America in Bloom 2026 Evaluation Report

Community: Edmonston, Maryland
Evaluation Dates: June 27-28, 2026

Lead Advisor: Sue Amatangelo
Co-Advisor: Alexandria Torres-Gypson

America in Bloom (AIB) promotes and builds vibrant and sustainable communities through volunteerism and education emphasizing flowers, plants, trees, heritage, and environmental and lifestyle enhancements. America in Bloom envisions communities across the country as the best examples of welcoming and vibrant places to live, work, and play.

Evaluation Areas	Possible Points	Actual Points	Percent
Community Vitality	104.00	84.00	80.76%
Floral Impact	80.00	65.00	81.25%
Landscaped Areas	80.00	66.00	82.50%
Urban Forestry	96.00	76.00	79.16%
Environmental Initiatives	96.00	81.00	84.37%
Celebrating Heritage	104.00	67.00	64.42%
Overall Impression	96.00	80.00	83.33%
Community Involvement	104.00	82.00	78.84%
Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions	14.00	14.00	100.00%
Total Points and Percent	774.00	615.00	79.45%
Star Rating		8	

Star ratings are based on overall percentage.

1 star = 0% - 9.99%	2 stars = 10% – 19.99%	3 stars = 20% – 29.99%	4 stars = 30% – 39.99%	5 stars = 40% – 49.99%
6 stars = 50% – 59.99%	7 stars = 60% – 69.99%	8 stars = 70% - 79.99%	9 stars = 80% – 89.99%	10 stars = 90% - 100%

Community representatives to receive the Evaluation Report		
Name	**Title**	**Email**
Rod Barnes	Town Administrator	rbarnes@edmonstonmd.gov
Ed hooker	AIB Co-Chair/Volunteer	Edhooker3@yahoo.com
Alex Maltez	Mayor	amaltez@edmonstonmd.gov

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION:

Communities are required to provide the following prior to evaluation:

- Community Profile organized to follow the criteria and metrics. For repeat communities, call out what is new and/or implemented due to advisors' recommendations.
- Evaluation Tour Itinerary with start and finish times for each day
- Community Map with community boundaries and the tour route
- Communities are responsible for addressing the metrics in the Community Profile, Evaluation Tour Itinerary, and during the Evaluation Tour.

The areas to be scored:

Advisors will review Community Profiles, Community Maps, and Evaluation Tour Itineraries to confirm the appropriateness of the areas to be evaluated and contact communities prior to the tour so adjustments can be made.

- All areas (municipal, commercial, and residential) within the boundaries of the entrant's community/municipality (except as noted below) are scored and a representative portion of all areas must be included.
- Property to be scored, whether public or private, must be subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant's community/municipality.
- When a property does not meet these requirements, but the community's volunteers significantly impact the property with labor and/or funding, then advisors may include in their scoring the property not subject to the codes and regulations of the entrant community.
- A community may request recommendations for areas toured but not scored.

Metrics are noted with unique codes based on the criteria. Ratings include:

N/A (Not Applicable): Communities should strive to implement all metrics; however, advisors will use N/A when a metric is not scorable in a community. N/A metric is not included in the point totals and does not affect percentages. Examples when N/A may apply in a metric: commercial/business areas do not exist; state or county statutes prevent implementation of a metric.

Not Started (0 points): programs or procedures are not in place.

In Progress (1-2 points): programs or procedures are developed, and a plan of action is implemented.

In Place (3-5 points): programs or procedures are utilized and beneficial.

Surpassing (6-8 points): programs or procedures are exceptional, utilized, and beneficial throughout the community.

Other:

- This Evaluation Report's scoring, general observations, and general and criteria recommendations are based upon the community's efforts including its levels of participation in, or implementation of the metrics in each of the criteria.
- Future projects and programs are not scored.
- The scoring for the eight evaluation criteria is adjusted to the climate and environmental conditions of the community's location. Make sure the advisors are made aware of any challenges that were faced during the year.

General Observations and Recommendations (recommendations are indicated in italics):

Welcome back Edmonston and congratulations on completing your tenth year as an America in Bloom community. Your accomplishments are something to be proud of and celebrated as they have earned you an impressive 8-star rating.

“Small but mighty” perfectly describes this quaint Maryland community. As one of the four Port Towns, Edmonston demonstrates the strength of collaboration, and the impact neighboring communities can have when they work toward shared goals. Together, these communities show that partnership can make progress more effectively while creating meaningful benefits, from joint grant opportunities to shared celebrations that bring people closer together.

Much of Edmonston’s success is rooted in the commitment of the people who serve this community every day. Collaboration isn’t just a value here—it’s the way local government operates. Town leaders work side by side with residents, listening closely, responding quickly, and taking on challenges with determination and pride. Their dedication shows up in the long hours, the thoughtful decisions, and the steady leadership that keeps Edmonston moving forward. A handful of individuals in particular devote their time, expertise, and heart to ensuring the town shines—strengthening its neighborhoods, supporting its families, and building a community that reflects the very best of public service.

Awarded a Banner Town designation by the Maryland Municipal League in 2026**,** Edmonston continues to prioritize listening to its residents and creating meaningful ways for them to participate in local decision-making. The town remains committed to civic education, helping community members stay informed, engaged, and confident in contributing to the conversations that shape their hometown.

Your 2026 America in Bloom Advisors, Alex and Sue, would like to thank everyone involved with the tour for your warm welcome and your hospitality. You prepared a wonderful visit and made us feel right at home. Special thanks to Rod Barnes, Ed Hooker, Mayor Julio Maltez and your entire team for all your preparation prior to our arrival, sharing the many facets of your community, and answering the numerous questions we had throughout our time together. You are making a difference in your community, and you should be very proud of your accomplishments. We look forward to your return in 2027!

Our best to you,
Sue Amatangelo and Alex Torres-Gypson
2026 America in Bloom National Advisors

COMMUNITY VITALITY: Community Vitality refers to the overall health, strength, and vibrancy of a community, reflected in the quality of life, social connections, economic opportunities, and civic engagement among its members and measured through policies, programs, activities, and facilities. Examples include neighborhood associations that are active, thriving local businesses, inclusive public events, volunteer programs, and accessible services like libraries and recreation centers. Museums, arts/cultural organizations, mentoring programs, schools, faith-based organizations, parks, playgrounds, dog parks, sports fields, water activities, trails, golf courses, and other active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities all add to the vitality of a community.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. An economic development plan is in place and implemented. It includes strategies for short- and long-term economic growth along with programs to improve the economy. It is regularly evaluated, measured, and/or reevaluated.					7
2. Communication of ordinances and policies pertaining to Community Vitality is easily accessible. Topics include, but are not limited to, culture, education, government, recreation, and technology. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.					7
3. Master plan exists for current and/or future community growth and public green space. Growth, enhancements, and/or protection of undeveloped areas are included. It is reviewed and routinely updated.					6
4. Public parks and/or green spaces are available. Properties may be defined as pocket parks, school grounds, neighborhood, city, county, state, and national parks, and green spaces. Parks and green spaces meet the needs of the community and are clean, maintained, and utilized.					7
5. Active and/or passive recreation opportunities are available and meet the needs of the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, water sports, golf, baseball, pickleball, skiing, soccer, hiking, nature trails, bird watching, picnic areas, and fishing. Year-round age and ability appropriate programs are available.					6
6. Seating is available near walking, exercise, playground areas, and/or public transportation stops. The seating and area are clean and accessible.					6
7. Shade is provided for participants and/or spectators at cultural and sporting events. Structures include, but are not limited to, shade sails, dugouts, pergolas, arbors, and trees. Structures are maintained and inspected for safety.				5	

8. Community gathering space is available. The space is accessible and used throughout the year for all ages and abilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, community center, senior center, YMCA, faith-based gathering places, libraries, town hall, and designated outdoor refreshment areas (DORA) with clearly defined district boundaries.					6
9. Age- and ability-appropriate play areas are accessible. Equipment is ADA-compliant and/or inspected by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.					6
10. Active outdoor community events are offered throughout the year. Examples include, but are not limited to, Bike-to-Work Day, Walk to School Day, and 5K events.					7
11. Community celebrations and/or cultural performances meet the needs of the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, festivals, art, dance, theatre, music, and cinema.					7
12. Alternative transportation programs are available. Transportation is available in all areas of the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, bicycle/scooter rental, car/van pools, public transportation, and/or ride sharing to all areas of the community.					7
13. Safety policies, programs, and/or services are in place. Examples include, but are not limited to, police, fire, emergency medical services, community health, crime prevention, homeland security, gang prevention, traffic, homelessness, and civil and human rights. Information is easily accessible and communicated.					7
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
1. Community Vitality	104		84		80.76%

Community Vitality Recommendations:

Edmonston is a vibrant, welcoming community that makes a significant effort to celebrate the diversity that makes their town special. The town should be proud of the model it has created for other communities--Edmonston is a great place to live and offers an inclusive environment for all. Each year, the town hosts a wide range of community-building events, including Black History and Hispanic Heritage celebrations, senior bingo/lotería nights, an environmental fair and pet fest, Arbor Day activities, and many others. There is truly something for everyone! Art is also abundant throughout town and takes many forms, from the nine recycled bicycles with flower baskets along Decanter Street to the remarkable transformation of Buchanan Street Industrial Park. New this year, the industrial park's interactive African American mural and ten historical signs, bring vibrancy and culture to an unexpected place. We appreciate the care Edmonston has taken to think creatively and bring beauty where it is least expected.

