

PLAYBOOK TO PROMOTE  
**THE BALTIMORE REGION TO  
BUSINESSES AND TALENT**



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# Introduction

Baltimore has many nicknames. To locals, it's affectionately called "Charm City" and "Smaltimore", both of which refer to Baltimore's unique neighborhood character and close-knit communities. Other names and slogans include the "Monumental City," the "City That Reads", "The Greatest City in America", the "Clipper City" and "Mobtown". Less flattering nicknames include "Bodymore" and the "City that Bleeds" referring to the City's reputation for homicides and violent crime.

Today, the Charm City has a perception problem - with both Baltimoreans and Americans. The media regularly reports Baltimore as being overly dangerous and crime-ridden, known for drugs, guns, murders, Freddie Gray and "The Wire". In 2019, the New York Times gave validation to these perceptions, writing a story entitled "How an American city falls apart: The tragedy of Baltimore."

In fact, Baltimore is an excellent place to visit, stay and invest. Its downtown and Inner Harbor are being comprehensively revitalized, its startups and early-stage companies are attracting record levels of investment, and many residents are inspired to improve their communities.

While Baltimore still ranks above the national average for homicides, its leaders, the Baltimore Police Department and communities have worked hard to reduce crime rates in the city. And, as with most cities in the US, within the city, a small number of neighborhoods have the highest concentration of crime.

This playbook has been created to help Baltimore's leaders change the narrative about the city to attract investment and talent.

It lists case-tested strategies that can be tailored to fit local conditions and deployed locally. We hope that it will help Baltimore leaders create effective and equitable campaigns and programming which contribute to building a better Baltimore.

# Recommended actions and case studies

## Summary of action scores

Actions to attract investors			
Action	Impact	Implementation Time	Cost
Develop a 5-10 year vision and outcome-focused goals to inform your effort	High	Medium	Low
Develop a plan to grow industry clusters and proposition material	High	Long	Low
Build local stakeholder knowledge and advocacy	Medium	Medium	Medium
Build regional partnerships	Medium	Medium	Low
Run a branded B2B communications campaign	High	Medium	Medium
Create an ambassadors' program	Medium	Short	Low
Create a business recruitment program	High	Medium	Medium
Create a business retention and expansion outreach program	High	Medium	Medium
Provide logistical and business development support to investors	High	Medium	High
Provide talent recruitment and workforce development support to investors	High	Short	Low
Create an events program	Medium	Long	Medium
Actions to attract talent			
Build local stakeholder knowledge and advocacy	Medium	Medium	Medium
Run a branded B2C marketing campaign	High	Medium	High
Create a matchmaking and job placement program	High	Medium	Medium
Provide incentives and logistical support for graduates and workers	Low	Short	Low
Create a program to attract/ retain startups	High	Medium	High
Create a landing pack for entrepreneurs	Low	Short	Low

Favorable
  Moderately favorable
  Less Favorable



# Actions to Attract Investors

# 1 Develop a 5-10 year vision and outcome-focused goals to inform your effort

## How to

- Develop goals which:
  - Capitalize on the city's existing strengths
  - Focus recruitment on specific sectors
  - Support entrepreneurship and small business
  - Support talent development, recruitment and retention
  - Advocate for key infrastructure projects (e.g., UM BioPark) and regulatory improvements (e.g., speed of permitting process)
- Identify partners which can support the delivery of these goals
- Use a roadmap strategy to align the goals with the 5-10 year vision
- Create an evaluation plan to guide progress and accountability

## Case Study

### Northeast Indiana. Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership

- The Northeast Indiana [Vision 2030](#) launched with a goal to increase per capita personal income to 90 percent as compared to the national average
- Its strategies were to increase business attraction, talent attraction, and talent development
- The Partnership developed the vision in partnership with the Mayors and Commissioners Caucus, The Regional Opportunities Council, and The Local Economic Development Organization (LEDO) Council, among others



## 2 Develop a plan to grow industry clusters and proposition material

Create a joint plan, crafted by industry and city/ county/ state representatives, to foster job-creating investment in a fast growing industry sector over 5-years. Create compelling messaging and marketing collateral which describe Baltimore's benefits vis-a-vis its competitor set

### How to

- Work with leading businesses, partners and stakeholders to create a 5-year action plan to grow (one or more) priority economic sectors
- Define goals and identify challenges, opportunities, solutions, quick wins and longer term actions
- Focus on innovation infrastructure, a skills pipeline, startup networks and the local ecosystem
- Jointly determine high priority initiatives (e.g., development of a new campus, creation of a business-designed program to grow a talent pipeline)
- Focus on targeted business recruitment and support for local supply chains
- Agree on governance arrangements to hold delivery partners to account
- Communicate the plan and Baltimore's intention to be an industry leader to target stakeholders and prospective investors
- Create marketing collateral ("propositions") for each industry sector, using the following headings:
 

- Why Baltimore	- Employers and start-ups
- The opportunity	- Business environment
- Snapshot of the ecosystem	- Fiscal incentives
- The community	- Gateway to the US
- Sector strengths	- Quality of life
- Talent base	- Find out more

### Benefits

- The exercise will help you to develop a "North Star" and clear objectives, to which everyone contributes

### Risks

- This work can distract from actual delivery, and/or can end up sitting "on the shelf"

### Resources

- 1x FTE (or pro bono consultant) over 12 months, plus access to senior business, academic and other partners

### Case Study

**San Diego, CA, The CleanTech agency**  
(a non-profit business association)

- "Southern California Energy Innovation Network" was created to attract and grow non-polluting industries
- The city partnered with San Bernardino, Imperial, Riverside, and San Diego counties to create a specialized agency, incubator and program to reduce barriers to establishment, foster collaborations (such as the Southern California Energy Innovation Network), provide access to physical space and free business services for start-ups, and contribute to the commercialization of emerging energy technologies
- The agency also connects investors with private, public and academic institutions, as well as grant opportunities

