

Agency Environmental Justice Activity – Case Study & Examples The Maryland Port Administration

The Maryland Port Administration, an agency of the Maryland Department of Transportation, has been engaging with and partnering with communities throughout the Baltimore region for more than 30 years. Many port area communities are underserved or disadvantaged, and MDOT MPA's activities advance stakeholder inclusion, local environmental enhancement, and socially responsible decision-making.

In 2015, the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA), the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing a partnership to work together to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases associated with the Port. For the past five years, MDOT MPA has been fortunate to receive approximately \$6.3 million in state and federal funds to support the partnership's investments of projects to clean the air around the Port. One of the key elements of the partnership was to work closely with communities surrounding the Port to get their ideas and their input on environmental protection initiatives.

[This report](#) summarizes the workgroup's 2019 activities and accomplishments.



Maryland Department of the Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles at a clean truck rollout ceremony at the Port of Baltimore.

Activities to Expand Stakeholder Engagement and Awareness

MDOT MPA, MDOT and MDE continue to place a high priority on increasing stakeholder engagement. The workgroup that manages the activities of the partnership continues to focus on projects that will provide direct environmental benefits to the communities around the Port.

Community Engagement

- Attending community group meetings to provide presentations on air quality and the agencies' efforts to reduce air emissions.
- Developing relationships with representatives of faith-based and other organizations in West Baltimore, Brooklyn, Dundalk and additional areas near the Port.
- Providing and participating in tours, sponsored by the Baltimore Port Alliance, to give community members a first-hand look at Port operations.
- Providing and participating in tours for EPA regional and national staff, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and private terminal operators to familiarize them with successful grant-funded Port projects and discuss future possibilities.
- Teaming with the Maryland Motor Truck Association to promote the Idle Free MD campaign which discourages unnecessary engine idling that contributes to harmful air emissions.
- Providing outreach materials to truck drivers serving Seagirt Terminal explaining the importance of idle reduction.
- Including private Port tenants in the workgroup's monthly meetings to exchange information and ideas.
- Creating and marketing a Diesel Equipment Upgrade Program website and producing a video on cargo handling equipment replacements.
- Presenting Port environmental accomplishments and plans to outside groups such as the Maryland Port Commission, Maryland Department of Transportation's environmental justice workshop, and the Air Quality Control Advisory Council.
- Publishing accomplishments and events in the GreenPort newsletter, MDE Heron, Port of Baltimore magazine, and in social media.
- Participating in a tree planting day sponsored by Blue Water Baltimore along Broening Highway.

Community Grants

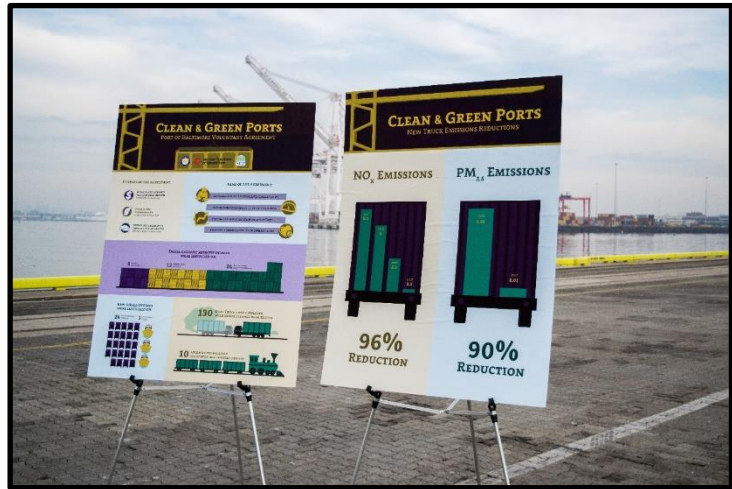
- Assisting Marshall's Trash Removal in Turner Station to successfully apply for a Volkswagen Mitigation Fund grant to replace an older, higher polluting trash truck with a 90% cleaner truck.
- Working with Curtis Bay/Brooklyn citizens to successfully apply for a new cleaner truck for the Baltimore Compost Collective.



- Meeting with Baltimore City to consider replacing older engines for Inner Harbor trash skimmers and water taxis.
- Investigating the Climate Access Fund for local solar energy projects.
- Helping the Greater Baybrook Alliance, Safe Alternative Foundation for Education (SAFE) and Maryland Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education apply for EPA Environmental Education grants.

Examples of the MDOT MPA partnership activities include:

- **Air Quality Improvement Programs** – The MDOT MPA/MDOT/MDE partnership has been highly successful in seeking federal and state air quality improvement grants to reduce the emission of air pollutants and greenhouse gases associated with Port activities. With these funds, MDOT MPA implements air emission reduction programs that have marked reductions in GHG, criteria and hazardous air pollutant emissions. The Ports Dray Truck Replacement program helps dray truck owners upgrade their older vehicles with cleaner, more efficient models to reduce diesel emissions locally and regionally.



The Cargo Handling Equipment Upgrade program helps eligible Port businesses improve their fleet while reducing emissions from heavy duty diesel engines. MDOT MPA has also been a recipient of funds from the Volkswagen settlement that will further improve our fleet of diesel equipment. Many of the communities with whom MDOT MPA has developed strong relationships regularly provide letters of support for our grant applications, strengthening these applications and making them more competitive and more likely to be funded.

