



Bethesda Downtown Plan



community
identity

equity

habitat +
health

access +
mobility

water

energy +
materials



Work Session #8 | Planning Board, February 25, 2016

MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION





Bethesda Today

Lacking central
green spaces and
continuous tree
canopy



Bethesda Tomorrow



A greener and more connected Downtown



Inviting and Flexible Green Spaces

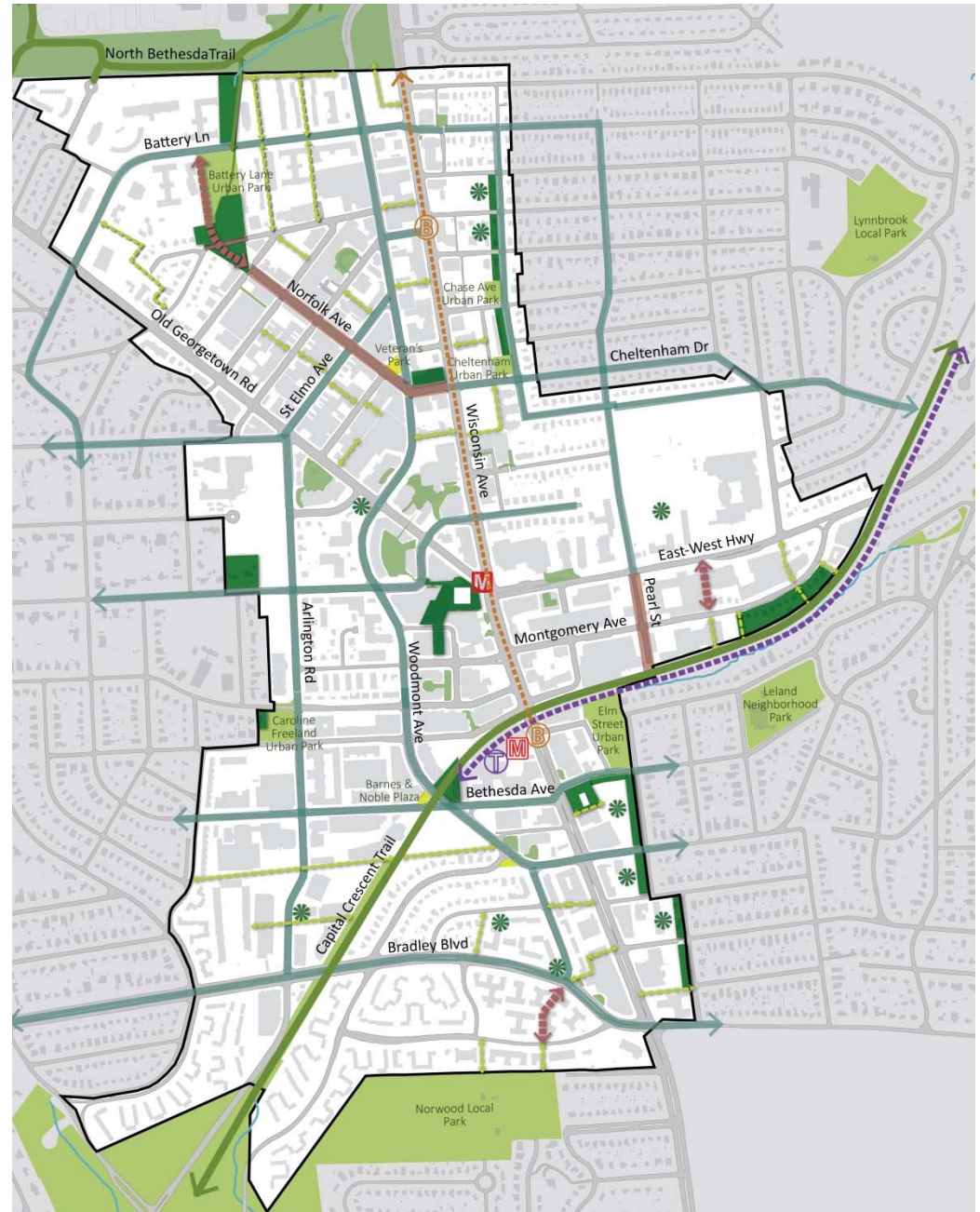




Walk to Neighborhood Greens

Parks, Trails, and Open Space Goals

- Support the Centers with Civic gathering spaces
- Provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail systems
- Create green neighborhood parks.
- Create livable communities and appropriate transitions by greening and buffering the edges



Urban Parks and Open Space Hierarchy

A HIERARCHY

Each area master plan should include a system of open spaces based on the roles of each type of open space. The amount and size of open spaces may vary from plan to plan and should be directly proportional to the projected density, and adjusted to the pattern of existing open space and other factors such as community-specific needs.

The following hierarchy should be applied to any new urbanizing area:

FOR THE SECTOR PLAN AREA:

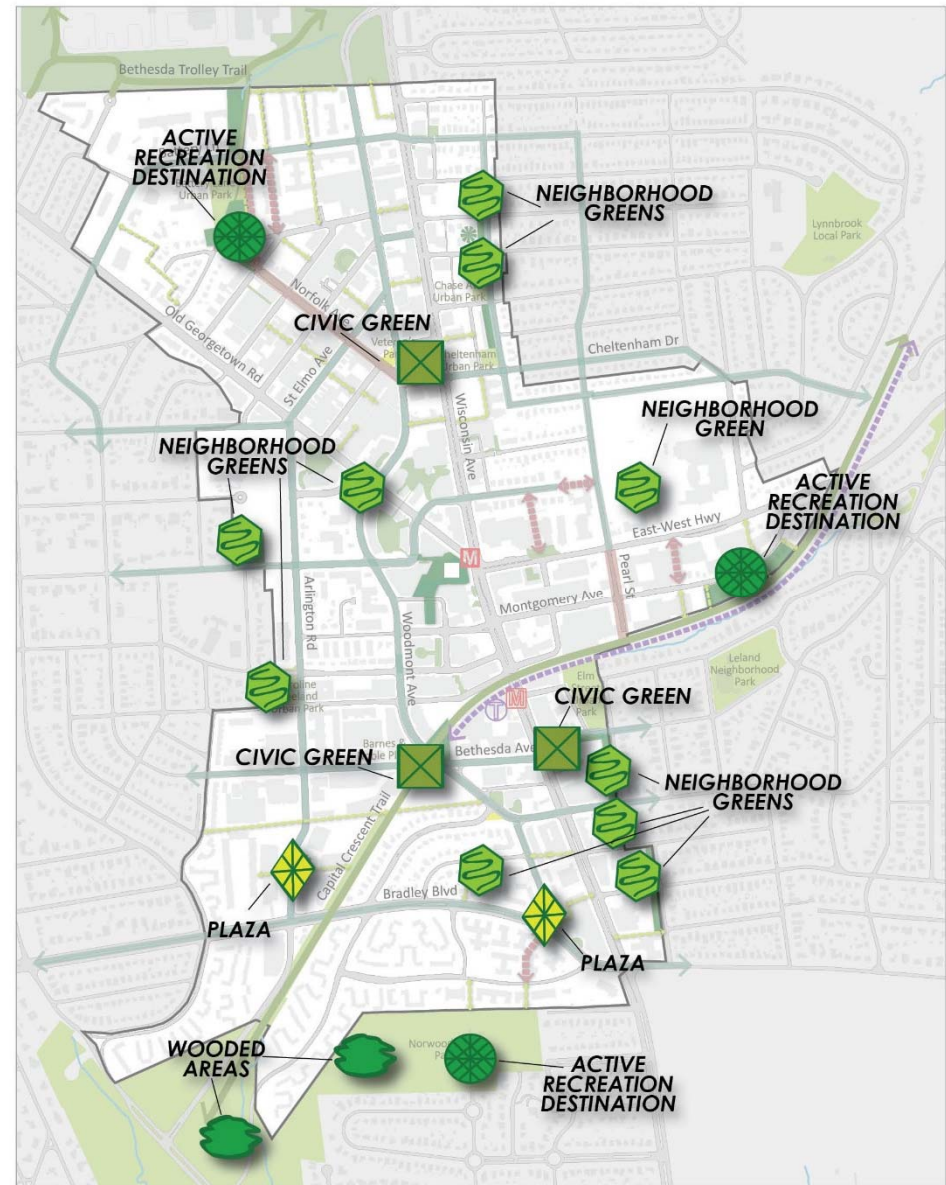
- Active recreation destinations located within or near the plan area, including courts, playgrounds, and lawn areas large enough for pick up soccer, festivals or events, etc.
- A central “civic green” urban park (Chapter 3), ranging in size from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 acres, depending on projected densities, located in close proximity to a public transit hub, next to activating uses, with a mixture of hard and soft surfaces including a central lawn area for events.
- An interconnected system of sidewalks and trails to connect parks and open spaces.
- Wooded areas that will provide a sense of contact with nature.

FOR EACH URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD: A neighborhood green, urban buffer park, or community use recreational park.

FOR EACH BLOCK: An urban square, plaza, or green area.

FOR EACH BUILDING: An outdoor recreation space.

FOR EACH RESIDENCE: A private outdoor space.



What we heard from the Community

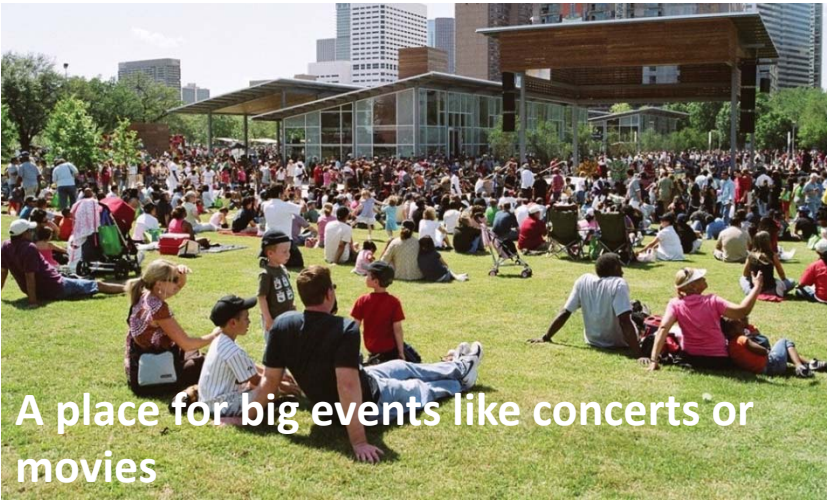
A place with grass and trees and benches



A place to run, walk or bike



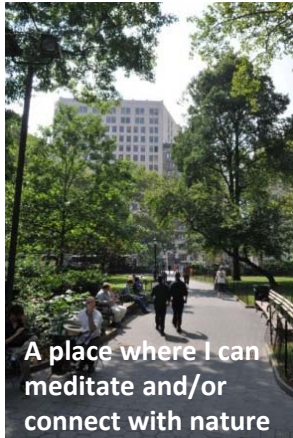
A place for big events like concerts or movies



A place to gather with friends



What we heard from the Community



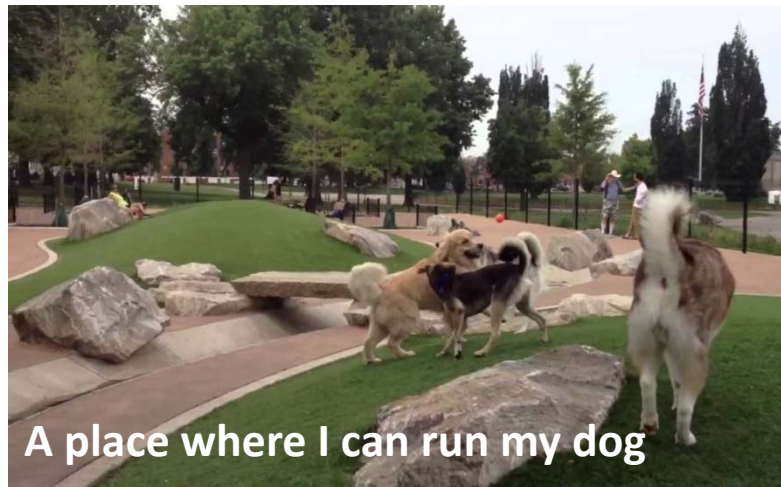
A place where I can meditate and/or connect with nature



