

Baltimore County Government
Transition Report

2019



Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski

Letter from the County Executive



Dear Baltimore County,

As a candidate for Baltimore County Executive, I promised to work with you and all of our communities to build a better Baltimore County. As County Executive, I am committed to following through on that promise. This Transition Report is an important step in honoring my commitment and moving Baltimore County forward in the years ahead.

Under the leadership of our Transition Team co-chairs—Calvin Butler, Jr. and Rachel Garbow Monroe—more than 100 respected thought-leaders, practitioners, community leaders, and policy advocates from both the public and private sectors came together to develop a comprehensive set of recommendations that provide a blueprint for our work over the next four years. Several key themes run throughout the recommendations: Connectivity, Equity, Sustainability, and Transparency. These four tenets will serve as the foundation of my administration as we work to create a county where all residents can live in strong, vibrant, diverse communities that they are proud to call home.

From the beginning, our journey has been an open, people-powered effort that speaks to what is possible in Baltimore County—and our transition has followed this philosophy. Over the last few months, we have led an inclusive, transparent process that has connected individuals from around our region to share ideas and plan for our County's future. We have received hundreds of online submissions from residents about a broad range of issues, from schools and jobs to diversity and government reform. And we have convened diverse groups of stakeholders, including labor leaders, education advocates, business leaders, and environmental advocates, for productive dialogues about the most pressing issues facing the County.

The priorities outlined in this report reflect both the recommendations of our Transition Team work groups as well as the input of our residents as we now chart a course to actualize our vision for a better Baltimore County.

This report cannot be read in a vacuum; it is being presented while the County confronts significant fiscal challenges. But I am confident that we will overcome these challenges by working together, being honest about where we are and where we want to go, and remaining steadfast as we build a better Baltimore County.

It's important to remember that this document is not the culmination of our efforts, but a starting point from which we will work together to turn this blueprint into a reality.

What we can build is limited only by our imagination and our ability to come together to get it done. Let's get to work.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Olszewski". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a distinct "O" at the end.

John "Johnny O" Olszewski, Jr.

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Executive Summary

The Olszewski transition was an open and inclusive process that connected individuals from around the County and the region to share ideas and plan for Baltimore County's future.

Executive Summary

The Transition Team

The Transition Team brought together more than 100 respected thought-leaders, practitioners, community leaders, and policy advocates—from both the public and private sectors—to participate in seven work groups charged with developing recommendations for advancing key priorities affecting Baltimore County residents. The seven work groups covered the topics of Education; Diversity, Inclusion, and Quality of Life; Government Reform and Innovation; Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Transportation; Public Safety; Health and Human Services; and Job Creation and Economic Development.

The process began in mid-November 2018 when then County Executive-elect Johnny Olszewski named two co-chairs of his Transition Team: Calvin G. Butler, Jr. and Rachel Garbow Monroe.

Calvin G. Butler, Jr. is CEO of Baltimore Gas and Electric Company and serves on the board of many prominent Baltimore-area organizations including the Baltimore Community Foundation, the University of Maryland Medical Center, Greater Baltimore Committee, and the Cal Ripken Sr. Foundation. In 2017, Butler was named among Black Enterprise Magazine’s “300 Most Powerful Executives in Corporate America” and “Industrialist of the Year” by the Baltimore Museum of Industry.

Rachel Garbow Monroe is President and CEO of the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, one of the nation’s largest private charitable foundations with roughly \$2.6 billion in assets. For the past several years, the Foundation has distributed approximately \$25 million each year in grants to nonprofits in the greater Baltimore region. Monroe began her tenure as President and CEO in 2010 after serving as the Foundation’s first chief operating officer since 2005. In 2016, Monroe was honored as SmartCEO Magazine’s “CEO of the Year.”

On November 30, the first full meeting of the Transition Team was held at the Maryland Agriculture and Farm Park in Cockeysville. Over the course of several weeks, groups continued to meet to discuss gaps, obstacles, and opportunities within each policy area, ultimately compiling their lists of recommendations for the County. Team members engaged with County agency heads and others with knowledge about the operations of County government, and its strengths and weaknesses.

The Ideas@ Initiative

Throughout this time period, the public was also asked to provide ideas and views on key issues and priorities. In November, the Olszewski Transition Team established an email account to solicit feedback from Baltimore County residents on a broad range of issues areas, from schools and jobs to diversity and government reform.

Over the course of several months, a total of 178 individuals submitted 195 emails to the account. Examples of specific suggestions included: leveraging data to improve performance, from code enforcement and public safety to education; promoting an inclusive culture for the County, including the hiring of more diverse staff; diversifying the County's economy by embracing tech jobs; and incorporating green infrastructure into public works projects.

Many of these ideas from Baltimore County residents are reflected in this final report.

Stakeholder Roundtables

The Olszewski Transition process also included four roundtable discussions with stakeholder groups around specific issues. The labor roundtable discussed a regional coalition in support of a statewide minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour, with a focus on local hiring requirements and fair wages for workers. At the business roundtable discussion, the County Executive stressed his objective to make Baltimore County more customer-service oriented and encouraged participants to supply input on ways to improve the County's business processes. Environmental advocates joined the County Executive for a roundtable discussion of connectivity among sustainability and environmental advocates, ensuring a greener Baltimore County and improving engagement between advocates and county government. County Executive Olszewski also met with parent advocates to discuss the most pressing issues involving Baltimore County Public Schools. The topics included the County's dire fiscal situation, the state of school construction funding, the efficacy of the STAT technology program in K-12 classrooms, and the impact of technology on learning and brain development. Roundtable discussions with stakeholders will continue going forward.

Transition Team Co-Chairs

Calvin G. Butler, Jr., CEO, Baltimore Gas and Electric

Rachel Garbow Monroe, President and CEO,
The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation

Work Group Members

Education

Co-Chairs:

Ed Gillis, Partner at Royston, Mueller, McLean, and Reid LLP

Diana Morris,
Director, Open Society Institute

Members:

Abby Beytin	Tam Lynne Kelley
Allie Carter	Jennifer Lynch
Melissa Broome	Ligia Mardari
Yara Cheikh	Sean McComb
Tony Fugett	Eric Washington
Marisol Johnson	

Diversity, Inclusion, and Quality of Life

Co-Chairs:

Vicki Almond,
Former District 2 Councilwoman

Chuck Tildon, Vice President,
United Way of Central Maryland

Members:

Jessy Dressin	Gray Parsons
Sara Elalamy	Susan Radke
Charles Fink	Doug Riley
Doug Hoffberger	Shanaysha Sauls
Linwood Jackson	Jason St. John
Bobbie Laur	Morgan Streeter
Cindy Leppert	Lisa Weiderlight
Pam Newland	

Government Reform and Innovation

Co-Chairs:

Beth Blauer, Executive Director,
Johns Hopkins University GovEx

Lisa Hamilton, President and CEO
of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

Roy Meyers, Professor, UMBC

Members:

Akbar Ansari	Mandee Heintz
Sonny Appolonia	Kevin Mooring
Mitch Butta	Jeff Supik
Sheldon Caplis	Shirley Supik
Rob Gavel	Maria Tildon

Sustainability, Transportation, and Infrastructure

Co-Chairs:

Anwer Hasan, Senior Vice President,
Louis Berger

Tim Regan,
President, Whiting-Turner

Members:

Ed Adams	Klaus Philipsen
Joan Bryan	Scott Phillips
Chris Burton	Tom Pilon
Charlie Fenwick	Rob Poleski
John Hawks	Todd Schuler
Brent Howard	Jim Smith
Marsha McLaughlin	Tyrone Taborn
Teresa Moore	Ted Venetoulis
Peter O'Malley	

Public Safety

Co-Chairs:

Sheryl Goldstein, Vice President,
The Abell Foundation

Carl Jackson, Community Activist

Members:

Elizabeth Alex	Ganesha Martin
Craig Coleman	Kevin O'Connor
Bryen Glass	Garry Pace
Dyana Forester	John Ripley
Mary Livingston	Anthony Russell
Aisha Khan	Keith Tiedemann
Raees Khan	Mark Weir
Barbara Korenblit	Alonza Williams

Health and Human Services

Co-Chairs:

Talib Horne, Executive Director,
Bon Secours Community Works

Gill Wylie, President, Johns Hopkins
Medical Management

Bill McCarthy,
Executive Director, Catholic Charities

Members:

Lauren Averella	Amy Kleine
Amy Blank	Dawn O'Neill
Lisa Budlow	Mark Puente
John Chessare	Tom Smyth
Jean Gaffney	Brock Yetso
Justin Holliday	Mark Yost
Ricarra Jones	

Job Creation and Economic Development

Co-Chairs:

Kim Schatzel,
President, Towson University

Freeman Hrabowski, President, University
of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC)

Shina Parker, CEO, Integrity Title

Members:

Kirk Baumgart	Adam Kane
Rick Binetti	Sandra Kurtinitis
Brandon Bonnano	Erich March
Dante Daniels	Jon Mayers
Linda Dworak	Amy Menzer
Chickie Grayson	Sam Neuberger
Jessica Hack	Tommy Obrecht
Marci Hunn	Odetta Ramos
Joe Jones	Hugh Sisson

Staff

Transition Director

Elisabeth Sachs

Supporting Staff

Michelle Bernstein	LeRoy Graefe
Chadai Brown	Brad Kroner
Matt Butler	Kelli Lakis
Tucker Cavanagh	Justin Lane
Mary Clay	Ed Novak
Elizabeth Gale	Lauren Watley

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The reports and a full list of recommendations from the seven Transition Team work groups are presented in this report. The following are key recommendations from each work group:

Education

- Apply an equity lens to Baltimore County Public Schools' investments, policies and practices
- Create and publish a long-term capital project plan
- Ensure healthy student-to-teacher, as well as student-to-support-staff, ratios
- Ensure competitive pay for educators
- Expand Community Schools and Hunger-Free Schools
- Expand early childhood education

Diversity, Inclusion, and Quality of Life

- Create an Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Create a Commission on Volunteerism
- Boost capacity of nonprofits and community associations
- Raise the profile of the Small Business Resource Center

Government Reform and Innovation

- Create a CountyStat performance management system
- Direct budget reform
 - Make the County's fiscal practices sustainable
 - Center the budget process on goals, outcomes, and tracking metrics
 - Open up the budget process to the public
- Modernize data practices and make data more accessible
- Engage the public and County employees

Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Transportation

- Create an Office of Sustainability
- Develop a 2030 Master Plan
- Establish a climate change adaptation strategy for Baltimore County
- Create an Office of Transportation Planning with a goal of a separate Transportation Department
- Explore establishment of a Regional Water Authority
- Develop a roadmap for re-invigorating the Department of Recreation and Parks

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

Public Safety

- Build community trust through better community engagement, social media, resident patrols, neighborhood watch programs, PAL Centers, bias training, and multi-lingual resources
- Strengthen regional cooperation through real-time data sharing, first responder coordination, and joint training
- Evaluate Fire, Police, and Corrections operations; technology; and HR practices
- Strengthen services to victims of domestic violence and elder abuse
- Convene a task force to review, revise, and improve practices and procedures related to sexual assault investigations and prosecution of allegations of sexual assault
- Tackle the opioid crisis with expanded use of Narcan and partnering with public health agencies and providers

Health and Human Services

- Create a healthcare blueprint in conjunction with a new Baltimore County Healthcare Commission
- Conduct a data-driven assessment and potential restructuring of health-related County departments
- Expand the collection of data focusing on health and service disparities
- Appoint an Opioid Strategy Coordinator
- Assess services for vulnerable populations, particularly older adults

Job Creation and Economic Development

- Establish an Economic Development Commission
 - Create an economic blueprint
 - Design an anchor strategy
- Expand employer-driven workforce strategies
 - Explore creation of a workforce intermediary
 - Expand Job Connector, strategies for at-risk youth and summer programs for high school students
- Support policies that preserve quality jobs
- Develop an Integrated Tourism and Arts strategy
- Design an overarching strategy for neighborhood stability and revitalization
 - Restructure County departments
 - Support Community Development Corporations
- Take actions that leverage the County's high-quality housing stock to ensure a diverse and sustainable housing portfolio

Education

“ Every family deserves the opportunity to achieve economic stability and security. A robust and dynamic education system is the foundation to that stability, but it’s only the beginning. With a world-class education system, we’ll build a better Baltimore County.

