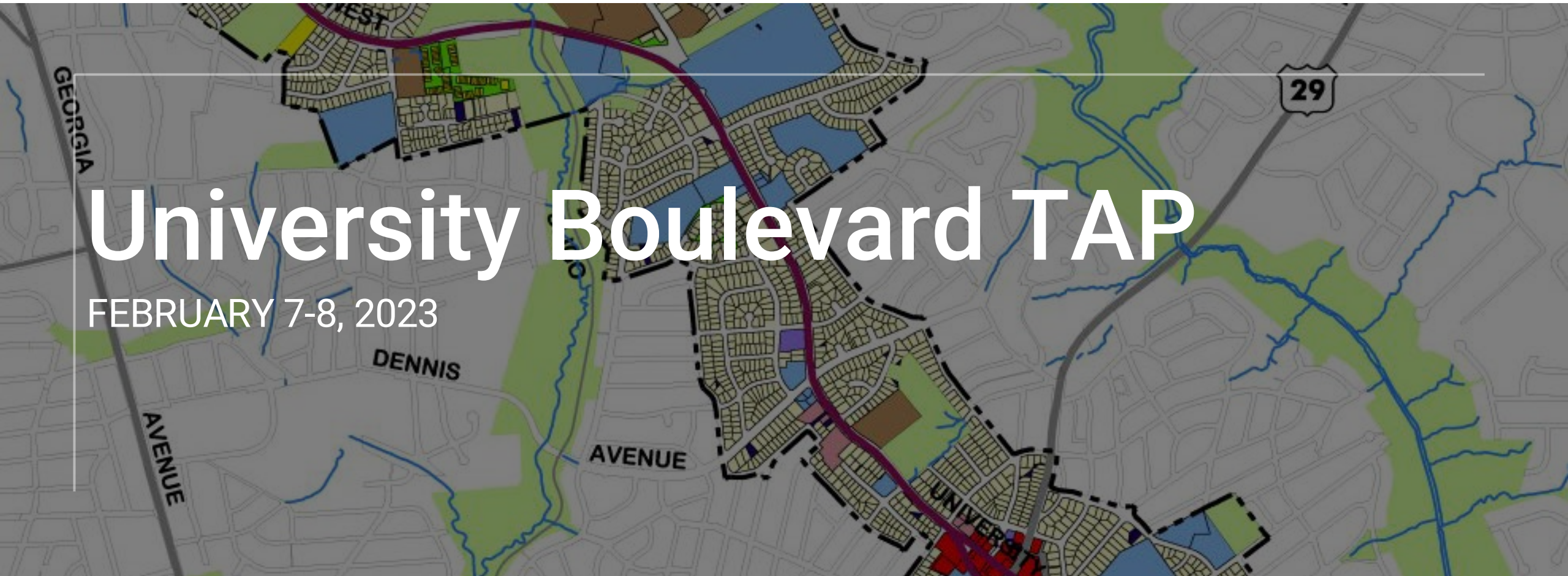




Washington

University Boulevard TAP

FEBRUARY 7-8, 2023



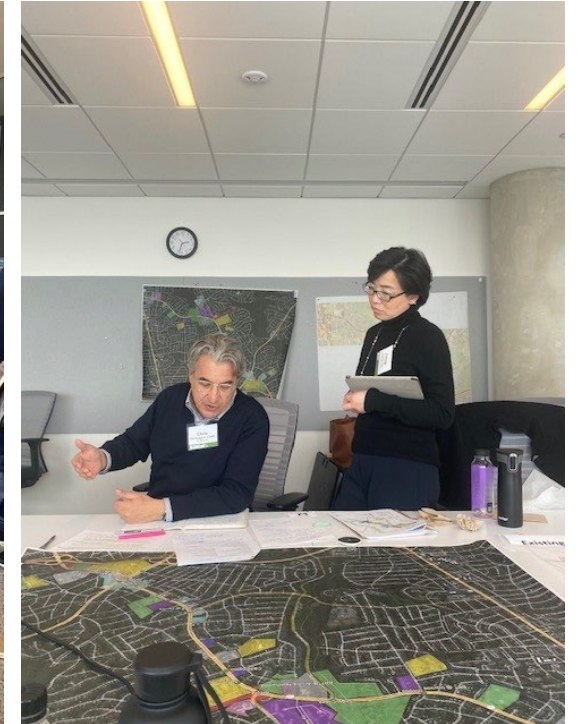
Panelists and Project Staff

Panel Chair

Ellen McCarthy, Urban Partnership, LLC
Robert Atkinson, retired
Connie Fan, LSG Landscape Architecture Group

