



Upper Shore's
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
SUMMARY

Planning Organization

The mission of the Upper Shore Regional Council (USRC), [the Planning Organization, as defined in 13 C.F.R. § 303.2] is to foster regional planning and development for Cecil, Kent, and Queen Anne's Counties; and, to afford federal, state, county and local governments a regional forum to identify issues and opportunities to provide leadership in planning and implementing programs to improve the region's quality of life.

Keeping close to its mission, the USRC formed a Standing Committee comprised of Upper Shore regional strategic partners and stakeholders including Maryland Department of Commerce, county officials, USRC Executive Board, county Economic Development staff, and Chamber of Commerce staff to address regionally identified priorities.

As a result, the Committee identified pathways to these opportunities which are throughout this Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to help guide development over the next few years.

**Strategy Committee –
9/24/15 Retreat Participants**

- Robert Buckey, Chairman
- Dr. Alan McCarthy
- Hon. Boyd Rutherford, Lieutenant Governor, Maryland
- Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio
- Doris Sampson Mason, Exec. Director
- Steve Hershey
- Barbara Smith
- Bruce England
- Dan McDermott
- Dan Schneckenburger
- Denise Lovelady
- Jack Wilson
- Jamie Williams
- Jayson Knott
- Jean Fabi
- Joyce Bowsbey
- Kim Roland
- Linda Friday
- Linda Prochaska
- Lisa Webb
- Luis Machado
- Mary Ann Skilling
- Amanda Hickman
- Mary Way Bolt
- Michael Clark
- Michael Dugan
- Scott Mesneak
- Shelley Herman
- Stewart Bruce
- Ummu Bradley Thomas
- William Short
- Tony DiGiacomo
- Joanne Richart-Young
- Cynthia Cantor
- Steve Arentz
- Jim Beauchamp
- Brandon Butler
- Jamie Williams
- Scott Boone
- Amy Moredock
- Al Wein
- Chris Moyer
- Megan DelGuadio

Vision

The Upper Eastern Shore Region’s vision is: (1) to create high-skill, higher-wage jobs within innovative clusters as a means to diversify the regional economy and improve the economic conditions;(2) to invest in infrastructure such as broadband systems that will strengthen and diversify the regional economy; (3) to develop and invest in small business and agribusiness expansion and improve the economic conditions of the region and to maintain the unique qualities of life in the Upper Shore Region of Maryland through the preservation of resources and a balanced approach to economic development; and (4) to develop a cost-effective regional solution to local problem of youth engagement and an aging out population and/or to leverage the resources available through the workforce development and university/community college systems to address the growing needs of the youth community and regional workforce.

Goals

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|---------|--|
| Goal 1: | Workforce |
| Goal 2: | Transportation |
| Goal 3: | Infrastructure |
| Goal 4: | Business Development &
Industrial Expansion |
| Goal 5: | Aging Out/Youth Retention |

CONDENSED SWOT

Strengths

- Farmland
- Marinas
- Commitment to Excellence
- Geographic Location
- Connected Education
- Quality of Life
- Influx of Retirees
- High Quality Service Industry

Weaknesses

- Lack of Job Opportunities
- Lack of Economic Diversity
- Lack of High Speed Internet
- Fewer Tax Resources
- Weather
- Low Educational Attainment
- Lack of Public Transportation

Opportunities

- Existing Undeveloped Lots
- Close Communication with Local and County Government
- Changes in Surrounding Areas
- Access to Skill Development

Threats

- Disconnect between Education and Qualified Workforce
- Demand for Diversified Workforce
- Aging Workforce
- High Unemployment
- High Drop-out Rate
- Small Business Decline
- Out- Commute
- Drug Epidemic

CEDS Plan of Action

Promoting Economic Development and Opportunity

Plan
Build Economic Clusters Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Food Science
Build Economic Clusters Health Care and Education
Build Economic Clusters-Small-Scale Manufacturing
Build

Fostering Effective Transportation Access

Plan
Support the improvement of public transportation options
Support regional rail effort to expand MARC service
Support the expansion of frequency of existing bus routes and increase the volume and expanse of bus routes
Partner with State Highway Administration to ensure the maintenance and upgrade of state roads
Support the Department of Public works to ensure that that regional roads and bridges are safe and support the demands of traffic flow

Enhancing and Protecting the Environment

Plan
Support restoration of Chestertown Marina
Support initiatives to ensure adequate capacity collection, and management of wastewater
Support initiatives to support Conowingo Dam/Susquehanna Project
Support protection of clean water in streams, rivers, and the Chesapeake Bay
Support programs to assure the protection of forested and other sensitive areas
Support implementation improvements in infrastructure, consistent with the area comprehensive plans

***Proposed Priority Projects**

- ❖ Cecil Small Business Incubator
- ❖ Regional Infrastructure Improvements
- ❖ Cecil Career Training Center
- ❖ Regional Broadband Deployment/Expansion (Kent and Queen Anne’s Counties)
- ❖ Multi-County Data Center
- ❖ Chestertown Business Campus
- ❖ Revitalization of Chestertown Marina
- ❖ MAPS Chestertown Waterfront Project Interpretive Center
- ❖ Kent/QA Regional Incubator Project
- ❖ Infrastructure Improvements for the Kent Narrows Redevelopment Projects
- ❖ Cecil and Queen Anne’s County Workforce Initiatives

*(Subject to Modifications)

Maximizing Effective Dev. and Use of Workforce

Plan
Support linkages between the K-12 Public Education system, the region's institutions, and county businesses to enhance college and career readiness
Support the drive for more four-year and graduate programs in the regional institutions of higher education
Support business outreach to all educational institutions, including the growth of after school job programs, apprenticeships, and internships
Enhance vocational training to support employers' needs

Promoting the Use of Technology

Plan
Support the expansion of regional broadband
Support the creation of regional data center
Support efforts to expand residential internet access

Balancing Resources

Plan
Support smart growth of business parks
Support creation of business incubators
Support protection of ag-lands
Support water-sewer infrastructure investments
Support the creation of new businesses and the expansion of existing
Target the surrounding areas county's business economic development promotion activities

Obtaining and Utilizing Resources

Plan
Release funding
Review projects
Evaluate projects
Audit projects
Assess future project needs
Request additional funding
Collaborate with partners
Expand Public Private Partnerships

CEDS 2017 Drafting/ Submittal Schedule

Winter 2017	Draft CEDS
Spring 2017	Hearing for Public Comment on CEDS
Spring 2017	Final Approval of CEDS
Spring 2017	Adoption of CEDS by region
Spring 2017	Receive Resolution from Upper Shore Region Counties and bordering counties
Spring 2017	Receive Letters of Support from Counties and Partners
Late Spring 2017	Submit CEDS plan to EDA and Apply for EDA funding