

middle branch



Photo by Andrew Nagl

Murals like this one are representative of the local communities' vibrant culture. Through thoughtful urban design, these communities will maintain their unique identities.

Sustainable Communities

“Never doubt that a small number of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Meade

Sustainable communities are the foundation of a healthy city. These communities have a unique sense of place, preserve natural and cultural resources, embrace local enterprise, promote stable employment, and increase social equity through the fair distribution of the costs and benefits of development.

Redevelopment of the Middle Branch will create major changes to both the waterfront and its adjacent communities. The challenge presented is to capture the opportunities to ensure these changes

have a positive impact on existing communities. Redevelopment of the waterfront will allow us to restore and improve walkable connections from existing neighborhoods to the park system, trails, transportation and shops. Housing can be stabilized by directing private and public funds to renovation of existing homes. New mixed-use development will increase the number of jobs. Light Rail stops that were originally located without improving local access can be improved with new sidewalks and facilities that encourage their use. The unique character of surrounding neighborhoods can be acknowledged and celebrated as a part of these changes. Mixed-income communities are the strongest communities. Redevelopment of the Middle Branch provides the opportunity to increase housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents through home ownership and new rentals.

The Middle Branch Master Plan acts as an overlay plan to the existing communities. It is not intended to replace the authority of local communities to guide their future, but to complement and support existing plans and programs. See Map 11 for community locations.

I. History

Cherry Hill

In the early 1940's private developers laid out three subdivisions for African Americans in the area now known as Cherry Hill. In 1943 City Officials, after a heated debate about location, chose the Cherry Hill area to build 600 apartment units for African American war workers. The whole neighborhood was laid out by the relatively new Planning Commission, according to the best design ideas at the time: curving streets, cul-de-sacs, pedestrian paths, and well-sited green space. When the HABC development opened in January of 1945, Cherry Hill became one of the first African American suburban-style housing projects in the country. In 1945, these units were opened. Shortly after the war, the Cherry Hill Homes were converted to low-income housing. HABC added another 632 units in 1952 and 360 units in 1956. In 1980, HABC added another 121 units to Cherry Hill, making it one of the largest housing projects east of Chicago. The neighborhood in the 1990's went through major changes including the demolition of public housing units built in 1952 and 1956 and the renovations of hundreds more.

Brooklyn

Throughout the 19th century, the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay area was a village that catered to truck farmers in northern Anne Arundel County. Hundreds of farms, ranging from ten to fifty acres in size, circled the City. These farms trucked their goods to market in Baltimore. On the Middle Branch shoreline, several waterfront resorts and hotels opened, catering to Baltimore resident truck farmers. The Walnut Spring Hotel, built in the 1850's, became a popular rest stop for farmers, a resort for city residents, a communal hall to villagers, and a terrapin farm.

By the mid-19th century, two initiatives transformed Brooklyn. First, in 1853 the Patapsco Land Company formed, hoping to create a deep water port. Second, in circa 1856, the Long Bridge was built, connecting Brooklyn to South Baltimore. Other changes encouraged growth in Brooklyn. In 1878, the State of Maryland purchased the Long Bridge and eliminated its toll, and in 1882, the B&O railroad extended a rail line across to Curtis Bay. Subsequently, in Curtis Bay the B&O railroad erected a coal shipping facility in 1884 and a train station in 1886. Several years later, the Baltimore

and Curtis Railway began streetcar service from Brooklyn to Baltimore. By the 1890's, suburban and rowhouse developments were being erected in this area. In 1918, Brooklyn became part of Baltimore City.

Westport

Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, Westport grew into a small village catering to local farms and several resorts located along the Middle Branch shoreline. The Middle Branch shoreline attracted resorts that offered everything from crabcakes to gambling.

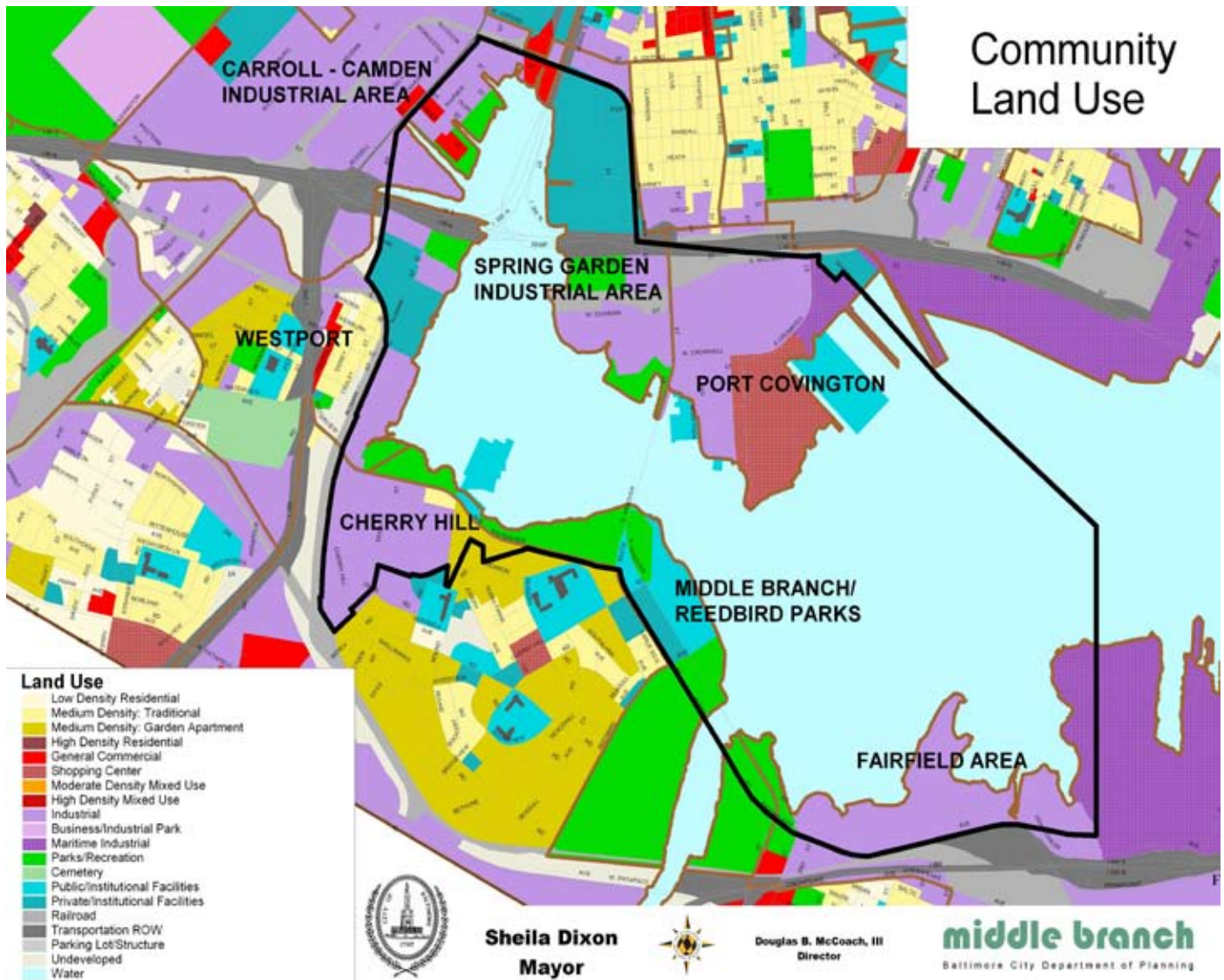
By the turn of the 20th Century, industry loomed over the Westport area. Carr-Lowrey Glass Company built a glass manufacturing plant on the shores of the Middle Branch in 1889. Several years later, the Baltimore Novelty Steam Boiler Works built their plant just north of Carr-Lowrey Glass Company, and in 1905 BG&E constructed the Westport Power Plant. The first residential rowhouses were constructed between 1898 and 1915. Between 1915 and 1924, the porch-front rowhouses were constructed. Industrial workers settled into these houses as the existing industries in the area expanded and new industries moved in. The residential neighborhood centered on Annapolis Road, and seamlessly meshed with the Mt.. Winans community (that was centered on Hollins Ferry Road). The construction of I-295 split the community in half and destroyed a large swathe of the neighborhood.

