

Baltimore Highlands Community Plan

January 2023



SOUTHEAST
community development corporation

**the
Neighborhood
DesignCenter**

Executive Summary

The Baltimore Highlands Community Plan is a new guiding document for the Southeast Community Development Corporation, the Highlandtown Community Association, neighborhood residents, and other community partners. The plan was supported by a grant from the Enterprise Community Foundation and was co-created by the Neighborhood Design Center between fall 2020 and winter 2021 in partnership with Southeast CDC staff, residents, and community partners. This document describes the overall planning process, the history and existing conditions of the community, feedback from residents, and the strategies and actions recommended to meet community goals.

Staff from the Neighborhood Design Center and Southeast Community Development Corporation engaged residents and community members in the a year-long planning process to learn about what drew them to the neighborhood, any challenges they face in the community, and hopes they have for the area's development. Activities included virtual stakeholder and community meetings, surveys administered online and by phone, events planned with schools and after-school programs, sustained email communications, door-to-door canvassing, pop-up engagement at community gatherings, and presentations at community association meetings. The COVID-19 pandemic made some outreach methods more difficult, but door-to-door canvassing and phone surveys provided safe opportunities to engage.

Baltimore Highlands is a small neighborhood north of Highlandtown, which was annexed into Baltimore City in 1918. Key assets for the neighborhood include the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center and Conkling Street Garden as well as the neighborhood's inclusion in the Highlandtown Arts District and proximity to Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center. Today, Baltimore Highlands is growing and stands out as a majority Latino neighborhood in a city where Latinos are less than five percent of the overall population. Unfortunately, sanitation and safety issues in commercial areas, rising housing costs, and overcrowding in nearby Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School #237 are all significant challenges that negatively affect current residents.

The shared vision for Baltimore Highlands resulting from this planning process is organized around three goals:

- 1.** Make Baltimore Highlands a more friendly, playful, and beautiful neighborhood;
- 2.** Make Baltimore Highlands a safer place for residents and visitors of all ages;
- 3.** Keep Baltimore Highlands affordable for renters and create new opportunities for homeownership.

To meet these goals, this document presents strategies and actions that can be completed by dedicated neighborhood partners within immediate and long-term time frames. While this remains a living document, subject to updates and input from stakeholders not available during the original planning process, the goals listed here reflect an agreed-upon vision for the future that will guide upcoming efforts.

Contents

Executive Summary

About the Baltimore Highlands Community Plan

Acknowledgements	pg 8
Introduction	pg 9
Planning Process	pg 12

About Baltimore Highlands

History	pg 15
Demographics	pg 20
Existing Conditions	pg 24

Goals for Baltimore Highlands

Overview	pg 44
Goal 1: Make Baltimore Highlands a more friendly, playful, and beautiful neighborhood	pg 45
Goal 2: Make Baltimore Highlands a safer place for neighbors and visitors of all ages	pg 56
Goal 3: Keep Baltimore Highlands affordable for renters and create new opportunities for homeownership	pg 64

Appendices

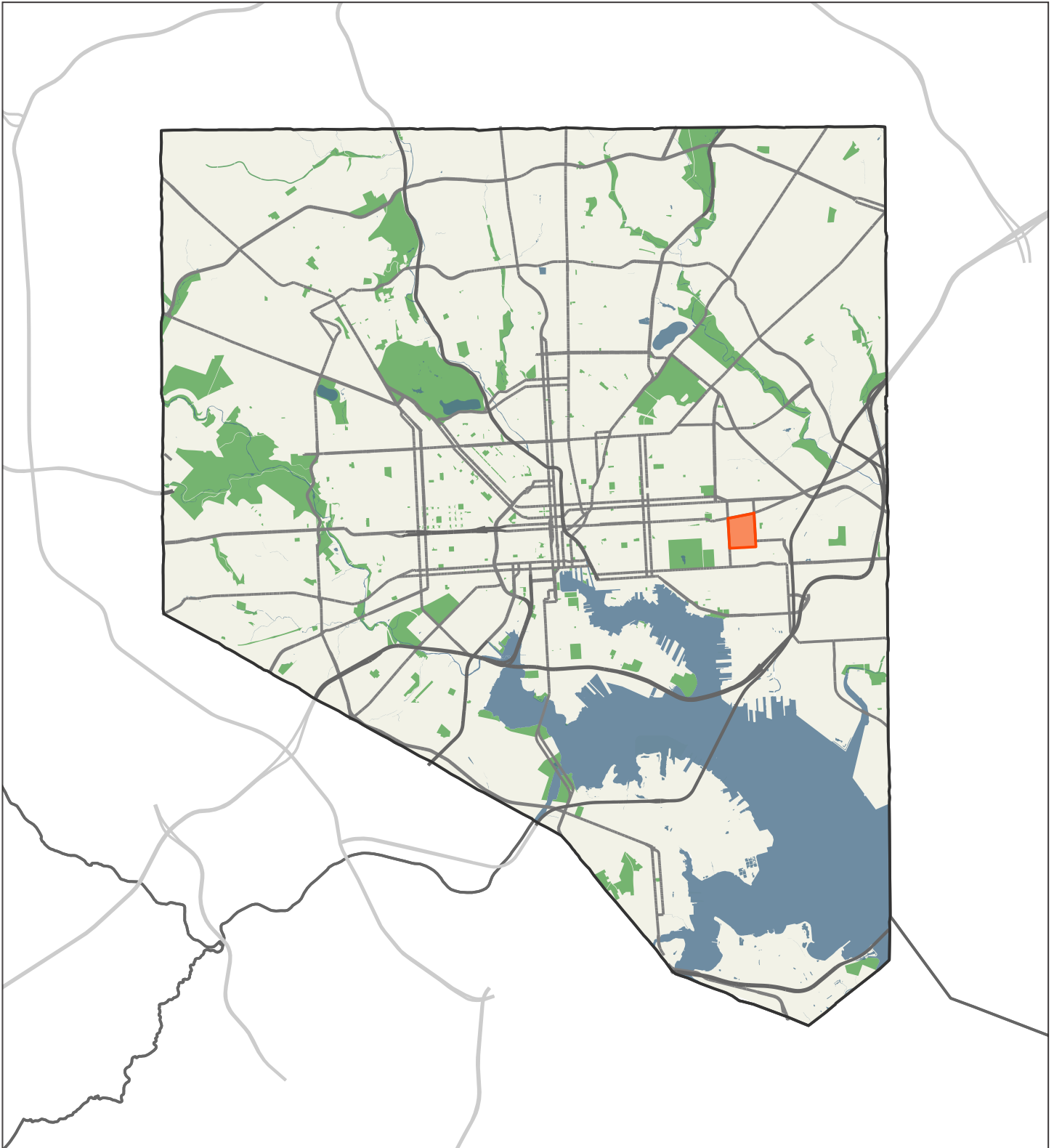
Partners Glossary	pg 74
Demographic Tables	pg 76
Community Plan Development Activities List	pg 78

Plots

Plot 1. Renter and owner occupied units as a share of total occupied units	pg 20
Plot 2. Black, white, and Latino residents as share of total population	pg 20
Plot 3. Share of population by birthplace and citizenship status	pg 21
Plot 4. Share of households by commute type	pg 22
Plot 5. Share of households in Baltimore Highlands by income category	pg 22
Plot 6. Enrollment at Baltimore Highlands area schools, 2009 to 2019	pg 25
Plot 7. Violent crime in Baltimore Highlands since 2016	pg 35

Maps

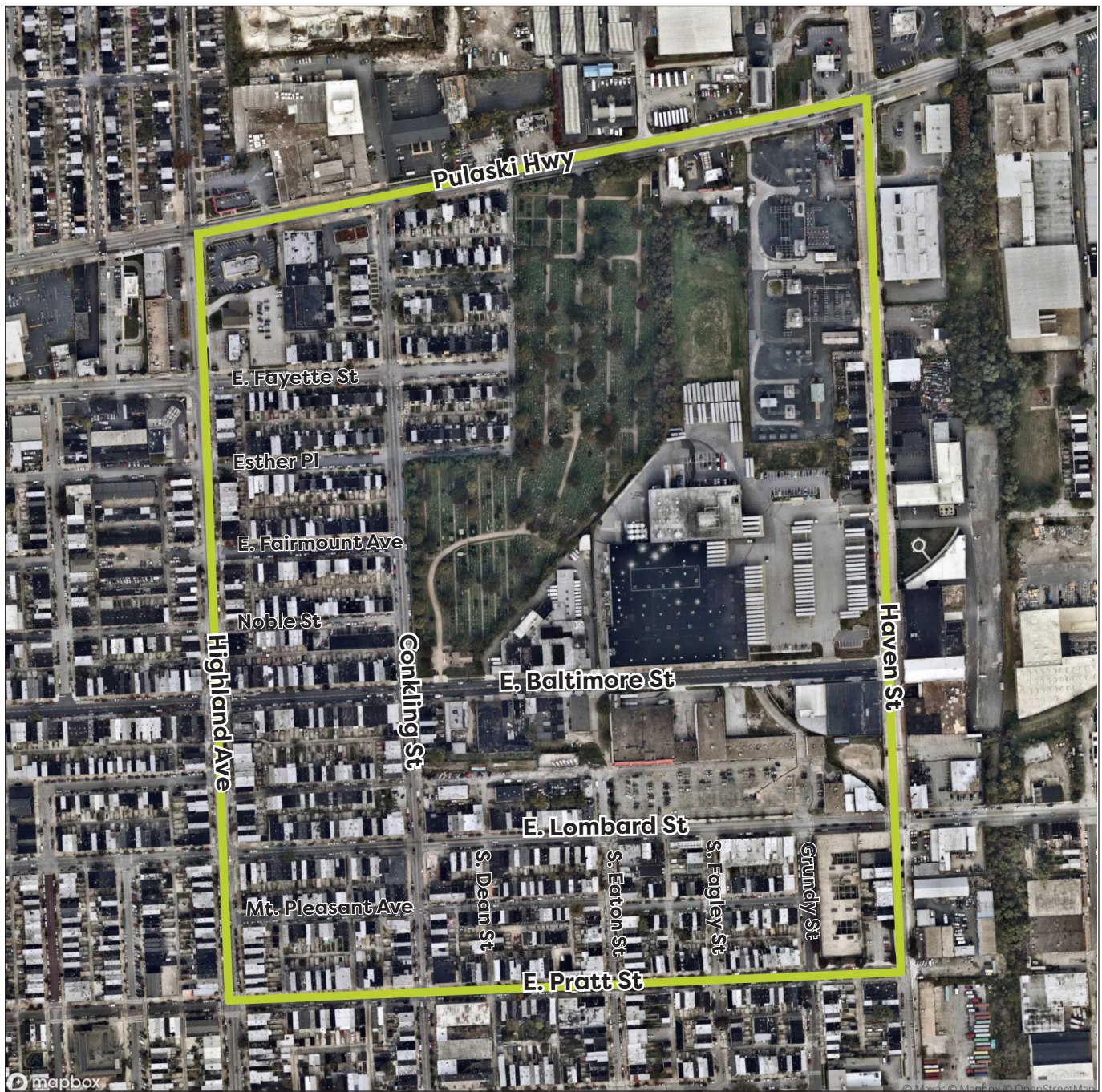
Map 1. City context map showing Baltimore Highlands	pg 5
Map 2. Satellite map of Baltimore Highlands and surrounding area	pg 6
Map 3. Churches, businesses, and other landmarks near Baltimore Highlands	pg 14
Map 4. BCPSS Elementary School attendance zones in Baltimore Highlands area	pg 24
Map 5. Vacant building notices and unimproved lots in Baltimore Highlands area	pg 27
Map 6. Market clusters in Baltimore Highlands from the 2017 Housing Market Typology	pg 28
Map 7. Frequent MTA bus routes around Baltimore Highlands	pg 31
Map 8. Area within a 15-minute drive of the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center	pg 32
Map 9. Baltimore Highlands area parks	pg 40
Map 10. Potential development sites	pg 71



MAP 1. City context map showing Baltimore Highlands

Baltimore Highlands is located a little over than three miles east of downtown Baltimore and less than a quarter-mile north of Highlandtown's Eastern Avenue commercial corridor.

Sources: Maryland iMap, Open Baltimore



MAP 2. Satellite map of Baltimore Highlands and surrounding area

Credits: © Mapbox; © OpenStreetMap; © Maxar; [Improve this map](#)



Former Our Lady of Pompei Church School built in 1951 (January 18, 2022)



King Cork & Seal Building, 1001 N. Haven Street (January 18, 2022)

About the Baltimore Highlands Community Plan

Acknowledgements

About the Southeast CDC

The Southeast CDC is dedicated to growing and supporting a thriving, socioeconomically and racially diverse Southeast Baltimore where residents share in the success and improvement of their communities. To achieve this vision, they stimulate private and public investment in housing, infrastructure, parks, employment, and city services; mobilize and support existing residents to participate in the planning and implementation of community projects that improve their quality of life; and attract residents to homeownership while preserving quality affordable housing.

Supporting Southeast CDC staff and interns included Molly McCullagh, Andy Dahl, Ali Morris, Dinora Mendoza, Maria Mora, and Kari Snyder.

About the Neighborhood Design Center

The Neighborhood Design Center supports the growth of healthy, equitable neighborhoods through community-engaged design and planning services. By providing the tools, expertise, and partnerships necessary to realize neighborhood visions, we support broad participation in the evolution of the built environment.

Supporting NDC staff included Eli Pousson, Jalen Powell-Bartley, Eleanor Luken, Kelly Sterling, and Jennifer Goold. Supporting NDC interns included Yvette Bailey-Emberson and Daphne Moraga.

Neighborhood Advisory Committee

The members and leadership of the Highlandtown Community Association played a key role in supporting the planning process including hosting conversations with other Baltimore Highlands residents and providing feedback on the plan recommendations. Special thanks to Michael Dorsey, Nick and Erin Kirley, Rev. Mark Parker, Nikki Santana, Anne Sawyer, and Brian Sweeney.



“Baltimore Highlands Welcomes You,” Roberts Place Garden, 3601 Roberts Place
(January 18, 2022)

Introduction

Baltimore Highlands is a dynamic neighborhood in southeast Baltimore with a diverse mix of renters, homeowners, small business owners, new immigrants, and long-established neighbors. The area has the advantage of proximity to key assets including the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center, Patterson Park, and varied businesses of the Highlandtown Arts District. This community plan seeks to document the community’s diverse perspectives and resources and lay out a guide for the Southeast Community Development Corporation (Southeast CDC), community partners, and Baltimore City agencies to address local challenges and improve neighborhood quality of life for residents of all ages.

Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) created this plan in partnership with the Southeast CDC, members of the Highlandtown Community Association (HCA), and Baltimore Highlands residents with funding from the Enterprise Community Foundation. The Southeast CDC initiated this plan to build on a major new \$19 million investment in the area: the expansion of Highlandtown #237 through Baltimore’s 21st Century Schools program.

The neighborhood’s relative affordability, a growing number of immigrant-serving businesses, and welcoming family, friends, and churches have made

Baltimore Highlands and the broader area into a destination for families immigrating to Baltimore from Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic, among others. In contrast to other areas of the city that have lost population over the past twenty years, Baltimore Highlands has been growing.

The arrival of new families with young children has also transformed the demographics of a formerly aging neighborhood. Changes have included a large increase in enrollment at Highlandtown #237, the zoned elementary school for the neighborhood. Unfortunately, this rapid increase has meant significant overcrowding in the school’s nearly century-old school building—a challenge that the school’s expansion seeks to address.

to afford housing, causing overcrowding and instability for many neighbors. Dumping by contractors and landlords, littering by patrons at local bars and stores, and improper disposal of household trash by neighbors make it difficult to keep public spaces clean.

The COVID-19 pandemic also hit Baltimore Highlands residents harder than most. By April 2021, the state reported over five thousand COVID-19 cases among residents in Baltimore Highlands’ 21224 zip code—the largest number of cases for any zip code in Baltimore City at the time. In the spring of 2020, Baltimore City, Southeast CDC, and other neighborhood partners responded to the pandemic with significant new investments in food distribution and eviction prevention services to address income and job



Former Highlandtown #237 community school coordinator, Dinora Mendoza, distributing masks at Highlandtown #215 (March 2, 2021)

An overcrowded school is not the only challenge for neighborhood residents. Baltimore Highlands was originally developed when the area remained part of Baltimore County, resulting in an unusual mix of industrial and residential land uses. Automobile shops touch the sides of two-story rowhouses and community gardens are placed on top of old railroad tracks. Low incomes and rising rents have led to struggles

loss among area households. While there is still a great deal of uncertainty around the long-term effects of the pandemic on the neighborhood, the Southeast CDC remains well-positioned to support residents and community organizations through this challenging time.

For this plan, the pandemic also brought unique challenges. Large in-person gatherings were unsafe and online meetings could only reach



Feedback collected using Google Jamboard in virtual discussion with neighbors (January 14, 2021)

a small subset of neighborhood residents. Fortunately, tabling at outdoor community events and surveying neighbors by phone allowed our team to gather input from residents who might otherwise have been left out of the process.

We anticipate that this document will be useful for community groups dedicated to understanding and responding to emerging community conditions in collaboration with local partners, Southeast CDC, and City agencies.

This plan was completed in parallel with a similar community plan for the Ellwood Park neighborhood (located immediately northwest of Baltimore Highlands) and both documents may be a resource for neighborhoods across the area. Priorities for the implementation of recommendations in this plan may also change as our communities continue to navigate the long-term impact of the pandemic on housing, employment, transportation, education, and health.

This plan includes three major sections: the first introducing the Baltimore Highlands neighborhood and describing the planning process, the second introducing the plan and sharing insights from both the data analysis and resident engagement, and the third laying out the goals, strategies, and actions that can be used to put this plan into action.

Planning Process

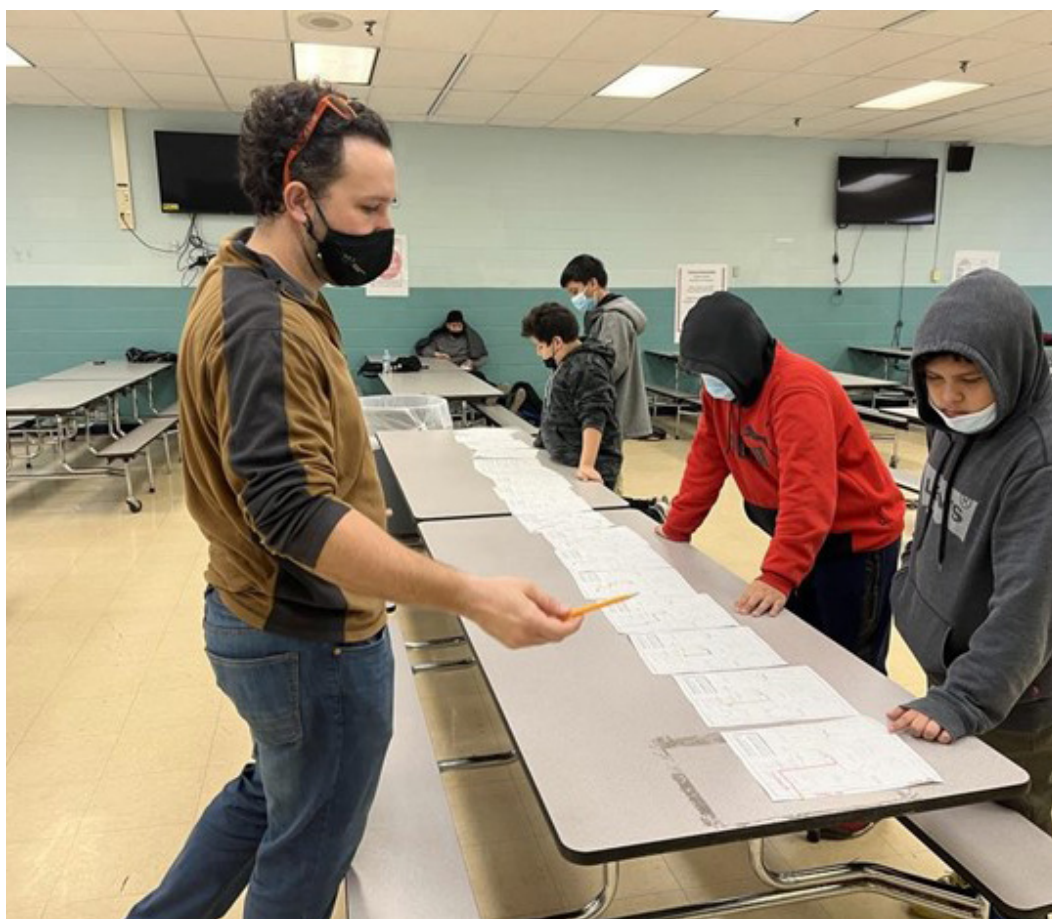
Background

Southeast CDC contracted with the Neighborhood Design Center in February 2020 to extend recent neighborhood planning initiatives in the neighborhood and develop recommendations in four key areas:

- Affordable housing and home ownership
- Commercial needs
- Arts
- Public space and transportation projects

Ultimately, planning around the arts was dropped as a priority for this plan as the concurrent development of a strategic plan for the Highlandtown Arts District covered this same topic.

Several issue-based plans have been completed in recent years for the Baltimore Highlands neighborhood. NDC reviewed, reframed, and refined those plan goals and recommendations, and added additional recommendations that achieve community goals for block-level and neighborhood improvements.



Baltimore City planner Matt DeSantis talking to students at Highlandtown #237 about walking routes to school. (February 15, 2022)

Community Engagement

The plan outreach efforts built on existing relationships and past outreach initiatives by the Southeast CDC. While the planning team used virtual meetings where feasible, online outreach engaged a smaller share of residents than expected and those who participated were largely from moderate-income, English-speaking households.

We engaged more Spanish-speaking households by surveying neighbors who had previously volunteered with the Conkling Street Garden or participated in other neighborhood programming and reaching out to area families through the Community school coordinators at Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School #237 and Highlandtown Elementary/Middle School #215.

In fall 2021, NDC also initiated a partnership with the Higher Achievement afterschool program at Highlandtown #237 operating out of the school’s temporary swing space at 6820 Fait Avenue. This partnership included engaging students in a series of planning-related creative activities including zine-making and map drawing. Student feedback echoed many of the same concerns shared by adults through other engagement strategies: noise, sanitation in public spaces, and community safety. In the zines produced by the students, they also highlighted the importance of community building as a strategy for addressing these shared concerns.

