BALTIMORE IN 1752.

The History of Baltimore

In 1752 John Moale sketched a rough drawing of Baltimore Town as seen from Federal Hill. In 1817 Edward Johnson Coale repainted this view, adding picturesque embellishments.

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Four centuries of decisions made by millions of people have created Baltimore City. Sometimes, these decisions – local, national, or global in scale – have challenged the very existence of Baltimore City. At other times, these decisions have created opportunities for Baltimore to grow, transform, and thrive.

Within this continual sea of decision making, Baltimoreans have successfully steered their City through global turmoil, economic booms and busts, political and social upheaval, and the extraordinary consequences of technological change. Throughout Baltimore's history, its leadership responded to a number of seemingly insurmountable challenges by reinventing the City many times: brilliant Baltimoreans have invented and improved upon a vast range of technologies; shrewd businessmen have seized mercantile advantages; philanthropists have dramatically improved the lives of people within Baltimore and across the globe; and civic-minded citizens have organized and re-organized local government and the City's civic institutions. The next few pages will chronicle moments in Baltimore's history when hard, culture-defining choices had to be made. These choices reveal the tenacity, ingenuity, and genius of Baltimore and its residents.
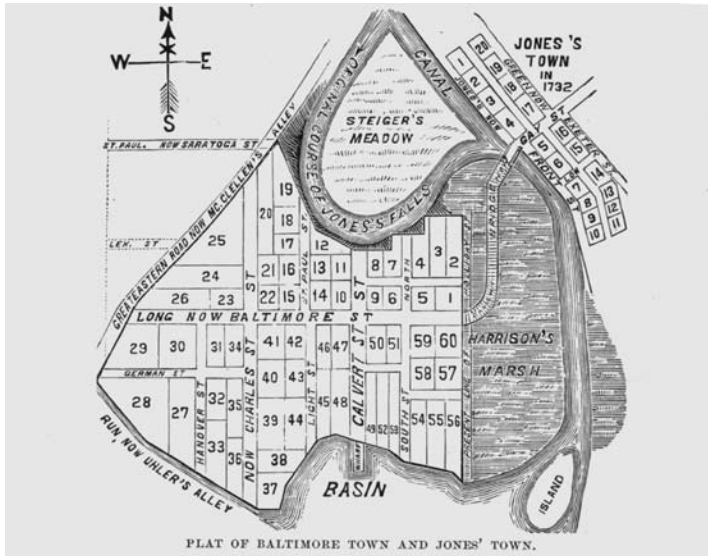
Map showing Baltimore and Jonestown in the mid-18th Century.

1729 to 1752 – The Beginning

There was nothing unusual in 1729 when several wealthy Marylanders pushed through the State Legislature a town charter for Baltimore. Town charters were issued routinely across the State in those times. In 1730, Baltimore Town was established with sixty lots, one-acre each, and located on the north side of the Inner Basin of the Patapsco River (now the Inner Harbor). These lots were squeezed in between a shallow harbor on the south; the Jones Falls River and marsh on the east; a bluff and woods on the north; and large gullies on the west. In 1745, Jonestown, a small settlement just east of the Jones Falls, was merged into Baltimore, adding twenty more lots to the town. By 1752, only twenty-five buildings had been constructed in Baltimore– a rate of approximately one building per year. Shortly after 1752, the pace changed.

1752 to 1773 – Seizing the Geography

The rise of Baltimore from a sleepy town trading in tobacco to a city rivaling Philadelphia, Boston, and New York began when Dr. John Stevenson, a prominent Baltimore physician and merchant, began shipping flour to Ireland. The success of this seemingly insignificant venture opened the eyes of many Baltimoreans to the City's most extraordinary advantage– a port nestled alongside a vast wheat growing countryside, significantly closer to this rich farm land than Philadelphia.

The town exploded with energy, and Baltimoreans restructured the City's economy based on flour. Trails heading west were transformed into roads; flour mills were built along the Jones Falls, Gwynns Falls, and Patapsco River; and merchants built warehouses on thousand-foot long wharves that extended into the harbor. Soon, the roads from Baltimore extended all the way to Frederick County and southern Pennsylvania, and Baltimore ships sailed beyond Ireland to ports in Europe, the Caribbean, and South America.

The City's widening reach was also apparent in the foreign-born populations it attracted. In 1756 a group of nine hundred Acadians, French-speaking Catholics from Nova Scotia, made what homes they could in an undeveloped tract along the waterfront. This pattern would be repeated by numerous groups over subsequent decades and centuries: entry into Baltimore's harbor, a scramble for housing near the centers of commerce, and a dispersion throughout the city as much as space, means and sometimes stigma would allow. But not all newcomers started at a disadvantage. During this period, Irish, Scottish and German families with experience and capital gained from milling in other parts of the region took advantage of the City's growth economy.

1773 to 1827 – Improving on the Geography

During the Revolutionary War, Baltimore contributed an essential ingredient for victory: naval superiority. By the 1770s, Baltimore had built the most maneuverable ships in the world. These ships penetrated British blockades and

VUE DU PORT DE BALTIMORE

outran pirates, privateers, and the Royal British Navy. The agility and speed of these ships allowed Baltimore merchants to continue trading during the Revolutionary War, which in turn helped to win the war and to propel Baltimore's growth from 564 houses in 1774 to 3,000 houses in the mid 1790s.

From the late 1770s through the 1790s, Baltimore was loaded with boom-town energy. Baltimore's Town Commissioners implemented a number of critical public works projects and legislative actions to guide this energy: Fells Point merged with Baltimore (1773); a Street Commission was created to lay-out and pave streets (1782); and a Board of Port Wardens was created to survey the harbor and dredge a main shipping channel (1783). Street lighting followed in 1784 along with the establishment of "Marsh Market," and the straightening of the Jones Falls. In 1797 Baltimore was officially incorporated as a city, which allowed local officials to create and pass laws. In 1798 George Washington described Baltimore as the "risingest town in America" (A.T. Morison, George Washington).

Baltimore City at the beginning of the 19th century overcame many obstacles to growth. The northern shoreline of the Inner Harbor was extended two blocks south (Water Street marks the original location of the

This engraving of Baltimore was published in Paris and New York around 1834. Since 1752, Federal Hill has been the vantage point from which to view Baltimore.

