



2025 - 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of this Strategic Plan was guided by Steering Committee members:

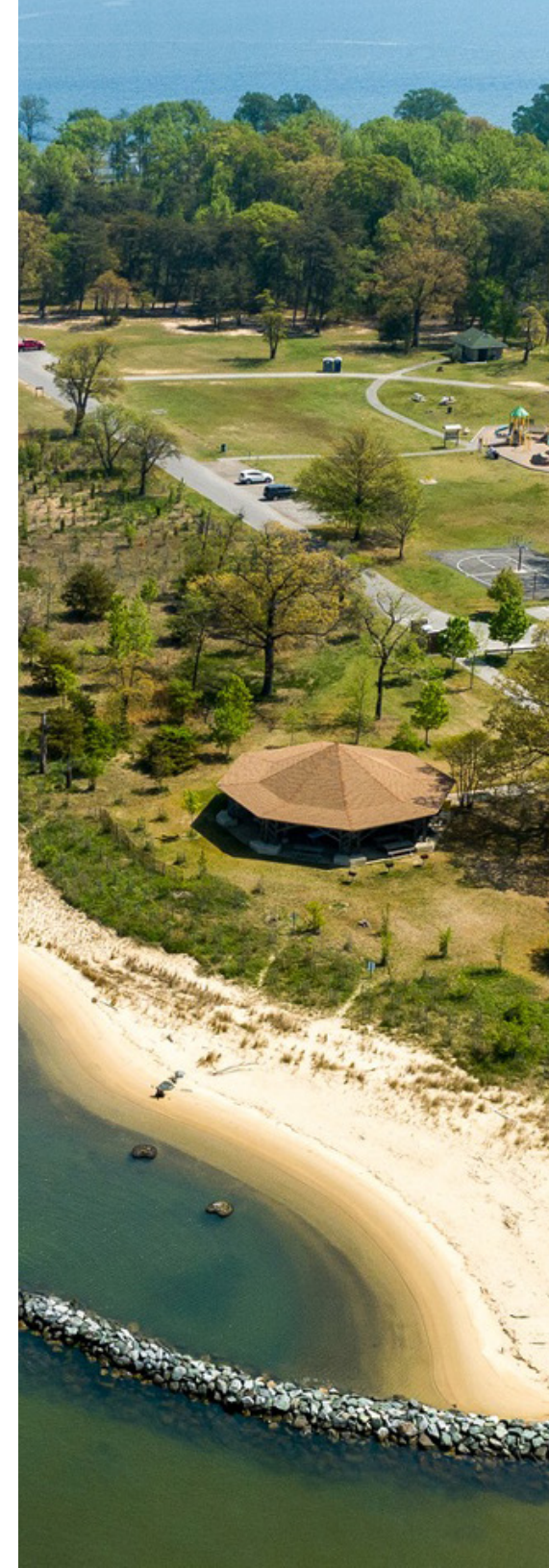
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AAEDC's Board of Directors and Staff played an active role in researching, discussing and advancing this strategic plan.

Thank you to community members who also contributed to this strategic plan and will continue to be our focus and passion.

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HISTORY AND BACKGROUND



The Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) was founded in 1993 as a privatized agency of the Anne Arundel County government, to promote economic growth in Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

Over the last 30+ years, AAEDC has become a vital resource for the county, playing a key role in the county's economic development efforts including attracting new businesses, supporting existing businesses, and promoting economic growth.

While the type of programs AAEDC has implemented to advance this role have varied over time, programming has historically reflected traditional economic practices of business retention, expansion, and attraction (BREA), and small business lending and support. As one of the premier economic development corporations in the state, AAEDC has had recognized success in:

- Delivering hands on assistance to businesses of all sizes, from startups to established corporations across the county, including through its Inclusive Ventures Program;
- Providing financing assistance to local businesses in the form of loans through the VOLT Funds and Next Stage Tech Fund
- Working to enhance commercial districts and improve corridor infrastructure, including through the ACR Fund, and more recently, efforts like “The Glen Burnie Better Plaza” project.

AAEDC's business assistance is well-known and valued by business owners in all sectors across the county, who credit the organization with critical help to advancing their business success. AAEDC's lending programs stand out as a model among peers in the state, with record dollars invested, and a diverse portfolio, helping to fill a critical financing need in the county.

In recent years AAEDC has accelerated revitalization efforts by identifying funding sources, fostering collaboration with property owners and businesses, and promoting reinvestment in the county's 11 revitalization districts and three town centers. AAEDC also drives community engagement through events, strategic partnerships, and marketing key revitalization programs like the Arundel Community Reinvestment Fund (ACR) and the Community Revitalization Tax Credit. In 2024, AAEDC awarded over a million dollars (\$1,066,122) in loans and \$544,350 in accompanying grants to 13 property owners through the ACR Fund.

Conversations with stakeholders engaged as part of this strategic planning process identified the need for continued and increased support in revitalization/redevelopment of older communities and commercial corridors. Specifically, elected officials noted the need for increased visibility of regulatory changes that affect the development community including the creation of Opportunity Zones, Commercial Revitalization Areas, and Smart Growth strategies. Stakeholders also expressed an interest in AAEDC serving at the helm of redevelopment within the County, due to their relative agility and existing working relationships with real estate sector players.

In 2024, AAEDC set out to create a Strategic Plan to inform a roadmap over the next five years that aligns with the aspirations and priorities of county stakeholders while addressing economic challenges and opportunities. The enclosed strategic plan

identifies goals and strategic direction and serves as a guide to direct resources and investments. It will allow AAEDC to prioritize initiatives that further the Plan and play a secondary or support role in other areas.

Additional resources will be needed and the extent to which AAEDC can support these efforts may be, in part, resource dependent.



"From hiring and training assistance to expert consultations and specialized funding, AAEDC offers exactly what we need to overcome challenges and seize new opportunities. With its continued support, we're well on our way to achieving our long-term vision."

- SUSAN BEALL, OWNER AND FOUNDER OF NUE
INFORMATION SYSTEMS, FINANCIAL PLANNING AND
ANALYSIS TOOL FOR GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS

THE ECONOMY TODAY

Anne Arundel County, Maryland, boasts a thriving and diverse economy, strategically situated between the influential metropolitan hubs of Washington, D.C., and Baltimore.

There are three main attributes that make up Anne Arundel County's competitive economic advantage:



QUALITY OF LIFE

Anne Arundel County offers a high quality of life, with access to recreational opportunities, good schools, and a strong sense of community. Despite its proximity to major cities, Anne Arundel County maintains a small-town atmosphere, which attracts residents and businesses seeking a high quality of life. This unique blend of urban access and small-town charm creates a desirable environment for businesses and families. As a tourism destination, the County also holds an outsized array of arts, cultural and hospitality assets.

DIVERSE INDUSTRY BASE

Anne Arundel County's economy is built on a number of major industries including:

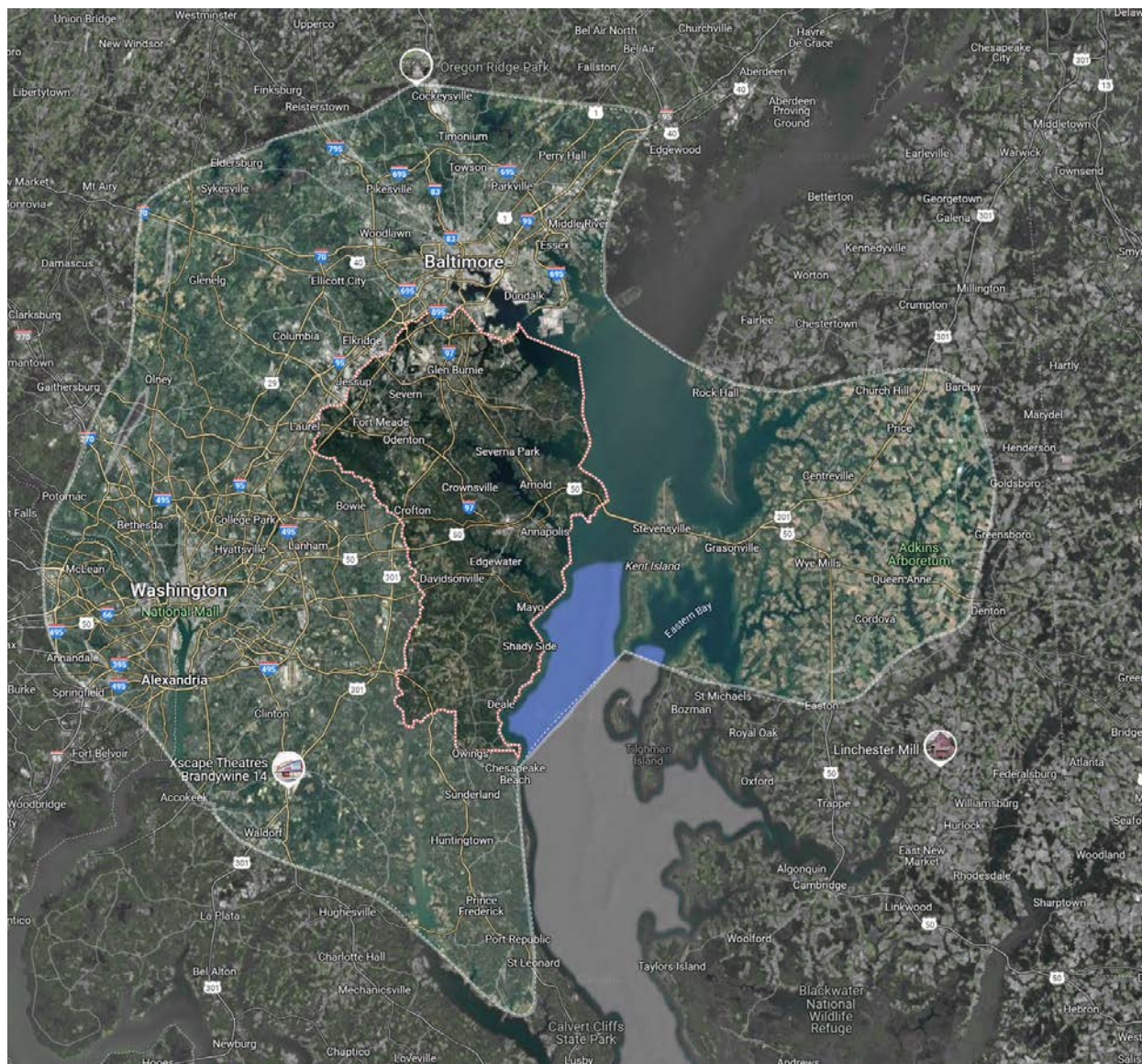
- **Government:** Anne Arundel County is home to Fort George G. Meade and the U.S. Naval Academy. Fort Meade provides support services to 120 Department of Defense ("DoD") and non-DoD organizations representing all military branches and several federal agencies. Major tenants include National Security Agency ("NSA"), Defense Information Systems Agency ("DISA"), U.S. Cyber Command. Together, these institutions provide a stable source of employment and contribute significantly to the County's economic stability. Data indicates that public administration is one of the largest employment sectors in the County. This strong government presence provides a degree of economic resilience, but it also highlights the importance of diversification to mitigate potential risks associated with changes in government spending or policy.
- **Technology:** The County has a growing technology sector, driven by its proximity to major government agencies and in the center of the Baltimore and D.C. regions.
- **Healthcare:** The healthcare sector is a significant employer in Anne Arundel County, with major hospitals like Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center and the University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center and an array of outpatient care options providing thousands of jobs.
- **Tourism:** With its rich history, scenic beauty, and proximity to the Chesapeake Bay, Anne Arundel County attracts a significant number of tourists. Annapolis, the state capital, is a popular tourist destination, and the County's waterfront areas offer various recreational opportunities. Additionally, Live! Casino and Hotel, along with the adjacent Arundel Mills regional mall, is the number one tourist attraction in the Greater Baltimore region and the largest mall in the state.

- **Education:** Anne Arundel County has a well-educated workforce, with over 45% of residents holding at least a bachelor's degree. The County is home to several higher education institutions, including Anne Arundel Community College and the U.S. Naval Academy, which contributes to the skilled labor pool.
- **Retail, Accommodation, and Food Services:** These sectors provide nearly 60,000 jobs in the County, catering to the needs of residents and tourists.

PROXIMITY

Situated between Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, Anne Arundel County benefits from access to global markets through Baltimore Washington International (BWI) Marshall Airport and nearby Port of Baltimore. Between these global gateways, a major highway network connects both ports of entry to the mid-Atlantic region, while the rail system allows goods to reach approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the US within 24 hours. This central, connected location facilitates movement of people and goods, making it an attractive place for businesses to locate and for residents to live and work.

The map shown here depicts the 1-hour driveshed (outlined in gray) from Anne Arundel County (outlined in red) which encompasses the majority of the greater Baltimore and Washington D.C. areas. ►



MARKET AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS KEY FINDINGS

As part of the strategic planning process a market and economic analysis was conducted that examined local economic and workforce conditions in Anne Arundel County, along with projections for the future based on local and national trends. The analysis also includes data on resident lived experience and identifies the county's relative economic strengths and opportunities, including critical and core growth sectors of focus for the county. In addition, it outlines key infrastructure needs to support and sustain economic growth in the years ahead.

Anne Arundel County's employment is relatively diverse, contributing to economic resilience.

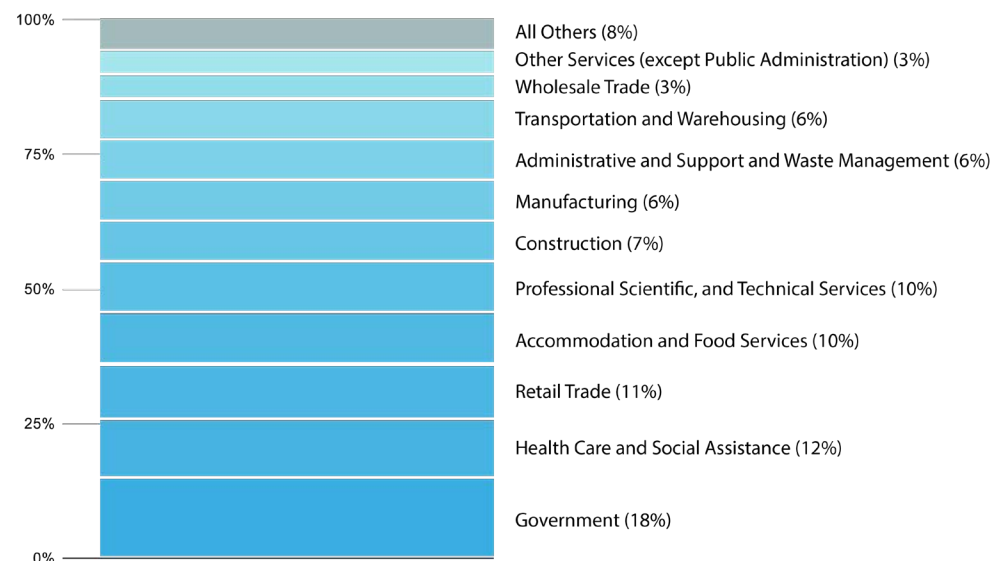
CRITICAL SECTORS

Critical Sectors are those industries where we see long term, sustained market growth and economic resiliency as longstanding generators of jobs in Anne Arundel County.

Anne Arundel County's Critical Sectors include:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (11.6% of employment)
- Retail Trade (10.9% of employment)
- Accommodation and Food Services (which comprises most of the hospitality industry, and makes up 10.4% of employment)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (9.7% of employment)
- Construction (7% of employment)
- Manufacturing (which includes much of the maritime industry and represents 6.4% of employment)
- Agriculture: As of 2022, the most recent census, there were 454 farms in the county, an increase of 16 percent since 2017. These farms sold \$25M in products, though agriculture makes up less than 1% of total county employment.

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY SECTOR



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Lightcast™ | QCEW Estimates, 2023

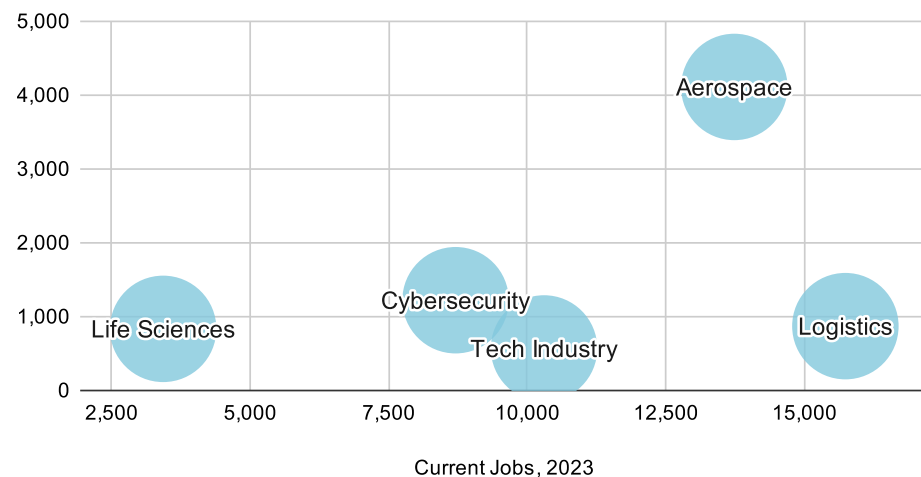
CORE GROWTH SECTORS

Core Growth Sectors are those with growth potential due to Anne Arundel County's competitive advantage and regional or national trends. In addition to serving long-standing industries that have been strong economic drivers for the county, there is an opportunity to expand focus to growing sectors including Aerospace, Cybersecurity, Life Sciences, Logistics and the Tech Industry.

- **Aerospace:** Anchored by the presence of BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport and a strong base of aerospace and defense contractors, this sector in Anne Arundel County is a significant engine for technological advancement, manufacturing, and high-quality job creation in the broader transportation landscape.
- **Cybersecurity:** Home to key federal defense agencies and a growing cluster of cybersecurity firms, Anne Arundel County is a national hub for protecting critical infrastructure and digital assets, fostering innovation and a highly skilled workforce in this vital sector.
- **Life Sciences:** Benefitting from its proximity to major research institutions and healthcare systems, Anne Arundel County's life sciences sector is experiencing growth in areas such as biotechnology, medical research, and healthcare innovation, contributing to both economic prosperity and improved quality of life for the region.
- **Logistics:** Leveraging Anne Arundel County's strategic location with access to major transportation arteries, including the Port of Baltimore and BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, this sector drives the efficient movement of goods and supports a connected supply chain ecosystem within the region.
- **Tech Industry:** An underlying driver of job growth across clusters in the region, Anne Arundel's proximity to federal agencies and an underlying skilled workforce contributes to the existing strength and projected growth of its Tech Industry cluster.

These Core Growth Sectors are significant in both size and growth, as demonstrated in the chart shown here.

PROJECTED GROWTH VS. CURRENT JOBS



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Lightcast™ Data, 2013-2033

CURRENT ECONOMIC TRENDS NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY

This planning process occurred on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic's recovery, at a time of record inflation and low unemployment. The post-pandemic landscape has brought about significant economic shifts, including changes in work patterns, supply chain disruptions, and evolving consumer behaviors. Low unemployment, while positive overall, brings negative externalities of labor shortages, with few workers available to fill open jobs. Meanwhile, rising inflation can erode purchasing power and create economic uncertainty. Planning now allows the county to mitigate the effects of these disruptions and proactively adapt to ongoing and upcoming changes while building resilience.

The state of Maryland has also indicated its support for economic development, which is guiding Anne Arundel County's approach. For example, Governor Wes Moore's recent executive orders have demonstrated a clear commitment to fostering Maryland's economic development by improving the business environment, supporting strategic industries, and streamlining government functions.

At the same time, AAEDC actively participates in regional partnerships to support economic development, including:

- **Maryland National Capital Regional Economic Development Alliance (MNCREDA):** This consortium formed during COVID, as EDO's across the state needed to activate swiftly to help businesses with relief funding. MNCREDA consists of economic development leadership from Maryland Economic Development Association (MEDA) and Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Montgomery, Charles, Howard and Frederick counties. The alliance

WINNING THE DECADE

Maryland Governor Wes Moore has established an aggressive new approach to economic development in Maryland that includes a series of Executive Orders and the development of new initiatives to support economic growth in a state that has been recognized as less than optimal for businesses. AAEDC will keep informed of these changes and collaborate where appropriate with the efforts to help existing and new businesses in the county. Key orders the County may be able to collaborate with include:



AAEDC can collaborate in the following ways:

1. Establishment of the Governor's Office of Business Advancement - which will provide concierge services to business expanding or relocating to the state.
2. Establishment of the Maryland Coordinated Permitting Review Council - which will bring together State and local officials to advance major projects.
3. Establishment of a Certified Sites Program to engage State, local and private leaders to prepare sites throughout the State that have infrastructure that is ready to support business growth.
4. Directs an all-of-government approach to supporting priority industries and sectors. The order identifies the lighthouse industries and sectors identified by the Department of Commerce: life sciences, information technology, aerospace and defense; as well as emerging subsectors such as computational biology, quantum technology, and position, navigation, and timing.
5. Directs the Department of Commerce to coordinate economic development, marketing, and branding efforts with local governments

meets weekly to discuss major economic headwinds affecting the region, legislation, operational challenges, and other factors affecting the economy. In 2023, the Washington Council of Governments awarded MNCREDA the Stuart A. Freudberg Award for Regional Partnership for the unique and unprecedented nature of the on-going collaboration.

