



WEST NORTH AVENUE
STREETSCAPE CONCEPTUAL
MASTER PLAN

WEST NORTH AVENUE STREETScape CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN

PREPARED FOR

THE COMMUNITIES OF WEST NORTH AVENUE

7TH BALTIMORE CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT
RESERVOIR HILL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL
DRUID HEIGHTS CDC
COPPIN HEIGHTS CDC

SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

BY

THE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN CENTER

Jared Barnhart, Ryan Behneman, Samantha Biddle, Katelin Etoh, Jasmine Forbes, Christina Hartsfield, William Hallgren, Bahar Jafarpur, Denise Johnson, Songhyun Jung, Katherine LePage, Emily Lewis, Eli Lopatin, Johnny Macon, Kyle Mastalinski, Joe McGinley, Chris Merriam, Jacqueline Murray, Cherisse Otis, Elenalee Peddicord, Khashayar Shakolahy, Iseul Song, Julie Soss, Sandra Sparks, Amanda Stout, Carol Truppi, Adam Vest

NDC VOLUNTEERS

Jennifer Goold, Ross Hackett, Laura Wheaton

NDC STAFF

Jawad Abdullah, Bilal Bahar, Michael Barb, Jackie Caldwell, Damion Cooper, Dora Carroll, Shelia Davis, Rick Gwynallen, Annie Hall, Debi Hurst, Roscoe Johnson, Elgin Klugh, Teddy Krolik, Kelly Little, Nick Mosby, Russ Moss, Chet Myers, David Nyweide, Erik Pihlgren, Twanda Prioleau, Chartruse Robinson, Gary Rodwell, Alethea Smith, Gretchen Spell, Vernice Turner

COMMUNITY CORE STAKEHOLDERS

IN COORDINATION WITH

Kohl Fallin, Gladys Hurwitz, Valorie Lacour, Betty Smoot

BCDOT

Krycia Cowling, Shalik Fulton, Candance Greene, Heather Martin, Katey Mote, Marianne Navarro, Anna Perry

CITY AGENCIES

photo on previous page of April 2014 Visioning Workshop by Matt Roth

Introduction 4

- Glossary
- Plan Background & Purpose
- Project Study Area

Section 1: Existing Conditions 11

- Demographics
- Asset Maps
- Parallel Changes

Section 2: Goals and Vision 22

- Community Goals
- Outline of Priorities
- Potential Health Impacts

Section 3: Concept Plans 28

- Multi-Modal Corridor
- Branding
- Street Furnishings
- Community Gathering Spaces
- Historical Markers
- Public Art
- Greening

Section 4: Block by Block Diagrams 58

Section 5: Implementation 69

- Phasing

Appendix

- Community Engagement Summaries
- Health Impact Assessment (by Baltimore Health Department)

This document is for conceptual purposes only and is not for regulatory approval, permitting, or construction. The Neighborhood Design Center and its volunteers assume no responsibility or liability for its technical accuracy nor for any unauthorized use of this plan.



INTRODUCTION



photo by Matt Roth

GLOSSARY

NDC DEFINITIONS

Core Stakeholders

Key members of the Sponsoring Organizations or other stakeholders recommended by the Sponsoring Organizations and NDC staff to be the main representatives of the Sponsoring Organizations to the project process.

Project Stakeholders

Anyone who is affected by the proposed project.

NDC Volunteer Team

The professional design volunteers assigned to the project through the Neighborhood Design Center.

Sponsoring Organization

The organization(s) that applied for design assistance from NDC and were parties to a memorandum of understanding for pro bono design services.

Endorsing Organization

The organization(s) that have voted or otherwise agreed to support this plan for West North Avenue.

PROJECT DEFINITIONS

Amenity

Amenities occupy the streetscape between a Building or other property line and the Curb. Amenities can include trees, bus stops, sidewalk cafes, green spaces, signs, stormwater interventions, etc. Parking is an amenity that occurs on the other side of the Curb in the Roadway.

Buildings

The private and public structures along the streetscape but not in the right-of-way. Since this is a master plan focusing on the streetscape, buildings will be considered as they relate to the streetscape, but recommendations dealing specifically with buildings will be limited.

Curb

The curb is the defining line at the edge of the roadway. It can be a traditional curb with a 4-6" elevation change, or an at-level change in surface material (such as at the base of a ramp).

Median

The median is the space between opposite directions of traffic. It can be as small as a double yellow line, large enough for a left turn lane, or even larger with trees and plants.

Pedestrian Space

This is the often raised surface for walking adjacent to the Roadway. It has a minimum legal width and connects to all street crossings. It may share the space between the Curb and the Building with other elements such as amenities.

Roadway

The roadway is the paved surface provided for auto, bus, and/or bike transit.

Streetscape

The streetscape as defined for this project is the space between opposing building fronts, including both private front yard/step space and the public right of way.

TECHNICAL DEFINITIONS

Sharrow

"A shared-lane marking or sharrow is a street marking... This marking is placed in the center of a travel lane to indicate that a cyclist may use the full lane." (Wikipedia, www.wikipedia.org)

Curb Extension

"Curb extensions visually and physically narrow the roadway, creating safer and shorter crossings for pedestrians while increasing the available space for street furniture, benches, plantings, and street trees. They may be implemented on downtown, neighborhood, and residential streets, large and small." ("Urban Street Design Guide" by NACTO: <http://nacto.org/usdg/>)

PLAN BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

North Avenue is a major transportation corridor through the neighborhoods immediately north of downtown Baltimore.

In late 2013, the 7th District Office of Councilman Nick Mosby, Reservoir Hill Improvement Council, Coppin Heights Community Development Corporation, and Druid Heights Community Development Corporation invited the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) to facilitate a conceptual design process for the West North Avenue streetscape. These organizations had earlier reached out to the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) and asked them to observe a process and to provide input related to the resulting documentation. This plan will be submitted to BCDOT for consideration of funding and implementation. Additionally, stakeholder groups, community organizations, and other nonprofits may implement some of the action items in this plan.

This conceptual master plan has been facilitated by the Neighborhood Design Center, a Baltimore non-profit funded by public and private grants and donations. Additionally, specific funding for this project has been generously provided by the sponsoring organizations and the Baltimore Community Foundation.

The Neighborhood Design Center facilitated an approximately 18-month process of visioning and design with technical and design expertise provided by its volunteers and with neighborhood knowledge of core stakeholders. The process attempted to be as inclusionary as possible, with numerous opportunities

for engagement with area residents and other community organizations.

The West North Avenue Streetscape Conceptual Master Plan addresses three miles of the corridor from Howard Street in the center of Baltimore to Hilton Parkway on the far west side. The sponsoring organizations along with NDC divided the project into three sections: Near West, Middle West and Far West.

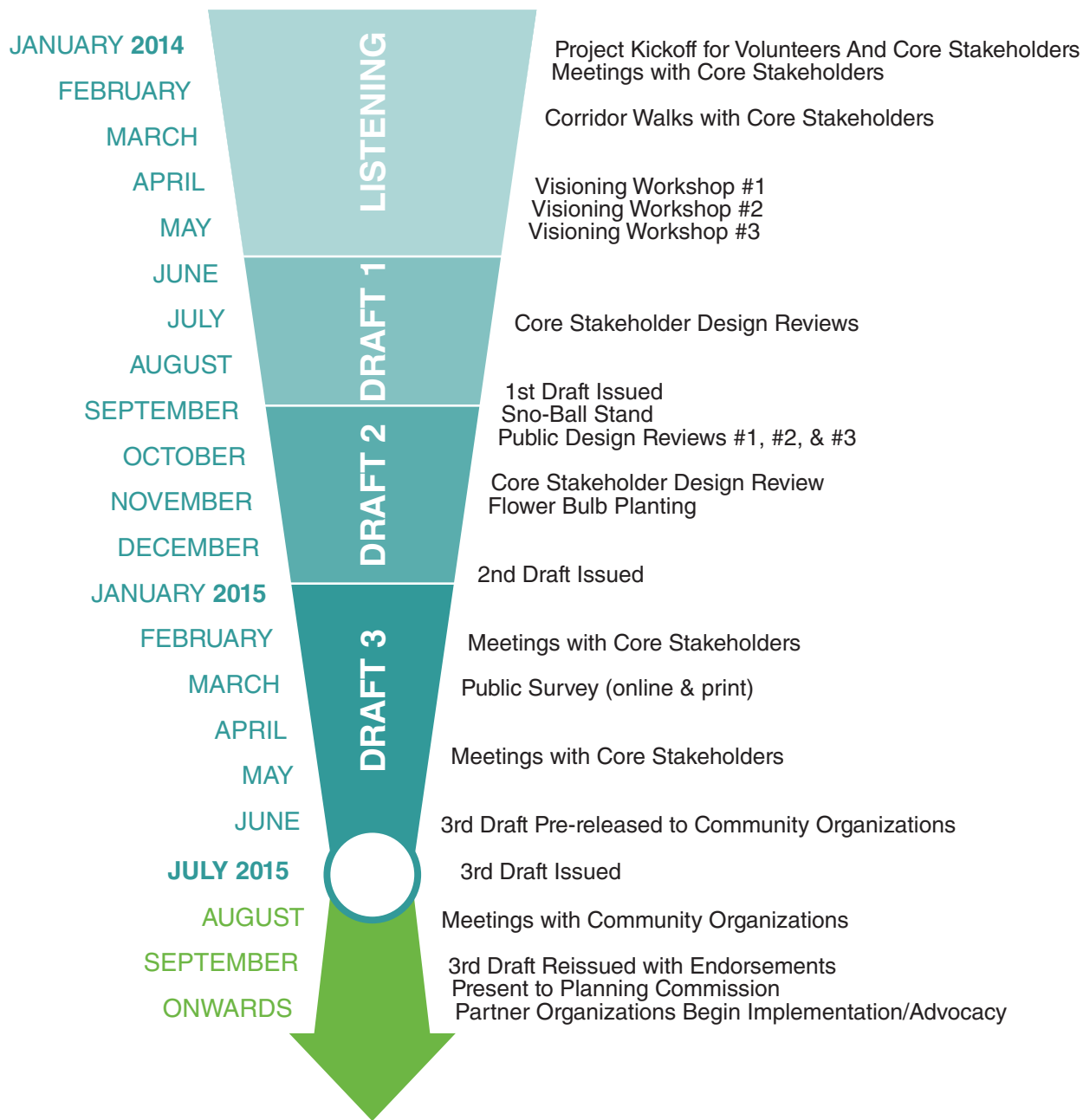
NDC recruited volunteer professionals with expertise in urban planning, architecture, transportation planning, landscape architecture, community engagement, civil engineering, marketing, and graphic design to serve as resources for the stakeholder groups.

The NDC volunteer team and core stakeholders from each section first met in early 2014. The spring was spent conducting outreach and engagement, culminating in three visioning workshops hosted by the sponsoring organizations and facilitated by the NDC volunteer team. The three public visioning workshops facilitated by NDC volunteers and Core Stakeholders in April and May 2014, drew a combined 100+ attendees. Workshops were held in locations near West North Avenue to encourage attendance by area residents.

This listening period informed the first draft of the plan, which was developed and released in summer 2014. Comments were provided by BCDOT and other city agencies in late summer. Also in summer 2014 the Baltimore Health Department began outreach to conduct a Health Impact Assessment about the project.

Project Kickoff, photo by Laura Wheaton



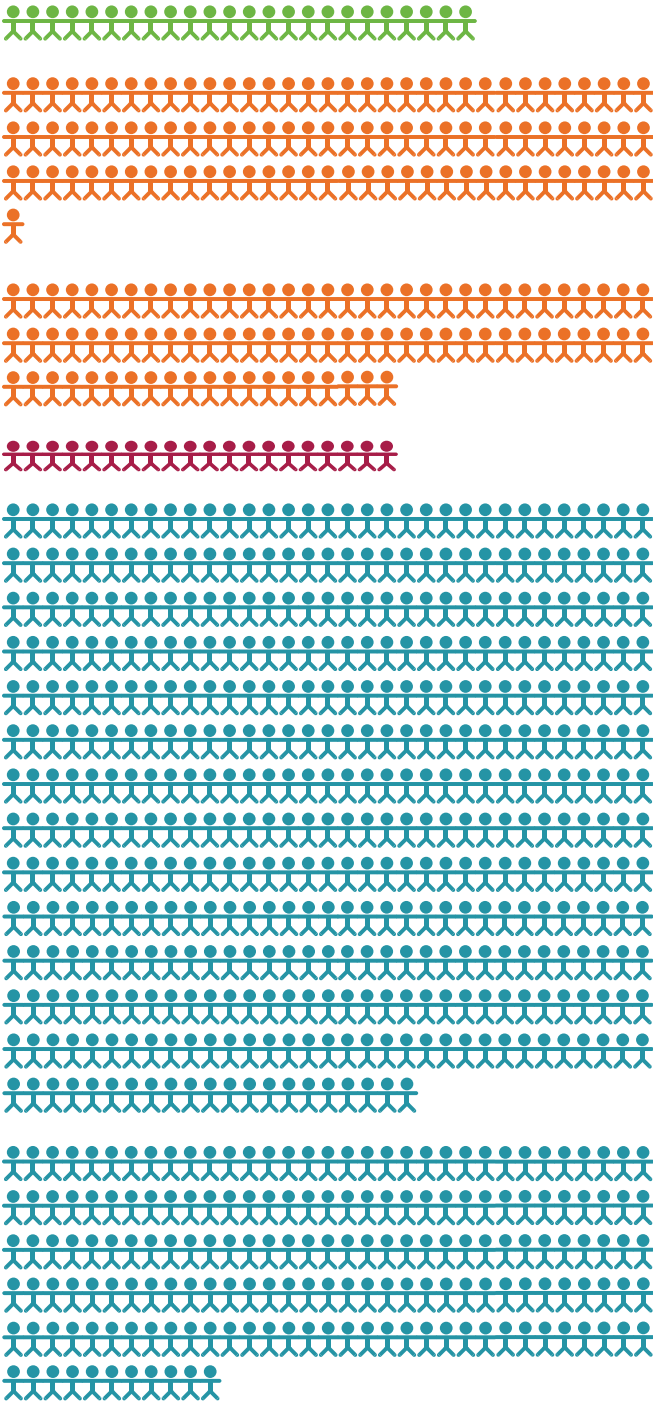


Efforts to inform the second draft included additional meetings with core stakeholders and three public design reviews held in September 2014, hosted by sponsoring organizations in locations near West North Avenue. Thanks to funding from the Baltimore Community Foundation, NDC volunteers gave away free sno-balls to 450 passers-by on West North Avenue in September 2014 and engaged them with a survey about their use of the streetscape. In November 2014 the same grant funded flower bulb planting where over

4000 bulbs were planted with the help of at least 20 community members.

The second draft of the conceptual master plan was released in December 2014. The Baltimore City Department of Transportation and other City Agencies provided comments in January 2015.

Revisions to the second draft for a third and final draft were based on conversations with Core Stakeholders,



review of documentation from previous community outreach in this process, and from the results of an online survey on the second draft conducted in March 2015. Paper surveys were distributed through sponsoring organizations to community members without internet access.

The final draft of this plan was pre-released at the end of June 2015 to local community organizations and city agencies.

The completion of this planning process does not mark the end of efforts for West North Avenue. Instead it signifies the beginning of coordinated efforts to advocate for and/or implement various parts and allied proposals.

Outreach to potential project stakeholders, individuals that would be affected by changes to the West North Avenue Streetscape, was conducted through multiple methods. Varying the means of engagement increased the likelihood of more individuals having access to the process. Outreach relied on the communication networks of the sponsoring organizations: Coppin Heights CDC, Druid Heights CDC, Reservoir Hill Improvement Council, and the 7th District office of Councilman Nick Mosby.

- 24** Core Stakeholders
- 100+** Visioning Workshop Attendees
- 86** Design Review Attendees
- 20+** Flower Bulb Planters
- 450** Sno-balls distributed (3-- surveys collected)
- 176** Second survey responses

856 Total connections with community members about the West North Avenue Streetscape.

The total number of individuals community members engaged throughout the process was not tracked. Many of the people that interacted in the design process were engaged by more than one method. The NDC and Core Stakeholders implemented a participatory design process that provided the opportunity for community members' voices to be included in the development of the West North Avenue Streetscape.



Sno-ball stand, September 2014, photo by Jennifer Goold

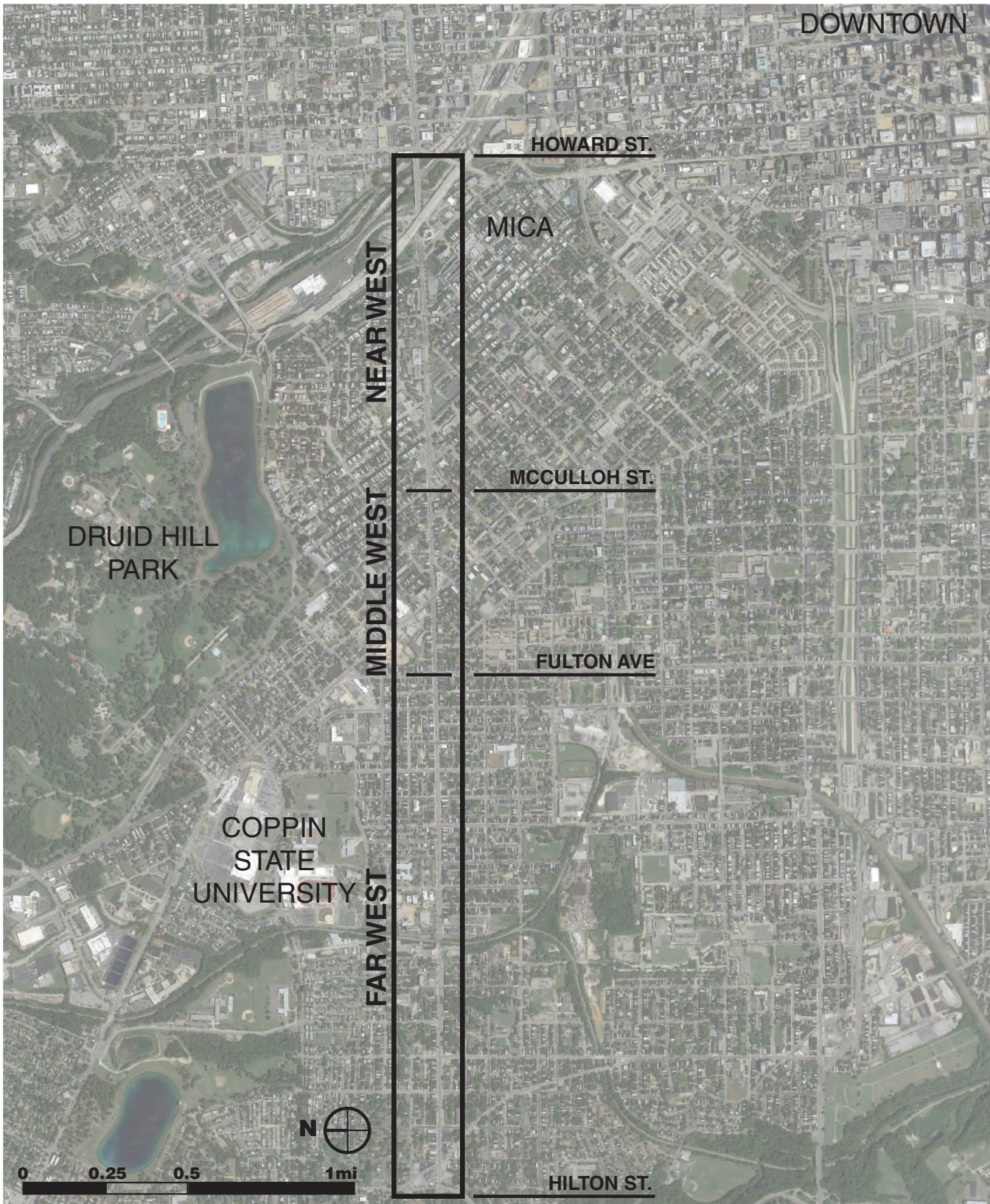


Visioning Workshop, April 2014, photo by Matt Roth



Public Design Review held in September 2014 at John Wesley United Methodist Church, 3202 West North Avenue. The break-out conversation pictured was facilitated by Core Stakeholder Twanda Prioleau and NDC staff member Ross Hackett. Photo by Laura Wheaton.

