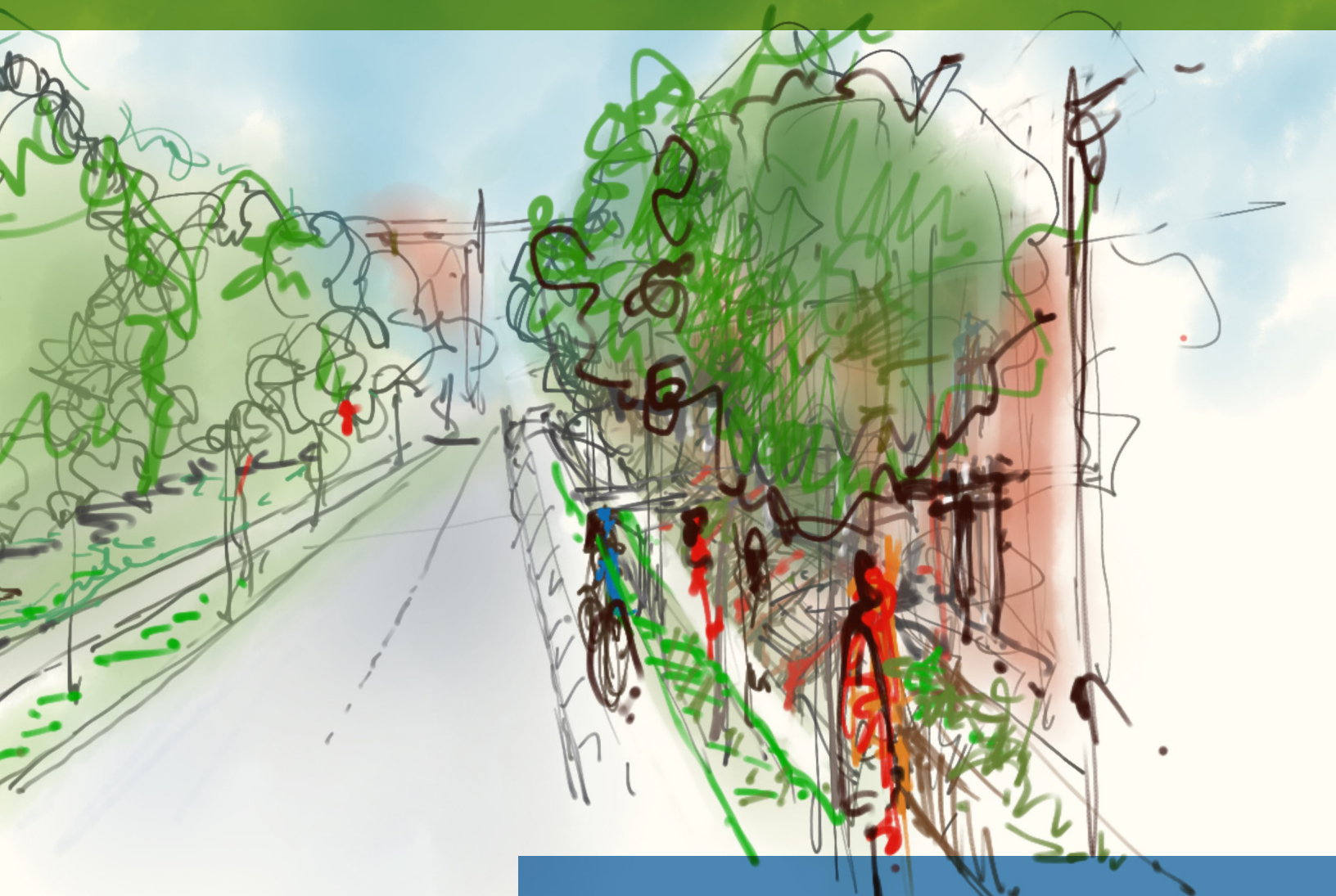




Washington

TOWN OF KENSINGTON, MARYLAND



ON THE COVER: The panel envisioned pairing residential development with a linear park to help transform a streetscape and make the environment more pedestrian friendly. (Credit ULI Washington TAP Panel)

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The Urban Land Institute is a global, member-driven organization comprising more than 48,000 real estate and urban development professionals dedicated to advancing the mission of shaping the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide.

ULI's interdisciplinary membership represents all aspects of the industry, including developers, property owners, investors, architects, urban planners, public officials, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, and academics. Established in 1936, the Institute has a presence in the Americas, Europe, and the Asia Pacific regions, with members in 82 countries.

More information is available at [uli.org](https://www.uli.org).

About ULI Washington

ULI Washington is one of ULI's largest District Councils worldwide, with 2,300 members. We welcome membership and participation from individuals who share our commitment to responsible land use to sustain the growth and prosperity of the National Capital region. The opportunity to influence local land use policy remains the focus and achievement of ULI Washington.

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About the Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

The objective of ULI Washington's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Metropolitan Washington Region. ULI Washington has completed more than 60 technical assistance panels (TAPs) to date. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI Washington conducts two-day Panels offering objective and responsible advice to local decision-makers on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues, ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues.

Learn more at washington.uli.org/TAPS.

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Acknowledgments

The Urban Land Institute – Washington, D.C.'s Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) members and project staff would like to thank the Town of Kensington for inviting ULI Washington to explore the opportunities and impacts of the proposed Summit Avenue Extension project.

The Panel would also like to thank the many stakeholders and organizations* who participated in the process, providing valuable input that shaped this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

[The Town of Kensington, Maryland](#) has evolved from its origins as a garden suburb into an engaged and lively residential community with an economic hub consisting of restaurants, retail, and light industrial businesses. The widening of Connecticut Avenue in 1957 prioritized vehicular traffic, and this, along with the railroad tracks that bisect the Town, has resulted in Kensington becoming increasingly fractured. This is a problem for physical connectivity and has isolated the community from north to south and east to west.

There have been positive steps to address access and traffic concerns over the years. For instance, about ten years ago there was an effort to reimagine Connecticut Avenue as a Town Center ([2012 Kensington and Vicinity Sector Plan](#)). More recently, the [2022 Connecticut Avenue Corridor Pedestrian and Bicycling Access and Safety Study](#), supported by a Transportation Land-Use Connections (TLC) grant from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOCG), along with the Bicycling and Pedestrian Priority Areas Plan (BPPAP) initiated in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT-SHA), have [established guidelines and recommendations](#) to help improve and provide alternative personal mobility options within the corridor and into greater Montgomery County.

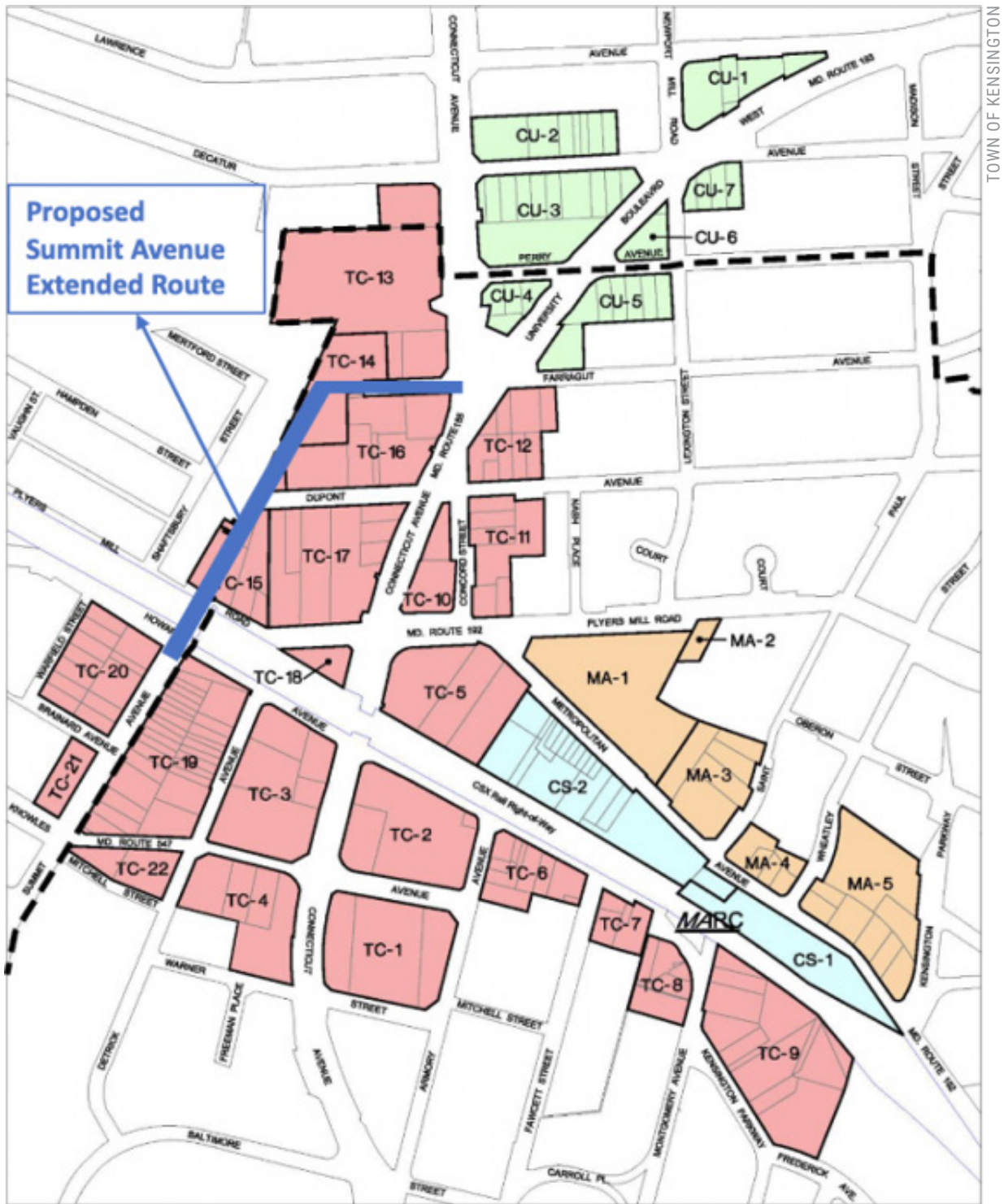
One of the main goals of the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan was the creation of a town center that concentrated building density in the commercial core of Kensington nearby to the available public bus routes and commuter rail located along the four Maryland state highways that bisect the town: Connecticut Avenue (MD 185), Knowles Avenue (MD 547), University Avenue (MD 193), and Metropolitan Avenue (MD 192). To help aid traffic flow to and through this new town center, the 2012 Kensington Sector Plan revived the 1970 plan for the Summit Avenue Extension. The Summit Avenue Extension would create a more complete mobility network and provide alternate travel routes for vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and bicycles. Projected to

be completed in FY31, the Summit Avenue Extension project would extend Summit Avenue north past its current terminus at Plyers Mill Road, and connect Summit Avenue to Connecticut Avenue, via Farragut Avenue.

