



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

The City of Cumberland has historically been a regional hub for economic and commercial activity within Allegany County and the larger Western Maryland region. The City's economy was largely built upon a manufacturing base that established the City of Cumberland as the second largest city in Maryland. Starting in the second half of the 20th century the city's economy experienced a fundamental transformation as global economic patterns shifted and caused traditional manufacturing based economies throughout the United States to see their foundations altered.

The City has made great strides to stabilize from the economic decline that marked the past 50 years, but much work is needed in order to establish an economic base that will fill the void created through the loss of major manufacturing employers. The City of Cumberland has made progress and seen success in many areas including, but not limited to, growth as a regional medical services hub, a steady arts and entertainment district, a strong collection of stable tourist attractions, a steadily growing outdoor recreation economy, and a viable location for information technology development and a variety of mid-high level skilled office operations.

The City recognizes that it is critical to update and synthesize its economic development vision from the 2004 and 2012 strategies, and create a more defined implementation strategy to guide future endeavors. This new city-wide Economic Development Strategic Plan (EDSP) provides a framework to enable the City to pursue a proactive, comprehensive economic development effort aimed at increasing the local tax base, attracting new employers, enabling existing employers to grow, and supporting the continued development of the arts and tourism industries. The ultimate goal is to sustain and expand the economic base in order to provide for a high quality of life for all residents.

The City of Cumberland retained the services of RKG Associates, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia to provide the technical analysis and consensus building within the City administration, the Cumberland Economic Development Commission, the EDSP Steering Committee, and the community as a whole. While RKG provided the technical analysis and guided discussions around defining and prioritizing implementation actions, it was the community as a whole that came together to define success. The four main questions this EDSP addressed are:

- What is the current economic base of the City of Cumberland and the surrounding region?
- What are the opportunities for economic base expansion in the region that Cumberland can look to capitalize on?
- What must we do in a coordinated effort to take advantage of all opportunities?
- How can we most effectively deploy our financial and other resources to achieve our goals?



B. SOCIOECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Cumberland, Maryland has historically been the center for manufacturing and industry within Western Maryland with multimodal (rail, auto, and recreation) transportation access to the Pittsburgh, PA, Washington, DC and Baltimore, MD metropolitan areas. Over the last several decades, the influence and prominence of Cumberland as an industrial and manufacturing hub in the region has diminished as businesses gravitated to lower cost environments in the southern U.S. and international facilities. This economic shift, seen in numerous northeastern and Midwestern manufacturing/industry-based economies, has had a direct impact on the current economy of Cumberland and declining and changing population and household trends over the last decade and a half. By analyzing the demographic characteristics and economic base of Cumberland, the foundation can be developed for economic development strategies that acknowledge and incorporate these realities. The following are the most substantial findings from this analysis:

Cumberland has experienced a decline in population and households and is projected to continue to do so, unlike the Western Maryland Region which continues to grow. The decline in population that Cumberland has experience over the last decade and a half reflect not only a population shift, but also an economic shift as labor-intensive industries that previously dominated the local economy have departed. Conversely, Regional growth is largely due to the increase in population and households in Washington County which is benefitting from continued economic expansion from the Baltimore and Washington DC markets.

The number of young families and retirees has decrease in Cumberland impacting the economic capacity of the City. The loss of population within the 35 to 44 years of age cohort substantially reduces the experienced labor force within the City, which would otherwise provide a solid foundation for the economy. Additionally, there has been a decline in the retiree population, aged 65 years or greater, possibly due to a lack of housing, infrastructure and services that can accommodate aging in place. While not often a substantial part of the workforce, this population represents substantial spending power within the economy.

The median household income of Cumberland is lower than both Allegany County and the Region as a whole. The Cumberland population has an overall lower wage/income levels than the rest of the Region, and substantially lower incomes than the surrounding metropolitan areas. However, the cost of living within Cumberland is consistent with the wage levels (as compared to the metropolitan areas). To these points, local businesses have noted they benefit from the local cost efficiencies, being able to pay a comparatively lower wage rate than metropolitan locations while providing a greater real income levels.

Growth in the healthcare/social service sector has offset declines in manufacturing, both in Cumberland and in the Region. Resident employment and local/regional job trends reflect consistent expansion of jobs and residents employed in health care throughout the Region. When combined with continued declines in manufacturing in Western Maryland, this ultimately indicates a shift in the foundation of the economy from a production-based market to a service-based market throughout the Region.

Cumberland remains a center for employment within Allegany County. Despite the decline of economic scale within the City and the region compared to the surrounding metropolitan markets, The City remains an employment center, with more workers commuting to Cumberland than residents commuting out of the City for work. The majority of in-commuters come from other parts of Allegany County. This corroborates anecdotal findings that the countywide economy is



inextricably linked, and the regional labor force recognizes the value of being within proximity of personal and professional services available in Cumberland.

The Cumberland labor force is competitively educated and employed in primarily white-collar occupations. The overall level of education attainment is higher in Cumberland than the Region as a whole. The majority of City residents are employed in white-collar jobs. While perceptions of Cumberland and the Region may not be consistent with these findings, they highlight the existing labor force potential to further expand professional service sectors such as Health Care/Social Assistance.

Telecommuting is a small, but growing reality for Cumberland's employment base. More than 2% of City residents “commute” to each of the following destinations: Ann Arundel County, Montgomery County, Baltimore City and Baltimore County. This indicates that while the majority of residents stay within Western Maryland to work, a small portion are choosing to live in Cumberland despite their jobs being located in the major metropolitan areas on the eastern side of the state. The growth of telecommuting most likely explains this finding, as the jobs are technically located in these metropolitan areas but the workers reside in the City. This finding supports the potential growth of back office, or “rural sourcing,” as a viable economic development strategy for the City.

