



# THE YORK ROAD COMMUNITY

STRATEGIC NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

*Baltimore City's York Road Community will capture the essence and spirit of positive city living.*

*From its diverse blend of citizens to its unique shopping attractions, the Community will capture the essence and spirit of positive city living.*



FEBRUARY 2006



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Mayor  
City of Baltimore*



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## Acknowledgments

Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods

Baltimore Housing

Baltimore Development Corporation

City of Baltimore Department of Transportation

City of Baltimore Department of Recreation and Parks

Baltimore City Police Department

**With special thanks to the members of the:**

York Road Partnership Steering Committee  
and Action Committees

Neighborhood Organizations

Govanstowne Business Association

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**Adopted by the**

**City of Baltimore Planning Commission**

**February 2, 2006**

### Department of Planning Mission Statement

To provide the highest level services and leadership in urban and strategic planning, historical and architectural preservation, zoning, design, development, and capital budgeting to promote the sustained economic, social, and community development of the City of Baltimore.

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# What Is SNAP?

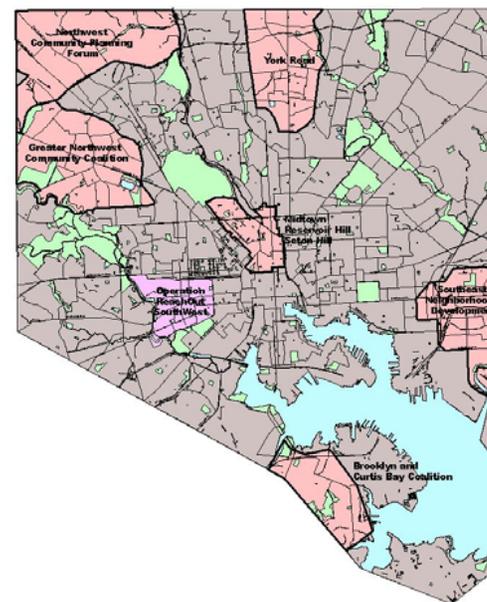
In 2002 Mayor Martin O'Malley launched the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) program to create comprehensive plans for select clusters of neighborhoods throughout the city. Following his administration's philosophy of putting Neighborhoods First and building on established strengths, SNAP established four central planning guidelines:

- **Partnership:** Residents work with their neighbors across traditional boundaries, as well as with City agencies and other stakeholders (including nonprofits, churches, institutions, and businesses). During an era of limited resources, a broad stakeholder group has greater capacity to both create and implement the plan.
- **Priorities:** Plans identify key assets in each cluster and build upon these strengths within a framework of market demand. Cluster priorities target implementable agency actions and services for maximum impact.
- **Participation:** The planning process is inclusive. Residents and other stakeholders have opportunities for decision-making and for carrying out improvement projects with the City's support.
- **Perspective:** No one issue is the key to a successful plan. Neighborhood revitalization must be comprehensive, addressing many issues and priorities and establishing a long-term framework for future development and change.

In September 2002, the Planning Commission adopted the pilot plan for the SNAP program, the Operation ReachOut Southwest (OROSW) SNAP for a cluster of neighborhoods in Southwest Baltimore.

Following the program's launch, fifteen clusters citywide applied for SNAP designation. In January 2003, six clusters were selected citywide:

- Brooklyn and Curtis Bay
- Midtown/Reservoir Hill/Seton Hill (Midtown)
- Northwest Community Planning Forum (NWCPF)
- Greater Northwest Community Coalition (GNCC)
- Southeastern Neighborhoods Development (SEND)
- York Road Partnership



## York Road Community Vision

Baltimore City's York Road Community will be composed of vibrant urban neighborhoods. From its diverse blend of citizens to its unique shopping attractions, the Community will capture the essence and spirit of positive city living.

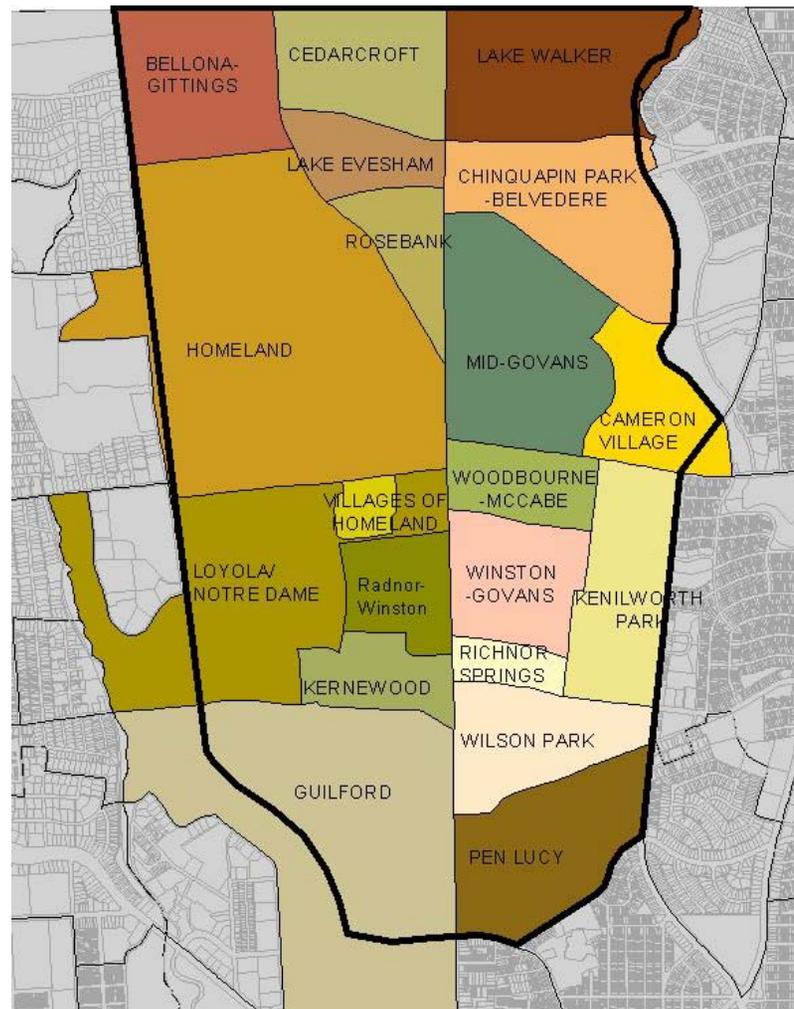
### Description of Cluster

The York Road SNAP plan has the same boundaries as the York Road Partnership. The area is bounded by the City/County line on the north 39th Street on the south. The western boundary follows St. Paul below Greenway and Charles Street above Greenway Street. The eastern boundary is Northwood above Tunbridge and The Alameda below Tunbridge. The YRP cluster includes twenty neighborhoods, 15 of which touch York Road.

In addition to the neighborhoods having well-established neighborhood associations and the Govanstowne Business Association, this cluster includes major anchor institutions, such as Loyola College and The College of Notre Dame and the Evergreen House owned by Johns Hopkins University.

### Planning Process

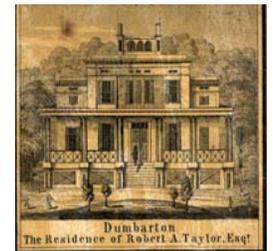
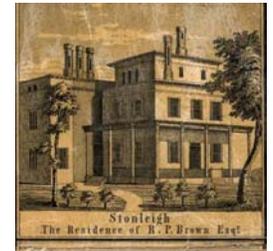
In May 2003 approximately 100 people from almost every part of the York Road Partnership area attended a community forum to kick off their Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan. After a brief introduction to the York Road Partnership and the SNAP



program, neighborhood residents broke into small groups to discuss priority topics, including Housing, Corridor Safety, Appearance, Stores and Services, and Youth and Community issues. Each group was charged with identifying the strengths and weaknesses of their neighborhoods and thinking of new ways to make their neighborhoods stronger by building on their strengths. Additionally, representatives from 311 were on hand to log service requests directly into the system. A lot of enthusiasm and new ideas came out of the Community Forum as well as the newly energized York Road Partnership Action Teams. Together, the steering committee, action teams along with City agencies, worked to turn some of those ideas into the goals, objectives and strategies of this plan.



## History



The York Road is almost as old as York, Pennsylvania itself. Shortly after 1741, when York was first established as a town, a conference of Baltimore and York tradesmen and merchants met to establish a road between the two young communities. By the mid 1750s, back-country farmers routinely used the York Road to bring grain and other agricultural goods to Baltimore. As the City demand for agricultural products increased, the development of farmland in Baltimore County increased. Consequently, in 1787 Baltimore County, through State enabling legislation, created the Baltimore County-operated York turnpike. By 1805 the county sold the turnpike to private investors; in turn, the Baltimore and York Turnpike Company remained in private hands until the early 1900s. York Road opened up the rural areas of north Baltimore to development.

Development in this area oriented itself to the York Road. The first cross-road village, Govans, was established by 1783. The village was named after its first known resident, William Govans who in the 1750s moved to the area.



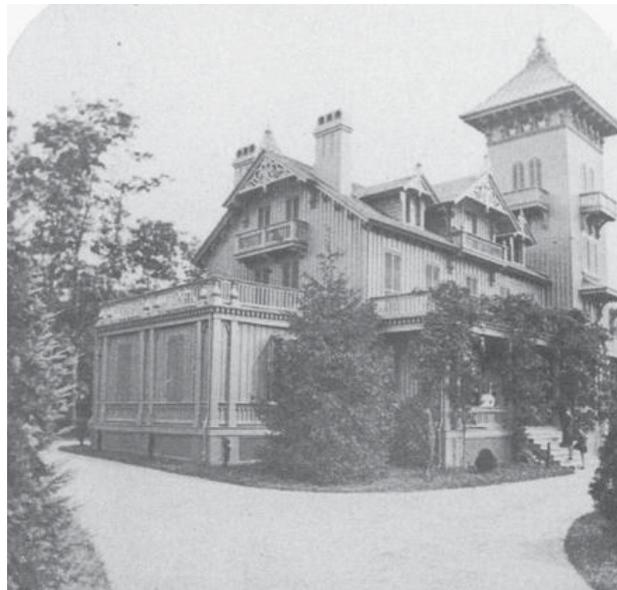
In the 1840s Govans developed into a thriving village. Shops opened along the York Road, catering to the surrounding gentlemen estates and truck farms. In 1844 Govans was connected to Baltimore by daily omnibus service, and ten years later the village had daily mail service. Omnibuses conveniently stopped near the prevailing inns and taverns: Cold Spring Tavern, south of Govans at Oakland and York; the Star Tavern in Govans; and Robert Ramsey's Hotel in Govans. Churches were also established: the Govans Presbyterian Church was constructed in 1845; St. Patrick's R.C. Church built an orphanage for Irish children in 1847; St. Mary's R.C. Church was constructed in 1849; and the Govans Methodist Episcopal Church was constructed in 1849-50.

