



HOWARD COUNTY
ROUTE 1 TAX CREDIT PROGRAM
COUNCIL BILL
NO. 33-2017

MAY 15, 2017





Route 1 Tax Credit Program

Background

Purpose

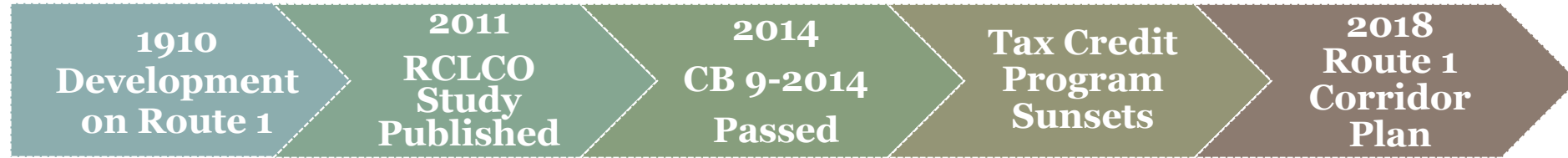
Projects

Future





Background



- The Robert Charles Lesser & Co. (RCLCO) Study identified Route 1 as an important employment corridor for the County but acknowledged that long stretches of Route 1 frontage included “a hodgepodge of longstanding commercial visual blight”.
- CB 9 – 2014 approved to fund a four-year tax credit program for commercial and industrial properties that front Route 1
- CB 33-2017 requests to extend the program until the Route 1 Corridor Plan is complete



Background

Year 1: Slow Start

DPZ, the EDA, and Finance rejected several applications for the following reasons:

- Businesses were not current on property taxes
- Applicants were not in compliance with zoning regulations
- Property owners proposed improvements that did not meet program requirements





Background

Years 2-4: Gained traction but continued slow pace

- *Approved* three applications
- *Assisted* two property owners from pre-approval through final tax credit verification process (including review of all required documentation and a signed maintenance agreement)
- *Held* one application due to sunset
- *Communicated* recently with three interested property owners awaiting the extension



Purpose

- *Supports* renovations, rehabilitation and upgrades of commercial and industrial properties that front Route 1 (adjacent to Route 1 or must adjoin a Route 1 parcel and be visible from the roadway)
- *Provides* property tax credit for eligible improvements (up to \$100,000)
- *Caps* program to \$500,000 per fiscal year
- *Encourages* revitalization
- *Creates* an opportunity for owners to apply for a property tax credit for improvements they make to their property



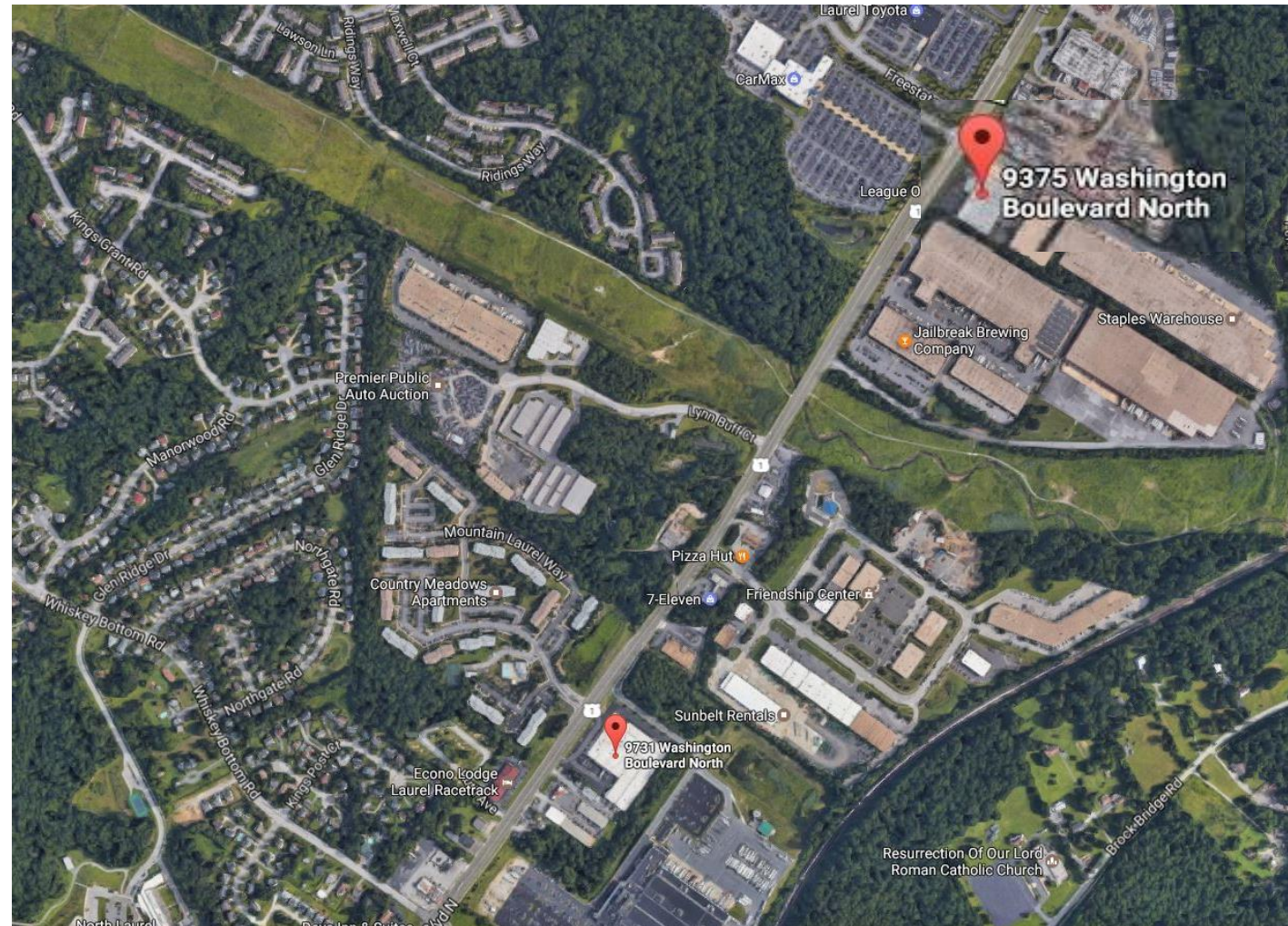
Exterior Improvements

- exterior improvements to a building façade
- exterior painting and cleaning
- structural improvements to a building façade
- structure mounted signage, canopies, shutters/awnings
- screening of utility, trash or storage enclosures
- enhanced exterior building lighting
- replacement or enhancement of streetscape amenities





Projects





Route 1 Tax Credit Program 9375 Washington Boulevard

Before



After





Route 1 Tax Credit Program 9731 Washington Boulevard

Before



After





Next Steps

Extend to Years 5 and 6: DPZ, the EDA, and Finance continue the program until the Route 1 Corridor Plan is complete

- Allow approved projects to receive full tax credit amount
- Process the one pending application
- Work with two other interested property owners to complete applications for pre-approval
- Process five properties per year along Route 1



Approval of CB-33-2017



Future

- Continues to support the employment sector on Route 1
- Provides incentives for significant property enhancements along Route 1
- Extends tax credits until the completion of the Route 1 Corridor Plan which may make recommendations to amend, eliminate, or replace the tax credit program