



Washington

BLUE LINE CORRIDOR

Prince George's County, MD

Technical Assistance Panel | March 7–8, 2024

About

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Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 48,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the Institute's mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and Asia Pacific regions, with members in 84 countries.

Cover photo: Richmond Highway corridor. (ULI Washington)

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This study was sponsored by:

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Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

The objective of ULI Washington's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Metropolitan Washington Region. ULI Washington has completed over 65 technical assistance panels (TAPs) to date. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI Washington conducts two-day Panels offering objective and responsible advice to local decision-makers on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues, ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. Learn more at washington.uli.org.

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Acknowledgments

ULI Washington is grateful to LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) DC for sponsoring this TAP and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG) for their co-sponsorship.

LISC is a national organization with a local focus, rooted in the belief that neighborhood leaders and organizations best understand the assets and needs of their communities. LISC equips low-income communities with the capital, strategy, and know-how to become places where people can thrive. Working with local leaders, they invest in housing, health, education, and arts and culture organizations to create sustainable communities: good places to work, do business, and raise families. They are dedicated to promoting racial, ethnic, and socio-economic diversity.

Special thanks to Bryan Franklin, Deputy Director of LISC DC for facilitating this TAP and to Rylan Collins and Ashley Rosado of LISC DC for their support in the coordination and execution of this project.

ULI Washington would also like to thank The Capital Market, and especially Brittney Drakeford and Kyle Reeder for their help framing this assignment.



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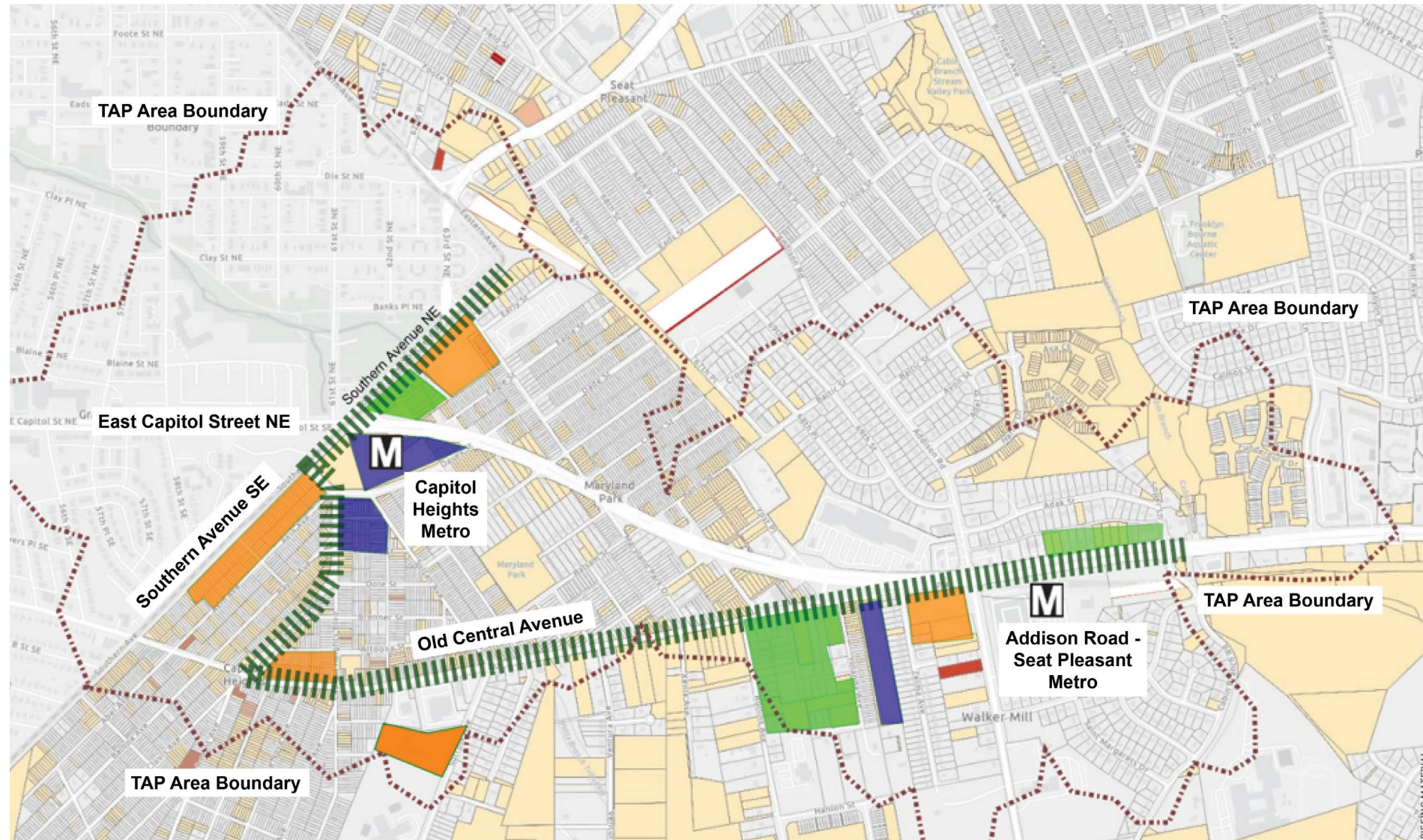
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Executive Summary

On March 7 and 8, 2024, a multidisciplinary Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) of ULI Washington members convened to evaluate the current conditions along the Blue Line/

Central Avenue Corridor in Prince George's County, Maryland, and envision its future. The TAP was sponsored by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) DC in partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC).

The study area for this TAP is defined as the western section of the Blue Line/Central Avenue Corridor in Prince George's County. The study area includes three municipalities – Capitol Heights, Seat Pleasant, Fairmount Heights – and other unincorporated areas. It



Map of the Blue Line Corridor with TAP study area boundaries.



The ULI TAP Panelists.

spans 4,020 acres of land, which includes residential neighborhoods, two WMATA metro stops, institutional properties, commercial and industrial areas, parks, and open spaces. The Corridor borders the eastern boundary of Washington, DC, and includes Central Avenue as a main arterial route.

In recent years, there has been a significant impetus to develop Central Avenue to be more transit-oriented and economically vibrant. Since 2021, the County raised \$474 million in state and federal dollars to support a series of infrastructure improvements and real estate projects. Additionally, over \$700 million of privately led development

is planned or currently under construction. Much of this momentum is focused on the eastern section of the Corridor centered around Downtown Largo, Morgan Boulevard and FedEx Field.

The population of the western section of the Corridor, like the whole Corridor, is predominantly Black, and experiences clear and pronounced inequities in areas of income, education, health, and wealth. This area consists of multiple vacant and underutilized plots, and two metro stops – Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant – within a mile of each other. However, it lacks essential amenities like grocery stores, banks,



Panelists touring the study area.



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Stakeholder meetings in session at the TAP.

and casual gathering spots like coffee shops, parks, trails, and sit-down restaurants. These factors, combined with a 2022 rezoning that allows for increased density on hundreds of properties, make it an area with tremendous potential for growth.

Each of the municipalities in the study area – Capitol Heights, Seat Pleasant, and Fairmount Heights, as well as the nearby unincorporated areas – expressed an interest in both seeing development happen within their land and in working together for the sake of the corridor at large. This gives hope for collective leveraging of municipal power to pursue development for mutual benefit.

At the outset of the two-day TAP exercise, the Panel toured the study area in person, received a briefing from the sponsor and selected community group partners, and

conducted stakeholder interviews through multiple focus groups. During the stakeholder interview session, panelists interviewed more than 50 stakeholders across myriad stakeholder focus groups: community members, residents, leaders of community organizations, landowners, local business owners, and public sector representatives from the State of Maryland, Prince George's County, the Town of Fairmount Heights, the City of Seat Pleasant, the Town of Capitol Heights, and from different government agencies operating within the TAP study area. (Stakeholders have been acknowledged in Appendix A).

The Panel discussed challenges faced by the Blue Line Corridor and formulated recommendations for the short-, medium-, and long-term under four broad categories: Community Identity, Mobility & Access



Stakeholders connecting in roundtable interview sessions - the community engagement piece of the TAP

Strategy, Land Use, and Agency Coordination/ Public Process. The Panel then presented its analysis and recommendations to the sponsors and members of the community on the afternoon of March 8, 2024.

At the outset, the goals of this TAP were to:

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.

At the end of the 2-day TAP, the Panel presented the following key recommendations,



Panelists working at The Training Source during the two-day TAP

among others described in this report:

1. **Create a repository of community assets** across the Blue Line 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.



Prince George's County Council Member and District 7 Representative Krystal Oriadha and the ULI Panel during the final presentation of recommendations

Scope and Background

TAP Study Area Boundaries

The study area, referred to in this report as the “Blue Line Corridor,” is located in the western part of central Prince George’s County, Maryland, bordering the eastern boundary of Washington, DC. The Corridor encompasses three small municipalities - Capitol Heights, Seat Pleasant, Fairmount Heights – and other incorporated areas. It includes 4,020 acres of residential neighborhoods, institutional properties, commercial and industrial areas, parks, and open spaces, and is served by the Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Stations.

The TAP Study Area boundary is demarcated by the District of Columbia boundary to the west of the Capitol Heights metro station along Eastern Avenue SE and Southern Avenue SE; along Sheriff Road to the north; approximately aligned along Booker Drive and Pepper Mill Drive to the east; and approximately aligned along Doppler Street to the south of the Blue Line Corridor.

Background & Existing Conditions

For over 100 years, the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Corridor has played an important role in the social and economic growth of Prince George’s County. Stretching from the District of Columbia’s easternmost corner through Largo Town Center, Central Avenue provides connections to major destinations

in Prince George’s County and neighboring communities.

Starting at the Washington DC boundary and traveling east, the development pattern transitions from walkable communities to suburban sprawl. Buildings close to the boundary are generally older, smaller, closer together, and organized in a grid pattern while those farther from the DC line are larger and widely spaced. Denser residential uses are closer to Washington, D.C., while larger scale industrial uses are toward the Capital Beltway, and clusters of suburban development with some commercial uses are scattered in between.

The Western section of the Corridor consists of three small municipalities: Capitol Heights, Fairmount Heights and Seat Pleasant. Historically, these municipalities have had limited resources and limited collaboration, despite their proximity to each other. They have planned separately, but there is interest in collaborating and planning together with some preliminary meetings.

- i. **Seat Pleasant** was first platted for subdivision in 1873, but development did not happen until over thirty years later. Located at the convergence of multiple modes of transportation, Seat Pleasant was a convenient location for commuters. The city became incorporated in 1931. By the 1960s the population of African Americans began to increase in what had previously been a predominately white community.

TAP Questions

The Panel was tasked with addressing the following questions during the TAP:

1. **Revitalization that Respects & Reflects the Communities**
How can the Central Avenue corridor between Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro stations be further revitalized and enhanced as a place that (i) honors the history and culture of the area (ii) prevents displacement, and (iii) attracts new folks to the area?
2. **Leveraging Geography & Demographics**
How can this part of the corridor leverage its unique geographic position (between DC and Downtown Largo) and demographics for inclusive and equitable growth?
3. **Near-term Development Opportunities**
Which publicly owned vacant or underutilized sites have the most potential for redevelopment within a near-term timeframe? What are potential quick wins that match community priorities and are market feasible?
4. **Community Empowerment**
What steps can be taken to build the municipalities and local communities’ capacity to pursue their own vision? Could a nonprofit CDC with buy in from the above-mentioned stakeholders be a useful vehicle? What are other potential mechanisms? What next steps are recommended?

ii. **Capitol Heights** was platted in 1904 into small lots that were originally advertised to white people only. Although residents were not directly served by railroad or streetcar service, they were within a mile of the stops at Seat Pleasant. As the popularity of automobiles increased and a bus line started to service the neighborhoods, African Americans began to move into the previously segregated community. The town was incorporated in 1910.

iii. **Fairmount Heights** has the distinction of being the oldest and the largest African American community in Prince George's County. The first attempt to incorporate the town was in 1922, but it was officially incorporated in 1935.

The Blue Line Corridor consists of four stations on the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) Blue/Silver Lines: Capitol Heights, Addison Road-Seat Pleasant, Morgan Boulevard and Largo Town

Center. Central Avenue spans from east to west bisecting the study area into northern and southern parts. Martin Luther King Jr. Highway runs northeast from the District of Columbia line to Landover. It serves as the main arterial route through the City of Seat Pleasant and forms a portion of the study area's northern boundary. The corridor was designed for cars and despite minimal traffic congestion, persistent speeding and poor traffic calming infrastructure have resulted in a high incidence of fatal accidents along Central Avenue, particularly at its intersection with Addison Road.

