

Essex Eastern Boulevard

20

22

Technical Assistance Panel



Urban Land Institute **Baltimore**

ULI Baltimore

On behalf of the Baltimore Development Corporation

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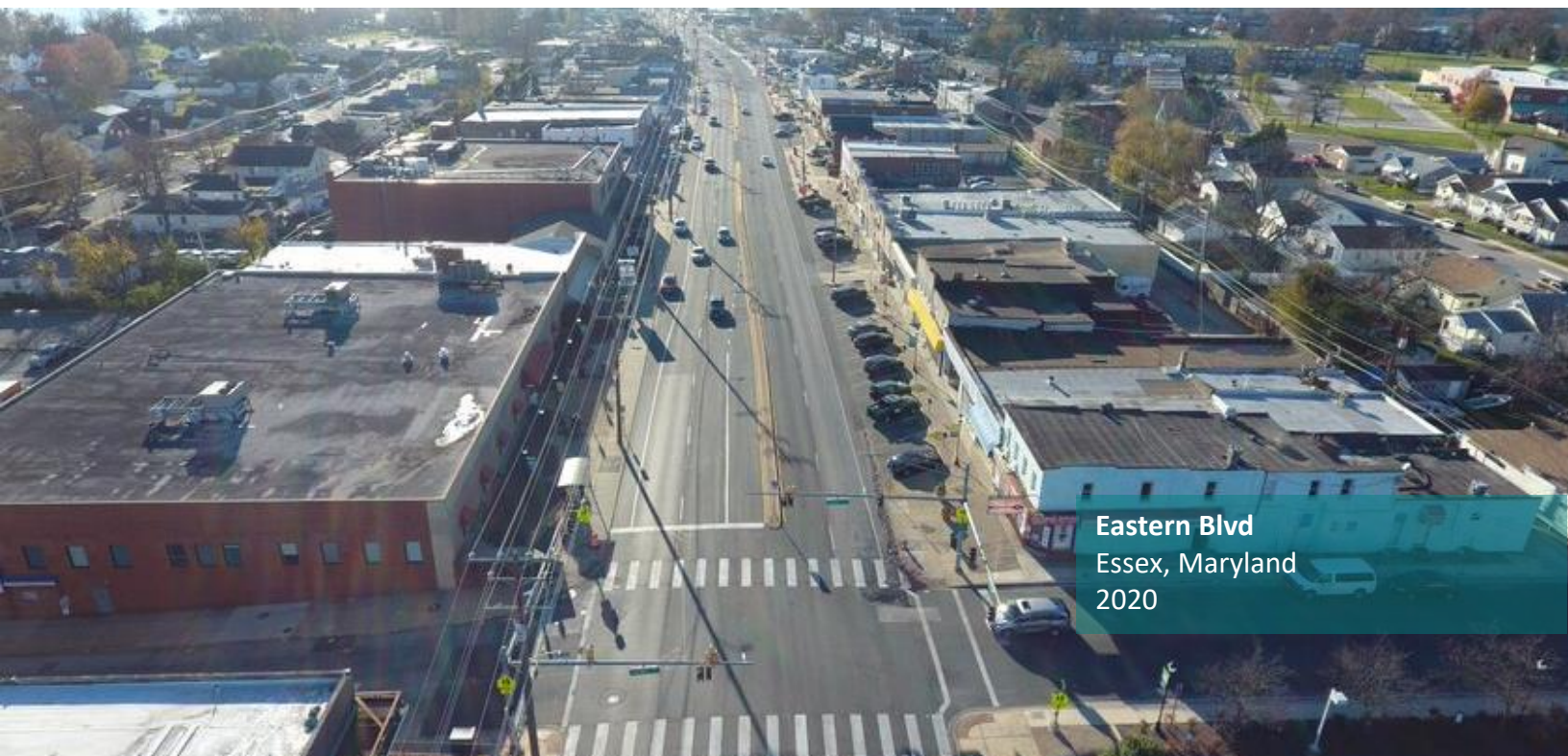
Executive Summary

What was once a thriving business district in the mid-20th century for all local shopping, dining and entertainment needs, the commercial corridor of downtown Essex has fallen into a steady decline. Despite its proximity to waterfront, major employment hubs and community demand, the full potential of Eastern Boulevard remains untapped. Vacant buildings, problems with trash, graffiti, traffic and safety issues, and the lack of attractive retail offerings have turned this stretch of a commercial corridor into a place that residents avoid.

There have been several revitalization efforts focused in Essex that date back to the 1970s. The lack of a consistent champion and stable funding have hampered these proposed improvements. This TAP report presents recommendations to improve the commercial corridor, identify who will spearhead these efforts, and determine how to secure consistent funding.

Although Essex has its charm and identity rooted in a rich history, it requires immediate attention and improvement if it wants to continue to attract residents and visitors. Cars driving down Eastern Boulevard need to slow down, more attention and care needs to be provided for pedestrians, and the streetscape needs improvement to become attractive to tenants, better meeting the needs of the immediate community.

As our report indicates, we believe some key recommendations should guide the plans for Eastern Boulevard.



Key Recommendations

Find a Champion

Hire a full-time coordinator to act as a champion for The Boulevard. This person will wake up each day determined to improve the complete Essex experience.

Identify a source of funding

Build sources of cash flow to employ this person or team, and fund ongoing maintenance and operations

Improve Traffic & Safety of the Region

Install speed identification signs and speed cameras, if necessary. Capitalize on County and State Highway Administration (SHA) water line reconstruction to make the traffic improvements and create a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a parking study and remaining improvements along The Boulevard.

Improve Opportunities & Design

Issue an RFP for development of the county-owned and underutilized waterfront Park and Ride and consider a multi-family workforce housing development to bring more people to the area. Improve streetscape and attract experiential retail to The Boulevard. Consider events like food cart pods on the public parking lot or activating the area between Fruitland and Crabland. Create a zoning overlay district to attract more creative and entrepreneurial designs.

Create engagement

Develop engagement programs for minority and immigrant businesses and resident populations to account for the diverse population of the Essex and Sussex region and engage the county for key properties.

Create a brand

Adopt a common name everyone can use: The Boulevard. Issue an RFP to further explore the conceptual branding recommendations contained in this report, including signage and wayfinding to give The Boulevard a name and identity of its own.



Eastern Blvd
Essex, Maryland
2020

Background

The Current Climate of Essex and Eastern Boulevard

Despite once being a thriving business district in the mid-20th century for all local shopping, dining and entertainment needs, Essex has since fallen into a steady decline. Eastern Boulevard, the main downtown thoroughfare, has not yet undergone a transformation. Despite its proximity to waterfront, major employment hubs and community demand, the area's full potential remains untapped.

There have been several revitalization efforts focused on Essex that date back to the 1970s. Most recently, the Eastern Baltimore County Task Force, a committee founded in 2017 under the umbrella of the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce, brought together local community leaders to implement projects and actions in the corridor. This included several streetscape beautification projects, creation of the Essex Farmer's Market, and efforts to help reduce trash, graffiti and vermin problems.

Eastern Boulevard, the main road of Essex, is a fast, busy and noisy State Highway. Driving through, symptoms of decline are visible - cracked sidewalks, broken signs, vacancies, and the absence of trees and greenery. Conversations with stakeholders included other concerns of decline, including absentee landlords, poorly maintained properties, declining property values, and negative public perceptions. The lack of retail is hampered by more attractive nearby surroundings - as a result more high-end and family-friendly shoppers are going to Merritt

Boulevard, White Marsh Mall, The Avenue at White Marsh, and Greenleigh.

The population in Essex is projected to remain stable with no perceptible growth in the next five years. Approximately three-quarters of the households are owners, rather than renters, and nearly half (43%) are between the ages of 45 and 64. In the 45-64 age group, homeowners make up 76.6% of the households overall. This age cohort is approaching retirement and empty-nesting, which is opening the door for younger families to settle in the community. The target market should be the upcoming age cohort of 25-45 years.

Overall, the demographics illustrate that the Essex area is a moderate income, working-class community that is financially shrewd and budget conscious, preferring to shop as needed, rather than frivolously. An important trait of this demographic is loyalty to brands and their community. Historically, the former working populations of the steel mills and Martin have preferred this community to live out their years. However, there comes a time when the old family house is no longer appropriate for aging-in-place and then younger souls move in, upgrade and raise a new family in the same space. To that end, the next generation of homeowners may still be of a similar working class as the original Essex population, albeit in a wider variety of professions, but the rejuvenation of the main street needs to be crafted to market to the incoming generation.

