



The 2019 *Baltimore* *Sustainability* *Plan*

Prepared by the Baltimore
Office of Sustainability

baltimoresustainability.org

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CATHERINE E. PUGH
MAYOR

Mayor's Letter

“*My administration believes that connection with each other is one of our most valuable and renewable resources.*”



Dear Baltimore,

Our lives are most sustainable when we are connected to one another; when we feel seen, heard and valued. To that end, the Office of Sustainability and the Sustainability Commission led a two year process to connect with thousands of Baltimore residents. We listened as residents expressed their visions and commitments and the change they want for a better Baltimore. The 2019 Sustainability Plan lifts up these voices.

I am excited to introduce the 2019 Sustainability Plan. Using a racial equity lens, the plan provides guidance to both recognize and eliminate disparities. The plan seeks to find balance as we work to protect our environment, advance our economy and connect our neighbors while focusing on social equity.

The plan is connected to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that include promoting prosperity while protecting the planet, ending poverty while building the economy and combatting climate change while improving environmental protection. The livability and viability of our city depends on the forward movement of these variables.

My administration believes that connection with each other is one of our most valuable and renewable resources. Let us commit to using this plan as a guiding document to make Baltimore more sustainable, regenerative and equitable for all.

Sincerely,

Catherine A. Pugh
Mayor

Sustainability Commission Co-Chairs' Letter

“*This plan is a reflection of the voices of Baltimore, with parameters set for equity... We will actively see your feedback as we ask, “How are we doing?”*”



Dear Baltimore,

The Commission on Sustainability is thrilled to share with you the 2019 Sustainability Plan. Since the original Sustainability Plan was adopted in 2009, the Commission and the Office of Sustainability have been working to strengthen communities through collaborative economic, environmental and socially equitable planning and action. In the last ten years, residents, government agencies, nonprofit partners, and businesses have made tremendous strides in fulfilling the initial plan. In this new plan, you will notice an expansion of our focus areas and importantly, a focus on racial equity.

While 2009 plan had a strong focus on environment, we saw the need to uplift the social and economic aspects of sustainability. We began by asking questions – about past, current, and future policies and programs - to learn who is included or excluded from decision-making and participation.

It is the job of the Sustainability Commission to oversee the implementation of the Plan. Upon adoption by the Planning Commission, the Plan becomes part of the City’s Comprehensive Master Plan, known as LIVE, EARN, PLAN, LEARN. This plan is a reflection of the voices of Baltimore, with parameters set for equity. Each year we will conduct an annual review, prepare an annual report and host an annual Open House. We will actively seek your feedback as we ask “How are we doing?”

We hope that you will see the value in subscribing to working together as we all commit to creating a more sustainable and resilient Baltimore.

Sincerely,

Miriam Avins and Rebecca Bakre
Sustainability Commission Co-Chairs



Planning Director's Letter

“**Our City's new Sustainability Plan reflects years of engagement and conversation about our vision for Baltimore. It is an ambitious document, capturing our greatest hopes for our City's future.**”

Dear Baltimore:

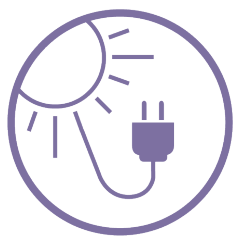
I am proud to share with you our 2019 Sustainability Plan. This Plan would not be possible without the input of community residents; the ideas and contributions of many organizational partners; and the tireless work of our staff in the Office of Sustainability. Our City's new Sustainability Plan reflects years of engagement and conversation about our vision for Baltimore. It is an ambitious document, capturing our greatest hopes for our City's future.

Baltimore's Sustainability Plan was developed to think broadly about all three legs of sustainability: people, planet and prosperity. The plan also takes great care to integrate an equity lens, a tool designed to explicitly consider racial equity when developing policy. The application of the equity lens to the Sustainability Plan is an important step towards operationalizing equity across the entire Department of Planning and transforming how we do business day-to-day. It is also an important step for the City of Baltimore.

Upon adoption by City Council and the Planning Commission, the Sustainability Plan becomes part of the fabric of Baltimore City, guiding its development for years to come. The Plan, once adopted today, will become a core part of our City's Comprehensive Plan. As we approach updating the Comprehensive Plan after the 2020 Census, the framework of the Sustainability Plan will be our guidepost and our foundation.

Laurie Feinberg
Acting Director, Department of Planning

The 2019 Baltimore Sustainability Plan



Adopted by the Baltimore Commission on Sustainability

January 16, 2019

Adopted by the Baltimore City Planning Commission

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The Commission on Sustainability

Miriam Avins (Co-Chair)
Rasheed Aziz
Rebecca Bakre (Co-Chair)
Donzell Brown
John Ciekot
The Honorable Ryan Dorsey
Lisa Ferretto
Michael Furbish
Beth Harber
Charlotte James
Earl Johnson
The Honorable Robbyn Lewis
Barbara McMahon
John Quinn
Avis Ransom
Inez Robb
Gregory Sawtell
Kurt Sommer
Tracy Williams
Benjamin Zaitchik

Baltimore Office of Sustainability Staff

Lisa McNeilly, Director
Bruna Attila
Sarah Buzogany
Abby Cocke
Anne Draddy
Holly Freishtat
Aubrey Germ
Amy Gilder-Busatti
Alice Huang
Nia Jones
Kimberley M. Knox
Jeff LaNoue
Denzel Mitchell
Ava Richardson
Anika Richter
Victor Ukpolo Jr