- **County Executive Johnny Olszewski**

Education

All students in Baltimore County deserve access to educational opportunities that provide them with the tools they need to learn, become engaged residents, access learning opportunities beyond high school, and succeed in the workforce.

Baltimore County has a solid foundation, starting with a strong P-20 system of educational partners. Of the \$3.6 billion budget for FY 2019, nearly half (49 percent) is invested in education.

Although there is much to be proud of, gaps and obstacles remain.

The County has many aging and overcrowded school facilities. There is a need for more pre-K and early childhood opportunities. For some students across the County, there is inadequate access to nutrition and school-based meals. There are challenges with teacher recruitment and retention, and with racial and other disparities in education outcomes and discipline practices.

Innovative, data-driven approaches and additional investments are needed to overcome these challenges.

Early Childhood Education

Studies have consistently shown that children who attend pre-school earn higher wages, commit fewer crimes, are more likely to hold a job, and are more likely to graduate from high school. Investing in education at all levels has an immense return on investment. The National Forum on Early Childhood Policy and Programs found that high quality early childhood programs can yield a \$4-\$9 return per \$1 invested.¹

K-12 Education

In Baltimore County Public Schools, over 40 percent of students live in poverty. Baltimore County, therefore, needs a data-driven strategy with a whole-child approach to fight poverty, improve student health, and improve academic outcomes.

School capacity is another looming challenge. According to the report titled “BCPS High School Capacity and Conditions Study: Community Outreach Study,” submitted to Baltimore County Public Schools by the Sage Policy Group in December 2018, over the next decade, there will be 1,700 more students in Baltimore County high schools than there are seats. Towson High School, for example, is already 30 percent over capacity, and it will be 50 percent over capacity within five years. Several high schools need to be replaced, while others need significant modernization.

¹ <https://www.impact.upenn.edu/our-analysis/opportunities-to-achieve-impact/early-childhood-toolkit/why-invest/what-is-the-return-on-investment/>

The average salary of a Baltimore County teacher is less than all but two counties out of the big seven in Maryland. Baltimore County teachers earn an average salary of \$69,627. By comparison, in top-performing school districts Montgomery and Howard counties, teachers earn average salaries of \$81,823 and \$75,274, respectively.²

Nationally, the average student-to-teacher ratio is approximately 16:1. The average student to teacher ratio in Maryland is slightly below that national average at 15:1. Although Baltimore County's average student-to-teacher ratio comes in at the national average of 16:1, this statistic is misleading because class sizes vary widely throughout the County, and can top well over 30 students.³

The County is also woefully behind on hiring social workers, counselors, and school psychologists. For example, Baltimore County provides, on average, one social worker for every 1,176 students—the recommended ratio is 1:250.⁴

Connecting High School to College and Careers

When it comes to connecting high school students to college and careers, Baltimore County high school students benefit from the partnership between BCPS and the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC). The collaboration provides high school student with early access to college-level coursework. This past year, 2,600 high school students enrolled in college-level courses, offered either on site at the high school or at one of the college's campuses. Through a special arrangement with the School Board, CCBC offers four college classes tuition free to qualified high school juniors and seniors, enabling these students to earn the equivalent of their first semester in college at no cost to their families.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Early College Programs

Baltimore County Public Schools and the Community College of Baltimore County have found innovative ways to provide access and opportunity to County high school students. These two educational partners have collaborated to establish the Woodlawn Early College High School and the Pathways to Technology (P-Tech) High School at Dundalk/Sollers Point High School. Both of these initiatives enable high school seniors who enroll in these programs to graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate degree from the Community College of Baltimore County.

² <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/about/Documents/DCAA/SSP/20172018Staff/20172018SalarySchedules.pdf>

³ <https://www.publicschoolreview.com>

⁴ <https://www.socialworkers.org>



Baltimore County Public Schools at a Glance

Size:	25th largest school district in the country; third largest in Maryland
Budget:	\$1.63 billion for FY 2019
Number of schools, programs, and centers:	174
Number of employees:	18,202, including 9,834 teachers
Number of students:	113,814
Student demographics by race:	39.4 percent black, 37.4 percent white, 10.5 percent Hispanic, and 7.2 percent Asian
Percentage that receives special education services:	13.4%
Percentage of English language learners:	6.7%, up from 3.9% five years ago. Since October 1, 2018, more than 900 new students have enrolled in BCPS; 710 of them spoke English as their second language.
Number of languages spoken by BCPS students:	Students come from 115 countries and speak 97 different languages. The most common is Spanish, with the second most common being Yoruba, a language from Nigeria.
Percentage eligible for free or reduced-price meals:	43.8%

Sources: (1) www.bcps.org/system/ and (2) Bowie, Liz. "Baltimore County schools are rapidly adding students. More than half are immigrants or speak another language." *The Baltimore Sun* 7 Feb. 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Funding

1. Partner with the State to meet the County's need for school funding, including funding for school construction and renovation, teacher salaries and school resource staff, operations and programs, for K-12 and community college opportunities
 - Promote an inclusive process to consider how to prioritize funding needs
 - Create a long-term strategic plan for the capital budget that encourages transparency, accountability, and greater community input throughout the process
2. Support the Kirwan Commission's mission by educating the public and encouraging our County's legislative delegation to make funding education in Baltimore County a top priority

Ensuring Equity

3. Use an equity lens when developing the policies, practices, and funding related to the school system
 - Ensure that all students have the same opportunities to learn and to access the non-academic services and support they need to focus on academic studies
 - Given the digital divide and 21st century expectations, explore ways to provide devices and internet access to students in a fiscally responsible and evidence-based approach
 - Support Baltimore County's growing population of English Language Learners, including ESOL educators, bilingual staff, translators, transportation for extra-curriculars, and professional development opportunities for teachers and staff working with ESOL students

Focusing on the Whole Child

4. Expand the number of Hunger-Free Schools⁵ through the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) to all 50 eligible schools

- Require that Breakfast After the Bell be served in all eligible schools
5. Promote a positive school climate that serves the whole child and meets the social and emotional needs of all students
 - Support programs that aim to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and immigration status
 - Allocate sufficient funds for the district to adopt evidence-based models and to provide ongoing training so the models are implemented with fidelity
 6. Implement comprehensive student discipline programs that aim to:
 - Decrease suspensions and expulsions
 - Reduce disproportionate school exclusion for students of color and students with disabilities
 - Improve school climate and assist in classroom management
 7. Meet the needs of special education students through appropriate curriculum, support services, and interventions
 8. Encourage the expansion of dental, optical, and other health services in our schools by partnering with existing County programs, exploring opportunities for public/private partnerships, and taking advantage of all reimbursement opportunities under Medicaid, in coordination with the County and State Health Departments

Engaging Communities

9. Improve the public's confidence in our school system by partnering with BCPS to share information regarding student achievement, system operations, and the state of school climate

⁵Hunger-Free Schools offer breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students at qualifying schools. Only four schools in Baltimore County have implemented this program.

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

10. Expand the number of community schools⁶ while allowing flexibility in meeting the needs of individual communities⁷
11. Build on existing parenting support programs such as the Judy Centers and BCPS' Parent University to support earliest learners, starting at birth

Connecting to Careers

12. Expand and enhance students' access to post-secondary career-building opportunities.
 - Increase BCPS CTE and pre-apprenticeship offerings and apprenticeship opportunities prior to high school graduation, particularly for in-demand industries
 - Expand existing programs, including vocational and technical schools, and certification programs, and community college offerings through Early College Access Initiatives and Diploma to Degree programs, Early College High School at Woodlawn and Pathways to Technology (P-Tech) at Dundalk and Sollers Point High Schools
 - Expand access to the College Promise program by increasing annual family income eligibility to \$80,000 and exploring other eligibility changes that benefit working families
13. Expand existing summer employment opportunities for County high school students, modeled after successful programs such as YouthWorks
14. Support community college Cade⁸ funding formula at the state level

Supporting Teachers and School Personnel

15. Ensure that teachers and students have adequate levels of support from staff such as social workers, school psychologists, counselors, translators, classroom aides, etc., including staff who are bilingual
16. Bolster teacher retention and recruitment through a variety of methods, including but not limited to, increasing salaries, providing high quality professional development, expanding the peer review program, and decreasing class sizes
17. Ensure competitive pay to attract highly qualified candidates for professional support positions

Looking Beyond the Traditional Classroom

18. Develop a universal early childhood education program that could include public-private partnerships
19. Explore development of summer opportunities that combine half-day academic programs through BCPS with other enrichment and extra-curricular activities offered by community and nonprofit partners
20. Hold summer school classes closer to the beginning of the school year to offset students' summer learning loss and ease their transition into the new school year
21. Evaluate and expand transportation options to enable all students to have greater access to special academic opportunities such as early college and magnet schools and to various after-school activities

⁶Community schools bring together many partners to offer a range of supports and opportunities to children, youth, families, and communities. Parkville High School has nearly 900 students in severe poverty, 300 of whom depend on SNAP benefits; 143 are currently identified as homeless. The Student Support Network partners with school staff to provide basic items for students and funding for specific programs and projects.

⁷See the NEA Toolkit: <https://www.nea.org/communitieschools>.

⁸State funding of community colleges is based on the Cade funding formula, which provides not only community colleges with predictable support for operations, but also students with tuition they can afford. The intent of the formula is that community college costs be divided equally between the state, local government, and students.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Quality of Life

“ Our diversity is our strength in Baltimore County. We will continue to strive for more inclusionary practices and policies so that every resident enjoys a high quality of life.

- County Executive Johnny Olszewski

Diversity, Inclusion, and Quality of Life

Diversity is one of Baltimore County's greatest strengths, and it is imperative for County government to demonstrate a core commitment to advancing inclusion and equity practices that strengthen our communities. Residents should have access to the same opportunities and quality of life regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or identity, country of origin, religion, or physical or mental abilities.

Advancing the principles of diversity and inclusion should be considered as a part of every decision made by Baltimore County government. Currently, the County does not have a dedicated leader or office to assist in the advancement of diversity and inclusion within County government and across our communities. There should be a renewed focus on meeting the needs of all communities and populations across the County, particularly those who have been traditionally underserved.

To start, relevant stakeholder organizations, representing a variety of communities and groups, should be engaged in community conversations. This is a first step in gaining greater insight into what needs are not being met, where resources are needed, and whose voices are not being heard.

Equity and Empowerment Lens

In addition to providing vital services to residents, Baltimore County government is also an economic engine for the region, employing more than 8,000 general government employees and spending \$3.6 billion annually in operating expenses. However, these employment and procurement opportunities are not necessarily equitable. One way to address this disparity is for Baltimore County to conduct the business of government through an equity lens. This lens should not be limited to proposals or policies; it should be a way to look at human resource decisions and the budget process, and to review decisions to ensure the County is inclusive and equitable in its operations.

