



OUR MISSION

The mission of the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce is to promote an economic environment which attracts new businesses while allowing established business to prosper. The Chamber is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in the region it serves by reinvesting its resources in all phases of community life.

OUR COMMUNITY

The Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce serves a beautiful area on the east side of Baltimore County, including a vast waterfront. Come dine in our restaurants, visit our parks and amenities, sail from our marinas and take advantage of our business opportunities.

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Chamber Chairman's Update

May, 2023

Chamber Events in Early 2023

Dear Chamber Members and Friends:

As the new Board Chair, I am amazed at all of the wonderful things that the Chamber does! I am no stranger to the Chamber, having served on the Board for a few years. However, my primary focus at that time was my full-time job. Now that I am chairing the Board of Directors, I'm fully focused on Chamber business. Just in case you missed them, here are some highlights of things that your Chamber has done so far this year.

We started the year with **"A Magical Evening"** at the renovated Flagship Cinemas at Eastpoint. The swearing in of the new Chamber Board, a Business Awards Ceremony and a magic show made for an exciting evening.

In February, we assisted with the grand opening for **"A Step Ahead Dance"**, one of our newest Chamber members, located along MD-43.

Also, on February 9th, we took part in the **"Winter Mega-Networking"** event in Towson. If you have not attended one of these Mega-Networking events, you are missing out on a tremendous opportunity to connect with other businesses and potential customers.

In March, we hosted your elected officials for a **"County Council Briefing"** at the Library in Perry Hall. Thanks to Council members Marks, Ertel, and Crandell, for taking the time to attend and update us on current legislative issues.

This year's **"Bull & Shrimp Feast"** was held at Rosedale Gardens and was a HUGE success!! If you missed it, you missed a fun evening. We have collaborated with the Marine Trades Association of Baltimore County and booked the same venue for next year on March 23. I guarantee you that tickets will sell out fast.

The weather was a bit of a challenge early April 29, but the sun came out in the afternoon, and we had a beautiful day. Our **"All About Maryland"** festival at Gunpowder State Park was a very nice event, featuring fine crafters, artisans, and a car show. If you have never been to the park, I highly encourage you to do so. The waterfront is beautiful.

The **"Legislative Wrap-Up Breakfast"** was held on May 4 at Two Guys Grill & Pub and featured presentations by Senators Klausmeier, Salling, and Jennings, and Delegate Nawrocki. Your chamber coordinates these events to give you an opportunity to hear first hand from your elected officials and ask them questions. If you have not attended one of these, you are truly missing a golden opportunity.

Humbly, Your Chairman, *Al Pollard*



Membership Corner



As the Chairman of the Board, one of my top goals is to double the Chamber membership in two years!!! Yes, two years!

With that being said, **YOUR CHAMBER NEEDS YOU!!!**

Your Chamber does so much amazing work in your community and on your behalf that there is no way that every business is NOT a Chamber Member. **“NO WAY”**

I must give a huge shout out to the membership committee for all of the incredible work that they have been doing to not only identify and engage prospective members, but also to re-engage past members. Thank you Jessica, Sophia, Juanita, Ceal, Travis, etc. Please consider joining this wonderful group of volunteers. The time commitment is minimal. The committee meets once a month, and then the members are off on their own recruiting and welcoming new members. I humbly ask you to PLEASE consider being a member of this committee! As I stated previously, **YOUR CHAMBER NEEDS YOU!!!**

**“Each one
bring one”**

Your Chamber leadership has been very intentional in our approach to membership and are very happy to welcome all of our new members this year. Thank you for being a member! And to our returning members—Welcome back!! The list of NEW members includes:

Arrow Child & Family Ministries, Cogar Printing, Maryland Heating & Air, Eastern Yacht Club, Chesapeake Real Estate Group, A Step Ahead Dance, State Farm-Tony Pearce Agent LLC, ISI Elite Training White Marsh.



One of the questions that we get asked frequently from prospective members is this, “What is the benefit to me?” We discuss all of the networking and learning opportunities to grow their business; however, I think we may be able to offer more. So, here is my question to you, our members. If someone calls or walks in to your business and identifies themselves as a Chamber member, are you able/willing to offer a Chamber member discount? I honestly believe that the Chamber can drive more business to you, and it’s up to you how you want to participate. We really would love to hear from you about this initiative. This is a win-win for all of our members.

Moving forward, my challenge for you is this—**each one bring one!** If you are a current member, we humbly ask that you recruit a new member. There may even be a reward in it for you.

