

BROOKLYN-CURTIS BAY BUSINESS URBAN RENEWAL PLAN:  
PROPOSED AMENDMENT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Boundary Description

The boundaries of the urban renewal area are shown in Exhibit 1.

2. Plan Objectives

The objectives of the Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Business Area Urban Renewal Plan, (hereinafter referred to as “Renewal Plan”) as determined by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore (hereinafter referred to as “City”), acting by and through the Department of Housing and Community Development (hereafter referred to as “Department”) and the Commissioner thereof (hereinafter referred to as “Commissioner”) are as follows:

The basic goal of this Renewal Plan is the revitalization of the Brooklyn- Curtis Bay Business Area in order to create a unique neighborhood retail business district with enhanced viability, attractiveness, and convenience for residents of the surrounding community and of the City as a whole. The objectives of this Renewal Plan include:

- a. Establishing a positive and identifiable image for the Brooklyn- Curtis Bay Business Area;
- b. Promoting new commercial, industrial, and residential development in balance with adjacent residential, commercial and industrial uses, and the needs of these property owners;
- c. Establishing minimum, comprehensive design, maintenance, and rehabilitation standards that will encourage pedestrian-safe and attractive streets and commercial development in balance with adjacent commercial, industrial, residential uses;

- d. Working with residents, business owners, property owners, and institutions to bring about a general physical improvement of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay by coordinating private rehabilitation redevelopment, and public improvements;
- e. Using tools such as zoning to create new, flexible, development opportunities and preserve a mix of businesses, residences, and offices in the business area;
- f. Providing a pleasant environment for the staging of year-round promotional activities and events;
- g. Where deemed necessary or appropriate by the Department and/or the Department of Planning (hereinafter referred to as “Planning”), allowing for the creation of buffers or barriers; and
- h. Encouraging partnerships with industrial businesses adjacent to the boundaries of the Renewal Plan.

### 3. Types of Proposed Renewal Action

- a. Acquisition of properties, disposition, demolition, and redevelopment;
- b. Coordinated public improvements;
- c. Property rehabilitation that must comply with the codes and ordinances of the City of Baltimore, and the requirements set forth in this Renewal Plan.

### A. LAND USE PLAN

1. Land Use Plan Map- Land uses, streets, and all other public rights-of-way, proposed or existing to remain, within the Project Area, are shown on the Land Use Plan, Exhibit 2.
2. Permitted & Non-Permitted Uses

Only the use categories shown on the Land Use Plan, Exhibit 2, are permitted within the Project Area. These are Residential, Office- Residential, Industrial,

Community Business, and Open Space. Accessory uses including landscaping, off-street parking and loading will be permitted. In addition, certain uses will be permitted to continue subject to the provisions governing nonconforming uses and noncomplying structures set forth below.

a. Community Business

In the areas designated as Community Business on the Land Use Plan, uses are limited to those permitted or allowed as conditional uses under the C-2 category of the Zoning Code of Baltimore City. For all businesses located in a C-2 zone in the boundaries of the URP, street-facing ground floor uses must be primarily retail or service establishments that deal directly with consumers, rely heavily on walk-in business, and have regular daily hours that are open to the public.

However, the following C-2 uses are prohibited in this Renewal Plan:

- Bail bonds establishments
- Liquor stores: package goods
- Check cashing establishments
- After-Hours establishments
- Firearm sales
- Gasoline stations
- Hotel; Motel
- Motor vehicle dealership
- Motor vehicle rental establishment
- Motor vehicle repair: minor
- Motor vehicle repair: major
- Pawnshop

b. Residential and Office-Residential

In the areas designated as Residential or Office-Residential on the Land Use Plan, uses are limited to those permitted under the R-6, R-7, and O-R-1 categories of the Zoning Code of Baltimore City.

c. Industrial

In the area designated as Industrial on the Land Use Plan, uses are limited to those permitted under the I-1 category of the Zoning Code of Baltimore City.

d. Maritime Industrial Zoning District

The intent of the Maritime Industrial Zoning District, the boundaries of which are in close proximity with the Project Area, is to maintain and

encourage a working waterfront in the Curtis Bay area. Due consideration must be given by the Department for any plans presented as to new construction, rehabilitation, additions, demolition, or expansion in the Project Area as to the effect of these plans and their implementation on the continuation and expansion of the historic industrial waterfront uses.

