

Baltimore City Office of Sustainability

Commission on Sustainability Meeting
July 21, 2026



“...toward a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable city.”

Baltimore City Office of Sustainability

Commission on Sustainability Meeting
July 21, 2026



"...toward a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable city."

Agenda

Welcome

Updates

Office of Sustainability Updates
Commission Updates & Roll Call
Committee Updates

Commission Business: Discussion of Future Meeting Planning

Progress on Big, Audacious Commitments: A Baltimore Where Everyone Thrives

Baltimore Energy Challenge 2.0

Ebone Smith, Baltimore Department of Planning/Office of Sustainability

Baltimore Planning Academy

Journee Harris, Baltimore Department of Planning

Closing: Calls to Action & Announcements

Office of Sustainability Updates

- **Forest Conservation and Critical Area Management Program (CAMP)** collect fee-in-lieu of mitigation, if on- or off-site plantings are not possible
- Fee-in-lieu funds Environmental Offset Grants for projects:
 - To provide reforestation, reforestation, and/or support achievement of urban canopy goals;
 - To improve water quality by reducing stormwater pollution and;
 - To conserve, enhance and protect wildlife habitat.



Office of Sustainability Updates

23 applicants

11 grantees

\$464,000 awarded

**Grant term
June 2026-May
2027**

- ❑ **American Communities Trust** for *Llewelyn Green Street*
- ❑ **Audubon's Baltimore Program / Audubon Mid-Atlantic** for *Baltimore City Forests for Birds & Communities*
- **Baltimore Green Justice Workers Cooperative** for *Building Community: Horticulture Community Outreach Initiative*
- ❑ **Baltimore Green Space** for *Enhancing, Preserving, and Expanding Baltimore's Community-Owned Open Spaces*
- ❑ **Baltimore Tree Trust** for *Strengthening Tree Establishment in Impact Investment Areas*
- ❑ **Farm Alliance of Baltimore** for *Orchard Planting at the Black Butterfly Urban Farm*
- ❑ **Living Classrooms Foundation** for *School Leadership in Urban Runoff Reduction Project (SLURRP) and Community Stewardship Programs*
- ❑ **Maryland Zoo** for *Invasive Species Removal and Forest Restoration Project*
- ❑ **National Aquarium** for *Harbor Wetland*
- ❑ **Seton Hill Association** for *New Tree Well Project*
- ❑ **Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore** for *Harris Creek Eco Park Rain Garden Rehabilitation*

Office of Sustainability Updates

Casino Local Impact Fund (CLIF)

FY28 NOFO

- CLIF supports projects and programs in the South Baltimore Gateway District.
 - CLIF funds improve community development, economic growth, public infrastructure, public services, and quality of life for residents.
-
- **Applications due August 31st**



Office of Sustainability Updates

Sustainability & Resiliency Subcabinet

- Extreme Heat
 - Code Red Season Kick off Press Conference; Harvard Roundtable Wrap Up; A-Frames
- Waste
 - New Subgroups: Construction & Demolition, Green Procurement, Food Waste
- Buildings & Energy
 - Exploring All Electric New & Significant Renovation Requirement
- Flooding & Infrastructure
 - Watershed Master Plan
- Transportation
 - Breakfast Chats

Commission Updates

Lightning Round: Commission Member Share-out

- Opportunity for Commission Members to share timely updates or information
- Limited to one item and one minute
- Share links in the chat



Commission Roll Call

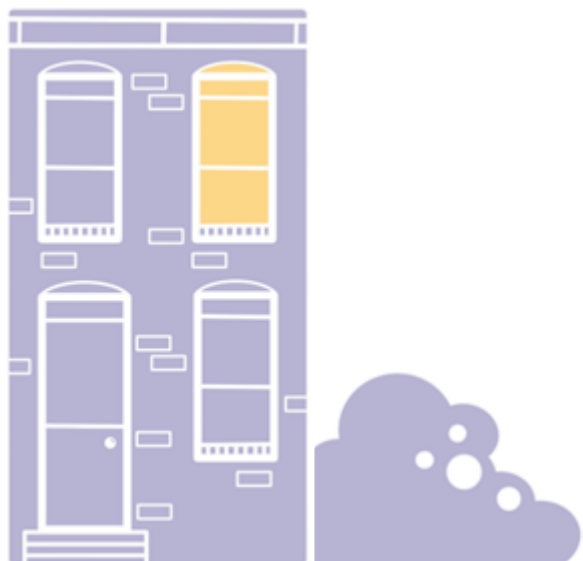
Sustainability Commission Roll Call:

Jared Lyles & Morgan Grove, Co-Chairs
Baltimore Commission on Sustainability



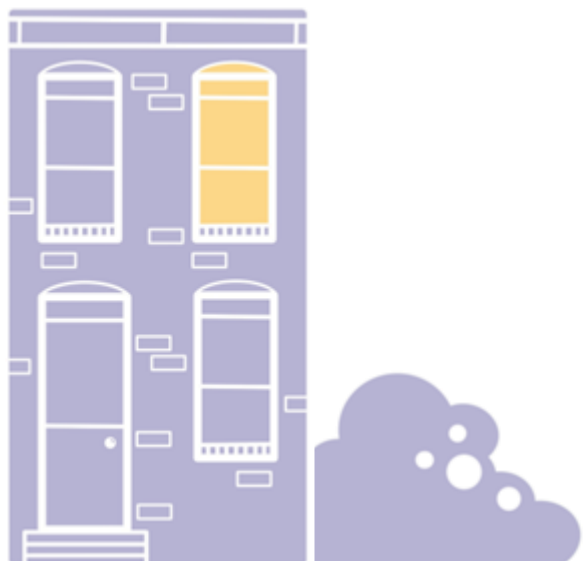
Committee Updates

- Resource Development Committee
- Legislative Committee
- Events Committee



Resource Development Committee

- Staff: Valerie Rupp & Amy Gilder-Busatti
- Co-Chairs: Morgan Grove & Jeffrey Holland
- Last Meeting: June 20th
- Next Meeting: 3rd Quarter, TBA



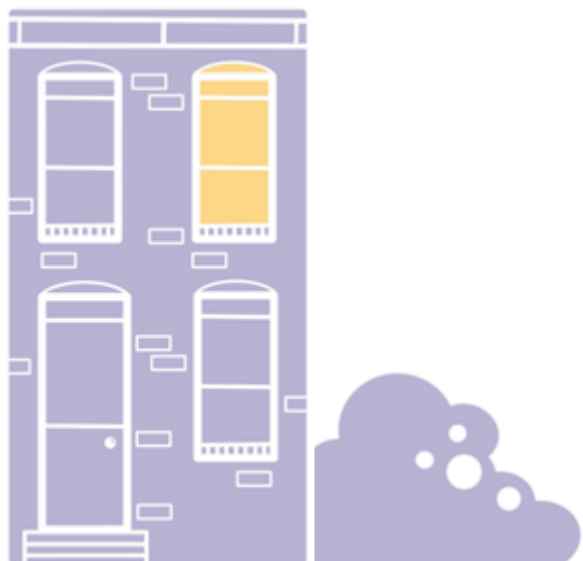
Legislative Committee

- Staff: Ava Richardson
- Co-Chairs: Jenn Aiosa, Derek Baumgardner, Bernat Navarro
- Last Meeting: July 6th
- Next Meeting: August 3rd at 4:00 pm
- Updates
 - Educating Commissioners about current legislative recommendations in plans managed by the Office of Sustainability
 - Plan for guest speakers to present to the Committee
 - Discussion on legislative strategies and recommendations



Events Committee

- Staff: Ebone Smith & Natalie Cohen
- Chair: Phil Costa



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Baltimore Energy Challenge 2.0

Ebone Smith, Baltimore Department of Planning/Office of Sustainability

Baltimore Planning Academy

Journee Harris, Baltimore Department of Planning

Closing: Calls to Action & Announcements

Commission Business: 2026 Meetings

- New schedule starting in July (3rd Tuesdays)
- Targeting 3rd and/or 4th quarter for 1-2 in person meetings

3rd Quarter: Progress on Big, Audacious Commitments			4th Quarter: Economic Prosperity & Sustainability – How to Achieve Both?		
July 21 – A Baltimore Where Everyone Thrives (Virtual)	August 18 - Revisiting the 2019 Sustainability Plan Commitments (Virtual)	September 15 - Climate Communications, Climate Literacy, & Behavior Change	October 20 - Why Climate Resilience is Central to Economic Prosperity	November 17 - An Equitable Economy Focused on Accessibility & Inclusion (Virtual)	December 15 - Community Building and Networking

2027 Planning Process

- Factors to consider in setting strategic priorities
 - Priority actions from adopted plans
 - Equity planning & implementation
 - Environmental code updates & program implementation
 - Implementation of projects, programs, and initiatives
 - Communications & community engagement
- Complement related efforts
 - Committee efforts
 - Sustainability & Resilience Subcabinet activities
- Structuring Meetings Around Themes & Topics
 - Timeliness
 - Briefing Requests

2027 Tentative Meeting Dates

1st Quarter

January 19

February 16

March 16

2nd Quarter

April 20

May 18

June 15*

3rd Quarter

July 20

August 17

September 21

4th Quarter

October 19

November 16

December 21

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Progress on Big, Audacious Commitments: A Baltimore Where Everyone Thrives

Baltimore Energy Challenge 2.0

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Journee Harris, Baltimore Department of Planning

Baltimore Energy Challenge 2.0



"...toward a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable city."

Baltimore's First Energy Challenge

- Launched in 2009, led the the Office of Sustainability and supported by Civic Works; funding through the Baltimore Community Foundation
- Designed to help low-income reduce their energy usage through grassroots peer-to-peer engagement
- Engagement facilitated through neighborhoods, schools, business and faith communities and an Energy Educators (AmeriCorps) member
- Hosted separate <http://baltimoreenergychallenge.org/> URL
- Distributed custom kits to businesses

Baltimore's First Energy Challenge

 Baltimore Energy

Take the Pledge! Taking on the Baltimore Energy Challenge

I hereby pledge on behalf of my family to cut back on energy consumption in order to support the betterment of the earth's environment.

