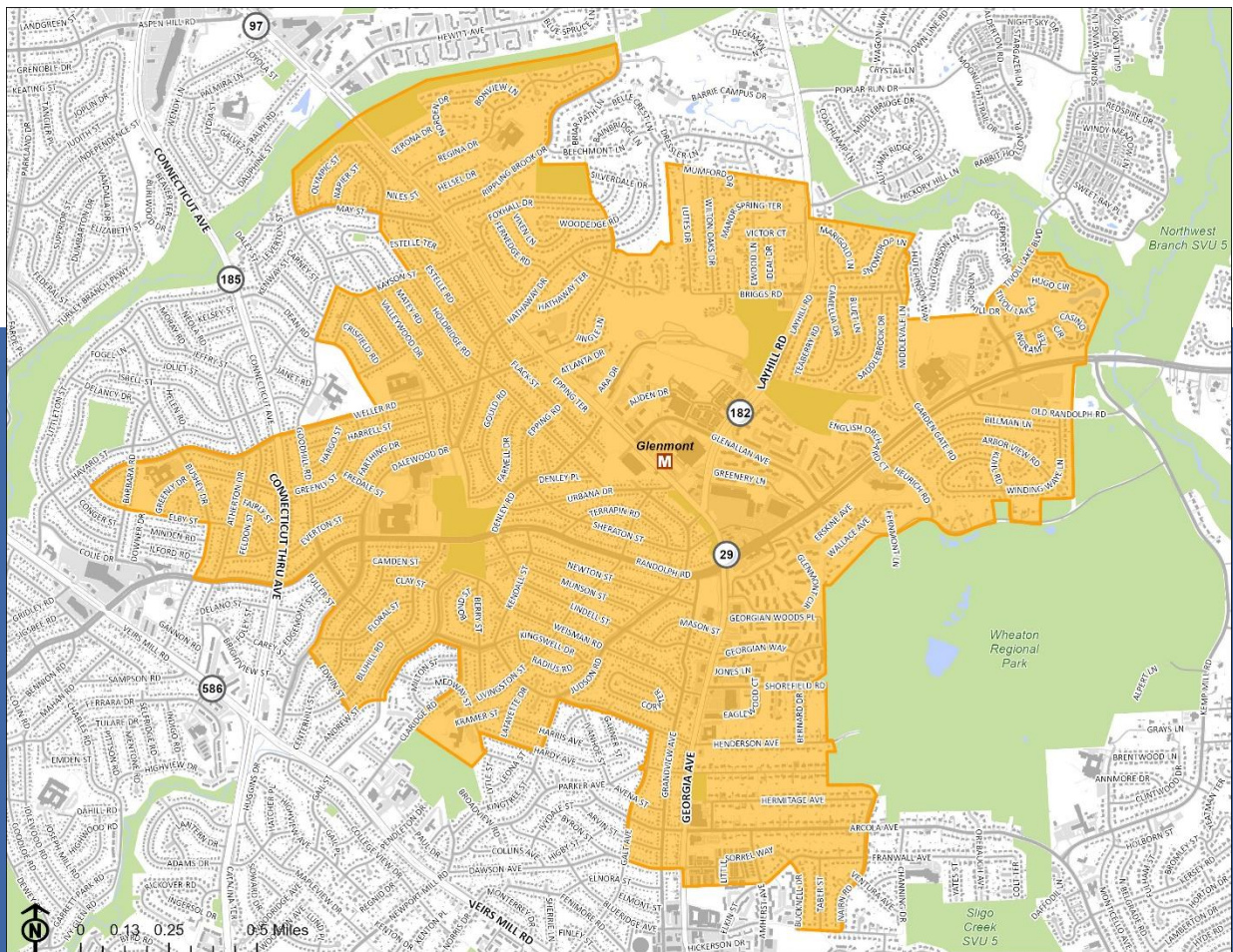


GLENMONT CORRIDORS OPPORTUNITY STUDY



Description

Planning staff will brief the Planning Board on the proposed scope of work for the Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study.

