

February 27, 2024

Ellen Janes, Executive Director
Jack Danna, Director of Commercial Revitalization



25 E. 20th Street
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-244-1775

Testimony before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Hearing on the Department of Housing Community Development Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget

Chair and Members of the Capital Budget Subcommittee:

We are writing to support the Department of Housing and Community Development's Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget. It is fantastic to see the generous expansion of demonstrably effective revitalization funding in DHCD's budget!

The power of flexible capital dollars to support innovative, catalytic community development projects has been clearly shown across Maryland. Because DHCD deploys these funds in accordance with comprehensive community revitalization plans and in tandem with other public and private investment, the projects these funds support represent the best possible chance to reverse decades of disinvestment. Few dollars in Maryland's budget have greater tangible impact or the power to leverage private investment in our distressed communities.

The Central Baltimore Partnership (CBP)—with 150+ active partners—is one of the largest users of the *Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Investment (BRNI)* program, and complementary *Project CORE* and *SEED* programs.

In the eleven neighborhoods we serve, over the past two years State support leveraged over \$25 million in public and private investment, a leverage ratio of over 8 to 1. These funds:

Redevelop vacant buildings and lots;

Create new community landmarks and other assets; and

Support new and legacy homeowners, small businesses, and the others who are working to build equitable communities.

With this expansion, we can achieve far greater revitalization impact and far sooner by integrating commercial and residential redevelopment and with an array of complementary projects. With this level of funding, we can tackle disinvestment more aggressively and simultaneously, rather than sequentially.

For example in the Station North Arts District we hope to:

Improve or create over 250 homes and repurpose 150,000 square feet of landmark commercial space;

Support the location or expansion of some 15 small businesses;

Create new neighborhood gathering spaces, gardens, walkways, and the installation of public art;

Protect the affordability and improve the safety of artists' studios and performing spaces; and

Spur the development of several acres of underused land into a mixed-use, mixed-income hub.

The opportunity presented with this capital framework ensures greater community revitalization outcomes. Thank you for your long-standing support for these exemplary programs.

We welcome and encourage all of you to visit Central Baltimore and the Arts District to experience the momentum you have made happen.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Ellen Janes
Executive Director



Jack Danna
Director of Commercial Revitalization