

This Essex Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) for Eastern Boulevard is sponsored by the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce and its Eastern Baltimore County Task Force, funded through a Baltimore County grant.



Baltimore County  
Department of Planning



Eastern Baltimore County  
Task Force



## THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

Shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide

### MISSION COMMITMENTS

- **CONNECT** active, passionate, diverse members through the foremost global network of interdisciplinary professionals
- **INSPIRE** best practices for equitable and sustainable land use through content, education, convening, mentoring, and knowledge sharing
- **LEAD** in solving community and real estate challenges through applied collective global experience and philanthropic engagement



# ULI Baltimore Leadership

## ULI Baltimore Leadership

- Kim Clark, District Council Chair, Baltimore Development Corporation
- Kristian Spannhake, Chair for Mission Advancement, Brightview Senior Living
- Julie Natoli, Treasurer, The Brick Companies
- Josh Halbedel, Governance Chair EA Commercial

## •ULI Baltimore Staff

- Lisa Norris, Executive Director
- Ghadeer Mansour, Senior Associate
- Bridget Moriconi, Associate
- Guy Froderman, Associate





# ULI Panelists

- **Alexey Ikonomou** – Ashton Design
- **Arjun Hosakare** – Zahlco Development
- **Brad Rogers** – South Baltimore Gateway Partnership
- **Dominic Wiker** – Washington Place Equities
- **Ed Steere** – Valbridge Property Advisors
- **Mickey Cornelius** – The Traffic Group
- **Peter Garver** – Garver Development
- **Ryan Janes** – BCT Design Group
- **Sean Davis** – Morris & Ritchie Associates
  
- **Rebecca Gale** – Writer





# Our Schedule

## Monday April 4<sup>th</sup>

- 9:00AM – Introductions
- 10:00AM – Study Area Tour
- 12:00PM – Working Lunch
- 1:00PM – 4:00PM – Stakeholders Interviews
- 5:30PM – 6:30PM – Public Engagement
- 7:00PM - Panel Debriefing Dinner

## Tuesday April 5<sup>th</sup>

- 9:00AM - Work session
- 12:00PM - Working Lunch
- 5:00PM - Stop and go home!

## Wednesday April 6<sup>th</sup>

- 9:00AM – County Implementation Team
- 12:00PM - Working Lunch
- 1:30PM – Prepare public presentation
- 5:30PM – Public presentation





# Issues We Were Asked To Address

## Comprehensive visioning

- Land use and urban design
- Identifying market advantages
- Moving into a 21<sup>st</sup> century economic model

## Commercial revitalization

- Business attraction, growth and retention
- Demand for private investment
- Strategy for vacancies (pop-ups, incubators)
- Infill and redevelopment
- Façade improvements / building design
- Finding clustering and synergies within local economy
- Deal with absentee landlords

## Traffic issues on a state highway

- Traffic Calming
- Create a more pedestrian friendly walkable core
- Complete streets / road diets
- A high-quality public realm
- Better Parking Program

## Creating a sense of place/branding or rebranding

- Access to waterways through recreation, tourism and industry
- Becoming family and business friendly
- People oriented: Building social cohesion through engagement and involvement in process. Creating a collaborative social infrastructure.
- Create a new town square, public plaza for public gatherings and events (Farmer's Market, Essex Day, Etc.)

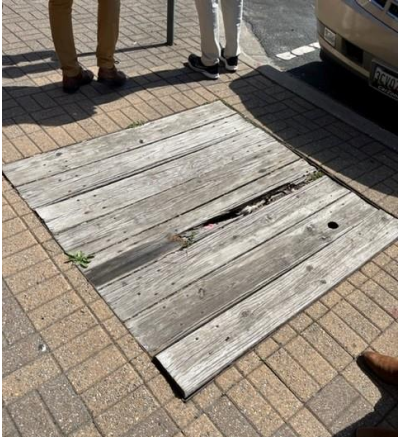
## Public policy strategies and changes

- Zoning, land use and tax overlay district
- Policy incentives for investment
- Current or needed public and private resources and tools





# First Impressions





# What We Heard from You

*Too many vacant store fronts”*

*“We Need more events on the Boulevard”*

*“Too many drug clinics”*

*“Small business education opportunities”*

*“You can’t enjoy the streetscape because there’s nothing to look at and it’s too noisy with all the speeding cars”*

*“Move the Police Station from Marilyn to the Center of the Boulevard”*

*“What’s the incentive to invest”*

**TRAFFIC/SAFETY**

**A CHAMPION!**

**BUSINESSES FOR  
THE RESIDENTS**

**PARKING**

**INTEREST/AMENITIES**

**OPPORTUNITIES**

*“Something needs to happen NOW”*

*“It takes the entire community, not just Main Street”*

*“The Boulevard is a RACE TRACK”*

*“What happened to all the other studies?”*

*Trash is not collected because owners/tenants put their trash in the cans for pedestrians”*

*“There’s no place for kids, no greenspace or things for them to do”*

*“We need more family restaurants”*

*“We need to find the money to fund improvements”*

*“The Problems of the City are moving out”*



# The Stats





# The Stats Continued

Population	(2021)	13,404
	(2026)	13,444
Households	(2021)	5,266
	(2026)	5,279
Household Size	(2021)	2.51
	(2026)	2.51
Household Tenure:		
Owner		74%
Renter		26%
Transportation:		
Drove Alone		78.2%
Carpool		11.2%
Public Transport		4.5%
Work at Home		3.0%
Commute 10-25 min		47%

Race:		
White		80.1%
African		9.0%
Hispanic		6.7%

Education:		
HS Diploma		37.0%
Some College		19.5%
Bachelors or Masters		11.0%

Employment:		
Sales/Office Admin Support		26.3%
Trans./Material Handling		10.2%

Trades:		
Construction		11.2%
Retail		14.1%
Healthcare		11.7%



# The Stats Continued

Table III-4

## Age of Householder by Tenure

ESSEX	Owner	Renter	Total Households		Percent of Households	
			Households	% by Age	Owner	Renter
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,827</b>	<b>1,469</b>	<b>5,296</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>72.3%</b>	<b>27.7%</b>
15-24 years	43	125	168	3.2%	25.6%	74.4%
25-34 years	342	247	589	11.1%	58.1%	41.9%
35-44 years	524	235	759	14.3%	69.0%	31.0%
45-54 years	902	289	1,191	22.5%	75.7%	24.3%
55-64 years	842	244	1,086	20.5%	77.5%	22.5%
65-74 years	563	154	717	13.5%	78.5%	21.5%
75-84 years	406	117	523	9.9%	77.6%	22.4%
85+ years	205	58	263	5.0%	77.9%	22.1%

BALTIMORE COUNTY	Owner	Renter	Total Households		Percent of Households	
			Households	% by Age	Owner	Renter
<b>Total</b>	<b>211,571</b>	<b>105,144</b>	<b>316,715</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>66.8%</b>	<b>33.2%</b>
15-24 years	1,785	10,693	12,478	3.9%	14.3%	85.7%
25-34 years	20,760	25,863	46,623	14.7%	44.5%	55.5%
35-44 years	34,952	19,796	54,748	17.3%	63.8%	36.2%
45-54 years	50,639	17,284	67,923	21.4%	74.6%	25.4%
55-64 years	47,902	11,916	59,818	18.9%	80.1%	19.9%
65-74 years	28,273	6,917	35,190	11.1%	80.3%	19.7%
75-84 years	19,559	7,098	26,657	8.4%	73.4%	26.6%
85+ years	7,701	5,577	13,278	4.2%	58.0%	42.0%

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 2010; compiled by Valbridge Property Advisors





# The Stats Continued



**Table III-8  
Household Incomes**

2021	ESSEX		BALTIMORE COUNTY	
	Households:	Percent By Income	Households:	Percent By Income
Under \$15,000	576	10.9%	24,152	7.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	558	10.6%	19,540	6.1%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	448	8.5%	20,287	6.3%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	616	11.7%	33,364	10.4%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	952	18.1%	58,211	18.2%
\$75,000 - \$99,000	812	15.4%	44,437	13.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	831	15.8%	59,868	18.7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	279	5.3%	27,368	8.5%
\$200,000 or more	194	3.7%	33,091	10.3%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>5,266</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>320,318</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median Income</b>		<b>\$59,081</b>		<b>\$76,971</b>

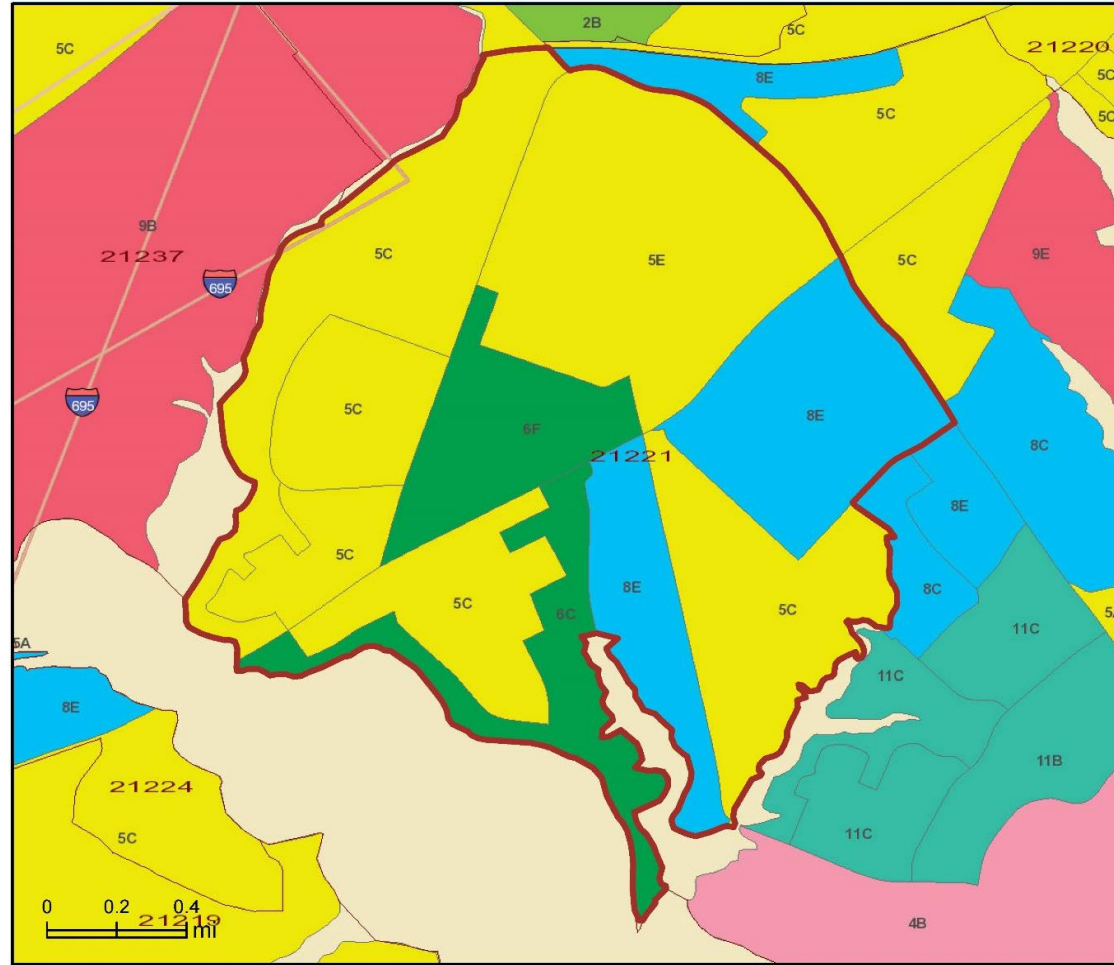
  

2026	Households:	Percent By Income	Households:	Percent By Income
Under \$15,000	528	10.0%	22,471	6.9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	507	9.6%	17,891	5.5%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	413	7.8%	19,119	5.9%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	569	10.8%	30,209	9.3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	947	17.9%	55,730	17.2%
\$75,000 - \$99,000	843	16.0%	44,926	13.9%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	925	17.5%	63,778	19.7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	322	6.1%	31,104	9.6%
\$200,000 or more	225	4.3%	38,431	11.9%
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>5,279</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>323,659</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Median Income</b>		<b>\$64,225</b>		<b>\$82,530</b>