Edmonston keeps both adults and children connected with one another through a number of events and activities throughout the year. Spring fest, kids easter bunny, the police trunk and treat, Christmas with Santa, Senior casino night and Global youth day where 100 youth pick up trash. Theres even a Junior Mayor selected to work with the community and their classmates.

The newly created Zen Garden is a memorable example of Edmonston's commitment to honoring its history while advancing its progressive values. Tucked away on a quiet street, this small pocket park offers visitors a peaceful and unexpected place to pause, reflect, and connect with nature.

The town already does an excellent job of educating residents about the environmental benefits of plants. *Building on that foundation, we recommend Edmonston expand programming that highlights the connection*

between nature, health, and wellness. The Zen Garden would be an excellent place to hold a small group meditation. Forest bathing or nature-focused yoga in some of the larger parks could also be a great way to get people engaged in the natural world. Some helpful resources are listed below.

Books and Printed Resources:
PRA Nature Prescribed
The Association of Nature and Forest Therapy

Local Forest Bathing and Yoga Resources:
Wild Heart, Forest Bathing and Yoga
Bookside Gardens (They host a variety of nature-based yoga and forest bathing programs. They would be a good source of information)
Nature RX@UMD Laboratory (A possible partner for this work)

Grants:
Veterans and Nature Grant Program
Forest Society Grants

Edmonston benefits from innovative leadership, dedicated volunteers, and strong community support. These strengths provide a solid foundation for expanding community-building efforts through additional training and regular volunteer opportunities. More detailed recommendations for strengthening these efforts are included in the Landscaped Areas Section of this report.

Trails for biking, running, and walking are a valuable asset for residents, especially when they connect seamlessly to neighboring communities*. Whenever opportunities arise to extend a trail—such as the possible extension toward Kenilworth Avenue—Edmonston should actively pursue funding and move the project forward. Enhancing these trails with thoughtful amenities also adds meaningful benefit. Features like wayfinding signage, informational markers, benches, and even outdoor exercise equipment can enrich the experience for all users.*

The town's Little Free Libraries are beautiful art pieces and valuable resources for residents. Although the new library in Bladensburg is an excellent asset, its distance may still make access difficult for some community members. Prince George's County has historically struggled with literary (In 2024, Maryland's average reading score for fourth-grade students was only thirty-four percent (34%) performing at or above the National Assessment of Educational Progress' Proficient level). *Continue building this program by offering residents the option to purchase their own library kits (possibly branded in a standard town color and/ or with a common logo).*

Another option would be to purchase a few little libraries that could be raffled off as gifts during a literacy event. National Literacy Month is September, which lines up nicely with the start of the school season. Prince George's County has recently launched a mobile library, Library2Go Career Connector, that provides career assistance. This would be a great resource to have at literacy events. A long-term project, between Bladensburg Library and the Port Towns, could be to develop a mobile library that regularly travels to each of the towns. Possible funding sources to explore are listed below.

The Maryland State Library Agency (MSLA) (They have historically provided grants to support the creation of mobile libraries)
Lois Lenski Covey Foundation (Provides grants to build book collections for mobile libraries)
ALSC/Candlewick Press "Light the Way" Grant
T-Mobile Hometown Grants

*To get everyone involved in a fun project create "*The Little Free Library Adventure Trail or Story Stroll*" program that encourages residents to visit each Little Free Library, note a book they found at each stop, and get their booklet stamped. After each page is stamped in the booklet, bring it to town hall and receive a prize like a certificate for ice cream. Other possible prizes include:*

- A commemorative bookmark
- A "Little Library Explorer" pin
- A certificate signed by the mayor or library stewards
- Entry into a quarterly drawing for a local gift card
- Create a Community Spotlight Board to feature photos of participants who complete the booklet

This could also be a great way to get the word out about other programs, such as the youth camps or volunteer opportunities.

Edmonston has abundant green space and areas for recreation. *To make these spaces more comfortable and usable throughout the year, we recommend adding shade structures to parks*. *Several grants to help fund these structures can be found at Where to Get Shade Structure Grants | USA Shade. Additionally, the city lacks a pool or splash pad. Adding a mister with a shade structure could be a fun and cost-effective way to help the community cool down and get some relief during the warmer months. Some examples can be found here:*

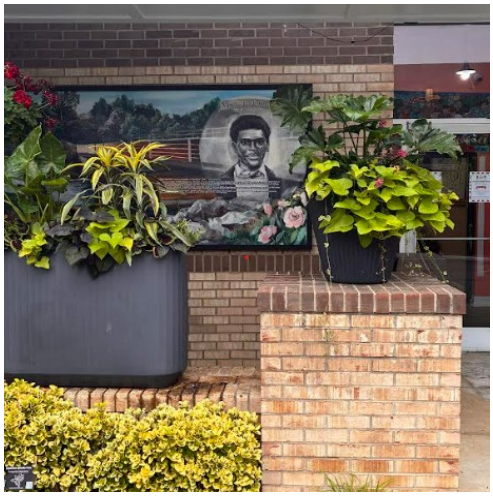
Landscape Structures
Habitat

Edmonston benefits from innovative leadership, dedicated volunteers, and strong community support. These strengths provide a solid foundation for expanding community-building efforts through additional training and regular volunteer opportunities. More detailed recommendations for strengthening these efforts are included in the Landscaped Areas Section of this report.

FLORAL IMPACT: Floral areas in a community are designated spaces where flowers are strategically and intentionally planted, cultivated, and maintained to enhance the beauty and ecological health of the environment. These areas can be part of public parks, street medians, residential gardens, school grounds, roadways, or commercial zones. Examples include containers, hanging baskets, window boxes, raised planters, trellises, and in-ground plantings and can be found at Botanical Gardens, school gardens, public spaces, and business and residential front yards. Season-round displays can utilize annuals, perennials, bulbs, tropical plants, flowering topiaries, colorful foliage, and cultivated and native plants.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. Floral combinations are carefully selected for location and environmental conditions. The combinations create visual interest, provide dramatic effects, and appear coordinated.					7
2. Floral displays are located throughout the community. Displays are well maintained and attractive. Examples include, but are not limited to, flowerbeds, raised beds, planters, hanging baskets, window boxes, carpet bedding, topiaries, and/or mosaics.					7
3. In-ground flower displays are designed with mature plant heights, color, and texture in mind. Plants are healthy, robust, and floriferous.					7
4. Containers and/or hanging baskets are part of a floral plan, in use, scaled to their surroundings, and have suitable plants. Flowers are robust, floriferous, and provide a dramatic effect.					7
5. Regular maintenance, watering, fertilizing, pruning, deadheading, weeding, removal, and/or replacement of dead flowers is conducted on public properties.					7
6. Demonstration/display gardens are available. Flowers are labeled. The garden is promoted to the public. Garden is available to residents and businesses for events.					6
7. Appropriate floral maintenance procedures, including fertilization (chemical and/or non-chemical) for municipal, parks, and/or school properties are implemented. The procedures produce effective results. Educational information about fertilization is communicated. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall postings, libraries, and social media.					6
8. Training programs for proper floral displays care and maintenance are offered to seasonal staff and/or volunteers. Training is conducted by Master Gardeners, County Extension, local garden centers, state agencies, and/or contractors.				5	

9. Efforts are in place to educate and raise public awareness of the importance of floral displays in the landscape. Educational information about the selection and care of flowers for beautification is available and communicated to the public.					6
10. Recognition programs are in place monthly, quarterly, and/or annually for attractive displays created by businesses and/or residents.					7
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
2. Floral Impact	80		65		81.25%

Floral Impact Recommendations:



Edmonston features abundant blooms throughout the community, including vibrant planters, hanging baskets, and in-ground gardens. The town's 99 rain gardens are especially impressive, offering a rich diversity of flowers. Art and floral displays are also combined in creative ways, such as the nine painted bicycles with flower baskets along Decatur Street.

Edmonston recently received a number of large cement planters that line the streets throughout town. Many of these planters are beautifully designed and already add visual interest to the streetscape. Given their size and number, planting and maintaining them is a major undertaking. The town has already begun incorporating more perennials to save time and resources. *Continue experimenting with perennials and standardize plant selections, especially among planters on the same street, to strengthen the overall floral impact. In industrial areas, where conditions are harsher and maintenance is less frequent, simplify the design and focus on stress-tolerant plants. One industrial-area planter with a crape myrtle offered a simple but beautiful example of this approach.*

Given the size and number of planters throughout Edmonston, planting and maintaining them is a significant undertaking. *The town could make this effort more manageable and meaningful by turning planting—and possibly ongoing maintenance—into a volunteer project that builds community connection and pride. A spring planting and sprucing-up event would be a practical and engaging way to launch the effort. Potted plants could be delivered to central locations, and volunteers could use a simple design sketch that is easy to replicate in the field. This approach would help create a consistent look across the planters while keeping the process accessible and enjoyable for participants. The project could also serve as an opportunity to share basic floral design education that residents can apply in their own yards, further supporting the beautification of Edmonston. Small signs placed in the planters could recognize the volunteers' contributions and celebrate the community effort behind the improvements. Incorporating more perennials in these locations could also help reduce long-term maintenance needs and costs while providing consistent seasonal interest. Depending on each planter's location and microclimate, suitable options may include Black-eyed Susan, hosta, salvia, coral bells, heuchera, coneflowers, and Japanese ferns. Adding small trees, such as a crepe myrtle or compact evergreens, could also create an attractive and resilient focal point in select areas. Finally, whenever possible, add automatic irrigation to the planters.*

In industrial areas, where growing conditions are harsher and maintenance may be less frequent, the planting design should be simple, durable, and focused on stress-tolerant species. Incorporating more perennials in these locations could also help reduce long-term maintenance needs and costs while providing consistent seasonal interest.

