

Leveraging Investments in Neighborhood Corridors (LINCS)

Overview

Mayor Rawlings-Blake initiated **Leveraging Investments in Neighborhood Corridors (LINCS)** to continue her efforts to Grow Baltimore. LINCS is an interagency partnership to revitalize the major corridors that connect neighborhoods and communities throughout the City, to enhance the aesthetics and economic vitality of these key gateways, while seeking to improve quality of life and increase community capacity.

Baltimore's neighborhood corridors are the primary routes for navigating in and around the city. They play a significant role in shaping the perception and the reality of adjacent communities. In their current conditions many of the city's commercial corridors do not adequately reflect the strength of the communities that support them. **LINCS** will leverage existing city programs with key mayoral initiatives, and be initially piloted in five of City's most heavily traveled corridors.

Process

Recognizing that each corridor presents its own unique set of conditions, **LINCS** will evaluate each corridor individually to determine its strengths, challenges and opportunities. This initiative is designed to utilize the capacity of our community partners to manage community engagement, while City staff will provide technical assistance. Coordinated through the Baltimore City Planning Department, **LINCS** will use a team approach, with each team consisting of a design planner, transportation planner, a commercial market analyst, and Baltimore Housing representative. Staff members will work collaboratively on the needs of the targeted commercial corridors.

The **LINCS** teams will perform assessments of each corridor and then use the results to guide the teams in recommending strategic actions that target existing city programs and services to address the specific needs of each corridor. In collaboration with our civic and business partners, the **LINCS** teams will implement these programs and services throughout the commercial corridor.

The implementation strategies will focus on five areas:

- Economic Development
- Land Use and Zoning
- Transportation
- Public Safety and Health
- Sanitation

Under each strategic focus area, a toolbox of existing and renewed programs and services will be employed to improve the character of these key corridors and strengthen the neighborhoods that surround them.



Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor

Contact: LINCS@baltimorecity.gov

Greenmount Avenue

Where: Eager St to 29th St



Liberty Heights Blvd

Where: Druid Park Dr to Northern Pkwy



Central Avenue

Where: E Fayette St to Fleet St



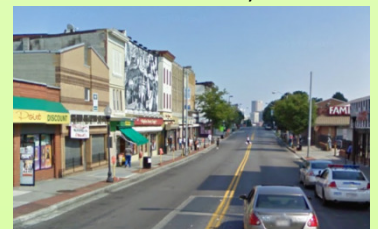
East North Avenue

Where: Greenmount Ave to Belair Rd



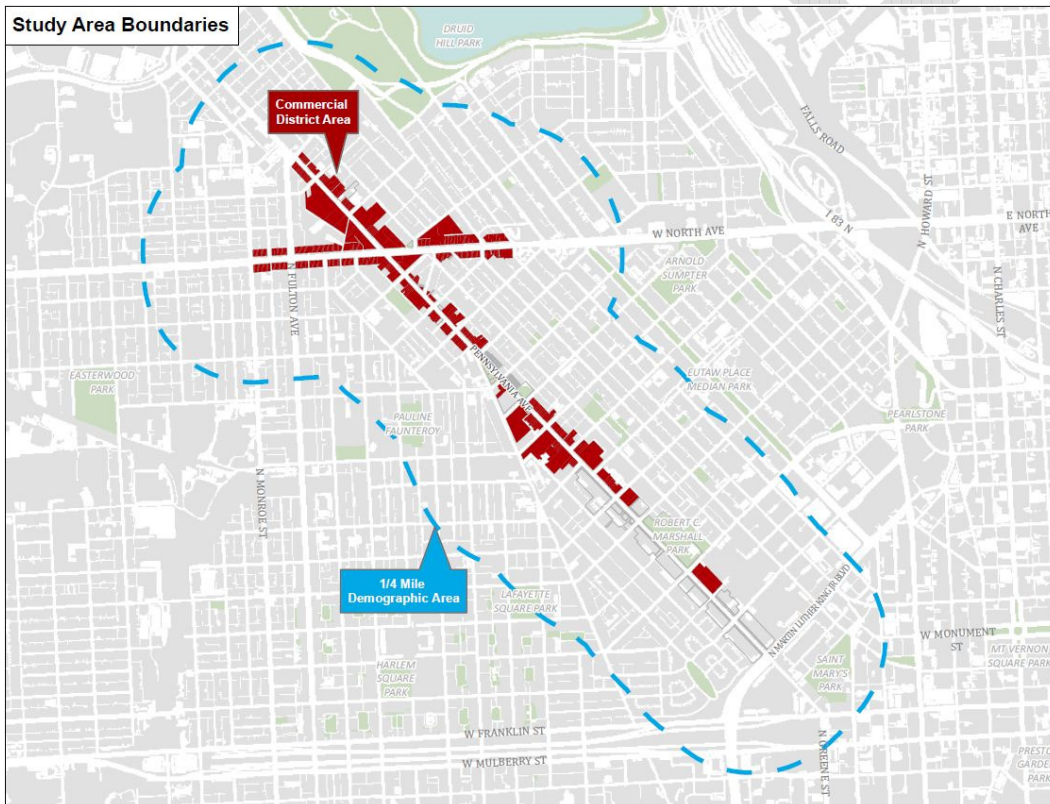
Pennsylvania Avenue

Where: Pennsylvania Avenue (N Fulton Ave to Martin Luther King Jr Blvd) and North Avenue (McCulloh St to N. Monroe St)



Corridor Profile: The Pennsylvania & West North Avenue Commercial Corridors

The Pennsylvania and West North Avenue commercial corridor centered at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and North Avenue has tremendous potential. The corridors are served by several bus lines and by the Penn North and Upton/Avenue Market Transit Stations on the Metro subway line. The Penn North subway station is one of the most actively utilized stations in the City with more than 5,500 people entering and exiting every weekday. The commercial area has many public services, including a library, post office, health clinic, and Baltimore City Department of Social Services office, but residents are currently underserved by retail, restaurant, and entertainment services. Walking to and from existing amenities, such as the Metro stations and Druid Hill Park, is difficult due to traffic patterns, inadequate infrastructure, and public safety concerns.