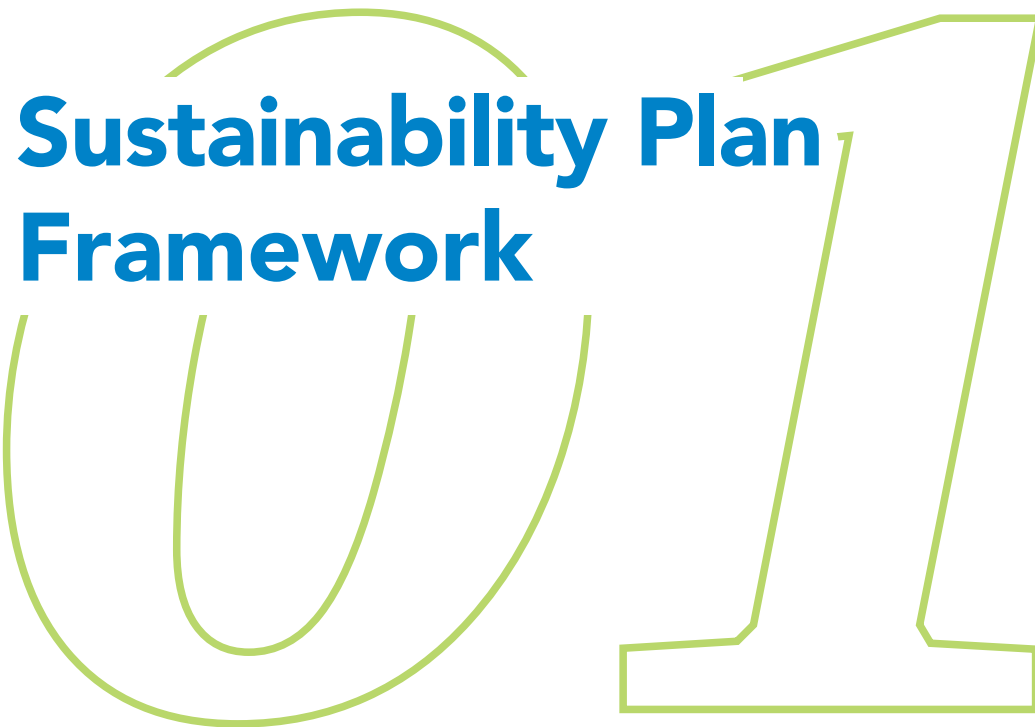
Sustainability Plan Project Manager

Anne Draddy

This plan is dedicated to a visionary Baltimore leader whose commitment, contagious energy, and sense of humor shapes our work.

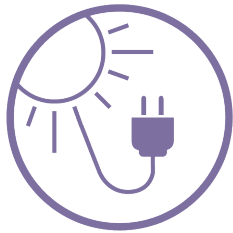


Photo Credit: Blue Water Baltimore, Pollinator Garden Install - Green Street Academy
<https://bluewaterbaltimore.smugmug.com/EVENTS/51118-PollinatorGardenInstall-GreenStreetAcademy/51118-PollinatorGardenInstall-GreenStreetAcademy-MICHEL/>

The number 101 is rendered in a light green outline style. The '0' is a simple oval shape. The first '1' is a tall, narrow vertical stroke with a small rectangular base. The second '1' is a shorter, wider vertical stroke with a small rectangular base.

**Sustainability Plan
Framework**

Sustainability Plan Framework



Community

Human-Made Systems

Climate & Resilience

Nature in the City

Economy

Neighbors

Neighborhoods

Community Preparedness

People and Nature

Local Economy

Environmental Literacy

Housing Affordability

Energy

Nature for Nature's Sake

Workforce Development

Healthy School Environments

Buildings

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Trees and Forests

Arts and Culture

Waste and Recycling

Transportation

Clean Air

Water in the Environment

Urban Agriculture

Noise

Food Systems

Green Infrastructure

The Global Goals

The United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals for a better world by 2030.





Introduction



A Baltimore Where Everyone Thrives

Let today be the day that we commit to a new vision for a sustainable Baltimore.

We are at a moment when we are poised to repair, regenerate, heal, and mend the fabric of our community.

Weaving a new fabric will lead to a different future where we can collectively create the conditions for each of us to heal ourselves, each other and the earth, and generate a healthy future for us all.

Like an organism, a city will only grow and flourish when all of its parts are fully functioning. Baltimore's history of deliberate racial segregation has positioned people in unhealthy and inequitable circumstances, deeply affecting the well-being of many of our residents—as well as the social, economic, and environmental well-being of our city. We must first acknowledge the history of race discrimination and inequity in Baltimore in order to begin to move forward. This recognition can help us understand how we have arrived at this place, while playing a powerful role in shaping where we want to go and how we want to get there, together. The Sustainability Plan is just one step in the process toward creating a more equitable city. The livability and viability of our city depends on a strong economy, a healthy environment, and an inclusive society for all.

Let's work to make sure the child born tomorrow grows up with the opportunity to nurture a connection

with family, with their community, and with nature. To live free from violence. To receive a quality education. To enjoy plenty of healthy food on the table. To have access to a good paying job. And to thrive in a city that supports all residents to reach their potential. That is a sustainable Baltimore.

This plan is the result of hundreds of conversations, comments, and drafts among Baltimore's residents, those who work at its nonprofits, businesses, and in government, and the Sustainability Commission and the Baltimore Office of Sustainability. It articulates a vision for a new communal fabric leading to a future where we all do better. Unlike most city plans, which are roadmaps for actions by city government, this plan relies on all parts of our community for its implementation.

Past Successes of the Sustainability Plan

The Baltimore Office of Sustainability was created by the City Council in 2007 to be a resource, a catalyst, and an advocate for a healthy, resilient Baltimore. The Office offers innovative, sustainable solutions to Baltimore's opportunities and challenges while engaging people throughout the city, region, and country. The Baltimore Commission on Sustainability is comprised of 20 members appointed by the Mayor and one City Council member appointed by the City Council President. It oversees the Sustainability Plan, monitoring and reporting progress annually.

The 2009 Baltimore Sustainability Plan has been a successful umbrella document providing a citywide

vision complete with strategies, actions, and metrics. Approved with widespread support, the 2009 Plan has seven chapters, 29 goals, and 132 strategies—93 percent of which have been advanced or completed by residents, faith-based institutions, nonprofits, city agencies, and businesses.

Key accomplishments include:

- Passing an Urban Agriculture Tax credit in 2015
- Adopting in 2010 the Baltimore City Green Building Standards and, in 2015, the International Green Construction Code
- Reducing residential gas use by 2.7 percent and electric use by 8.1 percent from the 2007 baseline through the Baltimore Energy Challenge
- Weatherizing more than 10,000 units inhabited by low-income families, collectively saving these families \$10 million in reduced utility bills
- Training more than 820 residents for green construction careers, maintaining an 85 percent graduation rate and 87 percent job placement rate, with average wages of \$13 to \$18 per hour.
 - The solar installation training program alone trained 55 residents, with an average wage placement of \$15 per hour
- Serving over 1 million pounds of local produce in 2015 in Baltimore City Public Schools, and using composting trays, instead of polystyrene, starting in June 2018
- Passing a ban on the use of disposable food serve ware made from polystyrene foam
- Reducing the cost of flood insurance by up to 25 percent for almost 2,000 properties
- Introducing citywide street sweeping, and citywide municipal trash cans

There is more to be done. In the ten years since the City's first Plan was adopted, climate change has become an increasing threat, and many

socioeconomic and public health challenges persist, threatening our city's residents and weakening the sustainability and resiliency of our ecosystem. It's vital that we tackle these challenges together.