- **Greater Baltimore Committee:** AAEDC and Anne Arundel County partner with GBC on regional economic development efforts. Over 2023 and 2024, AAEDC participated on steering committees for “All In 2025,” the region’s 10-year economic opportunity plan, and the regional economic branding initiative. AAEDC also participated in developing the EDA Tech Hub application, provided data for the first-ever regional economic scorecard, attended the inaugural Baltimore Region Investment Summit and co-hosted a booth at Select USA. The newly constituted Business Investment and Attraction Committee is a promising opportunity for AAEDC to influence regional initiatives and connect with broad based resources. AAEDC should also remain engaged in the new branding effort to maximize reach and ensure local messaging is consistent.

Finally, at the time of drafting this document the federal government is undergoing vast changes under the newest presidential administration including major cuts to federal employees, real estate and spending. The constant and rapid nature of these changes, makes it difficult to assess impact and develop a response strategy.

Anne Arundel is home to approximately 33,000 federal employees that work both in and out of the county. In terms of federal employment, Anne Arundel is home to approximately 15,000 federal jobs, however this figure does not include NSA and classified jobs, which could be double the amount.

Many Maryland counties have direct exposure to federal layoffs and spending cuts, particularly those closest to the federal district and with major federal facilities (i.e. NOAA, NIH, SSA, DOE, etc.). However, Anne Arundel may be somewhat insulated from mass layoffs and major procurement shifts given the essential nature of Fort Meade, as the second largest military installation in the US. While some contraction will occur at Fort Meade, national defense agencies may have more discretion over spending mandates given the large number of military and classified personnel engaged in critical, global mission advancement.

However at the time of drafting this Plan, federal contractors report facing significant strains on their bottom line. Contract management has become a state of constant churn. Contractors face a high administrative burden as they navigate shifting guidance, deferred project starts, and sudden cancellations. In many cases, notice of contract termination or suspension is delivered after work has already been completed—rendering that work unbillable and resulting in lost revenue. This unpredictability undermines the ability of contractors to forecast revenue, plan staffing, and manage operations with confidence.



Smaller contractors are disproportionately affected. Lacking the contract volume or flexibility of larger firms, they are often forced to redeploy personnel without clear direction or delay hiring entirely in an attempt to retain existing staff. This instability contributes to an environment of angst among employees and leadership alike.

Further compounding these issues is the attrition of federal personnel—many of whom are not being replaced. This includes the loss of mission-critical staff who hold deep institutional knowledge and understand contract terms and agency culture. Contractors who have spent significant time cultivating these working relationships must begin anew when replacements are eventually hired, delaying project execution and reducing efficiency.

To mitigate these headwinds, many contractors are attempting to diversify by pursuing commercial, state, and local contracts. However, such diversification is challenging: state government rates are typically lower, and compliance requirements differ significantly from federal standards, requiring firms to adapt workflows, pricing structures, and sometimes even staffing models.

Anne Arundel benefits from historically low unemployment, which has been hovering between 2.3% and 3.5% since 2022, suggest that displaced federal workers may be absorbed into the non-governmental private sector more readily, as businesses are continually seeking skilled talent to fill open roles. AAEDC tracks weekly unemployment claims and UCFC filings and to date has not seen any advanced indicators of rising unemployment related to federal actions.

This data should continue to be monitored closely along with tourism and survey data so that economic development and tourism strategies can be adjusted depending on market trends.

Additionally, AAEDC, in conjunction with AAWDC, can play a matchmaking role connecting skilled workers with local employers and can provide workforce stabilization resources, such as wage subsidies or grants for reskilling during contract gaps. Finally, AAEDC can support displaced federal workers that are interested in starting a business or are seeking entrepreneurial opportunities.

ABOUT THE PLANNING PROCESS

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement served as a key element of this strategic planning process to ensure that all recommendations made are both actionable and reflective of the varied interests of AAEDC's stakeholders. Below is an overview of engagement efforts that informed this plan.

INTERVIEWS

A total of 15 interviews with 20 individual interviewees were conducted, which included representatives from the following organizations:

- Amazon
- Anne Arundel County
- Office of the County Executive
- Department of Transportation
- Office of Central Services
- Councilmembers
- District 2
- District 6
- BWI Business Partnership
- Cultivate and Craft
- Cybersecurity Association Inc
- Maryland Live! Casino
- Maryland Tech Council
- M & T Bank
- Maryland Department of Commerce
 - » Office of Finance Programs
 - » Office of Business Development & Services
- Simon Property Group / Arundel Mills Mall

FOCUS GROUPS

A total of 9 focus groups were conducted with 37 key stakeholders across the following industries and groups:

- Agriculture
- Ft. Meade/Defense Tech
- Technology
- County Government
- Quasi-County Government
- Chambers of Commerce
- Manufacturing
- Real Estate
- Strategic Partnerships

Focus group participation included representation from the following entities:

- Maryland Farmers Market Association
- Honey's Harvest Farms
- Triple G Farm
- Griffith Family Farm
- Gable Company
- Precision Microfab
- C Tech
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- St. John Properties
- Reliable Contracting
- COPT Defense Properties
- NSA Charter Director
- Greenberg Gibbons Commercial
- University of Maryland Small Business Development Center
- Maryland Economic Development Corporation
- City of Annapolis
- Anne Arundel Community College
- Fort Meade Alliance
- U.S. Cyber Command
- PC Help Dude
- Eccalon / Project Spectrum
- Anne Arundel Community College
- Clarity Business Solutions
- KSquared Technology
- Optic Cyber

The findings from the stakeholder engagement have informed the strategies enclosed in this plan.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

To conduct a thorough analysis of the economic landscape of Anne Arundel County, Phase I first investigated a baseline analysis to examine the county's level of economic competitiveness in relation to the state and a chosen group of regional peer communities. Critical data points for the county were collected, largely derived from publicly available data sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and United Way, to better understand the county through the context of local trends and future projections. Among other indicators, the following data points were featured:

- Population Trends
- Median Household Income
- Educational Attainment
- Labor Force Participation Rate
- Unemployment Rate
- Commuter Inflow/Outflow
- Owner/Renter Cost Burden
- Cost of Living
- Poverty Rate
- ALICE Households

Where applicable, comparisons to a group of peer communities included Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County.

Phase II of the data analysis process entailed an economic and market analysis that included a quantitative analysis of local economic and workforce conditions, including projections for the future, an investigation into the stability of economic and workforce support infrastructure and an identification of legacy industries as well as emerging industries. This included a high-level look at job growth by industry and wages by industry, as well as a deeper dive into specific industry clusters based on their current and future potential for job growth.

VISION, MISSION, VALUES

The following Vision, Mission, and Values statements were developed by the staff and board, and reflect an updated focus on key activities and essential drivers of the organization's work.

Vision

To be a leading and innovative economic development organization that cultivates a vibrant business community and drives revitalization in Anne Arundel County.

Mission

We foster diverse economic growth by empowering businesses, expanding employment opportunities, and revitalizing communities. As the go-to partner, we connect businesses in Anne Arundel County with the key resources to thrive.

Values

- **Connectivity:** We believe economic growth happens through strategic and collaborative partnerships and we advocate on behalf of the business community to remove barriers to success.
- **Responsiveness:** We take pride in our ability to be highly responsive and adaptable to the current business climate, effectively addressing the needs of businesses and stakeholders.
- **Creativity:** We are committed to implementing innovative and proactive solutions to help businesses overcome challenges.
- **Excellence:** We hold ourselves to the highest professional standards, integrity, and expertise. By embracing diverse perspectives and fresh ideas, we continuously evolve and strengthen our organization.

These vision, mission, and values statements will aid AAEDC as it pursues the goals and strategies outlined in this Strategic Plan.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section details the recommended strategies and action items for AAEDC to prioritize in order to advance its impact goals over the next five years.

Each section contains both **Key Data Points**, which are data indicators that correspond to the county's economic health on a macro-scale and are the factors AAEDC is trying to influence through its efforts, and **Goals and Objectives**, which are what AAEDC is trying to accomplish through its efforts, and represent what organizational success may be measured by.

These recommendations are organized under the following **priority areas**:

- Advance Place-Based Investments
- Support Business Retention, Expansion, and Attraction
 - » Enhance Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support
 - » Increase Industry Support
 - » Serve as a Business Advocate
 - » Coordinate Workforce Support
- Provide Business Finance Resources



PROMISING PRACTICES

For each strategy we have provided **Promising Practices** which are case studies which illustrate examples where similar strategies have been effectively implemented. See page 46 for a list of Promising Practices organized by priority area.

ADVANCE PLACE-BASED INVESTMENTS

With few sites available for greenfield development, the future of development in Anne Arundel County is the redevelopment of existing sites. As AAEDC increases its focus on redevelopment and revitalization, it will be important to county stakeholders that these actions align efforts with Plan2040, which emphasizes a focus on building sustainable, healthy communities and assigns specific redevelopment actions under AAEDC's purview.

At the same time, the county desires a smart approach to growth, to help keep living costs manageable and housing costs accessible, a key value proposition within the region, and ensure environmental protection, cultural preservation, and community resilience. To that end, AAEDC can play an active role in facilitating mixed-use development with a focus on multi-modal transportation infrastructure to support sustainable growth.

There are also several corridors throughout the county that have aged with limited recent investment and are in need of revitalization.

In addition, many commercial districts would benefit from additional wayfinding, placemaking, and public realm improvements. Such efforts would increase accessibility, foster a stronger sense of identity and community, and create more inviting, people-friendly environments that attract both visitors and investment. Strategically investing in these places can help reduce blight, increase property values, reduce sprawl, and improve community connectedness and identity.

Growing communities must actively invest in two key place-based areas. First, they should redevelop underutilized properties to maximize their value. Second, they should create amenities that enhance quality of life, retain workers, and attract the next generation of employers to drive economic growth.



Through the strategic planning process, developers, business owners, and community leaders identified several challenges, including:

- The need for a diverse range of housing options, such as single-family, multi-family, and mixed-use developments, to accommodate a growing population.
- The scarcity of greenfield development sites.
- A perceived mismatch between the demand for high-density, walkable developments and the practical feasibility of such projects due to zoning restrictions and financial constraints.

While the county's market presents significant opportunities for mixed-use developments to meet growing residential needs, the county's zoning codes have not historically supported the density required. Anne Arundel County has recently instituted zoning that allows for mixed-use development and upzoning commercial zoning to incentivize redevelopment.

PLAN 2040

The County's Plan2040 establishes targeted areas for growth and redevelopment based on expressed community needs, environmental sensitivity, economic development potential, and existing infrastructure (such as transportation networks, utilities, and public services to sufficiently support increased development).

The county has eleven Commercial Revitalization Areas, adopted as Overlay Areas in the Zoning Ordinance. These areas are designed to encourage the revitalization of older commercial corridors, facilitate redevelopment opportunities, and allow expanded uses and greater development flexibility. Most specifically, Plan2040 identifies AAEDC as a key leader in identifying and responding to economic trends relative to land use (Goal BE6.1).

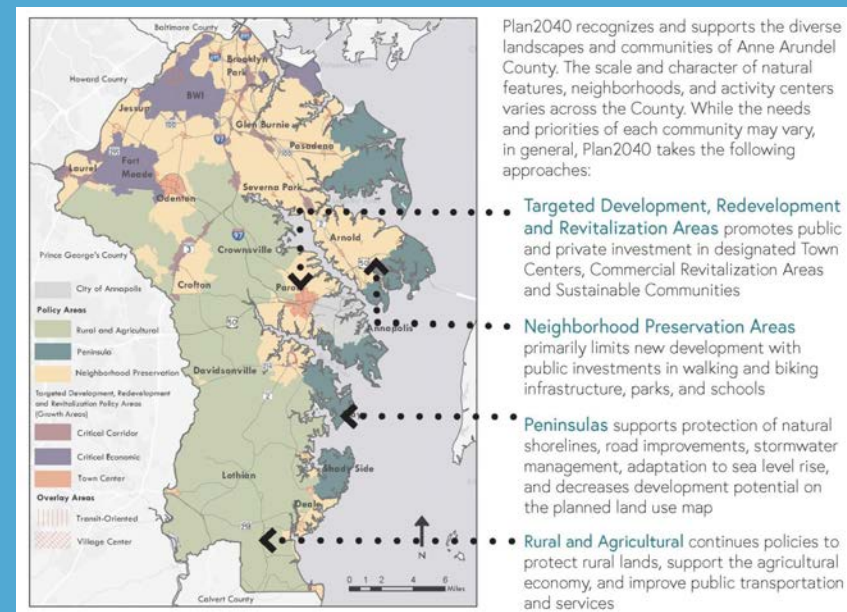
In addition, the following goals are highlighted:

Goal HE.1.2

e. Consider the use of Special Tax Districts for Targeted Development, Redevelopment and Revitalization Policy Areas as applicable, to provide a special fund and dedicated revenue source for public infrastructure needs

f. Study the feasibility of establishing a Redevelopment Authority to facilitate revitalization and redevelopment of specific parcels, areas, or structures, and implement recommendations of study.

Goal BE13.3b. Identify opportunities for increased use of public-private partnerships in implementing redevelopment projects



Goal BE5.1b b. Expand incentives to encourage business and employment growth in Targeted Development, Redevelopment and Revitalization Policy Areas, such as density bonuses, impact and connection fee reductions, increased design flexibility and other regulatory incentives.

Goal HE1.2a a. Use incentives, such as financing tools and/or an expedited review process to encourage new development and redevelopment to locate in Targeted Development, Redevelopment and Revitalization Policy Areas, especially in Town Centers, or properties located in Transit-Oriented Policy Areas.

Overall within Plan2040, AAEDC is the lead agency for **41 of the measures in the Goals, Policies, & Strategies** and has a **supporting role in an additional 24.**



KEY DATA POINTS

AAEDC will track place-based changes in the county, including:

- Changes in county building permit data¹
- Transit proximity to redevelopment investments²
- Commercial real estate trend data³



GOALS/OBJECTIVES

AAEDC is committed to enhancing the overall economic impact of land use in the county with the following defined goals:

- Increase AAEDC's place-based investments for revitalization and redevelopment
- Help align housing, job density, and mobility planning—supporting transit-oriented development (TOD) and revitalization that brings jobs closer to where people live.
- Invest in redevelopment areas and attract additional private and public investment

1. Census Building Permits
2. EPA Smart Location Mapping
3. CoStar



ONGOING INITIATIVES/ PROGRAMS

AAEDC will continue to lead the following programs that support place-based investment:

- **Continue deploying the Arundel Community Reinvestment (ACR) Fund.** The Arundel Community Reinvestment (ACR) Fund is designed to spur economic activity, investment, and improvement in Anne Arundel County's eleven Commercial Revitalization Districts; parts of the City of Annapolis; portions of the Anne Arundel County's Enterprise zone, located in Brooklyn Park; and designated commercial corridors located in South County.
- **Identify state, philanthropic, and other funding** that may support increased redevelopment and revitalization efforts, leveraging the ACR Fund, DHCD funding, and existing tax credits and incentives.
- **Continue revitalization and placemaking work** within commercial revitalization areas, town centers, and sustainable communities.



STRATEGIES

1. *Assess the Feasibility and Potential Impact of the Creation of a Redevelopment Authority.*

County RDAs have unique powers that enable them to play a proactive and impactful role in local development and community revitalization. For example, redevelopment authorities often can acquire properties in blighted or distressed areas, which is crucial for assembling land for large-scale redevelopment projects and overcoming obstacles posed by fragmented ownership or holdout properties.

Redevelopment authorities can use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund projects by capturing the increased property tax revenue generated from the redevelopment. This revenue is then used to repay bonds issued to cover project costs, such as public infrastructure improvements, without placing additional burden on taxpayers. Redevelopment authorities can also establish programs for assessing and remediation of brownfield sites and accessing funding sources and technical assistance needed to make them suitable for redevelopment.

In Maryland, county redevelopment authorities are established through state enabling legislation, which grants counties the power to form these entities via local ordinances. Typically governed by a board appointed by county officials, they operate at the local level, often collaborating with state agencies like Maryland DHCD.

ADVANCE PLACE-BASED INVESTMENTS

AAEDC'S REVITALIZATION & PLACEMAKING EFFORTS

- » **Implementation of Glen Burnie Town Center's Revitalization Plan:** This includes the ongoing execution of the Glen Burnie Town Center Revitalization Plan, along with the installation of gateway signage and the addition of engaging public art to create vibrant community spaces.
- » **Strategic Vacancy Reduction through Project Restore:** AAEDC's Project Restore initiative actively works to fill vacant commercial spaces by connecting prospective tenants with suitable locations and providing crucial financial support for build-out costs and initial rental assistance, fostering economic activity.
- » **Investing in Visual Enhancements through Facade Improvement Programming:** AAEDC offers and manages Facade Improvement Programs designed to enhance the aesthetic appeal of commercial corridors and properties throughout the county and targeted to commercial revitalization areas, sustainable communities, and parts of South County, contributing to a more attractive and inviting environment for businesses and residents.
- » **Town Center Master Planning Participation:** AAEDC actively participates in the development of Town Center Master Plans across the county, ensuring that economic development considerations are integrated into the long-term vision and strategic growth of these key areas.
- » **Leveraging Enterprise Zones for Targeted Revitalization and Investment:** AAEDC strategically targets properties within designated Enterprise Zones, actively promoting the available tax credits and other incentives to encourage revitalization projects and stimulate investment in these key economic development areas.

In accordance with Plan2040, AAEDC will consider the creation of a redevelopment authority to streamline community revitalization efforts and spearhead redevelopment initiatives. Such an entity could be used to:

- Acquire, assemble, and develop vacant and underutilized properties
- Provide expertise and leadership focused on revitalization efforts and economic growth;
- Coordinate projects, engage stakeholders, and align efforts with legislative goals;
- Enhance access to funding and resources, such as grants, bonds, and tax increment financing (TIF), as well as access and leverage private funding.

It could also catalyze broader community transformation, sparking further investment and improvement beyond direct projects, and by creating a ripple effect of revitalization beyond the project area. Other tools, such as introducing incentives like real property and revitalization tax credits—similar to those used in neighboring jurisdictions—could also be explored as a way to make development more financially viable.

ACTION STEPS

- 1a. Document the need and purpose of a redevelopment authority** to facilitate communication to key stakeholders, e.g., reduced costs of redevelopment, streamlined permitting processes, etc.
- 1b. Hire a consultant to determine the feasibility and Return on Investment**

- » Identify financial and personnel costs to implement
- » Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the expected outcome of the redevelopment authority

1c. Work with county partners to **identify the policy and legislative changes** required to launch a redevelopment authority

1d. Identify and pursue predevelopment funding opportunities, particularly in higher-cost or more complex areas., Specifically, AAEDC could explore financing through national lenders, such as:

- » “The [*Institute for Community Economics*](#) (ICE), an affiliate loan fund of the National Housing Trust, provides flexible financing focused on long-term permanent affordability and shared equity models of affordable housing. The projects we finance benefit low- and moderate-income renters, homeowners, tenant associations, and cooperatives across the country.”
- » [*Enterprise Community Loan Fund*](#) “The mission of Enterprise Community Loan Fund is to create opportunity for low- and moderate-income people through affordable housing in diverse, thriving communities.” Enterprise is a national lender with offices in MD, VA, DC.

Strategic Partners:	Anne Arundel County, Community leaders, Hired consultants
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	\$60,000

2. Expand redevelopment, placemaking, and revitalization work by assessing need and priority corridors, as well as introducing incentives and additional funding to spur place-based investments.

Over the past 18 months, AAEDC has significantly expanded its role in community revitalization, with Glen Burnie serving as a visible and impactful pilot area. The results are beginning to take shape—physically and economically—through a growing number of place-based initiatives that enhance vibrancy and business engagement. These efforts are not only refreshing Glen Burnie but also laying the groundwork for a replicable model that can be scaled to other town centers and revitalization areas across Anne Arundel County.

AAEDC will continue its revitalization efforts in Glen Burnie while applying lessons learned and adapting strategies to fit the unique character of other communities. To build on the momentum of recent revitalization efforts like 7409 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd, AAEDC will take a more proactive and data-informed approach to identifying and evaluating high potential redevelopment sites. By cataloging underutilized assets, analyzing infrastructure needs, and aligning agency efforts, AAEDC can position key sites for future development and take full advantage of state-level programs that support site readiness and revitalization.

ACTION STEPS

2a. Catalogue underutilized properties that have high impact redevelopment potential and potential project pipeline (e.g., Laurel Park, Army Depot, Marley, etc.) and create a list of targeted revitalization projects (e.g., older shopping centers and commercial districts; also evaluate the feasibility of a regional agriculture center, etc).

2b. Create profiles of available sites and document the infrastructure needs of each project area. This profile analysis might include: Site characteristics, market and economic factors, infrastructure and utility needs, and regulatory and policy considerations. AAEDC could take advantage of MEDCO's new Business Ready Sites Program, which invests in infrastructure and site improvements on commercial and industrial sites with the potential for significant business attraction and economic development impact.

