NEIGHBORHOOD SPRUCE-UP PROGRAM

2025

SOUTHEAST community development corporation

50 YEARS OF BUILDING COMMUNITY

1975—2025

Neighborhood Spruce-Up Overview

- $7,500 - $20,000 capital grants to fund public space improvements in Southeast and East Baltimore neighborhoods.

- Enables smaller community groups and individuals to have an impact on neighborhood revitalization.

- Modeled after a successful program developed by the Central Baltimore Partnership.

- Funded by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative.

2025 Eligible neighborhoods
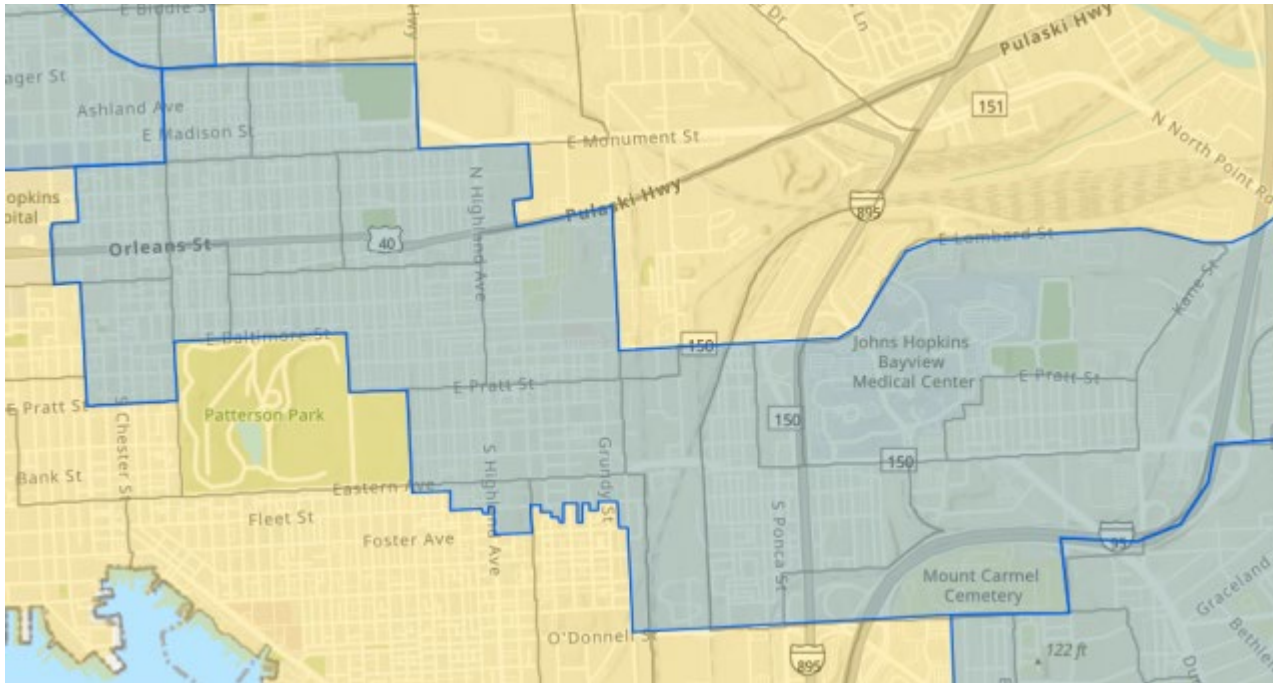
- **Baltimore Highlands**
- **Bayview**
- **Butchers Hill**
- **CARE**
- **Ellwood Park/Monument**
- **Greektown**
- **Highlandtown**
- **Madison-Eastend**
- **McElderry Park**
- **Milton-Montford**
- **Patterson Park (Neighborhood)**
- **Patterson Place**

Please visit DHCD's Neighborhood Revitalization Mapper (https://portal.dhcd.state.md.us/GIS/revitalize/index.html) to verify if your proposed project falls within the boundaries.

Program Goals

- Implement new quality of life improvement projects.

- Utilize physical space planning projects to facilitate community engagement and community revitalization.

- Contribute to building a critical mass of long-lasting, high-impact improvements in public spaces.

Placemaking

Project for Public Spaces

- Inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of every community.

- Facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

- Capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, and it results in the creation of quality public spaces that contribute to people's health, happiness, and well being.

SPRUCE-UP
PROJECT EXAMPLES

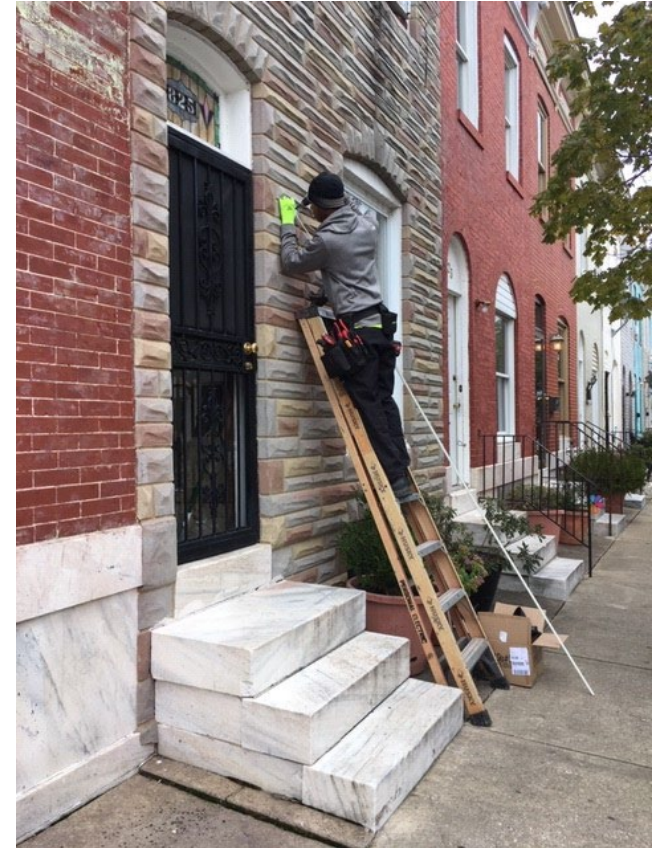**Creative Alliance** $20,000 award

Arts & Parks $20,000 award

Patterson Park Neighborhood Association
$19,000 award

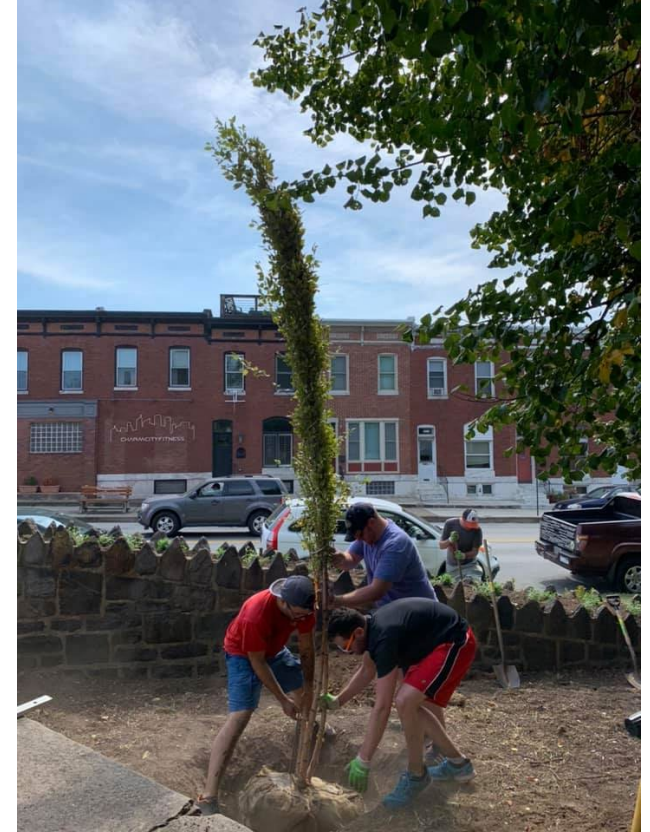# Amazing Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
$12,000 award