The Town of Kensington convened a two-day Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to study the fractured nature of the Town and how the proposed Summit Avenue Extension project might create opportunities for better connectivity. The project was proposed for its potential traffic alleviation but could create opportunities for developable frontage and multimodal infrastructure.

The Panel began by evaluating the area's fractured mobility network and the opportunities and challenges associated with the Summit Avenue Extension. Based on its analysis, the Panel identified a need for an auxiliary road in the area and cautioned against using the extended Summit Avenue solely as a traffic mitigation strategy. Instead, the Panel proposed building townhouses along the new Summit Avenue and maintaining the residential character of the adjoining Ken-Gar neighborhood while transitioning to future higher density and commercial development along Connecticut Avenue. In addition, the Panel recommended the Town consider co-location of uses at the current (or future) site of Kensington Volunteer Fire Station 5 - a project that would require coordination at the County level.

Learn more and see the TAP presentation: [Kensington TAP Presentation](#).



TOWN OF KENSINGTON



The Summit Avenue Extension project would extend Summit Avenue north past its current terminus at Pliers Mill Road, and connect Summit Avenue to Connecticut Avenue, via Farragut Avenue.

BACKGROUND

The Town of Kensington

The Town of Kensington sits along the Seneca Trail, the pre-colonial equivalent of Interstate 270. At the close of the 17th century, settlers came to the area from the wilderness of central Maryland. Charles Calvert, the third Lord Baltimore, granted William Joseph, then his Deputy Governor of Maryland, over four thousand acres known as Joseph's Park, which today make up Kensington, Forest Glen, and Woodside. Around the same time, Joseph also received another large grant, The Hermitage, which is now Ken-Gar and Wheaton.

Two other moments defined the Town of Kensington as we know it today. The first was the inauguration in 1873 of the Potomac River Valley line of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. The train stopped at a crossing known as Knowles Station on a farm owned by George Knowles, which was later subdivided to create a new type of garden suburb called "Kensington Park." By 1890, there were ten new subdivisions in the vicinity and The Town of Kensington was officially incorporated in 1894.

The second defining moment for the Town came after WWII. The advent of the automobile and improved roadways paved the way for a boom in commercial development in the area in the 1950s, including a number of automotive establishments along Plyers Mill Road west of Connecticut Avenue. Today, auto repair, body shops and woodworking shops remain central features along the corridor, known to locals as "Gasoline Alley."¹

The Ken-Gar Community

Established in 1892, Ken-Gar is a community located just outside of the Town of Kensington's western boundary. Ken-Gar was named for its location between Kensington and Garrett Park. In 1903, Lot 7 in Block 3 was sold to the

trustees of the Lee A.M.E. Church,² and Ken-Gar eventually became a predominantly Black neighborhood. A lack of government services in the community led Ken-Gar's residents to spend decades advocating to the County for decent roads, sidewalks, street lighting, and plumbing. Community organizers in Ken-Gar now work with the Town of Kensington and the County regularly, and the Town has made concerted efforts to include Ken-Gar in planning and design processes that impact its residents. Such efforts include formally making a place for the neighborhood in Sector Plan review, via the Revitalization Committee, keeping Ken-Gar in the Walter Johnson High School cluster, and updating the County's political map to put Ken-Gar and the Town of Kensington in the same council district.

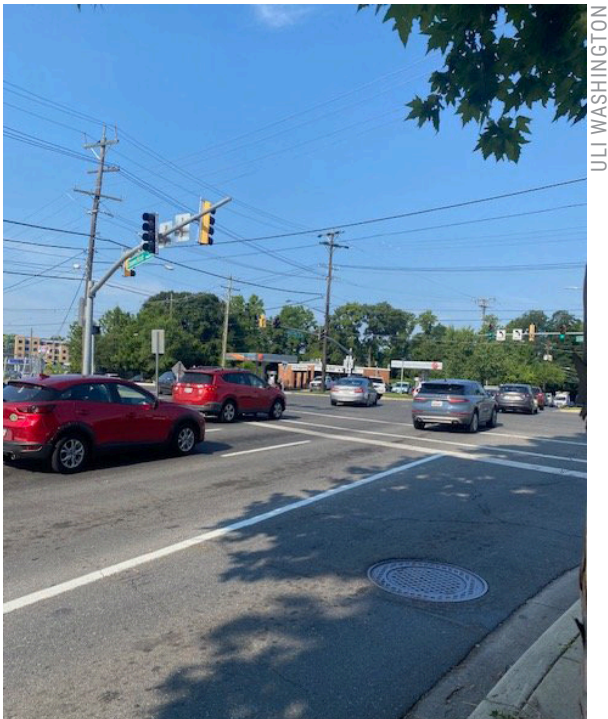
Kensington as a Thoroughfare

Heavy vehicular traffic passes through the Town of Kensington due to its proximity to Washington, D.C. and the Capital Beltway. Connecticut Avenue is one of the few regional crossings over the B&O railroad. Approximately 60,000 trips are made by vehicle via Connecticut Avenue per day.³ Although there are only 2,122 residents who live within the incorporated limits of the Town of Kensington, the Town's Central Business District (CBD) also serves

¹ Town History. (2023). Kensington Historical Society. <https://www.kensingtonhistory.org/town-history/>.

² Julianne Mangin. (2022). Will Adams, Fiddler of Ken-Gar. <https://juliannemangin.com/2022/02/03/will-adams-fiddler-of-ken-gar/>.

³ Connecticut Avenue Corridor Pedestrian and Bicycling Access and Safety Study.

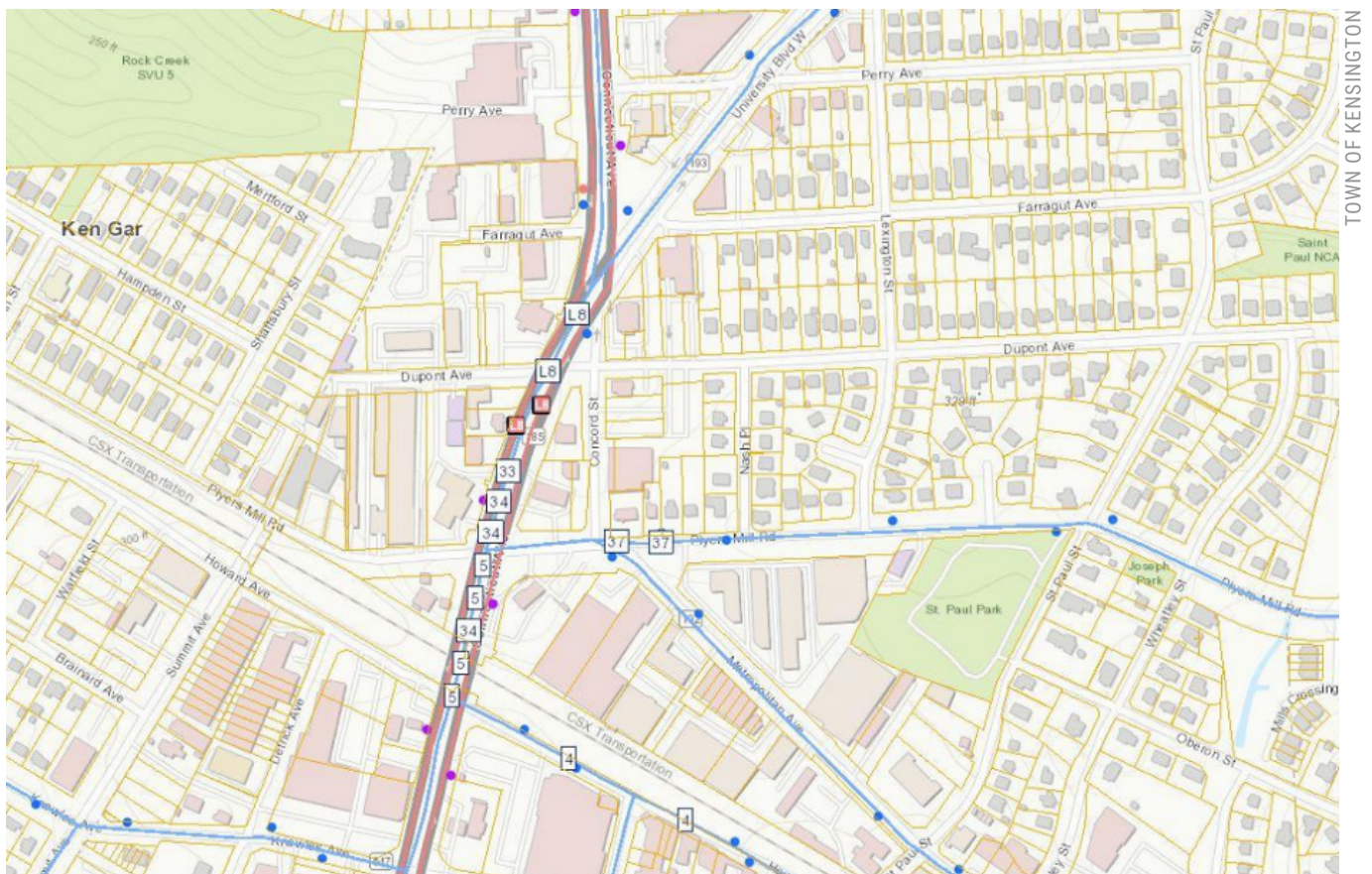


Approximately 60,000 trips are made by vehicle via Connecticut Avenue per day.

the highly populated surrounding area; approximately 19,000 people live in the Kensington ZIP code (20895) and approximately 68,000 live within a 2-mile radius.