Demographics and Market:

Essex is a historic working-class community, constructed primarily to serve the industrial complexes of the Martin Company (now known as Lockheed Martin) and Bethlehem Steel at Sparrows Point. These were once stable communities that represented a solid infrastructure of simple housing and wholesome family life – a stable community. The steel mills closed completely in 2012. Sparrows Point is being redeveloped as TradePoint Atlantic, with a variety of logistics businesses, manufacturing, shipyard and rail. The site employed as many as 30,000 at its peak and is gradually recapturing that population today. The households of the post WWII era are aging out of the community, and the new generation of working-class families are moving in.

In 2021, the population of Essex was 13,404. The community is 80 percent White, 9 percent Black and 8 percent Hispanic. Roughly, one third (37 percent) has a high school diploma, while 20 percent have some college and 11 percent have a bachelor's or master's degree. Most are dual-income households, and most of the employment is in construction, retail and health care (over one-third).

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Table III-4

Age of Householder by Tenure

<u>ESSEX</u>	Owner	Renter	Total Households		Percent of Households	
			Households	% by Age	Owner	Renter
Total	3,827	1,469	5,296	100.0%	72.3%	27.7%
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%

<u>BALTIMORE COUNTY</u>	Owner	Renter	Total Households		Percent of Households	
			Households	% by Age	Owner	Renter
Total	211,571	105,144	316,715	100.0%	66.8%	33.2%
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

Table III-8

Household Incomes

2021	<u>ESSEX</u>		<u>BALTIMORE COUNTY</u>	
	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%
Total Households	5,266	100.0%	320,318	100.0%
Median Income		\$59,081		\$76,971

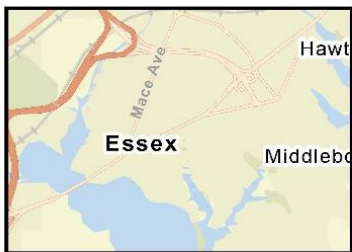
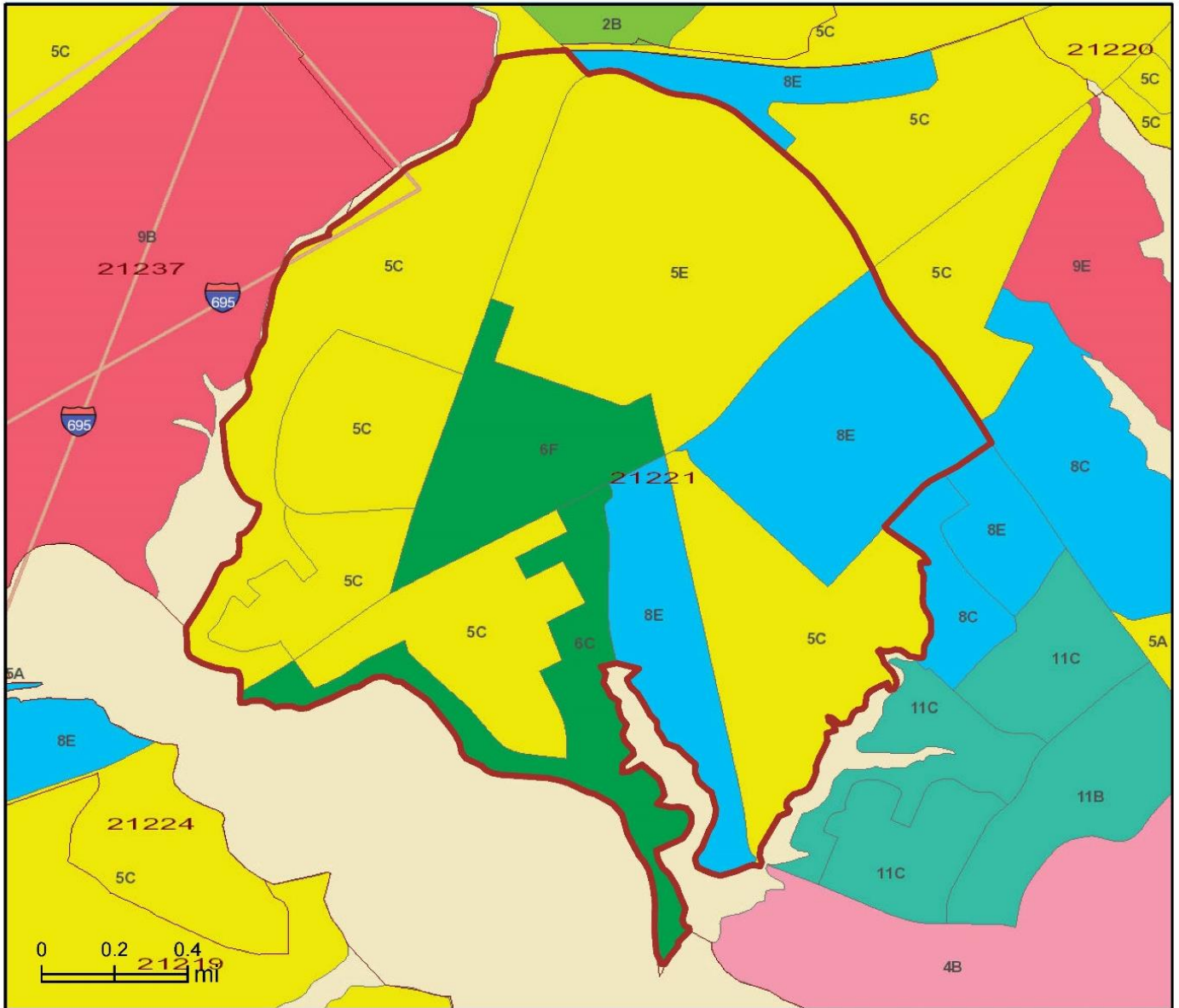
2026	Households:	Percent By Income	Households:	Percent By Income
Under \$15,000	528	10.0%	22,471	6.9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	507	9.6%	17,891	5.5%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	413	7.8%	19,119	5.9%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	569	10.8%	30,209	9.3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	947	17.9%	55,730	17.2%
\$75,000 - \$99,000	843	16.0%	44,926	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%
Total Households	5,279	100.0%	323,659	100.0%
Median Income		\$64,225		\$82,530

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

Dominant Tapestry Map

Essex 1BG
 240054502.003 (240054502003) et al.
 Geography: Block Group

Prepared by Esri



Tapestry LifeMode

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



Source: Esri

April 05, 2022

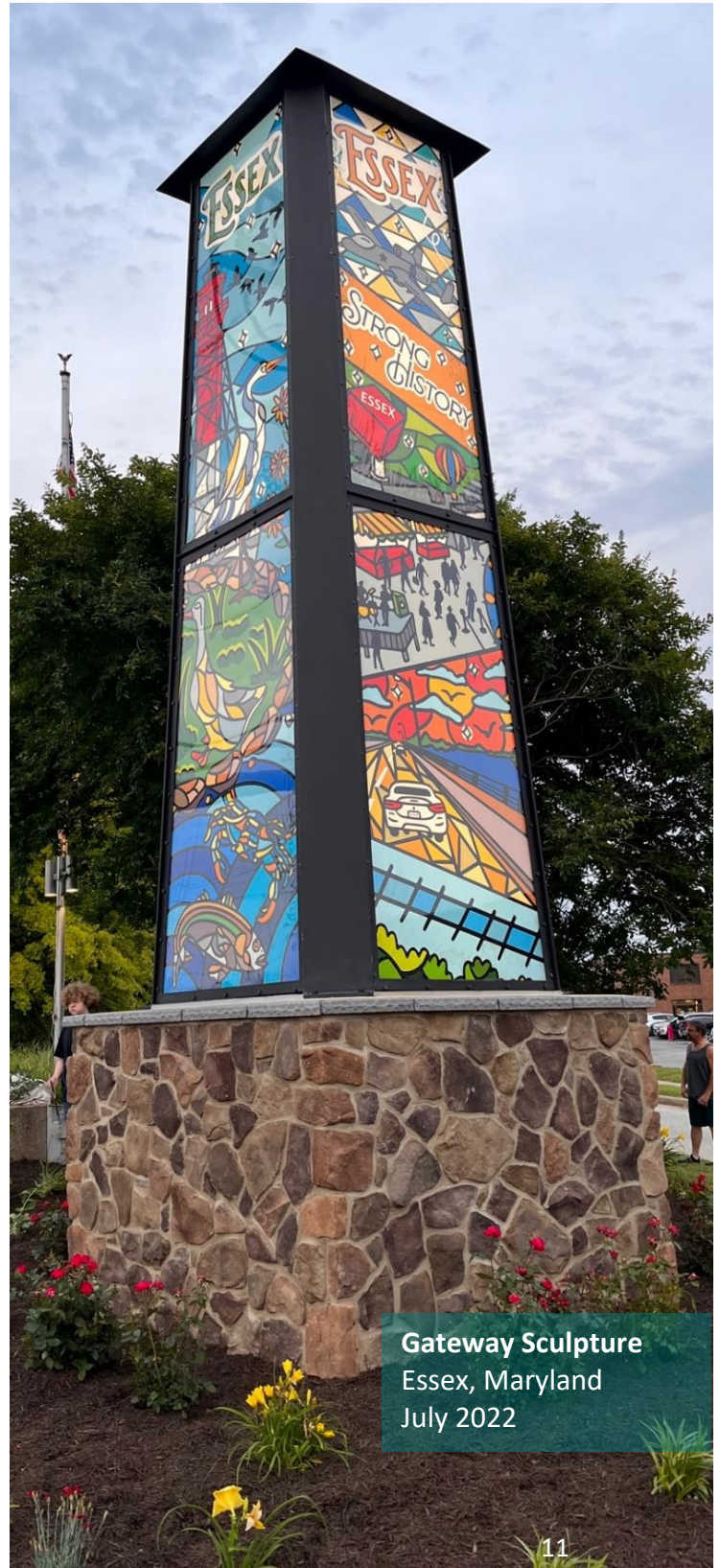
Illustration of the Dominant Tapestry Map for Essex. According to ESRI.com, Tapestry is a market segmentation system built from using a large, well-selected array of attributes of demographic and socioeconomic variables to identify numerous unique consumer markets throughout the United States.

