



Montgomery Planning Upcounty Division

January 14, 2025

Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

Emerging Ideas Presentation

Tonight's Agenda

1. About Montgomery Planning and the Sector Plan
2. Community engagement and planning efforts to date
3. Draft Visions, Goals, and Emerging Ideas
4. Audience Polls, Comments and Questions
5. Next Steps

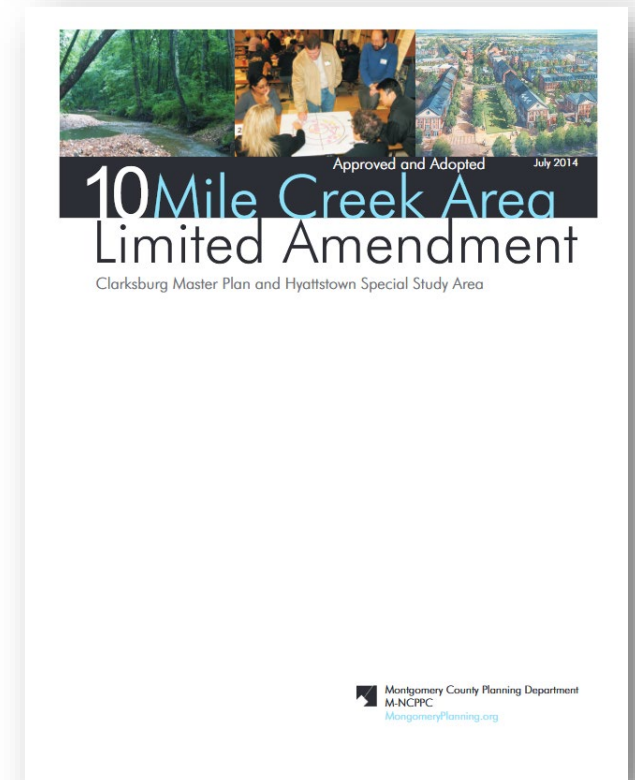
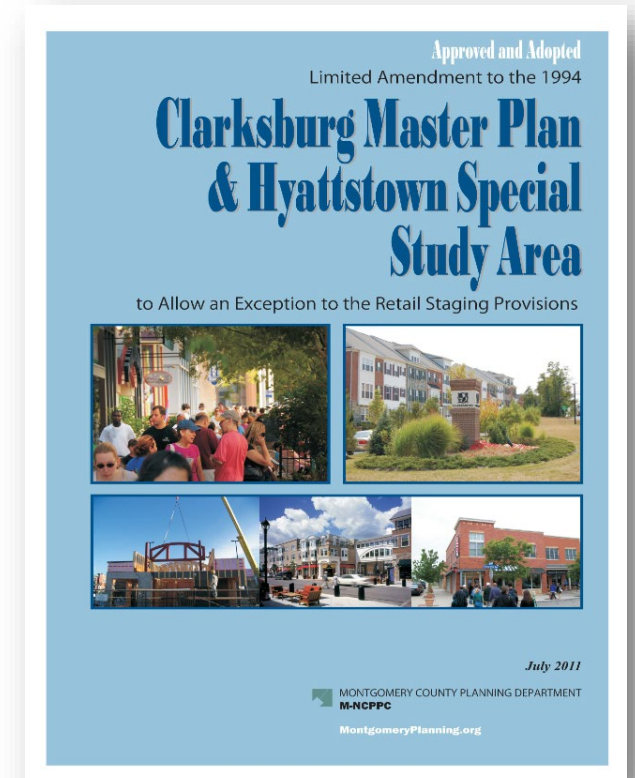
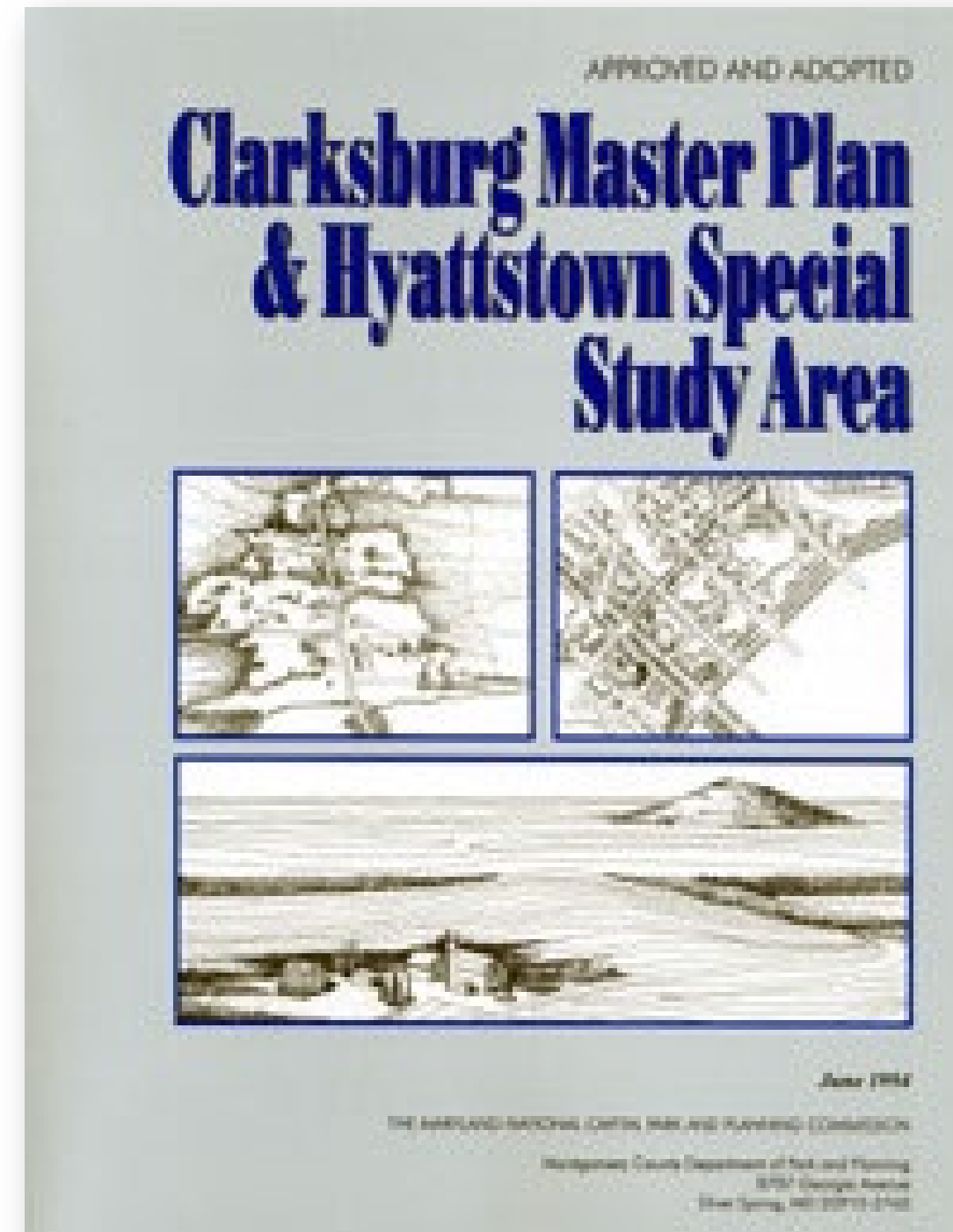
Introduction to Montgomery Planning

- Develop plans to guide future change
- Review applications for development conformance
- Analyze and study county information and issues



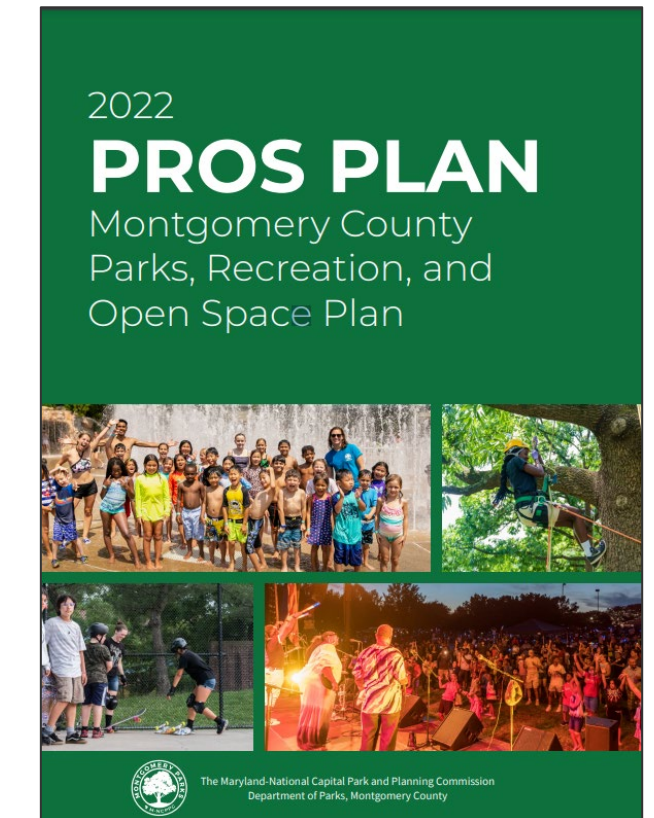
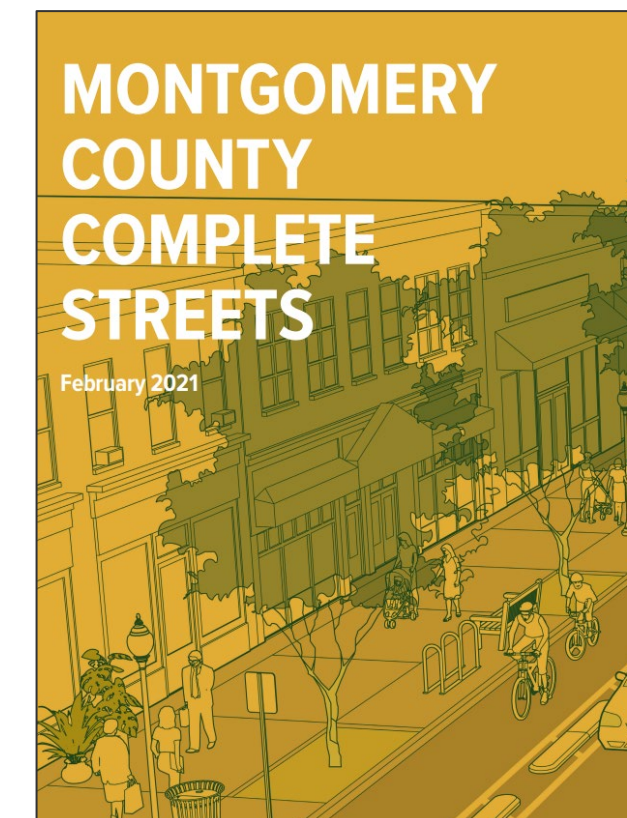
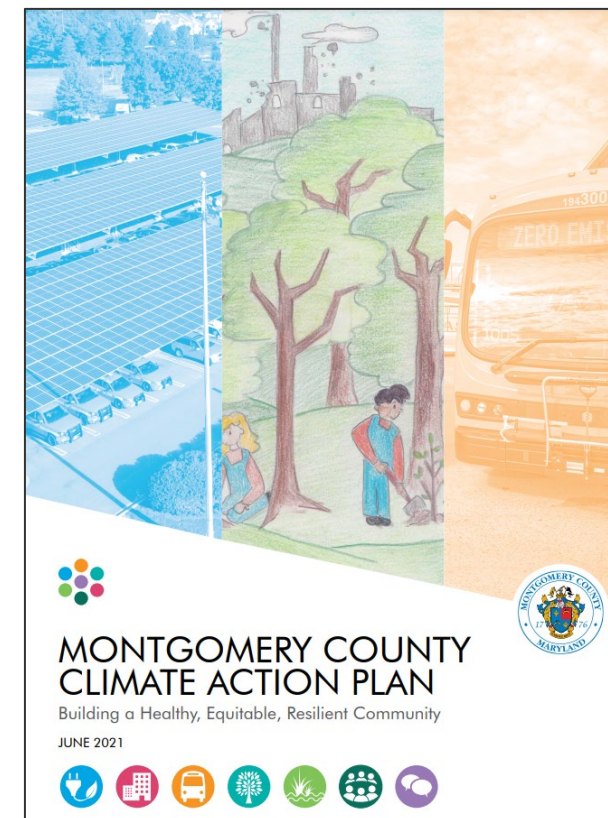
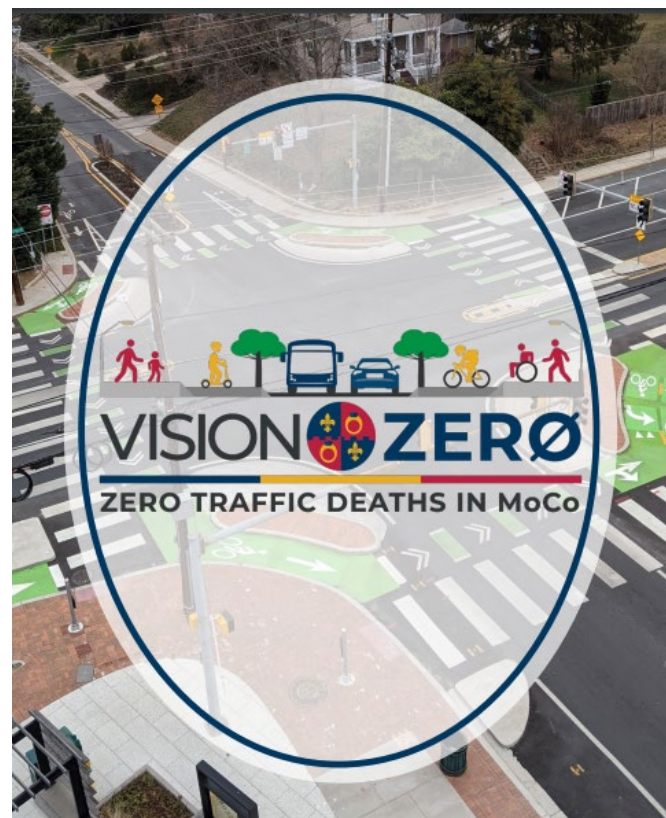
Master Planning in Clarksburg