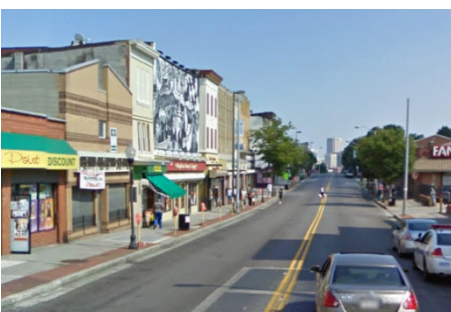


Community Partners

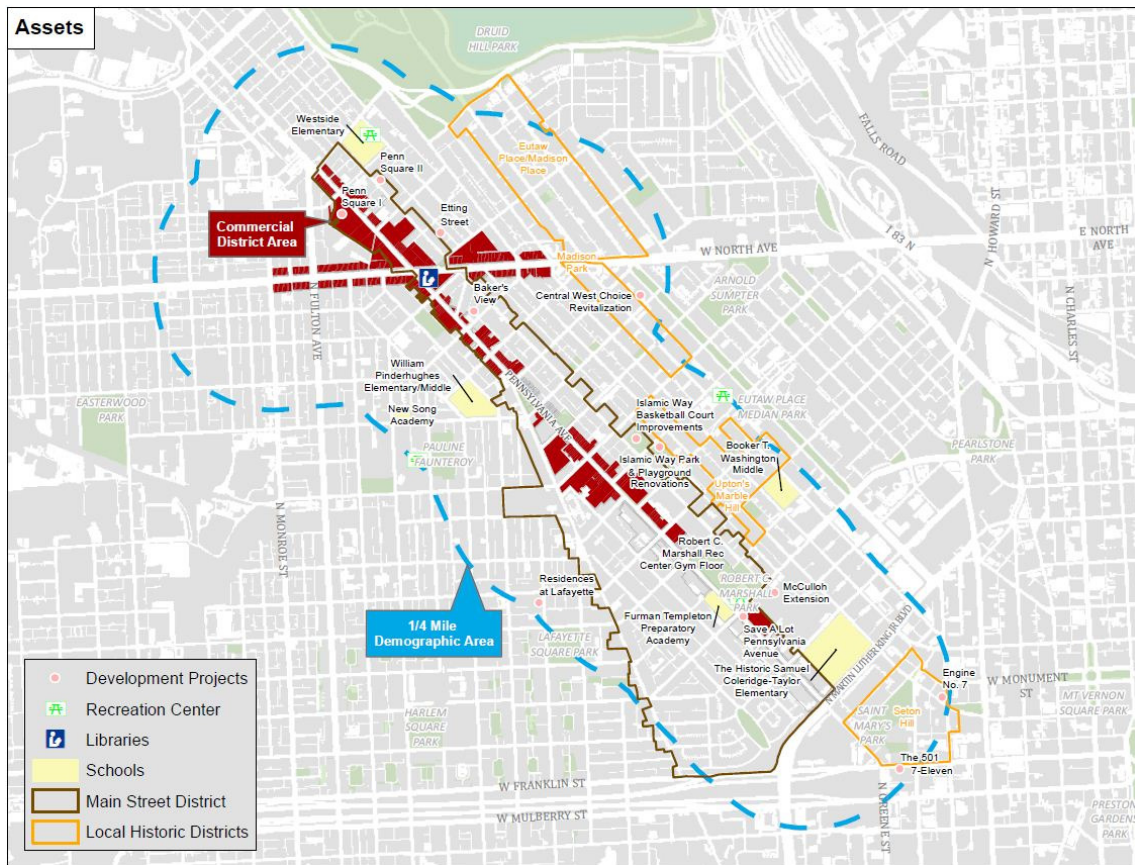
Penn North Community Association
Druid Heights Community Development Corporation
Upton Planning Committee
Pennsylvania Avenue Redevelopment Collaborative
Penn North/Druid Heights North Avenue Merchants Association

The Corridor

- Access to multiple transit options
- Median household income is \$17,000
- Corridor is a mixture of residential, commercial, industrial, educational, and open space uses
- Retail mix does not fully meet the needs of residential population
- Poor pedestrian access to existing amenities:
HEATHER, do you mean lack of walkability or accessibility?



Existing Conditions:



