ENTERPRISE ZONE APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Department of Commerce

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INTRODUCTION

The Maryland Enterprise Zone Program is a local economic development program established by the Maryland General Assembly that gives local governments the legal authority to offer economic incentives, including real property and income tax credits. The Department of Commerce (Commerce) was designated as the State agency responsible for coordinating the program. However, each zone is the creation and the responsibility of municipal and county governments. Through the establishment of local standards and the offering of additional local economic development incentives, the applicant has the ability to create an enterprise zone that meets its economic needs.

The State reimburses the local jurisdiction 50 percent of the revenue lost as a result of offering businesses located in its zone the property tax credit; however, this is subject to approval in the annual budget.

The purpose of this manual is to provide jurisdictions that are applying for enterprise zone designation with specific information about the application procedure in order to facilitate the application process. This manual should not be considered a substitute for the Enterprise Zone statute and regulations.

ENTERPRISE ZONE BENEFITS

Real property tax credits – Ten-year credit against local real property taxes on the value of a portion of real property improvements. The credit is 80 percent for the first five years and decreases 10 percent annually thereafter to 30 percent in the 10th and final year.

Income tax credits – One or three year credit for wages paid to eligible new employees. The general credit is a one-time $1,000 credit per new worker. For economically disadvantaged employees, the credit increases to a total of $6,000 per worker distributed over three years.

FOCUS AREA BENEFITS

Real property tax credits – Ten-year, 80 percent credit against local real property taxes on a portion of real property improvements. (Credit does not decline in a focus area as it does with the standard benefit.)

Personal property tax credits – Ten-year, 80 percent credit against local personal property taxes on new investment in personal property within a focus area. (Personal property tax credits are only available in focus areas.)

Income tax credits – One or three year credit for wages paid to new employees. The general credit is a one-time $1,500 credit for each new qualified position. For economically disadvantaged employees, the credit increases to a total of $9,000 per worker distributed over three years.

ENTERPRISE ZONE APPLICATION GUIDELINES

A. Who Can Apply

County Applicant: A county may apply for designation of an area as an enterprise zone within its corporate or political boundaries, but if any portion of the area is within a municipal corporation, the governing body of the municipal corporation must consent to the county's application.

- The required consent of the municipal corporation shall be obtained before submission of the application for designation, and the consent document shall be included as part of the application.
- The required consent document shall be in the form required by local law and the governing body of the municipal corporation.

Municipal Applicant:

- A municipality may apply for designation of an area as an enterprise zone within its corporate or political boundaries. Commerce policy requires that the municipality include in its application an expression of consent from its overlying county including that the county will offer the property tax credits. The consent document(s) shall be in the form required by local law and the governing body of the county.

Two or more political subdivisions may jointly apply for designation of an area as an enterprise zone if portions of the proposed area are within each of their common boundaries.

B. Limitations on Designation:

In general, Commerce may not designate more than six enterprise zones during a 12-month period. In addition, no more than two areas in a county may be designated an enterprise zone during a calendar year. Expansions of less than 25 percent the size of the original zone do not count against the limits described above.

C. Application Requirements

All applications and cover sheets must be typed. The application shall be complete and meet all stated requirements. All applications must be properly signed by the chief elected officer or officers in the case of a joint application. In jurisdictions having a separate legislative body, the applications should include a written expression of sentiment of the local elected governing body or bodies regarding the filing of an application for designation, in the form of a letter or resolution at the discretion of the local jurisdiction.

D. Application Deadline

Applications must be received on April 15 and October 15 each year. Late applications cannot be accepted. Applicants should submit by email to taxincentives.commerce@maryland.gov and caroline.kimani@maryland.gov and include GIS shapefiles of the boundaries of the enterprise zone.

Geospatial Data Submission Requirements

The proposed Enterprise Zone needs to meet the following criteria:

Align to parcels - Line work must align to the MDP Parcel Boundaries - No split parcels.
Line work must not split the MDP Parcel Boundaries.

