

# **The Promise of Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan, Phase One**

Submitted by the Market Center Community Development Corporation  
To the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development  
June 12, 2019

On behalf of the 95 unique individuals who participated in Phase One  
Including Advisory Committee Members (see list on page 67)

Work on Phase Two will commence in September 2019

# The Promise of Market Center

## Strategic Revitalization Plan, Phase One

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## Executive Summary

Market Center is a place of history, a community of resilience, and Baltimore City's best opportunity to accommodate population and job growth without displacement and showcase incremental, grassroots, community-led and creative revitalization.

After ten months of discussions with and input from a broad spectrum of Market Center stakeholders, culminating in an intensive two-month series of community focus groups and working sessions, the Market Center Community Development Corporation is pleased to submit Phase I of the Strategic Revitalization Plan for Baltimore's historic retail core. Informed by the input of 90+ individuals, including representatives of nearly two dozen Market Center stakeholder organizations and institutions, the report's highlights include:

- A collective vision of Market Center as a vibrant, diverse, accessible, welcoming, clean and safe part of Baltimore's urban fabric;
- A reminder of Market Center's proud history as **the** shopping district for Baltimore City and the surrounding region;
- Descriptions of the current community conditions for Market Center's economy, housing, transportation, environment, quality of life and community engagement;
- A look at Market Center's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each planning area;
- The goals, outcomes, strategies and partners that will bring Market Center's new vision to life;
- The intent in Phase II to engage in additional community outreach, dive deeper into some of the more complex issues facing Market Center, and create the organizational structure, identify the leadership and secure the resources necessary to assure successful implementation of Market Center's Strategic Revitalization Plan;

## The Visions

**Housing:** Market Center offers a vibrant living experience by maintaining and promoting a diversity of mixed-use, mixed-income housing options and amenities which create a welcoming, walkable

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**Housing:** Market Center offers a vibrant living experience by maintaining and promoting a diversity of mixed-use, mixed-income housing options and amenities which create a welcoming, walkable and safe neighborhood.

**Economy:** Market Center is a premier international district with a vibrant mix of retail, arts, dining, and entertainment offerings that serve a diverse community of residents, workers, students, and visitors in a transit-rich environment.

**Transportation:** Market Center is pleasantly accessible, walkable, and bikeable, where residents, workers, students, and visitors can make comfortable transfers on safe and reliable transportation options to local and regional destinations.

**Environment:** Market Center is architecturally diverse, with clean, functional, and environmentally conscious infrastructure, and safe, welcoming, well-lit, green public gathering spaces.

**Quality of Life:** Market Center is a diverse, welcoming, and amenity-rich neighborhood whose civic pride is built on a culture of collaboration to improve the social, physical and natural environment.

**Community Engagement:** Market Center is a place where stakeholders can clearly learn about the community, be engaged in decision-making, feel respected and heard, and have a personal stake in the outcome.

# Part I

## Introduction to Market Center



Market Center is comprised of 27 blocks in the geographic center of Baltimore City less than a half-mile northwest of Baltimore’s Inner Harbor. Its eastern boundary is Liberty/Cathedral Streets and its western boundaries from north to south are generally Eutaw, Paca, and Greene Streets. Southern boundaries are Fayette and Baltimore Streets, and northern boundaries from east to west are Centre, Monument, and Madison, Franklin, and Saratoga Streets. See Map 1 for detailed boundaries. The Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan encompasses these same boundaries; it also includes the west side of the 300 block of N. Paca Street.



The Market Center Merchants Association (“MCMA”) and Market Center Community Development Corporation (“MCCDC”) work within these boundaries, which are consistent with the Market Center Retail Business District License Area, established by City Council Ordinance in 1983. Significant portions of Market Center are also within the boundaries of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore (“DPOB”), Bromo Arts & Entertainment District (“Bromo”), City Center Residents Association (“CCRA”), and the UniverCity Partnership, a group periodically convened by the Mayor of Baltimore and President of University of Maryland, Baltimore (“UMB”), to pursue revitalization of this part of the city.

Market Center is also home to the Market Center National Register Historic District, and the Five and Dime and Howard Street Baltimore City Historic Districts. A small

portion of Market Center also overlaps with the Mount Vernon Baltimore City and National Register Historic Districts, and the Cathedral Hill National Register Historic District.

The overlapping boundaries have led to some confusion regarding Market Center's identity and branding, and the delineation of the different organizations' roles and responsibilities. However, they also present an opportunity for partnership and collaboration that can benefit all Market Center stakeholders.

## History

Market Center has a rich history as a center of commerce in Baltimore. Lexington Market, the oldest public market in the United States, was created in 1782 and continues to serve as an anchor for Market Center. Through much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Market Center housed the flagship locations of every major Baltimore department store. With six department stores located within two blocks of the Howard/Lexington Street intersection along with eight smaller 'five and dime' stores, the area was packed with shoppers from all over Baltimore City and the region nearly every day. Until the Rite Aid store on Howard Street closed in 2018, passers-by could see photographs in the windows of Market Center when it was **the** place to shop in Central Maryland.

As the department stores left their flagship buildings for suburban locations, Market Center began losing its cachet as a shopping destination. This was part of a larger pattern of disinvestment and population flight from Baltimore City to Baltimore County and surrounding counties during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In an effort to revitalize Market Center, beginning in the late 1990s, the City of Baltimore began acquiring buildings from private property owners and relocating existing businesses, with the intent of facilitating a major development project with one or more "big box" stores. The project(s) did not materialize, and the city's efforts instead resulted in the proliferation of vacant buildings. Over the past twenty years, public and private infrastructure and properties in Market Center have suffered from neglect.

Despite the vacancies in and neglect of Market Center itself, Market Center is surrounded by some of the most vibrant parts of Baltimore. To its west is the University of Maryland, Baltimore with a daily population totaling more than 13,000+ students, faculty and staff, the University of Maryland Medical Center, and Veterans Administration hospital. To the east is the central business district, an employment center which now also includes Baltimore's fastest growing residential neighborhood with young professionals, empty-nesters and others attracted to urban amenities residing in repurposed office and commercial buildings as well as newly constructed high-rise apartments. In its 'State of Downtown Baltimore Report' issued in March 2019, the Downtown Partnership reported a residential population of nearly 43,000 in a one-mile radius of the Pratt and Light Street intersection— many of whom live within reasonable walking distance to Market Center.

The Inner Harbor and Camden Yards are just south of Market Center, with historic Mount Vernon and Seton Hill, and University of Maryland Medical Center's Midtown Campus to the north. Anyone not familiar with the current state of Market Center would believe it must be a

happening place filled with people enjoying urban life on a regular basis. Sadly, this is not the case as the current Market Center environment keeps many away or inside the bubble of their workplaces, residences and campus spaces – as well as encourages others to walk or ride through the area as quickly as possible.

## **The Case for a Strategic Revitalization Plan**

**Much of Market Center is in a state of physical disrepair, hindering its ability to live up to its full potential.** However, as other communities across the country – from Over the Rhine in Cincinnati to Market East/Reading Terminal – have shown, a combination of vision, leadership and community engagement, coupled with a shared vision, goals, strategy and resources, can revitalize Market Center. Moreover, Market Center’s revitalization can help Baltimore City as a whole. Done correctly, Market Center has the unique capacity to absorb significant residential, business, and job growth in a location readily accessible to all Baltimoreans, without residential or business displacement.

The time is right for a community-driven strategic revitalization plan (“SRP”) in Market Center because:

- Grassroots, inclusive, incremental revitalization is the most sustainable, equitable approach to economic development, and Baltimore City needs this, particularly in a neighborhood with such transformative potential;
- Market Center’s historically low residential population is growing;<sup>1</sup>
- Key organizations, including MCMA, MCCDC, CCRA, and Bromo, are coalescing around a set of revitalization principles which must be solidified, expanded upon with broader input, and articulated in an official document;
- The Baltimore Development Corporation is selling many city-owned properties in Market Center, meaning that a lot of properties are “in play”;
- The Baltimore Public Markets Corporation (BPMC) is planning to redevelop Lexington Market and its investors need confidence that Market Center will support the investment;
- Market Center will benefit from a revived Lexington Market, but the likelihood of widespread, sustained benefits requires more than a new market building – it requires a greater commitment from the public, nonprofit, and private sectors to better maintain infrastructure and the public realm, ensure public safety, and renovate and reuse vacant buildings near Lexington Market;
- If the UniverCity Partnership, which operated under the auspices of mayors Catherine Pugh and Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, continues under Mayor Bernard C. “Jack” Young, it would benefit from a plan which can help guide action steps;

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<sup>1</sup> Census Block Group 245100401002, which largely overlaps with Market Center, had a population of 1,331 in 2000 and 2,315 in 2010. MCMA began tracking population within the exact boundaries of Market Center in 2017, and between 2017 and 2019, the population grew from 2,865 to 2,979.

- Funds from the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative (“BRNI”), a key state revitalization funding program, are only available to communities with approved SRPs;
- The Baltimore City Planning Commission now has a policy and procedures that can lead to formal recognition of community-managed planning efforts, which in turn may help guide city decision-making;<sup>2</sup>
- Market Center has ongoing challenges of a significant stock of vacant, underused, and derelict buildings, long-term disinvestment, and associated social ills despite its excellent location, transit accessibility, walkability, and impressive stock of historic buildings;
- Market Center’s arts and cultural community is expanding and diversifying beyond the major attractions of the Hippodrome and Everyman theatres to include more DIY arts spaces;
- The inaugural Charm City Night Market, held in September 2018, proved that with an enticing mix of food, culture, and entertainment, large numbers of people will come to Market Center; and
- Market Center stakeholders need to be prepared to address spillover effects from proposed large-scale developments in the vicinity, including State Center and the former Social Security Administration complex, as well as the ongoing UMB Biopark.

To ensure MCMA & MCCDC would not be duplicating the work of other stakeholders in the area, MCMA staff asked DPOB and Bromo representatives whether they knew of an existing plan that could function as the official SRP for BRNI purposes. They indicated this was not the case and would support efforts to initiate and coordinate development of an SRP.

## **The Planning Process**

To begin this process, MCMA and MCCDC committed human and financial resources to develop the Market Center SRP, aiming to leveraging these resources to attract additional funding to hire a professional facilitator. Unfortunately, they were unable to secure additional funds. Nevertheless, they proceeded, using funds on hand to hire a professional facilitator, with the goal of being able to submit Phase I of the SRP to the State Department of Housing and Community Development in the spring of 2019. They intend to follow up with additional outreach and further consideration of key concepts beginning in July 2019, which will result in Phase II of the SRP.

During the summer of 2018, MCCDC staff and volunteers met with key Market Center institutional and civic stakeholders to secure their input and buy-in for the concept and process. These meetings continued into the fall.

Though the area has been the subject of prior plans and studies, they were not comprehensive in scope. Moreover, the area and its stakeholders are changing, and there is renewed energy and excitement about Market Center’s potential and place in the fabric of Baltimore during the

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<sup>2</sup> <https://pc.baltimorecity.gov/january-11-2018>



21<sup>st</sup> century. Nevertheless, staff and volunteers reviewed the following existing plans to identify still relevant key themes and points:

- [BUILDing a Better Howard Street](#), 2018
- [UMB Facilities Master Plan](#), 2016
- [MCMA Marketing Plan](#), 2016
- [Bromo Vision Plan](#), 2015
- [Lexington Market Master Plan](#), Phase 2, 2015
- [Lexington Market Master Plan](#), Phase 1, 2014
- [Baltimore's Westside Parking Study](#), 2012
- Downtown Baltimore Strategic Plan, 2011
- [A Strategic Plan to Enhance the Howard Street Corridor](#), 2010
- [Downtown Baltimore Open Space Plan](#), 2010
- [The Westside: A Vision for the Westside Neighborhood](#), 2010
- Westside Strategic Plan, 2000

In January 2019, MCCDC created an advisory group, comprised of representatives of civic, institutional, and nonprofit partners to help guide the process and provide substantive input. Though specific entities were invited to send representatives, MCCDC also made it clear in the press release and on the website that anyone who was interested in participating on the advisory group would be welcome. For a full list of advisory group participants, see Appendix A.

Workgroups were also formed, designed to focus on the following substantive topics: housing, transportation, economy, environment, quality of life and community engagement. The workgroups were open to anyone with an interest in the topic, though an extra effort was made to recruit people with specific knowledge of relevant information. For example, representation from the Baltimore City Department of Transportation ("BC DOT") and Maryland Transit Administration ("MDOT MTA") was sought for the transportation workgroup.

In addition to the advisory group and workgroups, a series of focus groups was convened to give residents, workers, business owners, developers and property owners, artists, students and other Market Center stakeholders an opportunity to share their perspectives and provide input to the committees and advisory group.

The meetings and focus groups attracted over 130 participants (90+ unique individuals):

- Arts & Arts/Cultural Organizations Focus Group, March 21
- Advisory Committee Meeting, March 25
- Property Owner/Developer Focus Group, March 26
- Business Focus Group, March 28
- Transportation Workgroup, April 1
- Residents Focus Group, April 2
- Employees Focus Group, April 3
- Economy Workgroup, April 8
- Housing Workgroup, April 9

- Quality of Life & Environment Workgroup, April 11
- Public Meeting, April 15
- Advisory Committee Meeting, April 22
- Community Engagement Workgroup, May 9
- Advisory Committee Meeting, May 23

Despite efforts to include and hear from a large and diverse group of people, some stakeholder groups were missing or underrepresented in the process, such as:

- Current customers of Market Center businesses, including Lexington Market and Mount Vernon Marketplace;
- Homeless and other unaffiliated people who spend time in Market Center;
- Residents, employees, and students (underrepresented);
- Youth and young adults; and
- Public safety organizations and advocates.

The planning process will continue beyond submission of the Phase I, with additional outreach, expanded workgroups and deeper exploration of ideas not fully examined during this phase, so all Market Center stakeholders believe the final Market Center SRP reflects their input. This is critical to ongoing vocal, enthusiastic support for and commitments to implementation.

## Current Community Conditions

### Housing

Historically, Market Center served as more of a commercial center than residential neighborhood, but that is changing. Market Center is experiencing a period of sustained residential growth, fueled in part by increasing demand for living spaces with access to urban amenities, which is especially strong among young professionals, empty-nesters and recent graduates.

A 2018 report commissioned by the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, *Downtown Baltimore Outlook 2020: Analysis of Market Rate Housing Demand in Downtown Baltimore Neighborhoods and Adjacent Areas*, analyzed demand for new market rate housing in the Downtown Baltimore Study Area, defined as the one-mile radius from the Pratt and Light Street intersection. While this area is much larger than just Market Center, information gleaned from the analysis is nevertheless informative. The report found that there are 8,335 households of potential renters and buyers of new multi-family and single-family attached residential units in the Downtown Baltimore Study Area each year over the next five years. Assuming the Downtown Baltimore Study Area can capture 20% of the renters and 7.5-10% of the buyers, it should be able to support up to 1,339 new market-rate housing units per year for the next 2-3 years, and 1,405 per year in years 3-5. This same study found that the potential market consists of 69% younger singles and couples, 20.5% empty nesters and retirees, and 10.3% traditional and non-traditional families.

The majority (95%) of Market Center's housing stock is multifamily rental. There are at least 1,854 rental units – with an additional count in smaller buildings.<sup>3</sup> There are currently eighty owner-occupied housing units, which is approximately 4.24% of the total.

Of the 1,854 existing apartments identified by MCCDC, 200 (11%) are affordable units for seniors and individuals with disabilities, 147 are restricted to students (9%), and 132 (7%) are income restricted. The remainder are unrestricted. Note that this figure does not include units in Paca House, which provides housing for veterans, because it is currently undergoing an expansion and reconfiguration of units.

Within Market Center, 252 new units are currently under construction. Of these, 72 (29%) are income restricted, 12 (5%) are for artists, 92 (37%) are veteran-preferred units in Paca House, and 61 are market rate. There are no senior or student housing projects currently underway within Market Center.

Developers have plans to create an additional 661 apartments in Market Center in the next two to three years. Of these, approximately 48 (7.2%) will be artist units, 20 (3%) will be affordable

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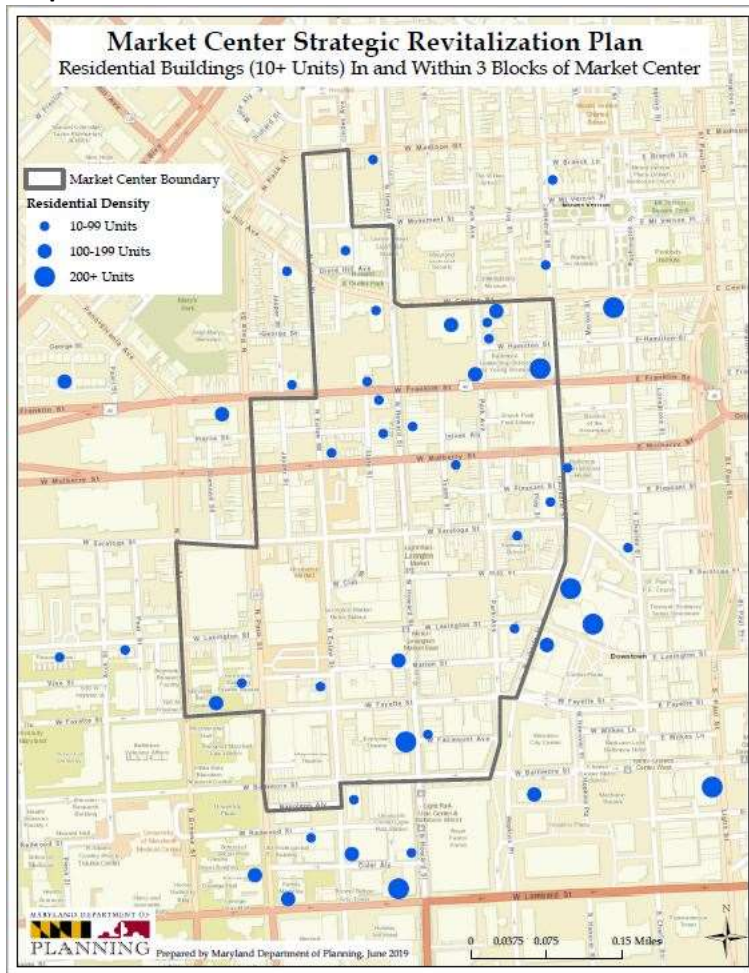
<sup>3</sup> Claritas estimated 1,801 occupied rental and 80 ownership units within Market Center. The other figure, 1,854 rental units is an actual count of units, regardless of occupancy status, in apartment buildings with ten or more units.

to households earning 50-60% less than the area median income, and 213 (33.7%) will be for students.