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could create a regional partnership collective, which builds on the "Baltimore Together" plan and is supported by a Baltimore agency team



## 3 Build local stakeholder knowledge and advocacy

Engage residents to update their perceptions of the city, make them aware of city assets, and turn cynics into advocates. Deliver a branded campaign which focuses residents' attention on Baltimore's development, and its positive impact on the local economy and quality of life

### How to

- Audit current perceptions and what has led to them
- Document development progress (e.g., residents who have been assisted to start a new business, new green spaces, turn-around high schools)
- Identify misconceptions, identify incomplete narratives. (e.g., are there negative associations which are no longer true?)
- Define the perception and reputation you'd like to establish
- Work with a marketing agency to craft the messaging
- Market and advertise the city's assets and development
- Recruit everyday residents to become campaign spokespeople
- Define a target profile for spokespeople and identify where to reach them and what kind of messages they can communicate. Their messages will need to be grounded in lived experiences (e.g., you do not want someone who does not use public transit commenting on the state of the bus system)
- Create opportunities for them to experience the city's development (e.g., tours, events)
- Document and disseminate their testimonies, in person at events, on social media platforms, and through local news outlets

### Benefits

- Residents are more credible spokespeople than you. They are more likely to be heard, and more likely to influence other residents' perceptions

### Risks

- By recruiting residents as campaign spokespeople, you risk amplifying any negative voices
- The changes that the campaign communicates must be real and not "window dressing"
- Negative incidents (such as a local shooting) can quickly undo the campaign's good work

### Resources

- 1x FTE, a contract with a marketing agency for multimedia and event planning

### Case Study

#### Cincinnati, OH. DCI marketing agency

- "Cincinnati Experience" is a marketing campaign that seeks to alter the public perception of Cincinnati by highlighting recent improvements made in the city
- This campaign goal was to attract new businesses and skilled workers by improving the city's reputation (including with its own residents)
- The campaign placed positive stories in national publications and on Instagram (by Cincinnati-based social media influencers)
- Its collateral highlighted redevelopments (e.g. its [3CDC](#) connected audiences to Cincinnati Food Tours at the recently redeveloped Findlay Market), and social/ cultural events (e.g., Black Tech Week 2022)
- Over 8 years, the campaign created a "top 10 best Instagram accounts to follow", attracted 40,000 Instagram followers, achieved 3x higher engagement rate than industry standard, and achieved 11.6 billion impressions
- Some of its social media posts converted into media articles that reached business leaders, (e.g., [ULL article](#))
- The focus on earned media ensured authentic, local stakeholder opinions and advocacy

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could run a similar campaign
- Its focus should be on the here and now, rather than a potential distant future
- It could focus on redevelopments, growing businesses, successful startups and events
- It could also focus on specific neighborhoods, and create partnership opportunities for local spokespeople

## 4 Build regional partnerships

**Build partnerships with local counties and cities to promote the region's assets to investors, with a central Baltimore-based team to coordinate their varying interest**

### How to

- Align Baltimore's efforts with cities and counties in the surrounding metropolitan area, and pitch the broader region as a good place to do business
- Partner with cities like Frederick and Gaithersburg to lobby for economic development tools that will make the region more competitive, share market research, and collaborate on infrastructure and workforce development initiatives
- Offer the Greater Baltimore Committee to coordinate the partnership, but ask all partners to contribute funding

### Benefits

- You can offer a more compelling solution to investors, which are not constrained by political boundaries

### Risks

- You risk spending a lot of time getting consensus, fighting politics, and talking amongst yourselves rather than to investors

### Resources

- 1x FTE, a contract with a marketing agency for multimedia and event planning

## Case Studies

### San Antonio TX. Greater SATX Regional Economic Partnership

- Greater SATX REP is a public-private nonprofit that promotes the greater San Antonio region, including all of Behar county and 7 surrounding counties
- Greater SATX also partners with Opportunity Austin to lobby for programs that attract new businesses to Texas

### Chicago IL. World Business Chicago

- WBC manages the Greater Chicagoland Economic Partnership, a united effort which includes the City of Chicago, Cook County and 6 Chicagoland counties
- The partnership complements existing municipal and county programs by promoting the region's assets, coordinating international engagement and sharing and optimizing resources like market research and asset mapping
- A focus on joint action is helping the region to build a more competitive ecosystem of interconnected infrastructure, economic sectors, innovation and talent pools
- The partners are contributing \$1m to the program

### Greater Washington region, Connected DMV

- Connected DMV is a regional economic partnership and 501c3 which brings together the public sector, industry, business, academia, community and philanthropy
- Public sector partners include Fairfax County EDA, Prince George's County EDC, Montgomery County EDC, Alexandria EDP, Howard County EDA, Arlington ED, Washington DC EP, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Virginia EDP, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and Maryland TEDCO
- Its goals are to
  - Lay the groundwork for regional economic development collaboration;
  - Identify shared interests, complementary resources, and partnership opportunities;
  - Explore joint actions across talent development, market strengthening and activation, regional branding and marketing, and innovation ecosystem development; and
  - Emphasize ways to address linkages between economic renewal and social equity

## Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could seek to identify and align key interests within the metropolitan area
- The Greater Baltimore Committee could act as a directing partner, with representatives from other cities and counties playing a participating role