One polygon - The submitted data must only contain one polygon.

Connector segments – When connector segments are used, the line work must follow the MDP Parcel Boundaries. If the parcel boundary is not present along the roadway ,please use your best judgment when drawing the line work: https://mdgeodata.md.gov/imap/rest/services/PlanningCadastre/MD_ParcelBoundaries/MapServer

The Maryland Clearing House

In accordance with established procedures of the Maryland State Clearinghouse, the application must be filed electronically with the Clearinghouse simultaneously with the filing of the application with the Department of Commerce. Please submit the electronic copy via PDF to mdp.clearinghouse@maryland.gov and if you have any questions for the Maryland State Clearinghouse, please contact mdp.clearinghouse@maryland.gov.

The Maryland Clearing House also requires that applicants provide the "X, Y" coordinates for the project
(1)Please submit the "X, Y" coordinates found in Google Maps to indicate the location of the Enterprise Zone.
(2)One pair is sufficient
(3)The Enterprise Zones covers a lot of territory so the following options can be used to pinpoint the general location of the Enterprise Zone:

a) "The beginning" can be either the easternmost or westernmost part of the proposed Enterprise Zone. For additional context, we are working to develop a map function for our Intergovernmental Monitor, which provides the public with all of the details of applications being processed through the Clearinghouse. Even though the entirety of the proposed Enterprise Zone won't be mapped, the public will be able to get additional details (including any maps submitted with an application) through the above function.
b) Use the address and Google Map coordinates for the County Seat or the Municipal Center.

ENTERPRISE ZONE APPLICATION

The application must be presented in the format listed below:

1. ***Cover Sheet*** that includes the following:

   - Name of local jurisdiction(s) applying (city/county)
   - Name and location of the proposed enterprise zone
   - Nature of application (New Designation, Expansion, Renewal)
   - Approximate land area of proposed enterprise zone (in acres or square miles). If an expansion, note both acreage of existing zone and acreage of the addition.
   - Specify the eligibility criteria being used for designation
   - Contact person's name, title, mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and email address
   - Signature of the chief elected official of the jurisdiction applying for designation with printed name, title, full mailing address, telephone number and date signed. If the application is being filed jointly by more than one jurisdiction, the signature of the chief elected official of each jurisdiction should be included.

2. ***Expression of Consent:***

   - Resolution of the county council or county board of commissioners.
   - Resolution of the city or town council of each municipality within the proposed enterprise zone.

   The *elected* governing body of each applicant, each underlying municipality, and each overlying county must consent to the submission of the application for designation. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure economic development coordination and cooperation between all jurisdictions affected by the proposed zone. The consent documents shall be obtained before submission of the application for designation, and the consent document shall be included as part of the application.

3. ***Written Confirmation for a State Priority Funding Area:*** To be eligible to receive the enterprise zone designation, the proposed area must be located in a State PFA defined under Code of Maryland, State Finance and Procurement Article, §5-7B-02 and §5-7B-03. Provide a confirmation letter from Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) that states that the entire area to be designated an enterprise zone in the application is within a State PFA, or submit written confirmation that the area meets an exception under §5-7B-03.

   To confirm if the proposed area is within a State PFA, please contact MDP by mail or email. MDP will provide a letter confirming if the area is a State PFA.

   The following language should be included in the letter/email: *"County/Municipality is applying for an Enterprise Designation for Spring/Fall 20XX from the State of Maryland. The county/municipality understands that the entire proposed enterprise zone area must be located within a State Priority Funding Area in order to receive the enterprise zone designation. Please confirm if the proposed area is within a State PFA"*.

   The letter/email must also include a GIS shapefile of the boundary or the real property information for the parcels in question. Please send the letter/email to:

Meagan Fairfield-Peak, Planner, Geospatial & Data
Analysis Maryland Department of Planning
120 East Baltimore Street, Suite 2000
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4. ***Documentation of Eligibility Requirements for an Enterprise Zone:*** Documentation showing the fulfillment of at least one requirement for designation as described under "Eligibility Requirements for an Enterprise Zone." This documentation should include the data source, the data, and the computations for the eligibility criterion being claimed by the applicant.