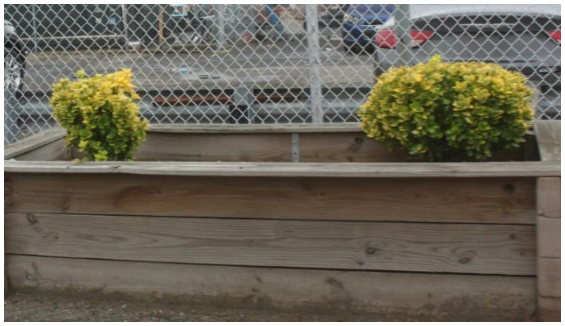
The Decatur Street Bridge features a beautiful mural that reflects

Edmonston's cultural diversity. *Adding hay baskets to the bridge railing, filled with colorful flowers and trailing plants, would soften this important connection between Edmonston's two neighborhoods and make the crossing feel more welcoming. The baskets could be updated seasonally or decorated for holidays and community events at Veterans Park, creating a festive backdrop for celebrations. Coordinating the flowers on the bridge with plantings in Veterans Park and the large cement planters would further strengthen the visual impact.*

The industrial park features impressive new art and history murals that add character, context, and visual interest to the area. *To strengthen their impact, we recommend adding more planters that soften the surrounding hardscape and help draw attention to the murals as focal points.* Corten steel planters would be especially well suited to this setting. Their weathered finish ages beautifully over time and complements the industrial character of the space. Examples are available on the websites listed below:

- Planter Craft
- Cor-Ten-Steel
- Nice Planter

If cost is prohibitive, another option would be to relocate some of your large cement planters to this space. Ultimately, this could be a great starting location for an art and history tour, potentially sponsored by nearby businesses.



Boxes in the industrial area that have been planted to add color to the street will need to be maintained more frequently and planted up with varieties that can withstand the conditions of the area. The addition of irrigation to these boxes may also help these boxes always look their best.

Partner with a local garden center, such as Homestead Gardens in Davidsonville, to do a container workshop. Residents can bring their own containers, select flowers, and learn how to create attractive plant combinations and the finished products can grace the front porches all through your community. For more information go to: www.homesteadgardens.com

Whiskey barrels can be added to Eco Farms for the purpose of having children get their hands in the dirt, take ownership and feel the pride in growing their own little garden. Start with herbs, Zinnias or the town flowert that are all easy to grow.

Lastly, keep doing what you're doing! The rain gardens feature an impressive diversity of blooms, and the town has begun adding color in select areas. *Continue adding splashes of color to make rain gardens more visually interesting, especially in neighborhoods.*

LANDSCAPED AREAS: Landscaped areas in a community include outdoor spaces intentionally designed and maintained to enhance natural beauty, functionality, and environmental health. These areas include elements like non-native and native trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses, vines, succulents, edibles, evergreens, topiaries, turf, groundcovers, and pollinator-friendly plants, and can include hardscape features such as benches, fountains, and decorative features. Landscaping can be found in parks, walking paths, residential neighborhoods, community gardens, round-abouts, streetscapes, commercial zones, schools, and public squares.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. Action plan developed and implemented for proper maintenance, pruning, removal, and/or replacement of dead and overgrown plants. Best practices are utilized.					7
2. Plan developed each season for procurement, scheduling, planting, and/or maintenance of landscapes.					7
3. Landscape ordinances and/or policies are in place. City landscape ordinance requires specifications for landscaping and maintenance for new and improved residential, commercial, and public development. Ordinances and/or policies are easily accessible.					7
4. Landscaping is found throughout the community including public areas, parks, gateways, and/or key buildings. Landscape displays are selected for location, environmental conditions, and/or impact. Attractive designs are utilized and well maintained. Landscapes serve as focal areas in the community.					8
5. Landscape displays enhance community entryways. The use of trees, shrubs, signage, hardscapes, and/or lighting creates a welcome display. The displays are attractive, well maintained, and create visual impact.					7
6. Procedures in place to monitor and/or manage diseases and/or pests in the landscape. Pertinent information is available and/or communicated to the public.					6
7. Lawn and turf areas display health and vigor. Procedures and practices, such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) are used to manage lawn and turf areas, including fertilizing, mowing, edging, proper watering, and/or weeding.					6
8. Qualified landscape personnel and/or experienced contractors are available to design, install, source, and/or maintain public landscape sites. Additional support can be provided by growers, garden centers, County Extension Agents, and/or city departments. These resources are utilized to create and implement attractive municipal landscape displays.					7

9. Training programs for proper landscape display care and maintenance are available for volunteers, full-time, and/or seasonal staff. Examples of trainers include, but are not limited to, Master Gardeners, County Extension, local garden centers, state agencies, and contractors.				5	
10. Recognition programs are in place monthly, quarterly, and/or annually for attractive displays created by businesses and/or residents.					6
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
3. Landscaped Areas	80		66		82.50%

Landscaped Areas Recommendations:

Edmonston's landscaped areas are welcoming, abundant, and well maintained. Highlights include thoughtfully designed plantings around the welcome signs and town hall, 99 rain gardens along community streets, and many parks and green spaces available to residents. The town also does an excellent job educating the community about landscape best practices. Attractive signs throughout town explain the benefits of rain gardens, and this year's No Mow April/May campaign helped residents understand how reduced mowing can support pollinators. Residents reinforced the message by proudly displaying yard signs that encouraged others to participate.

As in many Maryland communities, most parks and green spaces in Edmonston are managed by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC). This arrangement helps reduce costs for the town, but it can also make landscape management and the implementation of best practices more complex. We commend Edmonston for working diligently with M-NCPPC to maintain and improve these important public spaces.

Edmonston has already shown strong leadership in educating residents about sustainable landscapes, especially through its rain garden program. The town's newly purchased lot, planned as a park and central community gathering space, offers an excellent opportunity to expand that education. The town has also worked with the University of Maryland PALS Program to develop several innovative design concepts for the site. *As plans for the garden beds move forward, consider adding a display garden that teaches residents about integrated pest management (IPM), sustainable pest-control practices, and other environmentally responsible landscape methods. The University of Maryland Extension (UME) is a valuable resource, and its Master Gardener program may be able to support this effort through their internship program. Also consider incorporating permaculture principles into the design, such as fruit trees or other edible plants that could serve as both an educational tool and a community resource. Many helpful books and resources are available. A few favorites are listed below.*

Practical Permaculture for Home Landscapes, Your Community and the Whole Earth by Jessi Bloom and Dave Boehnlein
Permaculture: A Designers' Manual by Bill Mollison
Edible Landscaping with a Permaculture Twist by Michael Judd

As part of your planning process, consider pursuing SITES certification for this space or for other landscapes currently in development. SITES is an internationally recognized landscape certification program that complements LEED certification for buildings. Earning this designation could elevate Edmonston's landscape design, demonstrate leadership in sustainable practices, and further showcase the community's environmental commitment.

As noted in the Community Vitality section, Edmonston can continue strengthening landscaping efforts by expanding resident training and regular volunteer opportunities. *Where appropriate, consider shifting some landscape maintenance tasks from contracted work to volunteer-led efforts. This approach could reduce costs while building stronger community connection, pride, and ownership.*

To expand the group of residents prepared to lead these efforts, consider offering a few grants each year to complete Master Gardener training. The costs are minimal, but this could help expand outreach and educational efforts. Another program that offers great training materials is Landscape for Life. This program has a strong focus on sustainable landscape practices. They offer a train-the-trainer program that could be another avenue for increasing community leadership. Review both training options to determine which best aligns with Colmar Manor's goals, values, and capacity for community engagement.

Once a volunteer structure is in place, organize maintenance into themed events, such as planting, weeding, mulching, or deadheading weeks. Offering coffee and treats in exchange for a few hours of service could make participation more welcoming. Gardening can also be therapeutic and may provide a meaningful way to connect youth with seniors. Consider working with Reverend Addison to identify mutually beneficial partnerships.

- Effective Youth Engagement (Cornell Garen Based Learning)
- A Brief Toolkit for Intergenerational Gardening Projects (Roots & Shoots)
- Youth Wellness Through Horticulture Campaign (American Horticulture Therapy Association)

Foundation plantings and street-facing landscaping directly shape how a business looks, how people feel in the space, and how the community functions economically and environmentally. Because these improvements cannot rely on goodwill alone, Edmonston would benefit from a landscape ordinance tailored specifically to businesses. Such an ordinance would help create a consistent and attractive visual identity, support stronger property values and business success, improve environmental performance, and reflect the community's pride and shared values.