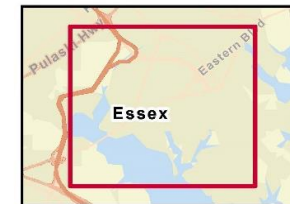
Source: ESRI estimates and forecasts, 2021; compiled by Valbridge Property Advisors



# The Stats Continued



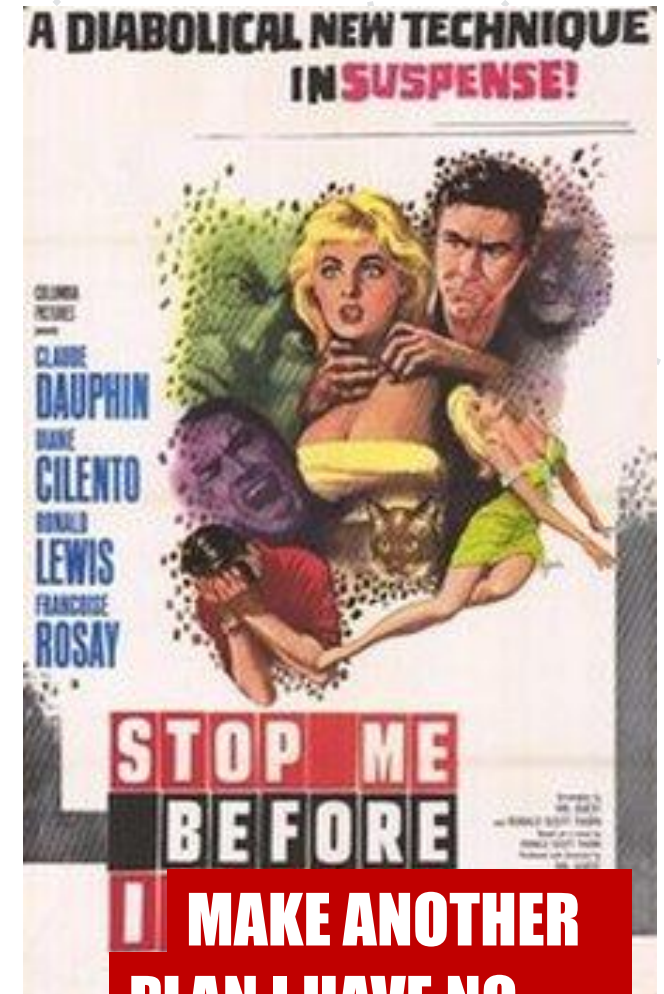
- Tapestry LifeMode**
- L1: Affluent Estates
  - L2: Upscale Avenues
  - L3: Uptown Individuals
  - L4: Family Landscapes
  - L5: GenXurban
  - L6: Cozy Country
  - L7: Sprouting Explorers
  - L8: Middle Ground
  - L9: Senior Styles
  - L10: Rustic Outposts
  - L11: Midtown Singles
  - L12: Hometown
  - L13: Next Wave
  - L14: Scholars and Patriots



Source: Esri

# Organizational Structure

Why Have We Not Made More Progress?





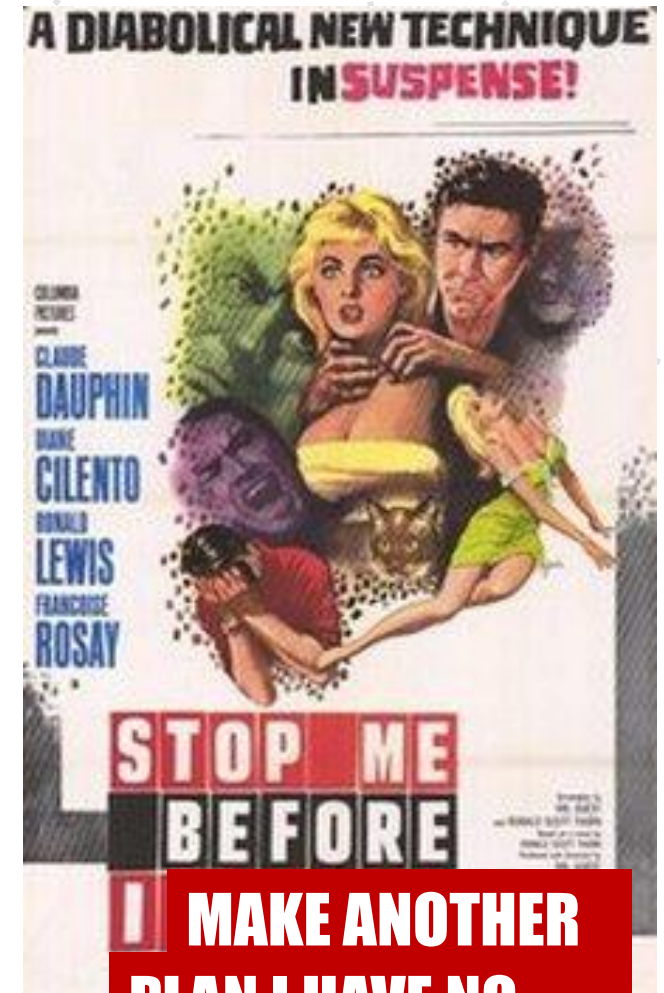
# Organizational Structure

Brad Rogers

## Why Have We Not Made More Progress?

### 1. Nobody's in Charge of Not Failing.

- You need a **DEDICATED CHAMPION** wakes up every day and makes the Boulevard better.
- Success is their **JOB**.



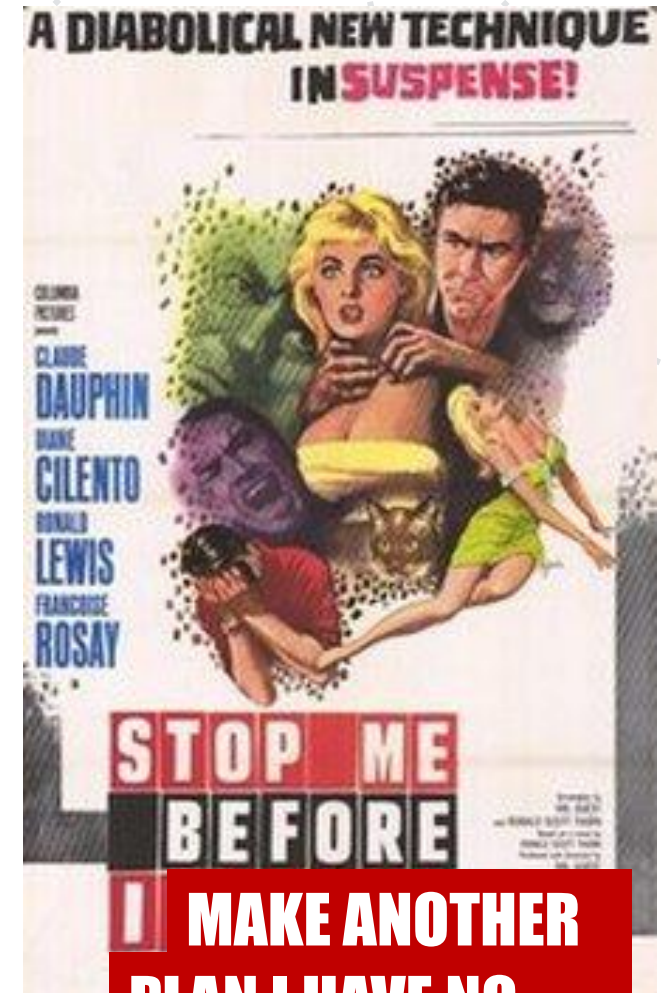
# Organizational Structure

Brad Rogers

## Why Have We Not Made More Progress?

### 2. Money / Mouth Mismatch.

- You get what you pay for.
- Build new sources of CASH FLOW.
- Cash Flow is VICTORY.



