

GERMANTOWN SECTOR PLAN AMENDMENT




Emerging Ideas



Description

Planning Staff will brief the Planning Board on emerging ideas for the Germantown Sector Plan Amendment.

Planning Staff

	Jamey Pratt, Planner III, Upcounty Planning Division Jamey.Pratt@montgomeryplanning.org , 301-495-4588
	Donnell Zeigler, Planning Supervisor, Upcounty Planning Division Donnell.Zeigler@montgomeryplanning.org , 301-495-4511
	Patrick Butler, Chief, Upcounty Planning Division Patrick.Butler@montgomeryplanning.org , 301-495-4561

- The Germantown Sector Plan Amendment is a comprehensive master plan amendment that will evaluate and make recommendations for land use, zoning, urban design, transportation, environment, historic preservation, and community facilities, as well as incorporate countywide initiatives and policies. The plan area closely matches the area covered by the 2009 *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan*.
- Planning Staff will brief the Planning Board on emerging ideas for the plan, including the plan vision, the goals of the plan, and strategies to reach the goals. These emerging ideas have been informed by extensive community feedback, gathered through outreach, engagement sessions, and public input. This ensures the plan reflects the priorities, concerns, and aspirations of the residents we serve. This session is designed to share early concepts, invite discussion, and gather feedback from the Board to help shape our preliminary recommendations.



MASTER PLAN INFORMATION

Plan Phase

Preliminary Recommendations

Lead Planner

Jamey Pratt

Staff Contact

Jamey.Pratt@montgomeryplanning.org

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Upcounty Division

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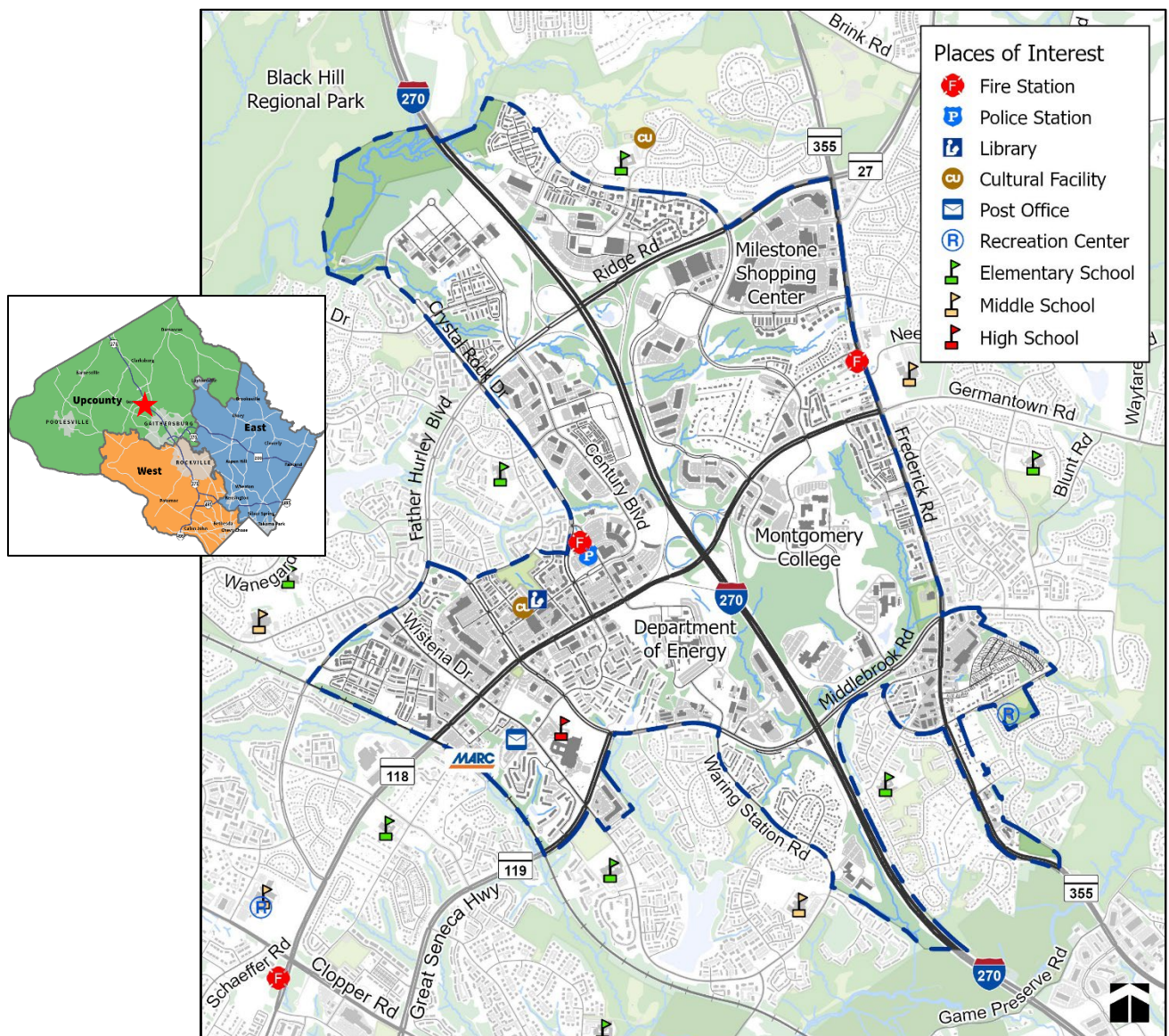


Figure 1. Plan area map.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

This report contains emerging ideas for the Germantown Sector Plan Amendment (“GSPA” or “Plan”). The GSPA aims to transform Germantown into a better-connected, more complete community, featuring walkable neighborhoods with safer streets and ample opportunities for residents to recreate and interact. The emerging ideas in this report are informed by the Plan area’s existing conditions, analysis by Planning Staff, feedback from the community, an internal staff design charrette, conversations with landowners, and other sources. The ideas are presented as an overall plan vision, plan goals, strategies to reach these goals, and a framework diagram that illustrates many of the strategies.

Planning Staff conducted work on the earlier Germantown Employment Area Study (“Study”) throughout much of 2024. The Study assessed the state of employment and evaluated the land use and zoning recommendations in the area covered by the 2009 *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan* (“2009 Plan”). The Study included community outreach and engagement, an employment and economic analysis, and scenario modeling of potential alternative futures for the Germantown activity centers along I-270.

Early findings of the Study indicated that a plan amendment would be necessary to respond to market conditions and provide recommendations to better guide the Plan area’s future. Some of the more important findings include:

- The 2009 Plan assumed that there would be massive growth in the office market in Germantown, and the increase in the number of employees would be accompanied by an increase in the amount of multifamily housing. Instead, changing trends in office location preferences, the effects of the Great Recession, and a change in interest rate markets has stalled both office and multifamily housing development in many areas.
- The 2009 Plan contained parcel-specific recommendations on many of the key properties in the Plan area that put caps on the proportion of a site that could be developed with residential units, including one case where a maximum of 20% residential units is recommended. Given that there is little interest in developing new office space in Germantown and that there are property owners with high office vacancy rates that would like to redevelop their properties with more housing, these plan recommendations need to be revisited to provide more flexibility to respond to market changes.
- A new zone, TMX, was created and applied to most of the developable properties in Germantown in the 2009 Plan. The TMX (Transit Mixed Use) zone included a requirement that any development over a density of 0.5 FAR purchase Building Lot Termination (BLT) easements at a rate which is now seven times higher than in any other area of the county. (The TMX zone was replaced by CR Zones and an overlay zone that maintains the BLT purchase requirement with the Zoning Code rewrite in 2014.) A new master plan is necessary to revise the BLT requirement.