Fairview Inn was located on the Old Frederick Road. The inn, known as the "three mile house," catered to farmers bringing wheat, flour, and produce to Baltimore. This image was painted by Thomas Coke Ruckle around 1829.

shoreline) and development expanded in all directions, usually following the turnpike roads that led from Baltimore's harbor to the rural hinterlands. In 1816, when the population reached 46,000 residents, Baltimore expanded its boundaries, increasing its size from three to ten square miles. Shortly thereafter, land surveyor Thomas Poppleton was hired to map the City and prepare a plan to control future street extensions. His plan consisted of a gridiron street pattern that created a hierarchy of streets: main streets, side streets and small alleys. This set in motion Baltimore's basic development pattern of various-sized rowhouses built on a hierarchical street grid. Catering to several economic classes, the larger streets held larger houses; the smaller cross streets held smaller houses; and the alleys held tiny houses for immigrants and laborers.

As Baltimore's port grew, its trade routes were extended to the Ohio Valley. In 1806 the Federal Government authorized the building of the National Road from the Ohio River to Cumberland, Maryland. In turn, Baltimore businessmen built turnpike roads from Baltimore to Cumberland, effectively completing the Maryland portion of the National Road. The Road quickly became Baltimore's economic lifeline to the fertile lands of the Ohio Valley. By 1827 Baltimore became the country's fastest growing city and the largest flour market in the world.

This 1865 view of Fort McHenry was published by E. Sachse and Company. Fort McHenry was the military post for Baltimore in the Civil War as well as a jail for Confederate prisoners.

At the same time, other economic forces were taking hold. Many mills along Jones Falls were converted to or built as textile mills. In 1808 the Union Manufacturing Company, built in the Mount Washington area, became one of America's first textile mills. Nearly twenty years later, mills along the Jones Falls were producing over 80% of the cotton duck (sail cloth) in the country. In addition, 60 flour and grist mills, 57 saw mills, 13 spinning and paper mills, 6 foundries, and 3 powder mills were located on streams near the City, and shipyards, brick kilns, copper and iron works, and glass factories were built along the shoreline of the harbor.

Baltimore also played a key role in the War of 1812. Privateers, essentially pirates supported by the U.S. government, played a decisive role in winning the War. At this time Baltimore shipbuilders built the fastest, most maneuverable ships in the world. Known as the "Baltimore Clipper," these ships allowed Baltimore ship captains to wreak havoc on England's maritime trade. Captain W.F. Wise of the Royal Navy said "In England we cannot build such vessels as your 'Baltimore Clippers.' We have no such models, and even if we had them they would be of no service to us, for we could never sail them as you do." Of the 2,000 English ships lost during the war, Baltimore privateers had captured 476 or almost 25% of them.

In 1829, the Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad built the Mount Clare Station. By 1900 it was a sprawling complex of 32 buildings. This building, the Mount Clare Passenger Car Shop, built in 1884, became the B&O Railroad Museum's principal building in 1953.

The British described Baltimore as 'a nest of pirates,' and the City soon became a military target. After the British burned Washington, DC, they sailed to Baltimore. The City, left to defend itself, looked to Revolutionary War hero General Samuel Smith to coordinate its defense. Following Smith's direction, every able-bodied man toiled for days, building a formidable defense at Hampstead Hill (now Patterson Park) and making preparations at Fort McHenry. A contemporary of Smith quipped "Washington saved his Country and Smith saved his City."

The Battle of Baltimore has been immortalized by not one but two American treasures. The Battle Monument erected between 1815 and 1825 was the first public war memorial in the country and the first memorial since antiquity to commemorate the common soldier. It lists every ordinary citizen who died in the battle. In addition, Francis Scott Key, who was being held prisoner on a British ship, observed the battle and recorded the event in a poem, which

The Washington Monument in 1835 sat on the grounds of "Howard's Woods." Baltimore's developed area ended a block south on Charles Street.

he set to the tune of an old drinking song. The Star Spangled Banner premiered in Baltimore in 1814 and became our National Anthem in the early 20th century.

As Baltimore grew in size and population, many social and cultural institutions were founded. As early as 1773, a theater opened in an old warehouse near current-day Power Plant Live. By 1800 there were three theaters and several theater companies. In 1797, directly across from the current-day City Hall, the Baltimore Dance Club built the New Assembly Room featuring a ball room and a subscription library. In 1814, Rembrandt Peale

built the first purpose-built museum building in the Western Hemisphere and the second in modern history. The Peale Museum exhibited paintings, sculpture, and the bones of a mastodon excavated in upstate New York. During the first half of the 19th century, Baltimore's cultural activities grew as literary, science and social clubs were formed.

The early 19th century was a great time for Baltimore. It seemed to be America's perennial boom town. It kept growing. It had energy. It was a city full of merchants of all kinds. Its sailing ships were the fastest, swiftest force on the world's oceans. In the 1830 national census, with its population of 80,000, Baltimore had become the second largest city in the United States. German settlers now made up a substantial part of this population (possibly some ten percent as early as 1796). Substantial numbers of Scotch-Irish moved overland from Pennsylvania while boatloads of newcomers from Ireland, Scotland and France were received as well. A number of the new French-speaking arrivals came by way of the Caribbean from Santo Domingo (present-day Haiti), displaced by a massive and ultimately successful slave revolt. The blacks among them may have added as much as 30% to the "colored" population of the town.

1827 to 1850 – The Looming Economic Downturn

In 1825, one boat completed a journey that indirectly shaped Baltimore's history for the next 100 years. The packet boat, Seneca Chief, operated by New York Governor Dewitt Clinton, journeyed from the eastern end of Lake Erie to New York City, thereby inaugurating the Erie Canal. A year later, 19,000 boats had transported goods to and from the Midwest and New York. The new freight rates from Buffalo to New York were $10 per ton by canal, compared to the cost of $100 per ton by road. The canal became by far the most efficient and affordable way to transport goods from the Midwest to the Atlantic Ocean.