Throughout the community engagement process, we engaged an estimated 140 residents and area stakeholders and added 85 people to our contact list.

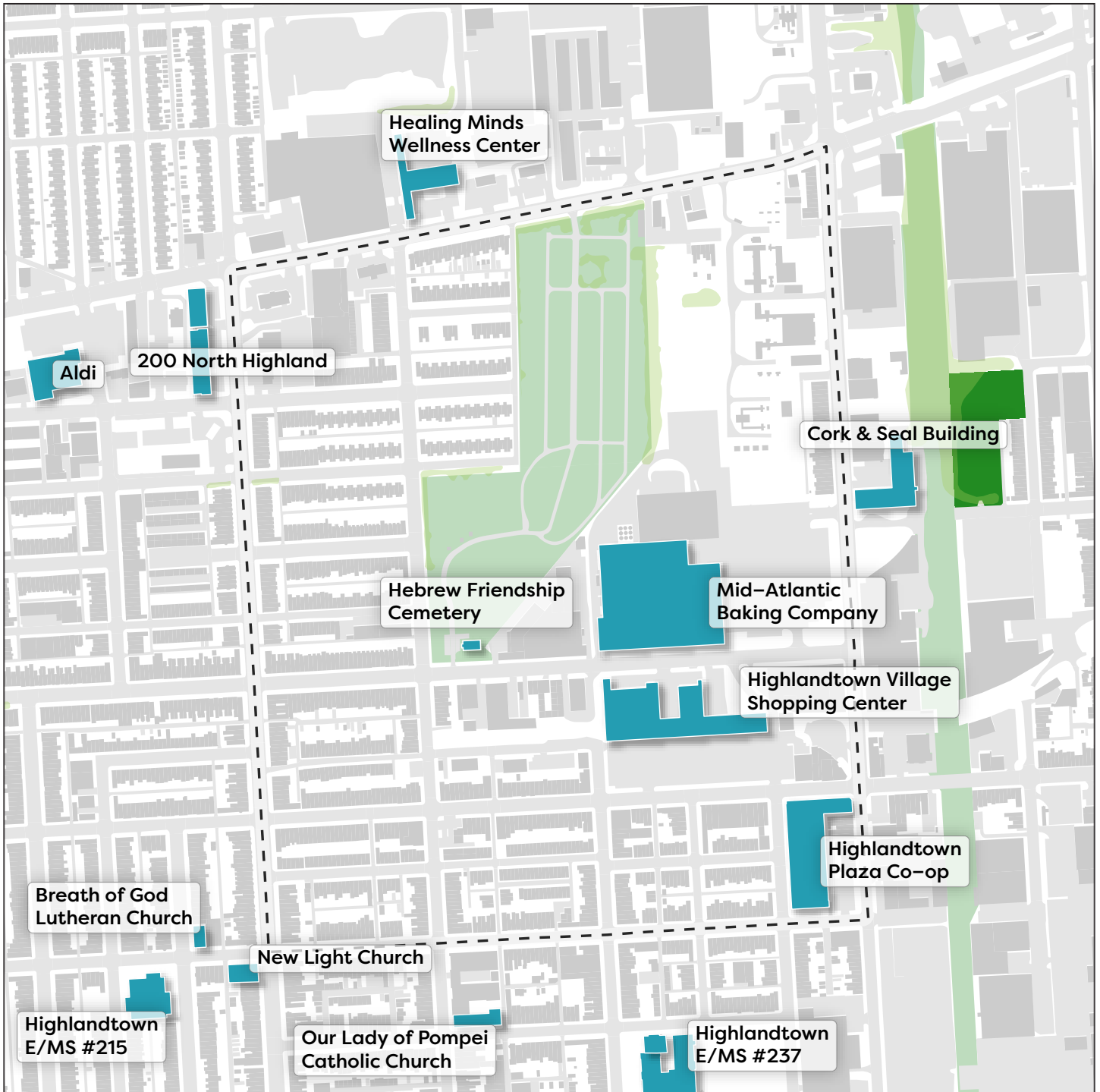
Survey

Due to the limited reach of initial online outreach, a survey of Baltimore Highlands neighbors completed through a door-to-door canvas and phone calls was a key part of our outreach strategy. Overall, here are a few key characteristics of the 34 surveyed residents:



NDC staff collected feedback on the Baltimore Highlands plan recommendations at the September 2022 Community Meet & Greet event hosted by the Highlandtown Community Association.

- More than six in ten surveyed neighbors spoke Spanish as their primary language (22).
- More than half of surveyed residents (19) have lived in the neighborhood less than five years—and most of those for less than 3 years.
- One in three of the surveyed neighbors (11) have lived in the neighborhood more than a decade.



MAP 3. Churches, businesses, and other landmarks near Baltimore Highlands.

About Baltimore Highlands

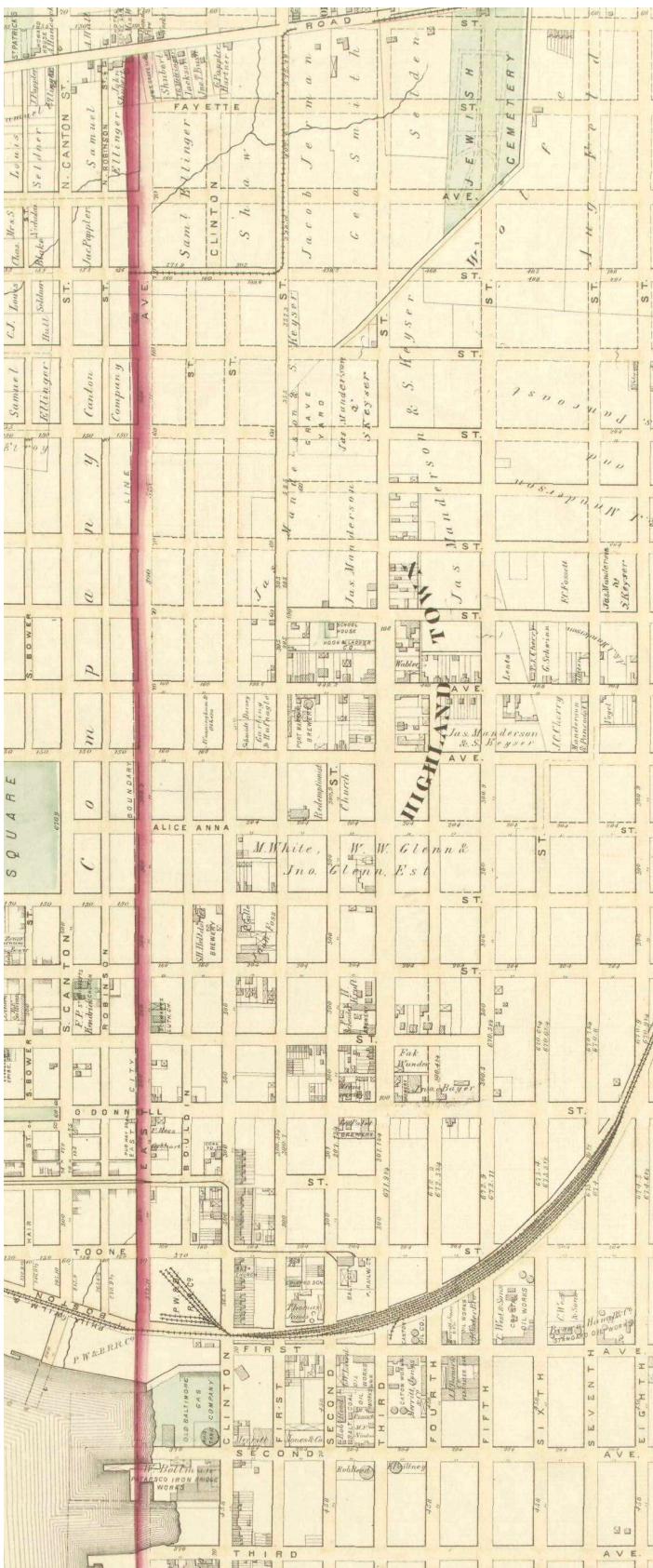
History

The history of Baltimore Highlands is closely tied to the history of the Highlandtown neighborhood immediately to the south. Both in the past and in the present day, many residents of Baltimore Highlands identify as residents of Highlandtown, reflecting the importance of the area's identity.



1910 stone gate at Hebrew Friendship Cemetery, 3600 E. Baltimore Street (October 4, 2020)

For most of the nineteenth century, Highlandtown and the surrounding area was largely undeveloped area of Baltimore County cut off from the city by Harris Creek and swampy land surrounding it. Hebrew Friendship Cemetery (3600 E. Baltimore Street) was established in 1849, making it one of the only landmarks from before the Civil War. In the 1870s and 1880s, local butchers and brewers began buying up land



Excerpt from Plate M, *City Atlas of Baltimore Maryland and Environs* (1876)

Courtesy Maryland State Archives.

in the area around Fleet and Highland Avenue, then known as “Snake Hill.”

In 1888, this area of Baltimore County had less than a thousand residents and a majority voted against being annexed into the city. By the late nineteenth century, the land offered many of the same advantages of being in the city, such as the proximity to city streetcar lines, but property owners paid less than a third of the city property tax rates and avoided the city’s “Blue Laws” restricting alcohol sales on Sundays. The county’s minimal land use regulation led to an unusual mix of rowhouses and industrial buildings.

Horse-drawn streetcars had been in operation along Eastern Avenue to Haven Street since 1880 and electric streetcars arrived in the 1890s. Builders filled the blocks radiating out from the streetcar lines with small, two-story rowhouses in the 1900s and 1910s. By the 1910s, rowhouse designs changed to adopt a new “daylight” style where every room offered a window. Many of these rowhouses were sold to households working in the area or other industrial businesses in southeast Baltimore. In 1907, Thomas J. Kurdel, a major pork packer, opened a processing plant at 4020 E. Lombard Street. The area on N. Haven Street, now occupied by an electric substation, was briefly used for natural gas processing before it was purchased by the city’s electric company the same year.

In 1918, Baltimore City annexed the eastern and northern portions of Baltimore County—Baltimore Highlands included. Annexation helped support the addition of new churches, libraries, and schools in and around the neighborhood.

Sacred Heart of Jesus was among the earliest churches established in the area as it was established as a mission church of St. Michael’s Church on Broadway in 1873. In 1908, the Highland Methodist Church (now used by the New Light Church) was built on Highland Avenue. Our Lady of Pompei Church at 201 S. Conkling Street completed a new church and convent in 1924 then added a school in 1951. In 1910, the Enoch Pratt Free Library Branch Number 13 (now known as the Patterson Park branch) opened on N. Linwood Avenue. St. Paul’s English Evangelical



The New Light Church/Former Highland Methodist Church, 200 S. Highland Avenue (October 4, 2020)

Lutheran Church (now Breath of God Lutheran Church) was completed in 1924, later adding a church school in 1950. Highlandtown Elementary School #237 at 231 S. Eaton Street was built in 1926.

While most homebuilding in the area was complete by the early 1920s, industrial businesses continued to develop property along the railroad tracks on Haven Street and north of Baltimore Street. Older industrial and commercial businesses were replaced by automotive uses. In 1946, the Lord Baltimore Laundry opened their commercial laundry service plant. Other nearby industrial businesses on Haven Street included Conowingo Wallpaper, Savarese Macaroni, the Carstairs Distillery, and the Williamson Veneer factory, which manufactured the decorative outer layer of everything from pianos to radio cabinets to dining room tables.



Wonder Clothes at the northeast corner of Eastern Avenue and S. Conkling Street in Highlandtown's shopping district, 1954.

(Courtesy: Baltimore Museum of Industry, BGE-28385B)

In the mid-1930s, the #23 and #26 streetcar routes followed Baltimore Street to Conkling and then took Conkling to Lombard. The routes shared the street with the "G" bus route that ended at Lombard and Eaton Street and the #26 streetcar continued to the Sparrow's Point Shipyard and Bay Shore Park near Fort Howard.

Service to Dundalk continued into the 1950s even as the city began replacing streetcar lines with bus routes. During the 1940s, Baltimore City saw a huge growth in industrial activity centered around the Bethlehem Steel facility and shipyards located in southeast Baltimore. The growing number of drivers led the city to build new bridges to carry Lombard Street over the railroad tracks and created a new interchange with Ponca Street where I-895 is today.



1958 Baltimore zoning map showing industrial zoning for the Haven Street corridor and area north of E. Lombard Street. (Courtesy: JHU Sheridan Libraries)

Between the 1960s and 1980s, the neighborhood encountered major new challenges. Aging homes and industrial properties pose threats to public safety. In 1971, a large gas explosion destroyed three houses on Roberts Place killing several residents. A near identical gas explosion took place again in 2017 with no loss of life but the destruction of additional houses. Additionally, many of the industrial businesses that once provided jobs to neighborhood homeowners closed or relocated outside the area. The most significant loss took place in 1993 when Esskay Meats closed the company's Baltimore Street plant, eliminating over 200 jobs in the process.

However, some other long-standing businesses held on, and new businesses moved in. Lord Baltimore Laundry stayed in place and the Pompeian Olive Oil Company remains in the nearby Kresson neighborhood. In 1985, the Highland Village Shopping Center was developed on a former industrial site and, in 1996, the former streetcar barn across the street was turned into affordable senior apartments for the Highland Plaza Co-op. In an encouraging move, the H&S Bakery built a new factory on the site of the Esskay Meats plant.

Over the past twenty years, the Highlandtown Community Association, established in 2001, has helped bring new interest and residents to the area. At the same, a growing number of new residents immigrating from Mexico and Central America have settled in Baltimore Highlands and Highlandtown. In 2004, the *Sun* reported on southeast Baltimore's growing Latino population and interviewed Daisy Ramos, owner of Fell's Point bakery Panaderia Ramos, who noted: "It used to be there were only Central Americans here in Baltimore. Now Latinos come from all over—Dominicans, Puerto Ricans, Ecuadorians."

Our Lady of Pompei was one of the first congregations in the neighborhood that attracted a large community of Latino members, but it was not the only one. Around 2010, Breath of God Lutheran Church began offering worship services in Spanish as well as English. In 2011, Sagrado Corazón de Jesús organized as a Spanish-speaking congregation within Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. At Highlandtown #237, enrollment has more than doubled, with an increasing share of students speaking Spanish as their first language.

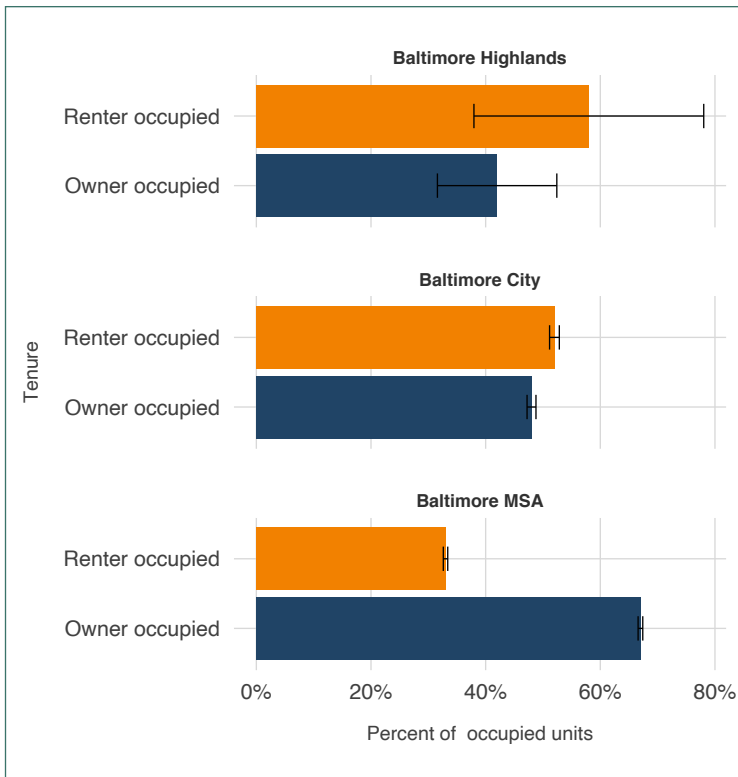


Resident volunteers at the Conkling Street Garden (April 13, 2019)

Over the past decade, the expanding private investment in southeast Baltimore has led to dramatic changes and uncertainty over how Baltimore Highlands can remain affordable to the residents who live there today. In 2008, local developer David Siebert acquired a former factory and warehouse complex on Haven Street and has been redeveloping the area buildings as ‘Highland Forge.’ Another residential development was completed nearby in 2017 when Ryan Homes constructed the first phase of the Oldham Crossing townhouse development in Greektown. That same year, Urban Phoenix Properties developed the former Our Lady of

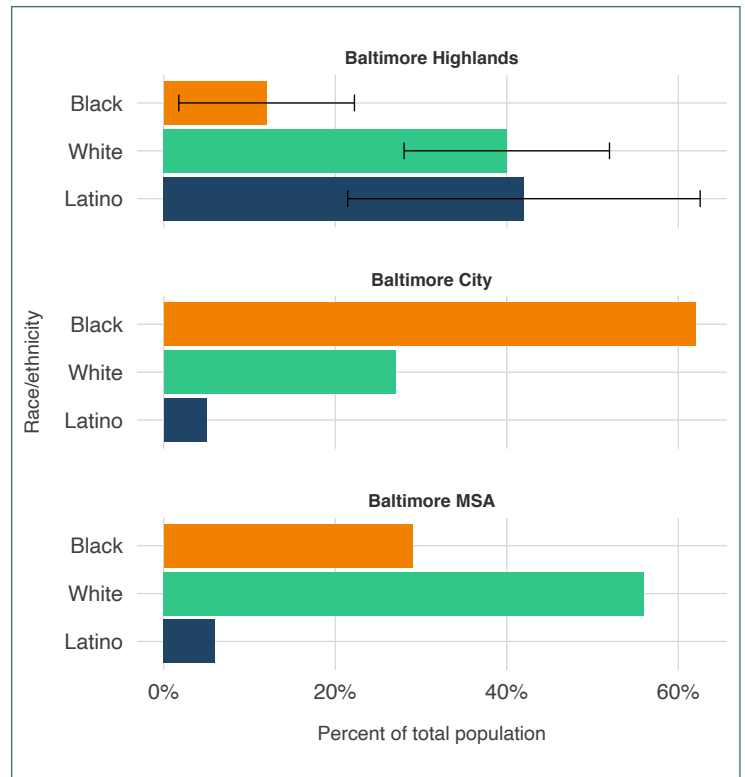
Pompei Catholic Church parochial school (closed in 2011) into a 27-unit building called The Imperial at Conkling at 201 S. Conkling Street.

Highlandtown, and parts of Baltimore Highlands, was designated by the State of Maryland as an Arts District in 2003 managed by the Southeast CDC, shortly before the new Southeast Anchor branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library was completed. In 2015, Southeast CDC installed new artistic bus stops on Highland Avenue at Baltimore Street. The Conkling Street Garden was founded in 2014 and significantly expanded in 2020 thanks to the removal of an aging concrete railroad siding.



PLOT 1. Renter and owner occupied units as a share of total occupied units

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2016-2020)



PLOT 2. Black, white, and Latino residents as share of total population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2016-2020)

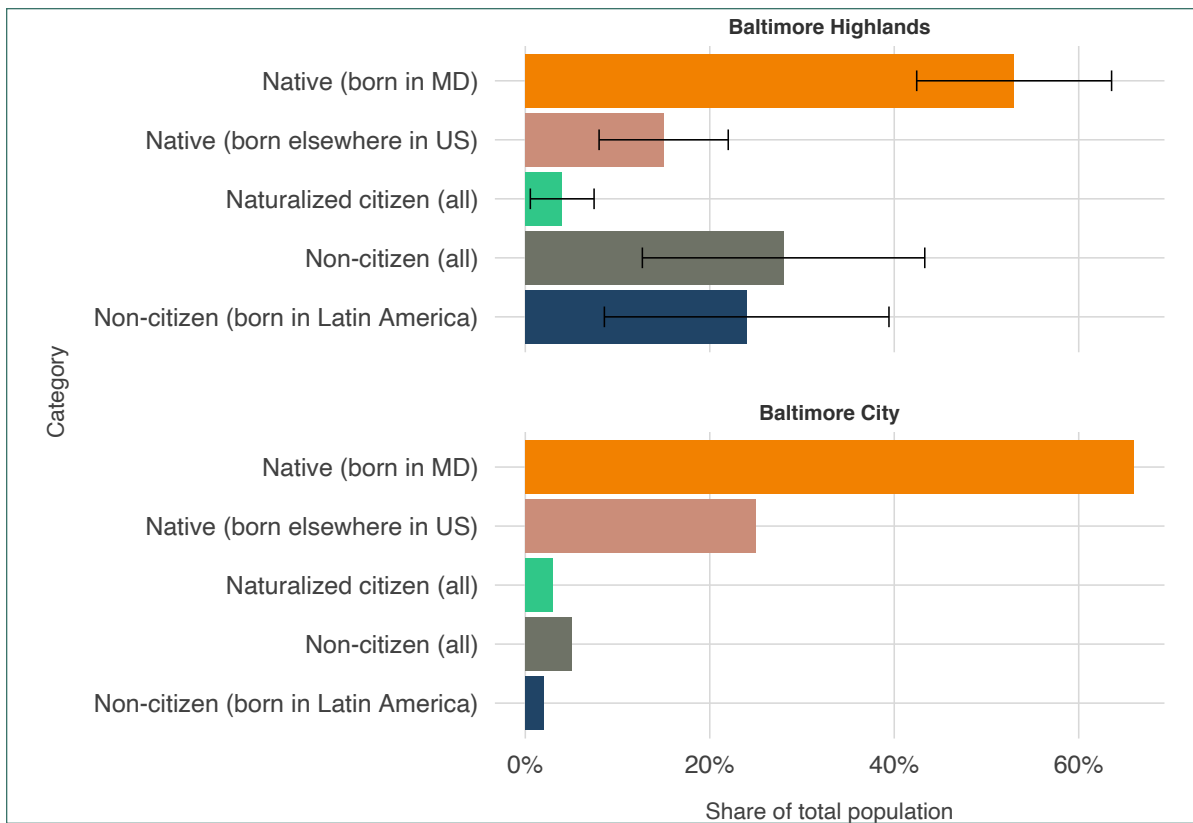
Demographics

Who lives in Baltimore Highlands? How does the neighborhood compare to the city more broadly? The neighborhood has around 3,100 residents in 850 households. A little over a third of households are made up of a married couple with the remainder split evenly between male-headed and female-headed households. The household median income is around \$48,000 (similar to the city’s overall median income of \$50,400) and around one in four households include children under the age of eighteen.