- The 2009 Plan saw the completion of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) as critical to the plan’s success. The CCT was never built, so the transit-oriented development envisioned in the plan never materialized.

In response to these findings, on November 12, 2024, the County Council approved an update to the Planning Department’s work program to transition the Study into an amendment of the 2009 Plan. The Planning Board approved the Scope of Work for the Germantown Sector Plan Amendment on February 20, 2025, where they also received a briefing on the existing conditions of the Plan area and a summary of community feedback up to that date.

Since the approval of the Scope of Work, the planning team, with assistance from an engagement consultant, Brick & Story, has conducted a second round of community outreach and engagement, culminating in the Community Engagement Report presented to the Board on November 13, 2025. Montgomery Planning has also contracted with a consultant, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin (VHB), to perform detailed traffic analysis of existing and proposed conditions in the Plan area. This consulting work is ongoing; the planning team will use the results of VHB’s analysis in formulating transportation recommendations.

The emerging ideas and other planning work mentioned above will ultimately inform the Plan’s recommendations for zoning, land use, urban design, housing, transportation, the environment, public facilities, economic development, historic preservation, and other areas. In addition to amending the 2009 Plan, the Plan will amend portions of the 1989 *Germantown Master Plan*, the 2019 *MARC Rail Communities Plan*, and the 2020 *Germantown Plan for the Town Sector Zone*. The Plan may also amend countywide functional master plans, such as the *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*, the *Pedestrian Master Plan*, and the *Bicycle Master Plan*.

The project webpage for the GSPA is www.montgomeryplanning.org/gspa/.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SUMMARY

The communications and equitable engagement approach for the Germantown Sector Plan Amendment builds directly on the foundation established through the 2024 Germantown Employment Area Study, which included extensive community outreach, an online questionnaire, stakeholder meetings, pop-up events, and in-person engagement opportunities. The insights gathered during the Study, ranging from priorities around safety, connectivity, economic vibrancy, and housing affordability, became the starting point for the plan’s engagement strategy, ensuring continuity and honoring what the community had already shared. Building from this early phase, the plan broadened and deepened outreach, focusing intentionally on meeting people where they are, strengthening partnerships with local businesses, and expanding opportunities for underrepresented voices to shape the vision for Germantown’s future. This iterative, community-forward approach ensures that both residents and business owners are not only heard but central to the development of recommendations that reflect the area’s needs and aspirations.

The emerging ideas are largely a response to the community feedback we received. This summary of the community feedback was garnered through additional engagement events, a new questionnaire, and public meetings. The team presented a summary of engagement activities to the Planning Board on November 13, 2025 ([link to staff report](#)).

Community feedback for Germantown highlights a strong desire for improved safety, both in terms of pedestrian, bicycling, and traffic conditions, as well as reducing crime. Residents value convenient access to shopping, dining, parks, services, and cultural amenities, and they want to see existing green spaces preserved and enhanced. While Germantown offers many parks and trails, people often need to drive to reach larger parks and would like more walkable connections. The area's ethnic and racial diversity is seen as a defining strength, contributing to cultural richness and inclusivity.

Residents identified their most valued places as Black Hill Regional Park, Germantown Library, the Maryland SoccerPlex and South Germantown Recreational Park, and the BlackRock Center for the Arts. For the Town Center, residents envision more public art, inviting gathering spaces, pedestrian-friendly streets, diverse dining options, improved parking, and activities for all ages.

Transportation remains car-dependent, with most residents driving for commutes, though some walk or use transit. People want safer walking and biking routes and better bus service, including more frequent trips, extended hours, and improved lighting. When asked about their top priorities for housing, residents tended to prioritize the location of the housing. Specifically, they are seeking neighborhoods with low crime, good schools, and access to amenities over physical housing characteristics, while affordability is the top concern, even in Germantown's relatively affordable market. Family-sized homes are also in demand.

Environmental concerns include loss of biodiversity, tree canopy reduction, and extreme heat. Residents favor sustainability measures that create more natural spaces and expand walking and biking paths.

ROADS AS BARRIERS

One thing has been clear from the outset of the Plan: the main roads in the Plan area act as barriers between neighborhoods in the Town Center and throughout the Plan area. The rights-of-way of many of the roads are 150 feet wide, and traffic flows at high speeds, making crossing on foot or bike uncomfortable. The distance between marked crosswalks is sometimes considerably larger than the recommended 600-foot maximum spacing in Town Centers. Some intersections lack crosswalks on one or more legs of an intersection, requiring pedestrians to cross multiple times to get across a single street. Planned separated bike lanes and sidepaths have not been constructed in many locations in the Plan area.

Many residents do not feel safe walking or biking in Germantown. Several of the roads in the Plan area have been identified as High Injury Network (HIN) road segments by the county's Vision Zero team. HIN roads are those with the highest rates of serious and fatal crashes in the county. Germantown is one of three communities (along with Wheaton and Aspen Hill) identified as having the highest concentrations of serious and fatal crashes. Two of the top 10 state-maintained HIN road segments in the county and two of the top 10 county-maintained HIN road segments are in the Plan area. Several other road segments in Germantown are also identified as HIN segments. A primary focus of this Plan is to remove these barriers by creating a safe and inviting network of walkable and bikeable streets.