II. Existing Conditions

The existing neighborhoods span the Middle Branch geographically, historically, and in their character. Along the west shore, Westport is situated behind the industrial waterfront, physically separated from the water. Westport worked with the City to create a master plan in 2004. A major development project planned for the site of former industrial plants will once again connect this neighborhood to the beautiful Middle Branch waterfront. The community is divided in half by I-295, and is ringed by heavy industrial uses along its northwestern edge including Patapsco Excavating Company and Wimpey Minerals, U.S.A. These uses create dust and truck traffic. (See Map 10)

The community of Cherry Hill sits behind the southern shoreline of the Middle Branch overlooking the estuary. This community is home to over a dozen churches, a major park, a health center, a library branch, and many other services. The rate of home ownership is higher than in the city as whole. The community has made great strides in public safety and school programs in recent years and sponsors collective activities such as regular neighborhood clean-ups and citizens-on-patrol programs. The Cherry Hill Master Plan demonstrates a wealth of successes and new initiatives in areas as diverse as expanded economic development and increased voter participation.

Cherry Hill has seen the demolition or impending demolition of hundreds of public housing units, opening the door for new development. Much of the public housing is located south of Cherry Hill Road. Several privately owned apartment complexes are located along the northern edge of the community, closest to the waterfront. Currently these units are very affordable. The Cherry Hill Master Plan recommends determining the future plans of the management companies controlling these properties. There is concern regarding their future availability for low- and moderate- income tenants given the pending changes along the waterfront. The Cherry Hill plan looks favorably upon mixed-income redevelopment. This redevelopment should include a significant percentage of af-



Map 10 - Community Land Use

fordable housing. The Cherry Hill Public Housing Tenants' Council has right of first refusal on any development project on HABC owned land. The Tenants' Council must, therefore, be a partner in any redevelopment scheme utilizing public land that was formerly public housing.

Light Rail stops are located in both the Westport and Cherry Hill communities and allow a rider to reach downtown Baltimore in a matter of minutes. A sixty-acre industrial area is located in the western edge of the community between residential uses and the light rail station. This area is marginally productive, containing a mix of active and vacant properties.

The far southern end of the Middle Branch is home to the community of Brooklyn. In contrast to the row houses in the other neighborhoods, Brooklyn has many detached houses. It can be accessed directly from the Hanover Street Bridge and is the neighborhood closest to Anne Arundel County. Brooklyn is also adjacent to the Port of Baltimore and I-895 can be accessed from the main street. This community is also separated from the Middle Branch by waterfront industrial uses. Growing out of its master plan, efforts are being made to enhance its commercial area, upgrade housing, and support waterfront open space projects. Its recent designation as a City Main Street is a testimony

to these initiatives.

Though all existing communities should benefit from the recommendations of the Middle Branch plan, of primary importance are Westport and Cherry Hill. In the 2006 Comprehensive Master Plan for Baltimore City, there is a discussion of the 2005 Housing Market Typology. Every city neighborhood is categorized as to its condition and the likely resource allocation needed to stabilize or upgrade each area. Westport and Cherry Hill are both communities that are in need of additional resources.

The Cherry Hill and Westport neighborhoods need a certain amount of government resources to maintain or upgrade their quality of life, such as jobs training and access to health care, in addition to housing market intervention.

III. Opportunities

There are many benefits from economic investment, including:

- Increased population and restoration of vacant homes
- Increased number and types of jobs
- More customers for local shopping centers
- Expanded waterfront access and better care of parkland
- Improvements to transportation
- More recreational and educational opportunities

