



Southwest Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Ward Street
Mural, Pigtown

Welcome Message



Tony Scott

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tony Scott'.

Executive Director

2025 was an eventful year for the Southwest Partnership and the neighborhoods we serve. We hired a new Executive Director, we completed our largest project ever in the reopening of the Poppleton Recreation Center that has gone on to win several awards, we became one of twenty recipients of the Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative (BVRI) closing the year acquiring our first property under the program, and jumpstarting a holistic redevelopment approach with new partnerships that center people, target vacant properties, and invest in place.

Southwest Partnership

Gala

◆ CELEBRATING COMMUNITY

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 7, 2026
6:00PM - 9:00PM

4MLK
4 MARTIN LUTHER KING BLVD
BALTIMORE, MD 21201

RSVP: [SWPGALA.EVENTBRITE.COM](https://www.swp gala.eventbrite.com)



Housing Development

SWP and partners seek to develop over 200 vacant houses over the next 3-5 years.

Southwest Partnership was awarded funding through State of Maryland's Baltimore Vacants Reinvestment Initiative (BVRI) to tackle around 60 properties throughout Hollins Market and Mount Clare over the next 3 years totaling \$18 million in development investment.

SWP also supported a proposal with Unity Properties of Bon Secours in Franklin Square that was also awarded funding to rebuild 152 properties at over \$32 million. SWP and Unity Properties have already begun meeting with City and State officials to ensure coordination, support, and alignment.

By the end of 2025, SWP successfully purchased its first property and expects to begin work in the coming months. While the specific properties will change over time as vacant properties get rehabilitated and potential new vacants show up, this partnership with the City and State represents a new era in tackling the vacant, abandoned properties in Central Southwest Baltimore and beyond.

In preparation for the increased work, SWP has already begun ramping up its support for existing residents: moving its Community Organizer from part-time to full-time, establishing partnerships for homeownership counseling and financial wellness providers, reaching out to partners who can educate and protect tenants, and making placemaking investments in alignment with community priorities.



109 S. Schroeder Street

SWP is also exploring mechanisms for permanent affordability that allow residents of all incomes to stay in or move to our neighborhoods.

Learn more about our Housing Action Plan and how to stay informed about redevelopment opportunities by visiting our website at: <https://swpbal.org/housing-program>

Southwest Means Business

Powering growth, supporting entrepreneurs, and strengthening the West Baltimore / Hollins Market corridor.



What the Program Is

A hands-on support program connecting property owners and entrepreneurs with the resources, partners, and practical help needed to activate spaces and grow businesses along the corridor.

What We Do

- **Activate Storefronts:** Keep a live inventory & connect spaces with tenants.
- **Business Outreach:** Monthly corridor visits to share resources & check in.
- **Funding Help:** Navigate grants, incentives, and improvement programs.
- **Permit Support:** Guidance on licensing & city processes.
- **Referrals:** Connect to experts in planning, bookkeeping, & legal.
- **Promote & Spotlight:** Share openings, milestones, and corridor news.

Who We Serve

- Commercial property owners & managers
- Current and prospective small businesses
- Community-based partners

How We Assist

- **Quick Intake:** Collect property or business details by email or in person.
- **Needs Check:** Identify vacancy, build-out, funding, or permitting needs.
- **Resource Plan:** Share relevant programs, timelines, and next steps.
- **Connections:** Warm introductions to city agencies, lenders, and TA providers.
- **Follow Up:** Ongoing check-ins to track progress and keep momentum.

Why It Matters

Every activated storefront builds stronger neighborhoods. Together, we're creating a corridor that attracts foot traffic, grows jobs, and restores pride in West Baltimore.

Let's Get to Business



David Pope
Business Relations Manager
david@swpba.org
410-357-1070



1317 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Md 21223

Commercial Development

Expanding Access to Capital and Business Support

SWP's new Business Relations Manager, David Pope, is maintaining contact each month to over 40 businesses in the Hollins Market and West Baltimore Street corridor to offer support and connect them to technical assistance as needed. Technical assistance has included helping with the zoning process, to finding contractors for repairs, to assisting with reclaiming good business status.

