



BALTIMORE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY BRIEFING

Legislative Oversight: Zero Waste
April 30th 2025



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

Scope of the Office

"The mission of the Office is to develop and advocate for programs, policies, and actions by government, citizens, and businesses that lead to sustainable communities in the City."

ART. 1, § 34-1

BALTIMORE CITY CODE

SUBTITLE 34

BALTIMORE CITY OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

§ 34-1. Definitions.

(a) *In general.*

In this subtitle, the following terms have the meanings indicated.

(b) *Carbon offset.*

"Carbon offset" means one metric ton of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2e) that is kept out of the atmosphere by either:

(1) preventing the creation of the emissions; or

(2) sequestering carbon in:

(i) vegetation;

(ii) soils;

(iii) rock; or

(iv) water.

(c) *Director.*

"Director" means the Director of Planning or the Director's designee.

(d) *Environmental justice.*

"Environmental justice" means the fair treatment of all individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

(e) *Greenhouse gas.*

"Greenhouse gas" includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, and sulfur hexafluoride.

(f) *Net-zero emissions.*

"Net-zero emissions" means the balancing of greenhouse gas emissions with emissions off-sets that cause an equivalent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

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MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND AGENCIES

(g) *Office.*

"Office" means the Baltimore City Office of Sustainability.
(Ord. 07-484; Ord. 22-125; Ord. 22-131.)

§ 34-2. *[Reserved]*

§ 34-3. Office established.

(a) *In general.*

There is a Baltimore City Office of Sustainability.

(b) *A Division of Planning.*

The Office is a Division in the Department of Planning.
(Ord. 07-484.)

§ 34-4. Sustainability Manager.

The Director of Planning shall employ a Sustainability Manager.
(Ord. 07-484.)

§ 34-5. Staff and consultants.

The Director may employ a staff and may contract for consultants and other experts as provided in the Ordinance of Estimates.
(Ord. 07-484.)

§ 34-6. *[Reserved]*

§ 34-7. Mission of Office.

(a) *"Sustainable community" defined.*

A sustainable community is one in which economic, ecological, and social well-being are integrated to ensure all live well, within nature's means.

(b) *Programs, policies, and actions.*

(1) The mission of the Office is to develop and advocate for programs, policies, and actions by government, citizens, and businesses that lead to sustainable communities in the City.

(2) These programs, policies, and actions include those that:

(i) support a diverse and vibrant economy;

(ii) promote an equitable distribution of resources;

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Our Work

1. Catalyze Climate Action Citywide

- Lead, support implementation of citywide plans, anchored to equity & environmental justice goals
 - 2019 Sustainability Plan, Climate Action Plan Hazard-Mitigation Plan
 - Relevant plans led by partner agencies
- Policy implementation – Plastic bag ban, foam ban, pesticide regulation
- Statewide climate goals and policies – Maryland Climate Solutions Now Act
- Pursue funding opportunities to support climate action (federal, state & philanthropic)

2. Educate, Engage, Collaborate & ... Promote Behavior Change?

- Advance environmental education citywide
- Engage with communities through events, newsletter, social media and Commission meetings
- Enhance cross agency collaboration to fulfill climate goals

3. Track & Report

- Sustainability Annual Reports
- Performance Measure Reporting
- LEED for Cities (USGBC)
- Community Rating System (NFIP)
- American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE)
- Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP)
- Required State Reporting to MDE, DNR



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Zero Waste Lingo

Carbon neutral: no net release of GHGs to the atmosphere by balancing the GHG emissions we create with the GHG emissions we remove from the air (net zero emissions)

Circular economy: keeping materials, products, and services in circulation for as long possible, by reducing & redesigning materials, products, and services to be less resource intensive

Climate equity: Eliminating unequal burdens made worse by climate change, while ensuring that all people share the benefits of climate protection efforts.

Food rescue: the practice of gleaning edible food from places such as farms, produce markets, grocery stores, restaurants, or dining facilities and distributing it to people, not landfills or incinerators

Greenhouse gases (GHGs): gases that trap heat. Cities try to reduce the amount of GHGs they produce to fight climate change

Extended Producer Responsibility: Places the burden on producers for the end-of-life management of these materials

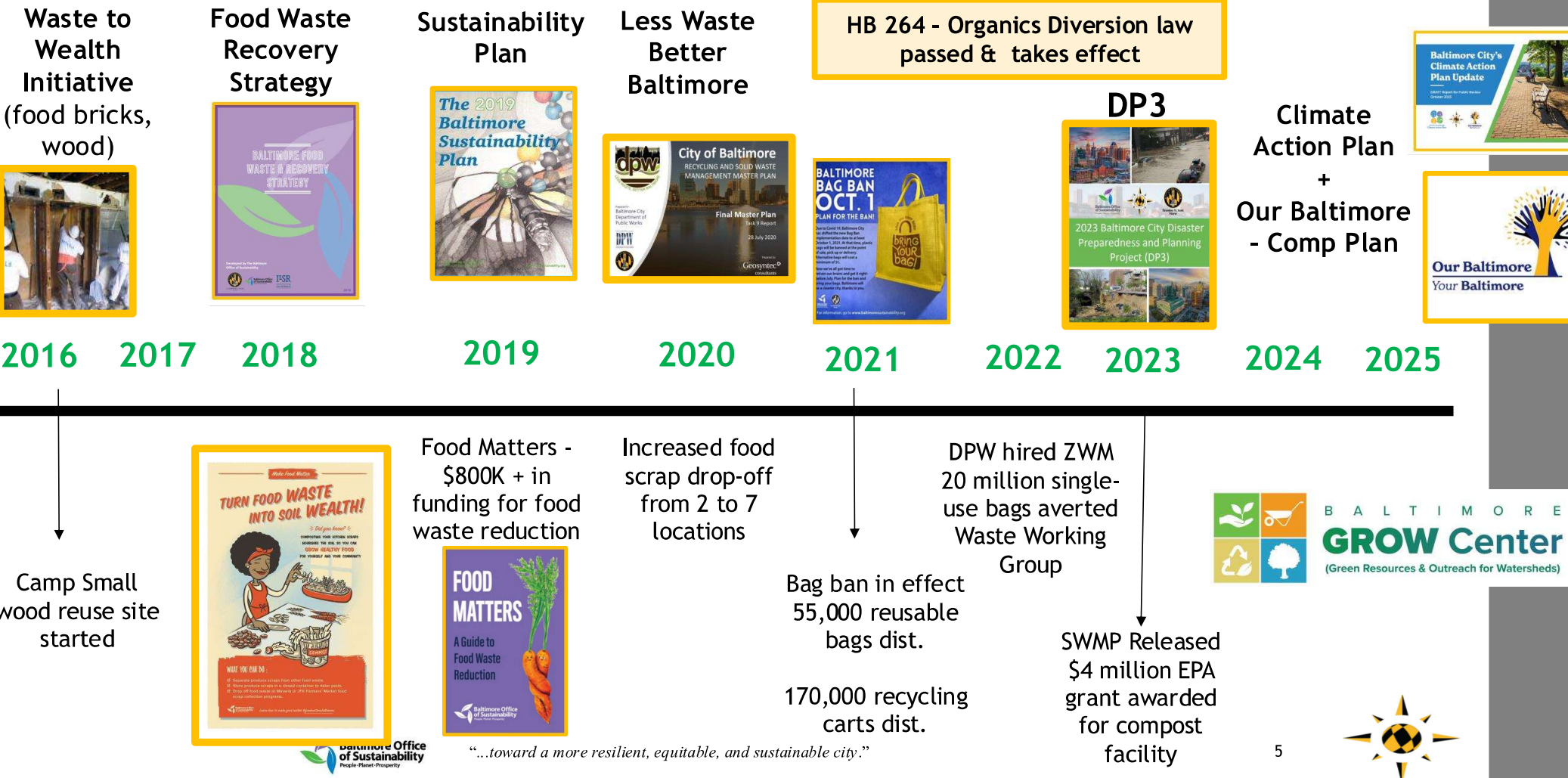
Reuse/Repair: restoring materials to extend their usable life

