



Maryland's Underserved Urban Communities to Receive \$7.7 million for Heat Island Effect-Reducing Trees

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(Baltimore, MD) – Thirty-six underserved urban communities across Maryland are about to plant 40,000 new trees, thanks to a new effort created by the Maryland General Assembly's Tree Solutions Now Act of 2021 and state resources provided through the Chesapeake Bay Trust (the Trust). The Act calls for five million trees to be planted across Maryland by 2031, with 500,000 of them targeted to urban, underserved areas. The Trust, the distributor of funds from the Chesapeake vehicle license plate program and other sources, has long empowered local urban communities through grant-making and was tapped in the Act to serve as the administrator of the urban component.

Urban trees have significant benefits to human health, climate, the economy, and the environment. Yet some urban communities are severely lacking in greening, contributing to heat island effect, exacerbating asthma and other health issues, and reducing quality of life. Providing resources through ground-up, community-based grants empowers people to own this piece of community improvement, leading to sustainability.

"This urban greening effort will help address both global climate change as well as environmental justice including inequities in historically disenfranchised communities," **said Senator Paul Pinsky**, a sponsor of the legislation. "This work will create lasting green improvements and help to mitigate the harmful effects of climate change with every tree planted."

Ninety million dollars per year over nine years will be distributed by the Trust to communities, neighborhoods, civic groups, schools, and others who commit to planting trees in underserved regions as defined in the legislation. Funding is reserved for urban census tracts with low median household income levels, with high unemployment, or were historically red-lined or for public housing projects.

"We are thrilled to have been able to provide the resources for this work," **said Delegate Dana Stein**, another key sponsor of the legislation. "All communities deserve to have green spaces and trees to help improve quality of life."

Studies show that trees planted in urban communities improve the physical and mental health of people within their proximity, and that increasing urban canopy can reduce asthma and respiratory-related

emergencies during heat wave-related events in under-treed areas. For these reasons, many urban communities have adopted urban tree canopy goals, including Baltimore City, which has set a goal of 40% canopy by 2037.

Communities will begin planting trees this fall, concentrating on areas such as vacant lots or streets where native trees and resources are scarce. These trees will help to reduce the urban heat island effect, filter polluted stormwater, mitigate the effect of carbon emissions, reduce energy consumption and therefore energy bills, and improve air quality. Increasing tree quantity and quality in urban areas is a cost-effective way to strengthen the health of the Chesapeake Bay, provide urban wildlife habitat, help mitigate flooding issues, and stimulate local green jobs markets enabling families to work where they live and play.

“Witnessing the work of these communities and organizations as they restore and protect their neighborhoods is a perfect reminder of the symbiotic relationship between the health of our local neighborhoods and the health of our environment and waterways.” **said Jana Davis, president of the Chesapeake Bay Trust.**

The full list of Urban Trees Grant Program awardees in its first round of funding:

Anne Arundel Watershed Stewards Academy, Anne Arundel County - \$54,851 to plant 80 trees across low-income neighborhoods in North Anne Arundel County focusing on Latino/a/x communities.

Antietam Creek Watershed Alliance (ACWA), Washington County - \$89,754 to plant 205 trees across three towns in Washington County including Hagerstown Community College.

Ashburton Area Association, Baltimore City - \$14,245 to plant native trees with the help of 40 volunteers and 20 children in the Ashburton and Callaway-Garrison neighborhoods.

Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection & Sustainability, Baltimore County - \$1,500,000 to plant 2,500 trees with an overall goal of planting 4500 trees in high priority urban areas in Baltimore County.

Baltimore Tree Trust, Baltimore City - \$1,949,204 to plant 3,000 trees in high priority urban areas of Baltimore City while connecting economically marginalized residents to career training and living wage jobs in urban forestry.

Blue Water Baltimore, Baltimore City - \$342,444 to plant 600 trees in four West Baltimore neighborhoods, engaging more than 400 volunteers.

Bon Secours Unity Properties, Baltimore City - \$15,200 to add 32 trees to two planned parks in abandoned land in West Baltimore, in part for the benefit of 75 preschoolers in a nearby Head Start program.

Broadway East Community Development Corporation, Baltimore City - \$181,390 to engage East Baltimore residents in the planning of 320 trees in six neighborhoods.

Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation, Inc., Prince George's County - \$193,713 to plant 300 trees throughout the Town of Bladensburg.

City of Brunswick, Frederick County - \$10,500 to plant 50 trees in local parks.

City of Hagerstown, Washington County- \$66,619 to plant 175 trees in the neighborhoods with the least canopy coverage.

City Neighbors Foundation, Baltimore City - \$2,520 for the tree component of a larger \$148,883 project for a complete green renovation of our City Neighbors Charter parking lot.

