

# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: INTRODUCTION

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## WHY A GREEN NETWORK?

The City of Baltimore is rich in green space—an under-appreciated resource with the potential to improve life for everyone who lives here. However, many of these green resources are disconnected from each other, and too many of our city’s residents lack safe, easy access to them.

In a city with concentrations of neighborhoods blighted by abandoned properties and vacant lots, and where serious economic disparities span generations, we have an urgent need—and an exceptional opportunity—to tap our full green space potential. This opportunity includes the vacancies themselves, which can be transformed into community assets.

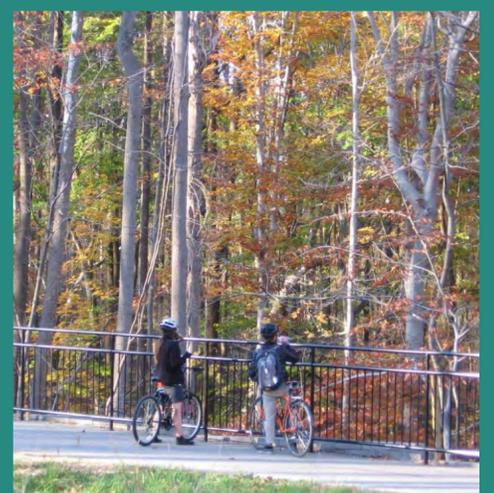
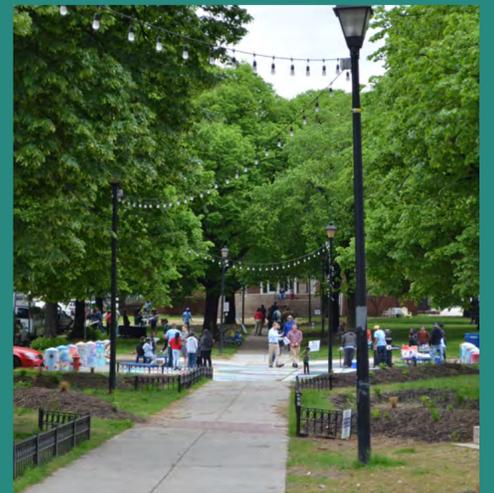
By providing residents with better access to nature and recreation, we can improve public health and safety, and strengthen economic development opportunities. In creating connections between our green spaces—and between our neighborhoods—we can enrich our social connectivity, strengthening the bonds amongst our residents. And by improving and increasing the green space available in long-neglected neighborhoods, we can help address long-running disparities, making our city more equitable.

This Green Network Vision Plan provides a framework for reaching these ambitious goals. We seek to link every neighborhood in Baltimore to new or improved green space, reducing social fragmentation through an enlivened “green network.” We seek to improve the function of, and open access to, the unique natural resources that define our city, while revitalizing the neighborhoods that need it most. The goal of the Baltimore Green Network is to make the greatest variety of green amenities and recreational opportunities accessible to the greatest number of citizens.



## WHAT IS A GREEN NETWORK?

A green network is an interconnected system of natural and recreational spaces throughout a city. Made up of both nodes (activity centers such as open green spaces, parks, and community gardens) and corridors (transit pathways, like trails and tree-lined sidewalks), a green network is an innovative way to connect neighborhoods to both natural and economic resources.



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## BALTIMORE'S PAST OPEN SPACE PLANNING EFFORTS

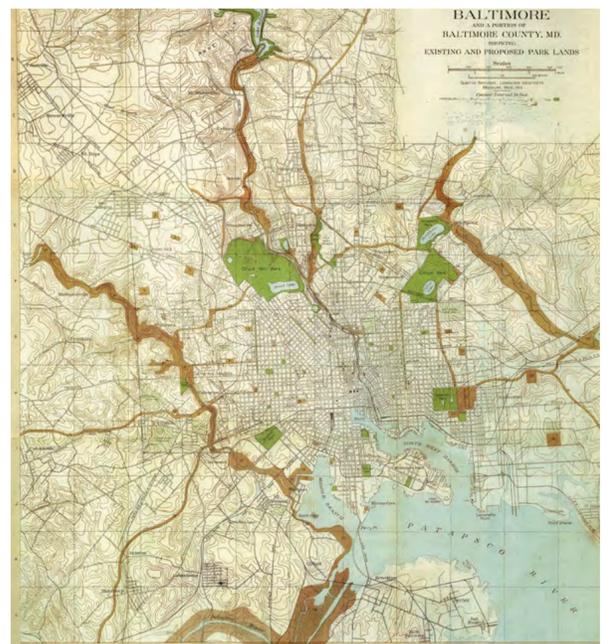
The Baltimore Green Network fits into a long, rich tradition of open space planning in Baltimore, a legacy integral to development throughout the city's history.

The first park created in Baltimore solely for recreational purposes was Patterson Park, which started as a six-acre parcel of donated land in the 1820s. That same decade, the City organized four public squares around the Washington Monument, and new buildings were constructed facing the green space—one of Baltimore's earliest examples of designed open space tied to residential development.

At the turn of the century, the Olmsted Brothers Landscape Architecture firm created a comprehensive report urging the city to acquire more land for open space. During the "Olmsted Era," from 1904-1945, the City acquired 2,678 acres of park land. Many of these lands were stream valleys in undeveloped suburban areas, which were both affordable as well as picturesque. In carefully organizing active recreational use within the pastoral scenery, the Olmsted plan created the model of coordinated "passive use" with "active use" of open space in Baltimore.

As Baltimore continued to change through the 20th century, and as the automobile became the prominent factor in urban planning, the concept of green space shifted. Fewer front porches were built, and homeowners increasingly used private back yards. The expansion of privately held green space has had an impact on how we use public parks even today.

However, a new shift is now underway. Although private gardens are as popular as ever, the longing for democratic communal open space has surged. Advocacy organizations and numerous "Friends of" parks groups are spurring park improvements, drawing from Baltimore's long history of organizing our residential and commercial activities around green space.



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## HOW TO USE THE PLAN

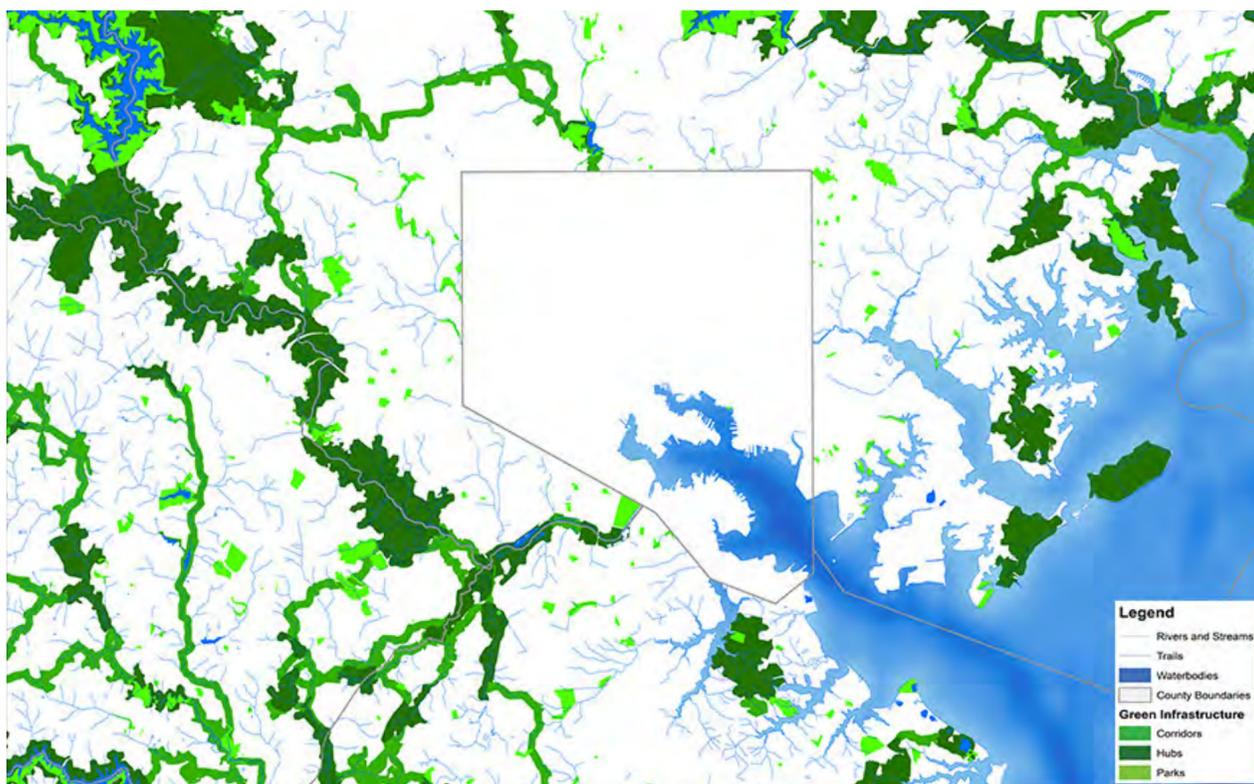
The Baltimore Green Network is meant to serve as a foundation for future planning and development projects that strive to give every Baltimore City resident access and connection to green space. The plan builds on what is already green in Baltimore—our historic and existing streams, our parks and recreational areas, our community gardens, and so much more—and it focuses on those neighborhoods with the least green space, where residents have the most to gain from investments in health, safety, economic development, and neighborhood beautification.

The plan includes:

- **The Baltimore Green Network Vision:** The broad, long-term strategy for a city-wide green network.
- **The Green Network in Baltimore Neighborhoods:** Four local plans, developed in collaboration with residents living in “Focus Areas” (neighborhoods selected for high numbers of vacant properties and high potential for immediate implementation of Green Network projects).
- **Making the Green Network a Reality:** Recommendations and implementation strategy for the Green Network, including changes to city policies and processes that may improve outcomes, as well as potential funding strategies.
- **The Visual Glossary [Appendix]:** A toolbox of different greening practices that can be used in the further development of the Green Network.

On the local scale, this plan provides a vision for how the City will ensure that all our neighborhoods have access to recreational and community spaces, including a diversity of open and active green spaces that reflect the natural character of our local ecology. On the city planning scale, this plan provides a blueprint for connecting residential areas, while promoting pedestrian-friendly access to commercial zones, employment opportunities, and educational centers. It extends the influence of our existing economic and natural resources by connecting them to new and under-resourced neighborhoods.

Beyond our city limits, the plan provides opportunities to connect residents to regional greenways and trail networks, like the East Coast Greenway, and to nearby destinations like Lake Roland and Loch Raven Reservoir. And as an overall strategy for our city, this plan charts the path forward to creating a true green network—putting every single household in Baltimore within walking distance of a safe and comfortable green space that, in turn, connects them to the entire city through an innovative and unified network.



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## THE BENEFITS OF A GREEN NETWORK

### Quality of Life

- Greater community cohesion
- Increased public awareness of sustainable planning
- Improved health and well-being for residents (including physical, mental, aesthetic, and spiritual)
- More spaces available for community engagement and education
- A stronger “sense of place”
- Access to public amenities, including parks and recreational water sites



### Community Development

- Spur economic growth and investment, with potential to diversify the local economy and job creation
- Increased productivity, through workforce stress reduction and amenities to attract and retain staff
- Stabilize land and property values
- Reduced economic risks of flooding
- Encourage local food production and productive landscapes



### Environmental Quality

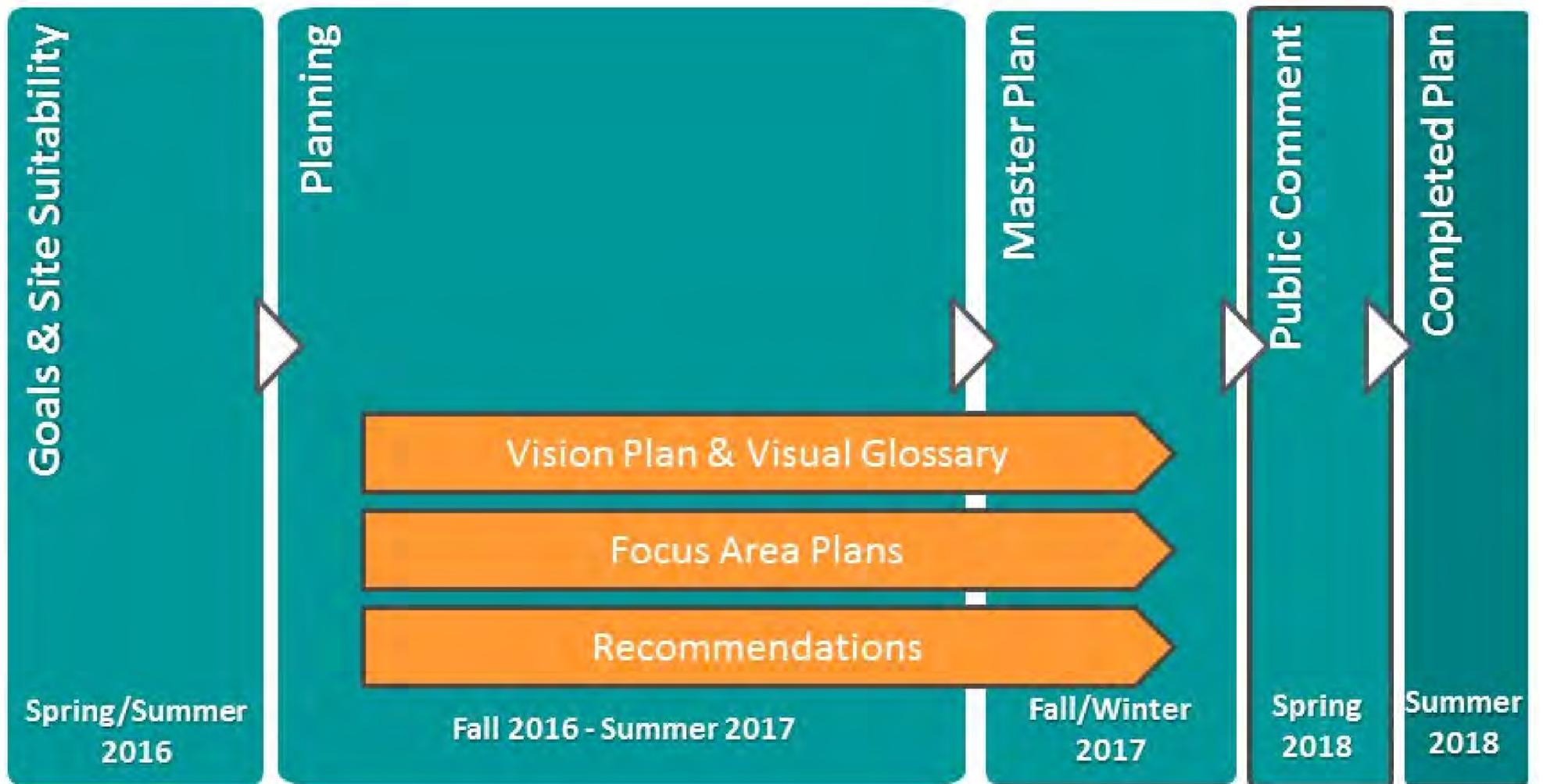
- Strengthen the ecosystem, with increased resilience
- Reduce the urban heat island effect
- Support climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Carbon reduction and mitigation
- Improved air quality
- Better management of stormwater and water supply, conservation of water resources
- Reduction in the accumulation of sediment, debris, and pollutants in urban waterways
- Shading and shelter along rivers and in the urban environment
- Habitat and biodiversity enhancement, including support for vital pollinators