The built environment in the study area inhibits walkability and creates hostile conditions for pedestrians. The roads lack adequate sidewalks, operate as freeways, offer minimal pedestrian crossing opportunities, lack buffers between the traffic and pedestrians on Central Avenue, and have poor street network connectivity. Bicycling is hindered by land-use patterns and lack of infrastructure and connectivity. Dedicated

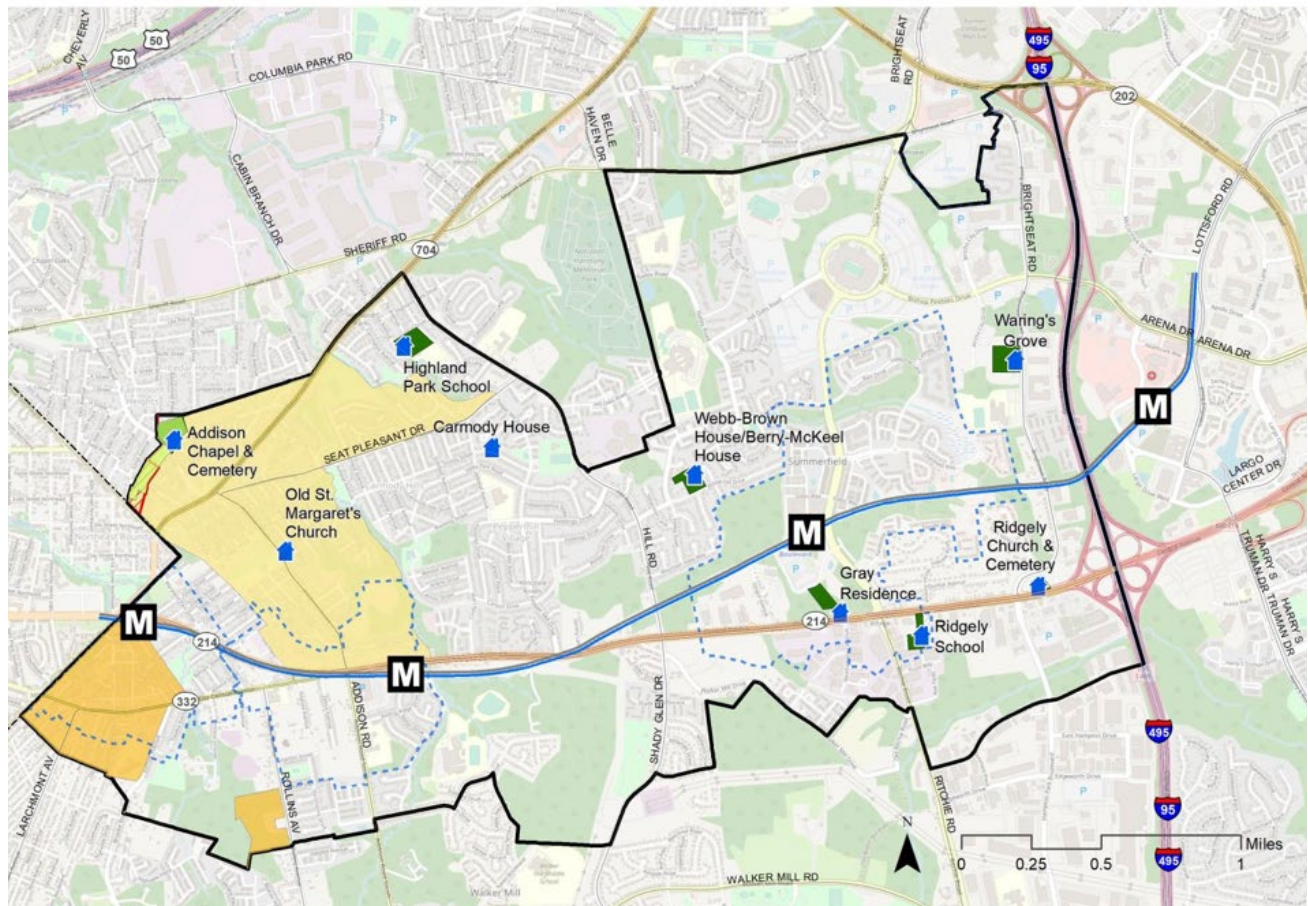
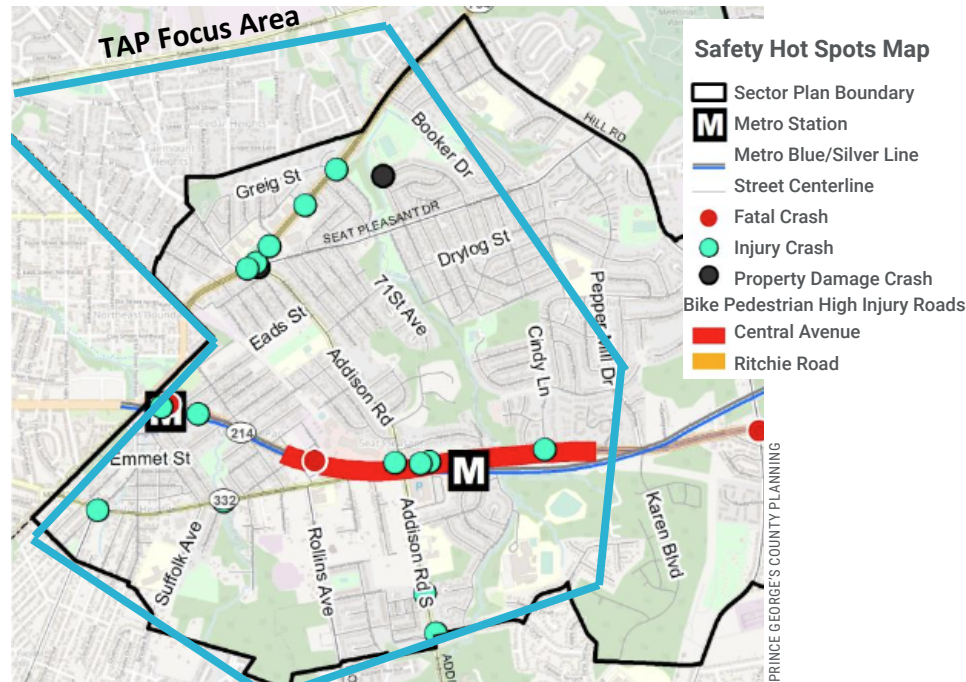


Diagram showing existing municipalities along the Blue Line Corridor as depicted in the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan and SMA, Prince George's County Planning Department, Community Planning Division, June 12, 2023.



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Crosswalk ending at a light pole at the intersection of Old Central Avenue and Rollins Avenue.



Map showing safety hotspots in the TAP Boundary Study Area as depicted in the Prince George's County Planning Department, GIS Open Data Portal, 2023

road space is not provided on Central Avenue parallel alternatives that could provide low volume/speed routes for cyclists. Vehicle crash incidents with pedestrians and bicyclists along the Corridor are primarily clustered along Central Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr Highway.

LISC's engagement in the corridor traces back to July of 2021. Guided by LISC's national Community-Centered Economic Inclusion Framework, LISC embarked on a collaborative effort to create an inclusive economic development agenda for Prince George's County's Blue Line Corridor. The Economic Inclusion Agenda combined regional economic trends, community surveys and the creation of a Central Avenue/Blue Line Corridor Task Force in its

	Recommendation	Timeline
PLACE	Host a creative placemaking initiative to engage artists, local residents, and municipal leaders to collaboratively reimagine the physical environment in the Blue Line Corridor	Short: 0-12 Months
	Establish an arts and culture hub and purpose on the Blue Line Corridor	Long: 3+ Years
	Create an equitable transit-oriented development fund that prioritizes funding projects which address community-led priorities	Long: 3+ Years
COMMUNITY	Partner with county leadership to convene Blue Line focused work groups that bring diverse stakeholders together to move an inclusive economic development agenda forward	Short: 0-12 Months
	Establish Community Development Corporation (CDC) or CDC-like presence on the Blue Line Corridor	Mid: 1-3 Years
	Advocate for increased public, corporate, and philanthropic general operating support to current, longstanding Community Development Organizations from the county and private sources	Mid: 1-3 Years
	Create a nonprofit organization with the mission to provide capacity building to local community development organizations and advocate alongside residents, businesses, and CDOs in pursuit of an inclusive and equitable county	Mid: 1-3 Years
BUSINESS	Convene small construction and construction-related businesses to understand areas of potential support, provide technical assistance and connect to business opportunities	Short: 0-12 Months
	Establish place-based services in the corridor for locally owned small businesses	Long: 3+ Years
PEOPLE	Explore Workforce synergies with the Purple Line Corridor Coalition	Short: 0-12 Months
	Administer a healthcare or construction-focused training program for Blue Line Corridor residents that includes career readiness training, job skills and connection to employment opportunities	Mid: 1-3 Years
POLICY	Advocate for amendment of county guidelines to qualify local nonprofit organizations with minority boards and/or staff as "local" and "minority-owned" for purposes of awarding contracts.	Mid: 1-3 Years
	Advocate for policy interventions to incentivize developers to lease to locally-owned small businesses	Long: 3+ Years

TAP BRIEFING MATERIALS

Recommendations from LISC DC's [2022 Economic Inclusion Agenda](#).

production. The Task Force—which brought together local nonprofit, faith and small business leaders, county representatives, anchor institutions, and funders—produced a set of thirteen recommendations to drive inclusive and equitable development in the Blue Line Corridor. Of key focus in those recommendations were exploring avenues for community driven development and building community power to shape the future of the built environment in the Blue Line. The Blue Line TAP was a continuation of LISC’s work and an opportunity to gain valuable feedback from ULI members towards these goals.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Panel summarized stakeholder concerns and desires according to the following themes:

i. There is misinformation and a lack of information.

According to the stakeholders, there is lots of local energy along the Blue Line Corridor. However, though the three municipalities of Town of Fairmount Heights, City of Seat Pleasant and Town of Capitol Heights are interested in growth, they lack a structure for collaboration. Moreover, unincorporated areas are often left out from civic engagement. It is hard to get information out to the public officials, and there needs to be a centralized system. The stakeholders emphasized that they

wanted a direct go-to portal or person as information gets siloed. Confusion and misinformation often lead to unmet expectations, and then general dissatisfaction prevails amongst the community.

They stressed the need for a champion to drive sustained coordination, conduct community meetings to gather feedback, prioritize goals, facilitate decision making and keeping accountability.

ii. The area is a food desert and a bank desert.

There is a high need for a grocery store with healthy food options and a bank for the residents. These are perspectives that stakeholders have been expressing for many years, and the Panel observed that there was a growing sentiment of hopelessness among residents mitigated by the ongoing efforts of organizations like the Capital Market that provide access to locally grown food.

iii. It is dangerous to be a pedestrian in this area.

Stakeholders pointed to traffic studies which indicate a high rate of fatalities along the roads in the study area. Central Avenue is among the top ten thoroughfares for fatalities due to pedestrian, vehicle and bicycle crashes. There is a significant lack of infrastructure to support safe pedestrian

life due to inadequate sidewalks, crosswalks, buffer space between sidewalks and fast moving traffic, highway like roads, and lack of refuge spaces for pedestrians.

iv. The area needs more job creation and workforce development.

As the TAP briefing materials showed, most employed residents work in management, business, science, and arts occupations. Local employment is primarily located in Hampton Park and Center Pointe Industrial/Office Parks adjacent to I-495. Both these sites are outside the western portion of the Blue Line Corridor. The sector plan area has a higher unemployment rate at 11.3% compared to Prince George’s County at 4.8% (source: TAP Briefing Materials).

Employment is well diversified, with three major industry leaders:

- Construction – strong performance and various sub industries of jobs that do not require a bachelor’s degree.
- Educational Services & Healthcare – strong performance and additional growth expected; however, many industries to require advanced education.
- Retail Trade – strong industry performance and have high percentage of jobs that do not require a bachelor’s degree.

v. African American history must be preserved.

Prince George's County has a rich legacy of African American history and culture. As per the book African American Historic and Cultural Resources in Prince George's County, Maryland, there are 181 properties including residences, churches and cemeteries, schools, fraternal lodges, a monument, an airfield, an amusement park, archeological sites, and commercial establishments.