C. REAL ESTATE ANALYSIS

Non-residential real estate is one of many pieces within a comprehensive economic development strategy that can influence the implementation strategy. Existing companies need room to grow. New companies need space to conduct business and store products. In addition, understanding what type of real estate has been developed or sold and the current demand for property can illuminate opportunities to fill existing gaps in supply or identify market conditions that need to be addressed. This chapter focuses on better understanding the commercial (office and retail/service) and industrial real estate markets and their respective influence on economic development efforts for the City of Cumberland. The most substantial findings from this section include:

There is limited undeveloped land available in Cumberland. Cumberland is a mature community which is largely developed. Therefore, undeveloped land is in limited supply. The undeveloped supply of land is further reduced by environmental constraints, such as topography and wetlands, which can make development costly and impractical. Recent green-field development has largely taken place outside of Downtown Cumberland, where larger pieces of undeveloped land are still available. This indicates that most future development, particularly efforts to revitalize areas in and around Downtown, will focus on in-fill or redevelopment of small sites. Issues such as property assemblage need to be taken into account.

The non-residential market has not yet recovered from the impact of the 2008 Recession and economic downturn. Development trends within the City indicate there has been very little construction. Broker feedback corroborates this finding, and further indicates that investment in non-residential property has not returned to pre-Recession levels. The economic downturn not only reduced investment activity, but also consumer demand. The continued loss of population—and the corresponding consumption levels—in the City is exacerbating this challenge. For the City's efforts to encourage real estate market growth, the economic development effort needs to both improve the market climate for business and attract new residents to the City.

Cumberland has an oversupply of existing retail space, particularly in Downtown. Retail/service properties account for the largest single type of non-residential real estate in Cumberland. Due to the



recent economic shift noted above, a large inventory of these properties are either for sale or for lease. This inventory of available properties, greater than the number sold in recent years, indicates that supply of retail/service properties exceeds the existing demand. Therefore, a better understanding of the current retail/service market is needed in order to identify the best approach for reducing the surplus of property. This will include finding alternate uses for available space, identifying redevelopment opportunities, and conducting additional research to better understand what type of retail is best suited for the consumer market in Cumberland.

Institutional and corporate investment is the main source of new development in Cumberland.

Given the limited available land for development and current market constraints related to consumer demand and spending patterns, many of the recent and upcoming development activity in Cumberland involves large institutions or national/regional corporate entities focused on investments near Interstate 68. At a base level, the investment locations indicate businesses are seeking to augment the local consumer base with the thru-traffic along the Interstate. Furthermore, these entities have the capital absorb the risks associated with development in the current market. These findings indicate that development potential is limited to specific locations and types of development in the near-term development projects without some form of public private partnership.

Opportunity for planned, non-residential development that is tied to an area vision has the potential to positively impact the economy.

The real estate market analysis reveals that a more directed, vision-based approach is needed to encourage a revival of the non-residential real estate market in Cumberland. Opportunity sites have been identified through combining the vision of the community and the results of the market analysis. Existing market and socioeconomic conditions have been used to inform the potential focus for future strategic investment efforts. However, for redevelopment and the resulting economic growth potential to be realized, additional research and planning efforts are needed to identify how to approach each area in order to ensure that the City can maximize the impact of its economic development investments.

D. TARGET INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The identification of existing and potential industry clusters is a critical element of a strategic plan for economic development. Industry “clusters” are strategic groupings of businesses and industries that locate within close proximity of each other, or near a strategic resource, to gain economic benefits.

In order to identify the industry clusters for the City of Cumberland, the consultant first identified the strengths and weaknesses of the City, the business climate, and quality of life factors. Using a screening process (described in detail later in this chapter), the consultant then identified particular industry groups that either already exist or would benefit from the competitive advantages of Cumberland as an economic hub within Western Maryland.

The result of these efforts is a list containing specific industry segments that are compatible with the resource offerings and industry activity of Cumberland. This list is intended to be used to focus a comprehensive recruitment effort by the City’s economic development entity, as well as other local or partnership-based organizations charged with this responsibility. This target industry list is not intended to preclude any non-listed industries from being recruited or otherwise encouraged to locate within the City. Rather, this list exemplifies those industries that may have the greatest interest in the City of Cumberland based on local and regional competitive advantages. The target industries are:

Target Industry Cluster #1 – Back Office and Remote Business Services



Cumberland offers a unique market opportunity for businesses that serve clients in metropolitan areas but do not have to be located in those areas. The City's proximity to Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Washington, DC market allows these remote companies to have access to three substantial customer bases within a two-hour drive. Cumberland is well served with fiber optic telecommunications infrastructure, making data processing and movement convenient and accessible.

Cumberland's high quality of life, year-round outdoor recreation amenities, low cost of living, and well regarded schools make the City an ideal location for persons/families that value a more rustic lifestyle. Downtown Cumberland is a strategic asset, as it offers an urban scale and charm not commonly found in less developed areas. Communities such as Morgantown, West Virginia, Asheville, North Carolina and Covington, Georgia have developed niche business services industries being located on the periphery of larger markets.

While overall employment numbers for service-based industry sectors have been relative stable in the region over the past decade, the greater regional market has experienced growth in a number business and professional service industries. For example, internet-based companies have grown substantially in Allegany County and the greater region (1,484 jobs) between 2003 and 2012. Locally, Cumberland has had success in attracting and sustaining financial services companies and information technology companies. Other sectors have been successful regionally, but not locally. These include professional, technical and scientific services and administrative and support services. Specific industries within these sectors should be considered as part of a larger recruitment effort, but monitored closely during the City's implementation effort to determine the long-term potential. Industry sectors, and specific industries to pursue as part of this effort include:

Administrative and Support Services

- Data Processing, Hosting and Related Services
- Inbound and Outbound Telemarketing
- Direct Mail Advertising
- Translation and Transcription Services
- Process, Physical Distribution and Logistics Consulting Services
- Financial Transaction Hosting and Processing

Internet and Virtual Services

- Software Publishing
- Motion Picture and Video Processing
- Telecommunication Support Services
- Internet Publishing
- Cyber Security Services