For a full list of existing apartment buildings, apartments under construction, and apartments planned, see Appendix B.

Map 3 illustrates the locations of residential buildings (with 10+ units) in and within 3 blocks of Market Center, to help people visualize concentrations of residential density. The highest concentrations are in the northeast corner of Market Center and just outside the southeast boundary.

**Map 3**



In May 2019, the average length of residence is 5.32 years for renter-occupied units and 8.25 years for owner-occupied units. This represents a decline in duration of residency since 2017, when the average duration of renter-occupied and owner-occupied units, respectively, was 6 and 11.<sup>4</sup>

In 2019, MCMA conducted a survey of Market Center residents and asked residents to identify the three qualities most important to them when choosing where to live. Personal safety, convenience/proximity to work, school, and family were the two most frequently cited criteria, followed by presence of unique business and arts and entertainment venues and low prices/good value (tied). For a summary of survey questions and answers, see Appendix C.

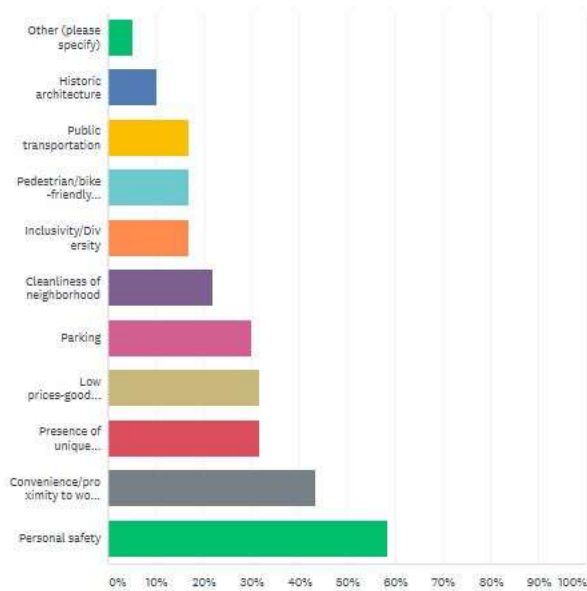
<sup>4</sup> Source: *EnviroNics Analytics | Claritas, 2019, courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore*

## Chart 1

Customize Save as

When choosing where to live, what three qualities are most important to you?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 0



Source: Market Center Merchants Association Residents Survey, Winter 2019

### Focus Group Input

As noted previously, MCCDC convened five focus groups: artists and arts and culture organizations; business owners; developers and property owners; residents; and employees and students. Each focus group had the opportunity to discuss each of the topic areas (housing, economy, etc.).

With respect to housing, during the artists and arts and cultural organizations focus group, participants stated that artists need safe, inexpensive places to live, work, collaborate and share. To truly function as an arts district, this is essential.

Market Center's stock of large vacant buildings are a detriment, because they make people feel uneasy about living and investing in the community. They also present an opportunity to provide more housing, though they are expensive and complicated to renovate and reuse. Participants agreed that it would be nice to identify those buildings which must be saved, those which must be demolished because of their advanced state of deterioration, and those which can/should be renovated, and then work proactively to achieve this. This was done in 1999, when the Maryland Historical Trust and City of Baltimore entered into a Memorandum of Agreement regarding historic preservation in this area. Though the MOA was terminated in 2017, the map still provides insight into preservation priorities at that time. See Appendix D for maps.

Focus group participants also spoke a lot about Market Center is *as a place to live*, in addition to housing as a product. Participants stressed that Market Center should be thought of – and function – as a cohesive neighborhood and a place where people live, rather than an agglomeration of institutions and businesses. They want the community to be more welcoming and neighborly. Participating residents said that they love and care about the neighborhood, love living downtown, and appreciate the convenience. They are sick of trash and poor lighting, and they think that Market Center needs more curb appeal, greenery, safe communal gathering spaces, activities and events, a grocery store, a better pedestrian environment, and a better engagement strategy with the police.

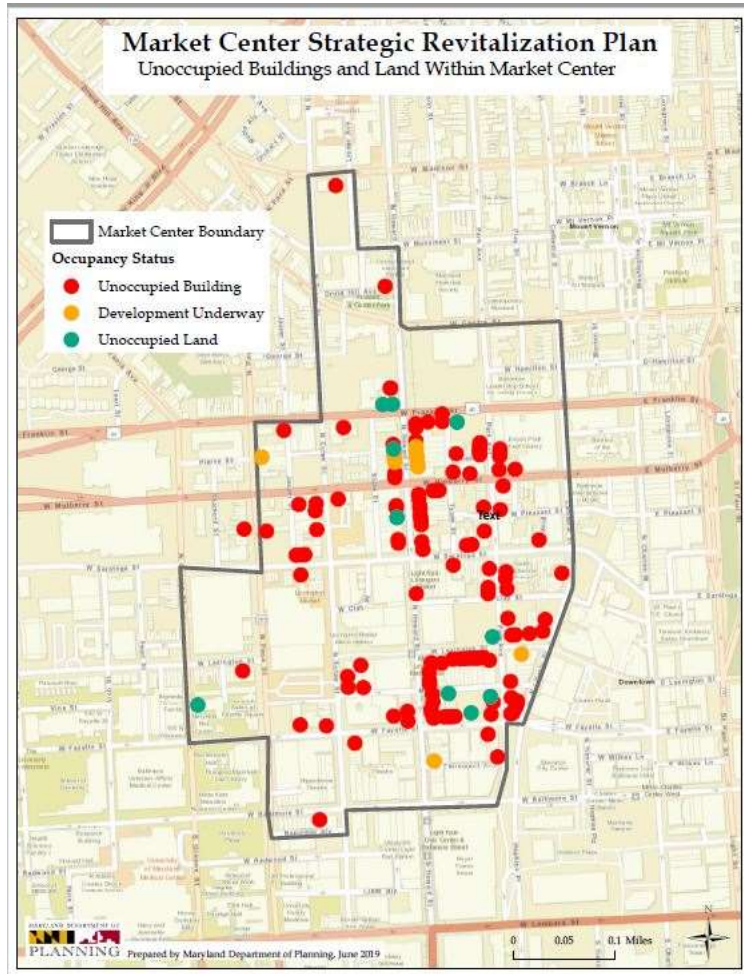
<b>Table 1: Housing SWOT Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
The group did not reach consensus regarding Market Center’s current level of housing affordability. Some people feel that Market Center has more affordable price points than other parts of downtown, while others feel that Market Center is not affordable.	
Transportation Hub – good for residents; bicyclist & runner-friendly	Vacant buildings are eyesores that detract from positive development efforts
Decent # of new/renovated multifamily housing units in the last 15 years	Lack of amenities for residents, including grocery options
Strong diversity of residents, artistic community	Poor condition of public realm/physical appearance (including trash)
Mostly intact historic fabric	Crime/safety/perception of crime
Artists and creatives live here and create vibrancy; creativity is welcome	Lack of placemaking
Available live/work options	Absentee landlords
Market Center is a unique place	Limited parking
Minority business community	Trash/urine
10-minute walk to harbor	
Diverse food hub	Lexington Market
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Growing markets: millennials, singles, couples without children, empty nesters	Lack of parking for current residents – fears it could grow worse
Demand for more university/student housing	Concerns about noise from at least one late night venue – might deter residents
Create more affordable housing and live/work spaces for artists and creatives	Established retailers leaving – to some extent, part of national trends
Potential to invest in vacant property	Awareness that MC is not just a business district but also a neighborhood
Increased UMB focus on revitalization and placemaking	Lack of affordable housing; commercial development; big business
There are a lot of potential sites for housing	Perception that MC is just for transplants and not for life-long or long-term residents
Lexington Market redevelopment	Addict population

Historic buildings	People do not want to live in a construction zone, and there is a lot of development activity in the area
Naturally occurring transit-oriented development on Howard Street and walkable access radiating out from light rail.	Lack of resident/business involvement in the revitalization process
Strong diversity of residents and mix with University of Maryland, Baltimore students, faculty, and staff, UMMS, VA, etc.	Poor communication with residents about what is happening in area
Existing green spaces within and near Market Center can be enhanced and help to attract residents.	

**Economy**

As noted in the introduction, Market Center once served as the Baltimore region’s premier shopping destination, but that began to change in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century, as businesses relocated to the suburbs. Public policy exacerbated the losses in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century and into the early 21<sup>st</sup>, when the city purchased properties and relocated existing businesses with the goal of assembling land for a large mixed-used development project, anchored by one or more big box stores. This project never materialized, and most of the buildings remain vacant.

**Map 4**



The community has yet to rebound from that exodus. More than 120 buildings in Market Center are currently unoccupied, and ten parcels of land are vacant. Eleven additional buildings are unoccupied but undergoing redevelopment. Map 4 illustrates the location of unoccupied buildings and land in Market Center. The unoccupied buildings are both evidence of a struggling business district and a factor in the ongoing difficulties of attracting businesses and customers. The prevalence of vacant buildings creates significant gaps in Market Center’s fabric and contributes to the current perception of the area as an uninviting place to shop and spend time in – they are a deterrent to customers, business owners, and investors.

**Businesses & Retail Demand**

Within Market Center’s 27-block footprint, there are 734 businesses and 7,806 employees according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Of the businesses, 118 are in health care and social assistance, 104 in retail; 80 in other services; and 77 in accommodations and food services.

MCMA also tracks the number and type of businesses, but its inventory is limited to the ground floor of buildings. This focus stems from Market Center’s status as a City of Baltimore Retail Business District License (RBDL) area.<sup>5</sup> As of April 2019, there were 283 ground floor businesses in Market Center, which includes businesses in Lexington Market and Mount Vernon Marketplace. This is a decline from approximately 300 in 2018. Table 2 shows the breakdown of Market Center’s 283 ground floor businesses in April 2019:

<sup>5</sup> Market Center is one of ten designated Retail Business District License (RBDL) areas in the City of Baltimore, which are geographic areas established by City Council Ordinance. Within the RBDL, businesses are assessed an annual fee. The City bills the businesses, collects the revenue, and disburses 97% of the proceeds to the local business association to use to support and improve the business district. In the case of Market Center, only businesses occupying the ground floor are assessed the fee, which is 20 cents per square foot.



Retail	39%
Food & Beverage	30%
Service	26%
Arts & Entertainment	2%
Other	2%

Source: Market Center Merchants Association Business Inventory, April 2019

The most common types of ground floor businesses are:

General Goods	24	Of these, 14+ specialize in fragrance/oils.
Carry-Out	51	This includes food hall stalls, and there is a great variety in types of food and prices.
Convenience Stores	19	
Restaurants – Counter Service	14	
Hair Salons	12	
Barber Shops	11	
Cell Phone Stores	10	
Jewelry Stores	7	

Source: Market Center Merchants Association Business Inventory, April 2019

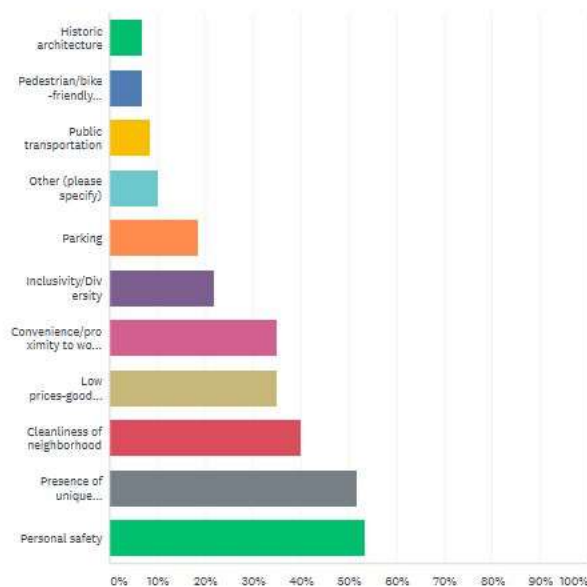
Focus group participants and respondents to the 2019 residential survey indicated that Market Center has enough general goods stores, convenience stores, hair salons/barber shops, cell phone stores, and jewelry stores. The community wants a greater diversity of businesses, whether businesses not currently found in Market Center, or businesses that otherwise distinguish themselves from existing offerings (for example, a hair salon that offers a unique service, or a different type of experience).

In the 2019 survey of Market Center residents, variety and quality of offerings were the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> most frequently cited reasons residents provided for not shopping or dining in Market Center more frequently (after safety). In this same survey, residents were asked what three qualities were most important to them when deciding where to shop and dine. Personal safety, presence of unique businesses and arts and entertainment venues, and cleanliness of neighborhood were the top three most frequently cited factors.

## Chart 2

When choosing where to shop/dine, what three qualities are most important to you?

Answered: 60 Skipped: 0



Source: Market Center Merchants Association Residents Survey, Winter 2019

Market Center boasts many ethnic dining and shopping alternatives, as well as an ethnically and racially diverse group of business owners. Many participants in the planning process have noted this as an asset upon which to build. In the 2019 Residents Survey, 55% of respondents rated the food offerings in Market Center as good, very good, or excellent. This, too, is something participants want to build upon.

It should also be noted that there is another informal economic element in Market Center, as the buying and selling of illegal drugs often takes place in the Eutaw/Lexington/Saratoga Street area close to Lexington Market. This activity is a barrier to customer attraction.

Market Center can benefit from its location adjacent to the central business district, amidst many of Baltimore's strongest institutions and attractions, though the benefits have largely gone untapped. Tens of thousands of potential Market Center customers live, work or attend school, sports & cultural events and conventions within and within one mile of Market Center boundaries. Within a one-mile radius of 300 N. Howard Street at the corner of Saratoga Street, there are 8,046 businesses, 117,578 employees, and 48,105 residents.<sup>6</sup> More than 6,700 students are enrolled at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, which is adjacent to Market Center's western boundary. Thousands of people attend events at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, M&T Bank Stadium, the Royal Farms Arena, the Hippodrome and Everyman Theatres, and more.

<sup>6</sup> Source: Environics Analytics | Claritas, 2019, courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

These employees, students, and visitors represent a largely untapped customer base. Through the planning process, a residents’ survey, and unofficial channels, people have repeatedly emphasized that concerns about safety, conditions on the streets and vacant buildings currently deter them – even those who live and work in Market Center – from patronizing businesses in Market Center, contributing to lower than expected retail business. In the 2019 Residential Survey, safety concerns were the number one reason respondents said they do not dine or shop in Market Center more frequently, followed by variety and quality of offerings, as noted above.

Data provided to Market Center by DPOB can help illuminate opportunities for growth in the retail sector. Downtown Partnership provided figures for the potential for growth by retail store type, both within Market Center and within a one-mile radius of Howard and Saratoga. The following table summarizes the data for anticipated growth by retail store type between 2019 and 2024, including each of the major categories of stores and any subcategory with anticipated growth greater than \$5 million, within the 1-mile radius of 300 N. Howard:

<b>Table 4: Retail Stores Demand Growth, 2019-2024 Within the 1-Mile Radius of 300 N. Howard</b>		
<i>Category</i>	<i>Growth in Demand</i>	
	1-mile radius from 300 N. Howard	MCMA Boundaries
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$29.6m	\$2.4m
Automobile Dealers	\$26.3m	\$2.1m
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	\$1.8m	\$152k
Electronics & Appliance Stores	\$1.7m	\$144k
Building Material & Garden Equipment & Supplies Dealers	\$5.6m	\$383k
Food & Beverage Stores	\$11.4m	\$991k
Grocery Stores	\$9.7m	\$850k
Health & Personal Care Stores	\$6.7 million	\$555k
Pharmacies & Drug Stores	\$5.6m	\$460k
Gasoline Stations	\$10m	\$863k
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$2.5m	\$226k
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument, & Books	\$1.21m	\$103k
General Merchandise Stores	\$10.7m	\$919k
Other General Merchandise Stores (not dept. stores)	\$8.67m	\$742k
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	\$1.7m	\$137k
Non-Store Retailers	\$10.7m	\$893k
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	\$9.5m	\$791k
Food Service & Drinking Places	\$16.3m	\$1.38m
Restaurants & Other Eating Places	\$14.1m	\$1.19m

Source: Environics Analytics | U.S. Census Bureau | U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

This data shows more growth in the Food Service & Drinking Places than in all categories other than Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers. Market Center is not likely to attract Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers, in part because these types of businesses mostly locate on major arterial roads, but also because Baltimore City’s zoning code only permits motor vehicle dealerships with fully enclosed structures in the C5 zone (which is Market Center’s zone). The retail gap analysis for Market Center, which compares the amount of money spent by residents in Market Center to the amount of money earned by businesses in Market Center at certain types of businesses, shows leakage of \$3,319,680 from full-service restaurants.<sup>7</sup> Together, this data appears to point to an opportunity to increase Food Service & Drinking Places, specifically full-service restaurants.