COME — STAY — PLAY

Now that the weather is getting warmer, it’s time to get out and enjoy some local tourist attractions and events. With its convenient proximity to the Chesapeake Bay, numerous historic attractions and great dining and entertainment, Baltimore County offers a wealth of opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Come dine in our restaurants, visit our parks and amenities, sail from our marinas and take advantage of our business opportunities.

Baltimore County is no stranger to incredible hiking, biking and walking trails. Our scenic destination offers hundreds of trails adorned with rich wooded hillsides, diverse topography and rich ecosystems. One of my favorite places is [Gunpowder Falls State Park](#). If you have not been there, you are truly missing out. Admission is free for active duty military and veterans.

Here are other attractions to explore--[Marshy Point Nature Center](#), [Glenn L. Martin Maryland Aviation Museum](#), [Rocky Point Golf Course](#), [Urban Air Trampoline & Adventure Park](#), [iFly](#), [Heritage Society of Essex & Middle River, Inc.](#), [the Go-Kart Track](#), & [Bengie’s Drive-in Theatre](#).



Essex Revitalization Efforts

For years, the Chesapeake Gateway Chamber of Commerce has been actively engaged in initiatives to support and revitalize the business community in Essex. To provide some recent history about these efforts, in 2017, a group of Chamber and community leaders approached the Chamber leadership about helping to eliminate rats, graffiti, crime, trash, vacant structures, etc. in Essex. A Chamber committee was created and eventually became known as the Eastern Baltimore County Task Force (EBCTF). It is this group that has been working to address these issues in Essex and make improvements to the business corridor along Eastern Boulevard.

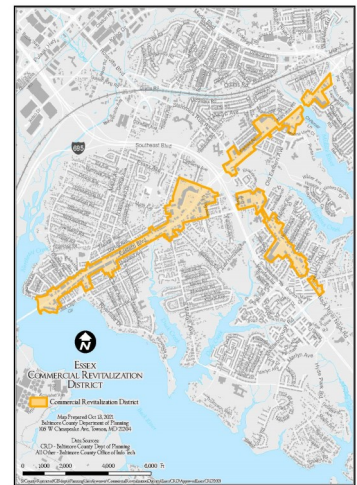


Sharon Kihn & Chrissy Erb



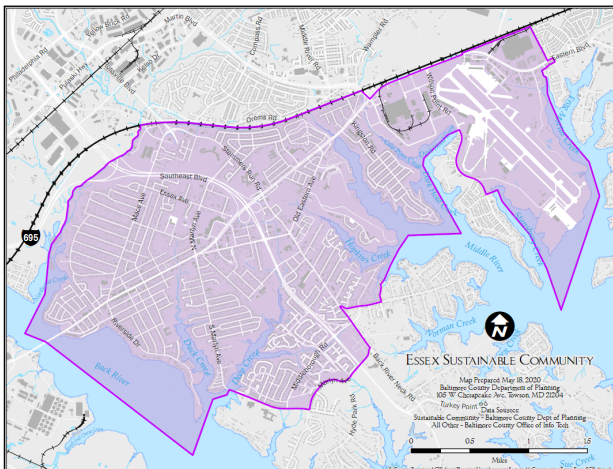
The Chamber has been able to obtain grants from Baltimore County and the State of Maryland to procure and install items such as trash cans, signage, banners, large flowerpots and benches. Grants also have covered all of the flowers and shrubs in pots, planters and the two gateway gardens, the new Landmark Sculpture by the Back River bridge, renovations to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel's cafeteria to turn it into a community hall, the Essex Farmers' Market, and the soon-to-be-built turf field for soccer, lacrosse and football at Renaissance Park.

As the number of projects continued to expand, the EBCTF and Chamber President Sharon Kihn sought assistance from Baltimore County to hire a full-time project director for Essex, and Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski and the Department of Planning really came through. Funding from the American Rescue Plan Act enabled the Chamber to hire Chrissy Erb in mid-January as Director, Essex Development Initiative, to lead these efforts. In partnership with the EBCTF, Baltimore County and local stakeholders, Chrissy is continuing efforts to revitalize Essex. In the first quarter of 2023, in cooperation with the Essex police precinct, we developed a program which provides grants to business owners for security cameras, with the goal of deterring crime in the area. We also have developed a program which provides business owners in the Essex Commercial Revitalization District and Essex Sustainable Community Area with the opportunity to access to funding to improve the exterior/façade of their buildings.



