



*part of the last
working agricultural
space in the city*

living wetlands

mature trees

This unparalleled 56-acre parcel of land is the last of its kind here in Fredericksburg, VA

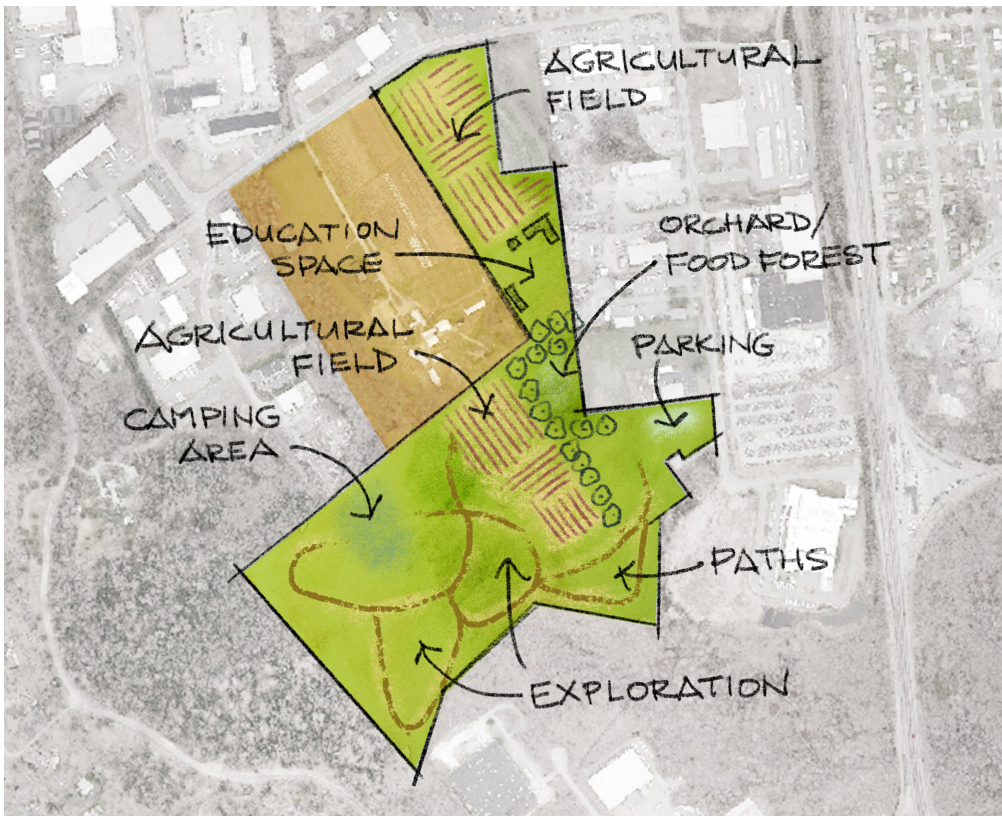
This is our vision for its future.



206 Charles Street, Fredericksburg, VA 22401 | 540.371.7315 | downtowngreens.org

The Future of Farming and Green Spaces in Fredericksburg

Downtown Greens is working to purchase and conserve a parcel of land in Fredericksburg, Virginia to extend its campus and programming capabilities.



The Perfect Fit

As an extension of what Downtown Greens has been doing for over 25 years, this project will protect and nurture urban greenspace, teach the community about sustainable and organic growing techniques and provide accessible open space.

Downtown Greens has brought the community together for more than 25 years. A second campus for the organization would mean conservation of one of the last agricultural spaces in the City of Fredericksburg.

Our team and partners are eager to take on the exciting opportunity to purchase and conserve this unique parcel of land in our community. It will not only expand our programming capabilities, but increase the number of people in our community who can enjoy accessible green space.

The unparalleled 56-acre parcel of land is the last of its kind here in Fredericksburg, Virginia. It contains living wetlands, mature trees, and nearly 20 acres of some of the last working agricultural space in the city.

We invite you to join us in the opportunity to:



Provide accessible greenspace in the City



Grow and inspire the next generation of farmers



Create outdoor education opportunities

The Vision



ACCESSIBLE GREEN SPACE

A continuation of the successful open-access garden and green spaces for all to enjoy with education and community mindedness at its core.



AGRICULTURAL TRAINING CENTER

A partnership with Michael Carter, Jr., an 11th generation Black farmer from Carter Farms in Orange, Virginia to teach the mechanics of 'hands in the dirt' farming, marketing, small engine repair, food safety training, irrigation and hydroponics, digital technologies and more. Let's open the next generation's eyes to the boundless profitability made possible by agricultural jobs.



NATURE BASED LEARNING

Partnerships with local schools will bring students to use the property as an outdoor classroom for wetlands research projects and connection with nature. Some partnering schools include: Gladys H. Oberle School, an alternative, special education day school in the area; Brompton Community School, a nature focused school; and the University of Mary Washington.





Accessible greenspace for the entire community

A host of studies have proven the health benefits of access to nature for all ages. As the pace of development in the City of Fredericksburg is hastening, open space is becoming more critical and the need to preserve it increasingly essential to the health of our community.