Strengths

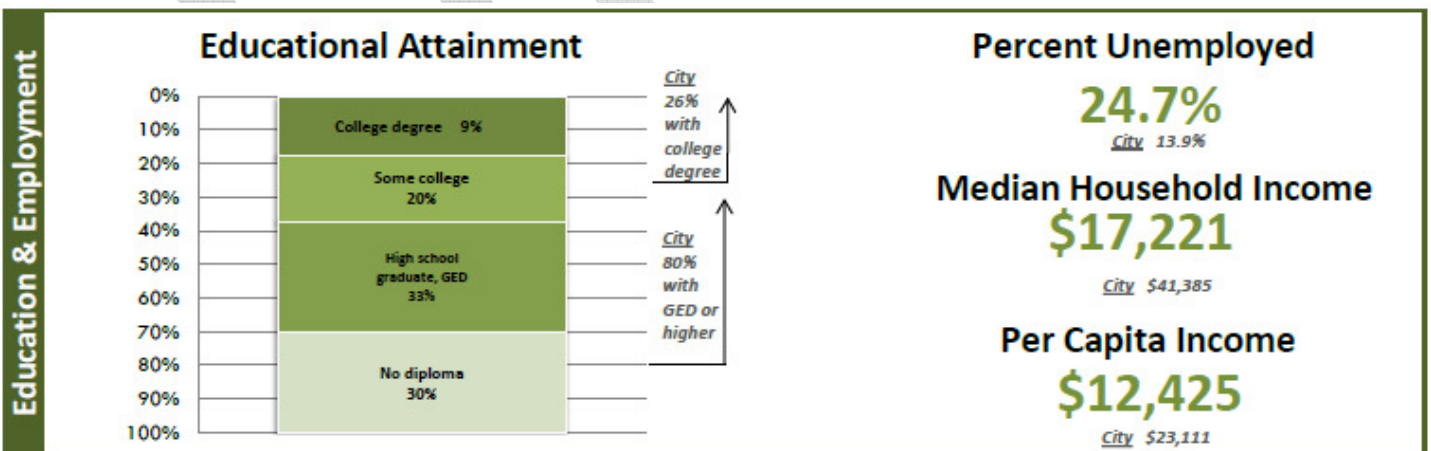
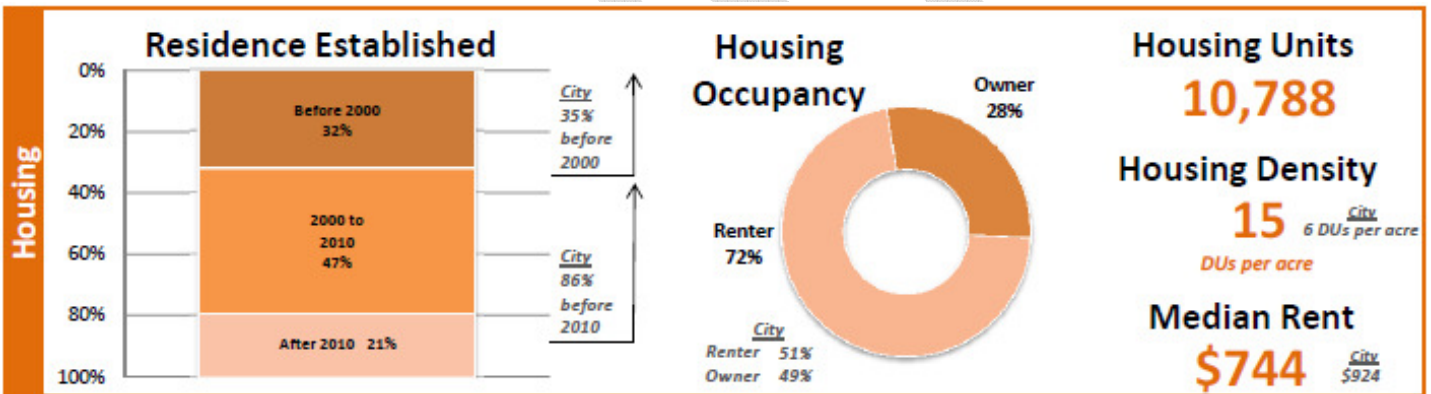
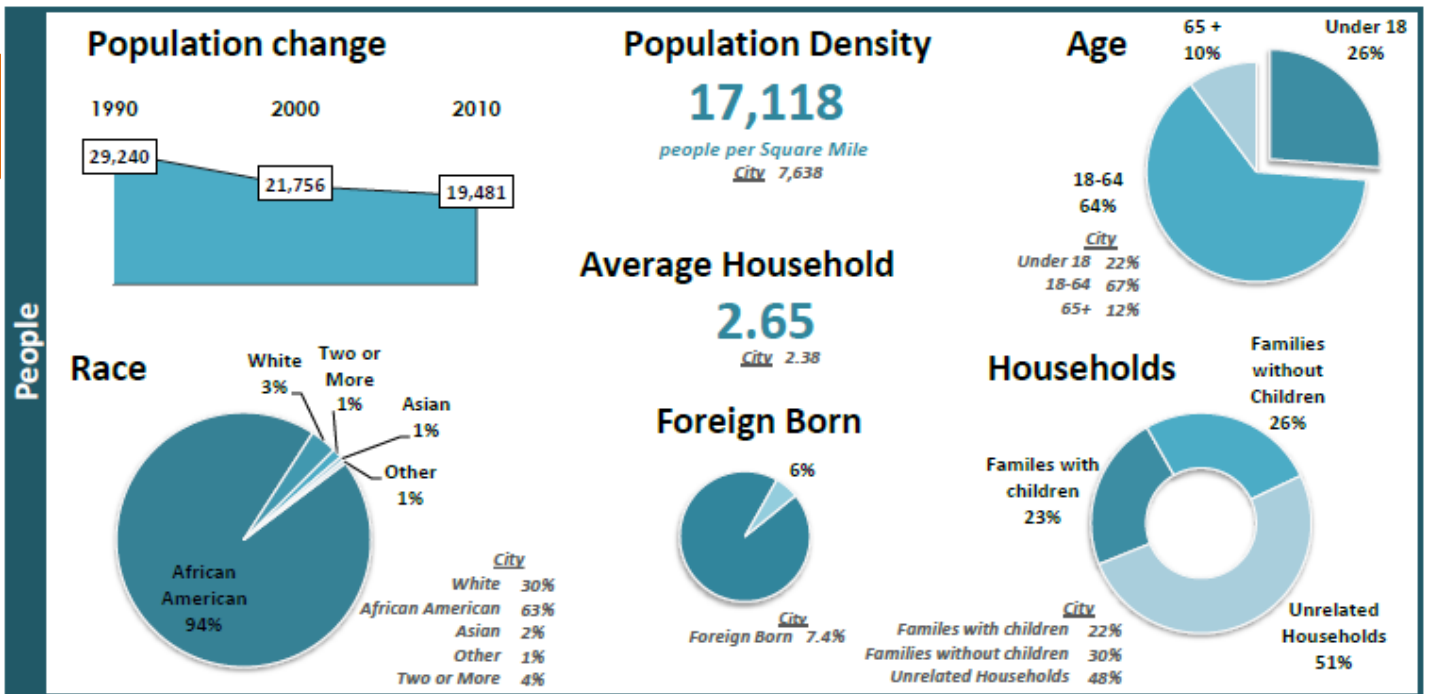
- 1 – One of the most historic African-American districts in the country with a rich heritage of arts and entertainment
- 2 – True transit-oriented development (TOD) potential around the Penn North and Upton-Avenue Market Metro stations
- 3 – West North Avenue's proximity to both MICA and Coppin State University



