

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

### A. Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental impacts.

**(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so.**

Baltimore boasts significant cultural, institutional, transportation and financial resources and serves as the epicenter of Smart Growth success in Maryland. Though the city is challenged with a growing number of vacant properties and ongoing population decline, it has managed to support the redevelopment and growth of existing communities and commercial districts. As listed in Strategies 1, 2, 5 and 6, this approach focuses development in areas with available land and infrastructure, and provides programs that assist homeowners maintain their investments. Smart Growth efforts also allow households to live near their work, improve green spaces, and assist communities to protect and preserve the character of their neighborhoods, while minimizing disturbance of the City's natural resource base.

#### *Examples of the City's success made over the last decade:*

- *Adaptive reuse and LEED certification.* Miller's Court is an example of innovative, adaptive re-use of a vacant historic building. It provides affordable workforce housing for teachers and serves as an incubator space for education-related businesses and non-profits. The property is LEED Gold certified and is located near the headquarters of the Baltimore City Public Schools and the Johns Hopkins University School of Education, where many Teach for America participants earn master's degrees while working in the City school system.
- *Historic Preservation.* American Brewery, built in 1887, is an example of the successful rehabilitation of a formerly vacant historic structure. Located in East Baltimore, the building was once one of the largest breweries in Maryland, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. After a long period of abandonment, the brewery has since become the home for Humanim, a Columbia, MD based non-profit. Humanim was a key player in securing \$22.5 million to renovate the American Brewery Complex into its new headquarters.
- *Live Near Your Work Program.* Johns Hopkins University's (JHU) Live Near Your Work program is the longest running and most successful employer-assisted home-buying program in the state. In 1997, the Johns Hopkins Hospital, one of the City's largest employers, partnered with the State to offer cash grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$17,000 to help employees buy homes in targeted areas around JHU's Homewood and medical campuses. There has been a clear shift in the quality of life near Hopkins' institutions due to this partnership and investments in surrounding neighborhoods.

- *Healthy Neighborhoods and Greening.* The Patterson Park neighborhood is an example of a successful Healthy Neighborhood partnership. To develop and implement an alley greening plan, residents raised more than \$14,000, and partnered with community organizations such as Community Greens, University of Maryland Law School, Hogan & Hartson Law Firm, Patterson Park Neighborhood Association, the Mayor’s Office, and the Neighborhood Design Center. This was also made possible by a City Charter Amendment.
- *The Baltimore Sustainability Plan* articulates 29 goals and 131 strategies to improve Baltimore in the categories of Cleanliness, Pollution Prevention, Resource Conservation, Greening, Transportation, Education & Awareness, and the Green Economy. Designed as a resource to help guide actions and decisions in ways that benefit people, the economy, and the environment, the plan was developed in 2008 through a public process engaging more than 1,000 citizens, and was formally adopted by the City Council in 2009. Implementation is overseen by a 21-member Commission on Sustainability, and an Annual Report is produced to track progress.
- *TransForm Baltimore* is a city-wide effort led by the Department of Planning to develop a new zoning code that includes tools to support and guide city investment, protect neighborhood character and guide private development in a cohesive manner. It is expected to be approved by the City Council by late 2012.

**(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure –water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribute to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community.**

Baltimore City has committed resources to improve the physical infrastructure of the community to encourage private investment. In the proposed SC area, the following initiatives are being used to spur private investment and redevelopment:

*Current projects, policies and initiatives:*

**1. Strategy 3: Investments along Transit Routes**

- *The Green Streets Project.* Belair-Edison Neighborhoods, Inc. (BENI) has developed a comprehensive strategy for “green infrastructure” improvements to the corridor based on Chesapeake Bay Trust’s “Green Streets-Green Jobs-Green Town” program to include: creation of linear tree pits along the northeast and southwest sections of Belair Road; creation of bio-retention areas on the 3100 block of Erdman Ave and the southwest corner of Erdman Avenue and Edison Highway; and, conversion of the Mayfield-Erdman Alley into a “Blue Alley.”

**2. Strategy 6: Greening strategies and targeted demolition in distressed areas**

- *Stormwater Management Initiatives.* The Department of Public Works (DPW) will rehab sanitary sewers, and repair wastewater facility systems to comply with TMDL regulations. DPW is upgrading the water treatment plant at Montebello, which should be completed by May 2012. With stringent new stormwater management requirements developed by the State, the Department of Transportation (DOT) is required to mitigate impervious areas to decrease run-off and improve water quality. DOT is working with DPW to provide more permeable areas within the public rights of way, both with on-going projects and through other community initiatives.
- *The Growing Green Initiative (GGI)* – the GGI uses vacant land as a ‘raw asset’ for the future. Vacant land in weak market communities provide an opportunity to strategically incorporate high-performance green spaces such as parks, green storm water infrastructure, agriculture, and community spaces into the fabric of economic redevelopment. The GGI has five key elements: systems-based green storm water management; community managed open spaces; parks and open spaces; urban agriculture; and urban forestry. The Department of Planning is co-chairing a committee to develop the details of the initiative. The GGI is a key component of the Federal Urban Waters program.
- *DOT Resurfacing and Lighting:* DOT has committed funds to resurfacing at least 200 lane miles of city streets, and upgrade street lights with energy efficient LED replacements. To date, DOT has completed 2 miles of road resurfacing for bike lanes in Southeast Baltimore.
- *Vacants to Value Program:* The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) strategy to rehabilitate more than 1,000 vacant buildings and leverage more than \$70 million in private investment. Strategy 6 targets blight in areas that far exceeds development demand for housing for the foreseeable future. The focus of Baltimore Housing in these areas will be to maintain, clear and hold-or "land bank" vacant property for future use. This includes targeted demolition, boarding and cleaning, and creative interim uses including creating community green space where demand for new housing doesn't yet exist.

