



CLARKSBURG GATEWAY

Sector Plan

Existing Conditions Report

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan will evaluate land use, zoning, transportation, environmental, and historic preservation recommendations for the Plan area to determine if a new mix of land uses and zoning are more appropriate. This Plan may also require adjustments to other recommendations in the 1994 *Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area* (“1994 Plan”), the 2011 *Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area Limited Amendment* (“2011 Limited Plan Amendment”), the 2014 *Ten Mile Creek Area Limited Amendment* (“2014 Ten Mile Creek Plan”), or functional master plans. Examples of items which may change are interchange design, street alignments, staging of development, transportation corridors, environmental recommendations, and historic preservation designations.

The Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan will also evaluate the Plan area’s market trends and conditions and develop strategies to align the vision and recommendations for the Plan area with the county’s adopted plans, policies, and priorities. The Plan’s focus is the partially developed portion of the Clarksburg area on the east side of I-270 between West Old Baltimore and Stringtown roads, but the Plan will reexamine all parts of the Plan area.

Thrive Montgomery 2050, an update to the county’s General Plan, was adopted and approved by the County Council on October 25, 2022. The ideas and the recommendations in the update are organized to achieve three overarching goals: economic competitiveness, racial and social equity, and environmental sustainability. As in the former General Plan, *Thrive Montgomery 2050* champions growth along corridors in defined centers. It recognizes the crucial role of transit, vibrant mixed-use development, and attainable housing in supporting our economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability, and equity initiatives.

Thrive Montgomery 2050 identifies Clarksburg as a “Medium Center,” a term used to describe areas in the county with the second highest level of intensity of development. Medium Centers typically include significant clusters of existing or planned residential density and clusters of commercial density, such as large shopping centers and office campuses. Medium Centers are likely to be close to transit. *Thrive Montgomery 2050* also identifies MD 355 as a Growth Corridor and the Plan area as a Corridor-Focused Growth area. According to the plan, development of new or substantially expanded centers of activity should be focused along the growth corridors to avoid sprawl and achieve the critical mass required for each center to be economically sustainable.

PLAN AREA

The Plan area is approximately 969 acres and is generally bounded by Clarksburg Road on the north, Frederick Road (MD 355) on the east, West Old Baltimore Road and the Little Seneca Greenway on the south, and I-270 on the west (see Figure 1). This area is largely within the Upper Little Seneca South sub-watershed of Little Seneca Creek—part of the Clarksburg Special Protection Area. The Plan area

also includes two small extensions to reevaluate transportation recommendations from the 1994 Plan: a small area that crosses I-270 where there is a planned interchange and an extension south of the 1994 Plan area to reach the current northern terminus of Observation Drive when heading north from the Germantown area.

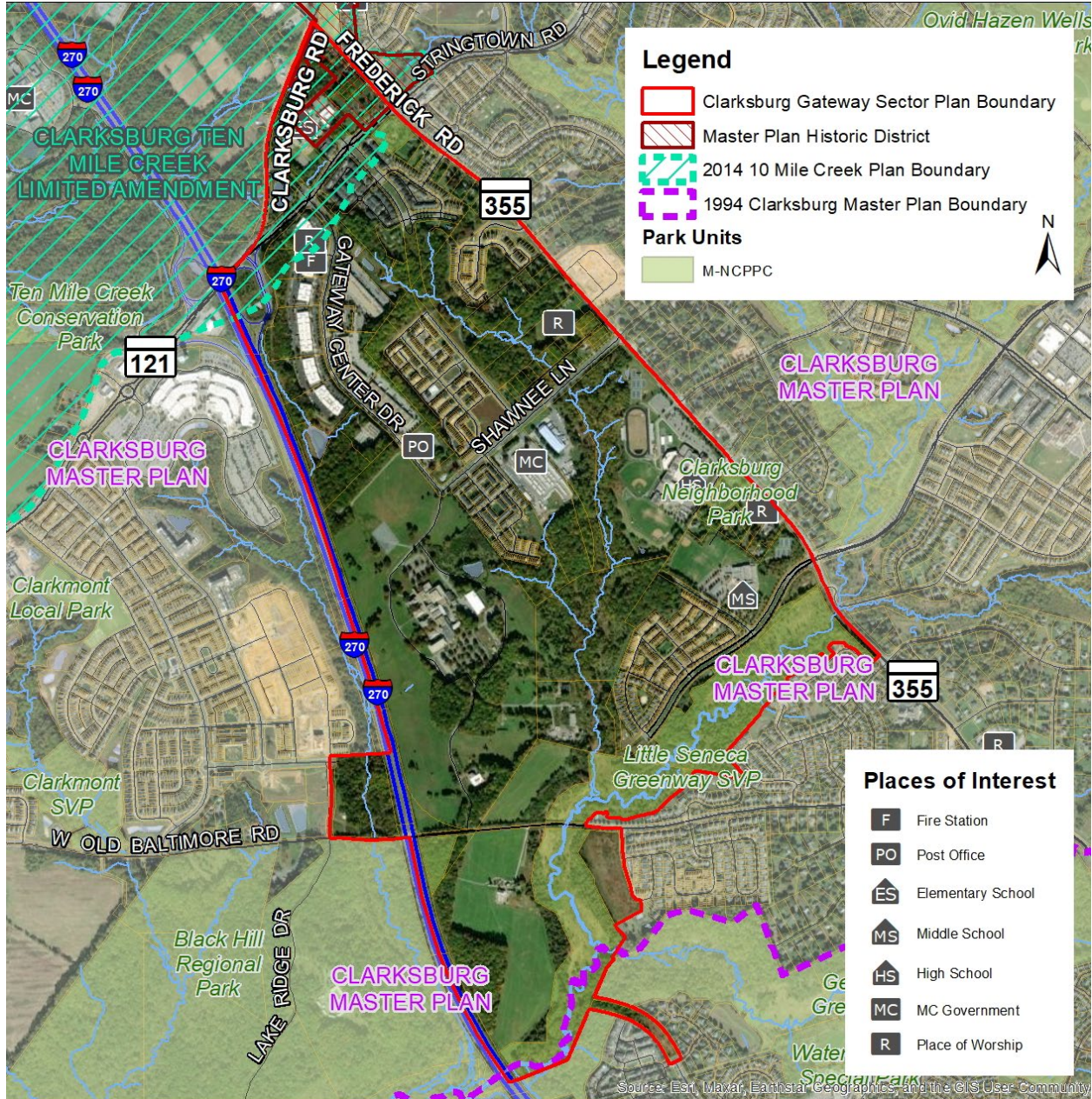


Figure 1: Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan Boundary. All areas above the dashed purple line were included in the 1994 Plan.

The boundary includes most of the properties located within the 1994 Plan’s Transit Corridor District west of Frederick Road. Major properties in the Plan area include the Gateway 270 office park, the former Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT) property, Clarksburg Elementary School, Clarksburg High School, Rocky Hill Middle School, and the residential neighborhoods of Gateway

Commons, Gallery Park (formerly Eastside), Hurley Ridge, Clarksburg Square (formerly Garnkirk Farms), and Dowden’s Station. Other areas covered by the 1994 Plan have largely been developed according to the 1994 Plan or have been evaluated as part of the 2014 Ten Mile Creek Plan and, therefore, don’t need to be evaluated at this time, although a small part of the 2014 Plan’s area is included in the Plan boundary near Stringtown and Clarksburg roads to reconsider former plan recommendations there.

PLAN SCHEDULE

Below is the plan schedule, which is subject to change if necessary. Our preliminary outreach efforts to the community began prior to the presentation and approval of the Scope of Work in June, but planners will continue to reach out to the public throughout the planning process. Planners have already received over 100 surveys from members of the Clarksburg community, and our Outreach partner, Everyday Canvassing, has knocked on almost every door in the Plan area and several more outside the Plan boundary to get the word out about the Plan and to have conversations with those who will be impacted the most by this Plan. More recently, planners held four listening sessions with the community to hear their thoughts on their community and past plan recommendations. We expect to report on these outreach efforts at a later date.

Scope of Work	June 22, 2023
Outreach	Summer 2023
Community Kickoff Meeting	July 26, 2023
Community Listening Sessions by Topic	October 2023
Existing Conditions Presentation	November 2023
Visioning and Analysis	November 2023 – February 2024
Preliminary Recommendations	February – March 2024
Working Draft	April – June 2024
Planning Board Public Hearing	July 2024
Planning Board Work Sessions	September – October 2024
County Council Public Hearing	January 2025
County Council Work Sessions	February – April 2025
Sector Plan Approved and Adopted	May 2025

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

CLARKSBURG GATEWAY STUDY AREA

For the demographic analysis, one Census tract (7003.16) was selected as the “study area” to approximate the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan area (see Figure 2). This Census tract covers all parts of the Sector Plan area with a residential population except for the small triangular area bounded by Stringtown Road, Clarksburg Road, and Frederick Road (MD 355) on the north end of the Plan area. This excluded area includes Clarksburg Elementary School and 45 residents (from the 2020 Census results) and is part of a census block group (the smallest geographic level with detailed demographic information) that covers the large residential developments of the Cabin Branch area west of Interstate 270. Including this neighboring block group in the study area would skew the demographic statistics so that they would not be representative of the Plan area.

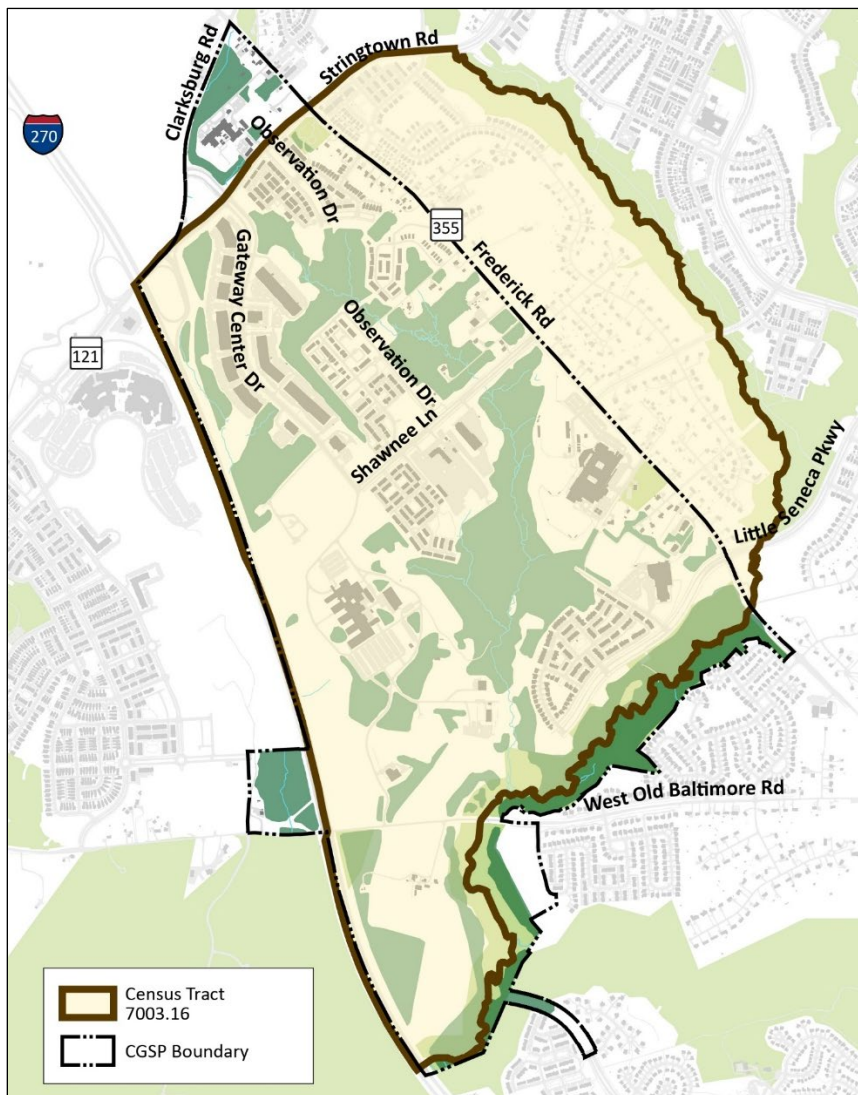


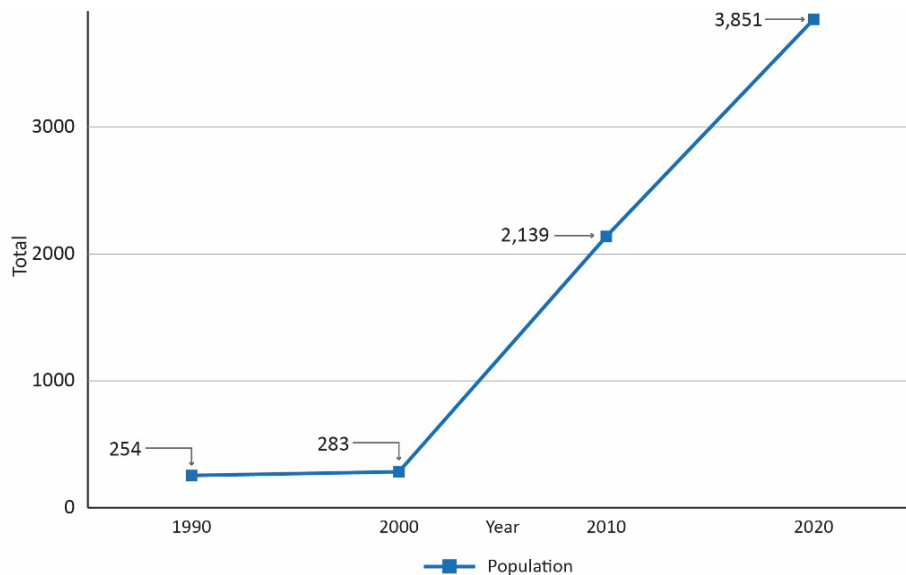
Figure 2. Clarksburg Sector Plan Boundary in relationship to the study area used for demographics

The study area also extends to the east of Frederick Road to Little Seneca Creek between Stringtown Road and Little Seneca Parkway and includes newer residential areas, such as the Highlands at Clarksburg subdivision, as well as older residential areas along Timber Creek Lane and Frederick Road.

POPULATION AND HOUSING GROWTH: 1990-2020

The 2020 Decennial Census counted 3,851 persons and 1,288 housing units within the Clarksburg Gateway study area. The study area experienced an enormous population increase after 2000 as new subdivisions were built (see Chart 1). In the 30 years between 1990 and 2020, the study area gained 3,597 residents, or a 1,416% increase; the number of housing units increased by 1,194 units or 1,270%. 99% of the population and housing growth since 1990 occurred in the two decades between 2000 and 2020. From 2000 to 2010, the area gained 1,856 residents (a 656% increase) and 606 housing units (a 566% increase). In the 2010s, the area gained almost as many people and housing units as the 2000s, with an increase of 1,712 residents (80%) and 575 housing units (81%). The average household size increased slightly from 2.7 people per household in 2000 to 3.12 people in 2020.

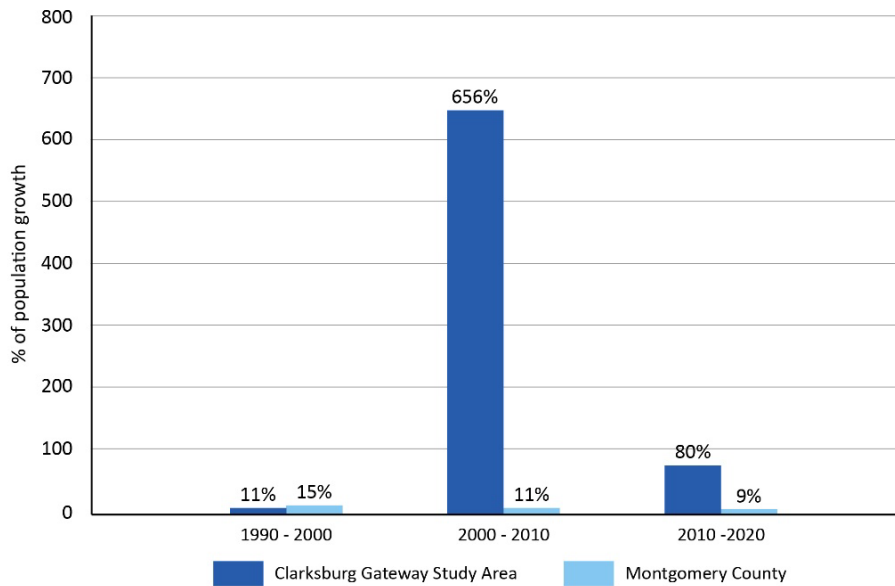
Chart 1. Clarksburg Gateway Study Area Population, 1990-2020



Source: Decennial Census, 1990-2020, U.S. Census Bureau

The study area has experienced a different population growth cycle than Montgomery County as a whole (see Chart 2). While the county's highest growth period occurred before 1990, Clarksburg Gateway's high growth period occurred after 2000. The study area's population and housing unit gains after 2000 reflect its rapid transition from a mostly rural locale to a suburban bedroom community.

Chart 2. Population Growth of the Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 1990-2020



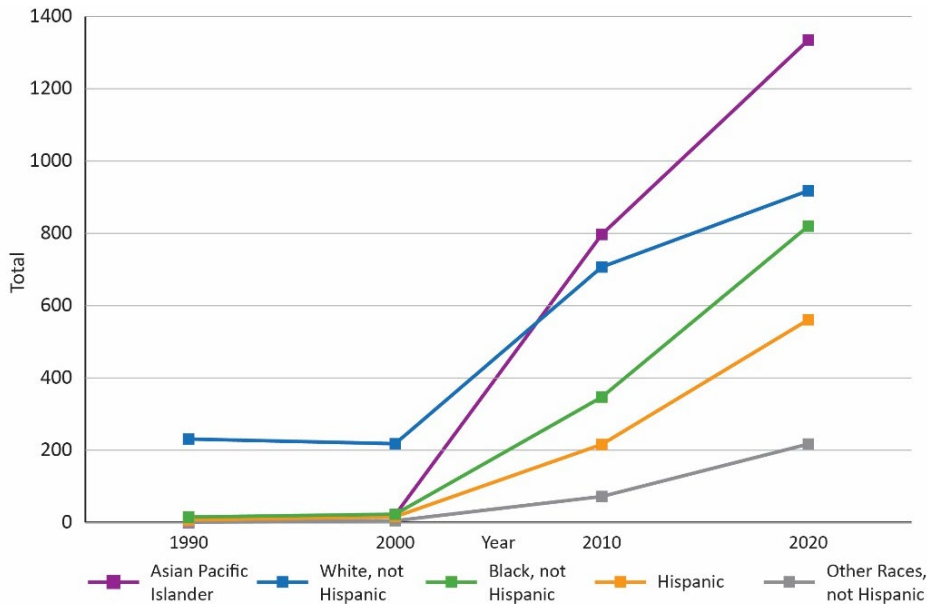
Source: Decennial Census, 1990-2020, U.S. Census Bureau

POPULATION DIVERSITY

Examining population growth by major race and Hispanic origin categories and the associated shift in racial distribution since 1990 provides insight into the changes seen in this community (see Chart 3 and Chart 4). In 1990 and 2000, the study area was majority non-Hispanic White. The population became a little more racially diversified by 2000 as small numbers of other racial groups moved in and the White population decreased slightly.

The study area experienced not only immense population and housing growth but also much more racial diversity after 2000. As the overall population grew sharply from 2000 to 2010, the population of all major racial groups also increased. The largest growth in the 2000-2010 period occurred among the Asian/Pacific Islander population, which became the largest racial group and comprised over one-third (37%) of the study area's population in 2010. Population growth for all racial groups continued through the 2010s; the percentage of Hispanics and Blacks steadily increased during this decade. By 2020, Asians/Pacific Islanders were 35% of the population and were still the largest racial group, followed by Whites (24%), Blacks (21%), and Hispanics (15%).

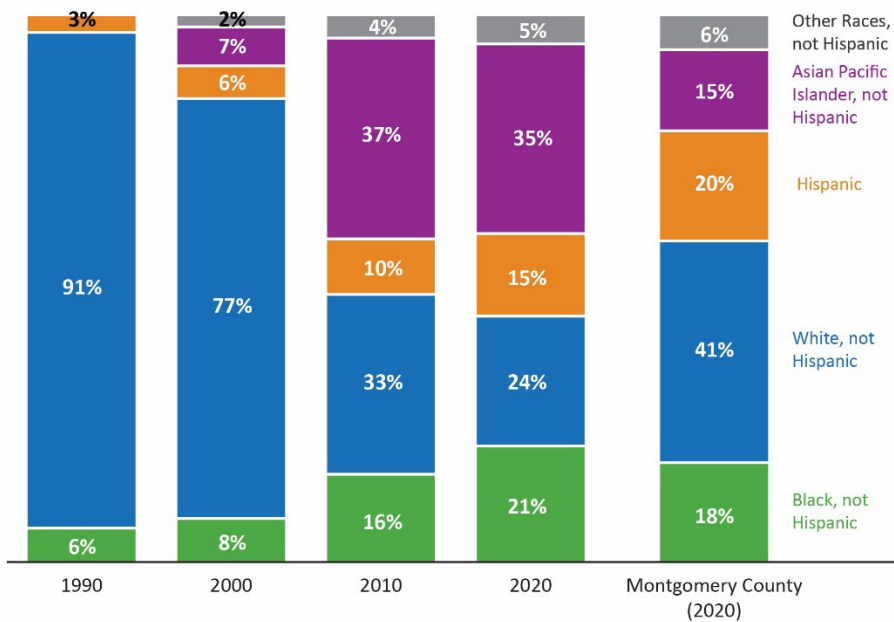
Chart 3. Clarksburg Gateway Study Area Population by Race and Ethnicity, 1990-2020



Source: Decennial Census, 1990-2020, U.S. Census Bureau

The Clarksburg Gateway study area, in comparison to Montgomery County as a whole, is far more racially diverse. The percentage of People of Color (persons other than non-Hispanic Whites) in the study area is 76% compared to 59% across the county. The study area also has a larger percentage of the population who is Asian/Pacific Islander or Black than the county.

Chart 4. Share of the Population by Race and Ethnicity for the Clarksburg Gateway Study Area (1990-2020) and Montgomery County (2020)



Source: Decennial Census, 1990-2020, U.S. Census Bureau

Underlying the increase in the racial diversity is a notable foreign-born population and large numbers of non-English speakers. According to the 2021 American Community Survey’s (ACS) 5-year estimates, 44% of the residents, or about 1,600 people, in the study area were born in another country, a higher rate of foreign-born than for all of Montgomery County (32%).

Table 1. Top Foreign Languages in the Clarksburg Gateway Study Area, 2021

Language	% of Non-English Speakers	% Who Speak English Less than Very Well
Spanish	28%	4%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	18%	24%
Other Indo-European languages	17%	20%
Other Asian and Pacific Island languages	12%	0%
Korean	11%	24%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Over 60% of the study area’s residents ages 5 and over (or about 2,000 people) speak a language other than English at home. Among residents who speak another language at home, 24% of them (or nearly 500 people) speak English less than very well. (This group represents 15% of all residents ages 5 and over.) The most spoken foreign languages in the study area are Spanish, Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese), and Korean, which are spoken by 28%, 18%, and 11%, respectively, of residents who speak another language at home (see Table 1). (In Table 1, “Other Indo-European languages” and “Other Asian and Pacific Island languages” round out the list of top five languages. These categories may include individual languages that have large percentages of speakers but are not broken out by the Census Bureau. South Asians, who speak a multitude of languages, comprise the largest component of the Asian population in the study area.) Among residents who speak English less than very well, 24% of them are Chinese speakers, 24% are Korean speakers, and only 4% are Spanish speakers. (Table 2 shows the full list of languages published by the American Community Survey with estimates and percentages for the study area).

Table 2. Estimates of persons ages 5 and over who speak a foreign language at home and those who speak English less than very well in the Clarksburg Gateway study area, 2021

Language	Speak non-English language at home		Speak English less than very well	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Spanish	559	28%	18	4%
French, Haitian, Cajun	14	1%	0	0%
German or other West Germanic languages	0	0%	0	0%
Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages	0	0%	0	0%
Other Indo-European languages	330	17%	96	20%
Korean	216	11%	116	24%
Chinese (incl. Mandarin, Cantonese)	368	18%	113	24%
Vietnamese	13	1%	13	3%
Tagalog (incl. Filipino)	101	5%	13	3%
Other Asian and Pacific Island languages	238	12%	0	0%
Arabic	13	1%	13	3%
Other and unspecified languages	141	7%	97	20%
Totals	1,993	100%	479	100%

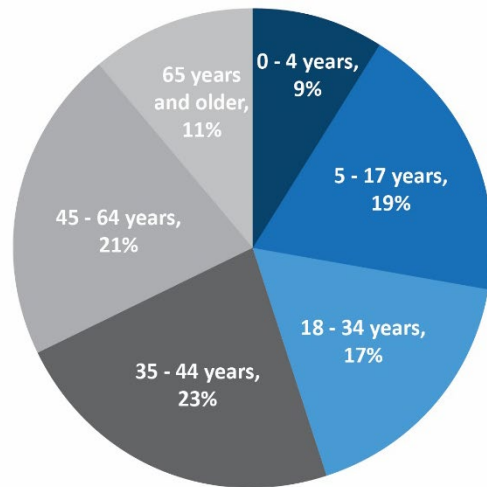
Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

AGE DISTRIBUTION AND HOUSEHOLD TYPE

Age of Residents

Residents of the study area are predominantly working-age adults and children, as reported in the 2021 ACS 5-year estimates. 61% of the population are ages 18 to 64, and children (ages 17 and under) make up another 28% of residents (see Chart 5). Persons ages 65 and over are 10% of the population. The study area's population is also younger than Montgomery County's overall. While the study area's median age is 36.7, the county's median age is nearly three years more at 39.6.

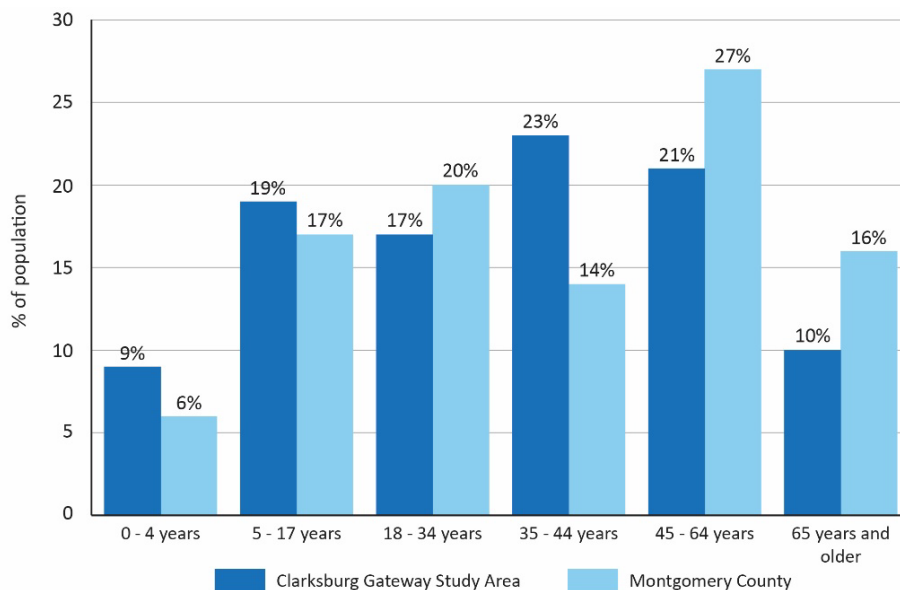
Chart 5. Age Distribution for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area, 2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

A comparison of the age distribution between the study area and the county shows a notably larger share of the study area’s population (23%) that is 35 to 44 years, whereas the county only has 14% of its population in this age range (see Chart 6). The study area has a smaller share of its population in the oldest two age ranges than the county. Only 31% of the study area’s population is age 45 and above, but 43% of the county’s population is in this age range.

