



CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSIONS AGENDA

**25 Crescent Road
2nd Floor, Council Chambers
Wednesday, January 23, 2019
8:00 PM**

Work Session Packet - *Agenda*

- *Introductions*
- *Presentation*
Josh Olsen, Monument Realty
- *Council Discussion*
- *Questions and Answers*
- *Other Items*

Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel Report
[ULI Washington News_From Highway to Main Street_A New Vision for Greenbelt Road.pdf](#)
[Greenbelt-TAP-Report-Final-100118.pdf](#)

City Council Work Sessions Agenda Item Report

Meeting Date: January 23, 2019

Submitted by: Bonita Anderson

Submitting Department: Administration

Item Type: Work Session Item

Agenda Section:

Subject:

Urban Land Institute Technical Assistance Panel Report

Suggested Action:

Attachments:

[ULI Washington News_From Highway to Main Street_A New Vision for Greenbelt Road.pdf](#)

[Greenbelt-TAP-Report-Final-100118.pdf](#)

ULI Washington News

FROM HIGHWAY TO MAIN STREET: A NEW VISION FOR GREENBELT ROAD

Posted on October 3, 2018 by ULI Washington



How can a 1960s suburban strip find new life in the 21st century?

This summer, a **Technical Assistance Panel** of planners, architects, and developers helped craft a vision for

Greenbelt Road, a Prince George's County corridor with trying to reimagine itself as a new Main Street. View the full Technical Assistance Panel report [here](#).

Located just inside the Beltway in northern Prince George's County, Greenbelt Road (Maryland Route 193) is a major east-west road connecting the municipalities of College Park, Greenbelt, and Berwyn Heights.



Greenbelt Road is close to extensive open spaces including Greenbelt Park, a national park with recreation and camping sites; major activity centers and employers including the University of

Maryland and NASA Goddard; and the Route 1 corridor, which has seen an influx of new investment in recent years. The Greenbelt Metro station is three-fourths of a mile away, and builders are completing Greenbelt Station, a new neighborhood with 1200 apartments and townhomes.

However, Greenbelt Road itself hasn't seen much change in recent decades. Today, it's characterized by auto-oriented retail, like drive-thru restaurants and gas stations, aimed at travelers passing through

the area. The road is wide and fast, with incomplete sidewalks and bicycle lanes that discourage people from walking and bicycling, despite the presence of extensive parks and open space nearby.



Over two days in June, a group of planners, architects, and developers worked with community leaders from College Park, Greenbelt, and Berwyn Heights to envision a new future for the corridor as

part of the Urban Land Institute's Technical Assistance Panel program. The panelists heard from local leaders who celebrated the area's diversity and accessibility to the region, but were anxious for more places to shop and eat, and wanted the area to have a walkable Main Street.

At the same time, it was clear that the broader community may have a variety of conflicting wants and needs. The three cities of Berwyn Heights, College Park, and Greenbelt have a range of age, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity. Likewise, the Greenbelt Road corridor serves a variety of different needs: it's a regional shopping destination, a gateway to the area from the highway, and a large residential community as well. Any development that occurs here will be responsible for simultaneously meeting the needs of many different populations, but there is also a risk of political gridlock as different constituencies struggle to find common ground.



Panelists heard a variety of opinions from a variety of stakeholders.

Panelists heard four common themes from stakeholders that could become guiding principles for future development. They wanted to **emphasize pedestrian and bicycle improvements**, such as making Greenbelt Road a

safer, more comfortable place to walk and bike and improving connections to surrounding residential areas, nearby parks such as Greenbelt Park and Lake Artemesia, and the area's extensive trail network. Additionally, there was a desire for **quality open space** where the community can gather informally or for programmed events such as farmers' markets, festivals, and concerts, as opposed to area parks which are intended for recreation or preserving land in a natural state.

In terms of private investment, community members wanted to **introduce different kinds of retail** that could allow residents to do more shopping in their community, as well as providing more opportunities for residents to dine out or be entertained without leaving. And they wanted to **allow residents to age in place** by providing a wider mix of housing options, including apartments that seniors can downsize into from larger single-family homes.

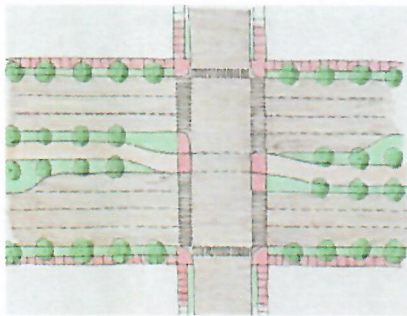
In the coming years, the corridor could change dramatically due to development at two catalyst sites, including “the Triangle” at Route 1 and Greenbelt Road, where retail and housing is planned and at Beltway Plaza, a 1960s-era enclosed shopping mall whose owner, Quantum Companies, intends to renovate and add housing around it. These developments are opportunities to reshape Greenbelt Road itself and set the area on the path that community members envision.

During the workshop, the panel developed recommendations for improving the area’s transportation, land use, and local economy to help achieve community leaders’ goals. Some of those recommendations included:

- Designating Greenbelt Road a WMATA Bus Priority Corridor, which would make it eligible for improvements that can speed up buses, like transit signal priority and dedicated bus lanes.
- Making local bus service more frequent and run longer hours to attract more riders.
- Developing a bicycle network in the area by creating protected bike lanes along Greenbelt Road, either along the curbside or in the median, that would connect nearby off-street trails such as the Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail, Indian Creek Trail, and Paint Branch Trail.
- Giving Greenbelt Road a “road diet,” reallocating the road space within the existing curbs to make room for protected bike lanes, wide sidewalks with planting buffers, and a landscaped median with pedestrian refuges.
- Redeveloping Beltway Plaza as a town center-style shopping center, with street-facing retail, a mix of housing over shops, and structured parking, with an open plaza or green for community events.
- Encouraging mixed-use development at “the Triangle,” including housing, shops, and office or research development to capitalize on the growth of the University of Maryland campus.
- Starting an Economic Development Organization (EDO) for the three municipalities to craft a shared brand for marketing the area, and allowing them to advocate for their shared goals.

- Using public financing, such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF), a tax incentive, or municipal bonding, to help pay for improvements to Greenbelt Road itself that can catalyze private investment.
- Working with Prince George's County to protect naturally occurring affordable housing in the area to ensure that current residents can afford to stay with redevelopment.

Like many suburban commercial corridors, Greenbelt Road must decide on an answer to this question: are you bringing people through you, or to you? Is this community a place where people stop on their way to somewhere else, or a destination for local residents and the region as a whole?



The panel proposed a road diet for Greenbelt Road, including wider sidewalks, more landscaping, and a bike lane (center).

What happens here depends on the three communities along the Greenbelt Road corridor coming together to articulate a shared vision for the area. If they can do that, they can help answer this question, revitalize their community, and help provide an example of other suburban places facing the same challenges.

Technical Assistance Panels provide expert, multidisciplinary advice to sponsors facing complex land use and real estate issues in the Washington metropolitan area. Drawing from ULI Washington's extensive membership base, panels to offer objective and responsible advice on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. ULI Washington is grateful to the following individuals for serving on this Panel: Marsha Kaiser (Chair), WSP; Nicole McCall, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments; Dan Reed, Toole Design Group; Merrill St. Leter, SmithGroup JJR; Nkosi Yearwood, Montgomery County Planning Department; Paul Moyer, Jacobs; Kyle Talente, RKG Associates; Suzette Goldstein, HOK; Josh Olsen, Monument Realty; Lora Byala, Foursquare ITP. To view the full report detailing the panel's recommendations on creating a future for Greenbelt Road, click [here](#).



ULI Washington Panelists, on their tour of Greenbelt Road in June 2018.

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

Creating a Future for Greenbelt Road/MD-193

WASHINGTON, DC

SPONSORED BY:
City of Greenbelt
City of College Park
Town of Berwyn Heights
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

June 4-5, 2018

ABOUT ULI WASHINGTON

A DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

ULI Washington is a district council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a nonprofit education and research organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the Institute today has over 32,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use planning and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service. As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local, national, and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better communities.

ULI's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI Washington carries out the ULI mission locally by sharing best practices, building consensus, and advancing solutions through educational programs and community outreach initiatives.

ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL (TAP) PROGRAM

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

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Table of Contents

ULI WASHINGTON PANEL & PROJECT STAFF	2
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
WHAT PANELISTS HEARD	6
OPPORTUNITIES	8
MOBILITY POSSIBILITIES	12
LAND USE ENHANCEMENTS	18
MARKET + SOCIAL REALITIES	21
IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES	22
CONCLUSION	28
PANELISTS	29

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ULI Washington is grateful to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments for its continued partnership and commitment to delivering TAPs in COG-designated Activity Centers. In addition, ULI Washington wishes to acknowledge the dedicated staff members of the City of College Park, the Town of Berwyn Heights, and the City of Greenbelt for their assistance and hospitality throughout this TAP. In particular, ULI would like to acknowledge: Nicole Ard, Terri Hruby, Terry Schum, Jessica Cowles, Ann Marie Belton, Jessica Bellah, Steve Beavers, Ryan Chelton, as well as the entire onsite staff of the Springhill Lake Recreation Center.

