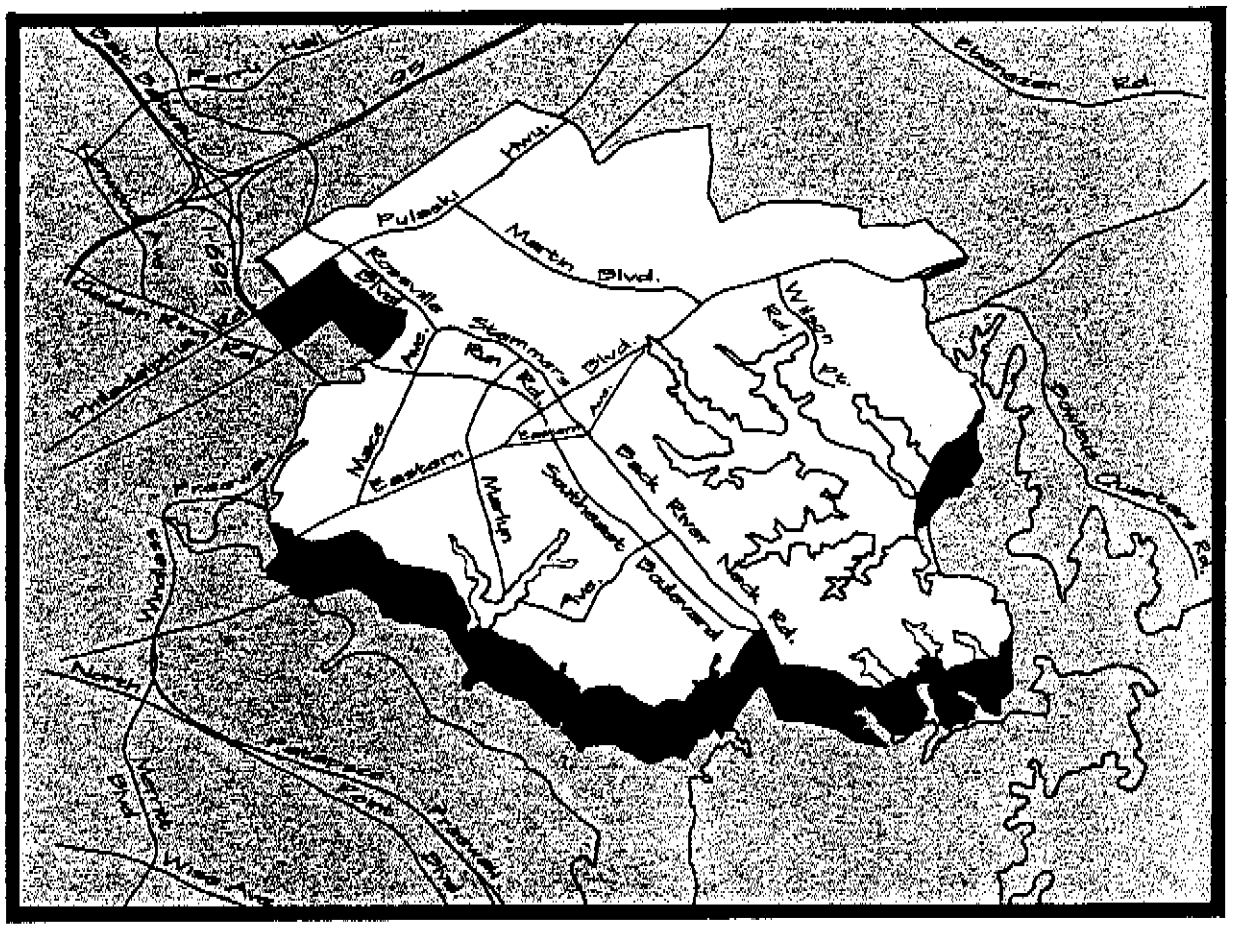

Baltimore County Focus on Community

A COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN FOR ESSEX-MIDDLE RIVER

As Adopted by The Baltimore County Council
July 1, 1996

COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND
Legislative Session 1996, Legislative Day No. 14

Resolution No. 50-96

Mr. Vincent J. Gardina, Councilman

By the County Council, July 1, 1996

A RESOLUTION of the Baltimore County Council to adopt a Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River as part of the Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000.

WHEREAS, the Baltimore County Council adopted the Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000 on February 5, 1990; and

WHEREAS, the Master Plan advocates the implementation of actions and policies for the conservation and revitalization of the County's older established communities, including the preparation of detailed local plans for certain designated areas; and

WHEREAS, Council Resolution 51-94 had urged the preparation of a community plan for Essex-Middle River; and

WHEREAS, a committee composed of County staff and more than 70 local residents, working under the auspices of the Essex-Middle River Community Action Plan Committee, prepared a Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River; and

WHEREAS, the Plan identifies various concerns of area residents and businesses and addresses the issues of community development, social enrichment, economic and employment opportunities and land use which are necessary for the stabilization and revitalization of the Essex-Middle River area; and

WHEREAS, by Resolution adopted February 15, 1996, the Baltimore County Planning

Board adopted a Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River to constitute part of and an amendment to the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the County Council held a public hearing on the recommended Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River on May 20, 1996.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, MARYLAND, that a Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof, be and it is hereby adopted and incorporated into the Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000 to be a guide for development of the Essex-Middle River area, subject to such further modifications as deemed advisable by the County Council.

R05096

Baltimore County
Planning Board

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RESOLUTION
Adopting and Recommending
A COMMUNITY CONSERVATION PLAN FOR
ESSEX-MIDDLE RIVER

WHEREAS the Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000 places great importance on the development and use of community plans for established areas of the County; and

WHEREAS County Council Resolution No. 51-94 has urged the preparation of a community plan for the Essex-Middle River area; and

WHEREAS a Community Action Plan Committee comprised of more than 70 citizens from the neighborhoods and businesses throughout the community, with staff assistance from a wide range of County agencies, has prepared and recommended A Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River; and

WHEREAS the draft Plan documents existing conditions and issues in the Essex-Middle River area, which is a logical unit for planning within Baltimore County, and proposes reasonable actions for protecting and improving the community in accord with the principles adopted in the Master Plan; and

WHEREAS the draft of the Community plan, as submitted on January 4, 1996, was the subject of a public hearing on February 1, 1996;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to Section 26-81 of the Baltimore County Code, 1988, that the Baltimore County Planning Board hereby adopts A Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River, January, 1996 to constitute a part of and an amendment to the Baltimore County Master Plan 1989-2000, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that A Community Conservation Plan for Essex-Middle River shall be transmitted to the Baltimore County Council for adoption in accordance with Section 523(a) of the Baltimore County Charter.

DULY ADOPTED by vote of the
Planning Board this 15th day of
February, 1996

Pat Keller

Arnold F. "Pat" Keller, III
Secretary to the Planning Board

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RESESSEX.MID/PZONE/TXTRLH

Printed with Soybean Ink

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 2

BACKGROUND 3

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT 5

- *Infrastructure* 5
- *Housing* 6
  - *Owner Occupied* 6
  - *Rental* 8
- *Transportation* 10
- *Education* 10
- *Public Safety* 11
- *Recreation* 12
- *Leadership Development* 13

SOCIAL ENRICHMENT 14

- *Education* 14
- *Human Services* 14

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES 15

- *Promotion and Marketing the Community* 16
- *Employment Programs* 17
- *Small Business Expansion* 17

LAND USE 19

- *Residential*
- *Commercial and Industrial* 20

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 21

APPENDIXES .....

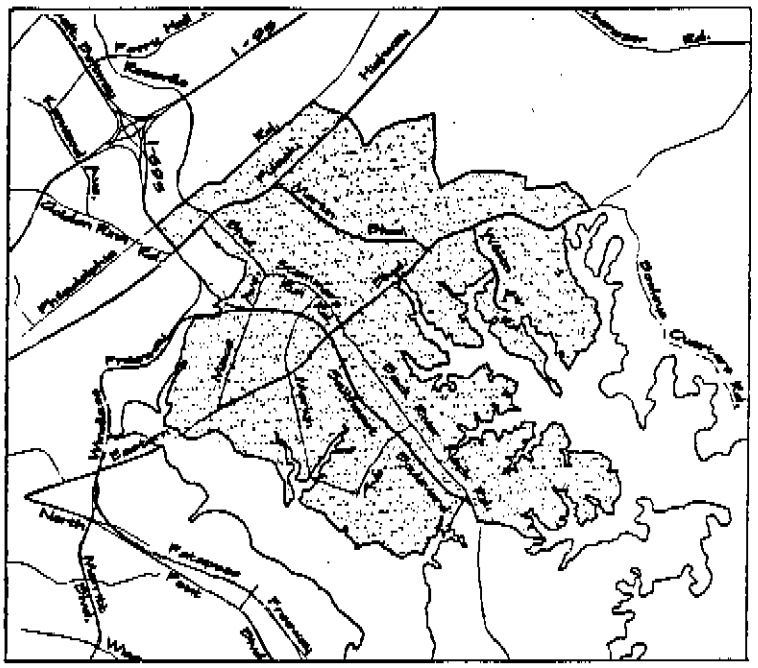
- *Maps:* .....
- *Census Tracts* A1
- *Zoning* A2
- *Land Use* A3
- *Poverty Status* A4
- *Education* A5
- *Female Headed Households* A6
- *Renter Occupied* A7
- *House Values* A8
- *Median Income* A9

INTRODUCTION

On June 6, 1994 the Baltimore County Council passed Resolution No. 51-94 sponsored by Councilman Vincent Gardina urging the Baltimore County Planning Board to prepare an Essex-Middle River area plan. The plan was looked upon as a way to promote stabilization of the community. The resolution also called for the plan to become an amendment to the Baltimore County Master Plan.

The Office of Planning and Zoning under the direction of Pat Keller and 5th District Community Planner, Jack Dillon began an assessment of the Essex-Middle River community. The assessment indicated that Baltimore County was providing a great deal of its resources to the Essex-Middle River community, however, there was little coordination between agencies, other non-profit service providers, community and business members. The assessment also highlighted many community development issues that needed to be addressed swiftly to prevent further decline in the area.

In January, 1995 the Essex-Middle River area was identified by the county administration as a priority for coordinated, multi-disciplinary community conservative action. Baltimore County Executive C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger requested that a conservation plan be developed with input from a broad range of citizens in the area with county staff acting as technical support. A meeting was held in the Essex Branch of the Baltimore County Library with over 100 people in attendance to discuss the results of the Essex-Middle River Assessment. A committee was formed involving nearly 75 citizens, and Jack Barnhart, a resident of Middle River and an Essex business leader, agreed to chair the Essex-Middle River Community Action Plan Committee. The committee was comprised of the following 10 sub-committees: infrastructure, housing, transportation, human resources, education, public safety, recreation, leadership development, land use and zoning, and economic development. Each committee submitted a report on June 30, 1995.



The individual committee reports frequently overlapped in their recommendations, and it became difficult to separate elements of the plan by the original committee structure. Therefore, the following set of recommendations are structured under four general headings: Community Development, Social Enrichment, Economic and Employment Opportunities, and Land Use.

In addition to these four headings are four overall objectives that must be attained for this plan to be an effective tool for the stabilization and revitalization of the Essex-Middle River area. These objectives are as follows:

1. THE COMMUNITY ACTION COMMITTEE SHOULD BECOME AN ON-GOING LINK BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY OF ESSEX- MIDDLE RIVER AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT.

The community action plan process has brought together many individuals and organizations interested in achieving a better Essex-Middle River community. This interest should not be allowed to dissipate. The future of the community ultimately rests with the people of the area, and the continuation of the committee allows the many elements of the community to share ideas and formulate plans. Many of the actions called for in this Report require implementation at different levels, and the on-going Committee should review the implementation and help co-ordinate local actions.