5. ***Maps:*** Maps should be easily read and the boundaries clearly marked and labeled. If this is a zone expansion or a focus area, the zone map should show both the existing zone and the proposed additions. Applicants should submit by email to caroline.kimini@maryland.gov a shapefile of the proposed zone.

   - *Enterprise Zone Map* – Provide a map that clearly shows the boundaries of the zone.
     - Written description of the boundaries- When a boundary runs down a street or highway, indicate whether parcels on both sides of the street are included in the zone or only the parcels in the inside boundary of the zone.
     - Provide a list of the existing or proposed capital improvement projects
   - *Vicinity Map* – The purpose of the *vicinity* map is to help put the zone in perspective. For example, this map may show the relationship of the zone to the business district, transportation arteries or facilities, colleges, vocational schools, or tourist centers. The purpose if this map is to show how the proposed zone fits into the economy of the area and how it might benefit from other local economic development assets.
   - *Parcel Map or Tax Map* – Provide a parcel map and parcel listing.
     - Identify properties that are within the proposed zone
     - Indicate those properties that are publicly or privately held
   - *Other Maps*
     - Zoning Map
     - Map showing statistical area of the eligibility criteria used in relation to the proposed zone (census tracts, block groups).

6. ***Written Narrative:*** In this section, the applicant should make the strongest case for why the area should be designated an enterprise zone. The written narrative should cover the following topics:

- Describe the economic, social and demographic nature of the zone.
- Describe the economy of the zone: is it a downtown area, industrial park, retail corridor? Who are the major employers and businesses in the zone? What is the condition of buildings in the zone and what percent are vacant?
- Explain the goals and objectives of the zone and their proposed outcomes
- Describe the development projects that are in the pipeline to begin construction within the next 12 months, or projects under consideration in the proposed zone.
- Describe the Local Standards
  The jurisdiction(s) applying for designation may impose local standards with which the business must comply as a precondition to receiving the incentives. Local standards are an opportunity to customize the proposed zone to meet your jurisdiction's economic development needs. For example, you can establish a local standard to require a minimum investment or minimum job creation level in order to receive certification. Local standards are subject to approval by the Secretary of COMMERCE.
- Describe any additional incentives and initiatives the jurisdiction may provide
- Discuss the feasibility of creating educational or training opportunities for employers and employees in the enterprise zone.
- Management Plan
  - Specify the person or group responsible for administering the zone and submitting the annual report
  - Specify plans to market the enterprise zone to potential businesses
  - Describe certification procedures that will be established for businesses to receive tax credits

7. If the size of the proposed enterprise zone exceeds 160 acres, provide a written justification of the size of the proposed zone.

8. ***Evidence and Certification of a Public Hearing:*** Evidence and certification that the political subdivision held a public hearing with adequate notice and publicity (at least two weeks prior to the public hearing) on the application before submission of the application. Include a copy of the public notice, an attendance list, and either minutes from the hearing or a resolution that has passed.

9. An application for redesignation must, by regulation, include the following additional information:

- An evaluation of the history and benefits of the existing zone
- An explanation of why portions of the existing enterprise zone are or are not included in the redesignation request as well as an explanation of why other areas are being added.
- A comparison of the economic development strategy for the redesignation or expansion with that of the existing zone.

10. Any other information that the applicant feels will help the Department determine the economic and community development merits of the application.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF AN ENTERPRISE ZONE

In order to apply for designation as an enterprise zone, the area must meet the following requirements, as outlined in Economic Development Article, § 5–704:

1. The entire area for which the county and/ or municipality is applying for enterprise zone designation must have been designated as a priority funding area or meet an exception under State Finance and Procurement Article, Subtitle 7B, Annotated Code of Maryland.