For the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the larger Govans area was a farm community made up mostly of gentlemen estates and small truck farms. Many prominent city residents bought country estates in the area. The 1857 Taylor map of Baltimore County

printed several images of the estates within the greater Govans area. These estates were gentlemen farms and were the summer homes of Baltimore's elite. These were hobby farms, architectural statements, and carefully designed landscapes.

The 1870s saw rapid development spawned by innovations in transportation. In 1874 the Horse Car Railway connected Govans to Baltimore and Towson. York Road became a mixed-use street with commercial, residential, and agricultural-oriented uses. Just a block or two from the road, Suburban style houses were built. In the 1877 G.M. Hopkins atlas, Govans residents included carpenters, florists, wholesale produce dealers, inn keepers, teachers, farmers, and one landscape gardener. By 1881, Greater Govans had a population of just over 1200.

By the 1920s, Govans was a thriving mainstreet that catered to the newly built suburban neighborhoods. Drug stores, restaurants, hardware stores, clothing stores, movie theaters, house-ware stores, and banks were established along the York Road corridor. Automobile dealers replaced livery stables and carriage shops, gas stations replaced grain and feed stores, and automotive repair garages replaced blacksmiths.

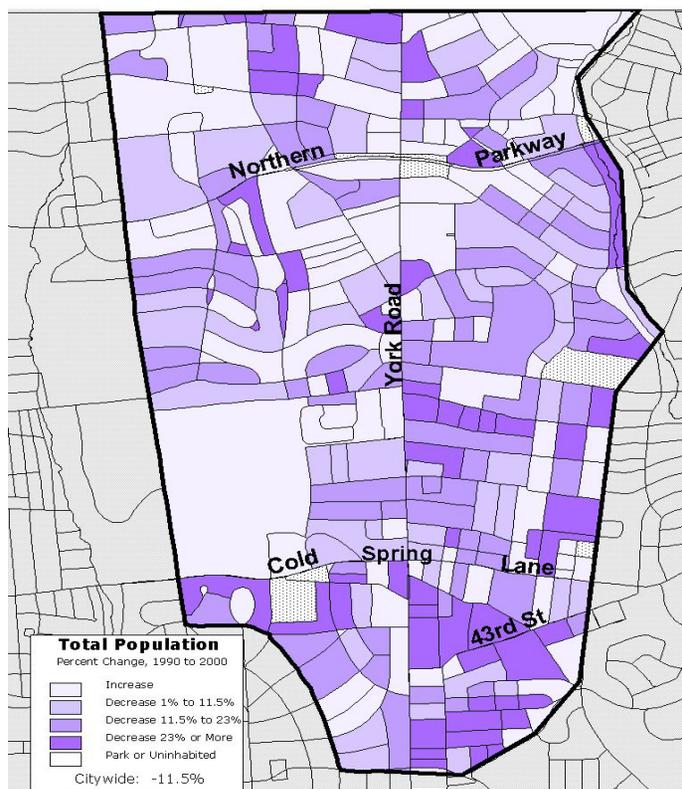


As we have seen, North Baltimore is a product of the York Road. The history of York Road begins the history of development in this area and is never more evident today in that these same twenty neighborhoods in north Baltimore have aligned themselves with the York Road corridor through the York

Road Partnership. These neighborhoods are extremely diverse in building type and demographic make-up.

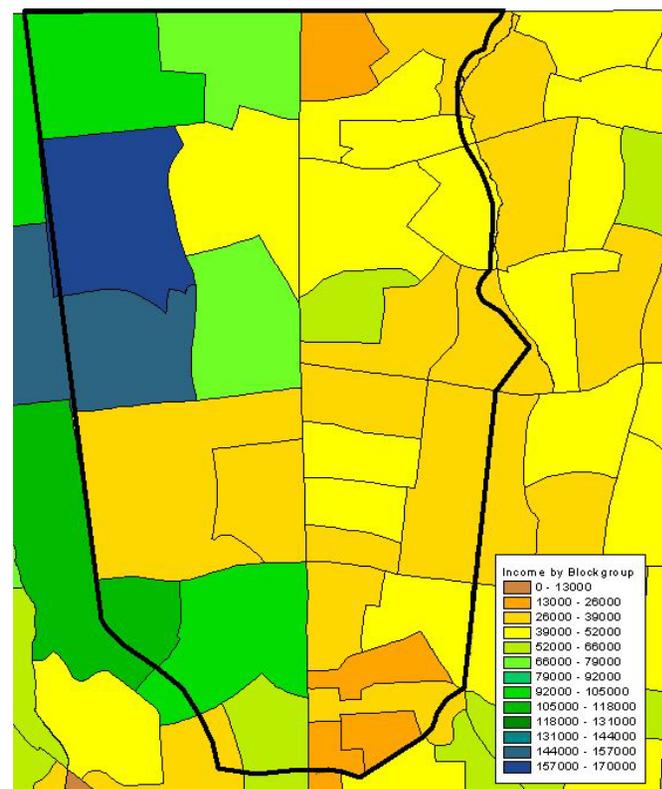
## Population Change

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, between 1990 and 2000 many blocks within the York Road Partnership area experienced a population decline. As you can see from the Population Change map the largest concentration of decline was experienced in the southeast area of the planning area. This is the Pen Lucy neighborhood. Many of the blocks within this neighborhood experienced a population decrease of 23% or greater. The neighborhoods to the north of Pen Lucy, below Northern Parkway have also experienced severe population decrease, but not to the extent of Pen Lucy. As you can see there are also several areas that experienced a population increase.



## Income

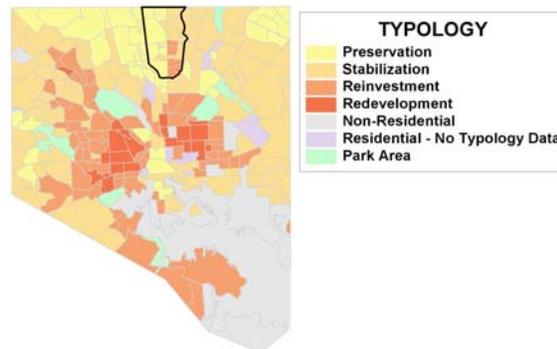
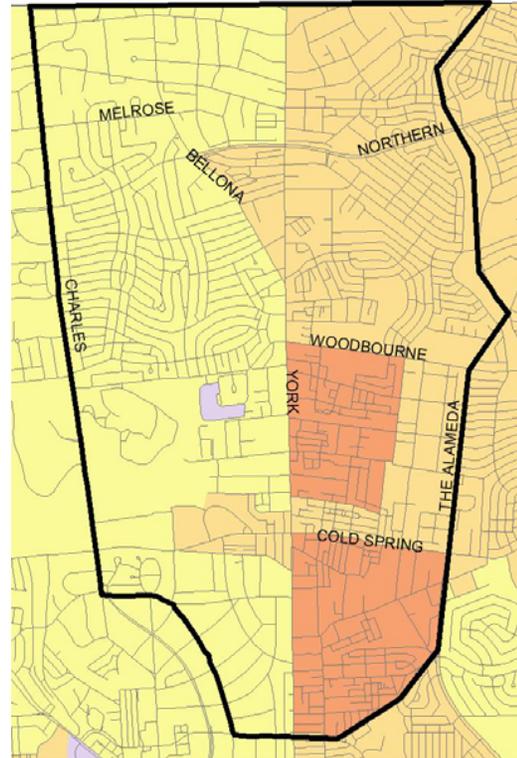
As you can see from the Income map below, according to the 2000 U.S. Census the income levels throughout the York Road Partnership area vary from \$13,000 to over \$150,000 annually. The highest income ranges between \$144,000 - \$157,000 and \$157,000 - \$170,000 are located in Homeland. These blockgroups represent some of the highest income levels in the City. The lowest income levels represented in the cluster, \$13,000 - \$26,000 are primarily in the Pen Lucy neighborhood. The two income ranges most prevalent in the cluster are \$26,000 - \$39,000 and \$39,000 - \$52,000. The majority of the higher income blockgroups are in the western section of the cluster and the majority of the moderate and lower income levels are in the eastern section of the cluster.



## Baltimore's Housing Market Typology

The Department of Planning in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Community Development created a Housing Market Typology for the City of Baltimore. Using abandonment, median home value, and homeownership data four categories were created:

- **Preservation:** Healthy, attractive areas with high owner-occupancy rates and high property values. The housing stock is well maintained and vacancy and abandonment rates are very low.
- **Stabilization:** High Home ownership rate, low abandonment, relatively low median home values, housing market needs intervention, signs of deferred maintenance
- **Reinvestment:** Moderate real estate values, average home ownership rates, and substantial vacancy rates, although not as substantial as Redevelopment Areas. Without intervention these neighborhoods could find themselves with widespread vacancies and, housing market stress (e.g. flipping, isolation).

