



Opportunity Collaborative



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BALTIMORE REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

JUNE 2015



Baltimore Metropolitan Council

BALTIMORE REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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The Opportunity Collaborative was established with an overarching goal: to develop coordinated strategies to address the growing economic and social disparities “that pose a central challenge to the long-term sustainability and health of the greater Baltimore region.” Those were our words when we applied for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in the fall of 2010.

Reflecting on our application now, just a month removed from the civil unrest that drew national attention to the challenges we face in our region, it is clear how vital our original goal was. As pundits assessed the situation in Baltimore, they accurately articulated the region’s challenges. We are not alone. A long list of American cities suffer from historically disinvested and segregated neighborhoods, the loss of manufacturing jobs, limited public transportation and a lack of safe affordable housing near employment centers.

The national discourse and punditry on Baltimore and similar cities often focuses on the right issues but falls short in noting the scale of these challenges. Cities are not self-sufficient political entities, rather they exist as part of metropolitan regions that share social and economic challenges and opportunities. These regional issues, which bind our city and the surrounding counties, have been the focus of the Opportunity Collaborative.

The Opportunity Collaborative, by design, is led cooperatively by leaders from the public and nonprofit sectors. We set out deliberately to build a consortium of practitioners, funders, public officials and experts who represented important regional constituencies. Our decision-making has been guided by consensus, which allowed all of our partners an equal voice and ensured that all opinions were heard in our planning.

This Regional Plan for Sustainable Development is the culmination of three years of research, analysis and deliberation. The plan connects housing, transportation and workforce development strategies to identify crosscutting responses to the challenges created by regional disparities. This plan is not a sweeping blueprint for drastic reform. This plan is a comprehensive menu of policy and investment strategies that can work together to improve the quality of life for all of our region’s residents.

Our planning process went beyond traditional research and analysis. We road-tested some of our ideas through demonstration and workforce investment grants. We undertook a wide-ranging public engagement process that focused jointly on business and grassroots leadership throughout the region. In the final year of our planning, we created a leadership development program that brought citizens from all walks of life together to examine our work. Finally, we sent delegations to five other metropolitan regions to see successful programs that can have value in our own region. All of these grants, engagement sessions, meetings and delegation visits have fed into our plan and grounded our recommendations in real-world experience.

As the co-chairs of this effort, we are proud to say that none of this work would have been possible without the commitment, trust and patience of our fellow consortium members. This has been an entirely new planning process for our region, requiring constant adjustment throughout our work together. Our partners consistently brought their best ideas to the table and bought into the concept of a regional approach. Those ideas have led to a set of strategies designed to benefit all communities in the Baltimore region.

The challenges facing our region are significant. Addressing them will require our region's leaders to adopt the same thoughtful and balanced approach that marked the efforts of the consortium. We are hopeful and confident that using this plan as a guide, our national, state and local partners are up to the task.



William H. Cole, IV
President and CEO
Baltimore Development Corporation
Co-Chair, Opportunity Collaborative



Scot Spencer
Associate Director, Advocacy & Influence
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Co-Chair, Opportunity Collaborative

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1. INTRODUCTION

The **Opportunity Collaborative** is a coalition of local governments, state agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Baltimore region. This unique partnership was formed in 2012 to develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. Consortium members include the organizations listed on the opposite page.

The Collaboration is funded by a \$3.5 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant from the **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**, and guided by HUD's Six Livability Principles (inset). The work of the Collaborative is coordinated and staffed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council.



The **Baltimore Metropolitan Council** (BMC) is committed to identifying regional interests and developing collaborative strategies, plans and programs which will improve the quality of life and economic vitality throughout the region. The BMC board of directors is composed of the mayor of Baltimore, the executives of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford and Howard counties, a member of the Carroll County Board of Commissioners, a member of the Maryland House of Delegates, a member of the Maryland State Senate and a gubernatorial appointee from the private sector.

The **Regional Plan for Sustainable Development**, divided into nine chapters, represents the culmination of the Opportunity Collaborative's efforts to begin the process of tackling the disparities that hold back our region's economy and human potential.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the social, economic and environmental challenges facing the Baltimore region, and the opportunities before it to bridge gaps in opportunity.

Chapter 3 summarizes findings from an analysis of opportunity mapping – identifying which areas of the Baltimore region enjoy the most, and least, to achieve health and prosperity across six different categories: Education, Social Capital, Housing and Neighborhoods, Public Health and Safety, Employment and Workforce, and Transportation and Mobility.

Chapter 4 describes the public engagement activities that took place throughout the planning process.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 offer executive summaries of the Housing, Workforce and Transportation plans, respectively. They include specific recommendations that each inform the RPSD's overall recommendations, shown in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8 outlines the RPSD's recommendations, organized by three aspirational yet attainable goals and six strategies, which integrate aims of the individual Housing, Workforce and Transportation plans.

Chapter 9 concludes the RPSD with a proposed approach to implementing its recommendations.

CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

The City of Annapolis
Anne Arundel County
Annie E. Casey Foundation
Associated Black Charities
Baltimore City
Baltimore County
Baltimore Integration Partnership
Baltimore Metropolitan Council
Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc.
Baltimore Regional initiative Developing
Genuine Equality (BRIDGE)
Baltimore Regional Transportation Board
Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance
Citizens Planning & Housing Association, Inc.
Community Development Network of Maryland
The Coordinating Center
Enterprise Community Partners
Equity Matters
Greater Baltimore Committee
Innovative Housing Institute
Harford County
Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County
Howard County
Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition
Maryland Department of Disabilities
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Maryland Department of Planning
Maryland Department of Transportation
Morgan State University
University of Maryland National Center for Smart Growth

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES LIVABILITY PRINCIPLES

The Opportunity Collaborative has been funded in large part by the Partnership for Sustainable Communities—a collaboration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation. The Partnership has established six principles to drive the sustainability planning of its grants recipients. The Collaborative thought it appropriate to add one more principle, focused on the Chesapeake Bay, to guide our work. The livability principles, as adopted by the Opportunity Collaborative, are:

1. Providing more transportation choices through the implementation of our Long Range Transportation Plan and in particular by better connecting our transit-dependent ridership to regional employment centers;
2. Promoting equitable affordable housing by creating a Regional Plan Housing Plan that is responsive to the Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice;
3. Enhancing economic competitiveness by bringing regional Workforce Investment Boards, policy advocacy organizations, employers, educational institutions and local philanthropy together to develop a coordinated plan to utilize the region's educational assets to link low-skill/ low-wage workers to career track employment in growth industries, while meeting the growing needs of our region's employers for a skilled workforce;
4. Supporting existing communities through our Regional Housing Plan and direct investments of demonstration projects and leveraged funds aimed at creating thriving and vibrant neighborhoods adjacent to transportation and employment centers;
5. Coordinating policies and leveraging investments by developing a long-term financing plan and strategy as a central component of our Regional Sustainability Plan and by partnering with local governments and philanthropy to invest proposed demonstration funds in a way that maximizes leverage, builds human capital and strengthens neighborhoods while our planning proceeds;
6. Valuing communities and neighborhoods by developing and carrying out a robust community engagement strategy to drive our planning process.
7. Protecting the Chesapeake Bay by promoting location efficient and low-impact development in the region, and more specifically by developing a Green and Healthy Housing Program aimed at preserving and rehabilitating existing housing in the region in a "green" manner that considers the water downstream.

DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

Throughout the planning process, the Opportunity Collaborative awarded \$750,000 in demonstration grants to 16 Baltimore-area organizations working to make the region more sustainable by improving transportation, housing and workforce development. The Collaborative also made grants supportive of community beautification, education and outreach.

From changing zoning codes to provide better access to transit in Aberdeen and countering negative perceptions of Section 8 vouchers to an initiative preparing low-income Baltimore residents to enter construction jobs, these grants funded projects to help make the Baltimore region a better place to live and work.

Throughout this document, sidebars highlight some of the work of our grant recipients. The table below shows the full list of recipients.

Demonstration Grants	Amount	Summary
City of Aberdeen	\$10,500	Drafting of zoning code amendments and review requirements for transit-oriented development area
Anne Arundel County Partnership for Children Youth & Families	\$57,856	Workforce training and employment program for public housing residents
Baltimore City Department of Transportation	\$46,000	Market analysis, economic feasibility analysis and stakeholder engagement for West Baltimore MARC Station
Baltimore Community Foundation/ Blue Water Baltimore	\$46,000	Community engagement and neighborhood cleanup projects to reduce pollution in the Baltimore City
Central Baltimore Partnership	\$35,000	Homewood Community Partners Initiative implementation
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance	\$50,000	Analyze and prioritize public transportation service in targeted employment centers
Howard County Office of Transportation	\$55,103	Evaluation of best practices for providing efficient and effective sustainable transportation from affordable housing communities to employment centers
Community Development Network of Maryland	\$63,750	Creation of a public relations campaign called "Consider the Person" to change negative perceptions of Section 8 voucher recipients
American Visionary Arts Museum	\$25,000	Partial support of a workforce training program to connect troubled youth with job and life skills
Belair-Edison Neighborhood Inc.	\$54,223	Design and marketing of a unified marketing brand for a distressed community through partnership of government, community association, nonprofit organizations, business owners and residents
Blue Water Baltimore	\$43,623	An education and ambassador program to reduce pollution and generate citizen awareness and engagement
Light House	\$45,000	Early funding for a social enterprise catering company that provides supplemental employment opportunities to graduates of Light House's culinary training program
Urban Alliance	\$37,000	Creation of a college internship program including case management services
BWI Business Partnership	\$60,000	Implementation of new transportation choices for the under-employed and job ready in Baltimore City to fill jobs in the BWI Airport Hotel district
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance	\$50,000	Analysis of alternative transit solutions to reduce turnover at a suburban employment center
Job Opportunities Task Force	\$65,000	Establishment of a skills training program that leads to family-supporting jobs in Baltimore City's westside

2. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN OUR REGION

The Baltimore metropolitan region is made up of five counties —Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard—and the City of Baltimore, the largest city in the state and the 26th most populous in the nation.

A GROWING, DIVERSE REGION

According to the most recent projections by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, population in the region is expected to grow nearly 300,000 (11 percent) by 2030. Projections show that the number of jobs will grow at an even sharper rate in the city and will see steady growth in every county except for Carroll, reaching an estimated 1.96 million jobs by 2030. Recent growth in the region has helped fuel a resurgence in downtown Baltimore and continuing growth in areas such as Columbia, Fort Meade and BWI Airport, Aberdeen Proving Grounds and White Marsh.

The region’s relative affordability has been a strong source of its growth. Housing is more affordable in the Baltimore region compared to other East Coast metropolitan areas, such as Washington, D.C., New York, and Boston.

While overall population is increasing, household size in the region is getting smaller. One person households now account for nearly 30 percent of all households in the region. National trends indicate that smaller households are more likely to choose urban living, which gives Baltimore City and older suburban communities an opportunity to attract more residents.

As it has grown, the region has become more racially and ethnically diverse. In 2010 about 60 percent of the region’s residents identified themselves as white, 30 percent of the region’s population identified themselves as African American, and residents identifying themselves as Asian and Hispanic each comprised about five percent of the region’s population. The region’s net population growth between 2000 and 2010 is largely due to persons of color. The white population declined by over four percent during the decade, while the number of African Americans in the region grew by 11.5 percent. While still a small share of the total population, Asian and Hispanic residents have shown high levels of growth from 2000 to 2010: a 79 percent and 139 percent growth rate for Asians and Hispanics, respectively, in that decade.

FIGURE 2-A: Population Growth

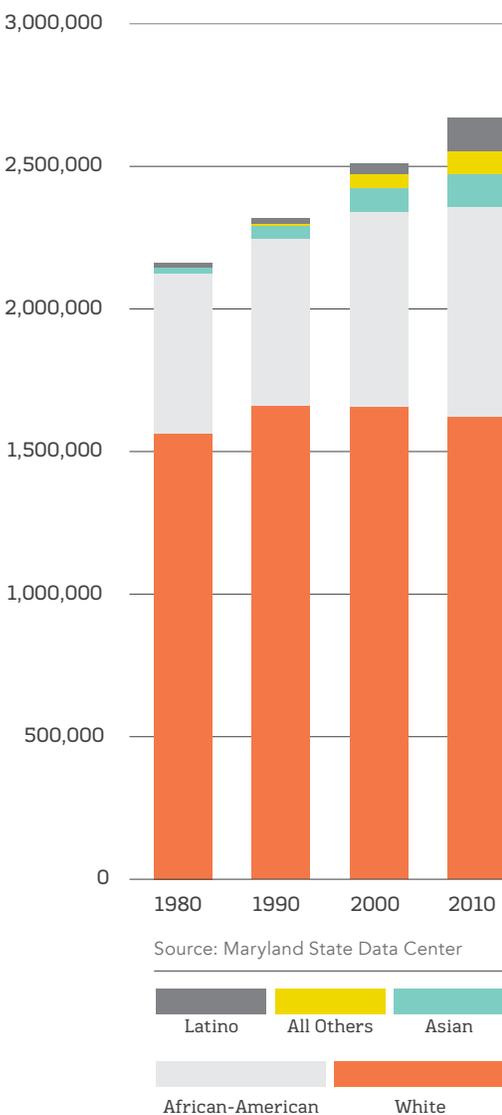
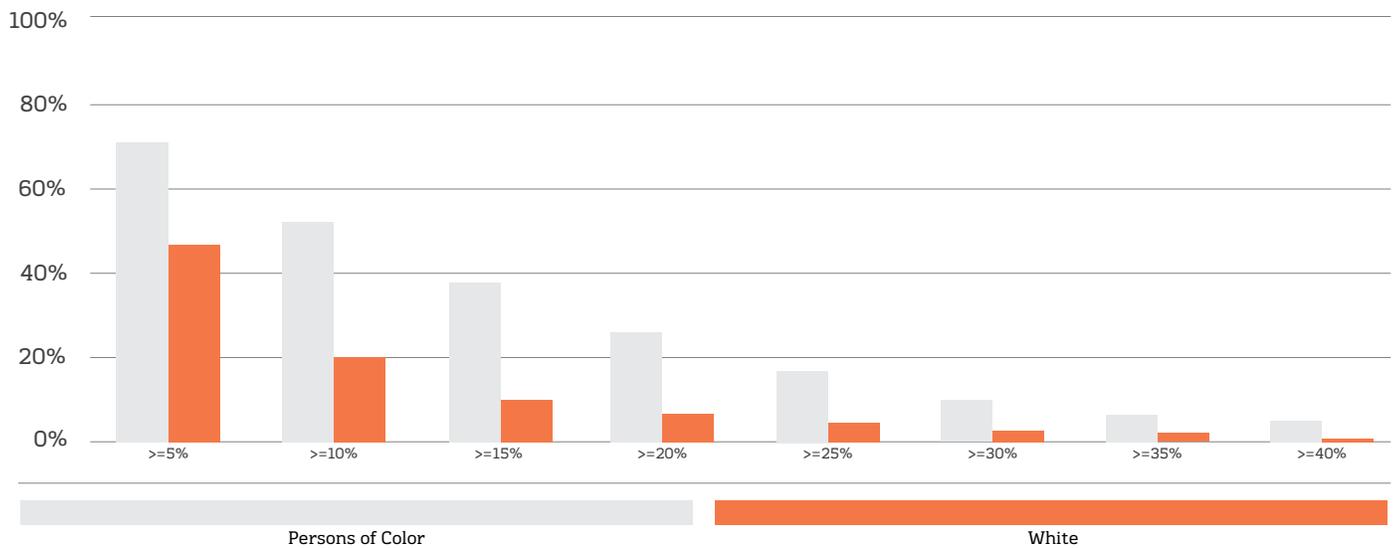


FIGURE 2-B: % of White & Minority Population Living in Census Tracts by Poverty Level, 2010



Meanwhile, poverty is becoming less concentrated. Between 1980 and 2010, the percentage of the region’s minority population living in census tracts with extreme poverty has decreased by two thirds, from 30 percent of tracts to 10 percent. Census tracts with moderate poverty levels of all races—those in which 15 percent to 35 percent of residents live in poverty—have consequently increased in number and become more dispersed throughout the region. This distribution of poverty should encourage the city and surrounding counties to collaborate on comprehensive poverty reduction strategies.

The state has created a range of programs to mitigate the effects of this dispersion of poverty in the region. In 2010, it merged several of these into the Sustainable Communities Program. Once designated by a local government and approved by the state, a Sustainable Community is eligible for funds from a variety of state grant programs. Every county in the region and Baltimore City has one or more state-approved sustainable communities. Every jurisdiction in the region also has departments or agencies that address housing and community and economic development.

A STRONG ECONOMY AND A TALENTED WORKFORCE

The region features a robust network of colleges and universities, world-class hospital systems, proximity to the nation’s capital, a highly skilled and well-educated workforce, and formidable research capacity. Due in part to these strengths, the region has seen a nearly complete recovery of the jobs lost during the great recession.

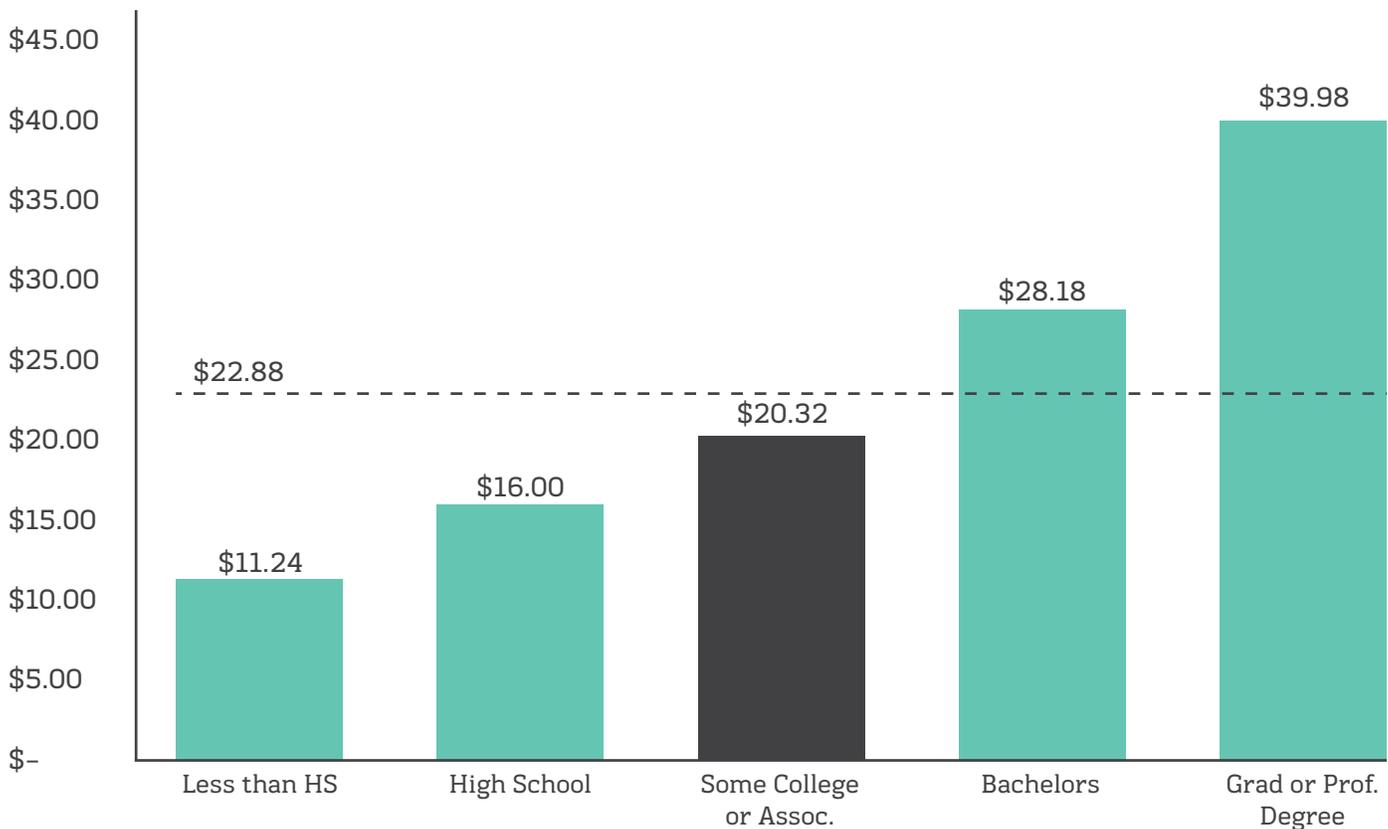
Several middle-skill industries that have living-wage jobs that do not require postsecondary education are projected to grow in the coming years, including transportation and logistics, business services, information technology, healthcare, and manufacturing. At the same time, the aging of the workforce, a national trend, will lead to increased employment opportunities in a range of fields. Strategic partnerships between workforce development providers, education providers and employers can lead to more underemployed and unemployed gaining access to family-supporting jobs.

Employment in the region is concentrated in downtown Baltimore and suburban job centers, both of which continue to expand. Outside the city center, the highest concentrations of jobs are in Owings Mills, Columbia, Towson, the I-83 corridor, the BWI area, around Fort Meade and near Aberdeen Proving Ground.

The greater Baltimore region features a wealth of **anchor institutions that provide a foundation for the regional economy**, creating jobs and spurring research. Anchor institutions, large regional employers and governmental institutions have the capacity to support workforce development and economic growth.

The region is home to **112 companies that employ at least 500 workers**, including 30 in Baltimore County and 23 in Baltimore City. These employers are dominant in a handful of industries: government (federal, state, and county), health (hospitals and health care), and education (colleges and universities). Four Fortune 1000 companies are located in the region—W.R. Grace & Co., Legg Mason, T. Rowe Price, and McCormick & Company—as well as the National Security Agency headquarters in Fort Meade, and the Social Security Administration in Woodlawn. The region has one of the **highest levels of educational attainment** in the country. Approximately 66 percent of the adult population has more than a high school education, and 39 percent have earned a bachelor’s degree or more. For those with a college education, economic prospects are strong and the unemployment rate is a low 3.1 percent (2012). At \$66,654 the region boasts the fourth highest median household income in the nation, which is 130 percent of the national average.

