From the beginning, Northern Baltimore's neighborhoods have been characterized by the incorporation of nature into the built environment. When the area was first developed, statuesque mature trees were retained and integrated into the design, subsequently defining the character of some of America's first "garden suburbs". While the trees were—and still are—integral to the aesthetic nature of the area, they are also so much more. Trees, specifically in developed areas, help mitigate climate change in several ways. Subsequently, homeowners in Northern Baltimore that retain large shade trees on their property provide an essential service to the community.

Trees in the community store and sequester carbon, moderate temperature, filter air, and manage stormwater. These functions lead to a cooler city with less heat-related illness, cleaner air and water, and decreased flooding. In the case of Baltimore, the Northern Baltimore tree population also contributes to a cleaner and more productive Chesapeake Bay. Baltimore City estimates that over the life of a single tree, around $57,000 of economic and environmental services are provided.

However, just like all other living things, trees get old and die. Across the country, homeowners routinely replace large shade trees with smaller ornamental trees such as dogwoods, flowering cherries, serviceberries, and redbuds. While these trees are pretty and have their place in the community, they are also smaller and shorter lived. Consequently, they do not offer as many environmental benefits or define the landscape around them in the same way as larger, long-lived trees.

While the costs of maintaining large trees are very tangible, the benefits of doing so are often harder to conceptualize and extend well-beyond the property boundary. When individual community members bear the costs of planting and maintaining big trees on private property, they are improving the living conditions of the entire area, both aesthetically and functionally.

It is imperative that each homeowner in North Baltimore be a steward of the land by planting and retaining large shade trees on private property. While this will ensure that the area maintains its distinctive and renown garden character, more importantly, it contributes to a resilient neighborhood able to withstand shifting climate patterns. The tree population in North Baltimore is a collective community resource to which residents contribute and from which they derive benefits. Plant a large shade tree today to ensure that the Northern Baltimore forest will continue to thrive for future generations.

Trees to Plant
- Red maple (*Acer rubrum*)
- Sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*)
- Hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
- American yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea*)
- American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*)
- Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
- Black gum (*Nyssa sylvatica*)
- American sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*)
- London planetree (*Platanus x acerifolia*)
- White oak (*Quercus alba*)
- Swamp white oak (*Quercus bicolor*)
- Pin oak (*Quercus palustris*)
- Willow oak (*Quercus phellos*)
- Northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*)
- Shumard oak (*Quercus schumardii*)
- Black oak (*Quercus velutina*)
- American linden (*Tilia americana*)
- American elm (*Ulmus americana*)

Both Roland Park and Guilford Association websites provide instructions on properly caring for newly planted trees. This list was cross-referenced with Baltimore City's Street Tree Species List, on which can be found further species recommendations.

About the Author
Mary Charlotte Gitlin is an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist and New Jersey Licensed Tree Expert. She holds a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University in Ecology, Evolution, and Natural Resources. Mary Charlotte attributes her love of ecology and trees to growing up in the area and believes that these communities can be a model for others in the Northeast. She welcomes all tree and ecology related questions via email at marygitlin@hotmail.com.