A place to bounce, kick, or throw a ball



A place to skateboard

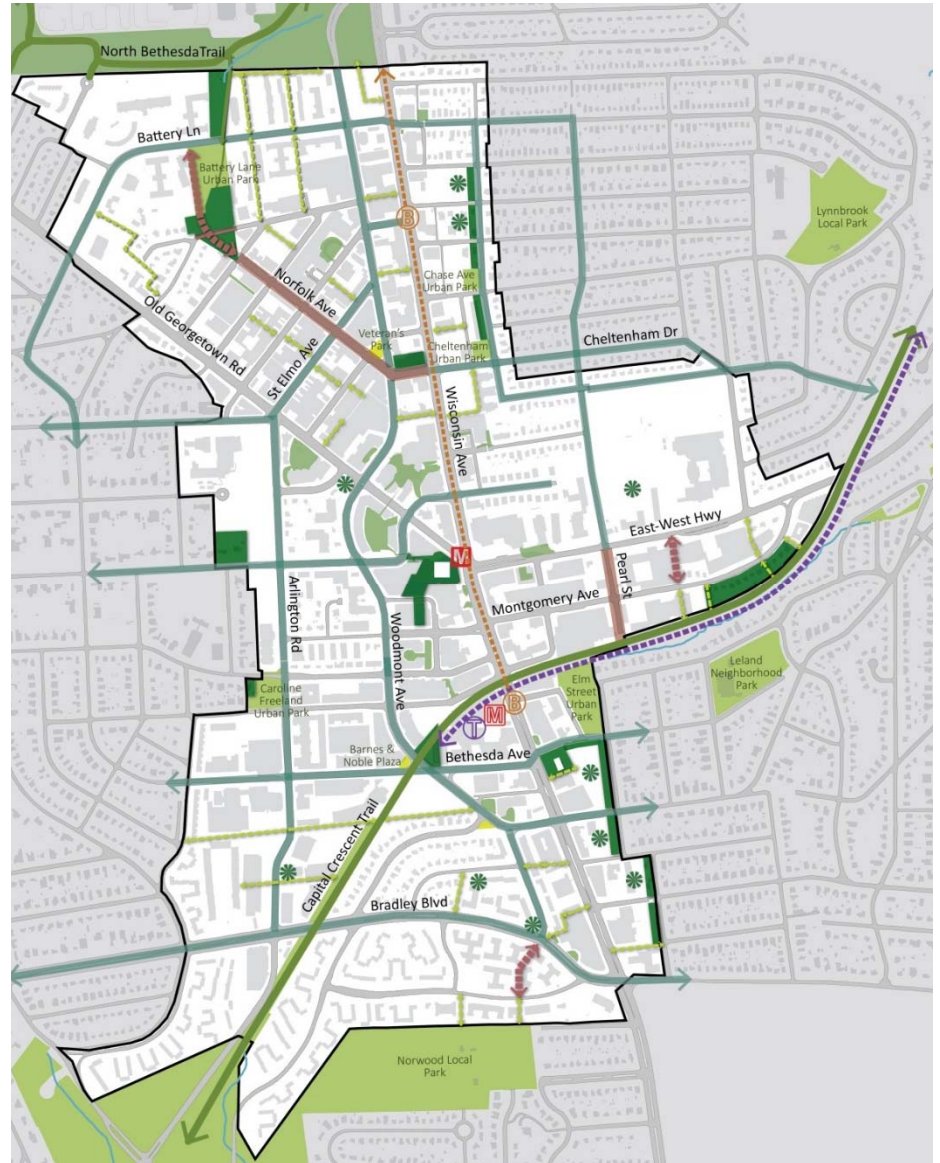


A place where I can run my dog



A play place for all ages: children, adults, and seniors

Existing and Proposed



Implementation

Parks Implementation Strategy

Challenges for Urban Parkland Acquisition

- High cost of Land Acquisition
- Timing Challenges for Dedication

Traditional Park Acquisition Tools

- Dedication via Development Review Process
 - Smaller parks
 - Additions to existing parks
 - Small portions of entire lots or development footprints
- Direct Acquisition via CIP funds
 - Non-Local and Local Acquisition
 - Legacy Open Space
 - ALARF

Parks Implementation Strategy

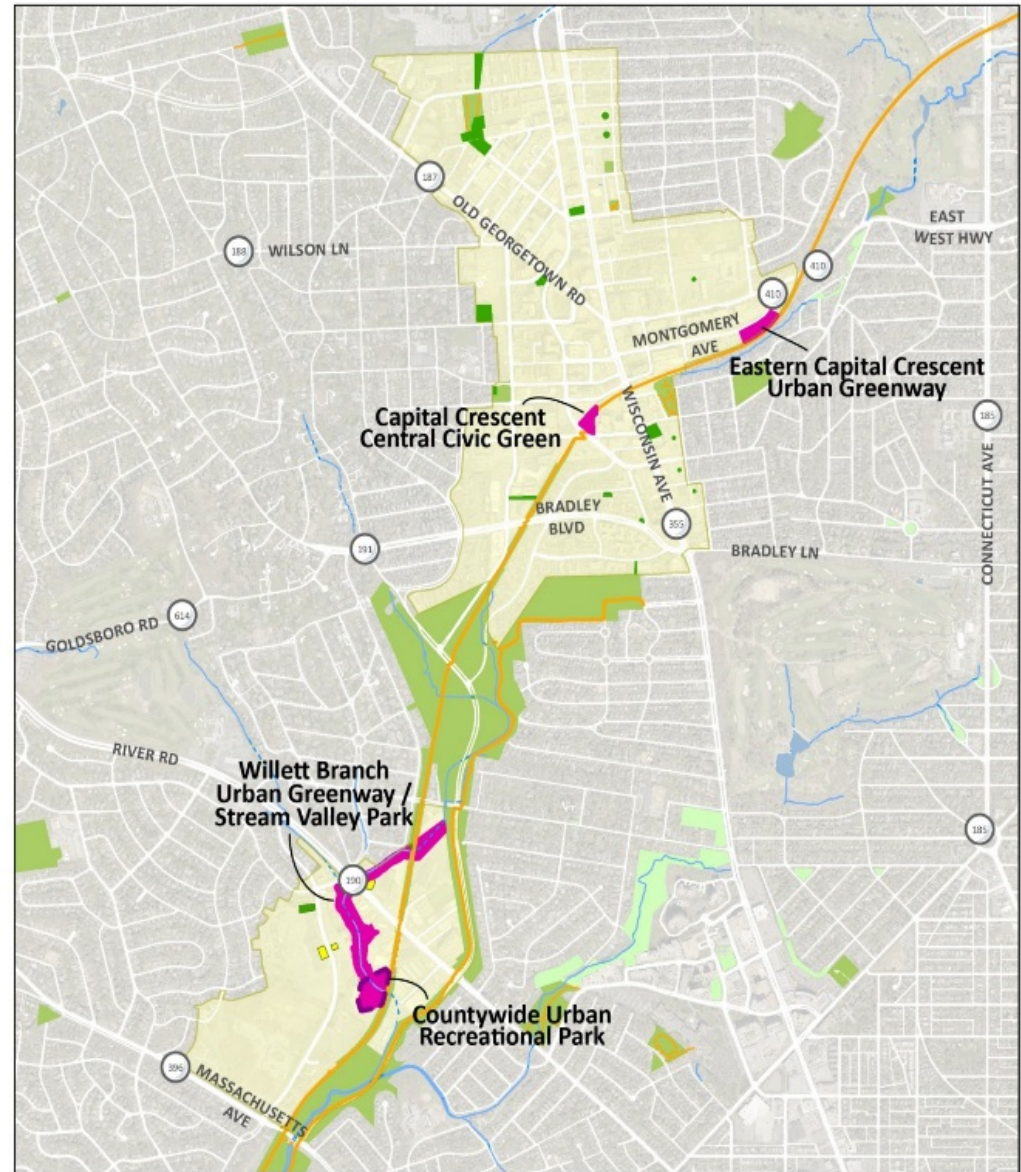
Alternative Tools to Overcome Challenges

- Increase the Likelihood of Receiving Parks in Dedication through Development
 - Use the density transfer program
 - Identify Parks as priority sending areas, and
 - Use other innovative zoning tools
- Make Expensive Acquisitions Feasible
 - Negotiate installment contracts to stretch current funds
 - Request supplemental appropriations from Board and Council for significant urban acquisitions
 - Seek additional funding sources

Legacy Open Space Designations

- *Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan Categories*
 - Urban Open Space
 - Greenway Connectivity
- LOS Criteria
 - Increase access to open space and recreation in urban communities
 - Promote interconnectivity of the urban green infrastructure
 - Provide community open space for casual use and large community gatherings
- BDP Sites that “Rise Above the Rest”
 - Capital Crescent Central Civic Green
 - Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway

Proposed Legacy Open Space Urban Designations in Westbard Sector and Bethesda Downtown Plans



Proposed Legacy Open Space Designation

Westbard and Bethesda Plan Boundaries



Legacy Open Space Designations

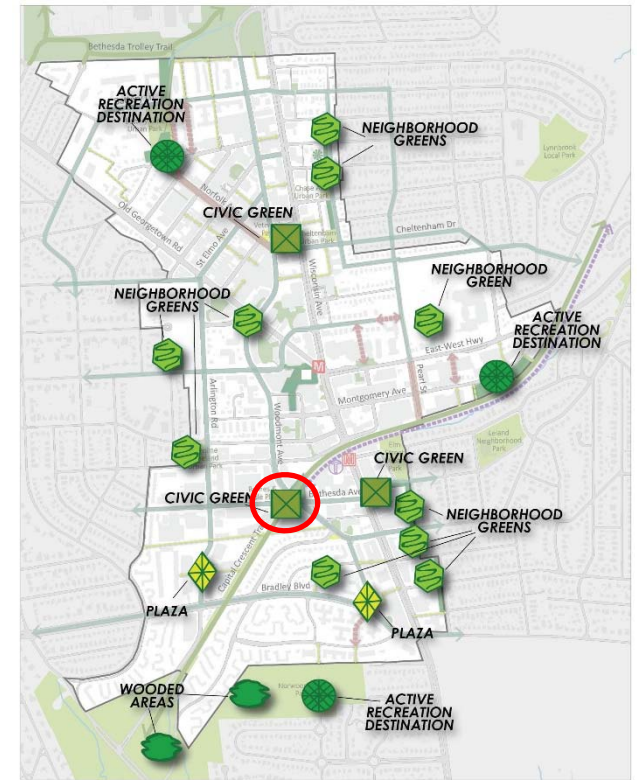
- Capital Crescent Civic Green
 - *Provide key community open space for recreation and casual use by the large population center in this community*
 - *Support trail usage and special events to serve the entire County*
- Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway
 - *Increase access between one of the most important trail corridors in the County and the center of Bethesda*
 - *Provide key additional recreational open space to a community with high population density*
- Legacy Open Space designation supports implementation through the use of Legacy Open Space tools and funding
- Designation in LOS Functional Master Plan via BDP Master Plan
- Proposed additions to Plan text in staff memo