We want to conserve this parcel of land so that future generations can continue to discover unique components of nature. This is one of the last remaining parcels of open greenspace in Fredericksburg, Virginia, and also includes biologically diverse wetlands and active farmland.



Open space conservation

"As the premier river conservation organization in the City of Fredericksburg for over 35 years, Friends of the Rappahannock is keenly aware of the intimate link between open space preservation and water quality. In fact our 2018 river report card awarded the Middle Rappahannock a D+ grade for Land Use, due in part to a scarcity of open space conservation in the Fredericksburg area. Preserving this property would raise that grade and provide a rare opportunity for land conservation in a mostly built-out city."

—Adam Lynch, River Steward with Friends of the Rappahannock



Growing and inspiring the next generation of farmers

Our goal is to inspire, educate, and equip the next generation to enter the farming industry. Getting young people interested and excited to enter the agricultural field is not only essential for a healthy and equitable food system, it is essential for the health of our planet. New farmers need to be our front line environmentalists, using regenerative and sustainable practices to grow the nation's food supply.

Among minorities, the urgency of the need to train young farmers is even stronger, with the current average age of a white farmer in the United States being 59 years old, and the average age of a Black farmer being 63 (USDA's 2017 Agriculture Census). We want to be part of a growing national movement to provide resources to beginning farmers, including those of color, who are integral to the future of our nation's food security.

With the support of our partners and collaborators, we want to develop a **Training Center** to teach the next generation of farmers. The establishment of this center is in collaboration with Michael Carter, Jr., 11th generation Black farmer and owner of Carter Farms, a century farm in Orange, Virginia. The center will include demonstration gardens that will provide food to our community in need in addition to generating income through sales of "FXBG Grown" food to select farm-to-table restaurants and the new Fredericksburg Food Co-op.

The Training Center will focus on teaching youth the mechanics of 'hands in the dirt' farming as well as the critical components of managing a successful farm, including everything from marketing to small engine repair, writing to food safety training, irrigation and hydroponics to digital technologies. We want to bring the next generation into the agriculture field in ways that they might not have known were possible or profitable.

We hope the city school system will use this technical training center to provide additional options to high schoolers considering their future prospects. The Gladys H. Oberle School -- an alternative, special education day school in the area -- has already expressed interest in offering agricultural instruction through our Training Center to their students as a part of the school's career and technical education offerings.



Collaborator:
Michael Carter, Jr

Michael Carter Jr. is an 11th generation farmer in the United States and is the 5th generation to farm on Carter Farms, his family's century farm in Orange County, Virginia where he gives workshops on how to grow and market ethnic vegetables. With Virginia State University, he works in the capacity of the Small Farm Resource Center Coordinator for the Small Farm Outreach Program. Michael was recognized as a 2020 Audubon Naturalist Society Taking Nature Black Regional Environmental Champion, and the 2020 VSU Small Farm Outreach Agent of the year. Michael presently consults for numerous governments, organizations, and individuals throughout the region and nation on food access, food security/insecurity, market outreach, social and economic parity/equity/evaluation programs, racial understanding, immersion, history and cultural trainings, among other areas.



Providing nature-based education opportunities

Many schools and universities in the area lack easy access to outdoor classroom space. “Nature-Deficit disorder” is a term coined by Richard Louv in his book *Last Child in the Woods* and refers to the fact that youth are spending less time in nature, leading to higher rates of ADHD and obesity, higher stress levels, and more. Many studies prove that children not only learn better while taught outside, but tend to learn better once they return to the classroom after outdoor education sessions.

The biodiversity of the land that we plan to purchase is a unique asset to the city of Fredericksburg. This parcel contains an ideal mix of mature trees, wetlands and agricultural space that are local and easily accessible space for these schools to participate in outdoor learning.

The University of Mary Washington has expressed interest in a partnership that would give students access to the land for study. Dr. Keith E. Mellinger, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, describes the land as “well situated to serve the educational and research needs of the University.” He continues: “Our faculty often seek out local areas of representative biodiversity.” With nearly 20 acres of wetlands, the site can become a part of the curriculum for students, helping them connect global environmental concerns with the preservation of natural resources in their immediate community.

The Brompton Community School is located on land adjacent to the parcel and offers its students the benefits of spending much of their days outdoors. Offering their students access to the land would give them additional open space for experiential learning and increase the effectiveness and impact of the school’s programs.



The power of outdoor education

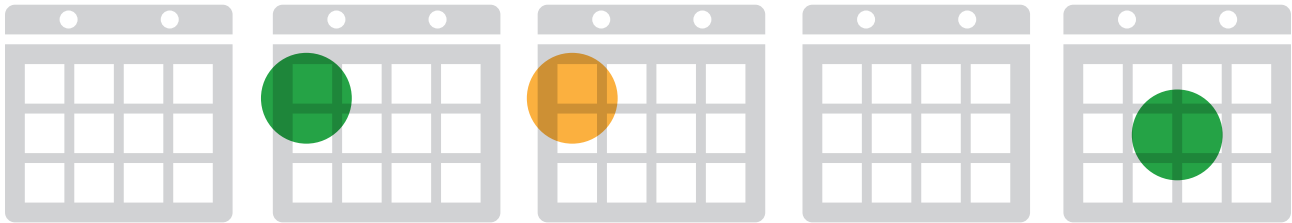
“In one study, fifth-grade students attended school regularly at a local prairie wetlands, where science, math, and writing were taught in an intimate, experiential way as students participated in onsite research. When compared to peers attending regular schools, those who’d attended school outside had significantly stronger reading and writing skills (as measured by standardized tests) and reported feeling more excited about school because of the experience. Students at the outdoor school who’d previously had low attendance rates ended up with higher attendance, too.”