URBAN FORESTRY: Strategic design, use, installation, and maintenance of trees and associated green spaces for environmental, aesthetic, shade, and community benefits, including but not limited to street trees, park trees, native and ornamental species, naturalized areas, woodlands, and tree canopies on public and private lands, with attention to proper selection, placement, and long-term care to ensure sustainability, resilience, and quality of life.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. The municipal plan addresses the role urban forest initiatives play in the green infrastructure of the community. Policy is enacted and enforced that includes performance requirements to meet the minimum crown canopy and/or succession planting.					7
2. Municipal ordinance enacted and enforced for tree planting and/or preservation. Ordinance addresses the handling and removal of damaged, dying, or dead trees. Ordinance includes public property, private property, and new construction projects. Communication of ordinances and policies are easily accessible.					7
3. Tree board and/or department is available, active, and/or interact with the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, tree planting events, addressing safety concerns, education, and making recommendations to municipality.					7
4. Certified municipal personnel, trained arborist, urban forester, and/or Department of Natural Resources (DNR) entity actively manages the urban forest.					6
5. Trees are healthy and contribute to public health and wellness. Procedures are in place for the appropriate selection, diversity of tree species, proper spacing, planting depth, and/or monitoring and managing diseases and pests. Pertinent information is available and/or communicated to the public.					7
6. Policies are implemented for the protection of historic trees located on public and private properties. Tree programs exist that spotlight and honor historic trees. Trees are labeled and/or indexed. Historic trees are highlighted in a brochure, tree walk, and/or website.					6
7. Programs in place to increase, support, promote, and/or protect trees. Examples include, but are not limited to, civic native tree nursery, repurposing fallen trees, managing destructive pests, and urban orchards.					6
8. Efforts are in place to educate and raise the public awareness of the importance of urban forestry. Examples include, but are not limited to, the use of print, videos, websites, apps, and social media.					6

9. Trees are identified in public sites such as arboretums, parks, and/or cemeteries. Examples include, but are not limited to, identification labels, descriptive signage, QR codes, kiosks, maps, apps, and brochures.					6
10. Policies are implemented, and education is available for the safe participation by volunteers and staff in planting trees on public properties. Ongoing urban forest tree care training and educational information and/or seminars available for residents and/or businesses.				5	
11. Effective communication of recommended trees is available to the public. Topics include "Right Tree in the Right Place," mulching, placement, spacing, and/or maintenance. Examples of communication include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, library, City Hall, and social media.					6
12. The municipality is a member of urban forestry organizations, participates in programs, and/or earns designations and awards. Examples include, but are not limited to, Tree City USA, Arbor Day Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and regional or state agencies.					7
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
4. Urban Forestry	96		76		79.16%

Urban Forestry Recommendations:

Edmonston has an impressive urban tree canopy with healthy, mature trees throughout the community. The town has earned Tree City USA recognition for 12 years, the Growth Award for two years, and the Maryland Forestry Department's PLANT Award for several years in recognition of its work to increase canopy cover. Edmonston's active tree board also supports education, especially around selecting the right tree for the right place. On Arbor Day, the town gave away more than 100 trees and has planted 75 trees since 2025. We also want to commend the town for establishing a tree inventory in 2022, which is a valuable tool for making informed tree-care decisions.

Trees are a long-term investment that provide lasting environmental, economic, and community benefits. We noticed a few young trees that had died and were being replaced. *We recommend adding Treegator bags, the number one slow release tree watering bags, to newly planted trees to give the best start and help make maintenance more efficient.* Tree bags are inexpensive and come in many styles. They release water slowly and help give young trees extra support, especially after planting in urban areas. Note that bags should only be used for the first 2-3 months and removed before winter to prevent moisture issues. Visit www.treegator.com

The town does an excellent job educating residents about proper tree selection and planting, and its website offers strong resources on these topics. *Build on these efforts by adding information about long-term tree care, including pest and disease management. For example, the spotted lanternfly is widespread in Maryland and can weaken trees. Help residents identify life stages and understand treatment options. Additionally, we spotted several Tree of Heaven (Ailanthus altissima) plants sprouting up in the area. Removing their preferred host plant can help further manage lanternfly populations. Some great resources can be found on the following websites:*

- Maryland Department of Agriculture
- University of Maryland Extension
- Casey Trees

Another significant issue in towns is improper pruning and maintenance of trees by unqualified tree care companies. *Support the long-term health of Edmonston's trees by giving residents clear guidance on care and pruning practices.* An example of the kind of outreach that can help residents make more informed decisions can

be found here. We noticed a few topped trees-- providing this information can help homeowners avoid costly mistakes and maintain the beauty and health of your tree canopy. Another resource to provide to homeowners is the is the ISA certified arborists directory. ISA arborists have been trained to understand tree biology and how to properly maintain a tree for optimal health.

Other ideas for educational campaigns that can help residents understand the importance and value of trees could include installing signs that discuss benefits. Other cities have done this creatively by adding tags to trees (see pictures below). The i-Tree My Tree Benefit Calculator can be used to generate benefit information for individual trees. This could be fun to incorporate into your Arbor or Earth Day events.

The expansive park along the Anacostia River has a remarkable collection of mature trees and appears to be well used by walkers. With two playgrounds and picnic tables, it could also be an incredible resource for schools. *Consider developing this area into a tree trail or small arboretum that highlights the diversity and value of trees. Start by selecting and labeling specimen trees throughout the park, building on the work already done to identify the town's ten largest trees. Over time, add trails, interpretive signage, and an educational guide that can be shared with residents and local schools. These resources would make the park more engaging, support community forestry education, and help demonstrate the value of additional funding. A few grants that support community forestry education are listed below.*

- Sustainable Forestry Intuitive Community Grants
- TREE Fund
- Maryland Forestry Foundation MDOT Grants
- US Forest Service (USFS) Urban and Community Forestry Program
- The National Environmental Education Foundation
- National Forest Foundation

ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES: Environmental initiatives are purposeful actions, programs, or policies designed to protect, preserve, or restore the natural environment and to reduce human impact on the planet, promote sustainability, and ensure a healthier ecosystem for current and future generations. Environmental and sustainable leadership includes policies, plans, and programs for water, and resource conservation; pollution control; trash, recycling, and reuse; climate change issues; green Infrastructure; and alternative energy sources. Environmental initiatives can be led by governments, businesses, communities, or individuals.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. Comprehensive/Master Environmental Plan in place to identify, protect, restore, and/or maintain natural areas. Examples include, but are not limited to, removal of invasives, no-mow areas planted with native grasses and wildflowers, and succession tree plantings. The plan promotes water conservation, alternative energy use, food security and sustainability, carbon reduction, and/or responsible land management. The plan is accessible and reviewed annually.					7
2. Environmental board and/or Green Team are available, active, and/or interact with the community. Examples may include, but are not limited to, sustainability initiatives, events, education, and making recommendations to the municipality					6
3. Public awareness strategies regarding environmental issues are implemented and effective. This includes but is not limited to, the Reduce/Recycle/Reuse program, Earth Day events, pollution prevention, "leave no trace," landfill reduction, and community clean-up days. Examples of communication avenues include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, city hall, library, and social media.					7
4. Programs exist and are available for all ages to educate, encourage, and/or expand the understanding of the role and importance of pollinators and ecological habitats.					7
5. Green infrastructure policies, techniques, and/or inventory mapping are used throughout the community and regularly updated. Examples include, but are not limited to, naturalization, soils, topography, xeriscaping, rain gardens, wetlands, and suitable plant varieties to enhance such features as traffic calming, bank stabilization, stormwater run-off, and water management. Displays are well maintained.					8
6. Home and business energy audits are available and promoted. Incentives are available and communicated for items such as solar energy, water conservation, home appliance replacement, weatherization, etc.					6

7. Water conservation and water quality measures are widely promoted throughout the community and accessible. Residential and business practices include, but are not limited to, using rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable surfaces; addressing water leaks in homes, businesses, and community spaces; choosing efficient appliances; and irrigating responsibly. Efforts also emphasize protecting water quality through stormwater management, reducing chemical runoff, proper disposal of household and yard waste, and maintaining healthy waterways.					6
8. Management strategies are implemented for the effective reuse/repurpose of buildings, structures, and/or land. The municipality has a reuse plan in place.					7
9. Recycling and trash containers are available, present themselves together, and are clearly labeled in public areas. Additional containers are available during special events. Collection is available for trash, recycling, composting, and food waste. Events and/or sites are offered for drop-off of hazardous, household, electronics, shredding, and/or difficult-to-recycle items.					7
10. Reuse opportunities are offered and include clothing, books, household goods, resale shops, tool lending, durable medical equipment, and/or equipment repair initiatives available for donations and/or purchase.					7
11. Energy-efficient vehicles/transportation for police, fire, public transit, and/or city employees is available. Options may include electric, fuel cell electric, plug-in electric hybrid, and/or compressed natural gas vehicles. Electric vehicle charging stations are located throughout the community and available to city, residential, and/or visitor vehicles. 240-volt home charging outlet installation incentive is available and promoted.					7
12. Mulch from renewable and/or sustainable sources is appropriately used by the municipality. Mulch is available for residential use.	N/A				
13. Green building practices are implemented to minimize environmental impact while maximizing efficiency, health, and sustainability. These practices emphasize the use of environmentally responsible building materials—such as recycled, reclaimed, rapidly renewable, or locally sourced products—as well as non-toxic materials. Energy-efficient and renewable energy systems, including solar panels, wind turbines, geothermal heating and cooling, high-performance insulation and windows, and smart HVAC and energy management tools, are also encouraged. Certification systems such as LEED, WELL, or the Living Building Challenge are utilized to help track, validate, and achieve comprehensive sustainability goals.					6
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
5. Environmental Initiatives	96		81		84.37%

Environmental Initiatives Recommendations:

Edmonston has become one of the region's standout models for small-town environmental leadership. The town's initiatives are unusually comprehensive for a community of its size, combining green infrastructure, renewable energy, habitat restoration, and hands-on community engagement. What makes Edmonston notable is that its environmental work is not limited to a single project. It is part of an entire ecosystem of practices designed to make the town healthier, more resilient, and more connected. Edmonston IS a small town with a big green vision!