Strengths: What Essex Has to Offer

Essex is near the Chesapeake Bay and Back River waterfront, with high visibility and proximity to a large population of the Baltimore region. There is easy access to marinas and waterfront amenities. There is proximity to major institutions and employment centers, including Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), MedStar Franklin Square Medical Center, Greenleigh (1,000 acre mixed-use with nearly 2 million square feet of commercial space, 2,000 residences, 6,500+ jobs) and TradePoint Atlantic (3,300 acres, 10,000+ jobs).

The area has all forms of transportation: one train station, two airports, two major highways, 22 marinas, and eight yacht clubs.

Essex ranked as one of the 50 most affordable waterfront towns in the U.S. in 2020, with the number one high school in Baltimore County – Eastern Technical – according to U.S. News & World Report. Essex has a campus of Community College of Baltimore County. Local tourist attractions include the Heritage Society of Essex & Middle River (Museum), Glenn L. Martin Maryland Aviation Museum, Waterfront parks, including Rocky Point Park & Beach and Cox’s Point Park, and Marshy Point Nature Center. Essex also has a 5-star waterfront golf course, six yacht clubs, five local breweries and a distillery, top rated restaurants, and miles of shoreline for water activities.



Gateway Sculpture
Essex, Maryland
July 2022

The TAP Process

The Eastern Baltimore County Task Force (EBCTF), a committee of the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Baltimore County Department of Planning, engaged ULI Baltimore to convene a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP). The overall goal of creating the TAP was to examine revitalization strategies for nearly two miles of Eastern Boulevard, the main artery running through Essex and Sussex between the Back River Bridge and the intersection of State Highway 702. To gather relevant data and understand community dynamics, a buffer around the boundary is a quarter mile radius and includes the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The three-day TAP convened on April 4, 2022 at the Eastern Yacht Club in Essex and concluded on April 6, 2022. On the first day, the Panel spent the morning touring the study area; the afternoon was devoted to interviewing over 30 stakeholders and residents, and 40 online surveys were submitted. The first evening included an open public meeting for soliciting broader community input. On the second and third day, the Panel re-convened to share what they had learned with Baltimore County agency officials and formulate their recommendations. At the end of the third day, stakeholders and the public were invited to hear the Panel's presentation of its findings and recommendations.

01

Before

Because of the desire to examine revitalization strategies along Eastern Blvd., the Baltimore Co. Department of Planning + EBCTF convened a TAP to address several questions and issues.

02

During

The TAP took place April 4-6. Throughout this time, there was community engagement, opportunities for panelists to explore Eastern Blvd., and panelists formulated recommendations

03

After

The Panel provided recommendations and actions. A formal report was created to be shared publically.

Before: Topics to Address

Prior to the TAP, the sponsor (EBCTF) as well as the Baltimore County Department of planning provided ULI with a list of topics and issues they wanted to be addressed. These included:

Comprehensive visioning

- Land use and urban design
- Identifying market advantages
- Moving into a 21st 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



TAP Panelist Tour of Eastern Blvd
Essex Plaza
April 2022

During the TAP: Lessons Learned from Stakeholders

Several themes came up in the stakeholder interviews that the panelists took into account when forming their recommendations. These include:



Uncertainty on progress of previous plans

There had been previous reports and suggestions for improvements that had not been implemented. Residents expressed concerns about the lack of a champion or designated leader, as well as lack of dedicated funding, which is why previous plans have not been able to move forward.

Parking

There were differing opinions on the availability and access to parking, and whether more was needed. The panel also heard concerns about employee parking and that residents didn't want to go to downtown Essex if they had to pay to park.

A need for a new narrative

There is a storied and proud history of Essex, with a strong industrial tradition and having played a crucial role in our nation's defense with Sparrow Point and Glenn L. Martin. Stakeholders felt a sense of nostalgia that "life was much better before." The small-town feel, manicured lawns, high homeownership rate and flags flying on porches made the residents of Essex feel it was a "great place for your employees to raise a family" and a "small town with a big heart."

Crime

There were concerns surrounding new residents of the town, and perception of crime, though conversations with law enforcement revealed a lack of correlation or crime increase. Residents suggested moving the police station to a more visible location or increasing police presence.

Streetscape improvement

Residents cited the need for facade improvements on Eastern Boulevard and the reluctance of property owners to make improvements without higher-paying tenants.

Incentives for homeownership

Residents felt more should be done to incentivize home ownership over rentals and encourage more people to “live near your work” for employees who work at one of the major employers in the area. Multiple existing programs do this, including Dundalk Renaissance and Eastside CDC.

Park and Ride

This 3.3 acre parcel of land is owned by Baltimore County and is currently underutilized.

Multi-family housing needs and concerns

Residents expressed concern for multi-family housing, especially low-income housing, though many expressed the need for more people to live in Essex, particularly close to the Commercial District. Senior housing could also increase density while retaining residents to age in place while freeing up homes for sale.

Traffic, speed, and pedestrian concerns

The high speeds of cars traveling down Eastern Boulevard was considered the top safety issue. Residents expressed a need for traffic calming mechanisms and increased pedestrian safety. The high speed of traffic also contributed to high noise levels, and inhibited restaurants from having outdoor sidewalk seating. The current configuration

of the diagonal parking was also a concern for residents as a safety hazard when pulling out of parking spaces into fast-moving traffic.

Parks and green space

The lack of parks and green space was a concern as well, particularly those with young children or those wanting to attract young families to the area. Some residents expressed concern that the increase in green spaces would attract crime.

Trash

Residents had concerns that the trash pickup wasn't sufficient, and the lack of dumpsters in commercial zones meant that the sidewalk trash was overflowing.

Lack of desirable retail

Residents said that people want to spend money in Essex but have no place to do so. There are few restaurants, no coffee shops, and a lack of overall desirable retail, experiential retail, or destinations for people to go to and spend time and money. There were also concerns about the proliferation of methadone clinics.

Events

Multiple residents and stakeholders expressed the success of events to draw people to Essex, including Essex Day, where the road would be closed and residents could gather, as well as the Farmers' Market.

Final Recommendations

The TAP panelists listened to all the stakeholder concerns and spent time discussing some of the best ways forward, taking into account the history of Essex, the surrounding community, and the panelists' own professional expertise.

Each recommendation includes a list of action items. Additionally, a list of funding sources is in the Appendix to explore. Overall, the recommendations provided at the conclusion of the TAP take into account the following pragmatic policies and strategies:



The panel recommends an organizational structure and implementation plan that addresses why the recommendations from previous reports did not come to fruition.

Action Items:

1. Hire a full-time coordinator to act as a Champion for The Boulevard.
2. Make the Task Force champions of this effort.
3. Identify sources of funding. Build sources of cash flow to employ this person or team for a minimum of 10 years.
4. Create engagement programs for minority and immigrant business and resident populations to account for the diverse population for the Essex and Sussex region.