**Employment & Workforce Development**

As noted previously, 117,578 people work within one mile of 300 N. Howard, and 7,806 people work within the boundaries of Market Center. Table 5 shows the number of employees by industry in Market Center, with Public Administration claiming the greatest number.

NAICS Code	Industry	Number of Employees
92	Public Administration	2,408
61	Educational Services	926
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	726
44	Retail Trade	487
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	474
72	Accommodation and Food Services	468
23	Construction	381
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	351
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	336
99	Unassigned	302
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	210
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	170
51	Information	148
52	Finance and Insurance	118
42	Wholesale Trade	113
48	Transportation and Warehousing	100
31	Manufacturing	71
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	10
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	7

<sup>7</sup> Source: Retail Power, Environics Analytics | U.S. Census Bureau | U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics | InfoUSA, Courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

Source: Environics Analytics | InfoGroup USA, courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

Within Market Center, 64% of the population 16 and older is employed; 2% is unemployed; and 34% is not in the labor market. Health care practitioners/technicians are the most common occupation. Critically, the neighborhoods immediately west of Market Center and to the northeast along the Metro Subway line suffer from some of the most severe unemployment rates in the city (10.08+%).

Job growth in Market Center, which is more feasible than job growth in many neighborhoods – because of Market Center’s building stock, proximity to downtown, robust transit access, and access to many main roads – could be a game changer for these communities.



Source: The Reinvestment Fund, Policy Map, May 2019.

Data from 2015 show that 99.8% of the people who worked in Market Center lived outside of Market Center. Similarly, 98.1% of the people who lived in Market Center worked outside of Market Center. In 2015, only 19 people both lived and worked in Market Center. Of the people whose primary jobs were in Market Center, 55% lived within ten miles of Market Center. The greatest number of people (1,960) commuting from outside Market Center to primary jobs within Market Center commuted from Census tracts northeast of Market Center, followed by 1,590 commuters from Census tracts northwest of Market Center.<sup>8</sup>

There are several job training, workforce development, or co-working resources within or close to Market Center:

<sup>8</sup> Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2015), courtesy of the Baltimore Development Corporation

1. The Veterans Administration Annex on Fayette Street offers nursing education and recruitment.
2. University of Maryland, Baltimore, has a community engagement center which offers job readiness counseling, though that is located west of Martin Luther King, Jr., Boulevard.
3. The University of Maryland Medical System partners with UMB at its community engagement center for work readiness programs, and with other partners such as Baltimore City Community College and Center for Urban Families for technical skills training. Through these sources, UMMS recruits people for employment, with an emphasis on Certified Nursing Assistants, Patient Care Technicians, Medical Assistants, and clerical and service jobs. UMMS also partners with high schools to prepare students for jobs such as surgical technologists and phlebotomists.
4. The Enoch Pratt Free Library's Central Library is in Market Center, and its job and career center offers clinics, courses and materials on job hunting, resume writing, interviewing techniques, career planning, and occupations. Patrons can also use computers for job-related activities.
5. The Harbor Bank of Maryland Community Development Corporation operates the Joseph Haskins, Jr., Center for Community and Economic Development at 25 W. Fayette Street, just outside of Market Center. The Center offers low-cost office space for entrepreneurs, as well as access to technical assistance and other resources.
6. The Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED) outreach team visits Lexington Market periodically, as does the MOED mobile unit.

Despite these resources, many people who hang out in Market Center are still looking for work. Anecdotally, whenever volunteers are cleaning the streets or gardening, people ask about employment opportunities. There is still a need, but additional research is necessary to understand that need.

### *Focus Group Input*

Focus groups participants stated that Market Center needs stores that meet a variety of necessities and desires at different price points, and that stores should "sell things people recognize" (referring to brands). Participants are interested in expanding the international restaurant, business, and cultural scenes, and they would like more arts and entertainment venues. They want Market Center to feel and function more like an arts district.

Participants noted that stores should be open later and on weekends, both for the convenience of people who want to shop during these times, but also because of the impression that closed businesses give. One participant noted that when he sees store owners closing during daylight hours, it makes him think that there is something wrong and he should not be there for safety reasons.

With respect to safety, participants stated the perception and reality of crime in Market Center hurts businesses’ ability to attract patrons and deters employees from venturing beyond their place of employment for meals or to run errands.

Business owners also brought up the need to reassess on-street parking restrictions, such as the afternoon rush hour restrictions Park Avenue (which deter some customers from stopping on their way home from work) and the 24-hour restrictions on the 200 block of Eutaw Street.

Vacant storefronts are a challenge, and an opportunity to attract more retailers and capture the dollars that UMB students, faculty, and staff spend elsewhere. Participants also stated that the historic architecture and authentic feel of Market Center can/should enhance attractiveness to new businesses and investors.

There is also an interest in ensuring that artists of all types are welcomed as part of the Market Center economy – by ensuring that they have safe, affordable, permanent spaces to live, create, and share their work; connecting them with opportunities to own properties; connecting them with building and business owners to collaborate on projects; and connecting them with educational and mentoring opportunities to facilitate their transition into sustainable businesses (if they choose).

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Transit accessibility; transportation nexus	Vacant, underused, dilapidated building stock – sense of unease
Lots of hidden treasures	Sense of disorder, neglect
Lexington Market – community anchor	Street front experience; poor appearance of storefronts
Strong, growing downtown residential market (singles, childless couples, millennials, empty nesters) – good for business	Dirty conditions, trash
Captive audience, large daytime population (students, employees, UM)	Failing infrastructure
Proximity to Central Business District (walking distance); downtown location	Open air drug market; drug use; concentration of clinics
Close to Inner Harbor and other attractions – possibility of attracting visitors	Perception & reality of crime
Opportunity Zone and other incentives	Loitering
Affordability	High retail vacancies & limited market for retail
Increased UMB focus on revitalization and placemaking	High cost of everyday goods
Many of Baltimore’s primary tourist attractions, sports & entertainment venues, local shopping and ethnic dining options are within or walkable from Market Center	Lack of destination dining options

Historic architecture and authentic feel of Market Center enhance attractiveness to new businesses and investors	
Ethnic & racial diversity of business owners; many of whom desire to purchase property	
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Help artists makes connections for work and development opportunities	Established retailers closing, leaving
Concentrated support to help artists find housing, space, resources	Negative perceptions about Baltimore and Market Center
Catalytic redevelopment sites	Lack of incentives for tech employers
Connectivity to entertainment and attractions	Lack of trade schools, internships, apprenticeships
Coolness factor	Lack of job training/workforce/skills development programs
Growing downtown residential population	Poor track record of retaining artists after they graduate
Hub	UMMS Controversy – impact on future investment
Brand ambiguity	Brand ambiguity
Attract retail that is not dependent on density	
Opportunity to better match retail supply with demands of existing customers	

**Transportation**

There is no location in Baltimore with better access to public transportation than Market Center. It is one of only two locations in the city traversed by both the light rail and Metro subway lines – with only one block between the Lexington Market stops on both. Moreover, the light rail provides direct access to AMTRAK Northeast Corridor train service, MARC commuter rail and Bolt Bus service to New York at Penn Station as well as national and international air travel at BWI Airport.

Although service is often less reliable than the light rail and subway lines, the Maryland Transit Administration’s (MTA) Baltimore Link buses also serve Market Center, providing access to the area from many parts of Baltimore City and County. Baltimore and Fayette Streets are major east-west bus routes, served by the City Link Orange, Purple and Red Lines, with dedicated bus/bike lanes facilitating more reliable service. City Link Blue runs on Saratoga, and City Link Pink runs on Centre and Madison. Market Center is also served by five local link bus lines (51, 54, 73, 80, and 94), and two express link lines (120 and 150). The free Charm City Circulator Purple Route runs on Charles Street, one block east of Market Center, and its Orange Route runs on Lombard Street, one block south of Market Center.

Unfortunately, the inter-city Greyhound bus terminal which used to be in the heart of Market Center was relocated to a location adjacent to the Horseshoe Casino in South Baltimore. When



it was in Market Center on Fayette Street, passengers benefitted from greater connectivity to other transit modes, as well as the walkable location.

The light rail cars have been in service for nearly thirty years and are far from state-of-the-art. Many feel that their size and noise when traveling along Howard Street detract from Market Center's physical environment. In addition, the curve in some of the light rail tracks along Howard Street creates a confusing and dangerous situation for drivers and pedestrians.

Poor lighting and the poorly maintained environment around transit stops are a detriment to transit use and pedestrian perceptions of safety. This problem is not easily addressed due to jurisdictional and communication issues among the various government and private entities responsible for Market Center's transportation infrastructure and streetscape.

Market Center's street grid does create "good bones" for an easily navigable environment for pedestrians and bicycle riders. However, the conditions of Market Center – vacant buildings, poor lighting, deteriorating infrastructure, trash, and loitering – are a significant deterrent to pedestrians, bicyclists and other forms of micro-mobility.

Despite this, 40% of people who live in Market Center walk or bicycle to work, an increase from 2017, when 31% of people in Market Center walk or biked to work. The percentage of no-vehicle households has also increased between 2017 and 2019, from 39% to 42%. The percentage of people who live in Market Center and take public transit to work has declined from 21% to 17% between 2017 and 2019.<sup>9</sup>

### *Focus Group Input*

Focus group participants repeatedly stated that Market Center – despite having many of the necessary characteristics for a walkable community (scoring 98 on Walkscore.com) – is not pedestrian-friendly. Participants argued that Market Center needs a more welcoming and human-scale pedestrian environment, and that downtown is designed for automobiles above all else, making bicycling and walking more difficult. Specifically, people noted that street crossings are chaotic and poorly signaled, crosswalks are faded, or nonexistent, and sidewalks are broken. The intersection of Liberty, Park, and Fayette was identified as particularly problematic for pedestrians, with five lanes of traffic and uncoordinated signals. Market Center also needs more curb appeal to encourage pedestrian activity – participants want better lighting, more street cleaning, more greenery, and trees trimmed (so they don't block lights).

Participants noted that it is difficult to drive through Market Center because of the one-way streets, coupled with restrictions on turning due to the presence of light rail on Howard Street. Several people raised the possibility of transforming Park Avenue into a two-way street. One way to begin to transform Park Avenue would be to remove the rush hour parking restrictions.

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<sup>9</sup> Source: *Environics Analytics | Claritas, 2019, courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore*

One person suggested that Market Center brand itself as a “ditch your car” community and more directly embrace transit.

With respect to the bike lanes, we did hear some complaints that the bike lanes have reduced parking on Liberty/Cathedral and Centre Streets, and that they have backed up traffic on Centre Street. There are concerns that this may be a detriment to businesses in Mount Vernon Marketplace.

From a macro perspective, focus group participants said that they feel that the light rail only works to bring people into the city and does not really serve city residents; the subway is insufficient; the bus route changes have forced some people to take two buses instead of one to reach their destination; and that parking options are limited and expensive.

There was a discussion about the parking prohibition on both sides of the 200 block of N. Eutaw Street (between Lexington and Saratoga Streets). According to one participant, it makes the area look nicer and more orderly, but another noted that it hurts business in Lexington Market. People also expressed interest in revisiting on-street parking restrictions, particularly on Park Avenue and Franklin Street, to allow more on-street parking throughout the day.

<b>Table 7: Transportation SWOT Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
More transportation options here than elsewhere in the city.	Current conditions of streets and sidewalks. Not ADA Compliant. DOT does not have resources necessary to meet capital needs.
Connectivity – This is one of only two locations where Metro and LRT stops are within a block of each other.	Poor lighting hinders pedestrian activity and other forms of micro-mobility.
Connectivity – LRT provides connections to Amtrak & BWI.	Incomplete transit network.
Connectivity & Central Location – Multiple forms of transit provide connections to employment centers (UMB, UMMS, VA, downtown business district). Particularly valuable to people living in West and NW Baltimore.	Despite presence of multiple forms of transportation and bus lines, if you don’t know where you are going, you don’t know how to connect.
Presence of dense, transit-supportive land use.	Light rail not in a state of good repair. Cars are currently going through a mid-life overhaul – missed opportunity to purchase more inobtrusive vehicles.
Grid network of streets – good bones for multiple route options for multiple forms of transportation.	LRT hazards – weaving lane on Howard
	MTA will replace rails on Howard Street – missed opportunity to correct convoluted tracks.
	Bus stops attract a lot of people, which others view with apprehension.

Opportunities	Threats
<p>Capitalize on transit with high density/transit-oriented land use. The city can be more intentional about supporting transit-oriented development through policies, decision-making, incentives, and funding. Supportive land use can positively impact the use of alternative modes of transportation.</p>	<p>A lot of bus routes come downtown, but MTA has a limited number of places for layovers &amp; hubs.</p>
<p>BCDOT needs to explore options for expanding local transit and micro-transit services to help people access even more destinations via transit.</p>	<p>BCDOT does not have a formal role in state transit systems.</p>
<p>BCDOT pushing for more sustainable forms of transportation.</p>	<p>Confusion between DOT, DPW, BGE responsibilities for lighting – the public does not know who is responsible for maintaining or repairing streetlights. When people submit service requests to 311, the city routes the request to the responsible party, but slow response times often means that people still want to know which entity is responsible.</p>
<p>New demographic of people living in City Center – millennials and empty nesters. They WANT to use public transit.</p>	<p>Implementation of sustainable forms of transportation not happening throughout city (though the city’s proposed rules for dockless scooters will require equitable distribution of scooters).</p>
<p>City’s new complete streets policy will redefine typology. Retrofit our streets.</p>	
<p>City is transitioning to a permanent program for dockless scooters – opportunity to provide facilities.</p>	
<p>Lexington Market redevelopment creates the opportunity to re-connect the grid, especially a better east-west bicycle connection.</p>	
<p>There is interest in hosting a good, multimodal transit center in the area, to facilitate connections and transfers.</p>	

**Environment**

Market Center has very few public parks or communal gathering spaces within its boundaries except for two dog parks, Howard Dog Park and Liberty Dog Park. Howard Dog Park also includes a small patch of green space across Centre Street which is not specifically for dogs, but it is not well maintained or regularly used.

There are other public parks and plazas near Market Center:

1. University Square Park above the parking garage on the University of Maryland, Baltimore campus. UMMC and UMB host The University Farmers Market at the park on Tuesdays from May through November, and UMMC and UMB faculty, staff, and students use the park primarily during weekday lunch hours. It has the potential to be more well-used.
2. St. Mary's Park, a 6+ acre oasis in Seton Hill.
3. Center and Hopkins Plazas in Charles Center.
4. Mt. Vernon Square in the Mount Vernon neighborhood.

The area has some private green spaces adjacent to the Catholic Relief Services building (former Stewart's Department Store) on Lexington Street and the city-owned former Greyhound Bus Station site on Fayette Street. However, the property owners have fenced them off from the public and have not created an aesthetically pleasing or welcoming environment.

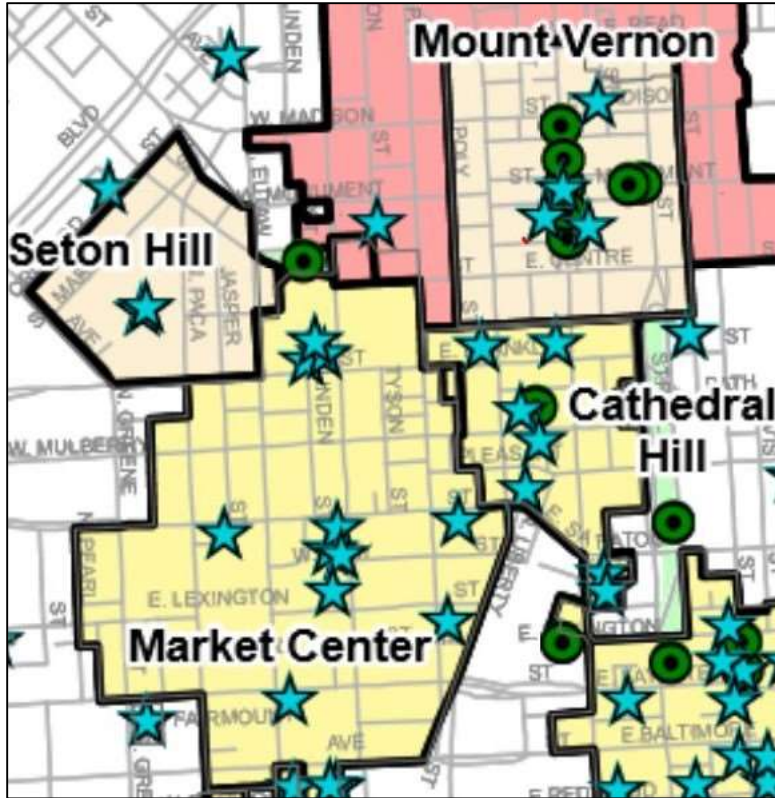
Market Center has limited tree canopy/greenery and no gardens. Flowerpots – some provided by DPOB and others privately owned – offer limited but welcome glimpses of greenery and flowers.