The Decatur Street Green designation signals that the corridor in Edmonston, is a fully built "green street"—a model of sustainable infrastructure that delivers environmental, community, and economic benefits. The core advantages fall into four major categories: stormwater management, environmental health, community livability, and economic resilience improving water quality, enhancing walkability/bike ability, lowers long-term infrastructure costs, and beautifies the community. Green Street (Decatur Street) is a nationally recognized model featuring permeable pavement, native plantings, bio-retention cells, and LED streetlights powered by wind energy. It was the first street of its kind in Maryland and remains a benchmark for sustainable street design. *Be sure to celebrate this tremendous accomplishment each year through a Green Street Day and include another green street project that everyone can be a part of.*

Edmonston is also leading most cities two and three times their size in the number of rain gardens: currently 99. The rain gardens across the town capture and filter stormwater, reduce runoff, and create pollinator habitat assisting in flood reduction. *To build on this success, the town could collect the seeds from the Cone Flowers growing in the rain gardens and package them for distribution at various community events. Due to the number of rain gardens that are filled with cone flowers, you may reconsider your choice of a town flower and move it from Black-eyed Susan to Cone Flowers. Create a seed library gathering seeds from all of the port towns. Colmar Manor can supply a number of Aquilegia seeds from their new shade garden and other varieties can be collected from Cottage City and Bladensburg.*

Edmonston demonstrates how a small town can lead big environmental change. Its initiatives are practical, replicable, and rooted in community participation. The town's work shows that sustainability isn't just about infrastructure — it's about culture, education, and long-term stewardship. Additional opportunities to continue with your green initiative include:

- *Expanding the green street model into adjacent residential blocks with permeable pavement, bioswales, and native plantings, create a Tree canopy acceleration plan prioritizing heat-vulnerable streets, and create repair cafés and swap events to reduce landfill waste and build community. You can also begin to think about becoming a Dark Skies community to reduce light pollution and protect our nocturnal species.*

- *Leverage federal grants (EPA, FEMA BRIC, DOT Safe Streets, DOE energy programs), to continue your green journey and remain ahead of other communities in Maryland.*
- *Continue to partner with the University of Maryland for research, interns, and pilot projects. This is an extremely useful resource for the town and can help to move a number of new initiatives forward while providing students with the opportunity to use their skills.*

Eco City Farms is one of Prince George's County's most influential urban agriculture organizations — and Edmonston is where its story truly began. The Edmonston site is the original flagship farm, and it remains a national model for community-rooted, climate-smart food production. The farm supports people interested in entering agriculture while demonstrating how small, intensively managed urban spaces can produce meaningful amounts of food. ECO City Farms uses no synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, relying instead on composting, soil building, hoop houses, and year-round growing. Their Edmonston site is known for its high-tunnel production, which allows them to grow leafy greens, herbs, and specialty crops even in winter. They even house their classes, refrigeration, and supplies in recycled containers that serve their purpose well.

The Edmonston farm is home to ECO's signature training programs including the beginning farmer training program, youth apprenticeships and internships, and workshops on composting, cooking urban gardening and more. In addition, they supply CSA shares and farmers markets with produce, partner with local schools and food pantries, and support the region's desire for fresh, affordable locally grown food. . Together, these efforts make the farm a powerful anchor for community resilience, food education, and local economic vitality. It does more than grow produce; it grows skills, confidence, and opportunity for the entire region.

Consider adding fennel, parsley and dill in all of your garden bed plantings at the farm to increase the swallowtail butterfly population and provide additional herbs for local distribution. To help young children "catch the gardening bug," set up several barrels they can use individually to plant, tend, and grow herbs and flowers. This hands-on activity would give children a sense of ownership while introducing them to the joy of gardening. In the recently cleared area behind the fig trees, add birdhouses and a decorative fence wrap to screen the neighboring yard while bringing more color and beauty to the space. The wrap could feature children's faces, photos from farming classes, or cheerful images of fruits and vegetables. Inside the building, improve organization by adding storage areas, shelving, or cupboards. Many of these items could be sourced affordably from a local resale store such as Community Forklift.

The rain barrel program in Edmonston has become one of the town's quiet success stories — a practical, community-driven tool that helps residents reduce flooding, cut water use, and participate directly in stormwater resilience. You can even find one at Edmonston's Town Hall. The program's impact is best understood in the broader context of Edmonston's long fight against chronic flooding and its participation in Prince George's

County's Rain Check Rebate Program, which provides rebates for installing rain barrels and other stormwater-management practices. Part of a Larger Resilience Strategy: The rain barrel program complements Edmonston's other green infrastructure efforts — including the Green Street Project, Walkable Watershed improvements, and Sustainable Maryland initiatives — creating a layered, community-wide stormwater system. The rain barrel program has helped Edmonston reduce the amount of stormwater entering streets and storm drains during heavy rain and has lowered household water use by allowing residents to reuse captured rainwater.

The Advisors recommend that you continue to share the benefits of the program and to have additional rain barrels available for sale to both residents and businesses. Share the results of your rain barrel program with all including energy savings, water use reductions, and environmental tips in the lobby of the Town Hall so that those that haven't made the jump yet, may consider doing so to be part of the solution.

Adding bird houses to your rain gardens and throughout the community would be a beneficial addition. Birds add to the quality and ecology of life. They are an important part of our pollinators and the benefits of having them in your community include:

- Pest Control
- Rodent Control
- Flower Pollination
- Weed Control
- Food Sharing
- Environmental
- Increased Property Values
- Education
- Wildlife
- Stress Relief

Local scout troops, schools, and your Green Team can make the houses and sell them at community events. There could be a project for the junior Green Team to number and monitor these boxes every couple of weeks throughout the spring and summer months and since each box can have up to three or four broods, be responsible for cleaning out a box after the young have fledged. Start a bird trail in your many parks. Determine the birds that you would like to support and /or increase and after researching their ideal habitat. The Eastern Bluebird is found in Maryland and is considered part of the state's natural heritage. They are most common in rural areas, and you can increase the population of these beautiful birds by increasing the number of bird boxes where they can lay their eggs, raise their brood, and be relatively protected. Even if other birds make their home in the bluebird box, it is still a bonus. Once the babies have fledged, simply clean out the box and the circle of life will begin again. For more information visit www.mdbluebirdsociety.org

Other common backyard birds include:

- Northern Cardinal
- American Robin
- Carolina Wren
- Carolina Chickadee
- Blue Jay
- Mourning Dove
- House Finch
- American Goldfinch
- Downy Woodpecker
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Northern Mockingbird
- White-breasted Nuthatch

Forest & thicket birds include:

- Wood Thrush
- Scarlet Tanager
- Brown Thrasher
- Gray Catbird
- Tufted Titmouse
- Red-eyed Vireo

Anacostia wetland & river birds include:

- Great Blue Heron
- Green Heron
- Osprey
- Mallard
- Canada Goose
- Belted Kingfisher
- Red-winged Blackbird

Edmonston can make your town hall dramatically more environmentally friendly without needing a massive budget or a full renovation. This would be a good project for your Green Team. The smartest approach is to think in layers: energy, water, waste, landscaping, and people-powered habits. Some opportunities for updating include:

- *Smart thermostats — Install smart thermostats to reduce heating/cooling when the building is empty.*
- *HVAC tune-ups — Regular maintenance improves efficiency and extends equipment life.*
- *Low-flow fixtures*
- *Motion sensor lighting*

An excellent addition to the community is a business by the name of Community Forklift. Community Forklift, based in Edmonston, Maryland, is a nationally recognized nonprofit reuse center that transforms the region's waste stream into a powerful community resource. By rescuing building materials, appliances, furniture, and home goods that would otherwise end up in landfills, they make home repair and renovation more affordable while dramatically reducing environmental impact. Their donation programs provide essential supplies to families, nonprofits, schools, and community groups, strengthening local resilience and ensuring that neighbors in need have access to safe, functional living spaces. Through green job creation, sustainability education, and millions of pounds of materials diverted each year, Community Forklift has become a cornerstone of environmental stewardship and social support—proving that reuse can uplift both people and the planet. *Continue to stay in touch with this business to uncover items of possible historical value for your town.*

Edmonston is well positioned to pursue several grant opportunities that align with its sustainability goals, community engagement efforts, and environmental programs. In case you weren't aware, here are a few opportunities:

- Community Parks & Playgrounds Program DNR

- Chesapeake & Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund
- Stormwater Management and Green Infrastructure Grants – MDE
- Recycling and Waste Reduction Grants
- Community Engagement Mini-Grants – CBT
- Green Streets, Green Jobs, Green Towns (G3) Grants
- Environmental Education Grants
- Walmart Community Grants
- Home Depot Foundation Grants
- Lowes Hometown Grants
- REI Cooperative Action Fund
- Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Grants -NFWF

Create a local/heirloom seed collection at the library or Town Hall. Seed donors bring in native and heirloom seeds, they are sorted, packaged and 'catalogued' by name in an old-fashioned card catalogue. The idea is that anyone can 'borrow' seeds, plant them in their gardens, grow, flower/harvest, and then collect and 'return' seed so that others can share in the bounty. No one is dinged for not returning seed, but the hope is that the project sustains itself.

