Attachment B: Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study Appendices

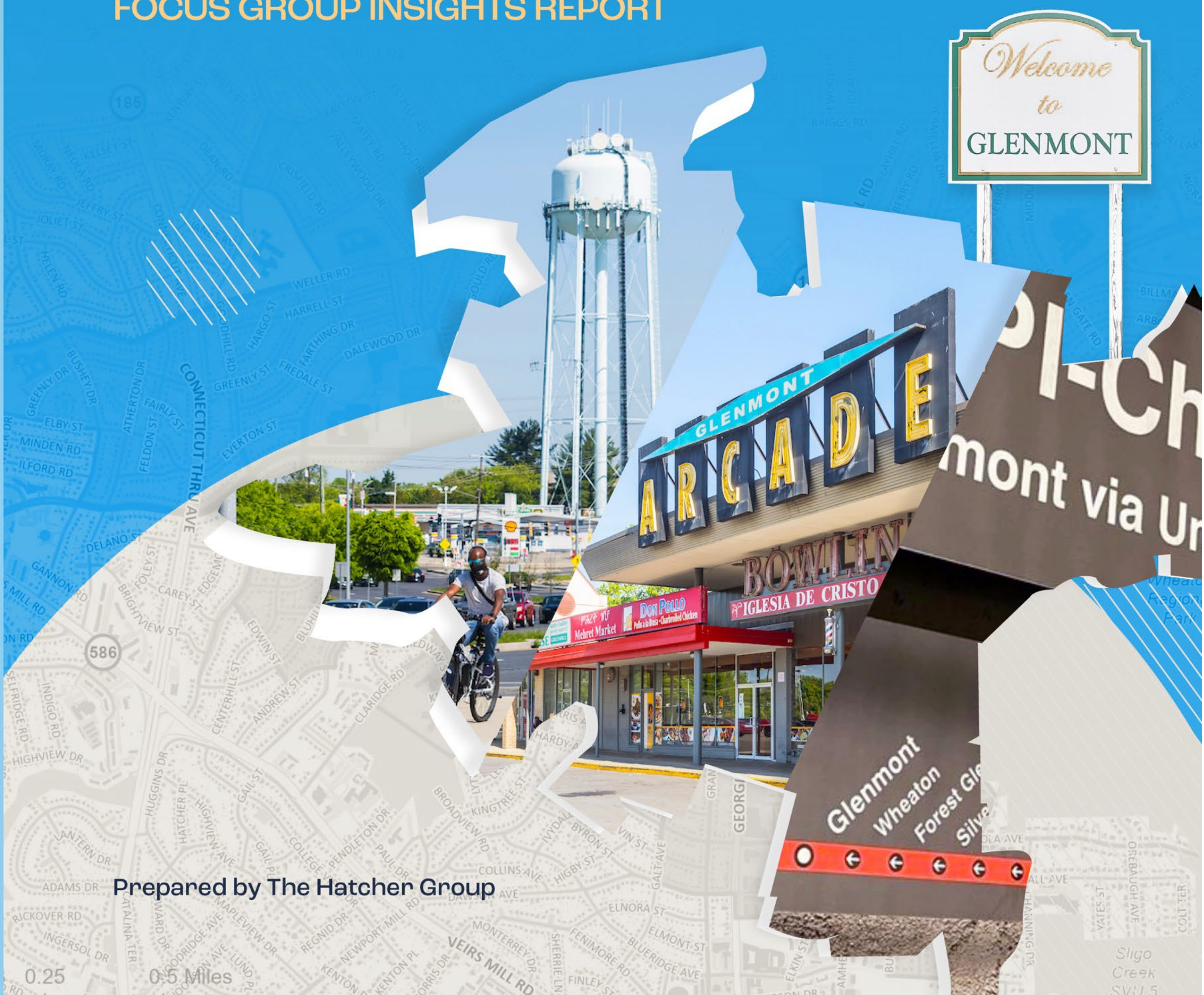
Montgomery Planning

JULY 2024

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING

Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study

FOCUS GROUP INSIGHTS REPORT



Prepared by The Hatcher Group

Contents

Executive Summary

As part of the Montgomery Planning Department's commitment to gather more qualitative community insights and feedback from residents about the Glenmont Corridor Opportunity Study, it engaged The Hatcher Group to conduct six focus group sessions. Focus group participants were recruited from the Study Area and selected to capture a diversity of backgrounds and viewpoints. Each participant engaged in two sessions: an in-person session at an elementary school located in the Study Area and a virtual session.

Participants engaged in a mapping exercise and were asked several questions about their interaction with the Study Area. The focus groups explored a wide variety of topics related to the Glenmont corridor and aligned with the three E's of Thrive Montgomery 2050: equity and social justice, environmental resilience, and economic competitiveness. Key themes that emerged related to the work of the Planning Department include concerns about pedestrian safety, the future of the Glenmont Shopping Center, and the impacts of increased housing on the Study Area.

Methodology

Hatcher conducted six hour-long focus groups with Glenmont Corridor residents. The purpose of the focus groups is to hear about lived experiences in the community, opportunities and challenges of the Glenmont metro area, and overall opinions to inform future development. Focus groups allow interviewers to hear multiple points of view from participants in a similar living environment at one time.

Participant Recruitment:

Participants for the focus group session were recruited through a combination of tactics, including:

- Geofenced digital advertisements for the Study Area (in English and Spanish).
- The Glenmont e-Letter (an email communication about Glenmont news and information).
- Postcards sent to 948 residential addresses.
- Outreach from Planning staff.

Geofenced Ad Campaign (Glenmont Corridor Opportunity Study)				
Campaign	**Budget**	**Impressions**	**Clicks**	**Click-Through rate (CTR)**
English	$700.00	213,884	3,542	1.66%
Spanish	$300.00	83,688	1,425	1.70%
Total	$1,000.00	297,572	4,967	1.67%

Participant Selection:

Respondents to the ads and outreach were asked to complete a brief questionnaire with demographic information and provide their availability to participate in a two-session focus group. With a focus on demographic representation (age, gender, and racial/ethnic background) reflecting the 2020 U.S. census data for Glenmont, and aligned with participant availability, we identified 26 participants.

Demographic Breakdown of Respondents	
Stakeholder Characteristic	**Count**
Female	39
Male	21
Nonbinary	0
Not Disclosed	5
Black/African American	11
White/Caucasian	37
Asian American/Pacific Islander	3
Hispanic/Latino	9
American Indian	0
Other	2
Not Disclosed	3
18–24 years old	1
25–34 years old	9
35–44 years old	18
45–54 years old	11
55–64 years old	14
65 years and older	11
Not Disclosed	1
Total	65

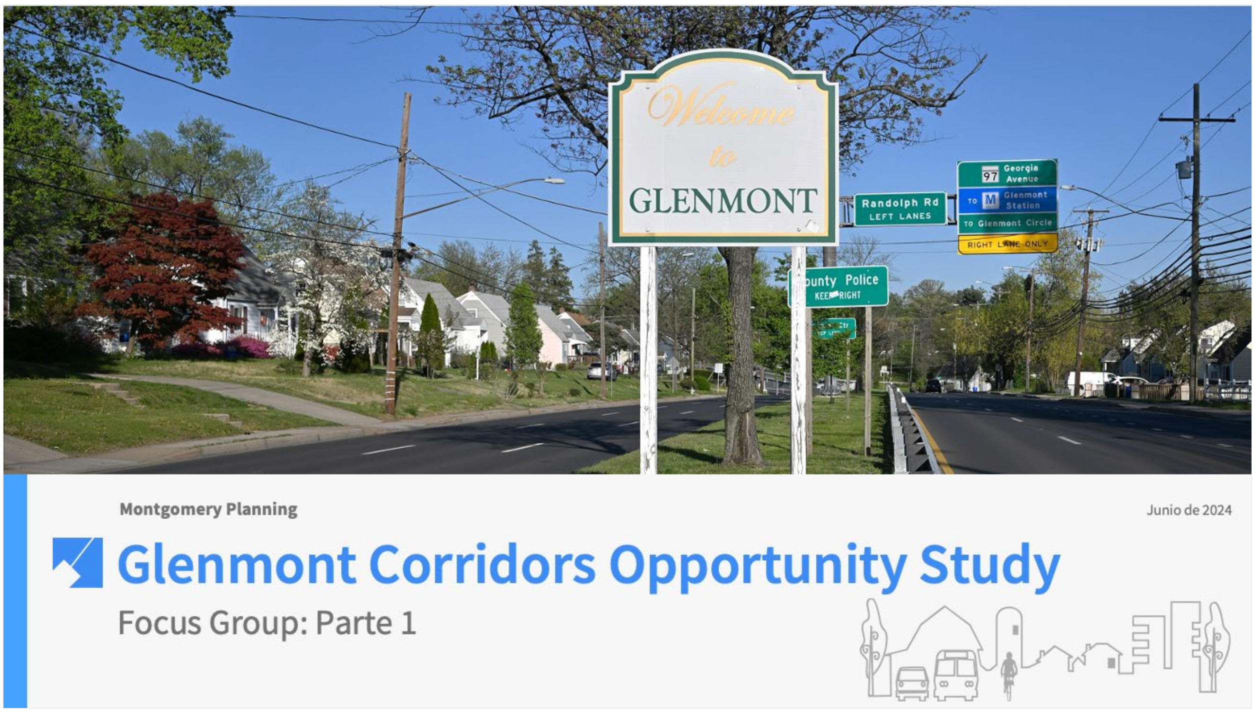
Demographic Breakdown of Participants	
Stakeholder Characteristic	**Count**
Female	16
Male	9
Nonbinary	0
Not Disclosed	1
Black/African American	6
White/Caucasian	13
Asian American/Pacific Islander	1
Hispanic/Latino	2
American Indian	0
Other	1
Not Disclosed	3
18–24 years old	1
25–34 years old	4
35–44 years old	7
45–54 years old	4
55–64 years old	7
65 years and older	2
Not Disclosed	1
Total	**26**

Our Equitable Engagement Approach:

We embedded equitable engagement practices throughout the focus group sessions. This includes the selection of Glenallen Elementary School as the venue because of its accessibility for all levels of physical ability, its proximity to public transportation, and the sense of safety provided by a public school setting.

Sessions were planned at a range of evening times to avoid scheduling conflicts that could force residents to choose between work and participation. Additionally, we provided drinks and snacks to help participants avoid hunger and stay focused.

Recognizing that some participants may be more comfortable engaging in Spanish, a professional interpreter was secured and the presentation was translated.



Additionally, in recognition of the time spent providing their insights, and aligned with focus group best practices, every participant who attended both an in-person and virtual session received a $100 gift card.

Focus Group Part 1: In-Person Sessions

Session Format and Content:

Participants engaged in a 60- to 75-minute session focused on the Study Area. After a brief presentation about the boundaries area of discussion, participants engaged in a mapping exercise to explore their relationship to the community. Each participant was provided a map of the Glenmont Corridor Opportunity Study area and colored pencils to mark the following:

- Locate Your Residence: Participants were asked to indicate the position of their residence on the map (an approximate position or the nearest intersection was fine).
- Map Your Daily Routes: Participants were asked to draw lines showing their routine travel paths for daily activities, including work, school, shopping, fitness, or other frequently visited places.
- Define Your Community Perimeter: Participants were asked to locate their neighborhood, which includes neighborhoods they were familiar with and associated with in addition to neighborhoods where they lived. This could also include thoroughfares, notable landmarks, or any distinctive features that participants identified with their community.

