



Montgomery Planning Eastern Silver Spring Communities Plan

University Boulevard Community Conversation Summary

June 3, 2025



Community Visioning, Spring 2025

Engagement for the Eastern Silver Spring Communities Plan began in October 2023. After gathering community input throughout the entire Plan Area, the planning team held a series of conversations in the spring of 2025 focused on the three corridors within the Plan Area: New Hampshire Avenue, University Boulevard and Colesville Road.

Though each event followed a similar format, each event was tailored to the specific area. The planning team collaborated with neighborhood organizations to choose the date, time and location of each event and promote the event within their community.

All materials were available in both English and Spanish. Spanish speaking staff members and consultants provided live interpretation at every event.

Community Conversation

This meeting began with a short, overview presentation to explain what a master plan is, and the process Montgomery Planning follows to create each master plan.

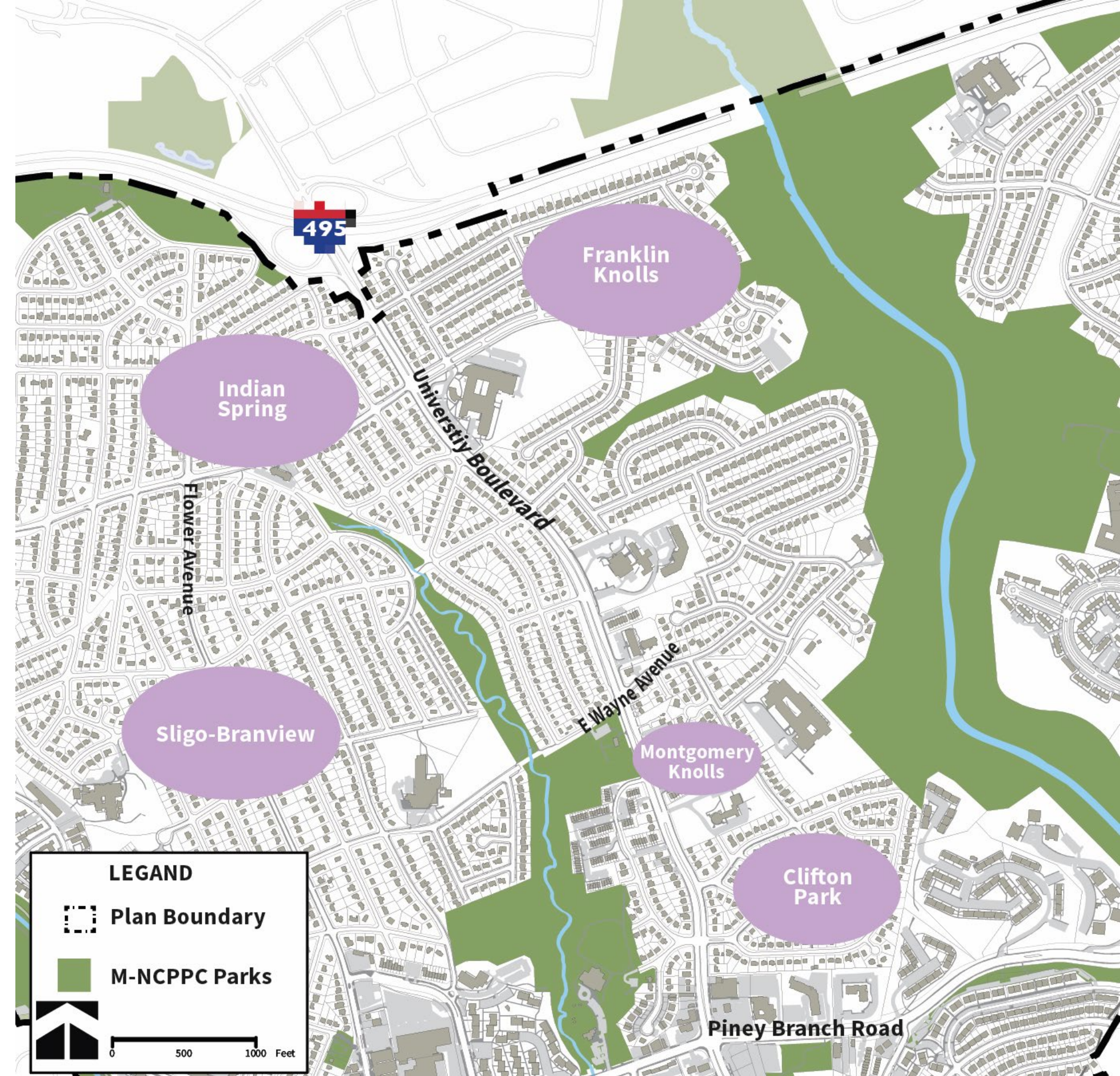
After the presentation, community members were divided into small groups to move through three interactive visioning stations focused on the following topics:



Who Lives Here:

- The area around University Boulevard is approximately 35% Black/ African American, 24% White, 19% Asian, 17% Hispanic/Latino, and 5% other races.
- 54% of people speak a language other than English at home
- 75% of housing units in this area are owned and 25% are rented

Data from 2017-2021 American Community Survey for Census block groups: 240317021011, 240317021012, 240317021014, 240317022001, 240317022002.

