

## Media Contacts:

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** Shaun Adamec

Office: 410-974-2316

Cell: 410-919-3206 Christine Hansen

Office: 410-974-2316

Cell: 443-336-5270

## GOVERNOR O'MALLEY ANNOUNCES NEW MAIN STREET MARYLAND COMMUNITIES

### *Five cities and towns receive key designations*

**BERLIN, MD (June 24, 2008)** – Governor Martin O'Malley, joined by Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Raymond Skinner, Mayor of Berlin William G. "Gee" Williams III, and Cumberland Mayor Lee N. Fiedler, today announced that five new cities and towns have been designated as Main Street Maryland communities under the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Main Street Maryland Program. The latest additions to the State's roster of Main Street Maryland communities are Annapolis, Berlin, Chestertown, Middletown, and Princess Anne.

"I am pleased to announce that the Maryland towns and cities of Berlin, Annapolis, Chestertown, Middletown and Princess Anne have all earned this new Main Street distinction," said Governor O'Malley. "Expansion of the Main Street Program recognizes the 'smart growth' value of revitalizing existing communities, building both individual and community wealth, and strengthens the economic potential of Maryland's traditional main streets and neighborhoods."

Created in 1998, Main Street Maryland is a comprehensive downtown revitalization program that is recognized nationally as a model for Smart Growth. The program strengthens the economic potential of Maryland's traditional main streets and neighborhoods. Using a competitive process, MSM selects communities which have made a commitment to revitalization, and helps them increase private-sector small business investment, and improve the appearance and image of their core business districts. Before the additions of the recently announced communities, the program had designated 18 communities in 12 counties, resulting in the opening of 833 new businesses and the creation of 3,350 new jobs. A full list of Main Street Maryland communities is included below.

The Main Street Maryland Program uses the Main Street Four Point Approach for commercial revitalization, developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center. Beginning this year, Main Street Maryland programs also incorporated a Fifth Point: "Clean, Safe, and Green" which stresses Smart Growth and sustainability. The Five Points are:

- *Design* which enhances the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging supportive new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning;
- *Organization* which seeks to build consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process;
- *Promotion* which supports marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors;

- *Economic Restructuring* to strengthen the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new opportunities and challenges from outlying development; and
- *Clean, Safe, and Green* which enhances the perception of a neighborhood through the principles of Smart Growth and sustainability.

Governor O'Malley also announced that four existing Main Street Maryland communities have been awarded funding for Maple Street projects through the Main Street Improvement Program (MIP). Maple Street initiatives encourage residential revitalization projects near the business district that strengthen the relationship between downtown commercial districts and the surrounding neighborhoods. Cambridge, Cumberland, Dundalk, and Westminster each received Maple Street awards in the amount of \$15,000.

“Main Street Maryland has been so successful, it is only natural that we would look for positive ways to expand the program,” said Secretary Skinner. “With these Maple Street projects, we will apply Main Street principles to residential initiatives and foster a holistic approach to community revitalization.”

Also announced were MIP awards for Main Street projects. In addition to the \$60,000 in MIP awards for Maple Street projects, \$240,000 in MIP funding was awarded for Main Street projects. MIP awards for Main Street projects in the amount of \$12,000 each were provided to the following Main Street Maryland communities: Annapolis, Bel Air, Berlin, Cambridge, Chestertown, Cumberland, Denton, Dundalk, Elkton, Frederick, Frostburg, Havre De Grace, Middletown, Mount Airy, Oakland, Princess Anne, Takoma Park, Taneytown, Thurmont, and Westminster.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development works with partners to finance housing opportunities and revitalize great places for Maryland citizens to live, work and prosper. To learn more about DHCD and its programs, visit [www.mdhousing.org](http://www.mdhousing.org).

###