As per the June 2023 report [*Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan and SMA, Existing Conditions Report*](#), the sector plan area contains nine county-designated historic sites (HS) identified in the 2010 Prince George's County Historic Sites and Districts Plan (three of which relate to the Ridgley family). Three of the historic sites, Addison Chapel and Cemetery, Ridgeley Church and Cemetery, and Ridgely School, are also on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

Moreover, Fairmount Heights is a historic district and is on the National Register of Historic Places. On October 17, 2018, Mayor Lillie Thompson Martin and the Town Council dedicated the Fairmount Heights African American Signage Trail with a ribbon cutting ceremony. To establish a visual trail of the town's rich legacy, the Mayor and Council established the Fairmount Heights Historic Signage Program that

described many of the important historic landmarks. In 2015, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development through its Community Legacy Program awarded the Town a grant of \$75,000 to design and install historic markers that would identify many of the historic sites and historic resources. Markers were installed at 18 significant sites.

vi. The area needs a greater diversity of housing options.

As per the briefing materials provided by LISC, single-family residential units make up most of the housing density around both the Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Stations. Over 70% of the TAP study area consists of individual unit detached or attached single family housing. There are various mixed-use development/redevelopment planned for the area, but none have broken ground yet.

The sector plan area has not seen a significant amount of housing development in the last five years. Over 60% of housing units were built before 1990, and according to available new construction records, a total of 192 housing units were built in the sector plan area between 2014 and 2022, though none of these were attached or multifamily.

Moreover, 51% of the housing units are owner-occupied which is lower than

Stakeholder Concerns

The stakeholders conveyed their primary concerns for the future of the TAP study area with the following two questions:

1. How do we establish an idea of "place" and "identity" across siloed municipalities?
2. How do we continue to make sure this area does not get overlooked?

the Prince George's County-wide rate of 58.9%; and 44% of the housing units are renter-occupied. Most rents range from \$500 to \$2,499 per month with median rent being \$1,679. With rent being so high, 55% of the renters are rent burdened, and spend more than a third of their household income on rent.

The overarching theme that Panel members heard from stakeholders was that the western portion of the Blue Line Corridor is rich with historical and cultural assets to create inclusive destinations. Despite this, there are markedly few visible identifiers of cultural and historic assets in the current built environment.

Below is a list of more specific points of feedback from stakeholders that directly informed the Panel's deliberations and recommendations:

Regarding Community Identity:

1. There is a great need to **elevate arts and cultural hubs** within this area.
2. The area needs **improved streetscapes and safe crossings**.
3. Someone needs to create a **centralized information portal** to craft a unified message and improve communication with residents and businesses.
4. **Facilitate opportunities** to envision the communities' desires reflective of their unique characteristics.
5. **Introduce more civic assets** including community centers, a movie theater, and recreational spaces.
6. **Highlighting neighborhood gateways** could lead to better visibility of a community image as well as a cohesive identity for the area.
7. **Prioritize job creation and youth workforce development.**

Regarding Safety and Mobility:

1. **Sidewalks are inadequate.** While a lot of major roads have sidewalks, they are poorly lit, falling apart, and there is very little buffering between the sidewalks and the fast-moving traffic which inhibit pedestrian life and make it unsafe for pedestrians.
2. **The area lacks active destinations.** There is a severe lack of local destinations one can go to. There is sufficient connectivity to get to and from the metro stations, to get to a bus stop, to get to work. But



A bus stop at the intersection of Central Avenue and Cabin Branch Road lacking shade structure.



A bus stop at the intersection of Central Avenue and Cindy Lane lacking shade structure and seating.

- there is nowhere to go before work, after work, or on weekends to hang out.
3. **The bus shelters are inadequate.** Existing bus stops in the area lack a consistent design language and fail to provide shade from the weather. Some bus stops lack seating and most of them lack shade structures.
 4. **The pedestrian crossings are inadequate.** The existing crosswalk

system is not pedestrian friendly. Crosswalks are incomplete at large intersections or completely missing. And in some areas, they exist but end abruptly, and do not connect to pedestrian realms like a sidewalk.

5. **Central Avenue is seen as a facility for pass-through traffic corridor.** Central Avenue is not a local serving road and does not serve as an asset to the

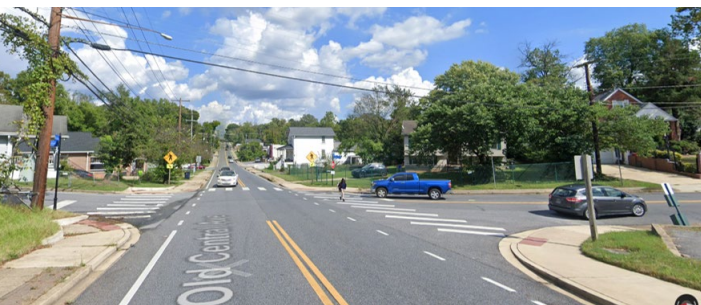
neighborhood. It is not a road people use to get to places, but instead is perceived as a barrier between the north and south sides. It is 6 lanes in some sections of the Corridor and 8 lanes along some intersections with turn lanes, and carries fast moving traffic. It does not offer a



Missing crosswalk at the intersection of Central Avenue and Suffolk Avenue.



Missing crosswalks at the intersection of Central Avenue and Cabin Branch Road.



A crosswalk leading to nowhere for pedestrians at the intersection of Central Avenue and Yolanda Avenue.

comfortable walking experience, so it acts as a physical barrier between the communities to the north and to the south as well.

6. **Major transportation improvements are currently under study.** As per the Maryland State Highway Administration and other local jurisdictions, upcoming planned improvements like the Central Avenue Connector Trail (CACT) and a study on Central Avenue conducted by the Maryland State Highway Administration will add value along the Corridor and lead to improvements to the experience of moving along the corridor.

Regarding Public Process:

1. The **process is complex, unpredictable, and challenging** to navigate.
2. It is **difficult for developers** to take risks and make significant investments under current conditions.
3. Local municipalities and residents have deep roots and **feel like they have not been heard.**
4. Municipalities and communities **want to be part of local land use decisions.**
5. **It takes too long** to see the return on investment.
6. These municipalities need to **support existing residents while attracting new residents.**
7. There is a **strong desire to attract new businesses** (a grocery store), job growth, and workforce development.

8. There is a **lack of coordination and consistency** between local municipalities and Prince George's County agencies. There is a need for them to come together and collaborate, find a shared goal and organize themselves for collective action. They need to figure out what characteristics and opportunities are unique to each of their municipalities. They need to engage more with not just their own community, but also need to bring unincorporated entities on board.
9. Although several **planning studies have been prepared, they have not been implemented** within the western end of Blue Line Corridor.



Missing crosswalk at the intersection of Central Avenue and Suffolk.



Central Avenue near the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station.

Recommendations

In response to stakeholder input and with the goal of formulating a cohesive place-keeping and placemaking vision for the western section of the Blue Line Corridor, the Panel deliberated and presented the following recommendations.

Community Identity

The Panel observed a perception that the Blue Line Corridor lacks a cohesive community identity, and the Panel identified existing attributes within the community that can be enhanced to define the community's identity and increase their visibility and power in the region. The Panel presented the following opportunities for community empowerment, case studies, and action items.

Opportunities for Community Empowerment

The Panel highlighted the following opportunities to foster community empowerment:

1. **Land is still available at a wide variety of scales** – and that creates tremendous potential. The community can use these land resources to leverage their sense of place and for cultural, civic and storytelling uses.
2. **New development is coming** – guidelines or mandates to add public art, depict local history, and create walkable and safe streetscapes can all help ensure this development benefits the communities in the area.

3. **The Central Avenue Connector Trail is being implemented** – enhancements can be made to support local identity and reinforce the sense of place.
4. **Rich history and distinct characters exist in communities along the Corridor** – the area's history needs to be reinforced by the built environment to articulate these communities' unique values and identities.
5. **A caring and connected culture exists in the area** – implement programs and projects to preserve and enhance those relationships within the community, championed by an entity that embraces and highlights this culture.

Case Studies

1. Technical Assistance Tools

The Panel shared two case studies of placemaking tools in Maryland as programmatic models to be emulated within the study area. These programs have best practices throughout the state of Maryland, and help with aspirations and visioning within the communities. The following examples have been successful in promoting arts and culture for revitalizing communities.

- i. **Main Street Maryland** (<https://mainstreetmaryland.org>) 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.

There are 34 state designated Main Street Maryland communities featuring historic architecture, locally owned shops, exciting events and festivals, and a variety of restaurants which all make for a fun and authentic Maryland experience.

- ii. **Maryland Arts & Entertainment Districts** (<https://msac.org/programs/arts-entertainment-districts>) help develop and promote community involvement, tourism, and revitalization through tax-related incentives. Maryland's 29 A&E Districts are unique destinations that attract audiences, artists, arts organizations, and other creative enterprises to specific neighborhoods in Maryland's towns and cities. Each reflects the traditions and evolving culture of its community and invites residents and visitors to experience the best Maryland has to offer.

2. Long Branch in Silver Spring, Maryland

The Panel examined the Long Branch neighborhood of Silver Spring in Montgomery County, Maryland as an example of locally responsive small business and main street development. Located two miles east of the Silver Spring Metro Station, Long Branch is a two-block long commercial district located along the future route of 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.

The implementors of Long Branch are Montgomery Housing Partnership and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC); and collaborators are Long Branch Business

League, CHEER, NeighborWorks America and Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA).

Their strength lies in programming and festivals, murals, street trees, façade improvements, renovation of historic theater (catalytic project), park redesign, public art, and local visibility campaign “[Discover Long Branch.](#)”

3. Destination Crenshaw in Los Angeles, California

Destination Crenshaw (<https://destinationcrenshaw.la>) is a community-centric development project transforming a 1.3-mile stretch of Crenshaw Boulevard in Los Angeles, California 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.

They describe the birth of their vision in the following manner, wherein the Panel identified similarities with the community interests present in the study area:

“Our story reflects the legacy of resilience and creativity Black Americans have demonstrated throughout history. When plans were made to run the Crenshaw/LAX airport light rail line through Black LA’s main thoroughfare, we knew the train’s arrival would provide an unprecedented opportunity to expose thousands of tourists and new visitors to the cultural

heart of the Black community. So, we rose to meet the moment. Coming together, the community decided to create the largest reparative Black art and economic revival program in the country. We are building community spaces, planting 800 new trees, investing in local businesses, creating local jobs, and funding commissions for more than 100 Black artists.

Now, when the world enters Los Angeles along the new Metro line, it will be greeted by the art, energy, and legacy of accomplishment of Black LA”.

The implementors are Destination Crenshaw and collaborators are Getty Foundation, Otis College, City of Los Angeles, LISC LA and Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation.

Action Items

1. Storytelling through Place

In the short- through medium-term, the Panel recommended compiling records of local history and stories to showcase, sharing them locally with the community and with developers working in the area. The Panel recommended implementing projects to bring history and culture to light, especially the following place-based activations:

- **Create spaces to celebrate the community’s legacy.**

The second-oldest Black community in Prince George’s County broke ground in October 2023 on a six-home development



Infographic for the Long Branch Festival organized by Discover Long Branch.



3D rendering of pocket park design at the Fairmount Heights Net-Zero Townhomes community.

that occupies a small subdivision in Fairmount Heights. This will be powered by a combination of solar panels and energy-storing batteries.

The new subdivision sits where Fairmount Height's original municipal building used to be, and the project aims to celebrate the town's rich legacy with a historic marker and a neighborhood "pocket park" that will serve as the formal beginning of the Fairmount Heights Black History Walking Tour.

- **Plant lilacs to honor the Ridgley community and install signage to make the stories more broadly accessible.**

Lewis Ridgley along with his wife Mary Ridgley and thirteen children contributed to legacy historic institutions like churches and schools in the TAP study area. Lewis Ridgley, born in 1831, was enslaved during the Civil War. While they were farmers, according to some accounts, Lewis Ridgley was a former enslaved person who had worked for the

Thomas and Betty Berry of Concord and may have been working and living on their land before entering into agreements and acquiring land over the years.

The Ridgleys raised chickens and pigs, grew tobacco, corn, strawberries, string beans and also had five acres dedicated to growing lilacs. The lilacs were sold on Central Avenue and the money from these sales was used to pay the family's taxes.

While the historic character of the Ridgley farm with its dwellings, barns, outbuildings and cultivated land no longer exists, the Ridgley Methodist Episcopal Church and Cemetery, and the Ridgley Rosenwald School still stand today. They are surrounded by low-density parcels populated with light-industrial uses, parking lots, and fast-food restaurants.

The Panel recommended that the Ridgley Family be honored and remembered by **planting lilacs** with signage to tell their story as development occurs along the Blue Line Corridor.