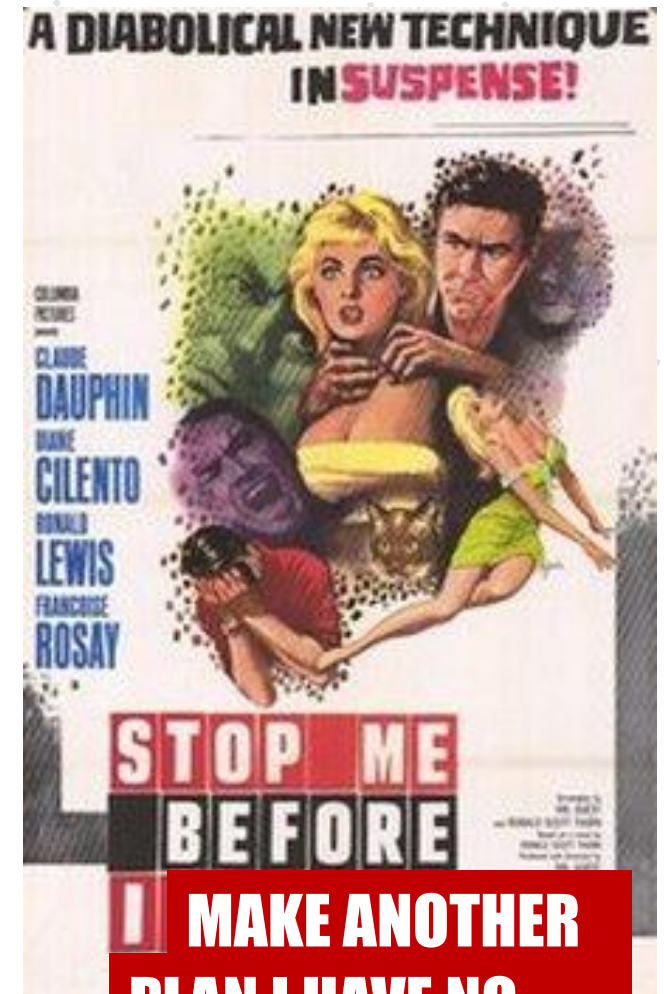


# Organizational Structure

## Why Have We Not Made More Progress?

### 3. Basic Math.

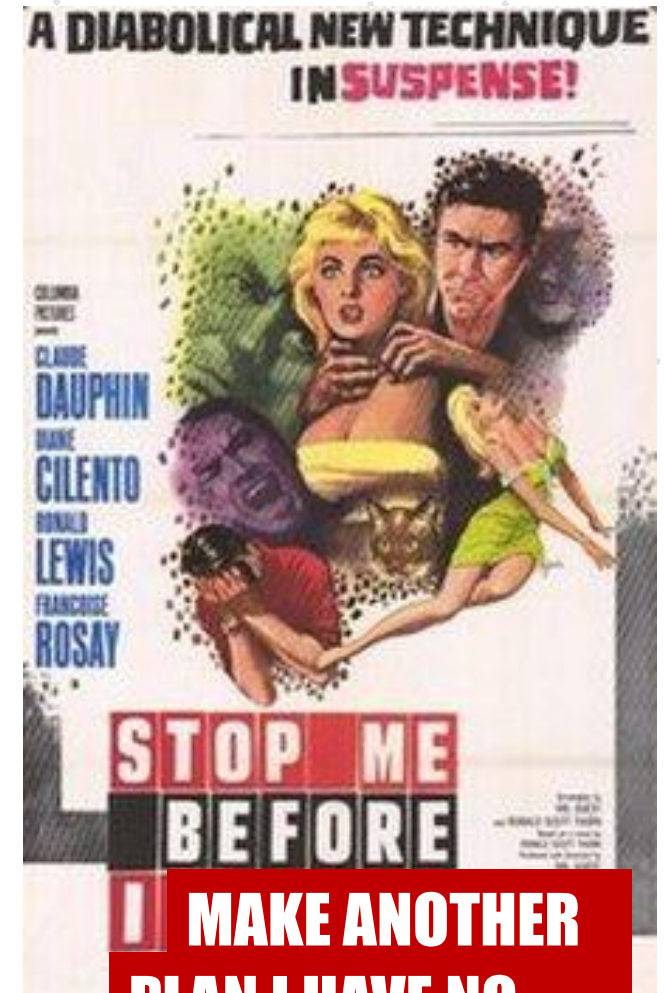
- Fast Traffic + Retail Competition + Absentee Landlords + Ignoring Key Assets + Wrong Zoning + No Champion + No Cash Flow = **TODAY.**
- The Good News: **Subtraction** is your friend. **Remove things** from this equation and the math works for you.



# Organizational Structure

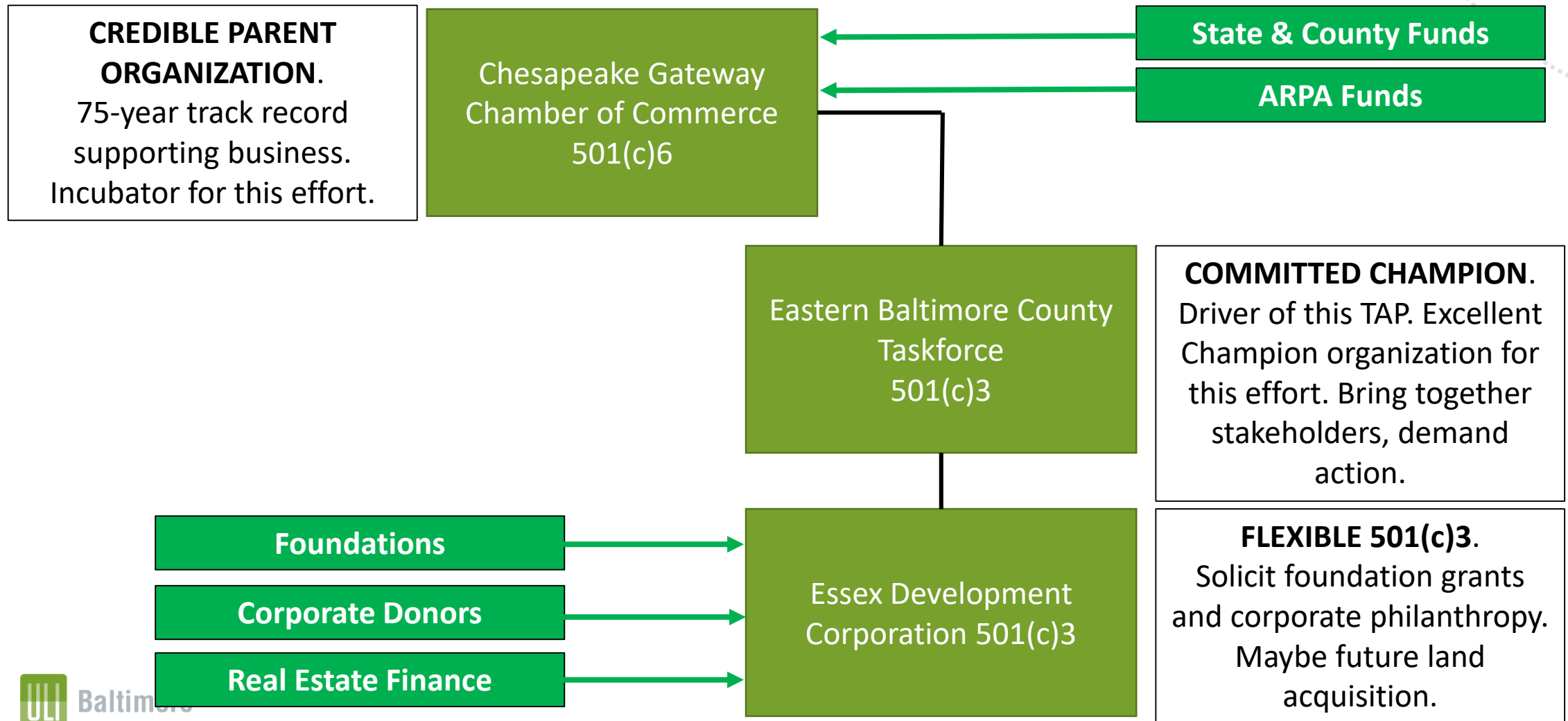
## Essex To Do List

- ✓ Stop listing concerns, start **leveraging your assets** (real estate, history, culture, waterfront, Tradepoint, Greenleigh).
- ✓ Use **immediate, visible accomplishments** to build credibility, optimism, and enthusiasm.
- ✓ Use **County /ARPA Funds** to prime the pump, then innovative strategies to sustain **cash flow**.
- ✓ ~~Reinvent the Wheel~~ **ROLL FORWARD!**





# Getting the Wheel We Have to Roll



# Getting the Wheel We Have to Roll

**GENUINELY REPRESENTATIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH (SOME) EX OFFICIO SEATS**

**CHAMBER**

**BUSINESS**

**ESSEX**

**SUSSEX**

**SHA**

**CO STAFF**

**COUNCIL**

**CO EXEC**

**STATE LEG**

Eastern Baltimore County  
Taskforce  
501(c)3

DEDICATED MAIN STREET MANAGER

MARKETING

FUNDRAISING



# Getting the Wheel We Have to Roll

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**CO EXEC**

**STATE LEG**

Essex Development Corporation

?

Eastern Baltimore County Taskforce

DEDICATED MAIN STREET MANAGER

MARKETING

FUNDRAISING

# Organizational Structure

## Cash Flow Strategy:

### 1. Think like a Bank Robber.

- Why do bank robbers rob banks?
- Align Essex with **Tradepoint Atlantic** and other critical projects. How are you integral to their success? What do you have to offer? How is your victory their victory?
- Make Yourself Critical.



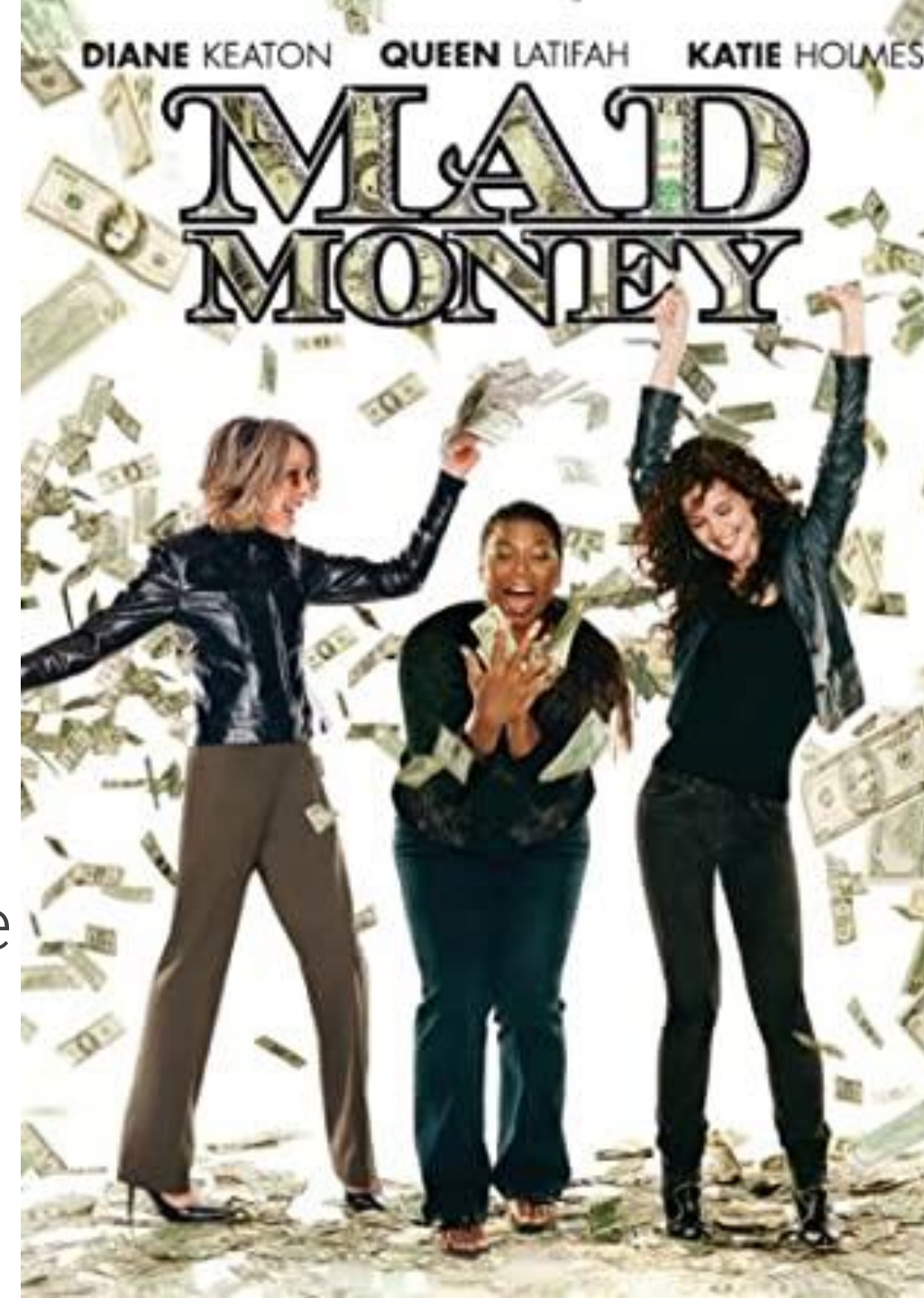


# Organizational Structure

## Cash Flow Strategy:

### 2. Leverage Your Assets.

- County land can generate **CASH FLOW**.
- Lease to a developer, spark the local economy, and then drive the proceeds back **into the COMMUNITY**.