Stewardship Laws: requires specific end-of-life management for certain types of goods such as paint, batteries or electronics

Climate behavior change: shift in processes, procedures or activities to achieve intended emission reductions or other environmental measures

Zero Waste: generally described as a 90% diversion rate, requiring redesigning, reducing, reusing, recycling and recovery where possible

Timeline Zero Waste Strategic Planning



Multi-Plan Management



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2019 Sustainability Plan: Equity Lens

Equity Considerations

- ✓ Defining Project Purpose and Intent
- ✓ Budget and Work Planning
- ✓ Relevant Data and Information Gathering
- ✓ Inclusive Community Engagement
- ✓ Equitable Impacts Analysis
 - Accessibility
 - Capacity Building
 - Alignment
 - Disproportionate Impacts
 - Economic Opportunity
 - Displacement
- ✓ Accountability



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Baltimore Sustainability Plan Guidance for Equitable Implementation

The Commission on Sustainability and the Office of Sustainability commit to more intentionally addressing implicit bias and removing barriers for racial and other marginalized groups. Our goal is to help eliminate the forces that create and sustain institutional¹ and structural racism² and other entrenched inequities in Baltimore. When discussing, creating, and implementing policy, projects, and programs, we commit to using our power to achieve racial equity.

Baltimore remains one of the most segregated cities in the United States, according to 2010 Census data. It is undeniable that historic policy and planning decisions created and exacerbated inequity and inequality in Baltimore. Policies to deliberately segregate white and black residents—such as restrictive covenants, the Federal Housing Administration’s openly racist system for mortgage loan approval, urban renewal, redlining, and other policies—directly contributed to many of the economic and social challenges Baltimore faces today.

The 2019 Sustainability Plan uses an equity lens to approach integrating social equity, the environment, the economy, resiliency, and regeneration. To continue this integration, this Guidance Document is a companion to the Sustainability Plan. Its purpose is to assist those who are implementing the Plan to do the work more equitably. It will carry forward the intention set through this Plan and provide a framework to incorporate equity considerations during design, planning, decision-making, and implementation processes, and to encourage accountability.

What is an Equity Lens?

An equity lens “leads” with a racial equity analysis to ensure that the impacts of institutional racism are considered. This analysis does not exclude other historically under-represented and under-served communities, but rather serves as a starting point; an analysis of inequities begins with racial equity because race is a predominant, but under-acknowledged, determinant of outcomes. Still, decisions regarding the development of policies, procedures, regulations, and plans, or issuance of permits, must consider the impact on all under-represented communities.

An equity lens is not intended to be a checklist. Rather, it’s a guide to inform project management decision-making, and a facilitation tool to support iterative learning and process improvement throughout the development and implementation of an initiative.

Equity Considerations³

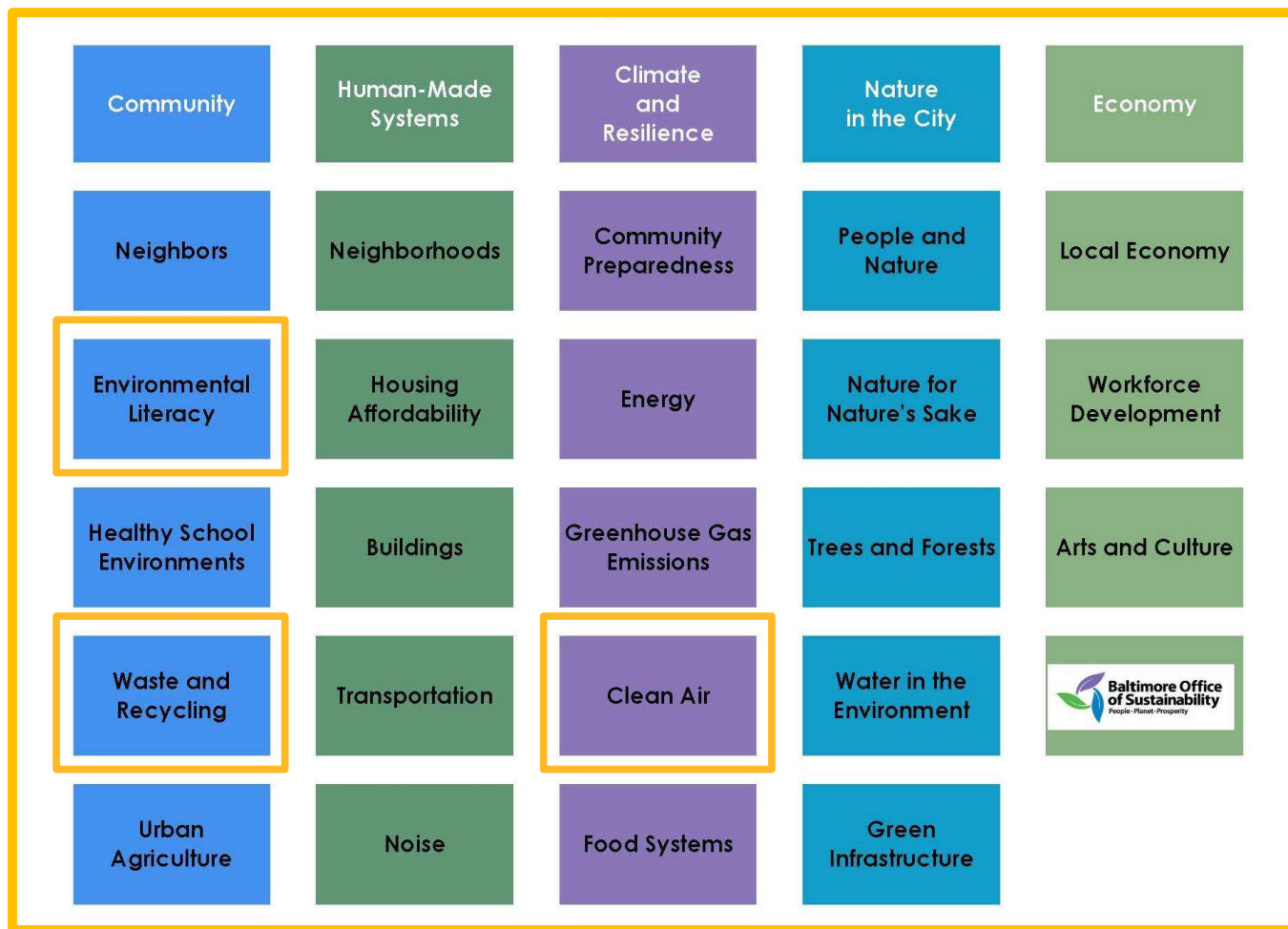
The following equity considerations were identified as critical opportunities to advance equity through the Sustainability Plan. These considerations will be used as an initial framework to inform the Guidance Manual for any new project, and will help to uphold the Big Audacious Commitments.