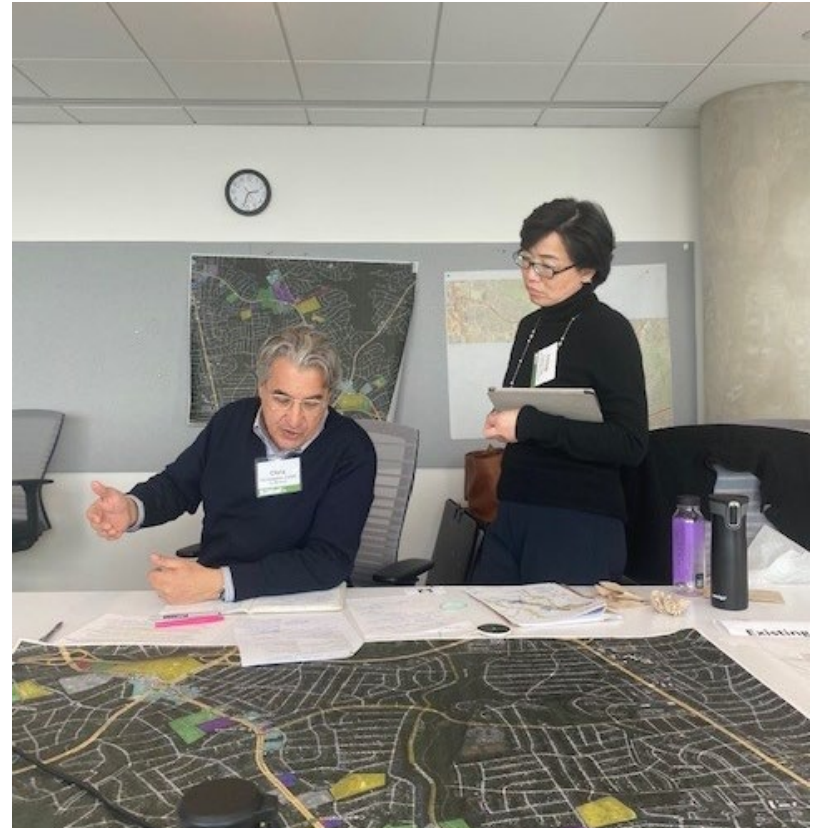
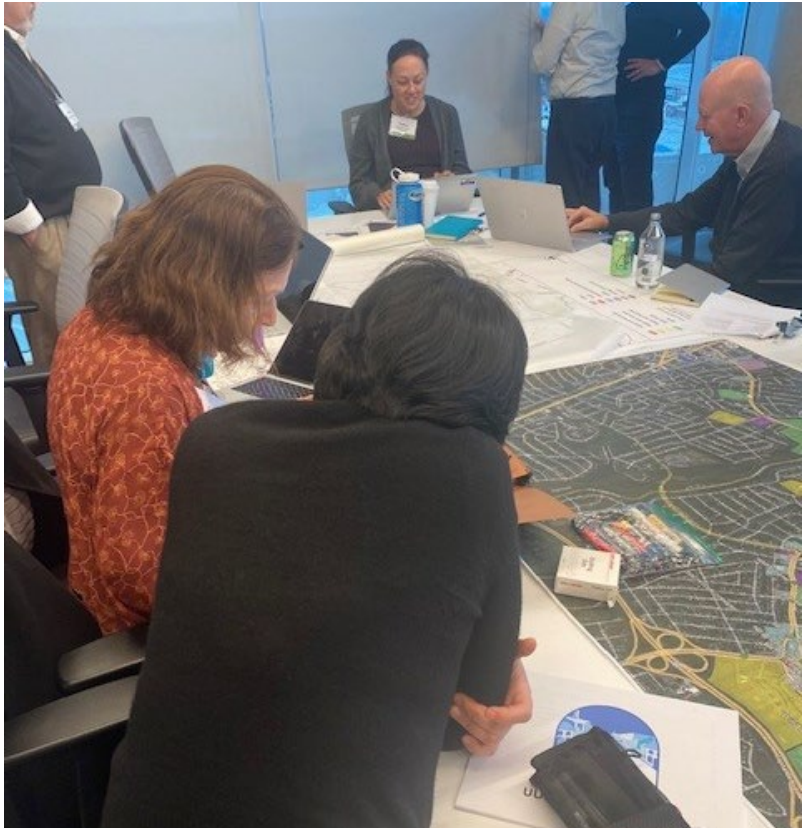
Panelists

Chris Calott, UC Berkeley
John Coe, Coe Enterprises
Alan Goldstein, AHC, Inc.
Tracy Hadden Loh, Brookings Metro
Margaret Rifkin, The Art and Walkability Project
Jonathan D. Rogers, DDOT
Will Zeid, Gorove Slade



Project Staff

Emily McKnight, ULI Washington
Elisabeth Rohde, ULI Washington
Rebecca Gale, Writer



The TAP Process

February 7th & 8th at Montgomery County Planning in Wheaton, Md.

Questions to be Answered

1. What market conditions are necessary to advance corridor focused growth along University Boulevard as envisioned in *Thrive 2050*?
2. Is it economically feasible for the existing housing and institutional uses along University Boulevard to transition to a compact form of housing over the next 20 years?
3. Alternatively, is it economically feasible for a transition towards a more compact form of housing at certain nodes along the corridor (e.g. Kemp Mill Center or Four Corners)?
4. Are there any planning or development options outside of proposed feasibilities that the county isn't considering, but should?

What We Heard From Stakeholders

STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS

Safer options for walkers and bikers, improve accessibility in the corridor – especially in and around the high schools.

Bike lanes worked well – people did not oppose the bike lanes themselves but did take issue with the process and abrupt changes.

Four Corners is a dangerous intersection and not working for cars, walkers, bikers or businesses.

Gentrification concerns. What is the risk of pushing out residents and businesses?

“Missing middle” more affordable housing is needed in Montgomery County, and in the corridor as well.

Need adequate bus stop facilities - well placed and well lit with safe crossing.



What We Heard (pt 2)

Preventing fatalities is priority number one – why this work matters.



Overarching Themes

Improve quality of life for neighborhoods along the corridor (and enhancing property values) by improving the walkability, attractiveness, and safety:



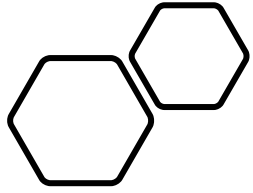
Beautifying the adjacent areas with street trees, lighting and attractive BRT stations, etc.



Making it safer by providing bus and bike lanes along the sides to buffer pedestrians from dangerous drivers and providing more “eyes on the street” by encouraging infill development.



Accommodating growth while substantially enhancing residents’ ability to access and enjoy neighborhood amenities by bringing origins and destinations closer together, connecting trails, and improving wayfinding.



