



JOHNSTON SQUARE

2020 VISION PLAN

FEBRUARY 14, 2020



BARCO | BALTIMORE ARTS
REALTY CORP.



BALTIMORE CITY
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Prepared by **hord | coplan | macht**

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FUNDING PROVIDED BY

Abell Foundation
Baltimore City Department of Housing & Community Development
Baltimore Gas & Electric Company
Deutsch Foundation
Goldseker Foundation
Sieck Family

JOHNSTON SQUARE PARTNERS

Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO)
Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD)
ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization (RJSNO)
ReBUILD Metro
St. Francis Academy (SFA)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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ReBUILD Metro	Sean Closkey, President
RJSNO	Regina Hammond, President
SFA	Dr. Curtis Turner, Principal
Robert W. Deutsch Foundation	Neil Didriksen, Chief Operating Officer
Department of Planning	Marshella Wallace, Eastern District Planner
HCD	Michael Braverman, Commissioner

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

Baltimore City Mayor Bernard C. “Jack” Young	The Ivy Hotel
Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice	Johnston Square Elementary School
Baltimore City Comptroller	Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Honorable Joan M. Pratt	Maryland Delegate Stephanie Smith
Baltimore City Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD)	Maryland Historical Trust
Baltimore City Office of Information and Technology	Maryland State Department of Public Safety & Correctional Services
Baltimore City Department of Planning	Maryland State Senator Cory V. McCray
Baltimore City Department of Public Works	Media Democracy Fund
Baltimore City Police Department	Mt. Sinai Baptist Church
Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks	Open Works
Baltimore City Department of Transportation	Parks & People Foundation
Baltimore Tree Trust	Sieck Floral Distributing
Charm City Meadworks	The 6th Branch
Councilman Robert Stokes, Sr.	
Council President Brandon M. Scott	

CONSULTANT TEAM

Hord Coplan Macht



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

February 14, 2020



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“We are here as our NEXT STEP on our journey to rebuilding Johnston Square to serve as a model for all the goodness that occurs when we all lock arms and organize together to REBUILD Baltimore. There is no stopping us!” -Regina Hammonds (August 20th, 2019)

The Johnston Square 2020 Vision Plan provides a roadmap for equitable neighborhood reinvestment. After decades of disinvestment, blight and crime, the neighborhood is positioned to rebuild a more humane and resilient community. The neighborhood is poised to take advantage of proximity to competitive real estate markets, employment centers, major institutions and regional transit access. This Plan builds on the strength of location and leverages key internal strengths: organized leadership and available developable property.

The Johnston Square Partners is an alliance of nonprofit stakeholders which include ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization, ReBUILD Metro, Baltimoreans United for Leadership Development (BUILD), Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO) and St. Frances Academy. Prior to this planning effort the Partners have secured funding for new housing, the renovation of Henrietta Lacks Park and has raised attention to the needs of the neighborhood. The Partners have successfully negotiated with Baltimore City to establish site control over all abandon properties in Johnston Square.

This inclusive and collaborative planning process identified the following common themes:

1. Establish a clean and attractive neighborhood,
2. Provide diversity of retail and housing options,
3. Develop a variety of open spaces and community assets and
4. Create safe streets.

These themes influenced the crafting of a shared neighborhood vision. Johnston Square will revitalize to become a safe, walkable neighborhood complete with diverse housing choices for all people and anchored by thriving businesses, supportive services and institutions. Public streets and open spaces will connect people and create welcoming community places. The plan is crafted to improve access to transportation options and amplify economic opportunities. Sustaining programs and operations will support social networks, reinvestment and economic growth.

The following goals are supported by initiatives and recommendations to advance the neighborhood vision:

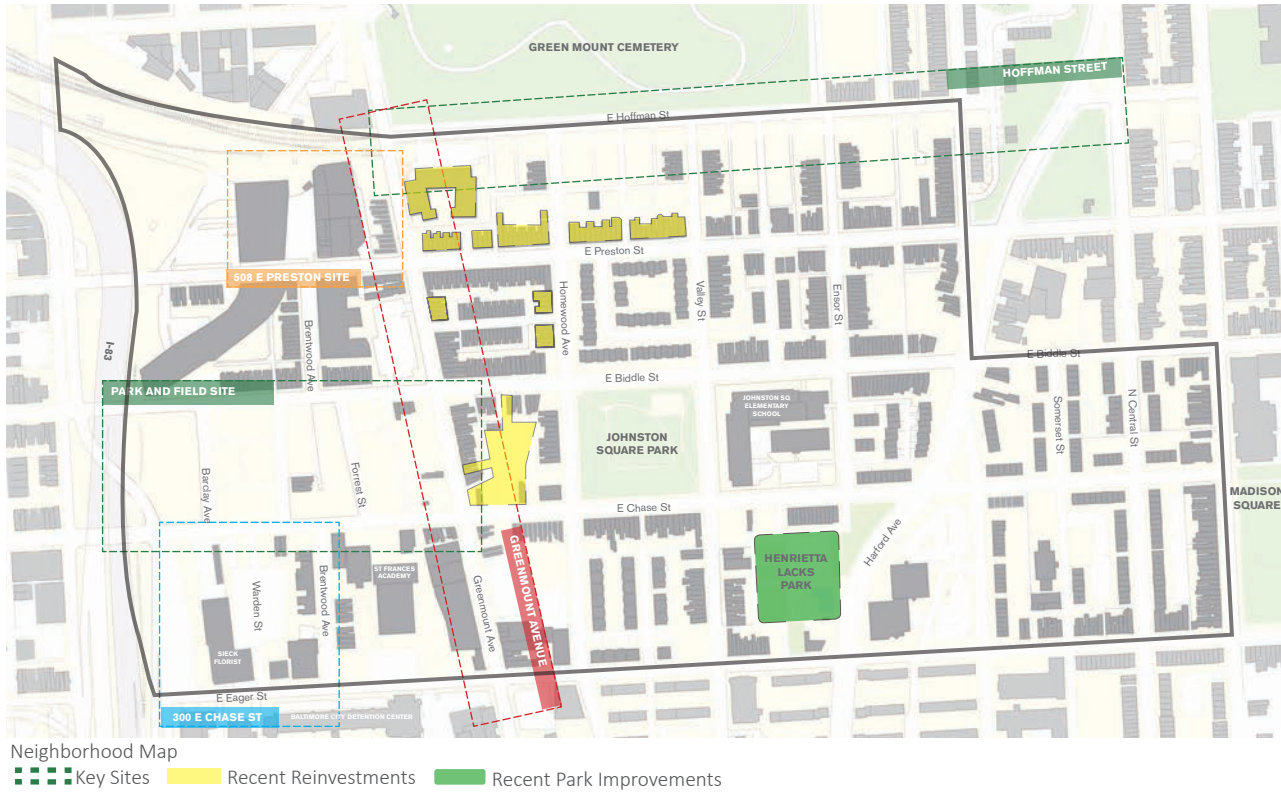
1. Create a Vibrant and Connected Public Realm for All
2. Build Impactful Developments to Create a Mixed Income and Diverse Community
3. Develop Sustaining Programs and Operations to Support Social Networks, Reinvestment and Economic Growth





PLANNING PROCESS

Open Works



PLAN PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to craft a vision for the equitable redevelopment and neighborhood improvements in the Johnston Square neighborhood. Dedicated community members, institutional stakeholders, local business leaders, nonprofit organizations and public agencies collaborated to construct this shared vision for Johnston Square. The design ideas within the plan should not be considered as prescriptive solutions, but rather an illustrative vision, design guidance and recommendations to transform Johnston Square into an inclusive, vibrant and healthy urban neighborhood.

The collective work of the Johnston Square Partners is bearing fruit within the community as evidenced by the transformation of Henrietta Lacks Park, new apartment buildings and renovated historic homes. This planning process capitalizes there earlier

efforts and this new sense of community, hope and opportunity to envision a more complete Johnston Square.

In 2019, the Johnston Square Partners retained Hord Coplan Macht, architects and planners, to facilitate an engaging and inclusive planning process to craft a shared vision for the neighborhood. A few strategic and underperforming sites served as the focus of discussion and design to develop a complete and transformative vision. The sites included:

1. 508 East Preston Street
2. 300 Block of East Chase Street
3. Park & Field Site (400-500 Blocks of East Biddle and Chase Streets)
4. Greenmount Avenue Commercial Corridor (1000-12000 Blocks of Greenmount Avenue)
5. Hoffman Street Corridor (700-1100 Blocks of Hoffman Street)

PLANNING PROCESS

PROCESS AND ENGAGEMENT

The Johnston Square Partners are committed to the values of **BUILD** (<https://www.buildiaf.org>), which prioritizes seeking change with people, and their legacy of training community leaders to take agency and lead in fighting for social justice in their communities. Thus the consultant team worked closely with the Johnston Square Partners to develop a process that suited the needs of their constituents to capture a broad level of participation, empower stakeholders and foster ownership of a shared vision. Three monthly community forums provided opportunities for stakeholders to understand neighborhood data, discuss ideas, address concerns and provide critical feedback. The first two forums relied on small group break-out sessions to encourage all attendees to feel comfortable sharing their perspective. All three community meetings were well attended with approximately 40 participants at each meeting. In addition to three collaborative community forums, the consultant team worked collaboratively with the Partners and City agencies as well as holding several stakeholder meetings with churches, business owners and nonprofits to gain additional insight.

The Partners will continue to hold periodic Master Plan meetings beyond the approval of the plan to as needed and to ensure public and nonprofit partners maintain communications and accountability to its objectives.

The following is a summary of the planning process:

DISCOVER AND ANALYSIS

This initial phase reviewed applicable plans, regulations and processes impacting the neighborhood. Documents included The Johnston

Square Build from Strength Methodology, dated April 2015, Baltimore Zoning Code and Johnston Square Urban Renewal Plan, to name a few.

Numerous academic and professional consultants have explored landscape and redevelopment opportunities. Many of these ideas influenced the planning process and design concepts.

During this phase, the consultant team toured the neighborhood and interviewed key land holders, stakeholders, and State and City agencies. This phase concluded with Community Forum #1.

CONCEPT PLANNING

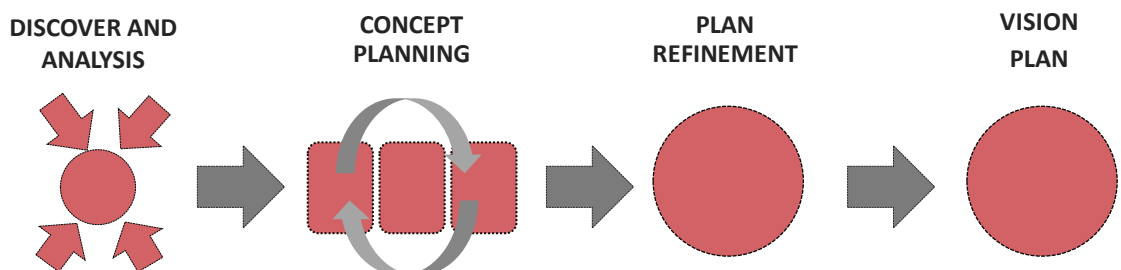
Participants were asked to share their priorities for the neighborhood and to vote on a set of precedent images in Community Forum #1. Based on ideas and preferences developed during Community Forum #1, a variety of planning and development options were formulated to stimulate discussion with community members. This phase concluded with Community Forum #2

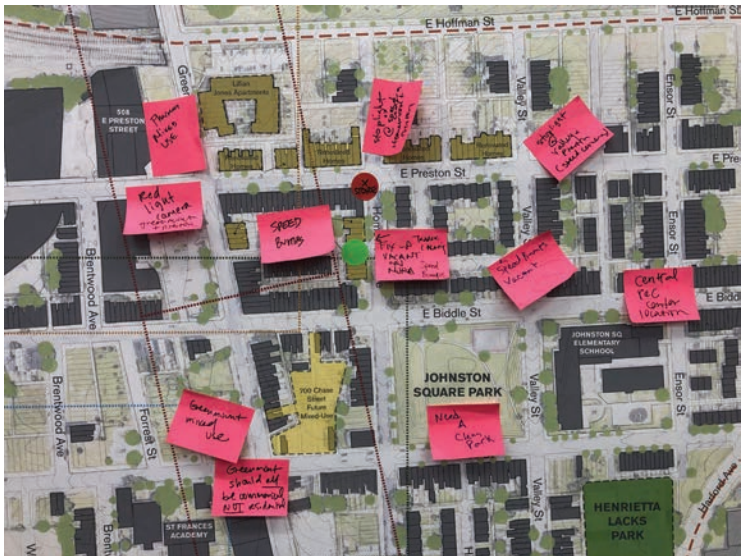
PLAN REFINEMENT

Preferred options and ideas identified during Community Forum #2 were refined and analyzed to better understand implementation. The preferred plan was reviewed during Community Forum #3.

VISION PLAN

This document reflects the evolution of design and ideas developed throughout this planning process. This shared vision is a roadmap to develop a healthy and equitable Johnston Square neighborhood illustrating key strategic actions and processes that continue to rebuild a great neighborhood.





Community Forum #1
 September 9, 2019
 Visual and Program Preferences



PLANNING PROCESS

508 E. PRESTON SITE STUDY

CONCEPT A: THE LOOP

- 1. Demonstration Yard
- 2. Overlook Plaza
- 3. Retail Plaza
- 4. Parking
- 5. Hardware / Building Supply Store with Office Above (see building)
- 6. Garden Center (see building)
- 7. Mixed Use Residential (3 or 4)

CONCEPT B: THE WEAVE

- 1. Amenity Lawn / Terrace
- 2. Plaza
- 3. Entry Plaza
- 4. Day Deck
- 5. Parking
- 6. Residential Lofts (see building)
- 7. Mixed Use Residential (4 or 5)
- 8. Mixed Use Residential (3 or 4)

Open space connected with 508 E. Preston needs analysis walking, upgrading for vehicle development

CONCEPT C: THE DECK

- 1. Learning Courtyard
- 2. Plaza
- 3. Smokerack Shade Structure
- 4. Parking
- 5. Community Center with office above (see building)
- 6. Mixed Use Residential (3 or 4)
- 7. Mixed Use Residential (3 or 4)

SMALL GARDEN CENTER DO NOT NEED ENTIRE SITE

YEAR-ROUND PLANT

BIDDLE-CHASE AND ST. ... STUDY

CONCEPT A: THE LOOP

- 1. Amenity Lawn / Terrace
- 2. Plaza
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Community Forum #2 October 14, 2019 Concept Plans

Crosswalks ● I like it. ● I don't like it.