- *Clarksburg Master Plan* approved in 1994
- Minor amendments adopted in 2011 and 2014
- Plans are typically revisited every 20-25 years
- 1994 plan remains in effect until a new plan is approved and adopted



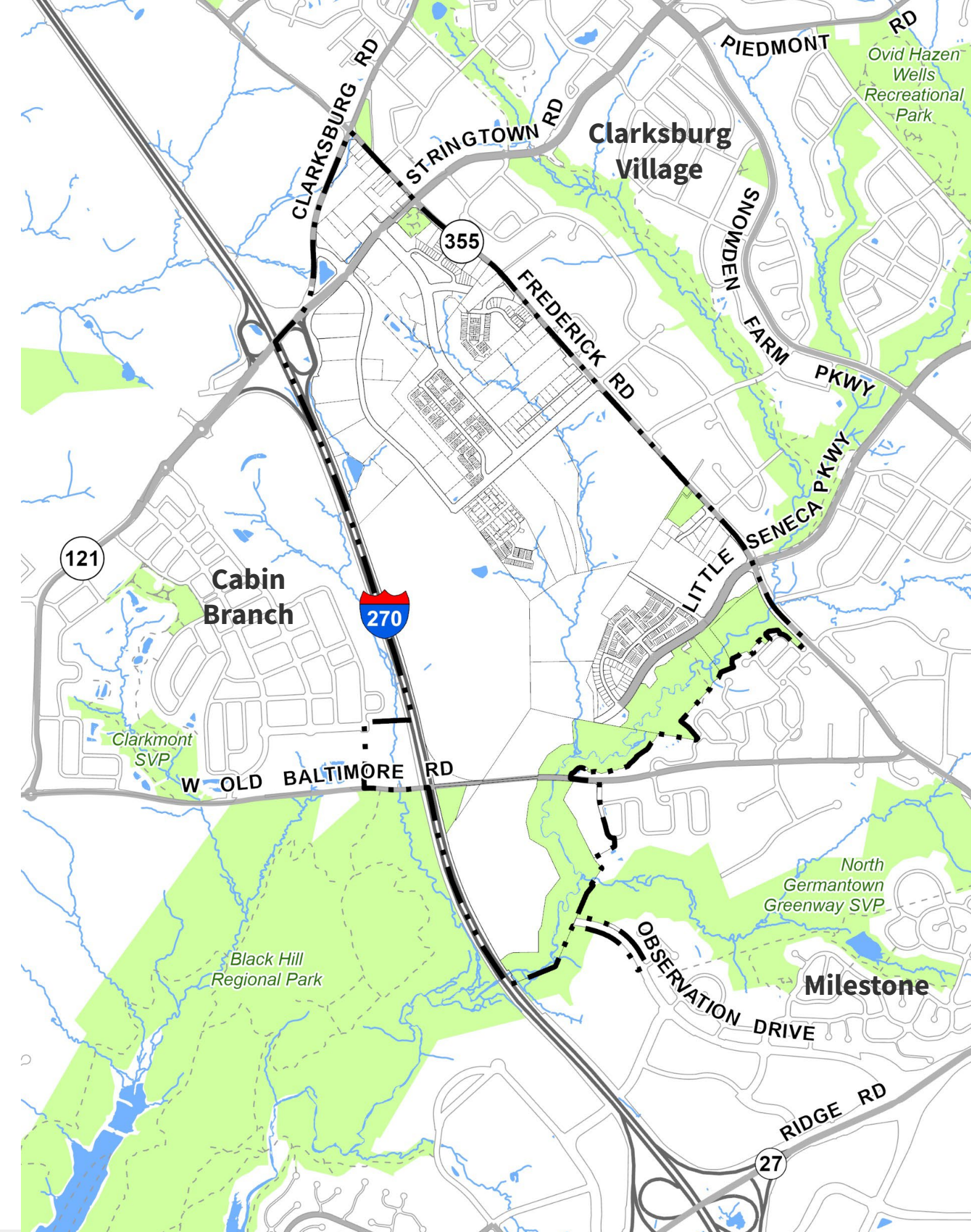
Planning Framework

Montgomery Planning evaluates existing conditions, examines changes since the adoption of previous master plans, considers best practices, and assesses guiding plans and policies.



Purpose of the Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

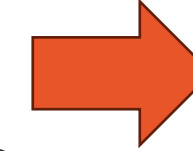
Re-examine a portion of the 1994 *Clarksburg Master Plan* to explore the potential for new housing and commercial development and how to complete transportation networks and protect the environment as future development occurs.



Community Engagement

- **Summer 2023:** Community kick-off meetings
- **Summer 2023:** Neighborhood canvassing
- **Fall 2023:** Community listening sessions
- **Spring 2024:** Community visioning workshops
- **Ongoing:** Planning team tabling ‘pop-ups’ and community events
- **Ongoing:** Meetings with community organizations and other stakeholders
- **Ongoing:** Communications via website and e-letter

We are here



 Public engagement opportunities

What we've heard so far...

- Provide for more places to live, shop, gather, and recreate
- Don't overburden the community from future growth impacts
- Improve access to existing neighborhoods and community assets
- Protect and improve water quality and natural resources
- Establish safer streets and intersection crossings
- Improve public transit routes and shelters
- Add wayfinding and interpretive markers and paths that highlight the natural setting, community character, and heritage of Clarksburg



Overall Plan Vision











The Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan envisions a harmonious balance between thoughtful, sustainable development and the preservation of natural resources, fostering a vibrant, connected, and resilient neighborhood that enhances the quality of life for all residents while respecting Clarksburg's environmental and community values.

