

Hagerstown's Sustainable Community Action Plan

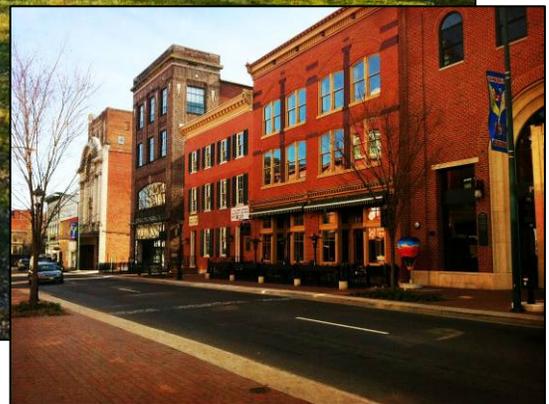


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Hagerstown's Sustainable Community Action Plan and Area was approved by the State of Maryland in March 2012. This Sustainable Community Plan and Area replaces the City's former Community Legacy Plan and Area, as our community's revitalization plan for the urban core of Hagerstown. A map of the Sustainable Community Area is included on the last page of this presentation.

The Sustainable Community Action Plan incorporates recommendations from the City's 2008 Comprehensive Plan and Community Legacy Plan, as well as strategies devised by Hagerstown's Sustainable Community Work Group in the summer and fall of 2011.

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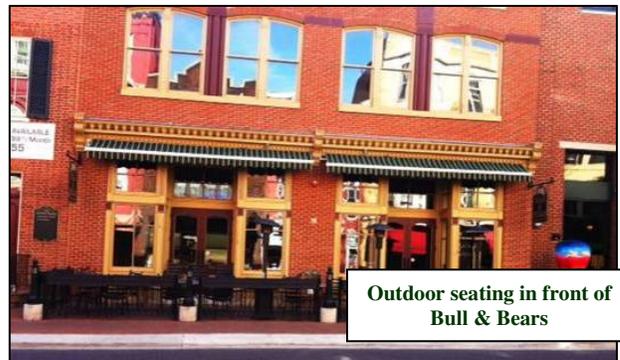
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The following is Hagerstown's Sustainable Community Action Plan and Area.

I. Supporting Existing Communities and Reducing Environmental Impacts

A. Our community's approach to Smart Growth and significant accomplishments made in last decade or so:

- ☀ Reinforce City Center's role as region's economic, cultural, and institutional center.
 1. Improve image of City Center through enhancement of physical environment.
 2. Diversify recruitment approach to cultivate and accommodate a wider mix of customers and to stimulate business-to-business economic activity.
 3. Develop and support initiatives that bring people to the City Center and stimulate the economy
 4. Create and expand safe and attractive parking areas.
- ☀ Encourage revitalized City Center housing development with a diversity of price ranges.
 1. Add new residences through adaptive re-use of upper floors, upgrades to existing vacant units, and creation of mixed-use buildings with apartments over retail and service uses.
 2. Improve quality of existing housing stock to ensure safety of residents and to attract more responsible tenants.
 3. Add housing and studio space for artists in the A&E district.
- ☀ Strengthen City Center's role as a regional tourist destination.
 1. Encourage creation of small inn or hotel with enough conference space to support small regional and State meetings.
 2. Focus on history, arts, and culture and creation/support of anchors to draw people to the City Center.
 3. Encourage outdoor dining and other street-level activity.
- ☀ Continue to use comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategies to address needs of city's neighborhoods.
- ☀ Grow the parks and open space system to give neighborhoods appropriate levels of recreational amenities.
- ☀ Promote high quality housing stock and increased home-ownership rates throughout the city.
- ☀ Encourage re-use and revitalization of vacant and underutilized land within the city.
- ☀ Recruit service-sector, high technology and other businesses that offer higher wages and strengthen the City's economic and fiscal base.
- ☀ Strengthen the role of historic resources in the city by encouraging



Outdoor seating in front of Bull & Bears

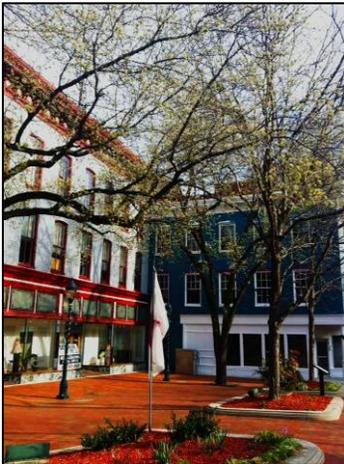
rehabilitation and reuse of historical residential, commercial, industrial and mixed-use buildings.