2. THERE NEEDS TO BE BETTER CO-ORDINATION OF SERVICES FROM THE COUNTY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND BETTER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE SERVICES AVAILABLE.

Unfortunately, so many of the services are not used to their full potential, and many of the residents are unaware of the opportunities offered. The Government Center itself may be inconvenient for some of the residents dependent upon public transportation, and the county should consider utilizing the schools to a greater degree for community service and resource centers.

3. FUTURE PLANS AND STUDIES SOUGHT TO BE DEVELOPED BY BALTIMORE COUNTY SHOULD COME BACK TO THE COMMUNITY.

Perhaps the single most beneficial aspect of the community conservation report process is the empowerment of the local community to plan for itself. Too often in the past the planning has come from the outside with selective input. This report and call for action reflects a change in that process, which should not be wasted.

4. COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND ACTIONS SHOULD BE PRIORITIZED AND GIVEN BUDGET ITEM STATUS IN CAPITAL BUDGETS AND MASTER PLANS.

There is precedent for communities having their own conservation status in the capital budget, and the Essex - Middle River Community should be accorded that status with on-going prioritization and review of the projects necessary to advance the community.

BACKGROUND

No community is devoid of problems or lacking in opportunity. Baltimore County, however, has been fortunate in the past in having an expanding tax base to cover the increased costs associated with an increasing population and an increasing demand for services. That good fortune, however, has come to an end. On a county-wide basis the growth rate has slowed to the lowest rate among the six (6) major jurisdictions in the Baltimore region with the exception of Baltimore City. The county has the oldest median population and an aging population. As a percentage of overall population the group over 65 years in age has doubled in size over the last twenty (20) years. Income of residents in the county has increased at less than half of the state average over the last ten (10) years. Median housing values are the lowest but for Baltimore City in the metropolitan jurisdictions. The entire County, therefore, is faced with a declining income base, a static property tax base, a decreasing labor force, an aging population, and a greater demand for service. It has become apparent that

unless a reinvestment is made back into the communities the problems the county is experiencing will increase as flight from the county becomes a reality.

The Essex - Middle River community has been designated by the Baltimore County administration as a priority area for coordinated, multi-disciplinary community conservation action. Although the majority of the community is a stable community, the older areas of the community have experienced signs of deterioration. Essex - Middle River as a community has been among the hardest hit areas of all of the communities in the metropolitan area from the shift from blue-collar smokestack industry to the technological/ communications era. If jobs and employment are the mortar that holds a community together, then the erosion of the jobs clearly indicates that the stability of the community is weakening. That has surely happened in this community. Major employers have downsized dramatically, and much of the job base has left the area. A tremendous stock of housing was built, however, to accommodate the labor boom, and that housing has become part of the problem as the jobs have left the area. The transience of a large portion of the community has greatly affected the community's stability.

The Essex - Middle River area is comprised of a little less than 10,000 acres. It is home to over 63,000 people. The average value of housing is 10% less than the county average. The average density of the developed acreage is 13.7 people per acre

compared to an overall county density of 4.16 persons per acre in the urbanized areas. Five (5) of the top ten (10) county elementary schools in serving free and reduced lunches are in the study area. Three (3) elementary schools have a turnover rate of over 60%. Only four (4) of the twelve (12) elementary schools ranked higher than the national average in math and reading. There are concerns over youth gangs appearing in some of the housing complexes and of increased vice and narcotic offenses. Much of the police activity has centered around the rental housing.

One of the primary concerns of area residents and businesses has been the poor image of the community. The image of a community tends over time to reinforce itself, and the image of this community as a stable, hard-working, proud community has deteriorated. The community action plan is an attempt by members of the community and by the County administration to reverse the trend and to support, enhance and conserve the many assets available in the community.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

INFRASTRUCTURE

The aging infrastructure is a county-wide problem in the urbanized areas. Already steps have been taken to repair alleys and sidewalks. As in every older community there are roads to be repaired, sidewalks to be fixed. In no way does this Report intend to minimize the importance of these on-going maintenance matters. They most directly affect the most residents. A number of general and specific infrastructure actions, however, are necessary with respect to the Essex - Middle River community.

5. THE COMMUNITY SHOULD HAVE INPUT ON PRIORITIZATION OF COMMUNITY CAPITAL SPENDING.

Too often it appears that capital projects are prioritized by agencies acting outside the community. There are many capital projects for which money could be spent, and the community needs to know before the capital spending priorities have been decided what the recommendations may be. The community should be given the opportunity for meaningful input on capital issues.

6. A NEW MARTIN BOULEVARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SHOULD BE BUILT.

The old building simply is not suited to the current needs of the community. The building is over fifty (50) years old and requires constant maintenance attention. A new building with modern education tools is needed to provide a valuable education and will probably save taxpayer dollars in the long term. A community resource center should be included as part of a new Martin Boulevard Elementary School to replace the Middle River mini-library that was closed by Baltimore County.

7. AN EXPANDED LIBRARY IS NEEDED TO SERVE THE ESSEX- MIDDLE RIVER COMMUNITY.

A proposal has been put forth by the library system that deserves attention. The library already serves as a mini-community center, and could become a valuable hub in providing community service and resources. Over 50% of the residents of the community rely on public transportation, and the consolidation of services at a convenient location open in the evenings is important. The Essex library is very well located with ample parking and easy access. It is well utilized not only for the library resources but also for educational and community programs. The library has become an important part of the life of the community, has tremendous data banks and resources, and expansion of this facility would serve as a resource for the entire community.

8. ACTION IS NEEDED ON EXPANDED ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITIES.

Currently, only 2.5% of the total land area in the study area is devoted to parks and open space. Almost all of this resource is located in areas removed from the bulk of the population. The local school playing fields are the primary source of active recreation, and they

are stressed. The county should move to acquire some of the 1,465 acres of vacant land in the study area for conversion to active recreation pursuits. In addition, due to negligible opportunity for indoor recreation, some of the commercial buildings, particularly in the Stemmers Run, Back River Neck Road area should be considered for indoor recreation facilities.

9. CONVERSION OF OLDER BUILDINGS FOR COMMUNITY PURPOSES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

Many of the older housing and commercial buildings are vacant, and in time become a blight on the community. The county should consider acquisition of the buildings or encourage their acquisition by non-profit groups for conversion to community-oriented service buildings. Most of these structures are in the most heavily populated, poorest areas of the community. They could well serve the local populace, many of whom are dependent on public transportation and have need of services.

10. A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND EXPANDED STREETSCAPE PLAN FOR EASTERN BOULEVARD AND MARTIN BOULEVARD IS NECESSARY, AND THIS PLAN SHOULD RECEIVE PRIORITY TREATMENT IN IMPLEMENTATION.

A streetscape plan was adopted and executed for the 400 and 500 blocks of Eastern Boulevard. It, however, did not go far enough. One has only to drive along Eastern Boulevard from the Back River bridge to Carroll Island Road and Martin Boulevard from Rt. 40 to Eastern Boulevard to see how desperately action is needed to upgrade these strips. Concrete medians should be replaced by a turn lane to ease access into businesses along Eastern Boulevard. The grass medians should be curbed and landscaped, and road frontages should be cleaned up with private parking taken out of the public right of way. There are no current plans for any concentrated improvements to Eastern and Martin Boulevards, yet these routes are most associated with the community. The image of the entire community is negatively affected by the lack of action on these roadways, and every step should be taken for their improvement.

11. THE COUNTY SHOULD RESOLVE THE SEVERE FLOODING PROBLEMS IN THE VICTORY VILLA AREA BY PROGRAMMING THIS PROJECT INTO THE CAPITAL BUDGET.

The area of Victory Villa has experienced severe flooding problems resulting in property damage to many homes. Many residents have correspondence from the Department of Public Works dating back to the 1970's promising some action. A consultant will be contracted to prepare options to rectify the problems. The community should have some input on these recommendations.

HOUSING

Although the percentage of home ownership in some of the portions of the Essex - Middle River area is above the county average, much of the area is characterized by older housing selling for substantially less than the county-wide average. In the center of the community rental housing composes over two-thirds of the available housing stock. There is a need to stabilize the rental housing market without adding to it. The home ownership market also needs to be stabilized, and assistance provided to people seeking to buy homes in the area.

OWNER OCCUPIED

12. THE COUNTY SHOULD PROMOTE THE ADOPTION OF A HOME BUYER INCENTIVE PLAN TO BE OFFERED THROUGH EMPLOYERS.

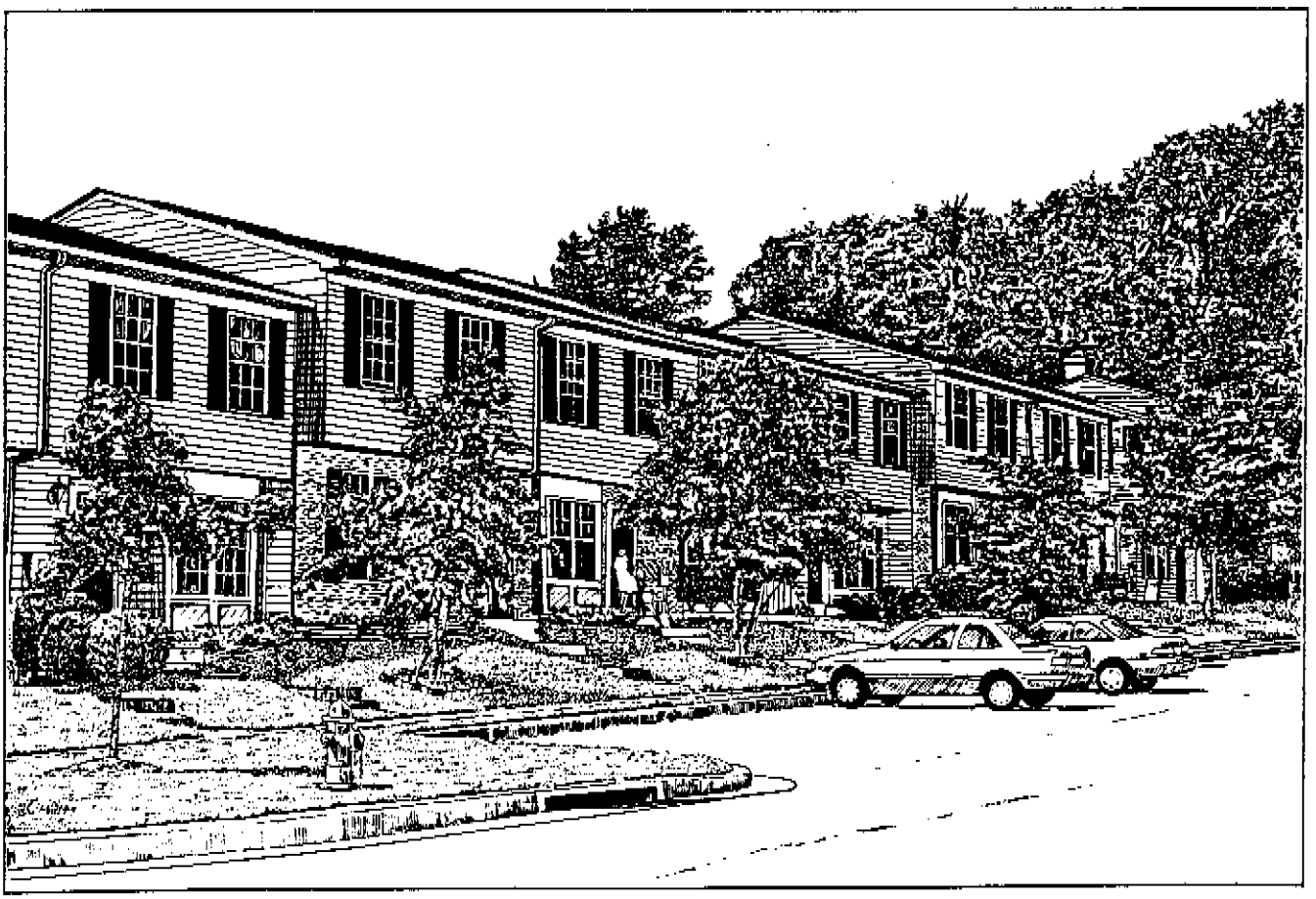
The incentives would consist of help with closing costs and rehabilitation bonuses on true "fix 'er uppers". With the aging housing market many of the owner occupied homes need rehabilitation work. Unfortunately, many of the homes are owned by people on fixed or low incomes for whom the cost of repair is prohibitive. Rather than force the owners out with the possible result of adding to the rental market, there should be incentives for homeowners to fix up their properties.

