



Edgewood Small Area Plan: Executive Summary

HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND



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** Cover photos courtesy of Harford County.

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Glossary & List of Abbreviations

Access Management – A set of transportation planning techniques used to control access to high volume roadways, increasing the capacity of these roads, manage congestion and increase safety.

APG – Aberdeen Proving Ground

Infill – New development on scattered vacant sites in an otherwise built-up area.

Native vegetation – Vegetation inherent and original to the Harford County region.

Redevelopment – The construction of new buildings and uses on a site, typically after demolishing part or all of the existing structures.

Residential development open space option – A development option intended to preserve significant portions of development lots as permanent open space.

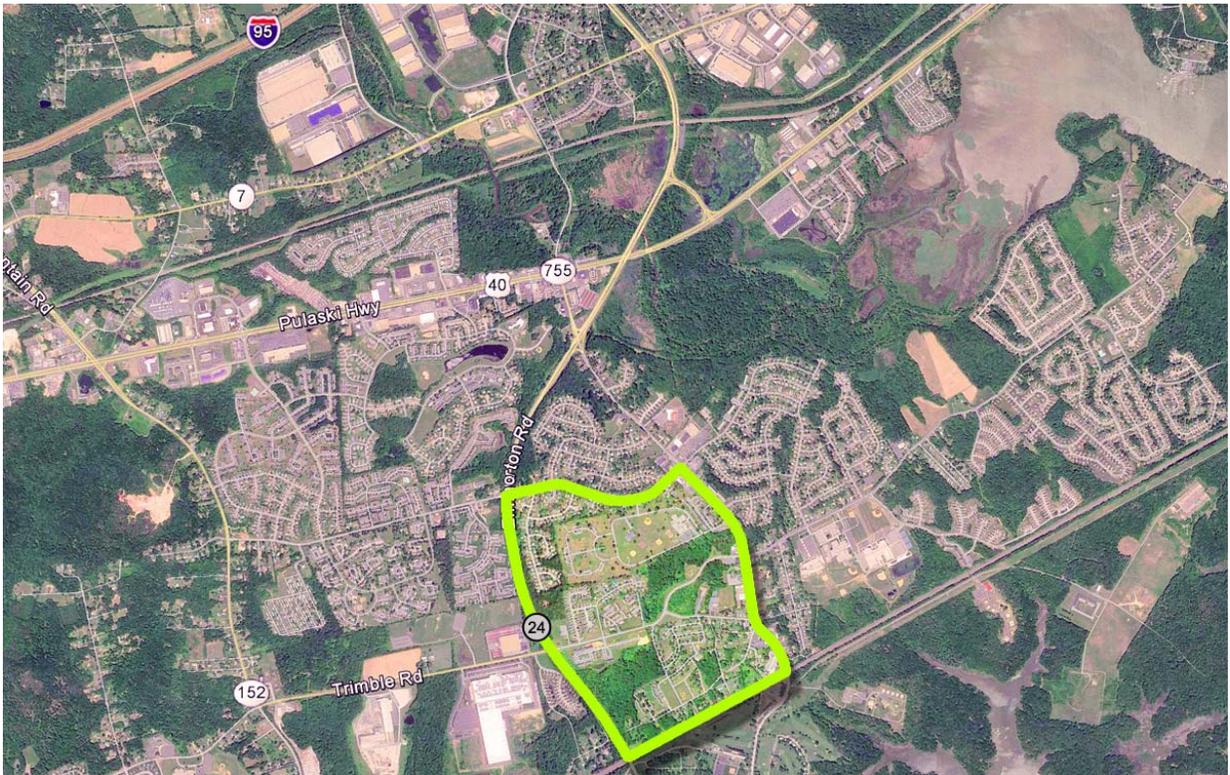
Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)- A land planning and design concept that incorporates traditional town planning techniques, such as a network of well-connected streets and blocks, mix of housing types, a variety of public spaces, all within walking distance of amenities such as shops, jobs and schools.

Traffic calming – Design techniques utilized to slow traffic on residential streets.

Transit Oriented Development – A mix of uses integrated into a walkable neighborhood and located within ½ mile of a public transit hub.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Edgewood, Maryland is a small, unincorporated area in southern Harford County. The intent of this Small Area Study is to develop a land use and revitalization plan for the 390 acres (0.6 square miles) located between MD Route 24/Emmorton Road to the west, MD Route 755/Edgewood Road to the east, Hansen Road to the north, and Aberdeen Proving Ground to the south. This area is considered by many to be “Old Edgewood”.



WHY A SMALL AREA STUDY?

