

Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

LAND USE AND ZONING

DRAFT Vision Statement

The Sector Plan envisions a more complete and compact community within the greater Clarksburg area, connected by an expanded street grid, transit service, and active transportation routes, and offering a diverse range of housing options, parkland, and open spaces.

DRAFT Plan Goals

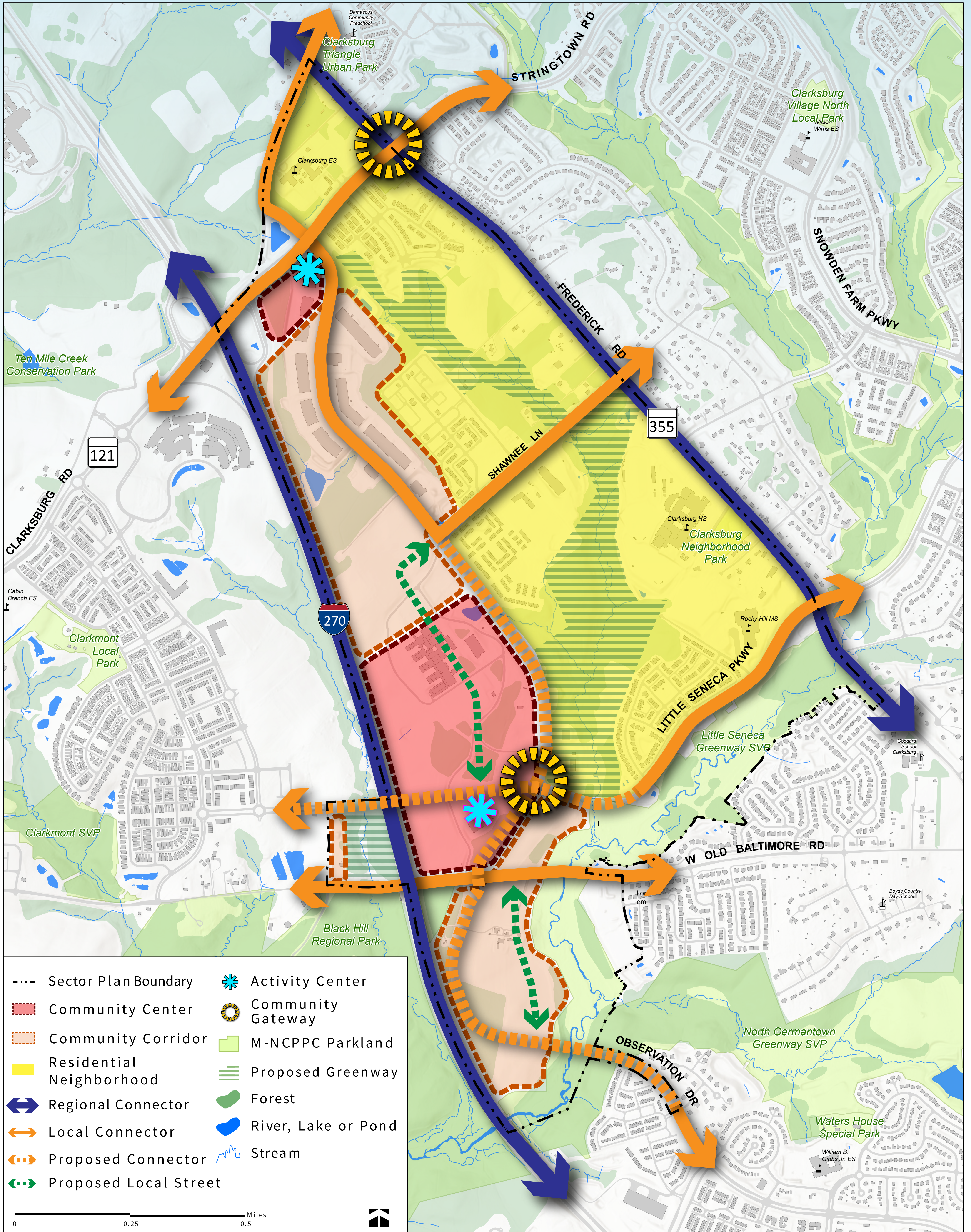
- Support compact, mixed-use development along the planned transit corridor that integrates housing, retail, neighborhood services, and amenities with the surrounding Clarksburg community.
- Maintain a primarily residential character along Frederick Road (MD 355) while allowing for a moderate increase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

Emerging Ideas

1. Implement the Concept Framework Plan's vision through future development, transportation improvements, placemaking, and public investments. [See *Concept Framework Plan*]
2. Adopt zoning recommendations that implement the plan's vision by allowing a mix of commercial (shopping, dining, and entertainment), residential, and recreational uses serving immediate and surrounding communities. [See *Draft Zoning Map*]
3. For development projects seeking approval under the Optional Method of Development, the following public benefits recommended as priorities:
 - a. For all projects, incorporate sustainable features into their site design.
 - b. For projects with a residential component, provide a greater percentage of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) than the minimum master plan-recommended level of 15%.
 - c. For projects with a residential component, include residential units of three-bedrooms or larger.
 - d. If the former COMSAT Laboratories building is proposed for full or partial demolition, provide mitigation commensurate to the loss of the historic resource.
 - e. For development on the COMSAT property, incorporate a Major Public Facility in partnership with any interested public agency or organization, such as an indoor or outdoor community recreation center, public school, public park, entertainment venue, conference center, or County service center.

Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

DRAFT CONCEPT FRAMEWORK PLAN



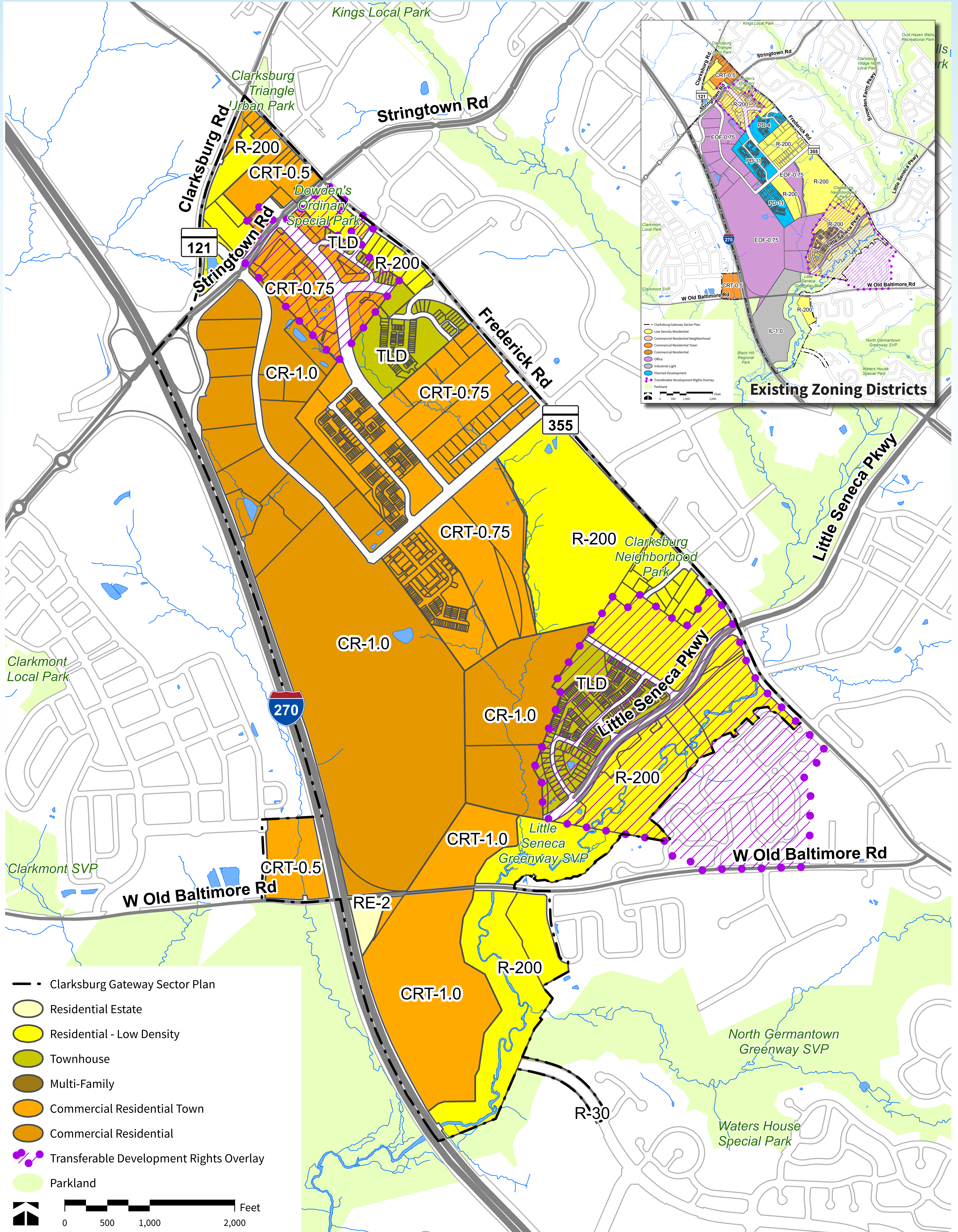
Emerging Ideas Meeting

Montgomery Planning



Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

DRAFT ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS



Emerging Ideas Meeting

Montgomery Planning



Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

HOUSING

DRAFT Vision Statement

The Sector Plan aims to foster vibrant, inclusive communities by expanding residential density, promoting diverse housing options, and ensuring all households have access to safe, affordable homes. This will support the development of Complete Communities within the plan area.

DRAFT Plan Goals

- Expand opportunities to increase residential density, especially along major corridors and in locations where additional housing can assist in the development of Complete Communities.
- Support creative housing options including personal living quarters and/or micro units; “missing middle” housing types such as tiny houses, cottages, duplexes, multiplexes, and small apartment buildings; shared housing, cooperative housing, co-housing, live-work units, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs), to help meet housing needs and diversify housing options.
- Increase the number of income restricted affordable housing units, especially for low-and-moderate-income households.

Emerging Ideas

1. New developments should provide at least 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs).
2. 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.
3. 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.



Townhomes in Dowden's Station neighborhood



Detached homes in Dowden's Station neighborhood

4. 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.
5. 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.

6. 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.



Cabin Branch neighborhood

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING

DRAFT Vision Statement

The Sector Plan envisions a more complete, compact, and attractive community within the greater Clarksburg area featuring distinctive gathering spaces and well-designed streetscapes that enhance the public realm and ensure accessibility for all while providing opportunities for art, culture, and historic interpretation in parks and other public spaces.

DRAFT Plan Goals

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

Emerging Ideas

1. 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.
2. 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



Food hall with a covered arcade at the Riverdale Park Town Center



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

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING

Emerging Ideas

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



The fence defines the beginning of the semi-public space in the Kentlands



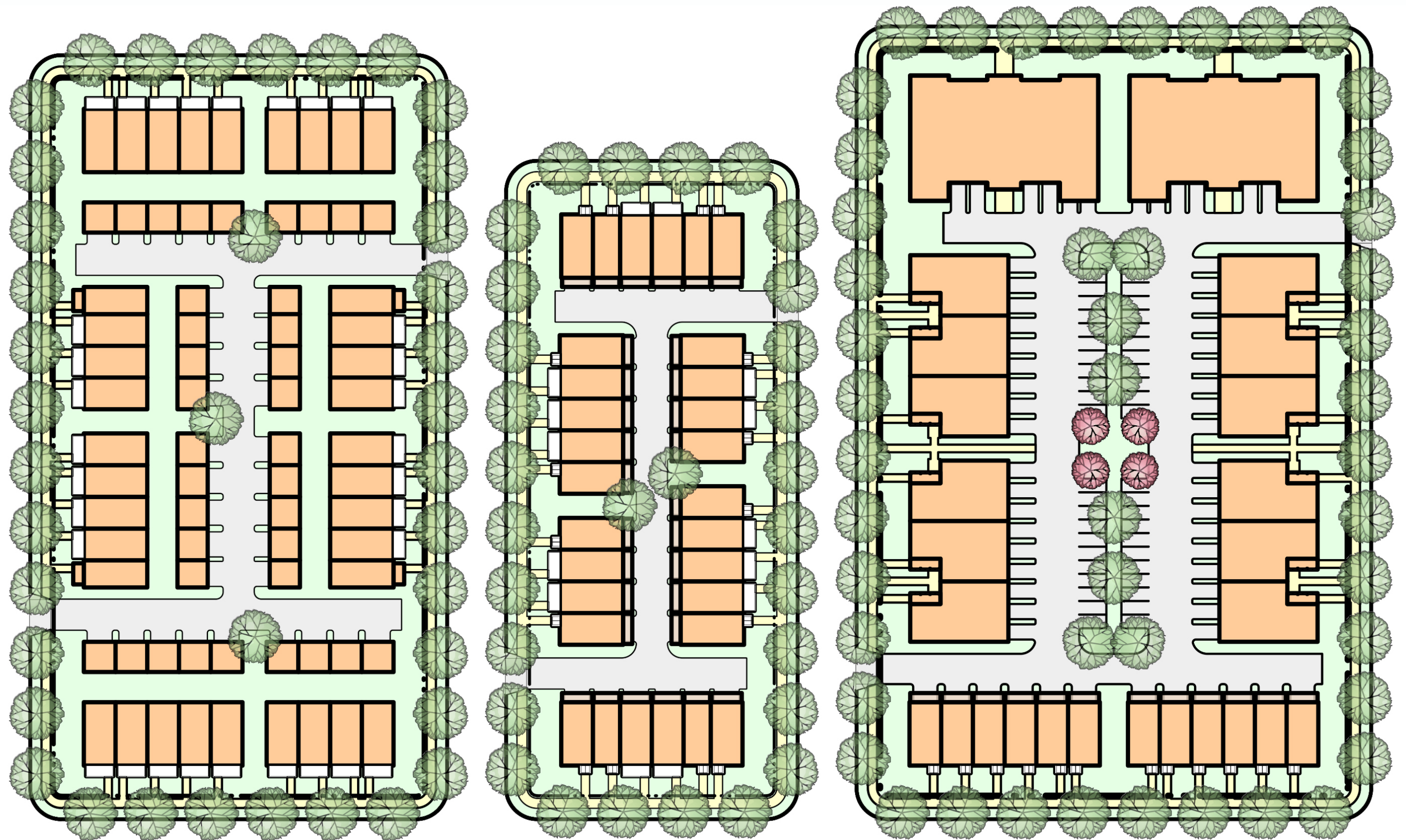
Front court defines entry to a multifamily building in Takoma Park



Porches and stoops add architectural detail to the fronts of townhomes



5. Except where necessary due to 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.



Block diagram with multiple housing types

- a. Primary parking for residences is located internally within blocks.
- b. There are two curb cuts per block to access the parking areas.
- c. Sidewalks are uninterrupted and have shade trees to promote walking.
- d. Additional residential and visitor parking is located along streets.