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## PLAN PROCESS & TIMELINE



## DATES & LOCATIONS OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

### Citywide Meetings

June 15, 2016	Mother Seton Academy
November 16, 2016	Humanim/The American Brewery Building
November 30, 2016	Lillian Jones Recreation Center
May 22, 2017	Humanim/The American Brewery Building
May 25, 2017	Saint Benedict Church
March 15, 2018	Mother Seton Academy

### Focus Area Meetings

#### Southwest

October 13, 2016	Kadesh House of Prayer
October 20, 2016	Kadesh House of Prayer
April 20, 2017	Kadesh House of Prayer

#### West

November 1, 2016	Roots and Branches School
November 15, 2016	Roots and Branches School
February 15, 2017	Roots and Branches School
April 27, 2017	Roots and Branches School

#### Central

November 9, 2016	Druid Heights CDC
January 18, 2017	Druid Heights CDC
April 24, 2017	Druid Heights CDC

#### East

(Meetings held as part of the East Baltimore Revitalization Project)

April 2016	Morgan State University
September 2016	Southern Baptist Church
February 2017	Southern Baptist Church



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: ABOUT THE GREEN NETWORK

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## VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Baltimore Green Network was built on a shared vision: To develop a bold and actionable plan for an urban green network that connects and supports the residents of the City of Baltimore and creates a system of healthy, vibrant, and resilient places. To fulfill that vision, the planning process followed six Guiding Principles:

1. Empower residents through an inclusive planning process, striving for environmentally and socially just opportunities.
2. Include a wide representation of community stakeholders in the planning process, integrating the existing efforts and goals of those stakeholders in the Green Network.
3. Strengthen economic and social relationships between community groups, anchor institutions, and developers.
4. Prioritize opportunities that address community needs, creating lively and livable neighborhoods and inviting public spaces in the urban landscape.
5. Create spaces that are conducive to family and kid-friendly activities.
6. Enhance neighborhood identity and civic pride through improved and cohesive aesthetics and place-making.

Both the vision and the guiding principles were developed by the City with community members and stakeholders, in order to align the plan with Baltimore's unique character and immediate neighborhood needs.



## HOW THE PLAN WAS CREATED

In building our Green Network, we are not starting from scratch—Baltimore has a wealth of natural and community resources to build on, expand, and improve. The Baltimore Green Network started with these resources, identifying strategic opportunities to fill gaps in the overall network, with a focus on neighborhoods that are historically and economically disadvantaged.

This plan includes strategies and recommendations for our entire city; it also includes specific plans for greening in four Focus Areas. Communities in each Focus Area suggested pilot projects for local greening; these will be some of the first steps in designing and implementing the Green Network.

Development of the plan involved interconnecting activities:

- 1) **Community and Stakeholder Engagement**
- 2) **Suitability Analysis**

For clarity, we describe these two separately, but in practice the processes influenced each other throughout planning. Community engagement and feedback was especially important, as the success of the Green Network hinges on its impact on the lives of Baltimore residents.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: ABOUT THE GREEN NETWORK

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## COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The success of the Green Network depends entirely on whether it improves life for Baltimore residents. That's why the Department of Planning prioritized community engagement throughout the planning process, ensuring that the voices of Baltimore residents are reflected in this plan.

During all phases of the planning process, community input was gathered at a variety of small group neighborhood Focus Area meetings and through a series of larger public outreach events. Through a total of six city-wide meetings, nearly a dozen focus area meetings, and an online survey, more than 600 residents and stakeholders from neighborhoods throughout the city have provided input into the plan.

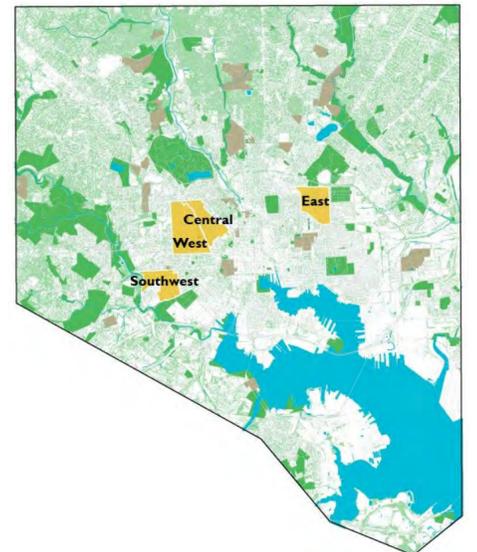


## ENGAGEMENT IN FOCUS AREA COMMUNITIES

The Green Network Vision includes preliminary local-level plans for specific areas throughout the city— the aforementioned “Focus Areas,” each a cluster of 2-3 proximate neighborhoods:

- **Central Baltimore:** Druid Heights and Upton
- **West Baltimore:** Harlem Park and Sandtown-Winchester
- **Southwest Baltimore:** Boyd-Booth, Carrollton Ridge, and Shipley Hill
- **East Baltimore:** Broadway East and South Clifton Park

These four initial Focus Areas were selected based on the suitability analysis—they include high concentration of vacancies, as well as the greatest opportunities for creating economic, environmental, and health benefits through greening. In identifying the Focus Areas, the analysis also took into consideration previous and current neighborhood planning initiatives. Based on these factors and analysis, the selected Focus Areas present opportunities for strategic demolition, greening, and neighborhood revitalization.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: ABOUT THE GREEN NETWORK

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## SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

The planning process included a robust analysis of existing plans and other city data, to identify opportunities where new investments in open space can provide the most ecological, economic, and livability benefits in the areas with greatest need.

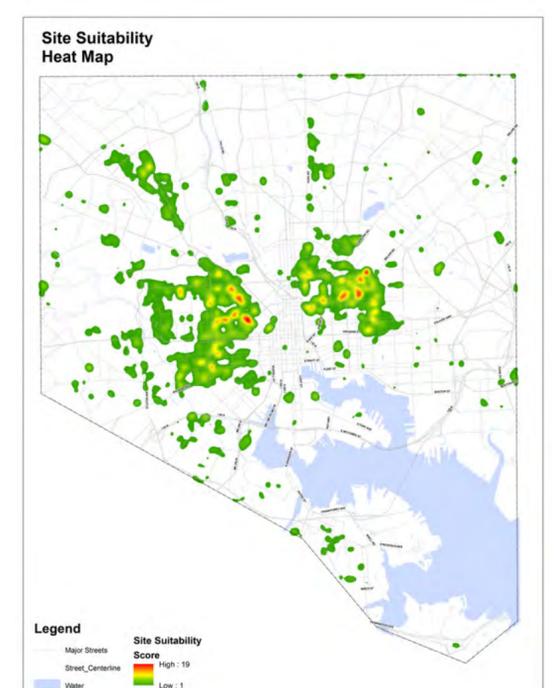
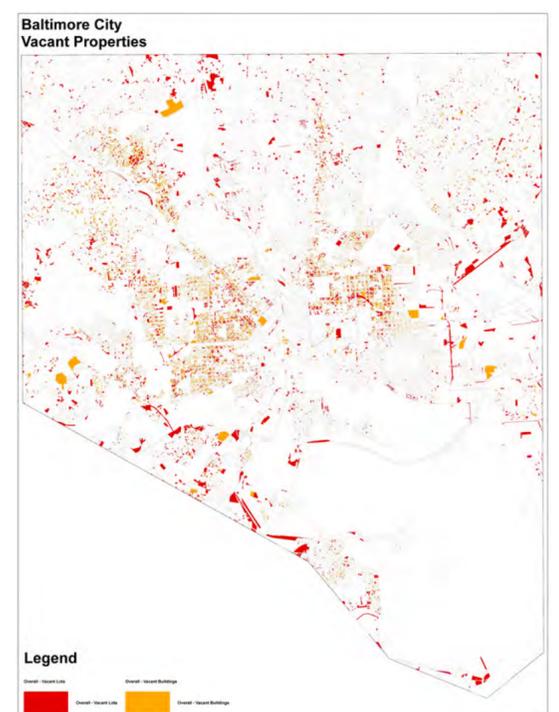
**Mapping Existing Green Assets** - The analysis began with mapping the existing green network, in order to understand how best to improve, expand, and strengthen these existing assets. The analysis considered the existing waterways, parks, forests, urban farms, community gardens, schools and universities, cemeteries, golf courses, stormwater management practices, parkways, and other open spaces.

**Understanding Our Environmental Legacy** - The analysis also included the legacy green network, using as much information as was available to identify historic natural features like streams, shorelines, native soils, and floodplains. This information can point to where the greatest ecological benefits might be gained.

**Addressing Our Social Legacy** - In addition to our city's natural history, the Green Network Vision takes careful consideration of our social history. Too many neighborhoods in Baltimore today are still adversely affected by a history of harmful policies that entrenched racial inequity, like mortgage redlining. This plan envisions increased access to open space, recreation, and natural areas for residents who live in communities that lack adequate green amenities; it is an important step toward a more equitable and just city.

**Identifying Opportunities in Vacant Properties** - Vacant properties are a serious problem in Baltimore City; however, the Green Network Vision views them as an opportunity as well. Where renovation is not an option, vacant buildings can be replaced with attractive, new green spaces, either permanently or as a temporary holding strategy for future redevelopment opportunities.

A significant step in developing the Green Network Vision was a site suitability analysis of vacant buildings and vacant lots. The goal of the analysis was to identify vacant properties most suited for inclusion in an enhanced and expanded Green Network for the city. The findings of this initial suitability analysis show opportunities clustered around the vacant lands where connections to the existing green assets are possible. The resulting hot spots map also reveals opportunities to expand the Green Network, and provide better connections for residents, in areas with high densities of suitable vacant properties.



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## PRIORITIZATION ANALYSIS

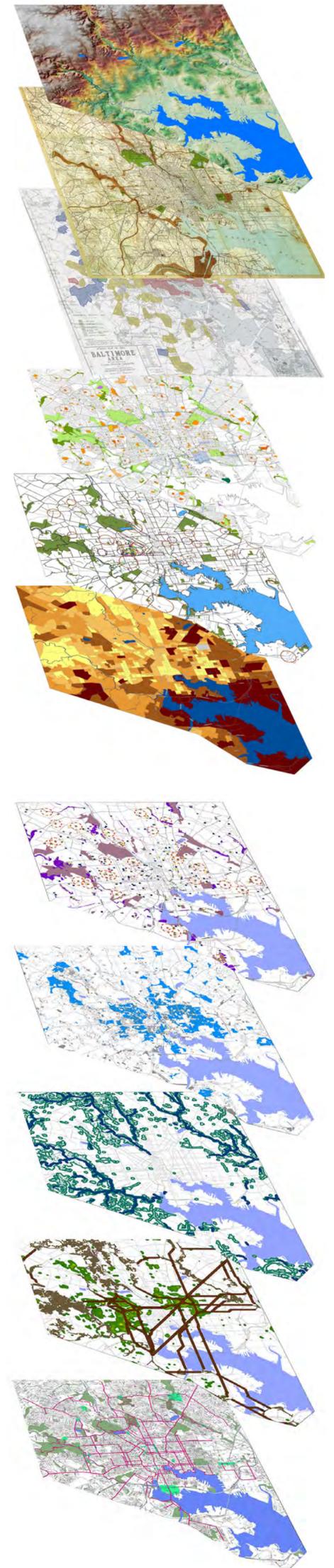
In the final stages of creating the Green Network Vision, the opportunities identified through suitability analysis and community engagement were analyzed through a process of “prioritization,” with the goal of highlighting those opportunities with the greatest potential for beneficial impact—in the greatest areas of need. **Prioritization took several factors into account: 1) environmental needs, 2) existing community assets, and 3) planned and in-progress economic development.**

The prioritization considered the city’s **natural resources**, which are the foundation for a functional green network. It identified gaps where ecological resources like forests and streams could be enhanced for improved vitality, considering the lack of existing habitat for key wildlife species, and stream buffer enhancement for optimal function and environmental health. For the health of our community, the analysis identified sidewalks and other corridor connections to community assets that lack tree canopy or can otherwise benefit from greening. These considerations ensure that the Green Network leads the way toward both a healthy environment and a unified, walkable system throughout the city.

