

## **Economic Development and Revitalization**

### **Current Economic Conditions**

Glen Burnie is an unincorporated community that is considered to be a “first ring” suburb of Baltimore. The area experienced its primary growth in the 1940's through the 1960's, and continued to experience a healthy growth rate through the 1970's. Since 1980, the area has grown much more slowly both in terms of population and new development. The community is considered to be a stable one and is not considered to be a community in decline or in distress. However, there is a general attitude among local residents that portions of the area, primarily along its commercial and business corridors, are in need of revitalization.

Educational attainment levels, income levels, and workforce characteristics are often used as indicators of the economic health of an area. Data compiled from the 2000 Census for the Glen Burnie Census Designated Place (CDP) indicate that educational attainment is somewhat lower in the Glen Burnie CDP than in Anne Arundel County as a whole. [The Glen Burnie CDP covers the majority of, but not the entire, Small Planning Area]. In the Glen Burnie CDP, 75.6 percent of the population age 25 and older are high school graduates or higher, and 10.7 percent hold bachelor's degrees or higher. In the County, 86.4 percent of the population age 25 and older are high school graduates or higher while 30.6 percent hold bachelor's degrees or higher.

Educational attainment levels are generally found to correlate with income levels and workforce characteristics. Individuals with higher education levels tend to have higher incomes and work in management and professional occupations. As with education levels, income levels in the Glen Burnie CDP are lower than those for the County as a whole. The median household income from the 2000 Census is \$45,281 for the Glen Burnie CDP and \$61,768 for the entire County. Comparatively, the median household income is \$50,572 in the Baltimore Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA) and \$62,216 in the Washington D.C. PMSA.

Data on employment status indicate that the unemployment rate in Glen Burnie in the year 2000 was at a fairly low level of 3.9%, although this may have increased due to the nationwide economic decline of the past two years. Workforce occupations are distributed differently in the Glen Burnie CDP versus the County as a whole. In the County, 40.5 percent of the employed civilian population work in management, professional or related occupations, which are generally the higher income jobs. In the Glen Burnie CDP, 24.1 percent of the employed civilian population work in management, professional or related occupations, while the largest percentage of the employed population works in sales and office occupations (30.7%).

### **Real Estate Conditions**

The office market in the Glen Burnie Small Area is primarily local-serving. Many office

uses are medical-related or are local professionals such as insurance agents, lawyers, and

accountants. A recent inventory by the North County Chamber of Commerce indicated that the majority of businesses in the area are considered small businesses with fewer than 15 employees.

The Baymeadow Industrial Park is the largest business park in the area. A few smaller business parks are also located in the area including the Curtis Business Center on Ordnance Road, the Glen Burnie Business Center on Eighth Avenue, and the Cloverleaf Business Park off of Veterans Highway. The Cromwell Business Park is located just outside of the Planning Area off of Aviation Boulevard.

The local office market is generally perceived to be healthy. Commercial brokers classify most of the office space in Glen Burnie as “B” or “C” space. There is a substantial amount of Class A space nearby in the vicinity of the BWI Airport. For the most part the Glen Burnie office product does not compete with the BWI office space, as the latter houses users that are primarily regional or national. Data indicate that office market rates have not changed significantly in the last several years. Currently market rates range between \$8 and \$19 dollars per square foot, with \$11 to \$14 being typical. Comparatively, rates in the BWI market typically exceed \$20 per square foot. There also appears to have been a recent increase in vacancies in the local Glen Burnie market.

The North Arundel Hospital is a key economic anchor for Glen Burnie. The facility treated over 77,000 patients in the 2002 fiscal year, and most of the doctors working at the facility maintain their offices in Glen Burnie within a few blocks of the hospital campus. In addition to these independent offices, the hospital itself employs 2,200 persons including many local residents, and has expanded five times since opening in 1965. The campus is currently undergoing another expansion which is the addition of the Tate Cancer Center, an affiliate of the University of Maryland’s Greenebaum Center. This new facility promises to generate new jobs and other business activity for Glen Burnie.