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING

Emerging Ideas

6. Provide publicly-accessible open spaces of varying scales 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 on the end of the block in King Farm



Small residential green with homes facing the green in Park Potomac



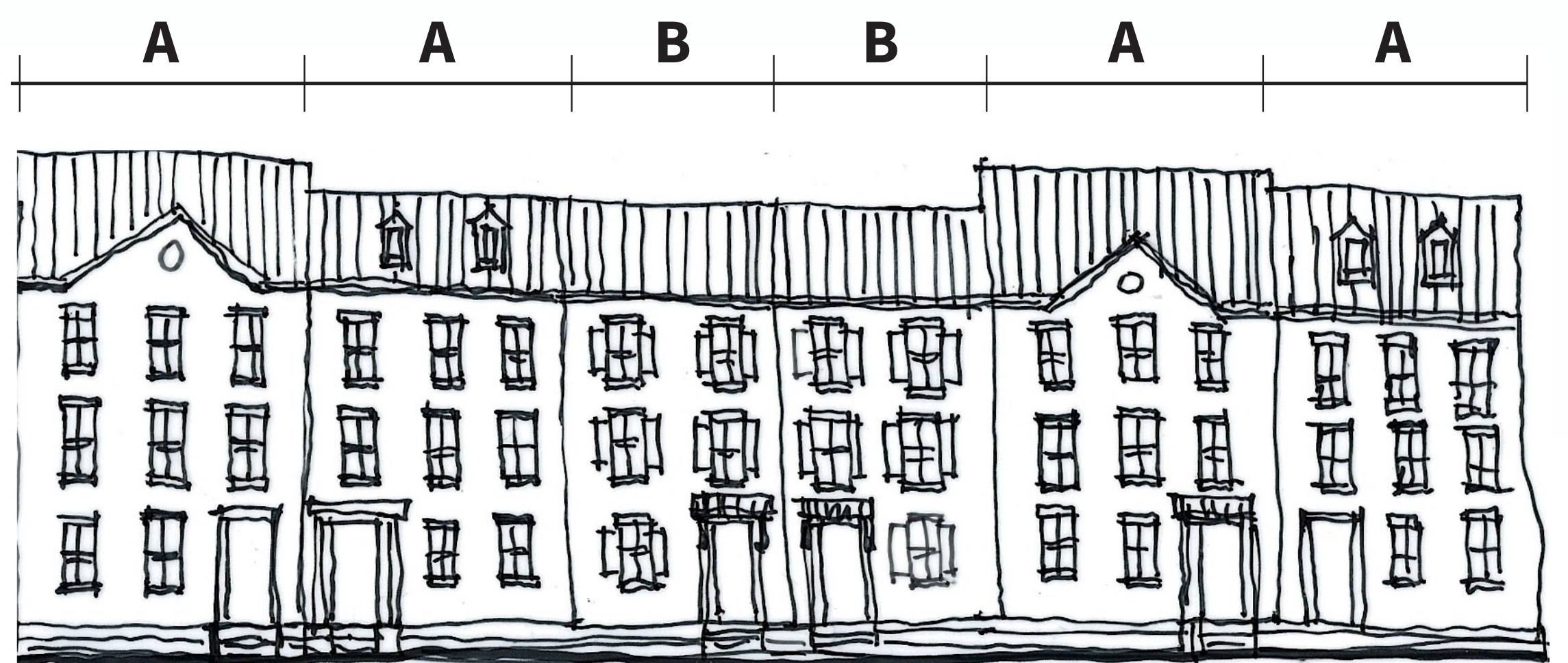
Larger residential green with significant shade trees in Fallsgrove



Central green space with sports courts in King Farm

7. Compose building facades so that communities and neighborhoods have cohesive and complementary elements within streetscapes. Avoid building compositions that have random architectural elements or too many window.

- Simplify elevations. Create a rhythm to townhouse strings with consistent window spacing.
- Limit the number of window types. Use consistent window dimensions.
- Ground the townhouse string by providing a change in materials at the base. Use a consistent base height for the material rather than varying the base heights on individual units within a string.
- Use architectural embellishment elements, such as shutters, gables, dormers, and bay windows, judiciously. Bay windows should be used in a consistent manner on individual townhouses within a building string.
- Use color on facades judiciously. Too many color changes between individual units in a string can cause disharmony to the overall townhouse string.



Composition of a townhouse string at the Riverdale Park Town Center

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

TRANSPORTATION

DRAFT Vision Statement

The Sector Plan envisions a transportation network that supports a new, complete community in Clarksburg. It will provide safe and efficient travel for all street users, high-quality public transit services, and strong connections to local and regional amenities, all while responsibly integrating with the area's sensitive environmental features.

DRAFT Plan Goals

Street Network

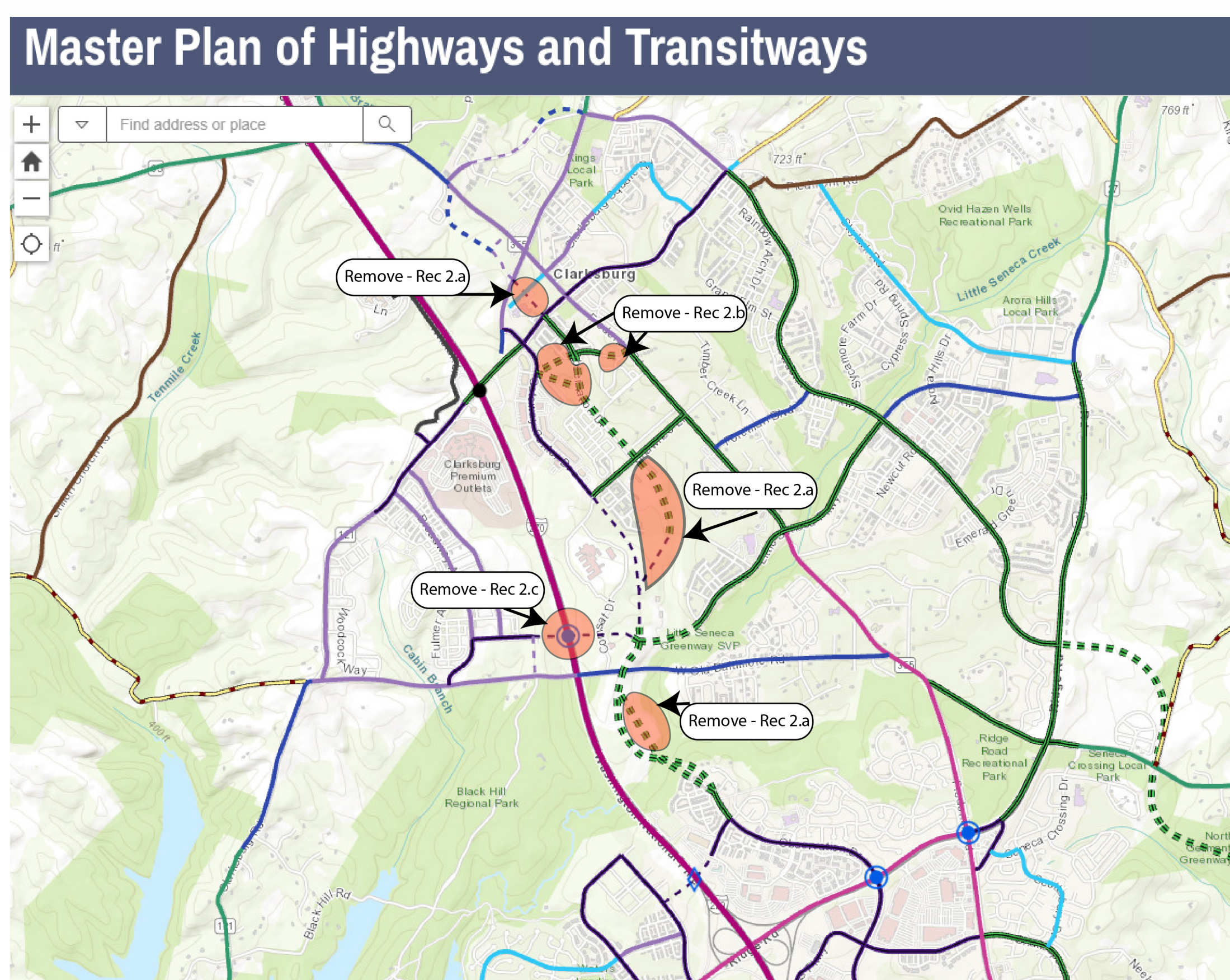
- Prioritize safety and multi-modal accessibility, including transit, over single-occupancy vehicle movement efficiency while incorporating Complete Streets design and modern Vision Zero design practices.
- Create a hierarchy of streets as an organizing element in the sector plan area that serves all modes of transportation and creates spaces for informal social interactions.
- Prioritize low-impact, environmentally responsible street designs and alignments over vehicle movement efficiency – minimizing road impacts to protect environmentally sensitive features and areas within the plan area.