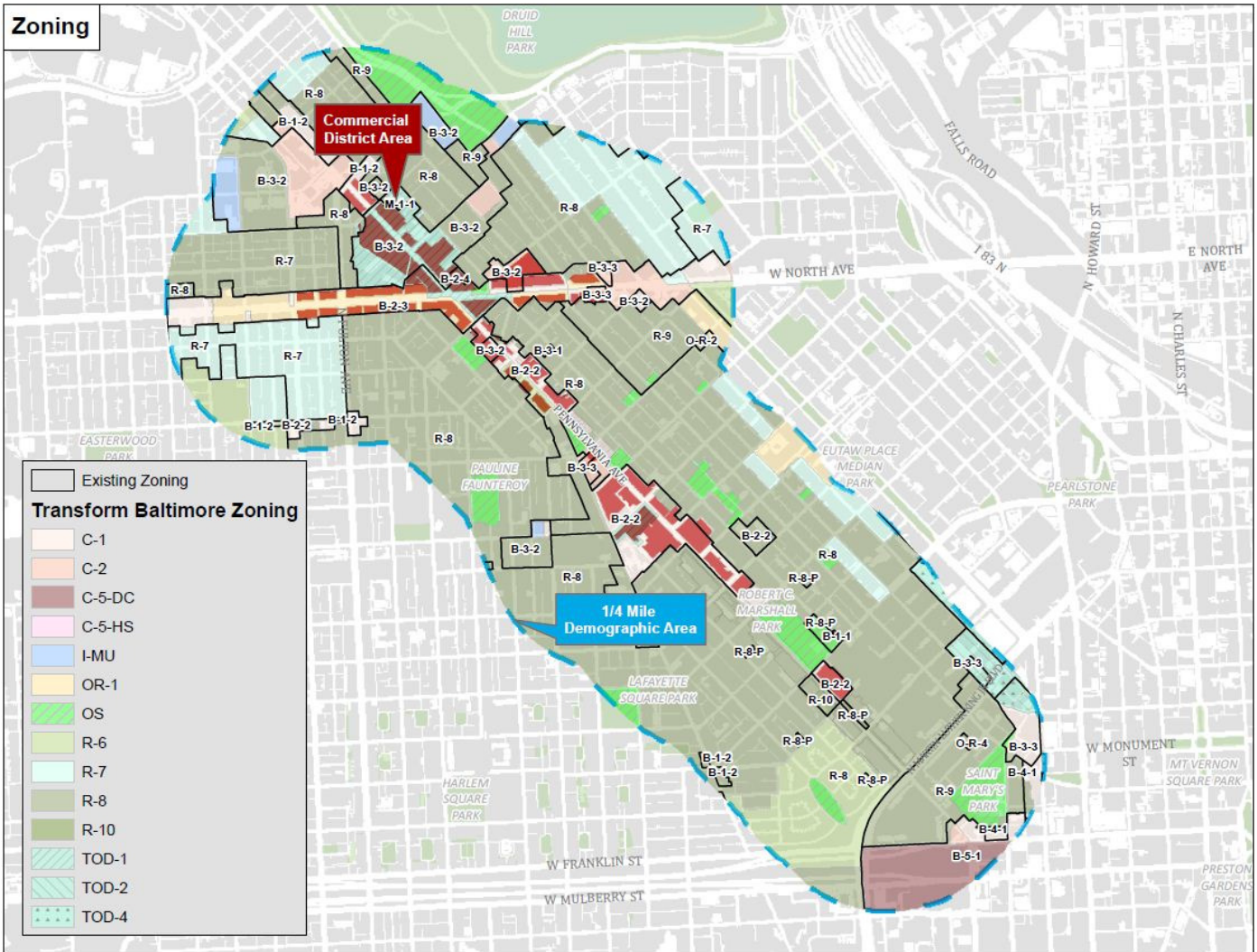
Weaknesses

- 1 – The commercial district properties have a high degree of vacancy and abandonment
- 2 – High amount of drug activity and crime, especially around transit stops and public spaces
- 3 – West North Avenue is difficult and dangerous to cross as a pedestrian

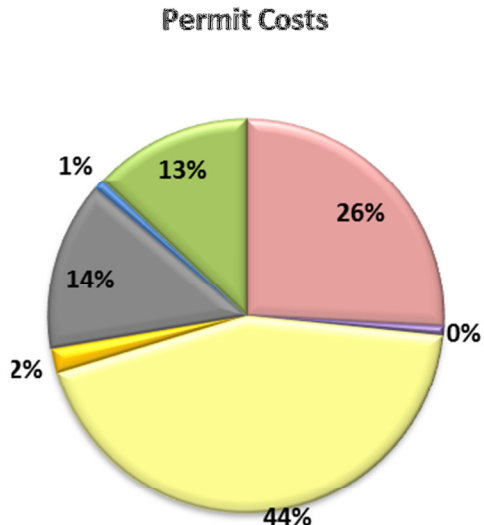
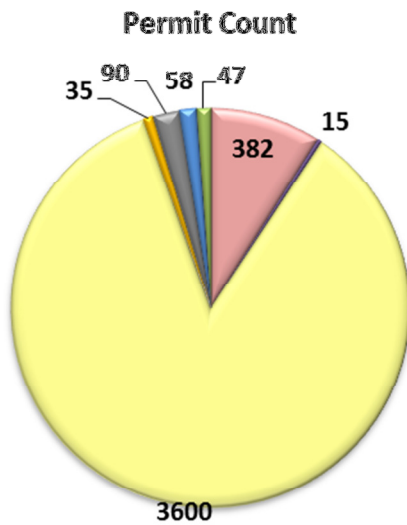
Demographic Indicators:



Land Use and Zoning:



Building Permits 2010-2014



5-Year Permit Total:

4,230

5-Year Permit

Investment:

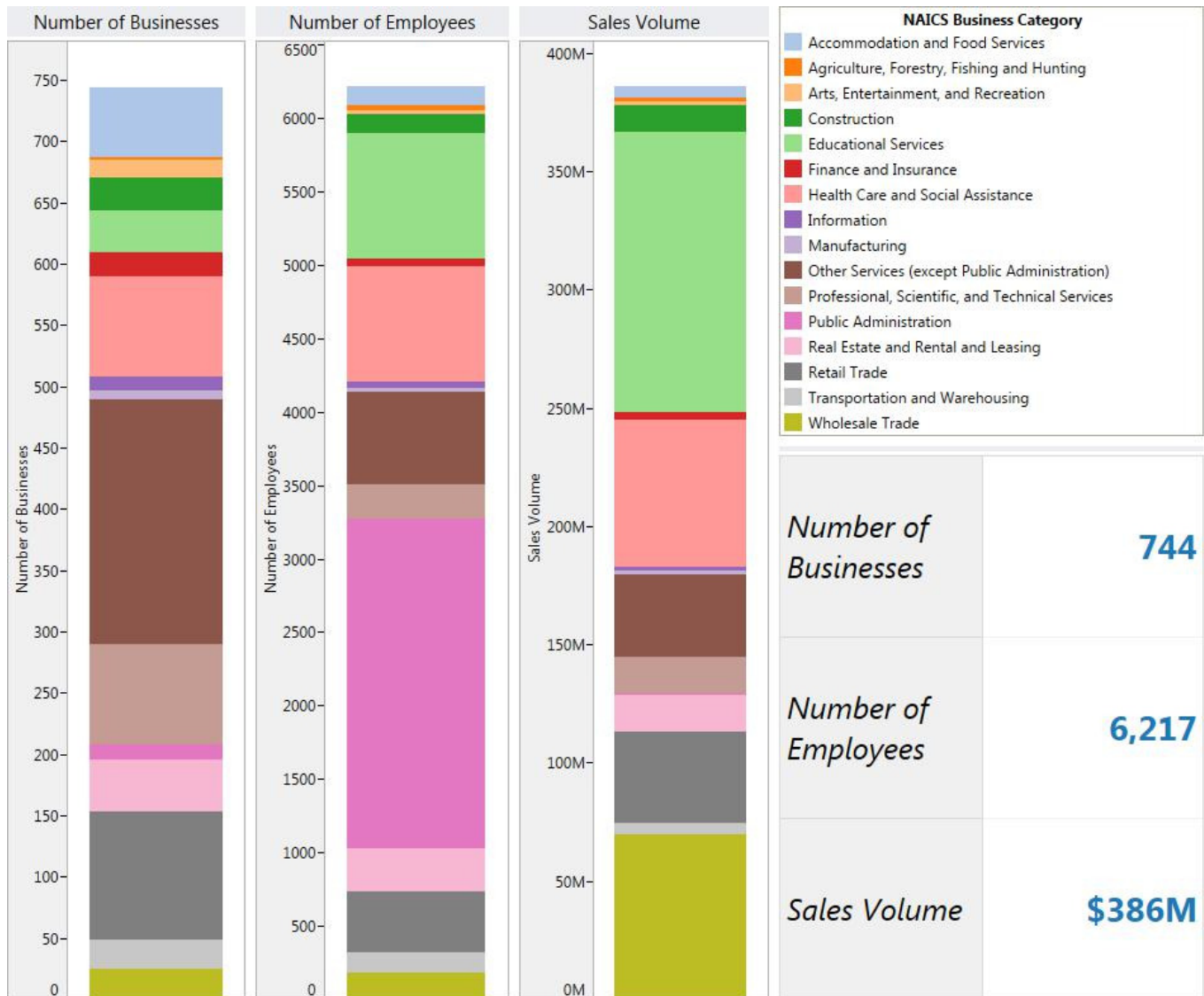
\$67,645,336

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential
- Office
- Other
- Institutional/Private
- Institutional/Public

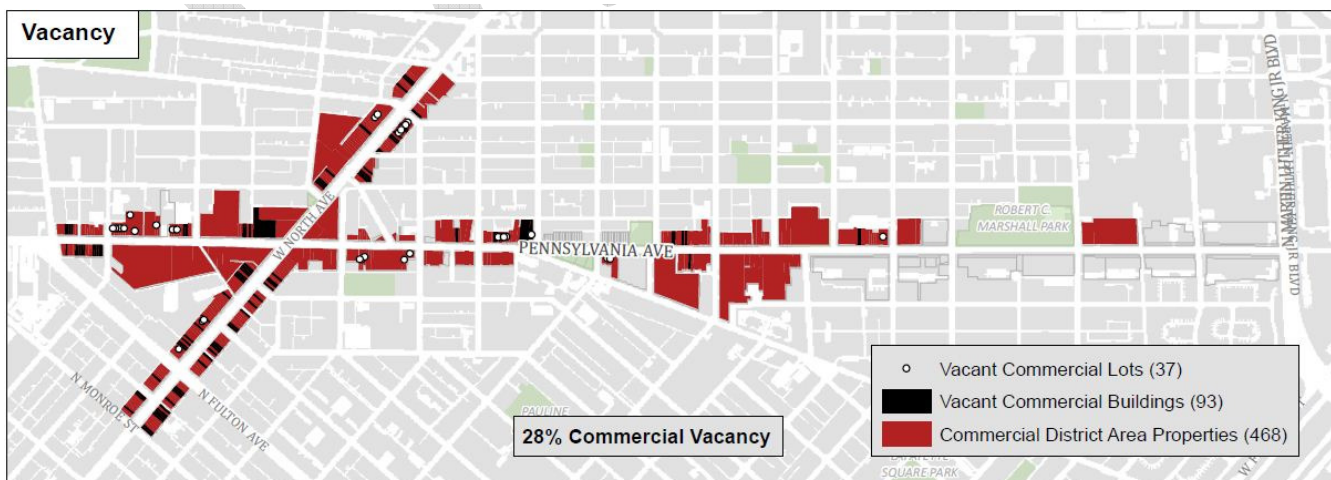
Source: 5-Year Building Permit data from the City of Baltimore records, 2010-2014.