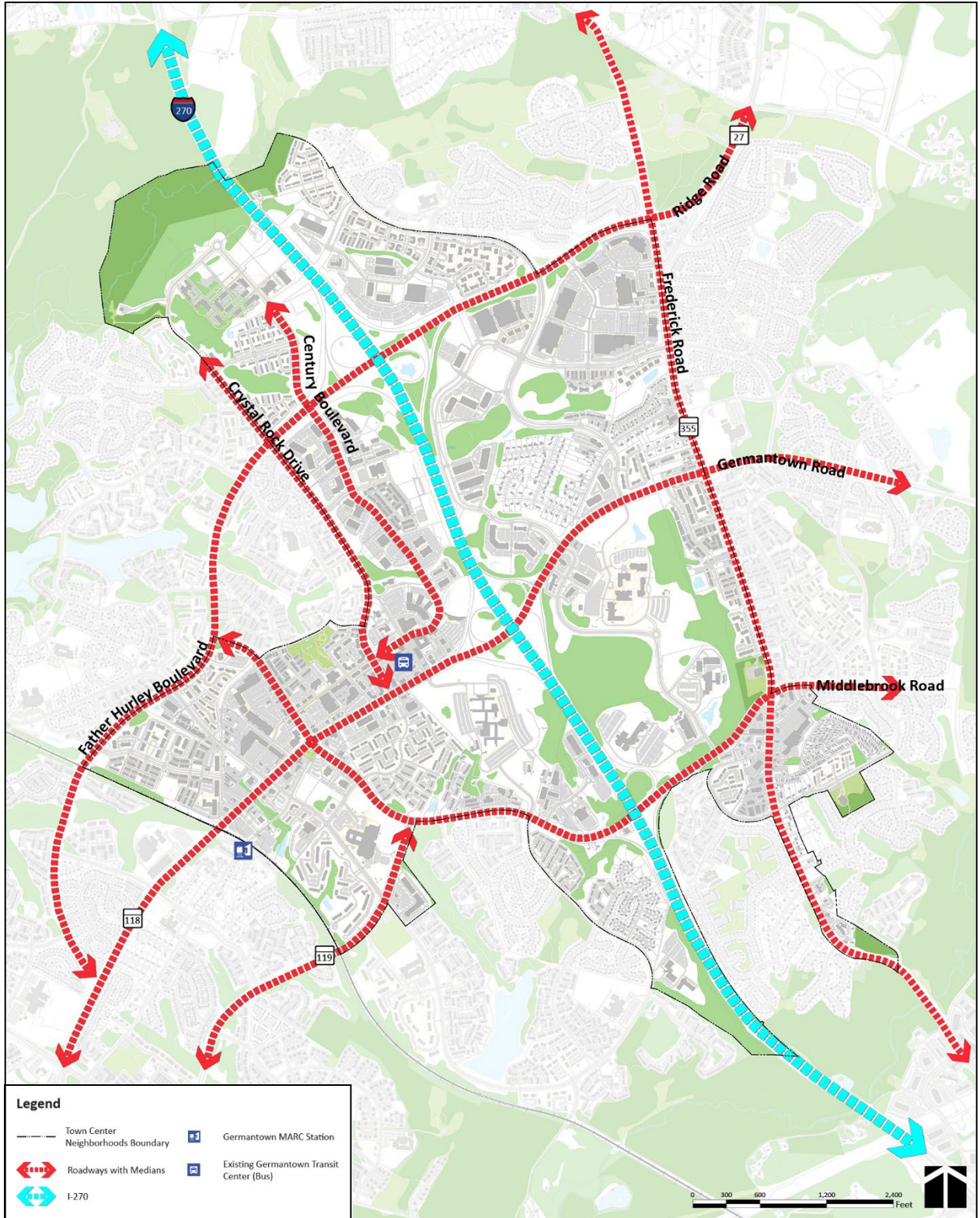


Figure 2. Map of the Plan area emphasizing the main roads, which act as barriers to pedestrians and bicyclists.

EMERGING IDEAS

OVERVIEW

The planning team combined the feedback from both the Study and the more recent outreach efforts, the existing conditions, the output of an internal design charrette, and additional analyses to develop the emerging ideas outlined here. These ideas are grounded in Maryland’s eight Sustainable Growth Planning Principles, which balance economic, social, and environmental needs for current and future generations in the areas of land use, transportation, housing, the economy, equity, resilience, public places, and ecological systems. These principles, like *Thrive Montgomery 2050*, prioritize development within population centers like Germantown that are already served by existing infrastructure and public facilities.

We begin with a vision for the Plan area, then present the main goals of the Plan. A series of framework maps is then used to illustrate the strategies that will help realize the vision and goals.

DRAFT VISION

The following is the overall vision for the Plan:

Germantown is envisioned as a connected, inclusive, and resilient community that celebrates its rich diversity and provides a strong sense of belonging. Anchored by vibrant activity centers and a welcoming Town Center, a central pedestrian-oriented corridor organizes movement and public life, linking key destinations with walkable streets, safe crossings, and accessible transit. Neighborhoods are well connected for walking, biking, and transit, enabling residents to easily reach parks, services, and neighboring areas.

Through intentional design, flexible land use, and green infrastructure, Germantown supports complete, convenient living and offers a wide range of housing, recreation, and cultural experiences. Parks are active and inviting, public spaces reflect community identity, and the built environment promotes sustainability, equity, and safety for all.

DRAFT GOALS

The following are the main goals of the Plan:

- **Vibrant Neighborhood Hubs**
Germantown is a network of walkable, mixed-use activity centers that serve as everyday destinations for living, working, and gathering.
- **A Civic Heart in the Town Center**
Germantown’s Town Center is the symbolic and functional heart of public life—home to civic events, cultural institutions, and shared community spaces.

- **Connected Mobility for All**
Germantown offers safe, accessible, and seamless transportation options that connect people to places by foot, bike, transit, car, or micromobility options.
- **Inclusive and Context-Sensitive Growth**
Germantown supports diverse development that reflects the character of its neighborhoods and responds to evolving community needs. Germantown provides a wide range of housing options that are affordable, accessible, and adaptable to different life stages and household types.
- **Parks, Recreation, and Public Spaces for Community Wellbeing**
Germantown’s parks and public spaces strengthen community connections, encourage physical activity, and protect greenspaces and natural resources in a major growth center of the county.
- **Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience**
Germantown is committed to environmental protection and is prepared for the challenges of climate change through resilient infrastructure and green practices.

Each of these goals is supported by multiple strategies. Many ideas fall into more than one area, so the ultimate Plan recommendations will frequently cross-reference multiple strategies and goals. A series of framework maps illustrate many of the strategies visually—each map adds new layers on top of the previous map. The strategies to reach the goals above are described within the context of each framework map. The full list of goals and strategies is attached.

DRAFT PLAN FRAMEWORK – TOWN CENTER

Planning Staff developed framework maps at two scales: one for the entire Plan area and one for the Town Center and immediately adjacent neighborhoods. This report section illustrates many of the Plan’s goals and strategies within the Town Center area as a series of maps, with each map building on the previous map, concluding with the complete framework map for the Town Center neighborhoods. Additional context is provided before each framework map to explain how the specified strategies are intended to help achieve the goals of the Plan. The framework map for the entire Plan area with the same concepts illustrated is shown in the next section.

The “big idea” for the Town Center area is a series of five activity centers linked by a walkable “central spine” from the Germantown MARC Rail station and along Century Boulevard up to Father Hurley Boulevard. This area would be further served by improved bicycling, pedestrian, and transit options, enhanced street crossings, smaller internal blocks, and one or more gateway features welcoming people to Germantown. Additional green spaces and parks are proposed within each neighborhood, and shared structured parking facilities are encouraged to maximize developable areas and allow people to park once and walk to multiple destinations. It may be possible to reclaim portions of the space previously dedicated for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) right-of-way to be used for active transportation, recreation, and ecological functions. Placemaking, wayfinding, and branding initiatives currently being spearheaded by the Gaithersburg-Germantown Chamber of Commerce, which will help establish a sense of place in Germantown, could be incorporated into the Plan’s recommendations for the Town Center.

Activity Centers

The primary organizing principle for the Plan area is a network of walkable, mixed-use activity centers that serve as everyday destinations for living, working, and gathering. Some activity centers, such as the Town Commons in front of the BlackRock Center for the Arts, already exist, whereas others would evolve as development occurs. These activity centers are essential for implementing the concepts of complete communities and 15-minute living championed in the county's general plan, *Thrive Montgomery 2050*.

The map in Figure 3 shows a series of five conceptual activity centers, where the circles are drawn with a ¼-mile radius to illustrate a 5-minute walk from a central point. Each activity center has a distinct flavor; from north to south, they are:

- **Mid-Century:** centered on the communities along the central portion of Century Boulevard north of the Town Center; currently home to several office parks, there has been recent interest to redevelop some of the sites to provide residential units, and there are approved but unbuilt residential units and commercial uses on the east side of the activity center
- **Town Center East:** home to the Germantown Transit Center, this activity center is the most transit-friendly area in Germantown; the Fairchild Apartments building is the best example of new development in Germantown that closely followed the recommendations of the 2009 Plan; TopGolf is a popular regional destination in the Plan area
- **Town Center:** includes the BlackRock Center for the Arts, the Town Commons, the Germantown Library, the most active commercial section of Century Boulevard, and the Germantown Town Center Urban Park
- **Town Center West:** contains the Upcounty Regional Services Center and an extension of Century Boulevard through shopping centers that could be redeveloped
- **MARC Station:** adjacent to the Germantown MARC Station and near Seneca Valley High School; redevelopment of the MARC station parking lots into a mixed-use, primarily residential development has been a long-standing goal for this activity center

An urban service district, such as an Urban District or Business Improvement District, would help manage open space and organize community events.