2019 Sustainability Plan Structure

The 2019 Sustainability Plan represents a step forward for the City. The plan uses an equity lens, a transformative tool to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs. Using the STAR Community Rating System¹ framework as a basis, the plan incorporates feedback gathered from residents. The Sustainability Plan includes new topics, more intentionally addressing all three legs of sustainability: people, planet and prosperity.

Further, the plan is globally inspired. As part of the USA Sustainable Cities Initiative (USA-SCI), Baltimore was selected as one of three US cities to pilot implementation of 17 new United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹. The SDGs, adopted by UN member countries in September 2015, form a cohesive and integrated package of global aspirations the world commits to achieving by 2030. The ambitious vision is a universal call to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. Baltimore community members worked in collaboration with city agencies, higher educational institutions and other stakeholders to identify 54 concrete measures that track Baltimore's progress towards each of these goals. Mayor Catherine Pugh endorsed the initiative when she took office in December 2016. The connections between the plan and the Sustainable Development Goals are highlighted at the beginning of each topic. To learn about additional ways Baltimore is connecting to the goals, visit Baltimore's Sustainable Future: Localizing the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Strategies and Indicators (2016)².

1. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

2. <http://www.ubalt.edu/about-ub/sustainable-cities/>

Sustainability Plan Purpose

The 2019 Sustainability Plan is a vision for the future of Baltimore. Like the 2009 Plan, it serves as an umbrella document, to gather efforts together under a single, cohesive vision and identify gaps. It continues and expands the work of other plans including:

- The *Baltimore Green Network* (2018) envisions transforming vacant properties into green community assets, connecting these spaces to schools, homes, retail districts, and other activity centers.
- The *Baltimore Food Waste and Recovery Strategy* (2018).
- The *Baltimore Climate Action Plan (CAP)* (2012) has a goal of reducing emissions by 15 percent by 2020.
- The *Disaster Preparedness and Planning Project (DP3)* (2018) addresses existing hazards including flooding, coastal hazards (such as hurricanes and sea level rise), extreme wind, and extreme heat, while also preparing for the anticipated threats of climate change.
- *Homegrown Baltimore* (2013) is the city's urban agriculture plan and aims to increase production, distribution, sales, and consumption of locally grown food within our city.

Achieving the goals set forth in the Sustainability Plan will require the creativity, commitment, and participation of all of us. No single entity alone—not the government, nor any one person or community—can transform Baltimore into a more sustainable and equitable city. We can only do it together. There is a role for every resident, community organization, business, faith-based organization, and institution in making this vision for Baltimore a reality.

Accountability

Advancing the goals of this plan requires more than just a commitment to act, it requires a commitment to be held accountable. A way for us to reach our equity goals is to ensure that we are learning from our failures and our successes. Tracking our progress and monitoring our ability to advance equity and sustainability goals are essential responsibilities of the plan. This will be done in three ways:

- 1) **Annual Reporting:** Every year, the Commission on Sustainability and the Baltimore Office of Sustainability will produce an annual report, as

mandated by the City Council ordinance. The reports will evaluate what has been done and how well it has been done, as best as we are able to determine. The reports will evaluate the efforts and effectiveness of acting in a racially equitable way. We will also use thoughtful indicators that reflect residents' lived experiences — such as commute time or number of vacant buildings in a neighborhood — and we will recognize that the big, striking statistics will often require multiple measurements of interconnected factors. The annual review will be an opportunity to celebrate our successes together as a city, and to learn what is missing and where more effort is needed.

- 2) **Annual Open House:** Every year, at an annual Open House, we will check in with city residents, renew our commitment, and ask, "How are we doing?" "What can we do better?" "Who is here?" "Who is missing in the conversation?" and "Were there unintended consequences or undesired impacts and if so, how can structures be reassessed?" We will identify new strategies and actions as we become more attuned to equitable systems and as technologies and best practices change.
- 3) **Periodic Update:** At least every three years, the Commission on Sustainability and the Baltimore Office of Sustainability will use the annual reports to update strategies, set new benchmarks, and identify new or refined metrics. This allows the plan to adapt and stay relevant to the most pressing issues the City faces.

Conclusion

Sustainability is about regenerating and strengthening our city through collaborative action. It's about balancing social and racial equity, economic growth, and environmental action. It's about the need for justice and equity, in everything we do — recognizing that these are imperative to addressing the social, economic and environmental challenges we face. Most importantly, it's about all of us, contributing our voices, our experiences and joining together to create a new vision.

Let us commit to a new future today!



Photo Credit: Michel Anderson, Blue Water Baltimore, Cherry Hill Homes Tree Planting

Why Equity?

Why addressing today's challenges through an "equity lens" is essential for a sustainable future.

When talking about sustainability, we must address issues of race and place.

When talking about sustainability, we must address issues of race and place. Where we come from, where we live, who we are, and how we identify—these factors have a disproportionate impact on our lives and opportunities, because of social disparities rooted in generations of unfair policy and discrimination. Our focus on equity forces us to look at the systems that have prevented us from achieving sustainable outcomes for all of our residents and for our city as a whole. It acknowledges that the playing field is not level, the starting lines have been incorrectly drawn, and that in order for us to give people a fair shot, the way forward is to correct what's not working.

We cannot meaningfully work for sustainability without deliberately addressing enduring social, economic, and environmental disadvantages that people experience based on their race, ethnicity, and class.