13. LENDERS IN MANY INSTANCES HAVE LOW INTEREST LOAN PRODUCTS OF WHICH BUYERS ARE UNAWARE, AND THERE SHOULD BE AN EXTENSION OF THE FIRST TIME BUYERS PROGRAM TO INFORM BUYERS OF THE DIFFERENT PACKAGES AVAILABLE TO THEM ON THE MARKET.

The first time buyers program recently instituted in the community under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce provides valuable information and assistance to persons interested in local home ownership. Lenders frequently have quotas of money to be reinvested in the local communities and have adopted various programs to assist buyers. Their information should be made available in a setting other than the normal business setting so that the buyers can be informed in an atmosphere other than the banker's office. The buyers' program would seem naturally suited for this task.

14. A LOCAL HOUSING OFFICE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED IN THE ESSEX - MIDDLE RIVER AREA.

A local housing office could serve several functions. It could compile information on home ownership opportunities in the area and offer housing counseling to members of the community. A staff person could arrange workshops for realtors and buyers to explain programs and lending products available in the area. The staff person also could work as a liaison between the communities and the state and county agencies. The office could also distribute information on inspections, county codes and rental regulations for the area and serve as a base office for county housing services.



RENTAL HOUSING

The tremendous amount of rental housing in the area has resulted in special issues. The housing code is important to the county, and further enforcement is important, but renter services and security are also important. Many of the residents of the communities are single parents; many others are impoverished. They have special needs, and a pro-active approach should be taken to address the needs of the residents and of the rental complexes.

Rental complexes also have a unique impact on county revenues and services. Property taxes for rental complexes usually are based on capitalizing the rental stream of revenue. Consequently, a complex with low vacancy and a high rental rate would pay much more than a complex with high vacancies and low rentals. Unfortunately, complexes which have the lowest rentals and the higher vacancies usually have the greatest demand for service. It can be argued that they are not paying "their fair share" of the tax burden. On the other hand the owners are working off of low margins and revenue streams, and increases in tax burdens either are passed along to tenants who can least afford them or are paid in lieu of necessary maintenance. One way to break the cycle would be to put more responsibility on the tenants and landlords to handle their affairs internally to lessen the burden on county services.

15. LARGER APARTMENT COMPLEXES SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO ADOPT AN ON-SITE RESIDENT LIAISON POSITION.

The development of a resident advocate program, similar to the State funded Service Linked Housing Program, is a cost effective, preventive solution to addressing the needs of individuals and families residing in permanent rental housing, of the rental communities, and of the community as a whole. The integration of housing and support services to individuals and to the community will positively impact the quality of life for all persons living in the community. Resident advocates serve as links and conduits between the individuals and families and the government and social services available to them. In addition, as the resident advocate identifies issues that confront the rental complex as a whole, the advocates work with the residents and the community to resolve these issues. An example of this would include assisting residents to unite to work toward establishing a drug free environment, neighborhood watches, etc. The Kingsley Park Apartment program, where a small investment has energized a community into a successful revitalization, is an example of a very successful Service Linked Housing Program. The residents have seen the benefit of working together and have worked with the landlord in improving their community. These are partnerships which benefit all levels of the community. The County \should assist in funding this position.

16. THERE SHOULD BE EXPANDED INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE COUNTY HOUSING CODE AND OF THE ZONING CODE.

There is a true lack of inspectors to answer legitimate concerns about housing code violations. There really is no funding mechanism for hiring the inspectors. A nominal fee on each landlord for each unit registered in the county, would fund enough inspector positions to make a difference. It also is recognized that tenants create some of the violations, and the enforcement provisions should include tenants who violate the zoning and housing codes so that the landlords who ultimately pay the price of bad tenants should not bear the burden alone. The entire process should also be decriminalized with civil penalties so as to promote easy resolution of the matters and solutions without criminal sanctions and stigma. It makes no sense for zoning violations to be a civil penalty and for housing violations to have a criminal penalty. All of the violations should be removed from the court system where prosecution and resolution are time consuming, somewhat capricious, and frustrating.

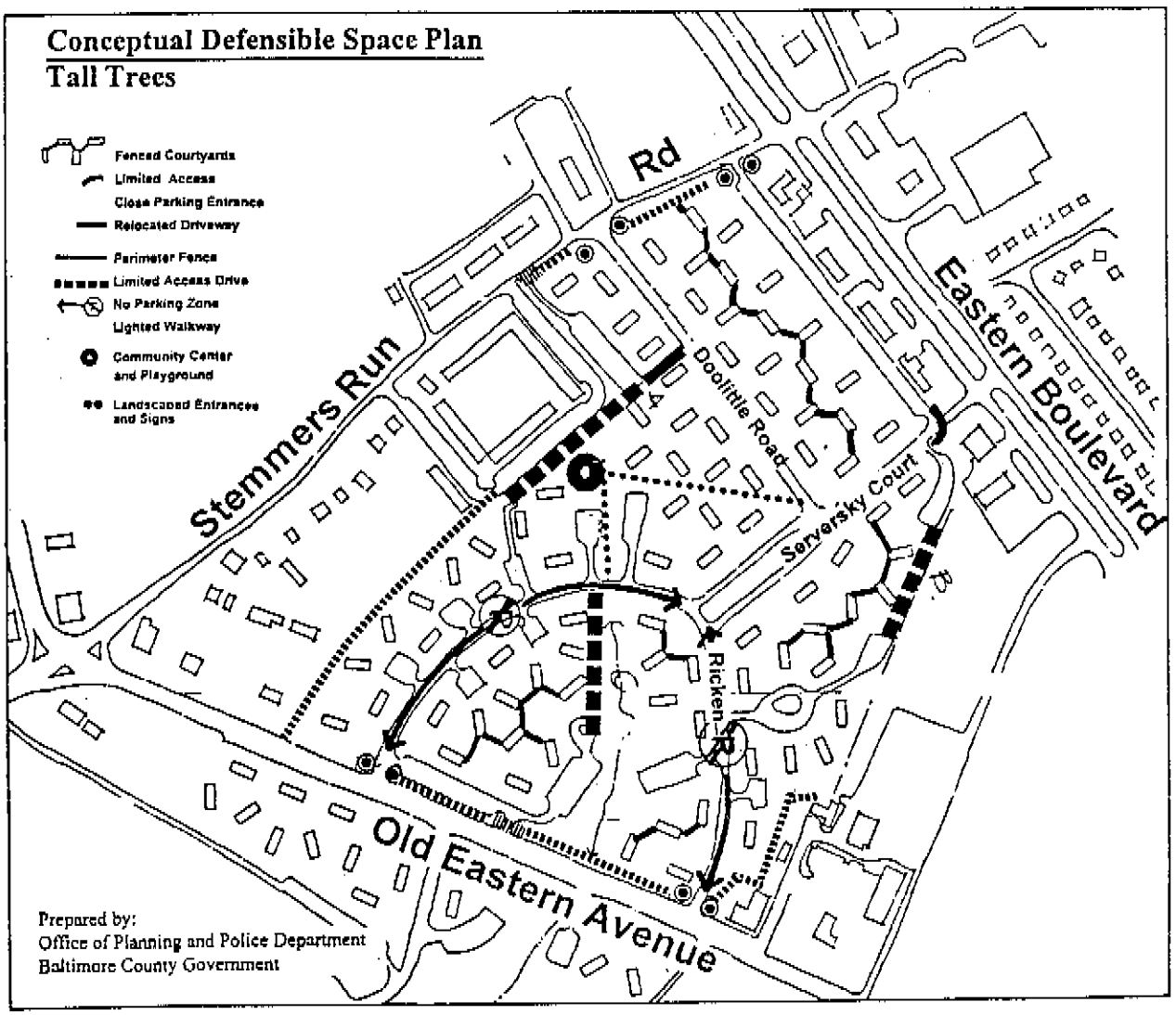
17. LARGE APARTMENT COMPLEXES SHOULD BE REQUIRED BY COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO SUPPLY THEIR OWN PRIVATE SECURITY.

Last year the Essex precinct received almost 60,000 calls for service resulting in over 11,000 reported crimes and over 4,000 arrests. One apartment complex alone accounted for over 15% of the arrests. This is an incredible drain of resources and manpower. Five apartment complexes in the area account for a vast amount of the vice and narcotic

traffic. The concentration of so many people in the complexes makes them difficult and expensive to police. The private complexes serving more than 100 tenants should supply their own private security to supplement neighborhood watch and the formal police patrols.

18. LARGE APARTMENT COMPLEXES SHOULD BE REQUIRED TO FILE DEFENSIBLE SPACE PLANS WITH BALTIMORE COUNTY.

In most modern complexes defensible space design is not an issue. In the older complexes in the county, security was not an element to be considered in design. As a result there are many hiding places for criminal activity, lots of escape routes, and in some cases poor public safety access. A defensible space plan has been proposed for the Village of Tall Trees, and it has many workable elements that could be utilized in other communities. Complexes of over 50 apartments should be required to file defensible space plans within two (2) years.



TRANSPORTATION

In a community where so many people are dependent upon public transportation as a sole means of transportation, the lack of adequate public facilities becomes much more apparent. Is it reasonable to expect residents of the study area to take two hours to travel one way to the health care center on Franklin Square Drive and then take another two hours to travel home? It is a distance that can be traversed by car in fifteen (15) minutes. What happens is that people needing service all tend to reach their destination at the same time resulting in long lines for service. This is inefficient and destructive of the relief the service was intended to provide. An entire day is lost. There are two alternatives: either bring the services provided into the community or increase the opportunities for people to reach the service.

19. THE COUNTY SHOULD WORK WITH THE METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY TO EXPAND CROSS COUNTY SERVICE.

Currently, there is a mid-day gap in service to the Towson area. Because there is a bus in the morning and another at night, a trip to Towson is an all day event. The location and design of bus stops should be done in accordance with property owners and the community.

20. RECREATION COUNCILS SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE COUNTYRIDE VANS OR COUNTYRIDE PROGRAM TO GET THE YOUTH TO THE RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS AFTER SCHOOL AND ON WEEKENDS.

There may be an opportunity when the vans are not otherwise in use to allow the recreation councils to use the vans to transport the youngsters to programs and community activities. Community activities at the local parks are not readily accessible to those dependent on public transportation. There is no service, for instance, to Rocky Point or Miami Beach or other waterfront facilities. Ball fields outside the community are not accessible to those without cars. These public facilities should serve all of the public and not only those with private transportation. In older communities like Essex - Middle River the countyride vans could be a real help in getting the youth off the streets and to the recreation centers.

21. SHUTTLE SERVICE TO THE HEALTH-EDUCATION COMPLEX ON ROSSVILLE BOULEVARD SHOULD BE EXPANDED.

There are numerous health and educational services available at the Franklin Square Hospital facility and at Essex Community College. Unfortunately, getting there is the major problem. Pre-natal programs, family wellness clinics, rehabilitation facilities, job counseling and placement services are just a few of the important programs that may well be beyond the reach of the very segment of the population which could most benefit from them. The Essex - Middle River community is truly fortunate in having the fine facilities on Rossville Boulevard, but they should be readily accessible.