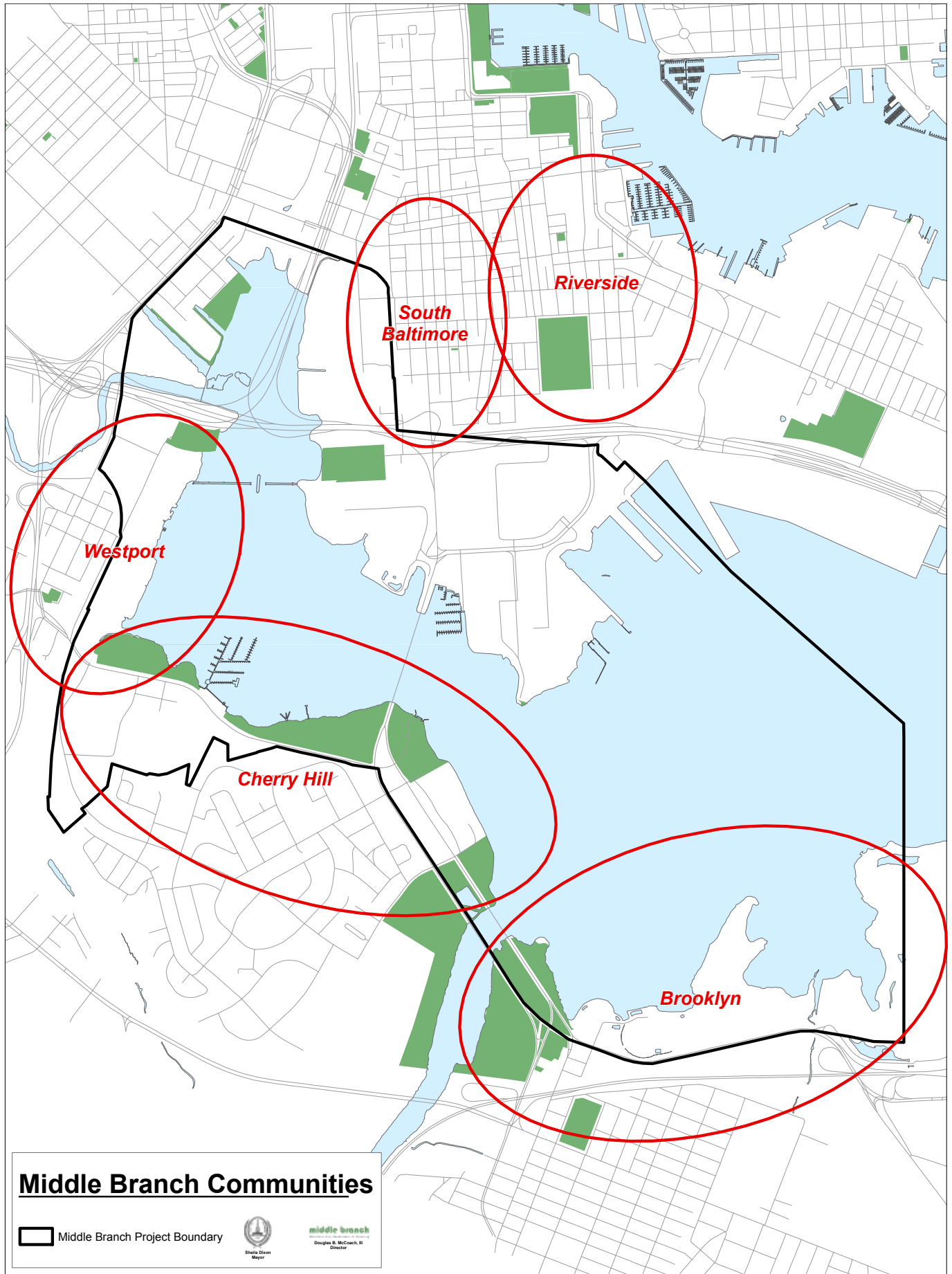
IV. Constraints

- New development and increases in demand for housing often raise prices, forcing existing residents to move out because of higher property taxes and changing rents.
- Gentrification and new populations force major changes in the character of historic communities. These changes are not always beneficial to existing residents.



Photo by Andrew Nagl

Rowhouses such as these can easily be an important part of a sustainable community.



Map 11 - Middle Branch Communities

V. Guiding Principles

While each of the communities surrounding the Middle Branch is unique in character, all have similar requirements for a successful and sustainable community. Over arching community Vision and Principles as they relate to the larger Middle Branch are presented here in this section.

Vision

Include existing communities in the restoration of the greater Middle Branch through connectivity, housing opportunities, job creation, access to open space and the waterfront, and preservation of community character.

- ***Reduce poverty.*** Both local and regional economic development efforts should be targeted to reducing poverty by promoting jobs that match the skills of existing residents, improving the skills of low-income individuals, addressing the needs of families moving off welfare, and insuring the availability in all communities of quality affordable child care, transportation, and housing.
- ***Reduce crime.*** Public safety initiatives should be comprehensive and coordinated.
- ***Prevent displacement and support affordable housing choices.*** As development pressures mount, programs should be in place to assist existing residents to remain in their homes, relocate nearby, or, if renters, become homeowners if appropriate.
- ***Increase employment.*** Utilize city and state programs to assist existing small businesses to remain while also encouraging new businesses to locate in the communities for greater access to services and employment opportunities.
- ***Plan for human-scale development.*** Streets, pedestrian paths, and bike paths should contribute to a system of fully connected and interesting routes to all destinations. Their design should encourage pedestrian and bicycle use through narrow widths and spatially defined buildings, trees, and lighting. This will discourage high-speed traffic. Community design should help conserve resources and minimize waste.
- ***Provide for a well-balanced, well-designed transportation system.*** A key element of a livable community is a system that allows people to get around by car, transit, bicycle, and walking. As many activities as possible should be located within easy walking distance of transit stops. In the Middle Branch area, especially Westport, a plan for routing truck traffic onto the main roads and not on local streets is very important.
- ***Improve educational attainment.*** The success of students should be of concern to all citizens. Schools should also be used as centers for the community.
- ***Create job opportunities and job training programs for existing residents.*** To be sustainable, emphasis should be placed on career building and not simply entry-level jobs. Coordination among existing and new employers with job training programs will offer the best path for job advancement within the area.
- ***Provide for open space and recreation along the waterfront and connect existing parks to the waterfront and the surrounding communities.*** Existing parks, such as Reedbird Park, should offer a connection to the waterfront through Middle Branch Park. Any new waterfront projects should be planned to provide easy connections to the adjacent neighborhoods, both physically and psychologically.
- ***Protect the character of existing communities and limit displacement of current residents as changes occur.*** Preserve community affordability, character and sense of place by initiating spe-

cial programs and initiatives.

VI. Recommendations

Surrounding communities will be exposed to new investment patterns and gentrification as a result of land use changes along the waterfront. The residents of these communities should remain an important part of the area as it evolves. To preserve community character and sense of place, special commitments, programs and initiatives will be needed. Therefore, the Middle Branch Master Plan recommends the following actions take place immediately:

Prevent Displacement

1. Educate Residents regarding how to purchase homes, improve homes and reduce impacts on property tax increases through a series of housing workshops. This will help existing homeowners deal with inquiries from investors, help renters purchase homes, and assist elderly residents who want to stay in their homes. *(See Appendix B for existing housing programs in Maryland)*
2. Study ways that new, unique housing assistance programs can be initiated within surrounding communities to assure residents can remain.
3. The Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Housing Authority of Baltimore City should work with surrounding communities to create specific plans with time lines for City controlled properties.
4. Enforce the new Baltimore City Inclusionary Housing regulations in new development projects with the goal to provide additional, affordable housing in new developments.
5. The recommendations contained in community Master Plans should be the foundation for approving zoning changes, Urban Renewal Ordinances, Planned Unit Developments and capital improvements.

Increase job opportunities

1. Work with the State of Maryland and the Baltimore Development Corporation to offer tax incentives to new developments for employment of district residents.
2. Provide 'first source' employee recruitment from new developments in surrounding communities.



Photo by Andrew Nagl

Urban blight can threaten the health and sustainability of a community.