Civic Gathering Spaces

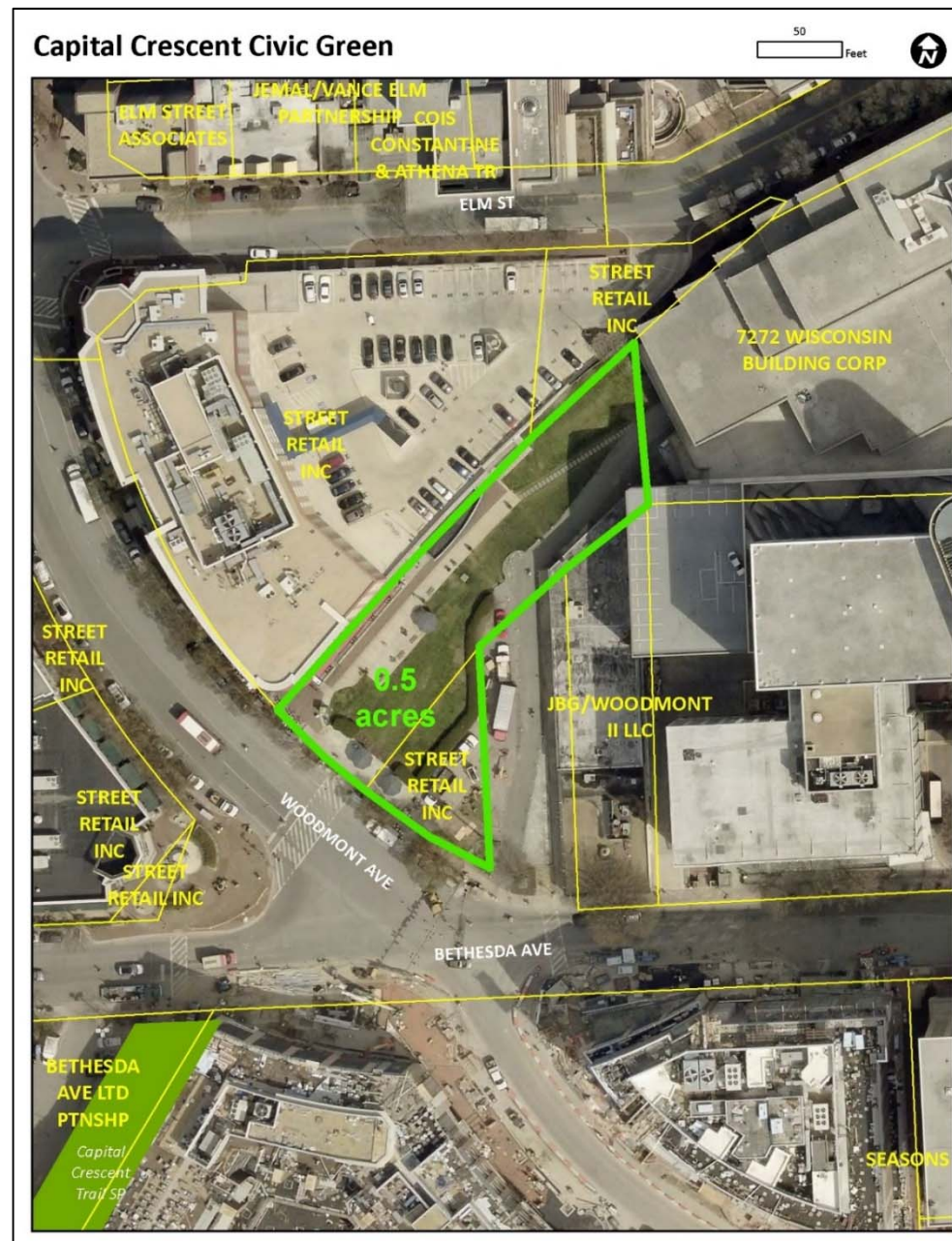
Support Centers with Civic Greens

The Capital Crescent Civic Green

- **Vision:** the Civic Green for the Bethesda Row District and the western gateway of the Capital Crescent Trail
- **Purpose:** community events, meeting spot, casual informal gathering on the lawn. Amenities such as food kiosks and a water play area should be included.
- **Size:** 0.5 acres



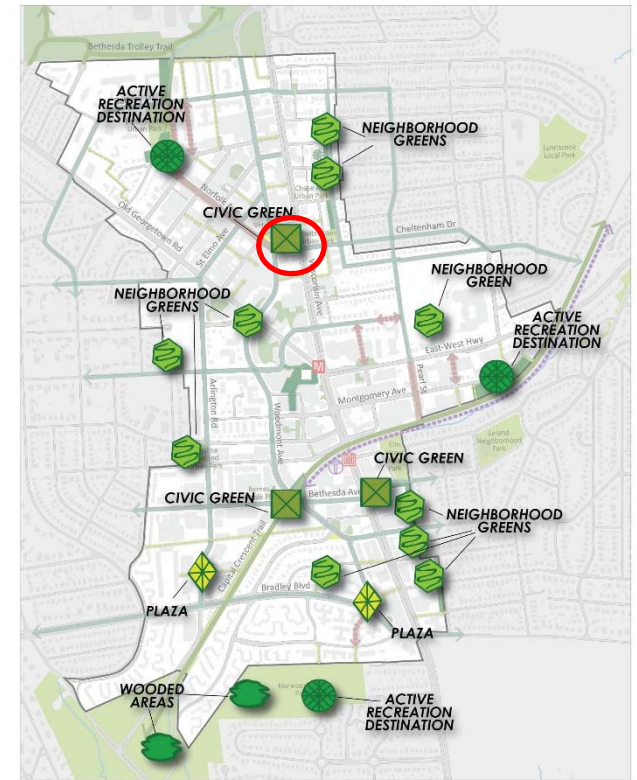
Support Centers with Civic Greens



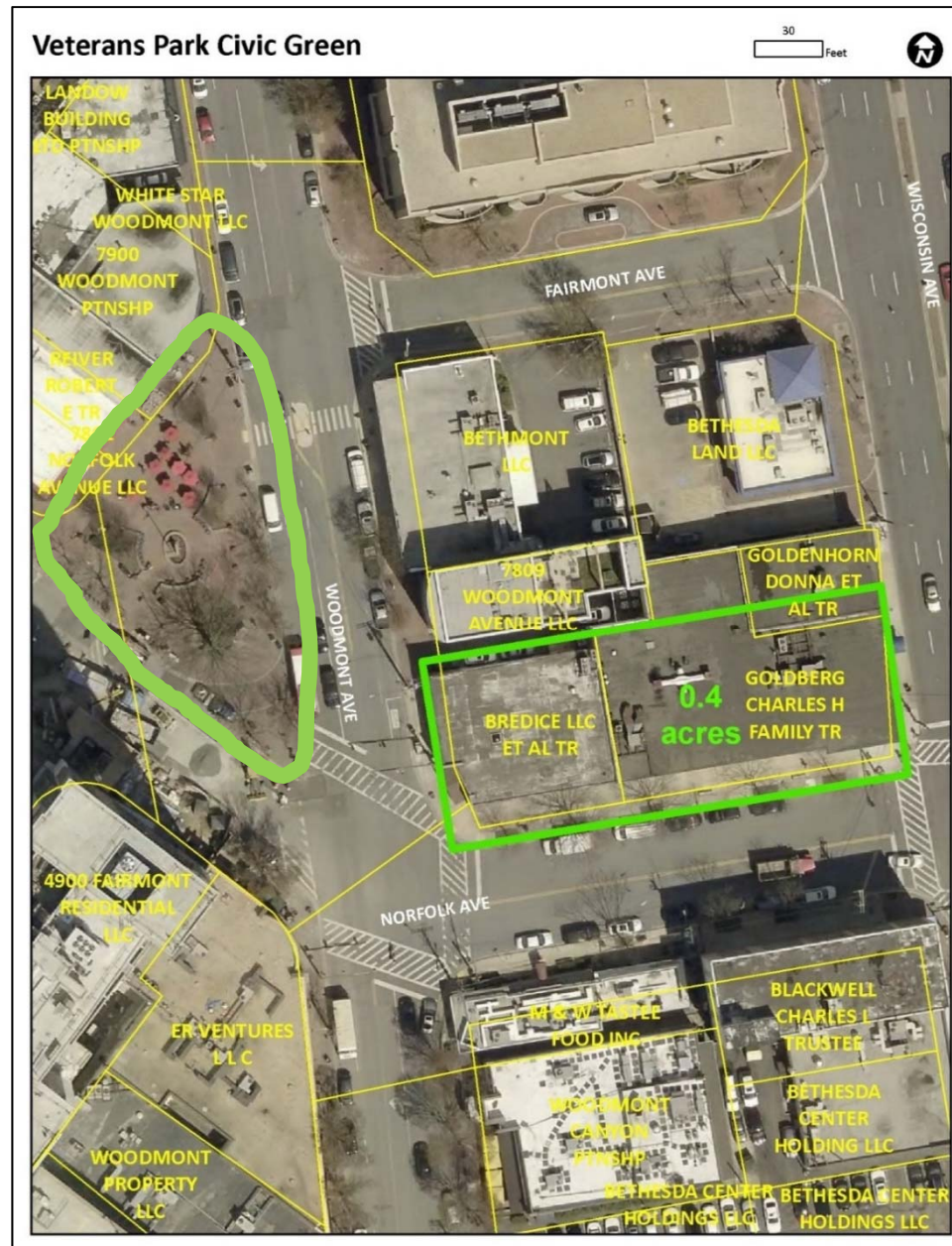
Support Centers with Civic Greens

Veteran's Park Civic Green

- **Vision:** a green extension of the existing successful public open space at Veteran's Park
- **Purpose:** formal community programs, informal relaxing, including amenities such as shade structures, water walls, etc.
- **Size:** 0.4 acres



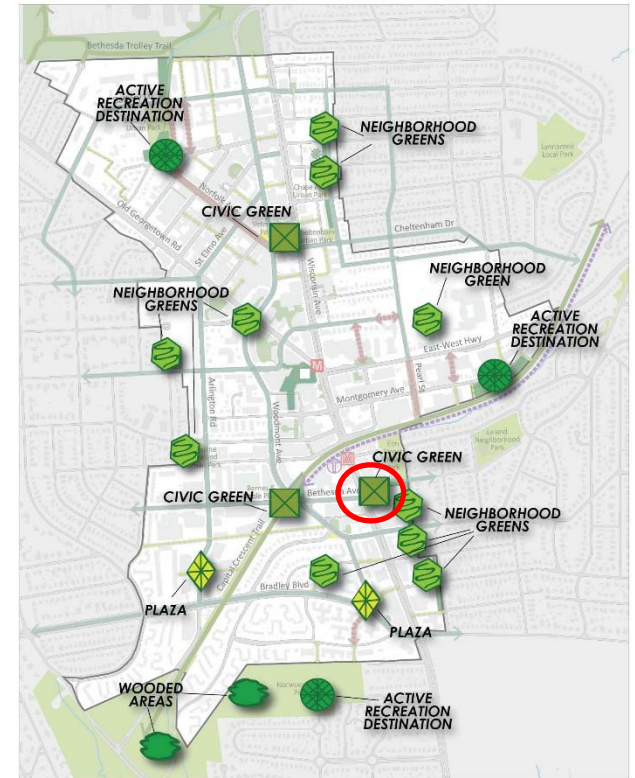
Support Centers with Civic Greens



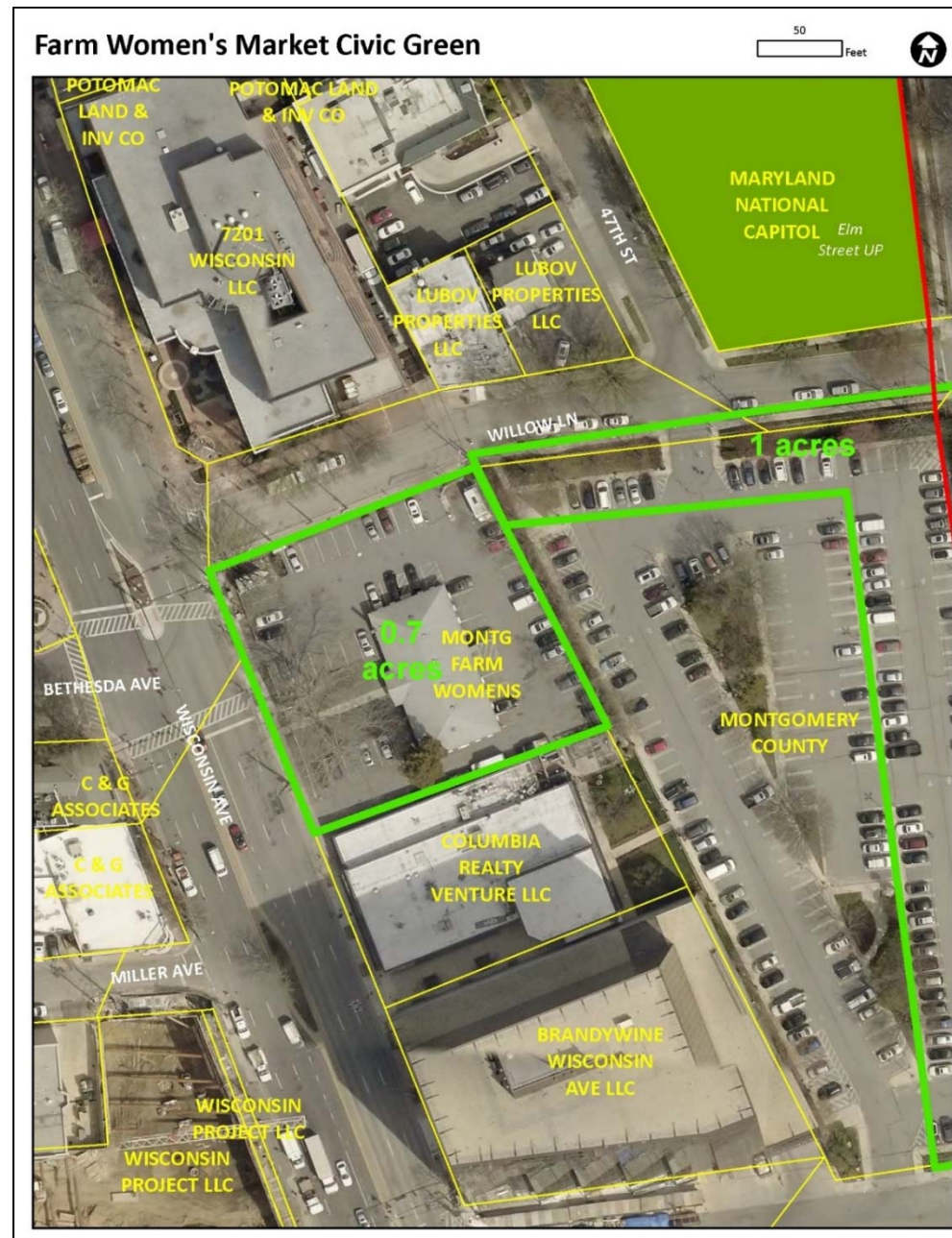
Support Centers with Civic Greens

The Farm Women's Market Civic Green

- **Vision:** a green open space in the historic heart of Bethesda, next to the longstanding community institution
- **Purpose:** destination and gathering spot for market customers to eat and relax. Amenities such as portable tents, seating and tables should be included.
- **Size:** 0.6 acres (includes historic building)