For seventeen years, I have served as an Advisor with America in Bloom, working closely with communities of every size, geography, and capacity. In all that time, I have **never** encountered a community more consistently aligned with the core principles of environmental stewardship, resilience, and innovation than Edmonston, Maryland. Their commitment is not simply impressive—it is exemplary at a national level. *Continue to get your residents and businesses involved in the many programs to keep your community green.*

This photo says everything you would want to know about Edmonston and just how the residents have embraced their green initiatives.

Congratulations, Edmonston!

CELEBRATING HERITAGE: Celebrating heritage in a community includes recognition, designation, protection, commemoration, and celebration of historical, cultural, natural, agricultural, and industrial resources, including but not limited to, traditions, stories, landmarks, buildings, artifacts, events, and practices that reflect the community's identity. Efforts may include preservation, interpretation, education, and programming that foster pride, belonging, and awareness of diverse cultural roots while maintaining and enhancing the community's heritage.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. Historic Preservation, Historic Society, and/or Architectural Review Board are available, active, and/or interact with the community. Activities/responsibilities include, but are not limited to, review proposals for construction and rehabilitation, promote historic preservation incentives, submit recommendations to National Register, and designate local historic landmarks.				5	
2. Historic Preservation ordinances are enacted and enforced. Ordinances effectively provide commercial and/or residential designation, guidance, and/or protection. Ordinances, policies, and restoration resources are available, easily accessible, and communicated.				5	
3. Historic districts, neighborhoods, structures, landmarks, and/or objects are identified and/or labeled. Designations by such organizations as the Department of Archives and History and/or National Register are in place and/or in progress.				4	
4. Cemeteries and monuments are in place and well maintained. Historical plaques are used and well maintained. Examples of plaque locations include, but are not limited to, buildings, sites, residences, districts, historical events and people, and battle sites. Historical Records are available for public reference.				5	
5. Historical museums and/or interpretive displays are available and maintained. Events and educational opportunities are held for all age groups to utilize historic assets.				4	
6. Archives, artifacts, community records, and/or oral histories are collected, safely stored, preserved, and/or catalogued.				4	
7. Staff and/or volunteers are trained to maintain historical sites, archives, records, collections, artifacts, structures, and/or landscapes. Historic educators are trained to effectively communicate a community's history.				4	

8. Historic preservation incentives are available and promoted. Incentives may include, but are not limited to, tax credits, waived permit fees, eased setbacks, and/or rebates.					6
9. Programs are in place for the purchase, installation, and/or long-term maintenance of memorial features. Examples include, but are not limited to, memorial benches, trees, brick pathways, and lamp posts.				5	
10. Natural and agricultural areas are identified and protected. Designation by such organizations as The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, Department of Natural Resources are in place and/or in progress.				5	
11. Programs and/or events are available to bring history to life. Examples include, but are not limited to, theater dramas, reenactments, and historic characters at public events.					6
12. Community heritage and/or cultural diversity are supported and promoted to all ages. Educational resources are available such as websites, publications, tours, interpretive signage, mobile apps, and/or programs.					8
13. Youth of all ages and abilities participate in historical programs. Examples include, but are not limited to, lectures, tours, events, reenactments, research, and reader's theater. Participants are recognized for their efforts and/or achievements.					6
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
6. Celebrating Heritage	104		67		64.42%

Celebrating Heritage Recommendations:

With more than 100 years of history, Edmonston has a meaningful story that deserves to be told, honored, and preserved.

One important part of that story is Edmonston Terrace, a post–World War II residential development built in 1945. This neighborhood forms the town's only large-scale, uniform historic residential cluster in the town. They consist of nearly identical two-story, side-gabled brick houses built on small lots (about 5,500 sq ft each). They line both sides of Gallatin Street and Hamilton Street, just north of the older Palestine subdivision, and were designed as modest, efficient, quickly constructed residences for returning WWII veterans and their families—part of a nationwide boom in standardized housing. These homes are historically important because they reflect:

- Post-war housing trends for returning veterans.
- Early suburban development patterns in Prince George's County.
- Community identity, as this subdivision marked Edmonston's transition into a more structured residential town.

While these homes have not met the historically notable houses, you can still honor their history and recognize them through the *creation of a historic district or conservation overlay which will help to preserve and protect the architectural features and prevent demolition well into the future. You may also want to conduct a formal historic survey including construction dates, architectural style, significant residents and the integrity and condition of each. This information will be useful in pursuing grants and district designation. Informing residents that live in these homes of the history will be important as preservation is strongest when people understand why it matters. List the homes (individually or as a district) on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties or the National Register of Historic Places, offer incentives to the homeowners and tell the story through signage, in the community newsletter and a designated historic district.*

It will be important to start the process of protecting and preserving these homes due to their architectural significance, their cultural and community value, and the economic benefit. Work with the Prince George's County Historic Preservation Commission to determine eligibility for local or national historic designation and encourage homeowners to submit their homes to the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties. Apply for the Maryland Historic Revitalization Homeowner Tax Credit (20% credit) and follow the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation when repairing or updating homes. You can even host walking tours or history days to showcase these significant homes.

The town will need to increase its efforts to recover artifacts from its recent and deep past. *We recommend that you continue efforts to collect, preserve, and document local history, both of the town and years prior to becoming incorporated. Reach out to your community and ask them to keep the town hall in mind when cleaning out their attic, basement and/or closets. Provide a number where a current or past resident can call if they find something that could be historically significant. Reach out to secondhand stores and auction houses as well as Community Forklift to keep an eye out for anything significant that may be donated to help tell the story of your history.*

As you collect the artifacts, research and share the story of each. These stories can be posted on the town website for all to read.

The M-NCPPC Parks and Recreation Department offers a wonderful booklet filled with classes, programs, and events for children. However, only one class currently highlights history. *Adding one or two history-focused classes would be a meaningful way to share Edmonston's story with children and families. Even if history does not immediately sound exciting, it can be brought to life through lively, hands-on activities that make learning both fun and memorable. This would be a wonderful project for the Junior Green Team to help develop.*

The Wall of Mayors is quite impressive in town hall. The Advisors recommend finding a place where these photos can be more visible and add them to your website. Provide some interesting facts that happened in Edmonston during each of their time as Mayor and some interesting facts about each one individually. Add this to your town website.

The Wall of Mayors at Town Hall is an impressive tribute to Edmonston's leadership history.
The Advisors recommend relocating the photographs to a more visible place and adding them to the town website. For each mayor, include a brief profile with interesting facts about their service, notable events that occurred in Edmonston during their term, and details that help residents better understand their individual contributions. Sharing these stories online would make the display more accessible, strengthen community pride, and help preserve Edmonston's history for future generations.

Continue collecting oral histories from the elders in your community. Their memories, wisdom, and lived experiences are irreplaceable treasures that should be preserved while they can still be shared in their own voices. Capturing these stories now will help future generations understand the people, places, and moments that shaped the community's history and identity.

Touching the lives of more than 10,000 students is definitely reason to celebrate. Reverend Gale Addison, a staple of Edmonston, has spent her life as a role model and has helped children to become outstanding citizens. She has been a lifeline for countless high school students, she listens without judgment, shows up when they need support, and helps them believe in futures they weren't sure they could reach. Many say she was the first adult who truly saw their potential. Because of her compassion and presence, a generation of young people stands taller, more confident, and more hopeful. Her impact is lasting, and her care has shaped the heart of Edmonston and is reason to celebrate. *A tribute to Reverend Addison through the development of a pocket park and sculpture seems fitting for the individual who stood beside the youth and families of Edmonston.*

The honor roll sign in Veterans Park is such a meaningful landmark. It might benefit from a little sprucing up so it continues to honor our veterans in the best way possible.

