



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION AGENDA

Economic Development Strategic Plan

COUNCIL WORK SESSION WILL BE ONLINE ONLY

Due to the COVID-19 precautions, the Council Meeting will be held online and is planned to be cablecast on Verizon 21, Comcast 71 and 996 and streamed to www.greenbeltmd.gov/municipaltv.

Resident participation:

Join Zoom Webinar

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87252813589?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87252813589?pwd=cHBuR2pYZzE2K2NLQVpMYStPVXIXQT09)
[pwd=cHBuR2pYZzE2K2NLQVpMYStPVXIXQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87252813589?pwd=cHBuR2pYZzE2K2NLQVpMYStPVXIXQT09)**

Webinar ID: 872 5281 3589

Join By Phone: (301) 715-8592

Password (if needed): 347993

In advance, the hearing impaired is advised to use Video Relay Services (VRS) at 711 to submit your questions/comments or contact the City Clerk at (301) 474-8000 or email

banderson@greenbeltmd.gov.

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

8:00 PM

Work Session Packet

Economic Development Strategic Plan

Suggested Action:

Reference: Economic Development - Strategic Priorities Draft 2.8.22

Economic Development - Business Data At-a-Glance 2.9.22

Office Vacancy Rates 2.10.22

Agenda

- Introductions

- Council Discussion
- Questions and Answers
- Other Items

[Economic Development - Strategic Priorities Draft 2.8.22.pdf](#)

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[Office Vacancy Rates 2.10.22.pdf](#)

City Council Work Session Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: February 23, 2022

Submitted by: Shaniya Lashley-Mullen

Submitting Department:

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section: Work Session Packet

Subject:

Economic Development Strategic Plan

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Attachments:

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February 2022

I. Executive Summary

Resiliency is an important part of sustainable economic development. Sharing stories of a city, rich with history, racially diverse residents and a community pledge that is aspiring to fulfill a legacy built on the spirit of cooperation is another. Key to this is strengthening the City's economic base by providing resources and services that bolster local entrepreneurs, attract, retain and expand businesses and focusing on the development of core sectors will contribute to Greenbelt's overall success. Increasing opportunities to highlight Greenbelt, residents, businesses and community events serves as a way to enhance those efforts and position the community to thrive over the long-term.

The City of Greenbelt residents, businesses/nonprofits, council members, and staff have the opportunity to build on the city's strengths, like its location and community offerings, while investing in strategies that foster equity, justice and sustainable economic growth. Staff is proposing a three-phased approach to economic development. In phase one, the priority is to implement strategic economic development activities. For phase two, the focus is to engage an economic development firm to help set strategic goals that are aligned with the City's top priorities, especially as it relates to Covid19 recovery efforts. The third phase is focused on implementation, measurement and ongoing assessment of strategic economic development goals. The following is an overview of what these strategic priorities seek to accomplish.

- **Phase One: Develop a strategic approach to engaging in economic development activities.** Both Council and staff have worked on implementing a set of economic development initiatives over the past three years that include business outreach, organizing networking events, providing technical assistance, promoting local businesses and supporting Covid19 financial recovery, to name a few. Staff would like to see many of these efforts continue. The initial goal is to focus more intentionally on aligning these efforts with specific outcomes (i.e. retaining or creating jobs, business growth or expansion, successful business startup, etc.). Examining economic development through this lens will also allow Council and staff to identify opportunities to strengthen efforts in areas such as workforce development - an area that has become increasingly marked by challenges that resulted, in part, from the pandemic.
- **Phase Two: Develop economic development strategic plan and implement key marketing initiatives.** There is no single definition of economic development. Different communities have different needs, priorities, people and amenities that require a unique approach. Greenbelt is no different. In phase two, engaging an economic development firm can help the residents, businesses, council members, staff and other key stakeholders work together to set priorities. A formal strategic plan is an important aspect of long-term economic development planning because it can help the City identify emerging trends and key industries to focus business attraction efforts. It can also help examine things like housing affordability and accessibility, workforce development and overall quality of life. Implementing strategic marketing initiatives will help increase awareness of the City's presence to residents, businesses and other stakeholders.
- **Phase Three: Implement, monitor and measure economic development milestones.** Phase three can be seen as both the implementation and ongoing monitoring of economic development strategic goals. Developing action items and reporting on key metrics is an

Greenbelt Economic Development Strategic Priorities

February 2022

essential part of assessing economic development efforts. Ensuring that these efforts are aligned with specific goals on an ongoing basis can not only highlight the progress made, but provide necessary tools to combat future economic volatility.