As trade on the canal began to usurp trade on the National Road, Baltimoreans foresaw the City's economic power eroding. Baltimore's business leaders were on the verge of panic. They discussed all sorts of wild schemes and alternative canal locations, but Baltimore's geography prevented any of these schemes from becoming reality.

At this point, the luck and stubbornness of Baltimoreans began a course of events that reinvented the world, even making its arch nemesis, the Erie Canal, obsolete. Baltimore merchant Philip Evan Thomas while in England became convinced that England's "short railroads," which hauled coal from the mines to the canals, had long-distance potential. On February 12, 1827, Thomas and 25 other Baltimore merchants met "to take into consideration the best means of restoring to the City of Baltimore that portion of the western trade which has lately been diverted from it by the introduction of steam navigation [on the Mississippi] and by other causes [the Erie Canal]." Four days later, the men resolved "that immediate application be made to the legislature of Maryland for an act incorporating a joint stock company, to be named the Baltimore & Ohio Railway Company." Twelve days later, the Act of Incorporation for the company was approved.

Over a year later, on July 4, 1828, with $4,000,000 of capital stock already raised, Charles Carroll of Carrollton laid the "first stone" of the B&O Railroad. On May 22, 1830, the B&O Railroad began running operations from Baltimore to Ellicott's Mills, a distance of 13 1/2 miles. Finally, on December

Portrait of Frederick Douglass. Douglass spent his early years in Baltimore where he learned to read and write. In the late 1830s, Douglass escaped to freedom while impersonating a sailor.

24, 1852, the last spike was driven in Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), a distance of 379 miles.

In those few years, Baltimore citizens had decided how far apart the rails should be (4 feet 8 1/2 inches), had completely re-engineered the steam engine, and in fact had created the world's first long distance railroad, the world's first passenger railroad, and the world's first railroad that climbed over mountain tops. At the B&O railroad shops in West Baltimore, ingenious innovators perfected passenger and freight car design, continuously improved the steam locomotive design, and fabricated bridges for the growing railroad. Baltimoreans unleashed "mighty forces that were to revolutionize land transportation, alter the course of trade, make and unmake great cities, and transform the face of the country" (J. Wallace Brown).

An 1848 image of the Washington Monument from Charles and Hamilton streets. The squares were first laid out as simple lawns.

The B&O Railroad shops triggered technological innovation in architecture and engineering. Wendel Bollman, after working as an engineer for the B&O Railroad, developed the first cast-iron bridge system in the country. In 1850, the Hayward, Bartlett & Company, iron fabricators, moved next to the B&O Railroad shops and began producing much of the nation's cast-iron architectural components.

The telegraph became intertwined with the development and success of the B&O Railroad. In 1844, a telegraph line was completed from Baltimore to Washington, DC along the B&O Railroad tracks. First the telegraph lines were buried, but the lines kept failing. Finally, they were strung on poles, effectively bringing into existence the telephone pole. Later, the railroads and the telegraph, together, helped to implement standard time zones throughout the Country. Standard time zones were essential for railroads to safely schedule their trains, and the telegraph allowed cities across the country to synchronize their clocks.

The railroad's first year of operation coincided with a spike in immigration. The port's intake of foreigners doubled in 1830 and again in 1832, from 2,000 to 4,000 to 8,000 per year. Bavarian Jews, for example, settled in Oldtown on High, Lombard, Exeter and Aisquith streets.

1850 to 1866 – Baltimore at Mid-Century

Between 1850 and the Civil War, extraordinary changes spread through Baltimore's landscape. Cast-iron building technology transformed Baltimore's downtown. In 1851 the construction of the Sun Iron Building introduced cast-iron architecture to Baltimore and the nation. Its five-story cast-iron façade, iron

BALTIMORE.

An 1850s-era view of Mount Vernon Place in relation with downtown Baltimore.

post-and-beam construction, and sculptural detailing were copied throughout cities worldwide. Back in Baltimore, 18 months after the Sun Building opened, 22 new downtown buildings incorporated cast iron into their construction. In 1857 the Baltimore Sun noted, "literally, the City of yesterday is not the city of today… The dingy edifices that for half a century have stood…are one by one being removed, and in their places new and imposing fronts of brown stone or iron present themselves."

Baltimore was also remarkable during this time for the size and achievements of its African-American community. In 1820 it was the largest in the nation. Slave or free, no greater number of blacks could be found anywhere in the nation. By the time the Civil War erupted, the City contained 26,000 free blacks and approximately 2,000 slaves. Even more remarkable, during that same period Maryland alone accounted for one out of every five free blacks in the country.

African Americans struggled for a piece of Baltimore's economic activities. Prior to emancipation, it was common for slaves in the City to rent their skills and services for wages, part of which went to their masters and part of which could be used for food, accommodation and amusement. At the same time racism handicapped free blacks while competing with whites for skilled and unskilled jobs in the port economy. During times of recession, white working men sometimes resorted to violence to keep jobs among themselves.

1866 to 1899– Heading Towards Modernity

After the war, the City's industry gathered momentum. The advent of steam power in the 1820s released Baltimore's industry from its stream valleys, and new larger-scale industries were built close to the harbor. Baltimore's connections to the Bay's fishing industry and the fertile farm land around the Chesapeake Bay helped to concentrate canning factories around the harbor's edge. In fact, by the 1880s, Baltimore had become the world's largest oyster supplier and America's leader in canned fruits and vegetables. Complementing the canning industry was the fertilizer industry. Baltimore became the number one importer of guano, centuries-old bird droppings scraped off Pacific Coast islands near South America. Mixed with phosphates, guano became the most important fertilizer for the farms lining the Chesapeake Bay. By 1880, Baltimore had 27 fertilizer factories producing 280,000 tons of fertilizer per year.