OVERALL IMPRESSION: The overall impression of a community refers to the design, maintenance, and condition of physical, social, and cultural elements that collectively shape the perception of a community's character and identity. These include, but are not limited to, amenities, infrastructure, signage, public spaces, streetscapes, and visible upkeep of public and private properties. Ordinances, regulations, and enforcement addressing signage, nuisances, and property maintenance contribute to reducing visual clutter, enhancing aesthetics, and fostering a welcoming atmosphere that reflects community values.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. Ordinances are enacted and enforced to address issues such as overgrown lots, abandoned vehicles, unscreened dumpsters, public nuisances, unregulated garage sales, building facades, and/or empty storefronts windows. Ordinances are routinely reviewed and updated as needed.					6
2. Code enforcement/compliance officer is available. Violations are detected, investigated, and/or resolved. Code enforcement includes, but is not limited to, public health, safety, consumer protection, building standards, and land use.					7
3. Communication of ordinances is easily accessible. Examples of communication include, but are not limited to, lectures, print, city website, library, City Hall, social media, and calendar of events.					6
4. First impressions are positive in residential, business, and/or municipal areas. Properties, buildings, structures, grounds, decks, patios, and yards are neat and in order. Examples include, but are not limited to, lack of vandalism, graffiti, broken windows, peeling or faded paint, and rust. Programs exist and are effective to minimize graffiti, litter, and nuisance areas.					7
5. Community infrastructure is in good condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, roadways, road shoulders, curbs, corner pads, medians, sidewalks, railroad crossings, sewers, transformers, and/or utility poles.					7
6. Community amenities are in good condition. Examples include, but are not limited to, signs, site furnishings, public restrooms, water features, lamp posts, benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, trash and recycling receptacles, safe parking, proper lighting, crosswalks/pavement markings, containers, planters, and/or cigarette receptacles.					7
7. Community is accessible to people of all abilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, public buildings, parking, sidewalks, public transportation, playgrounds, parks, sports fields, and trails.					7

8. Wayfinding signage is visible, attractive, and in appropriate locations throughout the community. Signage adequately lists directional information and/or areas of interest.				5	
9. Public art is located throughout the community. Features such as banners, murals, and/or statues are used, attractive, and effective.					8
10. Year-round seasonal decorations are used in key areas. The decorations are well maintained and attractive. Examples include, but are not limited to, lighting, ornamental displays, wreaths, planters, luminaries, and displays in government buildings, residential homes, and storefronts.					7
11. Pet waste policies are posted and/or enforced. Pet clean-up stations are available throughout the community. Stations are monitored and stocked.					8
12. Public restrooms are available, ADA compliant, and cleaned routinely.				5	
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
7. Overall Impression	96		80		83.33%

Overall Impression Recommendations:

Edmonston has a gentle, almost understated charm — the kind of quiet town where you can actually hear yourself think, where neighbors wave from porches, and where the pace of life gives people room to breathe. But beneath that calm exterior, there's a steady, determined heartbeat. Edmonston is striving for more — more connection, more opportunity, more ways to grow while still honoring the character that makes it special. Edmonston's progress feels authentic because it's driven by people who care deeply about their town's future.

Quiet doesn't mean stagnant. In Edmonston, quiet means thoughtful, grounded, and ready for what comes next. 273 homes are neat and tidy, most with well-manicured shrubs and gardens. Although we did not get the opportunity to meet Steve, your Code Enforcement Officer, it is evident that he has a good handle on things that need to be addressed in Edmonston. *A Code Enforcement Officer, however, is only as good as the support he/she receives through strong ordinances. Review your ordinances annually and make additions, deletions, and/or changes as needed.*

Edmonston's entryway signs already create an inviting first impression, and the container garden beneath them adds a beautiful splash of color that truly brightens the area. *You can elevate that welcome even further by incorporating in-ground, year-round plantings to complement the container display. Adding a sign that proudly announces your status as an America in Bloom Community will let everyone who drives into town know just how special Edmonston is.*

The street banners throughout your community add a charming visual touch; however, *many appear to be installed higher on the poles than ideal. The Advisors recommend lowering them so they are more visible and can be fully enjoyed by residents and visitors. You may also want to expand the banner program to additional streets and refresh the designs at least twice per year to keep the look vibrant and engaging. Adding hanging baskets on every other pole would further enhance the beauty and character of each street.*

For every trash can throughout the community and in Town Hall*, please ensure a recycling container is placed alongside it. We've spent years building strong recycling habits and strengthening our commitment to greener practices—let's keep that progress going. Add a recycling container to every trash receptacle in town to support continued environmental responsibility.*

The idea of wrapping fences in industrial parks is strong and worth exploring further. *Consider customizing the wraps to highlight Edmonston's cultural, historical, and environmental initiatives. For example, wraps could explain the benefits of rain gardens, showcase broader environmental efforts, or support wayfinding throughout the area. These additions would make the industrial parks more visually engaging while helping residents and visitors better understand the town's impressive work. When possible, continue using public spaces to promote and celebrate Edmonston's efforts*

The addition of fence wrappings also helps to create a more beautiful streetscape. *Work with businesses like JHINGO Automation on Decatur to add wraps that include a bit of history about their business or of the town of Edmonston. Add flags or banners to the poles in the industrial area, as well as additional flowers in containers that can be managed by the businesses.*

Public restroom access has been a challenge in Edmonston, as the community relies solely on porta potties, which have occasionally been used as an overnight refuge by unhoused individuals. To keep these facilities available for residents and visitors while reducing misuse, several practical steps can be taken. *Porta potties can be placed in highly visible, well-lit locations and serviced more frequently to maintain cleanliness and discourage long-term occupancy. Locking them during overnight hours or using time-controlled locks can help ensure they remain accessible during the day but secured when misuse is most likely. A sensor can be added when the facility is in use, alerting town police that there may be someone misusing it. Some communities also add simple exterior modifications—such as motion-activated lighting or regular patrols by public works staff—to increase oversight. Longer-term approaches may include partnering with county agencies and nonprofits to connect unhoused individuals with safer, more appropriate services.* Together, these strategies allow Edmonston to provide clean, reliable porta potty access while supporting community safety and stewardship. While we are talking about public restrooms, *the Advisors recommend that you check each one in the community and any that are not ADA compliant should be updated.*

Mr. Martin is a success story as you were able to convince him to add rain gardens and create a beautiful place to have lunch or take a break outside of his building. How lucky his employees are! *Placing the picnic tables on cement pad will add to the enjoyment of the area, reduced pests, and make it easier for the grass to be cut. It is also a great place to add recycle bins to complement the trash bins that are already there*

Art is abundant throughout the town and takes many forms, from the nine recycled bicycles with flower baskets along Decatur Street to the remarkable transformation of Buchanan Street Industrial Park. New this year, the industrial park's interactive African American mural and ten historical signs, bring vibrancy and culture to an unexpected place. We appreciate the care Edmonston has taken to think creatively and bring beauty where it is least expected.

Edmonston is a vibrant, welcoming community that makes a significant effort to celebrate the diversity that makes their town special. The town should be proud of the model it has created for other communities. Edmonston is a great place to live and offers an inclusive environment for all.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT: Community involvement refers to the active participation of individuals, organizations, and groups in efforts that support and enhance the well-being of the community. Contributions include, but are not limited to, volunteering, mentoring, fundraising, resource sharing, organizing events, serving on boards or committees, and supporting cultural, educational, social, and service initiatives. Engagement fosters shared responsibility, strengthens the social fabric, builds trust, and enhances quality of life while inspiring new and continued involvement.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Not Started (N/S) 0**	**In Progress 1-2**	**In Place 3-5**	**Surpasses 6-8**
1. Programs are in place to encourage, recruit, engage and/or recognize a diverse base of volunteers of all ages, abilities, cultures, and/or segments of the community in each of the America in Bloom criteria. Volunteers from businesses, residents, schools, and/or organizations participate, and opportunities present themselves to residents and/or businesses to get involved.					6
2. Residential landscapes provide streetscape appeal and reflect community value in landscaping. They are neat, attractive, and well maintained.					7
3. Annual recognition of a community champion. This may be from the schools, social organizations, Chamber of Commerce, businesses, to include issues that are important to the community, including, but not limited to, housing, health, and environmental initiatives.					6
4. Secure food programs are available. Examples include, but are not limited to, hunger relief efforts, food pantries, garden plots, rooftop gardens, community gardens, farmers markets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).					8
5. Volunteer boards are active and/or comprised of representatives from business and residents. Examples include, but are not limited to, In Bloom committee, Rotary, Veteran groups, Chamber of Commerce, Scouting, HOAs, municipal boards, and faith-based organizations.					6
6. Youth of all ages and abilities participate in community events. Examples include, but are not limited to, lectures, tours, events, reenactments, research, and reader's theater. Participants are recognized for their efforts and/or achievements.					6