Hiring a champion who is skilled at both business development and local politics. The following are characteristics and experience that should be prioritized when hiring for this position:

- **Business Development:** Attract, retain, and support local businesses on The Boulevard
- **Event Planning and Logistics:** Organize events and activities to attract people to The Boulevard
- **Volunteer Coordination & Supervision:** Organize teams of volunteers to help with events, programs, cleanups, etc.
- **Fundraising and Grants Management:** Raise funds to support new programs and manage grants professionally.
- **Cleaning and Greening:** Work with property owners, county officials, volunteers, and other stakeholders to reduce litter, graffiti, and defective streetscaping. Implement plantings, public art, and other beautification efforts.
- **Code Enforcement:** Identify problem properties and encourage owners and tenants to keep their properties in a safe, sanitary, and code-compliant condition. If they are unwilling to do so, coordinate ongoing code enforcement and reporting activities to engage government officials in enforcing legal standards.
- **Marketing and Communications:** Maintain an ongoing stream of positive public communication through social media, email lists, press releases and public events.
- **ULI TAP Implementation:** Coordinate stakeholders to implement the recommendations of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP). Develop and implement management tools to track progress on TAP implementation over time.

01 Organizational Change

Install a board of directors to get as many stakeholders and leaders to the table as possible, including ex-officio members.

The board of directors should be made up of representatives from organizations including the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce, business leaders, political leaders of Essex and Sussex, minority resident and business representation, representatives from the SHA, County staff, Council, County Executive and state legislators' offices.

When considering overarching leaders for the Essex champion position, the panel recommends having both the Task Force be the lead, and the Champion report to the Task Force directly. The overall leadership should include both a 501c3 and a 501c6 organization and, as some groups can donate or collaborate more closely with one organization and not the other.

Identify funding resources

The panel recommends taking a flexible approach to funding and seeking creative ways that the projects surrounding Essex can qualify for federal, state and local funding. A complete list of funding sources is included in the appendix.

The panel recommends that any planning with Essex focus around the assets that the area does have - access to major employers and a highly visible block of county-owned, waterfront property that is underutilized. This report details ideas to leverage both of these assets, and any planning going forward should make sure that both of these assets are included.

Create engagement programs for minority and immigrant business and resident populations

The panel recommends that any overseeing body or champion of Essex create an engagement program for minority and immigrant business and resident populations. This will be important as the area grows in population and establishes itself as a quality place to live near the major employment centers.

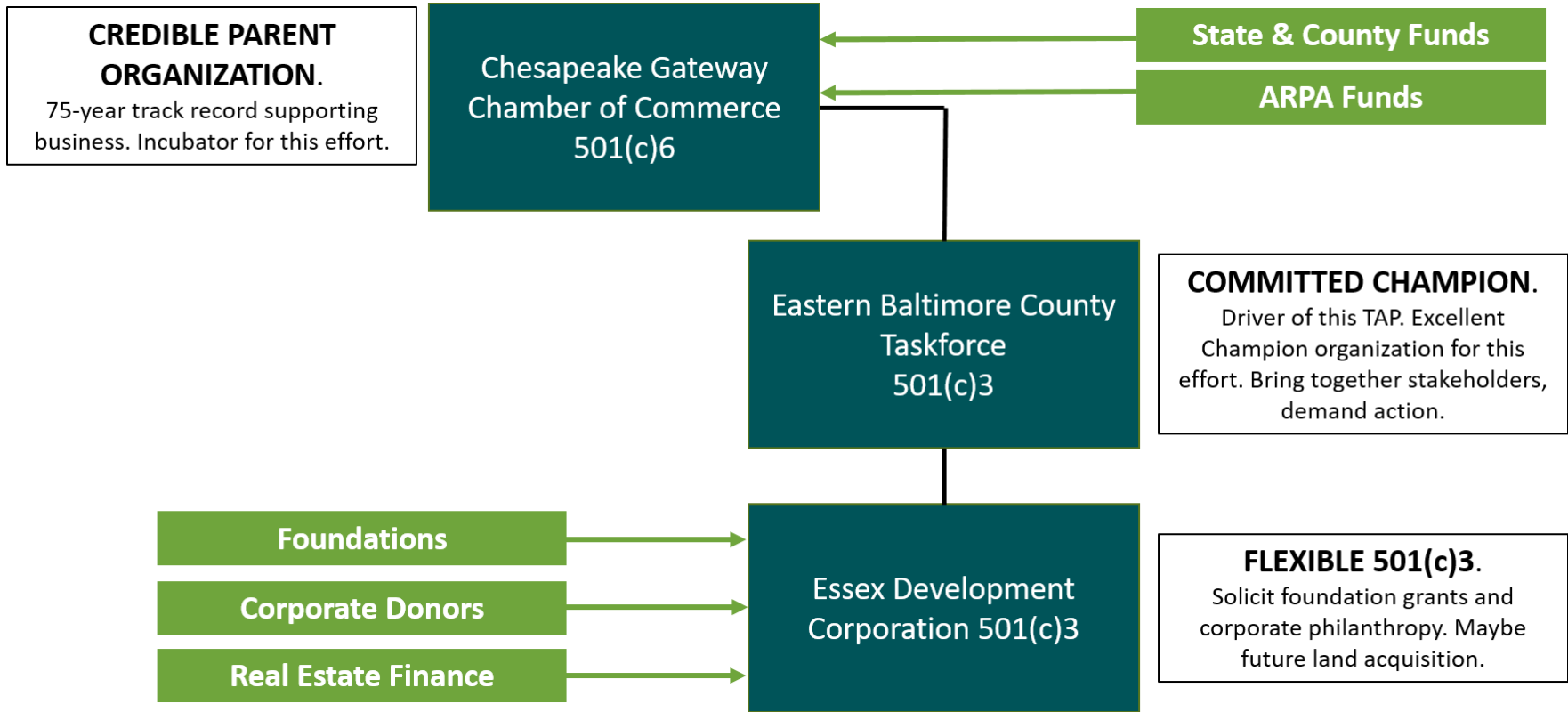


Illustration of structure and roles of the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce and their entities.

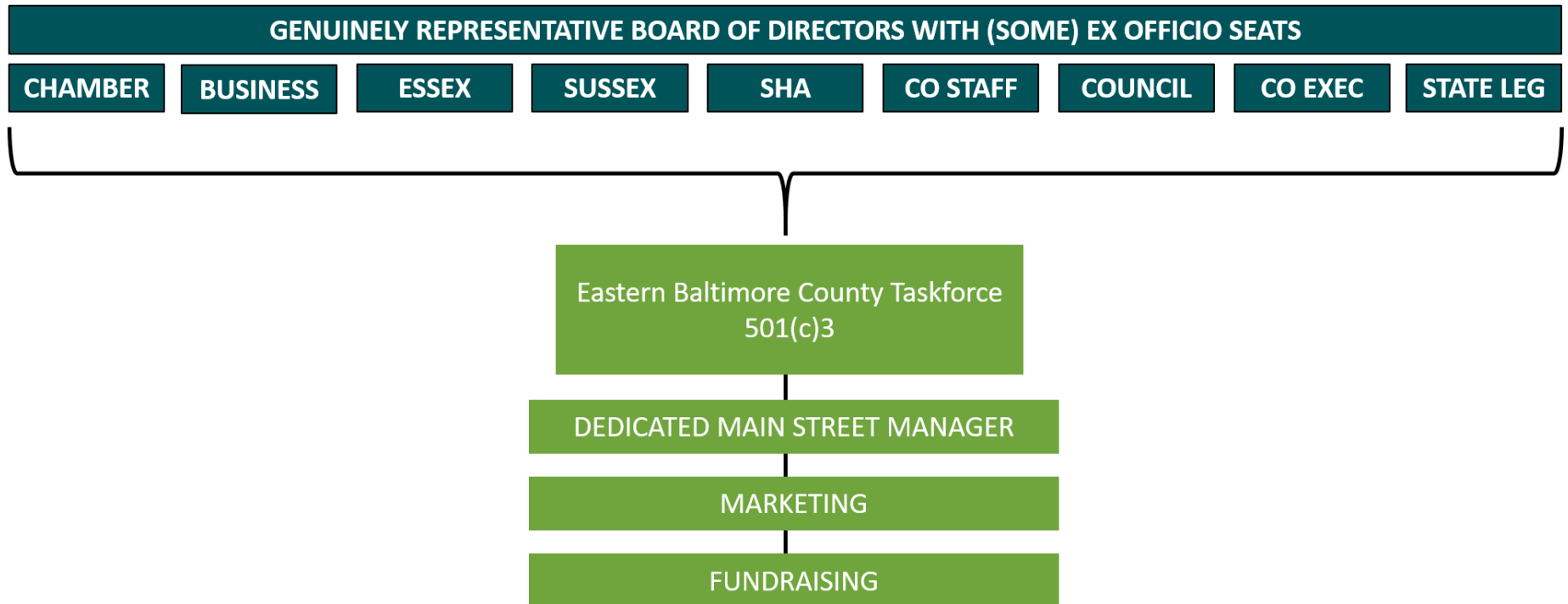


Illustration of Potential Board of Directors and structure.