Support Centers with Civic Greens

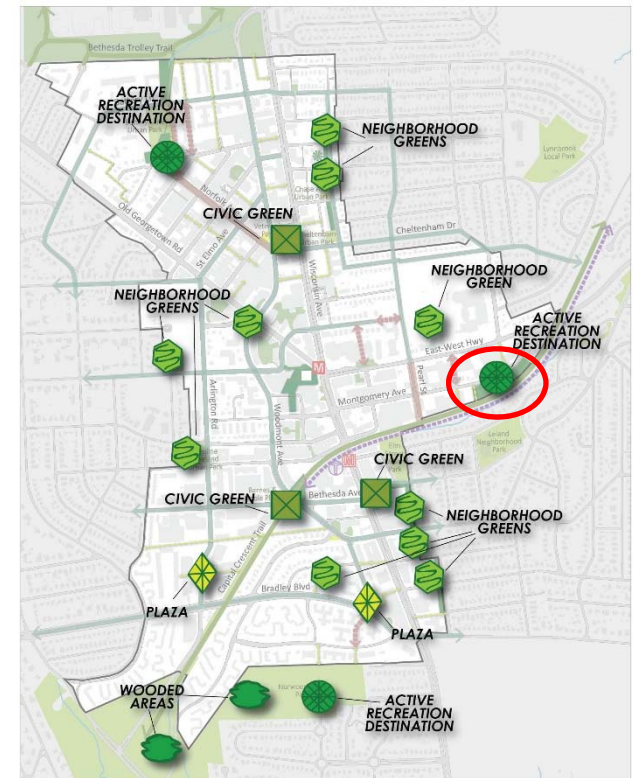


Linkages and Gateways

Provide Gateways to Major Trail Systems

The Eastern Capital Crescent Trail Urban Greenway Park

- Vision: an active gateway park along the Capital Crescent Trail
- Purpose: recreational facilities accessed by the trail, a green gateway to the central Business District. Amenities such as adult fitness, skateboard walls and a dog park should be included.
- Size: 1.3 acres



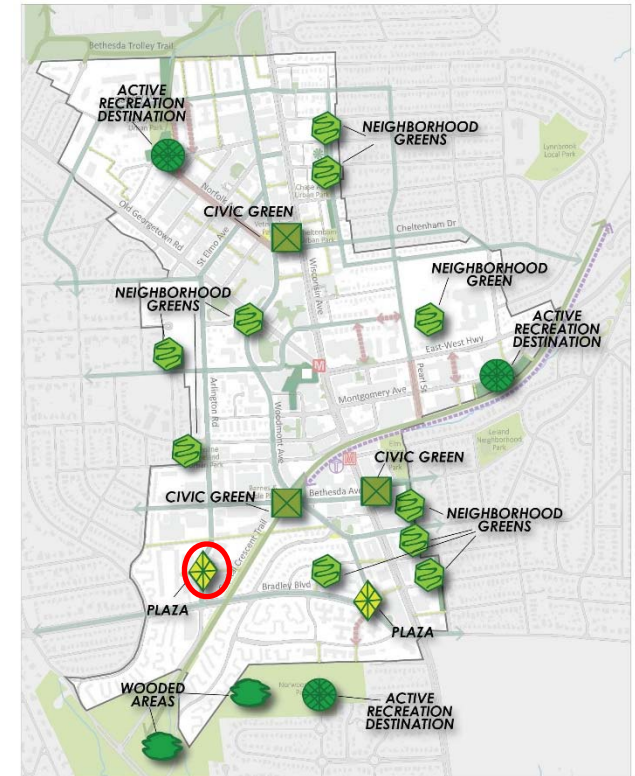
Eastern Capital Crescent Trail Greenway



Provide Gateways to Major Trail Systems

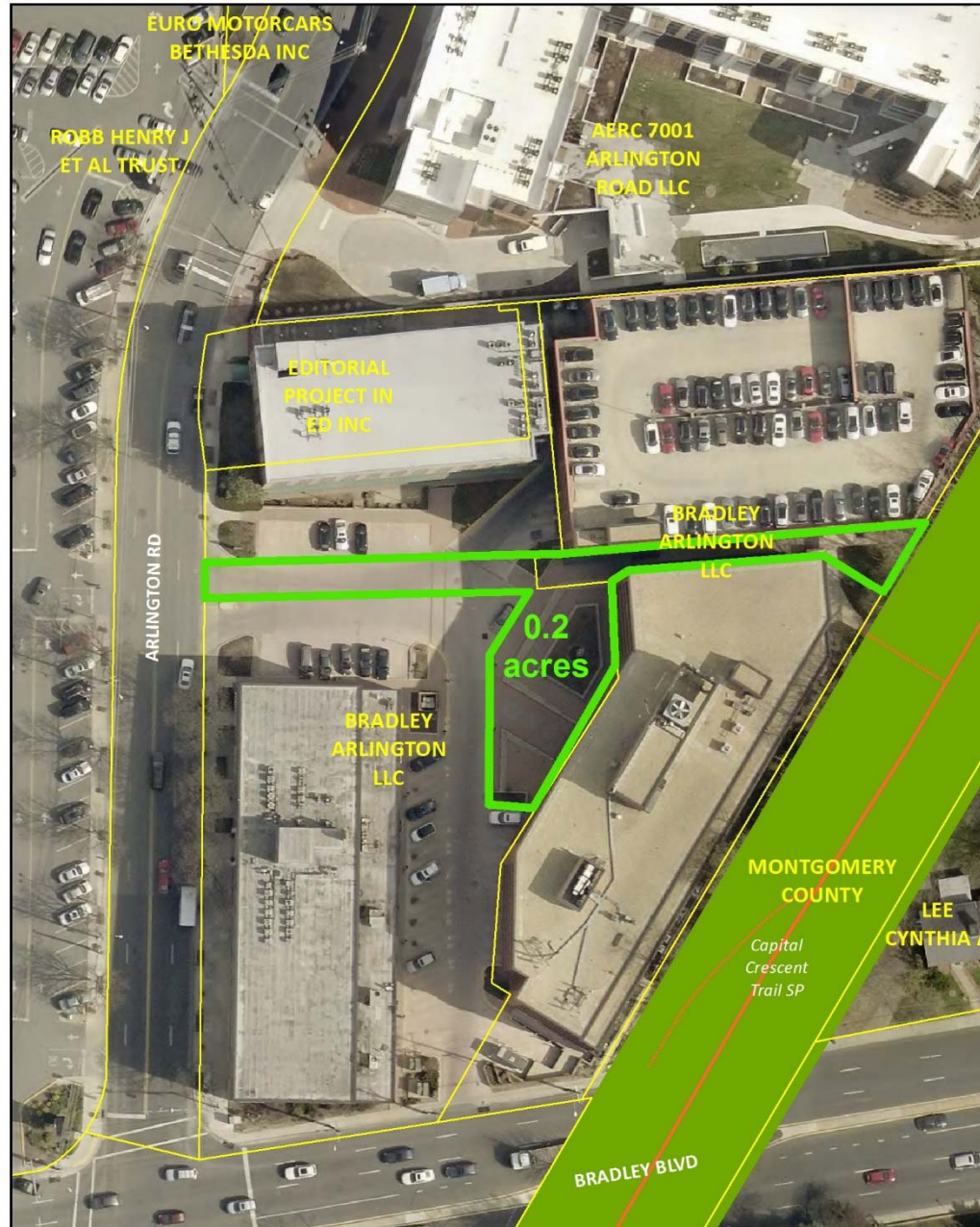
Arlington South Urban Gateway Plaza

- **Vision:** a linear park linking the Arlington South District to the Capital Crescent Trail.
- **Purpose:** Connection from the Trail to a mid-block cross to the Bradley Shopping Center. Amenities such as comfortable seating and innovative storm water management should be included.
- **Size:** a minimum width of 12 feet between the existing buildings adjacent to the Capital Crescent Trail and 20 feet in the area that leads to Arlington Boulevard.



Arlington South Urban Gateway Plaza

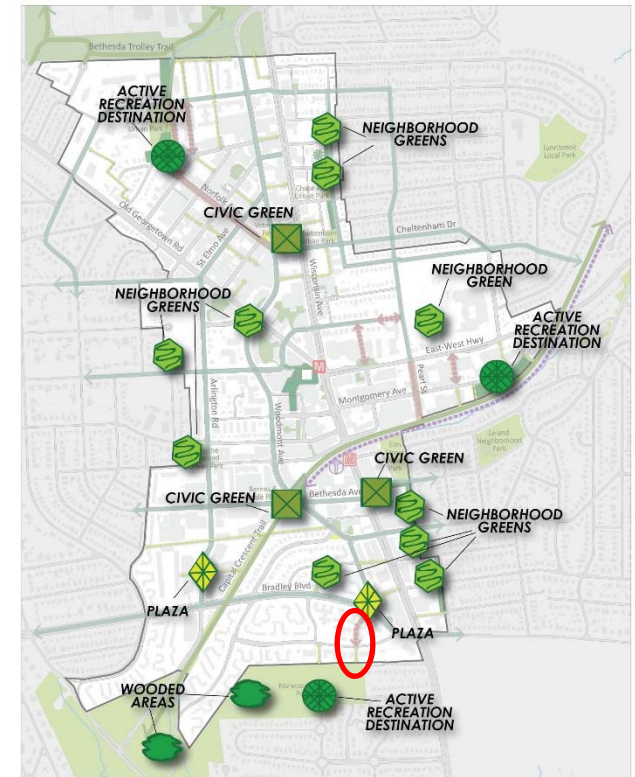
40 Feet



Provide Gateways to Major Trail Systems

The Gateway into Norwood Local Park

- **Vision:** a welcoming, green and obviously public entrance into Norwood Local Park
- **Purpose:** improve connections to the Bethesda's largest park for cyclists and pedestrians. Amenities such as a welcoming gateway and landscaping should be included.
- **Size:** Wide enough pavement for cyclists and pedestrians between Chevy Chase Drive and park property line



Gateway to Norwood Local Park

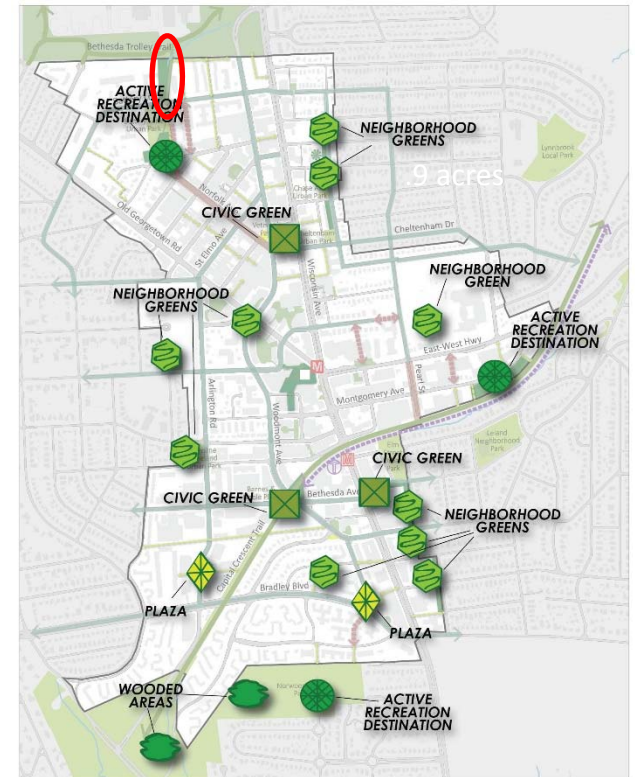
50 Feet



Provide Gateways to Major Trail Systems

The North Bethesda Urban Greenway Park

- **Vision:** a green and active linear park connecting the National Institute of Health and the Woodmont Triangle
 - **Purpose:** enhanced trail for cyclists and walkers, Amenities such as play elements and stream improvements should be included.
 - **Size:** 0.9 acres
- (along the major bicycle and pedestrian route between Bethesda and White Flint)



