

# Blue Line Corridor Technical Assistance Panel

## Presentation of Recommendations

FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2024





# Presentation Outline

- TAP Process
- Meet the Panel
- The Assignment
- Stakeholder Input
- Community Identity
- Mobility and Access
- Land Use Recommendations
- Agency Coordination & Public Procedure
- Q&A



# What is a TAP?

**The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) offers technical analysis to communities and organizations facing land-use challenges.**

ULI members volunteer their time to provide unbiased, expert advice and specific recommendations for improvement. Local industry leaders draft a plan to revive, rethink, and restore communities to ultimately enact change and improve the lives of people in the DC region

## **Day One**

- Meetings with sponsor representatives
- Interviews with stakeholders and community representatives

## **Day Two**

- Work session to develop recommendations
- Presentation to sponsor and stakeholders



## How does ULI provide this assistance?

A community group or organization approaches ULI with a request.

**ULI convenes a group of experts to focus on specific questions in a concentrated, finite effort and communicates the results.**

- group of experts = Technical Assistance Panel
- specific questions = defined by the sponsor
- concentrated, finite effort = two intense days
- communicates the results = presentation to the sponsor *and* published report

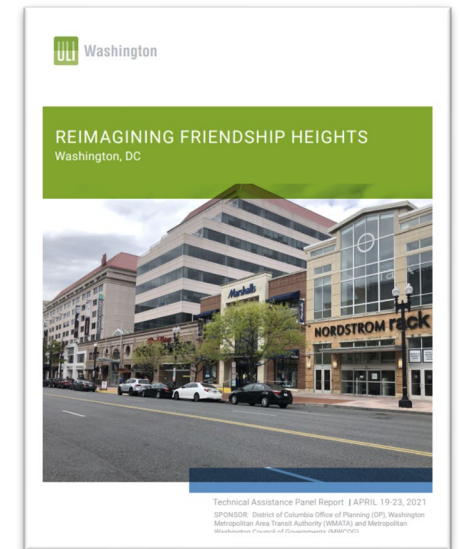
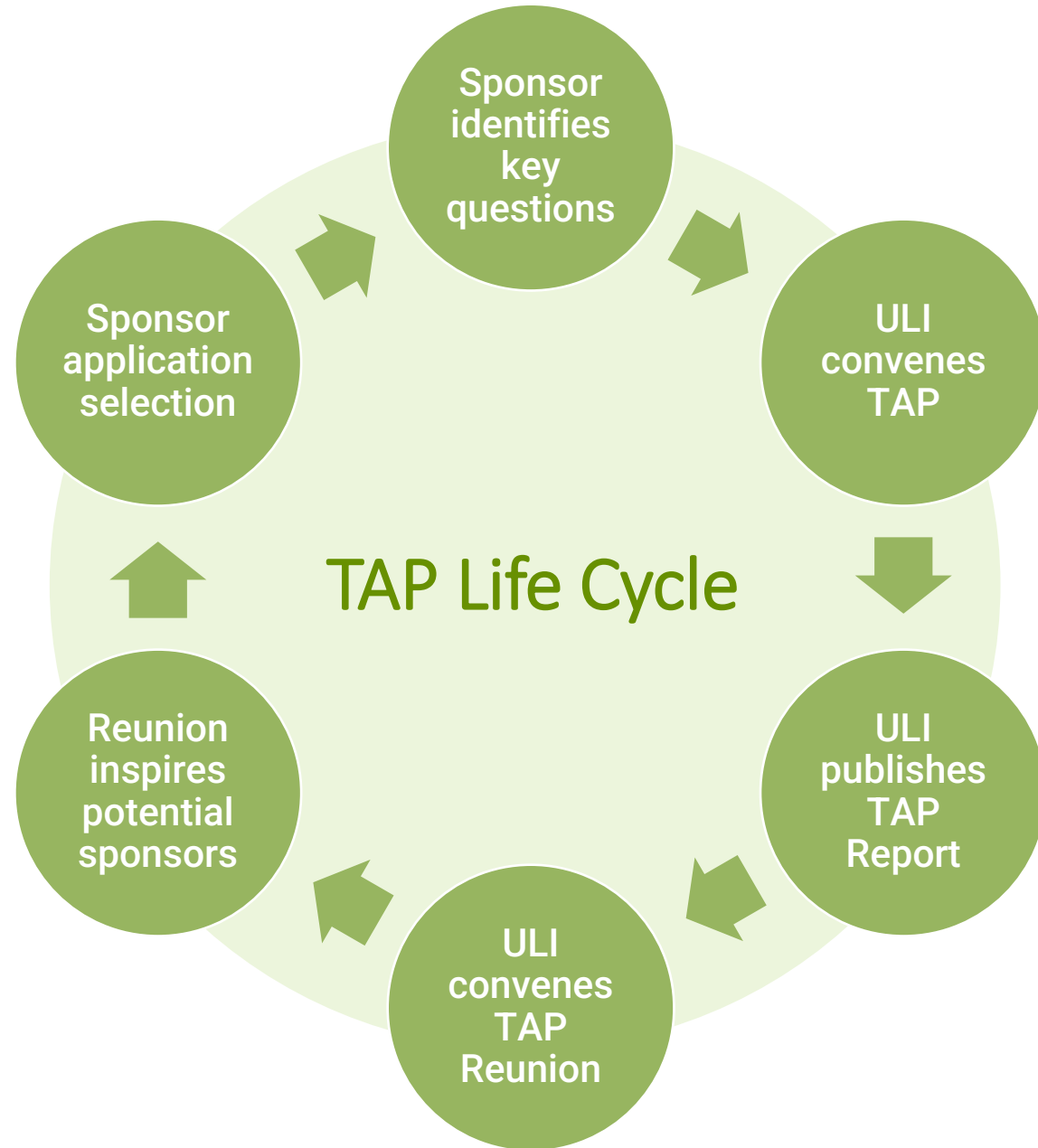
**Sponsor pays a fee for service (\$25,000) to ULI Washington.**



