



## Economic and Community Development / Revitalization

*Background Report*





## Table of Contents

Economic Development.....	5
Housing and Community Development.....	13
Community Revitalization.....	18
Challenges, Conclusions and Future Needs.....	30



## Economic Development

Strategically located between the metropolitan markets of Washington, DC, and Baltimore, the economy of Anne Arundel County is strong, with a diverse \$36 billion economy that ranks as the third largest in Maryland<sup>1</sup>. The County is home to several critical statewide and national assets including:

- Annapolis, the State capital;
- Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI);
- National Business Park;
- Maryland Live!, one of the nation's largest casinos;
- Fort George G. Meade, the third largest Army base in the U.S.;
- The National Security Agency;
- U.S. Cyber Command; and
- U.S. Naval Academy.

Various economic and demographic data attest to the strength of Anne Arundel County's economy. The County's labor force stands at 314,712, with an unemployment rate of 3.9%, well below the State unemployment rate of 4.5%<sup>2</sup>. The labor force is drawn from a well-educated pool of residents, with over 40% of residents holding at least a bachelor's degree. Most households in the County (73%) own their own homes, and median household income stands at \$99,662, 19% higher than the State, and 65% higher than the national level<sup>3</sup>.

Approximately 52,000 businesses are located in Anne Arundel County, ranging from government, technology, healthcare, construction, hospitality, retail to agriculture. Top industries by number of jobs in the County include retail (37,035), health care and social services (32,473), accommodation and food services (28,080), and education (27,947). As Table 1 indicates, government agencies, health care systems and private government contracting firms are among the largest employers in the County<sup>4</sup>.

### *Planning Goals*

The 2009 General Development Plan (GDP) set several goals for enhancing the County's strong economic climate and further growing its economic assets. These include a range of policies to support efforts to attract new business and industry, and retain and strengthen existing businesses. In particular, the GDP called for specific, targeted economic development efforts in the County's Town Centers, Mixed Use Districts, and Commercial Revitalization Districts. Furthermore, the GDP calls for ensuring an adequate supply of land available for key economic sectors, including defense industry and research; for supporting services aimed at entrepreneurship, business startup, and agricultural programs; and for the protection of the future growth potential of BWI Airport.

1 Source: Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation ([www.aaedc.org](http://www.aaedc.org)), accessed July 31, 2018

2 Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation, data for June 2018, not seasonally adjusted

3 Source: Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation ([www.aaedc.org](http://www.aaedc.org)), accessed July 31, 2018

4 Source: Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation ([www.aaedc.org](http://www.aaedc.org)), updated September 2015

**Table 1 – Largest Employers in Anne Arundel County**

Government or Private Employer	Estimated Number of Employees	Product or Service
Fort George G. Meade	53,733	U.S. Department of Defense installation; 119 tenant organizations including the National Security Agency, Defense Information System Agency and U.S. Cyber Command
Anne Arundel County Public Schools	14,000	County public education K-12 (employee number includes full-time, part-time & contractual employees)
State of Maryland	12,132	State government services
BWI Airport	9,717	Regional airport
Northrop Grumman	7,725	Electronic Systems Sector & Marine Division
Anne Arundel County Government	5,190	Local government services
Anne Arundel Health System	4,000	Hospital
Southwest Airlines	3,500	Airline
Maryland Live! Casino	3,000	Casino
University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center	2,901	Hospital
U.S. Naval Academy	2,340	Federal naval education facility
Booz Allen Hamilton	2,100	Information assurance & signals intelligence solutions

### *The Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation*

The Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) is a quasi-governmental non-profit organization with a mission to support business and serve as a catalyst for business growth in Anne Arundel County, thereby increasing job opportunities, expanding the tax base and improving quality of life. AAEDC provides investment and technical assistance and fosters community revitalization initiatives. The organization plays a vital role in enhancing commercial districts, improving county infrastructure, increasing agriculture-based business and promoting high-value business sectors such as technology and national security. AAEDC also serves as a liaison for businesses to navigate the permit process, zoning and environmental considerations, building and fire codes, and health department requirements as businesses expand in or relocate to Anne Arundel County.

To accomplish its mission, AAEDC:

- Recruits new businesses to locate in Anne Arundel County and assists in the expansion of existing businesses,



- Anticipates and addresses workforce development needs of the County's business community,
- Promotes Anne Arundel County as a premier location for business,
- Provides advocacy for Anne Arundel County businesses undergoing the regulatory and approval process,
- Provides financing assistance to County businesses,
- Incentivizes redevelopment and revitalization along older commercial corridors,
- Promotes technology development and attracts start-up ventures through Anne Arundel Tech Defense Fund, and
- Promotes agriculture development and expands markets for agri-business.

AAEDC's business development associates serve the entire business community of Anne Arundel County, providing support for industry specific sectors including, but not limited to:

- |                                |                                  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Healthcare                   | • Agriculture/Agritourism        |
| • Finance                      | • Cybersecurity                  |
| • Transportation Logistics     | • Defense/Government Contractors |
| • Maritime                     | • Manufacturing                  |
| • Hospitality                  | • Distribution/Warehouse         |
| • Retail (Small & Large/Chain) | • Construction                   |
| • Small/Minority Businesses    | • Professional Services          |
| • Information Technology       | • Revitalization/Enterprise Zone |
| • Energy                       | • Town Center Development        |
| • Biotechnology                | • International Trade            |
|                                | • Real Estate Development        |

Additionally, AAEDC is dedicated to serving the Agricultural businesses and programs in the County and has a Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Annapolis to ensure the businesses within the City limits are serviced appropriately.

AAEDC administers a number of programs and incentives to support business start-ups, expansion, and relocation in the County.

#### *Business Financing Assistance*

- AAEDC offers the Arundel Business Loan (ABL) Fund, providing Anne Arundel County businesses alternative Small Business Administration (SBA)-backed financing, as well as traditional, financing. Loans can be used to fund a start-up, expansion or relocation.
- The Arundel Community Reinvestment (ACR) Fund provides zero-interest loans to qualified property or business owners that are interested in making significant improvements to their façade, exterior, or interior in the County's eight Commercial Revitalization areas.

- The Arundel Defense Tech Toolbox helps small innovative businesses that are developing technology in the national security space, with assistance such as:
  - i. the Next Stage Fund, which offers zero percent interest loans with flexible payment terms;
  - ii. workforce training grants for current and potential employees; and
  - iii. access to experts in the fields of commercial technology marketing, Federal contracting and intellectual property.
- AAEDC serves as a manager of Maryland's Small, Minority and Women-Owned Business loan fund under the name of the VOLT Fund, which receives 1.5 percent of video lottery terminal revenue from Maryland casinos. Small, minority, woman and veteran owned businesses located within 10 miles of any of Maryland's five casinos and those located elsewhere in the State may be eligible for loans of between \$25,000 to \$500,000 for purposes such as business and commercial real estate acquisition and expansion, lease-hold improvements, equipment and vehicle purchase, and working capital. AAEDC targets distributing seventy percent of the funds to conventional small businesses and thirty percent to entrepreneurs of emerging technology.
- AAEDC provides a link to State of Maryland financing options.



Founders of The Polymath Place worked with the AAEDC finance team to secure a VOLT loan for their South County children's learning center.

### *Workforce Development*

AAEDC offers the Workforce Training Partnership Agreements, providing qualified new or existing companies training assistance to provide critical skills upgrades for incumbent or new employees. Additionally, AAEDC partners with the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC) and others to promote various workforce programs. In particular, AAWDC has developed focused partnerships in the County's Cybersecurity/IT and Hotel sectors to address issues in workforce recruitment, retention, and transportation, as well as training programs for other businesses and industries in the County to meet specific workforce needs.

### *Small Business Development*

- AAEDC provides several resources for small businesses. An in-house counselor from the Maryland Small Business Development Center offers assistance including writing a business plan, applying for business financing and loans, and management skills training.
- AAEDC offers small, minority, and women-owned business assistance through one-on-one counseling, workshops, seminars, office resources, and connections to County and State MBE/WBE certification processes.



- AAEDC works in partnership with SCORE (a volunteer expert business mentor network), Anne Arundel County Office of Minority Affairs and the Procurement Technical Assistance Program to ensure individual business needs are met.

### *Brownfields Redevelopment*

The Brownfields Revitalization Incentive Program (BRIP) was approved by the Maryland Legislature in 1997 in conjunction with Maryland Department of Environment's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP). The Maryland Department of Commerce administers BRIP, and AAEDC helps coordinate participation by property owners or potential developers. The purpose of this program is to encourage participation in the VCP and provide financial incentives for the redevelopment of properties previously used for commercial or industrial purposes within designated growth areas of participating jurisdictions.