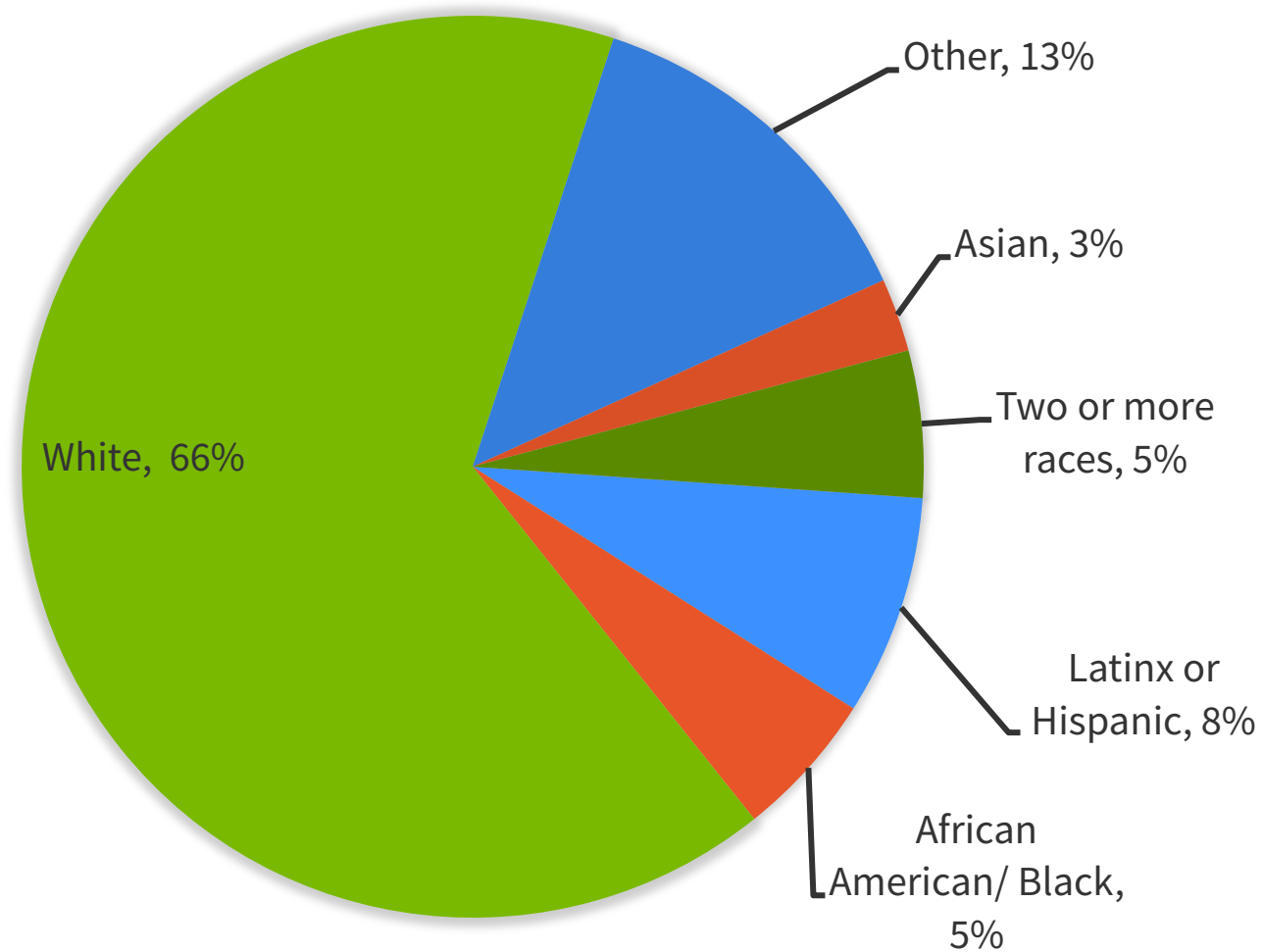


Neighborhoods along University Boulevard between the Capital Beltway and Piney Branch Road

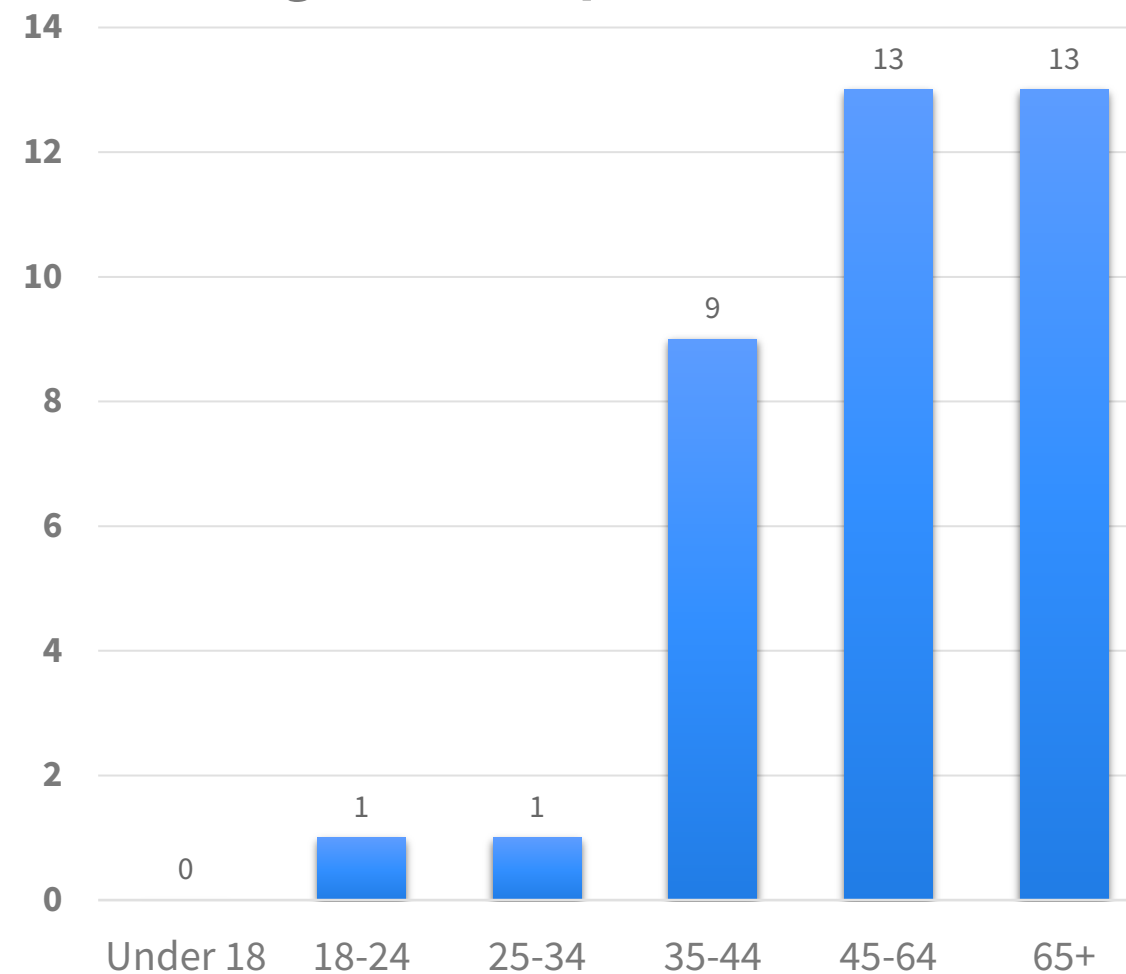
Who We Heard From:

- 49 community members
- Almost all were homeowners from the Clifton Park, Montgomery Knolls, and Franklin Knolls neighborhoods.

