



Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission

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Press Release

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Sustainability Awards Recognize People, Projects that Advance Sustainable Growth, Conservation in Maryland

ANNAPOLIS, MD - The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission presented awards for leadership, community planning and conservation at its fourth annual awards ceremony today, recognizing individuals, organizations and programs that exemplify well-planned economic and community development initiatives throughout the state.

The eight winners represent individuals and organizations that demonstrate their commitment to sustainable growth - development or redevelopment that is compact, walkable and takes advantage of existing infrastructure while preserving the rural landscape - in Maryland. The event featured a keynote address by Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford.

"Today's recipients characterize the innovation, leadership, and passion that makes Maryland a leader in cultural preservation, community and economic development and environmental stewardship," said Lt. Governor Rutherford. "Governor Hogan and I are proud to celebrate their contributions to our state and their commitment to helping change Maryland for the better."

"The Maryland Department of Planning joins Lt. Governor Rutherford in applauding today's growth award winners," Wendi Peters, Secretary of Planning reiterated. "The individuals and projects celebrated today are examples of what can happen when great ideas and local vision come together in the spirit of creating economic opportunities, robust communities and a superior quality of life for Marylanders."

"The commission and I are excited to be recognizing outstanding Maryland projects for the fourth consecutive year," said Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission Chair Susan Summers. "These growth awards are the highest level of recognition for well-planned economic and community development and sustainability in the state and these eight recipients exemplify the highest commitment to successful communities."

The commission selected a diverse set of award recipients, from a community advocate that single-handedly led an effort to preserve and rehabilitate a crumbling piece of African American history, to a community program that educates and assists Baltimore City homeowners in becoming energy-efficient.

The 2016 Maryland Sustainable Growth Awards presented at today's ceremony:

Leadership & Service: For activities or accomplishments that advance public appreciation, understanding and/or involvement in promoting smart growth and sustainable communities at the local, regional or state level.

Civic Works' Retrofit Baltimore Program - Launched in 2011, Retrofit Baltimore improves the sustainability of Baltimore's communities and enhances residents' quality of life. Retrofit Baltimore educates more than 2,000 homeowners annually about the benefits of energy efficiency, stormwater management, and solar energy, and works with more than 500 households annually to make comprehensive energy efficiency improvements to their homes. These upgrades reduce utility bills and make homeownership more affordable.

Community College of Baltimore County - The college's vision to build a sustainable college crystalized in 2008 when President Sandra Kurtinitis signed the American College and University President's Climate Commitment. Since then, the college has embraced sustainable living and learning, involving and benefiting all who work, study and play at its campuses. CCBC's commitment to sustainability is as bold and visible as the solar carports that frame about 1,400 parking spaces across its three campuses. CCBC partnered with Constellation Energy to construct the 5.1 megawatt solar canopies at no cost to the college. CCBC also has three LEED Silver certified facilities.

Laura Wright - Ms. Wright has a long and distinguished record of leadership and activism in cultural and heritage preservation and race relations, particularly in Montgomery County, Maryland. As a board member for the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County, Montgomery County Historical Society, and Heritage Montgomery, as well as the Executive Director of the Sandy Spring Slave Museum and African Art Gallery, Laura has dedicated the last 20 years to celebrating the multi-cultural society in which we live and narrowing the cultural gap among all ethnic groups. More recently, Laura led efforts to renovate and re-use the historically significant Odd Fellows Lodge in Sandy Spring, which was built around 1906 by black artisans and carpenters and served as the cultural center for blacks in Sandy Spring and in Montgomery and Howard Counties for decades.

Sustainable Communities: For facilitating or creating development that addresses at least one or more of Maryland's 12 Planning Visions.

The Centre - Vacant for more than 20 years, The Centre was a long forgotten theater on an undervalued thoroughfare in the Station North Arts District of Baltimore. The Centre is a unique gem situated on North Avenue, one of Baltimore's most historically and culturally significant streets. The project transformed one of the largest vacant buildings in the district into a hub for artists, arts education, entrepreneurs focused on social innovation, and tech companies. With its 1939 marquee restored and brightly illuminated every night, it is now an iconic presence in the arts district.

Center for Parks & People Foundation - Established in 1984, the Parks & People Foundation is Baltimore's leading nonprofit organization for providing creative solutions to parks and recreation issues. To better serve its network of communities and partners, Parks & People recently sought to consolidate its growing program staff and services in a central headquarters location. The selected site on Auchentoroly Terrace supports its Greening initiative, which aims to reclaim and revitalize vacant lots and create usable space that benefits the entire community.

520 Park Avenue - Originally constructed in 1942 as a warehouse for the venerable Hochschild Kohn department store, 520 Park Avenue had sat vacant for years, until The Time Group transformed the building into ground-floor retail and 171 apartments in 2015. What had once been a dead space in the neighborhood is now bustling with activity. Today, hundreds of residents, as well as the visitors who flock to the building's new coffee shop and popular food hub - the Mount Vernon Marketplace - generate a lot of foot traffic.

Pike & Rose Project - Pike & Rose serves as a model for transforming aging strip centers into desirable, livable neighborhoods. As the first project to be implemented under Montgomery County's White Flint Sector Plan, Pike & Rose embodies the plan's goals of creating mixed-use, transit-oriented and sustainable communities in the Washington, DC, suburb of North Bethesda. The 24-acre community, with its new grid of walkable streets, diverse uses and varied architecture - all appealing to a wide demographic -- sets a high bar for other developers to follow.

Preservation and Conservation: For accomplishments in protecting or improving farms, forests, natural resources and the waters of Maryland.

Washington County Solar Initiative Project - The Washington County Division of Environmental Management has established a number of initiatives to manage the County's water, wastewater, solid waste and recycling operations safely, economically and efficiently. A public-private partnership between the County and EPG Solar to develop solar fields on the County's landfill properties is just one of the highlights of their work. The County entered into a public private partnership with EPG Solar, and in 2015, EPG built solar fields that generate up to 25 megawatts of electricity on 130 acres of County landfill property. This project has both economic and environmental benefits. By utilizing landfill properties to generate solar electricity, the County is generating revenue for the solid waste fund, which helps cover operating costs and decreases general fund obligations.

Short videos about each award recipient are available at www.youtube.com/MarylandPlanning

The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission, established by Maryland statute, makes recommendations on growth and development issues and celebrates these achievements with an annual awards program. Commission members, who represent local and state government, business and nonprofit organization sectors, promote coordination and cooperation regarding innovative and responsible growth and development throughout Maryland.

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