The retail market in Glen Burnie is located in both large and small shopping centers and in scattered individual establishments, including some in homes converted for these uses. The market for most of the retailers in this area is primarily local. Some of the larger shopping centers on Ritchie Highway and the “Chrome City” area of auto dealers may have more regional customer bases, but most of the remaining retail uses primarily serve the local residents and local employees. Most of the chain retailers in Glen Burnie are mid-level (middle income targeted) national chains. The higher end chains typically do not locate in the Glen Burnie area. A recent exception to this is a decision by Outback to locate a restaurant at the Harundale Plaza.

According to real estate brokers, retail rental rates in the area range from \$13 to \$15 per square foot typically, although spaces in some of the older retail centers may lease for less, and space in some of the newer centers may rent as high as \$18 to \$20 per square foot. Brokers also indicate that these rates have not changed significantly over the past several years.

The residential market in Glen Burnie is relatively healthy and stable. A large majority of residential neighborhoods are comprised of single-family detached housing units. In the older communities such as those surrounding the Town Center, the typical home is less than 2,000 square feet in size and has two or three bedrooms. Residential brokers in the central Glen Burnie area indicated that selling prices in 2002 ranged from approximately \$150,000 to \$170,000. Home sales prices are estimated to have increased at a moderate rate of five to ten percent in the past couple of years. Though this level is not extraordinary given the booming regional real estate market of 2001-2002, it is an indicator of strength and stability in the area.

The market for quality apartments also appears to be quite strong. The Glen Burnie Town Apartments, a 54-unit development located in the Town Center, have been nearly fully occupied since opening in July 2000. This apartment development rents one- and two-bedroom apartments at rates ranging from \$765 to \$1025 and has exceeded occupancy expectations.

The strength of these two distinctive parts of the housing market, single-family detached and apartments, also bodes well for condominium and townhome products. Glen Burnie is a community with many long-term homeowners. As these homeowners age, the attractiveness of lower maintenance options, such as townhomes or condominiums, will likely follow. Although there is a limited amount of this type of development in Glen Burnie, all indications are that there is a market here. There are currently at least three age-restricted condominium developments in the planning stages within the Glen Burnie Planning Area.

In addition to the relevance of these residential trends on the residential real estate market, they are generally good trends for the market at large. Although there is no significant growth in population or households that would trigger additional demand for retail development, the trends are more positive than for many older suburbs in the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, such as Dundalk and portions of Prince George's County, that are losing population and showing income declines relative to the increasing cost of living.

### **Economic and Market Issues**

The following economic and market issues and concerns were identified during the planning process:

- Overall, Glen Burnie has more retail supply than there is demand, particularly with the newer retail development nearby such as Arundel Mills,
- Office and retail vacancy rates are higher than desirable in some locations, such as in some of the older office buildings near the Town Center and in Marley Station Mall,
- Some of the older retail and office establishments need to be updated or revitalized, and their appearance may discourage potential users or customers from shopping in the area,

- Due in part to demographic and economic conditions in the area, it is difficult to attract “upscale” businesses and restaurants to the area and difficult to draw customers from outside the immediate area; local residents have to travel to the Annapolis Mall or elsewhere to shop at higher end stores,
- The Community College and government offices do not patronize local businesses as much as was anticipated, and businesses do not proactively seek college clientele,
- There is too much “big box” retail development and too many auto-related uses concentrated along Ritchie Highway; there is a need for more service-oriented and high-technology businesses to locate in the area, and this would help to provide a “cleaner” look to the area,
- Many of the newer high-technology businesses and office parks are locating west of the BWI Airport where there is still vacant land to be developed. It is difficult for Glen Burnie to attract these businesses since location in Glen Burnie often requires renovation of an older office building or redevelopment of a site.

Notwithstanding the concerns discussed above, the Glen Burnie area has some assets and opportunities that can serve the local economy well:

- The office and retail markets are primarily local-serving but are generally perceived to be healthy in this niche,
- There is evidence of demand for small office users (up to 2,000 square feet) in the area, particularly for flex space,
- New residential uses are absorbed quickly in the area in general, and there is evidence of particularly strong demand for new residential uses in the Town Center area, including higher-end rentals and condominiums,
- North Arundel Hospital has many positive economic impacts in Glen Burnie, and the recent merger with the University of Maryland system will strengthen the local hospital and enhance its reputation,
- Glen Burnie’s location in the regional marketplace is excellent, given its good highway access, proximity to BWI Airport, and proximity to both Baltimore and Annapolis,
- Although the median household income of Glen Burnie is lower than the County as a whole, from an investor’s perspective, it is “middle income” and is an indicator of disposable income that could support expansion of goods and services in the community.