7. Youth organizations such as Scouts, Green Teams, schools, and 4H encourage community involvement. Participants are recognized for their efforts and/or achievements. Efforts are communicated to the public through social media, newsletters, city website, and other methods. Youth-focused programs are in place for multiple ages and/or abilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, sports, gardening, clubs, and lectures.					6
8. Volunteer engagement in parades, festivals, and community events as measured by but not limited to event volunteers, the frequency and variety of events, a dedicated volunteer coordinator, and number of volunteer hours.					7
9. Volunteers participate in community improvement initiatives. Examples include, but are not limited to, Habitat for Humanity, home repair programs, disaster relief, and clean-up days.					6
10. Residential best practices regarding water conservation measures are used throughout the community. Examples include, but are not limited to, water-saving shower heads, full loads for dishwashers and washing machines, sink and toilet leaks fixed, lawn irrigation, drought-resistant plants, and use of gray water.					6
11. Compassionate Community Response: The community demonstrates organized efforts to provide compassionate care during crises such as floods or hurricanes, wildfires, homelessness, and tragic deaths of community members. Support may include short- and long-term assistance (e.g., meals, housing, support groups, vigils, warming centers, garden therapy), volunteer service, fundraising, and coordinated relief efforts.					6
12. Training programs for volunteer excellence are in place to teach best practices assuring every volunteer is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to succeed for all volunteer positions. Training should include standardized best practices, role-specific instruction, hands-on learning, mentorship, safety, communication, and teamwork.					6
13. The community has a disaster preparedness plan in place and routinely reviews and updates it to ensure effectiveness, incorporates lessons learned from past events, and conducts regular training exercises to maintain readiness among residents and emergency personnel.					6
Totals:	**Possible Points**		**Actual Points**		**Percent**
8. Community Involvement	104		82		78.84%

Community Involvement Recommendations:

Edmonston is a small town with an outsized commitment to civic engagement, environmental stewardship, and neighbor-to-neighbor connection. Its identity is rooted in the belief that residents, local leaders, and partner organizations all play an active role in shaping the community's future. While modest in size, Edmonston consistently demonstrates how a town can mobilize its people to create meaningful, visible impact.

The Junior Mayor program is wonderful, and *it would be good to expand on the idea of getting the youth involved in their community. Expand your current leadership opportunities by creating a youth advisory. Youth involvement strengthens long-term civic participation and instills a sense of pride and ownership in their community. Working with the local schools and Reverend Gail Addison to create additional youth opportunities in Edmonston.*

Be sure to get local businesses involved in what's going on in your community. Even though the owner may not live in Edmonston, he has chosen Edmonston as a place to house his business and is securing jobs for residents of your community and that makes them family. Create a few events that can take place near their businesses to increase visibility and always look for ways to get them involved. Many companies require their employees to provide a number of hours each year in volunteerism. St up a program that will work well with the businesses and help them to feel a part of Edmonston. Participating in beautification projects builds a stronger economic and social ecosystem.

Edmonston could host Quarterly Community Action Days beyond your clean up days. Focus on different themes and include green infrastructure maintenance and Pollinator Gardens. Make sure each project is only 1-2 hours long, provide the tools and remember to bring the coffee and donuts. As you gain a following, add more action days

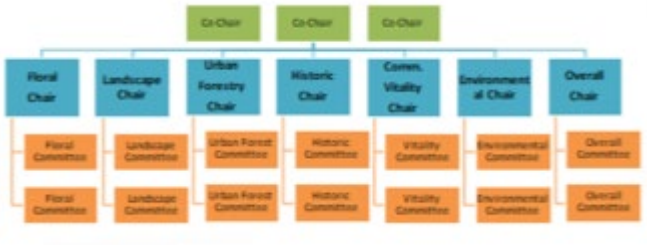
A couple of ideas to increase your community involvement include:

- *Create a Community Engagement Hub which includes a centralized online and physical space where residents can sign up for volunteer opportunities and submit ideas or feedback.*
- *Launch a "Neighbors Teaching Neighbors" Skill-Sharing Series where residents host short workshops on gardening, bike repair, cooking, financial literacy, or cultural traditions. This builds pride, connection, and cross-generational engagement. You have members of your community that can lead these sessions such as Reverend Gail Addison, or Dr. Dallas who can share her success story to motivate your youth. The local businesses can take on an intern to help them learn a skill whether it's changing the oil on a car or how to read a P & L.*

The new KaBoom playground is beautiful and a wonderful addition to the town. *Keep trash and particularly water bottles at a minimum by adding more trash containers to the park and with each trash container add a separate recycle bin. This playground is ADA accessible so adding more picnic tables that are designed for those with disabilities would be well received.*

While you are at it, take the time to clean up both the trash from the river next to your KaBoom playground and cut back the invasive vines. This would be a good project for the Green Team.

With much work to be done, many hands can definitely make light work. As you prepare for 2027, create an America in Bloom committee selecting a captain that will oversee each criterion and allow them to bring their own committee of experts and helping hands together. They can help to make additions to the community profile, put together the Advisors tour highlighting the category, and speak to the Advisors when they visit utilizing their expertise. This will help to lighten the load on the Township employees and will help to build your volunteer base, all moving together in the same direction. Apply for 501(c)(3) status for your America in Bloom committee.



When it's time to add to your community profile meet with a number of the residents of your community of different ages and backgrounds to help you identify all the great things that Logan is known for and all the great things you are doing. Use the grid on this evaluation to help you think of questions to ask and through your discussions you may be able to discover additional opportunities, thoughts and ideas.

Edmonston's community involvement is rooted in pride, stewardship, and collaboration. By expanding opportunities for connection, elevating resident voices, and strengthening youth and business engagement, the town can build an even more vibrant, inclusive, and resilient future—one where every resident feels seen, valued, and empowered to contribute.

EVALUATION TOUR PREPARATION AND ACTIONS: Community's readiness prior to and the action during the Evaluation Tour include an informative Community Profile, preparedness prior to Advisors' arrival, and effective content during the Evaluation Tour. Succession plans are evident.	**Not Applicable (N/A)**	**Unmet (U/M) 0**	**Met 1**
1. Community contact was available for pre-visit meeting for introductions and discussion of preparations.			1
2. Community Profile was provided to Advisors at least two weeks prior to the first official tour date.			1
3. Community Profile includes contacts with emails and positions.			1
4. Community Profile from a returning community includes what is new and implemented from previous Advisors' recommendations (scored as Not Applicable for a new community).			1
5. Community Profile includes a map with tour boundaries and a daily itinerary.			1
6. Evaluation Tour provided a representative cross-section of the community.			1
7. Advisors met with elected/appointed municipal leaders and staff.			1
8. Advisors met with the business and non-profit community.			1
9. Advisors met with volunteers.			1
10. Advisors met with the media (print, radio, tv, social media) and/or have been given media contact information.			1
11. Advisors were asked to give a presentation.			1
12. A tour wrap-up session was conducted with a community representative.			1
13. Enough time was allotted for Advisors to work on the Evaluation Report in a quiet place with adequate Wi-Fi.			1
14. Succession plans are evident, and next year's chair is present and participating in the tour.			1
15. CN grant project(s) are reviewed (scored as Not Applicable for a community not receiving a CN grant).	N/A		
Totals:	**Possible Points**	**Actual Points**	**Percent**
9. Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions	14	14	100.00%

Evaluation Tour Preparation and Actions Recommendations:

Edmonston has been an America in Bloom community for ten years now, and that longevity is truly admirable. It reflects your deep commitment to making Edmonston a great place to live, work, and play. Over the past decade, you have accomplished an impressive amount, and your Community Profile clearly showcases those successes.

It also indicates that this is a good moment for a thoughtful review of your Community Profile—removing redundancies, ensuring consistent fonts and formatting, and updating the content to fully reflect all criteria, including the newest Community Involvement *section.*

DISCLAIMERS:

1. Communities are responsible for addressing the metrics in the Community Profile, Evaluation Tour Itinerary, and during the Evaluation Tour. Please note that the metric calculations contained herein are final, and each community is encouraged to focus on any changes during the following year's entry in the America in Bloom Program.
2. All information is given to the best of America in Bloom's knowledge and is believed to be accurate. Your conditions of use and application of recommendations and/or suggested products are beyond our control. There is no warranty expressed or implied regarding the accuracy of any given data or statements. America in Bloom specifically disclaims any responsibility or liability relating to the use of the recommendations and/or suggested products and shall under no circumstances whatsoever, be liable for any special, incidental, or consequential damages which may arise from such use.
3. Reference herein to any specific commercial products, processes, or service by trade named trademark manufacturer or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation or favoring by America in Bloom. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein shall not be used for advertising or product endorsement purposes.

2026 Community Recognitions

Community name/state: Edmonston, Maryland

Recognized Criterion: Environmental Initiatives

Edmonston, Maryland has emerged as one of the region's most compelling examples of small-town environmental innovation. Despite its modest size, the community has built an impressively holistic approach to sustainability—layering green infrastructure, renewable energy, habitat restoration, and active resident participation into a unified, long-term strategy.

What sets Edmonston apart is the way these efforts work together. This isn't a town with one signature project; it's a place where environmental stewardship is woven into daily life, municipal planning, and community identity. The result is a healthier, more resilient, and more connected town that continues to punch far above its weight.

Edmonston truly proves that a small town can lead with a big, bold green vision.

Noteworthy Project or Initiative:

Edmonston is reimagining its open lots as innovative, environmentally friendly spaces that honor the community's history and culture. One example is the city's new pocket park at the end of a quiet street. Known as the Zen Garden, the space celebrates Edmonston's history by reflecting the Japanese roots of one of its early mayors. The Zen Garden also highlights the benefits that green spaces can bring to health and wellness. Beautiful, peaceful, and inviting, it offers residents a place for joy, reflection, and wonder. This project is one of several innovative green spaces Edmonston is developing on vacant lots throughout the community.