

# City of Cumberland

- Maryland -

## RESOLUTION

NO. R2016-01

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF CUMBERLAND TO ADOPT THE JULY 13, 2015 AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER VIII (TITLED “ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION”) OF THE CITY-WIDE ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF CUMBERLAND’S 2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND USE ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND.**

**WHEREAS,** the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and empowers municipalities to make, adopt and amend comprehensive plans for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development; and

**WHEREAS,** the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland, Maryland is a policy guide to govern future physical development within the City of Cumberland; and

**WHEREAS,** the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and empowers municipalities to adopt and amend comprehensive plans as wholes or in successive parts; and

**WHEREAS,** on December 17, 2013, the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland adopted the July 2013 City-Wide Element as the second and final of two volumes that collectively comprise the 2013 Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS,** City staff has prepared and recommended an amended and updated Chapter VIII (titled “Economic Development and Revitalization”) as a replacement to the chapter of the same title in the document entitled “2013 Comprehensive Plan: Forging Our Heritage Into Prosperity: City-Wide Element Volume 2 of 2”, a copy of the amended and updated Chapter VIII being attached hereto and incorporated by reference herein as Exhibit 1; and

**WHEREAS,** the said amended Chapter VIII was submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning, all adjoining jurisdictions and all affected State agencies for formal review and comment at least 60 days prior to the formal public hearing before the City of Cumberland Planning and Zoning Commission (the “Planning Commission”), said submission having been effected through the State Clearinghouse Procedures of the Department of Planning in compliance with the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the applicable provisions of COMAR 34.02.01; and

**WHEREAS,** the purpose of the said amendment is to update the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan to reflect the policy changes regarding the future growth and development of the City of Cumberland effected by the City's adoption of its 2014 Strategic Economic Development Plan; and

**WHEREAS,** the Planning Commission held a public hearing on October 19, 2015 regarding the proposed amendment to the aforesaid Chapter VIII; and

**WHEREAS,** the Planning Commission carefully considered the proposed amendment of Chapter VIII and found that it constitutes a suitable component of the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Cumberland and that it will promote, in accordance with present and future needs: the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the City of Cumberland as well as efficiency and economy in the development process; and

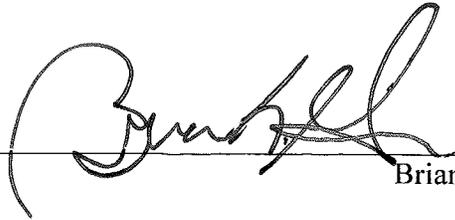
**WHEREAS,** consistent with its findings, the Planning Commission passed a Resolution dated October 19, 2015, recommending that the Mayor and City Council adopt the proposed amendment of Chapter VIII, subject to certain text changes which are set forth in the Exhibit 2 identified hereinafter; and

**WHEREAS,** the Mayor and City Council carefully considered the proposed amendment of Chapter VIII and make the same findings made by the Planning Commission in its Resolution.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland as follows:

1. The amendment of Chapter VIII of the City-Wide Element of the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan titled "Economic Development and Revitalization, together with all text, maps, and descriptive matter contained therein, annexed thereto and/or made a part thereof, subject to the text changes documented in the Draft 2013 Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Chapter Amendment Public Comment Matrix attached hereto as Exhibit 2, shall replace the presently existing Chapter VIII and is hereby adopted as a part of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland; and
2. That this Resolution shall be certified to the Maryland State Agencies (including, the Department of Planning and the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Allegany County, Maryland) as required by law; and
3. This Resolution shall take effect on the date of its passage.

**GIVEN UNDER OUR HANDS AND SEALS** this 5th day of January,  
in the year 2016, with the corporate seal of the City of Cumberland hereto attached, duly attested by  
the City Clerk.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Brian K. Grim  
Mayor

ATTEST:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Marjorie A. Woodring  
City Clerk

Introduction:	<u>November 17, 2015</u>
Public Hearing:	<u>December 15, 2015</u>
Enactment:	<u>January 5, 2016</u>
Effective Date:	<u>January 5, 2016</u>

# **EXHIBIT 1**

July 13, 2015

## **I. Economic Development & Revitalization**

*The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the City's economic development initiatives. The chapter provides background on Cumberland's current economic conditions and its focus for economic development including targeted industries. The goals, policies and action items provided are in keeping with Cumberland's Strategic Economic Development Plan and the City's mission to be a supportive place to build a profitable business.*

### **GOALS**

- 1. Promote and implement the City of Cumberland Strategic Economic Development Plan (as amended).**
- 2. Strengthen and expand the City's tax base.**
- 3. Diversify the City's economic base and attract new employers that will provide career and income growth opportunities for City residents.**
- 4. Support continued growth of existing employers and businesses.**
- 5. Support continued growth of the City's arts and tourism businesses.**
- 6. Promote and facilitate development/revitalization of the targeted economic development opportunity areas specified in the Strategic Economic Development Plan.**

#### **A. Overview**

A diverse, healthy, and vibrant local economy is essential to sustain growth and development in any community. Those communities that have strong economies enjoy the greatest levels of growth, vitality, and prosperity. Cumberland's overall setting suggests that the city should serve as a national model of smart growth and sustainability. The city possesses a strong, compact urban development pattern with far less sprawl than most other cities its size. Cumberland's intense urban design, narrow streets, extensive sidewalks, and attractive, natural streetscapes make it a very walkable and pedestrian-friendly environment. The city's residential neighborhoods have strong, distinct characters and cultural heritages, historic architecture, and social cohesiveness that (even in their relatively diminished states today) would be the envy of many larger communities. Cumberland possesses a well-

developed, urban infrastructure and broad array of supporting public facilities and services (including one of the largest paid, professional fire department staffs in Maryland). Unlike many growing communities in Maryland, the city's water and sewer systems have substantial available capacity to serve additional growth. Cumberland also has the most affordable housing stock in the State of Maryland. Finally, the city is surrounded by an attractive, largely undeveloped, natural setting that abounds in recreational opportunities. Cumberland and Allegany County have made great strides to stabilize the area's population losses and economic decline that marked the past 70 years. However, for the city's smart growth development pattern and resources to be truly sustainable over the long term, Cumberland must restore vitality to its economy, strengthen its tax base, and reverse the long-standing pattern of decline. Achieving that economic objective is a primary focus of this plan.