City of New Carrollton, Prince George's County- \$51,875 to plant more than 100 trees in city-owned rights-of-way.

Cottage City, Prince George's County - \$22,555.00 to plant 33 trees in the jurisdiction.

Defensores de la Cuenca, Prince George's County - \$160,028 to plant 400 trees to support the Town of Edmonston, Cheverly Nature Trail, Solid Rock Church, and the Port Towns and Greater Riverdale area.

Druid Heights Community Development Corporation, Baltimore City - \$29,530 to plant 50 trees in the Druid Heights neighborhood of West Baltimore, where tree canopy is only 14%.

Global Health and Education Projects, Inc., Prince George's County - \$143,699 to plant 305 native trees on private residential properties across Prince George's County.

Greater Baybrook Alliance, Baltimore City - \$92,695 to plant 200 trees in high priority locations in Brooklyn, Brooklyn Park, and Curtis Bay in South Baltimore.

Howard EcoWorks, Howard County, Baltimore County, and Baltimore City - \$73,736 to plant 500 trees native nut and fruit trees in urban, underserved areas throughout Howard County, particularly the City of Laurel, as well as locations in Baltimore County and Baltimore City, including churches, homeowners associations, public lands, and commercial properties.

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC), Statewide - \$133,553 to plant 376 trees at 20 congregations across the State of Maryland.

Joe's Movement Emporium/World Arts Focus, Prince George's County - \$57,000 to plant 110 trees across Suitland, Cheverly, and Colmar Manor while training young adults of color for green jobs.

Lillie May Carroll Jackson Charter School, Baltimore City - \$18,500 to plant 37 trees on the all-girls school's on-site arboretum in Clifton Park.

Midtown Community Benefits District, Baltimore City - \$44,964 to plant 100 trees in the Mount Vernon-Belvedere and Charles North neighborhoods of Baltimore City.

Montgomery County Department of Environmental Protection, Montgomery County - \$135,970 to plant 250 trees on 18 public-serving, County- owned facilities including schools, libraries, and police and fire stations.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Montgomery County - \$362,740 to plant 1200 trees in underserved, low canopy neighborhoods.

NeighborSpace of Baltimore County, Inc., Baltimore County - \$8,594 to plant 31 trees across three neighborhoods inside Baltimore County's Urban Rural Demarcation Line.

Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation, Prince George's County - \$1,000,000 to plant 4,000 trees in urban, underserved areas.

Prince George's County, Maryland, Prince George's County - \$300,000.00 to plant 2,000 native trees on public and private lands in underserved communities.

Reverend Samuel Green Sr Foundation, Anne Arundel County - \$30,500 to plant trees at the Annapolis Gardens mixed finance property while engaging communities and youth in the City of Annapolis, with plans to expand to other properties.

The Community Ecology Institute, Howard County - \$6,000 of a \$108,650 project for the planting of trees at Atholton High School as part of a larger "Walkable Watershed" green infrastructure and education project.

The Urban Oasis, Baltimore City - \$17,720 to plant 40 trees on Clifton Avenue and in public gathering spaces in historically redlined areas of West Baltimore.

Town of Emmitsburg, Frederick County - \$1,620 for the tree component of a larger \$121,400 green infrastructure project.

Town of Riverdale Park, Prince George's County - \$41,875 to plant 150 trees on municipal properties and engage residents on tree maintenance and care.

University of Maryland Medical System, Baltimore City - \$19,596 to plant 350 trees to enrich the nature-based, therapeutic properties of its 88-acre campus bordering Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park.

University of Maryland, Baltimore, Baltimore City - \$39,289 to plant 53 trees, engage the community in tree maintenance, and provide educational sessions for local K-12 students.

Upton Planning Committee, Baltimore City - \$192,420 to plant 316 trees in six Upton neighborhoods.

About the Chesapeake Bay Trust

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (www.cbtrust.org) envisions a restored and protected Chesapeake Bay watershed and other natural resources in our area, from the Coastal Bays to the Chesapeake to the Youghiogheny River. We empower local community-based groups on the ground with the resources they need to take on a meaningful and measurable role in restoring forests, streams, rivers, bays, wildlife, and more in their own communities. Every year, the Trust empowers about 400 groups by providing grants and technical assistance to accomplish environmental education, community outreach, and local watershed restoration projects. The Trust is supported by the sale of the Chesapeake Bay license plate; donations to the Chesapeake Bay and Endangered Species Fund on the Maryland State income tax form; donations made by hunters, fishers, and boaters in the Maryland online natural resource licensing system; donations from individuals and corporations; and partnerships with private foundations and federal, state, and local governments. The Trust has received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for over two decades. On average, 90% of the Trust's expenditures are directed to its restoration and education programs.

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