



HARLEM PARK
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan

AYERS
SAINT
GROSS

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CHAPTER ONE PROLOGUE

Prologue

The Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan is a guiding framework that promotes equitable reinvestment in the community for generations to come. It is a plan founded on the vision and ideas of neighborhood residents. This plan also seeks to undo decades of underinvestment and inequitable policy. Through engagement with the community and local stakeholders, this neighborhood master plan elevates the voices of those living, working, and investing in the neighborhood to shape the future of Harlem Park. **The Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan is:**

A PLAN FOUNDED ON ENGAGEMENT

This neighborhood plan is a community-guided vision for the future of Harlem Park and provides a long-term vision to inform future decision makers. Master plans look holistically at buildings, programs, land use, transportation, and more to develop a physical method for future development. This neighborhood master plan will help set the stage for reinvestment and target resources to align with the desires of community members. To create an equitable, sustainable, and implementable master plan, the plan and planning process focused on:

- Capturing the needs and voices of the community
- Creating a long-term vision that informs future decision making
- Serving as a guide for where to target financing and funding.

A PLAN THAT PROMOTES EQUITY & SUSTAINABILITY

With equity and inclusion at its core, the desire to restore a once flourishing community, and pressing environmental concerns, the master plan aligns with the EcoDistricts' imperatives.



EQUITY



RESILIENCE



CLIMATE PROTECTION

A PLAN THAT CELEBRATES THE HISTORY & UNIQUENESS OF HARLEM PARK

Harlem Park has an incredible history of parks, celebrated architecture, activism, education, churches, and much more. The master plan celebrates the distinguishing features of the neighborhood and increases diversity in the urban fabric while maintaining and restoring the neighborhood's historic character.







CHAPTER TWO PLACE

HARLEM PARK IS A WEST BALTIMORE GEM

Bounded by Fremont Avenue and Monroe Street on the east and west and Lafayette Avenue and Mulberry Street on the north and south, Harlem Park is embedded in the heart of West Baltimore. The diverse character of adjacent neighborhoods presents unique challenges and opportunities for Harlem Park as the community is flanked by Sandtown-Winchester to the north, Upton and Heritage Crossing to the east, Poppleton and Franklin Square to the south, and Midtown-Edmondson to the west.

One would think that a neighborhood just one mile from Downtown, proximate to the University of Maryland, Baltimore and the West Baltimore MARC station, grounded by schools and churches, and filled with parks and stunning architecture would be a thriving, vibrant place to live. This was once the case for Harlem Park, but not today. Harlem Park's history of discriminatory policies and practices combined with neglect and disinvestment has resulted in a neighborhood with many present challenges. This master plan seeks to right that course to restore equity and rebuild the community.



Fulton Avenue





INNER HARBOR

UMB

HARLEM PARK

Orleans Street

1 MILE

MLK Blvd

Heritage Crossing

Poppleton

N Fremont Avenue

W Mulberry Street

Franklin Square

W Lafayette Avenue

Sandtown-Winchester

N Monroe Street

Midtown-Edmondson

West Baltimore MARC

HARLEM PARK IS A NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERIZED BY CHANGE

The history of Harlem Park nearly dates back to the founding of Baltimore. Initially developed as garden estates, Harlem Park began as a lush landscape filled with imported plants and greenery just outside the city boundaries. After nearly 100 years as private estates, Harlem Park became a Union encampment during the Civil War. It was around this time that Lafayette Square and Harlem Square were created, setting a formal structure for the neighborhood's design. A boom in housing development after the Civil War generated much of the architectural character we see today.

In the early 1900s, redlining, inequitable lending policies, and deed restrictions attempted to exclude African Americans from buying houses in Harlem Park. However, by the 1920s the city's growing Black middle-class successfully began purchasing and moving into more desirable properties in Harlem Park. Many of the neighborhood's White residents moved away to newer suburban communities and by the early 1930s, the neighborhood was predominately African American.

Harlem Park became an essential part of the Black community with tremendous economic diversity and varied urban uses and forms. Doctors and lawyers lived in stately houses along the main streets while working-class residents lived in smaller alley houses and accessory units. Harlem Park was an integral part of the thriving African American West Baltimore community that grew to include schools, churches, homes, and businesses from North Avenue to Franklin Street and Eutaw Place to Fulton Avenue.

Historical account summarized from Baltimore Heritage

1760s

Dutch merchant Adrian Valeck established the "Harlem" estate and gardens.



"Harlem, the Country House of Dr. Edmondson," by Nicolino V. Calyo, 1834. Courtesy Winterthur Museum Collections, 1968.0060 A.

1700

1862

Union soldiers recovered from their injuries at Lafayette Barracks and Hicks U.S. General Hospital just east of Harlem Park. Union camps in West Baltimore also sheltered enslaved African Americans among the northern troops during the early years of the war.

1867

Dr. Thomas Edmondson's heirs donated a portion of his estate to form Harlem Square in 1867. The city later passed a resolution to rename Thompson street "Edmondson Avenue."

1900s–30s

The redlining of Harlem Park led to white flight, and by the 1920s, the city's growing Black middle-class could buy desirable properties in Harlem Park. As a result, the neighborhood was majority African American by the 1930s.

1960s–70s

Extensive urban removal destroyed over a dozen blocks of homes and half of the original Harlem Square Park to build Route 40 (the "Highway to Nowhere"), a neighborhood school complex, and 29 inner-block parks. The community still reels from the negative impacts today.

PRESENT

1870s–80s

Developer Joseph Cone erected hundreds of homes and churches were built around the Lafayette Square (Church Square). New amenities like gas lighting, hot water, and doorbells attracted buyers, including many German-speaking factory owners and shop-keepers from Baltimore's growing middle-class.

1930s–50s

Impacts of systemic racism in Harlem Park led to an increase in activism. Early leaders included Mrs. Violet Hill Whyte in local policing and juvenile justice, Parren and Clarence Mitchell in civil rights and politics, and Dr. Eugenie Phillips in community health.



View of Lafayette Square excerpted from E. Sachse, & Co.'s bird's eye view of the city of Baltimore, 1869. Courtesy Library of Congress, 75694535.

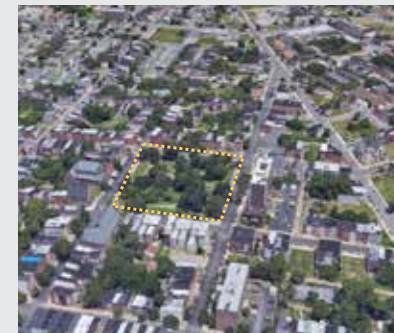


Image from Google Earth



An Educational Birthplace

Harlem Park acted as an incubator for institutes of higher education. The Maryland Normal School (which later became Towson University), the Maryland School for the Blind, and Morgan State University were all located in Harlem Park in the late 1800s before moving to their present locations.

HISTORIC SCHOOL SITES IN HARLEM PARK



Cultural Landmarks

Historic churches (many of which were made of stone with landmark steeples) and the Harlem Park Theater have also been cultural landmarks for generations.

DIAGRAM TITLE

- Harlem Theater
- Churches

Activism & Culture

As cultural and community buildings grew in the neighborhood, Harlem Park provided stability and a strong sense of unity that shaped the activism and leadership of Baltimore's Black community. The historic theater, schools, and churches were settings for action and advocacy against racism.

Local churches helped build more affordable senior housing including St. James Terrace Apartments in 1960 and N.M. Carroll Manor in 1978. Even the historic Sellers Mansion was converted into a space for recreational programming from the 1960s to the 1980s.

As Harlem Park residents faced discrimination in employment, education, city planning, and housing, many fought against this injustice and tried to improve conditions for themselves and their neighbors. Many continue the fight today.



Rev. George Freeman Bragg, c. 1922. From History of the Afro-American group of the Episcopal church (1922).



Activists Carmena F. Watson, Barbara C. Ferguson, and Madeline Pullen meet with Mayor William Donald Schaefer, 1983. Courtesy Digital Maryland, mdaa321.



Snowball cart on Edmondson Avenue next to Harlem Park, Paul S. Henderson. Courtesy Maryland Historical Society, HEN.00.A1-105. Photographer Paul Henderson



Harlem Theatre, A. A. Bodine. Courtesy Maryland Historical Society, B1617.

Images & historical account summarized from Baltimore Heritage



Neighborhood Activists Locations

- Mrs. Violet Hill Whyte, AKA “Lady Law”, was Baltimore’s first Black police officer in 1957.
- Clarence Mitchell (1911-1984) and Parren Mitchell (1922-2007) were born and raised in Harlem Park and fought for civil rights. Clarence was the chief lobbyist for the NAACP, and Parren was the first Black member of Congress from any southern state since Reconstruction.
- Dr. Eugenie Phillips (1918-2010) worked and lived in Harlem Park as an obstetrician-gynecologist for families across West Baltimore.

HOMES OF MAJOR ACTIVISTS

Urban Renewal

Despite activism in Harlem Park against 'slum clearance' efforts and the construction of Route 40, the existing streetcar system that connected Harlem Park to other parts of the city was destroyed and replaced with widened roads by the 1960s.

The city demolished over a dozen blocks of homes and businesses between Downtown and the present-day site of the West Baltimore MARC Station to build Route 40 (now commonly known as the Highway to Nowhere).

Ignoring the protests of the NAACP, over three blocks of houses and half of the original Harlem Square Park were also destroyed to create the Harlem Park Elementary/Middle School and Augusta Fells Savage Institute of Visual Arts. Additionally, countless other properties were demolished and families displaced to build 29 inner-block parks. The inner-block parks fell into disuse as the City failed to maintain them and their location behind rowhomes conflicted with the culture of street-facing public activity.

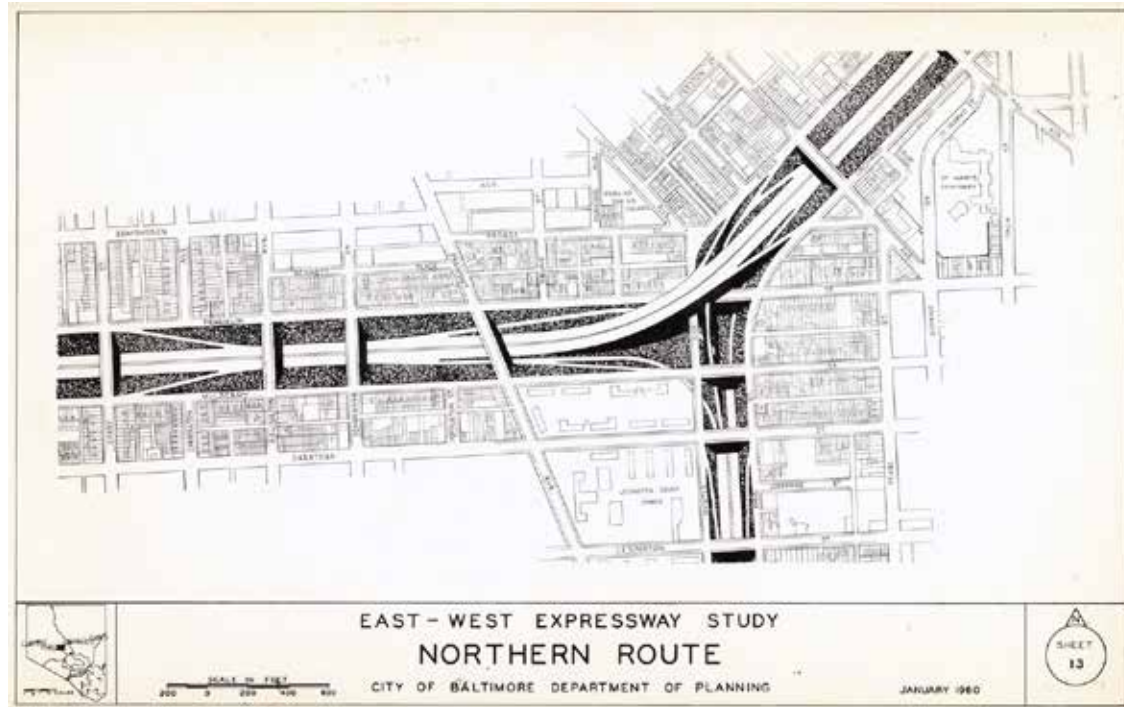


Illustration from "Study for East-West Expressway," Volume 2, Sheet 3 (1960). Courtesy JScholarship.

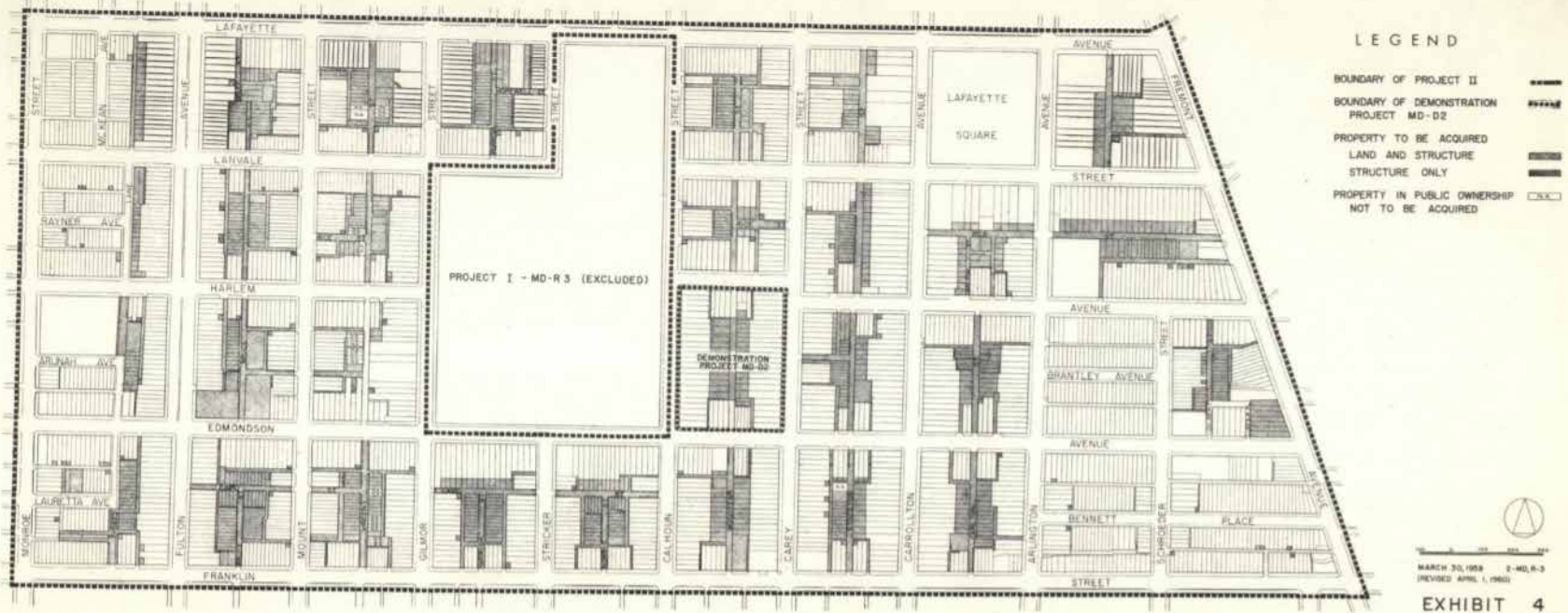


Alley home in Harlem Park. Image from Baltimore Heritage



Streetcar line and early inner-block park. Image from Baltimore Heritage

HARLEM PARK URBAN RENEWAL AREA - PROJECT - II



BALTIMORE URBAN RENEWAL AND HOUSING AGENCY

PROPERTY ACQUISITION MAP

Property Acquisition Map (1959)

The initial Urban Renewal Plan for Harlem Park identified properties for demolition and clearance, displacing many residents.

*Initial Urban Renewal Plan for Inner-Block Parks and School Development
Image from Parks and People Foundation.*




Urban Renewal Zones

Harlem Park’s urban renewal plan (adopted in 1961) envisioned replacing these red areas with 29 inner block parks, Route 40, and the neighborhood school. Demolition started in the 1960s, destroying hundreds of homes and half of the original Harlem Square Park.

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the land area in Harlem Park was impacted by urban renewal (73 out of 200 acres). There is no question this significantly impacted the neighborhood’s stability and played a major role in creating the challenges we see today in Harlem Park.

URBAN RENEWAL IMPACT

 Properties that were razed and displaced



Historic Streetcars

As shown in a map of 1910 streetcar routes, the Edmondson Avenue line (bold) was a main route into the city.

Baltimore’s streetcar network tied Harlem Park to neighborhoods across the city. But in the 1940s, fast growing suburbs and an increasing number of drivers caused city planners to promote an “East-West Expressway” through Harlem Park and neighborhoods all along Franklin Street. As a result, the Edmondson Avenue line became an urban renewal zone.

FORMER STREETCAR ROUTES

 Streetcar lines

Looking into the Future

The proposed Red Line could have pushed Harlem Park back towards the public transit-oriented development of its past. If approved one day, the rail line could expand the existing single-line system and use the Route 40 corridor right-of-way.

Although the Red Line was vetoed in 2015, Harlem Park still has great potential for connectivity. Its rich history and prime location near universities, the West Baltimore MARC station, and the Inner Harbor add to the opportunity of this changing neighborhood.



Image from Baltimore Red Line Vision Plan: Harlem Park/Poppleton (2011)



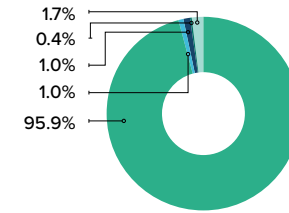
Image from Greater Greater Washington

Current Conditions: Demographics

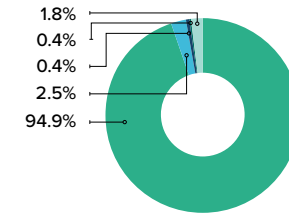
The Harlem Park neighborhood is about 200 acres, with a population of 3,205 individuals. Over the last century, the neighborhood has been deeply affected by redlining and urban renewal hampering home values and wealth creation in the predominately Black community. Today we see this cycle of oppression manifesting in high poverty rates, low educational attainment and many other factors.

Harlem Park	Sandtown/Winchester, Harlem Park	Fells Point, Butchers Hill	Baltimore City
Area 0.31 square miles	Area 0.87 square miles	Area 0.45 square miles	Area 80.94 square miles
Population Density 3,205 10,338	Population Density 14,896 17,122	Population Density 9,039 20,086	Population Density 609,032 7,524
Median home price \$90,504	Median home price \$55,000	Median home price \$244,797	Median home price \$148,000
Median household income \$17,559	Median household income \$23,551	Median household income \$98,991	Median household income \$50,379
Percent owner-occupied 33.3%	Percent owner-occupied 25.7%	Percent owner-occupied 48.5%	Percent owner-occupied 52.6%
Poverty rate 43.6%	Poverty rate 36.4%	Poverty rate 5.7%	Poverty rate 16%
Unemployment rate 18.5%	Unemployment rate 15.1%	Unemployment rate 1.3%	Unemployment rate 8.5%

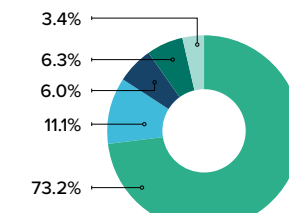
Data from American Community Survey, BNIA, and Datastory



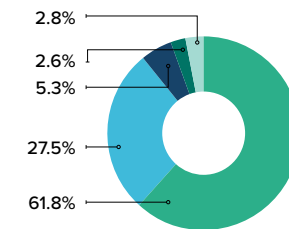
Harlem Park



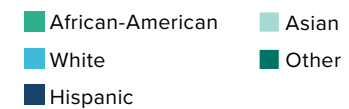
Sandtown/Winchester



Fells Point



Baltimore City



Location Intelligence Report

POPULATION



3,205
Population



-1.1%
Population: Annual Growth Rate (2020-2025)

LIFESTYLES

Social Security Set 754 households	53.9% of Households
Family Foundations 255 households	18.2% of Households
City Commons 232 households	16.6% of Households

BUSINESS

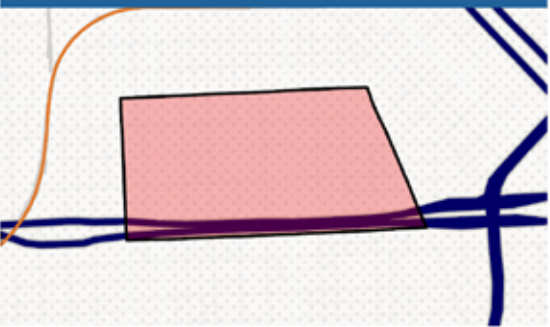


78
Total Businesses



398
Total Employees

Harlem Park



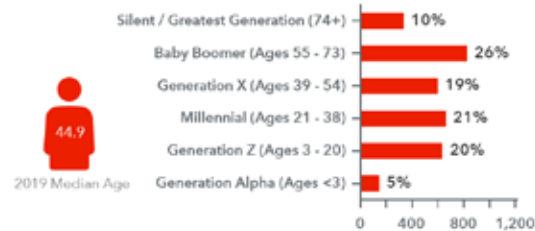
EDUCATION



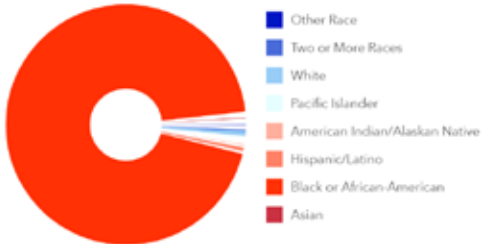
34% High School Diploma
4% Associate's Degree
5% Bachelor's Degree
3% Graduate/Professional Degree