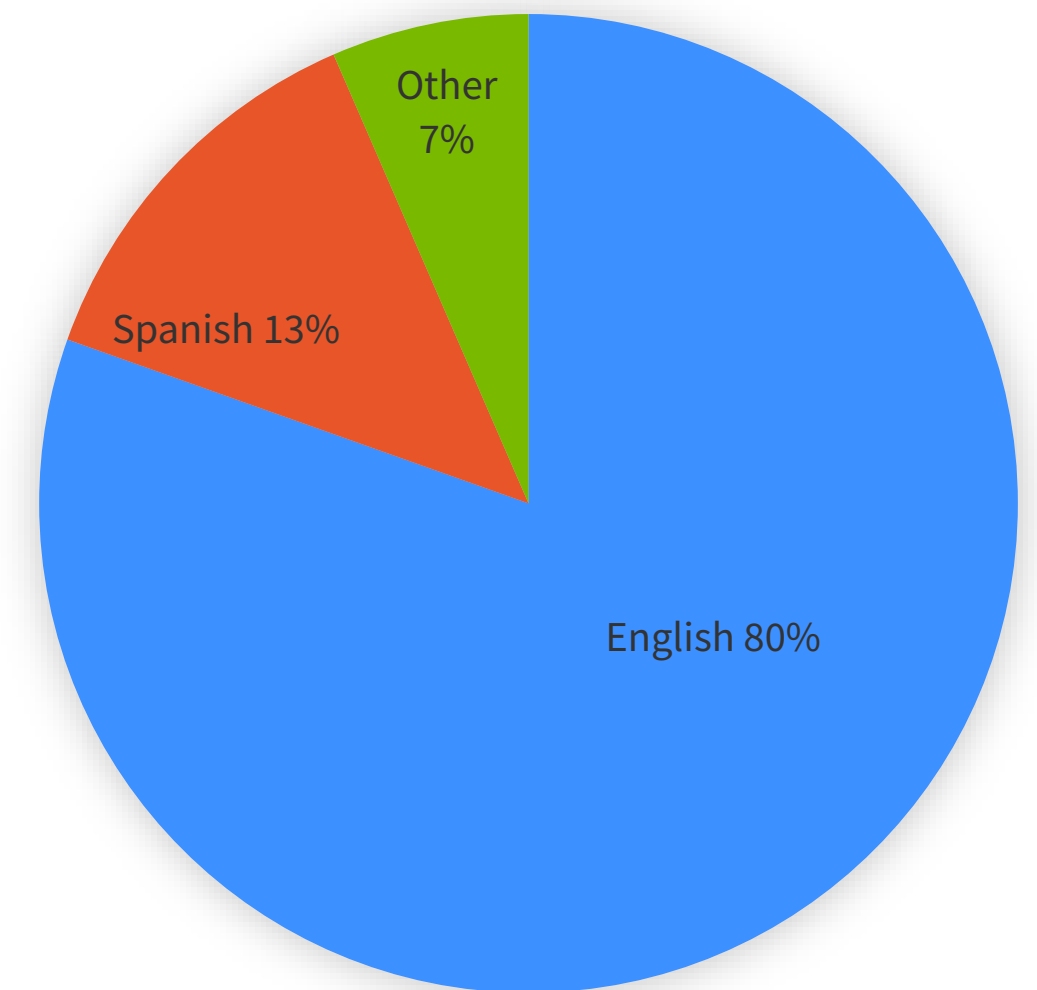
Race of Participants



Age of Participants



Languages Spoken at Home



Change & growth



Cambios y crecimiento

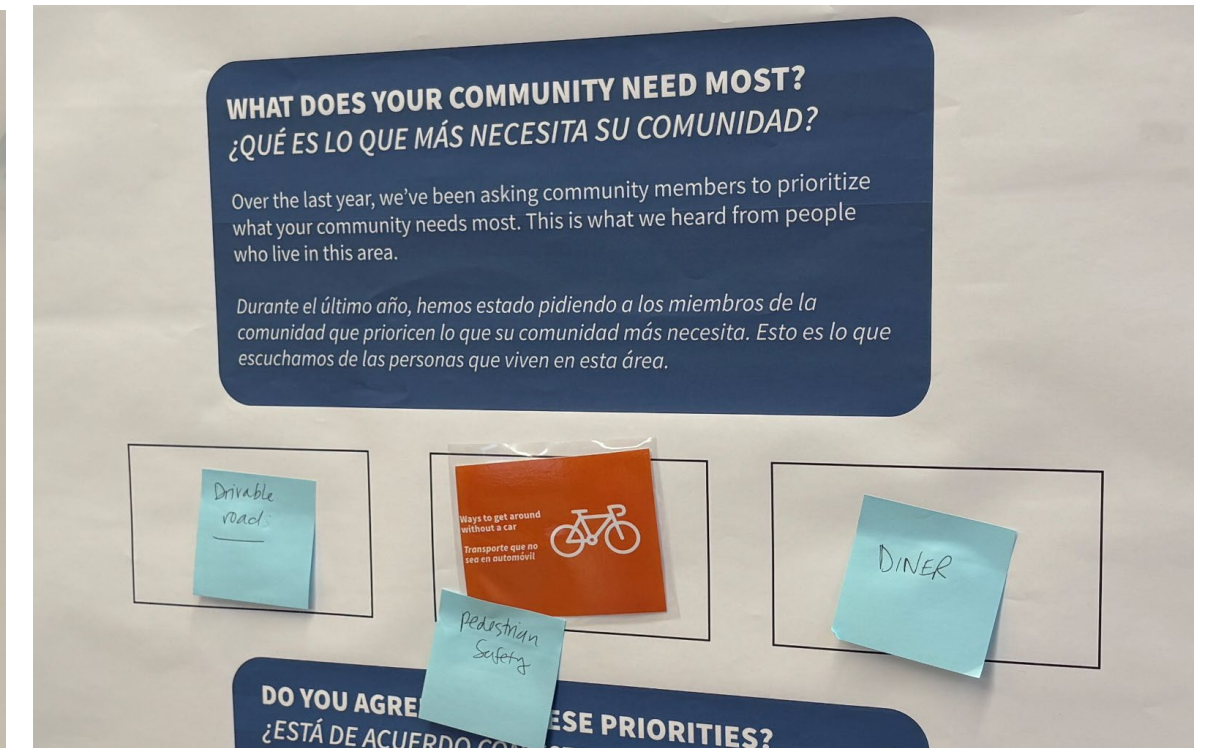
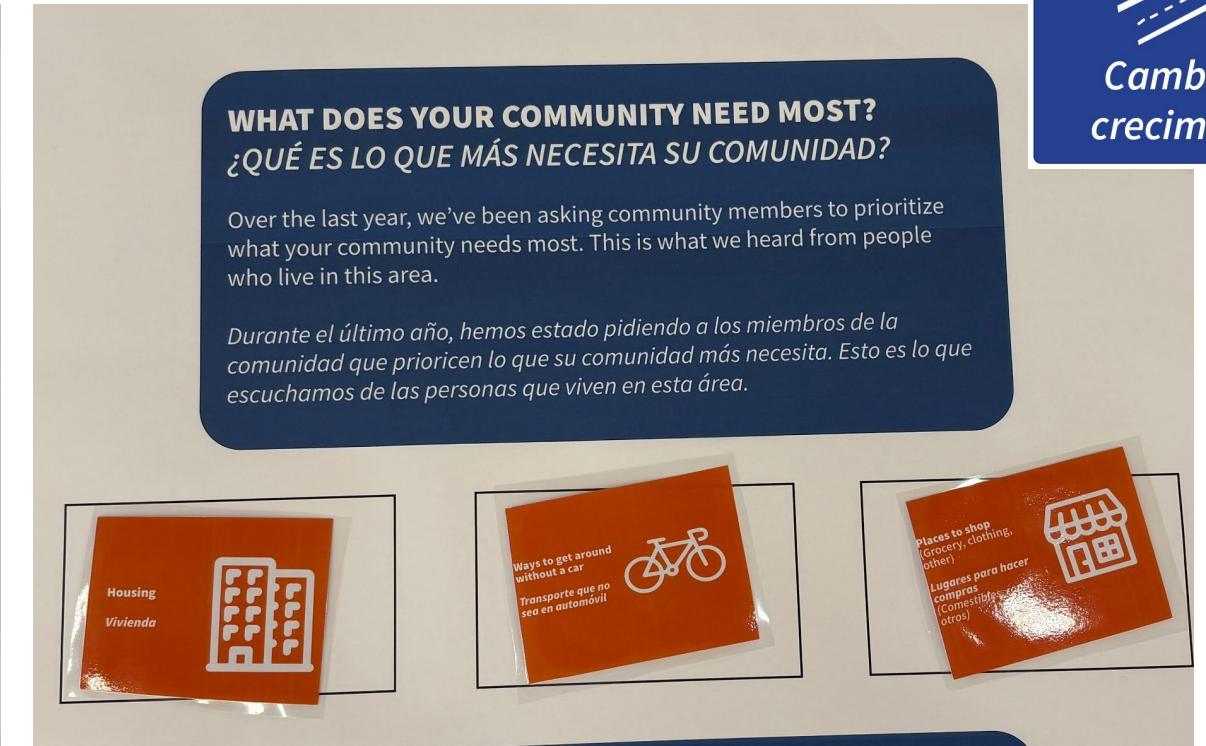