The panel immediately noticed the high speed of the cars traveling down The Boulevard, and the lack of pedestrian safety measures and crosswalks. The corridor is posted as 30 mph, though cars are traveling at speeds of 50 mph coming off the Back River Bridge or from the higher-speed road of 702. There is not much in the road currently to slow cars down.

The panel explored the idea of eliminating lanes but found that the daily traffic volume of Eastern Boulevard (30,000) is too high to allow for this. However, it is still possible to make significant improvements that address both speed and pedestrian safety.

Action items

1. Change the road configurations to slow traffic
2. Add pedestrian safety measures
3. Install speed signage and speed cameras (if necessary in the short term)
4. Capitalize on the County and SHA Water line reconstruction
5. RFP for remaining improvements along the Boulevard

Change the road configurations to slow traffic:

The current road is 67 feet from curb to curb, allowing too much space for cars to speed and not enough space for pedestrians and parking. Narrowing the lanes will slow down the speed of traffic. The panel recommends making changes so that the configuration is:

- 8 foot parking lines on each side (16 feet)
- 2 travel lanes in each direction, 10 feet + 11 feet. The 11 foot lane is the one close to the median curb (42 feet)
- Remaining 9 feet should be used for upgrading the median/center island, including additional landscaping.

Pedestrian safety measures:

The panel recommends building curb bump outs at crosswalks. This allows pedestrians to walk fewer feet in the road. The panel recommends adding a refuge in the middle of the median allowing pedestrians to cross without stepping up. The pedestrian signals need to be updated to current standards. The panel also recommends considering road treatments or stamped concrete to make the crosswalks more visible.

Install speed signage and speed cameras (if necessary)

Speed signage will add visibility to drivers and encourage them to slow down. If speed signage does not help in slowing traffic, the panel recommends exploring speed cameras. Any revenue generated from the speed cameras can be used to fund repairs and improvements to The Boulevard. There is local precedent for this - Baltimore legislators changed state law to allow speed cameras on JFX (I-83) with the stipulation that revenue raised would go to the road's repairs and upkeep.

Pedestrian safety measures:

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Illustration on next page provides examples of enhancements, pedestrian refuges, and bumps that can be incorporated to improve pedestrian safety.



Illustration of possible roadways improvements along Eastern Boulevard



Examples of pedestrian refuges



Examples of bump outs

Understanding Contents of Eastern Blvd.

The 1.9-mile corridor along Eastern Boulevard was divided into three sections. First is the section from 702 to Marlyn Avenue. This section is heavily auto dependent and, therefore, no suggestions were made. The second section runs from Marlyn Avenue to Woodward Drive. This section of the study area contains many single-family home conversions into office and retail and no specific suggestions were made at this time. Finally, the third section runs from Woodward Drive to the Back River Bridge. This is the heart of Essex's main street and is the focus of the recommendations that were made by the Panel.



The panel recommends different opportunities and design strategies to increase foot traffic downtown and improve the streetscape. The panel also is looking into ways to bring more people downtown through events and have identified different spaces and locations that would be ideal hosts.

Action items

1. RFP for the park and ride
2. Create more downtown events, including an event calendar
3. County engagement for key properties
4. RFP for Parking survey

Park and Ride Development

The panel recommends turning the Park and Ride into a mid-rise, higher density market rate multi-family development. There are opportunities for a walking trail to connect to the single-family homes that already exist and the nearly four acres mean there is enough space to include waterfront dining that will become a gateway when coming north from the bridge. There are opportunities to retain the park and ride formula on that lot, either with shared parking in the parking lot itself or with an adjacent lot. The fact that this is publicly-owned means that it is an ideal spot for opportunities in the area.

The panel recommends exploring a branded collaborative partnership with Tradepoint Atlantic to have this multi-family housing prioritized for their employees, with an optional shuttle to bring the employees to Tradepoint Atlantic for work. The panel recommends leveraging this asset by either leasing or selling it to a developer to spark the local economy; the proceeds from this development can be invested back into the community.

This process begins with an RFP. The advantage of an RFP is to generate ideas and make sure the entire lot is best able to meet the needs and demands of the community, as outlined in this report. It is important to remember that the actual development may take up to three years to complete.

Events

The panel recommends an increase in events to bring more people downtown. We heard from stakeholders that when events do happen, people come and are willing to spend money and time downtown. The panel recommends more frequent events to motivate people to come back to the area.

The additional foot traffic also can drive business to local merchants and increase demand for more storefronts. We recommend that the champion of The Boulevard create a calendar of events with a year's timeline of things that people can look forward to and plan on attending. These events can include:

- Food trucks and a band in the public parking lots.
- Friday happy hour, close down part of the street.
- Continuation of Essex Days
- Tailgate events

The panel recommends having events in the following spaces and the calendar of events should rely heavily on these spaces:

- Lot in between Fruitland and Crabland (#2)
- Public Parking lot (#5)
- 418 Vacant Lot (#6)

The panel has provided the following recommendations on how to use the following underutilized space to better serve the community of Essex and revitalize the downtown (see illustration on next page).

1. Park and Ride
2. Fruitland/Crabland
3. Wiltshire Corner
4. 311 Garage
5. Eye Candy and public lot
6. 418 vacant lot (home of Champion)
7. 431 two-story building
8. The panel recommends utilizing the 500 Eastern Boulevard block (the former A+P space) for shared parking conditions. There are opportunities here for a multi-family mixed use