## C. TECHNIQUES USED TO ACHIEVE THE PLAN OBJECTIVES

### 1. Rehabilitation Area

The entire project area is designated for rehabilitation. Property owners will be required to undertake rehabilitation of those structures which are capable of being brought up to the rehabilitation standards.

### 2. Acquisition

#### a. Conditions Under Which Properties Not Specifically Designated for Acquisition May be Acquired

##### (1) Non-Salvable and Non-Compliance with Provisions

(a) It may be necessary to acquire by purchase or by condemnation for urban renewal purposes the fee simple interest or any lesser interest in and to such of the remaining properties or portions thereof in the Brooklyn and Curtis Bay Urban Renewal Area as may be deemed necessary and proper by the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development to effect the proper implementation of the project. This may include:

- i. Any property in the project area containing a non-salvable structure, i.e., a structure which in the opinion of the Commissioner of the Department of Housing and Community Development cannot be economically rehabilitated
- ii. Any property the owner of which is unable or unwilling to comply or conform to the codes and ordinances of Baltimore City and the Property Rehabilitation Standards set forth in this plan within 24 months from the date of written notice of the required improvements, the Department of Housing and Community Development, after due consideration that the property owner has failed to achieve substantial conformity with the codes and ordinances of Baltimore City, may acquire such property pursuant to the Eminent Domain Law of this State as if the property had originally been planned for acquisition after 90 days written notice to

the owner. The Department of Housing and Community Development reserves the right to acquire any such non-complying property for a period of two (2) years from the date of said written 90-days notice by the Department of Housing and Community Development.

- c. Actions to be Followed by the Department of Housing and Community Development Upon Acquisition of Properties as Non-Salvable or for Non-Compliance with Provisions. Upon the acquisition of such properties, the Department of Housing and Community Development will either:
  - (1) Demolish the structure or structures thereon and dispose of the land for redevelopment for uses in accordance with this plan; or
  - (2) Sell or lease the property subject to rehabilitation in conformance with the codes and ordinances of Baltimore City, and the Property Rehabilitation Standards set forth in this plan; or
  - (3) Rehabilitate the property in conformance with the codes and ordinances of Baltimore City and the Property Rehabilitation Standards set forth in this plan and dispose of property in accordance with applicable regulations. If sale cannot be consummated by the time rehabilitation is accomplished, property may be rented pending continuing sale efforts.

### 3. Property Rehabilitation & Maintenance Standards

In addition to the standards for properties outlined in the codes and ordinances of the City of Baltimore, the following additional standards shall be applied to all non-residential properties within the project area, whether occupied or vacant. See Appendix A for definitions and building diagrams related to these Standards.

- A. Exterior Walls (front, side, and rear)
  - a) All of the exterior walls of all structures located in the C-2 district are included in this requirement.
  - b) Adjoining buildings used by the same occupant shall be rehabilitated in a unified and harmonious manner. Each building shall be rehabilitated and repaired with materials and in a manner consistent with the original construction techniques where feasible.
  - c) All exposed and visible surfaces must be repaired, cleaned, or painted to present an acceptable appearance.
  - d) All defective structural and decorative elements of building fronts and sides abutting streets must be repaired or replaced in a workmanlike manner to match as closely as possible the architecture of that building. Any damaged, sagging, or otherwise deteriorated storefront, sign, show window, or entrance must be repaired or replaced.