- Ensure sufficient school, utility, and other public facilities capacity to serve the growing needs of the city and its surrounding growth area.
- Establish a cohesive pedestrian-friendly atmosphere throughout the City Center and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Protect sensitive environmental areas, such as stream buffer zones and steep slopes, through conservation, stabilization, and restoration activities.
- Undertake various activities, such as regulation of private development and construction of stormwater retrofits as appropriate, to reduce non-point source nutrient loads and to gain compliance with the upcoming Watershed Implementation Plan for the county.
- Ensure city's transportation network meets the mobility needs of its residents, businesses and visitors – including roads, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities.
- Ensure adequate capacity of roadway network around and through the city to prevent over-loading of the City Center with the region's through traffic.

B. Major investments in community infrastructure that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the Sustainable Community Area for private investment and compliance with TMDL regulations:

- Develop Downtown Parking Master Plan (underway).
- Implement Parking Plan recommendations.
- Explore opportunities for stormwater retrofits as funding allows.
- Improve aesthetics of City Center pedestrian environment.

C. Policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the Sustainable Community Area's impact on the environment:



- Explore opportunities for stream buffer restoration projects as funding allows.
- Implement Tree Canopy Cover Goal of increasing City tree canopy cover percentage from 22% to 30% by 2020.
- Continue street tree planting projects.
- Continue city-wide inflow and infiltration correction projects to wastewater collection system.
- Market the City's Green Buildings Tax Credit program to investors and developers.

D. Community groups or stakeholders key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Antietam Creek Watershed Alliance

II. Valuing Communities and Neighborhoods – building upon assets and building in amenities

A. Key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build:

- Small town feel with larger city amenities.
- Unique architectural character of City Center and mixing of uses in close-knit area.
- Relatively low-cost space that could accommodate the needs of start-up and expanding businesses.
- Mixed-use zoning and other flexible urban zoning tools to accommodate blending of uses in exciting ways.
- Strong arts and cultural assets in the City Center and surrounding region.
- Diverse, walkable residential neighborhoods interconnected with City Center and each other and surrounding business districts.
- Low cost of living compared to jurisdictions to the east.
- Plentiful recreation and sports opportunities in the city and surrounding region, including a minor league baseball team.
- Diverse educational opportunities with public and private school systems, Hagerstown Community College, University System of Maryland Center at Hagerstown, and Kaplan University.
- Diversified economic base with room for more employment opportunities.
- Good medical facilities with new hospital and large medical support community.
- Excellent transportation connections with other regions, with I-81 and I-70, Hagerstown Airport, Greyhound, and a commuter bus system to metro area.
- Excellent public utilities, including electric, water and wastewater, to serve growth needs of city and surrounding growth area.

B. Policies, initiatives or projects that will reuse or enhance the Historical Assets, Traditional Business Districts and Cultural Resources of the community:

- Develop new and expand existing incentive programs to support and attract entrepreneurial and small business development and stimulate building renovations and enhancements.
- Recruit employment centers to expand a



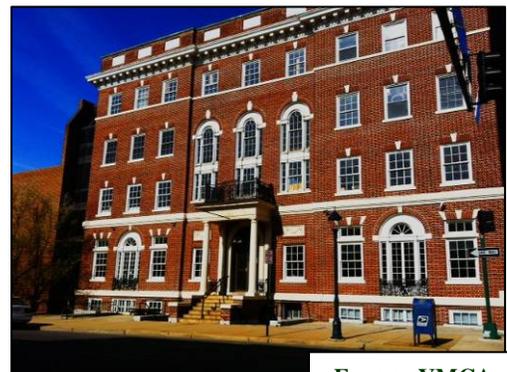
Barbara Ingram School for the Arts

daytime population that will support existing businesses and increase demand for businesses.