Illustration of development and event space opportunities

1. Park & Ride



Dockside Restaurant



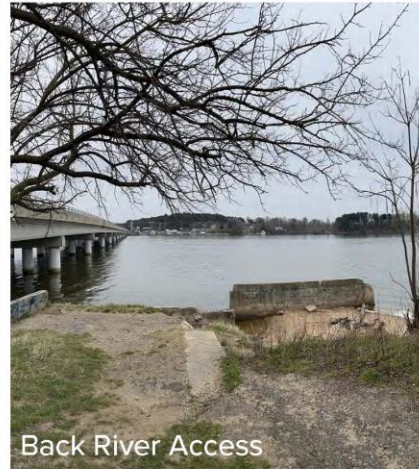
Multi-Family



Collaborative Development



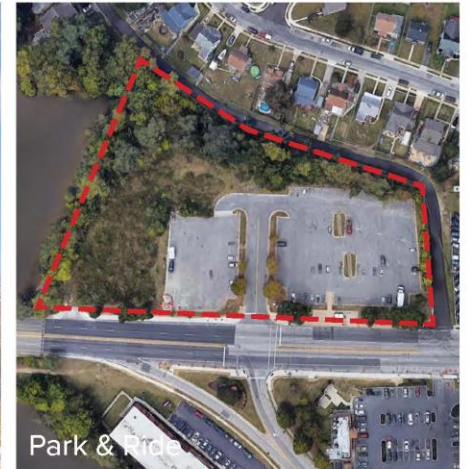
Waterfront Views



Back River Access



Iconic Gateway Building



Park & Ride

2. Fruitland



Shared Branding



Fresh Fruits & Produce



Seafood Market



Food Truck Opportunities

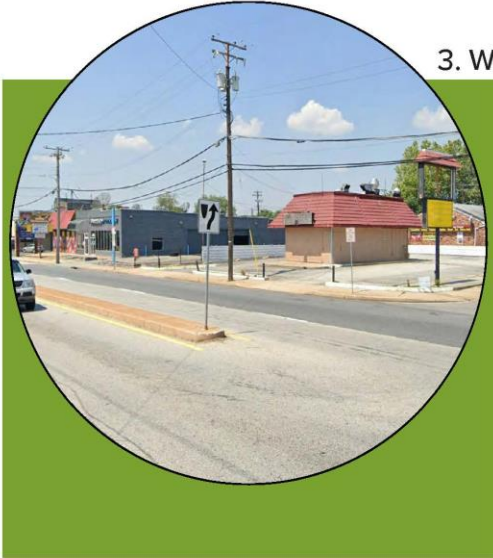


Book Fairs



Pop-Up Stalls

3. Wiltshire Corner



Reid's Jerk Shack



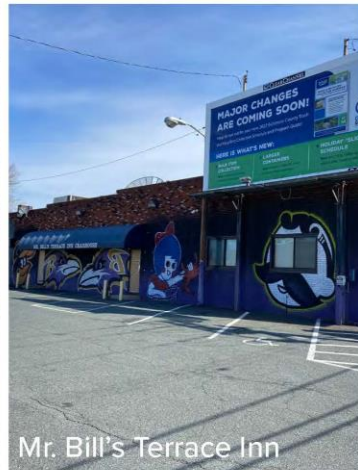
After Hours Dining



Wiltshire Corner Plan



Creative Use of Parking Lots



Mr. Bill's Terrace Inn



Maximize Outdoor Space

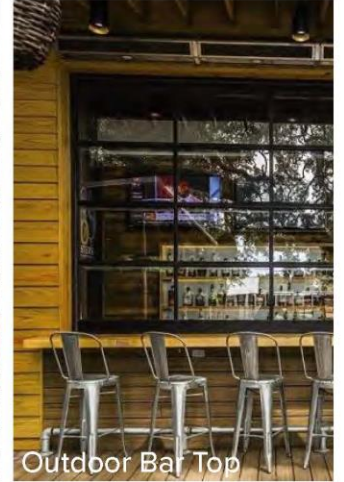
4. 311 Garage



Building Re-Use



Industrial Feel



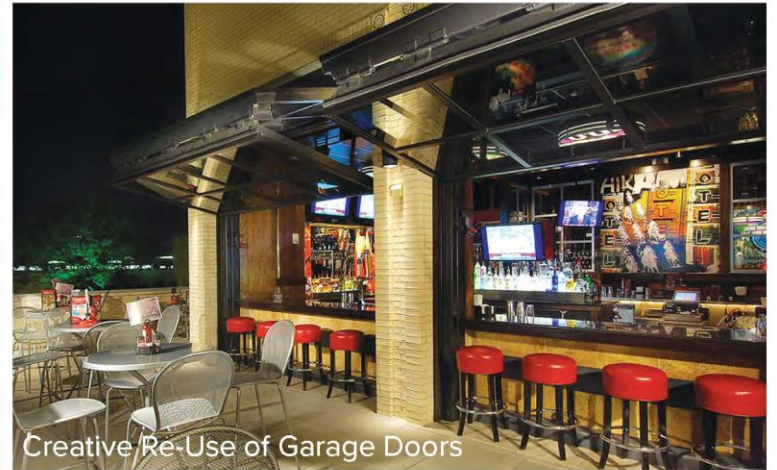
Outdoor Bar Top



Spill-Out Dining



Shade Structures



Creative Re-Use of Garage Doors

5. Eye Candy & Public Lot



Food Trucks



Creative Pop-Ups



Public Lot



Food Truck Opportunities



Tailgate Events



Creative Re-Use of Garage Doors

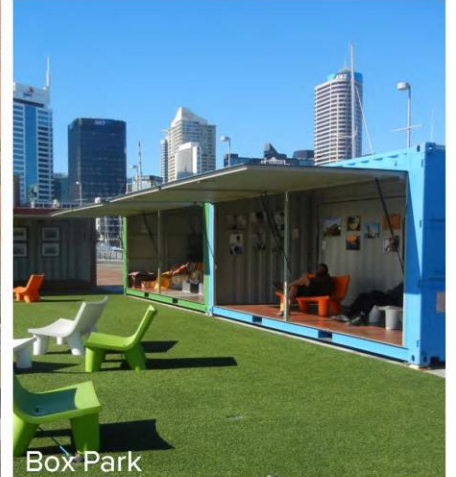
6. 418 Vacant Lot



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

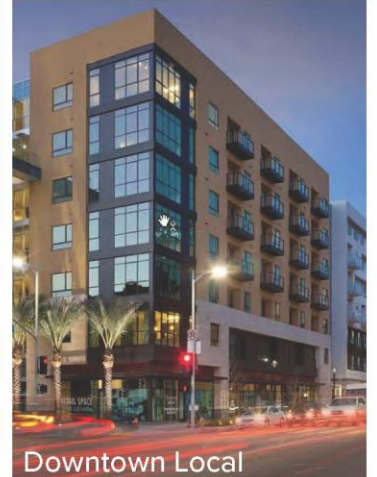
8. Former A&P



Mixed-Use Building



Courtyard Amenities



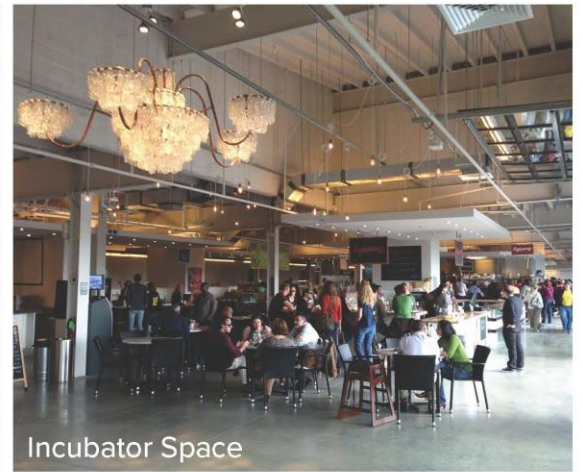
Downtown Local



Markethall Streetscape



Added Parking



Incubator Space

County engagement for key properties

The panel recommends the County and/or the Essex Development Corporation lease key vacant buildings along The Boulevard. The county, with help from the champion, can then sublease space to a variety of retail and business enterprises that will provide the retail and business needs of Essex and Sussex. Such uses could include start-up restaurants, a permanent home for the champion, and incubator businesses that hopefully grow and move to permanent locations on The Boulevard.

Lease terms should be structured to maintain flexibility for redevelopment but must include adequate revenue, so landlords will implement critical facade improvements. Key properties could include 418 Eastern Boulevard, 431 Eastern Boulevard, and the 500 block of Eastern Boulevard.

Parking Survey

The panel recommends a parking survey because of the mixed perception from the community about whether there is too much, too little, or just enough parking along The Boulevard. A parking ratio could be created to determine what the parking needs are and will be as retail comes back to The Boulevard.

Action items

1. Create an Essex Boulevard Overlay District
2. RFP for complete market analysis from Middle River to the Back River.
3. Cleaning and Greening Streetscape

The panel recommends the creation of a district overlay zone to promote maximum flexibility for development for The Boulevard. A district overlay zone allows property owners to develop under existing zoning, should they so choose. But such designation would incentivize property owners to think bigger and encourage the type of development the panel thinks would revitalize The Boulevard.

A district overlay zone works by providing incentives (such as greater density or taller buildings) to develop under the overlay zone. It also can require architectural and signage enhancements, and Essex Design Guidelines can be a starting point. The current zoning is restrictive with height, use, and may turn new development ideas away. By creating an overlay, there will be more room to bring in new development ideas.

In addition, a market study specific to The Boulevard can help with additional planning and understanding the needs for the residents and customers of the area.

Our initial perceptions were the significant number of dedicated and passionate business owners and trade services along Eastern Boulevard. There is a limited arrival experience without a central gathering space downtown.

Action Items

1. Adopt a common name everyone can use: the Boulevard
2. Issue an RFP to build on the ideas created during the TAP

Adopt a common name everyone can use: The Boulevard

The panel recommends creating a separate focus and description for downtown more specific to Essex rather than “Gateway to the Chesapeake.” The panel recommends calling the downtown area “The Boulevard” so that people can understand visually when you say something, what it means spatially in context. While there are many names and phrases currently used by different constituents for the Eastern Boulevard corridor, it is usually best to adopt the most widely used colloquial term. It should also be descriptive and easy to say. While Eastern Boulevard is accurate, “The Boulevard” is concise and descriptive. It is a name Essex can “own” and rally around. The descriptor of “Downtown” can also be used or incorporated to further explain and describe the area, for example, “The Boulevard in Downtown Essex.”

Develop a logo and brand from there

Positioning. The panel recommends issuing an RFP for a branding campaign that focuses on what is unique about The Boulevard and utilizes that as a value proposition.

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)

Recommendation for a 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.

05 Sense of Place & Branding

Communication and Outreach

The panel recommends the creation of a new website for The Boulevard. This new web presence will visually reflect the new branding and messaging as well as list all the current retail and service businesses (by category), and key destinations and attractions (Heritage Society Museum, parks, waterfront, etc.) Additionally, events can be posted here and updated for residents and visitors. This website is also an opportunity to aggregate all the applicable government resources and programs available to current business owners and prospective businesses and developers considering investing in The Boulevard.

Additionally, the panel recommends this web site share success stories of local businesses, including what programs they utilized and how they obtained approval for them. For example, Rosemary and the façade improvement program for her Beauty Salon on The Boulevard.

Activation Strategy

The panel recommends that a comprehensive strategy should be developed to enhance existing events offered on The Boulevard, 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.

Innovative event ideas have worked in other markets—such as developing exciting partnerships between businesses and the community and making sure people see and hear about them. For example, creating block parties with music and kiosks, creating an Artwalk, etc. Encourage influencers and locals to promote these events and share them via their social networks, adding to the credibility and reach of these events. Allowing the community to provide feedback on what they want to see in future events could also help generate buzz and participation.