### *Tourism*

AAEDC participates as a board member of Visit Annapolis, which serves as the Visitors Bureau for Annapolis and Anne Arundel County.

### *Agriculture*

The AAEDC Agriculture Program serves to meet the business demands of Anne Arundel County Agricultural Businesses, providing assistance to new and existing agriculture businesses in the County. The program also serves as an ombudsman to assist with permitting requirements, interpreting code and the licensing and permitting required for those businesses, particularly with County, State and Federal health departments. The AAEDC Agriculture program has partnered with the Farm Bureau, and various other agencies to change legislation to better serve Anne Arundel County farmers.

- *Farmers Markets* - AAEDC provides marketing assistance and development for County farmers markets. There are approximately 75 vendors that participate across all market locations. Vendors include farmers and producers of value-added products and foods, including beer, wine and other specialty products. Additionally, AAEDC advises communities and neighborhoods that are interested in establishing farmers markets of their own. In 2018, AAEDC helped establish a farmers market at the Deale Library and continues to work with the South County Chamber of Commerce to promote that market.
- *Anne Arundel County Equipment Rental Program* – This program, funded by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission, provides the agricultural community with equipment that helps farms incorporate



Mr. B's Apiaries, one of the vendors participating in a County Farmers Market.

conservation practices on their farms. Total grant funds to date are approximately \$158,000 to purchase eleven pieces of equipment for rent to farmers in the five counties of Southern Maryland. Through an MOU with T&C Farms of Lothian, the owner stores, maintains and repairs the equipment and arranges for pick-up and delivery.

- *Anne Arundel County Agriculture Scrap Tire Program* – AAEDC partners with T&C Farms and Emmanuel Tire of Baltimore to allow farmers to dispose of agriculture tires. Agricultural tires are not accepted in county landfills. The program has been funded by grants from the Anne Arundel County Farm Bureau, Anne Arundel Soil Conservation District and the Maryland Department of the Environment/Maryland Environmental Service.
- *Arundel Grown* – This program identifies restaurants using locally grown ingredients from farms in Anne Arundel County. Arundel Grown Certified helps promote participating restaurants and farms in an effort to increase awareness of local agriculture and food sourcing. Participating businesses are required to source at least 25% of its ingredients from in-season products from a Maryland Farm and at least 10% from an Anne Arundel County farm. The percentage is based off total purchases. Restaurants and chefs currently meeting this goal are encouraged to apply.
- *Agriculture Education* – AAEDC continues work with the Ag Education Program for Southern High School and the Phoenix Academy. The Curriculum for Agriculture Science Education (CASE), a national program, was brought to Southern High School and has had a tremendous impact on County agriculture, which includes the return of the County's Future Farmers of America (FFA) program and the creation of a FFA Alumni group.
- *Agriculture Marketing* – AAEDC promotes awareness of agriculture through educational events (Farm to Fork dinners, Buy Local Challenge, Farmers' Market events/promotions) and includes Agriculture literacy programs in elementary schools and agriculture education in County high schools. Other tactics include the distribution of flyers and newsletters to promote Farmers' Markets and Agricultural events, paid advertisements in local media, farm business profiles, press releases, social media engagement and TV and Radio interviews. AAEDC updated the Anne Arundel County Agriculture Guide in 2017 and launched a new look in January 2018.

### *Maritime Industry*

AAEDC attends and participates in the Anne Arundel County Maritime Industry Advisory Board (MIAB). The MIAB is working toward creating metrics to determine the health of the industry and grow the County's recreational and commercial maritime industries.

In total, AAEDC staff conducted 712 business visits and attended 542 events and outreach meetings to support business development in the County in fiscal year 2018. The impact of these efforts included 74 transactions closed, capital investment of over \$206 million, 15 loans closed totaling \$1,856,000, workforce training agreements totaling over \$59,000, and 1,211 new jobs created.

### *The Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation*

The Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC) is a nonprofit corporation that facilitates programs to strengthen the capacity and skills of local workers and job seekers in response to the workforce needs of business and industry in Anne Arundel County. AAWDC has several initiatives to advance this mission, including:

*Workforce Re-entry*

This initiative is a partnership with the Anne Arundel County Detention Center that provides job search assistance, employment resources, and training options for offenders and ex-offenders to successfully transition back into the community.

*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act provides quality career advancement and training services to assist individuals 18 and older in finding meaningful employment, and to help businesses find the qualified talent they need to remain competitive in a global economy.

*Ticket to Work*

The Ticket to Work initiative was designed by the Social Security Administration as a voluntary option for recipients of Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income to become and stay employed, increase their earnings, and eventually transition off benefits by becoming fully self-supportive. Participants working with AAWDC receive opportunities and support to assist with obtaining employment and advancing their careers.

*Military Corps Career Connect*

Military Corps Career Connect, better known as C3, is a Maryland-wide initiative focusing on employment for transitioning service members, active duty spouses and recently separated veterans (non-retiree). The Anne Arundel County C3 program is funded by a \$4.3 million US Department of Labor, National Dislocated Worker Grant.

Participants work directly with a C3 Veteran Navigator to receive career planning, coaching and preparation to assist in a successful transition. Outcomes include gaining industry credentials, certifications, and licenses needed for employment; and hands-on experience with on-the-job training and paid work experience.

*Maryland Tech Connection*

Maryland Tech Connection is a public-private initiative comprised of a coalition of 59 partners led by AAWDC. The program utilizes a demand-driven system and comprehensive wrap-around services to address the unique barriers of long-term unemployed individuals and assists them in preparing for middle and high skilled occupations in information technology and biosciences.

*JobsWork@ Arundel*

JobsWork! Arundel is a partnership with the Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services to get recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) on a path of self-sufficiency through barrier removal, up-to-date skills and certifications training, essential skills development, and work experience placement that leads to employment.

*CyberWorks*

CyberWorks is designed to fill the competitive needs of the high-growth Maryland cybersecurity industry by increasing the pipeline of qualified cybersecurity/IT professionals. CyberWorks focuses on

providing the practical hands-on experience and specialized skills needed to succeed after completion of training. This initiative is intended to serve Maryland residents with a bachelor's degree in science, a minimum certification level of Network+, or a veteran with related experience.

### *Business Solutions*

Business Solutions provides customized workforce solutions for Anne Arundel County companies by providing innovative sourcing options, talent management strategies, assistance in upskilling incumbent workers, and other resources.

### *Bridges to Construction*

In response to the need for highway construction workers, AAWDC created a supportive environment that gives individuals the capabilities to succeed in transit and capital project careers, and an opportunity to gain exposure to the industry while earning wages.

### *AAWDC YouthWorks!*

AAWDC YouthWorks! provides services to youth and young adults ages 14-24 by building a foundation through career exploration and skills development, leading to independence. AAWDC YouthWorks! includes targeted in-school and out-of-school initiatives along with summer and year-round career readiness and work experience offerings.

Using innovative practices, AAWDC ensures that the Anne Arundel County workforce is prepared to meet the needs of the area's growth industries. AAWDC has a growing presence nationally, with innovative practices recognized in areas such as sector strategies, regionalism, and wrap-around strategies. AAWDC uses innovative practices and continuous improvement to train individuals with the technical and soft skills to be successful, and partners with businesses to provide quality talent management services and ensure that cutting edge industry-specific training.

### *Sector Strategies*

AAWDC has become a nationally recognized leader in sector strategies. AAWDC has led or engaged in regional industry sector partnerships in Cybersecurity, Construction, Green Careers, and Marine Sectors. Additionally, AAWDC has developed the Industry Navigator staffing model to address the unique needs of sector strategies. Industry Navigators serve as subject matter experts and guide training, placement, and business service strategies to effectively align with industry needs.

### *Bridging the Skills Gap*

AAWDC works to address both the technical and soft skills gap in the region for all job seekers. In the area of Soft Skills Development, AAWDC partnered with WorkNet Solutions (a nationally recognized workforce training company) to develop the Workplace Excellence Series. By teaching customers to put themselves in the shoes of the employer, AAWDC aims to cultivate the attitudes and behaviors that will increase success in obtaining and retaining employment through ten (10) flexible modules.

With Integrated Learning Strategies, Anne Arundel County is on the cutting edge of career pathways development in Maryland. AAWDC partners with Anne Arundel Community College (AACC) to

offer integrated learning opportunities that blend basic academic and occupational skills to help lower-skilled job seekers begin their career path based on the highly-acclaimed I-BEST model.