Public Transit

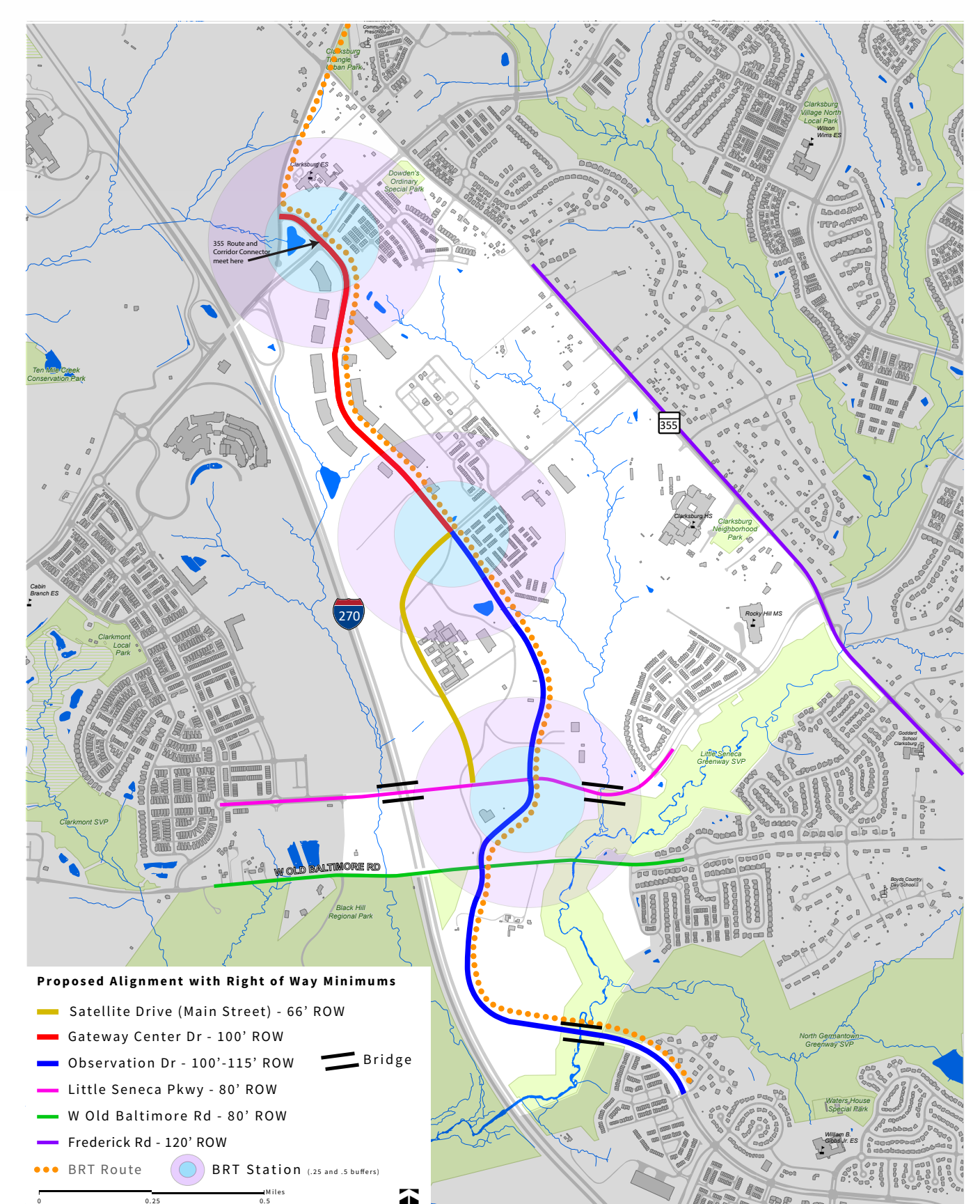
- Support and refine Corridor Forward recommendations for a Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Connector route – creating high quality stations that are sheltered, comfortable, and support opportunities for multimodal travel.
- Improve existing public transportation infrastructure and operations to reflect community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

Active Transportation (Walk-Bike-Roll) Network

- 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.



Proposed changes to existing Master Plan of Highways and Transitways



Proposed master planned street network

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

TRANSPORTATION

Emerging Ideas

Street Network

Reorient the planned street network to improve connectivity, support all travel modes, and minimize environmental impacts, including:

1. Shifting the planned Observation Drive alignment away from stream valleys
2. Encouraging low-impact, narrow new bridges while serving all travel modes
3. Replacing the planned Little Seneca Parkway-Interstate 270 interchange with an overpass
4. Establishing an internal 'main street' on the COMSAT property as part of new development

Public Transit

Establish a high-quality Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor and improve current transit services.



A BRT station on the US 29 BRT Flash route

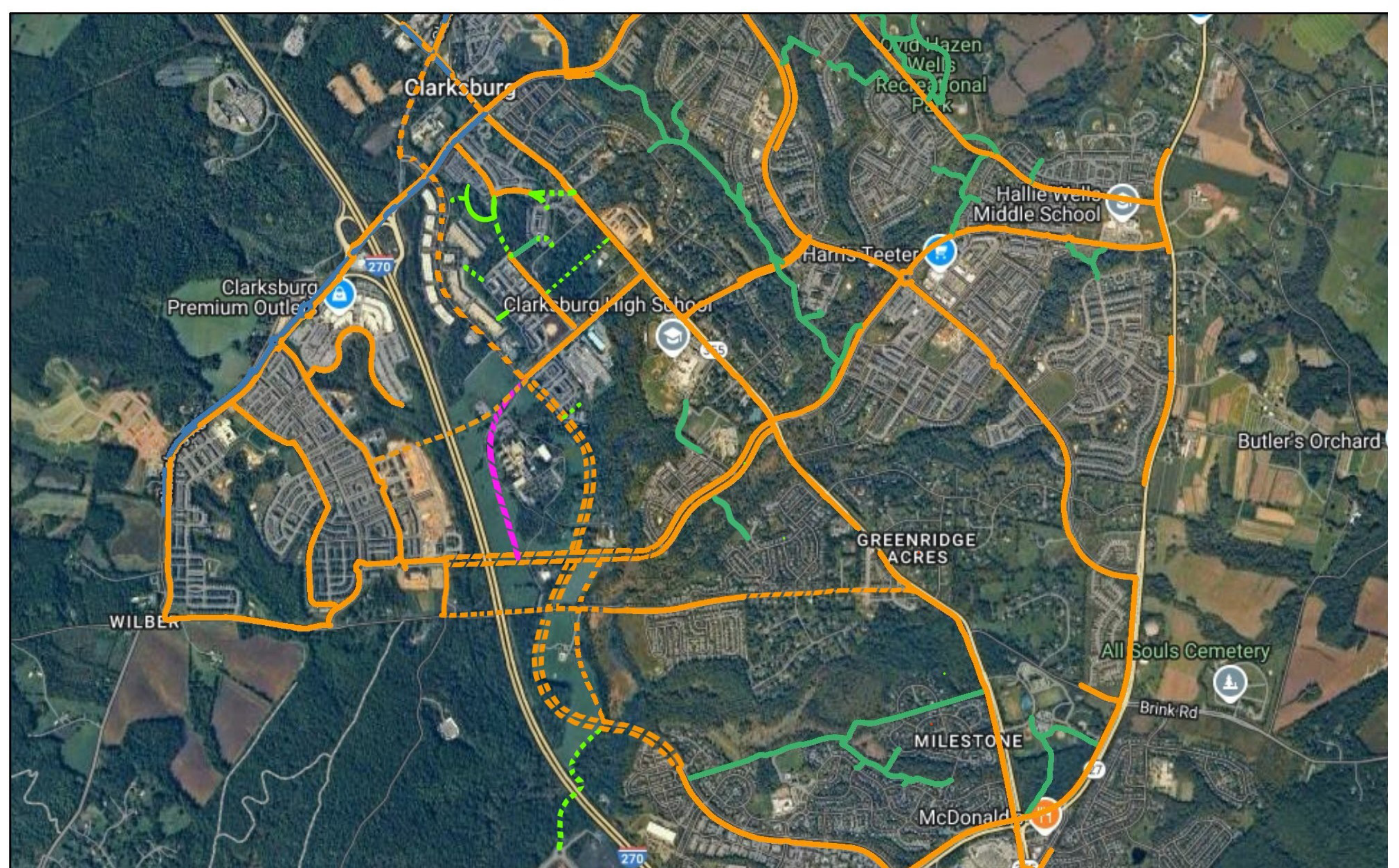
1. Establish dedicated bus transit lanes on the planned Corridor Connector route (Observation Drive and Gateway Center Drive).
2. Ensure BRT stations are comfortable and well-lit, with sheltered stops and improved wayfinding signage.
3. Improve the quality of existing local bus stops by the same criteria above.
4. Study increased frequency on existing local routes: 73, 75, 79.