**(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area’s impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of —green building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of —Buy Local approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the Environmental Finance Center’s Sustainable Maryland Certified Initiative.**

Led by the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, the City is committed to reducing the SC Area’s environmental impact by maximizing the reuse and recycling of materials,

implementing green building standards, promoting environmental education, and improving local food systems.

***Current projects, policies and initiatives:***

***1. Strategy #6: Greening strategies and targeted demolition in distressed areas***

- ***City-wide Efforts:*** The City of Baltimore will recycle more waste and reduce the environmental and monetary costs of landfill maintenance. The City will reduce the level of trash in our watersheds through proven operational systems such as street sweeping, and new technologies such as trash interceptors. Reduction of chemical and nutrient pollutants will occur through greening initiatives such as tree plantings, vegetating vacant lots, installing green roofs and building bio-retention facilities. The Departments of Planning and General Services will work to reduce energy consumption in city-owned buildings
- ***Green Schools Challenge:*** The Green Schools Challenge supports environmental leadership by creating “Green Teams” of students and teachers at City public schools. The program provides each Green Team with a \$1,000 grant to plan and implement projects in the categories of Sustainability, Energy, and Healthy Food. Green Teams also get additional support from the Baltimore Energy Challenge for energy conservation projects.
- ***Blue Water Baltimore Clean Water Communities:*** Based on the Clean Water Community Initiative (CWCI), Blue Water Baltimore brings together non-profits, foundations and city agencies to educate residents and encourage actions and collaborations to work toward cleaner waterways and healthier communities. CWCI activities include installing rain barrels, planting rain gardens and removing unwanted pavement.
- ***Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge & Community Energy Savers Grant:*** The Baltimore Neighborhood Energy Challenge has the goal of reducing the energy use in the city by 15% by 2015 through neighborhood-level engagement. Started by the Baltimore Office of Sustainability and housed at the non-profit Civic Works, the program has worked in 20 neighborhoods so far, and has branched out to include a Baltimore Business Energy Challenge (focused on Baltimore’s Main Street neighborhoods) and the School Energy Hubs program (focused on school-community partnerships). Also, through the Community Energy Savers Grant Program, the City granted \$1,000,000 to local non-profits for energy-saving retrofits and programs in 2011.
- ***Buy Local Baltimore:*** BDC is working with the Mayor’s Office on a Buy Local Baltimore initiative designed to encourage area residents to patronize local independent businesses in an effort to improve the quality of life in Baltimore neighborhoods and enhance economic vitality throughout the region. Preliminary activities include monthly visits by the Mayor to commercial districts and highlighting local businesses in the Mayor’s e-newsletters.
- ***Homegrown Baltimore:*** “Grow Local, Buy Local, Eat Local” is a City program to promote urban agriculture, led by the Mayor and supported by the Baltimore

Office of Sustainability, Baltimore Housing, and other public and private partners. Homegrown Baltimore focuses on updating policies to support local food production, distribution, and consumption. It offers 1+ acre parcels of vacant land that are suitable for farming, but have no short-to-mid-term development plans, to experienced growers identified through a Request for Qualifications process.

- *Baltimore BNote*: The BNote is a local currency created in 2011 by the Baltimore Green Currency Association, a non-profit seeking to encourage local buying. Anyone can “purchase” \$11 in BNotes for \$10, which can then be spent at over 150 independent Baltimore businesses at an equivalent of \$1 each, giving participants a built in 10% discount. Currently, there are approximately 22,000 BNotes in circulation.

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

The Sustainable Communities initiative will utilize an extensive network of public agencies, private organizations, anchor institutions, businesses, community development corporations, umbrella organizations and others who contribute various resources and expertise toward the common goals of creating a strong, vital and sustainable city. These agencies and organizations include:

- Office of Sustainability
- Blue Water Baltimore
- Department of General Services
- Department of Planning
- Homegrown Baltimore
- Baltimore Housing
- BNote Baltimore

**B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon assets and building in amenities: (10 points)**

**(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan’s projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities.**

Baltimore will build upon its existing strengths and assets by targeting investments in historic and cultural amenities, competitive economic sectors, parks and open spaces, education and our extensive location-based assets. These investment priorities are reflected in the six strategies around which the Baltimore Sustainable Community initiative was designed.

- *Historic and cultural amenities* are located throughout Baltimore, offering a rich variety of experiences for tourists and residents alike. Historic sites include the Museum of Maryland African-American History, Fort McHenry, the B&O Railroad Museum and the Edgar Allen Poe House. Baltimore’s arts amenities scene includes regional art galleries (such as the Baltimore Museum of Art and the Walters Art Museum), community art events, international festivals, and

Artscape, America's largest free arts festival. Baltimore is also home to performance venues such as the Hippodrome Theater, Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, and Center Stage.