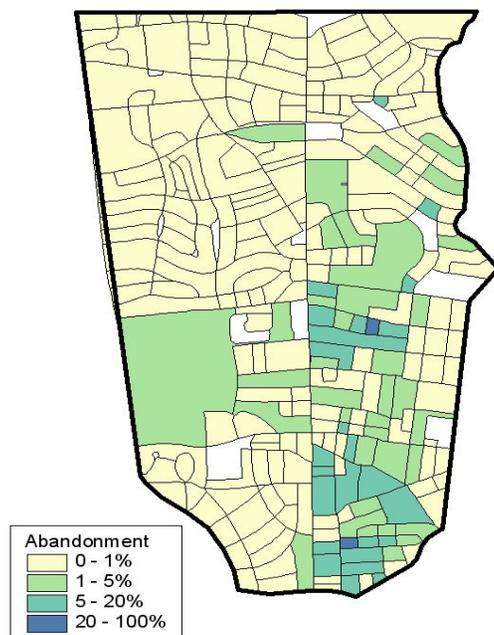


- **Redevelopment:** Deteriorated housing stock, abandoned buildings and vacant lots, traditional market forces not working, nor are they likely to be reestablished soon. Targeted blocks should be stabilized and surplus of vacant and uninhabitable housing units removed, with the creation new uses and amenities.

As you can see from the map to the left, approximately half of the cluster is Preservation. The majority of these neighborhoods are west of York Road. There are also some stabilization areas west of York Road with the largest portion of Stabilization area being in the northeast portion of the cluster. The darkest orange are the Reinvestment neighborhoods. The four neighborhoods that fall within this category are Woodbourne-McCabe and Winston-Govans (upper) and Wilson Park and Pen Lucy (lower). Currently, the Department of Planning is doing a Small Area Plan in the Pen Lucy neighborhood to further refine strategies to improve this neighborhood.

The City's Housing Market Typology is based on 3 factors: Abandonment Rate, Percent Homeownership and Median Assessed Home Value. The majority of the blocks within the York Road Partnership area has a 1%

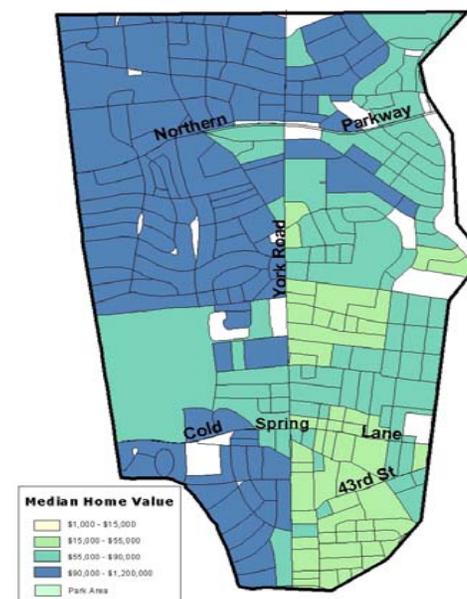
### Percent Abandonment



### Percent Homeownership



### Median Home Value



abandonment rate or less. There are several areas that have between 1% and 5% abandonment. Many blocks within the lower southeastern portion of the cluster have abandonment higher than 5%. The same areas with the largest percentages of abandonment have seen the smallest percentages of homeownership. In some cases the homeownership rate may be small, but the abandonment rate is lower. One reason may be the presence of more renters.

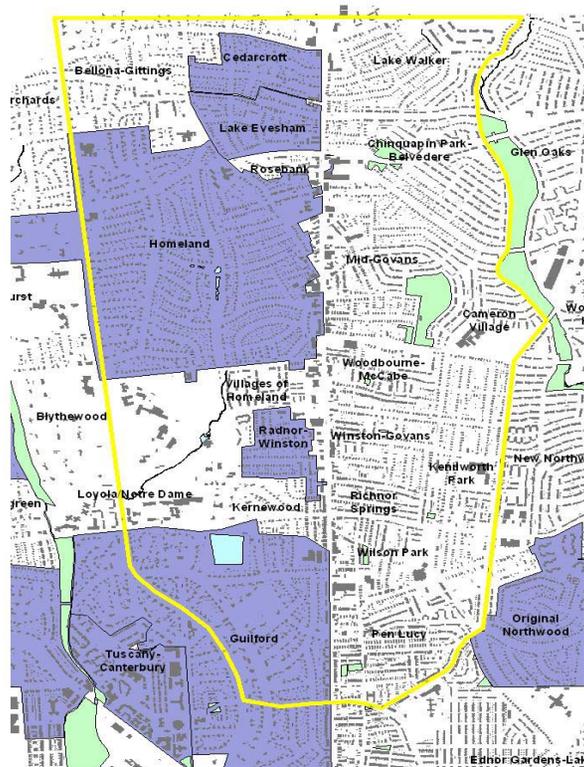
The areas with the lowest median home value are in direct correlation with the areas of high abandonment and low homeownership rates. For this cluster, the Preservation neighborhoods have median home values between \$90,000 and \$1.2 million. The Reinvestment neighborhoods have median home values between \$15,000 and \$55,000.

# Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization

The conglomeration of new suburban developments grew into neighborhoods, mostly oriented around the York Road corridor. These neighborhoods, most of which are twentieth-century creations, provided the area with a great diversity of housing types and styles.



During the 1890s, when the streetcar was electrified, residential housing began to cater to suburbanites. Houses in the current, eclectic style were built within a short walking distance from York Road. Foursquares, Queen-Anne Cottages, and Colonial revival farmhouses were built on spacious lots. In addition, smaller gabled-end houses were built to house the working class. Amongst these houses, many duplexes were built. Most rowhouses found in the neighborhoods were built between the 1920s and 1940s. These residential developments were constructed several houses at a time. They were built as part of the Govans community. Pen Lucy and Wilson Park are two neighborhoods that were built with smaller gabled-end housing. Many

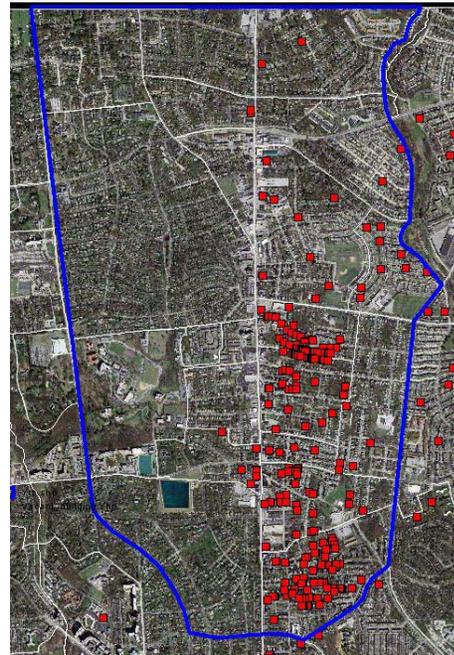


of these houses were decorated with shiplap siding, barge-board, finials, decorative scroll-sawn brackets, cedar-shake shingles and porchfronts. These neighborhoods, being closer to the City, were first considered part of the Waverly area; however, by the 1920s they formed their own identity. Wilson Park, considered one of Baltimore's first African-American suburbs, was developed by Harry Wilson, an African American, who began to build houses as early as 1917. In addition to some of the neighborhoods being culturally historic, several are architecturally significant.

The York Road Partnership area is home to five National Register Districts: Guilford, Radnor Winston, Homeland, Lake Evesham and Cedarcroft. Homeland and Guilford are considered some of Baltimore's finest planned suburban neighborhoods with exquisite trend-setting architecture. These neighborhoods were planned by the Roland Park Company and under the design guidance of the Olmsted Brothers. The houses were designed by the leading Baltimore architects who were nationally known and respected. Cedarcroft and Lake Evesham have also been listed on the National Register of historic Places mainly for their significance in early patterns of urban development.

Today, the York Road Partnership area features a diverse range of housing types, providing opportunities for households of all sizes and income levels, including public housing. Housing types include single-family homes, semi-detached townhomes, rowhouses, garden apartments, high rise apartments, and apartments above retail. There is also a wide range of housing conditions: while most of the cluster is healthy and stable, a few areas have been showing signs of deterioration over the years. Within those areas, there are a few pockets of concentrated vacancies and drug activity. Listed below are several of the assets and challenges that have influenced the housing market and quality of life of the residents of the area.

As you can see from the map, many of the vacant properties within the plan area are located on the east side of York Road.



228 vacant properties within the YRP cluster boundaries

The majority of the vacant properties are located within the Pen Lucy, Wilson Park, Woodbourne-McCabe and Richnor Springs and Winston-Govans neighborhoods. The following goals and strategies stem from the recognition that the strength of a neighborhood comes from the quality of its housing stock, the ability of its residents to work together, and from the amenities and resources available to its residents. While some intervention is necessary in these areas, the goal is to build off of the strong neighborhoods and bring the success of the neighborhoods in the western portion of the plan area to the east. Though the areas are different in many cases, the uplifting of the areas above will only strengthen the entire plan area and give provide a more stable neighborhoods to existing and future residents.

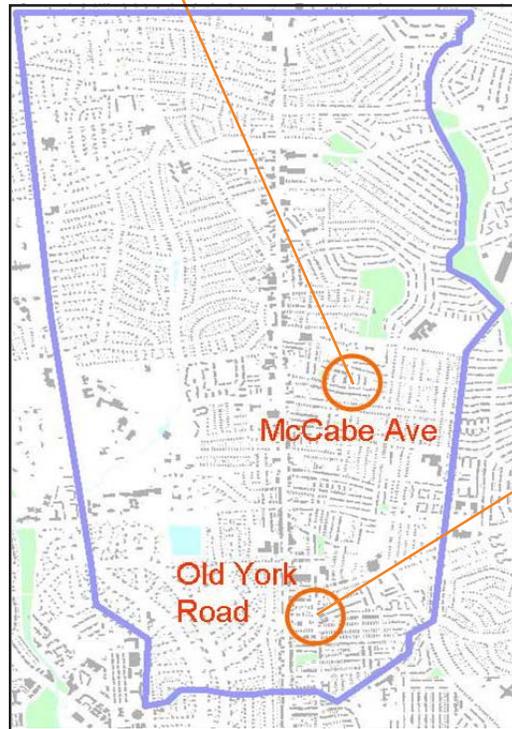
The two areas highlighted for major intervention are the 4000 block of Old York Road in Pen Lucy and 5200 block of Alhambra in Woodbourne-McCabe.