Individual Recommendations by Community

Each community impacted by the Middle Branch redevelopment has completed a master plan or is in the process of completing a plan. The recommendations contained in this section are taken from these plans. For more detailed information, see the Baltimore City website:

<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/government/planning/available.html>

Brooklyn

The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay SNAP plan recommends several strategies for housing investment, which could also apply to Westport and Cherry Hill.

A few of these recommendations are:

- Market the community to home buyers
- Improve housing conditions on the edges of strong areas
- Assist homeowners in making needed repairs
- Improve rental housing conditions
- Develop long-term strategies to revitalize weak housing areas.

The plan also recommends:

- Encourage the redevelopment of the commercial corridors, and especially the parcel at Garrett and Potee streets, just southeast of I-895.
- Develop the nature preserve at Masonville Cove with accompanying educational center resources
- Improve the appearance of industrial areas and work with City agencies and local residences and industries to establish community-industry partnerships to address common issues.

Westport

- The Westport-Mt. Winans-Lakeland plan recommends that the eastern area of Westport between I-295 and the proposed new waterfront project should be a higher-density mix of homes, stores, and parks. Westport could accommodate more than double the number of existing housing units.
- West of I-295 provides the best opportunity for large-scale redevelopment.
- The east side of Westport is the most vulnerable to investment pressures and gentrifica-

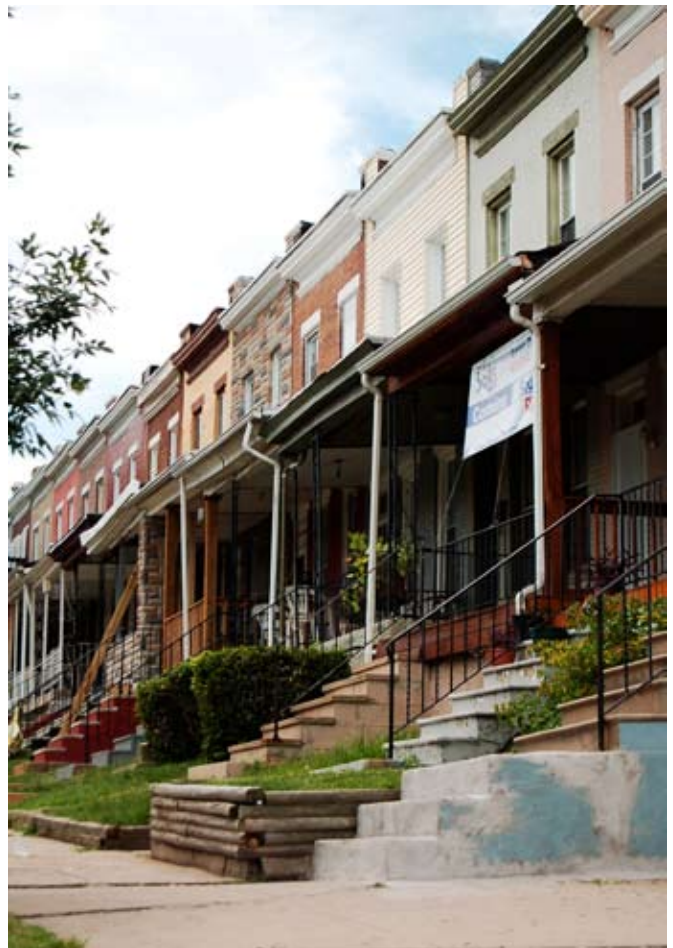


Photo by Andrew Nagl

In a healthy, mixed-use community, people living in rowhouses like these will have easy access to basic needs like recreation and grocery stores.

tion. The neighborhood associations in the area are planning a series of housing workshops to help existing residents deal with inquiries from investors and assist elderly residents who want to stay in their homes.

- Make rehabilitation assistance programs available to existing property owners and help first-time home buyers purchase properties.

Other recommendations that need immediate attention are:

- Work with stakeholders in Westport to develop a detailed mini-plan for the future of the area between the Light Rail station and I-295, including a corridor plan for Annapolis Road, the main street in Westport. This plan should incorporate the vision for connecting the existing community to the new waterfront development project and to green spaces and the waterfront.
- An immediate action plan should be undertaken for the redevelopment of Westport Homes Extension that takes into account the needs of existing residents and relates to the plan mentioned above for the eastern part of Westport.
- The waterfront development project should provide for convenient access and parking for the Light Rail stop that prevents a spillover of traffic and parking into the existing neighborhood.
- The waterfront development project should provide a multi-purpose building near the water for educational, recreational, and other programs that will serve not only the new residents and employees but also the existing residents.
- Transportation improvements should be studied to make automobile and truck access to and around Westport and Mt. Winans less confusing. This should include a thorough analysis of the functionality of Hollins Ferry Road and a plan to keep trucks off of local streets. A study of enhanced transit services should also be undertaken.
- Facilities for recreation, especially for youth, must be upgraded and new facilities put in place.

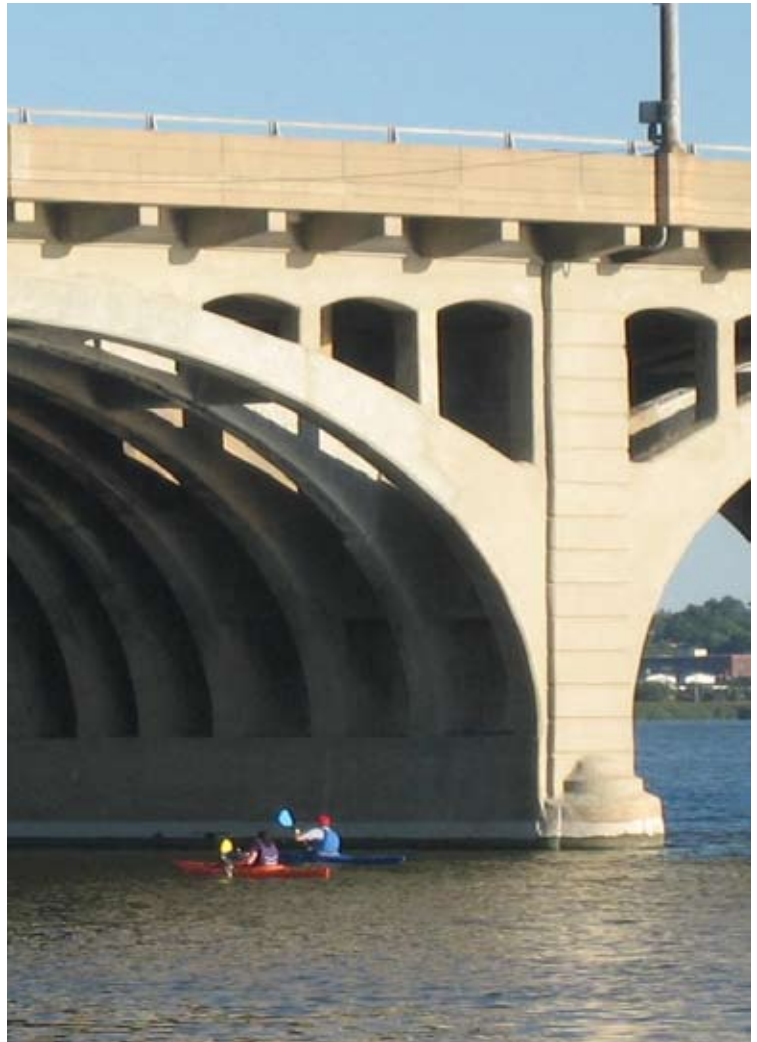


Photo by Andrew Nagl

Opportunities for small craft boating in the Middle Branch are immense and access to them should be expanded for all residents.