FIGURE 2-C: Regional Median Hourly Earnings



Source: 2009–13 ACS Survey, 5 yr. estimates
 In October 2014, when the Opportunity Collaborative published our Regional Talent Development Pipeline Study \$22.88 was the living wage for a single parent with one child in Baltimore City, according to the Living Wage Calculator at MIT’s Living Wage Project. www.livingwage.mit.edu

Progress Toward a Growing Baltimore City

The impact of the growing market for urban living, led by retiring baby boomers and Millennial Generation professionals, has resulted in a growing demand for housing in walkable, urban areas. The growing popularity of urban living, coupled with the city's high performance residential tax credit, is changing the face of Baltimore City's housing market in new and exciting ways

In downtown Baltimore, Millennials are fueling a housing boom. From 2000 to 2010, the population of Millennials in a three mile radius from the central business district grew by 92 percent, which is the 4th largest growth of Millennials in a downtown area in the country. These are Millennials with a college education who are attracted to the downtown to access jobs and enjoy walkable neighborhoods. Demand is growing for market rate rentals in the downtown area. According to the Downtown Partnership, with 431 units completed in 2014 (up from 154 in 2013) there are now 1,417 units under construction and 2,717 units planned through 2018 in downtown Baltimore. This growth boosted Baltimore's downtown in 2013 to become the 8th highest in residential density in the country.

When Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced her goal to grow the city by 10,000 households by 2020, the city was confronted with the challenge of how to monitor population growth, knowing that there would not be an official population count until the 2020 Census. To help gauge our progress, the Baltimore City Department of Planning has been tracking the development of new residential units throughout the city.

Analyzing permit data provided by Baltimore Housing, the Planning Department has been tracking residential development projects from the point when a project enters the development review process through the construction phase, and ultimately to completion, or the issuance of a use and occupancy permit. The permit data demonstrates that the growth in housing production is occurring not just in Downtown and along the waterfront, but is spreading across a variety of city neighborhoods.

To understand the larger housing market, the city also tracks the net increase or decrease in residential vacancies in the city.

Below are key findings from the analysis from 2010 through 2014.

Completed Units: Since 2010, over 9,900 new housing units have been completed.

Under Construction: 3,232 units are currently under construction.

Approved: 2,825 units are currently approved, or are in the planning pipeline.

Vacant Building Notices: Since 2010, the number of housing units with vacant building notices have seen a net decrease of 359 units. This decrease is attributable to both the rehabilitation of vacant units and demolition.

Baltimore City CEDS

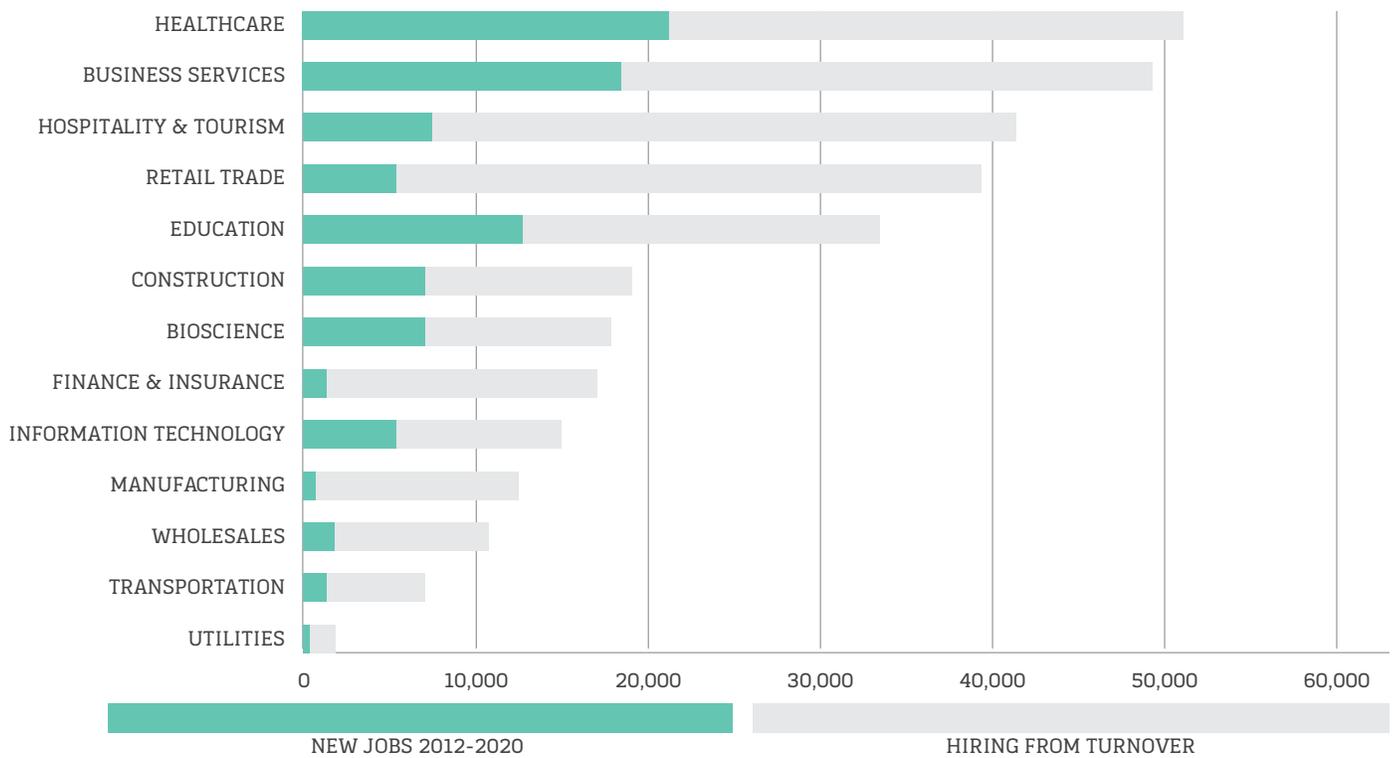
The City of Baltimore in 2014 published its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS will be used by agencies throughout the city to implement the objectives that support future economic development for Baltimore. The CEDS is built around eight major strategies and a cooperative framework to grow the economy.

1. Focus on Business Retention and Attraction
2. Improve Baltimore’s Resources for Small Business and Entrepreneurs
3. Foster Economic Inclusion
4. Expand Support for Mid-Size Companies
5. Recruit Nationally and Internationally
6. Focus Economic Development Efforts on Six Key Industry Clusters
7. Use Investments and Real Estate Development to Support Economic Development Goals
8. Work Strategically to Position Baltimore Regionally and Nationally as a Premier Place to do Business and Invest

FIGURE 2-D: Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for Baltimore



FIGURE 2-E: Total Projected Hiring Demand by Sector in the Baltimore Region, 2012-2020



Source: Baltimore Region Talent Development Pipeline Study, 2013

The region’s high educational attainment reflects the **large number of post-secondary education opportunities**, with more than 2,000 educational and job training programs that had combined enrollment of just under 200,000 students in 2012. The region is home to 37 colleges and universities, including world renowned institutions such as Johns Hopkins University and the United States Naval Academy, competitive public school options including the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the University of Baltimore, and a strong network of community colleges.

STRONG PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Although the state of Maryland is well known for its leadership in smart growth, land use planning in the region is a largely a local responsibility. Every county and all cities (with land use authority) in the region have comprehensive land use plans that are implemented through local zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations, adequate public facilities and other local ordinances. Local plans must be submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning for review every 10 years, but the state has no authority to approve or require local governments to revise their plans.

The state has several other programs that guide local planning and shape land development patterns. Maryland’s smart growth statutes require local land use authorities to designate Priority Funding Areas (PFA) and Rural Legacy Areas (RLA) to be eligible for many sources of state funding. To help discourage urban sprawl, the state prioritizes spending on growth-related infrastructure and programs in PFAs, and land preservation measures in RLAs. The region’s counties have had growth management policies of varying strength for many years.

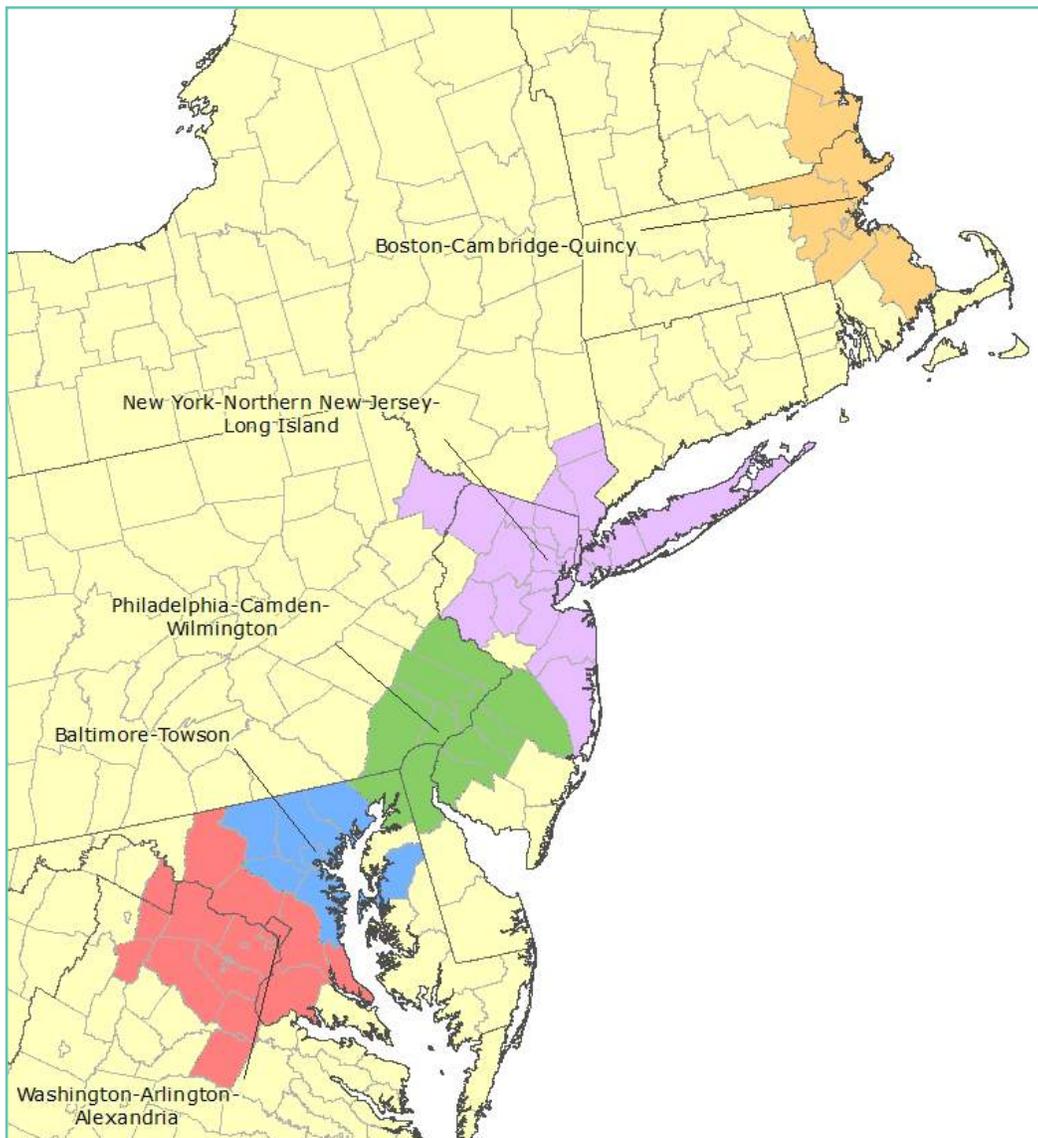
While these policies and programs have established a foundation for coordination, further collaboration across jurisdictions is likely to result in better resource conservation and economic competitiveness. For instance, strong commercial corridors benefit from being close to strong housing and business districts across the county line. Resource conservation areas have a greater impact when they are linked to parks and conservation areas in adjacent jurisdictions. Even a strong community can suffer challenges from being close to a weak one.

REGIONALISM AND MEGA-REGIONALISM

The steps towards regional collaboration have long been in the making, with the **Baltimore Metropolitan Council** (BMC) serving as a convener of local governments and state partners. While transportation planning has been BMC's traditional focus, the agency has, in recent years expanded its portfolio to include housing policy, workforce development and cooperative purchasing. In 2014, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation formalizing BMC's role in housing and workforce development.

The region is also strategically located in the Northeast Corridor mega-region between Washington, D.C., and Boston, which includes the **I-95 corridor and the Amtrak high-speed rail**. This area is the largest regional economy in the U.S., and if it were a separate country, the fourth largest economy in the world. Baltimore, with its more affordable real estate and access to multi-modal logistics support (rail, port, and air) makes it a strong location for industrial, back office, and logistics employment.

High-growth corridors that transcend jurisdictional boundaries provide a basis for enhanced regional cooperation in addressing common challenges and opportunities. This includes the area along I-95 from Aberdeen Proving Ground to White Marsh, and from downtown Baltimore to the BWI/Fort Meade areas in Howard and Anne Arundel counties.



Baltimore Red Line



September 2014



TRANSPORTATION

The region has a connected **multi-modal transit system** that includes bus, rail, light rail and commuter trains (MARC and Amtrak) operated through a centrally run transit system that fosters commuting between downtown Baltimore, suburban areas and Washington, D.C.

Numerous state, local and regional agencies and authorities plan, build, maintain and operate the region's transportation network. Local governments build and maintain local roads and the State Highway Administration builds and manages state highways, including the 430 miles of interstate highways that serve as the region's transportation backbone. Transit services are provided by the Maryland Transit Administration, Central Maryland Regional Transit, Harford Transit, Carroll Area Transit, as well as several privately operated shuttle services. The Maryland Transportation Authority manages toll facilities. The Maryland Aviation Administration manages Thurgood Marshall Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI), the 22nd busiest airport in the country, serving more than 22.7 million passengers in 2012. As in other metropolitan areas, federal transportation funds for the region are contingent on key regional transportation planning provided by its Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, which is staffed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC). The BMC also provides technical assistance to local governments, especially in environmental planning.

The planned, 14.1 mile light rail **Red Line** and an increased focus on the integration of existing bus and rail lines, have the potential to create jobs and improve access to job centers, reduce pollution and decrease traffic congestion. The proposed Red Line will connect outlying areas such as Woodlawn and Security Square to downtown Baltimore, Canton, and the Bayview Medical Campus (among other areas) and connect west Baltimore's low income and largely African American population to thousands of employment opportunities. Additionally, the **2015 Long Range Transportation planning process** presents an opportunity for jurisdictions to collaborate and prioritize projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND POLICY

The Baltimore region has a strong connection to the environment, especially the Chesapeake Bay and Baltimore Harbor. Through best practices in storm water management throughout the region, including an assessment of current infrastructure and sustainable water management practices, the region can lead the way in preserving its waterways.

This multi-jurisdictional approach to environmental stewardship began in the 1980s when the state General Assembly enacted a comprehensive resource protection program to safeguard and preserve the Chesapeake Bay—the largest and most productive estuary in North America. Many policies are intended to implement the Chesapeake Bay agreement, signed in 1983. Pursuant to this multi-state agreement, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), established a nutrient and sediment pollution diet known as the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). To achieve its TMDL, the state requires local governments to develop and implement watershed implementation plans (WIPs).

Authorized in 1984, the Critical Area Act brought together state and local entities to work jointly to reduce the impact of development on habitat and aquatic resources. This law also created the Critical Area Commission for the Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays to oversee the development and implementation of land use programs. The Critical Area Commission which emphasizes the need to protect shared natural resources and interconnecting ecosystems, has received significant buy-in from state and local leaders.

A SEGREGATED AND AGING POPULATION

While our region is growing more demographically diverse, it remains markedly segregated by race and income. Based on a 2010 segregation index, the Baltimore region is the 16th most racially segregated region among the 50 metro areas with the largest minority populations.

Since 1950, the region has grown by 1.2 million people, but the city of Baltimore has lost 330,000 people. The flight of middle-class white households to suburban counties in the latter half of the 20th Century was followed by the departure of many middle-class African American families in the 1980s. These population shifts left the city with a high concentration of lower-income African Americans. In the last two decades of the last century, many jobs were also moved to suburban centers. The resulting race and class divide, particularly in Baltimore City, tends to exist over large areas. Many, predominantly African-American city neighborhoods today remain depopulated and disinvested. The concentration of poverty challenges efforts to combat crime, provide adequate city services, and retain working families.

Between 2000 and 2010, white middle- and upper-income population growth occurred at the outer suburban fringe and along the city's waterfront in greater numbers, while poverty rates increased in both non-waterfront urban and inner suburban areas.

The patterns of residential settlement in the Baltimore region are shaped by a legacy of discriminatory 20th Century practices, such as redlining, blockbusting, minimum lot sizes, racial zoning, racial steering, and restrictive covenants. Challenges remain to developing affordable housing in areas with good schools and neighborhood amenities, reinforcing concentrations of poverty in many parts of Baltimore City.

The Baltimore region's population is increasingly getting older, which creates new challenges for our local governments and service providers. Between 2000 and 2010, the region's population of people over age 65 grew by 11 percent while the number of children under age 5 grew by 0.6 percent. Nationally, the elderly population grew by 15 percent while the population of young children grew by 5 percent during the same period. Because income and mobility decline with age, the need for support will increase, and the region may need to do more to address older residents' housing and mobility needs.

SYSTEMIC POVERTY AND HOUSING NEEDS

Baltimore City continues to have nearly triple the rate of poverty compared to the region as a whole. Multiple studies illustrate that living in poverty has adverse impacts on health, educational attainment, safety and economic opportunity.

As the Baltimore region’s economy recovers, many new jobs are high-paying ones in health care, defense, and technology that require college degrees and fuel our region’s overall prosperity. At the same time, the region has lost many living-wage jobs, such as in manufacturing, that require only a high school education, and previously sustained many older communities. Instead, the economy is creating many more relatively low-paying jobs in the service sector. Increasingly, this is leading to wealth disparities in the region and a significant lack of affordable housing for lower-income workers. Table 1 shows income levels and associated “severe housing cost burdens” for renters—those paying more than half their income for housing.

Table 1 shows that 60 percent of the region’s extremely low-income renter households (the equivalent of a family of four earning \$26,000 or less) pay more than half of their income on rent. Nearly half of very low-income renter households (a family of four earning \$26,000 to \$43,000) in Howard and Anne Arundel Counties are similarly cost burdened. Meanwhile, the private real estate market is unable to develop good affordable housing for many extremely and very low-income renters without some form of subsidy.

Totaling the severely cost-burdened households in Table 1 above (right-most column), we calculate the region needs about 70,000 more affordable housing units, especially for our lowest-income residents.

The lack of affordable housing options outside of Baltimore City reinforces concentrations of low-income populations in certain city neighborhoods, and concentrations of poverty tend to limit opportunity. These tend to be neighborhoods with the weakest private market conditions and high rates of vacant homes. These conditions undermine redevelopment, which leads to further concentrating the population of people with low incomes.



Demonstrating Impact: Baltimore Community Foundation/ Blue Water Baltimore

Community outreach, peer-to-peer outreach, school outreach and hands-on projects were all part of the Clean Water Schools and Communities project, which was awarded two grants by the Opportunity Collaborative totaling more than \$89,000. This partnership between the Baltimore Community Foundation, Blue Water Baltimore, the Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore and the Baltimore Office of Sustainability focuses on promoting community action to address neighborhood runoff and reduce litter and educating the public about how both pollution sources hurts the Chesapeake Bay.

The primary goal of this project was to demonstrate effective strategies to achieve litter-free blocks surrounding schools, litter-free storm drains near schools and surrounding blocks and an increased awareness by community members of the connection between neighborhood trash disposal behavior and the health and cleanliness of local waterways. This was accomplished through six sets of major activities including: litter perceptions surveys, litter audits, education, storm drain stenciling, peer outreach and hands-on projects.

Participation in these activities was better than expected. As part of this project, more than 100 students from five schools were involved with hands-on projects, 350 students made pledges to take action, 116 students took part in Healthy Harbor Lab Days, 972 students completed the litter perceptions survey, and more than 2,150 students were involved in the project's green teams through a combination of storm drain murals, school assemblies and posters, signing pledges, clean ups, school newsletters, school and community banners, Healthy Harbor Lab Days and school/community celebrations.

A key strategy was to avoid using a unified message about these different sources of pollution. Instead, each green team created its own message to engage its school community and team members became the spokespeople to take their messages to peers and the school community. In fact, peer-to-peer education was one of the main strengths of the project.

The students enjoyed hands-on projects like storm drain stenciling. As part of those projects, the students also learned about how pollution travels to local waterways. One student, a green team leader at a school said, "We learned a great deal about the ways in which open drains manage stormwater, which will help us next year when we work on our new landscape areas."

The second phase of the project, which added new partners, the Baltimore City Environmental Protection office and office of sustainability and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, included funding of education ambassadors, tree plantings, more storm drain art, residential water audits and an annual spring cleanup event. To make this Clean Water Ambassador project a success, the project staff connected with community leaders from target neighborhoods to identify community assets and needs. Specifically, the project aimed to connect neighborhoods in the Gwynns Falls watershed with resources to take action for clean waterways and strong communities. The community leaders decided which projects would work best for their communities, which generated greater buy-in from the communities themselves.

The education topics covered through the ambassador outreach part of the program were determined through site visits to the communities by project staff. Darin Crew, who worked on the project from Blue Water Baltimore, said that site visits also determined opportunities for controlling runoff such as rain gardens, rain barrels and tree plantings.