- e) All miscellaneous unused elements on the exterior walls of the structures as empty electrical boxes, conduits, pipes, unused sign brackets, etc., must be removed.
- f) All exterior walls that have not been wholly or partially resurfaced or built over must be repaired and cleaned or painted in an acceptable manner. Brick walls must be pointed where necessary to match the existing bond. Painted masonry walls must have loose material removed and be painted a single color except for trim or decorative details that may be another color. Surfaces must be painted with products, and employ application methods, that will prevent early deterioration. Patched walls must match the existing adjacent surfaces as to materials, color, bond, and joining. Cleaning of masonry walls by means of sandblasting is not permitted.
- g) All stucco surfaces must be cleaned and repaired. Repaired and new stucco surfaces must have a continuous and even finish, with no patching visible.
- h) Metal siding is limited to the street level and shall not cover more than 25% of the total front. The metal must be of sufficient gage, thickness and finish quality to prevent denting, scratching, and discoloration through normal wear and tear.
- i) All cornices, upper-floor windows, and all other portions of a building containing metal or wood trim must be made structurally sound. Rotten, rusted, peeling or weakened portions must be restored, where feasible, or replaced to match as closely as possible the original architecture. All exposed metal or wood must be painted or stained, or otherwise treated for protection. The removal of cornice work, without prompt replacement of approved design, is not permitted.
- j) No new mechanical equipment such as exhaust fans, vents and air conditioning units is allowed to project through building fronts or sides facing streets unless suitably concealed.

B. Roofs

- a) Television and radio antennae must be located so as to be as inconspicuous as possible from the sidewalk across the street.
- b) Rooftop mechanical equipment including television or radio antennae must be located far enough back from the edge of the roof so that it cannot be seen from the sidewalk across the street, either in front or to one side of the building. Functional equipment may be retained until major repair or replacement of the equipment becomes necessary, at which time it shall be repositioned as above. All mechanical equipment must be painted a color compatible with the color of the front of the building upon which it rests to minimize visibility.
- c) Roofs shall be kept free of trash, debris, or any other element which is not a permanent part of the building or a functioning element of its mechanical or electrical system.

C. Windows

- a) Signage in or on windows is addressed in the Baltimore City Code under "Signage"
- b) Window openings in upper floors of the front and all visible sides of the building shall not be filled, boarded up, or covered by any signs. Windows in upper floors may be backed by suitable curtains, blinds, interior wood shutters, or other approved materials. Window glass at any floor must not be painted over unless for the purposes of signage.
- c) Windows in the rear of the buildings must be kept properly repaired, or with Fire Department approval, may be closed. If closed, their sills, lintels, and frames must

- be removed and the opening properly closed to match the material, design, and finish of the adjacent wall, or other solution satisfactory to the Department of Planning.
- d) All broken and missing windows must be replaced with glass or approved clear plastic glazing.
  - e) Where the window treatment of the first floor is to be modified, these new window openings must not be smaller in size than the openings of the second or third floor windows. These new windows must be compatible with the upper windows in the structure. All of the windows in a single façade must be of matching design. All window openings must have the same height and width they did at the time that the wall in which they are located was originally built. Filling in these openings at the top, bottom, or sides is not permitted. The following additional requirements apply to all new windows:
    - i. All windows must have frames, sash, and mullions of a material, design, and color appropriate to the architecture of the building.
    - ii. All windows, frames, and mullions must be kept in good repair and properly painted.
    - iii. The lintels over windows must be preserved or restored. Rotten wood lintels must be replaced with steel lintels concealed behind a wood facing. Brick arch work and stone lintels must be restored.
    - iv. Installation of exhaust fans, vents, and air conditioning units in front windows is not allowed; however, where there is no other alternative, the unit may be permitted if it is painted in a color that makes it as inconspicuous as possible or is otherwise suitably screened.

