

MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER QUARTERLY NEWS & UPDATES FROM YOUR BUSINESS DISTRICT

DIVERSITY in MARKET CENTER

— BEYOND a BUZZWORD —



(Photo: Developer C. Okoro stands in front of his project at 109 W. Lexington)

Market Center is one of Baltimore’s major business, cultural, and transit hubs, and home to institutions including Lexington Market, the Central Library, hospitals, universities, and historic Chinatown. Generations of Baltimoreans from all backgrounds and neighborhoods have come to Market Center to shop, dine, work, socialize, and people-watch—and still do today.

For Market Center, diversity is more than just a buzzword. While we will always strive to grow and attract a range of new businesses, the vast array of cultures, ages, races, and more who currently call Market Center home is inspiring. The easiest way to see Market Center’s diversity on display? Take a walk down the street and meet some of our small business owners. Today, more than 70% of street level businesses in the neighborhood are minority-owned. To be more specific: at least 32% are Asian-owned, 30% are Black-owned, 2% are MENA-owned (Middle East-North African), and 2% are owned by people of Hispanic descent. MCMA is finalizing data regarding woman-owned businesses.

It’s not just about the businesses and buildings here now—over half of the active development projects in Market Center are led by minority-owned development companies. Additionally, seven properties are owned by artist groups who are working to provide affordable spaces for artists to live, work, and showcase their art.

In just a few short blocks, you can travel around the world via the
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A PUBLICATION OF



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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

— OF THE MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION —

FROM MCMA PRESIDENT JUDSON H. KERR, III, AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR KRISTEN MITCHELL

Diversity and inclusion is a moral imperative, but it is also an economic strength. When people from diverse backgrounds come together, they share different perspectives, experiences, expertise, talent, and interests with one another, fostering a wellspring of creativity, innovation, industry, understanding, and drive. When embraced, this confluence of culture can produce unique, meaningful, and potentially lucrative results, whether they be artistic collaborations that delight our senses, scientific breakthroughs that address challenges like climate change, policies that tackle racial and economic disparities, innovative products that make life easier, or a dynamic mix of shops, restaurants, services, homes, parks, and public places that attract customers, residents, and investment.



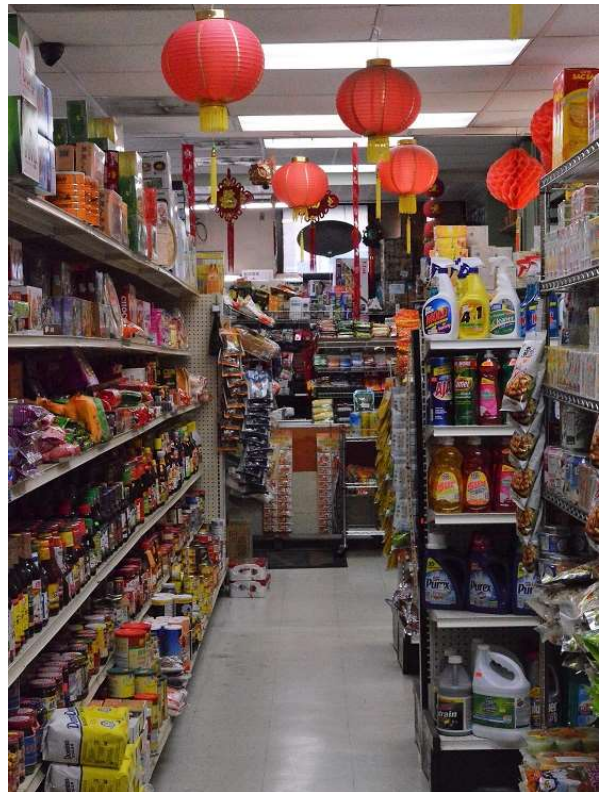
Market Center’s diversity, coupled with its distinctive international flair that stems from the global products, foods, and services offered by Market Center businesses, affords us a tremendous marketing tool, because it is authentic.

You may not hear this enough, but we really appreciate you – the business owners, property owners, employees, residents, and patrons of Market Center. Thank you for your contributions to our wonderfully diverse community!

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veritable buffet of global flavors and styles. Talented multicultural chefs create and serve traditional and fusion cuisine from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Italy, Korea, Peru, and Canada (just to name a few!). These intermingle with timeless American seafood and soul food. Visitors to Market Center can shop for African, Asian, and Italian ingredients and delicacies at specialty grocers, African gifts from Mahogany Exchange, and many shops that offer clothing, jewelry, soaps, and oils from across the globe.