Executive Summary

Located in northern Prince George's County, the Greenbelt Road corridor connects the municipalities of Greenbelt, College Park, and Berwyn Heights. It was primarily developed during the mid 20th century as a classic suburban commercial strip, and today consists of a mix of drive-through retail, industrial uses, an enclosed shopping mall, and several mature residential neighborhoods, with both rental and for-sale housing. It is a stable, middle-class community, whose residents embrace its diversity and affordability.

The area is close to several major employers such as NASA Goddard, is two miles from the University of Maryland, whose students, faculty, and staff frequent the shopping along Greenbelt Road, and major parks like Greenbelt Park and Lake Artemesia. The corridor's proximity to the Beltway and the Greenbelt Metro and MARC stations have historically made it a popular location for both residential and commercial development over the past few decades.

However, the Greenbelt Road corridor is at a crossroads. Like many suburban commercial areas, it has lost some business to newer, outlying shopping centers, and grapples with some disinvestment and traffic congestion. Many community members express a desire for a greater variety of retail, but there is no singular vision for how the area can attract that. The corridor is beginning to see some significant new residential development at Greenbelt Station, including a large mixed-use community rising near the Greenbelt Metro station, which will bring new, potentially higher-income residents. As the area is subject to regional housing pressures, stakeholders expressed concerns about rising housing costs and the potential for gentrification.

Additionally, the area faces some transportation challenges as it transitions from a primarily auto-oriented corridor to one with a more multimodal focus. Stakeholders noted that many residents do not drive to the variety of walking, bicycling, and transit options in the area, but Greenbelt Road itself remains a unsafe and unwelcoming place to travel without a car. Sidewalks are missing, curb cuts and closely spaced driveways are common, and heavy, fast-moving traffic makes the road a barrier between the commercial center and surrounding residential areas.

The Panel assembled a set of recommendations aimed at holistically addressing the Greenbelt Road corridor's challenges as they relate to its economy, land use, and transportation. Its goal is to help this community develop a more sustainable economy, land uses that promote a stronger sense of place, and a multimodal transportation network that enables everyone to get around safely and comfortably. These recommendations will not be easy to carry out, and will require a strong vision from the community and many vocal champions for change. Nonetheless, these recommendations provide the three municipalities an opportunity to take control of their collective future.

What Panelists Heard



The Panel went on a site visit to Beltway Plaza.
Image Source: ULI Washington.

Over two days, the Panel met with stakeholders from the Town of Berwyn Heights, the City of College Park, and the City of Greenbelt, and went on a site visit of the Greenbelt Road corridor. On the second day, the Panel presented their preliminary recommendations to the sponsors in a public meeting.

Stakeholders were quick to share the study area's strengths, including its diversity, having lots of community services at close reach, and proximity to the Metro, highways, major employers such as NASA Goddard, UMD, nearby healthcare providers such as Children's Hospital and Kaiser Permanente, and parks including Greenbelt Park and Lake Artemesia. They noted that many residents chose not to own cars due to the variety of bus routes serving the area. Representatives from the Town of Berwyn Heights were proud that their median income was higher than surrounding areas, a sign of its economic strength, and wanted investment that reflected that.

At the same time, there were conflicts present in the way stakeholders described the goals for the area in the future. The area is home to beloved restaurants, but residents mourn the loss of Sir Walter Raleigh, and note there are few places to go out for a sit-down meal. Stakeholders noted that the area could potentially serve as a residential community for University of Maryland faculty and staff, but local elementary schools are at or over capacity. Tourism was repeatedly mentioned as a potential economic engine, though opportunities to leverage that remain untapped.



Greenbelt Mayor Pro Tem Judith Davis describes her goals for the Greenbelt Road corridor to the panel. Image Source: ULI Washington.

Stakeholders expressed several desires for the area, including attracting more tech companies, leveraging the nearby arts scene along Route 1, and being a “local hub” for residents. A common thread among the stakeholders, and among residents, was “why can’t we have a X” store or restaurant. There was a feeling among some representatives that Prince George’s County had ignored the area to instead focus on developing National Harbor and Largo. However, stakeholders expressed enthusiasm for creative solutions that would help reposition the area.

Beltway Plaza, an enclosed shopping mall built in 1964, is a large parcel potentially nearing redevelopment. But there is a mismatch between offerings and desires of part of the community, and a mixed vision for what the future of the Mall will look like. In the mid-2000s, developer Quantum Companies introduced plans to redevelop the mall as an open-air town center with a mix of shops and housing, but city officials were reluctant to allow new rental housing in the area due to the presence of the massive Franklin Park (formerly Springhill Lake) apartment complex behind the mall.

The Panel heard four common themes from stakeholders that could become guiding principles for future development:

- **Emphasizing pedestrian and bicycle improvements**, such as making Greenbelt Road a safer, more comfortable place to walk and bike and improving connections to surrounding residential areas, nearby parks such as Greenbelt Park and Lake Artemesia, and the area’s extensive trail network.
- **Introducing different kinds of retail** that could allow residents to do more shopping in their community, as well as providing more opportunities for residents to dine out or be entertained without leaving.
- **Creating quality open space** where the community can gather informally or for programmed events such as farmers’ markets, festivals, and concerts, as opposed to area parks which are intended for recreation or preserving land in a natural state.
- **Residents to age in place** by providing a wider mix of housing options, including apartments that seniors can downsize into from larger single-family homes.

Another challenge for stakeholders is to figure out the wants and needs of the collective community. The three cities of Berwyn Heights, College Park, and Greenbelt have a range of age, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity, and likewise, the Greenbelt Road corridor serves a variety of different needs: a regional shopping destination, a gateway to the area from the highway, and a large residential community as well. Any development that occurs here will be responsible for simultaneously meeting the needs of many different populations, but there is also a risk of political gridlock as different constituencies struggle to find common ground.



A vacant restaurant at Beltway Plaza. Image Source: ULI Washington.



Greenbelt Mayor Emmett Jordan, stakeholders, and Panel members discuss the corridor’s opportunities in small groups. Image Source: ULI Washington.

Opportunities

The Greenbelt Road corridor has a variety of opportunities that can be leveraged to attract new investment. A variety of local institutions draw people to the area, creating opportunities to convert them into customers, residents, tourists, or other users.

MAGNETS

The University of Maryland is a public research university located two miles south of the Greenbelt Road corridor with over 38,000 enrolled undergraduate and graduate students and over 9,000 faculty and staff. Many students, faculty, and staff live in the surrounding neighborhoods, and Greenbelt Road has been a popular shopping destination for university affiliates due to its proximity to campus. Until recently, Beltway Plaza had its own University of Maryland shuttle route, but it was discontinued when the university began charging private property owners for shuttle service and the mall ownership decided not to participate.

The United States District Court for the District of Maryland, Greenbelt Division is the federal court with jurisdiction over the state of Maryland, and is located one mile north of the Greenbelt Road corridor. As a major judiciary institution, it employs a large number of people and attracts a high number of visitors to the area for long periods of time, making them a potential user base for development along Greenbelt Road.

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center is a space research laboratory located three miles east of the study area along Greenbelt Road, and employs 10,000 people. While there are several shopping centers closer to Goddard, Beltway Plaza and other retail in the study area form the largest concentration of shopping and dining opportunities, and are a likely destination for Goddard employees looking to eat or run errands during or after the work day. Additionally, Goddard workers may choose to live in the area rather than commuting from elsewhere.

Capital Office Park is a 40-acre office park northeast of the study area that contains over 800,000 square feet of office space, and was purchased by Morning Calm Management in 2017, which is spending \$7 million to renovate the buildings and add new amenities. While the park has struggled with high vacancies due to a broader market shift away from single-use office parks, the improvements are attracting some new tenants, which may bring new office workers to support retail businesses along Greenbelt Road.

Greenbelt Park is a 1200-acre park managed by the National Park Service located less than one mile from the study area. It offers a variety of recreational opportunities, including nine miles of walking and bicycling trails, three picnic areas, and 174 campground sites for overnight camping, making it the only campsite inside the Capitol Beltway. Stakeholders from the three cities repeatedly mentioned Greenbelt Park as an opportunity to attract tourists to the area.

Old Town Greenbelt, located one mile east of the study area, is an 800-acre planned community historic district developed by the United States federal government in the 1930s as part of president Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal. Greenbelt was designed as a model community, with over 400 modernist-style buildings containing apartments and townhomes in a large crescent shape surrounding a town center with neighborhood-serving retail and a network of parks and plazas. Greenbelt was added to the U.S. Register of Historic Places in 1980. Today, Old Town Greenbelt is both a large residential community that patronizes retail in the Greenbelt Road corridor, and a potential tourist attraction for visitors across the region.