AGE

POPULATION BY GENERATION



DIVERSITY

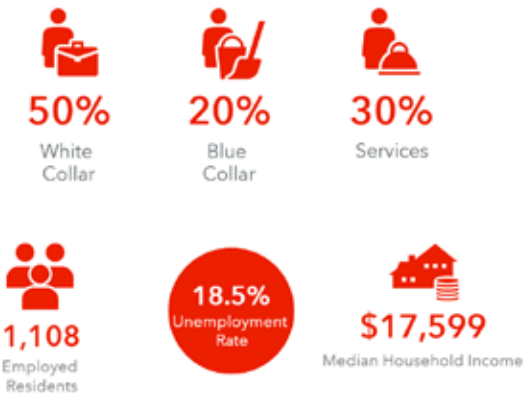


Datastory

HOUSING



WORKFORCE



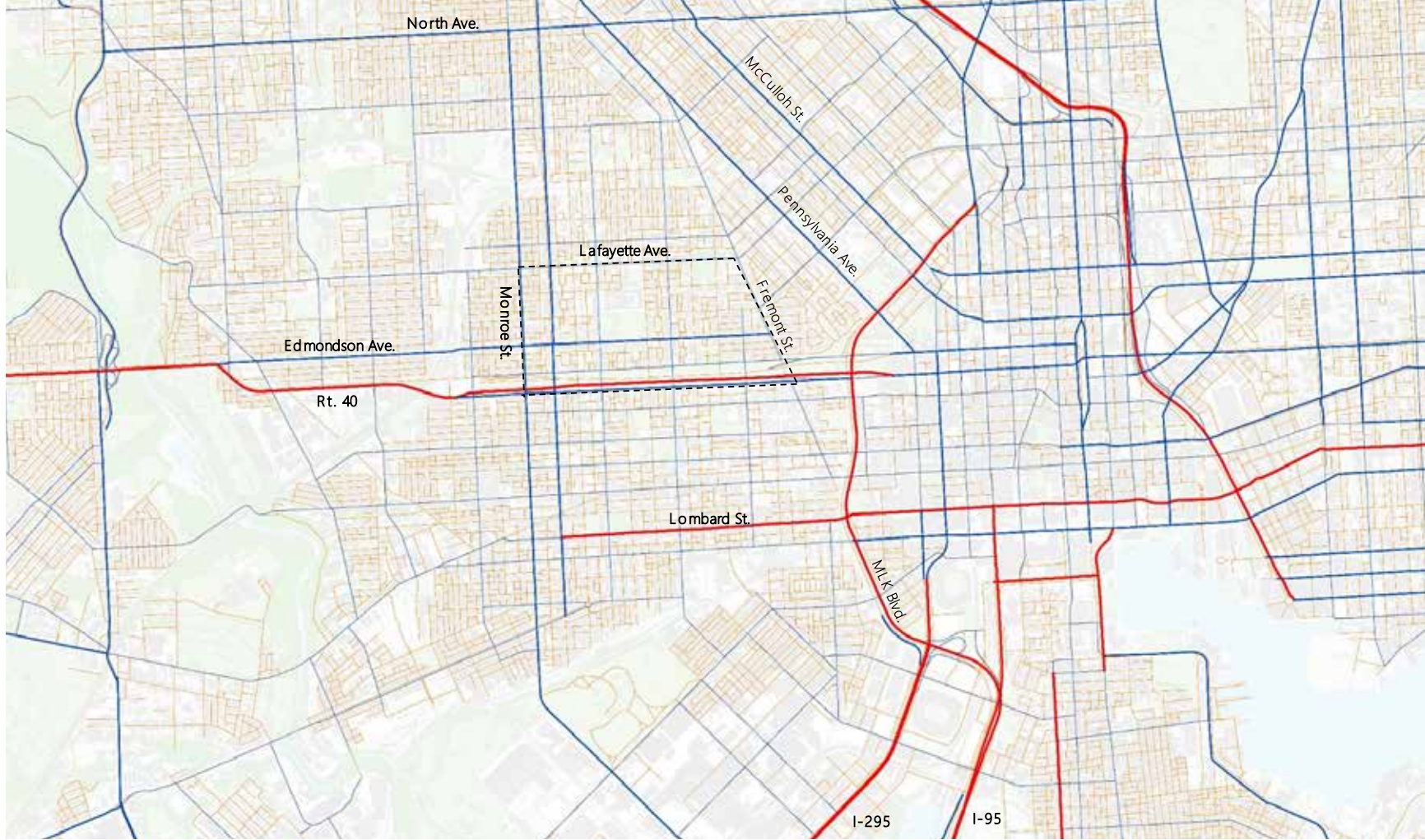
Source: This infographic contains data provided by Esri, Esri and Infogroup. The vintage of the data is 2020, 2025.

Image from Datastory. To view or request additional information, please inquire at info@Harlemparkcdc.org

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HARLEM PARK NEIGHBORHOOD



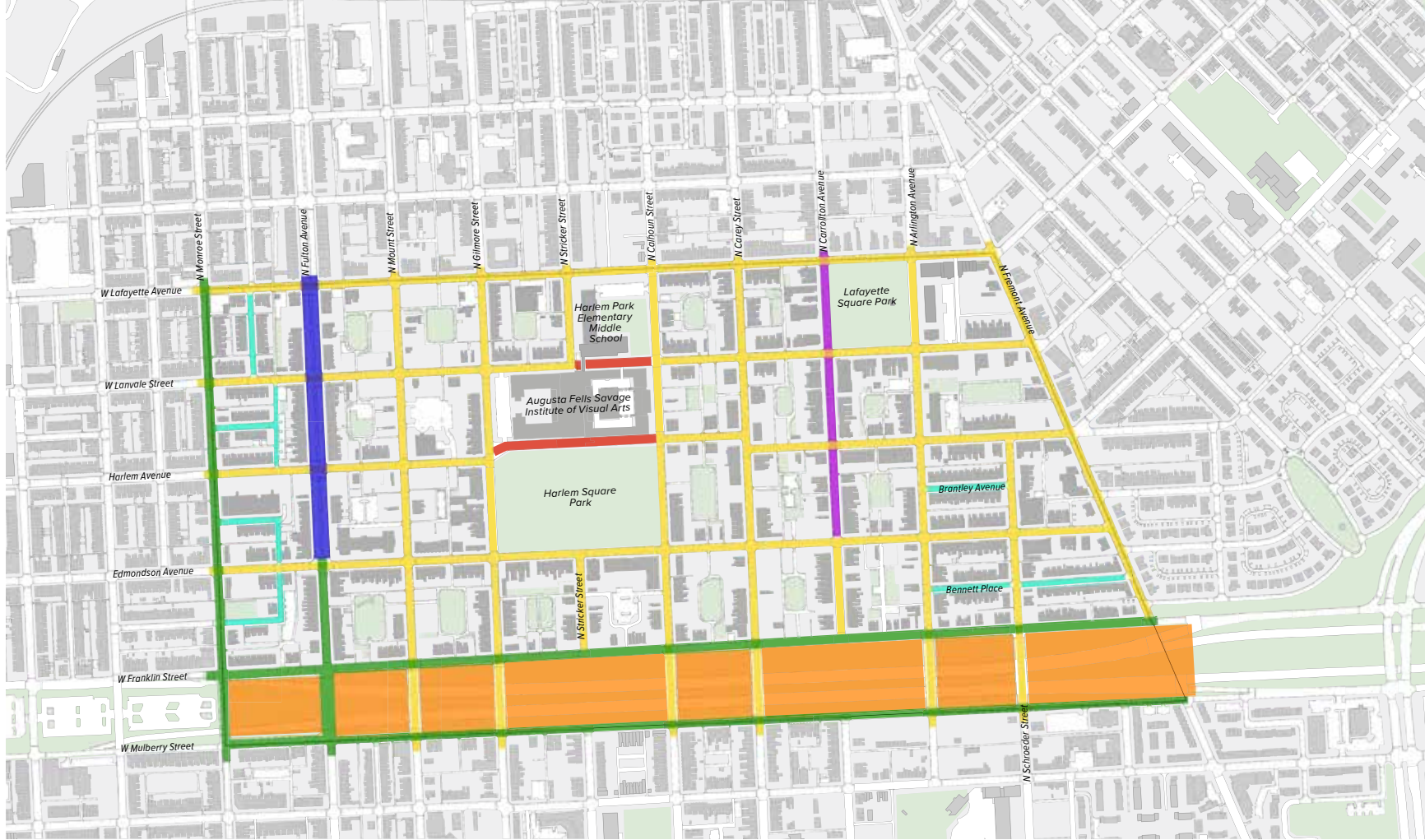
City Street Hierarchy

Harlem Park has high connectivity by car to the rest of Baltimore, yet less than half of the residents own a personal vehicle. Between Route 40, MLK Jr. Boulevard, and I-83, the neighborhood is conveniently linked to the city center and roads like I-95 and 295 that lead outside of the city. However, these major roads form pedestrian boundaries around the neighborhood and hinder walkability.

STREET NETWORK

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary

To the south of the Harlem Park Neighborhood boundary is Route 40, Between Route 40, MLK Jr. Boulevard, and I-83, the Harlem Park Neighborhood is well-connected to the rest of the city.

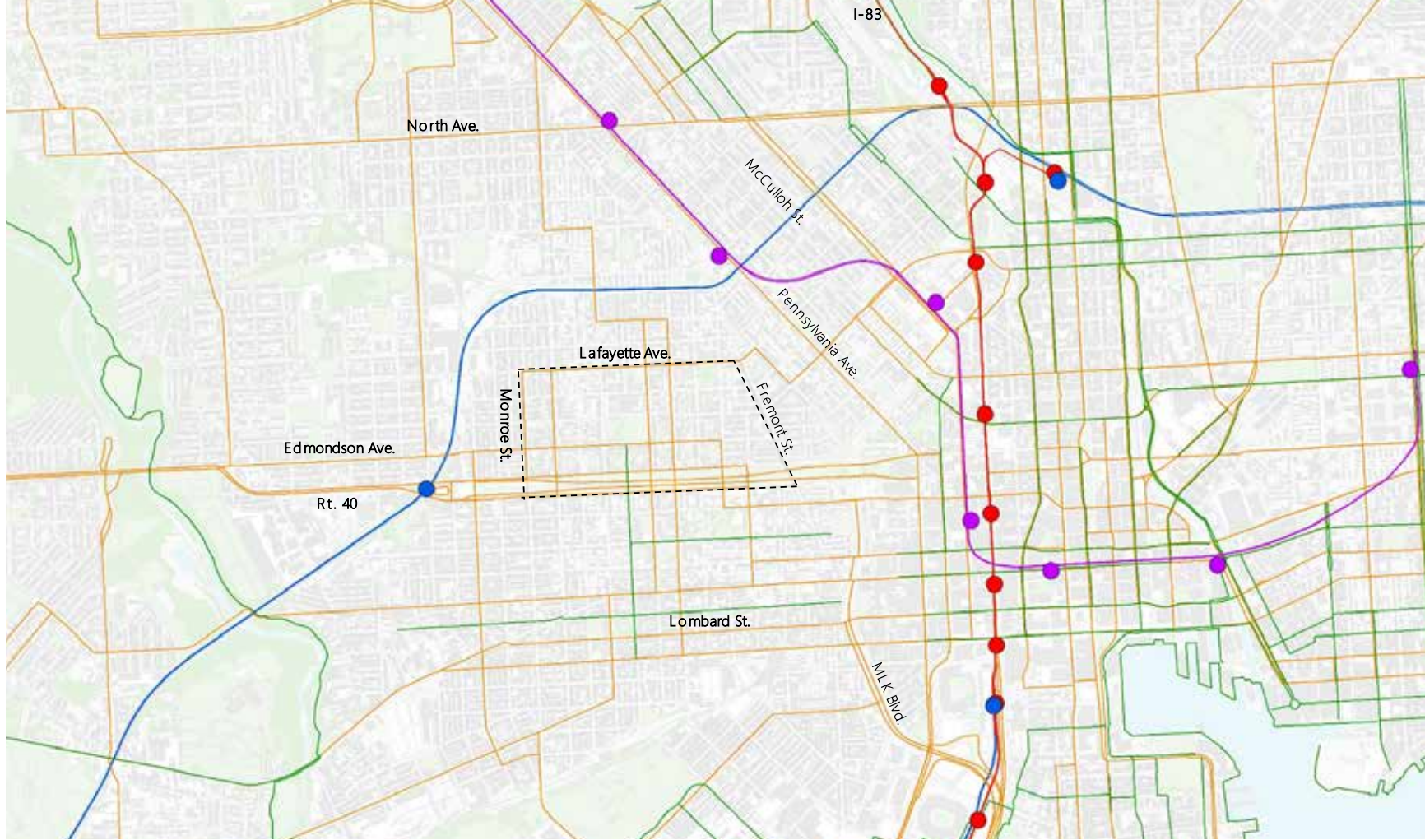


Existing Street Typologies

The predominant street typology in Harlem Park is a generous 62 ft right of way for a 2-way through street with two parallel parking lanes on either side. This mat of street types is complimented by a couple of one-way streets with varying dimensions. Unique to the neighborhood are the Route 40 arterial to the south and the Fulton Street boulevard on the neighborhood's west side.

STREET TYPOLOGIES

- 4 lanes, 2-way parkway
- 2 lanes, 2-way w/street parking
- 2-way, 1-way w/street parking
- Inner block street 1 lane w/street parking
- Church Rd. 1 lane w/street parking
- Abandoned school streets
- Sunken highway, 8 lanes

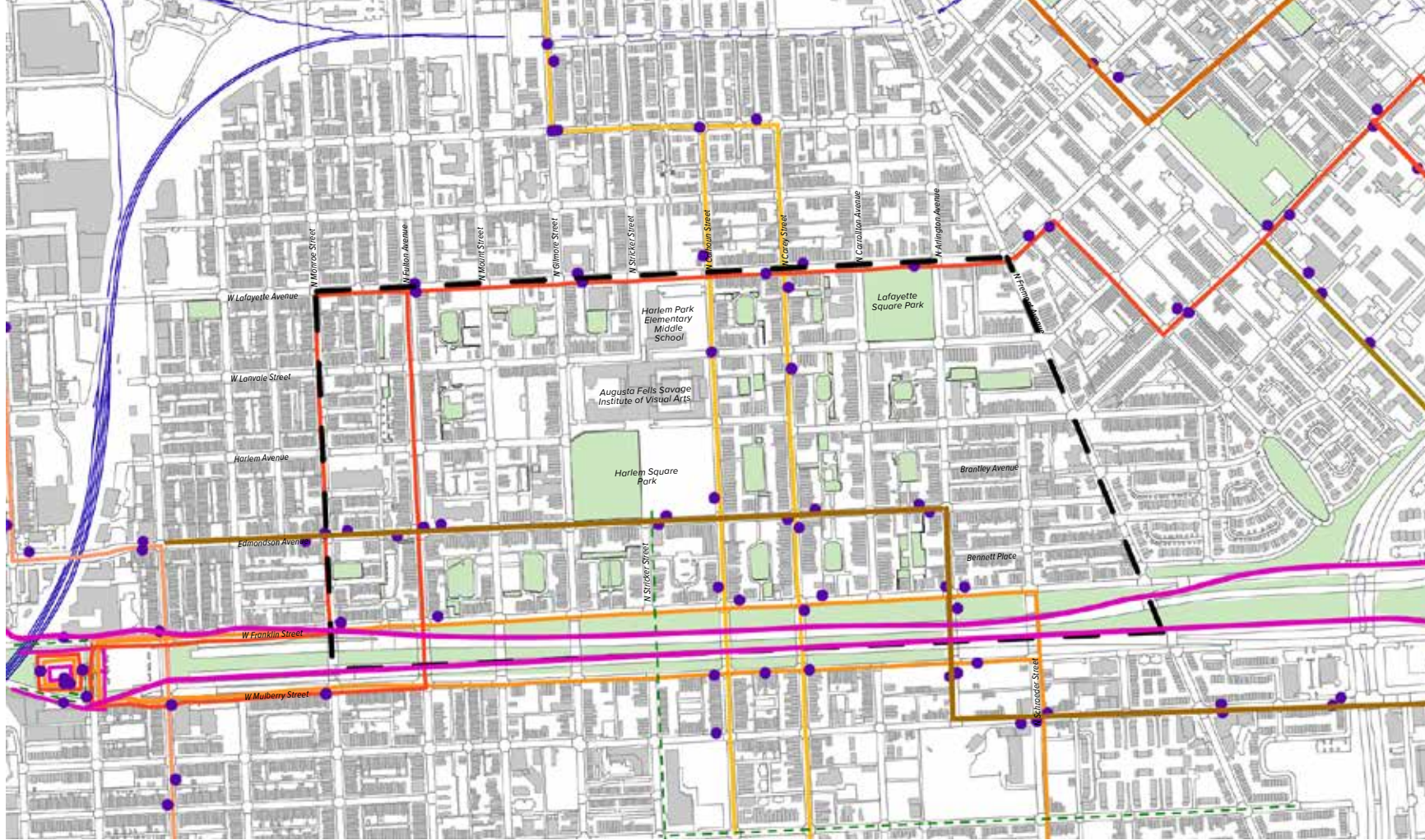


City Public Transportation

Harlem Park is moderately well served by transit. From the northeastern and southwestern edges of the neighborhood, access to the subway and MARC train are within a five-minute walk. However, public transportation is lacking within the heart of Harlem Park and residents without personal vehicles are dependent on the bus, bike, scooter, or ride-share options to get around. The removal of the historic streetcar routes to the city center also contributed to the disconnect between Harlem Park and Downtown.

TRANSIT ROUTES

- Subway
- Commuter Rail
- Light Rail
- Main Bike Routes
- Secondary Bike Routes
- Subway Stops
- MARC Train Stops
- Light Rail Stops



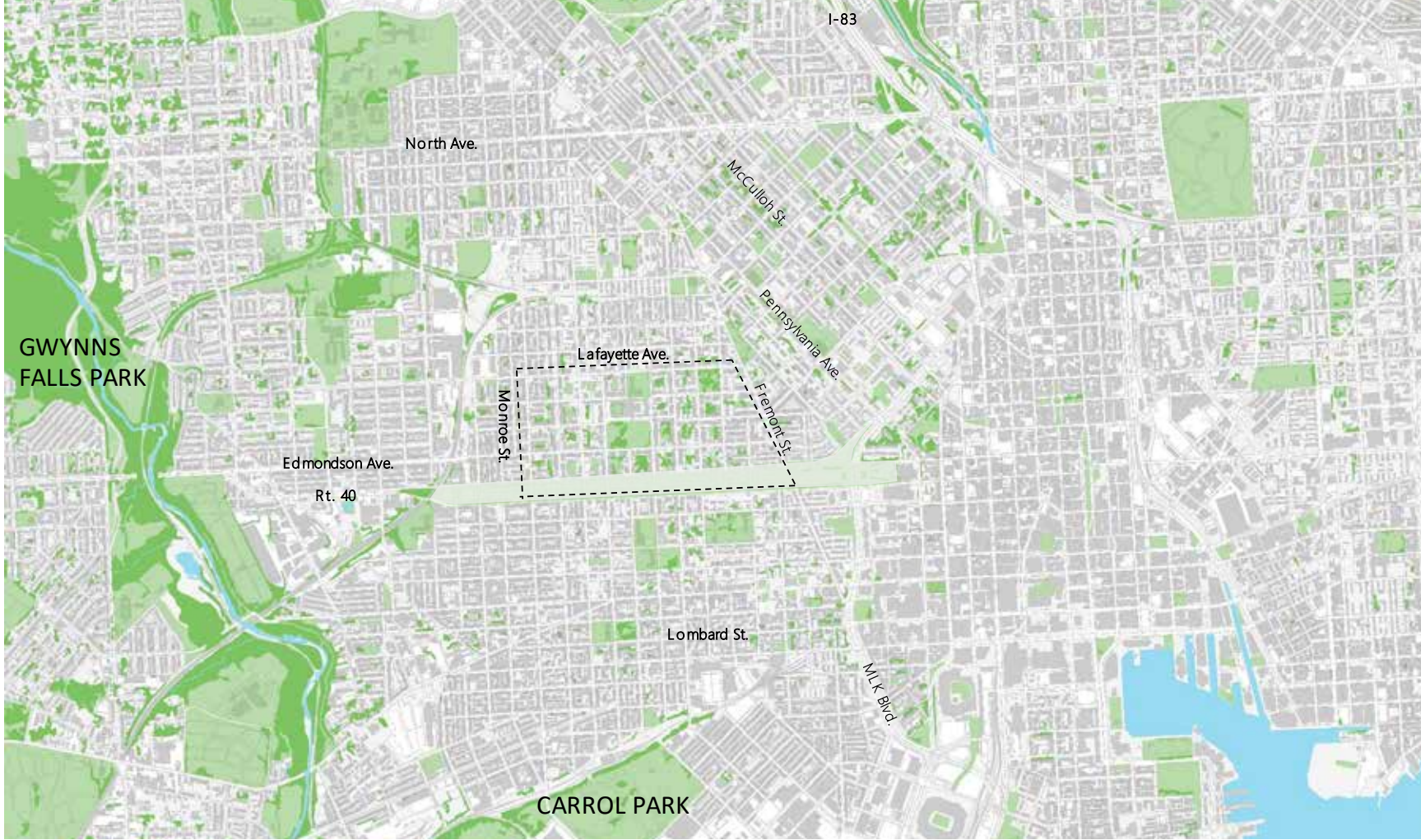
Local Public Transportation

At the neighborhood scale, buses are the primary mode of public transportation. Many residents often use the buses, however, the routes are not direct and the timing is often unreliable. Additionally, the railroad impacts much of the pedestrian traffic to the west and MLK Boulevard forms another boundary to the east.

When planning for the Red Line was underway, the proposed station was along Route 40 between Carey and Calhoun Streets. This would have connected Harlem Park to many other neighborhoods and critical transit hubs across the city.