## 5 Run a branded B2B communications campaign

Reach and engage target investors, and influence their perceptions of Baltimore

### How to

- Create a list of target investors
- Research their knowledge/perception of Baltimore, their “needs and wants”, their decision makers and where they get their information
- Find opportunities to place positive messaging about Baltimore, and follow up with sales engagements
- Focus on gathering and pitching stories (not on paid advertising)
- In particular, focus stories around:
  - Interesting people (the Mayor, local business leaders, local entrepreneurs)
  - Policy announcements
  - Technology breakthroughs (medical schools, universities)
  - Rankings and awards programs (e.g. Forbes top-10 life sciences cluster)
  - Symbolic actions (e.g. how the Baltimore Police Department is teaching other PDs how to reduce violent crime - to myth-bust Baltimore’s reputation for crime)
  - Human interest success stories (e.g. the founder of a local unicorn company)
  - A competition (for talent, for startups, in disinvested communities)
  - Insights into how Baltimore is performing (vs. its competitor cities)
  - Insights which can inform investment decisions (e.g. regular research reports on VC investments/ exits)
- Pitch your stories to industry leaders and thought leaders/ analysts who inform their decisions (e.g., S&P, Bloomberg Media, Scrip magazine)

### Benefits

- It can be powerful when everyone is speaking with one voice (and evident when they are not). It requires a collaborative approach, which will, in turn, make it easier to deliver joined up solutions for investors

### Risks

- Raising awareness and altering perceptions takes time, and your success or failure can be affected by any number of issues outside your control

### Resources

- 1x FTE communications officer, embedded in a dedicated business development team
- A contract with a marketing agency to develop a brand, website, logos and collateral, and guide media placements

### Case Study

#### Netherlands. Netherlands Foreign Investment Agency

- [Invest in Holland](#) is a campaign to attract foreign investment into the Netherlands through an integrated marketing campaign
- Its website is designed to direct viewers to information on the value of investing in the Netherlands, the nature of business operations, key industries, how the NFIA can help, and testimonials/ media
- In addition to the website, the campaign included an active presence on Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram, direct mail, Web-to-Leads and earned media.
- There was consistency across all media platforms, in terms of visual cues and direction to the website
- The campaign regularly refreshed content across all media platforms. It also tailored content to different target audiences, e.g. targeted North American prospects
- The campaign invited US journalists to visit to cover Holland’s digital, medtech, logistics and smart & green mobility sectors

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore can similarly look to streamline investment attraction messaging under a single brand
- It could then target the messaging to investors from specific regions and industry sectors





## 6 Create an ambassadors' program

Identify and onboard local corporate leaders, tech entrepreneurs, politicians, and opinion formers. Provide them with key messages and communications opportunities

### How to

- Identify business leaders, entrepreneurs, and investors who will be known to your target audience and have a stake in Baltimore's future, but are "not paid" to promote Baltimore (e.g., CEO of T. Rowe Price, Founder Paradox startup, Founder NextGen venture partners)
- Leverage the Mayor to invite them to become business ambassadors
- Create simple, 1-2 page messaging for them
- Identify opportunities for them to speak at conferences, do media interviews, post social media videos and blogs, participate in inbound sales missions (including opportunities when they are traveling)
- Ask them to introduce your business development team to their industry peers
- Thank them by inviting them to social events with the Mayor and other ambassadors
- Consider inviting them to serve on a city board or advisory committee

### Benefits

- Ambassadors will be more credible messengers than you. They are more likely to be heard, and more likely to influence perceptions and behaviors

### Risks

- It takes time and effort to onboard and coordinate senior people (sometimes with large egos). It can also be difficult to ensure they are available to meaningfully participate in events or tours

### Resources

- 0.5x FTE to identify ambassadors, guide their messaging, and coordinate opportunities for media engagement and networking

### Case Study

#### Phoenix, AZ. Greater Phoenix Economic Council

- ["GPEC Ambassadors"](#) is a group of industry and government leaders who act as ambassadors to attract investment to Phoenix
- The program has clear goals, which set expectations for the ambassadors. They are:
  - Raise awareness on GPEC's efforts to improve the state's business climate and competitiveness
  - Help shape GPEC's influence as a regional thought leader
  - Support implementation of strategic programs and business development activities
  - Champion job recovery among state policy makers
  - Host prospects and site-selectors during in-market visits and ExecTours
  - Facilitate and sponsor welcome receptions for new locates to the region
  - GPEC also hosts events where ambassadors act as panelists/speakers. These events can be themed to leverage industry-wide interests to improve attendance
- GPEC also hosts events for ambassadors to speak to industry leaders. The ambassadors are encouraged to invite peers and contacts to the events

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could seek to recruit a wide range of ambassadors who can then reach a variety of investors and organizations
- It will be important to provide guidance and support to the ambassadors in their roles - (e.g., when speaking at events outside Baltimore and spreading awareness of the Baltimore ecosystem)

## 7 Create a business recruitment program

Devote resources to lead generation and the identification of corporate relocation projects

### How to

- Identify leads through existing businesses, partners, and outsourced lead generation agencies
- Create a list of target companies for direct, in-person outreach through site visits and conversations
- Proactively target expansions and relocations that will attract other companies in their supply chain or could benefit from sharing a location
- Recruit headquarters from markets without a hub airport
- Recruit gazelles from their startup locations
- Use comparative data to sell the region
- Incentivize staff support with sales bonuses
- Limit travel to markets (which is time intensive and costly) that have produced a high number of prospect inquiries
- Target and incentivize trade shows in partnership with Visit Baltimore
- Devote capacity to respond to prospects and requests for information
- Account manage leads and projects using a CRM tool

### Benefits

- An effective sales team can influence location decisions, and win projects which would otherwise not come to Baltimore (provided the team seeks to influence investors early enough in the decision process)

### Risks

- You need a good sales and research/ insights team to stand out from the crowd. The team needs to be confident that the “product” that they are selling is both compelling and different from other cities
- Some cities/ states may be able to steal business from Baltimore by offering large financial incentives



