

# Competitive Edge

## **UNLEASHING THE POWER OF THE BALTIMORE REGIONAL WORKFORCE**

Produced by:  
The Baltimore Regional Initiatives Taskforce

*A Special Collaborative  
of the Baltimore City and Baltimore County  
Workforce Investment Boards*

September 2011





**Letter from the Co-Chairs of the Baltimore Regional Initiatives Taskforce:**

Dear Reader,

As business leaders in the Baltimore region, we share a strong interest in promoting a quality workforce—it is a crucial factor in every organization's success and in the vitality of our local economy. So when we were asked by our respective workforce investment boards to lead a taskforce charged with examining how to optimize the talent and resources available in our region, we were happy to accept the challenge.

The Baltimore Regional Initiatives Taskforce was convened to evaluate an array of workforce-related issues over the course of a 12-month tenure. Early in the process it became apparent that many forces influence the availability and quality of our workforce. Some issues were obvious considerations, like the need to support a well-coordinated public transportation system that effectively moves workers to jobs. In other cases, the impact of a workforce-related concern only became evident as we examined the interplay between factors. For instance, although leveraging Baltimore City and County resources would clearly be to the advantage of both jurisdictions, the Taskforce noted few effective mechanisms for sharing related resources and information across the City/County line. This is a critically important issue, given the challenges the region confronts as a result of the current recessionary economy.

This report contains the sum of the Taskforce's work—the background research we conducted and an analysis of the information gleaned from subject matter experts. We placed emphasis on areas where our findings led us to clear, actionable recommendations. It is the sincere hope of the Taskforce that our work will serve to guide the work of our workforce investment boards and inform public policy decisions, business practices and the direction of educational programming, to the benefit of the entire regional workforce.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Pegeen Townsend**

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## Introduction

### *Fostering Collaboration*

The Baltimore City and Baltimore County workforce agencies have a strong record of collaboration. Whether promoting cross-jurisdictional job fairs, partnering on grant opportunities, or sharing professional development activities, the two jurisdictions regularly partner to leverage their respective resources. A spirit of regionalism has allowed both organizations to offer a more robust menu of services and benefits to local jobseekers and businesses.

In a prime example of resource-sharing, the Baltimore Regional Initiatives Taskforce (BRIT) was co-chaired by an employer from the City and an employer from the County. Moreover, the framework for Taskforce activities was derived from the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB) strategic plan, which prioritizes goals and strategies across a range of workforce related areas. The table below includes the specific sub-section of the BWIB plan used to define the BRIT mission and scope of work.

BRIT Mission: To foster Collaboration and Engagement Between Workforce Entities in the Baltimore Region

Goals	Recommended Strategies	Potential Measurable Outcomes
1. <b>Support and promote the efforts associated with the Baltimore Regional Workforce Innovations (BRWI) Awards.</b>	Broaden the awareness of businesses in the Baltimore region regarding efforts to recognize and promote best practices in employee recruitment and retention, such as the BRWI Awards program;	Number of employer nominations received as part of the annual BRWI process.
	Support the development of employer-focused programming that informs and responds to the interests of businesses in the Baltimore region.	Number of businesses touched by employer-focused programming.
2. <b>Enhance collaboration among regional workforce investment areas (WIAs).</b>	Provide guidance and strategic direction for the current County/City mature worker demonstration grant initiative, "Maturity Works."	Activities associated with the "Maturity Works" initiative.
	Identify and pursue new opportunities to partner with other regional workforce entities.	Develop of various workforce-related initiatives with other regional workforce development stakeholders.
	Pursue opportunities to promote regional advocacy for relevant workforce development policy initiatives being considered at either the state or federal levels of government.	Activities related to advocacy in support of workforce development policy initiatives.

## *Identifying the Issues*

The Taskforce was clear from the onset that its focus should be directed to areas where the group would be able to make actionable recommendations. Using this criteria, the Taskforce devoted an extended meeting to whittling down the broad field of workforce issues to a subset of three major areas into which this report is organized: workforce trends, workplace readiness, and transportation, as described below.

### Issue #1: Workforce Trends

The Taskforce wanted to begin its work by establishing a clear understanding of the workforce climate in the Baltimore region. Tim Bibo, Senior Research Analyst for the Governor's Workforce Investment Board, presented information to the Taskforce on population demographics, the aging workforce, and factors influencing employment. He provided the Taskforce with valuable data on the current state, as well as projections for the future state.

### Issue #2: Workplace Readiness

Workplace Readiness quickly emerged as a matter of great concern for Taskforce members. Many, being employers themselves, encounter entry-level workers sorely lacking even the most basic knowledge of behavioral expectations in the workplace. The Taskforce wanted to better understand the causes underlying this issue, and identify ways to improve worker preparation in soft-skills areas such as teamwork, critical thinking, the ability to communicate effectively, and time management skills.

### Issue #3: Transportation

There is an old adage that "Getting there is half the battle." The Taskforce agreed that transportation issues have a significant impact on their workforce. Intense commuter-induced traffic congestion, poor integration of the various forms of public transportation (buses, light rail, subway), and a lack of coordinated public transportation service back and forth across the City/County line were all identified as barriers to securing the best workers and running business operations at peak efficiency.

## *Report Structure*

Each of the three issues noted above are individually examined. The content of the research conducted by the Taskforce is provided, followed by a summary of findings and recommendations based on those findings. Finally, each issue section will feature a best practice identified by the Taskforce that incorporates some or all of the Taskforce recommendations.

## Issue #1: Are We Making the Most of Prevailing Workforce Trends?

The Taskforce invested considerable time conferring with workforce experts at the state and local levels to establish a thorough understanding of baseline workforce conditions in the Baltimore region. The section that follows summarizes the research conducted by the Taskforce in three key areas: demographic trends, state and local employment levels, and regional industry and occupational demand.