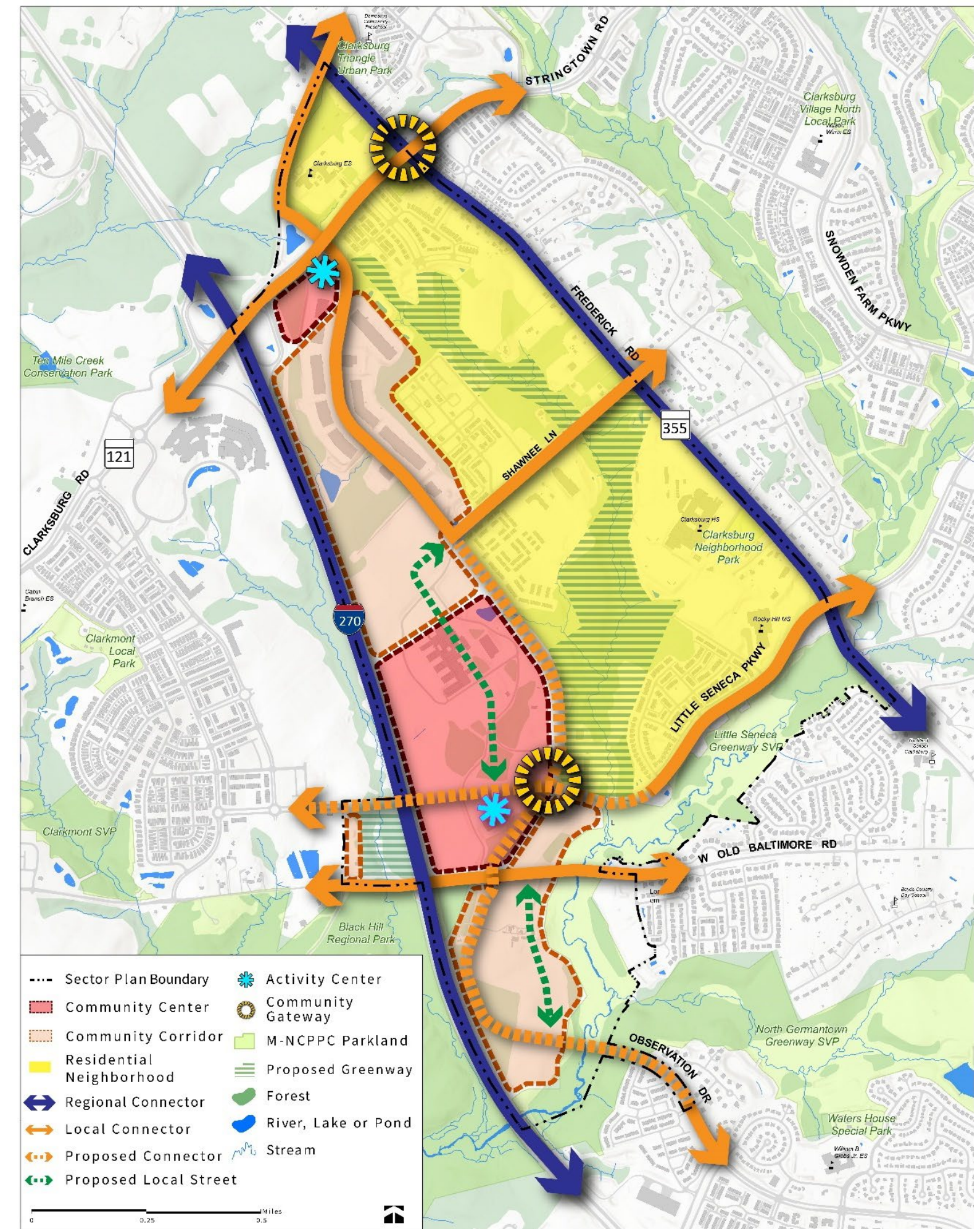
Land Use and Development

Draft Goals

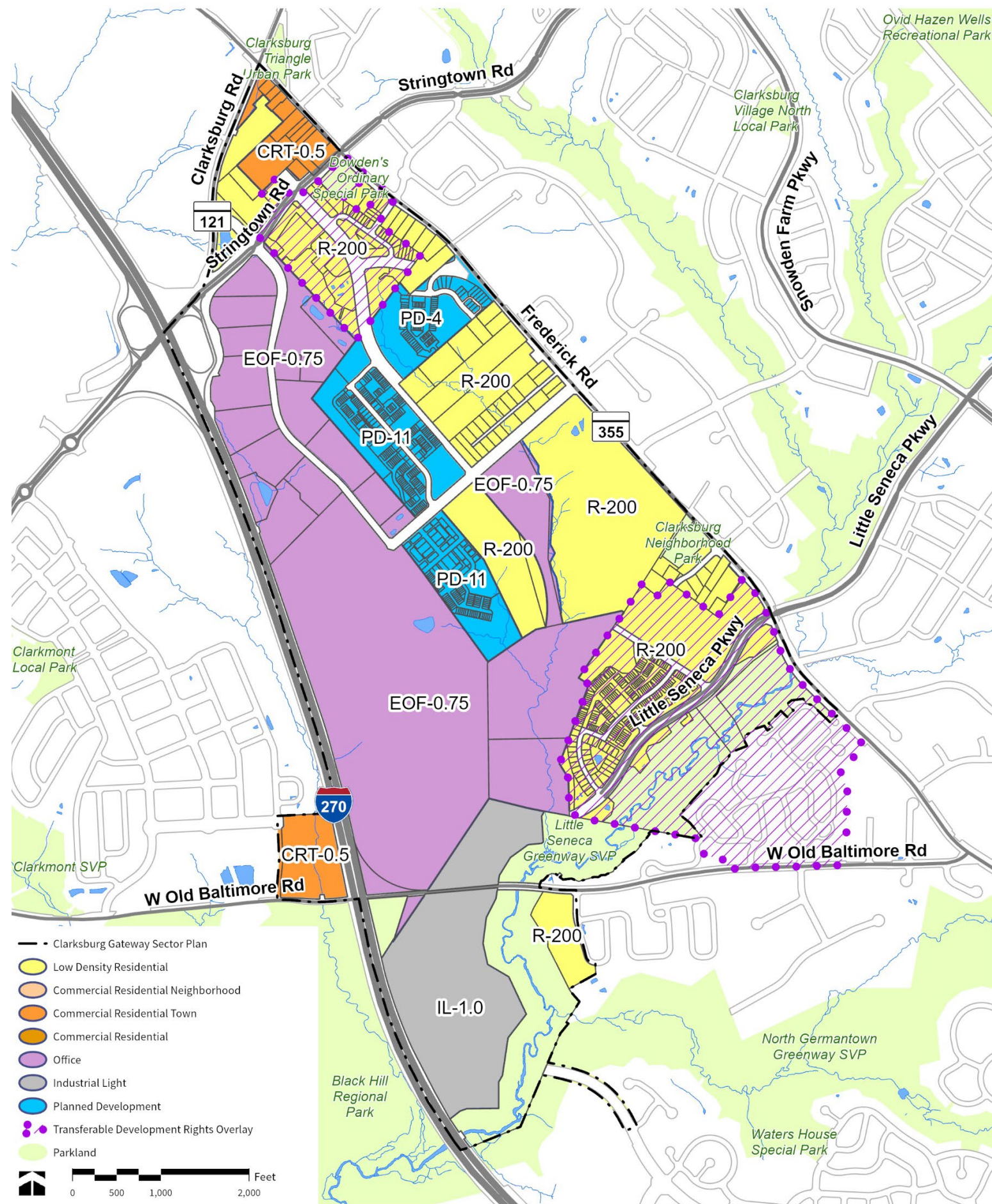
- Support compact, mixed-use development along the planned transit corridor that integrates housing, retail, neighborhood services, and amenities with the surrounding Clarksburg community.
- Maintain a primarily residential character along Frederick Road (MD 355) while allowing for a moderate increase in allowable residential density and small-scale commercial uses.

DRAFT Concept Framework Plan

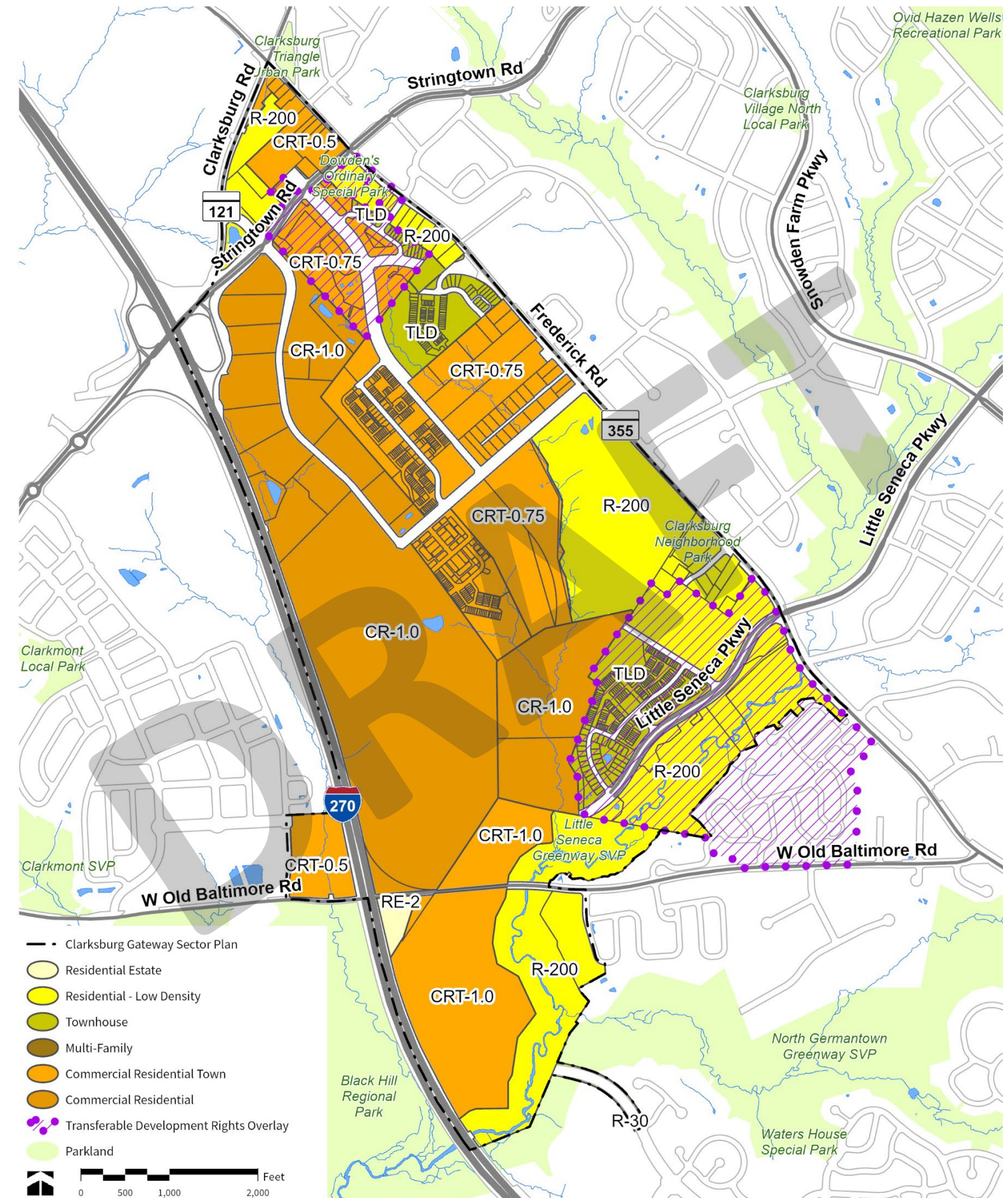
-  Community Center
-  Community Corridor
-  Residential Neighborhood
-  Activity Centers
-  Community Gateways
-  Proposed Local Connectors ()
-  and Local Streets ()
-  Proposed Greenway



Existing Zoning



Proposed Zoning



Land Use and Development – Public Benefits

Emerging Ideas

Optional Method of Development Public Benefit Priorities:

- Incorporate sustainable features into site designs
- Achieve greater than 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)
- Include residential units of three-bedrooms or larger
- If the COMSAT building is proposed for full or partial demolition, provide mitigation commensurate to the loss of the historic resource
- Partner with a public agency or organization to incorporate a Major Public Facility as part of future development on the COMSAT property

Community Design and Placemaking

Draft Goals

- Ensure buildings help define the public realm by fronting and framing streets and public spaces, with parking and services behind and to the rear of buildings.
- Design building facades and entries that respond to and help activate the public realm at the ground floor.
- Locate higher-density development and mixed uses near transit stations and community centers and ensure new development transitions in scale to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Utilize placemaking strategies to enhance and promote local character and history of Clarksburg and identify locations for art, culture, and historic interpretation installations in parks and other public spaces.

Community Design and Placemaking

Emerging Ideas

- Provide active commercial store front entrance features through building design and architectural elements, such as entry awnings, tall windows, distinct first floor façade materials or treatments, depending on the use of the building.
- Place buildings closer to the street with parking and services behind or to the sides of buildings to promote an active, pedestrian-oriented public realm.