# LLSC DC



Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments









# Panelists & Staff



**Shelynda Brown**

Enterprise Community  
Development  
**Panel Chair**



**Mike Workosky**

Wells &  
Associates  
**Panel Chair**



**Jessica Brunson**

STV



**Rhonda Dallas**

Prince George's  
Arts + Humanities  
Council



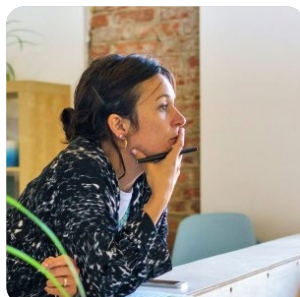
**Amol Deshpande**

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# The Assignment

## The Goals of the TAP

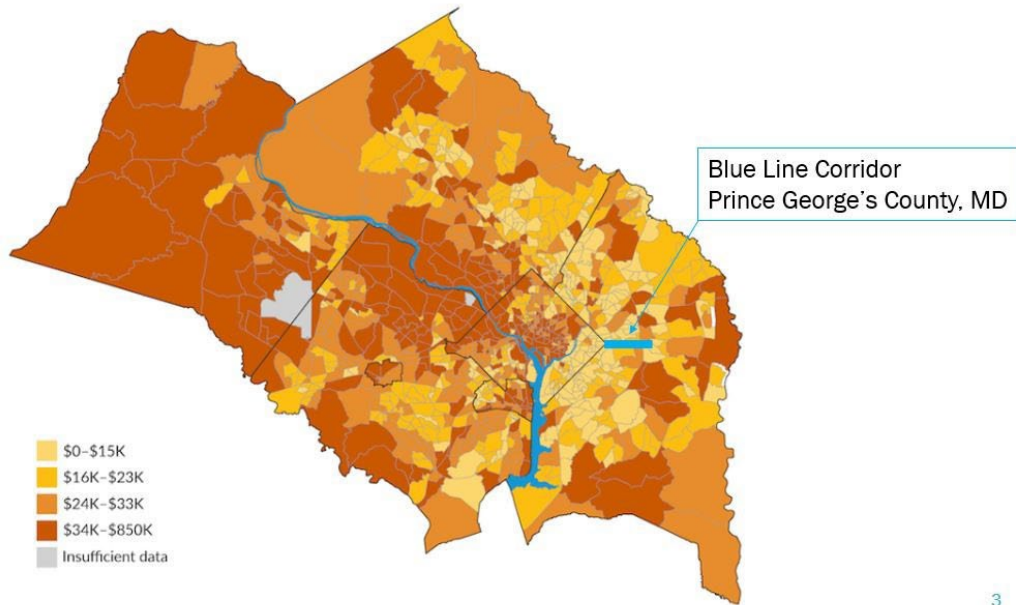


Image Credit: [The Urban Institute](#) and TAP Briefing Materials

- 1. Develop a vision of place-keeping and place-making for the western portion of the Blue Line Corridor.**
- 2. Determine market-feasible near-term projects that address the most relevant community priorities.**
- 3. Identify actionable next steps to support and increase community power to affect land use.**



# The Assignment

## The Big Questions to Answer

1: Revitalization that Respects & Reflects the Communities  
**How can this corridor be enhanced to honor history and culture, prevent displacement, and attract new folks?**

2: Leveraging Geography & Demographics  
**How can we leverage our geography and demographics for inclusive, equitable growth?**

3: Near-term Development Opportunities  
**Which vacant/underutilized sites have the most potential for development?**

4: Community Empowerment  
**What steps can be taken to build municipalities' and communities' capacities to pursue their vision?**



Image Credit: Unskrypted TV for ULI Panel

# Thank You to Our Incredible Stakeholders!

**Aaron Zimmerman**, WMATA  
**Adenia Bradley**, Mission of Love Charities  
**Mayor Akiaba Stewart**, Fairmount Heights  
**Alex Villegas**, Rodgers Consulting  
**Amanda Anderson**, Councilmember, Capitol Heights  
**Anita Anderson**, Councilmember, Capitol Heights  
**Ashley Drakeford**, The Capital Market  
**Belinda Queen**, Coalition of Central Prince George's County  
**Benjamin Hobbs**, Prince George's Redevelopment Authority  
**Bill Skibinski**, M-NCPPC Blue Line Sector Plan Lead Planner  
**Brad Frome**, Rise Investment Partners  
**Bradley Heard**, Greater Capitol Heights Improvement Corporation  
**Brittney Drakeford**, The Capital Market  
**Camisha St. John**, Councilmember, Fairmount Heights  
**Cheryl Cort**, Coalition for Smarter Growth  
**David Zaidain**, MDOT

**Demetrius T Harris**, Chief of Police, Seat Pleasant Police Department  
**Elena Perry**, M-NCPPC Planning Department  
**Rev. Harold Dugger**, First Baptist Capitol Heights  
**Henry Snurr**, Delegate Jazz Lewis James Brown, Capitol Heights Civic Association  
**Janna Parker**, PG Changemakers  
**State Delegate Jazz Lewis**, MD State Delegate  
**JoAnn Tucker**, Town Clerk, Fairmount Heights  
**Joseph Moges**, State Highway Administration  
**Karen Mierow**, M-NCPPC Planning Department  
**Kim Rhim**, The Training Source  
**Kyle Gamber**, Horning Broker  
**Kyle Reeder**, The Capital Market  
**Kyrthlyn Rhoda**, Grants Manager, Seat Pleasant  
**LaVerne Gray**, Mildred Ridgely Gray Charitable Trust  
**LeKeisha Vone**, Horning  
**Mayor Linda Monroe**, Capitol Heights  
**Mark Lawrence**, Inccuvate  
**Myneca Ojo**, Town Manager, Seat Pleasant  
**Nicole Hall**, Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation

**Nkosi Bradley**, Local Developer – Partners for Equitable Community Growth  
**Pat Fletcher**, Office of MD Delegate Tiffany Alston  
**Peter Goldsmith**, Lerch, Early & Brewer, Chartered  
**Randall Scott**, State Highway Administration  
**Rasheeda Jamison**, UCAP  
**Renita Flood-Bennett**, Fairmount Heights CDC  
**Robert Patten**, M-NCPPC – Parks  
**Robyn Mabry**, Local Developer  
**Ron Williams**, Councilmember, Capitol Heights  
**Pastor Ronald Triplett**, Pastor of Gethsemane United Methodist Church  
**Scott Rowe**, M-NCPPC Planning Department  
**Shubha Punase**, M-NCPPC – Parks  
**Stephanie Prange Proestel**, Housing Initiative Partnership  
**Steve Brigham**, Community Engagement and Planning Consultant  
**Winstina Hughes**, State Highway Administration Planning & Strategic Manager for District 3  
**Wuhan Dansby**, Development Consultant



# Stakeholder Roundtable Session



# What We Heard in Stakeholder Roundtables:

Misinformation and a Lack of Information

This is a Food Desert and a Bank Desert

How do we establish an idea of “place” and “identity” across siloed municipalities?

It's dangerous to be a pedestrian

Job Creation and Workforce Development

African-American History Must be Preserved


How do we continue to make sure this area doesn't get overlooked?

Greater diversity of housing options needed





# Community Identity



# Highlighting the Western Portion of the Blue Line Corridor's Rich Historical and Cultural Assets to Create Inclusive Destinations



# What We Heard

There is a need to elevate arts and cultural hubs within Western Section of Blue Line Corridor

- There are currently no visible identifiers of cultural and historic assets
- Desire for improved streetscapes and safe crossings
- Create centralized information portal to craft a unified message
- Opportunities to envision what are the communities' desires reflective of their unique characteristics
- Need for more civic assets including community centers, a movie theatre, and recreational spaces
- Highlight neighborhood gateways
- Prioritize job creation and youth workforce development



Image Credit: Washington Glass School

# Opportunities for Community Empowerment

- Rich history and distinct characters exist in communities along the corridor. *What is needed to support communities in articulating their unique value and identity? How can the built environment reflect this culture?*
- Central Avenue Connector Trail is being implemented. *What enhancements can be added to support local identity and sense of place?*
- Development is coming. *What requirements can be put in place to add public art, local history, and create walkable and safe streetscapes?*
- A caring and connected culture exists in the area. *How can programs and projects preserve and enhance those relationships?*
- Land is still available at a wide variety of scales. *How can the community leverage these spaces for cultural / civic / storytelling use?*



Image Credit: M-NCPPC "Historic Fairmount Heights School Adaptive Reuse Study"



# Case Study: Technical Assistance Tools

## Helpful Placemaking Tools

Main Street Maryland is a comprehensive downtown revitalization program created in 1998 by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The designation helps strengthen the economic development potential in the town's historic downtown districts and neighborhoods.

Maryland Arts & Entertainment Districts help develop and promote community involvement, tourism, and revitalization through tax-related incentives.



Image Source: [Miles 2 Go](#)

# Case Study: Long Branch

Locally responsive small business and main street development



Long Branch is a two-block long commercial district located along the Purple Line. It is characterized by strip malls and small businesses run by members of the community which reflect the local diversity. Efforts are being made to organize and build capacity in the area to prevent commercial displacement.