Illustrated Strategies:

- **Establish and Strengthen Activity Centers as the Framework for Community Life**
Define and enhance a network of walkable, mixed-use activity centers that serve as focal points for daily needs, services, and social interaction. These centers should support 15-minute living and complete communities by integrating housing, retail, public spaces, and mobility options.
- **Organize an Urban Service District**
Establish a sustainable and responsive urban service district to enhance public realm maintenance, safety, and identity in the Town Center and surrounding activity centers.

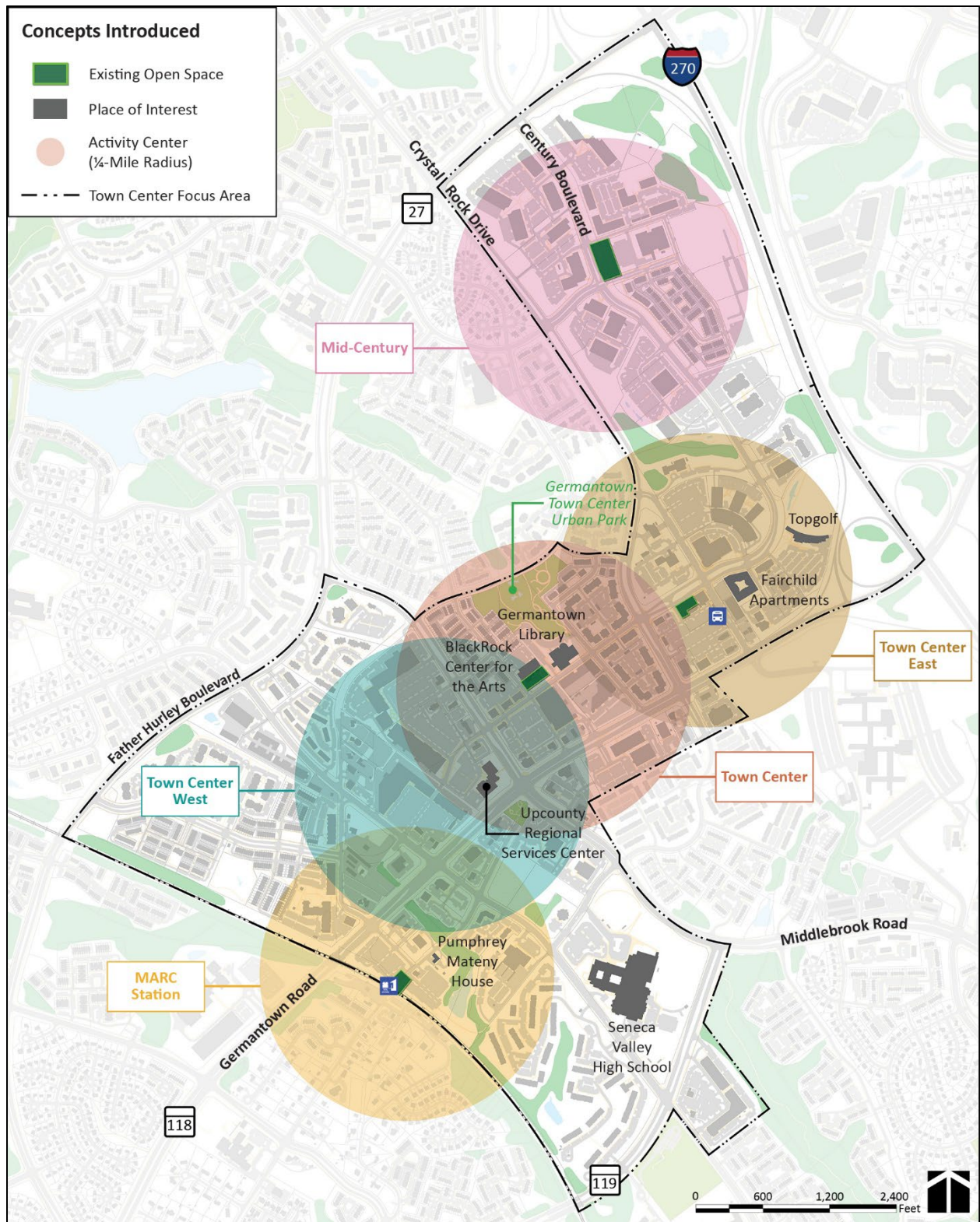


Figure 3. Map showing a series of activity centers from Father Hurley Boulevard to the MARC Rail station.

Multimodal Priority Corridor

The corridor begins at the MARC Station south of Germantown Road and connects to Century Boulevard at Dorsey Mill Road in the north (see Figure 4). The four-block segment of Century Boulevard between Middlebrook Road and Crystal Rock Drive is what people commonly think of as the “Germantown Town Center.” Anchored by the BlackRock Center for the Arts and the Germantown Library, this street, for the most part, is lined with storefronts. Most of the shops here are small restaurants or service-oriented businesses (e.g. nail salon, dry cleaner, medical offices, painting studio). The streetscape here has a strong urban design, with brick sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian-scale lighting, and entrances along the sidewalk. These concepts can be expanded in both directions along Century Boulevard as Germantown continues to develop. Upgraded street crossings throughout the Plan area are needed to help fulfill this vision.

Portions of previously dedicated right-of-way for the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) could be reclaimed on Century Boulevard from Crystal Rock Drive continuing north past Father Hurley Boulevard. While Corridor Connector dedicated bus lanes are still envisioned here, they may not require the full width once needed for the CCT.

Illustrated Strategies:

- **Link Town Center Activity Centers through a Central Corridor**
Develop a continuous “Multimodal Priority Corridor” that links the Town Center activity centers, serving as the organizing framework for movement, placemaking, and public life. This corridor, from the MARC Rail station to Father Hurley Boulevard, mostly along Century Boulevard, should prioritize walkability, bikeability, transit access, and green infrastructure, and act as a unifying element for the activity centers.
- **Focus on Century Boulevard**
Identify the central segment of Century Boulevard as the initial focus for pedestrian-oriented placemaking, beginning with the blocks between Middlebrook Road and Crystal Rock Drive. This corridor should serve as a focal point for enhanced streetscape design, pedestrian safety improvements, active ground-floor uses, and public realm investments, with the intent to extend it incrementally as development and community needs evolve. Consolidate incompatible uses and expand downtown-oriented development, especially near the transit center and police station.
- **Reclaim a Portion of the CCT Right-of-Way**
Reclaim a portion of the right-of-way previously dedicated along Century Boulevard for the Corridor Cities Transitway to be used for bikeways, wider sidewalks, or small-scale, nature-based community facilities, such as pocket parks, community gardens, exercise equipment, and increased tree canopy.
- **Upgrade Street Crossings**
Improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists at intersections, with an initial focus on crossings critical to the success of the Town Center activity centers. Provide additional street crossings where existing crossings are far apart. Use raised crosswalks along the Multimodal Priority Corridor in the Town Center and in other areas with lots of foot traffic.