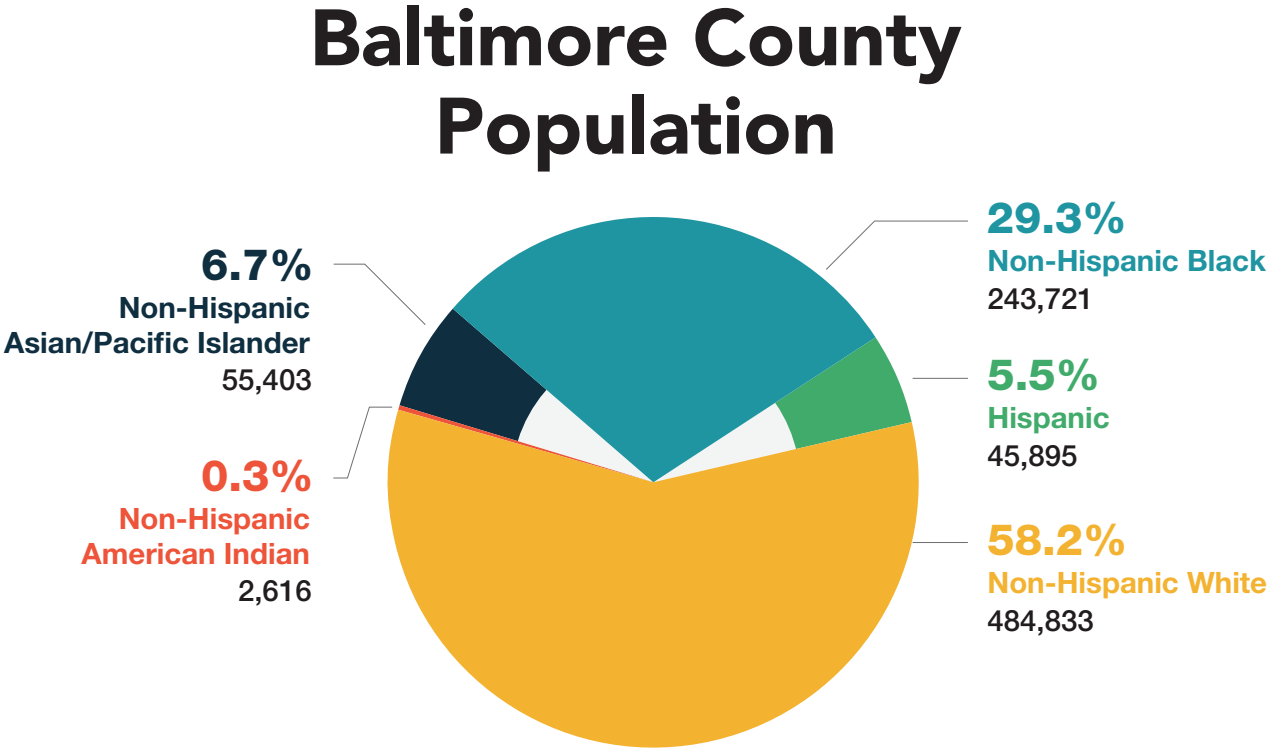
Although there are many minority and women-owned businesses in Baltimore County, many have expressed challenges getting added to the preferred vendors' list—with inclusion criteria remaining unclear to these businesses. Currently, most awards are given to the lowest bid on projects. Instead of a "low bid only" approach, the County should consider also creating more access points for MBEs/WBEs, and/or Baltimore County-based companies.

Finally, the Small Business Resource Center offers very useful information, but it is being underutilized by small businesses throughout the County. Baltimore County should examine ways to expand its reach.

Quality of Life

Fostering diverse, vibrant communities in all areas of the County requires collaboration between County government and many partners.

To meet the needs of all Baltimore County residents, there must be a new focus on leveraging and connecting the government with nonprofit and private sectors, and growing a much deeper network of nonprofit organizations in Baltimore County. Doing so can create new strategies for addressing the needs of our aging neighborhoods and main streets. These organizations can mobilize residents, small businesses, volunteers, and institutions to create block-by-block changes; support local retail and launch new businesses; and build community capacity to solve problems. They can also help deliver specific, replicable programs to address financial stability, increase home ownership, address family stability, change the built environment to impact quality of life in neighborhoods, facilitate aging in place, and impact the social determinants of health.



Source: Maryland Department of Health, Vital Statistics Report 2017

RECOMMENDATIONS

Diversity and Inclusion

1. Establish an Office of Diversity and Inclusion, within the County Executive's Office, to address barriers to access and resources throughout the County and within County government
 - Develop an equity lens for use in decisions across County government including hiring, contracting, and purchasing
 - Employ best practices for ensuring Baltimore County government reflects a diverse workforce and is an inclusive workplace
 - Use a data-driven approach to assess the resource and access needs of traditionally underserved communities
 - Engage communities about unmet needs
 - Use data-driven special projects to show progress and foster buy-in
 - Build bridges between communities across the County
 - Create a multi-cultural Advisory Board to help foster community trust in government, particularly with public safety departments
 - Identify and map out strategies for greater economic inclusion for County residents using best practice resources such as the recent report by the Baltimore Integration Partnership¹
2. Develop a County certification process for MBE/WBE
 - Articulate clear guidelines on how vendors are chosen
 - Re-examine the goal of 15 percent for both women and minority vendors
3. Raise the profile of the Small Business Resource Center

Quality of Life²

4. Conduct an audit of public spaces and facilities, including community centers and fields to identify better uses and access for all residents
5. Create a Commission on Volunteerism
6. Increase engagement with nonprofits and community associations
 - Leverage partnerships with the nonprofit and philanthropic communities
 - Create an asset map of Baltimore County's nonprofit organizations
 - Provide capacity building and board support for homeowner associations and community associations
 - Establish a Grants Coordinator in the Executive's Office to seek resources in coordination with County departments and nonprofit partners, including community associations
7. Forge a tangible and sustained partnership with the Baltimore Community Foundation (BCF)
 - Create pathways to significantly increase direct and indirect investments of the BCF into Baltimore County's needs and opportunities
 - Work together to expand and support neighborhood organizing, community association capacity-building, and regional collaboration
 - Identify, leverage, and catalyze public, private, and philanthropic investments that expand opportunity and improve quality of life for Baltimore County residents in areas or issues identified for special projects
 - Collaborate on a regional advocacy agenda, particularly as it relates to expanding access and opportunity for all

¹ https://baltimorepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/BIP_EconomicInclusion_FullReport_ReducedFileSize_06202018.pdf

² Many of these Quality of Life issues are discussed in greater detail in other sections of this report. For a robust discussion of Recreation and Parks, please see the Sustainability, Transportation, and Infrastructure section of this report. For recommendations on revitalizing neighborhoods, see the Job Creation and Economic Development section.

Government Reform and Innovation

“ It’s time to bring all of Baltimore County into the 21st-century. We will set the standard for transparent, accessible, and connected government. We will modernize our government so that we better measure where we really are, where we want to go, and how we get there.

- County Executive Johnny Olszewski

Government Reform and Innovation

Local government should be transparent, connected, and accessible.

To transform Baltimore County, the Olszewski Administration should follow these principles as they restructure County operations, improve services, and create a budget from the ground up. To stay connected, the new County Executive should take a proactive role in engaging communities across Baltimore County. This work has already begun with the restructuring of the County Executive's outreach and constituent services team, and with well-attended town hall meetings across the County.

Government reform and innovation lay the groundwork for all other policy and program recommendations in this report.

Budget formulation is a key element of reform. In the past, the mechanical calculation of a spending ceiling for the spending affordability process has failed to provide a sufficiently accurate and comprehensive understanding of the County's financial position. And transparency is critical in this space. In years past, the budget formulation process has been incremental and "top down." The public has been historically excluded from participation. Further, the budget document is not user-friendly; its length, organization, and style overload a typical resident reader with too much information. The budget documents, both capital and operating, have outdated performance measures at best.

And when it comes to reform, time is of the essence. Although Baltimore County has maintained a AAA bond rating for years, the current outlook for the County's bond rating is negative, and the County is in danger of a downgrade.

Collaboration is also an essential element of reform. In recent years, cross-departmental sharing has been sporadic at best. Internal leaders have indicated a lack of consistent department-head meetings across the agencies, preventing them from being coordinated and working in concert. The County has also not been efficiently organized to respond in a timely and effective manner to constituent concerns and ideas.

Data-driven management is critical for both innovation and reform. At the core of every innovative public sector team is the value that data is a strategic asset. The County must build on existing efforts to create a County-wide data strategy with a focus on inventory, governance, privacy, and open data.

Engagement is another core tool. The County should create an environment that welcomes and rewards problem solving, openness, and fresh thinking. To encourage innovation, Baltimore County needs a process that engages and leverages the ideas, insights, and energy of both its employees and residents. Through this process, both internal and external stakeholders can become collaborators and contributors.

Internally, all Baltimore County employees should share a vision for success and be clear on the role that their contributions play in achieving the County's goals. With a clear sense of progress toward that vision, employees will feel valued and be able to prioritize their efforts, enabling them to be ambassadors both within the organization and among the community.

To do this, leadership must define attainable, understandable goals and outline how progress will be measured. The County should leverage tools like internal town hall meetings and the intranet to keep employees informed and engaged. They should be able to check the departmental websites and see a dashboard with key data points measuring success. Without knowing how the County is faring, employees cannot adjust their priorities or work together to alter departmental processes.

Externally, engagement can strengthen communities, nurture leaders, and create a more transparent style of government. It can create a sustainable feedback loop, not only allowing residents to be a source of ideas and innovation, but also providing a mechanism for accountability and reporting. Baltimore County should employ a range of community engagement techniques including social media and in-person information sessions to engage with residents and community stakeholders. The County has a number of strong neighborhood associations that can serve as the backbone of this effort and provide guidance on how to allocate funds, understand cultural issues, and develop partnerships within the community.