- **Implementors:** Montgomery Housing Partnership, M-NCPPC
- **Collaborators:** Long Branch Business League, CHEER, NeighborWorks America, DHCA,
- **Elements:** Programming and festivals, murals, street trees, façade improvements, renovation of historic theater (catalytic project), park redesign, public art, local visibility campaign "Discover Long Branch"



# Case Study: Destination Crenshaw

- Destination Crenshaw is a **community-centric development** project transforming a 1.3-mile stretch of Crenshaw Boulevard to drive long-deserved economic investment and strategic urban planning to the community. The project's primary mission is to boost Crenshaw Boulevard through **economic development and job creation** while **celebrating local Black art and Culture**.
- **Implementors:** Destination Crenshaw
- **Collaborators:** Getty Foundation, Otis College, City of LA, LISC LA, Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation



Image Source: Destination Crenshaw

Short Term

# Action Item: Storytelling through place

- **Compile histories and stories** to showcase, share locally and with developers working in the area.
- **Implement projects** to bring history & culture to light
  - Fairmount Heights net-zero townhomes Pocket Park (In process)
  - Plant lilacs to honor the Ridgeley community & install signage to make the stories more broadly accessible.
  - Advertise events like the Turnip Tour along the corridor.
  - Create and circulate a map of community gardens in the community.

Medium Term

Long Term



Fairmount Heights Zero Energy Homes for Sale, HIP



# Action Item: Highlighting Existing Historical Assets



Historic Fairmont Heights School, MD

Image Source: City of Fairmont Heights



Historic Ridgeley Rosenwald School, Capitol Heights, MD

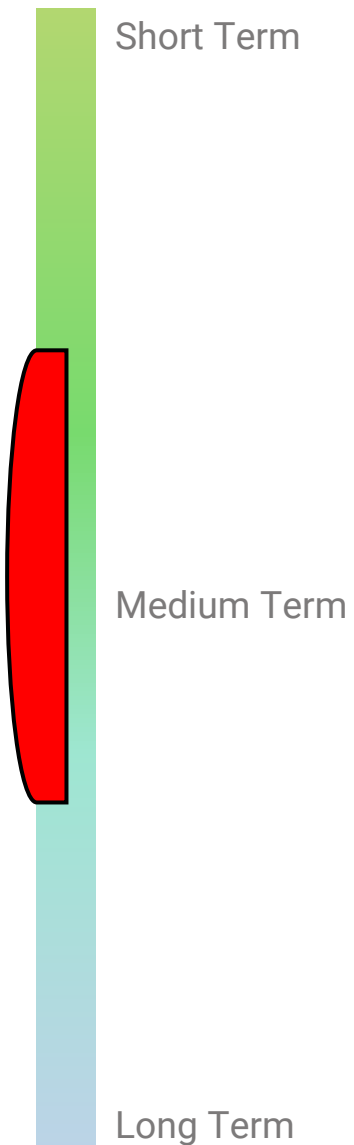
Image Source: Michael Harding Miles 2 Go

## Historic St. Margaret's Catholic Church, Seat Pleasant, MD



Image Source: M-NCPPC





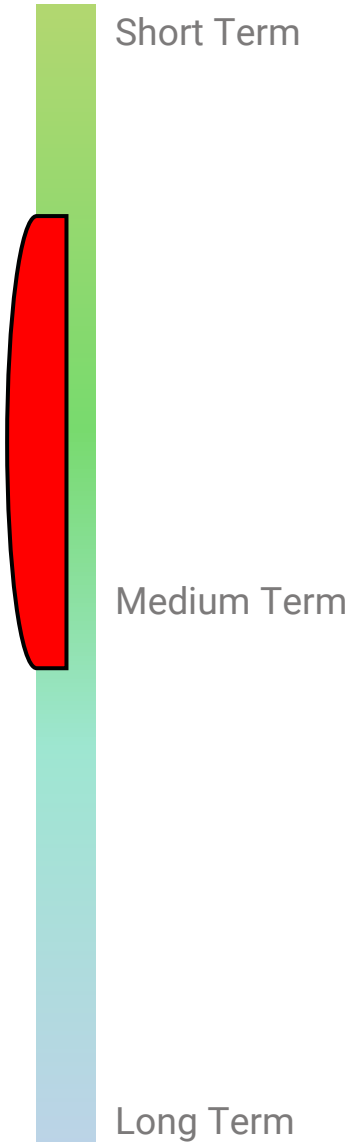
# Action Item: Trail Enhancements

- Convene a group to **identify elements and additions to be installed along the Central Avenue Connector Trail**. A collective vision, easily shared and communicated, will make advocacy efforts more impactful.
- Identify priority projects and select partner organizations to support with project development, fundraising, and implementation.



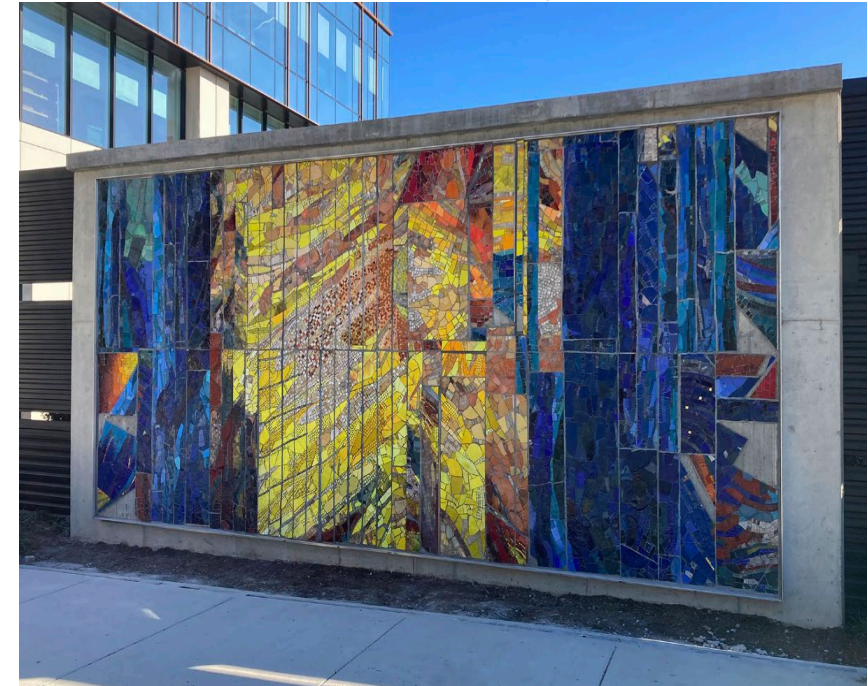
Sculpture along the Anacostia





# Action Item: Add Arts & Culture to Local Development

- Adopt and advocate for Coalition of Central Prince George’s County Community Organizations **Principles for Placemaking** to guide appropriate development.
- **Invest in key projects in high visibility areas** such as the addition of murals and public art at the Addison Road Metro Station.
- Include Public Art and cultural projects when considering new development and when enhancing existing businesses
- Resources: Prince George’s Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC) and M-NCPPC Placemaking Division



New Carrollton Metro Development Project, Collaboration PGAHC and WMATA  
Image Source: PGAHC





# Existing Conditions

## Addison Road Metro





© 2024 Google

# Conceptual Rendering

Addison Road Metro Public Art and Landscaping





# Addison Road Metro Bus Shelters

Temporary public art project commissioned by Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council in partnership with WMATA.



Image Credit: PGAHC



Image Credit: PGAHC





Public Art reimagining intersections while improving street safety.