A. Defining Project Purpose and Intent:

- a. What problem does this project aim to address? Define the benefits of the proposed action and how they can reduce historic or



2019 Sustainability Plan Framework



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2019 Sustainability Plan

- Uses an **equity lens** to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs
- Five main categories: **Community, Human-Made Systems, Climate and Resiliency, Nature in the City, and Economy**

23
Topics

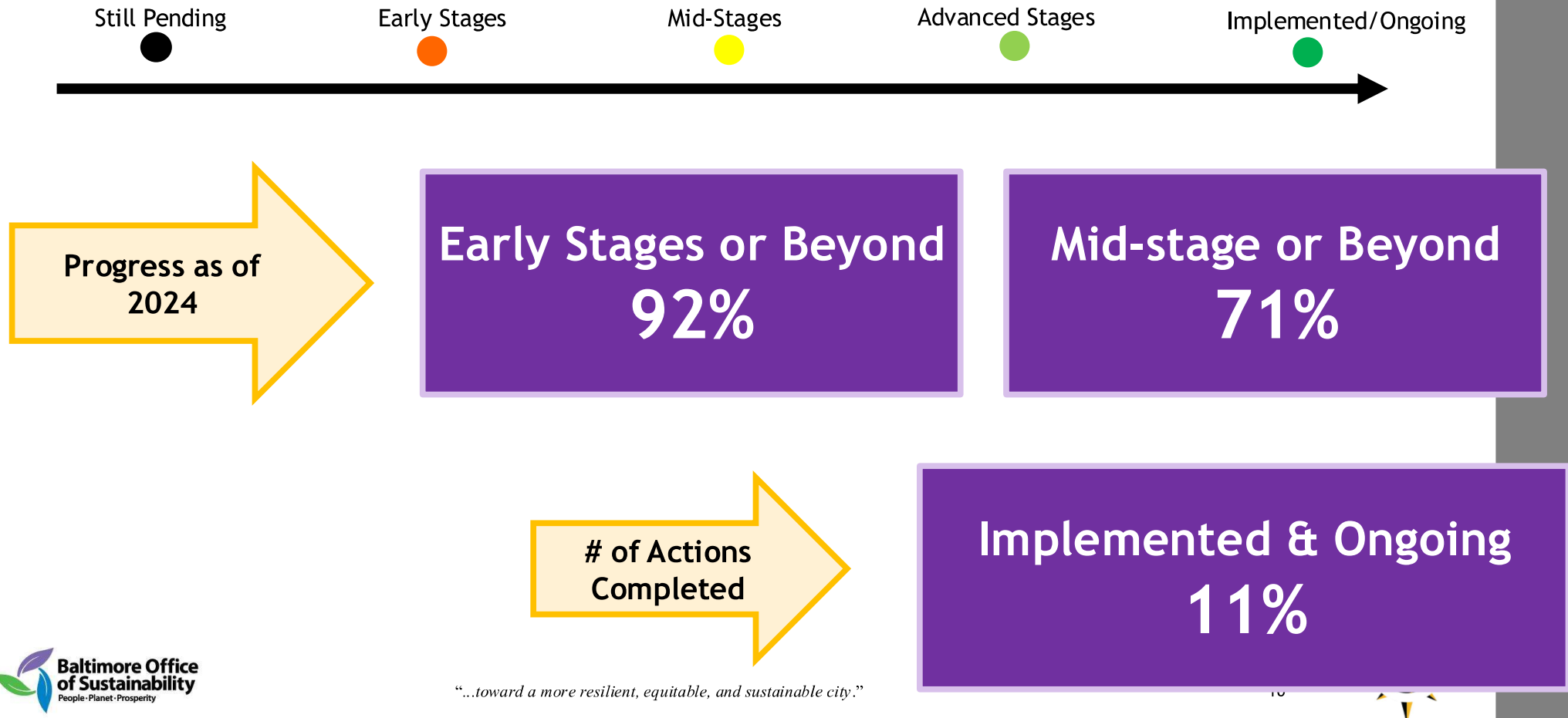
78
Measures

70
Strategies

244
Actions



2019 Sustainability Plan



annual report
2019-2020



annual report
2021



annual report
2022



annual report
2023



Sustainability Reporting



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2019 Sustainability Plan: Annual Reports

annual report 2023



47 The Sustainability Plan: Community



community: Waste and Recycling

A clean city is more sustainable—and can generate economic benefits for all.

