

Welcome to  
**Baltimore Rising**<sup>1</sup>

***"Without a thriving, all-inclusive city economy, nothing else works."***

### **What is Baltimore Rising**

We are a non-profit 501(c)(4) organization dedicated to encouraging economic development and growth that reduces unemployment and poverty in the city of Baltimore. The result will be a more confident, more optimistic, forward-thinking city with dramatically less crime and a far brighter future.

We're going to do this by teaching voters the importance of job creation and other benefits of economic growth as a means of revitalizing their city and improving the lot of their individual families. Those voters will, in turn, elect a new Mayor and City Council next April whose attitude and experience is business-friendly to an extent unmatched in the city's history. There will be a new Mayor and City Council committed to creating jobs, reducing unemployment and poverty – and to increasing total property tax and income tax revenues, even while lowering our property tax rates.

In addition to a new city government that will focus its efforts on far-reaching economic development, we're going to encourage the process of development through new legislation and other initiatives – with or without a new city government.

### **Background**

Baltimore is a city in crisis – a great city fighting for its life, struggling against the odds to make a comeback before it's too late.

- **In the past 60 years, the City of Baltimore has lost a third of its population.** Over 300,000 people left the city for its more prosperous, safer, better-educated suburbs. Needless to say, the impact on the city's economy and on the two-thirds still here has been devastating.

**In 1950, Baltimore was the 6th largest city in the United States with a population of 949,708. Our population in 2010 was only 621,210. That's a loss of 328,498 people or 34.6% of the city's population. We are now only the 26th largest city in the country.**

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<sup>1</sup> **Please Note...** Contributions or gifts to Baltimore Rising, Inc. are not deductible as charitable contributions for income tax purposes. Contributors and amounts contributed are disclosed only to the Internal Revenue Service. Baltimore Rising, Inc. is a non-stock Maryland corporation that has filed with the IRS for designation as a 501(c)(4) tax-exempt organization. Approval of tax-exempt status from the IRS is pending.

- **In Baltimore, the unemployment rate is 8.2%.<sup>2</sup>** (The unemployment rate in Maryland, including Baltimore City, is only 5.4%.) And these are just reported numbers. They don't include people who have given up searching for employment and the tens of thousands who are under-employed, who are working **well below their abilities and potential.**

**There are at least 24,491 unemployed people in Baltimore who are looking for work.**

- **One in four of our city's families live below the poverty level and there is dramatic disparity in family income.** Maryland is a prosperous state. Round numbers, statewide median household income is \$74,000. It's \$61,000 among White families in Baltimore, but only \$34,000 among Black families.

**Over 60,000 of the city's 240,000 households are making less than \$24,250 per year, before taxes.**

- **No city can lose a third of its population from the top down and continue to endure substantial unemployment and poverty for decades without severe consequences.** The shootings we read about daily in the headlines and breaking television news? The failure of a government that doesn't have the resources to take care of our City and its families? They are the consequences we're talking about.

- **Our city government is going broke.** According to the 2013 "Ten-Year Financial Plan" commissioned by the Mayor and City Council, without extreme corrective measures and very significant increases in city revenues, the Baltimore City government – including unfunded obligations for pensions – will be in the red by \$2 to \$3 billion by the end of the 10 year plan. **Even without taking unfunded liabilities into account and net of cutbacks and adjustments by the current administration – and assuming that nothing goes wrong and that long-term projections are accurate – the city will still be in the red by \$393,000,000 in fiscal 2022.**

**Without extreme corrective measures, our city government will be broke in less than 6 years.**

And what is our city government's answer to this fiscal emergency? It's only solution is to cut programs, including public employee and retiree compensation and benefits, sell off income-producing city-owned assets and postpone critically needed maintenance and repair of the city's infrastructure. Unfortunately, cutting back isn't a long-term solution and actually makes our city's economy weaker. Cutting back diminishes the quality of our life in Baltimore – and makes the city less attractive to employers and commuters who might consider moving here.

<sup>2</sup> As of June 2015.

The only real and long-term solution to this fiscal crisis is to redefine and grow the city's economy to produce substantial increases in property and income tax revenues. And we need to do that without increasing taxes to those who already live and own businesses here. In fact, we should actually be lowering the city's property tax rate.

## **Purpose**

Baltimore Rising's objectives are twofold:

1. Our primary objective is to **refocus voter attention** on the rebuilding of the economy of Baltimore. Using creative, highly effective traditional and digital media, we will:

- **Educate** our city's likely voters.

In a recent Baltimore Rising poll of a specially selected subset of registered voters, we asked respondents what they thought was the most important problem facing their city. Their answer was "Crime." But then when we asked them what they thought was the cause of all this crime, their answer was, "Jobs. There aren't enough jobs. Too many unemployment. Too many families living in poverty." No question about it, the economy is on these respondent's minds, but not yet at the level that will effect the changes Baltimore needs to survive and prosper.

It will take time, but when our commercials and digital advertising gets our message out there, the answer to that first question about the city's most serious problem will be, **"It's the economy.** Not enough jobs, chronic unemployment and poverty. Not enough people and employers to pay he taxes we need to maintain essential services and improve the quality of our lives. These are the root causes of the crime and the other social ills that plague our city."

- **Persuade** reluctant voters to participate in next year's elections.

In the 2012 Democratic primary, with an uncontested Presidential race, turnout was less than 15% of registered voters. It is one of Baltimore Rising's most important missions to convince the other 85% of what we call "reluctant" or "unlikely voters" that there is far too much at stake for them to sit back and let the fate of their city be determined by so few of their fellow Baltimoreans.

- **Motivate** candidates for Mayor, for President of the City Council and for the City Council.