	● I like it. ● I don't like it.		● I like it. ● I don't like it.
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	● I like it. ● I don't like it.		● I like it. ● I don't like it.



Community Forum #3

*November 11, 2019
Preferred Vision Plan*

PLANNING PROCESS



GATEWAY

COMMUNITY GARDEN

PLAY SPACE



HOFFMAN CORRIDOR





NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



Location Map

LOCATION

Johnston Square is centrally located in Baltimore City within close proximity to employment centers, major institutions and cultural attractions. The neighborhood is well served by regional transit and transportation options.

PENN STATION +/- 1/2 Mile
8th busiest station in Amtrak national rail network connecting to New York City, Philadelphia and Washington DC

JOHNS HOPKINS HOSPITAL +/- 3/4 Mile
Internationally renowned medical and research center and largest private employer in the State of Maryland

DOWNTOWN & INNER HARBOR +/- 1 Mile
Major commercial center and world class waterfront

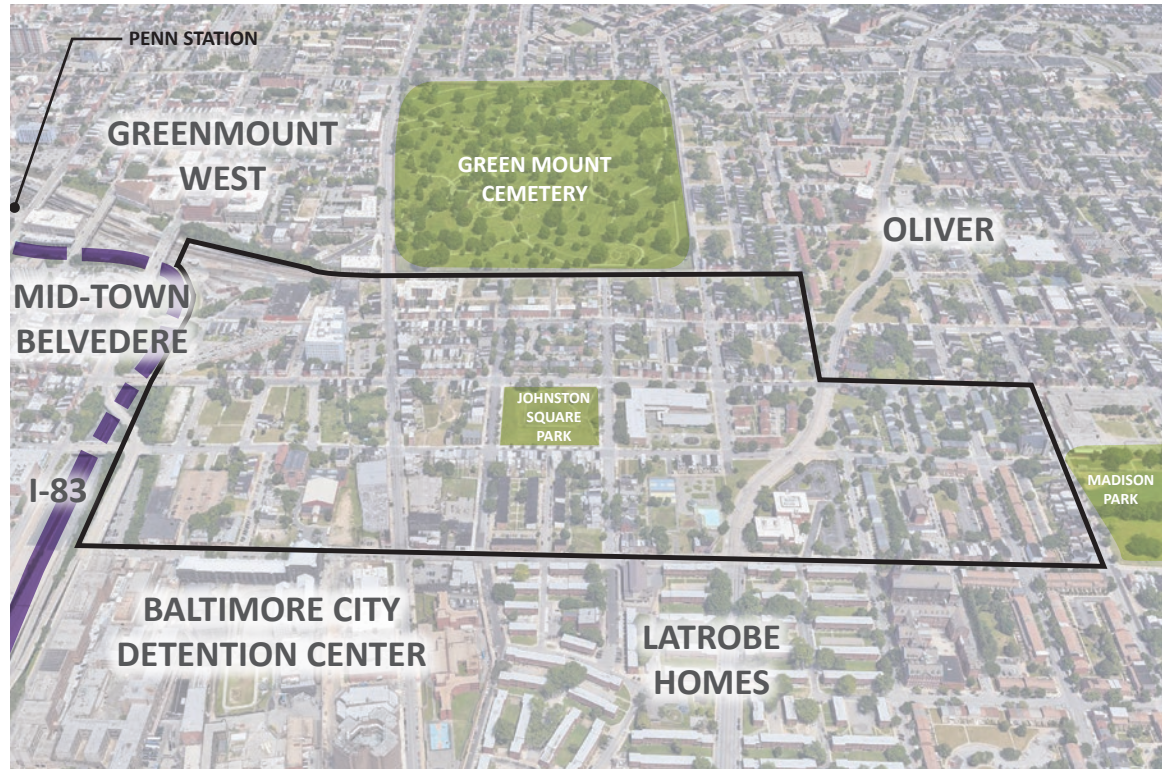
CONTEXT

The neighborhood is nestled between adjacent neighborhoods, institutions and major transportation infrastructure. Some of the boundaries of the neighborhood are well-defined by impenetrable barriers which isolate it from nearby communities.

The Jones Falls Expressway (US I-83) located on top of the former Jones Falls River separates Mid-Town Belvedere from Johnston Square. Bridges over the expressway provide vehicular and pedestrian access, but the experience lacks visual interest making this distance between feel more remote. The shortest distance is approximately 200 feet on Biddle Street.

The northern boundary of the neighborhood is framed by the Amtrak right-of-way and Greenmount Cemetery. The bucolic oasis within the cemetery is surrounded by a tall stone wall topped with a chain-link fence.

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



Context Map

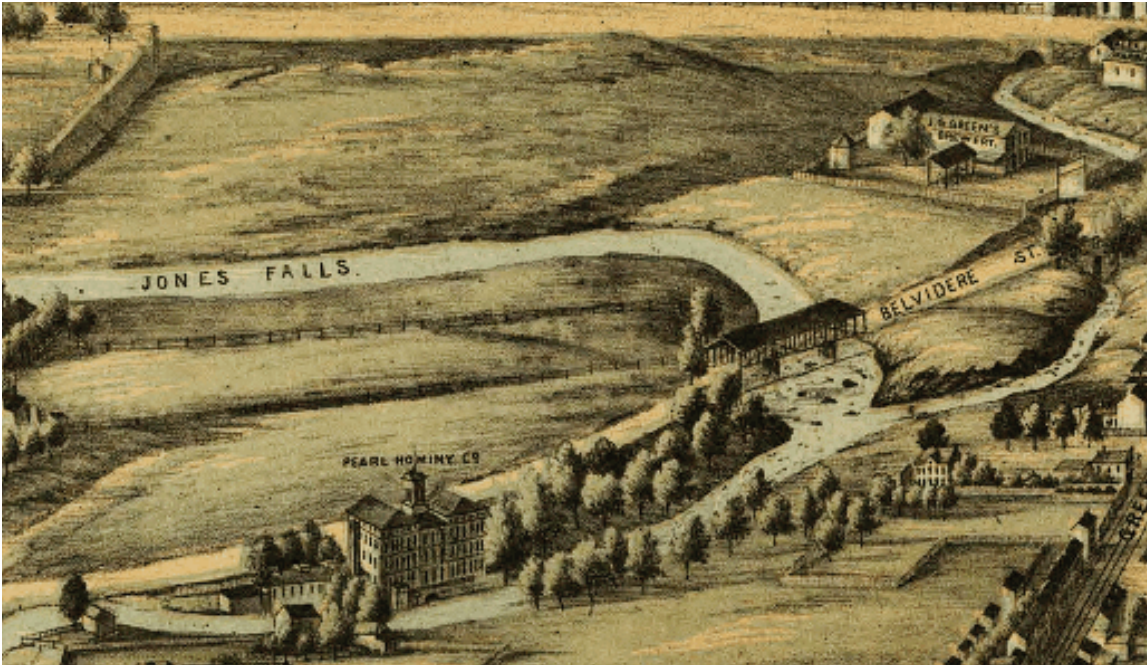
Adjacent neighborhoods of Greenmount West and Oliver have experienced stabilization and reinvestment. Open Works, City Arts apartments, new infill and renovated townhouses, as well as the Baltimore Design School are a few of the more recent investments.

Nearby Penn Station is undergoing an estimated \$600 million urban transformation into a world-class regional rail center anchored by mixture of dense transit-oriented uses (office, hospitality, residential).

To the south the Baltimore City Detention Center creates an impenetrable wall along Eager Street. Recently approved plans to redevelop the prison complex may include demolishing the wall, however the existence of the complex, which houses 3,000 inmates will most likely remain a less than desirable edge.

Latrobe Homes, a public housing community, borders the neighborhood to the south as well.

Harford Avenue, a wide (68 foot curb-to-curb) street is dominated by 6 lanes of fast moving traffic. This is a physical barrier that separates the eastern and western portions of the neighborhood. The eastern corner of the neighborhood feels more connected to the adjacent Madison Square Park community.



Historic views of the Jones Falls prior to the expressway

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

The origin of Johnston Square is rooted in the industrialization along the Jones Falls Valley and the urban growth along the old country roads. In the early 1800's affluent city leaders located their country houses on the rising hills surrounding the port of Baltimore. Here they enjoyed a more bucolic setting with access to clean water and fresh air. Green Mount Cemetery was established in the 1830s as a rural oasis for the deceased and visiting families just beyond the congested city.

Mills and industries harnessed the power of the water along the Jones Falls Valley. In time the railroad would follow transforming the valley into an industrial artery. The old embankments of the channelized river and mill foundations are still visible along the valley.

Country roads radiated outward from the old port. Advances in transportation enabled urban growth to follow these corridors away from the congested waterfront. After the Civil War, the country estates were sold to home builders to capture the strong demand for new urban housing. Following a similar pattern of dedicating urban squares to improve the

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



Aerial photograph 1927, Chesapeake Aircraft Co.

value of new homes, the Vickers family sold land to the City for the purpose of creating Johnston Square Park. The park remains at the center of the neighborhood.

During the second half of the 19th Century, waves of immigrants settled in the neighborhood. The Catholic Church played a dominant role in supporting community and development. Churches created saving societies to help families make a down-payment for a home or to lend mortgage money to home builders in the area. St. Frances Academy, founded in 1870s remains a major community stakeholder in the neighborhood.

Each block was constructed with a variety of housing types. Elegant three-story townhouses were located on the wider streets with more utilitarian two-story townhouses on side streets. This housing strategy created a mixed-income community within a walkable city.

Citation: NR-1434 National Register of Historic Places Registration Form for the Old East Baltimore Historic District

The housing boom of the 1920s saw white residents with disposable incomes move further out of the congested city followed by their church congregations. African-American congregations moved into these vacated churches followed by their constituents into the neighborhood. During the late 1940s rural African-Americans arrived seeking work in the war-related industries. The alley houses provided these new arrivals with affordable starter homes.

During the second half of the 20th Century, Johnston Square became a victim to discriminatory lending practices which resulted in disinvestment, concentrated poverty, population loss and abandonment.



Historic postcard of Fallsway at Biddle Street looking south



Henrietta Lacks Educational Park (Photo Regina Hammond)

Today there are large swaths of vacant homes and lots. Many existing homes have not been maintained and ultimately contribute to the growing numbers of vacant properties. As of 2014, the neighborhood contained 656 vacant lots and homes. Between 1994-2014, student enrollment dropped by 37.2% from 622 students to 381 students, an indicator of population loss.

Despite this trends, strong leadership emerged from within the Johnston Square neighborhood with long-time resident, Regina Hammond. She led the creation of a new vision of Johnston Square with the help of Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD) organizer, Terrell Williams. Their first community meeting in 2013 at Johnston Square Elementary School drew over 150 residents. Residents cited their main concerns for the neighborhood included:

- Recreational opportunities for children
- Employment
- Decent housing.

As a result, the ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization (RJSNO) was formed with a Core Team of fourteen leaders from local churches, apartment buildings and residents. RJSNO held monthly meetings and started working with partner organizations to clean up vacant lots and create a strong community voice, which led to visible successes like restoring green spaces and eliminating long-standing public safety issues.



Adopt-a-Lot Sign

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



Henrietta Lacks Park



Vacant Property



Lillian Jones Apartments- New Multifamily Housing

RJSNO sought to leverage these successes and wanted to attract larger scale investment and redevelopment. As part of its organizing work, RJSNO approached ReBUILD Metro (formerly TRF Development Partners) to rehabilitate vacant housing in their neighborhood. In 2015, RJSNO and ReBUILD Metro hosted a series of community meetings to foster a holistic vision of community redevelopment. This community effort created the RJSNO Vision Plan. Building on the success of the Vision Plan, a core group of nonprofit stakeholders established the Johnston Square Partners. The Partners is an alliance with RJSNO, ReBUILD Metro, BUILD, Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO), and St. Frances Academy.

The Vision Plan was an effective tool that helped secure over \$20 million of new housing investments, a \$2 million renovation of Henrietta Lacks Park, and attracted significant attention to the needs of Johnston Square.

These recent neighborhood investments demonstrate a commitment to equitable growth and progress towards addressing the community's concerns by preserving quality affordable housing, increasing homeownership opportunities and creating access to safe open space.

In 2019, the Partners successfully negotiated with Baltimore City to establish site control over all abandoned properties in Johnston Square under a Land Disposition and Development Agreement (LDDA). Over the LDDA's ten year term, the Partners will work with Baltimore City to assemble, redevelop vacant parcels, and renovate or build up to 185 houses in order to rebuild a healthy, viable residential market which will reduce vacancy from 52% to 3% and increase home values from \$49,121 to replacement value without displacing existing residents.



View of Greenmount Avenue from Open Works

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

THE PARTNERS

ReBUILD Metro is a nonprofit organization dedicated to restoring the history and prosperity of neighborhoods by rebuilding homes and fostering enduring community relationships, with a focus on disinvested communities of East Baltimore. ReBUILD redevelops abandoned single-family homes and small commercial spaces, creates affordable multifamily housing, and converts vacant lots into active greenspace, fulfilling local revitalization priorities and creating stable neighborhoods where residents have access to opportunity and can thrive in place.

Baltimoreans United in Leadership Development (BUILD) is a broad-based, non-partisan, interfaith, multiracial community power organization rooted in Baltimore's neighborhoods and congregations. BUILD is dedicated to making Baltimore a better place for all Baltimoreans to live and thrive. For more than 40 years, BUILD has worked to improve housing, increase job opportunities, and rebuild schools and neighborhoods, among other issues.

Baltimore Arts Realty Corporation (BARCO) is a nonprofit organization that builds and supports the development of affordable and sustainable commercial facilities in Baltimore City that are rooted in their local communities and serve small businesses, nonprofits, artists, and makers. BARCO's projects provide 21st century artistic, educational, entrepreneurship, and job opportunities for surrounding residents while serving as regional magnets that help build more inclusive, vibrant, and sustainable local economies.