PROJECT STUDY AREA





SECTION ONE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

photo by Ross Hackett

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

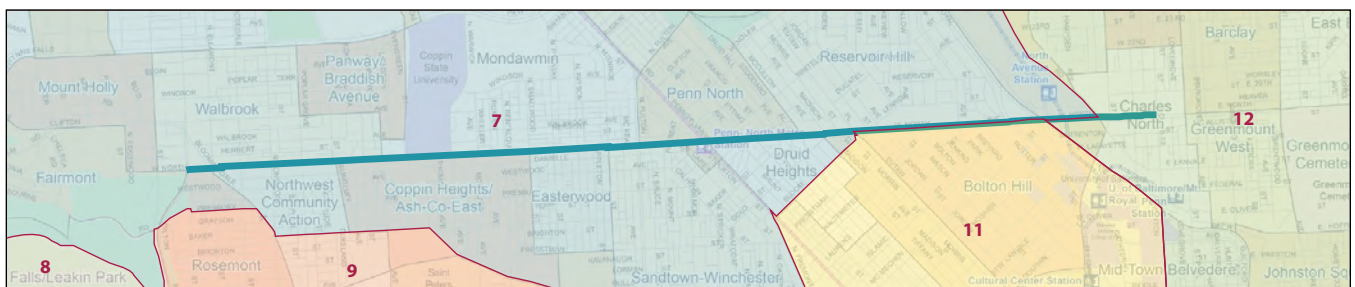
West North Avenue marked the northern border of the Baltimore City from 1816 until 1888, and it remains a dividing line between many neighborhoods. Its path links diverse communities and user groups, stretching from Leakin Park in the west to the Station North Arts and Entertainment District. While North Avenue terminates in the east at Baltimore Cemetery, this plan only concerns the portion of North Avenue west of Charles Street.

West North Avenue passes through over a dozen neighborhoods and nearly all use North Avenue as a border. The majority of West North Avenue falls in the 7th City Council District, but the corridor also has portions in the 11th and 12th Districts. Similarly, most of the corridor lies in the 40th State Legislative District, but has portions in the 41st, 44th, and 45th districts.

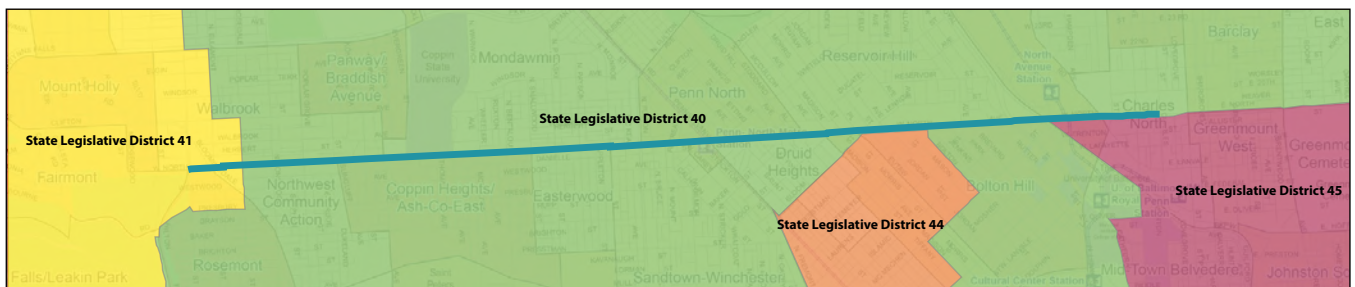
The Baltimore Health Department provided demographics and analysis for the NDC Volunteer Team and Core Stakeholders. The data is grouped into the plan designations of Near, Middle, and Far West. However, the U.S. Census data borders and those of the plan designations do not align perfectly. Sections are approximated and represent weighted averages of values from census tract data around North Avenue from the American Community Survey (2008-12) of the non-institutional population. Baltimore City data comes from 2013 American Community Survey 1-year estimates. Values are estimates subject to sampling error and sample size.



Neighborhood Boundaries as defined by the City of Baltimore



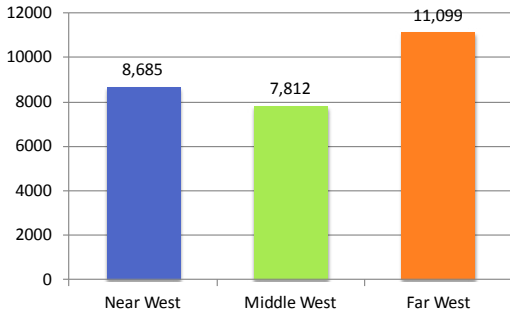
Baltimore City Council Districts



Maryland State Legislative Districts

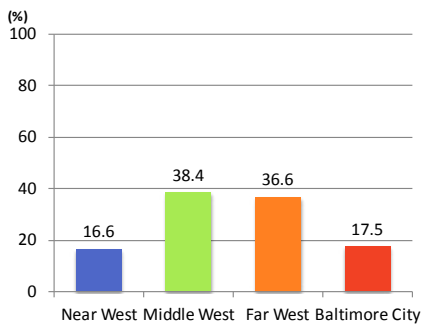
EXISTING CONDITIONS | DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

POPULATION

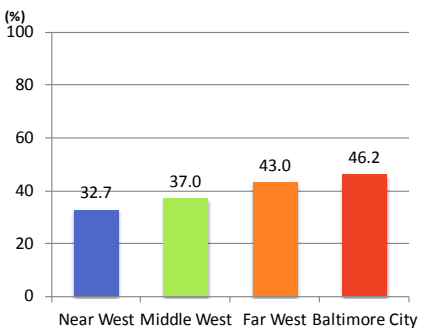


Near West has a higher than city average (65%) of non-family households, and smaller than average in all three remaining household types: married-couple family, male household, and female household. Middle West and Far West have fewer married-couple families than the city average, but larger percentages of male households (6%) and female households (33%) than either Near West or the city average.

VACANT HOUSING UNITS



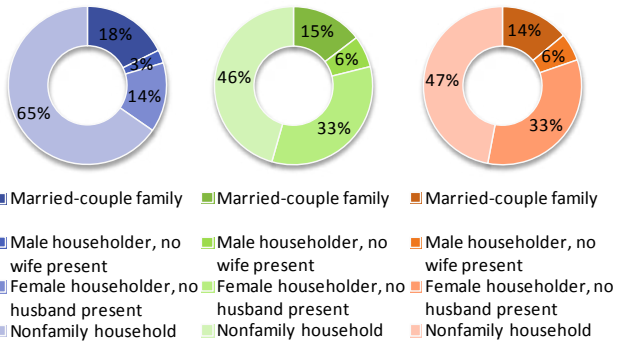
OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS



There is a large difference in racial demographics in the three sections of corridor. Middle West and Far West are both over 95% black, with less than 5% of the population identifying as either "white" or "other." All three areas skew slightly younger than the Baltimore City average, with Middle West having the highest proportion of residents under age 19 at 33%. Far West

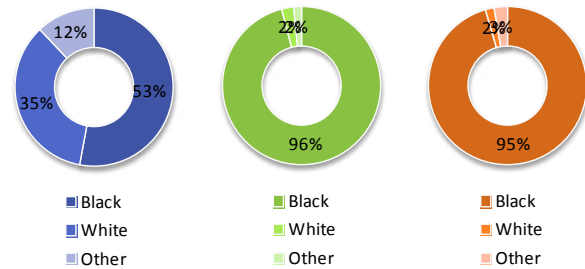
NEAR WEST MIDDLE WEST FAR WEST

HOUSEHOLD TYPE



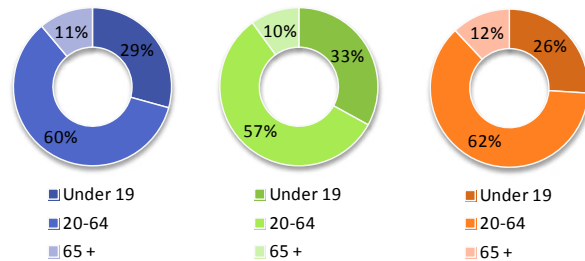
Baltimore City Average is 24% Married couple family, 4% Male householder, 21% Female householder, 50% Non family household

RACE



Baltimore City Average is 63% Black, 30% White, 7% Other

AGE

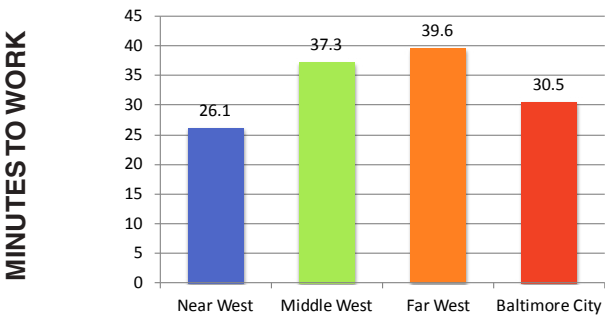
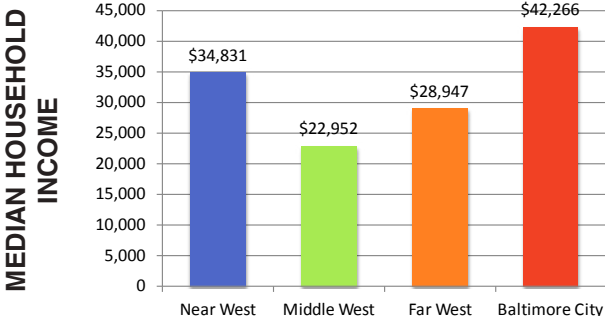


Baltimore City Average is 24% <19, 64% 20-64, 12% >65

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, North Ave data from the 2008-12 American Community Survey estimates, Baltimore City data from 2013 American Survey 1-year estimates by census tract: Near West (Bolton Hill, Reservoir Hill), Middle West (Sugar Hill, Druid Heights, Sandtown), and Far West (Sandtown, Coppin State).

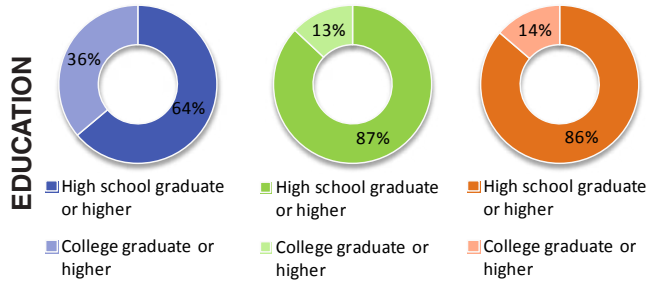
has the largest total population as well as the largest physical area, while Middle West has the smallest.

Near West has nearly three times as many college graduates per capita as Middle West or Far West, both of which fall below the Baltimore City average. The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) campus borders North Avenue in Near West, and Coppin State University (CSU) straddles North Avenue in Far West.

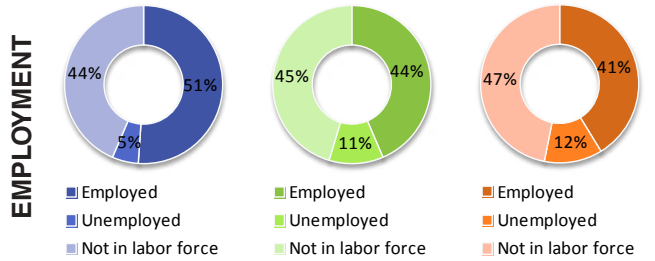


Commuting times from each section go up as geographic distance increases from downtown. Near West has shorter than average commutes, and Far West has commute times over 30% above city average. Residents in the three sections residents drove to work alone less than the city average. Near West and Far West areas drove less than Near West and over 50% more residents depend on public transportation to get to work compared to the city average. Middle West and Far West have over twice the unemployment rate of Near West, although all areas have a larger percentage of those not in the labor force compared to the city average.

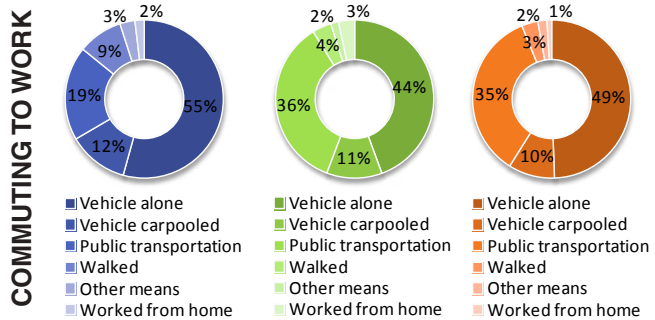
NEAR WEST MIDDLE WEST FAR WEST



Baltimore City Average is 82% High school, 29% College graduate or higher



Baltimore City Average is 55% Employed, 7% Unemployed, 38% Not in labor force



Baltimore City Average is 61% Vehicle alone, 9% Vehicle carpool, 19% Public transportation, 6% Walking, 2% Other means, 3% Worked from home

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, North Ave data from the 2008-12 American Community Survey estimates, Baltimore City data from 2013 American Survey 1-year estimates by census tract: Near West (Bolton Hill, Reservoir Hill), Middle West (Sugar Hill, Druid Heights, Sandtown), and Far West (Sandtown, Coppin State).

FAR WEST

The Far West section of North Avenue, for the purposes of this plan, runs from Hilton Street east to Fulton Avenue. At Hilton St. the corridor borders Gwynns Falls/Leakin Park, a large wooded green space and border between the corridor neighborhoods and far west Baltimore. At North Avenue, southbound Hilton Street turns into Hilton Parkway, a 4-lane, controlled-access highway that runs south to Highway 40, then turns into Caton Avenue before continuing to Interstate 95.



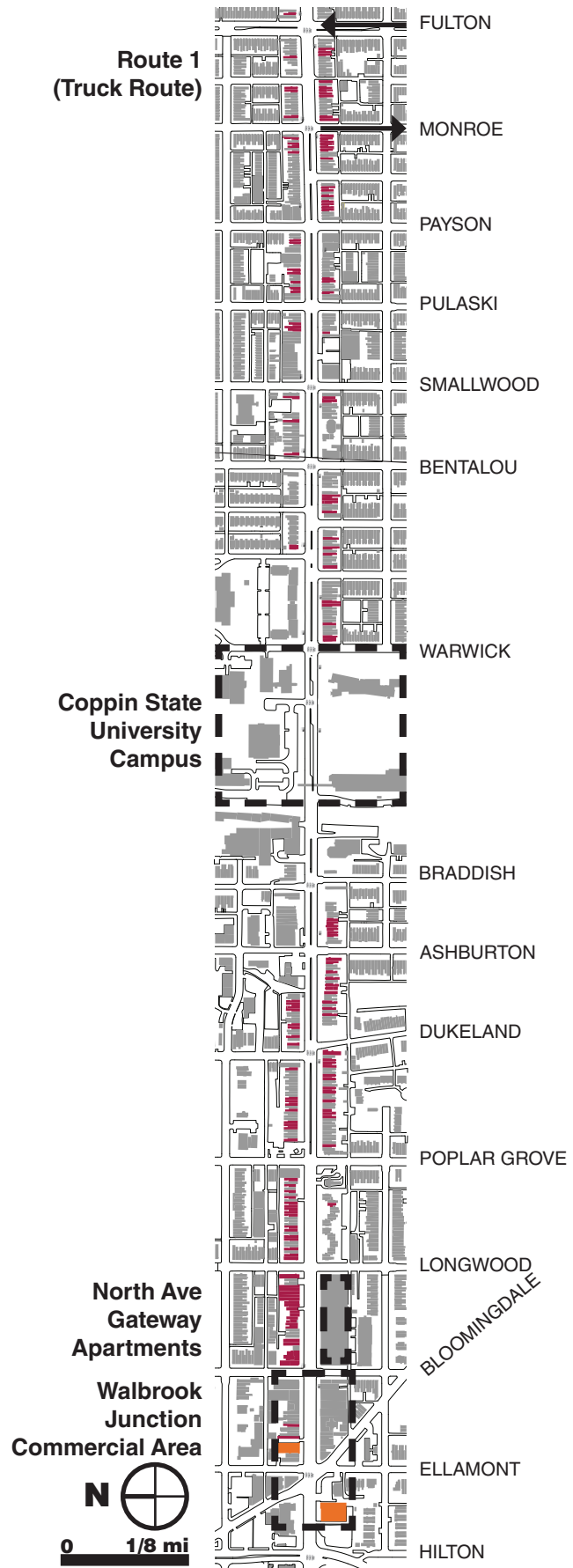
Walbrook Junction commercial area, photo by Ross Hackett

Most of the Far West section is low-density residential consisting of row homes with areas of light commercial. A notable break in this landscape is the presence of Coppin State University. Until recently North Avenue was the southern border of this campus; more information its expansion south is available in the Parallel Changes portion of this chapter. Other notable structures in Far West include the Walbrook Branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library and Baltimore City fire station, both at Bloomingdale Road, and the North Avenue Gateway affordable housing complex between Longwood and Rosedale which opened in 2013.

EXISTING CONDITIONS MAP

- Building
- Government Building
- Vacant Building (based on City data online)

Only buildings facing North Avenue are color-coded.



EXISTING CONDITIONS | FAR WEST

At Monroe Street the corridor becomes Route 1 and the truck route around downtown. Vehicles going southwest on Route 1 turn right onto Monroe Street from West North Avenue. Vehicles going northeast turn onto West North Avenue at Fulton Avenue, which parallels Monroe.



Typical block between Walbrook Junction and Coppin State Campus, photo by Ross Hackett



Far West east of Coppin State, photo by Ross Hackett



Coppin State University, photo by Ross Hackett

MIDDLE WEST

Middle West is the smallest section geographically of the three areas in this planning process, running from Fulton Avenue east to McCulloh Street. It is dominated by the intersection at Pennsylvania Avenue and surrounded by residential and light commercial row homes. Row homes in Middle West are always attached structures, and in general of greater size and height than in Far West, which allows for greater density of occupation.

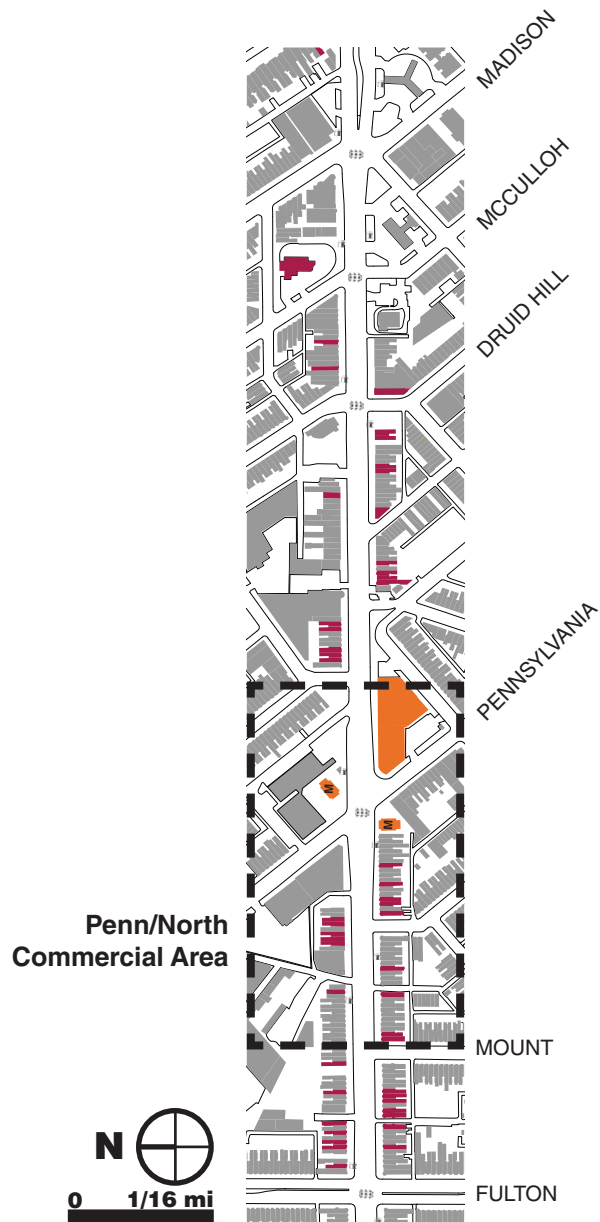
At Pennsylvania Avenue at West North Avenue there a metro station, a commercial shopping center, the Pennsylvania Avenue branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library system, and the Arch Social Club. Around this intersection is the largest group of retail/commercial between Walbrook Junction in Far West and Station North just east of the project study area.