Professional Services

- Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services
- Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services
- Advertising and Related Services
- Legal Support and Research Services
- Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping and Payroll Services

Technical Research and Modeling

- Computer Systems Design and Related Services
- Scientific Research and Development Services
- Agriculture and Biological Research/Consulting Services
- Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services



Given the City’s labor market fundamentals, this business recruitment effort will have the best chance of success targeting small firms and specific departments of larger firms. Realistically, the City should focus on companies with fewer than 25 employees. Taking this approach increases the value of Cumberland’s quality of life, since the business owner/manager will have a greater say in location preferences. In addition, it mitigates potential concerns about staffing if some of the company’s existing employees are not willing to relocate to Cumberland. That said, these criteria does not limit the potential business prospect market. RKG Associates collected establishment counts for business with fewer than 20 employees within the four regional metropolitan areas in each of the identified industries (Table 5-5). There are almost 63,000 businesses that met the criteria in these markets alone. Given Cumberland can market to companies outside of these areas as well, the recruitment focus should not be a limiting factor in potential success.

Small Business Presence in Regional Metropolitan Regions
Companies With Less Than 20 employees, By NAICS Code

NAICS	Description	Baltimore	Philadelphia	Pittsburgh	Washington
5112	Software Publishers	48	118	36	209
5121	Motion Picture and Video Industries	90	207	75	324
5179	Other Telecommunications	23	66	22	93
5182	Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services	116	267	92	385
5191	Other Information Services	54	188	136	270
5239	Other Financial Investment Activities	404	1,333	365	937
5412	Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	1,082	2,008	741	2,277
5413	Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	1,020	1,759	733	2,296
5414	Specialized Design Services	326	549	150	726
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	1,805	2,982	757	8,318
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	1,516	3,112	922	5,797
5417	Scientific Research and Development Services	188	343	88	817
5418	Advertising and Related Services	292	690	215	1,252
5419	Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	494	1,138	452	1,335
5511	Management of Companies and Enterprises	314	1,521	351	1,022
5614	Business Support Services	254	547	199	641
5615	Travel Arrangement and Reservation Services	128	408	116	484
7113	Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events	48	94	42	111
7115	Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers	105	222	63	275
7139	Other Amusement and Recreation Industries	412	912	490	757
8112	Electronic and Precision Equipment Repair and Maintenance	120	231	85	205
8113	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment Repair	169	281	142	148
TOTALS		9,008	18,976	6,272	28,679

Source: County Business Patterns and RKG Associates, Inc.

It is important to note that this recruitment effort cannot be implemented in a vacuum. There are a number of other initiatives that need to occur concurrently to position the City for success. Most notably, the continued reinvestment in Downtown Cumberland’s building stock is important. These businesses most likely will have some interest in a Downtown location, and having appropriate space available for immediate lease will be an asset. To this point, the City may need to take a more proactive, partnership role in ensuring there is sufficient supply available. 19 Frederick Street may be a good pilot location for this program.

The pursuit of this target industry cluster should not be limited to established businesses. The target industry analysis revealed there are market niches within these industries for Cumberland to develop entrepreneurial and home-based businesses. Implementation recommendations such as the business incubator concept, the minority/woman-owned business entrepreneurial program, and home-based loan pool initiative expands the focus to individuals with promising ideas, therefore increasing the City’s chances for success.



Target Industry Cluster #2 – Healthcare and Social Services

The economic and target industry analyses have shown that healthcare/social assistance industry sector is Cumberland's and the Western Maryland region's strongest growth industry. Despite the net loss of more than 5,000 jobs in the six-county study area between 2003 and 2012, the healthcare and social assistance industry sector experienced a net gain of more than 2,700 jobs. Information services was the only other industry sector (almost exclusively in Allegany County) to experience a net employment growth over 1,000 jobs over the entire study area. While healthcare and social assistance has been the largest employment sector in Allegany County, it has surpassed retail services and manufacturing to become the largest employment sector in the region as well.

At a base level, there is the potential to attract medical specialties currently not represented—or underrepresented—in Cumberland to the market. This effort would need to be done in coordination with Western Maryland Health System to augment their offerings at the hospital and coordinated urgent clinics. Additionally, conversations with healthcare professionals indicated a challenge to recruit and maintain primary and emergency care professionals. Part of the marketing and recruitment effort should be to develop a public/private partnership with Western Maryland Health System to attract physicians, nurses, and research professionals.

In October of 2013, Frederick Regional Health System in Frederick, Meritus Health in Hagerstown and Western Maryland Health System in Cumberland signed a joint regional alliance agreement. This agreement is intended to improve healthcare for persons living in western Maryland through shared services and management, combined quality initiatives, and clinical integration. This effective consolidation of hospital services offers a unique opportunity for the City, from an economic development perspective. In addition to the streamlined approach to providing care, there likely will be a consolidation of services that are not needed in three locations. To this point, the City of Cumberland should be working with Western Maryland Health Systems to establish incentive programs and/or public-private partnerships aimed at directing the most coveted specialties/programs to Cumberland.

Target Industry #3 – Arts, Culture, Tourism, and Recreation

As noted throughout this document, Cumberland is at the center of a four-season recreation and tourism market. In addition to the C&O Canal Trail and GAP Trail connection at Canal Place, the City hosts arts venues, holiday/community events, outdoor music concerts, and nationally recognized tourist destinations (i.e. the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad). In addition, Cumberland is within close proximity to historic (Antietam Battlefield), sporting (whitewater rafting, skiing), and entertainment (Rocky Gap Casino) venues. Cumberland's central location has led to the development and growth of a small bed & breakfast market as well as high hotel occupancy levels. To this end, the City is investigating the feasibility of a Downtown boutique hotel concept (in partnership with ACM) and the potential for additional hotels along Interstate 68 (2014 hotel study).