2c. Coordinate investments with project areas, such as Town Center planning activities, by regularly convening county agencies to communicate and coordinate investments.

2d. Expand Main Street, streetscape, public art and placemaking, and temporary space activation efforts. Given its track record of success with existing programs such as the ACR facade improvement program, revitalization grants, and new vacant property match-making program, AAEDC can further drive community revitalization through expanded efforts including:

» **Main Street Program Development:** AAEDC has applied for a Main Street Affiliate designation for Glen Burnie from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). This designation provides up to \$10,000 in technical assistance, training, and shared resources to build local capacity and test the feasibility of achieving full Main Street designation. AAEDC's Town Center Revitalization Manager will lead the program and convene a network of residents and businesses to implement the main street approach and identify additional resources to support Main Street activities.

- » **Streetscape Improvements:** AAEDC should seek opportunities and funding for targeted investments in sidewalk upgrades, lighting, landscaping, benches, and bike infrastructure which improve the function and feel of commercial corridors. These enhancements boost pedestrian safety, accessibility, and visual appeal, which in turn drives economic and community activity.
- » **Public Art & Cultural Placemaking:** AAEDC should continue to seek funding for murals, art, performance spaces, and cultural installations that reflect community identity and activate underused spaces.
- » **Pop-Up and Temporary Activation Programs:** The Glen Burnie Better Plaza Project serves as a pilot to test evaluate efficacy of an interim activation program- an approach that demonstrates value quickly and informs long-term use. Future opportunities for interim use of vacant properties or public spaces include markets, art displays, food trucks, or other events that generate foot traffic.

Strategic Partners:	Maryland Economic Development Corporation; Anne Arundel County Real Estate Division; Anne Arundel County Planning & Zoning; Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Timeline:	Year 2-3
Investment Needed:	Continue to leverage DCHD and other grant funding (see Burnie Annual Report for Details).



SUPPORT BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION, AND ATTRACTION

AAEDC focuses on several initiatives that retain and expand existing businesses, as well as attract new companies to the county. Each plays a vital role in fostering a robust and resilient local economy. Existing businesses form the foundation of the local economy. Retaining them helps preserve jobs, maintain the tax base, and leverage the investment these businesses have already made in the community. Business retention is also often more cost-effective than attracting new firms. Supporting business expansion fuels organic growth, generates new jobs, increases tax revenue, and drives innovation from within the community.

Moreover, attracting new businesses into the area injects fresh capital and helps to diversify the overall economic landscape. This influx of enterprise stimulates healthy competition, which can lead to better product choices and services for consumers. Furthermore, it enhances the region's reputation as a vibrant hub for commerce and innovation.

A comprehensive strategy must balance these three components- retention, expansion, and attraction- to foster long-term economic resilience. By maximizing the use of resources, AAEDC can adapt effectively to changing economic landscapes and respond to market trends, technological advancements, and community needs. Ultimately, by implementing a comprehensive strategy, we can create a vibrant and sustainable environment that benefits both businesses and residents, promotes growth, and enhances the overall quality of life in Anne Arundel County.



AAEDC's BREA initiatives fall under one of several categories that are supported by four sets of operational roles:

- Provide Entrepreneurship and Small Business Support
- Develop Focused Industry Support
- Serve as a Business Advocate
- Provide Workforce Support



KEY DATA POINTS

AAEDC will monitor trends in the BREA by tracking:

- Impact of digital marketing and outreach
- Number of businesses served in target sectors
- Jobs created by companies assisted
- Number of jobs retained by companies assisted



GOALS/OBJECTIVES

AAEDC is committed to supporting county businesses with the following defined BREA goals:

- Increase awareness of Anne Arundel County as a premier business location
- Prioritize retention and continued growth of existing businesses
- Increase the number of target industry firms located in Anne Arundel County through attraction, retention, and expansion.

ENHANCING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

A proactive business retention and expansion program must engage a diverse mix of businesses, from large defense-related contractors to a range of small businesses that create jobs and provide the community with vital services, amenities, and wealth-building. Supporting a wide range of companies, including those owned by minority and women-owned businesses, creates a more diverse and resilient economy that can better weather economic turbulence.

The county has seen growth in all business categories with fewer than 20 employees and has outpaced regional peers in establishments with 10 to 19 employees. This phase is most often the time when a business is looking for support in its growth journey. This includes navigating the real estate and operating environment, as well as establishing connections to new revenue opportunities. **A ten-year record of 1,395 business births occurred in 2022, the most recent year available.** What is unknown is if the county will see a higher survival rate for these businesses as they move from startup to maturity.

While Anne Arundel County has a higher business birth rate than business exit rate, the county lacks a meaningful angel investor community. As such, the start-up community thrives on a culture of innovation built through strategic partnerships, with AAEDC playing a vital role. For example, AAEDC currently partners with Anne Arundel Community College and the Maryland Tech Council to connect talent and industry through workshops, summits, and pitch competitions.



ONGOING INITIATIVES/ PROGRAMS

AAEDC will continue to lead the following programs that provide comprehensive support for new businesses and entrepreneurs including:

- Resources for business planning, access to funding, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities to help them thrive in a competitive marketplace.
- A suite of business retention and expansion programs.
- The successful Inclusive Ventures Program, a business accelerator for scaling small, women and minority owned businesses.
- Host/co-locate partner service organizations with the AAEDC office, including:
 - » Small Business Development Center (SBDC)
 - » SCORE
 - » Maryland APEX Accelerator
- Economic market research services to businesses and partners
- Strategic marketing that promotes the organization, celebrates local business successes, shares resources and positions AAEDC as a thought leader on economic development.



STRATEGIES

3. *Enhance support to entrepreneurs and small businesses in Anne Arundel County.*

AAEDC has a strong track record of being the go-to resource for entrepreneurs and small business owners, and has the opportunity to enhance this service by centralizing this knowledge into an online resource hub or clearinghouse. While AAEDC's value proposition lies in the relationships it cultivates and the connections it facilitates between local businesses and other resource providers, it is considered a best practice for EDOs to provide centralized access to business resources and information. It enhances transparency, streamlines support services, and fosters engagement through interactive tools and up-to-date resources.

Working closely with resource providers and partners limits duplication of efforts while ensuring that entrepreneurs have access to the specialized expertise they need at any given time. This is particularly true for advancing government contracting – an area that has many county resources dedicated to it.

AAEDC will continue to partner with organizations that provide specialized trainings and technical assistance, while leaning into its strength as a connector and convener. The value in this role is that it brings businesses together to forge relationships that open doors, create connections, develop skills, and build capacity to compete for larger contracts.

ACTION STEPS

- 3a. Continue to strengthen partnerships** with regional organizations to co-offer events such as business training, coaching, and expos. This may include deepening partnerships and fostering coordination amongst entities such as local chambers, local outposts of national entities like SBDC and SCORE, and institutions of higher education to share resources and promote events.

Examples of Supporting Resources/Partners Include:

MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Maryland Small Business Development Center provides comprehensive support to help small businesses start, grow, and thrive. Managed by the Maryland Department of Commerce, this portal offers guidance on accessing capital, navigating state procurement opportunities, and leveraging workforce development programs. Entrepreneurs can also find training opportunities, technical assistance, and connections to business support organizations across the state.

For Anne Arundel County businesses, this resource simplifies the process of finding state-level assistance tailored to their needs. Whether seeking grants, business certifications, or expert consulting, local small businesses can use the Maryland Small Business Resource Center to enhance their competitiveness and sustainability in Maryland's dynamic economy.

THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF SMALL, MINORITY & WOMEN BUSINESS AFFAIRS

The Governor's Office of Small, Minority & Women Business Affairs plays a pivotal role in fostering an inclusive business environment across Maryland. The office provides small, minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses with access to state procurement opportunities, training, and resources to enhance their competitiveness. Through its advocacy and support services, the office helps businesses navigate certification processes, connect with funding opportunities, and leverage state programs designed to promote equitable economic growth.

For Anne Arundel County businesses, this office is a key resource in accessing the state's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE), and Small Business Reserve (SBR) programs. By supporting local entrepreneurs in overcoming barriers to entry in state contracting and business development, the office strengthens the county's economic ecosystem and ensures that diverse businesses have the tools needed to succeed.

- 3b. Explore offering a partnership with a financial coach** who can assist businesses in effectively preparing for AAEDC's funding programs. The resources AAEDC offers must be accessible to meet the diverse needs of all businesses. Many individuals may struggle to fully grasp the intricacies of personal or business credit, and AAEDC should provide support that simplifies these concepts for better understanding.
- 3c. Leverage relationships with government entities and the private sector** through public-private partnerships to provide new opportunities for innovation, mentorship, and business support, particularly within the tech and defense ecosystems.
- 3d. Expand government contracting efforts** by facilitating connections between prime contractors and local subcontractors to foster mentorship and build capacity. AAEDC will leverage its convening power by hosting industry networking sessions that directly link supply chain companies with prime contractors.

Specific opportunities include:

- **Supporting the county's Procurement Access and Vendor Equity (PAVE) program**, focused on increasing opportunities for Certified Business Enterprises (CBEs), to participate in Anne Arundel County government contracting.
 - **Work with NSA's Office of Small Business Programs & Outreach** to offer increased workshops/educational opportunities.
- 3e. Create an online knowledge hub or clearinghouse** as part of the planned website upgrade to help businesses easily navigate resources and access referrals. This may entail identifying and profiling the business support organizations

(public and private) that assist businesses in Anne Arundel County, categorizing them by the type of assistance offered, and building both internal and external tools to aid business development specialists in their work of connecting small businesses to support.

SUPPORTING RESOURCE: MARYLAND FEDERAL FACILITIES CONTRACTING GUIDE



Maryland Federal Facilities Contracting Guide is a key resource from the Maryland Department of Commerce for businesses pursuing federal contracts. It offers a clear overview of the procurement process, compliance requirements, and support

services, along with best practices, funding sources, and key contacts to help companies compete and grow in the federal marketplace.

Anne Arundel County is home to major federal installations, including Fort Meade and the U.S. Naval Academy, making federal contracting a significant economic driver for local businesses. By utilizing this resource, Anne Arundel-based businesses can strengthen their ability to secure contracts, drive local job growth, and contribute to the region's economic resilience.

SUPPORTING RESOURCE: MARYLAND ENTREPRENEUR HUB

The [Maryland Entrepreneur Hub](#) is a one-stop digital resource designed to support entrepreneurs and small businesses at every stage of growth. This platform connects users to funding opportunities, mentorship programs, business development resources, and networking events across the state. Whether launching a startup or scaling an existing business, entrepreneurs can access tailored guidance, educational tools, and a broad ecosystem of partners, including incubators, accelerators, and investors.

For businesses in Anne Arundel County, the Maryland Entrepreneur Hub serves as a critical asset in fostering innovation and economic growth. By leveraging the hub's extensive database of resources, local businesses can find targeted support to overcome challenges, build strategic partnerships, and drive long-term success in Maryland's competitive business landscape.

Strategic Partners:	Anne Arundel County Procurement Access and Vendor Equity; Small Business Development Center; SCORE; Maryland APEX Accelerator, AACC, Maryland Tech Council-Chesapeake Region
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	\$100,000 for website development; \$5,000-\$15,000 per event

AAEDC'S INCLUSIVE VENTURES PROGRAM

The Inclusive Ventures Program (IVP) seeks to help small, minority-owned, woman-owned, and Veteran-owned businesses in Anne Arundel County succeed and grow. The program offers a robust menu of resources including business education, mentorship, and access to capital. The goal is to help small businesses maximize opportunity, create jobs, and grow our local and state economy.

Upon acceptance, entrepreneurs participate in the program's signature component, the Virtual Entrepreneurship Cohort. This online experience is a three-hour class once a week for eight weeks. Participating businesses also receive exclusive, complimentary consultations with legal, human resources and accounting experts.



"IVP taught me to dream big. It made me realize that I've been putting limits to myself, sometimes thinking that maybe I don't deserve to dream big because I wasn't born here, because I don't speak the language perfectly, because I have obstacles to ask for money. And that ends today!"

- MARIA WINTERS, OWNER OF THE COACHING THERAPIST
(LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR).

INCREASE INDUSTRY SUPPORT

AAEDC excels at supporting businesses of all types and sizes throughout Anne Arundel County. The organization serves as a central resource hub for businesses planning relocation or expansion, navigating permitting and regulatory issues, seeking workforce training grants, connections to resources, and incentives, or pursuing entrepreneurial support and startup assistance. Stakeholders recognize the strength of AAEDC's relationships as a long-term investment rather than simply transactional.



ONGOING INITIATIVES/ PROGRAMS

AAEDC will continue to provide support to Core Growth and Critical Sectors to advance business attraction, retention, and expansion within Anne Arundel County by:

- Enhancing business development specialist support that offers personalized guidance to businesses looking to open, expand, or relocate in Anne Arundel County.
- Providing consultation, technical assistance, and connections to incentives and other resources
- Prioritizing support for businesses in Core Growth Sectors and Critical sectors through proactive outreach while still serving inbound requests for support.



STRATEGIES

4. Increase support for Core Growth and Critical Sectors.

AAEDC will continue to engage with businesses in the Core Growth and Critical sectors to understand their needs and how best to support their growth and retention in the community. This approach can be advanced by one-to-one conversations, roundtables, industry-specific workshops, networking opportunities, panels, events, and expos.

ACTION STEPS

- 4a. **Estimate the future real estate needs** for manufacturing and flex space-related companies in the **Aerospace/Air-Transportation, Life Sciences and Cybersecurity** sectors, to inventory what exists and potential future demand, in order to guide real estate development for Core Growth sectors. Working with the County's private developers and public land owners, identify parcels available for growth and the resources necessary to activate them in the future.
- 4b. **Collaborate with the Greater Baltimore Committee and stakeholders on Logistics-related opportunities** that leverage BWI and the Port, including areas they have identified, such as value-added manufacturing.
- 4c. **Serve agribusiness needs** as they explore additional business-related opportunities, including agritourism.

4d. Support matchmaking programming, such as Fort Meade Alliance and AFCEA, between larger **defense contractors and smaller county-based firms**. While already an AAEDC activity, the opportunity exists to add additional focus around large and/or specialized procurement efforts. Fort Meade Alliance offers Meade Business Connect, which hosts industry days and other small business events in the defense contracting industry. Their Micro Business Mentorship Program connects small businesses with subs and primes for government contracting opportunities. These programs provide excellent business development lead opportunities for AAEDC.

4e. Inform and support small business compliance with changing cybersecurity compliance requirements, such as Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) rules taking effect for vendors in 2025, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) requirements. The costs associated with compliance are expected to be disruptive to many small business government contractors, particularly Department of Defense contractors, as they work to update their training and systems. AAEDC has recently launched a Cybersecurity Compliance Funding and Information program. AAEDC can also advocate to the Maryland Department of Commerce for their support as well. Leverage relationships with [Project Spectrum](#), Cybersecurity Association, etc.

4f. Advance support for the Maritime sector. Continue to forge relationships with key stakeholders such as the Marine Trades Association of Maryland, the maritime advisory boards for Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis, and owners of large yacht yards to connect with their maritime tenants. Host an event at the Annapolis Boat Show to attract maritime

businesses to locate in Anne Arundel County. Working with the County's private developers and public land owners, identify parcels available for growth and the resources necessary to activate them in the future.

4g. Host sector focused roundtable or listening sessions.

Invite local leaders from targeted industries, particularly **manufacturing and healthcare**, to share insights in a moderated format. These forums provide a structured yet conversational environment for businesses, workforce partners, and other stakeholders to share real-world challenges, priorities, and opportunities. They also build trust and relationships between AAEDC and key industry players.

Strategic Partners:	Fort Meade Alliance, Greater Baltimore Committee, BWI Business Partnership, Maryland Commerce, Maryland Apex Accelerator, Cybersecurity Association Inc., AFCEA Central Maryland Chapter, Maryland Tech Council, Chesapeake Regional Chapter, Maryland Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Regional Manufacturing Institute of Maryland
Timeline:	Year 1-2, Year 3-4
Investment Needed:	Variable by action – some actions can be accomplished with existing resources while others require funding, which could range up to \$100,000 depending on the scope and scale of the program.

5. *Develop a business attraction program for the county.*

Business attraction, both domestic and international, is a growth area that AAEDC could explore to boost Anne Arundel's competitive advantage in the region. Many of Maryland's large counties, including Frederick, Howard, and Baltimore counties, have dedicated staff and specific programs that proactively attract foreign and domestic investment. However, in Anne Arundel, attraction prospects typically come from the Department of Commerce, and AAEDC works with them in partnership to secure a deal. For Anne Arundel to compete in the region, AAEDC must have a proactive attraction program that showcases county assets, responds to the needs of existing businesses, and aligns job creation with the skills and interests of the local workforce.

Successful models exist within the Baltimore-Washington region that could be further explored to develop an Anne Arundel Business Attraction Program; however, funding will determine the extent of such efforts.

► MODEL 1: FOSTERING INNOVATION

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (PGEDC) offers the Innovation Station Business Incubator, a collaborative work environment coupled with resources to accelerate job creation and company growth. Key services include:

- Resource partners include attorneys, accountants, bankers, angel investors, VCs, exit strategy experts, human resource experts, business development, marketing, branding, and communications experts.
- Inclusive low-cost six-month or one-year leases in furnished and internet-enabled offices/co-working spaces, as well as shared common area space and parking
- Soft landing and extended tenancy for international companies

Similarly, **Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation** manages three business incubators (Germantown, Rockville, and Silver Spring) located near federal, academic, and nonprofit research agencies. All three incubators are members of Maryland's Global Gateway Soft Landing Program, which provides a space to launch East Coast operations. All facilities feature resources and support services, including business consulting, legal and accounting resources, intellectual property and commercialization assistance, and access to state and county funding programs to support business growth.

Howard County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) also houses the Maryland Innovation Center (MIC), an incubator similar to Prince George's Innovation Station and the Montgomery County incubators, which attracts international companies and startups, particularly in the technology and cyber sectors. The MIC serves Fort Meade given its proximity and alignment with NSA, US Cyber Command, and DISA's mission needs.

► MODEL 2: BUSINESS INTERNATIONALIZATION

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (PGEDC) employs an international business development professional as a staff member who organizes trade missions to help local companies access international markets, identify export opportunities, and meet potential business partners. Over the last five years, PGEDC has organized County Executive-led international missions to Kenya, El Salvador, Mexico, and Korea.

Through various trade missions to places such as Vienna, Italy, and Germany, **HCEDA** has recruited multiple businesses, including a cutting-edge bio-digestion facility which converts organic waste to renewable energy and nutrient-rich soil amendments.

Finally, **Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation**, along with county officials, led an economic development and recruitment mission to Taiwan in 2023 and a trade mission to South Korea and China in 2024. These trips targeted prospective life sciences and technology companies to influence their expansion to the U.S. The trips also included meetings with university and government leaders to share best practices.

► MODEL 3: EMPOWERING INVESTMENT THROUGH ACCESSIBLE MARKET INFORMATION

Howard County Economic Development Authority (HCEDA) also hosts a commercial property search option as well as a business directory, both of which facilitate public access to key information needed to identify available real estate, connect with local businesses, and support site selection for new or expanding companies. These tools enhance business attraction efforts by making it easier for investors, entrepreneurs, and corporations to navigate the local market and make informed decisions.

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (PGEDC) offers a robust web-based site section tool that lists county-owned sites available for surplus, available commercial and industrial properties, and specialized sites such as data centers, vacant land, and large parcels. This tool could be replicated as AAEDC updates its website.

Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation also offers a web-based site section tool that searches multiple property listing services to find available commercial spaces according to specifications. Additionally, the website lists cut sheets for available properties.

International attraction in Maryland is driven through the Maryland Global Gateway Soft Landing Program, administered by the Department of Commerce. Global Gateway provides international companies with a cost-effective opportunity to explore the U.S. market, offering access to facilities, resources, advisors, and investment capital. Participating companies also gain access to educational programs, networking events, mentorship services, and targeted matchmaking meetings with local businesses and industries.

The most successful programs target specific industries to connect international businesses with key industry players, research institutions, and potential customers more effectively. Tailored programs offer specialized mentorship, market insights, and connections that make market entry smoother and help international companies navigate complex regulations, such as those in healthcare or defense. Additionally, targeted programs attract more investment and funding since they align with regional economic strengths.

There are 15 soft landing programs across the state, with all counties surrounding Anne Arundel hosting 2-5 programs operated by local governments, economic development corporations, universities, or private organizations. These programs specialize in various technology sectors, including biotech, medical technology, cybersecurity, AI, and quantum computing, while some offer general industry support.

Although Anne Arundel does not currently host a soft landing program, its location and assets make it well-positioned to develop a specialized program in E-commerce, logistics, technology, or cyber.

Its strategic location between Washington, DC, and Baltimore, along with connectivity to BWI Airport and the Port of Baltimore, make it desirable for businesses in global trade and distribution. It also offers valuable real estate opportunities within the greater BWI corridor for businesses to expand once they establish a presence.