These strategic priorities seek to accomplish the following goals:

- Build back better and position Greenbelt to be more resilient to future economic volatility.
- Promote cooperation and create stronger connections between residents, businesses and community organizations.
- Provide more strategic business retention and expansion assistance to businesses.
- Build an ecosystem that better connects businesses with each other; provides a better system for communicating with the City; and helps local businesses thrive.
- Support small business development and entrepreneurship in emerging markets.
- Implement targeted workforce development strategies to increase opportunities for residents and to connect businesses with talent.
- Strengthen relationships with regional organizations and initiatives.
- Improve marketing and promotion efforts for the City as well as for local businesses.
- Create a strategic plan that takes a holistic approach to setting economic development priorities that enhance the quality of life for residents while supporting business retention and attraction.

II. Economic Development Phases, Priorities & Implementation

In this section, an overview of the phases of strategic priorities are provided along with specific economic development actions for each.

1. Develop a strategic approach to engaging in economic development activities.

- **1a. Develop a comprehensive Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program to retain and grow existing businesses.** Ensuring local businesses have what they need to thrive and be sustainable is one of the most important aspects of economic development. Greenbelt's existing businesses form the foundation for local employment opportunities, stabilize the tax base, serves as key engines for economic growth, and support the overall quality of life of residents. The key objectives of a comprehensive business retention and expansion program are focused on the existing and anticipated needs of businesses as well as an approach to addressing those needs through coordinated resources, partnerships, and tools. The below set of initiatives form the basis for a comprehensive BRE program.
 - **Greenbelt Business Engagement Program:** A technical assistance program that helps businesses assess their long-term sustainability. It includes one-on-one meetings with local businesses, site visits and review of business needs/opportunities, as well as identification of resources to assist with continued growth. Staff will work to develop a business intake form that can be used to understand and assess needs.
 - **Greenbelt Business Alliance:** The formation of a business alliance steering committee is the result of conversations with local businesses that were interested in a more formal way to convene with other businesses at a hyper-local level. The alliance, still in its early stages of development, is intended to be a business-led, city-supported initiative that harnesses the power of local businesses coming together to network, learn and share resources. For the city, the alliance can serve as an intermediary by helping to facilitate as well as strengthen relationships with local businesses. The alliance is currently working to establish its priorities that will be shared in the coming months.
 - **Greenbelt Revolving Loan Fund:** A low interest loan program that supports capital improvements of new and existing businesses that contribute to the city's economic growth. Capital improvements include property acquisition, purchase of machinery and equipment, renovations, etc. Staff will recommend that the existing revolving loan fund (that will have approximately \$140k at the end of the FY22 fiscal year) be transformed into a \$750k fund that is managed by FSC First, the County's community development financial institution (CDFI). A three-phased disbursement approach can be taken to build the fund by allocating \$250k over two years and a remaining \$110k in the third year. This fund can be used as a tool to help existing businesses make capital improvements that will help them grow and expand as well as support new businesses starting or relocating to Greenbelt.