Image Credit: [The Washington Post](#)



Short Term

## Action Item: Invest locally first

- Advocate for local sourcing of small businesses, vendors, partner organizations, and programming before bringing in new organizations.
- Prioritize activities and programs that can be accomplished with existing local resources.
- Expand local capacity by identifying trainings and other resources needed, then advocating for allocations from community benefit agreements or other funding streams.
- Prioritize small business advancement to create more quality jobs.

Medium Term

Long Term



Instagram @capiamarket20743



# Mobility and Access Strategy





MOBILITY AND ACCESS STRATEGY

# Prioritizing Levels of Comfort and Safety

# What we heard...

## Stakeholder Engagement

### Participants

- Maryland State Highway (SHA)
- M-NCPPC Parks and Planning
- Local Developers/Owners
- Area Residents
- Community Organizations

### Feedback

- Poorly lit and maintained access
- Inadequate bus shelters
- Inadequate pedestrian crossings
- Lack of active destinations
- Central Avenue seen as a facility for pass-thru traffic rather than local serving
- Major transportation improvements currently planned and under study

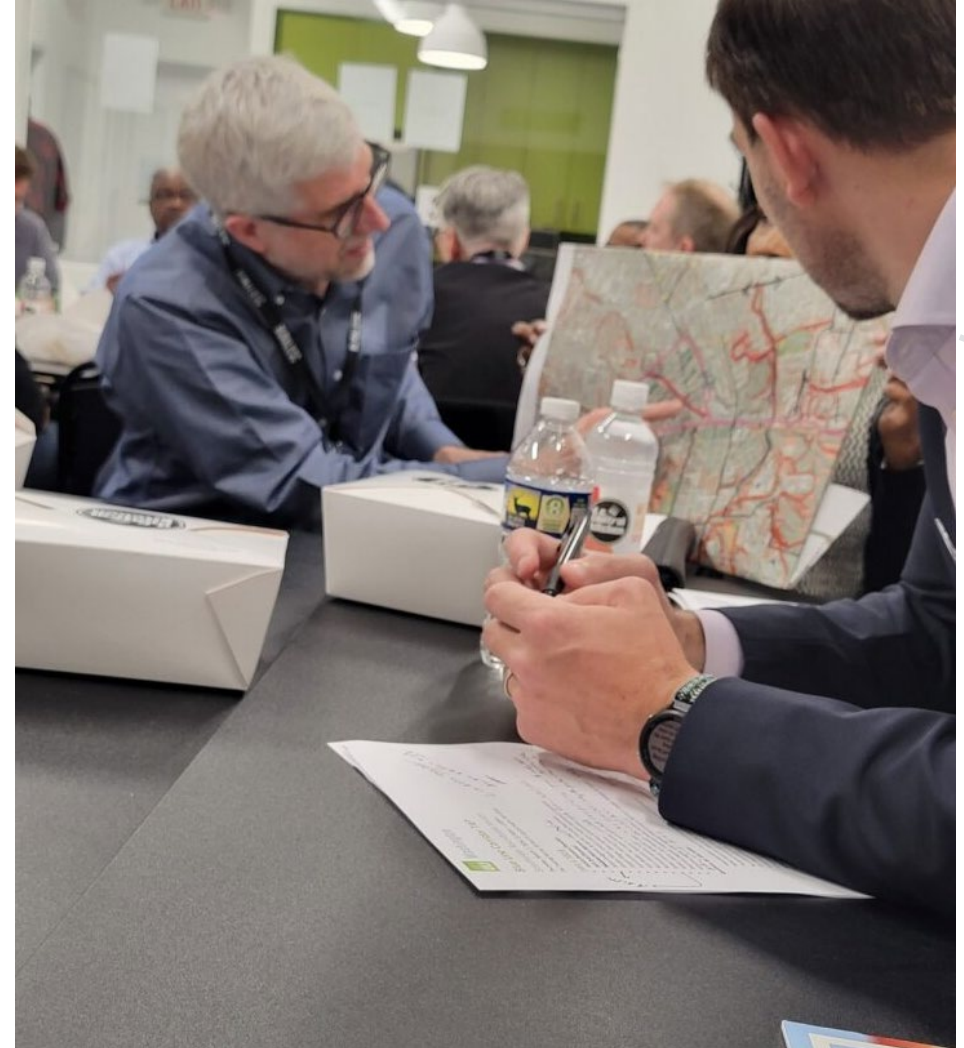


Image provided by ULI TAP Panel



# Transportation Aspirations

- Connected non-auto networks serving historical/cultural and typical daily needs
- Improved Safety for all ages and abilities
  - Vision Zero of Prince George's County
  - Central Avenue Connector Trail
  - MD SHA – Pedestrian Safety Action Plan
  - Capitol Heights Green Streets Plan
- Recharacterization of Old and New Central Avenue
- Destination connectivity amongst municipalities



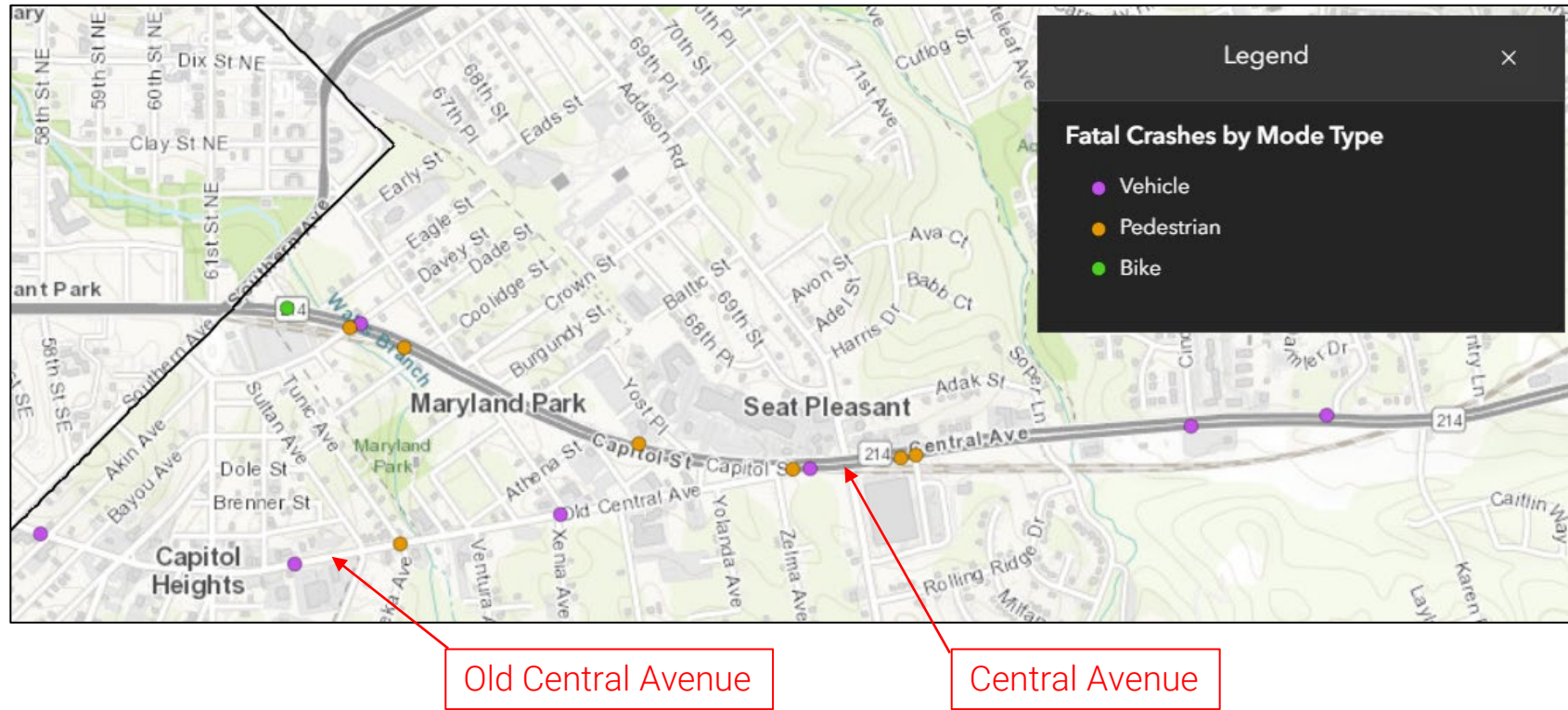
Capitol Heights looking south – image from Capitol Heights Green Streets Plan (2012)