EDUCATION

The education needs of the community are divisible into school programs and community programs. Within the elementary schools the greatest apparent problem is stability. Three (3) elementary schools, Deep Creek, Middlesex and Mars Estates have turnover rates in excess of 60% per year. During what are arguably the most important educational years the kids are shuttled from school to school often due to a move of only a few blocks. There are other possible means of addressing community stability such as with increased job opportunities, but the schools should look to see if there is something that can be done on a district wide basis to promote stability in education. Attendance is a major problem in the middle and high schools, and goals should be set with programs for attainment of the goals.

On a community level there are opportunities for continuing education through the library, community college system, as well as, adult education centers located in several neighborhood schools that should be explored. Two of the best assets we have in the county are the library system and the community college network. These assets should be enlisted in the community conservation effort.

22. GOALS SHOULD BE SET FOR ATTENDANCE INCREASE AND MOBILITY REDUCTION.

A suggested goal for attendance would be that by June, 1997, all schools in the community meet state standards for satisfactory attendance. Mobility should be reduced by 10% by June, 1997. The Board of Education has ignored this problem for too long by characterizing it as a local issue; it is a critical issue. We do not need another lost generation. The Board of Education should actively support this mobility reduction initiative. District boundaries can be drawn around the schools with the highest mobility to see if students can stay in the school even if the family moves to another school district within the community. Increased staffing to provide aides in the classrooms and additional pupil personnel workers and social workers would also enhance stability. Additional counseling and family assistance has been shown to greatly reduce mobility. School "voice systems" should be instituted in the five (5) schools with the lowest attendance rates with direct classroom lines where possible.

23. THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS SHOULD BE UTILIZED AS MINI-COMMUNITY CENTERS.

Most of the elementary schools are within walking distance of neighborhoods. Development of a community center program at each elementary school would be the best way to develop the parental involvement needed. The centers should have both in-house and out-reach capabilities. Some services would include parenting skills, mentoring, and computer lab access.

24. THE SCHOOLS SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ON-LINE CATALOG AND INFORMATION SYSTEM, KNOWN AS "EVERYBODY'S CATALOG".

This system has resources including data bases of service providers, government agencies, periodical data bases, and on-line services. It is a resource not only for the faculty but also for the students, parents and community service providers. Having this service at seventeen (17) additional locations to the one (1) currently available makes the service actually usable by the general community.

25. THE ESSEX LIBRARY SHOULD BE UTILIZED AS A FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER.

As indicated in the section on Infrastructure, the Essex library is very centrally located and has much potential as a community center. It can also serve as a family resource or learning center for the entire family. On any given school night the library is filled with children working on projects. Parental involvement can be increased by providing resources aimed at assisting family living. For example, there is a tremendous demand for computers to assist with word processing, resume preparation, literacy development, etc. In addition to more computer work stations, videotapes and audio cassettes can inform on a variety of job-related matters including resumes, home business, etc. These resources are relatively inexpensive, and in an enhanced library environment can really turn the facility into a much utilized family resource.

26. AN EXPANDED CABLE NETWORK SHOULD PROVIDE FOR GREATER ACCESSIBILITY TO ADDITIONAL EDUCATION.

The technology is at hand for more cable channels and greater resources. The county should explore with cable providers the dedication of resources to additional educational opportunities.

27. THERE SHOULD BE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE OUTREACH TO LOCAL SCHOOLS FOR TECHNICAL AND INTELLECTUAL ENRICHMENT.

Essex Community College has in the past effectively created partnerships with local schools which enhance the quality of education. It is an unfortunate fact that the public schools in the community as a whole are below average in overall testing. The resources of the college in mentoring and tutoring and outreach programs could assist these schools, and funding should be provided for the assistance.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is an area that impacts most closely the quality of life in a community. No community can remain stable; no community can attract business or residents if it is not perceived to be a safe place to

live and raise a family. Regardless of the fact that the Essex - Middle River community is as a whole a safe and secure community, the image is to the contrary. Much of the crime that exists in the community is concentrated in a few areas. There are a number of community and government actions that can be taken to meet the problems which do exist.

28. CITIZEN ON PATROL GROUPS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED AND MAINTAINED.

These groups have been shown to be an effective deterrent to crime and also have the positive effect of involving citizens within the community. The groups can be supported by formulating a training program including training for traffic control and for management for C.O.P. leaders, continuing funding of radios and phones as an on-going budget item, and recruiting new patrols.

29. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT SHOULD CREATE A JUVENILE CRIME TASK FORCE.

Gangs in some of the local communities have begun to contribute to juvenile delinquency. The task force would investigate and educate the public on juvenile crime and gang problems.

30. A COUNTY FUNDED COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM FOR JUVENILES SHOULD BE CREATED.

Although there are some limited opportunities for community service in the juvenile justice system, these opportunities should be expanded. A group would be needed to manage and supervise the juveniles as well as to schedule and to keep track of hours served.

31. PARENTAL COUNSELING SHOULD BECOME A FEATURE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY PROCEEDINGS.

Current laws allow for parental liability in the event of damage caused by delinquent juveniles, but frequently, this burden is unrealistic given the financial situation of the family. Parental counseling, however, should be a feature of the program with mandates and penalties if not followed.

32. IN THE COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREAS MONEY SEIZED DUE TO DRUG ENFORCEMENT SHOULD BE WHOLLY RETURNED TO THE PRECINCT FOR USE IN ENFORCEMENT.

Currently, only half of the assets seized are now returned to the police. The balance goes to other areas. Drug use has a disproportionate impact on the older, at risk communities, where there are higher rates of poverty and less opportunities. Consequently, the assets seized from the arrests should be returned to the communities to combat the crime adversely affecting the community as a whole.

33. CURFEWS FOR YOUTH SHOULD BE STUDIED FOR USE IN BALTIMORE COUNTY.

There seems to be little doubt that enforced curfews reduce juvenile crime. Obviously, there are constitutional issues which must be strictly observed. Curfew laws should be seriously examined. The problems created by the proposal should be weighed against its benefits in an objective review.

RECREATION

Parks in the Essex - Middle River area are poorly located to serve the needs of the immediate community. The parks which do exist are on the fringe area of the community and were intended to serve a regional need rather than a local need. There are only 10 county parks within the study area, with a total of 230.5 acres, not including open space and recreational facilities located at county schools. This is wholly inadequate to serve the existing population of over 60,000. Some issues pertaining to infrastructure and transportation already have been addressed, but there are program issues and maintenance issues which also require action.

34. LEADERSHIP OF LOCAL RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS SHOULD BE SUSTAINED BY FUNDING.

Local programs in the older communities lack the sort of funding that is available in wealthier communities. Additional funding sources for local leadership should be found. One idea might be to have a pooled private money fund so that of every dollar obtained from private sources for specific programs so much goes into the pooled fund for distribution to needier areas.

35. THE MISCONCEPTION THAT EVERYONE MUST PAY IN ORDER TO PLAY IN THE RECREATION COUNCILS MUST BE CORRECTED.

As a matter of fact the recreation councils do not turn away children who can not afford to pay the fees. Unfortunately, that fact has not been adequately promoted, but it should be. Every child should be made to feel welcome regardless of economic status in the recreation programs.

36. OLDER RECREATION FACILITIES NEED ADDITIONAL MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT.

The facilities in the community conservation areas should be a mandated priority item in maintenance and support. The necessary maintenance is on-going and draining financially but critical in providing attractive facilities. The lack of a solid constituency pressing for maintenance requires structured mandates in order that the work be performed on a continual basis.

37. THE POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE PROGRAMS SHOULD BE FULLY SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENT AND BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR.

The community needs greater involvement from the Police Athletic League. This is a valuable recreational resource particularly in areas where police contact with juveniles frequently may be confrontational in nature. Facilities for the programs should be sponsored by the county, and private fund programs should be established for their support.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Every community should be proactive in recruiting and training community leaders and volunteers to ensure that every neighborhood has adequate representation. Some large communities such as central Essex have no identifiable community group. The larger apartment complexes lack cohesive representation. Although one might be tempted to attribute this lack of representation to the transient nature of the communities, many of the residents have resided in the same complex for decades. The issues really seem to center upon a feeling of disenfranchisement, of lack of communication skills, and of lack of information.

Another problem in the leadership vacuum is that so much of the leadership development centers around political issues. Although a relatively small percentage of the community is attuned to political issues, politics plays a major part in the leadership structure as opposed to community issues. The advancement of community issues can only be achieved through heightened awareness of resources and the ability to communicate issues and actions to the communities affected and to government representatives.

The existence of this committee and the large degree of participation from all facets of the community demonstrate the strong interest held by many in the improvement of conditions within the community. Inclusiveness is the key to ultimate success, and by developing the leadership potential demonstrated by the interest in this project, many more people will become involved in the actions necessary to strengthen the community.

38. LEADERS FROM THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY SHOULD ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS.

Volunteers have stepped forward from the community college and from the public schools to work on programs that will improve and strengthen local associations and to increase awareness of the kind of impact the associations can have on the quality of life in the community.

39. A MORE COORDINATED EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES AVAILABLE TO COMMUNITIES.

A single county department should assume responsibility to disseminate information about the services that are available from business and the public sector.

40. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS SHOULD BE MADE MORE WIDELY ACCESSIBLE TO THE OLDER AREAS OF THE COUNTY.

There currently exist very valuable leadership development programs under various auspices. These programs have some scholarship participation, but are primarily directed toward corporate entities members of whom are seeking to develop leadership skills within the metropolitan community. There should be increased funding of scholarships to the programs and greater dissemination of the availability of the programs within the community. Time is always a problem for the small business owner, not to mention the single parent, but those with an interest have always come forward, and the provision of leadership programs in a non-political context is critically important within the older communities.

SOCIAL ENRICHMENT

EDUCATION

Although many aspects of education further the development of the community, the enrichment of the individual person is still the primary function of education. In addition to the standard education opportunities available to individuals, there are some special programs that should be made available to members of the community to further their personal development.

41. PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED IN THE AREAS OF MOTIVATION AND LEADERSHIP.

Volunteers have offered to conduct courses in employee motivation, leadership skills and techniques, shared decision making, and effective negotiation. These are skills that are useful in many contexts. Conflict resolution is another area that needs program development. The expansion of the resources of the Essex Library to a family resource center will also provide enrichment opportunities for individuals through the data base and educational information access.

42. PARENTING SKILL PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AT THE LIBRARY AND AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

In an atmosphere where resources are scarce, one's time with children is short, and given the negative cultural influences, strong parenting skills are very important. Stereotypical family situations are simply not the rule in today's society, and the skills which many of us inherited are simply not germane to the environment in which we find ourselves. Outreach to the families should be made to make attendance at these courses easier, and programs should be offered in an informal setting. These programs have been proven to be very useful, and the county should work toward their implementation.

HUMAN SERVICES

43. UNDER THE AUSPICES OF BALTIMORE COUNTY A VOLUNTEER CLEARING HOUSE SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED.

There are a large number of people willing to volunteer their time and talents within the community. There should be a general clearinghouse of services which need volunteers with up-to-date contact information and a list of potential volunteers. There are services which could attract volunteers if the right people knew of their existence. Groups should submit their volunteer lists to a clearinghouse along with needs so that coordination of services and volunteers can occur more readily.

44. HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES SHOULD BECOME MORE COMMUNITY BASED.

Franklin Square Hospital currently is working with the Tall Trees Community to locate services in the community center. This approach to local service delivery is one that should be duplicated elsewhere in the community. It is unrealistic to expect residents to take days off to get treatment except in emergency situations. Preventive medicine, however, greatly reduces ultimate medical problems and costs. Social services also should be more oriented to local centers to ease transportation problems and to encourage use.