Baltimore was also becoming a leader in other manufacturing sectors. By the 20th century, the City was a world leader in manufacturing chrome, copper, and steel products. In 1887, Sparrow's Point was developed by Pennsylvania Steel Company. This location brought Cuban iron ore and Western Maryland coal together, creating a company that helped to shape Baltimore's economy for over a hundred years. In addition, Baltimore was America's ready-made

Immigrants waiting to debark at Locust Point. Close to two million immigrants arrived in Baltimore throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. (Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland)

Baltimore Harbor image of Locust Point and Canton around 1860. Images of Camden Station (left) and the old Calvert Street Station (right) are located in the upper corners of the picture.

garment manufacturing center and the world's largest producer of umbrellas. Baltimore grew on its manufacturing strength, and industry expanded along the shorelines of Fairfield, Brooklyn, and Curtis Bay.

From 1850 to 1900 Baltimore's population grew from 169,000 to 508,957. Baltimore's vibrant and diverse neighborhoods evolved to accommodate a constant influx of immigrants searching for opportunity. More than two million immigrants landed first in Fells Point and then in Locust Point, making the City second only to New York as an immigrant port-of-entry. Most new arrivals promptly boarded the B&O Railroad and headed west, but many stayed in the City to work in the burgeoning industries or start their own businesses. Irish, German, Eastern European, Greek and Italian immigrants added their customs, religions and talents to Baltimore's colorful tapestry of neighborhoods and industries.

This growth, however, placed great pressure on Baltimore's physical infrastructure, and City officials responded. To accommodate this growth, Baltimore expanded its size from ten to thirty square miles in 1888. Prior to this annexation, the City influenced the suburban regions through the Baltimore City Water Works and the development of the horsecar.

In 1853, the Baltimore City government purchased the Baltimore Water Company. With Baltimore's water supply clearly a government responsibility, ambitious plans were implemented. Between 1858 and 1864, the Hampden Reservoir, Lake Roland and Druid Lake were created. This water system used the Jones Falls as its source; however, in 1874 the City passed an ordinance to create another water system with the Gunpowder River as its main source. By 1888, Baltimore had created Loch Raven Reservoir and a seven-mile tunnel that connected Loch Raven to Lake Montebello.

In addition, horsecar railway companies began laying track along Baltimore streets in 1859. Many horsecar railway lines followed old turnpike roads, effectively opening up suburban areas for development. In a matter of years Baltimore's neighborhoods and its suburban villages were tied together by a comprehensive system of horsecar railway lines. In the 1890s, Baltimore replaced horsecars with the electric streetcar, which opened up even more suburban areas to development, and by 1900 over 100 suburban villages surrounded Baltimore.

While horsecars expanded Baltimore's physical reach, steamships and railroads tied Baltimore to the global economy. The B&O Railroad connected Baltimore to the West; the Philadelphia, Wilmington and Baltimore Railroad connected

A lithograph of City Hall in 1875 by A. Hoen Company.

the City to Philadelphia; and the Maryland and Potomac Railroad connected Baltimore to the South. As early as 1851, Baltimore steamship companies connected the City to points along the shoreline of the Chesapeake Bay. In 1869, Baltimore and Bremen businessmen opened the Baltimore Bremen Line, which began regular runs between Baltimore and Germany. Samuel Shoemaker, an enterprising Baltimorean, seized the opportunity that Baltimore's transportation hub offered. He helped to organize the Adams Express Company that prided itself on delivering anything, anywhere. This service helped to open and settle the West. By the 1880s the company employed over 50,000 people.

Closer to home, Mayor Swann agreed to allow horsecar companies to lay track on public streets in exchange for 20% of their gross proceeds to fund a park system. In 1860 Baltimore created its first park board and opened Druid Hill Park. By 1900, the Park board had added eight major parks to Baltimore. All these parks were incorporated into Baltimore's major park plan of 1904.

As of 1893, Baltimore had more millionaire philanthropists than any other city in America; moreover, through the benevolence of four Baltimoreans, modern philanthropy began. In 1866 the Peabody Institute opened with a music school, an art gallery, a lyceum, and a library more comprehensive than the Library of Congress. Picking up on these themes, Enoch Pratt founded the City's library system; William and Henry Walters founded the Walters Art Gallery; and Johns Hopkins founded Johns Hopkins University and Hospital. During one memorable dinner, John Work Garrett remembers George Peabody telling Johns Hopkins, "I began to find out it was pleasanter to give money away than it was to make it."

"My library," Mr. Pratt said, "shall be for all, rich and poor without distinction of race or color, who, when properly accredited, can take out the books if they will handle them carefully and return them." In 1886 with the opening of the central library and four branch libraries, the Enoch Pratt Free Library became the first city-wide library system in the country. The Johns Hopkins University opened in 1876 as America's first research-oriented university modeled after the German university system. The university attracted some of the best minds of the late 19th century: philosophers Josiah Royce and Charles Sanders Pierce; medical doctor William Osler and chemist Ira Remsen; historians Frederick Jackson Turner and Herbert Baxter Adams (father of Political Science); and ambassador Theodore Marburg and future President Woodrow Wilson.

At the same time, Charles Joseph Bonaparte (future U.S. Attorney General under Theodore Roosevelt), Cardinal Gibbons, Baptist minister Henry Wharton, Reverend Hiram Vrooman of the New Jerusalem Church, and others formed the Baltimore Reform League to reform the election process in Baltimore. By 1900, the League had managed to significantly reduce the level of voting fraud and elect politicians not beholden to Baltimore's infamous Democratic Machine.

As the 20th century loomed over Baltimore, major economic, physical and technological changes were taking place. Family-owned businesses began to give way to corporations. Between 1895 and 1900, Baltimore found itself fully integrated into the national economy. In 1881 there were 39 corporations in Baltimore; by 1895 there were over 200 corporations.

During this same period, the City saw the beginnings of a Polish immigration that began around 1870 and continued until World War I. The first families settled in Fells Point before moving east and northeast of the water. The City also became home to a small number of Lithuanians fleeing assimilation and service in the Russian army in the 1880s. They settled in East Baltimore and eventually formed communities along Paca and Saratoga streets. Italians, fleeing drought and poverty, entered Baltimore around the same time. Today's Little Italy neighborhood didn't become Italian until it had seen a succession of Germans, Irish and Jews.

Panoramic view of the destruction left by the Great Baltimore Fire of 1904. This view is looking west from near Baltimore and Gay streets.