Maps were then collected at the end of each session and analyzed to determine recurring themes regarding preferred modes of transportation (e.g., walking, biking, driving), frequented neighborhoods, and other notable travel patterns. *See Appendix A.*

After the mapping exercise, participants were asked about their interaction with the Study Area, focusing on walkability/bike-ability, environmental sustainability, social/community interaction, and equity. All participants were asked to respond to the prompts, and additional follow-up was done to explore some responses. A full list of questions can be found in *Appendix B*.

Key Themes:

Residents have a strong attachment to their neighborhood and community.

Through the conversations, participants spoke of their connection to the community. Multiple participants had left the areas at some point but returned to the community. Participants also spoke fondly of small businesses that connect them to the community. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- “I lived here for 10 years in the ’90s. Moved to Urbana for 10 years. I've been back since 2015.”
- “[Developments] are needed while keeping the spirit of the place. ’Cause I like this area. One of the amazing things is that there are so many small businesses. There is a lot of ‘what is here is only here,’ and that's really cool. And I think there are things that need to happen here, but I also don't want it to lose any of the spirit that it has.”
- “I mean, truly, I like a lot of what it is now. I think it would be great if it was, like, a little greener, a little easier to get around. Maybe like, a, you know, farmers market and some trees in the big

parking lot, and you know, make sure that some of the small businesses that are there that can make it, and then add some more places people could open up; like [a] Chinese restaurant would be great. But you know, like, just build on what we have and make it a little greener."

Schools, supermarkets, and health care facilities exist within walking distance, but some participants are not happy with all of the existing options.

Participants engaged fully when discussing existing retail and commercial amenities. All agreed that options were available but shared dissatisfaction with Lidl as the anchor grocery store, believing that they would be getting a Harris Teeter. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "I was hoping Whole Foods would come."
- "[I use] the Lidl a lot. And then sometimes, when Lidl is a little scarce, like if I have [to go to the] store at end of the day, I'll go down to the Safeway."
- "That's my issue, that I want to live in a nice neighborhood area. I want [Mom's Organic Market] ... We can't get that because they're saying that we don't have the disposable income."
- "...We're very fortunate; we have a ton of schools in the immediate areas."

Residents feel unsafe walking or biking in the Study Area.

A vast majority of respondents noted that the community was technically walkable/bikeable by distance, but that the pathways, as well as the inadequate traffic signals and crosswalks, created a significant safety challenge that limited their interest in traveling that way. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "I feel very unsafe walking on the sidewalks. There's not enough time to cross. And I don't even feel safe walking to the train station."
- "The sidewalks are very narrow. You have garbage cans and everything [taking up space]. You have the overgrowth, and I'm afraid I'm gonna get hit [by] cars jumping the curb. It's very, very frightening."
- "Cars switch into that right turn from Georgia to Randolph, the fact that there's a bike lane there ... it's just the way that I, myself, have to drive in [that bike lane] to make that right turn. I would never consider biking."
- "I think the sidewalk width is a challenge for safe pedestrian traffic. I spend a lot of time going to the regional park, and it's not that easy to get to between Randolph and Georgia. I just feel like the traffic is really fast, and there's not a safe border, especially on certain parts."
- "I think one of the main issues is the distance and safety in general. I don't feel like letting my children go by themselves. They're already 13 and 11, but I don't feel like letting them go to the store [or to be] out and about with their friends.... I mean, I basically think that is not safe for them to walk by themselves."

- “One of the things that brought us this area years ago is like the fact that it is walkable and bikeable. The biking feels very unsafe. I will say I don't like doing it, but it's cool that I can. And you know, the, yeah, the walking. It's nice. I can go to the grocery store and the park and everything on foot. And it's wonderful. But yeah, it would be really cool if it felt a little easier to do that.”
- “Crossing major roads, whether it's Randolph or Georgia… even after the tunnel was put in, and I know there was kind of what seems to be band-aids on bullet wounds, as far as “fixing it”…”

Access to public transportation is an asset, but there are safety concerns.

Participants all agreed that the Glenmont Metro station adds value to their neighborhood, though few still use the system post-pandemic. Those who have used Metro in recent months shared deep concerns about their safety inside the system and in the area around the station. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- “… When I'm traveling by myself downtown to meet with clients once in a while, I am scared when I'm on the Glenmont Metro….”
- “I'm very unsafe on the train. I have to take it either to the Takoma stop or Silver Spring. Um, I don't take it at night … I have pepper spray with me.”
- “I'm so glad we have it, that, near a metro station, it’s miraculous to have this much green around. It's a key part of the value of being [in Glenmont].”
- “Walkability is a challenge. [There’s] underutilization of the Glenmont Metro, specifically the Glenmont shopping area as a significant opportunity and missed opportunity [for development].”

There is an abundance of parks and greenery, but there are real concerns about the County’s commitment to environmental sustainability in the area.

Participants shared that there were several available parks in the area, with the large regional parks adjacent to the study area. However, concerns were raised about long-term sustainability in response to the effects of climate change. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- “I think a big thing [with environmental protection] will be depending on where the neighborhood goes in the future, because, as density changes, which, unfortunately, is happening whether we like it or not … some of [the infrastructures] that we have now are gonna change….”
- “The more pavement that we have, the faster the water runs off it. And it has been really great to see those basins that capture the stormwater. But I hang out in the parks all the time and I see the erosion happening at an accelerated rate [during] the five years that I've been living in the neighborhood, [and] it's being torn up. So I don't think that [current infrastructures are] necessarily working. That soil takes thousands of years to rebuild.”
- “So I would say, heat island issues with tree canopy, erosion, and pavement slowing down the water would be the two of the primary concerns I have.”

The area feels like a passthrough with no distinct brand or character.

Several participants shared that Glenmont was not a destination, but a passthrough for people to get to more vibrant parts of the county. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "We have a unique cultural diversity and needs of people in the Wheaton-Glenmont area, and we need to keep that character, but find a way to make it … not just a pathway between Olney or Silver Spring or Rockville."
- "How do we put 'Glenmont' on the water tower and have an identity and make it artful? I'm sure there are tons of artists we can employ to make that an icon. I think it [would] really bring an identity."
- "[The area needs] something that's not just a passthrough, but something that's a focal point."
- "Millions of cars probably pass through here on a weekly basis, truthfully, and not one is stopping because you can't really stop. Use six lines of traffic. You don't know where to go … the Starbucks? McDonalds? And you know it's nothing, really."

Growth is both a challenge and an opportunity.

Participants appeared sharply divided on if and how the Study Area should grow in population. Some pointed to the potential for improved amenities while others spoke to the impact on traffic and the environment. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "… The growth of this area [makes it] a very hot traffic area."
- "[Vision for the area is] like, higher density. More retail, more entertainment, I mean. And I think that necessarily also means there's going to be a loss in, like, greenery and things like that."
- "The housing density isn't where it needs to be. We definitely lack a lot of housing for individuals … where there are several apartment complexes where there's just too many people in those units and they're seeing it spill out into other neighborhoods."
- "So you see how traffic is now with just the ... 482 garden-style apartments. Now you're talking almost 3,000 apartments, minus 102 trees, and over a thousand parking spaces."

Focus Group Part 2: Virtual Session

Session Format and Content:

Participants engaged in a 60-minute virtual session focused on housing and economic development. Per requests during the first session, a brief overview of statistics defining the Study Area was presented to participants, including the percentage of development and land use and the amount of retail, building, and parks.

A brief overview of feedback collected from the first session was presented and categorized into Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT). *See Appendix D.* Participants were asked to respond to the list and include additional points they would add to any of the four categories. Participants were also shared news of the Planning Board's decision to progress Affordable Housing Strategies (AHS) and were provided resources about the decision and initiative.

Participants were then led through a series of prompts on their experiences and opinions living in the Study Area. The discussion focused on housing density and its challenges/opportunities, challenges existing residential/commercial/recreational developments face, and businesses or spaces that could benefit the community. All participants were asked to respond to the prompts, and additional follow-up was done to explore some responses. A full list of questions can be found in *Appendix (C)*.

Key Themes:

There is not enough housing variety. Housing options should also be affordable and sustainable.

Participants discussed a lack of housing, particularly access to affordable housing that reflects the growing, diverse community. Conversation centered on the type of housing they would like to see and what would best benefit the Glenmont area at large. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "If they're going to do housing, it needs to be, you know, mixed-dwelling townhomes, condos, townhomes. But to just build five-fold apartment complexes on top of apartment complexes—I think that's just really bad energy for the environment to have that [much] apartment housing going up versus mixed dwelling. It needs to be a variety."
- "We need affordable housing, low-income housing in Glenmont. I think the housing market has gotten really out of control."
- "There's no way to get that higher density and more development and all the rest of it, without also accepting that there are going to be some things that have to change, and some of those things are things that we love dearly."

There is major concern that an increase in housing density could lead to an increase in foot and vehicle traffic.

Participants raised concerns about more cars taking up already limited parking in the area and in front of homes as a result of increased housing but unimproved development. In particular, participants were worried that the study area's current infrastructure and street layouts wouldn't be able to accommodate a larger number of new residents and families, all who would plan to bring their vehicles. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "There's no parking on the street. You can't park overnight in a park because you'll get ticketed. People don't want to pay to park in the parking garage for the metro. The more housing that you have with limited parking, you [will end up with] cars all over the place. If you do urban planning, you have to look into the housing and the available space and where cars are going to park."
- "I agree that we have to have an infrastructure. If you're gonna build something, you gotta build the infrastructure to support it. And one of it is definitely parking."
- "[The nearby apartment complex] is talking about changing [their] density from basically fivefold, and not only would it be, like, an environmental impact, but they would also open up more roads to come through there. Which means you're actually increasing the amount of traffic, increasing the amount of infrastructure to have cars drive around."

Residents worry that residential growth and market rate housing can lead to displacement of current families and businesses.

As home and rental prices continue to rise, participants expressed concerns about gentrification in the area, fearing it will displace current families and small businesses to make way for higher-income housing. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- "The housing density component is a threat to us ... the more people you bring in, the more you need for provide for them."
- "The density is going to be market rate apartments. So that means whatever the market can withstand. And right now, things are going for $600,000 here in the Wheaton area. These are not affordable housing for everyone, so I think displacement [is a threat]."
- "If they're all market rate, they're not affordable, even though our area is more affordable than other areas in the in the county."

Residents are looking for a mixture of chain retail and local independent shops with a priority on mom-and-pop businesses. There is also agreement to bring in a Glenmont farmers market.