The College Park Airport and Aviation Museum, located two miles south of the study area, is the world's longest continuously operating airport, containing both temporary and long-term parking for 100 planes and a pilot lounge, allowing it to receive small flights. It is also a museum about the history of flight, making it a regional tourist attraction.

UNTAPPED ASSETS

While the area has a number of high-profile destinations, there are also several untapped assets that could bring more people and investment to the community, while encouraging existing residents and businesses to take advantage of them.

The area has a large number of underutilized recreational facilities, including the nearby Trolley Trail and Paint Branch Trail, and green spaces like Lake Artemesia and Greenbelt Park. There are also vacant commercial properties along the corridor that present opportunities to reposition the area's retail and restaurant offerings. At both ends of the study corridor, there are potential "anchor sites," like the triangle formed by Route 1, Route 193, and Greenbelt Road, that are partially vacant or underused and are opportunities to create gateways to the area.

REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

The study area became a shopping and commercial destination because of its connection to the regional transportation network, and these links can be leveraged to draw more investment to the area in the coming years.

Those regional connections include an exit on the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, a limited-access highway between Baltimore and Washington, DC; proximity to two exits on Interstate 95/495 (Capital Beltway), which connects Greenbelt to major activity centers in Montgomery and Prince George's



New homes at Greenbelt Station. Image Source: ULI Washington.

counties as well as to national destinations; and Route 1 (Baltimore Avenue), which connects the study area to nearby towns within Prince George's County.

Additionally, the study area has a wealth of transit connections. The Greenbelt Metro station, within walking distance of the study area, provides frequent, rapid rail service to downtown DC and other regional destinations. Adjacent to the Metro is the Greenbelt MARC station, which has several trains each week-day to Washington, DC and Baltimore. Several Metrobus and Prince George's County The Bus routes serve Greenbelt Road, providing access to other communities in northern Prince George's County and eastern Montgomery County.

INFLUENCING FORCES AND POLICIES

The study corridor's present and future is continuously shaped by forces well beyond the immediate area. Understanding them will allow local stakeholders to harness these circumstances to draw the kind of investment they seek.

Regional housing demand will have an impact on the study area as buyers and renters priced out of Washington, DC and Montgomery County seek out housing options in Prince George's County. The Greenbelt Road corridor is a rare opportunity to live next to a Metro station inside the Capital Beltway, and at a much lower cost than in other parts of the region and, increasingly, in closer-in parts of Prince George's County. The Greenbelt Station development illustrates the demand for walkable, transit-oriented communities, which potential development on Greenbelt Road could further satisfy.

A consistent, cohesive vision for multimodal transportation can help shape the form of future development on Greenbelt Road. It will be important for local stakeholders to understand what kinds of investment contribute to a walkable, transit-oriented community (a mix of housing and shops; higher-density housing types such as apartments and townhomes; buildings oriented towards streets and sidewalks, parking placed in the rear of buildings or in structured garages), and what does not (drive-through restaurants, gas stations, lower-density housing types such as single-family homes, parking lots in the front of buildings). Being able to articulate what kinds of investment support the vision, and a willingness to reject development that does not meet the vision, will be crucial.

The Prince George's County zoning rewrite has been in progress for several years and is set to be approved soon. It will encourage more pedestrian- and transit-friendly development in the county by streamlining the zoning code and reducing barriers that may make this kind of development difficult to finance or build, such as restrictions on mixing residential and commercial uses, high parking requirements, and large setbacks.

THE PLAYERS

There are also several actors that play a role in the ongoing conversation about the future of Greenbelt Road. The Four Cities Coalition is a partnership

between the municipalities of Berwyn Heights, College Park, Greenbelt, and New Carrollton to work together on local issues and share resources, including funding a street sweeper. This coalition means there is already a positive working relationship between the three municipalities along Greenbelt Road.

Several public entities also play a large role in the study area. The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration owns and is responsible for maintaining Greenbelt Road. Additionally, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority operates several local Metrobus routes and the Greenbelt Metro station. WMATA also owns the parking lots around the Greenbelt station, and has an agreement in place with Renard Development to redevelop the parking lot as the “North Core,” a mix of offices, shops, and residential. While the cities of College Park and Greenbelt are both on record as supporting the project, the federal government’s decision not to relocate the FBI headquarters from downtown DC to Greenbelt might delay any significant development on this site.

The University of Maryland is located two miles west of the study area, and owns a former Washington Post printing press on Greenbelt Road where its facilities and maintenance divisions currently operate. While it has no plans to redevelop that site, the university’s students, faculty, and staff do represent a large constituency for housing and services in the study area.

There is also one large landowner in the Greenbelt Road area who is active in the conversation about future development and may have the means to make a significant investment in the near term. Quantum Companies, which has owned Beltway Plaza Mall since its construction in 1964, has been working to revitalize the property, which is 98% leased. The mall ownership describes its clientele as residents living in the immediate area and a small subset of tourists staying nearby, and wishes to attract more students, faculty, and staff from the University of Maryland.

In the near-term, the owner has invested \$5 million to renovate the 8-screen movie theatre, and is focusing on attracting “experience retail,” such as food and beverage. Quantum is in talks with restaurants to open in two “food clusters” within the mall. In the long-term, Quantum seeks to develop a mix of housing, street-fronting retail, and open space around the enclosed mall. In 2004, they introduced plans to build 1400 apartments around the mall, but faced resistance from the City of Greenbelt, which was wary about adding more rental housing to the area.

The plan ultimately stalled due to changes in Prince George’s County government and the Great Recession. Quantum is currently working on a new proposal that would include some of the same uses, while preserving the parking lots and pad sites along Greenbelt Road, which generate one-third of the property’s value. All retail leases since 2000 have included gradation clauses in the event of redevelopment.



Quantum Companies has invested \$5 million to renovate the interior of Beltway Plaza Mall. Image Source: ULI Washington.

Mobility Possibilities

The Greenbelt Road corridor already has a wide variety of mobility options, something which local leaders are very proud of. At the same time, there are opportunities to build on the transportation network and create new connections to area destinations, as well as new recreational opportunities.

BUS SERVICE

The corridor is served by six bus routes operated by WMATA (Metrobus), Prince George's County (The Bus), and the RTA of Central Maryland. While the C2 exclusively serves Greenbelt Road west of Cherrywood Lane, the other five routes serve portions of Greenbelt Road east of Cherrywood Lane, with multiple routes serving certain stops. Two stops on the Beltway Plaza property have the highest use, with over 50 boardings per day, followed by stops at Greenbelt Road and 62nd Avenue (eastbound), Greenbelt Road and 58th Avenue (westbound), and Greenbelt Road and Rhode Island Avenue (westbound), all of which have between 20 and 49 boardings per day. This pattern indicates that many riders are using the bus to access Beltway Plaza or to travel to and from the Greenbelt Metro station.

Route	Destinations	Operator	Rush Hour Headways
C2	Greenbelt Metro/Wheaton Metro	WMATA	25 minutes
R12	Greenbelt Metro/Deanwood Metro	WMATA	30 minutes
G14	Greenbelt Metro/New Carrollton Metro (via Good Luck Road)	WMATA	30 minutes
15X	Greenbelt Metro/New Carrollton Metro (via Godard)	The Bus	30 minutes
16	Greenbelt Metro/New Carrollton Metro (via Berwyn Heights)	The Bus	30 minutes
302	College Park Metro/Laurel	RTA	30 minutes

While ridership along the corridor is high, many stops lack shelters and sufficient sidewalk or waiting space, making it uncomfortable or even unsafe for riders to wait. Most stops are located near an intersection, but crosswalks and pedestrian signals are not always present. Sidewalks near stops are discontinuous, especially on the south side of Greenbelt Road leading to the Town of

Berwyn Heights. Going forward, it will be crucial to ensure that walking to and waiting for buses along the corridor is both easy and comfortable, which will encourage ridership and also strengthen the pedestrian environment. WMATA guidelines dictate that shelters be provided at stops with 50 or more boardings per day, but the transit agency will not pay for them.

There are also several opportunities to improve bus speed and reliability in the corridor. Greenbelt Road between Route 1 and Cherrywood Lane (where the C2 bus currently runs) is a designated WMATA bus priority corridor. That would make it eligible for improvements such as queue jumps (which allow buses to pull ahead of other traffic at the stoplight), transit signal priority (where buses are given additional green time at a stoplight, allowing them to clear the intersection), and dedicated bus lanes. This designation could be viable from Cherrywood Lane to Kenilworth Avenue based on the level of service of any routes serving that area.