45. SERVICE CARAVANS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR USE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

In many rural communities services are provided by caravan rather than at centers remote from the

population. This concept was seen in Baltimore County with the bookmobiles. One non-profit service provider commented that his organization suffered from an "edifice complex," too rooted to bricks and mortar housing and not effectively delivering service to the needy. Government also thinks in terms of bricks and mortar, and a service caravan that travels through communities on a regular basis, maybe, using elementary schools as a site could deliver social service and housing information and applications, license and permit renewals, social service recertification, health services and immunizations, etc.

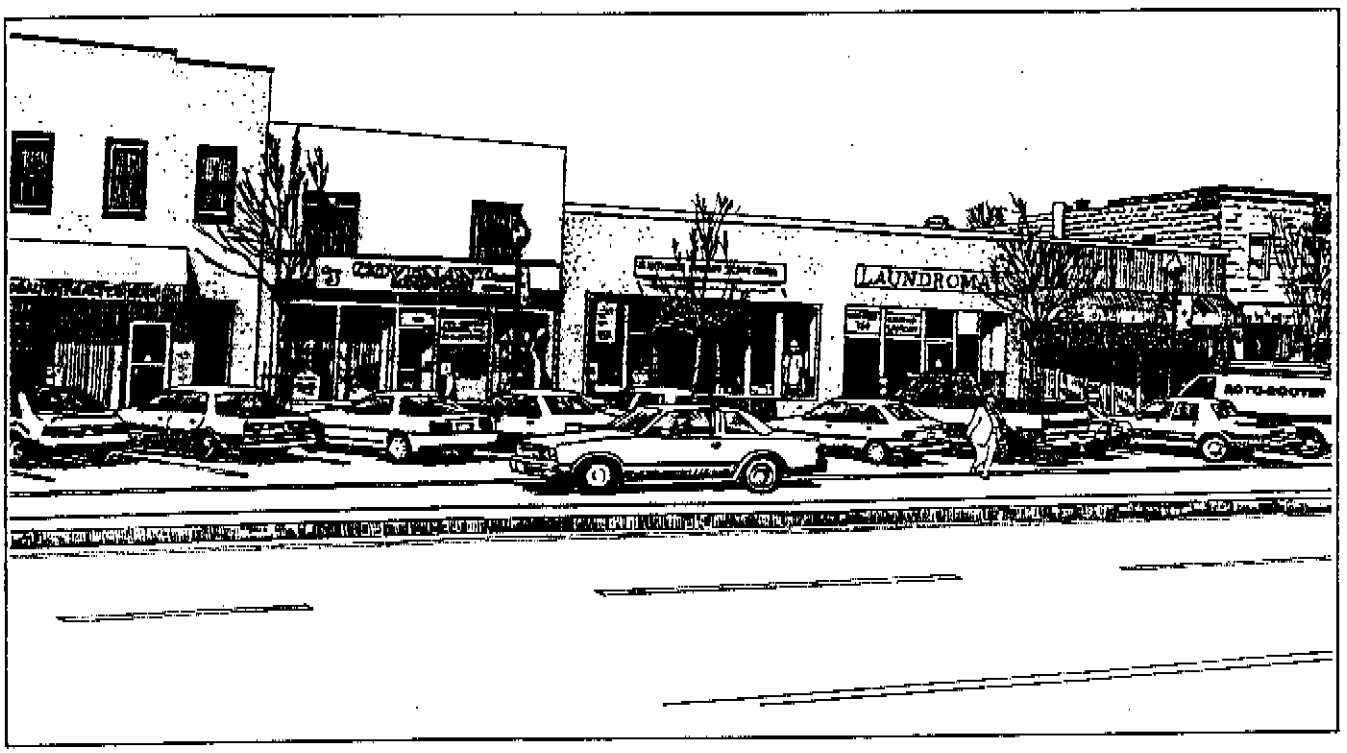
46. A SUBSTANCE ABUSE TASK FORCE SHOULD EVALUATE THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS IN THE COMMUNITY.

The issue of substance abuse touches the lives of many families in the study area and the availability of substance abuse programs is crucial to the wellness of the community. A task force should be established to evaluate the need for additional services and the effectiveness of current services.

ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Economic development is the engine that drives the growth and stability of the community. People come to a community because of its proximity to work. People leave a community when there is no work to be found. It has been noted that the deterioration of a community begins when the jobs leave.

The fortunes of Essex - Middle River have swung like a pendulum on the fortunes of Bethlehem Steel and the Martin Company (now Lockheed - Martin). At their peak the companies employed over 80,000 people. Almost every family has had someone employed by those companies. With the switch to technology and the decline of "smokestack" industry in eastern Baltimore County, the jobs left, and today, the two companies combined employ less than 10,000. Housing, however, was built in the late 1950's and in the 1960's and 1970's in accordance with the Baltimore County Master Plan of the time to



accommodate additional industrial development planned for the Back River Peninsula. That industrial base never materialized, and with the advent of wetlands regulation and the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area law, it became clear that the true value of the peninsula lay in conserving its environmental attributes.

Without the jobs to generate income many of the working residents have left. Commercial enterprises have lessened in number as their patrons have left and as competition from regional malls located along the Baltimore beltway have increased.

At the same time as the need for industry and job creation has grown the resentment and concern about the negative impacts of business has grown in the residential areas. Although the Martin State Airport is one of the major economic development resources of the area, the attendant noise is greatly resented by the residential communities of Wilson Point and Bowleys Quarters. Similarly, the residential communities have a heightened awareness of the costs of environmental pollution. They are confronted daily by water pollution from failing private septic systems and see the impact on the health of the Bay from wetland deterioration. The communities wish to preserve the remaining open areas that are left in order that they not intrude on more sensitive wetlands. Court challenges not infrequently confront new or expanding businesses due to environmental impacts.

Finally, as a recent study sponsored by the Eastern Baltimore Area Chamber of Commerce indicates, business and industry have to have a reason to select one area over another. It may be low cost land or a skilled and efficient labor force; it may be proximity to markets; it may be a high quality of amenities. This community is in competition for new jobs with every other community in the metropolitan area, and it must be able to address the questions of why stay here and why move here.

In the face of these issues it must be recognized that most jobs come from businesses already located within a community. Expansion of existing business accounts for well over the majority of new jobs. Consequently, existing business should be given the opportunity and incentive to expand and thrive in the Essex - Middle River community.

PROMOTION AND MARKETING OF COMMUNITY

47. A MARKETING PACKET SHOULD BE PRODUCED TO BE PRESENTED TO POTENTIAL HOME BUYERS.

Too often realtors, particularly those outside the area, do not have an appreciation of the services or of the available housing or of the proximity to major highways. The community has several assets: houses at lower cost than comparable housing elsewhere in the metropolitan area, waterfront proximity, and proximity to interstate highways that make job markets in Anne Arundel and Harford County readily accessible as well as those in western Baltimore County and Baltimore City. These assets along with regional assets could be used to market the community to others.

48. COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD ORGANIZE PUBLICITY PARTNERSHIPS WITH EMPLOYERS, LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS, LENDERS, REALTORS AND TITLE COMPANIES TO ADVERTISE EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY SUCH AS ESSEX DAY, RIVERFEST, THE AIR SHOW, AND COASTWEEKS.

There are numerous community events promoting various aspects of the area, which should be better marketed in area-wide publications. Attractions such as Coastweeks, Ballestone, and the Airshow deserve regional support.

49. AT LOCAL EVENTS A BOOTH SHOULD BE DEDICATED TO THE DISTRIBUTION OF LITERATURE ABOUT THE COMMUNITY AND OTHER EVENTS.

Home ownership plans and programs could also be distributed and advertised at events outside the region to promote Essex - Middle River as an attractive place to live.

50. INFORMATION SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED THROUGH THE LOCAL SCHOOLS AND LIBRARY ABOUT PUBLIC SAFETY AND EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENTS.

Public safety and education are topics of great interest to most people. Too often only the negative news gets published in the media, and the good that is occurring including citizen involvement needs to be brought home to the community. Oddly, there may be more recognition of certain teachers and individuals for their achievements outside the community than within it.

51. A COMMUNITY PRIDE COMMITTEE SHOULD BE ORGANIZED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

This committee would be the primary agent for the dissemination of information about housing and business opportunity in the area. Volunteers for the committee could be drawn from outside the chamber to man booths and make presentations. With the support of the real estate community this committee could work to promote and market the community as described above.

52. A COMMITTEE SHOULD BE FORMED TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBILITY OF DESIGNATING MIDDLE RIVER AS A HISTORIC DISTRICT.

Given the rich history centering around the many cultures that converged on the area as a result of World War II the area may find it beneficial to have historic district designation.

53. THE RESOURCES OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND TTECHNICAL SCHOOLSHOULD BE MARKETED AS AN ATTRACTION TO NEW BUSINESS.

Essex Community College and Eastern Technical School have tremendous resources that might be utilized by small business. The college has job training programs, and the technical school has student projects on a highly sophisticated technical level that could be used as an aid to small business. These resources should be better marketed and publicized.

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

54. THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES SHOULD HAVE A DEFINED ROLE IN THE PRIVATIZATION EFFORTS OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY.

Education and job training could be an important resource in the marketing of the county as a whole. The efforts to privatize economic development and to involve the private sector should not overlook the resources of the county's educational institutions.

55. A ONE STOP SHOP SHOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE AT THE JOB TRAINING CENTER FOR THOSE SEEKING EMPLOYMENT.

A place should be established where those seeking employment can look at available positions. The center would work as a placement office not just for those seeking training or retraining but for the employment community as a whole. Businesses should be encouraged to advertise generally and use the center as a resource.

SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION

56. SBA LOANS ARE FREQUENTLY VERY EXPENSIVE AND ARE NOT COST EFFICIENT FOR SMALL COMPANIES.
The County should consider such a program in conjunction with local bank programs for reinvestment in communities.

57. THE COUNTY SHOULD CONSIDER WAIVING OR DROPPING DEVELOPMENT COSTS FOR THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING SMALL BUSINESS IN COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREAS.

The county now charges significant review fees for even minor development. Storm water management plans may cost thousands in review fees. These fees operate as a disincentive for small business to expand. The county seems willing to aid large employers to locate in the county by expediting the development and zoning processes, but it has done little to aid the small business. Small businesses are still required to hire experts to prepare costly plans for a costly review fee. Too often the costs of plan preparation and review exceed the actual cost of the

improvement. This adds significantly to Baltimore County's poor development reputation.

58. THE COUNTY SHOULD CONSIDER A PROGRAM WHEREBY THEY PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SMALL BUSINESSES IN THE PREPARATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLANS IN EXCHANGE FOR IMPROVEMENTS IN LANDSCAPING AND AESTHETICS IN COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREAS.

The county had a program under the critical area growth allocation process whereby applicants with small acreage had the assistance of the county in the preparation of their application and plans. The county should consider a similar program, particularly in the nature of site plans, which can cost thousands to prepare. When plans serve little purpose the money spent on the plans could instead be paid into a fund to improve the community's appearance or to improve the aesthetics of the proposed improvement.

59. BUSINESS INCUBATORS SHOULD AGAIN BE CONSIDERED FOR THE ESSEX- MIDDLE RIVER COMMUNITY.

Several years ago the county considered locating a small business incubator project modeled on a project in York, Pennsylvania in the older retail area of Essex. Martin State Airport also was considered for a small manufacturing incubator. These concepts were good ones and should be reexamined. There are many small businesses, some part-time, in the community that could use the incubator facility to expand.

60. THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION SHOULD ESTABLISH A CLEARINGHOUSE OF PROGRAMS AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE IN A LOCAL OFFICE THAT WOULD AID SMALL BUSINESSES WITH EXPANSION, REDEVELOPMENT, AND RELOCATION.