Germantown Avenue in Philadelphia



Retail fronting streets with parking behind at the Riverdale Park Town Center



Food hall with covered arcade at the Riverdale Park Town Center

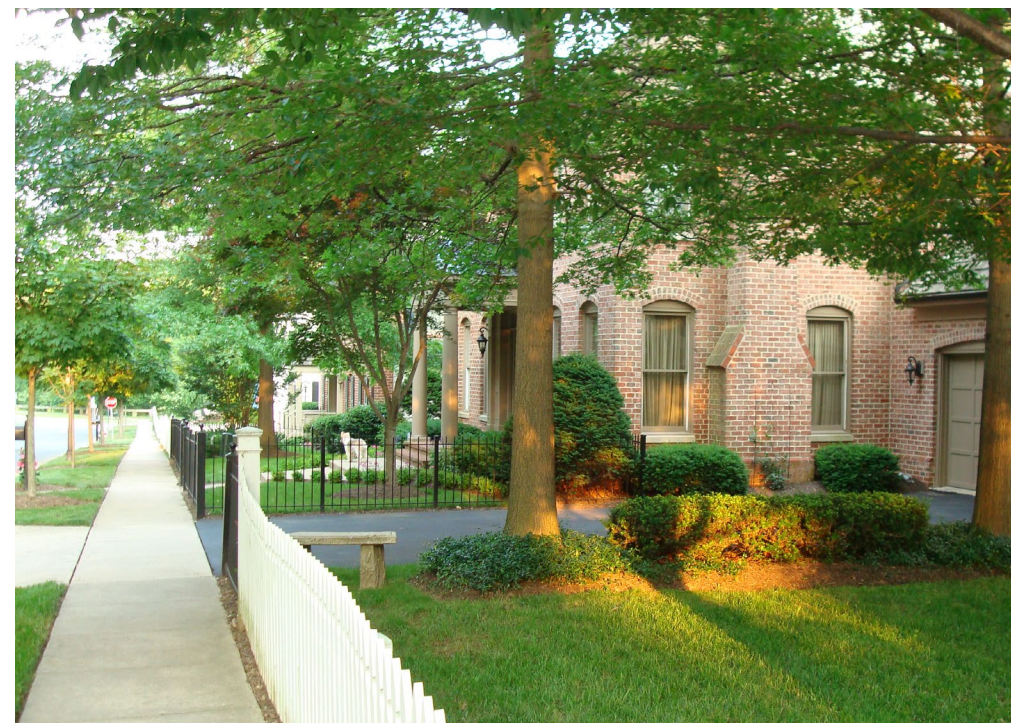
Community Design and Placemaking

Emerging Ideas

- Create streetscape transitions between the public, semi-public, and private realms of new single-unit detached, attached, and multi-unit residential housing.
- Residence should incorporate architectural features and designs that blend with and contribute to a pleasant and inviting semi-public and public realm.



Porches, stoops and bay windows add visual interest



Fences define the beginning of the semi-private space

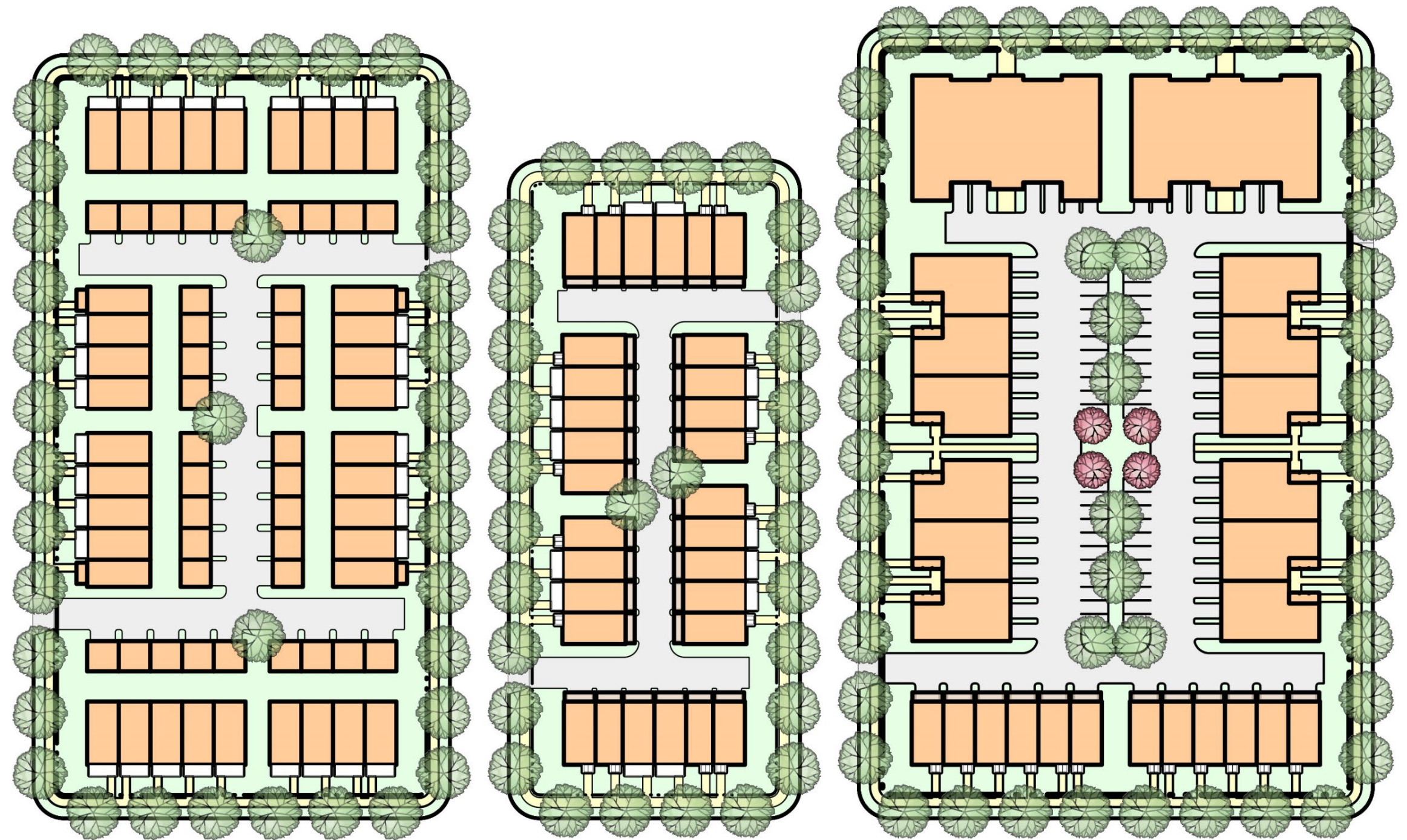


Front courtyard defines the entry to a multifamily building

Community Design and Placemaking

Emerging Ideas

- Except for site constraints, avoid front-loaded units along residential streets in order to create attractive, walkable streets with sidewalks uninterrupted by curb cuts and to provide areas for ample community on-street parking.
- Primary parking for residences should be located internally within blocks.
- Limit curb cuts on blocks.
- Provide shade trees along sidewalks to promote walking.
- Provide additional residential and visitor parking along streets.



Block diagram with multiple housing types

Community Design and Placemaking

Emerging Ideas

- Provide publicly-accessible open spaces within neighborhoods, generally located along streets and/or facing buildings so they are not hidden and may be enjoyed by all users.



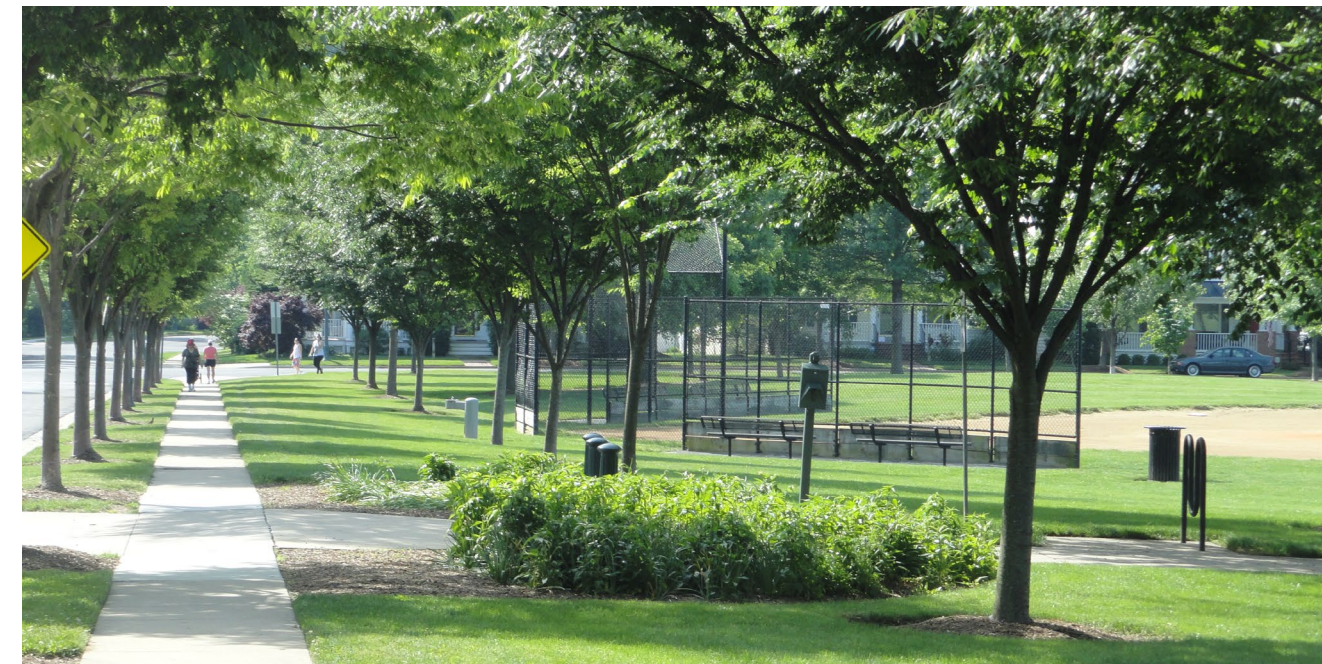
Small pocket park at the end of a block in King Farm