## **Current Economic Development Programs and Initiatives**

Over the past thirty years, much of the planning efforts towards economic development and revitalization in the Glen Burnie area have been focused on urban renewal projects in the Town Center. Legislation was passed in 1976 establishing the Glen Burnie Town Center as an Urban Renewal Area. An Urban Renewal Plan was adopted in 1980 and a citizen advisory committee was established to review redevelopment proposals and ensure their implementation in accordance with the plan. The plan was revised in 1986 and again in 1993. The objectives of the Urban Renewal Plan included the elimination of structural deterioration and blight influences and the development of an attractive business area with an integrated complex of retail, office, residential and public activity. Redevelopment efforts throughout the 1980's and 1990's have significantly improved the appearance of the Town Center area and have encouraged a mix of uses.

In 2001, the County undertook a study to update the *Glen Burnie Urban Renewal Plan* and to establish boundaries for a Town Center Enhancement Area (TCEA) around the Town Center. The study would make recommendations and establish guidelines for future development and revitalization within the designated area. Map 3 depicts the boundaries of the study area. The results of this effort are presented in the *Glen Burnie Town Center Enhancement Area Plan*, completed in 2003. The TCEA concept plan, design guidelines, and implementation recommendations are presented herein in a subsequent chapter and will be formally adopted as part of the *Glen Burnie Small Area Plan*.

The County has also recently taken advantage of some State programs geared toward economic development and revitalization. The State of Maryland's Smart Growth Designated Neighborhood Program is designed to stimulate re-investment in established older neighborhoods around the State. The program targets mixed-use areas in need of social or physical revitalization, which are selected by the local jurisdiction and approved by the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Business owners, property owners, and government-sponsored projects in Designated Neighborhoods may be eligible to receive State funding from a variety of programs.

The Glen Burnie Town Center was granted status as a Smart Growth Designated Neighborhood in 1997. Together with Brooklyn Park, Odenton Town Center, and Deale, it is one of four Designated Neighborhoods in Anne Arundel County. The State provided a \$413,000 grant to the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation to be used for the reconstruction of the Central Plaza in the Town Center, and in addition one of the Town Center property owners received a \$228,000 loan to renovate an existing shopping center.

State funding was also received for planning and conceptual design of the Glen Burnie Gateways Project, which focuses on streetscape improvements along Crain Highway between 8<sup>th</sup>

Map 3

Avenue and Aquahart Road, and along B&A Boulevard between Dorsey Road and MD 10. The planning study was completed in 2002 and recommends improvements to sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, handicapped ramps, bikeways, curbs and gutters, landscaping, additional on-street parking, and traffic control. Additional State funding has not been allocated in the current Consolidated Transportation Program for final engineering and design of this project. The County hopes to find additional funding sources to complete the Gateways Project, since improvements such as these will help to stimulate additional economic revitalization in the Town Center.

In an effort to further facilitate revitalization in some of the County's older commercial corridors, in 2002 the County adopted legislation creating sixteen Revitalization Districts throughout the County and establishing a community revitalization program which allows taxpayers who revitalize commercially or industrially zoned properties to receive a property tax credit for up to five years equal to the incremental increase in their real property tax assessment. Seven Revitalization Districts lie entirely or partly within the Glen Burnie Small Planning Area and are shown on Map 4. A subsequent legislative bill was adopted which established new conditional uses, including commercial uses and residential dwelling units and apartments, to be allowed on properties in Revitalization Districts that are zoned for general commercial or highway commercial uses (C3 or C4 zones) and that have principal buildings that are vacant or being leased temporarily. It is hoped that this new legislation will help to reduce the number of vacant commercial facilities in these Districts and promote reuse or redevelopment of these properties.