At Fulton looking east, photo by Ross Hackett

EXISTING CONDITIONS MAP

- Building
 - Government Building
 - Vacant Building (based on City data online)
- Only buildings facing North Avenue are color-coded.*



At Pennsylvania Avenue, photo by Ross Hackett

NEAR WEST

Near West is the furthest east portion of the corridor that this plan addresses, running from McCulloh Street east to Howard Street. East of Howard Street is covered in a separate streetscaping plan being led by the Central Baltimore Partnership.



At McCulloh looking east, photo by Ross Hackett

This stretch of North Avenue is designed for high traffic capacity, and includes on and off ramps to I-83. While the right of way in Far and Middle West averages 60 feet in width, in Near West the right of way is closer to 90 feet wide. Therefore this section features left turn lanes and grassy, treed medians. The Jones Falls Bridge connects West North Avenue to the Station North area. Near I-83 and the Jones Falls Bridge is a light rail station connecting north to Towson and south to downtown.

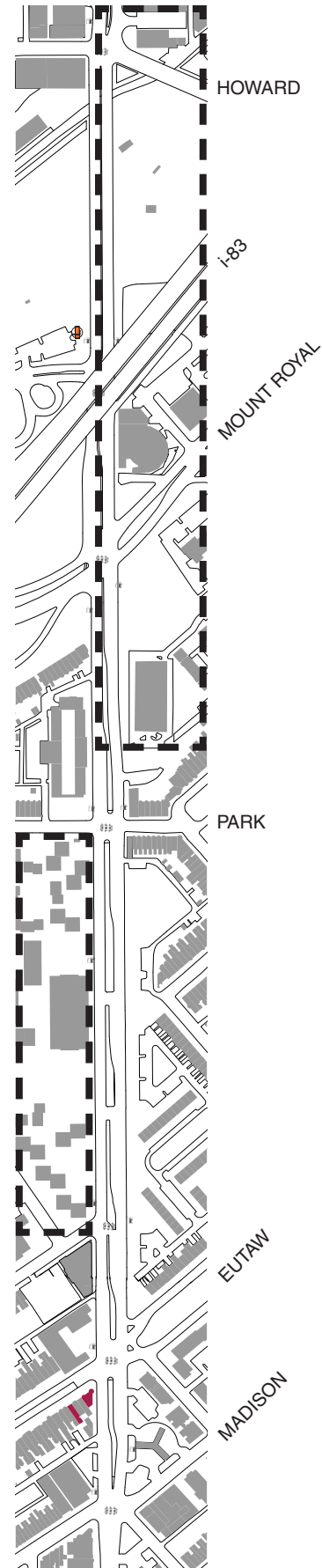


At Park Avenue, photo by Russ Moss

EXISTING CONDITIONS MAP

- Building
- Government Building
- Vacant Building (based on City data online)

Only buildings facing North Avenue are color-coded.



No homes and few businesses front on North Avenue, and between Linden and Park there are no cross-street connections. Standard Auto near Eutaw is the largest grossing business in Reservoir Hill and Penn North. The Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) campus borders the south side of North Avenue. Nearby John Eager Howard Elementary School is slated for redevelopment in Year One of the 21st Century Schools Initiative. The 8.5 acre parcel currently known as Madison Park North occupies the north side of the 600-900 blocks of West North Avenue, and is discussed in further detail in the Parallel Changes section of this document.



At Mount Royal Avenue, photo by Russ Moss



I-83 Underpass, photo by Russ Moss



Jones Falls Bridge, photo by Russ Moss

PARALLEL CHANGES

Description of changes that are occurring in or near parallel to this plan, such as Coppin State University's new streetscape and quadrangle and the demolition of Madison Park North.

MADISON PARK NORTH

Located at 850 W. North Avenue in the Reservoir Hill neighborhood, the Madison Park North Apartments complex is comprised of 202 low-income dwelling units in 44 separate buildings on the 8.18 acre site backing up to North Avenue. For decades, the property blighted the surrounding Reservoir Hill neighborhood with lack of upkeep, high vacancy and associated crime. For four years, the Baltimore Housing Department tried to revoke the HUD multi-family dwelling license held by private owner. In July 2014, the owner withdrew the final appeal and agreed with HUD and the City of Baltimore to relocate all the residents and rase the structures within 10 months after the last resident moves out. The parcel creates a new opportunity for development on the West North Avenue corridor.

“Throughout the city, vacant and blighted properties are being demolished, rehabilitated or redeveloped, to create opportunities for future mixed income development, making way for safer communities, new housing and green space opportunities for families who want to live and work in Baltimore,”

- Tania Baker, Baltimore Housing Spokeswoman, Baltimore Sun article “Troubled Reservoir Hill Apartment Complex to be Razed” 8/3/14

COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY

Coppin State University (CSU) is an important anchor on West North Avenue. As the campus expands south, the corridor begins to play a larger role in university life.

CSU's first new building south of North Avenue was the Health and Human Services Building. This prominent new building and pedestrian bridge across North Avenue just West of Warwick Avenue act as a gateway to North Avenue from the Far West. Currently, the university is finishing construction of their second campus building south of North Avenue, the Science and Technology Center, and has plans for a third academic building.

CSU is planning changes to the streetscape of West North Avenue as it passes through their campus, between the railroad bridge and Warwick Avenue. A new quadrangle with green space and buried rainwater cisterns for irrigation as well as a long garden parallel to Warwick Avenue adjacent to the easternmost new building will define the south campus expansion and provide significant enhancement to the North Avenue corridor.

The removal of street parking this section will accommodate left turn lanes at Warwick and Thomas, and create a wide pedestrian promenade along the south side of the street. The CSU Master Plan also calls for planting more than 200 trees along North Avenue and on the new campus quadrangle.



Madison Park North, photo by Ross Hackett



West North Avenue at Thomas, rendering by Cannon Design, courtesy Coppin State University

Distinctive lettering on the top of the existing pedestrian bridge and other improvements to campus signage and wayfinding will enhance the CSU campus.

The CSU streetscape improvements also include new street lighting and relocation of bus stops in coordination with the City and paid for by the University. Buses will stop briefly in the right lane in accordance with the DOT preferred practice to allow for quicker bus service rather than installing bus pull out areas.



Construction at Coppin State Campus, photo by Ross Hackett



SECTION TWO

GOALS & VISION

photo by Songhyun Jung

COMMUNITY GOALS

Information on community goals was gathered through three Visioning Workshops held in Spring, 2014 as well as anecdotally through conversations and neighborhood walks with our Core Stakeholders during that same period. These were then refined after the issuance of the first draft through input at the Public Design Reviews and Sno-Ball Stand and after the second draft through input in the March 2015 survey.

INCREASE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY & ACCESSIBILITY

The most frequently mentioned goal was increasing pedestrian safety and pedestrian accessibility along West North Avenue. During the Importance/Difficulty Matrix exercise at the Visioning Workshops, the importance of this priority was given an average of 4.3 on a 5 point scale. Aligned priorities of slower traffic and more pedestrian lighting were given importance rankings 4.5 during the same exercise. While not quantifiable, pedestrian safety also came up frequently at the three design reviews.

“Sometimes I go under the subway to cross the street at Penn-North.”

Visioning workshop comment about current conditions of pedestrian safety at West North Avenue

Additionally, of 382 surveys at the week-long sno-ball stand (which was located at a different West North Avenue site each day), 58% said they were on West North Avenue “always,” or “every day.” While only 34% indicated that they traveled by foot, the vast majority said they got around via public transportation: bus, subway, or light rail. The demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that 28% of Near West, 40% of Middle West, and 38% of Far West

residents walk or take public transportation to get to work. Users of public transportation typically become pedestrians for the leg of their journey between the public transportation stop and work or home. This is supported by the fact that 76% of surveys documented that the respondent(s) lived or worked nearby.

Such a large user group of West North Avenue deserves an urban landscape with a strong pedestrian focus.

CREATE AND MAINTAIN A CLEAN, ATTRACTIVE STREETScape

Many aligned priorities expressed by community members can be summarized as a desire for a clean, beautiful streetscape. The Importance/Difficulty Matrix exercise at the visioning workshops showed that “more trash/recycling points,” and greening were both frequently mentioned and given high importance rankings (4.3 and 3.9 on a 5 point scale). Beautification was ranked as 2.6.

Conversations about the appearance of the streetscape were as common during public workshops and reviews as those about its functionality, with solutions including public art, greening, lighting, and “branding.” The flower bulb planting day in November 2014 drew over 20 community members to help plant daffodils and other bulbs along West North Avenue that will bloom starting in the spring of 2015.

Creating and maintaining a clean, attractive streetscape will make West North Avenue a place people want to inhabit.

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT RIPE FOR DEVELOPMENT

The other priorities in this section contribute to this overarching desire to increase public and private development along West North Avenue. As the existing condition maps show on pages 17-21, there are high rates of vacancy along the corridor. Properties fronting the corridor go hand in hand with the right of way in

creating the overall streetscape. One can only improve so far without the other. This plan addresses the right of way in hopes that improvement there will spur improvement in the properties and neighborhoods along West North Avenue.

After pedestrian safety/accessibility, “more commercial development” was the second most mentioned goal in the Importance/Difficulty Matrix exercise, with an importance ranking of 4.1 on a 5 point scale. Public development was ranked as 3.7.

RESPECT AND CELEBRATE THE IDENTITIES OF NORTH AVENUE

Development should not come at the expense of the identities of the surrounding communities, and celebrating those identities should help promote development by establishing West North Avenue as a unique opportunity for investment. More signage/identity was relatively lower ranked and mentioned during the Importance/Difficulty Matrix (2.9 on a 5 point scale), but commentary during the visioning workshops frequently referenced neighborhood identity.

The West North Avenue corridor is host to numerous identities based on the area’s extensive and important history, proximate institutions like Coppin State University and MICA, and the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Discussion at the Public Design Reviews about specific elements such as public art or infrastructure frequently turned to how those elements could support the identity of their location or reference its history.



Importance / Difficulty Matrix at Visioning Workshop in April 2014, photo by Matt Roth

OUTLINE OF PRIORITIES

Although all of the proposals in this plan are part of the community vision, there are specific proposals which attain greater importance by contributing to the previously listed community goals.

Prioritization was determined by a committee of Core Stakeholders based on all the data collected during community outreach over the 18-month planning process. The following priorities are listed in no particular order within each grouping.

HIGHEST PRIORITY

- Maintain/upgrade all sidewalks to ADA standards for accessibility, including level surfaces and ramps at intersections
- Conduct a traffic study to determine feasibility of signaling proposals
- Adjacent traffic lights should be coordinated to facilitate consecutive green lights for vehicles traveling at below the posted speed limit, and signs should be posted that indicate the speed for which traffic lights are timed
- Repaint all crosswalks to a standard of “high visibility”
- Install pedestrian timers at every stoplight
- Apply “pedestrian lead” programming at intersections, where pedestrians get the walk signal seconds before the parallel green light for vehicles, to enable pedestrians to begin crossing before cars start right or left turns
- Install curb extensions at every intersection to increase pedestrian visibility, shorten crossing distances, and visually narrow the roadway
- Add consistent street trees to every block
- Add pedestrian-scale lighting to every block
- Add more waste cans, with a waste-removal strategy that accommodates the actual disposal rate of trash in the waste cans
- Every bus stop should have at least a bench and a waste can
- Improve bus service reliability
- Implement mobile and computer accessible bus tracker app
- Coordinate all improvements with plan and community branding strategies

HIGH PRIORITY

- Restrict left turns at intersections where there is not a left turn lane, with traffic study to determine whether turns are restricted part or all-day
- Restrict right turns on red at major intersections, especially at Mount Royal
- Repaint lane markings east of McCulloh Street to allow for a bike lane between the street parking lane and the curb (this priority is especially important to Near West residents)
- Install decorative planting at major intersections, including in curb extensions as feasible
- Implement community front yard/step beautification programming
- Install a historical marker series along West North Avenue
- Implement more public art installations
- Add more bike racks
- Add bus shelters at every major bus stop, including all that are switching points between major bus lines
- Improve all vacant lots along West North Avenue to stable green spaces, and ideally positive community spaces
- Add signage identifying the communities along West North Avenue

GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITY

The Core Stakeholders from the prioritization committee believe that all parts of West North Avenue need and deserve streetscape improvements, and do not prioritize one geographic portion of the corridor over another. However, should simultaneous deployment of improvements not be possible, they believe that a greater initial impact may be had if installations first occur at key intersections along West North Avenue, then spread to the full corridor. Key intersections include crossstreets such as Hilton, Bloomingdale, Warwick, Monroe, Fulton, Pennsylvania, Eutaw, Park, and Mount Royal.

POTENTIAL HEALTH IMPACTS

The Baltimore City Health Department conducted a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) of the West North Avenue Streetscape Plan. The objective of this HIA was to assess the likely impacts of alternative streetscape features on the health of residents in the area, to identify design priorities that will be most conducive to health, and to generate recommendations to promote health through the West North Avenue Streetscape Plan. This HIA considers alternative design elements and identifies priority features for redevelopment, with the aim of influencing the final design plan.

In consultation with community members, changes occurring through five pathways were identified as most critical for their effects on health in the area: **crime, social cohesion, commercial development, walkability, and housing prices.** For each of these major pathways, this study assessed the baseline conditions in the area, investigated the expected impacts on health, and developed recommendations to maximize positive health effects and minimize any health risks posed by the streetscape plan.

generated from the discussion at the community workshop. To understand baseline conditions in the study area, a variety of secondary data sources were used, including the census and American Community Survey, as well as data compiled by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance, the Baltimore City Health Department, and other city agencies. Primary data collection was conducted by the Neighborhood Design Center, who assessed existing pedestrian and traffic-control infrastructure along the corridor and conducted surveys with pedestrians. Information regarding expected impacts of the streetscape plan primarily came from a literature review on each of the major redesign components and pathways leading to health outcomes.

An assessment of baseline conditions along West North Avenue revealed important existing health-related challenges. Crime rates, particularly for drug-related offenses, are much higher along the corridor than for the city as a whole. Many residents reported feeling unsafe, which may limit outdoor physical activity and community engagement. Low levels of social cohesion along the corridor are also affected by and contribute to disengagement, particularly regarding the physical conditions of the area. High densities of vacant lots and buildings, as well as infrequent garbage pick-up, all contribute to dilapidated conditions. Community members expressed a strong desire for more commercial development along West North Avenue, particularly to improve access to healthy food and to provide employment opportunities. In its current condition, the corridor is not very walkable, deterring both pedestrians and other active forms of transportation. Area residents would like improved biking infrastructure and better access to public



This study compiled data and information from a variety of sources. Community input is a critical component of HIAs; this was elicited through a workshop intended to understand community members' health-related concerns about the area and those concerns specifically related to redevelopment. The following graphic is a word cloud that was

transportation. Housing prices vary substantially along the corridor, with prices in Near West above the city median and prices in Middle and Far West well below the city median. Throughout the corridor, a significant proportion of households spend a large portion of their incomes on housing, leaving insufficient funds to purchase other goods and services critical for health.

SECTION THREE

CONCEPT PLANS



rendering by William Hallgren

MULTI-MODAL CORRIDOR

This plan proposes a complete streets approach to West North Avenue. Complete streets are “designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.” (National Complete Streets Coalition)

Making West North Avenue more equitable to all modes of transportation will increase pedestrian safety and pedestrian accessibility, facilitate smoother and more reliable bus transit, and improve access to West North Avenue, thereby increasing its potential development value. This plan proposes multiple, coordinated tactics to achieve this goal:

- Curb extensions or bump-outs at intersections
- Reduction of lane width
- Expansion of pedestrian best practices, including intersection signalization
- Coordinated signaling of traffic lights
- Restriction of left turns from North Avenue
- Addition of bike lanes and best practices

The Neighborhood Design Center volunteer team attempted to access traffic counts for West North Avenue in order to provide a more effective analysis for this plan. According to Baltimore City data, the most recent traffic counts for some portions of West North Avenue were out of date. This plan recommends a traffic study be prepared by the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (BCDOT) to gather data to better inform implementation of the Plan’s recommended action items.

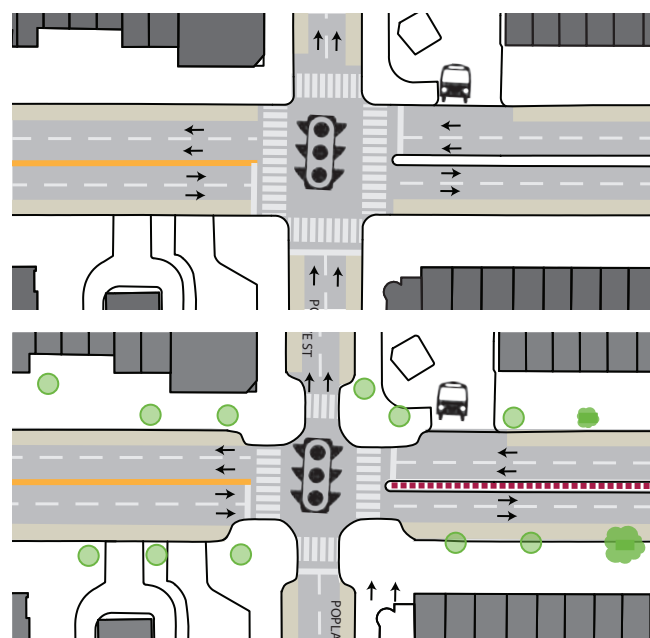
Motor vehicles have and continue to take priority along West North Avenue. 67% of Near West residents commute to work by car, as well as 55% of Middle West and 59% of Far West residents. Although there is an occasional stop-and-go traffic, traffic generally moves. An analysis of Google traffic information by NDC volunteers revealed that traffic is roughly similar during morning and evening rush hours, and on weekends. The average Google traffic information for these periods did not illustrate any red areas of traffic

congestion or black areas, although stop-and-go traffic does occur at traffic signals. Average travel time from Hilton Avenue to Charles Street is 13 minutes while travel in the opposite direction is 14 minutes. Average travel times were exactly the same during rush hour and on weekends.

However, there were extensive comments during community outreach about the speed of cars being too fast. Exceeding the speed limit on such a busy corridor risks the lives of pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of public transit, as well as riders in other vehicles. Reducing vehicular speeds to the posted limits increases everyone’s safety. Several of the strategies below work to encourage slower driving through direct and indirect methods.

CURB EXTENSIONS

Curb extensions are protrusions of the sidewalk into the roadway, typically, but not always, at intersections. Along West North Avenue they will occupy the space of the parallel parking lane. They do not protrude into the travel lanes. Curb extensions increase pedestrian accessibility by shortening the crossing distance in the roadway. They increase pedestrian safety by making those waiting to cross the intersection more visible by drivers. They also visually narrow the roadway,



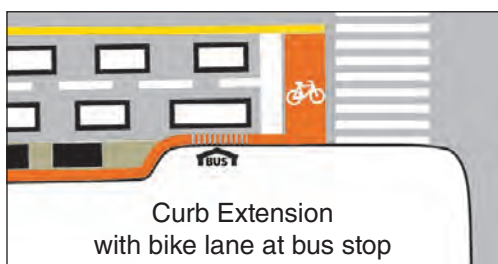
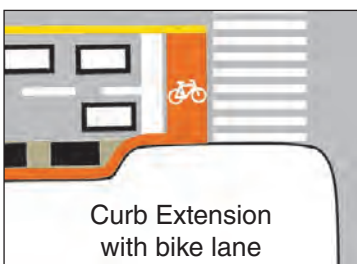
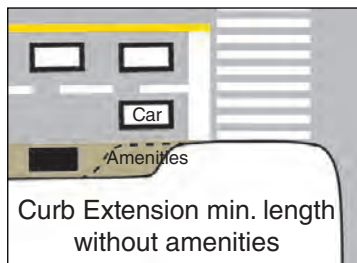
Existing (top) and proposed (bottom) conditions at West North Avenue and Poplar Grove Street, showing the reduction in crossing distance attained through curb extensions.

which incentivizes drivers to slow down. Buses can utilize curb extensions to more quickly drop off and pick up passengers by loading from a curb extension while stopped in the right travel lane. This practice is currently that preferred by the MTA, as it increases public transit efficiency.

Curb extension width is typically two feet less than the width of the parking lane. The minimum length of a curb extension is typically equal to the full width of the crosswalk. Therefore, they do not need to take away street parking spaces, unless additional length for amenities is desired, such as bus shelters, planting areas and street cafes.

When a curb extension is used at a bus stop, it should be of a minimum length to allow the front and rear doors to open onto the bump out. Curb extension edges need to conform with standards for vehicle turning radii. East of Monroe, where North Avenue is a truck route, the corner radius of curb extensions may need to be larger to allow trucks to make softer turns.