Small residential green with homes facing the green at Park Potomac



Larger residential green with artwork, seating, and shade trees

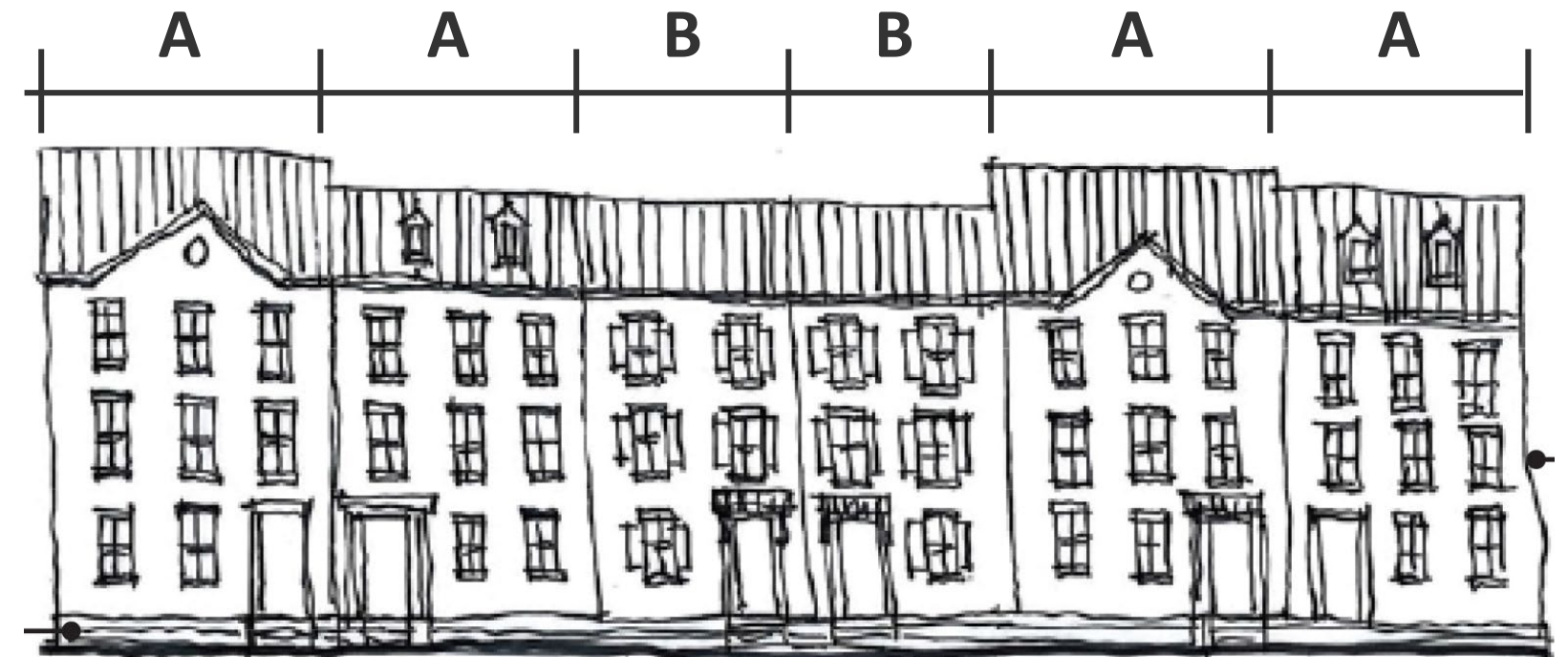


Central green space with sports courts at King Farm

Community Design and Placemaking

Emerging Ideas

- Compose building facades so that communities have cohesive elements along streetscapes. Avoid building compositions that have random architectural elements or too many window types.
- Simplify elevations and create a rhythm to townhouse strings by having consistent window spacing.
- Use architectural embellishment elements judiciously and in a consistent manner.
- Ground buildings by providing a change of materials at the base. Use consistent base height for the material rather than varying the base height for individual units within a string.
- Use color on facades judiciously. Too many color changes can cause disharmony to the overall building.



Composition of a townhouse string at the Riverdale Park Town Center

Housing

Draft Goals

- Expand opportunities to increase residential density, especially along major corridors and where additional housing can support Complete Community development.
- Support creative housing options (*e.g.*, “*missing middle*” housing types such as *tiny houses, cottages, duplexes, multiplexes, and small apartment buildings; shared housing, cooperative housing, live-work units, and accessory dwelling units*), to help meet housing needs and diversify housing options.
- Increase income restricted affordable housing units, especially for low-and-moderate-income households.

Housing – Affordable Housing

Emerging Ideas

- New developments should provide at least 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs).
- Prioritize additional MPDUs as a top public benefit for the Optional Development Method in the Commercial/Residential family of zones (C/R) zones to provide additional affordable housing that is needed within the Master Plan Area.



Housing – Housing Production

Emerging Ideas

- Add more units to the housing inventory, including more types of housing units to increase the amount of housing and to meet a diversity of incomes and households.
- Prioritize three-bedroom or larger units for residential development projects as a public benefit for the Optional Development Method in the Commercial/Residential family of zones (C/R) to provide additional family-sized units.
- New housing developments in the plan area should strive to increase the quality and quantity of housing units that are accessible to people with disabilities and older adults.



Housing – Fair Housing

Emerging Ideas

- Foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to housing and opportunity based on protected characteristics.
 - Protected characteristics include race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, source of income, or military status.



Transportation – Street Network

Draft Goals

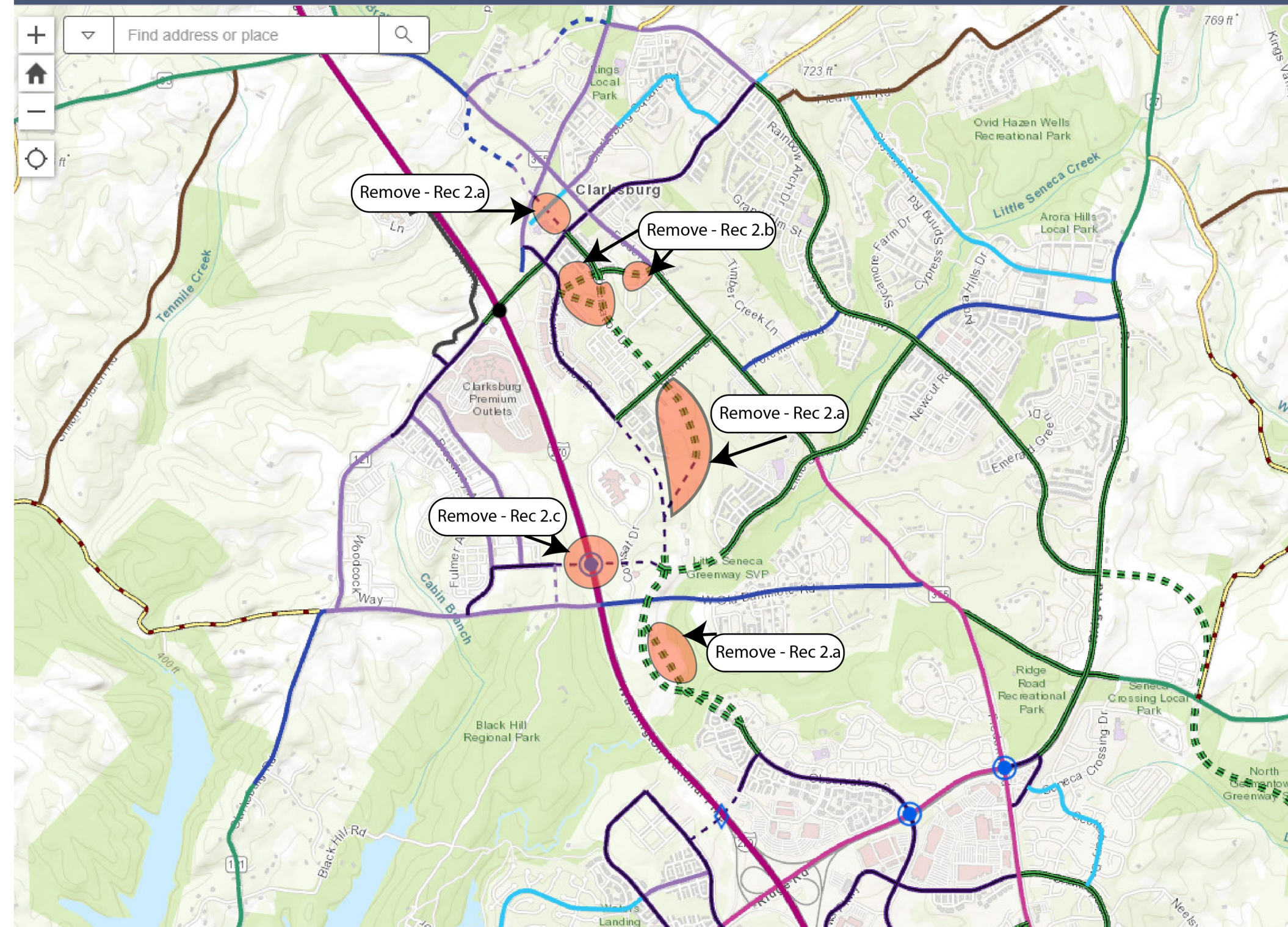
- Prioritize safety, multi-modal accessibility, and placemaking opportunities over vehicle movement efficiency while incorporating Complete Streets design and modern Vision Zero design practices.
- Create a hierarchy of streets as an organizing element that serves all modes of transportation and creates spaces for informal social interactions.
- Prioritize low-impact, environmentally responsible road designs and alignments over vehicle movement efficiency – minimizing road impacts to protect the aquatic and terrestrial biological functions of the stream valleys.

Transportation – Street Network

Emerging Ideas

- Reorient the planned street network to improve connectivity, support all travel modes, and minimize environmental impacts.
 - Shifting Observation out of the stream valley
 - Enhanced bridges
 - Replace Little Seneca Parkway interchange with overpass
 - Establish internal main street

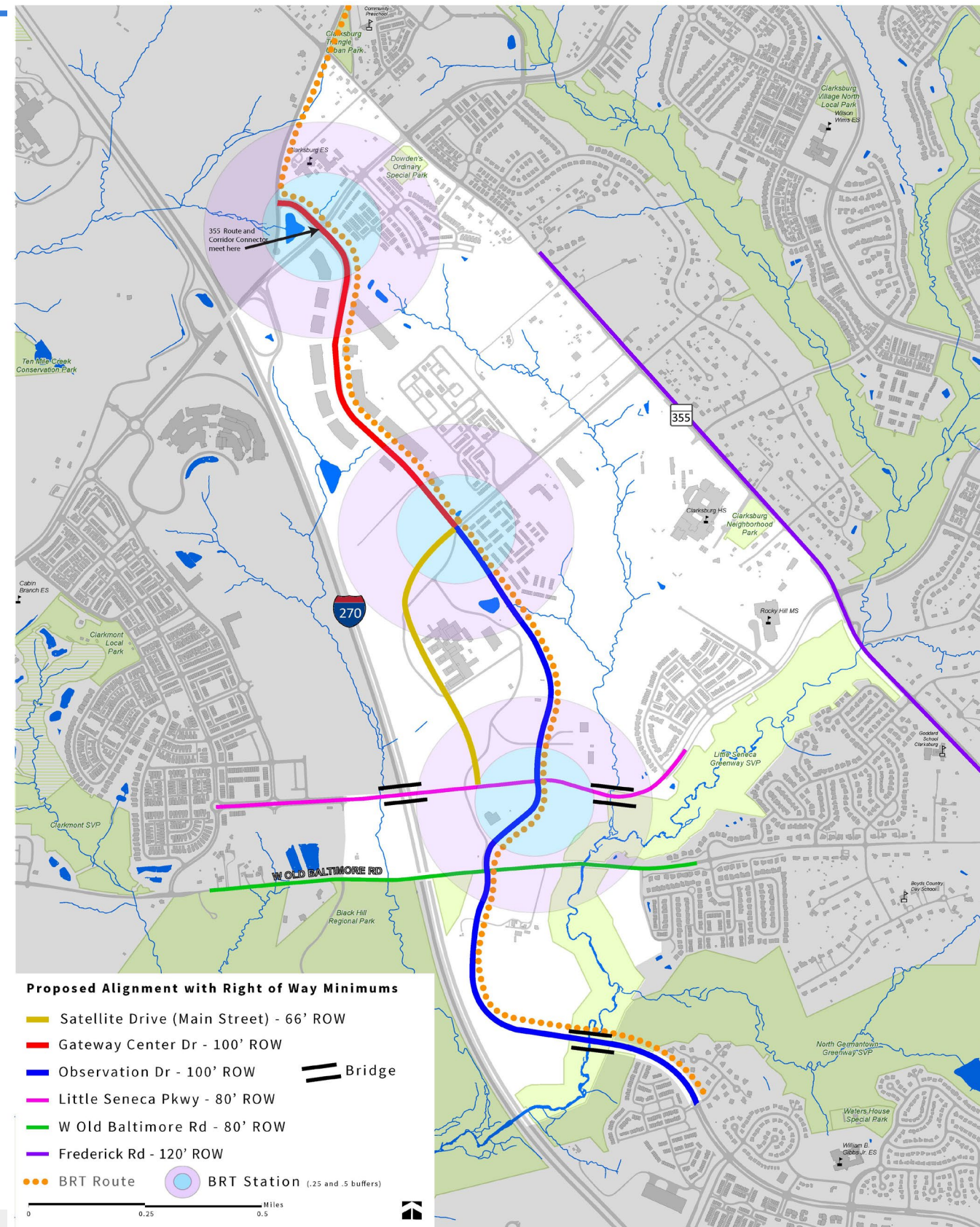
Master Plan of Highways and Transitways



Transportation – Street Network

Emerging Ideas

- Reorient the planned street network to improve connectivity, support all travel modes, and minimize environmental impacts.
 - Shifting Observation out of the stream valley
 - Enhanced bridges
 - Replace Little Seneca Parkway interchange with overpass
 - Establish internal main street



Transportation – Public Transit

Draft Goals

- Support and refine Corridor Forward recommendations for Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Connector route – creating high quality stations that are sheltered, comfortable, and support opportunities for multimodal travel.
- Improve existing public transportation infrastructure and operations to reflect community needs and BRT integration.