Chart 6. Age Distribution for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021



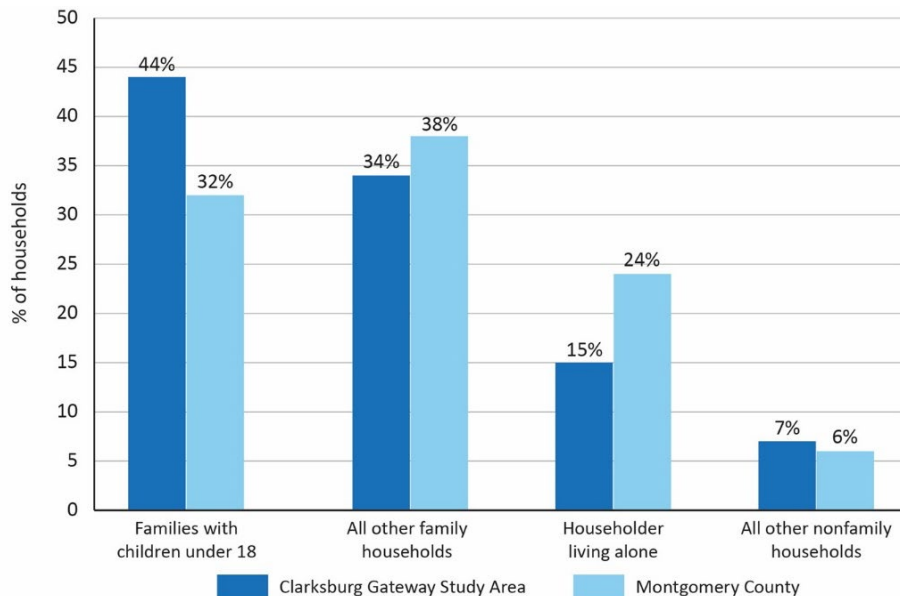
Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Households

Households in the study area are predominantly family households (78%), and 44% of all households are families with children under 18 years of age (see Chart 7). 15% of households have only one

person. In comparison, 70% of Montgomery County households are family households, and for family households with children under 18 years of age, that figure drops to 32%. One-person households consist of 24% of all households in the county.

Chart 7. Household Type for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS

Household Income

According to the 2021 ACS 5-year estimates, the median household income for the study area is \$131,000, which is 12% higher than Montgomery County’s median of \$117,000. However, the mean household income for the study area is nearly \$135,000, below Montgomery County’s mean of \$161,000. (The county average is skewed by very high-income households.) 10% of the population, or nearly 400 people, in the study area live in households with an income below the poverty level, which is not statistically different from the countywide figure of 7%.

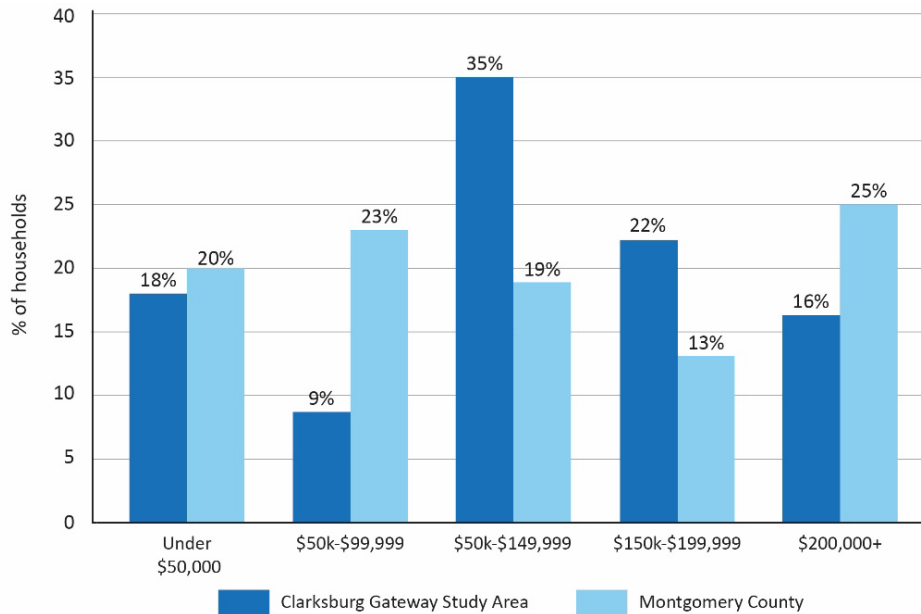
Study Area vs. Montgomery Co.

Median household income:
\$130,905 vs. \$117,345

% of people whose income is below the poverty level:
10% vs. 7%

About 57% of households in the study area have incomes ranging from \$100,000 to \$200,000; only 32% of the county’s households have incomes in this range (see Chart 8). However, the study area has fewer high-end income households earning more than \$200,000 (16%) when compared to the county (25%). 18% of the study area’s households have incomes below \$50,000, a similar percentage to the countywide number (20%).

Chart 8. Household Income Distribution for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

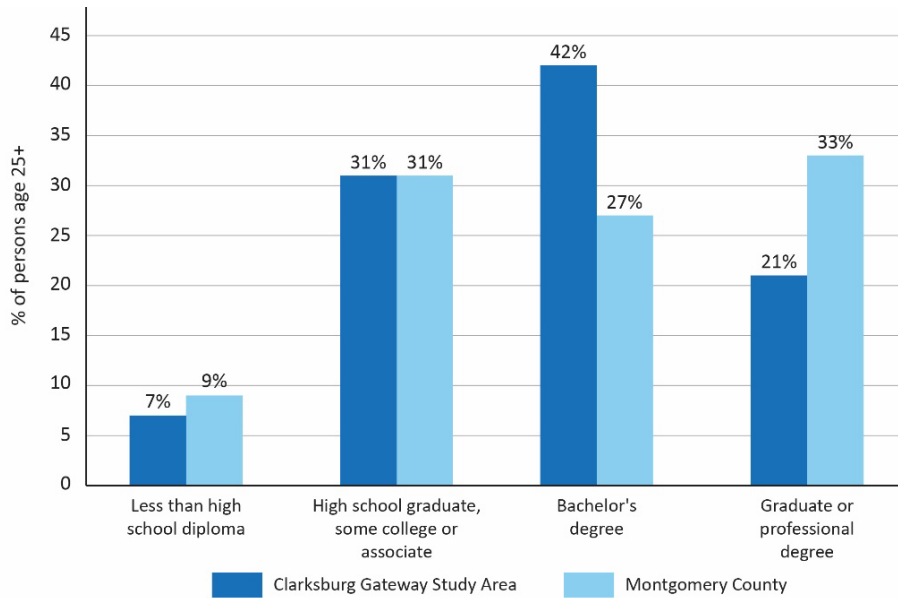
Housing Cost Burden

The study area has a greater percentage of households that experience a significant housing cost burden, defined as spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs, than the county overall. 30% of owner-occupied households in the study area with a mortgage have a housing cost burden, a proportion similar to the countywide percentage (26%). Among renter-occupied households, 37% have a housing cost burden; however, this estimate is less reliable because renters make up a small percentage (18%) of the households in the study area. (Items making up housing costs differ between owner-occupied and renter-occupied households. For owner-occupied households, housing costs include mortgage payments, condominium and other fees, real estate taxes, homeowners’ insurance premiums, and costs for electricity, heating/gas, and water/sewer. Housing costs for renter-occupied households include rent payments and costs for electricity, heating/gas, and water/sewer.)

Educational Attainment

Income is highly correlated with educational attainment and occupation. The study area has a solid concentration of persons ages 25 and over whose highest educational attainment is a bachelor’s degree (42%), a much higher share than Montgomery County has (27%) (see Chart 9). However, the study area has a lower percentage of those with graduate or professional degrees (21%) when compared to the county (33%). The percentage of residents ages 25 and over with only a high school degree, some college education (but no degree), or an associate degree is 31%, approximately the same as the county (31%). Persons who did not graduate from high school make up 7% of the study area’s population ages 25 and over, which is not statistically different from the county’s 9%.

Chart 9. Educational Attainment of Persons Ages 25 and Over for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021

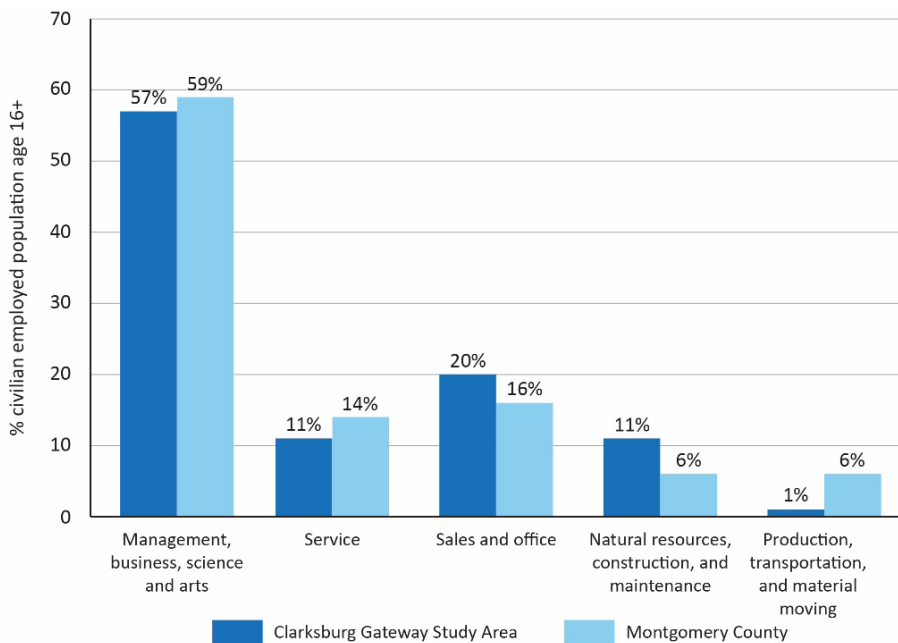


Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Occupations

The occupation distribution of the study area's civilian employed population ages 16 and over is similar to the county's distribution (see Chart 10).

Chart 10. Occupation of Civilian Employed Population Ages 16 and Over for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021



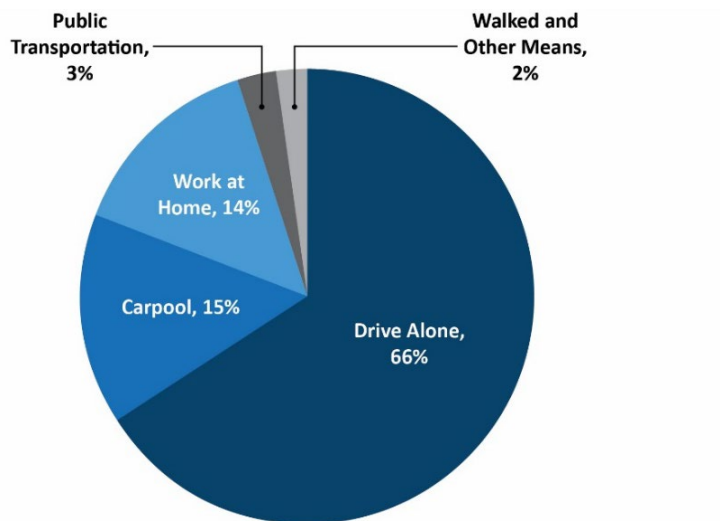
Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Most of the study area’s employed workforce has an occupation in the management, business, science, and arts category (57%), in line with the majority of Montgomery County’s employed residents (59%). Fewer study area residents are employed in sales and office occupations (20%), service occupations (11%), and natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (11%); these figures are do not differ significantly from their respective countywide numbers. The county has a higher share of its employed workforce in production, transportation, and material moving occupations (6%) than the study area has (1%).

Commuting

Among workers ages 16 and over living in the study area, 66% drove alone to work, another 15% carpoled, and 14% work at home (see Chart 11).

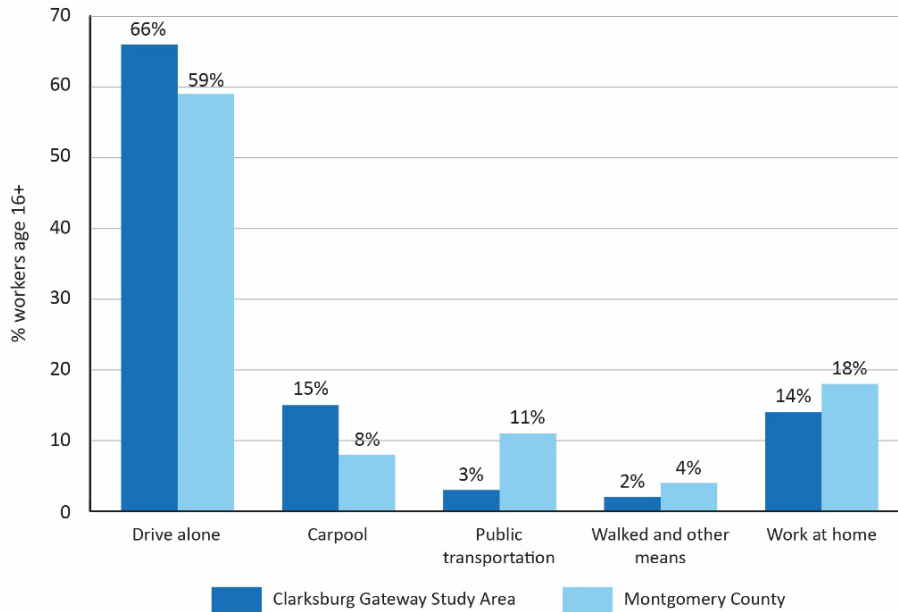
Chart 11. Mode of Transportation for Commuting to Work for Workers Ages 16 and Over for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area, 2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Commuting by public transportation (3%) and by walking and other means (2%) by workers living in the study area is negligible, in contrast to the county, where 15% of workers commute by these transportation modes (11% with public transportation and 4% by walking and other means) (see Chart 12). A greater share of workers drive alone or carpool in the study area compared to the countywide averages.

Chart 12. Mode of Transportation for Commuting to Work for Workers Ages 16 and Over for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021

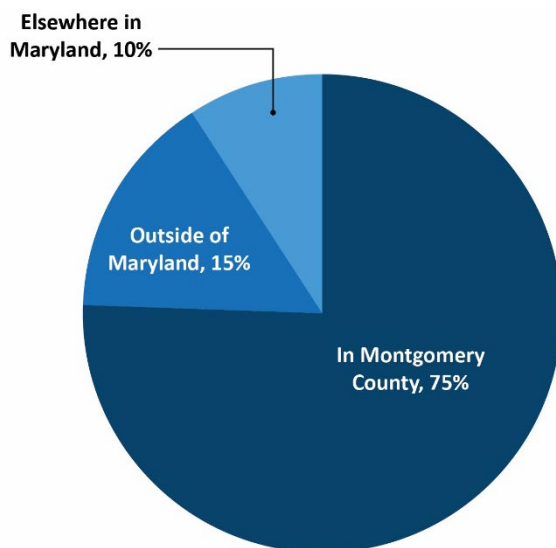


Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Place of Work

More than three-quarters (76%) of workers in the study area have a job within Montgomery County, and 15% commute outside of Maryland (most likely to DC or Virginia) (see Chart 13).

Chart 13. Place of Work for Workers Ages 16 and Over for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area, 2021



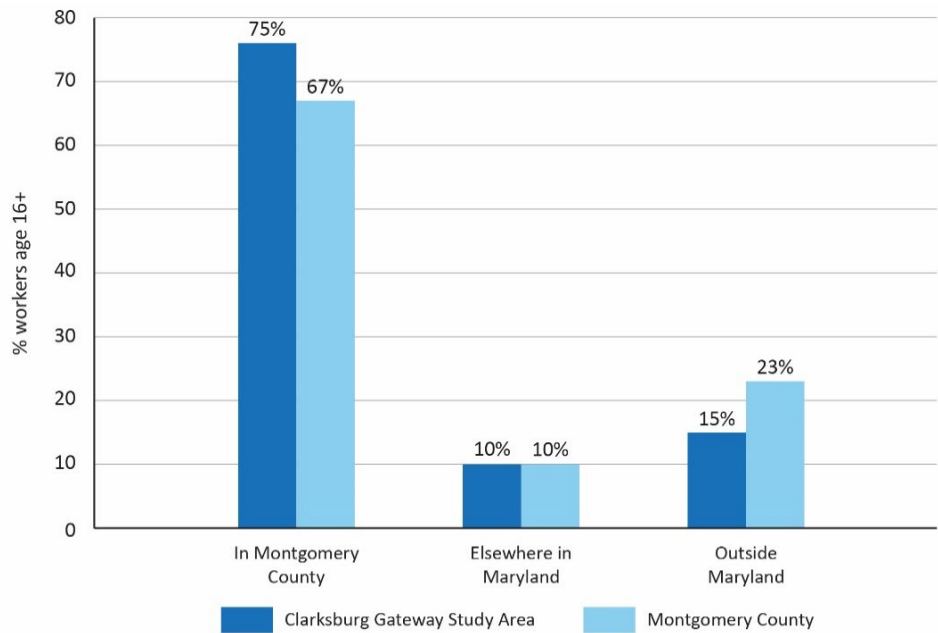
Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Slightly more county workers commute (23%) outside of Maryland and fewer work within Montgomery County (67%) (see Chart 14)—this may be because other parts of the county are closer to DC or Virginia. On average, residents of the study area travel 42 minutes to work, slightly longer than the average for the county (34 minutes).

Average Travel Time to Work for Residents in Study Area:
42 minutes

Average Travel Time to Work for All County Residents:
34 minutes

Chart 14. Place of Work for Workers Ages 16 and Over for Clarksburg Gateway Study Area and Montgomery County, 2021



Source: 2021 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

DEMOGRAPHICS KEY POINTS

- The study area for the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan experienced significantly higher growth in population and housing units over the past two decades than the county as a whole, going from fewer than 300 people in 2000 to almost 4,000 today; the county’s highest growth period occurred before 1990.
- Since 2000, the study area has shifted from majority non-Hispanic White to a far more racially diverse community. The percentage of People of Color (persons other than non-Hispanic White) in the study area is 76% compared to 59% across the county. Asians/Pacific Islanders make up the largest racial or ethnic group in the study area. The number of Black and Hispanic people has also risen dramatically over the last 20 years.
- 44% of the residents of the study area are foreign-born, compared to 32% for the county. 60% of study area residents ages 5 and over speak a language other than English at home. The top foreign languages spoken at home are Spanish, Chinese, and Korean, but 29% speak other Indo-European or Asian/Pacific Islander languages at home.

- South Asians comprise the largest subgroup of Asians/Pacific Islanders in the study area.
- Residents of the study area are predominantly working-age adults and children.
- The median household income for the study area is \$131,000 versus a county median of \$117,000. 57% of households in the study area earn between \$100,000 and \$200,000 per year. The study area has fewer high-end income households earning more than \$200,000 when compared to the county.
- Use of public transportation, walking, and other means of transportation by workers living in the study area is negligible, at 5%, in contrast to the county, which has 15% of workers commuting by these transportation modes.

SECTION 2: THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Overview

Transportation presents many challenges and opportunities related to pedestrian and bicycle safety, bicycle and pedestrian networks, public transit service, and roadway connectivity. The 1994 Plan made several recommendations to improve the north-south flow of traffic between Clarksburg and points south and was forward-thinking in its recommendations for transit that would serve the still semi-rural community through multiple developments while protecting sensitive environmental features.

The 1994 Plan included one of the first plans for the “Corridor Cities Transitway” (CCT), which would have been routed between Frederick, Clarksburg, and the Shady Grove Metrorail station. The CCT was the centerpiece of a grander vision for transit in and around the Clarksburg area, along with a connection to the nearby Boyds MARC Rail Station. Key roads, such as Observation Drive, were integral to the development of the transitway. The COMSAT site was the proposed location of a park-and-ride lot near a future transit stop serving the massive facility and potential additional commercial uses. The 1994 Plan envisioned higher intensity developments around the planned transit stops, utilizing “high quality” transportation service to reduce the demand for single occupancy vehicles. In 1994, only a handful of buses and the MARC train (with its station in Boyds) provided some semblance of public transit for residents of Clarksburg. This trend continues today even as the town has dramatically expanded.

Road Network within the Plan Area

Many significant roads convene or are planned to do so within the Plan boundary (see Figure 3). Several developments have built parts of the road network proposed in the 1994 Plan. Observation Drive has been constructed in multiple short segments within the Plan area, with the most prominent stretch from Stringtown Road south to Roberts Tavern Drive. This segment is designed to a right-of-way width of 150 feet to accommodate two traffic lanes in each direction and a two-lane transitway in the middle. Toward the midpoint of the Plan area, a short segment of Observation Drive exists within the Clarksburg Square development (only the future southbound lanes, which currently operate as a two-way road, have been built). Little Seneca Parkway, referred to as “Newcut Road Extended” in the 1994 Plan, has been built in two sections on either side of I-270, with a 0.7-mile gap between the sections.

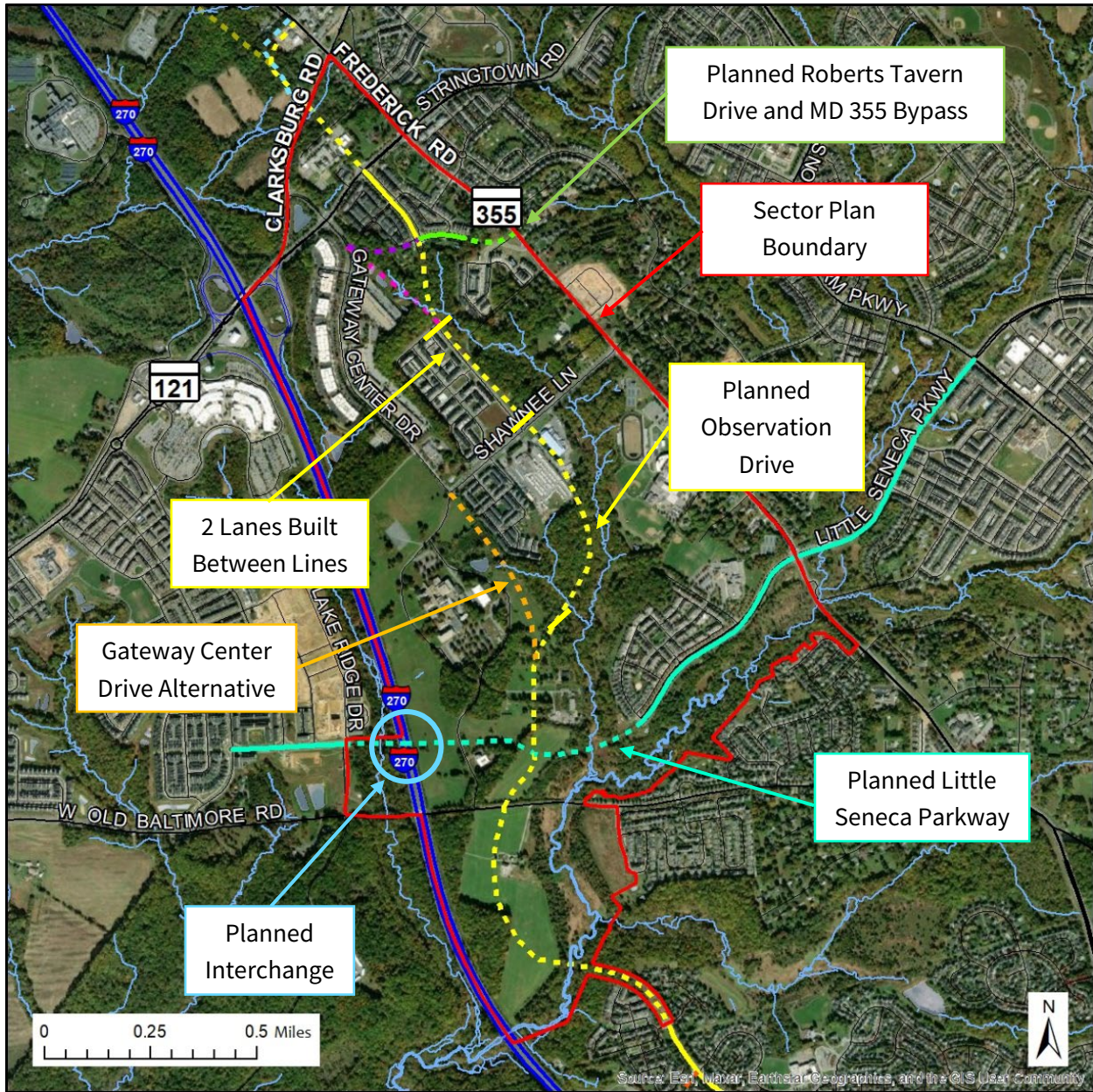


Figure 3. Map showing many of the planned but unbuilt roads within the Plan area

MCDOT is currently studying a Phase 1 extension of Observation Drive that would extend the road from its current northern terminus in Germantown to an extended Little Seneca Parkway. North of Little Seneca Parkway, the 1994 Plan routed Observation Drive through several sensitive environmental areas. Some existing businesses, most significantly Moyer and Sons Moving and Storage, and Clarksburg Elementary School currently operate in the proposed right-of-way. An alternative realignment of the road being considered (pending Phase II of the project) would instead connect to Gateway Center Drive (per the Corridor Forward plan, discussed below) to avoid some of the environmentally sensitive areas.

Other roads of importance in the Plan area include Frederick Road, Roberts Tavern Drive (a planned routing of MD 355 around the Clarksburg Historic District), Gateway Center Drive, Shawnee Lane, Stringtown Road, Clarksburg Road, West Old Baltimore Road, and Redgrave Place. The 1994 Plan also recommended an interchange at an extended Little Seneca Parkway and I-270.

The *Master Plan of Highways & Transitways* and accompanying *Complete Streets Design Guide* provide classifications for area roadways. Some streets carry two or more roadway designations based on changes in land use and the functionality of the street. The road classifications are listed in Table 3. Major streets entering the boundary of the Town Center respond appropriately to the change in area type designation. Similarly, streets within the residential core of the Plan area are classified based on the low-intensity land uses that they serve. In all cases, roadway classifications include specific recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Topographical constraints, including steep slopes and protected stream valleys, present challenges to the street grid network.

Table 3. Existing Street Network Classifications

Existing Street Network Classifications				
Street	From	To	ROW	Existing Lanes
Area Connector				
Clarksburg Road (MD 121)	Gateway Center Drive	End of Road	80 feet	2
West Old Baltimore Road	Frederick Road	I-270	80 feet	2
Boulevard				
Frederick Road	Roberts Tavern Drive	Little Seneca Parkway	120 feet	4
Gateway Center Drive	Clarksburg Road	Shawnee Lane	80 feet w/Transitway	2
Little Seneca Parkway	Frederick Road	Fair Garden Lane	120 feet	4
Observation Drive	Stringtown Road	Roberts Tavern Drive	150 feet w/Transitway	4, 2 transit lanes
Roberts Tavern Drive	End of Road	Observation Drive	120 feet	2
Shawnee Lane	Frederick Road	Gateway Center Drive	120 feet	4
Freeway				
I-270	Clarksburg/Stringtown Road	Little Seneca Creek	350 feet	6
Neighborhood Connector				
Redgrave Place	Frederick Road	End of Road	70 feet	2
Town Center Boulevard				
Stringtown Road	Frederick Road	Gateway Center Drive	120-140 feet	4
Town Center Street				
Clarksburg Road	Frederick Road	Gateway Center Drive	80 feet	2
Frederick Road	Clarksburg Road	Dowdens Station Way	50 feet	2

A transportation consultant has been engaged to perform an analysis of the existing and planned street network in the Plan area to provide support for the evaluation of intersection and roadway

operating performance under selected land use and transportation network alternatives for the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan. Information provided by the consultant will inform Plan recommendations for the proposed interchange at I-270 and Little Seneca Parkway, the routing and expected traffic volumes for Observation Drive, and other roads in the Plan area.

Traffic Congestion

In 2019, MCDOT completed a comprehensive corridor study on MD 355 in anticipation of the MD 355 BRT project. The study found that the entire corridor suffers from AM and PM peak traffic congestion, which will only be exacerbated if the county's land use goals are successful. Given the growth projected to occur along MD 355, traffic conditions tend to worsen in the future based on traffic projections outlined in the study. Existing transit service is hindered by the increase in vehicular traffic on MD 355, which negatively impacts the on-time performance rates of Ride On buses operating in the corridor. Traffic is predicted to worsen 13%-23% by 2040 based on future scenario forecasts, corridor-wide. Quality transit service to and from Clarksburg is affected by increased traffic congestion on MD 355, as the area currently suffers from a lack of transit options.

Transit

➤ *Corridor Cities Transitway and Bus Rapid Transit*

The 2013 *Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan* ("Countywide Transit Corridors Plan") continued previous guidance on implementation of the Corridor Cities Transitway. The Countywide Transit Corridors Plan also proposed additional Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service corridors to complement the CCT. The Plan included BRT service along MD 355 with two diverging corridors serving communities north and south of the Rockville Metrorail Station, which would have served as a hub for the transit service. The MD 355 North corridor would have provided Clarksburg with direct service to Rockville's AMTRAK, MARC, and Metrorail stations (see Figure 4). The MD 355 North corridor included a combination of dedicated lanes between Rockville Station and Shakespeare Boulevard in Germantown, and mixed traffic from Shakespeare Boulevard to a planned terminus at Redgrave Place and Frederick Road in Clarksburg.