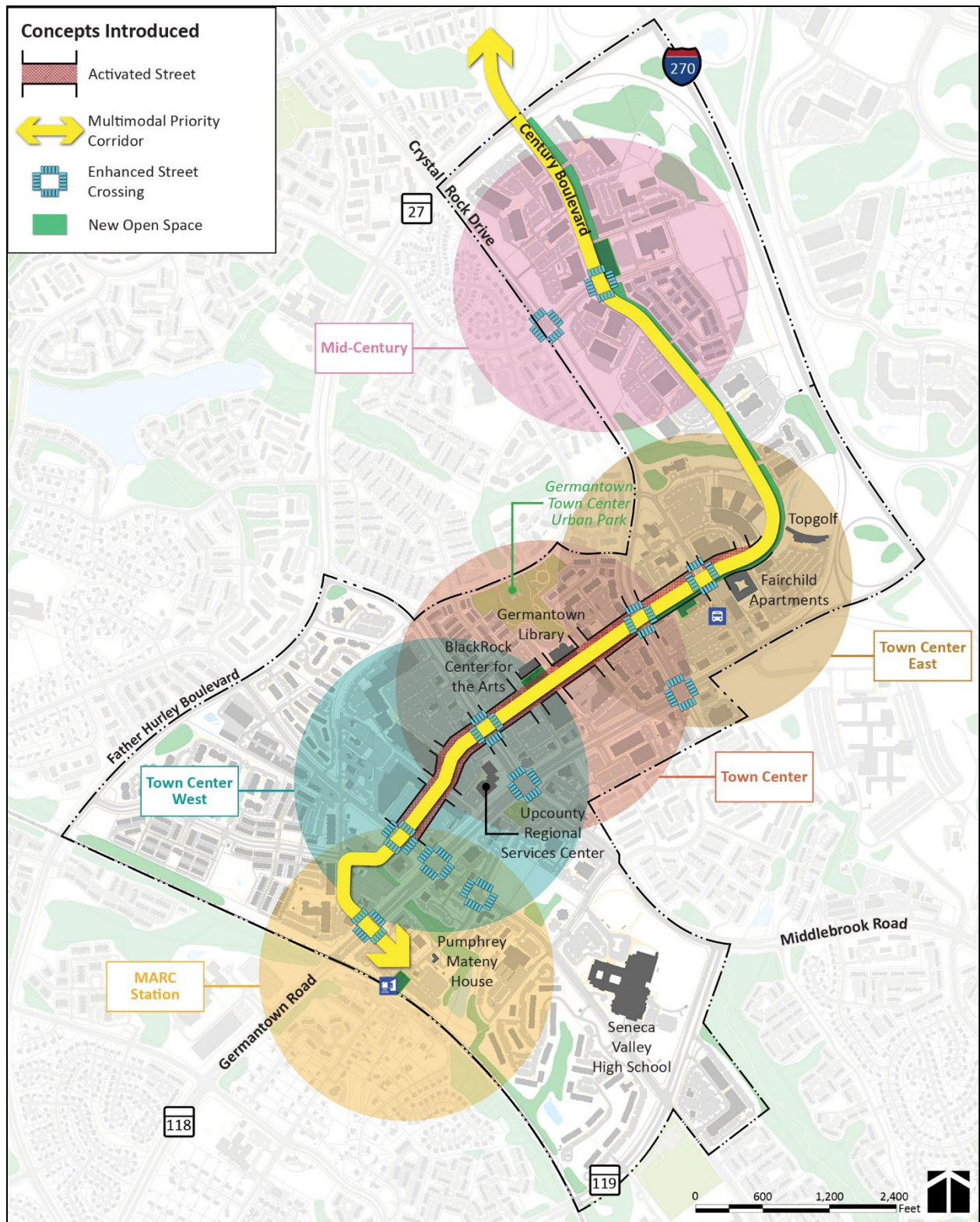


Figure 4. Map showing a "Multimodal Priority Corridor" running from the MARC Rail Station through the Town Center and continuing up Century Boulevard at least as far as Father Hurley Boulevard. Activated streets and priority improved street crossings are also shown.

(Re-)Developing Germantown

Germantown is located within the county's corridor-focused growth area in *Thrive Montgomery 2050*. Many properties in the Plan area are characterized by large surface parking lots, and there are still undeveloped and partially developed sites in the area (see Figure 5). This Plan aims to remove barriers to development, such as property specific development ratios in the 2009 Plan that favor office development over residential development and an expensive BLT (Building Lot Termination) purchase requirement. New zoning designations in the Plan area should allow for maximum development flexibility. Design guidelines or a form-based code could be used to encourage context-sensitive mixed-use development.

Germantown residents also want their community to be more of a "place." Central gathering spaces within each neighborhood can help establish a sense of place while also providing opportunities to fill gaps in park service and amenities.

Germantown residents told us that, while they love the parks in the area, there aren't many amenities in many of the local parks and they generally must drive to the larger regional parks. New parkland could be acquired to meet some of these needs, and new green spaces could be incorporated into new construction projects to provide needed amenities and gathering spaces.

Illustrated Strategies:

- **Encourage Infill Development**
Remove regulatory barriers and incentivize redevelopment of underutilized parcels. Promote development in Germantown to prevent urban sprawl into more remote parts of the county.
- **Promote Zoning Flexibility**
Apply zoning designations that provide for development flexibility. Explore form-based codes or design guidelines to support mixed-use and context-sensitive development. Support and build on Germantown's success as a regional research and development and manufacturing hub.
- **Establish or Enhance Central Gathering Spaces**
Design a public plaza or park in each activity center for social interaction and leisure. Promote and enhance the existing Town Commons in the Town Center as the central meeting place for Germantown.
- **Fill Gaps in Park Service**
Seek locations for new parks, amenities, and green spaces that fill existing gaps in service, serve diverse demographic groups, and guarantee equitable access to nature in one of the county's major growth corridors. Design these parks to function as central gathering spaces for activity centers where appropriate.
- **Integrate Green Space into Development**
Require or incentivize green space as part of new construction where appropriate to ensure access to nature as Germantown grows.