North Bethesda Trail Urban Greenway

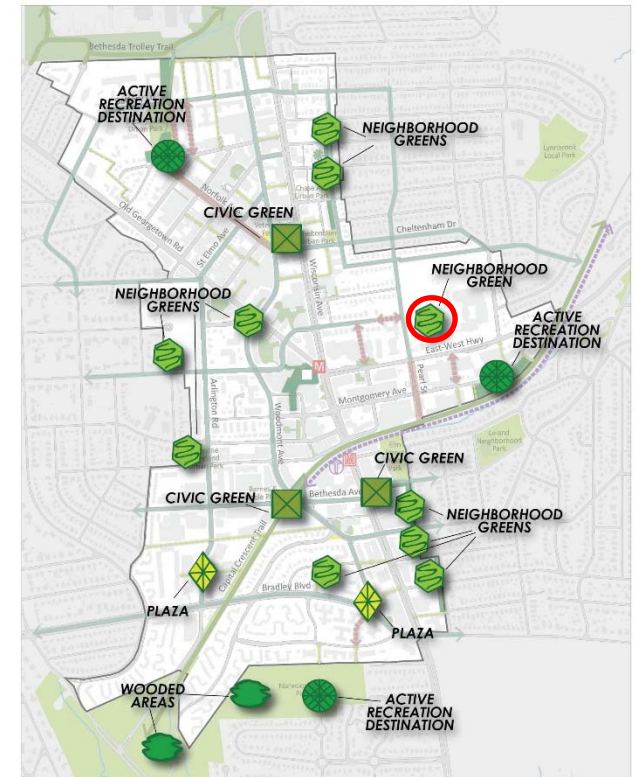


Neighborhood Greens

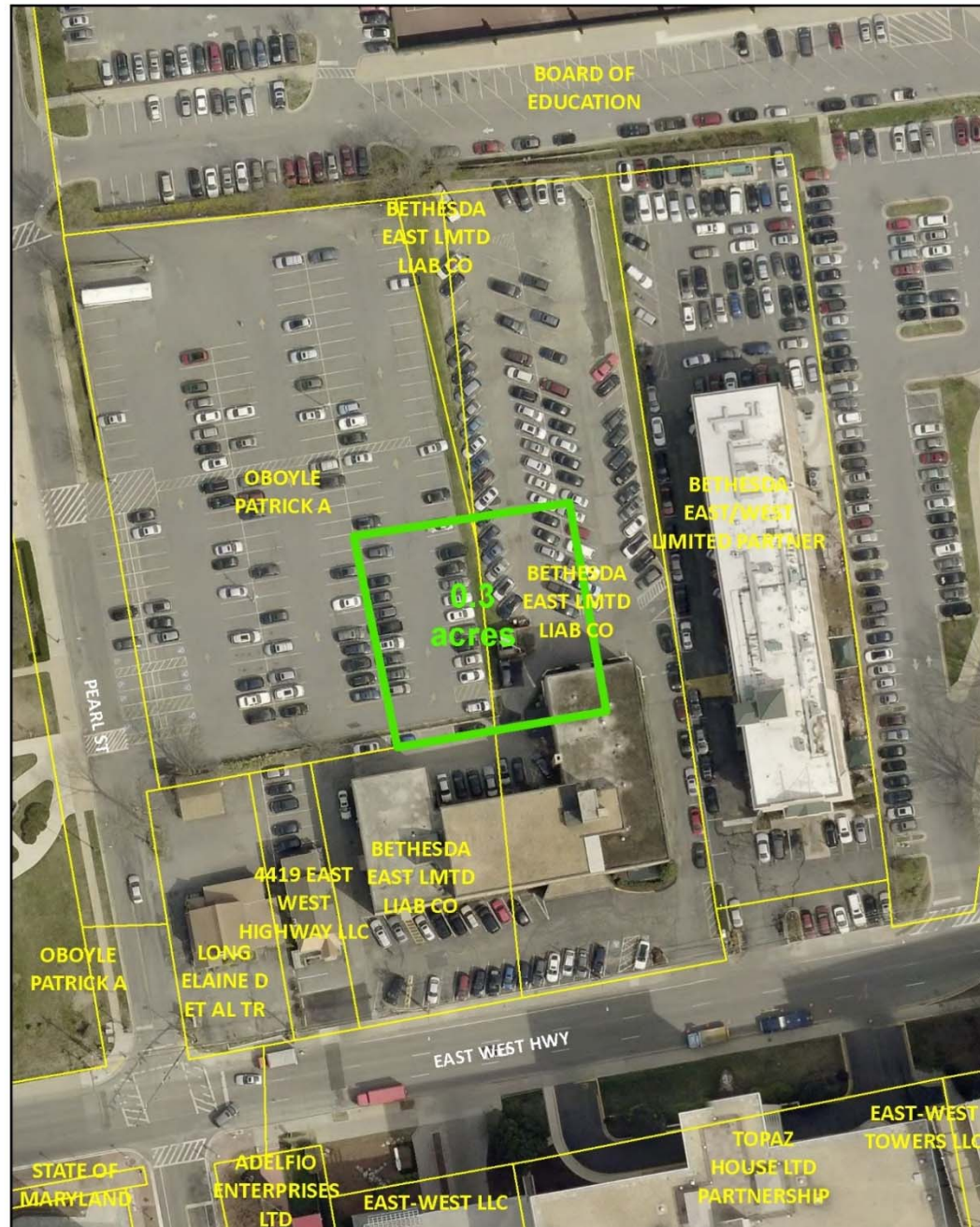
Create Green Neighborhood Parks

Bethesda – Chevy Chase East Neighborhood Green Urban Park

- **Vision:** neighborhood green urban park that serves new development in the area
- **Purpose:** walk-to amenities for the residents immediately surrounding this park, such as community open space, seating, trees, art-based play area
- **Size:** 0.3 acres
(between Bethesda – Chevy-Chase High School and the Pearl Street / East-West Highway intersection)



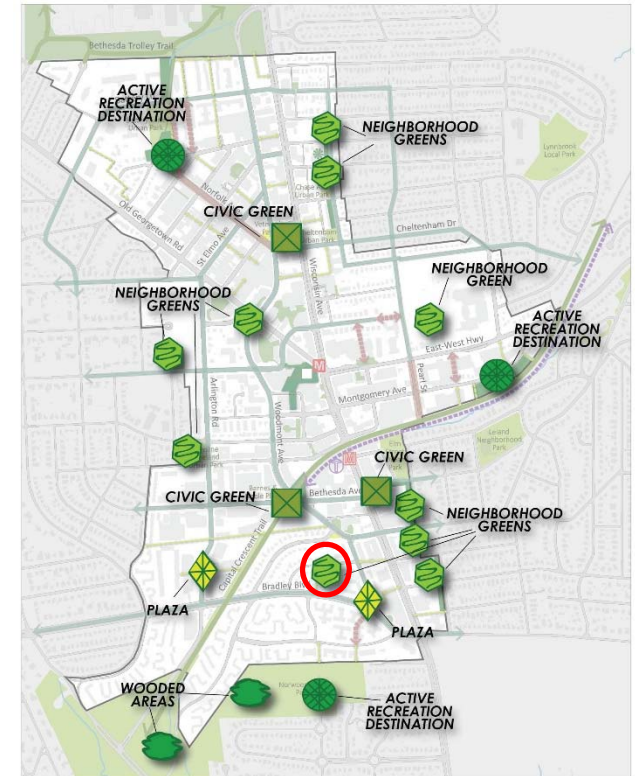
B-CC East Neighborhood Green Urban Park



Create Green Neighborhood Parks

Wellington Drive Neighborhood Green Urban Park

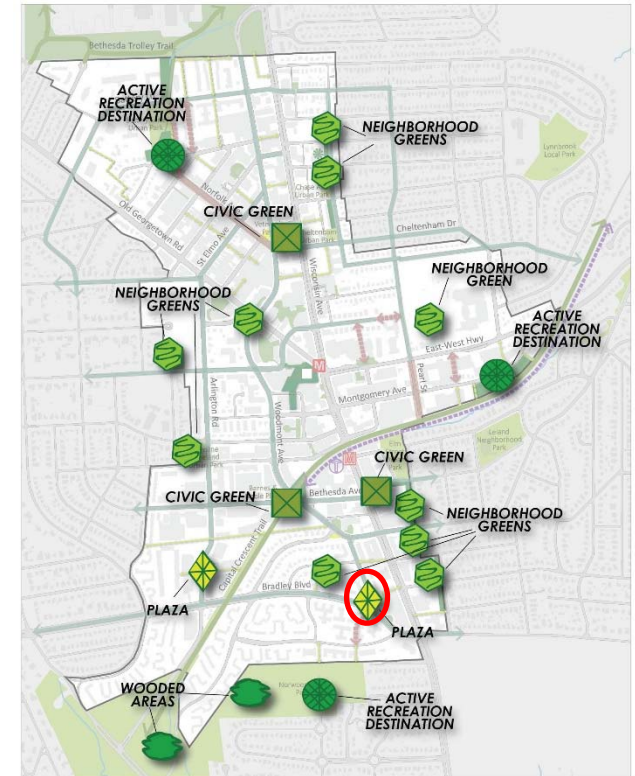
- Vision: a neighborhood park and green buffer
- Purpose: walk-to amenities for the residents immediately surrounding this park, such as community open space, trees, and nature-based play area
- Size: 0.5 acres



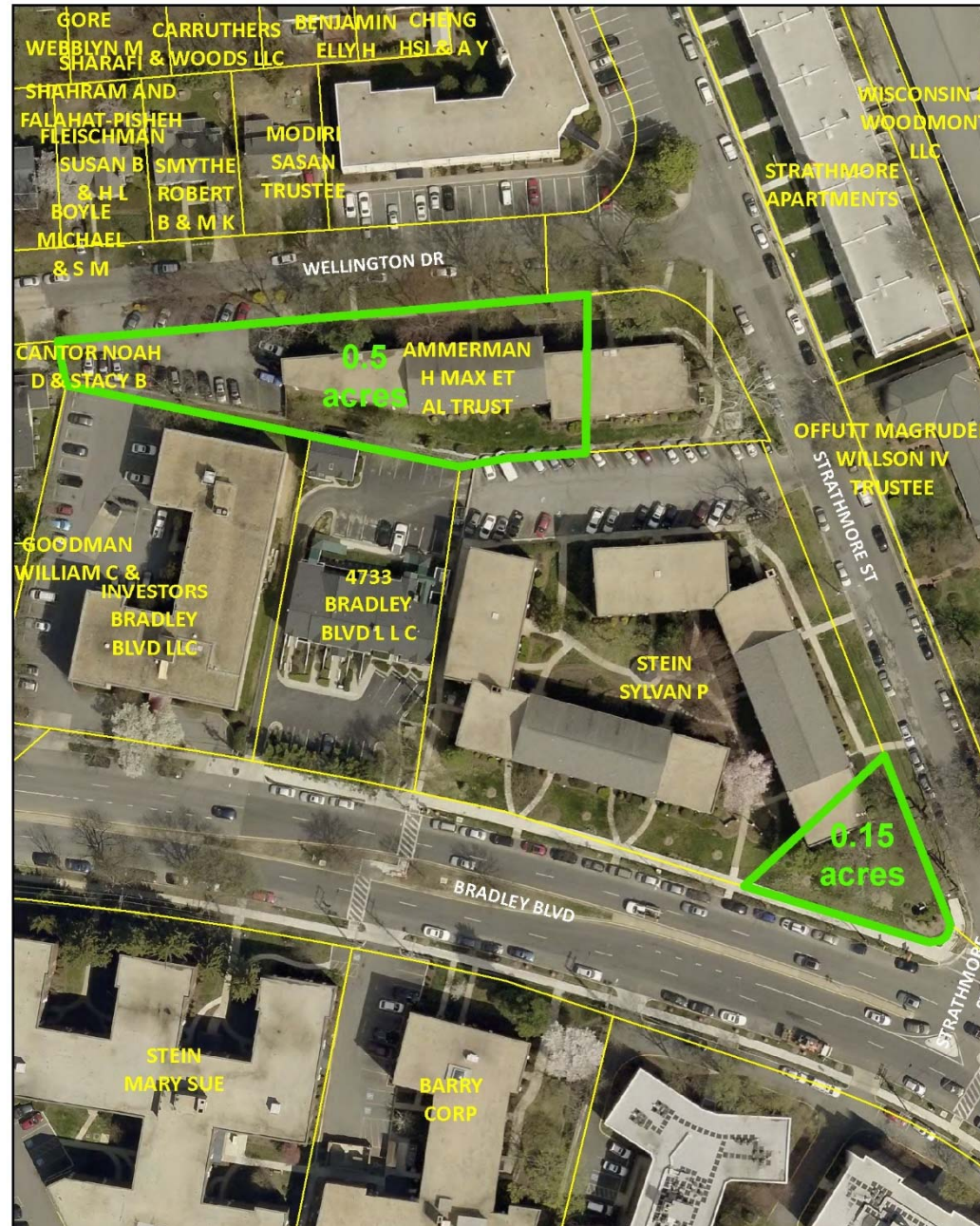
Create Green Neighborhood Parks

South Bethesda Public Plaza

- **Vision:** a small public open space at the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Strathmore Street
- **Purpose:** shaded open space for higher density development. Amenities such as playful gateway art should be included.
- **Size:** 0.15 acre