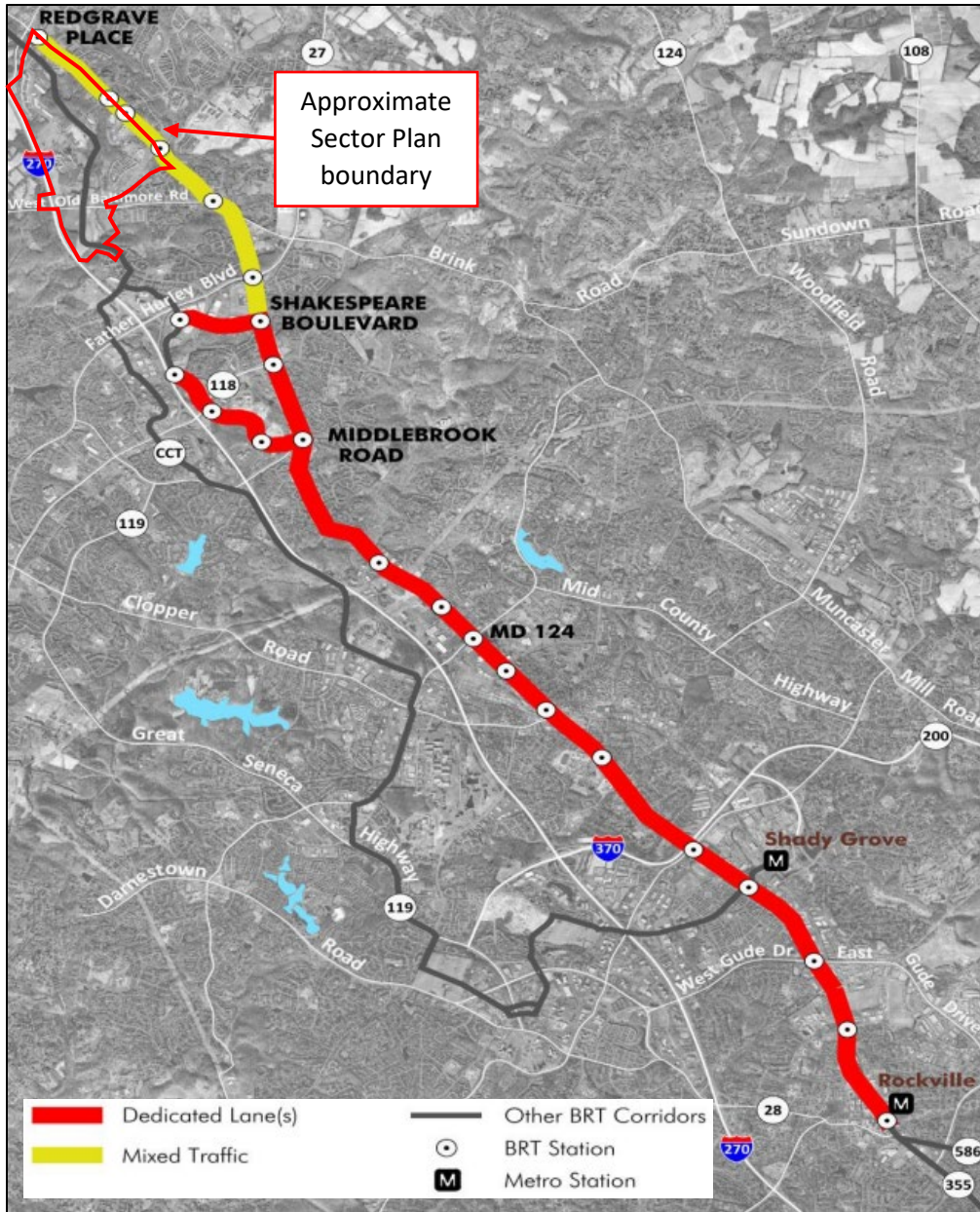


Figure 4. MD 355 North BRT corridor from the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Plan.

As MCDOT began developing specific BRT routes to Clarksburg, they evaluated three alternative alignments, including routes via MD 355, Observation Drive, and Snowden Farm Parkway with options to provide a new termination point at the Clarksburg Premium Outlets.

The 2022 *Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan* (“Corridor Forward”) formally reorganized portions of the CCT. The success of the CCT predominantly rested on future land use targets envisioned by the county. If the county’s stated land use goals were not met, demand for transit service in CCT-impacted communities would not be enough to warrant the implementation of BRT service. The CCT was ultimately transferred from the State of Maryland to Montgomery County in the Maryland Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) FY 2020-2026 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP).

Before the transfer to the county, the CCT had completed an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIS) and had entered the 30% design phase. Corridor Forward replaced the CCT with the “Corridor Connectors” concept, which utilizes some of the previously planned sections of the CCT. The Corridor Connectors, in addition to MD 355 BRT service, would include eight routes connecting the Life Sciences employment area with Germantown, Montgomery Village, and Clarksburg. The Milestone/COMSAT East Clarksburg Connector is envisioned to provide enhanced connectivity for the MD 355 BRT, with potential alignments on Observation Drive or Observation Drive via Gateway Center Drive (see Figure 5). North of Germantown, the MD 355 BRT would be routed on Snowden Farm Parkway, but now would terminate at the Clarksburg Premium Outlets rather than at Redgrave Place. At present, the project is concluding preliminary engineering concurrently with required federal and state environmental processes, with the alignment along Snowden Farm Parkway.

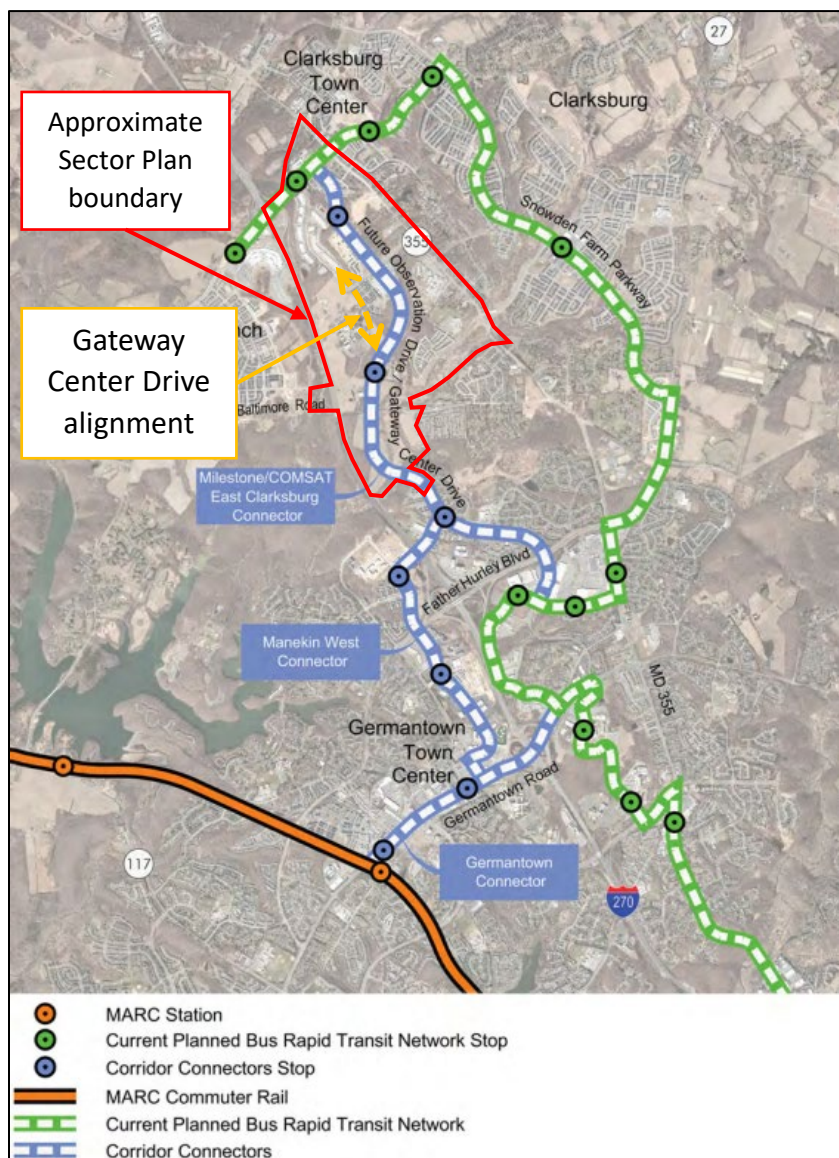


Figure 5. Map from Corridor Forward showing proposed transit routes in Clarksburg

➤ Buses

Three Ride On bus routes, the 73, 75 & 79, serve Clarksburg and offer commuter services to points south (see Figure 6):

- The 73 operates between Clarksburg Road/Gateway Center Drive and Shady Grove Metrorail station during the morning and evening rush hours, with service to the Cabin Branch neighborhood. The 73 does not provide midday or weekend service.
- The 75 operates between the Montgomery County Correctional Facility and the Germantown Transit Center, with intermittent service to Clarksburg High School and the Germantown MARC Rail station. The 75 is the only bus that operates throughout the day and on the weekends, with service approximately every 35 minutes.
- The 79 operates between Gateway Center Drive/Clarksburg Road & Shady Grove Metrorail station during the morning and evening rush hours, with service to Clarksburg Town Center, Clarksburg Village and Aurora Hills. The 79 does not provide midday or weekend service.



Figure 6. Bus routes in Clarksburg

Clarksburg is not served by any Metrobus or Metrorail lines. The closest rail service is Boyds Station on the MARC Brunswick Line, almost five miles to the southwest. In 2018, MCDOT began a feasibility study to implement a park-and-ride facility for the Boyds MARC station. The Boyds Transit Center project will include a bus loop to accommodate future Ride On service and an expanded parking lot. The new Ride On route will serve Clarksburg and provide an essential connection to the MARC station.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks

Much of the Plan area also contains a mixture of sidepaths and sidewalks. The Frederick Road Sidepath project represents the most significant Capital Improvement Project (CIP) within the Plan area. The project will provide a pedestrian and bicycle connection on the west side of MD 355 extending from Germantown near Ridge Road to Stringtown Road. This sidepath has been completed within the Plan area. A pair of additional CIP projects – the MD 355 Clarksburg Shared Use Path and the Clarksburg Road at MD 355 Intersection Improvements project – act as a continuation of the Frederick Road Sidepath along the road’s eastern side. However, access to other locations outside of the Sector Plan boundary is limited due to various environmental features.

Sidewalks exist throughout the Plan area, although some sections may be considered “uncomfortable” or “undesirable” for pedestrians (see Figure 7). Many internal streets are uncontrolled, and crosswalks only exist in some areas. The Town Center and portions of Gateway Center Drive contain pedestrian facilities rated “undesirable” by the *Pedestrian Master Plan*. For Instance, the triangle bounded by Frederick, Clarksburg, and Stringtown roads is rated “undesirable” due to the lack of pedestrian facilities. Redgrave Lane, which contains Clarksburg Elementary School, includes a narrow right-of-way and no sidewalks and is also rated “undesirable.”

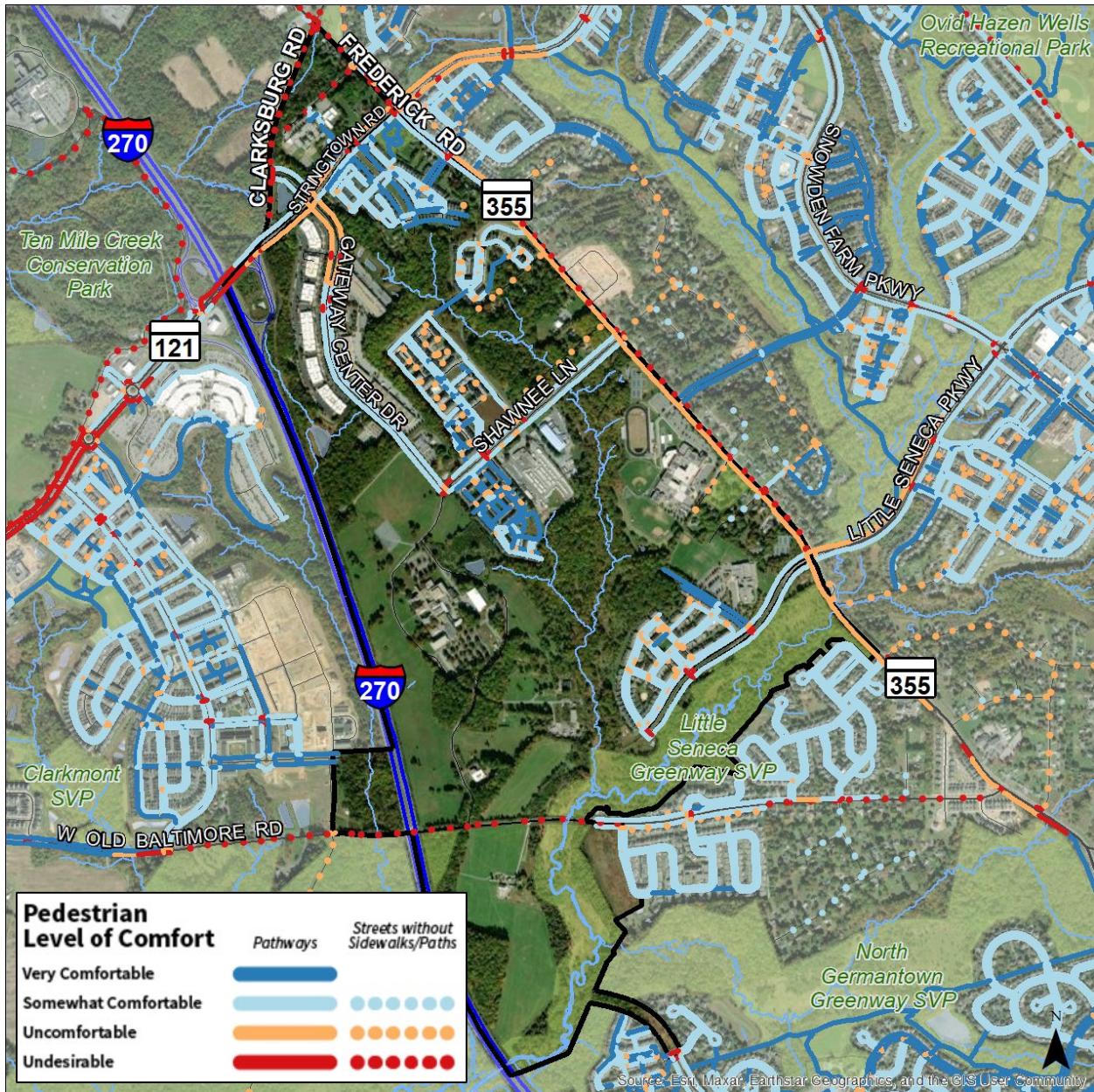


Figure 7. Pedestrian level of comfort in the Sector Plan area

Many of the internal residential streets have a “very comfortable” to “uncomfortable” rating. The residential roads rated “uncomfortable” may be due to the need for crosswalks to serve the many residential developments in the Plan area. A trail and pedestrian bridge exists between the Clarksburg Square and Dowden’s Station developments.

The planned bicycle network is substantial due to numerous shared-use paths, although many of the existing paths remain disconnected (see Figure 8). Within the Bicycle Master Plan, additional sidepaths are planned for Gateway Center Drive and Observation Drive’s planned alignment, portions of West Old Baltimore Road, the Little Seneca Parkway Extension, Clarksburg Road, and Frederick Road north of Stringtown Road. Supplementary bicycle facilities include separated bikeways on

Clarksburg Road and the inclusion of a 10-foot wide shared-use path on Frederick Road between Snowden Farm Parkway and Stringtown Road.



Figure 8. Existing Trails, Sidepaths, and Bikeways in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan area

The four goals of the Bicycle Master Plan are to:

1. Increase bicycling rates in Montgomery County
2. Create a highly connected, convenient, and low-stress bicycling network
3. Provide equal access to low-stress bicycling for all members of the community
4. Improve the safety of bicycling

A low-stress bicycling network is defined as a network that is comfortable and safe for people of all ages and bicycling abilities.

According to the 2021-2022 Bicycle Master Plan Biennial Monitoring Report, very few students ride their bikes to the schools in the Plan area (see Table 4). The table also shows that none of the three schools provide industry-standard adequate bicycle parking spaces and the number of inadequate existing spaces is far lower than industry-based estimates show are needed (1 space per 20 students).

Table 4. Bicycle Rates to School (Fall 2019) and Bicycle Parking Spaces (2022)

School	# of Bike Riders	# of Responses	Bike-to-School Rate	Bicycle Parking Spaces		
				Industry-Established Need	Adequate Existing	Inadequate Existing
Clarksburg ES	2	560	0%	18	0	0
Rocky Hill MS	1	747	0%	50	0	10
Clarksburg HS	7	1,460	0%	102	0	26

Table 5 shows the percentage of dwelling units that are within a certain distance of a school or regional park and are connected to that school or park on a very low-stress bicycling network. As of 2022, this percentage is generally much lower than the planned connectivity for the resource, although for Clarksburg High School that the planned low-stress network has been completed. Yet at 35% connectivity, there are not even plans to serve the majority of dwelling units within two miles of the school with a low-stress route to school. For Little Bennett Regional Park, there are currently no plans for low-stress routes to serve those living within two miles of the park.

Table 5. Percentage of Dwelling Units within a Given Distance of Schools and Parks Connected on a Very Low-Stress Bicycling Network

School or Park	Within Distance	12/2018	12/2020	12/2022	Under Construction 12/2022	Funded & Approved 12/2022	Planned
Clarksburg ES	1 mile	37%	37%	35%	35%	35%	98%
Rocky Hill MS	1.5 miles	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	66%
Clarksburg HS	2 miles	31%	29%	35%	35%	35%	35%
Black Hill RP	2 miles	27%	24%	24%	24%	24%	85%
Little Bennett RP	2 miles	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Transportation Key Points

- Several key transportation network elements have been recommended over the past three decades that have yet to be built. These include portions of Observation Drive, Little Seneca Parkway, the Clarksburg Bypass, and a new interchange on I-270.
- The Clarksburg area currently suffers from a lack of transit options.
- Traffic is predicted to worsen 13-23% by 2040.
- The Plan area contains a mixture of sidepaths, sidewalks, and park trails, but many more will need to be built to create complete pedestrian and bicycle networks.

LAND USE AND ZONING

Existing Land Uses

There are 12 distinct land uses within the Sector Plan area ranging from least intensive uses such as public parkland to more intensive uses such as industrial (see Figure 9).

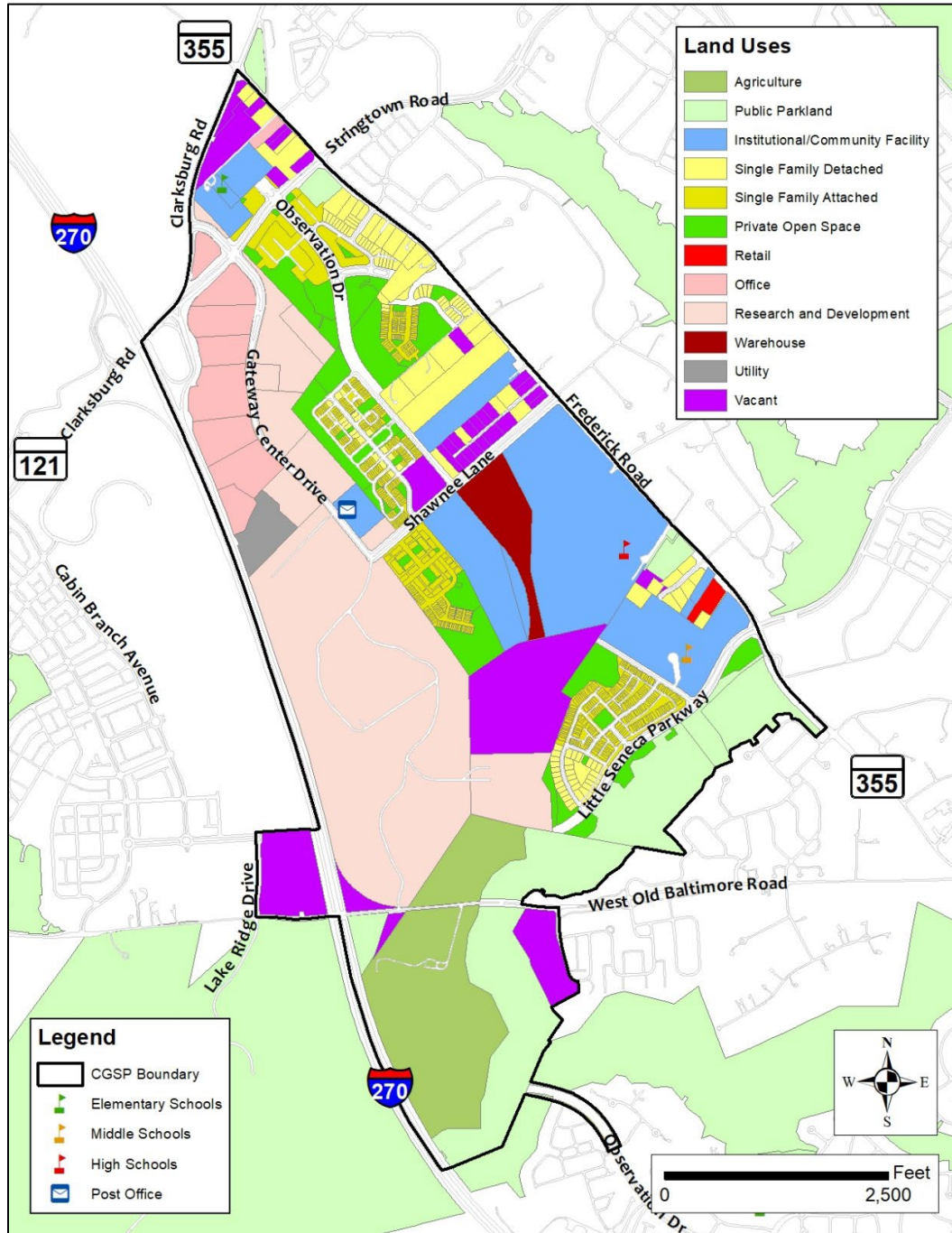


Figure 9: Existing Land Uses in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

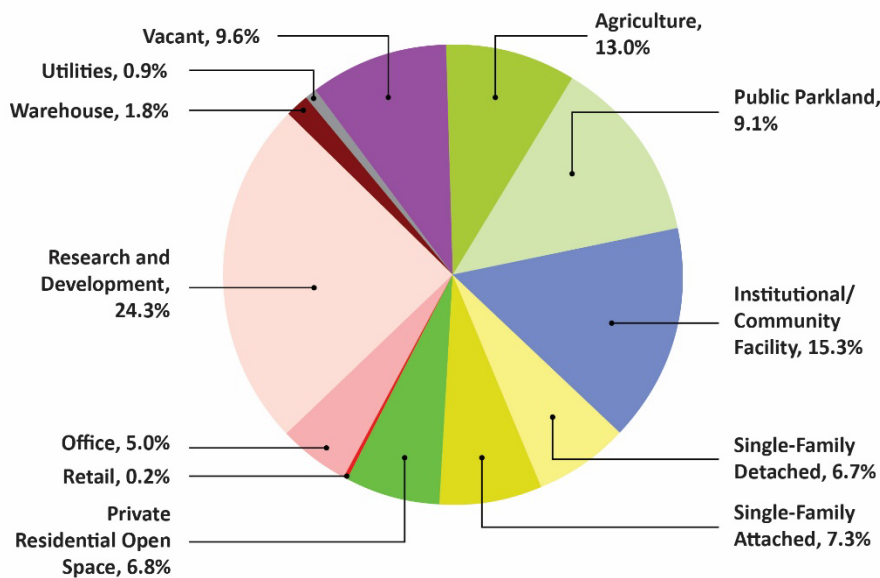
The public parkland (approximately 110.7 acres) is found primarily on the southern edge of the Plan area just south of Little Seneca Parkway and is part of the Little Seneca Greenway Stream Valley Park

(SVP). Agricultural uses (77.5 acres) associated with the Linthicum Farm are found west of the stream valley park straddling West Old Baltimore Road on the east side of I-270.

The eastern edge of the Sector Plan area along Frederick Road consists of single family attached and detached homes with associated private homeowners’ association (HOA) open spaces (177.4 acres), institutional/community facility uses (130.5 acres), and a warehouse use (Moyer and Sons Moving and Storage; 15.4 acres). There are no multi-family uses within the Plan boundary. The large institutional uses are Clarksburg Elementary School located north of Stringtown Road, Clarksburg High School located at the intersection of Shawnee Lane and Frederick Road, and Rocky Hill Middle School located at the intersection Little Seneca Parkway and Frederick Road. Another large institutional use, an MCPS bus depot (17.9 acres), is located on the south side of Shawnee Lane next to Moyer and Sons. A small retail property (2 acres) that contains a veterinary hospital is located along Frederick Road immediately north of Rock Hill Middle School. Vacant land uses (82.3 acres) are scattered around the Plan area. However, only parcels with no land uses whatsoever are flagged as vacant; underutilized parcels with room for additional development, such as the COMSAT property, will be designated under some other land use, such as office or R&D, even if large parts of the property are vacant.

The Gateway 270 office park, along Gateway Center Drive immediately south of Stringtown Road, contains a combination of office, research and development, light industrial, and warehouse spaces, collectively referred to as “flex development space” (250 acres). There is a U.S. Post Office, an institutional use, at the south end of Gateway Center Drive.

Chart 15. Land Use by Percentage in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan Area



Existing Zoning

➤ Standard Zones

The Sector Plan area contains two residential zones (RE-2 and R-200), two planned development zones (PD-4 and PD-11), two commercial residential town zones (CRT), an employment office zone (EOF), and a light industrial zone (IL) (see Figure 10).