By the turn of the century the wealth and success of many Jewish families was evident in the size and diversity of the community's synagogues, some orthodox, some reform. The wealthier sections of the population were becoming increasingly mobile, able to move northwest out of Oldtown.

African Americans, too, were in need of new and better homes. An influx of African American rural migrants in the 1870s and 1890s worsened already crowded conditions in many Baltimore neighborhoods, but discrimination meant that little to no new housing would be designated for them.

1900 to 1939 – Keeping up with Technology

At the dawn of the 20th century, Baltimore's population reached over half a million. Hundreds of passenger trains were funneled through its five railroad stations; 13 trust companies controlled large areas of Baltimore manufacturing; 21 national banks and 9 local banks controlled Baltimore's financial interests; 13 steamship companies were engaged in coastal trading; and 6 steamship companies connected Baltimore to foreign ports. Technological progress, economic restructuring, and an increasing population placed great pressure on Baltimore's urban fabric.

To confront these immense changes, the Baltimore Municipal Art Society was formed around 1899 and soon became the voice that directed Baltimore's physical development. The society's initial goals were inspired by the National City Beautiful Movement. They commissioned artists to create several monuments and hired the Olmsted Brothers' Landscape Architects to create the 1904 Baltimore City park plan. They advocated successfully for a comprehensive sewer system (1914), for annexation (1918), and for a comprehensive zoning ordinance (1923).

Baltimore's biggest challenge, however, began in 1904. On Sunday, February 7, 1904, Baltimore's downtown vanished. On that morning, smoke rose from the basement of a dry goods store on the corner of German (now Redwood) and Liberty streets. Shortly before 11:00 a.m., the building exploded, spreading flames and debris to nearby structures. Driven by a strong wind, the blaze
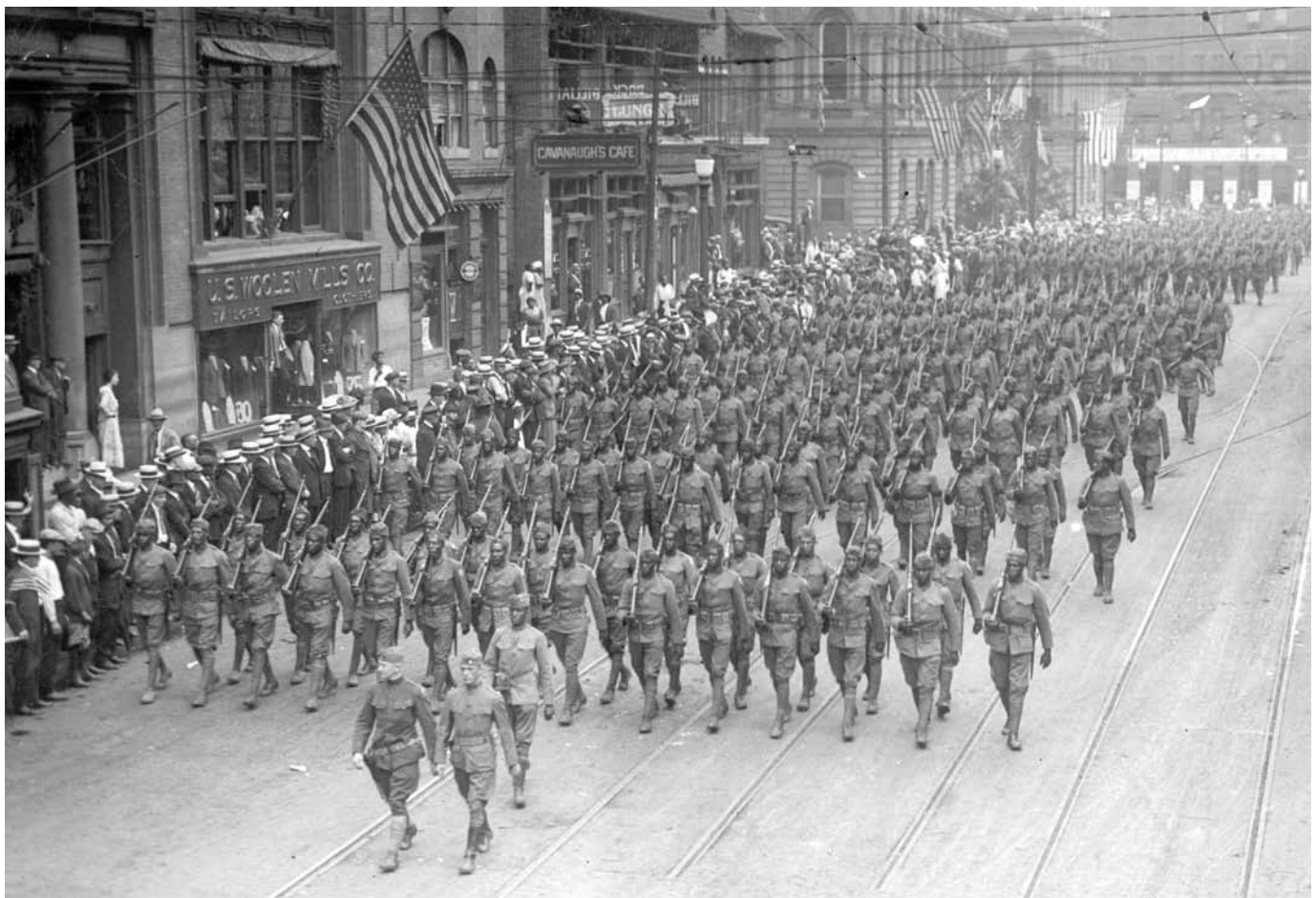
moved east and then south. Approximately 30 hours later, firemen from Baltimore and other cities along the East Coast as far away as New York stopped the blaze at the Jones Falls. The downtown smoldered for weeks. The fire consumed 140 acres, destroyed 1,526 buildings, and burned out 2,500 companies.

Baltimore quickly began rebuilding, and dozens of buildings were being constructed a year later. Ten years after the fire, Baltimore's downtown was completely rebuilt. In all, the fire made way for several significant improvements to the downtown: twelve streets were widened, utilities were moved underground, a plaza was established, and wharves were rebuilt and became publicly owned. The fire also led to stricter fire codes for Baltimore and national standardization of fire hydrants and fire-hose connectors.