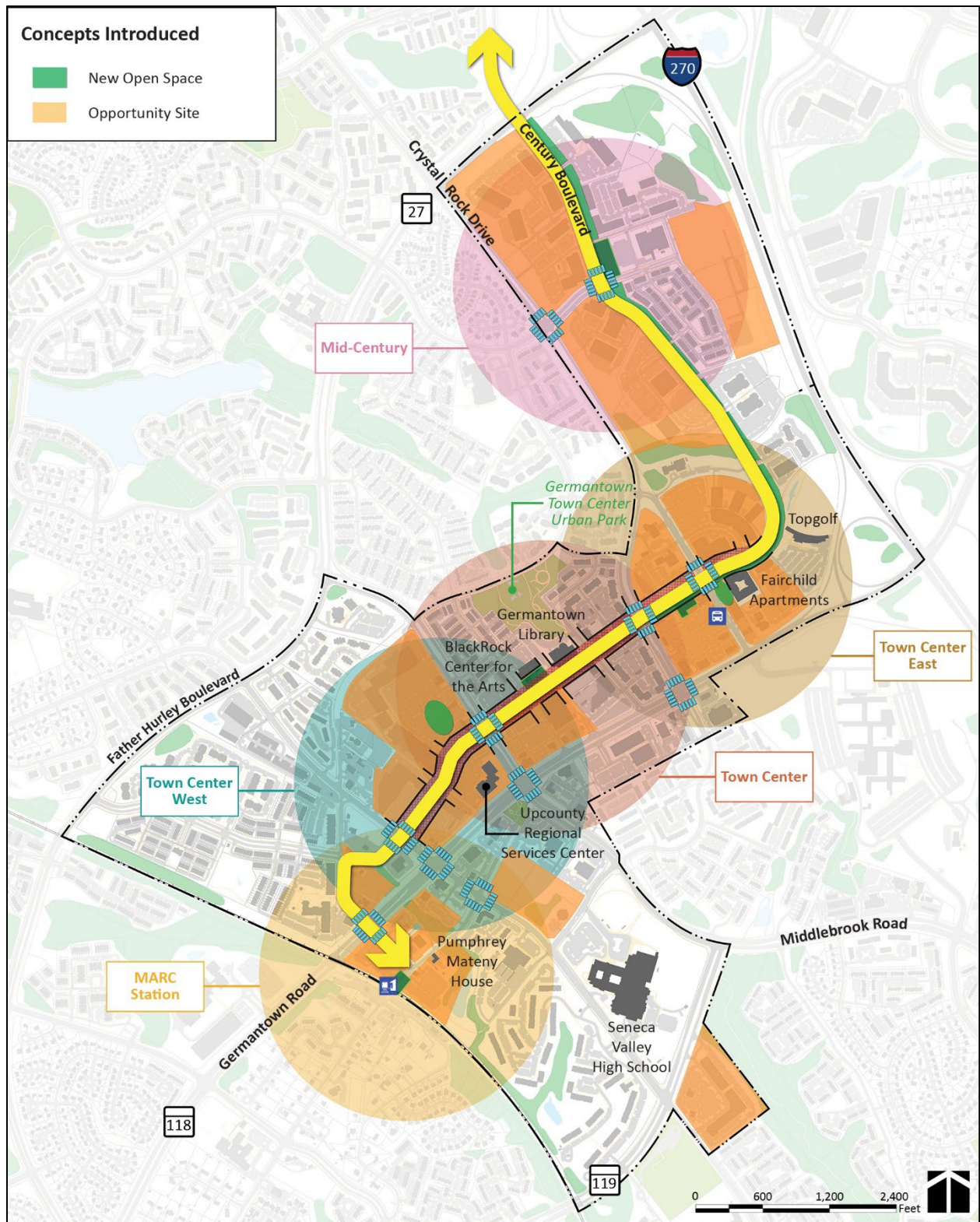


Figure 5. Map of Town Center neighborhoods with infill and greenfield development “opportunity sites.” Each activity center has an open area that can serve as a central gathering space for the neighborhood.

Completed Street Grid and Community Gateway

Much of Germantown is characterized by “super blocks,” with great distances between intersections and vehicular traffic funneled to a handful of very busy streets. An enhanced street grid would provide additional routing options for local trips of all modes, while offloading some local traffic from the regional connections through the Plan area (see Figure 6). Additional local streets would improve walkability, support transit use, and encourage neighborhood-scale development.

One or more landmark gateway features on Germantown Road would help build an identity for the Town Center. Potential locations: at Aircraft Drive (for those arriving from I-270 and other points east), at the CSX tracks (for those arriving from the west), and at Middlebrook and Germantown roads (for those arriving from either direction on Germantown Road or from the south on Middlebrook Road). A “Town Center” sign exists in one quadrant of the Germantown/Middlebrook intersection today, but it isn’t noticeable from all directions.

Illustrated Strategies:

- **Complete the Street Grid**

Maintain total roadway capacity but reallocate it to create a more efficient and resilient roadway network that provides multiple route options. Break up super blocks with a grid of smaller streets to enhance connectivity, provide more direct and intuitive site access to reduce traffic on major roads, improve walkability and bikeability, support transit, and encourage neighborhood-scale development within activity centers.

- **Create Town Center Gateways**

Develop one or more gateway landmark features along Germantown Road to notify arrival in the Town Center and to enhance community identity.

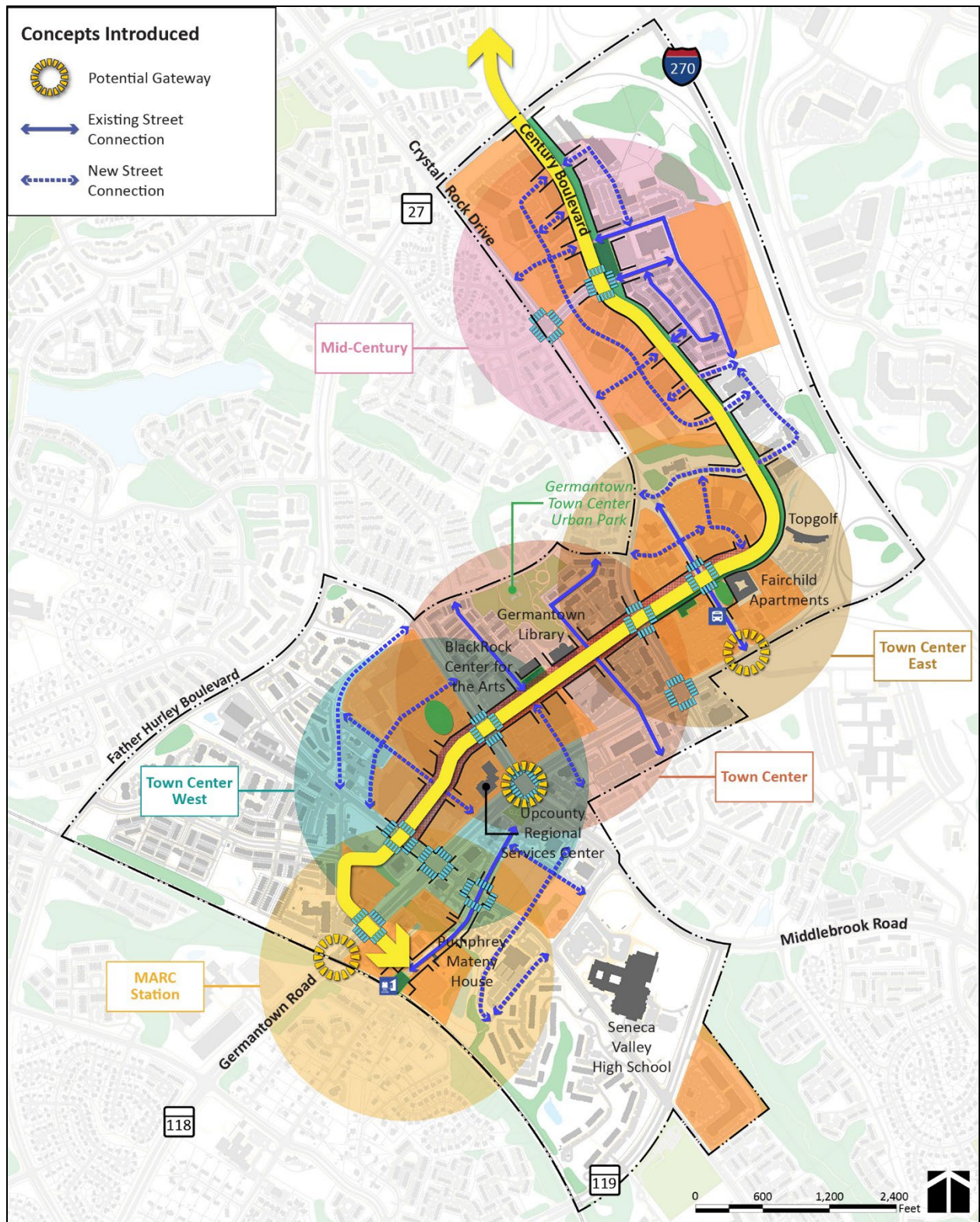


Figure 6. Map of Town Center neighborhoods with dashed blue lines illustrating where the street grid could be expanded to provide better connectivity. Potential gateway landmark feature locations are shown along Germantown Road.

Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Infrastructure

Pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure improvements are one of the top priorities of the Germantown Community. Residents want to be able to safely walk or bike to nearby locations such as shops and parks. We are also investigating whether new connections to parks are possible through existing greenways in the area. Wayfinding will help people get around and discover other parts of Germantown. New shared parking structures could replace large surface parking lots, helping create a more inviting urban form in Germantown (see Figure 7). It may also be appropriate to pursue a Parking Lot District.