It is also worth investigating how bus service is structured along Greenbelt Road. Each of the six routes serving the area have very high headways, forcing riders to wait 30 minutes or longer they've missed the bus. Several routes do not run on evenings or weekends. Reorganizing service in the area could allow for lower headways or more direct service to local destinations. The Panel has four recommendations for potential service changes:

- **The Bus 15X:** This is a limited-stop service between the Greenbelt Metro, the new Greenbelt Station development, and the New Carrollton Metro. The Panel recommended improving peak frequencies to 30 minutes and extending evening service to 10:00pm, enabling riders to use if they work later to do activities after work.
- **The Bus 16:** This is a local service between the Greenbelt and New Carrollton Metro stations via the Town of Berwyn Heights and Greenbelt Road between Cherrywood Lane and Kenilworth Avenue. The Panel recommended improving mid-day frequency to 45 minutes in the near-term, and in the long-term, to 30 minutes mid-day and 20 minutes during rush hour. They also recommended extending evening service to 10:00pm, and adding Saturday service every 45 minutes.
- **Metrobus G14 and R12:** These are local services between the Greenbelt Metro and the Deanwood and New Carrollton stations, respectively. Currently, both routes enter the Beltway Plaza parking lot and stop there, which is not within WMATA service design guidelines. The Panel recommended considering moving these stops to Greenbelt Road, which would reduce rider delays.
- **University of Maryland Shuttle Route 143:** This is a shuttle for University of Maryland students, faculty, and staff that runs between the campus in College Park and Old Town Greenbelt via Greenbelt Road. The UM-Shuttle previously served Beltway Plaza Mall, but ended it due to a new policy



Bicycle facilities along Greenbelt Road are limited, despite proximity to an extensive trail network. Image Source: ULI Washington.

that required private property owners to pay for shuttle service. Potential improvements to this route could include extending it to Giant (with the support of Beltway Plaza ownership) and the Greenbelt Station development.

BICYCLE FACILITIES

There are limited on-street bicycle facilities in the Greenbelt Road corridor. There are curbside bike lanes on portions of Greenbelt Road: westbound from the Capital Beltway to 62nd Avenue and at the entrance to Greenbelt Station, and eastbound from 63rd Avenue to Kenilworth Avenue. These lanes require bicycling next to a busy, fast, six-lane state highway, and there are many conflicts with turning motor vehicles, especially at the interchange with Kenilworth Avenue. Cherrywood Lane has on-street bike lanes north of Breezewood Drive, ending at Beltway Plaza. As a result, there is no safe on-street bicycling route to Beltway Plaza, Greenbelt Park, or to the Greenbelt Metro station from areas to the south.

However, there are extensive off-street and signed trails in the area, such as the Rhode Island Avenue Trolley Trail, trails along Indian Creek and the Paint Branch, and around Lake Artemesia. These trails offer access to open space, recreation opportunities, as well as the University of Maryland and Old Town College Park, but are not well connected to the Greenbelt Road corridor or the Greenbelt Metro station.

The Panel recommended creating a bicycling network in the study area by connecting the existing trail network with a mix of on-street and off-street facilities along Greenbelt Road itself. From the west, a new bike lane or side path would begin at the Paint Branch Trail, cross Route 1 to Greenbelt Road, and follow the Greenbelt Road right-of-way along the north side, connecting to the Trolley Trail. At University Boulevard, the bike facility could go in a number of directions, following the street itself for connections to Greenbelt Station and descending down to Branchville Road and Ballew Avenue to connect with the existing Indian Creek path. This is an opportunity acquire or repurpose some of the industrial sites along these two streets for open space, knitting together existing parks. East of Indian Creek, the path would continue along the north side of Greenbelt Road to provide access to the existing Cherrywood Lane bike lanes and Beltway Plaza, while avoiding the curb cuts on the south side. At 63rd Avenue the path would head south, then east at Seminole Street, crossing over Kenilworth Avenue at a new trail bridge, providing a connection to Greenbelt Park and back north to Greenbelt Road.

Future improvements to the Greenbelt Road area could include additional bike facilities and crossings, though this will require public education so people traveling on foot, bike, or in vehicles can know what to expect. Also beneficial would be adding wayfinding and entrance signage to direct bicyclists to off-street trails and to the Greenbelt Metro station.

The introduction of bikesharing, in conjunction with more bike connections, could encourage more bicycling in the area. There are two bikesharing systems



in operation in the surrounding area. mBike is a system jointly operated by the City of College Park and the University of Maryland, and is designed for local trips. While there are no stations in the Greenbelt Road corridor, the closest one is located two blocks south of the corridor at Rhode Island Avenue and Berwyn Road. Bikeshare is a regional system jointly operated by the District of Columbia, Montgomery and Prince George's counties in Maryland, and the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, and Fairfax County in Virginia. The nearest station to the study area is located two miles away in Riverdale Park, but Prince George's County's expansion plans include stations in College Park and Greenbelt, in conjunction with new bike facilities and wayfinding.

The panel's proposed drawing of expanding bike facilities and open space. Image Source: ULI Washington.

WAYFINDING

Despite the wide array of transportation options in the area and large number of extant destinations, these amenities are not always apparent to visitors, especially tourists. A coherent, unified wayfinding system is a strong tool for developing a local brand and identity, but could also raise awareness of the area's assets to visitors. Wayfinding should be geared to different kinds of travel modes: signs directing motorists from the Beltway, Kenilworth Avenue, and Route 1 to shopping and attractions; signs directing bicyclists to designated bike routes, recreation facilities, and commuting destinations; and signs directing transit users between the Metro and MARC station and the commercial district along Greenbelt Road.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Today, Greenbelt Road is a major arterial and state highway connecting the three cities of Berwyn Heights, College Park, and Greenbelt to the Capital Beltway, the University of Maryland, Goddard Space Center, and other



Greenbelt Road can be an unwelcoming place to walk or bike. Image Source: ULI Washington.

Traffic volumes on Greenbelt Road have declined over the past 10 years. Traffic data from Maryland State Highway Administration at <https://www.roads.maryland.gov/index.aspx?PagelD=792>. Image Source: ULI Washington.



Cross-section of curbside bike lanes on Greenbelt Road. Image Source: ULI Washington.

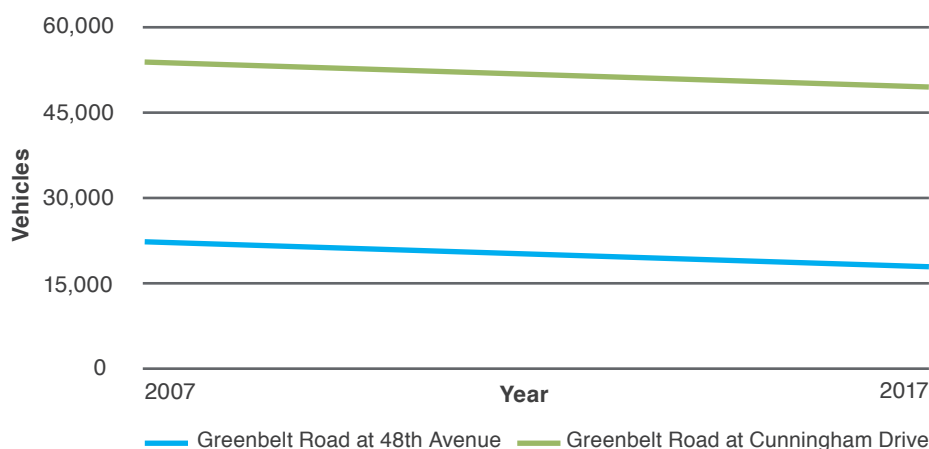


Cross-section of median bike lanes on Greenbelt Road. Image Source: ULI Washington.

communities in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. It has a 120-foot right of way within the study area, including a 96-foot carriageway (curb to curb). At intersections, there are dedicated left-turn lanes, and at the main Beltway Plaza entrance at Cunningham Drive, slip lanes for turning right. There are limited to no buffers between the sidewalk and the street, a significant number of curb cuts, and substantial gaps in the sidewalk, including in front of Beltway Plaza between 62nd Avenue and Cunningham Drive.

Traffic volumes in the corridor are high, but have declined in recent years. The Maryland State Highway Administration is currently studying improvements to Greenbelt Road, but is waiting for this TAP to finish before releasing any recommendations of its own.