Neighborhood-level estimates based American Community Survey (ACS) must be clearly understood as estimates. The data is based on a sample of the overall population. For the city and region, the survey provides accurate estimates with a high level of confidence but at the neighborhood level any characteristic described in this section may be an overestimate or an underestimate.

Around three in five (or more) households rent. Survey data suggests that most occupied housing units in Baltimore Highlands are occupied by renters and only a little over two in five occupied by homeowners. The actual homeownership rate is likely even lower. State property data has only one in five occupied properties listed as owner-occupied.

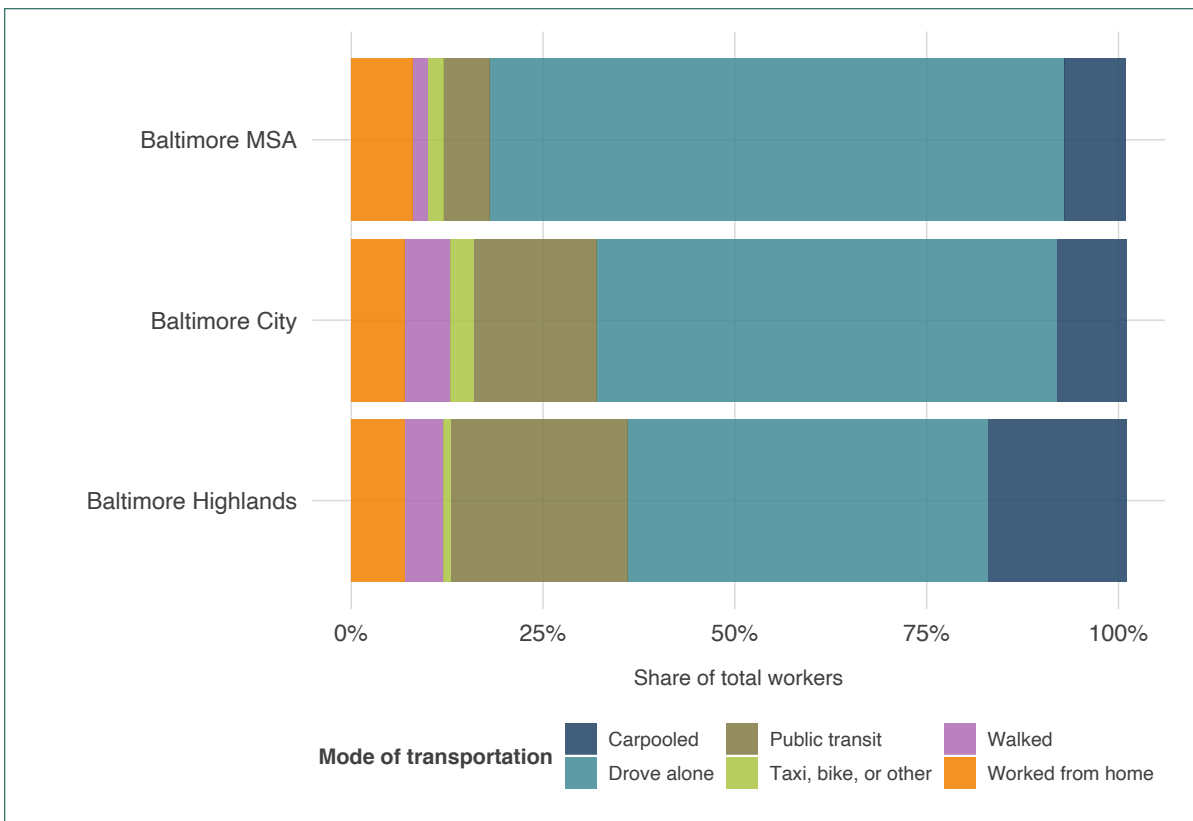
Nearly 70% of residents are Latino with smaller white and Black populations. According to the 2020 Census, 68% of Baltimore Highlands residents identify as Latino or Hispanic. This share is much greater than the city or the metro area where around one in twenty residents are Latino. A little under 20% of residents are white, which is lower than the city overall. These white residents largely live in the southern section of the neighborhood closer to Highlandtown and the Eastern Avenue commercial district. Only a little more than one in ten residents are Black.



PLOT 3. Share of population by birthplace and citizenship status compared between Baltimore Highlands and Baltimore City
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2016-2020)

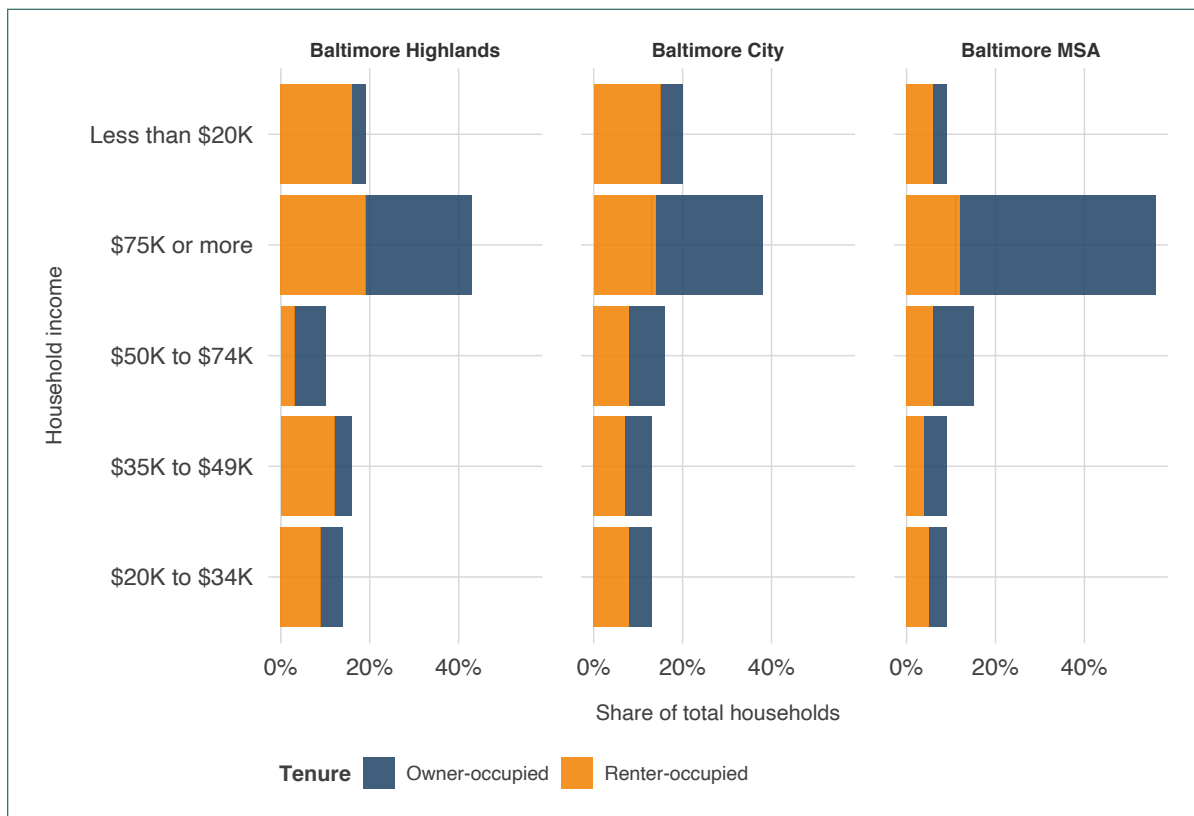
Immigrants make up a large share of the neighborhood population. Naturalized U.S. citizens born outside the country and people who are not U.S. citizens make up over a third of the neighborhood population. The share of non-citizens in Baltimore Highlands is more than five times the share for the city or the metro area. Nearly all of these newcomers were born in Latin America.

Many area households are poor and around a third have no vehicle available. Around one in five belonged to a household with income below the poverty level in the past twelve months. Around a third have no vehicle available. Both rates are similar to the city overall but much higher than the broader metro area.



PLOT 4. Share of households by commute mode, comparison across the region

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2016-2020)

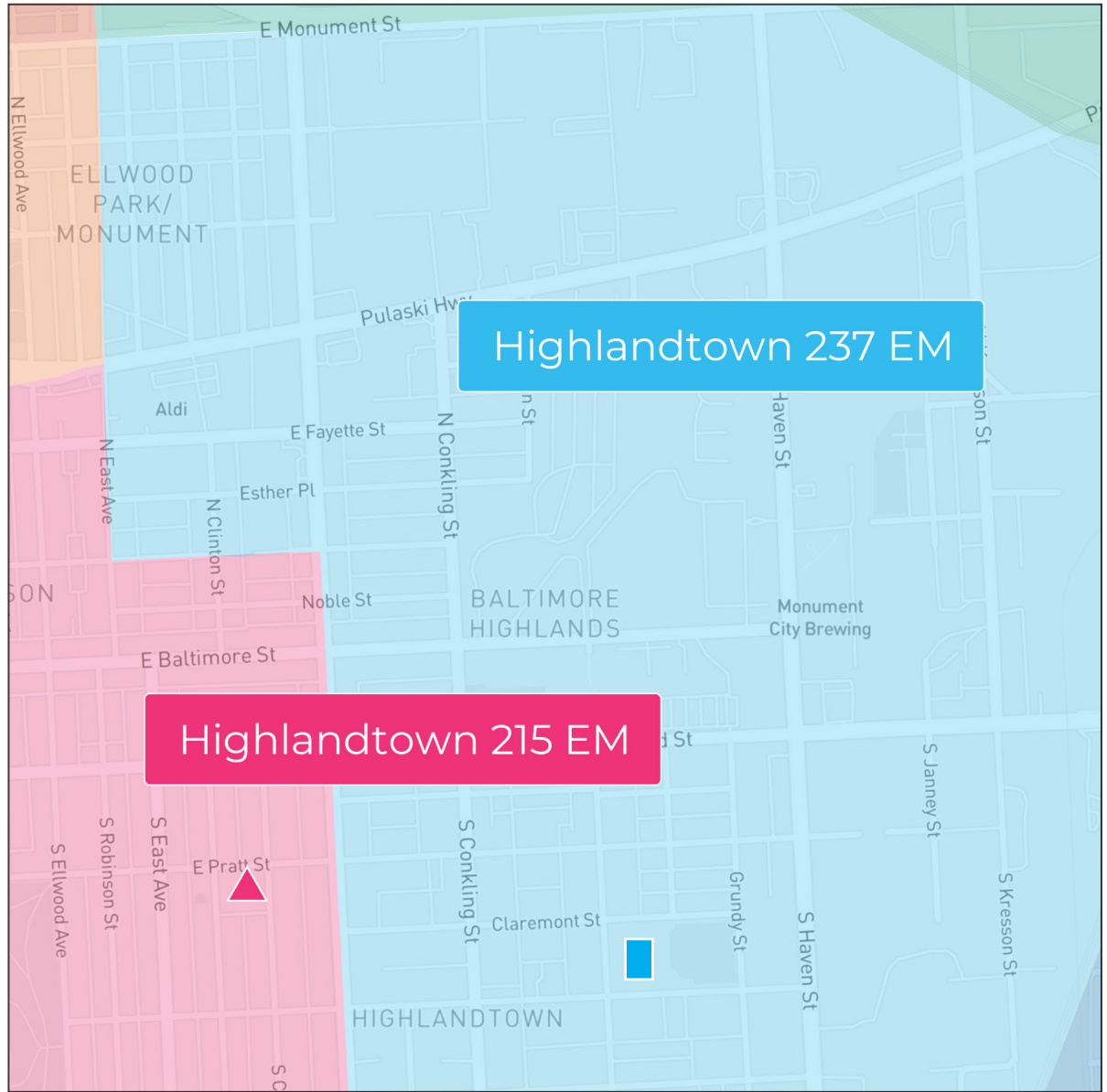


PLOT 5. Share of households in Baltimore Highlands by income category, comparison between renter and owners across the region

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Data (2016-2020)



Neighborhood youth participating in community greening event organized by Southeast CDC.
(October 12, 2019)



MAP 4. BCPSS Elementary School attendance zones in Baltimore Highlands area.

Data: Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS)

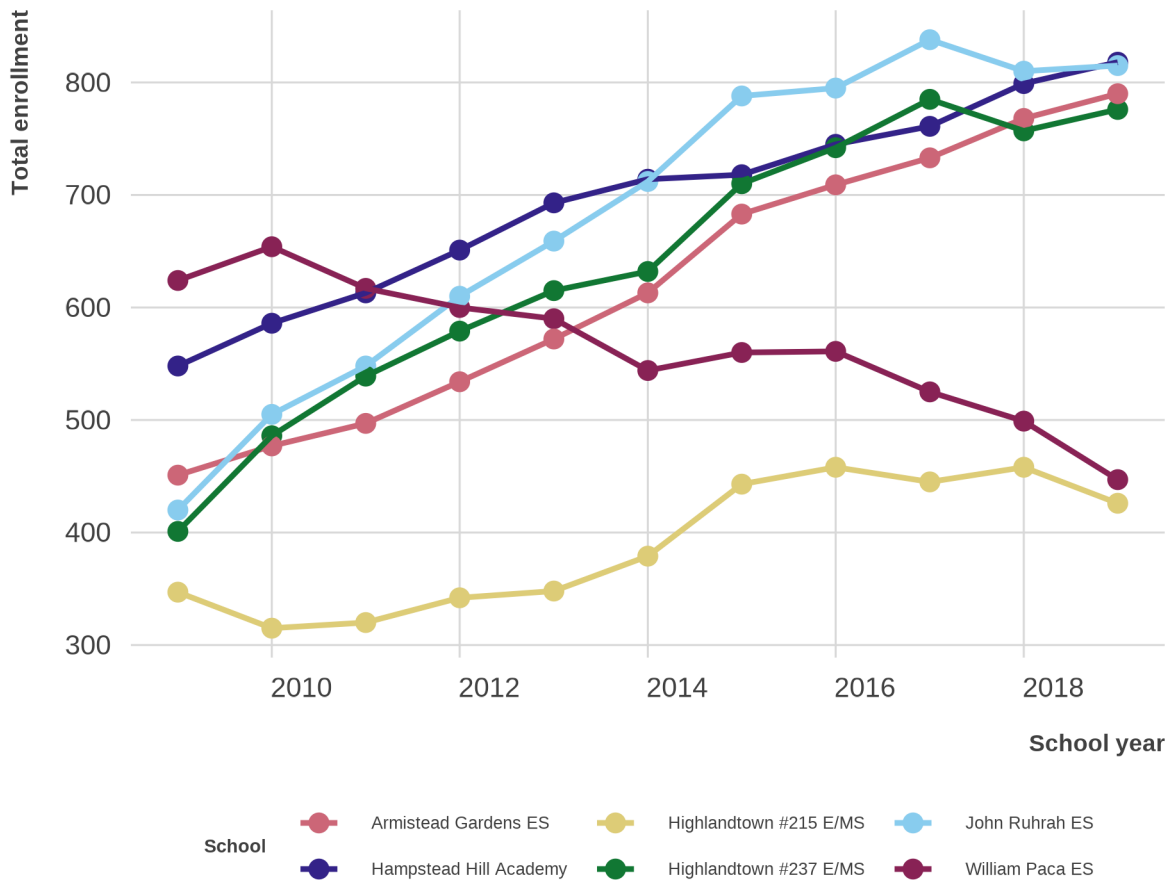
Existing Conditions

Schools

Highlandtown #237 is located one block outside the Baltimore Highlands neighborhood on S. Eaton Street between Claremont and Gough Streets. The #237 school building was closed to both students and staff from fall 2020-winter 2023 as Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPSS) constructed a major addition through the 21st Century Schools program. The Department of Planning will be kicking off an INSPIRE planning

process for Highlandtown #237 in early 2023, and this neighborhood plan will be able to serve as a foundation for that process and resulting plan which will eventually be adopted by the Planning Commission.

Southeast CDC has employed a Community School coordinator based at Highlandtown #237 since 2013 to organize resources and partnerships for the school community. Southeast CDC also supports a similar



PLOT 6. Enrollment at Baltimore Highlands area schools, 2009 to 2019

In 2019, Armistead Gardens and John Ruhrah converted from combined elementary/middle schools to elementary schools. Highlandtown #215 and #237 also converted from elementary only to elementary/middle schools in this period. Data: Maryland State Department of Education.

community school coordinator staff based at William Paca Elementary School, John Ruhrah Elementary/Middle School, Tench Tilghman Elementary/Middle School, and Highlandtown #215. Past initiatives by the Community School Coordinator at Highlandtown #237 include a student green team and parent group that supported a community garden, landscape improvements, and cleanliness around the school building.

Nearly half of families surveyed at Highlandtown #237 in 2019 reported students walking to school. This rate is similar to other southeast Baltimore elementary and elementary/middle schools but much higher than city schools overall. The school stands out

for the dramatic growth in student enrollment over the past ten years doubling from around 400 in 2009 to nearly 800 by 2019. During this same period, enrollment at Highlandtown #215 grew by a more modest twenty percent and enrollment William Paca declined by almost thirty percent.

The school’s enrollment growth has come largely through the increasing number of immigrant households moving to the area. As a result, Highlandtown #237 has a very large share of Latino or Hispanic students relative to the city overall and around seven in ten students at both schools are English language learners. The large share of students learning English is likely a primary reason for the low State Report Card

Score relative to other southeast Baltimore schools. The creation of a State Report Card Score is a requirement of the 2015 federal Every Student Succeeds Act and is based on a point system that assigns up to 65 points for academic indicators and 35 points for other measures of school quality and student success. Overcrowding may also have contributed to the relatively low parent satisfaction score, which falls below both other area schools and the city's average parent satisfaction score.

Table 1: Area BCPSS schools compared by select characteristics.

Source: Enrollment, attendance, and state report card score data from Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Parent satisfaction score from BCPSS SY18 parent survey. Results suppressed for schools with limited number of responses.

	SCHOOL NAME	ADDRESS	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	ATTENDANCE RATE	PARENT SATISFACTION SCORE	WALK TO SCHOOL	STATE REPORT CARD SCORE
13	Tench Tilghman	600 N. Patterson Park Ave.	397	95.0%	94.3%	54.9%	☆☆☆☆ (63%)
83	William Paca	200 N. Lakewood Ave.	447	-	91.1%	66.3%	☆☆☆ (45%)
215	Highlandtown #215	3223 E. Pratt St.	426	93.7%	93.5%	57.9%	☆☆☆ (50%)
237	Highlandtown #237	231 S. Eaton St.	776	91.7%	82.4%	45.9%	☆☆ (40%)
	All BCPSS schools	-	-	87.1%	87.9%	27.0%	☆☆ (44.01%)

Housing

This plan used a range of sources to investigate housing conditions in Baltimore Highlands including the 2017 Housing Market Typology highlighted in the table and map, a 2018 survey of area residents, additional feedback through the 2021 survey, sales data, and existing real property data.

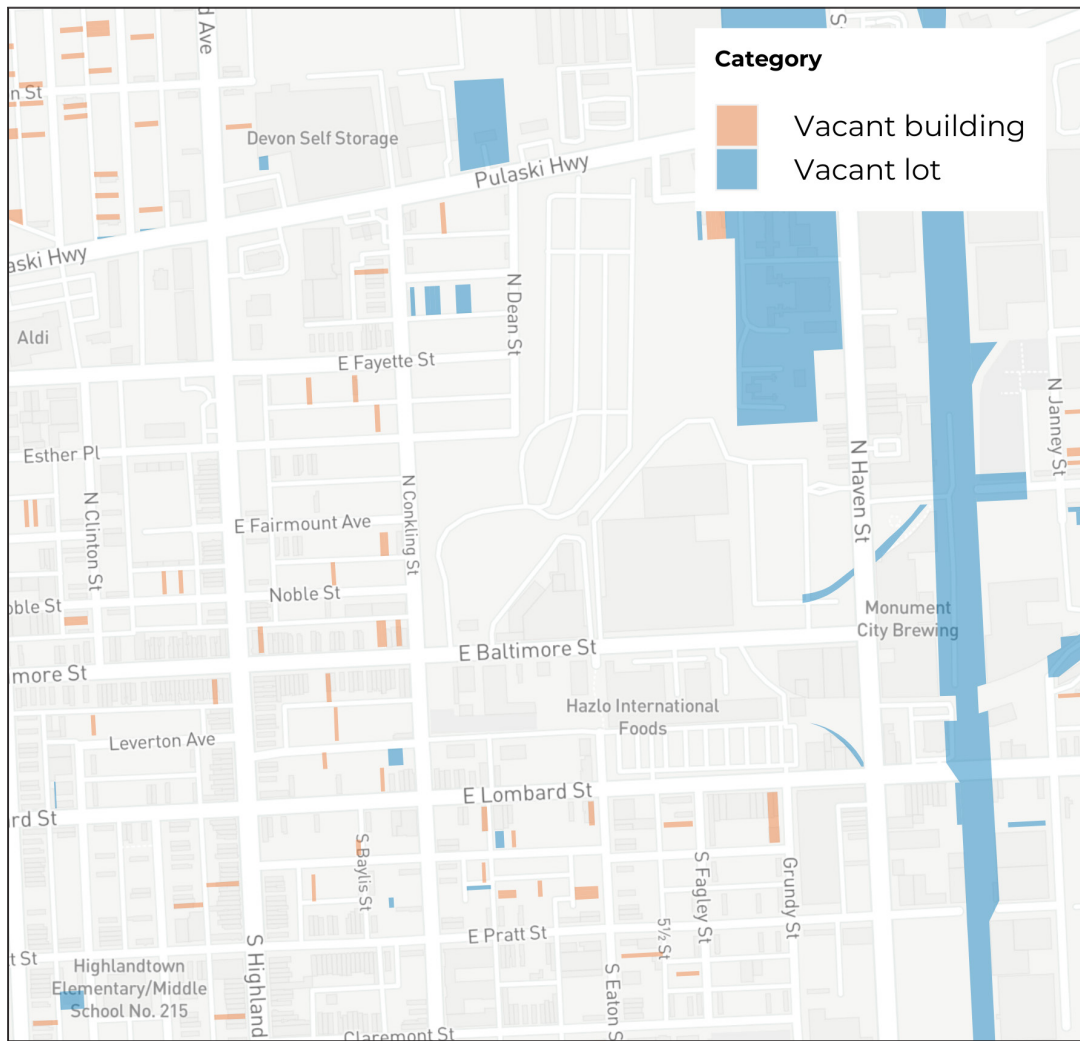
Resident survey responses

In 2018, the Southeast CDC completed a survey of 73 Baltimore Highlands residents with questions on affordability, housing conditions, neighborhood likes and dislikes.