### *Wrap-Around Services*

AAWDC is a national leader in workforce transportation efforts. Through a grant from the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the Anne Arundel County Video Lottery Fund, AAWDC operates the Mobility Access Program (MAP) that connects transit-dependent job seekers to major employment sectors in Anne Arundel County. AAWDC has been a regional and national speaker as a model for Workforce Investment Board engagement in addressing transportation issues.

To address other employment barriers and challenges job seekers face in today's market, AAWDC partners with Arundel Lodge, a national leader in trauma-informed care. Through this partnership, AAWDC works to train staff members in the use of trauma-informed career services and to offer workshops to job seekers to address the emotional stress of long-term unemployment. AAWDC and Arundel Lodge served as subject matter experts in a Ready to Work grantee webinar on Mental Health Services for Job Seekers.

### *Consolidation of Local Workforce Programs*

Finally, AAWDC oversees programs funded by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA); the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation; the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Detention Facilities. AAWDC thus provides an umbrella for County workforce initiatives, ensuring employment services are coordinated and integrated in Anne Arundel County.

The impact of AAWDC's efforts is felt throughout Anne Arundel County, but particularly for various populations that have multiple barriers to employment. Since July of 2017, AAWDC has facilitated the following outcomes:

- 8,656 Career Center visits,
- 11,286 staff assisted services provided,
- 3,198 unique individuals received staff assisted services,
- 2,191 participants enrolled in initiatives,
- 676 participants placed in occupational training,
- 328 participants received credentials,
- 668 participants placed in work and learn opportunities, and
- 806 participants obtained employment.

## **Housing and Community Development**

Anne Arundel County is an attractive place to live, work, locate a business, raise a family and retire, with incredible natural resources, a strong economy, and a growing employment market due to the many businesses located here. This has resulted in a housing market that has seen a significant increase



in the quality and quantity of houses built in the County, as well as increases in the sales price of new and existing houses. Despite the housing market downturn in 2007, home sale prices have rebounded in most of the County. At the same time, rental prices increased dramatically as a result of the foreclosure crisis during and following the economic recession.

The County's population has also increased, although it is expected to grow at a slower rate in the upcoming decades. The population is shifting towards middle age and into retirement, with an increase in the elderly population, especially in the 85 and over age group. These factors directly impact the type of housing and services necessary to meet the needs of the County's population.

With a robust economy and anticipated job growth, especially related to the technology and defense industry, it appears the County will continue to enjoy a level of prosperity for the foreseeable future. Still, there will be challenges to meeting the needs of a growing workforce and meeting the County's goal of providing a range of housing choices to all its residents.

### *Housing Needs*

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (2012-2016), among low-income households (defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, or HUD, as those earning 80% of the Area Median Income, or AMI, and below) in the County:

- 27% are moderately cost-burdened, paying between 30% and 50% of their income towards housing expenses; and
- 29% are severely cost-burdened, paying over 50% of their income towards housing expenses.

Among extremely low-income households (defined by HUD as those earning 30% AMI and below) in the County:

- 15% are moderately cost-burdened, paying between 30% and 50% of their income towards housing expenses; and
- 57% are severely cost-burdened, paying over 50% of their income towards housing expenses.

This has resulted in a growing affordability gap between household income and the availability of housing at moderate prices. In addition, the cost of housing increased at a faster rate than the incomes of the County's households. The FY2016-2020 Anne Arundel County Consolidated Plan notes that both median home values and median contract rent rates have increased significantly between the years 2000 and 2013, 98% and 90% respectively. During that same time period, median household income grew only 40%, leaving very few homes available which are priced at what would be considered affordable for workforce households.

### *Planning Goals and Requirements*

There are several plans Anne Arundel County has adopted in the last ten years that address housing and community development needs and identify goals and strategies to meet those needs, and the housing and community development activities described below relate back to those goals and strategies.



### *Anne Arundel County's General Development Plan (GDP) and Small Area Plans*

Anne Arundel County strives to offer a wide variety of housing types and prices to meet the needs of people at different ages and stages of their lives. The 2009 GDP emphasizes the needs of workforce housing and housing affordability, with an overarching goal to “provide a variety of housing opportunities to serve the full range of housing needs in the County.” Subsequent policies and actions include maintaining a range of housing densities and types by targeting areas for mixed-use development and using up-to-date demographic data to update housing supply and demand forecasts for age-restricted and senior housing.

Additionally, the 2009 GDP called for the creation of several residential mixed-use zones and encouraged growth in existing Town Centers, around key transportation hubs and close to existing commercial and employment centers. Four mixed-use zones were established in the zoning code to encourage a combination of residential, commercial and industrial uses, and four specific land use recommendations in the GDP have been at least partially implemented to accommodate these mixed-use zones. This enables people to live near their work and provides access to job training, childcare and retail opportunities.

The previous sixteen Small Area Plans (SAPs) provide more detailed land use recommendations for each area. For example, the Annapolis Neck SAP promotes mixed uses in its identified activity centers, the BWI/Linthicum and Severna Park SAPs encourage a wider range of housing types in areas designated for mixed-use developments, and the Glen Burnie SAP calls for Transit Mixed Use land use near the Cromwell Light Rail Station. Policies implementing these recommendations encourage development of a range of housing types and price points, allow people to live near employment opportunities and service providers, mitigate transportation challenges, and facilitate access to job training, childcare and retail opportunities.

### *Anne Arundel County Consolidated Plan (FY 2016-FY 2020)*

Developed through intensive public participation, the Consolidated Plan is a comprehensive process through which communities identify and assess their housing and community development needs and establish goals, priorities, and strategies. Adopted in 2015, the Anne Arundel County Consolidated Plan: FY 2016 – FY 2020 guides the investment of Federal housing and community development funds as well as State and County funds to address the needs of low and moderate income residents of a community. A Federally approved plan is required of all State and local jurisdictions in order to receive funds from various Federal programs, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), the Emergency Solutions Grants Program (ESG), and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program. The Consolidated Plan provides the framework to prioritize and fund housing and community development programs and projects which address the needs identified through the planning process.

Key goals outlined in the County's Consolidated Plan include investing in supportive services in order to stabilize housing for the homeless and providing programs and activities that positively contribute to the revitalization of Priority Revitalization Communities. Priority Revitalization Communities include the County's older, more established neighborhoods and contain a higher percentage of older housing stock and low and moderate income households than the County as a whole.

## *Programs and Strategies for Housing*

To address housing and community development needs and implement strategies of the Consolidated Plan, Anne Arundel County partners with Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. (ACDS), the Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County, and many other government and nonprofit partners to administer programs. ACDS administers approximately \$7 million in Federal housing and community development funds on behalf of Anne Arundel County each year. These funds are matched with approximately \$1.4 million in County general funds, including required match dollars. Because of its unique nonprofit status, ACDS successfully applies for additional competitive State and private financing to leverage funds available to address the County's housing and community development priorities and carry out community revitalization, financial empowerment, develop and preserve affordable housing, and provide homeless programs and initiatives in Anne Arundel County each year. These programs and initiatives are outlined briefly below.

*Community Development and Revitalization* - The County prioritizes expending much of its CDBG funding in older communities like Brooklyn Park and Spring Meadows in Severn. Communities where there is a concentration of older housing stock and infrastructure, as well as low and moderate income households, are defined in the County's Consolidated Plan as "Priority Revitalization Communities" and are targeted for neighborhood revitalization resources and programs that improve the quality of life for residents. In Brooklyn Park for example, ACDS implements a targeted owner-occupied rehabilitation program and an acquisition-rehabilitation program, where vacant or underutilized rowhomes are rehabilitated and rented to income-eligible households. ACDS has renovated over 70 homes in the Brooklyn Heights and Brooklyn Park communities through these two programs. County CDBG funds are leveraged with State of Maryland revitalization resources to accomplish these goals.

ACDS also provides smaller operating grants to service providers who support revitalization efforts in Priority Revitalization Communities, including grants for the Boys & Girls Club afterschool and summer programming and other programming for at-risk youth.

*Property Rehabilitation* - ACDS also utilizes County entitlement funds to conduct owner-occupied property rehabilitation throughout the County for low and moderate income households, many of whom are elderly or persons with disabilities.

*Financial Empowerment* - ACDS, with County support, is also focused on the financial empowerment and self-sufficiency of the County's low-income residents and offers a suite of programs to support this goal. For people who want to achieve homeownership, ACDS also offers a successful homeownership counseling program, which serves approximately 600 clients each year. ACDS also offers foreclosure prevention counseling for homeowners who are struggling and at risk of losing their homes and serves approximately 200 clients per year. Finally, ACDS offers a recently developed Financial Literacy counseling program. This can be helpful to very low income households, families who rent, or in some cases, are homeless. Clients may not be ready to buy a house, yet they have other financial goals, including credit repair, learning to budget, and developing a plan to pay down debt. Through this program, ACDS has served 150 clients in the last year through group seminars and has assisted 21 clients through one-on-one counseling.