D. Storefronts

- a) A storefront, as a part of a building façade, includes:
  - The building face and the entrance area leading to the door; and
  - The door, sidelights, transoms, show windows, display platforms, and devices including lighting and signing that can be seen from the exterior of the structure.
- b) All elements of the storefront, including awnings, show windows, entrances, signs, lighting, security grilles, etc., must be compatible and consistent in scale with the architecture of the building.
- c) All broken, deteriorated, or damaged elements of the storefront must be removed, repaired with skilled workmanship, or replaced. "Patching" or layering materials one on top of the other is not permitted.
- d) Any time that sign panels covering or replacing store cornices are removed, the cornice must be restored or replaced.
- e) Materials used on storefronts must be compatible with the architecture of buildings in the Renewal Area as well as other materials used on the building itself. Other factors such as durability ease of maintenance, and historical compatibility of materials must be considered. Formstone, metal or vinyl siding, real or simulated wood shakes, pebble-faced, plain, or chipboard plywood, or any other material not appropriate to commercial applications are not permitted. All those now in use must be kept in good repair or must be removed.
- f) Storefronts on single story buildings shall be designed for the full height to the cornice unless existing traditional architectural elements are present, in which case the new construction shall be harmonious with those elements. Cornice lines shall be maintained

- g) Dormer windows on roofs sloping toward the shopping street must be treated in accordance with the same criteria as building fronts.
- h) Gutters and downspouts must be repaired or replaced as necessary and must be neatly located and securely installed. Gutters and downspouts must be painted to harmonize with the other building front colors.

E. Awnings

- a) Soft, hard, or retractable awnings are permitted over the first floor and on the upper floors over windows only, but must be made of fade resistant, flame proofed materials.
- b) Existing retractable awning boxes or fixed awning hardware on storefronts must be reconditioned to accommodate a new awning that must be compatible with the building design. Torn, frayed, faded, or dirty awnings must be reconditioned, repaired, cleaned, or replaced.
- c) Awnings shall terminate against the building at a height not to exceed thirteen (13) feet above the pavement, or one inch below the second floor windowsill, whichever is lower.
- d) Awnings must not be lower than 8 feet above the sidewalk, shall not project more than seven (7) feet from the building front and must otherwise conform to the provisions of City Ordinances.
- e) Awnings must not prevent vehicular movement at the curb or interfere with improvements in the public right-of-way such as streetlights, landscaping, and street furniture.
- f) Sunscreen (other than awnings) or permanent canopies are not permitted on any portion of the building front.

F. Security screens

- a) Security screens, grates, bars and grilles must be designed to be as inconspicuous as possible. Enclosures and housings for security grilles and screens must be painted and compatible with the architecture of the storefront and the façade or hidden from view as an integral part of a sign or awning. All screens and grilles must be totally opened or removed during the normal business hours. Signs or product advertising are not permitted on grilles or grille housings.
- b) Solid or permanently enclosed or covered storefronts or painted show windows or show windows replaced by solid materials are not permitted.

G. Doorways and Entrances

- a) In cases where there are doorways to buildings that are not incorporated in the storefront, the character of the original doorway must be preserved, where possible. The original style of these doorways, if possible, must be incorporated into the design of the remodeled storefront. The following additional requirements apply to all doorways and entrances:
  - i. Storm and screen doors and hardware visible from the outside must be compatible with entrance doors.
  - ii. Any grilles, bars, and grates covering doors or windows must be designed to be compatible and consistent with the architecture of the building and the neighboring structures.
  - iii. Where steps or stoops are required at a doorway or entrance, they must be designed to match the original design. In cases where there are more than two (2) risers, the



steps or stoops must be provided with a railing of compatible design.

- iv. Doorways and entrances must be designed with consideration for the needs of the handicapped and the elderly.