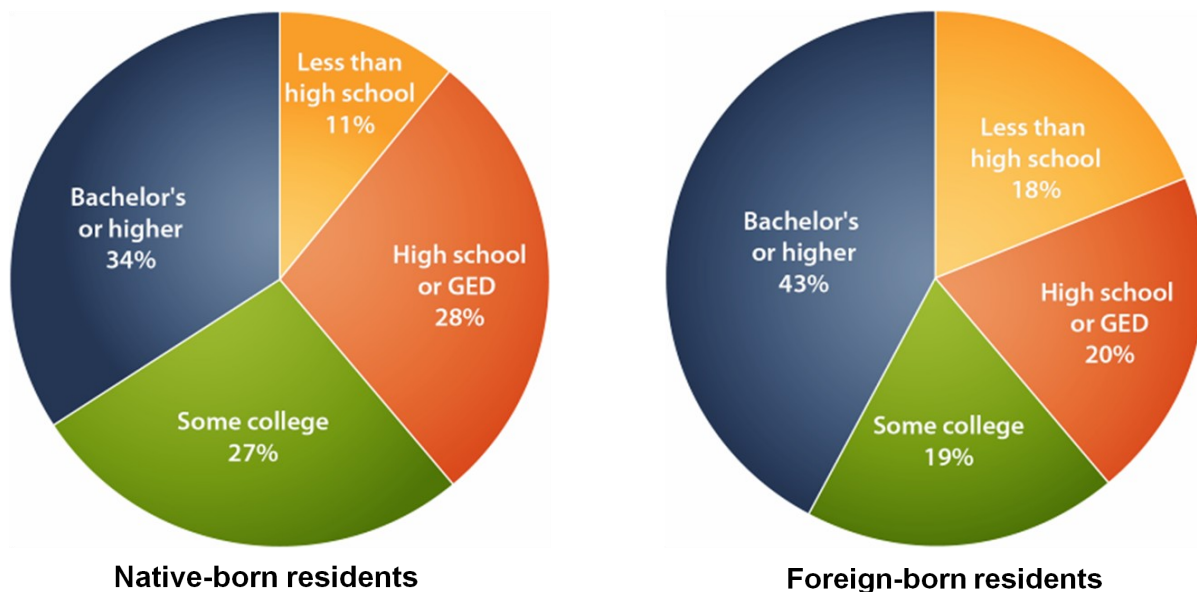
### Population Trends

Census Bureau data indicates that more people are moving out of the Baltimore region than are moving in from other locations. Baltimore County's population growth has been flat in the last two years and the City's population continues to decline, (although the rate of that decline has slowed). Despite the static picture suggested by these facts, a dynamic population shift is underway that has and will continue to impact the region's workforce.

Baltimore City and County both have significant concentrations of foreign-born residents. (Baltimore Co: 9.3%, Baltimore City: 6.0%). In fact, 62% of Baltimore County's population growth in the past decade was the result of foreign-born immigrants. Twenty-six percent of the City's population growth in the last eight years was in foreign-born individuals.

Among foreign-born residents, the majority tend to be slightly better educated than native-born residents, holding a Bachelor's degree or higher. However, as the comparative charts below show, foreign-born residents without a Bachelor's are even less likely than native-born residents to have at least a high school degree.

### Educational Attainment Levels Among Foreign-Born Workers in Maryland



Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2008 American Community Survey

**FINDINGS:** Amid static or declining overall population growth, the increasing number of well-educated, foreign-born residents in the Baltimore region forms a valuable pool of qualified workers.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Streamlined training and certification processes should be available for foreign-born workers who were qualified in their country of origin to perform occupations in high-demand in the Baltimore region.

Connections should be strengthened between local workforce agencies and English as a Second Language programs to provide foreign-born residents with a seamless path from language training to career preparation.

### **BEST PRACTICES: A Model for Healthcare**

#### Preparing Foreign-Born Workers for Healthcare Jobs

Working with the Maryland Hospital Association and the Latino Health Initiative of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, the Baltimore Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (BACH) is providing training and career coaching for nurses previously trained outside the U.S. who wish to re-enter the profession and become licensed in the State of Maryland. The Licensure of Foreign-Trained Health Professionals initiative, which originated in Montgomery County as a pilot program to increase the number of qualified, Spanish-speaking health care workers, is designed to bring much-needed diversity to Maryland's health care system. MHA and Montgomery County officials are relying on BACH's unique experience and network of hospitals, educational institutions and government agencies to extend the reach of that successful model throughout the Baltimore metro area.

The project is not specifically geared toward Hispanics, but builds on existing credentials and training of immigrants of all nationalities and provides economic opportunities to underutilized workers. Funded through MHA by a federal workforce grant, the program ran through June 2011. Three central components are key to the program's success: 1) case management or career coaches, as BACH calls them, who provide one-on-one guidance and support to students; 2) alliances with local hospitals, and 3) an academic component that includes classes for individuals whose native language is not English and a nurse refresher course specially designed to transition professionals who have already earned nursing credentials.

BACH has also collaborated with Baltimore City Community College and the Community College of Baltimore County to offer the course work, including English as a Second Language classes. Each participating hospital will provide nursing professionals to serve as career coaches for students enrolled in the program.

Learn more about this program at: <http://www.baltimorealliance.org/partnerships-expanding.html>

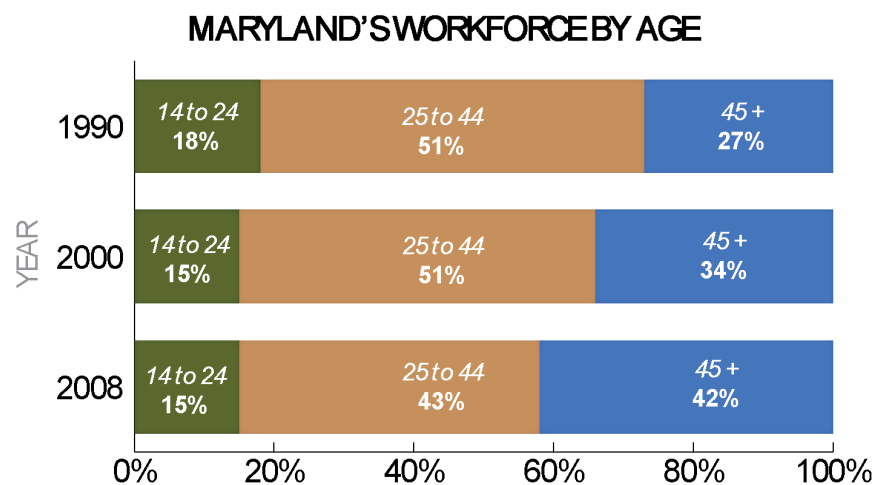
## An Aging Workforce

Consistent with national trends, Maryland's workforce is aging. Beginning in 2011, the first of Maryland's 1.55 million baby-boomers will reach the traditional retirement age of 65 years. Put another way, nearly half of Maryland's workforce is now 45 years or older. From the perspective of employers, this leads to the inescapable fact that, in the next ten years, the majority of workers will be within a decade or less of retirement age. —a phenomenon referred to by some demographers as the “Silver Tsunami.” But, as the television advertisement for an investment planning company suggests, the Boomer generation isn't likely to quietly shuffle off to a rocking chair in the corner or “go quietly into the night.” This population is healthy, strong, often well-educated and dynamic, with an appetite to contribute and continue to influence their world for the better. Furthermore, the numbers alone compel any employer intent on staffing his or her company with the very best employees to keep mature workers in the mix. Consider the following labor force projections from the Maryland Department of Planning, developed to help quantify some of the expected changes to the age composition of Maryland's workforce:

- Maryland's workforce ages 16—54 is projected to grow by only 3% between 2006 and 2016, while the workforce ages 55 and older is projected to grow by 48%.
- The number of workers between the ages of 30—44, often seen as managers and up and coming leaders, is expected to decrease by 10% in the same timespan.
- By 2020, one in four Maryland workers will be 55 or older, compared to less than one in five in 2005.