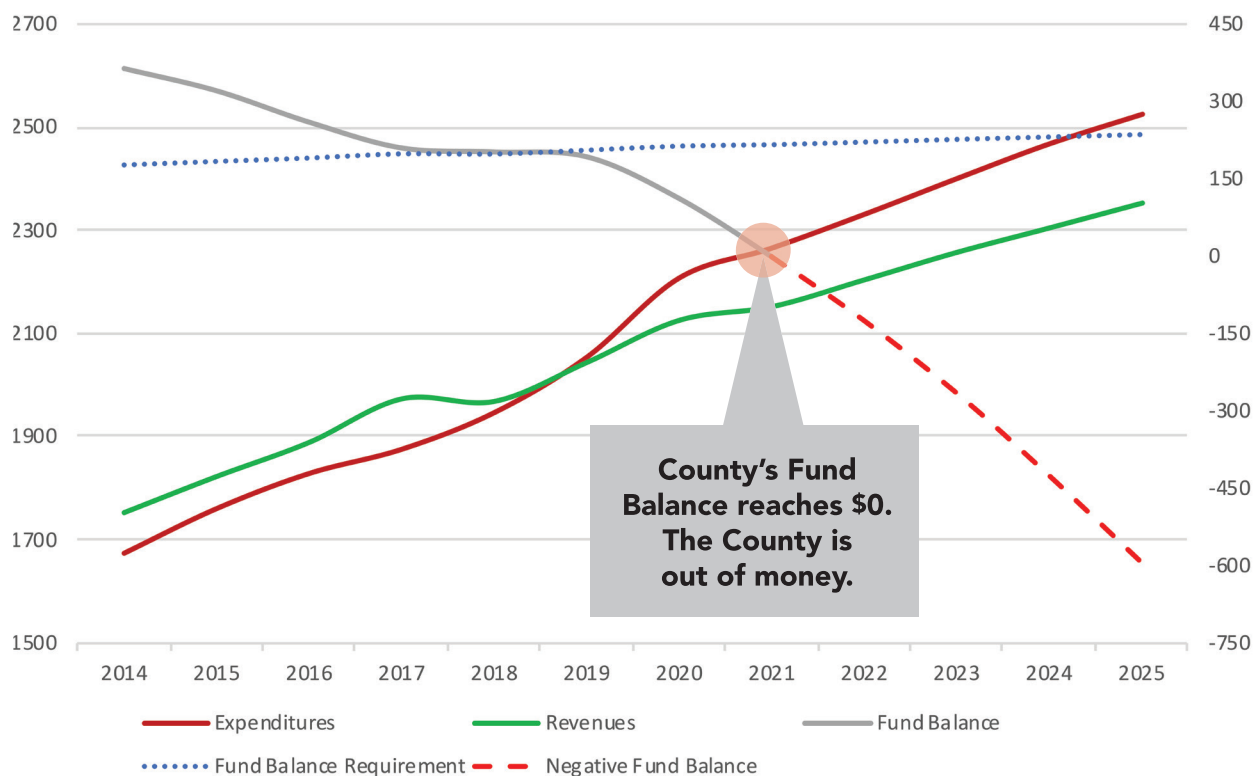
Data platforms, specifically, can offer Baltimore County residents the chance to actively engage in their communities, enabling them to quickly retrieve data, instantly submit forms, and quickly find information they need. A comprehensive communications strategy—email, social media, town hall meetings, newsletters, informational sessions—is an essential component of community engagement.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Liberty Road Community Council, Inc.

Strong neighborhood associations can serve as an important and vital link between County residents and County government. The Liberty Road Community Council, Inc. (LRCC) is one such organization. LRCC also provides start up advice and ongoing support to new neighborhood groups. Assistance ranges from building email lists to connecting new neighborhood leaders with County departments to help resolve issues and address complaints. The LRCC model also includes facilitating neighborhood volunteer projects at local schools and senior centers and encouraging residents to testify at public hearings.

REVENUE vs. EXPENDITURE



RECOMMENDATIONS

Modernize the Budget Process

1. Prepare a budget to provide a more understandable and accessible version to Baltimore County residents
2. Develop an effective and transparent method for making smart, data-informed, cost-effective budget allocations
3. Begin budget preparation by discussing with the Council the quality of the County's services to its residents, the adequacy and competitiveness of the County's revenues, and the County's overall financial position

Modernize Data Practices

4. Establish a cross-disciplinary oversight body, led by the County Executive's Office, to shape the collection and dissemination of data and ensure that data work is aligned with key priorities
 - Conduct a County-wide data inventory
 - Consider hiring a Chief Data Officer or Chief Analyst within the County Executive's office
5. Create a County-wide data governance policy that includes standards for the quality and maintenance of open data, its public release, and calls to action for public engagement

Create County-Stat, a County-wide performance management program

6. Create an internal performance program that focuses on the creation of goals, measurement, and alignment of data to outcomes, creating accountability for all stakeholders on the outcomes that mean the most
 - Create an executive team to own and manage a process that engages all the right stakeholders (Human Resources, Office of Budget and Finance, Office of Information Technology, departments)
 - Build performance routines through regular convenings that invoke the use of data and that shape how decisions are made in government
 - Align the performance management program with policy and legislation

Create a Comprehensive Engagement Strategy for All

7. Encourage internal engagement:
 - Define attainable goals
 - Communicate on a regular basis
 - Track overall progress
 - Share data with employees
8. Facilitate external engagement by creating:
 - Platforms for innovation and engagement
 - A comprehensive communications strategy
 - Resources and success metrics
 - Training and best practice sharing for neighborhood organizations
 - Ways to empower residents with decision-making power

Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Transportation

“As our County continues to grow, we must balance growth with conservation. Modern businesses demand modern infrastructure. It demands a transportation system to get workers and consumers to the front door. It’s time to think smarter about development and commit to a greener Baltimore County.

- **County Executive Johnny Olszewski**

Sustainability, Infrastructure, and Transportation

Sustainability

Sustainability requires meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the physical environment or the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Baltimore County has limited land resources, possesses extensive shorelines vulnerable to flooding, and has a unique combination of rural and highly urbanized areas. To preserve its environment rich in natural resources, Baltimore County needs an integrated cross-departmental approach to sustainability starting with an innovative, comprehensive plan that engages and educates the community, sets aggressive goals, and guides all departments.

Baltimore County can become more sustainable, starting with a retooled Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability to formulate and champion sustainability initiatives. Ambitious goals are needed to significantly increase production and use of renewable energy, including all new and renovated County facilities as well as new incentives for County businesses and residents.

Baltimore County should also have an aggressive timeline to implement a comprehensive, long-term plan to improve conservation recycling and solid waste management efforts.

Land Use

Continued conversion of open space to development combined with strong storm events (i.e., heavy rainfall and flooding) have made land use planning a critical component of sustainable development. A decision-making process that evaluates and balances social, economic, and technical factors is required. The County's Master Plan calls for smart growth that values long-term sustainability over short-term gains. It seeks to avoid sprawl and advocates for compact, transit-oriented, walkable, bicycle-friendly urban communities with neighborhood schools, open space, and mixed-use development that offers a wide range of housing choices and access to good jobs. However, these goals were not always met in specific developments.

Budgetary constraints and competing priorities have impacted the functions of the Planning Department over time. The Department should be the leader in land preservation and sustainable development, including revitalization of older communities. There are many factors that play into this planning process. For example, the County's Urban-Rural Demarcation Line (URDL) needs to be maintained. The URDL protects rural and forested land by directing new development to infill in existing communities with public water and sewer. However, increasing density creates new challenges: traffic congestion, aging and inadequate infrastructure, lack of open space inside the URDL, crowded schools, and other community facilities.

Older "inner ring" suburban communities are facing economic and social challenges that need to be addressed for them to be sustainable and attractive in the future. The Department of Community Conservation, which was created in 1994 to promote economic and social revitalization in these older communities, was an excellent tool. But due to budget constraints, it was scaled back and its functions were transferred to the Department of Planning.

Transportation

A healthy and sustainable Baltimore County requires an integrated transportation plan that connects population centers within the County and connects them with Baltimore City and other neighboring jurisdictions through regional planning.

Currently, the Department of Public Works includes the Bureau of Traffic and Highways. There is very little capacity for transportation planning and nearly all resources are devoted to managing existing assets. A comprehensive plan should connect more people to jobs; reduce energy consumption and air pollution; and make Baltimore County more livable, walkable, and sustainable by setting resiliency goals to mitigate damage and accelerate recovery from catastrophic events.

Infrastructure

Keeping up with infrastructure needs is critical, but the County currently lacks a sustainable source of funds for such maintenance. Recent storm events and flooding have proven that water can easily overwhelm County systems, with recovery time proceeding more slowly than desired. Baltimore County needs a robust intergovernmental resiliency strategy that incorporates smart technology and allows it to rebound rapidly after storms.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for capital and operational improvements for water/wastewater, transportation, storm drains, and solid waste. In addition to budget constraints, the Department faces some immediate challenges due to recent record rain events, loss and lack of financial staff, and loss of institutional knowledge as long-time staff retire.

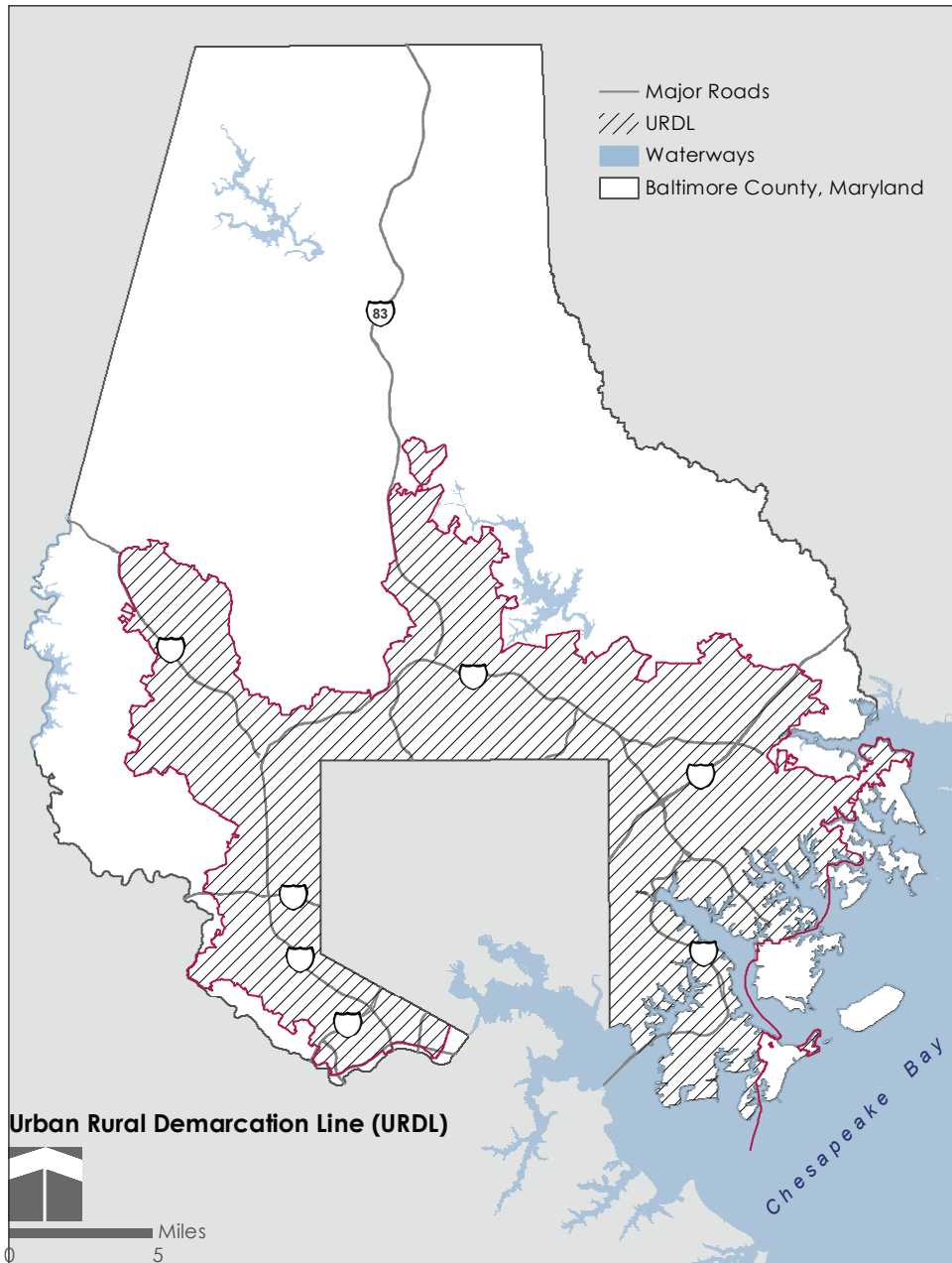
With regard to water and sewer utility rates, the City of Baltimore is increasing its rates to meet the capital expenditures for the future. Baltimore County is also replacing or rehabbing pipes and pump stations under the Consent Decree and non-Consent Decree work. These assets need maintenance and implementation under a proactive asset management system that requires additional revenue.