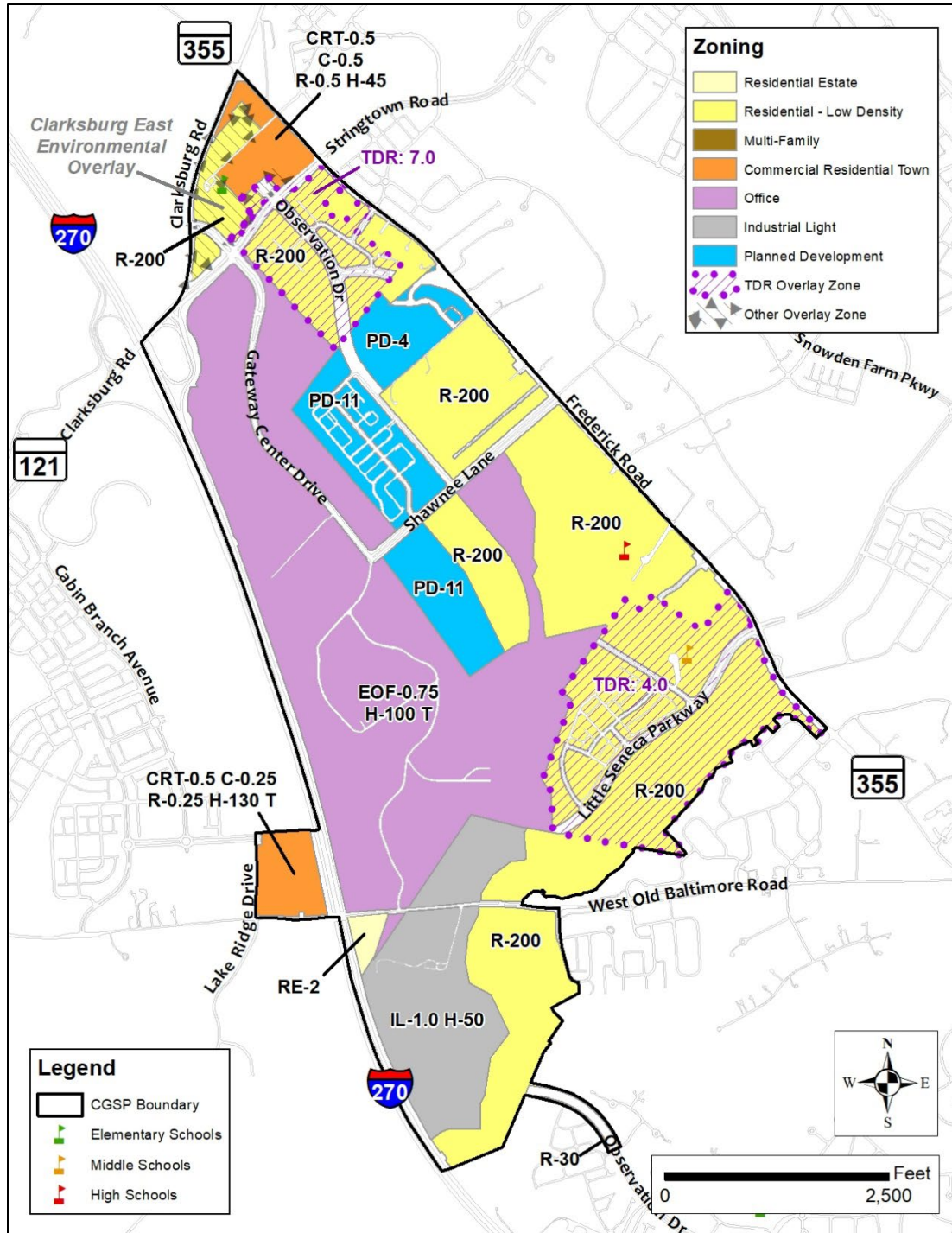
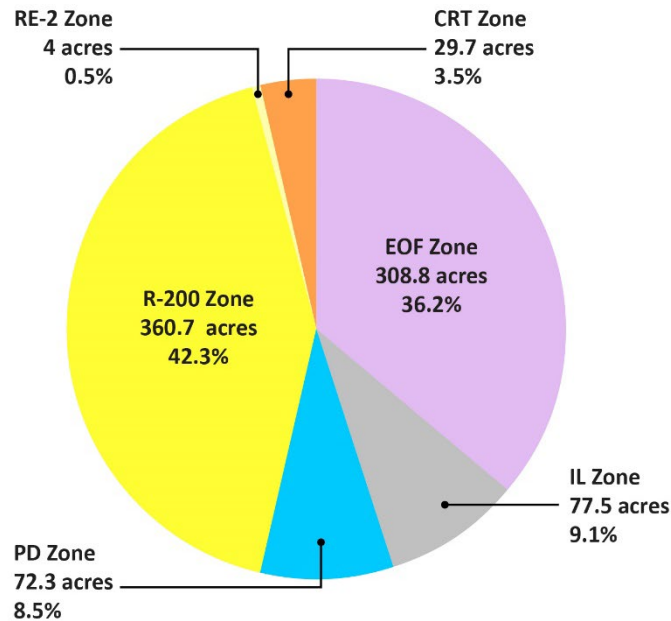


Figure 10: Existing Zoning and Overlay Zones in the Clarksburg Sector Plan

Chart 16. Zoning by Acreage and Percentage in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan Area



Except for a small pocket of RE-2 zoned property, the other residential properties within the Sector Plan boundary are zoned R-200 and are located along the northern, eastern, and southern edges of the Plan area away from the I-270 corridor. These R-200 residential properties within the Sector Plan boundary comprise 46.4 % of the overall zoned acreage. The R-200 zone requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet and typically features predominantly single-family detached housing. However, much of the R-200-zoned property in the Plan area is occupied by institutional uses such as the three schools and the school bus lot or by parkland along the Little Seneca Greenway. The one RE-2 zoned property is approximately four acres or 0.5% of the overall zoned acreage and is located south of West Old Baltimore Road and east of I-270. The RE-2, or residential estate, zone requires a minimum two-acre lot size. In this case, the property is part of Black Hill Regional Park, most of which is west of I-270.

The planned development-zoned properties comprise approximately 72.3 acres or 8.5% of the overall zoned acreage. The PD zone is a discontinued zone from the previous Zoning Ordinance that has been replaced with the new Ordinance’s Floating Zones. The PD-zoned properties in the Plan area have all been developed with residential neighborhoods. The housing in these neighborhoods is a mix of single-family attached and detached housing, with townhouses being the predominant type. There is one property within one of the PD-zoned developments that has been approved for a 184-unit apartment building that has not been built. (As a side note, for PD-zoned land within a master plan’s boundary, the plan is required to replace the PD zone with a zone from the current Zoning Ordinance that reflects the existing land uses of the affected properties.)

Two other properties within the Plan area were recommended for PD zones in the 1994 master plan but have not been further developed (see Figure 11). One of these properties, recommended for up to 11 dwelling units per acre, is the location of the MCPS bus depot and is currently in the R-200 zone. The other property, recommended for up to 9 units per acre, is the Moyer and Sons property and is currently in the EOF zone. These two properties were recommended for a PD zone because of their proximity to the transit stop near Observation Drive and Shawnee Lane recommended in the 1994 Plan.

The commercial/residential (CR) family of zones permits a mix of nonresidential and residential uses at varying densities and heights. The purpose of the CR zones (CR, CRT, and CRN) is to promote economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable development patterns where people can live, work, recreate, and have access to service and amenities.

Allowed density within the commercial/residential zones (and in the EOF and IL zones described below) is described in terms of Floor Area Ratio, or FAR. For example, if a property is 10,000 square feet in size, and there is a mapped density of 0.5 FAR, this means a 5,000-square foot building ($0.5 \times 10,000$) could be built on the property. The total allowable FAR is specified as part of the primary zoning designation and is followed by a breakdown of the commercial and residential densities. The CR zones also include a maximum height component, following the letter “H” in the mapped zone. An example from the Plan area is the zone CRT-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.5 H-45. A building in this zone may be all commercial or all residential, or it may be a mix of the two uses so long as that mix does not exceed 0.5 FAR, and the building height is capped at 45 feet. If the property has a “T” next to the maximum height, this means that height on a property may be increased if certain provisions are met. Some provisions include if additional moderately priced dwelling units (MPDU) are provided in a proposed development.

There are two CRT zones within the Sector Plan area. One CRT zone is located north of Stringtown Road near the Clarksburg Town Center within the Clarksburg Historic District and is zoned CRT-0.5 C-0.5 R-0.5 H-45. The other CRT zone is located west of I-270 in the Cabin Branch area and is zoned CRT-0.5 C-0.25 R-0.25 H-130 T. The two CRT zones comprise 30.4 acres or approximately 3.6% of the overall zoned acreage. However, the CRT-zoned property in Cabin Branch is in an area that is currently recommended for a potential interchange and contains numerous environmental constraints; development there is not currently envisioned.

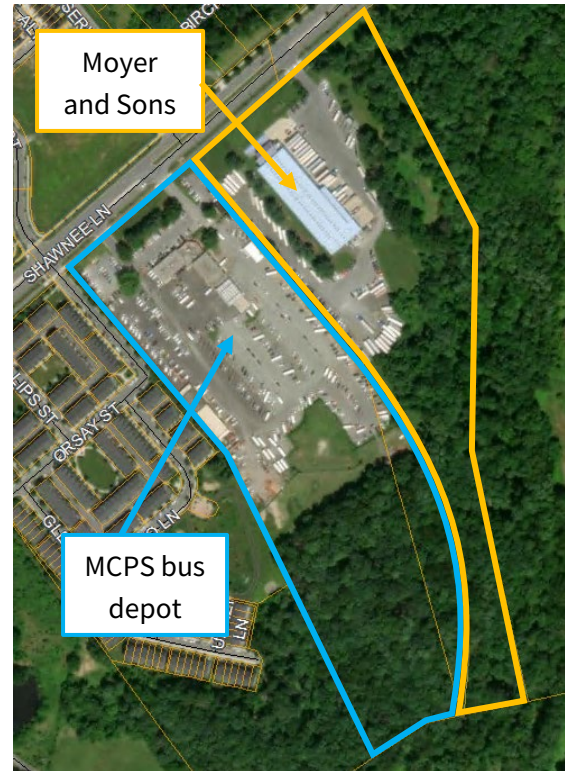


Figure 11. MCPS School Bus Depot and Moyer and Sons properties

The EOF-zoned properties within the Sector Plan area are located immediately east of I-270 and comprise 308.6 acres or 36.1% of the overall zoned acreage. These properties make up the Gateway 270 office park, the former COMSAT properties, and Moyer and Sons Moving and Storage. The EOF properties are zoned EOF-0.75 H-100 T. The EOF zone is intended for office and employment activity, with flexibility in building, circulation, and parking lot layout and only limited residential and neighborhood commercial uses.

The IL or light industrial-zoned properties in the Sector Plan area are located immediately north and south of West Old Baltimore Road and comprise 77.5 acres or 9.1% of the overall zoned acreage. This is a single property referred to as “Linthicum Farm” or “Linthicum East” in various planning documents. The mapped zoning designation is IL-1.0 H-50. The IL zone is intended to provide land for industrial activities where major transportation links are not typically necessary and noise, dust, vibration, glare, odors, and other adverse environmental impacts are usually minimal. The IL zone is typically used as a transitional Industrial zone between a residentially zoned area and land classified in the IM and IH zones, although here the area is not adjacent to either of these denser industrial zones.

➤ *Overlay Zones*

In addition to the base zoning within the Sector Plan area, there are two overlay zones (see striped areas in Figure 10): the Clarksburg East Environmental (CEE) Overlay Zone and the Transfer Development Rights (TDR) Overlay Zone. The purpose of CEE Overlay Zone is as follows:

1. protect the water quantity, water quality, habitat, and biological diversity of the Ten Mile Creek watershed and its tributaries;
2. regulate the amount and location of impervious surfaces to maintain levels of groundwater, control erosion and water temperature, and retain as many of the functions provided by natural land as possible;
3. regulate development that could adversely affect this high-quality stream system; and
4. implement the recommendations of the 2014 Ten Mile Creek Area Limited Amendment to the Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area.

The TDR Overlay Zone optional method of development permits an increase in the maximum residential density in “TDR receiving areas” if the development satisfies the requirements for optional method development using Transferable Development Rights under Section 4.9.18.B of the Zoning Ordinance. Within the Sector Plan area, there are two locations of R-200 that have a TDR Overlay Zone applied to the properties. One location is the Meadows at Hurley Ridge development in the southern portion of the Sector Plan area, with a mapped TDR of 4.0. This means that the properties within the overlay zone were eligible to be developed at four units per acre rather than the two units per acre in the underlying R-200 zone. A higher density TDR Overlay-zoned area, with a TDR of 7.0, is in the northern portion of the Sector Plan area where the Gateway Commons subdivision has been developed. To achieve the added density, properties in the TDR Overlay must provide a certain amount of MPDUs. Both TDR receiving areas have been fully developed since being designated as such in the 1994 Plan.

Land Use and Zoning Key Points

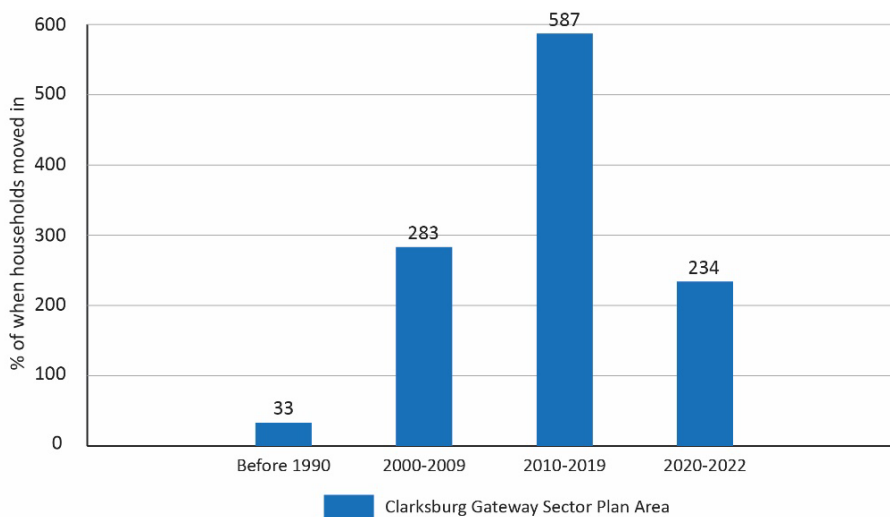
- The largest land use in the area is the combined “flex” space comprised of R&D and Office uses, which account for over 29% of the Plan area. A large amount of this space, however, is undeveloped portions of the former COMSAT properties.
- Institutional/Community Facilities make up the next largest land use category, at 15.3% of the Plan area. This is primarily due to land used by Clarksburg High School, Rocky Hill Middle School, Clarksburg Elementary School, and the MCPS bus depot.
- The R-200 zone is the single largest zone in the Plan area, but most of this land is occupied by public parkland and the three schools in the Plan area.
- Most of the non-institutional-use R-200 land has been developed with housing. Almost all of it was developed using bonus density allowed by the TDR overlay zones.
- The second largest zone in the Plan area is the EOF zone, which is occupied by the Gateway 270 office park, the former COMSAT property, and Moyer and Sons Moving and Storage.
- Some properties with existing land uses, such as the COMSAT property, show existing land uses but have large amounts of undeveloped land.
- Three of the five residential subdivisions in the Plan area were developed under Planned Development zones.

HOUSING

Units Built by Decade

The Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan has a little over 1,100 housing units in the Plan area. 97% of the units built in the Plan area were built after 2000 (see Chart 17). This compares to just 20% built in this time period for the county overall.

Chart 17. Housing Units Built by Decade

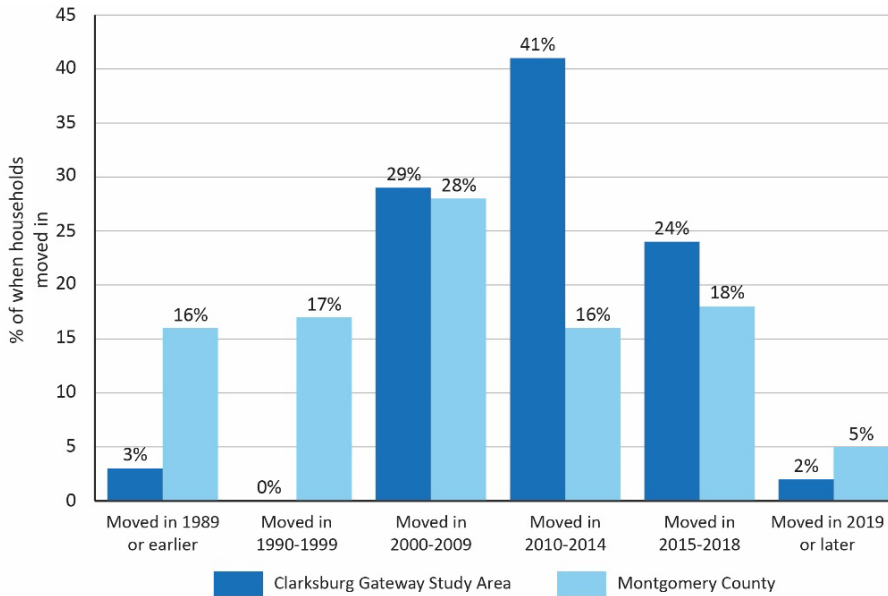


Year Householders Moved into Units (Owner Occupied)

As detailed in the Demographics section above, the Plan area has experienced significant population growth in the past 20 years. Most householders in the Study Area (97%) moved into their home after

2000, compared to 77% of county households (see Chart 18). Less than 3% of households lived in their unit before 1999, compared to 33% in county households.

Chart 18. Year Households Moved into Unit (Owner-Occupied)



Housing Types

Most of the units within the Plan area are townhomes (see Table 6); compared to the county, townhomes comprise a much larger share of the housing unit types in the Plan area (74%) than in the overall county (18%). There are no multi-family rental units in the Plan area. In the larger Clarksburg Area, there is a larger share of single-family detached development than in the county, although within the Plan area the percentage is less than half the county average.

Table 6. Number of Units in a Structure

Units in a Structure	Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan	Clarksburg Area	Montgomery County
1 Unit Detached	22.1%	58.6%	47.1%
1 Unit Attached	74.2%	31.1%	18.1%
2-19 Units	3.7%	8.5%	15.5%
20 or More Units	0%	1.7%	19.1%



Housing Developments in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

Most of the housing units are in five developments, which include 167 homeownership MPDUs (15% of the total housing units) (see Table 7). MPDUs are Moderately Priced Dwelling Units, the county’s mandatory inclusionary zoning program, which requires a set aside of 12.5% to 15% of units to be affordable to households earning 65-70% of Area Median Income, or about \$100,000 for a family of four.

Table 7. Housing Development in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan Area

Development Name	Dwelling Units	MPDUs	Year Built
Clarksburg Square (Garnkirk Farm)	208	24	2016-2021
Dowden’s Station	105	27	2020-2022
Gateway Commons	284	43	2009-2012
Gallery Park (Eastside)	256	32	2012-2015
The Meadows at Hurley Ridge (Martens Property)	250	41	2005-2010
Totals	1,103	167	

Source: 2023 State Department of Assessment and Taxation, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA)

For-Sale Market

Based on for-sale data, the units sold in the Plan area are relatively newer and larger and reflect county average prices (see Table 8). The median sale price for single family homes in Clarksburg is \$756,000, compared to \$800,000 countywide. Townhomes are more expensive in Clarksburg than countywide, with a median sale price of \$545,000 versus the county median of \$470,000.

Table 8. Median Sales Prices in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan Area

Units Sold August 2022 – August 2023	Total Sold	Median Sales Price	Average Unit Size	Average Year Built
Single-Family Detached	13	\$756,000	3,432	1997
Townhomes	46	\$545,000	2,290	2014
Condos	5	\$223,602	1,749	2012
All Units	64	\$555,750	2,477	2011

Housing Key Points

- 97% of the housing units in the Plan area were built after 2000 compared to just 20% for the county overall during this time period.
- 74% of the housing units in the Plan area are single-family attached units (townhouses) versus only 18% countywide.
- There are no multi-family rental units in the Plan area.
- 15% of the housing units in the Plan area are MPDUs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Employment

As of 2021, the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan area currently has about 50 businesses and 1,350 jobs, which amounts to about 20 more businesses but 60 fewer jobs than it had in 2010. This pattern of business growth coupled with employment decline is counterintuitive, especially since the area maintained its largest employers throughout this time period and even gained a new large business, Robotic Research, since 2010. The reason for the counterintuitive dynamic has to do with the Plan area’s mid-sized businesses (those with between 10 and 100 employees), most of which have closed or left the area. Specifically, the Plan area lost 12 mid-sized businesses totaling over 450 employees between 2010 and 2021. Meanwhile, it added only ten new mid-sized businesses which tended to be smaller than those that left, employing a total of about 180 new people. Most other new business that formed in the area between 2010 and 2021 were very small businesses with three or fewer employees.

While there are several dining, grocery, and other local-serving retail establishments to the north of the Plan area and the Clarksburg Premium Outlets across I-270 to the west, the Plan area itself has essentially no retail establishments except for a small café serving in the Gateway 270 office park and a veterinary hospital/boarding facility along Frederick Road.

Most of the employment in the center is concentrated in the Gateway 270 office park. For a small area, the park contains a lot of innovative potential. Its two largest occupants, Thales Defense and Security and Robotic Research (now RRAI), conduct research and development in communications and autonomous vehicle technology, respectively. While all businesses are important to a local economy, these businesses are the type of innovative, high value-added and high growth potential businesses that can provide a strong foundation for a local economy.

Additionally, the Brightfocus Foundation’s role in funding research to fight aging-related conditions—specifically Alzheimer’s disease, macular degeneration, and glaucoma—aligns with Montgomery County’s highly competitive life science industry.

With the Dominique Dawes Gymnastics & Ninja Academy also nearby, there is room to build on these clusters and also add retail to serve employees and visitors.

Table 9. Largest Private Employers in the Plan Area

Business Name	Employee Size Range
Thales Defense and Security	300-400
RRAI (Robotic Research)	200-300
Moyer and Sons	75-100
Brightfocus Foundation	50-75

Nonresidential Real Estate

There is approximately 1.5 million square feet of nonresidential development within the Plan area. The majority of this (1.1 million square feet) is comprised of “flex” development, as defined by CoStar, a private commercial property data vendor. CoStar also identifies two small churches and Clarksburg High School, a warehousing business, and one retail/personal services building. In general, the Plan area is dominated by one nonresidential use: the flex/light industrial properties along Gateway Center Drive that are also the primary employment generating uses.

A flex building is a versatile space which can combine office, R&D, light industrial and warehousing uses. Flex buildings tend to have ceiling heights under 18 feet. In the Plan area, tenants include a mix of R&D, medical office, medical labs, flex-retail (gyms, church), light manufacturing, and warehousing. The 1.1 million-square-foot flex inventory also includes the combined 574,000 square feet of space on the former COMSAT property, now owned by Lantian Development.

Other than COMSAT, there are two owners of the flex properties (see Figure 12). The properties on the west side of Gateway Center Drive are owned by Elion Partners, accounting for 275,000 square feet and numerous small tenants, light manufacturing, healthcare, and gyms. The buildings on the east side of Gateway Center Drive are owned by Gateway 270. The portfolio includes two R&D tenants: Thales and RRAI (Robotic Research). The Gateway 270 Portfolio is currently for sale and is pitched to investors as a large, fully leased, R&D/Warehouse Portfolio adjacent to I-270 and in a supply-constrained industrial market.

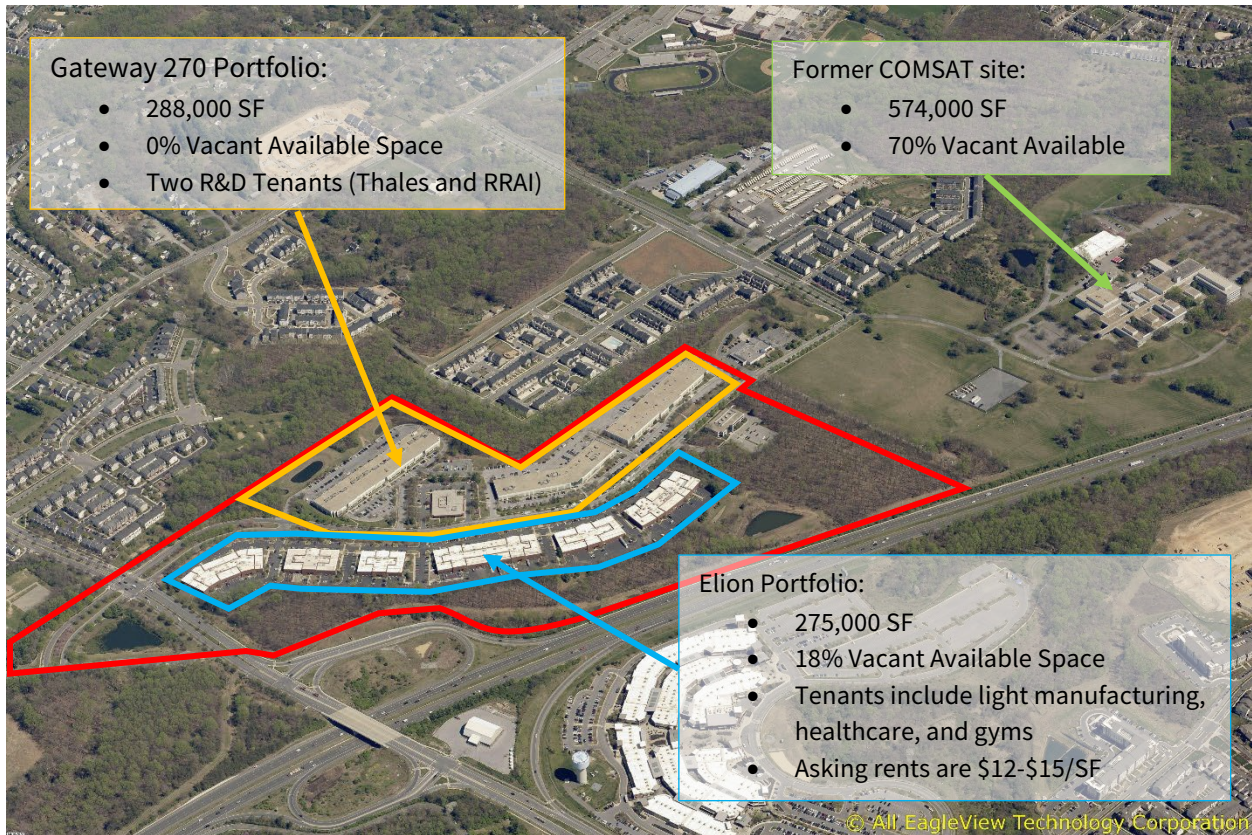


Figure 12. The Gateway 270 office park and former COMSAT site

The vision of office development in the Plan Area has not materialized. The employment generation that was anticipated is limited to the flex properties and did not anticipate the closing of the COMSAT facilities. While the rate of vacant available space in the Gateway 270 Portfolio is 0%, for the Elion Portfolio the rate is 18% (48,760 square feet). 404,000 square feet, or 70%, of the 574,000 square feet on the COMSAT site are vacant. The overall vacancy rate in these “employment area” properties is 40%. A detailed market study will examine the factors that have stunted job growth in the area.

The Plan Area itself does not include significant retail development, although there is one small neighborhood-serving retail center adjacent to the Plan area (Clarksburg Highlands Shopping Center) that includes restaurants, shops, and personal services. In addition, there is a grocery-anchored 106,000-square foot shopping center south of the Plan area (Clarksburg Village Center). The sustained housing development in Clarksburg suggests there may be more opportunity for retail spending capture of the new households that have moved into the area. The spending potential of these households will be examined closely in a market study for the Plan area.

Planning Staff in the Research and Strategic Projects Division are preparing a comprehensive market study to support the Sector Plan. It will serve as a technical study to assist with developing land use recommendations for the Plan based on trends in demand metrics and supply. The Market Study will be a comparative analysis of real estate market conditions for office, retail, flex/industrial, and hotels/lodging. The study will benchmark metrics for these uses in Clarksburg to other submarkets in Montgomery County as well as peer jurisdictions from around the region, including Urbana and

Frederick. The methodology for the study includes a mix of demographic and real estate data analysis as well as stakeholder interviews and some financial analysis of real estate development scenarios. Some high-level questions the study will ask are:

- How is demand for housing and retail in Clarksburg different than in nearby areas?
- What development opportunities exist based on the types of residents and households Clarksburg and surrounding areas have attracted over the past 20 years?

Economic Development Key Points

- There are currently about 50 businesses and 1,350 jobs in the Plan area.
- There are about 20 more businesses but 60 fewer jobs than in 2010 as mid-sized businesses have closed or left the area while smaller businesses have taken their place.
- Retail establishments in the Plan area are limited to a café in the Gateway 270 office park and a veterinary hospital.
- The largest employers in the Plan area are in the Gateway 270 office park and include Thales Defense and Security, RRAI (formerly Robotic Research), and Brightfocus Foundation, and Moyer and Sons Moving and Storage nearby on Shawnee Lane.
- Most of the non-residential real estate is described as “flex” development space, which can be used for offices, research and development, warehousing, and retail businesses. While nearly all of the Gateway 270 space is currently occupied, about 70% of the former COMSAT site’s 574,000 square feet of space is vacant.

SCHOOLS

School Clusters

The 1994 Plan estimated that a total of 11 public schools may be needed to serve the projected public school age population of that plan’s study area, and recommended sites for one new high school, two new middle schools, and six new elementary schools. It was assumed that the boundaries of a Clarksburg Cluster would roughly correspond to the 1994 Plan’s study area boundary, but that a more definitive cluster boundary and the number of schools constructed would depend on actual student yields and the capacities of adjacent clusters.

With the opening of Clarksburg High School in the 2006-2007 school year, the Clarksburg Cluster was formed. Additionally, some of the 1994 Plan area is now part of the Seneca Valley Cluster, and is served by Seneca Valley High School, Neelsville Middle School, and Cabin Branch Elementary School (see Figure 13).