When asked what stores and concepts participants would like to see in the area, a resounding number were in favor of a close-by supermarket chain that could provide a wider selection of items of higher quality, such as Whole Foods or Wegmans. In addition, they also noted a desire to see and invite more local vendors, similar to the beloved Tacos Don Perez. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

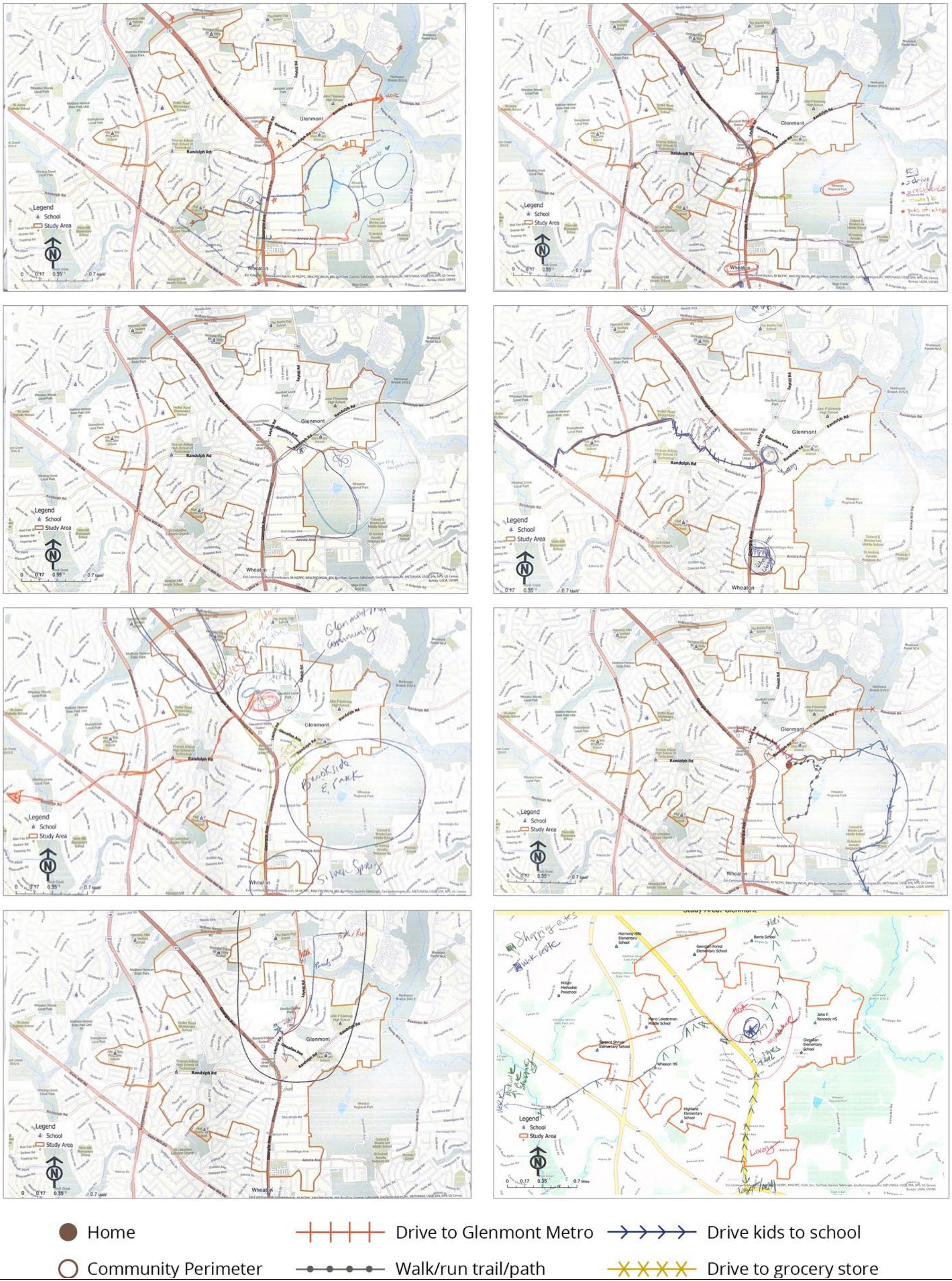
- "[I would want a] cafe, coffee shop thing, you know, not in the Starbucks vein. But, you know, something independent."

- “These don't need to be large places, but places that, you know, you can stop by quickly to pick up the basics. I mean having a full-on, like, Wegman's would be great as well. But as long as you know a grocery option is not that far away.”
- “Maybe a farmers market! The Bethesda and Olney farmers markets are a good model in terms of family-friendly meet-up spaces.”

Residents need a space where the community can gather.

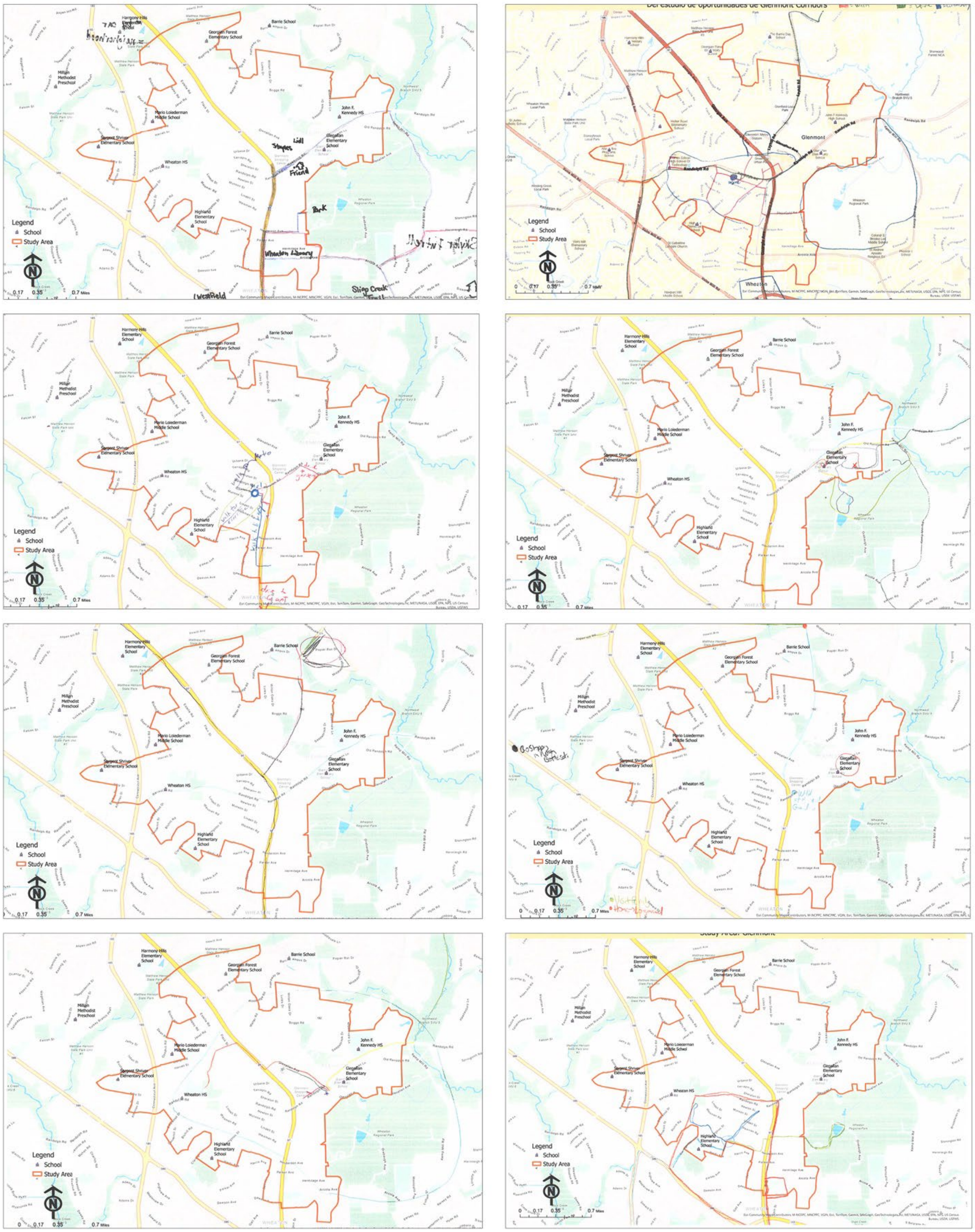
Participants voiced needing a place where families and friends can all come together and socialize. Several noted refurbishing the Glenmont Shopping Center as a potential spot to foster that community building. **Below are quotes from the discussion:**

- “... Having outdoor space that that doubles as an area where kids could play, people could gather, you could sit and eat a meal. But then also they could have an acoustic guitar guy on Friday nights, or something like that, or a community meeting. Not, maybe not a full amphitheater, but just space.”
- “I would love to see ... more at the green space at the corner of Georgia and Randolph. You know comfortable places for people to congregate and sit and play and be multigenerational.”


Home
Community Perimeter
Drive to Glenmont Metro
Walk/run trail/path
Drive kids to school
Drive to grocery store

Appendix A: Mapping Exercise

Home
Community Perimeter
Drive to Glenmont Metro
Walk/run trail/path
Drive kids to school
Drive to grocery store