The economic and target industry analysis revealed that the hospitality, entertainment, and recreation market sectors have experienced modest to moderate growth locally and regionally. This is due, in part, to the development of Rocky Gap as a casino. However, Cumberland offers an authentic downtown experience within driving distance of the Baltimore and Washington DC metropolitan areas that can expand the stay of persons already enjoying the destinations in and around the City. Other areas within close proximity to these metropolitan areas have been very successful developing this tourism niche that has expanded day and overnight visitors (i.e. Reading, PA, Winchester, VA).



That stated, the City’s economic development implementation entity can only be one component of the holistic arts, culture, tourism, and recreation market development. There are a number of existing entities that will have to play a leadership role in this effort including Allegany Tourism, the Allegany Arts Council and the Cumberland Downtown Development Commission.

On a positive note, there are a number of initiatives currently underway that will allow the City’s economic development to partner in growing this market opportunity. For example, the Arts Council has initiated a Creative Placemaking strategic planning effort to grow arts in Allegany County. The City’s economic development entity can partner in this endeavor to help identify specific projects that complement Creative Placemaking and assist in attracting private sector investment. Similarly, the growth and expansion of activity at Canal Place can be a collaboration between the City’s economic development effort and the Canal Place Preservation & Development Authority.

That said, the level of internal coordination amongst the various arts, culture, tourism, and recreation venues/organizations limits the potential effectiveness that the City’s economic development organization can have in this target industry. Simply put, there are too many individual stakeholders for the implementation entity to work with each individually. Furthermore, the scale of effort for many of these stakeholders will not justify the cost/benefit for Cumberland. To this end, better coordination and collaboration of the arts, culture, tourism, and recreation entities will be necessary to realize the true potential of an economic development partnership. While creating a strategic plan to formalize the relationships necessary to create a partnering entity is beyond the scope of the City’s economic development strategic plan, RKG Associates recommends that a parallel effort be initiated to develop a tourism development strategic plan that can be dovetailed into the City’s (and the County’s) economic development efforts.

E. IMPLEMENTATION

This implementation strategy provides a framework to enable the City to pursue a proactive, comprehensive economic development effort aimed at increasing the local tax base, attracting new employers, enabling existing employers to grow, and supporting the continued development of the arts and tourism industries. This implementation plan is intended to guide the City’s economic development efforts over the next five to ten years. The strategies developed for Cumberland focus on the City’s defined goals, and address both the needs and impediments for existing business while defining methods for attracting and growing new business areas of opportunity.

Throughout the planning process, RKG Associates has engaged with numerous public, non-profit and private entities, civic and institutional organizations, elected leaders, partner organizations, and the Cumberland community. These interactions provided a number of benefits for the strategic planning process. However, the most important benefit is it enabled RKG to synthesize the desires, frustrations, and preferences into the empirical data collected and analyzed into those overarching issues that must be addressed in order for the community to be able to move forward. It is through these principles that RKG Associates, the City’s economic development staff, and the Steering Committee defined the City’s economic development goals, framed the implementation strategy, and prioritized actions. For the City of Cumberland, the strategies overarching principles are:

- **Promote a “unity of vision” for Cumberland’s economic development efforts**
- **Take advantage of local, regional, and state-wide initiatives**
- **Look beyond the “traditional” economic development efforts**



The City assembled a Steering Committee to represent City interests in the development of this plan. As part of that effort, a comprehensive outreach strategy was held to identify, refine and select the City's economic development goals. These goals were presented and reviewed at each milestone interaction with the Steering Committee and the public. The following list of goals represents the culmination of this input and selection process. It is important to note that the order of goals is not reflective of priority.

- **To create jobs that pay above median income for Allegany County**
- **To add wealth through “primary” job attraction**
- **To create a new image for Cumberland that can be marketed**
- **To encourage entrepreneurship and small business development**
- **To define a tangible, multi-year plan that can garner support**
- **To identify a strategic approach to addressing blight and redevelopment**
- **To reverse negative attitude in community**
- **To educate decision makers and community stakeholders on the purpose and value of economic development**
- **To create a business case for moving past the “the way it was” mentality**
- **To continue development and growth of the robust arts and tourism markets in Cumberland**

The implementation strategy organizes the action steps into three topic areas most relevant to the goals and priorities established by the Steering Committee. These categories include: [1] Market and Asset Development, [2] Marketing and Outreach, and [3] Organization and Regulatory. The prioritization of action steps was shaped through combining the vision of the Steering Committee, the expectations of civic and government leaders, current market conditions, identified opportunities, and projected future market influences.

The following implementation matrix presents the full range of objectives and corresponding action items for consideration when creating the implementation entity's first year business plan. The time lines, estimated costing, and implementation partners for each action item identified in the matrix reflect of the level of effort desired by the Steering Committee and assessment by the Consultant. The final business plan established by the implementation entity should be heavily influenced by the Steering Committee's established strategy, but refined based on the available strategic and capital resources available to this effort. The final timing, focus, and potential costs will be better determined by the formal implementation entity representatives and the dedicated participation from various public and private sources. A more detailed narrative of the most substantial efforts the City of Cumberland and its implementation partners should undertake is provided in the Implementation Strategy chapter.