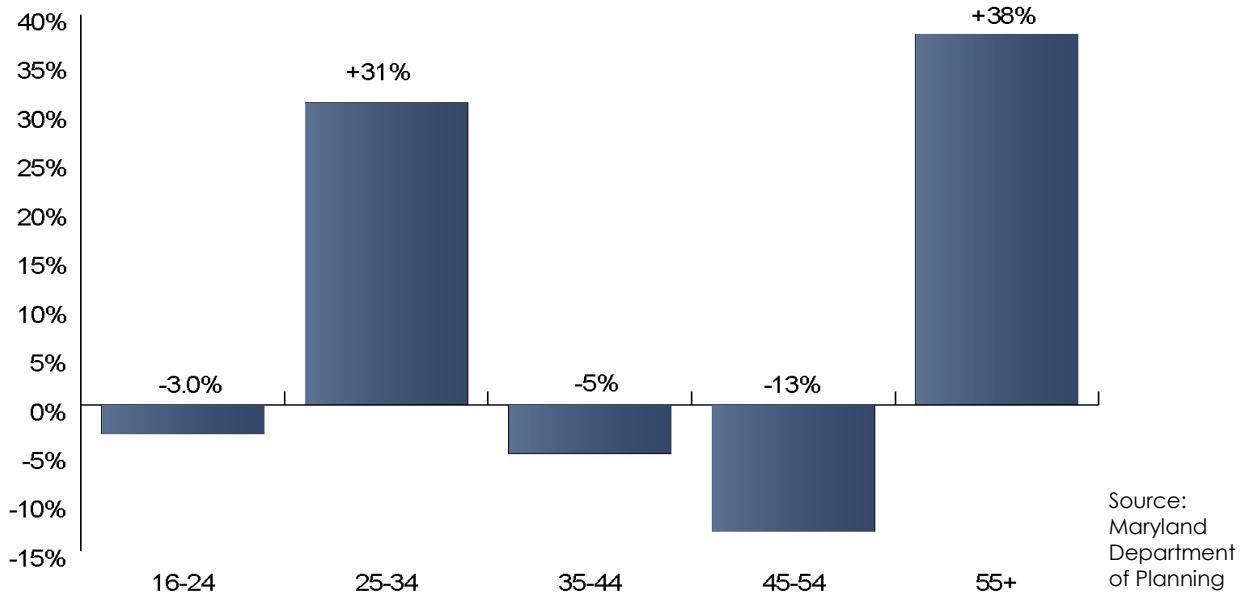
The charts on this page provide a more detailed picture of the dramatic ongoing demographic shift towards an aging workforce. The first chart looks back over the last two decades. The second chart illustrates projections in the decade ahead.

**Many organizations in the Baltimore region are facing a potential mass exodus of skilled workers. As these workers retire, many will be taking high-value institutional knowledge with them. Will businesses be ready to fill the vacuum this creates?**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau AGE GROUP & SHARE OF LABOR FORCE

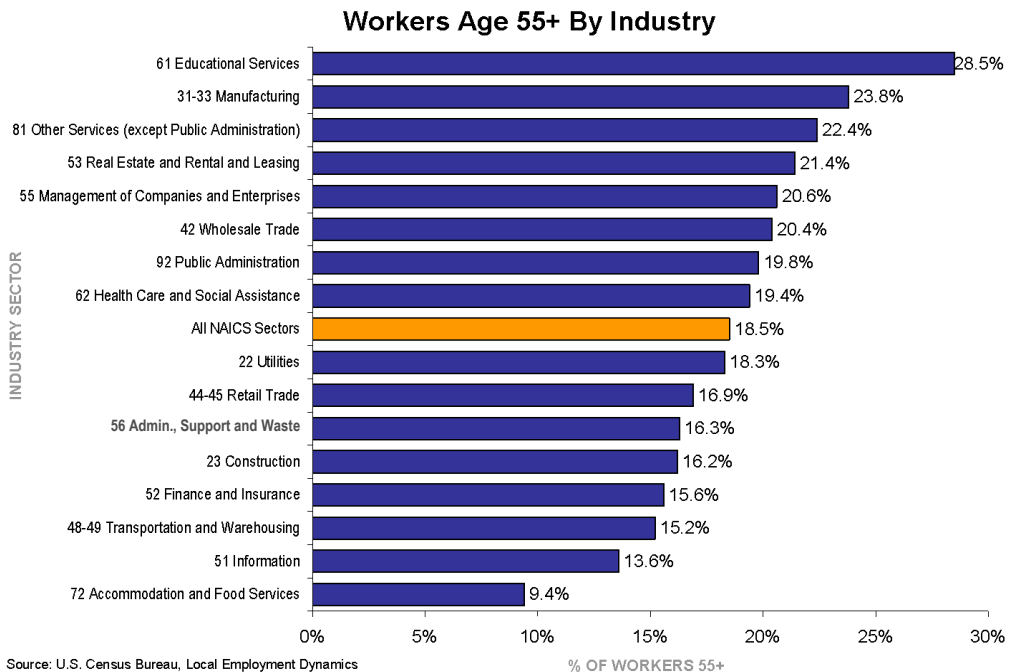
## Maryland's Projected Labor Force Growth: 2010 to 2020



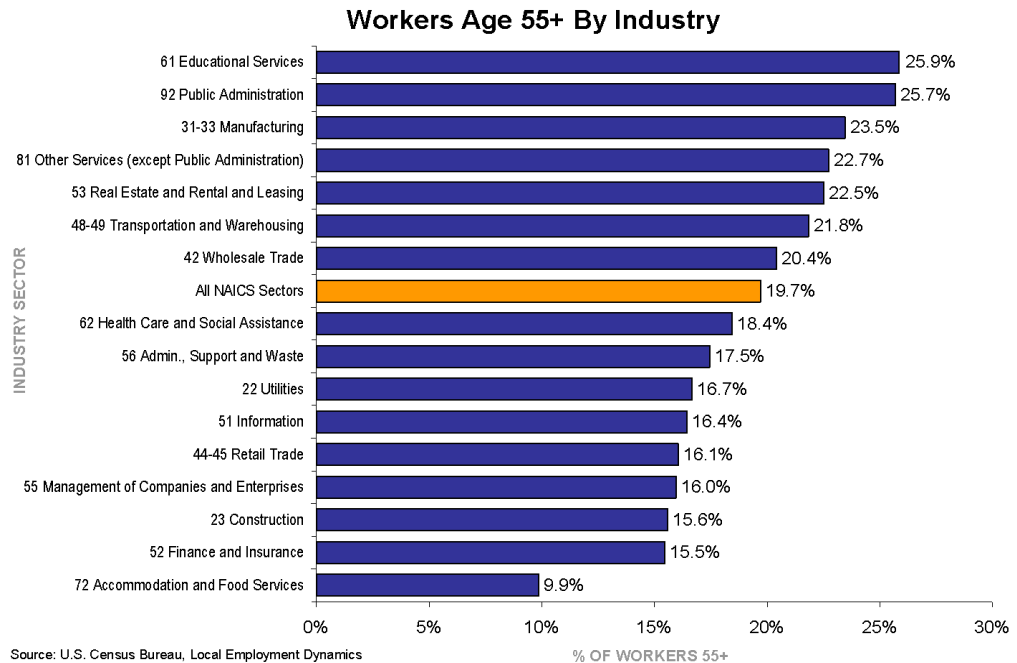
### The Age Factor in Baltimore City and Baltimore County

Interestingly, industries in the Baltimore region tend to have associated age demographics peculiar to specific sectors. In the County, jobs in education, manufacturing, public administration, management and healthcare have a higher rate of workers over 55 than the national average, whereas jobs in utilities, retail trade, construction, finance and insurance, transportation and warehousing, information and accommodation and food services employ a lower than average number of workers over the age of 55. The County's industry/age demographics are largely consistent in the City, except that the City's workforce is significantly older in the Transportation sector.