- Facilitate relocation of government offices into the City Center.
- Support plans to expand facilities to serve growing needs of Barbara Ingram School for the Arts.
- Approach businesses seeking new office locations in region and facilitate location in the City Center.
- Assist with planning efforts on redevelopment of the former hospital lands in the Sustainable Community Area.
- Support plans to expand and enhance existing cultural and educational anchors.
- Assist with enhancement efforts of new facilities in expanded Washington County Free Library.
- Support plans to enhance support facilities for the Maryland Theatre.
- Assist with creation of new anchors and support facilities to attract patrons to the City Center.
- Add permanent performance stage in University Plaza for concerts and other outdoor performances.
- Explore opportunities to develop small hotel with meeting space for regional conferences.
- Assist with efforts to expand or create additional heritage museums in the Sustainable Community Area (e.g., Doleman Black Heritage Museum, Fire Museum, expanded display space for collections of Discovery Station and Washington County Historical Society, etc.).
- Promote available meeting space in the City Center as venues for small regional meetings and conferences.
- Intercede with blighted properties to facilitate re-use by new businesses and/or residents that support the goals for the City Center.
- Rehab 36-40 N. Potomac Street as mixed-use project with upper floor artist loft housing.
- Rehab 60 W. Washington Street into small business center with incubator space for start-up businesses.
- Acquire and mothball properties when opportunities arise and promote adaptive re-use opportunities to potential investors.
- Target areas of Sustainable Community Area for redevelopment and facilitate planning efforts and investor recruitment (e.g., former Hospital lands, surface parking lots, condemned/obsolete buildings, former MVA lands, former



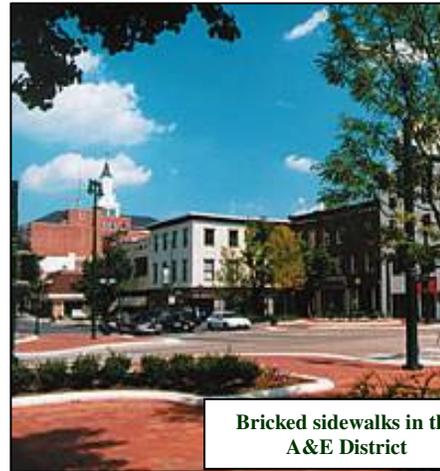
Construction of the Washington County Free Library



Former YMCA

YMCA, etc.).

- ✿ Enhance public infrastructure to support private sector investment in buildings and businesses.
- ✿ Develop and implement recommendations of Downtown Parking Master Plan for technological upgrades, future demand needs, incentives for patrons.
- ✿ Develop strategies to address the environmental hurdles that discourage people from visiting the City Center.
- ✿ Improve design features to allow for natural surveillance of public and private areas (e.g., windows, lighting, etc.).
- ✿ Improve way-finding to orient infrequent visitors.
- ✿ Continue bricking and landscaping sidewalks in the A&E District.
- ✿ Create safe access routes between parking and destinations.
- ✿ Address signs of disorder quickly (e.g., graffiti, broken windows, trash, etc.).
- ✿ Increase implied and/or explicit presence of authority.
- ✿ Install “blue light” kiosks for 911 access at strategic areas.
- ✿ Develop and support initiatives that bring people to the City Center and stimulate economy (e.g., special events, sidewalk dining, parks).
- ✿ Promote and market the Sustainable Community Area to young people and non-traditional households that have not closed their minds to living and conducting business in this area.



Bricked sidewalks in the A&E District

C. Policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to Green Spaces, Parks and Other Amenities:

- ✿ Assist with plans to relocate a downtown fire station (Antietam Fire Company) to new location in the north end of Hagerstown.
- ✿ Replace/Upgrade aging elementary schools (e.g., Bester Elementary School and Winter Street Elementary School) to better serve Hagerstown attendance areas.
- ✿ Assist with plans to replace/upgrade Municipal Stadium for the Hagerstown Suns.
- ✿ Explore opportunities to develop pocket parks throughout the Sustainable Community Area.
- ✿ Add the new play equipment in under-served areas of the Sustainable Community Area: City Center, West End, and South End.