Strategic Economic Development Plan
City of Cumberland, Maryland

CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN		Implementation Lead			Implementation Timing			Estimated Cost
Implementation Matrix		Public/NP	Private	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term		
MARKET AND ASSET DEVELOPMENT								
Action 4:	Encourage development of age-restricted housing at the former Memorial hospital site	IE, CU						A
Action 5:	Perform financial feasibility analysis to determine if the City's Downtown Legacy grant program for upper-level rehabilitation needs to be expanded/augmented	IE	C, O					C
Action 6:	Market test the City's age-in-place programs (i.e. rehabilitation and weatherization programs) to determine appropriate metrics	IE, CU	C					A
Action 7:	Consider property tax freezes for person who meet an age and income qualification threshold	CU, AL						F
Action 8:	Implement a proactive marketing effort of Cumberland as a place to retire, promoting programs and opportunities in the City	IE, CU						B
Objective #5: Execute greater coordination efforts for workforce development								
Action 1:	Establish an education and workforce roundtable that brings the FSU, ACM, Board of Education and private businesses together with City and County leadership on a quarterly or semi-annual basis	IE, AL, CU, AC, FS, BE, MD						A
Action 2:	Actively promote the new advanced manufacturing/CNC continuing education and IT Center for Excellence programs	IE, AC, FS, ED, MD						B
Action 3:	Inventory existing degree programs at FSU and ACM to include in target industry marketing materials. Advertise continuing education/workforce development programs to local residents through the implementation entity's website	IE, AC, FSU						A
Action 4:	Identify existing workforce programs that can be expanded/refined to correlate to industry retention and recruitment	IE, AC, FS, MD	C					A
Action 5:	Identify new education/continuing education programs that can be developed based on the results of the business survey and interactions with the industry roundtables	IE, AC, FS, MD						E
Action 6:	Identify 5-8 local business leaders willing to serve as mentors under the SDBC/implementation entity. Expand number as needed/talent allows	IE	I					A
Action 7:	Provide formal training to selected mentors (i.e. the SBA's Mentor-Protégé Program)	IE, MD	I					D
Action 8:	Implement mentorship program in coordination with the Small Business Development Center, bringing entrepreneurs together with implementation entity mentors	IE, AC, MD	I					B
Action 9:	Monitor success/effectiveness of existing programs and modify as needed based on changes in marketing and recruitment efforts/market conditions	IE	I					A
Objective #6: Create and administer an Allegany County/Western Maryland employment exposition								
Action 1:	Work with education institutions, neighboring economic development entities, and regional employers to establish an annual career exposition	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					E
Action 2:	Host exposition on a rotating basis with all participating economic development entities	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above
Action 3:	Provide separate, specialized sessions for middle school children, high school children, and transitioning adults to engage these businesses about educational needs, potential career paths and typical incomes	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above
Action 4:	Hold the event over 2-3 days	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above
Action 5:	Seek sponsorships from participating business to defray costs of holding the events	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above
Action 6:	Offer mock interview sessions and communication skills seminars for high school students and interested adults	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above
Action 7:	Provide transportation for school-aged children to attend event	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above
Action 8:	Consider offering access to parents to attend with their child	IE, AC, AL, BE, CU, ED, FR, FS	I					Included in Above



Strategic Economic Development Plan
City of Cumberland, Maryland

Implementation Matrix	Implementation Lead		Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Estimated Cost
	Public/NP	Private				
CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN						
MARKET AND ASSET DEVELOPMENT						
<p>Action 9: Create a jobs "app" for Cumberland that allows local employers to post openings/job requirements in a real-time manner accessible from the Internet and smart phones</p>	E	C				C
Objective #7: Retain and nurture existing businesses						
Action 1: Create a comprehensive business database for all businesses in Cumberland. Update annually	E	O, I				A
Action 2: Develop and implement a web-based survey for all businesses, focusing on identifying needs, emerging market trends and potential obstacles to success	E	O, I				A
Action 3: Hold workforce forum to share results of initial workforce survey results with local workforce training providers	E, AC, FSU, BE, CU	Z				B
Action 4: Present survey's market findings at industry roundtables relevant to that industry, soliciting response and advice on addressing specific needs/opportunities. Use this data to inform the annual business planning retreat	E	I, D, O				A
Action 5: Coordinate with local and state entities also performing retention activities to eliminate duplicative efforts and avoid inconveniencing local businesses	E, ED, TC, MD, CC, DD					A
Action 6: Provide monthly newsletter to the business community database	E					A
Action 7: Host 2-3 regional industry-specific business networking events each year; potentially in partnership with Frostburg/County economic development entities	E, ED, TC	C, I				B
Action 8: Develop a business lecture series, hosting 1-2 event per year, establishing topic areas based on the responses to the annual business survey and interacting with the industry roundtables	E, ED	C, I				C
Objective #8: Nurture and develop the City's home-based and entrepreneurial businesses						
Action 1: Create databases of entrepreneur/small business development partners, focus group members, business leaders, mentors and program participants	E, MD					A
Action 2: Determine the feasibility of an incubator/co-share/accelerator concept for the City	E, CU	C				C
Action 3: Expand/market business development programs including: [1] writing a business plan; [2] how to finance a business; [3] how to identify, hire and manage staff; and [4] how to market to clients	E, AC, FS, ED	I				B
Action 4: Establish incentives to accommodate home-based businesses; including business license fee waivers, business financing packages (tied to development program attendance), and a loan consortium dedicated program	E, ED	F				D
Action 5: The mentorship program to enrollment in business development programs	E, AC	I				A
Action 6: Implement a program conclusion and follow up survey of program participants to track effectiveness and success rate	E, AC	I, F				A
Action 7: Expand mentorship program as an industry recruitment effort as resources become available. Consider specific entrepreneurial development effort for women/minority owned businesses	E, AC	I				C
Objective #9: Proactively pursue "rural sourcing" concept						
Action 1: Work with the professional services industry roundtable to define market opportunities and identify potential target markets in context of the target industry clusters	E, MD	I				A
Action 2: Utilize a business listing database, such as Dun and Bradstreet, to get a list of businesses within the professional services target industries (admin & support services; internet & virtual services; and technical & research services)	E					B
Action 3: Inventory businesses operating in these industries, developing relationships to identify opportunities for them to expand (retention) or name potential targets (recruitment)	E					A
Action 4: Coordinate and distribute marketing materials to 50-100 targets, tracking responses and rationale for responses to modify approach for future recruitment efforts.	E	I				B
Action 5: Join 1-2 national trade associations within the specified industry segments (advised by local business leaders in those segments)	E, ED	I				B