Recommendations from the Draft Cherry Hill Master Plan

- Support the reconfiguration of Cherry Hill Road to connect to the new “main street” in Turner Development’s Westport waterfront project.

- Create an active list of available properties that could be purchased by existing residents. Also, establish a series of housing workshops to help existing residents deal with inquiries from investors and assist elderly residents who want to stay in their homes.
- Develop a public relations campaign to market Cherry Hill as a place to live and work.
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment of all existing infrastructure—roads, storm drains, lights, etc.—and create a plan for upgrading deficient infrastructure components.
- Cherry Hill is developing a Master Plan. The recommendations in the Cherry Hill Master Plan should be the foundation for establishing Urban Renewal Ordinances, Planned Unit Developments and capitol improvements within and near the community.
- Provide a shuttle bus system that connects the local streets in Cherry Hill, Westport, and Brooklyn to the Hamburg Street, Westport, Cherry Hill, and Patapsco Light Rail stations and commercial centers in new development projects.

Human service needs are also a major focus of the draft Cherry Hill Master Plan. Recommendations include:

- Ensure that new development adjacent to the Light Rail stop contains significant employment opportunities for existing Cherry Hill residents.
- Provide adequate job training, including programs for ex-offenders.
- Promote shopping in the Town Center, partly by bringing additional traffic to the neighborhood.
- Develop a comprehensive youth center with longer hours.
- Keep recreation centers open and fully staffed.
- Create youth apprenticeships and job opportunities.

“The time is always right to do what is right.”

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

middle branch



Maintaining Our Momentum

“Another flaw in the human character is that everyone wants to build and nobody wants to do maintenance.”

- Kurt Vonnegut

We have learned a great deal from our experiences guiding the development of the Inner Harbor. The Harbor has been a huge success that attracts millions of visitors per year, but this success has not come without challenges along the way. As the mix of public and private pieces to the promenade were built, a cohesive maintenance and management system was needed to assure these spaces were kept consistently clean and safe. As the Inner Harbor became more attractive to recreational boaters, conflicts and safety issues developed among water users. Coordination was needed to assure safety and organized use of the water. Success is attractive - a wide variety of organizations and businesses approach the City every year for new licenses to use our public spaces. Others simply attempt to take advantage of the space without permission.

We have learned that a key element to the long term viability of major waterfront redevelopment efforts is Management and Maintenance. The large amounts of open space, new wetlands and public

trails in the Middle Branch will require a cohesive authority to oversee and coordinate maintenance and management.

This document proposes creation of a Middle Branch Advisory committee (see Implementation Chapter). This authority will establish a subcommittee to study the maintenance and management issues of the Middle Branch in more detail, including funding sources, responsibilities, membership, organizational structure, mission and phasing.

I. Management and Maintenance Considerations for the Middle Branch

Responsibilities

When fully developed, the Middle Branch will consist of a complex mix of land uses, habitat, and waterfront recreational uses. Some of the resulting issues the maintenance and management organization must address will include:

- Maintenance of public and private waterfront parks, gardens, and trails
- Maintenance of wetlands through upkeep such as invasive species and trash removal
- Daily trash removal and shoreline/water maintenance
- Management of volunteers involved in environmental education, clean-ups, and other activities
- Program coordination for special events
- Management of water safety and navigation
- Management of land trusts where appropriate
- Fundraising and Grantsmanship
- Coordination with city agencies involved in water quality monitoring, infrastructure improvements and other activities
- Partnerships with other organizations

General Considerations

Recommended Board Members

The Board membership of most maintenance and management organizations reflect the citizens and businesses of the area they represent. Therefore the following individuals and organizations should be considered for membership:

- Local/state/federal government officials (including scientists from land agencies and representatives from housing, minority business development, and environmental agencies)
- Rowing Club officers
- Port Authority
- Experts in water quality, habitat, finance, etc.

- Attorneys
- Elected city officials including members of city council and the mayor
- Community leaders
- The National Aquarium in Baltimore
- Land Owners and Developers along the Middle Branch waterfront
- Citizens from surrounding communities

Potential Sources of Funding

- Special Taxing District
- Federal TOD (FTA)
- Grants
- Local corporations and Foundations
- Tax Increment Financing
- City of Baltimore



Photo by Andrew Nagl

The Middle Branch is home to a great variety of recreational uses. With people wanting to row, sail, fish, and swim, sometimes these uses may conflict. They need to be monitored and managed for everyone's safety and enjoyment.

II. Examples of Existing Management and Maintenance

Partnership for Baltimore's Waterfront

Purpose

Partnership for Baltimore's Waterfront (PBW) coordinates with public and private sectors to determine and realize competitive standards for services like hospitality and landscaping. They do this in order to improve the harbor experience for those who visit, work, and live in the area.

Authority

In 2005, Mayor O'Malley's Inner Harbor Advisory Committee suggested the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID) to create higher standards and oversee management in the Inner Harbor area. In a BID, local property owners participate in a self-imposed tax to support additional services that supplement the City's basic provisions. With this in mind, City Council passed the Waterfront Management District Bill (Ordinance # 07-417) in early 2007. It created the Waterfront Management District and gave PBW the authority to perform specific supplemental services like extra landscaping and ambassadors to greet visitors. Under the ordinance, the City will maintain a baseline level of services like street sweeping and police patrols. Both the PBW's and the City's respective responsibilities are outlined in the Waterfront Services Agreement.

In order to operate legally, the District must be supported in a 'Special Election.' All commercial

property owners within the District will have the opportunity to vote in favor of or against the District's creation. Ballots were collected by May 25, 2007. The Waterfront Management District will be certified to operate if 58% of the votes cast support its creation.

The Waterfront Management District will function for four years. During this period, all commercial property owners in the area will pay a surcharge on their property taxes. Homeowners in the region will not have to pay this fee. At the end of four years, the Mayor and City Council will decide whether or not to reinstate the District for another four year period.