# Organizational Structure

## Cash Flow Strategy:

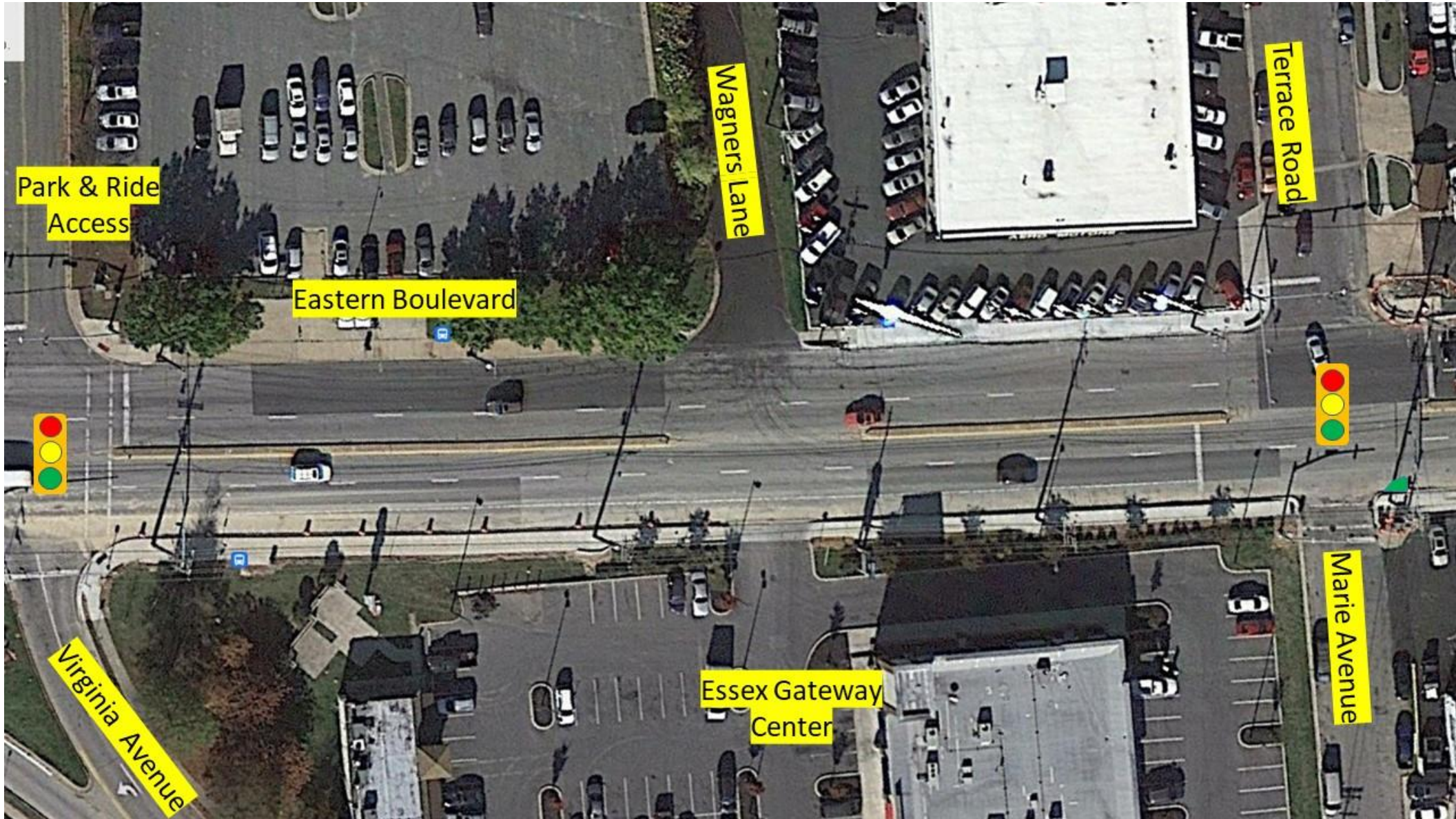
### 3. Safety First.

- You have a serious problem with speeding. It's **unsafe**. And it kills business.
- Baltimore legislators changed state law to allow **speed cameras** on the JFX, so long as the money went to improve the JFX.
- I'm not a legislator. But I bet you know one.



