

Bolton Hill

Community Association

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State gives neighborhoods \$62,767 to start Green Streets project

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/green-streets-grant/>



The State of Maryland has awarded \$62,767 to BHCA and two adjacent community associations to start work on renovating Mounds Park – a kickoff to the Green Street Concept Plan for the 1400-1500 blocks of the Eutaw Place Median, Mosher Plaza and Mounds Park on the west side of Eutaw.

The grant from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development is part of a program to deter crime and promote community safety in Madison Park, Historic Marble Hill and Bolton Hill. Jim Prost and Lee Tawney of BHCA’s Greening Committee led the proposal development in collaboration with leaders of the Madison Park Improvement Association and Historic Marble Hill Community Association.

Mounds Park is located at 1402 Eutaw Place and has seen in recent months an uptick in crime, drug use, homelessness, graffiti and trash in the surrounding area, the organizations told the state agency. Eutaw Place is the western boundary for Bolton Hill and has historically functioned as a “Red Line” racial and social divide running from North Avenue south to Dolphin Street. The Green Street Plan intends to reduce that perception by rehabilitating and maintaining trees and gardens, lighting, fencing and green space and installing litter removal equipment along both sides of that divide.

BHCA will manage the grant. Midtown Community Benefits Association has agreed to assist with safety and maintenance operations.

The grant is part of [nearly \\$10 million in grant awards](#) through the Community Safety Works program to more than 150 business districts, neighborhood associations, local governments and nonprofit organizations across Maryland. This expands the outgoing governor’s [“Re-Fund The Police” Initiative](#).

Senator wants neighborhoods involved in State Center planning

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/senator-state-center-planning/>



State Sen. Antonio Hayes (D), whose legislative District 40 includes Bolton Hill and most of West Baltimore, says he plans to revive a neighborhood alliance to help determine the future of the soon-to-be-empty 28-acre State Center complex at the south edge of the neighborhood.

A previous coalition of six neighborhoods in the shadow of the aged office buildings, led by Bolton Hill's John Kyle, was involved in a decade of planning and advocacy for the massive public-private revitalization of the State Center complex. That plan was moving forward but after Gov. Larry Hogan (R) assumed office in 2015 it was scrapped. Several years of litigation between the spurned contractor and the state kept the issue locked up.

In April 2021 the governor and Senate President Bill Ferguson (D), whose district includes south and central Baltimore, cut a deal to move state workers out of the crumbling buildings and into vacancies in downtown office buildings emptied before and during the pandemic. Earlier the General Assembly had passed legislative language to ensure that affected neighborhoods would be consulted before changes were made to State Center plans. That language proved to be impotent. Kyle said, regarding where state employees are situated. "However, significant neighborhood input, as intended by the legislature, should occur in regard to how the land and the remaining buildings (if any) are developed and used," he added.

Last year the governor announced the state would turn over the emptied site to the city and in December allocated \$500,000 to Baltimore for planning the future of the site. It seems likely that the buildings that housed 800 state workers for several agencies in nearly 1.3 million square feet of office space may sit empty indefinitely. "My fear is that the site will sit vacant for years, dragging down the surrounding neighborhoods or that some new use that does not enhance Bolton Hill will be built," said Ward Bucher, a restoration architect who lives on Eutaw Place.

At a Jan. 7 public briefing held at Unity Hall, Hayes and the three General Assembly delegates from the 40th District had an opportunity to present their recommendations and priorities before the annual 90-day legislative assembly opened in Annapolis. A brief presentation also was made by Anthony Jenkins, president of Coppin State University, about the university's efforts to revitalize West Baltimore. Jenkins

and Hayes were instrumental in creating the West North Avenue Development Authority last year.

Hayes and the delegates gave an overview of their accomplishments in the past session of the legislature. They also gave a summary of the many state boards which seek citizen participation. A general theme was helping residents of color. For example, Del. Melissa Wells called for the creation of a state Office of African American Affairs to help expand opportunities.

--Tom Hasler

New EV charging station now operating at State Center

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/ev-charging-state-center/>



BGE and the State of Maryland have partnered to allow the public to charge electric vehicles at State Center. Eight spaces are available with Level 2 (240V) chargers.