The area also has limited streetscaping, and what exists is poorly maintained. As an example, Howard Street has many empty tree wells, which are weed-strewn during the warmer months and lined with largely destroyed or missing courses of brick. The 200 block of N. Eutaw Street has deep tree wells and no tree grates, which is bad for trees and dangerous for pedestrians. Sidewalks on the 300 block of N. Paca Street are in particularly poor condition.

Though not always considered a traditional component of an environmental discussion, Market Center's environment is largely defined by its historic building stock. Market Center is Baltimore's historic retail core, which evolved from an early 19<sup>th</sup> Century neighborhood characterized by row homes to the region's premiere shopping district, with department stores, banks, and theatres. The site of Lexington Market dates to the 1750s, when John Eager Howard gave a plot of land on his estate to farmers and merchants to gather and outfit Conestoga wagons with things like horseshoes, pots and pans, and food, prior to the trip west. In 1782, Howard built a market shed and named it "Lexington" after the Revolutionary battle at Lexington and Concord. Market Center is also the site of Baltimore's Chinatown, where the first Chinese settlers in Baltimore and their descendants lived and worked for decades, beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The original Chinatown was centered on the 200 block of Marion Street, but it later moved to the 200-400 blocks of Park Avenue.

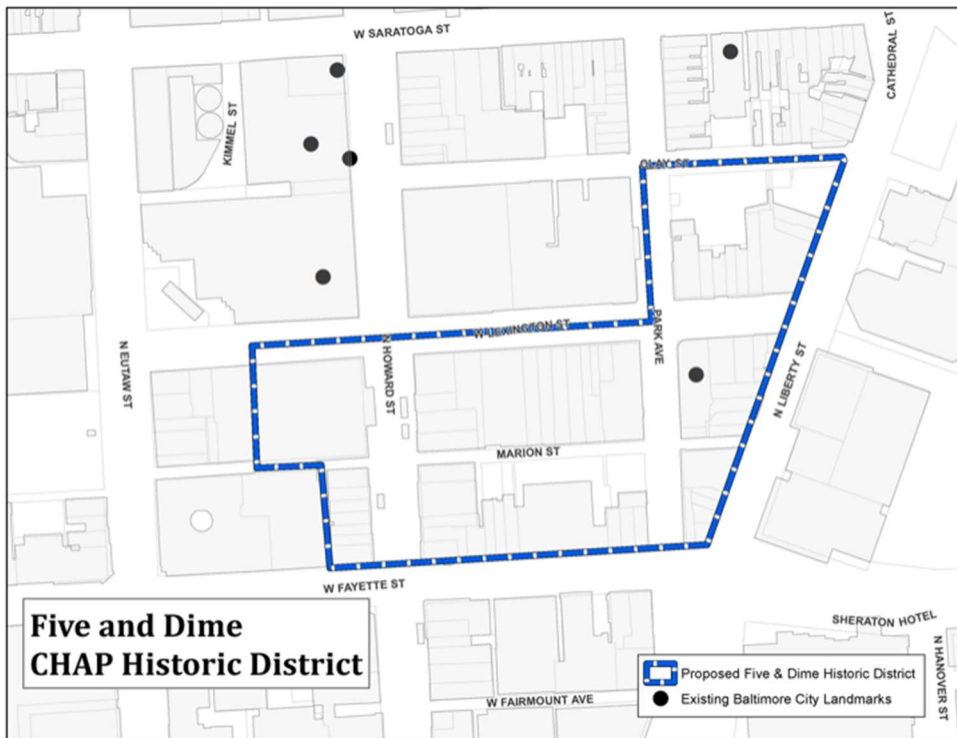
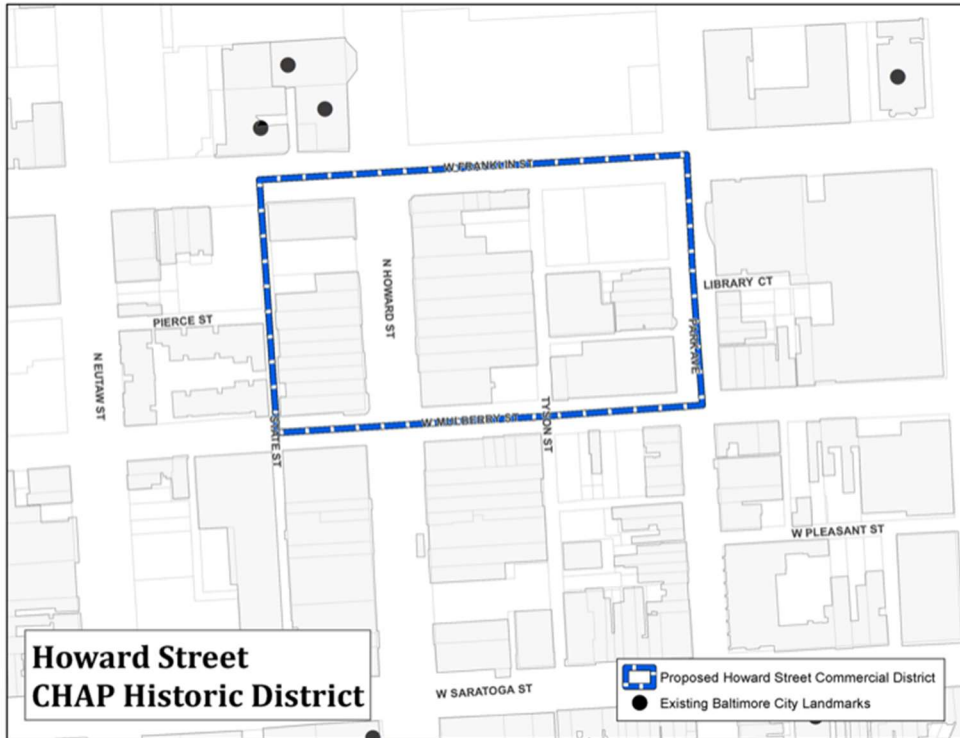
Market Center is touched by many historic districts: Market Center National Register Historic District, the Five and Dime Baltimore City Historic District, the Howard Street Baltimore City Historic District. Several blocks of Market Center are located within the Cathedral Hill National Register Historic District and the Mount Vernon Baltimore City/National Register Historic District.

#### **Map 6: Historic Districts In and Near Market Center**



Note: Map 6 is a screen shot from the City of Baltimore’s website, which does not yet include the two most recent historic district designations: Howard Street and Five and Dime. Maps 7 and 8 depict their boundaries.

Maps 7 and 8: Howard Street and Five and Dime Historic Districts



*Focus Group Input*

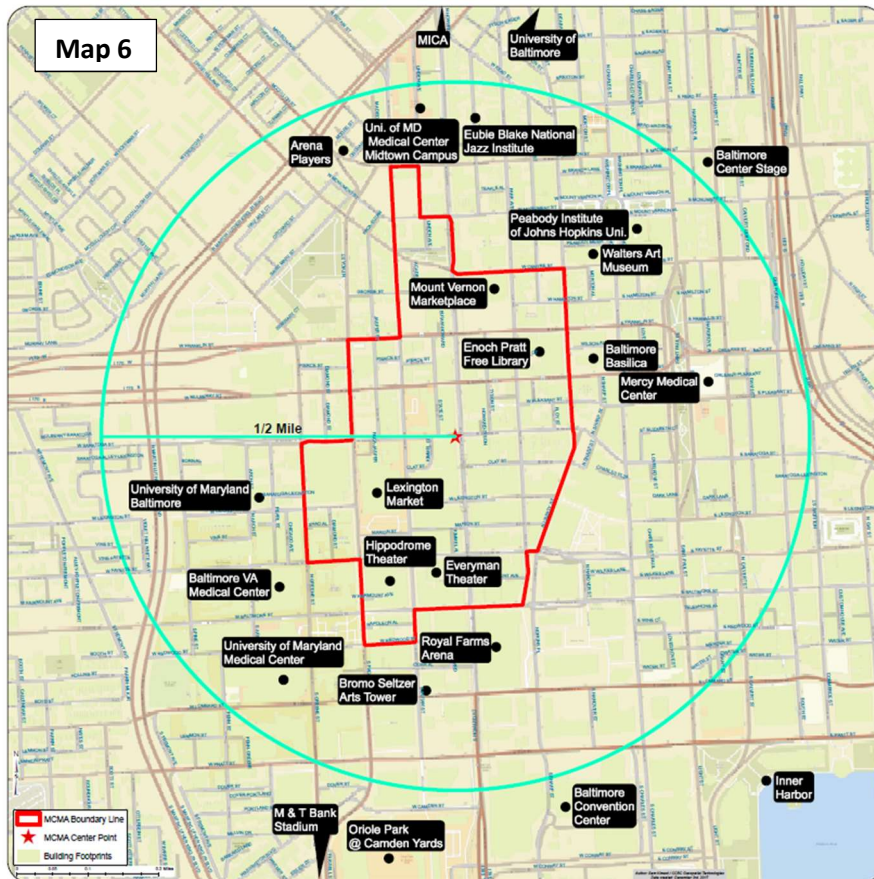
Focus group participants stated that Market Center needs “safe communal spaces” such as coffee shops with more seating, public gardens, useable green spaces, and event space. Participants in the residential focus group specifically stressed that they would like Market Center to have public open space that people naturally walk through, on their way from one place to another, rather than a park one must specifically set out to visit. They want public spaces that are integral to the fabric of the street network.

The prevalence of things like broken sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and streetlights, graffiti, faded cross walks and street markings, broken windows, and dilapidated buildings make people feel like no one cares. These conditions make it seem acceptable to litter or engage in illegal dumping. Participants suggested that if the city fixed the broken infrastructure and improved the conditions of the buildings it owns, individuals would be less likely to litter.

Focus group participants expressed support for the historic buildings but stressed that they want the buildings to be occupied and used. The Environmental Workgroup felt strongly that the historic fabric is an important component of Market Center.

<b>Table 8: Environment SWOT Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
MC has wonderful buildings unmatched anywhere in the city.	Lack of public open space, parks, green space
There is a lot of history and potential here.	No linkages between what little open space exists
Nice architecture	Trash, Grime
	Broken water lines, potholes, broken sidewalks
	There are few parks, placing greater importance on streets and sidewalks to serve as vital open space elements.
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Vacant buildings and lots	Many of the older buildings need careful remediation due to hazardous materials and environmental conditions

## Quality of Life



Market Center is rich in amenities, such as live theatre venues and multipurpose arts spaces, attractive historic architecture, and transit, and it boasts unique assets such as the main branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. Market Center benefits from nearby assets, too, such as the University of Maryland, Baltimore, multiple hospitals, and arts and entertainment venues (see Map 6). There are several houses of worship of various denominations within and near Market Center.

However, Market Center also lacks key community amenities, such as safe communal gathering spaces (both indoors and outdoors), recreational opportunities and healthy food resources. There is no full-service grocery store in Market Center, and while some Lexington Market merchants carry produce, meat, poultry, and fish, both the selection and hours are limited.

Public safety/comfort is another key factor in a community's quality of life. The amount of loitering and other disorderly behavior, drug dealing and use, trash, grime and graffiti, poorly maintained infrastructure, and vacant buildings and storefronts all contribute to a sense of unease throughout much of Market Center. Concerns about public safety are common. Whether the threat is real or perceived, the impact is undeniable, because people avoid walking through Market Center due to these concerns.

In a 2019 survey of Market Center residents, safety concerns were the most frequently cited reason for not shopping or dining in Market Center more frequently. In this same survey, 66.7% of respondents rated Market Center Fair or Poor on safety and cleanliness.



In addition to the Baltimore Police Department, the following entities have a security presence in parts of Market Center: Lexington Market, UMB, Maryland Transit Administration, Maryland Department of General Services (in buildings occupied by state agencies), and DPOB. DPOB also sometimes contracts with private security companies to further supplement their own public safety guides as funding allows. Despite the existence of multiple entities whose mission is at least in part to keep Market Center safe, safety concerns are among the most frequently cited frustrations with Market Center.

MCMA encourages law enforcement entities and security teams to coordinate as much as possible to make the most efficient use of resources, and it also encourages business owners to take steps to make their businesses, employees, and customers less susceptible to larceny, shoplifting and assaults. DPOB hosts monthly security coalition meetings for the stakeholders within its footprint, which includes Market Center, for the purpose of sharing information and discussing common concerns.

Most Market Center stakeholders recognize that additional police presence is not feasible or the only way to address concerns about public safety. Recommendations for improving public safety also include transforming vacant into occupied buildings, eliminating trash and graffiti, enhancing lighting, hosting events and activities (such as Bike Party), and addressing the underlying factors which contribute to people engaging in criminal activity (such as lack of opportunity).

Recognizing the pervasiveness of drug activity in Market Center and acknowledging that drug use is a public health crisis, the City of Baltimore selected Market Center as the pilot location for its Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program (LEAD), which began in 2017. The LEAD program allows public safety officials to work with behavioral health providers by diverting low-level drug offenders to treatment and support services, rather than into the legal system. To date, more than 250 individuals have been referred to the program, and there are 67 active participants. The program does have a positive impact on the people it helps, but it is harder to measure the impact it has had on the community. Drug dealing and abuse is still prevalent on the streets and alleys of Market Center.

#### *Focus Group Input*

Focus group participants expressed concerns about public safety, persistent drug activity, the possibility of getting contact highs, panhandling, loitering, homelessness, litter, poor lighting, and poor pedestrian conditions. They like the convenience of Market Center, value its history and architecture, and need/appreciate the transit access. They want more safe communal gathering spaces (inside and outside), as well as a grocery store.

Security concerns impact how people spend their time. Some people who work in Market Center never venture outside of their office to run errands or go to lunch. Others map their route based on where they feel comfortable walking. People wonder what else is “allowed to just go on,” given the prevalence and visibility of drug dealing and use. Even if the concerns

about public safety are overstated, as one person feels, it is still necessary to solve the problem of the perception and reality of crime.

One group noted that Market Center needs a better engagement strategy with police, citing the fact that in other communities, officers attend community meetings. Most participants acknowledged, however, that police presence alone will not solve concerns about public safety. They understand that societal issues contribute to criminal activity and drug use, and that security concerns are citywide. Therefore, in addition to continuing to advocate for more effective police, Market Center stakeholders recognize that they can take other actions to address public safety concerns, such as increasing the number of people on the street to reduce feelings of insecurity, improving lighting, and keeping the area cleaner.

<b>Table 9: Quality of Life SWOT Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Location	Food dessert/lack of food resources
Walkability	Overpriced everyday items
Easily accessible; transit hub	Lack of safe meeting space (Senior Center/Community Center)
Certain amenities	Aesthetics & appearance
Diverse population	Poor lighting
Unique urban character	Broken infrastructure
	Feels unsafe
	Drug market
	Noise pollution
	Lack of affordable parking
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
High traffic area with hospitals, etc.	Crime, drug activity, and the perception of same
Vacant buildings/lots (blank slate for new development, amenities, parks)	Homelessness
Space available for shops	Security concerns are city-wide
History, historic architecture	Loitering
Overlapping major stakeholders (opportunity to build collaboration)	

## **Community Engagement**

Currently, people who live, work, or own properties or businesses in, or otherwise have a stake in Market Center have limited opportunities for engagement. This may be a byproduct of the fact that until recently, Market Center was viewed simply as an amalgamation of businesses and institutions, rather than a community with potentially strong constituencies.

Multiple nonprofit organizations and institutions work in Market Center, including the Bromo Arts & Entertainment District, City Center Residents Association, Downtown Partnership of

Baltimore, Market Center Community Development Corporation, Market Center Merchants Association, and University of Maryland (immediately adjacent to Market Center).

The organizations offer the following opportunities for engagement:

1. Market Center Community Development Corporation (MCCDC)

MCCDC was established in November 2017, and its mission is to make investments to catalyze a healthy, dynamic, and diverse community in Market Center, encourage community development, and galvanize the renaissance of Baltimore’s historic retail core. MCCDC does not currently have a structure for public participation and community engagement but anticipates helping to fulfill the need for ongoing, active community engagement as defined by this plan.

2. Market Center Merchants Association (MCMA)

MCMA was formed in 1983 and operated as an all-volunteer organization until September 2016, when it hired its first and only staff person. MCMA’s mission is to



promote commerce, retain and attract business, and enhance the customer and residential experience. It has three committees on which the public is welcome to participate: Safe & Clean, Community Development, and Marketing. The meetings are held during the work day, which may work for some business and property owners, and other stakeholders, but is not likely to work well for residents.

MCMA hosts monthly Market Center mingles from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., which aim to bring a wide variety of stakeholders together in a social atmosphere, foster the formation of new relationships, and encourage participants to craft their own agenda and work together to achieve their goals, with administrative and financial support from MCMA.

3. City Center Residents Association (CCRA)

Formed in 2016, CCRA serves and supports the City Center neighborhood by building community among residents, engaging all stakeholders, advocating for residents, and

promoting Baltimore's City Center as a great place to live and locate businesses. CCRA maintains an informative website and is active on social media.

CCRA has six committees on which residents are welcome to participate: Aesthetics & Infrastructure, Safety & Security, Communications & Social Media, Finance & Fundraising, Retail & Development, and Events & Community Service. They hold monthly meetings.



CCRA holds monthly community clean-ups (trash collection, mulching, planting, etc. depending on the season), typically the last Saturday of the month.