[Read More](#)[Supporters](#)



 Baltimore Energy

[Home](#)[About](#)[Saving Energy](#)[Energy Sources](#)

Turn Off Lights

298 lbs of CO₂ Savings
\$14 Savings

Install Low Flow Showerheads

381 lbs CO₂ Savings
\$35 Savings

Seal Attic Bypasses

498 lbs CO₂ Savings
\$46 Savings

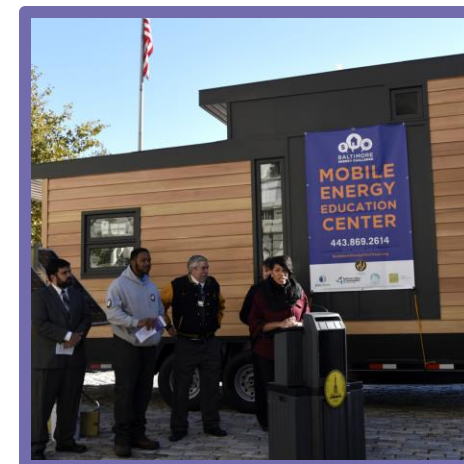
Take the Bus Once a Week

811 lbs CO₂ Savings
\$154 Savings

How Can I Save Energy?

Reducing energy usage lowers the quantity of electricity required by power plants, which in turn lowers the daily amount of fossil fuels burnt. Even a minor adjustment might have a big impact.

Fossil fuel extraction becomes less necessary since there is less need for energy. It's crucial from an economic perspective to protect our limited resources. Fossil fuels will become more costly as they grow more and more difficult to get.



Baltimore's Energy Challenge 2.0: Metrics

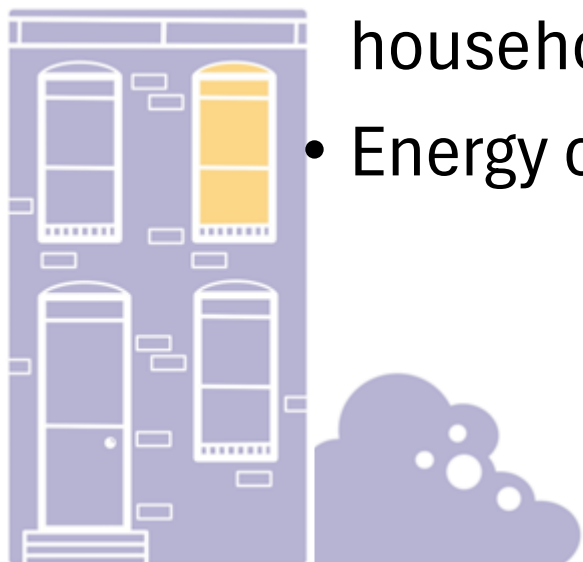
- **Goal:** Reduce energy costs for Baltimore City residents through energy efficiency, renewable energy adoption and electrification resources
- **Primary Target:** A **60% reduction** in emissions across Baltimore City by 2030 as detailed in the **2024 Climate Action Plan**.
- **Secondary Targets:** Aiming to achieve by December 31, 2030.
 - **5,000** residential rooftop solar installations
 - **10,000** residential heat pump installations
 - **15,000** retrofits and weatherizations completed
 - **25,000** households provided financial assistance
 - **\$1,000,000** in energy savings for residents annually



Baltimore Energy Challenge 2.0: Why Now?

Why this Approach?

- Advances specific goals in the 2024 Climate Action Plan
- Focuses on several strategies and actions to achieve a reduction in emissions and air pollutants
- Avoids income limited approach, but will aim to support low-income households with targeted resources
- Energy costs are high. Our residents need help.



Education and Engagement: Government Incentives

City Incentives

- [Baltimore SHINES](#)
 - Free rooftop solar installations
- [Weatherization Assistance Program](#)
 - Energy conservation materials installations
- [Baltimore City Energy Conservation Rebates for Property Taxes](#)
 - Tax credits for solar energy or geothermal energy devices



Photo credit: [Civic Works](#)