BUS NETWORK

- Mondawmin–Dundalk
- Cedonia–W. Baltimore MARC
- Essex–W. Baltimore MARC
- Downtown–Rogers Ave Metro Station
- Hopkins Hospital–Catonsville
- CMS–Johns Hopkins Bayview
- Downtown–Patapsco Light Rail
- - - Neighborhood Boundary
- Bus Stop



City Parks & Open Space

The Harlem Park neighborhood is at the center of a broader arc of parks in West Baltimore. However, aside from some smaller parks scattered across the west side, Harlem Park lacks access to large park spaces and amenities such as Gwynns Falls Park or Druid Hill Park. This void of larger green space contributes to the urban heat island effect experienced across West Baltimore. Similarly, the inconsistent tree canopy across Harlem Park further contributes to this warming.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE ON THE WEST SIDE

- Park or open space
- Tree canopy

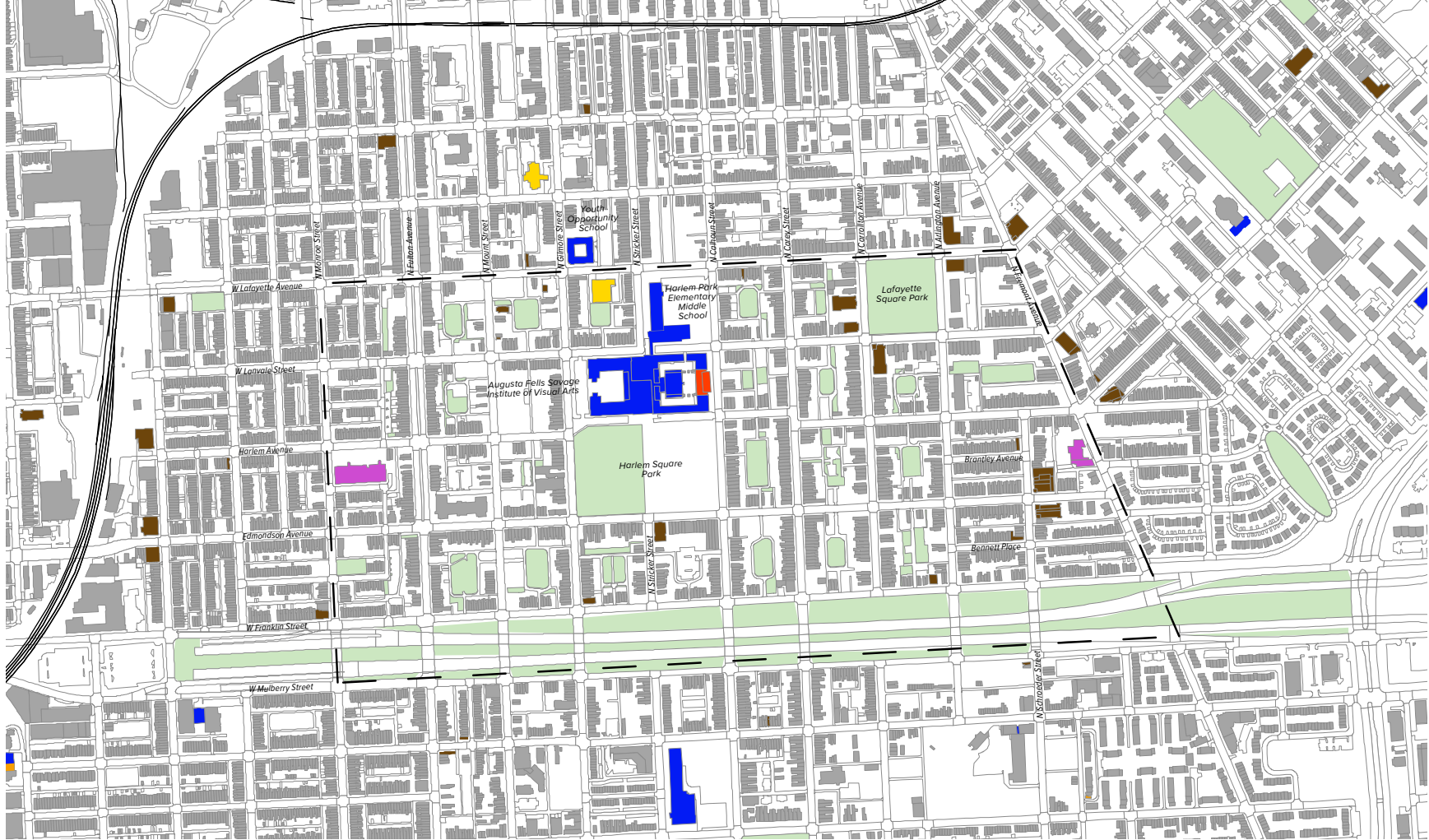


Neighborhood Parks & Open Space

Aside from Harlem Square Park and Lafayette Square Park--two neighborhood gems--many of the green spaces within the neighborhood are the result of the 1960s urban renewal efforts. For example, there are 29 inner block parks, but there was no agreement on who would maintain them. This resulted in unkempt, overgrown space that is mainly unusable for community members. The lack of maintenance is a significant issue as it changes parks and streetscapes from being assets to eyesores.

PARKS IN HARLEM PARK

■ Parks

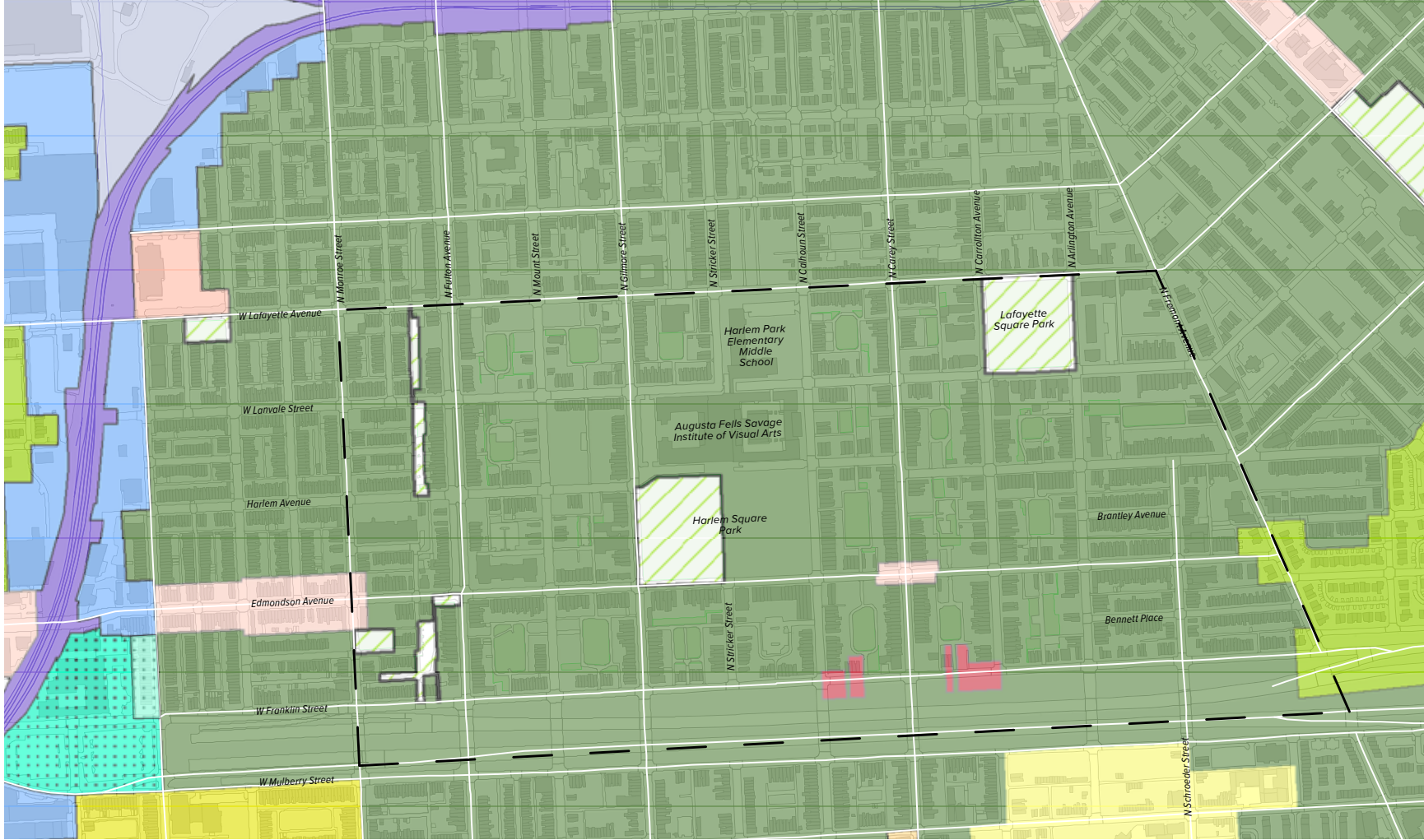


Civic Institutions

Civic institutions are the long-term anchors for the community. Historic churches in particular have been beacons of hope and activism within the neighborhood, often for well over a century. In addition, the Harlem Park Elementary/Middle and Augusta Fells Savage Institute of Visual Arts (9-12) anchor the heart of the community and are supplemented with a recreation center.

NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES














- Schools
- Fire or Police Station
- Rec Centers
- Churches
- Day Cares



Zoning

Harlem Park is almost exclusively zoned R-8: Traditional Urban Rowhomes. This zone is predominately continuous rowhouse development along full blocks built to or only modestly set back from the street. It also accommodates other residential types of a similar density with limited non-residential uses. Additionally, within and proximate to Harlem Park are some C-1 commercial clusters that serve the immediate neighborhood and TOD Transit Oriented Development that encourages development conducive to increased transit usage.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP & VACANCY

- | | |
|---|---|
|  R-6: Low-Density Rowhomes |  I-2: Industrial Mixed-Use Zoning |
|  R-7: Mixed Residential Zoning |  IMU: Industrial Mixed-Use Zoning |
|  R-8: Traditional Urban Rowhomes |  TOD-1: Transit-Oriented Development |
|  R-9: Multi-Family Zoning District |  TOD-2: Transit-Oriented Development |
|  OS: Open Space |  TOD-4: Transit-Oriented Development |
|  C-1: Commercial Clusters | |
|  C-2: Small/Medium Commercial Use | |
|  I-1: Light Industrial | |



Vacancy

Vacant housing is one of the biggest challenges facing Harlem Park. There are 650 vacant lots in Harlem Park, which equates to approximately 22 acres. Widespread vacancy and population decline have led to less tax revenue for the area and hazardous decaying buildings. With many of the vacant rowhomes being upwards of 3,000 SF, it not only makes rehabbing cost-prohibitive, but the prevalence of large rowhomes results in a fairly homogeneous housing stock.

NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES

- Vacant lots
- Vacant buildings



Property Tenure & Ownership

Of the 1,390 occupied housing units in Harlem Park, approximately 33.3 percent are owner-occupied, leaving 66.7 percent as rental units. A substantial amount of land in Harlem Park is owned by the City, the majority of which is either a relic of the 1960s urban renewal or vacant housing. There are larger development opportunities in areas where either vacant or City-owned properties are contiguous. These areas should be the focus for redevelopment as they do not require displacement of existing residents.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP & VACANCY

- City-owned parcels
- Housing Authority-owned parcels
- Vacant lots and buildings
- Owner-occupied housing
- Church-owned parcel





CHAPTER THREE PREVIOUS STUDIES

Harlem Park is one of the most heavily studied neighborhoods in Baltimore.

To contextualize this planning effort and both challenge and build on ideas of the past, extensive research and documentation were conducted on prior planning efforts. These efforts range from academic studies to urban renewal plans to inner block park transformations to revitalization studies.

Many prior plans identify similar core issues facing Harlem Park: vacant housing, lack of income and opportunities, low homeownership rates, failure of inner-block parks, division caused by I-40 and other highways, lack of pedestrian-friendly streets, crime, and a food desert. The critical takeaways from this extensive planning history are:

- Multiple proposals link neighborhood development to the expansion of public transportation (Transit Oriented Development), attracting young professionals to the city
- Failed interventions destroyed subjectively substandard homes without reinvestment into the community (inner block parks) and prioritized residents of suburbs outside of Baltimore (construction of Route 40)
- Social change is needed as much as physical and economic change—existing community organizations such as clubs and churches should be involved in plans for the future
- Designers should respect and learn from the existing residents—their collaboration is critical

University of Maryland (2018)



- Presents five ideas for redesigning the urban fabric of Harlem Park with a focus on reconnecting the neighborhood to the city
- Explores different applications of mixed-use, housing typologies, street design, and open space organization
- Focuses on creating an identity for the neighborhood
- Ideas for how to address Route 40
- Studies block typologies, precedent examples, general demographics, and urban context
- Emphasis was placed on plan strategies for the neighborhood, methods for the reuse/transformation of the highway, and proposals that examine how a lower-density community can be developed from the fragments of vacancy, urban space, and infrastructure

Harvard University (2018)



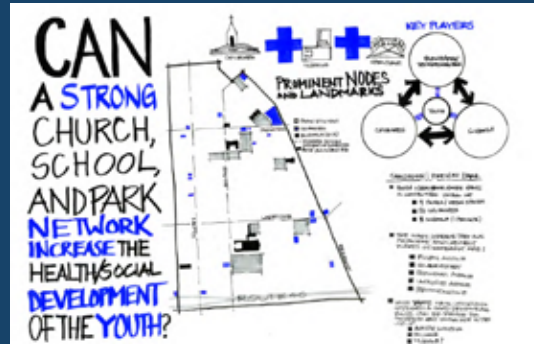
- The park system as a catalyst for urban regeneration—recreating Boston’s Emerald Necklace in Baltimore
- 140-acre watershed park with pedestrian bridges to recenter West Baltimore and create business-attracting waterfront development. Proposes the demolition of the majority of the Harlem Park neighborhood for this park
- Proposal includes subsidized housing, grocery stores, and institutional buildings integrated into the parks
- Vacant houses become constructed wetlands for attractive water treatment
- Solar array proposed over Route 40

**ULI Highway to Nowhere
TAPS Report (2018)**



- Two main takeaways: 1) on/off ramps to bypass MLK Boulevard not needed at the end of Route 40 and 2) a phased master plan should link West Baltimore to both public transportation and wealthier areas in the city
- Demolish concrete ramps and build a new retail center with a grocery store anchor at the intersection of MLK Blvd and Route 40
- Then stitch the neighborhood across Route 40 by rebuilding Fremont Ave, converting Franklin and Mulberry into quieter streets with wide sidewalks, extending exercise trails, and incentivized transit-oriented development by the West Baltimore MARC station
- Gradually Route 40 could become a narrower boulevard (or light rail route), and the rest of the width could be a planted “valley” to treat stormwater/provide habitat

Morgan State University (2017)



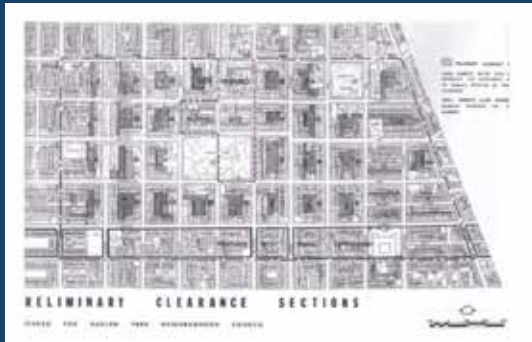
- Churches, parks, and schools as critical social infrastructure
- Add grocery stores/farmers markets to combat food desert
- Build new intergenerational housing to attract young professionals to currently vacant lots
- Route 40 as a linear park/activated corridor
- Link “inner blocks” so they are attractive and accessible to the public, not just residents who know about them
- Murals, arts & history community center to address tensions between police and the community
- Public transportation and pedestrian-friendly interventions (e.g., greater visibility on the street, wider sidewalks shaded by trees)

Pennsylvania State University (2015)



- West Franklin Street Highway Park Plan; a stormwater bioretention garden
- “Kaleidoscope”; first build new housing in vacant lots and preserve existing rowhomes, then activate the centers of the city blocks with a multi-purpose garden/social gathering spot/stormwater retention/commercial space
- “Verticulture”; learning gardens near schools teach children about urban farming
- “Fingerprint”; infill void spaces with gardens and bioretention ponds, cover blank walls with green trellis

Urban Renewal Plan (1957)



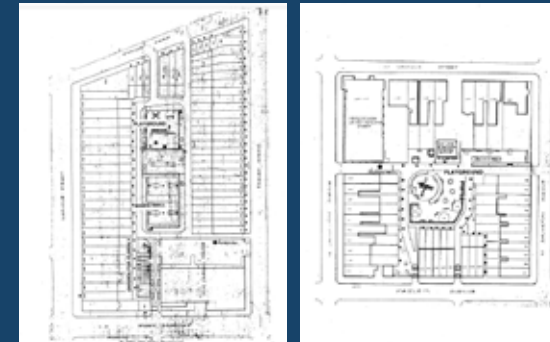
- Harlem Park was declared an urban renewal area by the Planning Commission in 1954 because “housing conditions were mixed; it was not a slum area, but the neighborhood was deteriorating rapidly.”
- The Baltimore Urban Renewal and Housing Agency (BURHA) was created to spearhead this effort and a committee of residents was formed to help with the plan.
- Plan proposed demolishing certain blocks and displacing 415 families to build both the elementary and middle/high school and the inner block parks.
- Plan proposed BURHA would lead inner block park maintenance but transition responsibility to residents. If there were areas residents could not maintain, “BURHA will remove equipment and facilities, the surface will be paved and everything done to reduce maintenance to an absolute minimum.”
- Further iterations show the demolition of 10 blocks to create Route 40.

Corridor Development: Baltimore Interstate Highway System (1970)



- Three goals: 1) restore the West Baltimore community, 2) maximize regional and local benefits to West Baltimore, and 3) minimize adverse environmental effects of the new roadway
- East-west city corridors were overloaded; the I-70 spur was proposed to reduce traffic on the parallel “Franklin/Mulberry Corridor”
- The clearance of homes to create inner block parks in Harlem Park was touted as “major rehabilitation”
- Planners believed that a new highway would foster development and prosperity in West Baltimore and consolidating cars on one main road would reduce emissions in the neighborhood
- Plans were made for additional retail, schools, housing, and massive parking complexes along the route

Harlem Park Innovation Project (1984)



- Community development is more valuable than physical improvement
- In the 60s-70s, the homes in the inner blocks were demolished to create parks; this project aimed to improve their condition
- The Harlem Park Trust was established as an organization of residents to manage/ supervise their own inner blocks instead of the City
- Proposed the redesign of eight parks aimed for safety, ease of maintenance, and community amenities that appeal to multiple age groups
- Main problems to address as ranked by residents: drugs/drinking, vandalism, excessive noise, “undesirables”, and littering

Design in Familiar Places— Harlem Park (1988)



- Research determined that more people use the street front than both the parks and backyards; they feel ownership of the street front
- Residents were afraid to be outside alone, afraid to visit parks due to poor street visibility and lack of collective ownership
- Ineffective parks were designed for what they “should” be in the eyes of the designers (separated lots and quiet gardens for older people), not what they “are” to the users (ball-playing spaces for teenagers, children playing informal games like duck-duck-goose)
- 13 Guidelines:
 - Keep the street front alive
 - Encourage residents to use the street front

- Recognize recreation as a legitimate use of the sidewalk
- Cut down on the speed and volume of automobile traffic
- Buildings must not turn their backs on the street
- Keep outsiders away from back spaces
- Increase the recreational potential of all neighborhood spaces
- Make parks attractive to adult users
- Design parks for a variety of contingencies
- Do not put active parks hard against houses
- Every space must belong to somebody
- Help residents to manage neighborhood spaces
- Help residents solve a design problem-- don't solve it for them

West Harlem Park Land Use Redevelopment Plan (1999)



- Main issues: abandoned housing, inner block parks, poor street quality, lack of retail (besides liquor stores)
- Improve and diversify housing stock for a range of income levels by introducing new housing types, specifically duplexes, and the renovation/selective demolition of rowhomes to create Charleston style side-yard houses
- Improve inner block parks with three techniques: convert to private ownership by extending rear yards, move inner block park space from the rear to the front of homes, and invest in substantial upgrades to address security in the remaining parks
- Introduce a street planting program and return Fulton Avenue to its original design with a planted median and resolve sanitation issues
- Diversify uses by introducing new retail corridors at the corner of Fulton and Edmondson and the intersection of Carey and Edmondson

Harlem Park/Lafayette Square Park Revitalization Plan (2000)



- Focuses on land use, economic development, housing, government services, civic issues, and transportation
- Land use reform: bike trail from West Baltimore MARC station to cultural center light rail station, add/renovate housing, selectively demolish vacant buildings but adaptive reuse if possible, add retail like grocery corner stores/pharmacies and small businesses
- Economic development: diversify retail to create jobs, introduce free job training, build offices on streets with high traffic volume for maximum visibility, design homes with offices in them, introduce a food co-op
- Housing: encourage residents to purchase homes by dropping tax liens and providing economic assistance, place affordable housing above stores (stores would pay most of the building rent), punish absentee landlords/slumlords

- Government Services: assess parks and renovate/demolish as necessary, add community gardens, create an after-school program for teens, expand Harlem Park Recreation Center, establish community computer lab in schools, improve utilities and trash pickup
- Civic issues: neighborhood events, clean-up days, website, signage at important intersections and historic locations, lighting, landscaping, security cameras, partnerships between police and community groups, add healthcare clinic, partner with churches
- Transportation: improve parking around churches, increase pedestrian safety around elementary school, add vegetation to streets

Baltimore Red Line Vision Plan: Harlem Park/Poppleton (2011)



- Report summarize the development of the Red Line through the Station Area Advisory Committees (SAAC)
- Red line proposed to run within the right-of-way of Route 40
- The high density of vacant homes creates a tremendous opportunity for the Red Line to spur infill development
- Red Line station proposed at Route 40 between Carey and Calhoun Streets
- This plan “envisions the Harlem Park station area to be a combination of the Neighborhood TOD and Stabilization area types in terms of land use vision. Lower scale, smaller mixed-use and TOD is desired for the area immediately adjacent to the station; however, stabilization and preservation is desired for the majority of the vision area with the station serving as an incentive for additional investment. The station is envisioned as a “Walk-Up Station” with an emphasis on enhanced pedestrian and bus connections to the station.”

Project CORE (2016)



- Capitalized on recent state funding for the demolition of vacant properties in Baltimore
- Highlights proposed areas for demolition.

Harlem Park CDC UB REED Fellows Program Pitch for a Million Real Estate Development Competition (2020)



- Challenges: Vacant properties, blighted areas, increasing liability risk for Baltimore City government, decreasing total population, increasing poverty levels
- Causes: racial profiling in housing (redlining, urban displacement), increased commute times for residents relying on mass transportation, fear of police brutality, increased crime, violence, and drug use
- Target areas for redevelopment: 500 block of N. Carrollton Ave, 500 Block of N. Carey Street, 600 Block of N. Carey Street, 500 Block of N. Arlington Ave



HARLEM PARK

AM...
s, Schools, Jo...

...for walking-ed...
...ing - appropriate...
...speeding/reckless...
...[?] transition of ha...
...is required to the communi...
...investors but not city...
...fund for park - too constraine...
...ment nearby can't use it for grilla...
...ing - local talent/enters...
...[?] [?] [?] - activate...
...re expense...
...s...
...to maintain park...
...at park fees/gates...
...ment / say getting



CHAPTER FOUR PROCESS

Master Plan Process

Initial conversations for the neighborhood master plan began in February 2020, which coincided with the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic. After a brief delay to pivot and recraft engagement strategies to allow for safe collaboration, the planning process kicked off in July 2020 structured around three phases:

- Existing Conditions Analysis & Community Visioning
- Planning Strategies & Design Alternatives
- Final Plan Development & Recommendations

The engagement process was creatively adapted to ensure various options for participation and input to meet residents at their comfort level, whether for health reasons with the pandemic or technological barriers. The design team used a combination of in-person community meetings, online and paper surveys, live webinars on social media, zoom meetings and listening sessions, online resources, and more to reach as many community members as possible. This design process was driven and shaped by community input.