Economic Vitality:

Corridor Businesses



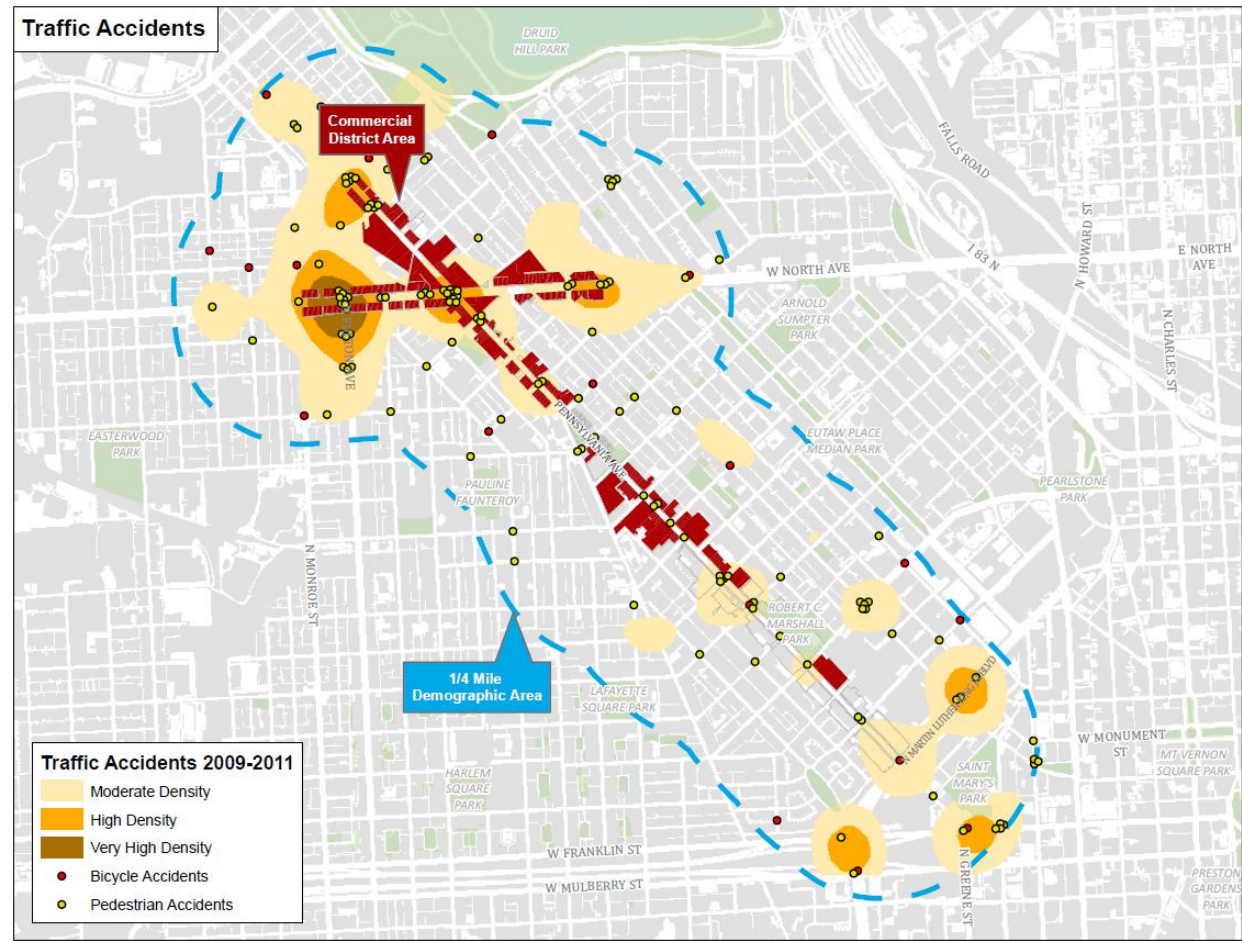
Source: The business data was collected from ESRI Business Analyst for 2013 and includes the Corridor's 1/4th mile demographic area.



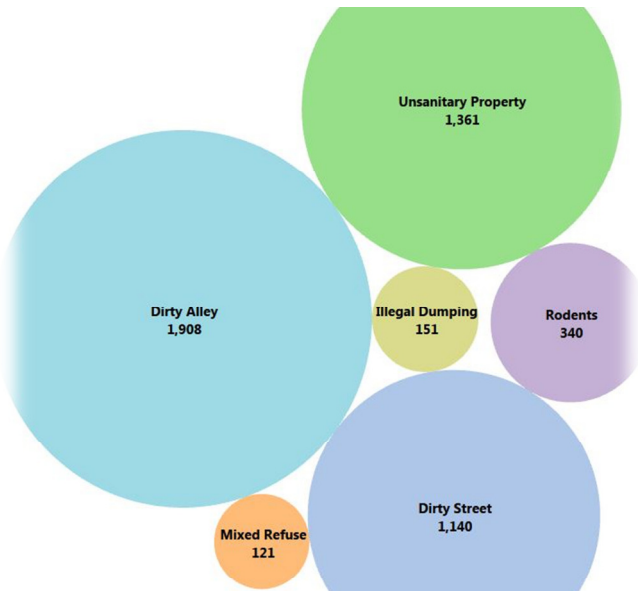
Source: The vacancy data is from the May 2015 Real Property parcel layer. Commercial District Area properties are defined as properties zoned commercial that are adjacent to the Pennsylvania and West North Avenue Corridors.

Public Safety and Health:

Traffic Crashes



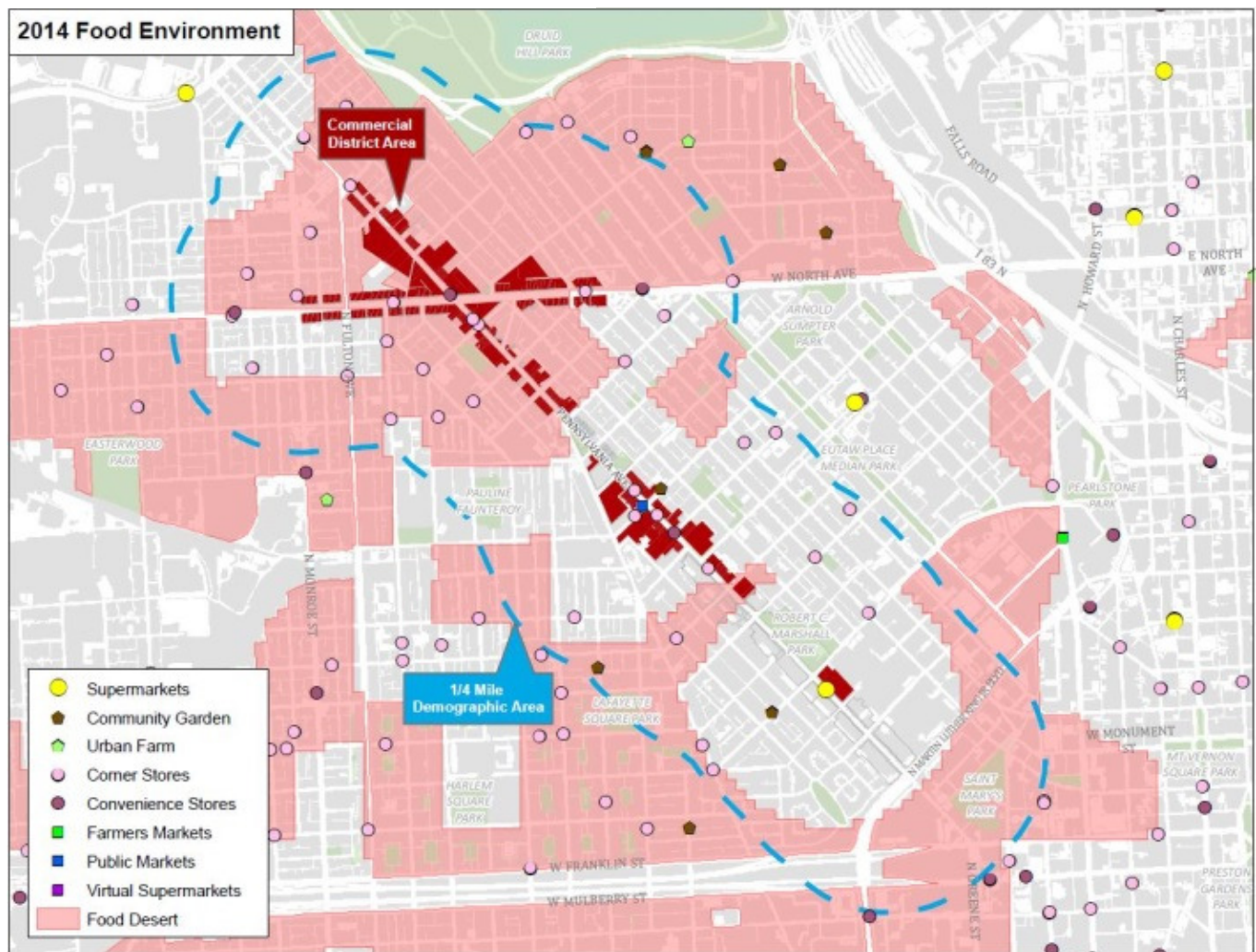
Public Sanitation Service Requests



Insert photo of trash can or sanitary workers.

Source: Open Baltimore 311 Call Data from 8/09/2014-5/29/2015

Food Environment



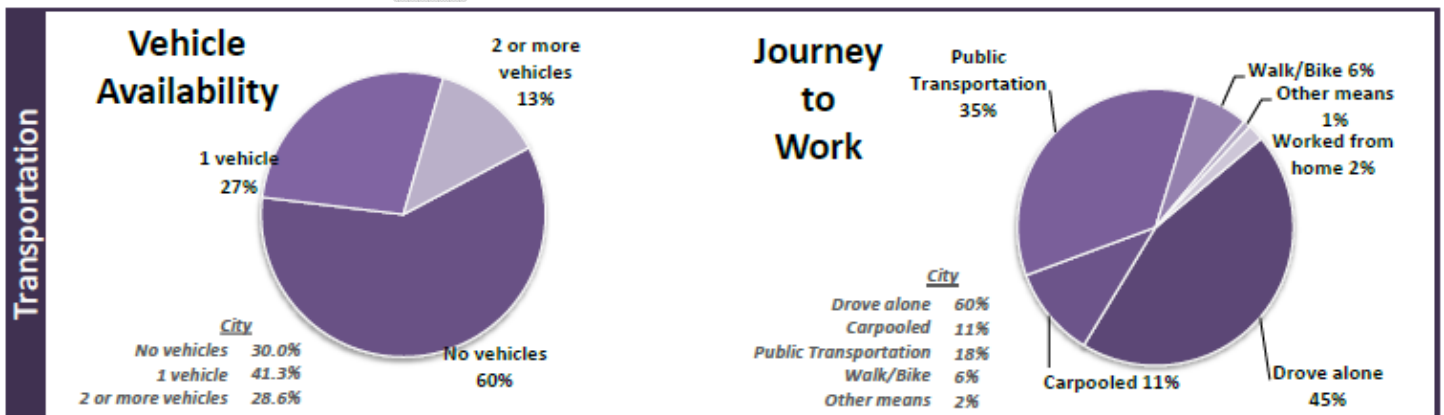
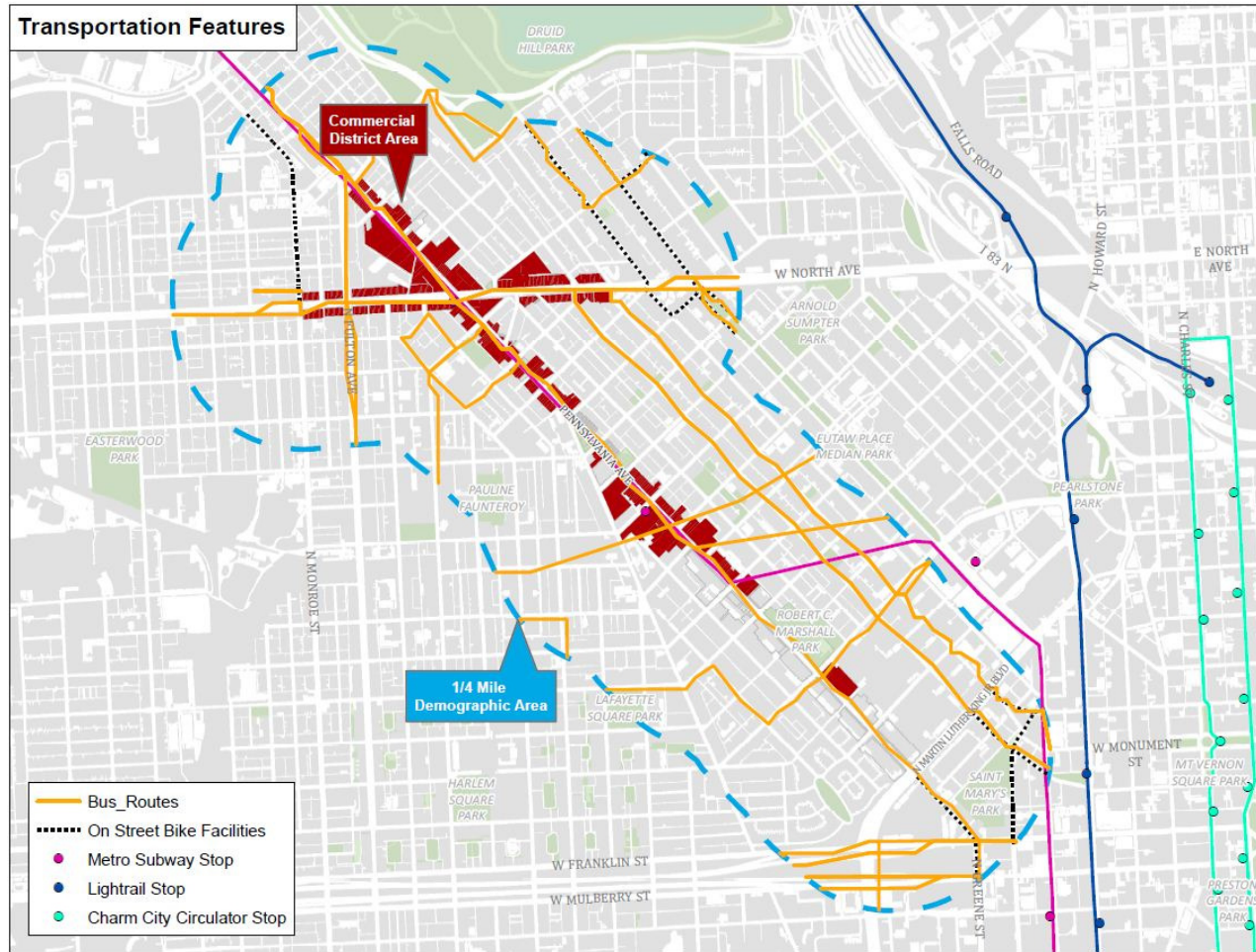
*A Food Desert is an area where: 1) The distance to a supermarket or supermarket alternative is more than ¼ mile, 2) The median household income is at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level, 3) Over 30% of households have no vehicle available, and 4) The average Healthy Food Availability Index score for all food stores is low.