### Resources

- A dedicated business development team, supported by a lead generation partner

### Case Study

#### Boston, MA. Department of Economic Inclusion and Opportunity

- “Boston Backstreets” was a campaign to support industrial and commercial business to locate in Boston’s neighborhoods
- The campaign’s value propositions were speed to market (through a reduced burden of research and time spent navigating processes) and access to suitable space and ready-trained staff
- The department supported licensing and permitting, facilitated real estate acquisition, and identified and placed trained staff
- Success required close collaboration between DEIO, the Planning Department and the Office of Workforce Development

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could look to create a similar package of incentives which can be marketed as part of an integrated campaign. These could include streamlined processes, a centralized licensing and permitting system, and dedicated, place-based liaison officers

## 8 Create a business retention and expansion outreach program

Connect proactively to local businesses, to understand their current and anticipated needs, and to address those needs through coordinated resources, partnerships, and tools

### How to

- Create a business retention advisory council and key accounts team
- Create a database of existing employers, to which you will target your efforts
- Conduct site visits to target employers
- Address target employers' needs by sharing information, providing support and finding solutions to problems
- Create an early warning system
- Conduct surveys of local employers to understand their needs and ambitions
- Become an information clearinghouse and provide access to contacts and networks
- Advocate for legislation of importance to existing sector strengths
- Revisit your business attraction, expansion and retention incentives
- Refresh your business attraction sector propositions and collect lead generation insights
- Continue to communicate your city's appeal

### Benefits

- Existing businesses are responsible for 70% to 80% of job creation in the region in a given year. It makes little sense to spend time and resources attracting businesses to Baltimore to then lose them due to lack of attention to changing needs or emerging obstacles

### Risks

- It can be challenging to know what difference the program made over and above what would have happened anyway

### Resources

- 2x FTEs, embedded within a dedicated business development team

## Case Studies

### Tulsa, OK. Tulsa Innovation Lab

- Cyber Fellows is a program which seeks to build a community of tech workers
- TIL partners with cyber venture creation company, Team8, to leverage the University of Tulsa's expertise in cybersecurity
- Each year, Team8 collaborates with 10x PhD students to help them create cyber-related companies off the back of their research projects
- The fellowship provides incentives for the students to remain in Tulsa upon graduation and pursue their businesses
- Team8 is based out of New York and offers a direct line of connections to new businesses which may be interested in moving to a more affordable location

### Miami, FL. Miami Downtown Development Agency

- ["Follow the Sun"](#) campaign was a business attraction marketing campaign launched in 2020
- The campaign promoted downtown Miami as a location for growing businesses, based on high quality of life and low taxes
- The campaign targeted high-growth and well-paying industries, in order to diversify the local economy away from real estate and tourism
- MDDA also offered up to a \$150,000 grant for businesses with at least 10 employees earning \$68,000 (or which would have that upon relocation)
- In its first year, the program recruited [17 firms](#) to move to downtown Miami. They pledged to [create 1,800 jobs](#) over three years

## Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could consider creating a program similar to Tulsa Innovation Lab with Johns Hopkins University, which already offers a suite of resources designed to efficiently move technologies from startup to marketplace "FastForward"
- Baltimore should consider retention incentives for fellows who participate in the program as well as physical space and additional support
- If Baltimore cannot create a new grant or subsidy program similar to Miami's "Follow the Sun", it could consider repackaging existing services and incentives (e.g., training grants)
- It could also define a specific location to which these benefits attach

## 9 Provide logistical and business development support to investors

Provide support to investors to shorten and de-risk their set up time in Baltimore. Help new investors to meet local distributors, partners and clients, to apply for public incentives, and to bid for public

### How to

- Connect recent investors to local business networks, research partners, distributors, and potential clients. (e.g., through monthly networking sessions)
- Regularly visit existing investors (as part of a business retention and expansion outreach program) to understand their challenges and barriers and how the city can assist them
- Create business development opportunities for investors through the city's research programs and procurement budgets

### Benefits

- Investment projects often start with a sales office, and only grow when the investor has won local business. Investors, which are well networked into the local ecosystem, are less likely to downsize/leave

### Risks

- You could displace local businesses. (You should be providing support to both domestic businesses and investors)

### Resources

- A dedicated business development team, supported by city/ state departmental and agency staff



## Case Studies

### Minnesota (State). Minnesota Department of Transportation, Connected and Automated Vehicles Office and Office of State Procurement

- “MN Connected and Automated Vehicle Challenge” was a program to position Minnesota as a destination for CAV-related industries and innovation
- MnDoT reconfigured its procurement and business processes, offering an alternative to lengthy RFP processes
- Instead, it offered an open and rolling procurement process that fostered innovation. Public and private entities could propose CAV solutions to improve safety, efficiency, equity, outreach, and mobility
- The program allowed innovators to submit proposals for CAV technologies that aligned with state and national goals. It offered an (optional) Stage 1 meeting for applicants to meet with program officials to workshop their ideas before submitting
- Proposals were then reviewed by technical experts, a review team, and MnDOT’s senior and executive leadership

### Michigan (State). Michigan Economic Development Corporation

- “[Pure Michigan Business Connect](#)” is a B2B platform which provides Michigan companies with matchmaking services
- MEDC connects businesses with “local, national, and global suppliers or purchasers through customized procurement or joint venture matchmaking searches, summits and buyer tours”
- Participants sign up through the [Connect Space](#) platform. They then [create a profile](#) and describe their capabilities and goals, which allows MEDC to tailor introductions/ 1-1’s and invitations to networking events or other services
- The program is marketed through the [Pure Opportunity](#) campaign and by the [Detroit Regional Chamber](#)

## Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could look to replicate the “challenge” aspect of the Minnesota program
- Baltimore could also partner with local educational institutions to support an applicant pipeline (equivalent to University of [Minnesota’s CAV Career Pathways Camp](#))
- Baltimore investors (and potential investors) could benefit from a program similar to MEDC’s Pure Michigan Business Connect, which connects them to local partners based on their business goals
- However, engaging investors at decision-maker level and then achieving a high “batting strike rate” requires a good understanding of the investors’ needs and wants. This, in turn, requires trust and strong industry (and possibly technical) knowledge
- Businesses are unlikely to use an online platform that does not come with in-person, intensive support