The milestones reached by the targeted communities were larger than the project staff expected, but more importantly, the neighborhoods committed to continuing their cleanup efforts. Over the course of the project:

- Five community meetings were held to introduce the project
- Thirteen water audits were completed
- Thirty two rain barrels were built at two workshops
- Four Project Clean Stream cleanups were held with 93 participants
- 3,490 pounds of trash were removed as part of those cleanups
- 52 trees were planted
- 37 storm drains were stenciled

In addition to the many positive outcomes, project staff also learned important lessons for future projects that will also support the region's plan for sustainable development. These included:

- Success in a community depends largely on the interest and commitment on the residents.
- Target smaller neighborhoods. Large neighborhoods are too vast to target community organization effectively.
- Establishing momentum in a community takes times. Each community has different needs, desires and priorities.



FIGURE 2-F: Segregation Indices & Racial/Ethnic Composition, 2000 & 2010

	2000	2010	%CHANGE
DISSIMILARITY INDEX			
WHITE-NONWHITE	59.6	54.0	-9.4%
WHITE-BLACK	68.8	65.4	-5.0%
WHITE-HISPANIC	39.2	39.8	1.7%
WHITE-ASIAN	42.9	43.5	1.4%
ISOLATION INDEX			
WHITE	81.7	75.0	-8.1%
NONWHITE	63.9	63.3	-1.0%
BLACK	65.9	62.2	-5.6%
HISPANIC	4.2	9.2	120.5%
ASIAN	6.4	11.0	73.1%
RACIAL / ETHNIC COMPOSITION			
WHITE %	66.3%	59.5%	-10.2%
NONWHITE %	33.7%	40.5%	20.2%
BLACK %	27.1%	28.8%	6.2%
HISPANIC %	2.0%	4.6%	131.4%
ASIAN %	2.7%	4.6%	70.1%

Source: 2000 & 2010 Census, SF1

DISTRESSED COMMUNITIES ARE ISOLATED FROM REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Geographically entrenched segregation by race and income isolates poor, predominantly African American neighborhoods from basic amenities and resources. This creates a physical, cultural and psychological divide separating families living in distressed communities from the amenities found in middle-income neighborhoods, including access to jobs, high-performing schools and the social networks that often help people find good jobs.

Jobs are separated from low-income communities.

Many of the region's jobs are located in suburban areas that have limited transit service. Although the region's public transit system is extensive, it does not adequately serve suburban job areas, particularly during second and third shifts. This makes having access to a car an almost essential job qualification. Low income families who cannot afford a car are therefore blocked from seeking many living-wage jobs. In fact, a survey of unemployed and underemployed workers in Baltimore cited lack of transportation options as a fundamental challenge in finding full-time work.

Meanwhile, **low-income households struggle to find housing they can afford in communities of opportunity.** In Howard and Anne Arundel counties, which are job-rich areas with generally high-performing public schools, the homes affordable to low- and moderate-income households are extremely limited. This disconnect presents an economic challenge to the entire region, considering that many industries require a range of workers at various skill levels and wages.

FIGURE 2-G: Areas that are Accessible to Residents of the Cherry Hill Neighborhood (2010 Transportation Analysis Zone 315): Transit Times by Public Transportation (Green-Blue Tones) and by Car (Yellow-Red Tones)

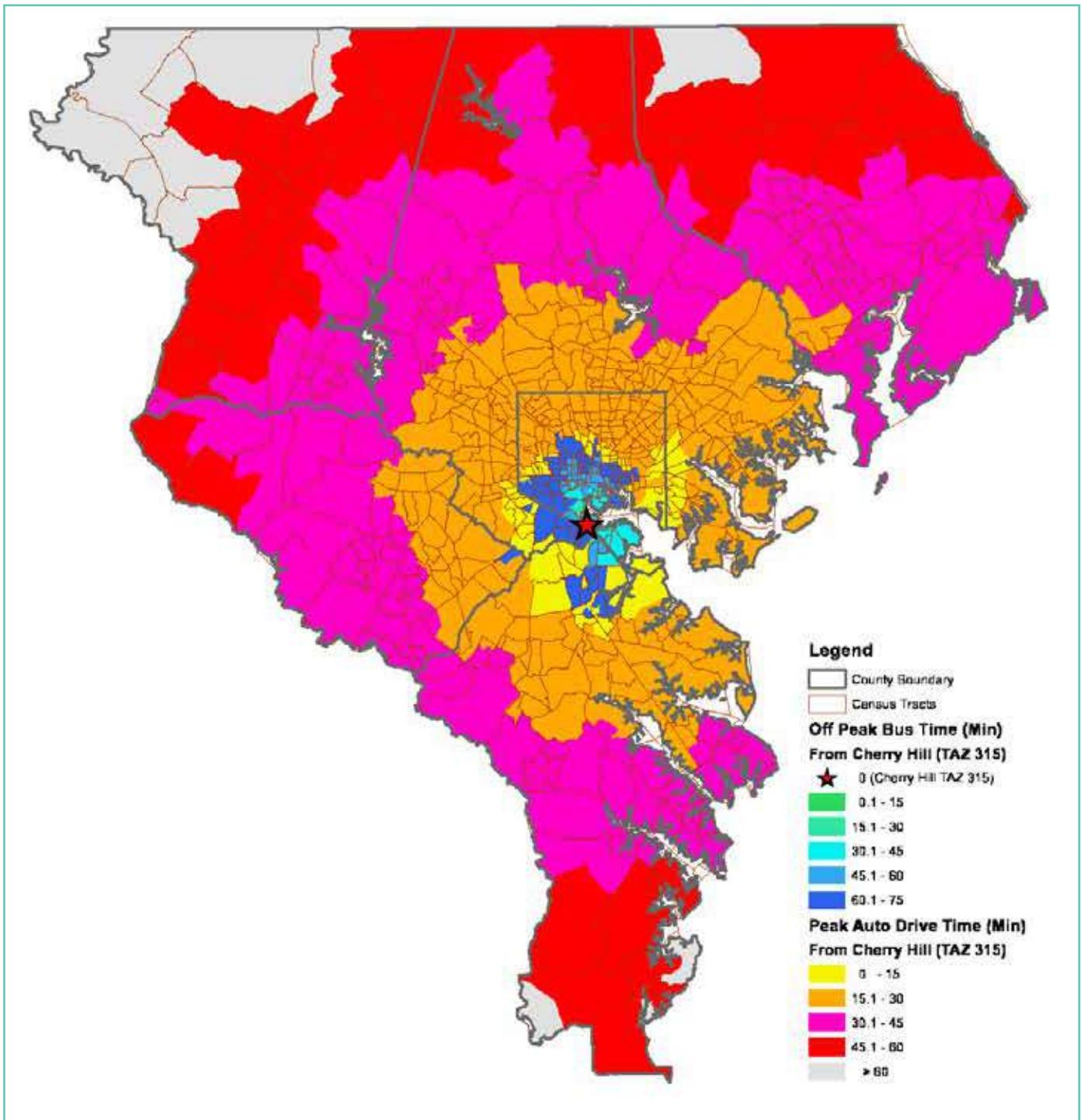


FIGURE 2-H

INCOME LEVEL - HUD NAME	% MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME (MFI)	4-PERSON HOUSEHOLD INCOME	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	EXAMPLES	SEVERELY COST BURDENED
EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME	Below 30%	Under \$26,000	Approx. 90,000 (26% of renters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single person on disability (\$8,500/yr.) • Food prep worker with two dependents (\$22,900/yr.) • Retail Salesperson with three dependents (\$24,900/yr.) 	51,000 households
VERY LOW-INCOME	30-50%	\$26,000-\$43,000	Approx. 60,000 (17% of renters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single teacher's assistant (\$28,700/yr.) • Substitute teacher with two dependents (\$35,000/yr.) • Cashier and carpenter's helper with three dependents \$45,600/yr.) 	17,000 households
LOW INCOME	50-80%	\$43,000-\$68,000	Approx. 66,000 (19% of renters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single massage therapist (\$39,070/yr.) • Home health aide and janitor, no dependents (\$48,770/yr.) • Firefighter with two dependents (\$57,320) 	4,300 households

BROKEN PATHWAYS TO OPPORTUNITY

Access to economic opportunity begins with a solid education, yet many of Baltimore's children and young adults lack access to the tools needed to succeed, including a high-quality education and the work skills needed for living-wage jobs. According to a regional education assessment, not one Census tract in Baltimore City scored in the top half of all tracts in a measure of educational opportunity.

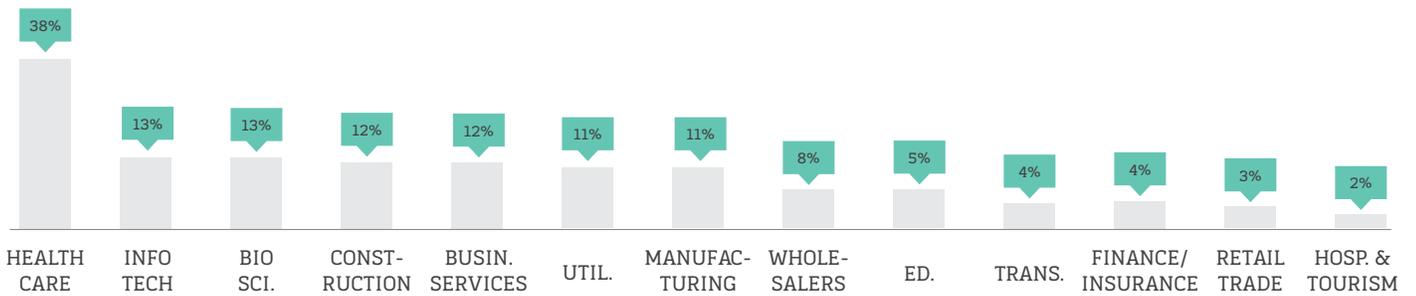
In the Baltimore region, existing systems and societal biases have reinforced the inequality between whites and minorities, resulting in a **racially imbalanced job market**. For example, African Americans represent 28 percent of the region's working age population but account for nearly half of all unemployed people.

Although several industries anticipate growing and offering more living-wage jobs, competition for them **has increased since the Great Recession**. As of 2012, for every three new highly skilled individuals entering the labor market, one low-skilled worker dropped out or was left unemployed. The period following the Great Recession also hit lower-skilled people hardest. The unemployment rate for people living in poverty grew from about 24 percent in 2007 to nearly 39 percent in 2012, a worrisome indicator that many people in the region are unable to access the region's rich and growing high-skilled employment opportunities

The region's job opportunities fall mainly into two categories: high-paying jobs requiring at least a bachelor's degree and jobs that require few technical skills and pay less than a living wage. This trend is evident for most industry sectors throughout the region, making it **difficult for low-skilled workers to find and progress into specialized mid-skill career paths** that pay family-supporting wages. Mid-skilled job opportunities that pay a living wage typically require post-secondary technical education and comprise a small portion of the labor market.

There are **not enough training opportunities** for residents to match the education level or experience needed to meet requirements of jobs in the region. Resources available to **workforce development organizations** are declining and conflicting program requirements make it difficult for providers to effectively serve people seeking jobs.

FIGURE 2-I: Share of Mid-Skilled Family Supporting Jobs in the Baltimore Region



Source: Baltimore Regional Talent Development Pipeline Study

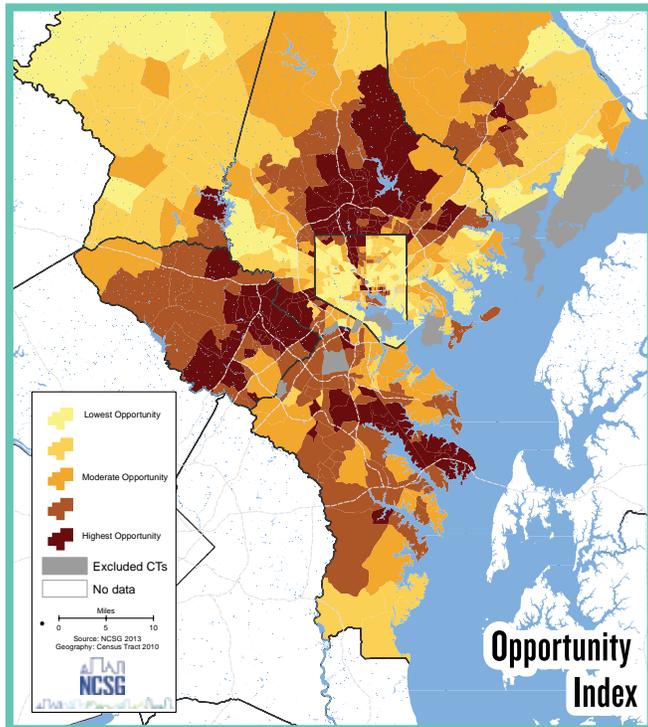
Even with education, many job seekers are excluded from the workforce. Ex-offenders in particular face a severely limited job pool. Surveys indicate one in four unemployed persons seeking work have a felony background, yet the majority of employers will not consider applicants with criminal records. This is particularly true in the growing cyber-security and government sectors. The recently passed Maryland Second Chance Act allows some non-violent offenders to shield a single past offense, but it is expected to have limited impact on the region’s chronically unemployed.

CONCLUSION

As acknowledged in the Consortium’s Planning Grant Application, regional strategies are not yet in place to adequately address the growing disparities within the region. The city of Baltimore and surrounding counties have recognized this and are working together to **plan for their shared regional destiny**. The Opportunity Collaborative is working to set a new model for future regional collaboration. This **26-member coalition** of state agencies, local governments, the metropolitan planning organization, universities and advocacy groups initiated this Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. Its partners are committed to implementing the strategies recommended within it to improve access to opportunity throughout the entire Baltimore region.

3. THE BALTIMORE REGION'S GEOGRAPHY OF OPPORTUNITY

Figure 3-A: Composite Opportunity Index



The neighborhood you live in can have a large influence on your success in life. People who live in “High Opportunity” neighborhoods have access to good schools, good jobs, high-quality health care, and parks and open spaces, and are relatively safe from crime and pollution exposure. Not surprisingly, people who live in such neighborhoods tend to be healthier and more affluent, have rewarding careers and stable families, and live longer lives. In our region, neighborhoods have wide disparities in assets, meaning residents do not have equal access to opportunity and upward mobility. Understanding the opportunity landscape is vital to strengthening the region’s economy and quality of life and making our region more sustainable and equitable.

Any good measure of opportunity must include many factors, such as access to jobs, quality education, public services, public safety, fresh foods, recreational opportunities, health care facilities, and more. Some community characteristics, such as concentrated poverty, are impediments to opportunity, while others, such as an abundance of jobs, are conduits to opportunity.

To develop measures of opportunity for the Baltimore region an Opportunity Mapping Advisory Panel (OMAP) was formed in November 2012. The OMAP included members of the Opportunity Collaborative, subject matter experts, and local residents. More than 70 people participated in one or more of 14 meetings held between November 2012 and July 2013. These meetings included discussions of how to categorize opportunity, what factors influence opportunity, the data available to measure each of those factors, and how to weight each factor. The maps shown by category in the next sections reflect these weightings and discussions. The OMAP reviewed approximately 165 indicators and selected 92 indicators in six categories:

- Education
- Housing and Neighborhood Quality
- Social Capital
- Public Health and Safety
- Employment and Workforce
- Transportation and Mobility

These six category indexes were then combined to produce a composite opportunity index for the entire region.

Although this method of opportunity mapping can be useful, it is important to note its limitations. It cannot be used to compare opportunity in the Baltimore region to other regions in the country, nor can it analyze how access to opportunity in the region as a whole changes over time relative to other regions.

Moreover, the most important opportunity attributes will vary by household. For households with children, access to education might matter most; for families without children, access to jobs and entertainment opportunities might be most important. And for households with no members in the workforce, access to open space might matter most.

The Opportunity Index map shown in Figure 3-A is a composite of 92 indicators from the six, evenly weighted categories.

The map reveals that the highest opportunity areas in the region include: north-central Baltimore City; central Baltimore County; central Harford County; parts of central Howard County; and north-central Anne Arundel County. The weakest opportunity areas are concentrated in eastern and western Baltimore City, southeastern and western Baltimore County, and northwestern Carroll County. Residents of these areas less access to good education, jobs, and amenities.

Of the six jurisdictions analyzed, Howard County has the highest average opportunity score (83rd percentile) and no census tracts in the lowest opportunity quintile. Anne Arundel County has the next highest opportunity score (67th), followed by Baltimore County (58th), Harford County (41st) and Carroll County (34th). Baltimore City has the lowest average opportunity score (24th percentile).

The sections below describe the six opportunity indexes used to produce the aggregate index.

EDUCATION

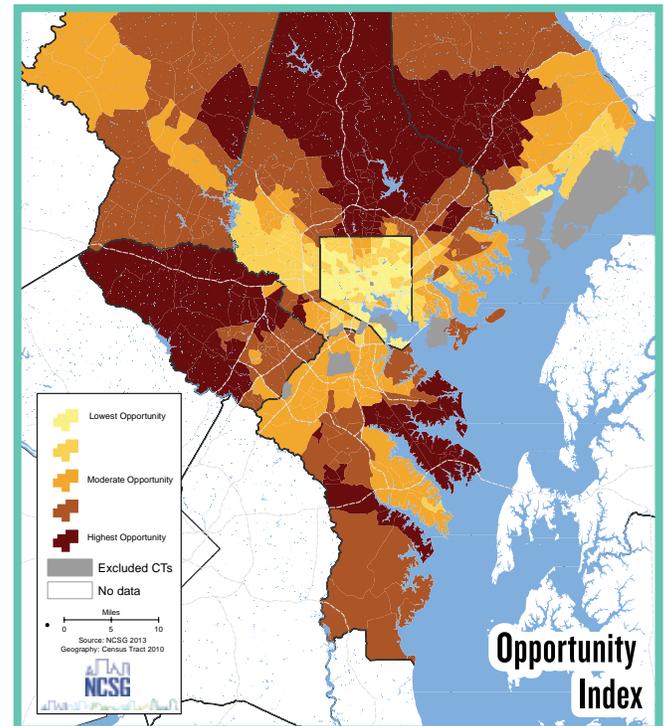
Social science research has repeatedly confirmed that education provides social and economic benefits that last a lifetime. All else equal, people with more education have longer and more stable periods of employment, earn higher wages, have lower rates of incarceration, and enjoy better mental and physical health. In short, almost every aspect of quality of life is positively associated with education.

1 Private and charter schools' performance are not included in the analysis.

SAMPLE EDUCATION INDICATORS

- Public elementary, middle, and high school performance in math and reading
- Graduation rates
- Enrollment in advanced placement courses
- Teacher quality
- Access to adult education

FIGURE 3-B: Education Index



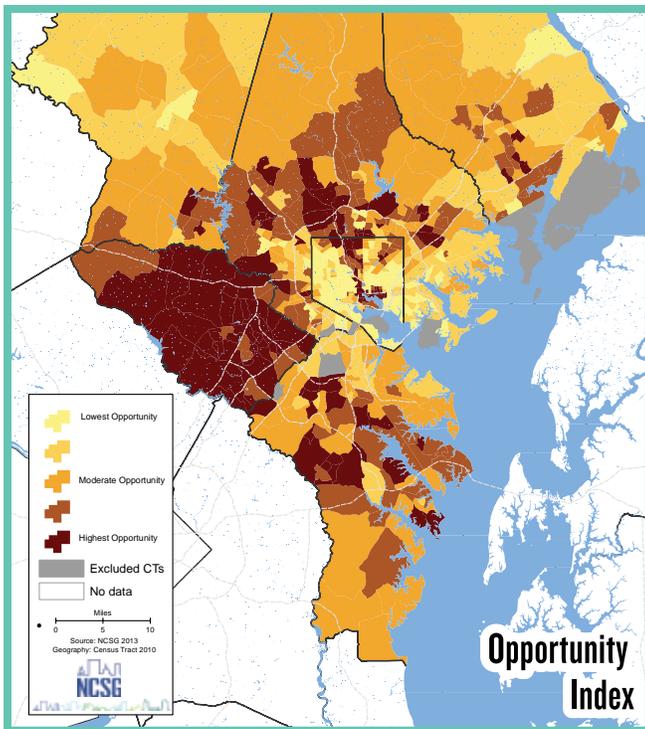
SAMPLE SOCIAL CAPITAL INDICATORS

- College education
- Income
- Employment
- Racial diversity
- Homeownership,
- Access to religious organizations, social clubs, community organizations, and public institutions

Educational opportunity varies starkly across the region. For nearly every measure of educational opportunity, Baltimore City ranks lower than surrounding counties. The average census tract in Baltimore City ranks in just the 16th percentile for educational opportunity.¹

The best performing school districts in the region are in Howard County, and 93 percent of Howard census tracts are classified in the two highest education opportunity categories. **Baltimore County has a high education opportunity score, with 50 percent of its census tracts in the two highest education opportunity categories.** The opportunity scores within other counties vary widely—indicating that school quality varies widely within those counties.

FIGURE 3-C: Social Capital Index



SOCIAL CAPITAL

People living in areas of persistent and concentrated poverty generally lack social connections that help them find and retain good jobs. Often, these connections are termed social capital, which broadly refers to the benefits gained through interpersonal relationships. Neighbors, friends, and acquaintances can all be important resources for personal well-being and economic success. They can provide direct help, like childcare or carpools, and they can provide more indirect help, such as information about job openings, or serve as a personal reference. Certain kinds of organizations and institutions can help build social capital because they help connect people with other helpful people. These include churches, civic organizations, and clubs.

Neighborhoods with high levels of social capital are located in Howard County and the wedge in Baltimore City that runs from the Inner Harbor north to Baltimore County. (This pattern largely reflects similar patterns when measuring income, educational attainment, and to a certain degree, racial diversity). Access to social capital-building institutions, however, is greatest in Baltimore City, which has the largest concentration of churches, social clubs, and civic organizations.