Greenbelt Economic Development Strategic Priorities

February 2022

- **Greenbelt Small Business Awards Ceremony:** The ceremony is being recommended as an annual awards event developed to highlight the accomplishments of local businesses across a variety of categories during Maryland Economic Development Week (fall). The small business awards are an opportunity for local businesses to be recognized for their hard work and demonstrates the city's appreciation for all of their contributions to the community as well as the local economy.
- **1b. Create startup and entrepreneur resources that help local residents better navigate the process for starting a business in Greenbelt.** Startups and entrepreneurs contribute to local economies by bringing growth and innovation to the community. Startups also help stimulate the economy by providing jobs, attracting talent, introducing new products/services and reinvesting in the local community. Cultivating the innovative, entrepreneurial spirit of Greenbelt residents is another key component to strategic economic development. The below set of initiatives form the foundation for a comprehensive startup program.
 - **Greenbelt Online Startup Portal:** A dedicated webpage that helps startups and entrepreneurs navigate the basics steps to starting a business. This site will also include links to county, state and federal resources needed for starting a business.
 - **Entrepreneur Bootcamp or Training Program:** Through partnerships (i.e. library, business development organizations), the city can serve as a location for entrepreneur bootcamps and trainings. Creating a local entrepreneurship training program will make it easier for residents to participate.
 - **Greenbelt Startup Competition:** An annual competition for Greenbelt-based startups and entrepreneurs to showcase their business to the public and potential funders. The competition will require a panel of judges to assess their business along categories that include product/service delivery, marketing, finances, etc. Depending on availability of funding, winners of the competition can be connected to funders to support their startup.
 - **Startup Resource Referral:** Strengthen relationships with local, state, federal and nonprofit small business organizations (i.e. Maryland SBDC, Women's Business Center, SCORE, etc.) to more seamlessly hand-off entrepreneurs and small business owners to partnering organizations to obtain additional assistance to start their business.
- **1c. Implement local workforce development initiatives.** Providing workforce development programs to residents and businesses is a critical aspect of economic development. To achieve the live, work, play trifecta, communities have to ensure that residents have access to good-paying jobs. By implementing local workforce development initiatives, Greenbelt can also help identify current trends and forecast future workforce needs to meet changing priorities of businesses. Successful workforce development initiatives that are focused on training and upskilling lead to prosperous employees, businesses, and local communities. The City's current workforce development efforts are minimal. The below set of initiatives represent the start to building a comprehensive workforce development strategy.

February 2022

- **Develop Workforce Resource Portal for Residents and Businesses:** Creating an online portal on the GreenbeltMD.Gov website is a great starting point to help both residents and businesses learn about workforce-related resources. This portal can also include current workforce programs that are offered by Greenbelt CARES.
- **Workforce Technical Assistance for Businesses:** One-on-one business meeting to discuss specific workforce challenges and possible solutions or resources. These efforts can also be a part of the overall business retention and expansion program. Supporting the workforce efforts of local businesses is critically important to attracting and retaining talent.
- **Pilot Youth Work Readiness Program:** Working closely with Greenbelt CARES and Recreation, a work readiness program for youth is being proposed as a pilot at Springhill Lake Recreation Center. Supporting young people, especially in underrepresented communities, is an important aspect of building a local talent pipeline. In addition to regularly scheduled workshops on job readiness topics (i.e. interviewing, resumes, etc.), efforts will be made to also connect youth to local employment opportunities.
- **Connect Residents to Upskilling Opportunities:** New skills are required to meet in-demand job opportunities available. Greenbelt can collaborate with county and state workforce development organizations to promote job training programs as well as compile and share a list of training resources for in-demand jobs.
- **Host Local Job Fair:** Hosting a job fair in Greenbelt is a great way to connect local residents to available jobs opportunities. Greenbelt can partner with CARES, Recreation, local businesses and county/state workforce development programs to host an in-person job fair (when it is safe).
- **Develop Grant Fund for Customized Training Programs:** Different types of businesses have unique training needs that may not be easily met through existing programs. It is being proposed that the City of Greenbelt establish a workforce training grant program that helps businesses provide customized trainings to attract new employees or upskill existing workforce. This program can support business efforts to hire locally.

2. Develop economic development strategic plan and implement key marketing initiatives.

- **2a. Engage economic development consulting firm to help develop strategic priorities.**
Although there are specific actions that are being done now to support Greenbelt's economic development efforts, a long-term view should be taken to discuss how economic development goals align with the City's priorities. This should be a facilitated process to ensure that residents, businesses, Council, staff and other key stakeholders can come together around shared economic development goals. Working with a firm can also help prioritize economic development activities. Right now, there isn't a strategic approach to housing or business attraction. A firm could help the City think about different ways to support affordable housing efforts along with greater access to homeownership opportunities. They can also help identify

Greenbelt Economic Development Strategic Priorities

February 2022

emerging markets, workforce trends and industry clusters to focus, strategically, on business attraction efforts.

- **2b. Develop strategic marketing initiatives to promote Greenbelt and local businesses.**

Economic development marketing is an essential tool for showcasing what makes communities great places to live, work, play and do business. Effective marketing can also draw visitors in to spend money and support the local economy. Greenbelt's history, location, nearby institutions, and large-scale community events are among the many attributes that attract people and businesses to the City. A strategic approach to telling Greenbelt's story will not only bring the community closer together and attract visitors, it will also help promote the city to existing and new businesses. The below set of initiatives will help Greenbelt more effectively promote the city's assets.