Education and Engagement: Government Incentives

State Incentives

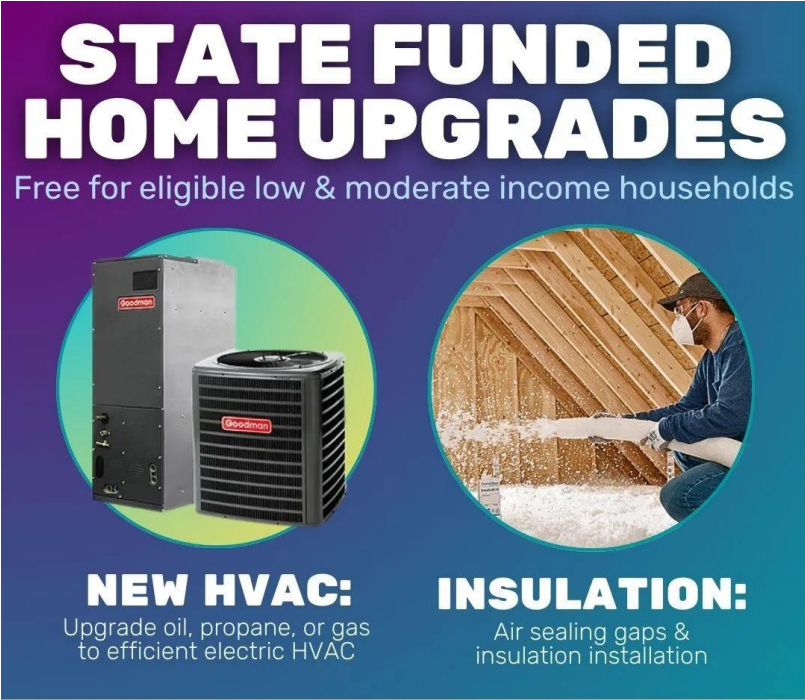
- [Maryland Solar Access Program](#)
 - Rebates for solar PV system home installations
- [Maryland Limited Income Energy Efficiency Program](#)
 - Reducing energy costs for income eligible BGE customers
- [Maryland Energy Assistance Program](#)
 - Restore home energy services through bill assistance from OHEP



Education and Engagement: Other Incentives

Non-Profits Organizations

- [Free energy upgrades](#)
 - Free efficient HVAC & insulation for low-income households
- [Civic Works](#)
 - Free energy consulting and check-ups
 - Free rooftop solar for income-qualified residents
- [Green & Healthy Homes Initiative](#)
 - Weatherization and insulation



**STATE FUNDED
HOME UPGRADES**
Free for eligible low & moderate income households

NEW HVAC:
Upgrade oil, propane, or gas to efficient electric HVAC

INSULATION:
Air sealing gaps & insulation installation

 Maryland Energy Administration

 SUSTAIN OUR FUTURE FOUNDATION

 **CLICK BELOW TO
LEARN MORE**

Education and Engagement: Other Incentives



Photo credit: [Office of People's Counsel](#)

Private Sector & BGE Supports

- [Neighborhood Sun](#)
 - Community solar subscription program
- [Maryland Community Solar](#)
 - Community solar education and enrollment program
- [EmPOWER MD:](#)
 - Free home repairs and energy efficiency upgrades



Education and Engagement: New Incentives

Group Solar Purchasing

- [Switch Together](#)
 - Citywide mailer



This block contains a template for a citywide mailer about the Switch Together program. It includes logos for the Baltimore Office of Sustainability, Solar United Neighbors, and Switch Together. The text describes the program's goal to help residents reduce energy bills by purchasing solar collectively. It lists benefits such as free registration, group discounts, and additional savings. A five-step process is outlined: 1. Register, 2. Auction, 3. Personal offer, 4. You decide, and 5. Installation. Contact information for questions is provided, including an email address and a phone number. The footer includes a placeholder for a community representative name and role, and logos for participating communities like Howard County and Prince Georges County.

 **Baltimore Office of Sustainability**
People · Planet · Prosperity

 **SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS**

 **switch together.**

Join over 6,700 Maryland households taking control of their energy future.

Visit SwitchTogether.com/Solar/Baltimore

Questions? Contact our help desk:
solar@switchtogether.com
1-888-810-1117

Reduce your energy bill with solar.

Dear Resident,

The City of Baltimore and nonprofit Solar United Neighbors are pleased to bring you **Switch Together**, a group buying program for solar installations. Switch Together offers residents a hassle-free way to install reliable rooftop solar, battery storage, and EV charger add-ons, at a competitive price. Residents may be able to stack the group discount with available Maryland Energy Administration and utility rebates. Eligibility and rebate amounts vary. The program is also supported by other local municipalities, such as Howard County and Montgomery County, though no government funds are used.

Why Join?

- **Free to register:** and no obligation to accept your offer.
- **Group discount:** set pricing is negotiated through a competitive auction among qualified installers.
- **Additional savings:** participants save an average of **\$X,XXX** on a typical solar installation.
- **Fully refundable deposit:** if you decide to move forward, a \$150 deposit secures your offer and is fully refundable if you choose not to proceed at any time.
- **Learn before you decide:** explore free webinars, in-person sessions, and online resources to learn how going solar works and what incentives, such as EmPOWER Maryland, may be available.

How Does Switch Together Work?

1. **Register:** Sign up for free at SwitchTogether.com/Solar/Baltimore. You will not receive any sales calls, and your information will not be shared with third parties.
2. **Auction:** Vetted installers compete in a bidding process. The most competitive bids for high-quality installations determine the final group discount.
3. **Personal offer:** Upon registering, you will receive a personal offer based on your registration details. This offer will include your estimated costs, group savings, and information about the selected installer for your neighborhood.
4. **You decide:** You have until **June 3, 2025** to decide if you want to accept the offer. There is no obligation to accept.
5. **Installation:** If you accept, the winning contractor will contact you to schedule an initial consultation. If your home is found to be unsuitable for solar, the installation will be canceled and your deposit will be refunded.

