



## **Kent County Farm Bureau**

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PO Box 732, Chestertown, MD 21620

April 27, 2021

Comprehensive Rezoning &

Land Use Task Force

400 High St

Chestertown, MD 21620

To Task Force Members,

The Kent County Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization representing the agricultural interests of its' nearly 300 member families. We are writing to strongly encourage the task force to follow the 2018 Comprehensive Plan which "recognizes that agriculture is the keystone to Kent County's heritage and it's future." Furthermore, "This recognition of agriculture's status as the highest and best use for much of the County is an essential tenet of this plan."

We also ask that the task force recommend maintaining the current Agricultural Zoning District (AZD). As stated in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, "it's retention and viability has always been and will continue to be a top priority for County land use and other policies." We feel to maintain our industry's viability, we agree with the strategy on page 43 of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan with the goal of supporting agriculture as a permanent and preferred land use, that "the County intends to allow very limited development in the Priority Preservation Area" and "is committed to directing growth adjacent to existing neighborhoods, villages, and towns."

We are in opposition to allowing data centers in the Agricultural Zoning District. This change in legislation would set a dangerous precedent as to what would be allowed in what is currently open agricultural land. Furthermore, the proposed amendment is in direct conflict with the Agricultural Zoning District's statement of intent: "to encourage the use of agricultural lands for farming and other agricultural businesses and to limit the use of these lands for non-agricultural purposes".

Additionally, we are concerned with the ability for the public to participate in this process. While technology has provided some access to the taskforce to continue its duties; it does have its limitations. Because there are still Covid restrictions in place and because of the lasting implications of these policies, we ask that the timeline be extended to allow for greater public input and transparency.

Sincerely,

Tim Bishton  
President