Home

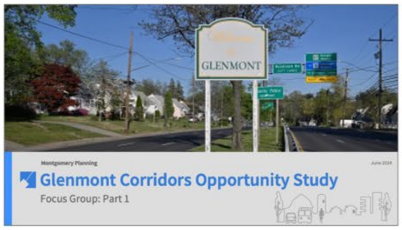
Community Perimeter

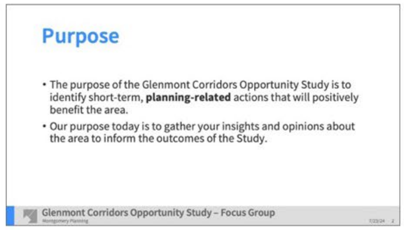
Drive to Glenmont Metro

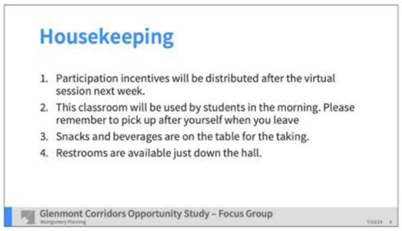
Walk/run trail/path

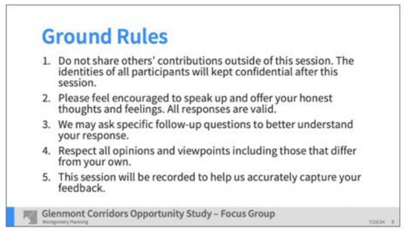
Drive kids to school

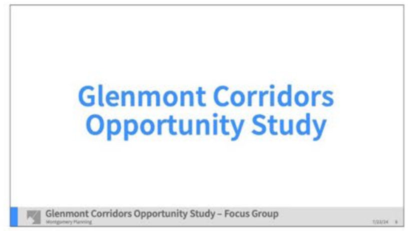
Drive to grocery store

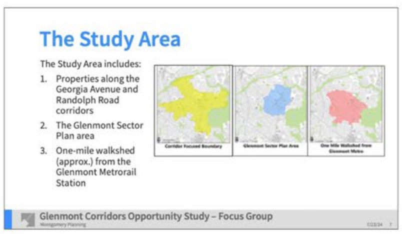


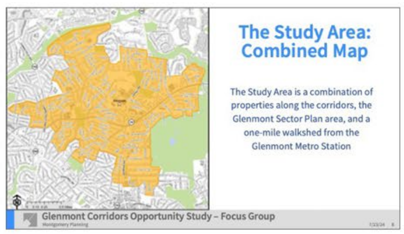


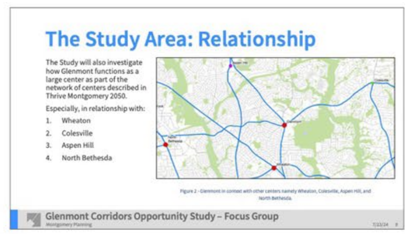


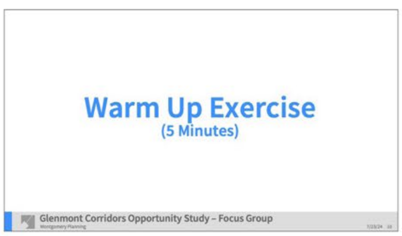


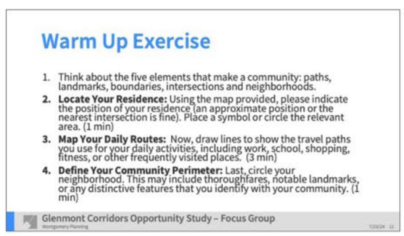


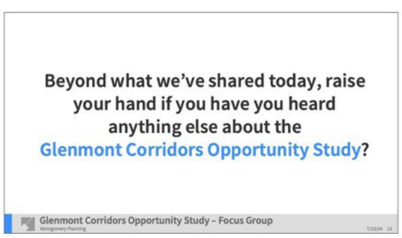


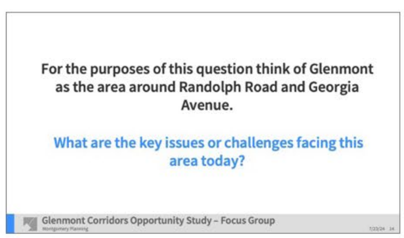


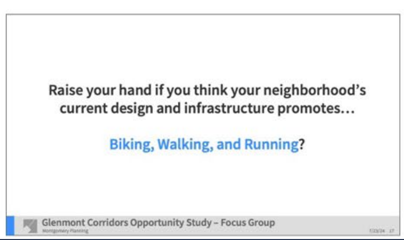


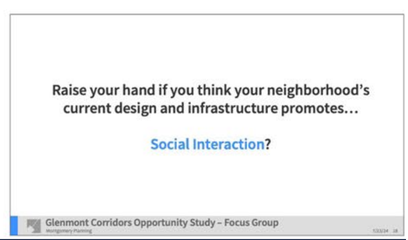




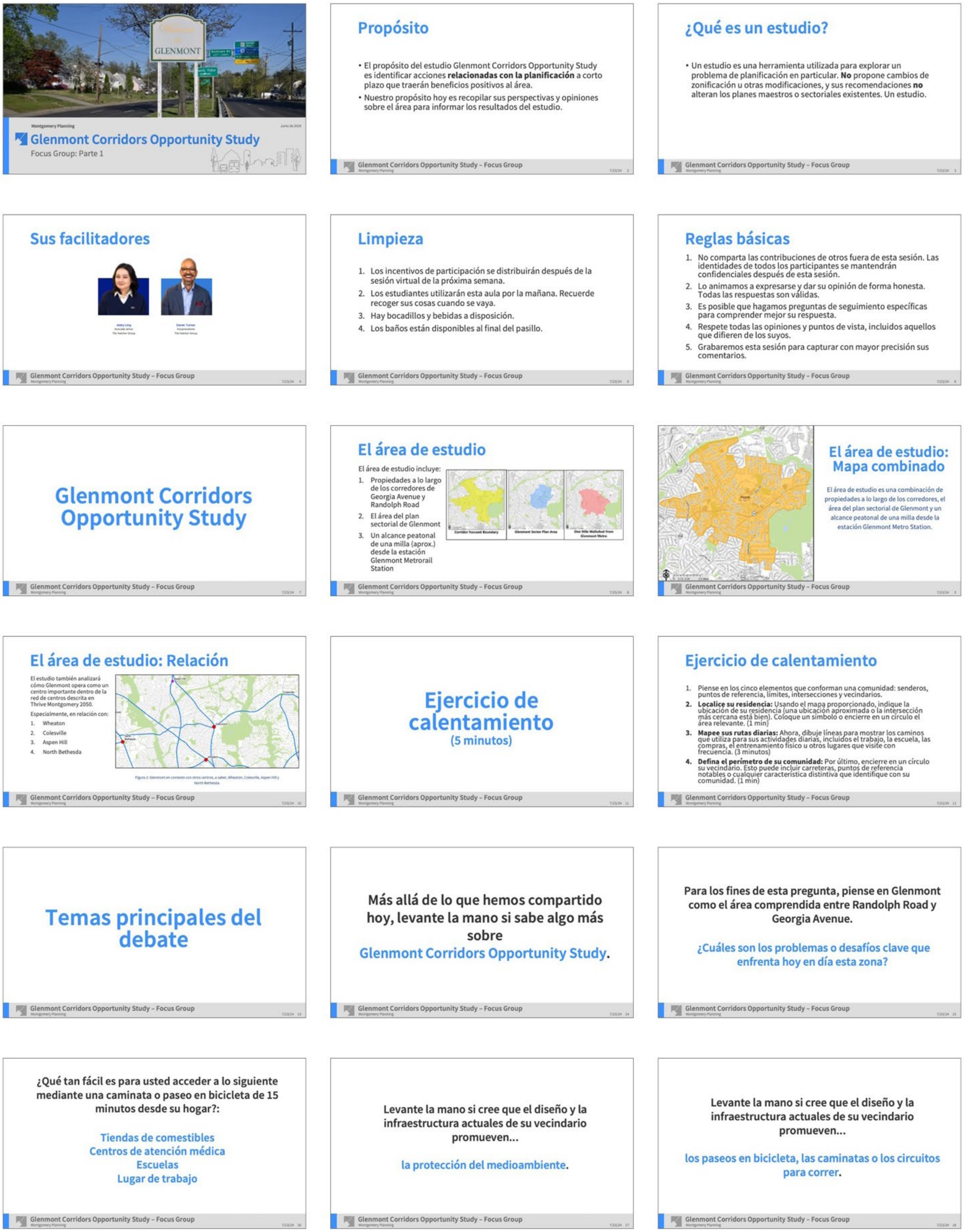




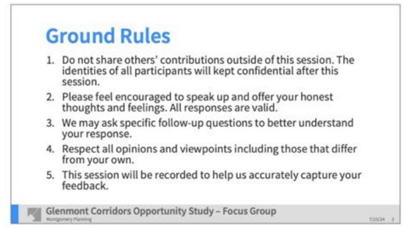


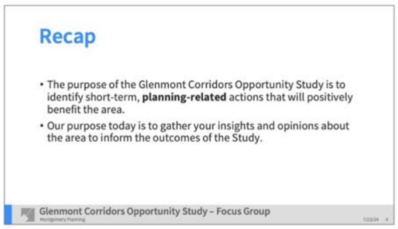


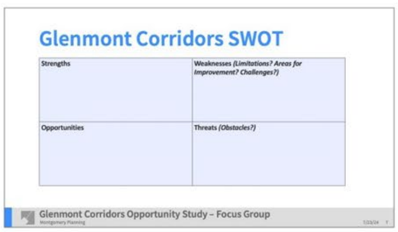
Appendix B: In-Person Focus Group Presentation Deck

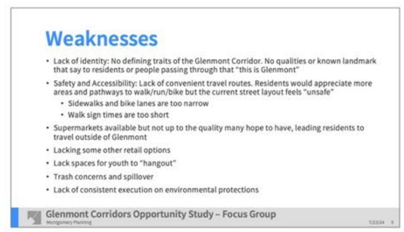


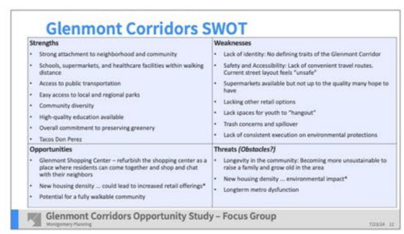
Appendix C: In-Person Focus Group Presentation Deck, Spanish

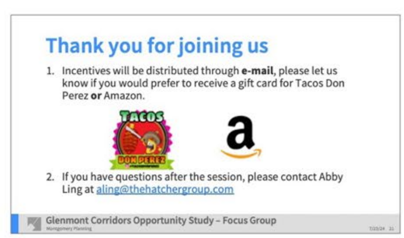












Appendix D: Virtual Focus Group Presentation Deck

Appendix E: Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Glenmont Corridors SWOT

Strengths

- Strong attachment to neighborhood and community
- Schools, supermarkets, and healthcare facilities within walking distance
- Access to public transportation
- Easy access to local and regional parks
- Community diversity
- High-quality education available
- Overall commitment to preserving greenery
- Tacos Don Perez

Weaknesses

- Lack of identity: No defining traits of the Glenmont Corridor
- Safety and Accessibility: Lack of convenient travel routes. Current street layout feels "unsafe"
- Supermarkets available but not up to the quality many hope to have
- Lacking other retail options
- Lack spaces for youth to "hangout"
- Trash concerns and spillover
- Lack of consistent execution on environmental protections

Opportunities

- Glenmont Shopping Center – refurbish the shopping center as a place where residents can come together and shop and chat with their neighbors
- New housing density ... could lead to increased retail offerings*
- Potential for a fully walkable community

Threats *(Obstacles?)*

- Longevity in the community: Becoming more unsustainable to raise a family and grow old in the area
- New housing density ... environmental impact*
- Longterm metro dysfunction

Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study – Focus Group

Montgomery Planning

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Appendix F: Programmatic Ads


Glenmont
¡necesitamos su ayuda!
COMPARTA SUS IDEAS
Y
PLANIFIQUE EL FUTURO DE GLENMONT
Montgomery Planning


Glenmont
¡necesitamos su ayuda!
PARA AYUDAR A PLANIFICAR EL FUTURO DE GLENMONT
Montgomery Planning


Glenmont
¡necesitamos su ayuda!


Glenmont
¡necesitamos su ayuda!
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Appendix G: Postcard

Appendix 2
Key Insights from Questionnaire

Information on Questionnaire Responses

- **273 total respondents**
  - 270 self-identified by age
  - 271 self-identified by race/ethnicity
- **194 respondents (71%) identified as residents of the Study Area**
  - 79 respondents (29%) selected "live around the Study Area."
    - 12 respondents selected both "live in" and "live around."
- **Respondents were a mix of newcomers and longtime residents.**
  - 30.7% of respondents identified as residents of Poplar Run or Glenmont MetroCentre

Demographic Skews in Respondents

- **Underrepresentation**:
  - **Hispanic/Latino**: 9.6% of respondents vs. 50.7% in the study area.
  - **Renters**: 6.2% of respondents vs. 34%.
  - **Young People (<25)**: 2.6% of respondents vs. 34.2%.
  - **Low-Income Households (<$50,000/year)**: 3.6% of respondents vs. 19.2%.
- **Overrepresentation**:
  - **Non-Hispanic White**: More than double their demographic proportion.
  - **High-Income Households (>$200,000/year)**: Three times their proportion.