Recommendations

Transportation
Development
Placemaking



A watercolor illustration of a road scene. In the foreground, a white car is driving on the left side of the road, and another white car is driving on the right side. The road is flanked by green grass and trees. In the background, there is a fence and more trees. The overall style is artistic and sketchy.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Vision Zero Considerations

University Blvd does not meet safety standards and Master Planned conditions along most of the corridor

Corridor identified as a top 10 High Injury Network in 2030 Vision Zero Action Plan with 17 serious/fatal collisions

Two major County high schools and several parks located directly along University Blvd with existing stakeholder safety concerns

Existing volumes and adequate vehicle LOS on University Blvd support reduction support reduced travel lanes

Vision Zero Considerations

1. Interim and ultimately permanent improvements to protect pedestrians and bicyclists and reduce travel speeds should be implemented along the full corridor
2. Road diet with bike lanes (SHA pilot has shown interim condition is feasible within existing section)
3. Protected intersections
4. Improved medians, added pedestrian crossings, and relocated bus stops to prevent mid-block crossings near schools
5. Long-term policies to promote consolidation of curb cuts along University Boulevard

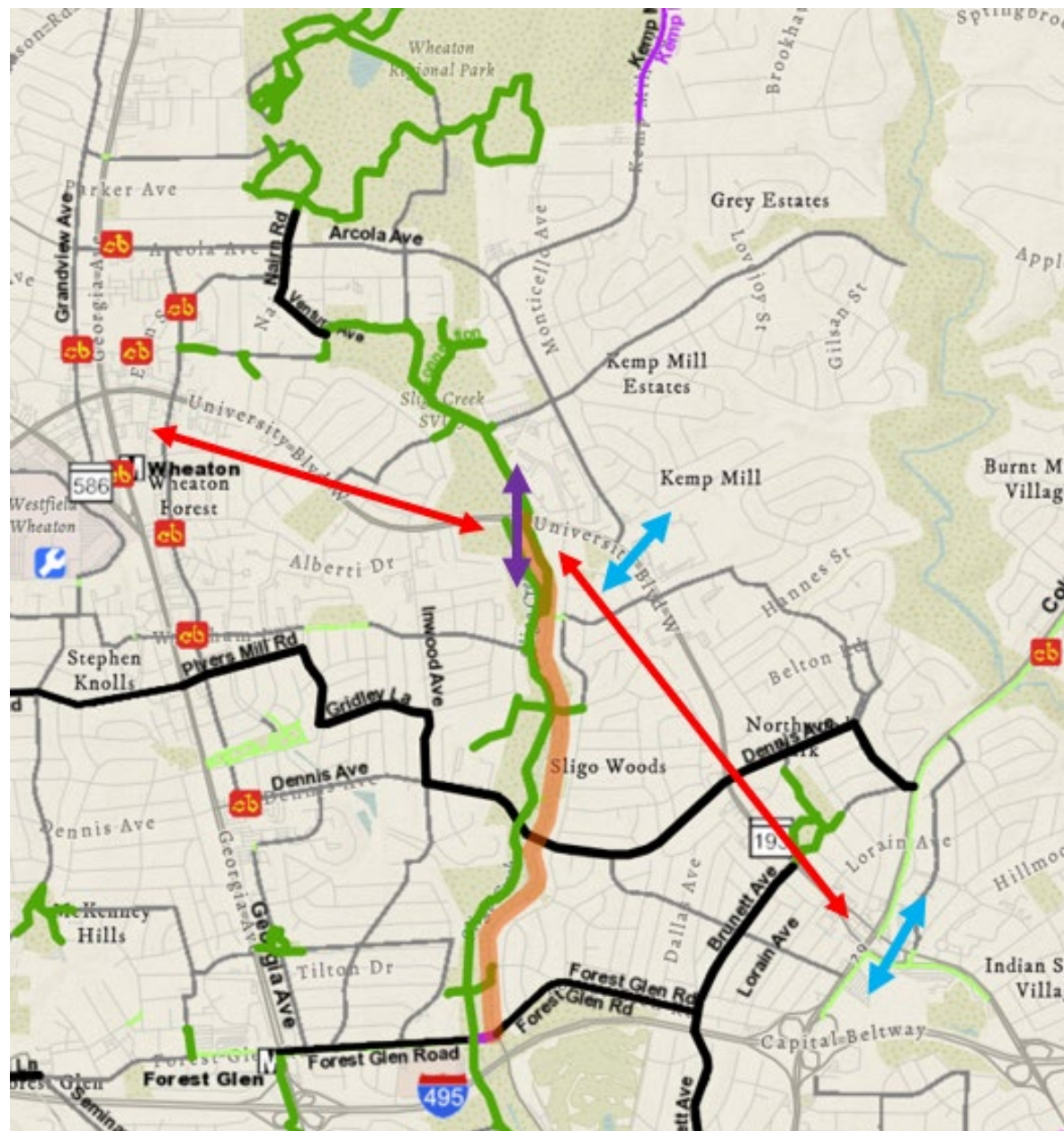
Current School and Trail Access

Connect Wheaton CBD and Four Corners to trail and park system

Provide protected and prioritized trail crossing for Sligo Creek corridor

Provide protected crossings on all intersection legs at Norwood High School with intervention along median to prevent mid-block crossings

Develop preventative measures to eliminate mid-block crossings at Blair High School