#### H. Lighting

- a) Exterior lighting is limited to lighting fixtures designed to be in harmony with the character of the buildings and the street. These fixtures must be mounted in the entrance ways or on the front façade of the building. Flood lighting, concealed above the shopfront cornice, may be used to light the buildings except where the upper floors are in residential use. Lighting of shops will be encouraged during the evening hours at times agreed upon by the merchants.
- b) Lighting of the façades of the buildings may be accomplished with projecting fixtures at the roofline or at shopfront cornice line. These fixtures must be inconspicuous and compatible with the building architecture and project no more than 24 inches from the face of the building.
- c) All lighting and electrical elements such as wires, conduits, junction boxes, transformers, ballasts, switches, and panel boxes must be concealed from view.
- d) The following lighting methods are not permitted for signs and buildings:
  - i. Exposed fluorescent lighting.
  - ii. Exposed quartz or mercury vapor lamps.
  - iii. Exposed incandescent lamps other than low wattage, purely lighting and neon as provided for herein.
  - iv. Box signs are not allowed above storefront level.
  - v. Lights that flash, chase, or change color in a distracting manner.
  - vi. Commercial grade string lights may only be used as auxiliary lighting of the show window, or the adjacent sidewalk where permitted.

#### I. Fencing

- a) All fences and barriers must be maintained on a regular basis. Owners must repair or remove damaged fences within 60 days. Landscape barriers must be trimmed on a regular basis, and dead or damaged shrubbery must be replaced as needed.
- b) Chain link fences are not allowed along edges of building lots facing public streets unless they are black coated and incorporated within a hedge. Wood, painted or coated aluminum, cast iron, and steel fences are acceptable.
- c) Metal or plastic slats threaded through chain link fences or fabric attached to chain link fences are not allowed.

#### J. Sidewalks, Footways, and Pedestrian Spaces

- a) Pedestrian walkways and open spaces including street furniture and signs, must be designed as an integral part of the overall design, properly related to adjacent existing and proposed buildings.
- b) Sidewalks should be at least ~~10~~ six (6) feet in clear width to encourage pedestrian use in accordance with City Ordinances. The use of even wider sidewalks in commercial areas for outdoor table service, as allowed by the Zoning Code, is encouraged.

- c) Footways adjacent to all properties within the area boundaries shall be maintained in a manner consistent with applicable Baltimore City Codes.
- d) Footways shall be repaired or replaced to present a neat and even appearance and in a manner that is compatible with the materials, design and finish of adjacent footway surfaces.
- e) Excessive weeds or grasses should be removed routinely to present a tidy appearance.
- f) Street trees must be included along all City streets wherever possible. Follow Baltimore City Forestry recommendations for size and location of tree pits. Loose set cobblestones may be set within the tree pit to help prevent compaction of the soil and to provide a surface for getting in and out of cars parked next to the curb.
- g) Other appropriate sidewalk landscaping may include planting in properly located containers provided that they are maintained and replanted seasonally and are consistent with the building facade design.

K. Rear Yards

- a) Where a front, side, or rear yard exists or is created through the demolition of structures, the open areas must be treated in a manner consistent with the following standards.
- b) **Auxiliary Structures**-Structures at the rears of buildings, attached or unattached to the principal commercial structure must be consistent with the original building. Auxiliary structures which are structurally deficient, shall be properly repaired or demolished.
- c) A rear yard may be enclosed along the side and rear property lines by a solid masonry wall, ornamental metal fence, or other approved fence material addressed by this Renewal Plan (see “Fencing”) compatible with the architecture of the rear walls of the building. Solid doors or gates may be used to the extent necessary for access and delivery. These walls must not be less than 3 feet in height. Use of barbed wire or broken glass on top of walls is not permitted. Solid masonry walls must be used where fronting on public streets and adjacent properties.
- d) A rear yard may be used as a parking or loading area providing that it is properly screened, paved, illuminated, and maintained. A sign, not exceeding 2 square feet in area, may be used to identify and control parking and loading. The owner of the building is responsible for maintenance of the parking area in a neat and clean manner.
- e) No storage of trash containers is allowed in this area except when housed in permanent enclosures of acceptable design.
- f) Off-Street Parking
- g) Off-street parking areas must be visually screened from public streets and adjacent properties.
- h) All parking facilities must be effectively screened. When fronting on public streets and adjacent properties, screening must consist of a solid masonry wall or combination masonry wall and ~~metal grille~~ fence, not less than 3 feet in height. Screening must be maintained in good condition and must be designed and placed so as not to obstruct vehicle sight distances at entrances and exits.
- i) All exterior (surface) parking areas must be paved with a hard, dust-free, and must be properly illuminated, and maintained in a neat and clean manner.
- j) Parking lots with more than 8 spaces must incorporate one deciduous tree within the area of the lot design for every 2,500 square feet of parking lot pavement.