### Baltimore County Workers 55 and Older: by Industry Sector (2008)



## Baltimore City Workers 55 and Older: by Industry Sector (2008)



## An Aging Workforce

**FINDINGS:** The Baltimore region's workforce is aging. As a result, many organizations are facing a mass exodus of skilled workers who will be taking vast institutional knowledge with them as they retire.

While the prospect of mass retirements is a reality, the Great Recession has pushed back retirement plans for many workers, creating an even more intergenerationally diverse workforce.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The local workforce investment boards should explore opportunities to replicate the "Maturity Works" model (see *the Best Practices* section) in other industry sectors, particularly in high-demand occupations suited to the strengths of the mature workforce.

All workforce diversity training programs should include a component on the intergenerational workplace.

Employers should prioritize organizational succession planning activities to prepare for the loss of highly skilled, long-term employees.

Local workforce investment Boards and workforce development agencies should collaborate to solicit employer input on best practices in succession planning. Feedback should be compiled in an online repository that can be accessed by the regional business community through the workforce development stakeholder websites.

## **BEST PRACTICES: Succession Planning and Next Steps for Mature Workers**

### Preparing for the Boomer's Grand Exit

The AARP has developed a free Workforce Assessment Tool for Human Resource managers, which is designed to assist them in determining current and future workforce needs. The Workforce Assessment Tool takes about 30 minutes to complete. A customized Summary Report will automatically be generated based on responses that can help employers:

- Assess how retiring workers will affect their organization
- Address skill shortage challenges due to staff attrition
- Create a work environment that attracts qualified workers of all ages
- Manage a multi-generational workforce
- Build an employer brand that attracts and retains top talent

The Workforce Assessment Tool is a free resource developed by the AARP and available through this organization's website at: <http://www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/template/index.cfm?CFID=22109468&CFTOKEN=51239537>.

### Maturity Works

Maturity Works is a federally-funded training program for workers over age 55. The program was designed to strengthen and utilize the existing abundant pool of older workers as a way to address the shortage of skilled workers in the healthcare industry. The program is managed by the Baltimore County Division of Workforce Development and operated in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Employment Development (MOED).

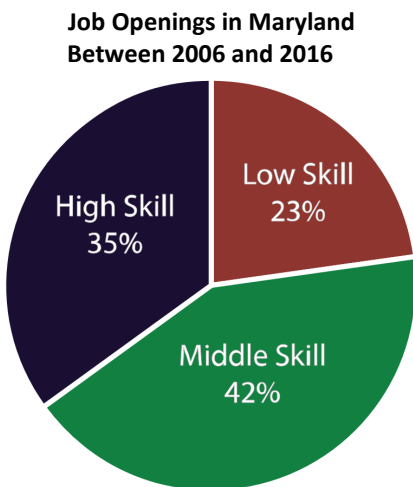
The two agencies work with employers to match their organizations' needs with a candidate pool of well-trained professionals in medical billing, medical coding, certified nursing assistant, geriatric nursing assistant, physical therapy aide, unit clerk, nurse extender, and sterile processing technician. The candidates are also prepared for entry-level healthcare support roles such as medical records clerk, patient account representative, front desk, office coordinator, and patient registry. Organizations hiring Maturity Works candidates also receive assistance in fostering healthy intergenerational dynamics among staff, training and recruitment resources, and succession planning tools. To learn more, visit [www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/jobtraining/index.html](http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/jobtraining/index.html) for additional information on business, job seeker and youth services.

## Employment In Recessionary Times

### Unemployment

Maryland currently ranks 14th in the nation in unemployment, faring better than many states. Even so, Maryland is definitely feeling the effects of the recession. There are about 3.2 million people currently in Maryland's workforce. To return to pre-recession employment levels, we would need to add 107,000 jobs. With this as the statewide scope of the problem, this section will examine factors influencing the impact on the Baltimore region.

Within the State, Baltimore City and County fall near the middle of the pack in terms of unemployment, although the average rate of unemployment for the first six months of 2011 in Baltimore County, at 7.7 %, is significantly lower than Baltimore City's average rate of 10.2 for the same period. In either case, these statistics leave many thousands in the Baltimore region searching for work.



### Education

Unemployment rates both in Maryland and more widely across the nation are impacted by a variety of factors, including education, age, and gender. Of these, educational attainment wields the biggest influence. In Maryland, individuals with a Bachelor's degree had a 4.4% unemployment rate in May of 2010, whereas the unemployment rate for individuals with only a high school diploma was 10.3%.

Projections for occupational demand in Maryland indicate that the strongest employment prospects are for occupations referred to as "middle-skill" jobs—occupations that require some post-secondary education beyond high school, but less than a bachelor's degree. As the chart to the left shows, 42% of job openings in Maryland between 2006 and 2016 will require this level of educational attainment.

The BRIT endorses the "21st Century Skills Guarantee" issued by the National Skills Coalition's report, *Maryland's Forgotten Middle-Skilled Jobs*, which states: "Every Marylander should have access to the equivalent of at least two years of education or training past high school—leading to a vocational credential, industry certification, or completion of the first two years of college—to be pursued at whatever point and pace makes sense for individual workers and industries." (Available at: [www.nationalskillscoalition.org/assets/reports-/marylands-forgotten-jobs.pdf](http://www.nationalskillscoalition.org/assets/reports-/marylands-forgotten-jobs.pdf))

To quantify and qualify regional occupational demand and the capacity of local post-secondary institutions to prepare workers for high demand jobs, the BWIB conducted a comprehensive analysis, released in the fall of 2010 in the Talent Development Pipeline Study (TDPS). The analysis was organized around six major industry sectors targeted by the BWIB.

High demand occupations within each industry sector were mapped to an inventory of regional post-secondary educational programming. Enrollment and graduation figures for each program were also included, to draw a baseline picture of the “pipeline” of qualified workers into selected occupations.

The results of the TDPS provide a resounding affirmation of the need for workers to acquire specialized training beyond a high school degree. Many high demand occupations identified in the TDPS require a Bachelor’s degree or more. However, several of the most in-demand occupations identified in the TDPS require shorter-term, specialized training, rather than a full four year college degree. Below is a snapshot of the jobs projected to be in the highest demand in 2016 in the Baltimore region, along with the typical educational requirements.