THE BIG PICTURE

The best way to prevent waste is by buying less, reusing what you have, and then recycling and composting, a concept known as “zero waste.”¹ This concept is increasingly guiding cities and individuals to limit the amount of waste going to landfills and incinerators—which are expensive, contribute to environmental degradation, and are disproportionately located near low-income neighborhoods affecting people of color. They compound existing health risks and negatively influence property values. Above and beyond reducing landfill strain, zero waste is an approach that can help keep money in your pocket and support local, resilient economies: Composting programs, creative deconstruction of buildings and salvage, and reuse of wasted materials create jobs—and literally turn waste into community wealth.

“I pick up garbage ... I call the city about illegal dumping.”

—Longtime Brooklyn resident takes action for a cleaner Baltimore

IN BALTIMORE

Baltimore is working to become a cleaner city while reducing landfill and incineration waste.

In striving for zero waste, we can revitalize our neighborhoods by reducing our consumption, repurposing our purchases instead of throwing them away, and building our local, green economy. For example, the Camp Small project, part of the Waste to Wealth initiative, repurposes City wood waste (from fallen trees) by diverting it from landfills and incineration while reducing expenses and creating jobs. And, as the City removes vacant, blighted buildings, deconstruction contracts have been incorporated into the process.

Citywide mechanical street sweeping has led to more streets swept and more tons of trash collected, reducing the trash in our streets and the Harbor. Professor, Captain, and Mr. Trash Wheel have collected 1,100 tons of trash in the Harbor since 2014. Non-recyclable materials like plastic bags, polystyrene containers, and beverage containers make up as much as half of the litter polluting local streets and waterways. In 2018, the City Council passed a ban on polystyrene containers for carryout food and drinks by a unanimous vote, and the Baltimore City Public School Board voted to phase out Styrofoam trays from school cafeterias in favor of compostable trays.

As we continue to strive for less waste, our thinking is shifting from waste as a liability to waste as an asset; a way to create good paying, local jobs tied to a workforce development pipeline. Our long-term goal is a clean, zero-waste city.

Additional Accomplishments

Neighbors:

- The Department of Planning (DOP) is working to make the zoning code more easily digestible to non-practitioners.
- A new Equity Coordinator position has been created with DOP to establish equity measures and assist with improving equitable community engagement with residents.

Environmental Literacy & Healthy School Environments:

- In SY 2023-24, the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS) Curriculum Management Plan identified environmental literacy content as part of the Integrated Curriculum.
- DPW launched the EcoWarriors competition to encourage school communities to take sustainable actions.
- BCPSS began offering assistance to small, black-run nonprofits and companies navigating BCPSS procurement system.
- The Baltimore Tree Trust lead tree care workshops for 30 BCPSS grounds staff.

Healthy School Environments:

- HVAC projects were completed at 12 schools.
- A BCPSS environmental compliance manager participated as an Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) Fellow with the US Green Building Council's Center for Green Schools, and staff attended an IAQ training and are developing an IAQ plan.
- All 155 BCPSS schools have a Community Site Coordinator/Site Specialist.

Urban Agriculture:

- The DOP Food Policy Division partnered with Morgan State University and the Aspen Institute to launch Open Access Baltimore, a free online portal for food entrepreneurs to utilize resources for capital, permitting, licensing, and training.

Community | 7



Waste & Recycling:

- City Council Bill # 23-0466 Recyclable Materials and Yard Waste – Disposal was introduced: “For the purpose of prohibiting the disposal of recyclable materials and yard waste in a landfill or an incinerator”.



* Plastic Bag Reduction Act went into effect on October 1, 2021.

Data Snapshot: Plastic Bag Reduction Act 311 Complaints and Citations Issued
Source: Open Baltimore

Year	311 Complaints	Citations Issued**
FY22*	31	25
FY23	23	12
FY24	20	—

* Plastic Bag Reduction Act went into effect on October 1, 2021.

** Environmental Citations reported through March 2023.

Neighbors | Environmental Literacy | Healthy School Environments | Waste and Recycling | Urban Agriculture

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Service 765 Performance Measures

PM Type	Performance Measure	FY22 Actual	FY23 Actual	FY24 Target	FY24 Actual	FY25 Target	FY26 Target
Output	# of customers engaged and/or equipped by the Office of Sustainability to promote and/or implement sustainable practices (% increase)	70,074	76,468	75,000	84,940	78,000	85,000
Output	# of staff engaged to meet climate and sustainability goals across the city.	No data	No data	100	147	120	140
Outcome	% of Climate Action Plan (CAP) recommendations completed or progressed annually	N/A	N/A	N/A	31%	10%	0.10
Outcome	% of Baltimore Sustainability Plan strategies initiated or advanced annually	13%	12%	5%	14%	5%	0.05
Outcome	Total Healthy Food Priority Area (HFPA) Funds invested in the City's food system	\$141,277.00	\$148,341.00	\$154,275.00	154,275.00	\$160,446.00	165,259.00



2019 Sustainability Plan: Waste & Recycling

Strategy 1: Increase the amount of trash that is diverted from the landfill and incinerator to recycling programs

Strategy 2: Expand Baltimore's Waste to Wealth initiative.

Strategy 3: Pursue legislative and policy changes to reduce the waste stream.

Measures

Tons of Waste

Trash wheel Volume

Businesses supporting
waste reduction

Recycling rate

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2019 Sustainability Plan: Waste & Recycling

(S1/A1) Provide free recycling bins to all Baltimore residents; increase commercial recycling; conduct deep engagement on what can be recycled.

(S1/A3) Create and implement a plan to achieve zero waste, meaning “diverting over 90 percent of our discards from landfilling or incineration.”