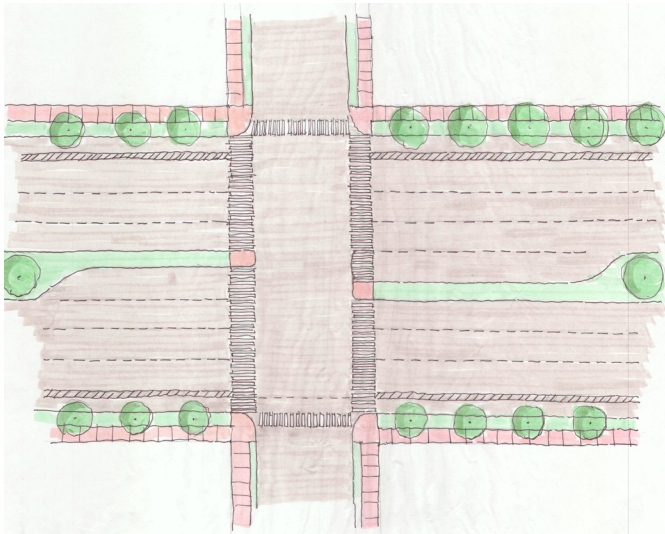
ANNUAL AVERAGE TRAFFIC COUNTS ON GREENBELT ROAD, 2007-2017



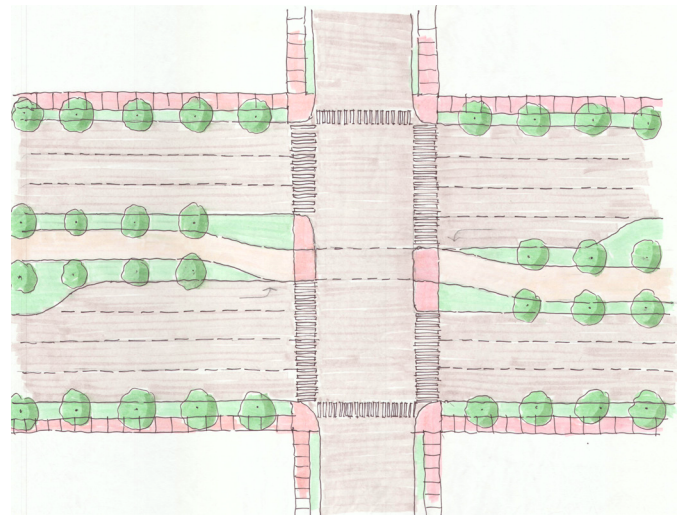
The Panel investigated several potential changes to make Greenbelt Road a more functional road for all users. Redistributing the road space within the existing curb to curb area could create room for different travel modes, including buffered bike lanes that would reduce conflicts between bicyclists and drivers. Eliminating the slip lanes at Cunningham Drive would calm traffic and make it safer to cross the street in front of Beltway Plaza. On both sides of Greenbelt Road, the Panel recommended incorporating a planting strip and sidewalk, as well as a median with a pedestrian refuge. These both make it safer and more enjoyable to walk, while creating a stronger sense of place via trees and landscaping. Consolidating curb cuts on the south side of Greenbelt Road reduces the number of interruptions in the sidewalk as well as conflicts between drivers and people on foot or bike.

Another alternative would be creating a dedicated trail facility down the center of Greenbelt Road, in a newly constructed median. This reduces conflicts with driveways or curb cuts for people traveling on foot or bike, and creates an iconic linear open space that could serve both recreation and commuting purposes. However, it would require a more intensive road reconstruction project, including moving the curbs and assorted utility lines beneath the road.

Additionally, introducing dedicated bus lanes could speed up transit service in the corridor, making it an attractive option for more travelers and potentially taking cars off the road. There are two potential ways to include bus lanes on Greenbelt Road. Curbside bus lanes would allow buses to use existing stops, reducing impacts on current traffic patterns, but would introduce more conflicts with driveways and between buses and right-turning vehicles. Median bus lanes would allow buses to travel through the corridor with no delays due to other traffic, but requires up to 50 feet of right-of-way, which could only be created by repurposing existing traffic lanes or widening the road into adjacent private properties.



Plan detail of
curbside bike lanes
at an intersection on
Greenbelt Road. Image
Source: ULI Washington.



Plan detail of
median bike lanes
at an intersection on
Greenbelt Road. Image
Source: ULI Washington.

Case Study: Queens Chapel Road

One precedent for the reconstruction of Greenbelt Road is Queens Chapel Road, located three miles away and nearing completion. The \$18 million project included streetscape improvements such as sidewalks and street lights, bike lanes, and stormwater management measures, as well as a wide grass median. While this road is a Maryland state highway, the state shared the costs with Prince George's County and the municipalities of Hyattsville and Mount Rainier, which the road passes through.

Land Use Enhancements

Land use is a key part of repositioning the Greenbelt Road corridor as a multimodal community and a real destination for the surrounding area. Over time, the Panel envisions that the auto-oriented retail and office uses along the corridor will eventually give way to a finer-grained mix of housing and retail creating a “Main Street” environment, something which is also supported by Prince George’s County’s zoning. Greenbelt Station, with a mix of rental and for-sale housing and low- to mid-rise buildings, appears to be of a scale that the stakeholder communities are comfortable with, and may be an effective precedent for future development in the area.

However, with a one-mile long corridor it can be difficult to create a cohesive sense of place by developing all of it at the same intensity or scale. Thus, the Panel proposes focusing on two key locations that are each well-positioned for future redevelopment, and substantial enough to have a critical mass of new residents, commercial activity, or both.

BELTWAY PLAZA

Beltway Plaza is a 1960s-era enclosed shopping mall located on the north side of Greenbelt Road between Cherrywood Lane and 62nd Avenue. Quantum Companies also own several adjacent retail parcels, including on the northwest

The panel proposes focusing future development at two nodes along Greenbelt Road, one centered on Route 1, another centered on the Beltway Plaza site between Cherrywood Lane and 62nd Avenue. Image Source: ULI Washington.



corner of Greenbelt Road and Cherrywood Lane, and the former Staples on the southwest corner of Greenbelt Road and 62nd Avenue. During the 2000s, Quantum proposed redeveloping the mall as a mixed-use development, retaining a portion of the mall building while building apartments with ground floor shops around it, and introducing a street grid that would break down the large super-block and create additional connections for foot and bike traffic, as well as local motor vehicle traffic. A open space at the center would provide a venue for local gatherings, like festivals and performances. Retail pad sites along Greenbelt Road itself, such as drive-through restaurants and banks, would remain, as they currently provide one-third of the mall's revenue.

This proposal was met with some skepticism from the City of Greenbelt due to its size and the presence of rental housing. However, Quantum plans to reintroduce a proposal similar to its previous concept, and city officials appear more open to the idea of mixed-use development and additional housing. While these plans are not yet public or available for review, the Panel developed a concept of what a redeveloped mall could look like.

Three anchors, Giant, Target, and the AMC movie theatre have long-term leases and are unlikely to leave, but can be kept in place while the rest of the site is redeveloped. The Panel's concept, unlike the Quantum proposal from the 2000s, would actually remove much of the mall structure and replace it with a large open space, surrounded by mid-rise apartments with retail on the ground floor. A network of local streets would create a north-south connection through the mall site. As previously proposed, pad sites along Greenbelt Road would stay, except at the intersection of Cunningham Drive, where panelists proposed replacing two pad buildings with street-facing retail that will draw people in, be designed for access on foot, and serve as a visual landmark for the new development. Along the north side of the site, mid-rise housing with an emphasis on senior housing would create a transition to the Franklin Park apartments.



In the near term, a potential catalyst site could be the former Staples at Greenbelt Road and 62nd Avenue, which is currently vacant. This site is owned by Quantum Companies, and is slated to become a sit-down restaurant.



Drive-through restaurants are a significant part of Beltway Plaza's revenue. Image Source: ULI Washington.



The former Staples site could be a potential catalyst site. Image Source: ULI Washington.

How the Beltway Plaza site could be redeveloped as a town center. Image Source: ULI Washington.

The Beltway Plaza redevelopment could be used to leverage future pedestrian-oriented, street fronting redevelopment on the south side of Greenbelt Road, creating a Main Street. Image Source: ULI Washington.



THE TRIANGLE

Another future catalyst for the area is the “Triangle,” located between Route 1, Greenbelt Road, and University Boulevard at the western end of the study corridor. This site is located within the City of College Park, but was frequently described as a “gateway” to the City of Greenbelt and Town of Berwyn Heights. Today, it consists mainly of vacant lots, some detached single-family homes, and auto-oriented retail facing Route 1. Chick-Fil-A is applying to build a drive-through restaurant at the corner of Route 1 and Greenbelt Road, which College Park opposes as it violates their goals for more pedestrian-oriented development in the corridor.

The “Triangle” may not be a viable site for short-term investment, as it is far from the locus of College Park’s redevelopment further south along Route 1, and could potentially pull attention away from the redevelopment of Beltway Plaza and adjacent retail properties along Greenbelt Road. In the long term, it could be the site of a pivotal or iconic development, potentially with some office or university-affiliated uses along Route 1 and a mix of medium-density housing and retail further east, that helps to knit the two corridors together.

Market + Social Realities

RETAIL DEMAND

While Beltway Plaza is a large retail center that offers a wide variety of shopping and dining options, there remains significant leakage as residents and visitors leave the area to buy things they cannot access here. A gap analysis indicates that the area may be undersupplied in hard goods, such as home furnishings, lawn and garden equipment, as well as soft goods like clothing, specialty food, and drinking establishments. Meanwhile, the area may be oversupplied in grocery stores, gas stations, liquor stores, shoe stores, and health and personal care stores. This suggested that the retail mix at Beltway Plaza and on Greenbelt Road itself could be shifted to include a greater number of sit-down eating and drinking establishments, and more stores that sell specialty items and hard goods. This aligns with feedback the Panel received from community stakeholders who often have to travel far from the study area to access those things.

