Middle Branch Restoration
Baltimore’s Next Great Waterfront

Presentation to:
Coast Smart Council and Adaptation and Resiliency Working Group

April 29, 2020
Our Purpose Today

- Introduce you to this project **before design begins**
- Communicate our **long-term strategy** and broad vision
- Share **early conceptual drawings** for illustrative purposes
- **Start a conversation** without a specific permitting request
- **Listen** to your comments and concerns
- **Discuss** how to structure the regulatory process:
  - What is the best strategy for **simplifying and coordinating** regulatory review?
  - Can you **share your preliminary questions** with us in writing before we begin the design?
  - How do we incorporate **your input** into the design?
  - How often do you want an **update** as we move forward?
Design Team By Functions

Design Team

- West 8
- Moffat & Nichol
- Mahan Rykiel
- Toole
- Living Design Lab
- Biohabitats

Community Outreach / Engagement

- Assedo
- West 8
- Mahan Rykiel
- Designing The We

Public Relations/Communications

- Post-Typography
- KGA
- MD
- Charles Birnbaum
- West 8
Project Goals

- **Reconnect nearby neighborhoods**, expand public access to the 11-mile shoreline and avoid displacement of residents.
- Establish a **world class park district** with **free and affordable recreational, cultural and ecological experiences**.
- **Anchor a regional trail network** reaching into nearby counties.
- Promote community-driven and **inclusive development** that protects and enhances the recreational and ecological assets of the Middle Branch.
- **Restore a healthy environment** by creating major new wetlands, marshlands, islands and strategies to prevent flooding.
- Demonstrate on a large scale the **creative use of dredge material** to improve water quality and create mitigation offsets as a source of innovative financing.
Master Plan Boundaries: 11 Miles of Shoreline
Neighborhoods’ Front Door
A Regional Amenity and Opportunity for Collaboration on Stormwater and Habitat
The Heart of the Regional Trail Network
Middle Branch Master Plan

Phase 1 – Invited Competition April-May 2019

- 11 Firm portfolios reviewed;
- 5 Firms requested to submit team qualifications;
- 3 Teams invited to submit competition proposals;
- 1 Team (West 8) selected for recommendation to City
Top 10 Priorities for the Middle Branch Waterfront

1. Trash & litter/Water quality improvement
2. Affordable recreation activities, programs and events for all ages
3. Convenient public access to the waterfront from neighborhoods
4. Seamless access around the waterfront for pedestrians and bikers
5. Improved transit infrastructure (multi-modal and regional)
6. Diverse water-based recreation (paddling, fishing and crabbing, etc.)
7. Network of safe, well-lit roadways and sidewalks
8. Affordable neighborhoods (development without displacement)
9. Enhanced and well-maintained natural spaces (trees, habitat areas, public art, etc.)
10. Cultural and historic activities that tell the stories of the neighborhoods on the waterfront and the people who lived there
Three Juried and Community Reviewed Proposals from World-Class Firms
Jury Selects **West 8**

**What Baltimore’s Plan to Redesign 11 Miles of Its Waterfront Means for Existing Communities**

_Ethan McLeod, August 29, 2019_

- West 8 Wins Middle Branch Competition to Revitalize Baltimore's Waterfront
- Transforming the Waterfront into Baltimore's 'Blue Green Heart'

**Ecological Revitalization Planned for Baltimore’s Waterfront**
Middle Branch Master Plan

Phase 1 – Vision Plan

✔ Major Themes & Program Elements
✔ Opportunities
✔ Works in Progress
Conceptual Design
(Final Design Not Yet Developed)
Middle Branch Park

Conceptual Design
(Final Design Not Yet Developed)
Middle Branch Basin

Conceptual Design
(Final Design Not Yet Developed)
Ridgely’s Cove

New Bridge Connections

Ridgely’s Water Taxi Stops

Resiliency Berm Pathways

Resiliency Berm Pathways

Conceptual Design
( final design not yet developed)
Concept: Ridgely’s Cove
Concept: Middle Branch Park
Potential Project: Crossing the Water
Long Term Opportunity: Hanover Street Bridge Reimagined and Replaced
Unlocking Development Opportunities

- Westport Waterfront
- Waterview Warehouse
- Port Covington
- Casino Entertainment District
Beneficial Use of Dredge Material

Middle Branch could use an estimated **one million** Cubic Yards to create wetlands, marshlands and islands.

An estimated **4.7 million** Cubic Yards is dredged yearly in the Bay and C&D Channels.
Conceptual Approach to Beneficial Use

If allowed, uncontaminated dredge material from private or public sources could be moved hydraulically or transported from DMCFs to create wetlands.
Works in Progress

$25 million Middle Branch Fitness and Wellness Center – Break Ground in 2020

$600,000 Trash Wheel Installation Summer 2020

$500,000 Grant to Design trail linking BWI and Gwynns Falls Trail.

Funds committed ($350,000) to start feasibility/design study of pedestrian bridge crossing between Westport & Port Covington

Ongoing: Baltimore Office of Sustainability & National Aquarium Collaborate on Environmental Education /Green Schools Programming in Project Area
Current Phasing

Phase 2 – 2020-21:
✔ Schematic Design & Feasibility Analysis for 11 miles of shoreline
✔ Urban Design/Planning connections to surrounding neighborhoods
✔ 100% Design/CD’s for first-round “Priority Project(s)"

Phase 3 – 2021-Ongoing
✔ Design documents, programming, construction
State and Federal Agency Meetings to Date

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources
- Maryland Port Administration
- Maryland Department of Transportation
- Governor’s Office (Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford)
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland Department of Commerce
- Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
- Army Corps of Engineering – Baltimore District

Also...
- Baltimore County Sustainability, Parks, Environment, Transportation (Trails)
- Del. Maggie McIntosh
- Maryland 46th Delegation
Thank You for Your Interest.

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Contacts:
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