2. The area for which the county and/or municipality is applying for enterprise zone designation must satisfy at least one of the following four requirements:

- The average rate of unemployment is at least 150 percent of the average rate of unemployment in either the State of Maryland or the United States, whichever average rate is greater during that same period;
- The population is a low-income poverty area in which the proportion of families with less than poverty level incomes is at least 1.25 times the national proportion;
- At least 70 percent of the families have incomes that are less than an amount equal to 80 percent of the median family income within the political subdivision in which the area is located; or
- The population in the area decreased by 10 percent between the date of the most recent census and the date of the immediately preceding census and either chronic abandonment or demolition of the property is occurring in that area or substantial property tax arrearages exist within the area.

The suggested methodologies you can use to determine if your area satisfies one of the four criteria in (2) will be detailed in the following pages of this section. Whenever possible, it is preferable to use US or Maryland Government data rather than generating your own statistics, because the former are readily accessible and easily verified. In almost all instances, US Census data (through the American Community Survey) should be used in meeting requirements in two, three and four. Unemployment data for criteria one is available from the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation.

The American Community Survey

The socioeconomic data required to determine if an area meets the eligibility criteria in the past could be found using the US Decennial Census. Beginning in December 2010, that data can now be found in the US Census American Community Survey (http://www.census.gov/acs/www/). The American Community Survey is an annual survey of over 3.5 million households. It gathers information previously contained only in the long form of the Decennial Census. After the 2000 Census, the long form became the American Community Survey and will continue to collect long-form-type information. The survey provides annual estimates for areas with a population over 65,000, 3-year estimates for areas with a population over 20,000 and 5-year estimates for all areas.

Because the survey is conducted on an annual basis, the sample size is smaller than the Decennial Census which affects the reliability of the data for a small geographic unit. The tables provided in the American Community Survey include a column labeled “Margin of Error”. To reduce the margin of error of the data you analyze for eligibility, do not use data at the block group level and for census tracts with a large margin of error, group the census tracts together. This is especially important for more rural areas or areas with small population. Also, when comparing the same data point for

different geographies (i.e. the median household income for the county compared to the enterprise zone), use the file that is available for all geographies. For example, the 3-year estimate may be available for a county but will not be available at the census tract level. Therefore, you should use the 5-year estimates for both the county and tract level data. The examples provided in the following pages use the 5-year estimates from 2005-2009. However, if more recent data is available, you are required to use those estimates (for example, 5-year estimates for 2008-2012 is now available).

The Secretary may approve another source of data in conformance with Maryland Annotated Code, Economic Development Article, 5-704. If you choose to generate your own statistics, all background data, sources, methodologies and certification by the persons responsible must be supplied to the Office of the Secretary at least 60 days before the submission date.

In general, exact references for all data must accompany all applications. The Tax Incentive Group is responsible for verifying that applicants meet at least one of the four requirements above.

1. Average Rate of Unemployment

"The average rate of unemployment in the area, or within a reasonable proximity to the area but within the same county, for the most recent 18-month period for which data are available is at least 150 percent of the average rate of unemployment in either the State or the United States, whichever average rate is greater during the same period".

To determine if an area meets the criteria, you must compare the most recent 18-month unemployment rate of the area to 150% of the unemployment rate of Maryland or the United States, whichever is greater, for the same period.

Maryland and county level monthly unemployment data is available from the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation at the following website: http://www.dllr.state.md.us/lmi/laus/. US monthly unemployment data is provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and can be found at the following website: http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpsatab1.htm. Unfortunately, data is not available for areas smaller than the county level. To determine the unemployment rate for the area around the zone, census data at the census tract or group of census tracts level, using the American Community Survey, can be used to apply a small area adjustment to monthly county unemployment data to estimate the unemployment rate of the smaller area. This methodology is explained below.