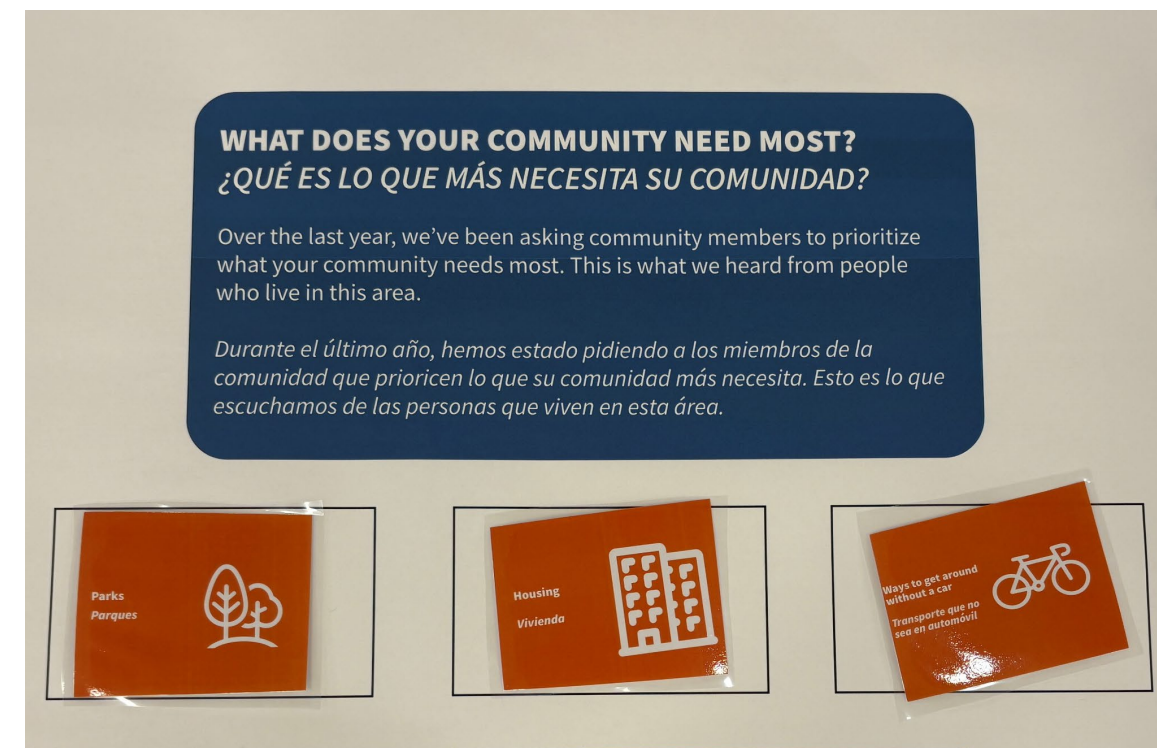
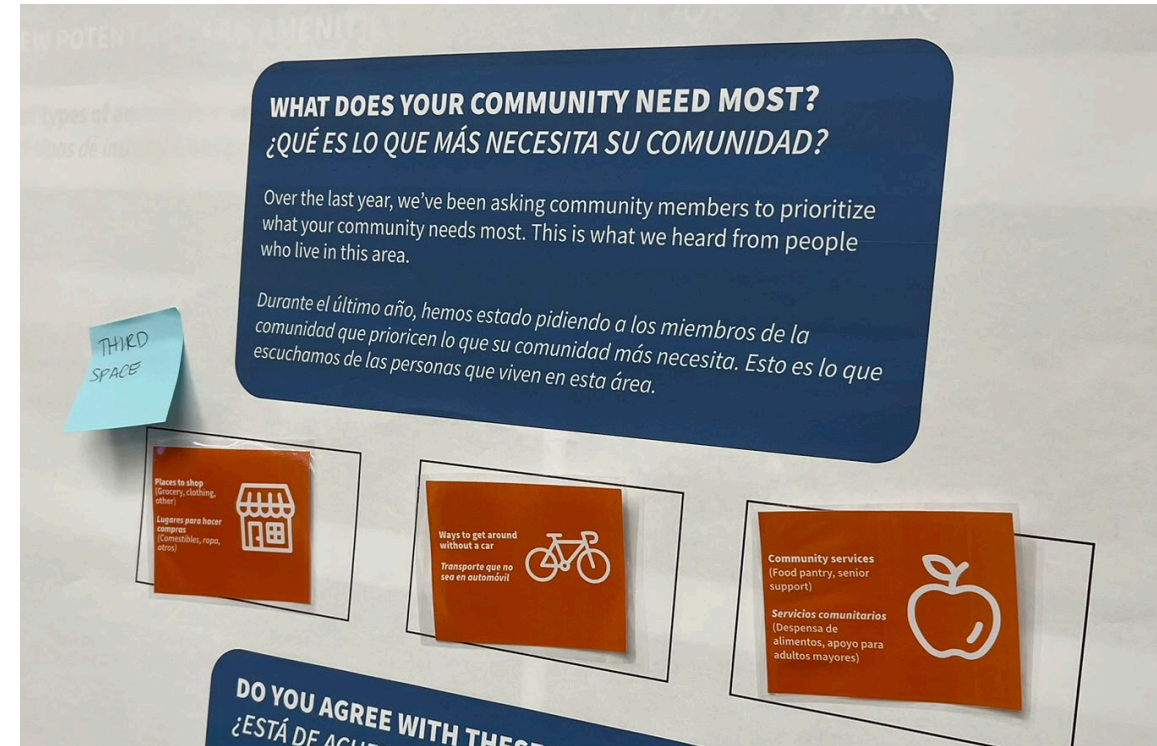
This station focused on getting feedback on the type and scale of potential growth community members would like to see along University Boulevard the next 25 years.