To a small business person time is very precious because time away from the business may mean that it is closed, yet going through the process in Towson is very time consuming. The county is well aware of the numerous pitfalls that await the new proposal, and all of them are time consuming. The Essex multi-government center should be expanded to include a clearinghouse of accurate information to aid the small business and prevent lost time. It would be a great help if much of the process itself could be handled within the community rather than in the centralized maze of the Towson complex.

61. A STATE OF THE ART CONFERENCE CENTER IS NEEDED IN THE COMMUNITY FOR CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS.

Eastern Technical High School is a logical site for a modern conference center. Their communications and audio-visual equipment is extensive, and their facility demonstrative of what a successful education program can be. The county should support funding for such a center.

62. ROUTE 43 (WHITE MARSH BOULEVARD) SHOULD BE EXTENDED FROM ITS CURRENT TERMINUS AT ROUTE 40 (PULASKI HIGHWAY) TO ROUTE 150 (EASTERN BOULEVARD).

The A.V. Williams tract presents a unique economic development opportunity to the area. The tract comprises nearly 1100 acres of industrially zoned land, however, the current road network does not allow for easy access to the site making industrial development impossible. The development of this road could foster major economic growth similar to the development of other areas along the I95 corridor.

63. THE COUNTY NEEDS TO ADOPT A SIGNAGE PACKAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREAS.

One cannot objectively drive down Eastern Boulevard and not notice the proliferation of signs. Signs beget more and bigger signs. Signage regulations calling for replacement of existing signs and new standards should be adopted. A local committee should be formed consisting of business and community representatives to adopt signage regulations for Essex-Middle River. The county and state also have to objectively look at the quantity of their signage with a view to limiting the number of directional signs they have posted as most of the signs in the community are public signs.

64. THE COUNTY SHOULD ADOPT THE PROPOSAL FOR WATERFRONT DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE TO REPLACE EXISTING MARINA AND RESTAURANT SIGNS AND TO DIRECT PEOPLE TO THE WATERFRONT AMENITIES.

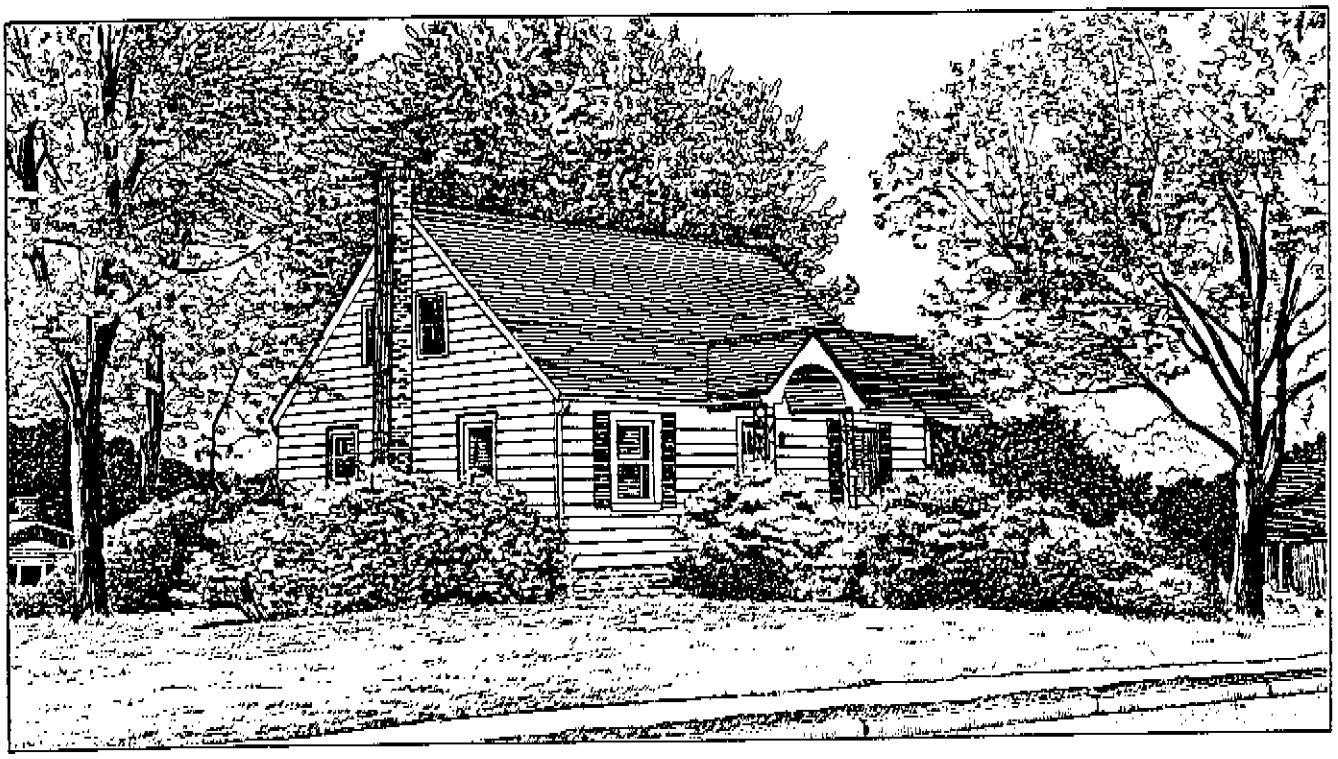
A proposal now being circulated in the County would adopt directional signs and boards listing marinas and restaurants available in the various peninsulas in the community. Because many of the facilities are difficult to find by those not familiar with the community, these signs would be a real benefit, and ultimately would serve the business community. The residential community would also be served because the number of business signs on residential properties would be reduced.

LAND USE

Land use is always one of the most important aspects of any community plan. Unless land use is planned with consideration to infrastructure and public services, development planning frequently occurs prematurely and haphazardly. There are significant factors that affect land use, of which zoning, while the most constraining, is only a portion. Proper land use promotes stability and controlled growth. The community cannot afford to squander the land use resources available to them and should carefully monitor its planning.

RESIDENTIAL

The Essex-Middle River study area has a population density of 13.7 per acre, considerably higher than the county average of 4.16 per acre, overburdening the infrastructure and public services available to community members. There is an overabundance of apartment zoning in the community, evidenced by the high vacancy rate in existing apartments and the quantity of undeveloped high density zoned land. There are well over 1,000 vacant apartment units in the Essex area now. No new apartments have been built within the last few years, partly because of the glut on the market and in the financing of the units. Rehabilitation and redevelopment has become more practical than new construction. It is hard to plan for the future when zoning densities on the properties are unsound and encourage, rather than discourage, additional low cost housing.



Some development in the study area is constrained by the Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas legislation. These constraints presently are in danger of dilution, however, it is in the best interests of the overall community to protect this most valuable resource, i.e. the Chesapeake Bay. Presently, zoning densities and mapping categories (intense development and limited development) within the Critical Areas continue to be in conflict with one another. High density zoning within the Critical Areas must be prohibited by legislation with current regulations retained.

65. NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD REFLECT DENSITIES NEEDED AND MARKETABLE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

An inventory of properties suitable for residential development should be made with appropriate uses selected for the properties. As a policy residential property within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area should be used only for single family detached dwellings. Compatibility with existing neighborhoods is extremely important. Every effort should be made to attract high quality "executive housing" to the community which will entice new business to locate in this area. Currently, townhouse development within the study area frequently becomes rental property disrupting the stability of neighborhoods. Consequently, single family detached housing is desirable because it precludes townhouse development. Home ownership should be encouraged in every way possible.

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL

Approximately 600 acres of all industrially zoned land in the study area appears to be undeveloped. However, much of that land is questionable for development because of environmental constraints. The need for more living wage jobs and the sensitivity of the environment (Chesapeake Bay Critical Areas) in this part of Baltimore County, dictates the need for critical review and marketing of all industrial and commercial land use. A joint effort between the Baltimore County Department of Economic Development, the Essex-Middle River Chamber of Commerce and the Essex-Middle River Civic Council, is needed to encourage high wage earner opportunities for residents on available industrial land.

Commercially zoned properties in the study area deserve close attention. The BR classification is the most permissive of all commercial classifications. Such zoned areas should be examined and appropriate changes recommended during the Comprehensive Zoning Map Process.

66. BEFORE MAKING IMPORTANT LAND USE DECISIONS WITH REGARD TO COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LAND, EXISTING INVENTORIES SHOULD BE EXAMINED AND UPDATED.

Updating previous inventories of developable land should be done promptly, prior to the end of the 1995 filing period for the Comprehensive Zoning Map Process.

67. THE COUNTY SHOULD CONSIDER THE USE OF SE (Service Employment) ZONES ON VACANT LAND PRESENTLY ZONED COMMERCIAL, TO PROMOTE THE USE OF SMALL MIXED COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES SIMILAR TO THAT BUILT ALONG GREENSPRING ROAD IN TIMONIUM AND ALONG NORTH POINT BOULEVARD NEAR WISE AVENUE.

The concept of multi-purpose use buildings housing multiple small businesses has been tried with great success in the North Point area. Such development is designed for the small shop keeper, promotes local employment and serves the local or small regional community. Vacant properties such as exist along Back River Road, north and south of Hyde Park Road, have sufficient acreage to successfully site such a project. Existing strip shopping centers now experience a high vacancy rate, indicating a lack of need for more. Pre-approval of SE zones by the County could save thousands of dollars of development costs, benefitting both the business and the civic interests in the community. These properties should be marketed by the county as Service Employment zones.

68. THE COUNTY SHOULD PROMOTE REDEVELOPMENT OF OLDER, ALREADY DEVELOPED AREAS.

Redevelopment of older buildings and enterprises in the Essex - Middle River area is difficult because of exorbitant development costs. While the businesses may continue as is, any redevelopment triggers a costly, intense developmental review that, under today's procedures, precludes development, thereby preventing the objective of upgrading the area. Consequently, designated conservation areas should be established whereby development plans are reviewed under less rigid criteria and plans are approved based on the overall improvement to existing conditions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ESSEX-MIDDLE RIVER COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, RUTH MOYE