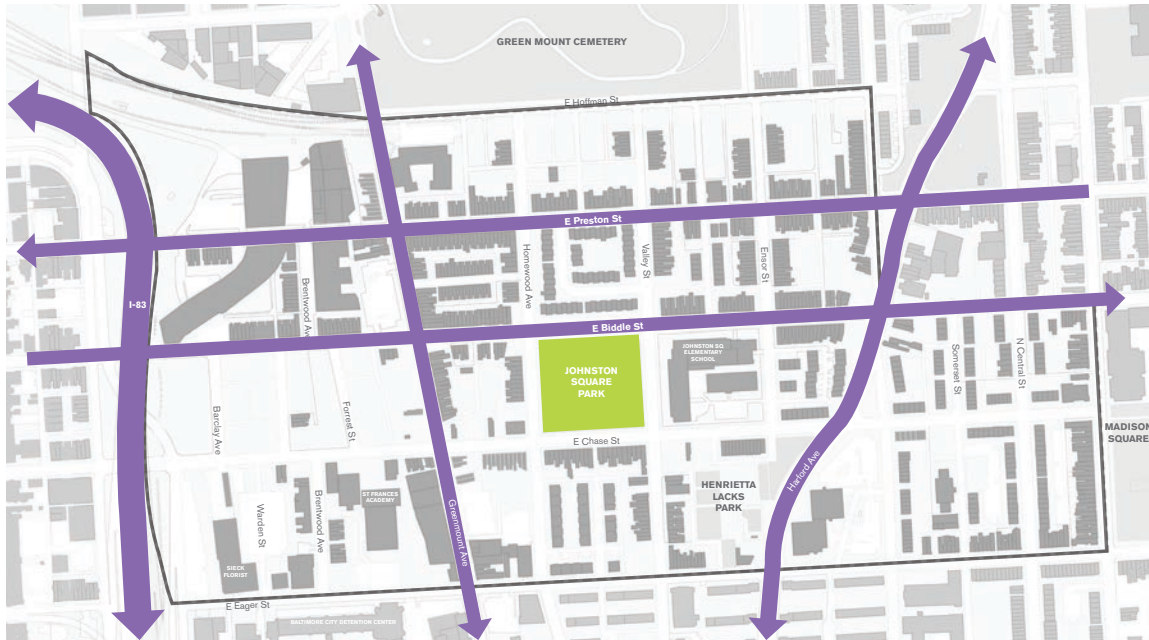
ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization

(RJSNO) is Johnston Square's local community association. RJSNO is committed to improving the quality of life for every Johnston Square resident—new and old—and to encouraging equitable development in the neighborhood. RJSNO uses community organizing and listening campaigns to promote cleaning and greening initiatives, recreational programs for children, educational and employment opportunities, and public safety in the Johnston Square community.

Saint Frances Academy, through its dignity and uniqueness, continues the legacy of Mother Mary Lange, its foundress. Saint Frances Academy, with faith in God's Providence, provides the immediate neighborhood and the Baltimore area relevant educational programs which gives all members a sense of their cultural heritage and giftedness by helping students and members of the community, particularly the poor and neglected, to recognize, develop and live as respectful, responsible, and just members of God's human family.



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Streets Diagram

↔ Major Street Corridors

CIRCULATION

STREETS

Johnston Square is laid out in an orthogonal grid-iron system of streets, with the exception of Greenmount Avenue, Harford Avenue and the Fallsway. East-west streets are wider and conduct through-traffic. North-south gridded streets have various widths and tend to have limited connectivity.

The neighborhood has direct access to the northbound Jones Falls Expressway (I-83) at East Chase Street. The expressway, a major artery of Baltimore City, is linked to the national and regional highway network.

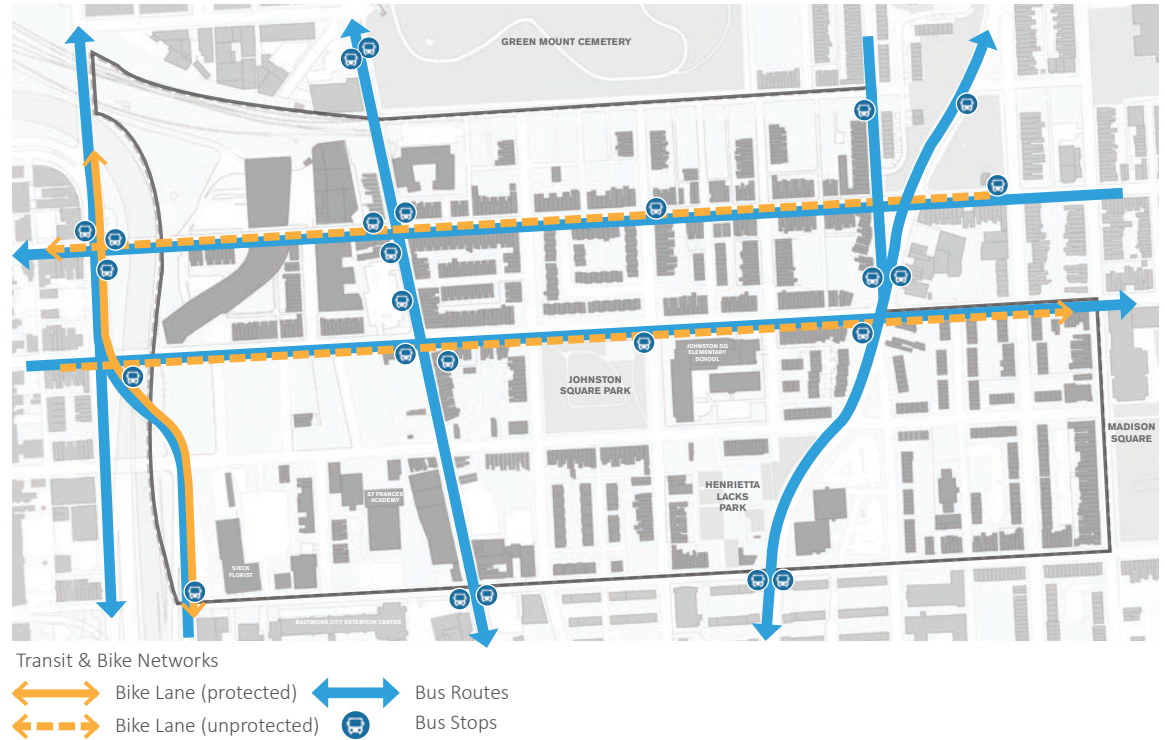
Biddle and Preston Streets operate as a pair of one-way streets with two dedicated through traffic lanes on each street. These streets are designed to quickly move higher volumes of traffic. Consequently, these streets are difficult for pedestrians and cars to cross particularly during rush hour.

Greenmount Avenue and Harford Avenue provide connections between downtown and the outer regions of the City. Greenmount Avenue has a narrow cross-section with slower traffic. Buildings are located close to the street creating a sense of enclosure.

In contrast Harford Avenue is a wider street with more capacity and faster moving traffic. Harford Avenue is a barrier that separates the people and places within this community.

Johnston Square residents agreed that pedestrians of all ages and abilities should be able to safely navigate the neighborhood. Neighbors were especially concerned about through-traffic on Preston and Biddle Streets traveling at high rates of speed. Comments also reflected a desire to improve safety around Johnston Square Elementary School and Henrietta Lacks Park.

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



TRANSIT

Johnston Square has multiple transit options to connect people to the region. The CityLink Lime service provides east-west connection along Biddle and Preston Street, connecting Northwest Hospital, Druid Hill Park and Harbor East. The CityLink Red service provides north-south connection along Greenmount Avenue linking Towson and University of Maryland Baltimore. Local Link 54 runs along Harford Road and connects State Center and Carney. Buses link to faster regional transit services, such as the light-rail, subway and regional and commuter rail service. Penn Station, which provides access to light rail, Amtrak and MARC transit lines, is within a 10- minute (1/2 mile) walking distance from the neighborhood.

PEDESTRIAN

In general, neighborhood streets provide adequate width to support pedestrian connectivity throughout the neighborhood. The quality of the pedestrian experience is reduced by real and perceived public safety concerns, conflicts with

vehicular traffic and the pervasive deterioration of the built environment. Vacant properties and abandoned buildings, undesirable retail activities and related loitering creates a sense of insecurity for pedestrians. Gaps in shade tree canopies and street lights further reduce pedestrian comforts.

BIKES

Residents have access to the city bike network. A pair of one-way dedicated bike lanes located along Biddle and Preston Streets provide connection between Broadway and the Fallsway. These unprotected bike lanes run along side moving traffic. This condition likely discourages casual riders, particularly young children, from biking.

The Fallsway has a protected multi-use trail connecting downtown to Guilford Street and eventually the Jones Falls Trail system.



General Land Use Diagram

- Residential
- Institutional
- Light Industrial / Employment
- Retail
- Multifamily Residential

LAND USE

Johnston Square is predominantly a townhouse residential neighborhood, particularly east of Greenmount Avenue. Several multifamily buildings are located along Greenmount Avenue. Churches and a few corner shops are mixed into the townhouse fabric. Johnston Square Elementary School, Johnston Square Park and Henrietta Lacks Park are central to this residential community.

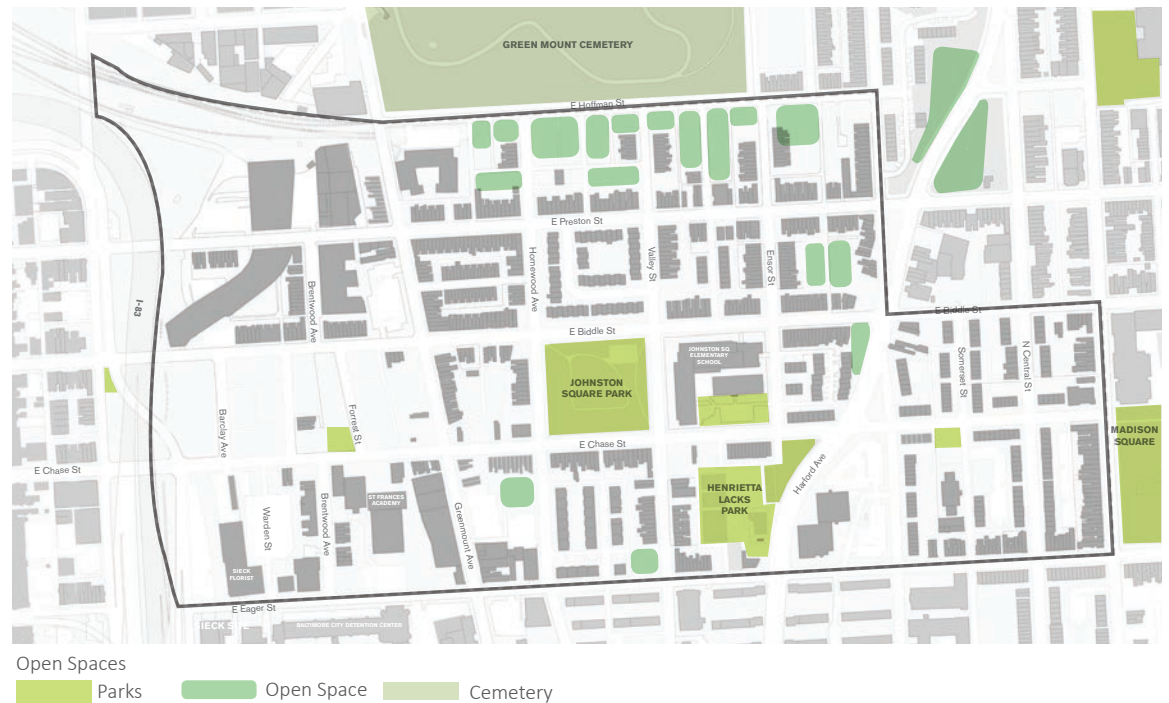
Greenmount Avenue has a scattered arrangement of small-scale retail shops mixed with commercial and residential uses. Greenmount is not a continuous retail corridor such as the Avenue in Hampden or Charles Street in Mt. Vernon. Retail lacks diversity and is limited to take-out establishments, liquor stores and mini-markets. Some storefronts are completely vacant, while others require major facade repairs or total reconstruction.

The land uses west of Greenmount are more commercial, industrial and institutional. The old post office facility (439 East Preston Street) provides leasable space to creative entrepreneurs. Sieck Florist (400 East Eager Street) and R.E. Michels warehouse (1030 Greenmount Avenue) operate long running viable businesses. 508 East Preston Street is an industrial site that is currently underutilized.

St Frances Academy is the oldest, continuously operating, predominantly African-American Catholic High School in the United States. It has been at its present location since 1871 at the corner of Brentwood and Chase Street.

Social and governmental agencies are also located in the neighborhood, such as the Helping Up Mission (Chase Street) and the State of Maryland Parole and Probation offices (Preston Street).

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



OPEN SPACES

Johnston Square has a series of dedicated parks and playgrounds, particularly along Chase Street. Vacant and residual green spaces are found throughout, particularly along Hoffman Street and along Biddle Street west of Greenmount Street.

The original Johnston Square Park remains the center of the neighborhood. This hilltop park provides great views of the city skyline, however steep slopes reduce the amount of usable land. The park contains a basketball court, little league baseball field and a few walking paths.

Henrietta Lacks Park recently underwent a \$2 million renovation with the assistance of many partners. The park includes a public pool, basketball courts, splash fountain, walking paths with seating areas and shade structures. The park provides recreation opportunity neighborhood residents and nearby Latrobe Homes. At the time of this planning

process vacant houses surrounding the park were demolished to make way for a second phase of park improvements.

Johnston Square Elementary School provides play equipment and some flexible lawn area for kids. The Brentwood Playground is surrounded by large swaths of vacant land and is geographically isolated.

Along Hoffman Street there are community gardens, urban agriculture sites and ecological research areas. The vacant, unbuildable land over the Amtrak tunnel offers an opportunity to create a linear park from Greenmount Avenue to Broadway.

St. Frances Academy lacks a home field for their athletic programs. Currently, their nationally ranked football team commutes to various locations around the City to practice and host games.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Johnston Square is located within the Old East Baltimore Historic District. The existing buildings capture the spirit of the late nineteenth century when many of the buildings were originally constructed. These structures drew inspiration from the then popular Queen Anne and Italianate styles. Many existing buildings have retained their original decorative cornices, brick details and elegant proportions, despite years of deferred maintenance, poorly executed renovations and demolition. Contemporary buildings, such as the Lillian Jones apartment building introduce a fresh architectural expression that blends with the surrounding historic structures.

The urban form of the neighborhood largely reinforces a tight urban grid, close to the curb and aligned along the street. Some public buildings, such as St. Frances Academy, are set back from the street setting it apart from surrounding domestic residential buildings.

Alley houses, with few exceptions such as Mura Street, have been demolished and their lots left vacant. This has reduced the diversity of housing options and left the centers of blocks empty.



Historic St. Frances Academy



Queen Anne Details



Typical Italianate Townhouses



NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS



City Jail- Southern Edge to Neighborhood



City Jail Roof Line



Mural Along Greenmount Avenue



1234 Greenmount Avenue (Former Yellow Bowl Restaurant)

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Great neighborhoods have developed iconic brands and logos to reinforce the identity of the local people and place. Johnston Square is missing a unifying brand.

