

Middle Branch Waterfront Plan: Design Competition

Baltimore, Maryland



From top: Design proposals from the three design teams supported by Biohabitats; Hargreaves Jones, James Corner Field Operations, and West 8

The Parks & People Foundation (Baltimore, MD) issued a call for proposals to develop a recreation and restoration plan for the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River in Baltimore, MD. Biohabitats supported three different design teams, who were invited to prepare concepts as part of a national design competition, with our local ecological knowledge and expertise in restoration and resilience planning in the upper Chesapeake Bay.

Biohabitats contributed expertise in native ecosystem restoration and adaptive ecological design with a focus on living shorelines and restoration of tidal wetlands,

Proposals for a transformed urban waterfront not only provide connectivity across neighborhoods, but support a more natural environment.

native woodland and scrub shrub buffers integrated into parks, trails, recreation areas, and revitalized neighborhoods in an area of Baltimore historically subject to the pressures associated with intense industry, aging infrastructure, and fragmented neighborhoods, resulting in vulnerable communities disconnected from the rest of the city. The three transformative urban waterfront proposals integrate better access and connectivity across the neighborhoods with healthier natural environs, supporting increased biodiversity, restoring vital marsh and woodland habitat zones, and prioritizing climate change resilience. The designs also weave the unique urban character of Baltimore with a mosaic of natural systems that reflect the Chesapeake Bay estuarine systems, providing an educational and

recreational resource for the local community as well as a broader array of visitors to “Charm City”. Biohabitats participated in public meetings and workshops with the community, then conducted site visits, data review and field research to support the teams’ designs in planning and visioning charrettes. All three proposals successfully merge residential, industrial and commercial life in a mosaic of development along a resilient and restored natural shoreline, helping to ensure that ecology is the foundation for a revitalized shoreline and resilient community.

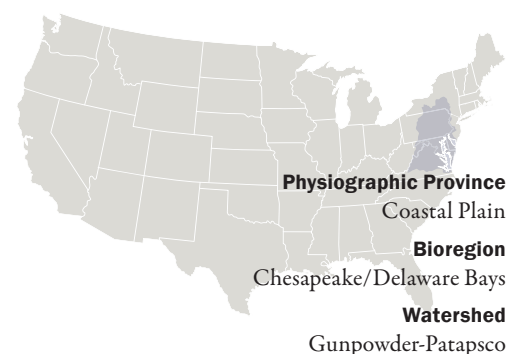
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Physiographic Province
Coastal Plain

Bioregion
Chesapeake/Delaware Bays

Watershed
Gunpowder-Patapsco