Next, the prioritization considered **community assets**. One important focus in this analysis was identifying gaps—areas that lack access to recreation, parks, and other community spaces, as well as areas without walkable access to grocery stores and other fresh produce vendors. The vision is to provide quality open space and recreation amenities—along with safe and convenient access routes—that are between 0.25 and 0.5 miles from residents’ homes. Prioritization focused on addressing these gaps.

Finally, the **potential economic impact** of each greening opportunity was revisited, with a review of both existing and planned economic development activities throughout Baltimore, supporting efforts to attract new investment. This took into account the 21st Century Schools Initiative, which will modernize or replace more than two dozen school buildings over the next five years, considering ways to amplify this initiative by placing both schools and parks at the heart of our communities—and identifying places where this doesn’t yet occur.

The resulting Green Network Vision builds on our existing environmental resource assets and increases the green space in the city’s most deprived neighborhoods, connecting our schools, streams and forests, parks, university campuses, and centers of employment with corridors that cross every community—a new circulatory system for a greener, healthier, and more equitable city.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: ABOUT THE GREEN NETWORK

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## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Goal 1 - Support economic growth and sustainable redevelopment of vacant lands across our city.

- Transform vacant properties into attractive and productive assets, while promoting mixed-income communities.
- Identify strategic development opportunities that can be catalyzed by green infrastructure.
- Support green jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities, community revenue generation, and workforce development initiatives.
- Leverage future investments, support innovative partnerships, and support financing options for the creation, maintenance, programming, and management of the Green Network.

### Goal 2 - Improve and support the health and wellness of residents

- Provide inclusive and safe access to a variety of open spaces to promote active lifestyles for all members of our community.
- Create a variety of spaces that support active recreation and healthy lifestyles through enhanced outdoor activities for all ages.
- Increase access to fresh and local foods and other goods and services supported by an integrated Green Network.

### Goal 3 - Protect and enhance the ecological resources of our city

- Enhance ecosystem services in the urban landscape.
- Improve ecological connectivity and habitat quality to support diverse habitats for native and migratory species.
- Protect and improve the quality of the city's waterways, urban tree canopy, and other natural resources.
- Expand awareness and understanding of urban green infrastructure and natural resources conservation.

### Goal 4 - Provide safe access to green spaces and economic hubs

- Improve development patterns to be more pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-oriented.
- Support mobility within neighborhoods to provide safe access and improve the ability to walk or bike within the community.
- Support pedestrian and bike-friendly access to major transit corridors, employment and commercial centers, open space, waterfront, and recreational amenities.
- Improve connections between parks and waterways, increasing public access to water.

### Goal 5 - Educate the public on the benefits of natural resources

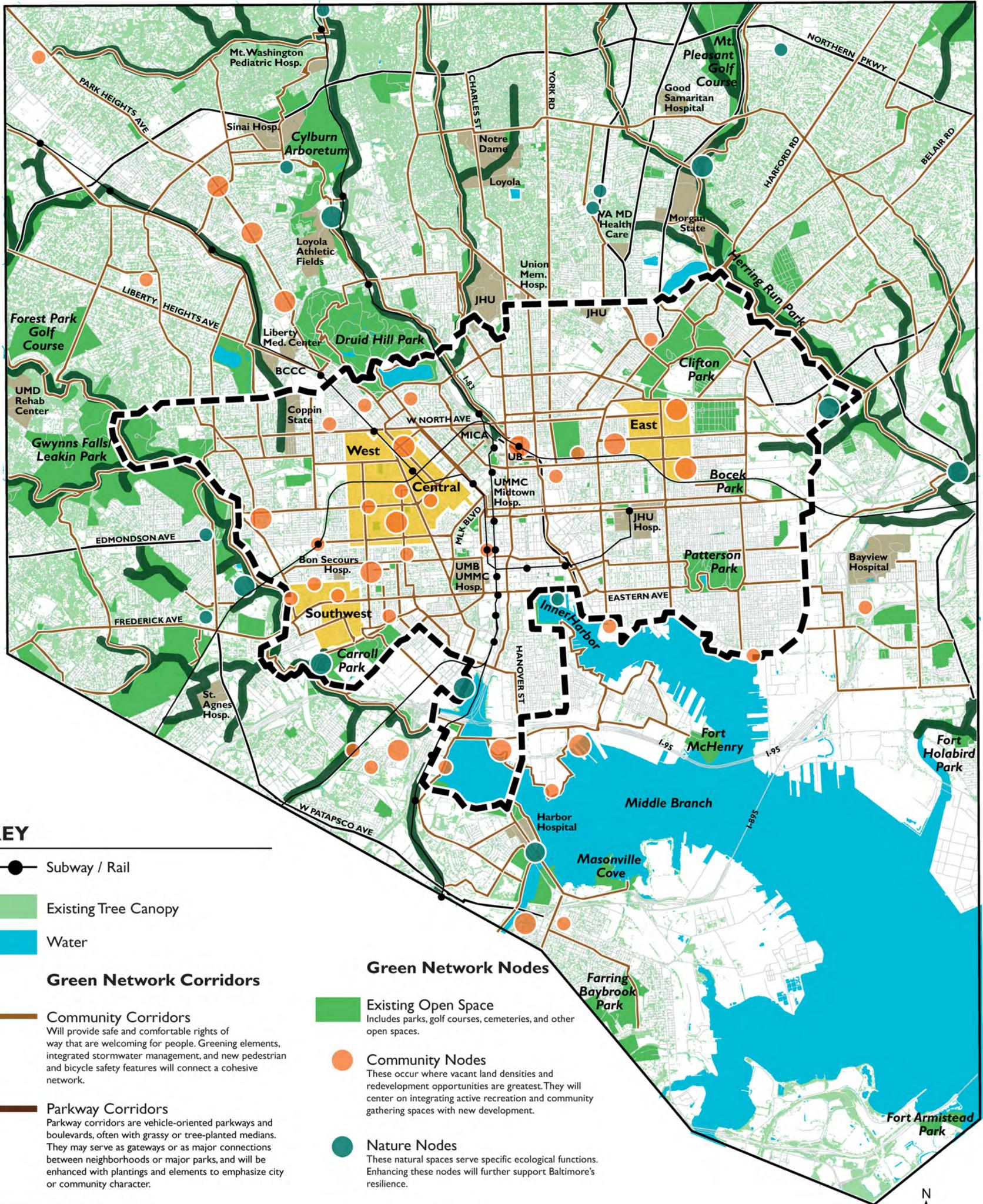
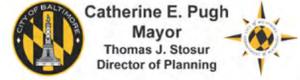
- Connect schools and community centers to the Green Network to create outdoor learning spaces.
- Promote landscape stewardship and increase public awareness about measures that can improve the City's resiliency.
- Increase and improve access to playgrounds, athletic fields, and recreational spaces in and around schools.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: THE GREEN NETWORK VISION

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## Baltimore Green Network Vision Plan

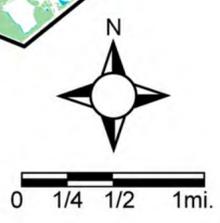


### KEY

- Subway / Rail
- Existing Tree Canopy
- Water
- Green Network Corridors**
  - Community Corridors  
Will provide safe and comfortable rights of way that are welcoming for people. Greening elements, integrated stormwater management, and new pedestrian and bicycle safety features will connect a cohesive network.
  - Parkway Corridors  
Parkway corridors are vehicle-oriented parkways and boulevards, often with grassy or tree-planted medians. They may serve as gateways or as major connections between neighborhoods or major parks, and will be enhanced with plantings and elements to emphasize city or community character.
  - Nature Corridors  
Protecting and enhancing these green connections will improve ecological function, provide wildlife habitat, and improve our city's resiliency.
  - Baltimore Greenway Trail Network  
This proposed 35-mile walking and bicycling loop will connect major parks, diverse neighborhoods, outdoor resources, transit stations, and major employers.

### Green Network Nodes

- Existing Open Space  
Includes parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and other open spaces.
- Community Nodes  
These occur where vacant land densities and redevelopment opportunities are greatest. They will center on integrating active recreation and community gathering spaces with new development.
- Nature Nodes  
These natural spaces serve specific ecological functions. Enhancing these nodes will further support Baltimore's resiliency.
- Anchor Institutions  
These important catalysts for economic investment and revitalization can help support a healthier environment and more vibrant, connected communities.
- Focus Areas  
Community planning work sessions were conducted in four initial Focus Areas – East, Central, West, and Southwest. Each Focus Area is a cluster of two to three neighborhoods chosen for high levels of vacancies and opportunities for greening and economic development.



March 2018

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## COMMUNITY NODES

Community nodes prioritize neighborhood needs and occur where vacant land densities are highest. These nodes provide amenities like spaces for active recreation and community gathering space, bringing new life to underutilized spaces or to concentrations of vacant and abandoned properties.

A community node might take the shape of a spacious park; a new playground; an urban farm or a garden that contributes to the local economy; a new public artwork; or a new space for community events. While community nodes are primarily spaces for people, they can accommodate features like shade trees and forest patches, meadows, or stormwater management that can also serve as wildlife habitat.

## TYPES:



### Neighborhood Revitalization with Integrated Open Space and Recreation:

These nodes are prioritized because of their potential to combine economic and residential revitalization with complementary green spaces.

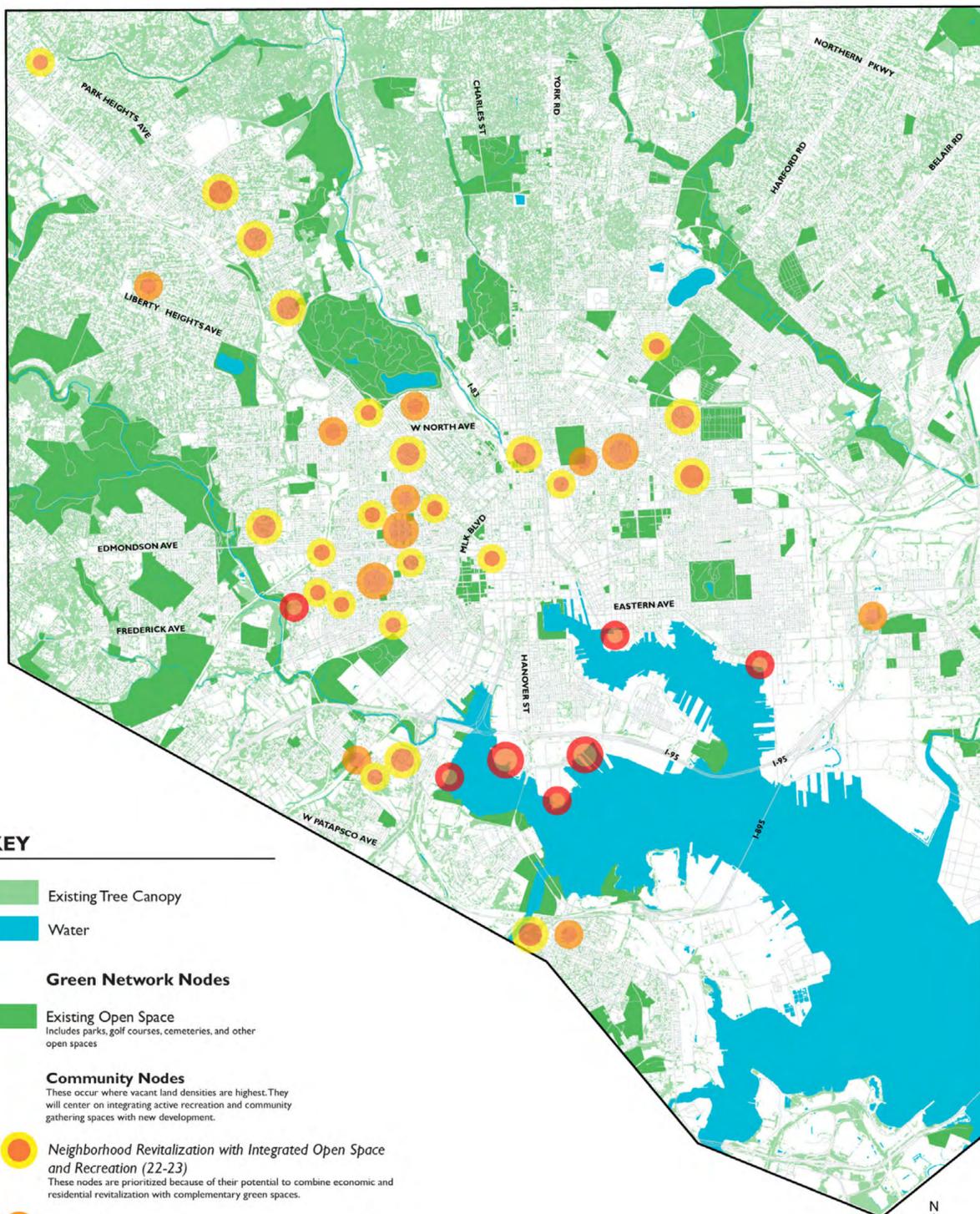
### Parks and Open Space Enhancement/Creation:

These nodes are prioritized as potential locations to create new permanent green spaces.