SOFT LANDING PROGRAMS IN MARYLAND BY COUNTY

Baltimore County/City:

- BW Tech@UMBC – Cyber, BioTech, GovTech
- Towson University StarTUp at the Armory- All industries
- Harbor Launch- Life Science, Marine, Environment
- LifeBridge Health BioIncubator- BioTech, Life Sciences
- Maryland Development Center Studio- MedTech

Eastern Maryland

- Eastern Shore Innovation Center- Technology
- F3 Tech (Easton) AgTech, CyberAg, Environmental Tech, Renewable Energy

Frederick

- Frederick Innovation Technology Center- BioTech, IT, Renewable Energy, Cyber

Howard

- Maryland innovation Center- Technology
- Technology Advancement Center- Cyber

Montgomery

- Montgomery County Innovation Centers- Life Science, MedTech, All Industries
- BioHealth Innovation (Rockville)- BioHealth
- Clinical Laboratory Innovation Axcelerator (Gaithersburg)- Life Science, BioTech, MedTech

Prince George's

- Innovation Station Business Incubator- All industries
- Quantum Startup Foundation- Quantum Technology

The county's proximity to key federal agencies and its strong government contracting sector create a natural advantage for technology and cybersecurity companies. A targeted approach in any of these areas could create a competitive edge and long-term economic growth.

Strategies for creating business attraction programming can be scaled according to resources, with marketing requiring the least and international efforts requiring the most. The following actions should be considered and can be implemented consecutively to provide time for performance evaluation in between.

AAEDC will need to define what is expected from initial recruitment efforts and how progress and impact will be tracked to allow for evaluation of the effort. Metrics may include job creation, capital investment, payroll generated, new business establishment numbers, local spending by new businesses, increased tax revenue, skill development within the workforce, and positive impact on community infrastructure.

ACTION STEPS

5a. Enhance Marketing and Partnerships:

- Identify key messaging around the county's unique value proposition and competitive advantage, profile Core Growth Sector companies that align with community strengths, and target businesses in those sectors. As part of these steps, create profiles of the real estate opportunities that exist or can be readily made available.

- Determine geographic footprint for marketing efforts, focusing on areas of the country that have a high amount of activity in similar industries, acknowledging limited organizational resources to do full-scale global attraction.
- Define partnership opportunities with other regional and state organizations (economic development and trade associations) that are also seeking to attract companies. This includes but is not limited to the Greater Baltimore Committee and the Maryland Economic Development Corporation.
- Expand on AAEDC's existing Business Attraction Pitch Deck to develop collateral for specific audiences and sectors, e.g., international trade shows, out-of-state talent, and industry events.
- Develop a site selection page as part of the website update that draws on examples such as PGEDC and Prince William EDC to highlight real estate opportunities and relevant zoning and permitting information.

5b. Consider creating a business attraction program that prioritizes Anne Arundel's Growth Sectors:

- Enlist coaching advice from a consultant or regional partner and attend industry events, conferences, and trade shows to network and promote the region. These may include:

DOMESTIC CONFERENCES

- [*SelectUSA Investment Summit*](#) is a premier event for attracting foreign direct investment (FDI) and connecting EDOs with global investors across various sectors.

- [The MedTech Conference](#) hosted by AdvaMed brings together Medical devices, diagnostics, imaging and digital technologies companies. This is an opportunity to showcase the County as a site for expansion/ growth in an industry sector that is demonstrating significant growth potential.
- [Site Selectors Guild](#) hosts an annual event that brings together corporate site selectors and economic development organizations. This provides an opportunity to showcase Anne Arundel and talk 1 to 1 with corporate advisors.
- [Biotechnology Innovation Organization \(BIO\) International Convention](#): This is the world's largest gathering of the biotechnology industry, bringing together over 15,000 leaders from the biotech and pharmaceutical sectors from around the globe. Participation would allow AAEDC to showcase Anne Arundel County's proximity to federal health agencies and position the region as an ideal location for biotech expansion, while also building relationships with international firms exploring U.S. market entry.
- [Quantum World Congress](#): The Quantum World Congress brings together global leaders in quantum technology from government, academia, and industry. Attending this event would enable AAEDC to align with emerging innovation trends, strengthen partnerships with cybersecurity and defense-adjacent firms, and promote the county's strategic assets near Fort Meade for companies in the quantum and tech sectors.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

- Aerospace/Transportation: Two major global aerospace events include the Farnborough International Airshow (occurs on even-numbered years) and Paris Air Show (occurs on odd-numbered years). Both of these should be considered as longer-term opportunities following a few years of domestic activity.
- It-sa 365 is widely recognized as Europe's leading trade fair for IT security. Held annually in Nuremberg, Germany, it serves as a central meeting point and crucial dialogue platform for IT security professionals, decision-makers, and experts from various sectors, including industry, services, and public administration.
- The InfoSecurity Europe conference is a major annual event held in London, UK, specifically at the ExCeL London. It stands as one of Europe's leading cybersecurity events, attracting a wide range of professionals, from technical experts and engineers to CISOs, policymakers, and industry leaders.

Strategic Partners:	Greater Baltimore Committee; The Maryland Economic Development Corporation; Maryland Economic Development Agency; Maryland Department of Commerce; Hired consultant support.
Timeline:	Year 1-2; Year 2-3
Investment Needed:	\$70,000 to engage external consulting support and 5,000-7,000 per trade show.

SERVE AS A BUSINESS ADVOCATE

A thriving local economy depends on the success of businesses of all sizes, from large employers to startups and small firms. However, small businesses, entrepreneurs, and early-stage ventures often face unique challenges due to limited access to specialized resources such as land use attorneys, permitting consultants, and business advisors. Stakeholders emphasized the importance of AAEDC continuing to champion these businesses by addressing both immediate needs and building an environment that supports long-term growth and competitiveness.

Stakeholders also stressed the importance of helping businesses navigate the complexities of permitting, zoning, and government contracting. Many smaller firms continue to report challenges understanding or managing local regulatory processes, which can unintentionally create barriers to entry or expansion. By both advocating for clearer processes and directly helping businesses navigate them through guidance and technical support, AAEDC can reduce friction and foster a more inclusive, business-friendly environment for all.



"The chain of connections has been invaluable, and I'm confident that we will continue to leverage AAEDC resources as Interworld continues to grow. The support of both AAEDC and SBDC played a crucial role in my decision to remain in Anne Arundel County rather than move the business back to Baltimore County."

- ASRORJON (JON) SHUKUROV, OWNER OF INTERWORLD



ONGOING INITIATIVES/ PROGRAMS

AAEDC will continue to Serve as a Business Advocate to support business attraction, retention, and expansion within Anne Arundel County by:

- Providing regulatory guidance to local businesses and employers, and helping to develop graphics depicting various permitting processes and FAQ sheets for certain processes.
- Serving on advisory boards for organizations relevant to the economic priorities AAEDC seeks to influence.
- Advising on legislation that improves the county's reputation as a business-friendly location.



STRATEGIES

6. *Foster greater connections between AAEDC and County branches and departments to positively impact economic development policy in the county.*

A strong partnership between the county government and AAEDC is essential for shaping legislation that drives economic growth. While elected officials lead legislative and regulatory efforts, AAEDC offers critical, on-the-ground insights into business needs, market trends, and development opportunities.

By aligning expertise with policy, AAEDC can help craft legislation that fosters a business-friendly environment, supports job creation, and advances the county's vision for smart, sustainable growth.

ACTION STEPS

- 6a.** Engage regularly with county staff and county elected officials to **increase awareness of EDC priorities** and engage in collective problem-solving.
- 6b.** Consider **conducting Information Briefs** to enhance public awareness and establish leadership around key issues. This concise case format enables AAEDC to present testimony and establish justification for favorable economic policy in a highly digestible manner.
- 6c.** **Convene county staff** as appropriate to coordinate cross-departmental issues and challenges that affect the business community and revitalization efforts. For example, conduct regular meetings with key county staff on capital projects in the Town Centers and Sustainable Communities, permitting and development review challenges, updates on County planning and legislative efforts.

Strategic Partners:	County Executive, County Council, AAEDC Board of Directors, Department of Inspection and Permits, Department of Public Works, Office of Planning and Zoning, Office of Transportation, Arundel Community Development Services.
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed

7. *Explore how an ombudsperson role could enhance business support services and create a more efficient regulatory environment that fosters economic growth.*

Stakeholders have identified a need for an official ombudsperson to assist businesses in navigating the county's permitting and regulatory processes. This role would serve as a dedicated resource to streamline approvals, clarify regulatory requirements, and facilitate communication between businesses and government entities. Additionally, an ombudsperson could help accelerate high-impact economic development projects, ensuring they move efficiently through the system.

While stakeholders see value in this position, county and agency staff do not believe it would require a full-time role. Further, the ombudsperson would need subject matter expertise in planning and zoning to provide meaningful guidance and support. A key question remains whether the position should be housed within county government or AAEDC, as each option presents different advantages in terms of accessibility, authority, and effectiveness. Outreach to other jurisdictions where similar models have been successfully implemented could provide valuable insights into best practices, potential challenges, and effective structures for the role.

ACTION STEPS

- 7a.** Consider establishing a formal ombudsperson position within a county-related agency/organization to bridge gaps between businesses and municipal/county departments, including an **evaluation of funding and resources** to determine the financial and operational feasibility of the role.

Strategic Partners:	Anne Arundel County Office of Planning and Zoning; Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works; Anne Arundel County Administration; Anne Arundel County Department of Inspections and Permits
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed



COORDINATE WORKFORCE SUPPORT

A strong and collaborative workforce development ecosystem exists in Anne Arundel County, led by Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC) with support from AAEDC, Anne Arundel Community College (AACC), and Maryland Department of Labor (MDOL), among others. These organizations share the overarching goal of a thriving local economy, but they approach it from different angles. AAEDC focuses on the county's overall economic health and business attraction/retention, while AAWDC focuses on aligning workforce skills with employer needs, and AACC specializes in offering education and training. Each organization brings unique expertise and resources to the table and works together to leverage these strengths.

AAEDC can strengthen workforce development to attract and expand businesses in Core Growth Sectors by leveraging the county's skilled talent pool, business infrastructure, high quality of life, and competitive advantages. To maximize this opportunity, AAEDC should advocate for policies and initiatives that enhance workforce readiness and availability and reduce barriers to employment, the most significant barriers being accessible housing, transportation, and childcare.

Workers in sectors that make up substantial portions of the economy are particularly vulnerable to cost-of-living challenges and housing affordability issues. A family in Anne Arundel County must earn a \$126,645 annual pre-tax salary to meet the minimum standard of living in the county, and housing makes up a significant cost within that total. The cost of living calculator from MIT estimates that a family of four with two adults working and two children can expect to spend \$28,636 dollars annually (about \$2,400 a month) on housing and associated costs in Anne Arundel County.⁴ Two working adults would need to both be employed in industries making at least \$63,000 a year to earn this salary and meet their housing needs. Two-thirds of industries in Anne Arundel pay at least \$63,000; however, while Retail trade and Accommodation and food services pay \$43,948 and \$30,218, respectively, they comprise the second and third largest concentrations of jobs in the county.⁵ To support workers at all income levels and address larger workforce challenges, workforce housing must be made accessible in terms of both cost and location.

4. Fourth Economy Analysis of MIT Living Wage Calculation for Anne Arundel County, Maryland, 2024.

5. Fourth Economy Analysis of QCEW Data, 2023.





ONGOING INITIATIVES/ PROGRAMS

AAEDC will continue to employ the following strategies that connect businesses to workforce development and training:

- **Promoting the workforce development resources** in the county that support Anne Arundel County's Core Growth and Critical Sectors, including but not limited to:
 - » Maryland Department of Commerce's Partnership for Workforce Quality (PWQ)
 - » Maryland Department of Labor's Maryland Business Works
 - » Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation's Incumbent Worker Training
 - » Anne Arundel Community College
 - » Center of Applied Technologies (CAT) North and South
- **Support employment needs through workforce training grants**, which provide reimbursement to businesses for approved training activities otherwise not covered by partnering programs. Grants are prioritized for training activities in the Core Growth Sectors and training for workforce-related services.
- **Partner with AACC and industry partners to hold Workforce Summits** that highlight topics specific to evolving industry needs. AAEDC has co-hosted two technology-focused Workforce Summits in collaboration with Maryland Tech Council-Chesapeake Region, AACC School of Science, Technology and Education, and AAWDC.

- **Assist with implementing Anne Arundel's Local Workforce Plan** by serving on the Local Workforce Development Board, facilitating the work of the Industry Collaboratives, and engaging AAWDC to conduct joint business visits.
- **Respond to the needs of workers and businesses impacted by federal downsizing** by conducting webinar/workshops, continued tracking and reporting, support to AAWDC in matching employers with requisite skilled labor.



STRATEGIES

8. Support AAWDC Industry Collaboratives, in particular, helping to advance the Transportation/Logistics Collaborative.

The Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Plan examines existing jobs, project growth, and occupations that offer family-sustaining wages and identifies which industries most need focused support. As such, the Local Workforce Board decided to concentrate on industries that represent the most jobs and growth in the region and the local area. The identified key sectors are:

- Healthcare – healthcare, social assistance
- Information Technology/Cybersecurity/Professional Services – professional, scientific, technical services
- Transportation - transportation, warehousing, logistics
- Construction/Skilled Trades – construction, skilled trades
- Hospitality – accommodation and food services, arts, entertainment, and recreation, retail

Industry Collaboratives are ongoing roundtable discussions that leverage labor market data and business insights within the key sectors to identify pain points, map in-demand skills and certifications, and identify training needs for occupations. The Collaboratives work with system partners and training providers to identify, develop, and catalog training assets that meet the needs identified.

AAEDC has been actively involved in each industry Collaborative, engaging businesses and sharing insights. While the healthcare, hospitality, and IT collaboratives have experienced strong participation, additional support is needed to re-energize the Transportation/Logistics Collaborative. AAEDC can play a support role by helping to recruit businesses in transportation, logistics, manufacturing, and distribution to serve as Collaborative partners.

ACTION STEPS

8a. Assist AAWDC in marketing the collaboratives, particularly the transportation and logistics collaborative, to relevant businesses and in developing the value proposition for businesses to participate.

- AAEDC may help advocate for Core Growth and Critical Sector needs, while other partners help ensure training programs are responsive, teach essential skills within those sectors, and deliver the training.

Strategic Partners:	AAWDC, Commerce, AACC, Cybersecurity Association, Maryland Tech Council-Chesapeake Region, AFCEA
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed

9. Identify additional Workforce Training Grant Opportunities to fill gaps.

Several workforce training grant opportunities are available in the County. AAWDC administers the incumbent worker training program, which provides funding to businesses to upskill current, full-time workers and provide employees with opportunities for advancement. Training must be skills-based and result in improved productivity, efficiency, and an increase in the employee's existing wages or industry-recognized credentials. Program funding is limited and must meet state programmatic requirements. This resource is most beneficial for entry-level jobs to assist with advancement.

Maryland's Talent Acquisition Program provides matching training grants and support services targeted to improve the competitive position of small and mid-sized manufacturing and technology companies. Grants are used to increase the skills of existing workers for new technologies and production processes, improve employee productivity and increase employment stability.

AAEDC's Workforce Training Grant Program provides matching funds to businesses for approved training activities otherwise not covered by partnering programs. Although the demand for training dollars exceeds available funding, the program offers a flexible resource that has served as a valuable tool to help local businesses invest in and advance their current employees. Given funding limitations, AAEDC has shifted programmatic priority toward high-impact employment, critical services, and attraction opportunities such as childcare enterprises and core growth sector industries.

ACTION STEPS

9a. Seek additional funding streams. Recognizing that workforce training resources are limited compared to demand, AAEDC should assess whether new funding opportunities could augment existing programs. Given the flexibility of AAEDC's workforce training program, additional funding for this program further supports AAEDC's core mission.

9b. Draft a policy for the use of limited workforce training dollars to include funding for core growth sectors, high-impact employment opportunities, and critical service delivery.

Strategic Partners:	AAWDC, AACC
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed

10. Track and support federal workforce reductions

Anne Arundel County is proactively responding to the threat of reductions in both the federal workforce and contractual spending. AAEDC is working in collaboration with other county agencies to help both employed and unemployed federal workers transition to new career opportunities through;

- Hiring events (local and regional), webinars, workshops, and tailored job boards.
- Matching former federal employees with local employers seeking skilled labor, as well as helping others interested in starting a business.

- Tracking unemployment to determine if job losses impact overall employment rates and economic stability, and to inform future policy decisions.
- Identifying impacts and trends through a Federal Government Transition Impact Survey that is developed and administered by AAEDC.

ACTION STEPS

10a. Conduct outreach to local businesses to participate in job fair events specifically for affected federal employees and attend hiring events as an exhibitor.

10b. Take the lead on compiling data from the Federal Government Transition Impact Survey and ensuring that data is readily available to partners and decision makers.

10c. As more information about federal downsizing is known, AAEDC could look at tailoring existing entrepreneurial resources and programs to support affected workers and businesses.

Strategic Partners:	AAWDC, Maryland Department of Labor, Maryland Public Service Resource Initiative , Maryland Department of Commerce
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed

11. Advocate for workforce housing.

Workforce housing will be a critical factor in addressing the needs of Anne Arundel County's growing labor force. As noted in the Market and Economic Analysis, about two thirds (63%) of jobs (165,639) in Anne Arundel County are not held by local residents, which speaks to the need for not only a regional focus on transportation and overall mobility but also promoting housing opportunities in areas with a high concentration of jobs.

Currently, there is a shortage of housing options close to employment centers, which creates a barrier for workers in Core Growth Sectors. AAEDC will focus on identifying and promoting housing development opportunities in areas with a high concentration of jobs, particularly in industries with workforce shortages. This will include defining zoning changes, advocating for funding and incentives, and leveraging public-private partnerships to increase the availability of workforce housing.

ACTION STEPS

- 11a.** Identify and assess potential sites for workforce housing development near major employment hubs.
- 11b.** Advocate for policy adjustments and explore funding mechanisms, such as tax incentives or grants, to support workforce housing projects.
- 11c.** Participate in effort to advance transit oriented development around MARC stations such as Cromwell and Odenton.

Strategic Partners:	AAWDC Industry Collaborative, Office of Planning and Zoning, ACDS, Office of Transportation, MDOT, DHCD
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed



PROVIDE BUSINESS FINANCE RESOURCES

AAEDC is recognized both within the community and throughout the State as being a leader in providing financing support to businesses, particularly those that are small, women-owned, and minority owned. AAEDC has financed over \$22,000,000 in loans to small businesses through its VOLT loan program since its inception in 2013, and there is increasing demand for this program, especially given the current interest rate environment. AAEDC also helps businesses understand and utilize county and state tax incentives. As a result, AAEDC is well-positioned to increase financing assistance to county businesses, having a successful track record offering accessible financing tools, including loans with low interest rates and flexible payment terms.

In conjunction with its Finance Committee, AAEDC annually assesses lending programs to ensure they are serving the defined economic development needs of the county. Many small businesses, startups, and entrepreneurs, particularly in underserved communities, struggle to secure loans from traditional banks due to factors like limited credit history, lack of collateral, or operating in high-risk industries. AAEDC provides crucial financing that these businesses need to grow and create jobs. In some cases, AAEDC funding can support entrepreneurs with innovative ideas that may be considered too risky for traditional lenders, thus fostering a more dynamic and diverse business environment.

Given the longstanding success and continued strong demand for the Corporation's loan programs, it is essential that these core resources remain a principal part of AAEDC's business support efforts. At the same time, there is an opportunity to explore more **targeted financing and support tools** aligned with Core Growth and Critical Sectors. Doing so would enhance the county's competitiveness and position it to capitalize on emerging economic opportunities.



KEY DATA POINTS

AAEDC will track small business lending changes in the county, including:

- Small business lending: number of loans
- Small business lending: total \$ amount loaned



GOALS/OBJECTIVES

AAEDC is committed to supporting county businesses with their financing needs through continued progress on the following goals:

- Provide financial support for new startups and existing businesses, particularly those that have been historically underserved.
- Review, with the Finance Committee, the portfolio of loans executed in the previous FY and the overall portfolio to assess performance. Adjust programmatic terms and conditions as needed to ensure the health of AAEDC's loan funds.

AAEDC WILL LEVERAGE LOCAL TECH FUNDING TO ADVANCE INDUSTRY GROWTH

Maryland Technology Development Corporation (TEDCO)

- Social Impact Funds: Available to pre-seed technology start ups across all industries.
- Seed Funds: Investments for early-stage technology companies made through convertible debt and equity instruments. Includes the Cybersecurity Investment Fund, Life Sciences Investment Fund, Technology Commercialization Fund, and Gap Investment Fund.
- Venture Funds: Investments of between \$500,000 and \$1.5M for early-stage technology- and life science-related companies
- Tech Transfer: Working with Maryland-based labs to commercialize their technological capabilities, facilities, and data sets. This includes the Maryland Innovation Initiative, Federal Tech Transfer, and Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund.

Maryland Department of Commerce

- Build Our Future Grant Pilot Program and Fund: This newly launched program provides matching grants of up to \$2M for innovation infrastructure projects that spur innovation in one of 12 eligible technology sectors.
- Data Center Maryland Sales and Use Tax Exemption Incentive Program: Provides an exemption from state sales and use taxes on the purchase of qualified data center property to centers looking to locate or expand within the state.
- Innovation Investment Tax Credit: Offers income tax credits equal to 33% or 50% of an eligible investment in a seed or early stage technology company.