# Safety Concerns

- Top 10 High Injury Network
- Fatal crash for all modes of transportation
- Narrow sidewalks without buffers
- High vehicle speeds
- Safety currently being reviewed by MD SHA

Image taken from Prince Georges County Vision Zero Map





# Central Avenue (MD 214)

## Existing

- 6-Lane Median Divided Arterial – Approx 32,000 vehicles per day
- Top 10 in MD for Pedestrian, Bike and Vehicular Fatalities
- Seen as a facility for pass-thru traffic rather than local serving

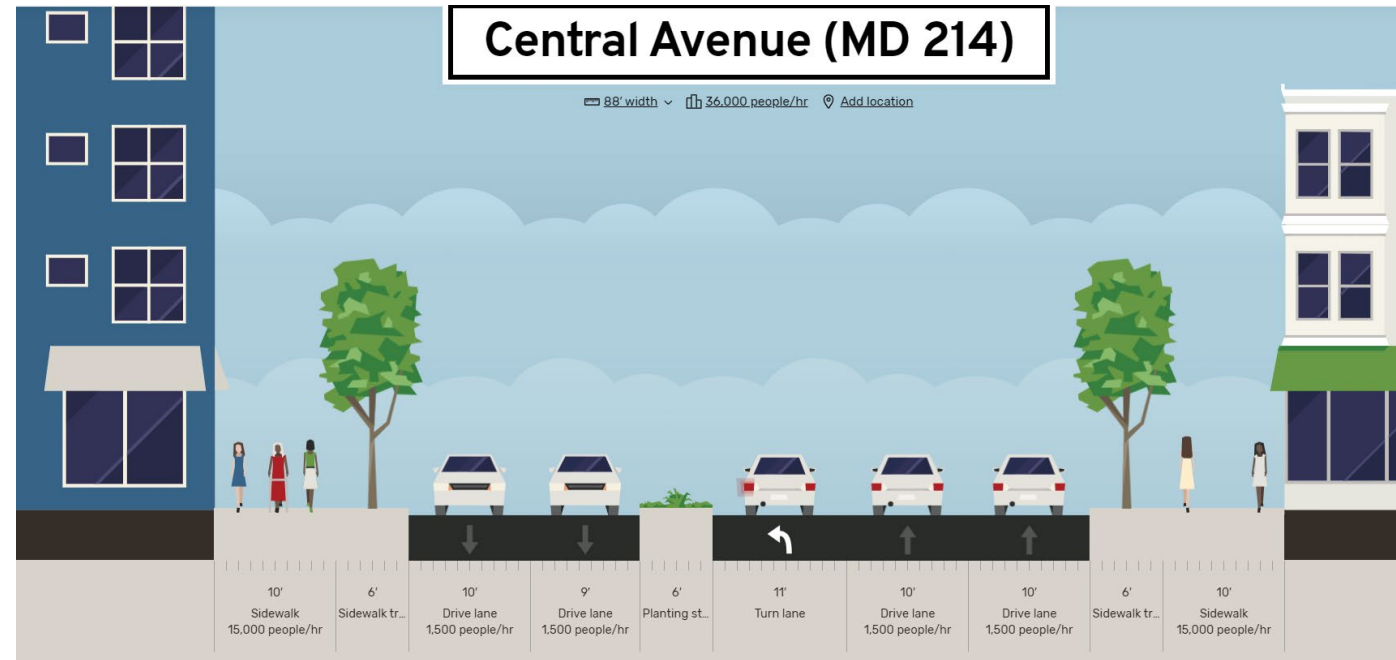
## Potential

- Road Diet with narrower 4-lane section (with turn lanes at intersections) and reduced speeds
- Wider pedestrian and bike facilities
- Shorter pedestrian crossings
- Tree-lined Boulevard creating a corridor for adjacent development suitable for commercial and residential

Image taken from Google Earth



Image created using Streetmix



# Central Avenue - Active Plans and Studies

## Central Avenue Connector Trail (CACT)

- Provides a bikeway and improved pedestrian space on south side of a portion of Central Avenue within the study area
- Plans progressing to 100%
- Full construction potentially in 10-yr timeframe

## MD SHA – Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

- New SHA program evaluating and constructing corridor improvements
- Central Avenue from DC Line to Ritchie Road currently being studied
- Potential for Road Diet and compliment to the CACT



Image taken from Central Avenue Connector Plans



# Old Central Avenue

## Existing

- 2-Lane roadway with 11,000 ADT
- 4 recent fatal accidents
- Wide lanes with sidewalks on curb and no buffers
- Buildings set back from sidewalk – available frontage