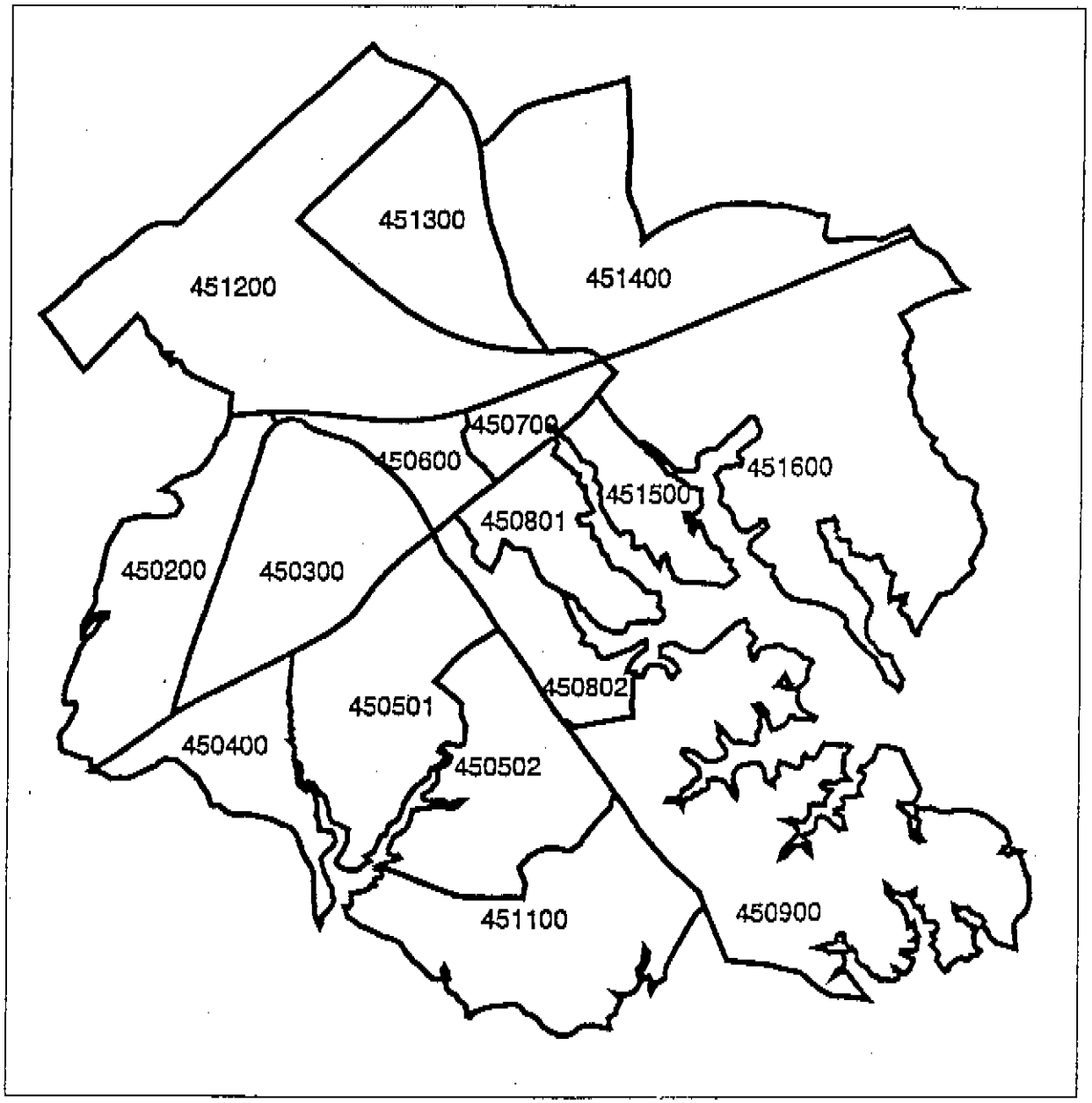
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, JOHN GONTRUM and TOM JULIANO

BALTIMORE COUNTY STAFF, JACK DILLON and MARY EMERICK

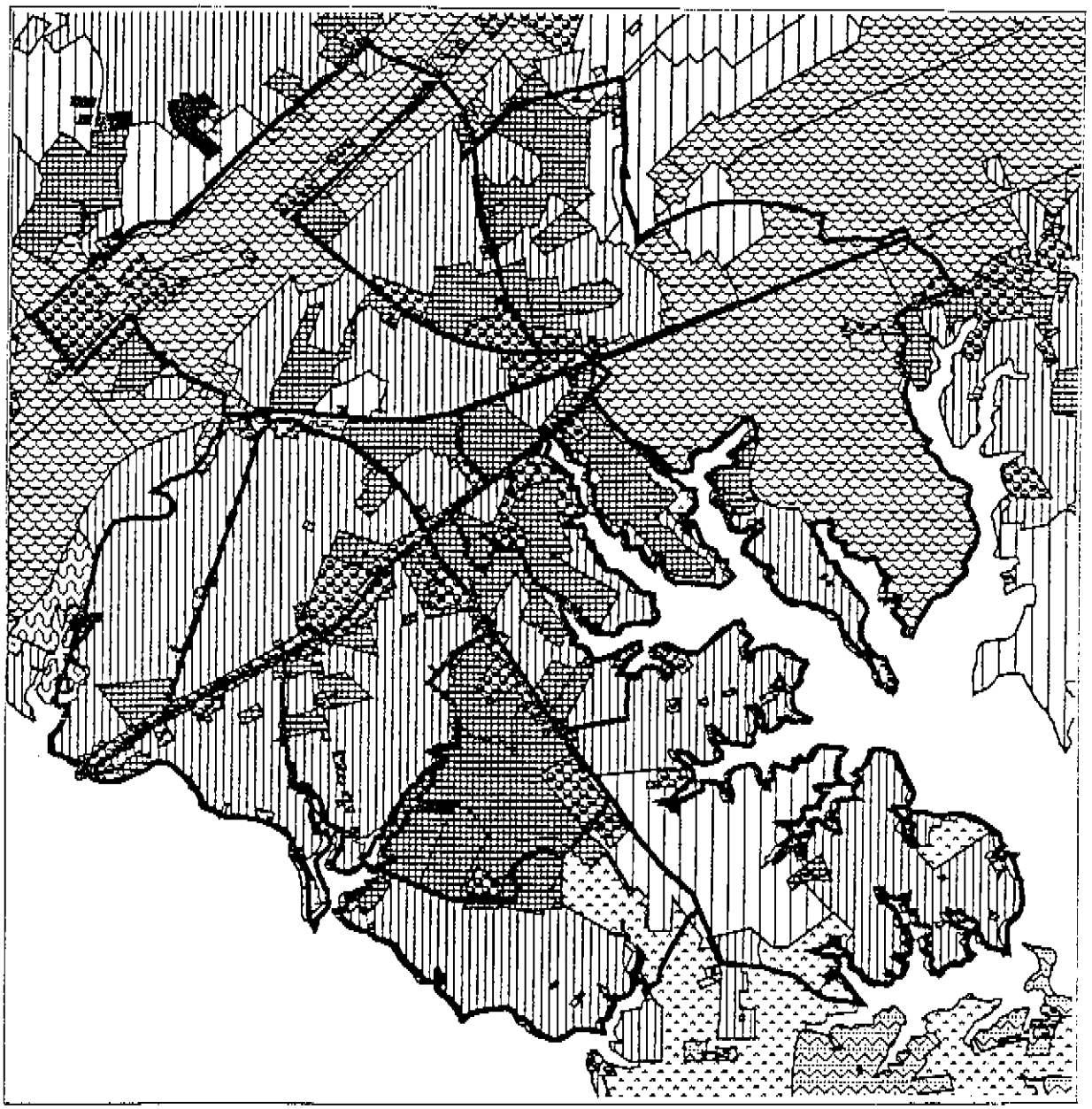
The Steering Committee gratefully acknowledges the seventy-five dedicated volunteers from the community, non-profit service agencies, state and county agencies who participated in the committee work and made this report possible. The Committee appreciates the support given by Baltimore County 5th District Councilman Vincent J. Gardina, and 7th District Councilman Louis L. DePazzo. Thanks are also extended to the Maryland 6th Legislative District Delegation, Senator Michael Collins, and Delegates Michael Weir, Diane DiCarlo and Ken Holt.

Essex1.pla.c:

Census Tracts



Zoning



KEY

- BL, BM, BR
- DR1, DR 2, DR 3.5
- DR 5.5
- DR 10.5, DR 16
- MH, ML, MR
- O, RO
- RAE
- RC 2
- RC 20
- RC 3
- RC 4
- RC 5
- RC 50

0 1 2 Miles

Land Use

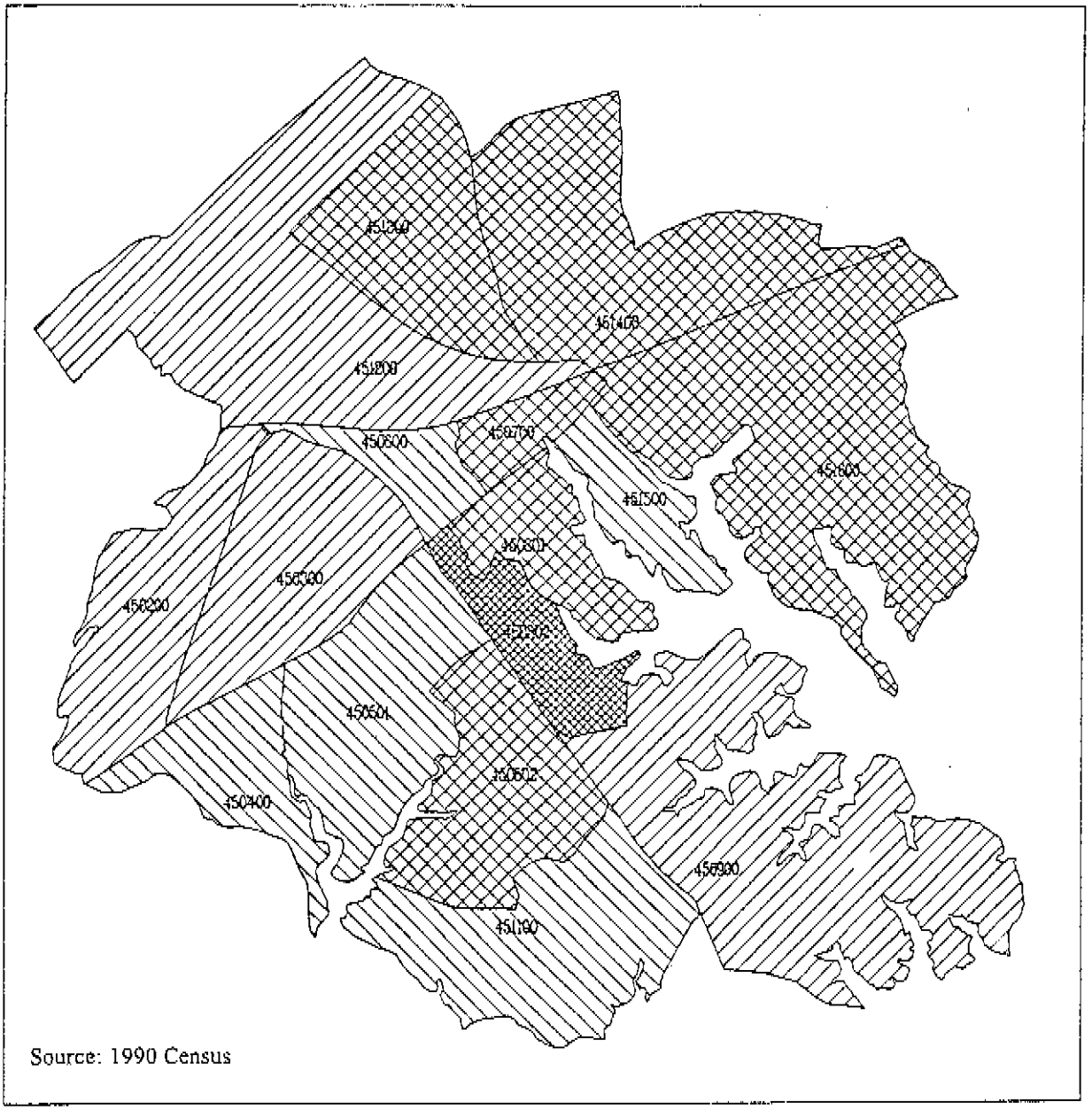
KEY

- Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutions
- Park / Forest
- Agriculture
- Vacant
- Pipeline Residential
- Pipeline Commercial
- Pipeline Industrial
- Pipeline Institutions
- Pipeline Park

0 1 2 Miles

Percent of Female Headed Households

(Universe: Two or more persons in household; no husband present)