Community Priorities

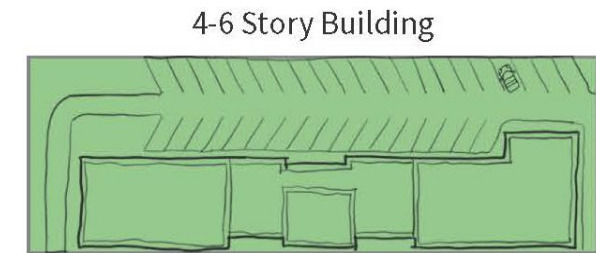
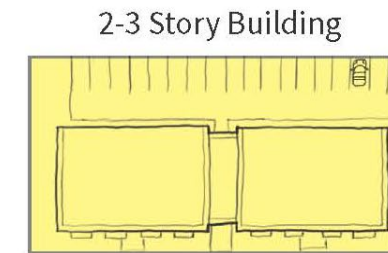
We asked each group of community members to prioritize what their community needs most. All groups mentioned **ways to get around without a car**, and many wanted **more housing** and **places to shop**. Groups also mentioned wanting **more parks and community services**.

The priorities of each group are shown on the right.

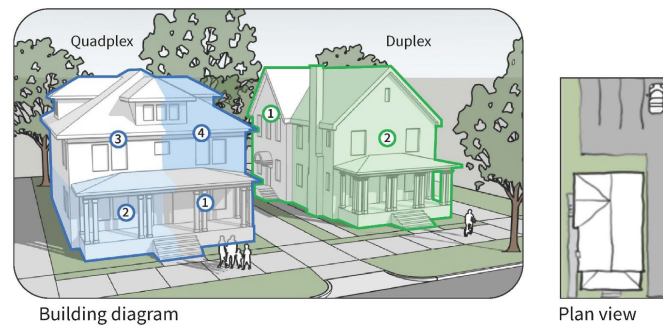


Building Types

After determining their priorities as a group, each community member had the opportunity to build their own block along University Boulevard, using four different building types. Each participant was given a blank block and were asked to imagine what types of development would be appropriate in the future. Staff explained what types of buildings could potentially be built along University Boulevard, what they could look like, and scenarios of what could be included within them. The four building types are displayed below:



Duplex, triplex and quadplex housing



What could fit in this type of building?

Duplex
shown above right 2 residential units

OR

Triplex 3 residential units

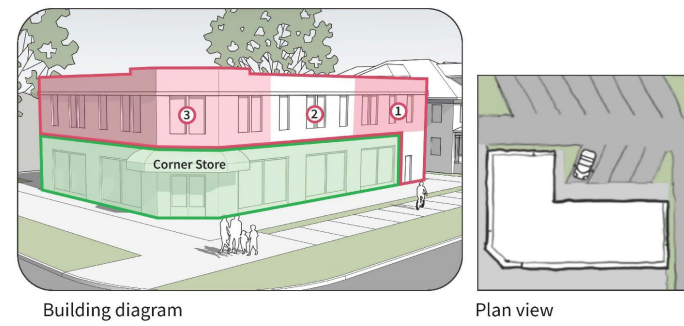
OR

Quadplex
shown above left 4 residential units

What could it look like?



2 Story Building



What could fit in this type of building?

Mixed-use
shown above Corner store or neighborhood-serving retail on ground floor, 2-4 residential units above

OR

Residential 4-6 residential units

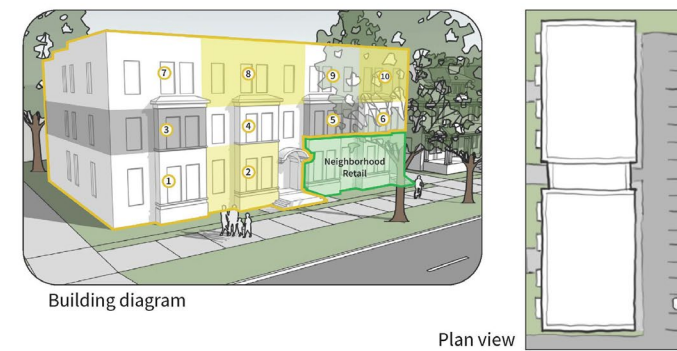
Neighborhood-serving retail could include:

- Dry-cleaner
- Nail salon
- Coffee shop
- Daycare

What could it look like?



2-3 Story Building



What could fit in this type of building?

Mixed-use
shown above Neighborhood retail on the ground floor, 10 apartment units above

OR

Residential 6 townhome units

OR

Residential 20 apartment units

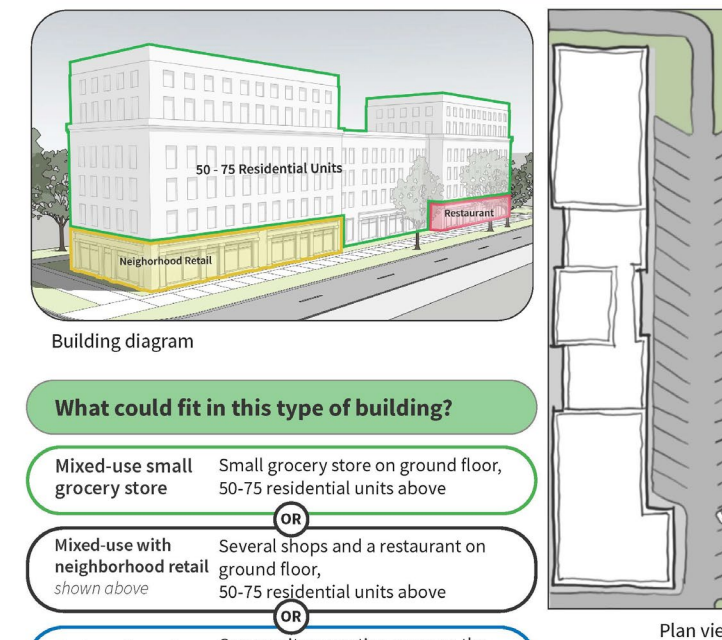
Neighborhood-serving retail could include:

- Dry-cleaner
- Nail salon
- Coffee shop
- Daycare

What could it look like?



4-6 Story Building



What could fit in this type of building?

Mixed-use small grocery store Small grocery store on ground floor, 50-75 residential units above

OR

Mixed-use with neighborhood retail
shown above Several shops and a restaurant on ground floor, 50-75 residential units above

OR

Co-location of public facility Community recreation space on the first two floors, 50-60 residential units above