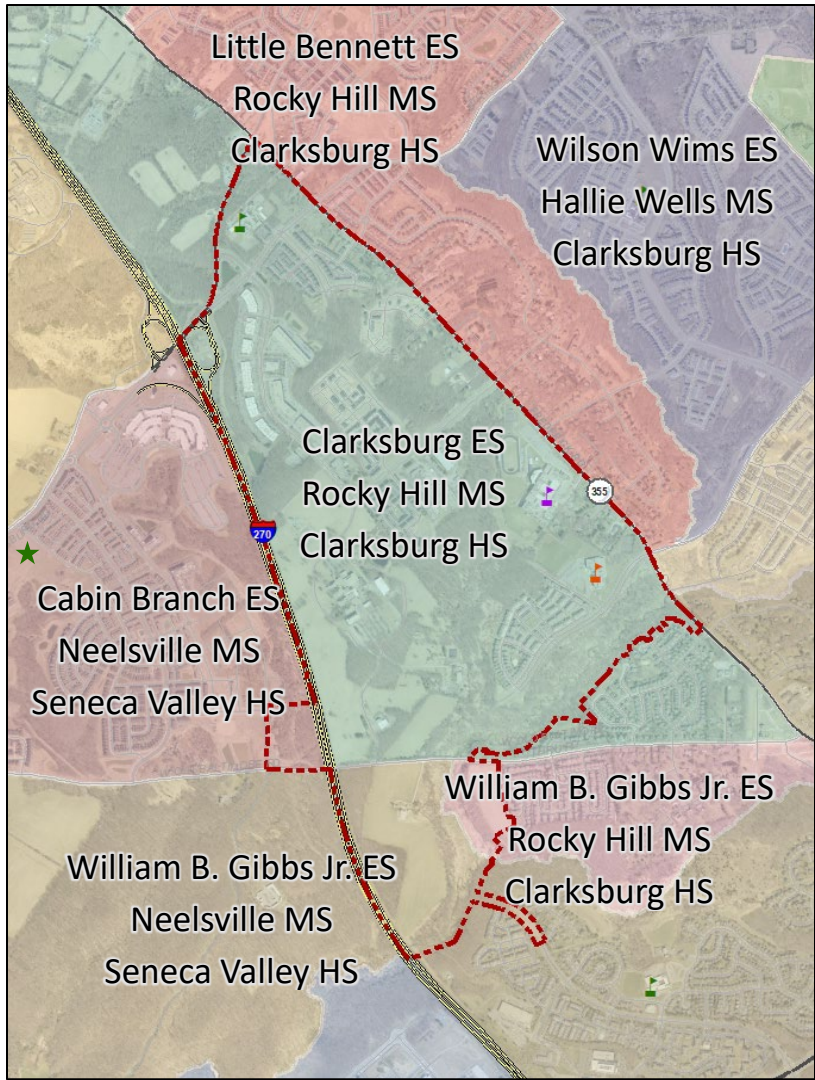


Figure 13. School cohort groups in and around the plan area

While there have been some changes in feeder schools and their boundaries for the Clarksburg Cluster over the years, the cluster now consists of:

- Clarksburg High School
 - Rocky Hill Middle School (opened in 2004)
 - Clarksburg Elementary School
 - Capt. James Daly Elementary School
 - Fox Chapel Elementary School
 - William B. Gibbs Jr. ES (opened in 2009)
 - Little Bennett Elementary School (opened in 2006)
 - Hallie Wells Middle School (opened in 2016)
 - Cedar Grove Elementary School
 - Snowden Farm Elementary School (opened in 2019)
 - Wilson Wims Elementary School (opened in 2014)

Enrollment

The collective enrollment of elementary school students in the Clarksburg Cluster and schools serving the Plan area has more than tripled over the past couple of decades, peaking around 2019. With the opening of Cabin Branch Elementary School in 2023, there are expected to be over 600 surplus seats available for additional growth beyond what is currently projected.

At the middle school level, the enrollment increased by more than 1,200 students, and is expected to increase for another few years before peaking. The middle schools are expected to experience a slight capacity shortage at the peak of its enrollment, but not enough to warrant a capital relief.

At the high school level, the enrollment increased by more than 2,200 students between the 2005 and 2022 school years, and it is projected to continue increasing for the next five school years. Damascus High School is expecting a major capital project with an increase in capacity of approximately 700 seats to accommodate students from Clarksburg HS; work is projected to be completed in 2026.

Current Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) data is showing little to no room for additional growth by 2028 in the Clarksburg Cluster and the 1994 Plan area's middle schools and high schools. However, based on the elementary school students' collective enrollment trend, which peaked in 2019 and often serves as a precursor to the upper grade level student trends, the middle school and high school enrollment is likely at its tail end of a growth spurt. Middle school projections are already showing that enrollment will peak within the next five years. Similarly, high school enrollment can be expected to peak a few more years down the road. Capacity, enrollment, and utilization trends and projections for elementary, middle, and high schools in the area is available as an appendix to this report.

A student generation rate analysis of the Clarksburg School Impact Area, considering the cyclical nature of student generation rates of single-family dwellings based on when they were last sold, also highlights the possibility that current enrollment in the Clarksburg area is at a higher point than it would generally be throughout the life of the community given the abundance of new subdivisions. As the number of home sales in the area gradually decrease and the existing enrollment progresses through each grade level, the overall enrollment of the area will likely drop to a level similar to the county's Turnover Impact Areas, which are characterized by low housing growth and enrollment growth largely due to turnover of existing single-family units.

Schools Key Points

- Most of the students living in Clarksburg, including all of those in the Plan area, are in the Clarksburg High School cluster, although some areas of Clarksburg is part of the Seneca Valley Cluster.
- Enrollment at the elementary, middle, and high school levels has experienced dramatic growth over the last couple of decades. Elementary school enrollment peaked around 2019, while it is projected to increase for a few more years at the middle and high school levels while children age through the system. A major capital project at Damascus High School will provide relief to projected overcrowding at Clarksburg High School.

- Growth of the school-age population in Clarksburg is primarily due to the abundance of new subdivisions in Clarksburg. The growth in new housing in the Clarksburg area is not expected to continue at the same rate it has experienced for the past two decades.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

There are numerous historic resources located within the boundary of the *Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan*. These resources have architectural and historical significance, but more importantly, provide material and tangible benefits to the community. Resources include a historic district and an individual historic site designated in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, a site listed in the *Locational Atlas & Inventory of Historic Properties*, and a family cemetery enumerated on the *Burial Sites Inventory*. In addition, there are several new historic resources that will be considered for designation as part of this planning process.

Resources Listed in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation

The County Council adopted the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* in 1979. The plan includes all officially designated historic sites and districts. These sites or districts have met at least one criterion for historical, cultural, or architectural significance, and merit protection under the Historic Resources Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24A. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is charged with the identification, designation, and regulation of historic sites or districts in Montgomery County. To ensure the rehabilitation of historic properties, the County Council adopted legislation to create a historic preservation tax credit program for properties listed in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. Owners of properties are eligible to receive a 25 percent tax credit for qualified expenses related to maintenance, restoration, or preservation of exterior features.

➤ *Clarksburg School Master Plan Historic Site, 13530 Redgrave Place*

In 1979, as part of the establishment of the Master Plan and Ordinance for Historic Preservation, the County Council designated the school as a historic site (see Figure 14). The building, constructed for white students in 1909, is one of the county's last and most elaborate remaining examples of a two-room schoolhouse. The cruciform-shaped building has a Colonial Revival-influenced design with pedimented and pilastered doorframe, oversize cornice returns, and gable overhang. The Clarksburg School remained in continuous use until 1972. At that time, Montgomery County Public Schools moved the building 300 feet to its current location to accommodate the construction of Clarksburg Elementary School.

➤ *Clarksburg Master Plan Historic District*

The County Council designated the Clarksburg Master Plan Historic District in 1990 (see Figure 14). The district represents a concentrated residential and commercial community lining Frederick Road as it moves north toward Hyattstown. Linear in plan, the town is characterized by its uniform building setback, closely sited dwellings, picturesque architectural detailing, and supporting cross streets. The historic district boasts an important collection of early 19th century residential and commercial architecture.

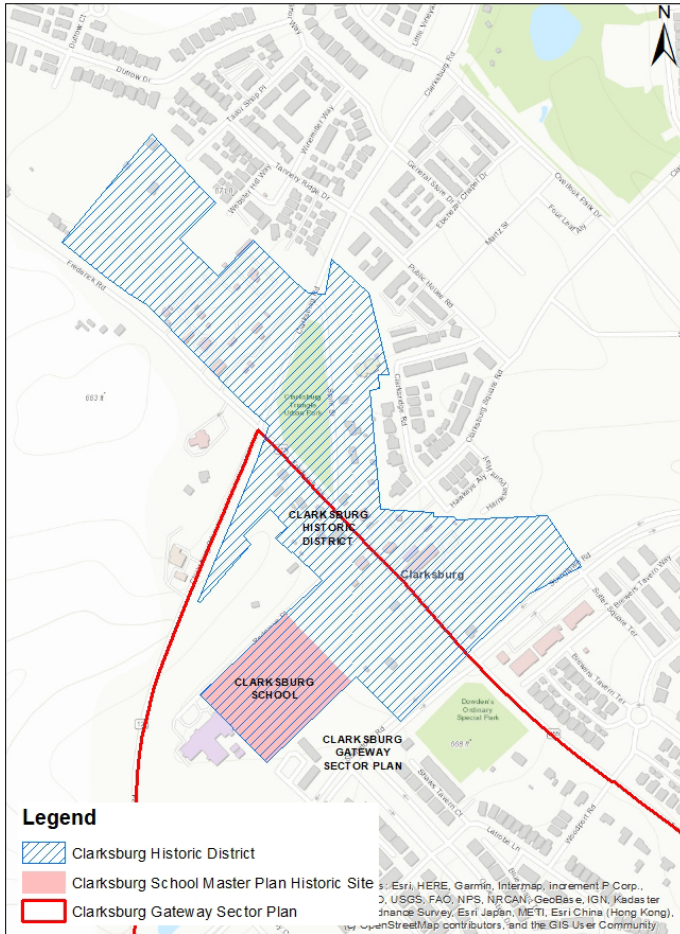


Figure 14. Master Plan Historic Sites and Districts in the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

Resources Listed in the Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites

Established in 1976, the *Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites* identifies resources that are potentially historically significant. Resources listed on the atlas are protected from demolition or substantial alteration under Chapter 24A of the Montgomery County Code. This designation is meant to be temporary until analysis for listing in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* can be completed.

There is a single Locational Atlas Site in the plan boundary that Montgomery Planning will evaluate for designation in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

➤ *Dowden's Ordinary Site and Marker, 23218 Frederick Road*

The Montgomery County Planning Board listed the former site and marker to the *Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites* as part of the *Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area* in 1994. Dowden's Ordinary was a tavern located on a rise along Frederick Road (see Figure 15). In 1915, the Janet Montgomery Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected a boulder with a plaque next to the site of the original Dowden's Ordinary, which remains at the site of the original building. By the 1920s, the tavern had become severely deteriorated, and it was torn down in 1924. The site remained undeveloped throughout the rest of the 20th century.

The *Clarksburg Master Plan & Hyattstown Special Study Area* stated the following about this site:

“At this location a marker was placed by the Janet Montgomery Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1915 commemorating the encampment of General George E. Braddock and Col. Dunbar's Division of the Colonial and English Army April 15-17, 1755, at the site of Dowden's Ordinary. Dowden's Ordinary also served as a meeting place for the Sons of Liberty protesting the Stamp Tax prior to the American Revolution and as a dinner stop for Andrew Jackson on the way to his presidential inauguration in 1829. The Marker is located near the west side of Frederick Road, south of Stringtown Road, where a major intersection is planned. Protection of the site is needed to prevent moving the marker from its historic location. The site may also qualify as an archeological site in the future.”

Dowden's Ordinary Special Park was developed in 2010 after the U.S. Homes Corporation, which proposed to develop a large condominium complex in the vicinity of the former Dowden's Ordinary, donated the 2.751-acre site to the Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) for an interpretive park. The main feature of the park is the "ghost" structure of the former Dowden's Ordinary building slightly to the north of the original building's location. A large boulder marks the location of the original building.



Figure 15. The area shaded yellow is the environmental setting of the Dowden's Ordinary Site and Marker Locational Atlas Site. The "ghost" structure of the former building can be seen in the photo on the right.

Burial Sites Inventory

Montgomery County recognizes the significance of cemetery and burial sites to the community. In 2017, the County Council passed two laws to help preserve and protect these unique and fragile resources. Ordinance 33A-17 requires the Planning Board to maintain an inventory of human burial sites in the county. Ordinance 18-31 requires these sites to be preserved and protected during the preliminary plan of subdivision review and approval process. A burial site is defined in the ordinances as the “physical location where human remains were buried in the earth or entombed in mausoleum or columbarium. A burial site includes a cemetery, but does not include the sprinkling of ashes from cremated remains.” The Burial Site Inventory is the list of burial sites officially adopted by the Planning Board.

➤ *John Wesley United Methodist Cemetery, 22420 Frederick Road*

The former John Wesley Methodist Cemetery (located to the south of the church) is important for its association with an early African American community in Clarksburg known as Rocky Hill (see Figure 16). Residents of the community built the first church on this site in 1887. Members of influential families, such as the Masons, Foremans, and Wims, are interred at this well-maintained burial ground.



Figure 16. The boundary for the John Wesley United Methodist Church. The cemetery is behind the church.

New Sites to be Evaluated for Designation in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation – African American Historic Resources

➤ *Clarksburg Heights District, 12700-12712 Running Brook Drive*

Clarksburg Heights is a mid-20th century planned subdivision composed of 4.07 acres (see Figure 17). The subdivision consists of six single-family residential lots along Running Brook Drive on the southwest side of Frederick Road. In 1963, F. Wilson Wims subdivided the property into six lots and subsequently built single-family houses during the 1960s and early 1970s. This subdivision consists of ranch, split level, and two-story houses with modest ornamentation and detailing. The subdivision played a role in suburbanization of Clarksburg by African American families as Wims established one of the first rent-to-own programs in the area. At Clarksburg Heights, he rented and eventually sold the homes to African American families who would otherwise be unable to afford to reside in Montgomery County. Wilson Wims is significant for his role in supporting the suburbanization of Clarksburg and greater activism in Montgomery County.

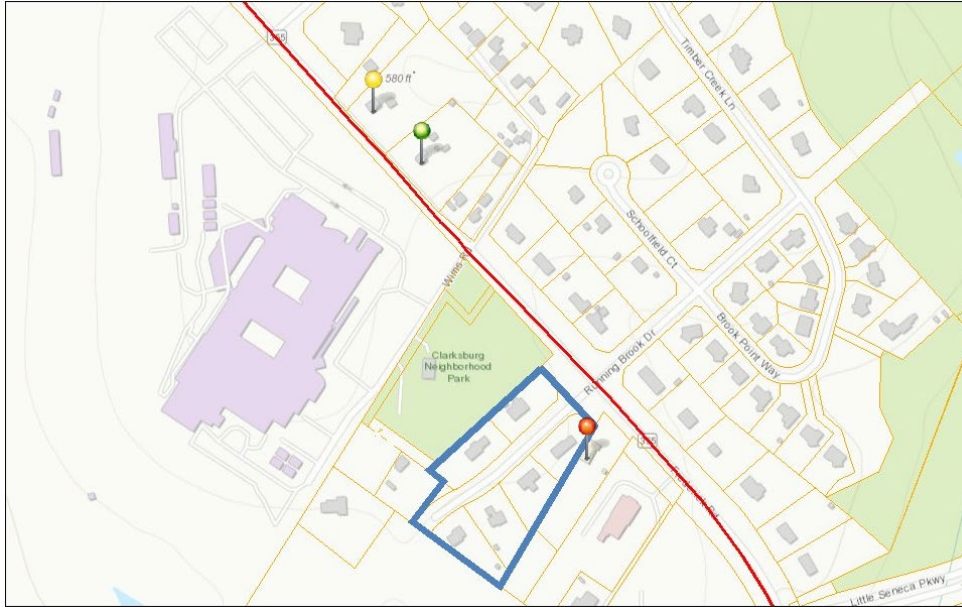


Figure 17: The blue outline is the boundary of the Clarksburg Heights subdivision and the red pin is the John Wesley United Methodist Church and Cemetery. The green and yellow pins (located outside of the boundary of the Sector Plan) are the Warner Wims House and Maurice and Sarah Mason House, respectively.

- *Warner Wims House, 22615 Frederick Road (Outside of the boundary of the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan)*
The Warner Wims House is a late 19th century house built by African American landowners in Rocky Hill. The African American community was one of the earliest established enclaves for Black residents in Clarksburg.
- *Maurice and Sarah Mason House, 22625 Frederick Road (Outside of the boundary of the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan)*
The Maurice and Sarah Mason House is an early 20th century house built by African American landowners in Rocky Hill. The African American community was one of the earliest established enclaves for Black residents in Clarksburg.

New Sites to be Evaluated for Designation in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation – COMSAT Laboratories

- *COMSAT Laboratories, 22300 Comsat Drive*
COMSAT Laboratories, constructed in 1968-69, is just east of and overlooking 1-270 in Clarksburg (see Figure 18). Designed by the world-renowned master architect Cesar Pelli, at that time Director of Design for Daniel, Mann, Jackson, Mendenhall (DMJM), COMSAT Laboratories was an early and iconic example of the High Technology design that came to define technology research corridors in Montgomery County and elsewhere in the nation. The building complex, a virtual “machine in the garden,” popularized several elements of the High-Tech design that dominated the late twentieth century. The building's transparent, futuristic form, resting lightly upon a pastoral landscape, symbolized the necessary, but complicated relationship of technology amid nature. The building cannot be separated from a naturalistic setting, but neither can a building representing the future meld unnoticed into the landscape. The building is Maryland's only

commercial building by Cesar Pelli and one of only four buildings by Cesar Pelli standing in metropolitan Washington.

The United States would not have become the world leader in artificial communication satellites were it not for the work undertaken at COMSAT Laboratories. Real-time international phone communication and international, live television broadcast - aspects of global communication technology that we take for granted today - were pioneered by the scientists, researchers, and technicians at COMSAT Laboratories in the 1960s and 1970s. The building at 22300 Comsat Drive that housed the Research and Development (R&D) functions of COMSAT since 1969 stands as an icon of avant-garde global research and the harbinger of the "high technology corridor" that came to define upper Montgomery County. The building is unquestionably one of the purest "high-technology" architectural statements in Maryland, a product both of the work that went on there and the aesthetic intention of its designer.



Figure 18: 2023 Aerial view of COMSAT (source: EagleView ConnectExplorer)

Historic Preservation Key Points

- There are numerous resources with architectural and historical significance with the Plan boundary.
- A section of the Clarksburg Master Plan Historic District, which includes an important collection of early 19th century residential and commercial architecture, is in the Plan boundary.
- Dowden's Ordinary Site and Marker, within a special park created in 2010 during development of the neighboring subdivision, is listed in the *Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites* and will be evaluated for designation in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

- Clarksburg Heights, the Warner Wims House, and the Maurice and Sarah Mason House, three resources associated with African American history in the Plan boundary, will be evaluated for designation in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.
- The COMSAT Laboratories site, with a building designed by master architect Cesar Pelli, is one of the purest “high-technology” architectural statements in Maryland and will be evaluated for designation in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*.

SECTION 3: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

ENVIRONMENT

Forests and Important Ecosystems

In the past, Clarksburg was a farming community, but there is evidence from 1944 USGS maps and 1951 air photos that this Plan area has significant areas that were forested. This may be due to topography, shallow soils, and wetlands. Some of these forests still exist as mature and thriving forests today, and some have been identified by the Maryland State Department of Natural Resources as significant for the Conservation of Biodiversity and important Targeted Ecological Areas (see Figure 19). Targeted Ecological Areas are lands and watersheds that have been identified as conservation priorities by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MD DNR) and represent some of the most ecologically valuable areas in Maryland. These areas should be carefully considered for protection and enhancement within the master plan process.

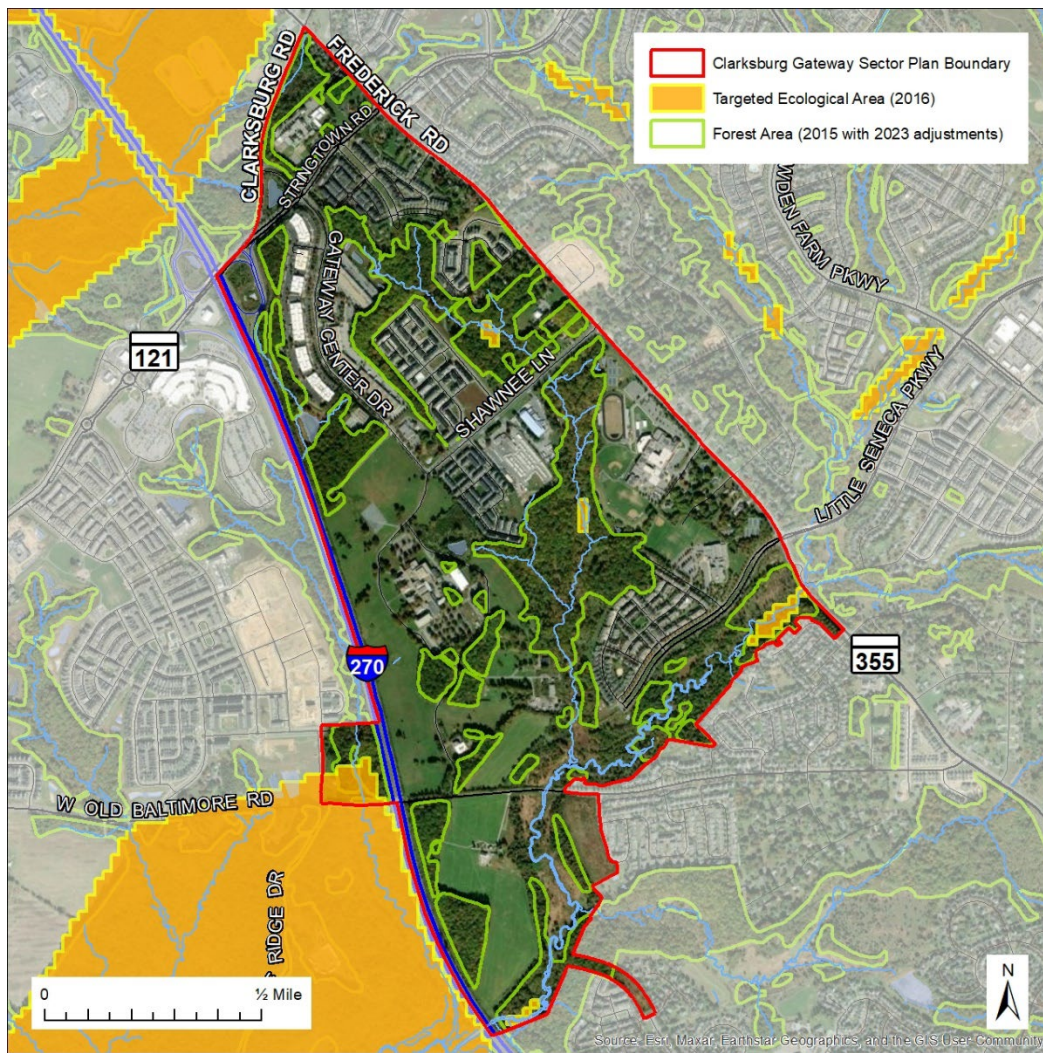


Figure 19. Forests and Targeted Ecological Areas

Forested areas cover approximately 25% of the Plan area (see Figure 20).

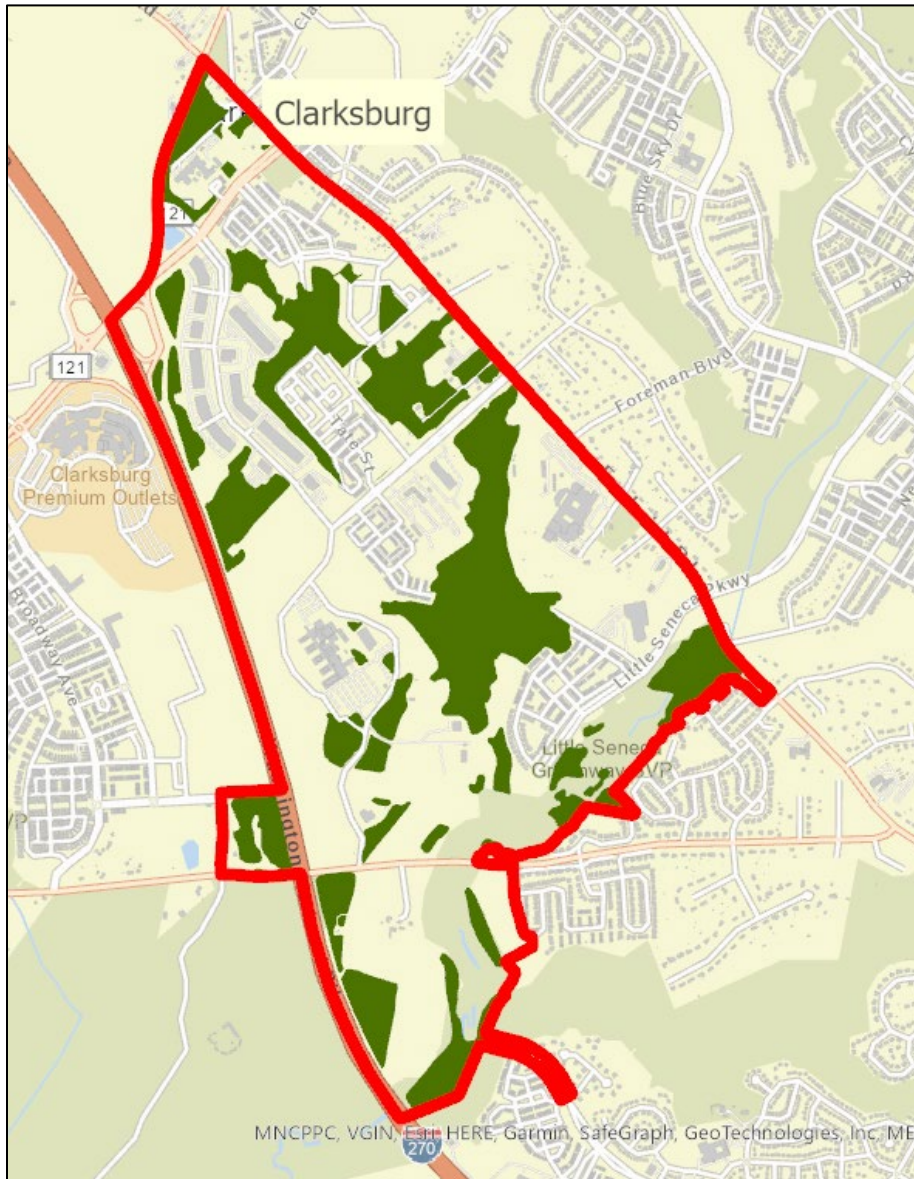


Figure 20. Forested areas cover approximately 25% of the Plan area

Coolbrook Greenway

One of the signature features of the 1994 Plan is a network of “greenway” parks with trails. This system now exists within the Plan area across the southeastern Plan boundary along Little Seneca Creek. The 1994 Plan designated the Coolbrook Tributary (the currently unnamed tributary of Little Seneca Creek that runs through the center of the Plan area) for private conservation and not part of the public greenway system envisioned in that Plan. The Little Seneca Creek stream system within this Plan area is within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area. Along with the stream channel, the associated wide floodplains, seeps, springs, and adjacent steep slopes are robustly protected. This has meant that the development process has protected more private conservation areas than anticipated (see Figure 21). In addition, a wide section of this tributary system is publicly owned,

primarily by MCPS next to Clarksburg High School. The redevelopment of COMSAT and the Coolbrook area (between Observation Drive and Frederick Road and between Shawnee Lane and Cool Brook Lane), along with other properties, will create opportunities for completing this greenway system (see stream buffer areas in Figure 21). This Sector Plan should investigate the potential for extending the Little Seneca Greenway trail system within the Coolbrook Tributary. An extended trail system may provide opportunities to connect neighborhoods both within and outside the Plan area without the need for roadways.



Figure 21: “Coolbrook” Greenway System. Some areas are protected by conservation easements or parkland, but these areas are fragmented. Yellow arrows show potential future trail connections.

Sewer Service

The 1994 Plan intended that this Plan area be served by public sewer service. Generally, service is provided through a network of underground pipes that allow gravity to move effluent to downstream treatment facilities. WSSC delineates subbasins that should share common gravity trunk lines. Linthicum Farms and the Comsat Property will be served by existing trunk lines that originate within Gateway Center Drive down to the trunkline along Little Seneca Creek (see Figure 22). More problematic will be servicing remaining developable properties just north and south of Shawnee Lane.

If this part of the Plan area had developed from south to north rather than north to south, the sewer lines within the Coolbrook Tributary would have been extended from Clarksburg High School, across Shawnee Lane, and then farther north. This incremental extension of infrastructure is generally done by developers under the oversight of WSSC and is a more affordable means of providing public service than trying to start with points further away from existing infrastructure.

However, housing built within the Coolbrook Tributary basin, starting with Gateway Commons, utilized the adjacent trunk lines within Gateway Center Drive and the COMSAT property. This was made possible by altering the building elevations and by using pumps where this was not feasible. Clarksburg Square (formerly Garnkirk Farms) and Dowdens Station used the same strategy and did not need to extend the Coolbrook infrastructure.

This has left the area between Dowdens Station, Shawnee Lane, and an area just south of Shawnee (see yellow circles in Figure 22) with few feasible and affordable options for the extension of sewer service. The most logical sewer outfall alignment according to WSSC policy would be to extend infrastructure by gravity across the Clarksburg High School property south of Shawnee Lane. This is now problematic since the nearest gravity sewer extension is over 2000 feet downstream of the areas with development potential along MD 355. In addition, there is a large wetland/forest complex protected by a conservation easement that would need to be crossed. The cost of this kind of extension may be prohibitive for the development of a relatively small area.



Figure 22: Main and secondary sewer lines and potential service locations (circled areas)

Surface Water Quality in Special Protection Areas

This Plan area is mostly within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area with a small area of the Ten Mile Creek Special Protection Area on its northern tip (see Figure 23).