University Plaza

- ☀ Explore opportunities to create a dog park somewhere in the city.
- ☀ Explore creation of “Rail-By-Trail” along little used rail lines in the Sustainable Community Area.
- ☀ Explore replacement of Winter Street elementary school (if it relocates) with a neighborhood park.
- ☀ Explore opportunities for Community Center or Community Meeting Space in the City Center to serve socializing needs of neighborhood groups and residents.

D. Community groups or stakeholders key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section:

- ☀ Greater Hagerstown Committee
- ☀ Local lending institutions
- ☀ Washington County Public School System
- ☀ Meritus Health
- ☀ State and County economic development agencies
- ☀ Washington County Free Library
- ☀ Maryland Theatre
- ☀ Doleman Black Heritage Museum
- ☀ Hagerstown/Washington Convention and Visitors Bureau
- ☀ Washington County Arts Council
- ☀ Washington County Industrial Foundation
- ☀ Local media
- ☀ Hagerstown/Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- ☀ Volunteer Fire Companies
- ☀ Hagerstown Suns



Municipal Stadium- Home of the Hagerstown Suns

III. Enhancing Economic Competitiveness

A. Economic development policies, initiatives or projects that will improve the economy:

- ☀ Increase “Economic Development Knowledge Infrastructure” to underpin strategic planning efforts (e.g., census of businesses, inventory of leasable space, comparison of demographics with competition, market analyses,



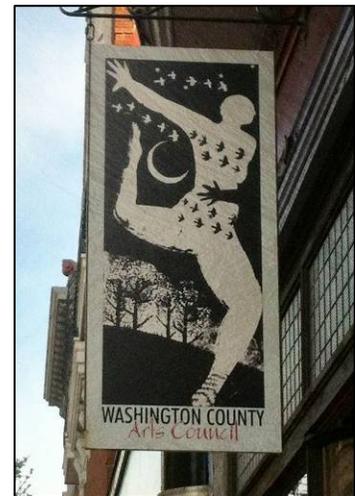
Workforce Center in the Public Square

business surveys, etc.).

- Market and promote the City for economic development (e.g., expand web-based tools, brand a fast-track system for relocation and development review, launch an “open for business” campaign, etc.)
- Recruit service-sector, high tech and other businesses that offer higher wages and strengthen the City’s economic and fiscal base.
- Upgrade business and investment incentive programs (e.g., revolving loan fund, Partners in Economic Progress program, Sign and Facade Grant Program).

B. Economic development and business incentives that we will build upon or implement as part of the Sustainable Community Plan:

- Develop training programs to mentor start-up businesses on how to ensure success.
- Support efforts by local educational institutions to provide workforce training programs to retrain employees of departed or retracting businesses.
- Revamp and consolidate two existing City Revolving Loan Funds for business assistance and commercial building rehab.
- Explore development of new Public-Private Loan Guarantee Program in partnership between local lenders and local government.
- Explore modifications to the City’s Partners in Economic Progress (PEP) program to encourage more investment and business recruitment (e.g., new Storefront Rent Relief Grant Program similar to the City’s Upper Floor Rent Relief Program for retail, restaurants, and A&E enterprises).
- Update the City’s Downtown Sign and Facade Grant program and consider increasing grant maximums.



C. Impact of BRAC activities on the Sustainable Community Area:

- There is the potential for the Sustainable Community Area to be impacted by BRAC activities at Fort Detrick, if new employees and businesses are in need of the more affordable housing and business start-up space in our community.

D. Community groups or stakeholders key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section:

- Washington County Public School System



University System of Maryland Center at Hagerstown

- ✿ Hagerstown Community College
- ✿ University System of Maryland Center at Hagerstown
- ✿ Greater Hagerstown Committee
- ✿ Local lending institutions
- ✿ Downtown Alliance
- ✿ City Center cultural community
- ✿ Hagerstown/Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- ✿ State and county economic development agencies
- ✿ Western Maryland Consortium

IV. Promoting Access to Quality Affordable Housing

A. Housing policies, initiatives or projects that will expand housing choices for people of a range of ages, incomes and also for disabled individuals:

- ✿ Revise zoning regulations to allow for higher density single-family, duplex, and townhouse subdivisions in higher density zoning districts.
- ✿ Devise zoning regulations to allow for artist live-work space in the City Center and other appropriate zoning districts.
- ✿ Continue to support endeavors to create wider mix of housing opportunities in the City Center to attract more diverse income groups.
- ✿ Assess the need for different types of live/work space and explore mechanisms to fill the needs.
- ✿ Develop a parking incentive program for City Center residents where on-site parking is not available to the tenants.
- ✿ Assess need for green space to serve Sustainable Community Area residents and consider removal of substandard housing and replacement with green space.
- ✿ Assess effective means to reduce residential density in substandard, over-occupied buildings and to improve such properties.
- ✿ Create and recruit features to attract target populations (e.g, grocery store, entertainment, dog park, green space).
- ✿ Improve quality of housing stock and adapt upper floors for non-traditional housing types.
- ✿ Create target areas of strong architectural character for home-owner, tenant, and investor recruitment programs.



B. These housing initiatives or projects will increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs, as follows:

- ✿ All neighborhoods and sectors of the Sustainable Community Area have

- transit routes in close proximity and most streets have sidewalks.
- Transportation costs for these residents will depend upon whether residents work within the city or nearby business centers or if they commute out of the county.
- “Safety through environmental design” measures will make the walkability within the Sustainable Community Area more attractive.

C. Our goal for affordable workforce housing, rentals and home-ownership:

- Affordability is not an issue in the Sustainable Community Area. The City focuses efforts on attempting to improve the quality of the housing stock and the behavior of absentee landlords (e.g, Rental Registration program).
- The City would like to increase the home-ownership rate in the city from its current ratio of 60% rental-40% owner-occupied, a reverse of the state average. The home-ownership rate in the Sustainable Community Area is even lower at 28%.



S. Prospect Street

D. Community groups or stakeholders key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section:

- Washington County Community Action Council
- Hagerstown Housing Authority
- Downtown Alliance
- Neighborhood First Groups

V. Supporting Transportation Efficiency and Access

A. Policies, strategies and projects envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the Sustainable Community area:



Bike Parking along N. Potomac St

- Explore funding opportunities for bus shelters along County Commuter routes.
- Implement the Bicycle Master Plan recommendations for commuter bike routes.
- Continue to fill the gaps in the city's pedestrian network and ensure that all new development includes sidewalks that connect to surrounding network.
- Ensure adequacy of capacity of roadway network in the community to prevent over-loading of the

Sustainable Community Area with the region's through traffic.

B. Community groups or stakeholders key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section:

- ☀ County Commuter
- ☀ Maryland Department of Transportation
- ☀ Developers

VI. Coordinating and Leveraging (federal, state, local) Policies and Investments

A. Specific steps to be taken by the Sustainable Community Workgroup to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the Sustainable Community Area:

- ☀ The Sustainable Community Work Group will work with the community stakeholders identified in the different sections of this Sustainable Community Plan to implement strategies intended to remove barriers to investment and maximize funding opportunities in the Sustainable Community Area. For example, business representatives on the Work Group will assist the City to forge partnerships with local lending institution.

B. The Sustainable Community Plan is consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans, as follows:

- ☀ The Sustainable Community Plan is consistent with the recommendations in the City's 2008 Comprehensive Plan, the City's 2008 Community Legacy Plan, the City's 2010 Consolidated Plan, the Mayor and City Council's 2010 Strategic Plan, the City's 2011 City Center Plan and Strategic Directions, and the recommendations of the Sustainable Community Work Group in the fall of 2011. The City's Smart Growth approach outlined in Sub-section A is directly lifted from the City's 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The City's 2008 Community Legacy Plan and Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area TIZ strategies for Hagerstown's City Center are built upon the core goals of Hagerstown's Comprehensive Plan. The Sustainable Community Work Group developed recommended revitalization strategies within the framework of these Comprehensive Plan goal statements.

C. The Plan will help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments, as follows:

- ☀ Public-private partnerships on loan guarantees for City Center projects will reduce risk for local lending institutions.
- ☀ More active local lending institutions will bring economic prospects to the



Beachley Furniture

City Center.

- More flexibility in zoning codes for alternative housing types and manufacturing in the City Center will provide more opportunities for securing tenants and thus reduce risk for investment.
- Proposed modifications to City incentive programs will make more business prospects and investors eligible for assistance and thus leverage more private investment.



138 W. Washington Street



22 N. Mulberry Street

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