In addition to the aforementioned funding opportunities and incentives, the Greater Baltimore Committee has also named life sciences and predictive technologies as strategic opportunity growth sectors, as well as logistics and light manufacturing, for the next decade. Through their All In strategic plan, focus will be given to strengthening the ecosystem (particularly infrastructure and entrepreneurship) to attract new businesses and advance innovation.





ONGOING INITIATIVES/ PROGRAMS

During the strategic planning process, the existing finance programs offered by AAEDC were assessed based on stakeholder feedback and staff conversations. Each program is serving the business community and will continue into the foreseeable future. This includes:

- **Next Stage Tech Fund** – This program provides low interest loans from \$50,000 to \$250,000 for technology companies serving the cybersecurity and national defense industries.
- **VOLT Fund** – Provides \$25,000 to \$500,000 loans for small, minority-owned, woman-owned, or Veteran-owned businesses.
- **VOLT Microloan Fund** – Provides loans up to \$50,000 for minority, women, veterans, or small business owners who have completed a business accelerator program (such as the Inclusive Ventures Program).
- **VOLT Growth Fund** – Provides loans of up to \$100,000 for Maryland-based high-growth businesses with an innovative product.



STRATEGIES

12. *Leverage MD Video Lottery Terminal (VLT) dollars and connect local companies to additional funding and resources.*

Businesses in Anne Arundel County need access to capital, whether they are just starting out, relocating, or expanding, particularly those not currently served by the traditional banking ecosystem.

PROVIDE BUSINESS FINANCE RESOURCES

While AAEDC provides invaluable financial support to businesses across the county, industries identified as Core Growth, such as logistics, aerospace, cybersecurity, life sciences and technology, are growing areas of importance to the region. The existing VOLT program offers flexibility to be customized for specific industries, and AAEDC has historically done so with the cybersecurity industry through the Next Stage Tech Fund.

This year, Governor Wes Moore released an Executive Order directing an all-of-government approach to supporting priority industries and sectors. The order identifies the lighthouse industries and sectors identified by the Department of Commerce: life sciences, information technology, aerospace and defense; as well as emerging subsectors such as computational biology, quantum technology, and position, navigation, and timing.

AAEDC should continue to track movement at the state level and align support with state and local priorities.



“The VOLT Fund has been instrumental in both the initial launch and continued growth of JesseJay’s. It provided the crucial financial backing that enabled us to transform our vision into reality when traditional banks couldn’t, and it allowed us to pursue two expansion opportunities that might have otherwise been out of reach.”

- JAYLEEN FONSECA, OWNER OF JESSEJAY’S

ACTION STEPS

- 12a.** Increase marketing and targeted communications to promote AAEDC's financing tools to businesses in Core Sectors, tailoring messaging to the specific needs of each sector as appropriate.
- 12b.** Expand the use of AAEDC VOLT funding to finance emerging agriculture business needs such as agritourism.
- 12c.** Align support for Core Growth Sector businesses with the priorities of state's Lighthouse industries including life sciences, information technology, aerospace and defense; as well as emerging sub sectors such as computational biology, quantum technology, and position, navigation, and timing.

Strategic Partners:	Chambers of Commerce; BWI Partnership; Fort Meade Alliance; United States Department of Agriculture; Maryland Agricultural & Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation, Maryland Technology Development Corporation; Maryland Tech Council; Cybersecurity Association of Maryland; Greater Baltimore Committee; Anne Arundel Community College
Timeline:	Year 1-4
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed

13. *Expand available financial resources by partnering with lenders and other supporters outside of Anne Arundel County.*

There are a range of national and regional organizations that provide capital to businesses and projects, and could be possible resources in Anne Arundel County. Often, these organizations are looking for local partners to provide matched capital, help navigate local processes and culture, and generally advise on investments. AAEDC can outreach and explore potential partnerships with such organizations to bring more capital into the County.

For larger loans that may exceed the capacity of a single lender, they can pool resources through syndicated lending. If a business doesn't qualify for a loan from one lender, they can be referred to another lender with different criteria or specialized programs. By sharing insights about local business financing readiness and industry trends, partnering financial institutions can co-create programming and provide direct technical assistance that may particularly benefit local companies with similar challenges.

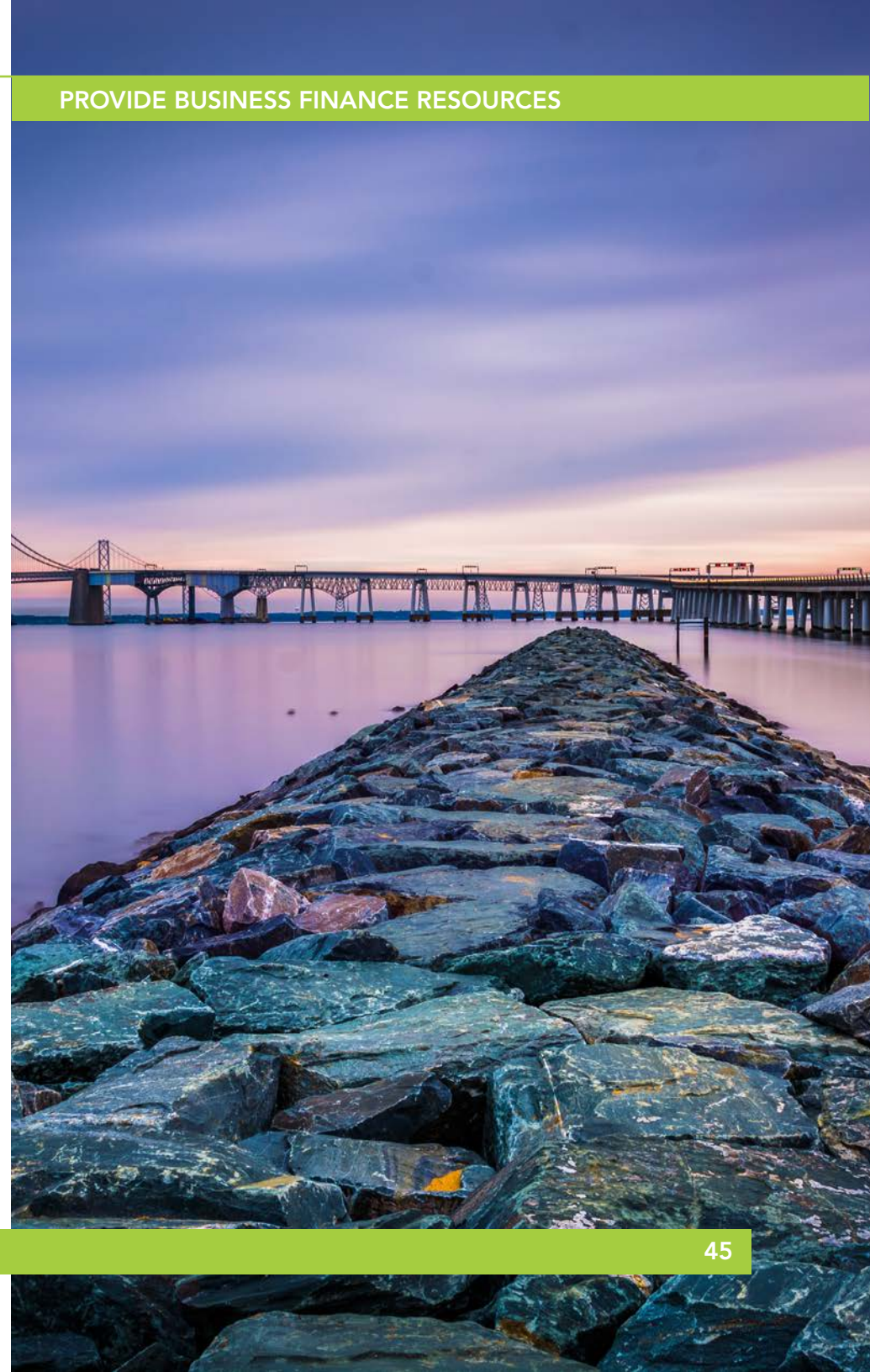
ACTION STEPS

- 13a.** Identify potential organizations to partner with and prioritize outreach.
- 13b.** Develop a shared understanding of goals, programs, and investment criteria.

13c. These potential partners have an established history and vested interest in AAEDC's service area and/or core growth sectors. Explore creating partnerships with them from this vantage point, by investigating program areas, relative risk tolerance, and contact information.

- » [*Community Reinvestment Fund*](#) "Founded in 1988, Community Reinvestment Fund, USA (CRF) is a national non-profit organization with a mission to improve lives and strengthen communities through innovative financial solutions. A leading Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI), CRF supports mission-driven organizations, increases economic mobility, and builds strong local economies through the development of solutions aimed at creating an equitable financial system.
- » [*SJF Ventures*](#) "SJF Ventures invests in high-growth companies, creating a healthier, smarter, and cleaner future. Our mission is to catalyze the development of highly successful businesses and drive lasting, positive changes. They invested in Lineage Logistics that has operations in the Maryland region.
- » [*Community Impact Loan Fund/ Grow America*](#) "CILF focuses on younger enterprises needing loans of \$100,000 or less. Working in participating communities around the nation, CILF is inclusive in its mission, inviting inquiries especially from Woman-and Minority-owned businesses and low-moderate income entrepreneurs. With our flexible terms and hands-on assistance throughout the life of the loan, we help borrowers develop equity, create jobs, and build community."

Strategic Partners:	Arundel Community Reinvestment Fund; SJF Ventures; VLT Fund Managers
Timeline:	Year 1-2
Investment Needed:	No additional resource is needed





PROMISING PRACTICES

The following are short case studies which present examples of similar strategies that have been successfully implemented in other communities. These Promising Practices have been organized to align with the strategies presented in previous chapters.

ADVANCING PLACE-BASED INVESTMENTS

ALTERNATE FUNDING STRUCTURES

Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) facilitated the [*Westport Redevelopment Project*](#) in Baltimore, Maryland. The project has been funded using a [*variety of funding models*](#) including:

- **Tax increment financing:** TIF financing is being utilized to fund some of the initial infrastructure improvements necessary for development, including streetscapes, utilities, and other public works.
- **Bonds:** Municipal bonds, through the City of Baltimore, have been used to fund public infrastructure costs such as roads, utilities, and environmental remediation.
- **Tax credits:** The development team became eligible for state-level tax incentives.
- **Public-private partnerships:** There is shared responsibility between the city for public infrastructure initiatives and private developers for construction and leasing.
- **Strategic Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative:** BDC supports comprehensive neighborhood revitalization efforts that integrate residential, commercial, and infrastructure improvements to strengthen communities. BDC does this by providing targeted investments and resources to revitalize the selected neighborhoods. For example, in the Patterson Park and Highlandtown neighborhoods, BDC helped to secure funding for streetscape improvement and grants to local small businesses. Appears similar in nature to this regional program.

RELEVANCE

Some of the funding models used in Baltimore could be applied to communities in Anne Arundel County, such as Glen Burnie or Pasadena, where revitalization efforts could benefit from integrated approaches that combine residential, commercial, and infrastructure improvements. Such an initiative could strengthen these neighborhoods, making them more attractive for both residents and businesses.

REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND INITIATIVES

Prince George's County's Redevelopment Authority “develops, redevelops, revitalizes and preserves targeted communities with an emphasis on communities within the Beltway in support of the County Executive’s priorities of **community development, transit-oriented development, and affordable housing**.”⁶ Specific strategies include:

- Acquiring vacant and underutilized commercial and residential properties;
- Ensuring financing for projects, obtaining approvals for development plans, and
- Partnering with for-profit and nonprofit entities for development.

Additionally, PGEDC’s RDA also offers *first-time home buyer assistance* and surplus real property programs. Through the surplus program, the RDA administers the county’s disposal of surplus county-owned properties either through sale, lease, or transfer of ownership. This has included the donation of properties for developments related to elderly housing, affordable family housing, transportation, and day care centers.

Through *this revitalization & redevelopment initiative*, Prince William County Department of Economic Development (PWCDDED) in Virginia focuses on soliciting and attracting real estate developments within areas that have been designated as *E-Commerce Overlay District*, *Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) Zones*, or *Opportunity Zones*.

Developments within these districts qualify for additional (-or stacked-) supports from the EDC, such as:

- Market studies to identify gaps in product demand;
- Land assembly for rezoning opportunities;
- Attracting early developers and investors for new projects;
- Conducting brownfield assessments and remediation; and
- Attracting uniquely qualified tenants for new developments.

RELEVANCE

The Redevelopment Authority (RDA) model used by Prince George’s County could serve as a useful template for Anne Arundel, which has several areas in need of revitalization, such as Glen Burnie, Brooklyn Park and Severn. An RDA could focus on acquiring and redeveloping vacant or underutilized properties, promoting affordable housing, and improving transit-oriented development. These strategies would align with Anne Arundel’s goals for sustainable urban growth and community development.

Further, an initiative similar to PWC’s revitalization and redevelopment initiative could benefit Anne Arundel County, particularly along its key corridors. AAEDC could uniquely support Plan 2040 implementation by offering incentives to targeted industries, such as those identified in the Greater Baltimore Council’s *All In 2035* Economic Opportunity Plan. Regarding land assembly, Prince William County’s comprehensive plan guides redevelopment efforts, with the PWCDDED supporting projects that align with its land use goals. While there is no formal policy for land assembly, targeted industry projects receive financial assistance, and mixed-use developments that fit the plan may benefit from fast-tracked site approvals.

6. <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/departments-offices/redevelopment-authority/about-rda>

TAX CREDITS

Prince George's County's Revitalization Tax Credit encourages property improvements by offering tax relief on the increased value resulting from eligible non-residential or residential enhancements. The Revitalization Tax Credit is applied in full during the first year after improvements are completed and assessed, and then it falls gradually in each subsequent year.

Baltimore County provides a range of real property tax credits designed to help property owners reduce their tax obligations. These credits cater to various situations and property types including for high-performance homes and buildings, commercial revitalization, and redevelopment in enterprise zones.

RELEVANCE

The consideration of a redevelopment authority and the expansion of revitalization efforts, including potential tax credits, directly address the need for strategic redevelopment in Anne Arundel County given the limited availability of greenfield sites. This approach aligns with Plan 2040's emphasis on sustainable, healthy communities and the identified stakeholder needs for reinvestment in existing commercial corridors and communities. By focusing on underutilized properties, infrastructure improvements, and placemaking, the county can enhance its quality of life, attract investment, and manage growth effectively.

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES & SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Through programs like [Green Business Certification](#), Montgomery County EDC promotes sustainability in residential and commercial revitalization projects. It is a voluntary program that recognizes and supports businesses that implement environmentally sustainable practices such as energy efficiency, water conservation, green

purchasing, waste reduction, and sustainable transportation and commuting options. Businesses start by submitting an application that details their current sustainability practices, which MCEDC then assesses. After completing the assessment, the companies provide evidence of their practices. If approved, businesses receive a time-limited certification (typically for one year).

RELEVANCE

Anne Arundel County could benefit from a Green Business Certification program to encourage environmentally sustainable practices among local businesses. By promoting energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable transportation, the county could enhance its environmental resilience while supporting economic growth.

SUPPORT BUSINESS RETENTION, EXPANSION, AND ATTRACTION AND ENHANCE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

ENTREPRENEURIAL SUPPORT: RESOURCE HUBS

Stafford County, Virginia's Economic Development Corporation has developed and published a [comprehensive online resource hub](#) to assist enterprises of all kinds to advance their commercial needs across all stages of their life cycle. The EDC's website includes step-by-step guides for activities such as:

- Finding properties;
- Starting a business; and
- Identifying financing options and incentives.

Fairfax County, Virginia ([“Fairfax CORE”](#)) connects aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners at all stages with information and experts to help entrepreneurs start and grow businesses in the county. It includes a resource navigator, step-by-step guides, and an events calendar for finding networking and educational opportunities

Prince William County Economic Development also offers an [online resource hub for job seekers](#), which includes a job search platform, free educational and training opportunities, and one-click links to connect with other County resources to get 1:1 support.

RELEVANCE

By adopting a similar approach, AAEDC could enhance the county’s appeal by making it easier for businesses to navigate the available processes and opportunities. Moreover, it further supports AAEDC’s reputation as a responsive and resourceful agency.

INCREASE INDUSTRY SUPPORT

FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY SUPPORT

Frederick and Dorchester Counties emphasize the importance of supporting food processing industries to transform raw agricultural and seafood products into market-ready goods. Frederick just released a new strategic plan for their [Office of Agriculture](#). This effort builds on the success they have had with the Agriculture Innovation Grant Program (established in 2021), which “has supported projects that strengthen the economic viability of the local agricultural industry. To date, the program has awarded more than \$1,600,000 to 70 agriculture projects in Frederick County, which has contributed to the creation of more than 300 jobs. Anne Arundel stakeholders communicated the need for processing facilities during the Anne Arundel County EDC agriculture focus group.

RELEVANCE

Anne Arundel County could take cues from Frederick and Dorchester Counties by focusing on enhancing its food processing industries, building on the “Arundel Grown” event, and considering partnering with Visit Annapolis to connect restaurants and local farms.

Anne Arundel could establish more facilities to process local food products, helping local farmers gain better market access, all while creating jobs in the food production and distribution sectors. These efforts could be targeted uses for county-owned land, especially in South County, and supported by agencies like the Maryland Department of Agriculture, USDA Rural Development, and MARBIDCO, which all offer funding for value-added agriculture.

FARM TO TABLE PROGRAMS

Howard County, MD’s [HoCo Farms Connect initiative](#) is a county-led campaign that promotes the connection between local farms and food businesses. It includes a digital and print guide that lists farms, farmers’ markets, and restaurants that use local ingredients. Notably, it features a seasonal availability chart, chef spotlights, and public recognition for participating establishments. The initiative is paired with networking events that enable chefs and farmers to establish direct procurement relationships.

RELEVANCE

A similarly structured guide—expanding on the existing AAEDC Ag Guide platform—can help overcome Anne Arundel’s production limitations by emphasizing relationship-building, transparency in seasonal availability, and flexibility. A well-designed guide that includes farms’ production limits (e.g., “CSA only” or “can fulfill limited restaurant orders”) can set realistic expectations for chefs while still promoting local pride and purchases.

Adding seasonal menus, chef profiles, and a shared language around “local” will help smaller producers find their market niche without overselling capacity.

LOCAL SUPPORT CERTIFICATION

The [So. Maryland, So Good: Buy Local program](#), established by the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), offers a branding and marketing toolkit for producers and restaurants committed to local sourcing. Restaurants that used local ingredients could display the brand, appear in promotional materials, and were eligible for grant-supported marketing campaigns. The program did not require full sourcing but offered flexible tiers of recognition, promoting both large and small-scale participation.

RELEVANCE

Given Anne Arundel’s smaller farms and limited production, a tiered certification system provides an inclusive model that celebrates even modest contributions to the local food economy. Instead of requiring full menus to be local, this model accommodates seasonality, supply variability, and the capacity of producers. A “Local Support Certification” could be tied to the AAEDC Ag guide and recognized through county communications, food tours, and tourism promotions, incentivizing restaurants without placing undue pressure on farmers.

SERVE AS A BUSINESS ADVOCATE

BUSINESS SUPPORT/LIAISON

The [City of Tuscaloosa’s Development Ombudsman](#) and economic development staff serve as liaisons between entrepreneurs, business owners, developers, and other city departments. The department coordinates with community partners to retain, attract, and promote expansion of new and existing businesses, assisting with everything from site selection, data, permits and general questions about Tuscaloosa.

Similarly, Cook County houses the Office of the Ombudsman within its Department of Economic Development. The office focuses on assisting businesses facing challenges related to county services and regulatory processes, including zoning, permits, and licensing. They specifically focus on resolving more complex issues and improving relationships between businesses and local government departments.

Iredell Economic Development Corporation has established a [Small Business Ombudsman program](#), which provides free assistance to small business owners looking to create or relocate their existing business. The program helps business owners to:

- a. Navigate the planning and inspections process
- b. Identify potential challenges of sites and facilities
- c. Interpret zoning and building codes
- d. Learn about regulatory compliance issues
- e. Coordinate with the government
- f. Resolve complaints and disagreements

Finally, Butt County Economic Development, as part of its regional economic development strategy, will create a Business Ombudsman position to serve as a single point of contact for business inquiries. This individual will assist businesses throughout the project

approval process, coordinating with various county departments to streamline operations and ensure that Butte County remains a competitive location for new investments.

RELEVANCE

Establishing an economic development ombudsman in Anne Arundel County would streamline support for businesses by serving as a direct liaison between entrepreneurs, developers, and local government. This office could assist with site selection, permits, and regulatory challenges, making it easier for businesses to start, expand, and thrive while fostering stronger public-private collaboration.

PROVIDE BUSINESS FINANCE RESOURCES

YORK COUNTY ECONOMIC ALLIANCE BLOOM BUSINESS EMPOWERMENT CENTER

The [BLOOM Business Empowerment Center](#) offers enhanced technical support, attainable capital, and access to opportunities to instill York with a thriving culture of entrepreneurship defined by our rate of business births, specifically births of women-owned and BIPOC-owned businesses.