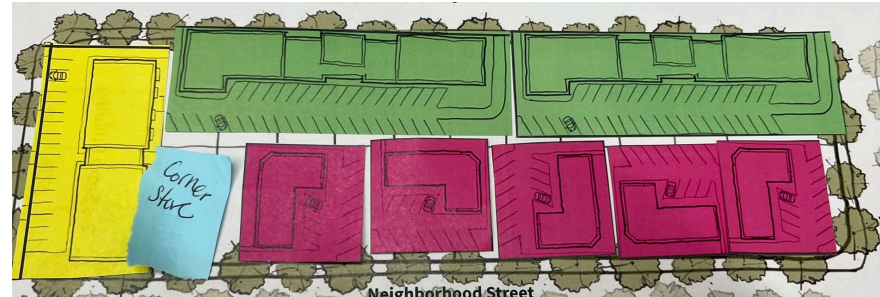
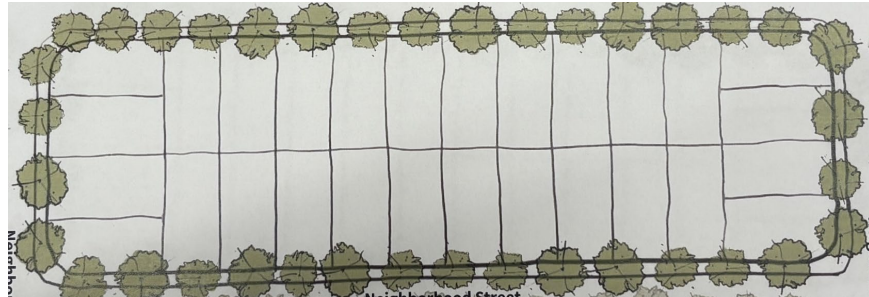
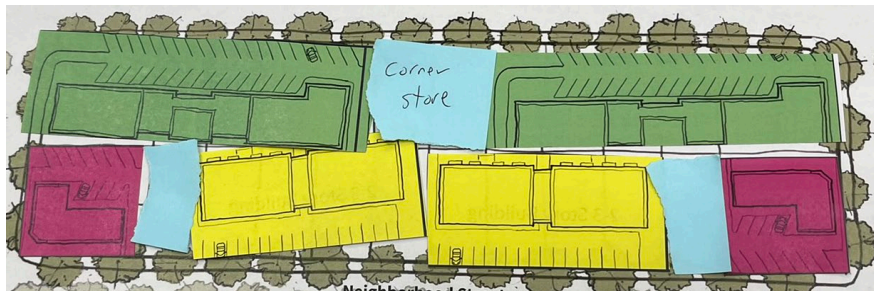
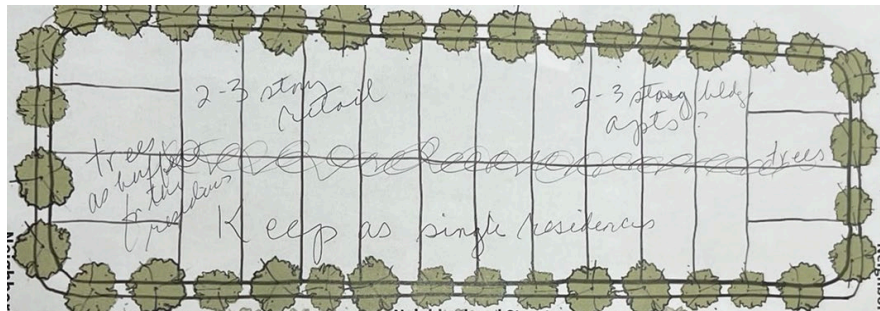
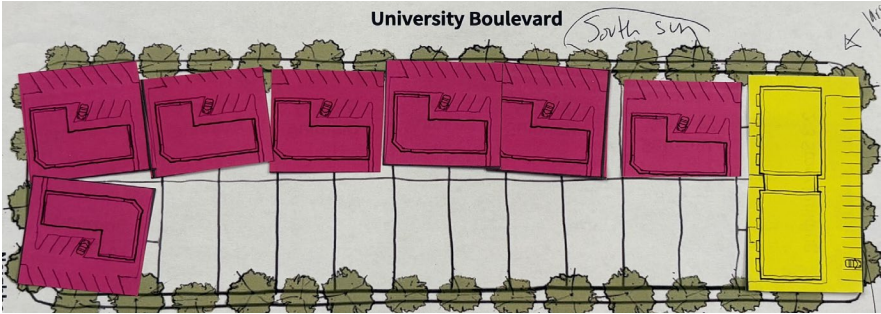
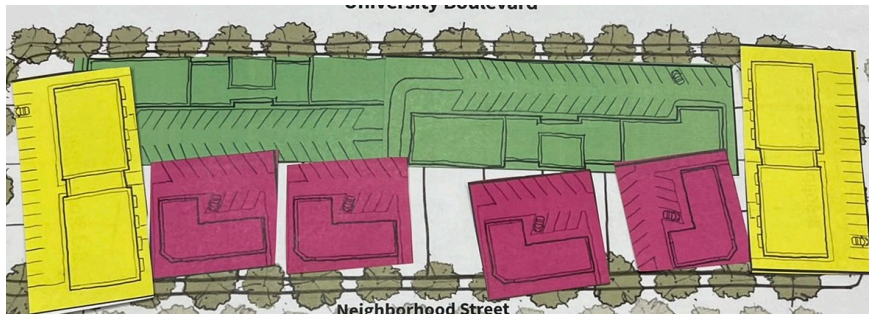
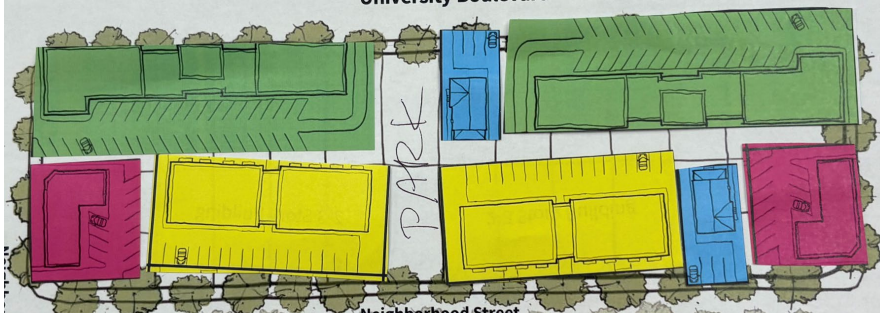
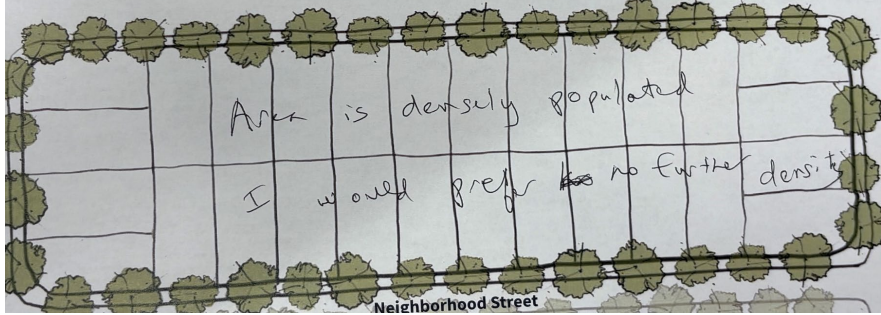
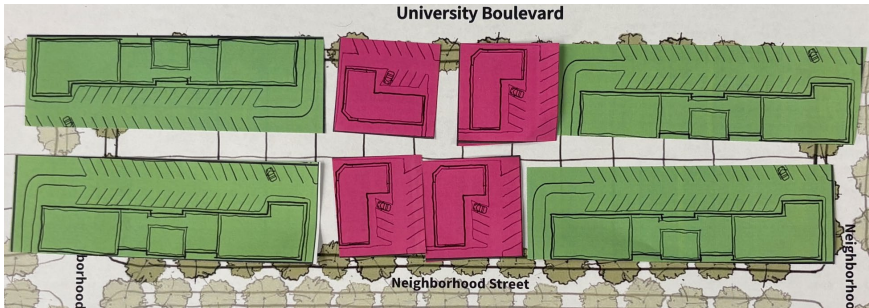
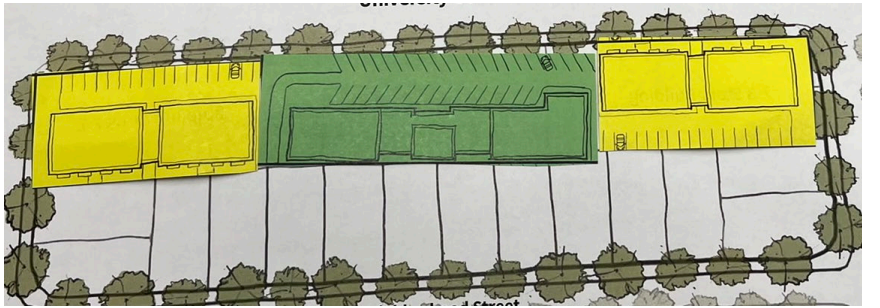
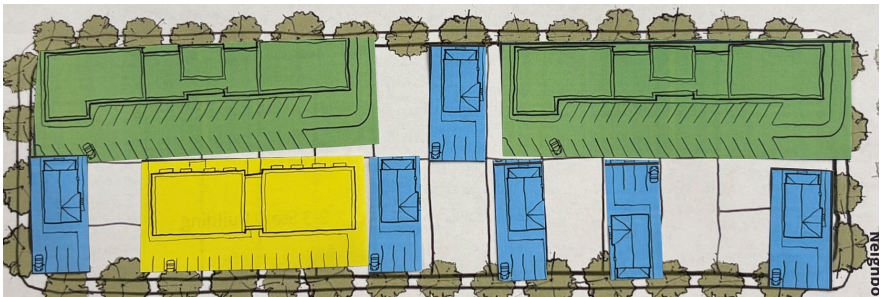
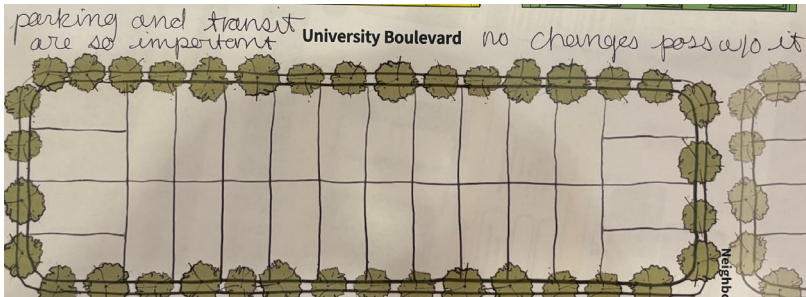
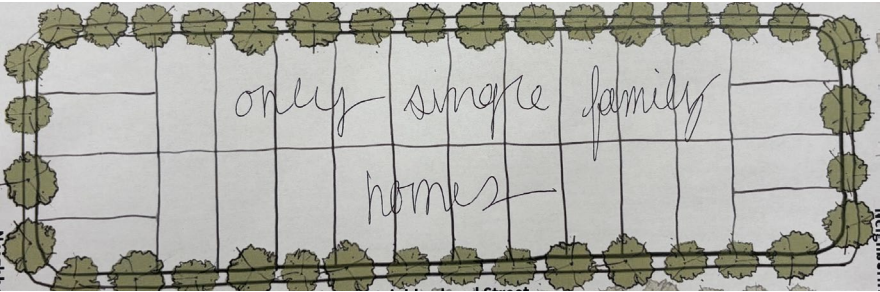
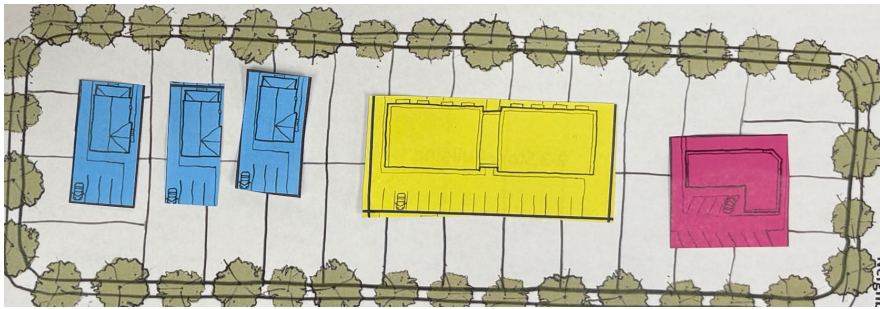
What could it look like?