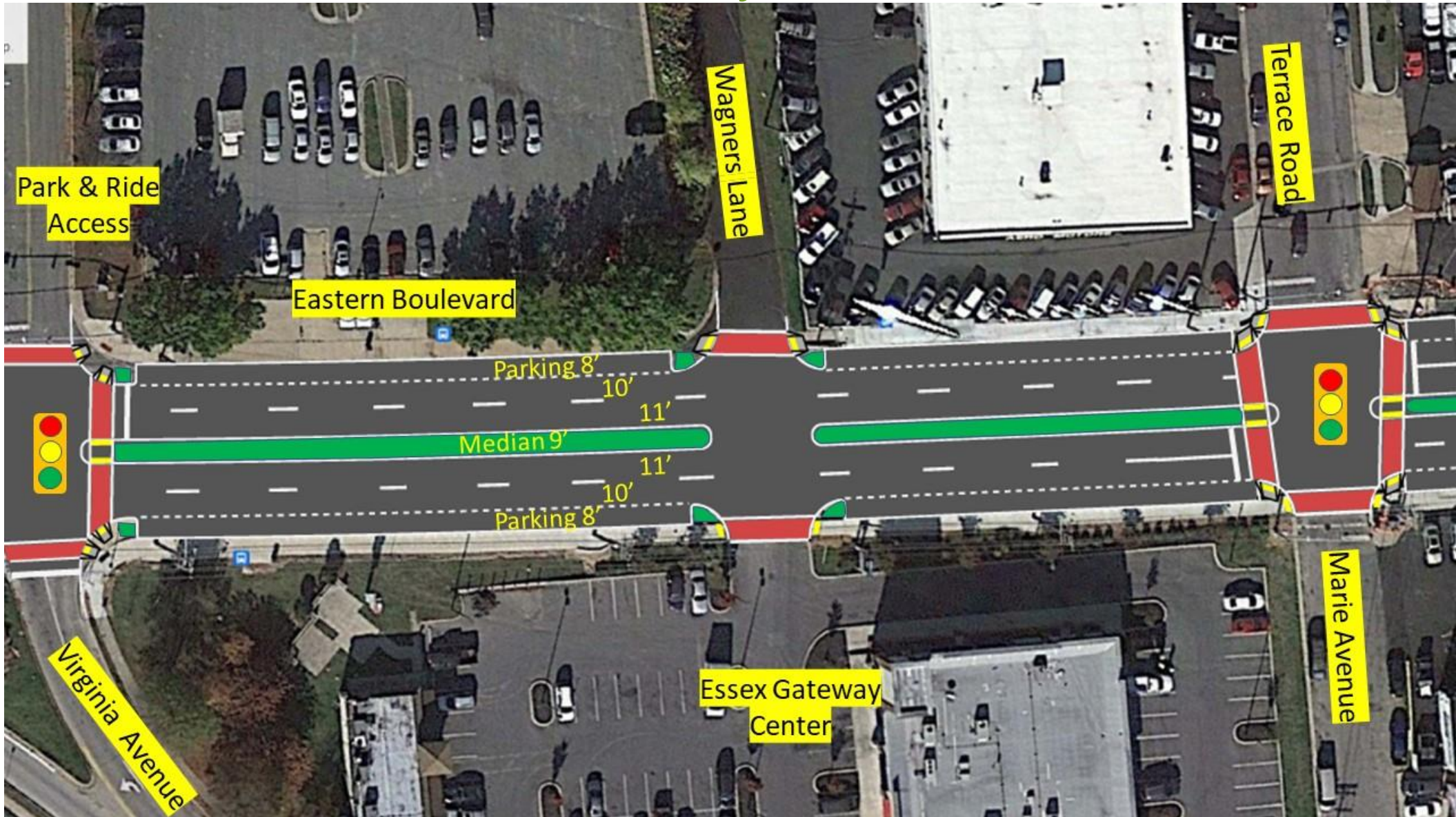


# Traffic and Pedestrian Safety



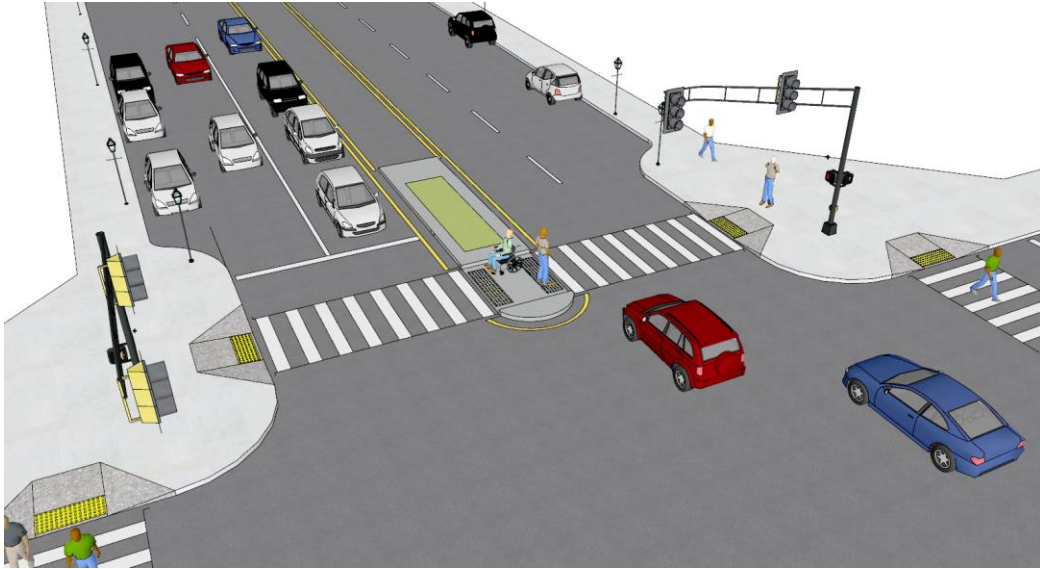


# Traffic and Pedestrian Safety





# Traffic and Pedestrian Safety



**Pedestrian  
Refuges**

**Bump  
Outs**





# Traffic and Pedestrian Safety

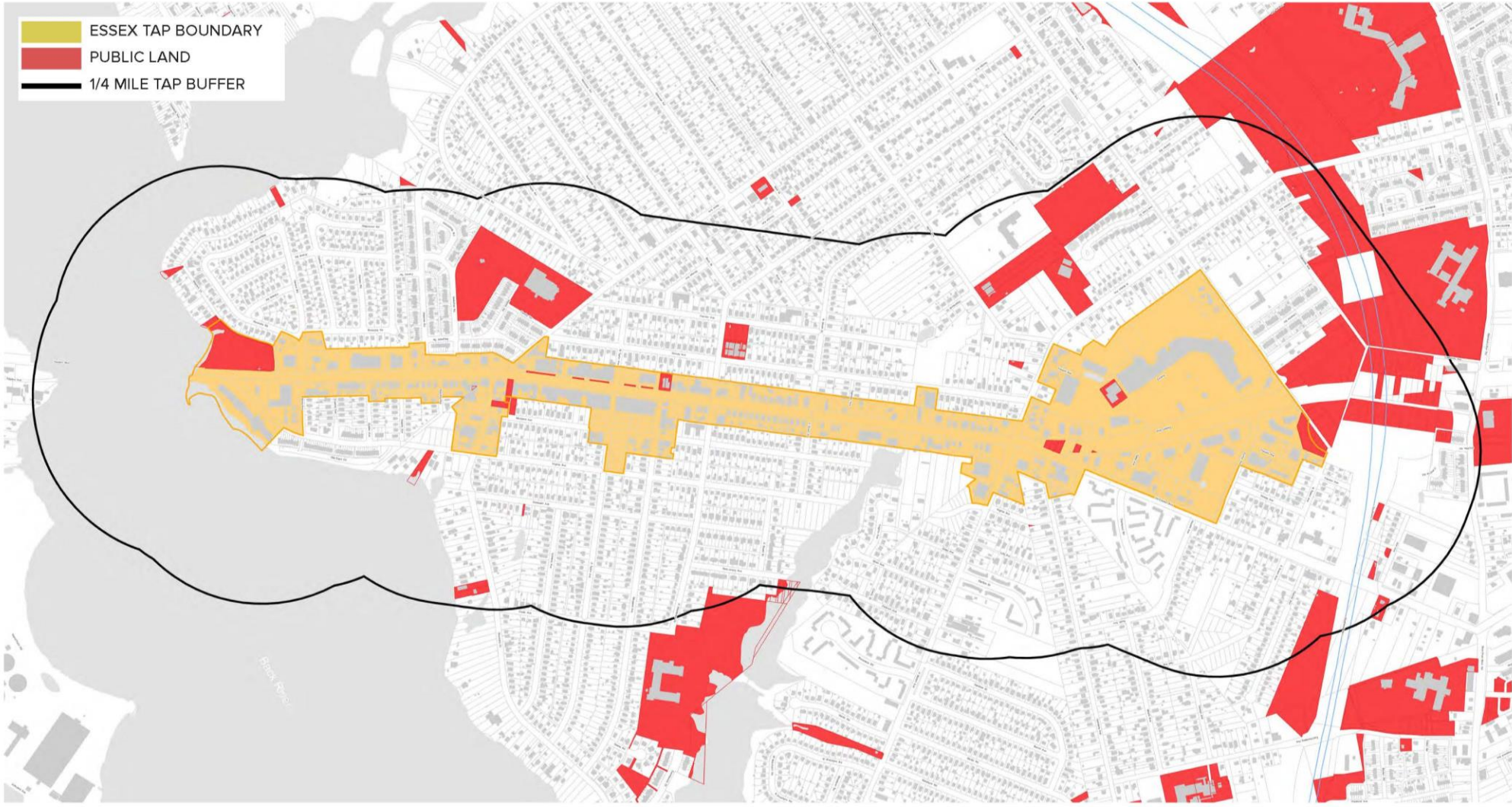
## Action Items

- Capitalize on County and SHA Water line reconstruction
  - Crosswalk improvement
  - Curb bump outs
  - Median installation if funding available
- RFP for remaining improvements along the Boulevard
- Install Speed Identification Signs
- Install Speed Cameras if necessary





# Opportunities / Design





# DOWNTOWN ESSEX



## Contents:

- Waterfront Gateway
- Multi-Tenant Retail Buildings
- Existing & Vacant Restaurants
- Numerous Retail Vacancies

## MINIMAL RETAIL INTERVENTION

## Contents:

- Surplus of Retail
- Residential Converted into Retail
- Fast Food, Service Retail, Financial Institutions, Automotive, Offices

## EXISTING TOWN CENTER

## Contents:

- More Sustainable Retail
- National Brands,
- Public Library, Senior Living, Grocer, MVA