A stronger identity could overcome challenges to the neighborhood and build a stronger public image. The presence of the Baltimore City Detention Center, crime, vacant properties and boarded up buildings creates a negative image of the community.

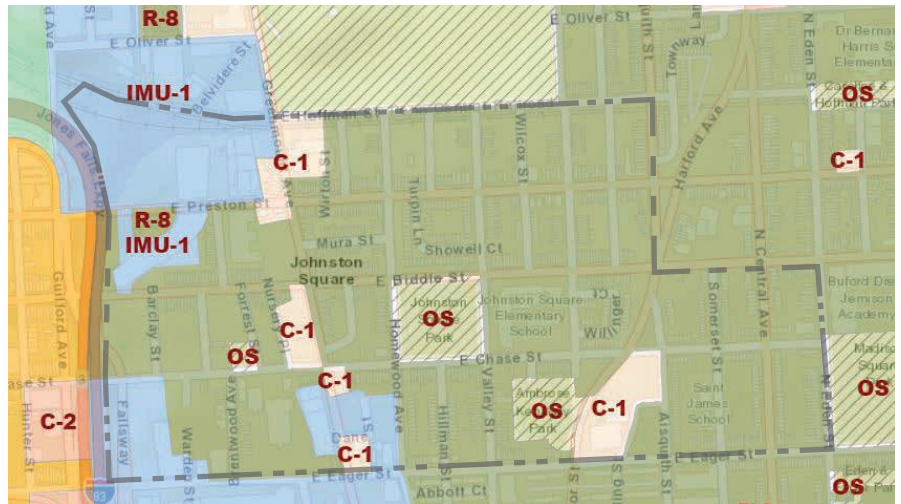
The neighborhood contains a variety of small pocket parks with gateway signage, murals and public art each with a different expression. Greenmount Avenue lacks streetscape features that unify street corridors, such as street lights with banners and street trees. Billboards and cluttered retail signs create a collage of visual information that distracts from the pedestrian experience.

A unifying approach to streetscape and artwork would help identify and interpret the story of the community. At the edges of the community, the introduction of enhanced landscape, signage and public art could celebrate one's arrival to the neighborhood. Bridges and key intersections could be transformed into grand gateways.

REGULATORY REVIEW

ZONING

Johnston Square is predominantly zoned R-8 Rowhouse Residential. This classification reflects the current urban form of long rowhouse blocks, with modest setbacks from the street. Multifamily housing is permitted in the R-8 district at an approximate density of 58 dwelling units per acre. A few clusters of parcels along Greenmount Avenue are zoned C-1 Neighborhood Business District. This district enables mixed-use multifamily development with a permitted density of approximately 145 dwelling unit per acre. Some of the older industrial parcels are zoned IMU-1 Industrial Mixed-Use District. This district encourages the reuse of older structures for light industrial and a variety of residential uses, including mixed-used residential. Forest Street Park, Johnston Square Park and Henrietta Lacks Park are protectively zoned as Open Space Districts, which prohibits development.



Baltimore City's Zoning Map (<http://cityview.baltimorecity.gov/>)

Mixed-use residential development is limited to a few areas along Greenmount Avenue and former industrial properties. Consideration should be given to expand C-1 district along Greenmount Avenue to enable mixed-use infill development at a scale that could support a more diverse inventory of retail and neighborhood services.

URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

The Johnston Square Urban Renewal Plan (URP) enables acquisition and condemnation of parcels to foster redevelopment and stabilization of underperforming properties. In 2014, the URP was amended to remove properties from the list and correct and clarify certain language. Since the amendment to the URP the neighborhood and the Baltimore City zoning code has changed. This has created inconsistencies in the URP document.

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

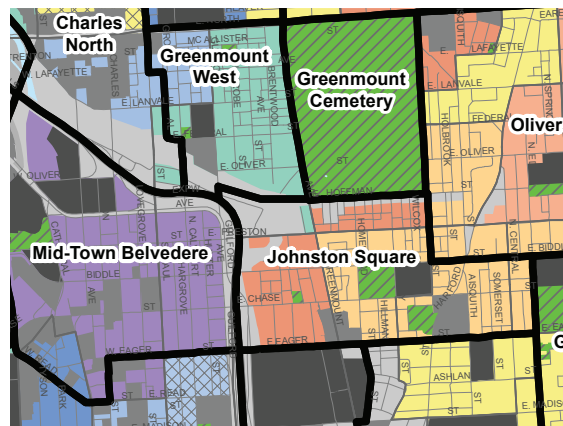
MARKET BACKGROUND

CURRENT MARKET CONDITIONS

The residential market analysis of Johnston Square is based on data from the City of Baltimore Housing Market Typology (see-<https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/maps-data/housing-market-typology>), a quantitative housing market classification system that helps planners, developers, and residents understand the housing market forces impacting their communities. Based on a statistical process called “Cluster Analysis,” the Typology distinguishes ten market types covering all real estate in the City of Baltimore. Areas within each market type are statistically similar across a number of indicators (Median Sales Price, Sales Price Variation, Vacant Buildings, Building Permits, etc.).

According to the 2017 Typology, the Johnston Square neighborhood is identified among the City’s most “distressed” areas. Specifically, Johnston Square’s housing market suffers from three key issues:

- **Depressed Sales Prices:** The highest median home sale price in Johnston Square’s is \$31,332, which is 69% lower than the City’s median sale price of \$101,000.
- **High Vacancy:** Johnston Square’s low sale price correlates to its high level of vacant property. 21% of all residential properties in Johnston Square are vacant, a rate that is 125% greater than the Citywide vacancy average of 9.39%.
- **Limited Reinvestment:** The limited reinvestment in Johnston Square is evidenced by building permit data. Building permit activity (residential permits over \$10,000) in Johnston Square is 75% lower than permit activity in neighboring communities (Mid-Town, Oliver, Greenmount West). The low permitting rate suggests that vacant Johnston Square homes are not being prepared for re-occupancy and that existing homes have deferred maintenance.



Baltimore City's 2017 Housing Market Typology
A & B Housing Markets (Stable)
H & J Housing Markets (Distressed)

Because the Typology is a point-in-time measure, it will change over time in response to a concerted effort to rehabilitate vacant Johnston Square properties. Such reinvestment activity will improve market conditions by decreasing vacancy and increasing building permit activity.

LOCAL MARKET ASSETS AND PRECEDENTS

Despite current market conditions in Johnston Square, the neighborhood possesses obvious geographic advantages. Johnston Square is the geographic center of Baltimore and is in walking distance of a number of Baltimore’s major amenities, including:

- Baltimore Penn Station, where the design phase has begun for a \$600 million redevelopment, the largest current Transit Oriented Development project in the nation.
- The Station North Arts and Entertainment District, which hosts a number of cultural institutions, events, hotels, shops, and restaurants.
- Johns Hopkins Hospital, the largest and most highly rated hospital in the nation.

Furthermore, Johnston Square is adjacent to several neighborhoods that are growing, dynamic, and have significantly stronger markets (Mid-Town, Greenmount West, and Oliver). As of 2017, Mid-Town’s median housing price is \$302,995—13 times greater than Johnston Square—and its population density is 2.8 times greater than Johnston Square. And while Johnston Square, Oliver, and Greenmount West all had roughly the same median housing prices in 2011, by 2017 the median prices in Greenmount West and Oliver had risen to 3 and 4 times greater than in Johnston Square, respectively.

The catalyst for the market improvements in Greenmount West and Oliver between 2011 and 2017 are instructive for Johnston Square. Both neighborhoods benefited from focused redevelopment efforts that eliminated blight and reoccupied vacant property. As a result of these efforts, their housing markets have experienced significant improvement while the Johnston Square market has languished.

The positive market results from targeted redevelopment in Greenmount West and Oliver is evident in the 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) data. In 2010, Greenmount West, Oliver, and Johnston Square were considered areas of racially concentrated poverty. After 2010,

both Greenmount West and Oliver improved, but Johnston Square did not. The ACS data (2013-2017) shows a reduction of racially concentrated poverty in Greenmount West and Oliver and an increase in concentrated racial poverty in the Johnston Square. Similarly, the former two areas experienced clear improvements in their Typologies from 2011 to 2017, but Johnston Square did not share in this improvement.



City Arts 2- New Multifamily in the Greenmount West Neighborhood

Greenmount West and Oliver both initially required subsidy to stimulate and stabilize the local markets, as the cost of redeveloping abandoned properties exceeded the post-rehab value due to low property values and weak demand. Indeed, according to the 2011 Typology, sales prices for new and fully renovated homes in these areas was less than \$130,000, with median sales prices at or below \$18,000. By using subsidy to support for-sale and rental production, homes in these areas could be redeveloped and sold/leased at levels higher than existing market prices, but lower than their development costs. As more vacant homes were replaced by new or fully rebuilt homes, median sale price rose from \$18,000 to \$89,397 from 2011 to 2017, and sales prices for new and rehabbed homes currently exceeds \$249,900, a cost that is attracting market rate investment.

NEIGHBORHOOD ANALYSIS

REINVESTMENT MODEL

Given Johnston Square's proximity to Greenmount West and Oliver and the similarity of its housing stock, a similar reinvestment approach and economic development playbook in Johnston Square should stimulate price growth, attract new investment, and spur similar market improvement. Moreover, the experience in Greenmount West and Oliver suggests that market recovery is likely to encourage the de-concentration of poverty and lead to stronger and more sustainable market conditions.

Johnston Square can capitalize on recent subsidized development to strengthen its market conditions. Since 2010, three major multifamily developments have been completed along Greenmount Avenue (City Arts, City Arts 2, and the Lillian Jones Apartments), and a fourth is under construction in Johnston Square at 700 Chase Street. Leasing at the three completed sites exceeded market study projections by several months. In addition to this proven demand, two commissioned market studies indicate the rental demand for the neighborhood is high: The demand for new affordable rental is 196 units, and moderate-income rental demand supports an absorption rate of 4-6 units per month.

However, based on current market data, homebuyer demand in Johnston Square will not support sales prices sufficient to cover the cost to renovate abandoned homes (more than \$250,000). Subsidizing the sale of the renovated homes in the first years of redevelopment—as was done in Greenmount West and Oliver—will help restore the market to a condition where home prices can equal the cost of renovation.

In order to increase both housing demand and sale prices in Johnston Square, redevelopment must prioritize the remediation of abandoned properties (including non-residential uses such as recreational and commercial uses)¹. Based on the history of Greenmount West and Oliver, values for

new and renovated homes in Johnston Square will approach \$250,000 (i.e. the cost of redevelopment) once 70% of its current abandoned properties are redeveloped, a total of roughly 350 abandoned properties.²

Because the absorption rate of for-sale homes is insufficient to eliminate its large stock of abandoned properties, Johnston Square must therefore rely on a mix of for-sale and rental property. Indeed, As vacancy dropped in Greenmount West and Oliver, home sale prices rose, despite the fact that less than 30% of redeveloped property was offered for-sale.



Mt. Sinai Church Refurbished Facade (photo by Lil Trottman)

A targeted, sustained, and subsidy-led redevelopment effort is necessary to reverse the decades of population and economic decline in Johnston Square. The investments envisioned in this Master Plan rely on successful methods used to shore up markets in neighboring communities and to create an equitable mix of housing, commercial, and recreational opportunities for a broad range of people.

1. In Greenmount West and Oliver, over 180 vacant residential properties were redeveloped as parks and greenspace, which reduced the total supply of housing and helped re-balance housing supply and demand.

2. Additional factors effecting Johnston Square's sale prices include several external dynamics such as social and demographic conditions in Baltimore City and regional and national economic trends.





MASTER PLAN

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

During the September 2019 community forum stakeholders interacted in small groups to discuss initial visual preferences, program ideas and their observations of the neighborhood and key sites. From this work session the following planning goals emerged:

CLEAN AND ATTRACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD

A clean and well-maintained neighborhood improves the quality of life for all. Attractive and well maintained public spaces, buildings and streets foster a sense of community pride, discourages criminal activity and improves land values.

RETAIL AND HOUSING DIVERSITY

Sustaining and vibrant neighborhoods provide equitable residential development, housing choices and are supported by businesses to cater to their daily needs. A mixed income and diverse housing stock can support people of different economic backgrounds and lifestyles simultaneously as well as give people a chance to stay local even as their needs change over time by creating and preserving a range of affordability options and housing types. A diverse retail corridor creates business synergies, supports daily needs and creates opportunities for social experiences.

VARIETY OF OPEN SPACES AND COMMUNITY AMENITIES

Civic and public spaces are important for livable communities. They provide opportunities for people to gather, recreate, play, learn, socialize and work together. A diverse and connected network of open spaces and community facilities provide experiences for all people.

SAFE STREETS

Streets are the public space that connect people and places within a walkable neighborhood. Great pedestrian streets are engaging places, enable mobility for all people and are safe from traffic. Streets need to balance a variety of transportation modes to connect with surrounding neighborhoods and employment opportunities. These public spaces need to be free from crime.



1. View of Greenmount Avenue and Hoffman Street



2. View of Greenmount Park



3. View of Greenmount Avenue and Chase Street

MASTER PLAN



Bird's Eye View of Johnston Square Looking Southeast

VISION

Johnston Square will revitalize to become a safe, walkable neighborhood complete with diverse housing choices for all people and anchored by thriving businesses, supportive services and institutions. Public streets and open spaces will connect people and create welcoming community places. The plan is crafted to improve access to transportation options and amplify economic opportunities. Sustaining programs and operations will support social networks, reinvestment and economic growth.



ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

The illustrative plan above identifies key developments and public realm improvements to ReBUILD Johnston Square. Key improvements include the following:

PUBLIC REALM PROJECTS

- 1 Biddle St/Fallsway Gateway
- 2 Greenmount Ave /Hoffman St Gateway
- 3 Greenmount Park
- 4 Greenmount Ave Streetscape
- 5 Hoffman St Corridor Greenway
- 6 Preston-Biddle Streetscape
- 7 Valley St Streetscape
- 8 Henrietta Lacks Park, Second Phase

KEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

- A 300 Block of East Chase St
(Residential/Commercial)
- B 1100 Block of Barclay St
(Mixed-use Residential)
- C 1100 Block of Greenmount Ave
(Mixed-use Residential)
- D 508 East Preston St
(Residential/Commercial Mixed-use)
- E 400-600 Blocks of East Biddle & 1200 Block of Brentwood (New & Renovated Residential)
- F 700 E Chase St Apartments (under construction)

MASTER PLAN

FRAMEWORK PLANS

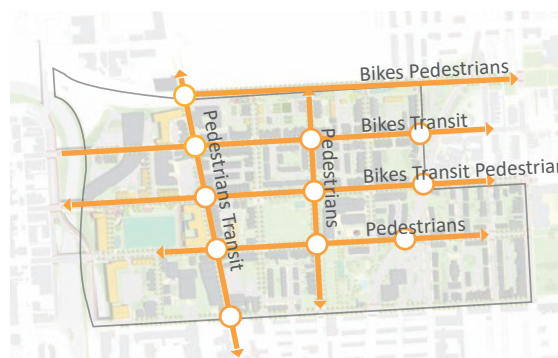
The framework diagrams explain and supplement the illustrative vision plan. Each framework provides organization and order to guide physical improvements and redevelopment.