Building Your Block

As you can see, everyone shared a different vision for what their block should look like in 25 years. **Community members shared insights about what was important to them:**

- Approximately 65% of participants designed a block with new building types, while 35% wanted no change.
- Most people preferred a mix of building types with medium density options being the most popular.
- Community members shared the importance of preserving green space in any future blocks, as well as the desire for retail and parking to be included.



The images shown above are a small collection of the blocks created at this event.

Parks & community facilities



Parques e instalaciones comunitarias

At this station, community members were asked to share how we can improve their existing parks and public spaces along University Boulevard, as well as their thoughts on locations for new parks.



Potential Locations for New Park Spaces

To address the lack of programmed park spaces east of University Boulevard, the planning team asked community members to share their opinions about four potential sites for new parks.

Overall, community members shared a desire for a system of smaller, connected parks within the neighborhood where kids could bike. Community members also welcomed wayfinding and stewardship signage at each site.



McAlpine Road (0.48 acre)
Owned by Montgomery Parks



E. Melbourne Avenue (0.15 acre)
Owned by Montgomery Parks



Weaver Street (0.5 acre)
Owned by Althea Woodland Nursing Home



Linton Street (0.1 acre)
Owned by Montgomery County

- For the larger sites on McAlpine Rd. (A) and Weaver St. (C):
 - Community members appreciated the open spaces that were already there, and some suggested that they would be good places for **benches, shaded structures, more trees, or small play equipment.**
- At E. Melbourne St.(B):
 - Community members wanted a **neighborhood-scale amenity** within walking distance.
- At Linton St. site(D):
 - The area links part of the community to Montgomery Knolls Elementary School. Community members suggested some **benches or shade structures** at this location.

Amenities for New Park Spaces

Community members were asked to share what types of potential amenities they would like to see in new park spaces. Most people desired **better connectivity** between the parks and community spaces the plan area, including fields. Within their neighborhoods, they also highlighted a need for more **community gathering spaces that feel safe and welcoming**, in addition to **benches, shade structures/trees, play areas that blend with nature, community gardens, and places to experience nature.**



Example of a shaded bench, shared with the community



Example of a nature-inspired playspace



Example of picnic tables as a place to gather

Getting around



Mobilización

At the third station, community members were asked to share their ideas about ways to improve how they get around University Boulevard.