### Habitat-Sensitive Parks and Recreation:

These are existing spaces, which are primarily places where people access open space and recreation; however, they occur in sensitive natural areas around the city, and their landscapes reflect and respond to the native ecology.



### KEY

- Existing Tree Canopy
- Water

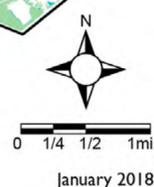
### Green Network Nodes

- Existing Open Space  
Includes parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and other open spaces

### Community Nodes

These occur where vacant land densities are highest. They will center on integrating active recreation and community gathering spaces with new development.

- Neighborhood Revitalization with Integrated Open Space and Recreation (22-23)**  
These nodes are prioritized because of their potential to combine economic and residential revitalization with complementary green spaces.
- Parks and Open Space Enhancement/Creation (11-12)**  
These nodes are prioritized as potential locations to create new permanent green spaces.
- Habitat-Sensitive Parks and Recreation (7)**  
These are existing spaces, which are primarily places where people access open space and recreation; however, they occur in sensitive natural areas around the city, and their landscapes reflect and respond to the native ecology.



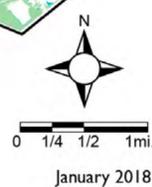
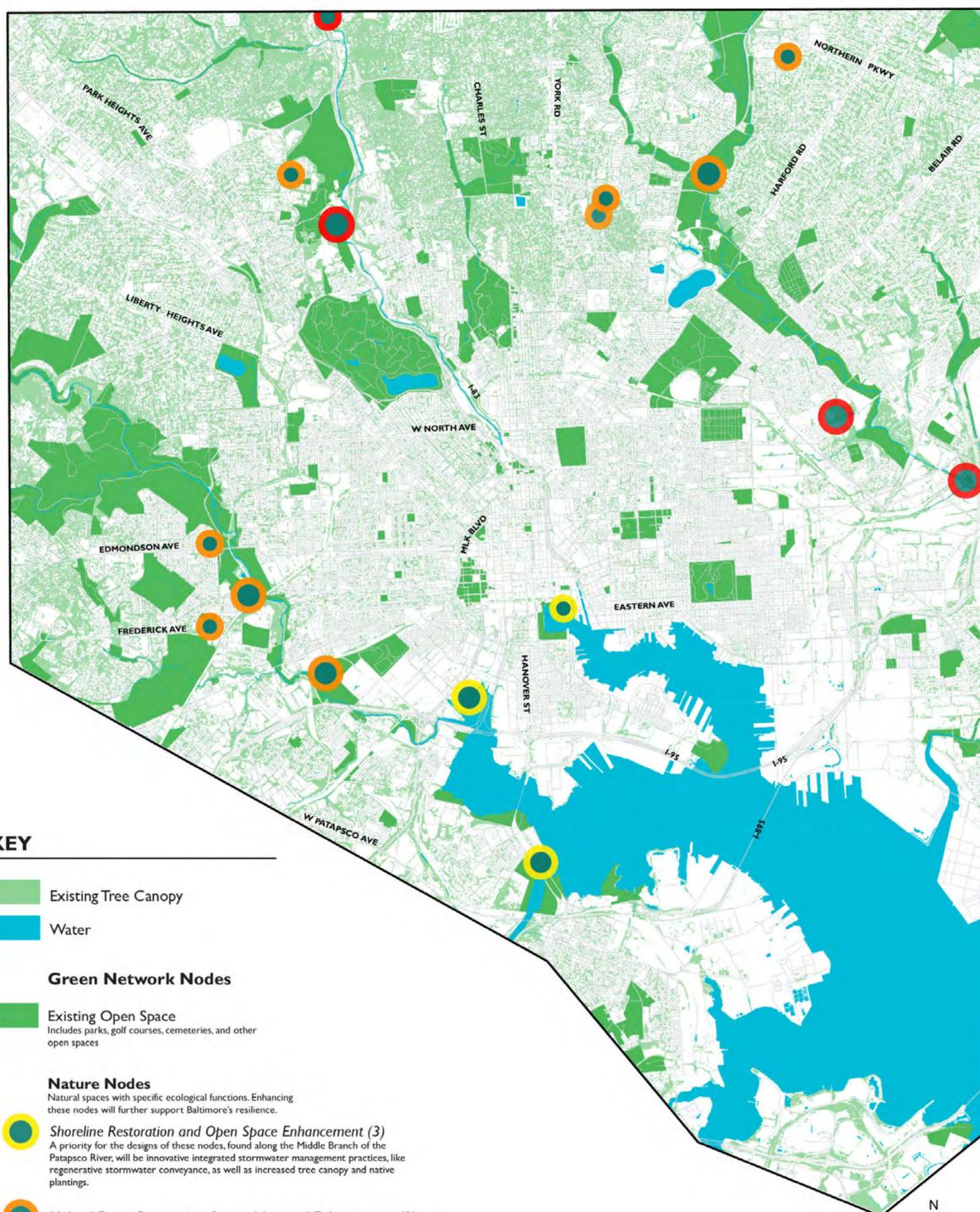
# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: THE GREEN NETWORK VISION

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## NATURE NODES

Nature nodes are locations for enhancing and expanding habitat in forest patches, meadows, floodplain, and wetlands. They may be small areas of upland woods, restored floodplain forest and wetlands, or a restored natural shoreline. These nodes may provide habitat “stepping stones” for wildlife as they move across the city and also attract and support pollinators through wildflower gardens and woodland patches; in short, these nodes promote ecosystem health and resilience.

While these nodes are not focused on people, they provide quiet spots for people to connect with nature and view urban wildlife like birds, butterflies, and fish. They may incorporate signage or other features to raise ecological awareness among residents.



## TYPES:



**Shoreline Restoration and Open Space:**  
A priority for these nodes will be integrated stormwater management and shoreline restoration, increased tree canopy and native plantings.



**Forest Restoration and Stewardship:**  
These woodland groves are located at higher elevations in the city; the plan seeks to protect and maintain these forests, and to expand them where possible.

**Floodplain Forest and Stream Buffer Restoration and Management:**  
These areas are located in the floodplain or stream valleys. Restoring and maintaining these areas will support the ecology of streams and wildlife habitat.

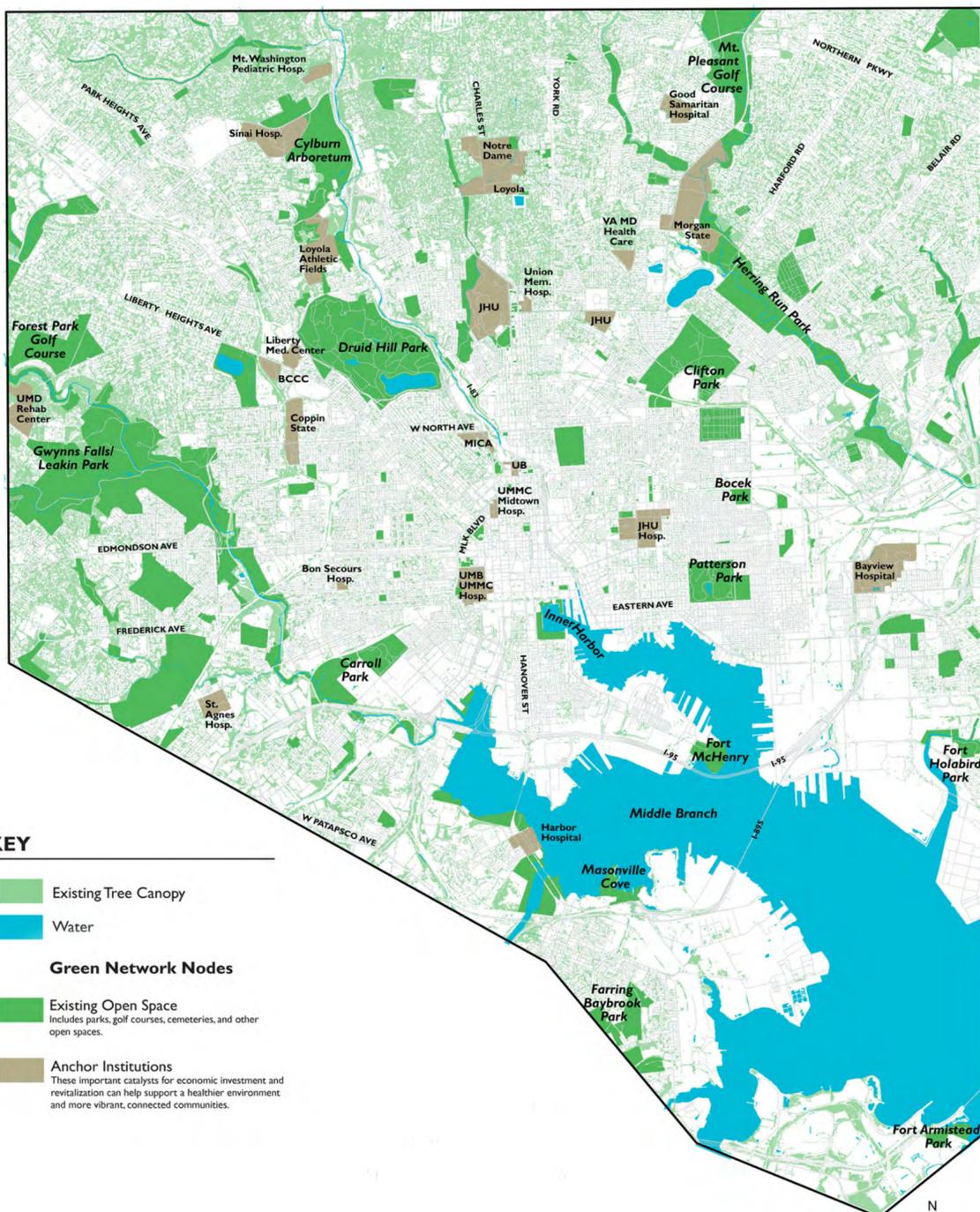


# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: THE GREEN NETWORK VISION

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## EXISTING ANCHOR INSTITUTIONS AND OPEN SPACE NODES

The existing open space and anchor nodes comprise spaces that are currently maintained by either the City or private entities; they include parks, universities, cemeteries, hospitals, and the Inner Harbor promenade. Already used for social gatherings, recreation, employment, services, tourism, play, and respite—as well as important habitat for native wildlife—these nodes are part of Baltimore’s green assets, and are important catalysts for economic investment and revitalization. Going forward, many of these nodes can be maintained in closer accordance with the Green Network principles and ecological practices. The City and private landholders can continue to manage the spaces for ecological function as well as educational stewardship and healthy living, prioritizing ecology and quality of life for all users.

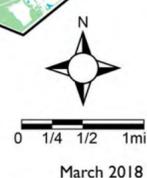


**KEY**

- Existing Tree Canopy
- Water

**Green Network Nodes**

- Existing Open Space  
Includes parks, golf courses, cemeteries, and other open spaces.
- Anchor Institutions  
These important catalysts for economic investment and revitalization can help support a healthier environment and more vibrant, connected communities.



### TYPES:



**Existing City Park Land:**  
The creation of a restoration and management plan for all City parks could help to prioritize needs for facility improvements, woodland management, plantings, and stream restoration.



**Cemeteries:**  
These green spaces could benefit from practices including increased tree canopy, alternative mowing regimes, native plantings, and invasive plant species management.

**Universities and Hospitals:**  
To strengthen their role within the Green Network, anchor institutions can implement improvements that show leadership in improving environmental quality, such as increased use of green infrastructure.