- *Health, education and bioscience industries* are key economic drivers, representing 42% of the city's total employment. Major industry employers include Johns Hopkins University and Medical Institutions, the University of Maryland and University of Maryland Medical Center, the Social Security Administration, Veterans Administration, and several other universities and hospitals. These industries also add to Baltimore's economic vibrancy by attracting employees, students and clients nationally and internationally.
- *Parks and open spaces* are located throughout the City, and are convenient to large concentrations of population. The City's parks and natural resource system includes over 6,000 acres of land on over 400 different properties ranging in size from the 700-acre Leakin Park to small neighborhood pocket parks that are less than an acre. Connecting many parks and the Inner Harbor is a growing network of greenway trails that includes the Gwynns Falls, Herring Run and Jones Falls Trails.
- *Educational opportunities* are an important amenity and top priority for families looking to invest in a particular neighborhood. Four Baltimore City public high schools are among the top ten ranked schools in the state. Recent philanthropic partnerships, namely the Goldseker Foundation's Neighborhood School Partnership, have invested in joint neighborhood and school improvement strategies that improve the quality of schools and increase enrollment and academic quality. Meanwhile, colleges and universities are involved in anchor-based development strategies to invest in and revitalize the neighborhoods surrounding their campuses, for example, the Johns Hopkins' "Homewood Community Partnership Initiative."
- Baltimore's location along the Eastern Seaboard and within the Mid-Atlantic region creates a regional advantage in manufacturing, warehousing, shipping, port-related and distribution activities. The City is accessible by multiple major interstate highways, and is served by a major international airport, an extensive freight rail network, MARC commuter rail and Amtrak passenger rail services.

***Current projects, policies and initiatives:***

1. *Strategy #1: Support Commercial areas*
  - Maritime Industrial Zoning tools to protect the Port of Baltimore and related industries;
2. *Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes*
  - Creation of new tools through TransForm Baltimore, the zoning code rewrite, to promote TOD, high-density mixed use, and entertainment options, including the C-1-E Neighborhood Business and Entertainment Zoning District;
3. *Strategy #4: Target investment in Arts and Entertainment*
  - Support for the Station North, Highlandtown and Bromo Tower Arts and Entertainment Districts;

- Restoration and reuse of historic landmarks, such as the Senator Theater, and Broadway Market;
- Promotion of new national events such as the Baltimore Grand Prix IndyCar Racing Event and Sailabration 2012.

**(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community’s authentic —sense of place and historic character?**

The U.S. Census showed that within the last decade young professionals are moving back to urban centers in record numbers. For Baltimore, young households are choosing Baltimore neighborhoods regardless of the location of their job within the region, and generally desire row houses, condominiums, and historic areas due to their unique blend of access to cultural amenities, retail and transit connections.

Baltimore’s historic and heritage tourism/cultural industry provides place-based opportunities that range from expansive world-renowned attractions to smaller, locally celebrated activities. These amenities fall within three broad areas:

- Visual arts-based attractions such as museums, galleries, art studios and architecture-related events;
- Performing arts-based attractions such as theater, cinema, music and dance; and
- Historic/cultural-based products such as history museums, libraries, literary events, bus and walking tours, and redevelopment and preservation of historic districts.

Projects and initiatives to support these amenities, increase the City’s sense of place and create experiences that attract visitors from around the region, all contributing to the expansion of Baltimore’s cultural sector. This will provide additional opportunities to preserve and enhance the historic character of neighborhoods, and spur private investment in historic areas through investments in residential, commercial, and mixed use development.

***Current projects, policies and initiatives:***

**Strategy #1: Support Commercial areas**

- Baltimore Mainstreets benefit retail and upper-story redevelopment efforts.

**Strategy #4: Target investment in Arts and Entertainment**

- Property Tax Credits for Historic Restoration and Rehabilitation in both national and local CHAP historic districts; National and local designation and protection of historic landmarks;
- Events such as the Baltimore Farmers Market, Artscape, War of 1812 Bicentennial Celebration;
- One Percent for Art Ordinance;
- Residential redevelopment projects in historic districts (e.g. Fells Point and Jones Falls Valley); and
- Inclusion of design standards in the new draft Zoning Code.

**(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.**

Baltimore's natural resource amenities include parks and open spaces, recreation centers, and natural habitats such as forests, streams and estuaries. The City's parks and natural resource system includes over 6,000 acres of land on over 400 different properties ranging in size from a 700-acre forest in Leakin Park to small sub-acre lots throughout the city. Baltimore's most famous natural resource is the Inner Harbor, an international tourist destination. The city's parks, natural resources, stream valleys, and open spaces offer great diversity. Residents play tennis in Druid Hill Park, hike in the forests of Cylburn Arboretum or navigate the Inner Harbor in a paddle boat.

***Current projects, policies and initiatives:***

***1. Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes***

- Expansion of the greenway trails and on-street bike network system to build connections between various parks and population centers, including the Inner Harbor, and
- Complete Streets planning by DOT.

***2. Strategy #6: Greening strategies and targeted demolition in distressed areas***

- Community Open Space Preservation Project (e.g. Pigtown Horseshoe Pit, Duncan Street Miracle Garden);
- Adopt-a-Lot program;
- Creation of an Open Space Zoning District in new Zoning Code;
- TreeBaltimore, and initiative to double Baltimore's tree canopy;
- Baltimore City Critical Area Management Program;
- Installation of Floating Wetland Islands and Jones Falls Trail;
- Vacants to Value and Power in Dirt;
- The Growing Green Initiative;
- Playground safety updates underway through Recreation & Parks;

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

- The Baltimore City Departments of Housing, Recreation and Parks, Transportation, and Planning with the Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) and the Baltimore Sustainability Commission are key community groups and stakeholders that will implement of the initiatives and projects noted in this section.
- Other partners will include local, state and federal governments: local educational institutions (both public and private), hospitals and other major employers, community and neighborhood associations, small business owners, non-profit arts and cultural organizations, sports organizations, and others.