## ***B. Historic Economic Trends & Evolution***

As noted earlier in this plan (please see Chapters I and II for additional detail), the City of Cumberland has evolved significantly throughout its history. The city's earliest years were marked by tremendous growth and industrial development driven by strategic transportation infrastructure investments. The city reached its population peak around 1940, and began a long, protracted decline that continued through the latest Census in 2010. The decline was precipitated by a significant contraction in the area's industrial employment base that began with (and even in the years leading into) the Great Depression. After World War II, the nation's transportation system transformed with the rise of commercial air transportation and the construction of the Interstate Highway System. Cumberland was largely bypassed during the early development of these modern transportation modes and suffered gradual erosion in its own transportation infrastructure with the closure of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in the 1920s and the protracted decline in railroad passenger and freight transportation during that era. Ground freight transportation shifted over time from rail to trucks, and the trucking industry utilized the high-speed Interstate Highway System to reduce delivery time and increase shipping efficiency. The Interstate Highway System was not fully extended to Cumberland until after 1990, and even with that extension (I-68), the city was not located along a major travel corridor.

Reversing the erosion that occurred over the latter half of the twentieth century is a significant challenge for a small city. Cumberland's recent trends are reflective of other small Appalachian and Midwestern rust belt cities, which lost their predominant industrial employers and many of the workers who relied upon them. As the industries closed down or moved away and their employees sought work outside the area, the city's commercial base contracted accordingly. To recover these lost economic resources the city must attract new employment opportunities and/or people with disposable incomes that can breathe new life into the local economy. This effort requires greater creativity, flexibility, and resource investment than may be typical for larger urban cities which lost most of their business and population resources to their surrounding suburbs. Although the nation's big cities also suffered population losses in the latter half of the twentieth century, growth in their surrounding metropolitan areas offset most if not all of those losses. To reverse its losses, Cumberland must compete with those growing larger metropolitan areas as well as the other smaller Appalachian and rust belt cities that were

left behind by their industries, workers, and youth populations that relocated elsewhere for better opportunities.

Despite the economic development challenges and hurdles that Cumberland and the surrounding metropolitan area face, the city and county have taken bold strides to improve the local situation—some of which have begun to show success. The city recently established the Cumberland Wi-Fi wireless network as part of the Johnson Controls efficiency study. City officials and civic leaders have worked hard and with determination to transform the city's economic base by developing a growing arts, entertainment, and tourist/retirement industry, based largely on Cumberland's cultural heritage and small-town, Victorian-era charm as well as the natural resource amenities (mountains, rivers, and lakes) that abound in the surrounding area. Many of the city's historic buildings have been lovingly restored, preserved and reused, and a large downtown historic district has been created. Through significant state investments and local donations, Canal Place and the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad have been redeveloped into major tourist attractions. A local Arts Council has been established that supports and promotes a growing artist community in the area. The heart of Cumberland's main street (Baltimore Street) has been converted into an open air pedestrian mall and entertainment district that has helped bring new businesses into the city and revitalize formerly vacant upper floors into new residential units. The former Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath and a former railroad line have been transformed into the C & O Canal Towpath and Great Allegheny Passage Trails that provide a dedicated bicycle and pedestrian recreational trail link to downtown Washington and Pittsburgh. The city's extensive cultural heritage has been further promoted by the development and expansion of local heritage museums.

These recent changes have provided a new source of optimism and improved the city's public image while breathing new life into historic buildings. They have improved the overall quality of life and provide a critical lifestyle amenity that can support and attract new outside growth and investment and provided a new source of employment.

Recent Census figures (discussed in Chapter II) indicate that the long-standing decline in the city's population has slowed significantly. This trend, combined with some positive economic trends, may indicate that the city is reaching or has reached a turning point in its evolution. The data seems to indicate that Cumberland and Allegany County may have achieved a point of stability or equilibrium between the economy and the local population base.

## ***C. Current Economy***

### **1. Economic Base**

Over the past few decades, the area's economic base transformed from a predominantly industrial economy to the more diversified retail and service based economy of 2010. Former firms included Kelly Tires, Celanese Corporation, the N & G Taylor tin plate mill, and Pittsburgh Plate and Glass have all since closed or left the area. At their twentieth century production peaks, Kelly Tires employed between 3,500 and 4,000 employees and Celanese Corporation employed more than 10,000 local workers.

According to data from the 1940 U.S. Census, Allegany County had a total of 72 manufacturing business employing 11,157 wage earners. The most recent employment data from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey reports an estimated total of only 2,765 manufacturing workers in all of Allegany County. These data illustrate the magnitude of contraction and restructuring that occurred in the area's former employment base during the final two-thirds of the twentieth century.

While several large industrial employers remain within the Cumberland Metropolitan Area they have greatly reduced employment levels. As a result, most of the former manufacturing jobs within the local economy have been replaced with a mix of professional and high-medium wage health service and educational industry jobs to medium-minimum wage service and retail sector jobs. A listing of the largest employers in the Cumberland Metropolitan Area in 2012, as compiled by Allegany County Economic Development staff and expanded by Cumberland Planning Staff, is provided below in Table 20.