Transportation – Public Transit

Emerging Ideas

- Establish high quality Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor and improve current transit services.
 - Establish dedicated bus transit lanes on Corridor Connector route.
 - Ensure BRT stations are comfortable and well-lit, with sheltered stops and improved wayfinding signage.
 - Improve quality of existing local bus stops by the same criteria above.
 - Study increased frequency on existing local routes: 73, 75, 79.



Transportation – Active Transportation

Draft Goals

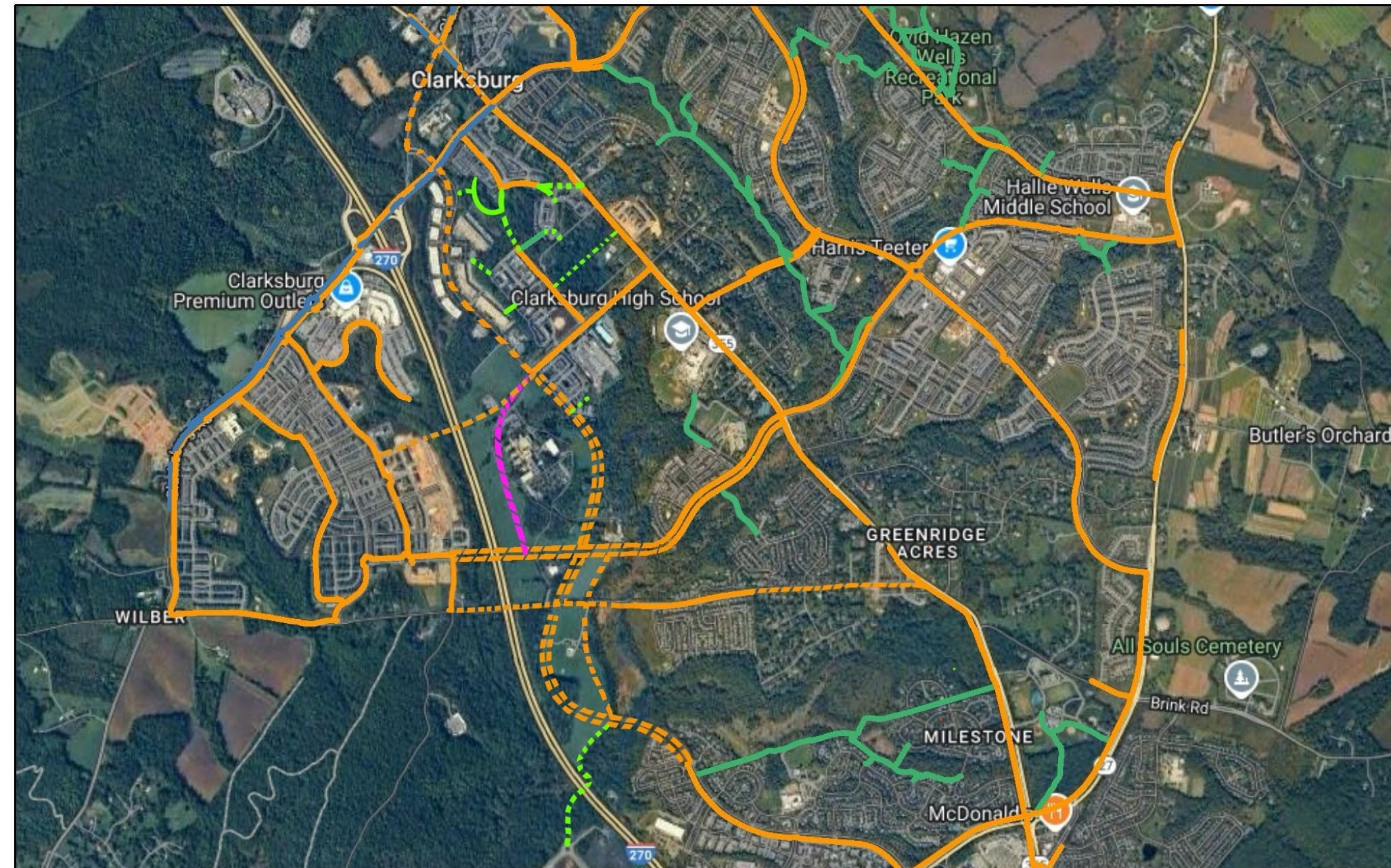
- Complete a network of low-stress, shared use trails and paths that foster connectivity between communities and provide safe and comfortable access to transportation, schools, parks, and essential amenities.
- Study key intersections that increase friction to walking and biking and recommending safety improvements.

Transportation – Active Transportation

Bikeway Draft Recommendations

Emerging Ideas

- Establish a comfortable, continuous network of low-stress bike/walk/roll opportunities.
 - Implement Bicycle Master Plan recommendations through new development and capital improvements
 - Provide for a future path along West Old Baltimore Road under I-270
 - Establish enhanced footpaths between neighborhoods to improve walking convenience
 - Implement a comprehensive wayfinding program integrating the path network and public transit



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All Existing Bikeways

- Trails
- Sidepaths

Separated Bike Lanes

- Striped Bikeways
- Bikeable Shoulders

New shared use path

Curbless Street

Footpath Connection

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Environment

Draft Goals

- Conserve the water quality and ecosystems of the Little Seneca Creek Watershed tributaries and the Clarksburg Special Protection Area.
- Conserve and expand forest stands and tree canopy on public and private lands.
- Avoid, minimize or mitigate the impacts of development on natural resources.
- Implement sustainable design elements into new development on public and private lands.
- Promote awareness and education about the environmental values of the sector plan area and sustainable environmental practices.

Environment – Water Quality and Quantity

Emerging Ideas

- Locate and design new roadways to avoid sensitive environmental features, avoid grading and land disturbance, and require the least area of impervious surface possible.
- Conserve land along Little Seneca Creek tributaries by private conservation easement or by establishing or expanding public parkland.
- Minimize stormwater runoff using site design techniques, such as vegetated riparian buffers, expanded urban tree canopy, and minimized impervious surfaces.
- Implement stormwater retrofits and stream restoration projects to help manage or remediate impacts of impervious areas.



Cool Brook Tributary of Little Seneca Creek

Environment – Forests and Tree Stands



Tree-lined sidewalk in the Gateway Commons neighborhood

Emerging Ideas

- Preserve existing and plant new tree canopy along new and existing street rights-of-way and within public and private properties to the greatest extent possible.
- Provide tree canopy within public gathering spaces, within surface parking lots, and along pedestrian corridors in the public right-of-way.
- Advocate for the planting of native and locally adaptive tree species and landscape vegetation, which requires less water and is more resilient to local climate variations.

Environment – Sustainable Development

Emerging Ideas

- Encourage the use of best management practices (BMPs) and nature-based design principles for all new development.
- Use high reflectivity materials on buildings and hardscapes, such as ‘cool’ roofs, green roofs, and ‘cool’ pavements, and install shade trees or structures to reduce heat absorption on surfaces that shed or store rainwater.
- Design new water or sewer connections to minimize environmental impacts, prioritizing gravity sewers, construction in public rights-of-way, and connections to existing nearby pipelines.



Stormwater management facilities in a common space at Dowden's Station neighborhood

Historic Preservation

Draft Goals

- Recognize and interpret the diversity, heritage, and history of the Plan area.
- Evaluate historic resources in the Plan area for historic designation, interpretation, documentation, or other support of historic preservation.
- Educate owners of historic properties on the benefits of local, state, and federal historic preservation tax credit programs.

Historic Preservation – Historic Site and District

Designate the Community of Faith United Methodist Church & Cemetery Site and Clarksburg Heights District in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation



Aerial showing the location of the Community of Faith United Methodist Church & Cemetery site (noted with the red pin) and the Clarksburg Heights district (outlined in yellow). Views of the church (center) and examples of houses in the Clarksburg Heights district.

Historic Preservation – COMSAT Laboratories

Emerging Ideas

- Find that COMSAT Laboratories meets the Designation Criteria for listing in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* as outlined in §24A of the Montgomery County Code but **recommend against designation** as a Master Plan Historic Site.

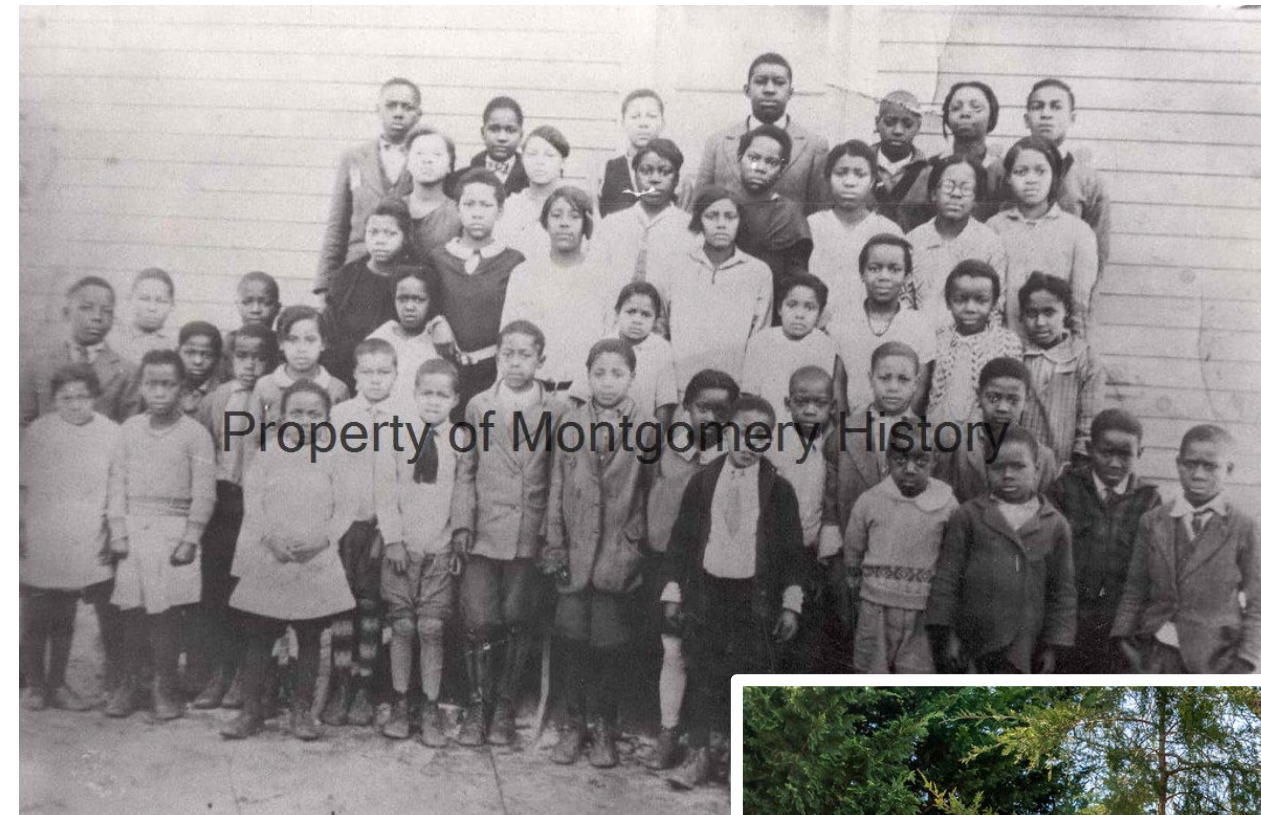


*View of the north elevation of COMSAT Laboratories, ca. 1969.
Source: Montgomery Planning Archives.*

Historic Preservation – Interpretation & Placemaking

Emerging Ideas

- Install a highly-visible gateway and wayfinding system at the northwest corner of Stringtown Road and Frederick Road.
- Collaborate with and support local partners to explore interpretation of existing and approved historic sites and districts that recognize the diversity, heritage, and history of Clarksburg.