The Eastern Baltimore County Task Force has expanded to become the TAP (Technical Assistance Panel) Implementation Steering Committee for the Essex Development Initiative. This group of dedicated professionals from the Chamber, local businesses and nonprofits, government, schools, churches, and the community, is gearing up to create, plan and implement targeted activities and initiatives to support Essex businesses and attract new businesses to the area. In the upcoming months, business owners can expect

to hear more about opportunities to network and discuss issues and opportunities that impact commerce. Also, everyone can expect to see upgrades to storefronts along Eastern Boulevard, improvements to sidewalks and streetscape on Eastern Blvd. and Marlyn Ave., as well as cultural events, festivals, food related activities. Stay up-to-date on these happenings via the Chamber's website and by liking and following social media for the Chamber and the Essex Development Initiative. Exciting things are taking place in Essex. If you are interested in learning more or becoming actively involved, please contact Chrissy Erb at chrissy.erb@chesapeakechamber.org or 443.579.7974.





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Treasurer TBD
Immediate Past Chair
Sophia Montgomery

We have **significantly** increased our online presence thanks to our Marketing and Communications Committee. You rock!!! We wish to thank Sharon Kehnemui for starting us down this path, Yina Rojas, our new committee Chair and the growing number of new committee members. We appreciate you and all that you are doing for the Chamber. :-)

Now we humbly ask ALL of our members to do three things: follow us on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), then "like" the Chamber posts, and finally, "**share**" what the chamber posts. There is so much that your Chamber does that no one knows about. We need your help to share our story.



A very special "**Thank You**" goes to our two interns - Westley Cook and Sang Nguyen, who will be graduating from high school this month. Congratulations and best wishes.

Important News: Maryland Air National Guard Hosts Civic Leaders



The Maryland Air National Guard (MANG) hosted a group of civic leaders at Martin State Air National Guard Base in Middle River on March 31, 2023, to share information regarding the future of the Maryland's 175th Wing and the base it calls home. During the engagement, leaders from the MANG, Maryland Aviation Administration, and Martin State Airport briefed local leaders on the status of the Martin State Airport runway renovation, 175th Wing's efforts to secure a future fighter mission, and cyberspace and intelligence operations expansion.

Before the briefings, civic leaders had the opportunity to network and examine an A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft. Guests were able to speak with pilots and view the cockpit while learning about the MANG and the A-10 mission. After the networking hour, MANG Brig. Gen. Drew Dougherty, Assistant Adjutant General--Air, kicked off the briefings by welcoming the group to Martin State Airport, outlining the topics that would be discussed during the event, and emphasizing that the Maryland Air National Guard and its members are a cornerstone in the community.

"I want to start off by saying 'thank you' for coming here tonight to learn about the Maryland Air National Guard and what the future looks like for us," said Dougherty. "There are a lot of things that are happening that are impacting the Maryland Air National Guard and the Maryland Aviation Administration, and we wanted to talk to you about what we think is in the best interest of both organizations."

Dougherty discussed the Air Force's decision to retire the A-10 Thunderbolt II from the Air Force inventory and how that may affect the wing. The Air Force will divest 42 A-10s in the coming year, although none of those aircraft will come from Maryland. But as the A-10 force continues to draw down, its impact will begin to be felt within the state over the next five to seven years, with the possibility that the 175th Wing could be forced to convert to a non-flying mission and move out of Martin State Airport.



"We are going to lose our A-10s, so we need to be in a position to compete for future fighters, whether it's F-35s, F-15EXs, or perhaps F-16s as a stopgap until more advanced aircraft become available," he said. "I will tell you that the ACC commander, Gen. Mark Kelly, has said the Air Force – which is the active duty, Guard, and reserve – needs 60 fighter squadrons to handle steady-state operations and right now the Air Force has 57." Read the full story [HERE!!](#)

Upcoming Chamber Events

The Chamber's Program Committee is working very hard planning networking opportunities, information sessions and other events.

Our annual "**Awards for Excellence in Education**" ceremony will take place on Tuesday, May 23, from 6-8 pm at CCBC. Join us as we honor our outstanding local teachers and support professionals. Special thanks to the Chamber's Workforce Development Committee for planning this wonderful event.

Here is an awesome opportunity to connect with business leaders countywide "**Spring Mega Networking**" June 1, 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Marriott Owings Mills Metro Center.

Ironbirds Game July 15, Leidos Field at Ripken Stadium in Aberdeen. Bring the entire family out to watch the game, and stay for the spectacular fireworks.

Here is a "**Members Only**" event. Lunch, briefing and tour at **Tradepoint Atlantic** on July 27, 11:30 to 1:30.