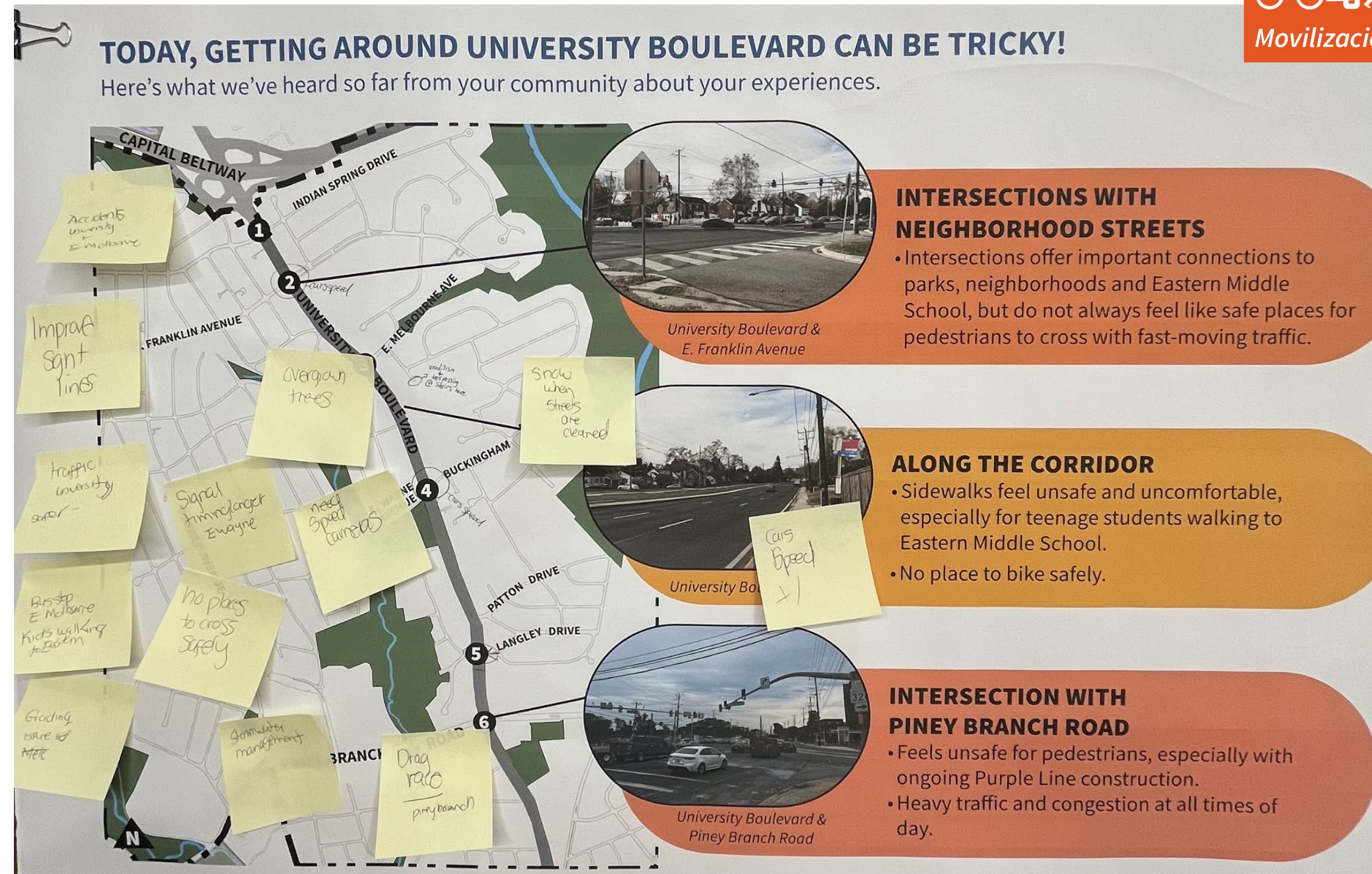


What We Heard

To begin the discussion on transportation, we started by presenting community members feedback collected at previous community engagement events and asked them to add additional feedback about the current conditions.

We heard additional concerns about University Boulevard including:

- **Speeding along University Boulevard.**
- **Need to improve sightlines.**
- **Safer crossings needed.**



Creating Solutions Together

After identifying some of the challenges along University Boulevard today, we asked for community members' help in identifying potential solutions to address those challenges. Using cards with potential street improvement options on them, each group of community members selected their proposed solutions for the intersections.

The interventions listed were most frequently selected by community members.



Langley Dr. & University Blvd.

Community members most wanted to see:

- Protected sidewalks
- Protected bike lanes
- Protected crossings
- Traffic calming measures
- Pedestrian signals
- Speed cameras or stop signs



Buckingham Ave. & University Blvd.

Community members most wanted to see:

- Traffic calming measures
- Protected sidewalks



Piney Branch Rd. & University Blvd.

Community members most wanted to see:

- Wider sidewalks
- Protected sidewalks
- Protected bike lanes

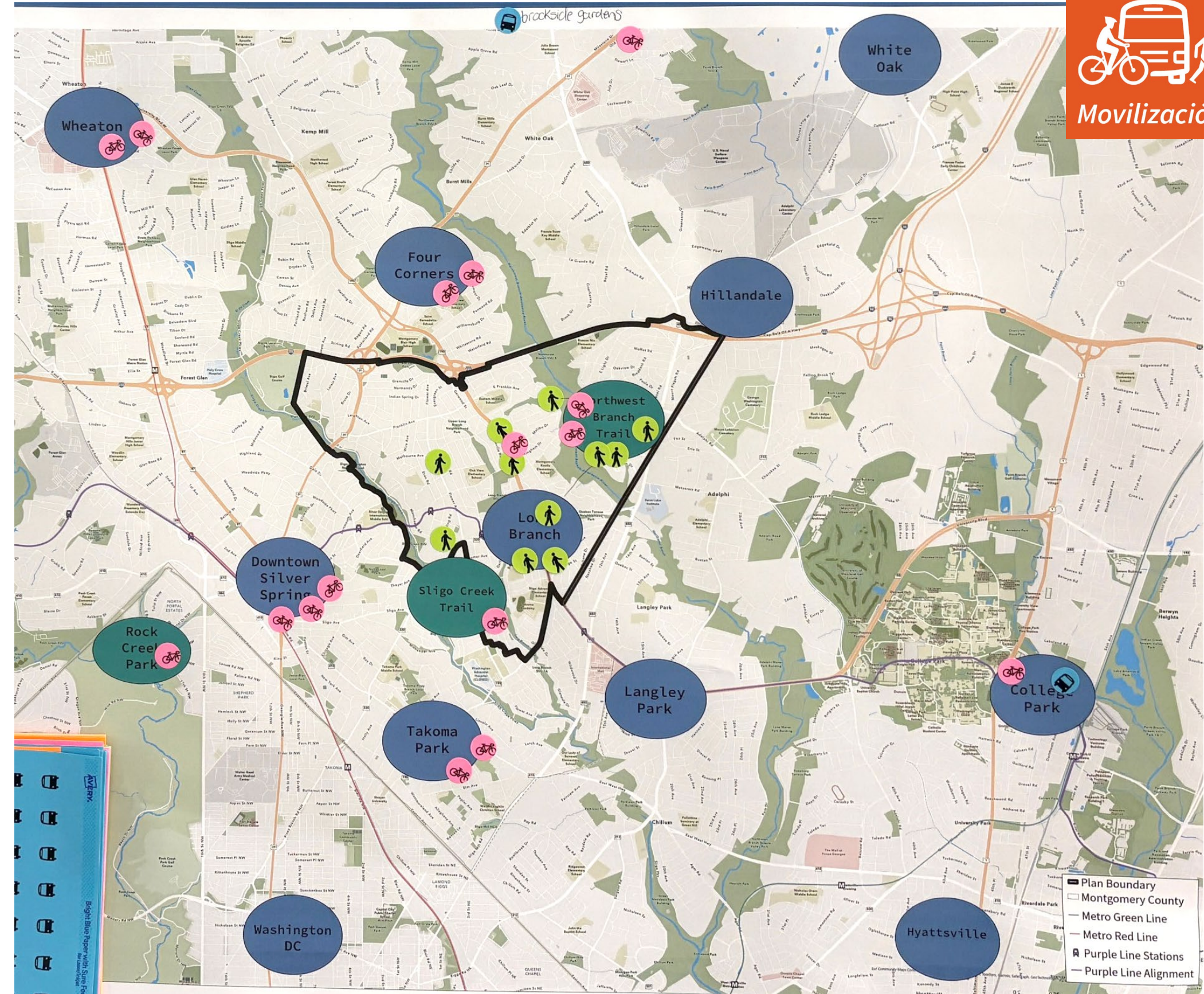
Getting There

This activity asked residents to use color-coded stickers to show us the areas they would like to be able to access in the future and their preferred mode of transportation to get there.

Most people wanted to be able reach destinations by biking and walking. The most popular destinations were the Northwest Branch Trail and Long Branch.

Community members also wanted to:

- Walk to: Northwest Branch Trail, Long Branch, and Sligo Creek Trail
- Take the bus to: College Park, and Brookside Gardens
- Bike to: Brookside Gardens, College Park, Takoma Park, Rock Creek Park, Downtown Silver Spring, Sligo Creek Trail, Long Branch, Northwest Branch Trail, Four Corners, and Wheaton



Acknowledgements and Next Steps

Thank you to Indian Springs Citizens Association, Clifton Park Civic Association, Franklin Knolls Civic Association and Sligo-Branview Community Association for their work to encourage so many community members to join this conversation.

The input gathered at each community conversation will help the planning team develop preliminary recommendations. These will be shared with the community by Winter 2026, for additional feedback and input, before they are shared with the Planning Board.