

**VISION:** The vision of NeighborSpace is that Baltimore County's established neighborhoods will preserve their green open space, creating more attractive and sustainable communities, and providing for cleaner air, water and natural areas.

**MISSION:** The mission of NeighborSpace is to work with local partners to promote more livable communities by acquiring land to serve as small parks, gardens and natural areas in established neighborhoods.

**PLANNING FACTS AND ASSUMPTIONS:**

1. The Baltimore region is among the most densely populated areas in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Within the region, Baltimore County is the largest political jurisdiction, with slightly less than one third of the region's population.
2. 90% of the County's 816,000 citizens live within the URDL in neighborhoods that were built before open space regulations were in place and NeighborSpace has a role to play in addressing this issue.
3. Within the County there are 10 watersheds and five rivers that are tributaries of the environmentally challenged Chesapeake Bay. Land conservation in these watersheds is a means of improving the Bay's health and NeighborSpace has a role to play in addressing this issue, as well.
4. Recent discussions of the County's Master Plan for 2020 suggest that accommodating growth and being more responsive to environmental concerns will necessitate "a new direction," for the County, one that embraces substantial redevelopment near transportation corridors and town centers and of older shopping centers and abandoned warehouses. Inherent in this new direction is the idea that green space (i.e. greenways, and trails, squares, plazas, tot lots, parks) will be a key component.
5. The State of Maryland is requiring that county spending priorities included in the next round of local land preservation, parks, and recreation plans "should emphasize locations accessible to residents in population centers, communities, and neighborhoods, and the use of State funds to make them more desirable places to live, work and visit."
6. Given the economic downturn, there is a heightened call for a system for identifying areas in greatest need of open space and for diversifying strategies for land acquisition.
7. While NeighborSpace has done much to put sound policies and procedures in place to guide its operations, its communications and fundraising efforts are not robust enough at present to take the organization to the next level.

**GOAL 1 (LAND ACQUISITION): IDENTIFY AND PURSUE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROVIDING RESIDENTS ACCESS TO GREEN OPEN SPACE THROUGH ACQUIRING LAND IN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS.** Objectives include:

- A. Identify areas in greatest need of open space and potential parcels using a range of data sources and community input.
- B. Seek more donations of easements & lower-price land purchases.
- C. Aspire to be flexible and innovative in the approaches employed to acquire land.

MAJOR STRATEGY FOR GOAL 1: Develop a land acquisition plan.

**GOAL 2 (STEWARDSHIP): EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY IN IDENTIFYING, ACQUIRING, UTILIZING AND PROVIDING STEWARDSHIP OF GREEN OPEN SPACE.** Objectives include:

- A. Achieve strong community stewardship of parcels by engaging communities in care, use, restoration, and promotion.
- B. Explore new promotional activities and improve the visibility of NeighborSpace properties through signage and other types of publicity.
- C. Create a way to measure how sites are used.
- D. Empower communities to promote environmental programming/education and other creative uses of NeighborSpace sites.
- E. Contribute to neighborhood, county and regional planning efforts to promote open space preservation.
- F. Increase community awareness of and use of NeighborSpace properties.

MAJOR STRATEGY FOR GOAL 2: Develop a property manager's resource list and a regular schedule for visits.

**GOAL 3 (COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH): EXPAND COMMUNICATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS TO BROADEN SUPPORT FOR PRESERVING GREEN SPACE IN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBORHOODS.** Objectives include:

- A. Develop partnerships with developers, builders, corporations, and trust & estate planners to expand opportunities for NeighborSpace to acquire land to preserve open space.

- B. Develop partnerships with other organizations (such as watershed organizations) with similar goals to increase opportunities for community utilization of NeighborSpace parcels and to acquire land.
- C. Get the County Council to identify NeighborSpace as one of the "social benefits" in the PUD development process.
- D. Solicit enthusiastic support from communities & ask them to lobby on our behalf.
- E. Partner with DEPRM to identify parcels, promote watershed restoration and share in resources.

MAJOR STRATEGY FOR GOAL 3: Develop and implement a communications and fundraising plan.

**GOAL 4 (FUNDRAISING): EXPAND AND DIVERSIFY REVENUE.**

Objectives include:

- A. Connect with local communities and local businesses as potential volunteers and funding sources.
- B. Seek strengthening of law surrounding, and maintenance of, fee-basis funding.
- C. Seek funding from the State directly, through Program Open Space or other State programs.
- D. Explore funding opportunities with foundations.

MAJOR STRATEGY FOR GOAL 4: Develop and implement a communications and fundraising plan.

**GOAL 5 (OPERATIONAL CAPACITY): STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF NEIGHBORSPACE.** Objectives include:

- A. Expand the staff capacity of NeighborSpace.
- B. Improve marketing and communications, including the website, newsletters, signage, and other means.
- C. Increase non-board volunteer involvement.
- D. Develop the board of directors, including having vacancies filled in a strategic manner.

MAJOR STRATEGY FOR GOAL 5: Develop and implement a communications and fundraising plan.

[FOR A COPY OF THE COMPLETE PLAN, VISIT US @ www.neighborspacebaltimorecounty.com.](http://www.neighborspacebaltimorecounty.com)  
**FOR ADDITIONAL INFO., PLEASE CONTACT:**  
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