CCRA has a monthly happy hour series at neighborhood bars/restaurants, typically the last Thursday of the month.

CCRA sponsors special community events (Taste of Lexington Market, Night at Camden Yards, guest speaker events) throughout the year.

Section N of the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan (“URP”) includes a provision for the “Market Center Project Area Committee” to review and comment on development proposals for disposition lots designated in the URP. However, the Commissioner of the Department of Housing & Community Development retains final approval authority. Currently, this provision is not followed.

#### *Focus Group Input*

Participants in every focus group raised questions about community branding and identity. Market Center is called not just Market Center, but also Bromo, City Center, the Westside, and sometimes Mount Vernon. People expressed the need to strengthen the community’s identity, which the confusion about the community’s name makes more difficult. Participants had different opinions about which name might be more readily embraced by the current Market Center community and which resonates more with people outside the community. One participant suggested different names for sub-geographies within the community.

Beyond the name, participants also stressed the need for a cohesive vision for the whole neighborhood, one which addresses what the neighborhood can be. Property owners, residents and business owners should be engaged in this visioning. (Note: That is what this SRP process aims to do.) One participant stated: “This neighborhood has yet to be defined, and everyone should work together to make Market Center something special.” It is critical to figure out what makes Market Center unique and use that to build its identity; to break through the misconceptions that there is nothing of value here; to get positive messages out; and yet dig

deep into the narrative of the neighborhood, so that messages about the area are not just positive spin, but real.

Similarly, participants in every focus group questioned the presence and impact of multiple organizations working in Market Center. They want to make sure that the organizations complement and strengthen each other, and that they are working toward the same goal – rather than working at cross purposes, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Several participants noted the confusion that sprung from being invited to different meetings about similar topics, and by different groups.

Focus group participants also expressed a desire for a reliable source of information about news and events relevant to the community, as well as an ongoing vehicle for community engagement. They suggested hosting regular meetings so people can get to know each other and talk about issues, stressing that no one should be left out.

<b>Table 10: Community Engagement SWOT Analysis</b>	
<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Multicultural and multipurpose (workers, residents, students, veterans, visitors) population in Market Center	Lack of cohesive community vision
Strong base of residents, workers	Lack of cohesive community voice
New residents' association; growing residential population	No clear way to reach multiple stakeholders yet
Multiple entities working in area	Lack of cohesion and effective communication between multiple stakeholder organizations
Reach of various newsletters (ex., DPOB)	Lack of engagement with the faith community, youth
	Little understanding of the needs of the transient population that come for services, shops, jobs
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
New Lexington Market could become a community meeting space that will attract all sorts of people.	Unknown plans of property owners (particularly owners of vacant buildings and lots)
There is an opportunity to shape the community.	Perceptions of racial and socio-economic status discrimination as development happens.
Lots of development occurring in Market Center.	Negative perceptions/narratives about Market Center
Untapped potential – people live downtown for a reason.	
There is an opportunity to strengthen existing associations, such as CCRA	
New attractions, festivals, energy (ie., Charm City Night Market)	
Proximity to City Hall	

## Part II Vision & Goals

### Housing

*Vision: Market Center offers a vibrant living experience by maintaining and promoting a diversity of mixed-use, mixed-income housing options and amenities which create a welcoming, walkable and safe neighborhood.*

**Goal 1: Incorporate more mixed-income and live/work developments into Market Center, preserve existing affordable housing, and serve people with a diversity of housing needs.**

**Outcome 1:** Achieve a housing stock affordable to households with a range of incomes and that serves a diversity of housing needs (ie., artists, families with children, senior citizens, and people with disabilities).

With respect to affordability, Market Center is aiming for one-third of housing units to be affordable to households earning less than 60% of area median income (AMI); one-third to households earning 60.1% - 120% of AMI; and one-third to households earning more than 120% of AMI.

#### Strategies & Partners

1. Build capacity for housing advocacy and development in Market Center.  
Partners: MCCDC, DPOB, BDC, Bromo, HCD

Year 1: Build relationships with the city, state, institutional and civic partners that can provide knowledge and guidance. Facilitate understanding of and support for the community's housing goals.

Year 2: Send key staff, board members to housing training programs. Add housing expert to the MCCDC board.

Year 3: Sponsor small, new developers (including those in the arts community) attendance at "developer bootcamp" to help them learn how to buy and renovate property for housing.

2. Preserve existing affordable housing and housing designated for artists, senior citizens, and the disabled  
Partners: MCCDC, BDC, HCD

Year 1: Identify and work with a property owner willing to commit to long-term affordable housing, to serve as a pilot project. Get the commitment in writing and use as a model for future projects.

Year 2: Explore alternative mechanisms for preserving long-term affordability, such as co-ops, renters' right of first refusal, and rent control. Talk to additional property owners about securing commitments to long-term affordability.

Year 3: Based on findings from Year 2 research, possibly pursue alternative mechanisms for preserving affordability.

**Progress Measures:**

1. Track average residential rents in Market Center. Compare change year by year and to other areas of city and region.
2. Decrease in the percentage of renters and homeowners who are cost burdened. Data from 2013-2017 shows that 48.65% of households in Market Center's Census Tract 401, Block 002 are cost burdened, slightly less than the City of Baltimore (49.8%).

**Outcome 2:** Increase the number of housing units.

**Strategies and Partners:**

1. Advocate for planned projects. *See Economy Goal 3, Outcome 1, Strategy 1: Support private and nonprofit sector renovation and reuse of unoccupied space.*

2. Make the most of incentives.

Partners: MCCDC, DPOB, BDC, Bromo

Year 1: Compile information about existing incentives, including but not limited to Opportunity Zones, New Markets, historic tax credits, and high-performance market rate rental tax credits, develop marketing material, and distribute through multiple channels. Reach out to Live Baltimore and Healthy Neighborhoods as potential additional partners.

Year 2: Explore potential for new incentives, particularly for artist housing, veterans housing, housing for the elderly and disabled, and workforce housing, and build consensus around advocacy for the establishment of one or more new incentives.

Year 3: Introduce new incentives.

**Progress Measures:**

1. Housing units grow by 5.5% annually (baseline: 1,854 units in buildings with 10+ units; goal is new 102 units/year)

Note: Developers are currently constructing 160 new dwelling units (this figure excludes Paca House, which will include 92 apartments but is a reconfiguration of existing units). Developers have plans for an additional 667 units in the near term, so a progress measure of 102 units/year is conservative. Average household size in Market Center is 1.45, which would mean approximately 149 new residents annually.

**Outcome 3:** Increase the residential population

Strategies & Partners:

1. Promote Market Center as a great place to live.

Partners: MCCDC, CCRA, Bromo, DPOB

Year 1: Foster a stronger sense of community and connectivity to existing residents through events, activities, and communication. Reach out to Live Baltimore.

Year 2: Plan and implement an annual integrated marketing campaign targeted to potential new residents, using social and traditional media and touting Market Center's diversity.

Year 3: Evaluate, refine marketing campaign.

Progress Measures:

1. Residential population grows by 5% annually (baseline: 2,979 people; goal is 149 new residents per year) Note: This progress measure is connected to the progress measure for Goal 1, Outcome 2.

**Goal 2: Activate the streets and public spaces so they feel more welcoming and create a stronger sense of community to help attract and retain residents.**

Housing is also inextricably tied to the look, feel and function of the community in which it is located. Therefore, to achieve the community's housing goals, it is necessary to also address community building and community improvements, which are critical to attracting and retaining residents.

**Outcome 1:** Enliven and make better use of the public realm, including but not limited to sidewalks, alleys, and amenity spaces, with public art, greenery, flowers, events and activities.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Bring new public art, greenery and flowers, events and activities, to Market Center's sidewalks and public spaces.

MCCDC, MCMA, Bromo, CCRA, DPOB



Year 1: Establish a grant program for public art, greening, and creative streetscaping and lighting projects. Use existing amenity spaces, such as the dog parks or university park, to host events.

Year 2: Evaluate and refine grant program. Evaluate and make recommendations regarding how to make amenity spaces more appealing and user-friendly.

Year 3: Evaluate and refine grant program. Follow up on recommendations about how to make amenity spaces more appealing and user-friendly.

2. Create a new central amenity/placemaking/community gathering space (ie., green space, market).

Partners: MCCDC, DPOB, CCRA, MDP, Baltimore City Planning

*See also: Environment, Goal 2: Establish dedicated park space that is open to all and a place of respite, and a neighborhood network of green spaces and special places. The goals differ slightly, with one more focused on green space, but they are sufficiently similar that, to make the most efficient use of resources, the process to determine how best to proceed with each will be combined.*

Year 1: Create a neighborhood park advocacy group. Engage in public conversations to learn about what people would like from their neighborhood park. Map existing centers of activity – such as large residential buildings, employment centers, and arts and entertainment venues – and opportunity sites. This mapping exercise will help pinpoint the optimal location(s) for a new amenity space and/or park, because the presence of a vacant lot alone does not guarantee success. The new amenity space and/or park must be surrounded by a mix of activities to ensure “eyes on the street” and regular use of the space. Evaluate opportunity sites and select a site for a new amenity space and/or park (or a single site that serves both purposes).

Year 2: Build coalition of support for amenity space and/or park. Develop funding, programming, and maintenance plans, and engage in public conversations to build excitement and support for the park. Begin fundraising.

Year 3: Acquire (if necessary) and develop amenity space and/or park (note that through the process, one may proceed more quickly than the other).

#### Progress Measures:

1. Introduce new public art, greenery, flowers, or creative streetscaping projects to five sites annually for three years.
2. Host 1-2 events annually at existing amenity spaces.
3. Create a new public amenity space by year 4.

**Outcome 2:** Enliven the community by activating buildings with spaces for artists to share their work, and businesses and other activities that attract foot traffic.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Establish a grant program to create spaces for artists to share their work, for people to activate unoccupied buildings with popup stores, events, art installations, etc., and related façade and exterior lighting improvements. One track of the program will be for long-term use of space, while another can be for a rotating schedule of short-term uses.

Year 1: Develop program parameters, raise funds, launch program

Partners: MCCDC, Bromo

Year 2: Evaluate, refine program

Partners: MCCDC, Bromo

Year 3: Evaluate, refine program

Partners: MCCDC, Bromo

Progress Measures:

1. Create three new spaces for artists to share their work and/or popup shops/installations/events annually for three years.

**Goal 4: Develop strategies to eliminate vacancies.**

**Outcome 1:** Preserve the area’s historic buildings and achieve a fully rehabilitated and reused building stock.

*See also Economy, Goal 3: “Achieve a fully rehabilitated and occupied building stock with a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens.”*

*See also Environment, Goal 4: “Maintain and celebrate the unique character of Market Center’s historic buildings.”*

**Housing Proposals Requiring Further Exploration**

- Mechanisms for preserving existing affordable housing.

**Relation to Baltimore City Sustainable Communities Plan**

Baltimore City’s Sustainable Communities Plan speaks directly to the opportunity for growing the residential component of Market Center when stating, “The U.S. Census showed that within the last decade young professionals are moving back to urban centers in record numbers. For Baltimore, young households are choosing Baltimore neighborhoods regardless of the location

of their job within the region, and generally desire row houses, condominiums, and historic areas due to their unique blend of access to cultural amenities, retail and transit connections.”

With its unique history as Baltimore’s bustling historic retail core, site of the oldest continually operating public market in the United States, location of numerous cultural and entertainment venues, small businesses and restaurants serving ethnic cuisine from throughout the world, and by far the best access to public transportation in the region, Market Center checks all the boxes as a desirable urban neighborhood.

Moreover, the affordability of Market Center’s housing makes it likely that the area will continue to meet the needs of a demographically diverse population. Market Center’s goals for housing closely align with the Sustainable Communities Plan’s commitment to “providing a diversity of housing choices for all residents and to advancing efforts that integrate housing, transportation, education and sustainability”

## **Economy**

*Vision: Market Center is a premier international district with a vibrant mix of retail, arts, dining, and entertainment offerings that serve a diverse community of residents, workers, students, and visitors in a transit-rich environment.*

**Goal 1: Enhance matchmaking opportunities between local talent and jobs.**

**Outcome 1:** Connect residents of Market Center and nearby communities with workforce development opportunities.

Strategies and Partners:

1. Support existing programs and minimize gaps in services.

Partners: Service providers include UMB, UMMS, VA, Enoch Pratt Free Library, DPOB

Year 1: Compile, package, and share information on workforce development programs in and near Market Center; identify gaps and opportunities to support growth of existing programs. Distribution channels may include Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Charities, Lexington Market, MCMA, neighborhood associations, MDOT MTA

Year 2: Develop strategy to minimize gaps (identify service providers with capacity for growth, or need for new service provider, funding sources).

Year 3: Implement strategy.

Progress Measures: We must do additional research to understand how many people from Market Center or nearby communities are currently being served by these programs to identify a reasonable progress measure.

**Goal 2: Work with existing businesses and cultivate new businesses (including arts-based businesses) to better meet the needs of people living and working in Market Center.**

**Outcome 1:** Reverse decline in first floor merchant population and achieve a net increase in the number of businesses in priority business sectors.

Priority business sectors include small scale manufacturing/makers, arts-based businesses, businesses that specialize in international/multicultural products, food, or services, and retail business that offer products or services not currently found in Market Center.

Strategies and Partners:

1. Provide information – retail sales gap, demographics, development activity, available technical and financial resources, available properties – and technical assistance (as requested) to existing and prospective new merchants, to ensure that they can survive and thrive as the market changes.

Partners: MCMA, DPOB, SBRC, BDC, Lexington Market

Year 1: Package and provide information to existing and prospective businesses.

Year 2: Develop incentive program for existing businesses to diversify product/service offerings, improve merchandising, look of store, and experience.

Year 3: Implement incentive program.

Progress Measures:

1. Stop decline in first floor businesses (baseline: 283)
2. Increase the number of businesses in priority sectors by two annually for three years.

**Outcome 2:** Foster entrepreneurship, including arts- and food-based entrepreneurship.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Develop a merchant and artist entrepreneurship program and support the planned incubator at Lexington Market.

Partners: Bromo, MCCDC, MCMA, SBRC, Lexington Market, Catholic Relief Services

The training curriculum will cover business planning, accounting, insurance, tax credits, legal issues, marketing, merchandising, customer service, and more. Build Institute of Detroit is a good model – it includes programs to help entrepreneurs connect, learn, launch businesses, and find funding.

Year 1: Convene a group of people interested in developing an entrepreneurship program in Market Center to research models, talk to others doing similar work in Baltimore, and identify the best path forward. Reach out to Chinatown Collective,

Maryland Art Place as potential partners. Work with Lexington Market on their proposed business incubator.

Year 2: By year 2, determine the best path forward for the merchant and artist entrepreneurship program; begin implementation. Continue to work with Lexington Market.

Year 3: Open business incubator at Lexington Market. Continue to work on merchant artist and education program (it is difficult to be more specific at this time, without knowing how the group will decide to proceed).

2. Develop a tenant improvement grant program to simultaneously curate new businesses in the district and renovate space.

Year 1: Craft tenant improvement incentive program, to provide grants for businesses that help diversify the business offerings, or for retail popup space. The landlord will benefit from improvements in exchange for reduced rent.

Year 2: Evaluate and refine program. Market positive stories.

Year 3: Evaluate and refine program. Market positive stories.

#### Progress Measures:

1. Convene group of people interested in developing merchant and artist entrepreneurship program and finalize recommendations in a memo by end of Year 1.
2. Launch Lexington Market incubator by Year 3.
3. Disburse 3 tenant improvement grants annually (2 to city residents and minority- and women-owned businesses).

#### **Goal 3: Achieve a fully rehabilitated and occupied building stock with a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens.**

This goal pertains to entire buildings, not just the ground floor, and to the full spectrum of uses permitted by zoning.

*See also Housing, Goal 4: "Develop strategies to eliminate vacancies."*

*See also Environment, Goal 4: "Maintain and celebrate the unique character of Market Center's historic buildings."*

**Outcome 1:** Activate unoccupied space (ground floor and upper stories)

Strategies & Partners

1. Support private and nonprofit sector renovation and reuse of unoccupied space, particularly for projects that further goals outlined in this SRP, including but not limited to: mixed-use development, mixed-income housing, artists live/workspace, housing for the elderly, veterans, people with disabilities, families with children, communal and public space, and space for artists to share their work (including performance space). Advocate for projects to receive necessary zoning, CHAP, and other approvals; assist with securing necessary gap financing, tax credits, etc.  
Partners: MCCDC, DPOB, BDC, Bromo

Year 1: Create, maintain list of development projects, opportunity sites in Market Center. Advocate for projects as appropriate, and market opportunity sites.

Year 2: Host events and tours to attract development interest and educate property owners and developers on incentives.

Year 3: Evaluate efforts to date and refine.

2. Develop a tenant improvement grant program to simultaneously curate new businesses in the district and renovate space. *See Economy, Goal 2, Outcome 2, Strategy 2.*
3. Modify policy and encourage public sector actions.

Year 1: Consider amendments to the Market Center RBDL ordinance to assess the RBDL fee on vacant first floor space, and possibly upper story space.  
Partners: MCMA, BDC, Council person

Establish bi-monthly code enforcement calls to encourage coordination and focus on the most egregious code violations (those that endanger the public or leave buildings vulnerable to demolition by neglect).  
Partners: BDC, DPOB, MCMA, HCD

Update the Market Center Urban Renewal Plan to provide the city with more alternatives to halt demolition by neglect.