This plan recommends curb extensions at all intersections along West North Avenue where there



is a parallel parking lane, if feasible. There may be locations where existing stormwater drainage may be blocked by a curb extension. This situation can be remedied by a break in the curb that permits the passage of stormwater along the original curb line while pedestrians pass over it.

86% of respondents to the March 2015 survey supported installing curb extensions wherever feasible. Curb extensions are capital improvement items. They can be phased in or tested with temporary installations, such as installing temporary bollards, which can define the future curb extension allowing it to function as a pedestrian space before constructing a curb extension.

PEDESTRIAN BEST PRACTICES

Sidewalks should be safe and accessible for all Baltimore communities. The following principles should apply along West North Avenue:

- Sidewalks should provide a continuous and attractive surface for pedestrians of all levels of mobility. Cracked and upheaved sidewalks should be repaired.
- All intersections should feature ADA-compliant ramps with detectable warnings in both directions.
- Pedestrian walk signals with countdown timers at all signaled intersections. At busy intersections the pedestrian walk signal should precede the parallel green light by a few seconds. This gives those waiting to cross a chance to enter the intersection prior to vehicles attempting right turns. Vehicles attempting right turns on a green will have the opportunity to do so after pedestrians pass. Pedestrian walk signals should be coordinated to not interfere with green arrows for left turns. They should be long enough to permit less mobile individuals time to cross the entire roadway width.
- Right turns on red should be prohibited to further reduce conflict between pedestrians and turning vehicles.



ADA compliant ramp, Baltimore, photo by Ross Hackett



Curb extension marked by bollards and paint, location unknown, image by Google Earth

LANE WIDTH REDUCTION

Lane widths along West North Avenue vary between 10 feet and 14 feet. Wider lanes make it easier for vehicles to exceed the speed limit by giving them the impression of greater maneuverability. Decreasing lane width gives vehicles the perception of less room and generally helps to reduce speed. The minimum lane width that BCDOT prefers for a truck route is 11 feet. West North Avenue is a truck route from Monroe Street to Belair Road. This plan recommends reducing lane width to 11 feet from Monroe Street east. The space will instead be used towards wider medians and bike lanes in this area. There are portions of North Avenue

KEY PROPOSALS: PEDESTRIANS

Maintain/upgrade all sidewalks to ADA standards for accessibility, including level surfaces and ramps at intersections.

priority: highest | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT

Repaint all crosswalks to a standard of “high visibility.”

priority: highest | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT

Install pedestrian timers at every stoplight.

priority: highest | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT

Apply “pedestrian lead” programming at intersections, where pedestrians get the walk signal seconds before the parallel green light for vehicles, to enable pedestrians to begin crossing before cars start right or left turns.

priority: highest | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT

Install curb extensions at every intersection to increase pedestrian visibility, shorten crossing distances, and visually narrow the roadway.

priority: highest | phasing: medium-long term

implemented by: BCDOT

Hilton to Poplar Grove / Monroe to Madison Proposed



Poplar Grove to Monroe Proposed
*Except CSU Area



Mount Royal to Howard Existing



Mount Royal to Howard Proposed



west of Monroe Street where the lane width is 10 feet. This plan recommends these lanes remain at 10 feet.

Another strategy to encourage slower traffic is to reduce the number of travel lanes, generally referred to as a “road diet.” There are at least two travel lanes in each direction on West North Avenue. Reducing the number of lanes from two to one lane in each direction can provide additional traffic calming while creating a more “main street” look and feel. This strategy, however, does not reflect the widely held desire by Core Stakeholders to preserve two traffic lanes in each direction and parallel parking for residents and shoppers. This plan, therefore, only recommends a reduction in travel lanes where they exceed two travel lanes per direction and installation of streetscape improvements. Additional amenities such as curb extensions and traffic signalling help in reducing traffic speed and create a safer pedestrian environment.

COORDINATED SIGNALING OF TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Coordinated traffic light signaling improves the travel experience for vehicles and encourages a safe speed. This plan recommends that traffic lights be coordinated so drivers travelling at the posted travel speed encounter more frequent green lights. Signals should also be fixed to follow a similar light pattern and time increments. According to NACTO, this requires less maintenance than actuated signalization and provides predictable signaling for cars, bikes, and pedestrians. Signal times should be set so that there are frequent opportunities for pedestrians to cross West North Avenue. This also helps reduce jaywalking by limiting pedestrian wait times at corners.

Madison to Mount Royal Existing



Madison to Mount Royal Proposed

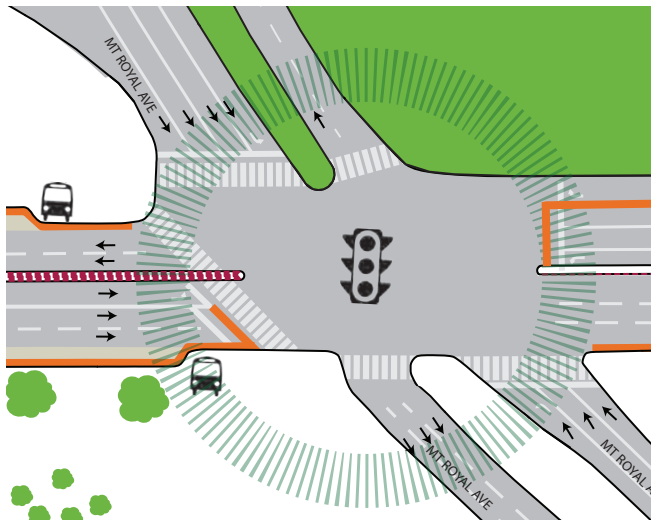


Sections created with streetmix.net

RESTRICTION OF LEFT TURNS

As mentioned above, a benefit of curb extensions is that they facilitate speedier bus loading and unloading because the bus remains in the right travel lane as it briefly stops for passengers then proceeds without having to re-enter the travel lane from the parking lane. It increases the priority for bus transit, making the service faster and more reliable. This is a best practice of BCDOT for high traffic streets. It will be implemented along North Avenue at Coppin State University as part of a streetscape development outlined in the Parallel Changes portion of this document.

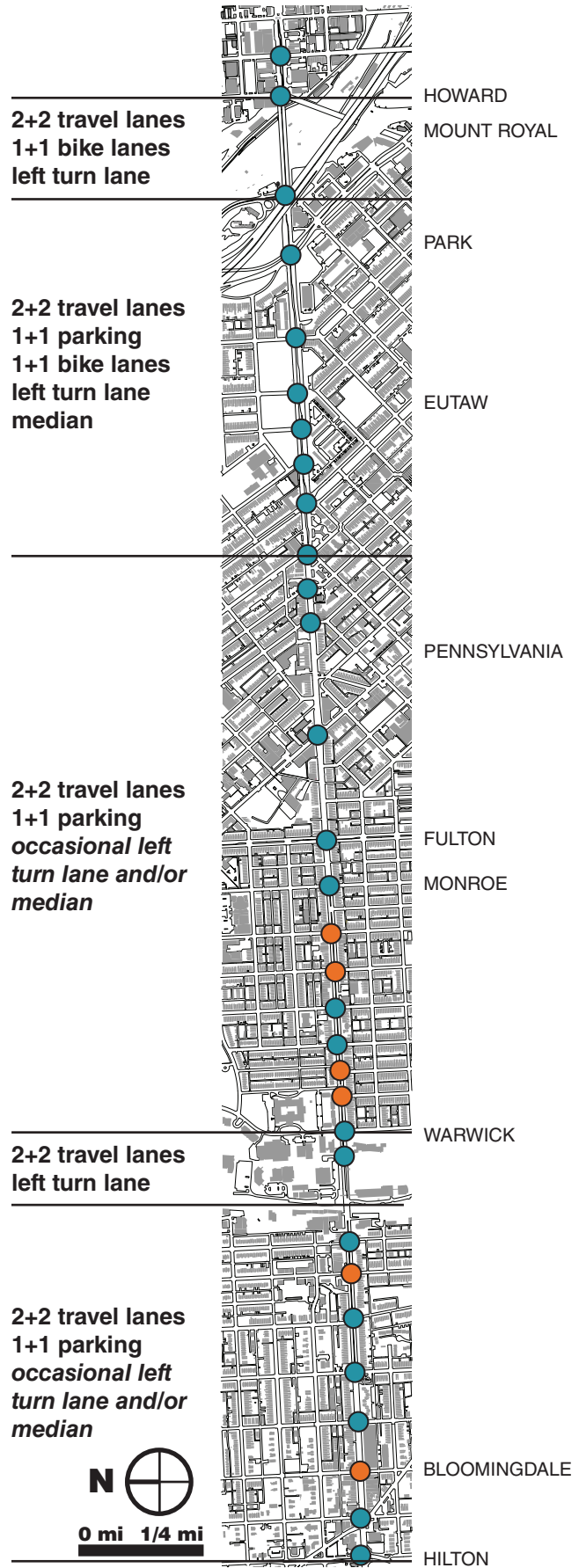
86% of March 2015 survey respondents supported a traffic study to examine coordinated signalling and restriction of left turns.



Proposed conditions at Mount Royal Terrace. Signalling improvements are critical at this intersection which manages on and off-ramp traffic from I-83 as well as being a major pedestrian intersection for those traveling to and/or from Station North, Reservoir Hill, the MIC/A campus, or the light rail station. For more information see block by block diagrams.

LANE DIVISIONS AND TRAFFIC SIGNALS MAP

- 2-WAY STOP SIGNS
- TRAFFIC LIGHT



KEY PROPOSALS: MOTORISTS

Conduct a traffic study to determine feasibility of signaling proposals.

priority: highest | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT

Adjacent traffic lights should be coordinated to facilitate consecutive green lights for vehicles traveling at or below the posted speed limit, and signs should be posted that indicate the speed for which traffic lights are timed.

priority: highest | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT

Restrict left turns at intersections where there is not a left turn lane, with traffic study to determine whether turns are restricted part or all-day.

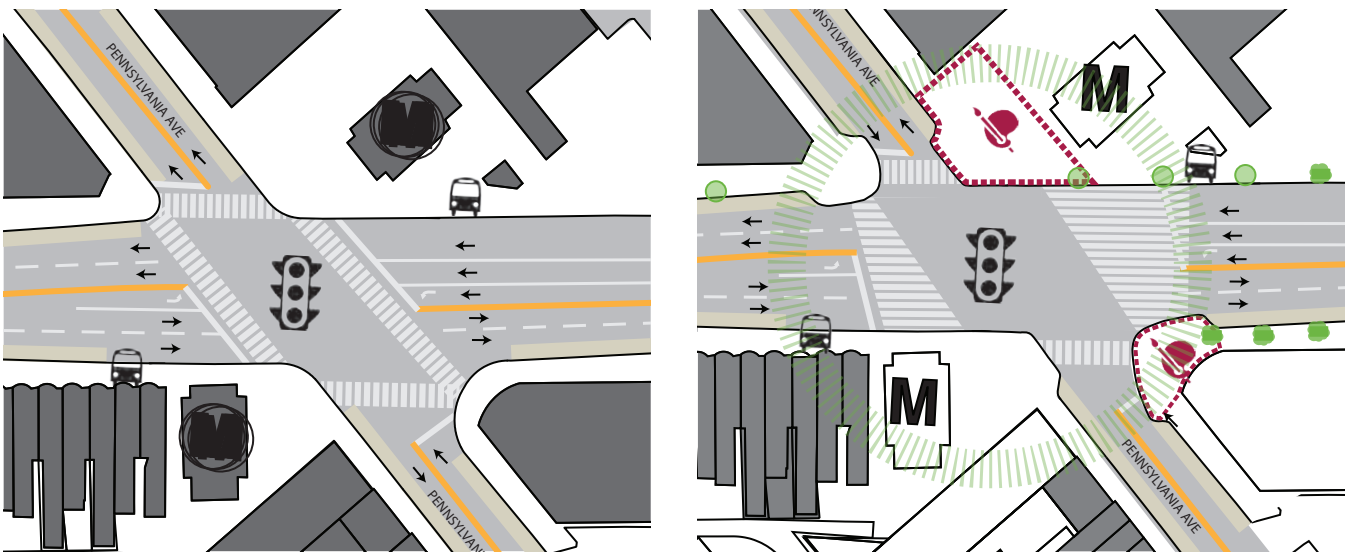
priority: high | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT

Restrict right turns on red at major intersections, especially at Mount Royal.

priority: high | phasing: medium term

implemented by: BCDOT



Existing (left) and proposed (right) conditions at Pennsylvania Avenue. This intersection has substantial pedestrian traffic. Extra-wide crosswalks help define pedestrian areas, especially at metro stations. Given the high-volume bus stops, it may be preferable to have buses pull out of traffic to load and unload passengers.

BUSES

The sno-ball survey indicated that the large majority of respondents use buses for getting around on West North Avenue. Demographic data from the U.S. Census supports large public transit ridership from these areas as well, especially Middle West (36%) and Far West (35%). It follows that buses should be a priority in the streetscape design.

Curb extensions can be utilized by buses at regular stops to accept and release passengers from the right travel lane. While this slightly delays car traffic, it speeds bus service as the bus does not get “stuck” in the parking lane. At high volume stops, such as Pennsylvania Avenue, buses will utilize a pull out area.

This plan proposes two program changes to the current MTA service:

- Create an online/app bus tracker for real-time tracking and arrival estimates.
- Include a digital sign with real-time arrival at bus shelters, public transit junctures or other locations where feasible.

CURRENT BUS ROUTE MAP

-  Route 5
-  Route 13
-  Route 16
-  Route 54
-  Route 91
-  Route 97
-  Light rail



STREETCARS

Streetcars along West North Avenue were replaced by bus lines in the mid 1900s. Groups including Transit Choices are currently advocating for renewed streetcar lines, including one on North Avenue. The community vision, today, focuses on improving bus service and access to existing subway and light rail stations. Although, they are not opposed to streetcars, it is not seen as a priority at this time.

A North Avenue streetcar, as proposed by Transit Choices, would run from Broadway Street west to Pennsylvania Avenue. On the east terminus it would meet an extension of the existing metro line to create a transit hub. On the west side, it would turn at Pennsylvania Avenue before continuing to the existing transit hub at Mondawmin Mall. A streetcar would share the right lane with car traffic. Additional studies would be needed to examine how a streetcar and other multi-modal elements could co-exist.



Historic Baltimore Streetcar in operation, photo by Frank Hicks

KEY PROPOSALS: PUBLIC TRANSIT

Improve bus service reliability.

priority: highest | phasing: long term

implemented by: MTA

Add bus shelters at every major bus stop, including all that are switching points between major bus lines.

priority: high | phasing: long term

implemented by: MTA

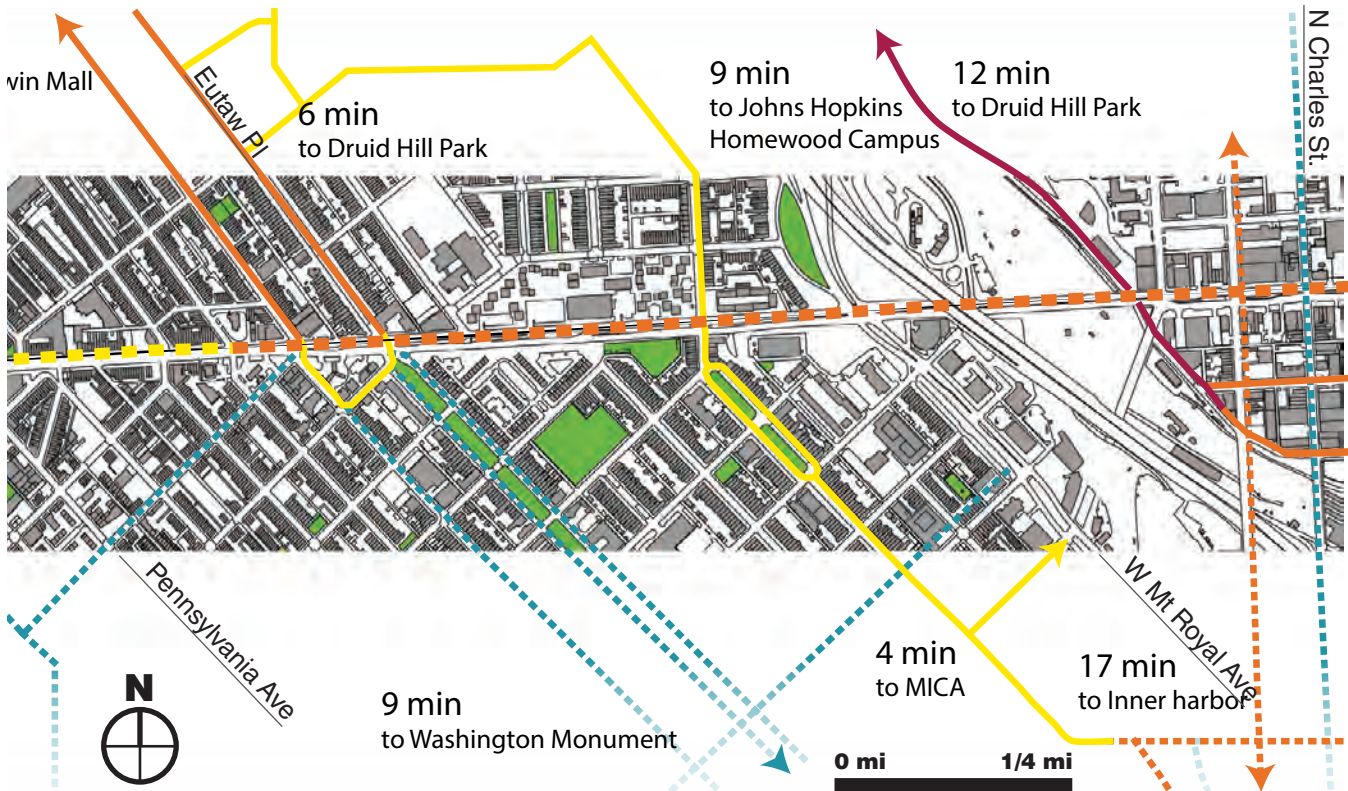
BIKE LANES

Bicyclists are currently a small user group along West North Avenue. However, connecting West North Avenue communities to existing and future bicycle infrastructure can make bicycling safer for area residents.

West of Madison Street there is not sufficient width in the roadway to permit the addition of bike lanes without removing an existing travel or parking lane. If actual vehicle travel speeds can be reduced to 30 mph or less, the right travel lane can be marked as a sharrow, a formal shared bike/car lane.



Parking-protected bike lane, Chicago, Google Street View



BIKE ROUTES MAP

- Orange : Existing Bike lane
- Dashed Orange : Planned/Proposed Bike lane
- Yellow : Existing Shared lane
- Dashed Yellow : Planned Shared lane
- Dashed Blue : Route commonly used by cyclist
- Red : Jones falls trail *Passes under North Avenue

Downtown bicycle network project (Jan 29, 2014)
Baltimore city bike map (Baltimore city DOT, 2012)

East of Madison Street the roadway is wider. This plan recommends a 5' wide bicycle lane be placed between the curb and the parking lane. The parking lane protects bicyclists from traffic. At the Jones Falls Bridge the bicycle lane would be located adjacent to the right travel lane with flexible bollards separating the two. 88% of respondents to the March 2015 survey supported the addition of a bike lane as described, however only 79% support reducing West North Avenue to two travel lanes in each direction in that same area.

KEY PROPOSALS: BICYCLES

Repaint lane markings east of McCulloh Street to allow for a bike lane between the street parking lane and the curb.

priority: high, important to Near West residents especially | phasing: medium term implemented by: BCDOT

Add more bike racks.

priority: high | phasing: near term implemented by: BCDOT

BRANDING

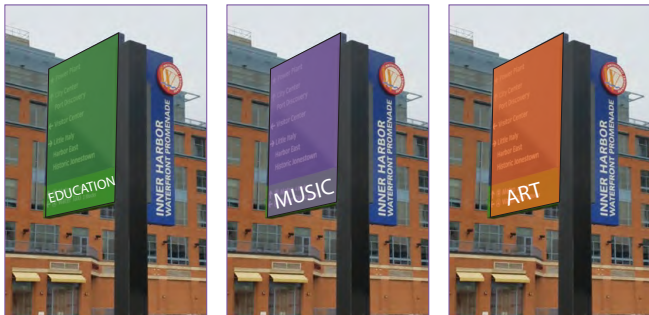
Branding can be a means of expressing the identity of a place through the qualities of the physical environment. As this plan seeks to implement changes to the streetscape, it is important to consider what effect those changes have on the “brands” of West North Avenue and its neighborhoods, and to ensure they have a positive impact.