Finally, the Germantown Transit Station is currently located in an underutilized area on the edge of the Town Center. While considering changes to land use, zoning, and reconfiguration of roadways within the plan area, staff will also explore the idea of relocating the transit center along the Multimodal Priority Corridor to potentially strengthen multimodal connections in the heart of the Plan area, better organize and align land use and transportation improvements, and expand accessibility and connectivity to the Town Center, while creating new opportunities for a more compact, mixed-use, and vibrant community with a more centrally located transit station. Future discussions about any potential site relocations will be coordinated with MCDOT, DGS, MCEDC, and other agency partners.

Illustrated Strategies:

- **Improve Bike and Pedestrian Infrastructure**
Fill gaps in the network to make non-motorized travel more attractive everywhere. Create clearly marked, safe pedestrian and bicycle routes for trips within the Town Center and between the outer Plan neighborhoods and the Town Center. Ensure new and retrofit development prioritizes direct pedestrian and bicycle access to sidewalks, trails, and bikeways. Build high-quality routes for regional bicycling trips.
- **Create Greenway Connections to Parks**
Use greenways and the reclaimed CCT right-of-way to connect neighborhoods and parks.
- **Provide Wayfinding**
Add wayfinding signage within the activity centers to help people easily navigate around the district. Install additional wayfinding signs throughout Germantown to direct people to other activity centers and places of interest. Use signage to designate suggested walking and bicycling loops; prioritize infrastructure improvements to support these loops.
- **Enhance Parking Design**
Integrate shared parking strategies and incentivize structured parking options.

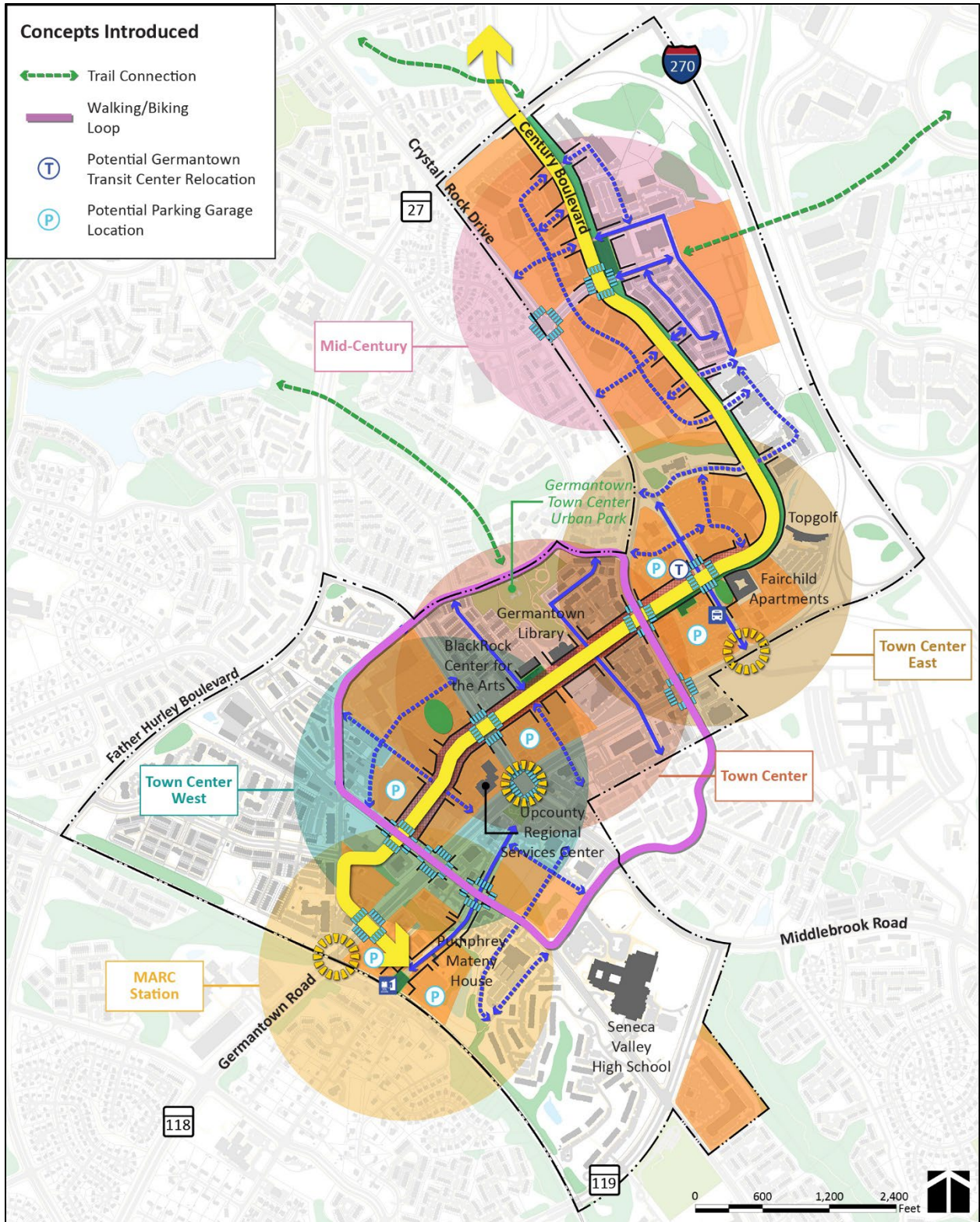


Figure 7. Final draft map framework for the Town Center area. Additional connections to parks (dashed green lines), a conceptual pedestrian/bike loop (dark pink line), potential locations for shared parking structures (P's), and a relocated transit station (T) are shown.

DRAFT PLAN FRAMEWORK – FULL PLAN AREA

The framework for the full Plan area, shown in Figure 8, contains most of the same concepts as the Town Center framework, but at a larger scale. Neighborhoods are organized around activity centers with central green spaces. Activity centers are connected by walking and bicycling routes and are well connected by transit. There are opportunity sites throughout the Plan area where new development could help create a stronger sense of community in each activity center. The Plan area also includes medium-industrial-zoned properties that are important for land uses not appropriate in other zones.

Each district contains one or more activity centers, with new green spaces and broken up “super blocks” creating a safer and more inviting environment for those walking or rolling through the neighborhoods and promoting community resilience. The Town Center branding efforts could be expanded to other portions of the Plan area as a part of public investment and private development to help tie all the Plan neighborhoods together.

An additional idea introduced at this scale is improved connectivity between districts and between the outer Plan districts and the Town Center neighborhoods. It is also critical to connect activity centers within the Plan boundary to the surrounding communities. Robust pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks are key components of improving connectivity within Germantown and to important regional destinations.

Additional Strategies Illustrated Here:

- **Link Outlying Districts to the Town Center**
Strengthen connections between peripheral activity centers and the core.
- **Repurpose Excess Roadway Space**
Reevaluate 6-lane rights-of-way to support bike lanes, wider sidewalks, or transit lanes and to ensure that the community is not divided by oversized roads.
- **Develop a Robust Transit System**
Ensure Germantown residents have safe, direct, and reliable transit connections within the Town Center, from surrounding neighborhoods into the Town Center, between activity centers, and to key regional destinations. Increase transit frequency and extend operating hours to make transit a more viable and appealing option. Introduce microtransit options and micromobility services to complement fixed-route transit and improve first-mile/last-mile connectivity.
- **Enhance Connectivity Across I-270**
Improve pedestrian, bike, and transit connections across the interstate.
- **Reinforce the Supply of Land for the County’s Innovation and Production Ecosystem**
Position the I-270 corridor from Germantown to Clarksburg as the center of the county’s satellite and advanced communications industry. Strengthen its role as a hub for life sciences R&D and manufacturing, and grow high value-added, exporting industries that create foundational 21st-century technologies. Provide large sites and modern facilities to meet these sectors’ needs and to ensure remaining appropriately sized sites are zoned to support sustainable economic growth and long-term competitiveness.