RESIDENTIAL DEMAND

Residential demand in the study area appears to be strong. New construction is occurring, both at the Greenbelt Station development, where 900 townhomes and 300 apartments are being built, and on a smaller scale in surrounding older neighborhoods. While the area experienced a decline in home prices due to the Great Recession, sale prices at Greenbelt Station indicate that the area has regained its value and it may increase in the future. Two-over-two condominium townhomes at Greenbelt Station currently sell for around \$350,000, while full townhomes start in the \$350,000s and can sell for as much as \$600,000. One-bedroom apartments in Verde Gate, a rental building at Greenbelt Station, rent for around \$1,500 per month, while two-bedrooms rent for \$2,000/month, comparable to new construction rental buildings around the Prince George's Plaza Metro station, two stops closer in.

Other residential projects in the area are starting to move forward as well. In College Park, a developer has purchased a 17-acre tract just west of the railroad tracks and intends to submit plans for a residential community, which zoning does not currently allow. Along Route 1, over 3600 beds of student housing have been built over the past 15 years due to a Prince George's County zoning change in response to the large amount of students living in surrounding neighborhoods.



Construction is underway on 900 townhomes and 300 apartments at Greenbelt Station. Image Source: ULI Washington.

Implementation Strategies

SOCIAL REALITIES

Opportunity360 is a tool from Enterprise Community Partners for understanding how people in a given community have access to social and economic opportunities. The Panel used this system to generate a report analyzing how many opportunities residents in the Greenbelt Road corridor can access based on several metrics, and compared them to the state, region, and the nation on a scale of 1 to 100. The area examined was Census Tract 8067.14, which covers both a portion of the Franklin Park apartment complex and the new Greenbelt Station development, reflecting the diversity of the area.¹

Overall, residents in the Greenbelt Road corridor have above average access to opportunity compared to the state, region, and nation, but it manifests in different ways.

- The area scored low for housing stability, noting the low rate of homeownership in the corridor. 18% of households lived in crowded or overcrowded units, while 30% were low-income households who were severely cost-burdened by rent or mortgages.
- Residents are less educated than the regional average. 68% have a high school diploma, compared to 90% regionally, and 21% have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 49% regionally.
- Residents are healthy, with comparable outcomes to the region as a whole. Diabetes rates are lower than the Prince George's County average, while 75% of adults have access to a health care provider.
- Residents have less economic security compared with the larger region.. The median household income, \$59,135, is over \$30,000 less than the regional average, and the 18% poverty rate is more than twice as high than the region. However, the area's 6% unemployment rate is the same as the region. These statistics have not really changed since 2000, reflecting the area's stability, but may change as Greenbelt Station and other residential developments introduce new demographics to the area.
- Residents here are more likely to not have a car, use public transit, or have longer commutes than the region. 16% of households have no access to a car, while 22% of commuters travel to work by public transit. One-fifth of

¹ https://www.policymap.com/report_widget?pid=213439&type=op&area=predefined&sid=2010

workers who commute travel more than an hour, which is indicative of the study area's location on the eastern side of the DC area, while most of the jobs are located on the west side.

While these indicators may sound negative, they do not present a full picture of the community or its potential. Stakeholders noted that they valued the area's diversity and its stability, suggesting that residents are able to stay here a long time and put down roots. That stability will be a powerful tool for creating a stronger sense of community and a stronger sense of place here. Both of these things can be leveraged to attract the kind of investment that both improves the local economy while increasing access to economic opportunities, making the area more equitable for everyone.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The first step to implementing the recommendations outlined in this document is to enhance stakeholders' ability to change. The City of Greenbelt, which includes much of the study area, is in a good financial position to lead public investment, being able to issue \$70 million in debt. Additionally, the municipalities of Berwyn Heights, College Park, and Greenbelt have strong civic identities and some agreement on what they would like to do, but they lack a unified voice to advocate for the area. These three municipalities, along with the City of New Carrollton, formed the Four Cities Coalition to work together and share resources. Likewise, a Four Cities Economic Development Organization (EDO) could be a powerful tool for collaboration and proactively implementing their shared economic development goals.

An EDO is a tool for creating more focus for the community's vision, and the capacity for carrying it out. An EDO would be able to create a brand for the four municipalities that can be used to promote the area to companies, encourage tourism, and attract new residents. It could hire staff to cover these issues and supplement the municipalities' existing work, while allowing the four communities to set and implement their top priorities. The EDO would also be able to develop a proactive marketing and outreach strategy, increasing awareness of economic opportunities in the area, promoting a shared vision, and allowing the four cities to guide their own future. Significantly, the EDO is a tool for building relationships between the four cities and entities who wish to invest in the community, as well as coordinating with county and state officials.

The Panel assembled a list of potential partners an EDO could work with to craft an execute a vision for economic development in the area:

- University of Maryland
- Maryland State Highway Administration
- WMATA
- NASA
- Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

- US Department of Interior (The National Park Service, which runs Greenbelt Park)
- Catalyst site property owners, such as Quantum Companies, which owns Beltway Plaza and several adjacent properties
- Area residents
- Capitol Office Park
- Greenbelt Homes, Inc., the cooperative for Old Town Greenbelt
- Local financial institutions

There are a number of programs that local stakeholders can use to promote economic development and leverage existing resources to attract new investment. The following are a few examples:

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) allows municipalities to collect property tax revenue from increases in the assessed values of properties in a given area. This allows it to leverage public investments (for example, streetscaping along Greenbelt Road) to generate private investment which, in turn, creates more public revenue, thus creating a virtuous cycle.

A rehabilitation tax incentive would allow property owners to get a tax cut or rebate in exchange for making physical improvements to their properties, jumpstarting development that may not occur otherwise. This is a strategy that the Four Cities explored for economic development in 2014.

Municipal bonding allows municipalities to borrow money for public improvements which, in turn, could promote private investment in the area, or the municipalities could make investments in the public realm directly from their **general fund**. **Grants** are another opportunity to receive money for economic development or public investments, as well as **implementation partner programs** with Prince George's County, the State of Maryland, and the federal government.

LAND USE STRATEGIES

The Greenbelt Road corridor has experienced substantial residential growth in recent years, even as the retail sector has remained largely the same. As pressure from the regional housing market continues to make an impact on the area, it will be important to create a cohesive land use vision that enables the area to attract new investment while retaining the features stakeholders value, particularly its diverse population and relatively affordable housing costs. The key to any land use strategy in the study corridor is to use development to help other goals while balancing it with market and financial realities. There are several strategies that stakeholders can use to guide future development in the area, including:

Protection for naturally occurring/market rate affordable housing. The Greenbelt Road corridor is home to Franklin Park (formerly Springhill Lake), a rental complex with over 3,000 apartments, which are a major source of market-rate affordable housing, and a key part of retaining the area's workforce.

However, this may change if the landlord chooses to increase rents or redevelop the property, as has been proposed in the past. Currently, Prince George's County has no programs to ensure that any affordable housing remains here. As this would require changes in county law, the City of Greenbelt, as well as the other two municipalities which may have some naturally occurring affordable housing, should consider advocating for legislation at the county level.

Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) is a policy where a percentage of new housing is set aside for low- to moderate-income households, and is currently not required in Prince George's County. As a result, large residential developments like Greenbelt Station, with 1200 new homes, will have no dedicated affordable housing if market-rate prices increase. As the proposed redevelopment of Beltway Plaza, Franklin Park, or other sites in the corridor could include new housing, IZ will be a crucial opportunity to expand the supply of affordable housing in the area. This would require a change in county law, and the Panel recommended that local municipalities advocate for these changes as well.

Open space property acquisition or land swaps. Currently, there are several large parks and open spaces near the study area, but they are often discontinuous and difficult to reach from much of the corridor. As properties come up for sale, there may be opportunities to acquire them to expand and connect the park system, particularly along Indian Creek. Much of the land around the South Core and North Core of the Greenbelt Station site sits within the Indian Creek watershed and cannot be built on. Additionally, the Prince George's Scrap site and adjacent industrial properties along Branchville Road and Ballew Avenue form a barrier between residential areas and Indian Creek Park and Lake Artemesia. These sites also sit within the watershed and cannot be redeveloped as other uses, making them good candidates for open space acquisition. Where alternative sites are available for these uses, a land swap may be a good option for converting this land to open space at a lower cost than directly acquiring these properties.