Steering Committee

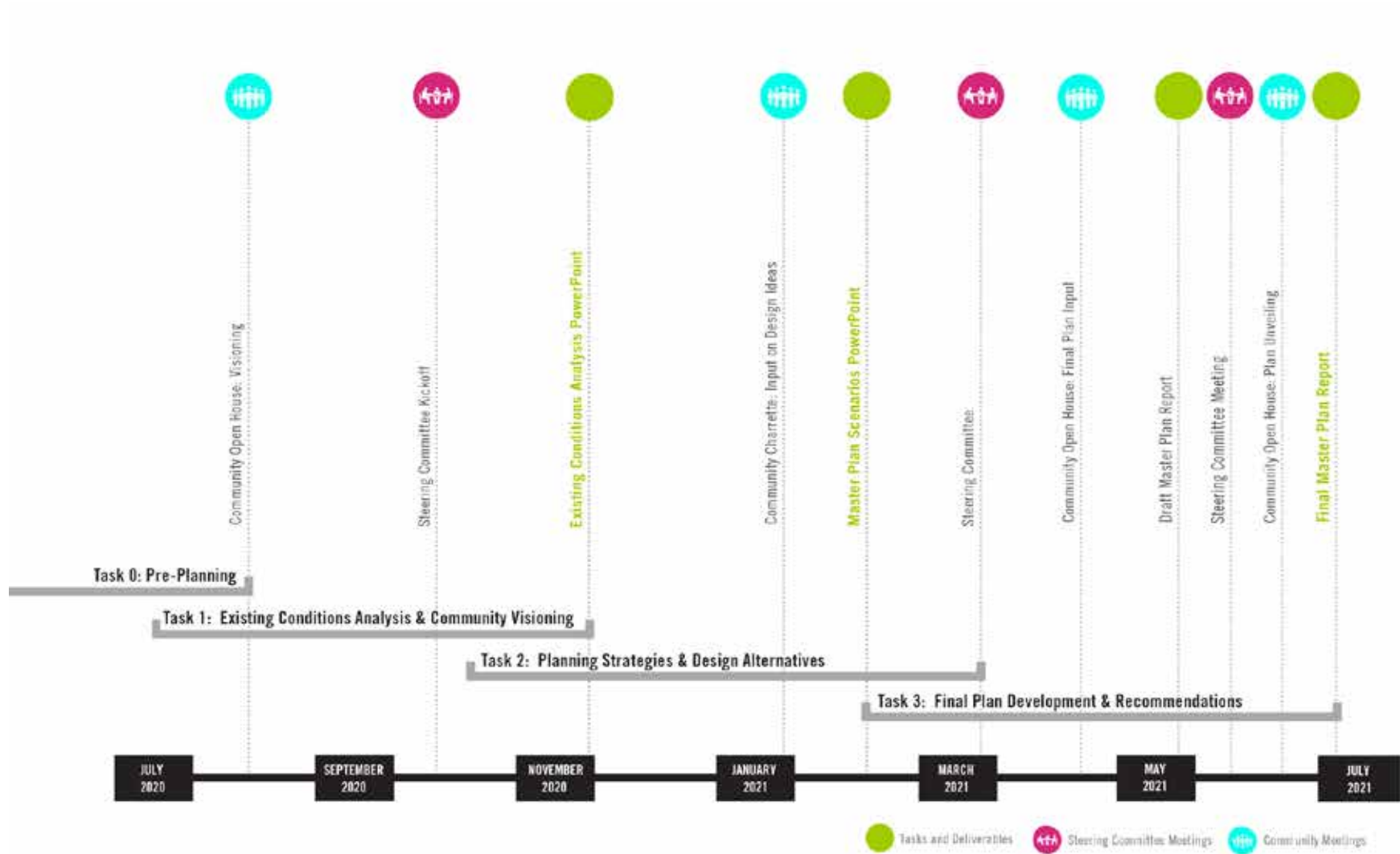
In addition to community engagement, the Master Plan had a Steering Committee comprised of residents, property owners, urban researchers, investors, and non-profit representatives. This diverse committee guided the development of this plan.

Steering Committee Members

- Matthew H. King, Harlem Park Resident *
- Gene Uzoukwu, Innovius, LLC *
- Arlene Fisher, Harlem Park Resident *
- Pauline Linthicum, Harlem Park Resident *
- Caroline Leo, DARE Development, LLC *
- Dr. Seema Iyer, University of Baltimore-Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance (Jacob France Institute)
- Donald Manekin, Seawall Development
- Karen M. Morales, University of Maryland School of Pharmacy (The PATIENTS Program)
- Rodney Hudson, Metropolitan United Methodist Church *
- Matthew Bell, University of Maryland School of Architecture
- Dr. Christian Anderson, Sr., Morgan State University School of Education & Urban Studies (S.L.O.P.E.-STEM Lab)

** Harlem Park Stakeholder*

Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan Process



Community Engagement

The neighborhood master plan was organized around a robust, three-phase community engagement process with community open houses at the beginning, middle, and end of the project timeline. Each open house had a unique focus depending on the phase of the project, but all open houses had the common goal of working with and elevating residents' voices to shape the direction of the plan.

The goal of the first community meeting was to understand the needs and wants of Harlem Park residents. A socially distanced, outdoor open house was held in Lafayette Square Park on July 25th, 2020 where a series of stations were arranged asking residents to share their thoughts on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to parks and open spaces, buildings and the built environment, amenities and services, and transportation. The design team gathered over 300 comments from more than 70 attendees and synthesized them to identify major themes. Those themes were:

- Increase Neighborhood Maintenance
- Reduce Vacant Housing
- Ensure Affordable Housing and Rent
- Improve Public Transportation
- Add Community Amenities and Services
- Balance Safety and Crime Prevention with Privacy and Awareness
- Preserve Local Aesthetic/Historic Character

A common thread linking many of the comments was the frustration with being ignored and disinvested as a majority African-American neighborhood. The slicing of the community with Route 40 in the 1960s and redlining set a precedent for skepticism of both the city government and development efforts.





"NO ONE TAKES CARE OF THE
COMMUNITY BETTER THAN
THE COMMUNITY"

Following the synthesis of community input from the first open house, the design team began to develop design ideas and plan the second community meeting targeting January 2021. Unfortunately, this was the height of the pandemic, and the design team knew that an in-person, socially distant open house would not be safe. Thus, the team assembled an online and printed survey that asked key questions related to design and desires for the neighborhood’s future. The design team also hosted a zoom meeting where they presented findings from the initial community meeting as well as historical and urban analysis that was researched as part of the planning process. The results of the survey guided the design strategies for the master plan. The following summary articulates key survey findings with the full survey results following.

- Harlem Square Park is the heart of the neighborhood
- Bus lines are generally well utilized
- Unattractive walk (litter, overgrown vegetation, vacant/unattractive buildings, etc.) was the biggest deterrent for mobility
- There is a strong desire to ensure a mix of housing types, with a special emphasis on senior housing
- Parks are valued throughout the neighborhood and most people want to preserve the inner block parks
- The best way to improve parks in Harlem Park are:
 1. Better maintenance and regular upkeep
 2. Regular trash clean-up and additional trash cans
- The top 7 desired amenities are:
 1. Market/grocery store
 2. Rec center/after school programs
 3. Renovate & rebuild schools
 4. Art space/center
 5. Job training programs
 6. Shops/retail
 7. Senior services

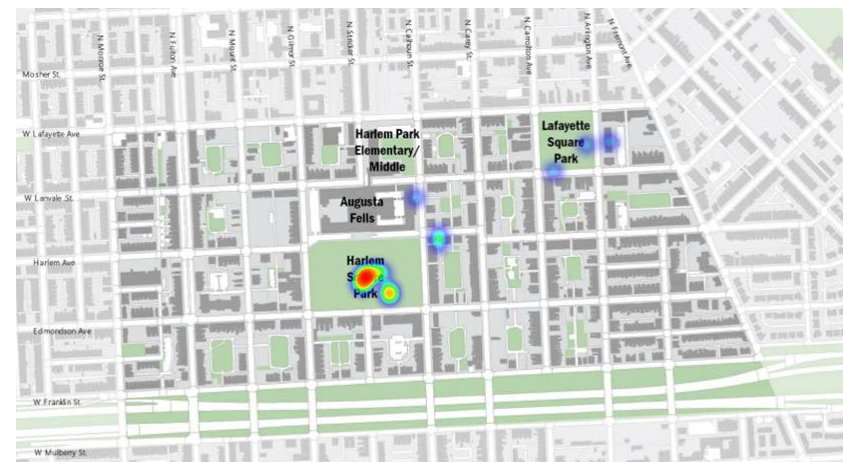
Question 1: Are you a Harlem Park resident?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	63.16%	12
2	No	36.84%	7

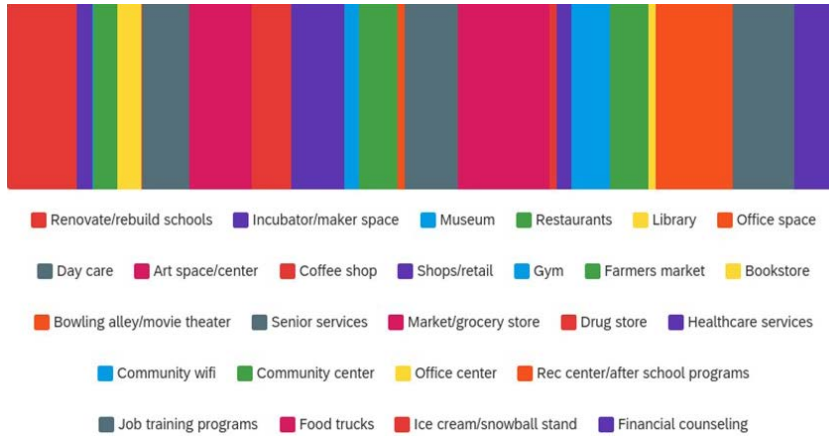
Question 2: If you are a Harlem Park resident, which block do you live on?



Question 3: Where would you say the heart of the Harlem Park neighborhood wants to be?

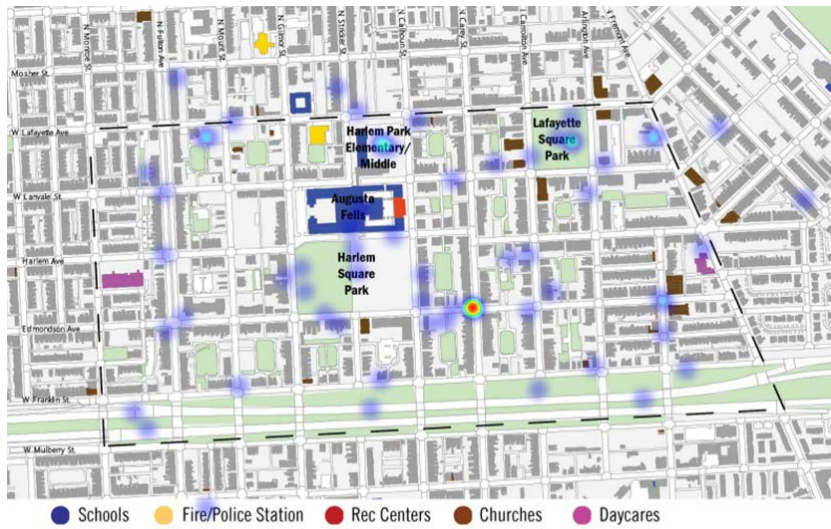


Question 4: Of the amenities and needs suggested during the July community meeting, what are your top six priorities?



#	Group	%	Count
1	Renovate/rebuild schools	8.33%	9
2	Incubator/maker space	1.85%	2
3	Museum	0.00%	0
4	Restaurants	2.78%	3
5	Library	2.78%	3
6	Office space	0.00%	0
7	Day care	5.56%	6
8	Art space/center	7.41%	8
9	Coffee shop	4.63%	5
10	Shops/retail	6.48%	7
11	Gym	1.85%	2
12	Farmers market	4.63%	5
13	Bookstore	0.00%	0
14	Bowling alley/movie theater	0.93%	1
15	Senior services	6.48%	7
16	Market/grocery store	11.11%	12
17	Drug store	0.93%	1
18	Healthcare services	1.85%	2
19	Community wifi	4.63%	5
20	Community center	4.63%	5
21	Office center	0.93%	1
22	Rec center/after school programs	9.26%	10
23	Job training programs	7.41%	8
24	Food trucks	0.00%	0
25	Ice cream/snowball stand	0.00%	0
26	Financial counseling	5.56%	6
	Total	100%	108

Question 5: Where might key amenities go?



Question 7: What bus stops/lines do you use?



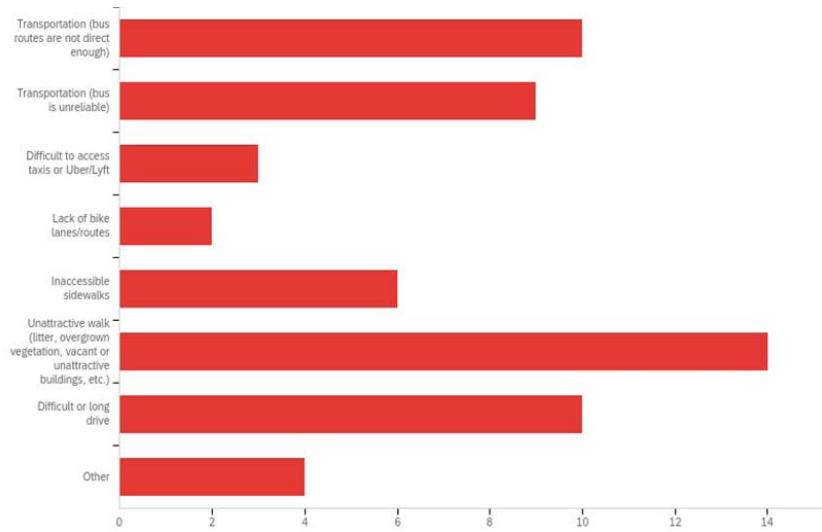
Question 6: Which stores or restaurants in Harlem Park have you visited or purchased from in the past six months?

Which stores or restaurants in Harlem Park have you visited or purchased from in the past six months?
none nearby
upton market, dollar general, legends
none
None-I travel outside my area for all purchases.
None
Carey Street, Lanvale Street-corner store, Gilmor Street corner store.
corner stores
Breathe4sure pharmacy
0
none
n/a
None... where are they?
None
Shereefs
Test

Question 8: What places do you often go to, inside or outside the neighborhood, that you have trouble getting to?

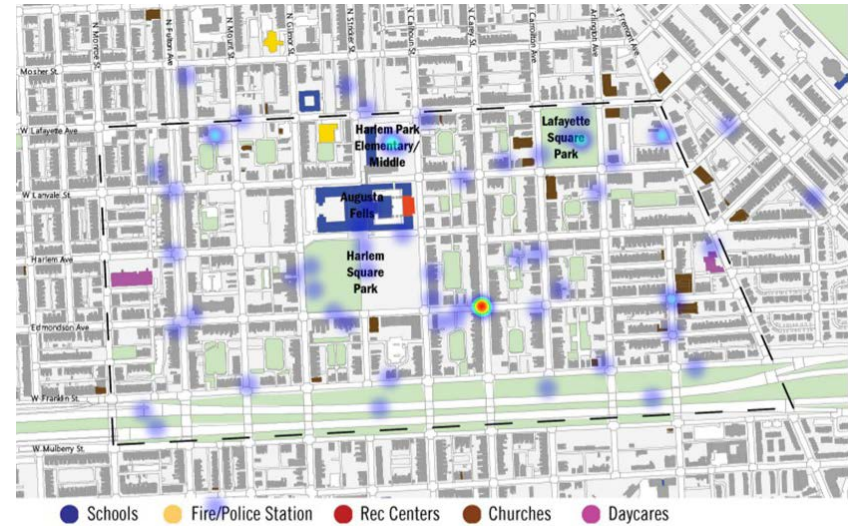
What places do you often go to, inside or outside the neighborhood, that you have trouble getting to? (List them below)
bank, food markets, drug stores
stop shop and save
None. I drive.
None
Save A Lot -market, Walmart, Mondawmin- Family Dollar, Prite Rite Supermarket, Shoppers, Employment, State Office Building, Credit Union and other locations which are outside of immediate area.
safe places
Everywhere
I have a car only patronize outside area, NEVER inside, too dangerous
n/a
Banks

Question 9: What makes the places in the previous question challenging to get to?

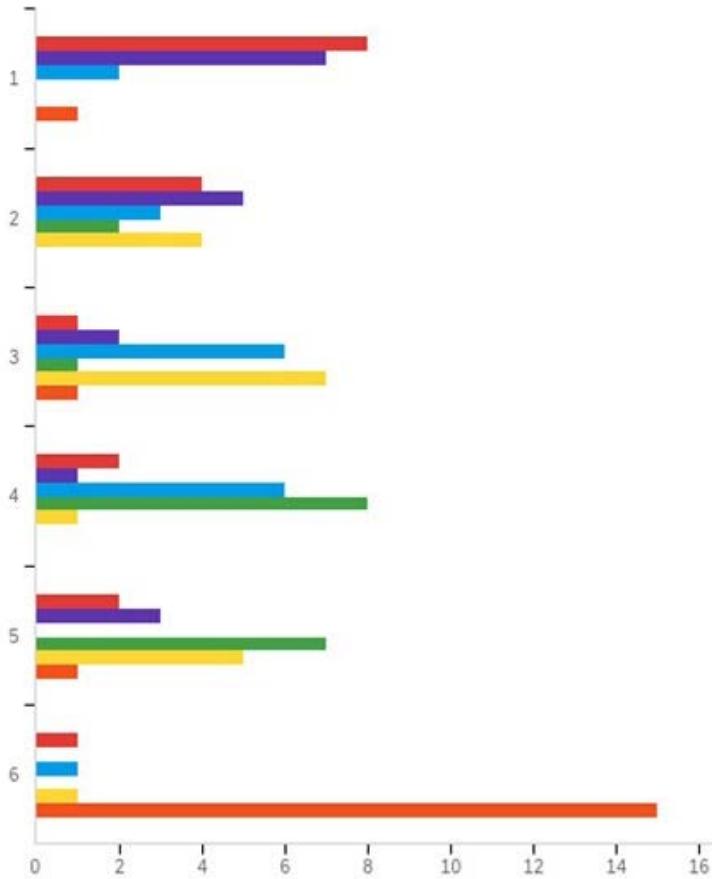


Other - Text
walking unprotected too dicey anywhere here
amenities should be positioned throughout the comm,unity to generate and create a better walking ability for residents -----
No Redline

Question 10: Which parks are most important to the Harlem Park neighborhood?

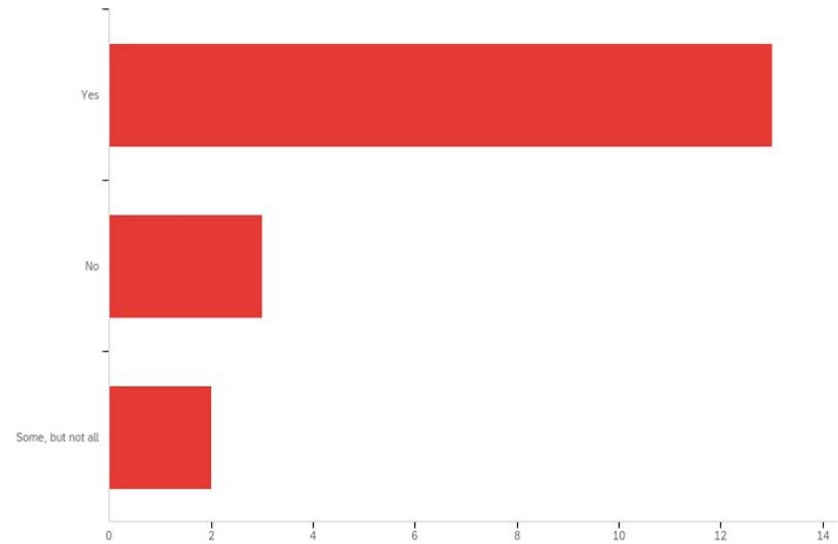


Question 11: What are the best ways to improve the parks in Harlem Park?

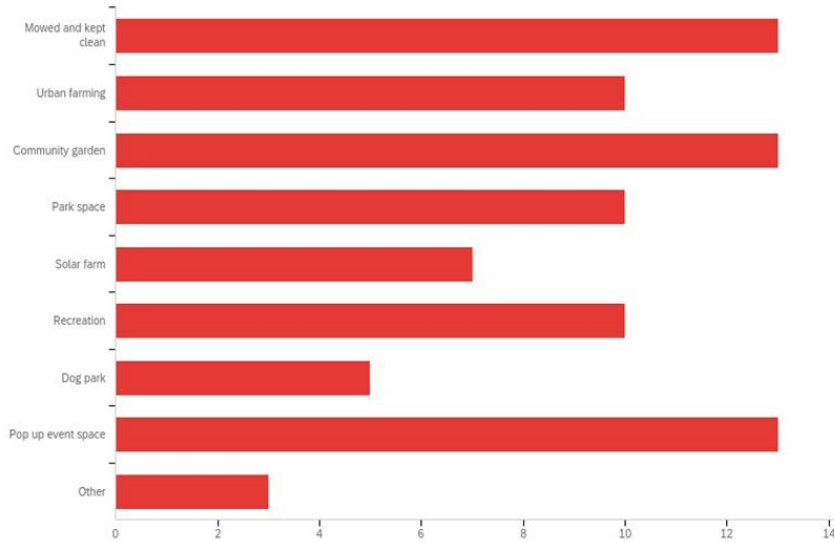


- Better maintenance and regular upkeep
- Regular trash clean up and additional trash cans
- Additional flowers and other plants
- More trees
- Better lighting
- Other

Question 12: Do you believe that inner block parks should be preserved?



Question 13: How do you think vacant land should be utilized in the near term?



Other - Text

outdoor amenity space

venue for outdoor classes, teaching

some sort of temporary gardening would be fine if kept neat, clean & tidy --- small growing spaces - probably seasonal for vegetables, herbs, butterflies, etc. --- easily removed and kept neat ----- it's the overgrowth and lack of maintenance that cretes the sloppy, 'vacant' unkempt look

Question 14: Which existing buildings in Harlem Park are important to you?

Which existing buildings in Harlem Park are important to you? They may be historic, occupied, used by the community, your home, etc.

(List up to ten buildings)

barber shop, churches

Harlem Park Rec, churches

Lafayette Square Community Center and Harlem Park Rec

My home and historical homes.