Currently, solid waste funding comes from the general fund, but alternative dedicated funding sources should be considered in order to make the operations of landfill, garbage collection, recycling, and street sweeping more sustainable in the County.

Climate change, torrential rain, and flooding are increasingly becoming problems in Baltimore County. Maintenance and construction of storm drains, outflow structures, and culverts, as well as implementation of green stormwater infrastructure strategies, will likely require a separate source of funding.

Engagement and Transparency

Residents have an intimate and unique relationship with the areas affected by development. They take pride in their communities and can offer insight into projects that others may have overlooked. More could be done to foster and support the authenticity of places instead of making all spaces more similar. When community members feel ownership of a project and the process that produced it, they may become its greatest supporters.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Sustainability

1. Create an Office of Sustainability, either in the County Executive's Office, or the Department of Planning. This Office should:
 - Engage the community in developing a sustainability strategy
 - Identify sustainability challenges and goals
 - Oversee coordinated efforts among relevant agencies to establish new initiatives and best practices and establish metrics for accountability
 - Educate residents on the rationale and importance of these initiatives
 - Update the County website to provide easy public access to information about sustainability initiatives, development proposals, and related pending legislation
 - Involve the public in the achievement of these goals and report on progress
 - Establish a Sustainability Advisory Group to ensure accountability
2. Develop and apply a 'sustainable development' screen for capital projects under review
3. Build resiliency into all County projects and as part of the criteria for private development and make resiliency part of the County's funding criteria
4. Establish bold and transparent energy and efficiency goals for the residents, businesses, and government of Baltimore County
 - Build a database of energy usage in government buildings
 - Ensure that County departments collaborate and establish best management practices using best available technologies
 - Set measurable benchmarks for increasing renewable energy use, track these, and report them to the public to ensure accountability
 - Increase incentives for the adoption of renewable and clean energy practices and efforts by nongovernmental entities
 - Evaluate how government property and buildings can accommodate solar panels
 - Increase weatherization and other efforts to help residents conserve energy
 - Strengthen enforcement of sediment and erosion control laws and regulations

- Promote the construction of LEED-certified buildings
- Set an ambitious goal for purchasing renewable and clean energy for County purposes

Land Use

5. Update the County's Master Plan into an overarching Master Plan 2030 that focuses on sustainable development issues, many of which will exceed the 2030 horizon, and provides clear guidance for communities, departments, and developers
 - Ensure active engagement of all sectors of the community
 - Ensure that community plans are consistent with the Master Plan
 - Ensure that development is consistent with, and adheres to, community plans and the County Master Plan
6. Update and/or create community plans for all sectors of the County that reflect local community identity
7. Seek Sustainable Community designation for targeted areas in order to access state resources
8. Monitor and report progress on Master Plan and community plan implementation
 - Establish oversight committees or use the Planning Board to monitor
9. **Climate Change**
 - Establish a climate change adaptation strategy for Baltimore County in partnership with federal, state, and regional entities to protect the County's coastline, the Chesapeake Bay, and other assets
 - Use existing data and GIS to identify those areas most vulnerable to rising sea levels and flooding due to climate change, including inland waterways and built communities with extant flooding problems

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

Land Use *(continued)*

10. Assess the state of smart growth policies and refine them as they relate to community revitalization and fiscal, environmental, and social sustainability
11. Develop a system to prioritize resource allocation that reflects social, economic, and environmental goals
12. Improve developments through targeted incentives where the greatest needs exist or where investment has the greatest positive impact
13. Engage the residential and business communities early in the planning process.
 - Give communities the benefit of County departmental evaluations
 - Strengthen the Community Input Meeting Process
14. Strengthen local codes by adopting LEED Design Standards or Green Codes for higher-density residential and nonresidential development to reduce energy, water, and other resource consumption
15. Review the development regulations and alter as necessary to establish sustainable development best practices
16. Explore ways to strengthen the storm water management regulation beyond the state minimum to better handle the increase in flooding events
17. Develop public and private programs to reduce and replace unnecessary impervious surfaces with best management practices to reduce pollution from stormwater runoff
18. Develop a sound groundwater protection and recharge strategy
19. Create a County-wide comprehensive green infrastructure plan
 - Strengthen and expand the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan to include a more detailed green infrastructure plan for both sides of the URDL
 - Protect land on the rural side of the URDL for agriculture, forests, watersheds, and recreational trails
 - Support organizations and efforts to preserve environmentally sensitive and active open space land within existing communities on the urban side of the URDL
 - Draw up robust operation and maintenance plans for green infrastructure
20. Update the Open Space and Landscape Manuals to require protection and maintenance of existing trees and forests, and to increase the urban tree canopy
 - Focus on making urban communities more livable by restoring stream health, adding trees and open spaces, and adding trails and pathways
 - Ensure that infill development and redevelopment enhance natural amenities, connect to green infrastructure, and improve stormwater management
 - Elevate the evaluation of soils in planning, development review, and preservation efforts
 - Limit the granting of variances and special exceptions that reduce key elements of green infrastructure on both sides of the URDL, such as forest and stream buffers, specimen trees, and wildlife corridors
21. Establish pollinator habitat plans for County property that are free of herbicides and pesticides
22. Support efforts to ban plastic bags and polystyrene

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

Transportation

23. Incubate a new expanded Transportation Planning function within DPW initially, and create a new Department of Transportation as the function evolves and funding is available
 - Take a regional approach to transportation
 - Employ a transit/traffic person in the Department of Public Works
 - Prioritize transit to connect people to jobs
 - Refine and implement a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and consider appointing a Bike-Ped administrator
 - Establish a Complete Streets policy and program to address all facets of transportation
24. Create a pilot circulator system, starting with the Towson area, to serve residents, businesses, the government, and institutions
25. Support the Regional Transit Plan with a special focus on connecting the West and East sides of the County and partnering with Baltimore City
26. Ensure that all new job centers connect with transit and provide support for 'last mile' connectivity, reverse commuting, and partnering with companies to support these changes
27. Participate meaningfully and actively in the Baltimore Metropolitan Council

Infrastructure

28. Evaluate County water rates considering the City increases to ensure water/wastewater operations are sustainable
29. Cooperate with adjacent municipalities to discuss the possibility of creating a regional water and/or sewer authority to improve system maintenance and distribute costs more efficiently
30. Establish appropriate metrics and prioritize projects using an Integrated Planning Framework to select projects that present maximum social, environmental, and economic benefits to the County
31. Establish community or area-wide storm drain and stormwater management plans to mitigate flooding
32. Improve coordination between the County and utilities to ensure efficient scheduling and completion of utility and road work
33. Streamline the process for cleaning debris from bodies of water, and for repairing and replacing storm drains, outfalls, and culverts
 - Provide information on the County website so that the timing and location of efforts can be identified
34. Employ CitiWorks or a similar information technology platform for asset management
35. Meet MS4 permit requirements with a more stable, dedicated, and predictable fiscal mechanism
36. Establish permanent green infrastructure as the County builds and rebuilds gray infrastructure

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

Recreation and Parks

Structure and Operations

37. Develop a roadmap for re-invigorating the Department of Recreation and Parks. Evaluate functions and staff that were removed/ transferred from the Department in recent years and determine what should be returned to achieve a full, functional department
38. As Board seats become available, consider candidates with contacts and skills related to business, philanthropy, tourism, public relations, and fundraising
39. Conduct a needs assessment for all parks and facilities, as well as the scope and quality of programs across the County to assess equity and establish priorities for enhancements
40. Investigate funding levels and sources for recreation and parks in other Central Maryland jurisdictions
41. Compare the County's open space regulations to those of other jurisdictions and propose amendments to more effectively build an open space network inside the URDL that enhances walkability and access to green space in all communities
42. Collaborate with the Department of Environmental Protection and Sustainability on forest planting, stream restoration, and other projects to improve environmental quality in community green space
43. Restore/enhance public outreach and participation in development of the state-required Land Preservation, Parks and

Recreation Plan

44. Ensure that capital projects track the priorities identified by the public, address high priorities first, and provide equitable distribution of scarce funds
 - Evaluate expenditure patterns and determine if adjustments are needed to ensure priority maintenance and other needs can be addressed and that state and local funds are being put to optimum use
45. Ensure that park facilities adhere to the following:
 - Signage advertising park events complies with sign regulations and does not cause clutter or impair sight lines
 - Outdoor lighting at parks is turned off when facilities are not in use
 - Maintenance requests are handled in a timely manner

Engagement Opportunities

46. Identify opportunities for public/private partnerships to generate financial and/or in-kind support for critical park maintenance and improvements
 - Create an ad hoc committee of business leaders and professionals to explore these partnerships
47. Ensure that staff working directly with volunteers have the skills and temperament to effectively engage, support, and utilize the many volunteers that are an essential component of park facilities and programs
 - Work to instill a customer service-oriented mindset
48. Plan promotional events:
 - Thank and solicit input from nature councils, rec councils, and other park volunteers
 - Celebrate parks and showcase community and business support

Public Safety



Everyone who lives and works in Baltimore County deserves a safe community. Providing the appropriate and necessary resources for our police department and first responders will continue to be a priority under my administration. Through a renewed focus on community policing, crime-prevention, and data-driven programs, Baltimore County can become a model jurisdiction for public safety.

- County Executive Johnny Olszewski

Public Safety

All residents in Baltimore County deserve to feel safe in the communities where they live, work, and play. Public safety is paramount—a critical responsibility for those elected to serve—and must remain a key priority under the Olszewski Administration. This entails not only providing the appropriate and necessary resources for public safety personnel, but also continuing efforts to build community trust through transparent processes and diversifying the public safety workforce to more adequately represent the demographics of the County.

Baltimore County has steadily increased positions within the Baltimore County Police Department (BCPD) over the past number of years, with 2,557 projected by the end of FY 2019.¹ Recruiting and retaining qualified individuals in an increasingly competitive environment, while planning accordingly for vacancies due to retirements, is essential for meeting the needs of Baltimore County's diverse and growing population.

The County's workforce should reflect its diversity. Baltimore County must continue to make progress in this important area, identifying underrepresented populations and pursuing targeted recruitment strategies, including the Cadet Program in partnership with the Baltimore County Public School System.

Building community trust is critical, especially during this time of strained relationships between police and the communities they serve. In response to the 2015 legislation regarding the use of body-worn cameras (BWC)—designed to improve public safety, increase transparency, reduce complaints, and aid in judicial proceedings—Baltimore County has since completed the roll-out of the BWC program, equipping more than 1,400 of its officers.

A discussion on ensuring the public safety of Baltimore County residents would not be complete without addressing the growing opioid crisis in the area. According to data from the Baltimore County Police Department, white males aged 20-29 are the most common victims of overdoses. People from all socio-economic classes are affected, and there has been an observed increase in fatal overdoses among the 40+ population. In 2018, there were 1,481 nonfatal overdoses and 313 fatal overdoses in Baltimore County.² More than half of all fatal opioid overdoses in Baltimore County involved fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is 50 times more powerful than morphine.

Throughout 2018, Naloxone was administered 284 times with consistently successful results.³ The drug is now maintained in every police patrol vehicle and various specialized units. Autopsy results are tracked, and data are shared with County partners; however, the challenges of the opioid epidemic—the physiological dependency, the changes in the chemical structure of synthetic opioids, and the sheer volume of overdose incidents—remain.

¹ This number includes both sworn and unsworn personnel.