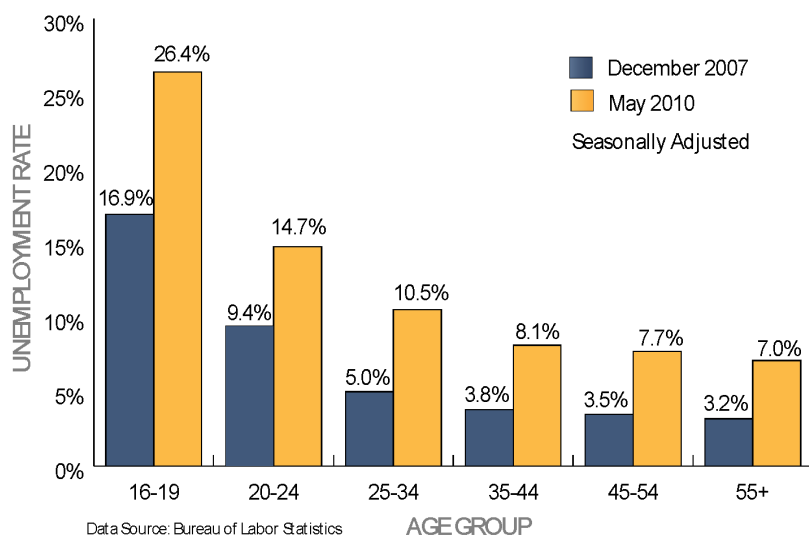
Industry Sector	Top Ten High Growth Occupations in 2016	Educational Requirements
<b>Bioscience</b>	Civil Engineers	Bachelor’s Degree
	Management Analysts	Bachelor’s Degree
	Architects, Except Landscape and Naval	Bachelor’s Degree
	Biological Technicians	Bachelor’s Degree
	General and Operations Managers	Bachelor’s Degree
	Surveyors	Bachelor’s Degree
	Architectural and Civil Drafters	Post-Secondary Vocational Award
	Environmental Scientists and Specialists, including Health	Master’s Degree
	Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	Doctoral Degree
	Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor’s Degree
<b>Business Services</b>	Lawyers	1 <sup>st</sup> Professional Degree
	Accountants and Auditors	Bachelor’s Degree
	Marketing Managers	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher, Plus Experience
	Computer Systems Analysts	Bachelor’s Degree
	Management Analysts	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher, Plus Experience
	Civil Engineers	Bachelor’s Degree
	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	Associate’s Degree
	Network Systems and Data Communications Analysts	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher
	Computer Software Engineers, Applications	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher
	Computer Support Specialists	Associate’s Degree
<b>Computer, Internet and Software-Related Data Services</b>	Computer systems analysts	Bachelor’s
	Computer software engineers, applications	Bachelor’s
	Network systems and data communications analysts	Bachelor’s
	Computer support specialists	Associates Degree
	Computer specialists, all other	Associates Degree
	Computer software engineers, systems software	Bachelor’s
	Computer programmers	Bachelor’s
	Network and computer systems administrators	Bachelor’s
	General and operations managers	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher
	Management analysts	Bachelor’s Degree or Higher
<b>Construction</b>	Carpenters	Apprenticeship
	Construction Laborers	Moderate-term on-the-job training
	Construction Managers	Bachelor’s degree
	First-Line Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	Work experience in a related occupation
	Electricians	Apprenticeship
	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	Apprenticeship
	Civil Engineers	Bachelor’s degree
	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	Apprenticeship
	Sheet Metal Workers	Apprenticeship
	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	Moderate-term on-the-job training

Industry Sector	Top Ten High Growth Occupations in 2016	Educational Requirements
<b>Healthcare and Social Assistance</b>	Registered Nurses	Associates Degree
	Physicians and Surgeons, all other	Doctorate
	Physical Therapists	Master's Degree
	Medical and clinical laboratory technologists	Bachelor's Degree
	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	Associates Degree
	Medical and Public Health Social Workers	Bachelor's Degree
	Respiratory Therapists	Associates Degree
	Dental Hygienists	Associates Degree
	Occupational Therapists	Master's Degree
	Medical and clinical laboratory technicians	Associates Degree
<b>Hospitality and Tourism</b>	General and operations managers	Bachelor's Degree and Experience
	Musicians and singers	Long-Term On-the-Job Training
	Coaches and scouts	Long-Term On-the-Job Training
	Sales representatives, services, all other	Work Experience in a Related Field
	Accountants and auditors	Bachelor's Degree
	Massage therapists	Vocational Post-secondary Award
	Meeting and convention planners	Bachelor's Degree
	Managers, all other	Work Experience in a Related Field
	Self-enrichment education teachers	Work Experience in a Related Field
	Business operations specialists, all other	Bachelor's Degree

### The Youth Employment Crisis

Age is a significant determinant for employment in the nation's labor market. As the graph to the right shows, youth from 16-19 have the highest rates of unemployment, while workers 55+ have the lowest rates. The Center for Labor Studies at Northeastern University noted that the current recession presents the worst jobless rate for teens in the past 61 years, citing as contributing factors, the weakening of a federal summer jobs programs and intense competition from higher skilled workers fighting for downscale jobs.

### National Unemployment Rate by Age



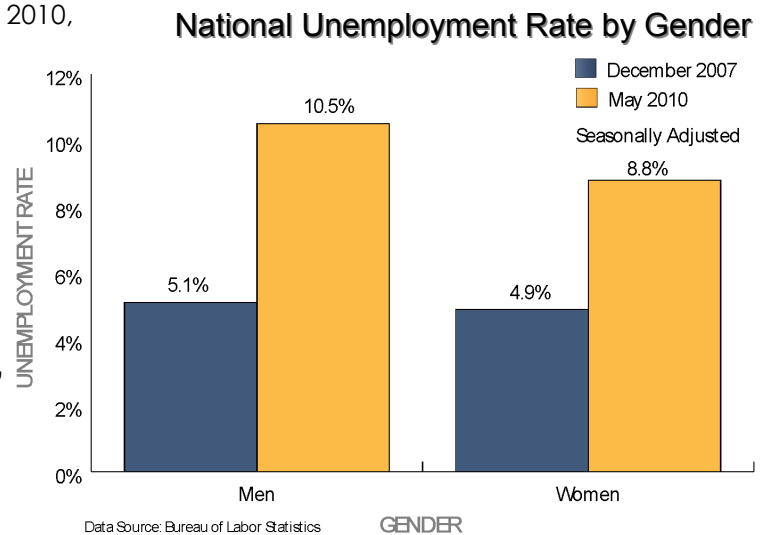
An improved employment picture for young people would also yield broader economic benefits for the community, since their earnings help young people purchase back-to-school clothes, books and supplies, contribute to their family's household expenses, and even allow them to enjoy some recreational fun – all expenditures that are cycled right back into the region's economy.

### The Gender Effect

Gender emerged as a significant factor during the Great Recession. While there was near-parity in 2007 pre-recession unemployment rates for men and women, by May of 2010 the unemployment level for men had risen nearly two full percentage points higher than that of women. The cause of the differentially higher unemployment for men was attributed largely to the precipitous downturn in the housing market, and the associated loss of male-dominated construction/skilled trades jobs.

A new trend has emerged with respect to the impact of gender on employment in the months since federal economists declared the recession officially at an end in the late spring of 2010. The *Women's Employment During the Recovery* report, published by the Department of Labor in May of 2011, summarizes the issue in the following analysis:

"Since reaching a peak in November 2010, female unemployment has declined. However, this decline is only half that experienced by men over the same period. Part of the reason that women have not fared as well as men may be their disproportionate representation in industries that continue to experience job losses, such as state and local government."



**FINDINGS:** Even in the Great Recession, some industry sectors and occupations in the Baltimore region are doing better than others.