The Summit Avenue Extension

Summit Avenue, between Knowles Avenue and Plyers Mill Road, is a two-lane, two-way business district street that runs in a north-south direction at the western border of Kensington and eastern border of unincorporated Montgomery County. Summit Avenue currently terminates at Plyers Mill Road. A planned extension of this road between Plyers Mill Road and Connecticut Avenue was originally proposed during the creation of the 1970 Kensington-Wheaton Master Plan but was ultimately removed by the Montgomery County Council. Forty-two years later, the Summit Avenue Extension was included in the (approved and adopted) [2012 Kensington Sector Plan](#). In 2018, the Montgomery County Planning Department approved a request by the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) for a Facility Planning Study for the Summit Avenue Extension project. As a



This map depicts stops and routes in the study area for Montgomery County's bus line, Ride On.

result of the [Facility Planning Study](#), the Montgomery County Planning Department recommended the approval of the Summit Avenue Extension. The project was added to Montgomery County's approved FY23 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) budget.

Estimated Timeline for Summit Avenue Extension

The Summit Avenue Extension completed Phase II of the [Facility Planning Study](#) and is currently in the 35% design phase. Initial approval by Montgomery County set a schedule for final design in FY27, land acquisition to begin in FY28, and construction to be completed in FY31.

During the FY24 County Budget planning process, the County Executive moved the Summit Avenue Extension project timeline outward in the CIP budget for final design to begin in FY28, land acquisition in FY29, and construction to be completed in FY32. However, the County Council rejected this recommendation and returned the project to its current timeline in the Approved FY24 CIP budget.

Questions Posed by Sponsors

While the Town believes that, if done thoughtfully, the anticipated benefits of the Summit Avenue Extension project far outweigh the concerns and potential costs, the Town requested a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to help understand the feasibility and reality of this project. The project is part of a larger reimagining of the Connecticut Avenue corridor by addressing traffic movement and congestion, improving pedestrian and bicycle access and safety, enhancing connectivity within the community, and expanding the thriving business community. With this in mind, the Town asked the Panel to address the following questions:

1. Can the TAP help the Town develop a singular vision for future planning purposes by coalescing the recommendations and ideals within the [2012 Kensington and Vicinity Sector Plan](#), [Thrive Montgomery 2050](#), [Connecticut Avenue TLC Report](#), [Bicycle & Pedestrian Priority Areas \(BPPA\) Plan](#), along with the [Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plans](#), that balances the ideas and concerns of local residents by addressing the following:
 - a. Traffic movement and alleviation in and around the Connecticut Avenue/University Boulevard/Summit Avenue Extension intersection (including innovative grid movements);
 - b. Pedestrian/bicycling access and safety and green public space creation (e.g., sidewalks and crosswalks, green space and plazas, stormwater management, and bike infrastructure);
 - c. Economic growth and infill in the wedge bordered by Connecticut Avenue to the east, the new Summit Avenue Extension to the west, and Plyers Mill Road to the south.
2. What are the benefits and drawbacks when comparing the needs concerning traffic, pedestrian/bicycling safety, and economic development? How should the Town assess and determine its priorities when considering improvements along the Connecticut Avenue corridor, specifically when identifying a preferred plan? What are the key tradeoffs between the options, and ultimately, which option best balances these tradeoffs (i.e., represents the 'preferred' option)? What are the barriers to implementing this 'preferred' option (e.g., is it technically and economically feasible)?
3. What are the financing mechanisms and associated timelines for the Summit Avenue Extension and associated redevelopment created by the project, including but not limited to federal, state, and county funding and grant opportunities?
4. How can equity and affordable/attainable housing considerations be integrated into the above, particularly accounting for the historically Black Ken-Gar neighborhood?
5. Is there viability to relocating the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD)'s Station 5 from its current location at 10620 Connecticut Avenue, to the block separating the split between Connecticut Avenue and University Boulevard, and configuring a traffic 'circle' bordered by University Boulevard to the east, Connecticut Avenue to the west, and Perry Avenue to the north?
6. How can the proposed Summit Avenue Extension area be reimagined from its historical reputation as 'gasoline alley' and adapt as the county and the country move away from a fossil-fuel based transportation network?

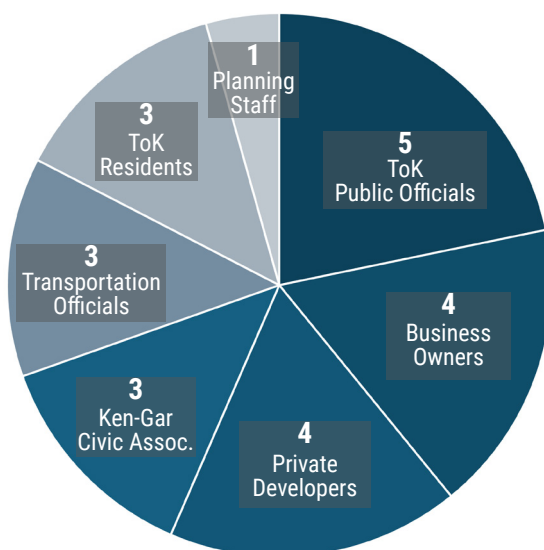
PROCESS

The Panel toured the study area, met with Town Council members to ask questions about the assignment, and interviewed 27 stakeholders, who were invited to participate by the sponsors of this TAP. Using this information, the Panel coalesced an overall strategy for the area and developed a series of recommendations to support the proposed Summit Avenue Extension project.

What did Panelists learn from stakeholder meetings?

Of the stakeholders interviewed, the following interests were represented:

- 5 Public officials: Mayor Tracey Furman and 4 town of Kensington council members
- 4 Owners of businesses located along the Connecticut Avenue
- 4 Private developers
- 3 Ken-Gar Civic Association members
- 3 Montgomery Department of Transportation (MDOT) State Highway Administration (SHA) representatives
- 3 Town of Kensington residents
- 1 Montgomery Planning Department staff member



TAP Stakeholder Representation



As part of the TAP, the Panel interviewed multiple stakeholders during its first day of the program.

The following feedback is directly related to who attended the stakeholder sessions.

Stakeholder Feedback: Transportation

- **The area needs road improvements: lower speeds, fewer lanes, and shade.** Area residents agreed that the State Highway Administration (SHA) should consider reducing the width of Connecticut Avenue, implementing a road diet on University Boulevard (eastbound, north of Farragut Avenue), and investing in pedestrian infrastructure (e.g., adding trees and widening sidewalks). More than anything, residents and transportation experts (serving in a stakeholder

capacity) called for improved and continuous sidewalks that are wider, shaded, and buffered. The existing sidewalk network is incomplete; it discourages walking and encourages dangerous behavior, such as jaywalking.

- **Many area residents take buses.** The bus network is important, but its supporting infrastructure is currently low-quality, evidenced by uncovered and uncomfortable bus stops; accessing the stops and waiting for the bus feels uncomfortable and unsafe. Current bus stop locations and routes may also encourage jaywalking across Connecticut Avenue as pedestrians change bus routes.
- **Everything along Connecticut Avenue has been designed for the vehicle.** The long pedestrian wait time at Connecticut Avenue and University Boulevard is a result of prioritizing vehicular capacity.
- **Safe, walkable connections are needed between Ken-Gar and Kensington.** When exiting Ken-Gar, drivers have only two options: head east on Plyers Mill Road to Connecticut Avenue or south on Summit Avenue to Knowles Avenue. Some residents choose to drive their children and aging relatives across Connecticut Avenue, rather than walk, because of the lack of safe pedestrian infrastructure on Plyers Mill and crossing Connecticut Avenue.
- **The Summit Avenue Extension project is not well understood by residents.** Residents shared concerns about stormwater management, as well as potential air, light, and noise pollution to the Ken-Gar neighborhood, signaling an unclear understanding of the project.
- **The Connecticut Avenue and University Boulevard intersection does not work as well as it could - it would benefit from a redesign.** Crossing Connecticut Avenue requires long wait times, encouraging dangerous behavior like jaywalking. Regional transportation planners suggest a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) on Connecticut Avenue and University Boulevard.

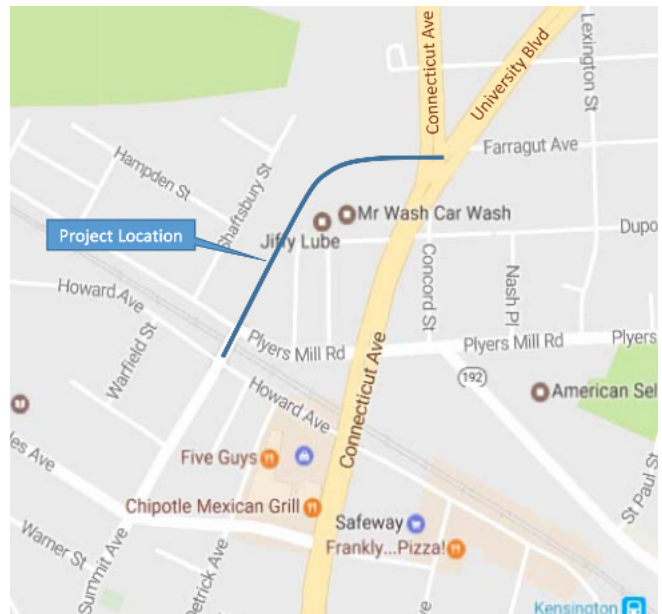
Stakeholder Feedback: Economic Development

- **Various – sometimes contradictory – opinions on desirable land uses for the area.** Some stakeholders expressed interest in art galleries, independent shops,



ULI WASHINGTON

The area needs road improvements: lower speeds, fewer lanes, and shade.