The Equity Lens

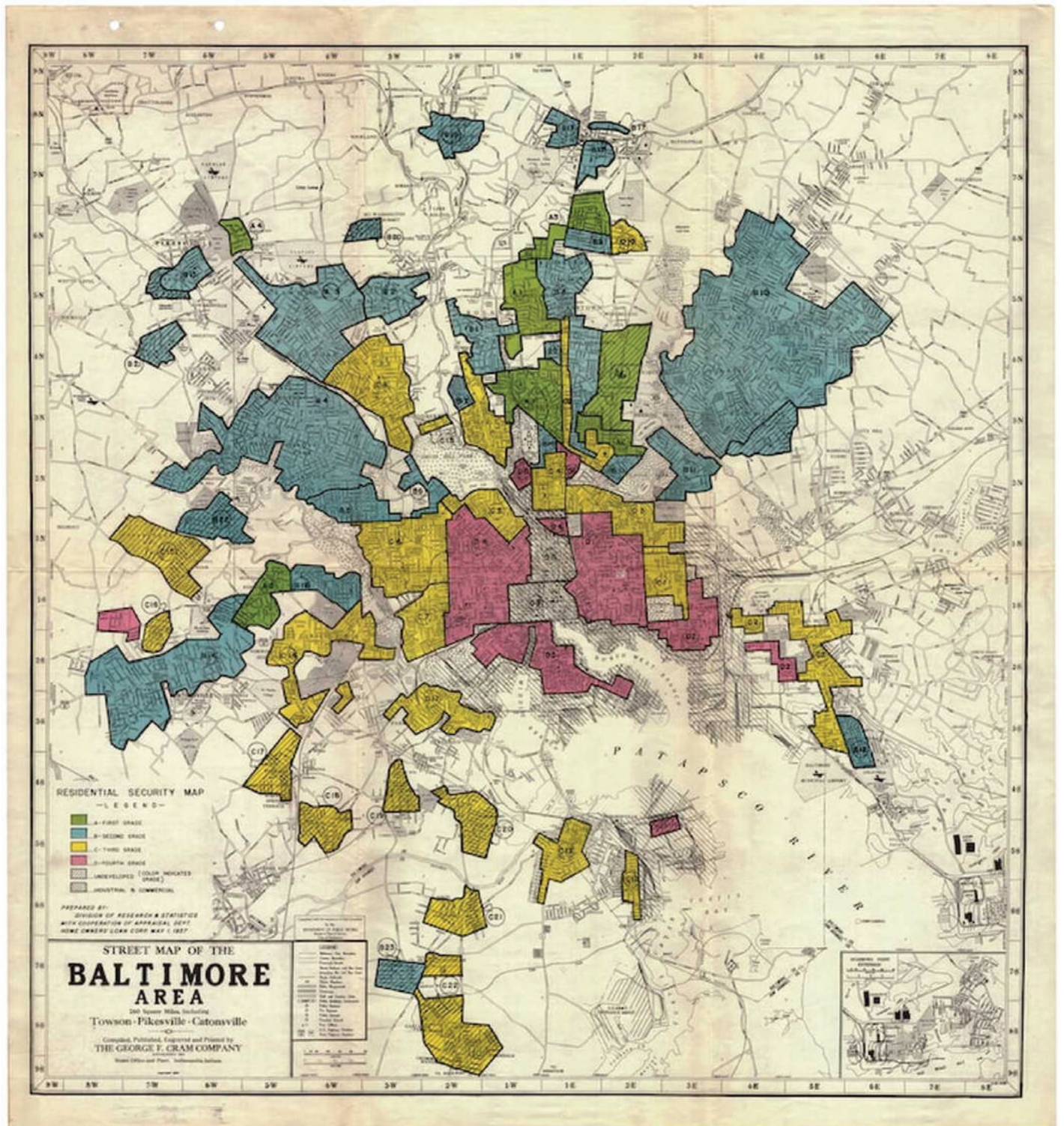
An equity lens has more intentionally been incorporated into the Sustainability Plan update. The lens is a "transformative quality improvement tool used to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs".¹ The equity lens focuses on the experiences that have been historically harmful to some of our residents, and broadens the scope of voices represented in the plan, inclusive not only of race but also gender, age, neighborhood, and employment status. It helped include those who have typically been left out of conversations in and about the American sustainability movement. The equity lens was used in framing issues and in crafting strategies, actions, and measures of success. It will also be used in evaluating impact. Most importantly, it broadened the meaning of sustainability—for a vision that is meaningful for ALL residents in the city.

Equity: "The condition that would be achieved if identities assigned to historically oppressed groups no longer acted as the most powerful predictors of how one fares."

— Baltimore Racial Justice Action

An important concept in equity work is targeted universalism. "A targeted universal strategy is one that is inclusive of the needs of both the dominant and the marginal groups but pays particular attention to the situation of the marginal group."²

1. <https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens>
2. <https://blog.nationalequityproject.org/2011/06/22/targeted-universalism>



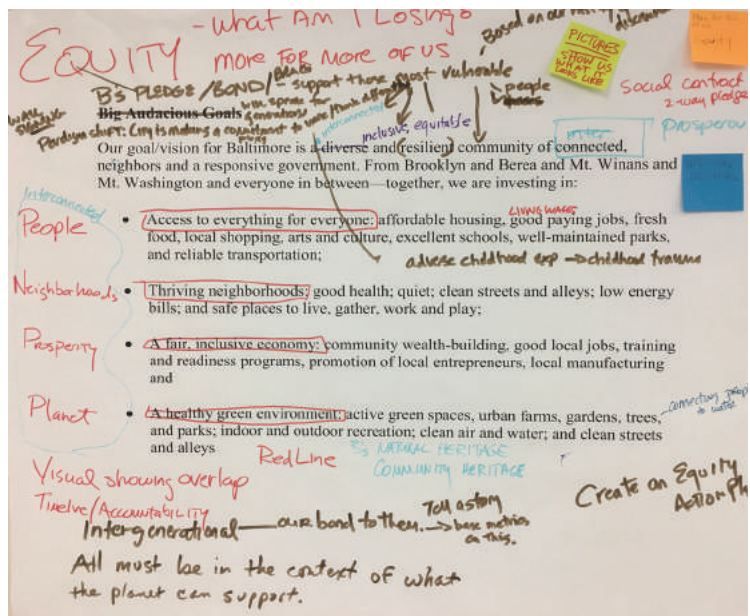
[1937 Residential Security Map](#) of Baltimore completed by the Federal Housing Authority more commonly known as the Redlining Map. The area of the map shown in red and yellow explicitly demonstrates that neighborhoods predominantly occupied by African Americans, immigrants, and composed of older housing stock were considered high risk for home loans, therefore banks would not lend in these areas.