*Affordable Rental Housing* - The County includes supporting the development of new affordable rental housing, the preservation of existing affordable housing and the redevelopment of public housing as

three of its major affordable housing goals in its five-year Consolidated Plan. Each year, a significant portion of the County's Federal HOME dollars go to support redeveloping older housing communities, such as Freetown Village, which is currently being developed, or to support new affordable housing developments. Keeping in line with Federal fair housing requirements, the County's Five-Year Consolidated Plan states that it intends to support new affordable housing development in Opportunity Areas and in areas with a concentration of poverty and minorities.

The County also utilizes its community development funding to provide supportive services and programs to further the self-sufficiency of public housing and affordable rental community residents. For example, CDBG supports congregate services for elderly households at senior affordable rental projects and Boys & Girls programming at Freetown Village. At the same time, County general funds support a Family Self Sufficiency Program for public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher Holders.

*Ending Homelessness* – Strategies to end homelessness in the County focus on improving access to shelter, resources and permanent housing. ACDS is the lead agency for the County's Coalition to End Homelessness, which works to develop a Continuum of Care, which is a continuum of services including crisis response, outreach, emergency shelter, and supportive housing to stabilize people's lives. ACDS works collaboratively with many County agencies, including the Housing Commission, Department of Social Services, the Mental Health Agency, and many area nonprofit organizations. ACDS secures an average of \$2.4 million in competitive funding each year through the Continuum of Care process to support the following goals:

- 175 of the County's most vulnerable, chronically, homeless individuals and families will find permanent housing, with the necessary support to help them stay housed;
- 20 homeless families will quickly be linked to permanent housing with short term assistance;
- shelter and services will be provided to more than 800 persons through emergency shelter, street outreach, and day centers; and
- eviction prevention assistance will be provided to 120 households.

The County's biggest priority has been to take critical steps to end homelessness among Veterans through the Operation Home campaign.

*Special Needs* - The County utilizes a combination of Federal resources to support persons with special needs through stabilization of housing and increasing the supply of housing. Through the ACDS Group Home Rehabilitation Program, nonprofit organizations serving persons with developmental disabilities or special needs like mental health diagnoses can receive interest free or low interest financing, as well as technical assistance to make needed repairs to their group homes. This helps stabilize the housing while allowing clients to remain in affordable, independent housing in the community. ACDS also provides financing to special needs group home providers to acquire and/or develop new affordable and accessible housing for persons with special needs. Recently, this effort has helped to develop specialized structures that meet the needs of an aging – and increasingly less mobile – population of persons with developmental disabilities.

## Community Revitalization

Community revitalization involves reinvesting in existing communities to improve their vitality and prevent decline. Revitalization is one of the basic premises of Smart Growth in that it focuses resources in developed areas, where public and private investments have previously been made in order to ensure those investments are protected into the future. Anne Arundel County supports and promotes revitalization opportunities wherever needed, but has also made some targeted efforts that have focused on specific geographic areas.

The County has various programs and initiatives in place to facilitate revitalization and promote reinvestment in some of the County's older communities and commercial corridors. These initiatives include the Sustainable Communities program, the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative, and the Commercial Revitalization Areas program.

### *Commercial Revitalization Areas*

Commercial revitalization improves communities, reduces blighted areas, increases property values, and reduces sprawl. Anne Arundel County encourages revitalization of its older commercial corridors through rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, or redevelopment.

In order to stimulate private investment and encourage revitalization in older commercial corridors, the County established eight Commercial Revitalization Areas, which are adopted as Overlay Areas in the Zoning Ordinance (Article 18, Title 14, Subtitle 3). In general, these corridors are located along State highways in the northern and western areas of the County and were developed with commercial uses decades ago. While all contain viable uses and generate economic activity, they have experienced varying levels of decline over the years. The intention of the Overlay Areas is to encourage revitalization and reuse of vacant properties and facilitate redevelopment opportunities by allowing expanded uses and greater development flexibility in certain zoning districts within a Commercial Revitalization Area.

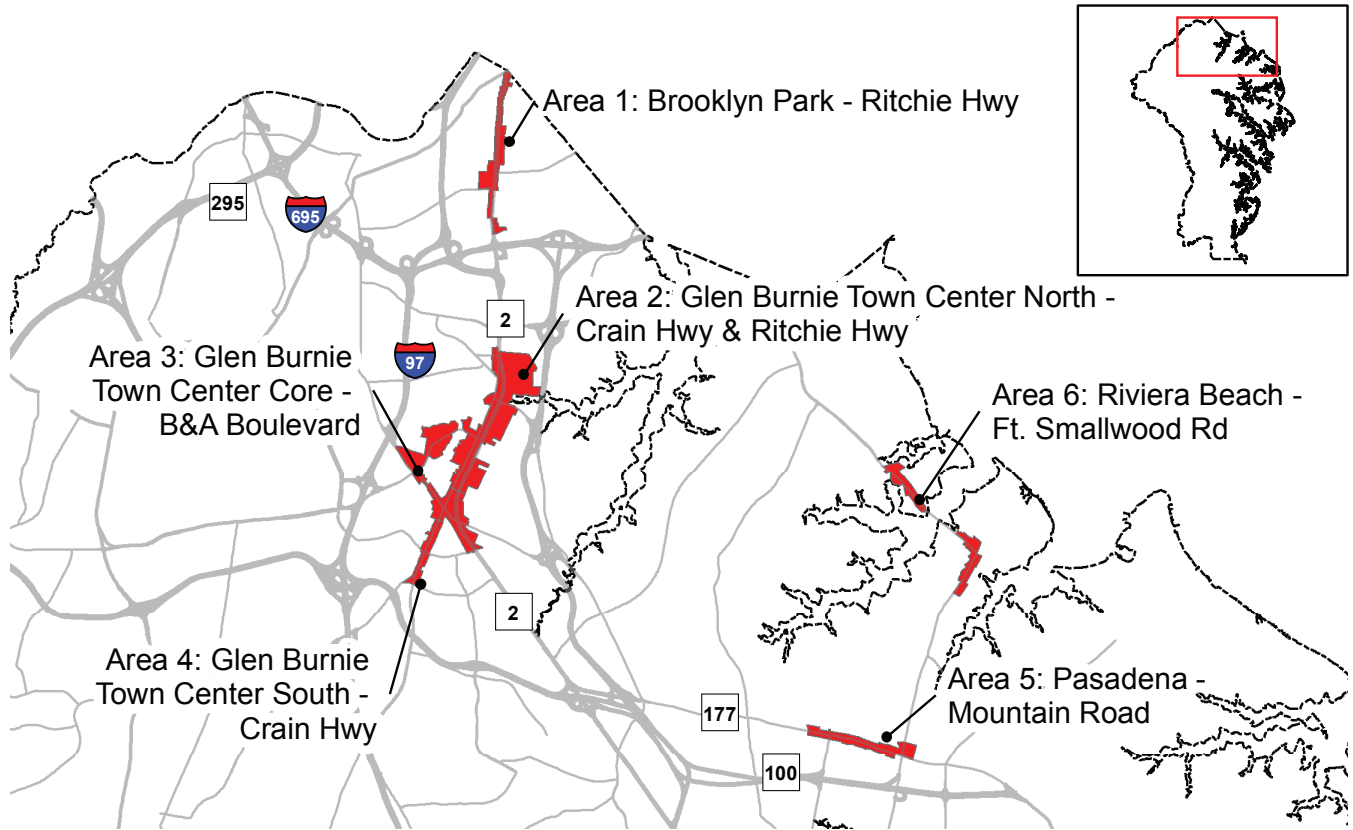
Although the character and need for improvements varies among these commercial corridors, some of the common issues that exist in many of them include vacancies, extensive pavement due to large parking lots, lack of landscaping, building or property age and upkeep, multiple driveway entries, excessive or unkempt signage, and lack of sidewalks. Along some segments of these corridors, small parcel sizes also limit redevelopment potential since assemblage of multiple properties will often be required for redevelopment opportunities. A description of the eight revitalization areas follows, and the areas are shown in Figure 1.