- **Advertise events like the Turnip Tour along the Corridor.**

In 2016, following the closing of the only full-service supermarket in the Central Avenue/ Blue Line Corridor, a group of residents, came together to start a community-based Farmer's Market, which sought to bring healthy food to the area, now designated a food desert. The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated this issue, leading many corner stores and restaurants to close their doors.



An advertisement for the Turnip Tour.

The Capital Market was formed in direct response to the ongoing cycle of disinvestment and food apartheid happening in Capitol Heights, Maryland. Their mission is deeply rooted in not just increasing food access for residents in neighborhoods that have been victims of systematic marginalization, but to advocate for increased land ownership for Black farmers, financial support for Black businesses, and organizing residents through foodways and food stories that they cherish to build the community they envision.

The Capital Market provides healthy, affordable food options to neighbors in the Capitol Heights neighborhood and surrounding vicinity; supports the growth of local-businesses and farms owned and operated by people of color; and advocates for equitable and culturally-aware food systems.

LISC supported the Capital Market's newest initiative called the Turnip Tour. The

Turnip Tour is a mobile food experience featuring a series of rotating farmers markets throughout Prince George's County connecting cultural heritage, food system advocacy, and local businesses to address healthy food access.

Five primary goals of the Turnip Tour are to:

- ii. Create unique food-related and culturally meaningful experiences for residents in Healthy Food Priority Areas,
 - iii. Connect local farmers and emerging businesses, based in Prince George's County, with local customers,
 - iv. Increase access to local, healthy food for families using food assistance programs including SNAP/WIC, by reducing the food miles traveled and increasing assistance benefits for a dollar-for-dollar matching program,
 - v. Assess the community and environmental landscape for people to safely access food in Healthy Food Priority neighborhoods,
 - vi. Establish recommendations for an ongoing process to recognize agricultural, artisan, and craft businesses at farmers markets in Prince George's County.
- **Create and circulate a map of all the community gardens in the community**

The Panel recommended the creation and circulation of maps and information about community gardens for the Blue Line Corridor communities to promote growing food at a small and local scale.

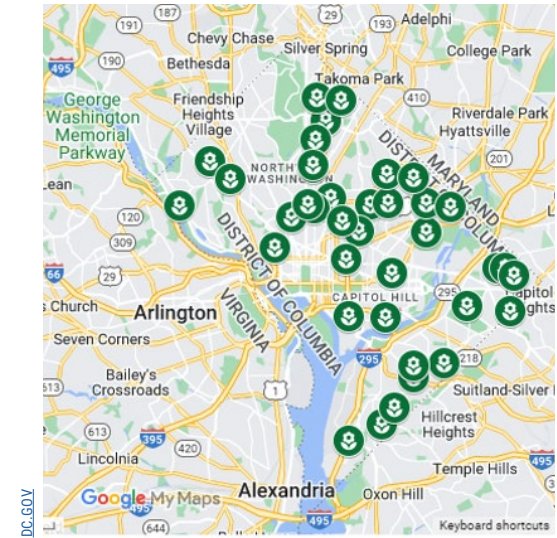
A successful example in Washington DC is Community Gardens, an urban agriculture program available at multiple Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) locations. This program is offered by the Park Ranger Program in conjunction with the Park Permits Office. These lots are maintained by dual effort by DPR staff and Washington DC citizens, and are key in the fight against food & fresh produce deserts. They also serve as a great outdoor space for productive recreation for anyone with a green thumb.

All DPR community gardens are managed by a group of volunteers. To get a garden plot, residents refer to an online interactive map for the nearest garden and get on to the waitlist by emailing the point staff representing that respective garden. There is a detailed set of community garden plot guidelines to be followed (citation needed).

2. Highlighting Existing Historical Assets

The Panel identified three existing historic assets in the TAP study area which continue to add value to the community: Fairmount Heights Elementary School in Fairmount Heights, Ridgeley Rosenwald School in Capitol Heights, and St. Margaret of Scotland Catholic Church in Seat Pleasant.

The Fairmount Heights Elementary School is an important landmark in Fairmount Heights. Built in 1912, it was designed by noted African American architect William Sidney Pittman of Washington DC. After its construction it was the only public school in Prince George's County with industrial



An interactive map for Community Gardens by the Department of Parks and Recreation in Washington DC

training for African American students. It served as a school until 1934.

The Ridgeley Rosenwald School opened in 1927 as Colored School No.1 in Election District 13, and served the African American community of Ridgely in central Prince George's County. Funded by a Rosenwald Foundation grant, it was one of nearly 5,000 schools built for African American children in the South. Despite its closure in 1954, it remained intact and is now one of nine remaining Rosenwald schools in Prince George's County, showcasing original design elements after restoration (source pgparks.com).

3. Trail Enhancements

In the medium-term, the Central Avenue Connector Trail is an upcoming opportunity



EXPERIENCE PRINCE GEORGES

The Fairmount Heights School in Fairmount Heights, Maryland.



PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD PARKS & RECREATION

The Ridgeley Rosenwald School in Fairmount Heights, Maryland.



PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY, MD PARKS & RECREATION

St. Margaret's Church in Seat Pleasant, Maryland.

to connect existing communities, and overlay moments of joy, beauty and learning along this Corridor. The Panel recommended convening a working stakeholder group to identify elements and additions to be installed along the trail. A collective vision with community input that can be easily shared and communicated will make advocacy efforts more impactful. The Panel further urged the community-level identification of priority projects and partner organizations to support with project development, fundraising, and implementation. The Panel shared an example of artwork along the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail in Washington DC as a successful model of project identification and organizational partnership.

4. Add Arts & Culture to Local Development

In the short- to medium-term, the Panel recommended adopting and advocating for the Coalition of Central Prince George's County Community Organizations – Principles for Placemaking to guide appropriate development within the study area. The Panel noted that community-scale investment in catalytic projects in strategic high visibility areas, along with the inclusion of public art and cultural projects when considering new development, would help enhance existing businesses. Collaboration with entities like the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC) and M-NCPPC Placemaking Division would help lead to authentic representation of the communities in the study area.

For inspiration, the Panel shared a conceptual



EXPLORING BY BICYCLE

Art along the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail in Washington DC.



GOOGLE EARTH



GOOGLE EARTH / ULTAP

Existing scenario at the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station and (bottom) proposed conceptual rendering with art installations.

rendering of potential murals and public art at the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station. The composition conveyed how a mundane station can be transformed by visual and functional landscaping and artistic elements. The rendering shows a sculpture garden in the foreground along Central Avenue, landscaping that reflects the lilacs that were originally farmed by the community and operates as a meadow of Maryland pollinators, and locally-created murals and banners on the station building.

The Panel also commended the bus shelters



Existing scenario at the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station and proposed conceptual rendering with art installations.



Bus shelters at the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station with vibrant mural design by local artist, Luther Wright.

at the Addison Road Metro Station that display vibrant artwork as part of Metro's Bus Stop and Shelter Improvements Program, Metro's Art in Transit Program, and the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council.

For these artworks, artist Luther Wright focused on his connection to people and public spaces in Maryland. Each of the designs for the bus shelters represent his personal experiences growing up in Maryland - from live music to walks in the park, or trips to the aquarium. The artist stated that "Metro not only helps us on our daily commute, but it also allows us to explore our surroundings and engage with our community." With bold vibrant intricate designs, his work is intended to change the mood and energy of the otherwise bleak public transit-oriented space. Through these compositions, Luther Wright hoped to embody the true essence of his Maryland experience – a model the Panel argued could be emulated throughout the study area.

For the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station, Panelists summarized that adding street trees would make the station area entry more pedestrian-friendly, banners would inform commuters and passersby of where people are, and new public artwork would reflect the community's pride in place through the built environment.

The Panel shared another example of artwork at the New Carrollton Metro Station, which transformed the station and commuter experiences. "Dawn & Dusk Resurgent" by Heidi Lippman is a recomposed artwork that

pays homage to "Dawn and Dusk" (1998) created by Ms. Lippman for the parking garage at the New Carrollton Metro Station. Prior to the demolition of the parking garage in 2022, large slab sections of the original mosaic were retrieved and reconfigured to create the new, vibrant installation in the public plaza adjacent to the Metro Building. Inspired by the natural cycle of light, the artwork is the first in the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Art in Transit collection created by conserving and adapting elements of an existing piece.



Commissioned by the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC) through a Maryland State Arts Council Conservation Grant, "Dawn & Dusk Resurgent" by Heidi Lippman is a recomposed artwork that pays homage to "Dawn and Dusk" (1998) created for the parking garage at New Carrollton Metro station.

It is an example of sustainability through the use of collected, salvaged, and upcycled material and adaptive creative process.

“Dawn and Dusk Resurgent” was created to fulfill several goals, including salvaging sections of an existing artwork condemned to be destroyed, creating a new piece that would engage Metro staff, customers, and the community, and activate a public space. Art in Transit and its partners - the artist, Prince George’s Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC), RLA Conservation, and Ben Gage Fine Arts Specialists – worked to develop solutions inspired by sustainable practices through the preservation and reuse of an existing artwork.

The Panel emphasized the importance of using public art at major road intersections to curtail accidents and improve public safety for vehicles as well as pedestrians. As per the *Asphalt Art Safety Study, Historical Crash Analysis and Observational Behavior Assessment at Asphalt Art Sites, April 2022*:

“Public art projects coupled with improvements to transportation infrastructure, often known as - asphalt art, offer many benefits. They can create safer, more desirable streets and public spaces. They are typically inexpensive and quickly implementable, while helping cities test long-term roadway redesigns. And they help local governments engage with residents to reshape their communities. These projects, including intersection murals,

crosswalk art, and painted plazas or sidewalk extensions, have existed for years and are growing in popularity in communities across the world. Though asphalt art projects frequently include specific roadway safety improvements, the art itself is often also intended to improve safety by increasing visibility of pedestrian spaces and crosswalks, promoting a more walkable public realm, and encouraging drivers to slow down and be more alert for pedestrians and cyclists, the most vulnerable users of the road.”

The study examined the crash history at 17 asphalt art sites across the US that have a minimum of two years of crash data. It found 83 fewer crashes at the analyzed intersections - more than a 50 percent decrease compared with data from before the crosswalks were painted. For example, at a five-way intersection in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where after an intersectional mural was added in September 2022, the rate of drivers yielding to pedestrians increased by 10 percent (citation needed).

Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Asphalt Art Initiative grant program supports projects that demonstrate the impact of asphalt art projects and encourage cities to develop their own processes for implementing these low-cost activations effectively. Previous grant rounds supported 65 projects

in the U.S. and Europe, installing from 2020-2023.

5. Invest Locally First

Panelists stressed the importance of promoting local with the following recommendations:

- **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.

Mobility & Access Strategy



A five-way intersection in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

The Panel encouraged a two-step approach to addressing mobility, safety, and access within and through the study area:

1. Prioritize safety along the Corridor
2. Focus on large-scale public infrastructure improvements.

While the first step would address the most pressing human need for safety, the second would increase the appetite for development along the Corridor. This approach acknowledges and addresses the needs of current residents as it plans for the future.

Transportation Aspirations

The Panel highlighted some of the aspirations of the stakeholders that particularly resonated as important and impactful:

- **Connecting non-auto networks.** A robust network of dedicated bike and pedestrian paths providing access to historical/cultural sites and typical daily needs is not only an aspirational objective unto itself, but would reduce dependency on personal vehicles and improve safety.
- **Improved Safety for all ages and abilities.** The Panel's recommendations included building on the momentum toward public safety generated by four major studies.
 - i. **Vision Zero of Prince George's County.** The County Executive launched Vision Zero Prince George's (<https://visionzero-princegeorges.hub.arcgis.com>) to make their streets safe for everyone

by 2040. Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all including people who walk, bike, drive and use transit. They are bringing key stakeholders together to declare that tragic roadway crashes are preventable with the right actions and commitment.

- ii. **Central Avenue Connector Trail (CACT).** The Central Avenue Connector Trail (CACT) will serve as a major trail (or "spine" facility) within a comprehensive countywide trail network and is being planned to complement the ongoing economic, community, and cultural revitalization of the Central Avenue-Metro Blue Line Corridor. The CACT will be 6.5 miles long, beginning west of the Capitol Heights Metro Station, running through a combination of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) right-of-way, neighborhood streets, and existing and planned trail segments before ending at the Largo Town Center Metro Station, with connections to the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant and Morgan Boulevard Metro Stations along the route.