Historical, Homes, Community, School, Recreation Center, Corner Stores, Barber Shops, and other necessary stores for families and seniors.

metropolitan umc

That old french looking mansion by the square and all the historic churches

Any buildings or structures related to African American History or Culture should be preserved.

St.James Terrace Senior Apartments

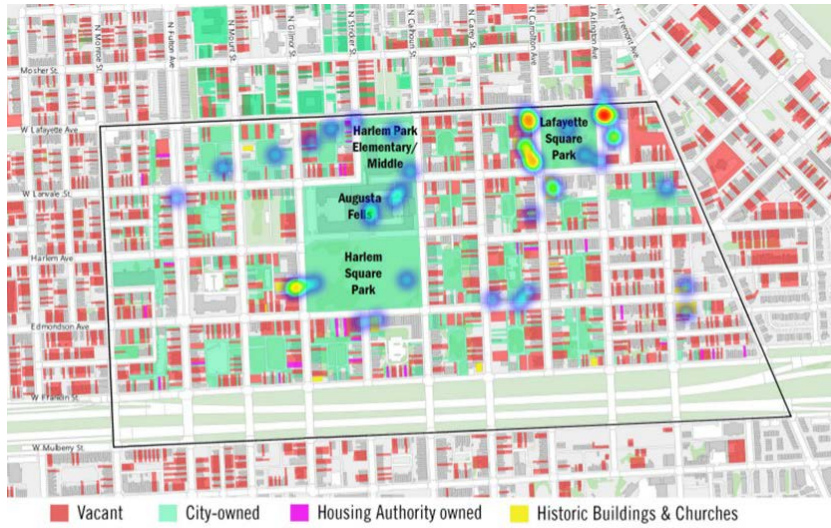
most of the churches have historic value and can be repurposed if unused, row homes that are NOT REHABBED AND RUINED, but restored w historic preservation principles

we are residential developers with project interests in Harlem Park ---- so for us -- the most important buildings would be the ones we are revitalizing in whole blocks to generate 'bubbles' of ownership opportunities. We feel that amenities would be better additions to areas that are being developed for housing and signs of complete revitalization. However, we are only too aware of the struggle of neighborhoods to maintain and upkeep beautiful areas - gardens, small parks, etc. Let's all take a lesson from the mistakes made in Station East. Beautiful gardens when the developers completed the project ----- a disaster only 1 year later due to lack of interest on the homeowner's parts. Not sure what would be the solution other than to potentially have a 'maintenance' team employed by Harlem Park to regularly take care of open areas. The residents/tenants interest will wane and the areas will look like crap quickly.

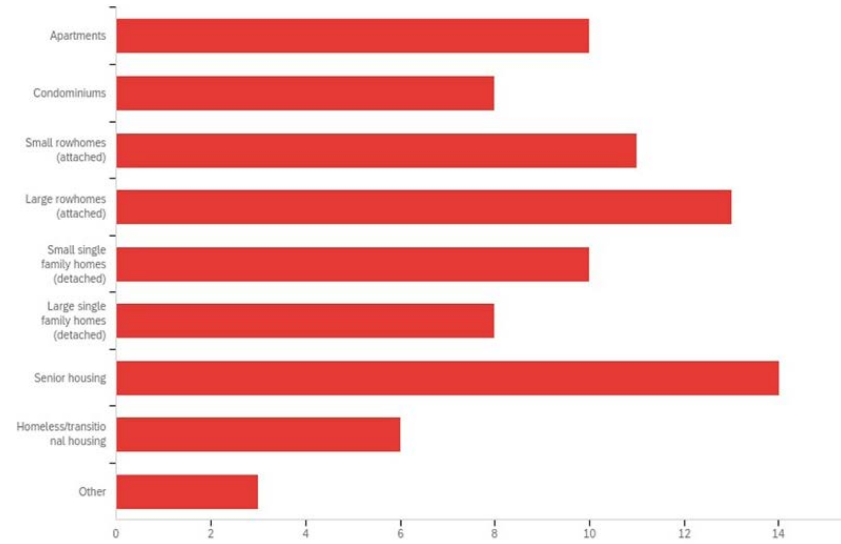
1501 Edmondson Ave

Harlem Theatre

Question 15: If you can, use the map below to place a dot where the buildings that are important to you are located.



Question 17: What type of housing should be available in Harlem Park?



Question 16: Where are the best locations for new buildings?



Question 18: Where do you feel the most safe in Harlem Park?



Question 19: Where do you feel the least safe in Harlem Park?

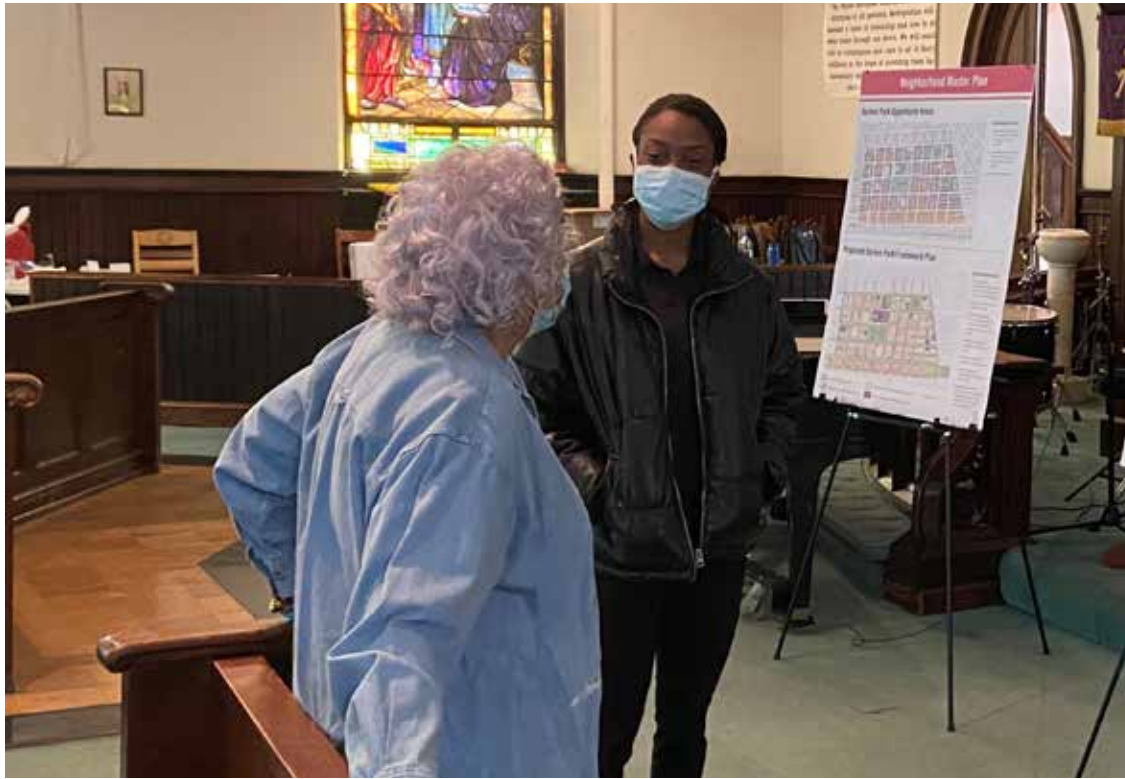


Question 20: Any final comments or things the design team should know?

Any final comments or things the design team should know?
move on development and get plan finalized, also Harlem park needs a laundromat/cleaners
Yes. Comments are about the vacant units in the area that can either be redeveloped or rehabbed by our youth. In addition, center where services, resources, computer wifi, financial literacy, senior programs which could provide services to the current residents. Currently, review vacant properties are already vacant and the new vacant areas that will be forthcoming due to the demolition of vacant properties on Carey Street, Calhoun Street, Edmondson Avenue, Carrollton Avenue, Lafayette and Mount Street. These vacant areas pose health and sanitation issues for residents. The idea that the community is losing a population and businesses which are critical to the area.
none
safety first!
The process should include all voices in the community (and the surrounding communities) not just those deemed as respectable. In order for Harlem Park to thrive we must be using collaborative and cooperative models for design and development not capitalistics models. This project should focus on restorative practice, equity and sustainability.
I'm leaving after 6 years of hell living here: gunshots, vandalism, crime, drugs, prostitution-- I came from another state and was very hopeful but I am done being a pioneer, my conestoga wagon is in shreds!! Slapping in some buildings, trees and retail hoping it will fix things is a waste of money. Better read Jane Jacobs again on neighborhoods and how they work. I have an MA in historic preservation and my property is palatial, but no one will buy it for the value, the problems here are so complex your goals are admirable but you must incentivize the PEOPLE to be invested in its growth! Not give them a restaurant and a few cafes and hope the retailers don't leave in 3 months from broken windows, theft and abuse of patrons. Harlem park is a repository for unwanted trash for developers to buy and ignore, for tenants to abuse, and the results are discouraging and depressing. Without an overhaul of resident mindset, potential for opportunity and SAFETY none of this will succeed. I can't wait to get out but good luck on your endeavors.
The design team should be prepared to share insights, concepts, and ideas from other cities...foreign and domestic.
More retail stores is needed within our community.

The final community meeting was held in two parts. The first was to gather any outstanding feedback from community members, so the meeting was held on May 8th in conjunction with a local vaccine drive. Residents were encouraged to review the final draft plan and provide comments. The reception of the final planning ideas and recommendations was positive and captured what community members had shared in the first and second workshops. The second part of the final meeting was the unveiling of the completed master plan on Juneteenth 2021. The document was shared online on the HPCDC's website and some physical copies were made available for access by community members at the event. This celebratory occasion denotes the conclusion of the planning process and enthusiastic support and excitement for implementation moving forward.









CHAPTER FIVE MASTER PLAN & RECOMMENDATIONS

Neighborhood Master Plan Framework

The Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan seeks to achieve a successful, safe, and sustainable built environment by balancing an aspirational vision with realistic incremental improvements. Through the community engagement process, the master planning team established a set of planning principles to guide the development of the master plan and its recommendations for neighborhood improvements.

The physical components of the neighborhood master plan are distilled to the basic framework plan to the right. This diagram illustrates the proposed future form of the neighborhood: interconnected, dense, green, walkable, and mixed-use. This plan was developed to minimize or avoid displacement and maintain flexibility to respond to market changes and future demolition of vacant properties.

Planning Principles

- Celebrate neighborhood history
- Build upon existing neighborhood anchors
- Consolidate vacant buildings and land into redevelopment opportunities
- Provide a public open space network that touches all parts of the neighborhood
- Build back neighborhood density and provide a diversity of housing choices
- Undo legacy of urban renewal: transform the ill-conceived inner block parks and Route 40

FRAMEWORK MASTER PLAN

- Opportunity Areas
- Open Space
- Productive Landscapes: Urban Agriculture, Solar Energy, etc.
- Improved Streetscapes
- Community Anchors: Civic, Educational, and Religious Institutions
- Community Hubs: Retail and Neighborhood Services



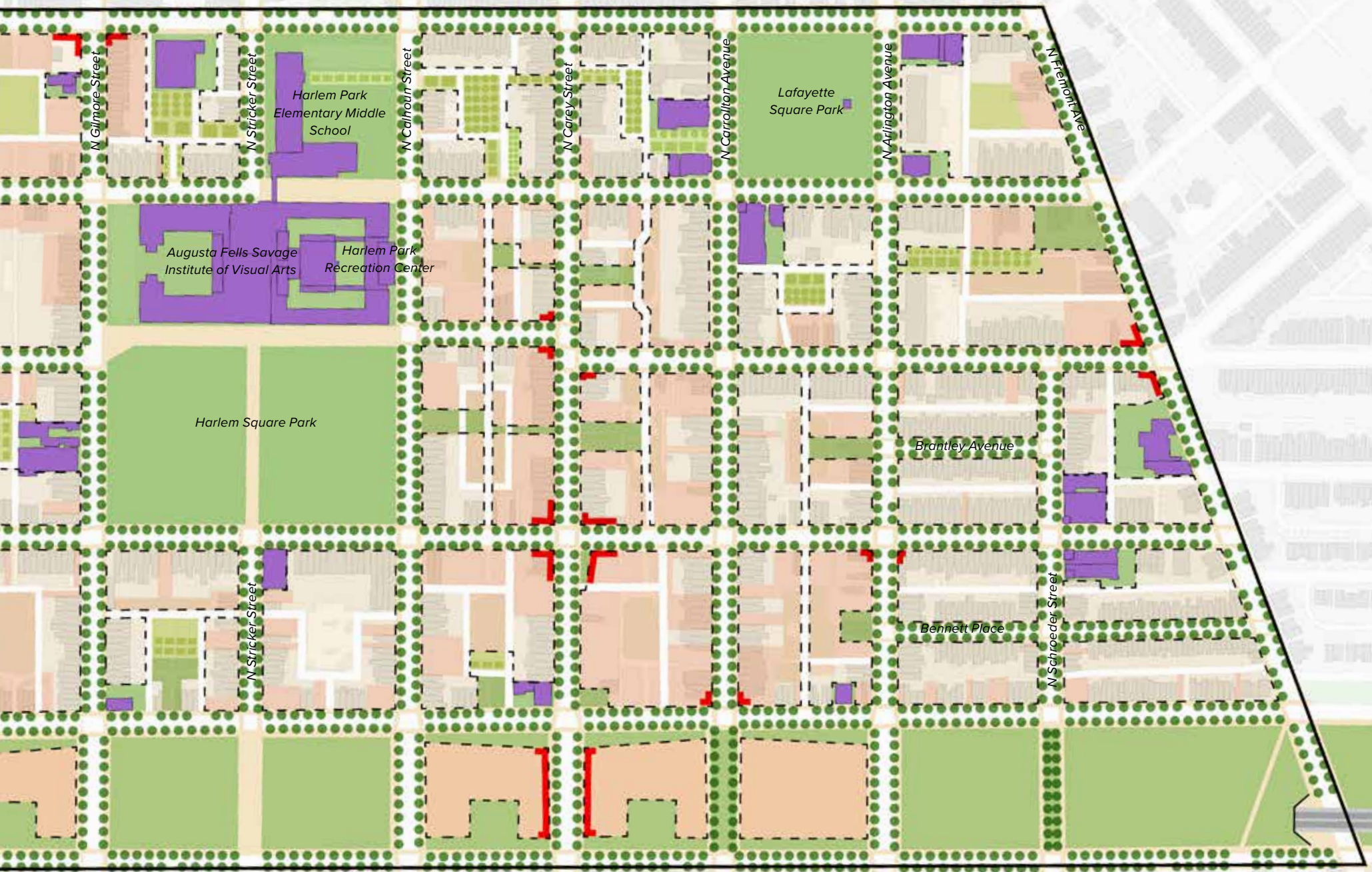




Photo by Ayers Saint Gross

Precedents: the ARC

- In Washington, DC
- Hub of neighborhood activity with community programming
- Programs: Parent training, new mom support group, child development center, grandparent support group, pediatric dental services, wellness classes, teen counseling, prevention services youth center, Covenant House, crisis center, summer camp, dance classes, urban farming, jazz performances, theater classes and internships, art classes, day camp, summer dance program, music classes, yoga classes, farmers market, Associate of Arts (AA) Degree in General Studies



Photo by Ayers Saint Gross

Precedents: Rebuild Metro & Vacants to Value

- Targets the renovation and rehabilitation of vacant houses in challenged areas of Baltimore City



Photos by Ziger/Snead

Precedents: Greenmount West

- In Baltimore, MD
- The vacancy rate in Greenmount West went down from almost 50% in 2000 to 33% in 2010
- Baltimore Design School
- Station North Tool Library
- City Arts Apartments
- Open Works
- Community Benefits Agreement (CBA): Agreement between a community group and a developer that requires the developer to
- Provide specific amenities to the local community or neighborhood

Precedents: Hyattsville Art District

- In Hyattsville, MD
- A mix of rowhomes and apartments
- Small, neighborhood retail core
- Busboys and Poets
- Yes! Organic Market
- Fast-casual restaurants
- Salon and spa
- Pet store
- Route 1 as a major thoroughfare
- Renovated auto shop into gym and neighborhood center



Photo by Housing Studio



Photo by Penney Design Group

Precedents: Roland Avenue

- In Baltimore, MD
- Intersection with grocery, bank, Starbucks, pharmacy, florist, post office, library, bookstore, and other small retail
- Successful streetscaping—mature trees, crosswalks, outdoor seating, sidewalks



Photo by Live Baltimore

Precedents: Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC)

- In Cincinnati, OH
- 501(c)3 formed in 2003 to revitalize the Business District and Over-the-Rhine that manages two economic development investment funds
- 3CDC has leveraged over half a billion dollars for Over-the-Rhine:
 - Developed vacant lots, built 48 new buildings, & rescued 131 historic buildings
 - Rehabilitated parks, improved lighting, and installed cameras
 - Maintained diversity
 - 2000: 76.9% African American | 19.4% White
 - 2010: 73.2% African American | 25.5% White



Photos in 2009 & 2013 by Wholton, Wikimedia Commons



Image by Brush Park Development Company

Precedents: City Modern Brush Park

- In Detroit, MI
- The mixed-use, mixed-income vision includes connected pedestrian paths, sustainable infrastructure, green roofs, and shared transit systems
- A diverse mix of housing types, architecture, and residential units
- Five architecture firms developed the vision in collaboration with existing neighborhood residents, City and State agencies, local developers, and active community groups

Precedents: Philadelphia Horticultural Society

- Philadelphia has 40,000 vacant parcels (Baltimore has 16,000 abandoned homes)
- PHS maintains 6,500 greened vacant lots
- An additional 2,100 lots receive care once a month from paid neighbors



Precedents: Rosa Parks Neighborhood Master Plan

- The 350-acre neighborhood is home to the now defunct Herman Keifer hospital complex and was the starting point of the 1967 Detroit riots
- Cultural landscape overgrown with wilderness previously
- Archaeological approach using its landscape framework to reinstall the area's cultural and institutional memory



Precedents: Butchers Hill

- Similar architectural character
- Proximity to downtown
- Adjacency to Johns Hopkins Hospital is similar to Harlem Park's adjacency to the University of Maryland, Baltimore
- A neighborhood of retail nodes as opposed to large corridors
- Preserved alley homes provide smaller and more affordable housing options to contrast the large, stately homes along main streets



Sustainability & EcoDistricts Framework

The Harlem Park neighborhood master plan will be seeking EcoDistrict certification. Design options will follow the three imperatives: **equity**, **resilience**, and **climate protection**.

Within these three imperatives are six (6) priorities.

Place: The Harlem Park master plan will leverage existing cultural assets, enhance public spaces, foster community engagement, and respect the rich historic character.

Prosperity: A future neighborhood framework will foster small local businesses and provide innovation and economic development space. Ultimately, this will increase access to opportunity for all residents.

Health + Wellbeing: Networks of bike paths, attractive sidewalks, and potential commercial space for food vendors will promote active living, health, safety, and food systems.

Connectivity: Inner-block routes demolished as part of urban renewal will be partially restored to increase mobility. Many inaccessible and unmaintained inner block parks will be envisioned as corner parks enhancing the existing street network.

Living Infrastructure: The master plan will maintain Harlem Square Park and Lafayette Square Park as centerpieces of the neighborhood. It will also promote tree cover over sidewalks and streets—leveraging a

natural feature to connect residents with nature and increase ecosystem health by reducing the heat island effect.

Resource Regeneration: As a harbor city hosting streams and rivers, Baltimore depends on its water quality. Street design for Harlem Park will include bioswales to help capture runoff and filter pollutants. Increased vegetation will also reduce air pollution.

IMPERATIVES						
	EQUITY		RESILIENCE		CLIMATE PROTECTION	
PRIORITIES						
	PLACE		PROSPERITY		HEALTH + WELLBEING	
OBJECTIVE CATEGORIES						
	CONNECTIVITY		LIVING INFRASTRUCTURE		RESOURCE REGENERATION	
	Engagement + Inclusion	Access to Opportunity	Active Living	Street Network	Natural Features	Air + Climate
	Culture + Identity	Economic Development	Health	Mobility	Ecosystem Health	Water
	Public Spaces	Innovation	Safety	Digital Network	Connection with Nature	Waste
	Housing		Food Systems			

EcoDistrict Framework

Safety and Security

A neighborhood cannot be healthy and prosperous without feeling and being safe. Unfortunately, crime is an issue in Harlem Park, as is the perception that neighborhood areas are not secure. The Harlem Park Master Plan promotes good urban and environmental design that deters and reduces crime. These strategies aim to eliminate opportune physical places and conditions for crime to occur. The master plan also supports good management practices and neighborhood cohesion strategies to improve community safety.

Eyes-on-the-Street: Create streets and open spaces that maximize the visibility of the area and its users:

- Design streets and sidewalks to increase bike and foot traffic
- Locate, orient, and design buildings to overlook sidewalks, parks, and parking lots
- Design identifiable and transparent building entries
- Provide appropriate lighting to fully illuminate spaces without creating overly dark shadows, blind spots, or blinding glare.

Clear delineation of public and private space:

Clearly define private spaces from public spaces to express control and ownership, increase a sense of safety for regular users, and increase an understanding of risk for potential offenders:

- Use landscape features such as plants, low hedges, and low fences to delineate private property
- Plant trees along streets and in public spaces to promote the use of these spaces
- Place common areas and active uses at ground floors along public sidewalks and park spaces

Maintenance While not a design strategy, the maintenance of neighborhood spaces is a critical factor in creating an environment that naturally deters crime. Therefore, the master plan promotes elevating the general level of public and private property in the community. This will help communicate that residents oversee, occupy, and care about the neighborhood, thereby reducing crime, increasing community pride, and enhancing the quality of life in Harlem Park. All neighborhood stakeholders, residents, property owners, faith-based organizations, neighborhood leaders, the city can contribute to these efforts.

- Organize events focused on cleaning up and maintaining deteriorated or ill-maintained public and private spaces at a block, street, or neighborhood scale
- Work with property owners and managers to secure the appropriate number and size of trash receptacles
- Establish groups that ‘adopt’ certain streets or spaces to supplement cleaning and maintenance

Social and Community-Building Efforts

The people of a community and their bonds with each other and their neighborhood play a significant role in creating a safe and inclusive environment. Therefore, the neighborhood plan supports ongoing efforts and programs that bring people together, build common purpose among neighbors, and enhance social bonds:

- Organize resident groups around specific purposes to tackle specific local problems, such as Neighborhood Watch
- Organize neighborhood events and placemaking activities, such as street fairs, arts and music festivals, and pop-up events, to bring together people of all ages and backgrounds
- Create strong connections with adjacent neighborhoods through strategic alliances, shared events, and physical linkages

Anchors & Amenities

The master plan supports the service, educational, and historical assets of Harlem Park by connecting existing cultural nodes. This design move will reinforce two of the EcoDistrict imperatives: **place** and **connectivity**.