Market Center’s stakeholders are determined to retain and grow the wonderful diversity in our neighborhood, in every respect and manifestation (business and property owners, residents, customers, and visitors, etc.). Thanks to the community-driven Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan, we know that folks in Market Center have a strong desire to celebrate, protect, and build on Market Center’s existing variegation. Four of the six vision statements reference a need for diversity, and the Plan explicitly calls for pursuing economic development through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens. Market Center aims to be a community where everyone knows they are welcome, heard, and celebrated. MCMA is working to ensure that all our members—from residents and merchants to nonprofits and arts organizations— have a seat at the table and are empowered to succeed. **



Po Tung Trading (321 Park) always has an amazing assortment of Asian and American food, from Kimchi to Cheerios!

NEWS & UPDATES

— IN THE MARKET CENTER —

DEVELOPMENT TEAM ANNOUNCED FOR FORMER 'SUPERBLOCK'

In November, the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) made a long-awaited announcement regarding the fate of 29 city-owned parcels on the block bound by Fayette, Lexington and Howard Streets, and Park Avenue. Following a competitive Request for Proposals process, the city awarded "Westside Partners" as the development group.

The predominately local team includes Landmark Partners, Vitruvius Co., Mayson-Dixon and Partnered Co. who plan a round-the-clock activated community-driven project comprised of residential, range of work-space, an entertainment venue, grocer, hotel, wellness, parking, and a wide breadth of retail.

The group's aim is to embrace and amplify the property's history through maintaining the historic fabric, integrating local stakeholders and artists and thoughtfully curated uses. Westside Partners will be seeking the community's input through various outreach programs and mediums, all to help ensure the project is truly the result of collaboration towards bettering the neighborhood and city at large.

'PAINTED PATH' TO LINK MODERN & HISTORIC CULTURAL SITES, VENUES

The Bromo Arts District is working with Graham Projects on a large-scale, community-informed creative wayfinding project to

connect cultural sites and venues, such as Maryland Art Place and the Hippodrome. Graham Projects is a Baltimore-based creative agency specializing in public art, placemaking, and civic engagement. Look for painting on the sidewalks in summer 2021!

BUSINESS NEWS & NOTES

You cannot always buy **your Mess in a Bottle** merch at Target, but you can right now! As part of a Black History Month initiative, Target is carrying a special Mess collection through the end of February in almost 800 stores nationwide.

Artstar Custom Paintworks, a decorative painting and faux finishing company, recently joined the **Made in Baltimore** network of manufacturers, retailers and maker spaces that create and promote local products.

M.A.P. Technologies, a gaming lounge and one-stop shop for all your computer and gaming needs, recently moved to a bigger space at 322 W. Baltimore. The shop is being renovated, so it is not open for in-store browsing or gaming yet, but you can still make purchases online and pickup in person.

International Fragrance Shop, which already had two Market Center locations, moved from 227 to 223 N. Eutaw, more than doubling their size and enabling an expanded selection of goods.

Beauty Zone added a second Market Center location, so you can now find them at 230 and 231 N. Eutaw.

FOUR TEN LOFTS BEGINS LEASING

Scheduled to open in spring 2021, Four Ten Lofts (422 W. Mulberry & 410 N. Eutaw) offers live/workspaces for artists in the heart of Market Center and Bromo Arts. Designed in collaboration with artists, Four Ten Lofts features spacious layouts, large windows for natural light, a spray booth, sound room, gallery, courtyard, community garden, and bike and car parking. Interested? Inquire at fourtenlofts@thefrenchcompanies.com.

'BLACK-OWNED AND OPERATED STOREFRONT TENANCY' (BOOST) PROGRAM LAUNCHES

The Downtown Partnership recently launched BOOST, a financial and technical support program that aims to support the long-term success of five creative Black-owned businesses. Powered by digital services firm Fearless, BOOST will address "racial inequities while fostering a more dynamic, safe and vibrant downtown."

BOOST aims to attract businesses that have a strong business plan and original ideas, will create a broad community impact, and will support downtown's recovery at key locations, including 10 and 602 N. Howard in Market Center.

Winners will receive up to \$50,000 in grants to support buildout and operations and technical assistance.

The deadline to apply is March 10. For more information, visit <https://www.godowntownbaltimore.com/>.