#### *Area 1 – Brooklyn Park-Ritchie Highway*

Located in one of the oldest developed parts of the County, this commercial corridor fronts along Ritchie Highway extending from the Baltimore City border to Cedar Hill Lane. It includes small commercial and residential lots as well as large shopping centers such as the Arundel Village Shopping Center. Land uses include small retail and service businesses, restaurants, offices, and auto service stations. The northern end of the corridor near Baltimore is primarily residential with several single family structures that have been converted for small business use.

The corridor and vicinity includes several assets such as community facilities (post office, library, elementary and middle schools, Chesapeake Arts Center), a landscaped median, and bus service. Some

Figure 1: Commercial Revitalization Areas





of the challenges along the corridor include underutilized or vacant properties, large paved parking areas, multiple entrances, and concentrations of commercial signage. The long-vacant site of the former Southview Shopping Center is currently being redeveloped with new apartment units and additional retail space fronting on Ritchie Highway, which may spur additional improvements along the corridor.

### *Area 2 – Glen Burnie Town Center North-Crain Highway and Ritchie Highway*

This revitalization area extends along Crain Highway and Ritchie Highway from their junction at the northern end down to Georgia Avenue at the southern end. This corridor is considered the northern gateway into the Glen Burnie Town Center. It is devoted primarily to automotive services including car sales, service and repair, and rentals, but also includes restaurants, small service providers, self storage, and convenience stores.

The character of the two highways differs. Crain Highway has two lanes with a wide shoulder of inconsistent width, discontinuous sidewalks, multiple entries, minimal landscaping in some areas, and generally smaller businesses than found along Ritchie Highway. Properties located between Crain and Ritchie Highways tend to have their front facades facing Ritchie Highway, leaving the backs of the buildings to face Crain Highway. This makes it particularly challenging to create an active street frontage along Crain.

Ritchie Highway is a large arterial highway with six lanes and a wide median. There are few sidewalks available, which reinforces the auto scale of the corridor. There is a need for updated and better-maintained landscaping both within the median and in landscape buffers along the front of many properties. Both highway corridors also suffer from large paved areas without landscaping, inconsistent streetscape features, and some vacant and underutilized structures.

### *Area 3 – Glen Burnie Town Center Core-Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard*

This revitalization area includes the Glen Burnie Town Center as its downtown hub, and also extends along Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard to the Cromwell Shopping Center as well as along Dorsey Road/8th Avenue. The approaches to the Town Center are lined with small retail spaces and wide pedestrian sidewalks. The central plaza hosts community activities, and nearby are the community college, District Court, the County Public Service Building, and a senior public housing building.

The Town Center has several attractive features that serve as assets, including the seasonal ice skating rink, good trail connections to the B&A Trail, a traditional downtown urban fabric, street connectivity, on-street parking, and proximity to the Light Rail and bus routes. In spite of these assets, there are numerous vacancies in the Town Center and along its approaches; thus there is a lack of a critical retail mass needed for the area to serve as a destination place. Additionally, many buildings have a dated and worn appearance. This includes the Cromwell Shopping Center, which has frequently experienced vacant storefronts and issues with vagrancy and is in need of façade improvements and improved landscaping and streetscaping, if not larger scale redevelopment. Given its proximity to both the Town Center and the Light Rail station, this site should be viewed as a key opportunity site. Recent replacement of the sidewalks along B&A Boulevard between the Town Center and Dorsey Road offers improved pedestrian connectivity. Small business attraction and retention should be an important element of revitalization efforts in the Town Center.



*Area 4 – Glen Burnie Town Center South-Crain Highway*

The southern gateway to the Town Center extends along Crain Highway from Aquahart Road north to 1st Avenue SW. This corridor has a compact urban character. The northern half between 1st Avenue and 5th Avenue includes a number of properties that have been redeveloped or well maintained, as well as good sidewalks and street trees, therefore setting a precedent for higher quality development. The southern half between Aquahart Road and 5th Avenue SW has the greater needed for revitalization. This section includes more large paved areas without landscaping, areas of signage clutter, some older properties in need of repair, and gaps in sidewalks and street trees.

*Area 5 – Pasadena-Mountain Road*

The Mountain Road revitalization corridor extends from Mayer Avenue to east of Edwin Raynor Boulevard. A key access route into the Pasadena area, it is an older commercial corridor with small lots, narrow right-of-way, and strip shopping centers. Traffic conditions have been an increasing problem along the corridor due to high volumes and other factors, and the County and the State Highway Administration (SHA) recently completed a traffic and streetscape improvement feasibility study, with recommendations for lane reconfiguration, signal and intersection improvements, sidewalks, and lighting. Future phases will include final design, acquisition, and construction.

Phase 1 of the project will address some issues including the inconsistent street edge and lack of continuous sidewalks from Catherine Avenue to Edwin Raynor Boulevard. However, the presence of many small, shallow lots along the corridor limits both redevelopment potential and site design options. There is also an issue with aging building stock and a number of vacancies. The County should promote, where feasible, the assemblage of parcels to allow redevelopment opportunities and to reduce the large number of ingress/egress points along the highway, which disrupts smooth traffic flow.

*Area 6 – Riviera Beach-Fort Smallwood Road*

The Fort Smallwood Road revitalization area is divided into two sections separated by Stoney Creek. The eastern section extends from Appian Way and Sunset Park to the Stoney Creek bridge, and the western section extends from the bridge to just north of Carvel Beach Road. The corridor has a mix of aging properties on small lots and more recent development including strip malls, fast food restaurants, and retail. Varying setbacks and inconsistent provision of sidewalks leads to a poorly defined street edge along much of this highway. There have been a number of vacant structures or storefronts along the corridor over the past several years, and some properties are not well maintained. However, there are stable residential communities surrounding the commercial corridor that support many of the local businesses.

*Area 7 – North Odenton-MD 175*

This commercial corridor lies within the master-planned Odenton Town Center (OTC), but is separated from the core of the OTC by MD 32. It extends along the north side of MD 175 and borders the Seven Oaks community to the east. The Seven Oaks Shopping Center is located along the corridor off of Blue Water Boulevard. The Fort Meade military base is located on the opposite side of MD 175. It is a mixed commercial area that includes a number of attractive redeveloped retail and convenience properties located among older buildings and properties that need updates to improve the area's appearance. Issues include some blighted buildings and undesirable uses, small lots that limit

redevelopment potential, inconsistent sidewalks, and signage. While the proximity to Fort Meade is an asset, it also limits the opportunity to create an active street frontage along both sides of MD 175.

SHA is in the process of completing improvements to MD 175 from MD 295 to Telegraph Road for the purpose of improving capacity, traffic operations and safety, and intermodal connectivity. The project is being completed in phases moving from west to east and will ultimately include road widening in some sections, intersection improvements, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

#### *Area 8 – Maryland City/Russett-MD 198*

This corridor extends along Laurel-Fort Meade Road from the Laurel Park Race Track eastward to the Baltimore Washington Parkway. Land uses along the highway include large and small shopping centers, big box retailers, auto sales and service, offices, gas stations, restaurants, and self storage facilities. As compared to the other commercial revitalization areas, this corridor has seen more improvements in that it includes continuous sidewalks and well-landscaped and maintained medians, several new developments with attractive landscaping, and has fewer vacancies than seen within other commercial corridors. Still, there are several older properties that are poorly maintained and thus detract from the newer investment in the area.

Absent significant shifts in the land use market, facilitating revitalization in older commercial areas such as these eight corridors will often require both development incentives and financial incentives. The County further encourages revitalization in these areas by offering tax incentives to qualifying properties. The Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit Program allows taxpayers who revitalize their properties to receive a property tax credit for up to five years, equal to the incremental increase in their real property tax assessment for improvements of at least \$100,000. Properties must be located in one of the eight Commercial Revitalization Areas and certified by the Office of Planning and Zoning as a qualified property. Qualifying improvements may include full site redevelopment, but also may include smaller measures such as new facades, landscaping and signage, lighting, replacing pavement with green spaces, or other measures that improve the physical appearance and aesthetics of the property and increase its economic viability.

To date fourteen properties have taken advantage of the property tax credit. These have been located in revitalization areas in Glen Burnie, Brooklyn Park, Odenton, and Pasadena and have included improvements to restaurants, office buildings, an auto supply store, big box retail stores, self storage facilities, and shopping centers. Most have involved demolition of all or parts of older commercial buildings followed by redevelopment.

As mentioned previously, AAEDC administers the Arundel Community Reinvestment Fund as a financial incentive to promote revitalization. Eligible improvements include renovation and upgrades to building exteriors and site improvements including landscaping. Since its inception, approximately 40 properties have received loans totaling roughly \$1.4 million and have used this incentive to complete over \$9.4 million in improvements. Recipients have included businesses located primarily in Glen Burnie, Pasadena, and Brooklyn Park and include both professional offices and retail services.