To determine if an area smaller than a county meets the unemployment criteria, please follow the steps below:

1. Add up the total labor force for Maryland for the most recent 18-month period for which data is available. Add up the total unemployed in Maryland for the same period. Divide the total unemployed by the total labor force to determine the average unemployment rate for the 18-month period.
2. Add up the total civilian labor force for the United States and the total number of unemployed for the same period used for Maryland. Use the seasonally unadjusted data.
3. Use whichever unemployment rate, Maryland or US, is higher as the benchmark.
4. Add up the total labor force for the county in which the enterprise zone is located for the same period used for Maryland and the US. Add up the total unemployed and calculate the average unemployment rate for the 18-month period.

5. Use the American Community Survey 5-year estimates for small areas to find the unemployment data for the county in which the zone is located and for the census tract(s) you are analyzing to apply a small area adjustment. Information about the American Community Survey (ACS) can be found at: http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.
6. Add up the total civilian labor force for the county and for the smaller area. Add up the total unemployed for the same areas. Calculate the unemployment rates for both areas.
7. Using the unemployment rates calculated using American Community Survey data, divide the Census Tract(s) unemployment rate by the county unemployment rate.
8. Apply this ratio to the county's 18-month unemployment rate to approximate the unemployment of the smaller area for the same 18-month period.
9. If the unemployment rate is at least 150% higher than the benchmark unemployment rate (Maryland or the US), the area meets the eligibility criteria.

2. Low Income Poverty Area

"The population in the area or within a reasonable proximity to the area but within the same county has an incidence of poverty that is 125 percent of the national average".

In order to qualify for enterprise zone designation under the poverty area requirement, zone or area within reasonable proximity to the zone must have an incidence of poverty 125 percent of the national average. To determine if the area meets this criterion, follow the steps below:

1. Use the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates to determine the poverty status for families in the United States. Multiply this by 1.25 percent to determine the benchmark for this criterion.
2. Use the American Community Survey 5-year estimate to determine the poverty status for families in the area in the proposed zone or within reasonable proximity.
3. For example, if you are using the 2005-2009 estimates, the percentage of families with incomes below the poverty level is 9.9%. Therefore, for an area to qualify, it must have at least 12.4% of families with incomes below the poverty level. If more recent estimates are available, you will have to recalculate this benchmark.

3. The Median Family Income Requirement

"At least 70 percent of the families living in the area or within a reasonable proximity within that county to that area have incomes that are less than an amount equal to 80 percent of the median family income within the political subdivision in which the area is located".

To determine if an area meets the income criterion, follow the steps below.

1. Use the American Community Survey 5-year estimates to determine the median family income for the county in which the proposed zone will be located. Multiply the median family income by 80 percent.
2. To determine the number of families in the enterprise zone having incomes equal to or less than 80 percent of median family incomes in the county, find the income data by income class for the area within the zone or within reasonable proximity.

3. Next, determine the number of families in the enterprise zone (or proximate area) having incomes equal to or less than 80 percent of median family income in the political jurisdiction. The ACS table gives the number of families by income class. The income classes range from "less than $5,000" to "$50,000 or more." The number of families by income class can then be added, starting with the "less than $5,000" class up to the income class containing the income figure calculated in step one, i.e., 80 percent of the median family income of the political jurisdiction.

For example, if 80 percent of the overlying jurisdiction's median family income is calculated to be $5,250 and the number of families in the income class $5,000 to $5,999 is 100, then the number of families in that income class with incomes equal to or less than $5,250 is:

[($5,250 - $5,000)/($5,999 - $5,000)] x 100
= ($250/$999) x 100
= 0.25 x 100 = 25 families

The total number of families with incomes equal to or less than 80 percent of the median family income is divided by the total number of families in the political jurisdiction to see whether 70 percent of the families in the prospective enterprise zone area have equal or lower incomes. If so, then the area is eligible to be considered for designation.

4. The Population Decrease/ Property 'Abandonment" Requirement

To qualify under this requirement, a prospective enterprise zone (or the smallest area including the zone for which data are available) must have had a 10 percent or larger decline in population between the last two censuses (2010 and 2000) and have experienced chronic abandonment or demolition of property, or substantial property tax arrearages. For this criterion, you must use Decennial Census data. Population changes in Maryland jurisdictions between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses are available from the Maryland Department of Planning State Data Center or directly from the U.S. Bureau of the Census (http://www.census.gov).