MC DOT FACILITY PLANNING PHASE 1 STUDY

When exiting Ken-Gar, drivers have only two options: head east on Plyers Mill Road to Connecticut Avenue or south on Summit Avenue to Knowles Avenue.

and restaurants. Other stakeholders asked for no more “boutique” retail - defined by these stakeholders as shops with higher-than-average prices. Additional interest was expressed in such uses as: fine dining restaurants, shared workspaces, outdoor eateries, after-school children’s programming, hospitality, and open space.

- **More retail could create additional parking issues.** Current businesses rely on surface parking for their customers. Any additional development would vie for existing parking spaces. As a solution, parking reservoirs/garages could offload parking from individual parcels.
- **Stakeholders seemed open to adding density and retail in a thoughtful way.** The study area does not exist in a retail desert. There seem to be plenty of options to shop, dine, and access services within a half-mile radius. Business owners fear that more retail development will oversaturate the market. Ken-Gar representatives fear that any incoming economic development will not focus on the needs of Ken-Gar residents.
- **Fragmented ownership makes development difficult.** Land assemblage is difficult in the study area. Many landowners are legacy owners, and there is a sense that many are waiting until the real estate market is stronger to let go of their properties. Owners don’t have an incentive to sell. Panelists also learned that some owners are not local to the area.
- **Acknowledged need for diversity of housing and need for density.** The area’s Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) address the higher end of affordable housing, but not housing at 30-50% Area Median Income (AMI). Stakeholders suggested that any housing development in the area should include moderately to low-priced units.
- **West Howard Avenue is not seen as a viable alternative location for businesses currently on Connecticut Avenue.** Stakeholders expressed that the Summit Avenue Extension may displace Connecticut Avenue’s auto-related businesses like auto body shops

and car washes. West of Connecticut Avenue, Howard Avenue’s informal street organization, namely the use of public roadway for vehicle storage/parking, makes it an unsuitable option for relocation. Without a suitable location, it is likely these businesses will leave Kensington.



Stakeholders seemed open to adding density and retail in a thoughtful way.



Stakeholders feel that Howard Avenue is not viable as an alternative location for businesses pushed out by the Summit Avenue Extension.

- **The zoning cap is in direct conflict with desired development.** The current zoning cap largely favors commercial and industrial uses, a reflection of market realities in 2012. Today, there is a desire for greater residential and mixed uses, and the caps should be updated to reflect as much. To meet the demand for residential development, the zoning cap needs to be higher for residential development and lower for commercial development.

Stakeholder Feedback: Equity

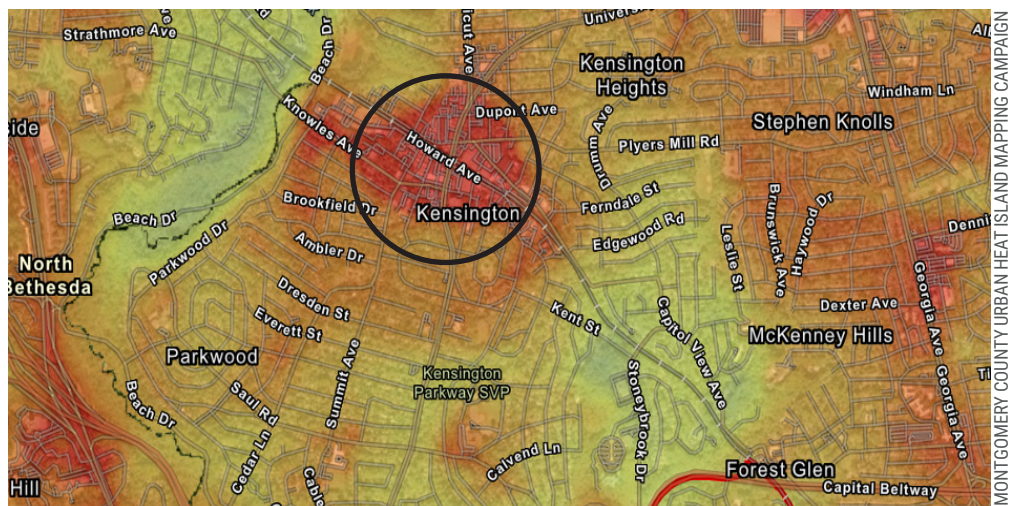
- **The Town is highly supportive of affordable housing on public land.** There is not much public land available for development; however, the parcels that do exist could be better leveraged for community benefits. Stakeholders speculated on the feasibility of co-locating current and future facilities, such as combining:
 - » A firehouse and affordable housing
 - » A renovated library building and affordable housing (e.g., the DC Chevy Chase Community Center and Library)
- **Pedestrian safety and access are issues for all residents.** Stakeholders reiterated a need for high-quality sidewalks: wide, shaded, and buffered. Roads and sidewalks are currently hot enough to discourage walking and biking even short distances. Stakeholders' lived experience is echoed by data that shows the heat island effect on the neighborhood. Many Ken-Gar residents do not own cars and rely on the bus system. Seniors aging in place and young families all need better

The Heat Island Effect

The Heat Island Effect: Projected increases in average temperatures and heat waves can be exacerbated by a phenomenon commonly referred to as the **urban heat island (UHI) effect**. The urban heat island effect occurs in densely populated areas where sunlight is absorbed and retained by paved surfaces and roofs. Trees and vegetation can keep temperatures cool by deflecting the sun, providing shade, and releasing moisture into the atmosphere.⁴ Montgomery County's 2022 [Urban Heat Island Mapping Campaign](#), a project in partnership with the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#), found that neighborhoods with less green infrastructure and more concrete experienced temperatures up to 10 degrees higher than nearby shaded, permeable areas.

pedestrian infrastructure.

- Lack of green space and/or public space. Stakeholders requested additional green space as part of the Summit Avenue Extension project; residents currently use the fire station community room as a gathering space for community events.



The Urban Heat Map's evening temperatures categorize the University Boulevard / Connecticut Avenue intersection in the hottest bracket (visualized as red).

⁴ Read more about Montgomery County's Urban Heat Island Mapping Campaign online here: bit.ly/UHIMC

MARKET REALITIES & CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Town of Kensington is small - home to only 2,200 people. However, it also serves as the commercial center for more than 68,000 residents who live within a 2-mile radius. The Panel contended that when analyzing need as they relate to transportation investment, the Town must also consider the larger area's retail, housing, and office demand, because transportation investment is inextricably linked with land use.

Alignment With County Plans

The Town's current Sector Plan, adopted in 2012, is aligned with Montgomery County's [Wedges and Corridors Plan](#) (first adopted in 1964), not the recently adopted General Plan, [Thrive Montgomery 2050](#). This is notable because the Wedges and Corridors Plan focused on office development, whereas Thrive 2050 prioritizes mixed-use development, with a specific emphasis on multi-family housing and small, ground-floor retail. The Town is anxious to invest in housing and retail to offset the area's robust office availability.

The State Highway Administration (SHA)'s ongoing Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas (BPPAs) seek to align state, regional, and local goals as they relate to pedestrian safety and accessibility in the area. This study will combine the findings of the Transportation and Land Use Connections (TLC) study and Connecticut Avenue SHA study into one set of recommendations.

While touring the study area, Panelists encountered the long wait time to cross major intersections and unfriendly pedestrian infrastructure. In total, it took 7.5 minutes to cross University Boulevard and Connecticut Avenue at Farragut Avenue. Nearly all of that time was spent waiting for three walk signals. Further, the walk signals themselves were 13-22 seconds long - not nearly enough time for most people to make the crossing. The long wait times and short pedestrian signal intervals encourage dangerous behavior like jaywalking and mid-block crossing.



In total, it took 7.5 minutes to cross University Boulevard and Connecticut Ave.

The infrastructure features narrow 6-foot sidewalks that are bisected by utility poles. Moreover, the sidewalks are not contiguous and as a result, pedestrians are forced to make dangerous crossings to access the broken sidewalk network. The corridor lacks a buffer between pedestrians and the high-speed vehicles moving down Connecticut Avenue. The corridor also lacks shade; bus stops lack seating and cover. Though the Panel did not tour the area



A plan view of the complicated pedestrian crossing at the intersection of University Boulevard and Connecticut Ave.

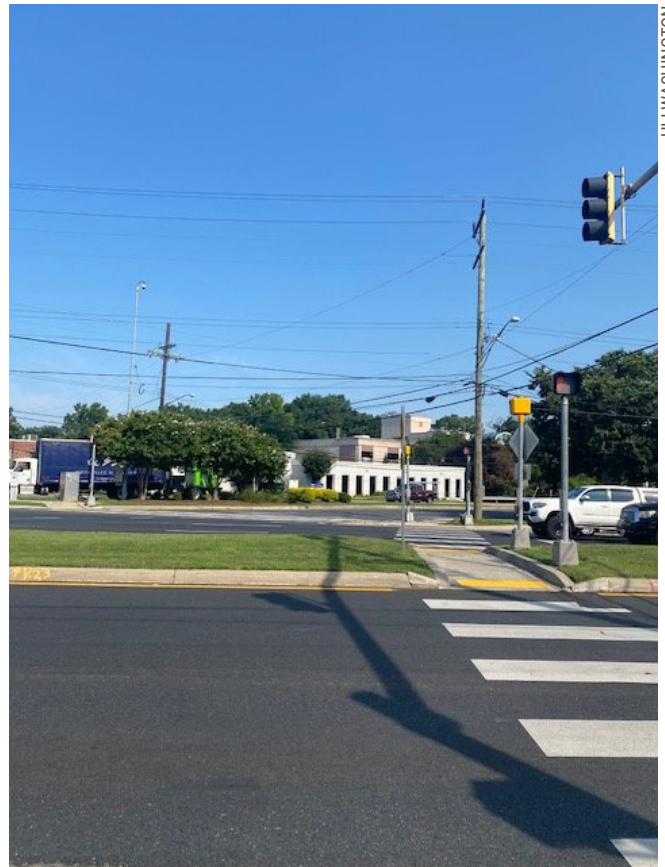


There is no southern crossing across Connecticut Ave at Plyers Mill Rd.

at night, lighting may be another important consideration when making a friendlier pedestrian experience.