Survey respondents in 2021 gave the following responses about housing conditions:

- 63% reported being likely or very likely to stay in the area (22 of 34)
- 37% reported being likely or very likely to move out of the area (13 of 34)

Many had lived in the area prior to their current residence with 46% living in another home in Baltimore Highlands or elsewhere in East Baltimore (16).



MAP 5. Vacant building notices and unimproved lots in Baltimore Highlands area.

Data: Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)

Sales and property data

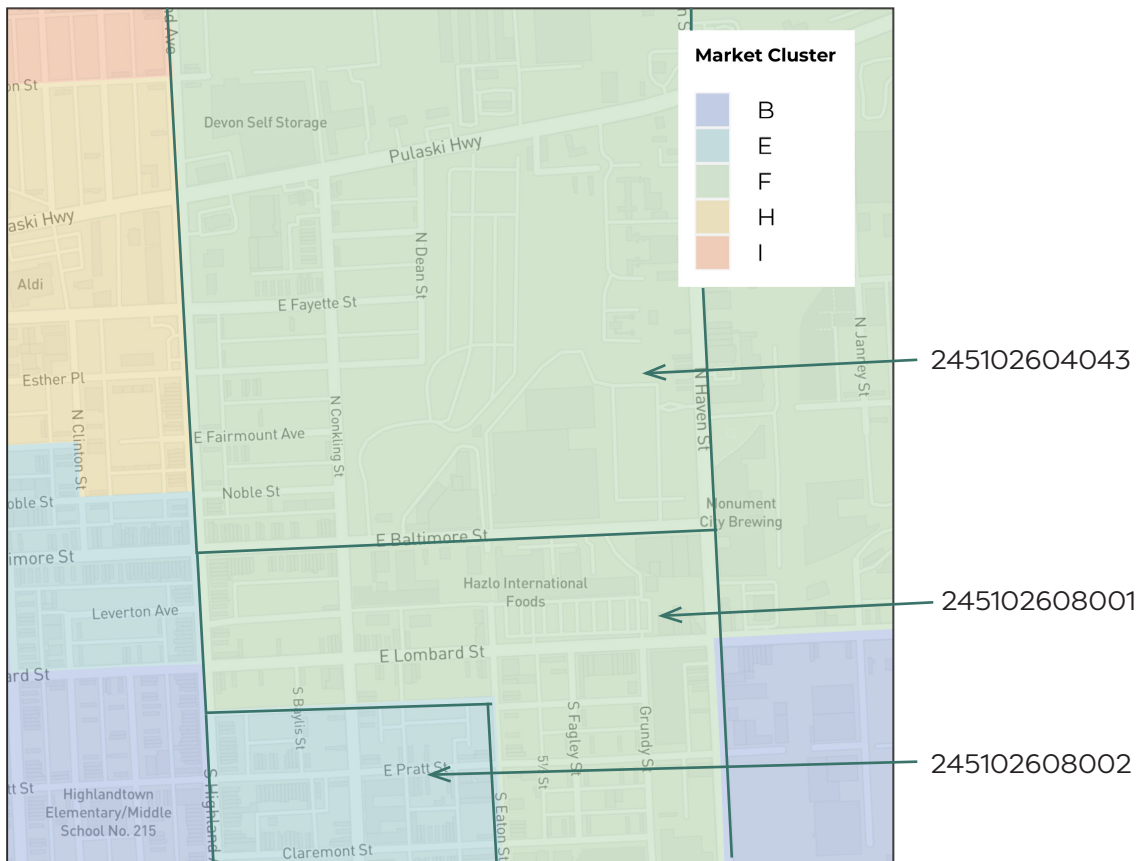
An analysis of Multiple Listing Service sales data from 2015 to 2020 for Baltimore Highlands and surrounding neighborhood found some notable patterns that set the neighborhood apart from others in southeast Baltimore:

- Baltimore Highlands has a relatively low sales volume (302) relative to McElderry Park (521), Highlandtown (546), or Patterson Park (1,176). The neighborhood saw a small increase in annual sales volume between 2015 and 2018 but has declined since 2018.
- The median sales price for property in the neighborhood was around half the median sales price in Highlandtown or Patterson Park but significantly higher than McElderry Park, Ellwood Park, or Madison-Eastend. Similarly, the average price per square foot (\$83) is low relative to the Patterson Park neighborhood but higher than other nearby neighborhoods.
- The median “sales to list price” ratio of 0.98 suggests that most sellers receive less than initially sought. About half (47%) of purchasers used financing, with the remainder being cash purchases by investors. The average cumulative days on market is relatively high at 42 days.

The 2017 Housing Market Typology incorporates sales data, building permit activity, and other factors into a set of market clusters or categories that indicate block-level housing market conditions. For Baltimore Highlands, nearly all blocks within the neighborhood are part of the F group. The two blocks bound by Mt. Pleasant Avenue, S. Eaton Street, E. Pratt Street, and S. Highland Avenue are the only exception in the incrementally stronger E group. These categories suggest a much weaker housing market in Baltimore Highlands than the western end of Highlandtown but a stronger market than Ellwood Park to the northwest.

Table 2: Selected characteristics from 2017 Housing Market Typology. Source: Baltimore City Department of Planning. Values based on sales data from Q3 2015 - Q2 2017 and property data from July 2017.

	BLOCK GROUP	SALES (#)	MEDIAN SALES PRICE	HOMEOWNER-OCCUPIED (% TOTAL)	PERMITS OVER \$10K (% TOTAL)	FORECLOSURE FILINGS (#)	FORECLOSURE SALES (% TOTAL)
F	245102604043	90	\$42,361	34.3%	0.9%	14	15.6%
F	245102608001	85	\$56,000	30.1%	1.7%	10	11.8%
E	245102608002	125	\$98,000	47.1%	7.2%	10	8.0%



MAP 6. Market clusters in Baltimore Highlands area from the 2017 Housing Market Typology.

Data: Baltimore City Department of Planning



Two story brick rowhouses on the 3900 block of Mount Pleasant Avenue (January 18, 2022)

Based on property data from the State Department of Assessment and Taxation, of 1,048 improved parcels in the district, 912 (87%) are zoned residential and are not vacant. Among the latter group, there are 212 properties (23%) that are listed as owner occupied and 700 (77%) that are either rental properties or some non-residential use. Only 35 (3%) of all properties in the district are vacant—a significantly lower vacancy rate than the city overall and most other neighborhoods.

NDC used this property data to map vacancy and tenure by block throughout the neighborhood and found both low vacancy and low homeownership rates. Only a handful of blocks—the 3400 and 3900 blocks of E. Pratt Street—at the neighborhood's border with Highlandtown are majority owner-occupied. Similarly, only a handful of blocks—part of the south side of the 3500 block of E. Fairmount, part of the north side of the 3500 block of E. Baltimore St., and the west side of the 100 block of S. Eaton Street have more than 10% of properties vacant.

Streets and transportation

Ease of access to area employers and commercial services by walking, riding public transportation, or driving is a key asset for the Baltimore Highlands neighborhood. In one group discussion with neighbors, a resident on Leverton Street explained she decided to rent in the neighborhood because she wanted to live within walking distance of the Johns Hopkins Medical Campus as well as the Orange and Blue CityLink bus lines. The CityLink bus routes provide high frequency service and access to jobs at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services headquarters in Woodlawn, downtown Baltimore, Bayview Medical Center, and White Marsh Mall.

*Table 3: Five busiest MTA Bus Stops in and around Baltimore Highlands.
Source: Maryland Transit Administration.*

STOP	DIRECTION	ROUTES	SHELTER	RIDERS ON	RIDERS OFF	TOTAL
HIGHLAND AVE. & BALTIMORE ST.	N	BL, OR, 22	✓	426	197	623
E. FAYETTE ST. & HIGHLAND AVE.	W	BL, OR	✗	406	144	550
HIGHLAND AVE. & E. BALTIMORE ST.	S	BL, OR, 22	✓	164	227	391
HIGHLAND AVE. & FAYETTE ST.	S	22	✓	68	210	278
E. FAYETTE ST. & HIGHLAND AVE.	E	BL, OR	✗	121	148	269

For neighbors who have access to a car, the proximity of Baltimore Highlands to U.S. Route 40, I-95, and I-895, mean that the neighborhood is also short drive from retail destinations within the city, such as the Shops at Canton Crossing, or in Baltimore County, such as the Golden Ring Shopping Center in Rosedale or Eastpoint Mall in Dundalk.

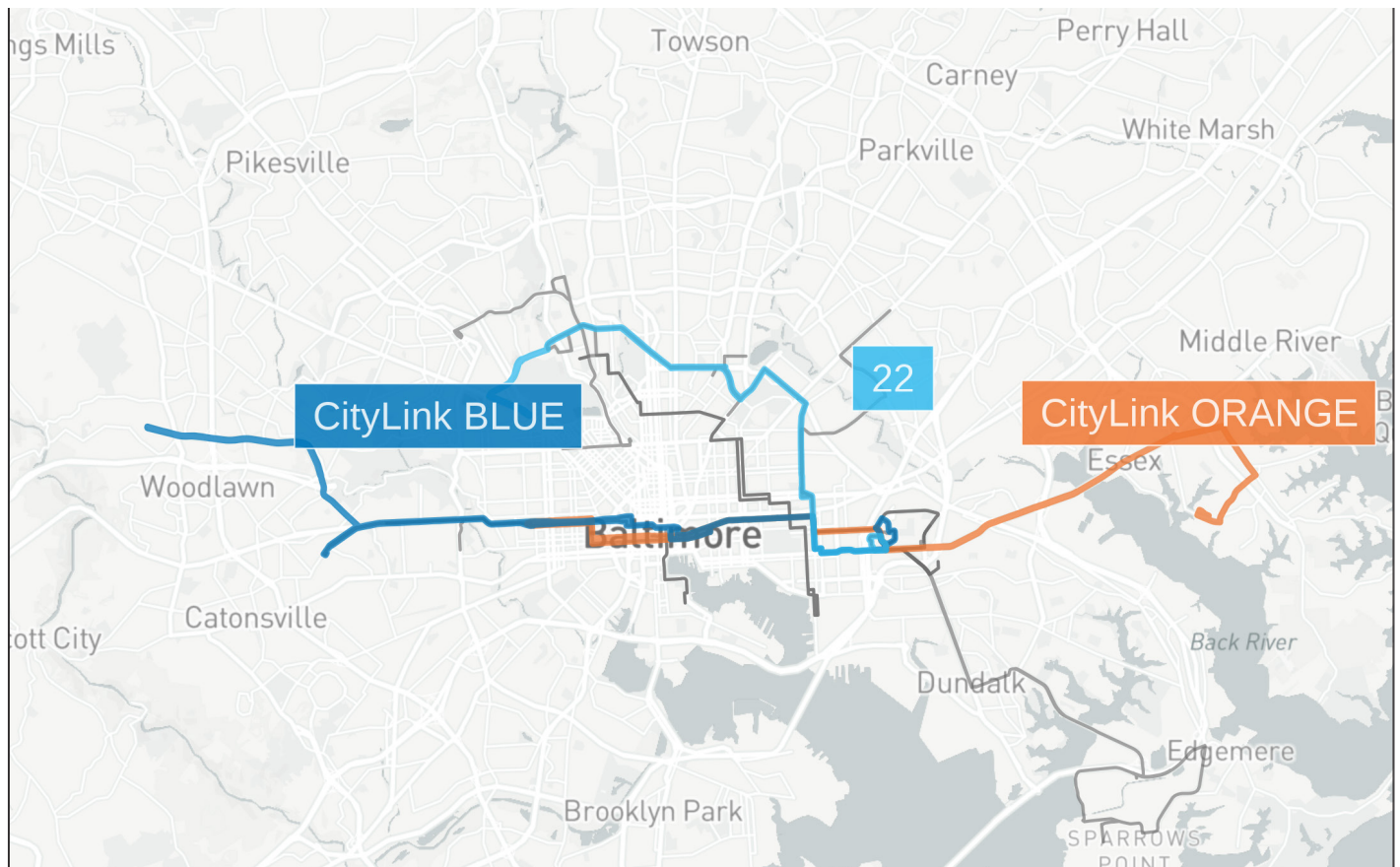
*Table 4: Area Resident Workplace Destinations.
Source: U.S. Census/Baltimore Metropolitan Council.*

WHERE AREA RESIDENTS WORK	% OF WORKERS
Baltimore City	62.63%
Baltimore County	24.22%
Anne Arundel County	7.58%
Other Baltimore MSA Counties	5.57%

Unfortunately, the convenience for drivers comes at a cost for residents dealing with the large volume of cars and trucks that travel through the neighborhood daily. For example, based on U.S. Census Bureau data, there are an estimated:

- 5,250 workers commuting into the area
- 2,850 residents commuting outside the area
- 300 residents who also work in the area

In addition to daily commuters, Haven Street is a designated truck route connecting E. Monument Street to I-95 and the Port of Baltimore. One Baltimore Street resident



MAP 7. Frequent MTA bus routes around Baltimore Highlands

Frequent routes include the CityLink Blue and Orange along E. Fayette St. and the LocalLink 22 on N. Highland Ave. Other nearby routes (appearing in dark gray on the map) include LocalLink 21 (Woodberry to Canton Crossing) on N. Linwood Ave. Data: Maryland Transit Administration.

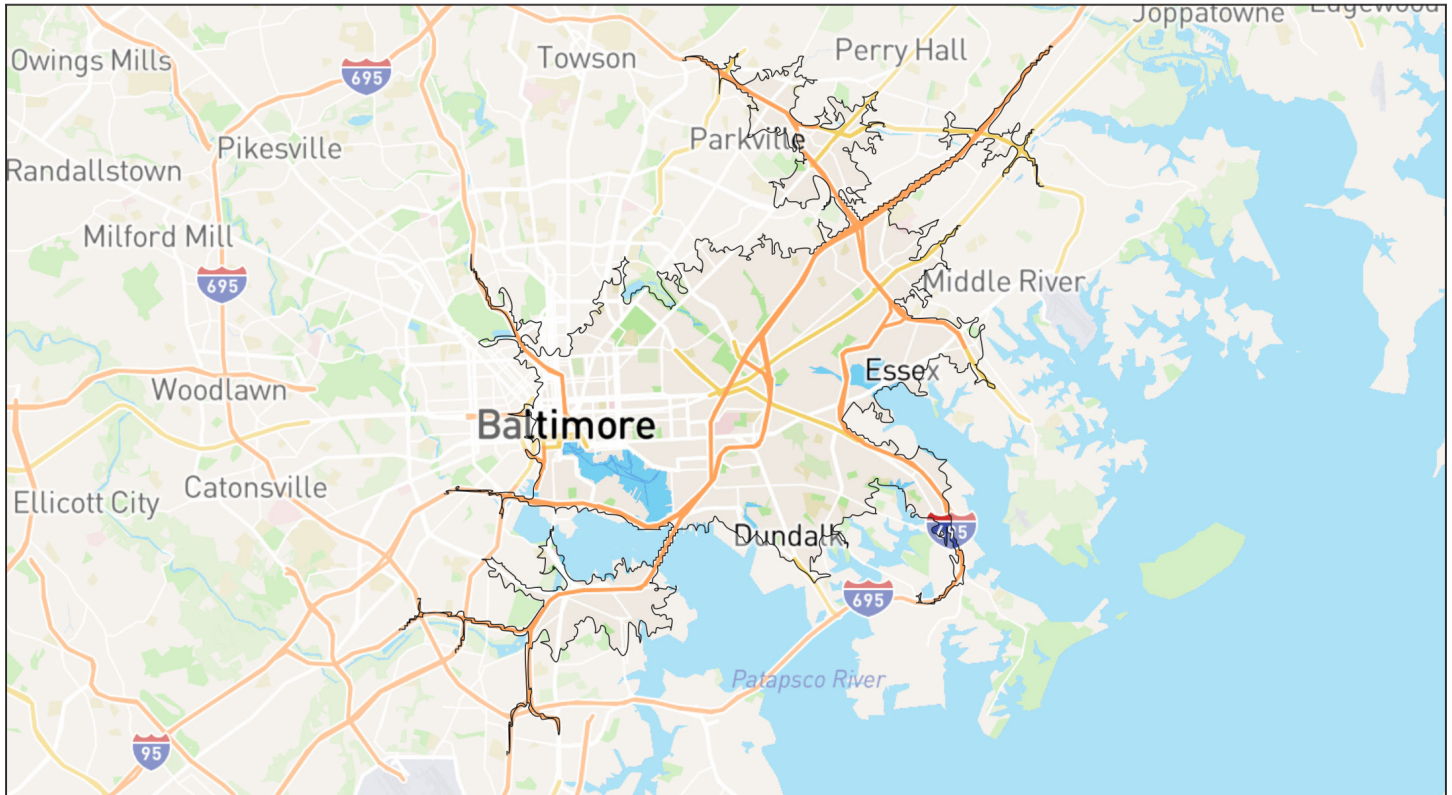
reported that they can “feel all the bumps and bruises” when cars and trucks speed past their two-story rowhouse. Other residents explained that speeding drivers are a major safety concern on Conkling Street. There are currently no speed cameras or red-light cameras located within the neighborhood or immediate vicinity.

Several previous plans have addressed transportation issues for the neighborhood and the broader area in detail including the Southeast Baltimore Complete Streets Plan (2012) completed by the Baltimore City Department of Planning and the Highland Avenue Transit Placemaking Plan (2017) completed by the Southeast CDC with assistance from the Neighborhood Design Center. Unfortunately, the [Baltimore Bike Master Plan](#) (2015) and the 2017 addendum for the citywide [Separated Bike Lane Network](#) did not recommend any new protected bike lanes for the neighborhood (however, the Department

of Transportation is proposing updates to the Bike Master Plan in 2023).

Southeast Baltimore Complete Streets Plan

The Complete Streets Plan was initiated as an extension of the city’s 2008 Southeast Transportation Plan and sought to apply the Complete Streets framework to identify “smaller, human-scaled and less costly improvements” that could encourage safe walking, biking, and transit use in southeast Baltimore. The plan identified resident-supported opportunities for priority bus routes on E. Fayette Street and Highland Avenue, opportunities for greening on Pratt Street, Conkling Street, and Noble Street, and traffic calming on Highland Avenue and Conkling Street. The plan saw limited implementation in Baltimore Highlands, although the Maryland Transit Administration is currently exploring bus priority lanes for E. Fayette Street as part of the agency’s broader Transit Priority Initiative and RAISE grant.



MAP 8. Area within a 15-minute drive of the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center.

Residents who drive reported the proximity to I-95 and ease of access to services in eastern Baltimore County and jobs in Downtown Baltimore as one advantage of living in Baltimore Highlands. Data: Mapbox Isochrone API.

Highland Avenue Transit Placemaking Plan

This 2017 plan has been partially implemented through the installation of new stop signs and flex post bump-outs at Highland Avenue and Pratt Street as well as new public art and mural projects on Lombard Street. However, requested crosswalk upgrades and turn lane changes at Highland Avenue and E. Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue and Lombard Street have not yet received needed capital funding from the Department of Transportation and implementation is delayed until they can be paired with scheduled road repaving, which may be years away.





Illegal dumping behind former Hathway's Furniture building, 3501 Pulaski Highway
(January 18, 2022)

Trash and sanitation

Illegal dumping in the neighborhood comes from a range of sources. High resident turnover means that some neighbors do not know how to access city bulk trash services. Eviction or the threat of eviction may lead renters to dump belongings in a hurry or landlords to leave debris behind after an illegal eviction nearby. Other sanitation issues noted by residents include rat infestations around commercial dumpsters behind restaurants and carry-out businesses on the 3800 and 3900 blocks of E. Lombard Street and litter along Highland Avenue.

Southeast CDC previously investigated the issue of excessive litter and dumping in and around Baltimore Highlands through the Baltimore Environmental Equity Partnership (BEEP) and a 2019 [analysis of 311 service request data](#) prepared for BEEP by Kris Misage, a Morgan State University graduate student. The analysis documented the unusual density of “dirty alley” 311 requests in the neighborhood and highlighted several hotspots for illegal dumping based on both the request data and feedback from Southeast CDC staff. These hotspots are summarized in the following table.

Table 5: Illegal dumping hotspots in Baltimore Highlands

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
Leverton Street next to Conkling Street Garden	Leverton St. is a popular casual gathering place where visitors routinely leave behind large quantities of beverage containers and other debris. The eastern end of the block is also a common location for dumping mattresses, furniture, and other unwanted bulk trash.
N. Dean St. (between Pulaski Highway and Esther Place) near Hebrew Friendship Cemetery	Overgrown vegetation from the cemetery and limited street lighting limit the visibility of this area potentially encouraging dumping by contractors or others travelling along Pulaski Hwy. Other nearby locations with significant dumping issues include Esther Pl. and Fairmount Ave., Esther Pl. and E. Fayette St., Roberts Pl. and E. Fayette St.
Alley behind the unit block of N. Highland Avenue	The alley behind N. Highland Ave. and effectively nearly all the alleys between E. Baltimore St. and Pulaski Hwy. have issues with dumped bulk trash and unsanitary conditions.
Alley between the 3400 and 3500 blocks of Leverton Street and Baltimore Street	Both the breezeway between Leverton and Lombard and the alley between Leverton St. and Baltimore St. are regular dumping sites.

Neighborhood residents and Southeast CDC staff have also organized clean-ups at and around the Conkling Street Garden regularly since at least 2016 with volunteer support from residents and area business owners (such as B-Fit Lifestyle at Highland Forge), and outside volunteer groups. Unfortunately, the large volume of litter (especially bottles from social gatherings by residents or visitors on Leverton Street) and illegal dumping (including larger bulk items such as mattresses, furniture, and construction debris) require a more coordinated strategy than relying on volunteer clean-ups.