**Table 20 - Major Employers in the Cumberland Area:**

<b>NAME OF BUSINESS</b>	<b>2012 EMPLOYMENT</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>	<b>NATURE OF OPERATION</b>
1. Western Maryland Health Systems	2,290	Cumberland	Health Care
2. ATK Tactical Systems	1,396	Mineral County	Rocket Propellants
3. Allegany County Public Schools	1,324	Cumberland	Education
4. Frostburg State University	922	Frostburg	Education
5. CSX Transportation	900	Cumberland	Rail Transportation
6. NewPage Corporation	870	Luke, MD	Paper Products
7. Hunter Douglas	580	Allegany County	Window Blinds
8. Allegany College of Maryland	559	Cumberland	Education
9. North Branch Correctional Institution	557	Allegany County	Prison
10. Western Correctional Institution	552	Allegany County	Prison
11. The Active Network	550	Frostburg	Telecommunications
12. Allegany County Government	385	Cumberland	Public Administration
13. American Woodmark	365	Allegany County	Wood Products
14. ACS	350	Frostburg	Telecommunications
15. Federal Correctional institution	292	Allegany County	Prison
16. City of Cumberland	282	Cumberland	Public Administration
17. Friends Aware	227	Cumberland	Commercial Cleaning
18. Rocky Gap Lodge, Casino, & Resort	206	Allegany County	State Park

**SOURCES:** Allegany County Economic Development and City of Cumberland, 2012.

Based on the analysis conducted for this plan (illustrated in the above table), the Cumberland Metropolitan Area has a total of 18 employers with 200 or more workers. The largest current employer in the city and county is the new Western Maryland Health Systems facility on Willowbrook Road, which was established in 2010 by the consolidation of the former Memorial and Sacred Heart Hospitals. According to hospital officials, annual wages and salaries paid by WMHS to its 2,290 workers total over \$100 million. WMHS also reports that it purchases roughly \$32 million annually in local materials and services. Data from the American Hospital Association suggests that each hospital job created in the local economy supports about two more jobs and every dollar spent by a hospital induces roughly \$2.30 of additional business activity. The combination of high wages and high level of spending for support services and materials makes WMHS a major basic industry within the area economy. The area's growing elderly population and expanding retirement base creates an opportunity for future expansion of the health care industry in Cumberland, which is why it has been identified as a primary economic development goal by the city's Strategic Economic Development Plan.

Four of the area's ten largest employers (including the largest) and seven of the top eighteen employers are located within the city of Cumberland. Only one of the area's largest employers (the region's second largest) is located outside of Allegany County in adjoining Mineral County, West Virginia. The two major industries that remain from the area's historic population peak period (CSX Railroad, successor to the Baltimore and Ohio and Chessie Railroads, and NewPage Corporation, formerly Westvaco) have become the area's fifth and sixth largest employers, respectively. Additionally, recent State legislation has allowed casino gambling at Rocky Gap State Park, roughly seven miles east of downtown Cumberland. This legislation is creating new employment opportunities in Allegany County and provides an additional attraction for the area's developing tourist industry.

## **2. Employment/Wage Characteristics & Trends**

Several trends and findings analyzed in the demographic trends of Chapter II represent important improvements in the city's employment base. These trends and findings include:

- Educational achievement levels within the city's labor force are improving with increasing speed over time, relative to national levels. The greatest increases occurred in the number of persons over the age of 25 who have attended some college and who have obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher.
- Median household incomes earned by Cumberland residents have increased consistently over the past three decades (1990-2010). Although incomes in the city remain below state and national levels and declined slightly over the recent decade when adjusted for inflation, the city's median household income has improved slightly relative to the national figure.
- The overall cost of living in the Cumberland area is significantly lower than in the rest of Maryland, which helps offset a significant amount of the disparity in incomes. To illustrate this point, data from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey shows that median household

incomes in Cumberland were only about 43% of the corresponding income for the State of Maryland. However, the median value of an owner-occupied house in Cumberland was only 31% of the state's median, and both the median monthly housing cost for owner occupied units and the median gross rent in the city was only about half of the corresponding costs for the state. Furthermore, the percentage of Cumberland residents who own their homes without a mortgage is nearly twice that of the state as a whole. These factors illustrate how the lower cost of living in Cumberland helps to compensate for a large portion of the income disparity with the rest of the state and may result in a similar or slightly higher percentage of disposable household income despite the relative income disparity.

- Despite a persistently high unemployment rate and a nation-wide contraction in the labor force the number of employed residents in Cumberland increased slightly from 2000-2009.

#### ***D. Economic Initiatives***

Overall low incomes and high levels of poverty, especially among senior citizens, remain significant hurdles for the city to overcome. Achieving improvement in those areas will likely require some combination of entrepreneurial support to promote successful home-grown businesses, attracting higher wage employers from outside the area in business sectors that generate significant support and spin-off business/employment opportunities (generate high employment multiplier benefits in the local economy), and strategic investments in higher education/employee training opportunities. To help achieve these general objectives, the city's Economic Development Commission recently refined and expanded the city's Economic Development goals through a community-wide strategic planning effort in 2013 and 2014.

The resulting 2014 Strategic Economic Development Plan replaced all previous economic development plans. The 2014 plan engaged a broad and diverse citizen and stakeholder base in the community and conducted a more detailed assessment of the city's market potential for new business and job growth. The resulting plan identified a number of new strategies and expanded on past initiatives, including the city's potential to capitalize on the growing "rural sourcing" trend by targeting entrepreneurial back office and remote businesses in internet-based information technology companies that are prevalent in the nearby major metropolitan areas. The new plan recommends targeting smaller growth industries and businesses that are footloose (capable of relocating), offer high wages, and would benefit from the city's proximity to larger urban markets and abundant recreational amenities as a strategy to stimulate employment growth and expand the city's tax base.

When evaluating the merits of new business or industrial opportunities in the city, it is important to consider the overall multiplier effect of the business on the area's economy. Businesses that retain more of the company's profits in the community, offer above-average wages and salaries and future growth potential, rely most heavily on other local businesses for their supplies or raw material needs, and establish firm ties to the local community will have the greatest and most long-term impact on the

city's economy. The city should aggressively seek and promote businesses that satisfy these essential criteria.

## 1. Incentive/Support Programs & Resources

The City of Cumberland routinely partners with Allegany County and the State of Maryland to offer/access a wide array of local, state, and Federal economic development incentive grant, loan, and tax credit/deferral programs to support local economic development initiatives. As of the writing of this plan, at least 18 different support programs were being offered to eligible economic development projects and applicants. These support programs help promote local business development and investment by reducing the cost of business start-up and development. Several of the programs can be combined to support projects that satisfy the basic eligibility requirements. The future availability of these incentives, grants, and loans depends upon continued funding and program reauthorization. The following list provides a brief overview of the current economic development incentive and support programs that the city offers.