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SUMMARY

- The purpose of the Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study is to identify short-term actions necessary to support *Thrive Montgomery 2050*'s principles of corridor focused growth, complete communities, and 15-minute living in the Study Area.
- The Study will also evaluate the extent to which the recommendations of the 2013 *Glenmont Sector Plan* have been achieved, consider barriers to implementation of recommendations, and identify strategies to further Glenmont as the walkable, diverse, and sustainable community envisioned in the 2013 Plan.

MASTER PLAN INFORMATION

Draft

Scope of Work

Date

02-29-2024

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Planning Board Information

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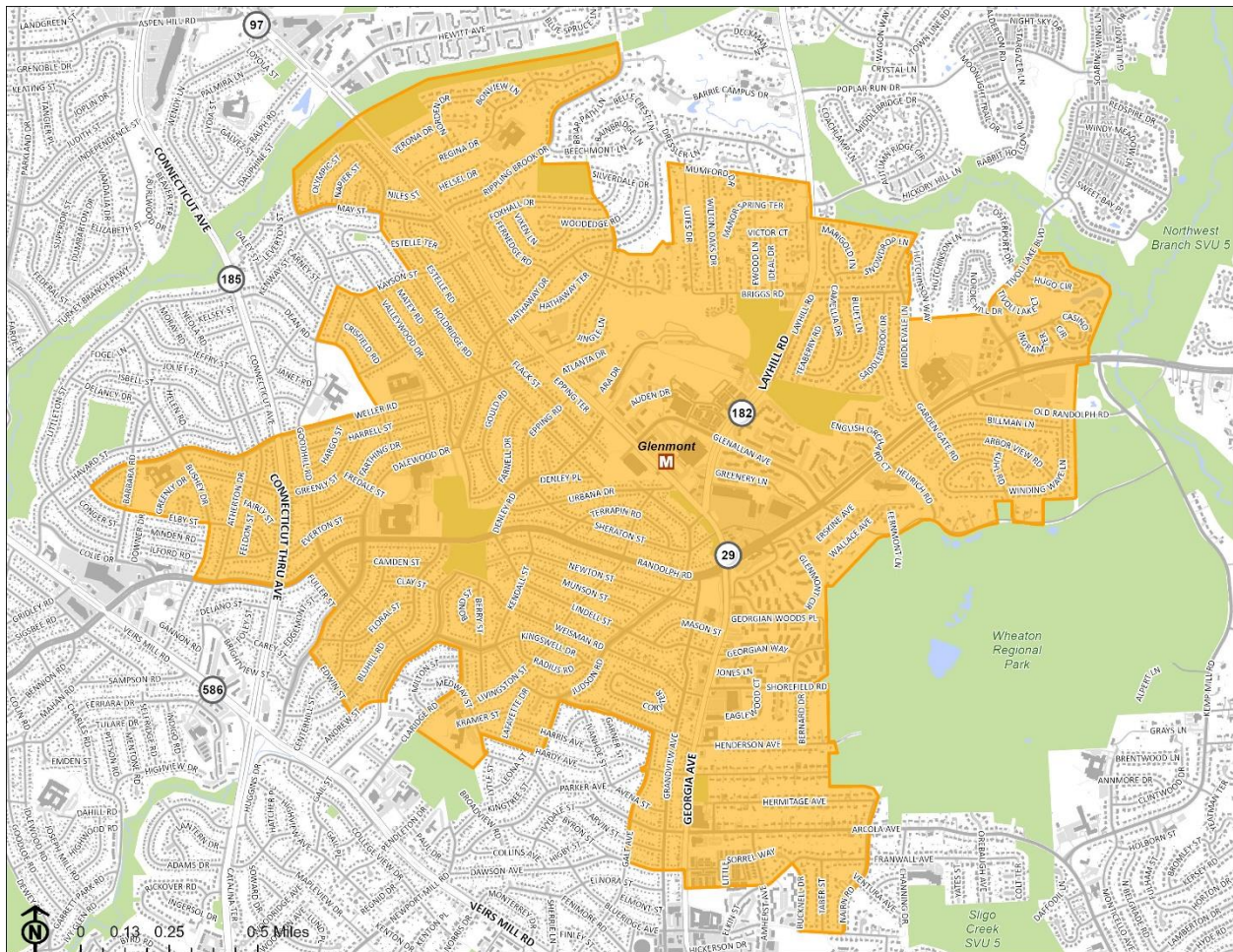


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PURPOSE

The purpose of the Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study is to identify short-term actions necessary to support *Thrive Montgomery 2050*'s principles of corridor focused growth, complete communities, and 15-minute living in the Study Area.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Glenmont is uniquely positioned at the juncture of Randolph Road and Georgia Avenue, two growth corridors identified in *Thrive Montgomery 2050* (Thrive). It exhibits urban nuances while not being a Central Business District (CBD). The Metrorail Red Line stations along the Georgia Avenue Corridor have traditionally seen higher densities centered in the Silver Spring and Wheaton CBDs.

The Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study recognizes the assets that Glenmont possesses, especially access to Metrorail. The area lends itself to exploring the vision of a "complete community" where residents can access their daily essentials within a 15-minute walk, roll, or bike ride. Of course, the intersection of the Randolph Road and Georgia Avenue corridors creates an opportunity and a challenge at once. The challenge being the traffic volumes currently served by the corridors and the opportunity being the possibility of a more multimodal future.

This Study will allow Planning staff to develop data-driven analysis and policy-relevant research on Glenmont's land use and economic growth. It will also allow a deeper understanding of how a center such as Glenmont can thrive on major corridors.

While the Study focuses on the Study Area, it will also afford an opportunity to understand other similar geographies. It will inform future master and sector plans which will focus on major centers and corridors and use Thrive as a primary policy document for guidance and precedence.

EXISTING PLANS AND POLICIES

THRIVE MONTGOMERY 2050 (THRIVE)

The primary guiding principle of this Study is to investigate the Study Area’s potential as a complete community. According to Thrive, “*complete communities are places that include the range of land uses, infrastructure, services, and amenities that allow them to meet a wide range of needs for a variety of people.*” (Page 84). Apart from the overarching goal of creating a complete community, the Study is informed by the following guiding principles of Thrive:

- Create Complete Communities
- Prioritize Racial Equity and Social Justice
- Advance Multimodal Transportation
- Create Housing Diversity

Finally, the Study will also frame outcomes and recommendations as Thrive does using the three symbols for Economic Competitiveness (Ec), Environmental Health and Resilience (En), and Racial Equity and Social Justice (Eq).

2013 GLENMONT SECTOR PLAN

The most recent planning effort in Glenmont is the 2013 *Glenmont Sector Plan*. The 2013 Plan advocates for a strategic development-oriented approach. The Plan integrates livability, sustainability, accessibility, and community-centric services as foundational elements for future growth. Salient recommendations of the Plan are as follows:

1. **Assemblage for Mixed-Use Development:** The Plan anticipated a phased redevelopment of the Glenmont Shopping Center, starting with assemblage and redevelopment of properties, followed by redevelopment of the remaining properties.
2. **Block Rezoning and Public Benefits:** The Plan prioritized providing Commercial Residential Zone public benefits of Neighborhood Services and Through-Block Connections from the Glenmont Metro Center development to the Glenmont Metrorail Station.
3. **Enhanced Streetscape Along Georgia Avenue:** The Plan recommended enhancing the streetscape along Georgia Avenue with pedestrian-scaled lighting, street furniture, and additional plantings, including a double row of trees.
4. **Multimodality and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Support:** The Plan supported high-quality BRT on Georgia Avenue and encouraged further study of BRT on Randolph Road as part of a

countywide network. This included ensuring convenient and safe intermodal connections with well-located bus bays, enhanced bus stop amenities, crosswalks, and other supporting facilities. There was also a recommendation to evaluate the need for a circulator bus to increase access considering the projected increase in residential density.

5. **Street Network Improvements:** The potential redevelopment of commercial and multifamily properties in Glenmont presents opportunities to increase connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods. This includes efficient and safe multimodal access to transit, retail, and recreation. The Plan also focuses on improvements to the existing road network to enhance access and mobility for all modes of transportation, while adding new streets to provide alternative routes for local traffic.