Safety

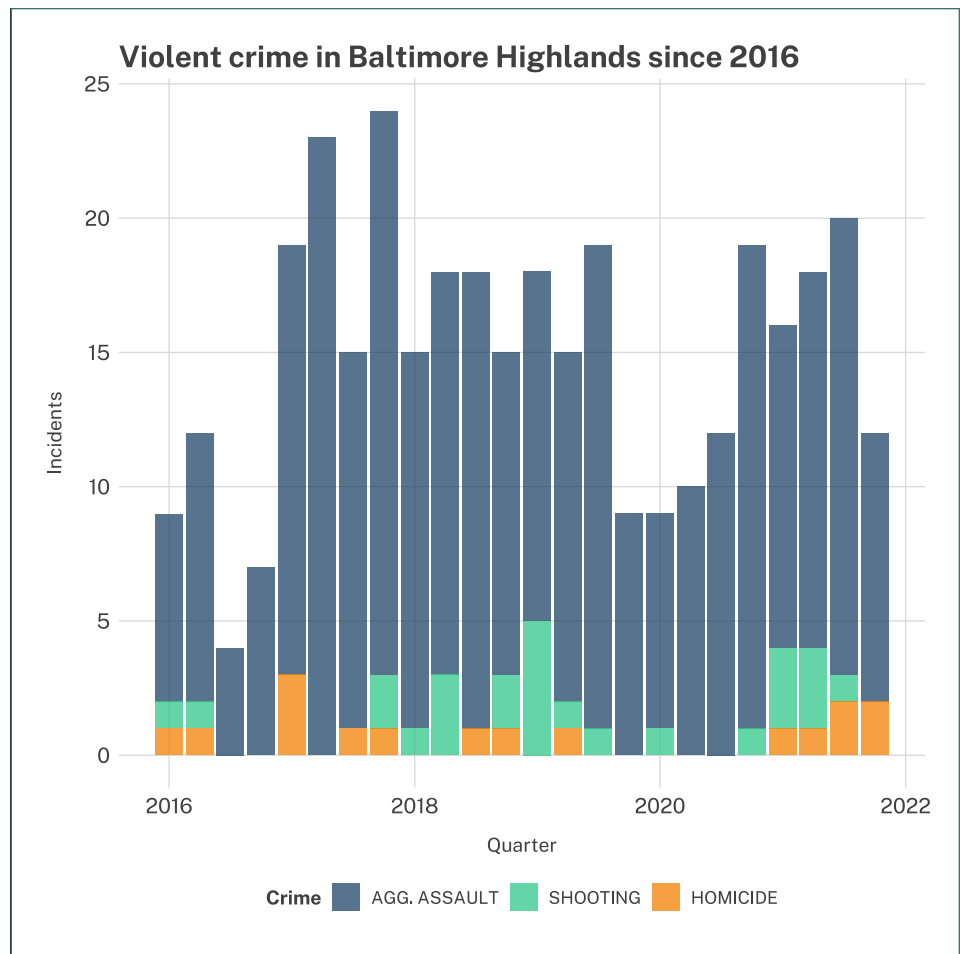
More than three-quarters of residents surveyed by phone (25 of 33) and online (15 of 19) said they do not feel safe walking around the neighborhood after dark. When asked whether they felt safe walking around the neighborhood at night residents shared:

- Fear of robberies, assault, and shootings: “[I do not feel safe] not at all... there was a shooting in front of my house a year ago.”
- Inadequate lighting: “[I feel safe walking at night] but only short distances or to areas I am very familiar with [due to] poor lighting and general apprehension.”
- Harassment and solicitation: “[I do not feel safe walking] by myself because people get mistaken for sex workers.”
- Alcohol use: “[Issues with] rowdy drunk people [are] out of control in the area.”

Some residents feel more comfortable but noted that they feel safe walking with a group, with a dog, or for short distances. In the prior 2018 survey, over half of surveyed residents cited drugs, violence, or safety/noise concerns related to prostitution as one of their “dislikes” about the neighborhood.

The Baltimore Highlands Task Force, a working group that includes representatives from City Councilmember Zeke Cohen’s office along with Southeast CDC, the Baltimore Police Department, and other city agencies, focused on addressing these concerns and met regularly until mid-2022.

Tragically, Baltimore Highlands saw six homicides in 2021—higher than any other year in the past five years. Based on reported crime data, shootings and aggravated assaults increased in 2021 from 2020 but are largely unchanged from 2018 and 2019 before the pandemic. While many surveyed Latino residents expressed support for more police patrol, this plan is focused on physical improvements and programs that can promote safety and reduce violence using other approaches.



PLOT 7. Violent crime in Baltimore Highlands since 2016

Data: Baltimore City Police Department/Open Baltimore.



Laundromat, 100 S. Conkling Street (January 18, 2022)

Retail and commercial services

Baltimore Highlands has many stores, restaurants, and other businesses serving area residents and others who may be driving or taking transit through the neighborhood. Feedback from residents about neighborhood retail and commercial services was collected through the resident survey, online meetings, and a survey of shoppers at the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center. Nearly all survey respondents reported shopping at nearby grocery stores with only a few (5) shopping for food at corner stores in the area or at grocery stores outside the area.

Key areas of commercial development include:

- Highlandtown Village Shopping Center and nearby bars, clubs, and restaurants on E. Lombard Street and S. Haven Street.
- Drive-through restaurants, automotive services, and other business on Pulaski Highway between N. Conkling Street and N. Ellwood Avenue.
- Neighborhood commercial centers including the intersection of E. Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue and at E. Lombard Street and N. Conkling Street.

There are some patterns among the types of businesses located in the neighborhood. The businesses located on Pulaski Highway are largely national chains (including ALDI, McDonald's, Popeye's, and U-Haul storage) attracted by the

visibility of the location and high volume of daily commuters. ALDI has been in operation at the current location since at least the early 2000s and completed a major renovation in 2019.

Many bars and clubs are located near the intersection of E. Lombard Street and Haven Street, including El Antro, El Deportivo Sport Bar, Club Adore, VIP Room Baltimore, Extasis Bar and Restaurant, and El Rancho Blanco Pub. A number of smaller carryout restaurants occupy corner buildings on Highland Avenue, Conkling Street, and Haven Street.

Other nearby commercial areas include the Highlandtown Main Street on Eastern Avenue (between S. East Avenue and S. Haven Street) and the Highland Forge development located on the east side of S. Haven Street in the Kresson neighborhood.

Notable strengths of the neighborhood retail and commercial businesses include convenient access to a range of products and services and diverse options for groceries and restaurants. Challenges to neighborhood retail and commercial businesses include trash, pests, noise, and public safety issues related to local businesses and business patrons.

In discussions with the planning team, residents shared a range of experiences with neighborhood bars and restaurants. For example, one neighbor cited K&D Sports Bar & Lounge (200 S. Conkling Street) as a place where noise and littering by patrons had been a major concern in the past, but they noted changing management practices had led to some improvements over the past two years. Another neighbor highlighted similar issues with patrons at Mr. Joe's Bar.



Yahaira Dominican Salon, 3400 Esther Place
(January 18, 2022)



Aqua Bar & Grill, 3537 E. Fairmount Avenue
(January 18, 2022)

Residents also expressed concern about the public consumption of beverages as both a sanitation issue—cans and bottles are a major source of litter in the area—and as a potential public safety issue. Most of the area businesses hold a “tavern” liquor license that allows for both on-site alcohol consumption and carry-out purchases. This license has been subject of close attention in other neighborhoods with some taverns being “sham taverns” that effectively function as liquor stores with extended hours of operation.

In addition, there are a significant number of vacant or underutilized commercial spaces throughout the neighborhood. For example, there are multiple vacancies within the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center and at the 200 N. Highland Avenue shopping center north of Fayette Street.

Southeast CDC has already undertaken several projects to improve public space and commercial areas in Baltimore Highlands funded by the State of Maryland’s Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative (BRNI), Healthy Neighborhoods, and other sources. Examples include the installation of branded neighborhood trash cans near the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center, a mural by artist Jeff Henriquez at the locally owned Corona Grocery, and a mural by Mauricio Ramirez on the tower of the Felco Packaging Company building (4001 E. Baltimore Street).



Hazlo International Supermarket and the shopping center, 3800 E. Lombard Street.
(Courtesy: Broad Street Realty)

Highlandtown Village Shopping Center

The Highlandtown Village Shopping Center is a key retail area in the neighborhood with fourteen units anchored by the Hazlo International Supermarket. The shopping center opened in 1987 anchored by a local grocer, Santoni's Super Market in the 27,000 sq. ft. space now occupied by Hazlo. Established in 1930, Santoni's expanded from a single store on the 100 block of S. Eaton Street into a small chain during the late 1980s, which closed its final doors in 2013.

To better understand resident perceptions and experiences with neighborhood retail, NDC and Southeast CDC conducted a survey of shoppers at the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center in July and August 2021. The team interviewed thirty-one shoppers and employees. Of those surveyed, half reside in Highlandtown; a third lives elsewhere in Baltimore City, and the remainder live in the southeast area. Two-thirds of those surveyed have a full or part-time job, and a third are either unemployed or retired. Half of those surveyed are between thirty and forty years old.

When asked what was liked most about the shopping center, half of the respondents liked

that the shopping center is convenient, and two-fifths liked that the shopping center has a grocery store and Latin products. The respondents highlighted the most frequented stores in the shopping center as Hazlo International foods, Dollar Tree, and the other carry-out restaurants.

Most of the respondents reported being satisfied with shopping options in the center but a third were not satisfied with the mix. When asked what types of businesses respondents would like to see in the area, a fifth of the respondents suggested a shoe store; a tenth suggested another grocery store (more options) and restaurant/ pub. Other business types mentioned were pharmacy, book, cafe/bakery, and children's stores.

When asked about challenges at the shopping center, half of the respondents did not identify any obstacles. A third of respondents highlighted dirty streets or litter around the center, insufficient lighting, existing stores not offering the goods they want to purchase, or not meeting their expectations for cleanliness.

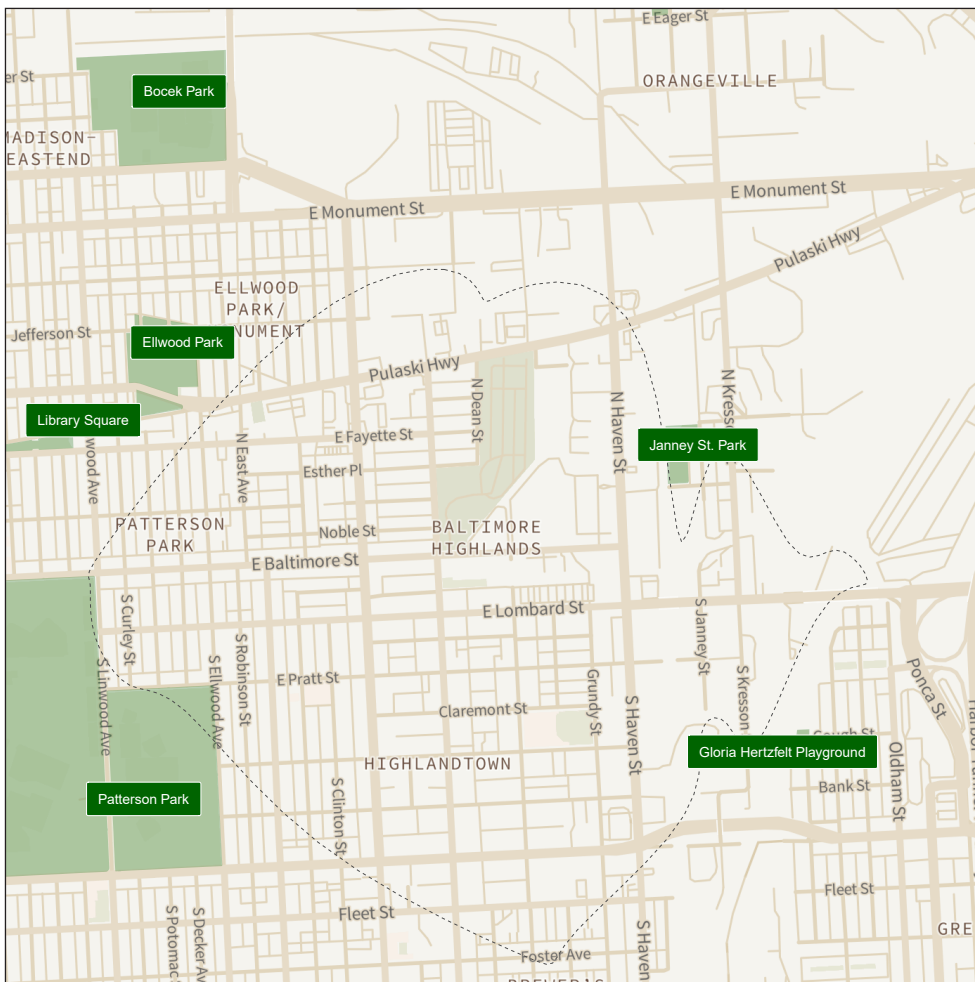
Parks and recreation

Parks

While there are no public parks located within Baltimore Highlands, many neighbors feel closely connected to nearby Patterson Park. In a small group conversation, one neighbor on Pratt Street explained: “The biggest thing that we have going for us here is Patterson Park.” However, the park is not easily accessible from all parts of the neighborhood.

Walking Distance Mapping for Southeast Baltimore Parks

An analysis of walking distances using household population data for Baltimore Highlands found that only one in three households live within a 6-minute walk of Patterson Park (leaving out all blocks east of S. Dean Street or north of E. Baltimore Street). Ellwood Park is less accessible for neighbors west of N. Conkling Street or south of Fairmount Avenue and Janney Street being too far for all but a handful of blocks on Haven Street and E. Lombard Street.



A ten minute walk from the Conkling Street Garden can reach Patterson Park (138 acres). Ellwood Park (6 acres) is a bit farther and requires residents to cross Pulaski Highway. Two other small parks (each less than 1.5 acres)—Janney Street Park at 140 N. Janney Street and the Library Square Park at 2800 Pulaski Highway—are also nearby but too distant for many residents to access on foot.

MAP 9. Baltimore Highlands area parks

In addition, the other two nearby parks—Ellwood Park and Janney Street Park—are too far away for most residents, with only one in ten households living within a six-minute walk of either park. Moreover, the poor condition of the Ellwood Park playground and limited recreational programming has made it unlikely that people would travel the longer distance to reach the space.

Open spaces

Community-managed and supported green spaces in Baltimore Highlands include the Conkling Street Garden (25 S. Conkling Street), Robert's Place Garden (3601 Roberts Place), and the landscaped path and steps that connect Leverton Avenue and E. Baltimore Street on the west side of the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center. The availability of small green spaces like the Conkling Street Garden is particularly important given that the northern and eastern sections of the neighborhood have less access to Patterson Park compared to the southern section closer to Highlandtown.

Other actively managed private green spaces in the neighborhood include the Hebrew Friendship Cemetery (3600 E. Baltimore Street) and a lawn and seating area for tenants at Highlands Forge (31 N. Haven Street). One additional private green space outside the neighborhood is the Oldham Crossing Community Dog Park at S. Newkirk Street on the south side of the Lombard Street overpass. In 2020, Mid-Atlantic Baking added a small outdoor seating area with three picnic tables at the northeast corner of E. Baltimore and N. Haven Streets behind the fence that encloses the complex. However, all three spaces are private and currently have no community use.

For neighbors in the southern end of the neighborhood, the field next to Highlandtown #237 (bordered by Claremont, Grundy and Gough Streets) also provides an important green space for neighbors to walk dogs or enjoy recreational activities. The planned redevelopment of the school building for the 21st Century Schools Program, however, will reduce the size of the green space from 1.3 acres to 0.8 acres. Design for the school additions anticipate the development



Volunteers and Southeast CDC staff at the Conkling Street Community Garden (August 10, 2019; Courtesy: Southeast CDC)

of a soccer field on the green space and a new playground in a partially enclosed courtyard space. Based on recent conversations with school leadership, the playground may remain gated and only available to students during scheduled recess periods or for approved after school programs.

The playground for Highlandtown #215 (located across from the school at 200 S. Bouldin Street) had been closed outside of school hours but, in 2020, opened for broader community use by area children and families.

Conkling Street Garden

This is a community-driven, small-plot urban garden that operates on property owned by Milton Electric and leased by the Highlandtown Community Association. Southeast CDC staff help coordinate a committee of area residents to organize projects and events in the space. Major recent improvements include the removal of a large concrete platform, the installation of a new sign, and the creation of a pollinator garden with the Patterson Park Audubon Center.



Sign on the front gate at Conkling Street Garden (May 1, 2021)

Robert's Place Garden

Established on a vacant lot at the southwest corner of Roberts Place and N. Conkling Street by the former Baltimore Highlands Community Association, this garden features garden beds, rain barrels, a sign and a mural by Bridget Cimino depicting the legendary Baltimore Highlands fox (all funded by a 2018 Baltimore Community Foundation grant).

Hebrew Friendship Cemetery

This historic private cemetery is surrounded by a stone wall and chain link fence with an entrance on E. Baltimore Street. The cemetery boundaries include Pulaski Highway on the north, industrial properties facing Haven Street on the east, E. Baltimore Street on the south, and N. Conkling Street and N. Dean Street on the west. Some residents remarked on the beauty of the space, but none reported using the area for walking or any other use.

Highland Forge

The open space at Highland Forge is a grass-covered, terraced lawn with several park benches and a fountain in front of the space occupied by the Haven Street Ballroom and immediately south of the Crown Cork and Seal Company building. The space is screened from the street by a row of densely planted high bushes and there is no continuous sidewalk from Haven Street into the site, limiting access for any visitors on foot.

Recreation

Opportunities for youth recreation in the neighborhood are limited but there are several programs available in the area.

Summer Youth Collaborative (SEYC)

Established in 2017, SEYC is a network of ten non-profit organizations in Southeast Baltimore that provide summer jobs to local teens through the city's YouthWorks program along with enrichment activities to explore different career paths and educational opportunities. Southeast CDC is a core member of this collaborative along with Banner Neighborhoods, Friends of Patterson Park, Patterson Park Audubon Center, Breath of God Church, Patterson Park Public Charter School, and the Creative Alliance



Neighborhood youth at the grand opening of the Baltimore Bike Experience workshop.
(November 9, 2022)

Our Lady of Pompei Church Teen Youth Group

In 2016, Fr. Giuliano Gargiulo joined Our Lady of Pompei Catholic Church (3600 Claremont Street) and established a teen youth group for church members. The group is dedicated to volunteer service activities and support for South American missions affiliated with the Operazione Mato Grosso (OMG) program. The church facilities also include a gymnasium built in the 1960s which is used by group members and was recently repainted through an ongoing capital improvement campaign.

Patterson Park Youth Soccer

Since 2018, the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks and Friends of Patterson Park have organized a recreational youth soccer program for children ages nine and under with games on Saturdays each week during the season and practice sessions during the week.

Baltimore Bike Experience

Since 2016, Andy Dahl of Southeast CDC, and Serbando Fernandez, a resident volunteer, have led a regular drop-in youth bike shop on the first floor of Southeast CDC's Highlandtown office. Known as the Baltimore Bike Experience, the group creates a safe environment allowing youth a space where they build friendships, learn repair, maintenance, artistic expression, and safe use of their bicycle. Southeast CDC recently renovated a historic gas station at 2912 Pulaski Highway as a permanent home for the program, in the Ellwood Park community, adjacent to Baltimore Highlands.



Felco Packaging Co. Tower Mural, 4001 E. Baltimore Street.
Artist: Mauricio Ramirez (Courtesy: Southeast CDC)

Goals for Baltimore Highlands

Overview

This plan recommends Southeast CDC and partners focus on three key goals.

1. Make Baltimore Highlands a more friendly, playful, and beautiful neighborhood

Creating cleaner and more welcoming public spaces can improve quality of life for existing residents and attract new visitors to vital community spaces like the Conkling Street Garden and commercial anchors like the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center.

2. Make Baltimore Highlands a safer place for neighbors and visitors of all ages

Traffic safety and violence reduction are urgent concerns for many residents and addressing these challenges is essential to retain and support the existing community.

3. Keep Baltimore Highlands affordable for renters and create new opportunities for homeownership

Over the past decade, many first-time homebuyers and new immigrants to the U.S. have come to Baltimore Highlands in search of an affordable place to live. Maintaining or increasing affordability and creating new opportunities for homeownership can benefit both low and moderate-income residents as well as the broader community development of southeast Baltimore.

Goal 1: Make Baltimore Highlands a more friendly, playful, and beautiful neighborhood

Strategy 1.1: Build community among English- and Spanish-speaking neighbors of all backgrounds

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.1.1	Support community organizations in hosting bi-lingual “stoop nights” to better connect Spanish- and English-speaking neighbors	HCA	SECDC, Comite, Nuestras Raices	Program	<1 years
1.1.2	Explore partnerships to offer mediation services to Baltimore Highlands residents (recruit bilingual volunteers; identify meeting space in area)	HCA	SECDC, City Council members, Community School Coordinators	Program	1-3 years

While canvassing the neighborhood, Southeast CDC and NDC staff met neighbors who freely expressed anti-immigrant beliefs (suggesting, for example, that Spanish-speaking neighbors “pretended” not to understand English) and immigrants who shared anti-Black stereotypes. Two-thirds of Black residents surveyed in the 2021 phone and in-person survey cited “language barriers” as a factor that makes it more difficult to meet and get to know their neighbors. A white English-speaking resident surveyed online shared that connecting to neighbors from different backgrounds “can feel overwhelming sometimes.”

Fortunately, many are willing and interested to learn. A 75-year-old Black neighbor proposed that Southeast CDC start organizing “language and culture exchange programs” and shared his feeling that “I should have learned [Spanish] better by now.” The leadership of the Highlandtown Community Association has also expressed interest for diversifying the organization’s membership and increasing participation from Spanish-speaking neighbors.

Southeast CDC previously funded an initiative to help staff from a group southeast Baltimore nonprofit organizations (organized by the Friends of Patterson Park) to practice and improve their Spanish language skills by working with students at City College. Southeast CDC and HCA should continue to work on this issue by partnering with groups that organize Spanish-speaking residents, such as Comité Latino de Baltimore, and institutions that model effective engagement for English and Spanish-speaking residents, such as Breath of God Lutheran Church or Friends of Patterson Park.