"Middle-Skill" occupations, which require more than a high school diploma but less than a 4-year college degree, are in demand and are projected to continue to see growth.

Unemployment rates among young people are unacceptably high, and impose potentially damaging long-term outcomes for both the youth and the community.

Men were hit especially hard by the recession. During the recovery, unemployment inequities transitioned from men to women.

High school graduates and individuals changing careers frequently require academic remediation to prepare for post-secondary training.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Workforce stakeholders should partner to create an inventory of all locally available "bridge" training that facilitates a successful transition into post-secondary educational programming, and promote the availability of identified programs widely.

Summer youth employment programs play a critical role in initiating a positive long-term employment outlook for young people, and should thus be strongly supported by both the public and private sectors.

Regional workforce agencies should convene a consortium to raise awareness about the Talent Development Pipeline Study, and the occupational demand and educational programming information it contains.

Businesses should identify opportunities to partner with post-secondary institutions to ensure that educational content is aligned with industry needs, and to develop practical student internship opportunities.

## **BEST PRACTICES: Resources and Partnerships**

### The Talent Development Pipeline Study

Post-secondary education is, undeniably, the single most powerful antidote to unemployment. However, up-skilling can take time and cost money. It's important to consider a variety of factors when selecting a career path. One excellent tool for the planning process is the Talent Development Pipeline Study, produced by the Training and Postsecondary Education Committee of the Baltimore Workforce Investment Board (BWIB). The Study provides a clear picture of where occupational demand is headed, and where training is locally available to prepare for high-demand occupations. The Baltimore Workforce Investment Board has presented the Study to numerous business and education leaders in the region, and continues to explore opportunities for promoting the information across the region. The Study can be accessed at: [http://www.baltoworkforce.com/documents/ri\\_tdps.pdf](http://www.baltoworkforce.com/documents/ri_tdps.pdf)

### Business Partnerships that Provide Clinical Rotations

Nursing students must accrue many hours of supervised patient care experience as part of their training. Unfortunately, nursing programs have long struggled with a shortage of placement slots in clinical settings. The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) partnered with Franklin Square Hospital Center in an innovative RN training program created to address this issue. Franklin Square works with CCBC to schedule nursing students for supervised clinical work. The Franklin Square staff works closely with CCBC's nursing program along the way, to ensure that instruction is aligned with professional standards. In exchange for this support, Franklin Square is playing an active role in reducing the severe shortage of nurses, and has a front row seat for recruiting top performers.

## Issue #2: Workforce Readiness

The previous section of this report emphasized education as the foundation for successful, steady employment. However, technical knowledge and skills are not enough to make a job seeker competitive in today's labor market. Employers on the Taskforce universally noted an alarming lack of baseline workplace readiness among their entry-level employees. Too often, new hires appear to be unaware of seemingly obvious rules of workplace etiquette, such as showing up on time for a shift, dressing appropriately, or being able to constructively resolve disputes with co-workers. To move from the anecdotal to the concrete, the Taskforce reviewed a variety of sources on the topic:

- Brief from the Job Opportunities Taskforce: A Young Workforce at Risk
- Baltimore City and Baltimore County Youth Workforce Profile
- Final Report of the P-20 College Success Taskforce ([www.marylandpublicschools.org](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org))
- Partnership for 21st Century Skills ([www.p21.org](http://www.p21.org))

**FINDINGS:** Locally and nationally, employers consistently report deficiencies among new hires across a wide range of workforce readiness skills, including professionalism and work ethic, teamwork and collaboration, communication, social responsibility, critical thinking and problem solving, and respect for diversity.

Public support already exists for strengthened workplace readiness. The P-20 College Success report produced by the Governor's Taskforce on P-20 Education recommends system-wide implementation of curriculum aligned to the Maryland State Department of Education's (MSDE) Common Core Standards, back-mapped from the college-and-career-ready standards codified in COMAR's Education/School Counseling regulations 13A.05.05.02.

Numerous low or no-cost resources designed to strengthen workforce readiness skills are available, ranging widely from the "BeWhatIWantToBe" website operated by the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education to an array of programs offered through public and non-profit entities.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** An inventory of the full spectrum of workforce readiness resources should be compiled and made available to all stakeholders in the workforce development system.

All public schools in Baltimore City and Baltimore County should implement career readiness curriculum, utilizing MSDE's voluntary curriculum and other publicly available resources.

The workforce readiness section of the BeWhatIWantToBe website should be enhanced with additional appropriate resources, as identified in the recommended inventory of programming.

Local business leaders should partner with the education and workforce systems to engage students and adult job seekers in career exploration activities, worksite internships and summer employment.

A portion of the community service hours required for graduation for public high schools should be set aside for workforce readiness training activities.

## **BEST PRACTICES: The Academy for College and Career Exploration**

In 2004, Baltimore City's Mayor's Office of Employment Development partnered with The Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies to embark on an ambitious project: to create a Baltimore City public high school in which students could develop a love of learning, a constructive direction for their lives, and confidence in their own abilities to succeed. The result of these efforts was the birth of the Academy for College and Career Exploration (ACCE). ACCE embraces an educational philosophy that blends standards-based curricula with "real-world" applications and experiences, promoting instruction that is individualized and competency-based. This unique model integrates career development curriculum and work-based learning into all four years of study, as described below:

### 9th & 10th Grade

Underclassmen are introduced to the world beyond high school slowly. Beginning with single day shadowing experiences at local businesses and continuing to a 21st century careers class. These students also work on interview skills, workplace readiness, and technology skills that will help prepare them for the world of work.

### 11th & 12th Grade

Upperclassmen continue their career readiness learning experiences with long-term activities such as internship and work study. The internship is a weekly one day experience for juniors placed at job sites throughout the city that promotes healthy learning experiences relating to individual student's career interests. Seniors may also participate in an optional daily afternoon internship experience or work study to continue their preparations for career's beyond high school.



All students participate in the ACCE Career Day on the last school Thursday of every month. Activities include seminars, career fairs, community experiences, skills workshops, and some college preparatory work. ACCE students are also encouraged to participate in the City's YouthWorks Summer Jobs Program.