Strategic Economic Development Plan
City of Cumberland, Maryland

CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN		Implementation Timing				Estimated Cost
Implementation Matrix		Public/NP	Private	Short-Term	Mid-Term	
MARKET AND ASSET DEVELOPMENT						
Action 6:	Attend 1-2 national trade association conferences, exhibiting at the event and establishing direct meetings with targeted attendees; bring business ambassadors to these events	IE, ED, TC, MD				B
Action 7:	Coordinate recruitment trips and visits with County and DBED, identifying opportunities to joint market	IE, ED, TC, MD				B
Objective #10: Proactively market to businesses in the healthcare industry						
Action 1:	Work with the healthcare industry roundtable to define market opportunities and identify potential target markets in context of the target industry clusters	IE, MD	I			A
Action 2:	Utilize a business listing database, such as Dun and Bradstreet, to get a list of businesses within the target industries identified in the target industry section of this plan	E				B
Action 3:	Perform a medical services market opportunity analysis, identifying specializations/sectors currently underrepresented in Western Maryland	E	C, I			C
Action 4:	Inventory businesses operating in these industries, developing relationships to identify opportunities for them to expand (retention) or name potential targets (recruitment)	E	I			A
Action 5:	Work with Western Maryland Regional Health Systems to define future of healthcare operations in their Cumberland facility. Develop recruitment/incentive programs to assist in meeting their stated focus for this facility	IE, ED, TC	I			A
Action 6:	Coordinate and distribute marketing materials to 25-50 targets, tracking responses and rationale for responses to modify approach for future recruitment efforts.	E	I			B
Action 7:	Join 1-2 national trade associations within the specified industry segments (advised by local business leaders in those segments)	IE, ED	I			B
Action 8:	Attend 1-2 national trade association conferences, exhibiting at the event and establishing direct meetings with targeted attendees; bring business ambassadors to these events	IE, ED, TC, MD				B
Action 9:	Coordinate recruitment trips and visits with County and State, identifying opportunities to joint market	IE, ED, TC, MD				B
Objective #11: Grow and enhance the City's arts, culture, entertainment and recreation industry cluster						
Action 1:	Work with the arts and tourism focus group to identify potential opportunities, regional and national industry trends & projections, and opportunities to enhance these industry clusters	E, TO, AA, DD	I			A
Action 2:	Perform a retail market opportunity analysis for Downtown, focusing on determining the appropriate mix of traditional and destination retail for Cumberland	DD	C			C
Action 3:	Work with the Allegany County Tourism to identify and test potential investments and developments for market and financial viability, starting with a potential urban ropes course at Canal Place	E, TO	C, I, O			C
Action 4:	Perform a market and financial feasibility study to determine the costs and benefits of expanding the City's arts recruitment and retention efforts with particular focus on artist live/work space	E, AA,	C, F, O			C
Action 5:	Work with Allegany County Tourism on joint marketing efforts	E, TO				A
Action 6:	Work with the Downtown Development Commission to integrate the event calendar/event venues as part of the Downtown small area plan needs	IE, DD	I			A
Action 7:	Work with Rocky Gap Casino to develop regular shuttle service between Downtown and the casino	IE, DD	I			F
Action 8:	Utilize a business listing database, such as Dun and Bradstreet, to get a list of businesses within the target industries identified in the target industry section of the strategic economic development plan	E				B
Action 9:	Coordinate and distribute marketing materials specific to the retail, entertainment and recreation opportunities	E, AA, DD, CC	I			B
Action 10:	Join professional associations related to the industries identified in the industry cluster, advertising in their trade publications and attending regional and national conferences	E				A



Strategic Economic Development Plan
City of Cumberland, Maryland

Implementation Matrix	Implementation Lead			Implementation Timing			Estimated Cost
	Public/NP	Private		Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	
CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN							
MARKETING AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES							
Objective #1: Enable the implementation entity to pursue and execute a signature project							
Action 1:	E, CU	I					A
Action 2:	E, CU						A
Action 3:	E, CU	C					C
Action 4:	E	D					A
Action 5:	E	D					A
Action 6:	E, CU	D					A
Action 7:	E, CU	D					A
Action 8:	E, CU						A
Action 9:	E						A
Objective #1: Develop relationships with external partners							
Action 1:	E, MD						A
Action 2:	E, UT						A
Action 3:	IE, FR, AL, ED, TC						A
Action 4:	E	I, S					A
Action 5:	E	S					A
Action 6:	E, CC	I, O, R, D					B
Action 7:	IE, ED, TC, MD	C, I, R, D					B
Objective #2: Expand City's role in regional and state wide economic development efforts							
Action 1:	E, MD						A
Action 2:	IE, ED, TC, MD						A
Action 3:	IE, ED, TC, MD						B
Action 4:	IE, ED, TC, MD						B
Action 5:	E	D, R, I					C