Source: 1990 Census

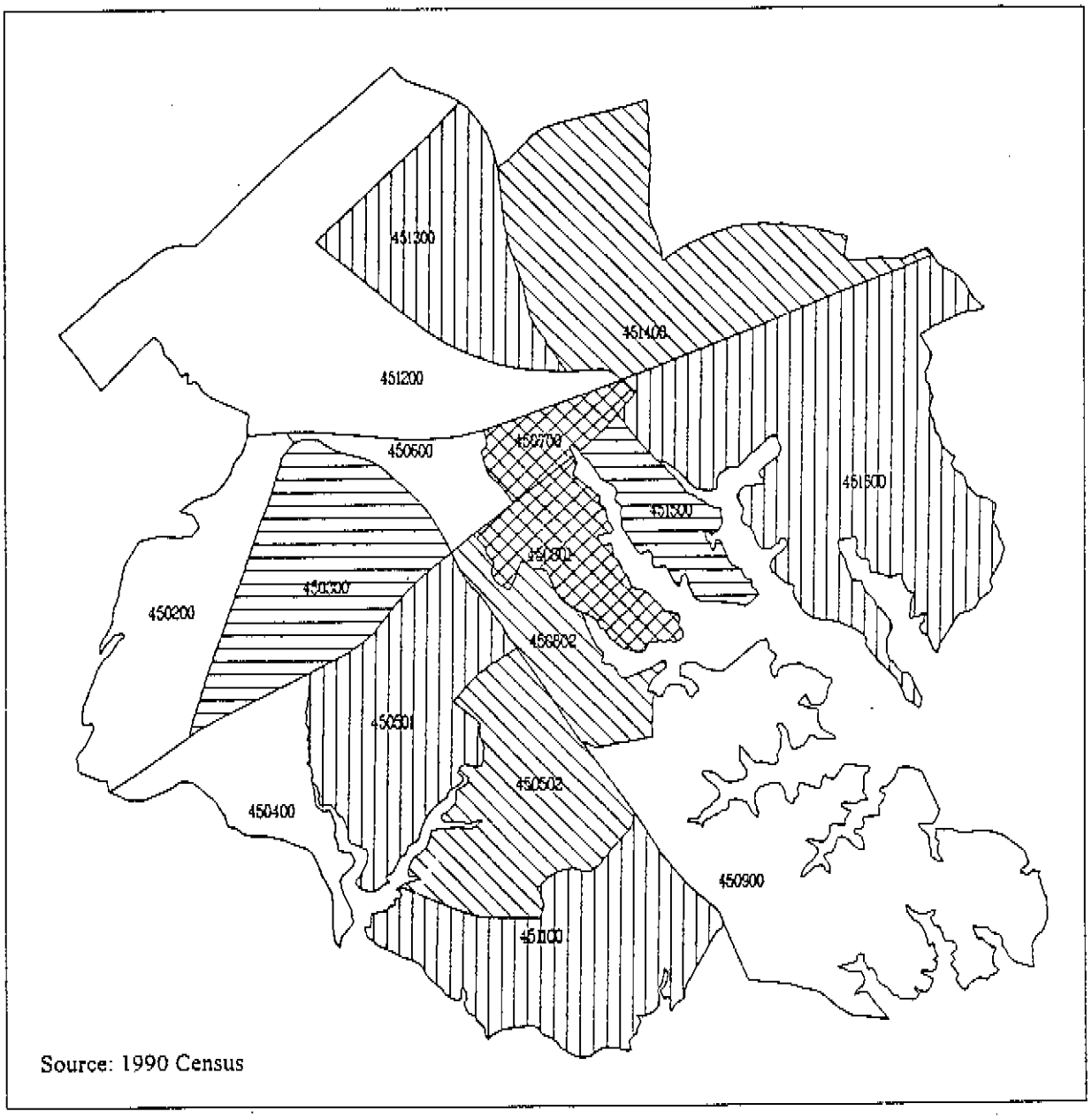
K E Y

- 0 - 4.99%
- 5.00 - 9.99%
- 10.00 - 14.99%
- 15.00 - 19.99%
- 20.00% and greater

0 1 2 Miles

Percent of Renter Occupied Units

(Universe: All Occupied Housing Units)



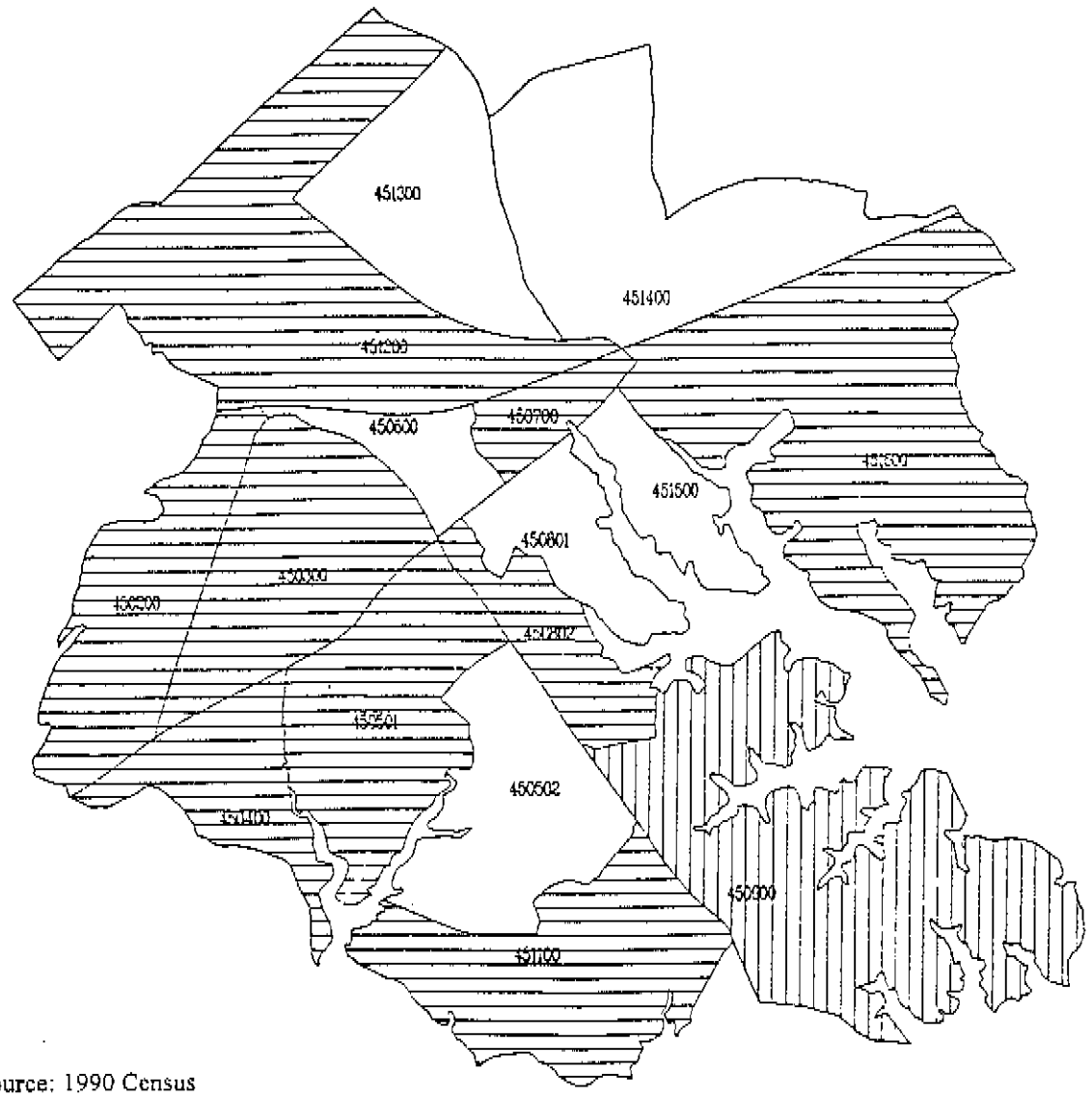
Source: 1990 Census

KEY

- 0 to 19.99%
- 20.00 to 39.99%
- 40.00 to 59.99%
- 60.00 to 79.99%
- 80.00 to 100%

0 1 2 Miles

Median Value
Owner Occupied Housing Units



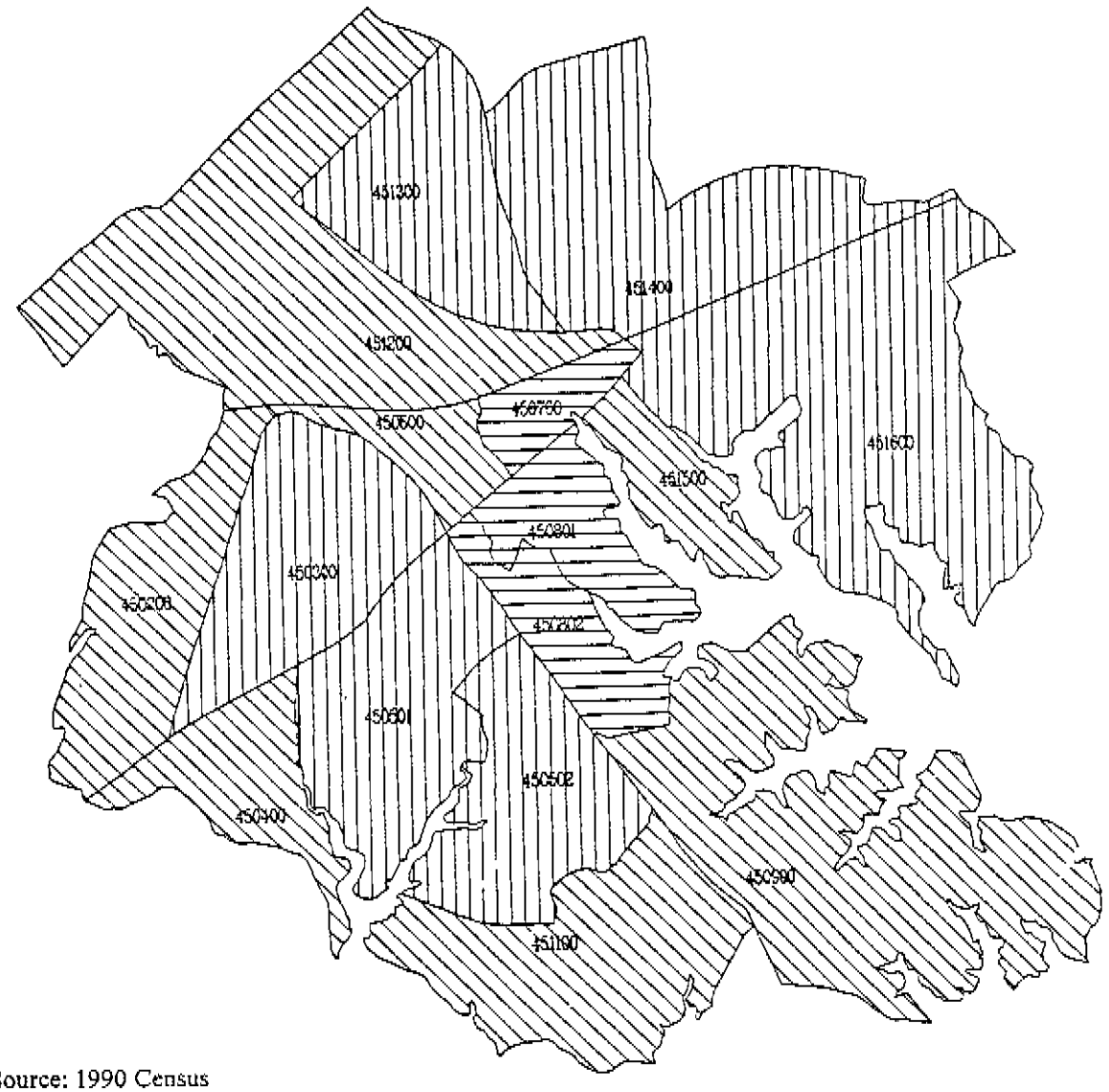
Source: 1990 Census

KEY

- 0 to 74,999
- 75,000 to 99,999
- 100,000 to 149,999
- 150,000 to 199,999
- 200,000 to 299,999
- More than 300,000

0 1 2 Miles

Median Income by Census Tract



Source: 1990 Census

KEY

- Less than $9,999
- $10,000 to $19,999
- $20,000 to $29,999
- $30,000 to $39,999
- $40,000 to $49,999
- $50,000 to $59,999
- $60,000 to $69,999
- $70,000 to $79,999
- $80,000 and up

0 1 2 Miles

Baltimore County
Office of Planning and Zoning
County Courts Building
401 Bosley Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204