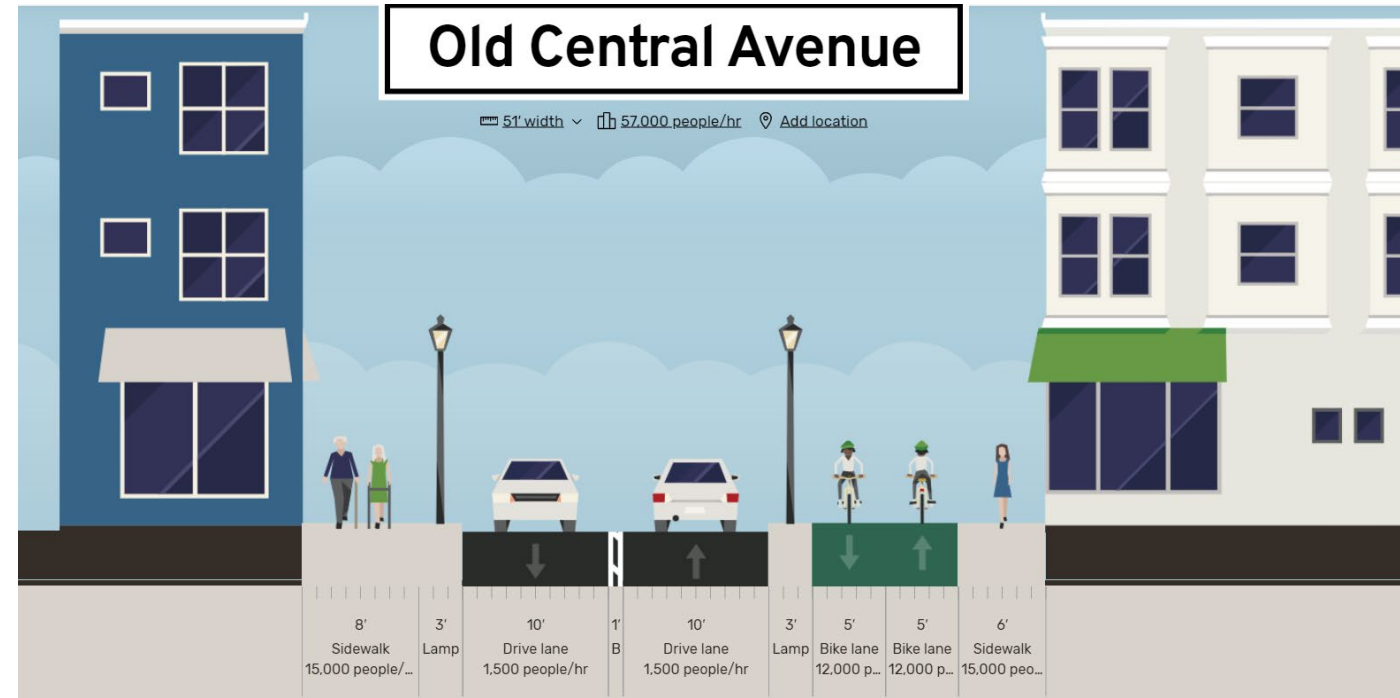
## Potential

- Narrowed lanes and added buffer with wider sidewalk
- Improvements additive to CACT plans
- Continues north along Chambers Rd and/or Capitol Heights Blvd
- Comfortable walking and biking experience
- Provides complete infrastructure for future destination development and cultural activity centers

Image taken from Google Earth



Image created using Streetmix



# Rethinking Addison Rd

## Addison Rd

- Transit-oriented development at Addison Plaza
- Connecting capacity to development and growth activity centers
- Incentivizing commitments for implementation and investment

## Response Framework Actions

- Local transit-oriented zoning
- Block-level approaches
- Modernizing signalization and ped-auto interactions





# Transit Equity

- Redesigning bus stop locations
- Transforming highway-like roads to slower moving streets
- Update transportation measures and requirements of design
- Safe Arrivals
- Adopting access to opportunity metrics
- Improving crosswalks and pedestrian refuges





# Connecting to Daily needs and Destinations

Growing the value of transportation

## Goals

- Improve walkability of major routes within 10-minute walk of Metro
- Learning to living pathways
- Healthy living expansion of options and access
- Active Metro routes and to communities
- Creating connectivity that creates opportunity spaces



Image provided by ULI TAP Panel



# Action Items for Improvement

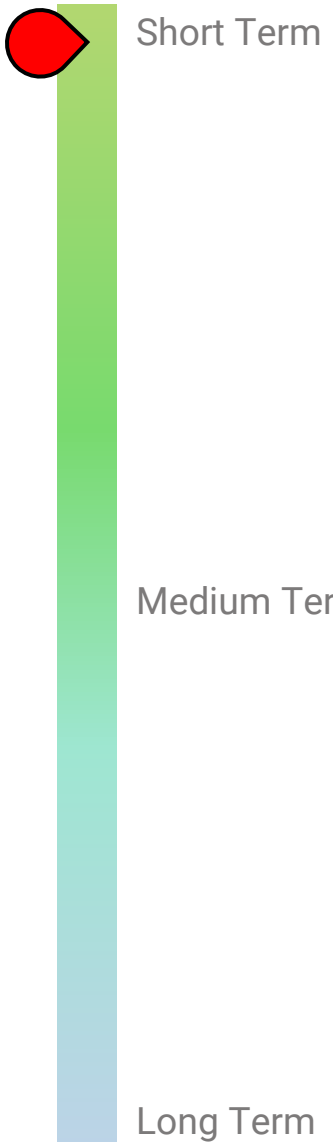
- Survey geological assets and grade level of streets – Leverage what has been done for CACT
- Identify destinations and routes for external connectivity
- Developing combined municipalities' transit action plan for connectivity and opportunities
- Impact and opportunities analysis to prioritize route construction
- Consider short term SHA pilot program to address fatalities along High Injury Network

Surveying Existing Conditions

Transit Action Plan

Impacts and Opportunities

Equitable Implementation





# Land Use Recommendations





*"Change will come and it is hard....but the time is right to ensure equitable development"*

# Equitable Land Use and Development

## Community Input and Empowerment

- Positive
- Intentional
- Inclusive

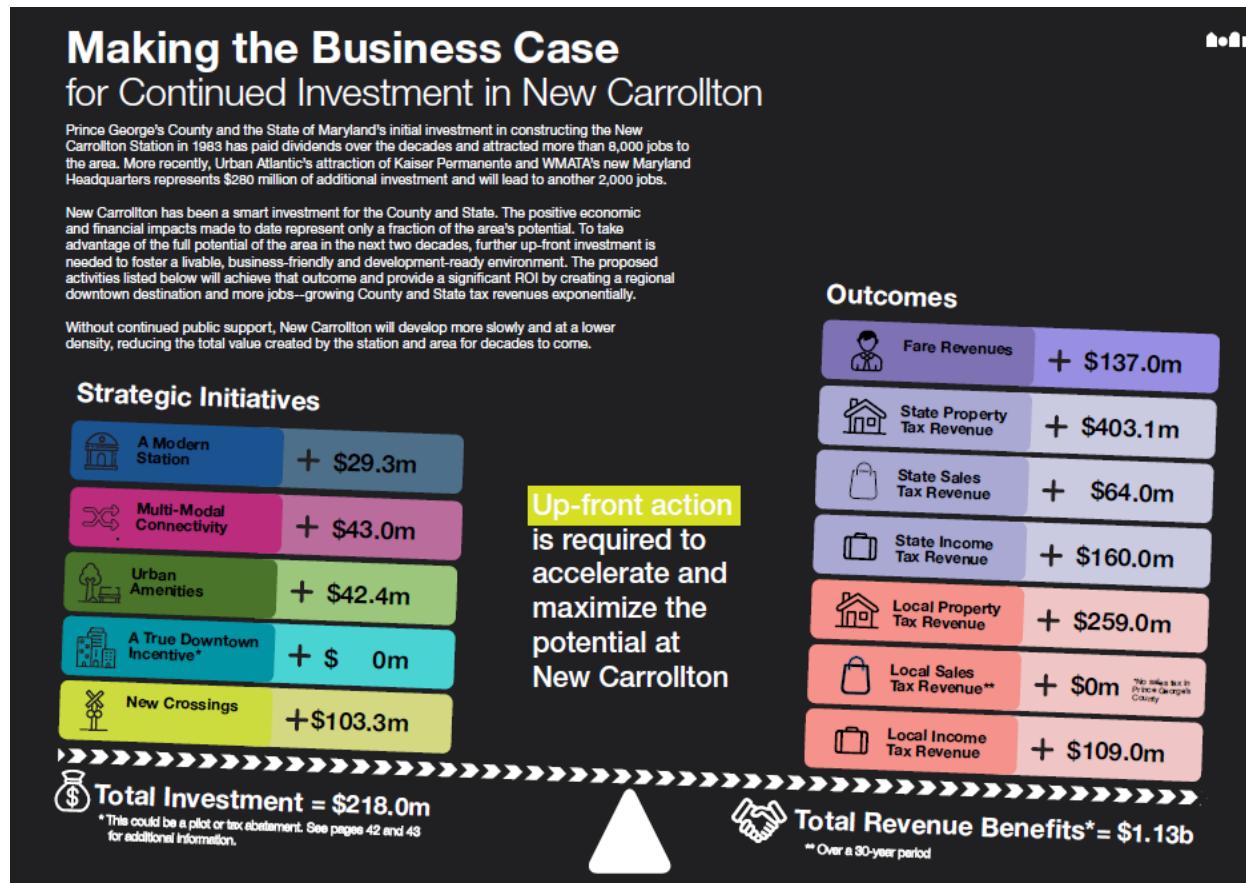


- Grocery Store
- Restaurants
- Places to Gather
- Places for Joy
- Infrastructure

