

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a County or Town use this tool if they have less than 50 permits issued a year?

Yes. This tool is available to use for any jurisdiction no matter how much development has occurred in your area. Our hope is that every jurisdiction will use it to its fullest. This would enable the County and Towns to analyze and track growth and assess Smart Growth efforts.

Are there examples of how data is to be entered and what if the examples do not fit my exact question?

Yes. Everyone will be able to view examples of data entry for each category within "Example County" found in the drop down list at the top of the Home Page. If you do not find an example that answers your question or is not sufficient please email MDP from the contact email on the Website Main Page with your question and we will respond promptly.

How do you calculate the floor area ratio (FAR)?

FAR = Total floor area of building divided by Total lot area.

What is a "preliminary subdivision"?

This is a subdivision submitted for review but has not been given approval or been recorded.

When do I include "preliminary subdivisions" in the report?

Preliminary subdivisions may be included in your report as a way of tracking development capacity and activity.

What happens if a subdivision is altered from one year to the next?

If you reported a subdivision that has been revised in any manner from one year to another or within the same reporting year, simply make the change and alter the record within the same reporting year, or enter the latest information as a new record for a subsequent year and comment accordingly to note the changes.

Who can enter data?

The designated Administrator invites staff to participate in data entry. The Administrator determines what information the invitee will be able to enter or alter. In Counties where one report is prepared for the development activity within the County and it includes the activity within the municipalities, both the County and the Municipality will share Administrative duties as needed.

Will other jurisdictions be able to view and print other jurisdictions reports?

Yes. Each jurisdiction will be able to view other jurisdictions development activity at any time. Printing of any reports from other jurisdictions will only be allowed after the report has been submitted to MDP for the calendar year's activity. In all cases, no other jurisdiction will be able to alter another jurisdictions data in any manner.

Can data be imported into the tool?

Yes. If your jurisdiction has the ability to query a database used for permitting or subdivision tracking AND it can be structured to the field formats of the database provided by MDP, it can be submitted to MDP and uploaded. Once completed, it will be available for viewing and editing as needed. All edits will be the responsibility of the reporting jurisdiction.

What are MDP's expectations for this Annual Report Tool?

MDP has designed the Annual Reporting web tool to provide State-wide growth indicators, benefitting local jurisdictions as well as MDP. The use of this web tool will provide uniformity to the data among all jurisdictions. Many jurisdictions may already have their own databases which contain the requested data, and this MDP web tool will allow the user to submit data electronically in the database format of the web tool. Some jurisdictions may not keep databases on development activity or have GIS mapping capabilities; this tool offers a means for those jurisdictions to enter the information directly on the site for the reporting calendar year. The tool will allow each jurisdiction to print out reports and tables of the inputted information. At the end of the reporting year, MDP will use this information to aid in the preparation of the Department's Annual Report to the General Assembly.

What is considered a substantial zoning or land use change?

Substantial zoning or land use changes means comprehensive zoning and/or comprehensive plan land use changes for a whole county, municipality, or subarea/sector. It could also include text changes that change density allowances within the jurisdiction. It is also those cumulative changes that have substantially affected the residential development capacity within the reporting jurisdiction.

I don't know if it has been 3 years since we revised our residential development capacity analysis.

A web link has been provided so a user may check MDP's database to ensure the Department has the most recent residential development capacity information on file for a particular jurisdiction. This information can serve as a baseline when determining substantial zoning or land use changes from one calendar year to the next.

What are PFAs? What is a Comment Area?

PFAs (Priority Funding Areas) are geographic growth areas defined under State law and designated by local jurisdictions as areas targeted for State investment. The law directs the use of state funding for roads, water and sewer plants, economic development and other growth-related needs to PFAs.

Locally designated PFAs that do not meet all of the State requirements are “PFA Comment Areas.” Because the demand for State funding of infrastructure exceeds available resources the State has established a process to evaluate funding requests in comment areas.

Who can I contact for questions regarding the Residential Development Capacity Analysis?

Please contact the Department's Land Use Planning and Analysis Division at 410 767-4500.

If you wish to view the latest **Development Capacity Summary** that MDP has posted, please select the County you want to view from the list at the top of the SGG Annual Report Web Tool, then, select the “Residential Development Capacity Status” page from the left column, and then select the County name after the Development Capacity Summary indicator.

Development Terms

Residential: all dwelling units or structures used for human living quarters, excluding jails

Non-Residential: all buildings or structures not used for living quarters.

Active Subdivisions: those that are approved and construction permits are being issued.

Pipeline Development: Preliminary subdivisions and site plans that have not received final approval and approved subdivisions and site plans that have not yet been built or have not yet been completed. This also includes approved lots for which no permits have been issued but are within the "active" status of development, ie. Not expired.

Land Use: Actual categories of land use shown on the County or Municipal adopted land use plan map.

State-Wide Generalized Zoning: Zoning classifications, established by the Maryland Department of Planning, of all County zoning categories into like groupings, for the purposes of comparison.

Mixed Use: A project, development, or land use that combines residential uses with non-residential uses within the same project / site area, or building.

PFA: Priority Funding Area. This is the locally identified growth area that meets certain density, water and sewer service, and capacity thresholds established by the State.

Total Acreage/Area of Parcel(s) to be developed: This is the total site area of the project, including any area that will remain undeveloped temporarily or permanently.

Remaining Land: This is the amount of land in the subdivision or on the site plan that will remain available for further development once the subject project is completed.

Undevelopable Acreage/Area: This is the area of the parcel or lot that is not to be disturbed for any further development. This is land that is removed from the development pool by being identified as sensitive area(s), open space, preserved through easement(s), or transferred / purchased development rights.

Building area completed: This is area that is completed and an occupancy permit is issued for any commercial use (SQFT only)

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): Floor Area Ratio is calculated by dividing the gross floor area of the buildings by the total area of the lot. Floor Area Ratio is usually expressed in terms of decimal fraction.

The table will calculate the FAR if the appropriate data is entered as requested. Enter the FAR if known.

Residential Development Capacity: This is the sum of housing units that could be built on all potentially developable lands as zoned.