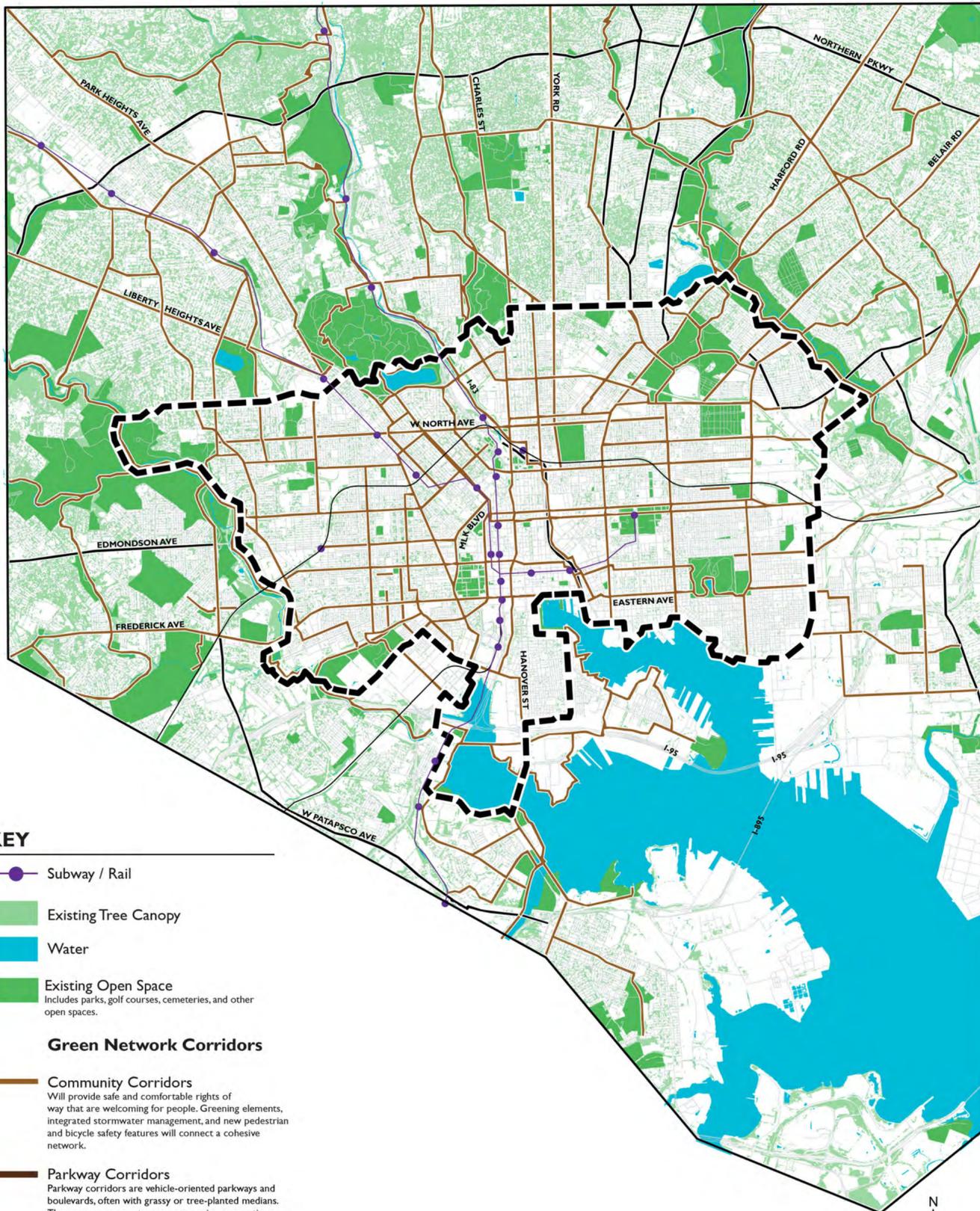
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## COMMUNITY & PARKWAY CORRIDORS

People-focused corridors make safe connections for residents to walk or bike to schools, stores, parks, recreation centers, and more. The proposed 35-mile Baltimore Greenway Trail Network 35-mile Loop envisioned by Rails to Trails is an important part of this corridor network, connecting neighborhoods and Green Network corridors around the city.

Community corridors also include “parkway corridors,” such as parkways and boulevards. Parkway corridors are the primarily vehicle-oriented parkways and boulevards found throughout the city. In many cases, boulevards serve as gateways into the city or as major connections between neighborhoods, providing an opportunity to play a role in expressing community identity.



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March 2018

### TYPES:



**Baltimore Greenway Trail Network**



**Community Corridors**



**Parkway Corridors**



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: THE GREEN NETWORK VISION

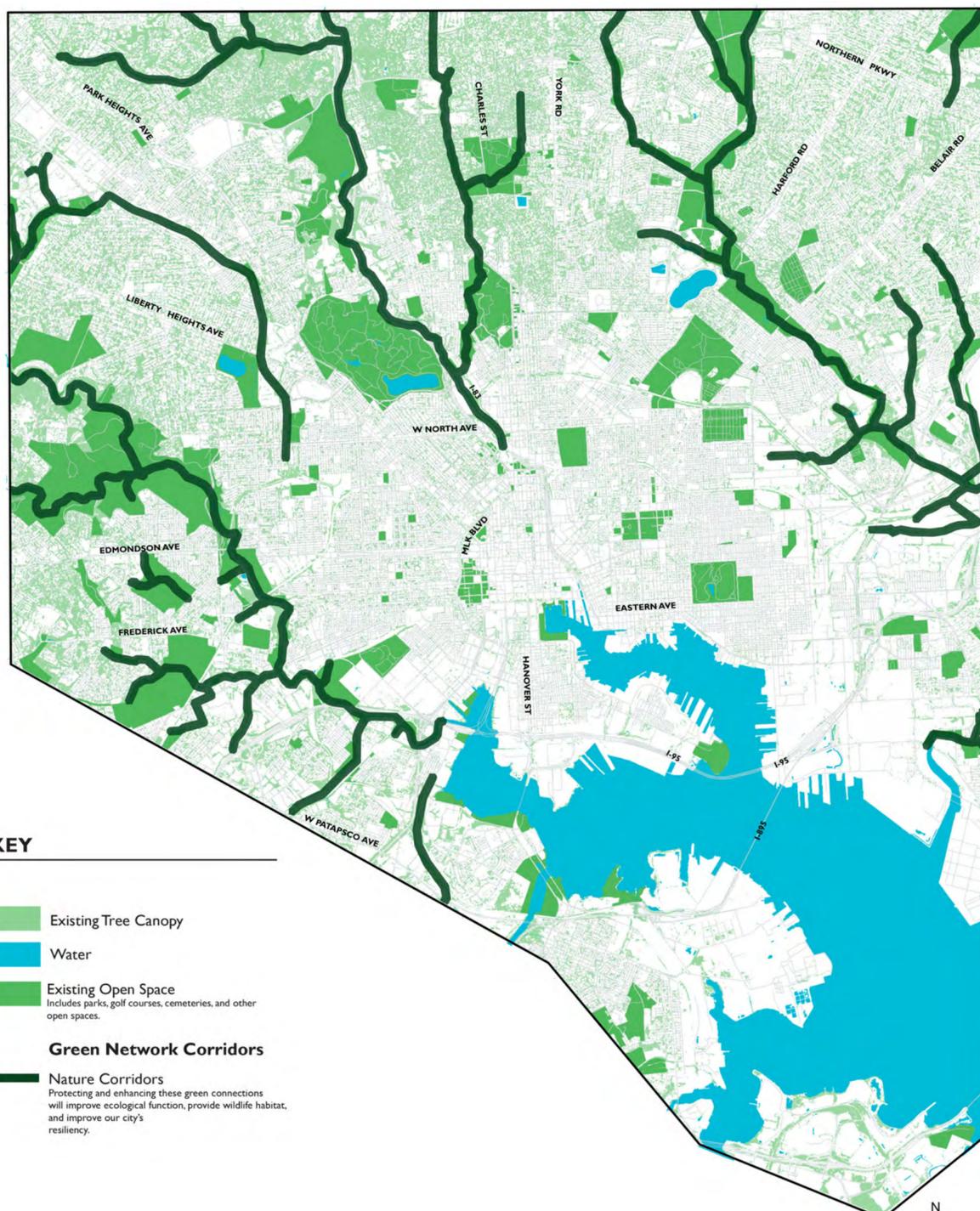
BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## NATURE CORRIDORS

Nature corridors provide habitat for native wildlife. The Green Network will preserve and expand these corridors by increasing the native tree canopy and understory plantings, managing invasive species, and restoring stream channels.

The top priority nature corridors are the stream valleys that define Baltimore's landscape. These important natural corridors need to be preserved and enhanced in order to support the health of our watersheds.

Additionally, major utility corridors and linear forest patches along rail lines have potential to serve as nature corridors. Vegetation in utility corridors can be managed in a way that provides habitat for wildlife. Trees growing along rail lines serve as connectors that benefit wildlife and also as buffers for nearby neighborhoods.



### TYPES:

#### Major Streams:

These are high-priority streams where continued restoration, native plantings, and invasive plant species management will be beneficial.

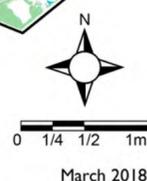


#### Minor Streams:

In cases where nodes or corridors in the vicinity are being improved, these smaller tributaries may also be included in projects.

#### Rail or Utility Corridors:

These nodes can be improved by working in concert with landowners; stewardship includes native tree canopy and understory plantings, invasive species management, and stormwater management practices. In some cases, these corridors may be accessible to community members, but in others (where access is not appropriate or feasible) they may be enhanced purely for natural resource value.



March 2018



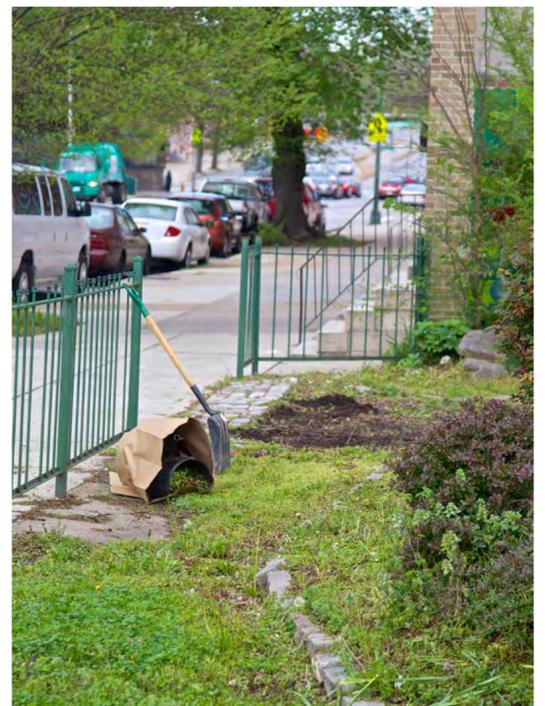
# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## THE GREEN NETWORK IN BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS

To begin putting the Green Network Vision into practice, the plan includes neighborhood-specific plans for four Focus Areas—in Central, West, Southwest, and East Baltimore. The goal of these plans is to apply the larger Green Network Vision to specific neighborhoods, identifying pilot projects for nodes and corridors that can spur new investment in neighborhood stabilization and renewal in the targeted areas.

- To create these Focus Area Plans, the Department of Planning spearheaded a “charrette” design process, hosting several community design sessions in each Focus Area between fall of 2016 and spring of 2017.
- The purpose of the Focus Area charrette process was to dig deeper into the type of green spaces, development, and connections between green spaces that community members want to see in their neighborhoods.
- Through the charrette process, community members and Department of Planning staff created plans and identified pilot projects for each Focus Area.
- **Two major themes** came out of these charrettes: 1. The need for an improved maintenance model to ensure new green spaces do not become blighted and 2. The importance of integrating new development opportunities into the plan along with the long-term greening strategies.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOCUS AREA PLANS

Each of the Focus Area Plans includes three strategies for greening: 1) Clean and Green sites, which are beautified for the short-term and held for long-term development opportunities; 2) Pilot Projects, to be developed as part of the Baltimore Green Network; and 3) Future Opportunity Sites, with high potential for community revitalization that integrates greening elements, pending opportunities for financing and other logistics.

### Clean and Green

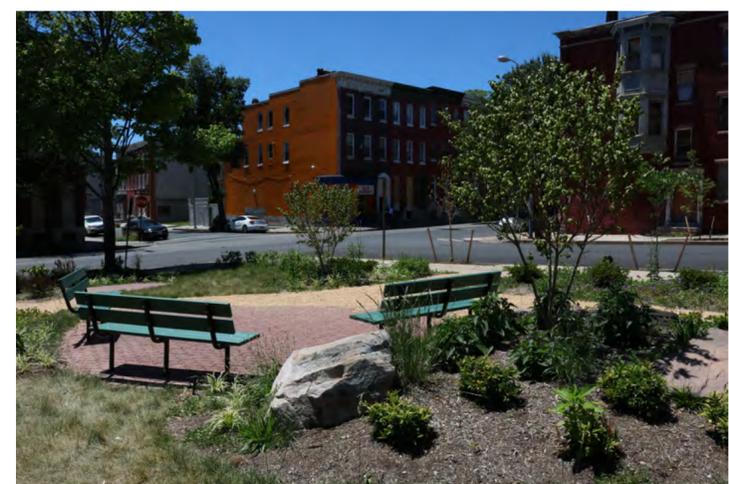
This is a temporary land-holding strategy for vacant lots. At a minimum, Clean and Green land is maintained with regular trash removal and mowing. Additional improvements, such as new soil and grass, tree plantings, and fence installation, can further beautify these sites. Clean and Green spaces are the first step in stabilizing vacant lots for adoption, future redevelopment, or a permanent open space like a neighborhood park. While these lots offer opportunities for future redevelopment, it is vital that a commitment to ongoing maintenance is established when the lot is created.

### Projects

Identified through the planning process and with community input, pilot projects are intended to serve as longer term green spaces—including improving or expanding existing parks, creating new parks, creating new Community-Managed Open Spaces and improving connections with new or extended corridors. In the Focus Areas, vacant land is an especially urgent opportunity to provide new amenities for residents; these can be maintained as Clean and Green spaces while the properties are being assembled and plans developed for permanent park space.

### Future Opportunity Sites

A number of the larger sites identified (especially in areas with high concentration of vacant lots and buildings) could be ideal for combining new developments with greening projects in the future. These require extensive demolition, acquisition, and site assembly, and will require much more planning to determine the best greening approach. In the short-term, these sites should be cleared and held as temporary green space for the community until an enhanced greening proposal is created, or a compatible development project is identified for the site.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

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# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

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### 1) Clean and Green

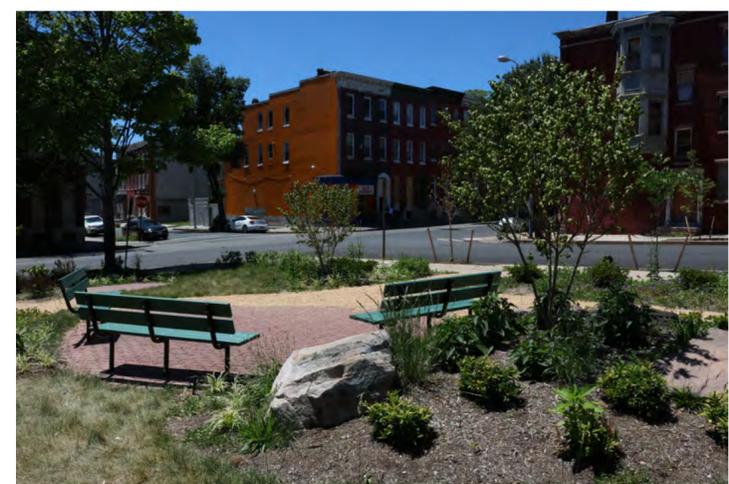
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### 2) Projects

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### 3) Future Opportunity Sites

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# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## PILOT PROJECTS

The Department of Planning has identified initial capital funding to begin implementation of select pilot projects, identified within each Focus Area; the Department has begun to work with communities and partners on several of these pilot projects. We anticipate that these projects can demonstrate the impact of the Green Network in these areas—catalyzing further improvements and investments.