The County conducts regular outreach by mail to notify property owners located in these revitalization areas of the incentive programs available to them and to help market other tools available to business owners.

### *Sustainable Communities*

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 was intended to promote reinvestment and revitalization in existing communities around the State. The Act established a State designation of specific geographic areas to promote efficient use of State resources based on local sustainability and revitalization strategies. The Sustainable Communities program consolidates resources for community revitalization and economic development under a single designation with an emphasis on infrastructure improvements, multimodal transportation and “green” development. The legislation established the Governor’s Smart Growth Cabinet as the body charged with final approval of Sustainable Communities designations.

The State defines Sustainable Communities as places where public and private investments and partnerships achieve:

- Development of a healthy local economy;
- Protection and appreciation of historical and cultural resources;
- A mix of land uses;
- Affordable and sustainable housing, and employment options;
- Growth and development practices that protect the environment and conserve air, water and energy resources, encourage walkability and recreational opportunities, and where available, create access to transit.

Under this program, various State agencies have created a revitalization toolbox to support comprehensive strategies for revitalization and to prioritize investment in the State’s Sustainable Communities. Development and infrastructure projects located within a Sustainable Community may be eligible for assistance through a variety of State financing and tax credit programs including the Community Legacy, Neighborhood BusinessWorks, Sidewalk Retrofit, Community Safety and Enhancement, Job Creation Tax Credit, and Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing programs.

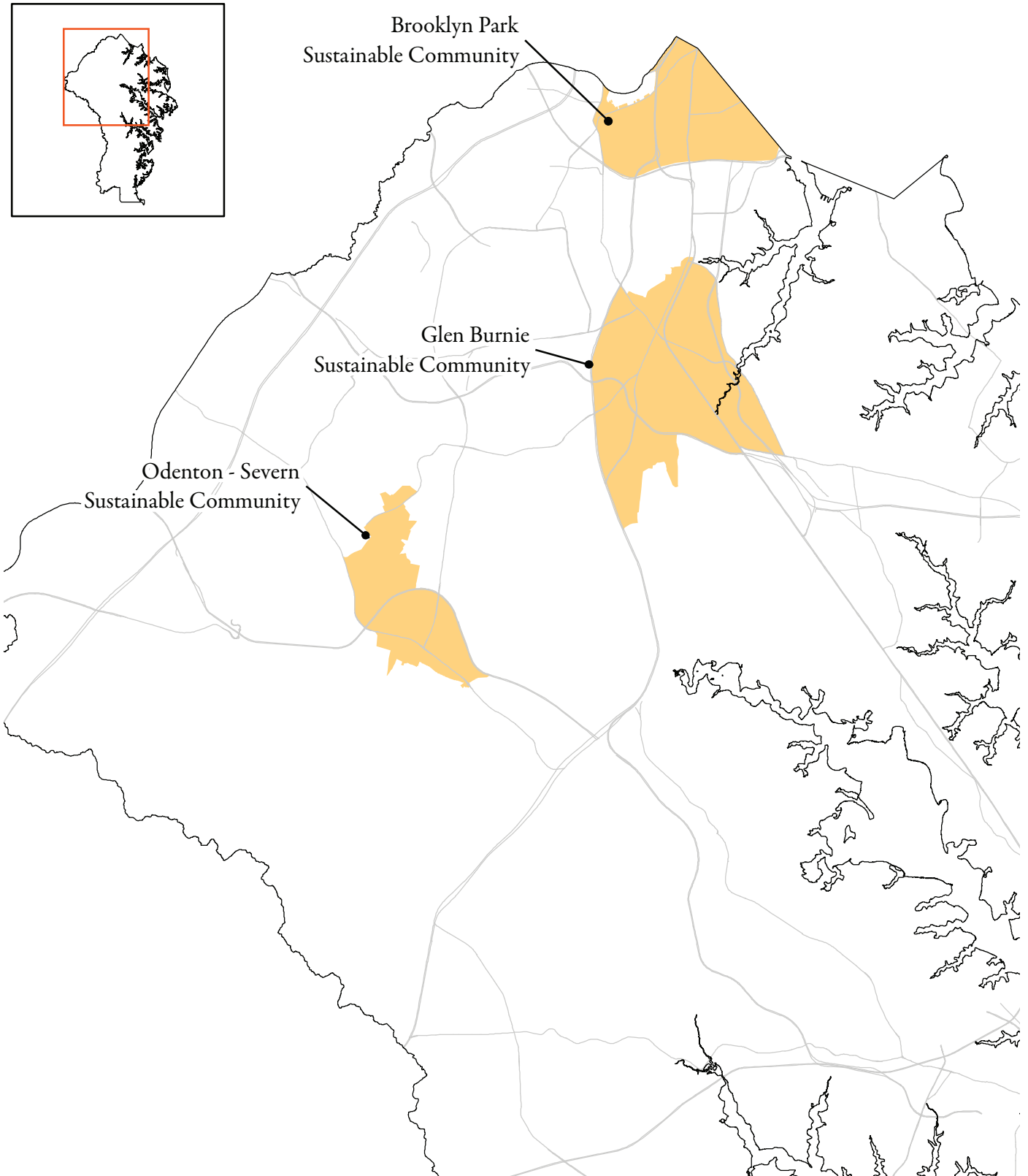
Anne Arundel County was granted approval of three designated Sustainable Communities in 2013 and 2014. These are Brooklyn Park, Glen Burnie, and Odenton-Severn (see Figure 2). For more information about these programs, visit the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development web site.

#### *Brooklyn Park Sustainable Community*

The Brooklyn Park Sustainable Community is bordered by Baltimore City to the north and east, I-695 to the south, and Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard to the west. It encompasses the communities of Old Brooklyn Park, Brooklyn Heights, Arundel Village, Arundel Gardens, and Pumphrey. Ritchie Highway serves as the principal commercial corridor and is one of the County’s adopted Commercial Revitalization Areas.

The greater community has several assets upon which to build. Its location near both downtown Baltimore and the BWI Airport provides accessibility to surrounding employment opportunities. Access to public transportation is available via MTA bus transit as well as two Light Rail stations (the North Linthicum and Nursery Road stations). The main commercial corridor includes a variety of retail and

**Figure 2: Sustainable Communities**



service uses, and some of the larger shopping centers have experienced renovations over the past several years. Brooklyn Park also provides affordable housing options for middle income families, options that have become scarce in some other parts of the County. Many neighborhoods are within walking distance to community facilities including the local library, parks, schools, and a senior center. The Brooklyn Park Middle School complex also includes the Chesapeake Arts Center, a regional arts center offering classes, performances, special events, and studio space for professional artists.

The Sustainable Community Action Plan for Brooklyn Park recommends focusing resources toward several key objectives, including

- creating new housing opportunities in key infill sites (the old Southview Shopping Center, the Cedar Hill brownfield site);
- continued rehabilitation of older residential properties to increase the supply of workforce housing;
- promoting revitalization along the Ritchie Highway corridor, including focused business attraction efforts as well as retention and expansion of existing businesses through financial assistance and other incentives;
- targeting additional workforce training services to the community; and
- increasing the use of public transit in the area.

Infrastructure and capital investments, both public and private, that are still needed in the area include:

- additional streetscape improvements and pedestrian amenities such as crosswalks, lighting, continuous planting strips, and completion of sidewalks along Ritchie Highway and Belle Grove Road;
- an attractive public plaza within the commercial corridor for public gatherings and events;
- redevelopment of some of the larger retail sites to reduce the appearance of too much asphalt; and
- building façade enhancements.

The Sustainable Community designation in Brooklyn Park has allowed the County to take advantage of funding through the State's Community Legacy Program to operate a property rehabilitation program administered by Arundel Community Development Services Inc. The program assists low and moderate income homeowners whose homes are in need of rehabilitation or reconstruction. A number of residential properties in the Brooklyn Park area have been improved through this program, focused primarily in the Brooklyn Heights neighborhood. More recently, funding awarded through the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative (discussed later in this report) has been used to enhance the property rehabilitation program as well as to establish a new block improvement program.

### *Glen Burnie Sustainable Community*

The Glen Burnie Sustainable Community lies primarily between I-97 to the west and MD 10 to the east, and extends from Furnace Branch Road south to MD 100, Hospital Drive and Elvaton Road. The area encompasses several neighborhoods including Glen Gardens, Acreslee, Glen Burnie Heights,



Aquahart Manor, Glen Burnie Park, Woodside Ridge, and Glendale Terrace. It also includes the Glen Burnie Town Center and three of the County's designated Commercial Revitalization Areas which extend along Crain Highway and Baltimore-Annapolis Boulevard and which serve as gateways into the Town Center.

