

# GREENSPACE EQUITY ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

DNR Land Acquisition and Planning (LAP) Unit

March 11, 2024

# Meeting Agenda



- Introductions
- Program Overview
- Discussion on Program Parameters
- Public Comments
- Next Meeting
- Adjournment

# Purpose of the Program



- The Greenspace Equity Program is designed to provide and administer grants to eligible applicants for enhancing the public health and livability of overburdened communities and underserved communities by implementing projects to preserve, create, and enhance community greenspace.
  - Makes conservation more equitable
  - Meets community needs for greenspace
  - Supports on the ground partners
  
- Legislation outlining the program: HB0503  
<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2023RS/bills/hb/hb0503T.pdf>

# Eligibility



- Who is eligible to apply?
  - A land trust or nongovernmental organization located or working in an overburdened community or an underserved community where a project is proposed to be implemented
  - A county or municipality
  
- Where can these projects occur?
  - In an overburdened community
  - In an underserved community
  - On a property owned by an eligible applicant, or for which the applicant holds a conservation easement, located in a census tract adjacent to an overburdened community or an underserved community

[Greenspace Equity Census Map](#)

# Types of Projects



## ➤ **Acquisition Project**

An eligible applicant may apply for funding to purchase property that will be used for an eligible purpose (Stewardship). The property must be held in fee-simple or with a perpetual conservation easement. If the lead applicant is a Land Trust the property must be co-owned by a government agency.

## ➤ **Stewardship (Development) Project**

Develop a property for public use AND improve the conservation value of the property.

Specific examples: Community garden, community gathering open space area, community woodland, a green network (a system of greenspaces that are interconnected by linear corridors that facilitate the movement of people and wildlife); a park; a trail; an urban farm.

# Allowable Expenses



## ➤ **Acquisition Projects**

- Cost of acquiring the land in fee simple or through a perpetual conservation easement
- Related due diligence expenses, such as appraisals, environmental assessments, surveys, title work, etc.
- \*Administrative costs related to program compliance for easement monitoring, if applicable

## ➤ **Stewardship (Development) Projects**

- Cost of clearing the site or developing it for use as community greenspace
- \*Administrative costs related to implementing the project

\*Administrative costs not to exceed 3% of the grant amount may be eligible

\*No operating costs are allowed with this funding

# Application Process



- Applications for both Acquisition and Stewardship projects will be available on the DNR website
- Submission deadlines will be posted when grants are available
- Applications will be initially reviewed by DNR staff and then shared with Greenspace Equity Advisory Board
- After application submission and review, selected eligible projects will be submitted to the Maryland State Clearinghouse for review and comment, and are subject to Board of Public Works approval prior to receiving funding.

# Project Maintenance Timeline & other items to note:



- Acquisition projects must be maintained for public use in perpetuity.
- Stewardship (Development) projects must be maintained for public use for at least 15 years from the project completion date.
- At least 50% of the yearly allotment for the Greenspace Equity Program shall be awarded to projects that include land acquisition. If the total amount of funds requested for land acquisition by program applicants is less than 50% of the grant funds available for a given fiscal year, the remaining grant funds may be awarded to projects that do not include land acquisition.
- Project applications should include information that demonstrates involvement by the affected community and partnership among local governments, land trusts, and community organizations.



# Greenspace Equity Advisory Board



## **What is the purpose of the Greenspace Equity Advisory Board?**

The Board will serve as a consultant to the Department in the implementation and administration of the Program, such as developing the application, assisting with networking and educating the public about the Greenspace Equity Program, and reviewing project applications. DNR will administer the application and financial funding processes.

## **Who is on the Greenspace Equity Advisory Board?**

- (1) One member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- (2) One member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
- (3) The following members, appointed by the governor:
  - (i) One representative of a county department of parks and recreation;
  - (ii) One representative of a municipal department of parks and recreation;
  - (iii) One representative of the Maryland Environmental Trust;
  - (iv) One representative of a land trust working in an overburdened community or an underserved community; and
  - (v) Five representatives who:
    1. Are residents of an overburdened community or an underserved community; and
    2. Reflect the diversity of the state.

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# LAP Contacts



## **Program Administrators:**

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Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Montgomery, Prince George's, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties

## **Local Grants Supervisor:**

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