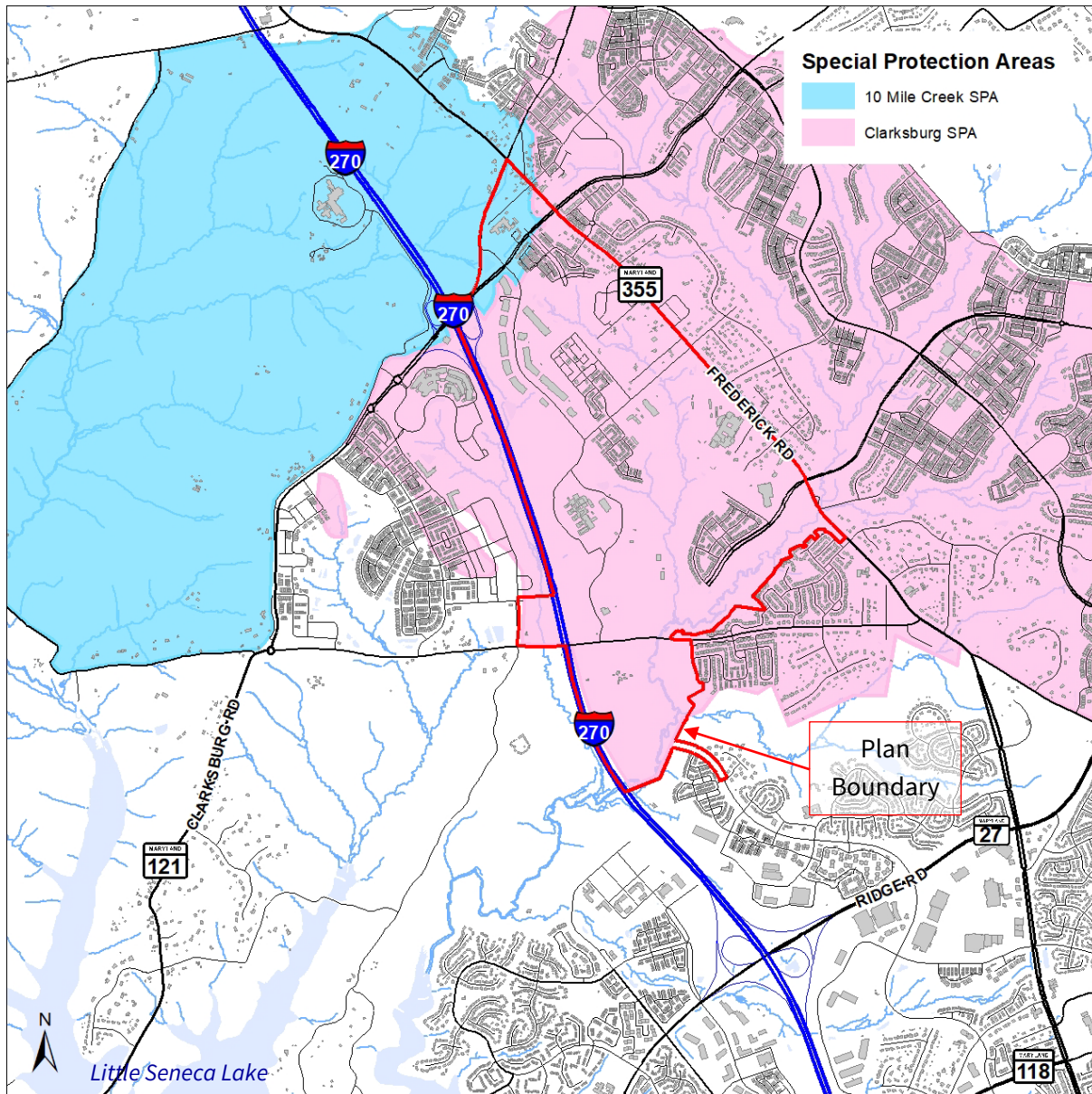


Figure 23. Special Protection Areas in Clarksburg

SPAs are designated in watersheds with particularly good water quality but that are zoned for a development density that is likely to degrade water quality under normal circumstances. To meet state requirements to maintain existing water quality in surface streams, special measures for the protection of water quality are applied to these areas when development takes place. This includes applying the highest standards to stormwater management and sediment control measures. It also involves an elevated level of protection to streams and wetlands and forests. Finally, minimizing the creation of impervious surfaces from roads, buildings and other types of soil sealing and compaction

is given great importance (see Figure 24). This is especially important given that the watersheds in this area are upstream from Little Seneca Lake, which is a backup drinking water supply for the region.

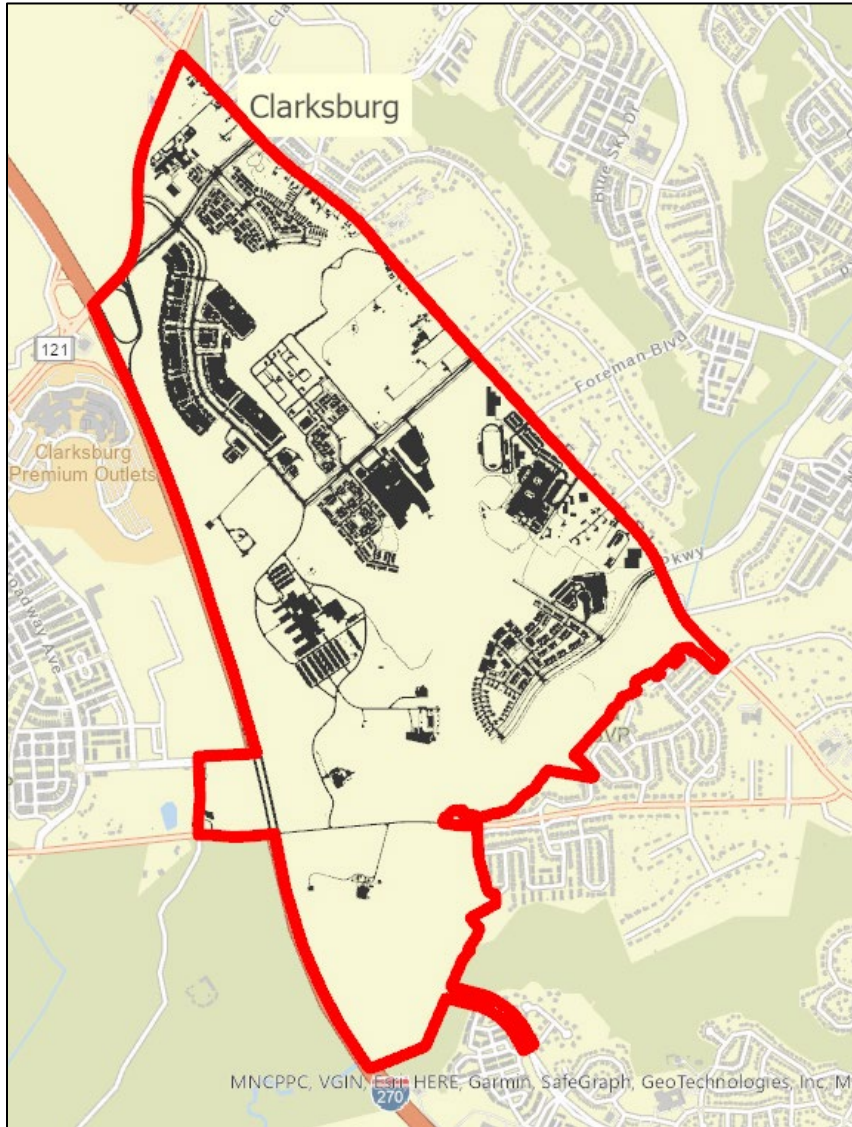


Figure 24. Impervious surfaces cover approximately 21% of the Plan area (2020)

The Ten Mile Creek SPA is protected by development restrictions, including impervious surface limits, contained in two overlay zones. The portion of the Plan area within the Ten Mile Creek SPA is in the Clarksburg East Environmental (CEE) Overlay Zone as described in the Existing Zoning section above. Developments in the CEE Overlay Zone are limited to a 15% imperviousness cap. The Clarksburg SPA, which covers most of the Plan area, does not have strict limits on imperviousness, but instead must demonstrate that proposed imperviousness has been minimized.

Environment Key Points

- Although Clarksburg has been a farming community for over two centuries, as recently as 1951 aerial photos showed significant forested areas, some of which still exist as mature and thriving forests. Some of these forested areas are state-designated Targeted Ecological Areas.

- Piecemeal development in and adjacent to the Plan area mean that future sewer infrastructure may be more difficult to provide or more costly to operate.
- Most of the Plan area is within the Clarksburg Special Protection Area. A small part of the Plan area is in the Ten Mile Creek SPA.

PARKS

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS)

The Montgomery County *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan* (PROS) is updated every five years. The PROS Plan guides the future development and management of the county’s park system. The focus of the 2022 PROS Plan is to provide equitably activated, central community spaces that meet recreational needs and protect and manage natural and cultural resources for future generations.

The county is divided into three zones in the 2022 PROS Plan (see Figure 25):

➤ *Zone A (Urban)*

Corridor-Focused Growth area – This zone encompasses the most developed part of the county with the highest-density population and employment centers and the infrastructure to support existing and new development. This zone is forecast to have the largest share of new growth. Parks and recreation facilities are often smaller but more intensively developed to serve a variety of purposes. Ideally these facilities will be readily accessible by transit, bicycling, and walking.

➤ *Zone B (Suburban)*

Limited Growth area (East & West) – This zone contains primarily suburban, residential communities where limited, organic growth is expected to meet local needs for services, provide a diverse range of housing choices, and increase racial and socioeconomic integration to achieve *Thrive Montgomery 2050’s* conception of “Complete Communities.” Park and recreation facilities usually follow the more traditional suburban model, with athletic fields, courts, playgrounds, large gathering spaces or open lawns as central features, and hard or natural surface trails.”

➤ *Zone C (Rural)*

Rural Areas and the Agricultural Reserve – Areas of Zone C are largely dedicated to agriculture, rural open space, and environmental preservation. These parks are generally larger and more frequently classified as Regional Parks or Conservation Parks. Their primary, but not exclusive, purpose is to serve stewardship and resource-based recreation functions. Significant portions of Zone C are in the Agricultural Reserve, and the Parks Department often leases land in this area for farming. Park and recreation facilities can include natural areas, campgrounds, water trails and boat launches, and natural surface trails for hiking, biking, and horseback riding.

All three tiers have active, social, and nature experiences. The urban area is supposed to have more social experiences. The suburban tier tends to have more active experiences usually where there is more land for ballfields, basketball courts, and many active amenities in one park. The rural tier generally has more nature experiences.

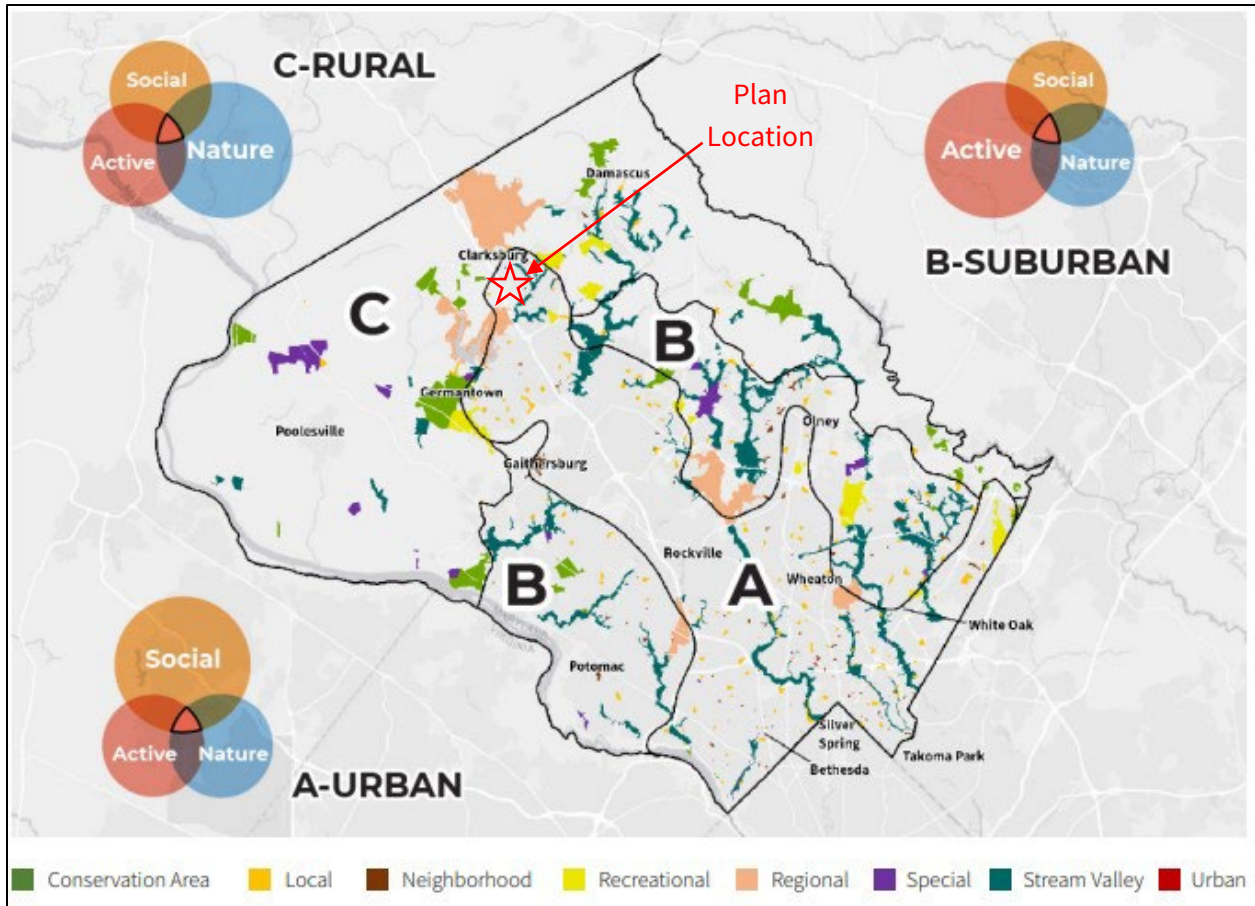


Figure 25: 2022 Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Service Zone Areas

The Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan is located within Zone A (Urban) of the 2022 PROS Plan. However, although the Sector Plan area has been categorized as urban by the PROS Plan, portions of the Sector Plan area maintain a suburban character with residential development interspersed with office parks and institutional uses. Based on preliminary interactions, many of the residents that have moved to the area enjoy the peace and quiet of the area and its natural environment. Other residents have expressed the need for additional amenities and greater walkability and connectivity. In general, the amount of parkland and number of park amenities within the Plan boundary is somewhat limited, but residents of the Plan area are well served by parks and park facilities within two miles of the Plan area.

Existing Parks

There are five existing parks within the Sector Plan boundary, described below and summarized in Table 10.

➤ *Dowden's Ordinary Special Park (and Cultural Resource)*

The park layout was designed to preserve and display the historic site and archaeological resources found in the park in a safe and user-friendly manner, and the park was constructed with the facilities above existing grades to preserve the archaeological fabric (see Historic Preservation section on Dowden's Ordinary for more information). The culturally sensitive area should be

avoided if any new amenities are provided. The 2.75-acre park was acquired by Montgomery Parks in September 2010.

➤ *Clarksburg Neighborhood Park*

The park features a playground, a basketball court, and lighted tennis courts (open until 11 p.m.). Visitors can rent an air-conditioned park activity building that offers kitchen facilities. The 3.8-acre park was acquired by Montgomery Parks in 1961.

➤ *Little Seneca Greenway Stream Valley Park*

This stream valley park has more than 299 undeveloped acres acquired beginning in 1969. Nearly 100 acres of the park are in the Plan area.

➤ *North Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park*

Two small slivers of this stream valley park on either side of dedicated right-of-way for Observation Drive are included in the part of the Plan area that extends south from the Little Seneca Greenway SVP to the current terminus of Observation Drive.

➤ *Back Hill Regional Park*

A small portion of Black Hill Regional Park is located along the southern boundary of the Sector Plan area south of West Old Baltimore Road. The park itself has more than 2,000 acres of land for outdoor recreation and family gatherings. Water sports equipment, such as canoes, kayaks, and rowboats, may be rented from Black Hill Boats to allow for the exploring the natural beauty of Little Seneca Lake.

Table 10. M-NCPPC Parks with portions within the Sector Plan boundary

Park Name	Acres in Plan Area	Existing Park Amenities
Dowden’s Ordinary Park	2.8	Playground; historic structures and markers
Clarksburg Neighborhood Park	3.8	Park activity building; basketball courts, playground, and tennis courts
Little Seneca Greenway Stream Valley Park	99.7	Largely undeveloped; natural surface trail
North Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park	0.4	Largely undeveloped; hard surface trail
Black Hill Regional Park	4.0	Picnic shelters, volleyball courts, playgrounds, trails, and water sports (no amenities within Plan Area)

The five parks add up to a total of 110.7 acres within the Sector Plan area. An additional 20 parks with 4,430.9 acres are within a two-mile buffer of the Sector Plan area (see Table 11 and Figure 26). These parks outside the Sector Plan boundary serve approximately 52,000 residents.

Table 11. M-NCPPC Parks within a two-mile radius of the Sector Plan boundary

Park Name	Park Size in Acres	Existing Amenities
Arora Hills Local Park	17.5	One baseball field, one softball field, one basketball court, one playground, one picnic shelter
Black Hill Regional Park	1,584	Canoes, kayaks, pedal boats, picnic shelters, community gardens, dog park, playground, volleyball, and trails
Clarksburg Triangle Urban Park	2.43	Undeveloped (legacy open space property)
Clarksburg Village North Local Park	3.76	One rectangular field for football or soccer and one picnic shelter
Clarkmont Local Park	10.1	One playground, one picnic shelter, one soccer field, and benches along pathways
Clarkmont Stream Valley Park	28.2	Natural surface trails
Clarksburg Village North Local Park	3.76	One rectangular field for football or soccer and one picnic shelter
Germantown Town Center Urban Park	7.25	Artwork, legacy open space, lawn area, event area, wetland-biodiversity area, loop trail, and picnic area
Goshen Recreational Park	252	Undeveloped
Kings Local Park	23.3	Pond, fishing pier, one softball field, and two soccer fields
Little Bennett Camping Area	154	Campground
Little Bennett Regional Park	3,256	One campground, one playground, 12+ historic sites, one 18-hole golf course, and four picnic areas
North Germantown Greenway Stream Valley Park	385	Bridges, trails
Ovid Hazen Wells Greenway Stream Valley Park	4.6	Undeveloped
Ovid Haven Wells Recreational Park	295	Three picnic shelters, playground, one baseball field, two softball fields, and two soccer fields
Piedmont Woods Local Park	65.7	One playground, two picnic areas, two tennis courts (also striped as pickleball court, one basketball court)
Ridge Road Recreational Park	77.9	One baseball field, one basketball court, one hockey (inline skating/ soccer court), three picnic shelters, one soccer field, one softball field, one tennis court, one volleyball court
Seneca Crossing Local Park	27.8	Undeveloped
Ten Mile Creek Conservation Park	352.9	Undeveloped
Waters House Special Park	4.0	Historic house and farm structure with offices
Waters Landing Local Park	11.7	One softball field, one football/soccer field, one multi-purpose field, two tennis courts, one playground, one picnic shelter, loop trail
Wildcat Branch Stream Valley Park Unit 1	17.4	Undeveloped

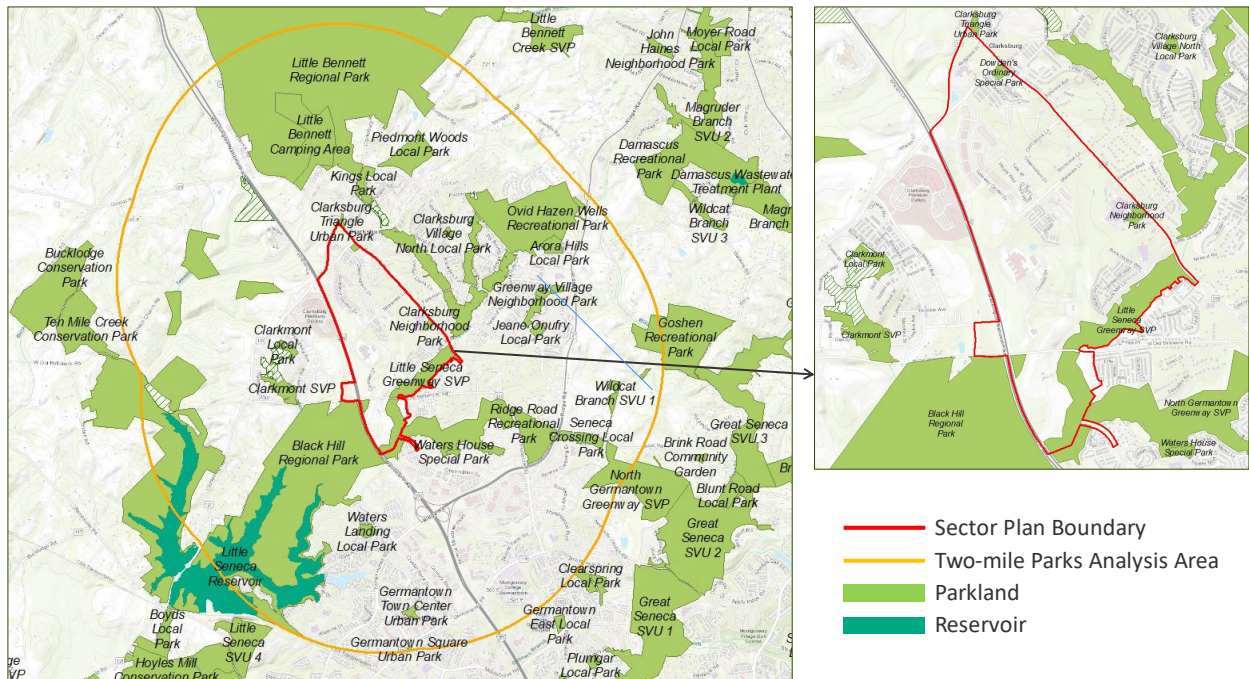


Figure 26: Map of M-NCPPC Parks contained within a two-mile radius of the Sector Plan (left) and within the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan boundary (right)

Amenity Access Level of Service (LOS) Analysis

Amenities available to the public can be on M-NCPPC parkland, on Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) properties, within privately owned public spaces, and on properties owned by other entities, such as WSSC. Amenities on M-NCPPC parks are the only ones controlled and operated by M-NCPPC, but the Level of Service (LOS) analysis considers all publicly available amenities.

Although there are only two developed parks within the Plan area, the residents of the Plan area appear to be well served by parks within two miles of the Plan boundary if not within the Plan boundary itself. In some cases, the distribution of the amenities means that there may appear to be an adequate number of a particular resource, but not every resident has easy access to that resource.

For example, looking at number of playgrounds, the Sector Plan area has 1.43 playgrounds for every 1000 residents, higher than the countywide average (0.65 per 1000 residents), or even the urban tier as a whole (0.81 per 1000 residents). At the same time, however, the percent of the population that lives within a half mile of a playground (77%) is lower than the urban area in general (94%) (see Table 12). This means that in some neighborhoods within the Plan area, people do not have access to a playground within easy walking distance to their home.

Table 12. Amenity Access level of service – Percentage of population living within 0.5-mile radius of amenity/resource

Amenity / Resource	Within Plan Area	Urban Tier	Countywide
Playgrounds	77%	94%	87%
Basketball courts	98%	91%	84%
Tennis courts	62%	73%	67%
Athletic fields	99%	100%	84%
Pickleball courts	30%	14%	13%
Picnic shelters	1%	45%	41%

People in this area have good access to athletic fields and basketball courts. The number of athletic fields and basketball courts per 1,000 residents in the Plan area is higher than the number countywide and in urban areas. Approximately 98% of the population live within half a mile of an athletic field or basketball court.

Access to other amenities, such as park trails, tennis courts, pickleball courts, and picnic shelters, is more limited. Only 9% of the population in the Plan area live within a half-mile radius of a park trail access point, which is much lower than the countywide average. 62% of residents in the Plan area are within half a mile of a tennis court, which is lower than the access in urban areas (73%) and countywide (67%). 30% of the population in the Plan area live within half a mile of a pickleball court, which is higher than the access in the urban areas (14%) and countywide (13%). Only 1% of residents in the Plan area have access to a park that has a picnic shelter within walking distance versus 45% of those living in the urban tier in general.

Trails on Parkland

There are currently 0.19 miles of natural surface trails and 0.24 miles of hard surface trails on parkland within the Sector Plan boundary. The hard surface trails inside the Plan boundary are the walkways in Dowden’s Ordinary Special Park; the natural surface trail crosses the Little Seneca Greenway near Rocky Hill Middle School (see Figure 27). The 1994 Plan recommends a trail along the Little Seneca Greenway. This trail will likely be a continuation of the existing path on the south side of Little Seneca Parkway, but its ultimate route and form have not been determined.



Figure 27. The only natural surface trail in the Plan area crosses Little Seneca Creek on a bridge and connects the neighborhood south of the Little Seneca Greenway to the Little Seneca Parkway near Rocky Hill Middle School. The only hard-surface Park trail are within Dowden's Ordinary Special Park.

By adding a two-mile buffer to the Plan area, the trail mileage increases to 28.73 miles of natural surface trails and 17.98 miles of hard surface trails on parkland (see Figure 28).

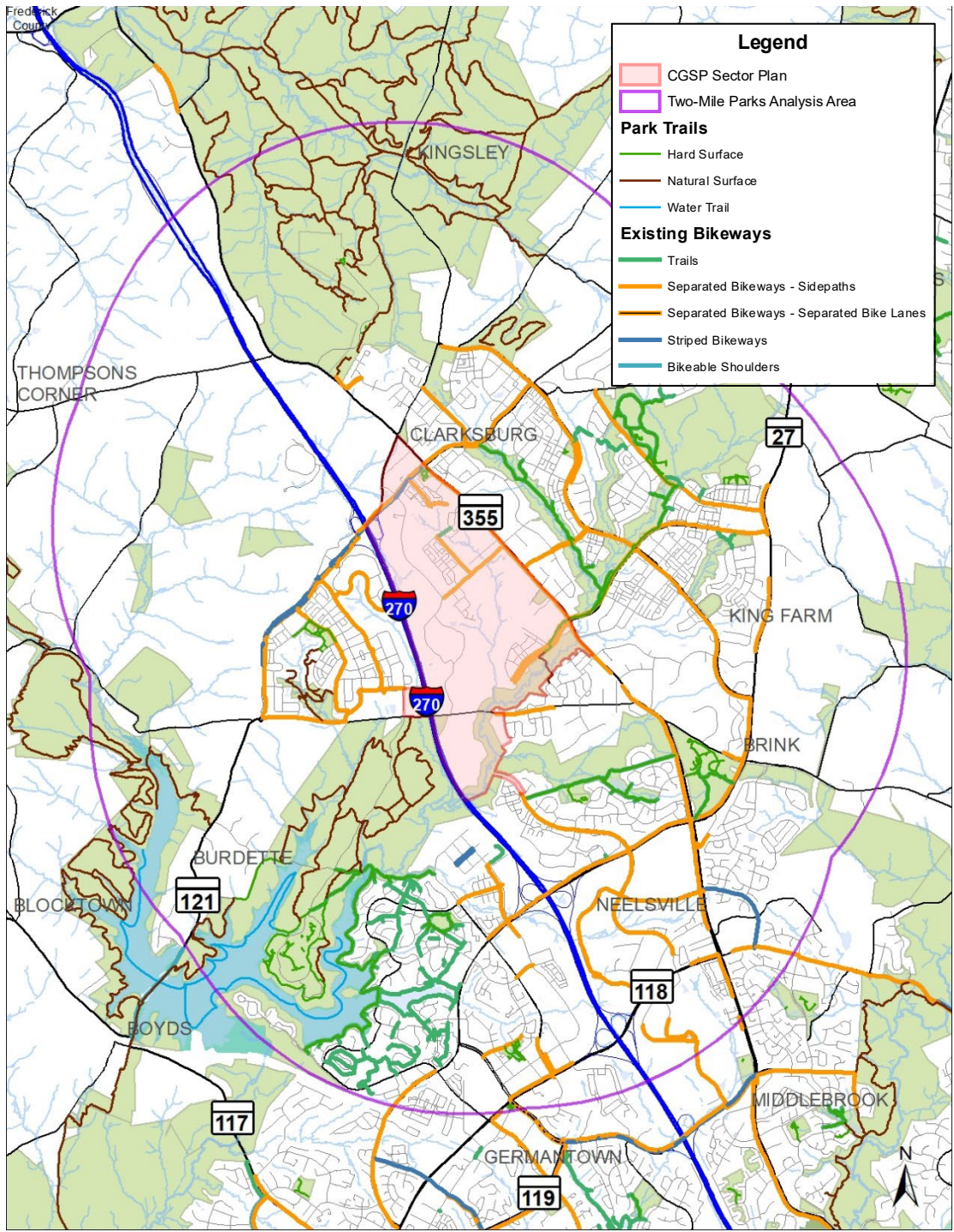


Figure 28. Trails, parkland, and bikeways surrounding the Plan area

Parks Key Points

- The Plan area is within Zone A—the “urban” zone—of the 2022 PROS Plan, but the area currently has a suburban character.
- There are two local parks and parts of two stream valley parks in the Plan area. A very small part of Black Hill Regional Park is within the plan boundary and the main park entrance along with a natural surface trailhead is opposite the Plan area’s southern boundary.