² These are unofficial figures provided by the Baltimore County Police Department.

³ This figure refers to the number of times Naloxone was administered by the Baltimore County Police Department. Others in the community also administer Naloxone.

Opioid Overdose by Sex and Race

	White Male Fatal	White Female Fatal	Black Male Fatal	Black Female Fatal	White Male Non Fatal	White Female Non Fatal	Black Male Non Fatal	Black Female Non Fatal
2016	147	58	34	9	675	293	75	21
2017	172	80	35	7	897	443	120	28

Source: Baltimore County Police Department

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building Community Trust

1. Conduct annual community surveys and roundtable meetings throughout the County
2. Enhance community-based social media platforms to support community engagement
3. Keep in place the "TRUST" Executive Order promoting constitutional policing
4. Support and grow Citizens on Patrol groups and Neighborhood Watch Programs
5. Hold regional community association meetings on a regular basis in order to improve relationships and exchange information about public safety issues
6. Implement a language access policy, train personnel on it, provide related technology, and hold all departments accountable to it
 - Ensure that all departments understand their legal obligations and have access to telephonic interpretation and know how to use it
 - Build on existing, well-functioning call-center infrastructure and expand that knowledge to first responders in the field
7. Re-establish a community outreach and education function at the Baltimore County

Fire Department and develop a protocol through which fire department personnel attend community meetings

Assessing and Improving Data, Resources, and Technology

8. Continue to implement the body worn camera program; review the body worn camera study conducted 18 months ago and implement recommendations as appropriate
9. Improve accessibility for persons who speak languages other than English in 911 Dispatch by streamlining and updating technology
 - Track ethnicity and language in new data systems to assess which precincts have the most calls with translation and need bilingual officers
10. Conduct an impartial outside assessment of Fire and Police operations, technology and HR practices; provide these recommendations to each agency and the County Executive
11. Evaluate 911 response times, assess placement of resources and Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems, and make recommendations for improvement
12. Conduct technology assessments of all public safety agencies, make recommendations for improvement, and publish data

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

13. Develop data collection systems and establish metrics to evaluate the impact of all public safety agencies
14. Assess public safety equipment and make a long-term plan for equipment purchases and replacement

Taking a Regional Approach

15. Develop real-time information sharing mechanisms between police in Baltimore County and surrounding jurisdictions in an effort to reduce crime
16. Explore collaborative efforts to maximize impact and reduce duplication of effort, such as the creation of a joint training unit
17. Adopt a regional cooperative protocol for all first responders (mutual aid and information sharing)

Strengthening Services for Victims of Crime

Domestic Violence

18. Ensure quarterly training for Domestic Violence Coordinators in the Police Department from victim service providers
19. The Domestic Violence Coordinating Council should continue its work and include culturally specific service providers to address the needs of all Baltimore County residents
20. Develop partnerships with domestic violence and sexual assault victim service agencies to improve training and operational practices
21. Identify a point person for monitoring and processing u-visa certifications within the Police Department and State's Attorney's Office

Sexual Assault

22. Convene a task force to review, revise, and improve practices and procedures related to sexual assault investigations and prosecution of allegations of sexual assault. The task force must:
 - Examine current investigation and prosecution policies, practices, and training related to sexual assault complaints
 - Make recommendations for adjustments to police and prosecution policies and practices as appropriate to align with national best practices
 - Review training for law enforcement officials involved in the response to sexual assault allegations, ensuring investigations are victim-centered and trauma-informed
 - Review data related to sexual assault investigations, ensuring proper tracking and accountability mechanisms are in place
 - Assess resources available for investigating sexual assault complaints, including testing old and new rape kits and make adjustments as necessary
 - Research and recommend implementation of national best practices, including the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Trauma Informed Sexual Assault Investigation Training, which provides law enforcement and multi-disciplinary partners with information on the neurobiology of trauma and investigative strategies to respond to sexual assault crimes in a victim-centered, trauma-informed manner⁴
 - Support the work of the SART (Sexual Assault Review Team)
23. Partner with TurnAround to operate a hotline for survivors who wish to obtain information about an existing case, have a complaint about how their case has been handled, or wish to have their case reviewed by the task force

⁴Executive Guidebook: Practical Approaches for Strengthening Law Enforcement's Response to Sexual Assault, <https://www.policeforum.org/assets/SexualAssaultResponseExecutiveGuidebook.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

Older Adults

- 24.** Reconvene the Elder Abuse Work Group as a standing group that meets at least quarterly. The group should consider:
- Engaging in public information campaigns
 - Training for County staff and partners, and introducing legislation to promote elder safety
 - Developing formal agreements among partners to better coordinate services for victims, and prosecution of perpetrators
 - Applying for grant funds to combat elder abuse

Coordinating Criminal Justice Agencies

- 25.** Foster implementation of best practices and stronger collaboration between criminal justice agencies, outside partners, and across jurisdictional lines
- 26.** Assess and reinvigorate the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to ensure that cross-agency approaches are being implemented
- Assign a representative from the County Executive's Office to assist in facilitating the work of this group

Human Resources Functions for Public Safety Personnel

- 27.** Review industry best practices for hiring and recruitment in public safety agencies, incorporating such practices wherever possible
- Solicit input directly from fire (career and volunteer) and police personnel regarding current practices and when conducting leadership searches
 - Review staffing and "business process" analyses previously conducted regarding the Sheriff's Office and Department of Corrections, and address recommendations as appropriate
- 28.** Develop systems to track recruitment, applications, hiring, and demographics for all public safety agencies, incorporating into CountyStat

- 29.** Increase diversity in public safety agencies, including command staff, so that personnel are more reflective of the community served
- 30.** Develop strategies to ensure full staffing at all public safety agencies and target inefficiencies in the hiring process
- 31.** Provide leadership opportunities for supervisors and commanders (i.e., FBI National Academy, IACP Fellowships, PERF memberships, NOBLE, etc.) by investing in professional development to ensure continuity in leadership
- 32.** Create incentives to attract bilingual public safety personnel

Training

- 33.** Assess safety and training practices at all public safety facilities and training academies and make changes as necessary
- 34.** Ensure that all public safety personnel undergo training to build trust with community members, including cultural competencies, de-escalation methods, and trauma-informed response
- Provide public safety officials with access to bi- or multi-lingual resources

Targeting Pre-Trial Services, Diversion, and Re-Entry

- 35.** Support efforts, including grant funding opportunities, to continue collaborative review of bail and pretrial supervision procedures in Baltimore County, with input from the Baltimore County Detention Center, the County Executive's Office, the State's Attorney's Office, and the Office of the Public Defender
- 36.** Use data to assess existing adult and juvenile diversion programs/resources and their impact. Build on what is working and implement

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

additional diversion programs that have a proven track record of success in reducing recidivism

37. Assess existing adult and juvenile re-entry programs, resources, and partnerships and their impact on recidivism

Focusing on Youth

38. Analyze juvenile crime data to assess where there has been an increase in juvenile arrests
39. Identify youth who are at risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of violence by understanding risk factors; develop and implement programs/interventions for this population with the goal of reducing youth violence
40. Develop educational programs for high school students to train in public safety careers – possible cooperative programs with community college and local universities
41. Assess underserved areas and develop plans to build community centers for youth and families
42. Assess the staffing and programming of the PAL Centers to ensure that they are working to improve trust and connection between law enforcement, youth, and families

Tackling Drugs/Opioids⁵

43. Continue the use of Narcan, ensuring all public safety personnel are trained to properly use it, and to properly respond to situations where individuals are experiencing substance abuse and/or behavioral health issues
44. Public safety agencies should partner with the Health Department, health care providers, and community-based services providers to enhance the support given to individuals who overdose
45. Consider medication-assisted treatment in the detention center and prior to release, similar to the program implemented in Anne Arundel County's correctional facility
46. Ensure proper information-sharing systems are in place between the public safety agencies and partner agencies
47. Play an active role in educating the public about the dangers of prescription opioids; engage in efforts to prevent people from becoming addicted to prescription opioids
48. Collect and share as much data on fatal and nonfatal drug overdoses as possible

⁵For additional discussion on the opioid crisis in Baltimore County, see the "Health and Human Services" section of this report.

Health and Human Services

“ Local government has the responsibility to be a stronger advocate at the state and federal levels in support of our residents who we see every day in need of access to care and more affordable coverage and medication.

- County Executive Johnny Olszewski

Health and Human Services

In order to become a model jurisdiction for overall population health, Baltimore County must remove barriers to access to health care services while proactively addressing social determinants of health. Primary and preventive care, whether delivered by Baltimore County or other entities, should be accessible in all communities. Developing public policy through an equity lens—with consideration of race, economic circumstances, and place—and serving vulnerable populations (i.e., older adults, individuals with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, veterans, and immigrants) are keys to vibrant, healthy communities.

Yet, there is currently limited access to primary care by the underinsured and uninsured in the County. The needs of some vulnerable populations outpace the availability of and access to services.

And there are structural issues to address. Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services was formed in 2011 from a merger to consolidate services. The Department now has a mix of County and State employees. The effectiveness of this consolidation is not apparent. In addition, the Department has several disconnected databases that make it extremely difficult to aggregate and use data. On the primary care front, the hospital Emergency Department is often the path of least resistance and it has become the catch-all for dysfunctional systems. The Emergency Medical System has become overwhelmed by behavioral health patients.

Fortunately, Baltimore County is part of a larger health care delivery system in the region. In the County alone, there are existing resources including the Baltimore County Health Coalition¹, numerous health care institutions, and their leadership, whose expertise can and should be better leveraged. Expanded efforts County-wide should include building on existing collaborations with neighboring jurisdictions, nonprofits, religious institutions, and other health care organizations.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES *The “Memphis Model”*

The “Memphis Model,” a community, faith-based health model developed by the Methodist LeBonheur Hospital of Memphis, is a partnership between hospitals, congregations, community health centers, and faith-based and community organizations. The Maryland Faith Health Network started a free pilot project through the Maryland Citizens’ Health Initiative (MCHI) with LifeBridge Health based on this successful Congregational Health Network program from Memphis.

Members from participating congregations in the Network who had been treated at participating LifeBridge hospitals had a 75 percent lower inpatient utilization after one month and, 17 percent lower utilization after one year. In 2016, the Baltimore County Council passed a resolution commending the participants for their commitment to improving public health and encouraging County hospitals and faith communities to participate.

¹ The Baltimore County Health Coalition works to achieve indicators of the Maryland State Health Improvement Plan, whose objective is to ensure that healthy people live, work, and play in Baltimore County. The Coalition is working to reduce the following: fall-related deaths, hypertension emergency visits, low birth weight, childhood obesity, tobacco use, substance abuse overdose deaths, and syphilis rates. For more information, visit <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/health/coalition/index.html>.

The Opioid Crisis

The opioid crisis is one of the most pressing public health challenges facing the County: Baltimore County has the second highest number of overdose deaths in the state. In Baltimore County from January to September of 2018, there were 267 opioid-related overdose deaths, up from 239 during the same period in 2017. According to a report by the National Safety Council released in January 2019, Americans are now likelier to die of an overdose than in a vehicle crash.

Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services has a R.E.A.C.H. (Recovery, Education, Assessment, Collaboration, and Help) Plan to address substance use and opioid overdose deaths. This includes certified peer-recovery specialists, naloxone training, addressing stigma, educating providers, clinics and assessments, an Opioid Intervention Team, the R.E.A.C.H. hotline, and harm-reduction strategies.