LAND USE

Johnston Square will remain a residential neighborhood, supported by commercial activity along Greenmount Avenue and a mix of uses west of Greenmount Avenue, including multifamily, industrial and commercial activities.

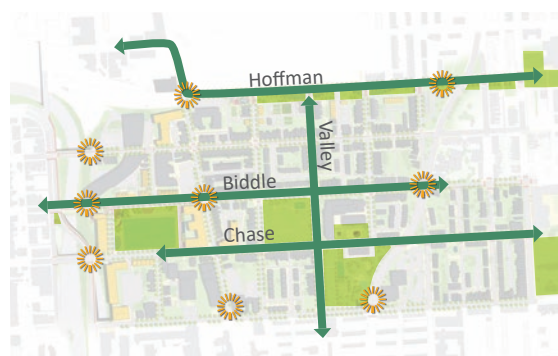
- Residential
- Multifamily
- Mixed-use Retail
- Mixed-use Commercial / Industrial
- Institutional



COMPLETE STREET NETWORK

Neighborhood streets are for people not just speeding cars. Street improvements and traffic calming will balance the street network to improve mobility choice and connectivity for all.

- Safe Intersections and Enhanced Crosswalks
- Priority Complete Street Network



OPEN SPACE NETWORK

Green street improvements, such as shade trees, landscape and stormwater bioretention facilities, will enhance neighborhood resiliency and connectivity between parks for all people.

- Gateways Opportunities
- Green Street Connections
- Parks



GREENMOUNT P



INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PARK



INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The planning principles guided the formation of the shared vision, strategic initiatives and recommendations. The following goals organize the strategies to implement a more livable, equitable and healthy Johnston Square:

1. Create a Vibrant and Connected **Public Realm** for All
2. Build **Impactful Developments** to Create a Mixed Income and Diverse Community
3. Develop Sustaining **Programs and Operations** to Support Social Networks, Reinvestment and Economic Growth



INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



1. PUBLIC REALM

Streets, parks and open spaces give order to the built environment and provide space for social engagement. Well managed and programmed public spaces foster stewardship, community pride and add value to surrounding homes and buildings. Throughout the planning process participants discussed a range of ideas and opportunities to program public spaces and address street design and safety.



View of Greenmount Park Looking West

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



GREENMOUNT PARK

VISION

This proposed four acre park is a shared vision between the neighborhood and St. Frances Academy to reclaim vacant land. The park will provide much needed practice field space to support St. Frances Academy's football and athletic programs while offering access to community. The park design provides inclusive and multigenerational recreation and social experiences for the residents of the neighborhood. Park elements include a lit football field, fitness stations and walking paths. The park provides terraced seating to support sport spectators and community events, such as outdoor movies. A hardscape promenade between Biddle and Chase Streets overlooks the fields and offers space for community functions such as farmers markets and street festivals. Neighborhood children and families will enjoy convenient and accessible play space. Perimeter shade trees and a misting fountain provide cooling opportunities on hot summer days. Integrated landscape design will incorporate storm water management and enhance the aesthetic experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Grade and clear empty lots to develop an interim practice football field to support local athletes and St. Frances Academy sports.
2. Continue to develop a partnership and management plan to provide for or direct sustainable park implementation and programming.
3. Design and develop the park to fulfill the community vision. Coordinate design with surrounding developments.
4. Develop corner gateways to celebrate the arrival to the park and neighborhood.
5. Work with local artists to introduce public art, particularly along Biddle Street.
6. Consider reserving the ground to incorporate geothermal systems to support adjacent development projects.



Hoffman Corridor Concept Plan

- ★ Gateway / Public Art
- ↔ Protected Shared Use Path
- ★ Stormwater Management
- Infill Housing Opportunity

Key Projects:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Community Garden | 5. Lawn and Shade Structure |
| 2. Play Space | 6. Exercise Station |
| 3. Urban Agriculture | 7. Dog Park |
| 4. Reflective Garden (Labyrinth) | 8. Pollinator Garden |

HOFFMAN STREET CORRIDOR

VISION

The vision for the Hoffman Street corridor creates a greenway to reclaim underutilized and unbuildable open space. The greenway will embrace safe bike and pedestrian connectivity between adjacent neighborhoods while balancing community spaces with urban agriculture and ecological functions. A winding walking path parallels Hoffman Street sidewalk to link community gardens, playgrounds, urban agriculture, reflective gardens, dog parks, public art, flexible lawns and gathering areas. Integrated landscaped stormwater facilities, pollinator gardens and shade trees add a layer of ecological benefit and aesthetic beauty. Traffic calming is paramount to prioritize pedestrian safety and visually knit the separated blocks together into a singular greenway corridor experience.

Currently, The 6th Branch in partnership with the ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization is in the process of launching the Greenmount Compost Factory (GCF) as well as beautification efforts that include shade trees, picnic benches, and flowerbeds to the 1300 block of Hillman and Homewood. The GCF is a

commercial-scale, membership based operation that is designed to assist East Baltimore neighbors in their efforts to reduce waste, help improve soil quality, and direct revenue to the Johnston Square community. A nursery facility is a consideration for expanded business opportunity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create a dedicated and buffered bike and tail facility along Hoffman Street. The pathway will connect with future bike way / greenway connections west to Penn Station redevelopment and east to the Oliver Neighborhood. Consider providing a bike repair station.
2. Coordinate and implement park improvements with neighbors, such as, but not limited to, Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, The Sixth Branch and the Partners.
3. Coordinate park design with the Oliver community and Penn Station redevelopment.
4. Install bump outs/ shortened crossings on north-south streets where they traverse the green space to enhance pedestrian safety, landscape and stormwater management opportunities. Consider a change in paving material in the street to raise awareness for pedestrian safety.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Protected Shared Use Path with Gateway Signage



Community Garden



Nature Inspired Play Space



Urban Agriculture

5. Develop gateway signage and landscapes at Greenmount Avenue and Harford Avenue to celebrate arrival.
6. Develop a maintenance and stewardship team to oversee the park.
7. Encourage infill housing along north-south streets.
8. Strategically prepare and develop new homesites along the greenway to encourage more eyes onto the space to reinforce public safety and stewardship.



Pollinator Garden



View of Greenmount Avenue and Chase Street

GREENMOUNT AVENUE STREETScape

VISION

The Greenmount corridor will become the center of the community, where locals can satisfy their daily needs and socialize with neighbors. The streetscape will unify the corridor and enhance pedestrian safety. New and renovated storefronts and buildings will activate and attract people to the corridor. Many of the goals and recommendations are consistent and build from the Greenmount Avenue Leveraging Investment in Neighborhood Corridors (LINCS) Plan. Key design landscape, signage and architectural improvements are identified on the following page.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STREETScape

1. Develop a landscape plan to coordinate pedestrian street lights, shade trees and landscape plantings and containers to create a consistent and unifying experience.
2. Develop signage and storefront standards to help businesses declutter storefronts, protect historic features and create more visibility into the shops.
3. Enhance the experience at intersections to serve both as gateways and safe pedestrian crossings. Enhanced cross-walks and curb

extensions are two tools to expand awareness of pedestrians in this retail experience.

FACADE ENHANCEMENTS

4. Develop a strategy to refurbish aging storefronts. Where possible restore historic facades to original design.
5. Develop storefront guidelines and consider including guidelines into Urban Renewal Plan to help regulate architectural consistency along Greenmount.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



TODAY: View of 1000 Block of Greenmount



- Freshly painted cornice and trim
- Infill mixed-use development
- New energy efficient windows
- Signage with clear and simple business name and logos
- Place-based murals
- Street trees
- Pedestrian scaled streetlights
- Branded neighborhood banners
- Transparent storefront windows
- Cafe seating
- Planters
- Curb-extension at intersections
- Highly visible cross walks



TOMORROW: View of 1000 Block of Greenmount



Gateway Opportunity and Connections Map

-  Key Pedestrian Connection
-  Gateway Opportunities

GATEWAYS & CONNECTIONS

VISION

Gateways at key intersections or thresholds heighten the sense of arrival and reinforce the identity of the neighborhood. Gateway designs will incorporate the approved Johnston Square brand. Where possible gateways should enhance pedestrian safety and support a balanced streetscape for all modes of transportation.

Key gateway locations include the following:

1. Preston, Biddle and Chase Street Bridges
2. Greenmount Avenue Intersections
3. Harford Avenue at Eager, Biddle and Hoffman Street

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Paint bridges to enliven the visual experience between Mid-Town and Johnston Square.
2. Introduce greenery by using durable planters.
3. Upgrade street lights to include energy-efficient and well-balanced illumination. Place Johnston Square brand banners on streetlight poles.
4. Use tactical urbanism, such as parklets, to encourage thoughtful experimentation of open space opportunities within the street right-of-ways.
5. Implement curb-extensions at the bridge thresholds to create focal landscape and storm water management opportunities and support an overall traffic calming strategy.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



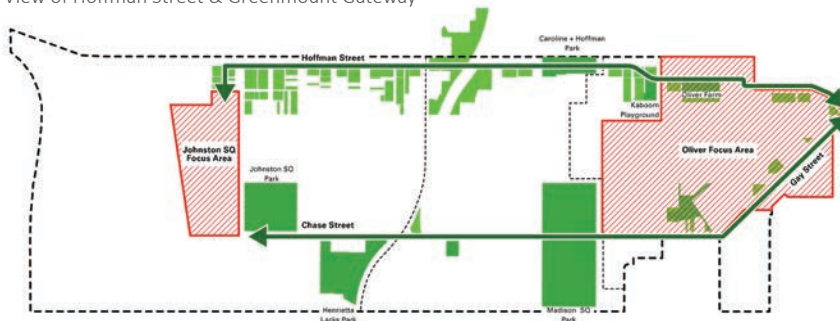
View of Hoffman Street & Greenmount Gateway



Precedent of Painted Bridge Gateway



Precedent for Biddle Street Linear Park Over i-83



Open Space Connections Between Oliver and Johnston Square
(Isaac W Stein, RLA Isaac@deptdesignoffice.com)

6. Install civic art to heighten the experience of arrival and celebrates the heritage and identity of the community. Develop an art/mural process that connects citizens with artists and to collaborate on site-specific art projects.
7. Explore a pedestrian greenway bridge corridor parallel to Biddle Street linking the Fallway Memorial and future Greenmount Park. The bridge greenway expansion will provide a linear park experience, uniquely Johnston Square.
8. Explore multi-modal green infrastructure connections to neighboring points of interest including Penn Station, the Last Mile in Broadway East, and Johns Hopkins University East Baltimore campus.

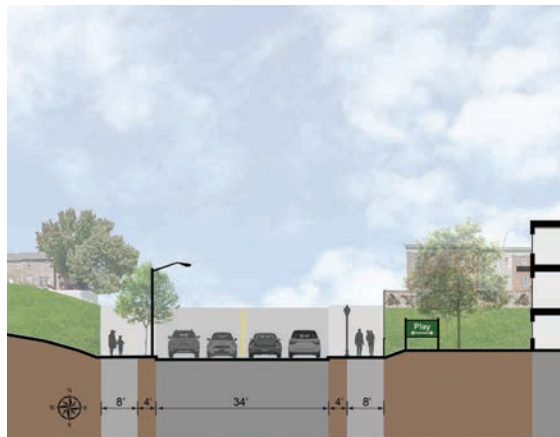
VALLEY STREET

VISION

Valley Street will become a link between existing assets: the newly renovated Henrietta Lacks Park with Johnston Square Elementary School and Johnston Square Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Add pedestrian lighting on the east side of the street to improve visibility at the edge of the school and create a barrier between pedestrians and automobiles.
2. Utilize placemaking strategies, such as decorative fence, murals and / or signage to connect Johnston Square Park to Henrietta Lacks Park via the schools' edge.
3. Request a study for adding tree pits and plantings along the schools' edge.
4. Create a better connection between the school's main entrance and Johnston Square Park; consider adding a mid-block raised crosswalk.
5. Increase programmed activities at Johnston Square Park to encourage use, including after school and summer time programs for school-aged children, and senior programs during the day, such as yoga classes or painting in the park.
6. Consider converting Valley Street to a one-way and adding angled parking to accommodate additional park activities.
7. Where possible, add street trees at the appropriate small scale and low plantings along the edge of the school.
8. Create better access from the elementary school to the baseball diamond and play fields at Johnston Square Park by adding vertical circulation (stairs and a ramp).



INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



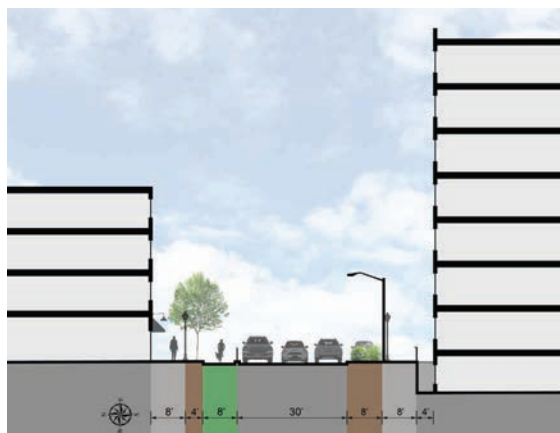
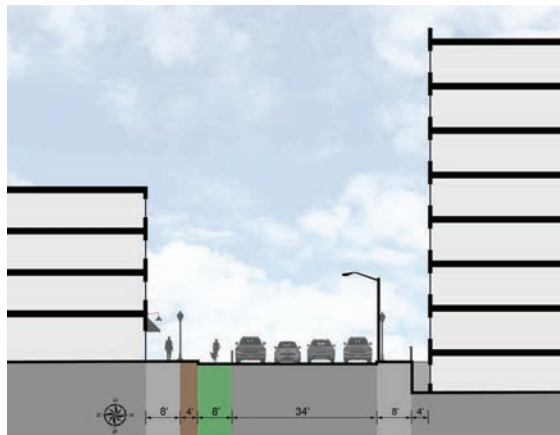
EAST PRESTON STREET

VISION

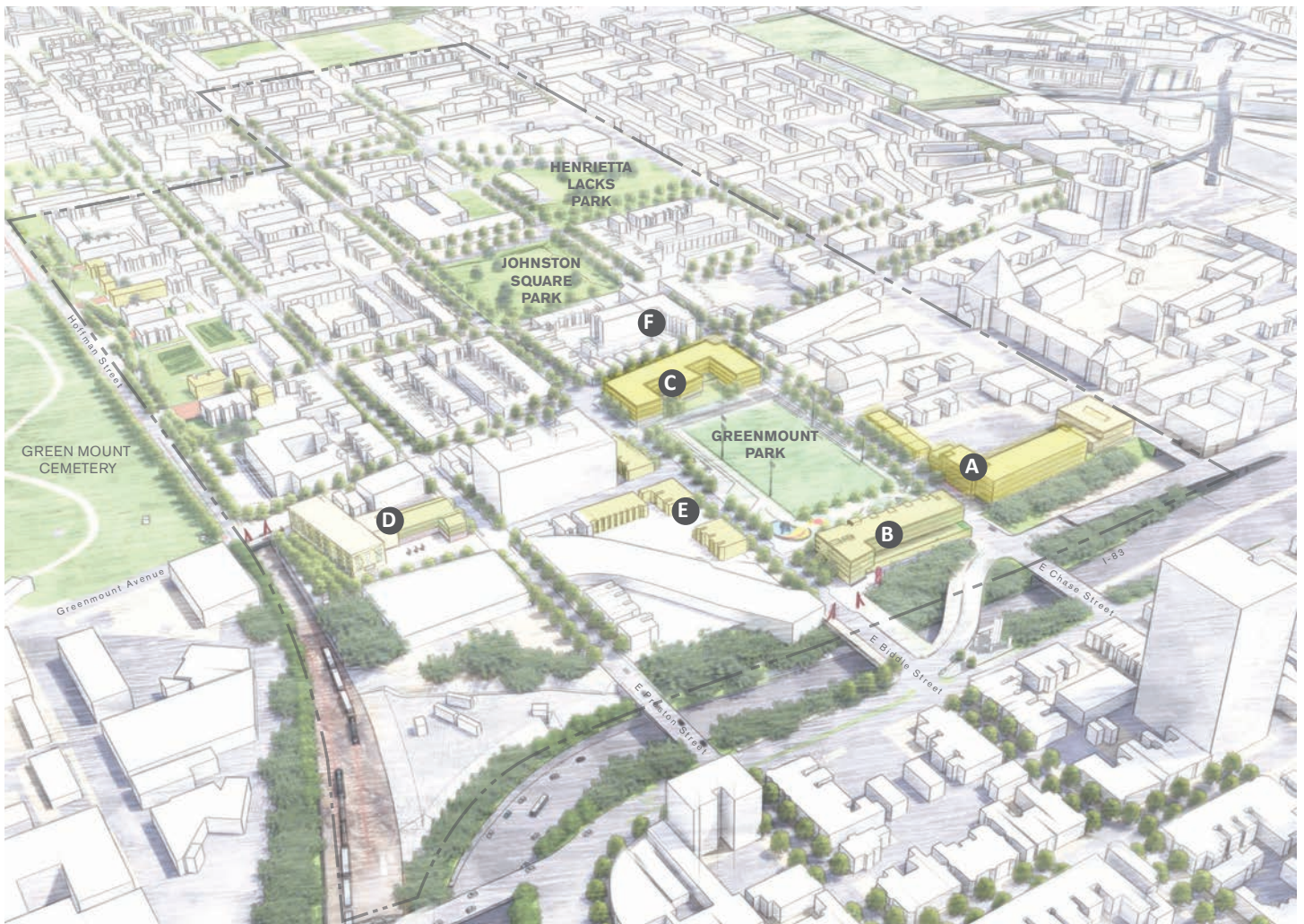
East Preston and Biddle Streets will become connectors into and out of Johnston Square for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Enhancements will help calm traffic and give pedestrians and cyclists an increased level of safety while offering an enjoyable experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve bicycle lane visibility with flex-posts and paint.
2. Improve crosswalk visibility with highly visible paint.
3. Request Department of Transportation repair curbs and sidewalks as necessary.
4. Request a study for adding tree pits and plantings throughout the stretch of Preston from Valley Street to Fallsway.
5. Add pedestrian lighting on both sides of the street to improve visibility and create a barrier between pedestrians and automobiles.
6. Decrease distance between sidewalks at corners using paint and flex-posts as a placeholder for curb bump out.
7. Where possible, add street trees at the appropriate small scale to maximize visibility; consider widening the south sidewalk to allow for tree pits, or add trees in movable basins.
8. Decrease distance between sidewalks at corners with concrete curb bump outs and improved crosswalks.
9. Remove bricks from window openings to meet Design Guide minimum requirement of 40% glazing at ground floor to improve relationship between buildings and street.



INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



View Looking Southeast of Development Initiatives

2. IMPACTFUL DEVELOPMENT

A variety of program ideas, architectural types and site configurations were tested and reviewed with participants for key sites. The following section captures the preferred development vision for key sites to promote housing choice and diversity of land uses, how buildings can reinforce the public realm and in some instances reclaim under utilized land.

KEY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

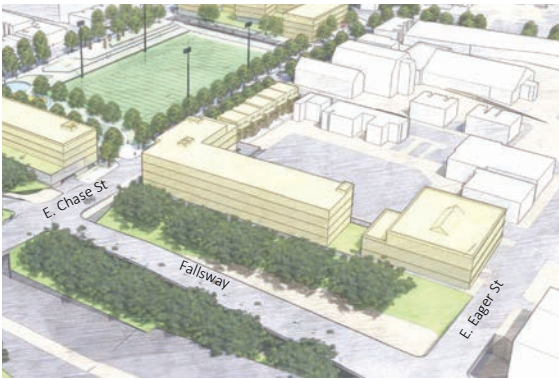
- A** 300 Block of East Chase St
(Residential/Commercial)
- B** 1100 Block of Barclay St
(Mixed-use Residential)
- C** 1100 Block of Greenmount Ave
(Mixed-use Residential)
- D** 508 East Preston St
(Residential/Commercial Mixed-use)
- E** 400-600 Blocks of East Biddle & 1200 Block of Brentwood (New & Renovated Residential)
- F** 700 E Chase St Apartments (under construction)



300 BLOCK OF EAST CHASE STREET

VISION

The redevelopment of the Sieck Site, which is a wholesale floral business located within two industrial buildings, is an opportunity to anchor the corner of Chase Street and Fallsway, a western portal into the Johnston Square neighborhood from Mid-Town Belvedere. Activating Chase Street is a priority. Building entrances and a higher level of architectural finish should face Chase Street.



The current configuration provides opportunity for adaptive reuse of the first and second floor for light manufacturing businesses and business incubator space. Longer term, residential multifamily is the preferred land use to provide critical density to support neighborhood vitality, potential retailers, and to face the future public park. Adaptive reuse of the Eager Street building to provide synergistic programming with the City Detention Center could create physical separation between the prison and future residential uses. A coordinated redevelopment with the Warden Street surface parking area offers greater development flexibility and possibilities.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Aggregate parcels to enable multifamily redevelopment along Chase Street.
2. New townhouse development along Chase Street and scattered rehab townhouses along Brentwood Avenue east of Warden Street.
3. Consider revising zoning of adjacent parcels along Chase Street and Warden Street to allow greater flexibility for mixed-use developments.
4. Assess existing building structure for adaptive reuse for light manufacturing and/or business incubator space.
5. Consider adaptive reuse of the Eager Street building to support non-residential programs.
6. Coordinate development activities with the State of Maryland to encourage shared parking, improved parcel dimensions to support the highest and best use along Warden Street.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1100 BLOCK OF BARCLAY STREET

VISION

The site plays an important role in establishing western gateway experiences at Biddle and Chase Streets. Development should encourage a mixed-use residential development to activate the future park space, new streets and gateway at Biddle Street. Active ground level uses, such as a small bakery, along Biddle Street would complement Meadworks, across the street, thereby creating a node of pedestrian activity within walking distance to Mid-Town Belvedere and Johnston Square. Consider providing additional building setback from Biddle Street to create wider views between Mid-Town Belvedere and Johnston Square and space to encourage a greenway along Biddle Street. Screen parking from future athletic park and streets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop parking and storage facility to support the immediate needs of an adjacent business. Structures should add visual interest to the adjacent future public park. Consider branded murals and quality materials on the face of building oriented towards the future park.
2. Coordinate site development with park design and future Barclay Street realignment. Enlarge development parcel to support minimum lot area requirements needed to satisfy zoning code.
3. Redevelop property to support mixed-use residential building.





1100 BLOCK OF GREENMOUNT AVENUE

VISION

The size and location of this site offers an opportunity to infill and activate Greenmount Avenue at the center of the commercial corridor. The community vision identifies a four-story mixed-use residential building with street level retail, residential lobby and amenities as well as shared community space to activate Greenmount Avenue. The scale of this building provides a density to support existing and future retailers as well as take advantage of frequent bus transit service. The building offers flexible ground floor area to enable a variety of retail uses, such as a pharmacy, bank or financial services, dine-in restaurant, athletic or fitness related services. Community space is strategically located along Biddle Street to take advantage of views and access to Greenmount Avenue and the proposed Greenmount Park.



The western side of the building overlooks the proposed Greenmount Park providing residents great views of the park and sunsets beyond the skyline of Mid-Town Belvedere.



RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Consider expanding the C-1 zoning district west to support future retail uses.
2. Develop multifamily residential building with retail space opportunities.
3. Work with existing social group to relocate to another location.
4. Attract an athletic and fitness related business, such as community fitness center, physical therapy and orthopedic services.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

508 EAST PRESTON STREET

VISION

Adaptively redevelop the Detrick & Harvey site at 508 Preston Street and adjacent Greenmount Avenue property to support an engaging mixed-use development. Where possible, preserve and reuse the existing buildings and iconic architectural elements to foster a strong sense of place. The red brick building headhouse along Preston Street is architecturally handsome and has a strong street presence. The lower scale garage addition detracts from the iconic building and should be removed. The community vision repositions the headhouse building into a non-residential building with ground level retail or community services and upper level with office and additional community supportive services, for example job training and business development. A new multifamily residential building is located behind the headhouse parallel to the Amtrak right-of-way. The ground floor provides parking as well as lobby, amenity and, if possible, retail along Greenmount. A shared use alley between proposed retail and 1320 Greenmount Avenue provides access for service vehicles and creates an outdoor space for both retailers. Surface parking should be screened from Preston Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Acquire properties or collaborate with current owners to develop active use on the sites.
2. Further analyze building systems and historic assets.
3. Renovate and adaptively reuse the multistory headhouse located on East Preston. Provide site improvements to support future non-residential uses.
4. Develop site and property into mixed-use development. Reuse existing buildings and/or clear site area to construct new housing.





400-600 Block of East Biddle Street

400-600 BLOCKS OF EAST BIDDLE STREET AND 1200 BLOCK OF BRENTWOOD AVENUE

VISION

The tall townhouses along E Biddle Street generally provide a continuous street edge along the north side of Biddle Street fronting the proposed Greenmount Park. Many of these Italianate houses still have intact beautiful historic architectural details such as ornate cornices, jig-sawn frieze panel decorated with a central bull's eye, decorative brick bands, marble sills and stoops and projecting brick hoods over entrance doors. Careful preservation of these facades will ensure the architectural legacy and authentic character of the neighborhood will live on for future generations to enjoy. The businesses of 439 East Preston Street are active local businesses. Site design considerations should encourage improved access and visibility of internal tenants currently obscured by existing townhouses, particularly along Brentwood Avenue.

At the time of this planning process ReBUILD Metro issued an RFP seeking design ideas for these sites.

OTHER INFILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

VISION

Vacant and underutilized structures and properties should be receive reinvestment to eliminate blight and rejuvenate the neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Encourage infill development and renovation of vacant properties (both residential and commercial) along Greenmount Avenue.
2. Residential reinvestment along Preston, Biddle, Chase Street and Mura Streets between Greenmount Avenue and Valley Street to enhance active streetscapes between parks.
3. Support local businesses, legacy residents, local churches and institutions to participate in reinvesting in properties to encourage wealth generation.
4. Develop infill housing opportunities along Hoffman Street Corridor to anchor the greenway.
5. Continue to expand residential investment (new construction and renovations) east towards Madison Square Park.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

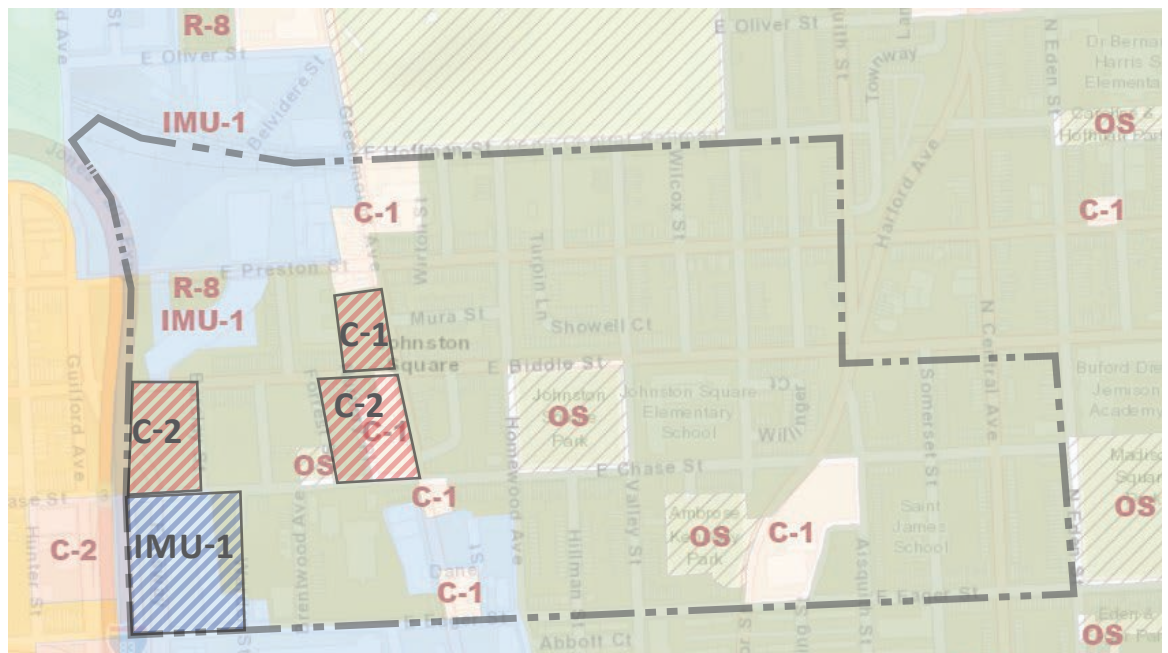
ZONING & URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

VISION

Regulatory documents need to be calipered to facilitate legal implementation of the community vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Evaluate changes to the zoning map and Urban Renewal Plan to guide positive redevelopment. The following considerations should be explored:
 - Consider rezoning properties to C-2 to encourage mixed-use development around the proposed park to activate and frame the park.
 - Explore expanding commercial zoning district boundaries along Greenmount Avenue to enable mixed-use development, particularly along the west side of Greenmount Avenue, between Biddle Street and Chase Street.
 - Consider expanding Industrial Mixed-Use boundaries to enable mixed-use and employment opportunities, particularly the along Warden Street.
 - Update URP land use exhibit to reflect current and proposed zoning changes.
 - The URP incorporates the East Baltimore Development Incorporation Design Guidelines. The guidelines establish basic urban design and architectural design controls to ensure a basic consistency of aesthetics and form. Waivers are permitted on a case by case basis to provide design flexibility and to address unique site conditions. Consider eliminating design guidelines from the URP or develop design guidelines that reflect local conditions.