Notable Variations in Responses by Identity Groups

- **Cycling Safety**:
  - Younger (25-44) and Hispanic/Latino respondents were more likely to view cycling as unsafe.
  - Older respondents more frequently marked cycling as "not applicable," indicating lower engagement with cycling.
- **Transit Use**:
  - Renters and younger respondents reported higher transit use.
  - Wealthy, white respondents were less reliant on transit.
- **Public Spaces Satisfaction**:
  - Higher satisfaction was observed among older and wealthier respondents.

  - Hispanic/Latino respondents, which as a group reported higher usage of public spaces, expressed lower satisfaction.

Housing Perceptions:

- Renters were less satisfied with the diversity of housing options compared to homeowners.
- High-income groups were more likely to view housing options favorably, skewing the overall sentiment.

Street Vendors and Local Services:

- Younger and Hispanic/Latino respondents were frequent patrons of street vendors, highlighting their cultural and economic importance.
- Low-income respondents indicated more reliance on local shopping/services, contrary to the less frequent usage by high-income groups.

Safety and Walkability:

- Perceptions of walking safety were positive but less so among Hispanic/Latino and younger respondents.
- Frequent users of public amenities, particularly in underrepresented groups, reported greater concerns about personal safety.

General Notes:

Respondents were not representative of study area demographics on multiple dimensions:

- Hispanic/Latino underrepresented (9.6% of respondents vs. 50.7% of study area)
- Renters underrepresented (6.2% of respondents vs. 34% of study area)
- Young people (under-25) underrepresented (2.6% of respondents vs. 34.2% of study area)
- High-income households overrepresented; lower-income households underrepresented.
  - Households with >$200,000 annual income responded at nearly three times their portion of the study area demographics.
  - Households in the three income bands below $100,000 annual income responded at half or less of their proportionate share of study area demographics.
    - Households earning less than $50,000 annually were most underrepresented (3.6% of respondents vs. 19.2% of study area)

The unrepresentative identities of respondents may impair our ability to understand the sentiments and needs of the community. To provide a fuller picture, this analysis includes weighting of responses from underrepresented identities, in addition to analysis of the raw response data.

Question 1: Age

Original Questions: What is your age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18 – 24
- ☐ 25 – 34
- ☐ 35 – 44
- ☐ 45 – 54
- ☐ 55 – 64
- ☐ 65+

Some available age bands in the questionnaire (<18 and 18-24 bands) were not standardized to match available demographic data (<20 and 20-24); this should be corrected in future questionnaires to better enable weighting to adjust for disparities between respondents and demographics.

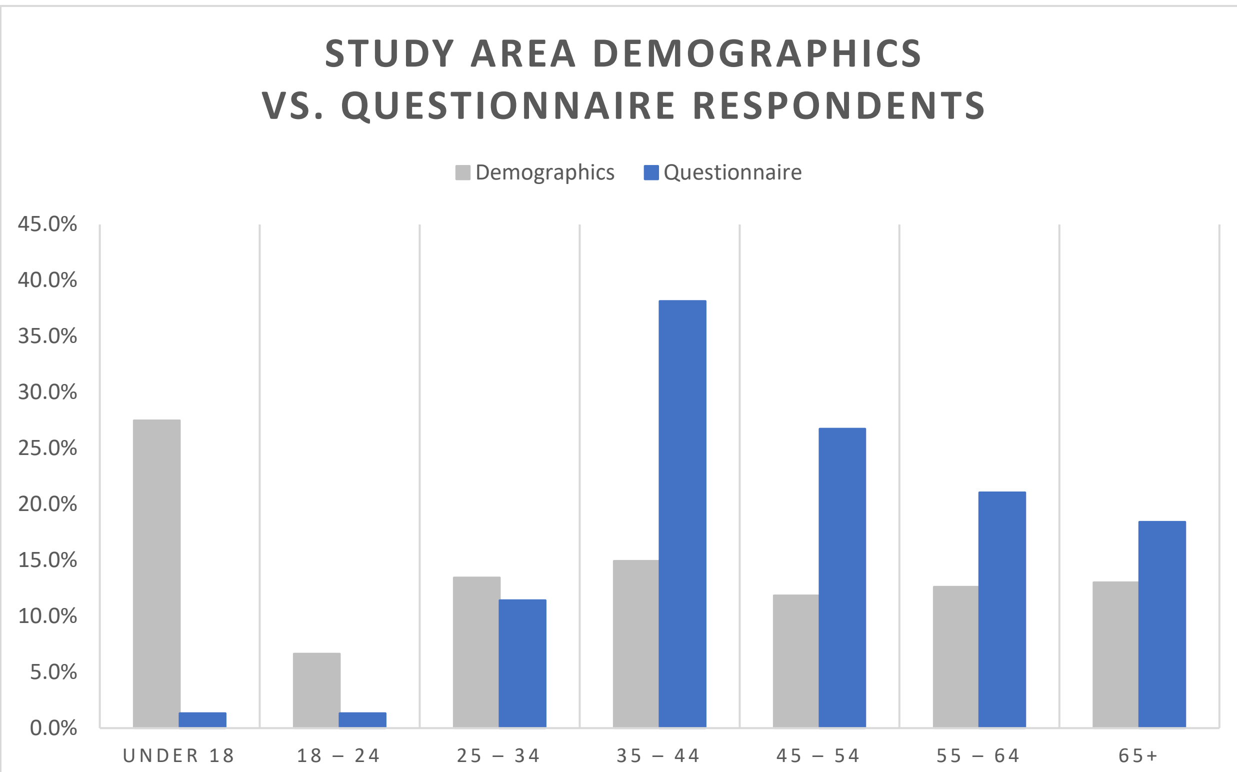

Figure 1: Column chart comparing the age of questionnaire respondents (self-reported) in blue and the demographic profile of the Study Area (U.S. Census) in orange. Young people (under 25 years old) were underrepresented among questionnaire respondents, although this is not unusual for the online questionnaire format.

Young people and children were underrepresented. Under-24-year-olds comprise 34.2% of residents in the study area, but only 2.6% of respondents. With only six respondents in this age group, it is less likely that responses are representative of the viewpoints of the age group.

All age groups 35 years and older were overrepresented in the questionnaire relative to study area demographics; the most overrepresented age bands were 35-44 and 45–54-year-olds.

Age was a key driver of differentiated responses to the following questions:

- Older respondents were less likely to report frequent transit use.
- Younger respondents (25-44) were more likely to perceive cycling as unsafe, while “not applicable” responses increased with age.
- Satisfaction with public spaces increased with the age of respondents.
- Satisfaction with housing options declined for both younger and older respondent cohorts.
- Popularity and recognition of street vendors declines with the age of respondents.

Weighting of responses to align with study area demographics for housing tenure most affected the results of:

- Question 10 (Frequency of Shopping/Services in Study Area)
    - Adjustments for age lowered the prevalence of “very often” responses.
- Question 11 (Frequency of Transit Use)
    - Adjustments for age lowered the prevalence of “never” responses.
- Question 13 (Satisfaction with Public Spaces)
    - Adjustments for age lowered the prevalence of “dissatisfied” and “neutral” responses.
- Question 14 (Perception of Cycling Safety)
    - Adjustments for age narrowed the prevalence of all options.
- Question 19 (Preferred Mode of Transportation)
    - Adjustments for age lowered the prevalence of “car” responses.

Question 2: Race

Original Question: Please specify your race or ethnicity:

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian and Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- Some other race
- Two or more races

The Hispanic/Latino population of the study area was underrepresented among respondents (9.6% of respondents vs. 50.7% of study area) and non-Hispanic white respondents were overrepresented by more than double their share of study area demographics.

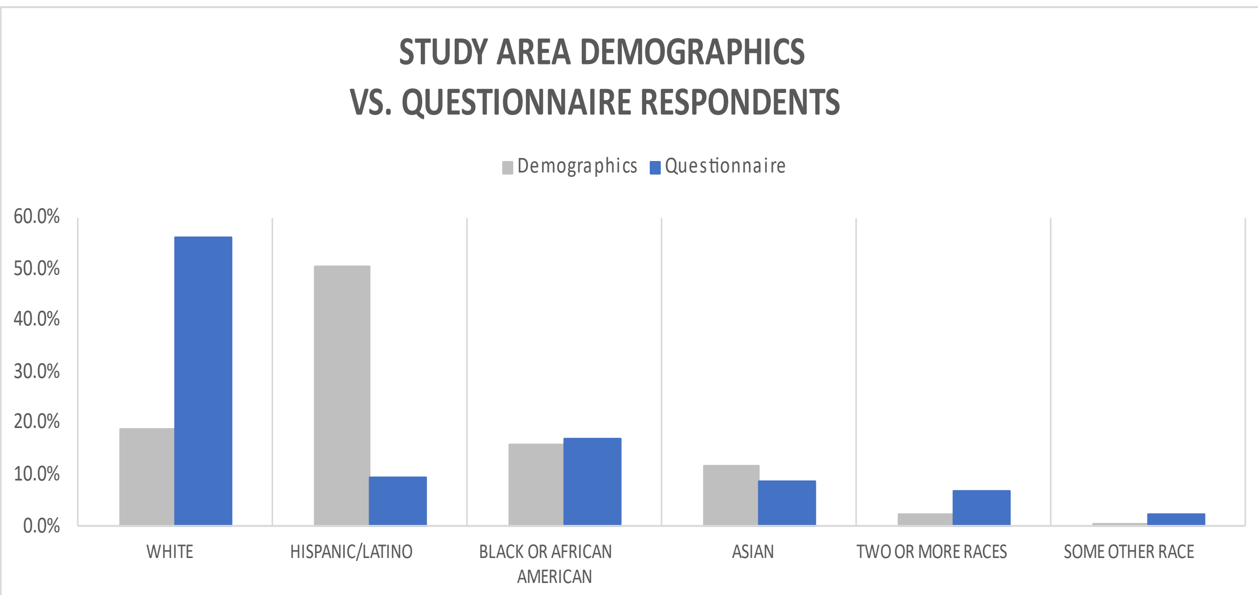

Figure 2: Column chart comparing the race/ethnicity of questionnaire respondents (self-reported) and the demographic profile of the Study Area (U.S. Census). Non-Hispanic whites were overrepresented among questionnaire respondents, while Hispanic respondents were underrepresented relative to their demographic share of the Study Area.

This disparity in representation causes problems for analysis of the questionnaire, which revealed several differences in sentiment on racial dimensions:

- Hispanic/Latino respondents were much less likely to feel safe cycling in the area and expressed the greatest preference for car travel to nearby amenities among racial groups.
- Hispanic/Latino respondents were most likely to frequent street vendors.
- Hispanic/Latino respondents were most likely to live in multigenerational households.

Hispanic/Latino respondents were the only racial group which were represented across household income bands in reasonable proportion to study area demographics. Other racial groups were dominated by respondents from high household income bands.

Weighting of responses to align with study area demographics for race most affected:

- Question 11 (Frequency of Transit Use)
  - Race-weighting increased "never" response prevalence.
- Question 14 (Perception of Cycling Safety)
  - Race-weighting increased "very unsafe" response prevalence.
- Question 15 (Perception of Walking Safety)
  - Race-weighting reduced perceptions of safety and increased perceptions of lack of safety.