The CACT will encourage pedestrian and bicycle commuting, and will promote improved public health through the development of a built environment that provides



Rendering of future Central Avenue Connector Trail.

recreational opportunities and encourages people to adopt healthier, more active lifestyles. The trail will also be an important community amenity to strengthen their identity, that will help to spur economic development and revitalize surrounding communities by providing infrastructure to support transit-oriented development and attract private investment.

- iii. **Maryland State Highway Administration – Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP).** Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) is implementing a new Context Driven guide for engineers that customize roadway features to fit local and community characteristics, such as urban core, urban center,

traditional town center, suburban activity center, suburban and rural. These features lower speed limits and add continental crosswalks plus specialized signals. An important feature of Context Driven is the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP). Through this, MDOT SHA works with communities to improve pedestrian safety by identifying challenges, setting goals and objectives, focusing on areas of need, setting priorities, and taking action.

iv. Capitol Heights Green Streets Plan. In 2011, the Town of Capitol Heights and the Low Impact Development Center, a 501(c)3 organization based in Beltsville MD, started an effort to develop a green street master plan and preliminary street design for the Town of Capitol Heights. This master plan is intended to provide residents, builders, municipal and county staff, and other interested groups with practical, state-of-the-art information on creating green streets and integrating low impact development design strategies and green infrastructure practices within the Town of Capitol Heights.

- **Recharacterization of Central Avenue and Old Central Avenue** – Currently, Central Avenue and Old Central Avenue operate as fast-moving passthrough corridors. The Panel recommends recharacterizing these roadways to

promote pedestrian, vehicular, and cyclist safety, transforming them into more pedestrian-friendly roads which in turn will spur community friendly destination-driven development.

- **Connectivity amongst municipalities' destinations** – Connectivity between destinations in various municipalities will lead to more cohesive development and shared visions for all involved.

Safety Concerns

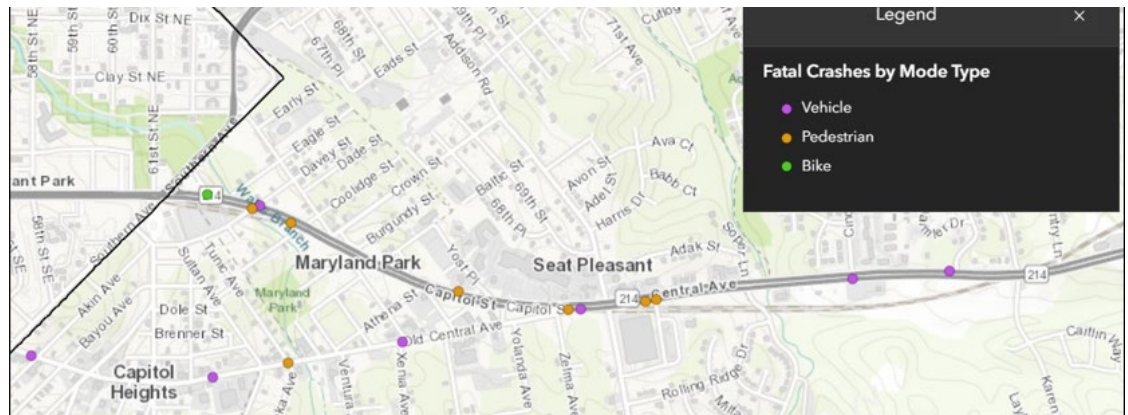
In the diagram below, each dot represents a vehicle, pedestrian, or bicycle fatality. Seeing these many dots inside the Beltway on such a short section of the road was a huge red flag to the Panel. Along Old Central Avenue, on a two-lane road, four deaths occurred, and something has to be done to prevent this. The Maryland State Highway Administration is aware of this situation, and the community needs to push for measures to ensure safety. The sidewalks are narrow without buffers and vehicles travel at high speeds as a result

of the wide roadway. This road is on the top ten list of most dangerous routes in Maryland and is currently being reviewed by the Maryland SHA (source:).

The following roads in the TAP study area posed particularly notable challenges and opportunities to the Panel:

Central Avenue (MD 214)

Currently, Central Avenue is a 6-lane median divided arterial road with approximately 32,000 vehicles per day. It is rated amongst the Top 10 in Maryland for pedestrian, vehicular and bicycle fatalities. It has narrow sidewalks without buffers with high vehicular speed. It operates as a facility or pass-through traffic corridor rather than a local serving road. Moreover, while 32,000 vehicles is a large number, Central Avenue does not necessarily require 6-lanes to carry this vehicular load. The 6th Edition of the Highway Capacity Manual states that a 4 lane road with left turn lanes could support 36,800 vehicles per day.

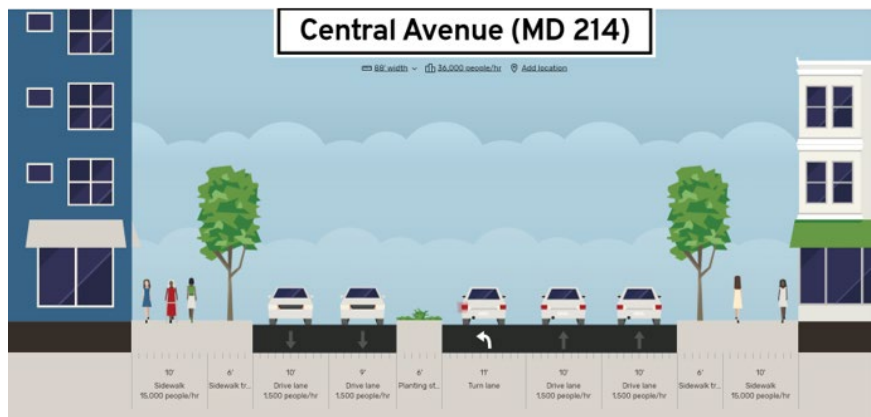


Fatal crashes by mode type in Prince George's County, Maryland.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY VISION ZERO MAP



Central Avenue within the TAP study area.



Proposed roadway distribution along Central Avenue.

The Panel's analysis concluded that there is capacity to reduce the road width along Central Avenue. The roadway could go on a road-diet with a narrower 4-lane section promoting slower speeds and allowing turn lanes at intersections, wider pedestrian and bike facilities, shorter pedestrian crossings and a tree-lined boulevard creating a safer and more comfortable corridor for all. With a corridor-wide improvement, the road becomes safer to walk and more active, thereby making it a vibrant environment. The adjoining parcels would no longer be next to a road with vehicles whizzing by, but instead would be lined with trees and lower-speed traffic. This change in nature of the roadway would then make the adjoining parcels viable for residential use in addition to commercial use.

Road Diets for Improving Safety

Case Study: Reston VA (source: [fhwa.dot.gov](https://www.fhwa.dot.gov))

A pivotal local example of road diets was performed and studied in Reston VA on a 2-mile section of Lawyers Road. The Road Diet transformed the once-dangerous thoroughfare of two lanes in either direction to one travel lane and a bike lane in each direction, separated by a two-way left-turn lane. Operating speeds were confirmed to be lower after Road Diet implementation. A safety study performed five years after the Road Diet conversion revealed a 70% reduction in crashes along the stretch of road. Additionally, perceptions of safety dramatically improved, evidenced by the following findings:

- 69% of respondents said Lawyers Road seems safer after the Road Diet was implemented.
- 69% said auto travel times have not increased, even though 59% said speeds dropped.
- 47% of respondents bicycled on Lawyers Road more often than before.
- 74% agreed the Road Diet project improved Lawyers Road.

While Road Diets done on 4-lane roads are more ubiquitous than those on 6-lane roads, the need on 6-lane roads is even more dramatic. 6-lane roads average nearly twice the rates of fatalities (source: [carfreeamerica.net](https://www.carfreeamerica.net)).



Lawyers Road, Reston, VA, after a Road Diet

Further Analysis would be needed to determine if a Road Diet in the study area could accommodate traffic. With a small sacrifice in vehicle travel times to provide safer and more abundant pedestrian and bike facilities, Central Ave could likely become a 4-lane divided arterial that still provides an acceptable level of service.

The Panel observed that active plans and studies related to Central Avenue would help improve conditions for all users of the thoroughfare:

- Central Avenue Connector Trail (CACT) – The aforementioned Central Avenue Connector Trail would provide a bikeway and improved pedestrian space on the south side of a portion of Central Avenue within the study area.

Plans are progressing to 100% and full construction potential has a 10-year timeframe.

- MD SHA - Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) – The new SHA program is evaluating and constructing corridor improvements, and Central Avenue from the DC Line to Ritchie Road is currently under study. There is potential for a road diet and it will complement the CACT.

Old Central Avenue

Currently, Old Central Avenue is a 2-lane roadway serving 11,000 vehicles per day, with four recent fatal accidents, wide lanes with sidewalks on curb, and no buffers. It operates like a 2-lane highway, and with the buildings set back and wide driving lanes, there is a clear lack of side friction, which in turns encourages drivers to speed along the road.

Old Central Ave has potential to have a more “Main Street” feel by making the lanes narrower and adding a buffer with wider sidewalks. Moreover, bike lanes can be added in tune with the Central Avenue Connector Trail plans. With the addition of comfortable walking and biking experiences, the road will have complete infrastructure for future destination development and cultural activity centers.



THE CENTRAL AVENUE CONNECTOR TRAIL

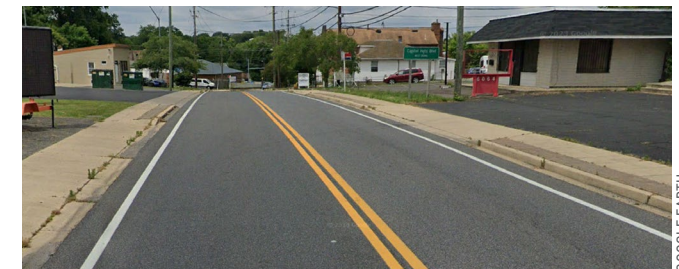
Legend

- Central Avenue Connector Trail - Phase I (Addison Road)
- Central Avenue Connector Trail - Phase II
- Central Avenue Connector Trail - Phase III (I-495/Beltway Connector)
- Chambers Avenue Complete and Green Street Project (Town of Capitol Heights)
- District of Columbia/Maryland Border

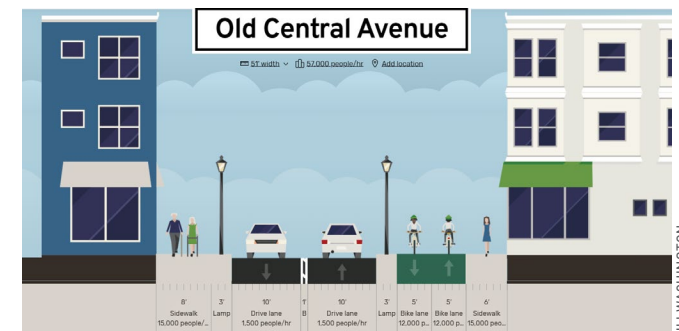
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Prince George's County Planning Department



Diagram showing Phase I of the Central Avenue Connector Trail in the TAP study area.



Old Central Avenue.



Proposed roadway distribution of Old Central Avenue.



Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station and its surroundings.



A bus stop without seating or shelter at the intersection of Central Avenue and Daimler Drive.

Rethinking Addison Road

Currently, getting off the Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Station and crossing Addison Road is challenging with vehicles speeding uphill and downhill. It is important that different age groups and people with different abilities can safely cross the road and connect that population and capacity to access development and growth activity centers in the area.

The Panel recommended looking closely at the local zoning plans, policies, and ordinances that restrict all these positive changes to make the area safe and more pedestrian friendly. Changing these standards will help broaden the horizon for interventions like taking setbacks away from the buildings to create wider sidewalks, adding buffers between sidewalks and roadways, adding bicycle paths, and modernizing traffic signals to improve the interactions between vehicles and others.

Transit Equity

The Panel observed that many bus stops

in the study area are located at shoulders and lack seating and shelter. The Panel encouraged incorporating roadway designs that provide shade from weather, and installing public art to enliven passengers' visual experience. In addition to emphasizing the need for transforming the study area's main arterials to slower-moving streets, the Panel made the case for updating transportation measures and design requirements more holistically. Facilitating safe arrivals for children and adults to their residences is of paramount importance, whether they are arriving from school or work and whether they are using the car or riding a bike. The Panel further stressed

the importance of improving crosswalks at intersections and facilitate pedestrian refuges so they feel safe, not just as a perception but as a reality.

Connecting to Daily Needs and Destinations

The Panel emphasized growing the value of transportation and focusing on the need to connect to destinations and daily needs. The Panel composed a diagram showing a



Diagram of the 10-minute walkshed from the Metro stations in the study area.