(S2/A1) Implement the City’s Food Waste and Recovery Strategy to reduce food waste by 50% by 2030

(S2/A2) Site a local composting facility, build the city’s capacity to accept food and yard

(S3/A1) Enact legislation to impose a fee for plastic bags, and support state legislation instituting beverage container deposits

(S3/A2) Action 2: Create a City government procurement committee that incentivizes source reduction, efficiencies, the purchase of goods that have longer life spans

(S3/A3) Incentivize reductions in the amount of household garbage placed on the curb using coupons or vouchers (recycling would remain free of charge)

(S3/A4) Establish reuse businesses along with marketplaces for selling products, located strategically to ensure access for the entire population



2019 Sustainability Plan: Waste & Recycling

(S1/A1)

170,000 recycling bins distributed in 2021

(S3/A1)

60 million+ bags diverted, 60,000+ free reusable bags distributed since 2021

(S1/A3)

Zero Waste Manager Hired in 2022
Waste Working Group Formed

(S3/A2)

Waste Working Group assessing sustainable procurement standards

(S2, A1)

Food Matters Baltimore brought \$800,000+ of food waste reduction investment

(S3, A3)

Engagement and education amounting to 70,000+ interactions annually

(S2/A2)

\$4 million EPA grant awarded to build solar-powered compost facility

(S3/A4)

Camp Small established in 2016, upcycles 9,000 tons of downed trees into products



2019 Sustainability Plan: Waste & Recycling



2019 Sustainability Plan: Waste & Recycling

2019 BALTIMORE SUSTAINABILITY PLAN WASTE & RECYCLING ACTIONS		Still Pending	Early Stages	Mid-Stages	Advanced Stages	Implemented/ Ongoing
Strategy #1: Increase the amount of trash that is diverted from the landfill and incinerator to recycling programs.						
Action 1:	Provide free recycling bins, increase commercial recycling, and conduct deep engagement on what can be recycled.					●
Action 2:	Launch an anti-litter, pro-recycling campaign.			●		
Action 3:	Create and implement a plan to achieve zero waste.		●		●	
Strategy #2: Expand Baltimore's Waste to Wealth initiative.						
Action 1:	Implement the City's Food Waste and Recovery Strategy.					●
Action 2:	Site a local composting facility.		●			
Action 3:	Investigate revising codes and creating ordinances to eliminate waste and maximize reuse of materials; Establish businesses that reuse products and marketplaces for selling them.			●		
Action 4:	Create a revolving loan fund for investment in recycling and composting infrastructure.		●			
Strategy #3: Pursue legislative and policy changes to reduce the waste stream.						
Action 1:	Enact legislation to impose a fee for plastic bags; and support State legislation instituting beverage container deposits.					●
Action 2:	Create a City government procurement committee.		●			
Action 3:	Develop a plan for a "Save As You Throw" program to reduce waste that is landfilled or burned.	●				



Climate Action Plan (CAP)

In 2022, the Scott Administration set **Baltimore's strongest climate action targets to date**, to reduce emissions by (compared to a 2007 baseline):

2025

30%

reduction in emissions

2030

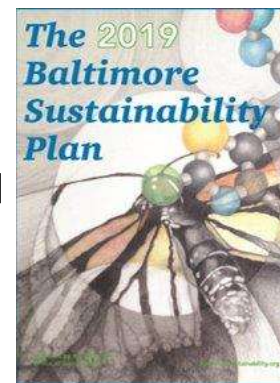
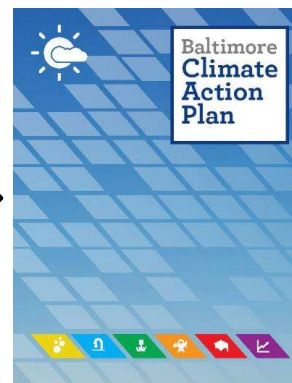
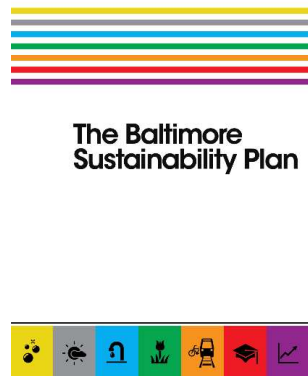
60%

reduction in emissions

2045

Net zero

greenhouse gas emissions



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CAP Guiding Principles

Center equity by addressing unequal environmental burdens.

Recognize that environmental, social and economic well-being is interconnected and to **protect both our communities and the natural environment.**

Climate resilience and sustainability is fundamental to improving the health, safety, and quality of life.

Seek to **create co-benefits for the people, economy** and through climate action.

Consider long-term impact and benefits in policy development and financial decision making.

Strategically and meaningfully **engage the public in climate resiliency planning** and in climate action.

Foster inter-agency and cross sector collaboration in climate resiliency planning and climate action.

Value, preserve, steward and promote our assets for future generations.

Redesign, reduce, reuse, recycle and compost and recirculate.

Leverage City general funds, investments, infrastructure or capital projects.

2024 Climate Action Plan: Waste Actions

(W1) Introduce City-wide Composting

(W2) Enhance Existing Organic Waste Diversion Policy Awareness, Compliance, and Enforcement of MD HB-264

**(W3) Coordinate a City-wide Food Rescue Program
(A4) Develop Waste Diversion Incentives**

(W5) Establish Waste Community Leaders

(W6) Promote and Partner with Circular Economy Local Businesses

**(W7) Establish Sustainable Procurement Protocol
(W10) Support Expansion of Waste Diversion and Reduction Programs**

(W11) Require Plans for New Buildings to Provide Sufficient Indoor and Outdoor Space for Recycling, Composting, and Materials Reuse

(W12) Ensure New Waste Disposal Facilities Processing Municipally Generated Waste Comply with Carbon Neutrality Goals

(W13) Collect Data to Help Reduce Pollutants Generated from Waste Processing Facilities

(W14) Explore Reducing Energy Use at Wastewater Facilities

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2024 Climate Action Plan: Waste Actions

2024 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE WASTE ACTIONS

		Still Pending	Early Stages	Mid-Stages	Advanced Stages	Implemented/ Ongoing
Action 1:	Establish sustainable procurement protocol for City government	●				
Action 2:	Introduce citywide composting			●		
Action 3:	Coordinate citywide food rescue programs	●				
Action 4:	Diversion policy awareness, compliance, and enforcement of MD HB264 - Organics Recycling	●				
Action 5:	Support expansion of waste diversion and reduction programs for City government		●			
Action 6:	Develop citywide waste diversion incentives	●				
Action 7:	Promote and partner with circular-economy local businesses	●				
Action 8:	Establish waste community leaders		●			
Action 9:	Waste disposal facilities processing municipally-generated waste to comply with carbon neutrality		●			
Action 10:	Encourage citywide water savings program	●				
Action 11:	Establish an emissions plan for City wastewater facilities	●				
Action 12:	Explore reducing energy use at City wastewater facilities			●		
Action 13:	Collect data to inform policy and decision-making regarding how to reduce pollutants generated from waste processing facilities, including waste incinerators	●				
Action 14:	Support and, as possible, expand upon legislation that bans recyclable materials from landfill and incineration			●		
Action 15:	Require plans for new buildings to provide sufficient indoor and outdoor space for recycling, composting, and materials reuse			●		

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Disaster Preparedness Plan (DP3)

Risk Assessment

Identifies the characteristics of hazards likely to impact the City and the potential consequences of the hazards.