ABC'S OF LOCAL INVESTING – IN BUSINESSES & REAL ESTATE

On February 25, 6-8 pm, Michael Shuman of Neighborhood Associates Corporation will lead a workshop on local investing, designed for people with little to no background on investing. It is especially focused on explaining investment crowdfunding and other tools for local investing. There is no charge, but registration is required. Register at <https://bit.ly/ABCsofLocal>.

The class will answer questions such as:

- How does crowdfunding work?
- How can I find promising local businesses and real estate projects in which to invest?
- How can I evaluate these local businesses and real estate projects (for risk, return, etc.)?
- How can I tap into tax-exempt savings (IRAs, 401ks, 403bs) for local investment?
- What are the basics of securities law?
- Why does local investment matter for community well-being?

Michael Shuman is a renowned economist, attorney, author, entrepreneur, and Director of

Local Economy Programs for Neighborhood Associates.

The class is brought to you by MCCDC and Community Wealth Builders (CWB), thanks to grants from the Abell Foundation and T. Rowe Price Foundation. CWB runs the Maryland Neighborhood Exchange, a community-based platform designed to facilitate local investing on federally licensed grassroots investment crowdfunding sites.

LEXINGTON MARKET VENDOR APPLICATION PROCESS REOPENS

Interested in becoming a Lexington Market vendor? The second-round vendor application process is underway, with applications accepted through March 19.

Food businesses of all types may apply, but they are specifically seeking vegetarian and vegan, fresh produce, creole and soul food, snacks and candies, bakers, butchers, Jewish and Italian delis, Asian cuisine, BBQ and pit beef, tacos, and Latin American cuisine.

To assist business owners with the application process, Seawall Development will hold virtual

information sessions (February 25, 12-1 pm, and March 9, 6-7 pm), and they have recorded "Technical Workshops" covering specific parts of the application process: 1) Menu Design 2) Branding & Marketing, and 3) Business Finance, which you can watch here.

Though the application process for kiosk vendors will not open until later this year, they are taking inquiries from people interested in operating from kiosks at Lexington Market.

For additional information, to register for an information session, or to apply, visit www.transformlexington.com.

GREENING HOWARD STREET

The City Center Residents Association (CCRA) received a 'Love Your Lot' grant from the Baltimore Department of Public Works, enabling CCRA and MCMA to plant four trees and nine bushes in five empty tree wells on the 200 block of Howard Street last fall. Thanks, CCRA and DPW!



The owner of 407-409 W. Baltimore is restoring the cast iron facades, expanding the ground floor commercial space, and creating eight apartments; Angie's Soul Food & BBQ, 511 W. Lexington, did brisk business leading up to New Year's Eve, as Baltimoreans sought their famous chitterlings and black-eyed peas.

MCMA COMMITTEE UPDATES

If you are interested in participating on a committee, contact
Kristen Mitchell at 443-478-3014 or executivedirector@marketcenterbaltimore.org

CLEAN & SAFE COMMITTEE

*Ann Winder, Chair
The Place Lounge*

*Mike Watson, Co-Chair
Everyman Theatre*

*Meets the second Monday
of every month at 11:00
a.m.*

- The committee continues to advocate for improvements to Market Center's public infrastructure, including sidewalks, streetlights, and tree wells.
- Thanks to a corporate contribution from John Bugg with State Farm, the committee purchased trash cans for businesses on the 300 block of Park Avenue, and adorned the cans with sponsor logos, the business address, and a reminder

that the city collects trash on Fridays in Market Center. The committee is collaborating with the Departments of Public Works and Housing to ensure business owners and residents know the city's trash and recycling regulations. If necessary, the city will follow up with enforcement. The committee will work with additional corporate sponsors and businesses on the 100-300 blocks of Eutaw Street next.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

*Wendy Blair, Chair
Re/Max Commercial Logic*

*Meets the first Thursday
of the month at 9:00 a.m.*

- The committee is coordinating with the Market Center CDC on the Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan, Phase II, which is underway. The goal of Phase II is to build consensus among stakeholders on key topics related to Housing, Economy, Transportation, Quality of Life, Environment, and Community Engagement. For more information, visit the Strategic Plan page on our website.

- The committee is investigating the possibility of establishing an architectural review committee to review proposals that require approval from the Commission for Historical & Architectural Preservation. They are talking to groups that do similar work in other parts of the city, such as Fells Point and Federal Hill, to learn more.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Jenny Kessler Klump, Chair

*The Marketing Committee
meets the fourth
Wednesday of the month
at 9:00 a.m.*

- The committee led the effort to craft fundraising messages for Market Center, creating marketing materials, a slide presentation, and email messages.
- The fundraising work dovetails with the committee's work on overall messaging for the district, which requires understanding Market Center's existing assets and stakeholders' vision for the future of Market Center.