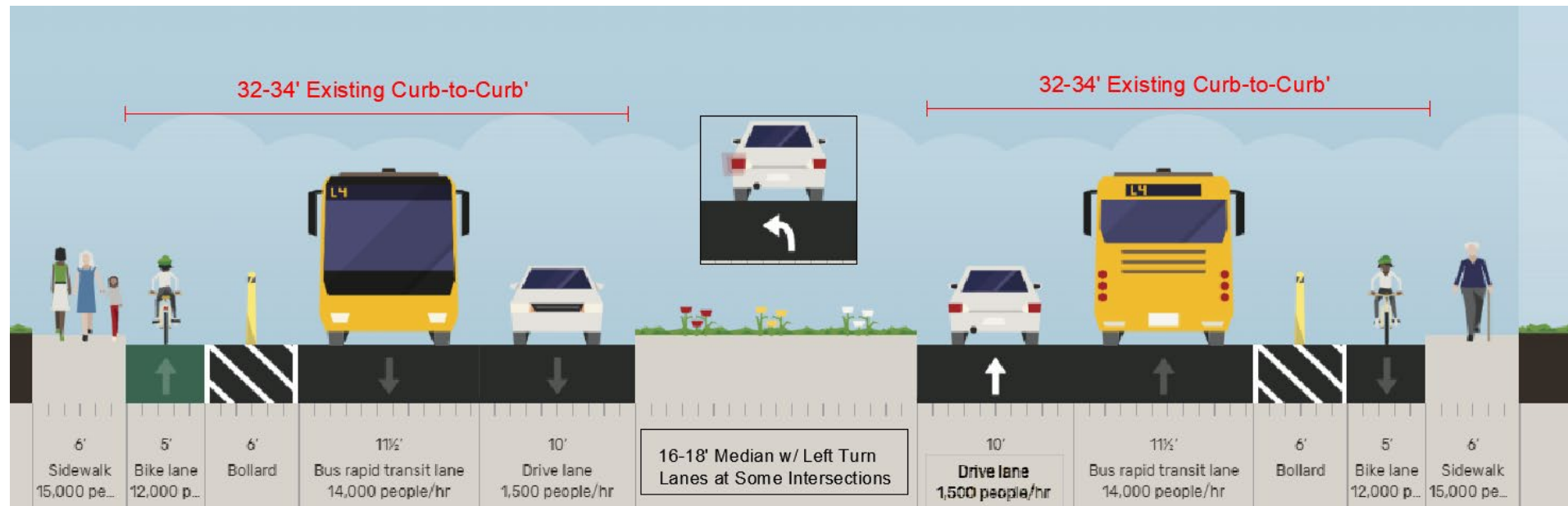


Short-term Recommendation: University Blvd Road Diet

Implement a Road Diet for University Blvd in an interim and then potentially further improved ultimate condition

Interim Condition Achieving Some Goals of the Master Plans

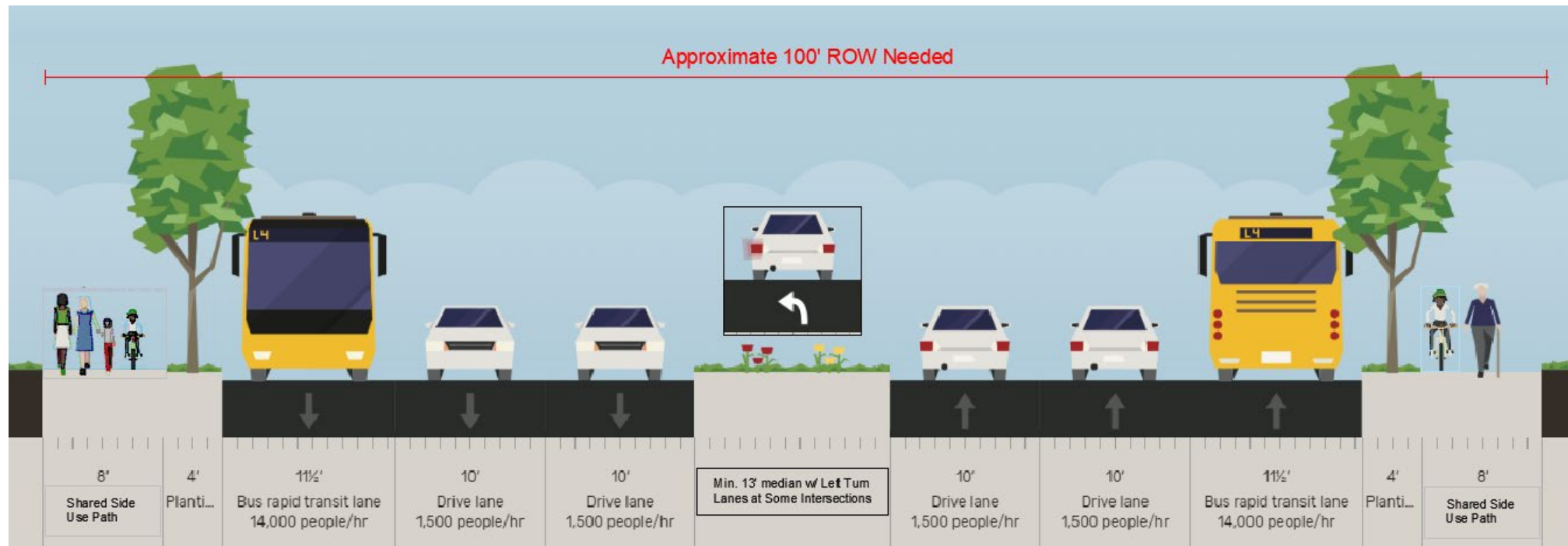
- Improvements within existing road section
 - Planned pilot program for a curb running BRT lane would not provide master planned bike facilities
- Restripe to include:
 - 2 travel lanes in each direction, 1 of which will support mixed traffic BRT
 - 5' bike lane and variable striped buffer of 6-8' in each direction. Buffer accommodates layby space for bus service
- Full protected intersection at Northwood High School with pedestrian crossings on all legs
- Median improvements at Northwood and Blair High Schools to eliminate mid-block uncontrolled pedestrian crossings



