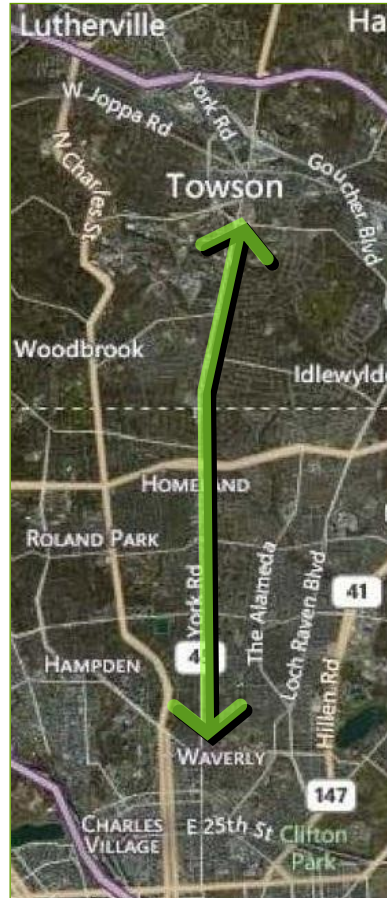


A ULI Advisory Services Technical Assistance Panel Report

Revitalizing the York Road Corridor

Baltimore, Maryland

June 18-19, 2013



About ULI Baltimore

ULI Baltimore is the local District Council for ULI – The Urban Land Institute. ULI Baltimore is a 501(c) 3, and serves Central Maryland and various other parts of Maryland through its outreach efforts. As a trusted convener for sharing knowledge, and as an unbiased source for timely land use information, ULI Baltimore provides a critical link to improving state and local land use policy and development practices.

ULI is a nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the institute now has more than 40,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines in private enterprise and public service.

As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information and experience among local, national and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

The objective of ULI Baltimore's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Greater Baltimore Metropolitan Region. Similar to other ULI District Councils throughout the country, ULI Baltimore utilizes its broad membership base to administer one and one-half day panels, offering objective and responsible advice to local stakeholders and decision makers on a diverse set of land use and real estate issues. These issues can range from site-specific projects to public policy strategies. The unique flexibility of the TAP program allows for a customized approach to specific contextual issues related to urban development.

ULI Baltimore would like to thank the TAP Committee that worked diligently to make this study possible:

Sean Davis, ULI Baltimore Chair
MRA/GTA

Addison Palmer, York Road TAP Committee Chair
STV Incorporated

Pauline Harris, ULI Baltimore District Council Coordinator
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Contents

Executive Summary	1
The Panel's Assignment	2
Introduction and History	4
Corridor Analysis	8
Vision and Overall Recommendations	10
Corridor Revitalization Framework Strategy	19
The Southern Gateway Node	20
The College and Neighborhood Node	24
The Entertainment Node	29
The Northern Gateway Node	35
Physical Design	37
Streetscape Sections	39
Mid-Block Crosswalks	41
Targeted Approaches to Implementation	42
Where to Begin	43

Executive Summary

In June of 2012, interested parties from the City of Baltimore, Govanstowne Business Association (GBA), York Road Partnership (YRP), Baltimore Development Corporation (BDC), 4th District City Councilman Bill Henry's office, Notre Dame University of Maryland, Morgan State University, Loyola University Maryland, and Cross Street Partners began meeting to vision a future for the York Road commercial corridor.

Following a series of meetings in November of 2012, this collaborative group agreed to pursue and finance an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) with an approximately 4 mile parameter of the commercial strips from 39th Street in the City to Towsontown Boulevard in the County.

By spring of 2013, additional interested parties included Baltimore County, Towson University, and the Greater Baltimore Committee.

In June 2013, a group of 8 ULI panelists came together for a two-day TAP process beginning with a tour of the area, continuing with interviews with diverse community stakeholders, and concluding with a public meeting. ULI Panel members shared their findings and recommendations with the over 100 residents, business owners, property owners, and other stakeholders present at the public meeting.

Herein, panelists present a vision to zip the corridor together, make overall recommendations to strengthen the four diverse commercial nodes, pose a framework strategy and develop targeted approaches to implement commercial corridor revitalization.



TAP Sponsors work with Baltimore ULI representatives to engage stakeholders



TAP Sponsors, City and County Representatives and ULI TAP Panelist collaborate on their observations and recommendations for the York Road corridor.



Area tour by TAP Panelists & Sponsors



Input session from stakeholders



Presentation of recommendations

The Panel's Assignment

Today, York Road (particularly in Baltimore City) lacks a consistently vibrant commercial corridor that serves the many needs of its existing neighborhood residents. While it does contain nodes of commercial development, the City portion of the corridor is generally perceived as aged, unmarketable, partially Un-walkable, and oftentimes unsafe – especially from 39th Street to Northern Parkway.

The ULI Panel was asked to determine how to revitalize the York Road commercial corridor, specifically focusing on the following aspects:

- Physical design and planning, including transportation, with easy to understand visuals;
- Market analysis and marketing/brand strategy, including impact from Towson Circle retail on the amenities of a City “main street” corridor; and
- Clear implementation strategies delineated to partners (i.e., State, City, GBA, YRP, Loyola, etc.)

The sponsors also identified the following questions for the panel:

- a. *The Market*
 - i. What is the market demand for new businesses and mixed-use development, including student housing?
 - ii. What should the marketing/branding strategy look like, especially given the impact of the retail and amenities in Towson?
 - iii. What specific policies and plans can York Road implement to leverage on the strength of Towson's commercial offerings? What to avoid?
- b. *Development Reality*
 - i. What revitalization strategies can position the corridor for a turnaround and sustainable growth?
 - ii. Where or how should revitalization efforts be focused or phased?
 - iii. Which of the identified nodes have the strongest potential for redevelopment and ability to bring about substantial positive change?
- c. *Design Quality*
 - i. How can specific revitalization efforts on York Road positively influence and strengthen surrounding residential neighborhoods?
 - ii. How can the residential, commercial, and institutional relationships benefit all parties/uses?
 - iii. What components of the streetscape are most promising for recreating a sense of place and the impression that one has entered a unique community?
 - iv. How can the relationship between Belvedere Square and York Road be strengthened without detracting from Belvedere Square? How does parking relate to the strength of Belvedere Square?

d. *Transportation*

- i. How can York Road be transformed into a more pedestrian-friendly mixed-use place without disrupting commuter traffic?

With the questions above, the panel embarked on a two-day work session. The panel met with a diverse array of stakeholders, toured the York Road corridor and its neighborhoods, engaged over 100 area residents and business owners for a half day work session, and discussed the vast amount of information gathered for the purposes of this panel.

As you will see in the following Technical Assistance Panel Report, the panel reviewed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and barriers of the York Road commercial corridor, present a vision theme for moving the commercial corridor forward, provide overall recommendations related to physical design and planning, and present a corridor revitalization framework strategy with easy to understand visuals and clear approaches to implementation.

Introduction and History

The York Road Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) boundary extends from 39th Street in the Pen Lucy/Guilford neighborhoods of Baltimore City north over the Baltimore County Line to Towsontown Boulevard in Towson, Baltimore County. While the data, context, and projects from Baltimore County are integral to the TAP process and recommendations, the TAP sponsors are most interested in the revitalization of the City sections of the York Road commercial corridor.