Rezoning or overlay districts. As Prince George's County's zoning rewrite moves forward, there may be opportunities to use newly-created mixed-use zones to encourage compact, walkable development in the corridor. However, that may not be enough of an incentive for the specific kinds of development stakeholders expressed interest in, particularly near a Metro station. Prince George's County has four types of overlay zones, which add design guidelines to zoning requirements, three of which may be relevant to this area:

- Transit District Overlay Zones encourage compact development near Metro stations that enable people to use transit by placing different uses nearby.
- Development District Overlay Zones can be used in a variety of locations, including commercial corridors and near transit, and are intended to ensure that individual development projects meet the goals established in a master plan.



The Branchville Road corridor (behind the fence) could be a connection between Greenbelt Road (foreground), the new Greenbelt Station development (background), and nearby open space. Image Source: ULI Washington.

- Revitalization Overlay Zones allow the county to give local municipalities more control over development, such as approving exceptions to the county's parking, landscaping, and sign standards, as well as building setbacks and lot coverage. This may be an especially effective tool for Greenbelt Road, where many of the commercial parcels are small and unusually shaped, and the three municipalities can use the overlay to craft a unique sense of place.

Zoning can be a powerful tool for creating value in the Greenbelt Road corridor, shaping the kind of development that occurs here and developing a stronger marketplace for housing, retail, and other uses.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs). TDRs are a program used in many communities around the country to reduce suburban sprawl while encouraging investment in closer-in, established areas. TDRs allow landowners in one area to sell their development rights to property owners elsewhere, thus preserving their land. In turn, landowners in areas where development is encouraged may be allowed to build at higher densities than they could otherwise. Prince George's County first introduced TDRs in 2014, and they could be a good tool for encouraging development in the study corridor.

TOD Parking Strategies. Traditionally, zoning requires that each property provide its own parking lot, whose size is based on whatever use or uses are occurring there. Transit-oriented developments, like University Town Center in Hyattsville or Riverdale Park Station in Riverdale Park, allow different uses to share parking across the broader neighborhood, based on the assumption that site users who drive there and park once to do a variety of activities, rather than driving from one thing to another. Not only does this free up land for open space or buildings, but it reduces development costs, which could be a barrier in this community. Shared parking could be a powerful tool for incentivizing compact, walkable development within the Greenbelt Road corridor, by allowing multiple property owners to pool their parking resources, especially for uses that may be active at different times of day.

TRANSPORTATION FUNDING PROGRAMS

Many of the transportation proposals outlined in this study will be a greater cost than the three municipalities can provide. However, there are a variety of funding programs available that can cover project design, planning, and execution.

Transportation Land Use Connections (TLC) is a technical assistance program of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) that provides assistance to local jurisdictions. Started in 2007, the TLC program could provide technical assistance relevant to the Greenbelt Road corridor, such as transit-oriented development planning, bicycle and pedestrian safety and access studies, streetscape improvement plans, trail planning and design, and transit demand and feasibility analysis. Both the City of College Park and the City of Greenbelt have participated in TLC before for projects in the vicinity

of the study area, including a green streets implementation plan in College Park and a bus stop accessibility study in Greenbelt.

The **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** is a federal aid funding program for community projects that encourage transportation options other than driving, such as walking, bicycling, and transit. Each project requires a local sponsor, whether it is a municipality or a non-governmental agency or organization, that is responsible for at least 20% of the project costs and the project's management. TAP projects near the study area include efforts to improve the trail system along Indian Creek south of Greenbelt Road.

The **Transportation Infrastructure Finance & Innovation Act (TIFIA)** is a loan program administered by the federal government for large surface transportation projects, such as road or highway construction. To be eligible, proposed projects must have a capital cost of at least \$50 million dollars, of which the loan can only cover 33%. This may be a better solution for larger, more capital-intense projects along the study corridor, such as the potential reconstruction of Greenbelt Road.

The **Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing (RRIF)** program provides direct loans for the financing of railroad infrastructure, such as building or rehabilitating tracks or bridges. Established in 2002, this program has not been used in the Washington metropolitan area, but may be useful for projects related to the Green Line/MARC tracks next to the Greenbelt Road corridor.

The **Maryland Bikeways Program** provides grant support for bicycle infrastructure, such as trails, on-street bike facilities, and improving connections to transit and commercial districts. In order to be eligible for funding, proposed projects must be within three miles of a rail transit station or bus hub, connect missing trail links, or enhance bicycle access in low- to moderate-income communities. Local municipalities, transit agencies, or federal public lands agencies can all apply for this program. This grant funding could be a great opportunity to support bicycle projects such as bike lanes on Greenbelt Road and Cherrywood Lane, connecting residential and commercial areas to Indian Creek, or improving bike access to Greenbelt Park, which is maintained by the National Park Services.

The **Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP)** is the state of Maryland's capital budget for transportation projects, including roads, transit, and biking and walking facilities. It is a main source of funding for transportation, and is developed with input from Prince George's County, which creates a priority list of projects to be included in the budget each year. As this may be the largest and most reliable source of funding for transportation projects, as well as the most flexible, getting in the capital budget is a crucial way to fund improvements in the Greenbelt Road corridor, and will require the municipalities advocate for their preferred projects at the county and state level.

Conclusion

This report lays out the present and future potential of the Greenbelt Road corridor. Over two days, the Panel met with local stakeholders, visited the study area, and developed recommendations which were presented in a public meeting.

While community stakeholders have a strong sense of pride for their community, their vision is not always clear, which makes it a challenge to attract new investment, to make public improvements, or even to define what this place is. Stakeholders agreed that they wanted to see a better bicycle and pedestrian environment, different kinds of retail, quality open space, and the ability to age in place, but there is no proactive voice calling for the changes needed to make this happen. There is an opportunity to craft a comprehensive vision for the area and find champions for it, enabling this place to reach its full potential.

Like many suburban commercial corridors, Greenbelt Road must decide on an answer to this question: are you bringing people through you, or to you? Is this community a place where people stop on their way to somewhere else, or a destination for local residents and the region as a whole? The risk that Greenbelt Road faces is that other communities around it will continue to grow and flourish, while this community will get their traffic but none of the benefits.

A proactive, rather than reactive, approach will help this community attract and secure the kind of investment that will help it become a destination rather than a pass through. One way to do this is to leverage the corridor's proximity to the Greenbelt Metro and an extensive transit and bicycling network, but it is important to focus on why future transportation investments are being made, and how they uphold the community's broader goals for economic development. Finally, this community is already home to several "pearls" that already attract residents, shoppers, and visitors, from Beltway Plaza to Greenbelt Park to the Metro, and connecting them into a unified place is crucial to making it a destination.

Ultimately, it is up to the stakeholders and the three municipalities along Greenbelt Road to influence their future. They have the power to shape this place and make it even better if the will is there.

Panelist Bios



Marsha Kaiser, CHAIR

WSP

Washington, DC

Marsha Kaiser is a Vice President and the senior managing planner in WSP's transportation/land planning practice dedicated to building and revitalizing communities through the integration of land use and transportation investments. Marsha's extensive experience in planning is focused on the economic, social, land use and developmental impacts of transportation projects. She had worked nationally on urban planning and transit oriented development projects of all sizes, from small towns such as TOD for Nashville, Tennessee, to the large plans such as Tysons Corner Virginia's Urban Plan. She develops and teaches courses nationally on Contextually Complete Streets and provides support to clients in the planning, policy development, design, implementation and maintenance of complete streets.

Prior to joining Parsons Brinckerhoff, Ms. Kaiser served as Director of the Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Office of Planning and Capital Programming, and played a key role in every major transportation investment. As MDOT's representative to the Governor's Smart Growth Coordinating Committee, she was involved in collaborative partnerships aimed at creating livable communities and sustainable development through directed state resources.

Lora Byala

Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning

Rockville, MD

Lora Byala, AICP is the Founder, President, and CEO of Foursquare Integrated Transportation Planning and has 20 years of professional experience in the transportation field. She began her transportation career as an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania, when she conducted a study of

transportation needs in Honolulu during a freshman geography class and was instantly hooked. Since then, she has worked in both the public and private sectors, primarily on public transit planning of all types. Her primary focus is on planning for public transit services (mainly for bus), transportation strategic planning and performance measurement, and regional transportation planning.

As the president of Foursquare ITP Lora is involved in some capacity in most of the projects conducted by the firm, which include transit development plans, bus priority plans, transportation demand management plans, and regional transit and vision plans. Some of her key projects include the BaltimoreLink transit system redesign; transit development plans in Fairfax, VA; and the MD 355 BRT study in Montgomery County, MD.

Prior to founding Foursquare ITP in 2006, Lora worked for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority in the long range planning office where she managed the regional planning section. She is a member of the Transportation Research Board's committee on bus transit systems and is a member of the Women's Transportation Seminar, where she was named Woman of the Year in 2011 and Foursquare ITP was named company of the year in 2015. She received bachelors' degrees in transportation engineering and urban studies from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master's degree in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Suzette Goldstein

HOK

Washington, DC

Suzette Goldstein is a Senior Principal with HOK with more than 30 years of practice in the Washington DC area and internationally. Since 2013, Suzette has served as the Director of Planning for the firm wide practice after serving as the director for HOK Washington Planning for many years. She offers a highly specialized planning and project management background in site analysis and design, master planning, new town development, and is highly skilled at facilitating community meetings. Suzette works with a multi-disciplinary staff of architects, designers, planners, and landscape architects.