Question 3: Primary Language

Original Question: What is your primary or preferred language?

- Amharic
- English
- Farsi
- French
- Korean
- Mandarin
- Spanish
- Other

Responses were dominated by English speakers; only 11 of the 273 respondents listed a different primary or preferred language. With just seven (2.5%) respondents listing Spanish, it is likely that language preference responses were affected by the underrepresentation of the Hispanic/Latino population among respondents.

Question 4: Interest in Study Area

Original Question: You are interested in this study because you: (select all that apply)

- Live in the Study Area
- Live around the Study Area
- Work in the Study Area
- Own property in Study Area
- Come to the Study Area for other reasons (shopping, doctors, visiting friends etc.)
- Other

All relevant "Other" responses were respondents with children in area schools; these responses were recoded as "Come to the study area for other reasons (shopping, doctors, visiting friends, etc.)" as necessary.

Most respondents listed a single interest in the study, with "live in the study area" most common.

Question 5: Neighborhood of Residence

Original Questionnaire: What neighborhood do you live in?

- Arcola
- Connecticut Avenue Estates
- Foxhall
- Georgian Forest
- Glen Waye Gardens
- Glenallen
- Glenfield North
- Glenmont Forest
- Glenmont Village
- Glenmont Hills-Heights
- Glenmont Metrocentre
- Greenwood Knolls
- Highland Woods
- Kingswell
- Layhill Gardens/Layhill South
- Leesborough
- Middlebridge
- Strathmore at Bel Pre
- Tivoli
- Wheaton Crest
- Wheaton Hills
- Wilton Oaks
- Winding Orchard
- Winexburg Manor
- Other______________________

The neighborhood best represented among respondents was Poplar Run, the largest recently developed neighborhood in the study area with a mix of detached single-family houses and townhouses. The next most prolific neighborhood was Glenmont MetroCentre, another new development comprised of townhouses adjacent to the Glenmont Metro station. Homes in these developments are larger and higher end on average than the legacy housing stock which dominates the study area. The overrepresentation of these neighborhoods (30.7% of respondents) likely skews responses toward the sentiments and interests of residents who can afford new construction—favoring whiter, wealthier, and older viewpoints.

Further analysis may be warranted to understand whether and/or how viewpoints diverge based on neighborhood of residence.

Question 6: Duration of Residence

Original Questions: If you live in or around the study area, how long have you lived here?

- 0 – 5 years
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 20 years
- More than 20 years
- Not Applicable

Responses were mixed between longtime residents and newcomers. Respondents from the newcomer categories (0-5 years and 6-10 years) were dominated by residents of Poplar Run and Glenmont Centre, which may obscure the perspectives of residents who recently moved into legacy housing stock, particularly the midcentury apartment complexes near the Glenmont Metro station. As a result, divergence in sentiments may be more closely tied to other demographic factors than duration of residence.

Duration of residence was a key driver of differentiated responses to the following questions:

- Newcomers were more likely to be dissatisfied with public spaces.
- Newcomers were less likely to frequent local shops and services.
- Longtime residents were less likely to use transit.

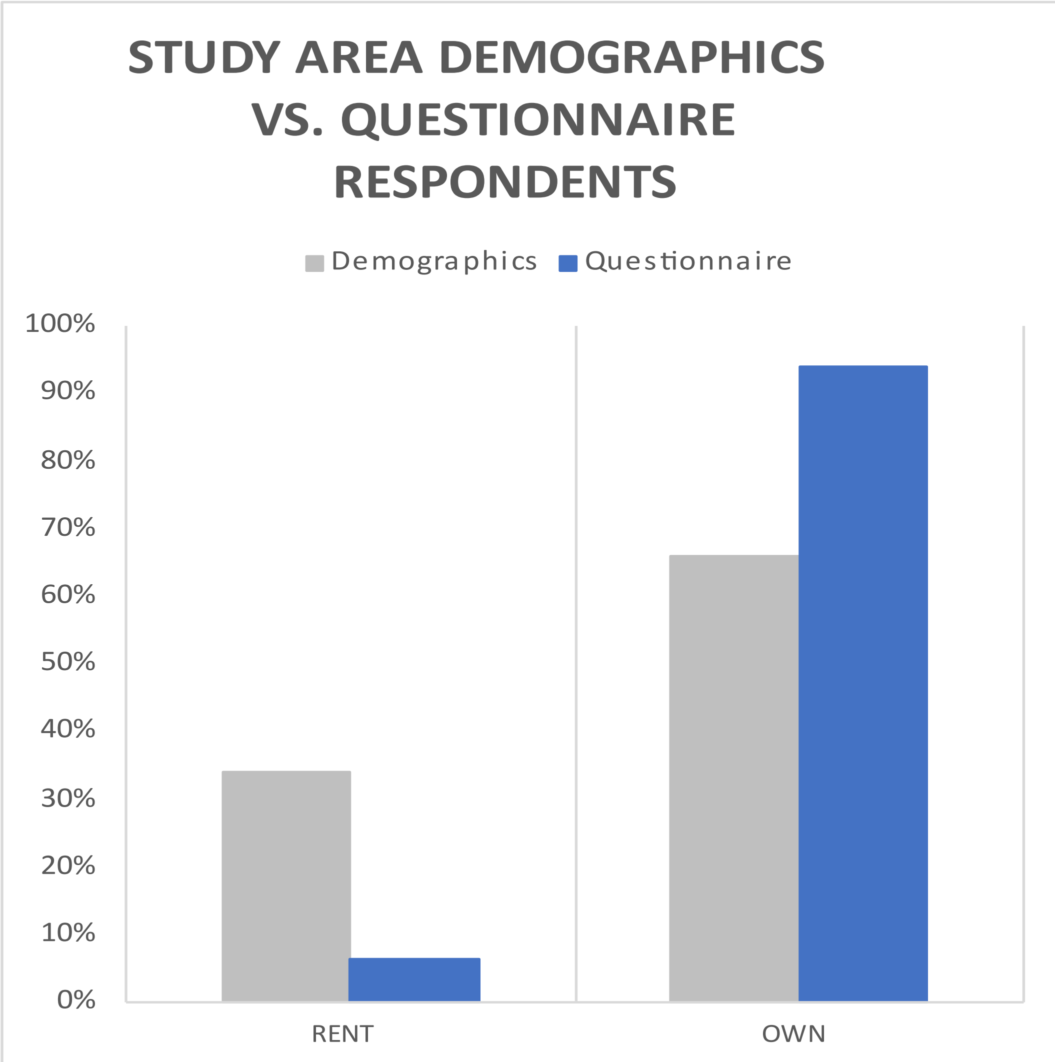

Figure 3: Column chart comparing the housing tenure of questionnaire respondents (self-reported) and the demographic profile of the Study Area (U.S. Census). Homeowner households were overrepresented among questionnaire respondents relative to their share of the study area.

Question 7: Tenure (Own/Rent)

Original Question: Do you rent or own your home?

- Rent
- Own

Renters were the most underrepresented identity group across each dimension (tenure, household income, race/ethnicity, and age). With only 17 responses from renters, it may be difficult to extrapolate responses into generalizable insights.

Housing tenure was a key driver of differentiated responses to the following questions:

- Renters were more likely to use transit and prefer public transportation to visit local facilities.

    - No renters preferred to access their most-visited facility by walking, compared to 19% of homeowners.
- Renters were more likely to visit street vendors.
- Renters were more likely to feel unsafe walking (47%) and cycling (64%) than homeowners (22% and 41%, respectively)
- Less than one-quarter of renter respondents agreed that diverse housing options are available in the study area, compared to more than half of homeowner respondents.
- Renter respondents were less likely to express satisfaction with the quality of public spaces, but more likely to frequently use transit and local shopping/services.

Weighting of responses to align with study area demographics for housing tenure most affected the results of:

- Question 16 (Housing Options)
    - Less positive perceptions of housing availability
- Question 19 (Preferred Mode of Transportation)
    - Greater preference for cycling and public transportation

Question 8: Income

Original question: What is your total household annual income?

- Less than $50,000
- $50,000-$74,999
- $75,000-$99,999
- $100,000-$149,999
- $150,000-$199,999
- More than $200,000

High-income respondents were substantially overrepresented across each dimension. With only 9 responses from households earning under $50,000 annually, it may be difficult to extrapolate responses from this important group.

- Households earning over $200,000 annually comprised 49.4% of respondents, compared to just 17.8% of study area demographics.
- Households earning over $100,000 annually comprised 83.5% of respondents, compared to just 52.2% of study area demographics.

Household income was a key driver of differentiated responses to the following questions:

- Household income was negatively associated with frequency of local shopping/services (higher income groups are less likely to shop or use services in the local area)
- Higher income groups were more likely to agree that diverse housing options are available in the study area.
    - The only “strongly agree” responses came from households with incomes over $150,000.

Weighting of responses to align with study area demographics for household income most affected the results of:

- Question 10 (Frequency of Local Shopping/Services)
    - More frequent use of local shopping/services
- Question 16 (Availability of Diverse Housing Options)
    - Less positive perceptions of housing availability

Question 9: Household Composition

Original Questions: What best describes your household composition:

- I live alone
- I live with a partner/spouse only
- I live with a partner/spouse and children
- I live in a multigenerational household
- I live with roommates that are not in my family
- Other (please describe)

Most respondents live with a partner/spouse, either with or without children. Issues with representation in the questionnaire likely skew responses based on household composition; renters and lower income respondents were more likely to live alone, with roommates, in a multigenerational household, or other non-nuclear household types.

Question 10: Frequency of Shopping/Services in Study Area

Original Question: How often do you shop or use services within the study area? (Pick One)

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

Most respondents report frequent use of local shopping/services. Frequency of local shopping/services increased with adjustment for demographic factors, which suggests that identity groups which were underrepresented in the questionnaire are more likely to prefer and/or rely on local amenities.

White respondents, homeowners, and high-income respondents were less likely to report frequent use of local shopping/services.

Question 11: Frequency of Transit Use

Original Question: How often do you use a Ride On, WMATA bus or Metrorail? (Pick One)

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Very Often

Respondents indicate transit is used relatively infrequently, with just a quarter indicating they use transit often or very often. This may be skewed by the unrepresentative sample, however. Weighting responses by housing tenure increased frequent transit use.

One interesting divergence is that weighting by household income and race/ethnicity increased the prevalence of responses that indicate transit is used rarely or never. This is likely driven by two factors: greater disuse among Hispanic/Latino respondents, and the abundance of responses from higher-income residents of Glenmont MetroCentre, which is located adjacent to a Red Line station.

Question 12: Commercial Centers

Original Question: Please rank (1 to 6-1 being the highest and 6 being the lowest) the following commercial centers based on your frequency of visits and use.

- Wheaton
- Colesville
- Aspen Hill
- North Bethesda
- Glenmont Shopping Center
- Wheaton Park Shopping Center

Respondents ranked Wheaton and Aspen Hill as their preferred commercial centers. North Bethesda exhibited the greatest variation by identity groups, with strength among higher-income and 25–44-year-old respondents.

Question 13: Satisfaction with Public Spaces

Original Question: How satisfied are you with the availability and quality of public spaces (parks, libraries, community centers etc.) in your neighborhood?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Satisfaction with public spaces is high, with less than a quarter of respondents expressing a degree of dissatisfaction.