Milton-Montford Community Association
$17,000 award

Friends of Patterson Park
$13,500 award
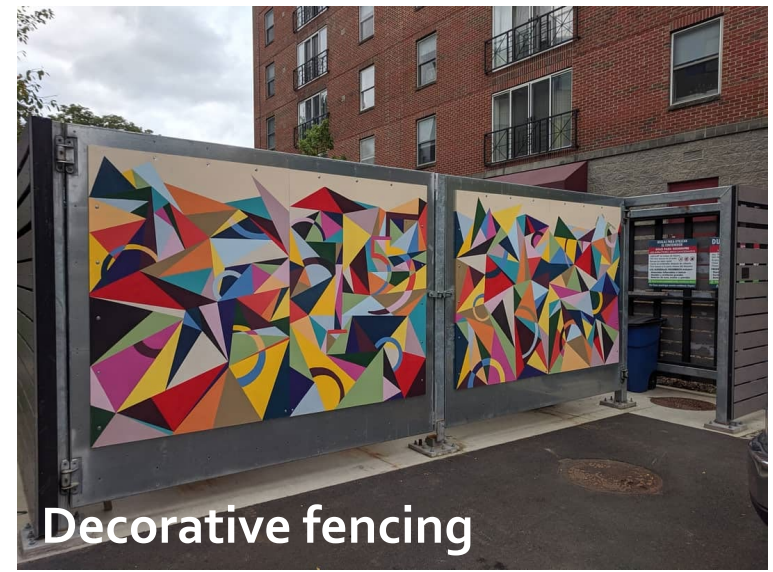
Greektown Neighborhood Association
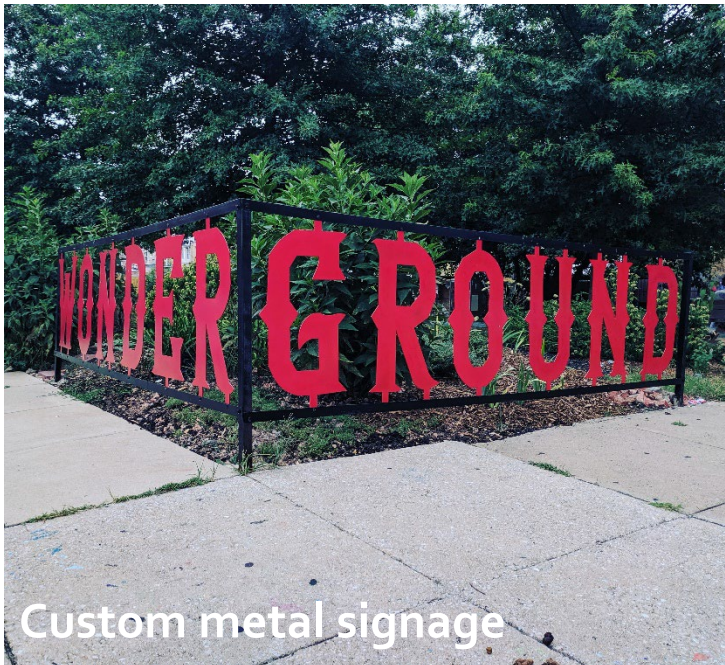## $23,000 award
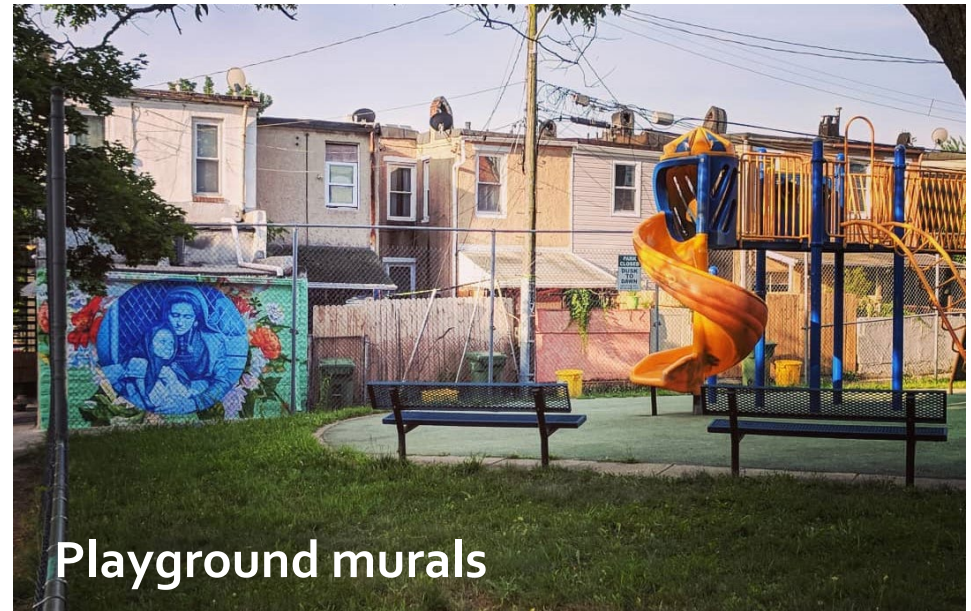
INSPIRATION