Year 2: Update the Baltimore Development Corporation's code enforcement brochure and distribute to all business/building owners. Visit businesses in person to discuss code violations and resources for making improvements.  
Partners: BDC, MCMA, DPOB, HCD, DPW

Year 3: Continue code enforcement calls and site visits.

Progress Measures:

1. Activate 40,000 square feet of currently unoccupied space annually.
2. Address 5 buildings with the most problematic code violations annually.
3. Starting in year 2, visit 20 businesses annually to discuss code issues.

**Outcome 2:** Achieve a diversity of business owners, business types, employees, contractors, property owners, and developers that reflects the diverse population of Market Center and the City of Baltimore.

Strategies and Partners:

1. Establish an incentive program for tenant improvements, as noted in Economy, Goal 2, Outcome 2, Strategy 2, but enhance incentives for city residents and small, minority- and women-owned businesses.
2. Connect Market Center businesses with programs and opportunities to promote minority and women-owned businesses, and buy local programs, such as Eboneats, Black Girls Cook, Charm City Night Market, and Made in Baltimore.

Year 1: Create, maintain list, market opportunities, and make personal connections when possible.

Year 2: With partners, evaluate the need/opportunity for Market Center to initiate its own marketing effort to specifically promote and recruit business owned by minorities, women, and other disadvantaged populations. Alternatively, continue to connect with existing opportunities.

Year 3: Proceed with decision made in Year 2.

3. Monitor city adherence to MBE/WBE and Employ Baltimore requirements; develop goals for Market Center.

Year 1 (ongoing): For developers who purchase property from the city or otherwise receive city assistance, track adherence to the City's MBE/WBE and Employ Baltimore requirements, and follow through on the Equity Impact Statements they submit to the Baltimore Development Corporation as part of their development proposal.

Establish MCCDC's own targets (or requirements) to support minority- and woman-owned businesses, locally-owned businesses, and businesses owned by other disadvantaged populations; and to employ people from the local labor pool. This would apply to grants disbursed by MCCDC, as well as its own expenditures.

Year 2: Monitor MCCDC's performance.

Year 3: Evaluate, refine goals/requirements as necessary.

Progress Measures:

1. Disburse 3 tenant improvement grants annually (2 to city residents and/or minority- and women-owned businesses).

### **Economy Proposals Requiring Further Discussion**

- Workforce development and entrepreneurship program needs
- Opportunity for local businesses to capture additional business from area institutions & larger businesses – need to understand current procurement policies better.

### **Relation to Baltimore City Sustainable Communities Plan**

Market Center’s economy goals closely align with the Sustainable Communities Plan’s calls to “enhance economic competitiveness by improving the City’s ability to attract new and expanded businesses by providing quality services and products that are regionally competitive, target investment along major transit routes, target investment in Arts and Entertainment districts, support existing economic and business development around anchor institutions and remove blighted and unsafe structures to promote market-based efforts.”

Moreover, the City’s plan identifies numerous public sector partners that can assist and support Market Center’s economic revitalization activities – including the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC), Baltimore Planning Department, Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB), and the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development (MOED).

### **Transportation**

*Vision: Market Center is pleasantly accessible, walkable, and bikeable, where residents, workers, students, and visitors can make comfortable transfers on safe and reliable transportation options to local and regional destinations.*

**Goal 1: Make Market Center more accessible, walkable, and bikeable.**

**Outcome 1:** Ensure that Market Center is well-lit.

Strategies & Partners

1. Improve exterior lighting on private properties.

Partners: MCCDC, DPOB, BDC

Year 1: Develop grant program for private property owners to increase exterior lighting on their buildings; explore possible funding sources. Apply to funding sources.

Year 2: Continue to apply to funding sources as opportunities arise. As soon as feasible, implement grant program.



Year 3: Evaluate, expand program, add corporate sponsors

2. Improve streetlights.

Partners: MCMA, DOT, DPW, BGE, MDOT MTA, UMB, DPOB, CCRA

Year 1: Evaluate existing blocks and rank according to need. Begin advocacy with BMore Bright for LED conversions, and with appropriate agency or agencies for installation of new streetlights.

Year 2: Continue advocacy.

Year 3: Continue advocacy.

3. Add artistic lighting through a “Light Rail Lights” project.

Partners: Bromo, DPOB, MSAC, BOPA, Light City, MDOT MTA, BCDOT, Maryland Stadium Authority, corporate sponsors

Participants in the artist focus group proposed a “Light Rail Lights” project, in which artists would create light “sculptures” for installation along the light rail line to both brighten the neighborhood and attract people to the neighborhood. The concept could be expanded to other locations in Market Center, too, but still be considered “Light Rail Lights” as all pedestrian routes lead to the light rail.

Year 1: Develop guidelines for artistic themes, usage of lights, participate in Light City

Year 2: Begin to implement Light Rail Lights and coordinate with events, for example at the convention center, Royal Farms Arena, the stadiums.

Year 3: Evaluate & enhance program; add corporate sponsors.

Progress Measures:

1. Improve exterior lighting on five private properties annually.
2. Upgrade lighting on 4 block faces annually, whether through new streetlights or LED upgrades. The 300 block of Paca Street and the 200-300 blocks of Park Avenue are priorities.
3. Implement Light Rail Lights program in year 2.

**Outcome 2:** Improve streetscaping and curb appeal; and bring transportation-related infrastructure up to code

*See also Environment, Goal 3, Outcome 1: “Market Center’s infrastructure – including but not limited to lights, sidewalks, crosswalks, street signs, and parks – is well-maintained and functional.”*

*See also Quality of Life, Goal 3, Outcome 1, Strategy 2: “Work with city to fix dilapidated infrastructure and city-owned buildings.”*

*See also Housing, Goal 2, Outcome 1: “Enliven and make better use of the public realm, including but not limited to sidewalks, alleys, and amenity spaces, with public art, greenery, flowers, events and activities.”*

#### Strategies & Partners

1. Create program to hire people from the community to assist with improvement projects requiring skilled and unskilled labor, to supplement the roles of the city and DPOB. The program will be able to address infrastructure repairs, building repairs, and ongoing maintenance of public space, greenery developed as a result of this plan.

Partners: VA, DPOB, MCMA, MCCDC, BC DOT, BC DPW

Year 1: Develop framework for program – scope of services, management entity, funding mechanism. Reach out to Living Classrooms, Civic Works, Humanim/Details as potential partners.

Year 2: Apply for funding and kick off program.

Year 3: Maintain, refine program.

2. Improve public sector and business improvement district service delivery.  
Partners: CCRA, MCMA, MCCDC, CRS, DPOB, UMB (students, faculty), Bromo City Agencies, City Council Person

Year 1: Enhance use and tracking of 311 requests – share Google Drive spreadsheet to collaborate, make public, and encourage more people to use 311. Establish a team of 4-5 diverse stakeholders who will follow up on requests that fail to get resolved in the required time. Both the DPOB and MTA have phone numbers/emails which the public can use to submit requests for service. Educate the public about these options and encourage their use. Coordinate public meetings with city agencies, elected officials (possibly invite to Market Center Mingles, or CCRA Aesthetics & Infrastructure Committee meetings)

Year 2: Track progress, refine strategy.

Year 3: Track progress, refine strategy.

Progress Measures:

1. Number of 311 requests submitted; time to resolution.
2. Develop program identified in Strategy 1

**Goal 2: Improve utility of public transit and micro-mobility options within Market Center and between Market Center and other locations**

**Outcome 1:** Increase use of alternative modes of transportation, including public transit, walking, biking, and other forms of micro-mobility.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Improve access to information about public transit and micro-mobility (ie., directions, locations and connection points).

Partners: MDOT MTA, BC DOT, DPOB (IKE Kiosks), coordinate with UMB, MCCDC

Year 1: Create new wayfinding signage.

Year 2: Devise and implement strategy for getting current information on transit options to all apartment buildings, Lexington Market, Mount Vernon Marketplace, and Central Library.

Year 3:

2. Make the most of existing incentives and promote new and unique strategies and incentives for use of alternative modes of transportation.

Partners: MDOT MTA, BCDOT, UMB, UMMS, DPOB, CCRA

Year 1: Connect with transit advocates to understand existing incentives/strategies and what works in other communities. Market existing incentives to targeted audiences.

Year 2: Evaluate possibility implementing new strategies and incentives.

Year 3: Implement new strategies and incentives.

3. Assure equitable access to alternative means of transportation in Market Center.

Partners: BC DOT, MDOT MTA, private service providers

Year 1: Talk to MDOT MTA to ensure that MobilityLink Paratransit is available throughout Market Center. Advocate for/educate about the importance of enforcement of dedicated bus lanes. Upgrade pedestrian infrastructure so that it is ADA-compliant.

Year 2: Ensure equitable supply of electric scooters (and bike share bicycles if applicable) in Market Center. Continue to upgrade pedestrian infrastructure.

Year 3: Complete upgrades to pedestrian infrastructure.

4. Support transit-oriented land use.

Partners: DPOB, MCCDC, BDC, Baltimore City Planning, Maryland Department of Planning

Year 1: Connect with transit-oriented development and transit advocates, such as the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance, to understand barriers to and incentives for transit-supportive land use. Advocate for transit-supportive development projects in Market Center, and work with developers to modify proposals to be more supportive of transit use.

Year 2: Execute a marketing campaign to attract more transit-oriented development activity. Host walking tours for developers, focused on transit-oriented development. Develop strategies to address barriers, take advantage of incentives.

Year 3: Evaluate and refine marketing campaign. Implement strategies to address barriers, take advantage of incentives.

Progress Measures:

1. Increase use of light rail and metro by 5% annually (baseline: Average weekday ridership at Lexington Market Light Rail is 3,000; Lexington Market Metro is 5,396)<sup>10</sup>
2. Increase percentage of people who take transit to work (baseline: 17%)<sup>11</sup>
3. Reduce number of non-ADA compliant street crossings.
4. Reduce percentage of people who drive alone or carpool to work (baseline: 38%).

**Transportation Proposals Requiring Further Exploration**

- Convert Park Avenue (and possibly other streets) into a two-way street
- Trolley
- On-street parking restrictions
- Parking – overall provision of parking options, ways to reduce demand
- Bike lanes
- Multi-modal transit center

**Relation to Baltimore City Sustainable Communities Plan**

The SCP’s statement that “the city’s existing transportation infrastructure is overloaded and in dire need of maintenance and repair” speaks directly to many of the outcomes and strategies in Market Center’s Strategic Revitalization Plan. As a transit-rich neighborhood with significant

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Maryland Department of Planning, Transit Station Area Profile Tool, 2017 data.

<sup>11</sup> Source: Environics Analytics | Claritas, 2019, courtesy of the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore

development opportunities, Market Center is well-positioned to support the SCP's intent to incentivize transit-oriented development near existing transit stations.

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

And although the Red Line light rail project was canceled by the governor, other transit elements of the City's plan are very much alive. Moreover, the city's Complete Streets Master Plan evaluates the city's roadway system and land uses and makes recommendations to accommodate diverse roadway users in a safe environment.

## Environment

*Vision: Market Center is architecturally diverse, with clean, functional, and environmentally conscious infrastructure, and safe, welcoming, well-lit, green public gathering spaces.*

**Goal 1: Maximize tree canopy to improve aesthetics and public health outcomes, provide shade, and reduce the heat island effect.**

**Outcome 1:** All tree wells that can reasonably accommodate trees will be occupied by living trees by the end of Year 3.

### *Strategies & Partners*

1. Plant and maintain trees, focusing primarily but not exclusively on street trees.  
Partners: CCRA, DPOB, MCCDC, Tree Baltimore, Baltimore Tree Trust, Forestry

Year 1: Update, ground truth Tree Baltimore's assessment of existing conditions; develop planting and maintenance plan, including possible funding sources (such as Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Town Creek Foundation, Department of Public Works).

Year 2: Plant trees in vacant, appropriate tree wells and other locations, as determined in Year 1. This includes replacement of dead trees.

Year 3: Maintain trees. Identify opportunities to increase tree canopy in other locations throughout Market Center.

Progress Measures:

1. Reduce the number of empty, available tree wells by 1/3 annually, beginning in year 2.
2. Replace 1/3 of the existing dead trees annually, beginning in year 2, so that there are no dead trees in Market Center by the end of year 4.

**Goal 2: Establish dedicated park space that is open to all and a place of respite, and a neighborhood network of green spaces and special places.**

**Outcome 1:** Create one new dedicated green park space.

*See also: Housing Goal 2, Outcome 2: Create a new central amenity/placemaking/community gathering space (ie., green space, market). The goals differ slightly, with one more focused on green space, but they are sufficiently similar that, to make the most efficient use of resources, the process to determine how best to proceed with each will be combined.*

*Strategies and Partners:*

1. Identify potential locations, build support for, and identify sources of funding for park acquisition (if necessary), development, programming, and maintenance. Connect with Parks & People Foundation and similar organizations to get advice.

Partners: CCRA, MCCDC, DPOB, MDP, Baltimore City Planning

Year 1: Create a neighborhood park advocacy group. Engage in public conversations to learn about what people would like from their neighborhood park. Map existing centers of activity – such as large residential buildings, employment centers, and arts and entertainment venues – and opportunity sites. This mapping exercise will help pinpoint the optimal location(s) for a new amenity space and/or park, because the presence of a vacant lot alone does not guarantee success. The new amenity space and/or park must be surrounded by a mix of activities to ensure “eyes on the street” and regular use of the space. Evaluate opportunity sites and select a site for a new amenity space and/or park (or a single site that serves both purposes).

Year 2: Build coalition of support for amenity space and/or park. Develop funding, programming, and maintenance plans, and engage in public conversations to build excitement and support for the park. Begin fundraising.

Year 3: Acquire (if necessary) and develop amenity space and/or park (note that through the process, one may proceed more quickly than the other).

**Outcome 2:** Create a cohesive network of green spaces and special places.

Strategies:

1. Establish “green moments” on walking routes.

Partners: Baltimore City Planning, DPOB, CCRA, MCCDC, MDP

Market Center does not have a lot of land available for large-scale park development, but people still crave green spaces, so the group envisions a neighborhood scale green network. They suggested focusing initially on Howard and Lexington Streets, as Howard is the main north-south spine, and it has wide sidewalks, and because Lexington is a good connection between Charles Center and Lexington Market. The green network may consist of green treatments along sidewalks, bioretention facilities, parklets, clusters of planters, and canopies or other shady spots.

Year 1: Convene interested parties to discuss and build support for concept, identify locations and opportunities for green moments, and additional partners.

Year 2: Develop strategy and budget; begin fundraising.

Year 3: Implementation.

Progress measures:

1. Five new “green moments” by the end of year 3.
2. One new dedicated park/green space by the end of year 4.

**Goal 3: Ensure that Market Center’s infrastructure is well-maintained and functional, and its public realm is clean.**

Market Center requires a sustained commitment to infrastructure maintenance and sanitation by professionals. Market Center’s deteriorated infrastructure and excessive trash accumulation, litter and debris, dirty sidewalks, and graffiti are well-documented problems – participants in every focus group meeting, workgroup meeting, and public meeting spoke about this problem, and it featured prominently in responses to the resident and business owner surveys. Participants stressed that the city must fix *and maintain* the infrastructure, and a combination of the city and business improvement district must maintain the public realm. Volunteer community cleanup days alone cannot combat these entrenched ills.

**Outcome 1:** Market Center’s infrastructure – including but not limited to lights, sidewalks, crosswalks, street signs, and parks – is well-maintained and functional.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Build network of allies to advocate on behalf of Market Center infrastructure repairs.

Partners: CCRA, CRS, MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Lexington Market, individual residents, businesses, and property owners

Year 1: Convene meetings with council person, Department of Public Works, Department of Transportation, Maryland Transit Administration, Baltimore Development Corporation, to demonstrate to the city breadth and depth of people who care about this neighborhood.

Year 2: Collectively identify the groups' priorities (for example, Howard Street tree wells, lighting), and advocate for city capital funds through the budget process.

Year 3: Continue to maintain pressure on the city to fix/maintain infrastructure, and to keep Market Center's priorities in the budget.

*See also Transportation, Goal 1, Outcome 2: Improve streetscaping and curb appeal; and bring transportation-related infrastructure up to code.*

*See also Quality of Life, Goal 3, Outcome 1, Strategy 2: Work with city to fix dilapidated infrastructure and city-owned buildings, to send a message that the city cares about the community.*

Progress Measures:

1. Resolution of top 2 priority issues by year 3.

**Outcome 2:** Market Center's streets, sidewalks, alleys, and other public spaces are free of trash.

*See Transportation Goal 1, Outcome 2, Strategy 2: "Improve public sector and business improvement district service delivery."*

**Goal 4: Maintain and celebrate the unique character of Market Center's historic buildings and ensure that new development speaks to the mixed-use nature of the community.**

*See also Housing, Goal 4: "Develop strategies to eliminate vacancies."*

*See also Economy, Goal 3: "Achieve a fully rehabilitated and occupied building stock with a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens."*

Market Center has one of the greatest collections of historic downtown buildings in America (per Richard Moe, former President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation), borne out of its history as a center of commerce. There is a desire to preserve this, in part because this is what separates this neighborhood from others.



**Outcome 1:** Buildings identified as contributing to the historic character of the area are stabilized, making them more financially feasible for reuse and better ensuring their preservation.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Establish a building stabilization fund and program guidelines.