**Wellington Drive Neighborhood Green Urban Park
and South Bethesda Public Plaza**

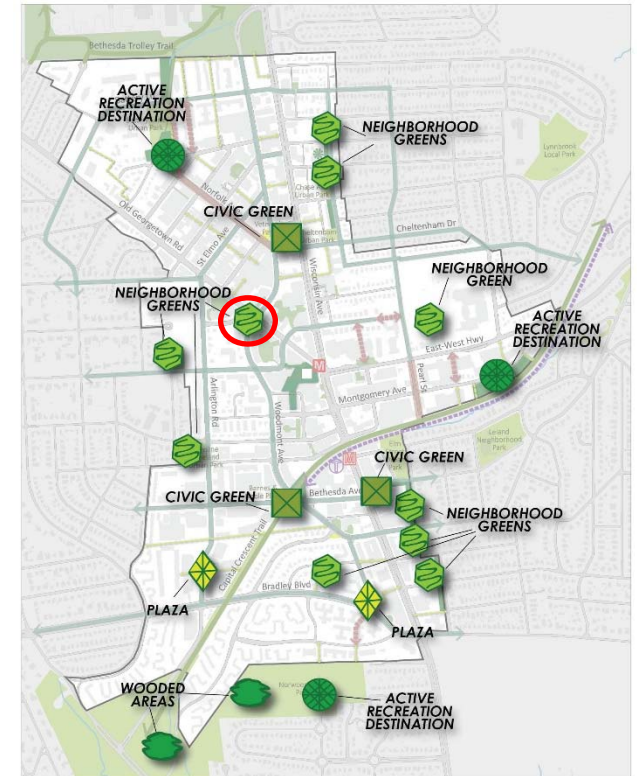


Create Green Neighborhood Parks

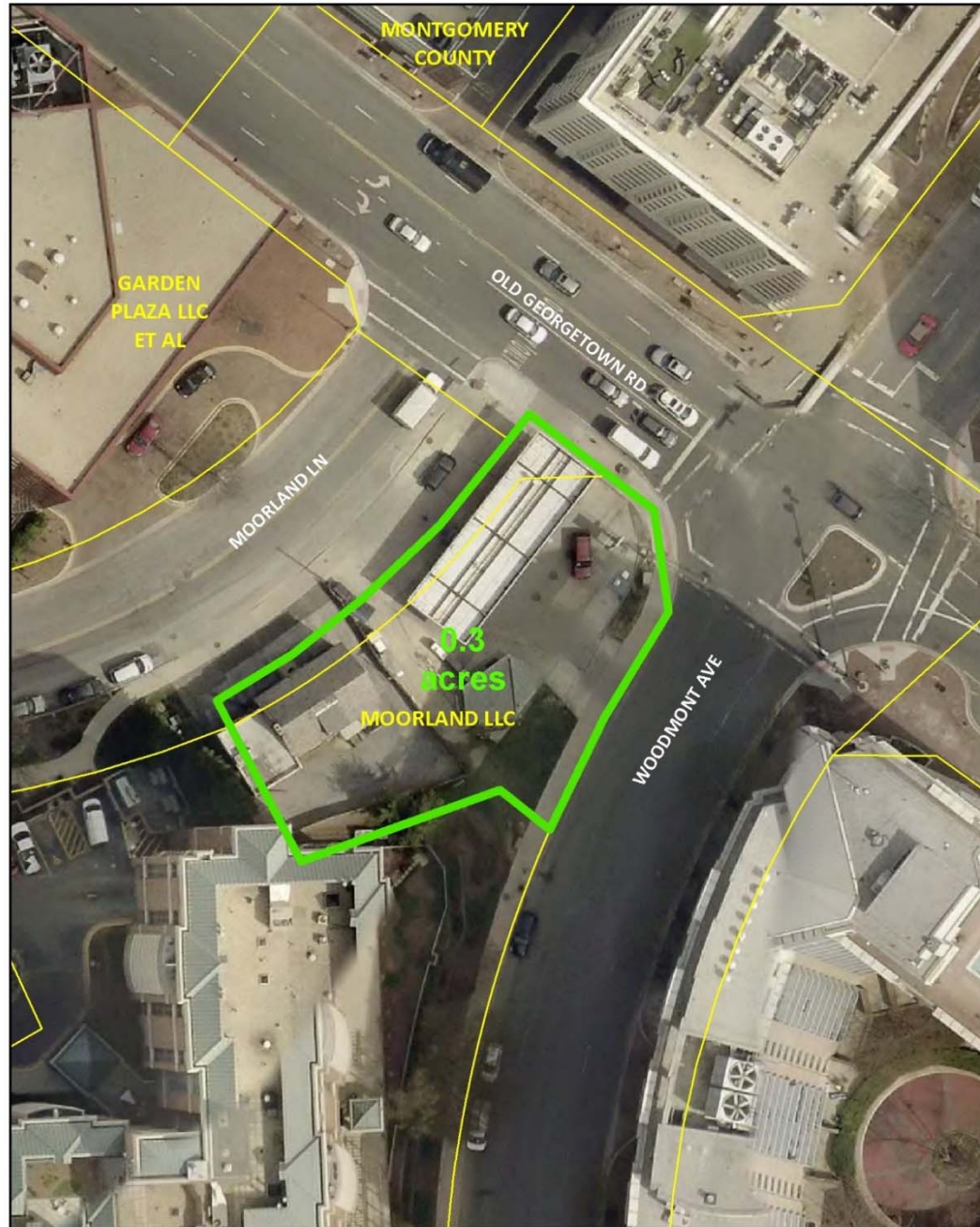
Old Georgetown Road Neighborhood Green Urban Park

- Vision: a heavily landscaped, shady, green living room at a signature location
- Purpose: green respite, lunch spot, visitor destination
- Size: 0.3 acres.

(currently a bank and adjacent single family home building to the southwest at Woodmont and Old Georgetown)





Old Georgetown Neighborhood Green Urban Park



Green Edges and Buffers

Eastern Greenway Districts

Public Realm

-  Proposed Bike Priority Street + Canopy Corridor
-  Proposed Public Connection
-  Proposed New Street
-  Proposed Shared Street
-  Enhanced Intersection
-  Proposed Gateway and Enhanced Intersection
-  Proposed/Enhanced Open Space
-  Potential Open Space (Location TBD)
-  Illustrative Potential Development



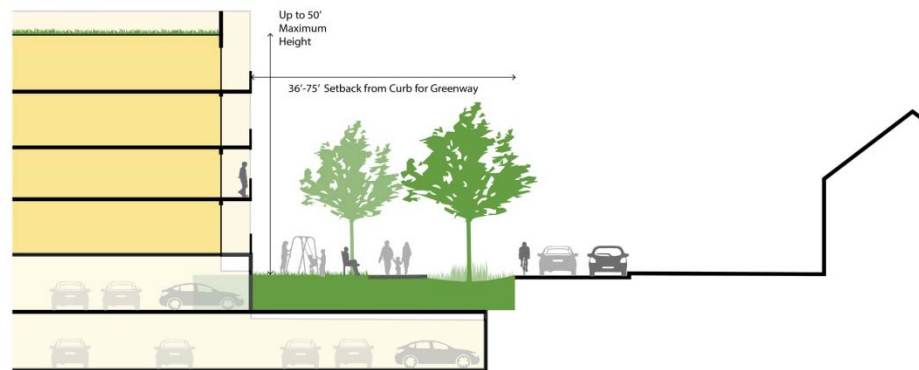
Eastern Greenway Districts



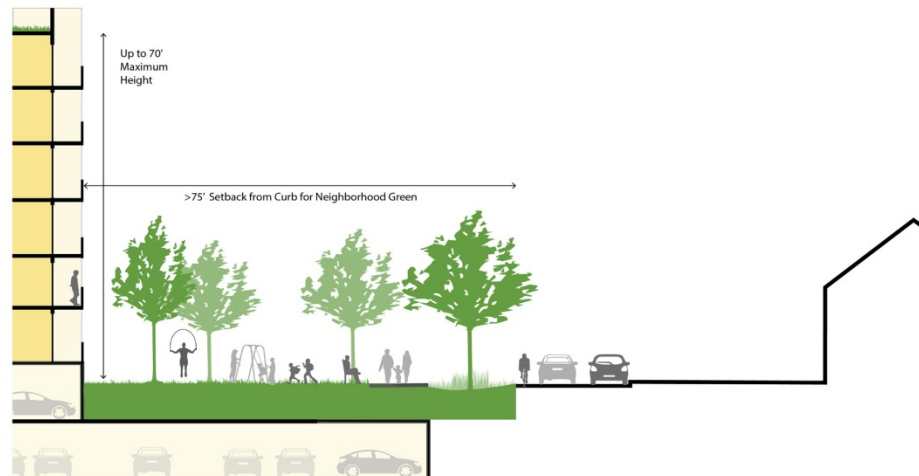
Tier 1 Green Street:



Tier 2 Greenway:



Tier 3 Neighborhood Green:

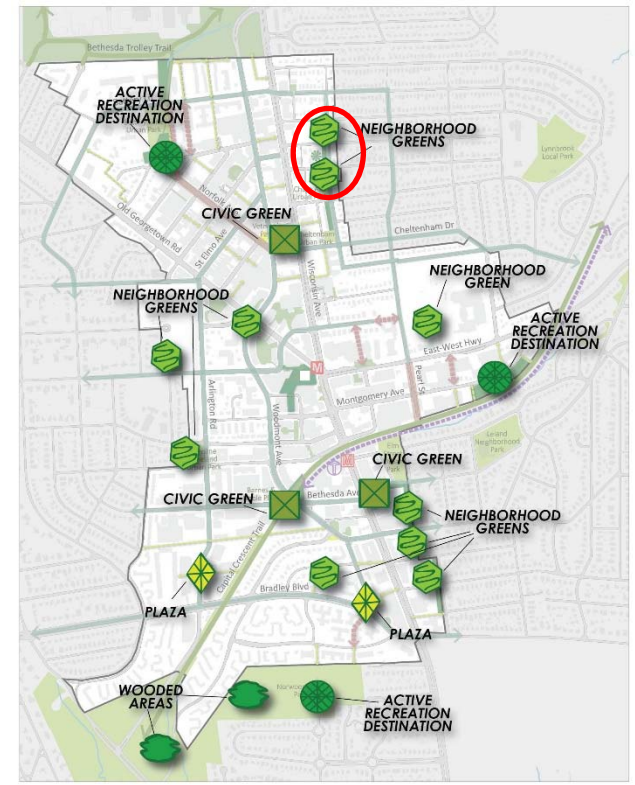


Greening and Buffering the Edges

The Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Green Urban Parks

North End:

- **Vision:** pockets of parkland along the Eastern Greenway for additional recreational amenities and green buffers
- **Purpose:** accommodate needed walk-to facilities. Amenities such as natural play areas and community open space should be included.
- **Size:** 0.5 acres each