Since its launch in early 2022, BLOOM has provided education taught by experts to over 750 entrepreneurs, awarded more than \$630,000 in micro-grants, financed over \$1 million in start-up and growth capital, and hosted dozens of networking and engagement events to strengthen the entrepreneurial network in York County. BLOOM operates as an extension of the York County Economic Alliance (YCEA) and maintains its own brand and dedicated leadership team.

This has enabled the organization to attract a diverse group of investors and supporters who are committed to its mission of promoting equity and advancement for women- and minority-owned businesses.

RELEVANCE

While BLOOM is not unlike the Inclusive Ventures Program, the educational opportunities are broader and are impacting a larger number of County businesses in a short period. In addition to microgrants and loans, they offer a series of training opportunities, record sessions for individual use, and connect entrepreneurs with mentors. The 'independent' branding has also generated broad support for the initiative, as well as partnerships with several organizations that have not previously collaborated with the YCEA.

APPENDIX

ECONOMIC AND MARKET ANALYSIS

This economic and market analysis presents data analysis of local economic and workforce conditions in Anne Arundel County, along with projections for the future based on both local and national trends. This includes data on the lived experiences of residents, examining economic and workforce support infrastructure, such as housing, transportation, and overall quality of life metrics. Relative economic strengths and opportunities are identified, including critical and core growth sectors of focus for the county, as well as key infrastructure needed to bolster economic growth in the coming years.

WORKFORCE DYNAMICS

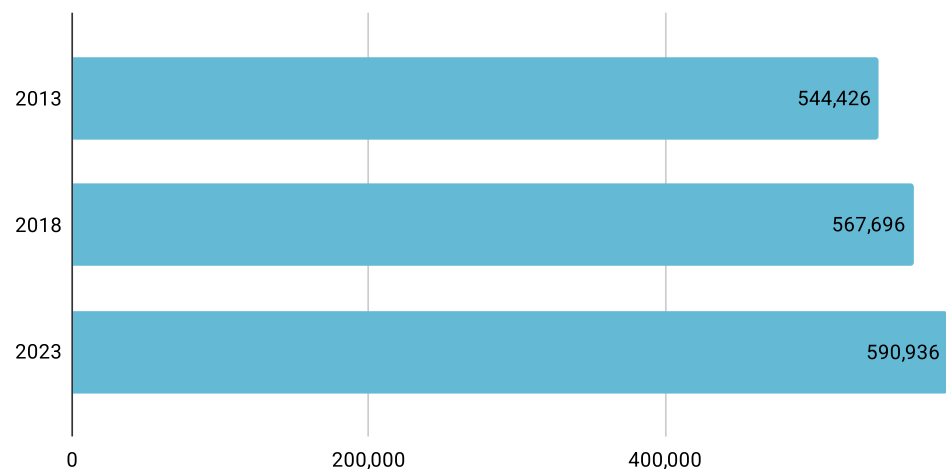
Anne Arundel County boasts a strong quality of place, with numerous recreational amenities, a rich cultural landscape, and an extensive shoreline. Its prime location between Baltimore and Washington, D.C., along with waterfront access near Annapolis, attracts new residents. As a result, the county's growth has outpaced the state and is projected to increase by 4.4% through 2033 (fig. 1), exceeding the state's 3.5% rate. While growth is slowing, the county continues to offer economic opportunities, drawing educated workers and maintaining a lower-than-average poverty rate.

Anne Arundel County saw -1,516 in net migration in 2022, with the greatest in net migration coming from nearby counties. The map below (fig. 2), with Anne Arundel in white, indicates net migration inbound to Anne Arundel in shades of blue and net migration outbound from Anne Arundel in shades of red. A net negative migration means that more people are moving out of the county than into it, and could be symptomatic of larger trends like a high cost of living, a poor job outlook, and more.

Other geographies that have seen a notable migration of people to Anne Arundel County include uncrewed aircraft systems and aerospace hotspots like North Dakota, and west coast communities with defense bases, indicating a fair amount of moving among military communities (fig. 3).

Figure 1: Population Trend

Anne Arundel County

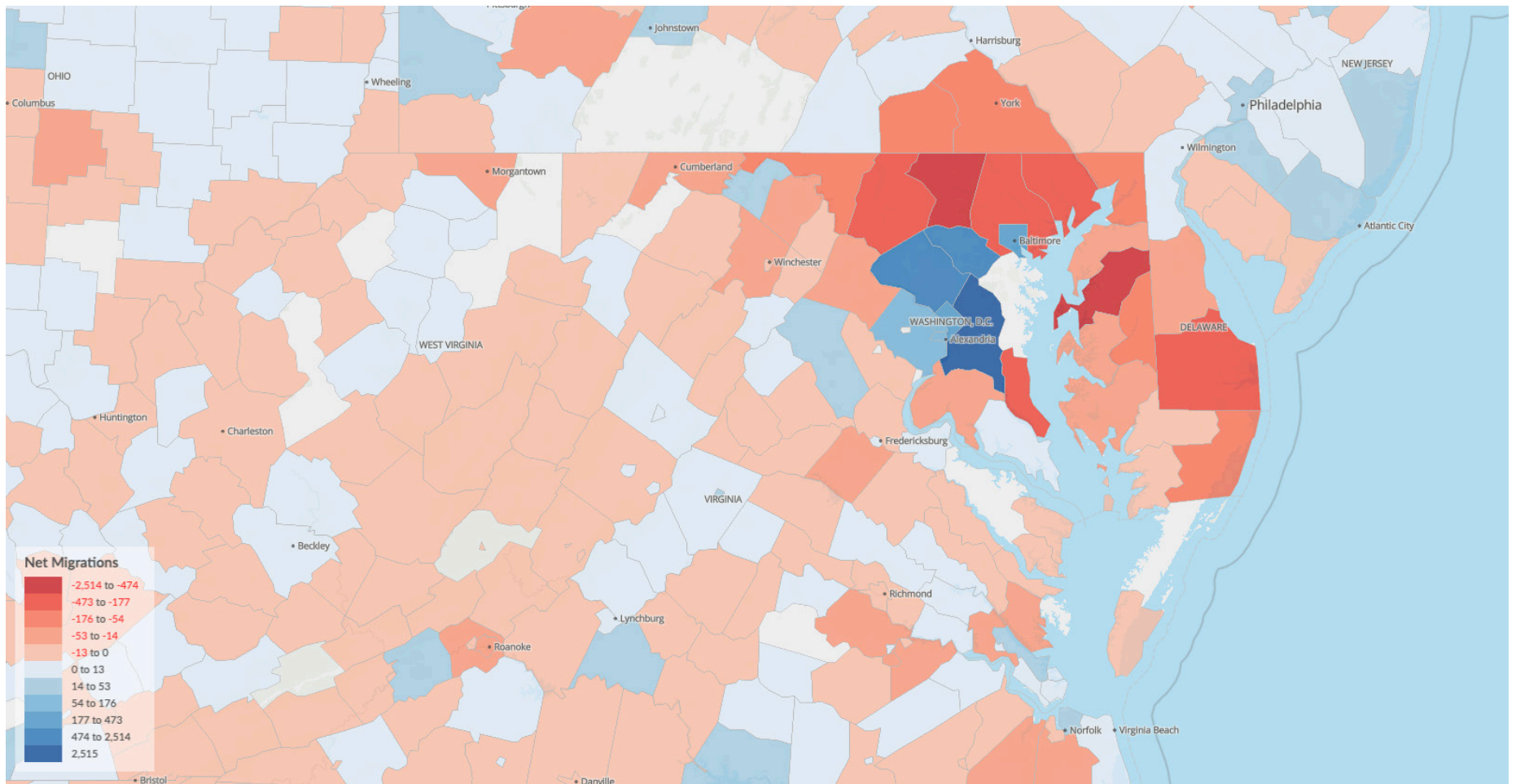


Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2009-2013, 2014-2018, 2019-2023

Anne Arundel's population has grown 9% since the 2009-2013 estimate, increasing from 544,426 to 590,936.

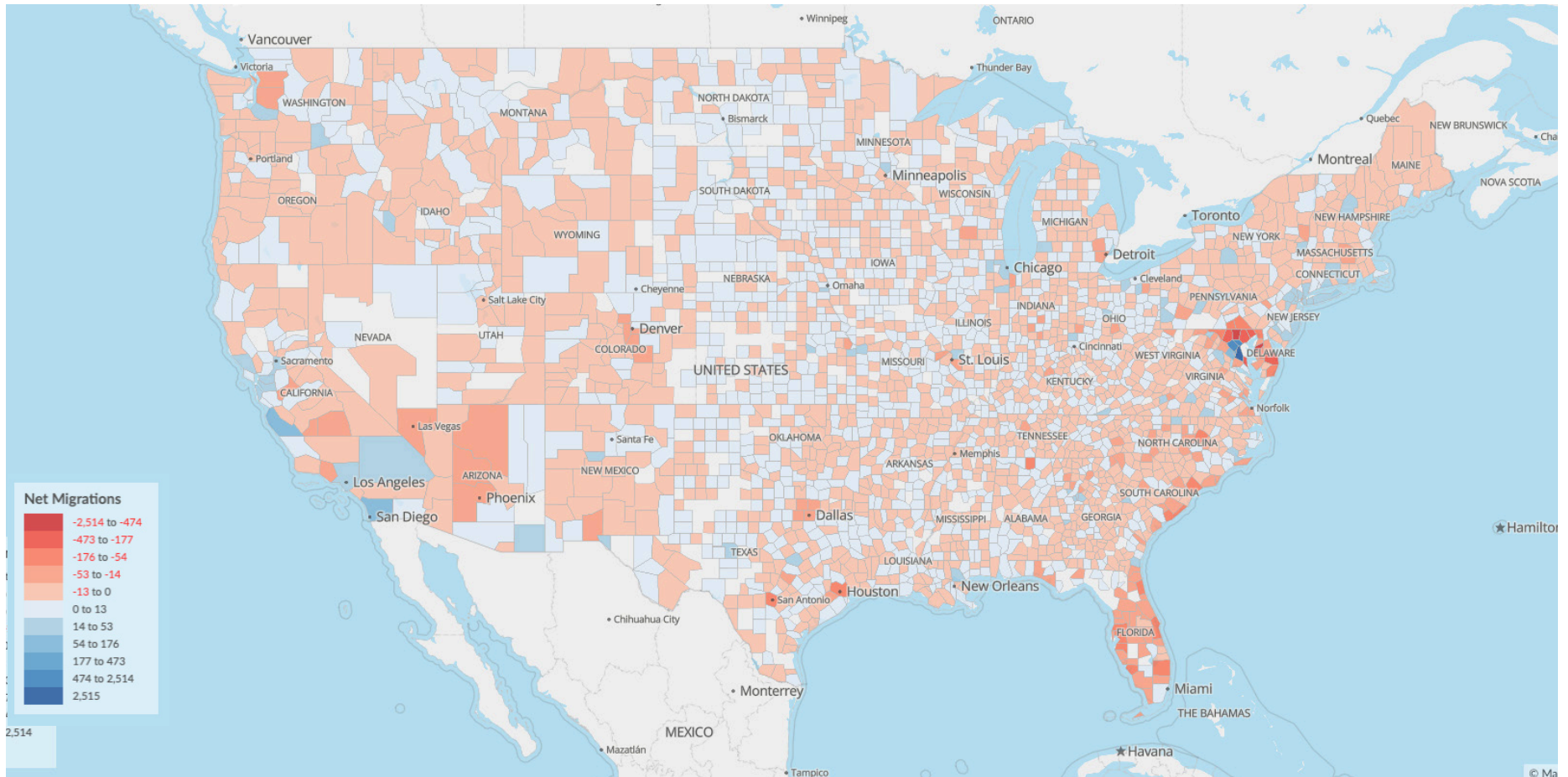
This is faster growth compared to the state, which increased 6% over the same period, and demonstrates the potential for continued economic expansion in a growing workforce.

Figure 2: Regional Net Migration for Anne Arundel County



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Lightcast™ Data, 2022

Figure 3: US-Wide Net Migration for Anne Arundel



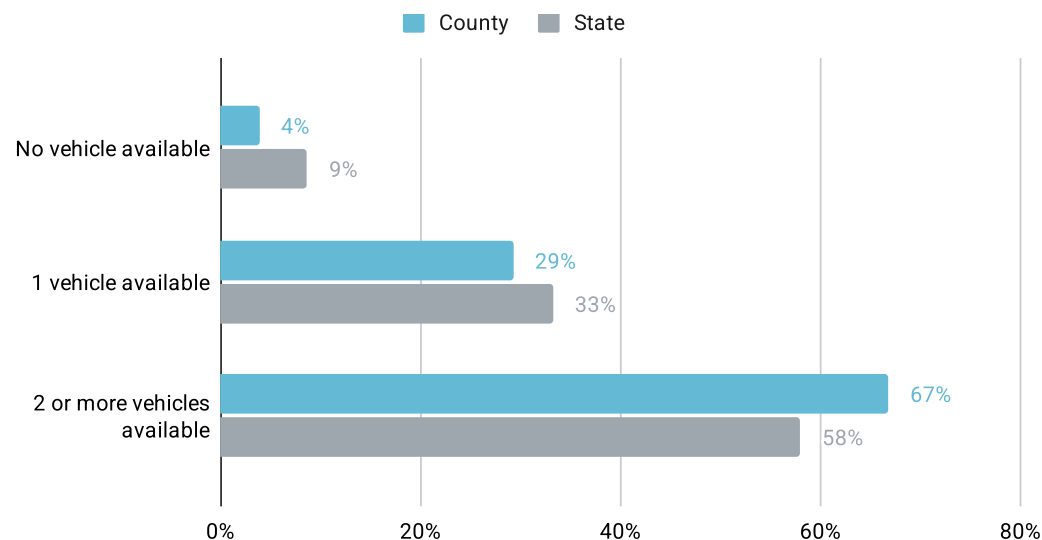
Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Lightcast™ Data, 2022

One area noted by stakeholders, and common in growing communities, is the issue of mobility. Anne Arundel is characterized as a largely car-dependent community with some transit options but not a robust system within the county and beyond. About two-thirds (67%, or 149,398) of Anne Arundel households have 2 or more vehicles available to them, a higher percentage than the state (58%) and an indication of the reliance on cars at the expense of forms of public transportation (fig. 4). A relatively small percentage (4%) of households (8,715) have no vehicle available, but this can be suggestive of a barrier to employment if not paired with access to public transportation.

The workforce flows that are demonstrated by commuting patterns, in which 63% of jobs (165,639) in Anne Arundel County are not held by local residents, speak to the need for a regional focus on transportation and overall mobility (fig. 5).

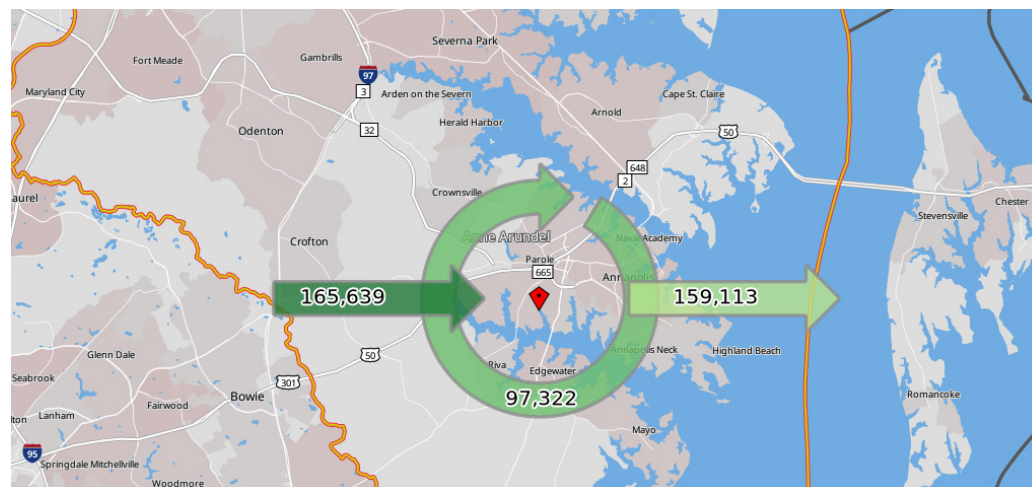
AAEDC can play a role by identifying mobility challenges for employers and helping to ensure local and regional transportation planning considers the commuting patterns of workers. AAEDC can also help connect people to jobs by advocating for investments in roads, public transit, and multimodal connections that support economic competitiveness. This includes advocating for improved connections between housing and job centers, especially for underrepresented communities and growing employment hubs.

Figure 4: Vehicle Availability by Household



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

Figure 5: Vehicle Availability by Household



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Census OnTheMap Data, 2022

COMPETITIVE POSITIONING

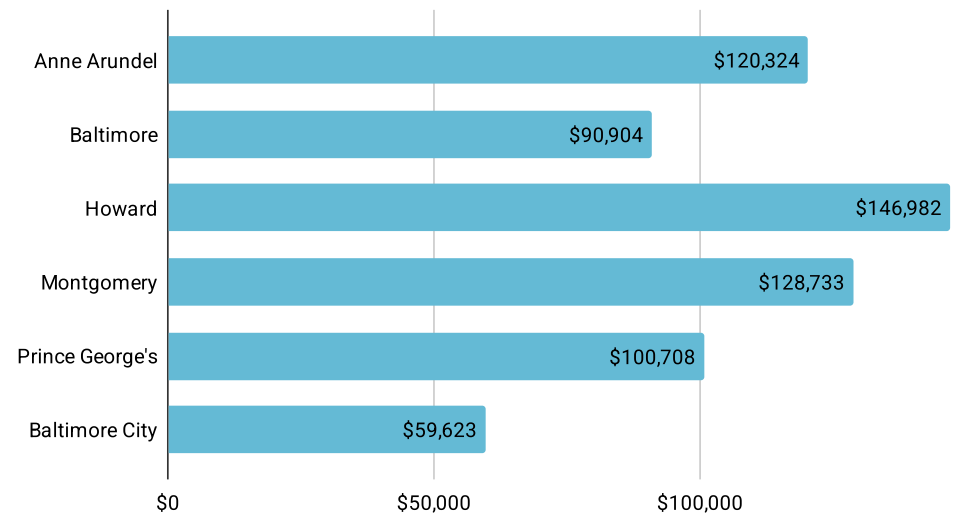
AREAS OF STRENGTH

Anne Arundel has the third-highest median household income among its five surrounding peer counties and Baltimore City (fig. 6). This finding can help gauge the overall economic condition of Anne Arundel in comparison to its peers and is an indicator of the mix of higher- and lower-paying jobs in Anne Arundel.

One important workforce dynamic is the community's level of educational attainment. Higher education levels typically translate to a more skilled workforce, which is essential for attracting and retaining businesses, particularly in high-tech and knowledge-based industries. Individuals with higher educational attainment also tend to earn higher wages, which drives increased consumer spending and strengthens the local economy. In addition, a more educated population contributes to greater productivity and innovation, leading to higher overall economic output.

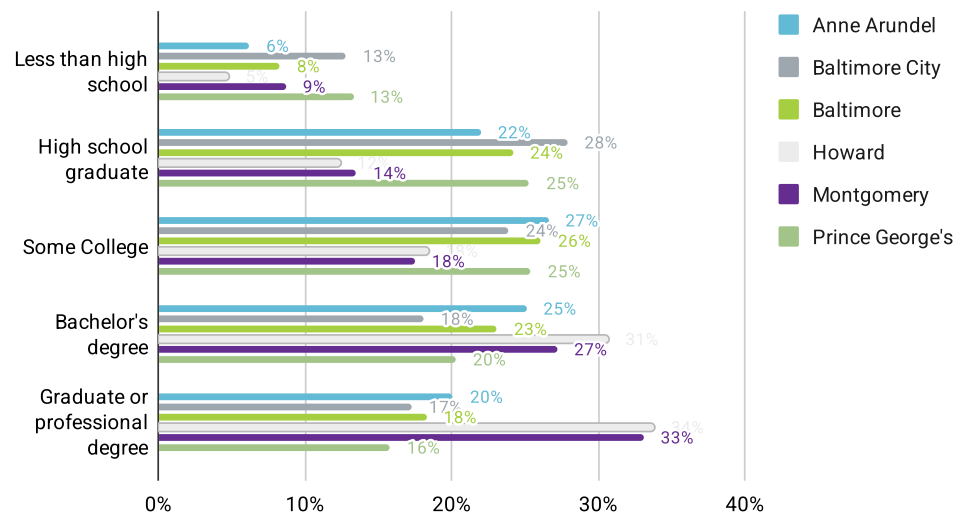
Anne Arundel County is toward the top of the pack for the share of residents with Bachelor's degree or higher, falling short of Howard and Montgomery counties (fig. 7). These two counties also have a 10%+ higher rate of residents with a graduate or professional degree, which means employers may look to them for employees with a high degree of education.