- The committee is brainstorming ideas for events that will bring people to Market Center in a Covid-safe manner.
- The committee supported the creation of the first Market Center Holiday Gift guide, featuring unique gifts from 11 different Market Center businesses.

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

— OF THE MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION —



Architectural and historical gems, St. James Place Apartments, Congress Hotel Apartments, and the former Mayfair Theatre, are all visible along Howard Street.

INVESTMENT CROWDFUNDING: A NEW TOOL TO RAISE MONEY FOR AND MARKET YOUR BUSINESSES

Grassroots investment crowdfunding empowers business owners to raise capital directly from their community, such as customers, family, and friends. A flexible tool, investment crowdfunding can be structured as equity, debt, or shared revenue notes, and with repayment terms defined by the business owner. Businesses can raise just a few thousand to over a million dollars with this tool, which can also support real estate development projects.

In addition to helping businesses raise money, investment crowdfunding gives businesses a big marketing boost. When customers and fans become investors, they help promote the business, grow the brand, and attract new customers.

Another benefit: When businesses repay their investors, community members build wealth and benefit. Win-win!

Now is a great time for local businesses to consider investment crowdfunding, as more people

realize that where they spend their money matters – whether they want to support a particular store, a specific group of business owners, or a local commercial district.

Thanks to grants from the T. Rowe Price Foundation and the Abell Foundation, Market Center businesses have access to free, hands-on professional technical advice on investment crowdfunding from Community Wealth Builders. Start the conversation today by contacting Kristen Mitchell at executivedirector@marketcenterbaltimore.org, or 443.478.3014

RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

Searching for financial or technical assistance, or marketing or collaboration opportunities? Check out our newly expanded resources webpage, with more items added regularly. For information, visit <https://www.marketcenterbaltimore.org/resources>. Let us know if we are missing anything!



Trinacria Marketplace Café (111 W. Centre) serves Italian favorites like Arancini and Calamari, and customers can also select wine, cookies, and other Italian specialties from the grocery section.

MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

ABOUT MARKET CENTER

Market Center is comprised of 27 blocks near Lexington Market, roughly bounded by Baltimore Street to the south, Greene to the west, Cathedral/Liberty to the east and Madison to the north. The exact boundaries are best shown on a map [back page].

Established in 1983, Market Center is one of ten Retail Business District License (RBDL) areas in the City of Baltimore. Each RBDL was established by a separate City Council ordinance, and the businesses within the RBDL boundaries are required to pay an annual fee, which the city collects and then redistributes back to the business association for use in the district.

ABOUT THE MARKET CENTER MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

The Market Center Merchants Association (MCMA) represents the businesses within Market Center. MCMA promotes commerce, retains and attracts business, and enhances the customer and residential experience. MCMA uses the RBDL fees to support a variety of work, much of which is outlined in the reports in this newsletter.

CALL FOR VENDORS

*SEEKING FRESH PRODUCE SUPPLIERS, BUTCHERS, CHEFS,
BAKERS, SANDWICH MAKERS, FLORISTS, RETAIL AND MORE!*



ROUND 2 APPLICATIONS DUE

FRI. MAR. 19, 2021

TRANSFORMLEXINGTON.COM

APPLY ONLINE
TECHNICAL SUPPORT AVAILABLE

WELCOME NEW BUSINESSES TO THE DISTRICT

Cheezy Mike's, Mount Vernon Marketplace, 520 Park
Coloco, 300 W. Lexington
Global Jewelers, 106 N. Howard
Paca Street Furniture, 503 W. Lexington
M&K Wholesale, 223 N. Howard
Maa Mini Mart, 225 N. Howard
Neo Pizza, Mount Vernon Marketplace, 520 Park
Studio London Yoga, 407 N. Howard
Style Haven, 327 Park
Universal Mini Mart & Tobacco Outlet, 225 W. Saratoga
Vegan Juiceology, 413 N. Howard
Wine O'Clock, Mount Vernon Marketplace, 520 Park