Active Transportation (Walk-Bike-Roll) Network

Establish a comfortable, continuous network of low-stress bike/walk/roll opportunities.

1. Implement Bicycle Master Plan recommendations through new development and capital improvements.
2. Provide for a future shared use path along West Old Baltimore Road under I-270.
3. Establish enhanced footpaths between neighborhoods to improve walking convenience.
4. Implement a comprehensive wayfinding program integrating the path network and public transit.

Bikeway Draft Recommendations



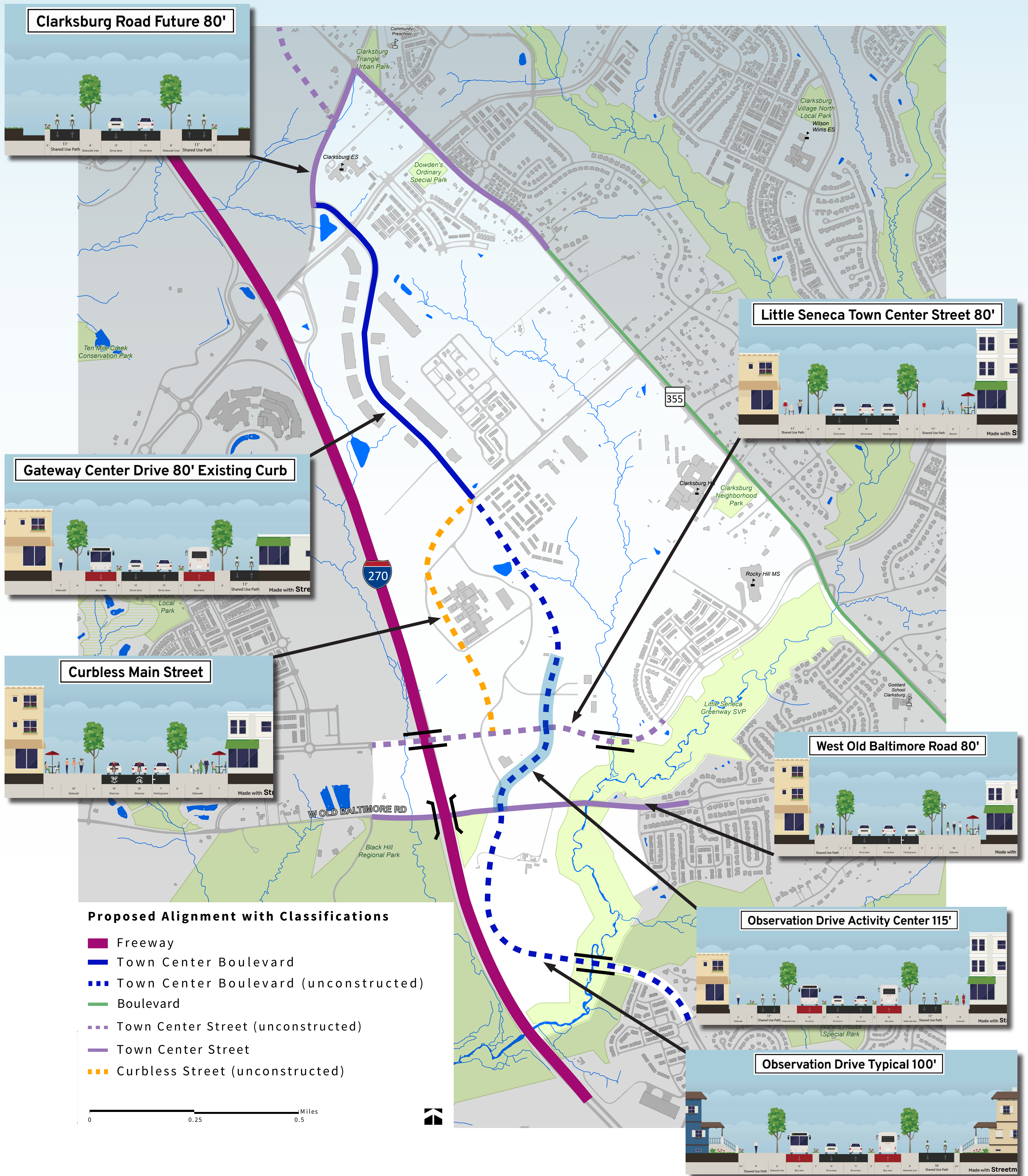
All Existing Bikeways
Trails
Sidepaths
Separated Bike Lanes
Striped Bikeways
Bikeable Shoulders
New shared use path
Curbless Street
Footpath Connection