- k) Lighting must be oriented or shielded so that residences are not directly exposed to the source of the glare
  - l) Chain link fences are not allowed along edges of parking lots facing public streets unless they are black coated and incorporated within a hedge. Wood, painted aluminum, cast iron, and steel fences are acceptable. Chain link fences are allowed along edges of parking lots that do not face public streets, but must be black coated and consistently maintained.
- L. Off-Street Loading, Storage, and Service
- a) Where permitted by Zoning Code, front, side, or rear yards may be used for loading, storage, or service. In addition to any requirements of the Zoning Code, these areas must be appropriately screened from all adjacent streets, alleys, and properties. Screening must consist of a solid masonry wall or ~~metal-grille~~ fence at least 3 feet in height.
  - b) All yards used for loading and vehicle storage and service must be provided the proper ingress and egress to a public street or alley by means of access drives and aisles. These drives and aisles must be consistent with the use of the property and must not be excessive in size.
  - c) A sign not exceeding 2 square feet in area may be used to identify and control loading and service areas.
  - d) All outside storage of vehicles is restricted to 3 per service bay, and limited to three consecutive days.
- M. Refuse Storage
- a) All outdoor refuse storage areas and dumpsters on private property must be screened from the view of adjacent properties and public rights-of-way.
  - b) No dumpsters or rubbish containers shall be exposed at the fronts of buildings, except those specifically designed and intended for public use.
  - c) Screening may consist of a masonry wall or metal fence, or combination not less than 5 feet in height. Trash storage areas must be maintained in a neat and clean manner at all times.
  - d) Signage
    - Sign standards for all new or replacement signs are covered in detail in the Baltimore City Article 32 Zoning Code (2017) published 2021, Title 17 pages 355-389. See Appendix ?? for sign sizes for C-2 zoning. Wall, Window, Projecting and Awning Signs are recommended.
    - The following sign types are not permitted in the Renewal Plan Area:
      - Attention Getting Devices
      - Banner or “Temporary” Signs, printed on vinyl or other similar non-rigid material
      - Billboards
      - Electronic signs
      - Freestanding signs
      - Moving or Flashing Signs
      - Pole Signs
      - Portable Signs
      - Roof Signs

#### D. DURATION OF PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Business Area Urban Renewal Plan, as it may be amended from time to time, remains in full force and effect for a period of 10 years from the date the Renewal Plan is last amended by the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

#### E. COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION

The Department must submit to certain community organizations within the Project Area for the form and content of all significant permits, as defined by the Department, within the Project Area. The community organizations to which these plans must be submitted are as follows: Action Baybrook, Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn, Inc. Community of Curtis Bay Association, Greater Baybrook Alliance, South Baltimore Business Alliance, Inc., their successors, and any other organizations listed in the Community Association Directory.

#### F. PROCEDURES FOR CHANGES IN APPROVED PLAN

Prior to passage of any ordinance amending the Renewal Plan, two public hearings, one before the Planning Commission and one before City Council must be held. Action Baybrook, Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn, Inc., Community of Curtis Bay Association, Greater Baybrook Alliance, South Baltimore Business Alliance, Inc., and any other organizations listed in the Community Association Directory or their successors, must receive, at least 10 days prior to the hearing, written notice of the time and place of the hearing. With respect to any land in the Project Area previously disposed of by the City for use in accordance with the Renewal Plan, the then owner of the land whose interests are materially affected by the changes must receive at least 10 days prior to the hearing, written notice of the time and place of the hearing and information as to where a copy of the proposed amendments may be inspected.