OTHER PLANS AND STUDIES

Since the adoption of the 2013 Plan, other plans and policies have established additional guidance for the development of the county's communities and public realm. These include the:

- *2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan:* Proposes essential modifications and expansions to the transportation infrastructure to accommodate the county's urbanized regions, zones earmarked for redevelopment, and new areas of dense development.
- *2018 Bicycle Master Plan:* Envisions transforming Montgomery County into a premier bicycling community with a safe and interconnected bicycle network for the people.
- *Vision Zero Action Plan:* Outlines a strategic roadmap and initiatives aimed at eradicating fatalities and severe injuries on roadways by the year 2030.
- *Complete Streets Design Guide:* Serves as a comprehensive resource for the design and transformation of streets, incorporating principles of safety, environmental sustainability, and community vibrancy.
- *2023 Pedestrian Master Plan:* Builds on a Vision Zero framework to systematically prioritize enhancements to the pedestrian infrastructure across the county.
- *Montgomery County's Racial Equity and Social Justice Law (Bill 27-19):* Requires master plans to consider racial equity and social justice impacts, thereby improving access to quality housing, education, jobs, transportation, parks, recreation, and other community assets.
- *Climate Action Plan (CAP):* The CAP aims to cut greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 80% by 2027 and 100% by 2035, detailing strategies to reduce climate-related risks: the plan recommends strategies for mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

The Study will build upon the vision and recommendations of the 2013 Plan and integrate guidance from more recent plans and policies to further Glenmont as a complete community that embodies the concept of 15-minute living.

STUDY AREA

The Study Area includes:

1. Properties along the Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road corridors
2. The Glenmont Sector Plan area
3. One-mile walkshed (approx.) from the Glenmont Metrorail Station