World War I imposed hardships on Baltimore as well as presented economic opportunities. In 1917, when the U.S. declared war on Germany, Baltimore swelled with anti-German feelings. German Street was renamed Redwood Street after Lt. George B. Redwood, Maryland's first casualty in the War. The German-American Bank was renamed the American Bank. Worse, thousands of German immigrants were classified as enemy aliens, even if they had lived in Baltimore for years. The War cut off the flow of European immigrants.

Baltimore's population swelled from 558,485 in 1910 to 733,826 in 1920 as unemployed rural southerners flocked to Baltimore. Even though the number of workers increased by a third, labor shortages were still pervasive. This worker–

Memorial Day Parade June 2, 1919. Here the 808th Infantry, an African American unit, headed south on Holliday Street, a half-block from City Hall.

The weekly step-scrubbing ritual, 1938. Baltimore is famous for its ubiquitous white marble steps lining the streets of many of its rowhouse neighborhoods.

friendly environment helped to bring the eight-hour day to Baltimore, opened up jobs for women, and provided more skilled jobs for African Americans.

In 1918, Baltimore completed a major annexation, instantly enlarging its size from 30 square miles to almost 90 square miles. In contrast to Baltimore's old rowhouse model, the annexed area was developed with bungalows and other types of suburban-style houses. Street patterns in the annexed area differed from the older, inner-city area of Baltimore. Alleys disappeared, and the urban grid softened into irregular and curved patterns. City government retooled and reorganized in order to thoughtfully develop the annexed area. The City Plan Committee was appointed in 1918. In addition, Baltimore City passed the 1923 Zoning Ordinance, and the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals was created. Other bureaucratic reorganization occurred: the Bureau of Highways was formed (1920s); Bureau of Plans and Survey was created (1926); and several departments were consolidated into the Department of Public Works (1926). The Major Street Plan for the annexed area was adopted in 1923, and from the beginning it was under extreme development pressure. In an unprecedented effort Baltimore bureaucrats and legislators "adopted a policy of refusing to extend paving or underground utilities in any street the location of which had not been approved by the City Plan Committee, and all sub-division plans were submitted to it."

In turn, developers adapted to the changes in the bureaucratic approval process as well as changes in finance, real estate, and building technology.

Developers began to consolidate their development process. They bought large estates, subdivided them, laid out the roads and underground utilities, built the houses, set-up building and loan associations (sometimes on site), and marketed their new neighborhoods. Prior to the 20th century, many of these steps were done separately. The results were extraordinary: E.J. Gallagher, Ephraim Macht, and Frank Novak built over fifty thousand houses in Baltimore. Other developers, including George R. Morris, Henry Kolbe, and Kennard and Company, partnered with longtime residents of suburban areas and formed real estate corporations. The rate of development was extraordinary: in Northeast Baltimore alone between 1900 and 1939 the number of housing units grew from 279 units to over 14,000 units.

Most African Americans, however, were left out of this suburban expansion. Three times before World War I the City Council passed ordinances forbidding them from moving into white neighborhoods. Each was overturned, but unfortunately they represented only the most formal and overt of numerous racist tactics. With the newest offerings within the expanding housing stock largely off limits, many blacks bought and rented secondhand. After another large rural influx in 1900, by 1904, half of the City's black population had taken up residence in Old West Baltimore as the area's German community branched out further north. Within this single area could be found a rich diversity of African American life.

Corporations, more than individuals, reshaped the downtown and surrounding areas along the shoreline. National corporations built industrial parks, not just industrial buildings. Western Electric, Standard Oil, and Crown Cork & Seal each had an industrial complex encompassing more than 125 acres. Standard Oil also located its regional office headquarters on St. Paul Place. Baltimore found a comfortable position in the new world of national corporations.

By the 1930s, most of our venerable cultural institutions had been created: the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Walters Art Gallery, the Peale Museum reopened as Baltimore's history museum, Lyric Opera House, and more than a hundred movie theaters were built throughout Baltimore neighborhoods. Other institutions were thriving: the Maryland Institute College of Art, Goucher College, Morgan College (now Morgan State University), Coppin Teachers College (now Coppin State University), and the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

By 1931 the Depression hit Baltimore hard. On September 31, 1931, the Baltimore Trust Company closed its thirty-two-story skyscraper; by 1933, the Governor closed all banks to try and prevent mass bank withdrawals. For the next six years Baltimore spiraled deeper into despair; 29,000 Baltimoreans were officially unemployed in 1934. Federal resources during the latter half of the 1930s kept Baltimore afloat. Civil engineer Abel Wolman coordinated the Civil Works Administration (CWA) in Baltimore, which put thousands of people back to work. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) followed the CWA, providing work for many more Baltimoreans. But it took another war to pull Baltimore and the nation out of its doldrums. By 1939, Baltimore industries began retooling their factories for war.

1939 to 1946 – World War II: Baltimore Comes Through

Baltimore geared up for World War II in a big way. Even before America's entrance into the War, many Baltimore factories were refitted to make everything that the war effort required. Dining room table-cover manufacturers began making the heavy cloth parts for gas masks; automobile makers began building tanks and jeeps; and the Martin Aircraft Corporation began making B-26 and B-29 Superfortress bombers. At the end of World War II, one Baltimore business, Martin-Marietta, was turning out thousands of airplanes a year, and at the Curtis Bay and Fairfield shipyards an ocean freighter a day slid into the water.

Migrants from the rural south, looking for work, overwhelmed Baltimore. Many grand Baltimore houses were cut up into small apartments to house the population. Rooms in many South Baltimore rowhouses were fitted with multiple beds. Each bed may have slept one man during each 8 hour shift.