Neighborhood History and Culture: Harlem Park has a rich history of parks, architecture, activism, education, and culture. The Master Plan proposes building on this history by strengthening and building on the foundational elements of the neighborhood.

Schools and Education: Harlem Park has a legacy as the birthplace of many educational institutions. Despite displacing three blocks of residents in the 1960s, having an elementary and middle/high school in the heart of the neighborhood is a tremendous asset and anchor. However, with only a 42 percent graduation rate Augusta Fells Savage Institute and math and reading proficiencies of 2 and 3 percent respectively at Harlem Park Elementary School, the schools in Harlem Park do not match the caliber of the legacy. Many factors contribute to the quality of education at these schools. From an urban design perspective, the plan seeks to bolster the environment around them by diversifying housing typologies and neighborhood amenities to attract people of all walks of life, thereby supporting a diverse and sustainable community.

Faith-Based Institutions: Harlem Park has some of the highest densities of churches in all of Baltimore. At one point, Lafayette Square Park was called 'Church Square' because of the number of churches surrounding the park. The master plan proposes maintaining and celebrating these essential anchors as critical elements of the neighborhood fabric. This master plan also offers church leaders the opportunity to work collaboratively in support of neighborhood improvements.

Neighborhood Services and Human Capital: The recreation center located adjacent to Augusta Fells Savage Institute has been an unreliable venue for the community due to persistent openings and closures. Recently some light renovations have been completed, but significant investment is needed to turn this into a true wellness center. Therefore, the master plan recommends maintaining a recreation center in this location but allocating substantial investment towards improving the facility and providing a wide variety of programming that addresses holistic wellness, from recreation to physical and mental health services.



DIVERSIFY KEY NODES



*RESTORE SURROUNDING
NEIGHBORHOOD*

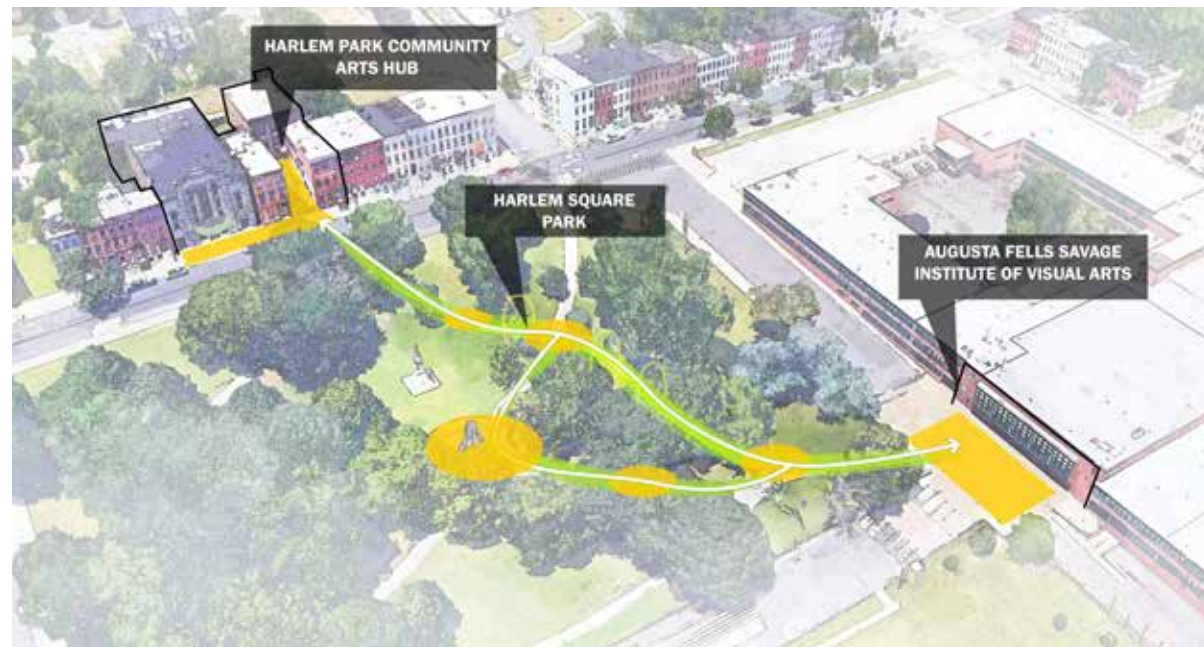


PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES & ANCHORS

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ■ School | ■ Recreation Center | ■ Historic Landmark | — Retail hub |
| ■ Day care | ■ Fire Station | ■ Church | |

Community Arts Hub

Along with several adjacent buildings to the north, the historic Harlem Park Theatre presents an opportunity to create a unique community arts hub. The theatre should be revitalized to host various community events and cultural performances. An adjacent rowhouse and warehouse can be repurposed to house community arts groups, gallery spaces, studios, and other educational, community service, and arts programs. The small courtyard space at the center of the cluster should be transformed into a combination multi-purpose event area, social gathering space, outdoor studio, and art display zone extending across the street into Harlem Square Park. The arts hub should create physical and programmatic links with Augusta Fells Savage Institute of Visual Arts.





Public Open Space Network

Harlem Park is and should remain a neighborhood of parks. However, the physical form of its open space network should evolve to serve the community better and create a safer, more diverse, and more enjoyable urban environment. The master plan aims to provide an open space to most neighborhood areas within a one-block walk.

All open spaces should be designed to be inclusive of all people, complement surrounding buildings and uses, and foster a sense of identity for the Harlem Park community. They should also be designed as places of social interaction that accommodate a range of passive and active uses, as well as necessary connectors that facilitate foot traffic to adjacent parks, trails, schools, churches, and other destinations. Finally, to ensure safety, public spaces should maximize visibility and incorporate appropriate lighting.

Harlem Square Park This centrally-located and multi-function historical park is at the heart of the neighborhood. Maintenance and upkeep should be improved to repair or replace broken benches, collect litter, empty trash cans, and mow the grass more frequently. In addition, dry limbs and dead trees should be cut down and removed promptly, with new trees planted to replace old trees. Opportunities to incorporate more public art into the park should be explored.

Lafayette Square Park Like the western part of Harlem Square Park, Lafayette Square Park is a beautiful historic park that adds charm and value to the community. However, the fountain at the center of the park should be repaired. Maintenance and upkeep should be improved to repair or replace broken benches, collect litter, empty trash cans, and mow the grass more frequently. Dry limbs and dead trees should be cut down and removed promptly, with new trees planted to replace old trees.

Inner Block Parks A significant recommendation of the neighborhood plan is to reduce inner block park spaces drastically. The inner block parks result from urban renewal policies that ripped out much of the neighborhood's physical and social fabric. The leftover spaces were made into inner block parks, though these spaces were never designed to be successful park spaces—there was no plan to maintain them and they lacked visibility. The master plan recommends that most of them get redeveloped and replaced by new open spaces with a visible presence on streets with buildings that appropriately overlook and address them. Some inner block spaces can remain as greenway connections and should primarily be used for urban farming, stormwater management, and solar energy generation.

New Neighborhood Parks The master plan envisions diverse public parks, plazas, linear greens, courtyards, community gardens, and other community spaces to replace the inner block parks. This range of parks will create richness and diversity in the open space network.

Route 40 Corridor The Route 40 corridor is a significant barrier and divider across West Baltimore. Many studies and plans have been done in the past but the future of this 'highway to nowhere' is once again being contemplated. The neighborhood master plan supports new open spaces as part of a future removal or capping of Route 40. These could include several full-block park spaces and continuous linear greenways that link them to West Baltimore Station and MLK Drive. More recommendations and details for Route 40 are provided at the end of this section.



PROPOSED PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

- Key anchor amenities
 - Open spaces at anchor amenities
- New neighborhood parks
 - Improved inner block parks
- Key greenway connections

Transportation & Mobility

The neighborhood master plan promotes a multi-modal transportation network that accommodates vehicles but encourages and prioritizes non-vehicular use.

Pedestrian Routes Transportation infrastructure throughout the neighborhood should prioritize pedestrian movement and safety. Sidewalks, multi-purpose trails, and park pathways should be continuous, interconnected, accessible, and well-lit.



Photo credit: OHM Advisors

Bikeways The neighborhood master plan promotes improvements to the bike network and incorporates recommendations from the city's bike master plan. Fulton, Edmondson, Carey, Carrollton, Lafayette, and Fremont are proposed to receive cycle tracks or bike lanes that extend to the broader city bike network. Additionally, the existing multi-purpose paths and bike trails along Route 40 should be extended and incorporated into the new open spaces proposed along the corridor.

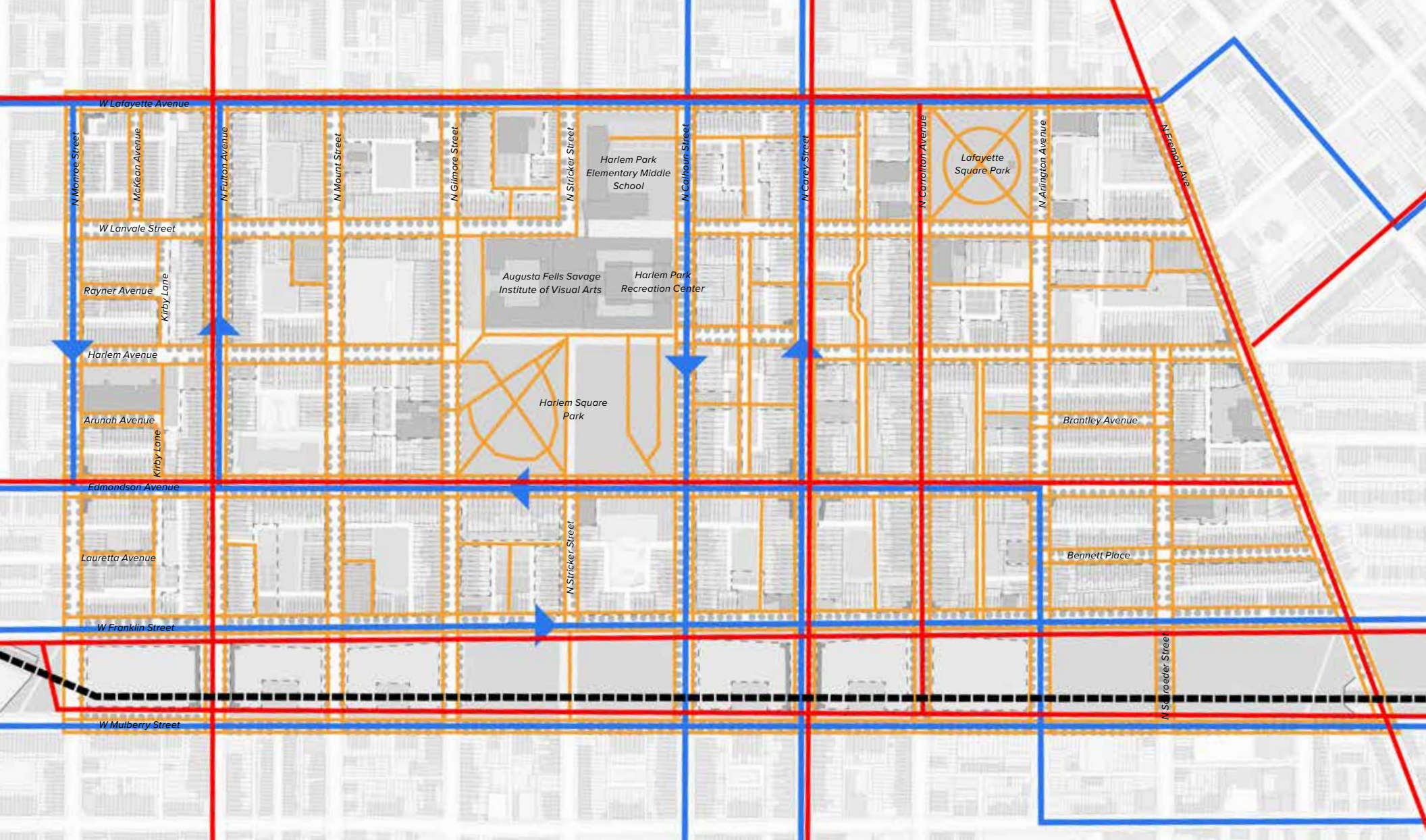


Photo credit: RootsRated

Transit Harlem Park is well-served by several bus lines. Busy stops at critical nodes and transfer points should receive bus shelters to provide riders with cover from rain and sun. In addition, a transformed Route 40 corridor should include a light rail extension with one or two stops in Harlem Park, ideally near Carey and Fulton.



Photo credit: Vector Media



PROPOSED TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

- Pedestrian network
- Bus routes
- Red line ROW
- Bikeways (cycle tracks or bike lanes)

Streetscape Improvements

High-quality streets are essential elements of thriving neighborhoods. Not only do they facilitate the movement of people, goods, and services, they are a critical part of the public realm where people gather, socialize, and build a sense of community. According to the neighborhood survey, the number one impediment to mobility in Harlem Park is the quality of the public realm, aesthetics, trash, and lack of upkeep. Disinvestment in streetscaping is a significant equity issue across the city. Many organizations, including the Baltimore Tree Trust, are pushing for more trees and plantings in lower-income neighborhoods to help reduce urban heat island impacts and improve residents' physical and mental health.

The neighborhood master plan supports and aligns with Complete Streets principles and the city's Bike Master Plan. All streets in Harlem Park should safely accommodate all users but prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and mass transit users. Recommended street enhancements are conceptual and are meant to inform the detailed design and implementation of street improvements.

Successful neighborhood streets are not only functional but beautiful. Street trees provide shade, reduce the heat island effect, and increase property values. As a community of parks and green space, Harlem Park's streets should be consistently lush and green as well.



Typical streetscape in Harlem Park



Improved planting, lighting, paving example for Harlem Park



America's dirty divide
Baltimore

Green health: a tree-filled street can positively influence depression, study finds

More trees near the home was associated with a reduced risk in antidepressant use, information that can help urban planners

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About this content
Ashley Simpson
APR 12 2024 10:00 AM EDT




▲ In East Baltimore, neighborhoods that will lose the sides of well-maintained green trees. (Photograph: Baltimore Tree Trust)

▲ Baltimore neighborhoods that will lose the sides of well-maintained green trees. (Photograph: Baltimore Tree Trust)



PROPOSED STREET TYPOLOGIES

- Route 40 removal
 - Boulevard (100' ROW)
 - One-way thoroughfare
- Typical neighborhood street (65' ROW)
 - Disconnected neighborhood street
 - One-way neighborhood street (65' ROW)
- Narrow neighborhood street (50' ROW)
 - Alley street (30' ROW)
 - Alley (20' ROW)

Section A:

Typical Neighborhood Streets

The typical street in Harlem Park is a 65 ft right-of-way with two travel lanes and parallel parking on both sides. Stoops project into the sidewalks to make the pedestrian zone feel narrow at points, though the condition is typical for historic neighborhoods of Baltimore. Street trees are inconsistent, and tree pits are undersized. Cobrahead light poles provide lighting.

Recognizing that complete reconfigurations of most neighborhood streets are not likely soon, this neighborhood master plan recommends maintaining street curb locations and implementing the following improvements:

- Add back missing street trees at consistent intervals (approx. 30', typ.)
- Enlarge tree pits and planting strips to improve street tree health
- Add curb bump-outs with stormwater bioretention areas at intersections and mid-block locations
- Replace cobrahead lighting with pedestrian-scale lighting spaced at appropriate intervals to enhance visibility and safety
- Add sharrow markings to streets

Existing



Proposed



Section B:

Main Bicycle Routes

Edmondson Avenue, Carey Street, Lafayette Avenue, and Fremont Street are typical neighborhood streets in dimension and configuration. However, they are more primary streets because they provide connectivity to other parts of West Baltimore, carry more through traffic, and accommodate bus routes.

The Baltimore City Bike Master Plan designates these four important streets as main bicycle routes that should incorporate robust bike infrastructure. Dedicated space for cyclists can be done without moving existing curbs. Along with the addition of bicycle infrastructure, the streets should be enhanced with all the same streetscape improvements as typical neighborhood streets (see the previous page):

- Eliminate one side of street parking
- Add a two-way cycle track (8' minimum / 10' preferred) with a striped buffer along the adjacent drive lane (2' minimum / 3' preferred)

Existing



Proposed



Section C:

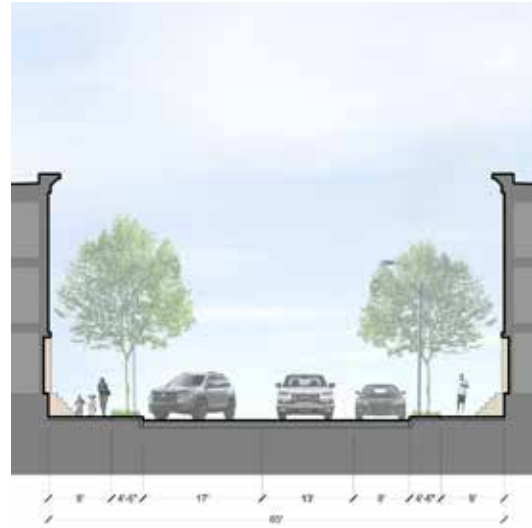
One-Way Neighborhood Street

North Carrollton Avenue has similar dimensions as the typical neighborhood street, but is a one-way street through the neighborhood from Lafayette Avenue to Edmondson Avenue. It is also the only street in the community with diagonal street parking, where it exists on the west side of the street from the 800 block to the 600 block (between Lafayette Avenue and Edmondson Avenue).

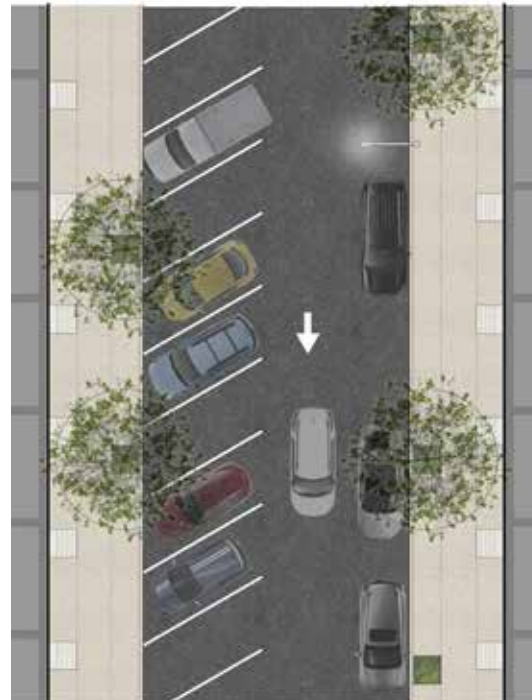
The Baltimore City Bike Master Plan designates Carrollton Avenue as a neighborhood bicycle route. Incorporating space for cyclists can be done without moving existing curbs. Along with the addition of bicycle infrastructure, the streets should be enhanced with all the same streetscape improvements as previously outlined for typical neighborhood streets:

- Eliminate parallel street parking along the east side of the street
- Add a one-way northbound cycletrack (5' wide) with a striped buffer along the adjacent drive lane (2' minimum / 3' preferred)
- Add sharrows to drive lane for southbound cyclists
- Re-stripe diagonal parking from head-in to reverse parking to improve visibility and safety for cyclists
- Apply this street section to the entire length of the street from Lafayette Street to Franklin Street

Existing



Proposed



Section D:

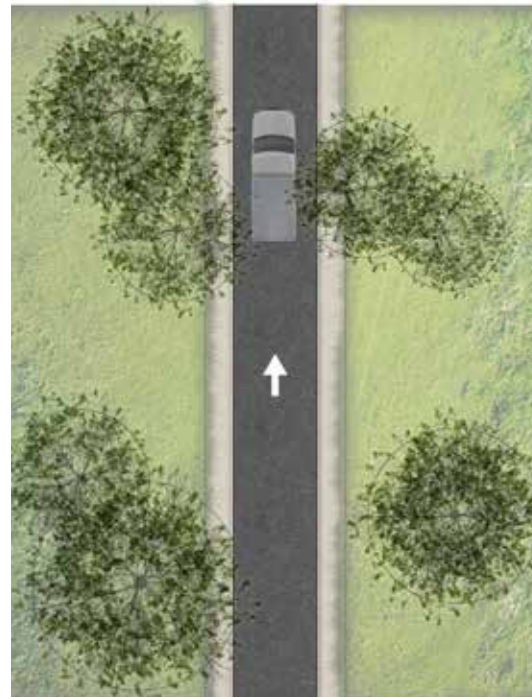
Alley Streets

Urban Renewal severely impacted Harlem Park's alley streets. Historically, these streets were lined with smaller rowhouses and carriage houses. Today, the remnants of these streets typically provide access to inner block parks, either connecting into alleys that loop around the parks or directly bisecting the park spaces. Unfortunately, the general condition of these streets is inferior with crumbling pavement, overgrown weeds, and litter.

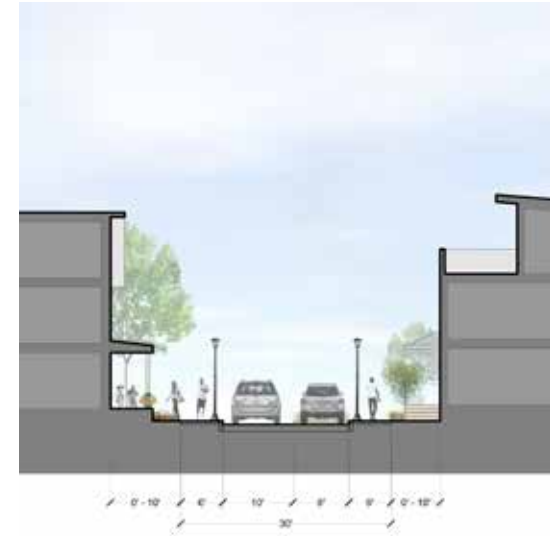
The neighborhood master plan proposes that revived alley streets become a part of the Harlem Park fabric once more. In certain instances, these streets may continue to serve as access ways for internal open spaces, though many could become intimate residential streets that add richness and diversity to the neighborhood. These streets also provide opportunities for smaller residential dwelling typologies to be reintroduced to the community.

- Where possible, expand the existing 20' right-of-way to 30'
- Maintain one-way travel
- Add parallel parking on one side
- Add curb bump-outs with stormwater bioretention areas and table-top crossings at mid-block crossing points

Existing



Proposed



Section E:

Boulevard (Fulton Avenue)

Fulton Avenue is a main north-south thoroughfare for West Baltimore. North of Edmondson Avenue it is configured as a wide two-way boulevard with a planted median, while south of Edmondson it is a one-way street traveling northbound. Fulton Avenue is coupled with southbound Monroe Street as U.S. Route 1, with the northbound portions of Fulton carrying the federal highway designation.