Payment is usually via a smartphone app. According to the BGE website, \$5 will add 116 miles to the range of an average car in 231 minutes. That is based on a cost per KWH of \$0.18. Spaces cannot be reserved, but early this month there was no problem finding a space.

Lot C is accessed from 1030 Mason St., west of the armory and north of the medical tent: very convenient to park an electric car and walk back to Bolton Hill for half a day. [More information is available here](#), along with a map showing 850 charger locations.

Bolton Hill's e-waste journey begins at Sisson Street drop-off center

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/e-waste-sisson-street/>



Since all of us have cell phones, laptops, big TVs and the like, it's not surprising to learn that E-waste is the fastest-growing waste stream in the world; between 50 and 60 million tons of electronic products are produced each year. A quick visit to the Sisson Street solid waste drop-off station seems to support that fact.

But for once, it seems, Baltimore and Maryland are ahead of the pack.

Gov. Robert Ehrlich (R) signed a bill passed by the General Assembly in 2005 to require computer manufacturers who sell products in the state to pay a fee to support recycling. About half of the states have some sort of similar law now, encouraging businesses to promote e-cycling by companies and households.

Many tech companies have their own recycling programs. Dell and HP will accept old, unusable equipment as trade-ins, while retailers like Staples and Best Buy invite you to recycle through them. Mom's Organic Grocery in Hampden takes old cell phones. Apple takes theirs back, too. When you Google "recycle old TV" you get several options.

Kaliyah Jackson in the city's Solid Waste Division at DPW pointed out that all five of the city's solid waste drop-off centers – the closest is at 2840 Sisson Street in Remington – accept [a long list of unwanted electronics](#), from outdated iPhones, fax machines and broken gaming gadgets to TVs with wooden cabinets and cathode ray tubes. Bolton Hill residents can haul discards there or call [Midtown Community Benefits District](#) to remove bulkier electronics.

The catch, of course, is that it all depends on consumer volunteerism and dropping off stuff in a city where many residents have no cars. Hauling recycling on public transit is, well, a challenge. DPW will pick up three bulk items for residents who contact them through 311. DPW slashed ordinary bulk recycling pickups a year ago as a "temporary measure" and still seems unwilling to reinstate it. Drive through scruffy neighborhoods and parks and you likely will see old electronics tossed here and there. Someone recently threw a broken laptop out of a car in front of Bolton Square townhouses.

The city pays a regional e-cycling company, E-Revival out of New Jersey, to haul away the stuff from the drop-off centers. Jackson at DPW said they typically haul away a dozen 48” by 48” pallets of broken stuff every couple of weeks. E-Revival hauls it to its 40,000-foot warehouse in the Morrell Park neighborhood in southwest Baltimore.

Globally, 75-80% of e-waste is shipped to countries in Africa and Asia, where poor and marginalized communities can suffer health and environmental consequences, according to Eco-Watch, an environmental news center based in Ohio. Eco-Watch says less than 20% of e-waste generated each year is properly recycled, which makes sense if you consider that in the U.S. half the states have no e-cycling requirements.

At E-Revival in Morrell Park, Soni Sunkara is quick to say that they ship nothing overseas and that they focus efficiently on disassembling and recovering about 45,000 pounds of local stuff each month – plastic, circuit boards, wires, glass mixed with lead (“We send it to a smelter to be reused.”), mercury and metals like copper, silver and aluminum. They also service Baltimore County. They ship the different stripped-out products to specialty facilities that repurpose them, he said.

Bulky old TVs make up a disproportionate percentage of the volume, he said, although that volume is slipping as big screens have replaced consoles and laptops overtake desktop computers.

The Sisson Street drop-off center is open every day but Sunday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

--*Bill Hamilton*

What are your hopes for the Inner Harbor, and for Baltimore?

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/inner-harbor-hopes/>



Jeff Koons Puppy statue at The Guggenheim Bilbao; Rebecca Hoffberger at the AVM. (Image: Chris Myers, courtesy of AVAM)

Once a prosperous manufacturing center of steel and shipbuilding with a thriving, crowded port, the very old city had become a post-industrial cemetery. Crime and public disruption. Factories and houses abandoned. Population loss, poverty and inequality. Decay all around. Sewage and other pollution in its rivers and harbor.