Strategic Economic Development Plan
City of Cumberland, Maryland

CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN Implementation Matrix	Implementation Lead		Implementation Timing			Estimated Cost
	Public/NP		Mid-Term			
	Private	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term		
MARKETING AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES						
Objective #3: Enhance Cumberland's marketing collateral						
Action 1: Create quality of life brochure highlighting Cumberland's four-season recreation amenities, cost of living benefits, access to major metropolitan markets, among others	E	C				D Included in Above
Action 2: Develop a industry "highlights" tri-fold materials for each target industry market including market fundamentals, local and regional business climate, labor force data, etc.	E	C				Included in Above
Action 3: Develop a detailed incentives document that details all local, county, state and federal incentive programs	E, CU	C				Included in Above
Action 4: Craft a business testimonials book with written statements from existing Cumberland business leaders on topics ranging from business climate, market performance, and choosing Cumberland to do business	E	I, C				Included in Above
Action 5: Develop each of these materials in print, digital and internet format, connecting them to the City's economic development website	E					Included in Above
Action 6: Develop land and building asset marketing sheets for the property assemblage book, focusing information about size, location, cost, and amenities	E					B
Action 7: Create conference materials and permanent display materials for exhibitions and outreach efforts	E	C				B
Action 8: Regularly update the materials as market/business climate changes in the City	E					C
Objective #4: Implement community outreach and education efforts						
Action 1: Establish materials and implementation protocol for interacting with community stakeholder groups (i.e. HOAs, civic groups...) using staff or trained advocates	E	I, Z				A
Action 2: Provide annual or semi-annual progress updates to the City Council through an in-person presentation, preferably at a scheduled elected body meeting	E, CU	Z				A
Action 3: Host quarterly coordination meetings with various implementation partners including: the Chamber of Commerce, Tourism, Downtown Development Commission, Allegany Arts Council and local utilities	E, CC, TO, DD, AA, UT					B
Action 4: Create an open-source community database for Cumberland residents and interested parties to sign up to receive the implementation entity's community monthly bulletin	E	Z				A
Action 5: Develop and distribute community versions of the implementation entity's monthly newsletter that focuses stories and information on economic development education and highlighting the benefits/activities	E					A
Action 6: Develop and release an "economic development 101" video that can be distributed/seen by any community member; distribute to local media and post on the implementation entity's website	E, ED, MD	Z				B
Action 7: Hold semi-annual town hall events to debrief community members on current economic development efforts, trends and projections in the market, and likely future opportunities/efforts	E					A
Action 8: Develop and release a "benefits and costs of economic development" video that can be distributed/seen by any community member; distribute to local media and post on the implementation entity's website	E, MD					B
Action 9: Cohost 1-2 industry-specific market summits each year designed to provide a panelist-style discussion on regional market conditions and how those conditions are influencing the Western Maryland market	E, ED, TC	C, I, D, R				C
Objective #5: Expand the implementation entity's website to provide greater information for investors, businesses, and City residents						
Action 1: Publish the property assemblage book and all target industry materials	E					A
Action 2: Provide web-based, downloadable incentives sheet detailing programs available by industry and location	E	C				A
Action 3: Host business survey on the implementation entity website	E	I, O				A
Action 4: Continue to advertise economic development events on the website, creating a more comprehensive calendar of events for partner entities	IS					A
Action 5: Implement the geospatial search database of available properties	E, MD	C				A



Strategic Economic Development Plan
City of Cumberland, Maryland

CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN		Implementation Lead Public/NP Private	Implementation Timing			Estimated Cost
Implementation Matrix			Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	
MARKETING AND OUTREACH STRATEGIES						
Objective #6: Create a multi-faceted social media outreach effort						
Action 1:	Create and regularly maintain a Facebook account	IE				A
Action 2:	Create and regularly maintain a Twitter account	IE				A
Action 3:	Create and regularly maintain a LinkedIn account	IE				A
Action 4:	Develop a comprehensive digital outreach list to publish regular eNewsletters and make necessary eBlast messages	IE				A
Action 5:	Build relationships with all local print, digital and social media outlets and create a regular communication strategy	IE				B
Action 6:	Get a Quick Response code developed for the implementation entity's website	IE				B
Action 7:	Have all materials translated into other languages, starting with Spanish	IE				B
Action 8:	Dedicate staff time to consistently and frequently update and maintain these efforts and relationships	IE				A
ORGANIZATIONAL AND REGULATORY						
Objective #1: Develop an implementation entity that enables the City to maximize its effectiveness in economic development						
Action 1:	Create a 501(c)(3) corporation to implement the City economic development strategy	IE, CU				A
Action 2:	Consider integrating the Cumberland Allegany County Industrial Foundation (CACIF) organization into the implementation entity	IE, CU, CA				A
Action 3:	Constitute a 7-person Board made up of 2 City appointed members, 1 ACM appointed member, and four elected business community leaders	IE, CU				A
Action 4:	Transition the City's existing economic development director to the new entity	IE, CU				A
Action 5:	Develop a long-term funding strategy that combines the City's economic development budget with a contribution formula for each additional Board member	CU				A
Action 6:	Establish a permanent, dedicated hosting and meeting space for the new implementation entity outside Cumberland City Hall, preferably in Downtown	IE, CU				F
Action 7:	Define City's implementation guidelines for the entity to follow	CU				A
Action 8:	Hire a new economic development specialist	IE				A
Action 9:	Hire a new marketing specialist	IE				C
Action 10:	Hold and annual off-site retreat to create (and subsequently refine) the implementation entity's business plan	IE, CU				B
Action 11:	Create a business recruitment marketing strategy to transition the City's economic development effort from predominantly reactive to predominantly proactive	IE				A
Action 12:	Define metrics based on the priorities established in the business plan and the activity level of the Board members	IE, CU				A
Action 13:	Monitor successes and report them to the Cumberland City Council, the organization's investors, and the community	IE, CU				A