“

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

—STAKEHOLDER DURING THE TAP
INTERVIEWS

10-minute walkshed around the two metro stations and recommended facilitating walkability, learning to living pathways between schools and residences, active routes to the metro and communities within this walkshed zone. The Panel stressed prioritizing connectivity within and between the municipalities in the study area to create opportunities for both activation through placemaking interventions and for new development.

Action Items for Improvement

In the short-term, the Panel recommended the following:

- **Survey existing geological assets** and grade level streets and to take what the community already has – the education, the surveys, and other assets to leverage what has been done for the Central Avenue Connector Trail.
- Have the Seat Pleasant, Capitol Heights, and Fairmount Heights communities



Diagram showing Equitable Land Use and Development for the TAP study area

identify destinations and routes for external connectivity so the community has places to go to.

- **Develop combined municipalities' transit action plan** for connectivity and opportunities.
- **Conduct impact and opportunities analysis** to prioritize route construction.
- **Consider short-term SHA pilot program** to address fatalities along High Injury Network.

Land Use Recommendations

The Panel emphasized that the communities along the Blue Line Corridor are at an important threshold where they can synchronize future development with efforts to reinforce their identities and promote equity. By activating different elements of land use, understanding community needs, forming the right partnerships, and utilizing

creative financing tools to implement land use measures, these communities can become more vibrant and inclusive in both the near- and long-term.

Equitable Land Use and Development

The Panel reflected on the needs of the community: grocery stores, quality restaurants, places to gather, places for joy, and infrastructure. These community needs must drive partnerships and eventually development. The Panel's diagram above shows how community input and empowerment represents the “grease” that moves these gears in harmony with each other. The Panel further emphasized that for development to be positive, intentional, and inclusive, the right partnerships are essential.

It is important for the voices of the communities in the study area to reach the Federal Government, the State of Maryland, and Prince George's County government

“

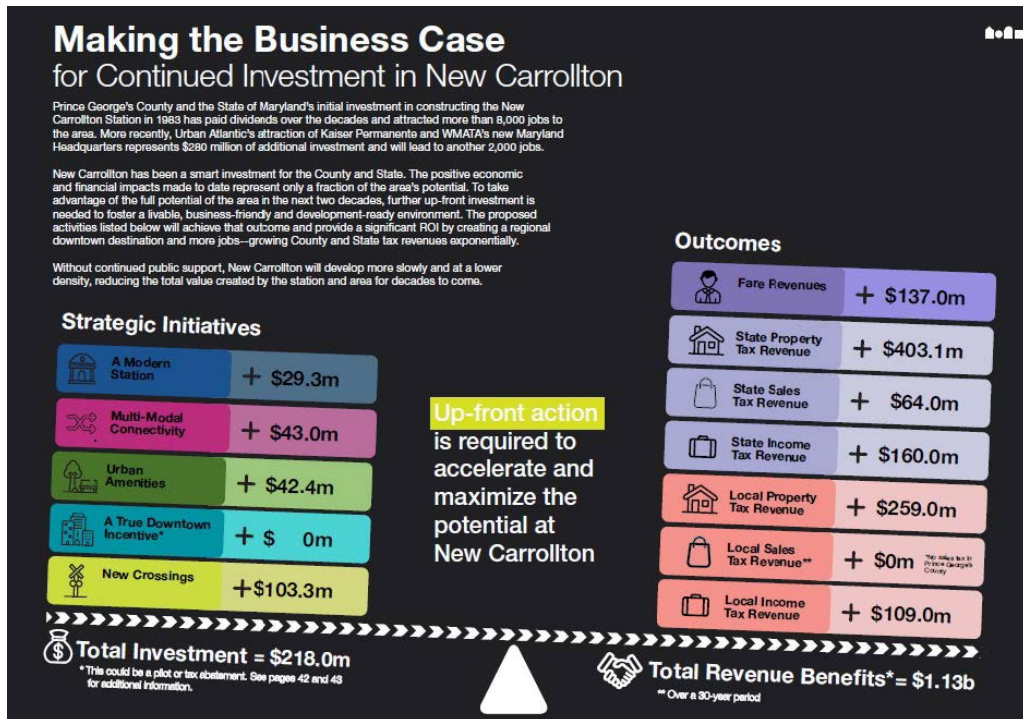
For every dollar in tax revenues from multifamily residential projects, 38 cents are needed to provide services to directly support the use and 62 cents are available for general budget needs.”

—CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AND ALEXANDRIA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP
2017 FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

to leverage resources for development like those from HUD, TOD grant funding, and low interest financing. Once larger authorities buy in, partnerships at the local level with unincorporated areas, the Town of Capitol Heights, the City of Seat Pleasant, the Town of Fairmount Heights, and other organizations can be leveraged to build political power, acquire further funding, and ensure community needs are being met in the development process.

Positive Development

The Panel illustrated how a “positive development” structure could benefit development along the corridor through the following example:



An infographic showing the balancing act between up-front action and resultant financial outcomes

In 2017, the City of Alexandria and Alexandria Economic Development Partnership collaborated with TischlerBise Inc. to conduct a fiscal impact analysis for new development. Their findings demonstrated that new development paid for itself and provided additional funds for general budget needs. They found that for every dollar in tax revenues from multifamily residential projects, 38 cents are needed to provide government services to directly support the use and 62 cents are available for general budget needs.

When a new development occurs, there are costs involved for the city or town, but once those residences start selling, a significant

percentage of that value is available for general funds for that city or town. These funds can then be used for community needs.

The diagram above demonstrating the Business Case for New Carrollton, MD showcases the different investments that need to be made to facilitate positive development. The Panel identified a similar structure would need to be implemented for continued investment in the Blue Line Corridor. In New Carrollton, up-front investment led to increased local and state tax dollars which were then used to fund community needs. Below are some of the investment sources that the Panel identified for use in the study area:

- Infrastructure investment
- Tax increment financing (TIF)
- Special assessment districts
- Support, funding and reimbursement agreements
- Tax exemptions and abatements

Prince George's County and the State of Maryland's initial investments in constructing the New Carrollton Station in 1983 has paid dividends over the decades and attracted more than 8,000 jobs to the area. More recently, Urban Atlantic's attraction of Kaiser Permanente and WMATA's new Maryland Headquarters represents \$280 million of additional investment and will lead to another 2,000 jobs. New Carrollton has been a smart investment for the positive economic and financial impacts made to date, and represent only a fraction of the area's development potential. To take advantage of the full potential of the area in the next two decades, further up-front investment is needed to foster a livable, business-friendly and development-ready environment. Without continued public support, New Carrollton will develop more slowly and at a lower density, reducing the total value created by the station and surrounding area for decades to come. Similarly, the Blue Line Corridor will require continuous public support from Prince George's County to remain attractive for residents and developers.

Intentional Development

The community wants to see changes along the Blue Line Corridor, but not at the expense

of displacement of long-time residents. The Panel recommends the changes to be planned and intentional; community engagement and feedback must be a priority during the development process. The Panel observed this imperative in action with the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor in Arlington, Virginia, where Arlington County was able to promote development around the Metro stations to add different residential options with varying densities and a mix of uses.

Arlington County General Land Use Plan established four "keystone policies." These included the following:

1. **Preserving established single-family residential areas.**
2. **Building a strong tax base** that would result in roughly equal total valuations for commercial and residential properties.
3. **Targeting redevelopment** within a quarter-mile from the Metro stations.
4. **Including high density projects** designed to combine commercial, retail, and residential uses in the one-quarter radii area around the Metro stations.

Today, there are seven "Metro Transit Villages" along the corridor that are mixed-use, walkable, and bicycle-friendly. The results reflect best practices of concentrating density near the stations but maintaining pedestrian scale and connectivity.

The Panel cited the common "Bull's Eye" concept present along the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor as an example to inform future



The Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor as seen from above

development patterns along the Blue Line Corridor, and especially within in the TAP study area. The 10-minute walking radii centered on the Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro stations would serve the areas where the Panel argued more dense development should occur and more pedestrian-serving interventions should be implemented.

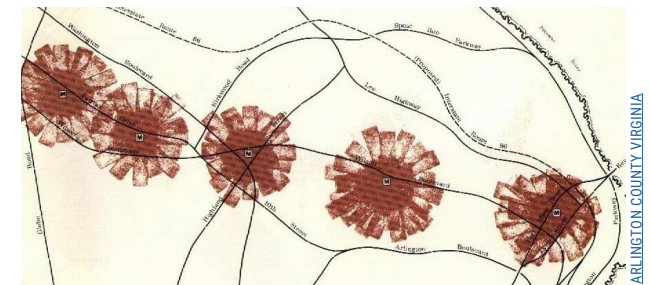


Diagram showing "Bull's Eye" concept for the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor in Arlington, Virginia.

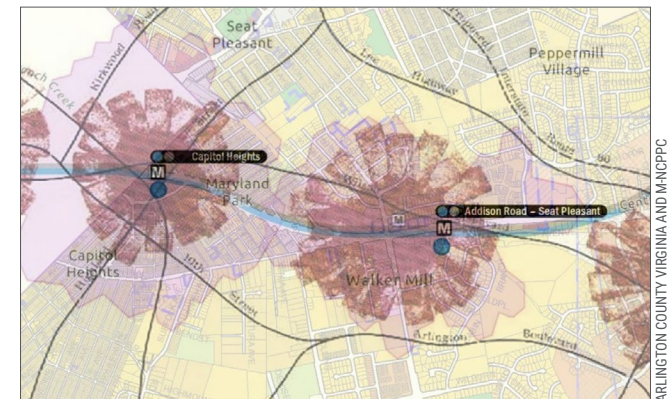


Diagram showing the "Bull's Eye" concept for the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor superimposed over the 10-minute walksheds from Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro stations at scale

The *Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan's* Blue Line Corridor Opportunities Map shown below indicates approved and proposed developments in the study

area. The Panel observed that the future development patterns in the area are already in tune with the “Bulls Eye” concept.

The Panel overlaid the 10-minute walkshed on the Opportunities Map as well, highlighting the vacant properties within the TAP study area to leverage along with proposed developments and the metro station. The Panel pointed out that lower density single-family residences are located further away from the Bull’s Eye, thereby facilitating the transition from higher density residential at the metro stations. Thus, existing single-family residential is not impacted as seen in the Opportunities Map, and can co-exist with the newer developments. This not only provides a variety of densities, but also different forms of ownership and can facilitate aging in place.

The *Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan* will be a guiding document developed through a multi-year process of public engagement, extensive review, and public hearings. The sector plan will address future development in and around Capitol Heights, Addison Road-Seat Pleasant, and Morgan Boulevard Metro Stations, which are designated as Local Transit Centers in *Plan Prince George’s 2035* (Plan 2035).

The lack of development and growth that has occurred in this area since the 2008 *Approved Capitol Heights Transit District Development Plan* and *Transit District Overlay Zoning Map Amendment* implies there is a critical need for updating land use and planning recommendations to incentivize and guide future development within this key area of Prince George’s County.



The Blue Line Corridor Opportunities Map within the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan Market Study Prepared by BAW Urban Economics for M-NCPPC Prince George’s County Planning



Diagram showing the 10-minute walking radius from the Capitol Heights and Addison Road-Seat Pleasant Metro Stations overlapped with the Blue Line Corridor Opportunities Map.

Inclusive Development

The Panel shared the case of the Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan in the City of Alexandria, Virginia. In the Arlandria-Chirilagua neighborhood, a planning process was launched in 2019 to address concerns about displacement and declining cultural diversity due to nearby new development. Arlandria-Chirilagua is a largely Hispanic and Latino neighborhood with 45 percent of residents earning less than \$50,000 per year. The small area plan sets out a vision for the city's work and approach to the majority Hispanic neighborhood whose residents are increasingly at risk of being priced out of housing, a trend that has exacerbated by the area's proximity to the new Amazon HQ2 and Virginia Tech campuses.

The Arlandria-Chirilagua small area plan aimed to increase new committed affordable housing units in the neighborhood by about 1,200 over a 20-year period. The small area plan for the Arlandria-Chirilagua neighborhood was adopted by Alexandria City Council in December 2021 with guiding principles such as housing for all and mobility and safety. According to the Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association, the adopted plan recommends addressing housing affordability needs through building height incentives, developer contributions, public-private partnerships, tenant protections, relocation assistance, and expanded homeownership opportunities. The plan prescribes 10 percent of all new development to be designated as affordable

units for residents who earn up to 40 or 50 percent of the area median income.

The Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan was recognized as an exemplary "Spanish First" approach, and the planning effort was very specific to the needs of the neighborhood. The plan won the 2022 Commonwealth Plan of the Year Award. Nick Rogers, APA Virginia's Vice President of External Affairs stated:

"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."

The Panel recommended that the Blue Line Corridor community's future be planned in a similar manner, with emphasis on the needs of the current residents and stakeholders. The timing of certain action items will help spur the Panel's recommendations through implementation.

Action Items: Asset Activation

In the short-term, the Panel recommended a study area-wide activation of neighborhood assets and tapping into the development potential of vacant land. The Panel recommended the following steps for a land/asset inventory activation exercise and a coordinated resource allocation process:

1. **Evaluate local assets/vacant land for development, activation and addressing community needs** through the lenses of civic, cultural, community spaces,

small scale residential, small scale commercial development and larger scale development.

2. Leverage support from partners

- Planning assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) through M-NCPCC
- Partner with University of Maryland Real Estate Development Program
- Non-profits and Community-Based Organizations

3. Identify individual funding and resource needs for both temporary/short-term and long-term activation/development.

4. Identify joint deployment of resources and allocation of resources.

5. Inform land use decisions and identify funding and resource gap: flag and vocalize the issues surrounding vacant parcels that cannot be developed because of current zoning or other land use conditions.

Action Items: Small Parcel Land Activation

In the short to medium-term, the Panel recommended realizing the potential in smaller vacant parcels in the study area in following ways:

1. **Convene a working group** of local municipal officials, community groups, nonprofits, churches, and businesses.
2. **Inventory existing vacant land**, identify parcels that can be used as civic,



Vacant lot reuse at the Duncan Street Miracle Garden in Baltimore, Maryland.

cultural, and community spaces. Each area will have projects of a different character that reflect the unique history and culture. The Duncan Street Miracle Garden in Baltimore, Maryland, for example, demonstrates the Panel's vision for exemplary reuse of vacant property.

3. **Utilize existing funding to bring projects to life** – 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.

Action Items: Deployment

Once solutions have been identified for short-term or long-term activation of development parcels the Panel recommended the following key steps to funding the implementation of these projects:

1. **Name the resource gap and identify solutions to bridging it** to bring projects to life.
2. **Dedicate/leverage increased tax revenues** from new development or other funding sources to finance upfront costs or fund ongoing community needs and help close the financing gap.
3. **Allocate funding and community resources to:**
 - Infrastructure
 - Attainable Housing
 - Other Community Needs – like grocery stores and dining options

Agency Coordination & Public Process

The Panel emphasized the need for coordination amongst various government agencies and local organizations along the Blue Line Corridor, and for educating members of the community about the public process, to drive future development in the neighborhood in an equitable and authentic manner.

Agency Coordination

The Panel provided the following recommendations, starting with amplifying the work LISC has already been doing in the study area:

1. **Engage agencies on a regular basis** to share information and best practices.

LISC provided grant funding to seed a comprehensive community development training institute for residents, local business owners, community organizations, and city officials. The Blue Line Corridor Civic Leadership Institute is developed by The Greater Capitol Heights Improvement Corporation and The Capital Market. It is a unique opportunity for residents, local business owners, community organizations, city officials, employees, and partners to come together and amplify their role as engaged civic participants. Tailored to the residents of Capitol Heights, Fairmount Heights, Seat Pleasant, Glenarden, District Heights and the unincorporated

areas along the Blue Line Corridor, this program offers a comprehensive approach to community development.

2. Establish partnerships for funding sources.

The Panel re-emphasized opportunities for funding smaller ventures to build momentum, including those offered by the Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development, the County's Redevelopment Authority, the Chesapeake Bay Trust, Anacostia Trails Heritage Area, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, Maryland State Arts Council, and Maryland DHCD. Given LISC's experience with making a significant impact on local development with other funding sources, the Panel was confident that this model could work in the study area.

Specific evidence for this includes LISC's ongoing work in the corridor since 2021, where the collaborative effort to create an inclusive economic development agenda for Prince George's County's Blue Line Corridor has made great strides. The Central Avenue/Blue Line Corridor Task – which brought together local nonprofit, faith and small business leaders, county representatives, anchor institutions, and funders – produced a set of thirteen recommendations to drive inclusive and equitable development in the Blue Line Corridor. Since 2022, LISC has invested \$4.5 million in support of two Blue Line Corridor housing investments. LISC invested \$60,000

to support two community-based initiatives, including The Capital Market's Turnip Tour, a mobile food experience focusing on resilient communities, local farms, and cultural heritage that visited different locations across the corridor. A similar approach coordinated across multiple projects and funding sources would have tangible and perceivable benefits for the Corridor at large.

3. Stay up-to-date on potential Federal funding resources and requirements.

The Panel indicated that federal funding is often available for revitalizing communities, and the Blue Line Corridor can benefit by keeping track of resources, programs, application cycles and requirements. Once a CBO or other Champion is established or identified, these groups can help with this process.

4. Maintain flexibility to respond to changing market conditions and phasing.

Oftentimes market demand changes with respect to land use and square footage dedicated to various uses over time. During the development process, it is wise to phase the projects and facilitate flexibility for uses and respective sizes.

5. Leverage land holdings in the land use and decision-making process.

The many vacant sites within the study area may be generally smaller in size than typically attractive development parcels, making private commercial uses

less viable, but these sites are prime for cultural aspects and placemaking interventions at the scale appropriate to the neighborhood. The Panel argued that momentum built from smaller-scale investments will in turn drive economic development at a larger scale.

Public Process

The Panel made the following recommendations toward improving the way that planning efforts are undertaken and implemented in the study area:

1. Find a Champion.

A community Champion is a person or group that advocates on behalf of the community. Champions act as intermediaries between the community, the local governments, foundations and other community organizations. They know and understand the unique challenges and opportunities of their neighborhoods, and their goal is to arrive at common community goals, find funding, sustain community building and drive the planning process representing the community.

2. Establish a Community-Based Organization (CBO).

The Panel emphasized on the need for a community-based organization that can set realistic goals, meet on a monthly basis, and coordinate effort amongst among the three municipalities and the unincorporated areas, as well as

the overall membership and the private sector and developers in the area to cohesively work towards appropriate development along the corridor. A body like this would help with accountability, help amplify and expedite work that is under way. This organization would also listen to the community and communicate their interest, advocate on behalf of the entire community and make sure they are promoting inclusive development.

The Panel shared a case study of [Greater Riverdale Thrives](#). It is a community-based group working together to change their communities. They meet on a monthly basis where they organize 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.

3. Educate Public Officials and Community on the development process.

The Panel suggested Blue Line Corridor community engagement with the following organizations to educate both officials and the public about the development process, to increase representation in the planning process, and to make appropriate decisions for the future development along the Corridor.

- Enroll with Neighborhood Planning Academy – [The Neighborhood](#)

[Planning Academy](#) offers a free seven-week planning course to help community stakeholders understand opportunities for input and empowerment; support residents in understanding how the development process works, how to better engage, and how to advocate for community goals and visions; support all municipalities in Prince George's County; and support local developers with understanding how to navigate the development process. This course is for county residents, Homeowner Associations and Civic Associations, municipalities and local, small-scale developers.

- Find funding for NeighborWorks America training – [NeighborWorks America](#) creates opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives and strengthen their communities. As a congressionally chartered and funded nonpartisan nonprofit, they support organizations that provide communities with affordable housing, financial counseling and coaching, training and resident engagement and collaboration in the areas of health, employment and education. Once accepted after rigorous assessment, they offer programs and support to help their network organizations establish and maintain healthy operations,

measure the reach of their efforts, expand their program offerings to meet community needs, and move toward long-term stability and growth. NeighborWorks builds the skills, supplements the resources and amplifies the reach of network organizations to empower more individuals and transform more communities than they could on their own.

- **Seek council support and CBO support** for community engagement and charrettes. Community engagement workshops and charrettes are very important in understanding community aspirations and driving future developments in a neighborhood. According to the Panel, it is best to seek help from local councils and the CBO to organize such gatherings to obtain feedback from the community and arrive at collective decision making.
- **Participate in UrbanPlan with ULI.** [UrbanPlan](#) is a program offered by ULI, where participants - high school students, university students, or public officials - learn the fundamental forces that affect development in our communities. Participants experience challenging issues, private and public sector roles, complex trade-offs, and fundamental economics in play when proposing

realistic land use solutions to vexing growth challenges. UrbanPlan for Public Officials workshops are ideal for local decision makers who would like to learn more about the fundamental forces that shape and affect the built environment and the important leadership roles that elected and appointed officials play in the real estate development process.

4. Define realistic expectations for development and return on investment.

To arrive at these expectations, the Panel encouraged consideration of a manageable scope of projects to be funded in the near term. The Panel acknowledged the abundance of local energy directed toward corridor-scale and even county-level interventions. The Panel recommended that energy be directed toward marketing a smaller selection of sites within their own communities. Additionally, the lack of local capacity could set limitations on the realization of grants, but the Panel identified that proper organizational awareness, led by a champion, could help bridge that gap.

5. Get input from both municipalities and HOA's within unincorporated areas.

Unincorporated areas are often overlooked in the decision making and planning process due to the smaller population. However, it is important to keep them informed and get them

involved in the larger planning decisions for the future development of the Blue Line Corridor.

6. Empower local officials and citizen groups to be involved in land use.

The Panel identified that there was fatigue around community engagement in the study area because of the lack of perceived action in these communities. Through education and properly curated planning exercises, community activities, and informal events, officials and communities would become more aware of what can be done and can begin influence planning decisions to ensure inclusive and equitable growth in their jurisdictions. When the two groups are engaged in the same process of bringing more vibrancy to their communities, citizen groups can help keep local officials accountable, while local officials can in turn help alleviate the confusion around who “owns” projects and carries them from ideation to implementation.

7. Establish a Development Authority, Business Improvement District, or similar agency in the future.

A Development Authority is a group of members that promotes economic growth by supporting existing businesses, targeting and attracting new businesses, as well as capturing corporate and/or regional headquarters in the region. Development authorities also typically provide information

to various government entities on supporting the achievement of planned economic growth.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a self-taxing district established by property owners to enhance the economic vitality of a specific commercial area. The tax is a surcharge on the real property tax liability. The tax is collected by the governing body, and all revenues are returned entirely to the nonprofit organization managing the BID. BID expenditures range from maintaining commercial corridors through litter and graffiti removal, landscaping and supplementing city services; increasing security through the presence of ambassadors who walk the commercial district; promoting the commercial district and the business operating therein; providing homeless and youth services; and making capital improvements like street furniture, decorative lighting to supplement city services.

Conclusion

In pursuit of accomplishing the goals of this TAP, the Panel presented its recommended Action Items in each of the following categories:

Community Identity

The Panel recommended these in the **short through medium-term**:

1. Promote Storytelling through Place
2. Highlight existing historical assets
3. Make trail enhancements
4. Add arts and culture to local development
5. Invest locally first

Mobility and Access Strategy

The Panel recommended these actions in the **short-term**:

1. Survey existing geological assets and grade level streets and to take what the community already has – the education, the surveys, and other assets to leverage what has been done for the Central Avenue Connector Trail.
2. Identify destinations and routes for external connectivity so the community has places to go to.
3. Develop combined municipalities' transit action plan for connectivity and opportunities.
4. Conduct impact and opportunities analysis to prioritize route construction.
5. Consider short-term SHA pilot program to address fatalities along High Injury Network.

Land Use: Asset Activation

The Panel recommended these **short-term** asset activation strategies:

1. Evaluate local assets/vacant land for development, activation and addressing community needs.
2. Leverage potential support from organizations like – Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC), University of Maryland Real Estate Development Program, LISC and others.
3. Identify individual funding and resource needs for both temporary/short-term and long-term activation/development.
4. Identify joint deployment of resources and allocation of resources.
5. Inform land use decisions and identify funding and resource gap.

Land Use: Small Parcel Land Activation

The Panel recommended the following for the **short- to medium-term**:

1. Convene a working group of local municipal officials, community groups, nonprofits, churches and businesses.
2. Make an inventory of existing vacant land for various civic and cultural uses.
3. Utilize existing funding to bring projects to life from organizations like – 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.

Land Use: Deployment

The Panel recommended the following actions in the **medium to long-term**:

1. Identify solutions to funding and resource gap to bring projects to life.
2. Dedicate/leverage increased tax revenues from new development or other funding sources to finance upfront costs or fund ongoing community needs/resource gap.
3. Allocate funding or resources to – infrastructure, attainable housing and other community needs like grocery store and dining options.

