

CENTRAL BRANCH AVENUE CORRIDOR

Prince George’s County, MD



Project Areas

- Affordable/Workforce Housing
- Corridor Planning
- Design Economics
- Downtown Revitalization
- Economic Development
- Economic & Fiscal Impact
- Industrial City Turnaround
- Metropolitan Growth Strategy
- Neighborhood Planning
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Transit-Oriented Development

*Maryland-National Capital
Park and Planning
Commission*

Scope of Work

- Cluster Analysis
- Economic Impact
- Financial Modeling
- Fiscal Impact
- Implementation
- Market Analysis
- Partnership Structuring
- Public Financing
- Public Outreach
- Regional Economics
- Retail Tenanting
- Strategy Planning

Challenge

The Central Branch Avenue corridor had been in decline for several decades. Once a commercial district that served a tightly-knit and diverse surrounding neighborhood fabric, the commercial properties exhibited physical decline and degradation alongside a drop-off in the quality and caliber of the commercial tenants. In fact, many of the commercial properties were now occupied by non-retailers, while their physical placemaking suffered from a lack of identity, navigation/access challenges, unappealing aesthetics, and eroded competitive advantage. All this while major employers—such as the U.S. Census and Andrews Air Force Base—sat within the corridor market areas but did not seem to impact the corridor’s overall economic performance.

Solution

RCLCO conducted an outreach strategy and market/economic analysis of the corridor to determine the causes for its decline as well as recommend a series of action steps for revitalization and to enhance the climate of investment. We benchmarked the market areas against comparable study areas in the region to establish perceptual guidelines for the stakeholders. We communicated to the stakeholders that the corridor suffered not from too little retail, but rather from too much bad retail space, and that

an infusion of higher residential densities in concert with additional office capacity would be needed to balance the corridor’s portfolio of land holdings. We created specific action strategies—with both public and private actors identified—to breathe new life into five key strategic investment areas, and communicated these visions and findings to the public.

Impact

Our work serves as the foundation for a design process that is now getting underway. The design team has the benefit of inheriting a stakeholder and community group that has already seen the market and economic analysis and forecast, and has already begun to buy into some of the more controversial aspects of the strategy. We are continuing to work with M-NCPPC on implementing the vision through the design process and catalyzing public and private support for the plan.