Greetings,

As promised, this month we're taking an in-depth look at one of the three key findings and recommendations from the University Research Park Feasibility Study and Business Plan Development. We're focusing on the physical properties - literally, land use. Don't miss our main article on mixed used communities and how other successful research parks have grown out of the seedlings of these communities. Fast Facts offers some interesting statistics both locally and nationally about facilities and land management for research parks, and Business Spotlight provides news on the Tech Transfer Office at HBC.

Don't forget to register for "Connect Harford" on November 1 for your chance to contribute to the "branding" ideas for Harford County. Working together, we will develop a vision toward which we can all grow to make the County a great place to live, work and play.

For more information on EDAB and and programs that foster positive economic growth in the County, visit www.harfordbusiness.org.

Sincerely,

Eric McLauchlin
Chairman

EDAB

Branding The Land: Mixed Use Communities Help Technology Thrive

Harford County's history is rich in agriculture, farm land and horses. While area natives remember the rolling meadows and long stretches of open roadway leading to the next farm, recent residents see the County's growth in agriculture, business, military, education and health care. Newcomers hope to find an environment here that allows for living, working and playing.

The University Research Park Feasibility Study and Business Plan Development, commissioned by the Chesapeake Science and Security Corridor (CSSC), hit home on this concept. The study recommended three significant development areas for the County: land use, technology and higher education. As we launch discussions of "branding" Harford County, these areas will be evolving simultaneously to support a local technology base within the County's infrastructure.

The URP study recommended several ways to address the physical "Live, Work, Play" environment with the most prominent solutions being transportation and mixed-use communities. Based on the rationale that current office spaces are both scattered and have high vacancy rates, the study recommended advancing transit-oriented mixed-use development hubs for growing the region's technology district. If we fail to provide more mixed-use development in the APG region, we will be less competitive than our neighbors in Washington, DC and Delaware. The study referred to two role models: the Dayton Downtown Technology District in Dayton, OH, which links housing, restaurants and other amenities, and Cummings Research Park in Huntsville, AL, which sports a new lifestyle center and uses nearly 4,000 acres for a research park.

These successful technology communities created mixed-use developments, and they showed that an environment designed for "live, work, play" attracted professionals to the region. For example, Dayton's Tech Town began with an infrastructure plan anchored by the University of Dayton's Research Institute. They then added the Institute for the Development and Commercialization of Advanced Sensor Technology, the RFID Convergence Center, The Entrepreneur Center, and the National Composite Center. Ultimately, Tech Town can walk from their unique neighborhoods to shopping, performing arts, sports venues, parks, schools and health care. In addition, Tech Town has over 200 acres of yet-to-be developed land.

Similarly, Cummings Research Park in Huntsville, AL, prides itself on its mixed use development. Started on just 150 acres over 50 years ago, it now boasts 175 buildings with 9.5 million square feet of space on 4,000 acres. Over 300 companies and 25,000 workers call Cummings Research Park their professional and personal home. In close proximity to the University of Alabama, the nearby Bridge Street Town Center offers 550,000 square feet of retail space, plus apartments, condominiums and Class A office buildings. Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle was quoted as saying, "Year after year, the Research Park has brought in high-tech sector jobs and above average pay. It's been the foundation of our economic development."

Importantly, the URP study showed that if Harford County overlooks a mixed use development in the APG region, our "efforts to promote the growth of technology industry development and to attract STEM-related workforce will be hampered." The study proposes several mixed use developments to accommodate the scattered office spaces already housing existing companies. Planned transit developments would offer...
Harford Business Innovation Center (HBIC)

The Harford Business Innovation Center in Belcamp welcomes a new resource with the addition of the Technology Transfer Office at the Harford Business Innovation Center (HBIC). Led by consultant Blake Sajonia, the office will work to connect local and regional technology companies with Aberdeen Proving Ground businesses.

Sajonia said the Technology Transfer office will focus on three key elements to help companies win business with APG organizations. First, the office will assist in positioning companies to win contracts on the merits through the Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. "Companies need to understand the rules and how to operate effectively within those parameters," Sajonia said. "It is very easy to miss the mark, and we want to assist companies in the nuances of the process, including various issues to consider when proposing a technology solution to the Army." In addition, the office will help companies to understand technology transfer mechanisms and leverage them for business advantage. The Tech Transfer office will "also play matchmaker," Sajonia said, matching companies with APG resources where the capabilities, requirements and interests of the parties align. "Technology transfer is a contact sport. You can't wait for people to come to you," Sajonia emphasized.

In addition to individual consulting opportunities, the Technology Transfer office will host a series of technology discussions, presentations and workshops about the business opportunities of technology transfer. These events will feature technologies available for commercialization, resources available for product development and testing, or details about tech transfer mechanisms and programs such as SBIR/STTR.

Sajonia's expertise in business, technology and patent law makes him an ideal consultant for the Tech Transfer office. He owns TRSG, a technology transfer and intellectual property protection company. Under Sajonia's leadership over the last 10 years, TRSG-supported projects have won more than a dozen National awards for Excellence in Technology Transfer from the Federal Laboratory Consortium (FLC), which is comprised of representatives from all Federal agencies.

The Technology Transfer Office at the Harford Business Innovation Center (HBIC) will be open every Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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Fast Facts

- The Dayton model studied as a best practice for mixed use spaces showed 9,140 industry jobs gained from 2005-2011 and over 11,500 defense jobs. Capital funding included $788 million from industry, $621 from military and $159 million from the State of Ohio's Third Frontier program.
- Dayton now markets itself as the "Ohio Aerospace Hub and Innovation Community," which has become the "magnet for aerospace entrepreneurs, innovators and business owners seeking opportunity in a live-work-play-learn environment that fosters creativity and growth."
- Another model studied was Oklahoma's Innovation to Enterprise (2IE) effort under contract to the State of Oklahoma. 2IE helps Oklahoma technology entrepreneurs to grow viable businesses and has served over 560 entrepreneurs and start-up companies since 1998. The total economic impact of 13 Oklahoma companies receiving $4.5 million in SEED Funding from 2IE was almost $50 million. Of 2IE assisted companies had a 39 percent job growth in FY2012 vs. 1.3 percent job growth statewide.
- The URP study identified features necessary for office space surrounding the APG area: flexible leasing terms for short term stays, favorable rental cost, and the ability to create classified space.
- The key corridors for the Technology District in Harford County are recommended to be Route 40 as the backbone from Edgewood through APG, Havre de Grace and across the Susquehanna River to Perryville. In addition, Route 22 from the I-95 interchange and Routes 24 and 715 would also be included.
- The study concluded that there should be a "public-private partnership collaboration for common signage, marketing and discussions on ways to enrich the live-work-play environment in the Aberdeen Technology District." The first steps toward this collaboration will be taken during "Connect Harford" on November 1.

Sources: University Research Park Feasibility Study and Business Plan Development; Battelle TPP Recommended Program, Governance and Funding Approaches for URP Initiative

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David R. Craig, Harford County Executive

The Harford County Economic Development Advisory Board consists of a number of subcommittees - including technology, workforce development, finance, tourism, and land use - dedicated to the positive growth and Economic Development of Harford County.