Last year, SWP launched the Commercial Development Improvement Program (CDIP) provide grants for businesses to remain viable and/or expand their operations. We received 38 applications requesting \$3,274,502 of improvements. This is triple the amount of applications that SWP received last year for commercial improvements, reflecting both increased demand and the program's need. Through an open application process aligned with the guidelines and requirements of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Southwest Partnership selected eight subgrantees.

A total of \$480,000 in state-funded grants was awarded to the following local businesses:

Business Name	Status	Address	Awarded Amount
Nino's	New	1141-1143 W Balto.	\$130,000
Little Miss Butterfly	New	1123 W Balto.	\$75,000
Ramsey Art Gallery	Existing	1106 Hollins St	\$46,000
Zellas	Existing	1145 Hollins St	\$30,000
Darker than Blue Grille	New	1025 W Balto.	\$90,000
Lonnie/Lisa	Existing	1514 W Balto.	\$8,000
Black Cat Bakery	New	48 S. Carrollton Ave	\$51,000
Bills Place	Existing	1516 and 1514 W Balto. St.	\$50,000
Total			\$480,000

All funded projects are currently underway and scheduled for completion by Spring 2026. Together, these awards advance Southwest Partnership's commercial development approach by prioritizing business retention and stabilization alongside the attraction of new businesses.

Reopening Poppleton Recreation Center

Last summer, the Southwest Partnership in partnership with the Southwest Sports & Fitness Alliance (SSFA) and Church of the Nativity hosted a ribbon cutting for the renovated Poppleton Recreation Center. Together, we raised over \$3 million dollars to modernize the large interior systems and spaces, update roofing and windows, and improve accessibility. This 7,500 square foot space is now the home of SSFA and will host a range of community programming, including a performance arts camp, youth workouts, organized sports, athletic training and a content creation studio for kids to learn how to use video. The event drew well over 70 people including the Mayor and his senior team and various Federal, State, and Community leaders whose funding and support made this possible. Over the past year, thanks to submissions by the architect, Two Point Studios, the Poppleton Recreation Center has gone on to win several awards:



AIA (American Institute of Architects) Maryland: Design Excellence in Historic Preservation

AIA (American Institute of Architects) Baltimore: Design Excellence



ULI (Urban Land Institute) Wavemaker Award: for the project's overall social impact, including sense of place and quality, sustainability, visionary emulation qualities, and need.



Preservation Maryland – Phoenix Award: The Phoenix Award is the highest award issued from Preservation Maryland

Thank you again to everyone who has supported this project over the years. Now that it is renovated, the Poppleton Recreation Center is being programmed and operated fully by Southwest Sports and Fitness Alliance. For additional information on their programming please reach out to info@sportsfitnessalliance.org.



Entrepreneurship Conference



Empowering Ideas. Building Community.

Southwest Partnership hosted the second iteration of its Entrepreneurship Conference, convening 90 registered participants and generating strong interest in small business development and commercial revitalization in Southwest Baltimore.

The conference brought together current and aspiring entrepreneurs, community stakeholders, and resource providers to explore pathways for launching and sustaining neighborhood-based businesses. A central focus of the conference was connecting entrepreneurs with trusted partners, including Innovation Works, Baltimore Community Lending, and other technical assistance and capital providers. These connections helped introduce participants to financing options, business support services, and mentorship resources aligned with neighborhood commercial opportunities.

The conference also served as a launch point for SWP's partnership with Innovation Works, helping establish an entrepreneur pipeline responsive to local needs. In parallel, outreach associated with the conference and SWP's broader commercial programming led to direct engagement with two property owners in the district who are now actively seeking tenant placement, an early indicator of renewed business activity and investor interest.

Looking ahead, Southwest Partnership plans to expand the Entrepreneurship Conference in 2026, pairing the event with a series of workshops and community engagement opportunities to deepen the entrepreneur pipeline and support both new and legacy businesses across the district.