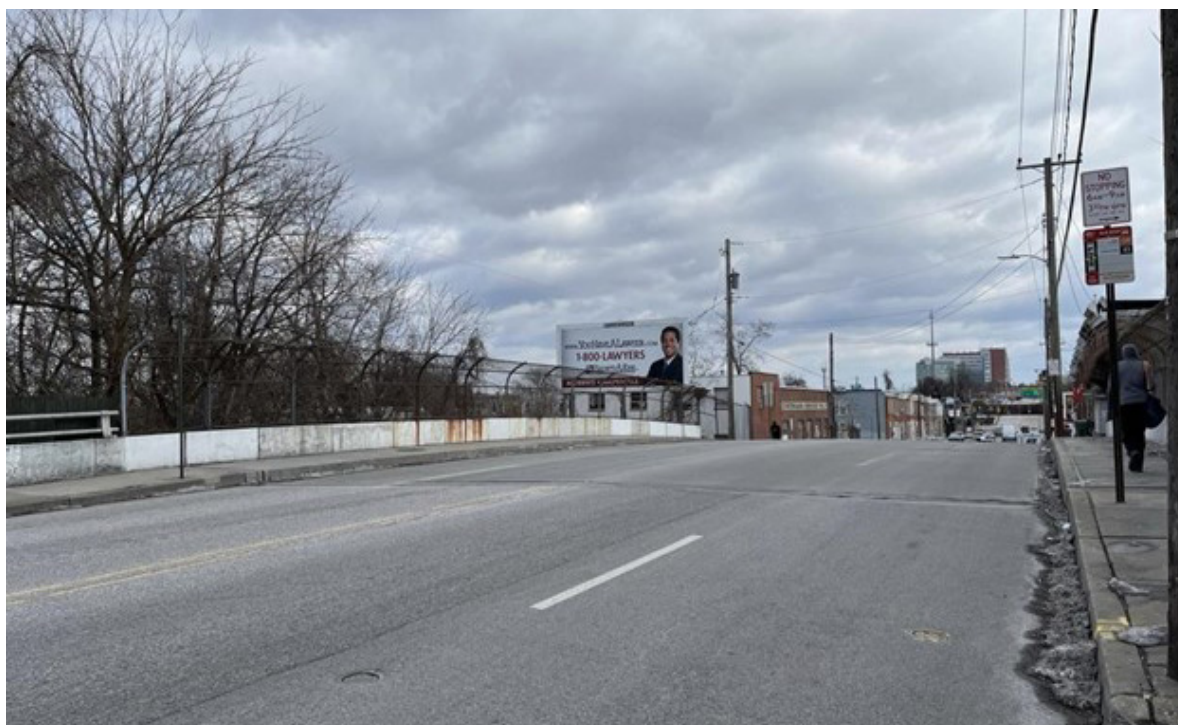
Through these partnerships, residents and Southeast CDC staff could expand neighborhood outreach efforts to include bilingual promotional materials, interpretation support for guest speakers, and social activities that do not rely on mutual language fluency. Partners and volunteers could organize a regular language café to connect native English and Spanish speakers with interested

language learners. Potential nearby venues include the Southeast Anchor and Patterson Park branch locations of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Creative Alliance, and CASA de Maryland's Baltimore Welcome Center.

In addition to social and community building programming, Southeast CDC, HCA, and partners should consider offering bilingual mediation services if needed to address potential conflict between English and Spanish-speaking neighbors.

FOCUS ON: Action 1.2.5 - Design and install a beautification project on the Lombard Street Bridge as a new neighborhood gateway

Murals across southeast Baltimore use themes of immigration and diversity. Two examples are “Across the Waves...” (2008) by Joel Bergner, which highlights the experiences of immigrants past and present and “Tres Amigas” (2015) by Pablo Machioli and Edgar Reyes, which shows a white, Black, and Latina woman laughing together. The Lombard Street Bridge is a key gateway for people driving into Baltimore Highlands from Bayview and eastern Baltimore County and could be an opportunity to showcase the neighborhood's diversity with a public art and beautification project. Local examples of other bridge-based mural projects include “The Bridge of Empowerment” (2015) by Amy Sherald for Art@Work Sandtown or the Mannasota Bridge mural (between Shannon Drive and Parkside Drive) (2017) by Paige Orpin for Belair-Edison Neighborhoods, Inc. (BENI). Potential funding sources for this initiative include the Maryland State Arts Council or the Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative (BRNI).



Lombard Street Bridge looking east towards Kresson and Bayview (Action 1.2.5)
(January 18, 2022)

Strategy 1.2: Make public spaces more child-friendly and family-friendly

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.2.1	Coordinate with local youth-serving organizations to host programming at the Conkling Street Garden	HCA	SECDC, Southeast Anchor Library, Creative Alliance	Program	<1 years
1.2.2	Explore opportunity for residents to host “play streets” events on low-traffic blocks	HCA	DOT, SECDC, Livable Streets Coalition	Program	<1 years
1.2.3	Install features that add playfulness (e.g. sidewalk murals, outdoor musical instruments, balance beams) to public spaces around the neighborhood	SECDC	ha!	Project	1-3 years
1.2.4	Improve crosswalks and intersections along walking routes to Highlandtown #237	Department of Planning	DOT, HCA, Highlandtown #237, Community School Coordinator	Project	1-3 years
1.2.5	Design and install a beautification project on the Lombard Street Bridge as a new neighborhood gateway	SECDC	DOT, HCA, JHMI, Kresson neighborhood groups	Project	1-3 years

Multiple parents in the area shared that they did not let their children walk around the neighborhood independently. Neighbors cited traffic safety, street harassment, and solicitation of girls and young women as major areas of concern for both their own children and other young people who did walk around the neighborhood independently. Multiple neighbors surveyed in 2018 and 2021 listed youth-friendly recreation among their future hopes and top priorities for improving neighborhood safety. Residents explained that the neighborhood “needs something for children to do after school,” “more safe spaces for teenagers,” and easier access to playgrounds. Due to speeding drivers and no speed bumps on N. Clinton Street, one neighbor explained: “I don’t feel safe letting my children play outside.” **Strategy 2.3** addresses safety issues more extensively.

Global interest in making cities more kid- and family-friendly has sparked a wide range of creative approaches to address these challenges. Southeast CDC and partners should explore programs, such as “play streets”, that promote youth recreation in public spaces and implement projects to make the neighborhood safer and more playful. See, for example, comparable programs such as Philadelphia Play Captains program, which trains teens in “playful learning, facilitation, leadership, and other workplace skills” to support children using Play Streets.

Strategy 1.3: Maintain and expand community greening initiatives

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.3.1	Organize seasonal maintenance events for rain garden and landscaped steps by the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center	SECDC	HCA	Program	<1 years
1.3.2	Revive student green team at Highlandtown #237	SECDC	Highlandtown #237, HCA, Community School Coordinator	Program	1-3 years
1.3.3	Recruit additional volunteer stewards for Robert's Place Garden	SECDC	HCA	Program	1-3 years
1.3.4	Work with property owner to make interim improvements to lot at Mt. Pleasant Ave. and S. Dean St.	SECDC	HCA	Project	1-3 years
1.3.5	Complete additional street tree plantings on Fayette St. and Conkling St. and other feasible sites	SECDC	Baltimore Tree Trust, HCA, BCRP Forestry	Project	1-3 years
1.3.6	Host DPW GROW Workshops to engage neighbors in improving terraced front yard plantings	SECDC	DPW, Audubon, HCA	Project	1-3 years
1.3.7	Connect volunteers at Conkling Street Garden with training and expand garden volunteer network	HCA	SECDC, UMD Master Gardeners	Program	3-6 years
1.3.8	Support alley gating on the 3400 block of Leverton Street	SECDC	HCA	Project	3-6 years

Diverse funding sources and a strong network of local partners (including Blue Water Baltimore, Tree Baltimore, the Waterfront Partnership, and others) have helped Southeast CDC and HCA support many different community greening projects in and around Baltimore Highlands.

Unfortunately, volunteer stewardship of community green spaces can be difficult especially as a long-term management strategy. It is unfair to ask residents to keep up with the constant frustration of litter, dumping, and weeds without adequate support. While Southeast CDC should explore opportunities for continued community greening (such as the lot Mt. Pleasant Avenue and S. Dean Street), prioritizing maintenance and stewardship is key to maximizing the benefits of existing green spaces for residents.

FOCUS ON: Action 1.3.2 - Revive student green team at Highlandtown #237

For several years, between 2014 and 2020, the students at Highlandtown #237 participated in a Green Team organized by the community school coordinator. With support from the Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE), they created a school garden and outdoor learning space, promoted school recycling, and participated in the design of an “Adopt-a-Lot” space on Eastern Avenue. Identifying new sources of support and reviving this student organization could provide neighborhood youth with a way to get involved with neighborhood greening projects and share their priorities for improvements with SECDC staff and partners.



Highlandtown #237 Green Team garden, 2017
(April 2017; Courtesy: Southeast CDC)

FOCUS ON: Action 1.3.6 - Host DPW GROW Center workshops to engage neighbors in improving terraced front yard plantings

Efforts to green and beautify Baltimore Highlands can take inspiration from other local examples such as the Union Square Bloom Your Block competition or the Waterfront Partnership’s Green Stoop Challenge. Blocks with setback rowhouses and small front yards, including 3500-3600 block of E. Fayette Street, 200 block of N. Conkling Street, and 3600 blocks of Roberts Place and Esther Place, offer a unique opportunity for community greening. SECDC should continue to partner DPW to organize Baltimore GROW Center (Green Resources & Outreach for Watersheds) workshops for residents and property owners in this area and explore ways to promote the beautification of neighborhood rowhouse blocks.

Strategy 1.4: Expand access to park spaces and recreational opportunities

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.4.1	Promote youth recreational programming at Patterson Park to area families in Spanish and English	Friends of Patterson Park	SECDC, Banner Neighborhoods, Community School Coordinators	Program	<1 years
1.4.2	Recruit partners to organize regular youth and adult recreational programming at Ellwood Park and at Highlandtown #237 athletic fields	Banner Neighborhoods	BCRP, Friends of Patterson Park	Program	1-3 years
1.4.3	Implement community programming at the Baltimore Bike Experience workshop	SECDC		Program	<1 years
1.4.4	Implement the southeast section of the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network	Department of Planning	BCRP, RTC, SECDC	Policy	6-10 years
1.4.5	Create a safe and accessible walking route to Janney Street Park using the Baltimore Greenway Trail	Department of Planning	BCRP, RTC	Project	6-10 years

While space for new parks or recreational facilities is not immediately available, Southeast CDC can work through partnerships with the Friends of Patterson Park and Banner Neighborhoods to promote existing programming (**Action 1.4.1**) and expand recreational programming at nearby parks and open spaces (**Action 1.4.2**). The opening of the Baltimore Bike Experience workshop (**Action 1.4.3**) and the long-term implementation of the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network (**Action 1.4.4**) will also help increase resident mobility and make parks outside the neighborhood (including Janney Street Park in nearby Kresson) more accessible and convenient.

The development of the Greenway adjacent to the Haven Street corridor will provide opportunities for recreation and an alternative method to access places of employment and amenities. Studies suggest that residents place significant value on trails and may be willing to pay a premium for homes nearby, which raises questions about long-term housing affordability. However, a 2020 study commissioned by the Rails to Trails Conservancy estimated that “the additional monthly rent for leased residential properties is estimated to average \$64 for properties within a quarter mile of the trail and \$26 for properties within a half mile. These rent increases are expected to diminish beyond the immediate vicinity of the trail.” (“Economic and social benefits of completing the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network,” October 2020) Helping existing residents become homeowners in the area prior to trail construction is one strategy for addressing potential rent and home price increases and is addressed in Goal 3.



Photo illustration of Baltimore Greenway Trail head at Monument City Brewing Company, 1 N. Haven Street. (Courtesy: Rails to Trails)

FOCUS ON: Action 1.4.4 - Implement the southeast section of the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network

Linking the Inner Harbor in Canton to the Herring Run Trail in northeast Baltimore, the trail connection will tie together the entire east side of the city by converting a BGE utility corridor and former railroad line into vibrant park spaces that weave through meadows, wetlands, city streets, former industrial areas, and diverse neighborhoods. The Greenway will link East Baltimore developments and destinations, connecting the people living in Baltimore’s southeast and northeast neighborhoods to the waterfront and downtown – building connections between the neighborhoods of Armistead Gardens, Orchard Ridge, Orangeville, Baltimore Highlands, Highlandtown, Brewers Hill Crescent, Greektown, and Canton to some of the fastest-growing retail, housing, and job markets in the region.

Adapted from “Economic and Social Benefits of Completing the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network” (2020).

Strategy 1.5: Improve streetscaping in commercial areas

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.5.1	Support businesses in the lighting of alleys or service spaces as a deterrent to illegal dumping	SECDC	ha!	Project	1-3 years
1.5.2	Work with property owners on E. Lombard St. and S. Haven St. to improve appearance/maintenance of sidewalk-adjacent landscaping	SECDC	ha!	Project	1-3 years
1.5.3	Connect area businesses with facade improvement funds and technical assistance through the Highlandtown Arts District	SECDC	ha!, BDC	Program	3-6 years
1.5.4	Explore possible creation of a outdoor seating and dining area at the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center	SECDC	ha!	Project	3-6 years
1.5.5	Explore business owner interest in removing on-street parking to create outdoor dining spaces on Grundy St. and E. Lombard St.	SECDC	ha!, DOT	Project	3-6 years
1.5.6	Work with the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center management company to improve pedestrian access and safety around the center parking lot	SECDC	ha!	Project	3-6 years



Intersection of E. Lombard and Haven Streets showing faded crosswalk markings and an individual using mobility scooter crossing the street. (January 18, 2022)

Improving the appearance, cleanliness, and safety of commercial areas would be beneficial to residents, shoppers, and local businesses. The Highlandtown Village Shopping Center is already a center of activity for many residents, so improving adjoining landscaping (**Action 1.5.2**), creating a new seating/dining space (**Action 1.5.5**), and improving pedestrian access (**Action 1.5.7**) would have public benefits beyond the interests of the shopping center owner and its tenants. As noted in **Strategy 3.6**, the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center could also be an opportunity for redevelopment with a multi-family and/or mixed-use development. If a development takes place at this site, the developer could be a source of support for public space improvements in the vicinity.

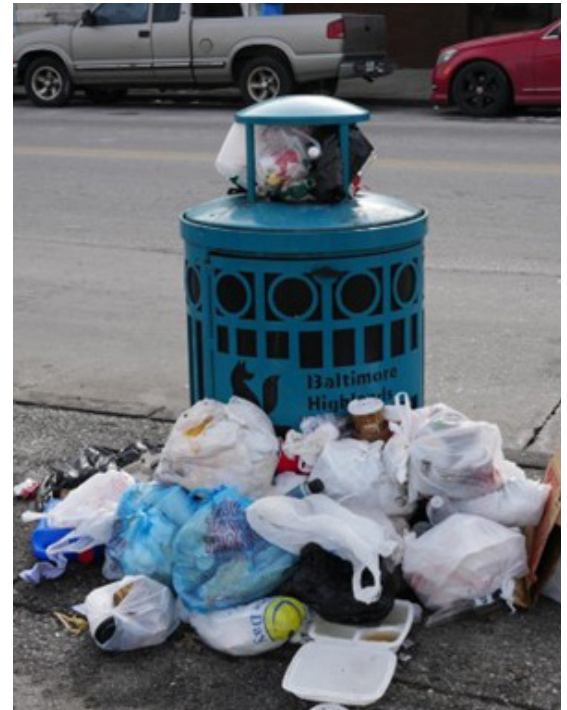
Nearby businesses could also benefit from investing in additional outdoor seating (**Action 1.5.6**). One potential location is the 100 block of Grundy Street where replacing on-street parking with outdoor public space could create a seating area for tenants at Highlandtown Co-op during the day and Extasis Bar & Restaurant / My Cousin's Place during the evening. Another option is to remove on-street parking on the south side of Lombard Street to create public space for adjoining businesses (e.g. El Rancho Blanco and VIP Room). Promoting the use of managed public spaces for socializing may also help address issues with dumping and litter related to the informal social space located on the south side of the Conkling Street Garden.

Strategy 1.6: Advocate for improved city sanitation services and enforcement

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.6.1	Monitor city servicing of corner cans on E. Baltimore St. and E. Lombard St. and, if needed, advocate for more cans or more frequent service	HCA	SECDC	Policy	<1 years
1.6.2	Survey multi-family buildings to ensure that all properties provide tenants with sufficient cans	SECDC	HCA	Program	1-3 years
1.6.3	Support resident education on use of new recycling carts	SECDC	DPW, HCA	Program	<1 years
1.6.4	Expand Spanish language outreach on city services and regulations for household and bulk trash	SECDC	DPW, HCA	Program	3-6 years
1.6.5	Educate area contractors about increased illegal dumping fines and encourage registration for small hauler permits	SECDC	DPW, CASA, HCA	Program	1-3 years
1.6.6	Advocate for DHCD to make Spanish-speaking code enforcement officers available to engage Spanish-speaking property owners	SECDC	City Council members	Policy	3-6 years

Residents shared numerous concerns over inequity and insufficiency of the city’s sanitation services. Familiar complaints over too few corner cans or inconsistent household trash collection grew more urgent in 2020 as the COVID-19 pandemic led to major disruption or suspension of key sanitation services from the Department of Public Works: trash and recycling collection, the “rat rubout” pest control program, and bulk trash collection.

The example of the necessity of improved city sanitation services is evident from neighbor experiences with the corner cans on E. Lombard Street. In 2017, Spruce-Up grant funding from the BRNI program for the HCA supported the installation of decorative trash cans along E. Lombard Street, with covers intended to discourage improper disposal of household trash. Unfortunately, people continue to place loose bags of garbage around the cans which causes an unpleasant experience for people waiting for transit or shopping at stores in the area. Addressing this issue requires investigation by code enforcement to identify and follow-up with individuals dumping trash near the cans—and consistent servicing of the cans to ensure they don’t overflow with litter.



Dumping around corner cans on E. Lombard Street is a recurring issue. (December 19, 2020)

Strategy 1.7: Improve capacity for residents and property owners to reduce waste and dispose of trash responsibly

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
1.7.1	Educate residents on bulk collection options, including 311, and organize community dumpster days at Conkling Street Garden and Robert’s Place Garden	HCA	DPW, SECDC	Program	1-3 years
1.7.2	Install durable trash can and recycling cart “corrals” in front of homes on blocks where waste is collected from the front (e.g. Lombard Street)	SECDC	HCA	Project	1-3 years
1.7.3	Organize a can labeling event to add house numbers on trash cans and recycling carts	SECDC	HCA	Project	<1 years

Resident volunteers and community organizations are already working hard to address neighborhood sanitation issues, but they are frustrated with neighbors and neighborhood property owners who are unable or unwilling to dispose of their trash safely and

responsibly. One neighbor surveyed in 2021 explained the frustration: “We’ve done clean ups, but the next day it’s the same.”

Southeast CDC staff noted that one consequence of high turnover among area renters and the regular arrival of new immigrants to the area is that some neighbors are unaware of the trash collection schedule or available city services for bulk trash collection. Neighbors on Mount Pleasant Avenue noted that several restaurants and carry-out businesses on E. Lombard Street had difficulty securing their dumpsters against rodents—particularly during the pandemic when the city suspended pest control services.

Dumping also comes from people driving through the neighborhood and social gatherings in the area. For example, the fence alongside the Conkling Street Garden is a popular location for evening gatherings—with boxes of beer bottles regularly left behind. There is also significant dumping of construction waste along the alleys and streets closest to Pulaski Highway, which could include material left by people driving out of the city.

Educating neighbors and making responsible trash collection easier and more convenient than littering and dumping is an important part of addressing this issue.



Resident volunteers participating in a community clean-up
(July 13, 2019; Courtesy: Southeast CDC)

Goal 2: Make Baltimore Highlands a safer place for neighbors and visitors of all ages

Strategy 2.1: Work with neighbors, businesses, and city agencies to improve community safety

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
2.1.1	Work with Baltimore Safe Haven, Baltimore Highlands Task Force, and Southeastern District Police-Community Relations Council to provide supportive services to people engaged in sex work along Conkling and Lombard Streets	SECDC	BHTF	Program	3-6 years
2.1.2	Work with Baltimore Highlands Task Force and Southeastern District Police-Community Relations Council to investigate police response to robberies affecting Latino residents	BHTF	SECDC	Program	1-3 years
2.1.3	Survey residents on challenges with area bars/taverns and, if needed, monitor business compliance with liquor license regulations	BHTF	HCA, City Council members, CLC	Program	3-6 years

Safety issues ranked among the top priorities for neighbors in the 2018 survey and remains an urgent concern today. Within a single week in the early spring 2021, Marcus Wilson was stabbed and killed while skateboarding with his daughter on the 200 block of S. Conkling Street and Fabian Mendez was struck and killed by a teenage driver on the 100 block of N. Conkling Street during an attempted carjacking.



Baltimore Highland neighbors gathered for community vigil for Marcus Wilson and Fabian Mendez (April 5, 2021)

In response to the killings, residents and elected officials to host a community vigil mourning the loss and decrying violence against Latino residents, like Mendez. After the vigil, Luis Sánchez, a construction worker with three daughters, spoke to Baltimore Brew reporter Vanessa Gabriela Sanchez and explained, “My daughters want to play with the bicycle, but I’m always worried about us being caught in crossfire.”

Violent crime is not the only safety concern. Residents highlighted safety issues with sex work, drug sales, and public intoxication as related challenges. Latino neighbors in particular mentioned robberies and described police responses as ineffective or even discriminatory. Baltimore Highlands has many liquor outlets including bars and clubs as well as taverns that offer carry-out sales with the extended hours afforded to bars and restaurants. Multiple neighbors surveyed in 2018 cited bars and “drunk people” as elements they disliked in the neighborhood.

This plan recommends that Southeast CDC and partners address these challenges by working with key partners to protect the safety of sex workers (**Action 2.1.1**), seeking an improved approach to resident concerns over robberies (**Action 2.2.2**), and expanding work with neighborhood bars and clubs to reduce issues with patrons (**Action 2.1.3**).

Strategy 2.2: Replace or install new lighting to improve community safety

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
2.2.1	Expand Highlandtown Community Association’s string light grant program to include support for porch/stoop light repair or installation	HCA	SECDC	Program	1-3 years
2.2.2	Improve lighting and remove overgrown vegetation on the west side of the Hebrew Friendship Cemetery	Cemetery owner	SECDC, HCA	Project	3-6 years
2.2.3	Install pedestrian-scale lighting in E. Lombard Street commercial area between S. Eaton Street and S. Haven Street	SECDC	Property owners	Project	3-6 years

Multiple neighbors surveyed by phone or in-person in 2021 suggested “more lighting in the neighborhood” as their first suggestion to improve neighborhood safety. Others recommended more cameras, an approach that is most effective in supporting night-time public safety when accompanied by sufficient lighting.