- Federal
- State of Maryland
- Prince George's County
- Capitol Heights
- Seat Pleasant
- Fairmont Heights
- Unincorporated areas
- LISC
- Other organizations



# Positive



## Tools

- Infrastructure investment
- Tax incremental financing
- Special assessment districts
- Support/funding/reimbursement agreements
- Tax exemptions and abatements

*"For every dollar in tax revenues from multifamily residential projects, 38 cents are needed to provide services to directly support the use and 62 cents are available for general budget needs."*

*City of Alexandria and Alexandria Economic Development Partnership  
2017 Fiscal Impact Analysis*

Courtesy: THE BLUE LINE CORRIDOR VISION ULI BALTIMORE TOD COUNCIL - JUNE 2023



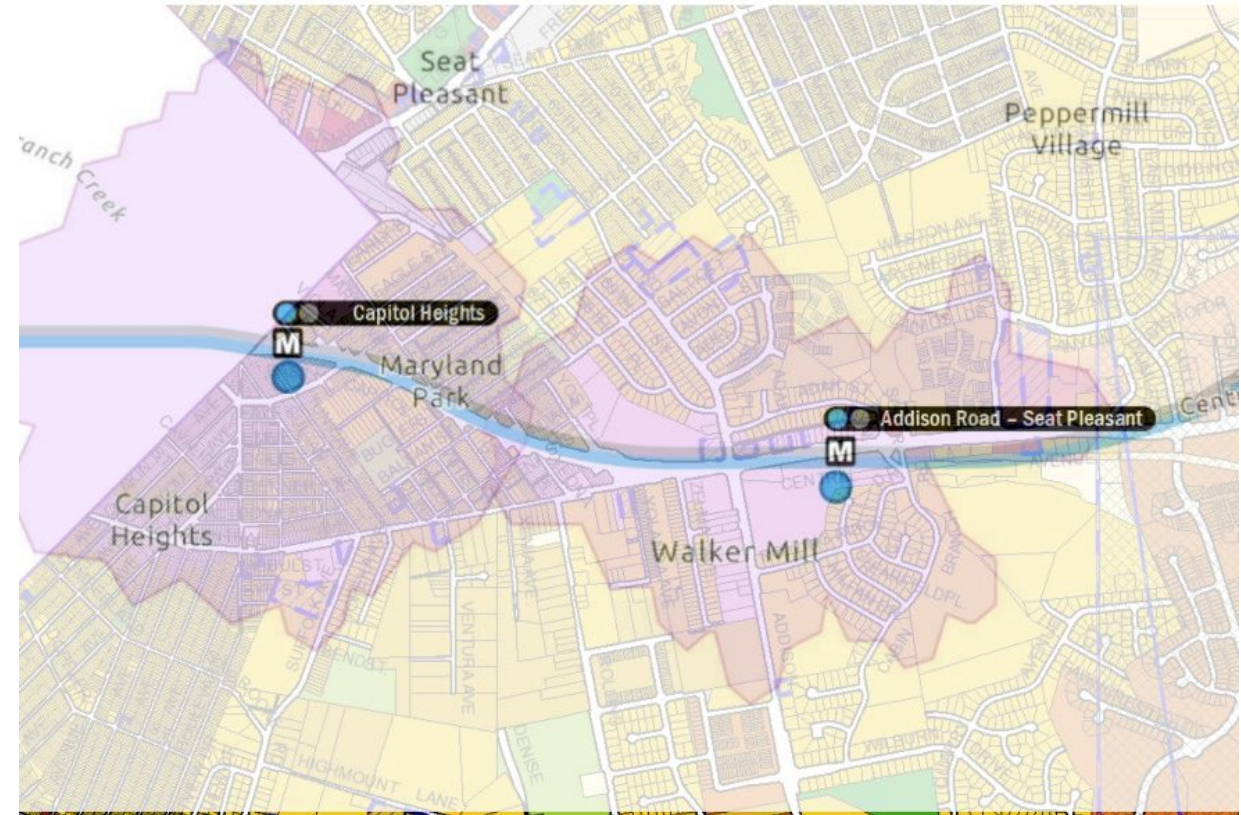


# Intentional

## Case Study: Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor, Arlington, Virginia



Courtesy: Arlington County



Courtesy: Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPCC)





Sources: Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, 2023.



Washington

Courtesy: Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan Market Study: Existing Conditions and Development Opportunities Analysis Prepared by bae urban economics for the M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Department







# Inclusive

## Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan

### Long-Term (20 year) Housing Mix



Courtesy: City of Alexandria

### 2022 Commonwealth Plan of the Year

Effort a recognition that residents are increasingly at risk of being priced out of housing, that's exacerbated by the neighborhood's proximity to the new Amazon HQ2 and Virginia Tech Innovation campuses.

*"It is encouraging and inspiring to see how this Plan prioritized the Hispanic/Latino population by engaging with the community in Spanish first during the plan's process." Nick Rogers, American Planning Association Virginia's Vice President of External Affairs*





Short Term

# Action Item: Asset Activation

## Land/Asset Inventory Activation Exercise and Coordinated Resource Allocation

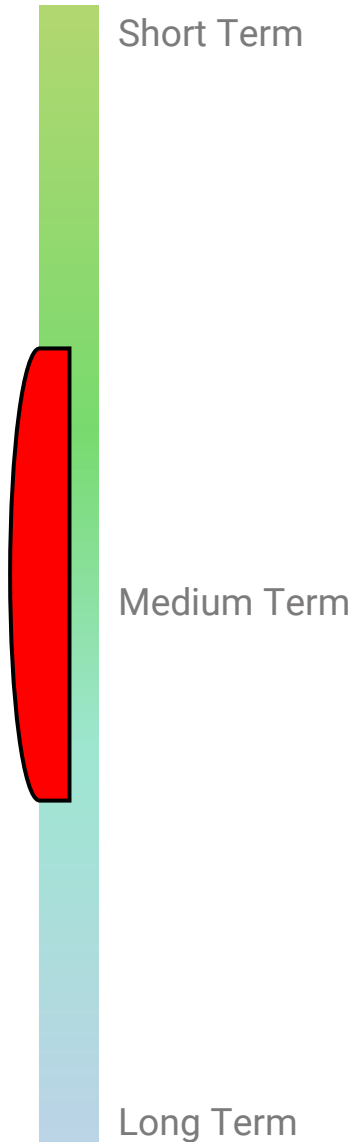
- Evaluate local assets/vacant land for development, activation and addressing community needs through the lens of:
  - Civic, cultural, community spaces, small scale residential, small scale commercial development, larger scale development
- Leverage potential support from
  - Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) through M-NCPCC
  - Partner with University of Maryland Real Estate Development Program
  - LISC & others
- Identify individual funding and resource needs for both temporary/short term and long-term activation/development
- Identify joint deployment of resources and allocation of resources.
- Inform land use decisions and identify funding and resource gap.