60
Feet



Chase Avenue Urban Park Expansion

Feet

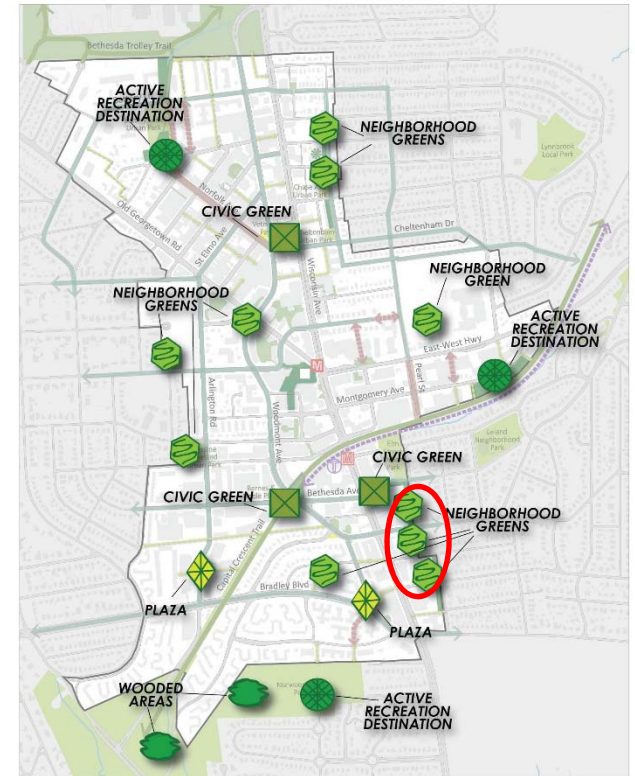


Greening and Buffering the Edges

The Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Green Urban Parks

South End

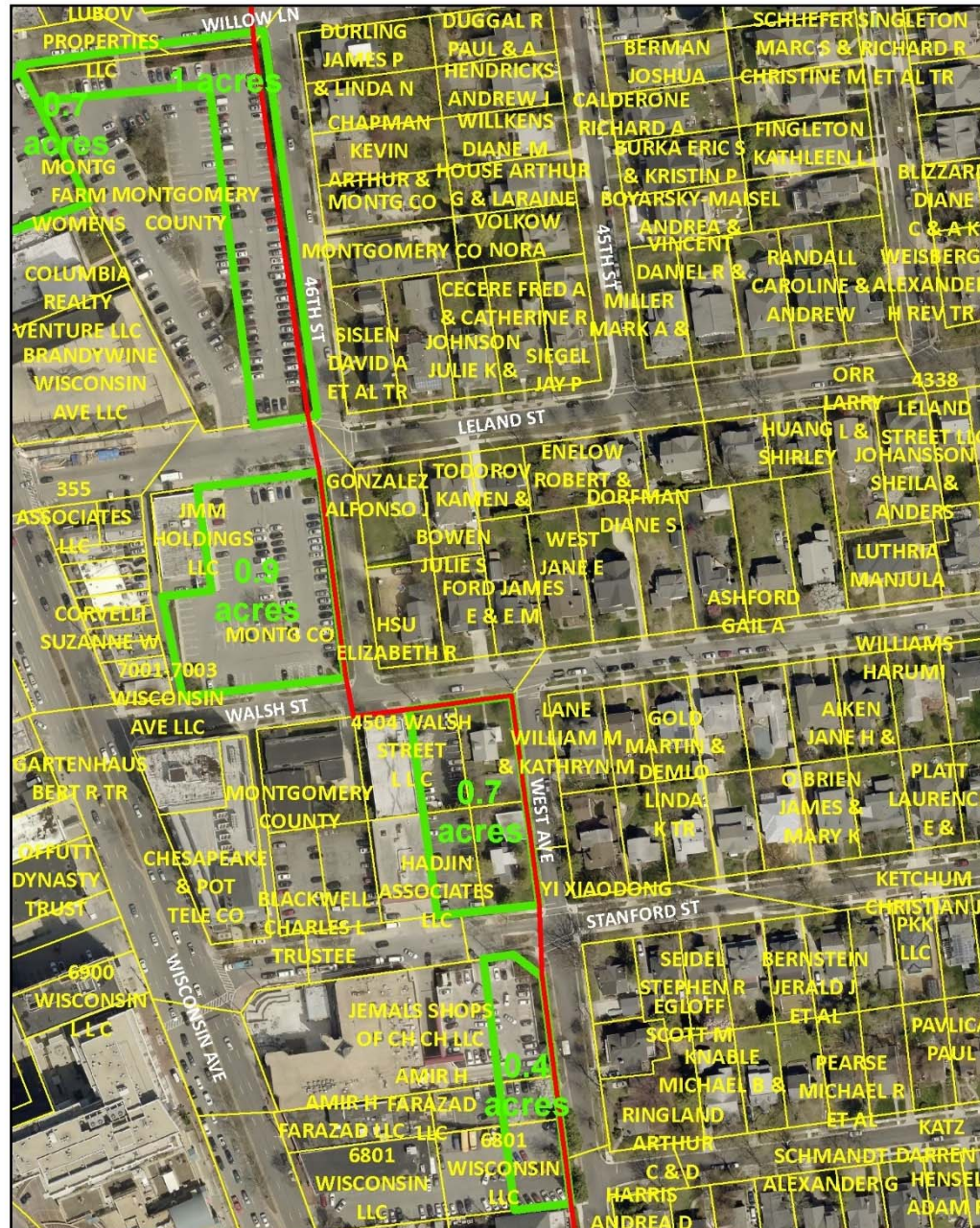
- **Vision:** destinations, green spaces, and buffers to the Town of Chevy Chase
- **Purpose:** neighborhood recreation, green buffer, increased tree canopy. Amenities such as climbing walls, should be included.
- **Size:** 3 additional acres of green space (in addition to the green space at the Farm Women's Cooperative Market)



Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens - South

110

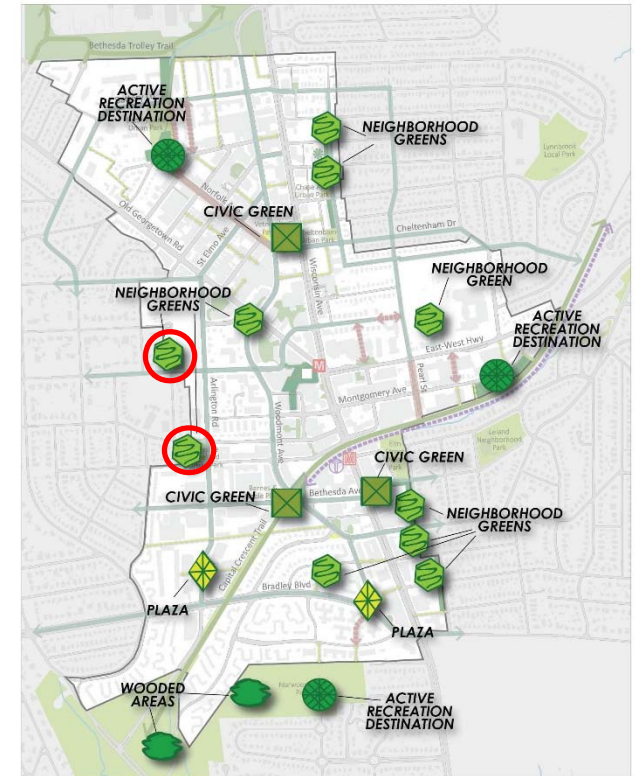
Feet



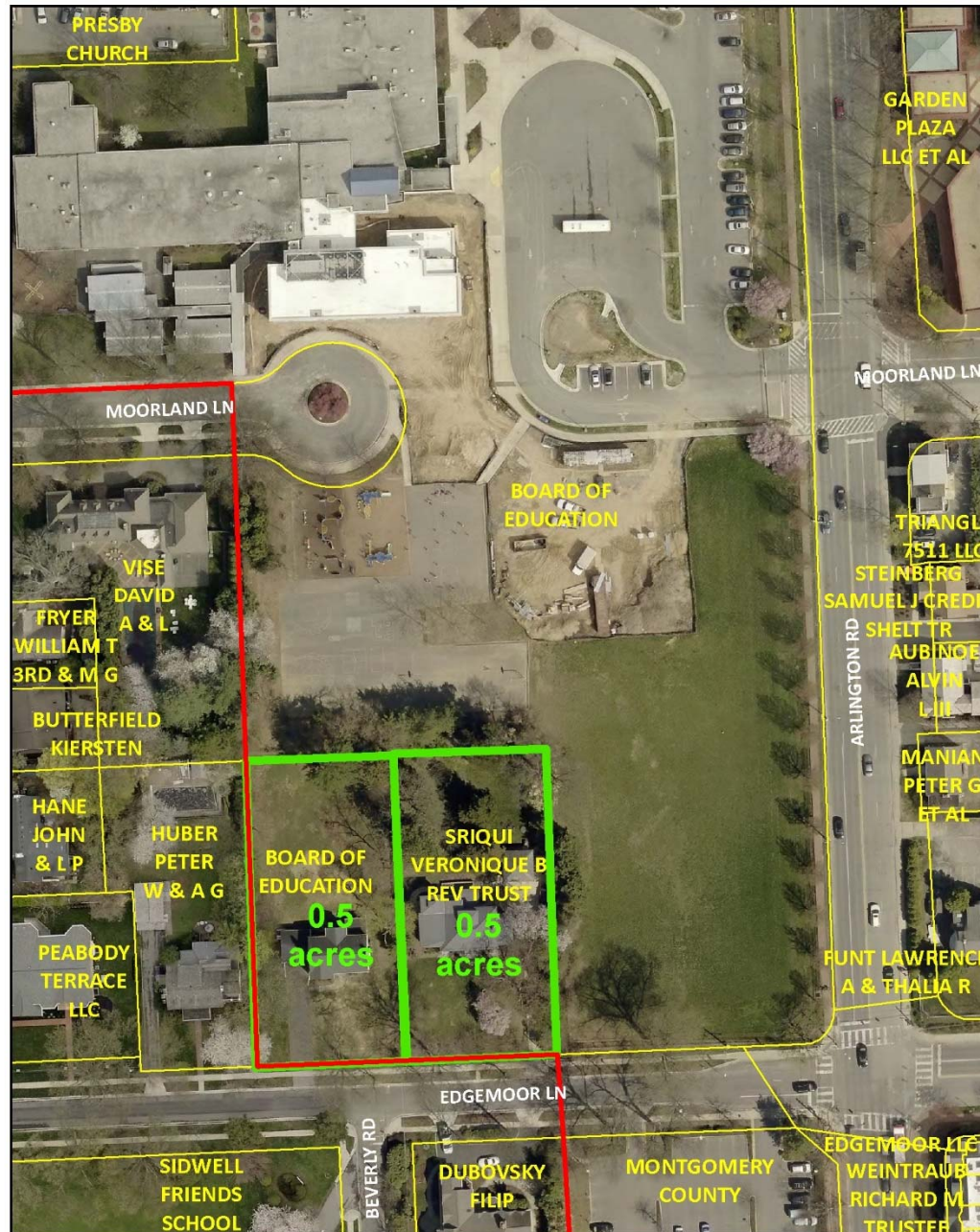
Greening and Buffering the Edges

Western Edge Neighborhood Parks

- **Vision:** additions to the larger green spaces along the western edge of the Plan area
- **Purpose:** neighborhood recreation, green buffers. Trending amenities such as musical playgrounds, disc golf and rope courses should be accommodated.
- **Size:** Caroline Freeland Urban Park - 0.15 acres
Bethesda Elementary School - 1.0 acres



Western Greenway at Bethesda Elementary



Proposed Addition to Caroline Freeland Urban Park

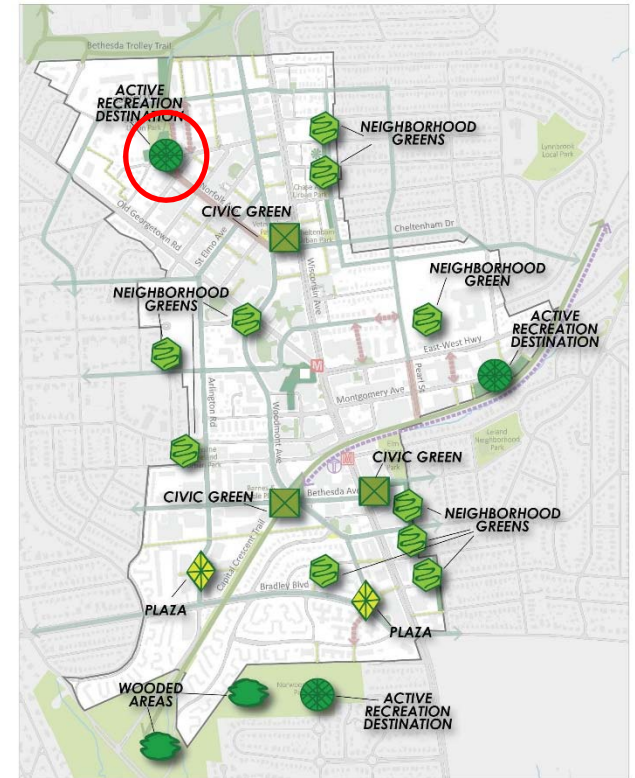
30
Feet



Greening and Buffering the Edges

Battery Lane Urban Park Expansion

- **Vision:** expanded Battery Lane Urban Park that provides a buffer, recreational amenities, and playable art for visitors and residents
- **Purpose:** allow for needed walk-to facilities, such as community open space, dog parks, skate parks or community gardens
- **Size :** existing 2.0 acres, additional 1.75 acres