Capabilities Assessment

Evaluates the City's resources to manage risk, including regulatory, administrative, financial, and staffing capabilities.

Mitigation Strategy

Sets the priorities and develops long-term strategies to reduce risk.

National Benefit-Cost Ratio Per Peril
*BCR numbers in this study have been rounded
Overall Hazard Benefit-Cost Ratio

**Federally
Funded**
6:1



Riverine Flood

7:1



Hurricane Surge

Too few
grants



Wind

5:1



Earthquake

3:1



Wildland-Urban Interface Fire

3:1

The City's roadmap to reducing the risk of natural and human-caused hazards and building community resilience – updated every 5 years.

FEMA-sanctioned **hazard mitigation plan** that establishes long-term, sustained actions to **reduce losses to people, property, the environment, and the economy** based on existing authorities, policies, programs, resources, and local ability.

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Disaster Preparedness Plan (DP3)

Goal 1: Ensure the equitable protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all people who work, live, and play in the City, with specific consideration for the barriers and challenges that may result in disproportionate hazard impacts to socially vulnerable populations and underserved communities.

Goal 2: Strengthen the resilience of critical government and community facilities, services, and systems, to reduce or prevent impacts from natural and human-caused hazard events.

Goal 3: Enhance the integration of resilience, disaster prevention, and planning into all City programs, policies, and operations.

Goal 4: Enhance the City of Baltimore's adaptive capacity and build institutional structures that can proactively cope with dynamic future conditions.

Goal 5: Promote hazard mitigation and climate adaptation awareness and education throughout the City of Baltimore.

Goal 6: Provide support to increase efforts toward a better Community Rating System (CRS) classification.



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2023 Disaster Preparedness Plan (DP3)

IN-13 (Overall goal): Increase the resilience of all wastewater systems and protect them from current and projected extreme weather events

(IN-20-3) Investigate, develop, and promote solid waste management actions for disposing of waste debris removal before a hazard event

(IN-13-5) Develop and adopt increased level of protection for construction, redevelopment, and design of all water and wastewater facilities that incorporate future climate projections

(IN-13-5) Establish protocols and ensure effective operations and security for wastewater treatment plants when facilities are overwhelmed during large storm events



Policy, Legislation, Programming and Evaluation



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Waste Legislation: Strategies to Consider

Private Sector

- [Extended Producer Responsibility \(SB 901\)](#) passed in 2025 in MD General Assembly)
- Stewardship Laws such as MD's Paint Stewardship, [battery collection](#) and [mattress stewardship](#)

Municipal Operations

- Funding mechanisms such as fees, surcharges etc.
- Reporting requirements for certain industries such as retailers, waste haulers
- Sustainable procurement protocols

Consumers/Public

- Bans (plastic bags, foam containers, landfill bans)
- Incentives for desired zero waste behavior via rebates, savings etc.
- Collection programs such as bottle vending machines, glass diversion or textile collection (DPW launched)

Organics

- Yard Waste
- Wasted Food
- Food Redistribution

Large-Scale Events

- Staffing Requirement
- Zero Waste Event Guidelines

Changing Behaviors

- Right to Repair Laws
- Fix it & Repair Events
- Mental/Physical Nudges

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Commission on Sustainability

- ✓ 21-member Commission, 2 co-chairs
- ✓ Oversees the implementation of the citywide Sustainability Plan, related plans
- ✓ Serves as a key public engagement opportunity for sustainability work across the city
- ✓ Hosts annual Sustainability Open House




April Meeting
BALTIMORE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

April 23, 2025
4:00-6:00 pm

Virtual Meeting via Webex

Join us as we kick off a series of meetings around the theme of **Beyond Environmental Literacy**. This month will focus on the topic of **Environmental Education and Climate Communications**

Register at:
<https://tinyurl.com/Sustainability-Commission>



February Newsletter

Read the latest issue of the Baltimore Office of Sustainability newsletter to learn about upcoming events, funding opportunities, and sustainability tips.

To read the latest newsletter, scan the QR code or visit: <https://conta.cc/4i6i9mm>



Sign up for our newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/BoS-Newsletter-Signup>



ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS NOW

BALTIMORE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

ABOUT THE COMMISSION

- **21 members:** 20 appointed by the Mayor, 1 by the City Council President
- **Oversees** the Baltimore Sustainability Plan
- **Reports** on progress annually
- **Members represent** environmental groups, community organizations, labor unions, public health & environmental justice, and private industry.

Monthly meetings:
THIRD WEDNESDAYS, 4-6 PM

Apply:
MAYOR.BALTIMORECITY.GOV/BC/APPLICATION



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**CALLING
ARTISTS, VENDORS, & VOLUNTEERS**

NATURE EVERYWHERE WEEK

APRIL 27 - MAY 3, 2025

HELP PLANT TREES & NATIVE PLANTS
BUILD OUTDOOR LEARNING AND PLAY SPACES
HELP SAVE TREES BY REMOVING INVASIVE SPECIES
ENJOY LIVE PERFORMANCES
LOCAL FOOD AND DRINKS
INTERACTIVE FAMILY ACTIVITIES
HEALING-CENTERED WORKSHOPS

DRUID HILL PARK, BALTIMORE MD
3100 SWANN DRIVE



STEWARDSHIP DAYS

MONDAY, APRIL 28: AT LAKESIDE PAVILION
TUESDAY, APRIL 29: NEAR RAWLINGS CONSERVATORY
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30: AT LIBERTY PAVILION
THURSDAY, MAY 1: AT REPTILE HOUSE FIELD #4

08:00 AM - 09:00 AM VOLUNTEER CHECK-IN
09:00 AM - 12:00 PM INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL & TREE PLANTING
12:00 PM - 01:00 PM LUNCH SERVICE
01:00 PM - 03:00 PM NATIVE MEADOW PLANTING & TREE PLANTING
03:00 PM - 04:00 PM CLEAN UP AND NATURE BRIDGE WALKTHROUGH

**NATURE
EVERYWHERE
WEEK**



BALTIMORE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY 2025 MEETING TOPICS

January 15	Nature in the City: People & Nature
February 19	Nature in the City: Community-Managed Open Space
March 19	Nature in the City: Trees & Forests
April 23	Beyond Environmental Literacy: Environmental Education & Climate Communications
May 21	Beyond Environmental Literacy: Changing Behaviors in a Changing Climate
June (TBA)	Beyond Environmental Literacy: Annual Sustainability Open House





ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY OPEN HOUSE

Community | Resilience | Environmental Literacy

Join Us



JUNE 28, 2025



12:00PM - 4:00PM



Middle Branch Fitness
& Wellness Center
201 Reedbird Ave 21225



Free & fun for all ages!