- **Annual Business Awareness Days & Event Calendar:** A calendar of key annual events and awareness days for businesses is a helpful planning tool to promote/recognize local businesses. This is a tool that can be used by both the economic development staff and the Public Information Office when planning events and content to be shared on website as well as across social media channels.
- **Business Resiliency Marketing Initiative:** Launch business resiliency marketing initiative in partnership with the Public Information Office to focus beyond Covid19 to recovery, resiliency and sustainability. This is an opportunity to bring together residents; promote Greenbelt amenities and events; and promote local businesses. Staff is currently working with the Public Information Office to start examining potential marketing opportunities.
- **Buy/Shop Local Campaigns:** Work with local businesses to develop entertainment, shopping, and dining campaigns to encourage residents to shop and buy local.
- **Exploration of Main Street or Affiliate Designation:** Main Street or Affiliate designation represents another opportunity to market Greenbelt and access funding opportunities. Maryland Milestones/Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) received a grant to work with Prince George's County municipalities to assess viability for Main Street or Affiliate Designation. Will seek guidance from ATHA when revisiting this effort.

3. Implement, monitor and measure economic development milestones.

- **3a. Implementation Plan**

Phases & Initiatives	Timeline
1. Develop a strategic approach to engaging in economic development activities.	
1a. Develop a comprehensive Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) program to retain and grow existing businesses.	Winter/Spring 2022
1b. Create startup and entrepreneur resources that help local residents better navigate the process for starting a business in Greenbelt.	Summer 2022

Greenbelt Economic Development Strategic Priorities

February 2022

1c. Implement local workforce development initiatives.	Spring 2022
2. Develop economic development strategic plan and implement key marketing initiatives.	
2a. Engage economic development consulting firm to help develop strategic priorities.	Fall 2022
2b. Develop strategic marketing initiatives to promote Greenbelt and local businesses.	Ongoing
3. Implement, monitor and measure economic development milestones	
3a. Develop implantation plan.	Complete
3a. Monitor and measure economic development goals.	Ongoing

- **3b. Monitor and measure economic development goals.** An ongoing reporting mechanism needs to be put in place to effectively track and measure economic development goals. Staff currently reports on metrics such as commercial vacancy rates and business outreach efforts. Upon completion of the strategic plan, other metrics will also need to be developed to monitor the progress of economic development goals. These metrics will include both quantitative and qualitative measures.

Greenbelt Economic Development Strategic Priorities

February 2022

Appendix

I. Background: Greenbelt At-a-Glance

Population: 24,921		
	Greenbelt	United States
White	29.7%	76.3%
Black or African American	46.8%	13.4%
American Indian & Alaska Native	0.5%	1.3%
Asian	9.5%	5.9%
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0.2%
Hispanic or Latino	16.5%	18.5%

Source: US Census Bureau Quick Facts <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/greenbeltcitymaryland,US>

II. Greenbelt Business Data At-a-Glance (attached)

III. February 2022 Office Vacancy Report (attached)

City of Greenbelt Economic Development

Business Data *At-A-Glance*

Unemployment Rate State/County Data: <u>Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) - Office of Workforce Information and Performance (OWIP)</u> (state.md.us); Federal: <u>THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION — January 2022</u> (bls.gov)	5.0% (County) 4.0% (State) 4.0% (US)
Number of Businesses <i>*Data from Census Business Builder</i>	667*
Businesses by Industry	
Accommodation & Food Services	54
Administrative & Support/ Waste Management & Remediation	45
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	6
Finance & Insurance	44
Healthcare & Social Assistance	161
Information	18
Other Services	29
Professional, Scientific, Tech Services	198
Real Estate, Rental & Leasing	24
Retail Trade	88
Vacancy Rates	
Office Vacancy Rate <i>*Costar 2/10/22. Please note: See attached detailed Commercial Office Vacancy Report</i>	12.6%
Retail Vacancy Rate <i>*Costar 2/10/22</i>	8.0%
Commercial Properties for Sale (www.loopnet.com)	
Buildings	1
Office Condominiums	1