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

TRANSPORTATION

Proposed Street Network by Classification and Cross-Sections



Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

ENVIRONMENT

DRAFT Vision Statement

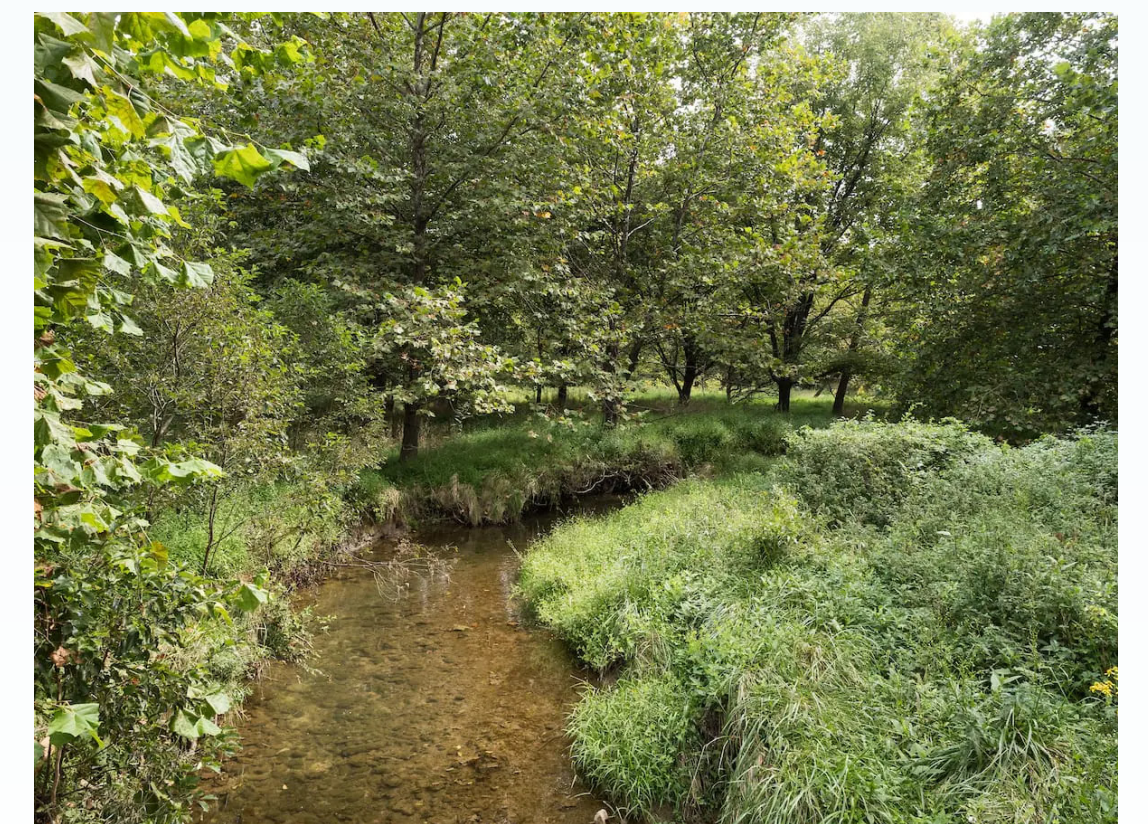
The Sector Plan envisions a sustainable and resilient community that prioritizes the conservation and enhancement of the Little Seneca Creek Watershed, its tributaries, and surrounding natural resources and promotes sustainable site and building design.

DRAFT Plan Goals

- Conserve the Little Seneca Creek Watershed's tributaries by maintaining its water quality and ecosystem services.
- Conserve and expand forest stands and tree canopy coverage 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.

Emerging Ideas

1. Locate and design new roadways to avoid sensitive environmental features, avoid grading and land disturbance, and require the least width and area of impervious surface possible.
2. Conserve land along Little Seneca Creek tributaries by private conservation easement or by establishing or expanding public parkland.
3. Minimize stormwater runoff using site design techniques, such as vegetated riparian buffers, expanded urban tree canopy, and minimized impervious surfaces.
4. Implement stormwater retrofits and stream restoration projects to help manage or remediate impacts of impervious areas.
5. 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.
6. Provide tree canopy within all public gathering spaces, within surface parking lots, and along pedestrian corridors in the public right-of-way.
7. 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.
8. Encourage the use of best management practices (BMPs) and nature-based design principles for all new development.
9. 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.
10. 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.



Cool Brook Tributary of Little Seneca Creek



Tree-lined sidewalk in the Gateway Commons neighborhood



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

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Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DRAFT Vision Statement

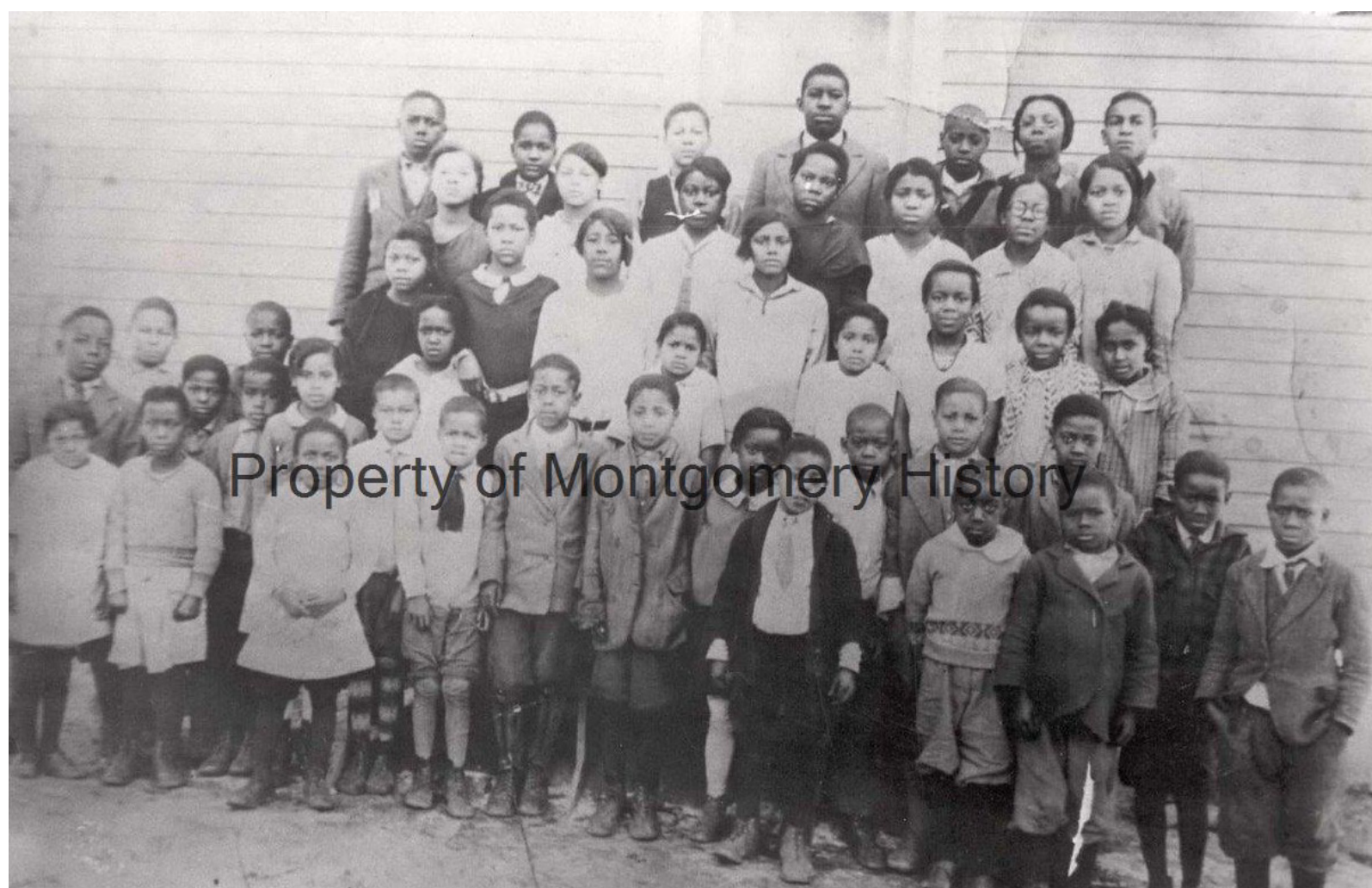
The Sector Plan will help to preserve and celebrate Clarksburg's rich history, fostering a deep connection to its cultural heritage while supporting responsible growth. By safeguarding historic sites and districts, the plan will promote community education, economic development, and a shared sense of pride, ensuring that Clarksburg's past remains a vibrant part of its future.