Assets	Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diverse housing stock: historic, affordable, rowhomes, detached and semi-detached, large and small</li> <li>• Strong community organizations</li> <li>• Loyola College within the cluster boundaries and close proximity to the College of Notre Dame and other private institutions</li> <li>• Convenient shopping to residential neighborhoods, including Belvedere Square</li> <li>• Heavily used bus lines, including the #8 Bus that travels Greenmount Avenue/York Road</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take control of blighting properties</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of properties needed</li> <li>• Some areas need targeted demolition and creation of new housing stock</li> <li>• Better information about available resources</li> <li>• not enough youth activities</li> <li>• City Services, non-profit</li> </ul>

# Major Redevelopment Opportunities

## Neighborhood: Woodbourne-McCabe McCabe Avenue (near Alhambra Park)

- Complete park construction
- Demolish blighted buildings
- Create new housing or expand park



## Neighborhood: Pen Lucy Old York Road (4000 Block)

- Relocate park to improve safety
- Demolish blighted buildings
- Create new housing

## Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Recommendations

**Outcome indicators: we will know we are on our way to our result by measuring:**

- Decrease in percent residential properties that are vacant and abandoned at end of year
- Decrease in percent residential properties with other types of housing violations at the end of year (excludes vacants)
- Decrease in the number of reported incidents of dirty streets and alleys
- Increase in percent of housing units owner-occupied (single family homes and condos)



### Goal I. All property is well maintained and attractive.

<p><b>A. Empower neighborhood associations to address code violations.</b></p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide information to all association leaders and block captains about housing and sanitation codes.</li> <li>2. Encourage and assist development of a system of block captains within neighborhoods.</li> <li>3. Coordinate “walk-throughs” with housing inspectors and sanitation officers to educate neighborhood leaders about code violations.</li> <li>4. Develop a system for neighborhood associations to notify property owners of code violations and give owners an opportunity to correct violations prior to alerting code enforcement.</li> <li>5. Identify priority areas for targeted code enforcement.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> HCD/Code Enforcement, DPW Sanitation Enforcement, YRP Housing Committee. Planning</p>
<p><b>B. Provide assistance to property owners to make needed repairs.</b></p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compile a list of existing City, neighborhood and non-profit resources.</li> <li>2. Pursue additional sources of financial assistance to help property owners make repairs.</li> <li>3. Explore partnerships with non-profits and institutions to provide volunteer manpower to assist with property maintenance and repairs.</li> <li>4. Identify reputable and cost-effective contractors to assist homeowners who are vulnerable to being scammed.</li> <li>5. Provide for senior homeowner workshops, counseling sessions, and repair assistance</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> YRP Housing, Loyola, GEDCO, Rebuilding Together Baltimore (Christmas in April)</p>

**C. Attract and support new homeowners.**

1. Identify neighborhood features that attracted longtime and new residents and highlight them in marketing of neighborhoods.
2. Create neighborhood profiles for YRP and LiveBaltimore websites.
3. Promote neighborhoods through Live Near Your Work program.
4. Have a YRP table at LiveBaltimore trolley tours.
5. Promote neighborhoods through the Sun's real estate section's Neighborhood Profile.
6. Assist renters to become homeowners.
7. Establish a new Healthy Neighborhood Program east of York Road.
8. Provide training/workshops on good homeownership
9. Work with realtors to promote the area.
10. Identify new homeowners and reach out to them

Partners to Engage  
YRP Housing, Live Baltimore, Greater Homewood, GBBR

**D. Empower neighborhood associations to address code violations for rental properties.**

1. Identify & locate absentee landlords.
2. Identify, in a timely manner, properties at risk for tax sale or foreclosure.
3. Develop a means for neighborhood associations to educate renters about codes and to notify landlords and tenants if violations occur.
4. Develop contacts at apartment complexes and work with management companies to ensure renters are responsible neighbors.
5. Investigate and disseminate information about zoning regulations that apply to group homes and multi-family dwellings.
6. Provide information on how multi-family dwellings can be converted into single-family units.
7. Develop 'good landlord' awards.

Partners to Engage  
HCD(Code Enforcement, YRP Housing

**E. Ensure that vacant lots are maintained.**

1. Identify vacant lots (commercial & residential)
2. Identify the party responsible for specific or problem vacant lots
3. Apply strategy appropriate for particular ownership (city, neighborhood, private etc.)

Partners to Engage  
HCD(Code Enforcement, Project 5000, NCI) YRP Housing



**Goal II. Vacant and blighted properties are returned to productive use.**

**A. Identify vacant and/or blighted properties.**

1. Conduct block-by-block housing assessment
2. Develop criteria to determine whether to pursue code enforcement or property acquisition solution.

Partners to Engage  
HCD(Code Enforcement, Project 5000, NCI) YRP Housing

**B. Transfer control/ownership of blighted properties from unresponsive, irresponsible or unidentifiable property owners to a responsible entity.**

1. Identify properties for Project 5000 and Neighborhood Conservation Initiative.
2. Identify properties for receivership through Save a Neighborhood/Community Law Center.
3. Explore intervention-buying strategy (e.g. BIA with NCI/St.Ambrose).
4. Develop disposition strategy for acquired properties, including vacant lots.
5. Identify opportunities for demolition and new construction.
6. Explore and utilize methods of acquiring vacant properties for communal greenspace (eg. OROSW vacant lot management)
7. Implement Old York Road Revitalization Plan in Pen Lucy
8. Facilitate transfer of City properties to Habitat for Humanity in Pen Lucy
9. Work with Baltimore Housing and Recreation & Parks to implement park project on the 5200 block of Alhambra
10. Investigate suspected incidents of illegal use of properties such as group homes or daycare centers.
11. Identify and address nuisance properties and situations
  - a. Expedite parking permit process for 5500 block of Ivanhoe Road and wherever needed to accommodate parking at the DeWees PAL Center.

Partners to Engage  
HCD(Code Enforcement, Project 5000, NCI) YRP Housing, Community Law Center, GEMS, Habitat for Humanity

## Accomplishments to Date

- Met with Baltimore Housing to advocate for improved housing code enforcement; Advocated for inclusion of some YRP neighborhood in the TEVO project
- Promoted the Alhambra Park Project and negotiated a timeline for completion; Baltimore Housing has completed acquisition for the park and is in the process of transferring properties to the Department of Recreation and Parks
- Supported the work of Chesapeake Habitat for Humanity on Cator Avenue in Pen Lucy.
- Investigated the neighborhood code enforcement project with Mid-Govans serving as a pilot location
- Completed a vacant housing inventory for the YRP area
- Worked with project 5000 to coordinate city acquisition of area properties
- Coordinated with neighborhood leaders and submitted to the city a list of properties needing demolition in the YRP area
- Provided training for neighborhood leaders through Greater Homewood
- Began researching resources for homeowners
- Coordinated the Believe in our Schools volunteer day at Walter P. Carter school

# Commercial Revitalization



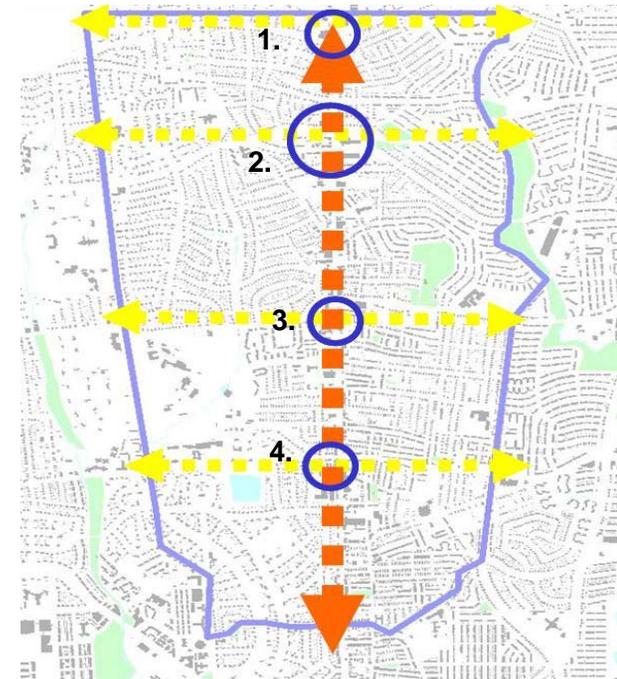
*The historic Senator Theater is still a popular movie house on the York Road Corridor*

York Road was the center of the Greater Govans community that was made up of the surrounding suburban developments. Churches increased in number as well as expanded their activities. Movie theaters were constructed (the Senator being a rare survivor), and taverns continued to line the corridor. In 1948 the Hochschild, Kohn Belvedere and Hess Shoes

buildings were built, becoming an anchor of the neighborhood. In addition, Hess Shoes also opened in 1948, making Govans a shopping destination. By the mid-1950s, the shopping core of Govans, centering on York and Belvedere roads, also included an A & P grocery store, a Steiff Silver outlet, Read's Drug store, a carpet store, a jeweler, the Senator Theater (opened 1939), banks, several restaurants, service stations, cleaners, barbers, shoe repair shops, and seven other specialty shoe and clothing stores. Govans shopping district catered to the newly developed suburban neighborhoods within the area.

Today, the York Road commercial corridor is a 2.5 mile mix of commercial, office, retail and institutional uses, with a few scattered residential units. The corridor has grown organically over time, resulting in an uncoordinated mix of neighborhood businesses, destination retail, and auto-oriented businesses. Along the corridor four commercial nodes have been identified: Coldspring, Woodbourne, Belvedere and the City/County Line above Walker Avenue. The diversity of these commercial nodes help create a vibrancy from south of Coldspring to the City/County line. With this mixture there are assets to build upon to help meet some of the existing needs and create a better York Road corridor.

## Four Commercial Nodes



### 1. City/County Line



### 2. Belvedere Square



### 3. Woodbourne



### 4. Coldspring Lane



### Assets

- Major north-south corridor- provides significant vehicular traffic. This is important because it provides for more exposure to the businesses and leads to more commercial activity
- Major MTA Bus Route
- Some strong businesses - destination and neighborhood retail.
- Combined purchasing power of surrounding residential areas- This strong residential purchasing power is the basis for commercial development – it enables businesses to start and succeed.