Responsibilities

PBW is responsible for managing:

- Operations on the waterfront from the Rusty Scupper to Bond Street Wharf
- Landscaping along the promenade
- Upkeep of lawns and flowerbeds
- The provision of visitor guide pamphlets
- Cleaning and maintenance services that exceed those provided by Baltimore City
- Positive publicity for the waterfront

Funding

The Partnership for Baltimore's Waterfront has gotten its funding from the contributions of founding partners, area corporations, local foundations, several tenants, all commercial property owners within the district and the City of Baltimore. Sixty percent (60%) of the Budget for the 2007 fiscal year comes from private sources, while 40% is from the city.

Commercial property owners are required to pay a fee based on a value assessment of their property. Currently, for every one hundred dollars of property they own, they pay fifteen cents. City funding is in the form of a \$300,000 service contract. Baltimore City also contributes the revenues it receives from docking fees for transient boaters, wharfage agreements and leases above a set 2004 baseline level.

Board

PBW is governed by a 20 member Board of Directors. The board includes major local property owners and attractions such as the National Aquarium and Maryland Science Center. Nonprofits such as Living Classrooms and residents of the community are also involved. Finally, key employers, city agencies, and city elected leaders are also vital members.

Downtown Partnership

Purpose

Downtown Partnership knows that attracting more retailers, residents, and investment, will make Baltimore even more vibrant. With the intention of bringing more activity to the area, the Downtown Partnership works to make downtown cleaner and safer. They coordinate with the public and private sectors to make Downtown Baltimore an even better place for businesses, employees, resi-

dents, and visitors.

Authority

Downtown Partnership of Baltimore is a Business Improvement District (BID) created by an ordinance of the Mayor and City Council. It is also enabled under state law. Business Improvement Districts charge local commercial property owners additional taxes or a surcharge to support services that supplement the city's basic provisions. These fees are essentially self-imposed because a majority of the business owners have chosen to pay for the extra services. City Council will soon schedule a vote on the renewal of the Downtown Management Authority.

Responsibilities

Downtown Partnership is responsible for managing:

- Cleaning services that include picking up trash, removing graffiti, power washing sidewalks, pruning trees, and weeding
- Safety services including Public Safety Guides who give directions, check on businesses, provide homeless outreach, deter panhandling, act as safety escorts, and assist the police
- Beautification services that focus on sidewalks, streets, facades, and parks
- The Downtown Management Authority (DMA)

Funding

Commercial property owners in the district pay a fee of 14.39 cents annually for every one hundred dollars of property value they own.

Board

The Downtown Partnership is advised by a large board including members from Mercy Medical Center, prominent area businesses, Baltimore Development Cor-



Photo by Andrew Nagl

The Gwynns Falls Trail System is a great place to recreate today, but it must be kept up or it will fall into disrepair.

poration, banks, elected city officials, city and state agencies, and museums and attractions.

III. Conclusions

These are excellent examples of the form of organization needed to maintain the redevelopment of the Middle Branch. There are a few differences, however, that must be considered. For example:

- A Middle Branch entity will have more responsibilities including environmental protection
- There may be fewer commercial entities to draw funds from
- There are more opportunities for funding related to environmental restoration and management

It follows that the management and maintenance entity will be appropriate guides for the Middle Branch. By thoughtfully customizing the new organization to the region, we can expect it to become the catalyst needed to bring about positive change on the Middle Branch.



Photo by Andrew Nagl

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middle branch



Photo by Andrew Nagl

An implementation entity must be created in order for the master plan's vision to be realized.

Implementation

“Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work.”

- Peter Drucker

This master plan envisions an environmentally sustainable and economically prosperous future for Baltimore’s Middle Branch. The Plan’s goal is to help connect people, with each other and with the Middle Branch estuary, through thoughtful urban design, efficient transportation options, ecological protection, historic preservation, and a diverse array of recreational opportunities. In order for these intentions to be realized, however, implementation of the Plan must be considered. Without an effective way to execute recommendations or manage and maintain the Middle Branch development, the Plan will not be successful.

Managing large areas of land for redevelopment is complex and time consuming. This is especially true when it comes to moving from a vision to a strategic plan and then to the details of implementing projects. To assure the vision is implemented, an appropriate team of individuals is needed. This team must have sufficient authority and expertise to make the difficult decisions needed and leverage resources for implementation activities.

I. Recommendations

The Middle Branch Master Plan is a powerful tool that can guide the area to an exciting future. In order to maintain current momentum, however, it needs a potent driving force. Lessons learned from other development programs such as East Baltimore Development Initiative and Battery Park City suggest the need for an entity to oversee the implementation of the Plan. The Executive Committee recommends the immediate appointment of the Middle Branch Advisory Committee (MBAC) to oversee implementation of the Plan and carry forward its vision, guiding principles and recommendations. The MBAC will provide the cohesive leadership needed to maintain control and direct activities in the redevelopment area. They will bring the master plan's vision to fruition by ensuring and overseeing the plan's next steps.

II. Mission

Oversee the implementation of the vision, goals, guiding principles and recommendations of the Middle Branch Master Plan by calling on the expertise of professionals, recommending sources of funding, and guiding the design of redevelopment sites and environmental restoration areas.

III. Responsibilities of MBAC

- Assure that new development meets guiding principles as outlined in the Plan.
- Review and make recommendations regarding passage of the Urban Renewal Ordinance(s) as the legal means to govern new development.
- Review and make recommendations on all Planned Unit Developments, major park improvements or other redevelopment efforts.
- Develop recommendations for funding Middle Branch programs.
- Establish subcommittees to implement specific plan recommendations. Provide guidance on major issues and questions as they arise.
- Complete a study to guide the future management and maintenance of the new projects in the Middle Branch estuary. This will include recommendations for appropriate legislation to create the Management and Maintenance entity, identify its mission, and other needs.



Photo by Kim Trueheart

Community involvement is important to the successful implementation of this plan.