Learn more and register today at SwitchTogether.com/Solar/Baltimore

Sincerely,

[Community Representative Name]
[Community Representative Role]
City of Baltimore

Communities taking part in Switch Together include:

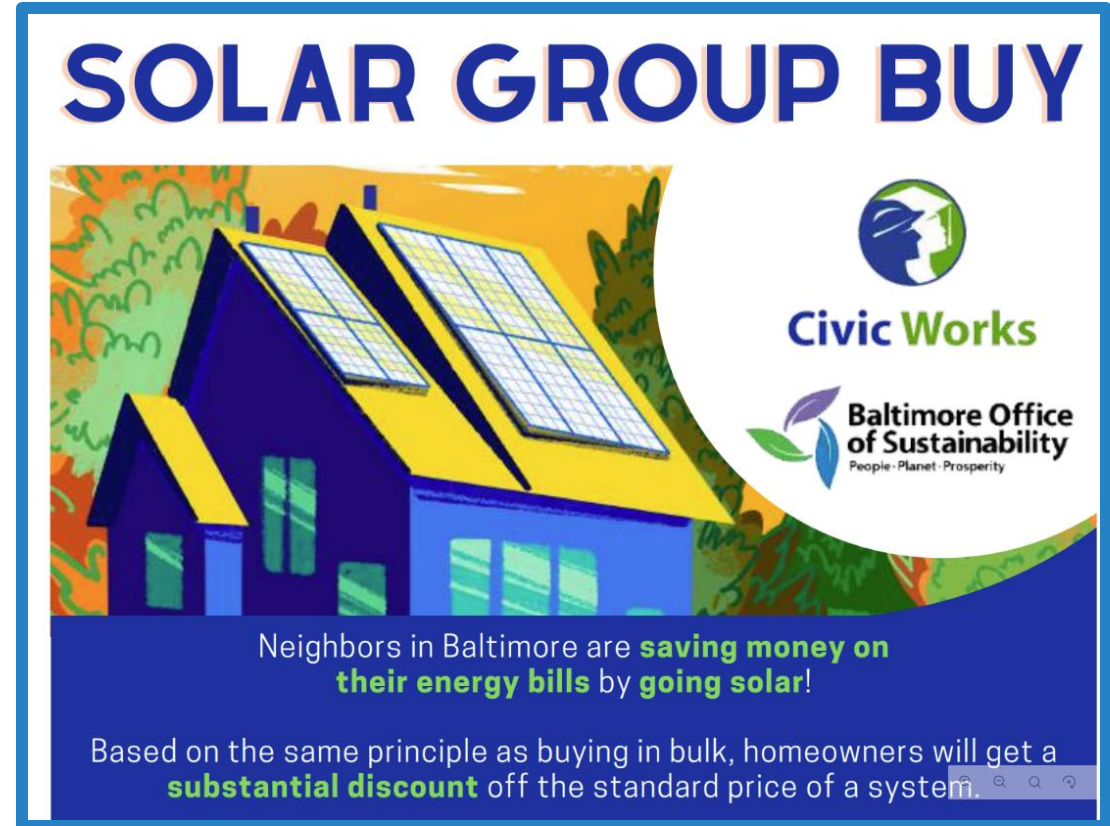
You can authenticate Switch Together and learn more about local incentives at
[City/County vanity URL]

Para obtener más información en español, por favor visite:
SwitchTogether.com/es/Solar/Baltimore

Education and Engagement: New Incentives

Group Solar Purchasing

- Civic Works
 - Solar systems and energy efficiency upgrades in south Baltimore



SOLAR GROUP BUY



Civic Works

Baltimore Office of Sustainability
People · Planet · Prosperity

Neighbors in Baltimore are **saving money on their energy bills** by **going solar!**

Based on the same principle as buying in bulk, homeowners will get a **substantial discount** off the standard price of a system.

Education and Engagement: New Incentives

New Energy Incentives to Explore

- [Low Interest Renewable Energy Loans:](#)
 - Residential
 - Non-Profit
 - Commercial
- CIP-Funded Energy/Climate Grants