Glen Burnie is well served with public infrastructure and community amenities. Some of these assets include its proximity to BWI Airport and nearby employment hubs; public transportation services at the Cromwell Light Rail Station and on Maryland Transit Authority bus routes; a Town Center that includes residential, retail and office uses and a plaza that serves as a community gathering place; multiple community facilities including a regional library, senior center, health center, local parks, and an aquatic center; the Anne Arundel Community College north campus; a variety of housing types (single family, townhomes, and multifamily), and some affordable housing opportunities for middle income families.

Weaknesses in the area's built environment relate primarily to the older age of some of the residential and commercial areas. The Glen Burnie area has a larger percentage of rental housing and an older housing stock as compared to the County as a whole, and some of the aging housing is in need of rehabilitation. ACDS Inc. has applied its Property Rehabilitation Program to upgrade over thirty residential properties in the Glen Burnie area over the past five years, and will continue to offer this program and others to implement residential property improvements.

While significant public and private investment has contributed to the revitalization of the area, the Glen Burnie Town Center still lacks the variety of retail uses that would make it a more vital "downtown," with a fair amount of turnover in retail space for lease. Competition from nearby malls, especially Arundel Mills mall, can make it difficult to attract businesses and there are frequently retail and office vacancies.

The first block of Crain Highway North in particular has struggled to retain retail tenants and with building upkeep and maintenance. This is a key opportunity area for renovation, redevelopment, or targeted business attraction efforts. Other opportunity sites for redevelopment, revitalization, and/or new business attraction include the Cromwell Shopping Center and the Marley Station Mall. Although several commercial properties in Glen Burnie have benefitted from loan programs and façade improvement programs offered through Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, there are still a number of businesses in need of building façade enhancements or other site improvements along the key commercial corridors in the area.

The Action Plan for the Glen Burnie Sustainable Community establishes several objectives on which resources should be targeted. These include:

- creating new housing and mixed use opportunities through redevelopment in strategic areas;
- increasing the supply of quality workforce housing;
- focusing business attraction and retention efforts in the Town Center and along the Crain Highway and Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard corridors; and
- improving access to the Cromwell Light Rail station.



Infrastructure improvements needed in the area include completion of the Glen Burnie Gateways concept plan developed through SHA funding to implement streetscape improvements along the B&A Boulevard gateways into the Town Center, including crosswalks, pedestrian lighting, continuous sidewalks, and street trees. The State Highway Administration recently upgraded sidewalks along B&A Boulevard between Crain Highway and Dorsey Road; however the section of B&A Boulevard east of the Town Center still needs improvements.

### *Odenton-Severn Sustainable Community*

The Odenton-Severn Sustainable Community is located in western Anne Arundel County along MD 32, MD 175 and Reece Road, and lies north and east of the Fort Meade military base. It encompasses the master-planned Odenton Town Center, the community of Seven Oaks, and the Stillmeadows, Spring Meadows, Pioneer Drive, and Meade Village communities in Severn. It also includes the North Odenton Commercial Revitalization Area, which extends along MD 175.

The Odenton Town Center is focused around the Odenton MARC Commuter Rail Station and is the primary targeted growth and redevelopment area in the western County. The MARC Station and vicinity is a State-designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) site, and a portion of the Town Center is also a State-designated BRAC Zone (Federal Base Realignment and Closure Initiative). These two State designations allow the Town Center to receive priority consideration for competitive State technical and/or financial assistance toward redevelopment projects and public infrastructure.

A key strength of the Odenton-Severn area is its strategic location within the Baltimore-Washington metro area and close proximity to Fort Meade, NSA, BWI Airport, National Business Park, Arundel Mills, and surrounding employment opportunities. It also has the advantage of being a community where many residents can walk to public transportation, community facilities, and local services. While not fully built to its potential yet, the Town Center is developing to combine residential, retail and office uses to create an urban core for the area. New residential developments completed over the past several years include Town Center Commons, Novus Odenton, Flats 170, the Point at Odenton, and Berger Square. These have provided nearly 600 new townhome and apartment units in the area, with more projects in the development pipeline. Additionally, a number of new retail and office uses have been completed along Annapolis Road throughout the Town Center.

Challenges to the area include the need for a stronger retail market to support the build out of the Odenton Town Center into a vibrant activity center as planned. New retail developments along MD 3 in Gambrills, at Arundel Mills Mall, and in other planned mixed use developments in the western County are competing with the retail market in Odenton. There is a need to ensure that incentives are available to developers to provide a range of active uses in the Town Center.

Other quality of life concerns are concentrated to some extent in the townhome communities of Pioneer Drive, Stillmeadows and Spring Meadows, and Meade Village. These communities provide a much needed stock of affordable housing in the western County, but they also have experienced some degree of nuisance and aesthetic issues as well as crime issues. While ACDS Inc. has focused some of its property acquisition and rehabilitation efforts in these communities over the past decade, resulting in an increase in the percentage of owner-occupied units, and some improvements have been realized, there remain some problems with disrepair and poor maintenance among the townhomes and continued incidences of crime.

The Sustainable Community Action Plan for Odenton-Severn recommends using available resources to

- focus business attraction efforts in the Odenton Town Center;
- promote revitalization in the commercial corridor along MD 175;
- create new housing and mixed use opportunities using infill and redevelopment in strategic locations;
- increase the supply of quality workforce housing near public transportation and services; and
- continue rehabilitation of residential properties in disrepair.

The primary investments in infrastructure that are still needed to meet development and revitalization goals in Odenton-Severn include:

- completion of design and construction of highway improvements along MD 175 from MD 32 to Sappington Station Circle including pedestrian and lighting improvements;
- development and financial strategies to allow redevelopment of the Odenton MARC Station West Parking Lot as a new TOD project incorporating parking structures, mixed use development, and public space;
- completion of the Odenton Town Center Core Grid Streets which are funded for design and construction in the County's Capital Program;
- planning and construction of a central public common within the Odenton Town Center; and
- pedestrian amenities to improve community connections, such as crosswalks, pedestrian lighting, and continuous sidewalks between area neighborhoods and key community facilities and shopping areas.

The County's three Sustainable Communities will require renewal from the State in 2018-19. The Office of Planning and Zoning plans to apply for State approval to reinstate all three areas as Sustainable Communities in order to continue revitalization efforts in these communities using all resources that are available.

### ***Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative***

The Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative (BRNI) was established by State legislation in FY2014 as a revitalization tool to fund projects that build on the strengths of Baltimore City and surrounding communities. The initiative targets existing communities that have experienced physical, economic, or social decline. The goal is to focus strategic investment in local housing and businesses that will lead to healthy communities, grow the tax base, and improve quality of life.