## **C. Enhancing economic competitiveness & access to economic opportunity.**

**(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds.**

The City of Baltimore seeks to enhance economic competitiveness and access to economic opportunity for the Sustainable Community areas through the promotion of Baltimore's strengths and regional assets. In addition, Strategy 1 specifically addresses economic development within the SC areas by targeting investments in the Baltimore Main Street areas and commercial corridors in Middle Market neighborhoods. The assets and amenities in these areas help to strengthen the city's economy and are reinforced by Baltimore City's 2006 Comprehensive Plan, *Live, Earn, Play, Learn* and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

**Planning Strategies:** The Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC), the Baltimore Planning Department, Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB), and the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) all work in collaboration to plan and implement a variety of economic development policies, initiatives and projects through various plans and programs. These plans and programs provide a strategic roadmap to direct economic and workforce development initiatives. The following plans contain specific strategies that impact Baltimore's economic development policies, initiatives and projects:

- Live, Earn, Plan Learn: The City of Baltimore Comprehensive Plan
- Baltimore Sustainability Plan (particularly the section on the green economy)
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) (to be updated in 2012)

**Economic Development Programs and Benefits for businesses:** BDC, Baltimore's economic development organization, manages the following programs (among others) to help improve the economy through investments in small businesses and our key employment sectors:

- *Baltimore Main Streets:* Provides support and public resources to 10 designated neighborhood business districts, all of which are included in the Sustainable Community area. Program strategies are designed to address local needs and opportunities, encourage public-private partnerships to leverage private investment, build confidence in the commercial real estate market, and spur economic activity in distressed areas.
- *Enterprise Zone (EZ) Income Tax Credits:* This program offers one- or three-year tax credits for wages paid to new employees. The general credit is a one-time \$1,000 credit per new worker. For economically disadvantaged employees, the credit increases to a total of \$6,000 per worker distributed over three years. When located in an EZ Focus Area, the general credit is a one-time \$1,500 credit per new worker.

- *Revolving Loan/Working Capital Loan Funds (RLF/WC and MILA/RLF)*: These resources are used by businesses for acquisition and improvement of land, equipment, renovation, demolition, site preparation and new construction. The funds may also be used for working capital with restrictions. The funds may not be used for relocation from a surplus area or investment activities and are not available to applicants with an outstanding RLF loan, or to applicants who have received accumulated assistance from the RLF of \$150,000 within the previous five-years.
- *BDC Façade Improvement Grants (FIG)*: This program offers up to \$3,000 in matching grants and, in certain cases, design assistance to merchants and property owners in designated commercial revitalization districts in order to improve the appearance of individual building facades, signs and awnings, as well as the overall look of the retail district. Improvements must be to areas visible from the public way and are reviewed by community review boards.

**(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area?**

The City’s Comprehensive Master Plan and CEDS provide a framework to guide development in Baltimore. Strategies from these plans focus on workforce development managed by BWIB.

BWIB engages partners and stakeholders in a process of building unified strategies for common goals to develop a city-wide workforce pipeline. These partners include MOED and the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC), with each playing a key role in setting city-wide priorities to attract and retain businesses in the city. Priorities related to workforce development include:

- Building the City’s future workforce by working to address low performance scores of high school students, and improve career education and work-based learning opportunities for youth.
- Increasing the city’s labor participation rate by expanding education and training opportunities, particularly for individuals facing various barriers to employment.
- Building better connections between and among businesses, educational institutions, and the public workforce system by addressing workforce needs in target industry sectors; educating employers about new laws and regulations impacting the current and future workforce; aligning educational programs with the needs of the 21st century workforce; and improving student preparation for learning, to facilitate overall achievement, at all education levels and within the workforce.
- Fostering collaboration and engagement between workforce entities through enhanced collaboration among regional workforce investment areas (WIA’s), and developing and promoting efficient regional transportation systems.

- Research and data collection to promote BWIB’s overall priorities and provide substantive information to improve decision-making for a more competitive business environment.

In addition, through Public Policy Committee, BWIB will continue to address legislative and administrative barriers to employment for diverse populations of job seekers. This will include implementation of recommendations in the recently released Talent Pipeline Development Study. Priorities adopted by the BWIB include:

- Training of low-wage workers and job seekers with adult literacy and workplace literacy training.
- Increased resources for training incarcerated individuals and ex-offenders.
- Additional resources for connecting youth, particularly those most in need of assistance, to education and workforce training, enhancing the pipeline of qualified job seekers.

***Projects and Initiatives to Address Workforce Needs (Strategy #1: Support commercial areas):***

- *Employ Baltimore:* A Mayoral initiative to match businesses that receive City contracts to qualified Baltimore residents who meet their workforce needs. The initiative seeks to ensure that City expenditures contribute to local employment. It will also meet business development needs by saving time and money in the recruitment process, offering customized training resources that build worker pipelines for hard-to-fill job vacancies, and providing access to tax credit programs that support investment.
- *Target sectors:* The City’s targeted economic sectors include the following: bio-science; business services and real estate; construction; technology; health care and social services; hospitality and tourism; and port related transportation and distribution. The Baltimore Office of Sustainability and the Baltimore Sustainability Plan (April, 2011) also includes economic development strategies for the green economy and training for green jobs.
- *Baltimore Integration Partnership:* Supports initiatives to reconnect low-income residents to the regional economy through physical and human capital development. BIP includes the following:
  - Funding for implementation of the Central Baltimore Partnership Strategic Plan
  - Support for Red Line Corridor Development
  - Enhanced EBDI workforce training
  - Project development and lending to support new construction and rehabilitation.