- Celebrate building community, fostering resilience and cultivating environmental literacy.
- Enjoy free refreshments, games, and activities for all ages.
- Connect with local organizations, learn about climate action and find out how you can get involved.



March Newsletter

Read the latest issue of the Baltimore Office of Sustainability newsletter to learn about upcoming events, funding opportunities, and sustainability tips.

To read the latest newsletter, scan the QR code or visit: <https://conta.cc/4jlkwm>



Sign up for our newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/BoS-Newsletter-Signup>



April Meeting BALTIMORE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

April 23, 2025

4:00-6:00 pm

Virtual Meeting
via Webex

Join us as we kick off a series of meetings around the theme of **Beyond Environmental Literacy**. This month will focus on the topic of **Environmental Education and Climate Communications**

Register at:
<https://tinyurl.com/Sustainability-Commission>



Recent Accomplishments



City of Baltimore Awarded
LEED Gold Certification

Recognized by the American
Planning Association



\$7.3 million grant to support
solar and battery back-up @
Community Resiliency Hubs

\$250,000 grant to support
energy audits @ Community
Resiliency Hubs



Achieve 70,000+ interactions
or engagements annually

60 million + bags prevented
from entering our
environment

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



Thank You!



BALTIMORE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

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



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

Waste & Recycling Actions Status Summary 2019 - 2024

About Us

The Baltimore Office of Sustainability acts as a resource, catalyst, and an advocate in creating an equitable and resilient Baltimore. We integrate environmental integrity, social equity, and economic prosperity into plans, practices, and policies. Our aim is to provide innovative solutions to our city's challenges while engaging, inspiring and collaborating with all sectors of Baltimore.

We define sustainability as “meeting the current environmental, social, and economic needs of our community without compromising the ability of future generations to meet these needs”.

The Baltimore Sustainability Commission was created by the City Council in 2007 to oversee the implementation of the Baltimore Sustainability Plan. The Commission is comprised of 20 members appointed by the Mayor and one City Council member appointed by the City Council President. The Commission is made up of members representing environmental groups, community organizations, labor unions, public health and environmental justice interests, and private industry.

As we implement the 2019 Sustainability Plan, we will expand our expertise and collaborate deeply with government, community, non-profit and institutional partners and make sure that implementation is inclusive, equitable and innovative.



Sustainability Plan Implementation

The Baltimore Sustainability Plan addresses all three legs of the sustainability stool – social equity (people), environmental stewardship (planet), and economic health (prosperity). The Plan was designed to lay out a broad, inclusive, and community responsive sustainability agenda. The Plan articulates strategies, actions, and measures of success across five core themes and 23 topic areas. We report on the implementation status of each action on an annual basis.

The charts below will allow you the opportunity to review the strategies and actions associated with the Waste & Recycling topic, and easily get an idea of where each action stands in implementation. Actions that advanced in status during 2024 are indicated with a black line that shows how the action advanced in status from 2023 to the end of 2024. A gray circle indicates that a strategy is “still pending,” and the green check mark indicates that the strategy has been “implemented and/or is ongoing.” A strategy may fall somewhere in between, and will be noted by orange, yellow, or light green. We update these charts every year as part of our annual report, to demonstrate our progress.



Climate Action Plan Implementation

The 2023 Climate Action Plan (CAP) Update is a guide to how Baltimore will meet its ambitious and critical goal to reduce carbon emissions by 60% by 2030. The CAP identifies community-wide sources of GHGs, sets goals to reduce emissions, and centers climate equity in implementation. The Plan establishes actions organized around five focus areas that address electricity, buildings, transportation, waste, and nature-based solutions that remove carbon. We will report on the implementation status of each action on an annual basis.

The chart below will allow you the opportunity to review the strategies and actions associated with the Waste focus area, and easily get an idea of where each action stands in implementation at the end of the first year following the plan's adoption. A gray circle indicates that a strategy is "still pending," and the green check mark indicates that the strategy has been "implemented and/or is ongoing." A strategy may fall somewhere in between, and will be noted by orange, yellow, or light green. We will update these charts every year to demonstrate our progress.

2024 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN UPDATE WASTE ACTIONS		Still Pending	Early Stages	Mid-Stages	Advanced Stages	Implemented/ Ongoing
Action 1:	Establish sustainable procurement protocol for City government	●				
Action 2:	Introduce citywide composting			●		
Action 3:	Coordinate citywide food rescue programs	●				
Action 4:	Diversion policy awareness, compliance, and enforcement of MD HB264 - Organics Recycling	●				
Action 5:	Support expansion of waste diversion and reduction programs for City government		●			
Action 6:	Develop citywide waste diversion incentives	●				
Action 7:	Promote and partner with circular-economy local businesses	●				
Action 8:	Establish waste community leaders		●			
Action 9:	Waste disposal facilities processing municipally-generated waste to comply with carbon neutrality		●			
Action 10:	Encourage citywide water savings program	●				
Action 11:	Establish an emissions plan for City wastewater facilities	●				
Action 12:	Explore reducing energy use at City wastewater facilities			●		
Action 13:	Collect data to inform policy and decision-making regarding how to reduce pollutants generated from waste processing facilities, including waste incinerators	●				
Action 14:	Support and, as possible, expand upon legislation that bans recyclable materials from landfill and incineration			●		
Action 15:	Require plans for new buildings to provide sufficient indoor and outdoor space for recycling, composting, and materials reuse			●		

Waste

Implementation Progress

Each year, the Baltimore Office of Sustainability releases an Annual Report to summarize and highlight accomplishments that support the implementation of the 2019 Baltimore Sustainability Plan, 2023 DP3, and 2024 Climate Action Plan Update. Because implementation of these plans requires action by local government, residents, businesses, non-profits, and other partners working together, the accomplishments reported are not limited to work led by the Office of Sustainability. Information included in this summary is a compilation of accomplishments related to waste reduction and recycling included in Sustainability Annual Reports for the years 2019 through 2024.