## 10

## Provide talent recruitment and workforce development support to investors

Provide support to new investors and incumbent businesses to access and recruit talented workers, and to train and retain staff

### How to

- Provide support investors and existing businesses on talent recruitment and workforce training
- Create tailored offerings as part of Baltimore's incentive package for investors
- Make the offerings compelling, by including support at each stage of the project. E.g.,
  - Train local workers in in-demand, soft skills before the business invests
  - Help the investor recruit its set-up team
  - Skill-up the investor's team during its first year of employment
  - Provide retention incentives to help the investor retain its staff (such as subsidized transit)

### Benefits

- Many workforce training and placement services already exist and are funded. They simply need to be tailored, possibly supplemented and packaged

### Risks

- Federally funded workforce development services are usually designed for low skilled workers, or residents who are "far from the labor market". They do not connect with graduates and skilled workers. Your support should offer access to both groups (from finance directors and software engineers, to security guards and caterers)

### Resources

- A joint sales/ service team, comprising the business development and workforce development teams

### Case Studies

#### Virginia (State). Virginia Economic Development Partnership

- "Virginia Talent Accelerator Program"
- The state created a tailored workforce training program to incentivize businesses to invest or expand their operations
- The program includes hands-on training, e-learning modules, and pre-employment training through partnerships with community colleges and other training centers
- The program also includes organizational development and operational excellence training to increase workers' productivity and support a collaborative culture within businesses
- There is no cost to the investor

#### Phoenix, AZ. Department of Community and Economic Development

- The city's business and workforce development team packages workforce development incentives to potential investors
- These can include pre-apprenticeship training (so that there is a pipeline of talent when the investors is ready to hire), recruitment of staff, customized training for new employees and on-the-job training for existing employees
- DCED also provides free interview and training space and helps investors to access tax credits for each hire. It can also support the investor's employees through an employee retention fund
- DCED quantifies the value of the package in dollars

#### Atlanta, GA. Invest Atlanta

- The city's economic development agency created a middle wage job fund which pays grants to investors and domestic businesses which create or retain middle wage jobs with employer-sponsored health insurance, and which are filled by residents from target populations
- The target populations include veterans, disabled individuals, long-term unemployed, ex-offenders and residents from disinvested neighborhoods, amongst others

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could package a similar service to new and expanding businesses. It should be employer-led, enabling the businesses to work with the city to design the training modules

## 11 Create an events program

Partner with Visit Baltimore/ Baltimore Convention Center to target and take advantage of conferences and conventions that can attract target investors. Showcase Baltimore talent and startups to the delegates. Create familiarization trips for target delegates

### How to

- Develop a program with the convention bureau which delivers both business and event attraction goals
- Target one or two industry sectors, and a small number of target investors
- Build relationships with local business and startup groups, universities and research labs, and community groups - to help sell Baltimore, give a reason to visit, and create investment opportunities

### Benefits

- Both teams have knowledge and networks that can benefit the other

### Risks

- Existing sales incentives may need to be changed to support effective collaboration

### Resources

- A joint sales/ service team, comprising staff from the business development team and the convention bureau

### Case Study

#### London (UK). London & Partners

- The agency incorporated the city's business development team and convention bureau. The teams aligned target industry sectors and used inbound conferences and events to showcase local entrepreneurial talent and to reach target investors
- The teams also created "London Tech Week", as a platform to attract more tech conferences, high growth technology-based investors, entrepreneurs and venture capital to the city
- LTW is a week-long program which seeks to shine a spotlight on local startups, and connect them to partners, corporates, distribution partners, and funders - both local and from overseas
- The week is anchored by a large tech conference, and involves more than 100 events which are delivered by the business community. It is supported by tech ambassadors, the Mayor's office and national government

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore's business development team and Visit Baltimore could create a similar partnership. VB would seek to attract meetings and events, by promoting access to industry leaders, and local startups and talent pools. The BD team would access conference attendees to showcase investment opportunities, and local talent pools





# **Actions to Attract Talent**

## 1 Build local stakeholder knowledge and advocacy

Engage residents to update their perceptions of the city, make them aware of city assets, and turn cynics into advocates. Deliver a branded campaign which focuses residents' attention on Baltimore's development, and its positive impact on the local economy and quality of life

### How to

- See action #3 to attract investors ([page 8](#))

