



February 17, 2021

House Bill 867
Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative Program Fund
House Appropriations Committee

Position: FAVORABLE

The Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative (BRNI) provides grants to fund revitalization strategies in State-designated Sustainable Community areas located within the Baltimore beltway. BRNI started as a pilot program of \$3 million in fiscal 2014, and has had an annual appropriation of \$12 million since fiscal year 2020. House Bill 867 would extend the required annual appropriation of \$12 million through fiscal year 2026.

The greater Baybrook area, which includes the Anne Arundel County community of Brooklyn Park, is one of the designated areas eligible for BRNI funding. Brooklyn Park is one of Anne Arundel County's oldest communities and one of Baltimore City's first suburbs. The community directly abuts the Baltimore City community of Brooklyn to its east, and is south across the Patapsco River from the Baltimore City community of Cherry Hill.

Since fiscal year 2018, the Greater Baybrook Alliance has received over \$3 million in BRNI grants for projects including expansion of property rehabilitation programs in Brooklyn Heights and Arundel Village, seeding of community-driven small to medium scale capital improvement projects, rodent abatement, and development of a Chesapeake Arts Center makerspace. Anne Arundel County also routinely dedicates funds to projects in Brooklyn Park. In recent years, the County has funded improvements to a bike trail and parks, expansion of the Brooklyn Park Senior Center, and redevelopment of athletic facilities.

BRNI is an important investment tool to support strategic neighborhood revitalization in communities such as Brooklyn Park. **For those reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report on House Bill 867.**