Photo Credit: Office of Sustainability

“ **Equity: The condition that would be achieved if identities assigned to historically oppressed groups no longer acted as the most powerful predictors of how one fares.** ”

— Baltimore Racial Justice Action



Equity working group notes.

Understanding Sustainability and Equity

The Baltimore Office of Sustainability describes sustainability efforts as those which “improve the quality of human life while balancing the need for environmental protection, societal progress, and economic growth.” Its vision for a sustainable Baltimore is one that meets the needs of people today without diminishing the ecosystems on which future generations will rely.

Addressing this vision requires tackling the roots of many of Baltimore’s most persistent challenges, which are deeply connected to the quest for equity.

The term “equity” is used intentionally instead of “equality,” because that the work required must acknowledge the unequal circumstances created by generations of systemic and institutional racism. “Race-blind” and other “equal” treatment approaches have historically had a harmful effect on communities that have been shut out from economic opportunity, because those approaches have not sought to correct the root causes of the problems communities face. Those approaches presume an even starting line, and the resulting actions have only served to continue injustice and further broaden inequality.

Most of the issues closely related to current inequities in Baltimore are deeply tied to sustainability. Public health, for example, is an area where Baltimore has glaring disparities. A person’s life expectancy, access to nutritious food, and other health issues are often concentrated by zip code, which reflect Baltimore’s enduring patterns of residential racial segregation. These disparities are stark: The majority-white neighborhood of Roland Park has an average life expectancy that is 20 years longer than the majority-African-American neighborhoods of Harlem Park or Sandtown-Winchester. The Health Department has committed to reducing racial health disparities that are currently rampant in overdose deaths, youth homicides, obesity, cardiovascular disease, and infant mortality. This commitment is expressed in the City’s “Healthy Baltimore 2020 Blueprint.”³

It is similarly impossible to talk about sustainability without addressing quality-of-life factors like transportation, economic mobility, education and

safety. Institutional racism undermines safety and overemphasizes the link between safety and law enforcement. Safe places are where people feel connected and healthy, where they are economically secure. Multiple, interconnected strategic interventions – like the actions in this plan – will lead to reduced violence and improved public safety, minimize arrests and incarceration, and build trust and relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

These sustainability issues are not new to Baltimore. They are reminders that racial inequities are not random; they have been created and sustained over time and will not disappear on their own. The use of an “equity lens” and the political will to make changes are essential to ensuring we leave Baltimore improved for future generations.

Increasing Quality of Life for All

We all benefit from robust neighborhoods and thriving societies. The more equitable our city, the more sustainable we all are.

True sustainable economic growth does not come at the expense of certain neighborhoods, cities, groups, or natural habitats. Sustainable growth lifts us all, while protecting and preserving natural habitats. Prosperity that benefits everyone is more just and more sustainable.

The goal of the Sustainability Plan is to expand access—to breathe clean air; to drink clean water; to have varied modes of transportation; to enjoy green spaces; to live in affordable, healthy, safe, thriving neighborhoods; to walk streets free of both crime and racial profiling; to secure a job or start a business; and to enjoy all of these opportunities regardless of where we were born, where we live, what we look like, or how we identify.

With broadened opportunities, Baltimore can become a city where everyone can benefit by living, working, and playing—in a city that truly works for all.

3. *Baltimore City Department of Health White Paper: State of Health in Baltimore Summary of Key Issues, Services, and Policies (March 2017)* <https://health.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/HB2020%20-%20April%202017.pdf>

4. *Baltimore Racial Justice Action, Definitions.* Available from <http://bmoreantiracist.org/resources-2/explanations/>

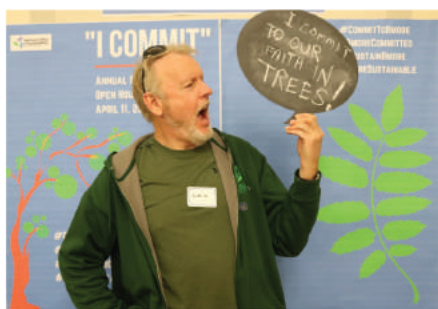
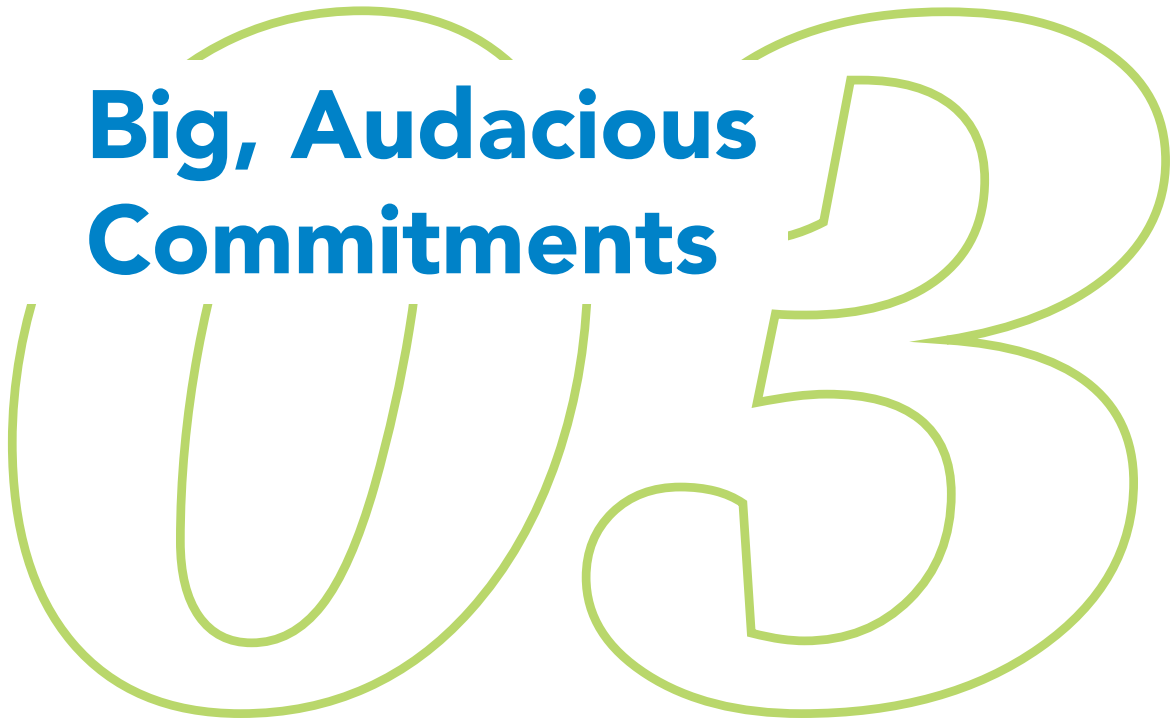