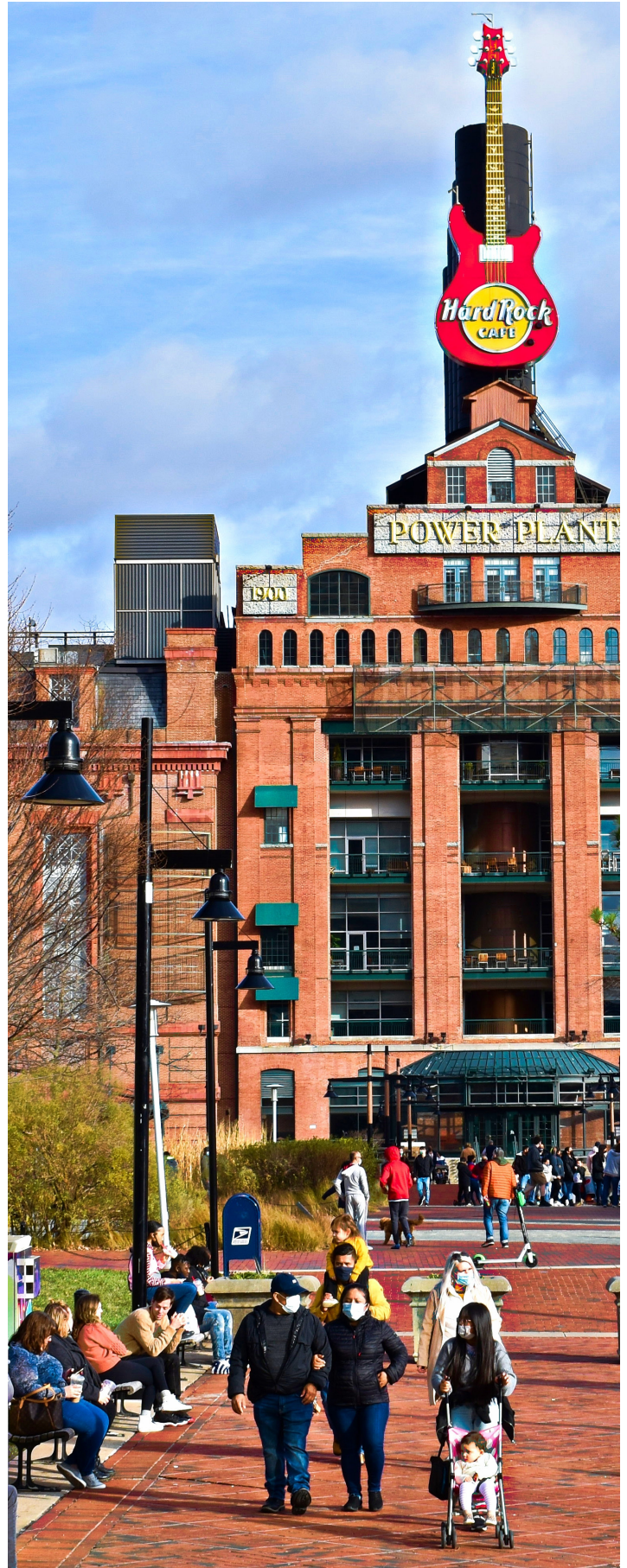
### Case Study

#### Columbia, SC. Columbia Opportunity Resource

- "[Crash Course Columbia](#)" is a talent retention program which aims to improve the perceptions of Columbia by demonstrating the benefits of working and living in the city
- Four times a year, 30 professionals are invited to tour attractions and entertainment districts in the greater Columbia S.C. region. In this way, they immerse themselves in the region's culture and lived-experiences
- As a result, they became local champions of the region
- Participants are sponsored by their employers, who partner with [Experience Columbia SC](#) to produce the program
- The program also offers discounts for employees who are members of young professionals organizations
- The program has been converted into an online series on [Instagram](#)

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could create a similar program that turns local professionals into advocates within their organizations and, by extension, professional networks
- It would be necessary to collaborate with Visit Baltimore and Greater Baltimore Committee



## 2 Run a branded B2C marketing campaign

Create a digital campaign to encourage graduates and workers to think about Baltimore for work/ a career move, and to explore job opportunities with local employers

### How to

- Define your goals and measures of success (e.g., change perceptions, attract workers from neighboring cities, connect graduates to local employers)
- Gather audience insights through research or focus groups - who are your target businesses/ personas, what are their wants and needs, what do they know/ think about Baltimore, where do they get their information
- Develop messaging that describes the benefits for your audiences of choosing Baltimore (vs. a competitor city), how you can assist them (key messages about your services and opportunities) and the call-to-action (e.g., apply using this link)
- Create creative/concept which will cut through (possibly with support of marketing agency). Use authoritative data sources, give proof points and tell stories
- Decide channels and media strategy (e.g., a search engine optimized website, social media, LinkedIn, out-of-home posters, conferences and in-person events, recruitment consultants, radio advertising, earned local press coverage)
- Select messengers who will get your audiences' attention and are trusted (e.g., their peers, a local celebrity entrepreneur)
- Decide timings (e.g., in the run up to university graduation, during high profile conferences)
- How to activate
  - Research the local context (recent/ current/ planned campaigns that you can build on)
  - Offer regular engagement, over several months

### Benefits

- Targeted digital ads can be relatable, reach audiences where they are and when they are open to your message

### Risks

- As audiences are being bombarded with advertising, your message needs to be compelling and interesting to cut through
- Measuring the effectiveness of your campaign can be difficult

### Resources

- Budget (ideally, \$100+k)
- Project manager and staff (who can both sell to and support graduates)
- A creative marketing/ media placement agency
- Press/ PR support (e.g., freelance journalist) to gather interesting content, pitch stories, build media partnerships and write blogs
- Spokespeople and ambassadors
- Partnerships with local organizations which can multiply your communications (e.g., business groups, employers, universities, city/ state officials)

### Case Study

#### Raleigh, NC. Wake County Economic Development (Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce)

- "Work in the Triangle" was a talent attraction campaign which sought to develop a clear and concise brand for the Research Triangle Region of North Carolina to engage business leaders and skilled professionals
- WCED worked with the DCI marketing agency to create a brand which highlighted the intellectual capital of the region and the opportunity to make "smart lifestyle choices"
- The campaign used the brand "Work in the Triangle, Smarter from Any Angle" and "Triangle Smarty Pants Ambassadors" to engage target audiences
- It was supported by three cities - Raleigh, Chapel Hill, and Durham - and 13 counties
- The campaign's brochure both provided an overview of Wake County and served as a relocation tool

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could craft a campaign for similar audiences
- It should look to do this with neighboring counties and cities
- It should target in-person placements - such as at BIO Career Fair and SXSW
- And it should be supported by frequent engagements with the target audiences (For example, #TriangleTuesdays is a weekly Twitter campaign which creates a virtual job board for companies in the region)
- A similar case study can be found in [Boise, Idaho](#)

## 3 Create a matchmaking and job placement program

Create a program for out-of-town university graduates to raise awareness of local career opportunities, and make connections with local employers that offer graduate positions