2019

Food Matters Program Accomplishments

- Support from the Natural Resources Defense Council and funding from the Rockefeller Foundation advanced the implementation of the City's Food Waste & Recovery Strategy. The Baltimore Food Matters (BFM) program within the Office of Sustainability brought together City agencies and institutional, nonprofit, business, and faith-based partners to implement actions in support of food waste reduction.
- BFM worked with NRDC to distribute \$200,000 to 13 organizations, with an emphasis on those working in historically underserved communities. The organizations supported the launch of community composting sites throughout the city.
- BFM ran an 8-week Save the Food campaign within the Maryland Transit Authority system, raising the awareness of the rampant food waste among residents.
- BCPSS implemented a school system-wide food waste prevention program that leverages proven approaches to ensure that healthy foods are not wasted, but instead support students' nutrition. All 180 schools in Baltimore implemented these programs.
- BFM initiated and expanded the Baltimore Community Composting Network at the Downtown Farmers' Market and Bazaar in May 2019 and the Waverly Farmers' Market in November 2019. Food scraps collected are given to local farmers for use as compost and animal feed. Both food scrap collection sites enter their seventh year of service in 2025.

2020

Less Waste Better Baltimore Recycling and Solid Waste Plan & Zero Waste Plan

- Two plans for improving management of waste were completed in 2020 – The Less Waste, Better Baltimore Plan and the Fair Development plan for Zero Waste.
- The LWBB Plan, prepared by the Department of Public Works, provides a roadmap for getting to 83% diversion of waste from disposal by 2040.
- The Zero Waste Plan, prepared through a partnership including the United Workers Association, Zero Waste Associates, the Fair Development Roundtable, and the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, calls for the city to achieve a 90% diversion rate by 2040.

Food Matters Program Accomplishments

- The Baltimore Food Matters (BFM) program within the Office of Sustainability increased residential food scrap drop-off locations from 2 in 2019 to 7 in 2021.
- BFM partnered with the Maryland Food Bank (MFB) to strategically address food waste and food insecurity. Through the partnership, MFB promoted the use of the MealConnect software, which connects those with food surpluses, to non-profits who feed people.



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Middle Left: Photo by Side A Photography; Bottom
Left: Photo by BCRP Staff

Implementation Progress

2021

Waste Reduction Campaigns

- DPW received a grant from The Recycling Partnership to launch a recycling campaign.
- DPW's Communications Office launched a "Be Part of the Solution, Not the Pollution" campaign.

Residential Recycling Cart Distribution

- 170,000 recycling carts were distributed to eligible households by DPW as part of a five-month distribution process that began in September 2021.

Comprehensive Bag Reduction Act

- The Citywide Comprehensive Bag Reduction Act took effect on October 1, 2021, banning thin plastic bags and applying a fee to alternative bags including paper, thicker plastic and compostable bags.
- In partnership with the Health Department, the Office of Sustainability distributed 55,000 reusable bags in support of the implementation of the bag reduction act. Bags were distributed to communities across the city through community events, at city schools, and at more than 30 grocery stores.
- The Office of Sustainability hosted a bag distribution event in December, providing 25,000 bags to over 50 community-based partners who serve high-need communities.

2022

Zero Waste Implementation Accomplishments

- In fall 2022, the Baltimore City Department of Public Works hired its first Zero-Waste Manager to advance zero waste infrastructure across the city, enhance recycling, and support waste diversion efforts.
- GRASS Baltimore, a new glass reuse cooperative venture, received both private and state grant funding and launched operations in southwest Baltimore.
- An estimated 20 million single-use plastic bags were prevented from entering our environment through implementation of the Comprehensive Bag Reduction Act in 2022.
- As part of the launch of the Sustainability Subcabinet, a Waste Working Group was formed to prioritize and coordinate the implementation of strategies for preventing waste.

2023

Solid Waste Management Plan

- The City's Department of Public Works (DPW) Office of Waste Diversion released the 10-year 2024-2033 Solid Waste Management Plan or SWMP, which maps operational needs, constraints, and improvements for waste management within the City.
- The plan consolidates goals for managing the City's solid waste stream and assesses the existing solid waste collection systems, current and future disposal capacity needs, and how zero waste strategies like reuse, recycling, and composting are to be implemented.

EPA Funding Awarded for Composting Facility

- In 2023, EPA announced a \$4 million grant awarded to DPW to fund a solar-powered, scalable composting facility co-located with the new East Side Transfer Station at Bowley's Lane.
- The proposed facility could divert up to 12,000 tons of organic materials from landfill and incineration; reducing 6,000 tons of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions annually.

2024

Camp Small Zero Waste Initiative Updates

- Initiated in 2016, the Camp Small Zero Waste Initiative operated by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks' Forestry Division has continued to transform the City's wood waste into useful products.
- Camp Small processes about 9,000 tons of wood waste annually, about 90% of which is street trees. The wood waste is transformed into useful wood products which are offered for sale, including compost, mulch, firewood, whole logs, furniture, and lumber.
- Beyond the revenue generated through sales, Camp Small also saves the City money on products such as mulch, wood furnishings for outdoor spaces, and milled wood for interior use that would have otherwise been purchased. They also offer free mulch and discounts on other wood products for community projects.

DPW Waste & Recycling Accomplishments

- In 2024, DPW relaunched weekly recycling for all city households after many months of scaled down service.
- Residential Recycling Center (formerly Citizen Convenience Drop-Off Centers) were rebranded in 2024 to reflect what these centers are truly about—helping Baltimore residents recycle responsibly and reduce waste. The Residential Recycling Centers accept a wide range of items for recycling and reuse: paper, plastics, aluminum, glass, food scraps, textiles, electronics, scrap metal, hard plastics, tires, motor oil, mattresses and box springs, and household hazardous waste.
- DPW teamed up with partners to offer several events supporting waste reduction in 2024. They partnered with the Station North Tool Library for their Fix It Fair. 251 items were saved from disposal during the fair. The Office of Waste Diversion hosted four Shred Events. DPW teamed with BGE and Helpsy to offer appliance recycling and textile recycling at the Shred Events.
- A Waste working Group led by DPW's Office of Waste Diversion began a process to engage several procurement staff members in different agencies to "...incorporate sustainable materials management into City's procurement process." DPW has plans to establish a Sustainable Procurement Committee in the Summer of 2025.

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Acknowledgements

Report Project Manager: Amy Gilder-Busatti
Report Design - Bridget Parlato, Full Circuit Studio
Cover Photo - Side A Photography



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Published April 2025