Long-term Recommendation: University Blvd Road Diet

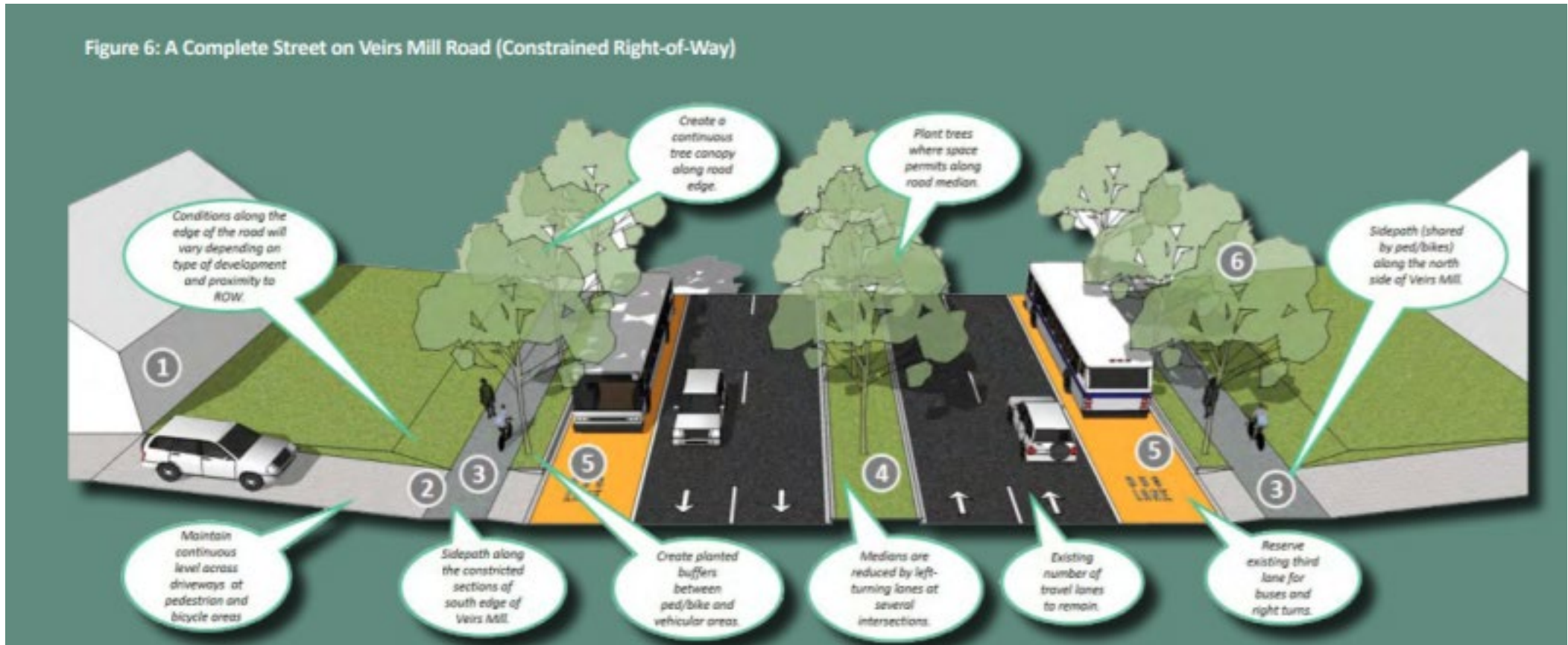
Long-Term Full Section Improvements to Achieve Master Plan Conditions

- Appears to be at least 100' of ROW consistently between Amherst Avenue and the Four Corners split
- Curb running BRT has been expressed by stakeholders as a priority over previously planned median configuration
- Replace sidewalks with minimum 8' shared use paths on both sides of the road – some sections may allow for more
 - 1 BRT only lane in each direction
 - 2 vehicle lanes in each direction with a median and turn lanes at intersections
 - Planting strip between shared use path and roadway



Similar to Veirs Mill Concept

Figure 6: A Complete Street on Veirs Mill Road (Constrained Right-of-Way)



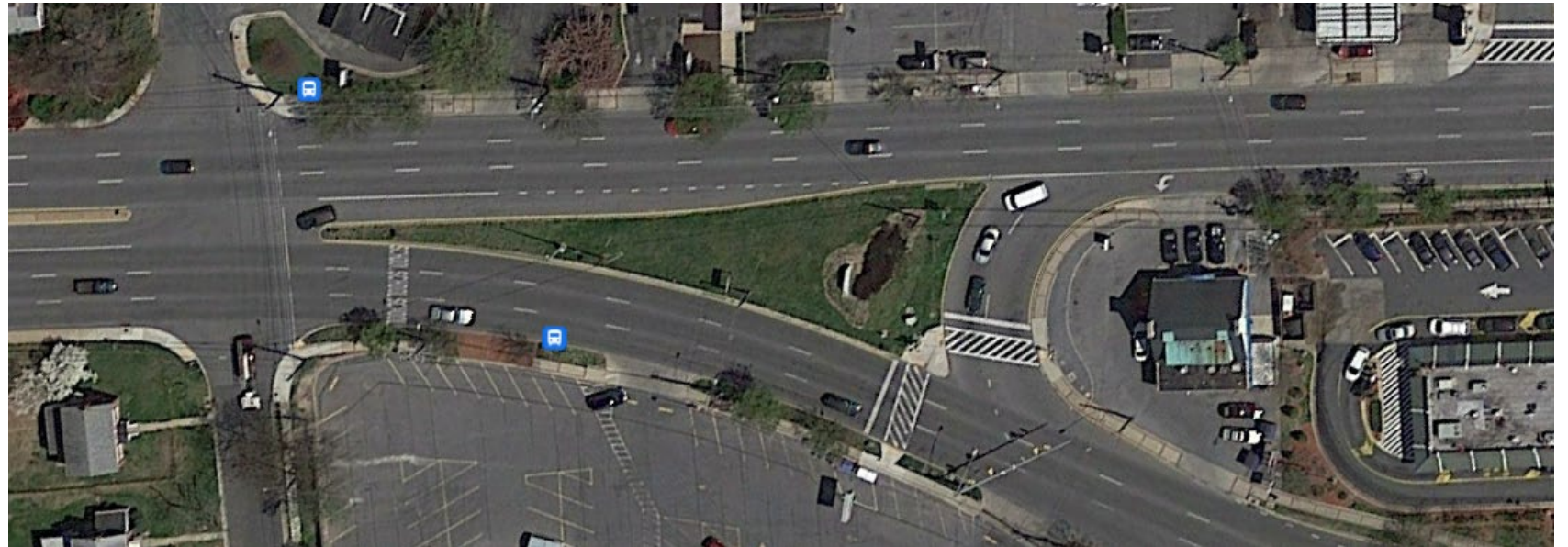
Four Corners

Recommendation: Transition to one-way pairs requires focus on providing dedicated bus lanes and shared use path for safe and efficient travel through the commercial district