Baltimore City Corridor

The TAP boundary in Baltimore City extends from 39th Street in Pen Lucy/Guilford to the Baltimore County Line at Gittings and York Road. In addition to four existing commercial nodes consisting of multiple uses, included in this boundary are the more than twenty neighborhoods from Pen Lucy to Lake Walker.

This section of York Road boasts well-established neighborhood associations, a high functioning umbrella organization in the York Road Partnership, a Retail Business District License (RBDL) funded Govanstowne Business Association, and anchor institutions in Loyola University Maryland and Notre Dame of Maryland University.

York Road in Baltimore City is widely seen as a historic dividing line of race and class. The neighborhoods to the west of York Road are populated by majority white, middle to upper-middle class homeowners in Guilford and Homeland. The neighborhoods to the east of York Road are a mix of majority African-American renters and homeowners, including the historic African American community of Wilson Park, ranging in income from middle class to below the poverty line. While the stone wall bounding one of York Road's west side neighborhoods is a visible reminder of a segregated past, the lack of new homeowners in historically stable eastside neighborhoods, and the lack of amenities, in particular convenient fresh food, for many of the neighborhoods that fall within the "food desert" portion of York Road, are of pressing concern.



Photo credit: 2006 SNAP Plan

Today, the York Road community features a diverse range of housing types, including public housing. Providing opportunities for households of all sizes and income levels, housing types include single-family homes, semi-detached townhomes, row houses, garden apartments, high-rise apartments, and

apartments above retail. There is also a wide range of housing conditions: while much of the area is healthy and stable, particularly on the west side and to the northeast, many of the east side neighborhoods are showing signs of disinvestment and/or distress.

The 2006 York Road Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) completed by the Baltimore City Department of Planning describes the historical development of the Govans/York Road area:

“York Road was the center of the Greater Govans community that was made up of the surrounding suburban developments. Churches increased in number as well as expanded their activities. Movie theaters were constructed (the Senator being a rare survivor), and taverns continued to line the corridor. In 1948 the Hochschild, Kohn Belvedere and Hess Shoes buildings were built, becoming an anchor of the neighborhood. Hess Shoes opened in 1948, making Govans a shopping destination. By the mid-1950s, the shopping core of Govans, centering on York and Belvedere roads, also included an A & P grocery store, a Steiff Silver outlet, Read’s Drug store, a carpet store, a jeweler, the Senator Theater (opened 1939), banks, several restaurants, service stations, cleaners, barbers, shoe repair shops, and seven other specialty shoe and clothing stores. Govans shopping district catered to the newly developed suburban neighborhoods within the area.”

Today, the City portion of the York Road commercial corridor is a 2.5-mile mix of commercial, office, retail and institutional uses, with a few scattered residential units. The corridor has grown haphazardly over time, resulting in an uncoordinated mix of neighborhood businesses, destination retail, and auto-oriented businesses. However, four diverse commercial nodes have been identified along the corridor at Coldspring Lane; Woodbourne Avenue; Belvedere Avenue; and the City/County Line above Walker Avenue.

The diversity of these commercial nodes helps create the opportunity for vibrancy along the corridor to above the City/County line. Within this mixture are assets to build upon and help meet some of the existing needs and create a stronger York Road commercial corridor.

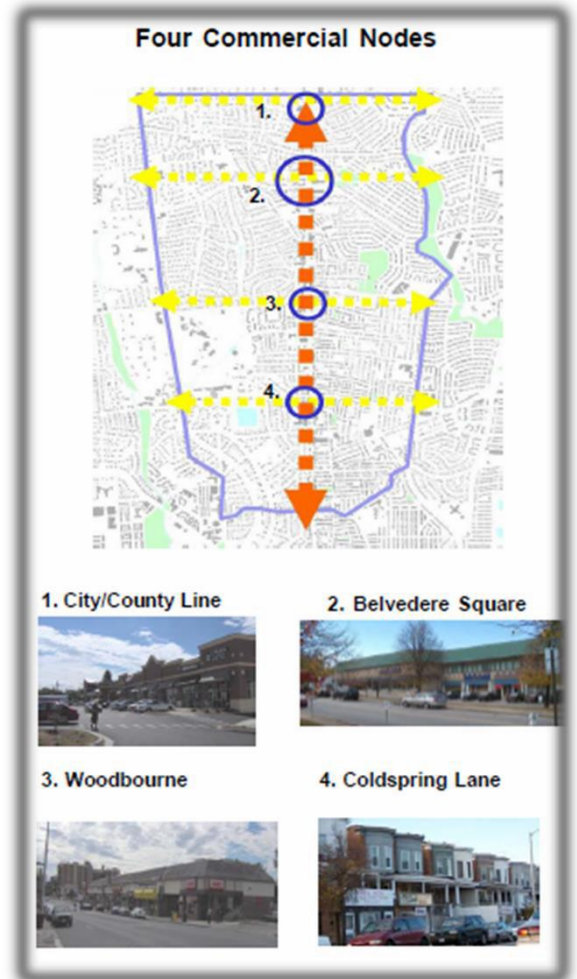


Photo credit: 2006 SNAP Plan

Baltimore County Corridor

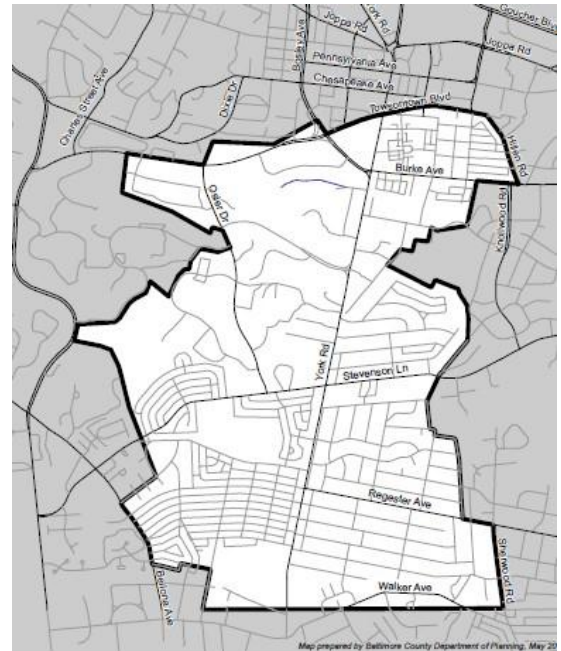
The ULI TAP boundary extends from the Baltimore County line north to the intersection of York Road and Towsontown Boulevard. In addition to the businesses and uses that front on the corridor, included in the boundary on the east and west side of the corridor are the bordering residential communities and institutions. On the east side, this includes Anneslie, Stoneleigh, Wiltondale, Aigburth Manor, Burkleigh, and Towson Manor Village. On the west side, it includes the Schwartz Avenue neighborhood, Rodgers Forge, Yorkleigh, Towson University, and University of Maryland-St. Joseph's Hospital. The area is directly south of the Towson Urban Core, the Baltimore County Seat, and Goucher College.

The section of York Road included in the study boundaries is an attractive, well maintained four lane road that is home to residential communities. These neighborhoods developed in the 1930's-1950's as a result of being on the number 8 streetcar line, and small clusters of retail and office use have developed over the years to serve the area residents. The presence of Towson University and St. Joseph's Hospital has also contributed to the desirability of the corridor. Many of the original residential, institutional, and commercial buildings have been well cared for and maintain their historical integrity. The area is walkable and green with a substantial tree canopy. York Road in the County is a state highway; maintenance of the right of way, pedestrian walkways, signaling and signage is a function of the State Highway Administration.