Despite its abundance of social institutions, Baltimore City scores poorly on the Social Capital Index, with an average score in the 26th percentile. This is because the labor force participation rate is significantly lower and the unemployment rate is two to three times higher in Baltimore City than in the surrounding counties. Most of

the neighborhoods in Baltimore City that do have strong social capital scores are located near the Inner Harbor, the Mount Washington neighborhood, and between Interstate 83 and York Road.

Howard County, with large numbers of highly educated and high-income households, scores highest in access to social capital, with an average score in the 91st percentile. Carroll County performs poorly on the social capital index because it has few social capital-building institutions, its population lacks racial diversity, and education and income levels are modest. Social opportunities in the other counties tend to be evenly distributed with few clear geographic patterns.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

A key measure of opportunity is having access to affordable home ownership and rental options in stable neighborhoods. Home equity is the largest source of wealth for most American households and provides a critical source of savings for investments in education and other avenues for social mobility. When households spend more of their income on housing, they are at greater risk of losing their home and becoming homeless, and households have less income to spend on critical household expenses. Strong housing markets also produce local tax revenue, which supports public services and further economic development. Finally, properties that are vacant or deteriorated can attract crime and foster negative perceptions about the safety of a neighborhood.

The measure of housing and neighborhood opportunity is highest in western Howard County, central Baltimore County, and central Anne Arundel County. Opportunity is lowest in eastern and western Baltimore City; renters in those areas pay a higher percentage of their income than those in any jurisdiction. Baltimore City also has the highest rates of vacancy, though vacancy rates are also high in the rural parts of the region.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

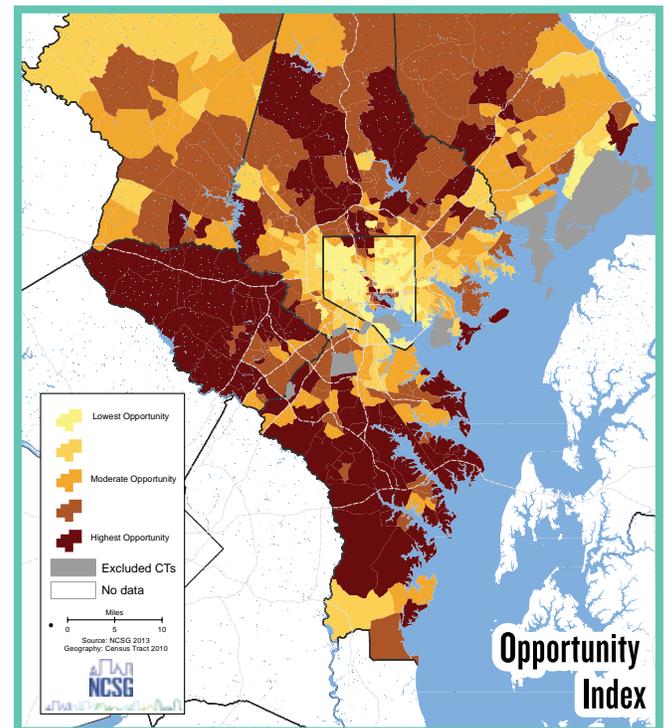
Individuals and families who live in unhealthy conditions or are victims of crime often struggle to escape poverty and climb social ladders. A large body of research demonstrates that a person's health is strongly influenced by the environment in which that person lives and works.²

² National Center for Healthy Housing. Housing Interventions and Health: A Review of the Evidence, January 2009.

SAMPLE HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS

- Sale prices
- Development activity
- Rent prices
- Vacancy rates

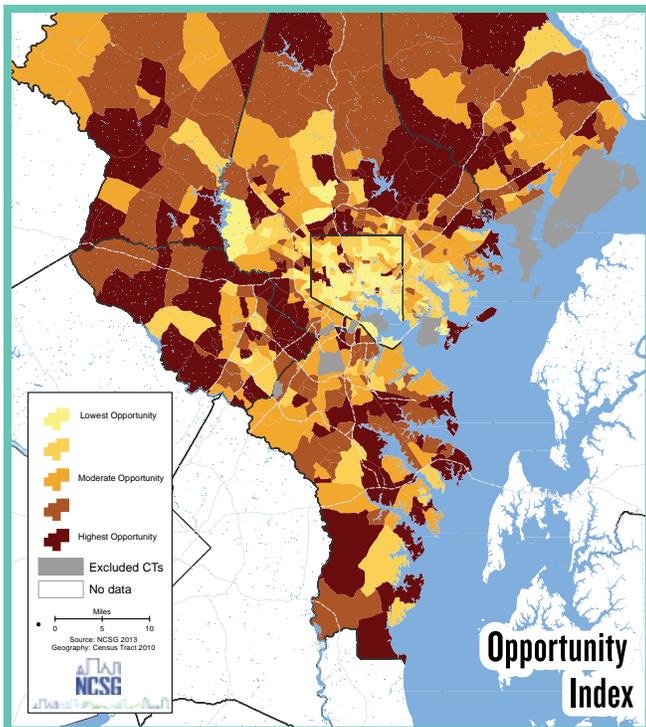
FIGURE 3-D: Housing & Neighborhood Opportunity Index



SAMPLE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY INDICATORS

- Crime risk
- Environmental and epidemiological hazards
- Access to public health and medical services
- Access to parks

FIGURE 3-E: Public Health & Safety Index



Grow Baltimore: Attracting and Retaining City Residents

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake announced the Grow Baltimore initiative in 2011. Through a focus on resident retention and attraction, the Mayor's goal is to grow Baltimore by 10,000 households by 2020. Grow Baltimore uses a data-driven approach including surveys and focus groups to identify intervention points, or times when residents are most likely to make a decision to leave the city. These include life changes such as the birth of a child, a child approaching school age, or reaching retirement age.

The recommendations and strategies are organized around "push" and "pull" factors, elements of city living that draw or detract from residents' experience and are a critical contributor to a decision to stay or leave.

Live Baltimore's research on family retention discovered that middle-income families are those most likely to leave. Focus groups sought to determine why these families choose to stay in Baltimore, as well as what factors threaten their continued residency. Live Baltimore's "Way to Stay" campaign addresses housing options for growing families, school choice, and family connectivity, by way of parent organization and family-focused neighborhood groups through their website.

City-led interventions include the Resident Retention Tax Credit, which is designed to encourage buyers to purchase their second (third, fourth, etc.) home in Baltimore City by providing a five-year property tax credit.

Population estimates between 2010 and 2013 indicate a net gain of approximately 1,000 residents, a major advance after decades of population decline. In particular the city is seeing significant growth in its Hispanic and Asian populations. And the 2010 U.S. Census reported that the downtown census tract alone grew by 130 percent between 2000 and 2010.

Exposure to crime is also a well-documented determinant of family well-being. Even the perception of crime can cause individuals and families to avoid social interaction and fail to make contacts necessary for social mobility. The stress of living with high poverty, high crime, and isolated neighborhoods can also have adverse effects on mental health. When people are stressed, child abuse, neglect, and family disintegration are more likely.

Carroll County ranks the highest in health and public safety—in the 84th percentile. Baltimore City, meanwhile, was the only jurisdiction to have an average tract score below the 50th percentile. Only 9 percent of the tracts in Baltimore City were identified in the top two quintiles. Overall, the City’s average score was in the 17th percentile.

Crime risk, a major component of the public health and safety index, is significantly higher in Baltimore City than in the surrounding counties. Many indicators of environmental risk factors are also high in Baltimore City, including low birth weights, teen birth rates, and infant mortality rates. Fast food is widely available yet access to fresh food is limited in Baltimore City as well as along transportation corridors that extend into the suburbs.

Baltimore City residents, however, have the best access to hospitals, emergency services, and social services due to its central location and its large number of health care institutions, including Johns Hopkins Hospital and the University of Maryland Medical System. Further, while Baltimore City ranks low in the amount of parkland, it ranks high in park accessibility.

EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE

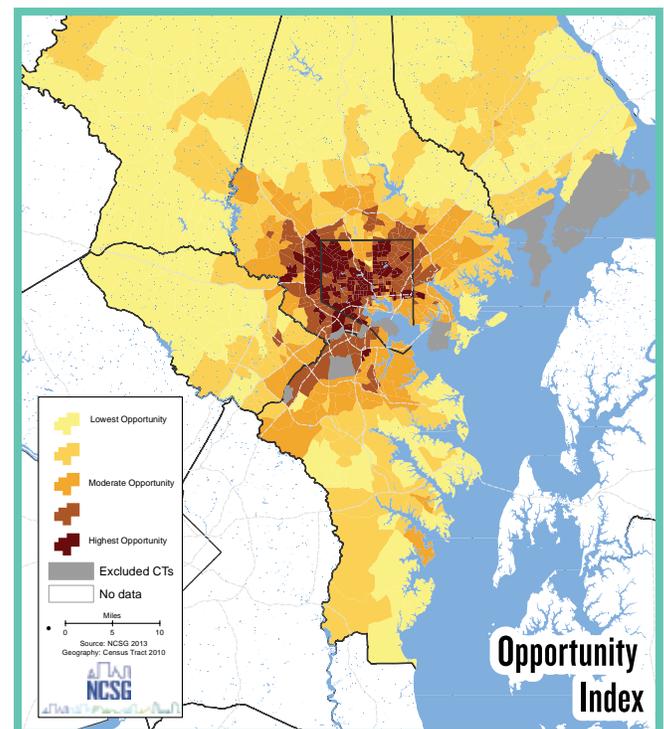
When jobs are far from home, it can be difficult to find and retain employment, particularly for those who lack access to a car. For this reason, access to jobs has been a major concern since many jobs have moved to the suburbs of large American cities. Such is the case in the Baltimore region, whose suburbs have gained the bulk of well-paying, mid-skill jobs over the last several decades.

Regardless of skill level or commute mode, residents of Baltimore City have access to the highest number of jobs. However, a higher concentration of low-

SAMPLE EMPLOYMENT AND WORKFORCE INDICATORS

- Number of jobs that can be reached within a 45-minute commute
- New and replacement jobs
- Gap between the total jobs accessible by automobile and transit

FIGURE 3-F: Employment & Workforce Index

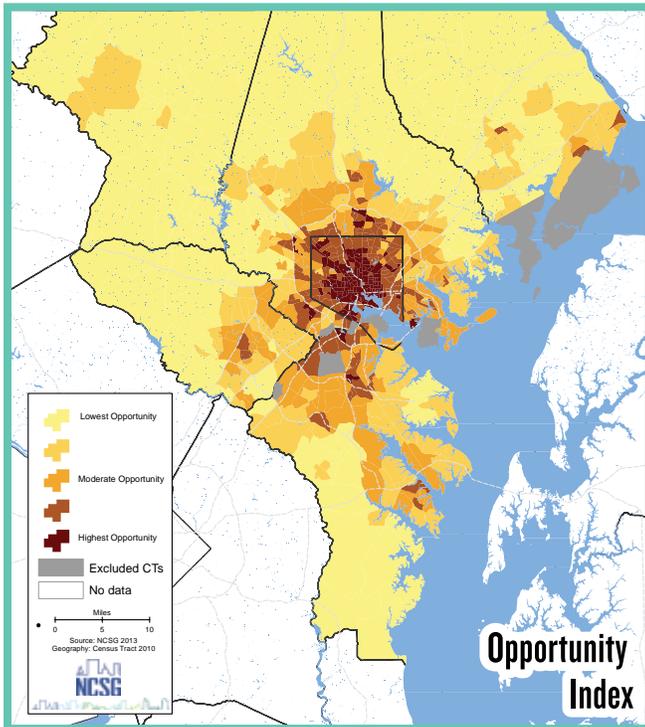


SAMPLE TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY INDICATORS

- Access to transit stops
- Quality of public transportation services
- Presence of walking and biking trails
- Amenities within walking distance

skilled workers are located in the city than in other jurisdictions. In addition to the city, the rural parts of Carroll and Harford Counties have larger shares of low-skilled workers. **Howard County has the largest share of high-skilled workers in the region at 62 percent, compared with 38 percent for the entire region.** Additional concentrations of high-skilled workers can be found in Baltimore and Anne Arundel Counties, and in the northern-central corridor of Baltimore City.

FIGURE 3-G: Transportation & Mobility Index



Demonstrating Impact: American Visionary Art Museum

The American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) connects teenagers recovering from substance abuse with opportunities to learn life skills and land good jobs through a partnership with Whiting-Turner, a Baltimore-area construction company. The final phase of this program, the Shining Youth, Shining Walls Community Mosaic Wall Project, began in 2013. That fall, youth from the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services' William Donald Schaefer House started apprenticeships by learning basic mosaic skills. Since receiving a \$25,000 Opportunity Collaborative grant, AVAM expanded the apprenticeships and offered these youth commercial tiling training with Quandel J. Vinton Schafer & Sons, an area construction firm.

Both the staff from AVAM and the Schaefer House observed that the program helped transform the participants. Abby Baer, director of development at AVAM, said that the basic tiling helped participants work through their personal challenges by giving them intricate work to concentrate on as well as time to think through their problems and mentors to support them along the way.

"They came in hesitant to participate, thinking 'ugh art,' and by the end, they opened up a bit more and they found new ways to communicate," Baer said. "A lot of the participants were dealing with emotional and psychological issues. It's hard to feel like you have something under control in that situation, but the mosaic tiling gave that to them."

Baer said that projects like this make a difference in the community. Some of the youth from the project's first two phases appreciated it so much, they asked to come back and help with other young people in the program.



TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Although transportation and accessibility are captured in measures found in most other indexes, transportation options are important in their own right. Studies suggest that walkable neighborhoods help promote healthy lifestyles and lower obesity rates. **Public transportation systems provide affordable and environmentally friendly access to shopping, school and leisure opportunities.** Especially for households who do not have access to a car, walking, biking and transit opportunities are important sources of mobility.

The transportation and mobility index heavily favors areas served by public transit and non-motorized forms of transportation. Baltimore City, with its bus and rail networks, ranks the highest among the region's jurisdictions in transportation and mobility; its average census tract score is in the 86th percentile. This means that city residents have more transportation options than suburban and rural residents. It should be noted, however, that Baltimore's score does not necessarily indicate high access to jobs in many suburban areas. Projects such as the Red Line light rail, which will run east-west through Baltimore County and Baltimore City, would address this gap.

Counties with limited transit service, low walkability scores and longer commute times, had lower scores. Carroll County's average score ranked last, in the 9th percentile. Howard and Harford Counties both fared poorly, with only 4 and 5 percent of their tracts, respectively, falling in the high or highest opportunity levels. While parts of Howard County (such as Columbia) have substantial transit availability, most services provide limited connectivity to other parts of the region.

CONCLUSION

Opportunity mapping is a particularly useful tool in regional planning because it compares communities within the region against themselves, without regard for jurisdictional lines or other political boundaries. The product is an apples-to-apples comparison of data that can be extremely useful when making regional policy decisions or capital investments. Our OMAP analysis is a comprehensive and objective snapshot of the region across a wide range of statistical measures.

Because the product is solely data-driven, opportunity mapping cannot capture how an individual household or neighborhood values each type of opportunity measured in the mapping. Ultimately, areas that may appear to be weak, or struggling, may be attractive communities to some residents because of transportation access, employment opportunity, family history or many other personal preferences. Opportunity mapping also does not consider the historical trends, investments and decisions that have created current conditions.

Our OMAP analysis demonstrates that neighborhoods across the Baltimore region differ significantly in the social, economic and environmental characteristics that define opportunity. Every neighborhood has its strengths and weaknesses and no neighborhood ranks at the highest or lowest level of opportunity in every category. While there is no perfect, or wholly imperfect community, our OMAP products demonstrate the gaps in opportunity that exist between places in our region. As we work together to close these gaps, for the benefit of all our residents, these maps can set a useful benchmark to track future progress.



4. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Ensuring that a regional planning process authentically reflects the community's views requires meaningful input and involvement of the region's residents. To that end, the Opportunity Collaborative targeted three key constituencies in its public education and engagement efforts:

- Community and grassroots organizations
- Businesses and anchor institutions
- Participants of a leadership development program, the Opportunity Fellows.

Collaborative members, the Citizens Planning and Housing Association, Inc. (CPHA) and the Greater Baltimore Committee led the community/grassroots and business/anchor engagement efforts. The Opportunity Fellows program was facilitated by BMC staff and a private consultant.

ENGAGING COMMUNITY AND GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS

Achieving meaningful public engagement in a region of 2.7 million people created a major challenge for the Collaborative. It was a natural fit to turn to CPHA. The organization has promoted civic action for more than six decades and assisted communities in changing Baltimore City for the best. CPHA has been a catalyst for civic action to bring about a healthy, inclusive Baltimore, with economically vibrant communities and opportunities for all people.

The first round of engagement reached 3,197 people through more than 60 meetings, while the second round reached 2,415 at more than 80 meetings.

For its engagement work, CPHA targeted traditionally underserved populations identified by HUD:

- Ex-offenders
- Homeless
- Immigrant populations for whom English is a second language
- Persons with disabilities
- Rural populations
- Persons living in areas that are heavily populated with minorities
- Persons who struggle to find employment paying a family-supporting wage
- Populations that have faced generational economic disadvantage
- Residents of subsidized housing
- Youth

CPHA partnered with a wide range of nonprofits and respected stakeholders across the region to connect with targeted audiences and communities. Our community and grassroots engagement was structured in three rounds designed to first solicit input on the meaning of “opportunity,” then collect focused responses on our planning efforts, and finally, share the findings and recommendations of the RPSD through an interactive visioning exercise.

The first round of engagement reached 3,197 people through more than 60 meetings, while the second round reached 2,415 at more than 80 meetings. In the summer of 2014, the Collaborative held a one-day summit at Coppin State University attended by more than 350 residents of the region. In the spring of 2015, CPHA held eight mini-summits, in the third round of engagement, to share key elements of this plan. These summits, titled *Giving Our Region a Chance*, were attended by more than 300 residents.



The Opportunity Collaborative thanks the following partners who helped in these efforts:

- Anne Arundel County Partnership for Children, Youth and Families
- Associated Community Services of Howard County
- BRIDGE
- CASA de Maryland
- Dundalk Renaissance Corporation
- Goodwill Industries of the Chesapeake
- Green & Healthy Homes Initiative
- Growth Action Network
- Project PLASE
- Resident Services, Inc.
- Southwest Partnership
- United Workers
- Urban Alliance



“Substantive participation by the business community is a fundamental element of successful regional planning, particularly on the issue of growing employment opportunities for all education levels and skill sets. We’re fortunate at the GBC to have CEOs from a wide range of industry sectors who are dedicated to the communities they serve and fully engaged in the mission of strengthening the business climate and quality of life in our region.”— GBC President & CEO Donald C. Fry.

ENGAGING BUSINESSES AND ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS

An active and civically engaged business community is a central element in every prosperous region in the country. At the outset of our planning, we recognized that the active participation of the business community would be a critical element of success.

We turned for help in reaching the business community to the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC). The GBC is the region’s premier organization of business and civic leaders and has been a leading voice for the business community on issues relating to economic growth, job creation, workforce development, transportation and quality of life. With the help of the GBC, the Opportunity Collaborative connected the business community to our planning efforts, collected key data to make the plans relevant, and actively engaged with regional thought leaders and economic decision-makers.

Early in the planning process, the GBC held a series of focus groups with human resource managers at some of the region’s largest employers, including Under Armour, M&T Bank, and Whiting Turner. The findings and outcomes of these focus groups helped shape the workforce development research and recommendations. Feedback from professionals on the front lines of regional hiring proved invaluable as the Opportunity Collaborative crafted a vision to help struggling residents overcome barriers to obtaining family-supporting employment.

As the planning recommendations became more concrete, the business and anchor engagement provided a direct connection to the private sector leaders who will help drive the implementation of the RPSD's recommendations. The insights gained from these conversations not only helped to shape this document, but they also established a shared understanding of the region's challenges and opportunities.

In addition to bringing nonprofit and business leaders to the planning table, the GBC convened a cohort of young professionals from around the region. Through a series of meetings, these emerging professionals provided insight and feedback that helped us shape this plan with an eye to the future.

ENGAGING EMERGING LEADERS: THE OPPORTUNITY FELLOWS

In the summer of 2014, 34 people from around the region were selected to be Opportunity Fellows and participate in an eight-month leadership development program. The program was designed, planned and facilitated by a team led Griff Hall Strategic Leadership. Participants live in all parts of the region and included students, neighborhood leaders, government staff, business owners and a former elected official. The program's goal was to cultivate a cohort of leaders who can build on their local experience and perspective to consider and act on issues regionally. We expect that the Fellows program will help ensure that the RPSD and its implementation reflect the character, needs and ambitions of the region.

The program included retreats and workshops to help participants develop an awareness of the issues and regional dynamics addressed by the Opportunity Collaborative, and to better understand how disparities affect our region's sustainability. Issues explored included transportation, housing, workforce development, economic competitiveness, and community trusteeship. In addition to this learning work, the Fellows focused on how community-oriented stakeholders could be involved in and influence the inclusive, crosscutting and multijurisdictional effort envisioned in the RPSD.

The work of the Fellows culminated in a three-part capstone project related to the RPSD. That project included Fellow-driven community engagement in addition to the Collaborative efforts described above, community-oriented perspectives on RPSD implementation projects, and an assessment of the Collaborative's planning efforts and the Fellows program.

5. THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL HOUSING PLAN AND FAIR HOUSING EQUITY ASSESSMENT: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

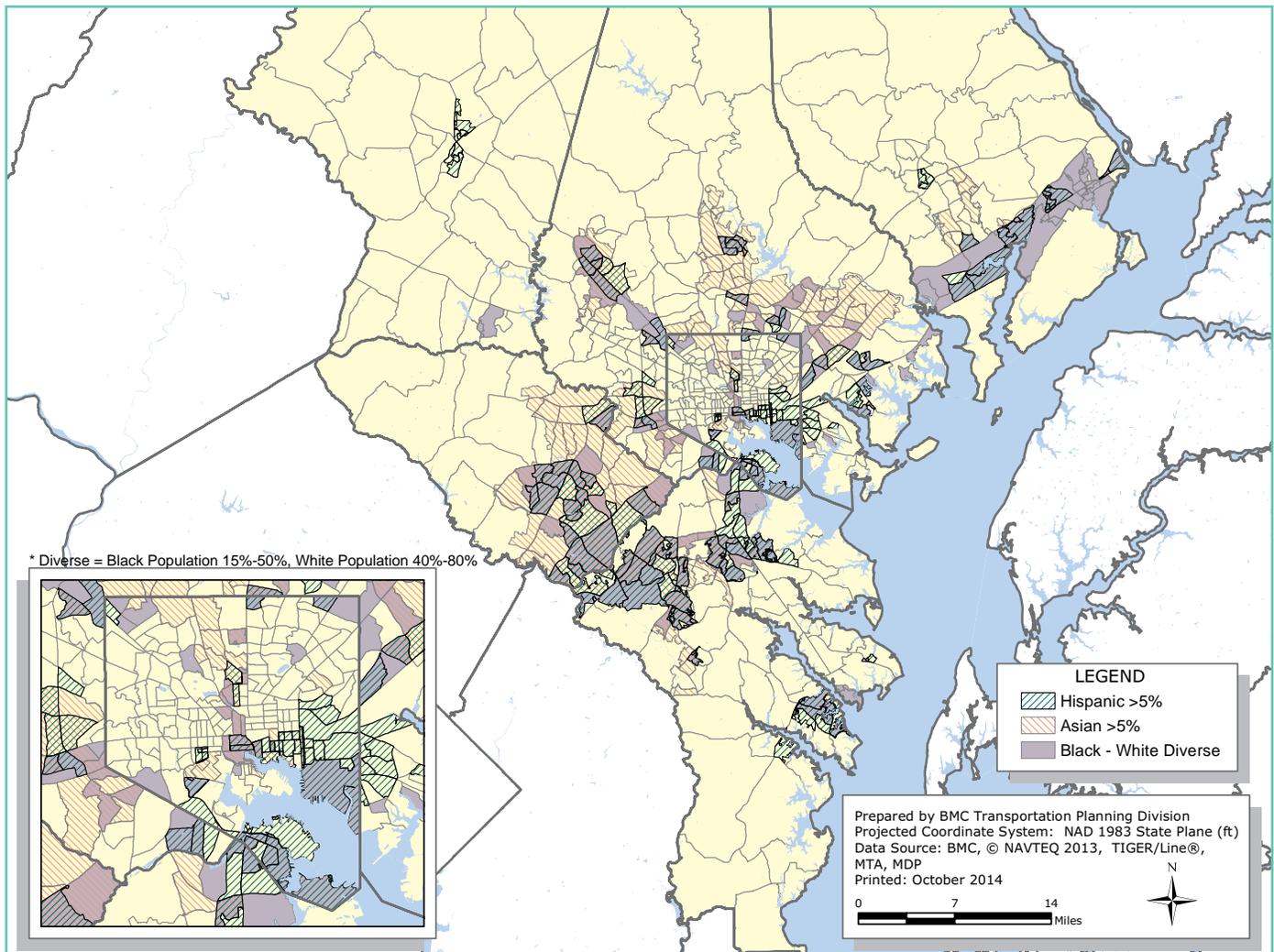
This section provides an executive summary of the Opportunity Collaborative's Housing Committee's *Strong Communities, Strong Region: The Baltimore Regional Housing Plan and Fair Housing Equity Assessment (FHEA)*. The FHEA, required of grantees by HUD, follows the 2012 Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice, completed by area local governments as required under the 1968 Fair Housing Act.

The full plan with in-depth recommendations is available at <http://www.opportunitycollaborative.org/housing-plan/>.

A GROWING REGION WITH GROWING DIVERSITY

As noted in Section 2, our region as a whole has been steadily growing, and growing more racially and ethnically diverse, for decades. The region continues to suffer, however, from patterns of segregation first established in some cases more than a century ago. Those patterns are tied closely to opportunity, and to historic wealth

Figure 5-A: Regional patterns of Racial and Ethnic Diversity



disparities, which were often supported by public policy. These patterns continue to weaken our region’s economy. Despite persistently high levels of segregation in the Baltimore area, some parts of the region do reflect its overall diversity. Figure 5.1 shows areas in the region—predominantly in the suburbs—that have substantial numbers of both white and black residents. These areas include much of Columbia; western Anne Arundel County; northwest, northern, and northeast Baltimore County; downtown Baltimore; and the U.S. 40 corridor in Harford County. Often these areas are on the fringes of areas that have seen major historic racial change but continue to be home to large populations of white residents, who have higher average wealth than residents of color. Some of these areas include Hispanic and Asian residents in higher than average numbers, making them more “global neighborhoods.” These diverse areas are valuable parts of our region with private investment and access to opportunity that should be preserved. Preserving these areas can help sustain important models of successful diversity and maintain access to opportunity for the region, while helping to halt the harmful patterns of racial change and re-segregation that have weakened our region.

PATTERNS OF SEGREGATION AND POVERTY

The FHEA describes trends in poverty and racial concentration, including racially/ethnically concentrated areas of poverty. Referred to as RCAPs and ECAPs, these are census tracts within the Baltimore region where minorities constitute the majority of the population and poverty rates are at least three times the census tract average of 11.7 percent, or 35.1 percent, in 2010. As noted in Section 2, 26 census tracts fall into this category, and all are located within the City of Baltimore. More than 87 percent of people residing in RCAPs/ECAPs are African American—nearly 53,000 people in 2010, or about 7 percent of the African American population of the region. Highly segregated areas, particularly those with high populations of African Americans, tended to have higher foreclosure rates—often generated by a flood of subprime loans—that weakened both families and communities over the past several years. In 2008 the City of Baltimore filed a lawsuit against Wells Fargo for discrimination in its use of subprime loans in low-income communities that often resulted in foreclosure. That lawsuit was resolved as part of \$175 million national settlement in 2012. While Wells Fargo did not admit wrongdoing, the City received \$7.5 million for down payment assistance, homeownership preservation, and legal costs. Additional funds from the national settlement compensated individual Baltimore residents who qualified for prime loans but were steered into taking out more costly subprime loans.

Figure 5-B: Census Tracts & Population in RCAP/ECAPs BMC Region, 2000–2010

		2000		2010	
		COUNT	% OF GROUP	COUNT	% OF GROUP
TOTAL CENSUS TRACTS		615	100.0%	668	100.0%
MAJORITY MINORITY CENSUS TRACTS		176	28.6%	235	35.2%
HIGH POVERTY CENSUS TRACTS		45	7.3%	31	4.6%
RCAP/ECAP CENSUS TRACTS		42	6.8%	26	3.9%
NON RCAP/ECAP CENSUS TRACTS		573	93.2%	642	96.1%
POPULATION IN RCAP/ECAPs		COUNT	% OF GROUP	COUNT	% OF GROUP
TOTAL POPULATION		103,791	4.1%	60,791	2.3%
HISPANIC		1,059	2.1%	2,210	1.8%
NON-HISPANIC	WHITE	8,484	0.5%	3,937	0.2%
	BLACK	91,393	13.3%	52,959	6.9%
	ASIAN	1,192	1.8%	647	0.5%
	NATIVE HAWAIIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER	0	0.0%	13	1.1%
	NATIVE HAWAIIAN/ALASKA NATIVE	368	5.6%	155	2.3%
	OTHER	151	3.8%	55	1.2%
	TWO OR MORE RACES	1,144	3.1%	815	1.5%
	TOTAL MINORITY	95,307	11.2%	56,854	5.3%

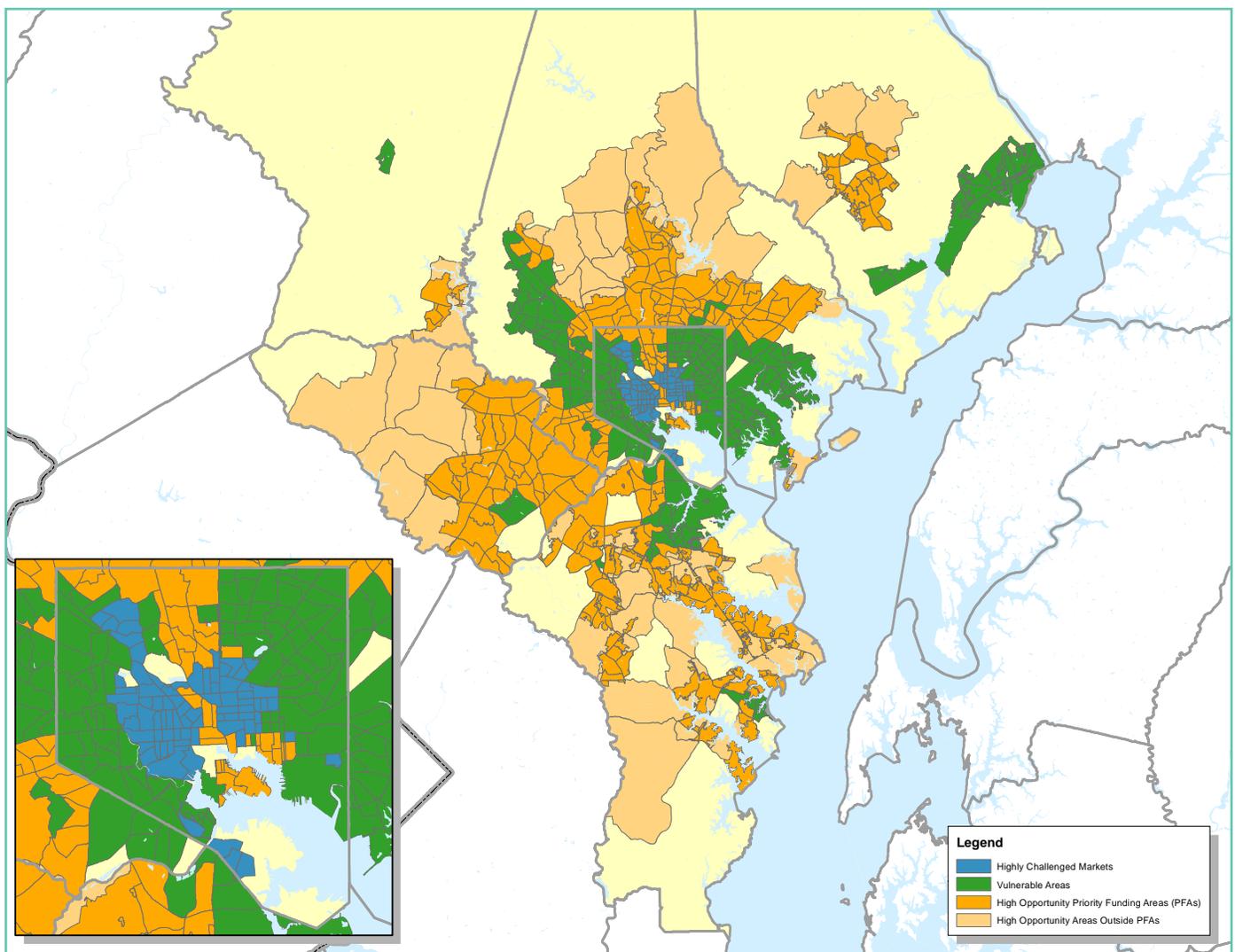
OPPORTUNITY AND THE REGION

Opportunity mapping grows out of the reality that where one lives heavily influences one's social, economic, and health prospects. This use of non-traditional housing data provides a more holistic understanding of a community's health. We used a range of indicators related to education, housing and neighborhood quality, employment, public health and safety, and transportation to rank the region's census tracts in quintiles (each one-fifth of the region) from highest opportunity to lowest opportunity.

Our FHEA mapped the region's existing subsidized housing and planned, primarily market-rate multifamily development to see patterns. We found that about 60 percent of subsidized units are located in the lowest two opportunity quintiles, and only about 20 percent are in the two highest opportunity quintiles. The pattern of planned multifamily development shows the opposite pattern, with about 60 percent of units located in the top two opportunity quintiles and only about 20 percent located in the bottom two quintiles. As a result, our Regional Housing Plan suggests additional inclusionary zoning and other strategies to create affordable housing in high-opportunity areas. Such strategies would affirmatively advance fair housing in addition to creating needed affordable units.

Figure 5-C shows the high opportunity, vulnerable and highly challenged areas in the Baltimore region that were the basis for many of the recommendations in the Opportunity Collaborative's Regional Housing Plan and FHEA.

FIGURE 5-C



GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Based on our analysis, the Regional Housing Plan sets the following goals and strategies.

1. ADDRESS UNMET HOUSING

NEEDS for 70,000 low-income households, including 14,000 that include a person with an ambulatory impairment, to increase opportunity and advance fair housing, through local inclusionary zoning, providing affordable/accessible housing at transit-oriented development sites and on surplus public land, creating housing funds, enforcing fair housing laws, coordinating among public housing agencies, and prohibiting discrimination based on the home-seeker's source of income.

2. SUSTAIN THE REGION'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

by promoting cross-cultural competency (the ability to engage with and understand people from different cultures) marketing and celebrating diverse neighborhoods, maintaining and creating high-quality infrastructure, preventing foreclosures, and piloting the type of intentional integration strategy that has been successful in such communities as Oak Park, Illinois.

3. BOLSTER VULNERABLE

COMMUNITIES by promoting homeownership and preventing foreclosure, preserving and revitalizing existing affordable housing, maintaining and creating high-quality infrastructure, convening local housing and school officials (given key role of schools in neighborhood attractiveness), strengthening partner neighborhood-based organizations, and coordinating state and local revitalization efforts.

4. BOOST OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE IN HIGHLY CHALLENGED MARKETS

using transformative investments that leverage the private market, assisting families who wish to move to higher-opportunity areas, developing interim plans for areas waiting for transformative investment, maintaining and creating high-quality infrastructure in coordination with redevelopment and targeted investment areas, and leveraging transit investments such as the Red Line.

5. CONNECT HOUSING EFFORTS TO TRANSPORTATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

by improving transit service to job centers, supporting alternative transportation efforts, maximizing asset-building efforts for people living in subsidized housing, and including affordable housing near transit.

6. SUPPORT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH CONTINUED CONVENING OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE,

with staff support from the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, integrating Regional Housing Plan elements into existing state and local plans, developing metrics to track progress, and continuing to integrate housing with workforce development and transportation.

6. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This section provides an executive summary of the Baltimore Regional Workforce Development Plan. The plan is a product of nearly two years of research by the Opportunity Collaborative's Workforce Development Committee. The full plan with in-depth recommendations is available at <http://www.opportunitycollaborative.org/workforce-plan/>

OVERVIEW

The Opportunity Collaborative seeks to promote the economic well-being of the region's low-skilled adult population by increasing their access to employment and economic opportunity. While the Baltimore region boasts average household incomes and educational attainment that outpace the national average, our labor market is increasingly bifurcated—divided between those with post-secondary educational attainment and those who don't. This divide, and a decades-long loss of middle-skills jobs, have made finding family-supporting employment increasingly difficult for Baltimore region workers without a college education.

Compounding this job gap, many of the region's lower-skilled adults face multiple and interwoven barriers to employment opportunity. These barriers must be addressed holistically for individuals to move into and maintain family-supporting careers. Solutions to help workers address these barriers are often complex and require the efforts of organizations that provide education, training, and wrap-around support services working in close partnership with the region's workforce investment boards, economic development organizations, and employers.

Strong Workforce, Strong Economy: The Baltimore Regional Workforce Development Plan, is the product of nearly two years of research by the Opportunity Collaborative's Workforce Development Committee. The committee includes representatives from each of the workforce investment boards in the Baltimore region, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation, local colleges and universities, social services organizations, workforce development funder organizations, community workforce development organizations, economic development agencies, transportation planners, and other stakeholders with an interest in improving access to employment opportunity across the region.

FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH

Our regional workforce planning is informed by the experience of those on the committee in addition to three Opportunity Collaborative studies that have explored the region's workforce development opportunities and problems.

The **Baltimore Region Talent Development Pipeline Study** assessed future demand for workers in the region's industry sectors; demand for specific occupations, especially expanding mid-skilled occupations; key characteristics of those occupations including earnings, educational, and training requirements and experience requirements, and advancement opportunity; and education and training programs available to prepare workers for jobs and careers. The pipeline study identified six key industry sectors for middle-skill job growth in the region:

1. Business Services
2. Construction
3. Healthcare
4. Information Technology/Cyber Security
5. Manufacturing
6. Transportation/Logistics/Warehousing

The **Study of Barriers to Employment Opportunity in the Baltimore Region** identified the complex and interconnected barriers that keep low-skilled adults from finding a job and advancing into a career that pays a family-supporting wage. This study used a survey of more than 1,000 job seekers in the region to document barriers to employment opportunity. The major categories of employment barriers include:

Finally, a study of the region's transportation and logistics sector further explored the career pathways that workers with lower skills could follow to move into family-supporting career in that sector. **Career Pathways in the Baltimore Region: Transportation and Logistics** can serve as a model for future pathways studies. This report maps out upwardly mobile career tracks in one of our region's middle-skill employment sectors and will be useful to both job seekers and employers.

39 Career Pathways Occupations

HEALTHCARE Medical Assistants • Medical Records and Health Information and Health Information Technicians • Pharmacy Technicians • Surgical Technicians • Radiologic Technologists and Technicians • Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians • Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses • Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics • Registered Nurses • Respiratory Therapists • Dental Hygienists

CONSTRUCTION Electricians • Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters • Carpenters Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators • Highway Maintenance Workers • Brickmasons and Blockmasons • Glaziers • Elevator Installers and Repairers • Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers

IT / CYBERSECURITY Computer Support Specialists* • Computer Systems Analysts* • Network and Computer Systems Administrators • Information Security Analysts, Web Developers, and Computer Network Architects

TRANSPORTATION AND LOGISTICS Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers • Cargo and Freight Agents • Dispatchers • Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists

BUSINESS SERVICES Tax Preparers • Human Resources Assistants • Hazardous Materials Removal Workers • Environmental Science and Protection Technicians, Including Health • Civil Engineering Technicians* • Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians* • Mechanical Engineering Technicians • Other Engineering Technicians • Architectural and Civil Drafters • Mechanical Drafters*

*Note: Also a top manufacturing occupation

MAJOR BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

<p>EDUCATION, TRAINING & SKILL BARRIERS</p> <p>Many job seekers face four types of skill barriers to employment opportunity: Basic Skills; Essential Skills; Computer Skills; and Technical Skills.</p>	<p>INDUSTRY & CAREER BARRIERS</p> <p>There are limited job and career opportunities that lead from entry-level jobs to mid-skill jobs offering a living wage. The costs of a college education and job training make many jobs unattainable for low skill workers.</p>	<p>INTERCONNECTED SOCIAL BARRIERS</p> <p>Many of the region's job seekers have barriers that appear manageable alone, but become difficult in combination with correlated barriers. These include: Cost of bus fare or work attire; Lack of a driver's license Criminal records; Physical and mental health problems; and Limited personal support networks.</p>
<p>STRUCTURAL RACISM</p> <p>An array of societal dynamics – e.g. historic wealth disparities, disparate treatment by justice systems, disparate consideration in interviews – that routinely put job seekers of color at a disadvantage relative to white job seekers.</p>	<p>SYSTEM LIMITATIONS</p> <p>Federal funding for workforce training has significantly declined over the last decade. Additionally, there are many restrictions placed on those funds that make it difficult for providers to work with populations that struggle to find employment.</p>	<p>TRANSPORTATION & HOUSING BARRIERS</p> <p>Most Baltimore region residents living in low-income neighborhoods cannot effectively travel by public transportation to growing job centers outside of the City. Conversely, workers often struggle to find affordable housing near these growing job centers.</p>

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

Five action areas are recommended to reduce the region's barriers to employment opportunities:

<p>SECTOR WORKFORCE STRATEGIES</p> <p>Launch more sector strategies for workforce development that offer a larger menu of pathways into family supporting careers.</p>	<p>BASIC SKILLS & ABE</p> <p>Increase the availability, awareness, and completion of Adult Basic Education (ABE) and GED preparation courses.</p>	<p>BETTER JOB TRANSPORTATION</p> <p>Improve the availability of transportation between low-income neighborhoods and high-growth job centers.</p>
<p>STRUCTURAL RACISM</p> <p>Eliminate policies, practices, and institutional cultures that promote and support structural racism that leads to biases against people of color.</p>	<p>STRONGER RESOURCES</p> <p>Increase the level of resources available to industry and workforce development organizations.</p>	

Demonstrating Impact: Job Opportunities Task Force

With the award of \$65,000 from the Opportunity Collaborative, the Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF) expanded its JumpStart construction-training program to the west side of Baltimore City. This 14-week, pre-apprenticeship program focuses on training and preparing low-income Baltimore City residents to enter a trade. Participants receive job coaching, legal assistance, help with childcare, housing assistance, financial coaching, and driver's education if needed. Participants take courses focused on job-readiness skills, math instruction required on the job and hands-on skill development in carpentry and other trades.

Knowing the great challenge that transportation brings to many Baltimore City residents, graduates of the program are eligible to receive affordable vehicles from the nonprofit organization Vehicles for Change. Before leaving the program, graduates receive a set of starter tools so they can walk onto a construction site and begin to work. JOTF partnered with Associated Builders and Contractors and the Center for Urban Families on the program.

JumpStart is run like a job site—with a strict attendance policy to reflect the realities of a workplace. The program has consistently strong outcomes with an average 85 percent graduation rate, a 75 percent placement rate for graduates and 43 percent of those placed graduates earning apprenticeships for further training. The average starting wage for these graduates was \$11.83 per hour.