Photo Credit: Zoe Gensheimer

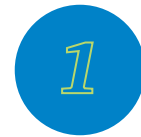
**Big, Audacious
Commitments**



Big, Audacious Commitments

These commitments are the promise for how the Commission on Sustainability and the Office of Sustainability staff will show up to work for the residents of Baltimore.

Our big, audacious commitments include big, audacious corrections in conventional thinking. These commitments constitute a practice for how we will implement the 2019 Sustainability Plan. The Plan, however, cannot be achieved by the Commission and Office of Sustainability staff alone; it is fundamentally based on effective collaborations and partnerships with individuals, residents, organizations, and agencies throughout the City. We invite you to adopt these commitments as a part of a collective community agreement for showing up in this work together.



A Commitment to Be Transparent

We will be honest about our past.

We recognize our city's complex legacy of profound problems: discriminatory laws and policies fueled by racial prejudice, profit-driven exploitation of our natural resources, and other interconnected injustices that have led to neighborhood decline as well as environmental degradation. We will be transparent about where we have failed.

We recognize our interconnectedness.

Sustainability requires us to think and act together, and to pay attention to the broader implications of our actions. We will facilitate stronger, longer-lasting social networks, and foster greater resident interaction within and between neighborhoods, businesses, governments, and nonprofits so that we may work better together.

We will share power.

Power is the ability to decide what matters. We commit to transparency and reject the old ways of decision-making that entrenched power inside closed institutions. We will move aside and make space for those who have been left out. Strategies are more better poised for success when they incorporate the wisdom and experience of those who are directly impacted.

2

A Commitment to Collaborate

We commit to thinking and working differently.

We will listen deeply, respect differing opinions, perspectives, and experiences, and prioritize the needs of those who are most marginalized. We will not be afraid to try new, innovative ideas that challenge the status quo.

We commit to working together.

We will co-create plans and programs to correct systems and move us collectively forward. This means being accountable and supportive of the people we serve and partner with. We are personally invested in the success of our city. By helping others, we also help ourselves.

We seek to solve multiple problems at once.

We acknowledge difficult problems are often tangled together and can't be solved one at a time. We will be both ambitious and strategic.

We support change at the local level.

We are thankful for and will support those who are self-organizing, leading local initiatives, and working directly in their own neighborhoods.

3

A Commitment to Be Accountable

We actively seek feedback and engagement.

We will engage in meaningful and constructive ways. By maintaining relationships and conversations, we will hold ourselves and our city accountable to the commitments we have made.

We will ask: How are we doing?

Are we fulfilling the plans that have been set with the community, and are we following a reasonable timeline? We will examine unintended consequences, we will reassess, and we will ask, "What can we do better?"

We will humanize our data.

The people of Baltimore are not statistics. We will track success based on measures that resonate with the real world (such as shorter commute times or decreased neighborhood vacancies).

We will speak in terms that are understandable to all.

We will strive to be open and honest about both our successes and failures. We will not speak in jargon.

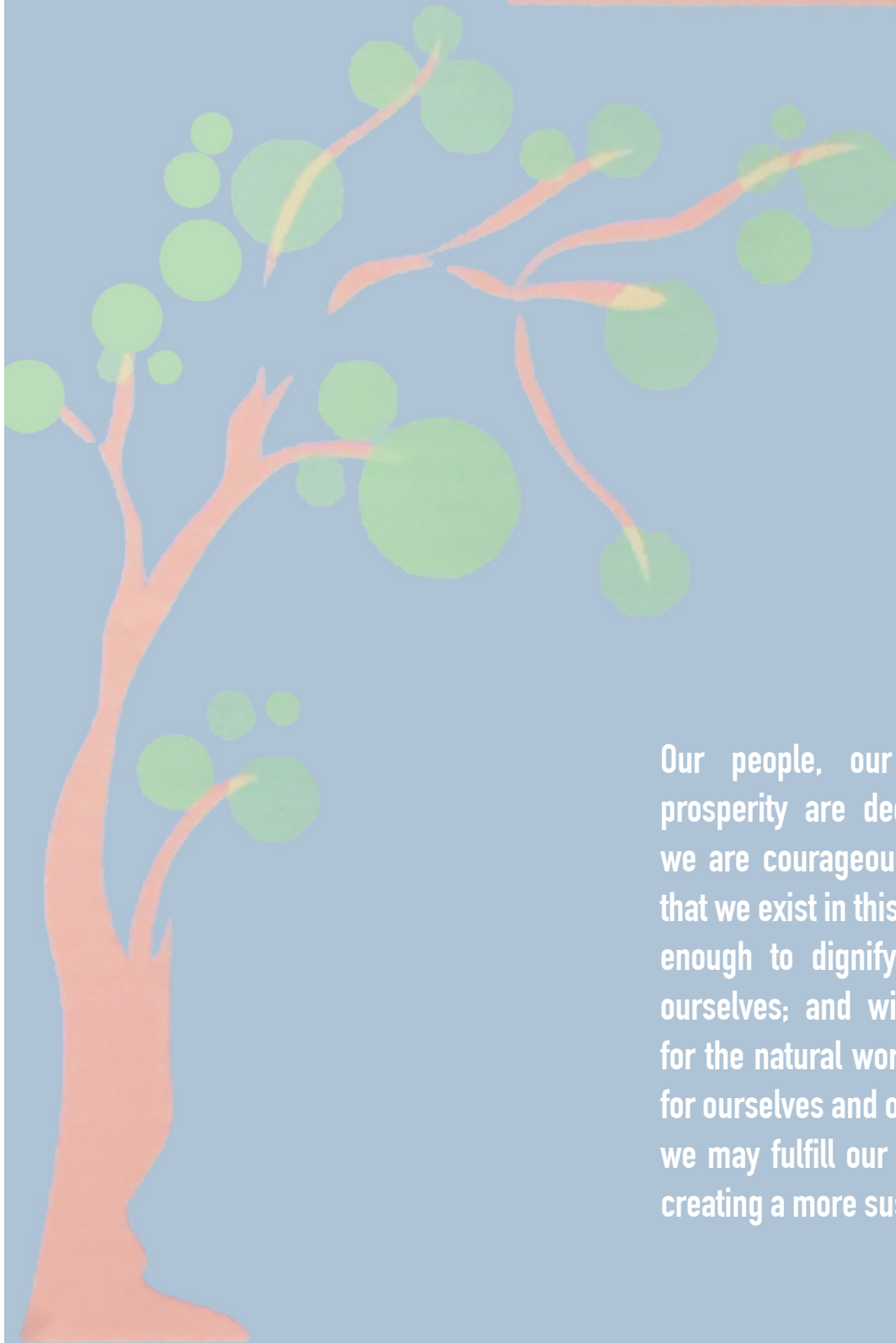
We will care for the natural world.