Identity Signage & Wayfinding

The panel recommends creating 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 south end by Back River that will replace the Cube, is the right approach. However, this particular design may be better suited at the center of downtown so pedestrians can approach and explore all the intricate scenes and depictions portrayed. The high speed of traffic off the bridge may not be conducive to properly experiencing the new monument. Instead, a large, bold name identifier (i.e. “The Boulevard”) would be better suited for this location. Similarly, the north end of The Boulevard can have a gateway entry identifier but may be a slightly different design based on the location and surrounding context. By making this more pedestrian-friendly and slowing down traffic, the area would become more of a walkable destination, and the new gateway sculpture could be placed in a small park where people can see the intricate details up close.

The panel recommends that wayfinding signage should be added to 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 also should be identified, as well as surrounding waterways and marinas, if applicable. When possible, the panel recommends eliminating the tremendous number of business signs cluttering The Boulevard, which make it difficult to see any wayfinding signage or streetscaping, such as banners. If smaller signs, such as blade signs, could be used instead, this would improve the look of the commercial district significantly.

To help build upon physical place-making 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.

Conclusion

As we think about the future of Essex and The Boulevard, we believe it's essential that the history of the region is never lost, but that there is a way to transition to a more attractive downtown that offers exceptional retail experiences for all.

We believe that the heart of moving forward lies with choosing the right champion and creating a steady funding stream so that The Boulevard will have someone keeping a close watch on "Everything Essex." Of all the action items the panel is listed, we cannot overstate the importance in bringing someone on board that can implement these recommendations. Without this, we believe improvements are far less likely to come to fruition and far more disjointed if and when they do. History has shown us that this has happened before, and Essex must take this first, immediate step to make sure it does not happen again.



Appendix: Previous Plans and Studies

The intention for the TAP is not to repeat the same findings, recommendations and conclusions that were developed in the following plans; but to instead tie them together in a modern and relevant action plan. It will take a shared responsibility between all community stakeholders, elected officials, civil servants and local organizations to realize this vision. Several plans and studies have been conducted that examined ways to revitalize the corridor. These include:

- Essex Central Business District (CBD) Revitalization on Strategy (1991)
- Eastern Baltimore County Revitalization on Strategy (1996)
- A Community Conservation on Plan for Essex-Middle River (1996)
- Gateway to the Water: A Vision for the Future of Essex-Middle River (2006), completed by the Urban Design Assistance Team (UDAT)
- Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan (2006)
- Sustainable Community Action Plan (2018)
- UMD Essex Market Study Summary: Eastern Boulevard and Back River Neck Road (2018)
- Essex Design Guidelines (2021)

Essex Revitalization Plan (1976)

This plan was funded as a result of decline in the Essex Central Business District. It contributed to expansions of highways, shopping malls, and traffic patterns on Eastern Boulevard. The Plan made significant public investment proposals including improvements to off-street parking, additional diagonal parking, sidewalk improvements including street trees, textured paving, benches, trash receptacles and street lighting, rehabilitation of the old fire house for reuse as a museum, and creation of public plazas. This plan was adopted by the Baltimore County Planning Board as part of the master plan in 1976.

Essex Central Business District (CBD) Revitalization Strategy (1991)

Baltimore County adopted this community plan as part of the master plan. Focused on revitalization of the 400 and 500 blocks between Mace Ave and Woodward Ave., this plan intended to address the same foundational problems facing the corridor today. This plan did not translate into real world results.

[Eastern Baltimore County Revitalization Strategy \(1996\)](#)

Baltimore County adopted community plan as part of the master plan. Bigger picture plan for the eastern region of Baltimore County. This plan came as a response to larger market forces of de-industrialization that transformed the economic base of the region. Larger heavy industries have traditionally given the region character and livelihood Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point Plan and the Glenn L. Martin Aviation Company. De-industrialization has hollowed out the job market over the years, leaving a suburban community with a declining tax base, declining labor force and aging population. The plan focused on transforming the job and economic market by leveraging the waterfront, strong labor force and the Essex Central Business District (CBD) to grow job opportunities. Essex and much of the eastern region of Baltimore County still experiences many of the impacts of de-industrialization and its ripple effects. Despite this, new opportunities like TradePoint Atlantic and Greenleigh have generated new investment and growth, but bottom-up local economic development is still needed.

[A Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River \(1996\)](#)

Baltimore County adopted community plan as part of the master plan. For the greater Essex/Middle River region to provide a plan to stabilize neighborhoods, coordinate efforts between all stakeholders, and develop strategies to solving specific problems. The four key pillars are community development, social enrichment, economic and employment opportunities, and land use. Specific actions and objectives were laid out.

Gateway to the Water: A Vision for the Future of Essex-Middle River (2006) completed by the Urban Design Assistance Team (UDAT)

An extensive planning and visioning program that is still relevant today on Eastern Boulevard in Essex and Middle River. This plan is more of a design and visioning document rather than a systematic planning, development and policy document. The vision of this plan is still desired. A TAP can supplement this plan to lay out a concrete set of steps to create the conditions needed to realize the UDAT.

[Eastern Baltimore County Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan \(2006\)](#)

Baltimore County adopted community plan as part of the master plan. The intent is to guide the expansion of alternative forms of transportation networks through bicycle and pedestrian access. New infrastructure projects, development projects and plans encourage bicycle and pedestrian access. The Eastern Region of Baltimore County is still primarily auto-oriented, but some improvements have been made. There is a strong desire to focus on walkable neighborhoods. Eastern Boulevard is one network that

can benefit from reduced auto-oriented development and roadways, and more pedestrian and bicycle oriented development.

Sustainable Community Action Plan (2018)

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Sustainable Communities Program is a place-based designation offering a comprehensive package of resources that support holistic strategies for community development, revitalization and sustainability. Led by the Department, Sustainable Communities has provided local governments with a framework for promoting environmentally, economically and socially responsible growth and development in existing older communities. Essex completed their sustainable community designation in 2018, and has since received Community Legacy Funding to help fund specific projects identifies in the sustainable community plan. The plan not only identifies a list of actionable projects, but it also provides funding and resources for implementation. In recent years, the Eastern Baltimore County Task Force has used funds for a Farmers' Market, street furniture, public art, and other projects in the Eastern Boulevard corridor. Essex is due for renewal in 2023.

UMD Essex Market Study Summary: Eastern Blvd and Back River Neck Road (2018)

This market study was completed for the Eastern Boulevard and Back River Neck Road corridors by the National Center for Smart Growth and The University of Maryland, College Park in 2018. The study focused on the real estate development and investment potential for the commercial market on the corridors.

Essex Design Guidelines (2021)

New design guidelines adopted by the County Council in the summer of 2021. The guidelines intend to serve as quality assurance for new improvements, to ensure a cohesive sense of place and to encourage high quality human-scaled design. All exterior improvements will be reviewed by the Baltimore County Design Review Committee to provide guidance and recommendations. Meeting guidelines is voluntary, with no incentives or legal requirements for compliance

Appendix: Potential Funding Sources

These potential funding sources and tools may support implementation of short, medium, and long-term projects that consultants recommended as part of the TAP. Funding programs change, new programs emerge, and there are likely other relevant sources beyond those here. Other funding may be available for specific initiatives; organizations should meet with elected officials regarding potential budget allocations or to explore other options.

Additional sources and information for grant seekers are:

- [The Enoch Pratt Library Central Branch](#) at 400 Cathedral St. in Baltimore
- [Maryland Nonprofits](#)

Type of Funding	Notes & Additional Information
1 Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding	Baltimore County to receive \$160 million. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) CE committed \$3 million of ARPA directly to cross-agency Essex Recovery Initiative focused on reducing crime, improving quality of life post-COVID-19 b) Needs to focus on post-COVID recovery to help reduce crime, and improve public safety, housing, job opportunities, racial equity, etc.
2 Federal funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Federal Infrastructure Bill. MDOT received \$50 million to make transit and pedestrian improvements along the east/west corridor, including Eastern Blvd. in Essex. b) Opportunity Zones. Starting at Duck Creek South of Eastern Blvd to Middle River Bridge
3 State Department of Transportation (MDOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consolidated Transportation Program: 6-year capital budgeting process for transportation projects. b) Maryland Bikeways Program: Supports expanding connections Sidewalk retrofit programs administered by local jurisdictions with MDOT support.
4 State Department of Housing and Community Development	Many funding programs and initiatives, highlighting some of them here that are featured on their website from these pages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Communities/Pages/programs/default.aspx