### Needs

- Reduce commercial vacancies – explore opportunities for redevelopment.
- Façade improvements, enforcement of existing design guidelines
- Improve mix of businesses to better serve surrounding communities.
- Improve parking and transit opportunities.

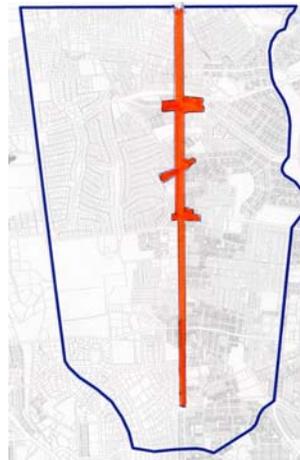
In addition to York Road Partnership, who works with businesses along the corridor, the Govanstowne Business Association (GBA) was established in 1980 as one of nine Retail Business Districts (RBDL) throughout the City. The district boundaries include businesses that are in the area that extends from the city/county line to 43rd street, along the York Road corridor. A portion of the RBDL fees paid by the businesses to Baltimore City are provided to the nine districts, to be used for business promotions, to encourage shopping and for part-time staffing.

In June of 2004, GBA was awarded the Baltimore Main Streets Affiliate status. Since then, the GBA has been working along the corridor gearing up for official Govanstowne Main Streets status. The Baltimore Main Streets Affiliate status brings such benefits, as architectural services which will benefit those businesses requesting architectural services regarding Façade improvements or Main Streets revitalization efforts. This

affiliation provides additional incentives and tools by which the York Road commercial areas can be strengthened.

In place currently to help select portions of the corridor is an Urban Renewal Plan for the York- Woodbourne commercial area and a Business Planned Unit Development which help to revitalize the Belvedere Shopping Center. The Urban Renewal Plan is one of the critical tools that can be used to help with the revitalization of the southeast corner of York and Woodbourne. This ordinance is also a possible mechanism by which design standards could be introduced into the corridor. The planned unit development guides the development of the commercial spaces through approving general use, design, placement and signage of Belvedere Square.

The strength of the neighborhoods and the business district are reliant on each other – the commercial corridor is dependent on strong residential growth and stability in order to support new and existing businesses, and a strong, thriving commercial corridor is an amenity to supporting the shopping needs of the surrounding community. This being said, the underlying premise of the following goals and strategies is that the health and stability of the York Road Community's neighborhoods is reinforced by a strong commercial corridor that serves the needs of and adds value to the community.



*Left: Map of RBDL Boundaries*

### Blocks in RBDL include:

4300 through 6300 blocks of York Road  
400-500 block of Woodbourne Avenue  
4700 block of Bellona Avenue  
400 block of Lyman Avenue  
400 and 500 block of Benninghaus Road  
400 and 500 block of East Belvedere Avenue

# Commercial Revitalization Recommendations

**Outcome Indicators: we will know we are reaching our result and vision by measuring:**

- Increase percent of commercial properties where investment for rehab above \$5,000 took place
- Decrease percent of commercial properties that are vacant and abandoned
- Increase in total retail sales
- Increase in successful small businesses

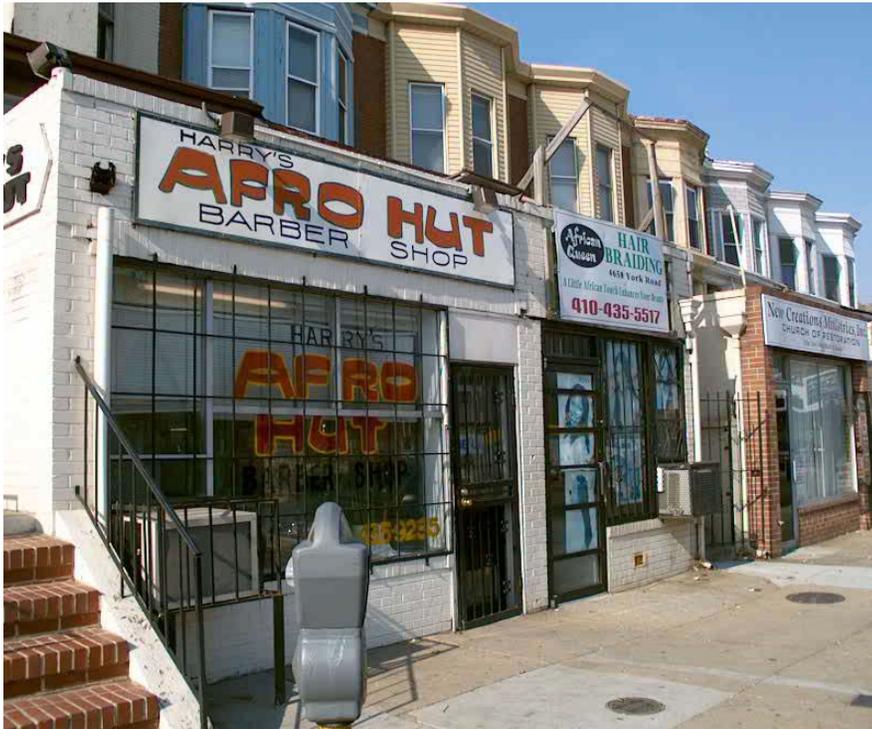
**Goal I: Strengthen the York Road Commercial Corridor**

**A. Revitalize and redevelop the weakest portions of the commercial corridor**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a redevelopment plan for the southern gateway area (commercial corridor and neighborhoods from 42nd Street north to 5200 York Road)</li> <li>2. Conduct a market study to identify the causes of property vacancies and viable commercial uses for the Corridor’s business districts.</li> <li>3. Use publicly owned facilities as a catalyst for redevelopment opportunities.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Baltimore City owns two adjacent properties in the 4300 block of York Road totaling 1.75 acres.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Develop a plan to attract businesses that complement the range of products and services already in the area.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Survey residents to identify the products, services, and amenities that they desire to exist along the York Road Corridor.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> BDC, GBA, Planning, YRP Commercial, consultants</p>
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**B. Identify opportunities for mixed use development (residential/commercial) to encourage/ enhance day and night uses.**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Perform detailed analysis of urban residential housing solutions within commercial corridors.</li> <li>2. Develop and implement a plan to encourage the development of new residential housing within the commercial corridor.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Some commercial areas could accommodate higher density apartments that might include first-floor retail or office use.</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Evaluate the efficacy of live-work uses.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Facilitating live-work opportunities is a way to increase residential opportunities as well as increase an owner’s stake in the success of the commercial district.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Provide incentives for encouraging the development and redevelopment of neighborhood and commercial shopping districts that permit both day and evening uses. (i.e., restaurants, art galleries and promotional events)</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> YRP Housing, consultants, GBA</p>
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**C. More effectively market the Corridor to neighborhoods and prospective business/development interests.**

1. Regularly publish and distribute a Business District Newsletter to promote the entire corridor
2. Explore opportunities to partner with other business districts for cross-promotional purposes.
  - a. Ensure cross-promotion between the four commercial nodes along the York Road Corridor
  - b. Continue joint promotional activities with other Main Street areas.
3. Work with communities to identify how desired businesses can expand their customer base and what types of new businesses, products, services, and amenities should be attracted to York Road.

Partners to Engage  
GBA, BDC, YRP  
Commercial, Planning

**Goal II. Appearance of the commercial corridor is improved.**

<p><b>A. Encourage a “Main Street” design that is compatible with and complements the development pattern of the adjacent businesses.</b></p>	
<p>1. Organize design workshops that encourage business and property owners to become engaged in the revitalization process and ultimately want to participate in programs such as façade improvements.</p>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> GBA, BDC, YRP Commercial, Planning</p>
<p><b>B. Retain an urban form along the corridor where appropriate.</b></p>	
<p>1. Develop a plan that will turn the southeast corner of York and Woodbourne into a significant anchor for the Woodbourne Shopping District. 2. Whenever possible, do not make parking the most visible element from the street place buildings close to the street and minimize turning conflicts that parking can create. 3. Avoid single use parking lots     a. Work with business owners to develop interconnecting parking lots and walkways between stand alone businesses. 4. Launch a pilot project in the York Road Partnership area to replace current use-based zoning rules with design-based rules.</p>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> YRP Streetscape, YRP steering, GBA</p>
<p><b>C. Establish design guidelines for façade improvements and signage through Urban Renewal Plans and Main Streets.</b></p>	
<p>1. Create a design handbook that uses illustrations and simple language to ensure compliance with new standards and regulations.     a. Provide an easy to understand and concise “zoning: guide of what is permitted and specific illustrations of signage and materials. 2. Define and promote building designs that are pedestrian and handicapped friendly. 3. Promote the use of appropriate signage, material, and façade design.     a. Develop 3 or 4 option signage prototypes for merchants 4. Enforce design guidelines where they currently exist.</p>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> GBA, BDC, YRP Commercial, Planning</p>

## Example Design Standards

Below are some of the types of proposed design standards that would be for the York Road commercial corridor.



### Identity Signage

- Each building should be limited to one general advertising sign that cannot take up a percentage (to be determined) of a building's frontage.
- Prohibit banners from being hung from fences, gates or across buildings.

### Advertising signage

- Advertising signage, such as that used by liquor stores, is one of the major contributors to the visual clutter on York Road. Limiting the signage that can be posted in a retailer's window will provide a sense of organization.

### Screen dumpsters and mechanical equipment

- Ideally dumpsters and mechanical equipment should be placed at the rear of the property where they would not be visible. If this not possible, screening should be provided that requires attractive materials.

### Quality of materials when making improvements or renovating

- Whenever possible, architecturally compatible materials should be used; vinyl shutters and plastic awnings should be avoided.

### Security grilles

- Require that new security grilles and screens for storefronts must be located on the inside of store windows.
- Security screens and grilles must be painted a dark color or be dark. Security screens and grilles must be opened or removed when a business is open.

### Windows

- Transparent windows be used when windows are replaced or as part of new development.
- Make second story windows look occupied when boarding windows.

