

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES**



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**The District of Columbia joins National “Target Cities” Program, Heralding a New Era of Urban Leadership in Sustainability with the St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights EcoDistrict**  
*The Department of General Services Commits to Three EcoDistricts Across Washington D.C., in Continued Support of the Sustainable DC Plan Goals.*

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**WASHINGTON, D.C. –**

Yesterday, the District of Columbia joined an elite group of North American cities committed to becoming a global exemplar of sustainability through neighborhood-scale projects that emphasize environmental performance, social equity and economic growth. EcoDistricts, the Portland, Oregon based nonprofit behind the Target Cities Program, announced the new partnership today at CGI America, a program of the Clinton Global Initiative. Three Washington-based Target Cities projects are currently underway in Southwest, Downtown and St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights.

Target Cities, a two-year partnership of seven development projects across five North American cities -- Boston, Cambridge, Denver, Los Angeles, and the District of Columbia – is designed to amplify and accelerate district-scale community regeneration and create replicable models for next-generation urban revitalization. “If we are to meet our ambitious goal of becoming the healthiest, greenest and most livable city in the United States, we must incorporate innovation in everything we do”, says Mayor Vincent C. Gray. “Our city’s emerging EcoDistricts will play a critical role in shaping the District’s future through innovative partnerships with local and federal governments, businesses and institutions and neighborhoods citywide.”

The Department of General Services (DGS) will play an integral role in the program’s success with the agency’s combined responsibilities for nearly 26 million square feet of city property and its Energy and Sustainability division, which oversees the District’s efforts to create one of the most efficient and sustainable portfolios of real estate in the United States. “Our agency continues to innovate by participating in relationships with expert partners in the sustainability field with whom we can continue to elevate the quality of life for residents in the District today, and for years to come,” said DGS Director Brian J. Hanlon.

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Despite remarkable progress over the last decade, the city is not yet meeting its Sustainable DC goals for waste diversion, access to healthy food and clean waterways. The establishment of the St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights EcoDistrict creates the unprecedented opportunity to meet the goals set forth by the Sustainable DC plan at the neighborhood level and help drive current redevelopment projects underway at St. Elizabeths East campus, planned improvements to Oxon Run Park, modernization efforts at Ballou High School and proposed development of St. Elizabeths West campus.

The St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights EcoDistrict will coordinate stakeholders with disparate interests and scales of impact, increase economic competitiveness through a cutting-edge sustainability infrastructure and articulate a municipal policy agenda with laws, incentives, and processes that support sustainable neighborhood development. The St. Elizabeths-Congress Heights EcoDistrict team will move beyond individual ‘one-off’ projects and refocus their attention on small-scale projects, which can be substantially measured.

Projects anticipated to be explored during the implementation phase of the EcoDistrict include: daylighting 1.5 miles of Oxon Run Creek; supporting infrastructure improvements on St. Elizabeths East campus, including the development of a pilot program to employ an innovative storm water management infrastructure for the historic buildings; and conducting a district energy feasibility study to assess a cogeneration project for Ballou High School and nearby Congress Heights. All of these capital improvements will build upon existing information technology, workforce development and sustainability programming currently underway at the Gateway DC Pavilion, and programming to be offered at the R.I.S.E. Demonstration Center, once construction is complete.

While EcoDistricts provides D.C. the opportunity to leverage national partners, collaborators and international experts, the project will face many challenges, including the need for careful collaboration between federal and District agencies, private entities and community based organizations to overcome the regulatory barriers and long-term governance issues associated with public-private partnerships.

“We’ve got a lot of work ahead of us. But on the other hand, we also have a great team that is committed to building a resilient and forward-looking community that will serve as a laboratory for sustainability innovation,” said Zach Dobelbower, Director of EcoDistricts for the Department of General Services.

### **About the Department of General Services**

The mission of the Department of General Services is to elevate the quality of life for the District with superior construction, first-rate maintenance and expert real estate management. By building and maintaining safe and green state-of-the-art facilities which foster economic growth and elevate educational environments, our trusted and skillful employees create modern and vibrant communities across all of the District of Columbia.

### **About EcoDistricts**

EcoDistricts, the Portland, Oregon-based nonprofit credited with developing the Target Cities Program, will act as a strategic partner to each of the project teams, helping them build robust governance models that will spur deep political and technical change, perform integrated assessment and goal setting tasks, and accelerate the deployment of strategies to deepen their impact. Information on the Target Cities initiatives as well as EcoDistrict best practices will be shared at the upcoming EcoDistrict Summit, hosted by Washington, D.C., September 24-26, 2014.

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