### Druid Square - West

A public square in this location could provide residents access to high-quality green space. This new park would support the Bakers View Townhomes (500 block of Baker Street),

#### Next steps:

The identified location includes 88 total properties: 60 vacant lots, 19 vacant buildings, and 9 occupied structures; non-City owned properties will need to be acquired, and properties on Druid Hill Avenue will need to be demolished.

Identification of funding for acquisition, demolition, and green renovation is underway.

A design process with existing neighborhood residents will be conducted to plan the new park.



### Smithson Park - West

There is significant planned demolition at this site, which should be developed into a new, large neighborhood park, per the Focus Area community charrette process.

#### Next steps:

Identify demolition and relocation needs for the park footprint; non City-owned properties will need to be acquired through tax sale or other means (2-4 year process).

Identification of funding for demolition, relocation, acquisition, and green renovation is underway.

### Harlem Park Inner Blocks- West

Renovation of several inner block parks mostly on west side of Harlem Park to revitalize these public spaces. The treatments include clean-up, removal of old pavement, new lawn and pervious pavers, tree pruning and park furniture. In addition, demolishing carefully selected vacant and blighted buildings bordering these spaces can open up the inner block parks, better connecting them to the neighborhood and creating a more contiguous Green Network in Harlem Park.

#### Next steps:

Conduct Conceptual design process with community members.

Identify demolition, acquisition, and relocation needs for the extension of each of the inner blocks; non City-owned properties will need to be acquired through tax sale or other means (2-4 year process).

Identification of funding for demolition, relocation, acquisition, and green renovation is underway.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## PILOT PROJECTS

### Racheal Wilson Firefighter Memorial - Southwest

#### Boyd Booth Neighborhood

A commemorative garden is under design to honor Racheal Wilson, a firefighter/EMT recruit who passed away in the line of duty at the site. Envisioned as a Baltimore City Park, the garden would include a fenced area with flower beds, a children's play space, and a gathering area.

#### Next steps:

Prioritize 2115-2119 Boyd Street for demolition to complete the green space.

Non-City-owned properties will need to be acquired in 2 years.

Identification of funding for demolition, relocation, acquisition, and green renovation is underway.

Existing area to be fenced, and community engagement to continue design process.



### Vincent Park Expansion - Southwest

A large number of vacant properties in a section of West Baltimore have been identified as an opportunity to expand Vincent Street Park. A significant expansion of the park could make room to add sports fields and other active recreation uses, to better meet the needs of the community. The proximity of this green space opportunity to the Baltimore Street retail corridor could also strengthen interest in reinvestment in surrounding vacant buildings. The Department of Planning is working with the Southwest Partnership Community Development Corporation and the Department of Recreation and Parks to further explore the feasibility of this expanded open space opportunity.

#### Next steps:

Work with HCD to acquire needed parcels.

Identification of funding for acquisition, demolition, and park construction

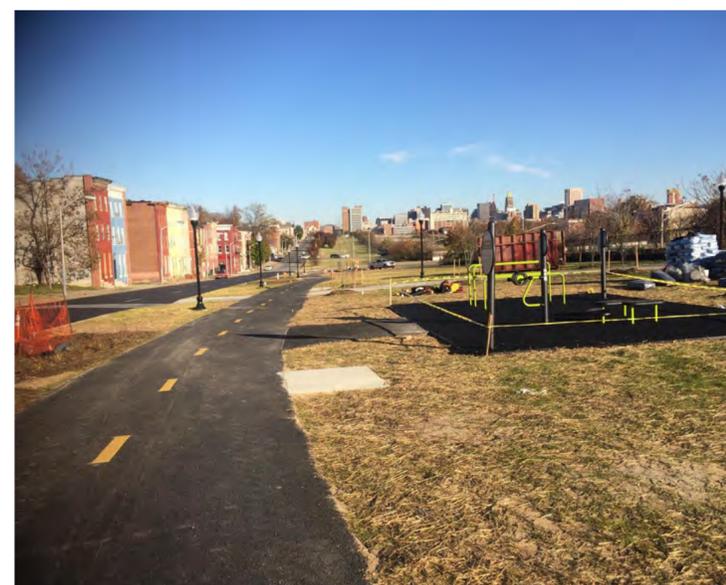
Conducting a design process with residents and stakeholders

### Martin Luther King Boulevard to West Baltimore MARC Community Corridor - West

A path has been started immediately south of W. Franklin Street that includes lighting and exercise equipment. The project envisioned here would extend the path east to Martin Luther King Boulevard and west to the West Baltimore MARC Station and Baltimore LINC Hub. Extending about 1.5 miles, this project has recreational and transportation benefits.

#### Next steps:

Work with DOT to identify funding for construction drawings and project implementation.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

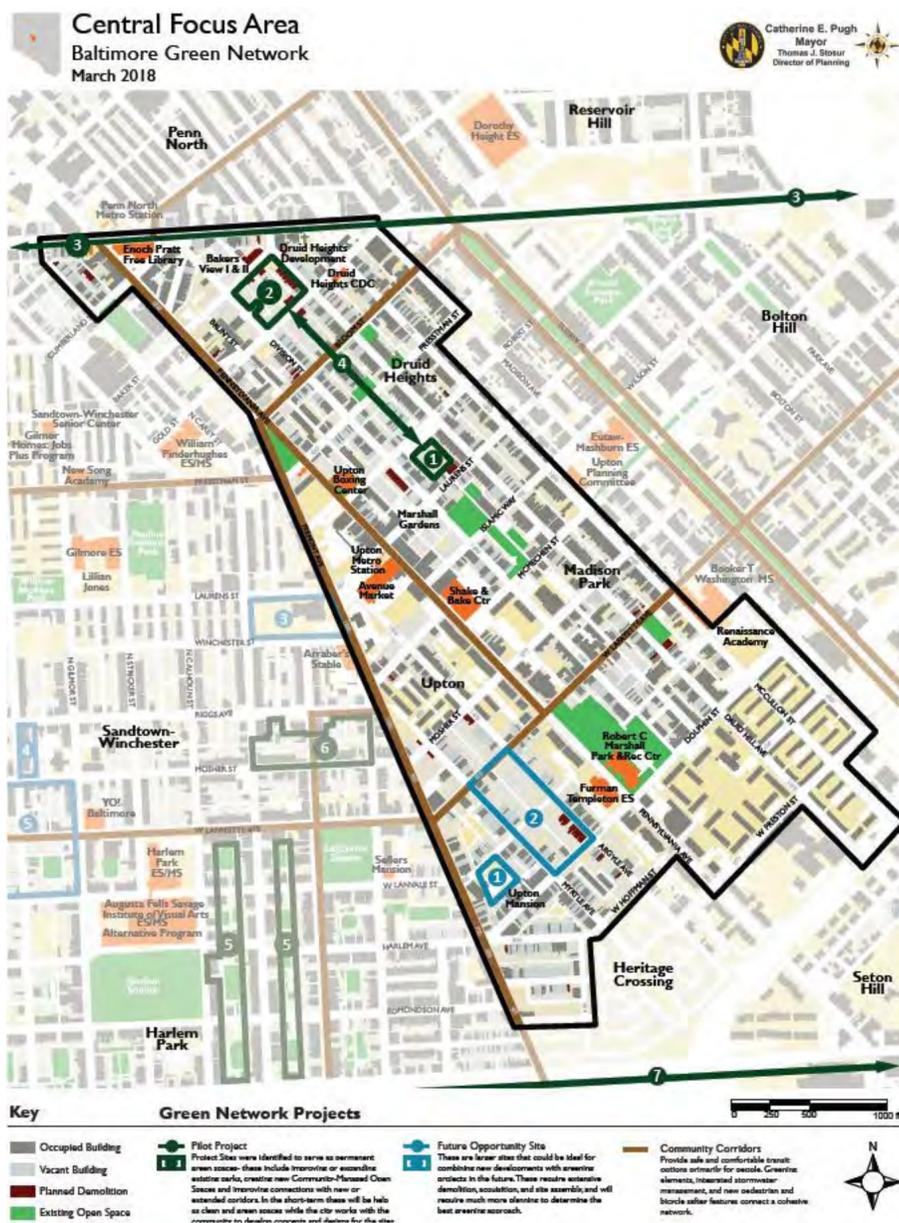
BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## CENTRAL

Druid Heights and Upton are currently experiencing significant investments: The Druid Heights Community Development Corporation (Druid Heights CDC) completed the first phase of the Bakers View Townhomes with 17 units built in 2011; an additional 21 townhomes are proposed for the second phase. Another residential development, proposed by The Community Builders, Inc., is Marshall Gardens—90 new and renovated affordable residential units in Upton and Druid Heights.

Amidst this activity, both neighborhoods benefit from the hard work of established community organizations, which provide leadership and services to residents and stakeholders, and which are currently helping guide the future of their communities. The Druid Heights CDC recently completed the Druid Heights Green Community Master Action Plan, and the Upton Planning Committee has been working on the Upton Master Plan since 2016, through a Neighborhood Planning Grant from the Wells Fargo Regional Foundation.

To complement this positive momentum, the plan for this Focus Area seeks to expand green space through strategic demolition, to create and maintain new park space, and to leverage the newly created green assets to attract private investment to the neighborhoods. The action steps and proposed pilot project below support the Focus Area Plan recommendation of creating a public square in Druid Heights and improving existing green spaces and connections.



### Central Focus Area Projects

Druid Heights and Upton	
Short Term	
<b>Vacant Lot Maintenance</b> Short-term strategies for maintenance include Clean and Green.	
1	<b>Druid Heights Neighborhood Farm Relocation</b> Due to impending development, this community farm needs to be relocated in order to keep serving the community. <i>Next steps: HCD and DOP are developing a plan and budget to move the existing raised beds and replace fencing.</i>
Medium term	
2	<b>Druid Square</b> A public square in this community-identified location could provide residents access to high-quality green space, including open active space and a Kaboom! playground; it could also become the asset needed to attract renovation and development to the surrounding residential blocks. This new park would support the Bakers View Townhomes (500 block of Baker Street), and would increase absorbent surfaces, especially by removing the Etting Street asphalt; this will help water quality.
3	<b>West North Avenue Corridor Greening</b> The conceptual Master Plan for this corridor includes several greening elements, such as street-side tree plantings, intersection plantings (in pots or pits), and gateway plantings. In addition, vacant adoptable lots have been identified as opportunities for new community gathering spaces.
Long term	
4	<b>Etting Street Greening</b> As Etting Street has suffered disinvestment and has a concentration of vacancies, this street should be monitored for ongoing greening and development opportunities. It has the potential to be an attractive green connection between new development in Upton and the new Druid Square in Druid Heights.

### Future Opportunity Sites:

- Upton Mansion:** This vacant historic landmark (811 West Lanvale Street) sits on a one-acre parcel and is currently owned by the City of Baltimore; it is in need of a new occupant and significant renovation. As a Baltimore historic landmark, it is eligible for historic tax credits for redevelopment.
- 1200-1300 blocks of Myrtle and Argyle:** This concentrated area of vacant lots and buildings slated for demolition requires further planning; a beneficial plan for these properties could include a combination of greening and redevelopment.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## WEST

Amidst the high levels of vacancy in the West Focus Area, there are large numbers of existing green spaces which create a unique character in the neighborhoods—as well as transit hubs, community spaces, and recent developments. While these neighborhoods both have a number of strong blocks, with few (or no) vacancies, as a whole the area has lost historic homes and community spaces due to disinvestment and abandonment. On the south end, this Focus Area also borders the infamous six-lane “Highway to Nowhere,” Route 40. The West Focus Area Plan seeks to build on this area’s green strengths to help address the decades-long challenges it faces.

Sandtown-Winchester contains a number of parks, including Pauline Fauntleroy Park, William McAbee Park, Cumberland & Cary Park, and the recently completed Easterwood-Sandtown Park & Playground on the 1500 block of McKean Avenue. Harlem Park’s green spaces include Harlem Square Park, the school playfields, and Lafayette Square Park. The numerous inner block parks throughout the neighborhood are one of its distinctive features although many have fallen into disrepair.

Both neighborhoods have a proud tradition of beautiful, historic properties; unfortunately, residents have witnessed hundreds of these homes slowly destroyed due to neglect, with many deteriorated to a point where they are no longer habitable. The decline and loss of so many homes has forever changed the historic fabric of the neighborhoods. The West Focus Area Plan seeks to begin rebuilding, by strategically demolishing vacancies, supporting and connecting the existing wealth of green spaces, and working to attract new resources and investment to these areas.