- There are an additional 23 parks within two miles of the Plan area.
- While the number of playgrounds per capita in the Plan area is higher than the countywide and urban tier averages, in some neighborhoods people do not have access to a playground within walking distance to their home.
- Access to athletic fields and basketball courts is very high for residents of the Plan area. Access to tennis courts, pickleball courts, and picnic shelters is more limited.
- While the amount of parkland and number of park amenities is somewhat limited within the Plan boundary, residents of the Plan area are well served by parks and park facilities within two miles of the Plan area.
- There is less than half a mile of park trails within the Plan area, but there are over 46 miles of park trails within two miles of the Plan area.

CONCLUSION

This existing conditions report was compiled to provide stakeholders with baseline information regarding what is in and around the Sector Plan area. Stakeholders may use this information to inform their suggestions for what they would like to see in their community. This information, along with our listening sessions, visioning sessions, and other interactions with the community, will help to inform our plan recommendations.

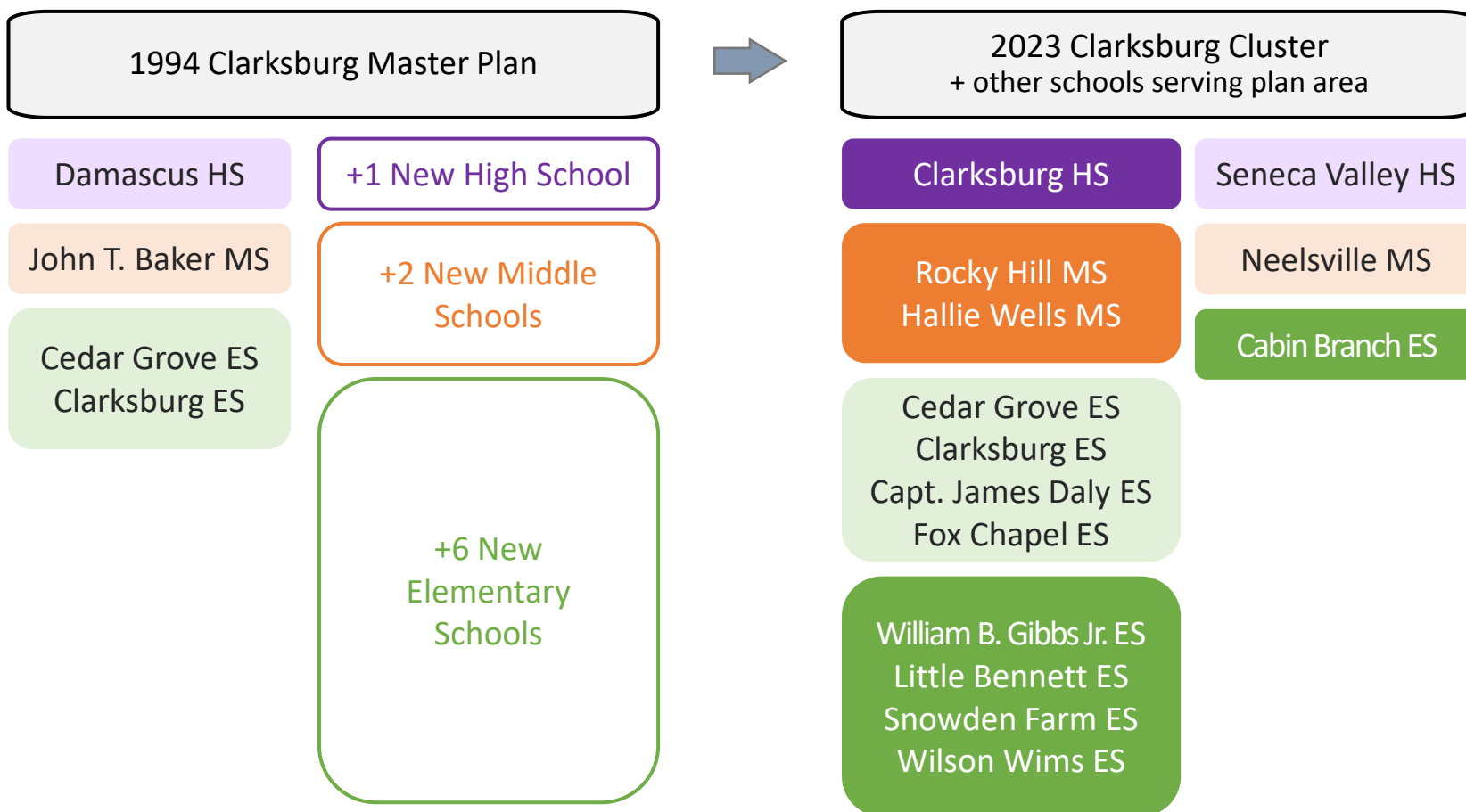
APPENDIX

- A. Existing Conditions Report on Schools



Existing Conditions Report on Schools

1994 Plan Reality Check



CGSP Schools

Elementary Schools Serving Plan Area

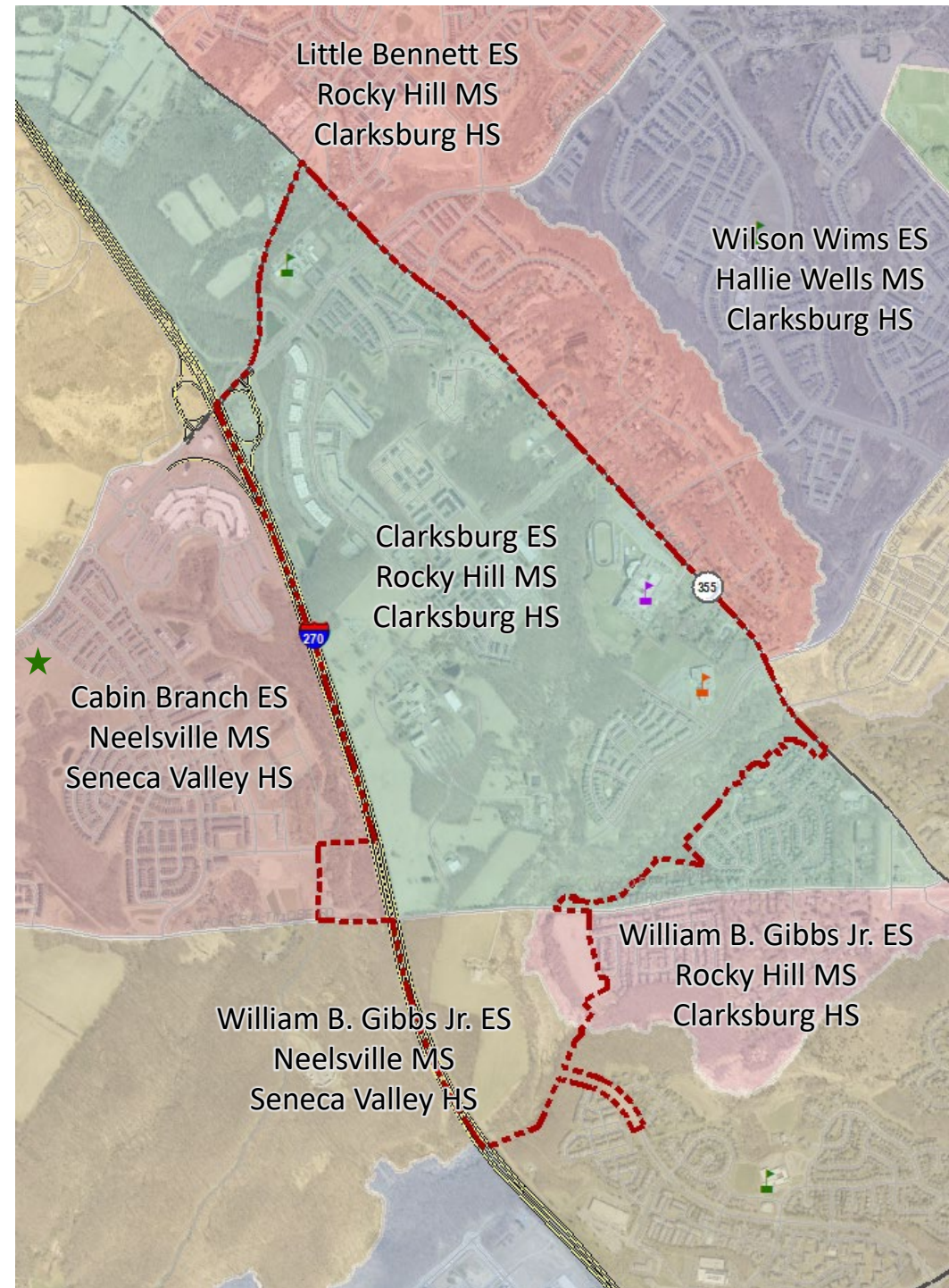
- **Clarksburg ES**
- **Cabin Branch ES** (Clarksburg ES #9)
- **William B. Gibbs, Jr. ES**
- + *Other schools in Clarksburg cluster:*
Capt. James E. Daly ES, Fox Chapel ES,
Little Bennett ES, Snowden Farm ES,
Wilson Wims ES

Middle Schools Serving Plan Area

- **Rocky Hill MS**
- **Neelsville MS**
- + *Other schools in Clarksburg cluster:*
Hallie Wells MS

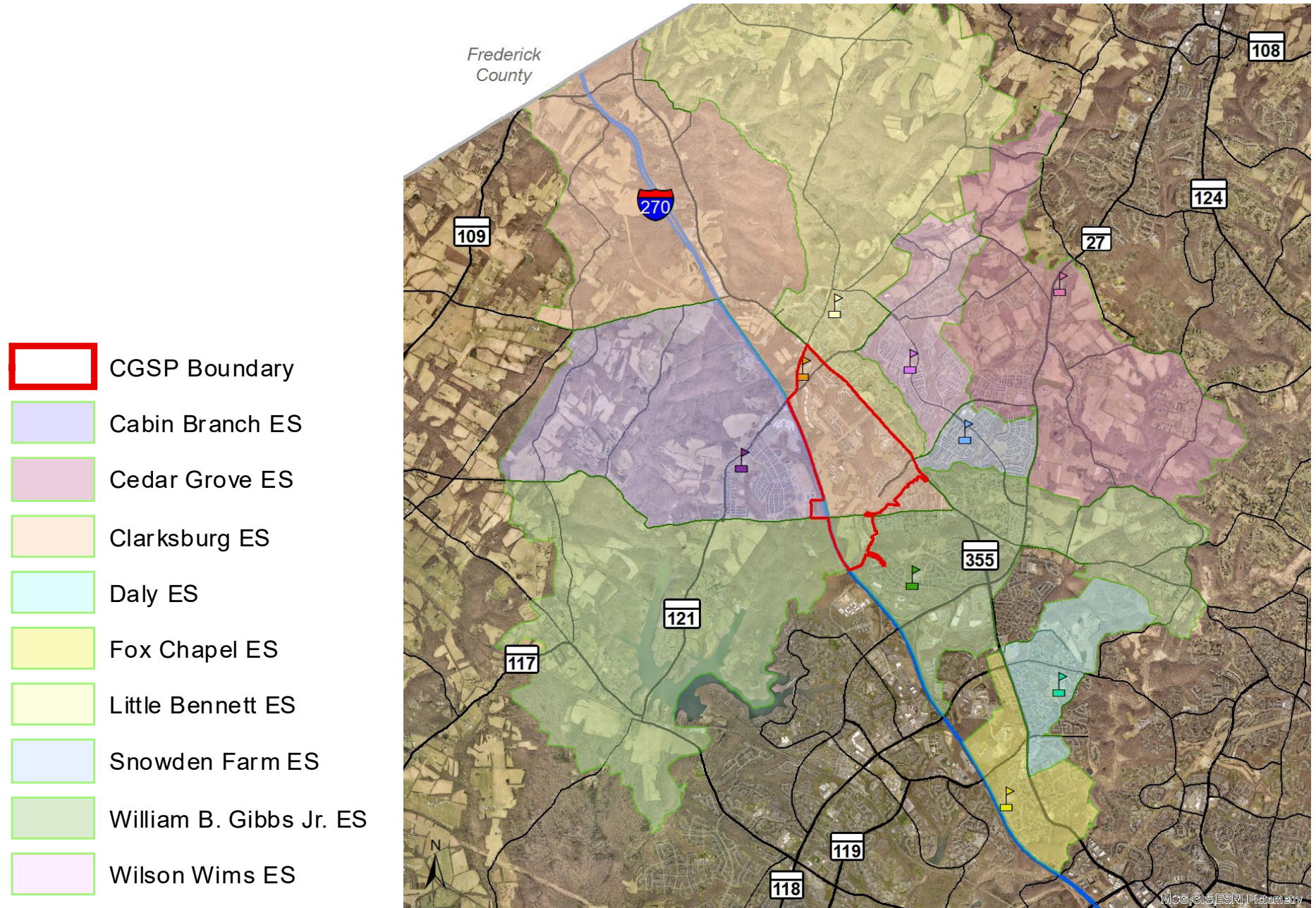
High Schools Serving Plan Area

- **Clarksburg HS**
- **Seneca Valley HS**
- + *Adjacent schools:* Damascus HS

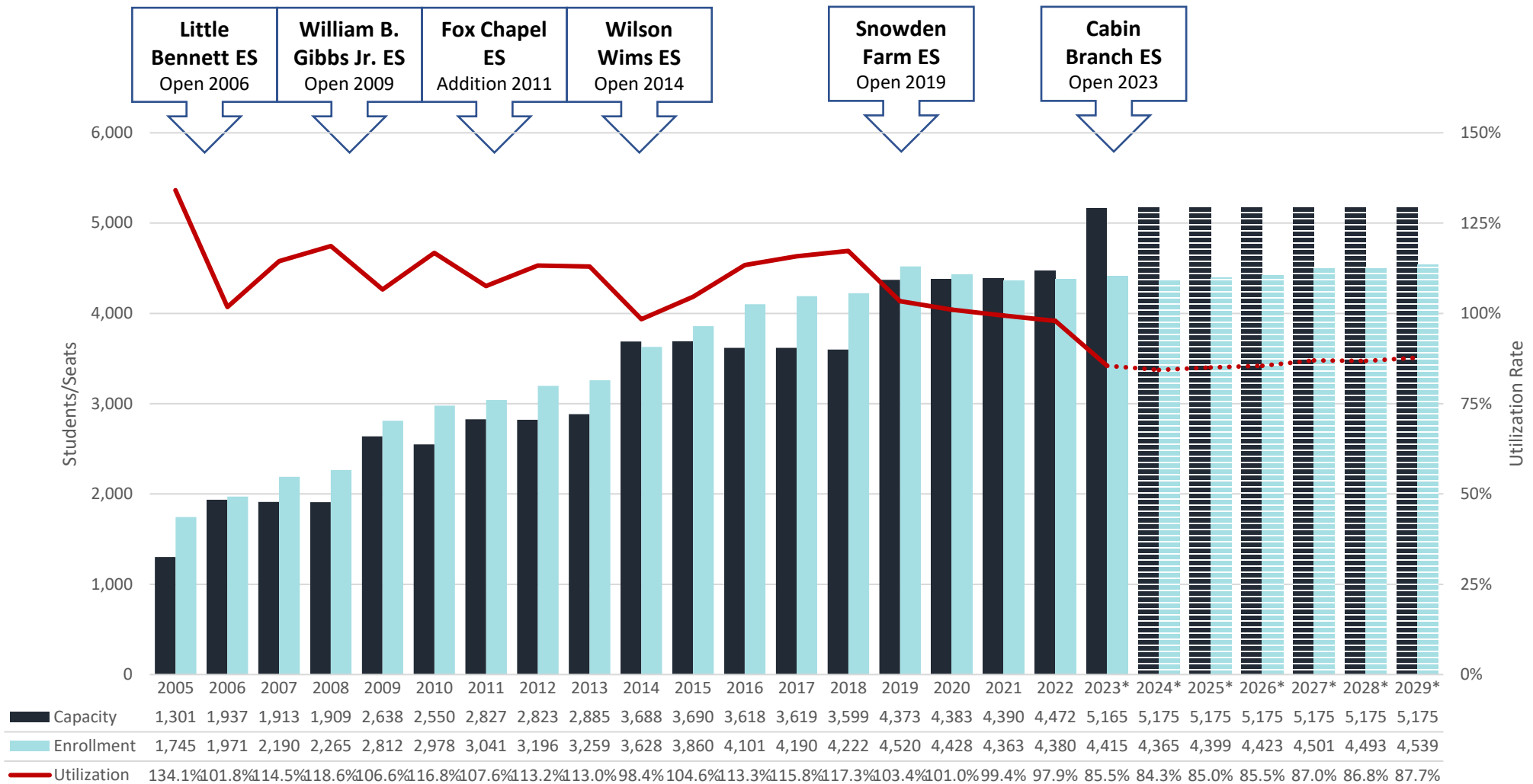


Small parts of the districts served by schools written in gray are within the plan boundary, but there are no residences within these areas to generate students at these schools.

Plan Area & Clarksburg Cluster Elementary Schools



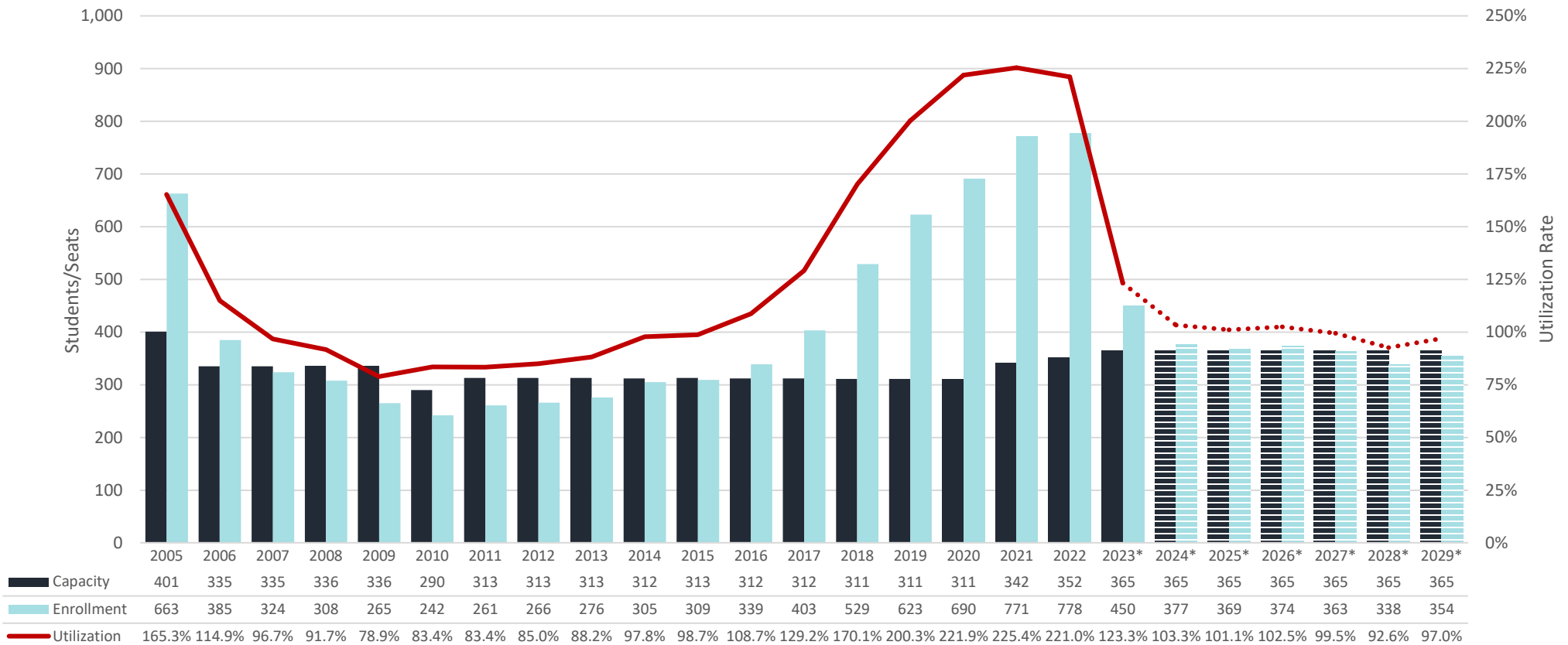
Plan Area & Clarksburg Cluster ES Collective Utilization Trend & Projections



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Clarksburg ES

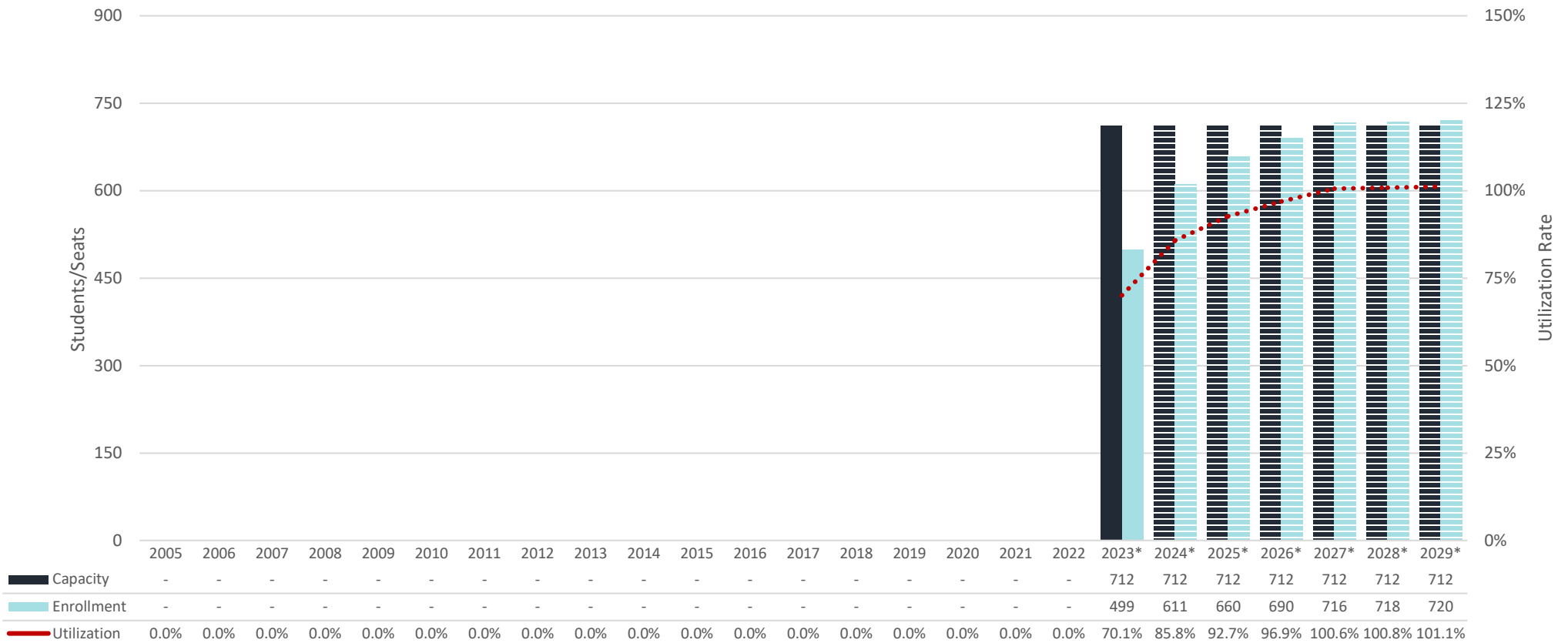
- Year facility built: 1952
- Last renovation: 1993