We will uphold our responsibility to care for our shared home. Our water, trees, air, and nonhuman beings are kin.



Photo Credit: Zoe Gensheimer

"I COMMIT"



Our people, our planet, and our prosperity are deeply intertwined. If we are courageous enough to accept that we exist in this web — committed enough to dignify our neighbors as ourselves; and wise enough to care for the natural world as part of caring for ourselves and our children — then we may fulfill our ambitious goals for creating a more sustainable city for all.



Photo Credit: Office of Sustainability



**Process &
Timeline**

4

Sustainability Plan Engagement Process

This 2019 update of the Sustainability Plan afforded an opportunity to hear a large number of personal stories and voices, and to identify steps to resolve unjust practices. It has was chance to highlight and convey the message that every story in our city—and everyone in our city—counts.

In order to include many voices in the Plan, over 125 residents signed on as Sustainability Ambassadors, 68 percent of whom are African-American. Together, we developed a survey that reached 1,200 neighbors, friends, and family. Interviews offered the opportunity for neighbors to talk with one another about their ideas, needs, and visions for the future. Ambassadors received equity training, which encouraged participants to recognize their own biases. They left the trainings excited and committed.

In designing the outreach and engagement process we asked ourselves: Could we reach enough people to gain perspectives that reflect the demographics of Baltimore? Would residents be willing to share their hopes and concerns with us? Could we document what we heard in an authentic and useful way? And would people be willing to support the implementation of sustainability projects and policies?

As the Ambassadors fanned out to conduct interviews at bus stops, markets, churches, schools, stoops,

and kitchen tables, Sustainability Commissioners and Office of Sustainability staff attended almost 25 meetings, engaging over 500 people. Industry and nonprofit leaders and professionals—from areas such as energy, racial equity, food and farming, business, transportation, waste, neighborhoods and workforce—offered visions for a more sustainable Baltimore. Demographic data was collected at every turn. Simultaneously, our “Every Story Counts” campaign surfaced stories from residents who, through their day-to-day actions, improve the sustainability of our city. The campaign shows actions Baltimoreans take to strengthen our communities, and help each other, bringing us closer to creating a just and thriving city.

Plan drafts were written and feedback was solicited at Open House meetings and working groups; the Plan was also made available for public comment through an online site where participants could click anywhere to comment, as well as review and respond to others’ comments. More than 1,000 comments were submitted during the open period.

What did we learn?

When asked how they could help improve neighborhoods with individual efforts, respondents seemed eager to connect with others to support their neighborhoods. People suggested working with neighbors to pick up trash, volunteering, helping with neighborhood improvements, attending relevant meetings, and overall, building stronger relationships with one



The survey questions—refined during the training sessions—were designed to be open-ended and accessible to all:

another. Driven by these responses, the Plan includes chapters on noise, neighbors, and neighborhoods, as well as a focus on steps to increase the quality of life in our city.

We also learned that giving residents a voice in plan development was invaluable—and that while our process was viable, it was only a starting point. The plan is meant to be implemented by anyone and everyone in the city, not only by government agencies. The strategies and actions require on-going engagement with those who will be leading projects as well as with those whose daily lives will be impacted by a more sustainable Baltimore and who will be ultimate judges of the Plan's success.

- 1. What do you like the most about your neighborhood?**
- 2. What do you like the least about your neighborhood?**
- 3. Do you have ideas on ways government, private and non-profit partners, and institutions can make it better?**
- 4. How do you think you can help make the neighborhood better?**
- 5. Do you have any idea how to make the city a better place?**