**CLEAN
ENERGY:
Advantage**



Target Populations



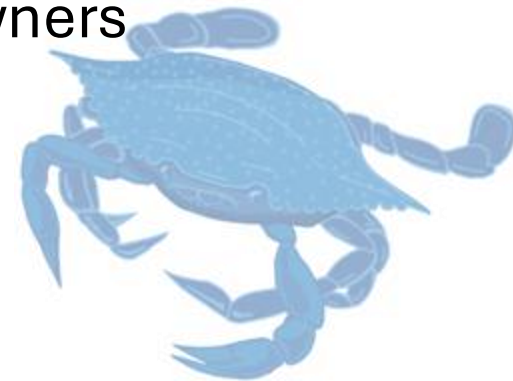
Families



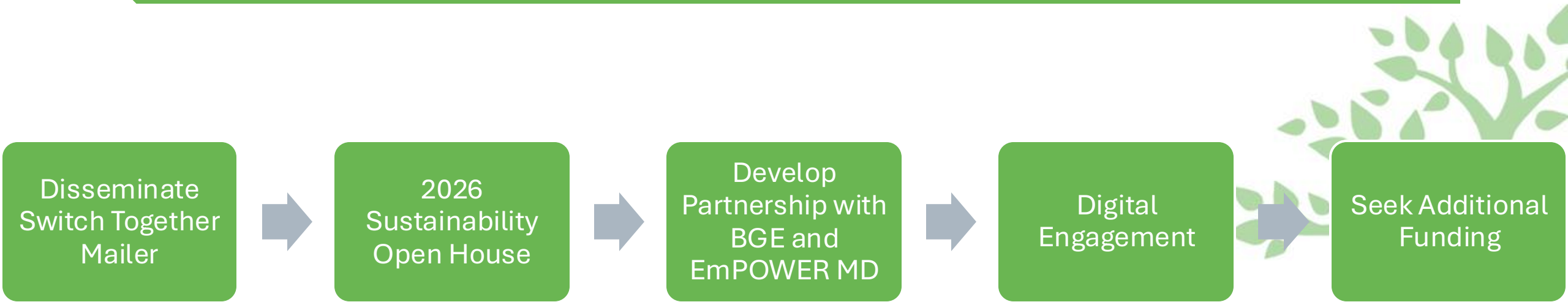
Specific geographic areas
(neighborhoods, CSAs)



Small business
owners



2026 Timeline



2027 Timeline

Deploy
Engagement
Resources



MEA Funding
Proposal
Submission

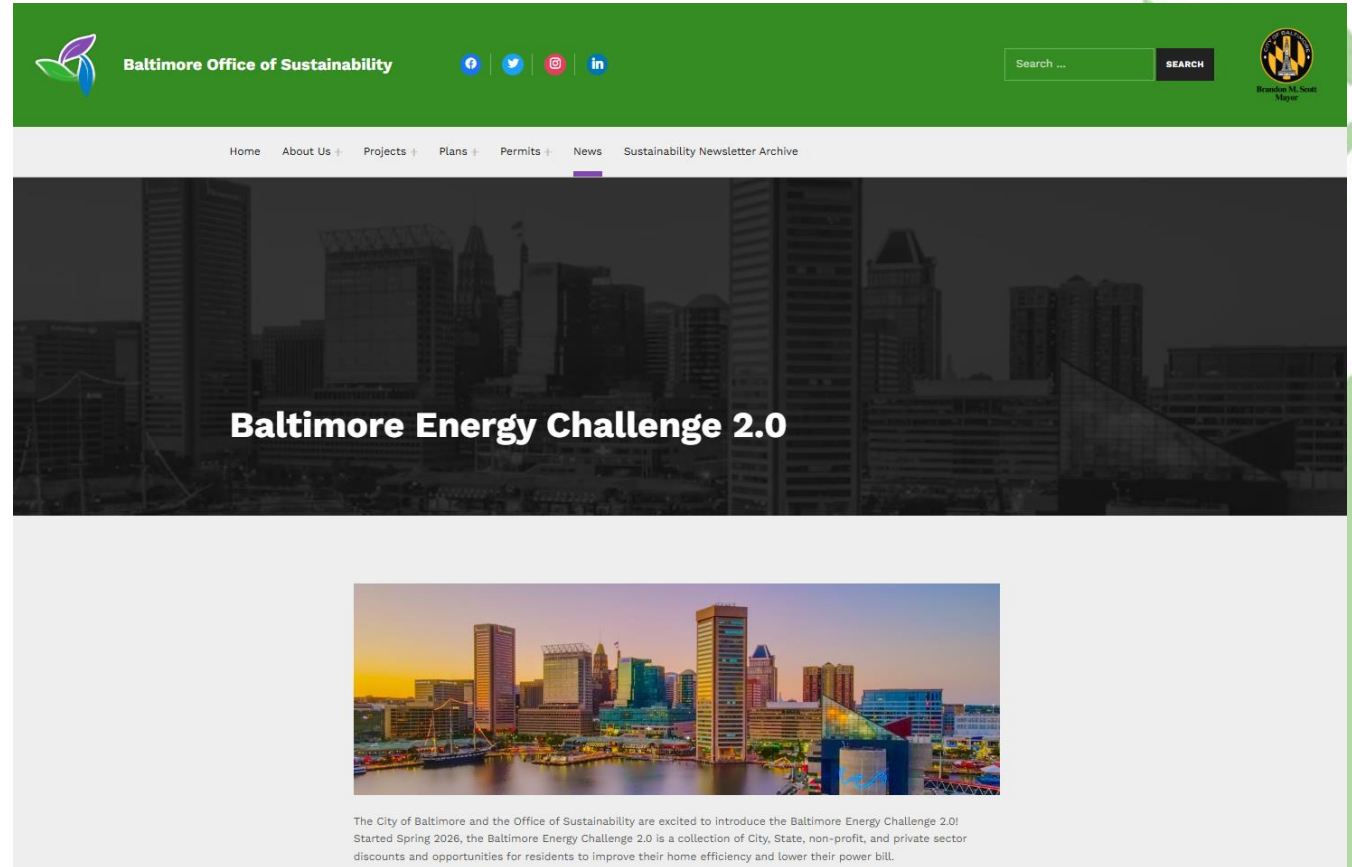


Support
Clean Energy
Adoption

Engagement Materials

Digital Content

- Baltimore Energy Challenge 2.0 Webpage
- Social Media Content



Engagement Materials

Printed Materials:

- Flyers, posters, and other printed materials to disseminate in high-traffic areas

GREENHOUSE GAS SOURCES IN BALTIMORE



BUILDINGS:
64%

Fossil Fuel Heating & Cooling
Poor Home Insulation
Low Energy Efficiency



VEHICLES:
23%

Construction Equipment
Commercial Shipping
Commuting to Work



WASTE:
13%

Single Use Plastics
Household Trash
Wastewater

Want to learn how to reduce your
carbon footprint?



Engagement Materials

Media Features:

- Engage with FOX45 Community Connections
- Explore engagement with other outlets such as WBAL, WJZ



Engagement Materials



**SUSTAINABILITY
OPEN HOUSE**

• **PEOPLE** •
• **PLANET** •
• **PROSPERITY** •



 **JUNE 6, 2026**
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM

 **MIDDLE BRANCH FITNESS
& WELLNESS CENTER**

Look Forward to:

Locally Sourced Catering Enjoy vegetarian and vegan dishes from local restaurant, Land of Kush.	Local Organizations Get to know organizations working to champion sustainability in the city.
Crafts and Activities Hands-on crafts and fun events to keep children and families entertained.	Free Raffle Prizes Enter a raffle for sustainability-themed prizes and experiences.

Community Events:

- Annual Sustainability Open House
- Rock the Block
- Greater Baltimore Climate Summit

Partners

- Office of Sustainability
- DGS' Energy Division
- Department of Housing & Community Development
 - Weatherization Assistance
- Mayor's Office
- Maryland Department of Environment
- Maryland Energy Administration
- Civic Works
- Green and Health Homes Initiative
- Baltimore Gas and Electric
- Sustain Our Future Foundation
- Power 52
- Electrify Baltimore Coalition
- Sierra Club
- League of Conservation Voters



Thank You!



@sustainbmore



@Baltimore City Office of Sustainability



@baltimoresustainability



@SustainBmore



**Baltimore Office
of Sustainability**
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"...toward a more resilient, equitable, and sustainable city."

Equity in Action:

The Equity Action Plan and the Baltimore Planning Academy

July 21st, 2026



Equity Action Plan Background



In Spring 2015, staff at DOP launched the Equity in Planning Committee (EIPC) to help erode the forces that create or sustain structural racism and other entrenched inequities in Baltimore City. This group created the Department's first **Equity Action Plan in 2017**, laying the foundation for the Department's equity efforts and goals for years to come.

While the Department continued its equity-focused efforts, the committee itself paused during the COVID-19 pandemic. It formally re-launched in October 2024, with a focus on updating the 2017 Equity Action Plan.

QR code to 2017 E.A.P



Goals of the Equity Action Plan (2025)



These goals are intended to be ambitious and guide the direction of the Department over the next 5+ years:

To empower communities to advocate for themselves

To recruit and retain a diverse workforce that is representative of the City

To make planning and development policies and processes equitable and accessible

To define and address historic inequities through the allocation of funding managed by DOP

To reduce longstanding health inequities and position the City as a leader in sustainability

About the Baltimore Planning Academy



The Baltimore Planning Academy is a project of Baltimore's Department of Planning. It is a free eight-week course focusing on the planning and development process in Baltimore.

The Academy aims to *empower community members and resident* to shape the future of their neighborhoods and of Baltimore by building an understanding of local urban planning and design processes.