While community members who participated in the planning process desire a cohesive feel for the corridor as a whole, they recognized that character and identity of the neighborhoods change over the three-mile project area. Therefore, a three-part branding strategy is proposed that allows three key “nodes” along West North Avenue to inspire themes that radiate outward.

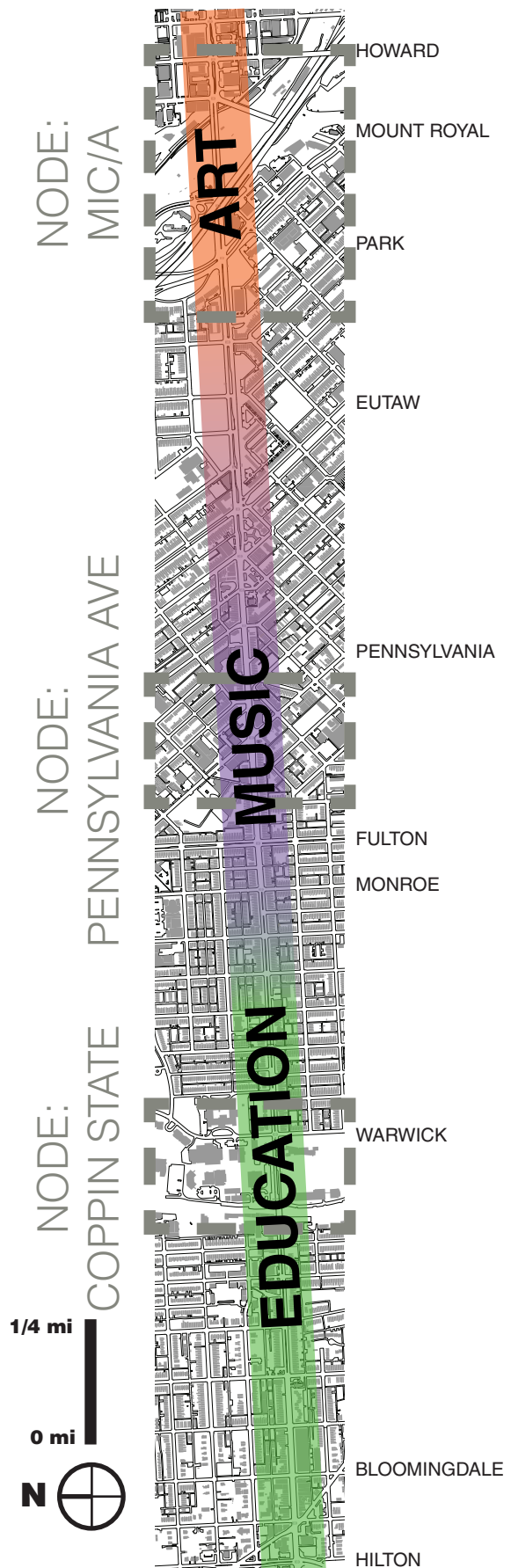
The Near West study area is near the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and Station North Arts District, both of which are hubs for artists and visual art installations. Middle West encompasses the area near the Pennsylvania Avenue and North Avenue intersection which, historically, was an epicenter of musical entertainment and African-American culture. Coppin State University resides in the Far West study area. The university was established as an institution that educated teachers and had a significant role in the



Existing branding, photo by Laura Wheaton



Wayfinding sign with neighborhood logo. Inner Harbor, Baltimore, MD. Photographed by Christina Gaymon.



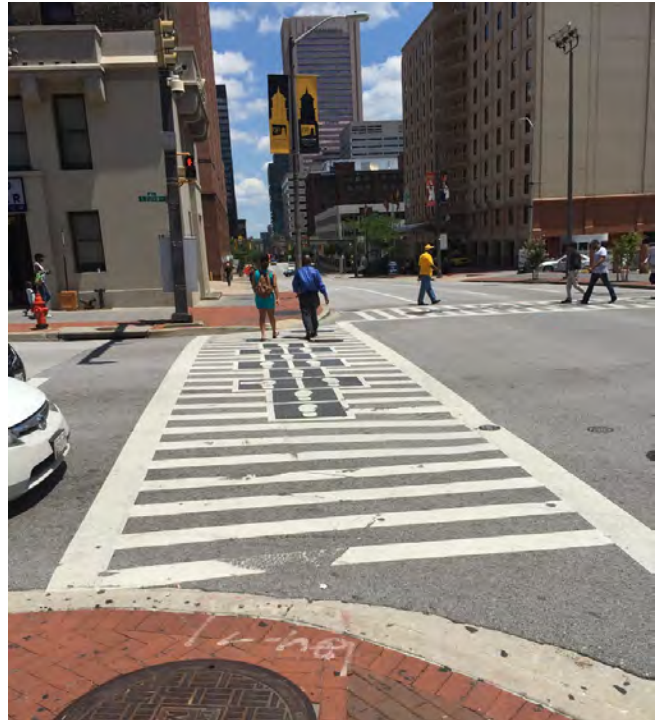
educational system of the city. Three unique identities were identified as a basis for developing potential West North Avenue brands - art, music, and education.

Branding can be expressed through the qualities of any streetscape element. Signage and art are obvious candidates, but infrastructural elements like lighting, benches, bike racks, bus shelters, street trees, plants, and even sidewalks and crosswalks can contribute to the expression of a branded identity.

Placemaking strategies along the corridor should incorporate elements that highlight the unique character or historical significance of the neighborhood. In the "ART" section of the corridor, murals, statues, and painted sidewalks take on even greater importance. Vacant spaces can be potentially reclaimed for pop-up exhibitions. In the "MUSIC" section, outdoor space could be allocated for impromptu performances. Art-themed statues and murals should be incorporated, as well as interactive musical art. Art with an educational theme can help support the "EDUCATION" section.

For consistency, streetlight posts, trash receptacles, the posts for wayfinding signage, bus shelters, and benches should mostly be the same style along the entire West North Avenue corridor. However, elements like banners and benches could be painted a unique color or incorporate images that are more in character with the neighborhood.

Branding coordination should engage neighborhood residents, for further concept development and installation.



Artistic crosswalk, Baltimore, photo by Ross Hackett



Pierce's Park, Baltimore, photo by Christina Hartsfield

KEY PROPOSALS: BRANDING

Coordinate all improvements with plan and community branding strategies.

*priority: **highest** | phasing: **continuous**
implemented by: **Everyone***

Add signage identifying the communities along West North Avenue.

*priority: **high** | phasing: **near term**
implemented by: **BCDOT in coordination with community organizations, or by community organizations in coordination with BCDOT, depending on type and location.***

STREET FURNISHINGS

Street furnishings are more than accessories. Well-designed furnishings facilitate better pedestrian experience, safety for vehicles, beautification and can help support neighborhood identity and branding.

Street Furnishings are an opportune way to instill vibrancy, identity, safety, and unity the West North Avenue corridor. Furnishings can also support a community's unique identity. Integration of these elements into a cohesive whole is important. Consistency with some types of amenities can extend across all of North Avenue to unify the many diverse communities.

Changes to object color, paving pattern, object placement, size, decorative elements, etc. can be used as a distinguishing element. If these changes are based on areas like neighborhoods, commercial districts, transportation hubs, or anchor tenants, one is able to maintain the larger connectivity of West North Avenue and maintain unique identity for those areas.

LIGHTING

Streetscape lighting types include street-scale (typically "cobra") lighting, pedestrian-scale lighting, building lighting and various types of secondary and/or decorative lighting.

One of the main concerns that the community had about North Avenue is safety on North Avenue. Lighting can contribute or detract from a feeling of safety in a particular space. Consistent illumination is critical, as dark spots, such as those between too-widely-placed light poles, can increase uneasiness by forcing night vision to adapt to changing light levels. This illumination is needed both on the street surface and on the sidewalks. Some lighting studies measure only from the middle of the street, and may not record lower light levels on adjacent sidewalks. Sidewalk lighting can be further impacted by street trees, especially if the tree canopy is below the level of the light, as is common with taller street-scale lights.

This plan proposes implementing pedestrian-scale lighting throughout the West North Avenue corridor.



Pedestrian acorn light with similarly branded bike rack in foreground, Station North, photo by Johnny Macon



Colorful bench with planting, New York City, photo by Cherisse Otis

These lights are designed to illuminate the sidewalk, and promote a safe-feeling night environment for pedestrians. They are lower in height so they aren't blocked by a street tree canopy. Of 176 respondents to the March 2015 survey, 94% supported implementation of pedestrian-scale lighting.

Community members at the public design review largely supported using a consistent pedestrian-scale light fixture throughout North Avenue. There was a preference for traditional over modern styling. There are currently pedestrian-scale lights on North Avenue between Howard and St. Paul Street. The lights are installed in between existing street lights in a staggered fashion. The lights are traditional acorn-style lights with a black pole. This style type of lighting is the standard pedestrian-scale lighting set by the Baltimore City Department of Transportation. This plan recommends incorporating the same type of lighting on West North Avenue to make it consistent along the corridor. BCDOT would be responsible for determining the location and maintenance for new pedestrian-scale lighting.

TRASH RECEPTACLES

The removal of trash is essential to the health and sanitation in the community. Trash collection and waste cans are mainly installed and maintained by the Baltimore City Department of Public Works (DPW). Many communities adjacent to West North Avenue have trash collection and recycling one a week each.

One of the concerns that were brought during the visioning workshops and survey is the issue of trash along the North Avenue corridor. There are currently not enough trash receptacles to collect the daily trash volume, resulting in littering. However, when additional waste cans are installed, illegal dumping of home waste is common, overflowing the new cans between pickups. This is a symptom of a larger waste-collection problem that needs addressing beyond the boundaries of the streetscape.

Currently there are the standard style trash cans and a couple of smaller trashcans attached to bus stop poles. This plan proposes adding one full-size waste can at each bus stop, in addition to other busy corners and sporadically along other places on North Avenue. However, this proposal will only be successful at mitigating the litter/trash problems on



Branded trash can in Charles Village, photo by Johnny Macon



Trash receptacles. Inner Harbor, Baltimore, photo by Christina Hartsfield

West North Avenue if paired with a pickup schedule that accomodates the waste collected. This may need to be more than once a week.

Certain parts of West North Avenue, such as commercial areas, may be able to implement their own private waste can collection with funding through an organization or merchants association.

SITE OBJECTS

Site objects include but are not limited to benches, bus shelters, bike racks, non-tree planting areas, signage, seating walls, trash cans and others.

Benches are important amenities at all but the smallest bus stops, and at community gathering spaces. Communities should consider the type of bench best suited to that space. How comfortable should it be? What are the material qualities? How does the bench styling support the identity of the area?



Traditional bus shelter with bench and signage space, Baltimore, photo by Ross Hackett



Artistic bike rack, Station North, photo by Laura Wheaton



Branded bike rack that matches wayfinding signage, Chicago, photos by Laura Wheaton



Modern-styled bus shelter with bench and traditional-styled trash can, Baltimore, photo by Johnny Macon

Bike racks should be added to encourage general cycling and use of the new bike lanes, and provide more secure storage for that property. This plan recommends at least one U-style or similar small scale bike rack per block along the corridor. At areas with dense commercial infrastructure, transit hubs, or libraries a larger bike rack may be appropriate to accommodate greater need. Bike racks are easy

elements with which to be creative, and can easily work to support the neighborhood identity.

KEY PROPOSALS: STREET FURNISHINGS

Add pedestrian-scale lighting to every block.

priority: highest | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT

Add more waste cans, with a waste-removal strategy that accommodates the actual disposal rate of trash in the waste cans.

priority: highest | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT and/or BCDPW

Every bus stop should have at least a bench and a waste can.

priority: highest | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT, MTA, and/or BCDPW

Coordinate all improvements with plan and community branding strategies.

priority: highest | phasing: n/a

implemented by: BCDOT, MTA, and/or BCDPW

Add more bike racks.

priority: high | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT, possibly community organizations or third parties

Add bus shelters at every major bus stop, including all that are switching points between major bus lines.

priority: high | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT and/or MTA

Add signage identifying the communities along West North Avenue.

priority: high | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT in coordination with community organizations, or by community organizations in coordination with BCDOT, depending on type and location.

GATHERING SPACES

Community gathering spaces are open areas in the streetscape, often with some element or activity that brings people together. They can be gardens, plazas, monuments, soccer fields, and many other things. Adding community gathering spaces adjacent to West North Avenue helps increase pedestrian traffic by providing an additional amenity that either adds to the experience of existing pedestrians or attracts new visitors.

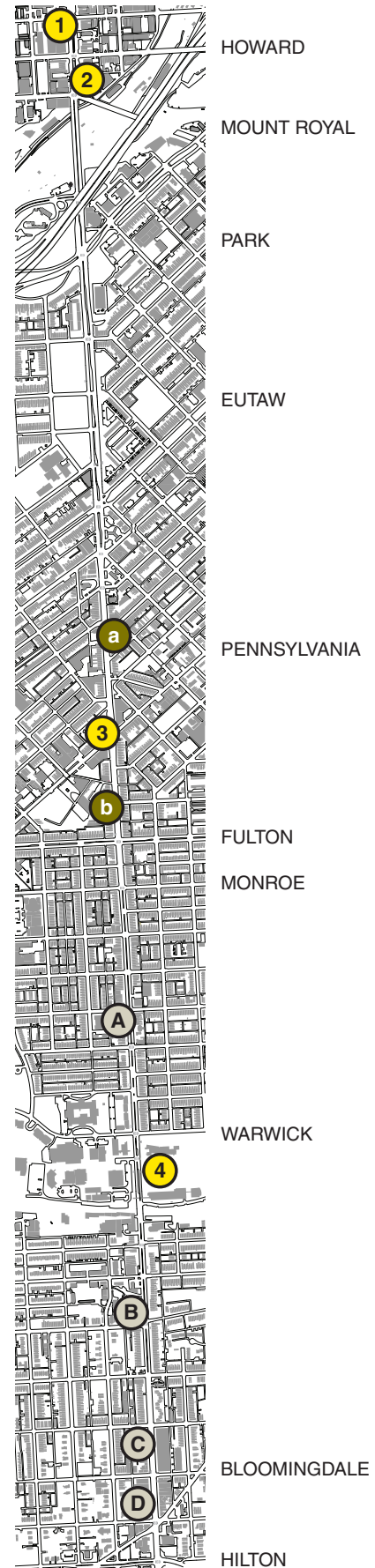
Existing community gathering spaces on West North Avenue include the Y Not Lot at Charles Street, patio seating in front of the MICA graduate center, and metro



MICA graduate center, photo by Laura Wheaton

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES

- ① Y NOT LOT
- ② MICA GRADUATE CENTER
- ③ METRO STATION PLAZA
- ④ CSU QUADRANGLE
- Ⓐ 2206 West North Avenue, lot size: 16'-6" x 150'
- Ⓑ 2788-2790 West North Avenue, combined size: 28'x90'
- Ⓒ 3006-3014 West North Avenue, combined size: 75'x98'
- Ⓓ 3128 West North Avenue, lot size: 15' x 105'
- Ⓐ 1313-1315 W North Ave (Already adopted)
- Ⓑ 1702 West North Avenue(Already adopted)



station plazas at Pennsylvania Avenue. Coppin State University is adding a large quadrangle at Thomas Ave and a smaller garden at Warwick Ave in their changes to the streetscape. For more information about this upcoming space see the Parallel Changes portion of this document.

Vacant, adoptable lots are potential opportunities for new community gathering spaces. The map shows the locations of adoptable and adopted lots along West North Avenue through the Baltimore City Adopt-A-Lot program.

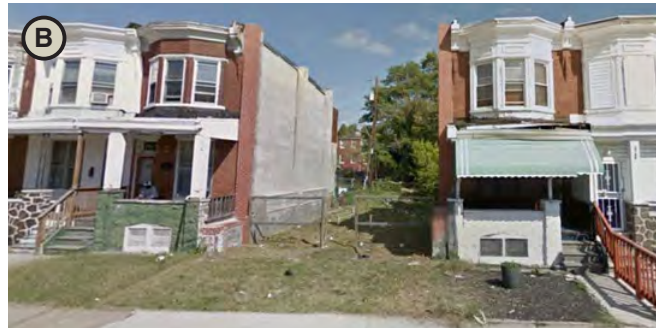
New community gathering spaces will require stewardship and maintenance from a long-term partner, such as an institution, business association, or community organization. New spaces should be designed around a positive element or activity to ensure they are not misappropriated.

When developing a new community gathering space, community organizations can apply for pro bono conceptual design assistance from the Neighborhood Design Center. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Implementation funding and material donations are available through a variety of local grant sources.

Another way to add gathering spaces is to encourage existing businesses and/or institutions along the corridor to include usable open space on their property adjacent to West North Avenue. An example of this is a sidewalk cafe, but it can be as simple as a bench on the grass in front of a building. Additionally, community members can advocate for new development along North Avenue to include community gathering spaces open to the public.



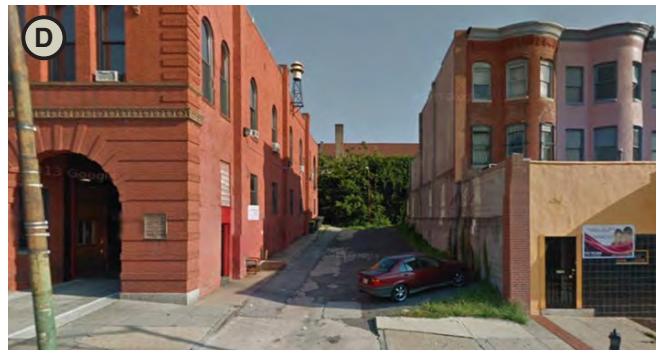
2206 West North Avenue, lot size: 16'-6" x 150'
photo by Google Earth



2788-2790 West North Avenue, combined size: 28'x90'
photo by Google Earth



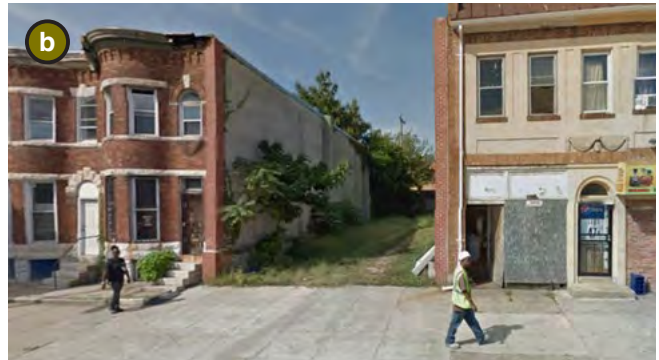
3006-3014 West North Avenue, combined size: 75'x98'
photo by Google Earth



3128 West North Avenue, lot size: 15' x 105'
photo by Google Earth



1313-1315 W North Ave
 Adopted by Druid Heights CDC
Flower bulb planting at lot, photo by Laura Wheaton



1702 West North Avenue
 Already adopted
photo by Google Earth

CONCEPT PLANS | GATHERING SPACES

KEY PROPOSALS: COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACES

Improve all vacant lots along West North Avenue to stable green spaces, and ideally positive community spaces.

priority: high | phasing: long-term

implemented by: Community Organizations and/or City Agencies.

HISTORICAL MARKERS

The recognition of West North Avenue's past can be supported by integration of identity elements into the proposed streetscape.

The communities adjacent to West North Avenue corridor have a rich and varied history dating back to the 1800s. Until 1918, North Avenue was the northern boundary of Baltimore City.

Baltimore has two types of historic districts: National Register Historic Districts and Local Historic Districts. A National Register Historic District is a designation set by the federal government. A Local Historic District designation is set by the Mayor and City Council and is usually requested by the residents in a community. Areas defined as local historic districts have historical, cultural, social and economic significance. They are eligible for tax credits and incentives. Review for design and permits is by the Baltimore City Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP).

The West North Avenue corridor includes six national register or Baltimore City local historic districts. There are three registered Historic Landmarks within or adjacent to the corridor: Ettings Cemetery, Arch Social Club and Watson Monument. Unfortunately, many of the buildings in this area with historic significance no longer exist due to decades of marginalization and/or property neglect. Incorporating a historic element to the corridor will support the sense of place and celebrate the corridor's significant place in Baltimore's history.

The implementation of a historic marker or sign series will help recognize and celebrate the history of West North Avenue and that of the surrounding communities. 89% of respondents to the March 2015 survey indicated their support for a historical marker series.

