



Want to preserve your neighborhood's special open space?

We love our community garden/horseshoe pit/pocket park, and we worry that somebody might buy the land. How can the neighborhood keep it forever?

You can partner with a land trust, such as Baltimore Green Space. A land trust's mission is to preserve land for conservation or community use. The land trust can purchase the land on behalf of your neighborhood, while you and your neighbors continue to maintain and enjoy the space.

Isn't purchasing land expensive?

Not necessarily! If Baltimore City owns the land and the green space meets 4 criteria, then in many cases the land can be sold to a land trust for a dollar per lot. (If the land is privately owned but abandoned, the City may be able to foreclose on the land, and then sell it for a dollar per lot.) This is a new City policy, created in 2009.

What are the 4 criteria?

1. The request for preservation must come from the community, and the person who is volunteering to be the Site Manager needs to complete an application.
2. The community must be able to take care of the site over the long term. So there must be an able, committed Site Manager and enough volunteers to take care of the project and provide continuity. The project must be at least five years old, to show that it is past the excitement of start-up. In addition, an organization active in the community – such as a community association, church, or social club – needs to sign on as a Partner Organization.



Baltimore City can now sell such land to land trusts for \$1 per lot.

3. The project needs to provide real benefits to the neighborhood, such as recreation, food production, education, beautification, or providing gathering space. It's also great if it makes the neighborhood more livable by pushing out blight or crime, or it improves Baltimore's ecosystem.

4. Since city soils can be contaminated, the site needs to show a good match between any identified environmental risks and how the site is used. For example, a grassy pocket park is a good use for a former truck garage; a vegetable garden is not.

How can our green space show it satisfies these criteria?

Using the land trust's application process, a neighborhood and the land trust assess whether the site meets the criteria.

What does partnering with a land trust look like in real life?

With Baltimore Green Space, the partnership begins when the land trust and gardeners first discuss the green space. If Baltimore Green Space acquires the site, the land trust, Site Manager, and Partner Organization enter into an agreement on what each partner will do: the Site Manager and other volunteers run the garden or other open space; the Partner Organization may provide different kinds of support; and Baltimore Green Space protects the site and provides basic liability insurance and technical assistance.

We're pretty self-sufficient. Do we need to work with a land trust, or can we preserve our open space on our own?

The \$1 sales price is for land trusts. You could form a

Baltimore Green Space

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land trust and jump through all the necessary hoops – but that’s a lot of paperwork and expense. (We’ll be happy to tell you about it...) It makes sense to have one or a few land trusts helping lots of neighborhoods.

Are there other options?

If permanent preservation through a land trust doesn’t seem like a good option right now, we may be able to help you think about other options. Give us a call at 443-695-7504 or write to info@baltimoregreenspace.org.



Duncan Street Miracle Garden – 44 rowhouse lots turned into an organic garden – was preserved by Baltimore Green Space for a \$44 purchase price.



The Pigtown Horseshoe Pit was preserved by Baltimore Green Space – for a \$1 purchase price.



About Baltimore Green Space, A Land Trust for Community-Managed Open Space, Inc.

Baltimore Green Space is a land trust that partners with communities to preserve and support community gardens, pocket parks, and other community-managed open spaces. We aim to protect the social and environmental benefits that residents create through their sweat equity investments in their neighborhoods.

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