Harford County chose to focus on this “small area” due to:

- Its strategic location directly adjacent to the gates of Aberdeen Proving Ground, the County’s largest employer;
- The study area has a unique opportunity in two county owned parcels within its boundaries, the 11 acre former Lee Court property on Nuttal Avenue, and the 28-acre Washington Court property on Cedar Drive. The County is willing to leverage these properties to stimulate investment and positive energy into the community; and

- Despite convenient access to US Route 40 and I-95, the study area is “off the beaten path”. Positive change in this area is unlikely without cooperative intervention between the County, community, and APG.

PLANNING PROCESS

The four-month planning process was guided by an Advisory Committee with strong ties to the Edgewood community. This Committee met five times over the course of plan development and helped to synthesize community input, review draft goals, and direct the implementation approach.

Significant public input was received throughout the process. The County hosted two public workshops, attended by more than 150 individuals, and conducted focus groups and stakeholder interviews with representatives from more than 26 organizations, agencies, business owners and neighborhoods.



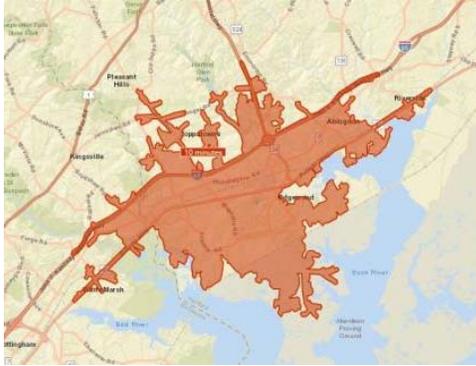
WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY

This community outreach coupled with thorough background research resulted in seven (7) key take-aways regarding the Edgewood Small Area:

1. Vacant land presents the opportunity to inject new energy into the study area, stabilize home values, and better meet resident needs;
2. APG, the County's largest employer, is being positioned to grow significantly, yet struggles to retain its young workforce;
3. Home values are low and there is a lack of investment, but there is potential demand for housing for seniors, veterans, and for APG's young and growing workforce;
4. There is a lack of open space and recreational opportunities within the study area;
5. There is a lack of retail and restaurant spaces serving residents, visitors and APG staff;
6. The Edgewood Train Station is underutilized and lacks critical multimodal infrastructure;
and
7. Negative perceptions of the community from outsiders deters new investment and residents.

KEY REAL ESTATE MARKET ANALYSIS FINDINGS

The market analysis examined the Edgewood market through two lenses: the local trade area and the regional trade area. The local trade area represents where residents in the study area can shop within a 10-minute drive, while the regional trade area depicts where residents could access within a 20-minute drive.



Local Trade area



Regional Trade Area

The market analysis reviewed the data for the retail, office, and housing markets.

Retail. The analysis supported the residents' desire for more restaurant and eating establishments, as well as several other shopping opportunities:

- Restaurants/Other Eating Places
- Clothing Stores
- Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instruments
- Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods
- Office Supplies, Stationary, Gift Stores
- Furniture Store
- Health and Personal Care Stores

Office. In addition, the analysis found that overall the demand for office space in Harford County as a whole, and in Edgewood, is low. However, the bright spot was the discovery that there are opportunities in the **health care industry** and potentially for **tenant-specific users**.

Housing. Overall Edgewood has a healthy housing market with lower price points for the region. There is a tight market for **multifamily rentals**, presenting an opportunity for development, particularly for new housing that could attract the young workforce from APG or seniors looking to age in place within the Edgewood community.

EDGEWOOD COMMUNITY VISION

Edgewood is a respected and desirable community rooted in its safe, walkable neighborhoods; diverse opportunities for recreation, education, and entertainment; and a unique partnership with the world class biological, chemical and medical research at the Aberdeen Proving Ground.

THE EDGEWOOD SMALL AREA PLAN

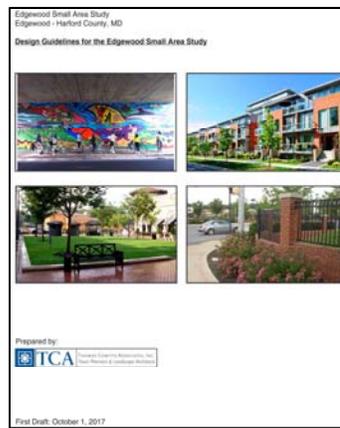
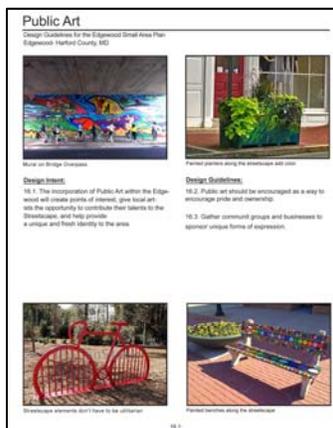
The plan for the Edgewood Small Area Study is organized into four themes that when combined represent a holistic approach to strengthening the Edgewood community:

1. Building for the Future: A plan for future land use;
2. Green and Growing: A plan for open space and recreation;
3. Making Connections: A plan for transportation and multimodal circulation; and
4. Positive Impressions: A plan for building a better reputation for the Edgewood area.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Building for the Future represents the land use components of the Small Area Study. Key recommendations focus on encouraging a mix of uses throughout the study area, including mixed-residential at Washington Court, Transit Oriented Development at the train station, and mixed-use revitalization opportunities along Route 755. The map on the next page depicts the future land use categories for the study area.

Design Guidelines relevant to the mixed use areas are included in the Plan Appendices and address design elements such as building placement, parking location, landscaping, lighting, common open spaces, and parking structures.



The table below summarizes the Recommended Uses for each of the Future Land Use area:

Area	Recommended Uses
Medium Density Residential	Single family detached
High Density Residential	Single family attached; Multifamily
Route 755 Corridor	Mix of commercial and residential uses; ensure provisions for office "hoteling", live-work units,
Transit Oriented Development	Mix of commercial and residential uses; Promote first floor retail/restaurant uses and office or residential above.
Neighborhood Center	Neighborhood services, retail, and restaurants
Small Scale Commercial MU	A coffee shop/bar that will draw the after work crowd; live-work units; office and retail space
Neighborhood Mixed Use	High density residential: multifamily rental units, townhouses/stacked townhouses with community green spaces

Mixed Use Development

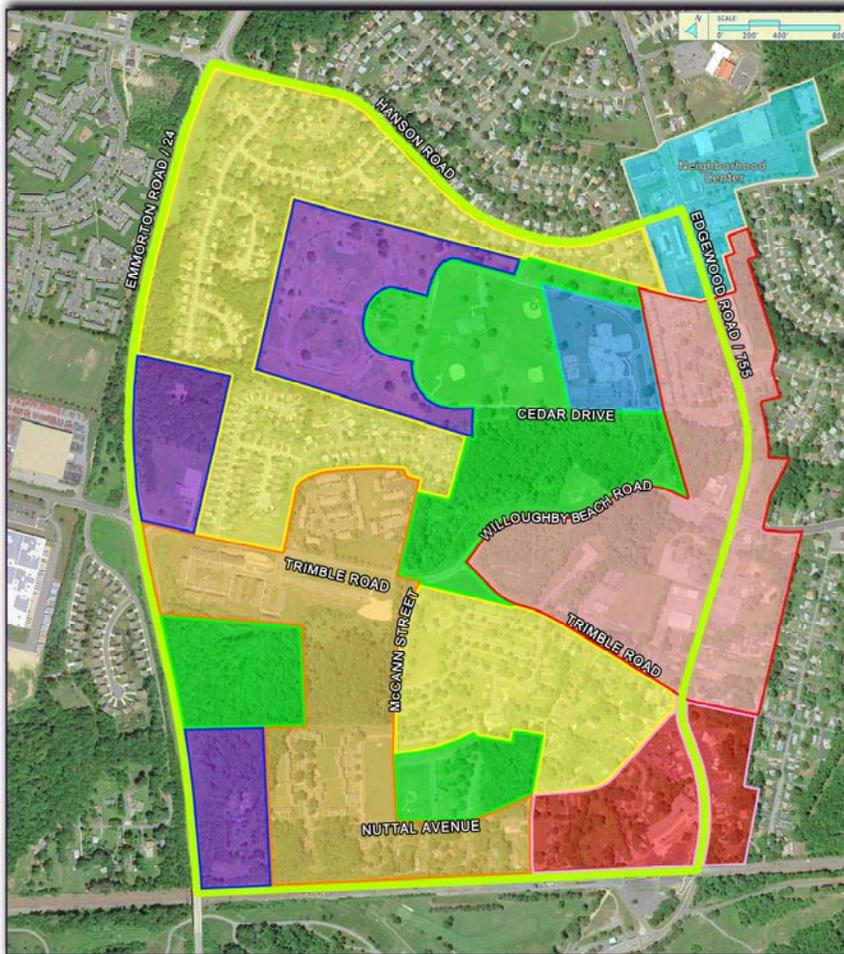


Provide restaurant and office opportunities with outdoor dining along Rt 24 to capture APG traffic.