Baltimore 2023?

Bilbao, in northern Spain, 25 years ago. Today it's [one of the most livable and visited cities](#) in all Western Europe. We flew there Thanksgiving week (one of the best cheap international travel weeks; \$600 RT) and were gob smacked by the vibrancy and life of a revitalized medium-sized place as cosmopolitan in its way as Chicago or San Francisco. We stayed across from the voluptuous Frank Gehry-designed Guggenheim Museum. We ate gorgeous food and drank local wine at crowded waterside cafes. The city is pulling in tens of thousands of tourists and new residents. It is, today, a great place to be. And it started with the Guggenheim Bilbao, a partnership between the New York museum and city officials to build a world-class art center on a former toxic site.

The mayor of Baltimore just handed a local real estate developer \$1 million of our tax dollars, no questions asked, no bidding involved, to help him begin to redevelop our sad and empty downtown Inner Harbor. While the developer is decent and successful, there is nothing in his portfolio that hints of renaissance.

Is there a master plan – something bigger and even more original than the thinking that James Rouse brought to the task of making the Inner Harbor a showplace? The founder of Baltimore's American Visionary Arts Museum has the beginning of a strategy. [Rethinking Baltimore's Inner Harbor for Enduring and Dynamic Success](#) appeared on a Baltimore website while we were in Spain. "I warn against any typical developer plans to just refurbish the two existing pavilions, no matter how tastefully, then install new retail and food tenants, and call it a day. The money will be quickly wasted," says Rebecca

Hoffberger.

“I don’t pretend to have all the details, just the vision,” she said. We need something different. Something better.” If you click on and read her article and want to comment or respond, click [here](#).

--*Bill Hamilton*

Bolton Hill traffic-calming outreach gets city’s attention

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/traffic-calming-attention/>



Looking down Laurens from Bolton

Last month’s [Bolton Hill Bulletin](#) detailed separate efforts by residents around W. Lafayette Avenue and Laurens Street, in conjunction with the BHCA Traffic Committee, to persuade the city’s transportation agency to undertake efforts to slow speeding and reckless vehicle traffic (often cutting through Bolton Hill between Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd and I-83).

City representatives attended the Jan. 3 BHCA meeting and provided updates. Two staff members for city council member Eric Costello’s office, including former BHCA President Neal Friedlander, noted the support for traffic calming that Costello’s office had conveyed to Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT). Liam Davis, DOT’s Legislative Affairs Manager, detailed the status of the proposal.

DOT agreed with BHCA’s and Costello’s recommendation to make the focus area the two streets’ entire paths across Bolton Hill: Lafayette from Eutaw Place to West Mount Royal Ave., and Laurens from Eutaw to Park Ave. While Davis did indicate progress with this request, he underscored that DOT has received and installed a record number of traffic-calming installations in recent months.

Davis said DOT plans to present recommendations to Bolton Hill – including possible types of installation or intervention – in February or early March. He did indicate that DOT would welcome community input for this report. Residents and other interested parties can review potential installations and provide their feedback to the BHCA Traffic Committee by Jan. 31 using [this form](#). To sign the traffic-calming petition close to you, click [here](#) or [here](#).

--Andrew N. Dupuy

Resolve this year to intentionally become a library patron

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/library-patronage/>



Why? Because their mission is to empower, enrich, and enhance the quality of life for all through equitable access to information, services, and opportunity. What's not to like?

Go to the Enoch Pratt Library and look around. The closest is the Pennsylvania Avenue branch at 1531 North Avenue, but the best is the main library at 400 Cathedral St., downtown. It's an architectural gem. If you have an old library card, dust it off and take it with you.

Too busy to visit? Think of something less important in your life and skip one session of that thing. Or think of someone you want to get to know better. Tell them what you are doing and ask them to do it with you. Make it a fun, bonding experience. Have lunch or drinks afterwards.

Talk with the librarian as you are verifying your library card. Library cards are intentionally easy to get, even for people without traditional forms of identification. If you have old fines, pay them cheerfully and chalk it up to the cost of creating a new self. Sometimes old fines can be forgiven, and if the library can forgive you, maybe you can forgive your old self.