DRAFT Plan Goals

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

Emerging Ideas

1. Install a highly visible gateway and wayfinding system at the northwest corner of Stringtown Road and Frederick Road in coordination with the proposed development of the new library at 23200 Stringtown Road.
2. Collaborate with and support local partners to explore interpretation of existing and proposed historic sites that recognizes the diversity, heritage, and history of the Clarksburg community. Sites should include: the former African American Rocky Hill Community (with a focus on the segregated Black elementary school and Community of Faith United Methodist Church & Cemetery) and updated interpretation of the Clarksburg Master Plan Historic District.
3. Collaborate with Montgomery Parks to evaluate the archaeological significance of Dowden's Ordinary Special Park listed in the Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites.
4. 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** of the resource or property as a Master Plan Historic Site.
5. Designate properties associated with the former African American Rocky Hill community in the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, including:
 - a. The Community of Faith United Methodist Church, Inc., as a Historic Site.
 - b. The Clarksburg Heights subdivision as a Historic District.



Students at the demolished segregated Black elementary school, formerly located in present-day Clarksburg Neighborhood Park, ca. 1932. Source: Ethel Foreman Collection, Montgomery History.



Clarksburg Historic District welcome sign

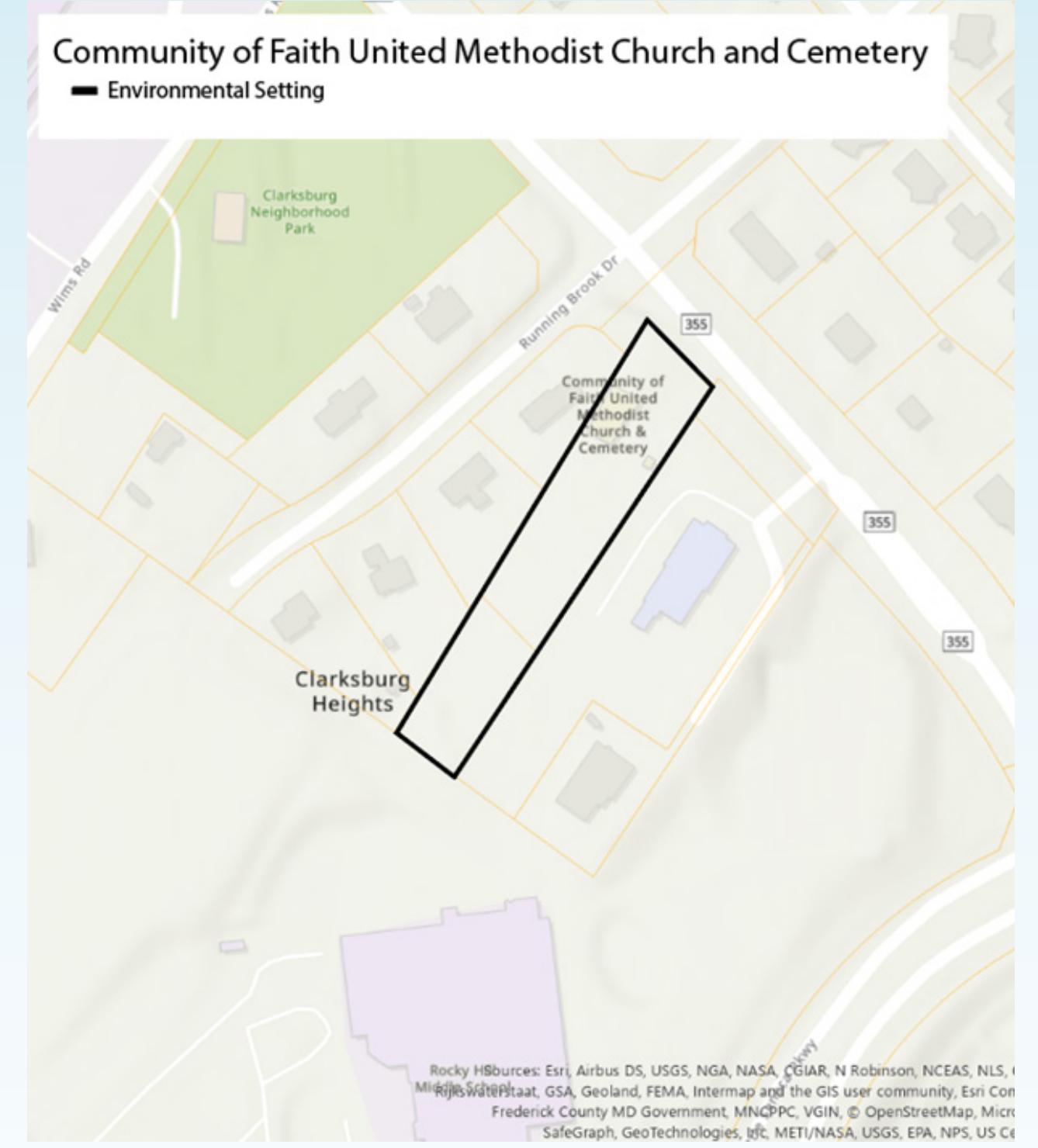
Emerging Ideas Meeting

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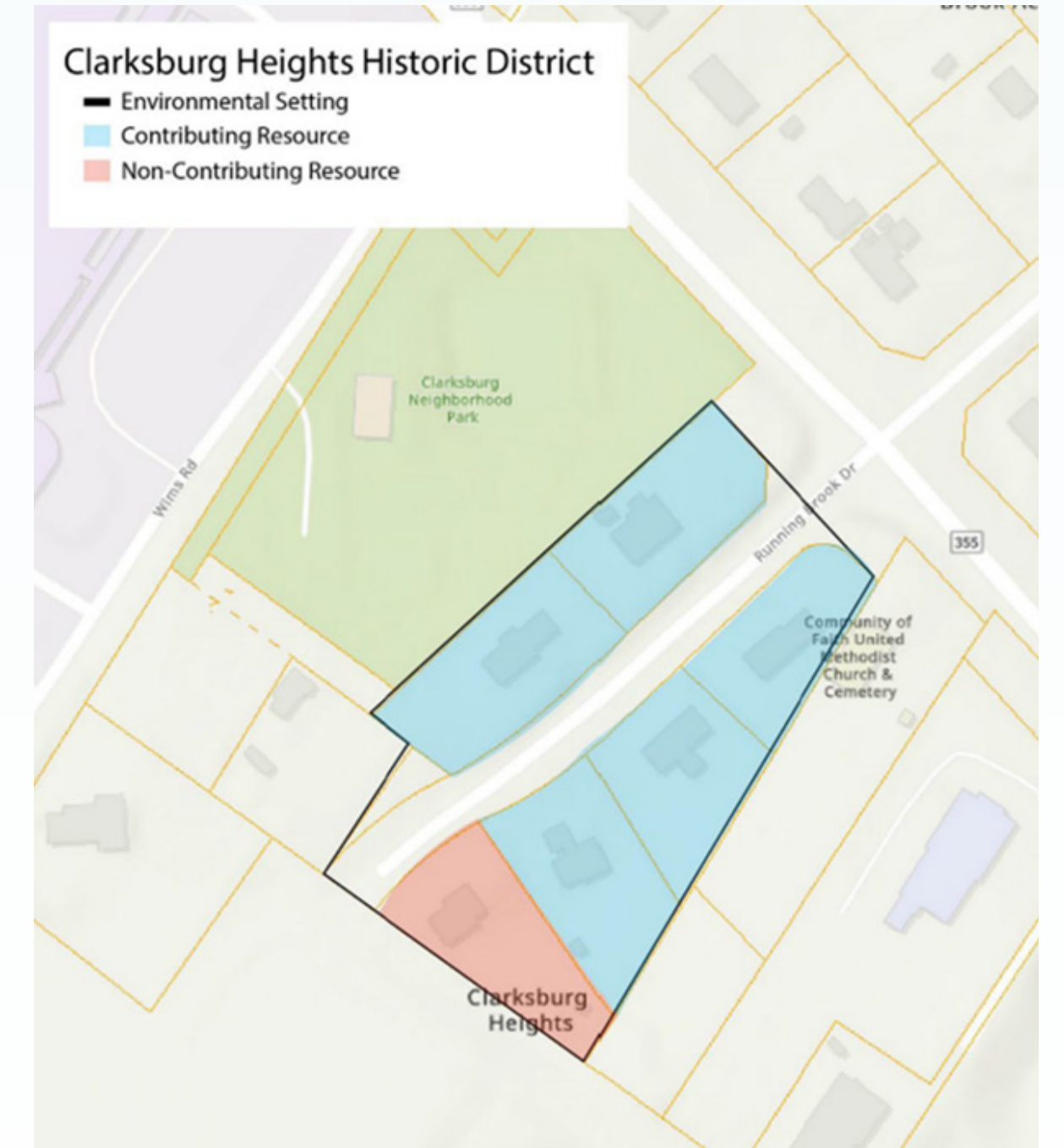
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Rocky Hill Community