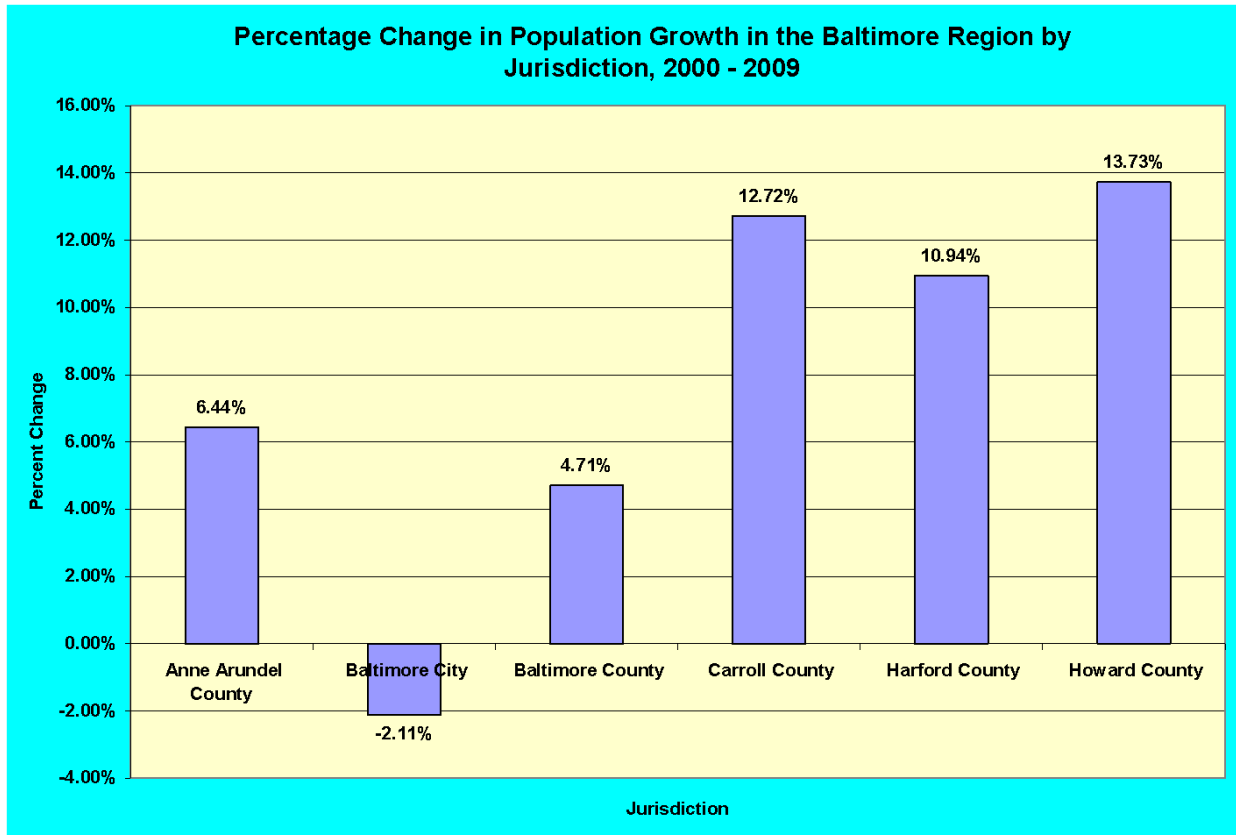
### Issue #3: Transportation

The Taskforce invited two experts to present information on local transportation infrastructure and operations. Dunbar Brooks, Manager of Data Development at the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, shared information on population growth, commuter patterns, and the range of modes of transportation utilized in the region. Henry Kay, Executive Director for Transit Development and Delivery at the Maryland Transit Administration also presented to the group. He offered insight into how public transportation routes are developed, where they currently exist, and how local business growth may impact future route programming.

#### Where Are the Workers?

The Taskforce sought information on how the regional workforce gets to and from employment sites. They were also interested in learning more about the availability and ease-of-use of various modes of transportation utilized by workers.

To begin, Mr. Brooks provided the group with data on regional population growth for all of Maryland's counties, as shown in the graph below.

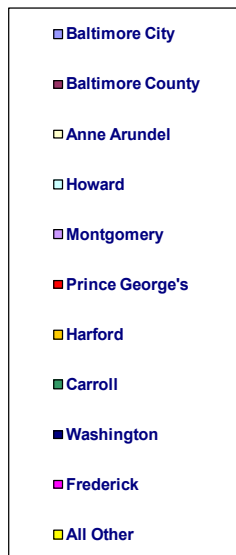
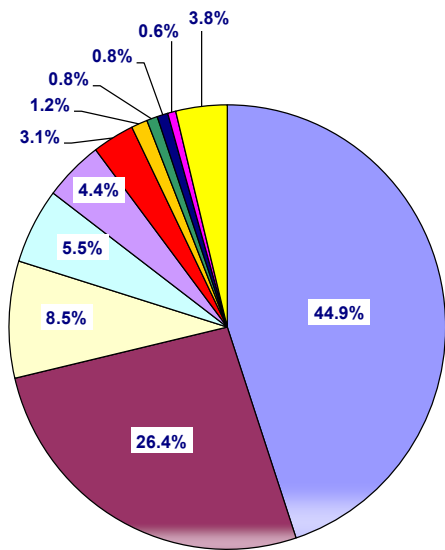


### Where are they Going?

The pool of employment opportunities available to an individual is directly tied to their ability to get to the worksite—making transportation is a key workforce issue. The Taskforce discovered that access to transportation options is distinctly different for City and County residents.

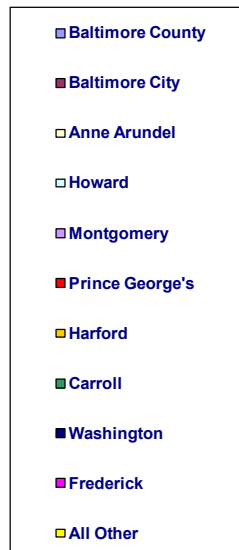
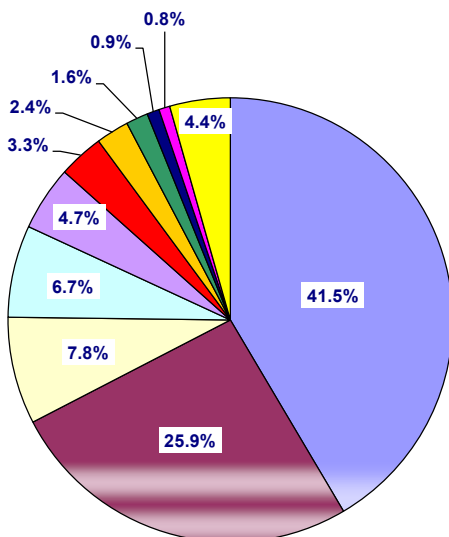
According to 2006—2008 American Community Survey data, Baltimore County residents enjoy a much higher level of choice than do City residents in this regard. Nearly a quarter of the City's population does not own a single vehicle, with a similar percentage relying on buses to get to work. In the County, the vast majority of workers own at least one vehicle. Unlike the City, there is an almost even split between workers who do and do not commute outside of the

#### Where Do Baltimore City Residents Work?



County for a job. These differences do not produce a marked difference in commute times, though: the average commute for City residents, (who, remember, are much more likely to be commuting within the confines of the City limits), is 28.6 minutes, whereas the County resident's commute is 28.3 minutes.

#### Where Do Baltimore County Residents Work?



A recently introduced City service—the Charm City Connector—could potential help shorten trips for City bus commuters. The Connector is a free bus service chiefly designed to serve tourists to the downtown area. Bus routes are fairly short and run more often than is typical for the conventional bus service. Anecdotal reports suggest that the service has gained popularity among City residents, however, it is unclear whether workers are utilizing the service to move around within the city during the workday.

*Where are the Jobs?*

Maryland counties with the greatest concentration of jobs obviously need a greater quantity and quality of transportation options. The table below provides two sets of employment projections, by county, as context for employment-related transportation needs.

