GREEN PATTERN BOOK
USING VACANT LAND TO CREATE GREENER NEIGHBORHOODS
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Problem
14,000 vacant lots / 16,000 vacant structures
> Vacant properties ARE highly concentrated in severely distressed areas with insufficient development demand to support wholesale rehabilitation in the foreseeable future (see map).

+ 4,000 houses to be demolished over next ten years

18,000 vacant lots after ten years = 500 acres

- Weak housing markets / insufficient housing demand
- Abandonment is random - gap tooth vacancy and demolition
- Poor condition of the vacant land
- Trash, dumping, crime, and safety
- Maintenance is costly

How do we grow the city in a sustainable manner? How do we transform vacant land into green spaces that support this growth?

GROWING GREEN INITIATIVE (GGi)
City-led effort to find sustainable, innovative, and cost-effective practices for re-using vacant land, reducing stormwater runoff, growing food, and greening neighborhoods to help mitigate the negative impacts of vacant properties and set the stage for future redevelopment opportunities.

- Stabilizing distressed neighborhoods by greening and maintaining vacant lots so that they are assets and not liabilities.
- Strengthening the social fabric of neighborhoods by helping communities, non-profits, and faith-based groups adopt and green vacant land.
- Attracting new development by re-using vacant land for permanent, public benefit – such as stormwater treatment and strategically placed new open space.
- Supporting TreeBaltimore by planting trees on or near vacant lots.
- Supporting the Food Policy Initiative by creating new farms.

### Elements of the Growing Green Initiative

POLICY
- Improving City policies, procedures, and standards as buildings are demolished and land assembled + re-used.
- Working with DPW and HCD to develop a maintenance strategy.
- Fostering inter-agency collaboration and work groups.

PLANNING
- Incorporating 'greening' into a strategic vacant house demolition.
- Working with DPW and HCD to identify vacant lots that can be used for stormwater mitigation credits by city agencies, developers, and other groups.
- Supporting collaborative efforts of various partners, agencies, and non-profits who are engaged in similar greening activities, including the selection of appropriate sites, and the sharing of resources.

PROJECTS
- Testing different approaches through pilot projects.
- Developing a Green Pattern Book to guide greening strategies.
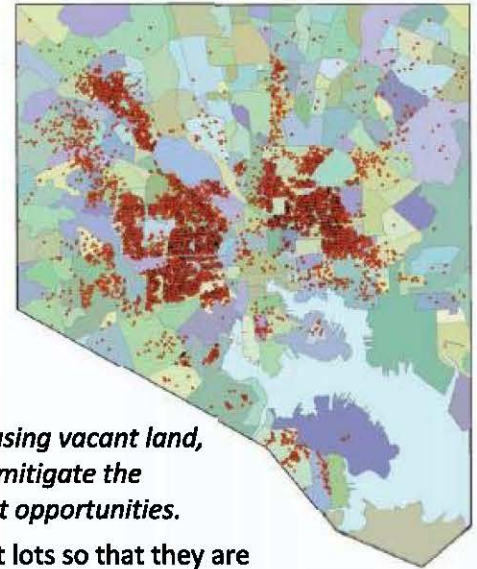
GREEN PATTERN BOOK

A tool to encourage the greening of vacant land by City agencies, NGOs, community-based organizations, and individual residents. This document will include information on:

- **Visioning**: definitions and images of local examples of the various green types to introduce unfamiliar concepts to a wider audience and help users envision how these practices could enhance the Baltimore's neighborhoods.

- **Site selection**: base level of technical guidance about the typical vacant lot patterns found throughout Baltimore and how these site factors need to be considered in the selection and implementation of various green types.

- **Guidelines**: guidance on the process of implementing greening practices, including which City agencies need to be involved, what types of permits may be required, etc.

- **Resources**: local organizations that can provide resources and support, and where groups and organizations can seek grants and other sources of funding to implement their projects.

Promoting eight different green "typologies" for re-using vacant land:

1. Clean and Green
2. Community Managed Open Space
3. Urban Agriculture
4. Stormwater Management
5. Green Parking
6. Urban Forests
7. Parks and Open Space
8. Mixed Greens

Challenges and opportunities that we are addressing with GGi / Green Pattern Book

- Maintenance costs of new vacant lots (75% Clean and Green)
- Condition of existing vacant lots
- Coordinating community expectations/capacity with agency objectives/capacity
- Inter-agency collaboration and support
- Land ownership and security
- Balancing strategic approaches with tactical solutions
- Shifting the end point

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