The Connecticut Avenue and Plyers Mill Road intersection lacks a crosswalk on the south leg of the intersection requiring all east-west crossings to occur on the north leg of the intersection, which could result in pedestrians at the southwest corner to make three intersection crossings in order to arrive at the southeast corner. This promotes jaywalking and mid-block crossings. This is especially important as the incoming development at the southeast corner of Plyers Mill Road and Connecticut Avenue will increase the number of pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles accessing this site.

Since the publication of the Town's Sector Plan, plans have been published that support improved pedestrian infrastructure: [Montgomery County's Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Areas \(BPPA\)](#), [Complete Streets](#), and a [new BPPA being drafted by SHA](#) as of the writing of this report (expected to be completed in Fall 2023). These newer plans recommend the best practice of creating buttresses to improve walkability. These recommendations require different amounts of investment by the State, County,



The corridor's long wait times, lack of shade, narrow sidewalks, and lack of buffer make it an unpleasant pedestrian experience.

and Town. Implementing a Complete Streets Model along Connecticut Avenue, for instance, would require an additional 15-20 feet of protected bike lanes, sidewalk, and buffer. The Summit Avenue Extension will provide for parts of this - current plans propose using Summit Avenue to create these protected lanes on a smaller, safer road.

Environmental Concerns

The corridor's reputation as "Gasoline Alley" has an impact on potential development. Parcels that serve or formally served as gas stations and automotive repair, like that of the new retail development at Connecticut Avenue and Plyers Mill Road, will likely require remediation. Panelists noted that retail or commercial use is the easiest development to site on a former gas station, but vertical housing requires added remediation.

The Town of Kensington needs additional stormwater management strategies. The lines along the Hydrologic Subarea (HSA) are near capacity (C line and N line). Complicating the administration of this need is the fact that the stormwater management systems in this area are under the control of multiple jurisdictions, including: the Maryland State Highway Administration, Montgomery County, and the Town of Kensington. For those portions under the control of the Town of Kensington, to date, the Town has leaned on private development to address many stormwater management concerns. New development and re-development projects are required to control water that comes into their property, using new County-established standards. So far, this strategy has remediated the area's stormwater management needs.

Residential Demand: Market-Rate & Affordable

The area's market favors small-scale residential development, either market rate or affordable. The Town does not have dedicated financing to commit to affordable housing, but the Town Council has discussed creating a land trust.

Many new developments in the Town of Kensington have Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs). The requirement to provide a certain percentage of MPDUs applies to any new development in Montgomery County with 20 or more units. The percentage of MPDUs required varies from 12.5% to 15% of the total number of units in the development. Some developments have exceeded the required number of units.

There are two housing developments in and around the study area worth noting:

- Silver Creek Apartments (3910 Knowles Avenue): opened April 2022, 93-units, 100% affordable (sliding scale, 70% of units at 70% Area Median Income (AMI)); age-restricted for seniors
- Kensington House (10225 Frederick Avenue): at and above market rate

Two senior living communities are situated adjacent to the study area. Today, elderly residents walking across Connecticut Avenue are challenged by the timing of the lights, narrow sidewalks, vehicular exhaust from idling cars, and lack of shade.

Stakeholder Engagement

The Summit Avenue Extension will require the taking of property at Summit Avenue via eminent domain. Currently, the Summit Avenue Extension has just finished Phase 2, the 35% design phase. Property owners are interested in seeing a more detailed plan/design. The Town Council has asked Montgomery County to buy the parcel for sale at 10800 Connecticut Avenue to develop affordable housing. The County is waiting to finish the next phases of the Summit Avenue plans before making the purchase.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS



GOOGLE MAPS

As the Summit Avenue Extension project moves forward it provides an opportunity to create a more walkable community that better connects Ken-Gar to the Town of Kensington as well as bridges west and east Kensington across Connecticut Avenue.

The Future Vision for the Summit Avenue Extension Project

The Panel analyzed the infill potential along the Summit Avenue Extension, along with market realities in the surrounding area. After much discussion, the panel concluded that the future vision for the project needs to look beyond the project as a traffic alleviation strategy and consider the greater opportunities to create a more walkable neighborhood that bridges Ken-Gar and the Town of Kensington. Thus far, the project has been conceptualized as a means of rerouting of traffic along Connecticut Avenue. However, the Panel does not believe the extended Summit Avenue should take on the character of a solely auxiliary thoroughfare. Instead, the extension of Summit Avenue presents an opportunity to also improve pedestrian safety, build much-needed green space, and reconnect neighborhoods.

Designing the Summit Avenue Extension as a Residential Street

The Town should create a vision for Summit Avenue as a green, residential bridge between Ken-Gar and Kensington rather than merely a traffic passthrough.

The Panel proposed that the Extension be residential in nature and feature a linear park along the west side of the street. This long, narrow greenway would buffer the homes on Shaftsbury Street from any future development, and address concerns about noise and light pollution. Rather than a commercial thoroughfare, the Panel imagines Summit Avenue as a smooth extension of the residential neighborhood in Ken-Gar.

This reimagined extension features many infrastructure best practices, including:

- Separated bike lanes

Opportunities and Challenges Associated with the Summit Avenue Extension

Opportunities	Challenges
Moderate traffic relief	Impacts on neighboring residential neighborhoods (e.g., Ken-Gar) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased property taxes (to the County), making it difficult to stay in place Noise and light pollution (solvable through thoughtful design)
Pedestrian safety	
Public transit improvements	
Connectivity of Plyers Mill Road/Summit Avenue	
Egress options for Ken-Gar	Displacement of local businesses
Additional green space	
Creating new neighborhood by adding residential development	
Implementation of Bicycle Master Plan recommendations	
Potential for added businesses and jobs	

- Sidewalks on both side of the street, to include buffers and shade trees
- Enhanced tree canopy and added greenspace
- Limited street parking (as opposed to surface parking lots)
- Low-rise residential, multi-family development

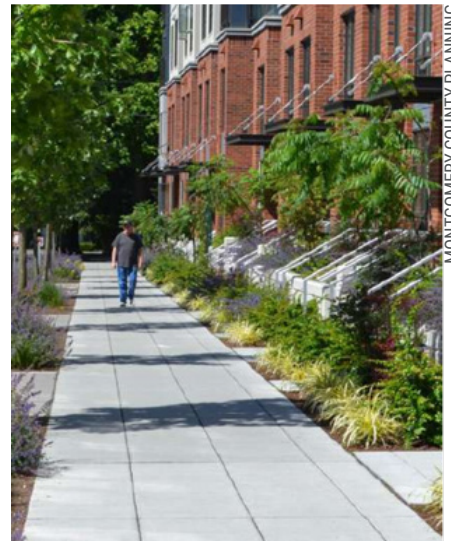
The Panel's recommended design focuses on the proposed primary street extension along Summit Avenue. The linear park on the west side of the street is coupled with residential development on the east side. Low-rise townhouses (ideally as a Commercial Residential, CRN, Zone) offer a gentle transition from Ken-Gar's single-family enclave to potential commercial development



The Panel proposed that the extension be residential in nature and feature a linear park along the west side of the street.



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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING

Low-rise townhouses would offer a gentle transition from Ken-Gar's single-family enclave to the commercial development along Connecticut Ave.

The linear park on the west side of the street would be coupled with residential development on the east side.

along Connecticut Avenue. Rather than invest in outsized multi-family development, the Panel recommended a scaled residential development that buffers Ken-Gar from future development and creates a new, transitional neighborhood where none exists now.

Transportation: Planning for Cars, Bikes, and People

Kensington can be a place you drive to, not through.

Placemaking: Driving to Kensington, Not Through Kensington

The Panel saw an opportunity to leverage transportation as a philosophy, seeing Kensington as a destination. The primary goal, voiced by stakeholders and shared by the panel, is to slow down vehicles - helping passengers to realize that they're driving into the Town of Kensington. To do this requires a variety of short and longer-term steps:

Short-term:

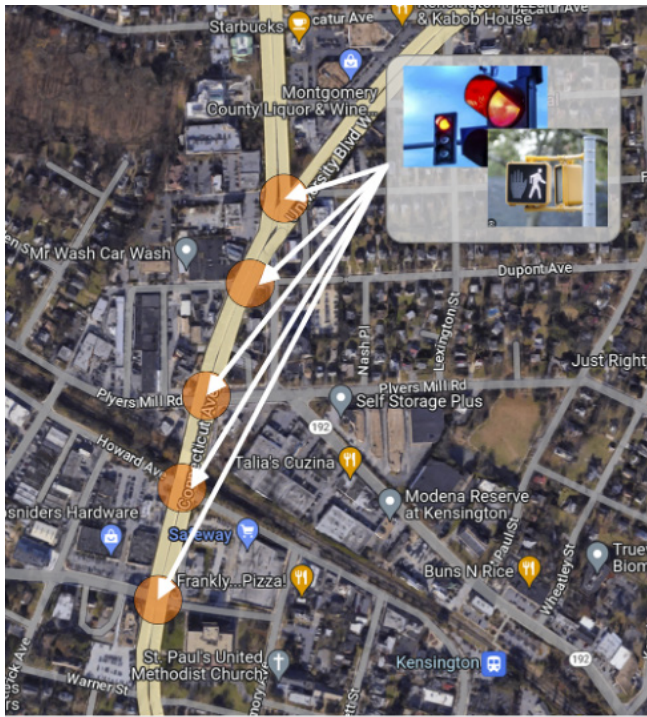
- Request SHA restripe vehicle lanes on Connecticut Avenue (MD 185) to a narrower 10 ft width. This creates extra space on the shoulders, buffering pedestrians from traffic, while still affording ample room for vehicle and public transit movements.