However, access to residential and community-based treatment services is not presently sufficient to meet the needs of Baltimore County residents suffering from substance use disorders. Hospitals and health care providers are already identifying patients who might need substance use services, but resources for these placements upon their release are scarce.

Vulnerable Populations

Vulnerable populations include older adults, those with medical issues and disabilities (physical, mental, cognitive, or sensory), those who are economically disadvantaged, people living in isolation (cultural, geographic, or social), and people who encounter language and literacy barriers. While access to services for all of these communities is critical, the projected growth in the number of older adults in Baltimore County by 2030 presents additional challenges.

Baltimore County's aging population (age 60+) is projected to grow from 208,053 in 2020 to 230,842 by 2030. How Baltimore County serves its older adults now will likely not be sufficient in 2030. Consider these examples:

- *Maryland Medicaid Community Options Waiver has a seven-year waiting list.* This program provides community services for those who are medically eligible to reside in long-term care and can save an average of five years in a nursing home. The State is currently reviewing the waiting list because it is not quite an accurate reflection of need. Staffing of the Medicaid Waiver program has been inadequate due to staff turnover.
- *The Senior Care program has a waiting list of approximately 300 people.* Senior Care is a state-funded program designed to provide case management and services that fill gaps for low-income adults, 65 and older, who are at risk of institutionalization.
- CountyRide is the County's own transportation program for older adults, adults with disabilities, and rural residents. *There are over 10,000 registered riders, with approximately 4,000 rides denied each year.* This is an important service as older adults often lack adequate transportation—the leading cause of loneliness and social isolation.
- Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services (BCDHHS) provides dental services, *but they are insufficient to meet the needs of seniors with limited resources.*
- The Baltimore County Department of Aging has programs to address older adult food insecurity, including the Eating Together Program, benefit assistance, Home Team volunteer program, dieticians, farmers' market coupons, and delivered meals. *CountyRide provides shopping shuttles but cannot keep up with demand.*

Statistics on Baltimore County's Senior Population

	Number of Residents	Percentage of Population
60-64 years	57,929	6.96%
65-74 years	77,439	9.3%
75-84 years	41,366	4.97%
85+	20,074	2.41%
TOTAL	196,808	23.64%

Source: American Community Survey Population Estimates, 2017

Population Projections: Residents Age 60+

2020 (predicted)	208,053
2030 (predicted)	230,842

Source: Maryland Department of Planning

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLES OF AGING IN PLACE MODELS:

PACE (Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly)

provides comprehensive medical and social services to qualifying elderly residents, enabling them to remain in the community, rather than receive care in a nursing home. Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center has PACE program in place.

CAPABLE (Community Aging in Place – Advancing Better Living for Elders)

is a program developed at the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing for low-income older adults to age in place. The approach teams a nurse, an occupational therapist, and a handyman to address the home environment and uses the strengths of the older adults themselves to improve safety and independence.

HUBS (Housing Upgrades to Benefit Seniors)

is a program that helps older adults identify home improvements to make their homes safer and healthier. Baltimore City residents who are 65 and older and whose income is 80 percent or below the Baltimore Metro area median income are eligible to apply. Baltimore County Department of Aging has started a pilot program for senior home modifications.

Healthier Communities

Addressing the health needs of Baltimore County residents includes facing the realities of food insecurity and homelessness. Too many Baltimore County residents experience food insecurity and lack access to healthy food. This includes BCPS students², who also need healthier food choices. And Baltimore County is not immune from homelessness. Among Baltimore County's homeless population, many have other issues, such as chronic homelessness, mental illness, and substance abuse disorders, while some are veterans and others are victims of domestic violence. Baltimore County should continue its Housing First policies approach while ensuring availability of the full continuum of housing with attention toward services for veterans and those who are chronically homeless. St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center offers a "homesharing" option for Baltimore City and County. Intergenerational housing models, like homesharing, can be models for housing solutions for vulnerable populations. Aging in place options for older adults also have a track record of success.

² See the "Education" section of this report for more information about the needs of Baltimore County Public School students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Access and Affordability

1. Create a commission or a point person in the Department of Health and Human Services to convene a diverse group of health care leaders to create a new blueprint for care within the County
 - Consider the Maryland Primary Care Model³, which may allow for a redistribution of resources to move resources from hospital-based care to community-based care
 - Conduct an assessment to calculate the need for primary care sites in Baltimore County with expanded hours and accountability for health. These may include Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)
 - Assess expansion of the reach and number of primary health care services throughout the County, especially those services for vulnerable populations
2. Assess the services at the Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services to ensure they meet the needs of those it serves, including addressing health disparities⁴ and payment barriers
3. Launch a health promotion campaign and include information about the changing primary care model and the increased use of in-home care workers
4. Play the critical role of convener of health care leaders and institutions to collaborate on health care system design and integrated service delivery
 - Expand regional coordination
 - Evaluate the efficacy and work of the Baltimore County Health Coalition through a lens of collaboration and coordination

Coordination of Services

5. Expand and improve data collection for health and human service needs and service delivery, including a focus on health disparity data
 - Update the Baltimore County Community Health Needs Assessment by 2020
 - Develop a tracking system of health indicators to match health and human services to needs by 2020
6. Review the structure of Baltimore County Department of Health and Human Services, and assess the most efficient model for delivery of services, including examining if the Department of Social Services should be a separate department
7. Explore a crisis center model for behavioral health care delivery that will decrease hospital use and increase community placement
8. Ensure a No Wrong Door approach to connecting residents with services⁵
9. Improve the use of community health workers and health care service coordinators
10. Explore the possibility of a public health ombudsman and adding a second epidemiologist
11. Convene hospitals and congregations to advance and expand the Maryland Faith Network pilot in Baltimore County

³The Maryland Primary Care Program is modeled after the CMMI's (Center for Medicare and Medicaid) national Comprehensive Primary Care Plus Model. It is designed to support the delivery of advanced primary care throughout the state to improve health incomes, while controlling total health care spending growth. <https://health.maryland.gov/mdpcp/Pages/practices.aspx>

⁴Health disparities are defined as a health difference that are closely linked with social, economic, or environmental disadvantage.

⁵The No Wrong Door approach ensures that all individuals are given the help they need to receive appropriate treatment or referral, regardless of where or how they entered the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

Solutions to the Opioid Crisis

12. Appoint an Opioid Strategy Coordinator to spearhead addressing the opioid crisis for Baltimore County. This position should examine access to treatment, neighborhood engagement, quality of standards within treatment centers, and develop a coordinated, cross-agency strategy for tackling the crisis. In addition, this person should examine best practices from other jurisdictions to evaluate whether they can be adapted for Baltimore County
13. Assess the efficacy of the R.E.A.C.H. Plan and, if appropriate, explore expanding it and including more community training and availability for naloxone
14. Work with other jurisdictions and the State to coordinate resources in responding to the opioid crisis
15. Offer residential treatment beds, recovery housing/community-based care, and expanded medical, behavioral, and holistic assisted treatment
 - Deliver treatment on demand and explore opportunities for expanding harm-reduction strategies
16. Encourage physicians to integrate substance abuse treatment into their practices in order to improve access to and the quality of substance use services
17. Train first responders to play a role in de-escalating situations when they encounter residents suffering from addiction. Responders can be trained to help send residents for an evaluation or to an appropriate facility, rather than to the Detention Center

18. Destigmatize the disease so that it can effectively be treated. Education and awareness messaging about substance use needs to be more visible to the general public and taught early and consistently in school curriculums across the County. Techniques like posting the number of overdose deaths in each community to have residents understand the impact can be used

Addressing the Needs of Vulnerable Populations

19. Assess the changing needs of aging consumers and develop resource and service delivery models that address them
20. Coordinate services for seniors with health care plans and encourage health care for seniors that treats them comprehensively and continually, regardless of the setting
21. Expand programs and partnerships that encourage older adults to age in place
22. Address the staffing and technology needs of senior centers through the Department of Aging
23. Expand Maryland Access Point⁶, a centralized, single point of entry for access to the services provided by state agencies
24. Explore, develop, and offer more transportation options, including a volunteer driving program or partnership. Neighbor Ride is a volunteer-provided senior transportation service in Howard County that could be studied as a model for addressing transportation shortages for older adults
25. Evaluate if the Department of Planning is the best department for Baltimore County's Preventing and Ending Homelessness services

⁶Maryland Access Point (MAP) assists individuals with long-term care needs and their caregivers identify and locate services in their community. There are also 10 caseworkers who go into homes through Maryland Access Point. Each year, 1,200 seniors are helped with public assistance applications through this program. It is a centralized, single point of entry for access to the services provided by state agencies such as the Department of Aging; the Department of Human Resources; the Department of Disabilities; and other private, public and community-based resources. <http://mhcc.maryland.gov/consumerinfo/longtermcare/marylandaccesspoint.aspx>

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

26. Consider joining the Built for Zero effort to move Baltimore County toward ending veteran and chronic homelessness, while also focusing on making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring for all populations
27. Explore creative housing solutions for older adults, veterans, and individuals with disabilities (e.g., house sharing models)
28. Re-evaluate Baltimore County's Continuum of Care agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and explore the possibility of merging services with other connected jurisdictions

Healthier Communities

29. Create a health promotion campaign regarding available services and healthy life choices by 2020. Look to Healthy Howard⁷ as a model
30. Explore funding to expand the Eating Together Program⁸
31. Increase outreach regarding the availability of free school breakfast, lunch, and afterschool meals
32. Increase the focus on behavioral health services
33. Reduce e-cigarette and vaping-product use by minors

⁷ Healthy Howard is a nonprofit based in Columbia, Maryland. Its mission is to serve as an innovative leader impacting quality of life in the community through the delivery of effective health programs, services, and resources. Its Healthiest Maryland Businesses program encourages hundreds of workplaces to take important steps to promote employee health and wellness. Healthy Howard not only helps thousands of individuals enroll in health care, but its Community Care Team helps chronically ill residents connect with resources that allow them to manage their illness and improve their health. <https://healthyhowardmd.org/>

⁸ The Eating Together Program offers seniors age 60 and older in Baltimore City lunch or dinner in a friendly, social atmosphere to promote health, reduce isolation, and provide nutritious meals in a congregate dining setting. There are more than 50 Eating Together sites throughout Baltimore City. There is no fee to join the program or for the meals, but participants are given the opportunity to make confidential donations. In addition to meals, Eating Together also offers education seminars, health programs, volunteer opportunities, and trips. <https://health.baltimorecity.gov/bmore-healthy>

Job Creation and Economic Development

“ Growing an economy is about investment, development, and revitalization—investing in our people, developing our assets, and revitalizing our communities. A better economy is possible in Baltimore County, and we’ll build it together.

- **County Executive Johnny Olszewski**

Job Creation and Economic Development

Baltimore County has experienced rapid growth since 2010. In less than a decade, the County has added more than 26,000 residents and is on track to surpass a population of 850,000 by 2020. Baltimore County has a well-educated workforce with bachelor's degree attainment nearly 10 percent higher than the national average. The County's unemployment rate is just 3.6 percent as of December 2018.¹

Population growth brings a number of opportunities and an equal number of challenges. The number of working families who live at or near the poverty line is too high: In 1990, 37,154 people in Baltimore County lived in poverty; in 2016, that number increased to 74,876.² Access to quality housing is limited for low-income individuals and families throughout the County. Aging infrastructure—roads, water mains, landfills, and disposal facilities—must be addressed to accommodate for increased usage. Agencies that address housing, community development, and neighborhood quality of life issues are currently fragmented and under-resourced, but they all must work in concert to improve the quality of life and add to the economic vibrancy of each community across Baltimore County.