IV. Membership of MBAC

The membership of the Task Force should reflect the membership of the Master Plan Executive Committee, with the addition of private sector experts in architecture, environmental restoration, development, and finance. The member list would contain:

- Chair: Deputy Mayor
- Five Committee Chairs (or persons with similar expertise)
- Director of Planning
- Director of BDC
- Director of R&P
- Director of Department of Public Works
- Director of Department of Transportation
- City Council Member
- Federal Agency representatives, as appropriate (USACE, NOAA, NPS)
- State DNR representative
- State MDE representative
- State Department of Business and Economic Development representative
- Habitat expert
- Green Architecture expert
- Financial expert
- Residents from Cherry Hill, Westport, and Brooklyn community associations



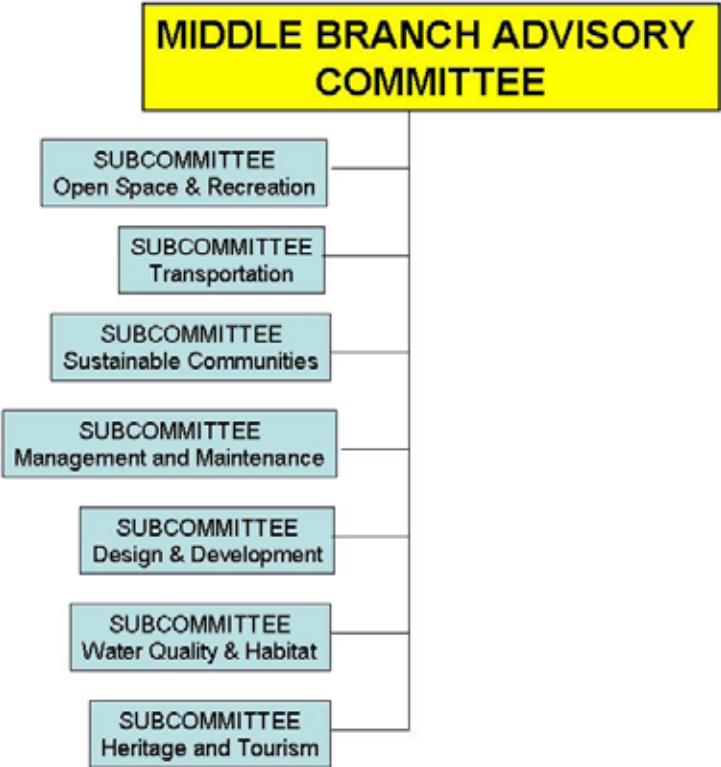
Photo by Andrew Nagl

Due to the area's many resources, environmental grants may be one source of funding for a management and maintenance entity on the Middle Branch.

V. Structure of MBAC

The structure of the Advisory Committee should include a series of subcommittees focused on implementing the chapters of the Plan. Members will chair subcommittees as needed.

The MBAC will report to the Mayor and City Council.



Ensuring that the necessary studies on water quality and the area’s transportation infrastructure are conducted will be among the implementing entity’s many responsibilities.

Implementation Time Tables

Water Quality and Habitat			
Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
1. Create a Comprehensive Monitoring Program that includes an Education Component a) Conduct surveys and gather and evaluate data from MDE, the City, and the County that show existing bacteria and toxics levels and sources.	MDE, USACE, DNR, DPW	A comprehensive report with a quantitative understanding of the bacteria and toxics impacting the Middle Branch.	Long-term
b.) Develop a bacteria TMDL for the Gwynns Falls.	MDE, USACE, DNR, DPW	Bacteria TMDL	Short-term
2. Manage Floating Debris a.) Conduct a systematic random-based survey of the watershed to identify hot-spots and types of trash.	MDE, DPW, local non-profits	A GIS map showing regional trash hot-spots.	Short-term
b.) Create an education campaign on the impact of trash on neighborhoods and wildlife.	Baltimore City Public School System, local nonprofits, MDE, DPW	Greater citizen understanding of trash; Reduced environmental impact from trash	Long-term
c.) Present evidence to MDE to get the Harbor and Middle Branch listed as impaired by trash.	DNR, USACE, MDE	The Inner Harbor and Middle Branch given "impaired" status for trash by MDE	Long-term
d.) Support the proposed Maryland Bottle Bill.	City of Baltimore, Bottle Bill Groups	Helps to reduce floating trash in the Middle Branch by up to 50%.	Short-term
e) Construct additional trash interceptors where appropriate and direct street sweeping programs to high trash streets.	City of Baltimore, MPA, Federal Partners.	Reduced levels of trash in the Middle Branch	Short-term
3. Incorporate Advanced Stormwater Techniques a.) Incorporate advanced storm water treatment techniques in all redevelopment projects with a goal to treat 100% of pollution in storm water.	Baltimore Department of Public Works	Reduction of trash and pollutants in the Middle Branch	Mid-term
b.) Retrofit existing developments with Best Management Practices	Baltimore Department of Public Works	Reduction of trash and pollutants in the Middle Branch	Short-term
4. Restore Habitat Areas a.) Require a 100 foot wide green buffer around the Middle Branch shoreline.	Baltimore Department of Planning	Request buffer creation or mitigation on all waterfront development projects	Immediate
b.) Develop a comprehensive planting, maintenance, and invasive species control plan to revegetate barren areas.	DNR, CAC, DOP, Department of Recreation and Parks, local nonprofits	Improved habitat and aesthetic value from formerly barren areas	Long-term

5. Enforce Environmental Regulations			
a.) Enforce Critical Area regulations in Designated Habitat Protection Areas, Resource Conservation Areas, and the 100 foot Buffer	Baltimore Department of Planning, CAC	Existing and new zoning enforced consistently and according to the vision of CA program	Immediate
b.) Step-up efforts to meet the requirements of the City's NPDES permit-fund, construct new BMP's, and restore streams in the watershed.	DNR, MDE, DPW, Local nonprofits	Improved water quality and restoration of degraded watersheds	Long-term
6. Create New Tidal Marshes			
a.) Seek innovative funding sources for habitat restoration, including incentives to create new habitat and marsh areas adjacent to private development	DPW, DOP, MDE, DNR, Middle Branch Advisory Committee	Additional funds located to restore and maintain the habitat in the Middle Branch and its watershed	Immediate
b.) Implement the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Tidal Middle Branch Restoration Plan (MBRP) and the Patapsco Urban River Restoration Initiative (PURRI).	USACE, DNR, DOP, Middle Branch Advisory Committee	MBRP and PURRI are in full effect and are improving the region	Long-term

Open Space and Recreation

Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
Create a group with membership from the Department of Recreation and Parks, local rowing clubs, and communities to explore expansion of rowing facilities and the Rowing Center.	Department of Recreation and Parks, rowing clubs, communities	Local rowing facilities and the Rowing Center expanded along the Middle Branch	Short-term
Create a Middle Branch Park Friends Group to begin programming and volunteer opportunities for Middle Branch Park.	Community members, local nonprofits, Department of Recreation and Parks	Local adoption of Middle Branch Park; More programming; More community involvement in the park	Immediate
Implement USACE Tidal Middle Branch Project.	USACE, DOP, DPW	Creation and restoration of up to six new wetland projects in the Middle Branch	Mid to Long-term
Establish a group tasked to recommend habitat improvements and guide the location and expansion of water based recreational facilities.	DNR, rowing clubs, Baltimore Bird Club, Department of Recreation and Parks, DOP, wildlife profession	The quality of habitat and the quantity of recreational facilities are managed to complement each other and grow	Mid-term
Assure that the green shoreline and public access to the waterfront are protected at all private redevelopment sites.	Baltimore Department of Planning, Middle Branch Advisory Committee, local nonprofits	The public has consistent access to the Waterfront area	Immediate
Acquire CSX 'Swing Bridge' for Trail system, extend Gwynns Falls Trail to Southwest Area Park	Department of Planning, Recreation and Parks, Gwynns Falls Trail Council, Communities	Completion of Trail systems	Short-term and Ongoing