Figure 6: Median Household Income



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

Figure 7: Educational Attainment



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

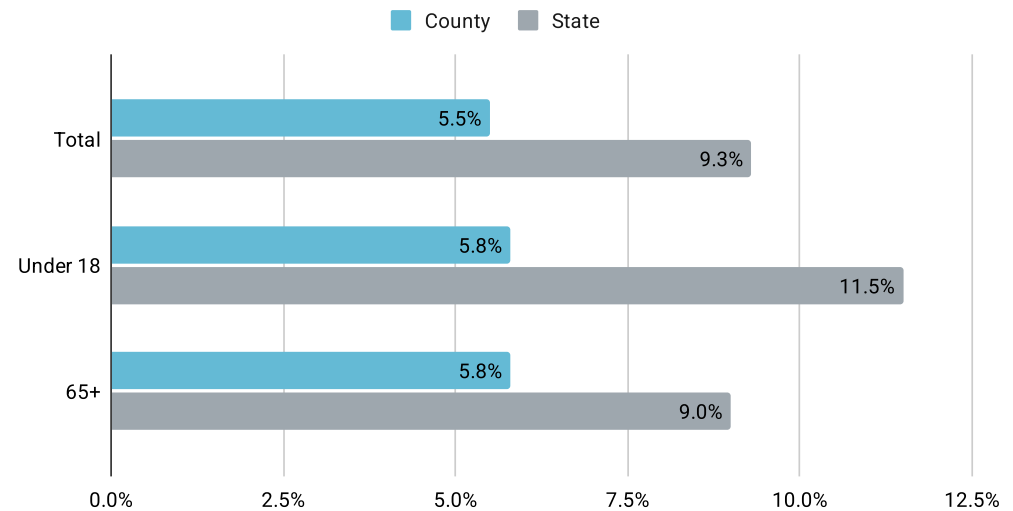
ECONOMIC BARRIERS

Anne Arundel County has a relatively low poverty rate, with 6% of residents (31,842 of 580,311) at or below the poverty level compared to 9% at the state level (fig. 8). This trend holds true for those under 18 (6% compared to 12%) and aged 65 and above (6% compared to 9%). While lower overall compared to the state, there remains a need for the county to dedicate resources on alleviating poverty for a portion of residents.

26% of households in Anne Arundel County are ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Restricted Employed), meaning that these individuals are employed but still struggle to afford basic necessities (fig. 9). Overall, approximately one-third of households in the county fall below the ALICE threshold. While this rate is lower than the state overall, this nevertheless represents a substantial segment of our population and highlights the need for targeted support in alleviating poverty, increasing the number of higher-paying jobs, and expanding access to them. This includes identifying specific career pathways that provide the necessary skills and training to help residents advance economically and compete successfully with peers in neighboring communities.

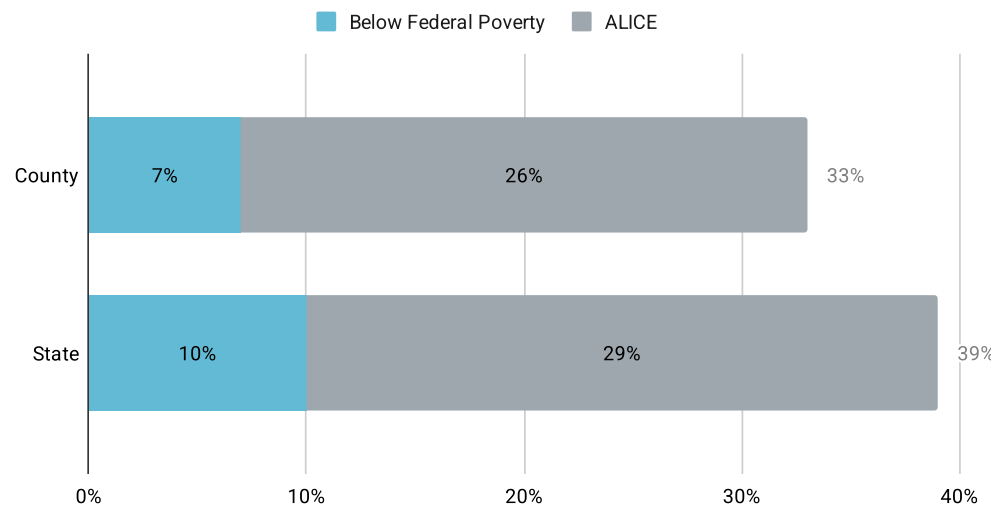
Approximately 27% of households (60,609) in Anne Arundel are housing cost-burdened, which means that they are paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs (fig. 10). This includes 21% of homeowners and 46% of renter-households. These estimates are lower compared to the state (22% and 48% cost-burdened, respectively), but show that a high portion of all households cannot afford their housing costs and suggest the need for more affordable rental housing stock.

Figure 8: Population in Poverty



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

Figure 9: ALICE Households

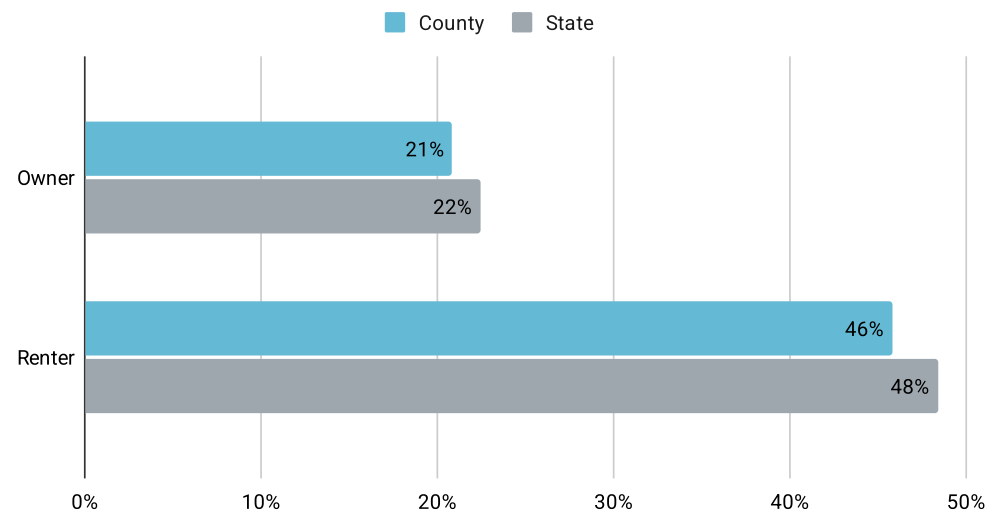


Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

In terms of overall cost of living, Anne Arundel County is positioned in the middle relative to its peer communities. Anne Arundel's living wage, which is the estimated local wage rate that full-time working households require to cover the costs of their family's basic needs where they live, is \$126,645 for 2 adults, both working, and two children, making it the third most expensive community among its peers (fig. 11). However, it should be noted that Anne Arundel has an income tax rate lower than its peers, benefiting residents with greater home pay and serving as a potential draw for businesses and workers.¹

Through this examination of competitive positioning of the county relative to its peers it is clear that while Anne Arundel has many strengths, including a high median household income, high rates of education attainment, and a relatively low rate of poverty and number of ALICE households, it tends to be in the middle of the pack in terms of surrounding peer counties and cities for these indicators. Moreover, Anne Arundel, like its peers, is experiencing a high rate of cost-burdened households and a cost of living that is out of reach for many households. These factors influence Anne Arundel's growth potential in terms of workforce and business attraction relative to those peer communities and may hinder this growth if affordability concerns persist.

Figure 10: Cost-Burdened Households



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023

Figure 11: Cost of Living

County	2 Adults (Both Working) + 2 Children
Howard	\$140,735
Montgomery	\$135,434
Anne Arundel	\$126,645
Prince George's	\$118,286
Baltimore	\$111,953
Baltimore City	\$109,351

Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator 2024

1. Maryland Income Tax Rates and Brackets

A STRONG AND DIVERSE BUSINESS BASE

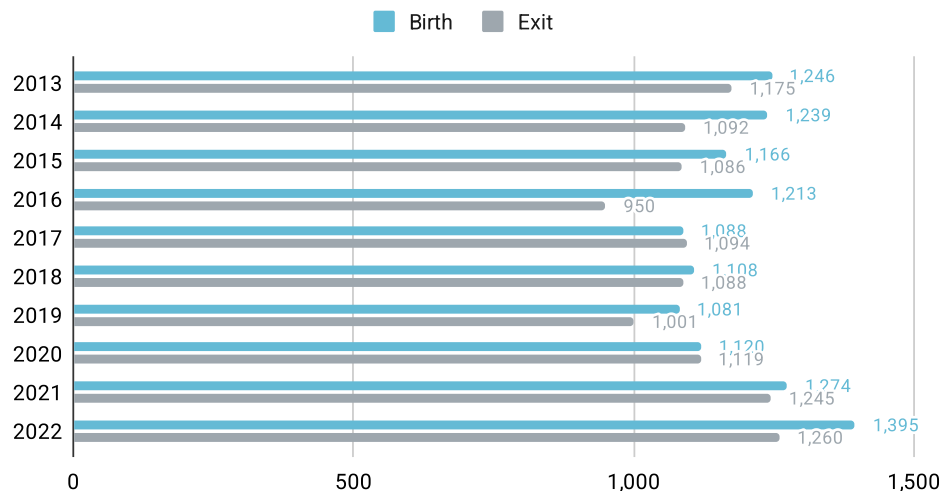
Anne Arundel County is home to a strong and diverse business base, with companies in a variety of sectors, sizes, and ages making up the foundation of the local economy.

One factor indicating a strong economic environment is the potential of starting a new business in a county that has a high quality of life and a well-educated workforce. Anne Arundel County appears to have an advantage in new business creation, with a business birth rate that generally exceeds the rate of business exits (fig. 12). In 2022, Anne Arundel County had a total of 13,328 businesses, representing a 6% growth since 2013. In particular, Anne Arundel County has witnessed, as compared to other communities and the US overall, an increase in business birth rates since the middle of the pandemic, as individuals chose to take the entrepreneurial journey.

Anne Arundel County excels in small business success. During the period from 2014 to 2022, Anne Arundel County's number of establishments with 10 to 19 employees grew at a faster rate than its peers (9%). What's more, Anne Arundel leads all its peers except Prince George's County in growth in establishments with 5-9 employees (fig. 13). This indicates a competitive advantage and predicates strong small business support locally, especially among very small businesses with fewer than 20 employees.

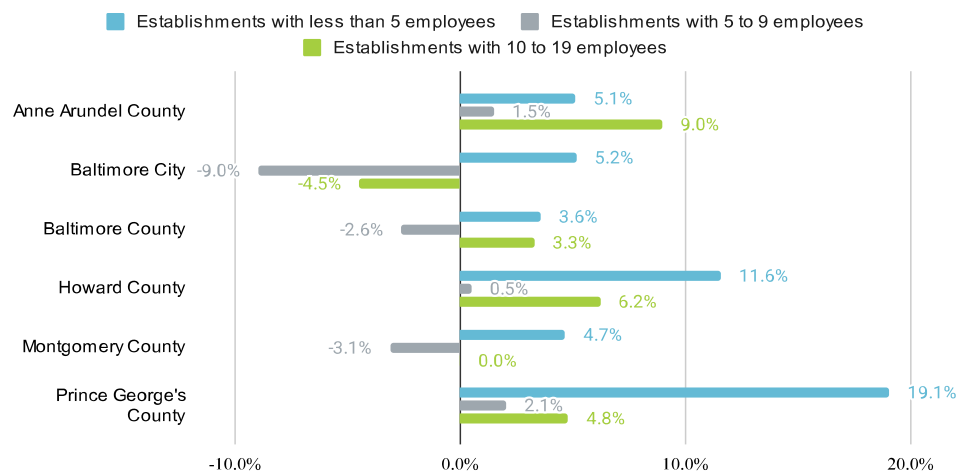
Figure 12: Business Births and Exits

Anne Arundel County



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Census Business Dynamics Statistics, 2018-2022

Figure 13: Percent Change in Small Businesses

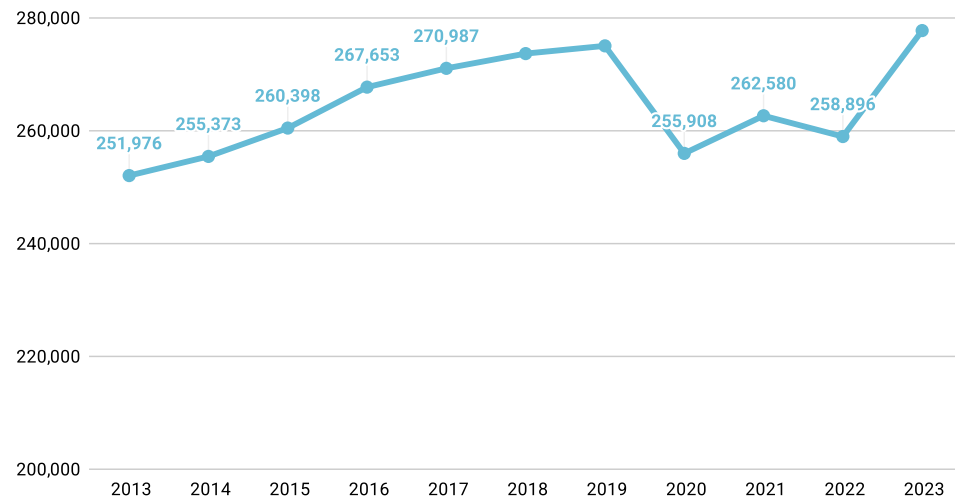


Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Census County Business Patterns, 2014-2022

Another indicator of a strong economic base is the presence of firms that hire and create jobs across multiple industries. Job growth in Anne Arundel County has been strong over recent years, even with a small pandemic-era dip. According to QCEW data, jobs in Anne Arundel County have increased 10% from 2013 to 2023, growing from 251,976 to 277,682 (fig. 14). This indicates consistent market growth within the county and economic resiliency in the post-COVID recovery period, where job growth since 2020 has been concentrated in Accommodation and food services (+5,898), Manufacturing (+4,960) and Health care and social assistance (+2,423) while Finance and insurance (-749), Management of companies and enterprises (-710) and Wholesale trade (-283) have seen losses during that post-COVID period.

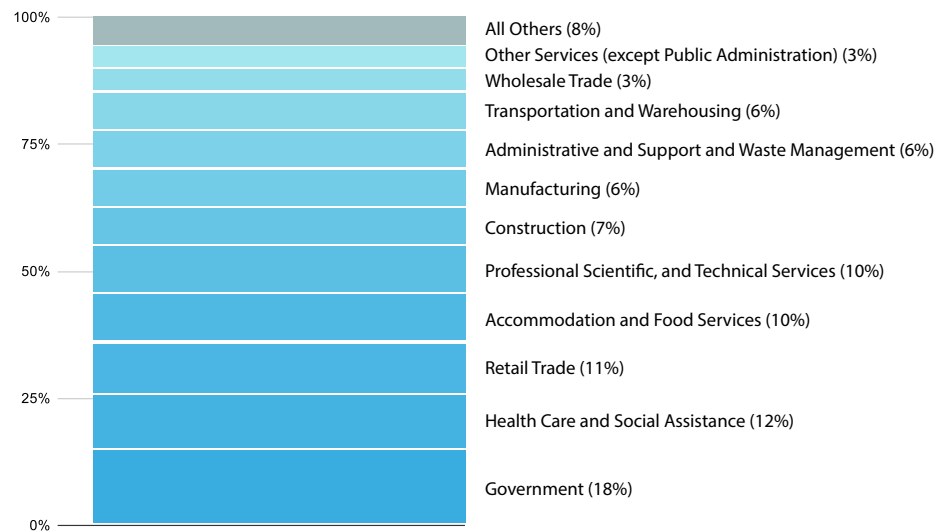
According to data from QCEW, the most jobs in Anne Arundel County are concentrated in the health care and social assistance industry (32,208) followed by retail trade (30,142) and accommodation and food services (28,992) (fig. 15).

Figure 14: Annual Job Trends



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Census Business Dynamics Statistics, 2018-2022

Figure 15: Jobs by Industry



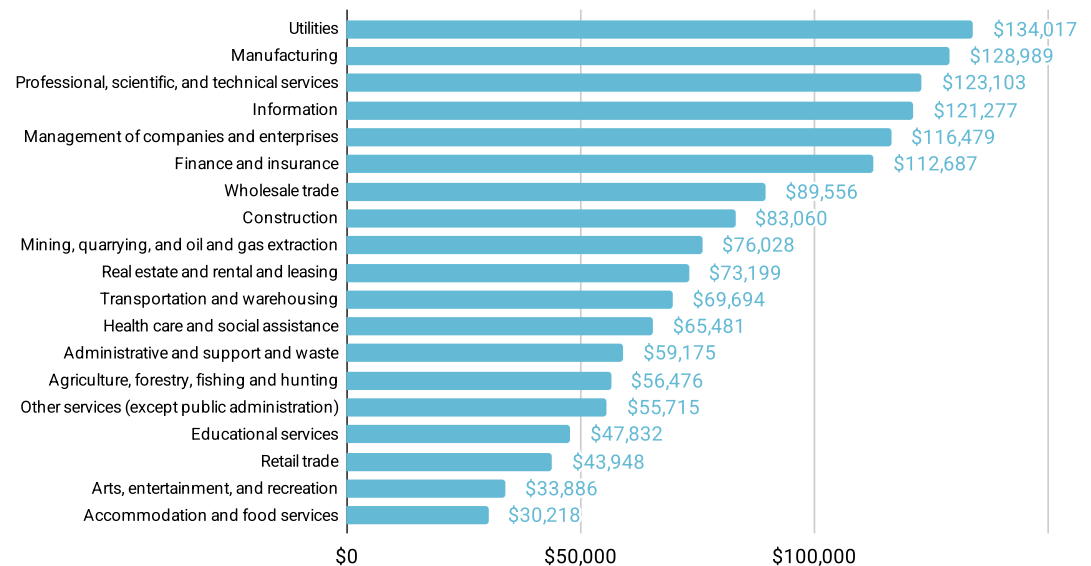
Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of QCEW Data, 2023

Utilities, Manufacturing, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical services tend to pay higher wages by industry for Anne Arundel (fig 16.). In contrast, Accommodation and food services, Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and Retail trade have larger portions of lower-paying jobs. This is significant because Retail trade and Accommodation and food services represent the second and third largest concentrations of jobs in the county, demonstrating a need to continue attracting and expanding high-earning jobs in Anne Arundel to offset these low-wage jobs and provide additional career opportunities for local workers.

Health care and social assistance experienced the most growth from 2013 to 2023, adding 6,153 jobs during the period (fig. 17). Retail saw the most decline, losing 2,171 jobs for the same time. This highlights the critical need to support hiring needs in industries experiencing both rapid and moderate growth, as well as in retaining those industries that have seen job losses.

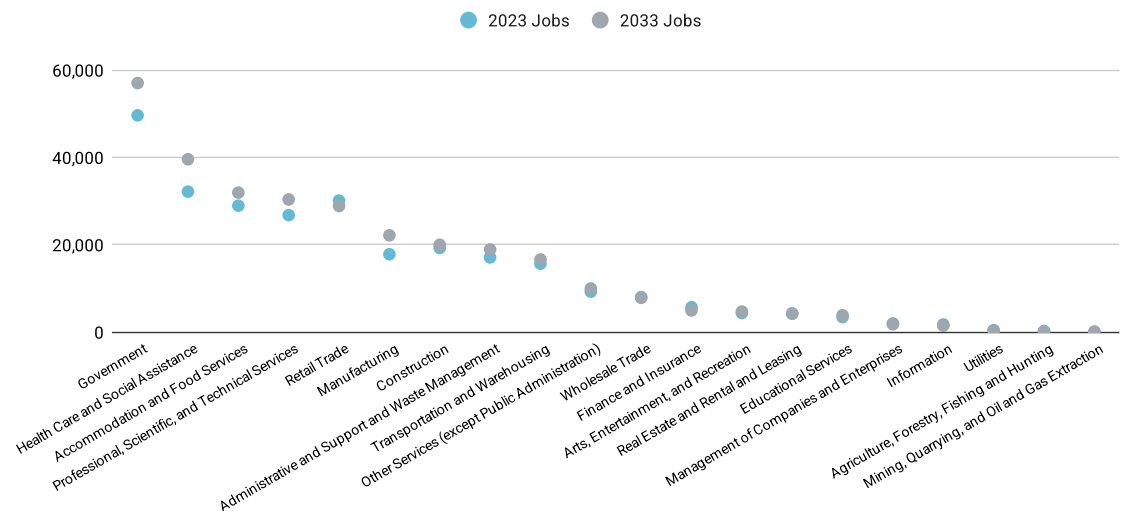
Anne Arundel is projected to gain 28,245 jobs over the next 10 years, increasing from 277,754 to 305,998. These jobs are especially concentrated in Government (+7,400), Health Care and Social Assistance (+7,413), Manufacturing, (+4,327) and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+3,580). Anne Arundel is projected to see 10% in job growth from 2023 to 2033 (fig. 17). While these estimates are preliminary, they suggest a need to align the current and future workforce with jobs in these growing industries, as overall population growth slows from 9% from 2013 to 2023 to a projected 4% from 2023 to 2033.

Figure 16: Wages by Industry



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of QCEW Data, 2023

Figure 17: Job Projections by Industry Anne Arundel County



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Lightcast™ data, 2023-2033

INDUSTRY CLUSTERS

In addition to serving long-standing industries that have been strong economic drivers for the county, like agriculture, maritime, and aviation, AAEDC provides targeted assistance to specialized sectors such as cybersecurity and defense tech, which have a high demand for EDC assistance. There is an opportunity to expand focus to growing sectors including Aerospace, Cybersecurity, Life Sciences, Logistics and the Tech Industry. Figure 18 illustrates the relative size and growth estimates of these **Core Growth Sectors**, with more details regarding the jobs breakdown of each sector in the succeeding charts.