Partners: Baltimore Heritage, CHAP, MCCDC, BDC, DPOB

Year 1: Identify buildings for priority stabilization and preservation, using a layered approach, considering preservation priorities, ability to build on strengths and enhance the market, and support for renovation/reuse projects that are ready to begin, *but for* a funding gap. Several resources can assist with this: CHAP staff reports for the Five and Dime and Howard Street Historic Districts (2017); City of Baltimore and Maryland Historical Trust Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) regarding historic preservation within the Market Center National Register Historic District (1999); and Westside Initiative Cluster Maps (2011). Though formally dissolved in 2017, the MOA included a map which illustrated preservation priorities, which can still provide helpful information. See Appendix D for historic preservation maps. Finally, the Baltimore Development Corporation may have information related to the conditions of the buildings owned by the city.

Year 2: Develop criteria for selection; apply for funding; launch program.

Year 3: Evaluate and refine program.

2. Encourage public and private sector stabilization and reuse of buildings.

Partners: MCCDC, DPOB, BDC, Baltimore Heritage, CHAP

Year 1: Promote use of historic tax credits by talking to relevant private property owners and hosting workshops for interested owners and developers. Advocate for projects to receive funding through the state's competitive tax credit process. Understand the condition of city-owned properties and advocate as necessary for additional city investment in stabilizing and securing these properties.

Year 2: Follow up with private property owners and the city; continue to advocate for state historic tax credits.

Year 3: Follow up with private property owners and the city; continue to advocate for historic tax credits.

Progress Measure:

1. Stabilize/button up 3 buildings/year.

## **Relation to Baltimore City Sustainable Communities Plan**

The SCP includes several references to the city's environment -- including the City's Forest Conservation program, described as "a key program for ensuring that developments in Baltimore preserve existing trees or plant new ones. In 2010, approximately 1,624 trees and 800 shrubs were planted under this program."

The SCP calls for targeting investment along major transit routes and expanding greenway trails and the on-street bike network system to build connections between various parks and population centers.

Other City initiatives and resources addressing environmental needs and concerns identified in Market Center's goals and outcomes include the Growing Green Initiative which uses vacant land as a 'raw asset' for the future to strategically incorporate high-performance green spaces such as parks, green storm water infrastructure, agriculture, and community spaces into the fabric of economic redevelopment; the Department of Transportation's Resurfacing and Lighting which has committed funds to resurfacing at least 200 lane miles of city streets and upgrade street lights with energy efficient LED replacements, and the Department of Housing and Community Development's Vacants to Value Program which intends to rehabilitate more than 1,000 vacant buildings and leverage more than \$70 million in private investment.

## **Quality of Life**

*Vision: Market Center is a diverse, welcoming, and amenity-rich neighborhood whose civic pride is built on a culture of collaboration to improve the social, physical and natural environment.*

**Goal 1: Foster diversity within Market Center and make Market Center more welcoming.**

**Outcome 1:** Expand cultural events and celebrate multicultural businesses.

Strategies and Partners

1. Expand cultural events, festivals, activities.  
Partners: Bromo, MCCDC, DPOB, CCRA

Year 1: Support Charm City Night Market, Fringe Festival, Light City, and popup events. Talk to Chinatown Collective, KAGRO, Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, BOPA, Baltimore Xiamen Sister Cities Program

Year 2: Work with arts community to develop regular, cross-promotional event calendar (This could be a “first Friday” type of event, but it does not have to be). Encourage outdoor music, tapping local talent.

Year 3: Develop Market Center Tour Program and celebrate multi-cultural businesses.

Progress Measures:

1. Support or host five events annually (beyond what is offered by individual arts groups) that activate underused spaces, highlight Market Center’s multicultural community, or support other goals articulated in this plan.

**Outcome 2:** Increase activities/amenities for residents and visitors of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities.

Strategies & Partners

1. Introduce new activities/amenities, paying close attention to desires of different groups of stakeholders, such as veterans, residents, young people.

Partners: VA, Volunteers of America, MCCDC, private sector, CCRA, DPOB, others

Year 1: Research. Build on information from resident survey and SRP focus groups and learn what people are interested in. Talk to VA, VA Annex, Volunteers of America, and the veterans who use these services or live in Paca House. Develop leaders within the group and a plan for implementation.

Year 2: Raise funds (or budget accordingly within existing programs); implement.

Year 3: Evaluate and refine.

*See also Community Engagement, Goal 1 (Operation Who is Market Center?)*

Progress measures:

1. Introduce two new activities/amenities by year 2.

**Outcome 3:** Increase the number of communal gathering spaces and enhance and promote offerings of existing spaces.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Pursue development of safe communal gathering spaces (ie., community center, senior center, green space, community garden)

Partners: Paradise Management, Catholic Relief Services, MCCDC, VA, others

Note: Both the Housing and Environment Workgroups came up with similar ideas, though theirs focused more on outdoor space. This group expressed interest in both indoor and outdoor amenity space.

*See also Housing, Goal 2, Outcome 2: Create a central amenity/placemaking/community gathering space (ie., green space, market).*

*See also Environment, Goal 2, Outcome 1: Create one new dedicated green park space.*

Year 1: Partner with the owner of Centerpoint Apartments to develop and program new community center at 8 N. Eutaw Street.

Year 2: Work with existing communal gathering spaces to address needs they may have to enhance and promote their offerings, including but not limited to the M.A.P. Gaming Lounge (219 Park Avenue), Le Mondo (404-412 N. Howard), Maryland Art Place (218 W. Saratoga), Current Space (419 N. Howard), Downtown Cultural Arts Center (401 N. Howard), other interested businesses.

Evaluate, refine Community Center at 8 N. Howard.

Explore potential/support creation of new community gathering spaces, such as another coffee shop, bike shop that doubles as learning space for bike repair, etc.

Year 3: Continue work from year 2.

**Progress Measures:**

1. Open new community center by Year 2.
2. Enhance and promote the offerings of three existing communal gathering spaces by Year 3.
3. Create one new additional community gathering space by Year 3.

**Outcome 4:** Build bridges between the community and law enforcement.

Year 1: Encourage Baltimore Police Department, UMB Police, and DPOB to attend CCRA meetings and/or Market Center Mingles. Talk to Seawall Development and Lexington Market, Inc., about their research into effective and equitable community safety programs.

Year 2: Based on what is learned from conversations with Seawall and Lexington Market, identify whether and how to support their efforts. Similarly, glean information from BPD and DPOB attendance at CCRA meetings and/or Market Center Mingles, and identify opportunities for working together.

Note: The Quality of Life workgroup also stressed the need to make Market Center feel more welcoming by reducing the number of vacant storefronts, improving lighting, and encouraging foot traffic. These items are addressed in the following sections:

- *Economy, Goal 3, Outcome 1: Activate unused space.*
- *Transportation, Goal 1: Make Market Center more accessible, walkable, and bikeable.*

**Outcome 5:** Attract a grocery store or otherwise improve quality of fresh food offerings in Market Center.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Learn about current opportunities and barriers to attracting a grocery store, and take steps to overcome barriers, take advantage of opportunities.

Partners: BDC, DPOB, MCMA, CCRA

Year 1: Convene meeting with BDC, DPOB, MCMA, other interested parties to understand current state of ability to attract a grocery store to Market Center, steps necessary to make Market Center more attractive to a grocery store. Identify other options to meet need for fresh food in Market Center. For example, the group may decide to pursue development of a coop grocery, work with existing businesses to diversify and improve quality of food offerings or address fresh food needs primarily through the redeveloped Lexington Market. Develop consensus on strategy.

Year 2: Implement steps identified in Year 1.

Year 3: Evaluate, refine strategy.

**Goal 2: Build a culture of collaboration and civic pride and connect this to community improvements (social, physical, and natural).**

**Outcome 1:** Increase volunteer activity.

Strategies:

1. Host volunteer events that simultaneously build a sense of community and improve the physical environment.

Year 1: Grow CCRA's monthly beautification days and connect with/make use of other volunteer programs.

Partners: CCRA, MCCDC, Private Sector, Bromo, VA, UMMC, UMB, Lexington Market, others

Year 2: Develop Artists in the Alleys program, to allow artists to take claim to alley space  
Partners: Bromo, City (to address any legal issues)

Year 3: Develop Community Garden

Partners: CCRA, VA, MCCDC, others

2. Work with city to fix dilapidated infrastructure and city-owned buildings, to send a message that the city cares about the community.

*See also Transportation Goal 1, Outcome 2, Strategy 2: “Improve public sector and business improvement district service delivery.”*

*See also Environment, Goal 3, Outcome 1: “Market Center’s infrastructure – including but not limited to lights, sidewalks, crosswalks, street signs, and parks – is well-maintained and functional.”*

Progress Measures:

1. Increase volunteer hours spent in Market Center for beautification efforts to 25 hours per month. (Baseline: 20, based on CCRA’s April beautification day).

## **Relation to Baltimore City Sustainable Communities Plan**

With much of the Bromo Arts and Entertainment District located within Market Center’s footprint, the SCP’s strategy to target investment in arts and entertainment districts aligns with Market Center’s revitalization goals. In addition, the SRP calls for more “projects and initiatives to support these amenities, increase the City’s sense of place and create experiences that attract visitors from around the region, all contributing to the expansion of Baltimore’s cultural sector. This will provide additional opportunities to preserve and enhance the historic character of neighborhoods, and spur private investment in historic areas through investments in residential, commercial, and mixed-use development.”

The SCP also encourages increased development near existing and proposed transit stations in order to enhance the safety and sense of place in neighborhoods and promote a broad range of mixed-income housing choices.”

## **Community Engagement**

*Vision: Market Center is a place where stakeholders can clearly learn about the community, be engaged in decision-making, feel respected and heard, and have a personal stake in the outcome.*

**Goal 1: Build strong relationships with various stakeholders and grow community organizing capacity.**

A core principle of Community Engagement is to meet people where they are.

**Outcome 1:** Develop core group of regular participants (“informal cheerleaders”), community leaders, and people who take responsibility for follow up actions and outreach (information distribution). Build on the existing structure that is emerging from the Market Center Mingles, which is organically developing a core leadership group.

#### Strategies & Partners

1. Host community and participate in community events/meetings. Some events will be open to anyone who is interested, such as the Market Center Mingles, while others will be targeted to specific groups, such as “lunch and learns” for employees.

Partners: MCCDC, CRS, others

Year 1: Continue to hold monthly Market Center Mingles and foster growth of informal cheerleader group and core leadership group. Hold at least two additional gatherings targeted to specific groups. Participate in at least two community meetings (such as CCRA, Mount Vernon Belvedere, Seton Hill, Orchard Gardens, Heritage Crossing).

Year 2: Evaluate system of Mingles, participation in community meetings, and hosting of special gatherings. Determine how effective it is and whether it needs to be modified or formalized.

Year 3: Continue to foster organic growth of community leaders through Market Center Mingles while also identifying future opportunities to grow community organizing capacity. For example, it might be possible to secure a fellow through the Open Society Institute or Baltimore Corps, or another organization might follow Catholic Relief Services’ lead and hire a community engagement specialist.

2. Engage in one-on-one outreach

Partners: CRS

Year 2: Operation Who is Market Center – Position people around Market Center at tables, with surveys to learn more about stakeholder priorities (especially transient population).

Year 3: Door knocking campaign

Partners: CRS, CCRA

#### Progress Measures:

1. Host ten community meetings/events per year. Attract 200 people to meetings, at least 50 of whom will be new.
2. Participate in two additional community meetings/year.

3. Develop core group of ten informal cheerleaders, six community leaders, and network for information distribution.
4. Get 100 respondents to “Who is Market Center?” and door-knocking campaign.

**Goal 2: Create & maintain consistent vehicles of communication with the public and between organizations working in Market Center.**

The information must be current, reliable, interesting, pertinent, and well-packaged.

**Outcome 1:** Market Center will have strengthened lines of communication with various stakeholder groups: apartment building owners/managers, community groups, employers, UMB.

Strategies & Partners:

1. Organizations working in Market Center meet regularly to share information and improve communication and collaboration.  
Partners: MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Bromo, UMB, BDC, CCRA
2. Host quarterly Market Center “Congress” Meetings (for lack of a better term).

**Outcome 2:** Market Center will have one or more well-recognized vehicles of communication with the public.

Year 1: Convene a committee to evaluate current vehicles of communication and determine whether any can be re-tooled to achieve the desired outcome. Make recommendations for re-tooling existing vehicles or creating new means of communication.

Partners: MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Bromo, UMB, and others who are not affiliated with a group but have expressed opinions and can help us understand the public’s perspective.

Year 2: Implement recommendations from Year 1

Partners: MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Bromo, UMB

**Outcome 4:** The Market Center geography will have a recognized, shared identity/brand, which resonates with Market Center stakeholders and the public.

Year 1: Hire a consultant to facilitate a discussion among the organizations working in Market Center, and informed by public opinion, to come to consensus about how best to brand the neighborhood.

Partners: MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Bromo, CCRA, BDC, UMB

Year 2: Implement the collaborative brand identity and strategies for working together, as agreed upon in Year 1.

Partners: MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Bromo, CCRA, BDC, UMB



Year 3: Gauge impact of efforts.

Partners: MCMA, MCCDC, DPOB, Bromo, CCRA, BDC, UMB

## **Relation to Sustainable Communities Plan**

Market Center's community involvement goals and outcomes align with the SCP's commitment to "utilize an extensive network of public agencies, private organizations, anchor institutions, businesses, community development corporations, umbrella organizations and others who contribute various resources and expertise toward the common goals of creating a strong, vital and sustainable city."

Further support for Market Center's community involvement efforts is seen in the SCP's statement "Strong public-private partnerships based on ongoing collaboration are and will continue to be critical to the success of the City's neighborhood revitalization initiatives."

## **Conclusion/Call to Action for Market Center**

During a time when cities across the country have seen neglected or abandoned parts of their urban core come back to life, Market Center is poised to become a thriving part of Baltimore's living fabric once again. With its central location in Baltimore City and the surrounding region, major institutions, employers and Baltimore's fastest growing residential neighborhood on its doorstep, public transportation options, walkability, historic architecture and history as the region's premier shopping district, many of the elements are in place for successful revitalization.

There is no shortage of models in cities that have transformed areas with similar characteristics into environments characterized by the vibrancy, energy and diversity that represent urban life at its best. Washington DC's Chinatown/Gallery Place/Arena neighborhood, Cincinnati's Over the Rhine, Philadelphia's Market East/Reading Terminal, Philadelphia's University City and Midtown Detroit all provide evidence of what Market Center can become.

For any urban environment -- including Market Center -- to be transformed, a community must have three key elements: vision, leadership and partners, and a comprehensive strategy and resources. The Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan expresses a clear vision of what Market Center can be in each of the planning areas. Together, these visions paint a picture of an urban district as a place where all Baltimoreans feel welcome, included and uplifted.

As always, leadership is essential to realizing a vision. Leadership for Market Center's revitalization must include business leaders, anchor institutions, and community-based stakeholders, and elected officials, including the mayor and councilperson. The right mix of leaders needs to move the process forward in ways that assure all stakeholders are involved in realizing the vision many of them helped create for this report.

And of course, no transformation can be successful without the necessary financial resources. This is also why leadership matters, as leaders can unlock existing resources and advocate for new ones, as we've recently seen for other parts of the city such as Harbor Point and Port Covington.

For all the challenges Market Center and Baltimore City face, the people of Baltimore City have demonstrated remarkable resiliency over the course of its history. When fire destroyed much of Baltimore's central business district in 1904, Mayor Robert McLane vowed to rebuild as quickly as possible. And rebuild he did to the point where just two years later, the Baltimore Sun reported "one of the great disasters of modern time had been converted into a blessing." When Baltimore experienced alarming levels of population flight and disinvestment during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mayor William Donald Schaefer, James Rouse, and civic leaders envisioned and created a revitalized waterfront where residents would rediscover their city while welcoming visitors from around the world.

Now nearly half a century later, Baltimore finds itself at another crossroads – people across Baltimore are working hard to improve their communities, but they are frustrated by factors which are or at least seem to be beyond their control. Market Center is just one of these communities, but Market Center has built in assets which do not exist anywhere else. MCCDC and its partners are determined to make the most of these assets and transform Market Center into a growing, thriving, equitable, welcoming community.

With committed leadership and investments of the resources necessary to realize the vision for a revitalized Market Center, the area can again be a place of pride for Baltimore. A place whose vibrancy, energy and diversity reflect Baltimore at its best and contribute to our city's comeback as an urban success story in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## APPENDIX A:

### Market Center Strategic Revitalization Plan Advisory Committee (in alphabetical order)

The following entities have been invited to participate on the Advisory Committee, but we are open to adding more Advisory Committee members. To serve on the Advisory Committee, you must be willing to commit time to meetings and reviewing documents between meetings. If you are interested in serving on the Advisory Committee, please contact Kristen Mitchell at 443-478-3014.

There are also other substantive ways to participate in this planning process, including focus groups, subcommittee meetings on specific subjects, such as housing and transportation, and public meetings.