Design and Development

Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
General Recommendations Adopt zoning changes recommended in the Middle Branch Master Plan.	Baltimore Department of Planning, Baltimore City Council	New zoning in the Middle Branch Master Plan study area	Short-term
Create a more focused plan for the following development areas: Waterview Industrial Area, Harbor Hospital, and Port Covington.	Baltimore Department of Planning, BDC, DOT, Communities	Development in the Waterview Industrial Area, Harbor Hospital, and Port Covington is consistent with recommendations of the Middle Branch Advisory Committee	Mid-term
Adopt or amend existing Urban Renewal Ordinances to implement the goals of Master Plan.	Baltimore City Council, Baltimore Department of Planning, communities	An effective Urban Renewal Ordinance is adopted for the area	Immediately
As development plans proceed, adopt Planned Unit Developments as appropriate to ensure the goals and principles of the Master Plan are implemented.	Baltimore Department of Planning, Baltimore City Council	New PUD's realize the goals of the Master Plan	Short-term
Complete a study of existing utility infrastructure to guide physical improvements, green building goals and design guidelines.	Baltimore Department of Public Works, DOT, DOP	A comprehensive report that details the current utilities and guides improvements	Short-term
Study waterfront view corridors from existing communities and key waterfront locations.	Department of Planning, Communities	Establish criteria for protection in development plans, PUD's and Urban Renewal Ordinances.	Immediate

Transportation

Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
Complete an Area-wide Transportation Implementation Study for circulation, access and demand management.	Baltimore Department of Transportation, Department of Planning	Gather accurate data for planning changes to and improvement of the transportation infrastructure	Short-term
Establish design guidelines, street/path connectivity targets, and sustainable transportation policies that support walking, transit use, and on-street bicycle networks particularly at major transit nodes/light rail stations.	Baltimore Department of Planning, Baltimore Department of Transportation, MTA, Middle Branch Advisory Committee	Improved traffic circulation, safety, and variety of transportation choices	Mid-term
Appoint a Transportation Subcommittee of the Middle Branch Advisory Committee with diverse interests to advise and review the proposed transportation studies and other information. This can become the foundation for a Transportation Management Association.	Baltimore Department of Transportation, local transportation consultants, local trail activists, Middle Branch Advisory Committee	Creation of a finalized Implementation Strategy to facilitate the formation of a Transportation Management Association	Long-Term

Heritage and Tourism

Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
Require that an interpretive history program be part of new development along the Middle Branch shoreline.	CHAP, developers	Signage; Documentation of pertinent historical elements of Middle Branch development sites	Immediate
Adopt a requirement that all developers submit a feasibility study prior to developing any Baltimore City historic landmark-eligible properties located in the Middle Branch Master Plan area or adjacent neighborhoods.	Baltimore Department of Planning, CHAP, developers	The city's historic buildings on the Middle Branch are protected and documented	Short-term
Create a plan to make all Middle Branch War of 1812 sites visitor-friendly for the War of 1812 Bicentennial.	CHAP, Baltimore Heritage Inc., Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, and Maryland Department of Tourism	War of 1812 sites around the Middle Branch have improved access, signage, publicity, and informative interpretation	Immediate - City officials should approve this plan by July of 2008
Establish Baltimore City Landmark designation for the Hanover Street Bridge and the CSX Swing Bridge.	CHAP, local railroad museums, CSX	Hanover Street Bridge and the CSX Swing Bridge will be preserved and protected	Short-term
Through the Cherry Hill Master Plan, identify potential historic landmarks and initiate contact with property owners as the first step in the historic landmark designation process.	Baltimore Department of Planning, CHAP, Cherry Hill community	Local historic Landmarks are designated and the culture of Cherry Hill is protected.	Short-term
Through the Westport Area Master Plan, identify potential historic landmarks and initiate contact with property owners as the first step in the landmark designation process.	Baltimore Department of Planning, CHAP, Westport community	Local historic Landmarks are designated and the culture of Westport is protected.	Short-term
Create a 'maintenance plan' for historical programs, including but not limited to an 'adopt a marker' program.	Middle Branch Advisory Committee, CHAP, Heritage Office, Baltimore citizens	Regional landmarks are protected and remain attractive	Long-term
Link the Charles Street Scenic Byway and other nearby trails to the Middle Branch redevelopment.	Baltimore Department of Planning, local trail advocates, Baltimore Department of Transportation	Improved access to a historical resource	Long-term

Sustainable Communities			
Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
Educate community residents regarding existing home ownership programs, home repair and housing assistance to prepare them for coming changes.	HCD, HABC, State HUD, Cherry Hill Development Corporation, Westport Community, Brooklyn Community	Residents educated and connected to existing housing programs.	Immediate
Create group to study the establishment of additional home ownership protection programs unique to Middle Branch communities	Middle Branch Advisory Committee, HCD, HABC, Department of Planning, State of MD, Community Groups	Creation of new programs to assist existing homeowners and renters to remain in their communities despite rising property taxes.	Immediate
City agencies work closely with communities to develop plans for re-use of publicly controlled lands.	HCD, HABC, DOP, local communities.	Clear development goals and time line are established for publicly owned tracts of land.	Immediate
Budget improvements to surrounding communities to coincide with physical improvements at new waterfront developments.	DOP, DPW, DOT, HCD, HABC	Physical improvements to surrounding communities such as street resurfacing, lighting, building improvements complement the improvements to the waterfront.	Ongoing as dev. occurs
Support recommendations of community master plans	All City Agencies	Implementation of local Master Plan goals.	Ongoing

Implementation of Middle Branch Master Plan/Maintenance and Management			
Objective	Implementing Bodies/ Agents	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
Creation of Middle Branch Advisory Committee (MBAC) to oversee implementation of Plan and its recommendations	Those identified in Middle Branch Master Plan	Implementation of Plan recommendations.	Immediate and ongoing
Preparation of report with recommendations for establishing a Maintenance and Management entity for the Middle Branch.	MBAC and selected experts.	Separate report with distinct recommendations for legislation, funding and mission for new Management and Maintenance organization.	Short-Term