Sculptural fencing

Decorative fencing

Custom metal signage

Playground murals

Nature playscape

Outdoor classroom

Community gathering spaces

Public recreation

Outdoor seating

Bike racks

Parklet

Neighborhood branding

PROGRAM SPECIFICS

Who's eligible?

Individuals, community associations and non-profits.

The applicant must have a 501c3 designation, or use a 501c3 as a fiscal agent.

A fiscal agent is an organization that manages financial and administrative tasks on behalf of another party.

What's eligible?

Projects must be accessible to the public, on land that you have legal rights to use.

Projects must have an expected life span of at least 20 years.

What's eligible?

Capital costs only. Spruce-Up funds cannot support operating costs.

Capital costs are things that do no move from the site, such as paint, artist's time, planters, plants, benches, light fixtures

Operating cost examples: staff time, permits for events, stipends for youth, conceptual design drawings (not related to final installation), tools

What's eligible?

Projects must include planning, development, and other forms of engagement by community residents, groups, or organizations.

Engagement could include surveys, public voting, volunteer days, design charrettes with neighbors, art designed or made by youth, etc.

Proposals that include committed matching funds will receive priority in the grant review process.

Spruce-Up 2025 Timeline

- Please submit any final questions by Friday, May 23, 2025, 9am

- Applications due by Monday, May 30, 2025

- Project period: June 30, 2025-June 15, 2026
  Projects that can be completed by **December 1, 2025** will receive priority ranking.

- Final report due: June 30, 2026

Spruce-Up Spending Guidelines

Southeast CDC can pay for project costs by paying your contractors directly or reimbursing you for expenses.

Project planning tips

Site Control: private property vs. city property, city right of way

Budget: one time costs, ongoing costs

Fundraising: "capital" or not? - donations/crowdfunding, grants

Implementation: contractor, volunteers

Celebration: ribbon cutting, community gathering

Evaluation: document everything for reporting

Project planning tips

Obtaining site control

Public property: requires permission from owner (Rec & Parks, Housing, DPW) which could take many months, and must use approved contractors