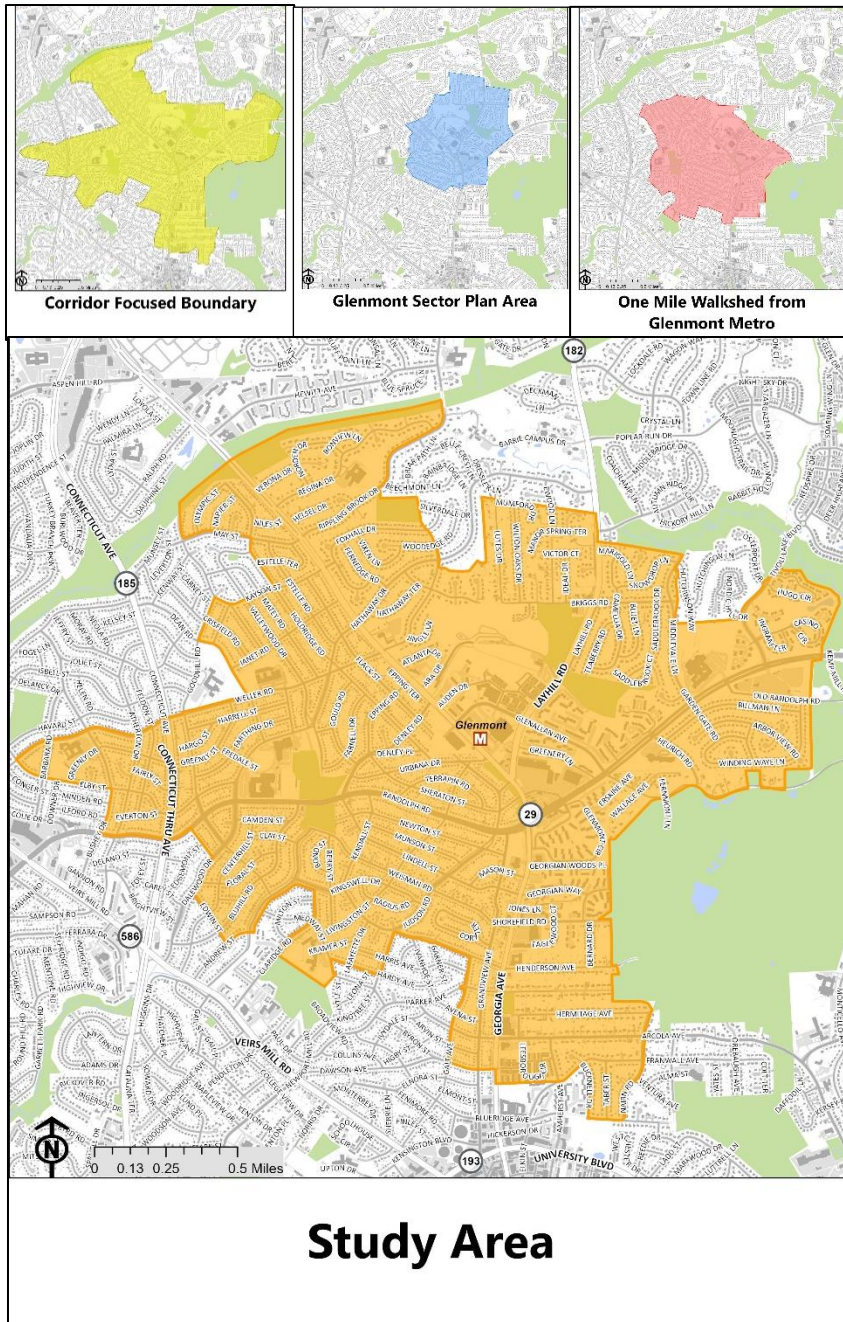


Figure 1 - Study Area as a combination of properties along the corridors, the Glenmont Sector Plan area, and a one-mile walkshed from the Glenmont Metro Station

The Study will also investigate how Glenmont functions as a large center as part of the network of centers described in Thrive. Especially, in relationship with:

1. Wheaton
2. Colesville
3. Aspen Hill
4. North Bethesda

These four areas represent the nearest centers along the Randolph Road and Georgia Avenue corridors. This Study aims to explore how Glenmont operates as a center within a network of diverse center typologies. Like Glenmont, Wheaton and North Bethesda are large centers, while Aspen Hill is a smaller center, and Colesville is a neighborhood center.

Further, in alignment with the values of *Thrive Montgomery 2050*, the Study will examine Glenmont’s role in fostering economic competitiveness, addressing climate challenges, and promoting equitable community development within this network along the two corridors.

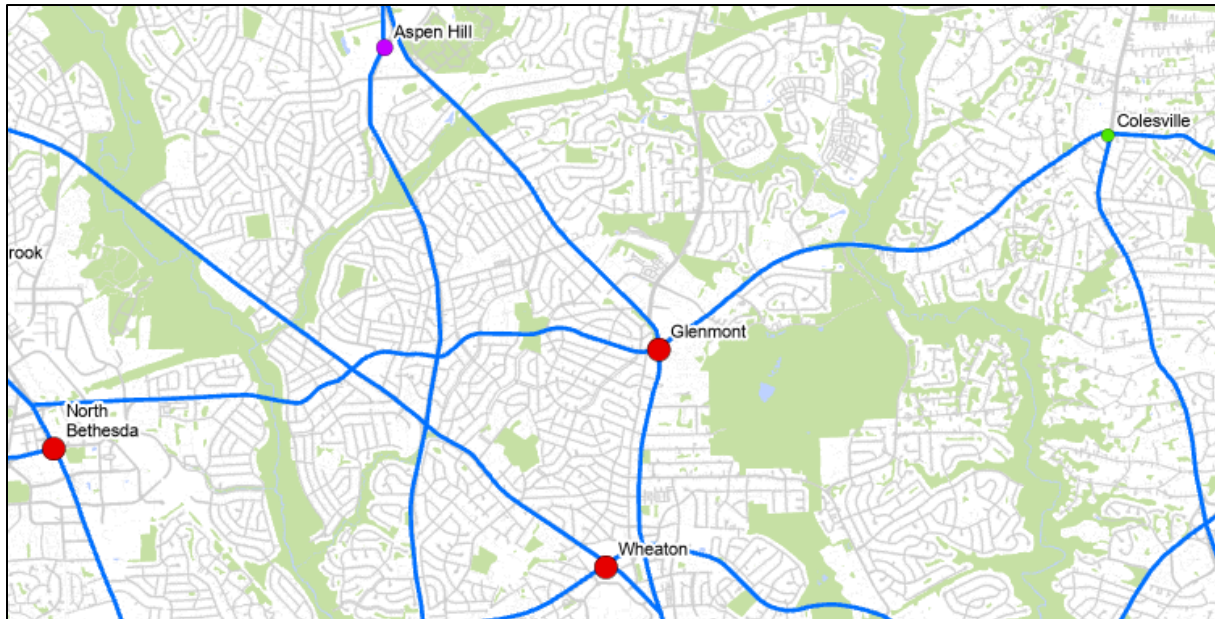


Figure 2 - Glenmont in context with other centers namely Wheaton, Colesville, Aspen Hill, and North Bethesda.