	<b>Employment Growth</b>	<b>Employment Growth</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
<b><u>JURISDICTION</u></b>	<b>2010 - 2020</b>	<b>2020 - 2035</b>	<b>2010 - 2020</b>	<b>2020 - 2035</b>
<b>Anne Arundel County</b>	<b>46,600</b>	<b>49,100</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>
<b>Baltimore City</b>	<b>20,200</b>	<b>13,700</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
<b>Baltimore County</b>	<b>33,700</b>	<b>18,500</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Carroll County</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Harford County</b>	<b>21,500</b>	<b>13,800</b>	<b>16.6%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>
<b>Howard County</b>	<b>35,500</b>	<b>36,900</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>
<b>Baltimore Region</b>	<b>161,500</b>	<b>135,000</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>7.2</b>

Baltimore Metropolitan Council, June 2010

*How well is Public Transportation Meeting Commuter Needs?*

The Maryland Transit Administration oversees five major public transportation services:

- Local Bus Service—Fifty-five bus routes serve Baltimore City, Baltimore County and Anne Arundel County.
- Light Rail—A 30-mile Light Rail line runs from Hunt Valley to BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport.
- The Metro Subway—A 14-mile track that runs from Owings Mills to Johns Hopkins Hospital.
- MARC—A commuter train system has 3 lines serving 9 counties and the D.C. metropolitan area over 202 miles of track.
- Commuter Service—A bus system is designed to transport workers from Park and Ride locations in outlying areas to central points in Baltimore City and Washington D.C. The service includes 18 routes serving 10 counties.

**The Red Line**

Despite the array of existing options, a gap in service still exists for commuters in need of transportation on an east-west path through the Baltimore City/County region. This is of particular importance, given that large regional employers are located along this trajectory, including the Social Security Administration, Medicare and Medicaid offices and Johns Hopkins Bayview. The new Red Line, currently under development, will be a light rail that runs 14-miles on an east-west route. It will have a 44-minute end-to-end travel time, and will connect existing rail lines and employment centers.

**FINDINGS:** Employment growth is projected to be strongest in outlying counties, including Howard, Harford, and Anne Arundel.

Baltimore City continues to struggle under disproportionately higher unemployment rates. While not as high as the City's unemployment, Baltimore County's rate is also elevated.

Public transportation is highly concentrated in Baltimore City, where poverty rates are high and vehicle ownership is low.

Even in locations where public transportation is concentrated, it is not always a practical alternative, particularly for single parents with children in school and daycare, who must coordinate fluctuating work, daycare and school schedules.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Baltimore City and County workforce entities need to explore the potential for relieving unemployment by working more closely with MTA to craft "reverse commute" public transportation options capable of moving City residents to the growing number of jobs in outlying counties.

An active ongoing dialogue should be established between local workforce development stakeholders and the MTA to examine current routes and make recommendations on modifications to improve the effectiveness and convenience of commuter services.

Businesses should work together to sponsor/support transportation for commuter employees.

The "Vehicles for Change" program, which provides cars to low income individuals at highly discounted costs, should be promoted by all workforce development stakeholders in order to reach those in greatest need.

Workforce development leaders should spearhead efforts to educate local organizations on the benefits of and effective management models for alternative work schedules and telecommuting options that would relieve intense traffic congestion, offer employees "perks" at little or no cost to the employer, and maximize the value of existing technology investments.

## **BEST PRACTICES: Creating Better Systems**

### The Pulaski Highway Corridor Development Project

An important new concept being embraced by communities across the country is the idea of "transit oriented development" (TOD), and the "walkable community." These development paradigms harken back to a time before the advent of the suburb and America's love affair with cars. TOD communities are characterized by high-density, mixed-use development, thoughtful placement of amenities where they are easily accessible, and public transportation

routes designed to serve the needs of the community. A few of the obvious benefits include reduced commute time, traffic congestion and carbon emissions and increased physical activity and resident connection to the community. Such communities are also an increasingly popular alternative among young professionals seeking a convenient, sustainable lifestyle.

A local example of this concept, the Pulaski Highway Redevelopment Project, is in the planning stages in Baltimore County. US Rt. 40 East (Pulaski Highway) is the “main street” linking Baltimore City, Baltimore, Harford, and Cecil Counties. It also happens to lead directly to the front door of Aberdeen Proving Ground, which will be gaining thousands of new jobs as a result of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). Baltimore County planners saw this as an opportunity to reposition the Pulasky Highway area as a technology and security corridor linked with BRAC growth in a sustainable way that attracts high quality businesses, enhances real estate values and the tax base, and promotes a green growth transportation pattern that not only benefits the environment, but appeals to a growing portion of the population. Learn more at: <http://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/planning/Pulaski%20Highway/index.html>

### The TRIP

The Maryland Transit Administration worked closely with the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) and the metropolitan planning organization for the Baltimore region, the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, to come up with a comprehensive and coordinated public transit and human services transportation plan. Grant funds supported the purchase of software to begin building a database that would ultimately serve as an interface for the public. The project was aptly titled “TRIP”.

By using census data and information provided by transportation and human services providers, the project partners were able to assess the transportation needs, issues and constraints of the general public, as well as of older adults, people with disabilities and people with lower incomes. A website was created so that riders can easily access information amassed in the database. They can quickly identify a variety of transportation options in one easy-to-use virtual tool. The **TRIP Hot Line (1-877-331-TRIP)** was also developed as part of the TRIP project. Customers, human services agencies and partner organizations can dial this number for immediate information and assistance.

Learn more about TRIP at: <http://mdtrip.org>

## Conclusion

A wide range of factors influence the character of the Baltimore region's workforce. The scope of these factors and the time constraints under which the Taskforce operated prompted the selection of a subset of three high-impact issues for closer consideration. The Taskforce's research, findings, and recommendations have been featured in this report.

The year-long research effort of the Taskforce brought several workforce issues into sharper focus. Demographic trends revealed untapped sources for skilled workers, and the need to

optimize the talents and skills of young people, mature workers, and foreign born professionals to meet industry needs. The Taskforce noted an emerging trend of entry-level employees underprepared for the world of work. The Taskforce also discovered a vast collection of resources targeting the issue. Research on transportation gave Taskforce members a new understanding of the political and financial complexities that constrain the system, and a broader perspective of the geography of commuter needs.

In each of the three major issue areas considered by the Taskforce, models of best practices were identified that can be leveraged, either through replication or program expansion, to strengthen the regional workforce. Recommendations were offered that, *if implemented*, would support getting the right worker to the right place at the right time.

But “if”, as we all know, is a very *big word*. Organizations, policy makers, and workforce development leaders must be willing to champion action in order to realize change. Implementation will be key to moving the regional workforce—and our local economy—forward.

### *Next Steps*

The Taskforce recommends several immediate actions to facilitate progress on the specific recommendations offered in the report:

Taskforce members should share the report with their respective organizations and other organizations within their sphere of influence.

- Action plans and timelines should be developed to implement report recommendations.
- Funding streams should be identified and developed to support implementation of action plans.
- Employers and schools should work together to identify work-based learning opportunities for students.
- A regional consortium should be formed to identify opportunities to replicate best practices cited in the report, where deemed practical and beneficial.