Weighting by race/ethnicity was the most significant divergence, driven by a greater dissatisfaction among Hispanic/Latino respondents. This groups indicated higher use of public spaces (frequent local shopping and patronage of street vendors) while also generally disfavoring public transit and cycling. Further engagement may be warranted to determine whether Hispanic/Latino residents of the study area experience public space, safety, and other issues differently than other groups due to cultural, locational, or other factors.

Question 14: Perception of Safety (Cycling)

Original Question: How safe do you feel cycling in your neighborhood?

- Very safe
- Somewhat safe
- Neutral
- Somewhat unsafe
- Very unsafe
- Not Applicable

Cycling is considered unsafe in the study area. Additionally, nearly one-in-five respondents indicated a “not applicable” response, which may include those who do not cycle due to feelings of lack of safety or other challenges.

Hispanic/Latino residents were more likely to view cycling as unsafe. Further engagement with this group may be useful to determine factors which drive these perceptions.

Question 15: Perception of Safety (Walking)

Original Question: How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood?

- Very safe
- Somewhat safe
- Neutral
- Somewhat unsafe
- Very unsafe

Perceptions of safety walking were positive, to the inverse of perceptions of cycling. Like cycling, however, young, and Hispanic/Latino respondents were more likely to indicate perceptions of lack of safety. These groups also registered fewer “not applicable” responses and indicated greater use of public spaces and amenities, which may indicate that their perceptions are informed by more frequent lived experiences.

Question 16: Housing Options

Original Question: Do you feel there are housing options available for different income levels?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Sentiments on the availability of housing options at different income levels are likely distorted by the extreme overrepresentation of high-income homeowners among the questionnaire respondents. More than half of homeowner respondents indicated satisfaction, compared to less than a quarter of renter respondents.

Question 17: Street Vendors

Original Question: Do you shop with local street vendors? (e.g., food trucks, food carts, etc.)

- Yes
- No
- I have not seen local street vendors.

Younger and Hispanic/Latino respondents were much more likely to frequent street vendors than other demographic groups. Both groups were underrepresented among questionnaire respondents, which indicates that street vending is likely more accepted and valued in the study area than generalized responses indicate.

Question 18: Most Used Facility/Amenity

Original Question Name the facility or amenity you use the most in or around the study area and pick your preferred mode of transportation to get there. (educational, medical, parks, recreation, retail, etc.)

____

- Walking
- Cycling
- Public transportation
- Car
- Other

The open-ended nature of this question did not enable mass analysis. Responses varied, often including multiple facilities/amenities, with variations on spelling and other coding challenges. Parks, retail, and Brookside Gardens were frequently listed. Most respondents indicated a preference for car access. Renter and younger respondents were more likely to prefer cycling and public transportation, with less preference for car use and walking.

Original Questionnaire

Demographics

1. **What is your age?**
    - ☐ Under 18
    - ☐ 18 – 24
    - ☐ 25 – 34
    - ☐ 35 – 44
    - ☐ 45 – 54
    - ☐ 55 – 64
    - ☐ 65+

2. **Please specify your race or ethnicity:**
    - White
    - Black or African American
    - American Indian and Alaska Native
    - Asian
    - Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
    - Hispanic or Latino
    - Some other race
    - Two or more races

3. **What is your primary or preferred language?**
    - Amharic
    - English
    - Farsi
    - French
    - Korean
    - Mandarin
    - Spanish
    - Other

4. **You are interested in this study because you: (select all that apply)**
    - Live in the Study Area
    - Live around the Study Area
    - Work in the Study Area
    - Own property in Study Area
    - Come to the Study Area for other reasons (shopping, doctors, visiting friends etc.)
    - Other

5. **What neighborhood do you live in?**
    - Arcola
    - Connecticut Avenue Estates
    - Foxhall
    - Georgian Forest
    - Glen Waye Gardens
    - Glenallen
    - Glenfield North
    - Glenmont Forest
    - Glenmont Village
    - Glenmont Hills-Heights
    - Glenmont Metrocentre
    - Greenwood Knolls
    - Highland Woods
    - Kingswell
    - Layhill Gardens/Layhill South
    - Leesborough
    - Middlebridge
    - Strathmore at Bel Pre
    - Tivoli
    - Wheaton Crest
    - Wheaton Hills
    - Wilton Oaks
    - Winding Orchard
    - Winexburg Manor
    - Other______________________

6. **If you live in or around the study area, how long have you lived here?**
    - 0 – 5 years
    - 6 – 10 years
    - 11 – 20 years
    - More than 20 years
    - Not Applicable

7. **Do you rent or own your home?**
    - Rent
    - Own

8. **What is your total household annual income?**

- Less than $50,000
- $50,000-$74,999
- $75,000-$99,999
- $100,000-$149,999
- $150,000-$199,999
- More than $200,000

9. **What best describes your household composition:**
    - I live alone
    - I live with a partner/spouse only
    - I live with a partner/spouse and children
    - I live in a multigenerational household
    - I live with roommates that are not in my family
    - Other (please describe)

Main

1. How often do you shop or use services within the study area? (Pick One)
    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Sometimes
    - Often
    - Very Often

2. How often do you use a Ride On, WMATA bus or Metrorail? (Pick One)

    - Never
    - Rarely
    - Sometimes
    - Often
    - Very Often

3. Please rank (1 to 6-1 being the highest and 6 being the lowest) the following commercial centers based on your frequency of visits and use.
    - Wheaton
    - Colesville
    - Aspen Hill
    - North Bethesda
    - Glenmont Shopping Center

- Wheaton Park Shopping Center

4. How satisfied are you with the availability and quality of public spaces (parks, libraries, community centers etc.) in your neighborhood?
    - Very satisfied
    - Satisfied
    - Neutral
    - Dissatisfied
    - Very dissatisfied

5. How safe do you feel cycling in your neighborhood?
    - Very safe
    - Somewhat safe
    - Neutral
    - Somewhat unsafe
    - Very unsafe
    - Not Applicable

6. How safe do you feel walking in your neighborhood?
    - Very safe
    - Somewhat safe
    - Neutral
    - Somewhat unsafe
    - Very unsafe

7. Do you feel there are housing options available for different income levels?
    - Strongly agree
    - Agree
    - Neutral
    - Disagree
    - Strongly disagree

8. Do you shop with local street vendors? (e.g., food trucks, food carts, etc.)
    - Yes
    - No
    - I have not seen local street vendors.

9. (NEW) Name the facility or amenity you use the most in or around the study area and pick your preferred mode of transportation to get there. (educational, medical, parks, recreation, retail, etc.)

   ____
    - Walking
    - Cycling
    - Public transportation
    - Car
    - Other

10. Would you like to be part of a focus group for this study? (Expression of interest does not guarantee selection for participation).
    - No
    - Yes (Email: _______________. Phone number_____________)

Appendix 3
Evaluation of Glenmont's Small and Informal Business Economy

Delivered: November 11, 2024
Submitted by: Partners for Economic Solutions, &Access, and Ochoa Urban Collaborative

This findings memorandum for the Glenmont Corridors Opportunity Study outlines a comprehensive analysis of the existing conditions and future potential for redevelopment in the Glenmont Shopping Center and surrounding areas, with a specific focus on the informal economy and small, independent businesses. Building on the vision established by the 2013 Glenmont Sector Plan and the growth principles of Thrive Montgomery 2050, this memorandum evaluates the role that the informal economy plays as a critical community anchor, particularly for foreign-born populations and communities of color. The memorandum highlights both the risks of displacement posed by redevelopment, as well as the opportunities for integrating informal entrepreneurs into future development plans. Key findings emphasize the need for thoughtful infrastructure upgrades, zoning strategies, business support strategies, and community engagement to ensure that redevelopment in Glenmont supports inclusive growth, corridor-focused development, and the creation of a vibrant, mixed-use neighborhood centered around equitable access and economic diversity.

Note: The initial scope of this work was limited to informal businesses, defined as those operating outside of brick-and-mortar spaces. After a series of site visits and interviews, the consultant team identified only two informal businesses, Tacos Don Perez and Antojitos Centroamericano, both operating from semi-permanent food trucks/stalls. To provide additional context, the team also interviewed brick-and-mortar businesses located within the shopping center.

Existing Conditions

The Glenmont Shopping Center is located at the northwest intersection of Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road. Although it is a strip center with a few pad sites surrounding the development, ownership is fragmented with 12 owners across 14 parcels studied. Many of the parcels associated with the strip center include the parking area directly in front of the storefront entrances. Additionally, there are three vacant spaces available for lease, totaling 3,750 square feet. Collectively, these conditions make redevelopment highly unlikely in the near future.

Figure 1: Glenmont Shopping Center parcels and ownership

Business Mix

The Glenmont Shopping Center has approximately 157,000 square feet of commercial space in the shopping center with over 153,000 square feet of space occupied. It exhibits a balanced business mix, with a significant portion of the space dedicated to Neighborhood Goods & Services (NG&S) establishments. NG&S businesses, including grocery stores, drugstores, and salons, occupy 61,033 square feet across 17 locations, making them the dominant category in terms of both the number of businesses and total space occupied. Food & Beverage (F&B) establishments, such as restaurants and cafes, contribute to the center's appeal with nine businesses occupying 16,303 square feet. General Merchandise, Apparel, Furniture, and Other (GAFO) retailers, while fewer in number, account for a substantial portion of the center's space with five stores occupying 36,525 square feet. Two gym facilities cover a large area of 31,319 square feet, a significant presence of fitness and recreational services. Non-Retail Services (NRS) establishments, which include professional offices, occupy 8,296 square feet across four locations. The center also has three vacant spaces, totaling 3,750 square feet, that present potential opportunities for new businesses. Overall, the Glenmont Shopping Center provides a mix of essential services and retail offerings while leaving room for future growth and development. (See business categories defined in Appendix A.)

Inventory of Shopping Center Tenants

Category	Count of Category	Sum of SF Occupied
NG&S	17	61,033
F&B	9	16,303
GAFO	5	36,525
Gym	2	31,319
NRS	4	8,296
Vacant	3	3,750
Grand Total	**40**	**157,226**

Source: Costar; &Access (July 2024);
Full inventory data available HERE.

Informal Businesses:
The consultant team observed only two informal businesses during site visits conducted on July 29th (Monday), August 2nd (Friday), August 23rd (Friday), August 24th (Saturday) and August 29th (Thursday), 2024, a time when the nearby Metro station was closed for repairs. Informal businesses occupy only the parking lot of the Sunoco gas station (12321 Georgia Avenue). The two businesses are Antojitos Centroamericano, an informal Central American snack vendor located west of the Sunoco, and Tacos Don Perez, an informal taco vendor located east of the Sunoco. The Sunoco parcel is 0.46 acres and zoned CR. The Sunoco station, built in 1961, has approximately 1,056 square feet of interior space. Appendix B provides a general site plan for the property.

Figure 2: Tacos Don Perez

Tacos Don Perez operates from a food truck, a food trailer, and a kiosk stand, comprising about 700 square feet of enclosed space. Adjacent to these merchant spaces is a series of outdoor tables and seating, with umbrellas providing shade.