- <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Business/Pages/default.aspx>
- a) **State Revitalization Program Grants** typically due @June/July:
 For designated Sustainable Community Areas (Essex is in a designated area so is eligible), eligible applicants for are local governments and nonprofits. Typically, all state funds require review by Maryland Historical Trust and will not fund liquor stores, adult entertainment, or churches.
- i. **Community Legacy:** Approximately \$5-8 million in capital funding available annually Statewide to support revitalization projects and programs such as streetscaping, business façade improvements, housing renovation, etc. – the Eastside Task Force has received these funds to support capital improvement projects in Essex
 - ii. **Strategic Demolition Fund:** (Statewide) Up to \$500,000 in capital funding for predevelopment costs including design, building/land acquisition and assembly, and demolition and/or redevelopment of dilapidated property
 - iii. **SEED Community Development Anchor Institution Program** – eligible applicants are hospitals or higher education institutions (such as Franklin Square or CCBC) – grants or loans to anchor institutions for capital improvement projects in blighted areas (loosely defined, need not be on the institution campus) – must have a 50% cash match.
- b) **State Operating Assistance Grants** typically due @April/May:
- i. Technical Assistance Grant – up to \$50,000 per year – any nonprofit Statewide can apply – can be used to support staffing costs or hire consultants – Eastern Baltimore County Task Force has received these funds to support staff time for work in Essex
 - ii. Main Street Improvement Grant – IF Essex were to become part of the Maryland Main Street program, an application that is submitted by the jurisdiction (Baltimore County) to designate the area – then Essex may become eligible for Main Street Improvement grants up to \$50,000 per year. Current Maryland main Streets in Baltimore County include Reisterstown and Dundalk (full designation) and Towson (affiliate)
- c) **Other State DHCD Programs**
- i. **Community Safety Enhancement Program:** If available, supports community safety programs and capital improvements that enhance safety
 - ii. **Neighborhood Business Works:** Loans up to \$5m for small businesses and nonprofits in sustainable community areas, can be used to match other sources for building acquisition, renovation, retail, mixed use, major equipment, etc. No community halls, fire stations, hospitals, universities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Project Restore: NEW funding round to be announced Summer 2022 - financial support for new or expanding businesses to help incentivize commercial investment in vacant retail and commercial properties – property assistance, business operations grants iv. Small Business Credit Initiative v. Homeowner Assistance Fund: Assists homeowners at risk of foreclosure via network of nonprofit service providers funded by the program vi. Maryland Mortgage Program: Low-interest home purchase financing <p>d) Rental Housing Works and other housing development financing programs can support developers in building workforce housing</p>
<p>5 Other State Departments and Programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Maryland Energy Administration: Incentives for businesses and homeowners to reduce energy consumption through increasing efficiency and/or adopting renewable energy sources – see EmPower Maryland programs and range of local providers including BGE, Diversified Housing Development, Civic Works b) Department of Commerce: Job Creation Tax Credit – eligible businesses that locate in a sustainable community can get a tax credit up to \$5,000 per new job created – c) Maryland Economic Development Corporation: Facilitates financing for public-private partnership projects including major institutions, transit projects, redevelopment projects. d) Maryland Department of Planning: Tax Increment Financing in designated sustainable community areas – can be used to generate financing that pays for infrastructure investments based upon future increase in property values from projected development.
<p>6 Baltimore County Department of Planning</p>	<p>Planning is in the process of hiring a Commercial Districts Planner, until then, contact the Department of Planning or visit this website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Commercial Revitalization Area Grants (CRAG): Chambers and nonprofit organizations focused on commercial revitalization districts may apply for support of events, marketing, and public improvements that benefit the business district. Annual grant process typically due @September 30, \$10,000 per organization, sometimes more funding is available and/or multiple proposals are welcome from the same applicant. Used by Eastern Baltimore County Task Force. b) Countywide Improvement Funds (CIF): Capital funding for physical improvements, more details later in Summer-Fall 2022. c) Building Improvement Loan Program (BILP): Building Improvement Loan Program (BILP) provides up to a \$30,000 interest-free loan which can be used for exterior improvements such as awnings, landscaping and signage.

		<p>d) <u>Commercial Revitalization Tax Credits</u> – for larger projects, provides a 5-year real property tax credit if physical improvements increase assessed property value by \$50,000 or more. Larger 10 year tax credit if improvement costs exceed \$10 million.</p> <p>e) <u>Architect On-Call</u> – up to 10 free hours of architectural design services to exterior improvements to buildings. Contact Marta Kulchytska at mkuchytska@baltimorecountymd.gov - Learn more here:</p>
7	Baltimore County Department of Economic and Workforce Development	<p>Multiple loan programs for small, medium, and larger businesses described here.</p> <p>a) One such program is the Boost loan fund for small, minority-owned, women-owned, or veteran-owned businesses. \$50,000- \$250,000 with a reduced down payment, lower interest rates, max 20-year term with flexible payment plans. Funds can be used for start-up costs, working capital, property improvements, or acquisition. Little Crystal Bijoux in the Dundalk Main Street has used.</p> <p>b) Small Business Resource Center: Provides technical assistance to businesses on start-up and expansion plans, assists in developing business plans. They can collaborate with you and meet businesses in the Essex area. They can also provide advice on applying for loans. Dundalk Renaissance Corporation (DRC) has partnered with them extensively to assist pop-up shop tenants and other Main Street businesses.</p>
8	Baltimore County Department of Housing & Community Development	<p>a) Public Service and Homeless Services RFP: These grants typically due @ February 1st each year include a mix of federal and county funds and are generally directed toward addressing social services needs in the County. Public Service funds may be available to help support the revitalization of a low-income area—this is language used in projects funded with federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Homeless Services federal funds are directed toward preventing homelessness or supporting those experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>b) Housing Finance Programs, Including Development, Rehabilitation, and Purchase Assistance - Federal funds from the Department of Housing and Community Development may be available to support single-family home renovations or larger-scale multifamily housing developments for workforce housing and/or people with incomes that are 80% or below the regional median income. Funds may also be available for current homeowners with lower incomes to assist with repairs. Finally, Housing Counseling agencies funded by Baltimore County can also provide assistance with Settlement Expense Loans to make the costs of purchasing a home more affordable.</p>
9	Baltimore County Council	<p>a) Planned Unit Development (PUD): This is a tool for implementing development proposals that may involve different density levels or a mix of uses not permitted by right under current zoning, but for which a case can be made that the development will positively contribute to the surrounding area. The County Council votes on PUD legislation.</p> <p>b) Comprehensive Zoning Map Process (CZMP): This the main way that the County’s zoning map is changed and it takes place every 4 years. Any citizen may request a zoning change on any property in the county, although the usual participants in the process are individual landowners, contract purchasers, community</p>

organizations, as well as Baltimore County’s Planning staff, Planning Board, and County Council members. The County Council votes to adopt the zoning map.

10 **Potential Partnerships and Leveraging Other Funding**

- a) **Foundations** – support for business development and “Main Street” style revitalization strategies in suburban areas can be difficult to find. One potential source is the Baltimore Community Foundation. The Weinberg Foundation is also interested in addressing poverty issues in Baltimore County and it is possible that a workforce development program or other approach that addresses increasing the capacity of individuals and families facing challenging economic circumstances may also have positive benefits for a commercial area.
- b) **Other Non-profits offering complementary services** – to address housing conditions in the neighborhoods adjacent to Eastern Blvd., you could consider partnering with entities such as Dundalk Renaissance Corporation, which is providing bilingual housing and financial counseling, income tax preparation, and senior home repair services to residents in the Dundalk, Essex, and Rosedale areas. Community Assistance Network provides food pantry services, and homeless shelter, transitional housing, and day care on the east side. These are just examples.
- c) **Institutional Partners and Major Employers** such as Franklin Square Hospital, Community College of Baltimore County, and TradePoint Atlantic may offer additional opportunities to partner regarding business development, workforce development, and workforce housing as well as advocacy on improved transit, bicycle, and pedestrian connectivity.
- d) **Baltimore County Public Library** offers a wide range of programs including some business development classes that may be useful.

About ULI Baltimore

A District Council of the Urban Land Institute

ULI Baltimore is metropolitan regional District Council for the Urban Land Institute, serving Central Maryland and other parts of Maryland. ULI is a nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information and experience among local, national and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places. Founded in 1936, the Institute now has more than 40,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines in private enterprise and public service. The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land to create and sustain thriving communities worldwide.

About ULI Baltimore's TAP Program

The objective of ULI Baltimore's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Baltimore Region. Like ULI District Councils throughout the country, ULI Baltimore utilizes its broad membership base to administer one- or two-day panels and offer objective and responsible advice to local stakeholders and decision makers on a diverse set of land use issues. These issues can range from site-specific projects to public policy strategies. The flexibility of the TAP program enables ULI Baltimore to present a customized approach for each TAP, one that allows panelists to study and address specific contextual issues.



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