1. Park & Ride



2. Fruitland



3. Wiltshire Corner



5. Eye Candy & Public Lot



6. 418 Vacant Lot



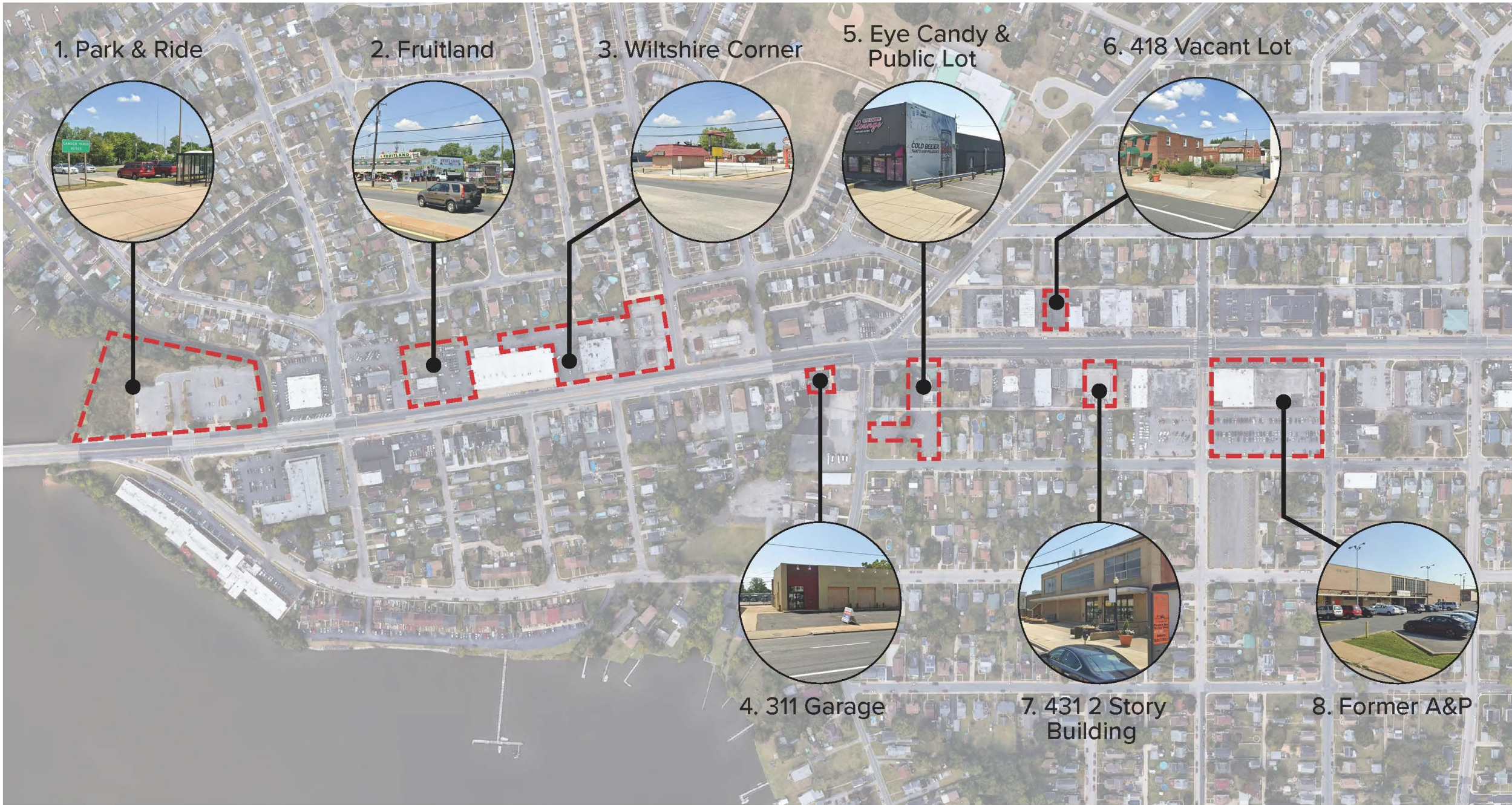
4. 311 Garage



7. 431 2 Story Building

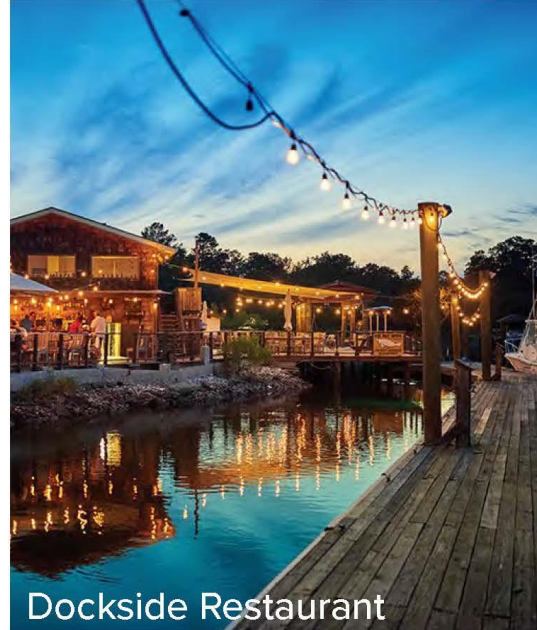


8. Former A&P Building





1. Park & Ride



Dockside Restaurant



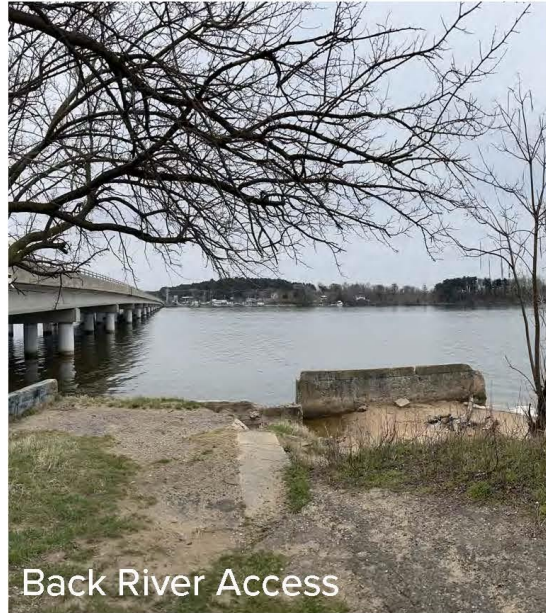
Multi-Family



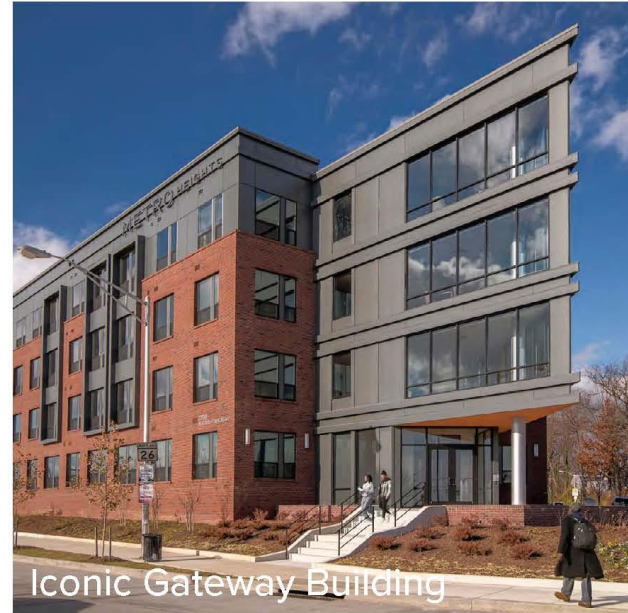
Collaborative Development



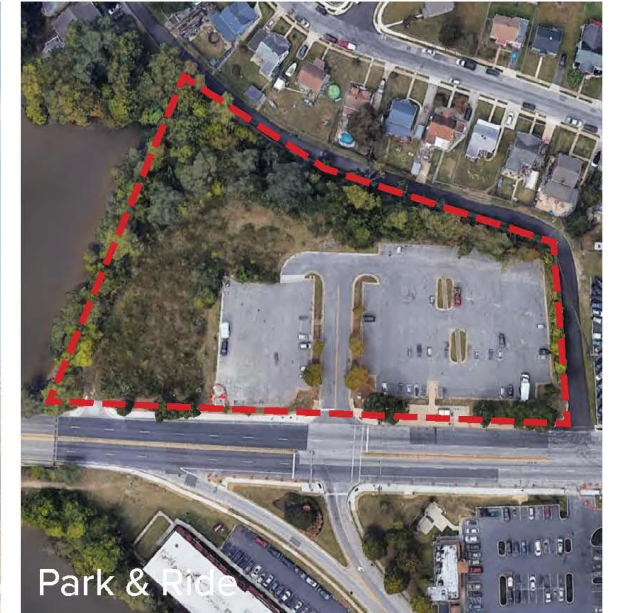
Waterfront Views



Back River Access



Iconic Gateway Building



Park & Ride



## 2. Fruitland



Shared Branding



Fresh Fruits & Produce



Seafood Market



Food Truck Opportunities



Book Fairs



Pop-Up Stalls



### 3. Wiltshire Corner



Reid's Jerk Shack



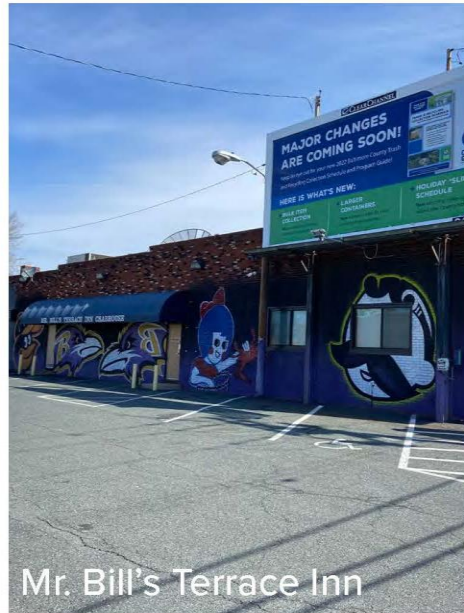
After Hours Dining



Wiltshire Corner Plan



Creative Use of Parking Lots



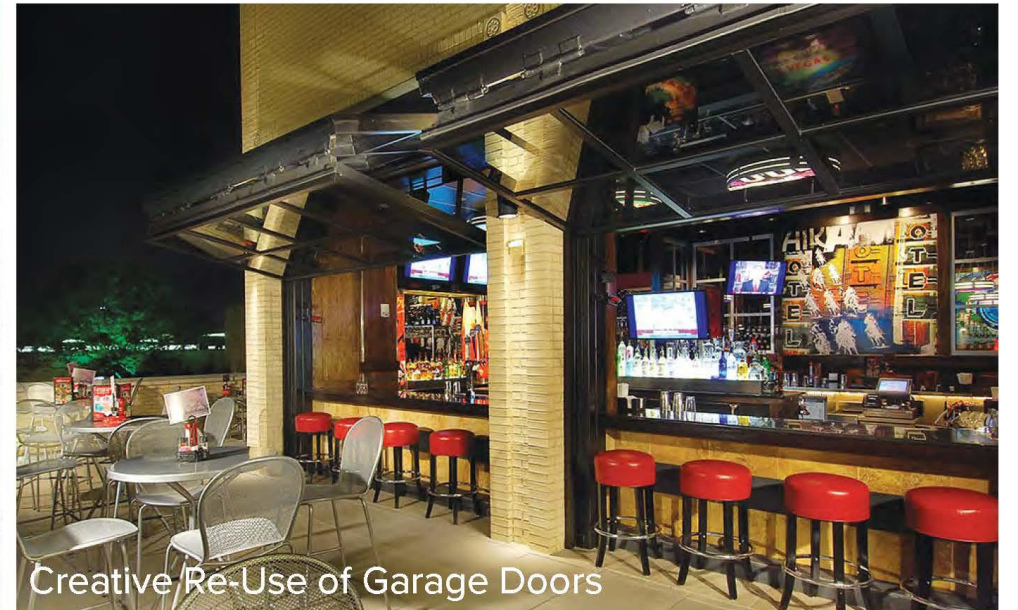
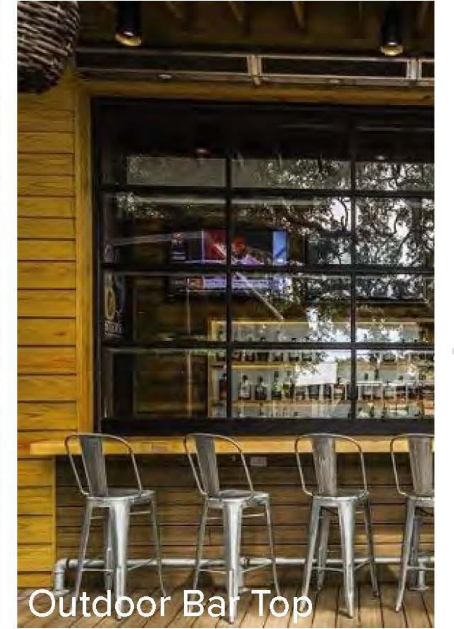
Mr. Bill's Terrace Inn