Whenever you want to read a book, ask whether you really want to OWN that book. Do you want to mark it up and refer to it often? If so, then actually buy it. But if you want to just read it, check whether it is available at the library. The Pratt has a great online catalog. If the book is not immediately available, it should be easy to put a hold on it and pick it up by the time you are ready to begin. Go to www.prattlibrary.org

This next step is optional, but if you can afford it, your experience will be even better. Get an envelope and mark it "Library Fund." Put it someplace safe. Set a price per book – perhaps whatever you might have paid to an online store like Amazon, say \$20. Every time you borrow a book, put that amount into your library fund. When it builds up, make a gift to the library and congratulate yourself. But if something important comes up, like an urgent charity appeal or a high electric bill, dip into your library fund guilt-free. The library is not demanding payment. Appreciate the grace and pleasure of the non-commercial interaction.

Finally, think about your library experience. Remember that the library is a government institution.

Whenever you have a bad experience with another government agency, remind yourself that it doesn't have to be that way. Resolve to do what you can to make other government agencies act more like the public library.

--*Steve Howard*

Garden Club has \$\$\$. Apply now

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/garden-club-has-apply-now/>



The Bolton Hill Garden Club's 2023 Greening Grants program is accepting grant proposals through March 1.

The grants are designed to create and improve *public* green spaces to beautify the Bolton Hill community. The cut-off date is earlier than in prior years to ensure that awarded funds are available for spring planting. Garden club grants fund the planting and maintenance of neighborhood parks, public green space and tree wells.

Priority projects focus on the planting of perennial flowers and native plants, shrubbery and trees, and related gardening materials. Hardscape or labor costs to enlarge, prepare or contain gardening spaces, such as in the case of tree wells, will be considered. All projects proposed for Bolton Hill are eligible. Previous awards have ranged from \$60 to over \$1,300; last year, the club granted a total of \$5,000.

Grants will be announced by April 1. The club is hosting a greening briefing on Feb. 11th at 4 pm at Unity Hall. More information, including the Greening Grant application and Frequently Asked Questions, can be found at [the garden club website](#). Please direct questions to [Bonnie Legro](#).

Bolton Hill Notes

<https://boltonhillmd.org/bulletin/bolton-hill-notes-jan23/>



BHCA calls for removal or explanation of 3 public monuments

BHCA's board this month gave final approval to nearly two years of committee work and recommendations for action on three historic markers on public space in the neighborhood. Without objection, it voted to:

- Remove the plinth on the west side of Mt. Royal Avenue which once held [an elaborate monument honoring the "Lost Cause" and the Confederate soldiers and sailors](#) who fought for it. Installed a half-century after the Civil War, the plinth originally was the pedestal for a bronze statue of a winged woman (Glory) clutching a wounded soldier in one arm and upholding a laurel wreath in the other. It was removed by city workers in 2017.
- Install an interpretive plaque adjacent to the Francis Scott Key monument installed on Eutaw Place a century ago. The plaque would [offer historical context](#) for the monument memorializing the man who wrote the Star-Spangled Banner, but who also advocated for slavery.
- Remove a plaque that was installed in a Park Avenue grassy spot by a long-perished garden club, in 1935. It honored at his death [William L. Marbury](#), a distinguished but racist lawyer, politician and neighborhood leader.

Committee chairman David Nyweide said he would consult with city council member Eric Costello about how best to go forward, since public properties are involved.

Thanks again to Home Depot . . .

Bolton Hill has 6,000 new spring bulbs – daffodils, tulips and the like – dozing in tree wells and other public spaces around the neighborhood. Watch for them in April.

The big box store donated the bulbs to BHCA's busy Greening Committee and they planted them around not only Bolton Hill but also in Madison Park to the west, collaborating with their community organization. It was the third consecutive year Home Depot made bulbs and gardening support available.

About the Bulletin. . . .

The Bulletin is designed by Elizabeth Peters. We invite others to help write, edit, provide photos or work the business side. Send suggestions and comments to bulletin@boltonhillmd.org. Thanks to Andrew Dupuy, Tom Hasler, Steve Howard, Paula Jackson, John Kyle, Deborah Morris, Joyce Oliner and Lee Tawney, among others, for advice and contributions. Errors and omissions are the responsibility of the editor, Bill Hamilton.

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