Photograph of students at the demolished segregated Black elementary school, formerly located in the present-day Clarksburg Neighborhood Park, ca. 1932 (left). Source: Ethel Foreman Collection, Montgomery History.



Clarksburg Historic District welcome sign

Parks, Open Space, & Recreation

Draft Goals

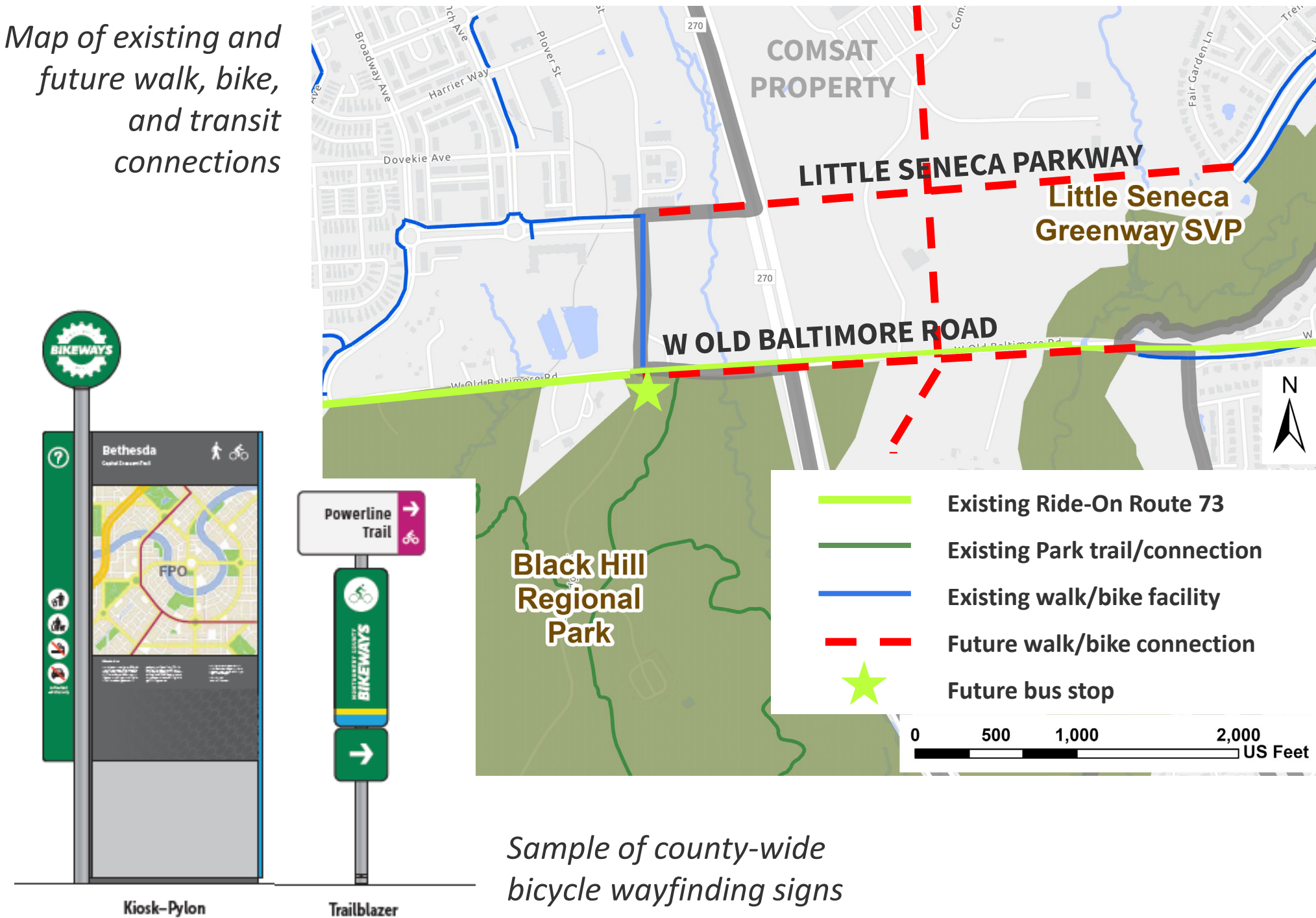
- Provide a range of park and open space types through the Sector Plan area to best serve the Clarksburg community.
- Improve connectivity and access to existing parks, especially to Black Hill Regional Park from east of I-270.
- Establish more active recreation opportunities in the Sector Plan area where possible and appropriate.
- Expand parkland and protected natural areas within the Sector Plan area where possible and appropriate.

Parks, Open Space, & Recreation - Access

Emerging Ideas

- Improve wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycle connections to all parks near the Sector Plan area.
- Improve access to Black Hill Regional Park via transit service and a shared use path along West Old Baltimore Road and/or a future extension of Little Seneca Parkway across I-270.
- Improve access to Little Bennett Regional Park and Ovid Hazen Wells Recreation Park by completing planned pedestrian/bikeway improvements on Frederick Road (MD 355), Clarksburg Road, Stringtown Road, and Piedmont Road.

Map of existing and future walk, bike, and transit connections



Sample of county-wide bicycle wayfinding signs

Parks, Open Space, & Recreation - Amenities

Emerging Ideas

- Establish a network of open spaces throughout the COMSAT site, including an 8- to 12-acre local park or Privately Owned Public Space (POPS).
- Consider temporary public uses of the Linthicum East Elementary School site prior to a need to build a school on the site.
- Investigate potential for additional amenities at Dowden's Ordinary Special Park that align with its historic significance as a gathering space.
- Support low-impact activation in the median of Observation Drive and/or Robert's Tavern Drive by the adjacent HOA or other organization.

*COMSAT
open space
should
include active
recreation*

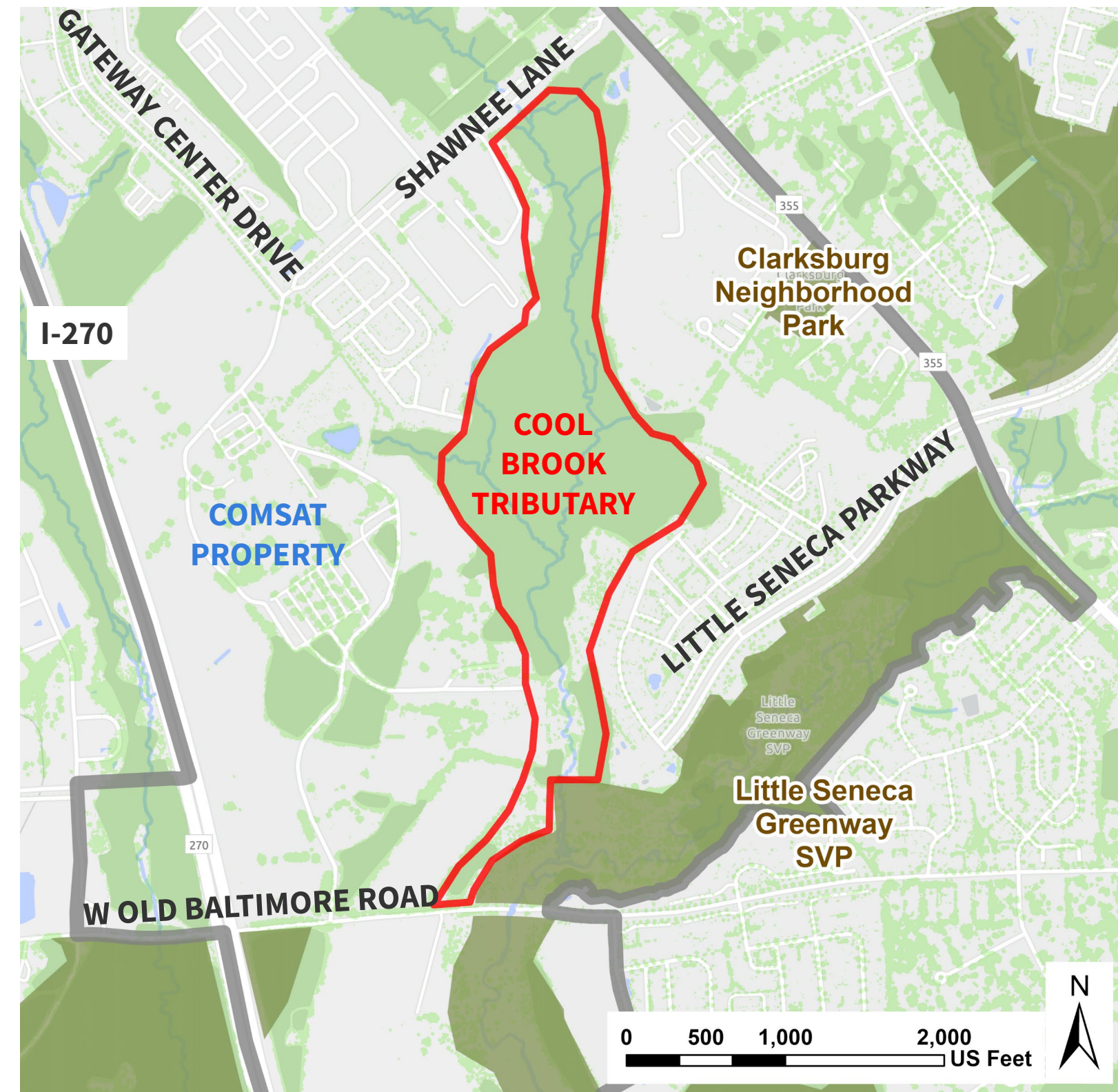


*Existing
interpretive
structure at
Dowden's
Ordinary
Special Park*

Parks, Open Space, & Recreation - Conservation

Emerging Ideas

- Establish parkland along Cool Brook Tributary from the existing Little Seneca Greenway Stream Valley Park to Shawnee Lane via dedication or conveyance.
- Minimize and mitigate impacts to existing and future parkland from road and bridge construction, including Observation Drive and Little Seneca Parkway.
- Explore creation of wildlife crossings to connect existing parkland on both sides of I-270, especially with any future extension of Little Seneca Parkway or I-270 construction/widening.