Medium Term

Long Term



# Action Item: Small Parcel Land Activation



- **Convene a working group** of local municipal officials, community groups, nonprofits, churches, and businesses.
- Using an inventory of existing vacant land, **identify parcels that can be used as civic, cultural, and community spaces**. Each area will have projects of a different character that reflect the unique history and culture.
- **Utilize existing funding to bring projects to life.** (Ex- PGC Department of Housing and Community Development, Redevelopment Authority, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Anacostia Trails Heritage Area\*, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority\*, Maryland State Arts Council, and Maryland DHCD Community Legacy funds. )

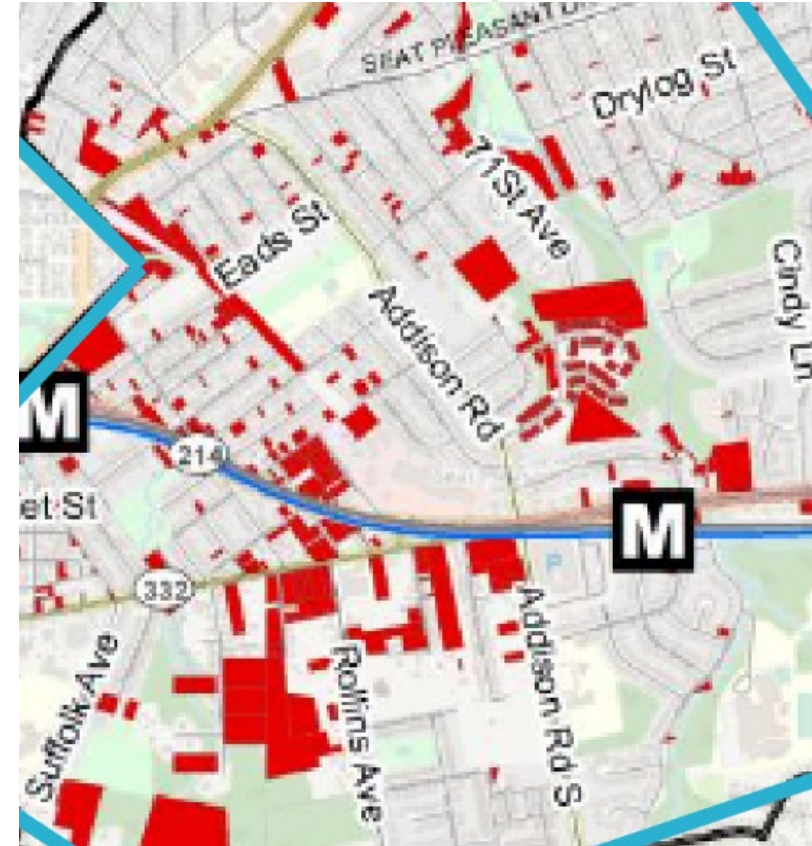


Image Credit: M-NCPPC



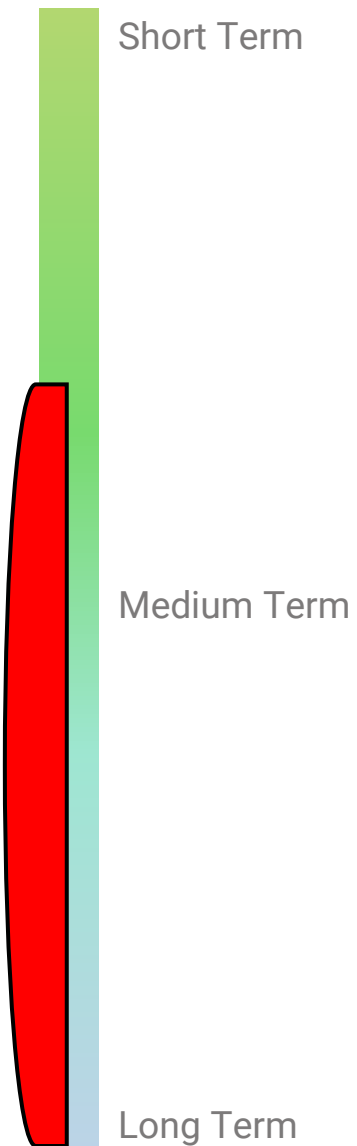


# Vacant Lot Reuse

Duncan Street Miracle Garden, Baltimore, MD



Image Credit: [Baltimore Green Space](#)



# Action Item: Deployment

## Deployment to address Community Needs

- Identify solutions to funding and resource gap to bring projects to life.
- Dedicate/leverage increased tax revenues from new development or other funding sources to finance upfront costs or fund ongoing community needs/resource gap.
- Allocate funding or resources to:
  - Infrastructure
  - Attainable Housing
  - Other Community Needs





# Agency Coordination and Public Process



AGENCY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC PROCESS

# Leveraging Assets for Inclusive and Equitable Growth



# Agency Coordination

## What We Heard

- A lack of coordination and consistency exists between local municipalities and County agencies
- Local officials and residents feel like they have not been heard or part of the planning and development process
- Although several planning studies have been prepared, they have not been implemented within the western end of Blue Line Corridor



Image Credit: cliparty.com

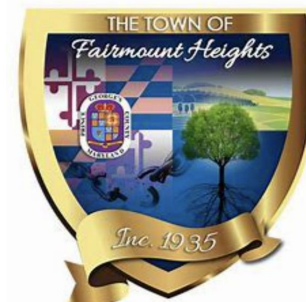
# Agency Coordination

## Recommendations

- Engage agencies on a regular basis to share information and best practices
- Establish partnerships for funding sources
- Stay up-to-date on potential Federal funding resources and requirements
- Maintain flexibility to respond to changing market conditions and phasing
- Leverage land holdings in the land use and decision-making process



Image Credit: cliparty.com





# Public Process

## What We Heard

- The process is complex and challenging to navigate
- Its unpredictable
- It's difficult for developers to take risks and make significant investments under current conditions
- Local municipalities and residents have deep roots and feel like they have not been heard
- Municipalities and communities want to be part of local land use decisions
- It takes too long to see the return on investment
- Support existing residents while attracting new residents
- Desire to attract new businesses (a grocery store), job growth, and workforce development



Image Credit: cliparty.com

# Public Process

## Recommendations

- Find a Champion!
- Establish a Community-Based Organization (CBO) with regularly scheduled meetings with realistic goals and accountability
- Educate Public Officials and Community on Development Process
- Define realistic expectations for development and return on investment
- Get input from both municipalities and HOA's within unincorporated areas
- Empower local officials and citizen groups to be involved in land use decisions to ensure inclusive and equitable growth
- Establish a Business Improvement District, Development Authority, or similar agency in the future



Image Credit: cliparty.com



# Case Study

## Greater Riverdale Thrives

- GRT is a group of community members working together to change their communities.
- The coalition has organized workgroups and community member co-chairs, to address issues that include food access, economic empowerment, environmental health and safety, health and wellness, Latino and immigrant outreach, and schools.
- The Greater Riverdale Thrives meets on a monthly basis.
- Received from Kaiser Permanente to seed organization



Image Credit: [greateriverdalethrives.org/](http://greateriverdalethrives.org/)



# Action Items: Find a Champion

- Create a Community-Based Organization (CBO)
- Engage local municipalities and unincorporated areas
- Educate municipalities and the public on the development process and opportunities
  - Enroll in Planning Academy, find funding for Neighborworks America training
  - Seek council support and CBO support for community engagement and charrettes
  - UrbanPlan with ULI
- Research funding sources for near-term opportunities

Short Term

Medium Term

Long Term





# Key Recommendations

# Key Recommendations

- 1: Create a repository of community assets across the corridor to reflect their unique community identities in the built environment.
- 2: Implement short-term safety improvements and invest in long-term projects that create more desirable development sites.
- 3: Conduct Land/Asset inventory activation exercise and coordinate resource allocation.
- 4: Establish a Community-Based Organization (CBO) to be a voice and advocate on behalf of the municipalities and community to promote inclusive and equitable growth.**



# Q&A

**More Questions?**

**Contact ULI Washington at:**

[Washington@uli.org](mailto:Washington@uli.org)

**Contact LISC DC at:**

[arosado@lisc.org](mailto:arosado@lisc.org)



Washington