Community of Faith United Methodist Church & Cemetery Site



Clarksburg Heights homes and the Wims family who built the subdivision in 1963-1964



Former COMSAT Laboratories



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



Recent aerial view of the former COMSAT Laboratories building

Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE

DRAFT Vision Statement

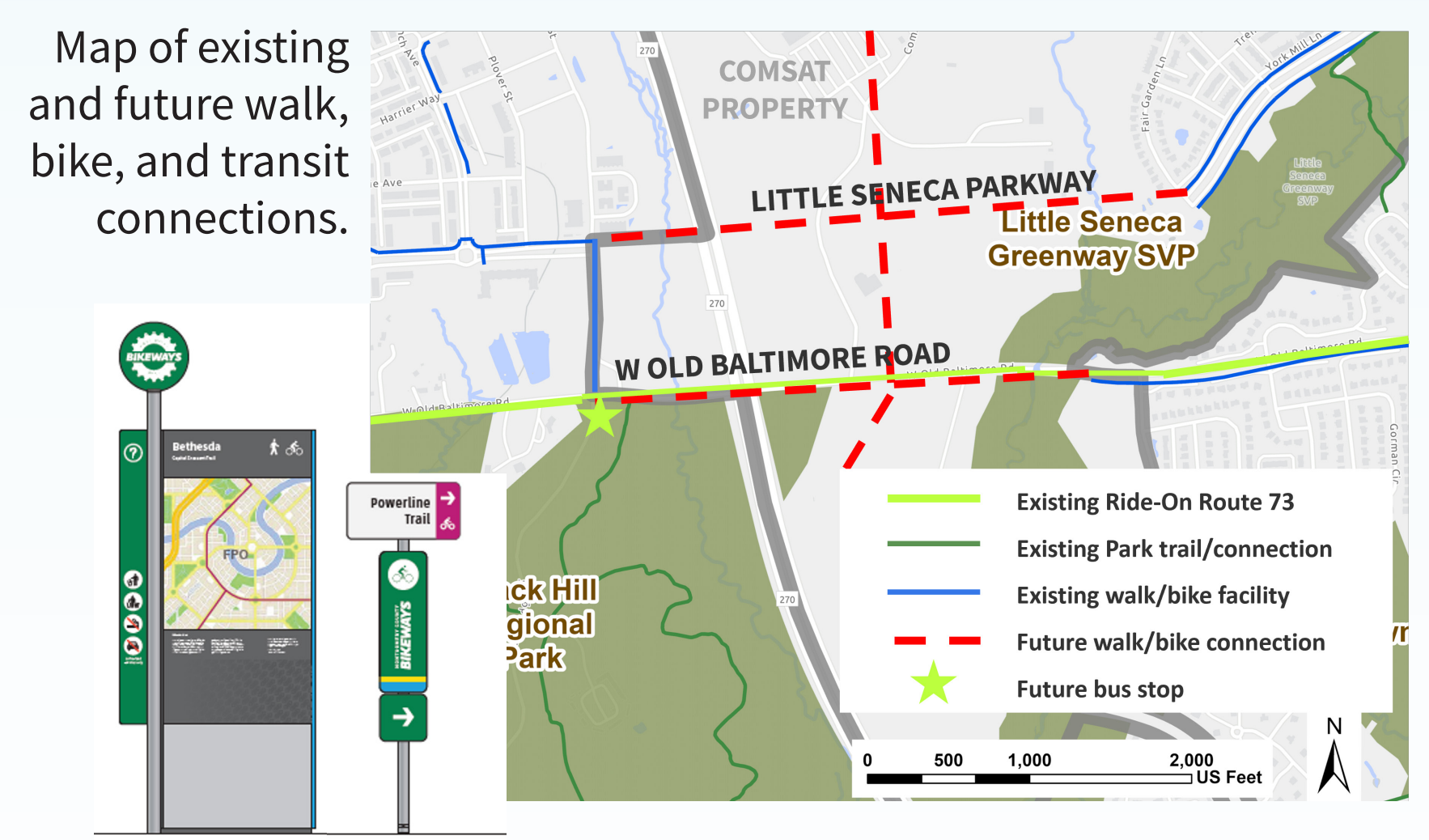
Parks and open spaces are vital components of connected, sustainable, and complete communities. In Clarksburg, parks should foster social connections, encourage outdoor activities, and help protect the environment.

DRAFT Plan 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.

Emerging Ideas

1. Improve wayfinding for pedestrian and bicycle connections to all parks near the Sector Plan area.
2. 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.
3. 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.



Sample of county-wide bicycle wayfinding signs.



Existing interpretive structure at Dowden's Ordinary Special Park

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

8. Establish parkland along Cool Brook Tributary from the existing Little Seneca Greenway Stream Valley Park to Shawnee Lane via dedication or conveyance.
9. Minimize and mitigate impacts to existing and future parkland from road and bridge construction, including Observation Drive and Little Seneca Parkway.



Common wildlife in the Clarksburg area.

10. 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.



Possible future parkland along Cool Brook Tributary.

Emerging Ideas Meeting



Clarksburg Gateway Sector Plan

PUBLIC FACILITIES

DRAFT Vision Statement

Foster a safe, accessible, and sustainable environment in the Clarksburg community ensuring adequate capacity for public facilities and ensuring that school access and capacities are aligned with evolving community growth and population shifts, fostering a thriving, connected educational experience for all.

DRAFT Plan Goals

- Increase or enhance safe routes to schools to support non-vehicular access for students, staff, and caregivers.
- Ensure adequate school capacity as new development occurs and students populations shift within existing residential communities.
- Ensure consistent and adequate coverage for cellular, public wireless internet, and broadband services throughout the Clarksburg community.
- Encourage safe, accessible, and co-located public facilities and amenities.
- Minimize environmental impacts from new sewer and water connections to properties within the Sector Plan.

Emerging Ideas

1. Expand cellular, public wireless internet, and broadband services in the Clarksburg area.
2. Provide accessible public parking and directional signage for visitors to Dowden's Ordinary Special Park.
3. Implement complete street design on Redgrave Place between Frederick Road (MD 355) and Clarksburg Elementary School, including for uninhibited school bus access throughout the school day.
4. Provide for safe routes to Clarksburg Elementary School, Rocky Hill Middle School, and Clarksburg High School by non-vehicular modes.
5. Design public water or sewer connections for new or existing development to minimize environmental impacts by prioritizing alignments along street rights-of-way, connecting to nearby existing pipelines where possible, and avoiding crossing or running along streams or stream valleys, forested or natural areas, and other sensitive environmental areas.
6. Support access to public water and sewer service for property owners in the Clarksburg Heights subdivision to support long-term preservation of homes and occupancy by current owners.

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