Private property: requires permission from the owner
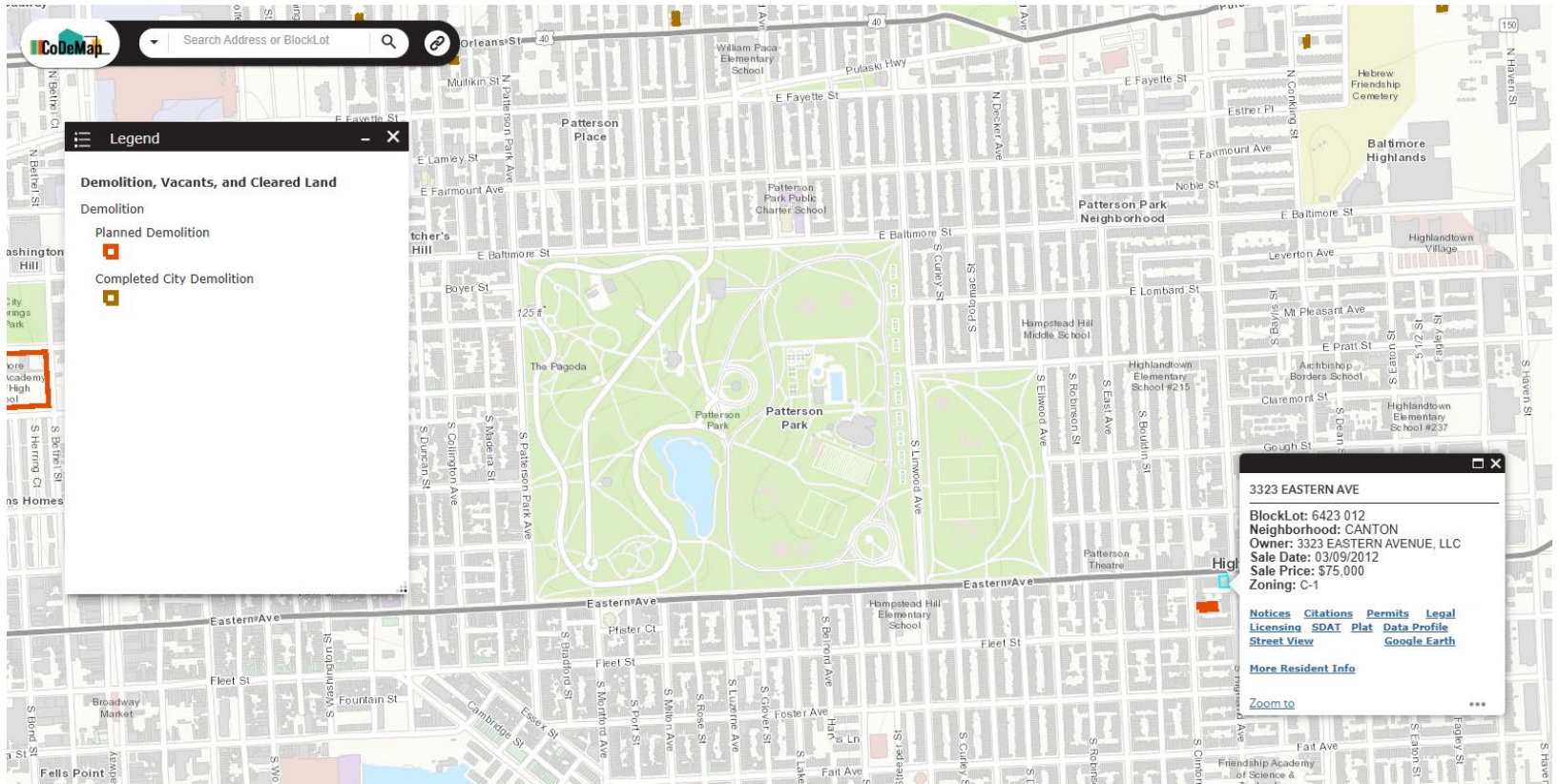
Project type

Greening: ongoing maintenance plan

Changes to buildings: Maryland Historical Trust review for any changes to buildings, including murals and lighting

Installation: professional or volunteers?

Baltimore City CoDeMap
https://cels.baltimorehousing.org/codemapv2ext/

PROJECT EXAMPLES & RESOURCES

Amazing Port Street Commons Gating Project

Site: Greenspace owned by the community land trust, but gating alleys requires permission from the City and abutting property owners

Project Management: Amazing Grace Lutheran Church staff member

Spruce-Up Funding: $12,000 for gates and lockboxes

Timeline: Took over a year to collect property owner permissions, go through the City's alley gating process, and install the gates

Greektown Sculpture

Site: Median owned by Department of Transportation; requires "Right of Way Art" approval and typical permits for construction

Project Management: board members of the Greektown Neighborhood Association

Construction Management: Dominic Terlizzi (artist selected through public process)

Spruce-Up Funding: $23,000

Timeline: Initiated July 2018, completed February 2020 (It takes lots of time to go through the city's review and process checks to get the sculpture fabrication started!)