- **Enterprise Zone Tax Credits** - Businesses locating in Cumberland and Allegany County's designated Enterprise Zones may be eligible for income tax credits and real property tax credits in return for job creation and investments made in the zone.
- **Federal Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zone Contracting Program** - The HUB Zone Empowerment Contracting program was enacted into law as part of the Small Business Reauthorization Act of 1997. The program encourages economic development in designated HUB zones through the establishment of preferences. SBA's HUB Zone program is an effort to promote economic development and employment growth in distressed areas by providing access to more Federal contracting opportunities.
- **Lenders Loan Pool** - This program was created to encourage development of the Cumberland Downtown area by financing the start-up costs and renovations of businesses relocating and/or expanding within the Central Business District. Loans ranging from \$10,000 - \$100,000 are provided at competitive interest rate for a maximum of 60 months and can be used for expenses such as inventory, leasehold improvements, equipment, and receivables.
- **Job Creation Tax Credit** - This program offers state income tax credits to businesses that create a minimum number of new full-time positions of \$1,000 to \$1,500 per job created in a designated "revitalization area."
- **Maryland Neighborhood Business Works Program** - Is the State's premiere small business loan program providing competitively-priced, flexible financing for the costs associated with business startup and expansion.
- **One Maryland Tax Credit** - Businesses that invest in an economic development project in Cumberland may qualify for project tax credits and start-up tax credits.

- **Workforce Training** - Allegany College of Maryland provides customized short-term and long-term employee training programs for local and regional companies for employees at all levels of experience.
- **City of Cumberland Historic District Tax Incentive Program** - For qualified renovations that have been approved by the city's Historic Preservation Commission.
- **Allegany County Historic District Tax Incentive Program** - Provides a tax assessment freeze equal to that received through the City of Cumberland's program.
- **Maryland Sustainable Communities Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program** - Provides Maryland income tax credits based on a percentage of the qualified capital costs expended in the rehabilitation of a "certified historic structure.
- **Maryland Historical Trust Historic Preservation Loan Program** - The Maryland Historical Trust administers loan programs that assist both bricks and mortar activities such as the acquisition and rehabilitation of historic properties and the development of heritage tourism-related businesses.
- **Maryland Historical Trust Grant Programs** - The Maryland Historical Trust administers six separate grant programs that assist in a wide variety of historic preservation-related activities.
- **Federal Tax Incentive Program** - This program enables the owners or long-term leaseholders of income-producing certified historic structures (listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or a contributing element within the boundaries of an historic district), to receive a federal tax credit.
- **Arts & Entertainment District Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program** - A tax credit will be provided on city real property taxes for properties wholly or partially constructed or renovated to be capable for use by a qualifying artist or arts enterprise located within the Arts & Entertainment District.
- **Arts & Entertainment District Admissions & Amusement Tax Exemption Program** - Enterprises dedicated to visual or performing arts located within the Arts & Entertainment District are exempt from the collection of the State of Maryland's Admissions and Amusement Tax.
- **Arts & Entertainment District Income Tax Subtraction Modification Program** - Qualifying artists who own or rent residential real property in the Arts & Entertainment District, may be eligible for a Maryland personal income tax subtraction modification to eliminate state and local income tax on their income from the sale, publication, or production within the District of their artistic work that is written, composed, or executed within the District.
- **Virginia Avenue Targeted Area Revitalization (VAATR) Tax Incentive** - This program provides flexibility to the owner to make improvements to his property and be eligible to receive property tax credits outside the structure of the Historic District guidelines.
- **Virginia Avenue Enterprise Zone for Revitalization Area (VAEZRA) Program** - The local standards of the Gateway Enterprise Zone are amended by the city and county to include

mercantile, retail or service activity, eligible for Enterprise Zone benefits in the Virginia Avenue area.

## **2. Revitalization & Redevelopment Projects**

During the past decade, the city has undertaken two significant neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment projects in the Rolling Mill and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhoods. These projects were built around major street improvement initiatives for Maryland Avenue and Virginia Avenue.

The impetus for the Rolling Mill neighborhood revitalization initiative was the designation of the former B & O Railroad Rolling Mill plant as a “Brownfield” by the State of Maryland. Fears of potential contamination at the site frustrated redevelopment efforts for years. However, in 1997, the Maryland Department of the Environment approved a restoration and redevelopment plan for the site as the state’s first Brownfield Redevelopment Project. Utilities to the property were upgraded and roughly half of the former plant site was redeveloped to create the new Queen City Centre shopping plaza. The plaza not only serves the essential shopping of neighborhood residents; it also draws residents from all parts of the city into the neighborhood.

The resulting growth in traffic spurred the city to undertake a major street improvement project for Maryland Avenue (eventually including portions of Cecelia, Williams, and Park Streets) to enhance vehicular and pedestrian access to the new plaza. Major funding for the project was contributed by the City of Cumberland, the Maryland Department of Transportation, the Appalachian Regional Commission, Community Development Block Grant funds and eventually embraced ARRA economic stimulus funding that emerged out of the 2007 Recession. Construction work on the project, which was divided into two phases, began in 2003 and was completed in 2008. The project included utility line replacement, sidewalk restoration and handicapped access improvements, street resurfacing, restriping and crosswalk improvements, and extensive streetscaping and signage improvements. The project also attracted significant private investment as new commercial uses were built, dilapidated buildings were removed and replaced, and deteriorating buildings were given significant facade facelifts.

Buoyed by the success of the Rolling Mill/Maryland Avenue project, the city moved on to Virginia Avenue to implement the revitalization recommendations outlined in the 2006 Virginia Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan. The project effectively extends the Maryland Avenue corridor improvements down Virginia Avenue to Industrial Boulevard. Like the Maryland Avenue project, the highway reconstruction project involved utility line replacement, sidewalk restoration and handicapped access improvements, street resurfacing, restriping and crosswalk improvements, and extensive streetscaping improvements. Project construction began in late 2009 and was completed in late 2011.