Baltimore Rising wants the people of this city to have better choices. We want qualified candidates running for every major city office, running against each other, to adopt a philosophy of government that opens up the city of Baltimore

for job-intensive, tax revenue-rich economic development and growth the likes of which this city has never seen.

This is a process of voter education. Our message rings true. And when it resonates – through the creative, highly effective use of traditional and digital media – it will be an inspiration to voters who determine which candidates for Mayor and City Council will be elected – because those candidates appreciate the overriding importance of economic growth as a permanent solution to our city's social and fiscal problems.

2. In the process, we will **initiate and encourage legislation, government programs and initiatives** that will effect significant, near-term, enduring reductions in unemployment and poverty – while growing the City's population and tax base to ensure the solvency of our government and the continued delivery of essential services.

***"We will put this City to work."***

And we're going to do more than "voter education." We're actually going to help put people to work. How?

- We will create jobs **organically** by helping local businesses obtain the capital and corporate mentoring they need to grow.
- We will create jobs by encouraging employers to move to our city by making them exceptional offers of land and financing if they hire our un- and under-employed. **A third of the city is vacant. Vacant land and huge numbers of un- and under-employed are Baltimore's two great capital resources that we will leverage to ignite a recovery.** We're going to use these resources to rebuild the manufacturing sector of our city's economy with next generation facilities that re-employ our city's workers.
- We're going to **refocus the use of TIFs** (Tax Increment Financing) and other Baltimore Development Corporation programs to support labor intensive and tax revenue-producing development in the most disadvantaged communities of the city.
- We will create jobs **by making Baltimore the location of choice** for companies around the country interested in expanding production – companies that would otherwise go to southern states or out of the country.
- We will create jobs by working with private sector investors and builders to **refurbish vacant housing** and then using those homes – and affordable financing to buy them – to entice commuters to move into the city.
- We'll create jobs **by encouraging** grocery store chains, office supply companies, new car dealerships and many other **companies missing from our**

**city** to believe in Baltimore rising and open locations in the city staffed exclusively by our un- and under-employed.

- We will create jobs **by removing inefficiency and waste** from our city government and then applying the money we save to covering neglected services, honoring our contracts with the city's employees and retirees and rebuilding the city's economy.

**We will put this City to work.** We'll do it because our city is in a fight for its life. We'll do it because we don't have any choice. And we'll do it because we can. It will take time, but the result will be a new, dynamic, all-inclusive Baltimore City economy that reinvigorates our confidence, our spirit and sense of pride in what we have and will accomplish.

### **Marketing initiatives.**

To do all this, Baltimore Rising will do the following...

- **Television, radio and digital/social media**

Professionally produced by Joe Trippi & Associates, one of the country's preeminent media agencies, our marketing will be informative, but nonetheless compelling. Its cumulative impact will be stunning and effective.

- **Research and polling**

We will conduct regular polls to constantly refine our media messaging, targeting and delivery methods. Our marketing will be data-driven and constantly adaptive.

- **Bringing reluctant, disinterested registered voters back to the polls**

One of our most effective strategies will be the way we undertake special initiatives – using both traditional and digital media – to engage reluctant voters who haven't been participating in recent elections.

- **Legislation**

In addition to refocusing likely voters on economic development and growth, Baltimore Rising is also going to take an active role in introducing legislation and that encourages employment and economic development and growth. These initiative will include...

- Legislation to assure **comprehensive tracking of available jobs** – in the city and surrounding counties – and all un- and under-employed city residents looking for employment.
- Legislation to further extend the process of **expungement and selected**

**pardons** to help even more of the city's unemployed find jobs.

- Legislation to greatly increase the **hiring** of the city's unemployed by the city government itself as well **by city contractors**.
- Legislation to further **encourage private sector companies** doing business in the city **to hire our unemployed**.
- Legislation to provide **auto loan guarantees** to help un- and under-employed residents purchase cars they need to commute to and from jobs throughout the city and in the suburbs.
- Legislation that provides substantial additional support for un- and under-employed residents who need **remedial and vocational education**.
- Legislation that creates a "**negative income tax**" that encourages the unemployed to find work while continuing to receive the benefits of traditional unemployment compensation.
- Legislation that uses the city's vast inventory of **vacant and abandoned properties** to attract people and employers back to Baltimore.
- **Fiscal emergency legislation** that suspends the sale of all city-owned income-producing assets and major elective expenditures by the city pending a fiscal plan that avoids the collapse of the city government.
- Legislation in Annapolis that **returns control over Baltimore City Community College** to the city under new management that makes it a much more effective tool for preparing residents for employment and advancement.
- Legislation that **brings the Baltimore Development Corporation inside** the city government where its focus and specific investments can be openly controlled and evaluated.

We have a historic opportunity and need to rebuild our city. To do that we need informed voters to elect leaders with the mindset and experience to help us ignite the turnaround of the Baltimore economy.

Our effort addresses the principal, most fundamental causes of the problems that plague our city and steal the headlines of the day from the many positive aspects of our urban culture. **It's something we have to do because, without a fully functioning, all-inclusive city economy, nothing else works.**

Without question, our goals are best accomplished with the cooperation of a new, much more business-friendly city government. To that end, we are certain that nothing short of extensive voter education is necessary to change in the way Baltimore's residents and leadership imagine the future of our city.

Can we save a major American City?  
**Can we save the great City of Baltimore?**

With your support and encouragement, the bold,  
but nonetheless realistic answer is,

**"Yes."**

To learn more about Baltimore Rising and to discuss your contributions and how you can help us accomplish our objectives, please call or email our President...

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Thank you. Now let's get on with the business of putting Baltimore back to work.