Inspirational resources

Inspirational resources
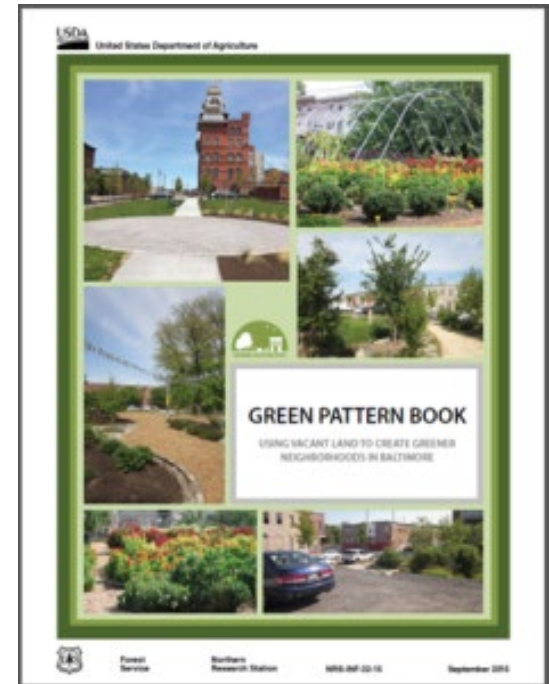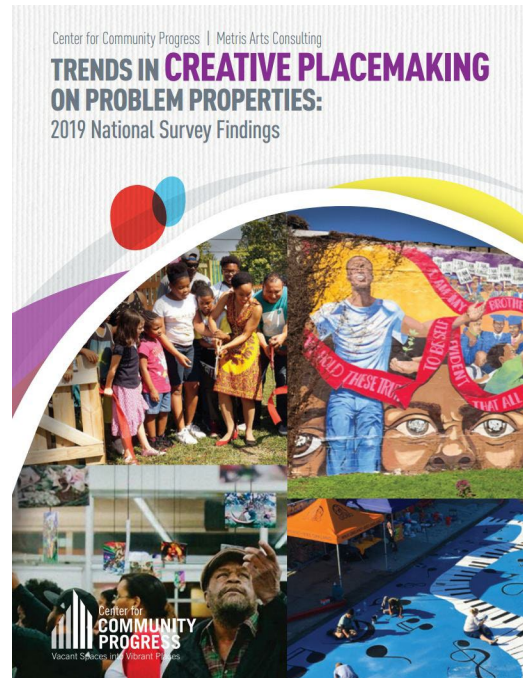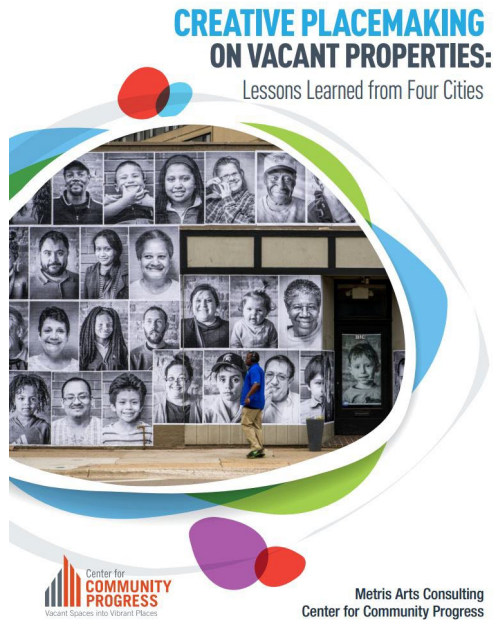
PRACTICAL URBANISM

Hashtags to search:
#placemaking
#publicart
#publicspace
#publicspacedesign
#urbandesign
#walkable
#tacticalurbanism

Spruce-Up Resource Guide

- Grants

- Guides

- Tools

- Working on City-owned land

- Vendors (available from SECDC)

Available at www.southeastcdc.org/spruceup

QUESTIONS

Questions from session

- **Can Spruce-Up funds be used for ground murals?** Yes – BRNI funds have been used for ground murals, provided they are installed by a professional artists who takes precautions to prepare the ground and use proper primer and traffic paint

- **If an organization already has a project funded through MD DHCD, can they apply for Spruce-Up funds?** Yes!

- **Who will manage the Maryland Historic Trust process?** Southeast CDC will send your project proposals to MHT. Feel free to submit your locations to us ahead of time to be vetted (especially if they are murals).

- **Are these State or Federal funds?** State funds

- **Can we add planters to an alley?** Potentially yes, but we may require you to seek approval from DOT to block an alley, depending on the placement and need for emergency access to the alley

- **Can we pay for cameras to monitor illegal dumping?** Not with Spruce-Up funds

- **Plants –** Spruce-Up can pay for perennials but not annuals

- **Can we install a bus shelter?** Yes! You will need to coordinate with MTA for location approval