Proposed Additions to Battery Lane Urban Park



Battery Lane District

Public Realm

-  Proposed Bike Priority Street + Canopy Corridor
-  Proposed Public Connection
-  Proposed New Street
-  Proposed Shared Street
-  Enhanced Intersection
-  Proposed Gateway and Enhanced Intersection
-  Proposed/Enhanced Open Space
-  Potential Open Space (Location TBD)
-  Illustrative Potential Development



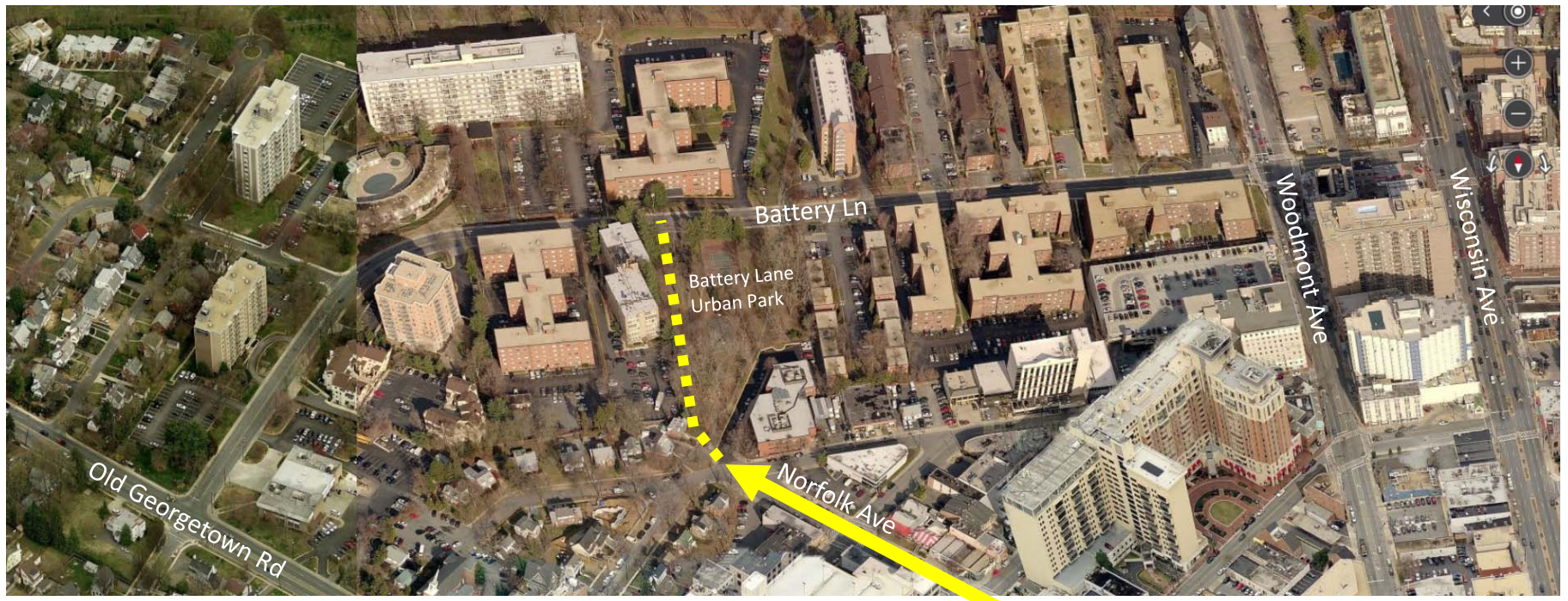
Public Space Network

Primary Links:

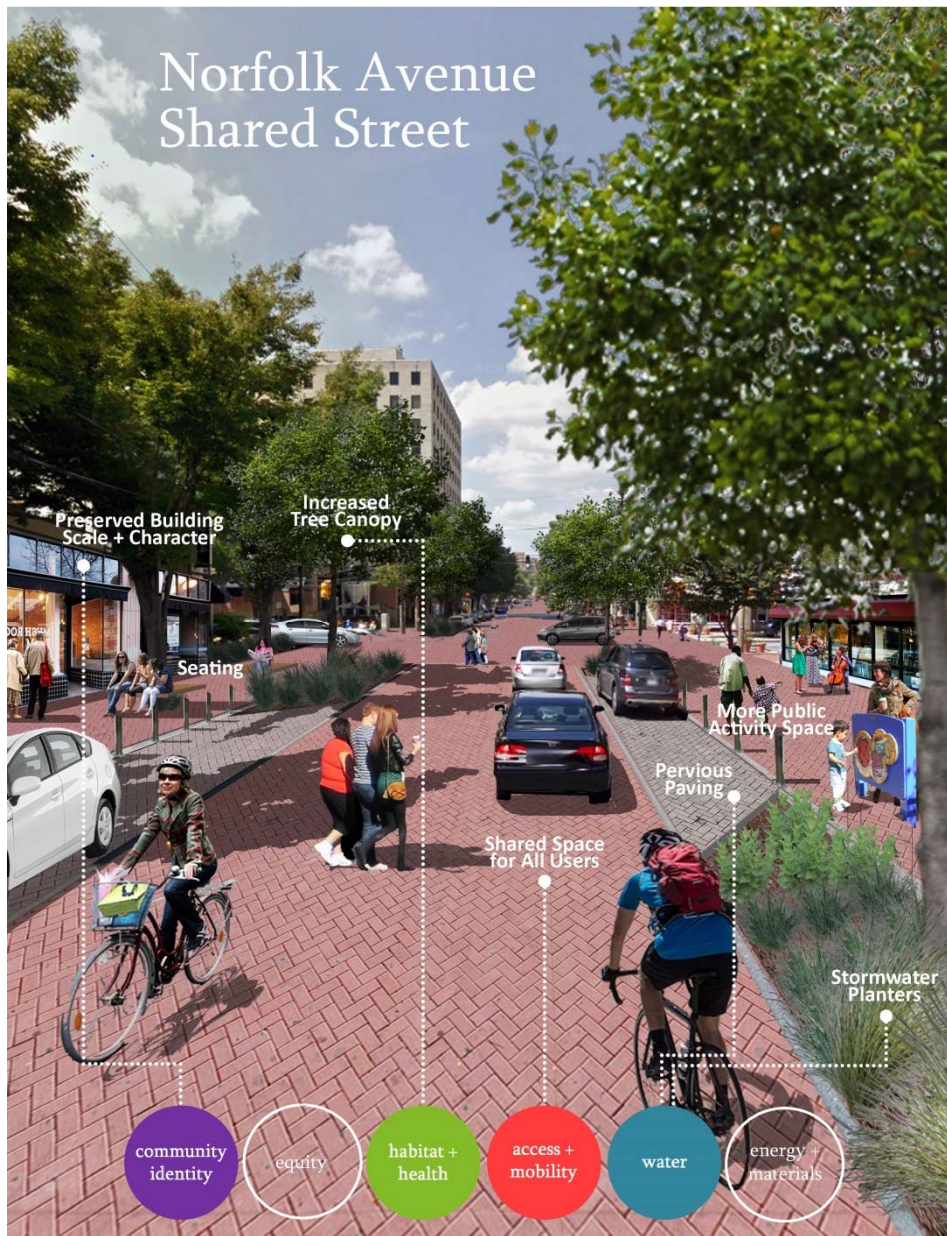
- Metro Center to Woodmont Triangle and Bethesda Row
- Norfolk Avenue linking Veteran's Park Civic Green through Battery Lane Park
- Capital Crescent Central Civic Green to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market



Battery Lane District



Shared Street Concept



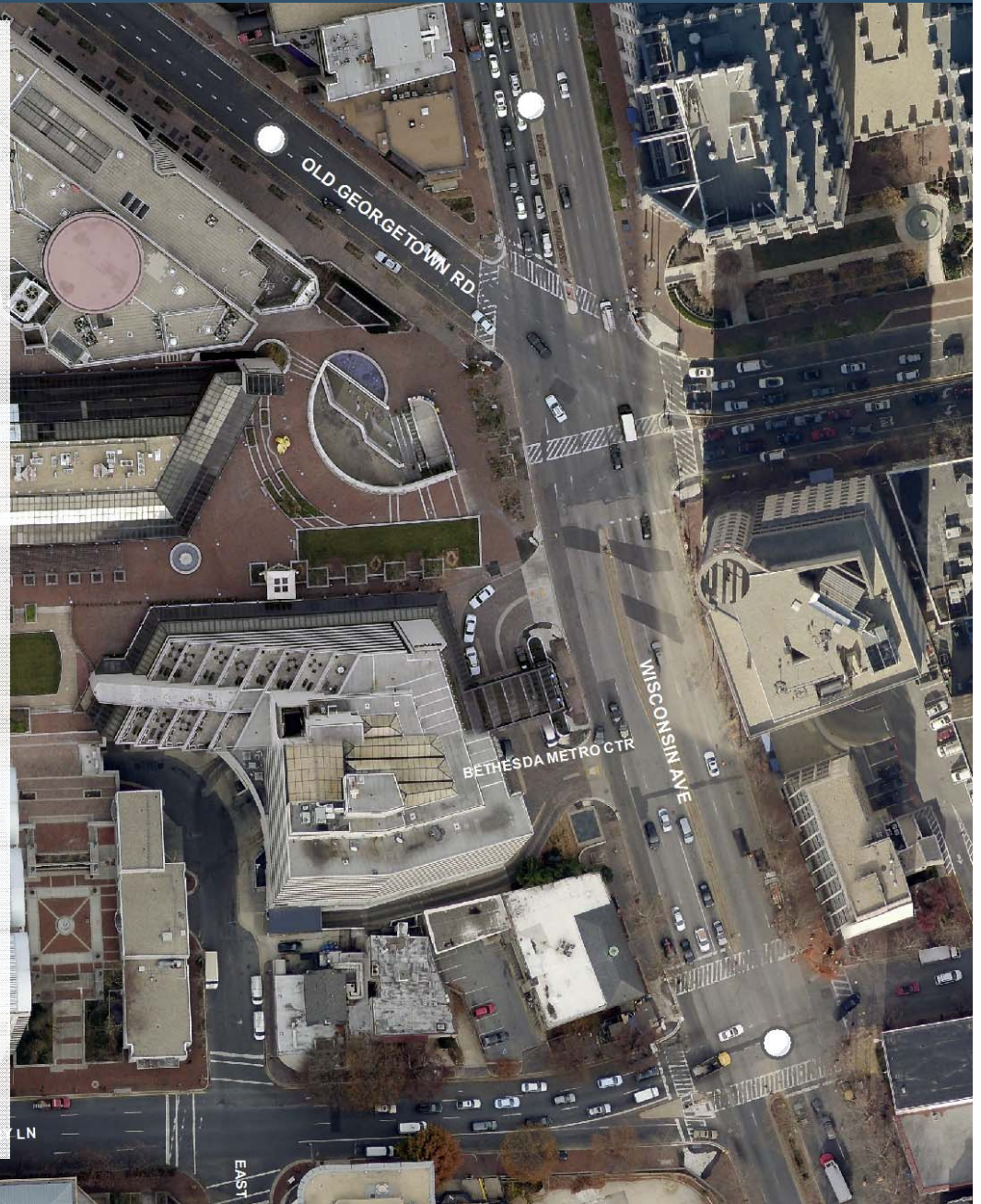
Bethesda Metro Plaza

Bethesda Metro Plaza



Bethesda Metro Plaza

- Activate and increase visibility of public use spaces
- Allow for new building to define the center
- Encourage a new civic gathering space
- Improve the pedestrian environment with better access





Bethesda Downtown Plan



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