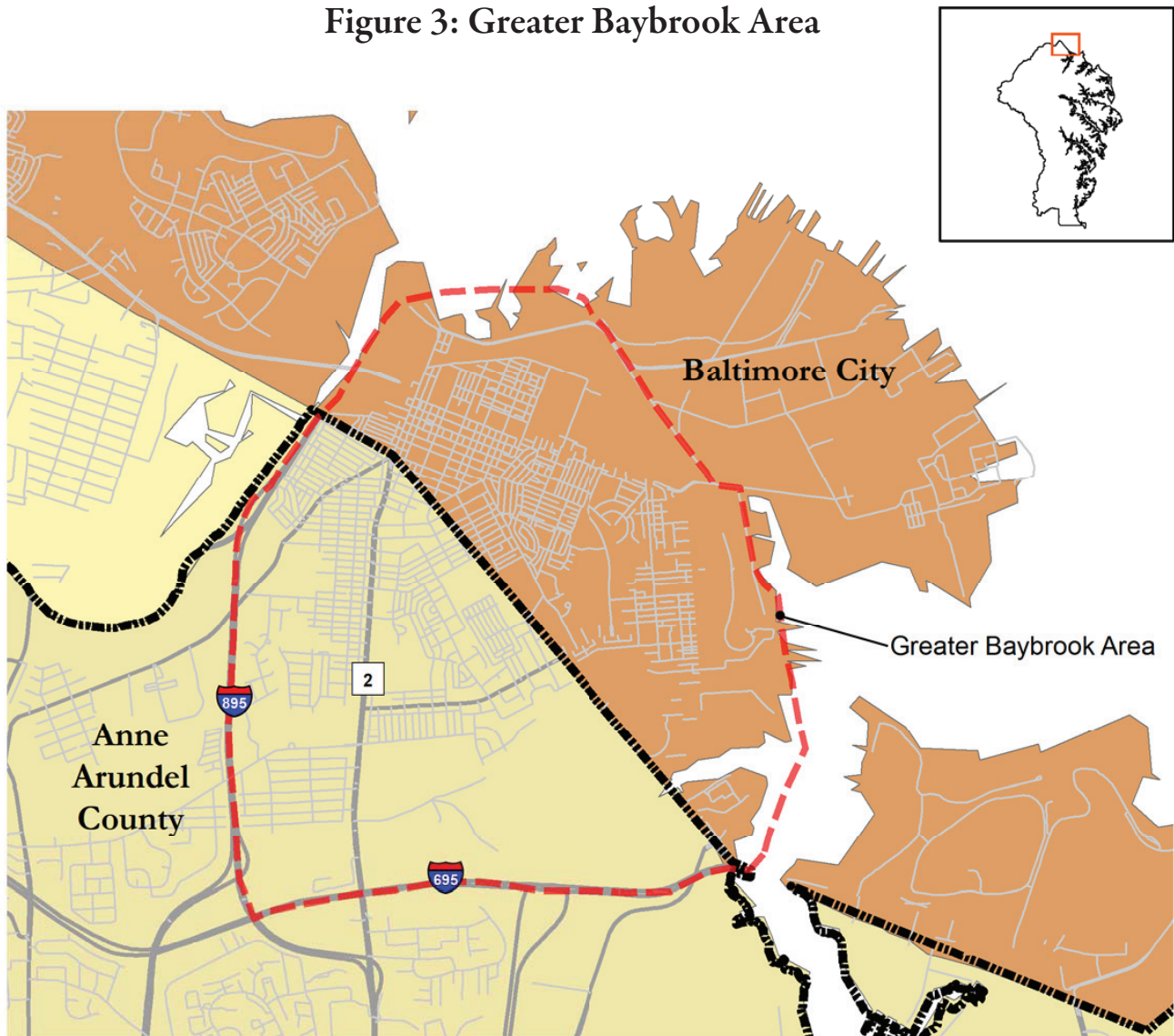
To this end, Anne Arundel County and the City of Baltimore collaborated with Strong City Baltimore, a nonprofit community development agency, and multiple stakeholders on a cross-jurisdictional plan to improve the Brooklyn–Curtis Bay–Brooklyn Park area, referred to as Greater Baybrook (see Figure 3).

The plan included establishing a local city-county community development corporation known as the Greater Baybrook Alliance (GBA), which will work with partners in both the City and County in their

revitalization efforts for the Baybrook area. Partners in the Greater Baybrook BRNI initiative include Strong City Baltimore, Arundel Community Development Services Inc. (ACDS), Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, Anne Arundel Office of Planning and Zoning, Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation, the Chesapeake Arts Center, the Chesapeake Center for Youth Development, MD Dept. of Housing and Community Development, Baltimore Metropolitan Council, Baltimore Development Corporation, several local community associations in Brooklyn Park, Curtis Bay, and Brooklyn, and many others.

The Greater Baybrook Vision and Action Plan ([www.greaterbaybrookalliance.org](http://www.greaterbaybrookalliance.org)) was submitted to the State in 2016 along with an application for funding for several specific implementation projects. Over \$700,000 in FY2017 BRNI Awards was granted to the Greater Baybrook area for several projects and programs including expansion of ACDS's property acquisition and rehabilitation program in Brooklyn Park; improvements to the Baybrook Youth Athletic Complex in Ferring-Baybrook Park; a block improvement program; and an identity and branding initiative.

**Figure 3: Greater Baybrook Area**



In FY 2018 over \$1.4 million in BRNI grants was awarded to the Greater Baybrook partnership. These funds were allocated toward a rodent abatement program in Brooklyn Park, development of makerspace at the Chesapeake Arts Center, the property rehabilitation program in both Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn-Curtis Bay, rehabilitation work at the Early Childhood and Community Center, and a new community spruce up program.

In 2018 the Greater Baybrook Alliance became an incorporated entity and will now be the local community development agency responsible for applying for and administering BRNI grant funds in collaboration with its many partners. Applications for additional funding support to continue these programs as well as develop new initiatives have been submitted for FY2019 and will be submitted in the future as long as the State continues to allocate funds for the BRNI Initiative. The GBA is also seeking additional grant funding and support from a variety of other resources that can contribute to the revitalization efforts in Brooklyn Park and the Greater Baybrook area.

## Challenges, Conclusions and Future Needs

Many of Anne Arundel County's economic indicators are remarkably strong, and there are opportunities to continue building on these strengths. There are also various challenges facing business and industry, as well as housing and community development, in the region.

The cyber and defense industries of the Fort Meade area are expected to continue their patterns of economic growth. Industrial warehousing and distribution are also experiencing high growth currently, though growth patterns for this sector tend to be cyclical. Anne Arundel's location in the metro area, with proximity to BWI Airport, the Port of Baltimore, and Fort Meade, combine to make the County a target for expansion in these areas. New hotel construction, low vacancy rates, and recent investment in hotels in Annapolis and near BWI Airport point to strength in the hospitality sector, and this expansion trend seems likely to continue. Maryland Live! Casino, and its expanding conference center, is one example of the new opportunities to bring more entertainment, conferences, and trade shows to the County.

Though national trends point to headwinds facing the retail sector, the County's demographics may buffer some potential negative impact locally. The County remains a strong retail market, particularly in the vicinity of Parole, Odenton, and Arundel Mills/Arundel Preserve. Still, the County's malls may experience some transformation and expansion of uses and services to better respond to national trends in shopper behavior.

The County's low unemployment rate, a positive indicator of economic health, also creates a challenge for business owners seeking employees. The County's cyber industry offers one example of this, with thousands of cyber job openings that require certifications and skill sets that most unemployed in the area do not have. AAEDC, working in conjunction with AAWDC and the Maryland Department of Commerce, has created several programs and resources to help bridge this gap and increase the skill level of the local workforce.

The County's agriculture sector remains a significant economic driver and a factor in the quality of life, but there are challenges for the future. There has been a loss in the number of larger farms in the County, but an overall increase in the number farms, with a trend toward more small farms focused on niche farming markets. Supplemental activities are becoming increasingly important as fewer of the remaining



farmers in the area engage in agriculture full time. The recent agritourism legislation (Bill 67-17) expanded the potential for agritourism activities in various zones to bolster the economic viability of the County's farms. It also established the Agriculture, Farming and Agritourism Commission, which will continue to study policies and measures that will further promote agriculture in the County. Balancing farmland preservation with development will also be key to the future of agriculture in the County. Current protections in the County Code through zoning and development regulations are critical to the continued viability of farming and maintaining farmland.

As with farming, Anne Arundel County's heritage is linked closely to its maritime activity. From recreational boating to commercial operations and ancillary activities, the County's maritime industry continues to be an important economic force in the region. The recent recession had a significant impact on maritime businesses, and despite recent growth, the industry has not returned yet to pre-recession levels. Indeed, boat sales and registrations throughout the State are below pre-recession levels. Other constraints such as the cost of land offer challenges to maritime businesses. A study of the economic impact of the County's maritime industry and the opportunities and challenges facing it going forward would help AAEDC and the County tailor policies and programs, such as a maritime tax credit program, to supporting and growing this important sector.

The County also faces a number of challenges in the areas of housing and community development. As the County's older adult population continues to grow, there will be an increasing challenge to ensure there are adequate housing types and services tailored to this group. Providing and coordinating services for homeless individuals and families, and expanding housing options for special needs populations will continue to be important. Revitalizing neighborhoods and communities is a key quality of life issue in parts of the County, and promoting residential rehabilitation, particularly in areas with concentrations of older housing stock, as well as development/redevelopment in targeted commercial areas continues to be a challenge.

### *Challenges and Issues Identified During the Plan 2040 Listening Sessions*

The Plan2040 effort opened with a series of listening sessions and an online survey to gauge the values and vision that County residents have for their communities. Among economic topics, participants stressed the importance of maintaining infrastructure capacity in line with population and development and ensuring adequate land uses for economic needs. Many individual responses cited the County's strong economy as a positive factor in the quality of life here, with quality job opportunities in several strong sectors such as high-tech and government. Several comments cited a need for particular types of businesses to improve the quality of life in various parts of the County. Participants generally favored redeveloping in built-up areas, providing housing choice, and ensuring transportation options for all users as priority goals for the County. Many other comments focused on housing affordability, including for young people, professionals, and seniors. Several participants cited the need to redevelop vacant areas and improve particular neighborhoods, primarily in the northern part of the County.