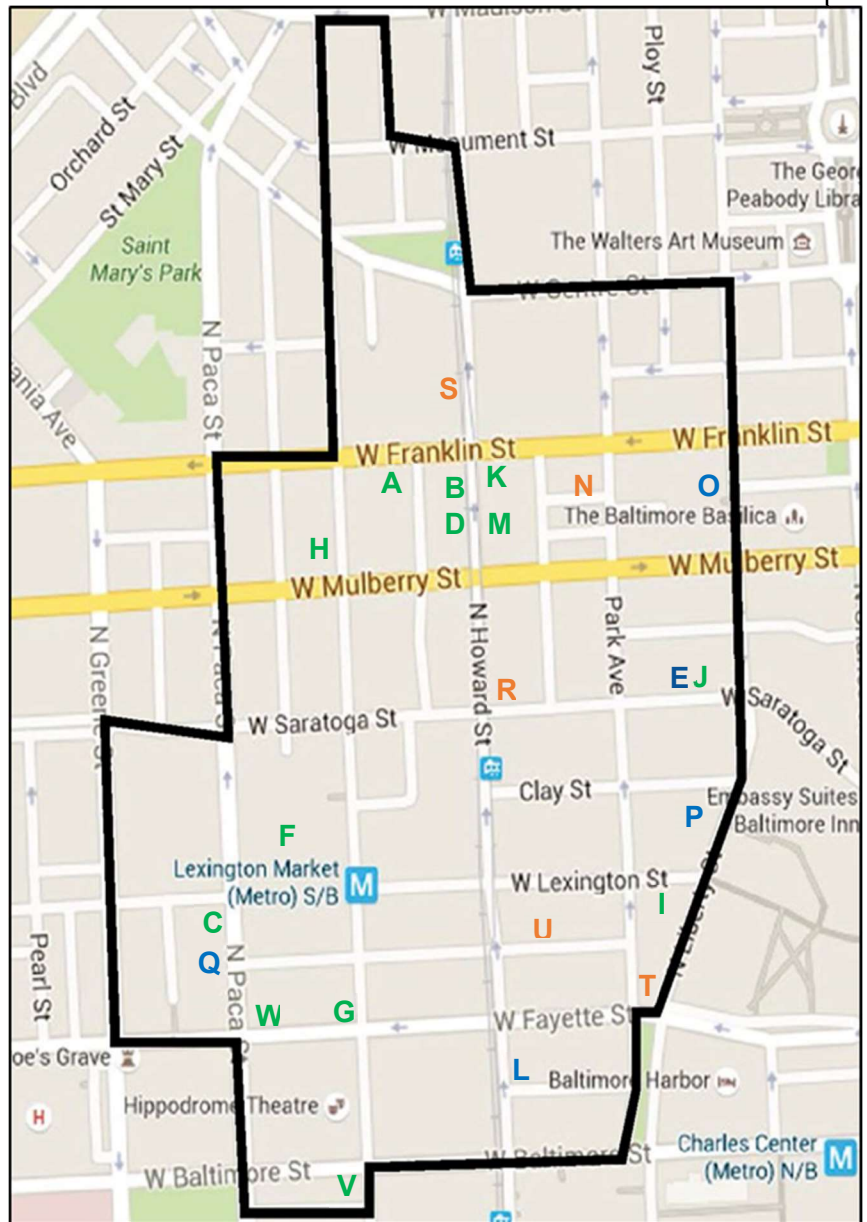
DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

— IN MARKET CENTER —

Key

- Blue – Complete in Last 2 Years
- Green - Under Way
- Orange - Breaking Ground Soon

- A – SJ2 Apartments – 12 apts.
- B – St. James Expansion – 30 apts.
- C – 128 N. Paca, 9 apts., commercial
- D – Le Mondo Arts Incubator
- E – 108 W. Saratoga, 7 apts.
- F – Lexington Market
- G – Springhill Suites – 158 Room Hotel
- H – Four Ten Lofts – artists' housing
- I – 109 W. Lexington – 20 apts., commercial
- J – 106 W. Saratoga – 10 apts.
- K – HeLa Franklin Apartments – 60 apts.
- L – 9 N. Howard – 15 apts., commercial
- M – Howard Row – 41 apts., retail
- N – Dwell on Park – Mixed-use
- O – Pratt Library Renovations
- P – L on Liberty – 72 apts.
- Q – Paca House Renovation, Expansion
- R – Crook Horner Lofts – 15 apts., commercial
- S – Mayfair – 50 apts., commercial
- T – Fayette/Liberty - 20 apts., commercial
- U – The Compass, mixed-use
- V – 407-409 W. Baltimore, 8 apts.
- W – Prosper on Fayette, 213 apts., commercial



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
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**MARKET CENTER
MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION**