The Virginia Avenue project also included significant neighborhood revitalization elements from the 2006 Redevelopment Plan, including significant improvements to restore the Springdale Street Park. Some elements of the plan proved too costly or infeasible, including the design and construction of a

bus transit pavilion and gathering place. Several of the projects were either more costly or required contributions of private land that simply were not able to be realized. By and large, the public realm improvements were designed and completed as consistently with the spirit and intent of the plan as was feasible. In 2008, the city was successful in obtaining a “Maple Street” designation for Virginia Avenue under the Maryland Main Street Program. The primary objective for this program is to foster residential revitalization within the context of historic preservation. It complements and expands upon the “Main Street” program that has helped revitalize the city’s downtown core by emphasizing a similar incremental, long-term, community-wide effort for neighborhood revitalization.



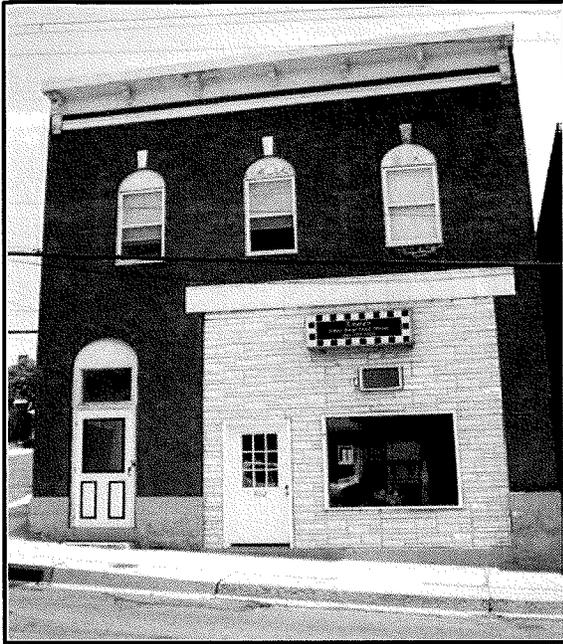
**The new HRDC Building on Virginia Avenue**

The overall project was supported by numerous additional public and private investments in the deteriorating buildings along Virginia Avenue and in the surrounding neighborhood. One of the biggest investments was the construction of the new Human Resources Development Commission (HRDC) complex on the site of the former Virginia Avenue School building that had been previously removed. The \$5.3 million, two-story building became the city’s first major construction project to utilize “green building” design concepts to conserve energy and treat stormwater.

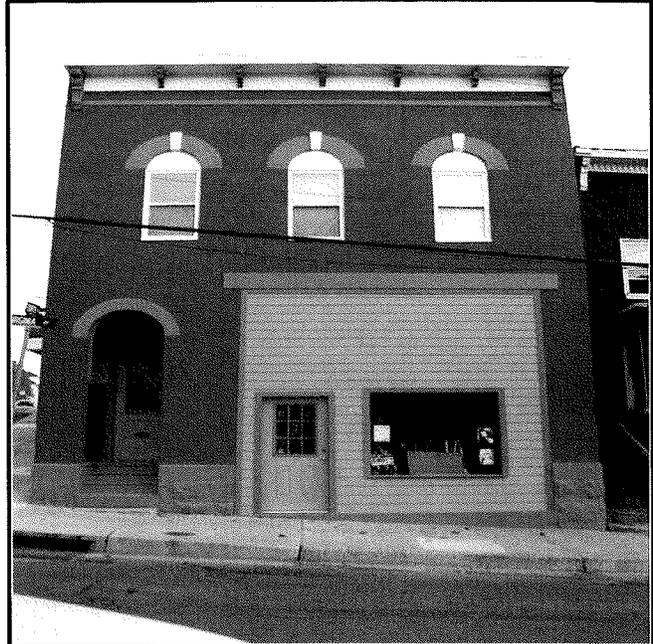
The building boasts a green roof with vegetation designed to absorb significant portions of the stormwater runoff that would be created by the building. In addition, the building’s design helped restore the Virginia Avenue streetscape by filling in a glaring gap in the commercial street façade and it incorporated design elements that reflected the outstanding historic architectural elements of the previous neighborhood school building. Finally, the new building brought a large pool of workers to Virginia Avenue, which provided a much-needed source of consumers for the remaining businesses on the Avenue.

Numerous private property investments emerged out of the project as well. Sheetz expanded its existing operation at the corner of Virginia Avenue and Industrial Boulevard and additional new businesses and offices were built around that intersection, including the Allegany Radio Corporation office, and Rite Aid. Some of the older commercial/residential buildings on adjoining streets have been revitalized and reused, including the ongoing restoration of 313 Springdale Street that will contain a ground floor commercial neighborhood laundry and upper floor apartments. The City of Cumberland also established a Virginia Avenue satellite office for use by the city’s Economic Development staff during the revitalization effort and extended its economic development grant and loan assistance programs (outlined in the previous section of this Chapter) to support both residential and commercial

building revitalization. A total of \$20,000 in CDBG Micro Enterprise Grants was awarded to 5 businesses in the neighborhood, and an additional \$4,000 in commercial façade improvement grants was awarded to 2 businesses. On the residential side, 17 homeowners received a combined total of \$68,468.56 in residential façade grant assistance.



**Virginia Ave. Building before rehab work**



**Virginia Ave. Building after rehab work**

In 2011, the city, in cooperation with the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority, the National Park Service, and the Downtown Development Commission, initiated a Heritage Area Management Plan effort to update and expand upon the 1998 Downtown Design and Development plan. Originally intended (as noted in the Neighborhood Element of this plan) as a new Downtown plan, the scope of the initiative was greatly expanded to engage the governing bodies of the Baltimore Street and Canal Place commercial districts to promote and ensure a more unified downtown commercial district. The scope of the planning effort expanded further when the boundaries of the Heritage Area were extended beyond Canal Place following the Western MD Scenic Railroad and Great Allegheny Passage trail to Frostburg. Ultimately, the draft plan proposes to extend the heritage area east along the Canal to the Washington County line and west and south from Frostburg to Mount Savage and Lonaconing. In pursuing this partnership, the joint effort was able to tap into a larger pool of funds to manage and finance the cost of the project. This plan, once completed, will include specific recommendations for future improvements to and revitalization of the city's central business district and will serve as a technical supplement to this Comprehensive Plan.