The second phase of this requirement is a demonstration to the Secretary's satisfaction that either chronic abandonment or demolition of property is occurring in the prospective enterprise zone (or proximate area) or substantial property tax arrearages exist within the area. To meet this criterion, the applicant must show the pattern over at least three points in time.

Political jurisdictions may find it easier to document property tax arrearages because such information is already collected, but in this case they must demonstrate an increasing pattern, over three years, of the number of buildings with property tax arrearages.

Similarly, if a jurisdiction wishes to demonstrate chronic abandonment or demolition of property in the prospective enterprise zone or proximate area, the pattern of abandonment/ demolition over three years should be presented.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS OF A FOCUS AREA

In order to apply for designation as a focus area, the area must meet the following requirements, as out-lined in Economic Development Article, § 5–706.

1. The proposed focus area must first be entirely within an existing enterprise zone or within an area being proposed as an enterprise zone.

2. The area meets at least three of the following criteria:

- The average rate of unemployment is at least 150 percent of the average rate of unemployment in either the State of Maryland or the United States, whichever average rate is greater during that same period;
- The population has an incidence of poverty that is 150 percent of the national average;
- The crime rate in the area is at least 150 percent of the crime rate in the political subdivision in which the area is located, based on crime statistics that:
    - Conform with standards set forth under the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reporting Program or the National Crime Victimization Survey, and
    - Are "aggregated categories" that include both violent crimes and crimes against property;
- The percentage of substandard housing in the area is at least 200 percent of the percentage of housing units in the State that are substandard, according to data from the U.S Census, or other State or federal government data considered appropriate by the Secretary, including any of the following measures:
    - The proportion of housing units without complete kitchen facilities,
    - The proportion of housing units without complete bathroom facilities,
    - The proportion of boarded-up units, or
    - The number of occupants per occupied housing unit;
- The percentage of square footage of commercial property that is vacant is at least 20 percent.

Suggested methodologies you can use to determine if your area satisfies the criteria in (2), above, are detailed in the following pages of this section. Whenever possible, it is preferable to use U.S. Government data rather than generating your own statistics, because the former are readily accessible and easily verified. Please see the summary of the American Community Survey in the previous section. However, if you choose to generate your own statistics, all background data, sources, methodologies and certification by the persons responsible must be supplied to the Department of Commerce at least 60 days before the submission date.

In general, exact references for all data must accompany all applications. The Tax Incentive Group is responsible for verifying that applicants meet at least three of the five focus area eligibility requirements under (2), above.

1. Average Rate of Unemployment Criterion

"The average rate of unemployment in the area, or within a reasonable proximity to the area but within the same county, for the most recent 18-month period for which data are available is at least 150 percent of the average rate of unemployment in either the State or the United States, whichever average rate is greater during the same period."

This criterion is the same as the unemployment criterion for designation as an enterprise zone. Therefore, the method of computation and the data sources are the same. This is explained in detail in the previous section on enterprise zone eligibility.

2. Very Low Income Poverty Area Criterion

"The population in the area or within a reasonable proximity to the area but within the same county has an incidence of poverty that is 150 percent of the national average."

This criterion is similar to the Low Income Poverty Area criterion for enterprise zone eligibility. The only difference is that the criterion is 150 percent of the national average proportion of families below the poverty level rather than 125 percent. Therefore, the method of computation and the data sources are the same. For example, using the ACS 2005-2009 estimates, the percentage of families with incomes below the poverty level is 9.9%. Therefore, for an area to qualify, it must have at least 14.8% of families with incomes below the poverty level. If more recent estimates are available, you will have to recalculate this benchmark.