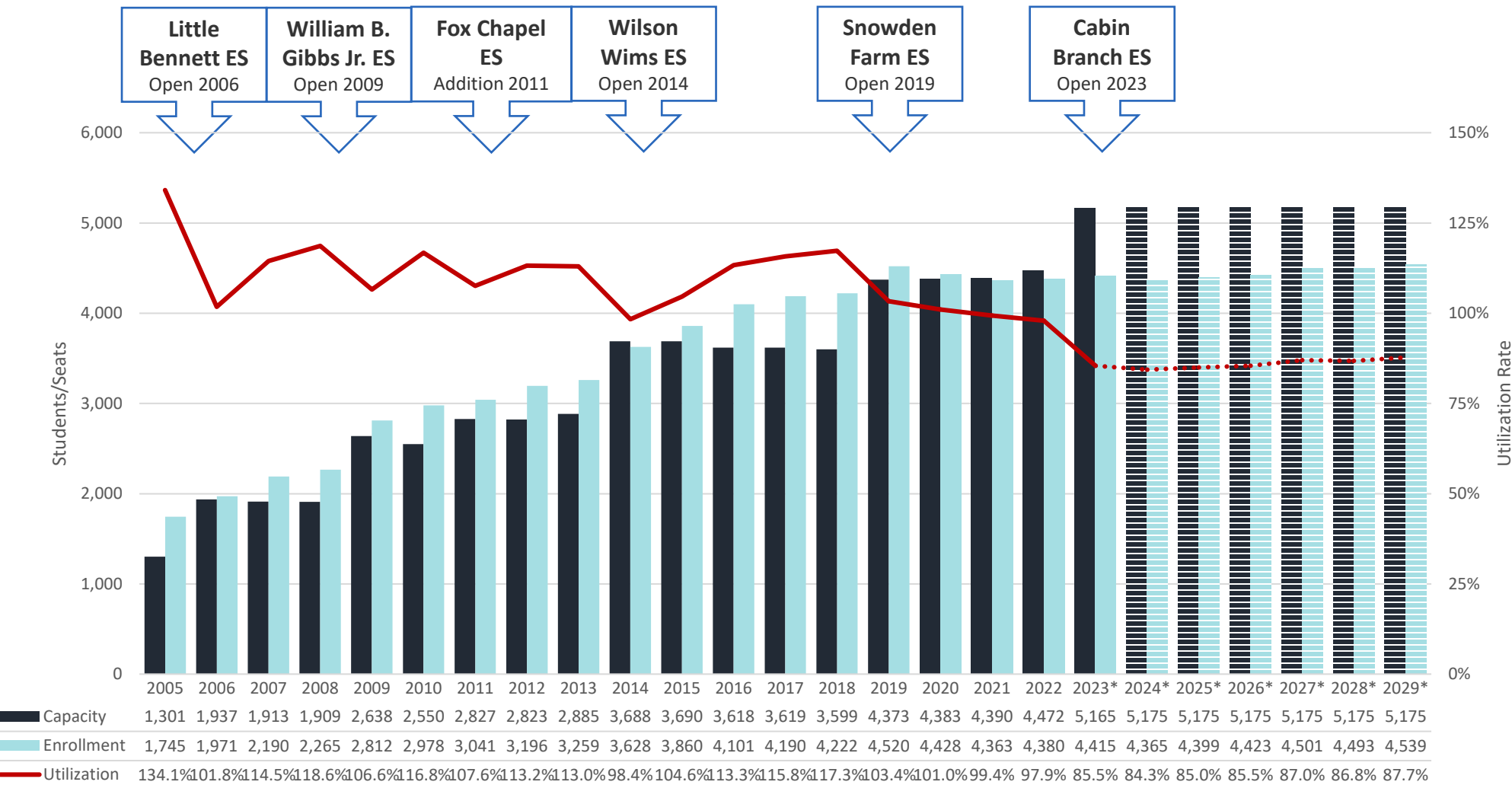
Public Facilities

Draft Goals

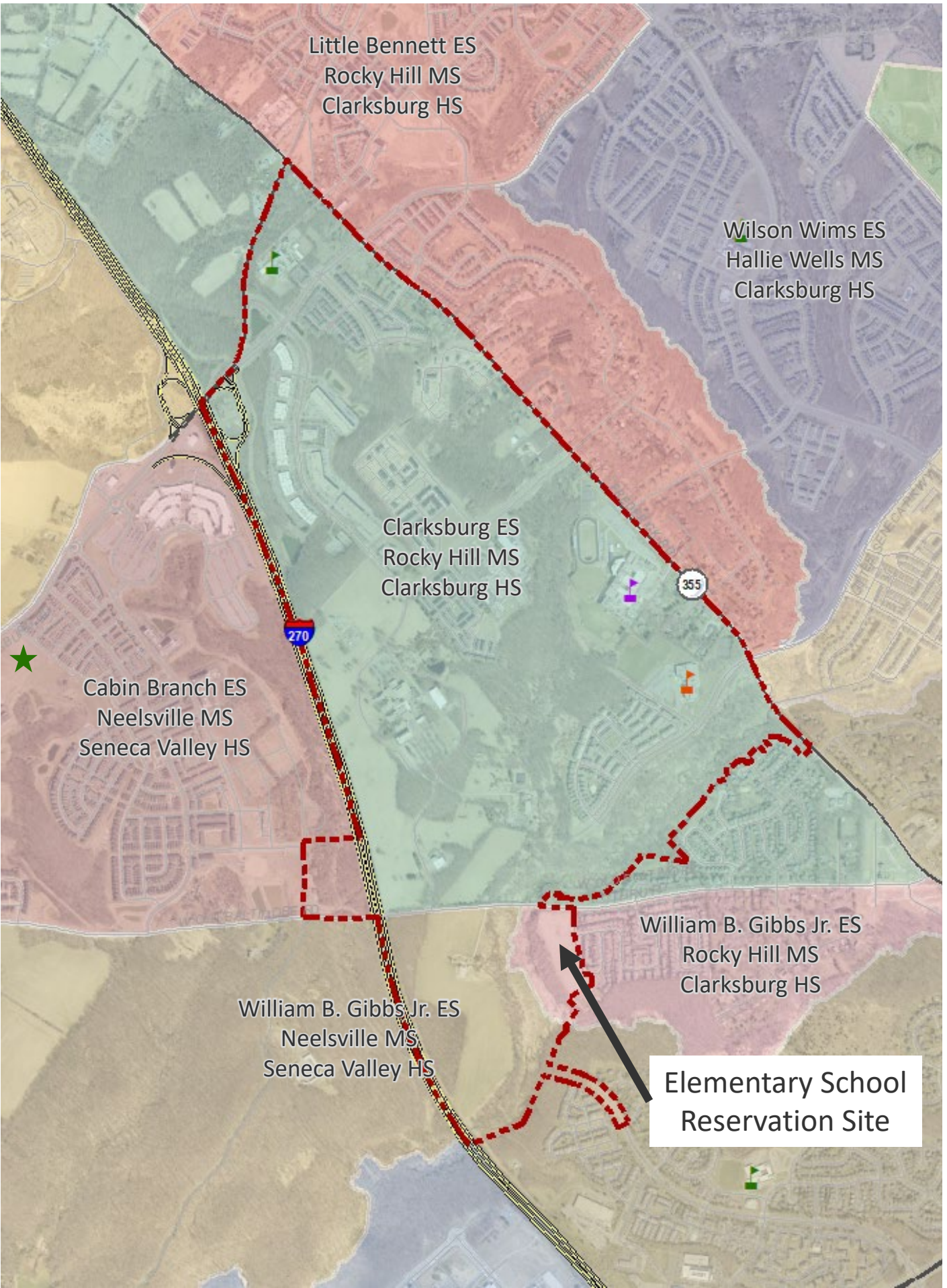
- Increase or enhance safe routes to schools for students, staff, and caregivers.
- Ensure adequate school capacity as new development occurs and future student populations shift.
- Encourage safe, accessible, and co-located public facilities and amenities.
- Ensure consistent and adequate coverage for cellular, public wireless internet, and broadband services.

Public Facilities - Schools

Plan Area & Clarksburg Cluster Elementary School Collective Utilization Trend & Projections



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



Next Steps

- **Spring 2025**
Planning Board Preliminary Recommendations Briefing
- **Winter-Spring 2025**
Preparation of Staff Working Draft
- **Summer 2025**
Public Testimony on Draft Plan and Planning Board Review
- **Fall 2025**
Transmit to County Council for Public Testimony, Review, and Action



★ Public engagement opportunities

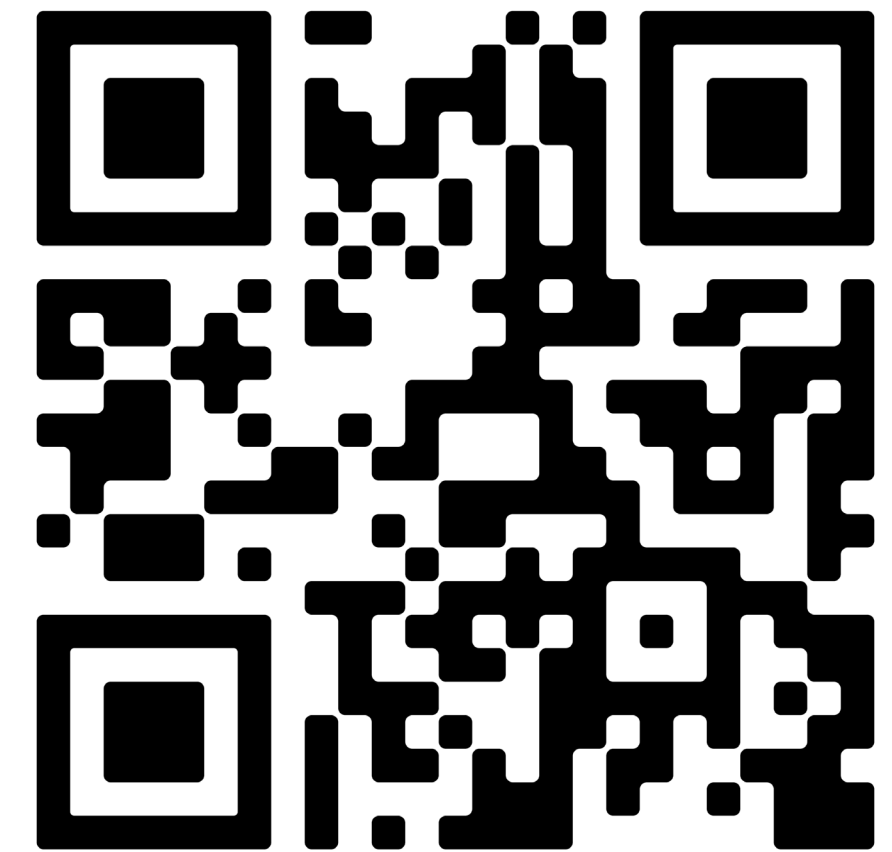
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Visit www.montgomeryplanning.org/cgsp to:

- Follow progress on the plan update
- Subscribe to our community newsletter
- Complete our Emerging Ideas questionnaire
- View upcoming and past meetings and published materials

Contact the project manager, Clark Larson, at:

clark.larson@montgomeryplanning.org or 301-495-1331



Questions?