### West Focus Area Projects

Harlem Park and Sandtown-Winchester	
<b>Short term</b>	
<b>Vacant Lot Maintenance</b> Short-term strategies for maintenance include Clean and Green.	
<b>Medium term</b>	
<b>5 Harlem Park Inner Block Parks</b>	Improve, expand and better connect several inner block parks on the east side of Harlem Park. The treatments include clean-up, removal of old pavement, new lawn and pervious pavers, tree pruning and park furniture. In addition, demolishing carefully selected vacant and blighted buildings bordering these spaces can open up the inner block parks, better connecting them to the neighborhood and creating a more contiguous Green Network in Harlem Park.
<b>6 Smithson Park</b>	There is significant planned demolition at this site, which should be developed into a new, large neighborhood park, per the Focus Area community charrette process.
<b>7 West North Avenue Corridor Greening</b>	The conceptual Master Plan for this corridor includes several greening elements, including street-side tree plantings, intersection plantings (in pots or pits), and gateway plantings. In addition, vacant adoptable lots have been identified as opportunities for new community gathering spaces.
<b>8 Martin Luther King Boulevard to West Baltimore MARC Community Corridor</b>	A path has been started immediately south of West Franklin Street that includes lighting and exercise equipment. The project envisioned here would extend the path east to Martin Luther King Boulevard and west to the West Baltimore MARC Station and Baltimore LINC Hub. Extending about 1.5 miles, this project has recreational and transportation benefits.
<b>Long term</b>	
<b>Ongoing greening opportunities</b> Continue to look at larger green space possibilities in high-vacancy areas.	

### Future Opportunity Sites

- 3 Former Pinderhughes School Site:** 1200 North Fremont Avenue. The former school building currently serves as a temporary housing for individuals who are homeless. The community identified the grounds of this site for exploration, in consideration of potential greening opportunities in conjunction with future transit development around the Upton metro station.
- 4 Western District Police Station Area:** 1000 block of North Mount. There are numerous City-owned vacant properties along the east side of this block which have been proposed for renovation to complement the investment at the Western District police station.
- 5 Northwest Harlem Park:** Residents identified the blocks from Fulton Avenue to Gilmore Street and Mosher Street to Harlem Avenue (excluding the funeral home block) as a space that could be redeveloped with a mixture of renovations, green spaces, and multi-family buildings that would face both toward the street and inward toward the inner block parks (creating green space courtyards).



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

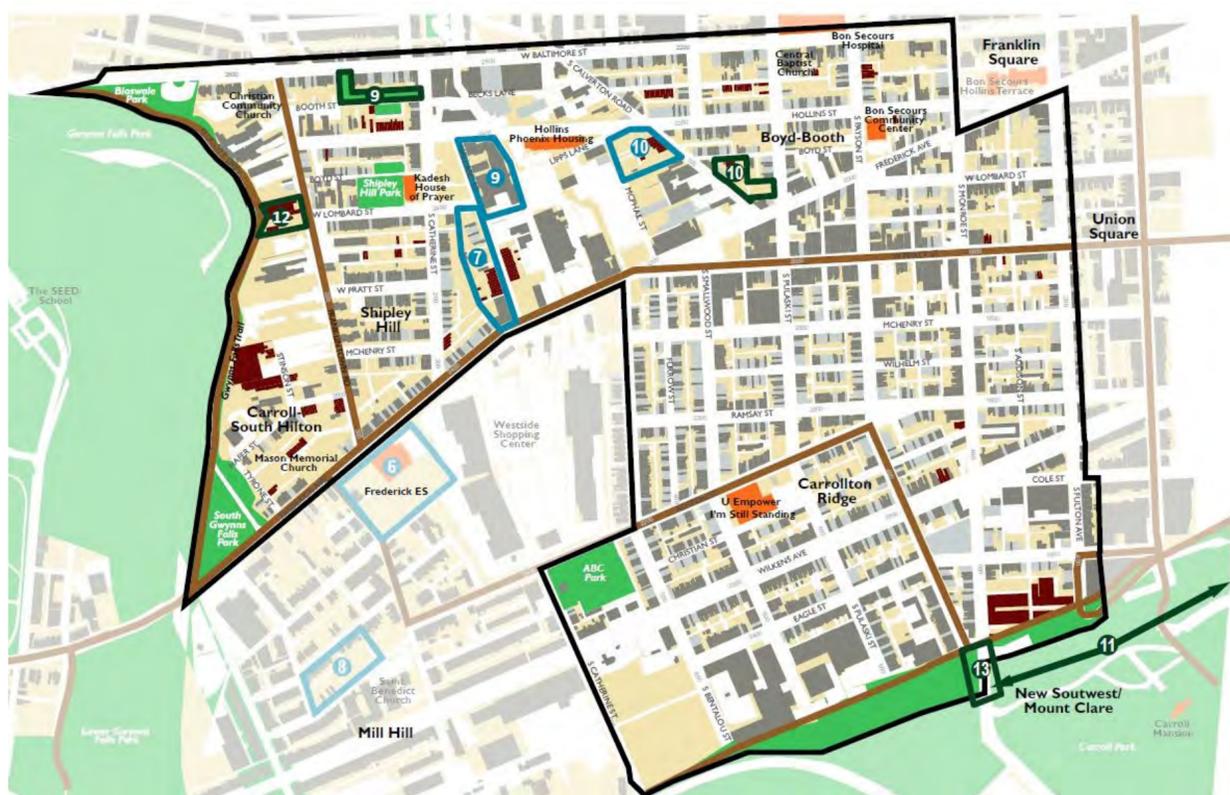
BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## SOUTHWEST

The Southwest Focus Area presents a unique opportunity to enhance the City's Green Network. Each of the three communities in this Focus Area is close to a significant green natural or recreational area, and yet is largely cut off from these amenities by roads, industrial properties, and blight. Fulfilling the opportunities to connect these communities to their close-yet-inaccessible green spaces will greatly enhance the Baltimore Green Network.

The Shipley Hill community is very close to Gwynns Falls Park and Trail, which run along its western border, but the park is rarely seen or used by residents for recreational purposes. In addition to a high number of vacant properties, Shipley Hill has two industrial pockets with a number of businesses that have become incompatible with residential uses or are now vacant and blighted industrial properties, complicating the community's overall challenges. Similarly, the Carrollton Ridge neighborhood abuts Carroll Park, with one entrance on South Monroe Street—a key opportunity for a better connection. The vacant buildings in Carrollton Ridge are scattered throughout the neighborhood, making it difficult to identify concentrated areas for demolition to create new green spaces. Situated between the two neighborhoods is Boyd-Booth, a relatively small neighborhood with few green spaces; its only access to both Carroll Park and Gwynns Falls Park and Trail is through Shipley Hill and Carrollton Ridge.

A major asset in Shipley Hill is the new Frederick Elementary School, which underwent an extensive renovation and expansion as part of the 21st Century Schools project and opened for the 2017 school year. To complement the large public investment in the school, the Department of Planning developed the Frederick INSPIRE plan for the nearby community (including parts of the Focus Area); some of the recommendations from the INSPIRE plan have been incorporated here.



Southwest Focus Area  
Baltimore Green Network  
March 2018  
Catherine E. Pugh  
Mayor  
Thomas J. Stosur  
Director of Planning

**Key**

- Occupied Building
- Vacant Building
- Planned Demolition
- Existing Open Space

**Green Network Projects**

- 1** Pilot Project: Project sites were identified to serve as permanent green spaces; these include improving or expanding existing parks, creating new Community-Managed Open Spaces and improving connections with new or extended corridors. In the short-term these will help as clean and green spaces while the city works with the community to develop concepts and designs for the sites.
- 2** Future Opportunity Site: These are larger sites that could be ideal for combining new developments with greening projects in the future. These require extensive demolition, acquisition, and site assembly, and will require much more planning to determine the best greening approach.
- 3** Community Corridors: Provide safe and comfortable transit options primarily for people. Greening elements, integrated stormwater management, and new pedestrian and bicycle safety features connect a cohesive network.

### Southwest Focus Area Projects

Carrollton Ridge, Boyd-Booth, and Shipley Hill	
Short Term	
<b>Vacant Lot Maintenance</b> Short-term strategies for maintenance include Clean and Green.	
Medium term	
<b>9</b>	<b>Shipley Hill Park Enhancements</b> Shipley Hill Park is an existing park along Booth Street in Shipley Hill. The park is dominated by paved surfaces, some of which are used by residents for parking. BCRP and DPW are working with the community to identify opportunities to add more green space to the park by removing some paved surfaces and defining parking areas more clearly.
<b>10</b>	<b>Racheal Wilson Firefighter Memorial</b> A commemorative park and garden is under design to honor Racheal Wilson, a firefighter/EMT recruit who passed away in the line of duty. The space will include a fenced area with flower beds, a children's play space, and a gathering area.
<b>11</b>	<b>Southwest Community Corridor</b> Construction of a path from Arlington Avenue to Traci Atkins Park, Carroll Park, and the Mt. Clare Mansion would help connect neighborhoods north and south of Carroll Park with the park, as well as provide a recreational and transportation (walking, jogging, or bicycling) path that leads to downtown.
Long term	
<b>12</b>	<b>Gwynns Falls Vista Park</b> The Gwynns Falls Greenway is physically and visually disconnected from the neighboring Shipley Hill community by a line of industrial buildings—several of which are vacant. Converting one of these vacancies into an overlook park would better connect the neighborhood with the trail, stream, and existing park.
<b>13</b>	<b>Carroll Park Pedestrian Access Pathway</b> The Carrollton Ridge community envisions better access to Carroll Park. A proposed new pathway into the park would cross Monroe Street, from the 1900 block of Ohio Avenue, and create a newly accessible entrance along the southeast border of the neighborhood.

### Future Opportunity Sites

- 6** **Frederick Elementary School area:** There are multiple opportunities to leverage the new, modernized school. The following locations should be examined for short-term greening and development opportunities; additional planning will be necessary to determine what type of project will be appropriate for each site.
- 7** **Potential Housing Development Sites:** There are opportunities to support local institutions (like Bon Secours Hospital and St. Benedict Church) as well as other developers and non-profit organizations (like St. Ambrose) to create new housing in strategic locations.
- 9** **Eigenbrot Brewery:** The historic brewery (101-113 Willard Street) anchors a cluster of vacant industrial properties in this Focus Area; there is an opportunity to reimagine these vacant properties for uses compatible with the residential neighborhoods.
- 10** **Calverton Road and Hollins Street Site:** There is an opportunity for new green space on a piece of land that sits between McPhail Street, Calverton Road, and Hollins Street. There are already several vacant and overgrown properties at this site and additional demolitions are planned.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: FOCUS AREA RECOMMENDATIONS

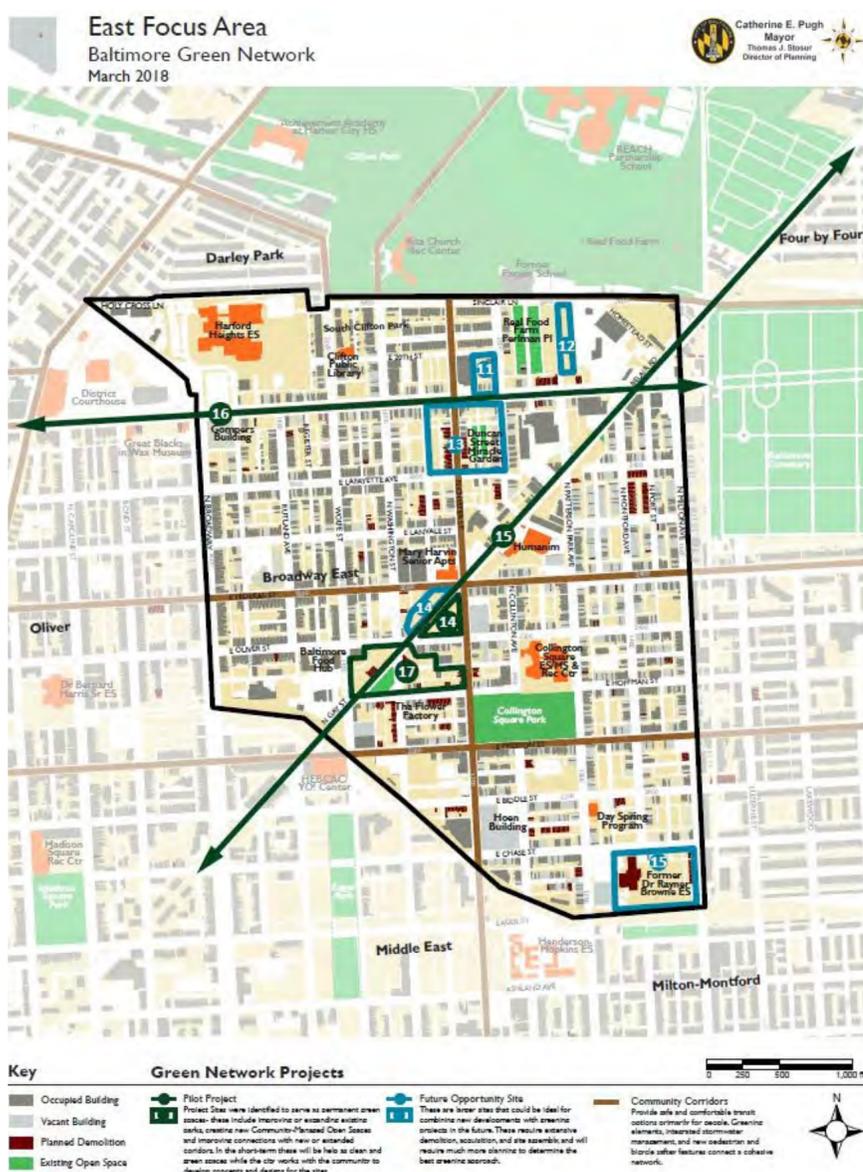
BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## EAST

The East Focus Area is unique within the Green Network as a locus of development activity. The Broadway East and South Clifton Park neighborhoods are on either side of North Avenue, a major transit corridor. The community also has a long history of activism, which is currently focused on youth programs, crime reduction programs, efforts to improve city services, and housing and vacant lot revitalization. These strengths will provide a strong foundation for local implementation of the Green Network, which in turn seeks to support the ongoing planning and investment in the area.