### How to

- Target graduates from universities and colleges in neighboring counties and states. Focus on graduates with credentials and degrees which are in high demand with local employers
- Build relationships with careers offices in order to run roadshows on campuses - bringing Baltimore companies to showcase career-building opportunities to local students
- Train career services officers so that they can promote the program to students, help students to prepare, connect students with opportunities, help to filter students, and facilitate hosting events on campus/ virtually, etc. Badge them "Baltimore ambassadors"
- Run flagship programs in Baltimore - enticing students to attend career pathway events with free tickets to major sporting events or music festivals
- Offer career development resources to the engaged students. (These don't need to be created - they are freely available on platforms like Dice.com and LinkedIn Learning)
- Partner with (and fund raise from) large, local employers, as well as up-and-coming startups, which have recently fundraised and are hiring
- Lock in the calendar of events 6-12 months in advance
- Consider creating an ambassadors program - comprising inspiring founders, employees and former program participants - who can promote the program through interviews, campus speaking engagements, and on social media. (Ideally, the program should include ambassadors who are based in the target markets from which you are trying to recruit talent)
- (To retain Baltimore talent) partner with local high school guidance counselors to create a coaching service for students who are thinking about their career opportunities

### Benefits

- The program's value proposition for students is access to training and growing employers that are hiring
- Its value proposition for local employers is early access to a vetted, filtered talent pipeline

### Risks

- It may be challenging to track the program's impact - because you will struggle to follow the participants career journeys

### Resources

- Budget (ideally, \$100+k)
- 2 FTEs to manage relationships with employers and talent, produce networking opportunities, and support matchmaking efforts

### Case Study

#### Chicago, IL. World Business Chicago (business membership organization)

- "Think Chicago" is a program that attracts graduates from outside Chicago to rapidly growing (but not yet widely known) tech companies in the city, by increasing their visibility and through matchmaking
- It is run by 2x FTEs
- The program seeks to increase students' awareness of employment opportunities in Chicago's tech and innovation ecosystem. It targets undergraduates and PhDs from 50 universities and colleges outside the city.
- It also helps to place students into fast growing start ups and otherwise lesser known technology companies for both technical and non-technical roles
- Each year, it invites students to Chicago to attend the Lollapalooza music festival and experience life in the city. Participating students are given free tickets after completing a 3-day program of networking
- The program features tours of cutting-edge companies and interactive sessions (like hackathons)
- Companies use the program to pitch to students, describing their mission, organizational culture, and how they will invest in the students

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could also target regional universities and colleges, creating opportunities for local businesses to pitch to out-of-town graduates and job seekers
- Any program should include dynamic programming, such as a music or food festival, which has been very effective for Chicago

## 4 Provide incentives and logistical support for graduates and workers

Create a campaign with an incentive to move to Baltimore and advice on living in Baltimore - from finding an apartment to making new friends

### How to

- Consider financial incentives to entice workers to Baltimore
- Revisit corporate incentives to help the employer attract talent from surrounding regions - for example, relocation support, job training, transit support
- Partner with local employers which are able to to contribute sign on bonuses and housing support
- Provide support for recently arrived workers - for example, advice on neighborhoods and schools, networking, discount vouchers, etc
- Market the incentives through your matchmaking and job placement program (previous action)

### Benefits

- This is a proven model - see case study

### Risks

- This is an expensive program
- You will probably need to fundraise, or use the general fund
- Existing workforce development and jobs placement budgets are unlikely to be able to be applied to the program
- It may be challenging to convince city council members to allocate funding

### Resources

- \$1m budget for a pilot program



### Case Study

#### Tulsa, OK. Oklahoma Department of Commerce and Workforce Development

- “Tulsa Remote” is a program created in 2018 to attract a well-educated workforce by reducing the financial and social burdens of relocating into Tulsa
- The program addressed three challenges
  - Lack of opportunities for talented workers
  - A below average number of knowledge-intensive firms, and
  - Below average share of college graduates
- It offered a \$10,000 financial incentive for renters (1-year commitment, \$15,000 for homeowners), professional guidance and discounts for securing housing, and a 36-month membership to 36 Degrees North, a coworking space in Downtown Tulsa. 36 Degrees North offers programming that focuses on building community and professional networks for new residents
- By 2021, the program had added \$62 million in new local earnings - \$51.3 million directly attributable to relocated remote workers and \$10.7 million from the employment boost generated in the local economy. Supported 592 jobs - 394 jobs directly attributable to relocated remote workers and approximately 198 newly created full-time equivalent jobs based in Tulsa
- The program’s largest source markets were Dallas, Los Angeles, Austin, and New York
- There was an estimated \$13.77 boost in new local labor income for every dollar spent toward relocating a remote worker. Approximately one new job was created in Tulsa for every two remote workers who relocated

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could adopt a similar program by creating a financial incentive and, importantly, offering support for community-building (e.g. connecting participants to volunteer opportunities, recreational activities, and housing and leasing professionals; offering subsidized AirBnB stays so applicants can test different neighborhoods to live in, etc.)
- The program should micro-target a small number of source cities and industries (and be clear which positions are not eligible - (e.g., ride-share workers, remote workers))

## 5 Create a program to attract/retain startups

Create a program to recruit entrepreneurs/ founders to Baltimore, with benefits such as a business acceleration program, and access to coworking space, graduate students, mentors, and local corporates