Maximize Outdoor Space

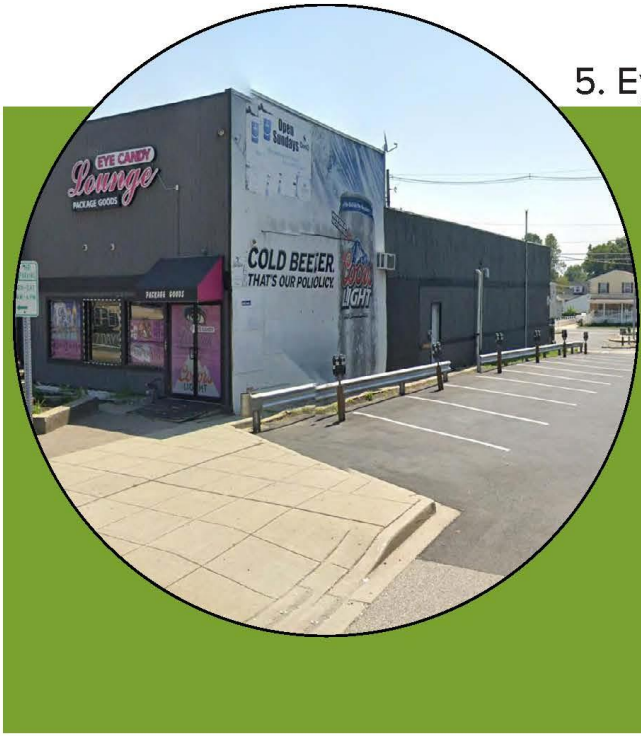


#### 4. 311 Garage





## 5. Eye Candy & Public Lot



Food Trucks



Creative Pop-Ups



Public Lot



Food Truck Opportunities



Tailgate Events



Creative Re-Use of Garage Doors



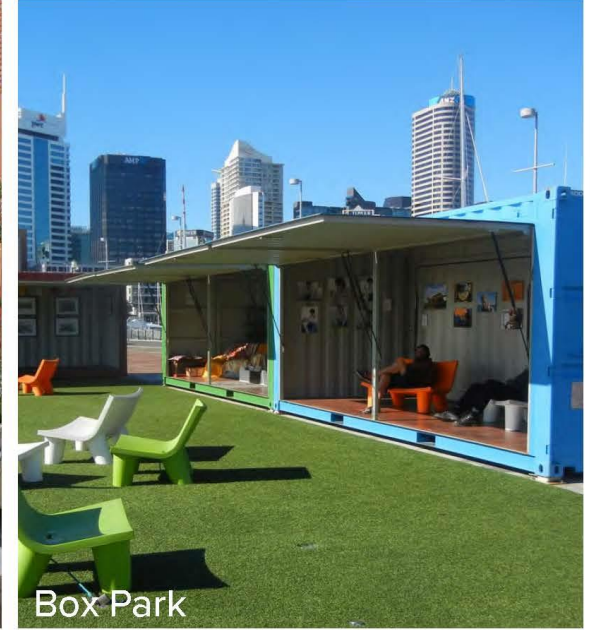
6. 418 Vacant Lot



Dog Park



Urban Courtyard & Greenspace



Box Park



Community Events



Kids Park



Community Rec Leagues





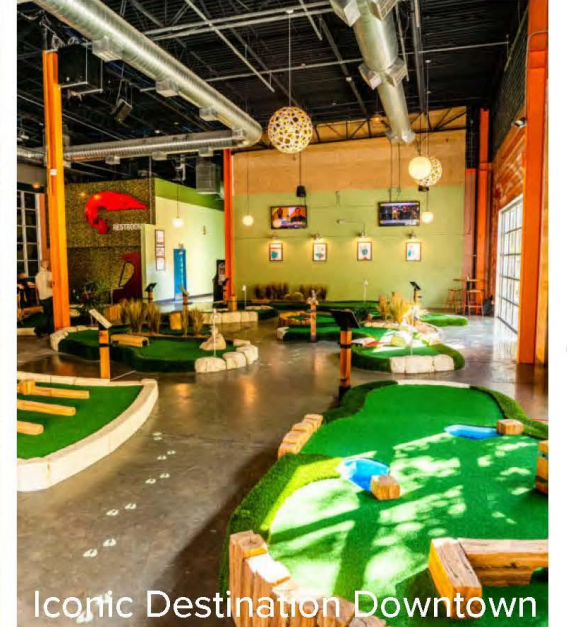
7. 431 2 Story Building



Double Height & 2 Story Space



Kids Play Zone



Iconic Destination Downtown



Brewery & Dining



Storefront Dining



Biergarten



Family Entertainment



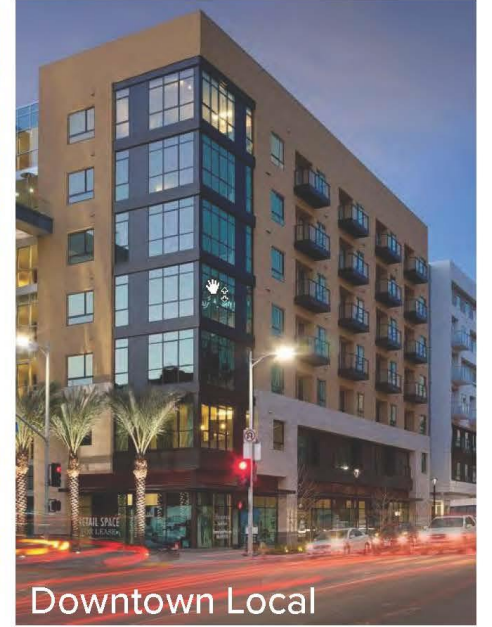
8. Former A&P



Mixed-Use Building



Courtyard Amenities



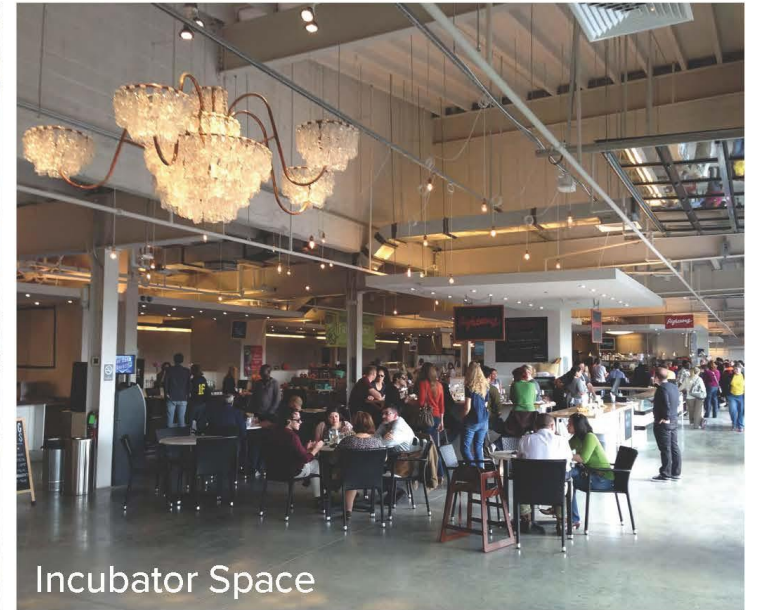
Downtown Local



Markethall Streetscape



Added Parking



Incubator Space



1. Park & Ride



2. Fruitland



5. Eye Candy & Public Lot



7. 431 2 Story Building



6. 418 Vacant Lot



3. Wiltshire Corner



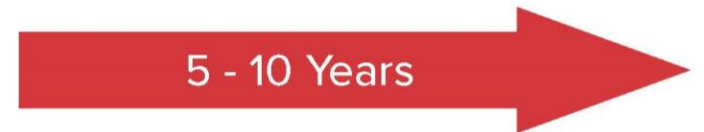
4. 311 Garage



8. Former A&P



1. Park & Ride





# Branding & Placemaking



★ *Designed by TownMapsUSA.com*



# Branding & Placemaking





# Branding & Placemaking

## Observation:

The new banners are a great addition to the streetscape. It shows a sense of pride and that there is current activity going on in the area. The visual design is nice and clean and the subject matter is spot on with the use of local elements that the community can and should be proud of (Aviation, Maritime, Boating, Fishing, Crabs, Water Fowl, etc.)



# Branding & Placemaking





# Branding & Placemaking

## Naming

There is also great opportunity to reposition and name the downtown business district.

Specifically, to a distinction between the surrounding rural areas and activities and the downtown commercial district is important and can help to focus efforts and much needed attention.



# Branding & Placemaking

## Naming

Some people refer to the corridor as Eastern Avenue, The Avenue, or Main Street, however these are either misleading or confusing. While Eastern Boulevard is accurate, **“The Boulevard”** has a nice sound, is concise and descriptive.

The descriptor of **“Downtown”** can also be used or incorporated

— **“The Boulevard in Downtown Essex”**



## CASE STUDY

### Old Ellicott City

—  
Old Ellicott City is a beautiful, Historic Main Street-designated area—a thriving downtown with an ever-expanding mix of unique shops and restaurants, all fueled by a quirky, independent spirit. Working with Ellicott City Partnership, its committee members, business owners and residents, we set out to reposition and reenergize the area after it had been losing new visitors and tourists to other area destinations.

### Services Completed

- Brand Strategy
- Positioning & Naming
- Logo & Tagline
- Identity Development
- Marketing Collateral
- Street Banner System
- Web & Mobile Site Design



**OLD**   
**ELICOTT**  
**CITY**

Individually Crafted  
Since 1772



**ELICOTT CITY  
PARTNERSHIP**



## CASE STUDY

### Old Ellicott City

Our in-person and phone interviews with various constituents helped us develop a unifying message platform around which all stakeholders could rally and incorporate into their promotional activities. The participation in and embracing of the messaging resulted in a coherent, consistent narrative that reinforces the Ellicott City brand image. We proposed using the colloquial term, "Old Ellicott City," as the name and created the town logo and Ellicott City Partnership (ECP) logo using historic wood type from the area's famous Globe Poster Printing Corporation. Paired with vibrant colors, the outcome was a fresh look with an old, familiar feel to which residents, businesses and visitors could all relate.



# Branding & Placemaking

## Positioning

Consider what is **unique and specific** to Downtown Essex (The Boulevard) and utilize that as a focused value proposition, or selling point.

For example, how is Essex positioned with the market place and in the context of other destinations for people to visit or set up a business in? What is your Competitive Positioning Strategy? What sets you apart from your competitors?



# Branding & Placemaking

## Positioning

This can be done with a simple positioning statement:

- Name (The Boulevard in Essex)
- Category (Downtown Business District)
- Identify the target market (Families)
- Identify your differentiator (A wide range of experiences)
- Explain the payoff to your target market (An authentic small town Maryland feel)

Example Positioning Statement:

**The Boulevard in Essex is a downtown business district that has a wide range of experiences for families that want an (authentic) small town Maryland feel.**

# Branding & Placemaking

## Tagline & Brand Story

While **“Gateway to the Chesapeake”** is a great tagline and evokes a strong visual, it does not serve the The Boulevard in Downtown Essex. It speaks more to the surrounding region, which is great, and should still be used to promote the greater Essex region that surrounds all of the downtown core.

Additionally, it suggests that Downtown is a passthrough to get to the Chesapeake.

Instead, a more focused downtown sentiment should be considered.



# Branding & Placemaking

## Tagline & Brand Story

Pulling inspiration from the surrounding industries (past and present) and amenities that helped build the downtown will not only provide a solid foundation for branding, it will also help to be inclusive of all generations.

- Steel Industry
- Tradeport Atlantic
- Aviation
- Seafood
- Maritime & Boating
- Fishing & Recreation
- Marinas
- Natural Surrounding

# Branding & Placemaking

## Visual Brand

The Boulevard can benefit from a new logo that captures the past, present and future of Downtown Essex.

### Additional Tasks & Deliverables:

- Logo
- Identity Development
- Brand Guidelines



## CASE STUDY

### Deuces Live

The Deuces Live is a nonprofit organization dedicated to reviving and preserving the spirit of St. Petersburg's 22nd Street corridor. Dubbed "The Deuces" after its double 2's, the main street was the heart and soul of St. Pete's African-American community in the early and mid-20th century until the construction of I-275 in the 1970s. A cultural hub, The Deuces was a haven for African-American musicians like James Brown, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday.

In 2021, The Deuces Live received a NEA "Our Town" Grant to revitalize the area. We were honored to work with The Deuces Live to help bring the neighborhood back to life with a strategic placemaking strategy, new neighborhood identity, vertical element designs for public spaces, and an activation strategy to increase commercial foot traffic. Our work was inspired by historical imagery of the neighborhood, the area's musical heritage, and iconic murals.

### Services Completed

- Positioning & Naming
- Logo & Tagline
- Identity Development
- Marketing Collateral
- Street Banner System
- Web & Mobile Site Design









# Branding & Placemaking

## Communication and Outreach – Website

Create a new web site for “The Boulevard” in Downtown Essex. This new web presence will visually reflect the new branding and messaging for The Boulevard as well as list all the current retail and services business (by category), as well as key destinations and attractions (Historic Museum, parks, waterfront, etc.)

This website is also an opportunity to aggregate all the applicable government resources and programs available to current business/owners as well as prospective business and developers considering investing in the downtown business district. Additionally, events can be posted here and update for residents and visitors.

# Branding & Placemaking

## Communication and Outreach – Activation Strategy

A comprehensive strategy should be developed to enhance existing events offered within Downtown, along with a social media campaign to bring awareness to The Boulevard, all with the goal of increasing event attendance and reach.

Additional programs can be conceptualized, as well as activities and amenities to activate the corridor that are low-cost and that engage both visitors and community residents.