Medium-term:

- Reallocate striped buffer to a permanent vegetated buffer and create an 11 ft side path (from current 6 ft) on the eastside of Connecticut Avenue.
- Plant trees to create shade, a sense of place, address the heat island effect, and aid in stormwater management and air quality.
- Implement a connected multimodal street network.

Long-term:

- Study the long-term impacts of a road along Connecticut Avenue by taking away a lane of travel in both directions. The road diet aims to make Kensington more walkable and bicycle friendly, not necessarily to



The added signals and slowing of traffic will prioritize pedestrians, increase the safety of east-west crossings, and work to reduce the volume of traffic that can move through at high speed.

alleviate traffic congestion, and needs a corresponding reduction in vehicles moving through the corridor as envisioned by Thrive 2050 to be successful.

- Leverage any future road diet to create separated bike lanes per the Montgomery County Bike Master Plan.
- Improve Metropolitan Avenue and Plyers Mill Road intersection.

Creating a Connected Street Grid & Multimodal Network

The Panel’s recommendations are outlined below, but will merit further study, which can be made possible through the county and state’s active interest in the area.

The Panel recommends moving forward with the Summit Avenue Extension, but doing so in a way that focuses beyond its use and utility as a traffic alleviation measure. The Panel also noted that the Town of Kensington has a unique opportunity to advocate for future transportation

needs: as the Town’s (and Montgomery County’s) population grows, it will be necessary to emphasize additional modes of transportation, including buses, bikes, and foot. The Panel cautioned that it is unwise to continue relying on widened streets as a long-term transportation solution.

As part of this, the Panel underscored the importance of a series of smaller changes at multiple intersections, as follows:

- **Connecticut Avenue / Farragut Avenue / Summit Avenue Extension:**
 - » Realigned intersection
 - » New signal
 - » Address long pedestrian crossing times
- **Connecticut Avenue / Dupont Avenue:** new signal
- **Connecticut Avenue / Plyers Mill Road:** high visibility crosswalk on all legs
- **Connecticut Avenue / Howard Avenue:** new signal
- **Connecticut Avenue / Knowles Avenue:** high visibility crosswalk on all legs

Adding signals and the resulting slowing of traffic will reduce the volume of traffic that can move quickly through the area. Currently, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) recommends 750 ft between signalized intersections. The Complete Streets guidelines recommend 400 ft between protected pedestrian crossings. To follow these (and other) best practices, the Panel recommends the following priority projects:

- Improve pedestrian crossings along Connecticut Avenue
 - » Shorten the distance between protected pedestrian crossings to 400 ft (a natural result of the intersection design outlined above)
 - » Make all intersections safe for all users: extended pedestrian signal timing, tactile warning strips, ADA compliance
 - » Shorten the long crossing time at the

intersection of University Boulevard and Connecticut Avenue

- Improve bicycle connectivity to a greenway on Lexington Street between University Boulevard and Plyers Mill Road
- Increase pedestrian access and connections to bus stops along Connecticut Avenue, including by improving the pedestrian experience to/from existing bus stops by completing the sidewalk network, and buffering the sidewalk with protected bike lanes and tree beds
- Improve vehicle circulation
- Optimize and coordinate signals on Connecticut Avenue
- Enhance Access Management (a set of techniques that municipalities can use to control access to highways, major arterials, and other roadways) opportunities for potential optimized redevelopment

Improving vehicle circulation via a series of coordinated signals would allow vehicles to navigate to their desired destination more efficiently and effectively without medians, restricted turning movements, or lack of traffic signals. Medians along Connecticut Avenue restrict left turn access, requiring vehicles to make U-turns and travel longer distances. Similarly, along a busy corridor like Connecticut Avenue, when there is a lack of traffic signals and side street movements have difficulty finding gaps in traffic to travel north or south, they will travel longer distances on neighborhood roads to be able to turn onto Connecticut Avenue where there is a traffic signal.

Shared Parking Structure as a Land Assemblage Strategy

Presently, the study area is defined by oversized surface parking. This reflects the area’s car-related industry that requires accessible parking and the low-rise commercial /light industrial character. The Panel considered that consolidating the existing surface parking into a shared,



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Today, the study area is defined by oversized surface parking.

above ground parking structure would free up land for future development.

The Panel agreed parking wayfinding can be a good part of minimizing traffic from vehicles searching for parking; however, outlining a detailed strategy was not a priority for this report. Any detailed plans for any future parking garages should include a wayfinding strategy.

Opportunity for New, Attainable Housing

The Summit Avenue Extension unlocks opportunities for more diverse housing.

According to the Panel, the Summit Avenue Extension project unlocks opportunities for (potentially affordable) housing. Building housing along the extension is a supportive, low-intensity use that works to create a safe, quiet, walkable street alongside the adjacent corridors. At 40-45 feet tall, the low-scale residential development

along the extension would be in accordance with the current zoning code. This infill townhouse development could include affordable (no more than 80% AMI) and workforce housing (20% lower than market rate).

Without the extension, it would be very difficult to develop any housing, affordable or market rate along the corridor. The Summit Avenue Extension therefore catalyzes housing development.

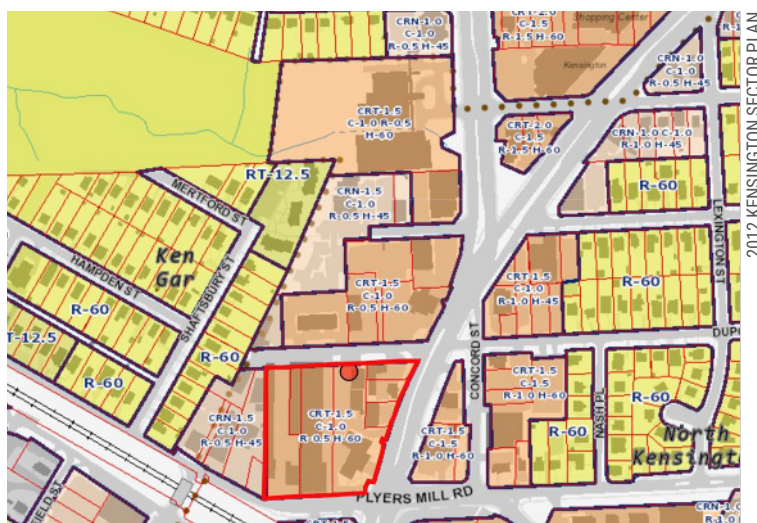
First Step: Incentivizing Residential Development

The Town's 2012 Sector Plan promotes mixed-use development in the town center, supporting housing choices for all ages and incomes. Currently, the zoning permits reduced density, resulting in a dearth of much-needed housing in the Town's commercial center.

The County's Thrive 2050 Plan envisions growth in urban areas, by creating Complete Communities that reduce sprawl by embracing the concept of the 15-Minute City. Stakeholders generally agreed that the study area, and the Town of Kensington as a whole, lacks the necessary diversity and amount of housing. Panelists contend that the Summit Avenue Extension is an opportunity to create much needed housing stock. Additionally, the Panel agreed that the Extension was necessary for accessing any future housing development from the south or the west. Currently, if any new housing were built near the intersection and residents approached from I-495 (a heavily used thoroughfare), they would need to travel north to Perry Avenue and complete a two-block U-turn to access the site.

At the same time, current interest rates, coupled with high construction costs, present barriers to immediate development.

The area's current zoning is based on a Floor Area Ratio (FAR), a measure of density, that supports higher commercial use and lower residential use. Today's strong residential market makes housing development the most



The area's current Floor Area Ratio (FAR), a measure of density, supports higher commercial use and lower residential use.

attractive land use option for economic development. The Panel recommended that the first step is to update the way FAR has been allocated in the zoning code to reflect the market and to support thoughtful economic development. The Panel further recommended that current FAR ratios be inverted to favor residential over commercial density.

Current

- Commercial Residential Zone (CRZ): 1.5 FAR
- Residential Zone (RZ): 0.5 FAR

Recommended

- Commercial Residential Zone (CRZ): 0.5-1 FAR
- Residential Zoning (RZ): 1-2 FAR

Increasing the residential zoning density encourages housing development as the primary use in the area, with commercial use - originally imagined as office in the Sector Plan - the ancillary use. This allows the area to better meet present and future housing needs and market demand while also recognizing the softening demand for mid-rise commercial use (i.e., office). The Panel acknowledged that the specific FAR will vary depending on the particular parcel.

In addition to the recommended ratios above, allowing additional density bonuses up to 2.5 FAR for consolidated

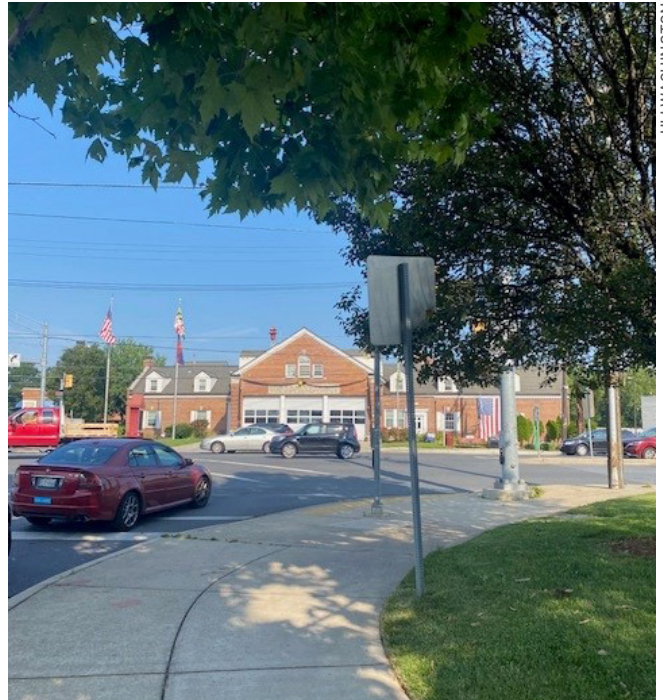
parcels incentivizes land assemblage and encourages cohesive planning. According to the Panel, If the Town wants to see development along the corridor, the Town must first work with the County to institute policies that unlock the required economic value.