Recommendation: Remove the one-way pairs and establish a tradition street grid to support development and safer transportation facilities for all modes

- Convert the westbound section to a 4-lane road for general purpose traffic
- Make the eastbound section a bus priority and pedestrian/bicyclist route with wide sidewalks or a path

Recommendation: Implement measures to prevent cut through traffic using Lorain Avenue and Lanark Way to address stakeholder concerns





DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Development Recommendations

Incentivize infill development along University Boulevard



Goal: Increase housing supply along the UBC



Policy Recommendations

- Allow "missing middle" densification of single-family zoning by-right with design criteria to ensure quality
- Waive impact fees for densification
- Reduce parking requirements concurrent with improving transportation (BRT), pedestrian and bicyclist experience

Growth Context for Montgomery County and University Blvd

- The county housing needs assessment forecasts 60K+ new households in the next 20 years.
- University Boulevard is a designated "growth corridor" in *Thrive 2050*.
- The corridor also sits at a "sweet spot" of affordability and access to retail amenities compared to other designated growth corridors in the county.
- What does "growth" mean on a corridor segment that is largely built-out with existing development? What infill development is feasible? Can the corridor accommodate new growth and remain a "sweet spot" for the middle class?

The "Sweet Spot"

	2-mile Radius	Retail			Multifamily Rental		
Address/Corridor	Population	SF/capita	Vacancy	NNN Rent	Inventory	Vacancy	Asking Rent
1111 University Boulevard / our study area	71,130	43	2.4%	\$29.34	6,016,824	3.7%	\$1.89
2019 Viers Mill Road / near Twinbrook	73,163	70	4.6%	\$32.10	10,240,350	5.9%	\$2.34
10550 Connecticut Avenue / Kensington	79,229	47	2.2%	\$23.22	5,941,925	6.6%	\$2.15
10206 New Hampshire Avenue / Hillandale	69,801	17	15.2%	\$38.12	8,711,769	3.5%	\$1.82
5214 River Road	83,402	60	7.0%	\$41.73	11,339,581	5.6%	\$2.69
Montgomery County	1,054,827	35	5.4%	\$31.61	96,964,609	5.2%	\$2.11

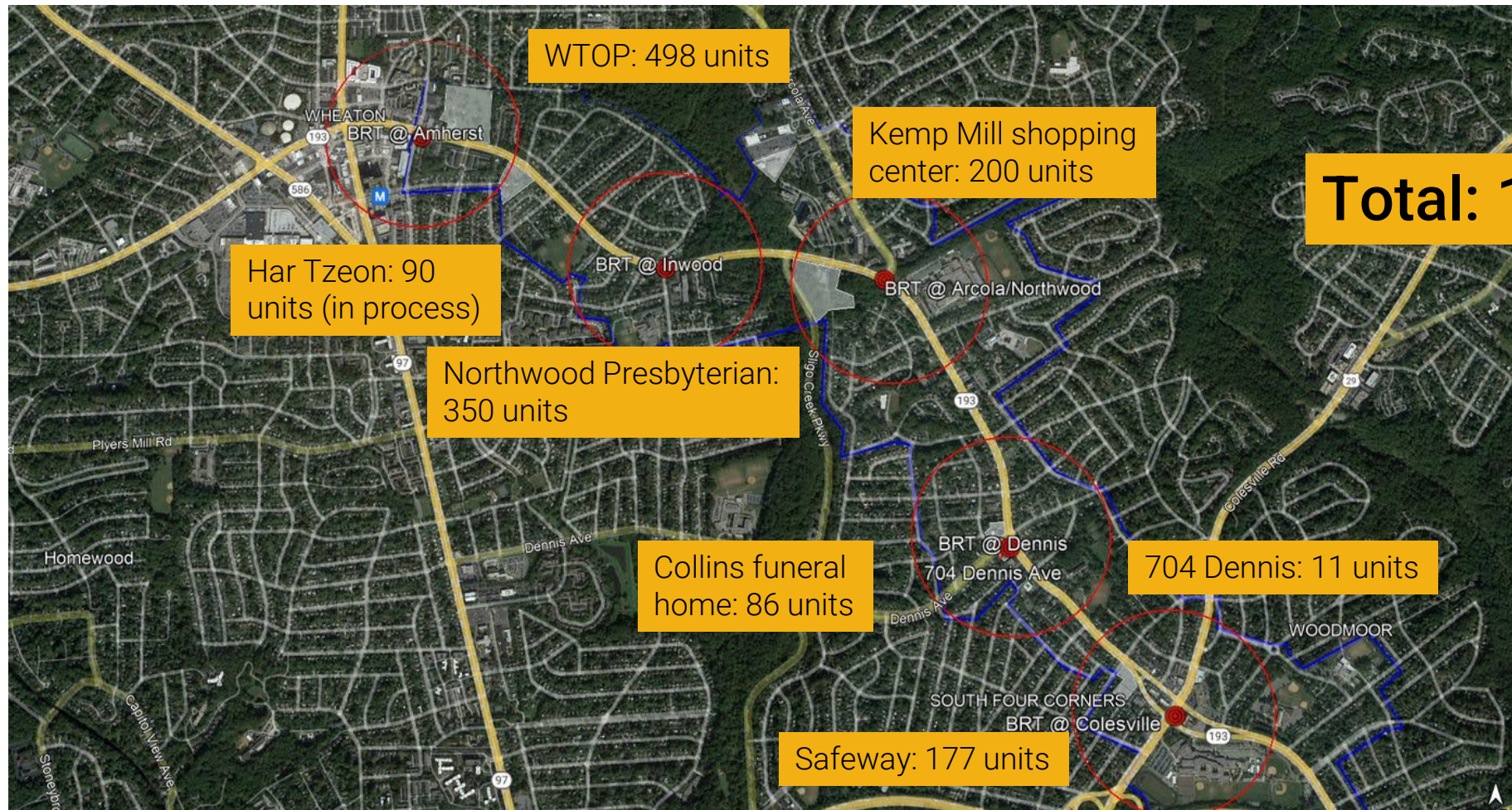
Infill Recommendation #1: Opportunity Sites for Larger Projects