### How to

- While these programs are common, there are many different models. e.g.,
- (1) Run a campaign to reach and engage entrepreneurs and startups in a particular market (e.g., Boston, New York), or from a particular vertical (e.g., healthcare, wearables, fintech)
- Invite the startups to compete for an “all expenses paid” 48-72 hour bootcamp in Baltimore, during which they will receive access to mentors, senior executives from local employers and technical assistance
- Partner with local employers (such as T Rowe Price, Under Armour, M&T Bank, and Johns Hopkins), as well as professional service providers (such as BDO, First Citizens) to help select the startups and deliver the program
- Partner with local hotels and airlines to defray travel and accommodation costs
- Run the bootcamp during a local festival, and offer free tickets as an extra incentive
- (2) Create a competitive, 1-3 month business acceleration program which is only open to entrepreneurs and startups from outside Baltimore
- Provide free space, access to mentors, and opportunities for participants to test their ideas and products with local corporates
- (3) Create a program to support Baltimore startups and university spin out companies, and give them incentives to remain in Baltimore - such as grant funding, subsidized space, recruitment support, and access to mentors and local corporates

### Benefits

- These types of programs can be effective in building the city's reputation, supporting local employers and the local startup ecosystem, and creating a “buzz”

### Risks

- The programs tend to be resource intensive, and only reach a small number of startups - many of which may never scale

### Resources

- 4x FTEs (for the duration of the program) to design and project manage the program, form partnerships and raise sponsorship, and do marketing and communications
- Access to local employers, professional services partners, mentors, and sponsors
- Access to incubator and business acceleration program partners

### Case Study

#### Helsinki, Finland. Helsinki Partners (official marketing/ attraction agency)

- [“90 Day Finns”](#) program is a program to attract talented entrepreneurs and new business ventures to Helsinki
- The strategy is to de-risk relocating to Helsinki, by offering an immersive experience, complete with a “landing pad” and guidance
- The program invites cohorts of 15 founders, investors, or business professionals, looking for opportunities to expand, to Helsinki
- For 90 days, participants receive an individualized guide to the local business ecosystem, free coworking space, and invitations to events
- The events range from industry-specific and networking events, to family-friendly leisure events Local businesses act as ambassadors
- Helsinki Partners covers the cost of relocations, provides visa assistance, and assistance to find accommodation, and schools/ childcare

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore could create a similar program for domestic audiences from a target industry sector
- A key goal would be to connect participants to local businesses, professional associations, trade shows/ conferences, which can lay a foundation for growth upon relocation
- Baltimore would need to leverage its many business service agencies and professional associations

## 6 Create a landing pack for entrepreneurs

Create a guide for entrepreneurs/ founders to set up a business in Baltimore and access local networks and assets

### How to

- Create tool kits, advice lines and events for recently arrived entrepreneurs and startups. e.g.,
  - Neighborhood guides
  - How to do business in the city
  - How to access local networks
  - Lists of qualified advisers
  - Lists of local conferences and events
  - Welcome receptions
  - Meaningful connections to the local tech ecosystem

### Benefits

- Simple to do and update annually, with limited resources

### Risks

- You are only reaching entrepreneurs and startups which have already decided to come to Baltimore

### Resources

- Can be created and delivered by the city's business development team

### Case Study

#### London (UK). London & Partners

- London & Partners created a guide to help inbound startups and tech-executives navigate London's tech ecosystem and find the best ways to expand their business there
- It pinpoints tech hotspots and clusters, the locations of tech giants, investors and potential clients.
- It offers half day walking tours of these hotspots - including where to meet like minded entrepreneurs and get great coffee
- It maps local tech, media and telecoms companies
- It lists useful contacts - to find clients, founders, new ideas, and talent
- It lists and describes accelerators, incubators, and co-working spaces
- It lists news, blog and meetup sites
- It offers practical information on how to set up in the city, and invites the startup to contact the business development team

### Adapt this approach

- Baltimore may be able to engage a student to create a guide as part of a capstone project





**Capacity to Deliver**

## 1 Secure State and Federal resources and support

**Funding to promote Baltimore is likely to be a combination of City and State general fund, Federal funding and local business/partner contributions**

- Situate your efforts in a public private nonprofit that can raise funds from local businesses, utilities, etc.
- Seek to access federal funding (CDBG, NMTC, HUD section 106, IRA, IIJA, etc.) and philanthropic grants



## 2 Build support tools

**Your promotional efforts will be underpinned by a number of digital/ data tools. These include:**

- An embedded, and properly configured, CRM tool
- Access to a PR and branding agency resource
- Access to local and comparable economic data (e.g., from Lightcast, Dewey, SafeGraph, Alignable, or Dealroom)
- (For targeted, digital marketing activities) Access to a database marketing platform (e.g. from Acxiom, or Powerlytics)
- Access to investor leads (e.g., from fDi Intelligence database, Gazelle.ai, or a lead generation consulting firm)

## 3 Build partnerships

### Success will be built on valuable partnerships with local employers and organizations

- Build a coalition of like-minded, local partners to support your promotional efforts
- The Mayor can be a valuable resource to create these partnerships
- Look to hire a full-time partnership manager to pitch the opportunities, onboard the partners and maintain the relationships

### Staff support need to have strong connections with

- The local business community
- Prominent local organizations
- Government departmental units

### Your promotional efforts can also be multiplied through partnerships with

- Site consultants
- Referral networks (e.g. legal and accounting firms, real estate consultants)
- Utility companies
- Colleges and universities
- Incubators and startup networks
- Business chambers and professional networks
- State and county departments and agencies
- The convention bureau and center and local event organizers

## 4 Build a dedicated team

### An early goal could be to grow a team of 6x FTEs, with an operational budget of at least \$250k, within 12 months

- Sales lead (x2)
- Data and research (x1)
- Marketing and PR (x1)
- Program management (x2)





This playbook was created by Bloomberg Associates for the City of Baltimore.

Bloomberg Associates is the philanthropic consulting arm of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable organization, Bloomberg Philanthropies. Founded in 2014, we work side by side with client cities to improve the quality of life for residents, taking a strategic, collaborative, and results-oriented approach to make cities stronger, safer, more equitable and more efficient. Our team of globally recognized experts and industry leaders has worked with cities across the globe on hundreds of projects in order to ignite change and transform a dynamic vision into reality.

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