



WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE CONGRESS HEIGHTS?

Sustainable Congress Heights represents a collaborative effort of District government agencies, led by the Office of Planning, to implement innovative projects that will support an economically vibrant, socially equitable, and environmentally responsible Congress Heights community. The Congress Heights neighborhood is undergoing many changes including the redevelopment of St. Elizabeths East Campus. To ensure existing residents benefit from these changes, District agencies are implementing existing plans and projects in a way that furthers neighborhood-scale sustainability—that is, achieving better environmental, economic and social outcomes. Sustainable Congress Heights has formed inter-agency working groups around seven core topic areas, identifying goals and the priority projects to achieve them:



Sustainable Congress Heights Eco District Boundary

1) Access and Mobility;

Goal #1: Improve connectivity and accessibility through efficient, integrated, and affordable transit systems.

Goal #2: Reduce traffic congestion to improve mobility.

2) Housing Affordability & Stability;

Goal #1: All residents have access to affordable housing choices.

Goal #2: No resident spends more than 45% of income on housing utilities and transportation.

3) Economic Workforce Development;

Goal #1: Increase wealth generation opportunities through entrepreneurship and small business development in Congress Heights.

Goal #2: Promote a vibrant commercial district with a range of retail options and amenities within walking distance for Congress Heights residents.

4) Healthy & Active Living;

Goal #1: Inspire healthy, active lifestyles for all residents, regardless of income, ability, or employment.

Goal #2: Create safe environments that are conducive to healthy living.

5) Materials Management;

Goal #1: Reduce the volume of waste generated and disposed.

Goal #2: Reuse materials to capture their economic value.

6) Watershed and Habitat;

Goal #1: Improve the quality of waterways to standards suitable for fishing, swimming, and wildlife habitat.

Goal #2: Reduce demands for potable water and increase rainwater reuse.

7) Energy

Goal #1: Improve the efficiency of energy use to reduce overall consumption.

Goal #2: Modernize energy infrastructure for improved efficiency and reliability.

Starting in 2016, Sustainable Congress Heights will host a number of community activities and events around Congress Heights to take action on sustainability issues and further core topic areas. Neighborhood activities may include tree plantings, community health days, fitness activities or trail cleanups along Oxon Run. Each of the seven working groups above will implement a community project or event.

WHY CONGRESS HEIGHTS?

Sustainable Congress Heights is not a standalone initiative. It builds on the substantial planning work already done to date and leverages investments within Congress Heights to achieve neighborhood sustainability. Taking a look at investments, the largest ones consist of public projects. These range from the infrastructure for St. Elizabeths East campus redevelopment to very significant investments in the social, recreational and educational anchors of the community. The District aims to leverage these investments to make them more innovative and high impact to the benefit of the community. Additionally, investments have been made in the following:

- Oxon Run Green Infrastructure (DDOT)
- Oxon Run Green Streets (DDOT-IPMA)
- Oxon Run Watershed Implementation Plan (DDOE)
- Oxon Run Trail Restoration (DDOT-IPMA)
- St. Elizabeths Gateway Pavilion (DMPED, DGS)
- Rise Demonstration Center (DMPED)
- St. Elizabeths Water Tower (DC Water)
- Congress Heights Metro (WMATA)
- Congress Heights Main Street Program (DSLBD)
- Ballou Cogeneration / District Energy Feasibility Study (DGS)
- Ballou School Modernization / high performance public facilities (DGS, DCPS, DPR)
- Vision Zero Intersection Improvements and Safety Study (DDOT)
- SE Tennis and Learning Center
- Great Streets Grants (DMPED)

WHY ECO DISTRICTS?

In 2014, the District of Columbia formed the **Sustainable Congress Heights** initiative (formerly the St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights EcoDistrict). The Sustainable Congress Heights Initiative is part of the District's involvement with the national Target Cities Initiative, a 2-year effort to develop models for sustainable community revitalization in the form of EcoDistricts. EcoDistricts are an effort to deploy high-impact, district-scale sustainable projects that drive experimentation and innovation, using a replicable model that accelerates neighborhood sustainability to achieve citywide goals. There is one other EcoDistrict in Washington, D.C. – the Southwest EcoDistrict led by the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC).

Sustainable Congress Heights builds upon the success of the **Sustainable DC Plan**, the 20-year blueprint for making DC the greenest, healthiest and most livable city in the country. Sustainable DC is working to create green jobs, healthier people, and more equitable neighborhoods in every part of the city. Yet, despite becoming one of the leading cities in the US on sustainability, especially in the fields of green buildings, green mobility and stormwater, the District is not yet meeting goals for waste diversion, access to healthy food, and clean waterways. To address these challenges, the District must move beyond individual projects and building-level efforts and focus our attention at the neighborhood-scale, where substantial measurable improvements are possible.

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