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MCOM 407
9-8-11

I have chosen Baltimore's art districts as my beat for the semester, I plan to investigate the success, or lack thereof, of Station North and Highlandtown. This is a timely issue because the proposal for a third district in Baltimore's west side has raised arguments over whether the existing two districts have provided the city with enough benefits to justify a third project.

Many of the articles on the matter are opinion pieces that gloss over the details without thoroughly explaining the goals of developing arts districts or providing tangible examples of how the districts are succeeding or failing; these opinion pieces also tend to be one sided thus not providing the audience with the whole perspective of the issue. News articles are generally missing the opportunity to report actual statistics of the past fiscal year's revenue, redevelopment projects, and new community events in these districts. The articles rarely use the artists or residents from the area prior to development as sources for the articles; most sources tend to be people removed from the impact of the projects, such as an assistant professor of city planning and urban affairs, director of community development, etc. Most of the articles are from 2010 or earlier, so the little data that has been provided is outdated.

I will examine how these districts are performing by examining vacancy rates in the areas pre- and post-development, revenue statistics from 2010 and development of new spaces and groups within the districts. My first article will examine the pro-con arguments over the newest district in the west side, referencing the performance of the existing two districts. The second article will focus on residents who lived in the areas before the art district designations, as well as the artists who currently participate in the districts regardless of prior residency. I anticipate the third article will highlight some of the spaces in each of the districts.