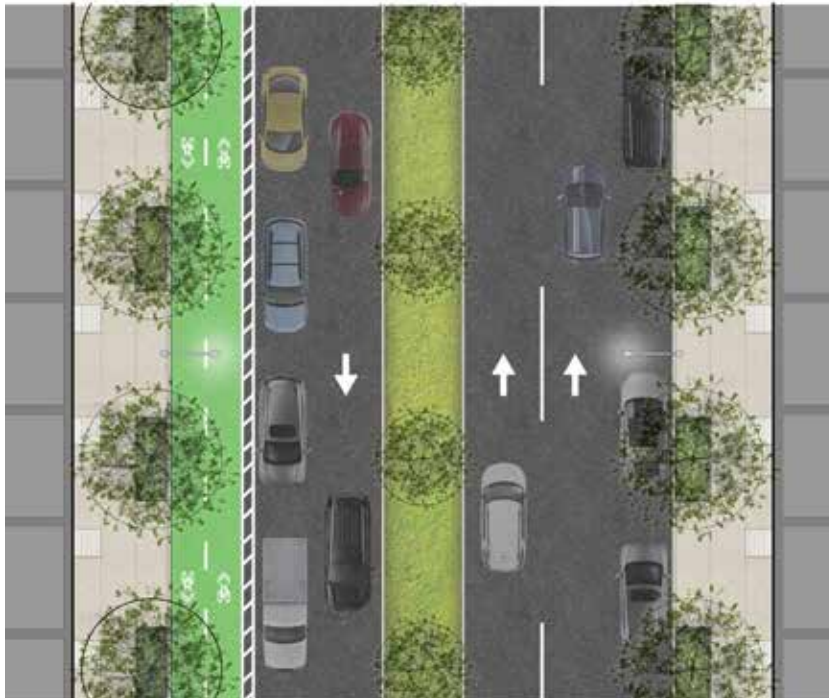
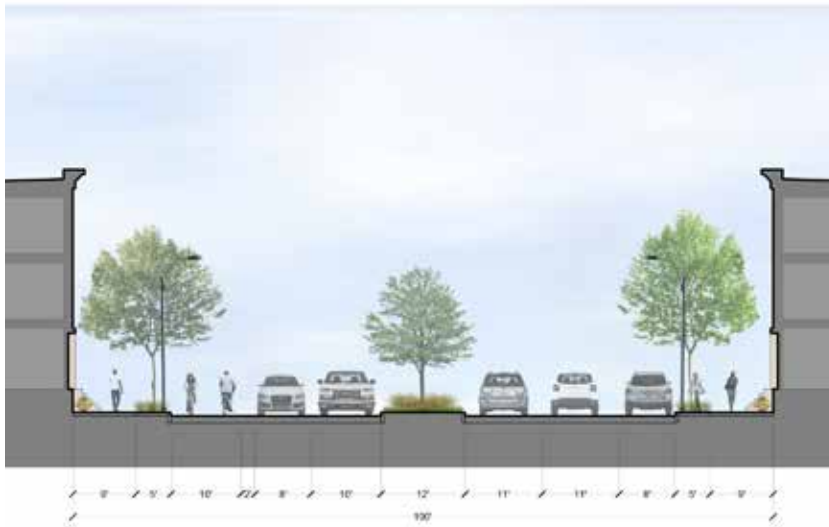
The Baltimore City Bike Master Plan designates Fulton as a main bicycle route. Therefore, the plan recommends dedicating space for cyclists, which can be done without moving existing curbs.

- Add back missing street trees at consistent intervals (approx. 30', typ.)
- Enlarge tree pits and planting strips to improve street tree health
- Add curb bump-outs with stormwater bioretention areas at intersections and mid-block locations
- Eliminate a southbound travel lane and shift parallel parking lane away from the curb
- Add a two-way cycle track along the west curb with a striped buffer along the parking lane

Existing



Proposed



Renovation, Homeownership, and Character Preservation

Historic Character

Large, stately rowhomes dominate the landscape of Harlem Park and come in various shapes and sizes. This breadth of character is a unique feature of the neighborhood and the Master Plan recommends the renovation and infill of many of these historic properties.

However, in some instances, preservation is not an option. Sometimes the integrity of the structure is so poor that renovation is not viable. Other times a whole or half block of vacant properties makes renovation cost-prohibitive compared with new development.

- Strategic demolition of structurally unsound properties or continuous lots of vacant, decaying buildings are prime opportunities for demolition and new construction.
- New construction should use materials and sustainable practices that complement the existing fabric of Harlem Park and diversify housing options.
- Renovation of existing rowhomes should align with the historic character of the neighborhood. In some instances, a larger rowhome can be converted into multiple units; however, this should only be used sparingly.

Homeownership

The best way to promote equity and wealth creation in Harlem Park is to increase homeownership rates for existing residents.

- Continue to grow the CDC's homeownership program for existing residents.



Diversity of rowhome character in Harlem Park



Home restoration and infill along Fulton Ave.



Photo credit: Dare Development LLC

Recently renovated housing on Fulton Ave.



Photo credit: Dare Development LLC

Quality of homes prior to renovation



Photo credit: Dare Development LLC

Vacant Lot Strategies

Like many other neighborhoods of Baltimore, Harlem Park has an abundance of empty lots. A vacant city lot may be seen as something negative—an eyesore or a reminder of a lost piece of the neighborhood. Or it may be seen in a positive way—a natural habitat, a green oasis, or someone’s future home. The master plan acknowledges that vacant lots are and will continue to be a feature of the neighborhood. The hope and recommendation is that many will eventually be developed. But in the meantime, vacant lots can be transformed into temporary and permanent neighborhood assets and amenities.

Maintenance and Upkeep The city, neighborhood groups, churches, and residents should work together to ensure that vacant lots are kept clean and vegetation is appropriately managed.

Low Mow Regime To reduce maintenance costs, mow vacant lots infrequently to create meadows of taller grasses and wildflowers. Plant growth should be managed and cut low along sidewalks to eliminate infringement into pedestrian ways. Walking paths can be mowed into the vegetation to encourage interaction with the landscape.

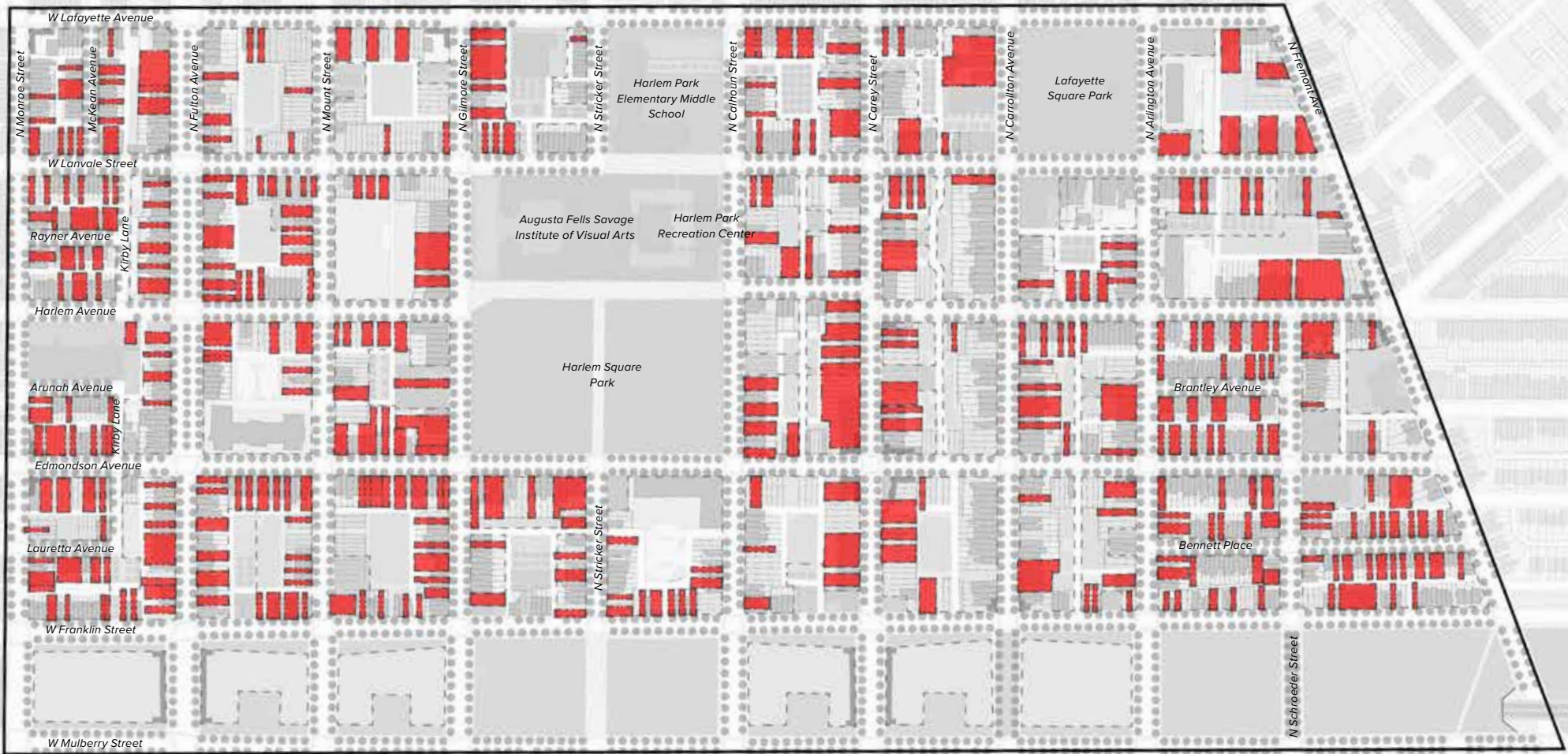
Urban Agriculture Vacant land can be utilized for local food production. Community gardens, small farm plots, and orchards can make productive use of the land, promote healthy eating, and generate revenue by supplying local produce to markets and restaurants.

Pocket Parks Vacant lots can become small community parks that function as small outdoor living spaces for residents.

Murals and Art Vacant lots can be beautified by murals, sculptures, and other types of art.

Activation Vacant lots provide opportunities for pop-up events and tactical urbanism. These quick and cheap community projects and events can explore different ways to improve the neighborhood and build community bonds.





VACANCY BUILDING & LOT OPPORTUNITIES

■ Vacant Parcels

Development Opportunities

This neighborhood master plan recognizes specific challenges to neighborhood growth, including weak market demand, an outdated housing stock, and an abundance of distressed properties. Nevertheless, the master plan also recognizes the potential for future growth and identifies the opportunity to build back some of the neighborhood's lost density.

Preservation and Restoration Large swaths of the neighborhood's original building fabric have been lost over the past decades, and the city continues to demolish vacant properties. But certain streets, blocks, and portions of the neighborhood remain largely intact. In these cases, the rowhouse fabric should be preserved and restored to ensure that Harlem Park maintains its historic charm.

Targeted Infill Individual or small clusters of empty parcels present the opportunity for new infill development. These could be smaller building types that add diversity to the neighborhood's housing stock. To help make this type of development more efficient and economical, smaller infill buildings can be incorporated into larger development projects.

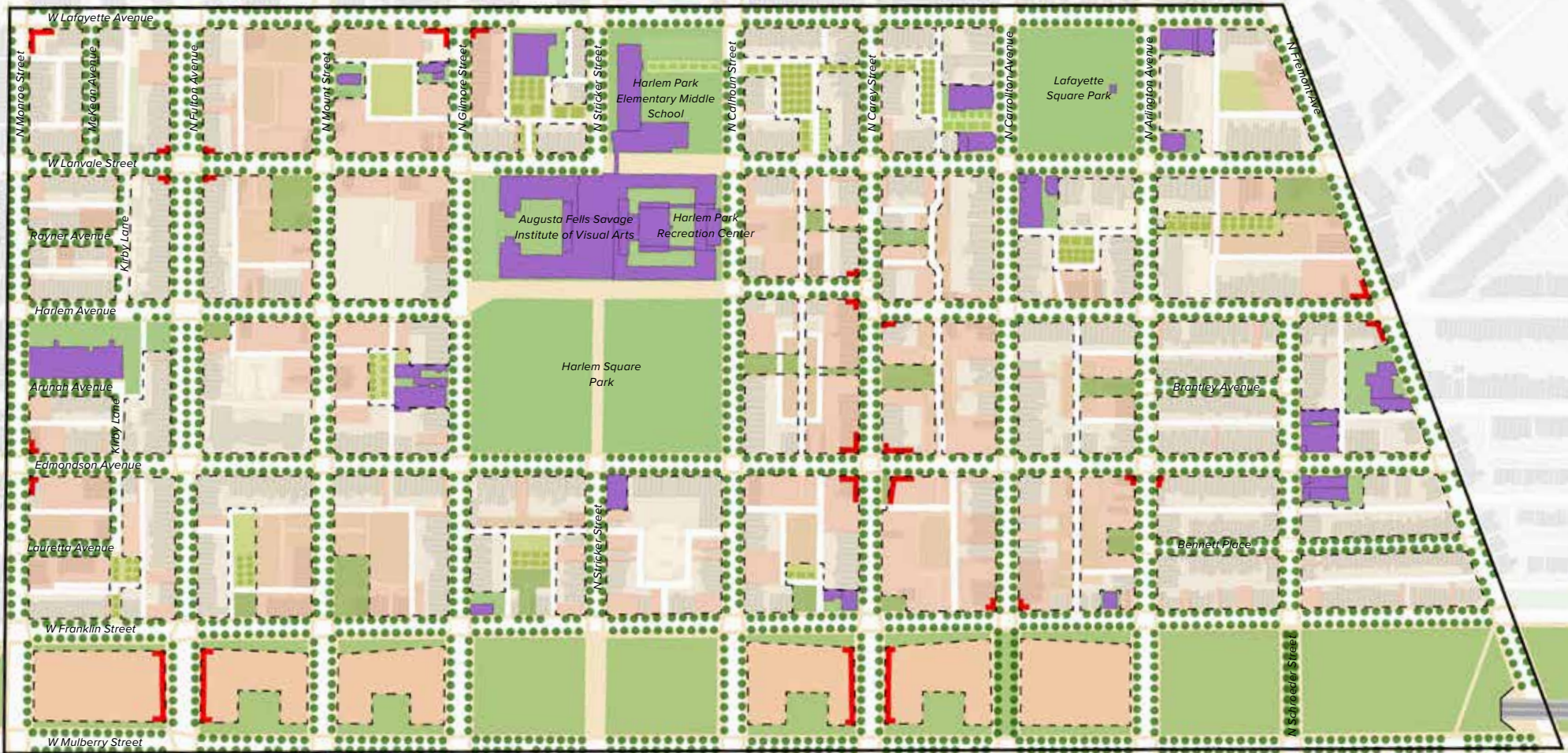
New Development Developers are attracted to large, cleared development sites under single ownership. Where vacancy is high and the building fabric is compromised, land consolidation should continue to make larger-scale residential and mixed-use redevelopment projects possible.

Building Type Diversity Harlem Park's buildings are predominantly three-story rowhouses. Two-story rowhouses are the second most common building type. To appeal to a broader range of people, the neighborhood should diversify its housing stock with missing housing types such as single-family homes, duplexes, accessory units, and a variety of multifamily building types.

Desired and Recommended Uses Harlem Park will continue to be a predominantly residential community. However, specific areas of mixed-use, commercial, and neighborhood amenities are proposed in the master plan at key intersections or along major streets. The community engagement process identified many non-residential uses that current residents desire in the neighborhood:

- Neighborhood-serving retail, such as a bank and pharmacy
- Food and beverage, including restaurants and cafes
- Neighborhood health clinic
- Social services such as youth activity programs, adult education and training, and senior services

Community Benefits To ensure the broader community benefits from new development in Harlem Park, developers should commit to providing explicit community benefits on large development projects. Agreements should be negotiated early in the development process. When done in good faith by both sides, Community Benefits Agreements cultivate positive relationships between developers and local residents.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES (AS OF JUNE 2021)

- Potential redevelopment sites
 - Community anchors: civic, educational, and religious institutions
- Community hubs: Retail and neighborhood services
 - Parks & open space
- Productive landscapes: urban agriculture, solar energy, etc.
 - Improved streetscapes

Street-Based Development Strategies

This neighborhood master plan seeks to provide flexibility for implementing the vision for transforming Harlem Park. As market demand, project funding, and redevelopment sites evolve, different types and densities of development will be possible. Therefore, this master plan has developed a menu or toolkit of appropriate development options that can be implemented across the neighborhood based on specific sites, funding, and market conditions.

The most impactful way to restore and rebuild the neighborhood fabric is a street-based approach. This method requires a strategy that focuses on improving both sides of the street. The following pages describe recommended development scenarios along a typical neighborhood street.

Strategy 1: Restore the Streetwall

- Where solid rowhouse fabric exists, preserve and renovate as much as possible.
- If the existing structure is compromised, consider maintaining original facades and rebuilding the rest of the structure.
- Infill on vacant lots with new rowhouses or stacked flats.



Where possible, Harlem Park's typical streetwall of three or two story rowhouses should be preserved, restored, or rebuilt.





Photo credit: Accessory Dwellings

Accessory dwelling units or carriage houses can generate income for property owners and allow for flexible living arrangements.



Small single-family detached houses are a feature of other Baltimore neighborhoods and could broaden Harlem Park's appeal.



Photo credit: Creede Fitch

Duplexes are a 'missing middle' housing type that can create opportunities for income generation.

Strategy 2: Low-Density Infill

- Preserve and renovate existing buildings as much as possible, prioritizing contiguous rows.
- Broaden neighborhood variety and appeal by introducing missing low-density housing types: single-family houses, duplexes, and accessory units.
- New infill buildings can have small setbacks to allow for front gardens and porches, adding variety to neighborhood streetscapes.
- The architectural style of new development can range from traditional to contemporary.





Rowhouses and small walk-up apartment buildings are appropriate for establishing a consistent streetwall and would recreate a similar density and character to that of historic Harlem Park. Architectural style and expression can vary as long as they complement the existing context and reinforce the urban character of the neighborhood.

Strategy 3: Medium-Density Infill

- Preserve and renovate existing buildings as much as possible, prioritizing contiguous rows.
- Infill with new two- and three-story rowhouses, stacked flats, and small apartment buildings.
- Certain new infill buildings can have small setbacks to allow for front gardens and porches, adding variety to neighborhood streetscapes.
- The architectural style of new development can range from traditional to contemporary.





Apartment buildings should typically be three or four stories to respect the current neighborhood context, though taller buildings may be appropriate in the future in certain locations. Ground floor residential units should be elevated to provide privacy and security. Active uses such as common areas and retail spaces are encouraged at the ground floor or prominent corners.

Strategy 4: High-Density Infill

- Preserve and renovate existing buildings as much as possible, prioritizing contiguous rows.
- Redevelop larger sites with high-density townhouses and multifamily apartment buildings.
- Provide surface or tuck-under parking at the back of buildings accessed from side or rear alleys.
- The architectural style of new development can range from traditional to contemporary.



Block-Based Development Strategies

No two blocks in Harlem Park are precisely alike, but many feature similar patterns. For example, the majority of the neighborhood blocks have an inner block park. The most common block type in Harlem Park was originally two blocks bisected by a narrow alley street lined with small residential dwellings. Urban renewal eliminated alley street housing and replaced it with public open space, which erased an entire housing typology from the neighborhood. However, the alley streets remain in whole or in part to provide access to the interior parks. The original layout of alleys within the two blocks was also typically preserved, though today, there is little distinguishing the alleys from leftover remnants of the original alley streets.

Besides tearing out the historic neighborhood fabric, the inner block parks were ill-conceived from an urban design perspective. They are buried within the core of the block with no buildings facing or addressing them. This creates a lack of safety and security, which the lack of upkeep only further exacerbates. Unfortunately, the inner block parks do not serve the functions of healthy and prosperous neighborhood parks. Instead, they have become eyesores and places for illegal dumping and other undesirable activity.

The inner block parks provide prime opportunities for enhancing and growing the neighborhood. The master plan does not identify a blanket strategy but provides a flexible menu of development approaches for leveraging the inner block park spaces.



The condition of inner block parks is poor throughout the neighborhood. Mature trees are a positive element of the spaces, but most or all other features of the parks are in disrepair. The parks are commonly used as illegal dumping grounds.



The Typical Harlem Park Block

- Poorly maintained public open space with limited visibility from streets.
- Alleys and remnants of original alley streets provide access and circulation.
- No buildings front or address the interior public park space.



Strategy 1a: Maintain Current Urban Form

- The master plan does not recommend preserving all inner block parks, though preserving and improving a select few in limited cases is recommended.
- Utilize central open space for urban agriculture, community gardens, solar energy capture, and/or stormwater management.
- Park maintenance and visibility must be improved.
- Promote infill and rehab of perimeter lots and buildings.
- Add accessory units at the backs of lots along alleys to add eyes onto the park.

Strategy 1b: Expand and Connect Inner Block Parks

- On the blocks where the perimeter has compromised or is missing building fabric, extend open spaces to the streets.
- Multiple adjacent blocks can link public open spaces into greenways.
- New development should be double-sided and face onto streets and interior open spaces.
- Minimize buildings backing onto parks.
- Incorporate stormwater management BMP's into open spaces.
- Parking for new development can be dispersed or consolidated within the block.



Corridor apartment buildings with units facing both sides are appropriate for overlooking public spaces on both sides of the building.

Dispersed Parking



Dispersed Parking

Consolidated Parking



Consolidated Parking



Strategy 2a: Urban Agriculture

- Extend open space to the street to improve visibility and public exposure.
- Utilize interior open space for community gardens or urban agriculture: farm plots, greenhouses, or orchards.
- Locate public open space along the street.
- Focus rehab and infill on remaining block frontages.
- Combine with job creation and workforce development programs



Photo credit: Rimol Greenhouses

Urban agriculture provides numerous community benefits



Strategy 2b: Solar Farm

- Extend open space to the street to improve visibility and public exposure.
- Utilize interior open space for solar farming or agrivoltaics (pictured to the right).
- Locate public open space along the street.
- Focus rehab and infill on remaining block frontages.



Photo credit: Civil Eats

Agrivoltaics utilize the land for solar power and farming



Strategy 3: Restore the Alley Street

- Undo the legacy of urban renewal by building back some of the neighborhood's lost fabric.
- Diversify neighborhood housing options by introducing smaller residential housing types along the street: two-story rowhouses, duplexes, urban cottages, and carriage houses.
- Re-densify the neighborhood and help build back the city tax base.