A growing number of residents of southeast Baltimore blocks in nearby Butcher’s Hill, Upper Fells Point, and Patterson Park have worked to install café string lights to improve safety after dark. The HCA has started a small grant fund to support string light installations in Highlandtown and can consider expanding the program to install lights on more blocks and include porch lights.

Strategy 2.3: Advocate for safety improvements for people walking and biking

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
2.3.1	Install pedestrian safety improvements at N. Haven and E. Lombard St.	SECDC	DOT, HCA	Project	1-3 years
2.3.2	Install traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements on Highland Ave. from Eastern Ave. to E. Fayette St	SECDC	DOT, HCA, MTA	Project	3-6 years
2.3.3	Install traffic calming on Mt. Pleasant Ave. from S. Conkling Street to S. Eaton St.	SECDC	DOT, HCA	Project	3-6 years
2.3.4	Explore possible addition of a separated bike lane on Highland Ave. between E. Fayette St. and Eastern Ave.	SECDC	DOT, HCA, Bikemore	Project	3-6 years
2.3.5	Explore possible pedestrian priority street redesign for Leverton Ave. between S. Highland Ave. and S. Eaton St.	SECDC	DOT, HCA	Project	3-6 years

Residents on Pratt Street, Leverton Avenue, Mount Pleasant Avenue, S. Clinton, and Claremont Streets all described walkability is a key neighborhood amenity. However, many neighbors also described speeding drivers and crashes as major challenges. A recent analysis of injury crash data in the neighborhood highlighted N. Haven and E. Lombard Street as the intersection with the greatest number of crashes and, given the location's proximity to senior housing and the Highlandtown Village Shopping Center, **Action 2.3.1** should be a priority for future safety improvements. Similarly, Highland Avenue saw higher rates of injury crashes and would benefit from traffic calming and safety improvements as well as improvements for transit riders described in **Strategy 2.4**. Traffic calming on secondary streets such as Mount Pleasant Avenue or Leverton Avenue could make it more feasible to use streets for community events or programming (such as the “play streets” initiative highlighted in **Action 1.2.2**).



Truck traveling south on S. Haven Street near E. Lombard Street (January 18, 2022)

Demand for traffic calming in Baltimore City neighborhoods is significantly greater than the current level of resources available to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for planning or construction. DOT staff have shared that traffic calming installation work is backlogged by as much as three years and the department is working to prioritize traffic calming projects in neighborhoods with the highest rate of injury crashes where investments are expected to have the greatest benefit for overall safety.

Fortunately, DOT will be completing some safety improvements along the primary walking routes to Highlandtown #237, including crosswalk striping (completed in summer 2022) and sidewalk repairs (to be completed in spring 2023). DOT staff have also expressed interest in expanding the citywide protected bike network into this section of southeast Baltimore if a feasible route could be identified.

Finally, the U.S. Department of Transportation recently awarded the city and state a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant to support infrastructure improvements along the CityLink Blue and CityLink Orange lines - which include E. Fayette Street and Highland Avenue - to provide faster, more reliable transit and improve pedestrian safety. As planning for this project proceeds, Southeast CDC and residents should advocate for pedestrian safety improvements in the vicinity of the project corridor.

FOCUS ON: Action 2.3.1 - Install traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements on Highland Avenue from Eastern Avenue to E. Fayette Street

The Highlandtown Deep Blue Plan highlights the need for traffic calming on Highland Avenue between Eastern Avenue and Fayette Street. A bike lane on Highland Avenue was included in the 2006 Bicycle Master Plan but no additional safe biking routes were identified in the 2015 Baltimore Bike Master Plan. Intersections that should be prioritized for pedestrian safety improvements (e.g. leading pedestrian signals, red light cameras) include Highland Avenue and Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue and Pulaski Highway due to the greater number of injury crashes at those intersections.

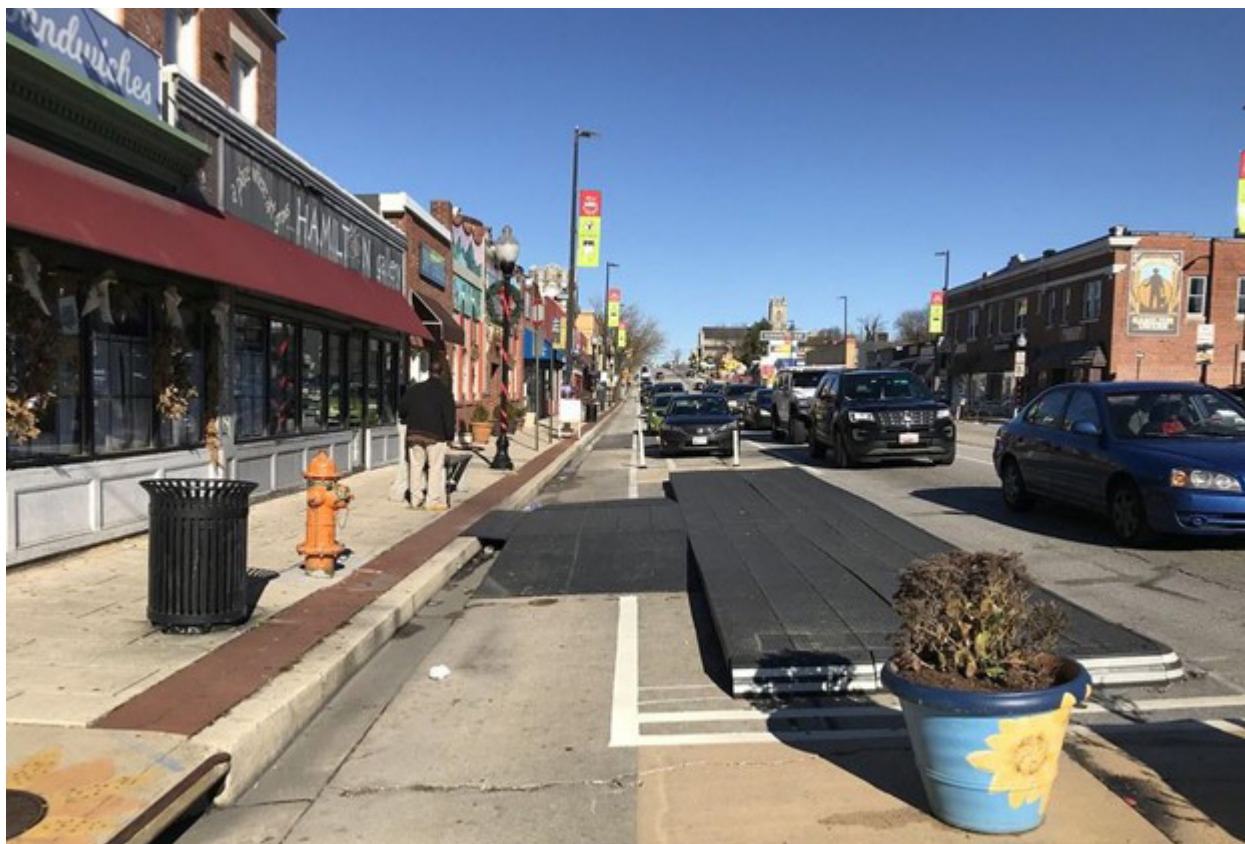
Strategy 2.4: Support efforts to improve transit service and transit rider experiences

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
2.4.1	Advocate for the addition of a stop in the Baltimore Highlands area for the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center shuttle	SECDC	JHU/ JHMI, HCA	Project	<1 years
2.4.2	Explore installation of a temporary bus bulb at Highland Avenue and E. Baltimore Street stop	SECDC	MTA	Project	1-3 years
2.4.3	Advocate for installation of a shelter, seating, and shade at E. Fayette Street and N. Highland Avenue bus stops	SECDC	DOT, MTA	Project	1-3 years
2.4.4	Support changes that improve transit service along the E. Fayette Street and N. Highland Avenue corridors	MTA	DOT	Policy	3-6 years

For area residents who rely on transit to get to work or school, easy access to high frequency bus service is one of the most important assets for southeast Baltimore. Transit is especially important for students who make up nearly one in five transit riders citywide. A recent report by the Fund for Educational Excellence recommended adding more shelters and better lighting to bus stops to improve the rider experience for students.

FOCUS ON: Action 2.4.1 - Advocate for the addition of a stop in the Baltimore Highlands area for the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center shuttle

A free shuttle offers students and staff convenient transportation between the Johns Hopkins Medical Campus and the Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center located around one mile east of Baltimore Highlands. Adding a stop on E. Lombard Street could help workers at both locations get to work without driving more easily and increase interest in neighborhood rental and homeownership opportunities among JHU/JHMI students and staff.



Floating bus stop and protected bike lane, Hamilton Avenue and Harford Road
(January 12, 2020)

FOCUS ON: Action 2.4.2 - Explore installation of a bus bulb at N. Highland Avenue and E. Baltimore Street stop

A bus bulb or floating bus stop would be an effective way to reduce bus dwell time, speed up boarding, and improve accessibility for riders using mobility devices at this well-used stop. In 2019, the Maryland Transit Administration and Baltimore City installed a pilot bus bulb as part of the installation of a protected bike lane on Harford Road. A second floating bus stop was recently installed on E. Fayette Street near Central Avenue. These initial locations serve much smaller number of daily riders than the Highland Avenue stop (672 relative to 118 daily riders at the Harford Avenue stop and 167 at the E. Fayette Street stop) suggesting that a bus bulb at this location could have a significant benefit for residents and MTA riders.



Estamos Aquí Bus Shelter (designed by Rachel Timmins; fabricated by Tim Scofield and Kyle Miller), E. Baltimore Street and N. Highland Avenue. (Courtesy: Southeast CDC)

FOCUS ON: Action 2.4.3 - Advocate for installation of a shelter, seating, and shade at E. Fayette Street and N. Highland Avenue bus stops

Shelter from inclement weather, seating, and shade from the sun are key components of a well-used bus stop and may even make taking the bus a more feasible option. Climate change means increasing summer heat making shade is an especially important amenity for rider safety and comfort. The well-used stops on E. Fayette Street and N. Highland Avenue offer an opportunity to advocate for greater attention to shade by Baltimore City Department of Transportation and the Maryland Transit Administration. Specific locations for seasonal temporary shade structures that could potentially be installed in partnership with nearby commercial businesses include Highland Avenue and Baltimore Street; Highland Avenue and E. Fayette Street; and Lombard Street and Eaton Street.



Bus stop by Royal Farms at the southwest corner of E. Fayette Street and Highland Avenue (January 18, 2022)

Strategy 2.5: Promote continued growth of neighbor-owned and neighborhood-serving retail

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
2.5.1	Create and maintain a directory of neighborhood dining and retail businesses that is promoted in English and Spanish to residents	SECDC	HCA, ha!	Project	<1 years
2.5.2	Connect entrepreneurs to supportive business resources, including access to capital and education about licensing and permits - especially Spanish-language resources	SECDC	BDC	Program	1-3 years

Latino-owned businesses are a key and growing part of the neighborhood commercial districts on Eastern Avenue and E. Lombard Street. Both Latino and non-Latino residents noted the easy availability of Latino prepared food and ingredients in the neighborhood as an important aspect of neighborhood identity and everyday life.

The continued development of Latino-owned businesses helps make Baltimore Highlands a more walkable neighborhood and can help promote the reuse of unoccupied or underutilized commercial spaces in the neighborhood. For example, the Panaderia y Reposteria Tikal Bakery opened in a former storefront church on E. Lombard Street in April 2018 and, by the fall 2020, had expanded into an adjoining corner space as the Tikal Cocina Cafe.

Southeast CDC may be able to support similar enterprises by working with the management of 200 N. Highland and Highlandtown Village shopping centers to subdivide one or more existing commercial units and offer smaller spaces at more affordable rates. Southeast CDC could also explore more financing options for helping small entrepreneurs lease and improve physical retail spaces. For informal businesses, assistance with permitting or formalizing a business enterprise could also be a valuable service. While the neighborhood is located outside the boundaries of the Highlandtown Main Street, the organization can refer entrepreneurs to business resource providers that operate city-wide.

Goal 3: Keep Baltimore Highlands affordable for renters and create new opportunities for homeownership

Strategy 3.1: Promote access to homeownership for low- and middle-income residents

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
3.1.1	Continue hosting a homebuyer club for renters living in the Baltimore Highlands area	SECDC	Community schools, local banks	Program	<1 years
3.1.2	Market the homebuyer club and area home-buying opportunities to students/staff at Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center	SECDC	JHU/JHMI	Project	1-3 years
3.1.3	Continue offering foreclosure prevention services to mortgage borrowers with difficulty making payments	SECDC		Program	<1 years
3.1.4	Conduct outreach to legacy homeowners to encourage resale to owner occupant homebuyers	SECDC	HCA	Program	3-6 years

The strategy for promoting access to homeownership for low- and middle-income residents includes helping renters stay in the area by supporting home buying in the neighborhood, attracting new homeowners to move to the area, and preventing the loss of existing homeowners by preventing foreclosure.

Southeast CDC recently established their first Baltimore Highlands Homebuyers' Club: a small group of residents preparing for homeownership together, learning and supporting each other along the way with assistance from Southeast CDC staff. The goal for this and other Southeast CDC-hosted Homebuyers' Clubs is to help participants buy a home where they live. This is especially important for families who want to stay at their zoned school but are concerned rising rents may force them to move. Currently, a mortgage in many of these neighborhoods has a similar monthly cost (or even lower monthly cost) than a typical rent payment. After the club ends, each participant schedules a one-on-one appointment with one of Southeast CDC's certified housing counselors to help them navigate the steps to homeownership. This often means helping to resolve credit issues and raise their credit score so they can qualify for a mortgage.

This strategy is complementary with **Strategy 3.2** focused on expanding support for immigrant homeownership and **Strategy 3.5** focused on the rehabilitation of vacant properties.

Strategy 3.2: Expand support for immigrant homeownership

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
3.2.1	Continue promoting Tu Hogar and explaining the homebuying process to area ITIN holders and realtors	SECDC	NHS, GBBR, Live Baltimore	Project	<1 years
3.2.2	Work with Neighborhood Housing Services and/or Healthy Neighborhoods to develop alternatives to Tu Hogar with lower interest rates and larger loan sizes	SECDC	NHS, Healthy Neighborhoods	Program	<1 years
3.2.3	Continue offering home buying counseling in Spanish	SECDC		Program	<1 years

Three in five renters who participated in a 2021 phone and in-person survey expressed interest in buying a house in the neighborhood or learning more about home buying in general. Southeast CDC already offers home buying counseling in Spanish and partners with Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore to offer a specialized mortgage product, Tu Hogar, which provides a loan to immigrant residents who cannot access conventional financing. Continuing these programs (see **Action 3.2.1** and **3.2.2**) and developing new programs that address issues with the program (see **Action 3.2.3**) is key to expanding immigrant homeownership in Baltimore Highlands.

One challenge in achieving this aim, however, is matching the housing supply to the needs and interests of potential homebuyers. One neighbor, a Honduran immigrant in her mid-30s, who was not interested in buying explained that she “really wants to stay” but “when thinking about buying [she] would want to buy outside the city.” Another Spanish-speaking neighbor explained that if she decided to buy, she would be “looking for a larger house”—something that is hard to find in the neighborhood. Opportunities for new housing development (detailed in **Strategy 3.6**) could take the need for larger units or improved amenities into account.



¡Viva Baltimore! homeownership education event organized by Southeast CDC at Highlandtown #215. (May 14, 2016; Courtesy: Southeast CDC)

FOCUS ON: Action 3.2.3 - Continue offering home buying counseling in Spanish

Southeast CDC provides HUD-approved first-time homebuyer counseling in both English and Spanish as part of a broader strategy to increase area homeownership. Staff serve approximately 500 clients each year with Homebuyer Education courses and over 400 with pre-purchase one-on-one counseling. Around twenty percent of those clients are Spanish speaking. ¡Viva Baltimore! is Southeast CDC's homebuyer program aimed at attracting and retaining Latino homeowners to Southeast Baltimore. The program is entirely delivered in Spanish and includes events, neighborhood tours, homebuyers' clubs as well as the Tu Hogar loan program, managed by Southeast CDC's bilingual housing counselor.

Table 6: Comparison of Tu Hogar, Healthy Neighborhoods Rehab Loan, and other financing options as of May 2022.

PROGRAM NAME	LOAN AMOUNT	RATE	TERM	DESCRIPTION
Tu Hogar	\$75,000	6%	15 years	Home purchase loan available to borrowers with an ITIN number. Borrowers must contribute 10% of the purchase price. 3% must be borrower's own funds—the remainder may be incentives, grants and/or gifts.
Healthy Neighborhoods Purchase & Rehab Loan	Up to 110% of the after-rehabilitation appraisal of the property.	no less than 4%	30 years (max permanent loan); 1 year or more (construction loan)	Borrowers must contribute 3% of the purchase price from their own funds; free architectural design assistance is available. Minimum credit score of 620. \$10K Matching Rehab Grants are available for borrowers meeting income restrictions.
PNC Community Mortgage				Property must be located in a low- to moderate-income census tract or borrower's household income must be 80% or less than the MSA median household income. At least 3% down; \$500 of down payment must be own cash; no PMI requirement; relaxed qualification terms.
MECU Fixed-Rate Home Loan (Conventional)		5.25% (May 2022)	30 year fixed	
Conventional Mortgage (Average - Zillow)		5.42% (May 2021)	30 year fixed	
Conventional Mortgage (Average - Zillow)		4.40% (May 2022)	15 year fixed	

Strategy 3.3: Maintain and expand services and expand renter organizing

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
3.3.1	Continue and expand eviction prevention programs for families with young children and renters with limited English proficiency	SECDC	MIMA, DHCD, MOCFS	Program	<1 years
3.3.2	Explore partnership with CASA de Maryland to expand tenant organizing for immigrant renter households in East Baltimore	SECDC	CASA	Program	1-3 years

The COVID-19 pandemic has created significant new challenges faced for many renters in Baltimore. In August 2021, nearly two in ten renters statewide reported being behind on rent and more than a third of delinquent renters reported being likely to be evicted without assistance. Financial assistance programs such as Southeast CDC's Family Stability Program (see **Action 3.3.1**) and tenant organizing to demand public investment in affordable housing and emergency financial assistant for tenants (see **Action 3.3.2**) are important to meeting this ongoing challenge.

Renters in Baltimore Highlands could also benefit from participation in broader organizing efforts. CASA de Maryland has used this approach in Prince George's County where the organization has worked closely with tenant advocates in Langley Park to address unsanitary and hazardous conditions at apartment complexes through public complaints, rent strikes, and legal action. Southeast CDC and residents could also join coalitions such as Baltimore Renters United and work with advocacy organizations such as the Fair Housing Action Center of Maryland to advance this work in Baltimore Highlands and the broader area of southeast Baltimore.

FOCUS ON: Action 3.3.1 - Continue and expand eviction prevention programs

The Southeast CDC's Family Stability Program provides financial assistance and case management to Community School families facing eviction. The Family Stability Program is designed to reduce student mobility by providing financial assistance for rent and utility payments and intensive case management. In FY21, this program served 29 families and provided \$80,000 in financial assistance. Every Family Stability client meets with one of Southeast CDC's housing counselors to review their credit and is encouraged to continue with housing counseling once they've graduated from the Family Stability program. Identifying ongoing sources for program funding in order to continue and, if possible, expand eviction prevention services for families is essential to support the broader goal of increased housing stability for area renters.

Strategy 3.4: Engage landlords to improve property maintenance and management

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
3.4.1	Conduct outreach to landlords with occupied residential properties advertised for tax sale to help avoid tax sale foreclosure	SECDC	DHCD	Program	<1 years
3.4.2	Promote participation in rental licensing program to area landlords	SECDC	DHCD	Program	1-3 years
3.4.3	Develop educational materials for area landlords on eviction prevention services available for renters	SECDC	MOCFS	Project	1-3 years
3.4.4	Create a directory of local property management companies to make referrals for interested landlords	SECDC		Project	3-6 years

Due to the large share of rental properties in Baltimore Highlands, engaging landlords is critically important to addressing issues with physical conditions in the neighborhood. However, in many cases, landlords may be disengaged or difficult to reach. One neighbor, a homeowner in her late 30s surveyed in 2021, wanted the community association to be “able to get ahold of landlords and owners” so they could “take responsibility for their renters” and any issues they might be creating for neighboring residents.

Since 2016, neighborhood rental properties have received over 90% of citations issued for bulk trash, trash accumulation, or other exterior sanitary maintenance issues. In addition, a small number of individuals and companies may have an outsized impact on the broader issues residents have shared. For example, a single company, KFRNA, LLC, owns 25 rental properties in Baltimore Highlands—and 11 of those properties have been cited for trash accumulation or bulk trash since 2016 (totaling 35 citations). One of the company’s properties—3629 E. Fayette Street—has been cited 12 times. Improving this company’s property management practices would benefit both their tenants and their neighbors.

During Southeast CDC’s strategic planning process, interviews with landlords and Southeast CDC staff revealed an area of common interest: the need to increase the number of years a tenant stays in their rental. For landlords, tenant duration increases the likelihood of profitability from their investment. For renters, increasing duration reduces the cycle of constant moving and related costs.

Southeast CDC’s strategic plan already recommends the creation of a landlord education program (see **Action 3.4.2** and **3.4.3**) and suggests that the created a list of trained and vetted landlords to share with clients looking for a safe, stable rental property (a proposal found in **Action 3.4.4**).

Strategy 3.5: Promote rehabilitation and reuse of vacant buildings

	ACTION	LEAD	PARTNERS	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
3.5.1	Organize a resident committee to identify and monitor area vacant buildings	SECDC	DHCD, HCA, BHTF	Program	1-3 years
3.5.2	Work with DHCD to initiate the receivership process for any vacant buildings with unresponsive ownership	SECDC	DHCD	Program	<1 years

Vacant buildings are present on several blocks throughout Baltimore Highlands although much less common than other nearby neighborhoods such as Kresson or Ellwood Park. The three streets with the greatest number of vacant building notices (VBNs) are E. Baltimore Street, E. Lombard Street, and Mount Pleasant Avenue which each have five properties with a VBN. A small number of residents surveyed in 2018 and 2021 identified vacant buildings as a priority, however, some have suggested that the city's vacant building notices may miss some long-term unoccupied and neglected properties that may not meet the city's definition of a vacant building.