**Goal III: Exteriors and signage on commercial properties, churches, institutions and residences, maintained and kept clean by property and/or business owners**

<b>A. Engage all resources to provide assistance to property owners for exterior improvements and maintenance</b>	
1. Develop an up-to-date handbook of resources and distribute to all property owners.	<u>Partners to Engage</u> GBA, BDC, YRP Commercial
<b>B. Develop agreements with litter-producing businesses to help police their immediate areas</b>	
1. Identify businesses or areas on the Corridor that generate excessive litter. 2. Develop a relationship with litter-producing businesses and establish a mutual desire to cooperate to alleviate litter.	<u>Partners to Engage</u> GBA, YRP Commercial
<b>C. Ensure the compliance and enforcement of existing building codes, urban renewal plans (York Woodbourne) and PUD's (Loyola facility and Belvedere Square).</b>	
<b>D. Target specific problem properties along the Corridor and implement campaigns to encourage property/business owners to cleanup and improve appearance.</b>	
1. Establish concern/complaint procedures to address specific problems along the corridor 2. Meet with business owners, property owners & local officials to address specific issues (e.g -Govans Post Office, CVS, etc.) 3. Organize grassroots campaigns to target national chain franchises (eg. Coordinated e-mails, etc.) that are located on the corridor 4. Increase City enforcement activity of sanitation code violations.	<u>Partners to Engage</u> GBA, BDC, YRP Commercial, Planning
<b>E. Create appropriate transitions between commercial and residential areas.</b>	
1. Develop plan to improve appearance and cleanliness of the back sides of commercial properties.	

## Accomplishments To Date

- Encouraged creative thinking on the use of the southeast corner of York and Woodbourne
- Helped facilitate the approval of the Belvedere Square PUD amendment
- Negotiated and MOU with Enterprise Car rental and the new Crown gas station
- Began an inventory of vacant commercial along the southern part of York Road
- GBA actively promotes BDC Façade Improvement grants and other programs
- Business District newsletter, GBA Gazette, issued to businesses, community associations and other interested parties, and posted on YRP website.
- GBA has been awarded Main Street Affiliate status, with many opportunities and benefits for the Govanstowne area.
- Resource List started for Commercial Revitalization/Construction
- GBA Concern/Complaint Management Procedure submitted to YRP

# Open Space and Recreation

The York Road Partnership cluster has significant greenspace and several parks within the boundaries: Evesham Park, Chinquapin Park, DeWees Pal Center and play fields, playgrounds in both Wilson Park and Pen Lucy, as well as play facilities at the local elementary and middle schools. One of the main goals for this cluster is that all community spaces are clean, safe, and inviting, and provide a safe and active place for youth. The neighborhoods also desire to have more activities for children and teenagers within the cluster. Providing activities for young people is crucial to helping to meet this goal as well as contributing to the overall health of the cluster.

In addition to the active play areas and passive parks, the informal greenspace and tree cover within some areas of the cluster are substantial. North Baltimore is one of the most heavily greened areas of the City. The planned communities of Guilford and Homeland offer green refuges within their boundaries. Maintaining and increasing this green canopy throughout the cluster is also major goal that will be discussed in the following Transportation section.



*Neighborhood playground and wading pool in the Wilson Park neighborhood*



*Right: The greenspace in the Homeland neighborhood offers a small lake with flowers (left) and ducks, adding to beauty and tranquility of the neighborhood.*



# Open Space and Recreation Recommendations



**Goal I: All community spaces are clean, safe, and inviting.**

**A. Identify impervious surfaces that can be converted to green spaces within these sites.**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walter P. Carter school yard</li> <li>• Guilford elementary</li> <li>• Eastern portions of Evesham Park where playground equipment was once located.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> BCPSS, Rec&amp; Parks, YRP Housing, Planning</p>
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**B. Identify and assess existing public spaces, particularly in terms of parks and other greenspace.**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use information sources available to verify public ownership / control.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> Rec &amp; Parks, YRP Housing, Planning</p>
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**C. Incorporate landscaping into City right-of-ways and parking lots.**

**D. Sponsor and encourage ongoing plantings in available green spaces and lots**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finalize the planned transfer of Alhambra Park and implement its design</li> <li>2. Complete the implementation of the designed plans of Evesham Park</li> <li>3. Work with <i>Precision Tune</i> to implement design plans for Bellona Triangle</li> <li>4. Work with the Govans Elementary Child First program to implement their artscape project</li> <li>5. Turn the City-owned right-of-way adjacent to Evesham Park into park area.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Consider having this space designated as a dog park.</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Improve landscaping and screening on east and west sides of York Road along Northern Parkway by planting trees in the median of the 400 &amp; 500 blocks of Evesham Road and Northern Parkway.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> Rec &amp; Parks, YRP Housing, GBA Planning</p>
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**Goal II: There are opportunities and activities for youth in YRP neighborhoods.**



**A. Provide recreation facilities and playgrounds conveniently placed and operated throughout our area.**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify and assess existing facilities and playgrounds</li> <li>2. Identify optimal locations for additional facilities and playgrounds             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Walter P. Carter ES</li> <li>b. Guilford ES &amp; MS</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Add an outdoor basketball court at Winston Middle School</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> BCPSS, Rec&amp; Parks, YRP Housing, HCD (Land Mgmt), Planning</p>
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**B. Expand hours of operations at existing facilities**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner with organizations, businesses, and religious institutions to provide volunteer staffing</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> BCPSS, Rec&amp; Parks, YRP Housing</p>
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**C. Investigate ways to provide recreational opportunities to 12-18 year-olds.**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Extend hours of operation at DeWees PAL Center</li> <li>2. Identify summer job opportunities for youth</li> </ol>	<p><u>Partners to Engage</u> BCPSS, Rec&amp; Parks, YRP Housing, Police (PAL)</p>
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**D. Provide and distribute widely the information about existing summer youth programs such as the Summer Activity Extraordinaire: Summer Music and Dance Camp (SAX) on the Loyola campus and programs at the Govans Library.**

**E. Support necessary services and hours of operation for the Govans Library.**

## Accomplishments To Date

- GBA has completed the improvements of the Bellona Triangle, utilizing a Baltimore City grant, and has contracted with a landscaper for maintenance for 1 year. The southern portion of Precision Tune's landscaping was also improved with this project.
- GBA has been awarded Parks and People grants in 2004 and 2005, and anticipates applying annually.
- GBA has been planting and maintaining this planter, providing regular maintenance through GBA-CARES program.
- In 2004, GBA and the CARES (Civic and Religious Emergency Services, which is a division of Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO) began a joint venture to provide positive activities for youths as well as increase the trash and beautification efforts in our community.
- GBA has distributed GBA-CARES program brochures, sent flyers to businesses and YRP listserve (and suggested that all neighborhoods place notices in their community newsletters and listserves), included notices in the GBA Gazette, and placed notices in at least one community newsletter.

# TRANSPORTATION, STREETScape, AND GATEWAYS

The streets in the York Road Partnership Cluster serve many purposes. York Road is a gateway to the City of Baltimore from Baltimore County and serves as one of the major bus routes for the City moving people from Downtown Baltimore to Towson in Baltimore County. There are several commercial areas and residential pockets along the way. The streets are often used by both local residential and patrons of the businesses. While many of the streets within the cluster are in desperate need of repaving, it is especially important that major corridors are maintained. The following goals are based on the premise that public investment in the appearance of the York Road Partnership area will spur an equal or greater private investment of time and money.



*Above: The York Road corridor is the central gateway to the City of Baltimore. The picture above shows the MD45 streetscape project underway, this project extended into Baltimore County.*

*Left: Northern Parkway from the pedestrian bridge near Evesham Park*

## **Outcome indicators: we will know we are on our way to our outcomes and results by measuring:**

- Increase in percent population ages 16 and over using a mode of transport other than car to get to work (such as bikes, public transit, walking, etc.)
- Increase in percent population ages 16 and over using public transit (bus, lightrail, etc) to get to work
- Increase in percent population ages 16 and over using other personal vehicles to get to work other than a car, (bike, walking, etc.)

## Transportation, Streetscape and Gateways Recommendations

### Goal I: There is attractive streetscape along the York Road Commercial Corridor

#### **A. Design and implement a streetscape Master Plan for the entire Corridor that is consistent and complementary to both the GBA and Maryland 45 streetscape projects.**

1. Create a task force that represents neighborhoods, businesses and institutions and which includes local landscape professionals, to oversee the streetscape design process.
2. Coordinate with the Public Safety group to address safety issues such as speeding, pedestrian crossings, and street lighting.
3. Ensure that any new streetscape improvements include new street and park lighting that is pedestrian in scale and attractive.
4. Ensure that already installed pedestrian lighting be turned on and functioning properly.
5. Ensure adequate funding is available to make necessary roadway improvements, as well as streetscape amenities.
6. Ensure that any selected contractors for streetscape projects are aware and consult the YRP master streetscape plan.

Partners to Engage  
YRP Commercial, YRP Streetscape, YRP Public Safety, GBA, Transportation, Planning

#### **B. Increase the number, appearance and health of street trees.**

1. Conduct annual block-by-block survey to identify available tree locations as well and needs for tree maintenance.
  - a. Plant trees in available locations
  - b. Prune and remove trees as needed
  - c. Engage nearby business proprietors in providing water needs for newly planted trees (e.g., adopt-a-tree program)

Partners to Engage  
Rec& Parks (Forestry), YRP Commercial, GBA

#### **C. Engage Civic Works to help maintain key locations**

- Bellona Triangle
- Lake Walker parklet
- Memorial site at Woodbourne

Partners to Engage  
YRP Commercial, YRP Streetscape, GBA

#### **D. Work with GEDCO to develop and implement a suitable replacement for the Curran Memorial Carillon.**



*Left: Example of substantial tree canopy along Lake Avenue.*



*Right: Planter walls and benches make for an attractive streetscape and pedestrian experience along York Road.*

**Goal II: More public spaces are created and maintained throughout all the York Road neighborhoods and commercial corridor.**

**A. Increase the number, appearance, and health of “street trees”**

1. Establish a street tree planting and maintenance campaign for use by area neighborhoods.
2. Engage nearby homeowners in providing water needs for newly planted trees (e.g. Adopt- A-Tree program)
3. Conduct annual block-by-block survey to identify available tree locations as well and needs for tree maintenance.
  - a. Plant trees in available locations
  - b. Prune and remove trees as needed
  - c. Ensure that street trees along the commercial corridor are proper type and properly maintained to enhance the shopping areas and not degrade the business facade.