Broadway East is adjacent to a major, long-term mixed-use revitalization effort in East Baltimore—the East Baltimore Development Initiative, which focuses on an 88-acre area now known as “Eager Park.” Johns Hopkins University is a central supporter of this non-profit partnership among city, state and federal agencies; philanthropic institutions; private sector partners; and community leaders. To date, partners have invested a combined total of \$1.6 billion, supporting 1,700 affordable and market-rate housing units, a new school and early childhood center, a five-acre park, and large amounts of commercial and retail space. Eager Park’s development, occurring next to Broadway East, will provide strong market support for the redevelopment plans in this neighborhood.

Ayers Saint Gross, a planning and design firm, and Southern Baptist Church have been leading the process of creating a Master Plan with the Broadway East neighborhood since spring 2016. The Department of Planning, through the Green Network, served as a partner in the process, which included small meetings with community leaders and stakeholder groups as well as a series of three large public meetings to identify needs and get feedback on the Master Plan.



### East Focus Area Projects

Broadway East and South Clifton Park	
<b>Short Term</b>	
<b>Vacant Lot Maintenance</b> Short-term strategies for maintenance include Clean and Green.	
<b>14 Broadway East Park</b>	The planning and design of this park began in 2014 (prior to the designation as a Green Network Focus Area). Several design charrettes were conducted with the New Broadway East Community Association to envision a passive recreation area for neighborhood gatherings. The Department of Recreation and Parks managed the design and construction of this new park which is now complete.
<b>Medium term</b>	
<b>15 Gay Street Corridor Greening</b>	A series of existing green spaces along the Gay Street Corridor (from Wolfe Street to North Chester Street; these include The Flower Factory) can be further developed, providing a green streetscape that will strengthen development efforts and connect to both Eager Park and Clifton Park. Streetscape features include bike paths, expanded sidewalks with landscaped area, expanded tree pits, and bioretention cells.
<b>16 East North Avenue Corridor Greening</b>	The conceptual Master Plan for this corridor includes several greening elements, including street-side tree plantings, intersection plantings (in pots or pits), and gateway plantings. Some streetscape improvements are currently in progress.
<b>Long term</b>	
<b>17 Hoffman Street Green Space</b>	This proposed linear green space is adjacent to the existing Collington Square Park, providing a green connection to the Baltimore Food Hub. The middle parcel of the linear space is The Flower Factory, an urban farm growing cut flowers and herbs; because of the connection to the Food Hub, there may be an opportunity for additional urban agriculture features.

### Future Opportunity Sites

- 11 North Avenue large-footprint retail site:** The east side of the 1900 block of North Collington Avenue is a possible location for a grocery store or other larger footprint retail, fronting on North Avenue.
- 12 Urban agriculture and mixed-use development:** The east side of the 1900 block of North Patterson Park Avenue is a possible location for retail and housing redevelopment facing an expanded permanent urban agriculture site.
- 13 Duncan Street Miracle Garden area:** There is potential for mixed-use redevelopment facing an expanded permanent green space centered on the Duncan Street Miracle Garden, including on the 2000 block of East North Avenue, the 1800 block of North Castle Street, and the 1700-1800 blocks of North Chester Street.
- 14 Community spaces facing new park:** There are possible locations for new community uses, such as a multi-purpose community center and health center, facing the new permanent green spaces at 1501 North Gay Street.
- 15 Former Dr. Rayner Browne school site:** The former Dr. Rayner Browne school site sits at 1000 North Montford Avenue. The school site has been turned over to the City for repurposing as it is no longer needed by Baltimore City Public Schools. The school building is planned for demolition. It is adjacent to a vacant grocery store parcel. Together, these two properties present a large site which could be redeveloped. Since this site sits along the existing elevated rail line, there may be an opportunity for redevelopment of this site to incorporate a green buffer along the rail line.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## NEXT STEPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In the immediate term, the Department of Planning, Office of Sustainability is leading initial implementation, with the support of existing City capital and operational resources. Phase-one efforts will focus on:

- Creating new parks and or development parcels identified in the initial Focus Area Plans.
- Creating and piloting a higher standard for greening and maintenance of vacant lots.
- Identifying resources and mechanisms for increased support for existing community-managed green spaces.
- Enhancing identified corridors—through a combination of improved walking and bicycling facilities, streetscape greening and improvements, and wayfinding.
- Extending, connecting, or improving existing trails.
- Enhancing or protecting existing natural resource assets (such as scattered forest patches) that are not under the jurisdiction of the Department of Recreation and Parks.
- Improving access between neighborhoods and existing parks through bicycle and walking paths and enhanced street crossings.
- Enhancing existing natural ecological systems such as stream valleys, wetlands, meadows, or forests.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## PROCESS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the City and its partners' recent strides, needed process improvements include:

### **1a. Address short-term operational bottlenecks for green space projects**

Create an inter-agency working group, with support from the Mayor's Office and other agency heads, to immediately develop and pilot minor improvements to permitting and other land use processes.

### **1b. Study a potential overhaul of core approval processes for green space projects**

Work with a specialist consultant to research best practices from other jurisdictions and make recommendations for streamlining City processes, enabling green spaces to quickly flourish.

### **1c. Use existing city resources to fill resource gaps.**

Support recycling and reutilization efforts to provide healthy soil and other physical resources to community green spaces.

### **1d. Increase support for community-driven and privately-sponsored green space projects**

Create a standardized, clear, and accessible process for coordinating site issues between agencies, partners, and communities, in part to provide a "backstop" for continuity of maintenance. Further coordination can open new, vital resources, such as training for community partners.

### **1e. Establish a robust green space workforce development program**

Create a new job training program to more tightly knit the Green Network into economic development goals, while addressing unmet needs for maintenance.

### **1f. Ensure predictability, transparency, and fairness for green space projects**

Create processes and establish funds for long-term care and maintenance for both new Green Network projects as well as existing green spaces in neighborhoods.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Transparent and inclusive implementation is crucial to building a sustainable Green Network and include:

**2a. Ensuring Inclusive outreach.** Develop consistent engagement guidelines, and extend outreach beyond traditional meetings (i.e., door-to-door canvassing; targeted advertising; community socials, coffee chats).

**2b. Conducting a variety of engagement activities in multiple, accessible locations.** Accommodate diverse schedules, and take advantage of creative formats (such as hosting “office hours” in vacant retail spaces and pop-up events at future greening sites).

**2c. Enhancing stakeholder partnerships.** Maintain strong collaboration with City and external partners for ongoing Green Network Implementation. The Green Network Vision should provide the framework for ongoing coordination and support for a wide range of organizations and stakeholders.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## LAND, OPEN SPACE, AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Ecological and environmental stewardship will be vital to long-term success and should include:

**3a. Following best practices for resource management.** Support the Department of Recreation and Parks in the creation of a master plan for the restoration and management for all properties in its jurisdiction.

**3b. Strategically acquire new, high priority open spaces.** Coordinate with the Department of Recreation and Parks to acquire space for park expansion and to protect floodplains and forests.

**3c. Designing to reflect Baltimore's unique natural character.** Collaborate with residents to design green spaces that reflect community aesthetics and respond to natural patterns and that promote ongoing neighborhood stewardship.

**3d. Pursue partnerships for engagement and education.**

Collaborate with local institutions, organizations, and community members to broaden the benefits and impacts of the Baltimore Green Network.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: RECOMMENDATIONS

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

## FUNDING SOURCES AND FINANCE STRATEGIES

Bringing Baltimore's Green Network Vision to scale will require state, federal, and private resources. The approach must include:

**4a. Elevating the Baltimore Green Network as a priority for City capital distribution and other funding.** Ensuring that pilot projects are implemented and ongoing maintenance needs of Green Network properties are met.

**4b. Seek dedicated funding for maintenance of Green Network properties.**

Increase maintenance funding for vacant properties, and ensure that all new Green Network projects include a long-term maintenance funding plan. With Department of Finance, create a work plan for a study of existing funding streams that could be used for vacant lot maintenance.

**4c. Leveraging existing agency initiatives and mandates.** For example, participating in the Department of Public Works' water quality planning efforts (such as the MS4), and continuing to partner with the Department of Housing and Community Development on prioritizing demolition to optimize resources in support of Green Network goals and projects.

**4d. Secure state and federal funding for Green Network implementation.**

To maximize federal and state funding to support the Green Network, ensure that the plan is understood and highly valued by a wide range of public funding partners. Begin by creating a pipeline of targeted funding sources for current Green Network pilot projects.

**4e. Secure private and philanthropic funds for Green Network implementation.**

In the short term, discuss financial support with those members of the Green Network Leadership and Advisory teams who represent philanthropic organizations. In the long term, the Green Network will require a dedicated fundraising and development team to write and execute successful funding proposals.

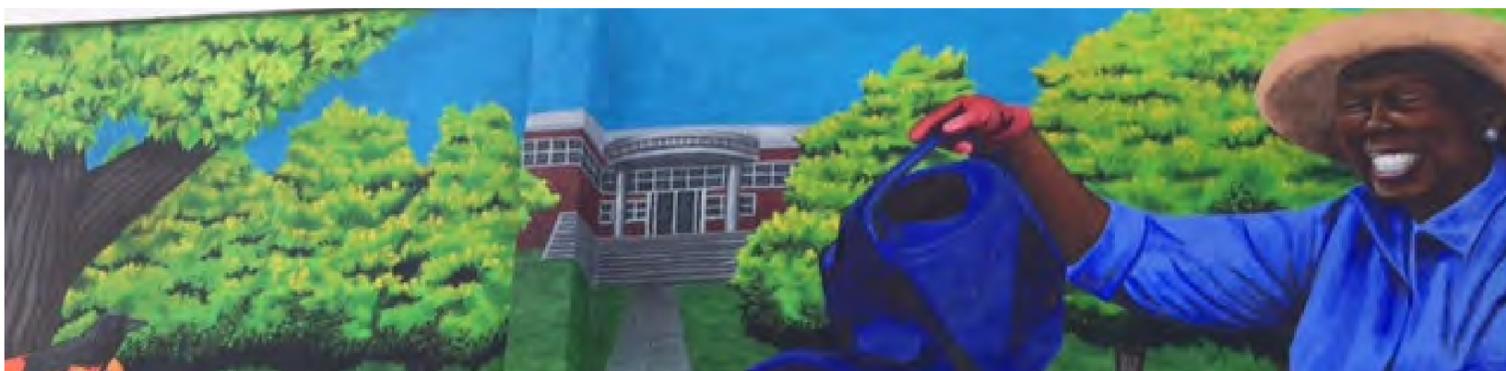
**4f. Performing a feasibility study and create a long-term funding strategy.** Explore the use of voter, administrative, or legislature-approved funding, as well as tax increment funding (TIF) and other tools.

**4g. Explore mechanisms to capture anticipated future revenues.**

Develop case studies of TIF or other financing tools used successfully in examples above. Identify experts/consultants in this area for initial conversation and potential further study. This evaluation would be part of the long term strategy developed by an external consultant.

**4h. Create a task force to analyze alternative, creative funding opportunities for Green Network Projects.**

Work with external experts to identify and assess emerging trends in finance; evaluation of the feasibility of creative mechanisms should be part of the long-term strategy developed by an external consultant.



# BALTIMORE GREEN NETWORK: ESTABLISHING A STEWARD

BALTIMORE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

The long-term home in City government for the Baltimore Green Network program is not yet determined.

In the interim, the Department of Planning Green Team will continue to move forward with a series of pilot projects, coordinating with City agencies and other stakeholders to ensure the Green Network has a sustainable administrative position as a priority for City government in the future.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF STEWARD

- The ability to focus time and resources directly to the Green Network mission amid changing fiscal and political environments.
- Broad capabilities and expertise, to coordinate and oversee complex planning, site implementation, and maintenance of projects.
- The ability to act innovatively and entrepreneurially, particularly in seeking private, state, and federal funding and in supporting or facilitating development deals.
- The skills to establish and maintain effective relationships with a variety of external private partners.

## ROLES OF STEWARD

- Provide a platform for ongoing coordination of greening initiatives, citywide.
- Establish new vacant lot treatment standards.
- Design and oversee initial intake, greening, and maintenance of vacant lots
- Steward all vacant lots (including those outside of the Green Network).
- Support Green Network projects
- Support stakeholder projects aligned with the Green Network.

## OPTIONS FOR STEWARD

- **Continued Green Team Leadership:** The Green Team within the Department of Planning could continue to function as the lead implementer for the Green Network, beyond the initial phase.
- **Assign to the Department of Housing and Community Development:** The department (or a dedicated unit within the department) could serve as the central hub for Green Network implementation, and focus specifically on the activities and roles depicted above. With additional dedicated resources, the department would coordinate closely with the Green Team on pilot projects; for greening and improved lot maintenance, it would either coordinate with the Department of Public Works or procure necessary services elsewhere.
- **Assign to External Partners:** The City could choose to play a less-direct role, relying instead on private partners through a series of contracts or other relationships. However, a large portion of the Green Network mission, mandates, fund sources, and legal mechanisms reside in the City's domain; it would be a significant challenge for a non-City party to be the center of implementation.