# Essex Farmers' Market

Fridays, 3-6 p.m.



**Sponsor: Eastern Baltimore County Task Force**  
*Made possible through the generosity of 8725 Acquisitions, LLC and a grant from Baltimore County.*



# Branding & Placemaking

## Identity Signage

Create a sense of arrival at each end of The Boulevard, through an iconic gateway moment.

The new vertical pier, as a result of the call for artists, at the west end by Back River that will replace the Cube, is the right approach.







## CASE STUDY

### Merriweather District

—

The Merriweather District is a vibrant mixed-use community on 68 acres in Columbia, Maryland, adjacent to the famed Merriweather Post Pavilion, consistently ranked one of the best outdoor amphitheaters in the country. This multi-phased district consists of walkable retail promenades intermingled with high-end residential construction, 2 million SF of Class A office space, 200,000 SF of street retail and an active public plaza, aptly named Color Burst Park, that acts as the district's center for activities including concerts, outdoor dining, ice skating, and more.

We were enlisted to create and implement the wayfinding and identity signage for the district. Our goal was to keep the signage on-brand, not only visually but also in spirit, by building upon the guiding principle & rallying cry of the new district — Grow Boldly, initially inspired by the region's visionary founder, James Rouse.

#### Services Completed

District Wayfinding  
Signage Design  
Documentation  
Implementation





# Branding & Placemaking

## Identity Signage

A large, bold name identifier (i.e. “Essex”, “The Boulevard”, “Downtown Essex”) would be better suited for this location.

Similarly, the east end of The Boulevard can have a gateway entry identifier but may be a slightly different design based on the location and surrounding context.

# Branding & Placemaking

## Wayfinding

Next, determine key destinations and attractions, then direct people to those destinations through a clear and concise wayfinding program.

Public parking should be the primary focus. A well thought out parking strategy should be considered for the entire Boulevard. Then, quickly and concisely identify the designated public parking areas throughout. Key municipal, civic and cultural destinations should also be identified, as well as surrounding waterways and marinas.



# Branding & Placemaking

## Streetscape

To help build upon physical placemaking for The Boulevard, various streetscape elements can begin to incorporate the new logo and brand, from large scale elements to small details such as

- 📄 branded bike racks
- 📄 Benches
- 📄 trash cans
- 📄 sidewalk grates
- 📄 etc.

Additionally, a Retail Tenant Signage Criteria can help add order to the chaos of signage, but still allow individual business personality.

## CASE STUDY

### The Avenue at White Marsh

—

The Avenue at White Marsh is a 35-acre shopping, dining, and entertainment site that opened in 1998 to serve as a town center for nearby residents. Over a 3-year period in collaboration with architects, landscape artists, client management, designers, and leasing teams, Ashton reinvigorated The Avenue with an energizing environmental refresh of painted and sculptural wall murals, directional signage, and custom tenant blade signs.

The suite of applications cemented The Avenue's role as a thriving retail and entertainment destination, with the renovations significantly increasing foot traffic and helping attract and secure new, high-profile tenants while still enabling existing tenants to remain open for business.

#### Services Completed

- Placemaking
- Wayfinding
- Architectural Signage
- Custom Wall Murals
- Supergraphics
- Tenant Guidelines





CASE STUDY

The Avenue at White Marsh



# Branding & Placemaking

## Next Steps

1. Focus on the downtown core
2. Adopt a common name everyone can use
3. Develop a Logo and Brand around this name







LIVE  
MARYLAND

LIVE CRABS SOFT  
CRABS

MBO SHRIMP













# MIDDLE RIVER OPOLY

A FUN GAME CELEBRATING MIDDLE RIVER, MARYLAND!

CONTINGENCY



DRAW A CARD

MARSHY POINT NATURE CENTER



COST \$290

CARROLL ISLAND ROAD



COST \$250

COUNTRY CLUB LANES

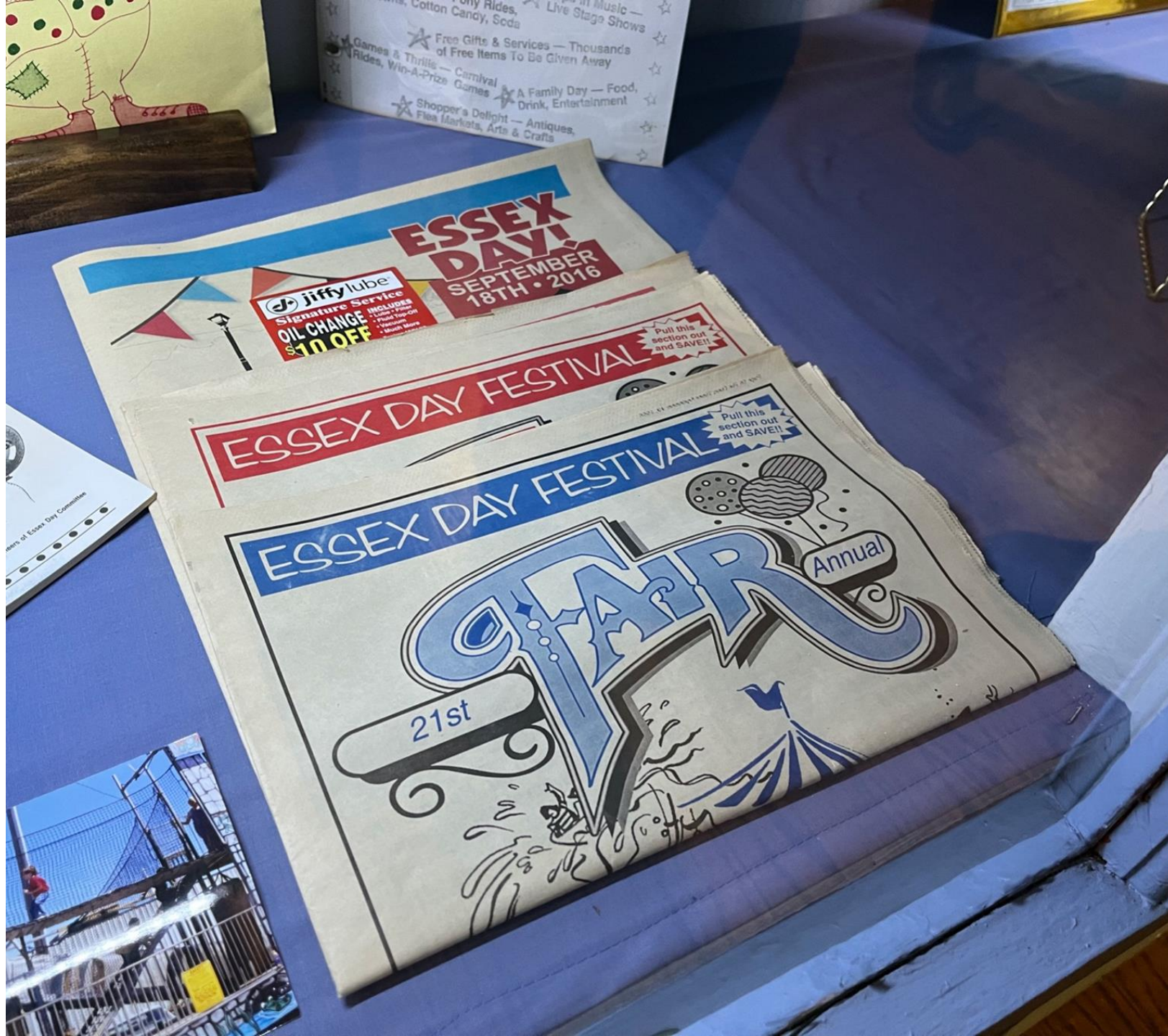


COST \$150

COLLECT \$500 AS YOU PASS

GO MIDDLE RIVER!







# Land Use and Zoning

- Create an “Essex Boulevard Overlay District” that:
  - Allows property owners to develop under existing zoning
  - Provides incentives to develop under the overlay zone such as greater density, taller buildings, etc.
  - Requires architectural and signage enhancements
  - Consider “form based” code to promote maximum flexibility





# Immediate Actions

## Stats/Marketing

- RFP for complete market analysis from Middle River to the Back River
- Cleaning and Greening Streetscape

## Operations

- Hire a Full Time Champion – make the task force the home for this effort
- Identify sources of funding & cash flow
- Create engagement program for minority and immigrant business and resident population.





# Immediate Actions

## Traffic/Safety

- Capitalize on County and SHA Water line reconstruction
  - Crosswalk improvement
  - Curb bump outs
  - Median installation if funding available
- RFP for remaining improvements along the Boulevard
- Install Speed Identification Signs
- Install Speed Cameras if necessary
- RFP for parking study



# Immediate Actions



## Opportunities/Design

- RFP for Park-and-Ride site
- Food cart pod on public parking lot
- Fruitland & Crabland activation
- County Engagement at Key Properties

## Branding

- RFP's on Branding & way-finding

## Land Use

- County Planning to develop overlay zone



# Immediate Actions



1. RFP for park and ride site
2. Food cart pod on public parking lot
3. Fruitland & Crabland activation
4. County Engagement at Key Properties
5. RFP's on Branding & way-finding
6. County Planning to develop overlay zone
7. RFP for parking study

# Q&A

## ESSEX TECHINICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL

[Lisa.Norris@ULI.org](mailto:Lisa.Norris@ULI.org)



# What We Heard from YOU

1. Why did all the prior plans fail? Why weren't they implemented?
2. Parking is an issue (too much, too little, diagonal, location),
3. Commercial should service basic needs and doesn't,
4. The Boulevard is dependent on the entire community, not just the businesses,
5. Need to create and maintain community engagement (Middle River Round Table),
6. Market success stories in Essex.
7. Market Essex as "this is a great place for your employees to raise a family."
8. A sense of hopelessness and despair in Essex. "The problems of the city are moving out",
9. "Aviation themed" - people want to see local history reflected,
10. A lot of the nostalgia was from the big historic industries,
11. Main street coordinator champion role is critical,
12. Reduce blight through code enforcement,
13. "Having a hard time finding quality employees - apprentice staff,
14. Provide incentives for home ownership/rental (Live Near Your Work),
15. There is a profound ambiguity, antipathy, to multi-family rental housing,
16. Local preference is for low density single family home development,
17. Absentee Landlords - no one has a financial incentive to do anything differently,
18. Dunkin Donuts was a big success story for the Boulevard,
19. Would redevelop property if there was a plan that showed it would be better than what we have.
20. Real concerns with all of the drug clinics,
21. Speed of traffic - Number one safety issue,
22. No outdoor dining because of noise from speeding traffic,
23. Could enforce more traffic issues here, but a more permanent solution would be effective (traffic calming),
24. Ordering electronic speed signs on either end of the strip. "Favorite place to sit if handing out speeding tickets."

# Slide title

Example slide subtitle