- Har Tzeon synagogue (site plan approved: 90-units affordable)
- Kemp Mill shopping center
- Safeway (Four Corners)
- WTOP (largest parcel in the UBC; partial historic designation)
- Collins Funeral Home
- 704 Dennis Avenue (adjacent to Verizon building)
- Northwood Presbyterian Church



Infill Recommendation #1: Yield Scenarios

Considerations: cost-effective construction (5/1, surface parking); maximum theoretical yields; mostly multifamily formats



Infill Recommendation #2: Missing Middle Housing on Single-Family Parcels

- The existing corridor contains a diverse mix of housing types, ranging from detached single family homes to attached townhomes to multifamily apartment buildings of various sizes.
- Much of the housing stock is aging. 74% of the housing units in the study area were constructed before 1970, meaning the stock is mostly more than 50 years old.
- Based on market conditions, we anticipate much of this housing stock will be replaced over the next 20 years – the question is, with what?



A new \$1.3 million detached single family home on Arcola Avenue in the study area replaces a smaller, older home in a neighborhood where the median single-family home sale price is \$585K.

Infill Recommendation #2: Yield Scenarios

- R-60 and R-90 parcels in the study area are relatively small lots, which limits the potential "missing middle" capacity for any one parcel.
- Parcel assembly in built-out detached single-family areas is rare. Acquisition costs are high. A 20% yield in this study area is an outside, optimistic assumption – no one is going to spend \$500K to acquire land to build a duplex. If producing new attainable housing in the study area is a goal, there is a need to think big about policy solutions to facilitate parcel assembly, such as transfer of development rights.
- At the outside, if all single-family parcels in the study area could potentially become quadplexes, and over 20 years, 20% of parcels converted, **this could add 1,535 new homes** to the study area, an 80% increase in the number of households currently accommodated by the R-60/90 land.

Potential parcels to upzone	Count	20% Yield
Single-family parcels fronting University Blvd	102	
Duplex		41
4-plex		82
All single-family parcels in the study area	1,919	
Duplex		768
4-plex		1,535



PLACEMAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

Placemaking Recommendations

- Transform the corridor into a 'place of choice' -- corridor improvements could increase the quality of life in adjacent neighborhoods and increase home values
- Create a placemaking concept that celebrates history and improves connections with 'wayfinding'
- Act in the near term – don't wait for the BRT! ... Engage the community every step of the way
- Add street trees & streetlights
- Choreograph the inclusion of public art on the corridor
- Energize parks
- Maximize connectivity between open space resources

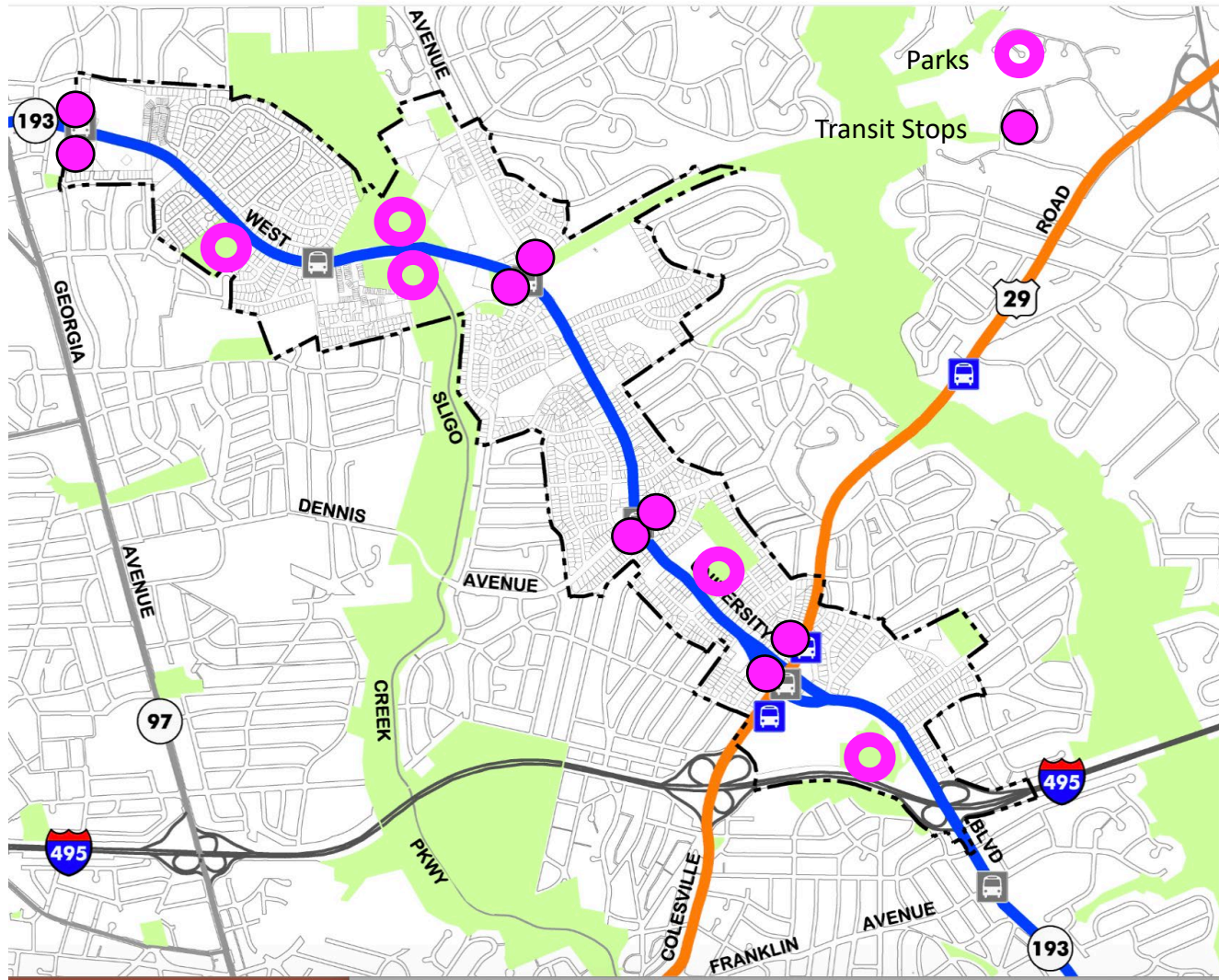
Create a Placemaking Concept that Celebrates History and Improves Connections with 'Wayfinding'