Potential Zoning District Updates

DISPLACEMENT PREVENTION

VISION

Almost all housing in Johnston Square is currently affordable by regional definitions, as only roughly 4% of households need to pay more than \$1,500 per month in housing costs. However, much of this housing is “naturally occurring” affordable housing and therefore not protected escalating rents or property taxes, nor does much of it prevent its residents from facing housing cost burdens. Johnston Square residents overwhelmingly express a sense of urgency for the revitalization and income diversification of their neighborhood. They also recognize that Johnston Square’s proximity to Baltimore’s Midtown area and Penn Station make it vulnerable to housing cost increases and further cost burdens on current residents. Because most residents of Johnston Square are low-income homeowners and renters, efforts must be made to ensure that these residents are not displaced by redevelopment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

MAINTAIN AFFORDABLE HOUSING COSTS:

1. Ensure new housing built in the neighborhood—including redeveloped rowhomes and new multifamily housing developments—is rented or sold at a range of affordability levels.
2. Utilize Johns Hopkins Live Near Your Work program, the City of Baltimore tax credit programs, and other local programs to lower down payments and property taxes for aspiring low- and moderate-income homebuyers and to make homeownership more accessible.
3. Leverage City and State resources and tax credit programs to both lower rental costs and subsidize renters’ purchases of newly redeveloped single-family rental homes.
4. Encourage the City and local development partners to continue to quickly acquire and stabilize neglected homes and to protect them from speculation and ongoing abandonment.
5. Coordinate and partner with other developers to pace residential redevelopment to ensure that blocks are stabilized with minimal speculation from large private residential investors.

INCREASE ASSETS, KNOWLEDGE, AND CAPACITY TO AFFORD LOCAL HOUSING:

6. Work through Turnaround Tuesdays to create a pipeline connecting unemployed or underemployed Johnston Square residents to new neighborhood job opportunities as they emerge, including construction jobs, jobs related to open space activities and maintenance, and jobs created by new retailers, services, and light manufacturers entering the neighborhood.
7. Through ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization, educate existing homeowners on the Homestead Tax Credit and other programs and tools to manage rising housing costs.
8. Use ReBUILD Metro’s Path to Own program and other homeownership counseling programs to ensure existing residents have access to the financial guidance and homeownership readiness training needed to meet savings, credit, and educational requirements to buy their first homes.
9. Utilize and supplement grant programs to help current residents repair and improved their homes.
10. Secure pro-bono legal services to existing homeowners for estate planning to ensure homes and equity are passed along to family members.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



3. PROGRAM AND OPERATIONS

The following section outlines sustaining programs and operations to support social networks, reinvestment and economic growth.

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

VISION

Greenmount Avenue has the physical attributes, historic storefronts and infill opportunities to grow business and retail offerings. A culture of innovative businesses and creative entrepreneurs are expanding into the neighborhood, such as Sew Lab USA, a Baltimore-based manufacturing company that creates unique customizable soft goods and Charm City Meadworks. Johnston Square will harness these opportunities to expand job growth and wealth generation for existing residents and businesses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

INCREASE FUNDING SOURCES

1. Create new capital funds and/or make financing more readily available for local builders, property owners and community members to diversify the pool of people who benefit from wealth generation strategies, such as new job creation, real estate development and business ownership.
2. Encourage crowdfunded real estate development to create incremental redevelopment, stabilize residential blocks and create homeownership opportunities.
3. Seek out philanthropic funds sources or revolving loan funds to help finance real estate development or deliver aid to residents and local businesses through tax abatement funds, facade improvement programs for businesses, and home improvement programs for residents.



Sew Lab Training Program (Photo by Sew Lab)



Turnaround Tuesday Event (Photo by Turnaround Tuesday)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

4. Work with local housing and commercial developers to encourage and incentivize their hiring of local residents and contracting with local and/or minority-owned businesses.
5. Work with local developers and owners of commercial and light industrial spaces on the west end of Johnston Square to help them identify and recruit local entrepreneurs, minority-owned businesses, and/or social enterprises to occupy their completed/redeveloped buildings.
6. Foster partnership between Turnaround Tuesdays and new and existing local businesses to align Turnaround Tuesdays' local employment training with local retail, manufacturing, and construction job openings—and to promote hiring of unemployed or underemployed Johnston Square residents.
7. Engage and support current residents that are interested in entrepreneurship. Provide education and training for local residents on the benefits of owning a business.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



NEIGHBORHOOD BRAND

Successful neighborhoods have a strong brand that reflects who they are. The Pigtown neighborhood in southwest Baltimore celebrates its unique history through its distinctive brand. Consistent colors, symbols and images reinforce the legacy of the neighborhood. In Johnston Square, the theme of bees has resonated with residents from ideas generated by Penn State University landscape architecture student work, floral businesses and the Charm City Meadworks logo.



Be Kind Mural (Photo by Tiffany Thompson, BOPA)

ORGANIZATION AND BRANDING

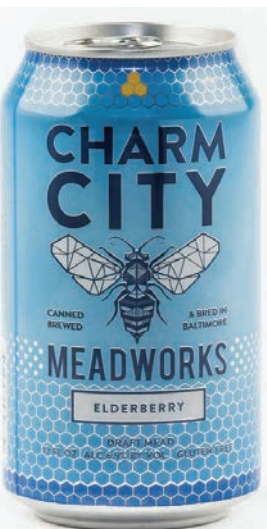
VISION

The neighborhood is fortunate to have grassroots leadership and key partners who believe Johnston Square can overcome disinvestment to become a sustaining, inclusive and equitable community. The neighborhood has a rich architectural legacy and a story share. The values and legacy of the community need to be clearly articulated, to reinforce the sense of place and celebrate community.

Johnston Square will continue to cultivate civic leadership and community partnerships to advance neighborhood revitalization, expand program offerings and ensure accountability to implement the master plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Develop a strategic plan for RJSNO that outlines an organizational structure, details short, mid, and long term goals, and creates a fundraising strategy.
2. Revive the local merchants association to support the needs of all merchants and to address opportunities to grow business activity.
3. Retain a branding consultant to work with the community and stakeholders to develop an iconic brand that celebrates inclusiveness, its historic heritage and uniqueness.
4. Adopt and implement brand attributes (typeface, colors, logo, tagline) to reflect the community throughout the neighborhood. Apply attributes to signs, murals, marketing campaigns and festivals to reinforce the community's identity and celebrate the area's authenticity.



QUALITY OF LIFE

VISION

Building from the initial efforts and successes of the ReBUILD Johnston Square Neighborhood Organization and working with a variety of partners, Johnston Square will strive to be a safe neighborhood that offers all residents access to educational opportunities through improved technology and strong school anchors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

SAFETY AND SECURITY

1. Continue to work with Baltimore City Police Department and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice to develop a micro-community policing plan. In order to achieve this, public safety stakeholders in the City should develop a framework where police and community members can work together to address crime issues by sharing responsibility, resources and decision-making. This framework should integrate the use of problem-solving strategies, community engagement, proactive evidence-based strategies and performance measures for gauging progress. The framework should extend beyond police-community collaboration to incorporate multi-sector partnerships where additional public and private stakeholders work together to define a problem, shape solutions, leverage resources and gain credibility and advocacy power to maximize positive outcomes.
2. Explore additional safety patrols and CCTV opportunities throughout the neighborhood to target specific areas of concern for residents.
3. Implement a series of neighborhood strategies to build social trust among new and existing residents, business owners and community associations. Strategies may include block parties, volunteer park and open space clean ups, neighborhood watch activities, and other activities in public spaces.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY AND TECHNOLOGY

4. Johnston Square was selected as BGE's first Smart and Connected Neighborhood in Baltimore City. Through this designation, the City, businesses and residents will evaluate, develop and deploy smart technology, operations and outreach. Possible technologies and activities may include, but are not limited to, advanced connected LED lighting with various sensors (air quality, public safety, etc.), electric vehicle charging infrastructure, public kiosks with public wifi capabilities, broadband, and education on energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities.
5. Develop a Community Education Plan and Digital Equity Vision for the neighborhood. Working closely with community, technology, and advocacy partners, Johnston Square will work to write a new story about using responsive technology investments and institutions to build frontline community power to challenge entrenched poverty, racism and an extractive digital economy— instead



INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Johnston Square Elementary School, Valley Street

prioritizing solutions that strengthen the community, acknowledging that broadband remains the most transformative technology of our generation. Through the delivery of hands-on trainings, leadership institutes and the co-creation of Digital Equity Principles, community leadership will be strengthened with an end goal of creating a comprehensive vision for a that ensures Johnston Square is politically, culturally and technologically connected.

6. Build relationships with organizations that support technology education, hardware, and access including Baltimore City Office of Information & Technology, Byte Back, PCs for People, and the Enoch Pratt Free Library.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

7. Create a Friends of Johnston Square Elementary School with the goal of forming strategic partnerships and attracting supplemental resources to create a better learning environment for the students. Priorities include improved attendance, professionalism among staff, student achievement, and a variety of modernization projects such as new lighting, a library, gym floor, and a bug for donations.
8. Continue to develop partnerships and outreach opportunities with workforce development programs like Turnaround Tuesday as well as partners that support social entrepreneurs like Innovation Works.

OPEN SPACE & GREENING

VISION

Johnston Square is home to a variety of open space from reclaimed vacant lots to the world class Henrietta Lacks Park. The variety of open space allows for both passive and active recreation as well as opportunities for beautification in the neighborhood and pride for residents. Continued support for maintenance, renovation, and expansion of existing parks and open space is needed to enhance quality of life and redevelopment initiatives.



Community Cleanup (Photo Regina Hammond)

RECOMMENDATIONS

MAINTENANCE

1. Secure funding for supplies and resources for the volunteer Green Team that maintains 17 vacant lots in the neighborhood as well as 5 additional pocket parks.
2. Create a Beautification Garden Club in partnership with Redeemer Church and Sixth Branch.
3. Continue to support Block Captains and the No Trash Zone project that play a vital role in ongoing upkeep of residential streets and reduction in litter and trash in the public realm.
4. Continue to identify potential underutilized green space for fencing and Clean and Green treatments.

PARKS

5. Work in partnership with Parks & People Foundation and Baltimore City Recreation and Parks to design and implement Phase II of Henrietta Lacks Park. Recent demolition of existing vacant homes adjacent to the newly renovated portion of the park provides an opportunity to expand the reach of the park and provide amenities for a wide range of ages.
6. Explore possible design and renovations of Johnston Square Park. The steep typography limits the usability of the park, thus creative solutions are needed to improve sight lines and community access.

INITIATIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7. Work in partnership with City agencies and nonprofit recreational programs to ensure new and existing local parks have daily programming (e.g. classes, organized sports, swim time, etc.) that are consistent with the needs and desires of Johnston Square residents and children. Programming opportunities should also attract outside users and events, such as sports teams, concerts and movies to help enliven park spaces and to attract revenue to support additional programming and upkeep.
8. Create a friends group to actively recruit resident involvement in planning of public art, open spaces, and other “third places.”

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

9. Continue to work with Baltimore Tree Trust to identify and plant trees and increase the tree canopy of the neighborhood, particularly on streets linking public spaces.
10. Work in partnership with the Baltimore Environmental Equity Partnership to identify stormwater management opportunities.
11. Work with City agencies and community associations to design and implement better linkages to open spaces. Improvements may include signage, streetscape design, traffic calming and accessibility upgrades.



Community Garden and Hoffman Street Tree Planting (Photo Regina Hammond)





IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Johnston Square Mural (Photo Regina Hammond)

IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

The Vision Plan of Johnston Square serves as a framework to rebuild the Johnston Square neighborhood over the course of ten years. In some cases, the implementation of recommendations is already underway, however other recommendations are intended to be long term and may not begin for several years. The hope is that this document can continue to evolve based on the foundation of this framework, and that adjustments and refinements are expected as implementation begins. The Johnston Square Partners are committed to providing updates, progress reports, and soliciting feedback from residents and stakeholders through periodic meetings and outreach events to continue participation and accountability to the community.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The matrix is organized by the three main planning goals: Public Realm, Key Development Initiatives, and Program and Operations. Each planning goal has a set of projects with a corresponding list of recommendations. The matrix identifies the Johnston Square Partner who will take the lead on each recommendation as well as possible key partners needed for implementation. Finally, the matrix prioritizes and identifies a timeframe for accomplishing each recommendation.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

“It’s important that the City is able to be a collaborative and creative partner in order to ignite revitalization in long disinvested neighborhoods. We are well on our way to creating the kind of outcome here that has been the vision of the Johnston Square community.”

-Michael Braverman, Housing Commissioner

JOHNSTON SQUARE PARTNERS

Each of the Johnston Square Partners brings a different yet complimentary level of expertise to implementing the recommendations outlined within this plan.

BARCO brings its skills and experience in creative real estate finance, project design and planning and entitlements and permitting to create award-winning spaces like Motor House and Open Works, and will serve as the lead for commercial development and adaptive re-use projects in the neighborhood.

BUILD brings a long history of organizing and developing leadership and capacity within neighborhoods with a focus on revitalizing neighborhoods with an emphasis on recreation centers, jobs, and an end to youth violence. BUILD will serve as the lead for workforce development and employment with their Turn Around Tuesday program, education, and public safety initiatives in the neighborhood.