Antojitos Centroamericano is a smaller operation, occupying about 200 square feet of enclosed space, offering an assortment of convenience-based items and known for its fresh fruit, vegetables, and juices. During the project, this vendor was shut down due to code violations.

Figure 3: Antojitos Centroamericanos

Both informal businesses benefit from the convenience-based customers and the high visibility provided by the gas station. Notably, when reviewing 2021 and 2022 Google Street View images, a variety of vendors and food trucks were visible in the lot facing Georgia Avenue. One vendor interviewed mentioned the need to relocate from the CVS lot to the gas station, raising the question of whether code enforcement and/or property management is limiting the opportunity for informal businesses to operate in the parking lot.

Montgomery County regulates informal businesses based on three typologies. An informal business may either require a sidewalk vendor license (for vending on the public right-of-way), a site-specific vendor license (for vending on private property), or a regular route vendor license (for vending along a route at multiple locations). All businesses are required to have $500,000 in liability insurance, and food vendors are required to have a food handler ID and an inspection by the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. Those selling agricultural products are also required to have an Agricultural Producer Certificate issued by the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture. All vendors are required to have a valid government ID, and vendors using vehicles are required to have a valid driver's license and proof of vehicle insurance. Those operating at a specific location must submit a site plan that complies with placement regulations such as being at least 100 ft from an intersection or the driveway of a shopping center, as specified in Montgomery County Code 47.02.01.05.2.

Figure 4: August 2022 Google Street View

Figure 5: September 2021 Google Street View

Figure 6: Trucks parked at Glenmont Shopping Center

Other Business Activity
During this study, the parking lot was occupied by parked buses and tractor trailers. In interviews with county officials, the team learned that private shuttle buses leased by WMATA for a limited shutdown for system repairs were using the parking lot as a staging area without any permission from the county. Buses and trailers may be more viable tenants for parking leases, either due to their ability to pay higher rates or their limited susceptibility for code enforcement. With several property owners and varying enforcement, the parking lots is a classic "tragedy of the commons" where enforcement and control remain unclear.

Zoning and Development Potential:
The Glenmont Shopping Center is located in the Commercial Residential (CR) zone. This zone is intended for higher density mixed uses, particularly near transit. It allows a wide range of building types, including apartments, townhomes, duplexes, detached homes, multi-use buildings, and general commercial/industrial building types.

Under "standard method" development, FAR in the CR zone is limited to 0.5. The higher limits shown on [Montgomery County's official zoning map] are only applicable to "optional method" development. Under the optional method, which uses a point system to assess public benefits provided by a developer, a developer could theoretically achieve up to a 3.0 total FAR depending on their point score, with commercial and residential FAR each capped at 2.5 FAR and height limited to 120 feet. Thus, in order to achieve the maximum 3.0 FAR, a developer would need to propose a mix of both commercial and residential uses. FAR averaging across multiple parcels is allowed for contiguous parcels that are part of the same development plan. The maximum height of 120 feet would likely not be a limiting factor on development, because a 12-story building reaching 120 feet (assuming 10-foot floors) would only consume about 25 percent of the approximately 19 acres of gross land area before reaching the site's maximum allowable FAR. Less expensive construction types, such as four- to five-story wood-frame mixed-use structures on a concrete podium, would be more economical. Such structures would consume about 42 to 50 percent of the gross land area before reaching the maximum allowable FAR. Glenmont Shopping Center would automatically be eligible for transit proximity points under the optional development method due to its proximity to the Glenmont Metro Station. The various other public benefits a developer can provide and their corresponding point values are described in Title 59 Division 3 Section 4.7.3 of the Montgomery County Code. In addition to the FAR awarded under the point system, density and height bonuses are also allowed for providing greater than 12.5 percent of gross residential floor area as moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUS) as described in Montgomery County Code Zoning Code (Title 59 Division 3 Section 4.5.2(C)). Such incentives could allow more of the gross land area to be developed even beyond the 3.0 FAR limit and the 120-foot height limit.

Engagement Findings:

Ochoa Urban Collaborative (OUC) interviewed nine businesses within the Glenmont Shopping Center during five site visits conducted on July 29 (Monday afternoon), August 2 (Friday evening), August 23 (Friday afternoon), August 24 (Saturday morning), and August 29 (Thursday afternoon). OUC also observed the informal business ecosystem during these visits. Two informal businesses were observed and interviewed, along with seven brick-and-mortar businesses.

Businesses interviewed (Click here for survey questions):

- Informal:
  - Antojitos Centroamericano (informal Central American snack business located to the west of the Sunoco)
  - Tacos Don Perez (informal taco business located to the east of the Sunoco)
- Formal/Brick-and-Mortar:
  - Staples (office supply store)
  - Junie's (Korean corn dogs and burgers/sandwiches)
  - Irena's Pupusas (Salvadoran restaurant/bar)
  - Discount Deal 2 (liquidation and bin store)
  - Meheret Ethiopian Market (Ethiopian market)

- Don Pollo (fast casual rotisserie chicken restaurant)
- Yett Gol (Korean Restaurant)

Key Findings:

- Limited Redevelopment Potential: The shopping center has 12 owners across 14 parcels, plus high occupancy with only 3,750 sq. ft. of vacant space. Although some redevelopment is happening on adjacent parcels, the consulting team could not determine whether redevelopment was imminent.
- Business Diversity: The shopping center hosts a variety of businesses, including restaurants (Korean, Central American, fast casual rotisserie chicken), an Ethiopian market, and a liquidation store, indicating a diverse array of cultural and commercial offerings. According to business owners and employees, unique products such as Korean corndogs from Junie's and papusas from Irena's draw customers from outside of the neighborhood.
- Business Longevity: Some businesses have been in operation for decades, such as a Korean restaurant with 30 years of experience, while others are newer, such as the Ethiopian market and liquidation store, which have only been open for about a month.
- Challenges Faced: Several businesses face challenges outside their business related to homelessness, alcoholism, and neighborhood safety, particularly issues like nearby stabbings and disruptive behavior from teenagers. These concerns are likely impacting foot traffic and the overall business environment. For example, one business owner has had problems with public urination near his establishment. He also expressed that the shopping center starts to feel unsafe by around 10pm. A manager at another business said that it can take 30 minutes for the police to arrive even though they are located across Randolph Rd. An informal business owner also expressed concerns about unhoused individuals committing petty crime and bothering customers.
- Location Benefits: Many business owners indicate that the location works well for them due to customer recognition and stability.
- Assistance from the County: Several businesses indicated they have not received much, if any, assistance from the county for improving their operations, suggesting a gap in support services for small businesses in the area. Only two business owners we interviewed were aware that the county provided any assistance, and only one had received any assistance (a promotion on the MoCo show). Three businesses indicated they would be interested in assistance, including with marketing. On site visits, the team observed that some informal businesses could use assistance with finding ways to comply with county regulations while still meeting their needs for shade and public display of merchandise.
- Plans for the Future: Some businesses have long-term plans to stay in the area, while others face month-to-month leases and a more uncertain outlook. One long-term business owner is seeking to sell their business and retire but faces language access issues.

Recommendations:

1. **Multilingual Communication:** Provide flyers in multiple languages, including Spanish, Chinese, Korean, and Amharic, to inform businesses of upcoming public meetings and ensure accessibility for diverse business owners.
2. **Collaboration with Regional Service Offices:** Planners should coordinate with community engagement staff from the Regional Service Offices to ensure that business owners are informed and prepared in the event of redevelopment.
3. **Dedicated Small Business Liaison:** The Small Business Center should assign a dedicated liaison to support businesses, particularly those that have been established for over 10 years, offering continuity and targeted assistance.
4. **Support for Food Trucks:** The Small Business Center liaison, fluent in Spanish, should work closely with the two food trucks at the shopping center, providing assistance with permitting and compliance issues to ensure their continued success.
5. **Ongoing Monitoring of Informal Business Activity:** The Small Business Center should collaborate with the Montgomery County Planning Department to monitor informal business activity at Glenmont Shopping Center, assessing long-term needs and ensuring proper visibility and integration in future development plans.
6. **Bolster Safety for Customers:** In partnership with the Montgomery County Police Department, the Regional Service Center should explore additional grants to increase safety for customers and business owners, especially at night. For example, the state has provided safety grants that funded video cameras and other measures for crime prevention for commercial districts. Montgomery County Police also have highly visible mobile video cameras that clearly indicate that an area is being surveilled.

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Appendix A: Inventory Categories Defined

Neighborhood Goods & Services (NG&S): This category includes establishments that depend on the patronage of residents and workers, such as grocery stores, drugstores, florists, bakeries, dry cleaners, laundromats, hair and nail salons, and similar uses. NG&S retailers rely on spending from nearby residents, students, and employees generally located within a one-mile radius. NG&S is “convenience-based” retail; it must be close, with easy access, as these retail services meet daily and weekly needs.

Food & Beverage (F&B): This category includes establishments that serve food and/or alcohol consumed on-premises. Retailers in the F&B category include sit-down restaurants, cafes, bars, coffee shops, sandwich shops, ice cream shops, “quick-bite” establishments, fast-food restaurants, and similar uses. F&B establishments can attract customers from a greater distance than NG&S retailers, primarily when they are clustered. A larger number of patrons will be interested in a group of F&B establishments that offer various options.

General Merchandise, Apparel, Furniture, and Other (GAFO): This category includes clothing stores, furniture stores, bookstores, jewelry stores, gift boutiques, pet stores, home goods stores, antique shops, electronics stores, and similar uses. GAFO retailers face a tremendous amount of competition in stores and online, for a relatively small percentage of household expenditures. Successful GAFO stores attract customers from long distances. However, these stores also rely on the exposure and foot traffic generated by an anchor tenant that draws people with the same customer profile.

Non-Retail Services (NRS): Non-retail users often found in ground-level sites with street frontage include professional offices (attorneys, accountants, architects, engineers, and similar), daycare and educational facilities, religious facilities, and studio offices. Customers of these businesses often are associated with scheduled visits based on recurring or irregular need-based interactions for a varied duration. Stores do not require the same visibility and accessibility principles that more greatly benefit retail businesses.

Gym: This category includes fitness centers, health clubs, yoga studios, Pilates studios, martial arts studios, and other recreational or athletic facilities. Gyms typically draw patrons from the surrounding area, especially those within a short commute or walking distance, making them highly dependent on local residents and workers. However, larger or specialized gyms may attract a broader audience from a greater distance, especially if they offer unique programs, facilities, or classes. Gyms contribute to the vibrancy of a commercial area by increasing daily foot traffic and creating opportunities for adjacent businesses, such as health food shops, cafes, and wellness-related retail.

Vacant: This category refers to unoccupied retail, service, or office spaces that were previously leased or developed for commercial use but are currently not in use. Vacancies can occur for various reasons, including changing market conditions, lease expirations, or redevelopment plans. Vacant spaces can impact the vitality of a retail corridor by reducing foot traffic and creating gaps in the streetscape. However, they also present opportunities for new tenants, revitalization efforts, or adaptive reuse, particularly in areas undergoing transformation or redevelopment, as seen in mixed-use and infill development projects.

Appendix B: Site Plan

A: Taco Don Perez
B: Antojitos Centroamericano
C: Trucks and Buses