**(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

The Sustainable Community areas have been impacted by Maryland’s BRAC activities, particularly through city-wide efforts to market stable housing markets near transit and MARC stations to households relocating to the Baltimore region. Baltimore is well

situated between both Aberdeen Proving Ground and Fort Meade which allows it to capitalize on this strategic location by providing access to one or more federal facilities. The City has partnered with Live Baltimore to market City neighborhoods to relocating families, and has proposals for improvements to MARC services, a new MARC station at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, and revitalization efforts in neighborhoods surrounding the West Baltimore and Penn Station MARC stops.

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

The following community groups and stakeholders will be key to the implementation of our economic and employment development priorities:

- Baltimore Development Corporation
- Mayor’s Office of Employment Development
- Baltimore Workforce Investment Board
- Emerging Technology Centers
- Baltimore City Community College
- Baltimore Main Streets
- Baltimore Office of Sustainability
- Job Opportunities Task Force
- Baltimore Metropolitan Council
- Live Baltimore

**D. Promoting equitable access to high quality affordable housing.**

**(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices – rental and homeownership for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II?**

The City is committed to providing a diversity of housing choices for all residents and to advancing efforts that integrate housing, transportation, education and sustainability. A toolkit of strategies (including regulatory requirements, incentives, planning initiatives and public-private partnerships) guides the City’s neighborhood investment decisions, provides a framework for equitable housing and works to reduce the disparities that have defined the city over the past 50 years. In addition, the City will continue to implement its 2006 Comprehensive Plan which calls for the expansion of housing choices and the creation of at least 300 additional housing units each year. This number may increase given a new focus on growing the City by 10,000 households by 2020.

***Current projects, policies and initiatives:***

*1. Strategy #2: Healthy Neighborhoods*

- *Healthy Neighborhoods, Inc. (HNI)* assists strong but undervalued neighborhoods encourage homeowner purchase and investment, market their communities, create high standards for property improvements, and forge strong connections among neighbors. HNI offers below market rate financing for housing purchase, rehabilitation, and refinance to home buyers and owners through a loan pool initiated in 2006. The first loan pool provided financing to 239 homeowners, and

a second pool of \$23 million was created in 2012. A \$26 million federal grant enables the purchase, renovation and sale of foreclosed or abandoned properties. As a result, more than \$100 million has been invested in these neighborhoods to-date.

- *Foreclosure prevention and mitigation* initiatives build the capacity of nonprofit community development organizations to provide financial, pre-purchase, default and delinquency, and reverse equity housing counseling; reclaim and rehabilitate vacant REO properties; and provide outreach and marketing to assist homeowners and renters at risk of foreclosure.
- The City has an *Inclusionary Housing Law* that seeks to ensure low and moderate-income families benefit from market-rate housing in rapidly gentrifying and high opportunity neighborhoods.
- An *Analysis to Fair Housing Impediments* study at both the City and regional level provides specific recommendations to eliminating barriers to housing.
- HUD's *Neighborhood Stabilization Program* is being used to broaden the residential base of the City's middle market and emerging neighborhoods and protect erosion of the tax base and neighborhood fabric by providing funds to acquire and rehabilitate vacant and foreclosed properties.
- *Vacants to Value* is a six-pronged approach to reducing the City's inventory of vacant properties.

2. *Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes*

- *HCD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)* links funding support to a project's proximity to transportation, employment centers and other amenities and services.
- A *HUD-sponsored Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant* seeks to remove barriers between neighborhoods in Central West Baltimore and to create a comprehensive implementation strategy that addresses education, employment and transportation issues.
- *The Red Line* is a proposed 14-mile, \$2.2 billion east-west transit initiative designed to connect the Hopkins Bayview campus with the Social Security Administration while serving as an organizing framework for stakeholders.

3. *Strategy #5: Investment around anchor institutions and major redevelopment areas.*

- The City has identified *eight major redevelopment areas*: EBDI, Oliver, Johnston Square, Barclay, Uplands, North Avenue, Park Heights and O'Donnell Heights where catalytic housing developments are combined with major transit initiatives, institutional expansion, or commercial redevelopments to create comprehensive neighborhood transformations.
- *Rehabilitation of scattered-site units* by the Housing Authority of Baltimore City in areas designated for new development and that are in close proximity to transit and services.

**(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?**

Baltimore is known for its recognition of the nexus between housing, transportation, lifestyle and economic sustainability. The city's core was designed before the prevalence of automobiles, and at other points in history, relied on transit and walking as the principle means to move people around the city. As a result, land use patterns are dense and well-distributed with ample sidewalks and the capacity to support high quality transit services. Many trips Baltimore citizens make are short enough for walking or biking.

The residential component ("Live") of the City's 2006 Comprehensive Plan calls for improving transportation access, accessibility and choice for all city residents, as well as identifying a set of policies that allow for and encourage increased development near existing and proposed transit stations in order to enhance the safety and sense of place in neighborhoods and promote a broad range of mixed-income housing choices. For example, the City's comprehensive rezoning effort has led to the creation of TOD station area zones, and agencies are coordinating land acquisition in a way that encourages intensified development near transit.

Similarly, the 2010 Sustainability Plan calls for capitalizing on Baltimore's existing transportation network and targeting improvements to meet the needs of residents in a sustainable way. It specifically calls for improving public transit services, including realizing the Red Line Transit project; improving public infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians; facilitating shared-vehicle and bicycle usage; measuring and improving transportation equity; and increasing transportation funding for sustainable modes of travel. This will meet the needs and desires of our current and future residents who are attracted to walkable, car-free communities with a mix of housing types and character.