RJSNO brings residents, business owners, and partners of Johnston Square together with the goal of improving the quality of life for all by organizing cleaning and greening initiatives, recreational programs, educational and employment opportunities, and improve public safety. RJSNO will serve as the lead for business development and branding, public art, open space and greening, streetscape improvements, and programmatic initiatives in the neighborhood.

ReBUILD Metro (RBM) brings its expertise in creating a multi-stage development model that engages in community planning, real estate development, construction management, property management, and other community programs. ReBUILD Metro will serve as the lead for residential development projects including single-family homes and multifamily housing projects.

St Frances Academy (SFA) brings 185 years of providing educational and recreational programming to the immediate neighborhood and the Baltimore Area. SFA will serve as the lead for the development of the football and athletic field to help support and grow all athletic departments including football as well as community uses.

One or a combination of the Partners will be responsible for the leading the next steps for each recommendation and bringing together key partners.

KEY PARTNERS

The following is a preliminary list that will continue to grow of possible key partners that will be instrumental in the success and achievement of the recommendations. In most cases, there will be a collaborative approach between multiple partners.

Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Minority & Women-Owned Business Development (MO)

Baltimore City Mayor’s Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ)

Baltimore City Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD)

Baltimore City Information and Technology (BCIT)

Baltimore City Department of Planning (DOP)

Baltimore City Police Department (BCPD)

Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks (BCRP)

Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT)

Baltimore Office of Promotion & Arts (BOPA)

Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS)

Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC)

Baltimore Environmental Equity Partnership (BEEP)

Baltimore Gas & Electric (BGE)

Baltimore Tree Trust (BTT)

Business Owners

Byte Back

Church of the Redeemer

Enoch Pratt Free Library (EPFL)

Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC)

Innovation Works (IW)

The Ivy Hotel (IH)

Johns Hopkins University (JHU)

Maryland State (MD)

Media Democracy Fund (MDF)

Mt Sinai Baptist Church

Neighborhood Design Center (NDC)

Parks & People Foundation (P&P)

PCs for People

Property Owners

University of Maryland

The 6th Branch (T6B)

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY



Plan Release and Demolition Event Feb 2, 2020 (Photos HCD)



RJSNO at Plan Release and Demolition Event Feb 2, 2020 (Photo Regina Hammond)

TIMEFRAME

The implementation timeframes range from short, medium, to long term as follows:

- Short (S), to occur immediately to 2 years
- Medium (M), to occur within the next 2 to 5 years
- Long (L), to occur within the next 5 to 10 years

GOAL 1: PUBLIC REALM

CREATE A VIBRANT AND CONNECTED PUBLIC REALM FOR ALL

Project	Recommendation	Time frame	JS Lead	Key Partner(s)
Johnston Square Field	1. Grade and clear empty lots to develop an interim practice football field	S	SFA	HCD
	2. Continue to develop a partnership and management plan	S	SFA	JHU
	3. Design and develop the park to fulfill the community vision	M	SFA, RJSNO	HCD
	4. Develop corner gateways to celebrate the arrival to the park and neighborhood	S	RJSNO	BOPA, NDC
	5. Work with local artists to introduce public art, particularly along Biddle Street	S	RJSNO	BOPA, NDC
	6. Consider reserving the ground to incorporate geothermal systems	M	SFA	BGE
Hoffman Street Corridor	1. Create a dedicated and buffered bike / trail facility along Hoffman Street	L	RJSNO	DOT
	2. Coordinate and implement park improvements with neighbors	S	RJSNO	T6B, Mt. Sinai Baptist Church
	3. Coordinate park design with the Oliver community	S	RJSNO, BUILD	Oliver Neighborhood Penn Station
	4. Install bump-outs / shortened crossings on north-south streets where they traverse the green space	L	RJSNO	DOT
	5. Develop gateway signage and landscapes at Greenmount Avenue and Harford Avenue	S	RJSNO	DOT, BOPA
	6. Develop a maintenance and stewardship team to oversee the park	S	RJSNO	T6B
	7. Encourage infill housing along north-south streets	M	RBM	HCD
	8. Strategically prepare and develop new home sites along the greenway	L	RBM	HCD
Greenmount Avenue Streetscape	1. Develop a landscape plan to coordinate pedestrian street lights, shade trees and landscape plantings and containers	S	RJSNO	DOT
	2. Develop signage and storefront standards	S	RJSNO	BDC, MO
	3. Enhance the experience at intersections to serve as both gateways and safe pedestrian crossings	M	RJSNO	DOT
	4. Develop a strategy to refurbish aging storefronts	S	RJSNO	BDC, MO
	5. Develop storefront guidelines and consider including guidelines into URP	M	RJSNO	BDC, MO, DOP

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Project	Recommendation	Time frame	JS Lead	Key Partner(s)
Gateways and Connections	1. Paint bridges	S	RJSNO	BOPA
	2. Introduce greenery by using durable planters	S	RJSNO	DOT
	3. Upgrade street lights	S	RJSNO	BGE, DOT
	4. Use tactical urbanism, such as parklets	M	RJSNO	NDC, DOT
	5. Implement curb-extensions at the bridge thresholds	M	RJSNO	DOT
	6. Install civic art	M	RJSNO	BOPA
	7. Explore a pedestrian greenway bridge corridor parallel to Biddle Street	L	RJSNO	DOT
	8. Explore multi modal green infrastructure connections	M	RJSNO	DOT
Valley Street	1. Add pedestrian lighting on both sides of the street	S	RJSNO	BGE, DOT
	2. Utilize placemaking strategies	S	RJSNO	BCPS, DOT, BCRP
	3. Request a study for adding tree pits and plantings along the school's edge	S	RJSNO	BCPS, DOT, BCRP
	4. Create a better connection between school's main entrance and Johnston Square Park	M	RJSNO	BCPS, DOT, BCRP
	5. Increase programmed activities at Johnston Square Park	M	RJSNO	BCRP
	6. Consider converting Valley Street to one-way and adding angled parking	M	RJSNO	DOT
	7. Add street trees and low plantings along the edge of the school	L	RJSNO	BCPS
	8. Create better access from the elementary school to the baseball diamond and play fields at Johnston Square Park	L	RJSNO	BCRP
East Preston Street	1. Improve bicycle lane visibility with flex-posts and paint	S	RJSNO	DOT
	2. Improve crosswalk visibility with highly visible paint	S	RJSNO	DOT
	3. Request DOT repair curbs and sidewalks as necessary	S	RJSNO	DOT
	4. Request a study for adding tree pits and plantings	S	RJSNO	DOT, BCRP
	5. Add pedestrian lighting on both sides of the street	M	RJSNO	DOT, BGE
	6. Decrease distance between sidewalks at corners using paint and flex-posts	M	RJSNO	DOT
	7. Add street trees at appropriate scale	L	RJSNO	DOT, BCRP
	8. Decrease distance between sidewalks at corners with concrete curb bump outs and improved sidewalks	L	RJSNO	DOT
	9. Remove bricks from window openings	L	RJSNO	Property Owner

GOAL 2: IMPACTFUL DEVELOPMENT

BUILD IMPACTFUL DEVELOPMENTS TO CREATE A MIXED INCOME AND DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Project	Recommendation	Time frame	JS Lead	Key Partner(s)
300 Block of East Chase Street	1. Aggregate parcels to enable multi-family redevelopment along Chase Street	L	BARCO, RBM	HCD
	2. New townhouse development along Chase Street and scattered rehab townhouses along Chase and Warden Streets	M	RBM	HCD
	3. Consider revising zoning of adjacent parcels along Chase Street and Warden Street	M	BARCO, RBM	DOP
	4. Assess existing building structure for adaptive reuse	S	BARCO	Property Owner
	5. Consider adaptive reuse of the Eager Street building to support non-residential programs	S	BARCO	Property Owner
	6. Coordinate development activities with the State of Maryland	M	BARCO	MD
1100 Block of Barclay Street	1. Develop parking and storage facility to support the immediate needs of an adjacent business	S	RBM	HCD, IH
	2. Coordinate site development with park design and future Barclay Street realignment	S	RBM	HCD, DOT
	3. Redevelop property to support mixed-use residential building	M	RBM	HCD
1100 Block of Greenmount Avenue	1. Consider expanding the C-1 zoning district west	S	RBM	DOP
	2. Develop multifamily residential building with retail space opportunities	M	RBM	HCD
	3. Work with existing social group to relocate to another location	M	RJSNO, BUILD	HCD
	4. Attract an athletic and fitness related businesses	M	RBM, SFA	BDC
508 East Preston Street	1. Acquire properties or collaborate with current owners to develop active use on the sites	S	RBM	Property Owner
	2. Further analyze building systems and historic assets	S	RBM	Property Owner
	3. Renovate and adaptively reuse the multistory headhouse located on East Preston	M	RBM	Property Owner
	4. Develop site and property into mixed-use development	L	RBM	Property Owner

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Project	Recommendation	Time frame	JS Lead	Key Partner(s)
Biddle, Brentwood & Other Infill Development	1. Encourage infill development and renovation of vacant properties along Greenmount Avenue	S	RBM	HCD, BDC
	2. Residential reinvestment along Preston, Biddle and Chase Street between Greenmount Avenue and Valley Street	M	RBM	HCD
	3. Support local businesses, legacy residences, local churches and institutions to participate in reinvesting in properties	S	RBM	HCD, BDC
	4. Develop infill housing opportunities along Hoffman Street Corridor	L	RBM	HCD
	5. Continue to expand residential investment further east towards Madison Square Park	L	RBM	HCD
Zoning and Urban Renewal Plan	1. Evaluate changes to the zoning map and urban renewal plan to guide positive redevelopment.	S	RBM	DOP
Displacement Prevention	1. Ensure new housing built in the neighborhood is rented or sold at a range of affordability levels	S	RBM	HABC
	2. Utilize local programs to lower down payments and property taxes for aspiring homeowners	S	RBM, RJSNO	JHU, HCD
	3. Leverage City and State resources and tax credit programs	S	RBM, RJSNO	HCD, MD
	4. Encourage the City and local development partners to continue to quickly acquire and stabilize neglected homes	S	RBM, RJSNO	HCD
	5. Coordinate and partner with other developers to pace residential development	S	RBM	HCD
	6. Work through Turnaround Tuesday to create a pipeline connecting unemployed or underemployed Johnston Square residents to job opportunities	S	BUILD	MO
	7. Educate existing homeowners on the Homestead Tax Credit and other programs	S	RJSNO	HCD, MD
	8. Use ReBUILD Metro's Path to Own program and other homeownership counseling programs	S	RJSNO	RBM
	9. Utilize and supplement grant programs to help current residents repair and improve their homes	S	RJSNO	HCD
	10. Secure pro-bono legal services to existing homeowners for estate planning	S	RJSNO	UMD

GOAL 3: PROGRAM AND OPERATIONS

DEVELOP SUSTAINING PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS TO SUPPORT SOCIAL NETWORKS, REINVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Project	Recommendation	Time frame	JS Lead	Key Partner(s)
Economic and Business Development	1. Create new capital funds and/or make financing more readily available for local builders, property owners, and community members	S	RJSNO	BDC, IW
	2. Encourage crowdfunded real estate development	S	BARCO, RBM	HCD
	3. Seek out philanthropic fund sources or revolving loan funds to help finance real estate development or deliver aid to residents and local businesses	S	BARCO, RBM	BDC
	4. Work with local housing and commercial developers to encourage and incentivize their hiring of local residents and contracting with local and/or minority owned businesses	S	BUILD	MO
	5. Work with local developers and owners of commercial and light industrial spaces to help them identify and recruit local entrepreneurs	S	BUILD	Business Owners
	6. Foster partnership between Turn Around Tuesday and new and existing local businesses to align Turn Around Tuesdays' local employment training with job openings	S	BUILD	Business Owners
	7. Engage and support current residents that are interested in entrepreneurship. Provide education and training for local residents on the benefits of owning a business	S	RJSNO, BUILD	IW
Organization and Branding	1. Develop a strategic plan for RJSNO that outlines organizational structure, details short, mid, and long term goals, and creates a fundraising strategy	S	RJSNO	BUILD
	2. Revive the local merchants association to support the needs of all of the merchant community and to address opportunities to grow business activity	S	RJSNO	BDC, MO, IW
	3. Develop an inclusive process to retain a branding consultant firm to work with the community and stakeholders to develop an iconic brand	S	RJSNO	NDC
	4. Adopt and implement the brand throughout the neighborhood and beyond	M	RJSNO	Business Owners

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Project	Recommendation	Time frame	JS Lead	Key Partner(s)
Quality of Life	1. Continue to work with Baltimore City Police Department and the Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice to develop a micro-community policing plan	S	BUILD	BCPD, MOCJ
	2. Explore additional safety patrols and CCTV opportunities	S	BUILD	BCPD, MOCJ, JHU
	3. Implement a series of neighborhood strategies to build social trust among new and existing residents	S	BUILD, RJSNO	Propety Owners
	4. Develop, deploy, and evaluate smart technology, operations and outreach to meet the community's needs	S	RJSNO	BGE, DOT, BCIT
	5. Develop a Community Education Plan and Digital Equity Vision for the neighborhood	S	RJSNO	MDF
	6. Build relationships with organizations that support technology education, hardware, and access	S	BUILD, RJSNO	Byte Back, BCIT, PCs for People, EPFL
	7. Create a Friends of Johnston Square Elementary School with the goal of creating a better learning environment for the students	S	BUILD, RJSNO	BCPS
	8. Continue to develop partnerships and outreach opportunities with workforce development programs	S	BUILD	Turn Around Tuesday, IW
Open Space and Greening	1. Secure funding for supplies and resources for the volunteer Green Team	S	RJSNO	BEEP
	2. Create a Beautification Garden Club	S	RJSNO	Church of the Redeemer
	3. Continue to support Block Captains and the No Trash Zone project	S	RJSNO	T6B
	4. Continue to identify potential underutilized green space for fencing and Clean and Green treatments	S	RJSNO	HCD, T6B
	5. Design and implement Phase II of Henrietta Lacks Park	M	RJSNO	P&P
	6. Explore possible design and renovations of Johnston Square Park	M	RJSNO	BCRP
	7. Ensure new and existing local parks have daily programming	S	RJSNO	BCRP
	8. Create a "Friend of" group to recruit residents involvement in planning of public art, open spaces, and other "third places"	S	RJSNO	BCRP
	9. Identify and plant trees and increase the tree canopy of the neighborhood	S	RJSNO	BTT
	10. Identify stormwater management opportunities	S	RJSNO	BEEP
	11. Design and implement better linkages to open spaces	S	RJSNO	BEEP

