

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HABC Receives \$1M from Maryland to Complete Nathaniel McFadden Learn and Play Park in Perkins Somerset Oldtown Community

Rebuild of former North Central Park is part of the PSO transformation, which includes more than housing

(BALTIMORE | June 29, 2022) – The Housing Authority of Baltimore City’s (HABC) Perkins Somerset Oldtown (PSO) transformation has received \$1 million in additional state bond funding towards completing The Nathaniel McFadden Learn and Play Park (formerly North Central Park), one of three parks that will be located in new PSO neighborhood in east Baltimore.

The \$1 million will assist in moving forward with the 1.3 acre, \$4.1 million park, to be located adjacent to the new apartment buildings in the Somerset section of the PSO plan. Last year, the park project received \$350,000 in bond funding from the state for planning and design. Additional funding will come from the city’s American Rescue Plan allocation, the state, and HUD’s CHOICE Neighborhood’s CCI funding.

“This green space will be very important to our residents,” said HABC President and CEO Janet Abrahams. “They were the driving force in saying which amenities they wanted included in the park. The park will have a pavilion and event area to facilitate and encourage activities in the park as well, but it also provides the necessary space for resident enjoyment. I want to thank Senator Cory McCray (45th legislative district) for sponsoring this funding for his constituents in the PSO area.”

In the former public housing at Perkins Homes and Somerset Homes there was no green space. The housing faced inward in barracks style structures, and the outdoor space was entirely concrete. Now residents will have a view of the street and park. Studies show that [natural space promotes mental well-being](#).

“With the three parks planned in the PSO area, we are changing the mindset and creating an area for residents to congregate and feel a sense of community,” Abrahams said. “That is why it was so important to tie the amenities back to the residents. They were able to vote on the features they wanted in this park. And I think that gives them more of a sense of pride and ownership in the neighborhood.”

There is one other new park planned in the Perkins Homes portion of PSO. South Central Park will be approximately 1.5 acres. In addition, improvements will be made to the existing City Springs Park and Pool, also within the PSO area. The PSO plan also features several pocket parks to be conveniently located around some of the new housing on the Perkins Home site.

Separately, Senator McCray also served as lead sponsor for a \$1 million dollar grant to be used toward construction of a grocery store to be built in the Somerset area right next to the new park. Detailed plans for the store will be announced later, but a grocer was another feature residents said was badly needed in the neighborhood.

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Construction on The Nathaniel McFadden Learn and Play Park will begin in spring of next year.

About HABC

HABC is the fifth largest public housing authority in the U.S., providing quality affordable housing for more than 23,000 households. The agency creates diverse and vibrant communities, provides opportunities for self-sufficiency, and builds pathways for strong partnerships. #bmoreHABC

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