***Current projects, policies and initiatives:***

1. *Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes*
  - *HCD's Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)* links funding support to a project's proximity to transportation, employment centers and other amenities and services.
  - *The Red Line* is a proposed 14-mile, \$2.2 billion east-west transit initiative designed to connect the Hopkins Bayview campus with the Social Security Administration while serving as an organizing framework for stakeholders.
  - *University efforts* such as Hopkins Live Near Your Work grant and NSP assistance spurred development along on Calvert Street; a new shuttle stop at the Fitzgerald apartments, and a market-rate apartment building that is also within walking distance of Penn Station.
  
2. *Strategy #5: Investment around anchor institutions and major redevelopment areas.*
  - *A HUD-sponsored Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant* seeks to remove barriers between neighborhoods in Central West Baltimore and to create a comprehensive implementation strategy that addresses education, employment and transportation issues.
  - *Uplands's Poppleton Coops* is a major redevelopment initiative of 234 units of affordable housing located near the proposed Red Line corridor, I-95, major bus routes, commercial amenities and employment centers.
  - *The North Avenue Gateway* is located along North Avenue, one of the City's major transit corridors.

- A multi-phased investment is underway in *Johnston Square* to support efforts to increase walkability and promote greater access to transit.
- The City's *Vacants to Value* strategy redirects development to areas of strength by working with committed, capitalized developers to effectively leverage whole block solutions. For example, the 200 block of North Duncan Street is being redeveloped and sold as homeownership in a joint venture between a local for-profit developer and a CDC. The block is adjacent to market-rate construction with a starting price of \$230,000 and is within walking distance of the Hopkins Medical Campus, the subway and multiple bus lines.

**(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing?**

The *Baltimore Housing Consolidated Plan (2010-2015)* identifies specific goals for the creation of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership units by 2015, for the following populations:

- **Low-income Persons:** Baltimore Housing will provide 1,634 units of affordable rental housing for extremely-, very- and low-income renters, and to assist 1,591 extremely-, very- and low-income households become homeowners (this does not include some 370 Special Needs renters who will be assisted). This objective will be reached using a wide variety of resources including those made available through: HOME, Public Housing, CDBG, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, City Bond Funds, Neighborhood Stabilization 1 and 2 and State of Maryland Housing Programs. The primary form of assistance will be a development subsidy for new construction and rehabilitation. Almost all of these units will be affordable for a minimum of 20 years.
- **Homeless Persons:** Baltimore Housing will lease 200 units for “vulnerable homeless persons” using housing choice vouchers, and acquire and develop 25 permanent supportive housing projects for homeless households.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** Using HOME and other funds, Baltimore Housing will create 107 units of “Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) Housing with Long Periods of Affordability,” 153 Units of “UFAS Compliant Public Housing,” and 2 units of “Partially UFAS Compliant Public Housing.” It will also assist 30 disabled householders to become homeowners through mortgage assistance.
- **Persons Living with HIV/AIDS:** Baltimore Housing will use HOPWA funds to lease 686 rental units for persons living with HIV/AIDS, and to create 25 units of permanent supportive housing.

**(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

In addition to City and State housing agencies, key public-sector partners include DOT, DPW, Planning, BDC and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Foundations and other funders are also playing an increasing role in aligning and leveraging housing and community development efforts and workforce development through initiatives such as the Living Cities’ Integrative Initiative and the HUD Regional Sustainable Communities program; it is anticipated that the groundwork laid through these efforts will continue as the lessons learned can be applied citywide.

Strong public-private partnerships based on ongoing collaboration are and will continue to be critical to the success of the City's neighborhood revitalization initiatives. The City's Housing Department works with local and nationally-based for- and not-for-profit developers as well as the Baltimore City Committee of the Asset Building Community Development (ABCD) network, the Baltimore Integrated Partnership, financial intermediaries such as The Reinvestment Fund and Baltimore Community Lending. Agency leadership is represented on a number of boards of directors including EBDI, Central Baltimore Partnership, Healthy Neighborhoods, Park Heights Renaissance, and the West Side Initiative.

## **E. Supporting transportation efficiency and access.**

**(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses?**

Strategy #3 targets investment along major transit routes which supports the goal in the City's Comprehensive Master Plan to improve transportation access and choice.

**Current projects, policies and initiatives to support the SC Plan to improve transportation efficiency and encourage walking, bicycling, and the use of public transportation:**

### *1. Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes*

- *Bicycle Network Strategy:* Bicycle facility improvements include over 100 miles of bike facilities installed by the Department of Transportation (DOT) including bike lanes, signed routes and bicycle boulevards. The nearly completed Guilford Avenue bicycle boulevard is the city's first such bicycle improvement. Additional improvements include: resurfacing, reconstructions and maintenance upgrades. The city boasts nearly 40 miles of off-road trails as part of the Gwynns Falls Trail, Jones Falls Trail, Herring Run Trail and Waterfront Promenade. DOT also installs free bike racks to interested property owners totaling over 350 bike racks in the past 5 years. As a result of these investments, the city has increased bicycle commuting by 40% over the past 2 years.
- *Strategic Transportation Safety Plan:* Over the past 3 years, traffic safety has ranked higher in citizen concern than property crime. Recognizing this trend, the DOT is developing a Strategic Transportation Safety Plan that aims to improve travelling conditions for all road users, especially pedestrians.
- *Complete Streets Master Plan:* The Plan follows the passage of the City Council Complete Streets resolution. It evaluates the city's roadway system and land uses and makes recommendations to accommodate diverse roadway users in a safe environment.