—Ming Kuo, Ph.D.
Greater Good Magazine,
a publication of University
of California, Berkeley



Turning the Vision into a reality

TIMELINE



Phase I:

Acquisition

Fundraising, due diligence, purchasing, permitting

est. completion: Early 2022

Phase II:

Development

Land cultivation, partner planning, Training Center development

est. completion: Early 2023

Phase III:

Full-Scale Operation

Training Center accepting full time students, schools and universities utilizing the wetlands area regularly, members of the public visiting and enjoying nature.

est. completion: 2025

HOW YOU CAN HELP



Become an investor in the future of your community

We are looking for pledges to purchase the entirety of the property. Pledges are all tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. We intend to close on the property by December 2021. Gifts of stock and bonds are also accepted and welcome.

To make your pledge call Sarah Perry, Executive Director at 540-429-6771 or sarah.perry@downtowngreens.org



Share the Vision

Let your friends and family know what an exciting opportunity this is for the City of Fredericksburg and how critical it is to the environment and health of the community to preserve open spaces. This is a community-wide effort for a community-wide benefit.



Experience in action: About Downtown Greens

Downtown Greens (DTG) is a nonprofit greenspace founded in 1995 in the heart of downtown Fredericksburg, Virginia. Our mission is *to foster community involvement and growth by protecting and nurturing urban greenspace through collaborative environmental stewardship and experiential education*. We have spent 25 years pursuing this mission by preserving natural space and providing impactful, environmentally-focused community programs, making us ideal stewards of this vital and unique piece of land.

Our established park-like space is located in the historically under-served Darbytown section of Fredericksburg, beside the Boys and Girls Club, Head Start, and two subsidized housing developments: Hazel Hill Apartments and Central Virginia Housing Coalition. The greenspace is accessible to the community sunrise to sunset, 365 days a year.

In addition to being a beautiful, organically-maintained urban oasis, DTG also provides important community programs. We offer garden-based education to over 325 preschool- to middle school- aged children in Planning District 16 annually through our Youth Farm Program, Youth Garden Club, and Garden Sprouts Program. During an ordinary school year, we serve over 250 preschool students from low-income households through our Garden Sprouts program. Nearly 90% of participants from our Youth Farm Program are from neighboring subsidized housing development Hazel Hill. We teach children about where food comes from and how they can grow it themselves through hands-on, garden-based lessons.

In response to COVID-19, we postponed our youth programs for 2020 and 2021. We established our Free Food Program, which includes a weekly Free Farm Stand that distributes fresh vegetables and herbs grown in our education garden, and 'Take What You Need' garden plot to address rising food insecurity amongst those we serve. We are in the process of adding a 24/7 free pantry to further increase the accessibility of fresh food in our neighborhood.

Downtown Greens' 25 years of experience in providing programming that maximizes the community impact of urban greenspace situates us perfectly to create a second campus on the proposed land.



**For more information
please reach out to us:**

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<http://www.downtowngreens.org/buffer>



Parcel Location in Fredericksburg, Virginia



Located in an industrial area in the City of Fredericksburg that just a generation ago was covered in farmland, this 56-acre parcel is adjacent to Braehead Farm.

Land acquisition Campaign – Conditional Pledge Agreement

This Pledge Agreement (the “Agreement”) is entered into as of _____, 2022, by and between _____ (the “Donor”) and Downtown Greens, Inc. (“DTG”).

Whereas, DTG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization headquartered in Fredericksburg, Virginia;

Whereas, DTG will permanently protect the unparalleled 56-acre parcel of land (the “Parcel”) that it purchased in 2021 and that is located in the Battlefield Industrial Park in the City of Fredericksburg, VA, that contains living wetlands, mature trees, and nearly 20 acres of working agricultural space, and:

Whereas, all funds pledged or provided to DTG pursuant to this Pledge Agreement will be utilized for the Parcel, including but not limited to repaying debt that was incurred for the purchase of the property, fees for planning and placing the land under a conservation easement, and conversion of the property for the community and public benefit.

NOW THEREFORE, the Donor pledges to contribute to DTG the sum of

\$_____ (the “Pledge”) to be used for the purposes specified in this Pledge Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the parties hereto have executed this Pledge Agreement on the day and year first above written.

DONOR

Downtown Greens, Inc.

Signature

Signature

Printed Name

Sarah Perry
Executive Director

Downtown Greens is a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations to Downtown Greens are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. FEIN 54-1853889