Photo Credit: Office of Sustainability



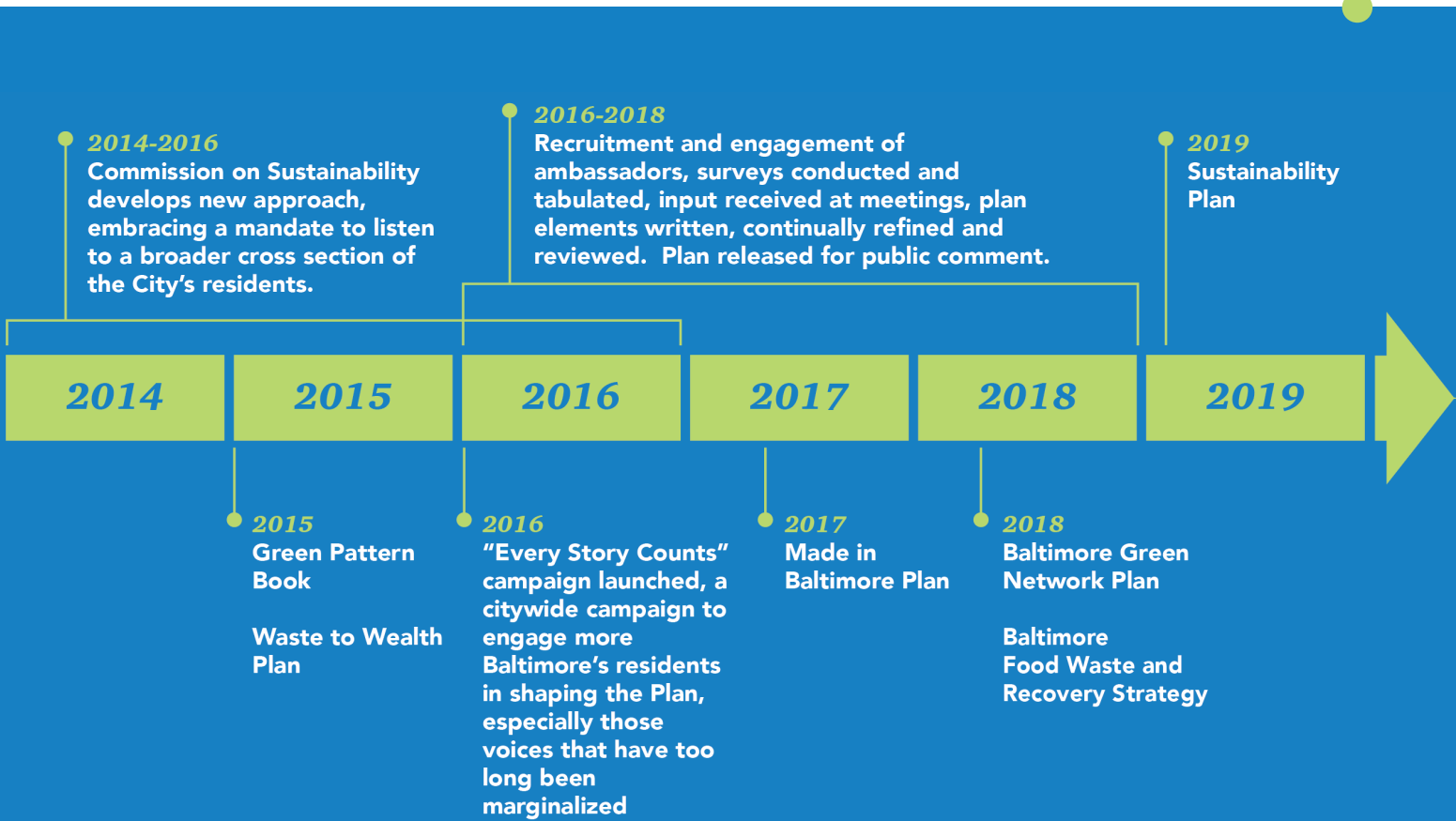


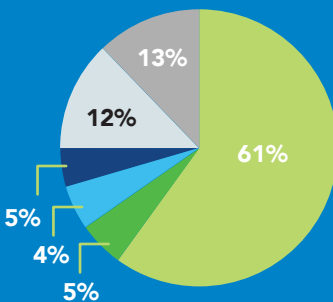
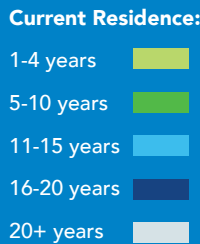
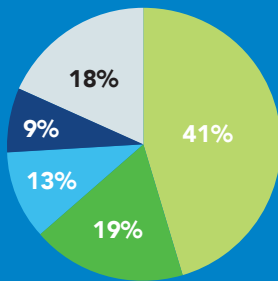
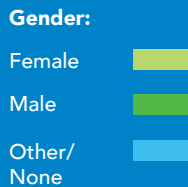
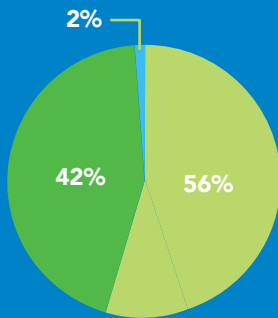
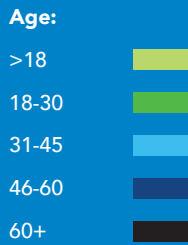
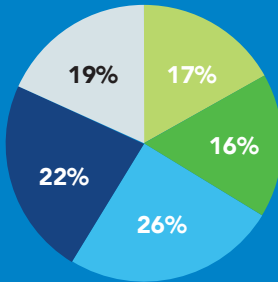
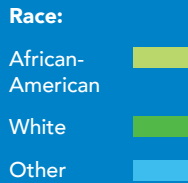
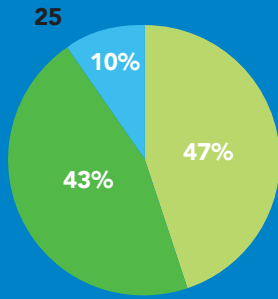
Photo Credit: Office of Sustainability



Photo Credit: Office of Sustainability

Timeline of Baltimore Office of Sustainability initiatives leading up to the release of the 2018 plan.





Survey Results

Question 1:

What do you like the most about your neighborhood?

Across all races and age groups, the most frequent response featured “neighbors,” appearing in 36 percent of responses to the question. The next two most frequent answers were “proximity” (or easy access to local amenities and walkability) and “nature in the city,” (or green space), respectively. Respondents under 18, most frequently cited “quiet” as their favorite neighborhood amenity.

Question 2:

What do you like the least about your neighborhood?

The most disliked aspects of neighborhoods were overwhelmingly safety (45 percent) and litter (36 percent), although respondents also had concern about jobs.

Question 3:

Do you have ideas on ways government, private and non-profit partners, and institutions can make it better?

This question elicited a much wider range of answers than the previous two questions. Respondents wanted improved transportation and local government operations, as well as City support for community efforts. While public safety and waste were mentioned, these answers were less frequent given their primacy in Question 2. Only 12 percent and 11 percent of respondents cited those factors, respectively. These two trends only represent overall numbers; there was great variation in the answers given by people, dependent on their race. (See table below.)

Question 4:

How do you think you can help make the neighborhood better?

When asked how they could help improve neighborhoods with individual efforts, respondents seemed eager to support their neighborhoods.

Demographics of individuals who responded to the survey

People suggested doing trash pickups, volunteering, helping with neighborhood improvement, attending meetings, and overall, building stronger relationships with neighbors.

Question 5:
Do you have any idea how to make the city a better place?

As might be expected, the most frequent responses were related to improving local government services, public safety, and economic development. There was a noticeable emphasis on public safety for respondents who were in the older demographic ranges, with the importance of the role of local government decreasing slightly in the group.

Survey Question 1: What do you like most about your neighborhood?
 Positive Responses by Category and by Age