As recommended in the Neighborhood Element of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, the city's next revitalization and redevelopment effort was to focus on the Baltimore Avenue/Goethe Street corridor. Baltimore Avenue is destined to become a more important gateway into the city as growth and

development along the Willowbrook Road corridor progresses. The two corridors meet at Exit 44 of I-68. In addition, Baltimore Avenue itself is rapidly deteriorating from heavy traffic demand and has a curve with a dangerously tight curb radius that needs to be improved to promote traffic safety. The Neighborhood Element envisioned that the city would expand upon the street improvement project, as was successfully done on Maryland Avenue and Virginia Avenue, to provide additional streetscaping improvements, sidewalk repairs, and similar building façade improvement funding.

Unfortunately, contraction in local, state, and federal funding support for neighborhood investment projects of this nature resulted in a highly constrained and limited design scope for the proposed Baltimore Avenue street project. The overall scope was reduced to a mill and overlay project (asphalt resurfacing) with the associated sidewalk and curbing improvements limited to essential ADA handicapped accessibility upgrades only. Insufficient funds were available to pursue other sidewalk improvements or streetscaping. While improvements to the unsafe street curve will be made, the level of improvement that can be accomplished under the project was reduced because the cost of acquiring the necessary right-of-way to significantly widen the curve exceeded the initial project funding. Consequently, many of the additional neighborhood revitalization elements envisioned to be undertaken in association with the project will have to be postponed until additional program funding can be secured.

Additional future priorities for cooperative street/neighborhood revitalization projects around the city have been identified. Priority areas include the Greene Street corridor and the Mechanic/Centre Street corridor. A complete street plan for the Greene Street corridor was initiated in 2014 with funding assistance by the Cumberland Area MPO. The proposed "Riverwalk" pedestrian trail from Riverside Park to the YMCA complex on Kelly Road, as discussed in the Parks and Recreation Section of the Municipal Growth & Land Use Chapter of this plan, is envisioned to serve as a complementary recreational improvement for the Greene Street corridor project. Initial conceptual design work on the Riverwalk trail project was also initiated in 2014.

### ***E. Economic Development Goals/Strategies***

The City of Cumberland has an established record of providing extensive technical and financial assistance to encourage economic revitalization and has undertaken significant neighborhood revitalization projects to help spur economic revitalization. Further efforts are contemplated, should the financial resources needed to undertake them become available. In addition to these projects and programs, the city's Economic Development Commission worked to prepare a new Economic Development Plan in 2014. The resulting 2014 Strategic Economic Development Plan (prepared by RKG Associates), and all future amendments, is hereby referenced as a stand-alone component of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Based on detailed socio-economic and real estate market analyses, which are described in detail in the plan, the plan identifies three primary growth industries or target markets that the city should aggressively pursue to expand its economic and employment base. They include:

1. **Back Office and Remote Business Services** – focused primarily on internet-based administrative, professional and technical research/modeling businesses that represent a growing presence in the Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington metropolitan areas.
2. **Health Care and Social Services businesses** – which build upon the strength of the existing health care industries in the City (predominantly within the Willowbrook Road Corridor).
3. **Arts, Culture, Tourism, and Recreation businesses** – which build up the growing arts and entertainment district theme in downtown Cumberland and Canal Place.

To focus the city’s efforts in implementing the plan’s recommendations, the plan outlines and identifies a number of “opportunity areas” where the City’s economic revitalization efforts should be targeted. These areas include sites in the downtown central business district, the Willowbrook Corridor, and South Cumberland. Several of these areas have been identified as infill and adaptive redevelopment areas in other chapters of this plan. The overarching principles guiding the plan’s overall economic development strategies are:

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

## **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Implement the strategies outlined in the Strategic Economic Development Plan, as may be amended. The Cumberland Economic Development Corporation’s Board of Directors should monitor progress in implementing the Strategic Plan and recommend revisions where needed to ensure continued expansion and revitalization of the city’s economic base.
2. Work cooperatively with the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority and the Downtown Development Commission to implement the strategies outlined in the 2012 Heritage Area Management Plan.
3. Continue and improve the current working relationship between the city of Frostburg and Allegany County Economic Development Departments to provide seamless support for economic development initiatives throughout Allegany County.

# **EXHIBIT 2**

**DRAFT 2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER AMENDMENT PUBLIC COMMENT MATRIX**

*Last Update – January 6, 2016*

This document presents a list of the comments received by the City regarding the Draft 2013 Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Chapter Amendment. The document is divided into four columns, which are described from left to right. The first column lists each comment individually and the source of that comment. If a specific comment was submitted by more than one source, all of the sources are identified and acknowledged individually under the common comment. Citizen comments are identified as such rather than identifying the name of the individual followed by a number in parentheses indicating the number of citizens who made that or similar comments. The second column indicates the staff response to each public comment. The remaining two columns are reserved for the Planning Commission's (PC) recommendation to the Mayor and Council regarding each comment and the final disposition of each comment as decided by the Mayor and Council (M & C) at the end of the process.