Commercial District Assessment



Last summer, SWP was selected by the Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC) to conduct the Commercial District Assessment for the Southwest Partnership area. This BDC-led initiative aligned closely with SWP's internal goal of developing a comprehensive commercial inventory. The assessment involved on-the-ground surveys to document business activity, vacancies, and property uses, culminating in a working database of active businesses and available commercial spaces. This resource will serve as both a city and neighborhood-level tool to inform investment priorities, outreach strategies, and long-term commercial revitalization planning. [View Here](#)

Bruce Street Stables

Southwest Partnership completed a stabilization and rehabilitation project at the historic Bruce Street Stables, a cultural and functional anchor in Southwest Baltimore. Supported by a \$100,000 Baltimore Regional Neighborhoods Initiative (BRNI) capital grant, the project focused on preserving the building's structural integrity while ensuring it remains safe, functional, and accessible for continued community use.

Serving generations of Arabbers and urban farmers, the stables play a vital role in supporting local produce distribution in neighborhoods facing food access challenges. In collaboration with local minority-owned contractor Bull Construction, the project included repointing exterior brick, rebuilding stalls, installing new windows, reinforcing interior supports, and improving access to the hay loft. All work was completed in coordination with the Maryland Historical Trust.



Public Safety Program: Cameras & String Lights

Public safety and health make development work possible. On Tuesday, December 9th, SWP Safety Chair Howard Hughes helped organize and lead a public health and safety walk with Deputy Mayor Dr. Dzirasa along the Monroe/Fulton St corridors from Pratt down to Wilkens Ave. This allowed top leadership in the Mayor's Office, DPW, Police, Fire, Health Department, and Homeless Services to understand better the extent of coordination needed to meet the needs of those suffering from addiction along the corridor and residents struggling with quality of life issues as a result. The City has now established regular check-ins to continue attention to and coordination along this corridor.



The public safety camera and string lights grant closed at the end of December, with final installations occurring through January. In total the program supported:

69 Residential Doorbell Cameras

10 Block Sides of String Lighting

Security/Anti-Dumping cameras installed at:
Greater Harvest Baptist Church (Franklin Square)

Faith Center (Mount Clare)

Poppleton Recreation Center (Poppleton)

Ruth M Kirk Recreation Center (Franklin Square)



Lou Packett Grants For Schools



During the Spring, four local schools applied for and were awarded \$1,000 grants through the Lou Packett Fund. Franklin Square Elementary/Middle hosted a Hawaiian style lunch for teachers/staff during Teacher Appreciation Week, Vivien T. Thomas Medical Arts Academy used funds for food & supplies for their School #429 Day to celebrate student achievement, The Barrister Ball at Charles Carroll Barrister Elementary used the funds to support a photographer and chef, and James McHenry Elementary hosted a Perfect Attendance lunch for students/parents at Swill in Pigtown.

This fund is entirely supported by donations from the general public. We are currently at a deficit to continue providing support for the 2026 calendar year, so please consider donating here (bit.ly/4ohoRxt)

SWP Upcoming Events

Date	Event
February 7 @ 6pm	Southwest Annual Gala
February 11 from 5–6:30pm	CEC Community Meal
February 17 from 5:30–6pm	Liquor Board Training
February 28	Dumpster Day – Pigtown
March 17 from 5:30–6pm	Nonprofit Tax Training
March 17 from 7–8:30pm	SWP Public Board Meeting
March 26	SWP Public Safety Walk
April 11	Dumpster Day – Pigtown

You can find all these events and more on our website calendar (<https://swpbal.org/events/>).

Thank You Donors

Our work would not be possible without the generosity of our donors and partners. Your support powers the programs and community-driven initiatives that strengthen Southwest Baltimore's neighborhoods and respond to local needs. We are deeply grateful for your belief in this work.

Our Major Donors



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Southwest Partnership

Building Community Together

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www.swpbal.org

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