1. Baltimore Development Corporation, Kyree West
2. Baltimore Heritage, Johns Hopkins
3. Baltimore Leadership School for Young Women (Invited)
4. Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Mark Slater
5. Bromo Arts & Entertainment District, Davon Barbour, Amy Cavanaugh Royce
6. Catholic Relief Services, Janee Franklin
7. City Center Residents Association, Bill King (+ Sue Carlin, Ethan Burbridge)
8. Downtown Partnership of Baltimore, Davon Barbour
9. Enoch Pratt Free Library (Invited – spoke twice with Marianne Escoe, 410-396-5395, mescoe@prattlibrary.org)
10. Greater Baltimore Urban League (Invited)
11. Lexington Market, Inc., Robert Thomas, Scott Garfield
12. Market Center Community Development Corporation, Wendy Blair
13. Market Center Merchants Association, Judson Kerr
14. University of Maryland, Baltimore, Stuart Sirota
15. University of Maryland Medical Center, Samuel Burris
16. Veterans Administration Hospital, Stephanie O'Connell

#### Resource Team:

1. Baltimore City Department of Planning, Christina Hartsfield
2. Baltimore City Department of Transportation, Theo Ngongang
3. Maryland Transit Administration, Patrick McMahon
4. Maryland Stadium Authority, Rachelina Bonacci
5. Maryland Department of Planning, Victoria Olivier
6. Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development, Nick Mayr
7. Representative of Mayor Catherine Pugh, Marianne Navarro
8. Representative of Council President Jack Young, Scott Davis
9. Councilman Eric Costello (+ alternate)

**APPENDIX B:**

**Housing**

**Residential Buildings in Market Center (10+ units)**

<b>Building Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Type</b>
<b><i>Existing Buildings</i></b>			
106-110 N. Eutaw	106-110 N. Eutaw	11	Market
300 Cathedral	300 Cathedral	59	Market
505 Park	505 Park	10	Market
511 Park	511 Park	16	Market
520 Park	520 Park	171	Market
500 Park	500 Park	153	Market
Basilica Place	124 W. Franklin	200	Seniors, Disabled
Centerpoint	8 N. Howard	399	Market
Chesapeake Commons	601 N. Eutaw	99	Market
Fayette Square	518 W. Fayette	147	Students
Gallery Tower	Gallery Tower	145	Market
Monument Place	305 W. Monument	59	Market
Mulberry Court	401 N. Eutaw	62	Affordable
Mulberry at Park	211 W. Mulberry	70	Affordable
St. James Place	301 W. Franklin	25	Market
Saratoga Lofts	125 W. Saratoga	19	Market
The Atrium	118 N. Howard	173	Market
The Congress	<u>306 W. Franklin</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>Market</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>1854</b>	
Artists			
Seniors/Disabled		200	10.79%
Students		147	7.93%
Veterans			
Affordable		132	7.12%

<b>Building Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Type</b>
<b><i>Under Construction</i></b>			
9 N. Howard	9 N. Howard	15	Market
109-111 W. Lexington	109 W. Lexington	20	Market
Howard Row	407-415 N. Howard	41	Market
L on Liberty	214 Clay	72	Affordable
Le Mondo	406-412 N. Howard	12	Artists
<u>Paca House</u>	<u>116 N. Paca</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>Veterans</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>252</b>	
Artists		12	4.8%
Seniors/Disabled			
Students			
Veterans		92	36.5%
Affordable		72	28.6%
<b>Building Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Type</b>
<b><i>Planned</i></b>			
600 N. Howard	600 N. Howard	12	Market
Crook Horner	301-05 N. Howard	15	Market
Fayette/Liberty	142-44 W. Fayette; 102-06 N. Liberty	20	Market
Hela Franklin	217-25 W. Franklin; 423-25 N. Howard	52	Market
Four Ten Lofts	410-22 W. Mulberry; 410 N. Eutaw	76	Mixed-income, including Affordable, Artist, and Market units
Howard Station	400-14 Park	94	Market
Mayfair	506 N. Howard	50	Market
St. James Expansion	301 W. Franklin	129	Market
<u>University Place</u>	<u>100 N. Eutaw</u>	<u>213</u>	<u>Students</u>
<b>Total</b>		<b>661</b>	
Artists		48	7.2%
Seniors/Disabled			
Students		213	32.4%
Veterans			
Affordable		20	3%

**APPENDIX C**  
**MCMA Residential Survey Summary (limited to people who live within Market Center)**  
**February – April 2019**

Total Responses: 60

Occupancy Status: 57 rent; 2 own

People in household

- One, 31, 51.67%
- Two, 24, 40%

Racial background

- White or Caucasian: 34, 57.63%
- Black or African American: 15, 25.42%
- Asian, or Asian American: 5, 8.47%
- Hispanic or Latino: 3.39%
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander: 1.69%
- Other: 3.39%

Age

- 25-34: 37, 61.67%
- 35-44: 9, 15%

Education Level

- Postgraduate: 29, 48.33%
- College graduate: 26, 43.33%
- Some College: 4, 6.67%
- High School Grad/GED: 1, 1.67%

Annual HH Income

- \$50-75K: 14, 24.14%
- \$30-50K: 12, 20.69%
- \$100-150K: 12, 20.69%
- \$150K+: 9, 15.52%
- \$75-100K: 7, 12.07%
- \$15-30K: 2, 3.45%
- Under \$15K: 2, 3.45%

Employment Status

- Employed: 45, 75%
- Student: 6, 10%
- Self-Employed: 3, 5%
- Active Duty Military: 2, 3.33%
- Retired: 2, 3.33%
- Homemaker and Other: 1 each

Primary Mode of Transport:

- Car: 26, 43.33%
- Walking: 17, 28.33%

- Bus: 12, 20%
- Other: 4 (MTA Mobility, MARC, Combination ...)
- Bicycling: 1

How often do you shop, dine, or access services in Market Center?

- About once a week: 14, 23.33%
- A few times a week: 13, 21.67%
- A few times a month: 12, 20%
- Less than once a month: 10, 16.67%
- Other: 5, 8.33% (almost never)
- Once a month: 3, 5%
- Every Day: 3, 5%

What specific businesses/venues in Market Center do you visit:

- Mount Vernon Marketplace: 16
- Lexington Market: 8
- Red Boat: 7
- 7-Eleven (7)
- Forno: 6
- Starbucks: 6
- Ceremony: 6
- Maiwand (5)
- Streets Market & Café (5),
- Trinacria (4)
- Panera (3)
- EPFL (3)
- HDL (3),
- Other mentions: Urban Outlet, Wireless One, Krispy Krunchy Chicken, Dear Globe Coffee, Benedetto, Royal Menu, McDonald's, Walgreens (2), The Dark Room, Diskobar (?),Saratoga Liquors, Local Oyster, Between 2 Buns (2), AJ's, Pinch, Fresh Monday's (2), Edible Favors, Brown Rice (2), Cholita's, Faidley's, Berger's, Amos Meats, "Grocery Store," "smoke shop," art gallery, Rotitto's, Chinese (?), Pollo, Nando's (4), D's Juice Bar, Walters Art, Parkside Liquors, Po Tung

What are your reasons for not shopping/dining in MC more frequently?

- Safety Concerns: 27
- Variety of Offerings: 26
- Quality of Offerings: 22
- Convenience: 5
- Other: saving \$/strict budget (6); "it is simply not pleasant"

Where do you do most of your shopping?

- Other neighborhoods in Baltimore City: 21, 35%
- On-Line: 20, 33.33%
- Outside of Baltimore City: 15, 25%
- Market Center: 3, 5%

When you dine out, where do you most often go?

- Other neighborhoods in Baltimore City: 37, 61.67%
- Market Center: 13, 21.67%
- Outside of Baltimore City: 4, 6.67%

When choosing where to live, what three qualities are most important to you?

1. Personal safety, 35, 58.33%
2. Convenience/proximity to work, school, family, etc.: 26, 43.33%
3. Presence of unique businesses, arts & entertainment venues: 19, 31.67%
4. Low prices/good value: 19, 31.67%
5. Parking: 18, 30%
6. Cleanliness of neighborhood: 13, 21.67%
7. Inclusivity/Diversity: 10, 16.67%
8. Public Transportation: 10, 16.67%
9. Pedestrian/bike-friendly atmosphere: 10, 16.67%
10. Historic architecture: 6, 10%
11. Other: Onsite gym, park/green space, proximity to Basilica

When choosing where to shop/dine, what three qualities are most important to you?

1. Personal safety: 32, 53.33%
2. Presence of unique businesses, arts & entertainment venues: 31, 51.67%
3. Cleanliness of neighborhood: 24, 40%
4. Low prices/good value: 21, 35%
5. Convenience/proximity to work, school, family, etc.: 21, 35%
6. Inclusivity/diversity: 13, 21.67%
7. Parking: 11, 18.33%
8. Public Transportation: 5, 8.33%
9. Pedestrian/bike-friendly atmosphere: 4, 6.67%
10. Historic buildings: 4, 6.67%
11. Other: quality, accommodation-friendly

How would you rate MC on the following?

Ratings: Excellent, Very Good, Good, Fair, Poor, N/A/Don't Know

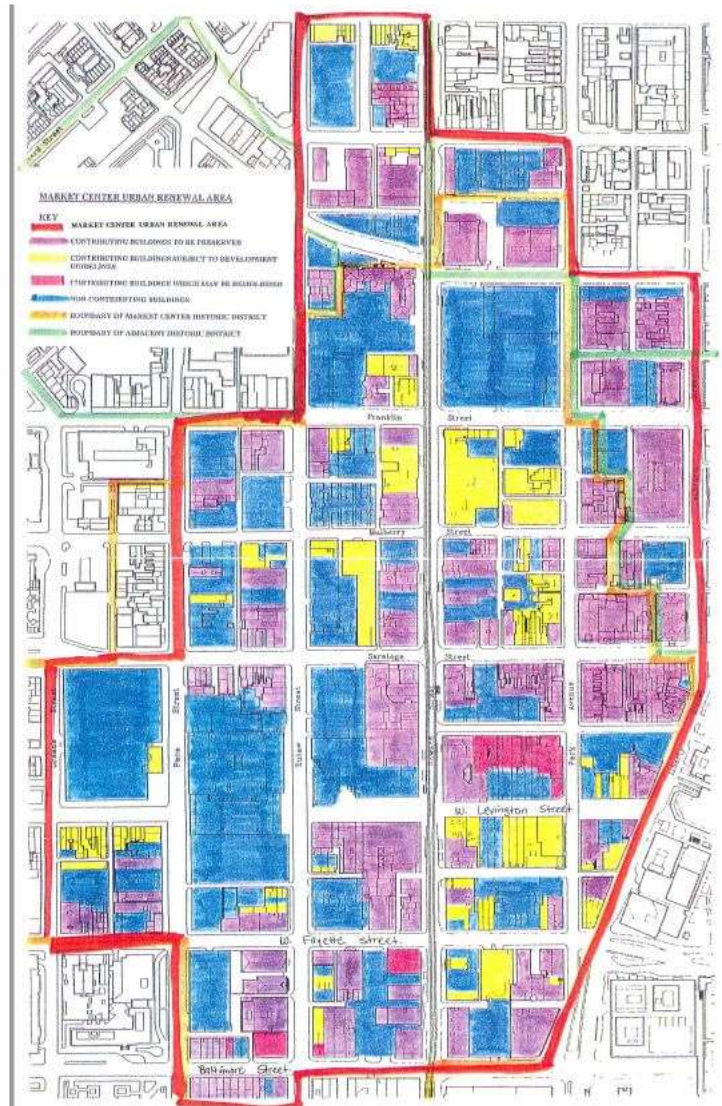
For this summary, I included only the top category if it exceeded every other category by at least 10%.

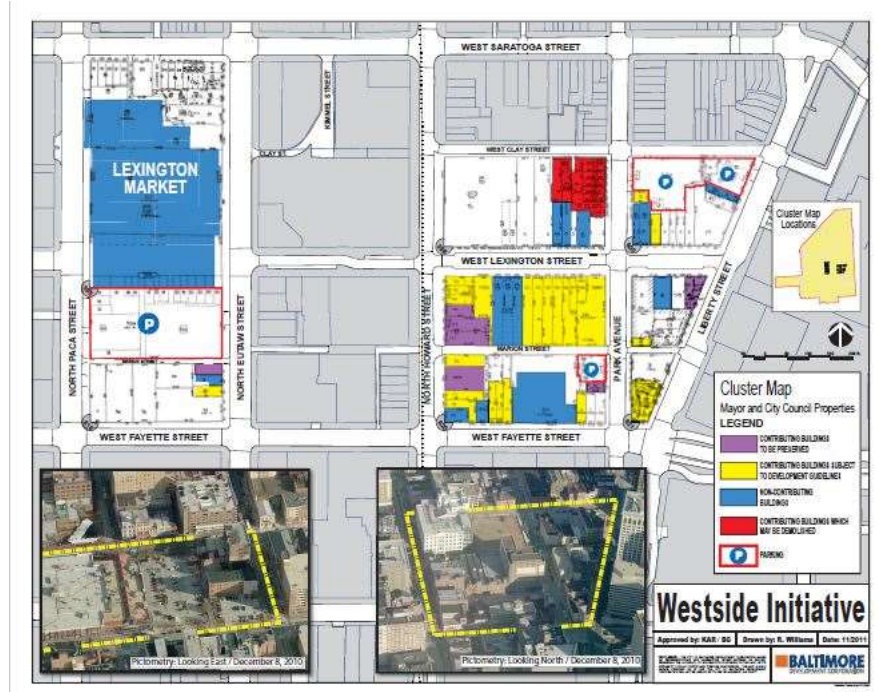
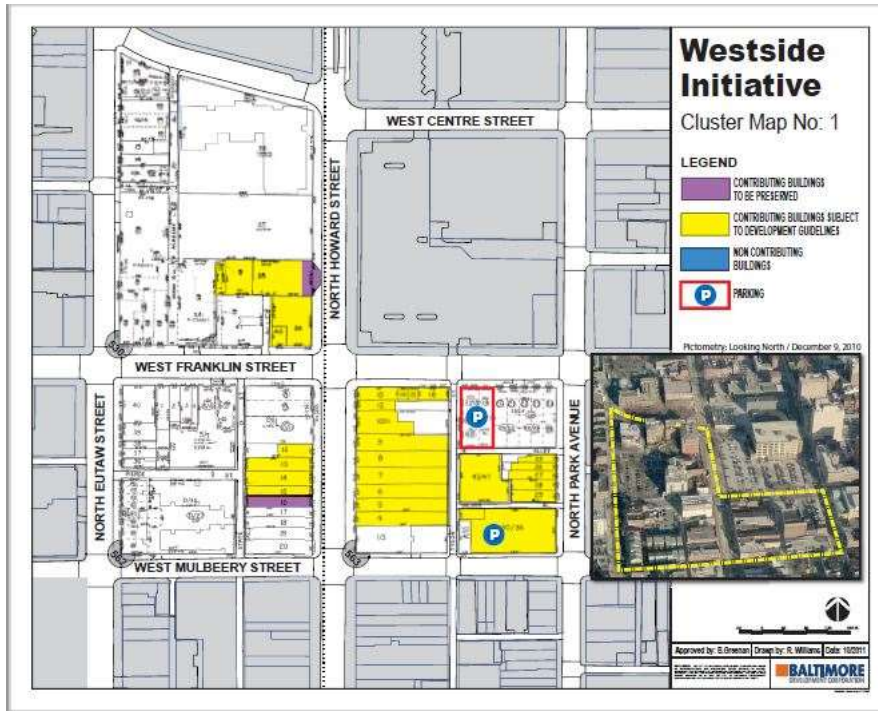
- Grocery Shopping: 29, 48.33% Poor
- Retail Offerings: 29, 48.33% Poor
- Cleanliness/Safety: 20, 33.33% Fair, 20, 33.33% Poor
- A&E Offerings: 15, 25.42% Fair; 14, 23.73% Good; 13, 22.03% Very Good
- Food Offerings: 23, 38.33% Good
- Accessibility/Mobility: 16, 27.12% Good; 15, 25.42% Very Good

MC fared most poorly on grocery shopping, retail offerings, and cleanliness/safety. MC fared best on food offerings, and accessibility/mobility. MC fared in the middle with respect to arts and entertainment offerings.



APPENDIX D:  
Historic Preservation Maps





	2019	2017
Population	2,979	2,865
Households	1,889	1,772
% Male	49%	49%
% Female	51%	51%
Age		
Age 25-44	1,754	1,706
% Age 25-44	59%	60%
Median Age	33	32
Race/Ethnicity		
% White	53%	53%
% Black or African American	23%	22%
% Asian	19%	19%
% American Indian, Alaskan Native	0%	0%
% Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%
% Other Race	1%	1%
% Two or More Races	4%	4%
% Hispanic or Latino	6%	5%
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	1723	1535
% Bachelor's Degree or Higher	69%	65%
Income		
Average HH Income	\$ 61,299	\$ 53,699
Median HH Income	\$ 50,739	\$ 45,012
HHs w/Income > \$75,000	521	436
% HHs w/Income > \$75,000	28%	25%
Median HH Income, White HH	\$ 55,535	\$ 50,982
Median HH Income, Black or African American	\$ 27,776	\$ 32,039
Median HH Income, Asian	\$ 59,276	\$ 47,507
Housing		
% Owner-Occupied Housing	4%	4%
Renter Occ Avg Length of Residence	8.25 years	6 years
Owner Occ Avg Length of Residence	5.32 years	11 years
Median Home Value (Owner Occ)	\$ 234,879	\$ 281,425
Household Composition		
% HHs w/No People Under 18	95%	95%
% One-Person HHs	67%	67%
Transportation & Vehicle Ownership		
% Drive Alone or Carpool to Work	38%	41%
% Walk or Bike to Work	40%	31%
% Take Public Transit to Work	17%	21%
% Work from Home	4%	3%
% No-Vehicle HHs	42%	39%