Baltimore County communities surrounding York Road have strong neighborhood associations that work together collaboratively on issues that affect the area through an umbrella organization – the Greater Towson Council of Community Associations.

The schools that serve the communities are among the most highly performing in the county, therefore keeping residential prices higher than the county median. The educational opportunity provided by the public school system continues to draw families as new residents. There are also a number of churches in the area that are active participants in community development issues.

The primary land use categories found in the study area are: low intensity commercial fronting on both sides of York Road from the City county line north to Register Avenue (6400 through 6900 blocks). The major commercial uses are the York Road Plaza Shopping center with Giant as the main anchor and 17 retail stores surrounding it. The majority of the stores are national credit tenants including Starbucks and Subway. The center has 90,903 square feet of gross land area and 389 parking spaces. It is within a five-mile radius of a population of 473,000 whose average income is \$71,000. Across the street on the east side is the Drumcastle Government Center. This former department store was converted to county offices for the Department of



Social Services in the late 1990's. Adjacent to the anchor building is a small retail center that houses tenants such as Party City, Petco, a Medstar Clinic and a small individually owned food establishment. Behind these commercial uses are strong residential communities. West of the study area is single-family attached housing (Rodgers Forge). East of the study area is single-family detached housing (the Anneslie and Stoneleigh Communities.)

The 6900 through 7100 blocks consist of residential use (single family detached housing) lining York Road, with some business local (BL) zoning and commercial land use around the intersections of York Road and Register Avenue and York Road and Stevenson Lane. At York and Register, there is a small section of two-story, traditional main street storefronts that house some longtime community businesses such as Ayd Hardware, Stoneleigh Duckpins Bowling and small food establishments. At York and Stevenson, there is a convenience store, gas station, small medical office building and Baltimore County headquarters of the Associated Retarded Citizens (ARC).

North of Stevenson Lane, institutional uses including Towson University and St. Joseph's Hospital are predominant on the west side of the corridor; and the east side is residential with single family detached housing, transitioning to denser, attached housing, including some apartments and assisted living facilities as one gets closer to the core.

Just north of Burke Avenue, the land use is commercial including some small aging retail establishments and the American Legion Hall. Recently, various properties have been purchased and proposed for a multi-story student housing building with retail on the first floor to serve the growing housing needs of Towson University. Across the street, just north of Burke Avenue, is the newly developed Towson Green residential project (which includes 210 residential units), a mixture of town homes and condos, as well as an elderly residential housing facility.

Corridor Analysis

When evaluating an area for redevelopment potential, it is critical to examine the existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers to revitalization. Using the information gathered from roundtable sessions with area stakeholders, on-the-ground assessments and observations during the tour, and thorough briefing documents about York Road's history, revitalization efforts, and market data, the panel discussed the existing assets, liabilities, and opportunities of York Road.

Strengths and Opportunities

LOCATION: The corridor's strong, centralized location within a highly populated and sought after area of Baltimore City and Baltimore County

STREETScape: Recent roadway and streetscape improvements to the corridor have improved traffic and pedestrian movement on York Road, with the added benefit of environmental enhancements and unified beautification initiatives

TRANSPORTATION: The corridor's strong public transportation network and position as one of the highest transit use corridors in Baltimore and Baltimore County. This is further reinforced with campuses linked through student shuttles

DIVERSITY: A wide diversity in population and cultures, within an equally diverse urban environment serving many roles for a variety of users and groups

ENGAGEMENT: Residential and institutional engagement from the many neighborhoods and universities that line the corridor

ANCHORS: Churches with strong faith-based service organizations, nonprofits like Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO) that support the corridor and the neighborhood population, the Govanstowne Business Association and Loyola University Maryland for on-going initiatives, including support of the fledgling Govanstowne Farmers' Market

STRONG BUSINESSES AND ONGOING REDEVELOPMENT: The Senator Theater and Shoo-fly restaurant are undergoing redevelopment as new and welcomed destinations/attractions along with the recently renovated and very strong commercial anchor of Belvedere Square Market



Weaknesses and Barriers

DIVIDING LINE: The fact that the corridor is seen as a dividing line between Baltimore City/County and the existing east/west neighborhoods

PUBLIC SAFETY: The perception of crime and public safety contributes to a negative public perception

AESTHETICS: In addition to trash and debris, the large presence of deferred right-of-way maintenance, lack of screening for surface parking and automotive uses, inconsistent private signage controls, deferred building maintenance and improper building additions

LACK OF FAMILY FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT: The absence of walkability and bikability, lack of family amenities-including market food, public parks and open space

AUTO ORIENTED: Overall relatively low corridor density, one to two stories with a focus on auto dependent uses.

SITES: There are very few large sites with capacity for adaptive reuse or redevelopment, with multiple owners owning key properties and the linear and relatively narrow commercial inventory of smaller spaces are difficult to use for contemporary commercial uses. Revitalization may require site assembly to accommodate modern uses.

LIMITED USE: There are very few employment uses beyond traditional retail, commercial and medical service uses on the corridor. Institutional and government uses being the exception.



The Zipper: A Vision for York Road

Like a zipper on a jacket, York Road necessitates a drawing together of businesses, neighborhoods and institutions for the greater good of the overall community.

To build on the existing strengths of one of Baltimore's most important and historic corridors, the panel recommends a vision to mend York Road's divide by uniting and reconnecting businesses, neighborhoods, and institutions together around a stronger community-serving corridor.

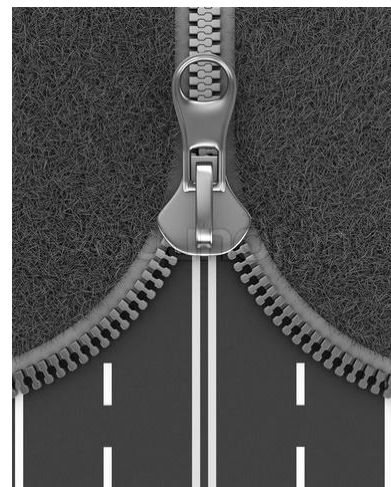
As you will see in the subsequent recommendations, while the northern portion of the York Road corridor from Belvedere Square to Towson appears to be well integrated, connected, and serving its eastern and western neighborhoods, the southern portion of the corridor, and its uses, appears to be more of a barrier and divide between sides.

South of Belvedere Square, the "unzipped" portion of York Road suffers from:

- Missing, vacant or underutilized buildings, businesses or uses or "teeth" in the zipper,
- A lack of alignment or theme of the uses that allow the teeth to better connect,
- A lack of interconnection with the neighborhoods and institutions implying that the stitching is loose on the zipper;
- A missing, strong centralized corridor manager or "deal making" entity to constantly represent and "work (pull) for" the best interest of the corridor's businesses, patrons and citizens, as with the case of a missing 'pull tab' on a zipper.

A zipper is difficult or impossible to close with any one or all of these challenges, as found in the York Road corridor.

The key to closing the zipper and revitalizing the corridor is finding and implementing solutions for each of the items listed above, which are outlined in the pages that follow.