The Maryland Department of Transportation and the Maryland Port Authority are conducting a Port Land Use Development Study as part of an effort to promote marine-based operations in the Baltimore Harbor. The study will be used to prepare a Master Plan for a designated Port Land Use Development Zone surrounding the Port of Baltimore. The land use study involved identifying vacant or underutilized properties which could be targeted for location of port-related land uses such as warehousing and distribution terminals. In Anne Arundel County, some properties along East Ordnance Road and Stahl Point Road in Glen Burnie as well as some properties in the Marley Neck area have been identified for inclusion in the Port Land Use Development Zone.

Map 4

## **Goals and Recommendations**

***Goal: Strengthen the local economic base by supporting a diversity of businesses and attracting businesses that generate jobs.***

### ***Recommendations***

1. Devise strategies to take advantage of the BWI Airport expansion to spur new economic growth in Glen Burnie. Develop promotional opportunities to attract hotels, conference centers, and other service-oriented businesses that can benefit from the close proximity to the BWI Airport.
2. Develop a program with Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation to promote the business incubator concept, in which multiple businesses share common facilities, thereby allowing them to share in the cost of services, training, support systems, insurance, etc. This can be an attractive option for many small businesses and could help to fill some of the vacant office and retail spaces in the area.
3. Develop strategies to take advantage of the regional tourism industry using Glen Burnie's prime location between Baltimore and Annapolis to build on the tourist markets in Baltimore and Annapolis. Work with representatives from the Conference and Visitors Bureau and the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation to explore strategies.

***Goal: Improve business development services to support the growth of new small businesses.***

### ***Recommendation***

1. Establish a Small and Minority-Owned Business service center in Glen Burnie to provide a local presence to support and assist small business and minority business owners. The center could be managed by the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation with assistance from the North County Chamber of Commerce.
2. Work with Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation to provide assistance and guidance to the North County Chamber of Commerce to help the Chamber improve and increase the services it provides to its members.

***Goal: Strengthen the local economy through investment in the workforce.***

### ***Recommendation***

1. Establish a local center for operation of the County's Workforce Investment Corporation program. The program provides employment counseling, computer and other types of

training, and other services for unemployed residents. Advertise and promote the program more widely at area high schools so that graduates can take advantage of its services.

***Goal: Eliminate vacant and deteriorated buildings and under-utilized commercial and industrial properties through redevelopment and revitalization.***

***Recommendations***

1. Develop and promote the use of new financial incentives to encourage redevelopment and reuse of vacant and underutilized buildings and sites, particularly in the Town Center area and along the Ritchie Highway corridor.
2. Develop a work program utilizing the County's Office of Long Range Planning and the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation that focuses on attracting redevelopment projects and on marketing the redevelopment concepts in the County's comprehensive plans.
3. Devise strategies for developing public/private partnerships to implement redevelopment plans.
4. Identify key opportunity sites for redevelopment and target strategies and resources toward these areas. Opportunity sites in the Glen Burnie area include:
  - the site of the old Levitz store on Ritchie Highway in the Morris Hill community,
  - the site of the old Hechingers store on Ritchie Highway at West Ordnance Road,
  - industrial and commercial properties adjacent to the Cromwell Light Rail Station,
  - the commercial area at Jumpers Hole Road and Ritchie Highway (old Ames building),
  - the site of the Beltway Crossing Shopping Center on Ritchie Highway at the Baltimore Beltway,
  - County property at B&A Boulevard near Eighth Avenue (old Sanitation Commission site). This site is currently being planned for location of County facilities. Should the County dispose of the property in the future, it should be targeted as a priority redevelopment site and would potentially be a good location for mixed use development including residential uses, which would complement the Town Center Enhancement Plan.
5. Take initiative in pursuing acquisition and/or promoting redevelopment of the U.S. Army Depot property on East Ordnance Road if the federal government decides to dispose of all or portions of the property. This site includes waterfront property and has good highway access, and would provide an excellent opportunity for mixed use development.

***Goal: Support marine-based activities in the Port Land Use Development Zone.***

***Recommendation***

Promote the location of clean marine-based industries, such as warehouse and distribution terminals, on properties that are within the designated Port Land Use Development Zone.