1946 to 1968 – Suburbanization without End / Charles Center invented / Historic Preservation Begins

After World War II, Baltimore City found itself in the middle of tremendous physical and social changes. With the return of soldiers eager to raise families, suburbanization accelerated and spread past the City limits into the

S.S. Maritime Victory Launching, photograph by A. Aubrey Bodine, May 1945. (Courtesy of the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland)

An image from the initial Charles Center Plan published by the Greater Baltimore Committee in 1958. A photograph of the model of Charles Center was superimposed on an aerial photograph of downtown, creating an illusion of a completed project.

surrounding counties. By the 1950s, 7,000 to 8,000 houses a year were being constructed in the counties surrounding Baltimore. The population within the City boundaries began a slow, continual decline: the City lost 10,000 people in the 1950s and 35,000 in the 1960s. During the 1960s the bulk of the retail activity in Baltimore's downtown shopping district and neighborhood main streets followed their customers and moved to the suburbs into shopping centers built around four-leaf-clover exit ramps of the newly completed beltway (1962). Industry, too, followed their employees. The City's old, multistory brick factories were vacated as sprawling, new industrial parks with quick access to the newly designed highway system were developed.

The federal government subsidized much of the development of the suburbs. Federal subsidies, such as new housing-oriented FHA loans, the 1956 Highway act, and tax incentives for industrial development, were instrumental in restructuring the City and the region.

Many Baltimoreans, however, were forced to move. In the City, the rate of demolition rose from 600 households a year throughout the 1950s to 800 in the early 1960s. The number reached 2,600 per annum in the late 1960s, as sites were cleared for expressways, new schools, and public housing projects. Poor and African American populations were disproportionately affected. At the same time, blockbusting reached its peak with the population turnover in Edmondson Village. Over a period of ten years (1955 –1965) most of the area's white residents were replaced by African-Americans. In situations such as this, "investors" could buy low by capitalizing on white residents' fears of a worsening neighborhood and sell high to African American families desperate for a chance at homeownership.

A great deal of attention was focused on the City center. Very few new office buildings, large or small, had been built since the Baltimore Trust building in 1929. Baltimore citizens decided to act. In 1958, the Greater Baltimore Committee, a regional organization of business leaders, in cooperation with City Government, unveiled a report that called for the transformation of 22 acres in the heart of downtown Baltimore. To implement the plan, the City created a public-private corporation known as the Charles Center Management Corporation. The plan mostly consisted of office buildings surrounding three urban plazas. Underground parking was constructed under each of the plazas and some of the buildings. While the new buildings were to be unabashedly modern, four existing office buildings were incorporated into the plan. The three plazas and most of the office buildings that surrounded them were linked by an overhead walkway system that crossed over several busy streets and included escalators connecting the elevated walkway to city sidewalks below.

In addition to the office buildings, a hotel, several residential towers, some ground floor retail establishments, and the Mechanic Theater were incorporated into the complex. At the time, Fortune Magazine wrote of the Charles Center Plan, "It looks as if it were designed by people who like the City."

In 1962, the construction of One Charles Center, located between Center Plaza and Charles Street, was completed. The 24-story, dark bronze-colored, metal-and-glass office building was designed by Mies van der Rohe, a very important International Style architect. Fortune Magazine called this building one of the nation's "ten buildings that point to the future." For many years, the American Heritage Dictionary included a thumbnail illustration of this building adjacent to the architect's entry.

The Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) was created in 1964 to administer design review for the new Mount Vernon local historic district. Concurrent with the creation of CHAP was the Mount Vernon Urban Renewal Ordinance, the first of its kind written to restore, not demolish the historic mansions that made up the area. Today, Baltimore has more than 50 National Register Historic Districts and 30 Local Historic Districts. Baltimore has a total of 56,000 structures listed on local and national registers.

1969 to 1999 – Suburbanization Continues / Inner Harbor: A Magical Invention

In 1956, the Federal Government passed the National Highway Act, which provided 90% of funding for interstate highway construction. In 1960, the Planning Commission published a study for the East-West Expressway, which chronicled eight major proposals to build highways through Baltimore. I-95 would have sliced through Federal Hill and included a bridge to Little Italy. These proposals would have effectively destroyed all harbor-front neighborhoods as well as pedestrian access to the harbor. Between 1965 and 1967, the City began condemning property along the proposed highway corridors. Throughout this process, Baltimoreans organized to oppose the destruction of the harbor-front neighborhoods. In 1969, Fells Point became a National Register historic district, and in 1970 Federal Hill followed suit. Shortly thereafter, I-95 was rerouted south of Locust Point, and a bridge would span the harbor, connecting Locust Point to Lazaretto Point. In 1975, the bridge concept was replaced with the Fort McHenry Tunnel in order to preserve Fort McHenry. In the 1970s, I-83 was proposed to be built underground in order to preserve Fells Point, but the idea fizzled out as construction costs became prohibitive. In the end, Baltimore lost over two hundred historic properties and hundreds of others sat vacant after being condemned for highway construction. It was the tenacity of Baltimoreans that prevented the highway from obliterating not only the harbor-front neighborhoods but the Inner Harbor itself.

By 1975, 108 houses in the Otterbein neighborhood had been scheduled for demolition as part of the Inner Harbor West Urban Renewal Plan. Instead, these houses were sold to "homesteaders" for one dollar. In turn, homesteaders would restore the houses and live in them for at least five years. 3,000 potential homesteaders visited Otterbein, proving that there was immense demand for downtown living. Homesteading and historic preservation, following the Otterbein example, spread to other neighborhoods, including Ridgley's Delight, Barre Circle, and Washington Hill. More importantly, however, the

A 1959 rendition of one of several interstate highway plans that would have connected I-95 to an East West Expressway and the Jones Falls Expressway. Baltimoreans fought for over twenty years to prevent a highway from destroying their historic neighborhoods.

internationally recognized success of homesteading proved that Baltimore was a place in which people wanted to live. Baltimoreans were beginning to reinvent their City as a collection of restored and rebuilt neighborhoods.

The roaring success of Charles Center empowered Baltimore officials to expand the reinvention of Downtown. The Charles Center Management Corporation was renamed the Charles Center Inner Harbor Management Corporation, and its staff began to work with the Philadelphia consultants, Wallace, McHarg, Roberts, and Todd to define the next stage of the Downtown transformation. In 1964, the City and the Consultants came up with a vision: the harbor should be encircled by a ring of new public spaces all connected together by a public, waterfront promenade. They envisioned museums, office buildings, hotels, amphitheaters, marinas and piers for visiting ships, parks and playgrounds, and a new kind of shopping center, the festival marketplace.