Since the partnership was initiated in 2015 over \$6.3 Million has or will be invested to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases from operations around the Port.

- **Inform, Engage, and Invest Strategy** – MDOT MPA's model outreach approach helps to develop and foster relationships with communities throughout Baltimore, including in areas where Port terminals or transportation corridors are located. Through "Port 101" presentations, terminal and facilities tours, and other opportunities to dialogue, MDOT MPA works to establish a shared understanding of the needs, concerns, and priorities with community representatives. Twice each year, MDOT MPA hosts terminal tours to provide an opportunity to see the Port up close. When possible, MDOT MPA builds relationships through community engagement at public events and volunteer opportunities. Finally, when appropriate,



MDOT MPA will often invest time and resources, providing technical and other support to communities to help advance mutual goals.

- **Linking Communities to Port-related Jobs** - The Port of Baltimore (POB) is a major job creator and MDOT MPA has been a strong advocate of creating linkages between employers and prospective employees from neighborhoods throughout Baltimore. MDOT MPA and the Baltimore Port Alliance (BPA) collaborate on developing and distributing facts sheets about available Port-related training and job resources. In 2019, MDOT MPA supported BPA's first Hiring and Career Expo that helped connect 215 prospective employees with more than 30 Port businesses and organizations. Due to Covid, the next hiring event has not been scheduled yet.
- **Partnerships within the Port Community** – MDOT MPA leverages the support of the greater maritime community by coordinating public engagement events with the BPA. MDOT MPA co-chairs, the BPA's Environmental and Education and Outreach Committees, through which MPA participated in neighborhood cleanup events, assisted with community gardens at Filbert Street in Curtis Bay and Madeira Street in East Baltimore, and helped to plant trees near St. Helena in Dundalk.
- **DMMP Stakeholder Engagement, Community Outreach and Environmental Education** - Local stakeholders, community representatives and environmental advocates are a crucial voice in decisions made about the long-term sustainability of the DMMP. Specific examples include the: Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), Harbor Team, Masonville CAC, Cox Creek Citizens Oversight Committee (COC), Hart Miller Island COC and the Pearce Creek Implementation Committee. Each of these groups afford citizens and stakeholders the opportunity to share feedback and engage in transparent information sharing as part of the planning, operation and implementation of the Port's DMMP, including construction of containment facilities, mitigation, and reuse of dredged material. Working directly with community members ensures more efficient and cost-effective program development and allows MDOT MPA to respond to air and water quality concerns and invest in related community improvements.
- **Environmental Education** - Each year MDOT MPA's Environmental Education program works directly with students and teachers in schools around the State providing field trips to the various dredged material placement sites, classroom programs and through the Terrapin Head Start research initiative. The environmental education team recently created and launched a [virtual platform](#), to provide Port related lessons and activities to educators and parents statewide, who are home schooling their students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The MDOT MPA Environmental Education team members are able to provide professional development to educators themselves, which has a direct effect on teachers being able to earn continuing education units, a requirement of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). These lesson plans focus on dredging, dredged material management, and Port logistics, and the environmental education program activities also serve as a [teacher's guide](#) so that Maryland educators can readily see how the lessons align with MSDE standards for comprehensive learning around the Chesapeake Bay, watershed studies, and ecology.



- **Masonville Cove Public Access and Environmental Education Center** – MDOT MPA and the Masonville Cove Partnership recently celebrated 10-years of serving the adjacent communities of Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, Cherry Hill and Baybrook. MDOT MPA's partners, the Living Classrooms Foundation and National Aquarium, offer a variety of environmental education programs to students and citizens in the surrounding neighborhoods, including free and engaging experiences in the Environmental Education Center. MDOT MPA continues to explore cost-effective solutions to improving public access to the site through implementation of a Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) grant, in partnership with US Fish & Wildlife Service, for a multimodal trail to the site.
- **Fleming Park at Turner Station** - In 2019, MDOT MPA awarded a \$500,000 MDOT Secretary's Grant to support Fleming Park, in the neighboring community of Turner Station for improvements such as public recreation areas with open fields, walking trails that will allow visitors to observe birds and other wildlife, and a boardwalk that will provide access to the Patapsco River. This project will be the first example of beneficial use of Harbor channel dredged material within the Harbor area, providing this community with multiple benefits including flood risk protection, shoreline restoration, coastal resiliency, aquatic ecosystem and water quality improvements as well as enhanced waterfront recreational opportunities.
- **Urban Forestry Partnership** – MDOT MPA has partnered with the local non-profit Bluewater Baltimore to plant trees throughout Baltimore City to improve stormwater, air, and quality of life in these communities. To date, 1,500 trees have been planted through this partnership
- **Middle Branch** – MDOT MPA is a partner in the Middle Branch Waterfront Parks master planning process, which is actively working with the City of Baltimore, Parks and People Foundation, the South Baltimore Gateway Partnership and surrounding communities to integrate justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI) principles into the master plan, outreach and engagement processes and the ultimate design and implementation of the project.

Contact: Jill Lemke, MDOT Maryland Port Administration: jlemke@marylandports.com or 410- 385-4445.