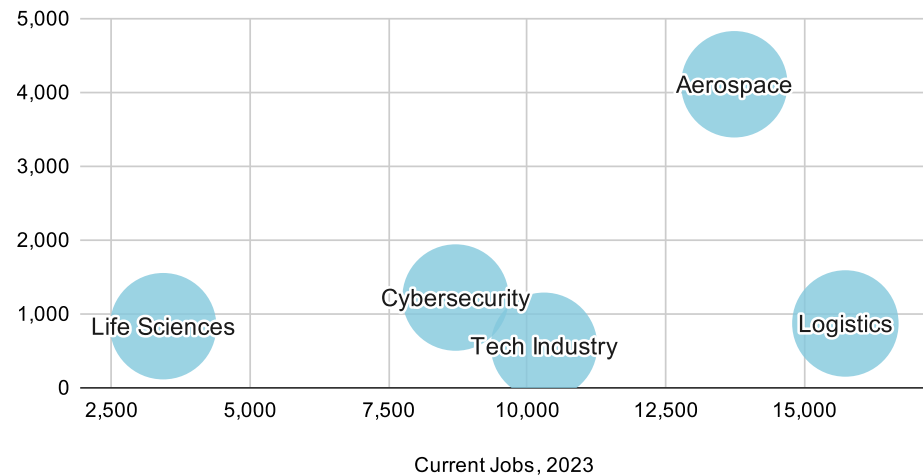
Overall, there were -

- 13,733 jobs in the Aerospace cluster in 2023, with 4,110 in projected growth by 2033.
- 8,704 jobs in the Cybersecurity cluster in 2023, with 1,222 in projected growth by 2033.
- 3,428 jobs in the Life Science cluster in 2023, with 834 additional jobs projected by 2033.
- 15,736 jobs in the Logistics cluster in 2023, with 871 in projected growth by 2033.
- 10,301 jobs in the Tech Industry in 2023, with 569 additional jobs projected by 2033.

Aerospace

The Aerospace cluster encompasses a wide range of industries, including Aircraft Manufacturing, Guided Missile and Space Vehicle Manufacturing, and various support industries crucial to the development, production and maintenance of civil, military, and defense operations. The county's existing infrastructure and expertise positions it well for further investment, innovation and job creation in this cluster as the demand for advanced aerospace technology continues to grow. The 6-digit NAICS in table 1 make up this cluster for Anne Arundel.

Figure 18: Job Projections by Industry



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of Lightcast™ Data, 2013-2033

Table 1: Aerospace NAICS

NAICS Code	Industry
334511	Search, Detection, Navigation, Guidance, Aeronautical, and Nautical System and Instrument Manufacturing
336411	Aircraft Manufacturing
336412	Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing
336413	Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing
336414	Guided Missile and Space Vehicle Manufacturing
336415	Guided Missile and Space Vehicle Propulsion Unit and Propulsion Unit Parts Manufacturing
336419	Other Guided Missile and Space Vehicle Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing

Cybersecurity

The Cybersecurity industry is growing rapidly nationwide as businesses and government agencies face increasing cyber threats. With rising concerns over data security and ransomware, demand for cybersecurity solutions is surging, creating significant opportunities in areas like network security and risk assessment. Anne Arundel County, with its proximity to federal agencies, defense contractors, and a strong tech ecosystem, is well-positioned to benefit from this growth. The county stands to strengthen its economy by fostering talent development, attracting cybersecurity firms, and supporting innovation in security technologies, positioning itself as a leader in this expanding sector and driving long-term economic growth. The 6-digit NAICS in table 2 make up this cluster for Anne Arundel.

Table 2: Cybersecurity NAICS

NAICS Code	Industry
541330	Engineering Services
541519	Other Computer-Related Services
541611	Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services
541990	All Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services

Life Sciences

The life sciences sector offers significant growth potential for Anne Arundel County, with its strong focus on biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, and medical technology. As the industry expands, the county would see increased job opportunities, particularly in scientific services and medical equipment manufacturing. This growth would also attract new businesses, bolstering the local economy by fostering innovation, research, and investment and creating a positive feedback loop that supports infrastructure development, workforce training, and the attraction of talent. The sector's growth would ultimately contribute to long-term economic stability and resilience. The 6-digit NAICS in table 3 make up this cluster for Anne Arundel:

Table 3: Life Sciences NAICS

NAICS Code	Industry
311221	Wet Corn Milling
311224	Soybean and Other Oilseed Processing
325314	Fertilizer (Mixing Only) Manufacturing
325320	Pesticide and Other Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing
325411	Medicinal and Botanical Manufacturing
325412	Pharmaceutical Preparation Manufacturing
325413	In-Vitro Diagnostic Substance Manufacturing

NAICS Code	Industry
325414	Biological Product (except Diagnostic) Manufacturing
334510	Electromedical and Electrotherapeutic Apparatus Manufacturing
334516	Analytical Laboratory Instrument Manufacturing
334517	Irradiation Apparatus Manufacturing
339112	Surgical and Medical Instrument Manufacturing
339113	Surgical Appliance and Supplies Manufacturing
339114	Dental Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing
423450	Medical, Dental, and Hospital Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers
424210	Drugs and Druggists' Sundries Merchant Wholesalers
424910	Farm Supplies Merchant Wholesalers
541380	Testing Laboratories
541713	Research and Development in Nanotechnology
541714	Research and Development in Biotechnology (except Nanobiotechnology)
541715	Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)
621511	Medical Laboratories

Logistics

The logistics industry is undergoing rapid transformation nationwide, driven by advances in technology, shifts in consumer demand, and ongoing supply chain disruptions. E-commerce growth, automation, and sustainability initiatives are transforming the way goods are transported and distributed, placing increasing pressure on logistics hubs to adapt. Air transportation, in particular, has seen a rise in demand as businesses seek faster delivery solutions, while professional services related to supply chain management are evolving to incorporate artificial intelligence and data-driven decision-making. As companies optimize operations and navigate

workforce shortages, regions with strong infrastructure, a skilled labor force, and strategic geographic advantages are well-positioned to capture new investment and growth.

Anne Arundel County is uniquely positioned to capitalize on these national trends due to its robust transportation network, proximity to major metropolitan areas, and expanding presence in air logistics and supply chain services. AAEDC can support this momentum by expanding workforce development initiatives, strengthening partnerships with key logistics firms, and facilitating investment in new technologies and infrastructure. By aligning local strategies with national industry shifts, such as automation in warehousing, green logistics, and digital supply chain solutions, AAEDC can help businesses stay competitive while driving sustainable economic growth. Through targeted support and strategic investments, the county can emerge as a premier logistics and supply chain hub in the Mid-Atlantic region. The 6-digit NAICS in table 4 make up this cluster for Anne Arundel.

Table 4: Logistics NAICS

NAICS Code	Industry
481111	Scheduled Passenger Air Transportation
481112	Scheduled Freight Air Transportation
481211	Nonscheduled Chartered Passenger Air Transportation
481212	Nonscheduled Chartered Freight Air Transportation
481219	Other Nonscheduled Air Transportation
482110	Rail transportation
483112	Deep Sea Passenger Transportation
483212	Inland Water Passenger Transportation
484110	General Freight Trucking, Local
484121	General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Truckload

NAICS Code	Industry
484122	General Freight Trucking, Long-Distance, Less Than Truckload
484210	Used Household and Office Goods Moving
484220	Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Local
484230	Specialized Freight (except Used Goods) Trucking, Long-Distance
485111	Mixed Mode Transit Systems
485112	Commuter Rail Systems
485113	Bus and Other Motor Vehicle Transit Systems
485119	Other Urban Transit Systems
485210	Interurban and Rural Bus Transportation
485310	Taxi Service
485320	Limousine Service
485410	School and Employee Bus Transportation
485510	Charter Bus Industry
485991	Special Needs Transportation
485999	All Other Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation
486110	Pipeline Transportation of Crude Oil
486210	Pipeline Transportation of Natural Gas
486910	Pipeline Transportation of Refined Petroleum Products
486990	All Other Pipeline Transportation
487110	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Land
487210	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Water
487990	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Other
488111	Air Traffic Control
488119	Other Airport Operations
488190	Other Support Activities for Air Transportation
488210	Support Activities for Rail Transportation
488320	Marine Cargo Handling

NAICS Code	Industry
488330	Navigational Services to Shipping
488410	Motor Vehicle Towing
488490	Other Support Activities for Road Transportation
488510	Freight Transportation Arrangement
488991	Packing and Crating
488999	All Other Support Activities for Transportation
491110	Postal Service
492110	Couriers and Express Delivery Services
492210	Local Messengers and Local Delivery
493110	General Warehousing and Storage
493120	Refrigerated Warehousing and Storage
493130	Farm Product Warehousing and Storage
493190	Other Warehousing and Storage
541614	Process, Physical Distribution, and Logistics Consulting Services

Tech Industry

The Tech Industry in Anne Arundel County includes a diverse range of businesses related to the manufacturing, distribution and maintenance of electronic hardware, software and related services. This sector is characterized by innovation and the support of other industries - while Cybersecurity and Aerospace could be considered a subset of the Tech Industry, for the purposes of this analysis they are separated to emphasize the importance of each industry cluster as drivers of economic growth for the county. Overall, Anne Arundel's proximity to federal agencies and an underlying skilled workforce contributes to the existing strength and projected growth of its Tech Industry cluster. The 6-digit NAICS in table 5 make up this cluster for Anne Arundel.

Table 5: Tech Industry NAICS

NAICS Code	Industry
333242	Semiconductor Machinery Manufacturing
334111	Electronic Computer Manufacturing
334118	Computer Terminal and Other Computer Peripheral Equipment Manufacturing
334210	Telephone Apparatus Manufacturing
334220	Radio and Television Broadcasting and Wireless Communications Equipment Manufacturing
334290	Other Communications Equipment Manufacturing
334310	Audio and Video Equipment Manufacturing
334412	Bare Printed Circuit Board Manufacturing
334413	Semiconductor and Related Device Manufacturing
334416	Capacitor, Resistor, Coil, Transformer, and Other Inductor Manufacturing
334417	Electronic Connector Manufacturing
334418	Printed Circuit Assembly (Electronic Assembly) Manufacturing
334419	Other Electronic Component Manufacturing
334515	Instrument Manufacturing for Measuring and Testing Electricity and Electrical Signals
334519	Other Measuring and Controlling Device Manufacturing
334610	Manufacturing and Reproducing Magnetic and Optical Media
423430	Computer and Computer Peripheral Equipment and Software Merchant Wholesalers
513210	Software Publishers
516210	Media Streaming Distribution Services, Social Networks, and Other Media Networks and Content Providers
517111	Wired Telecommunications Carriers

NAICS Code	Industry
517112	Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (except Satellite)
517121	Telecommunications Resellers
517410	Satellite Telecommunications
517810	All Other Telecommunications
518210	Data Processing, Hosting, and Related Services
519290	Web Search Portals and All Other Information Services
541511	Custom Computer Programming Services
541512	Computer Systems Design Services
541513	Computer Facilities Management Services
611420	Computer Training
811210	Electronic and Precision Equipment Repair and Maintenance

CRITICAL SECTORS

In addition to the identified Core Growth Sectors, the county's employment is relatively diverse, contributing to economic resilience. It is important to note that the presence of Fort Meade creates an over-reliance on the Department of Defense and other federal agencies for ongoing support, but because the installation and array of contractors are focused on the high-tech areas of cybersecurity and intelligence, the sector is less at risk than other areas of the military.

Anne Arundel County's Critical Sectors include:

- **Health Care and Social Assistance** (11.6% of employment)
- **Retail Trade** (10.9% of employment)
- **Accommodation and Food Services** (which comprises most of the hospitality industry, and makes up 10.4% of employment)

- **Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services** (9.7% of employment)
- **Construction** (7% of employment)
- **Manufacturing** (which includes much of the maritime industry and represents 6.4% of employment)
- **Agriculture:** As of 2022, the most recent census, there were 454 farms in the county, an increase of 16 percent since 2017. These farms sold \$25M in products, though agriculture makes up less than 1% of total county employment.

One additional Critical Sector of Anne Arundel's economy is the Agricultural Sector. Traditional sources for economic analysis do not track employment at farms and related businesses. The best resource is the Census of Agriculture, which identifies the characteristics of the county's and America's farm communities. However, this is voluntary reporting and may not accurately encompass the full picture of agricultural operations.

As of 2022, the most recent census, there were 454 farms in the county and an increase of 16% (64 farms) since 2017.² These farms sold \$25.47M in products, with the average per farm sales totaling \$56,097. Nearly three-quarters (71% of farms by size) are less than 50 acres, indicating a small farm. This concentration may suggest a larger trend in the reduction in available farmland in the county and a subsequent need to adapt operations for continued growth. While the Agricultural Sector makes up a small portion of the total regional economy, it remains a significant area of economic output for Anne Arundel.

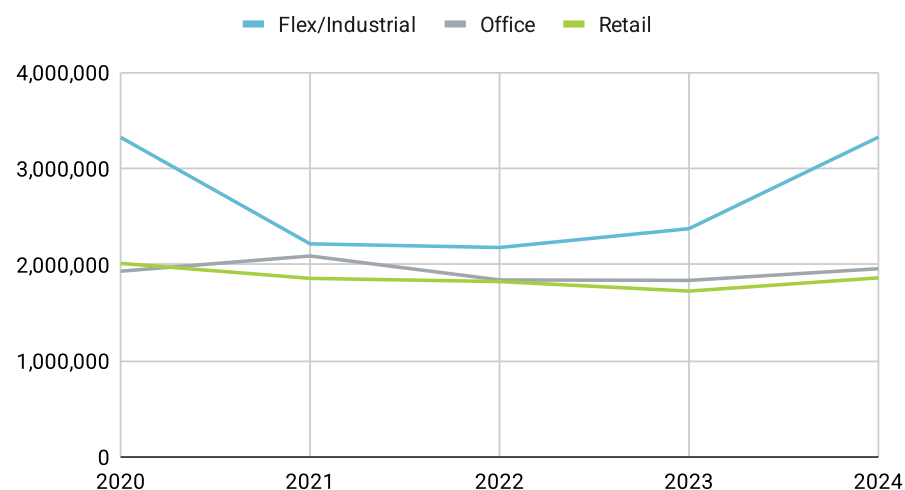
These sectors align with the recently published Local Workforce Development Plan published by the Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation.

2. Fourth Economy Analysis of Census of Agriculture, 2022

INFRASTRUCTURE AND ASSETS

A specific need identified by stakeholders is the need for additional real estate options to support growing and relocating businesses. Analysis of the current availability of Flex, Office, and Retail space demonstrates this need. The amount of vacant commercial space in Anne Arundel County has remained relatively stable over the past five years, although there has been some fluctuation in the Flex/Industrial sector.

Figure 18: Total Vacant Space by Type, Anne Arundel County (in SF)



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of CoStar Data, 2020-2024

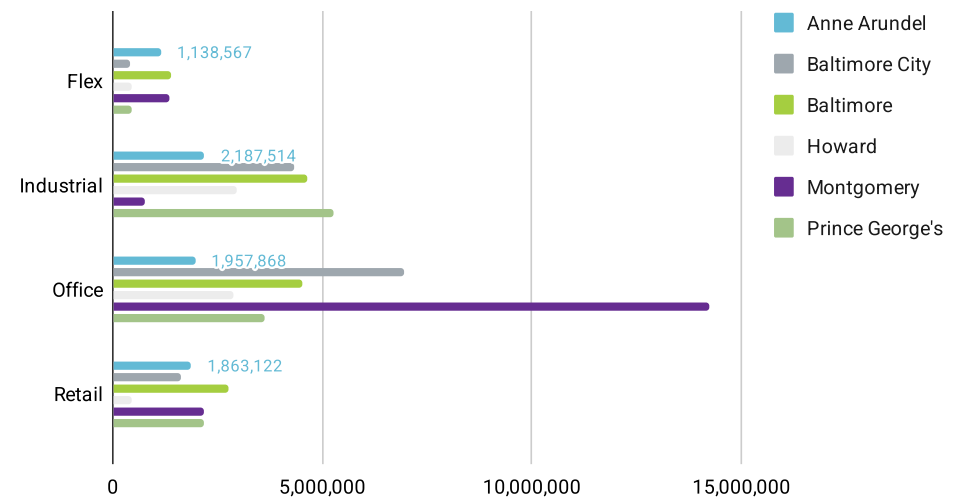
There is nearly 2M SF available vacant Office space (fig. 18), which has seen 1% growth over the past 5 years (fig. 19). Meanwhile, the share of vacant Retail space has declined 7% to 1.8M SF in 2024.

Anne Arundel has a higher rate of vacancy in its Flex space (9%) and a lower rate of Office space vacancies (8%) compared to its peer communities. It is largely in line with the other geographies in terms of Industrial and Retail vacancies. Anne Arundel has a lower amount of vacant space in all types compared to its peer communities, ranking highest in terms of the amount of Flex space available (3rd) and lowest in the amount of Office space available (6th).

Though generally a sign of good economic health, the low vacancy rates for Flex and Industrial space in Anne Arundel County create concerns that the county will have a difficult time attracting new businesses that want ready sites. In the case of Industrial space, while the county has 1.2 million square feet of space in the pipeline expected to come online over the next year, raw land with large acreage is at a premium in the region. This reality, paired with the overall low vacancy rates, may also limit the growth estimates that are projected for the Core Growth Sectors of the county.

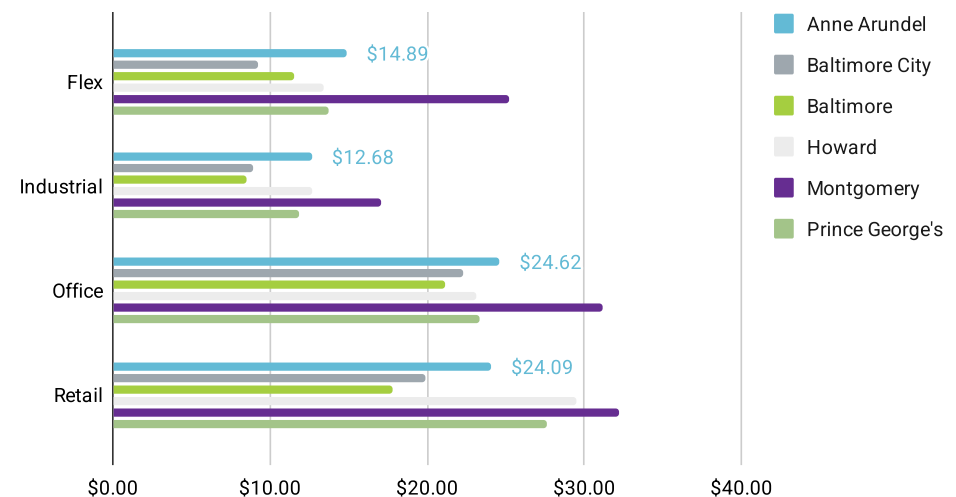
This dynamic also seems to be creating higher real estate costs in the county, with Flex, Industrial, and Office rates higher than all peers except Montgomery County. Real estate pricing by type ranged from \$12.68 per square foot for Industrial space to \$24.62 for Office space in Anne Arundel County (fig. 20).

Figure 19: Vacancy Rates by Location and Type (in SF)



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of CoStar Data, 2020-2024

Figure 20: Real Estate Costs by Type



Source: Fourth Economy Analysis of CoStar Data, 2024

CONCLUSION

The economic and market analysis showcases the relative strengths of Anne Arundel County's economy, as well as areas of caution to monitor and work to improve over time. Overall:

- The county's strong quality of place has contributed to population growth that surpasses the state's growth rate.
- Net out-migration that is higher than in-migration indicates possible cautions, including comparative cost of living and job prospect challenges.
- A high amount of in- and out-commuting and reliance on cars as a primary transportation mode, point to a need for considering transit-connected, multimodal development to ensure all have access to economic opportunities.
- Despite a high median income and low poverty, Anne Arundel County, like similar areas, faces high rates of cost-burdened households and an unaffordable cost of living for many.
- Anne Arundel County has an advantage in new business creation and support, with a business birth rate that generally outnumbers the rate of business exits, and a high business growth rate overall.
- Job growth in Anne Arundel County has been strong in recent years, recovering quickly from a small pandemic-era dip – a solid indicator of economic strength.
- Anne Arundel is projected to gain 23,547 jobs over the next 10 years, concentrated in Government, Health care and social assistance, and Professional, scientific, and technical services, indicating a need to align the current and future workforce with jobs in these growing industries.
- In addition to serving long-standing industries that have been strong economic drivers for the county, like Aerospace, sectors that take advantage of Anne Arundel County's workforce and

infrastructure assets, including Cybersecurity, Life Sciences, Logistics and the Tech Industry are key clusters that are expected to grow over the next 10 years.

- Low vacancy rates for Flex and Industrial space has pushed real estate costs up, and may result in the county having difficulty accommodating new and growing businesses, potentially limiting growth estimates projected for the Core Growth Sectors of the county.

Given these factors, the work AAEDC continues to do in service of economic growth in Anne Arundel County is critical for its continued success.



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