- *ADA Transition Plan:* As a result of new ADA standards developed for Baltimore City, DOT is developing an ADA Transition Plan to create an accessible environment for people of all ages and abilities by targeting sidewalk and street crossing improvements.
- *Art in the Public Right of Way:* Over the past 2 years, DOT has been working with community groups to oversee art projects in the public right of way. DOT approves community plans such as creatively decorated crosswalks and intersections in Highlandtown, Hamilton, Middle East and soon in Reservoir Hill.
- *Red Line Transit:* The City has been working with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to plan the Red Line rail transit corridor stretching east to west across the city. The project is currently in the preliminary design phase. As part of this process, in 2008, the City initiated the Red Line Community Compact, a landmark agreement between the City of Baltimore, the MTA and numerous local non-profit organizations to maximize the benefits of the project for the community. Addressing the goals of the Community Compact, the Station Area Advisory Committees (SAACs) were established in September 2010 to involve communities along the Red Line corridor in the station visioning and planning process.
- *Ridesharing:* DOT provides free ridesharing services to increase carpooling and decrease commuting congestion.
- *Charm City Circulator:* Launched in 2009, this free transit service provides 4 interconnected routes through central Baltimore. The Orange Line services an east-west route between Harbor East and Hollins Market. The Purple Line provides a north-south route between Penn Station and Federal Hill, and soon to be extended north to Charles Village. The Green Line provides a circular route between downtown, Harbor East and Johns Hopkins Medical Campus. The Star Spangled Route connects downtown with Locust Point businesses, the new McHenry Row development and Fort McHenry.
- *Charm City Bikeshare:* Charm City Bikeshare is scheduled to launch in September 2012, and will provide public access bikes for short-distance trips. The initial phase of the program will focus on central and south Baltimore with 25 stations and 275 bicycles.

**(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area's connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will the planned strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3)**

Baltimore's Comprehensive Master Plan provides a TOD strategy which supports economic efficacy and growth, expands transportation choices, guides future development into compact mixed-use activity centers near transit stations, and identifies

efforts to enhance the character, safety and sense of place in neighborhoods near transit stops.

The proposed SC boundaries are designed for continued support of the City's efforts to address long-standing patterns of disinvestment and segregation by focusing on areas and programs where efforts are already underway to better connect development, workforce and transportation initiatives. These efforts are further supported by the following policies, projects and initiatives.

### **Current projects, policies and initiatives to support the SC Plan:**

- *The Baltimore Integrative Initiative:* A 3-year pilot funded through Living Cities focusing on 4 areas: connecting development financing to job creation and wealth; building a pipeline of skilled workers in neighborhoods near anchor institutions, development or transit initiatives; and, working with anchor institutions to modify existing procurement policies to encourage greater participation by local and minority-owned businesses and to strengthen employment opportunities for local residents. This effort will promote a job/housing balance in affected areas.
- *Multiple transit options:* There is an extensive bus system that covers the proposed SC area. In addition, the area is also served by the subway and Light Rail. There are eleven Light Rail stops that serve the proposed SC area including Penn Station and Camden Yards that connect to the MARC trains as well as twelve proposed Red Line stops. Proposed stops will link to workplace sites.
- *Ongoing efforts to encourage sidewalk improvements around TOD stations:* City agencies are working to improve the pedestrian environment around TOD stations. These efforts will increase the land value around the stations, increase transit ridership, and attract employers and residential development.
- *Development around State designated TOD projects within the SC area:* Westport Waterfront, State Center and Reisterstown Road are currently State designated TOD sites. The projects are in various stages of development, but proposed plans for each of these station areas call for mixed-used development, including residential, retail and office which will improve the pedestrian environment, increase the supply of affordable housing, and raise land values around transit stations, provide automobile congestion relief, and increase transit ridership.
- *Additional Stations identified for TOD designation:* The following stations have been identified for designation and submission to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT):
  - Penn Station, Lexington Market, Cold Spring Lane and Mechanic Theatre, all within the SC area.
  - TOD planning processes for the following existing and future transit stops: West Baltimore MARC station based on the station master plan; and, Highlandtown/Greektown, future Red Line station.

- *Baltimore’s HUD Sustainable Communities grant:* This regional level effort will be used to develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development that will cohesively link housing, transportation and workforce investments. By formalizing regional housing and workforce development strategies in a way that connects them to each other and to our Long Range Transportation Plan, the City’s local governments and non-profit partners will be able to form new, outcome –based partnerships that maximize the ability to leverage regional resources. The process will include extensive community engagement and education, citizen leadership development, real world demonstration projects, and the establishment of regional housing and workforce development plans.

**(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?**

The following groups and stakeholders will be key to implementing the transportation projects and policies outlined above:

Baltimore City Department of Transportation  
 Baltimore City Department of Planning  
 Baltimore City Housing  
 Maryland Transit Administration  
 Maryland Department of Transportation  
 Baltimore Development Corporation  
 Central Maryland Transportation Alliance  
 Red Line Station Area Advisory Committees  
 Baltimore Metropolitan Council  
 Bike Maryland  
 Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Committee  
 Downtown Baltimore Family Alliance  
 Bikemore

**F. Coordinating and leveraging (federal, state, and local) policies and investment.**

**(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area?**

The City and its partners have been working over the past several years to address and remove barriers to investment in the areas of housing, transportation, workforce development and regional planning efforts.