Second Step: Coordinating Property Owners/Developers

The study area faces an uphill battle when it comes to land assemblage; the fractured property ownership makes an already difficult process more difficult. The area would benefit from collaboration and coordination between the many property owners in and around the corridor. Because the area is in flux, it may be premature for the formation of a Business Improvement District (BID), but establishing regularly scheduled meetings amongst property owners to identify priorities is good practice.

The Panel recommended the following key topics for discussion amongst property owners:

1. **Transportation Demand Management (TDM):** A joint effort by property owners and local governments to encourage people coming into new developments to use non-auto mobility choices.
2. **Parking:** Panelists heard from stakeholders that many property owners are already discussing the opportunities and challenges of shared parking. A parking garage/reservoir would free up other sites in the area for continuous development.
3. **Stormwater Management:** Consolidated water retention ponds and bioswales could prove useful strategies for the area.
4. **Environmental Remediation:** Knowing that many of these parcels are or have been the site of gas stations and light industrial uses, the Town should explore funding options to cover the heavy price tag of remediation. Programs to consider include Maryland’s Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP) and the federal



The Panel strongly recommended co-locating any future redevelopment of the fire station with affordable housing and a community center.

Environmental Protection Agency’s Cleanup Grant for polluted brownfield sites, a community-wide grant for up to \$500,000.

Co-location as a Best Practice

Together with the Summit Avenue Extension, an RFP for redevelopment (created in partnership with the County and Kensington Volunteer Fire Department) of the fire station could also be a catalyst for economic growth.

The Panel explored development on Town- and County-owned parcels because the land is already government owned, reducing the necessity of taking property by eminent domain. The study area has fractured property ownership, making land assemblage a challenge for any future development. The fragmented nature of the site discourages cohesive planning for economic development, stormwater management, or remediation. An owner with interests larger than their own site, like the Town or County, is best suited to

leading the corridor in a unified planning effort.

Kensington Volunteer Fire Department Station 5, a Montgomery County volunteer fire station located within the Town at the corner of Connecticut Avenue and Plyers Mill Road, needs to be renovated, which invites consideration of the future redevelopment of the site. Given that the fire station is currently used as a community gathering space, the Panel strongly recommended that the County consider co-locating any future redevelopment of the site with affordable housing and a community center. This suggests that any redevelopment within the wedges created by Summit Avenue provide formal community gathering space.

The Panel suggests that the fire station parcel could itself be the site of a mixed-use development. The site extends quite far behind the street in a narrow and complicated land use pattern. The complicated structure of the site requires thoughtful design solutions, hence the recommendation for a Request for Proposals (RFP) in later sections of this report. The Panel pointed to the ongoing Dominion Square development in Tysons, VA and Elizabeth Square in Silver Spring, MD, as regional precedents for co-locating community facilities and housing on County-owned land.

Step One: Issuing an RFP for Redevelopment of the Fire Station

The Panel explored a few options for the future of the County-owned Fire Station 5, each with its own set of pros and cons:

- Option 1: Renovate existing fire station and co-locate housing and a community center
- Option 2: Relocate the fire station to the intersection of Farragut Avenue and Connecticut Avenue and co-locate housing and a community center
- Option 3: Relocate the fire station to the triangular parcel between Connecticut Avenue and University Boulevard

Regional Case Studies: Dominion Square and the Leggett

Currently under development by the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), Dominion Square is the redevelopment of a car dealership parking lot near the Spring Hill Metro Station in Tysons, VA. The development features 516 units of affordable housing, a 33,000 sf two-level community center, and four levels of below grade parking. The project prioritizes households in the 30-70% Area Median Income (AMI) range. Elizabeth Square, located in the Silver Spring, MD, Central Business District (CBD), is comprised of three phases, of which two phases are almost complete. The second phase, The Leggett, is a recently opened 267-unit mixed income senior apartment complex developed by the Maryland Housing Opportunity Commission (HOC), which sits atop two community facilities: the 125,000 sf Montgomery County Silver Spring Recreation and Aquatic Center, and an 8,000 sf health clinic operated by Holy Cross Hospital.

Both projects are precedents for co-locating community uses and affordable housing.

The Panel ruled out Option 3 for the parcel's size and complications it would add to an already congested intersection. In comparing Options 1 and 2, the Panel agreed that more thought is required than was possible in the two-day TAP. The Town should consider partnering with the County and the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD) to issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to see possible co-location designs for the current (or future) site.

Addressing Concerns About Displacement

Area residents and business owners expressed concerns about residential and commercial displacement as a result

of the Summit Avenue Extension. Property owners in Ken-Gar living along the proposed route, especially those along Shaftsbury Street, are facing changing financial outlooks as a result of the project. Affordable and market rate residential development along Summit Avenue may increase property values and associated property taxes. Legacy and multi-generational owners might very well be priced out of the neighborhood.

In addition to existing property tax credits designed to provide relief to elderly, veteran, and low-income residents (such as the Homeowners' Property Tax Credit and the Homestead Property Tax Credit), the Panel explored financing tools to assist with the preservation of the existing racial and economic makeup of Ken-Gar, and recommended the following examples that the Town may look to for further consideration:

- **[The Westside Future Fund – Atlanta, GA.](#)** An anti-displacement tax was established to mitigate displacement as a result of the city's Beltline project.
 - » Launched in 2015, the fund has created hundreds of new and affordable units for residents of the city's westside neighborhoods, and delivered property tax relief to over 100 legacy residents. The City of Atlanta, the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation, and the Chick-Fil-A Foundation provided catalyzing investment and leadership. The Fund renovates properties and undertakes new construction to deliver high quality housing at deeply affordable rates. Homeownership support includes access to financial counseling and down-payment assistance.
- **[Home Repair Program – Department of Housing & Community Development, Maryland.](#)** Developed to assist residents in aging in place, the program subsidizes some of the cost of home repairs. If extended to property owners looking at high property taxes, this proves a useful precedent for balancing the scales.
 - » The grant and loan programs can be used to upgrade to energy efficient appliances, repair or replace heating and cooling systems, replace



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Residents and business owners expressed concerns about residential and commercial displacement as a result of the Summit Avenue Extension.

insulation, add accessibility features for seniors or those with special needs, remove lead paint, upgrade plumbing, and address structural and maintenance issues. To be eligible, households must not exceed 80% Area Median Income (AMI).

- **[Tax Abatement for Legacy Owners – Denver, CO.](#)** To minimize displacement, the city of Denver created a tax abatement for legacy residents.
 - » The program offers a partial refund of property taxes paid, or the equivalent in rent, to qualifying Denver households. On average, households received a rebate of \$1,000. To be eligible, homeowners must be over 65 years of age (or have been disabled, or have a disabled minor in their care), own the property in the year of application, and have a household income below 60% AMI.
 - » Montgomery County already has similar measures to prevent displacement of lower-income and elderly residents, in the [Homeowners Property Tax Credit](#) and the [Property Tax Credit for the Elderly and Military Retirees](#).

RECOMMENDED ACTION ITEMS

The Panel spent considerable time weighing options and priorities through its deliberations. The following list summarizes its priority recommended action items:

1. Create a Vision for Summit Avenue as a residential street, not solely as a thoroughfare.
2. Develop urban design standards for Connecticut Avenue and Summit Avenue ensure pedestrians are prioritized at the street level.
3. Update zoning caps to incentivize residential development.
4. Organize property owner collaboration: Parking Consortium and/or Transportation Management District (TMD).
 - » Organize owners/developers to take on land assemblage
 - » Create a plan and infrastructure for moving auto-related businesses into the electric vehicle industry.
5. Explore shared commercial parking structure as a way of capturing construction costs and freeing up space on individual parcels.
 - » Needed stormwater management infrastructure located under the parking reservoir/garage
 - » Mid-block parking garage
6. Co-locate community space and potentially housing on the site of any future fire station renovation/redevelopment.
 - » First step: partner with KVF D and the County to issue RFP/RFI for redevelopment of the fire station



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The Panel recommends a series of design, transportation, and policy strategies to accompany the project.

CONCLUSION

The Summit Avenue Extension is an opportunity for the Town of Kensington to reprioritize land uses in the areas bounded by the Summit Avenue Extension, Connecticut Avenue, and Plyers Mill Road. More than that, the project can catalyze thoughtful development that supports Town and County land use priorities. The Panel supports the Summit Avenue Extension, but before moving forward with it, the Panel urges Town leadership to consider the following conclusions:



The Town must create a vision for Summit Avenue as a green, residential bridge between Ken-Gar and Kensington rather than merely a traffic passthrough. The Panel recommends viewing the Summit Avenue Extension not solely as a traffic mitigation strategy, but rather as a neighborhood development tool for housing/commercial activity, green space, walkability, and connectivity.



Kensington can be a place you drive to, not through. The primary goal of this infrastructure investment is to slow vehicles down to help passengers realize they are driving into the Town of Kensington.



The Summit Avenue Extension unlocks opportunities for more diverse housing. Without the extension, it would be very difficult to develop any affordable or market-rate housing in this section of Kensington’s Town Center. The Summit Avenue Extension catalyzes housing development.



Together with the Summit Avenue Extension, an RFP for redevelopment (created in partnership with the County and Kensington Volunteer Fire Department) of the fire station could be a catalyst for economic growth. The fire station lot would be well-served as a mixed-use site that provides, at minimum, formal community gathering space. There are precedents in the region for co-locating



The Summit Avenue Extension should be used as a neighborhood development tool for housing/commercial activity, green space, walkability, and connectivity.

the fire station with other community uses like housing and community gathering space.

With these insights in hand, the Panel believes that the Summit Avenue Project should move forward with a new vision: a low-rise, multi-family residential street with green, pedestrian infrastructure. Paired with policy updates, the project will support a future-forward corridor - one that prioritizes multimodal forms of transportation, pedestrian safety, and housing options.