Opportunities and Overall Recommendations

Based on the dense information exchange between panelists and stakeholders during the roundtable sessions, on-the-ground assessments, and through briefing documents, as well as with a zippered vision of York Road in mind, the panel developed overall recommendations that leverage existing assets and overcome obstacles for successful revitalization along the corridor.

Create “Main Street” Environment to Improve and Attract Commercial Uses

Build upon the existing strong transit and road network by incorporating “complete streets” to include parallel parking, bike lanes and more crosswalks along York Road; reduce traffic lanes to create safer and more walkable roads; incorporate good urban design principles, including parking in the rear or side of sites to preserve architectural and street unity; continue to involve the organized community; utilize proximity of nearby universities; leverage economic strength of Belvedere Square, Drumcastle and Towson shopping centers; initially focus redevelopment near economically stable areas, then radiate out



Well used transit & road network



Continuous community involvement



Proximity of 4 major universities



Belvedere Sq. Destination Uses



Community-serving businesses for area residents and students



Meet the Demand for Basic Services

Address the “food desert” needs of the southern study area as well as dine-in restaurants, student amenities, neighborhood cafes, home improvement stores; community centers, social and medical services; central, visible public spaces and recreational opportunities for all ages.



Fast food establishments and small convenience stores provide limited food service to the southern portion of York Road

Address Destabilizing Elements

Relocate areas of high loitering, such as pocket parks and substance abuse clinics, to more visible areas which can be better policed; improve commercial code enforcement, trash collection, and police presence and enforcement; design public spaces to better promote safe use; consider rezoning as a tool to discourage destabilizing elements.



Govans Manor housing loitering Vacant or underutilized buildings and forgotten spaces



Lack of screening and dated transit rider amenities, underutilized pocket parks. Lack of visible safety presence for hot spots

Pursue Mixed-Use and Co-Located Uses

Combine residential, commercial and parking uses into single developments; encourage multi-family uses along York Road in conjunction with ground floor retail; encourage partnerships between businesses to create synergy and address common problems such as parking.



Family Dollar Site at Woodbourne



Staples Site



Loyola University Site



Enterprise Site



Cricket Site



Favorites Pub Site

Grow Universities' Presence

Promote the establishment of campus life (offices, classrooms, retail, student housing) by Loyola, Notre Dame, Morgan and Towson along York Road to strengthen the corridor; explore partnership opportunities with universities to create locations where students can interact with the community (for the benefit of the students and the community); provide housing, shopping and recreation opportunities for underserved university students.



Improve Transit Hubs

Make bus stops more user-friendly and interconnected to facilitate easy transfer of bus lines and reduce dangerous jaywalking; create bus linkage to Light Rail; improve bus stops with shelters, seating, trash cans and landscaping; explore shared university shuttle bus system / City Circulator among all campuses and the corridor.



Build on transit focus along corridor Provide transit amenities at all bus stops Maintain consistent transit amenities



Potential for shared shuttle system Consolidate transit stops to increase safety Additional crossings for pedestrian safety.

Learn from Good Examples on the Corridor

There is a number of good economic development and physical design examples for what to do along York Road that already exist on the corridor. The key is to take these examples and execute them consistently throughout the study area. Outlined below are the locations and elements that the TAP Panel observed along the study area. Both Baltimore City and County can learn from what each has accomplished in key areas.



Good parking screening at AutoZone. Good landscape within building setback Good landscape screening at gas station



Good streetscape pallet along York Rd commercial & residential. Not ideal, but example of higher density infill.



Civic green space & vegetation can break the monotony of the corridor; Farmers' market is common ground for the community and institutions.



Good example of institutional over retail mixed-use & civic open space on the corridor at Towson & Loyola Universities



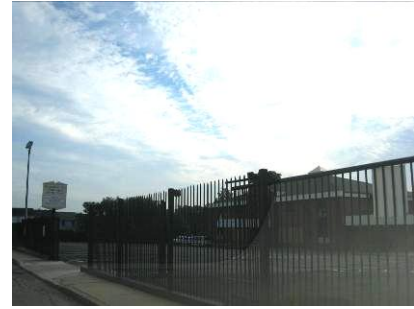
Good pedestrian crosswalk & island refuge Well scaled commercial monument sign Relatively good infill retail with parking placed behind



Good inclusion of outdoor dining space



Good ornamental security fencing use on commercial and institutional sites



Well animated new façades with signs & canopies versus older facades and canopies



Appropriate scale mixed-use for York Rd Good perimeter parking screen & islands Well landscaped fast-food restaurant



Designated on-street parking at businesses and ADA accessible walks and crossings. Well maintained neighborhoods

Correct Poor Examples on the Corridor

There are also a number of poor economic development and physical design examples for what not to do along the York Road corridor. Outlined below are a few examples of what to watch for as new development and revitalization of existing properties is undertaken along the corridor.



Security measures should be placed inside the building to maintain security while conveying a better corridor image. Building facades should also be designed to invite patrons in rather than wall them out. While not an ideal example, note the contrast between the liquor store and the family food market above right.



Substandard signage with excessive text and temporary signage on windows and sidewalk sandwich boards detract from the corridor. Billboards also impact the corridor image, especially when mounted on potential buildings for adaptive reuse



Blank walls can be animated with murals rather than traditional building facades. Security fencing should be ornamental



Parking should be screened & designed not to back out onto York Road. Gas Stations should also be adequately landscaped



Poorly designed residential with parking, garages and vacant add on structures oriented toward the corridor.



Lack of screening parking & service area Overhead utilities add to visual clutter Excessive sign size for single use tenant



Need for designated pedestrian crossings at noted pedestrian oriented destinations on longer blocks that generate pedestrian/vehicular conflicts: Senator Theater, Staples, Loyola Campus, Govans Manor Apartments, etc.

Corridor Revitalization Framework Strategy

The TAP panel developed a strategic approach to restoring the vitality of York Road that seeks to build upon the positive attributes of the corridor and halt the evident trends of decline. The panel's development of the overarching theme of a "Zipper" visually stimulates the vision of uniting and reconnecting the east and west sides of York Road.

Furthermore, the recommendations of creating a Govans "Main Street atmosphere" by utilizing complete streets policy, enhancing walkability and bikability, and leveraging common-sense, best-practices, have provided a foundation for this strategy.

In this next section the panel focused on 1) nodes of commercial development that are areas with a unique character that serve as existing hubs of activity, and 2) opportunity sites that are areas with short-term redevelopment potential.

The actions and recommendations presented herein are a starting point to the corridor's revitalization, as many elements of the framework strategy require further study prior to implementation. However, the panel desires this report to serve as a platform from which well-informed decisions are made to reinvigorate York Road.