Partners to Engage  
 Rec& Parks (Forestry),  
 YRP Housing, YRP  
 Streetscape, GBA

**Goal III: Pedestrians are safe**

**A. Better control the flow of vehicular traffic within the Partnership area.**

1. Expedite the installation of speed limit signs where requested, especially along:
  - a. 43rd Street;
  - b. York Road;
  - c. St. George's Avenue;
  - d. Eastway;
  - e. Old York Road;
  - f. The Alameda;
  - g. In and around school zones.
2. Install flashing lights in school zones.
3. Repaint the crosswalks at and near Chinquapin Middle School and Walter P. Carter Elementary School.
4. Improve the traffic light timing at Belvedere Avenue & York Road.
5. Examine the possibility of installing turn lanes at:
  - a. southbound York Road & Belvedere Avenue;
  - b. northbound York Road & Northern Parkway.
6. Examine the possibility of installing left turn signals at Bellona Avenue and Northern Parkway.
7. Examine the possibility of eliminating restricted left turns onto eastbound Belvedere from southbound York Road.
8. Identify appropriate solutions to traffic-flow problems at:
  - a. 39th Street & Greenmount Avenue,
  - b. Coldspring Lane & York Road,
  - c. Belvedere & York roads.
  - d. Bellona Avenue & Northern Parkway
  - e. Bellona Avenue between York Road and Northern Parkway

Partners to Engage  
Transportation, YRP  
Steering, Planning,  
BCPSS, GBA



*Belvedere Square integrates parking areas and pedestrian plazas with landscaping.*

**B. Improve pedestrian access to Belvedere Square.**

1. Install appropriate lighting on and around pedestrian bridge in between Evesham Park & Belvedere Square area.
2. Improve pedestrian signal timing at Northern Parkway & York Road.
3. Clear trees and vegetation at the south side of pedestrian bridge (where the 800 block of Evesham Road meets the bridge). The walkway is very hidden and is notorious for loiterers, whereas the north side is completely open and visible. The poor visibility is a serious deterrent to using this bridge, even in the daylight.

Partners to Engage  
 Transportation, YRP Steering,  
 Planning, GBA

**C. Encourage Pedestrian Circulation and Accessibility – make the area comfortable for pedestrians.**

1. Create distinct pedestrian crosswalks, re-signal lights to allow sufficient time to cross intersections.
2. Install pooh-outs where appropriate on York Road and Greenmount Avenue.
3. Install additional crosswalks
4. Install signaled crosswalks along York Road.
  - a. Especially near schools and bus stops.
  - b. At the current crosswalk at the Senator Theatre
5. Install pedestrian signs
6. Enforce J-walking laws
7. At larger intersections consider devices such as island refuges.

Partners to Engage  
 Transportation, YRP Steering,  
 Planning, GBA

**D. Establish a standard that accommodates seniors and people with disabilities.**

**E. Calm traffic on York Road.**

**F. Install bicycle racks in commercial districts.**

**Goal III: Mass transit services and facilities are available, improved, accessible and affordable.**

**A. Identify and assess existing transit needs**

1. Identify additional locations for bus shelters.
  - a. Add a bus shelter in front of the Dollar Store at York/Woodbourne (south bound side No. 8 Bus)
2. Identify potential route changes to better serve commercial areas and neighborhoods
3. Monitor on-time performance.
4. Study the feasibility of removing the “Not in Service” buses (e.g., #36 bus) from Lake Avenue.
  - a. A high percentage of the bus traffic on Lake Avenue is not in service and use Lake Avenue only as a turn-around.

Partners to Engage  
 Transportation, YRP Steering,  
 MTA, GBA

**B. Explore private and partnership-oriented solutions**

1. Discuss Hopkins-like shuttle program with Loyola College
2. Reroute Collegetown network shuttle through York Road commercial centers
3. Explore shuttle service to the Coldspring light rail station.

Partners to Engage  
 Transportation, YRP Steering,  
 MTA, Loyola, GBA

**C. Work with CPHA and other regional advocates to maximize metropolitan mass transit opportunities.**

## Accomplishments To Date

- YRP Streetscape Committee convened a series of forums focused on each of the defined commercial nodes at which community and business members brainstormed their visions for the appearance of York Road. With the assistance of a volunteer landscape architect whose business is in the area the YRP Streetscape committee completed a master streetscape design and plan that is being used to inform City streetscape projects for York Road
- The GBA Streetscape Project was initiated 11 years ago, and was divided into Phase 1a, 1b and 2 for funding purposes: GBA Streetscape Phase 1a (blocks 5300-5400) is completed, including new roadways, curbs, sidewalks, trees, street lamps, benches, trash cans; GBA Streetscape Phase 1b (blocks 5500-5700) is expected to be implemented soon, expanded to include blocks northerly to Northern Parkway, per YRP Master Streetscape (prepared in collaboration with GBA); Streetscape Phase 2 (blocks 4300-5200 and 5800-6300)
- City Department of Transportation is beginning York Road streetscape- Tunbridge to Northern Parkway (January 2006)
- York Road/Greenmount Ave. Streetscape from Woodbourne to 33rd Street proposed in CIP for FY2008 and FY2009
- Coordinated a clean up along York Road
- Presented Good Neighbor Awards to area businesses in partnership with GBA
- is hoped to be expanded to include the southern blocks down to 39th Street, and all the rest of the corridor, per YRP Master Streetscape. MD 45 Streetscape project is a state funded project extended from the City-County line to Northern Parkway, and should be completed soon.
- GBA submitted to the City a list of dead trees to be replaced and empty tree pits to be planted.
- GBA has initiated the Adopt-A-Planter program, and businesses in the 5300 block have signed on to help with the watering of the new tree pit plantings that were installed with Parks & People grant, GBA-CARES and Loyola student government volunteers.
- GBA is spearheading the Curran Memorial Belltower renovation to become a clocktower, working with the support of GEDCO (relative to the bells being relocated to Stadium Place and local contractor coordination) and interested community members.
- A transit taskforce has been established to explore options for bus routes and stop locations; task force was integral to the MTA bus restructuring process that began in 2005
- Successfully advocated for the retiming of lights at York and Belvedere

# Public Safety

Despite having stable residents with a high level of commitment to the community, drugs, prostitution, vandalism, and gang activity have infiltrated some of the Partnership neighborhoods. The neighborhoods have been working with the Northern Police District to help quell crime, drug activity on public, as well as private properties. The following goals are premised on the basic notion that Baltimore City residents want their neighborhoods to be safer, are willing to work to make them safer.

Early on in the planning process we discussed the use of the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. The CPTED principles that were key for this area pay close attention to:

- Areas or places where illegal activity occurred
- Areas where people did not feel safe or comfortable
- Places where natural surveillance was inhibited



## Assets

- Homeowners and long-term residents
- Strong neighborhood associations
- Block captain system in some neighborhoods
- Active commercial corridor
- On-going dialogue with the Northern District Police Station

## Issues

- Traffic, speeding – especially in school areas
- Crime and drugs
  - Negative after hours activity, especially youth
  - Need greater police visibility, communication and enforcement.

Given some of the safety concerns in the area, several goals and strategies were developed as a starting point to quell some of the safety concerns.



# Public Safety Recommendations

## Outcome indicators

- Decrease number of reported Part I adult criminal offenses
- Decrease number of reported Part I adult criminal offenses classified as violent
- Decrease number of juveniles age 10-17 arrested

### A. Increase police presence in areas of concentrated criminal activity along the commercial corridor and in neighborhoods.

1. Open the Police Substation located in the Pen Lucy Community Center.
2. Increase police bike and foot patrols of the following areas:
  - a. areas of concentrated commercial activity;
  - b. areas of concentrated and pervasive criminal activity;
  - c. parks and other public spaces.
3. Promote the use of porch lights.
  - a. Distribute literature about the importance of using porch lights.
  - b. Provide reduced-cost energy efficient bulbs and sensors to neighborhoods
  - c. Where needed, request electricians to volunteer their time to install new porch light fixtures where needed.
4. Study the efficacy of installing security cameras in selected high-crime areas and where appropriate.
  - a. Consider piloting at the Pen Lucy Community Center.
5. Strongly enforce loitering and curfew laws, especially around bars, active commercial areas, and drug treatment facilities.

Partners to Engage  
Police, YRP Public Safety, HABC, GHCC, GBA

### B. Engage Residents and Business Owners in Crime Control

1. Organize block watches and community on patrol efforts in neighborhoods and commercial areas, beginning with those most endangered by criminal activity and/or those containing educational institutions.
2. Promote the use of strategies and devices to reduce opportunities for crime in commercial areas (uncluttered shop windows, adequate parking lot lighting, install and share information from security cameras).
3. Promote the use of strategies and devices to reduce opportunities for crime in residential areas (use of automobile anti-theft devices, such as “clubs”, removing valuables from sight, locking doors, windows, & garages of residences).
4. Increase lighting in areas where illegal activities are occurring.

Partners to Engage  
Police, YRP Public Safety, HABC, GHCC, OCW, Planning, NDC, GEDCO, GBA

5. Monitor and report/address locations where illegal, disruptive or intimidating behaviors occur.
6. Apply Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies in developing new parks, housing and commercial buildings.
7. Amend existing Urban Renewal Plans to require a CPTED review when making improvements or structural changes to commercial buildings.
8. Coordinate with relevant City & State agencies in providing training classes to teach property managers how to use tenant screening, inspections, design changes, and legal tools to keep apartment communities drug free
  - a. Education on evictions is especially important.
9. Inform residents about and encourage them to avail themselves of programs to learn how to safely monitor and report drug activity.
10. Publicize and mobilize volunteers to participate in Baltimore City's child mentoring program to provide the basic resources children need to lead fulfilling lives, including:
  - a. an ongoing relationship with a caring adult,
  - b. safe and structured after school activities,
  - c. a healthy start for a healthy life,
  - d. marketable skills through effective education, and
  - e. opportunities to give back to the neighborhood through community service.
11. Develop public safety partnerships with area faith-based institutions, housing authority, MTA, schools.
12. Develop partnerships with private organizations and businesses that have internal security operations (Belvedere Square, Huber Memorial, Dunkin Donuts, Loyola College, Notre Dame College, etc.)
13. Work with area schools, neighborhoods and merchants in developing safe and drug-free youth centers.
14. Collaborate with businesses to create drug-free workplaces and responsible beverage service programs to reduce drunk driving and other incidents.
  - a. In particular, work with businesses to decrease the incidences of minors being served alcohol.
16. Evaluate and ensure that neighborhood open spaces are defensible spaces.