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
<p>1. The draft Economic Development Chapter is well written and concise, and acknowledges the many assets that Cumberland can build upon to continue to grow its economy.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Maryland Department of Planning</i></p>	<p>Staff appreciates MDP's overall assessment of the chapter amendment. <b>Since this is an advisory comment, no specific changes to the draft amendment narrative are warranted.</b></p>	<p><b>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</b></p>	<p><b>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</b></p>
<p>2. It may be helpful if the Chapter would include a map showing the "opportunity areas" targeted for revitalization by the City.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Maryland Department of Planning</i></p>	<p>The draft chapter references the opportunities areas map in the Strategic Economic Development Plan because including that map and more precise goals and objectives in the Comprehensive Plan would require an amendment to BOTH plans when the need for future adjustments to the Strategic Economic Development Plan arise. Even in the most favorable amendment process environments (where no controversy arises) the city's past experience with Comprehensive Plan amendments indicates that it can take between 7 and 11 months to complete. This would make any future amendment adoption process potentially lengthy, thereby increasing the city's</p>	<p><b>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</b></p>	<p><b>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</b></p>

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
<p>3. The City of Cumberland is a designated Sustainable Community. The Chapter should reference/discuss the designation, the state incentives provided by the Sustainable Communities Program, and how the Program would benefit City's economic development strategies and actions. For more information on the Program, please check out these links:  DHCD's - <a href="http://www.mdhousing.org/website/programs/dn/">http://www.mdhousing.org/website/programs/dn/</a> and MDP's - <a href="http://www.mdp.state.md.us/YourPart/SustainableCommunities.shtml">http://www.mdp.state.md.us/YourPart/SustainableCommunities.shtml</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Maryland Department of Planning</i></p>	<p>response time to economic changes. Therefore, the city decided that the 2013 Comprehensive Plan should reference the Strategic Economic Development Plan as a stand-alone supplement to the Comprehensive Plan to allow changes to be made solely to the Economic Development plan itself. Staff feels that retaining this arms-length relationship between the two documents would be best and most expedient way to respond to changes in the city's economic development policies and strategies. <b>Therefore, staff recommends no additional specific changes to the draft amendment in response to this comment.</b></p>		
	<p>Staff appreciates MDP's suggestion and proposes the following recommended wording changes to the proposed Economic Development Chapter Amendment.</p> <p>Add the following language at the end of Section D, 1:  <i>"Portions of the City of Cumberland have been designated as a Sustainable Community by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The City is working with DHCD to expand these boundaries to encompass the Bedford/Frederick Street area as part of its petition to renew its Sustainable Community designation in 2017. This boundary expansion is strongly recommended to ensure that the Commerce Business Center, an important business park and designated mixed commercial development site in the Conceptual Future Land Use Plan (Map 9) of this</i></p>	<p>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</p>	<p>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</p>

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
<p>4. In addition to the incentives listed on Page 8 of the Chapter, there are more community revitalization/redevelopment incentives including transportation programs that the State provides. For instance, the Sustainable Communities Program provides these financing programs: <a href="http://www.mdhousing.org/website/programs/dn/Documents/Benefits.pdf">http://www.mdhousing.org/website/programs/dn/Documents/Benefits.pdf</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Maryland Department of Planning</i></p> <p>5. Pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements are often part of a revitalization project. The Federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) administered by the Maryland State Highway Administration provides grants for pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements on not only Maryland state highways, but also local roadway and streets: <a href="http://roads.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=144">http://roads.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=144</a>. For instance, perhaps, the City may consider the</p>	<p><b>Staff Response</b></p> <p><i>plan, is made eligible for the various development financing and tax credit programs and incentives offered through the Sustainable Communities program. A comprehensive listing of the various financing, tax credit, and incentive programs offered through the Sustainable Communities program to eligible properties can be obtained through DHCD, MDP, the City's Economic Development office, or the DHCD web site at the following URL: <a href="http://www.mdhousing.org/website/programs/dn/Documents/Benefits.pdf">http://www.mdhousing.org/website/programs/dn/Documents/Benefits.pdf</a>.</i></p>	<p><b>PC Recommendation</b></p> <p>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</p>	<p><b>M &amp; C Decision</b></p>
<p>Staff appreciates MDP's suggestion and believes that the recommended wording changes for Comment 3 above will address this comment. Therefore, staff recommends no additional specific changes to the draft amendment in response to this comment.</p>	<p><b>Staff Response</b></p> <p>Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are addressed in a different chapter of the Comprehensive Plan City-Wide Element (Chapter VI, Transportation), and the proposed Riverwalk Trail is further discussed as a recreational trail improvement in Section D of Chapter V, Community Facilities &amp; Services. These sections are not a part of the proposed Plan Amendment. However, the city is aware of the TAP program, which has had numerous alternative names in prior Federal Transportation Bills. The City has</p>	<p><b>PC Recommendation</b></p> <p>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</p>	<p><b>M &amp; C Decision</b></p> <p>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Staff Response</b></p>	<p><b>PC Recommendation</b></p> <p>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</p>	<p><b>M &amp; C Decision</b></p> <p>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</p>

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
<p>TAP as a potential funding source for the proposed "Riverwalk" pedestrian trail.</p> <p><i>Maryland Department of Planning</i></p>	<p>used this program in the past and has identified TAP financing as one of several funding sources that may be used to finance the proposed Riverwalk. Pursuing development of this project is a stated action item of the Community Facilities and Services Chapter. All potential funding sources for this project will be evaluated as part of the pending Riverwalk Concept Plan, which is being undertaken through a cooperative effort by the City, the Allegany County Chamber of Commerce, the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority, and the Cumberland Area MPO. Since the name, scope, and nature of this Federal program has changed and can change with the adoption of each new Federal Transportation Bill—and a new Transportation Bill is currently pending before Congress—staff sees no immediate need to reference it specifically in this Plan Amendment, which addresses different topical aspects of the Comprehensive Plan. <b>Therefore, staff recommends no additional specific changes to the draft amendment in response to this comment.</b></p>		
<p>6. US DOT also provides "TIGER" grants (<a href="http://www.transportation.gov/tiger">http://www.transportation.gov/tiger</a>) directly to local jurisdictions for transportation projects that generate economic recovery.</p> <p><i>Maryland Department of Planning</i></p>	<p>Staff appreciates this advisory reminder and is aware of the USDOT TIGER Grant program. From our research efforts, it is our understanding that eligible competitive projects must address a wide range of transportation improvements and involve multiple funding partners. The city is currently considering this program as a potential funding option for implementation of three ongoing and inter-related transportation improvement projects—the Greene Street Complete Street Plan, the West Side Railroad Study, and the Riverwalk Concept Plan. We</p>	<p><b>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</b></p>	<p><b>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</b></p>