Historical markers take many forms. Traditional markers implemented via federal and state governments are iconic and easily identifiable, but have additional regulations governing their use and are limited in scope. Custom freestanding signs or plaques can be made of various materials at various price points. These can include additional narrative or graphics, including maps to indicate the location of neighboring markers.



Historical marker, Fort Lauderdale, photo by Wally Gobetz



Historical sign, Washington, D.C., photo by Laura Wheaton




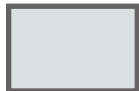
Historical sign, Mount Vernon, photo by Ross Hackett

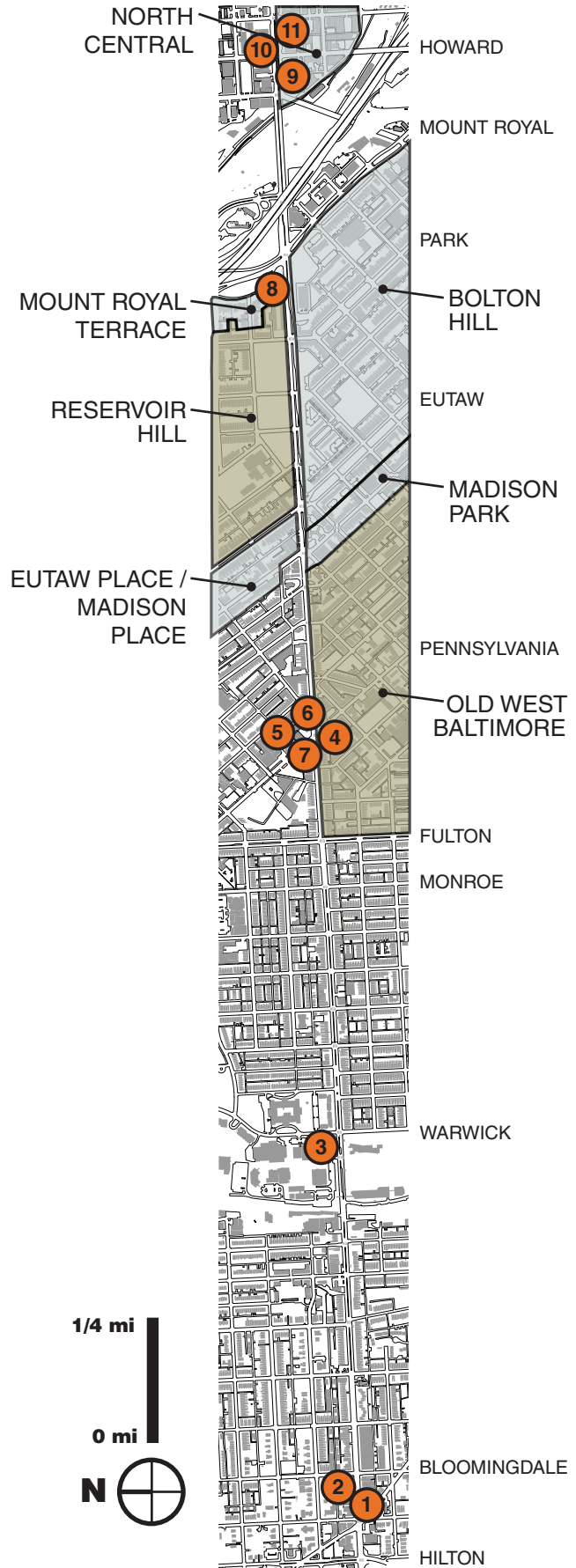
Signs indicating a historic district or nearby marker can be attached to existing lamp posts, similar to those in Mount Vernon. The placement of historical information on bus stop canopies and wayfinding signs is another way to exhibit the rich history on North Avenue.

The map of proposed markers in this plan is only a suggestion of a place to start. Communities would need assistance from local historians to determine locations of historical significance and how best to document them. Markers in the right of way would need approval from BCDOT before installation. Markers mounted to buildings would need owner permission.

CURRENT HISTORIC DISTRICTS & PROPOSED HISTORICAL MARKERS

- 1 WINDSOR THEATRE
- 2 WALBROOK THEATRE
- 3 COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY
- 4 ARCH SOCIAL CLUB
- 5 METROPOLITAN THEATRE
- 6 ETTING CEMETERY
- 7 1968 RIOTS
- 8 WATSON MONUMENT
- 9 MORGAN MILLWORK CO.
- 10 NORTH AVENUE MARKET
- 11 PARKWAY THEATRE

-  NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  BALTIMORE CITY & NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT



Development, design, and implementation of historical markers will require cooperation between multiple stakeholders. These stakeholders include community members, local organizations, CHAP, the Maryland Historical Trust, and BCDOT.

Grants are available to assist funding historic markers and doing the necessary historic research and evaluation. Many cities have established historical marker programs or foundation organizations to assist in the process of researching and installing markers. The Maryland Historical Trust: Roadside Historical Marker Program is an example of a state agency that assist in the evaluation and installation of historical markers. The Roadside Historical Marker Program is for areas that have historic significance within the State of Maryland.



Historical wayfinding, Baltimore, photo by Ross Hackett

KEY PROPOSALS: HISTORICAL MARKERS

Install a historical marker series along West North Avenue.

priority: high | phasing: development - near term, installation - medium term

implemented by: BCDOT or third party, in coordination with community organizations.

PUBLIC ART





Public art is important for beautifying, connecting and expressing the identity of place. The West North Avenue corridor includes historic monuments, murals and sculpture placed and replaced over 100 years. As a regional destination with many landmark sites, West North Avenue offers major opportunities to celebrate the great distinctiveness of this major Baltimore corridor.

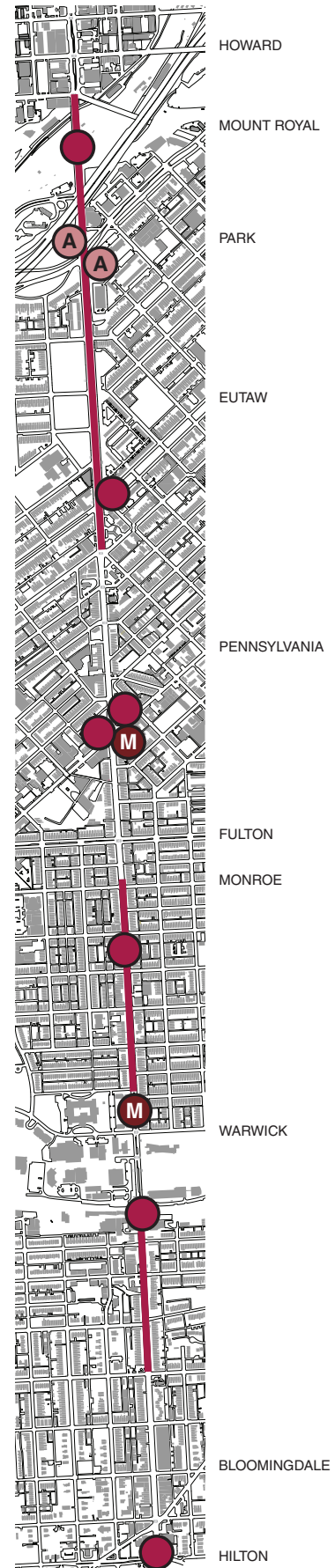
One implementation path for adding public art anywhere along West North Avenue is community and privately initiated. Community and non-profit organizations with private individuals would secure funding, hire artists and designers, prepare a site plan and obtain site control from the City or property owner. Many grants are available for public art installations.

Another implementation path is through transportation improvement projects. In Baltimore 1% of transportation improvement project budgets are designated for public art. The public art can take many forms: sidewalk patterning, creatively painted crosswalks, signs/banners on lamp posts, median artworks. The community needs to advocate throughout the planning process for the best quality project.

For example, painted surfaces on asphalt can be done one of two ways. The more permanent and expensive

CURRENT AND POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR PUBLIC ART

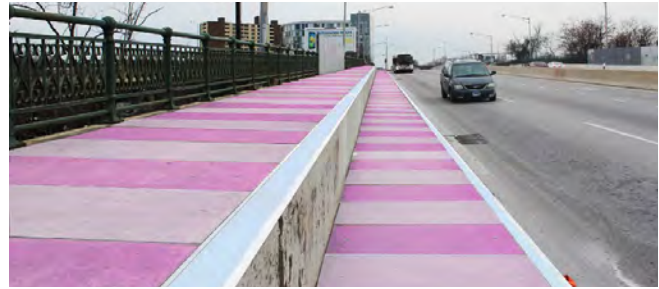
-  POTENTIAL ARTWORK SPACE
-  POTENTIAL ARTWORK MEDIAN
-  POTENTIAL MURAL SPACE
-  EXISTING ART SPACE



way involves special paint applied at the time of road resurfacing. This is what was done for the BOPA sponsored crosswalks in downtown Baltimore in Spring 2014. The less expensive and more temporary way is to use a less special paint applied at any time to the roadway. Depending on road use the paint will wear in a year or two.

Regardless of path, there was a strong desire expressed during community outreach that the artists and art come from the local community and/or represent the identity and history of place for that site. For the West North Avenue corridor, the more expensive version is an option for the 1% art, and the less expensive version could be something done for a special event.

Through the long visioning process, the historic North Avenue Bridge over the Jones Falls stream and the Interstate 83 Bridge crossing above North Avenue emerged as the major opportunity for public art of high-profile design significance. Residents along the corridor shared their memories of North Avenue on a postcard, which resonated with a photo of the 1899 Jones Falls Bridge construction. The bridges provided enthusiastic collaborations with MICA classes in



*Imaginative concept for W North Ave bridge over the Jones Falls
Image by: Robbie Tyler, Jun Hee Huh, James Girolamo
MICA Foundation Studio, Spring 2015, Prof. Stephen Hendee*



*Imaginative concept for W North Ave bridge over the Jones Falls
Image by: Jack Hoffman, Karl Bach, Nick Sisofa
MICA Foundation Studio, Spring 2015, Prof. Stephen Hendee*



*Imaginative concept for W North Ave bridge over the Jones Falls
Image by: Moira Hulbert, Kendra Lewis, Alessandra Berlarmino
MICA Foundation Studio, Spring 2015, Prof. Stephen Hendee*

Foundation Design and the Department of Architecture & Environmental Design.

The April 27, 2015 Freddie Gray protests and destruction focused on the West North Avenue corridor. Within days, murals began to celebrate the anguish of the community and desire to rebuild the neighborhoods., still marked by the 1968 Baltimore Riots. Public art will play a key role in the transformation of West North Avenue now underway.



Median Art, Photo by Cherisse Otis



Public art/bus shelter, Highlandtown, Photo by Baltimore Sun

KEY PROPOSALS: PUBLIC ART

Implement more public art installations.

*priority: **high** | phasing: **development - near term, installation - medium-long term**
implemented by: **Community Organizations, third parties, and/or BCDOT, depending on project type and location.***

GREENING

Greening, the addition of plants and other softscapes, can benefit West North Avenue in many ways. It visually can create a more attractive streetscape that increases the potential for commercial activity and private development, reduces the urban heat island effect, absorbs stormwater, creates definition between public and private or pedestrian and vehicular zones, softens the surrounding hardscape, and provides visual continuity and contributes to the sense of place.

There are multiple opportunities to incorporate greening strategies along West North Avenue:

STREETSIDE

The most common streetside planting element is street trees. While some portions of West North Avenue currently have a consistent street tree canopy, most areas do not, with many blocks completely barren. This plan proposes enlarging existing street tree pits and planting trees in those currently empty, as well as digging new tree pits and planting trees to infill gaps in the canopy.

Out of 176 responses to the Spring 2015 public survey, 160 (91%) supported creating a consistent street tree canopy. 6 of those who did not support the proposal did so because they wanted even more trees than those proposed here. Street trees were widely supported both by those who live in West North Avenue neighborhoods and those that use the corridor.

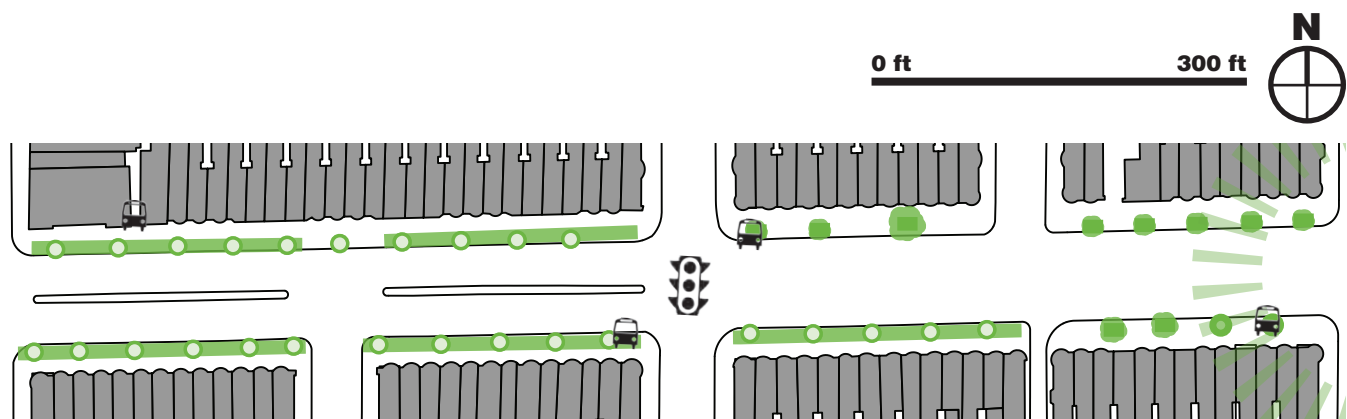
New street trees along West North Avenue will increase Baltimore City's tree canopy to meet its city-wide goal. Shade trees can be planted in tree pits at



Full tree canopy, 1300 block Hollins Street, photo by Ross Hackett

least 5'x8' or preferably 48 sq ft to allow for good root development and reduce upheaval of surrounding hardscape by tree roots. Tree pit width is limited by the overall sidewalk width: per code the tree pit must remain narrow enough to permit pedestrians to walk freely on the sidewalk.

Multiple tree pits can be linked to create a larger planted strip, although there should be regular access points to the parking lane for pedestrians. Planted strips increase the total permeable area, benefiting both the trees planted there and stormwater absorption.



Detail view of 1800 and 1900 blocks of West North Avenue. The 1800 block currently has several trees, which remain. The 1900 block, like many others, receives new trees and tree pits. This block, lined with residential housing, is a great candidate for continuous green strips between the sidewalk and roadway.

The top of the pit or strip can be filled with a groundcover plant or mulch, depending on the degree of maintenance feasible. More plants require more upkeep, although low-maintenance plantings can be designed. Tree pit fencing can help with upkeep, but the side facing the street should remain open to permit car doors to swing freely.

Where street trees may not be feasible, long grass strips may be placed along the street, removing concrete and providing some stormwater infiltration.

Blue Water Baltimore applied for a grant in Spring 2015 to create continuous tree strips and individual tree pits. Their plan calls for removing approximately ¼ acre of concrete along North Avenue and adding 150 new trees to the streetscape. A response on the grant is expected in Summer or Fall 2015. Street trees can also be planted via BCDOT.

All tree strip locations shown in this plan are potential sites only, and would require additional coordination and community engagement prior to implementation. Tree pits were the focus of community discussion for this plan, although locations proposed have not been checked for conflict with utilities or signage.

INTERSECTION PLANTINGS

Plants can be added to the corners of intersections, either in large planting pots, or in the ground in openings in the sidewalk or curb extension. Planting pots can be installed over existing sidewalks, and could be used as a temporary or trial installation



Curb extension planted for stormwater, Butcher's Hill, photo by Jared Barnhart

“The street is shaded by trees and small shop storefronts line both sides of the street. The street is more narrow and crossing is easy. There are places to linger, see and be seen.”

Statement collected at visioning workshop, Spring 2014

before creating pits in the sidewalk or curb extension. They can also be used permanently. Sidewalk or curb extension pits are most effective if designed and installed when curb extensions are created. They must be coordinated with underground utilities. Where topography permits, planting pits at intersections can also be used to collect stormwater from the adjacent roadway. These are typically called “stormwater bump



Planter pots, Union Square, photo by Ross Hackett



Gateway planting, photo by Cherisse Otis



Median, Old Quebec City, photo by Cherisse Otis



outs.” Stormwater bump outs have previously been installed in Franklin Square and in Butchers Hill.

Planting pots or pits at intersections will require community upkeep, and should only be located in areas where there is a community organization, such as a neighborhood or merchants association able to coordinate the responsibility. Community organizations can advocate for either type of intersection planting to be installed by BCDOT, or apply for grant funding for planting pot installation in coordination with BCDOT.

GATEWAYS

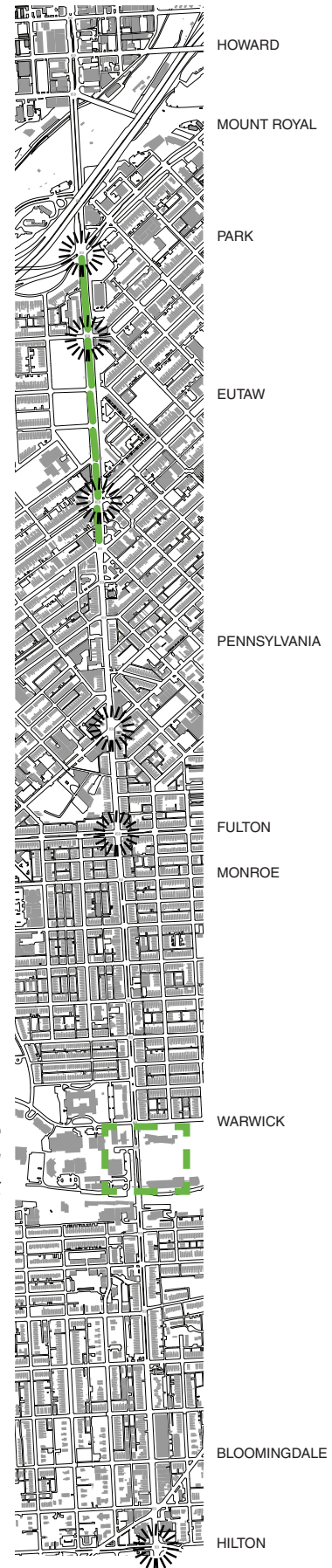
Gateway plantings and signage would occur at main access points to the West North Avenue corridor. They would feature more elaborate plantings than a typical intersection. Plants could include flowering or ornamental trees and low-growing (up to 2-3’ high) shrubs and grasses. Gateway plantings were supported by 85% of total respondents to the spring 2015 survey.

POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR GATEWAY & MEDIAN PLANTING

-  POTENTIAL GATEWAY
-  EXISTING MEDIAN TO BE PLANTED



Coppin State campus greening area, see pg. xx





Median with planters, Richmond, photo by Laura Wheaton

MEDIANS

Medians are an additional green space that already exist along West North Avenue and could be further developed. Near West has large, wide medians which are planted with small ornamental trees and some shrubs. NDC volunteers, core stakeholders, and community members planted thousands of bulbs along West North Avenue in November 2014, including many in the median just west of Mount Royal Avenue.

Over 90% of both residents and non-residents of West North Avenue neighborhoods support additional median plantings.

PLANTING PRINCIPLES

Use of low-maintenance plantings that are hardy in our climate and native to our region are recommended throughout. Use of evergreens is recommended only in locations where buffering between residential areas and commercial corridor/industrial uses is desired. Limit use of evergreens to permit visibility along corridor. Utilize groundcovers in place of lawn where practical to reduce mowing maintenance throughout corridor.

“The beauty of landscaping and clean, well-maintained buildings.”

Statements collected at visioning workshops, Spring 2014

BLOOM YOUR BLOCK

Bloom Your Block is a community planting project and event developed in Union Square, located in Southwest Baltimore. The project was started in 2011 by two Union Square residents, Andrea Leahy and Sal Seeley, who wanted to add more green to the neighborhood. The goal of the project is to encourage all Union Square residents to beautify the front steps of their houses and sidewalks by adding a flower pot or other plants. The project was a way to unify the Union Square community and have neighbors meet each other within Union Square. The event occurs yearly from April to June.

During the months of April and May, the Union Square Association and residents start collecting planting materials such as flower pots, seeds and soil to pass out to the community. The association sets a budget for each Bloom Your Block event. The funds allow the association to buy plant materials and host the community block party after the event. The association also asks for donations and sponsorships to help fund the budget. Neighbors frequently share surplus seeds or planting materials. Participating residents receive signs to put in front of their houses to advertise the event.