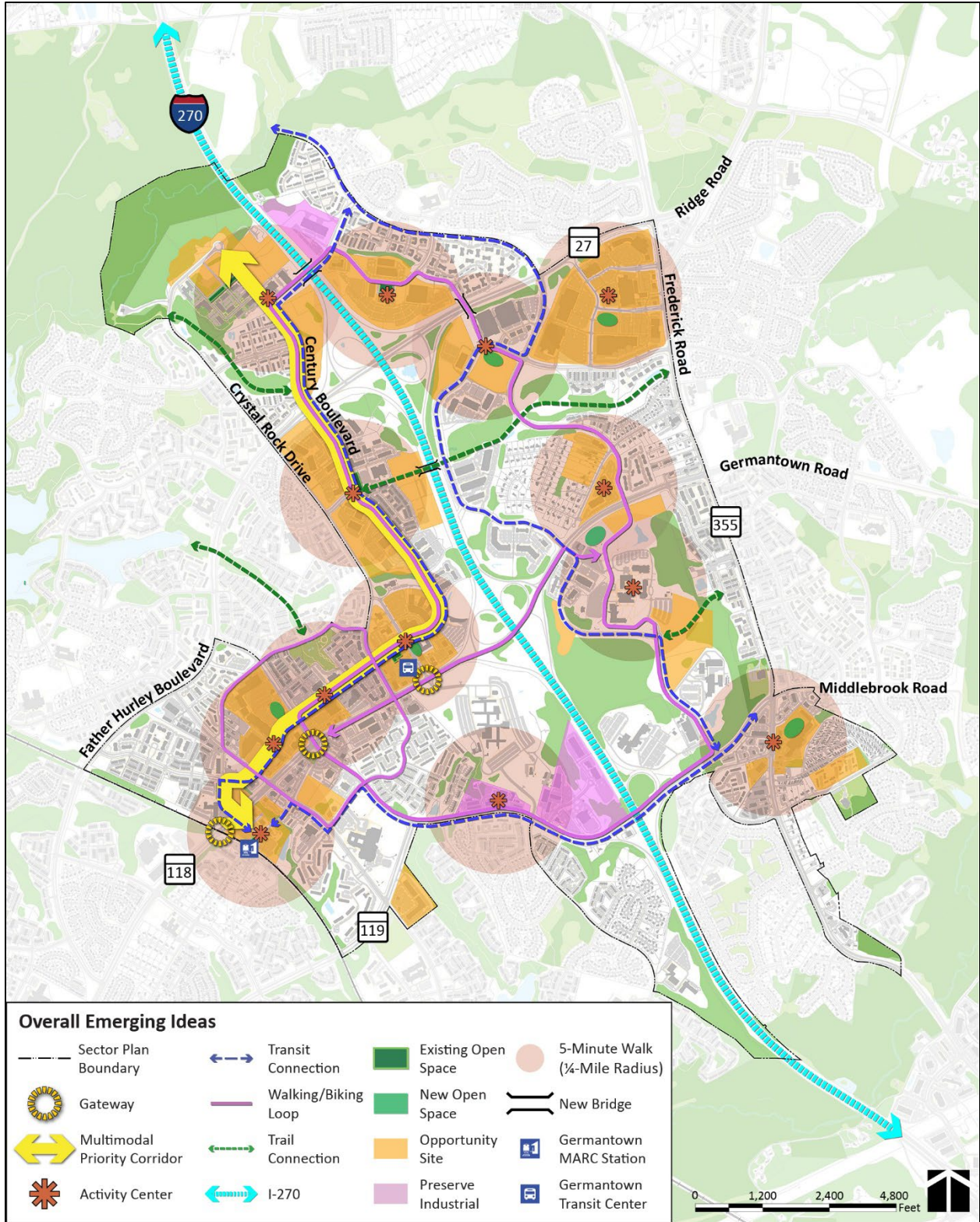


Figure 8. Draft framework map for the entire Plan area. Conceptual walking/biking and transit loops are intended to indicate improved connectivity throughout the Plan area and are not meant to imply specific routing. Industrial-Medium-zoned land in the Plan area is preserved.

AREAWIDE STRATEGIES

A few of the emerging ideas aren't conducive to mapping at the scale of the Plan framework. These strategies apply across the entire Plan area.

- **Encourage Public Art**
Incorporate public art, such as murals, sculptures, and interactive installations, into the design of buildings, streets and other infrastructure, and public spaces.
- **Provide a Range of Housing Types**
Encourage development of a wide range of housing types and sizes at varying price points, especially near transit stations, to suit different family sizes, income levels, and life stages. Incentivize the construction of affordable family-sized units.
- **Expand Recreational Opportunities**
Enhance existing parks and green spaces by adding a variety of amenities such as picnic areas, playgrounds, sports courts, community gardens, and other facilities that support active and passive use. Reflect community needs in these improvements to promote social interaction, health, and year-round enjoyment. Explore partnerships to formalize public use of Montgomery College's green spaces.
- **Improve Transportation Access to Parks**
Expand safe and accessible transportation connections to parks and recreation amenities by expanding transit and active transportation options and ensuring routes are direct and comfortable for all users.
- **Manage Natural and Cultural Resources**
Expand parkland and protected natural areas to manage critical natural resources. Promote community involvement in maintaining and enhancing parks and cultural assets to encourage a shared sense of responsibility and identity. Balance public access with preservation to ensure that natural habitats, water resources, and cultural heritage are protected for future generations.
- **Protect Water Quality**
Protect and enhance water quality in new and existing developments through more robust stormwater management utilizing facilities such as bioswales, rain gardens, and permeable pavements.
- **Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect**
Increase tree canopy, vegetated areas, cool roofs, and green roofs; reduce impervious surfaces; use lighter-colored pavement surfaces; and employ other strategies to cool the area.
- **Enhance Streetscape Greening**
Incorporate landscaping and shade elements into streets and public spaces.
- **Support Clean Energy**
Support clean energy solutions, adaptive reuse, and sustainable building practices.

- **Protect and Improve Air Quality**

Promote and improve non-auto transportation infrastructure and public transit options, create a mix of uses to reduce vehicle miles traveled, and use vegetated buffers to improve air quality.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Germantown residents take great pride in their community. Many people we spoke with said they love living in Germantown. They value the diversity of the community, the easy access to a large number of stores, the great nearby regional parks, and cultural institutions like BlackRock Center for the Arts and the Germantown Library. They hope to see what already exists made safer, better connected, and more accessible as Germantown continues to develop.

But our engagement process also revealed where residents and other visitors to Germantown would like to see improvements. Pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle safety concerns, as well as worries about crime, were the top priorities we heard across all groups. Affordable housing for both owners and renters was also cited as a top priority, especially since it will help Germantown maintain its diversity of residents.

The emerging ideas presented here address many of the concerns we heard from the community while preserving the things people like and setting up Germantown to become a more complete community for residents, workers, and visitors.

Following this briefing, Planning Staff will incorporate the Planning Board’s feedback into a full set of preliminary recommendations to bring to the Board and the public in early 2026. The team expects to bring the Working Draft Plan to the Planning Board for their consideration as the Public Hearing Draft in July 2026. Once the Planning Board accepts the Working Draft as the Public Hearing Draft and sets a Public Hearing date, Planning Staff will distribute the Draft Plan for public comment according to the Planning department’s notification guidelines.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft vision, goals, and strategies
- B. Enlarged conceptual framework maps