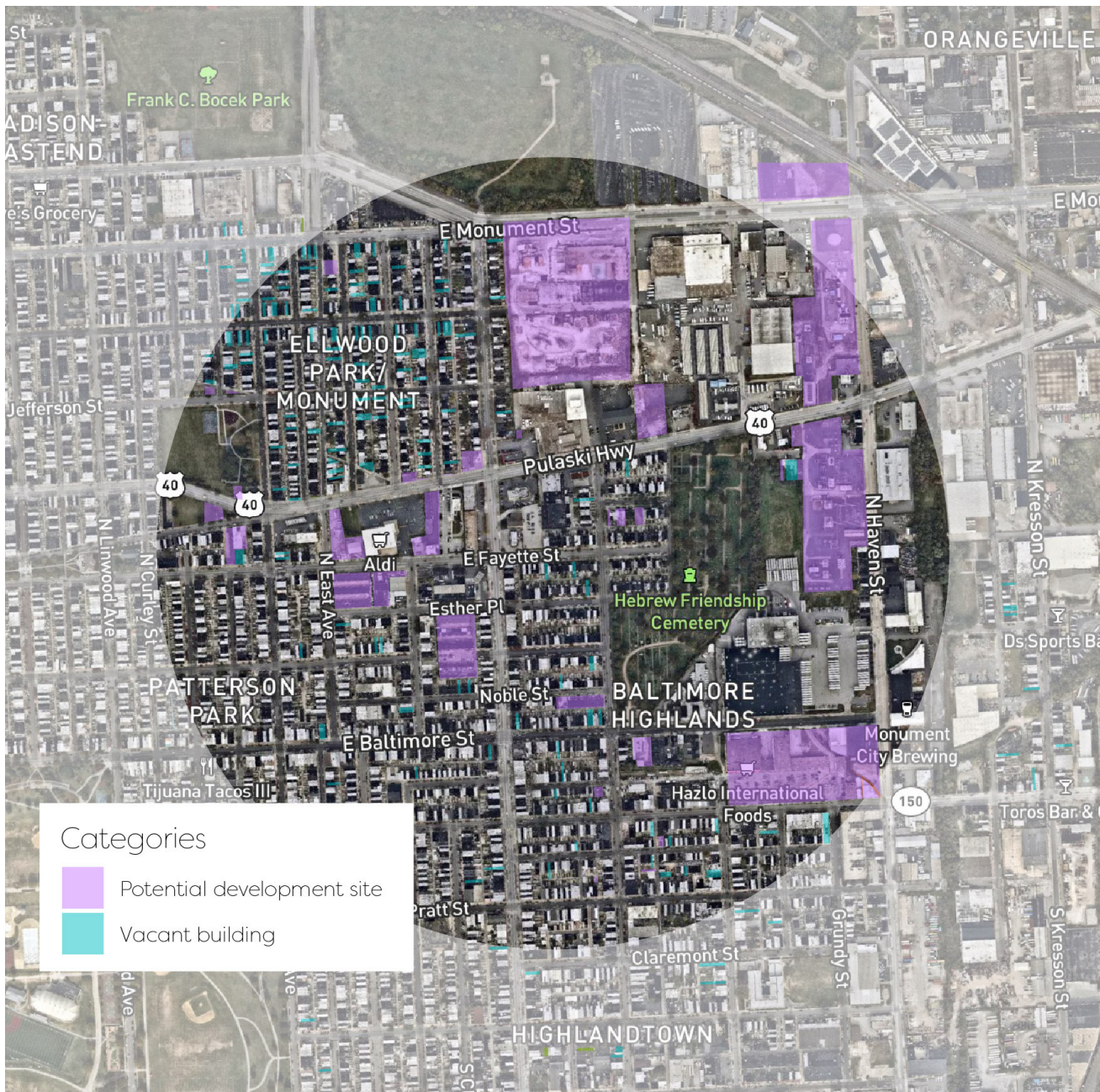
Identifying and monitoring any additional vacant buildings (**Action 3.5.1**) and working with DHCD to use the receivership process to transfer properties to new ownership (**Action 3.5.2**) are necessary to ensure that vacant housing does not become a greater challenge for neighbors in the future.

Strategy 3.6: Explore opportunities for multifamily residential development and changing land uses

	ACTION	LEAD	TYPE	TIMEFRAME
3.6.1	Explore options to develop new mixed-income multifamily housing or mixed-use buildings near E. Lombard Street and N. Haven Street	SECDC/ Developer	Project	1-3 years
3.6.2	Explore options to develop new mixed-income multifamily housing or mixed-use buildings near E. Fayette Street and Highland Avenue	SECDC/ Developer	Project	1-3 years
3.6.3	Explore options for development of lot at Mt. Pleasant Avenue and S. Dean Street	SECDC/ Developer	Project	<1 years
3.6.4	Support the preservation of the Highlandtown Plaza Co-op as affordable senior housing	SECDC	Program	6-10 years
3.6.5	Conduct zoning/future land use analysis of Haven Street corridor, focusing from Pulaski Highway to Eastern Avenue	Department of Planning	Project	1-3 years

Several potential locations for larger scale multifamily development or mixed use buildings within and near Baltimore Highlands have been identified using a few key criteria:

- Avoid or minimize displacement of existing owners, renters, and businesses.
- If displacement is required, focus on replacing automotive service and storage uses.
- Focus on infill development for vacant lots or replacement of vacant/underutilized buildings.



MAP 10. Potential development sites (see Strategy 3.6) on site selection

The few vacant lots include a 26' by 50' corner lot at 3700 Mount Pleasant Avenue, a 45' by 50' at 3511 Leverton Avenue (next to the rear parking lot used by Corona Grocery), and a half-dozen rowhouse lots on the 3600 block of Roberts Place. Automotive uses are found in several areas around the neighborhood but are particularly clustered in two areas: E. Lombard Street and N. Haven Street (**Action 3.6.1**) and E. Fayette Street and Highland Avenue (**Action 3.6.2**).



Corner vacant lot at Mount Pleasant Avenue and Dean Street, 3700 Mount Pleasant Avenue (January 18, 2022)

Redevelopment of any of these sites to include residential units will likely require rezoning or variances, which are subject to approval by the Baltimore City Council and/or Baltimore City Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, with opportunities for community input. In particular, Highlandtown Village Shopping Center, located at E. Lombard Street and N. Haven Street is a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Any change to the site's current uses or design would require amending or repealing the PUD. Additionally, many of the parcels that are currently zoned industrial are surrounded by manufacturing uses or located on Haven Street, a major truck route; residential and mixed-use development in those areas would need to be carefully designed to appropriately integrate with nearby industrial uses. Given the nature of the corridor as a truck route, any new developments should not include ground-floor residential use fronting on Haven Street. These spaces should instead be dedicated for commercial, retail, light industrial, or other similar uses.

While the scope of this plan did not include setting specific targets for increasing the number of affordable units or affordable units as a share of all units in the area, a recent assessment of affordable housing supply clearly suggests a major need. The high capital cost of acquiring property for development and the difficulty of financing multifamily affordable housing projects makes the overall timeline for these potential developments uncertain. However, rising costs and limited housing supply in southeast Baltimore means that waiting to undertake development may risk losing the opportunity.

A January 2021 Live Baltimore analysis of the Baltimore housing market prepared by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. highlighted several aspects of the Baltimore City housing market that support this recommendation. For example, the study found:

- There is high demand for walkable neighborhoods among potential homebuyers in Baltimore City—a key advantage for Baltimore Highlands and nearby neighborhoods.
- There is a larger demand for rental housing than owner-occupied housing overall. This suggests the construction of new rental housing as a key strategy for the city's continued growth.



Highlandtown Plaza Co-op, 155 Grundy Street. (January 18, 2022)

Appendices

Partner Glossary

ACRONYM	PARTNER NAME	WEB LINK
Audubon	Patterson Park Audubon Center	www.patterson.audubon.org
Baltimore Tree Trust	-	www.baltimoretreetrust.org
Banner Neighborhoods	-	www.bannerneighborhoods.org
BCRP	Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks	www.bcrp.baltimorecity.gov
BCRP - Forestry	Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks - Forestry Division	www.bcrp.baltimorecity.gov/forestry
BDC	Baltimore Development Corporation	www.baltimoredevelopment.com
BHTF	Baltimore Highlands Task Force (coordinated by Councilmember Cohen)	-
Bikemore	-	www.bikemore.net
CASA	CASA de Maryland	www.wearecasa.org
Comite	Comite Latino de Baltimore	www.facebook.com/groups/ComiteLatinoDeBaltimore
Creative Alliance	-	www.creativealliance.org
DHCD	Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development	www.dhcd.baltimorecity.gov
DOT	Baltimore City Department of Transportation	www.transportation.baltimorecity.gov
DPW	Baltimore City Department of Public Works	www.publicworks.baltimorecity.gov
FOPP	Friends of Patterson Park	www.pattersonpark.com
GBBR	Greater Baltimore Board of Realtors	www.gbbr.org
ha!	Highlandtown Arts District	www.ihearhighlandtown.com
HCA	Highlandtown Community Association	www.highlandtown.com
HABC	Housing Authority of Baltimore City	www.habc.org

ACRONYM	PARTNER NAME	WEB LINK
Healthy Neighborhoods	-	www.healthyneighborhoods.org
JHU/JHMI	Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions / Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center	www.hopkinsmedicine.org/ johns_hopkins_bayview
Livable Streets Coalition	Livable Streets Coalition (coordinated by Delegate Robbyn Lewis)	www.livablestreetsbaltimore.com
Live Baltimore	-	www.livebaltimore.com
MIMA	Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Immigrant and Multicultural Affairs	www.mima.baltimorecity.gov
MOCFS	Baltimore City Mayor's Office of Children and Family Success	www.bmorechildren.com
MTA	Maryland Transit Administration	www.mta.maryland.gov
NHS	Neighborhood Housing Services of Baltimore	www.nhsbaltimore.org
Nuestras Raices	Nuestras Raices, Inc.	www.nuestrasraicesinc.org
RTC	Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Baltimore Greenway Trails Network	www.railstotrails.org
SECDC	Southeast CDC	www.southeastcdc.org
Southeast Anchor Library	Enoch Pratt Free Library Southeast Anchor branch	www.prattlibrary.org
UMD Master Gardeners	University of Maryland Extension Master Gardener program	www.extension.umd.edu

Demographic Tables

	ESTIMATE (MOE)	% OF TOTAL
Baltimore Highlands		
White	854 ± 260	35% ± 7%
Black	316 ± 277	13% ± 11%
Latino	1,082 ± 543	44% ± 20%
Baltimore City		
White	167,430 ± 385	27%
Black	376,203 ± 1,066	62%
Latino	32,183	5%
Baltimore MSA		
White	1,581,452 ± 678	57%
Black	807,182 ± 2279	29%
Latino	162,988	6%

ACS 2016-2019 5-Year, Table B03002

	ESTIMATE (MOE)	% OF TOTAL
Baltimore Highlands		
Drove alone	594 ± 217	49% ± 11%
Carpooled	245 ± 212	20% ± 16%
Public transit	278 ± 161	23% ± 11%
Walked	65 ± 76	5% ± 6%
Taxi, bike, or other	13 ± 28	1% ± 2%
Worked from home	24 ± 45	2% ± 4%
Baltimore City		
Drove alone	165,248 ± 2607	61%
Carpooled	24,173 ± 1345	9%
Public transit	47,729 ± 1552	18%
Walked	16,727 ± 1014	6%
Taxi, bike, or other	7,049 ± 565	3%
Worked from home	11,782 ± 900	4%

ACS 2017-2019 5-Year, Table B08137

	ESTIMATE (MOE)	% OF TOTAL
Baltimore Highlands - Owner-occupied		
Less than \$20K	43 ± 40	5%
\$20K to \$34K	51 ± 49	6%
\$35K to \$49K	36 ± 36	4%
\$50K to \$74K	81 ± 52	9%
\$75K or more	146 ± 72	17%
Baltimore Highlands - Renter-occupied		
Less than \$20K	163 ± 106	19%
\$20K to \$34K	66 ± 63	8%
\$35K to \$49K	108 ± 74	13%
\$50K to \$74K	30 ± 38	4%
\$75K or more	100 ± 98	12%

ACS 2016-2019 5-Year, Table B25106

Community Plan Development Activity List

Meet with DoP staff to discuss the nature of the plan, proposed boundaries, preliminary stakeholders identified, etc.

January 20, 2021; Planning Department consultation: Matt DeSantis & Marshella Wallace

Create an advisory committee to guide the planning process that includes DoP staff.

Committee members: Nick Kirley, Erin Kirley, Rev. Mark Parker, Anne Sawyer, Brian Sweeney, Matt DeSantis

Host at least three (3) open, public meetings during the process

- November 16, 2020 - Presentation: Highlandtown Community Association Monthly Meeting
- March 15, 2021 - Presentation: Highlandtown Community Association Monthly Meeting
- October 12, 2022 - Community Plan Review: Conkling Street Garden Community Night

Meet with stakeholders who will be affected by the plan's recommendations (property owners, institutions, public agencies, other neighborhoods, etc.)

- December 9, 2020 - Block meeting: S. Conkling St. (virtual)
- January 14, 2021 - Block meeting: N. Conkling St. (virtual)
- January 6, 2021 - Meeting w/ BCRP, SECDC, DoP, and Del. Lierman re: park access analysis (virtual)
- February 24, 2021 - Outreach at Highlandtown 215/237 Food Distribution
- March 3, 2021 - Outreach at Highlandtown 215/237 Food Distribution
- March 10, 2021 - Outreach at Highlandtown 215/237 Food Distribution
- March 12-Aug 28, 2021 - Phone surveys conducted
- March 22, 2021 - Plan presentation: HCA board + City Councilmember Zeke Cohen's staff
- April 22, 2021 - Interview: Pastor Mark Parker, Breath of God church
- April 28, 2021 - Interview: Father Guiliano, Our Lady Pompei
- May 1, 2021 - Outreach: Conkling Street Garden Spring opener
- July 14-August 13, 2021 - In-person survey conducted: Highlandtown Village Shopping Center
- September 18, 2021 - Outreach: Community BBQ at Conkling Street Garden
- October 27, 2021 - Advisory Group Meeting (virtual)
- October - November, 2021 - Afterschool zine-making with Highlandtown 237 students
- December 16, 2021 - Meeting with DPW Liaisons re: plan recommendations
- January 7, 2022 - Meeting with DOT staff re: plan recommendations

Provide documentation of all meeting notifications (see below)

Highlandtown Neighbors / Vecinos de Highlandtown

Private group · 5.5K members



About Discussion Featured Topics Members Events Media Files

Nick Frisone shared an event.
Admin · November 14, 2020 ·

This Monday's HCA meeting will be at 7pm on Zoom!



MON, NOV 16, 2020

November HCA Meeting

You like Highlandtown Community Association

Interested

Highlandtown Community Association added an event.

March 8, 2021 ·



MON, MAR 15, 2021

March HCA Meeting

Juan and Nick

Going

Join us at the

CONKLING STREET GARDEN COMMUNITY NIGHT

TWO
EVENTS!

WEDNESDAY,
OCTOBER 12TH
5-7PM

Baltimore Highlands Community Plan Review

Comment on the plan's recommendations for community improvements and development.



GROW Center

Stop by and get FREE trees, mulch, and reusable shopping bags and more from the Department of Public Works.

25 S. CONKLING STREET

www.facebook.com/conklingstreetgarden

Júntese con nosotros

CONKLING STREET GARDEN NOCHE COMUNITARIA

¡Dos
Eventos!

MIÉRCOLES,
12 DE OCTUBRE
5-7PM

Baltimore Highlands Revisión del Plan Comunitario

Comente sobre las recomendaciones del plan sobre el desarrollo y mejoras comunitarias.



GROW Center

Pase para recibir árboles gratis, mulch, bolsas reusables y más del Departamento de Trabajos Públicos.

25 S. CONKLING STREET

www.facebook.com/conklingstreetgarden

Hello neighbor!

Please join us next week for a discussion on Baltimore Highlands and a new community plan.

This online community gathering is hosted by Nick Kirley on the 100 block of S. Conkling Street together with staff from the Southeast Community Development Corporation and the Neighborhood Design Center.

Wednesday, December 9

7:00 pm to 8:15 pm
Join with Zoom on your phone or computer!



Our meeting agenda include time for you to:

- ✓ Meet neighbors on S. Conkling and nearby blocks
- ✓ Learn about the new Baltimore Highlands Community Plan
- ✓ Share your ideas for the future of the neighborhood

Please text or email to RSVP:

Eli Pousson
epousson@ndc-md.org
301.830.8619

Participate in the meeting:
Meeting ID: 854 9546 6143
Passcode: 522150

Call 301-715-8592 or

Join online at <https://bit.ly/3ok5yy>

What is the goal of this meeting?

The Neighborhood Design Center and Southeast CDC are interested in talking to neighbors like you to learn more about your ideas for the future of Baltimore Highlands and ways we can work together to improve housing, recreation, retail, and other aspects of neighborhood life for residents now and in the future. The meeting will include a few short activities with time to meet neighbors, share your experiences in the neighborhood, and learn more about how you can contribute to the plan over the next few months.

How do I get on Zoom?

You can download the Zoom desktop application to your computer or find links to download the Zoom mobile app for iOS or Android by visiting <https://zoom.us/download>

After you install Zoom, you can access the meeting by visiting <https://bit.ly/3ok5yy> at 7:00 pm on December 9. You can also call into the meeting by dialing 301-715-8592 and using meeting ID number 854 9546 6143.

If you are not able to access the internet at home, you can learn more about free or affordable internet access, visit <https://www.internetessentials.com/>

How do I learn more about the Baltimore Highlands Plan?

The Southeast CDC and the Neighborhood Design Center are working on a new community plan for our neighborhood to guide future work by community residents, the CDC, and city agencies on housing, parks, and other quality of life issues.

To learn more about the Baltimore Highlands Community Plan, please join us for the meeting on December 9 or contact Eli Pousson at epousson@ndc-md.org or 301-830-8519.



Hello neighbor!

Please join us next week for a discussion on Baltimore Highlands and a new community plan.

This online community meeting is hosted by your neighbors Mike Dorsey and Nikki Santana together with staff from the Southeast Community Development Corporation and the Neighborhood Design Center.

Thursday, January 14

7:00 pm to 8:15 pm
Join with Zoom on your phone or computer!



Our meeting agenda include time for you to:

- ✓ Meet neighbors in your area
- ✓ Learn about the new Baltimore Highlands Community Plan
- ✓ Share your ideas for the future of the neighborhood

Please text or email to RSVP:

Eli Pousson
epousson@ndc-md.org
301.830.8619

Participate in the meeting:

Join online at <http://bit.ly/3hTud1v>
Or call 301-715-8592
Meeting ID: 885 5890 9903
Passcode: 097580

What is the goal of this meeting?

The Neighborhood Design Center and Southeast CDC are interested in talking to neighbors like you to learn more about your ideas for the future of Baltimore Highlands and ways we can work together to improve housing, recreation, retail, and other aspects of neighborhood life for residents now and in the future. The meeting will include a few short activities with time to meet neighbors, share your experiences in the neighborhood, and learn more about how you can contribute to the plan over the next few months.

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After you install Zoom, you can access the meeting by visiting <http://bit.ly/3hTud1v> at 7:00 pm on January 14.

You can also call into the meeting by dialing 301-715-8592 and using meeting ID number 885 5890 9903.

If you are not able to access the internet at home, you can learn more about free or affordable internet access, visit <https://www.internetessentials.com/>

How do I learn more about the Baltimore Highlands Plan?

The Southeast CDC and the Neighborhood Design Center are working on a new community plan for our neighborhood to guide future work by community residents, the CDC, and city agencies on housing, parks, and other quality of life issues.

To learn more about the Baltimore Highlands Community Plan, please join us for the meeting this month or contact Eli Pousson at epousson@ndc-md.org or 301-830-8519.



Eli Pousson shared an event.
 April 26, 2021

The Conkling Street Garden is kicking off a new season this weekend! I'm not organizing the event but I am tabling for our new Baltimore Highlands Community Plan. If you live, work, or just spend time north of Pratt Street, I'd love to talk to you about the new community plan that the Neighborhood Design Center is putting together for the Southeast CDC. I'm also happy to share more details about the planning process with any neighbors who are interested but can't stop by this Saturday. Just comment or message me with details on the best way to reach you or whether you just want to be added to my list for future email announcements!



SAT, MAY 1, 2021
Spring Opener! - ¡Lanzamiento de Primavera!
 25 S Conkling St, Baltimore, MD 21224, United States
 Eddie, Eli and 2 friends

Interested

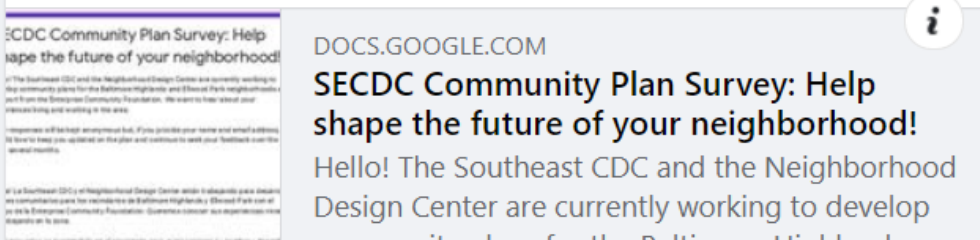
Highlandtown Neighbors / Vecinos de Highlandtown
 September 2, 2021

Summary - take our community survey before 9/13! <https://forms.gle/8KHkjQKKB2YFkKfE8>
 You may know that Southeast CDC and HCA have been engaging with neighbors since Fall 2020 to develop a community plan for Baltimore Highlands. We're close to having a draft ready for community review - help us make sure your voice is included! If you live or spend time in Baltimore Highlands and haven't yet shared about your experiences with housing, parks, retail - and ideas for improving the community - please take a few minutes to answer our survey: <https://forms.gle/8KHkjQKKB2YFkKfE8>
 If you provide your contact information in the survey, we'll be sure to invite you to review the draft plan with us in October. Survey closes September 13.



Highlandtown Community Association
 August 29, 2021

The Southeast CDC and the Neighborhood Design Center are currently working to develop community plans for the Baltimore Highlands and Ellwood Park neighborhoods with support from the Enterprise Community Foundation. We want to hear about your experiences living and working in the area. Your responses will be kept anonymous but, if you provide your name and email address, we would love to keep you updated on the plan and continue to seek your feedback over the next several months.



SEDC Community Plan Survey: Help shape the future of your neighborhood!

DOCS.GOOGLE.COM

SEDC Community Plan Survey: Help shape the future of your neighborhood!
 Hello! The Southeast CDC and the Neighborhood Design Center are currently working to develop community plans for the Baltimore Highlands