Within the ¼ mile area surrounding the corridor there are:

- Approximately 12,965 people living in a Food Desert
- 1 supermarket
- 3 community gardens
- No urban farms
- 40 corner stores
- 4 convenience stores
- No farmers markets
- No virtual supermarkets



Transportation:



Recommendations

1. Focus revitalization around the corridors' rich African-American cultural history
2. Explore possible TOD sites around Penn North and Upton-Avenue Market Metro stations.
3. Explore possibility of relocating the Maryland African-American Festival to Pennsylvania Ave.
4. Continue to partner with community associations to identify community concerns and issues. Improve communication through...
5. Invigorate Triangle Park with outdoor jazz concerts and other musical/cultural programs.
6. Explore a pop-up café concept in the Triangle Park.
7. Improve the safety of intersections at Pennsylvania/W North Ave, Clifton/Fulton, and Fulton/W North Ave to decrease accidents.
8. Work with police to enhance safety in public spaces.
9. Provide free, rotating music and dance programming in transit plazas.
10. Cultivate MICA and Coppin State University as potential partners.



Toolkit:

The City of Baltimore has many potential programs and services that can be targeted at the Pennsylvania and West North Avenue Corridor:

- **Economic Development Tools**

- Neighborhood Development (Baltimore Development Corporation)
 - *Façade Improvement Grant, Baltimore MICRO, and Enterprise Zone Tax Credits*
 - Various grants, loans, and tax credit programs will be targeted in Greenmount Corridor to support business operations and provide critical financing for expansion.
 - *Market Study Analysis*
 - Utilizing both in-house analyst and hired consultants, a market study will be performed for the commercial corridor. The assessment will provide government decision-makers, private investors, and community leaders with a realistic understanding of the potential for development of the different types of land uses that make up the corridor.
 - *Targeted Code Enforcement*
 - To maintain safe and attractive neighborhoods and business districts throughout the city, Baltimore Housing's Code Enforcement Division enforces the city's housing, zoning, building and related codes in target areas.

- **Planning**

- Planning Department
 - *Design and Zoning*
 - The Land Use Planning Division directs the physical development of the City in coordination with comprehensive plans.
 - *Comprehensive Planning*
 - The Comprehensive Planning Division incorporates a variety of planning disciplines including land use, environmental planning, transportation planning, and community planning to ensure that the City is provided with realistic, implementable plans.

- **Transportation**

- Department of Transportation
 - *Streetscape*
 - Roadway improvements that include but are not limited to tree plantings, lighting enhancements, sidewalk repair, roadway resurfacing, traffic calming, and landscaped medians.
 - *Bike Baltimore*
 - Bike Baltimore is a Mayoral initiative to institute infrastructure improvements, policy recommendations, educational goals and enforcement strategies designed to make Baltimore a bike friendly city.
 - *TreeBaltimore (Recreation and Parks)*
 - TreeBaltimore is a Mayoral initiative led by the Baltimore City of Recreation and Parks in partnership with Blue Water Baltimore, the Parks & People Foundation, and the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay that will be used to bolster street tree coverage.

- **Sanitation**

- Department of Public Works
 - The Department of Public Works has the ability to target priority areas in the corridor with their Corner Can Initiative, Mechanical Streetsweeping, Community Service Workers, Community Pitch-In Program, and Graffiti Removal.