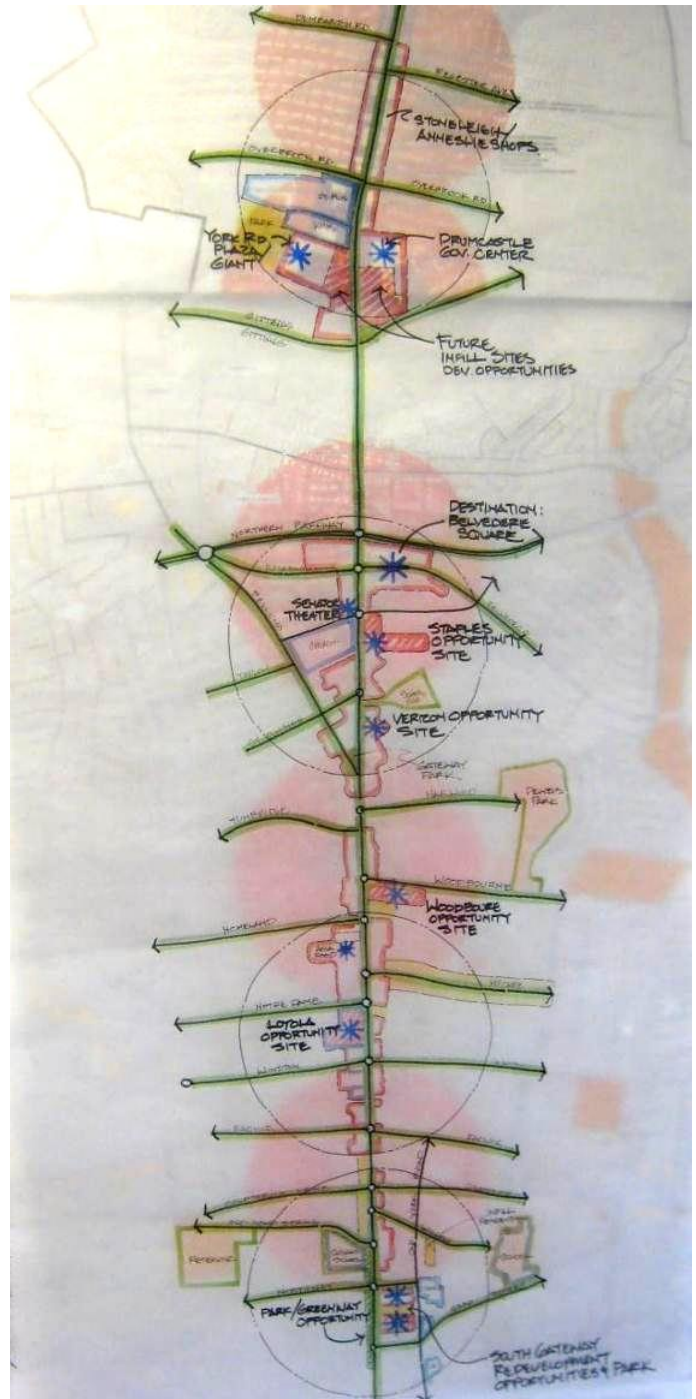
Thus, the panel's Corridor Revitalization Framework Strategy concentrates on the following:

Four Commercial Nodes

Physical Design Enhancements

Streetscape Sections

Mid-Block Crosswalks



The Southern Gateway Node: Govans Main Street Zone #3

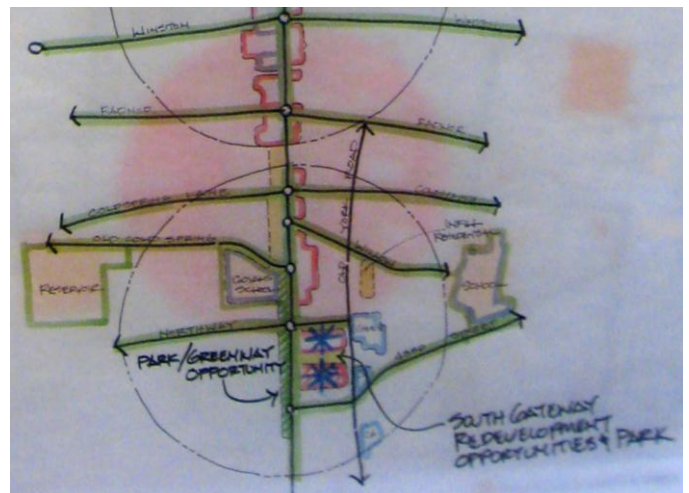
Starting at the southernmost portion of the TAP focus, this area is generally defined by Cold Spring Lane to the north and 39th Street to the south, with a specific focus on catalytic redevelopment and enhancement opportunities within the public storage and City services site and immediate surrounding blocks along the corridor.

These sites were identified as potential areas for:

- Visible public space on corridor
- Concentrate commercial space
- Embrace, expand personal service establishments
- Embrace auto uses
- Extend elementary school to get presence on York Road

Opportunity Sites:

- Public Storage Facility
- Baltimore City Department of General Services fleet site



Zone 3 Existing Conditions Aerial (Source: Bing Map, top) and Corridor Opportunities Diagram (bottom)

Opportunity Site: Public Storage and Baltimore City Services



South Gateway Opportunity Site. Source: Bing Maps



Public Storage and City DGS Sites offer combined redevelopment opportunities for a new commercial services center or employment uses including a business incubator (below left) or an indoor children’s activity center (below right)



Sample vision for commercial development surrounding a new, defensible public space linking back to surrounding neighborhood residences and church institutions.



Potential uses within a new commercial services center could include value-oriented retail & neighborhood medical services.



Redevelopment should include new civic park space. Parking & service should be located to the rear of new commercial properties.



Candidate block for commercial relocation and residential rehabilitation to look like this similar nearby block



The Guilford wall "garages site" candidate opportunity for linear park and indoor/outdoor recreation uses



The Stokes Christian School & Guilford Elementary/Middle School could benefit from a linear park outside the historic Guilford wall.



The blank walls of the Stokes Christian School would make a great canvas for one or more commissioned, high-quality community murals like the example shown above.



The commercial blocks at the south end of the corridor could benefit greatly from simple façade, canopy, signage and architectural lighting improvements like those pictured above.



The College and Neighborhood Node: Govans Main Street Zone #2

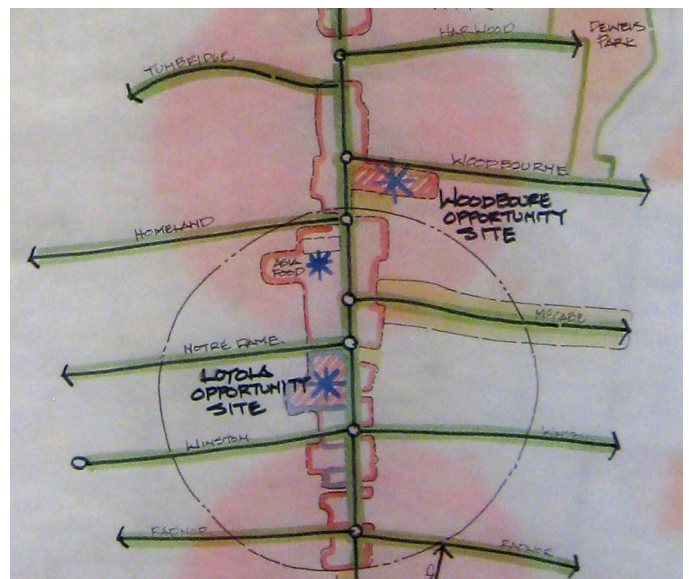
This area of focus is generally defined by Harwood Ave. and Tunbridge Road to the north and Radnor Avenue to the south, with a specific focus on catalytic redevelopment and enhancement opportunities within the Loyola University sites and immediate surrounding blocks along the corridor.