Strategic Economic Development Plan
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CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN Implementation Matrix		Implementation Lead	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	Estimated Cost
		Public/NP	Private			
ORGANIZATIONAL AND REGULATORY						
Objective #2: Consider drafting the implementation's mission and by-laws to eventually become the countywide economic development entity						
Action 1:	Increase coordination meetings with economic development entities in Frostburg and Allegany County	IE, FR, ED				A
Action 2:	Develop joint marketing/recruitment strategies	IE, FR, ED				B
Action 3:	Invite Frostburg and Allegany County to participate in the expansion of the implementation entity focus and mission	IE, CU, FR, AL, ED	I			A
Action 4:	Incorporate Allegany County, Frostburg, and Cumberland economic development efforts into the entity	IE, CU, FR, AL, ED	I			A
Action 5:	Develop comprehensive strategic economic development plan (possibly with funding assistance from U.S. EDA) for Allegany County, incorporating City plans	IE, CU, FR, AL, ED	I			A
Action 6:	Expand the entity's mission to actively market and serve the entire County's economic development needs	IE, CU, FR, AL, ED	I			A
Action 7:	Transfer/hire the appropriate staffing to implement a county-wide strategy, a recommended structure is detailed in this section of the report	E				A
Action 8:	Monitor successes and report them to the Cumberland City Council, Frostburg City Council, Allegany County Commission, the organization's investors, and the community	E				A
Objective #3: Activate the existing business community						
Develop industry roundtables in the following areas: Production industries; professional, information & internet services, healthcare & social services; education & workforce; and tourism & hospitality						
Action 1:	Implement quarterly/semi-annual meetings with the focus groups to discuss current market climate, emerging trends/issues, and identification of challenges	E	I, D, O, R, F			A
Action 2:	Adjust business plan as needed to address any time-sensitive opportunities or challenges to be addressed	E	I, D, O, R, F			B
Action 3:		E				A
Objective #4: Train and activate local partners						
Identify and train community 4-6 advocates, empowering them to interact with individual citizens, community groups, and local elected bodies. Candidates should be individuals well respected in the community						
Action 1:	Identify and coordinate existing business leaders within various industry sectors (i.e. healthcare, manufacturing) in Cumberland to become marketing ambassadors, actively participating in business recruitment	E	Z			A
Action 2:	Establish guidelines for FSU's Small Business Development Center that enables applicants direct support from the Cumberland's mentor program	E, AC	I, O, R			A
Action 3:		E, AC				A
Objective #5: Improve internal information sharing and role delineation around economic development in Cumberland (Allegany County)						
Meet with all organizations that claim to do economic development, clearly defining their role in the implementation of the new business plan. Ensure all economic development activity is monitored by the implementation entity						
Action 1:	Work with media outlets to establish a regular economic development opinion editorial (monthly or bi-monthly) to address community-focused information out of roundtable/market interactions	E	M			A
Action 2:	Host an annual "state of economic development" event for elected officials and implementation partners to brief on progress over the previous year and new business plan for the upcoming year	E, ED				B
Action 3:	Attend elected official meetings, as needed and requested to address specific issues opportunities	IE, CU				A
Action 4:	Provide more regular press releases connected to the implementation entity's education and outreach efforts	E	M			A
Action 5:	Host an elected official retreat at least two weeks before Board retreat to garner input on perceptions and desires related to economic development in Cumberland as part of the annual business plan development process	E, CU	I			B
Action 6:	Develop a centralized economic development database to collect and maintain data related to: building permit information, development trend data, local development procedures, utility rate and tap fees, and local incentives	E	C			B



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Implementation Matrix	CITY OF CUMBERLAND, MARYLAND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN		Implementation Timing			Estimated Cost
	Public/NP	Private	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term	
ORGANIZATIONAL AND REGULATORY						
Action 8:	E, ED, TO, CU, AL	C, I				A
Encourage the consolidation of tourism marketing and development under a single entity, advocating for a strategic tourism marketing plan for all of Allegany County						
Objective #6: Enhance the City's economic development toolbox to encourage investment and growth						
Action 1:	CU, FR, AL					A
Create formulaic incentive structure for all incentive programs, defining the job creation and/or tax base enhancement thresholds to access those programs						
Action 2:	CU, FR, AL					A
Frame grants based on the size of the company/project most suitable for the program (i.e. loan assistance for start-up businesses vs. tax reimbursement for large job creation).						
Action 3:	CU, FR, AL					C
Consider permitting/development fee reductions (i.e. water and sewer tap fees) that meet defined thresholds for economic development						
Action 4:	CU					F
Define structure for tax increment financing in each of the opportunity zones						
Action 5:	CU, AL					A
Consider overlay zones in opportunity areas that increase development flexibility in exchange for aesthetic controls						
Action 6:	CU					A
Consider density bonuses in and near downtown in exchange for favorable land use programs (i.e. mixed income developments)						
Action 7:	CU, AL, FR					F
Consider locally funded tax abatement/tax credit programs tied to job creation, particularly for jobs that exceed area median wages and/or offer benefit packages						
Action 8:	CU, AL, IE	I				E
Provide land acquisition cost mitigation or reimbursement (tied to the land bank concept)						
Action 9:	E, CU	F, I				A
Work with financial institutions to offer loan guarantees and/or interest rate write downs for start-up or home based businesses; consider formalizing this program in the City's existing loan pool						
Action 11:	IE, CU, ED, AL, MD, TC	I				A
Lobby Maryland legislature to provide economic development programs more conducive to Western Maryland market and more competitive with surrounding states						
Action 12:	IE, CU, AL, FR					A
Review effectiveness of incentive programs and refine as necessary						
Action 13:	IE, CU					A
Work with City of Cumberland departments to create single development approval/review process for development (i.e. concurrent review)						
Action 14:	CU, AL					A
Consider guaranteed expedited review processes for priority projects (tied to formulate criteria)						
Action 15:	IE, CU					E
Formalize the City's blight funds under the economic development entity						



LEGEND

Implementation Leaders

Public:

- AC - Allegany College of Maryland
- AL - Allegany County
- BE - Allegany County Board of Education
- CU - City of Cumberland
- ED - Allegany County Economic Development Department
- FR - City of Frostburg
- FS - Frostburg State University
- IE - Cumberland Economic Development Implementation Entity
- MD - Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development

Private

- C - Consultant
- D - Development Community
- F - Financial Institutions
- I - Industry Leaders
- M - Local Media
- O - Property Owners
- R - Realtors/Brokers
- S - Site Selection Professionals
- Z - City of Cumberland Residents

Partners:

- AA - Allegany Arts Council
- CA - Cumberland Allegany County Industrial Foundation
- CC - Allegany County Chamber of Commerce
- DD - Downtown Development Commission
- TC - Tri-County Council
- TO - Allegany County Tourism
- UT - Utilities

Cost Estimate Legend:

- A - Under \$1,000
- B - \$1,000 to \$10,000
- C - \$10,000 to \$50,000
- D - \$50,000 to \$100,000
- E - \$100,000 to \$500,000
- F - Over \$500,000
- Unk. - Unknown