Mixed Residential Neighborhood



Attract Millennials from APG with a mix of housing types, outdoor amenities and flex space for future retail/yoga or cafe use.



Community Gathering Areas



Incorporate high quality open space for community recreation.

Senior Housing Options



Allow community members to age in place and in close proximity to services.

Transit Oriented Development



Promote new mixed use development adjacent to the train station, potentially above the parking lot.



Building the Future Map and Inspirations

Mixed Use Development at Washington Court:

A mixed-residential neighborhood comprised of multifamily dwellings, townhomes, stacked townhomes, and open spaces that offers the amenities and price points that will appeal to the younger workforce being recruited by APG, as well as singles and empty-nesters looking to age in place within the Edgewood community.



In light of the real estate analysis and stakeholder interviews, the study recommends that Washington Court should be developed as a walkable, mixed-residential neighborhood focusing on the multifamily rental market. These multifamily units could become a desirable location for young singles, veterans, or seniors and support the growing workforce planned for APG. In order to attract people who may not ordinarily choose Edgewood, consideration could be given to a gated or access controlled community that provides an atmosphere of exclusivity and security, while complimenting the surrounding neighborhoods.

The character of the development is envisioned to utilize traditional town planning elements, but with a modern architectural face. It should include amenities that are in demand such as outdoor space for community events, dog run, and trails. Allowing for limited retail would be ideal, though in many cases, these businesses are challenging to sustain. The inclusion of ground floor flex space that is designed to provide opportunity for a small coffee shop, yoga studio, or other nonresidential use in the future, but that can be used for residential in the near-term may be a better strategy. The community open space should be surrounded by buildings on at least two sides and would be large enough to host movie nights, food trucks, and other community events for the residents.

Benefits of Residential

- New housing could be promoted by the County as housing for new teachers, police officers, firefighters, and others essential personnel; enabling them to live in the

communities they serve. (To more actively support this goal, the County should consider housing assistance programs targeted to these populations.)

- More “rooftops” will help to attract new businesses and to support the existing ones.
- In regards to retail, there are already numerous vacancies on Route 40 and along the Route 755 corridor. The lack of visibility from a main corridor would be challenging for any type of retail establishment that relies on pass through traffic in addition to the surrounding residential.

While the committee, residents, and consulting team was and continues to be “open” to the idea of a primarily commercial mixed use development with office space at Washington Court, the feasibility of such a development was not supported by the Real Estate market Analysis at this time. In lieu of this, this report recommends that the development incorporate first floor flex space that could alternately support residential, retail or restaurant space once the market can support such uses.

Design Elements:

Design of mixed use at Washington Court should incorporate elements of traditional neighborhood development, such as:

- o An interconnected network of streets with short blocks;
- o A mix of at least two (2) housing types, focusing on multi-family rental units with some townhouse, carriage house, and/or independent living units;
- o A variety of open spaces that offer amenities (consider a dog park or dog run, multi-use green that could serve as a space for informal gathering and more organized events) (See more discussion under the “Green and Growing Theme);
- o Trails and other pedestrian connections to the Edgewood Neighborhood Center, Route 755, train station, and other proposed commercial areas;
- o A pedestrian oriented streetscape that includes on-street parking, street trees, street lights, sidewalks, and pedestrian amenities; and
- o Landscape buffers that soften the transition from single-family detached housing to the more intense multi-family residential.



Claymont, Delaware

Darley Green, a traditional neighborhood development, located in Claymont, Delaware can serve as a model for design and implementation of Washington Court development as it too was conceived as part of a revitalization plan for a struggling, unincorporated area of New Castle County.

Key strategies utilized in Claymont and recommended for Edgewood, include:

- *adopting zoning provisions that enable mixed-use development with an approach that is more flexible in terms of uses, yet provides a level of predictability to the County and community;*
 - *the incorporation of design guidelines;*
 - *empowering an economic development corporation to promote community activities and the implementation of the Redevelopment Plan;*
 - *utilizing tax increment financing as a way to support needed infrastructure improvements;*
- and*
- *encouraging tenacious community champions.*



Mixed Use Along Route 24

Aside from Washington Court, two additional locations are identified as potential mixed-use development: the northeast corner of Trimble Road and Route 24; and the western side of Route 24 along a proposed connection with Nuttal Avenue. These locations are smaller, but considered reasonable opportunity for additional restaurant, office, and/or residential uses. The location at Trimble Road would offer future residents of Washington Court entertainment options in their own backyard and could be accessed via a pedestrian pathway or new road connection. Businesses here may be more feasible than on the Washington Court parcel due to visibility and potential access from Trimble Road and Route 24.