These sites were identified as potential areas for:

- Family-oriented activities
- Mixed-use
- More density (housing and commercial)
- Positive outdoor activities (outdoor seating) to minimize presence of negative behavior
- Gaps in commercial services (Grocery, food, medical, student amenities)
- Enhanced pedestrian connections to neighborhoods
- Enhanced university presence
- Amenities for students and residents (i.e. vintage clothing, books, coffee shop)

Opportunity Sites:

- 5315 York Rd. (Family Dollar)
 - Included in the York/Woodbourne Urban Renewal Plan
- 5104 York Rd. (Loyola Property)
 - Currently a PUD

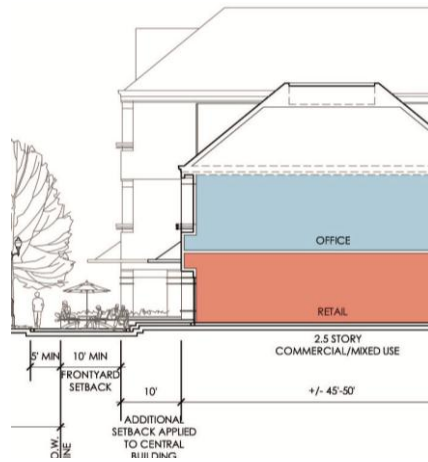


Zone 2 Existing Conditions Aerial (Source: Bing Map, top) and Corridor Opportunities Diagram (bottom)

Opportunity Site: 5315 York (Family Dollar)



Family Dollar Future Redevelopment Opportunity Source: Bing Maps



Sample commercial redevelopment cross-section envisioned for this portion of the York Road corridor.

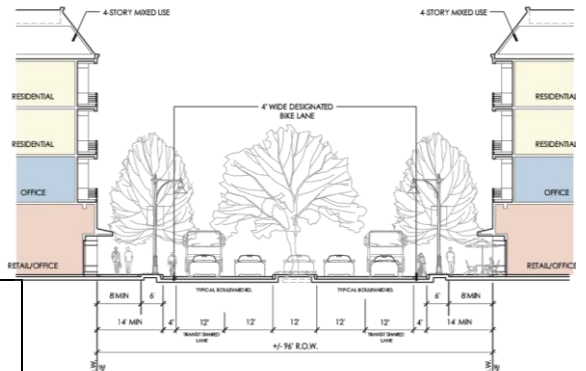


Family Dollar Site at Woodbourne should be marketed for a small-scale urban food market like ALDI's or a new expanded Family Dollar Store or Pharmacy at the front of the property.

Opportunity Site: 5104 York Road (Loyola Property)



Loyola University Redevelopment Opportunity Source: Bing Maps



Sample mixed-use redevelopment cross-section envisioned for this portion of the York Road corridor.



Loyola University Opportunity Site



Potential for a mixed-use infill administration-residential quad redevelopment



Sample residential over retail development Princeton, NJ and Old Dominion College Barnes & Noble University bookstore



Potential area for campus-oriented commercial use and urban retailers such as coffee house, urban clothiers, arts, bookstore, etc., as well as enhanced facades of existing amenities.



Future redevelopment of the Loyola University parking lot and farmers' market site could include a permanent structure for farmers' market activity, similar to that shown in Lynchburg, VA.



Future redevelopment of the Loyola University site should include commercial and administrative uses on the ground level with academic or residential uses above. With redevelopment the streetscape and setbacks could be adjusted to allow for a wider multi-use pedestrian environment, transit areas and flexible use plaza spaces.



Existing and future fast food establishments on the corridor should be designed to complement the neighborhood and University vernacular with prescriptive architectural open space design guidelines for the corridor. The left column examples are existing McDonalds and Wendy's and to the right, higher quality designs achieved for popular franchise restaurants.



Vacant corner commercial sites are good candidates for small food establishments and retail requiring high visibility and access.

The Entertainment Node: Govans Main Street Zone #1

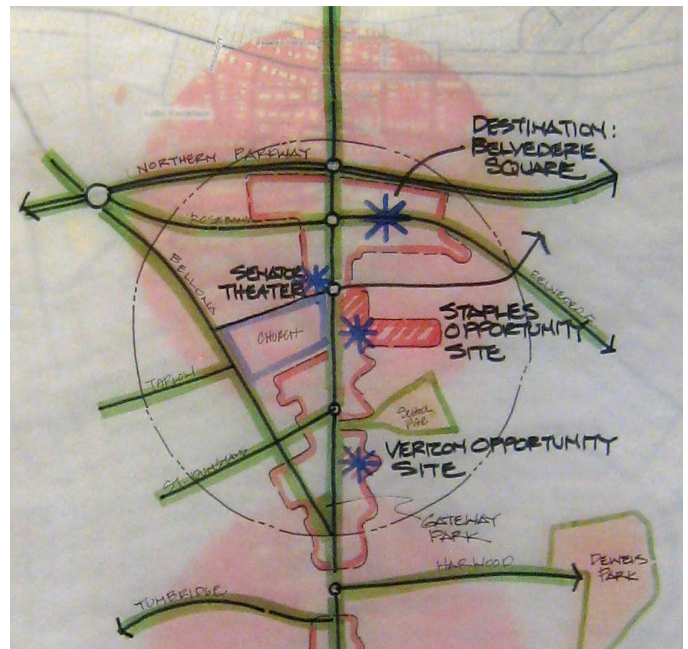
This area of focus is generally defined by Northern Parkway to the north and Harwood Avenue to the south, with a specific focus on catalytic redevelopment and enhancement opportunities within the Belvedere Square and Govanstowne gateway triangle sites and immediate surrounding blocks along the corridor.

These sites were identified as potential areas for:

- Family-serving
- Entertainment and destination node
- Regional appeal
- More density (housing and commercial)
- Mix of day and night activity
- Expanded parking opportunities (e.g. Staples, Belvedere Square)
- Transit hub (to help solve some pedestrian/transit rider safety issue)

Opportunity Sites:

- Staples
- Verizon Building
- Bellona triangle as important gateway site

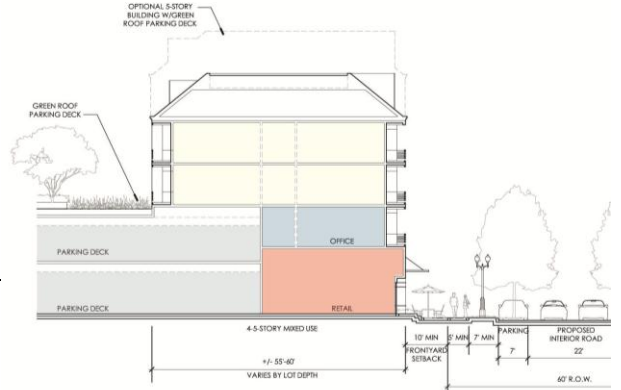


Zone 1 Existing Conditions Aerial (Source: Bing Map, top) and Corridor Opportunities Diagram (bottom)



Staples Redevelopment Opportunity Site

Source: Bing Map



Sample mixed-use redevelopment with parking deck cross-section envisioned for this portion of the York Road corridor.



The Staples Site is envisioned as the centerpiece of additional mixed-use redevelopment that could include a multi-modal transportation facility to serve the York Road & Northern Parkway routes, and a parking resource to serve the Belvedere Sq., Senator Theater and Govanstowne Triangle areas linked by a promenade environment along both sides of York Rd.



Senator Theater can be the centerpiece for a new outdoor "Promenade" linking Belvedere Sq. to the Staples site & Govanstowne Triangle. Potential for introducing centralized valet parking with suggested parking resource (below).



Expand outdoor dining opportunities along the "York Road Promenade."