Agency Coordination and Public Process: Find A Champion

The Panel recommended these in the **immediate and short-term**:

1. Create a Community-Based Organization (CBO).
2. Engage local municipalities and unincorporated areas through intentional outreach.
3. Educate municipalities and the public on the development process and opportunities.
4. Research funding sources for near-term opportunities.

The Panel expressed great appreciation for the opportunity to study the conditions along the Blue Line Corridor and provide recommendations for placekeeping and placemaking for these remarkable communities.

APPENDIX: List of TAP Stakeholders

Public Officials

Mayor Akiaba Stewart, Fairmount Heights
Mayor Linda Monroe, Capitol Heights
Amanda Anderson, Councilmember, Capitol Heights
Anita Anderson, Councilmember, Capitol Heights
Ron Williams, Councilmember, Capitol Heights
Demetrius T Harris, Chief of Police, Seat Pleasant Police Department
Camisha St. John, Councilmember, Fairmount Heights
Kyrthlyn Rhoda, Grants Manager, Seat Pleasant
David Zaidain, MDOT
Karen Mierow, M-NCPPC Planning Department
Nicole Hall, Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation
Randall Scott, State Highway Administration
Robert Patten, M-NCPPC – Parks
Shubha Punase, M-NCPPC – Parks
Scott Rowe, M-NCPPC Planning Department
Myneca Ojo, Town Manager, Seat Pleasant
Pat Fletcher, Office of MD Delegate Tiffany Alston
Winstina Hughes, State Highway Administration Planning & Strategic Manager for District 3
Aaron Zimmerman, WMATA
Benjamin Hobbs, Prince George's County Redevelopment Authority
Bill Skibinski, M-NCPPC Blue Line Sector Plan Lead Planner

State Delegate Jazz Lewis, MD State Delegate
JoAnn Tucker, Town Clerk, Fairmount Heights
Joseph Moges, State Highway Administration
Elena Perry, M-NCPPC Planning Department
Henry Snurr, Delegate Jazz Lewis James Brown, Capitol Heights Civic Association

Private Sector Professionals & Community Members

Adenia Bradley, Mission of Love Charities
Alex Villegas, Rodgers Consulting
Ashley Drakeford, The Capital Market
Belinda Queen, Coalition of Central Prince George's County
Brad Frome, Rise Investment Partners
Bradley Heard, Greater Capitol Heights Improvement Corporation
Brittney Drakeford, The Capital Market
Cheryl Cort, Coalition for Smarter Growth
Rev. Harold Dugger, First Baptist Capitol Heights
Janna Parker, PG Changemakers
Kim Rhim, The Training Source
Kyle Gamber, Horning Broker
Kyle Reeder, The Capital Market
LaVerne Gray, Mildred Ridgely Gray Charitable Trust
LeKeisha Vone, Horning
Mark Lawrence, Inccuvate
Nkosi Bradley, Local Developer – Partners for Equitable Community Growth

Peter Goldsmith, Lerch, Early & Brewer, Chartered
Rasheeda Jamison, UCAP
Renita Flood-Bennett, Fairmount Heights CDC
Robyn Mabry, Local Developer
Pastor Ronald Triplett, Pastor of Gethsemane United Methodist Church
Stephanie Prange Proestel, Housing Initiative Partnership
Steve Brigham, Community Engagement and Planning Consultant
Wuhan Dansby, Development Consultant



About the Panel

Panel Co-Chairs



Shelynda Brown
Vice President, Real Estate
Enterprise
Community
Development
Washington, DC

Shelynda Burney Brown, M.B.A. is the Vice President of Real Estate Development at Enterprise Community Development, and she is responsible for leading and managing high performance teams, business development as well as aspects of acquisitions and redevelopment projects undertaken by Enterprise Community Development. Mrs. Brown has worked in the affordable housing finance industry for over 25 years and has managed projects comprising over 4200 units totaling over \$750 million in development costs. She has expertise and familiarity with Low Income Housing Tax Credits, HUD affordable housing programs, tax-exempt bond financing, and the housing trust funds administered by agencies in District, Maryland and Virginia. She is also an active member of the following organizations: Urban Land Institute (ULI), African American Real Estate Professionals (AAREP), and Women of Color in Community Development (WCCD), Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc and Jack and Jill of America. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Georgia. She also holds a Certificate in Project Management from Georgetown

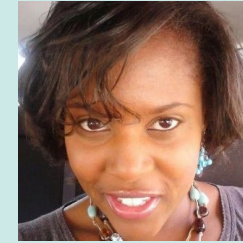
University Continuing Education; and was awarded a certificate of completion for the NeighborWorks Achieving Excellence Program, August 2016 - September 2017, John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Executive Education.



Mike Workosky
President
Wells & Associates
Tysons, Virginia

Mr. Workosky has over 35 years of experience in traffic, parking, and transportation planning and engineering. He is a registered Professional Transportation Planner (PTP), Traffic Operations Practitioner Specialist (TOPS), and Traffic Signal Operations Specialist (TSOS) and has worked for both private real estate developers and public sector clients. His experience includes site traffic impact studies, shared parking and design studies, town center studies and design, master plan design and evaluation, feasibility analyses and site assessments, preparation of Transportation Demand Management plans, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle analyses, and transportation analyses of large-scale mixed-use developments. He has testified as an expert witness before numerous boards and commissions.

Panelists



Jessica Brunson
Strategic Planner &
Designer
STV
Washington, DC

Jessica is a senior transportation planner and project manager with more than 20 years of experience coordinating and reviewing designs for capital projects, corridor improvements, and master plans. Skilled in urban planning, process improvement planning, architectural drafting, and stakeholder engagement, she has developed numerous educational and strategic plans for federally and locally funded transit undertakings. Jessica focuses on pedestrian and multimodal projects with an emphasis on increasing connectivity, integrating pedestrian- and bicyclist-friendly facilities, boosting recreational access, spurring economic development, and improving community wellbeing. She is familiar with the strategic planning and design process for transportation, architectural rehabilitation, and neighborhood planning projects, and provides leadership in implementing stakeholder engagement programs to introduce accessibility, reliability, and safety improvements.



Rhonda Dallas
CEO and Chief
Curator
Prince George's Arts
& Humanities Council
Largo, MD

Rhonda Dallas, LEED AP, is a visionary arts

administrator, public art curator and creative place-making consultant. Specializing in destination transformation, civic space and transit-oriented development, Rhonda currently lead's Prince George's County's Art in Public Places program and Blue Line Corridor public art and cultural asset strategy. Rhonda's completed public art projects have garnered national recognition and strategic alliances in both the public and private sector including WMATA, MGM National Harbor and various municipalities. She is an advocate for public art initiatives that advance cultural diversity, equity, and social impact through best practices in arts and economic development, arts and wellness and arts and environmental sustainability. Rhonda is a member of AIA, Urban Land Institute Prince George's County Product Council, Board of Visitors for Bowie State University and Board of Directors Experience Prince George's. Rhonda received her MFA, Maryland Institute College of Arts (MICA) and BBA, Howard University. She is also an adjunct professor at BSU, visual arts program.



Amol Deshpande
Principal
LSG Landscape
Architecture
Washington, DC

Trained as an architect, landscape architect and planner, Amol

Deshpande brings a wide range of expertise to the design and management of complex and challenging projects ranging from compact urban settings to large scale community designs. As a registered landscape architect and a LEED Accredited Professional, he is committed to incorporating sustainable design practices in his work while creating a unique sense of place for its users. As a Principal at LSG Landscape Architecture, Mr. Deshpande has designed and managed several award-winning projects and assisted in achieving LEED certification for several projects.



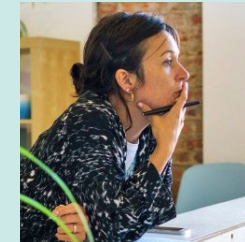
Julian Gonsalves
Assistant City
Manager
City of Alexandria
Alexandria, VA

Julian Gonsalves is the Assistant City Manager for Public-Private

Partnerships with the City of Alexandria. In this role, Julian leads the City's P3 initiatives, oversees the Office of Climate Action, and supports local small business initiatives.

Prior to joining the City, he worked as investor advisory manager at WSP USA, and as a consultant for Habitat for Humanity India. His career includes P3 and due diligence advisory, alternative project delivery, financial analysis and

planning, sustainability and construction experience in the United States, Canada, India and the United Arab Emirates. Julian is a Chartered Financial Analyst, a LEED AP, and a Certified P3 Professional. He serves on the City Employee's Pension Board, Young Professionals in Infrastructure board, and is a Clean Energy Leadership Institute Fellow.



Allie O'Neill
Principal
Warp and Weft LLC
Fairfax, VA

A designer, facilitator, and strategist, Allie focuses on projects and uses methods that

foster local self-determination and improve lives. She is a proven leader with the ability to enact visionary change and a designer expert at using participatory processes to achieve equitable design outcomes. She believes that the most resilient solutions are responsive to local context, honor grassroots expertise, and spark imagination and inspiration.

Allie received her Bachelor of Architecture from the Catholic University of America and is currently pursuing a Master's Degree at the Jimmy & Rosalynn Carter School for Peace and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University. She is the former Board President of the Association for Community Design and founder of Impact Design Drinks DC.



Nihar Shah
Head of Real Estate Development
Housing Opportunities Commission
Washington, DC

Nihar K. Shah serves as the Head of Real Estate Development, overseeing the department for the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County. He is responsible for the financial health and execution of development projects, sourcing new deals, and structuring capital to create mixed-income housing by leveraging the Commission's access to local, state, and federal housing funds and LIHTC as well as conventional financing.

Mr. Shah has sourced over \$1B of product in the region in addition to leading the development, management of sales and leasing operations, and the dispositions of more than 3.8M square feet of real estate across mixed-use, hospitality, multi-family, condominium, and townhome product types valued at over \$1.7B across 16 different projects and delivering over 2,700+ units of housing in the region.

Mr. Shah started his foray into the industry working in project management for general contractors, where he managed the construction of data centers, government facilities, and mixed-use apartment communities.

Nihar is a Federal City Council Trustee, a member of the Community Development Product Council within ULI Americas, and an active member of DCBIA's Housing Committee. He has also led Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committees within his organizations.

He is a United States Air Force veteran and separated as a Captain (O-3) after serving in

Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

Mr. Shah holds an MBA from the McDonough School of Business at Georgetown University and a BS in Electrical Engineering from Boston University.



Will Zeid
Senior Associate and Project Manager
Gorove Slade
Washington, DC

Will Zeid is a Senior Project Manager at Gorove Slade, a traffic engineering and planning firm operating in the DC, MD, and Virginia region for over 40 years. He has been working in the DC-MD-VA region as a transportation engineer for the last 13 years. He is a registered Professional Engineer in DC, Maryland and Indiana and has been qualified as an expert by the DC BZA & Zoning Commission, by numerous jurisdictions in Maryland and Virginia, and has been recognized as an expert witness by the Loudoun County Circuit Court. In his role as a Project Manager, he is tasked with responsibilities related to both client service and overseeing internal office operations including staff growth and development. Will oversees a variety of transportation planning and engineering projects across the region providing support for designing and entitling private and public development projects. Will provides a wide array of transportation planning and engineering services, including traffic multi-modal facilities design, impact studies, traffic simulation, site access and circulation planning, roadway signing and striping plans, traffic signal design, functional parking lot and garage design, parking demand studies, loading dock analysis, and Transportation

Demand Management (TDM) planning. His projects cover a wide array of land uses in the educational, mixed-use, office, government, commercial and retail sectors.

Will prides himself in developing solutions to complex issues and finding a path forward towards the success of projects he is involved in. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Maryland Society of Professional Engineers with a focus in legislative affairs and is actively involved in transportation working groups coordinating with M-NCPPC on updates to Montgomery County's Growth and Infrastructure Policy and LATR Guidelines. He recognizes that a balance in commitments must be reached between all stakeholders, both public and private, if development are to be truly successful for all.



Report Author
Kaushambi Shah
Free Lance Urban Designer & Report Writer
Rockville, MD

Kaushambi Shah is an Urban Designer/Planner with a background in Architecture. She has 12 years of experience in the private sector, including design and planning in the domestic as well as international realm. Besides working on projects in U.S. cities like Philadelphia, Washington DC, Baltimore, Boston, Fairfax and smaller towns in New York, she has also worked on projects in India, China, Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. Her project experiences range from design of Entertainment Cities, Mixed Use Town Centers, Campus Plans and Redevelopment, Resort Communities, Residential Communities, Waterfront Developments and Transit Oriented

Development.

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