A comprehensive and unified directional sign system

Design is customized to the signing area whether a town, city, county, or region



Choreograph the Inclusion of Public Art on the Corridor



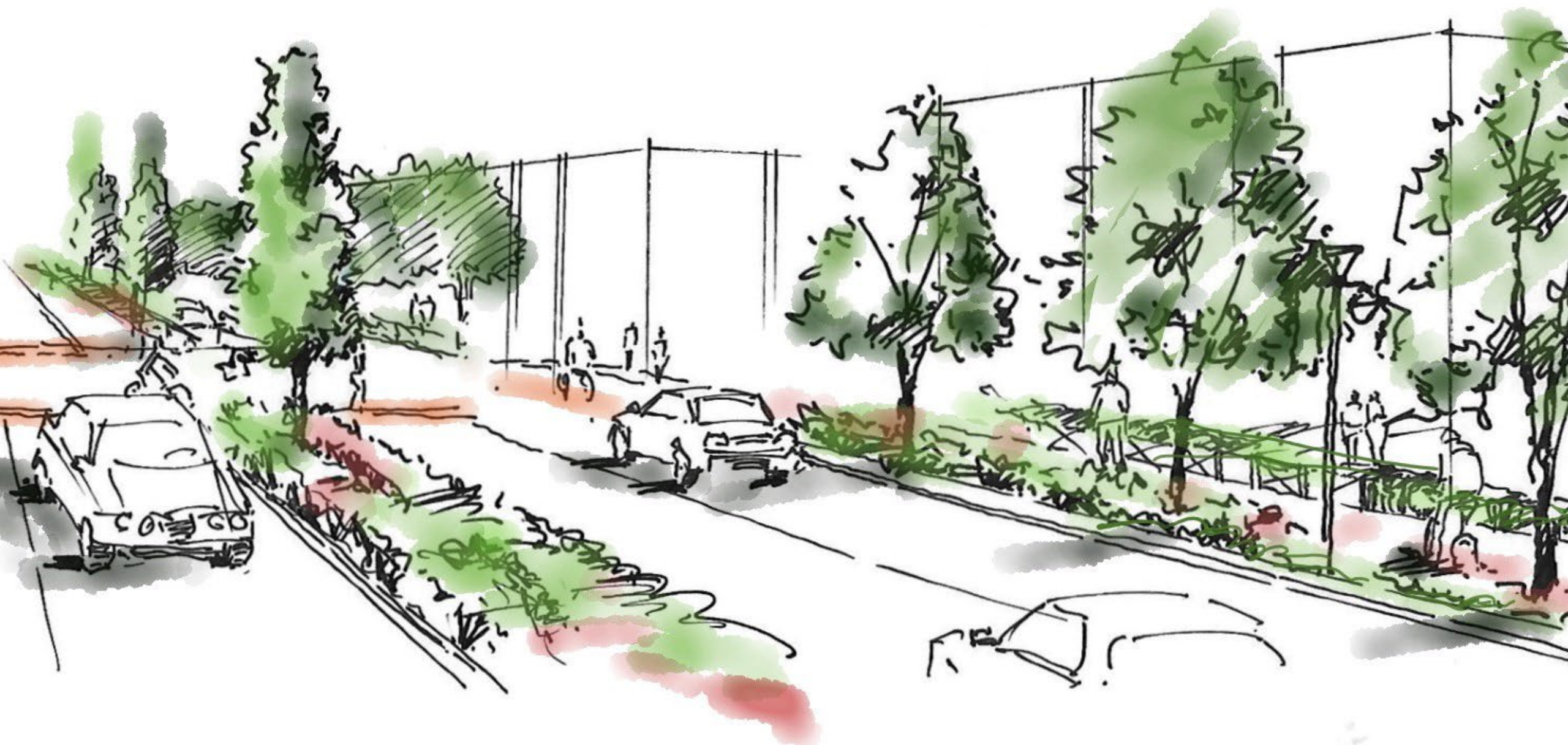


A KEY TO SUCCESS ON UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD

**Thoughtful and meaningful community
engagement built into process.**

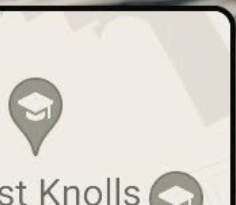






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Northwood High School Crossing



st Knolls

Q&A

University Blvd TAP

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Washington