While with HOK, Suzette has had the opportunity to work on amazing projects that have put a stamp on our Nation's Capital, starting early in her career with planning of the National Air and Space Museums, Steven F Hazy Center. She was also personally involved in the creation of several national monuments in DC; the Korean War Memorial, Khalil Gibran Memorial, the Women's Vietnam Memorial and most recently the restoration of the National Mall, and the Master Plan for the US Capital Complex. For the private sector, Suzette has worked locally for numerous developers and corporations, and has expertise in planning entitlements and mixed use developments such as Chevy Chase Center, and Rockville Center. Suzette's resume also includes various international projects such as the South Dhahran Homeownership community, Saudi Aramco Cultural District, and Capital Bay mixed use development. Suzette's passion is for urban planning and design. She believes that our success can be gaged by how people use the spaces we create. But planning is a long term endeavor, so it is particularly rewarding to see, our worked constructed and to know that the places we have created are making people's lives richer.

Suzette graduated from the University of Cincinnati, School of Design, Art, Architecture and Planning with a Bachelor of Urban Planning. She is qualified as a planner with the American Institute of Certified Planners and a LEEP accredited profession. She has represented HOK by speaking at conferences and ULI product council, has participated in crits for the University of Maryland, and has receive awards for her planning efforts.

Nicole McCall

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Washington, DC

Nicole McCall serves as a Senior Regional Planner for the Department of Community Planning and Services at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). She manages cross-departmental projects and initiatives focused on COG's Regional Activity Centers, transportation coordination, and economic development and workforce activities. Ms. McCall transitioned to this role after applying her analytical skills as a Transportation Planner to the National Capital Transportation Planning Board for four years. During that time, she supported the Regional Transportation Data Clearinghouse, the District of Columbia's Highway Performance Monitoring System, and performance-based planning. She has also worked as a federal economist, in international trade development, and in consulting.

Ms. McCall earned a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of New Orleans, a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Printmaking from Tulane University, and is a Certified Public Manager. She is a California native and currently resides in Silver Spring Maryland, with her husband and two dogs.

Paul Moyer, AICP, ENV SP

Jacobs

Arlington, VA

Paul brings 30 years of experience directing dozens of planning projects in the Washington, DC Metro region, as well as across the country and globe. As Principal of the Advance Planning Group, Paul maintains the long-term vision for projects while establishing the practical, near-term steps, decisions and milestones necessary to create project momentum. He facilitates this by communicating a clear understanding of the planning process, allowing for appropriate stakeholder buy-in, and defining ways that the client, and other relevant parties can contribute, and ultimately take ownership of the project's successful implementation.

Paul collaborates with clients and provides planning leadership to proactively solve complex problems, establish implementable plans, and facilitate processes to gain support for a wide range of projects. His expertise in helping clients of all scales to understand and address technical project issues from environmental, economic, transportation, to urban design, helps him drive projects toward the best solution for each project, client, and set of stakeholders.

This approach is illustrated in projects such as his work on the Washington Union Station Master Plan and EIS, Master Planning for the redevelopment of the historic DC Corrections Facility in Lorton, Virginia, the District Department of Transportation Far Southeast Livability Study, Tidal Schuylkill River Master Plan in Philadelphia, The Ohio State University Comprehensive Parking and Transportation Plan, and the Revitalization Study for Kenilworth Avenue/Town of Cheverly.

Josh Olsen

Monument Realty

Washington, DC

Josh Olsen is the Senior Vice President in charge of acquisitions at Monument Realty, a Washington, D.C.-based owner and developer of office, multifamily, hotels and re-tail. Monument has owned or developed

approximately 6 million sf of office space and 4,500 residential units. Josh has worked at Monument Realty since 2003. Prior to joining Monument, Josh wrote a biography of real estate developer and urban visionary James Rouse entitled *Better Places, Better Lives*, which was published by the Urban Land Institute. He is also the co-author of *Foggy Bottom and the West End in Vintage Images*, a compilation of historic images of two D.C. neighborhoods. Josh has served on the advisory board of the Washington District Council of ULI and was a national juror for ULI's Kenneth M. Good Graduate Student Scholarship. He co-edited Urban Land magazine's series of articles on the D.C. area when the ULI Fall Meeting was held in D.C., and co-authored an accompanying piece on the state of development in D.C. Josh's projects have received local awards, such as "Best Land Deal," and he has been recognized multiple times as one of the top young people in the D.C. business community, including the Washington Business Journal's "40 under 40". Josh has an undergraduate degree in architecture from Yale University and earned a master's degree from the University of Bristol while a Fulbright Scholar to the United Kingdom.

Dan Reed

Report Writer

Silver Spring, MD

Dan Reed represents the smart, creative next generation of smart growth leader. He began the blog *Just Up the Pike* in 2006, chronicling his experiences as an urbanist in eastern Montgomery County. In addition to his blog, he is a senior editor at Greater Greater Washington, writes for *Washingtonian* magazine, and is a professional urban planner.

Dan's family came to the Washington area from Guyana and North Carolina. This native of Montgomery County has brought a fresh perspective to smart growth, urbanism, transportation and education in our changing suburbs. He uses his writing and speaking talents to explain issues to a broad audience, to engage the community, and to persuasively advocate for sustainable and inclusive urban communities. Among his achievements as an activist, Dan has helped advocate for the Purple Line and Bus Rapid Transit on Route 29; highlighted issues of segregation and inequality in Montgomery County Public Schools; and led a community effort to reuse a vacant Art Deco movie theatre.

Dan has worked for Nelson/Nygaard Consulting Associates, and today he is an urban planner at Toole Design Group and an agent at Living In Style Real Estate. Dan sits on the board of the Action Committee for Transit, and lives with his partner in downtown Silver Spring.

Merrill St. Leger

SmithGroup

Washington, DC

Merrill St. Leger is a Principal in SmithGroupJJR's Washington, DC office where she leads the Urban Design and Planning Studio. In over 20 years of practice, Merrill has led community planning projects, mixed-use development and TOD master plans, and Federal campus planning projects in the mid-Atlantic region from visioning and conceptual design through municipal approvals. She is known for her creative and collaborative style, her focus on placemaking, design excellence, and sustainability. Her award-winning master planning projects include the MidCity East Small Area Plan in Washington DC, the Scotts Run Master Plan in Tysons, Virginia and the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan in Alexandria, Virginia. Merrill

currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer of the APA Sustainable Communities Division and is involved in ULI's Sustainability Initiative Council and TAP Committee. Merrill has a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from Catholic University, and a Master of Architecture from Virginia Tech.

Kyle Talente

RKG Associates, Inc.

Alexandria, VA

Kyle has developed and applied a broad range of professional and technical expertise since his hiring in 1998. Today, Mr. Talente uses that experience to manage projects in all facets of economic development, real estate advisory, and market analysis. Mr. Talente has provided proven results to a wide range of public and private sector clients, focusing on identifying creative, market driven solutions to real estate investment opportunities. During his tenure at RKG Associates, Mr. Talente has cultivated specializations in housing market and affordability analysis, local and regional real estate market analysis, economic development strategies, downtown and urban revitalization, financial feasibility and economic impact analysis, and target industry studies.

Mr. Talente's expertise is bringing his client's real world recommendations founded in market reality and projected conditions based on sound economic fundamentals, allowing clients to go beyond the visioning and assessment phase and into successful implementation. Mr. Talente has learned that this grounded approach garners support for a much stronger development process, particularly when implementation requires/seeks public private partnerships. His diverse education background has enabled Kyle to be a strategic liaison between the physical disciplines (i.e. urban design and architecture) and the market realities of real estate investment decision making. He also has developed a reputation for being able to successfully communicate the complex relationships between vision and reality to a wide variety of public and private stakeholders.

Mr. Talente is a graduate of the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta, GA, where he received his Bachelors of Science in Architecture in 1996 and his Masters of City Planning in 1998.

N'kosi Yearwood

Montgomery County Department of Planning

Silver Spring, MD

N'kosi Yearwood is a community planner with the Montgomery County Planning Department. He has developed and created comprehensive transit-oriented and mixed-use infill plans for the Shady Grove and White Flint Metro Station areas, including White Flint 1 and White Flint 2 Sector Plans. Nkosi has also created zoning standards for transit station areas and reviewed private and public development, including Pike & Rose and Shady Grove Station (Montgomery County Service Park redevelopment). His education includes architectural history and architecture from the University of Maryland, College Park and University of Cincinnati. He is a resident in the City of Hyattsville; a member of Lambda Alpha International (George Washington Chapter); a 2014 graduate of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Washington Regional Land Use Institute; and is a Board member of Green Spaces DC.



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