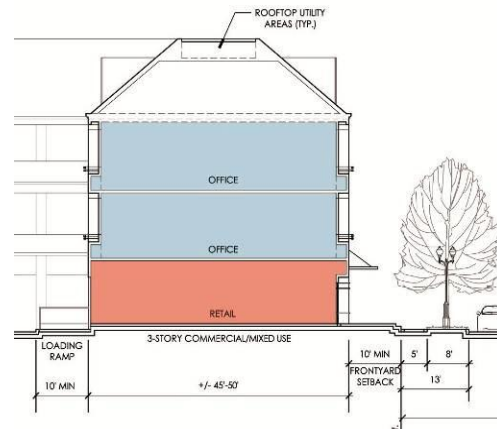
Incorporate old panels of Senator Theater sidewalk into proposed larger "York Road Promenade" concept, similar to well known "Hollywood Walk of Fame. The Pikesville streetscape has the scale & quality envisioned for the York Road Promenade



The York Road Streetscape and building interface should be designed to encourage both day and nighttime activity to strengthen the perception of safety and security. An abundance of well-designed night lighting is key to creating a feeling of safety for attracting evening patrons. This includes architectural lighting, street/pedestrian lighting and specialty lighting illustrated above.



Govanstowne / Bellona Triangle Renovation/Reuse & Redevelopment Sites
Source: Bing Map



Sample mixed-use redevelopment and adaptive reuse cross-section envisioned for this portion of the York Road corridor.



The gas station, Verizon Building, Bellona office building and residential for sale surrounding the Govanstowne Triangle offer excellent opportunities for future redevelopment, adaptive re-use, building renovations and redevelopment for mixed-use respectively.



Examples of appropriate scaled streetscape treatments, developments and building renovations for the older residential & commercial properties overlooking the "Govanstowne Triangle" listed above.



Older commercial structures along Bellona could be updated with simple façade, signage, night lighting and streetscape improvements to improve their marketability and attraction for patrons.



Adaptive re-use candidates should be identified and accommodated along with existing use (such as a bike sales and repair & Maaco Bldg); Need for cohesive streetscape/signage amenities



Govanstowne Civic Triangle has greater opportunity for being a significant multi-use space if streets and traffic movements around it are reconfigured and a portion of Bellona Ave is redirected and possibly removed to allow redevelopment to engage the park.



Favorites Pub is a gathering spot for local university students that could be significantly improved with façade improvements and/or the installation of a permanent "beer garden"



Infill opportunity next to art gallery and pizza restaurant for compatible small specialty shop or specialty restaurant



Programming the existing and proposed public spaces is also important to the corridors successful revitalization.



The Govanstowne Triangle area is an ideal location for a new York Road Corridor Development Organization/Main Street office. It's important to establish a highly visible, central and convenient location for this, or an equal entity, to market and guide redevelopment and physical improvements along the corridor.

The Northern Gateway Node: York Road Zone #4 –

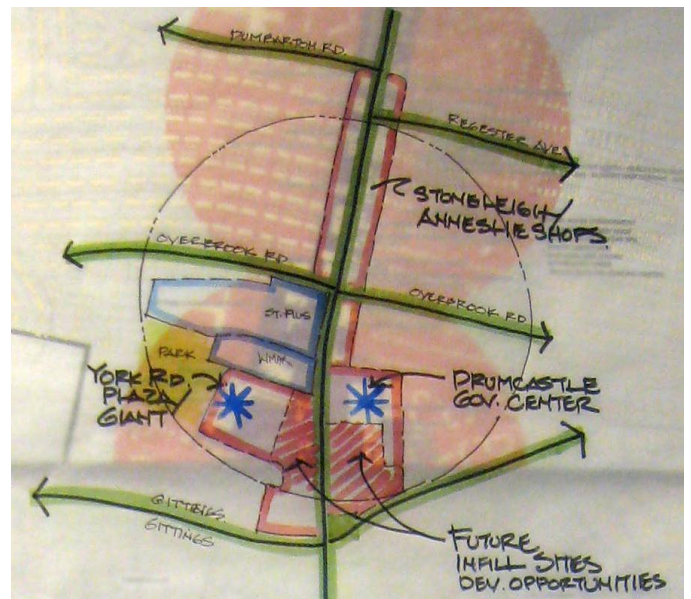
This area is generally defined by the Baltimore City/County Line to the south and Register Avenue/Dumbarton Road to the north. With a specific focus on redevelopment and enhancement opportunities within the York Road Plaza and Drumcastle Center sites along the corridor.

These sites were identified as potential areas for:

- Future moderately scaled vertical infill development
- Potential for mix of uses to create a more walkable district
- Capacity for more residents or workers that will thus patronize local businesses

Opportunity Sites:

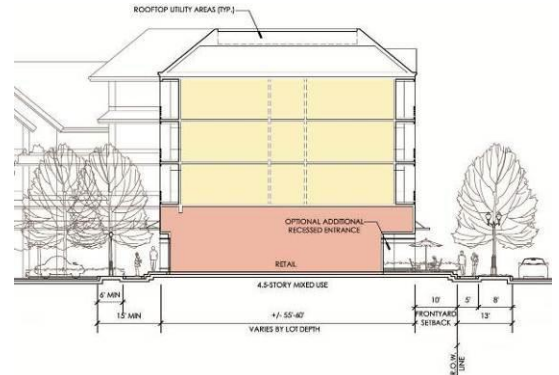
- Drumcastle Center
- Anneslie Center
- York Road Shopping Center



Zone 4 Existing Conditions Aerial (Source: Bing Map, top) and Corridor Opportunities Diagram (bottom)



North Gateway Redevelopment Opportunity Site Source: Bing Maps



Sample mixed-use redevelopment cross-section envisioned for this portion of the York Road corridor.



The Anneslie Shopping Center has potential to be redeveloped in the future as a modest scaled mixed-use retail and residential enclave connected with the Drumcastle Center and developed with a shared parking program across both sites.



The York Road Shopping Center frontage along York Road has the potential for future two-story infill development framing a new gateway entrance into the main portion of the existing shopping center.



New development should complement the materials and character of the Stoneleigh and Anneslie neighborhoods, institutions and traditional commercial shops to the north.

Physical Design Enhancements

Greenspace

- Enhance existing spaces (Maintenance –Leverage Parks and People Foundation)
- Improve visibility (Pockets vs. gateways)



The new streetscape enhancement project from 43rd Street to Glenwood Avenue and existing open spaces must be well maintained to continue to raise the positive image of the York Road Corridor.



Existing pocket parks are problem areas for loitering and illegal activities. These areas should be redeveloped with infill residential and new park spaces should be created with redevelopment along York Road using Defensible Space Principles. Additional gateway signage for the corridor could also be included within the south end median.

Signage Organization

- Establish guidelines (and/or regulations) for uniformity and to avoid visual clutter
- Design review and enforcement through a design review organization. The Neighborhood Design Center can provide these support services.



These are potential pilot sites (left 7 left center) for a business signage improvements demonstration project to follow the good signage standards exhibited on other buildings in Belvedere Square and Woodbourne Avenue

Complete Streets

- Accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages
- Easier to cross the street, walk to shops, bike to work
- Will increase on-street parking to support existing commercial uses



York Road currently accommodates pedestrian, autos and transit vehicles; however, bicyclists must share the roads travel lane, while others resort to riding on the sidewalks. The addition of designated bike lanes, as shown to the right, would help improve the safety of commuters to and from the universities, schools, neighborhoods and employment areas. Where possible additional off-road, multi-use trails or promenades should be created to encourage family-oriented activity on the corridor.