ABOUT THE PANEL



Aileen Horn
Panel Co-Chair
KGD Architecture

Ms. Horn is an architect with over three decades of experience. She collaborates with owners and developers through entitlement, design and delivery. Her

portfolio includes institutional, urban infill, historic adaptive reuse, community-focused residential and hospitality projects. Notable and successful projects for major brands and independent hotels include some of the first multiple-brand hotels for Marriott and Hilton in the Mid-Atlantic region.

As a Project Director in multiple practice areas, she is responsible for maintaining client relationships, sharing and preserving the institutional memory essential for exceptional customer service and high-quality, responsive design. Aileen orchestrates the delivery of complex projects across dedicated project teams. She is deeply committed to sustainable and resilient practices and has been working with industry tools for over ten years.

New development done well invigorates existing communities, enriches the urban fabric and enhances the vitality of local culture. Community engagement is key. She leads charrettes, presents LEED and AIA Continuing Education programs locally and nationally. She serves on advisory and planning committees for USGBC and the Urban Land Institute.



Justin Schor
Panel Co-Chair
Wells + Associates

Justin Schor is Vice President of Business Development and is a skilled and well-rounded transportation consultant with over two decades

of forward-thinking Transportation Demand Management (TDM) experience in communities all over the United States. His skills span planning, developing, and implementing award-winning transportation solutions.

He is the co-author of the book *Building a Multimodal Future: Connecting Real Estate Development and Transportation Demand Management to Ease Gridlock*, published by the Urban Land Institute (ULI), and a regular speaker on the development of transportation systems that discourage gridlock and foster greater choice.

Justin is recognized for his ability to manage outreach efforts that build awareness of and participation in sustainable transportation programs – and that demonstrate measurable change in travel behavior. He combines his first-hand marketing and outreach experience with extensive training and experience in transportation planning at the development, downtown, regional, and state levels. These skills and expertise give Justin a unique ability to confidently plan and recommend transportation strategies that are grounded and that are practical, achievable, and measurable.

Justin excels in TDM program development and management, employer outreach and implementation, residential outreach and commuter support, development based trip reduction, local and regional transportation planning, LEED, alternative transportation, and much more.

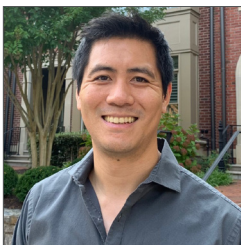


Justin Kennell
Bozzuto

As a Vice President at Bozzuto Development Company, Justin leads the direction and execution of mixed-use development projects in Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland. He is

responsible for managing all phases of development, including acquisition, entitlement, design, financing, construction, lease-up and disposition.

He is currently leading the development of Chevy Chase Lake, a multi-phase project consisting of 466 apartments, 65 condos, one acre of public space, and 95,000sf of retail located in Chevy Chase, MD. Justin is an active member of the Urban Land Institute. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Finance from Towson University and a Master of Science in Real Estate and Infrastructure from Johns Hopkins University.



Rick Liu
DC Office of the CFO

Rick Liu is a Senior Economic Officer at the DC Office of the CFO, where he manages a small team performing financial analyses, and manages and underwrites debt issuances for master

developed projects financed through public/private partnerships, such as TIFs and PILOTs. Separately, Rick serves as the Principal and founder of RYL Economic Strategies, a national advisory firm specializing in economic development, real estate, and infrastructure projects, and has counseled several public agencies and nonprofits in Miami, Philadelphia, and Sacramento on development advisory, master developer negotiations, and pipeline and capacity building through real estate.

Previously, Rick led and managed joint development and lease execution for Metro, the Washington region's transit agency, and led the team that closed a \$50M transaction that would create the largest community solar project in Washington region. He has also served

as the Director of Economic Analysis to the Montgomery County Planning Department, where he provided real estate subject matter expertise to elected officials to obtain plan approvals representing potentially \$500M+ in economic development.

He possesses Federal knowledge from managing housing assets under the U.S. Army's Privatized Housing Initiative (MHPI) – the largest public-private partnership in the U.S. Government. Rick has deep knowledge of government's methods of engaging the private real estate industry and navigating the complexities of project and policy execution from beginning to end.

Rick has a Masters of City Planning from the Georgia Institute of Technology and a Bachelor of Arts from Tufts University, and is an active member of ULI Washington, having previously served on various local product councils such as Sustainability, Regionalism, TOD, and the Prince George's Local Product Council.



Charles Sims
Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH)

Charles Sims joined APAH in 2019 and is a Senior Project Manager on APAH's Real Estate Development Team. Charles is currently managing the Snowden's Ridge

project in Montgomery County, Maryland. Acquired in 2019, this is APAH's first development in Maryland and was largely a response to the need to preserve deeply affordable units in the County. Charles is now managing the renovation of the 87- unit town home community, as well as the build out of a new community facility to enable resident programming on-site, which is financed with 4% LIHTC, CDBG, and local funding.

In addition, Charles manages the Oakwood Senior Housing Development in Fairfax County, Virginia. This is APAH's first development in Fairfax County. Oakwood is a public-private partnership with Fairfax County, where APAH is replacing an outdated storm water management pond with 150 units of new affordable senior housing on County-owned land. This development is a hybrid development financed with 9% and 4% LIHTC, along with local funding.

Previously Charles worked as a project manager for affordable housing at New Urban Development in Miami, FL. Over the course of 8 years, Charles managed several projects, including both new construction and renovation of multifamily residential. In addition, Charles managed retail and industrial buildouts for Office Depot, a national retailer.



Pedro Sales
BCT Design Group

Pedro joined BCT in 2002 as a Senior Associate following receipt of his Masters in Architecture. Having worked over the years on a variety of senior housing, interior architecture, and

mixed-use projects, he has developed an expertise in retail-driven projects and has established relationships with some of the firm's longest standing clients. An excellent project architect and manager, BCT's clients rely on Pedro's expertise in ground-up retail projects and renovation work. He is frequently out of the office overseeing projects in the Mid-Atlantic region and Mid-West. Most recently, he oversaw the renovation of Pentagon Row in Arlington, Virginia and is currently working on Pike & Rose in Montgomery County. Pedro graduated from the University of Maryland with a Masters in Architecture and an Urban Planning Certificate. He is a member of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) the Urban Land Institute (ULI) and American Institute of Architects (AIA).



Ivy Thompson
Prince George's Dept. of Parks & Recreation

Ivy R. Thompson has over 20 years' experience in Planning and Community Development involving community planning, engagement, economic

development, and historic preservation.

As a Planner with the with the Maryland-National Capital Parks and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Ms. Thompson assists in the organizations efforts to provide land use planning for physical development of the county. She reviews both public and private sector development projects for compliance with local and state regulations. During her tenure with M-NCPPC, she has worked to facilitate small and medium in-fill redevelopment projects and served as a community resource advising stakeholders on zoning and planning projects.

Prior to joining M-NCPPC, Ms. Thompson worked as Community Development Specialist in the City of Takoma Park where she focused on grants management, project implementation, and the development of the City's Affordable Housing Plan. As a two-term Council Member of the City of Mount Rainier, including one as Vice Mayor, Ms. Thompson focused on redevelopment of the City's business district.

While acknowledging the need for growth, she built on the existing foundation of community. Focused on engagement establishing the Family Movie Night and co-founding the Mount Rainier Farmers Market.

Ms. Thompson was invited to the German Marshall Fund of the United States Bilbao Urban Innovation and Leadership Dialogues, a forum for urban innovators to explore issues facing transatlantic cities. She is also an American Council on Germany John J. McCloy Fellow, working to enhance a broader understanding of global policy issues.

Ms. Thompson began her planning career in Cincinnati, Ohio facilitating the creation and placement of public art in the City's redeveloping areas. She has had the opportunity to study "Art in the Urban Environment" in Cuba, returning with lessons learned and experience to enhance city programming. Ms. Thompson holds a Bachelor's degree in English from Alverno College, a master of Community Planning and a certificate in Historic Preservation from the University of Cincinnati, a Post-Graduate Diploma in Inner City Renewal from the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies at Erasmus University Rotterdam.



Katie Wagner
Gorove Slade

Katie is a Principal at Gorove Slade where she leads the Maryland office. She has significant transportation planning and engineering experience, including traffic impact studies, traffic

simulation, site access and circulation planning, roadway signing and striping plans, traffic signal design, functional parking lot and garage design, Transportation Demand Management (TDM) planning and analysis. She has led projects for educational institutions, mixed-use developments, commercial and retail developments, office developments, government facilities, and a wide variety of other land-uses and clients throughout the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. She takes great interest in the multimodal component of urban projects that requires brainstorming solutions to benefit all modes of transportation.

She is an active member of Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Urban Land Institute (ULI), Commercial Real Estate Women Network (CREW), and National Association of Industrial and Office Properties (NAIOP MD|DC) where she serves on various committees and involved in different programs. Katie completed ULI's Leadership Institute and in 2022 was recognized with the Champion Award by the

DC chapter of CREW. She has a focus on organization, efficiency, and staff development at Gorove Slade.

While originally from the Pacific Northwest, Katie fell in love with the DC area seeing the impacts of the projects she has worked on in the community. She lives in Bethesda, Maryland where you will likely spot her running or walking with her husband and hound-dog, Maya.



Xavier Williams

WSP

Xavier Williams is a Lead Consultant in Advisory Services with extensive experience leading teams to support the implementation of high-profile, complex infrastructure planning

initiatives in conjunction with a range of public sector partners and private consultants. Xavier has a versatile professional background supporting organizations to contract for planning and feasibility services across different procurement models.

Other related work includes co-leading the planning and implementation of an asset management modernization project for a mid-sized city's entire Department of Public Works and leading the benchmarking of procurement strategies for a state-level Department of Transportation. His work has consistently engaged the intersection of infrastructure investment and organizational readiness to manage both construction and maintenance programs.



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