Each year guest judges walk around the neighborhood and judge each block on a specific criteria set by the event organizers. The judges pick both the best planted block and the best planted house. The judges are usually area plant experts and/or local government officials. In Union Square this has been a great opportunity for the mayor and council members to get



Planters, Old Quebec City, photo by Cherisse Otis

involved in this community.

On the day of event, usually held at the end of June, the judges first walk each participating block. At the end of the day there is a block party where the winners are announced.

A similar program could be implemented by community organizations in neighborhoods bordering West North Avenue. A competition area could include just the blocks on North Avenue itself, or extend deeper into one or more particular neighborhoods. It could help West North Avenue increase its “curb appeal” and promote private development. The idea for such a program is supported by over 91% of respondents to the Spring 2015 survey who also live in one of the neighborhoods of West North Avenue.

It may be beneficial for each neighborhood to organize their own Bloom Your Block program. Coordination and planning for the all-day event could go more smoothly if each neighborhood picks, funds, and runs their own day. The event could be a kickoff event to the start of the summer or other events being held within that particular community.

The Bloom Your Block event is a great tool to unify the community and makes a good grant application. Union Square hopes to one day see Bloom Your Block implemented in all communities within Baltimore City



Bloom Your Block, Union Square, photo by Laura Wheaton

and possibly become a city wide event.

KEY PROPOSALS: GREENING

Add consistent street trees to every block.

priority: highest | phasing: near term

implemented by: BCDOT, and/or Blue Water Baltimore depending on funding outcomes

Install decorative planting at major intersections, including in curb extensions as feasible.

priority: high | phasing: with curb extensions

implemented by: BCDOT, with community assistance with maintenance

Implement community front yard/step beautification programming.

priority: high | phasing: near term

implemented by: Community Organizations in each neighborhood



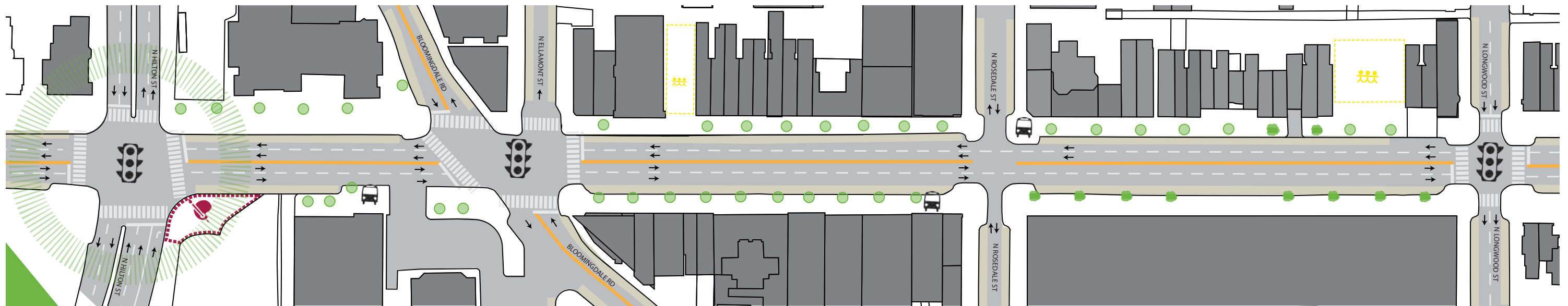
SECTION FOUR

BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS

photo by Laura Wheaton













EXISTING 3000-3300 WEST NORTH AVENUE



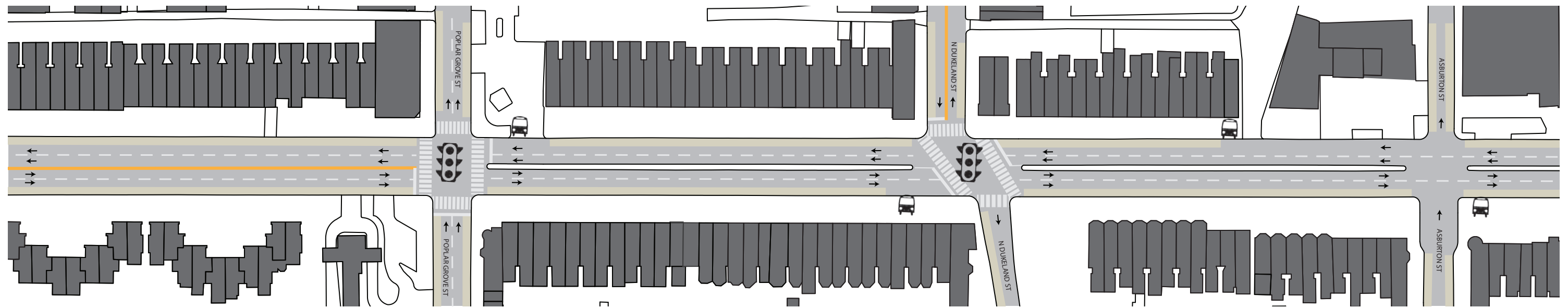
PROPOSED 3000-3300 WEST NORTH AVENUE

Proposals for this area support its status as the western gateway of North Avenue and the Walbrook Junction commercial area. Gateway planting and a potential art installation at the intersection with Hilton Parkway enhance the gateway. The creation of safe, comfortable, and efficient pedestrian crossings is especially important with the retail stores and the Walbrook branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. New street trees contribute to a “main street” atmosphere. Street parking spaces are preserved. The vacant lot adjacent to the fire station, currently used for parking, is a possible site for improvements.

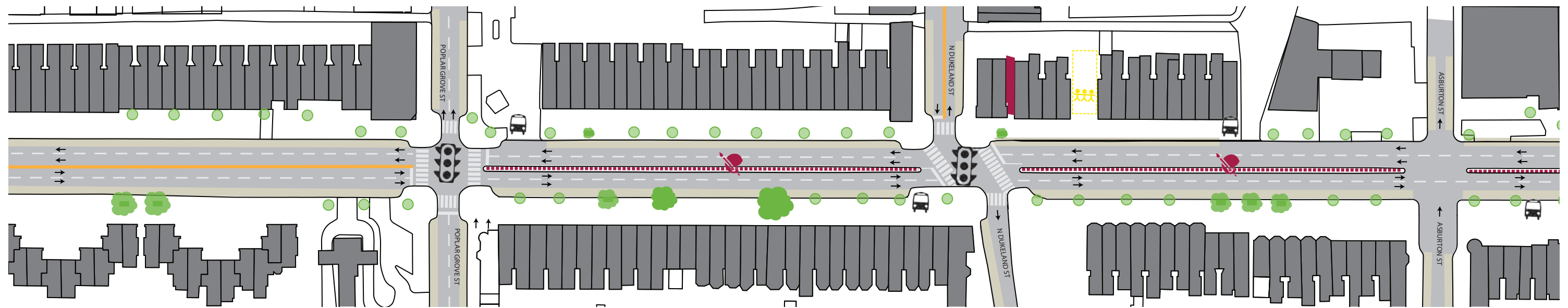
-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK



BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













EXISTING 2750-3000 WEST NORTH AVENUE

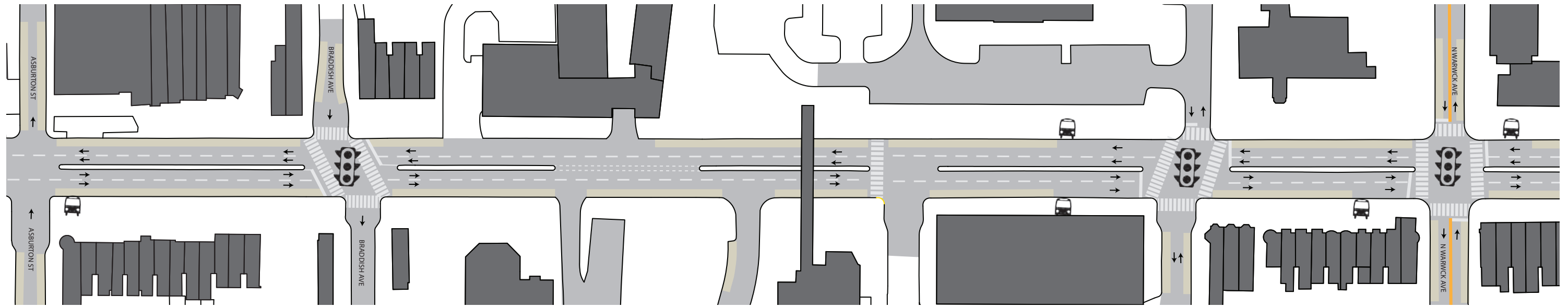


PROPOSED 2750-3000 WEST NORTH AVENUE

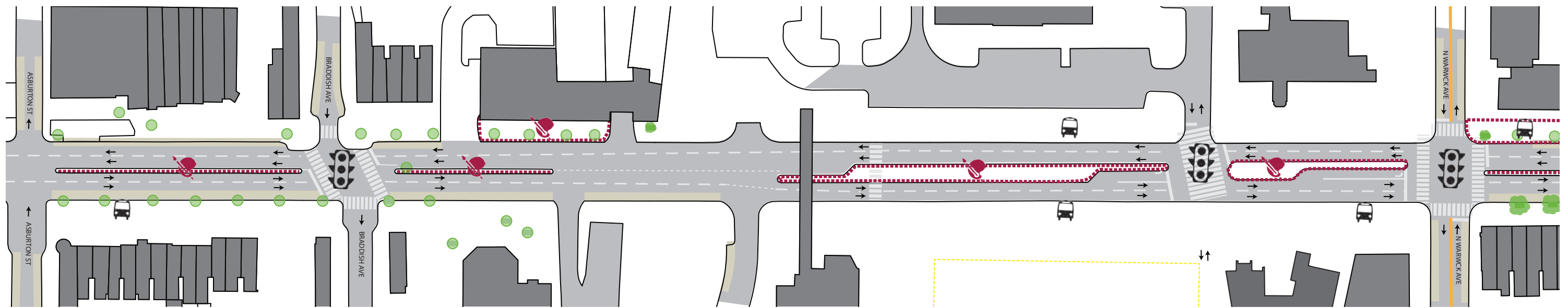
Residences in this area are typically set further back from the street and have small front yards. Street tree infill and community “Bloom Your Block” style programs could help enhance this residential feel. Curb extensions and narrower lane widths (approx. 10’ wide to remain) help keep traffic from moving too fast. This is a great area to utilize coordinated signal timing based on the speed limit or lower. While there are several vacant buildings on these blocks, there is also one adoptable lot available.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK

BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













EXISTING 2450-2750 WEST NORTH AVENUE



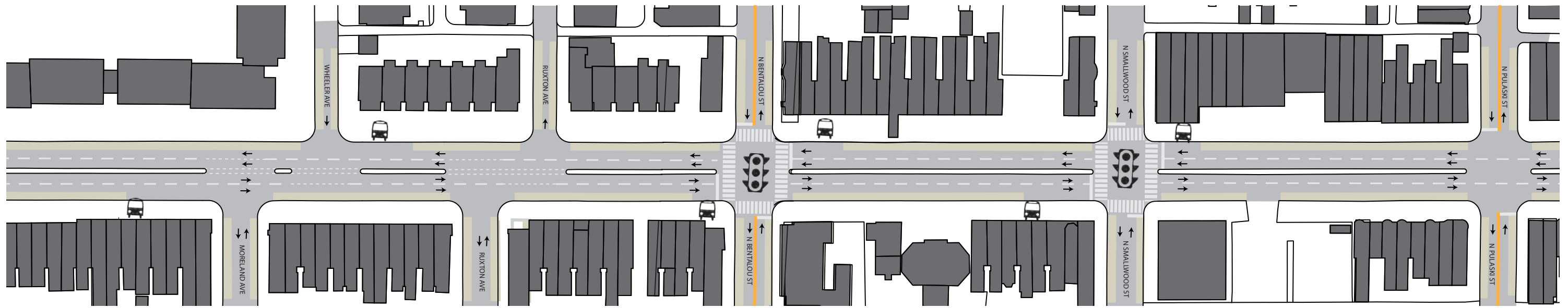
PROPOSED 2450-2750 WEST NORTH AVENUE

The Coppin State University campus now straddles North Avenue with two new buildings on the south side and a large quadrangle planned between them. This plan has omitted recommendations for this area due to the existence of CSU's improvements now under construction. The median islands and crosswalks are per their plan. More information is available in the Parallel Changes portion of this document.

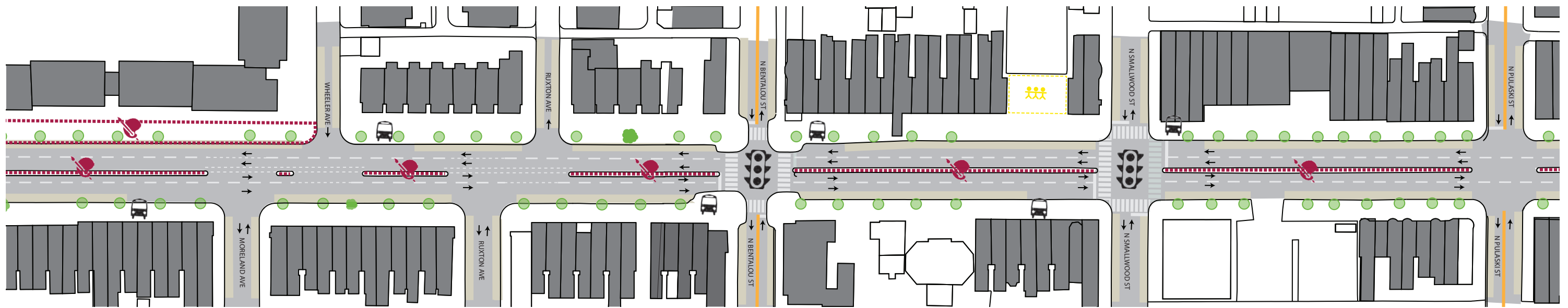
-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK



BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













EXISTING 2100-2450 WEST NORTH AVENUE



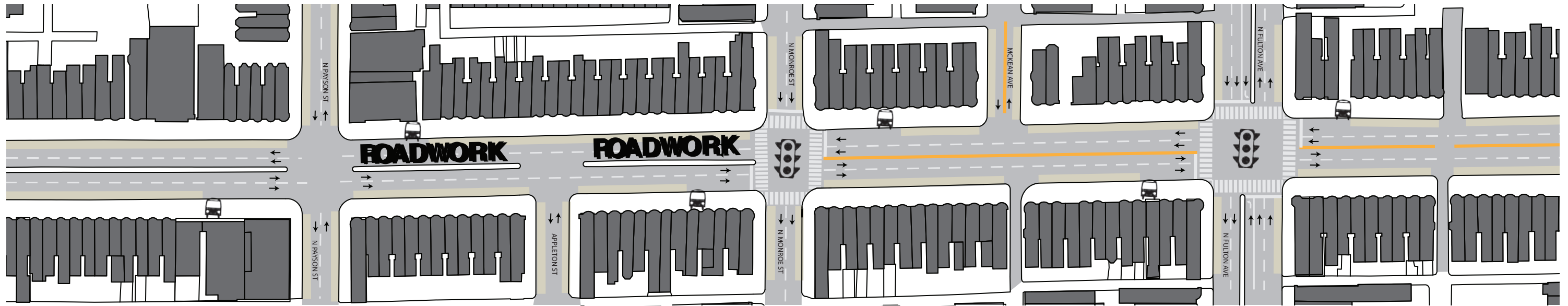
PROPOSED 2100-2450 WEST NORTH AVENUE

East of Coppin State University campus the corridor returns to residential. Again, street trees help enhance this residential feel, and coordinated signalling with curb extensions can help slow traffic to posted, safe speeds. The St. Stephen's Court Apartments have a large concrete retaining wall facing the sidewalk that could be a potential mural location, if property owner permission is secured. Additionally, a large vacant, adoptable lot near Smallwood Street could be improved as a community gathering space.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK



BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS

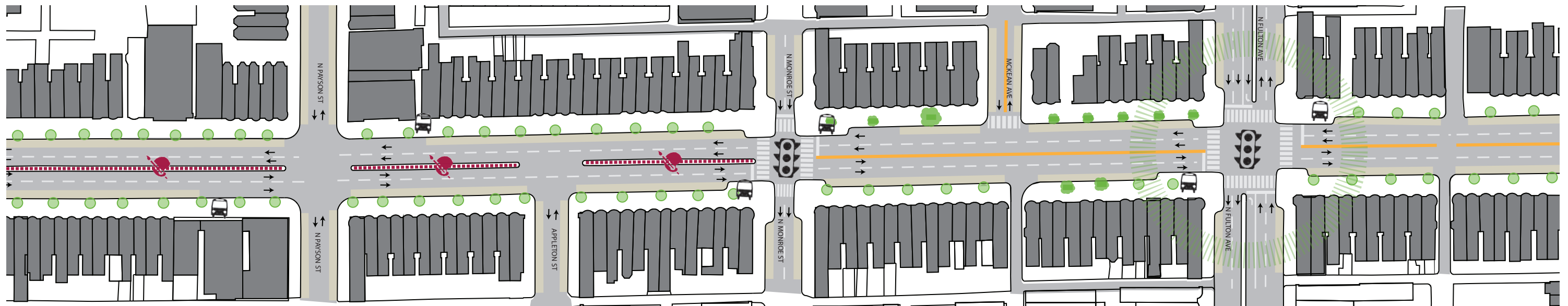


EXISTING 1800-2100 WEST NORTH AVENUE













0 ft

330 ft

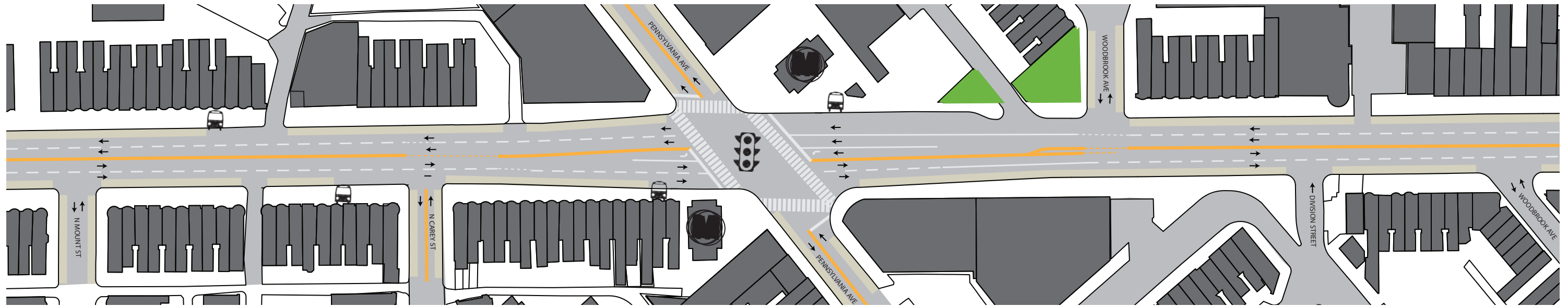


PROPOSED 1800-2100 WEST NORTH AVENUE

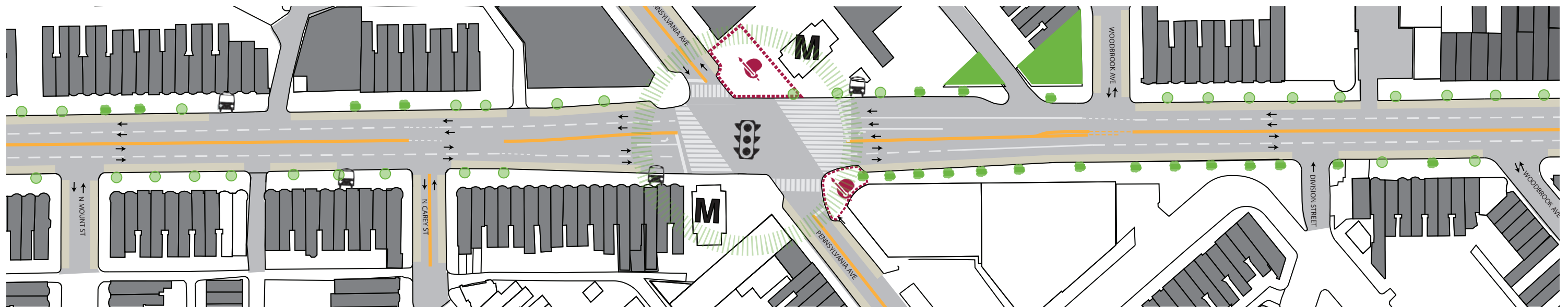
West of Monroe Street this plan recommends that the existing 10' wide travel lanes and small concrete medians remain, as narrower lanes encourage slower driving speeds. The medians are a potential site for public art or greening in planters. East of Monroe Street begins Route 1, the truck route around downtown Baltimore. Lanes should be 11 feet wide, and curb extensions should have an appropriate corner radius. Fulton Avenue, another gateway to North Avenue, could benefit from additional decorative planting. These blocks lack many street trees, so substantial infill is proposed.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK

BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













EXISTING 1500-1800 WEST NORTH AVENUE

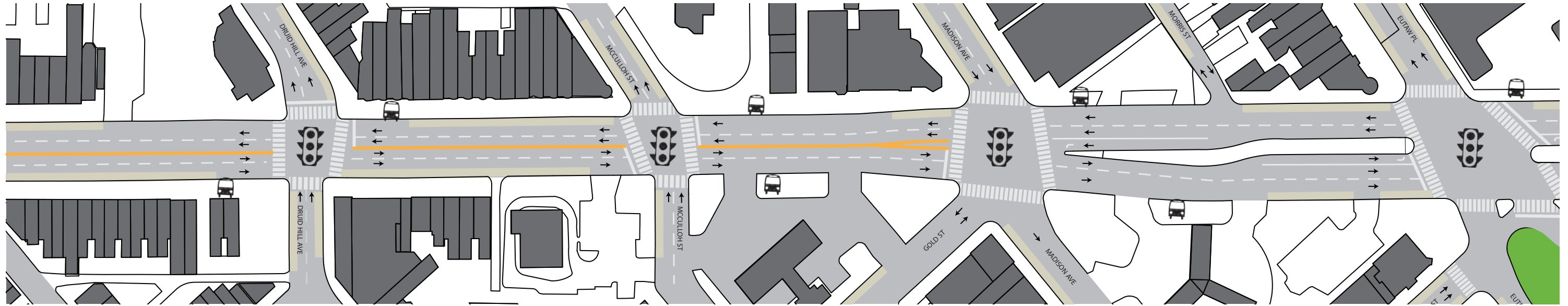


PROPOSED 1500-1800 WEST NORTH AVENUE

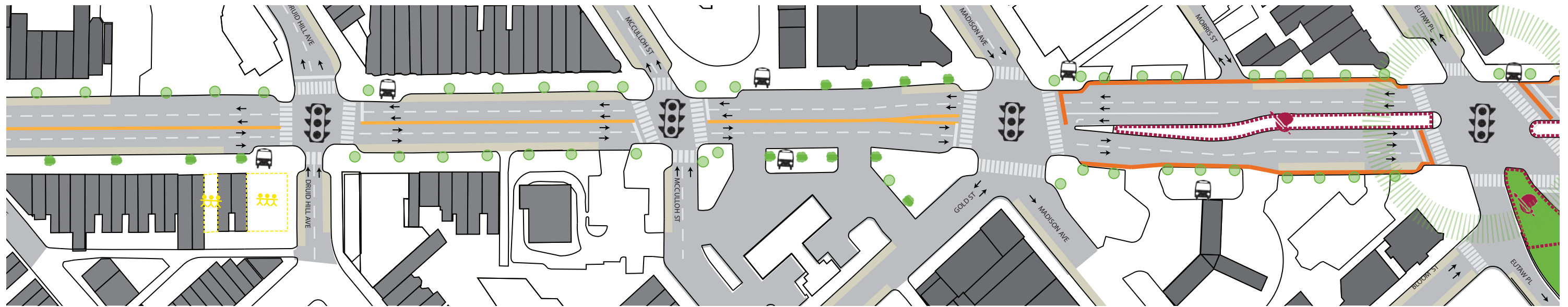
The Pennsylvania Avenue intersection is one of the busiest on West North Avenue, with a metro station, bus line changes, an Enoch Pratt Free Library branch, and as a multi-block commercial area. Improvements should work to support the safe coexistence of these user groups. Large crosswalks and curb extensions help large groups of pedestrians cross more efficiently. Greening and public art can work to define the intersection and adjacent plaza. It is critical to recognize and respect the history of this intersection, both as a historic center of African-American culture and as the site of historic events such as the 1968 and 2015 protests.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK

BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













EXISTING 1000-1500 WEST NORTH AVENUE

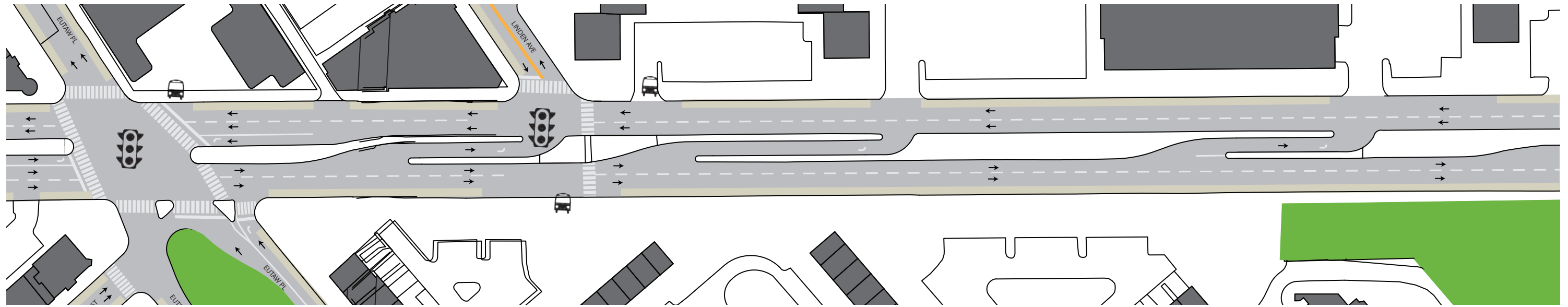


PROPOSED 1000-1500 WEST NORTH AVENUE

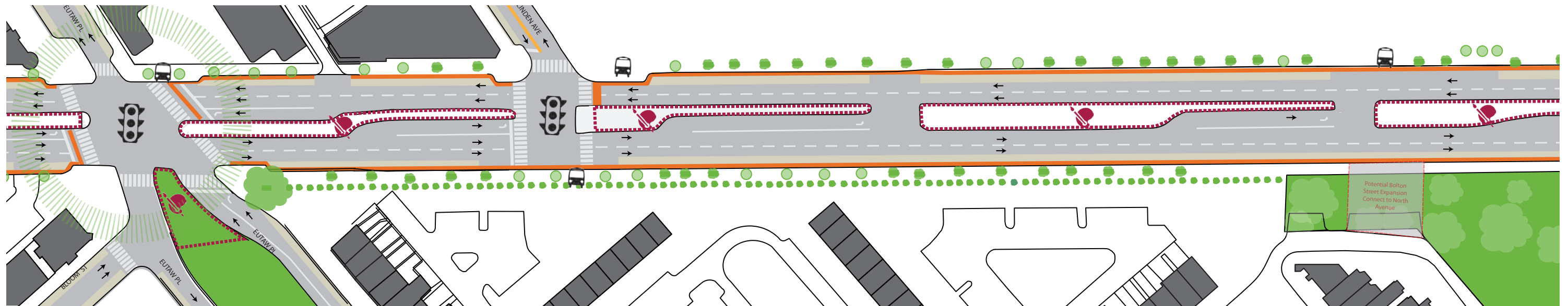
East of Pennsylvania Avenue remains largely commercial through Eutaw Place. Street trees help shade pedestrians patronizing retail establishments. Two vacant lots near Druid Hill Avenue have been adopted by Druid Heights CDC, and were the site of flower bulb planting in November 2014. At Madison Street the roadway widens and it is possible to support two travel lanes in each direction, street parking, and a bike lane.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK

BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













EXISTING 700-100 WEST NORTH AVENUE

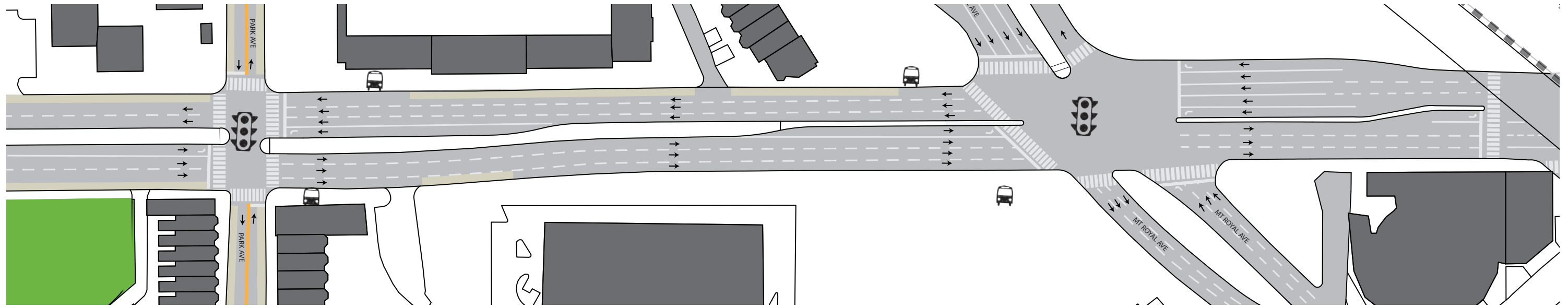


PROPOSED 700-1000 WEST NORTH AVENUE

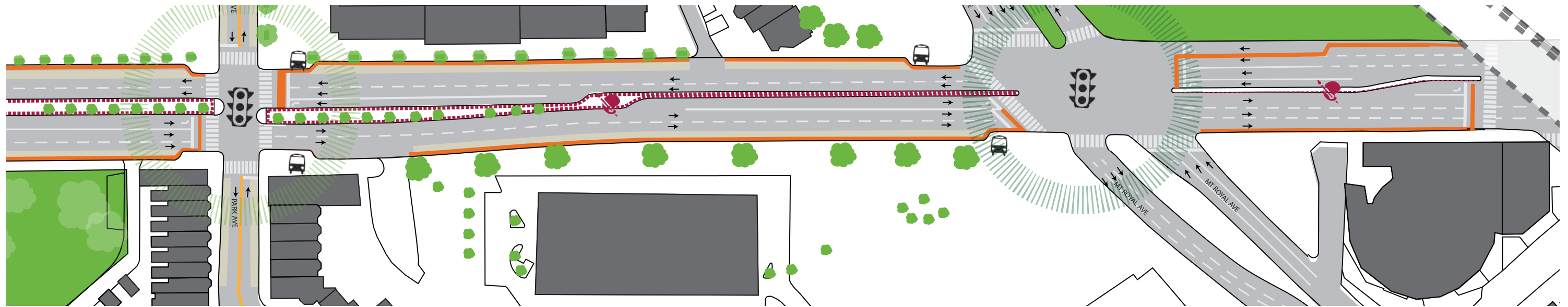
Eutaw Place, with a large grassy median south of North Avenue, is another gateway to the corridor and could receive additional decorative planting. The medians in this section are opportunities for trees, planting, and public art. By moving the left turn lanes slightly, the median can be widened for additional greening potential. In this area many of the crossstreets do not connect to North Avenue. On the north side, where Madison Park North is slated to be demolished, reconnecting crossstreets would work to break up these long blocks with little frontage that detract from pedestrian access and experience.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK

BLOCK BY BLOCK DIAGRAMS













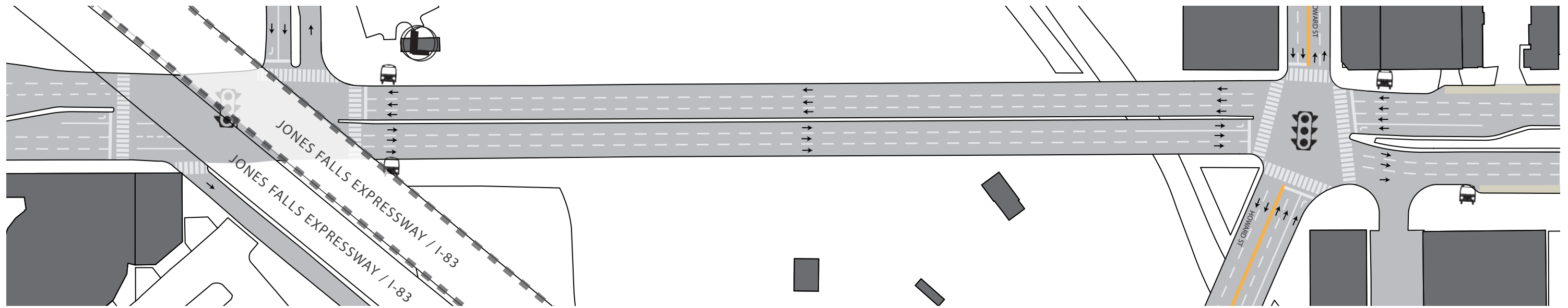
EXISTING 400-700 WEST NORTH AVENUE



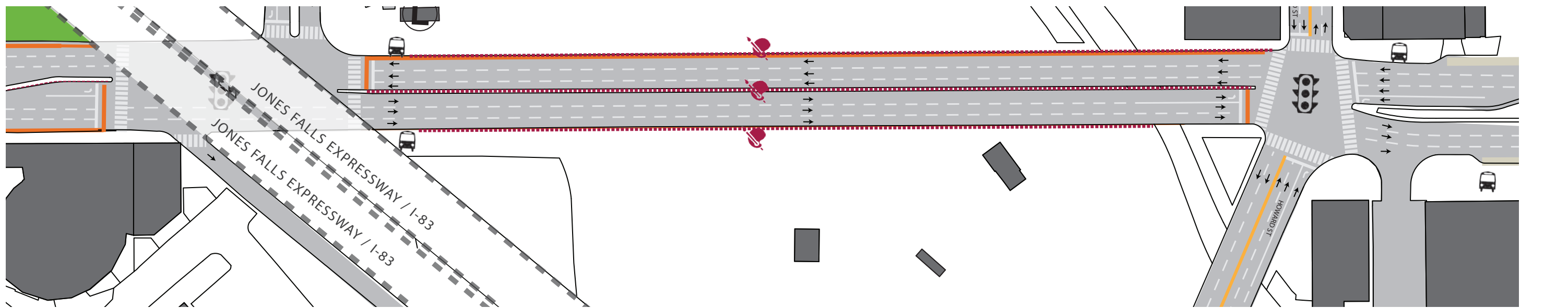
PROPOSED 400-700 WEST NORTH AVENUE

Mount Royal Terrace is a major intersection with heavy traffic connecting to I-83. However, as the link between the Station North Arts and Entertainment District and neighborhoods of West North Avenue, it is important to support pedestrians at this intersection with appropriate signalling. Many pedestrians surveyed via the sno-ball stand said they felt unsafe crossing at this intersection. The MICA campus touches North Avenue here. Decorative planting is proposed for both this and the Park Avenue intersections. The bike lane continues as it links West North Avenue neighborhoods with north/south bike infrastructure running to downtown and elsewhere.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK













EXISTING 200-400 WEST NORTH AVENUE

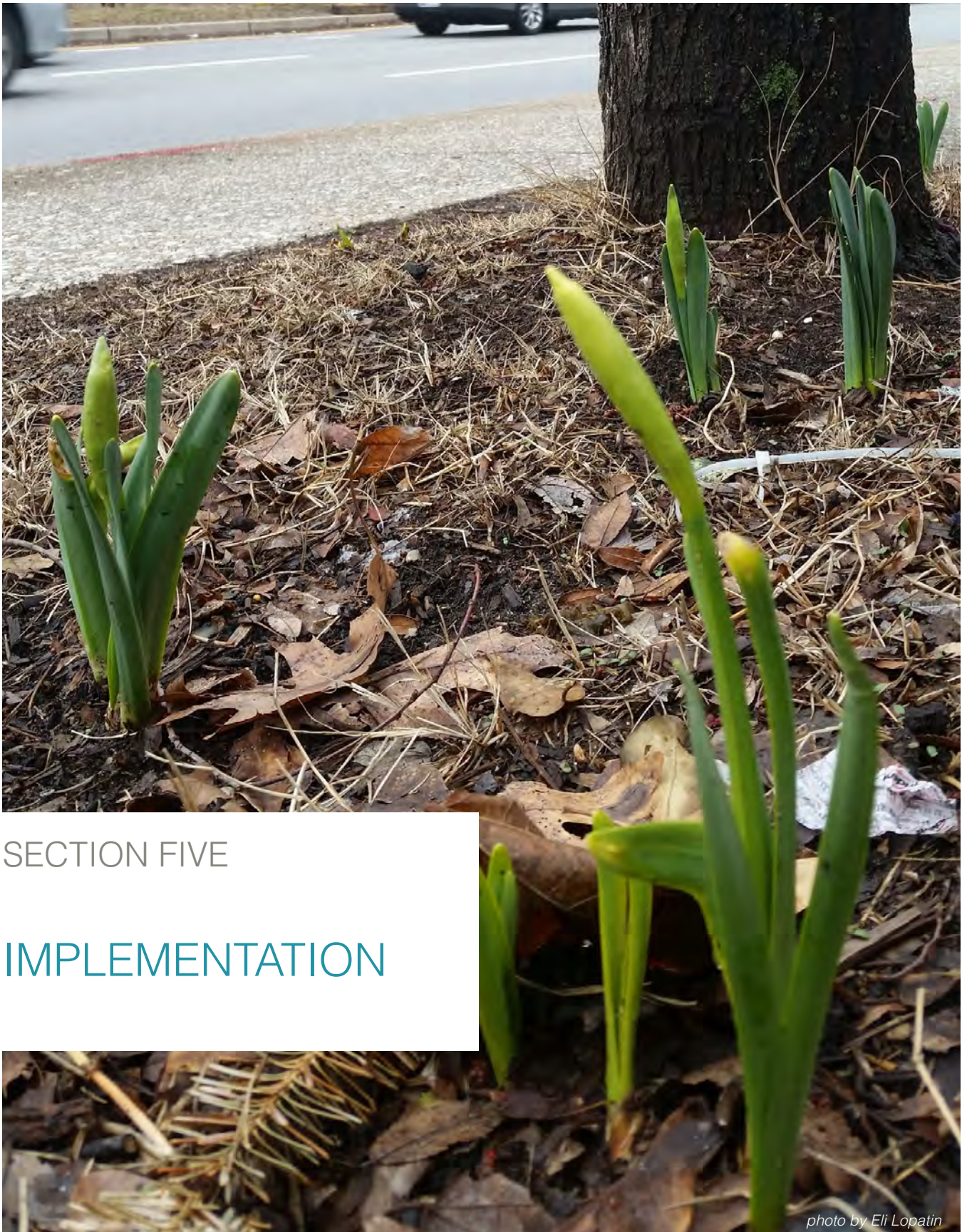


PROPOSED 200-400 WEST NORTH AVENUE

The I-83 underpass and bridge over the Jones Falls are the link between neighborhoods on West North Avenue and neighborhoods on central North Avenue such as Station North and Greenmount West. Designed for vehicles, they can be intimidating for pedestrians. Although there is already a mural at the underpass, additional public art can help support the pedestrian spaces on the corridor. On the bridge, the proposed bike lane is no longer separated from the travel lanes by street parking. Instead a painted buffer line or flexible bollards help define the bicycle infrastructure.

-  TRAFFIC LIGHT
-  BUS STOP
-  POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART SITE
-  GATEWAY PLANTING AREA
-  GARDEN/GATHERING SPACE
-  PROPOSED NEW TREE
-  EXISTING TREE
-  STREET PARKING LANE
-  BIKE LANE
-  CROSSWALK





SECTION FIVE

IMPLEMENTATION

photo by Eli Lopatin

PHASING

Implementation of the West North Avenue Streetscape and Conceptual Master Plan can only be accomplished with the political will, community support and financial resources to transform this important transportation corridor into a community asset.

“The image of a community is fundamentally important to its economic well-being.”

Ed McMahon, Senior Fellow, Urban Land Institute

The vision for West North Avenue is to make it “cozy” and create a “main street” environment for city residents and businesses. The Community reaffirmed the following community goals toward meeting its vision for the corridor:

Increase pedestrian safety & accessibility.

Create and maintain a clean, attractive streetscape.

Create an environment ripe for development.

Respect and celebrate the identities of North Avenue.

The success of this effort will require partnerships, particularly the coordination and partnership between the community and the Baltimore City Department of Transportation in its efforts for the Mayor’s OneBaltimore Initiative. Other partners include Blue Water Baltimore, MICA, Coppin State University, among other public, non-profit and private sector agencies and organizations.

NEAR TERM

MID TERM

LONG TERM