METHODOLOGY

This Study proposes a methodology for assessing complete communities and 15-minute living as follows:

1. **Identify** the networks within which the community exists. These networks will include accessibility within the Study Area and how the Study Area connects to other important centers in the county.
2. **Inventory** a list of places and services available in the Study Area and within districts of the Study Area, including retail stores that sell food and household items, educational institutions, medical centers and hospitals, public open spaces for leisure activities, facilities for sports, games, and other recreational activities, and stations and stops for public transportation. Identify gaps in the inventory.
3. **Analyze** the distance from various residential points to amenities in the Study Area and amenities in the immediate network from a 15-minute walk, bike, or roll on a low-stress network, at different scales.
4. **Assess** the quality and safety of pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure and accessibility and frequency of public transportation options, primarily focusing on Randolph Road and Georgia Avenue.
5. **Analyze** the types of housing available.

In addition to assessing complete communities and 15-minute living, the Study will also evaluate the extent to which the 2013 Plan recommendations have been achieved, consider barriers to implementation of recommendations that have not progressed over the last decade, and identify strategies to further Glenmont as the walkable, diverse, and sustainable community envisioned in the 2013 Plan.

OUTREACH

The Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study will examine current conditions and offer strategies to support 15-minute living and further Glenmont as the walkable, diverse, and sustainable community envisioned in the 2013 *Glenmont Sector Plan*. While the strategies developed through the Study will inform subsequent master plans, sector plans, and other countywide initiatives, the Study will not amend previously approved plans, including the 2013 *Glenmont Sector Plan*. As outlined in the above methodology, the Study will include data-driven analysis, policy-relevant research, and outreach to ultimately develop strategies and solutions.

Outreach will follow the Equity Agenda for Planning developed by Montgomery Planning to apply an equity lens to our plans, policies, and practices. This work follows the County Council’s legislation on its [Racial Equity and Social Justice Act, 27-19](#), which actively addresses racial disparities within the county.

Planning staff will use a multi-pronged approach to outreach by seeking opportunities to meet one-on-one with neighborhood leaders, build working partnerships with civic groups, and connect with community advocates to identify and define community supported solutions for local challenges. Planning staff will also engage with stakeholders to develop a better understanding of the elements listed in the above methodology.

The outreach for this Study will employ the following outreach methodologies.

1. Community questionnaire.
Staff will develop a comprehensive questionnaire focused on accessibility, housing, transportation, and associated themes for a complete community. Staff will ensure broad distribution through online and physical locations within the community to maximize participation.
2. Focus group discussions.
Staff will also organize focus groups to capture a wide range of detailed community perspectives. Focus groups allow for open-ended conversations that reveal a more in depth understanding of the community’s ideas.
3. Human geography explorations.
The team will ask community members to share their view of the local community, through a combination of in-person conversations and digital tools, to understand spatial, cultural, and social dynamics of the Study Area, as well as perspectives on whether community members feel they live in a complete community in which they can accomplish most daily tasks within 15 to 20 minutes.

DELIVERABLES

Key focus areas of the Final Study Report will include assessing land use and zoning challenges, particularly the redevelopment potential of the Glenmont Shopping Center. It will also emphasize improving mobility by boosting Metro ridership, enhancing pedestrian and bike connections, and addressing safety concerns along the corridors.

The Study will conclude with a Final Study Report that identifies the strategies, services, amenities, and short-term actions necessary to support *Thrive Montgomery 2050*’s principles of corridor focused growth, complete communities, and 15-minute living in Glenmont.

SCHEDULE

The Study will begin with a review of existing documents and data to establish a foundational understanding of the area's current state and historical developments. Staff will then conduct an analysis aimed at identifying key places and opportunities in the Study Area and conduct outreach. The Study concludes with the preparation of the Final Study Report. A tentative timetable for the Study is as shown in the table below.

Period	Task
Winter	Analysis
Spring	Community Outreach
Summer	Outreach Analysis
Fall	Recommendations Development
Winter 2025	Final Report