Streetscape Sections

Key Points

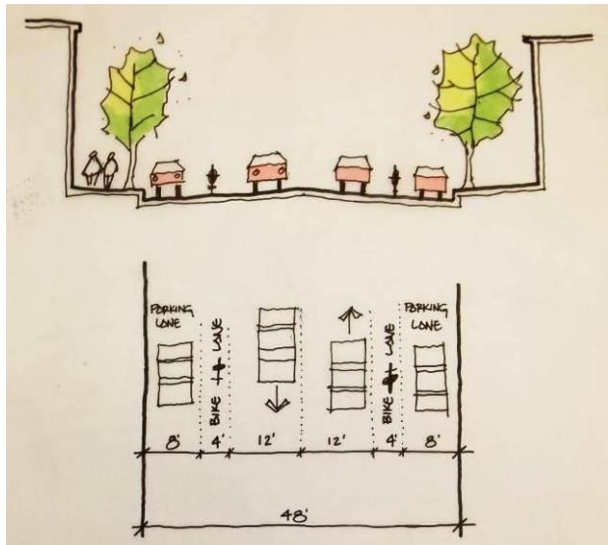
Designed with Complete Streets model for all users; uses existing cross-section; improved safety; curb extensions; improved pedestrian safety; clearly delineated crosswalks; landscape opportunities; additional on-street parking to support retail uses, separate lane for left turns at locations with significant turning volumes; improves pedestrian safety. Proposed street section is similar to Harford Road, which supports similar traffic volumes (17,000-22,000 ADT).



York Road Corridor – ADT 17,000 – 22,000



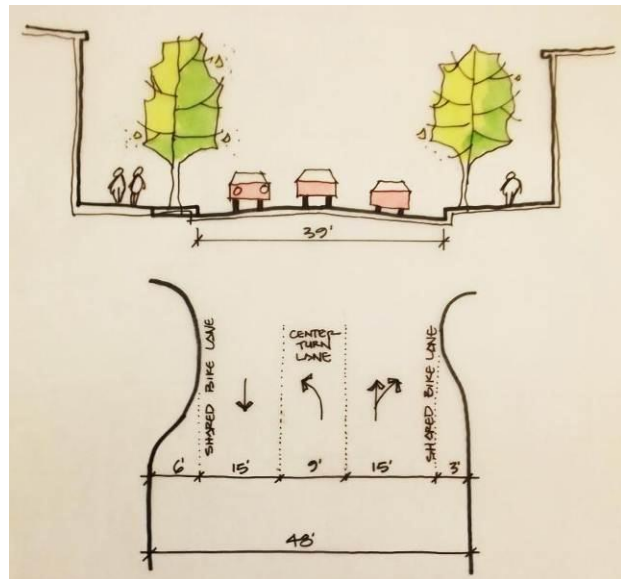
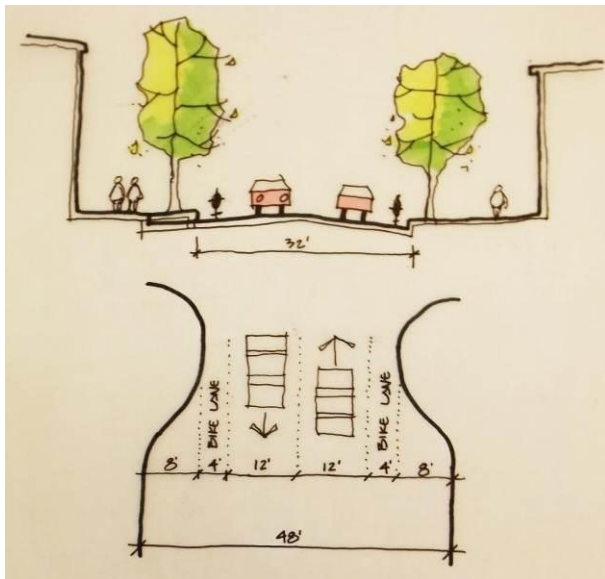
Hartford Road Corridor – ADT 17,000 – 22,000



Preferred complete street cross-section for York Road with on-street parking and bike lanes. Sample sketch vision illustrating desired complete street elements for York Road to the right.



Aerial view of Harford Road curb extensions with clearly delineated crosswalks, landscaping and improved pedestrian safety.



Preferred complete street, intersection plans and cross-sections for York Road with curb extensions, on-street parking and bike lanes (left). An optional left turn lane cross-section is also shown (right).

Mid-Block Crosswalks

Key Points

At strategic locations where pedestrian crossings at intersections are not convenient, provide pedestrian island and clearly delineated crosswalks. One opportunity for a mid-block crossing is between the Senator Theater and Belvedere Square.



Potential pilot block for pedestrian crossing improvements demonstration project like that found at the public library



Mid-block crossings can also be designed to enhance the image of the corridor with landscaped medians, ornamental crosswalk paving, and contrasting but warm colors.

Targeted Approaches to Implementation

In addition to the Corridor Revitalization Framework Strategy above, the panel developed several targeted approaches to implementation, focusing on various topic areas related to the redevelopment and repositioning of York Road. These include:

Create a Blanket Organization to Champion the York Road Vision on an Ongoing Basis

Create a new organization that can manage and consider the needs of all community and business groups (e.g., Govans Main Street / Downtown Partnership / Community Development Corporation); Stakeholders should include businesses, communities, churches, City, etc. Hire an employee who can focus on outreach to developers, retailers and builders to promote investment; expert on all incentives offered by City and County; maintain communication with owners of high priority parcels and consistently promote redevelopment to a higher and better use. This organization and employee should champion the goals of the entire community. It will be important to have a unified vision, message, information source and leader for the revitalization area.

Redefine the Nodes/Zones

Continue to redefine the four identified nodes as focused on the place and distinct area rather than as street intersections. Begin to vary land use themes to differentiate each zone (Northern Gateway, Entertainment Node, College/Neighborhood Node, and Southern Gateway. As explained throughout, it is not possible to strengthen the entire area at once. It will be crucial to focus on the nodes first, and then expand revitalization outward from them.

Where to Begin?

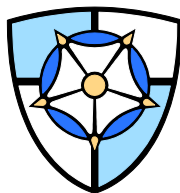
In addition to the Vision, Overall Recommendations, the Corridor Framework Revitalization Strategy and the Targeted Approaches to Revitalization listed above, the panel also recommended following the initial steps to be taken by the stakeholders in order to implement revitalization.

1. Share the plan and get buy in from ALL stakeholders. Without unified support or vision, revitalization will be sporadic.
2. Form a NEW organization that will CHAMPION implementation. This organization will represent all stakeholders in the community and focus on professional marketing efforts, infill development, and business attraction.
3. The new organization should inventory available opportunity sites and link to identified needs/uses.
4. Work with real estate community to locate infill businesses and uses for key vacancies along the corridor.
5. Implement physical improvement priorities: parking, street improvements, façade improvements, etc.
6. Maintain continuous communications with ALL stakeholders and hold annual community meetings to show concrete change and update goals.
7. Establish mid and long term goals for revitalization and processes for achieving them.

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