To ensure Baltimore County continues to attract, grow, and retain an educated, economically diverse population, we must take a targeted approach to expand economic investment, create quality jobs, grow a skilled workforce, and revitalize aging and underserved neighborhoods.

Strengthening the education to employment pipeline is one critical component of improving the overall vitality of Baltimore County. The County is home to a number of nationally recognized four-year, post-secondary institutions. These institutions are assets in the region and anchors in the County, bolstering economic and workforce development as part of Baltimore County's significant post-secondary educational delivery system.

Recognized among the top community colleges in the country, the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) is also a pivotal part of this system. Students enroll at CCBC to prepare to transfer to one of the region's four-year partner institutions, start a career, prepare for employment, upgrade skills to maintain industry credentials, or upgrade skills to remain competitive. Graduates from the Community College of Baltimore County make an average of \$10,000 more annually than individuals without a degree. In addition, 95 percent of CCBC graduates remain in the Baltimore region, and 87 percent are employed full time in a related field.

¹ Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation's Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

² Maryland Alliance for the Poor, 2018 Maryland Poverty Profiles: http://mapadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Maryland-Poverty-Profiles_2018_10-5-2018.pdf

By layering multiple approaches in targeted locations, community development strategies can impact the livability of neighborhoods, viability of commercial districts, and health of local housing markets to help secure the stability of the County’s tax base for the long term. Looking ahead to the next decade of growth, Baltimore County must build on its assets to expand economic opportunity for all residents and enhance quality of life in communities across the County.

Overarching strategies for economic expansion:

- Customize economic development strategies for industry sectors with high wages and job potential
- Leverage anchor institutions and emerging industries while supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs
- Grow local talent to meet the demand of local and regional employers
- Equip existing workers with the necessary skills to compete in the 21st century innovation economy
- Expand workforce development programs that equip under-skilled residents with the tools to succeed and eliminate barriers for advancement
- Enhance support for small businesses and tourism
- Invest in established neighborhoods and execute commercial corridor strategies
- Balance the appeal of more established neighborhoods while ensuring residents have the opportunity to build home equity as neighborhoods mature
- Create a more diverse range of housing choices in areas of opportunity that are accessible to employment centers

Baltimore County Labor Market Data

	2017
Population	832,512
Total Industry Jobs	374,733
Current Average Earnings	\$68,076
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	39.1%
Labor Force (July 2018)	462,262
Participation Rate (July 2018)	67.4%
Unemployment Rate	4.6%
Median Household Income	\$68,989

Source: Analysis of EMSI Data, provided by Baltimore Metropolitan Council

RECOMMENDATIONS

Economic Development

1. Establish a comprehensive Economic Development Commission
 - Take advantage of community expertise and include chairpersons from workforce, tourism, and arts commissions to establish alignment in goals, communications, and efforts
2. Develop an Economic Blueprint for Baltimore County, with input from the Commission, to include:
 - A comprehensive, data-informed long-term strategy with goals and metrics that tie together economic development, workforce development, tourism, arts and culture, housing, and community redevelopment activities
 - Explore models across the country for effective public/private partnership
 - Consider a regional approach to workforce, community, and economic development
3. Use federal and state designated areas to expand investment
 - Prioritize Opportunity Zone projects that benefit neighborhoods and declining commercial areas
 - Increase the number of Sustainable Communities, which will help access state resources
4. Conduct an inventory of other state and federal investment programs that can provide a long-term positive impact in Baltimore County
5. Strengthen Main Street programs in existing commercial revitalization districts and re-establish a new Commercial Revitalization Program throughout the County to actively promote the program to businesses and the development community
6. Explore establishing a Baltimore County Investment Fund using private-sector investment to support RISE, Community Revitalization Development, Opportunity Zones, and similar development opportunities
7. Develop and support an Anchor Institution Strategy that:
 - Supports RISE Zones and other efforts that lead to greater investment in our anchor institutions of higher education
 - Encourages development near anchor institutions that creates density and vitality, optimizes public transportation, and encourages innovation
 - Leverages major anchor employers and higher education institutions to foster greater economic inclusion through job training, placement, and advancement opportunities for residents
 - Supports procurement strategies to focus on local hiring and purchasing
8. Direct the Department of Economic and Workforce Development to use the established economic development Revolving Loan Fund to expand lending opportunities to enhance business growth
9. Examine transportation challenges and solutions such as “last mile” support, transit credits, and shuttles
10. Work with the County Chamber of Commerce and local chambers to create a small business retention and expansion strategy. This should include a review of County procurement rules to expand opportunities for local businesses

Workforce Development

11. Explore creation of a workforce intermediary entity that connects employers, training providers, public and private funders, job seekers, higher education, and partners in an efficient go-to enterprise system. This entity should consider elements that:
 - Establish a grant-seeking operation
 - Engage a broad array of new and existing workforce partners
 - Consider evidence-based methods (collective impact, pay-for-performance, social impact investing, etc.) around innovative jobs programming

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

- Consider increasing barrier removal supports for residents who want to participate in training programs that include, but are not limited to: transportation, child care, mental health, and legal and adult education
12. Implement a comprehensive multi-year workforce demonstration project for at-risk youth in Baltimore County Public Schools, tying in high-quality Career and Technical Education (CTE) instruction and work-based learning opportunities connected directly to employers
 13. Expand the County's existing employer-driven workforce strategy by expanding Job Connector³ and growing an industry sector-partnership model similar to EARN Maryland⁴
 14. Follow the successful Accelerating Connections to Employment model, tying multiple layers of supportive services around traditional training
 15. Expand and support apprenticeship programs
 16. Expand the County's summer youth employment program and explore closer alignment with CTE programming at BCPS high schools
 17. Make more data available to employers and job seekers
 18. Bolster coordination between CCBC and the County to engage current and prospective employers to identify workforce and training needs. Strategies include:
 - Sharing information on the County website about CCBC education and training opportunities;
 - Greater coordination between the County's Human Resources Department and department heads on training and professional development needs for County employees; and
 - Locating some of the County's Job Development and Placement programs at CCBC campuses to better serve the surrounding communities.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES **Worksystems, Inc.**

Through a network of local partners, Worksystems, Inc. invests in resources to improve the quality of the workforce in the City of Portland, and in Multnomah and Washington counties. The nonprofit organization develops policies and designs programs that support individual prosperity and business competitiveness. Current grants and special initiatives include: Back to Work Oregon, a hire-first program that places unemployed job seekers in jobs while providing resources to businesses to train new employees, and Reboot Northwest, an \$8.5 million grant to train 850 long-term unemployed and 150 veterans in manufacturing and tech occupations. Since its inception in 1998, Worksystems has successfully managed more than \$350 million in federal, state, and local resources. Each year, these investments help more than 75,000 people improve their skills, find jobs, or advance their careers.
<https://www.worksystems.org/>

³ <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/economicdev/job-seekers/job-connector>

⁴ <http://www.dllr.state.md.us/earn>

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

19. Develop a return-to-work program, modeled after the Baltimore County Fire Department, for County employees recovering from addiction to find suitable jobs within County government

Job Quality

20. Review and update County policies relative to prevailing and living wage practices to ensure that County-based businesses can fairly and equitably compete for projects while providing meaningful employment to County residents
21. Recognize outstanding businesses that offer and promote quality employment practices, such as the utilization of innovative business practices to hire, train, and retrain residents to meet employer demand within the County.
 - Align with the efforts led by the Baltimore Workforce Funders Collaborative to recognize “high road” employers

Tourism

22. Develop an Integrated Tourism and Arts and Culture Strategy that specifically contemplates the following elements:
 - Use the recently completed tourism study to relaunch tourism and arts programming, and build on near- and long-term tourism assets such as waterfront, youth sports, horse country, arenas, fairgrounds, vineyards, breweries, etc.
 - In 2018, the County enacted a new law requiring that 8 percent of revenue generated by the hotel tax be dedicated to tourism activities. Evaluate the plan for use of the dedicated funds
 - Identify communities well-positioned for Arts and Entertainment designation and support applications
 - Consider the implementation of a Tourism Improvement District fee (currently being implemented in Baltimore City) and look at other options to increase revenue to execute the tourism strategy
 - Consider implementation of a hotel tax being applied to short-term rentals (e.g. Airbnb, HomeAway)

- Update the County’s marketing approach for tourism activities by focusing on digital and social media, away from costly and less-effective print media
- Explore regional tourism initiatives, including specific County-City crossover tourism activities and other cooperation in Baltimore, Howard, and Anne Arundel counties and Baltimore City around the Patapsco Heritage Areas

Improve and Align Systems

23. Consider moving community development and housing programs and associated activities from the departments of Planning and Health and Human Services into a new and integrated agency: Community/Neighborhood Revitalization and Sustainability
24. Establish a service-oriented, concierge-like approach and ethic for how small, medium, and large businesses, start-up companies, and residents interact with the government
25. Evaluate tax incentive and loan programs, legislative processes, and loan program processes to ensure that the County is not losing money or businesses due to unclear legislation with regard to antiquated zoning language, tax incentive programs, and PUD processes

Community Development

26. Support and foster Community Development Corporations (CDCs)
 - Provide training and education for interested faith-based groups, nonprofits, and community groups so they know what is required to establish and maintain a CDC
 - Identify capital and operating budget resources to help support start-ups and to provide program assistance
27. Establish an overarching strategy for neighborhood stability, with resources and incentives. Specifically:

RECOMMENDATIONS *(continued)*

- Create databases by community concerning rentals and home ownership, property values and conditions, public spaces, and services
 - Create new tools and systems to identify and address aging and vacant houses and commercial properties
 - Include plans for community-based projects for walkability, crime prevention, support for seniors, recreation, and open space
 - Pilot property tax abatements, façade improvements, and community enhancement grants. Create and share prototypes and models
 - Foster Main Street programs and re-establish Commercial Revitalization programs for business centers and corridors
 - Actively seek state funding for small businesses, community improvements, and neighborhood revitalization through the following programs: Community Legacy, Baltimore Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, Neighborhood Business Works, Arts and Entertainment Districts, and Commerce Department programs
- 28.** Adopt best practices to address effective use of inspections, fines, and absentee landlords
- ### Housing
- 29.** Develop a housing strategy that:
- Leverages high quality housing stock to ensure a diverse housing portfolio
 - Increases the creation of affordable housing units, particularly for those with income at 60 percent of area median and below
 - Incentivizes private investment into revitalization projects
- 30.** Review zoning ordinances, regulations, policies, and practices to determine if there are impediments to creating more affordable housing and update as needed
- 31.** Expand funding to encourage and support the renovation or creation of affordable units
- 32.** Expand and simplify housing counseling services to offer more people access to services and move more people into stable home ownership
- 33.** Rebuild housing markets in aging communities by reinvigorating their competitiveness through targeted, strategic investment driven by community input
- 34.** Explore programs that incentivize reinvestment in existing housing stock and support home ownership in targeted revitalization areas, including by small developers, new home buyers, and current homeowners
- 35.** Educate Baltimore County residents and landlords on what affordable workforce housing is, who needs such housing, and how it is important to revitalize and provide opportunities for residents
- Continue strengthening compliance with fair housing laws
 - Establish an incentive to create workforce housing to serve those between 60 percent and 110 percent of the area median income
- 36.** Deconcentrate clusters of affordable housing by supporting affordable housing development in areas of opportunity and end source-of-income discrimination
- 37.** Explore the creation of programs to incentivize owners of rental properties in targeted revitalization nodes to make façade improvements