3. High Crime Rate Criterion

"The crime rate in the area or within a reasonable proximity to the area but within the same county is at least 150 percent of the crime rate in the political subdivision in which the area is located, based on crime statistics that: (a) conform with standards set forth under the F.B.I. Uniform Crime Reporting Program or the National Crime Victimization Survey, and (b) are "aggregated categories" that include both violent crimes and crimes against property".

4. Substandard Housing Criterion

"The percentage of substandard housing in the area or within a reasonable proximity to the area but within the same county is at least 200 percent of the percentage of housing units in the State that are substandard, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, or other State or federal government data considered appropriate by the Secretary, including any of the following measures developed from the Decennial Census of Population and Housing, Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce. "

The regulations permit the use of any one of several measures contained in the American Community Survey. These are: a) The proportion of housing units without complete kitchen facilities; b) The proportion of housing units without complete bathroom facilities; c) The proportion of boarded-up units; or d) The number of occupants per occupied housing unit.

- *Kitchen Facilities Criterion*

  For example, according to the American Community Survey 2005-2009 Estimates, Maryland had 2,313,193 housing units of which 36,695 housing units lacked complete kitchen facilities. Therefore, only 1.59 percent of Maryland's total housing units lacked complete kitchen facilities. Therefore, to meet the focus area eligibility criteria using this measure, in the local area, 3.17 percent of housing units must lack complete kitchen facilities. If more recent estimates are available, you will have to recalculate this benchmark.

- *Plumbing Facilities Criterion*

  For example, according to the American Community Survey 2005-2009 Estimates, Maryland had 2,313,193 housing units of which 26,412 housing units lacked plumbing facilities. Therefore, 1.14 percent of Maryland's housing units lacked plumbing facilities. To meet the focus area eligibility criteria using this measure, in the local area, 2.28 percent of housing units must lack plumbing facilities. If more recent estimates are available, you will have to recalculate this benchmark.

- *Boarded-up Units Criterion*

  The Census does not provide information on "boarded-up" housing units. Rather, data is collected on whether or not a housing unit is occupied or vacant. Therefore, the Department allows the use of this vacancy data as a proxy for "boarded-up" units. For example, according to the American Community Survey 2005-2009 Estimates, Maryland had 2,313,193 housing units of which 2,092,538 were occupied and 220,655 were vacant. Therefore, 9.54 percent of Maryland's housing units were vacant. In order to meet the focus area eligibility criteria using this measure, in the local area, 19.08 percent of housing units must be vacant. If more recent estimates are available, you will have to recalculate this benchmark.

- *Occupants Per Unit Criterion.*

  According to the American Community Survey 2005-2009 Estimates, Maryland had 2,313,193 housing units of which 2,092,538 were occupied. These units were occupied by approximately 5,495,445 persons (3,990,572 owner-occupants and 1,504,873 renters). Therefore, there was an average of 2.63 persons per occupied housing unit in Maryland. In order to meet the focus area eligibility criteria using this measure, in the local area, there must be an average of 5.25 persons in each occupied housing unit. If more recent estimates are available, you will have to recalculate this benchmark.

5. Vacant Property Criterion

"The percentage of square footage of commercial property that is vacant in the area or within a reasonable proximity of the area but within the same county is at least 20 percent, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, or other State or federal government data considered appropriate by the Secretary, including data collected by a county or municipality and approved by a unit of State government."

This data is not available from the U.S. Census. However, MdProperty View, a Geographic Information System database maintained by the Maryland Department of Planning, includes assessment

data on each taxable property, including the classification of the property, its assessed value, and the square footage of the property. Using a GIS Software package like ArcGIS, you can create a boundary map of the area you are analyzing, extract a list of all properties classified as commercial, and compute the aggregate square footage of the properties.

MDProperty View will provide the total square footage of commercial property in the zone. The applicant must do a local survey or use its own data source to determine the vacant square footage in the area's commercial buildings. The applicant does not have to document every vacant property in the proposed zone, just enough that the area meets the statutory criteria of 20 percent.

CONTACTS

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