



## BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK

Providing economic opportunity, community connection and stormwater control by greening neighborhoods

### PROJECT GOALS

Transform vacant properties into safe and healthy community assets such as gathering spaces, temporary art installations, recreation areas, trails and urban gardens, while reducing stormwater runoff and increasing tree canopy. Target investments in the community to create local green jobs, small-scale entrepreneurial opportunities and workforce development

### ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Water quality improvements through reduced stormwater runoff.
- New wildlife habitat created by adding native flowers and other plants.
- Planting trees along the streamside creates upland wildlife habitat and creates shade and cooler water temperatures for aquatic life.

### COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS

- Research shows that well-maintained green spaces increase property values and reduce violent crime, while attracting new residents and businesses.
- Investing in local organizations and providing grants generates local jobs.
- Signage and outreach educate the public about the benefits of green practices.
- Creation of multi-use spaces throughout Baltimore neighborhoods build connection and cohesion.
- Less flooding reduces damage-related costs.
- Expansion of the city's tree canopy provides a multitude of benefits, including an increase in shade, lowering energy costs.



A row of benches sits in the middle of the Peace Park in the Druid Heights Neighborhood of Baltimore, Md. The community members help keep the benches clean and preserved. According to Druid Heights Community Development Corporation Director of Housing and Real Estate Development JohnDre Jennings the home owners near the park are invested in maintaining the park. *(Photos by Ethan Weston/Chesapeake Bay Program)*

“ The Baltimore Green Network promotes urban resiliency through land use equity and connects Baltimore residents to a system of healthy, vibrant and resilient places.

- Kimberley Knox  
Baltimore Department of Planning

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The Baltimore Green Network (formerly known as the Growing Green Initiative) is an effort by the City of Baltimore to increase use of sustainable, innovative and cost-effective practices on vacant and abandoned lots. In 2018, Baltimore released its Green Network Plan, outlining a vision for the city's approximately 19,000 vacant and abandoned lots, imaging areas of redevelopment, neighborhood green spaces, increased tree canopy, wildlife habitat and a reduction in stormwater runoff, while adding jobs, growing food and creating community spaces. During the planning phase, hundreds of city residents and stakeholders provided input at neighborhood meetings and large public outreach events. This plan envisions a city-wide system of nodes (open green spaces) and corridors (linear passageways for people and wildlife to travel safely and comfortably). Multiple projects have been completed throughout the city, ranging from pocket parks to block-wide urban farms. The Baltimore City Department of Planning is the coordinator of the plan.

## CONSERVATION PROJECTS INSTALLED

- Vegetative channels that trap stormwater runoff.
- Native trees, plants and grasses.
- Woodland and pollinator meadows.
- Replacing pavement with green space.


## THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Must ensure and encourage ongoing maintenance of practices and green space.
- Must listen to, and follow and involve the community throughout the entire process.

## THE PARTNERS AND FUNDING SOURCES

- City of Baltimore Departments of Housing and Community Development and Planning.
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Nonprofit groups (e.g., Civic Works, neighborhood associations, Rails to Trails, Bon Secours Community Works, Baltimore Tree Trust).
- Local residents, businesses and organizations.
- Funding and in-kind support provided by the above organizations, regional organizations such as the Chesapeake Bay Trust, and others.

## CONTACT

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Anthony Pressley points north as he shows the compass tile at Gold Street Park in the Druid Heights neighborhood in Baltimore, Md. Gold Street Park used to be home to a coal pile which was used to heat houses in the area, according to Pressley.



A mural adorns the outside of an apartment building in the Nature Play Space of the Druid Heights neighborhood in Baltimore, Md. The park is one of the many green spaces the Druid Heights Community Development Corporation have created in their neighborhood. The goal of each park is to try and foster a sense of community membership among residents living near the park.



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