Using Federal Urban Renewal funds, the City demolished almost all of the buildings within the project area and constructed an entirely new infrastructure of piers, bulkheads, roads, utilities, and parks. A new brick pedestrian promenade was constructed around the harbor's edge. The State of Maryland erected the World Trade Center (1973), a pentagonal concrete-and-glass office building designed by the architect I. M. Pei. One of its columns symbolically emerges from the water, straddles the promenade, and hovers over the harbor. The United States Fidelity and Guarantee Company, the City's largest insurance company, consolidated its downtown offices and built its new 40-story headquarters (1970-73), which became the City's largest office building.

During the 1960s, the Inner Harbor looked like a wide open pool of black water surrounded by a prairie crisscrossed by streets. Those early days are just a

View of the Inner Harbor today.

memory now. The Inner Harbor, year by year, was sculpted with a world–class collection of uses and attractions: the National Aquarium, the Power Plant, the Gallery, the Hyatt Regency Hotel, the Maryland Science Center, Harbor Court apartments and hotel, Rash Field, Harbor Place, the USS Constellation, Scarlet Place, McKeldin Square and Meyerhoff Fountain, and the brand new Baltimore Visitors Center.

In its first year, Harborplace (1981) drew more tourists than Disneyland. The Inner Harbor has become an intricate, exciting people-place that changes all the time. It is a playground, a front yard, and a main street for the entire City. It is a place for the City to look at itself and a place for Baltimore to show off some of its wonders to the outside world.

Perhaps, the Inner Harbor is Baltimore's most important invention since the railroad. Elected officials, economic developers, and city planners arrive month–ly from all over the world to see and learn from this magical place. It was inven–tion by meticulous deliberation. The Inner Harbor was put together brick by brick, building by building, and block by block. The Inner Harbor's success can be attributed, in part, to the following features: well-developed architectural and urban design guidelines; major new attractions every five years; attractions for all ages and groups; high quality building materials; easy access to the water; uniformed policemen and other measures that create a feeling of safety; quality events; gardens and flowers; and high quality maintenance.

1999 to the Present: BaltiMORE THAN EVER

From 1999 to the present, dramatic progress has been made in creating a safer, cleaner city; a better place for children; and a more attractive place for

investment. Nevertheless, stubborn urban ills still plague Baltimore. During the past six years, the City has addressed these challenges in new and innovative ways.

In 1999, Baltimore was the most violent city in America. Now Baltimore leads big cities in reducing violence through a three-pronged approach: more and better drug treatment, youth intervention, and more effective policing. Overall, violent crime is down 40% – to its lowest level since the 1960s.

Baltimore has also been plagued with diseases that fester in poor urban environments. Throughout the 1990s the City was the most drug addicted city in America – a fact that defined Baltimore for the rest of America. Today, we have doubled the number of people able to receive drug treatment from 11,000 to 25,000. Health officials now point to Baltimore as having the best drug treatment system in the nation. In addition, Baltimore was infamous for the high numbers of deaths caused by sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, AIDS and lead poisoning. Baltimore has reduced these deaths dramatically. For example, the City has reduced the number of children with serious lead poisoning by 45% in just three years. In 2003, the City achieved the lowest infant mortality rate in its history.

For many years Baltimore public schools have been underperforming and providing second-rate education. The trend is changing, however, and for the last five years, the City has seen real improvement in its educational system. Our first and second graders are scoring above the national average in reading and math for the first time in 30 years. All grades are improving faster than the state average on the Maryland School Assessments, and Baltimore ranks ahead of cities like New York, Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia and Los Angeles on state assessment tests. In addition, three of our high schools are ranked among the State's top ten, and each year more students are graduating from our high schools.

Baltimore's astonishing progress in the last six years is the result of deliberate and comprehensive changes in the City's bureaucracy. Through the CitiStat program, Baltimore is moving from a traditional spoils-based system of local government to a new results-based system of government. CitiStat is an accountability tool that tracks the activities of City agencies. CitiStat has won Harvard's Innovation in Government Award, and Neal Pierce, a columnist on urban affairs, said that CitiStat "may represent the most significant local government innovation of this decade."

In addition, the City established the 311 system to allow residents to report non-emergency problems in the city. Residents can now report problems and track responses to complaints, such as potholes, housing code violations, and broken lights. For its 311 system, Baltimore is the first government entity to win the Gartner Award for customer relationship management.

 Cities that are diverse, cities that nurture creativity, cities that are culturally alive and preserve their history are cities that thrive– because they create a better quality of life; they create new businesses; they create living neighborhoods; they retain and attract members of a growing creative class.

View of downtown Baltimore and the Inner Harbor at dusk.

Baltimore is simmering with creativity and entrepreneurs, musicians, artists, architects, engineers, researchers, and scientists are already moving our local economy forward. World-renowned medical research institutions, most notably Johns Hopkins and the University of Maryland, are potent engines for the future of Baltimore's economy. Both of the City's arts districts are gaining momentum. This year, Entrepreneur Magazine reported that Baltimore moved from 30th to12th on their list of best cities for entrepreneurs, and we're number two in the East.

Qualities embedded in the urban fabric are attracting new residents to Baltimore: pedestrian-friendly environments promote less driving; historic architecture and streetscapes provide tangible connections to the past; restaurants, coffee shops, and pubs just a walk away offer social places where basic human connections are made; and cultural institutions produce character-defining activities that are enjoyed by all.

Baltimore has been scorched by devastating fires, real and figurative, but from these ashes, Baltimore, once again, is rising. The City's spirit thrives on beating the odds and achieving what others thought was unachievable. Baltimoreans have learned from our past, a past whose buildings, monuments, and diverse cultures still stands strong.

Making bold decisions in times of extraordinary change leads to reinvention. Thus, this is probably Baltimore's latest reinvention: today's willingness to change City Government and to tackle the chronic results of poverty. Baltimore's history also tells us something more: cities never cease to change, and unknown reinventions will be part of providing our children's children with a place to live, earn, play and learn in Baltimore.