**NEARLY 500
GRADUATES**

EST. 2018

14 COHORTS

Goals of the Baltimore Planning Academy

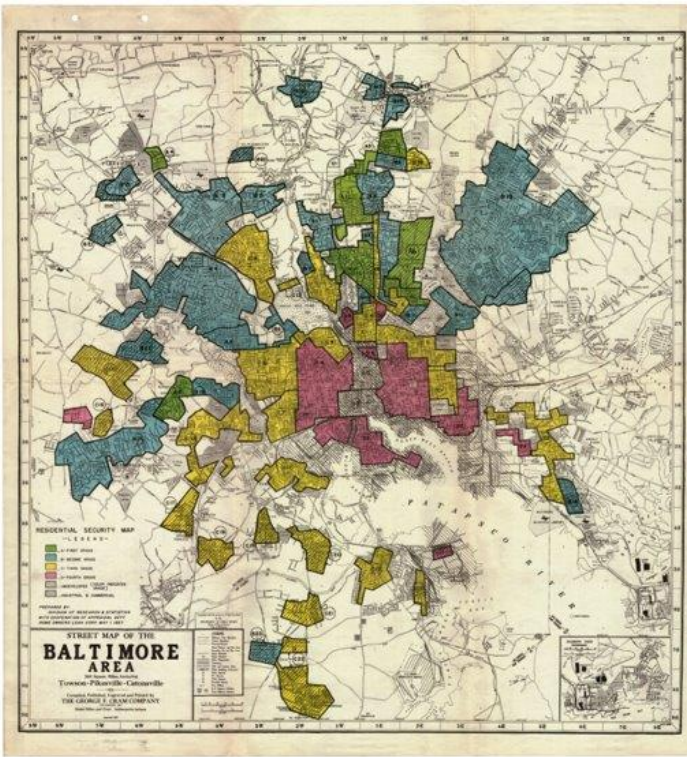


1. Build community across neighborhoods in Baltimore City through engagement around urban planning.
2. Connect advocates and leaders to City resources, tools and information around zoning and development.
3. Empower residents to shape the future of their neighborhoods and of Baltimore.

Planning Academy Curriculum



The curriculum begins with by reviewing planning history in Baltimore – especially the way in which planning policy has led to inequitable outcomes. This discussion informs our conversations later in the course.



RACISM IN THE STRUCTURE: BRIEF HISTORY OF 20TH CENTURY BALTIMORE

Planning Academy Curriculum



- **Zoning Code in Baltimore City** - How it is used and how it can be navigated.
- **Development Review Process** - How developers interact with Baltimore City.
- **Neighborhood Planning** - How do neighborhood level plans come together? Why are these plans important to the future of communities?
- **Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and City Budget** - Understanding the portion of the budget process that is managed by the Department of Planning in Baltimore City and the operational budget.
- **Equitable Development** – What does this look like? Is it possible for a developer to act in the best interests of the community?

New Planning Academy Developments



- 8-week, 100% in-person cohort
- Shaping participant experience through distinct learning tracks:
 - Resident Activists
 - Community Leaders
 - Community Development Professionals
- Vision and Empowerment Guide: A custom workbook helping participants define their vision and apply new knowledge and expertise to their neighborhoods
- Expanded alumni engagement:
 - Private LinkedIn Group (Launching Summer 2026)
 - Planning Academy 2.0 (Launched January 2026)

Planning Academy 2.0



Planning Academy 2.0 offers exclusive learning and networking opportunities for BPA alumni to strengthen their technical skills, expand their knowledge, and build relationships with other community leaders.

- Jan – Mar: Navigating the Development Process & Delivering Effective Testimony
- April: Baltimore City's Greening Initiatives
- May: Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
- June: Community-Managed Neighborhood Plans
- July: Citywide Food Policy Initiatives



Planning Academy Alumni Spotlights



Regina Hammond, Executive Director of Rebuild Johnston Square Neighborhood Org.

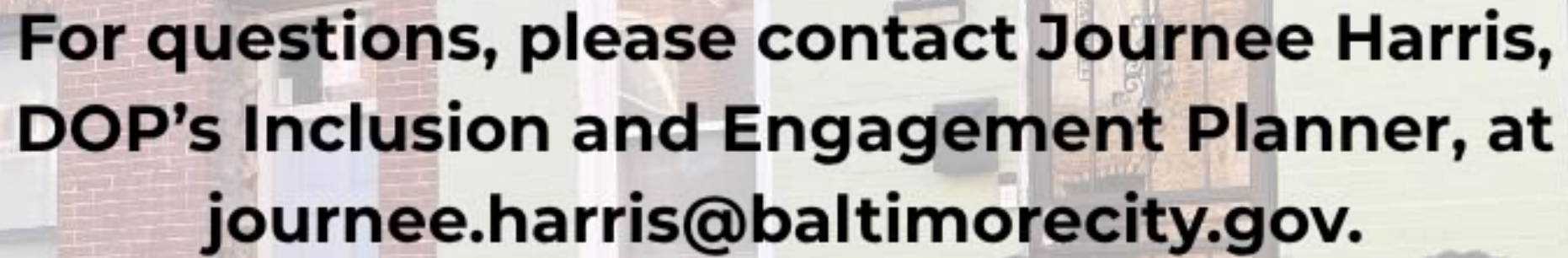


Bree Jones, Founder of Parity

Other E.A.P. Implementation Updates



- Community Engagement & Equity (Goal #3 of Equity Action Plan)
 - Updating the Community Engagement Guide to accurately reflect DOP's core commitments
 - Conducting an EIPC Community Engagement Audit to identify gaps and opportunities
 - Developing an Engagement Tracking Tool to measure the depth of community relationships
 - Aligning Community Engagement Strategy directly with agency equity goals
- Internships & Talent Development (Goal #2 of Equity Action Plan)
 - Establishing an Evergreen Internship Program (Fall & Summer) to pipeline new talent to DOP
 - Building a University Partnership with Morgan State for the Summer 2027 internship cohort
 - Designing a Standardized Onboarding Process for incoming interns



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**Next Meeting -
Progress on Big, Audacious Commitments: Revisit the 2019 Sustainability Plan Commitments
Tuesday, August 18, 2026; 4:00 – 6:00 pm on Webex**



@sustainbmore



@Baltimore City Office of Sustainability



@baltimoresustainability



@SustainBmore



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