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
	<p>also recognize that the planned revitalization of the Wills Creek Bridge on Baltimore Street may be considered as part of this larger transportation revitalization effort. The eligibility of these projects for TIGER Grant funding is being considered and evaluated as part of these ongoing planning studies. However, as far as the specific focus of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment is concerned, <b>staff recommends no additional specific changes to the draft amendment in response to this comment.</b></p>		
<p>7. Below are MDE's comments for the above referenced project. Our response code is R1.</p> <p>a. Any above ground or underground petroleum storage tanks, which may be utilized, must be installed and maintained in accordance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. Underground storage tanks must be registered and the installation must be conducted and performed by a contractor certified to install underground storage tanks by the Land Management Administration in accordance with COMAR 26.10. Contact the Oil Control Program at <a href="tel:4105373442">(410) 537-3442</a> for additional information.</p> <p>b. If the proposed project involves demolition – Any above ground or underground petroleum storage tanks that may be on site must have contents and tanks along with any contamination removed. Please contact the Oil Control Program at <a href="tel:4105373442">(410) 537-3442</a> for additional information.</p>	<p>According to Maryland Department of Planning staff, the MDE response code "R1" indicates that the proposed project (the draft Economic Development Chapter amendment) has been determined to be "consistent with MDE's programs and objectives." The comment is also subject to a series of 6 standard conditions that specifically relate to a development project application, not a technical plan amendment. Since the nature of this comment is advisory and does not request specific amendments to the draft text, <b>staff recommends no additional specific changes to the draft amendment in response to this comment.</b></p>	<p><b>Recommend Adoption by Mayor &amp; Council with staff recommended changes (where so noted).</b></p>	<p><b>Adopted in accordance with PC &amp; Staff recommendations.</b></p>

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
<p>c. Any solid waste including construction, demolition and land clearing debris, generated from the subject project, must be properly disposed of at a permitted solid waste acceptance facility, or recycled if possible. Contact the Solid Waste Program at (410) 537-3315 for additional information regarding solid waste activities and contact the Waste Diversion and Utilization Program at (410) 537-3314 for additional information regarding recycling activities.</p> <p>d. The Waste Diversion and Utilization Program should be contacted directly at (410) 537-3314 by those facilities which generate or propose to generate or handle hazardous wastes to ensure these activities are being conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations. The Program should also be contacted prior to construction activities to ensure that the treatment, storage or disposal of hazardous wastes and low-level radioactive wastes at the facility will be conducted in compliance with applicable State and federal laws and regulations.</p> <p>e. Any contract specifying "lead paint abatement" must comply with Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.16.01 - Accreditation and Training for Lead Paint Abatement Services. If a property was built before 1950 and will be used as rental housing, then compliance with COMAR 26.16.02 - Reduction of Lead Risk in Housing; and Environment Article Title 6, Subtitle 8, is required. Additional guidance</p>			

Public Comment	Staff Response	PC Recommendation	M & C Decision
<p>regarding projects where lead paint may be encountered can be obtained by contacting the Environmental Lead Division at (410) 537-3825.</p> <p>f. The proposed project may involve rehabilitation, redevelopment, revitalization, or property acquisition of commercial, industrial property. Accordingly, MDE's Brownfields Site Assessment and Voluntary Cleanup Programs (VCP) may provide valuable assistance to you in this project. These programs involve environmental site assessment in accordance with accepted industry and financial institution standards for property transfer. For specific information about these programs and eligibility, please contact the Land Restoration Program at <a href="tel:4105373437">(410) 537-3437</a>.</p> <p><i>Maryland Department of Environment</i></p>			

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**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**Legal Notice**

The Mayor and Council of the City of Cumberland will conduct a public hearing on a draft Economic Development and Revitalization Chapter amendment to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan City-Wide Element. This amendment was prepared to recognize and reference the recent adoption of the city's 2014 Strategic Economic Development Plan. This public hearing is being conducted in compliance with the applicable statutory requirements of the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

Copies of the draft Economic Development and Revitalization Chapter amendment and a matrix listing the public comments received to date have been placed in the Community Development Office in the basement of Cumberland City Hall for public inspection prior to the hearing. All interested citizens are encouraged to attend and express their comments on the proposed amendment.

The public hearing will be conducted on Tuesday, December 15, 2015, at 6:15 PM in the Mayor and City Council Chambers at City Hall, 57 North Liberty Street, Cumberland, Maryland. Anyone interested in commenting on the draft plan is encouraged to attend. Questions or comments concerning the plan may be directed to David Umling, City Planner, at 301-759-6503, or by e-mail at [david.uml@cumberlandmd.gov](mailto:david.uml@cumberlandmd.gov). Advertise Times-News: December 1, 2015

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Under and by virtue of the powers of sale contained in the Deed of Trust dated January 8, 2009 and recorded in Liber 1552, Folio 112 of the Allegany County Land Records, the undersigned Trustee will offer for sale at public auction at the front doors of the Allegany County Circuit Courthouse, located at 30 Washington Street, Cumberland, Maryland on **THURSDAY, December 3, 2015 AT 1:00 P.M.**

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**FIRST PARCEL - All those seventeen (17) lots, pieces or parcels of land in the Subdivisions known as Section A, Section B and Section C of the Cumberland Chase Development as more particularly described in the Subdivision Plats of said Subdivisions recorded as Plat Nos. 2073 through 2077, inclusive among the Plat Records of Allegany County, Maryland and consisting of the following lots:**

- Lot No. 2 of Section A, containing 0.95 acres, more or less.
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- Lot No. 14 of Section A, containing 0.69 acres, more or less.
- Lot No. 15 of Section A, containing 0.69 acres, more or less.
- Lot No. 7 of Section B, containing 0.52 acres, more or less.
- Lot No. 14 of Section B, containing 0.44 acres, more or less.
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Copies of the draft Economic Development and Revitalization Chapter amendment and a matrix listing the public comments received to date

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By: *Community Holdings of Maryland, Publishers*

s/s *Kim Hughes - Legal*  
Kim Hughes, Times – News Legal Clerk

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