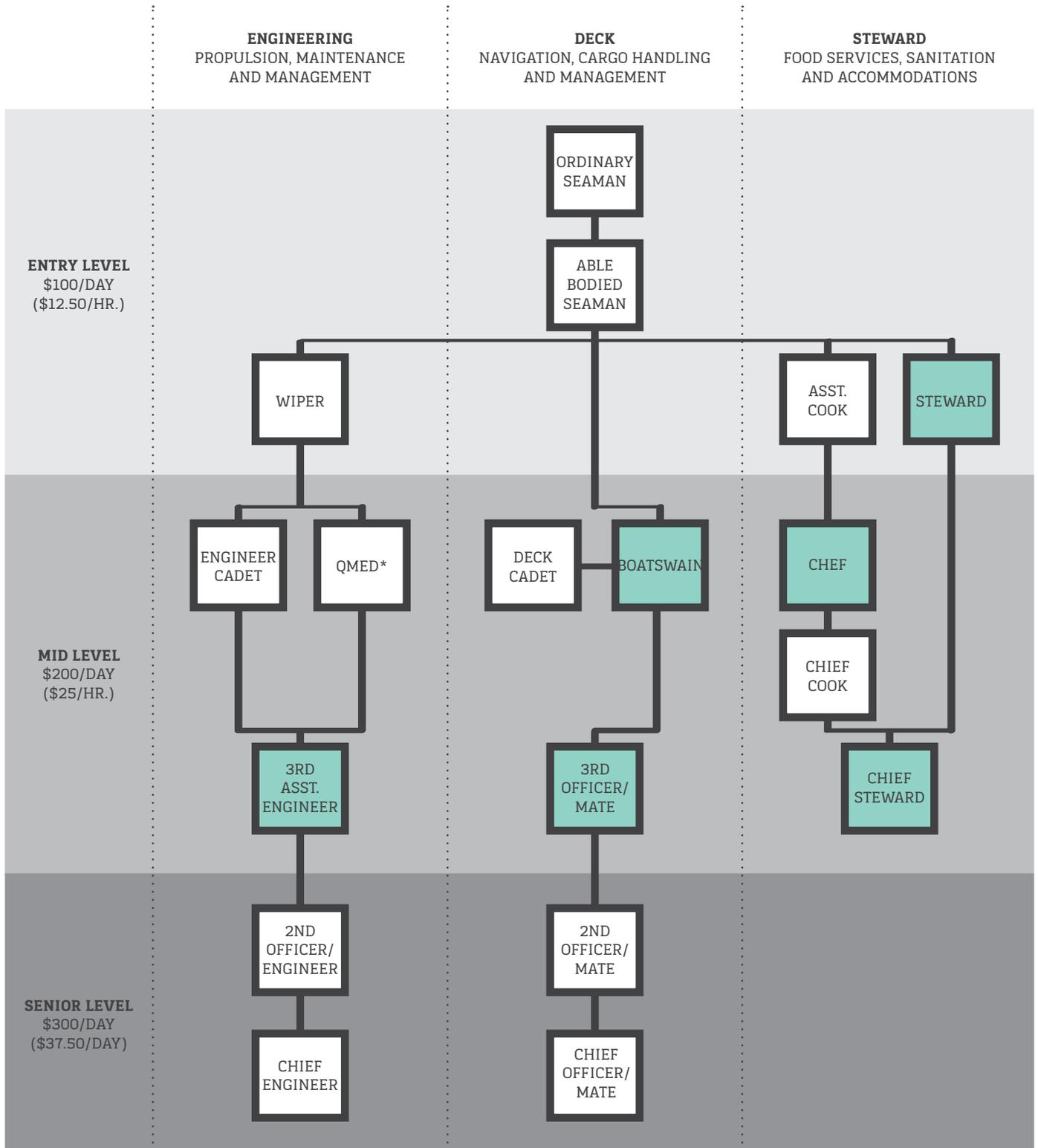
JOTF had great success on the east side, but they knew they could help connect even more Baltimore residents with jobs if they also operated on the west side. The Opportunity Collaborative grant gave JOTF the funding to make it possible.

“What’s so important is that we were able to show that we can train people and help move them to work,” said Elisabeth Sachs, executive director of JOTF. “Our success on the west side demonstrates for us and for others that we can train more people and help them to get jobs and that a west side model will work.”

JOTF helps 20 to 25 people in each class. The Opportunity Collaborative grant will allow JOTF to have three west side classes in 2015.



Figure 6-A Merchant Marine Career Pathways



ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS:

- An Ordinary Seaman ticket from the Coast Guard is required. This requires a physical exam, criminal background check & driver's license.
- Ability to work in a physically demanding environment
- Ability to work away from home for months (for blue-water vessel).
- Applicants with a criminal record may need to re-apply more than once.
- Basic reading and math skills (for AB Seaman).
- Must have reliable transportation to the vessel.

* **Qualified Member of Engineer Department**

OCCUPATION AVAILABLE ON MOST VESSELS, SHORELINE/NEAR HARBOR OCCUPATION AVAILABLE ON OCEAN GOING (BLUE WATER) VESSELS

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Strong Region, Strong Economy lays out goals and strategies, which are summarized here. The four overarching goals for workforce development in the region are:

1. Give every person in the region an opportunity to enter the talent development pipeline and progress into a family-supporting career.
2. Develop strategies to improve skills training; reduce housing, transportation, and social barriers; mitigate structural racism and industry biases; and strengthen the workforce development system — to help low-skilled or low-income adults move into family-supporting careers.
3. Ensure that businesses in each of the region’s industry sectors have access to a highly skilled workforce with the right competencies to make businesses nationally and globally competitive.
4. Decrease the region’s number of people who have low wages or are living in poverty and increase the number of people achieving economic self-sufficiency.

To meet these goals, we developed the following strategies.

CREATE MORE INDUSTRY-LED PARTNERSHIPS FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Implement industry-led sector strategies for workforce development and offer a broader menu of pathways into family-supporting careers. Increase the competitiveness of industry sectors with effective training and stackable, industry-valued credentials that lead to jobs with family-sustaining wages and benefits.

ESTABLISH STRONGER BASIC SKILLS, ABE, ESL AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Increase the availability, awareness, and completion of Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and GED preparation courses and develop continuing pathways into skills training and higher education. Such education is needed to help many of the region’s low-skilled adults who lack basic reading and math skills often making them the hardest to employ.

IMPROVE JOB-FOCUSED TRANSPORTATION AND CREATE JOB-ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

Improve transportation access and connections between low-income neighborhoods and high-growth job centers; align affordable housing with job centers to boost economic opportunities for lower-skilled workers.

TAKE STEPS TO UNDO STRUCTURAL RACISM

Eliminate policies, practices, and institutional cultures that promote and support structural racism and implicit biases against people of color. Work to change societal cultures that promote and support discrimination, which creates chronic barriers to opportunity for people of color.

PROVIDE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS

With about one in five job seekers in the Baltimore Region reporting a criminal record that is a barrier to employment, we must provide more workforce development pathways to help them. Additionally, we should reduce the number of individuals entering the criminal justice system by addressing the factors that lead to crime and create policies to eliminate hiring biases against ex-offenders.

EXPAND RESOURCES

Increase resources available to industry and workforce development organizations, expand technical assistance to small businesses, and add new services to help workers with multiple barriers to employment. While trends show that a growing number of Baltimore region residents are falling into poverty, the resources that are available to help workers overcome barriers to employment opportunity are declining.

Demonstrating Impact: Annapolis Lighthouse

Annapolis Light House’s mission is to provide support services for people in need and help them rebuild their lives. The organization has an emergency shelter, transitional housing, a food program, and a recently expanded workforce development program that offers employment opportunities to help break the cycle of homelessness.

A \$45,000 grant from the Opportunity Collaborative helped pay for an expansion of Light House’s Building Employment Success Training Program called B.E.S.T. Catering. The catering program offers employment opportunities to participants in Light House’s culinary training program and helps generate revenue for Light House. B.E.S.T. Catering also helps Light House’s clients to become more marketable in the hospitality industry, acquire sustainable employment and find stable housing.

Although the Light House project is 25 years old, the Opportunity Collaborative grant gave the program the ability to expand training and formalize the training process with a manual. It also gave the program the opportunity to buy a refrigerated truck—a longtime goal of the organization.

In addition to catering, Light House also trains clients in landscaping and facilities maintenance. Director of Development Pam Seimer says that both of these training programs assist Light House clients with sustainable career paths.

“Catering and landscaping/facilities maintenance are both second-chance professions that are very forgiving of past life transgressions,” Seimer said. “If you are well-skilled, you can get a job.”

The catering-training program has graduated 141 participants and the B.E.S.T. Catering has brought in more than \$100,000 in revenue.

Seimer said the Opportunity Collaborative grant has helped Light House become a culinary arts center that gives their clients the feeling that after training, “they can go out into the world and contribute something.”



7. TRANSPORTATION WORKGROUP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

While, the Baltimore region has an extensive transportation network, including several rail and bus public transportation options, many of the region's jobs are not easily accessible without a private vehicle. Our transit system was designed for an economy in which the majority of our region's workers traveled to, or near, downtown Baltimore. While Baltimore City's central business district is still the single largest employment center in the region, other areas, such as Towson, Woodlawn, and Columbia, have become major employment centers. Many suburban jobs were located and designed with vehicle access in mind, and are not leveraging the transit access that is available. Many workers face long commutes and have difficulty using transit to reach such major employment areas. The regionalization of our economy is a healthy sign of growth, but our transportation system has not evolved to meet our workforce's transportation needs.

Providing transportation options in the region is important for increasing our economic competitiveness, and making the Baltimore region a more attractive place to live and do business. Improving transportation access to jobs is particularly important for lower income workers, for whom access to a private vehicle may be cost prohibitive. An improved public transit system, coordinated with improved biking and walking connections and transit-supportive land use, will give more mid-skill workers access to family-supporting jobs, boosting the quality of life for workers and enhancing access to a qualified workforce for employers.

FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH

Through leveraged funds from the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, the Collaborative formed a transportation workgroup to examine transportation links between housing and employment opportunities. Specifically, the workgroup looked at public transportation access to the urban core, and mid-skill job centers in the suburbs.

Using data from the Collaborative's workforce development planning, the transportation workgroup identified key employment centers for the industries highlighted in the Regional Talent Development Pipeline Study: healthcare, construction, information technology, transportation and warehousing, and manufacturing. The Baltimore Metropolitan Council then developed "commute-shed" maps and overlaid data on the residential location of mid-skilled labor to assist the workgroup in making recommendations for improving access to mid-skill jobs. The maps in Figure 7-A and figure 7-B show public transit commute times in two areas—downtown Baltimore and Nursery Road—and the location of workers with less than a college education in the region.

BUILDING ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



While regional planning for housing and workforce development is a new concept to the Baltimore region, regional transportation planning has been occurring in our area for more than sixty years. The Baltimore Regional Transportation Board, housed at BMC, is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Baltimore region. The region's current long-range transportation plan, PlanIt 2035 was released in 2011. The next plan, Maximize2040, is scheduled for approval in November 2015.

Demonstrating Impact: BWI Business Partnership

The goal of the BWI Business Partnership's demonstration project was to create new transportation choices for workers in Baltimore City to connect them with employment in the BWI Airport Hotel District. The project evaluated, created and implemented outreach and coordination activities to create shared-ride programs in the BWI Hotel District. These include vanpools and a shuttle to serve employees in the BWI Marshall terminal. In addition, the project worked with the Baltimore City Department of Social Services to expand the possible employee pool for the BWI corridor given enhanced transportation choices. The Opportunity Collaborative awarded two grants totaling \$110,000 for this project.

The project focused on expanding transportation for both current employees in danger of losing jobs due to commuting problems as well as for new employees recruited from Baltimore City by the hospitality industry in the BWI airport corridor. The project's main goal was achieved with the launch and expansion of the Sunrise Shuttle, an early Sunday morning shuttle from downtown Baltimore to BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport hotel district. The route expansion was a success and generated a major increase in transit riders to the hotel district.

The project generated better than expected results. Baltimore City residents are now connected to employment opportunities in the BWI Hotel District as well as Arundel Mills Mall and Maryland Live Casino.

Ben Cohen, assistant director of transportation and workforce programs for the BWI Business Partnership, noted that transportation costs are a major barrier to employment in the BWI corridor for Baltimore City residents. And unreliable transportation is a major reason why employees lose jobs. Such employee turnover is a major cost concern for BWI-area businesses.

"It costs five to ten thousand dollars a year for the average person to commute to their job. When you have somebody making \$20,000 a year, the employer just cannot expect that the employee can afford a reliable vehicle," Cohen said. "If we can lower turnover costs by providing reliable transportation, that's an economic development benefit for businesses."



In addition to expanding transportation choices for employees, the partnership also informed local hotel managers about the transportation effort. Hotel general managers, as well as their human resources counterparts, were receptive to receiving printed materials on transportation options to assist workforce when transportation questions arise.

Those same managers also demonstrated an interest in learning about "wage subsidies" for hiring welfare-to-work candidates offered by the Baltimore City Department of Social Services. The partnership has continued to work with the department on this part of the project, which offers employers a chance to try candidates in temporary positions before hiring them for permanent jobs.

Figure 7-A

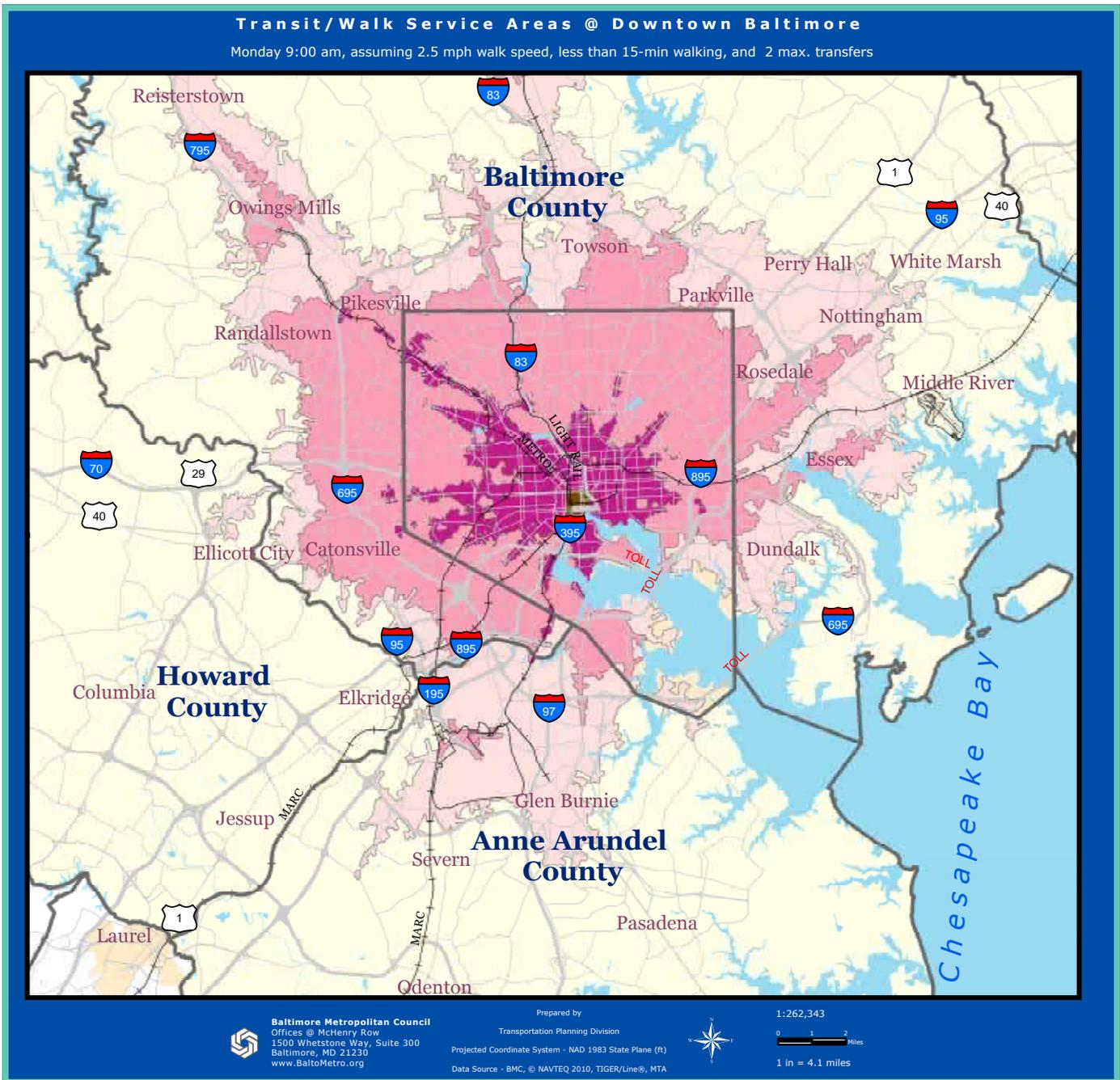
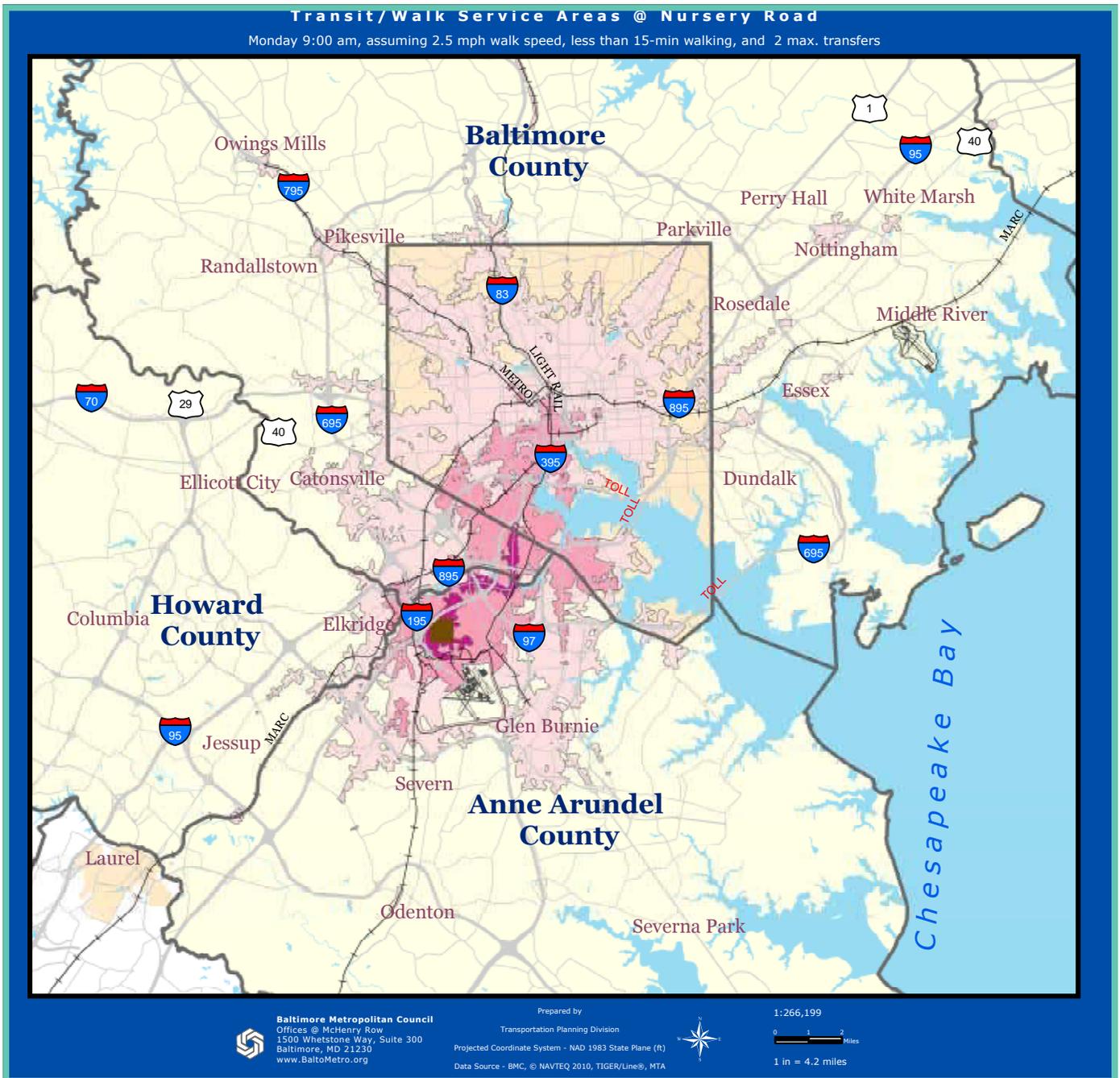


Figure 7-A and Figure 7-B are commuted maps developed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council. The dark pink area shows where residents must live to arrive at the employment center in less than a 30 minute transit commute, the middle shade of pink is less than a 60 minute transit commute and the light pink is less than a 90 minute transit commute.

These maps were developed to show the access that middle skill workers, or workers with less than a four-year college degree, have to employment centers in our region. 221,725 middle-skill workers have access to downtown Baltimore via transit in under an hour, while only 29,383 middle-skill workers can reach the Nursery Road employment center via transit in that time.

Figure 7-B



GUARANTEED RIDE HOME

Guaranteed Ride Home is a free commuter insurance program offered by the Maryland Transit Administration for commuters who use public and alternative modes of transportation within the Baltimore and Washington D.C. Metropolitan Areas. The program Offers up to 4 free rides home per year to those who ride transit, commuter rail, bike, walk, carpool, or vanpool to work at least twice a week, for occasions and times when their usual transportation options are limited. Guaranteed Ride Home is free to all working in the Baltimore, Central Maryland, and Washington D.C. regions.



GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Based on its analysis of commute-sheds and review of the transportation challenges identified in the housing and workforce efforts, the transportation workgroup developed four goals:

1. Create more opportunity for mid-skill workers to commute to family-supporting jobs via public transportation.
2. Shorten commute times and improve transit reliability to reduce the burden on working families.
3. Make the region a more attractive place for employers by expanding transit access to more of the region's mid-skill labor pool.
4. Increase non-car commuting options to reduce our impact on the Chesapeake Bay and reduce carbon emissions.

To reach these goals, we identified five key strategies:

1. RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENT A MORE COMPREHENSIVE TRANSIT NETWORK

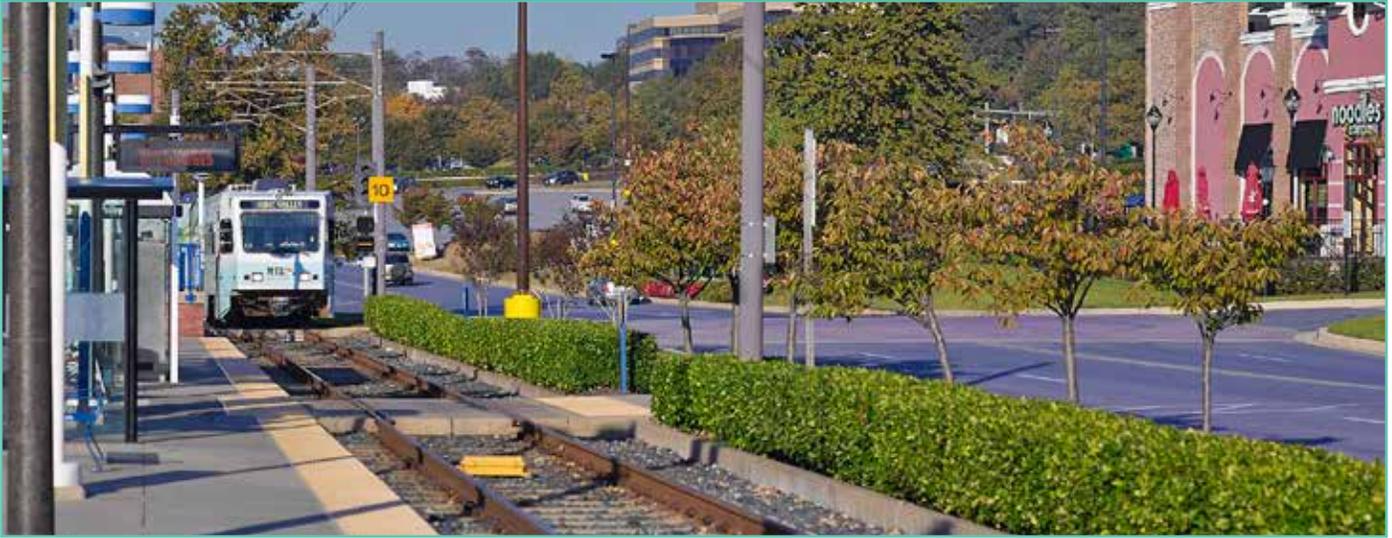
While the region is home to an extensive multi-modal transit network, the core system has gaps and often fails to coordinate service with locally operated transit systems, such as Central Maryland Regional Transit and Harford Transit, in the region. The service network provides good access to downtown Baltimore but does not contain sufficient circumferential and radial lines to provide efficient access to other employment centers.

2. LEVERAGE EXISTING TRANSIT HUBS TO SHORTEN COMMUTES AND INCREASE ACCESS TO JOB CENTERS

By focusing on more efficient transfers and stronger connections at transit hubs and employment centers, the region's transit network could provide an increased level of service without an increase in cost. Specifically, a stronger emphasis on intermodal transit hubs would foster improved regional access.

3. PROMOTE FAMILY-SUPPORTING JOB GROWTH NEAR TRANSIT AND IN AREAS ACCESSIBLE TO MID-SKILL WORKERS

Mid-skill workers generally use mass transit more often than the general population. The region should explore marketing transit access and create incentives for business to locate near high-volume transit hubs. This recommendation should be a significant consideration in the region's comprehensive transit-oriented development strategy.



4. INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF INDUSTRY-LED TRANSIT PROGRAMS AND ADDRESS IMMEDIATE NEEDS THROUGH TARGETED VEHICLE ACCESS PROGRAMS

Maximize the use of private sector transit benefits to promote employee use of public transportation. Additionally, the region can provide technical assistance to industry partnerships exploring alternative commuting models and market the benefits of transit to major employers. In addition to company-run shuttles, ride sharing, van pooling, and similar programs, create efficient access to worksites and provide a guaranteed ride home transit commuters in the event of an emergency. While increased transit ridership is a cost-effective and environmentally friendly way to connect workers to jobs, in some cases, the most immediate solution to reducing barriers for mid-skill workers is to increase car access. Successful models for expanding vehicle access or ownership are targeted toward workers with specific employment opportunities and provide support to help manage the full cost burden of using and maintaining a vehicle.

5. FOCUS ON “LAST MILE” CONNECTIONS TO JOB CENTERS, INCLUDING BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Bridging the “last mile” from transit lines to job locations often present the greatest hurdle for transit commuters. These issues could be addressed by providing improved pedestrian and bicycle access, better integrating transit services, and transit-friendly site design around commercial development. Additionally, the region should encourage “complete street” design and prioritize bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure near job centers.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a set of ambitious but attainable goals that integrate aims of the individual Housing, Workforce and Transportation plans completed during the regional planning process. Each goal includes corresponding strategies and actions that can reduce regional disparities and foster greater opportunity throughout the region. Each strategy meets the following criteria:

- **Outcomes that Matter.** The strategy should address disparities and result in improved neighborhoods and opportunities for all of our region’s residents.
- **Policy and Place Integration.** The strategy should employ a place-conscious approach to solving the region’s challenges.
- **Economic Impact.** The strategy should promote economic development in the region, including job growth, wage growth, family asset building or increased tax base.
- **Practicality of Implementation.** The strategy should be feasible to implement, with evidence, when possible, from other regions.
- **Scope of Strategy.** The strategy should be regional in scope and impact, rather than solely local.

GOAL I: GROW REGIONAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES AND COMPETITIVENESS

The following strategies will work to strengthen the region’s industries and expand economic opportunity by supporting business growth and preparing the workforce with the skills to meet employers’ needs.

STRATEGY 1: RETAIN, ATTRACT AND INCUBATE BUSINESSES IN THE BALTIMORE REGION THAT CREATE MID-SKILLED JOBS THAT PAY A FAMILY-SUPPORTING WAGE.

The region’s job opportunities fall mainly into two categories: high-paying jobs requiring at least a bachelor’s degree and jobs that require few technical skills and pay less than a living wage. In between are mid-skilled job opportunities that pay a living wage and typically require some post-secondary technical education. However, these jobs account for a small portion of positions in most industry sectors, giving low-skilled workers relatively few options to progress into mid-skill career paths that pay family-supporting wages. To promote the growth of well-paying jobs, partners in the region should take the following steps:

i. Partner with anchor institutions and employers in key industries to support job growth and equitable access, especially for historically disadvantaged populations.

The six key regional industries—healthcare, construction, information technology, transportation and logistics, business services and manufacturing—offer at least 39 occupations that offer workers an opportunity to progress into mid-skilled family-supporting jobs. Overall, employers in those fields are projected to make more than 35,800 job hires in those 39 mid-skilled occupations between 2012 and 2020, representing a significant opportunity to address the region’s unemployment challenges. A regional effort will be needed to connect jobseekers to the career oriented employment offered by these corporations and institutions.

BALTIMORE INTEGRATION PARTNERSHIP

The Baltimore Integration Partnership (BIP) is a collective impact initiative focused on advancing economic inclusion in the Baltimore region. The Partnership is comprised of Baltimore higher educational institutions, hospitals, foundations, financial institutions, nonprofits and public partners. Hosted by the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers, the initiative is supported by national and local foundations including Living Cities, The Annie E. Casey Foundation and the Goldseker Foundation.

Through partnership leadership, the first phase of the initiative led to more than 800 job placements for city residents, 500 workforce training opportunities, and over \$150 million in completed and active capital investment. Partners also helped advance a range of executive orders and public policy actions to sustain the goals of the initiative. "BIP 2.0," the current phase of work, began in 2014 and is focused on advancing anchor institution actions to support communities near their campus and across Baltimore City. Anchor leaders and the City of Baltimore benchmarked these efforts in the Baltimore City Anchor Plan signed in June 2014. Through the leadership of our partners, work is collectively moving forward to implement local purchasing, local hiring, and community development strategies to stimulate economic development, revitalization, and job creation.



ii. Leverage industry-led partnerships to attract more businesses that offer career laddering and advancement opportunity.

Industry-led partnerships are cooperative efforts by employers within the same region and sector to address workforce development, competitiveness, and growth. They are typically convened by a workforce development, economic development or community based organizations. Because of their specialized sector knowledge and relationships, these conveners are well-qualified to identify and attract complementary businesses to relocate to the region. Local, regional and state officials should help create and incentivize industry-led partnerships that aim to grow the number of businesses in their sector.



The Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland program, created by the state in 2013, is an excellent example of how public sector agencies can support industry-led partnerships. The \$4 million grant program has awarded 28 industry-led partnerships planning and implementation grants, following a model that has been shown to create effective onramps and pathways to sustainable careers. Maryland should build on the success of the EARN program by increasing future funding for the program.

STRATEGY 2: PREPARE WORKERS FOR MID-SKILLED JOBS THAT PAY A FAMILY-SUPPORTING WAGE.

The entire nation is struggling with the shrinking of our middle class and the loss of traditional blue collar jobs. While these jobs have diminished in number, they have not disappeared from our region. Partners around the region should work coordinate efforts to ensure that our employers have a deep pool of home grown talent to choose from when filling these critical positions.

i. Partner with workforce training providers and employers to develop career pathway training programs that offer certifications and other tangible qualifications that can lead to family-sustaining careers.

The region needs more career pathway programs that offer a clear sequence of education and training courses leading to industry-recognized credentials such as certifications or professional designations.

Such programs offer accelerated and integrated learning that often combines basic adult education (math and reading skills) with technical skills to help participants obtain jobs or move into better-paying career tracks. Learning can occur in the workplace as well as in classrooms, and programs are designed for students who are also working. Effective career pathway programs offer intensive wrap-around support services for participants, including career counseling, job placement and other support services such as transportation vouchers or assistance with child care.

ii. Increase the number of industry-led partnerships for workforce development

As described under Strategy 1, industry-led partnerships focus intensively on the workforce needs of a specific industry sector over a sustained period. These partnerships' strategies include creating career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment, and sustaining or growing middle-class jobs. Steps to achieve those goals include providing job training, GED preparation, occupational skills development, literacy advancement, and support for expenses such as transportation and child care. These efforts have been shown to result in longer continuous employment, more hours worked, and higher wages compared to other forms of workforce development. In addition, participants in sector-focused workforce training programs are more likely to work in jobs that offer benefits.

iii. Improve career readiness for middle- and high-school students.

While the region overall has a high level of educational attainment, residents with low levels of education have shockingly poor employment outcomes. The 2012 unemployment rate for Baltimore region residents who did not complete high school was 21 percent and 42 percent of adults who did not complete high school were not employed or looking for work.

There are steps that could better align the region's K-12 educational system with the workforce development system to help young people become more employable. These steps include remedial programs to improve young people's math and reading skills, a necessity for many jobs and postsecondary education. These steps also include a renewed focus on but also career oriented curriculums through which students can gain experience and technical credentials that make them workforce ready right out of high school. Equally important to technical training is the development of essential workplace skills that allow young adults to function in a mature work environment.

Programs such as YO! Baltimore, Baltimore City Career Academy, Civic Works, Job Corps, and the Living Classrooms Foundation's Fresh Start Program provide youth with both educational and career-training support. Still, more can be done to connect students with mentors in the business community or to develop partnerships in which college students mentor or tutor at-risk youth. Other needed strategies include youth apprenticeship programs, after-school camps focused on learning industry skills, and expanded high school vocational programs.

iv. Expand Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, and GED preparation courses as pathways to skills training and higher education.

A high school diploma or GED is a first step to better earnings; for adults over age 21, Adult Basic Education (ABE) courses are critical preparation for GED exams. However, students can face long wait times for ABE courses. Expanding ABE programs is a critical step to helping students progress toward higher education. This could be accomplished in several ways:

- Provide resources to high schools to implement ABE courses by revising funding formulas to support programs serving young adults enrolled in GED classes.
- Implement adult education charter schools, following the approach used in the District of Columbia. The D.C. Public Charter School Board has approved seven adult charter schools that serve students ages 16 and up and receive public funds of up to \$14,000 per student. Some adult education charter schools provide a combination of basic adult education to prepare for the GED along with job skills training and support services.
- Increase funding for current ABE providers such as community colleges.

Demonstrating Impact: Anne Arundel County Partnership for Children Youth and Families

The partnership began the Anne Arundel County Green Housing/Grow Jobs program to provide job skills training to public housing residents.

The program's goal was to train residents to conduct energy-efficiency audits, which identify changes and retrofits that can lower utility bills and increase energy efficiency. Nine out of 10 participants completed the program successfully. At the end of the program, each of the participants was to be placed in permanent employment. Opportunity Collaborative awarded the partnership a grant for \$57,856 for this workforce-training program.

Pamela Brown, executive director at the partnership, said five of the participants got jobs and one of them obtained a three-year apprenticeship. The other successful participants were limited in achieving employment by other barriers such as a lack of reliable childcare or transportation and criminal records.

"For low-income women, quality childcare is unattainable," Brown said. "Even with a voucher from social services, there is a huge gap between the value of the voucher and the cost of care."

The partnership worked with the candidates on how to overcome challenges. Solutions included figuring out how to expunge low-level criminal offenses from their records, organizing childcare resources and partnering with Vehicles for Change to obtain vehicles.

The partnership learned over time that transportation was the largest obstacle to success for participants.

"All across Maryland there is a lack of transportation and a lack of understanding that we have to subsidize transportation to get the workers there," said Brown. "There are people out there that can do the job, but they just can't get there."

Overall Brown considers the program a success. Two of the participants have left public housing and 50 percent of the participants are still employed. However, she said there needs to be better communication between businesses and human services providers. The challenge is providing services necessary to overcome personal challenges so that qualified employees can stay in their jobs.

All of the participants, who were surveyed at the end of the program, said they felt more motivated to change their lives. One participant said it best: "Instead of looking for a job, I'm looking for a career to better myself and my family."

GOAL II: IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION ACCESS TO CAREER, TRAINING AND EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

25 percent of the region’s job seekers cite poor transportation choices as a significant barrier to employment in the region. Likewise, inadequate transportation limits housing options for transit dependent workers. To tackle this issue, the Opportunity Collaborative recommends the following transportation strategies, particularly in areas that lack good access to mid-skilled, family-supporting jobs.

STRATEGY 1: IMPROVE TRANSIT SERVICE TO CONNECT WORKERS WITH JOBS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES IN SUBURBAN JOB CENTERS.

The region’s transit network of local and commuter bus lines, light rail, commuter rail, and subways effectively connect suburban bedroom communities and Baltimore City neighborhoods to the downtown job center. But this system does not adequately serve emerging job centers in outlying areas. To improve worker commutes and maximize the impact of the region’s transit system, the Baltimore region should:

i. Enhance public transit services that connect low-income neighborhoods and areas of residential growth with job centers, including at off-peak times.

In the short term, existing bus and rail routes that connect low- and mid-skilled workers to suburban job centers should be targeted for enhanced service, including additional hours of service where gaps exist. Transit options should be expanded in high-growth areas with relatively high residential density but little or no transit service. A key goal is to increase access to employment opportunities for households with the fewest housing choices.

In the long term, the region should plan for and fund a range of transit options that meet the needs of transit-dependent workers. Rather than serve a single jurisdiction, these routes should support our vision of a connected region in which workers of all income levels have ready access to family supporting careers. Particular attention should be paid to connecting low-income areas with the region’s growing job centers.

ii. Build strong bike and pedestrian connections between public transit stops and employment centers.

Several job centers are located near transit stops but workers still lack safe and convenient connections to reach them. New sidewalks, bikeways and shuttle services can help overcome that challenge. Different funding sources—private, local and state—can be tapped to make improvements to close those transportation gaps. Conversely, new job centers should be designed to integrate transit and pedestrian/ bicycle connections to the fullest extent possible. Consideration of bicycle, pedestrian and transit access to new developments in local zoning and site plan review processes would further institutionalize this strategy.

iii. Leverage transportation infrastructure, such as rapid transit services, to revitalize housing, employment, and retail in weak-market areas.

To fully capitalize on the value of transportation infrastructure investments and create greater access for transit-dependent households, communities should work to create housing, employment, and retail outlets adjacent to transit stops. High-quality transportation can boost property values, making private investment more viable.

Demonstrating Impact: The Last Mile

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, in partnership with the The BWI Business Partnership, received a demonstration grant to study transit issues near suburban employment centers. The project, called The Last Mile identified mass transit strategies to connect people to jobs in high-growth employment centers between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. including Fort George G. Meade, Arundel Mills/Maryland Live!, and BWI Thurgood Marshall International Airport.

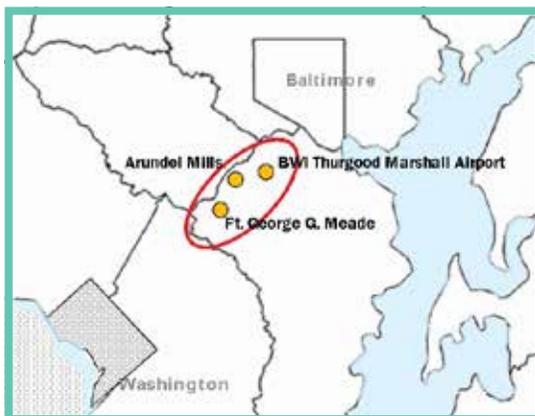
Recommended solutions in the report take into account the specific needs of workers, specifically low-income, that are most likely to use public transportation if it is improved. When given a list of regional transit enhancements, lower-income workers said they could be helped best in reaching their jobs through increased early-morning weekend light-rail service, shuttle service from MARC stations to Arundel Mills, more weekday evening MARC service and commuter bus service from Ellicott City and Columbia.

To address the problems identified in The Last Mile report, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance recommends a number of feasible, low-cost ways to close the transportation gap in growing employment areas including:

Synchronizing transit service with work schedules so that buses and trains run when people need them, such as for night and weekend shifts.

- Improving service efficiency by increasing frequency and redesigning routes.
- Incentivizing alternatives by subsidizing transit passes, or designating premium parking spaces for workers who car- or vanpool.
- Increasing connectivity between residential and high growth job centers by providing free, direct bus shuttles in selected locations.
- Improving the quality of the Last Mile experience by creating safe crosswalks and enhancing connections to bike networks.

“We heard repeatedly from commuters that transit wasn’t getting them where they needed to go. Nearly half of transit-riders in our study walked at least one mile after leaving a bus or transit stop to get to work,” said Brian O’Malley, President and CEO, Central Maryland Transportation Alliance. “The Last Mile found that trends such as central-city job loss and suburban job growth make access to employment difficult for urban residents without a car, which presents a serious problem for the region’s low-income and unemployed population—those who could benefit the most from closing the last mile gap.”



STRATEGY 2: INCREASE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS TO JOBS AND EDUCATION FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Even with improved transit service, many people throughout the region will have difficulty reaching good jobs that are outside the core service network. However, the upfront and recurring costs of car ownership—including loan repayments, insurance, gas, maintenance and repairs—are often prohibitive to households. New approaches are needed to give lower-income workers more options for commuting, including the following:

i. Promote vanpooling, shuttle and ridesharing programs to and from training centers and jobs

Local governments, employers and other entities should expand ridesharing and vanpooling programs through a coordinated effort. Local jurisdictions can promote the use of the State Highway Administration's Park and Ride lots, which are often near interstates and job centers. Employers can provide these programs and encourage public transportation use through employee benefits, either with or without an employer subsidy. Regional government organizations are well situated to coordinate ride share programs and nonprofit social service and faith-based organizations are eligible to receive federal grant funding to operate demand-response transit services in urban and rural areas.

ii. Support programs that give workers affordable access to cars

In cases where transit, vanpooling and ride-sharing programs are inadequate, programs to give workers access to private cars—through car sharing or ownership—should be supported. Subsidies should be targeted toward workers who lack transportation options to reach specific employment and training opportunities. Additionally, programs and policies that can reduce the cost of driver's education and auto insurance for low- and mid-skill workers should be evaluated.

GOAL III: CLOSE THE OPPORTUNITY GAP BY INCREASING THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING ATTAINABLE TO THE REGION'S WORKFORCE OF ALL INCOME LEVELS.

These strategies will meet this goal and help to bridge the divide in economic opportunities among communities. Expanding opportunities for all workers will pay dividends by helping employers who rely on skilled workers, resulting in an economically stronger Baltimore region.

STRATEGY 1: BUILD A MIX OF HOUSING CHOICES AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES NEAR EACH OTHER

i. Preserve, revitalize and create affordable and accessible housing near existing and planned job centers.

Affordable housing, in vulnerable communities still represents a critical resource throughout the region, especially in higher opportunity areas. Much of this housing is older, privately owned and in need of repair. Code enforcement alone cannot preserve and revitalize older rental housing. But, if used as a constructive strategy in conjunction with incentives and technical assistance, targeted code enforcement can help stabilize communities and increase property values. Also needed are sources of stable, affordable financing for responsible owners to maintain and improve their properties. The region should explore the creation of a regional loan pool to make small low-interest loans to owners willing to upgrade their properties and maintain stable, affordable rents. In a related measure, the state should consider a ban on housing discrimination based on source of income. Such an action would open up a range of rental options for voucher holders.

ii. Create and maintain high-quality neighborhood infrastructure and healthy environmental conditions

Ensure that high-quality infrastructure, including schools, recreational facilities and transportation infrastructure, is maintained or created in concert with other redevelopment and investment strategies. Target areas of focused redevelopment for new school construction, libraries, recreation facilities and other public amenities.

iii. Focus job and housing development near existing and planned transit nodes to create and revitalize mixed-use, mixed-income walkable communities.