- *Workforce Development:* By financing catalytic projects that create both people and place-benefits, the Baltimore Integration Partnership is simultaneously supporting job creation with new services and amenities while providing equity-building opportunities and improving conditions in low-income communities. Strategies are being tested in three communities, all of which are included in the SC boundaries: EBDI, Central Baltimore and the West Baltimore MARC station area with the intent of creating best practices that can be utilized citywide.

- *Regional Planning and Transportation Efforts:* Demonstration projects designed through the HUD Regional Plan for Sustainable Development will also focus on several communities that are part of the SC boundaries, particularly those where transit-employment connections can be strengthened.
- *Housing:* Through its Vacants to Value initiative, Baltimore Housing is removing barriers to investment by: reducing the time required to dispose of properties; creating green space, side yards, and urban agriculture uses in areas no longer suitable for development, where less density is required, or where the market is not supporting development; and, targeting areas near development initiatives for aggressive code enforcement that can lead to receivership in the event a property owner does not comply with the law.

Additional information regarding these efforts can be found in the hard copy submission.

**(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?**

Baltimore is divided into eleven geographically defined planning districts covered by 9 community planners. Each planning district contains a host of small-area plans and on-going planning processes, including Strategic Neighborhood Action Plans, urban renewal plans, community-based planning initiatives, transit-oriented development plans, corridor plans, and Critical Area management plans. These plans are developed by district planners working closely with private citizens, neighborhood/community based organizations, and non-profits to ensure that sound planning principles are being applied and various factors are considered, such as land use, environmental planning, and transportation planning. In a review of the various plans that overlap with the SC boundaries, all six strategies were consistent with existing and active plans in the districts.

**(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?**

As part of its criteria for identifying Sustainable Community areas, the SC Workgroup considered development efforts either underway or that would be underway within the five-year period. To further refine this selection process, Workgroup members identified projects or initiatives under each of the strategies that would likely be submitted in future SC applications as well as community and planning organizations areas with a successful track record of funding and completing projects under existing State programs.

**V. PROGRESS MEASURES**

**In this section, explain how your jurisdiction will measure its progress towards the goals of the Action Plan outlined in Section IV.**

**A. List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce.**

*Strategy #1:* Support Main Streets and commercial areas by targeting investments in Middle Market Neighborhoods.

Specific Outcomes:

- Increase active commercial retail space in Main Street districts and commercial corridors through a combination of loan programs, marketing incentives, and new partnerships between business owners, institutions and nonprofit organizations;
- Strengthen the connection between development, employment and local business growth through financial assistance.

*Strategy #2: Target Healthy Neighborhoods*

Specific Outcomes:

- Realize increased tax revenue in middle market neighborhoods by promoting new housing opportunities and attracting new residents.

*Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes.*

Specific Outcomes:

- Improve safety and provide pedestrian friendly environments; Improve citywide livability and economic prosperity by creating a jobs/housing balance with transportation options; and, move Baltimore residents more efficiently.

*Strategy #4: Target investment in arts and entertainment districts.*

Specific Outcomes:

- Improve property values and increase investments in existing arts and entertainment districts.

*Strategy #5: Investment in anchor institutions and major redevelopment areas.*

Specific Outcomes:

- Create opportunities for development and attract new investors by focusing on strategic blight elimination near transit corridors, anchor institutions and adjacent to current development initiatives.

*Strategy #6: Facilitate investment in emerging markets near areas of strength.*

Specific Outcomes:

- Increase open space for holding strategies or greening efforts.

*All Strategies.*

Specific Outcomes:

- Enhance Community Development Finance Institution (CDFI) fund and other non-traditional lenders' capacity to increase overall investment and, specifically to improve the housing/jobs/transportation connection.
- Reduce impervious surfaces and other negative environmental impacts by integrating "green" components into all funding requests.
- Develop best practices that can be applied on a citywide and regional basis, with an emphasis on those that promote social and economic integration; Create neighborhoods and communities that provide basic services and amenities within walking distance while providing transit and accessibility to regional goods, services and jobs.

**B. And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes.**

*Strategy #1: Support Main Streets and commercial areas by targeting investments in Middle Market Neighborhoods.*

Benchmarks:

- Permits, loans and other financing instruments that integrate development and workforce opportunities
- New businesses that open and are able to stay open
- New loan funds that can be replicated citywide
- Commercial permits over \$5000
- # of properties that utilize Sustainable Communities (formerly historic) tax credits

*Strategy #2: Target Healthy Neighborhoods*

Benchmarks:

- Residential Permits over \$5000
- Median Sales Price
- Median Days on Market
- Number of units sold that are mortgaged based vs. cash-based
- Number of units sold
- Number of vacant units
- Occupancy rate (Postal Service "No Stat" data, available via HUD at the Census Tract level)
- Foreclosure rate
- Affordability Index

*Strategy #3: Target investment along major transit routes.*

Benchmarks:

- Miles of bicycle lanes
- Reduction in TMDL Loads
- # of green roofs, swales, etc.
- Reduction in rate of clogged storm drains (311 calls)

*Strategy #4: Target investment in arts and entertainment districts.*

Benchmarks:

- Permits Loans and other financing instruments that integrate development and workforce opportunities
- New businesses that open and are able to stay open
- # of properties that utilize Sustainable Communities (formerly historic) tax credits

*Strategy #5: Investment in anchor institutions and major redevelopment areas.*

Benchmarks:

- # of new open spaces and urban agriculture spaces
- Reduction in vacant properties

*Strategy #6: Facilitate investment in emerging markets near areas of strength.*

Benchmarks:

- Property tax increases
- # of new open spaces and urban agriculture spaces

- Reduction in vacant properties