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Baltimore's already-plentiful creative class grew over 12 years

A CityLab report from urbanist Richard Florida indicates that Baltimore's group of "knowledge workers" grew between 2005 and 2017.



By [Stephen Babcock](#) / staff



The Baltimore skyline.
(Photo via Wikimedia user Nfutvol)

The “[rise of the rest](#)” is often looked at through the lens of startups and venture capital. As a new [CityLab analysis](#) from a noted urbanist shows, there’s also room for talent in the conversation.

In a new look at the “geography of talent,” [Richard Florida](#) teamed with **University of Maine** economist **Todd Gabe** to track the growth of the creative class in cities.

First, of course, it's necessary to define the creative class. Instead of focusing on college degrees, Florida writes that this group is defined by occupation, working in areas including "education, healthcare, law, arts, tech, science, and business," Florida writes.

So Florida and Gabe set out to find where there were concentrations, and Baltimore is found in top-10 lists throughout. Within the examined timeframe of 2005 to 2017, data here shows that Baltimore's creative class is both already highly concentrated, and growing.

In 2005, Baltimore had the seventh-largest share of creative class members making up the workforce, with 38.7%. In 2017, it had grown to 44.9% — still good for seventh place.

Between the two timeframes, the growth of this cohort in Baltimore was also in the top 10, both when it comes to overall shares and growth per 1,000 people, the report states.

"Established tech hubs like San Francisco, San Jose, and Washington D.C., continue to lead the nation in their concentration of the creative class. But Baltimore and Philadelphia also boast high concentrations, attesting to the power of the east coast corridor," Florida writes. Earlier, he noted that the area's research centers around Johns Hopkins were also a driver.

On a wider scale, Florida writes that housing prices are closely tied to the growth story, observing "increasingly unaffordable housing in established hubs and the improvement of the economies in less-established hubs."