Transit-oriented development is a land use strategy that places mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development within walking distance of transit stations. Transit improves access to economic opportunity by linking residents with job centers. It can also reduce the combined cost of housing and transportation, reduce traffic congestion and improve health and environmental conditions by lessening the use of cars.

Including affordable homes in any transit-oriented development program will directly benefit lower-income households. In areas with fewer economic opportunities, a high-quality rail station can anchor and catalyze private investment that brings jobs. In these situations, inclusive and affordable development can assure that lower-income people are not priced out of the station area.

STRATEGY 2: COORDINATE STATE AND LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION WITH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

i. Target workforce development efforts to people in assisted housing.

Many families and individuals that require assisted housing—including residents of public or subsidized housing—lack the skills to obtain and hold family supporting employment. Workforce development agencies in the region should focus on this population to help them become self-sufficient and contribute to the regional economy.

ii. Ensure that neighborhood revitalization strategies are comprehensive and integrated with education improvements and workforce training.

Good educational options, including schools and job training programs, are essential to the health of a neighborhood and its residents. Neighborhood revitalization efforts should focus on strengthening educational opportunities for residents, along with tackling housing, workforce and transportation challenges.

Vehicles for Change

Vehicles for Change is a nonprofit working in the Baltimore region and beyond to help low-income families achieve economic and personal independence through car ownership and technical training. Vehicles for Change's car award program aims to bring independent transportation and training in the automotive field to as many people as possible. The organization receives almost all of its car donations from the public. It then repairs cars and awards them for as little as \$750 to eligible families, who are referred to the program by social service agencies.

Since 1999, Vehicles for Change has awarded cars to more than 4,700 low-income families, changing the lives of more than 15,000 people. A 2011 study found that 75 percent of recipients got better jobs and/or boosted their earnings an average of \$7,000 within the first year.

iii. Increase homeownership counseling and assistance as part of revitalization efforts.

Revitalization efforts should also provide assistance that helps residents avoid losing their homes. Such efforts should focus on communities with high foreclosure rates or to low-income families in other areas. This intervention will help stabilize housing for residents, particularly communities of color that were hit hard by the foreclosure crisis of the past several years.

iv. Increase counseling, asset-building and mobility assistance for families using vouchers.

It is important to recognize that for most distressed neighborhoods, transformative revitalization projects and measurable improvements will be many years away. The region should devote resources to help families with young children who want to move from areas of concentrated poverty into areas with more opportunities—which will improve outcomes for children and create new job opportunities for parents. Strategies include building on the Housing Choice Voucher Program and the existing housing mobility counseling infrastructure to serve more families with children in stressed submarkets—by providing them with housing vouchers and housing mobility assistance.

Demonstrating Impact: Community Development Network of Maryland

In 2012, the Community Development Network of Maryland, then called the Maryland ABCD Network, received a grant of \$63,750 from the Opportunity Collaborative. The project, the Consider the Person Campaign, aimed to change public attitudes about subsidized housing and, over time, give lower-income individuals and families more options for where they can live. This goal reflects the value of allowing families to move into areas of opportunity that do not have high concentrations of poverty and are near good schools and jobs. To reach that goal, the network worked to change perceptions among community members and landlords about fair housing. Specifically, the campaign focused on highlighting the positive benefits brought to renters, landlords and communities through the Housing Choice voucher program, which subsidizes rents for low-income people and people with disabilities.

Odette Ramos, executive director of the Community Development Network of Maryland, said that the perception is that Housing Choice voucher tenants hurt properties, are unemployed and deal drugs. This campaign was to counter those myths with facts, she said.

“Unfortunately, many people have negative perceptions of people who may be using a Housing Choice voucher,” Ramos said. “But these renters are the same as our other neighbors; they have disabilities, they are the elderly, they are people with jobs who are just trying to make ends meet.”

The campaign focused on pointing out the program’s benefits to landlords, noting that that Housing Choice rents are paid promptly and that the program helps ensure rental properties are occupied, which benefits neighborhoods.

The campaign generated strong media coverage, with spokespeople discussing the campaign on public radio, in an op-ed in *The Baltimore Sun* and on the *On Time* show on WJZ-TV. In addition, the campaign produced seven videos that focused on Housing Choice voucher tenants and countered stereotypes about those tenants. Social media activities also played an important role in the campaign. An award from the Anne Arundel Affordable Housing Coalition rewarded these efforts.

National attention was garnered by the campaign due to its compelling, positive message. Housing America, a national organization requested the use of the campaign’s videos, and cities and states from across the country have called to get a better understanding about the campaign and how they can take a similar approach.

The Network hopes to reignite and sustain the campaign through additional grants.



9. MOVING FORWARD WITH THE REGIONAL PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Opportunity Collaborative has identified three major goals in this plan:

1. Grow regional economic opportunities and competitiveness
2. Improve transportation access to career, training and education opportunities
3. Close the gap in opportunities between communities by increasing the supply of housing affordable to the region's workforce at all income levels.

Taking action to meet these goals will require a coordinated approach from the region's government, nonprofit and private sector institutions and leaders. Progress will not be possible without openness to new ideas, integration of existing and emerging programs, and a shared understanding of our region's challenges and opportunities.

These regional institutions can pursue a range of strategies to meet these goals; these can include:

- Leveraging the critical economic local impact of anchor institutions on a regional scale;
- Developing corridor strategies to complement the work of the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board;
- Supporting coordination of regional transit services and enhancement of the regional transit network as a tool for community and economic development;
- Strengthening connections between personal asset building, workforce training and job/housing location; and
- Developing a better understanding of the mid-skill jobs gap through the corridor analysis.

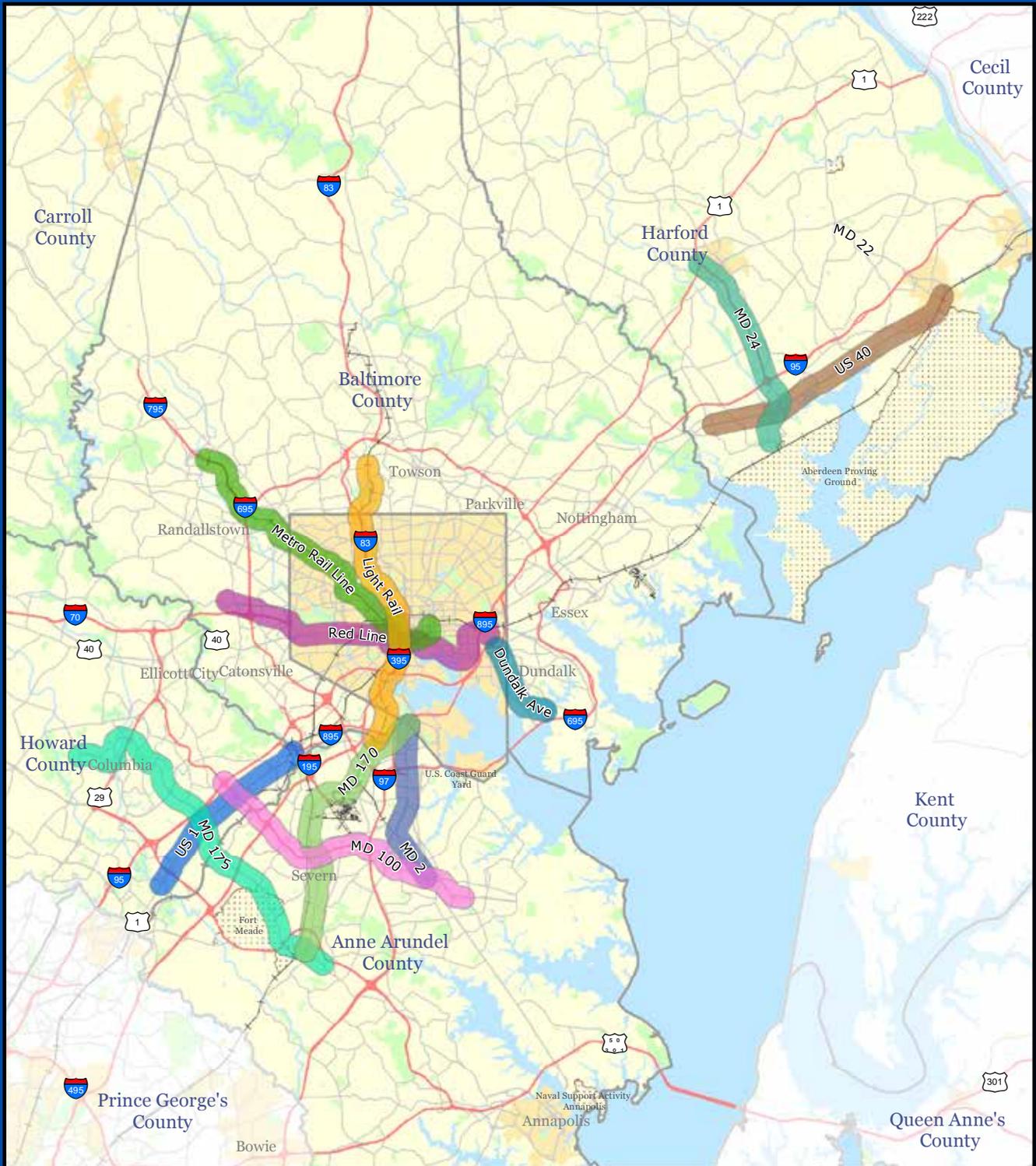
A CORRIDOR-DRIVEN APPROACH

While most of the Opportunity Collaborative's analysis has been regional in focus, many of the recommendations of this Regional Plan can best be fleshed out and implemented at the corridor level. Analyzing individual corridors reflects the geography in which residents live their daily lives and helps identify targeted areas where it is possible to achieve a range of integrated interventions and investments that foster concrete outcomes.

While corridor analysis traditionally focuses on trips to and from work, it could also be used to understand the relationship between the region's housing, transportation and workforce systems. This approach allows neighboring communities to plan together across jurisdictional lines to grow the region's economic opportunities while also meeting the needs of individual jurisdictions and residents.

In partnership with the planning departments of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's member jurisdictions, the Collaborative has identified 11 potential corridors in the region. The Council has analyzed each of these corridors and developed a series of concept maps that identify (1) the transportation network, (2) regional housing markets, (3) employment opportunity and (4) assets including anchor institutions, activity centers, employment centers and transit-oriented development sites.

RPSD Corridors



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Prepared by
 Transportation Planning Division
 Projected Coordinate System - NAD 1983 State Plane (ft)
 Data Source - BMC, © NAVTEQ 2015, TIGER/Line®, MTA
 Printed - April 2015



MD 24, Bel Air to Edgewood: Harford County
U.S. 40 from Edgewood to Aberdeen: Harford County
Dundalk Avenue, from Johns Hopkins Bayview to Sparrows Point: Baltimore City, Baltimore County
Light Rail, from Hunt Valley to BWI: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County
Metro Rail, from Owings Mills to Johns Hopkins Hospital: Baltimore City, Baltimore County
Proposed Red Line, from Social Security to Johns Hopkins Bayview: Baltimore City, Baltimore County
MD 2, from Brooklyn Park to Severna Park: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City
MD 170, from Brooklyn Park to Odenton: Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City
U.S. 1 from Arbutus to Laurel: Baltimore County, Howard County
MD 100, from Columbia to Severna Park: Anne Arundel County, Howard County
MD 175, from Columbia to Odenton: Anne Arundel County, Howard County

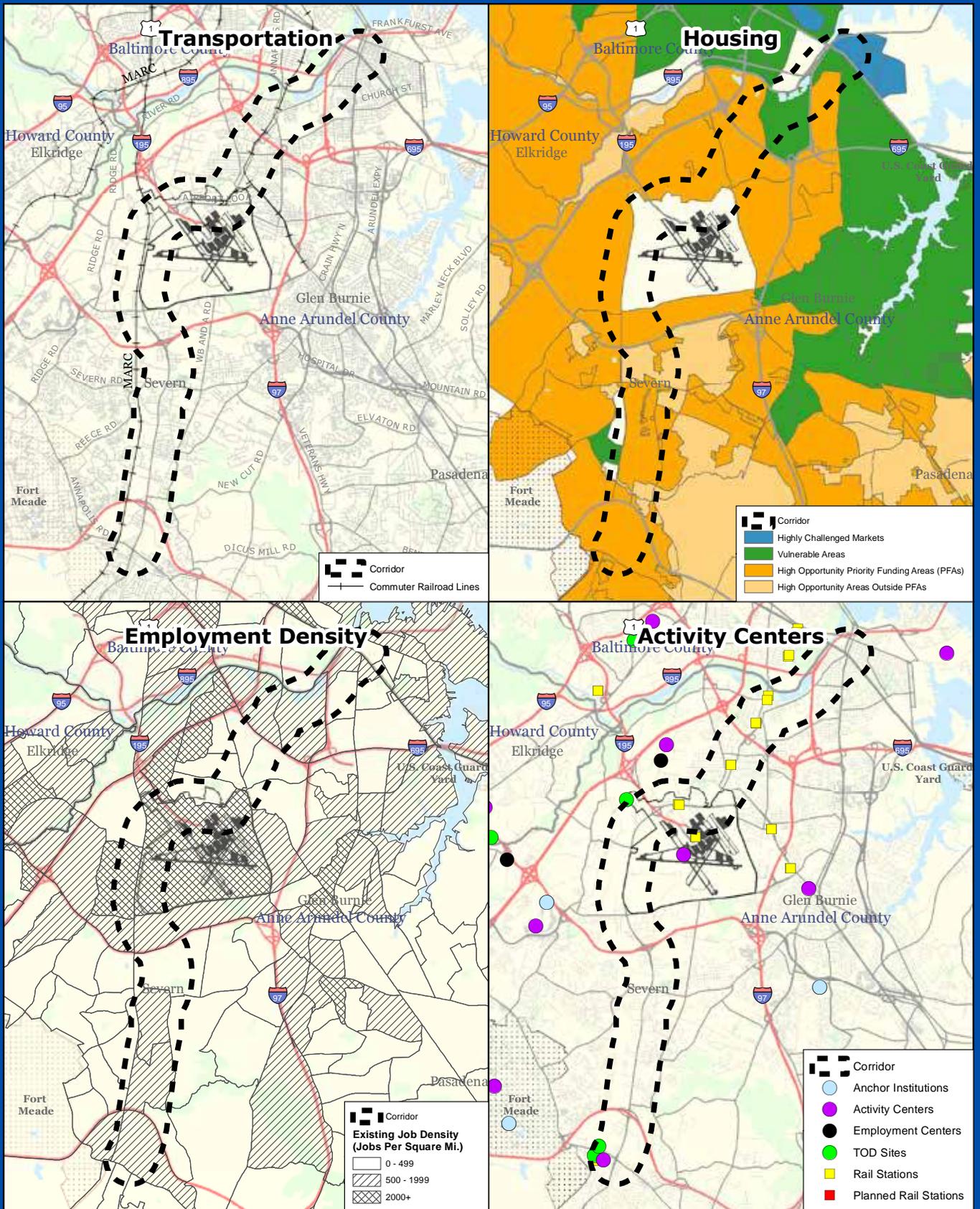
SAMPLE CORRIDOR: MD 170 – TELEGRAPH ROAD: ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, BALTIMORE CITY

The section of MD 170 we have identified stretches from Brooklyn in Baltimore City, a highly challenged market, to Odenton, a high-opportunity area slated for significant transit-oriented development . While the corridor does not follow a single transit line, it is served by the light rail and MARC train, as well as bus routes provided by the Maryland Transit Administration and the Regional Transit Authority. Central in this corridor is Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport, a major regional employment center and hub of economic activity. Employment opportunities are largely found in the wholesale trade sector, which accounts for 48 percent of jobs in the corridor.

Figure 9-A is a quadrant map showing the transportation network, housing markets, employment density and activity center in the corridor. Figure 9-B is a composite map that displays all four layers in unison.

Figure 9-A

MD 170

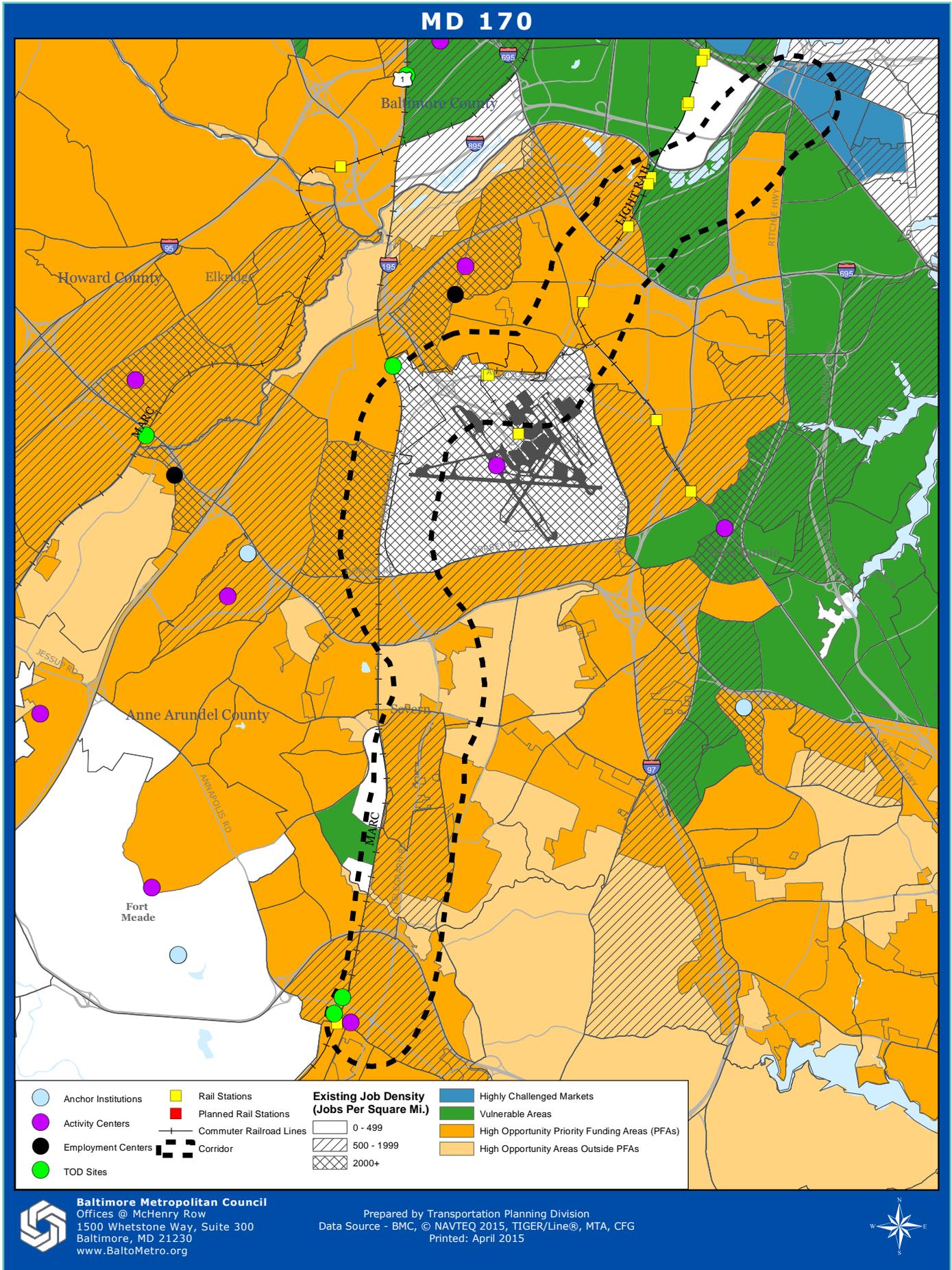


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Figure 9-B



ROLE OF THE BALTIMORE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

When the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development first announced the regional planning grant program in 2010, the department targeted regional councils as recipients for good reason. Regional councils have three uniform traits. They are led by elected executives with real decision making authority. They are the natural home of a range of cooperative efforts. And they are repositories for and collectors of data at a regional level.

The Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC) has served as the host and convener of the Opportunity Collaborative since 2012, and is situated to continue in its central role in regional coordination. BMC enjoys an established web of professional relationships throughout the region and its mission has evolved with the work of the Collaborative. In the 2014 legislative session, the General Assembly of Maryland passed legislation to officially add regional housing and workforce development coordination to BMC's traditional role in regional transportation planning. To that end, BMC is already working with housing and workforce partners to develop feasible implementation strategies that will become part of BMC's annual work program.

In the summer of 2015, BMC will begin work in earnest in these new policy areas. BMC will continue convening the Collaborative's existing housing and workforce development committees, shifting focus of this work from planning to implementation.

CONCLUSION

The Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) arrives at a pivotal moment for our region. The Baltimore region has prospered through decades of growth and development, but not all corners of our region have benefited from this prosperity. The RPSD thoroughly documents the roots and realities of our region's disparities. The plan also charts a course to correct some of these inequities. However, for our RPSD to be a catalyst for meaningful change, the implementation stage must maintain the same level of cooperation, flexibility and honest discussion that shaped the plan's design. The challenges facing the Baltimore region, and metropolitan areas throughout the country, did not develop overnight, nor will they be solved that way. Our hope is that the visionary, yet attainable strategies in this plan will help our region's residents and leaders reverse the trend towards economic polarization and establish pathways to social and economic opportunity.



Opportunity Collaborative

For a Greater Baltimore Region.

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