Photo credit: Lincoln Institute

Carriage house with a residential unit over garages

Strategy 4: Courtyard Housing

- Create a green space wrapped by new development.
- This flexible development approach allows for different densities and housing types, ranging from detached single-family houses to multifamily apartment buildings.
- Reduces the amount of open space compared to existing inner block parks but improves visibility.
- Adds variety to the character of the street by engaging an intimate community park space.



Low Density: Detached Houses and Duplexes



Medium Density: Rowhouses



High Density: Apartment Building ('L' or 'U' shaped)



Low Density: Detached Houses and Duplexes



Medium Density: Rowhouses and Small Apartment Buildings



High Density: Multi-Family Apartment Buildings



Strategy 5: Corner Park

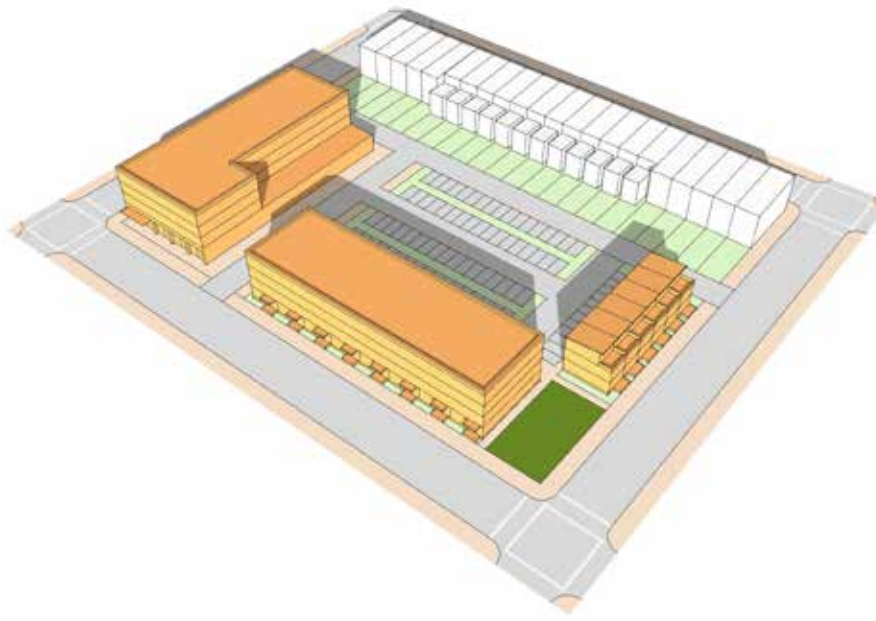
- Create a corner green space wrapped by new development on two sides.
- This flexible development approach allows for different densities and housing types, ranging from detached single-family houses to multifamily apartment buildings.
- Maintains similar amount of open space as existing inner block parks but improves visibility.
- Adds variety to the character of the streets and intersection by engaging a prominent community park space.



Strategy 6: Modern Rowhouse Blocks

- Restore the original neighborhood block structure by bringing back the alley street.
- Create new rowhouse lots with alleys and tuck-under parking.
- Residential units can be townhouse or stacked townhouse type.
- The maximum development scenario (as pictured to the right) is suitable for blocks close to parks, commercial nodes, and transit.
- The development approach can be modified to integrate a corner park.





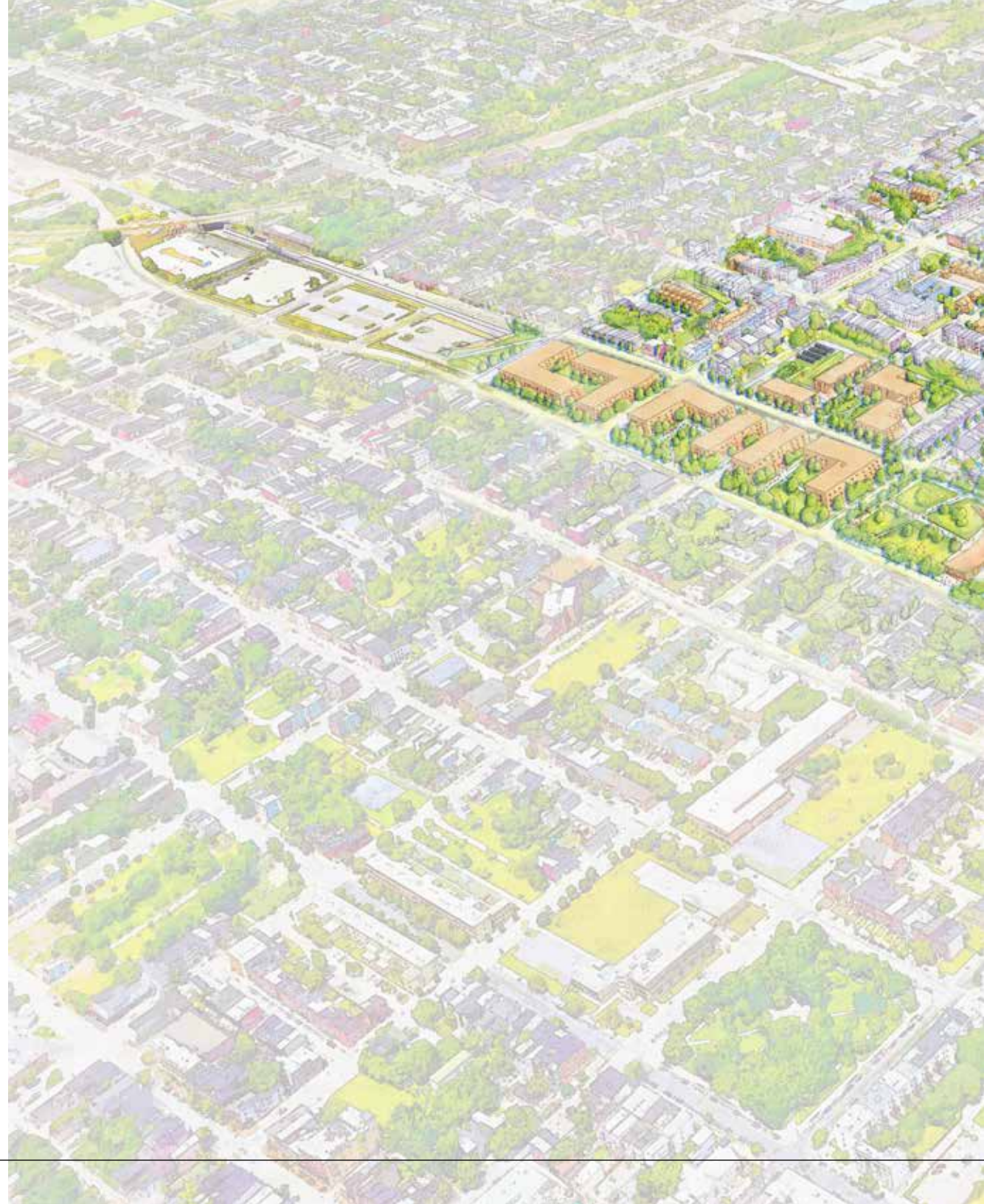
Strategy 7: Mixed-Use and Mixed-Typology Block

- Develop higher-density mixed-use and residential buildings along the primary street frontages, with smaller buildings sited along secondary frontages.
- Provide shared parking at the interior of the block.
- Incorporate smaller plazas or pocket parks at corners or along zones of active ground floor uses.
- This strategy is suitable for blocks located along transit routes or at commercial nodes.

Envisioning the Future

By implementing the recommended street improvements, development approaches, and neighborhood improvement strategies, Harlem Park can build up the physical fabric of a thriving neighborhood:

- Historic rowhouses restored to their original charm
- An extensive open space network featuring a wide variety of parks
- A range of housing types
- A mix of uses and neighborhood-serving amenities
- Safe and beautiful multi-modal streets
- Connections to an expanded regional transit network, including a mass transit corridor in place of the 'Highway to Nowhere'







500 Block of Carey Street: Creating a Neighborhood Main Street

Carey Street is a critical connector that links Harlem Park to other West Baltimore neighborhoods. It is also a transit route and designated as a main bicycle route. By implementing recommended street improvements and adding higher-density mixed-use development at the Edmondson Avenue intersection, it can become a vital neighborhood retail and service node.







500 Block of Carrollton Avenue: Restoring a Charming Residential Street

Carrollton Avenue near Lafayette Park has a well-preserved historic charm. But at the neighborhood's southern end, its original fabric and character have been lost to disrepair and demolition. This provides an opportunity for various infill and rehabilitation projects to restore the street's continuity and elevate its appeal.







500 Block of Arlington Avenue: Adding Housing Diversity and Community Open Space

Existing vacancies and city-controlled land on this block create a chance to apply the courtyard housing development strategy, creating an intimate community park space surrounded by small detached houses and duplexes.







700 Block of Woodyear Street: Reimagining the Harlem Park Alley Street

This stretch of Woodyear Street could be transformed into a modern-day version of the historic neighborhood's alley street. It should balance urban density with intimate scale and natural features.





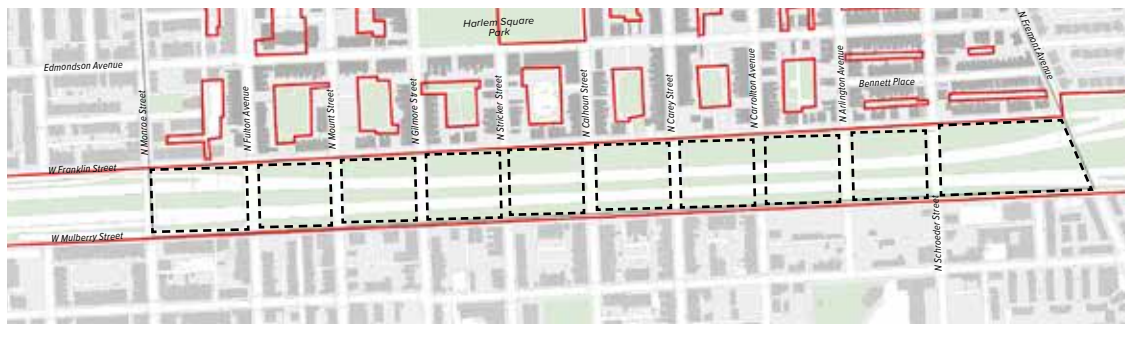
Transforming West Baltimore: Removing ‘The Highway to Nowhere’

Route 40 was built in the 1970s as a part of urban renewal efforts. Its construction demolished ten city blocks along the southern edge of Harlem Park, bifurcating West Baltimore and creating a deep gash in the urban fabric. It never became the interstate freeway it was planned to be, so it is severely overscaled and underutilized. For comparison, nearby Martin Luther King Boulevard carries approximately double the daily traffic volume of Route 40.

There are new conversations at the Federal level around the removal of highways similar to Route 40 that damaged predominately minority inner-city neighborhoods. Removing or drastically modifying highway infrastructure is a large and expensive undertaking, but it is not unprecedented. Successful examples can be found in many cities across the US and around the world. All of West Baltimore will need to come together to support the ultimate vision for Route 40, which should:

- Eliminate the divide and connect the urban fabric
- Include a variety of uses and community amenities
- Be a combination of open space and development
- Incorporate transit and revive the Red Line to link to downtown and tie into the West Baltimore Marc Station

Countless design studies and academic explorations have tested the removal of Route 40. A critical next step following the Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan is to conduct a comprehensive design study for the Highway to Nowhere and involve all West Baltimore stakeholders.



URBAN RENEWAL IMPACT

- Properties that were razed and displaced
- Blocks demolished for Route 40

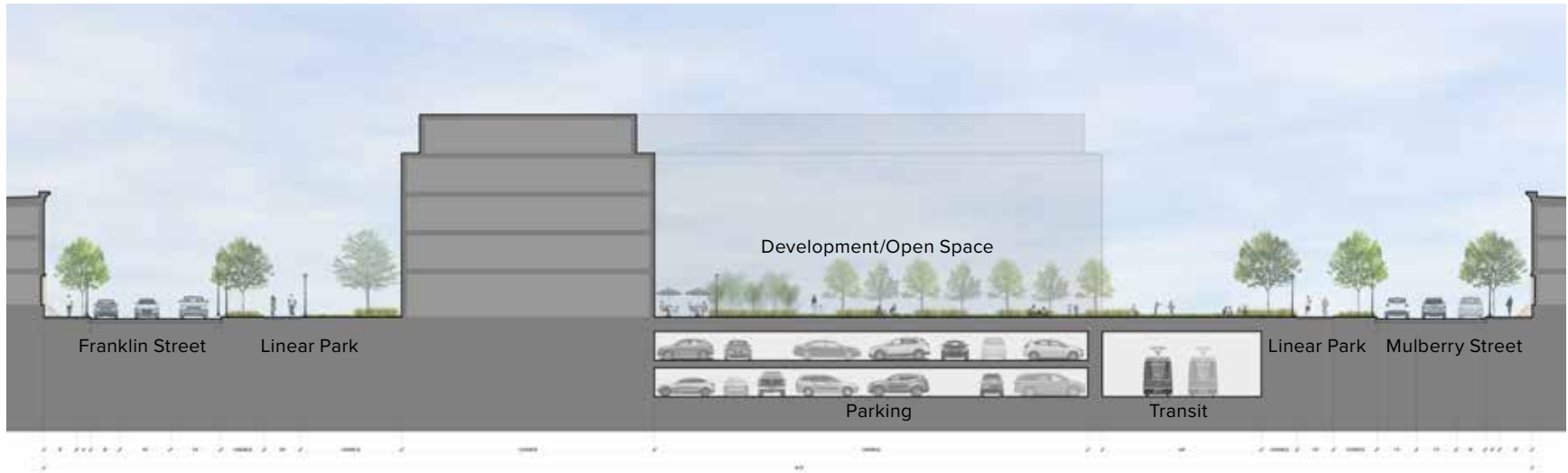




Existing Route 40 Section



Proposed Route 40 Section



Precedents: Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway

- A 17-acre linear park in Boston using land that once held the John F. Fitzgerald expressway
- Traffic was re-routed into a tunnel that runs under the park
- The Greenway includes: outdoor recreation, farmer's markets, food vendors, concert space, water features, a heritage park, and mixed-use development
- The cost was approximately \$24.3 billion and it was the most expensive US highway project in history



Precedents: Cheonggyecheon Restoration

- 6.8 mile long park restoration of the Cheonggyecheon stream, which was covered by concrete in 1968 to build an elevated highway
- Restoration began in 2003 with the primary goal of restoring history and culture to the area and re-introduce nature into the city
- The stream has helped cool the urban heat island effect in surrounding neighborhoods by up to 30 degrees
- The cost was approximately \$281 million





Route 40: Healing the Gash through West Baltimore

West Baltimore deserves to be reconnected again. While the Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan does not hinge on the capping and removal of the Highway to Nowhere, it strongly supports and advocates for this revolutionary project. Transforming this significant barrier and dividing it into a greenway with major parks, a transit corridor, and mixed-use development would benefit each adjacent neighborhood and Baltimore as a whole.





Edmondson Ave.

Franklin St.





CHAPTER SIX IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation & Moving Forward

Harlem Park was once a thriving, vibrant neighborhood. The main objective of this plan is to restore the community to reinvigorate and reignite that vibrancy once more. However, that new development must be carefully planned, designed, and executed to ensure equity is at the core of all future development in Harlem Park.

The Harlem Park Neighborhood Master Plan recommends that any new development should diversify the community's housing portfolio while remaining contextual to the existing fabric. This means that affordable units should be distributed across the neighborhood and mixed with market-rate units. This will be challenging with the level of distress that Harlem Park's housing market is experiencing, and developers will be incentivized to pursue inexpensive renovations and Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). However, these should be used sparingly in the neighborhood as the future of Harlem Park will be in jeopardy if development continues to concentrate poverty. To appropriately and equitably balance affordability a mix of 33 percent deeply affordable, 33 percent affordable, and 33 percent market-rate housing units is an ideal ratio for Harlem Park to work towards.

There are so many opportunities in Harlem Park and there is a lot of work to do. The following matrix summarizes the previous chapter's recommendations into a concise chart. Any of the aforementioned ideas can be carried forward at any point, but in an effort to prioritize, the critical and most impactful recommendations are those that directly align with multiple planning principles.

- Celebrate neighborhood history
- Build upon existing neighborhood anchors
- Consolidate vacant buildings and land into redevelopment opportunities
- Provide a public open space network that touches all parts of the neighborhood
- Build back neighborhood density and provide diversity of housing choices
- Undo legacy of urban renewal: transform the ill-conceived inner block parks and Route 40





NO PARKING
MONDAY
8AM TO 11AM
← TOW AWAY ZONE →

Recommendations

RENOVATION & NEW CONSTRUCTION

- Strategic demolition of properties that are structurally unsound or continuous lots of vacant, decaying buildings are prime opportunities for demolition and new construction
- New construction should use materials and sustainable practices that complement the existing fabric of Harlem Park and diversify housing options
- Rowhouse fabric should be preserved and restored to ensure that Harlem Park maintains its historic charm
- Continue to grow the Harlem Park CDC's homeownership program for existing residents
- Use new development to diversify the housing stock with missing housing types such as single-family homes, duplexes, accessory units, and a variety of multifamily building types
- Where vacancy is high and the building fabric is compromised, land consolidation should continue to make larger-scale residential and mixed-use redevelopment projects possible.
- Strategically target smaller-scale infill where larger parcels cannot be amassed
- Locate mixed-use, commercial and neighborhood amenities at key intersections/nodes: Carey and Edmondson, Carey and Harlem, Fulton and Lanvale and within the redevelopment of Route 40
- Developers should commit to providing explicit community benefits on large development projects
- The city, neighborhood groups, churches, and residents should work together to ensure that vacant lots are kept clean and vegetation is appropriately managed. In the interim, vacant lots can be used as the following, either temporarily or, in some cases, permanently
 - To reduce maintenance costs, mow vacant lots infrequently to create meadows of taller grasses and wildflowers, but plant growth should be managed and cut low along sidewalks to eliminate infringement into pedestrian ways
 - Explore options for using vacant land for local food production or community gardens
 - Convert vacant lot into a pocket park
 - Improve vacant lot aesthetics with murals and art
 - Activate vacant lots with pop-up events and tactical urbanism

ANCHORS & AMENITIES

- Build on neighborhood history by ensuring each block has direct access to a park
- Honor the legacy of past residents with signage and naming of parks and buildings
- Support infill and renovation for vacant buildings that are structurally sound.
- Improve the physical school facilities with upgrades that support modern teaching.
- Enhance the physical environment around the schools and diversify housing typologies and amenities to attract people of all walks of life and support a sustainable and diverse community.
- Preserve and celebrate churches as key elements of the neighborhood fabric
- Church leaders should work collaboratively to support improvements in the neighborhood.
- Maintain a recreation center in the heart of the community, but allocate substantial investment towards improving the facility.
- Providing a wide variety of programming that addresses wellness holistically from recreation to physical and mental health services.
- Redevelop Harlem Park Theater and several of the adjacent buildings into a community arts hub with direct connections to Augusta Fells Savage Institute of the Visual Arts.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE NETWORK

- Harlem Square Park & Lafayette Square Park: Maintenance and upkeep should be improved to repair or replace broken benches, collect litter, empty trash cans, fix fountains, and mow the grass more frequently. Dry limbs and dead trees should be cut down and removed promptly, with new trees planted to replace old trees. Opportunities to incorporate more public art into the park should be explored.
- The master plan envisions a diverse array of public parks, plazas, linear greens, courtyards, community gardens, and other community spaces to replace and/or reorient the inner block parks, ensuring every block either has or is adjacent to a park. This allows for the reinvention of the inner block parks while maintaining and improving park access for residents.
- The master plan recommends that most of the inner block parks get redeveloped with new open spaces that are brought out to the street or redesigned so that buildings appropriately overlook and front these spaces. Some inner block spaces can remain as greenway connections and should primarily be used for urban farming, stormwater management, and solar energy generation.
- The neighborhood master plan supports new open spaces as part of a future removal or capping of Route 40. These could include several full-block park spaces and continuous linear greenways that link them to West Baltimore Station and MLK Blvd. More recommendations and details for Route 40 are provided at the end of this section.

TRANSPORTATION, MOBILITY, & STREETSCAPES

- Prioritize pedestrian movement and safety by improving and integrating a continuous, inter-connected, accessible, and well-lit network of sidewalks, multi-purpose trails, and park pathways.
- In alignment with Baltimore's Bike Master Plan, add cycletracks or bike lanes to Fulton, Edmondson, Carey, Carrollton, Lafayette, and Fremont.
- Extend and incorporate existing multi-purpose paths and bike trails along Route 40 into the new open spaces proposed along the corridor.
- Busy stops at key nodes and transfer points should receive bus shelters to provide riders with cover from rain and sun.
- A transformed Route 40 corridor should include a light rail extension with one or two stops in Harlem Park, ideally near Carey and Fulton.
- Align streetscape improvements with the city's Complete Streets principles.
- The city, neighborhood groups, churches, and local residents should develop a streetscape maintenance strategy. This could be partially funded by community benefits agreements with developers.
- Add back missing street trees at consistent intervals (approx. 30', typ.)
- Enlarge tree pits and planting strips to improve street tree health
- Add curb bump-outs with stormwater bioretention areas at intersections and mid-block locations
- Replace cobrahead lighting with pedestrian-scale lighting spaced at appropriate intervals to enhance visibility and safety

SAFETY & SECURITY

- Design streets and sidewalks to increase bike and foot traffic
- Orient and design buildings to overlook sidewalks, parks, and parking lots
- Design clearly identifiable and transparent building entries
- Provide appropriate lighting to fully illuminate spaces without creating overly dark shadows, blind spots, or blinding glare.
- Use landscape features such as plants, low hedges, and low fences to delineate private property
- Plant trees along streets and in public spaces to promote the use of these spaces
- Place common areas and active uses at ground floors along public sidewalks and park spaces
- Organize events focused on cleaning up and maintaining deteriorated or ill-maintained public and private spaces at a block, street, or neighborhood scale
- Work with property owners and managers to secure the appropriate number and size of trash receptacles
- Establish groups that 'adopt' certain streets or spaces to supplement cleaning and maintenance
- Organize resident groups around specific purposes to tackle specific local problems, such as Neighborhood Watch
- Organize neighborhood events and placemaking activities (i.e., street fairs, arts and music festivals, pop-up events, etc.) to bring people of all ages and backgrounds together
- Create strong connections with adjacent neighborhoods through strategic alliances, shared events, and physical linkages







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