Office Vacancy Rates

Summary		
Address	Current Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
Belle Point Drive	2.0%	11.9%
Capital Office Park	33.5%	36.6%
Commerce Center I	3.7%	12.7%
Edmonston Road – HUB Zone	13.7%	10.7%
Golden Triangle	13.3%	13.6%
Greenbelt Corporate Park	50%	50%
Greenway Center Office Building	0%	7.1%
Greenway East Professional Center	3.2%	5.3%
Greenway Medical Center	0%	0%
Hanover Office Park	3.2%	3.7%
Maryland Trade Center	27.8%	23.2%
Patriot Business Park	1.8%	1.9%
Total Average Vacancy Rate	12.6%	15.1%
<i>*Note: Total Average Vacancy Rate was calculated by taking average of all individual buildings. Vacancy rates listed in CoStar fluctuate on a weekly basis. This data is current as of February 10, 2022.</i> <i>Please note that retail vacancy rates are not included in these calculations. The current retail vacancy rate is 8.0% as of February 10, 2022.</i>		



Office Vacancy Rates

Belle Point Drive		
Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7701-7719 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	0.0%
7721-7735 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	8.7%
7739-7759 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	20.0%
7801-7815 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	30.0%
7811-7815 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	0.0%
7821-7835 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	10.0%
7841-7855 Belle Point Drive	20.0%	100.0%
7861-7875 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	0.0%
7901-7915 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	0.0%
7921-7935 Belle Point Drive	0.0%	0.0%
Average Vacancy Rate	2.0%	16.9%





Office Vacancy Rates

Capital Office Park

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
6301 Ivy Lane	51.7%	59.1%
6303 Ivy Lane	69.3%	84.2%
6304 Ivy Lane	14.5%	21.0%
6305 Ivy Lane	15.7%	26.4%
6406 Ivy Lane	10.7%	7.7%
6411 Ivy Lane	39.1%	21.9%
Average Vacancy Rate	33.5%	36.7%



Commerce Center I

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7701 Greenbelt Road	3.7%	12.7%
Average Vacancy Rate	3.7%	12.7%





Office Vacancy Rates

Edmonston Road – HUB Zone

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
8955 Edmonston Road	0.0%	0.0%
8957 Edmonston Road	0.0%	0.0%
9001 Edmonston Road	13.5%	13.5%
9111 Edmonston Road	55.2%	42.4%
9200 Edmonston Road	0.0%	0.0%
Average Vacancy Rate	13.7%	11.2%



Golden Triangle

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
6401 Golden Triangle Drive	0.0%	2.9%
7833 Walker Drive	35.9%	15.3%
7855 Walker Drive	4.1%	24.6%
Average Vacancy Rate	13.3%	14.3%





Office Vacancy Rates

Greenbelt Corporate Park

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7601 Ora Glen Drive	0.0%	0.0%
7615 Ora Glen Drive	100.0%	100.0%
Average Vacancy Rate	50.0%	50.0%



Greenway Center

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7505 Greenway Center Drive	0.0%	7.1%
Average Vacancy Rate	0.0%	7.1%



Greenway East Professional Center

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7525 Greenway Center Drive	3.2%	3.2%
Average Vacancy Rate	3.2%	3.2%





Office Vacancy Rates

Hanover Office Parks

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7201-7211 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	0.0%
7213-7219 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	0.0%
7221-7231 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	13.3%
7231-7243 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	0.0%
7245-7251 Hanover Parkway	9.6%	0.0%
7253-7259 Hanover Parkway	19.2%	15.0%
7301-7315 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	25.0%
7317-7327 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	9.6%
7331-7351 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	0.0%
Average Vacancy Rate	3.2%	7.0%



Greenway Medical Center

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7500 Hanover Parkway	0.0%	0.0%
Average Vacancy Rate	0.0%	0.0%



CoStar February 10, 2022



Office Vacancy Rates

Maryland Trade Center

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7474 Greenway Center Drive	30.6%	25.4%
7500 Greenway Center Drive	31.8%	20.9%
7501 Greenway Center Drive	20.9%	22.6%
Average Vacancy Rate	27.8%	23.0%



Patriot Business Park

Address	Vacancy Rate	June 2021 Vacancy Rate
7850 Walker Drive	0.0%	3.7%
7852 Walker Drive	3.5%	10.6%
Average Vacancy Rate	1.8%	7.2%