### C. Ensure safety in and around Govans Manor Senior Apartments

1. Open substation Police Substation open in Govans Manor

Partners to Engage  
Police, YRP Public Safety,  
HABC, GBA

### D. Employ safe neighborhood design on the commercial corridor

1. Redesign bus stops to discourage loitering
  - a. Consider moving bus stops away from storefronts where possible;
  - b. Encourage the use of materials and design to keep riders off of residential properties (e.g., landscaping, stone walls, etc.)
3. Make the area brighter with pedestrian and landscape lighting.
4. Ensure that the already installed pedestrian lighting is functioning.
5. Require that all buildings have night lighting that illuminates the address and does not create dark spots or shadows.
6. Turn vacant buildings into temporary art installations.
7. Buildings that are boarded can be painted or used as the backdrops for collages or other types of artwork. Display windows can show off the latest art projects of the local elementary school. Police, YRP Public Safety, HAB

Partners to Engage  
Police, YRP Public  
Safety, GBA

## Accomplishments To Date

- GBA requested that businesses be included in the current block watch program. Northern District approved the request, and GBA is currently working to get all the businesses to participate in the program.
- Helped promote safety and tenet activity at Govans Manor
- Began a court watch program
- Baltimore Police is beginning to work with the Northern District to do a strategic safety plan

# Public Services and Infrastructure

Sanitation is primary to creating attractive well used spaces. Vacant and abandoned buildings are often magnets for trash and breeding grounds for rats and other vermin. The neighborhoods have been active trying to mitigate these problems with neighborhood clean-ups, implementation of rat abatement programs and making sure that proper trash receptacles are provided in the commercial areas and near bus stops. In support of the goal to have safer cleaner communities and commercial spaces, the residents of the York Road Partnership want to make sure that the public facilities and other aspects of the public realm within the cluster are adequate and well maintained. In order to do this some of the facilities may need to be upgraded and modernized. In some cases, the facilities may need to be studied to determine how to make safer cleaner spaces and better functioning facilities.

## Recommendations

**Outcome indicators: we will know we are on our way to our outcomes and results by measuring:**

- Decrease number of reported incidents of dirty streets and alleys
- Decrease in number of reported incidents of illegal dumping
- Decrease in number of reported incidents of dirty streets and alleys
- Decrease in number of reported incidents of clogged storm drains
- Decrease in number of reported incidents of rats

### Goal I: Vacant lots, streets and alleys are free of trash and rats.

<b>A. Provide quick removal of dumped trash to avoid “broken windows” syndrome</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use block watch system or identify residents in an area responsible for reporting incidents.</li> <li>2. Provide accurate, up-to-date information on how/who to contact within the City government.</li> <li>3. Establish community / DPW working groups to plan, monitor and evaluate progress</li> </ol>	<u>Partners to Engage</u> DPW Sanitation, YRP Steering
<b>B. Cut tall grasses on vacant lots.</b>	
<b>C. Educate residents on rat abatement and deterring dumping</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publicize \$100 reward for reporting dumping.</li> <li>2. Distribute free BELIEVE trash cans in problem areas.</li> </ol>	<u>Partners to Engage</u> DPW Sanitation, YRP Steering, YRP Housing
<b>D. Use block watch system to watch for and report dumping</b>	

**Goal II: Public services and infrastructure are in place to support community and commercial revitalization efforts.****A. Ensure that the streets, sidewalks, alleys and parking lots are kept clean and in good repair**

1. Increase the number of trash receptacles along the Corridor.
2. Survey needs and request replacement receptacles annually.
3. Design and implement a campaign to encourage use of trash receptacles.
  - a. Design and install signs for receptacles
4. Monitor the daily collection of the trash along the Corridor.
5. Monitor the use of trash receptacles by area storefront businesses. Enforce proper compliance.
6. Increase the use and effectiveness of “hokies” and machines for street cleaning in the commercial districts.
7. Encourage fast food and other carryout food establishments to maintain the area around their property.
8. Continue progressive sidewalk repair along York Road and target comprehensive repairs throughout the neighborhood.

Partners to Engage  
DPW Sanitation, YRP  
Steering, GBA

**B. Ensure that critical public utilities are well maintained and available.**

1. Request that the City perform a review of and report on the safety and adequacy of public utilities in the York Road Partnership area, including:
2. Address / resolve problems that are identified.
3. Install pedestrian lighting in areas with extensive tree coverage.

Partners to Engage  
YRP Steering, DPW Water &  
Wastewater, Transportation,  
Comcast, BGE, Verizon

**Accomplishments To Date**

- GBA funds and supervises the GBA-CARES youths to clean sidewalks on a weekly basis.

# Community Building

One of the desires of the neighborhoods, businesses and institutions of the York Road area is to implement activities which build community spirit and promote improving and uplifting the quality of life of the people who live there, as well as the patrons of the businesses and those that come to enjoy the many activities and entertainment venues of the area.

## Community Building Recommendations

### Goal I: There is a sense of community ownership in the Corridor’s appearance

#### **A. Implement campaigns to showcase positive contribution and changes in the area, involve volunteers, and to motivate members of the YRP community**

1. Encourage the Messenger to provide coverage of positive changes in the area.
2. Provide information on positive changes to the neighborhood association presidents and organizational leaders and encourage them to communicate information within their organization.
3. Use the YRP listserve and website to showcase neighborhood activities and positive changes within the area.

Partners to Engage  
YRP Streetscape, YRP steering, GBA

#### **B. Sponsor annual “Good Neighbor” awards to recognize positive contributions to the area’s appearance**

1. Advertise these awards to non-winners as part of a motivational campaign

Partners to Engage  
YRP Streetscape, YRP steering, GBA

#### **C. Recruit area community groups and Loyola student volunteers to participate in the fireplug painting campaign and other activities which enhance the appearance of the Corridor.**

#### **D. Encourage the display of seasonal decorations in the commercial nodes**

1. Obtain funding and implement displays in the commercial nodes.

Partners to Engage  
YRP Streetscape, GBA

#### **E. Sponsor and encourage organizations to sponsor community-building events**

1. Plan community events with stakeholders
2. Increase participation in National Night Out
3. Expand on concerts in Evesham Park and encourage greater community and local business participation.
4. Encourage use of the Govans Library
5. Encourage participation in school festivals.

Partners to Engage  
YRP Steering, GBA

## **Goal II: All community spaces are clean, safe, and inviting**

- A. Design and implement campaigns to encourage and facilitate clean-up events by individual neighborhoods and cooperative event between adjacent neighborhoods**
- B. Engage community and governmental resources to maintain all common lots, streets, alleys, and parks.**

1. Develop closer relationships with area schools and organizations that are looking for community

Partners to Engage  
YRP Steering, BCPSS

### **Accomplishments To Date**

- The YRP-streetscape committee has a campaign to work with interested parties to paint fire hydrants throughout the area.
- GBA posts GBA Gazette on YRP website.
- YRP offers membership organizations and various groups the opportunity to present profiles at monthly meetings; this often is used as an incubator for idea sharing for future activities
- In 2005, GBA is partnered with school(s) to provide greens displays and also is participating in the Baltimore Main Street 'Miracles on Main Street' program.
- GBA has established a separate Events Committee that is open to non-GBA members to join and recommend various events and activities that the GBA would sponsor.



*Example of painted fire hydrants in the York Road area*



*Belvedere Square hosted a York Road Partnership night which featured live music. Above are some of the concert attendees.*

# Implementation

This plan provides a framework for the subsequent revitalization and enhancement of the York Road Partnership area. The recommendations are intended to be both short and mid-range. Undoubtedly, City agencies such as the Department of Planning, Baltimore Housing, Baltimore City Police Department, Baltimore Development Corporation, the Department of Transportation, and the Department of Recreation and Parks will be key entities in carrying out projects that will have tremendous impact on the this plan area. As shown in the plan, many efforts have already begun. The primary mechanisms by which projects happen are through neighborhood and City partnerships. The main implementation mechanisms are listed below.

■ Comprehensive Plan- Currently, the Department of Planning is working to develop a comprehensive plan for the City of Baltimore, that will focus on such things as housing, recreation, education and economic development. This plan will also provide the framework for the Comprehensive Rezoning initiative for the City.

■ Capital Improvements Program (CIP)  
The City Charter requires the Planning Commission to annually prepare a six-year recommended Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The City uses this to guide the City in making necessary physical improvements. Three of the several CIP evaluation criteria are:

- Project is necessary to correct a dangerous and/or blighting condition
- Project is necessary to protect public health and safety
- Project is necessary to implement a priority housing or economic development project

Projects the CIP typically include, but are not limited to funding for street resurfacings, streetscape projects, acquisition dollars, recreation facility upgrades such as parks and playgrounds, and city service infrastructure improvements for water and waste water.

■ Zoning- The zoning code for the City of Baltimore makes provision for and regulates use within the City limits. It also makes provisions for bulk requirements such as height, setbacks, FAR, and lot coverage. The zoning code also makes provisions for certain performance standards and for overlay districts such as Planned Unit Developments.

■ Partnerships- There are many opportunities for the non-profit and foundation community to partner to implement projects within the area. Theses partners may be able to provide technical assistance as well as funding mechanisms through grant opportunities to fund small projects that would have a large impact. Types of projects may include, but are not limited to design assistance, home ownership counseling, and recreational programming.