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Cabin Branch ES

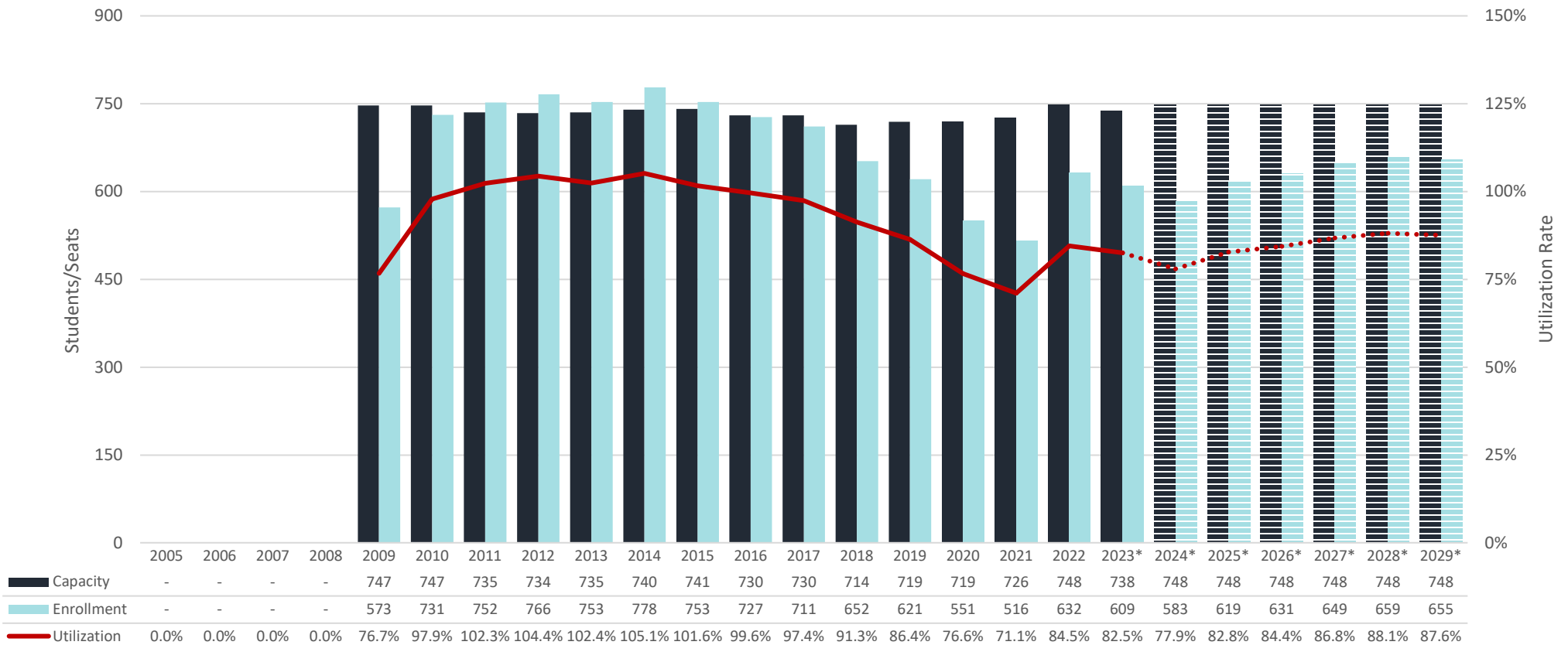
- Year facility built: 2023



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

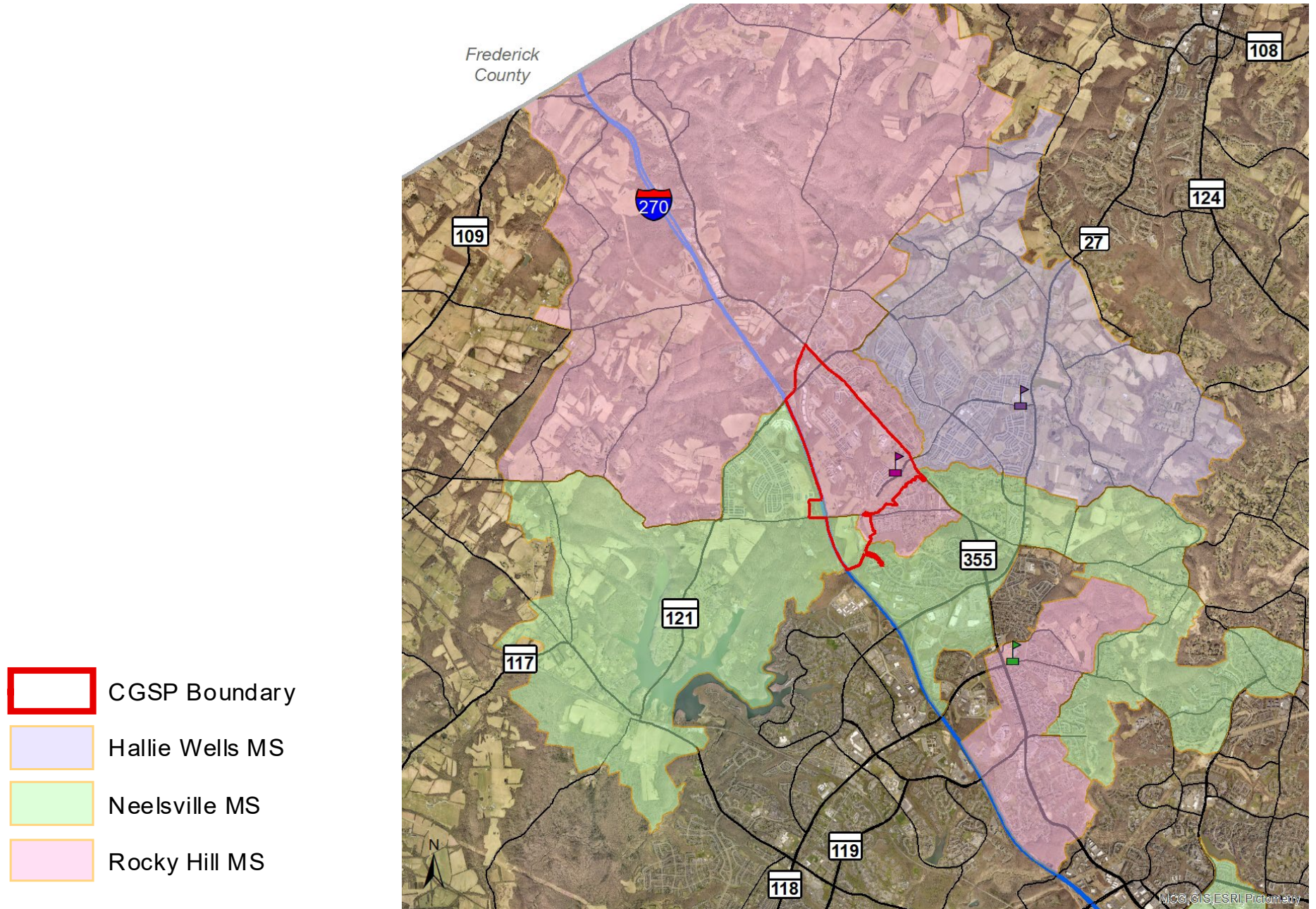
William B. Gibbs ES

- Year facility built: 2009

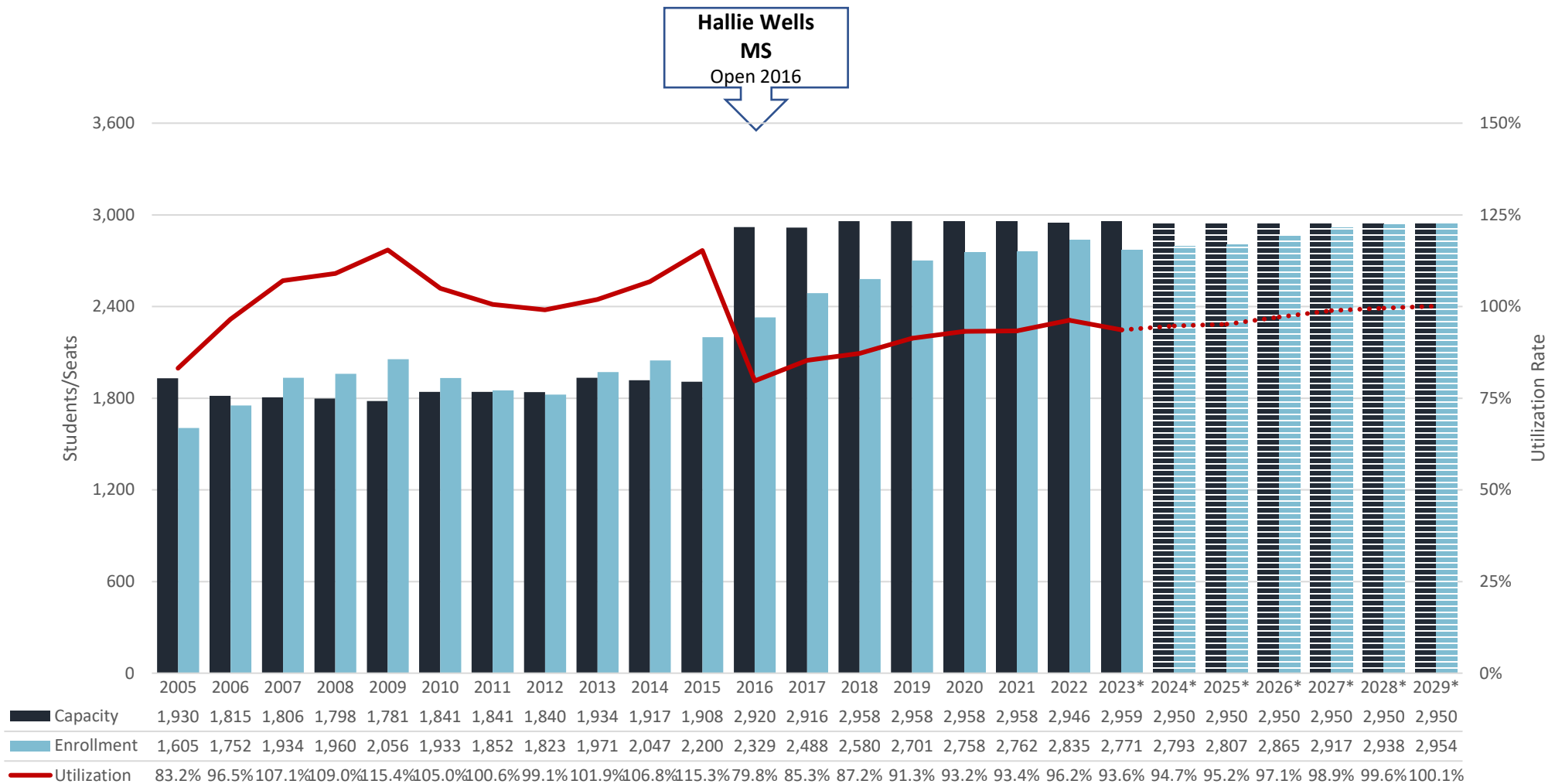


*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Plan Area & Clarksburg Cluster Middle Schools



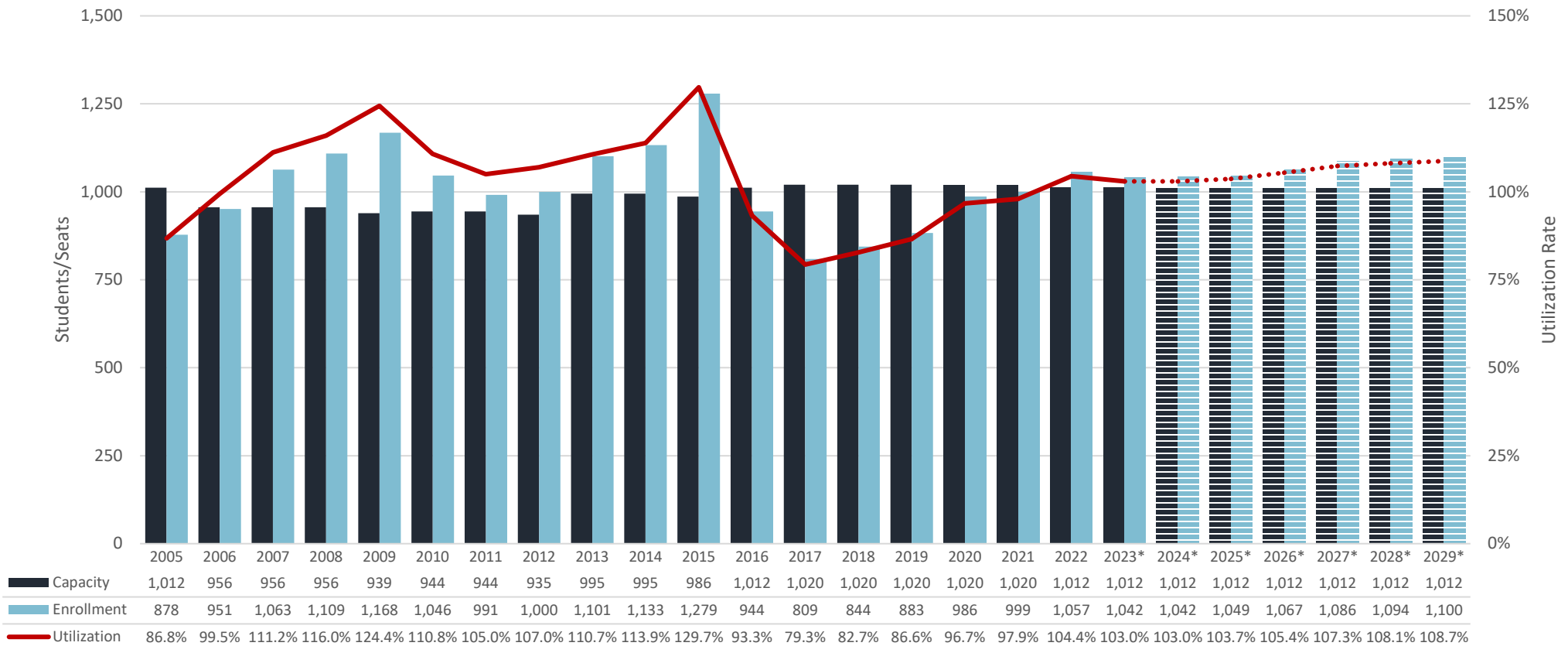
Plan Area & Clarksburg Cluster MS Collective Utilization Trend & Projections



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Rocky Hill MS

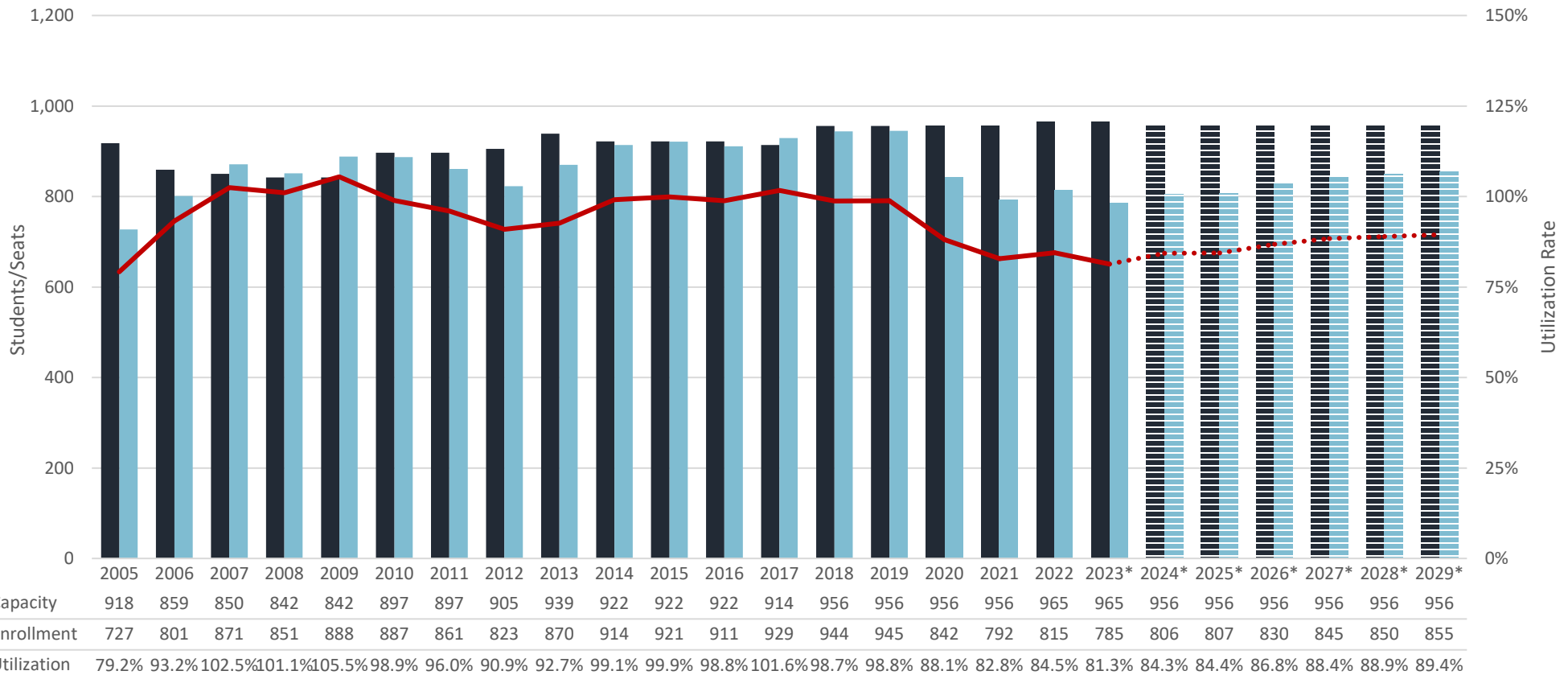
- Year facility built: 2004



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

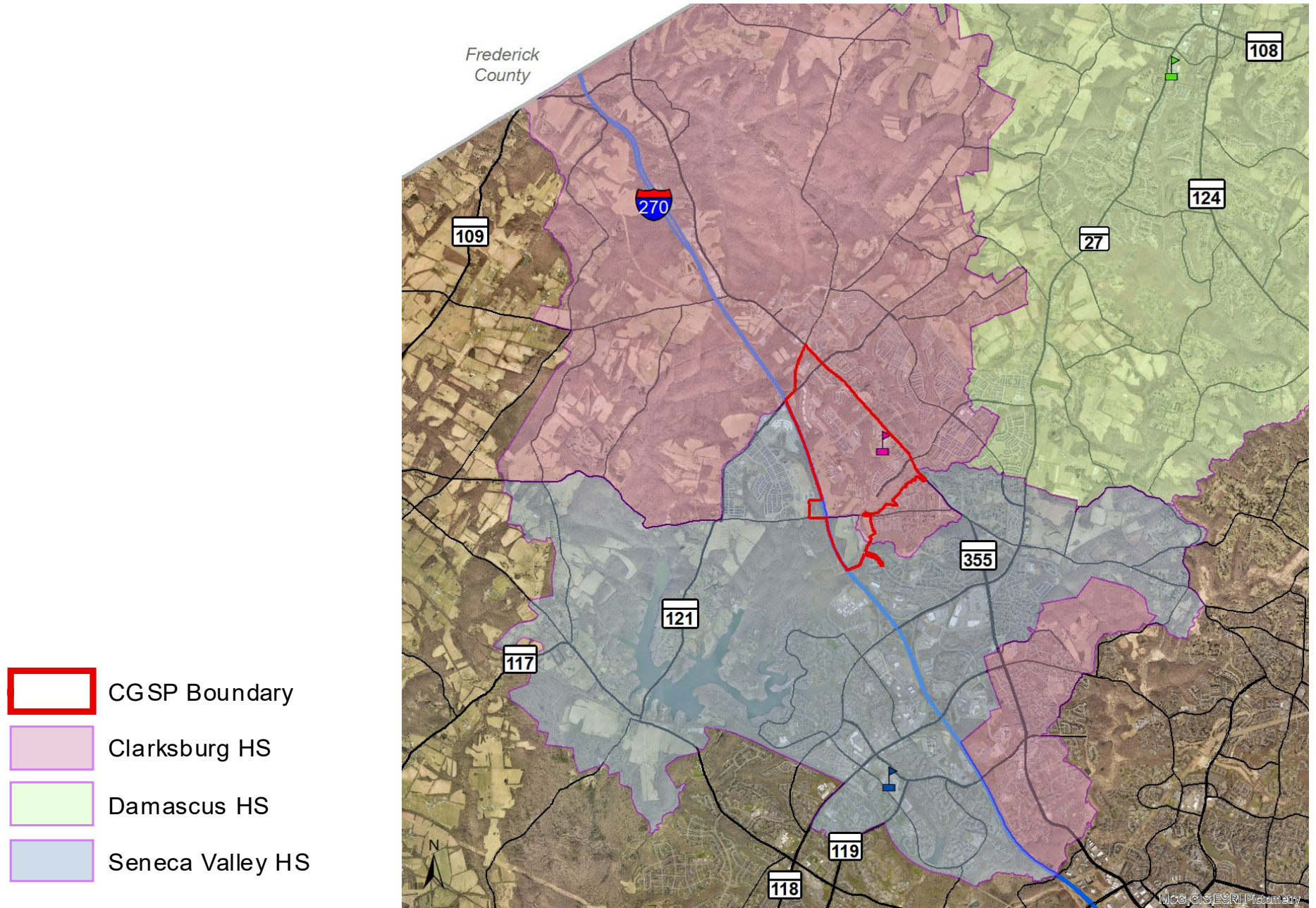
Neelsville MS

- Year facility built: 1981

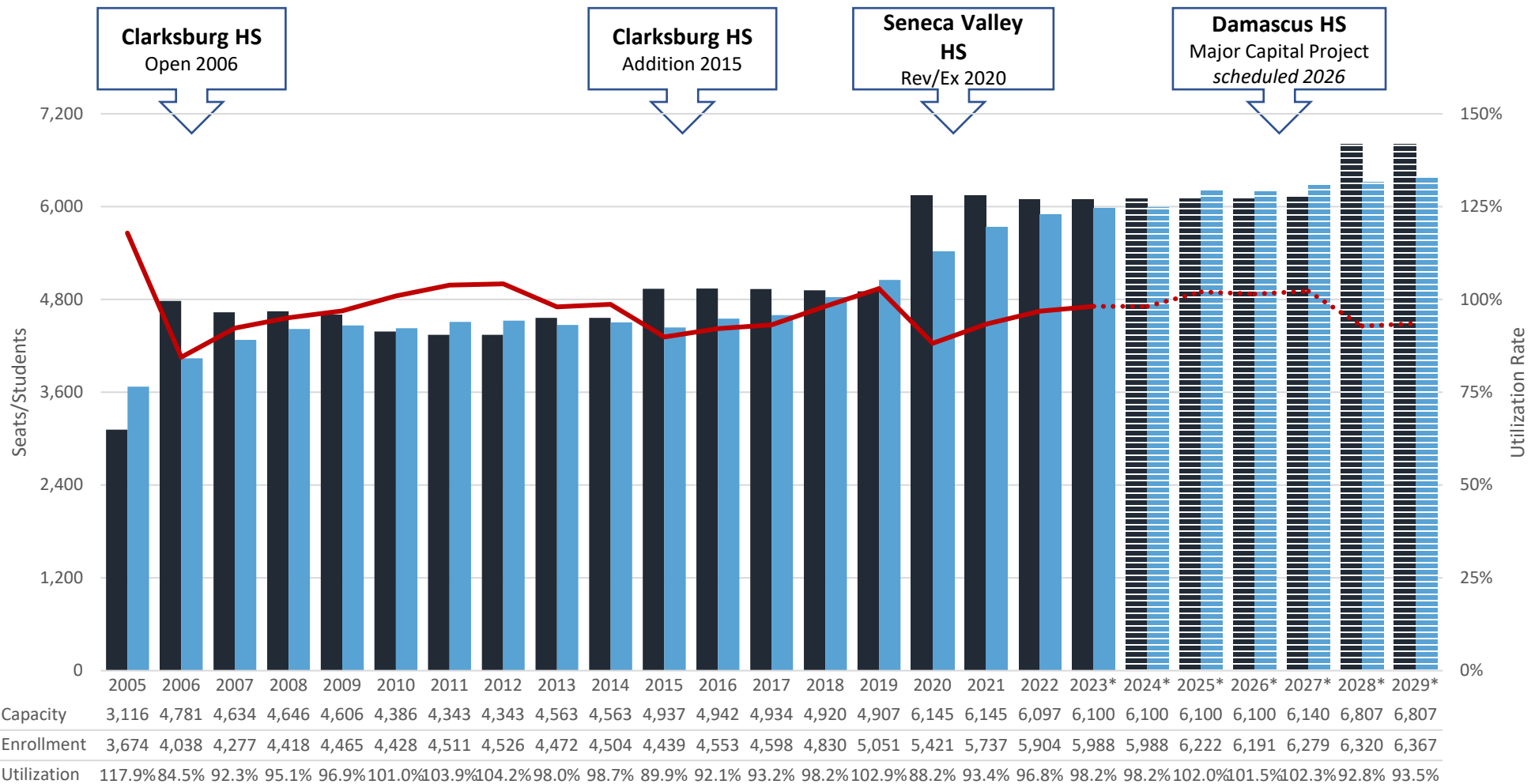


*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Plan Area & Adjacent High Schools



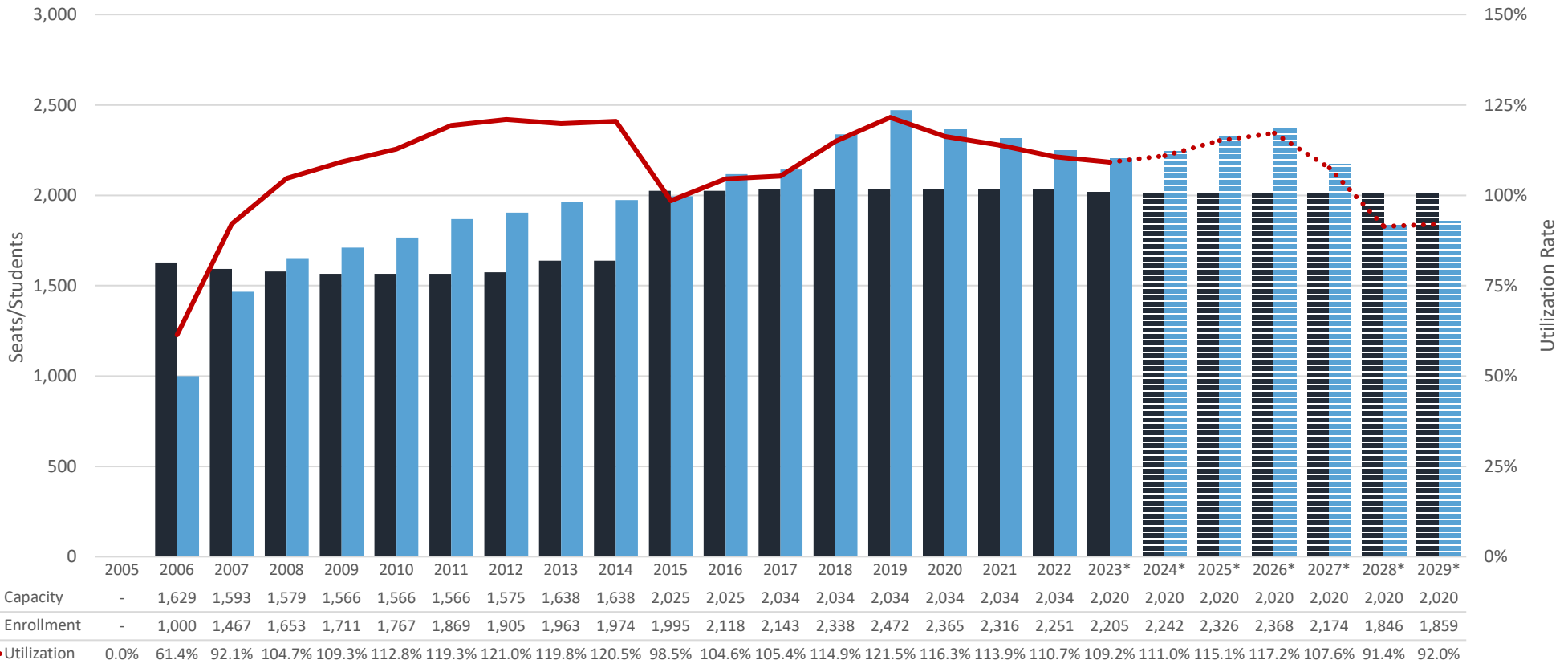
Plan Area and Adjacent High Schools Collective Utilization Trend & Projections



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Clarksburg HS

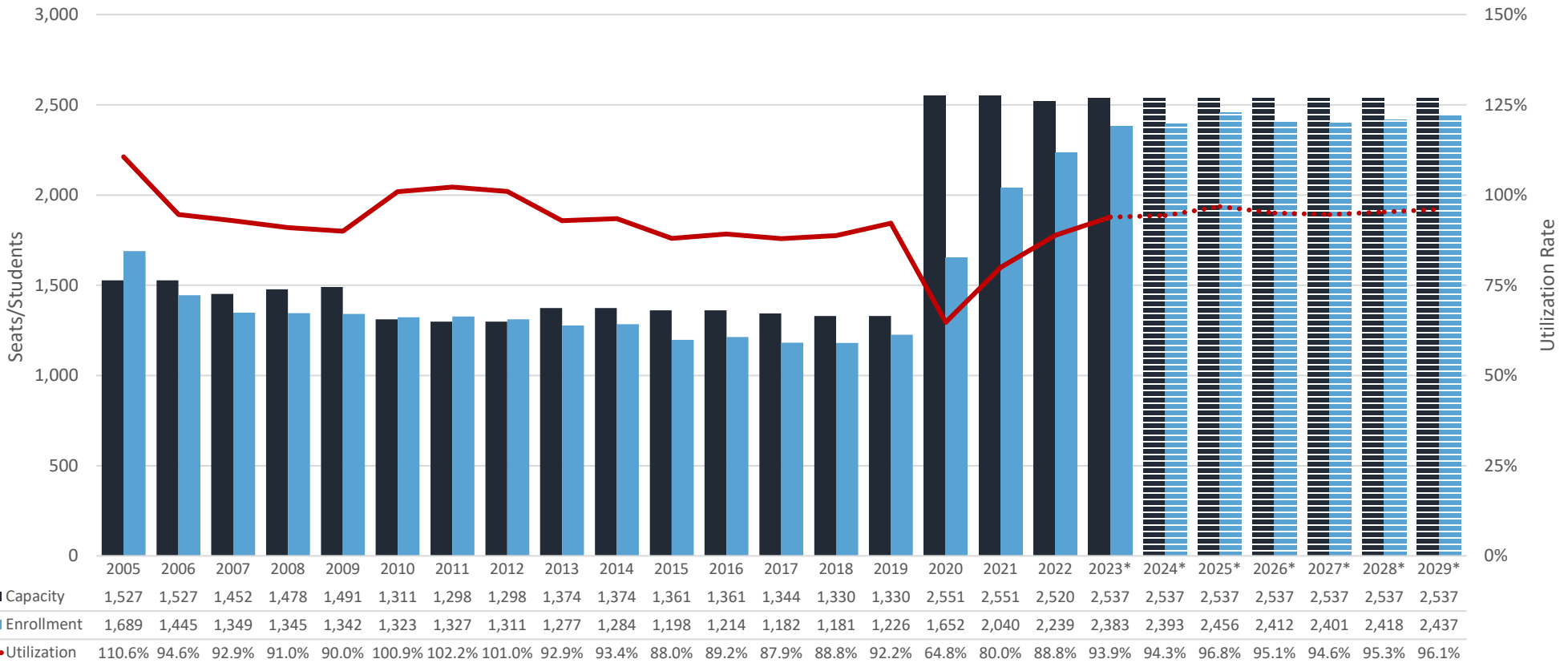
- Year facility built: 1995
- Last renovation: 2006
- Classroom addition: 2015



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Seneca Valley HS

- Year facility built: 1974
- Last renovation: 2020



*Based on MCPS' FY2025 CIP preliminary enrollment and projections.

Student Generation Rates Analysis

FY 2024-2025		ES	MS	HS	K-12 Total
Turnover Impact Area	Single Family Detached	0.185	0.102	0.154	0.440
	Single Family Attached	0.218	0.119	0.167	0.504
	Multi-Family Low-Rise	0.116	0.061	0.081	0.258
	Multi-Family High-Rise	0.073	0.042	0.053	0.168
School Impact Area - Clarksburg	Single Family Detached	0.290	0.170	0.225	0.685
	Single Family Attached	0.338	0.158	0.182	0.678
	Multi-Family Low-Rise	0.245	0.130	0.164	0.539
	Multi-Family High-Rise	0.132	0.086	0.057	0.276

Student Generation Rate of Single-Family Homes by Year Last Sold