Transit Oriented Development: Transit oriented development (TOD) is a type of mixed use development located within a half mile of a public transit hub. TOD allows for residents to live, shop and commute without the use of a private automobile because they can walk to the train station for work and recreational opportunities.



The train station area, particularly on the north side of the tracks along both sides of Route 755, has long been viewed as an opportunity for higher density, mixed use development. The biggest challenge is the consolidation of parcels to allow the envisioned redevelopment to occur as available land is limited, though many surrounding parcels could be considered underutilized. A key anchor project here would be the transformation of the MTA owned surface parking lot on Old Edgewood Road into a mid-rise mixed-use building. Ground level parking could be “wrapped” by retail spaces oriented toward Old Edgewood Road and residential or office spaces constructed above.

Route 755 Corridor

Route 755 is considered to be Edgewood’s traditional “main street”, but has struggled since the widening of Route 24 drew traffic away from the businesses located there. The future land use recommendation is to continue the current policy of promoting a mix of uses along the corridor, including residential live-work units, institutional, high density residential, commercial, office, and retail/restaurant uses. Of particular interest are opportunities to offer office “hoteling”. This could be beneficial and/or attractive to defense contractors for APG who wish to pilot an office in Edgewood without committing to long term or large office space and overhead.



Additional focus for this corridor includes façade upgrades to existing buildings, and enhanced landscaping, lighting, and pedestrian facilities.

Nuttal Avenue

Nuttal Avenue has the ability to become a main corridor within the study area, linking Route 24 (and all of its APG traffic) to the train station and open up parcels along the road to additional development. Key recommendations for the area include:

- Develop the 11-acre Nuttal Avenue parcel as a County park;
- Nuttal Avenue should be considered for commercial and/or mixed use at the proposed intersection with Route 24;
- Consider transit oriented development from the train station to the Railroad Avenue on the eastern end of Nuttal Avenue; and
- Consider medium density residential along the south side of the corridor between the transit oriented development and the commercial mixed-use.



GREEN AND GROWING

The need for additional recreational and community space within the area became clear through the public input process. This theme envisions the development of several County owned green spaces as a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities that will complement the natural resources characterizing the area. These include an interactive playground, nature trails, a new County park on Nuttal Avenue, and suggested upgraded sports fields at the Board of Education owned Edgewood Elementary School.

Goal: Provide variety of opportunities for active and passive recreation within Old Edgewood.

- Locate County parkland within the study area for community benefit.
- Create more active play space for young families.
- Enhance existing recreational opportunities.
- Maximize recreational use of passive open space and resource-constrained lands for trails in an environmentally sensitive manner.
- Encourage more street trees, landscaping with native plants, and rain gardens to address stormwater and water quality issues.
- In the southern half of the study area (south of Trimble and Willoughby Beach Roads), there are no designated public green spaces or playgrounds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Consider moving ahead with plans to develop the Nuttal Avenue parcel as a County Park for the benefit of Edgewood residents.*
2. *Consider building trails on the county owned green space between Cedar Drive and Willoughby Beach Road.*
3. *Require a variety of usable green spaces as part of the development of Washington Court for informal community gathering, organized events, and other recreational opportunities.*
4. *Promote outdoor seating areas for commercial uses along Routes 755 and Route 24 that will enhance the perception of activity along the corridors and eyes on the street, which increase a sense of security, encourage "people watching", and expand dining options.*
5. *Work with the School District and Boys & Girls Club to enhance the active play fields behind the Board of Education owned Edgewood Elementary.*
6. *Consider developing an interactive playground on the south side of the intersection of McCann & Trimble Roads.*
7. *Locate a larger green space that could feasibly accommodate community events, such as outdoor movie nights, summer concerts, food trucks, festivals and the like. Such a space should be centrally located to maximize access, have ample parking, and be designed to flexibly accommodate such variety of uses.*



Small greens and courtyards as part of mixed residential neighborhood. Consider amenities such as dog parks to appeal to younger residents and retirees.



Interactive playground



Upgraded fields



Passive open space with walking trail and fitness cluster



New County Park at Nuttal Avenue



Informal outdoor seating area near train station



Existing Sidewalk	Potential Wayfinding	Event Site	Transit Oriented Development Area
New Sidewalk Link	New Edgewood Sign	Mural Under Bridge	Mixed Use Areas
Envisioned Trail	New Street Trees	Community Garden	Community Greens
Primary Bikeway	Interactive Playground	Shuttle Bus	
New Road Link			

Green and Growing Map and Inspirations

Making Connections

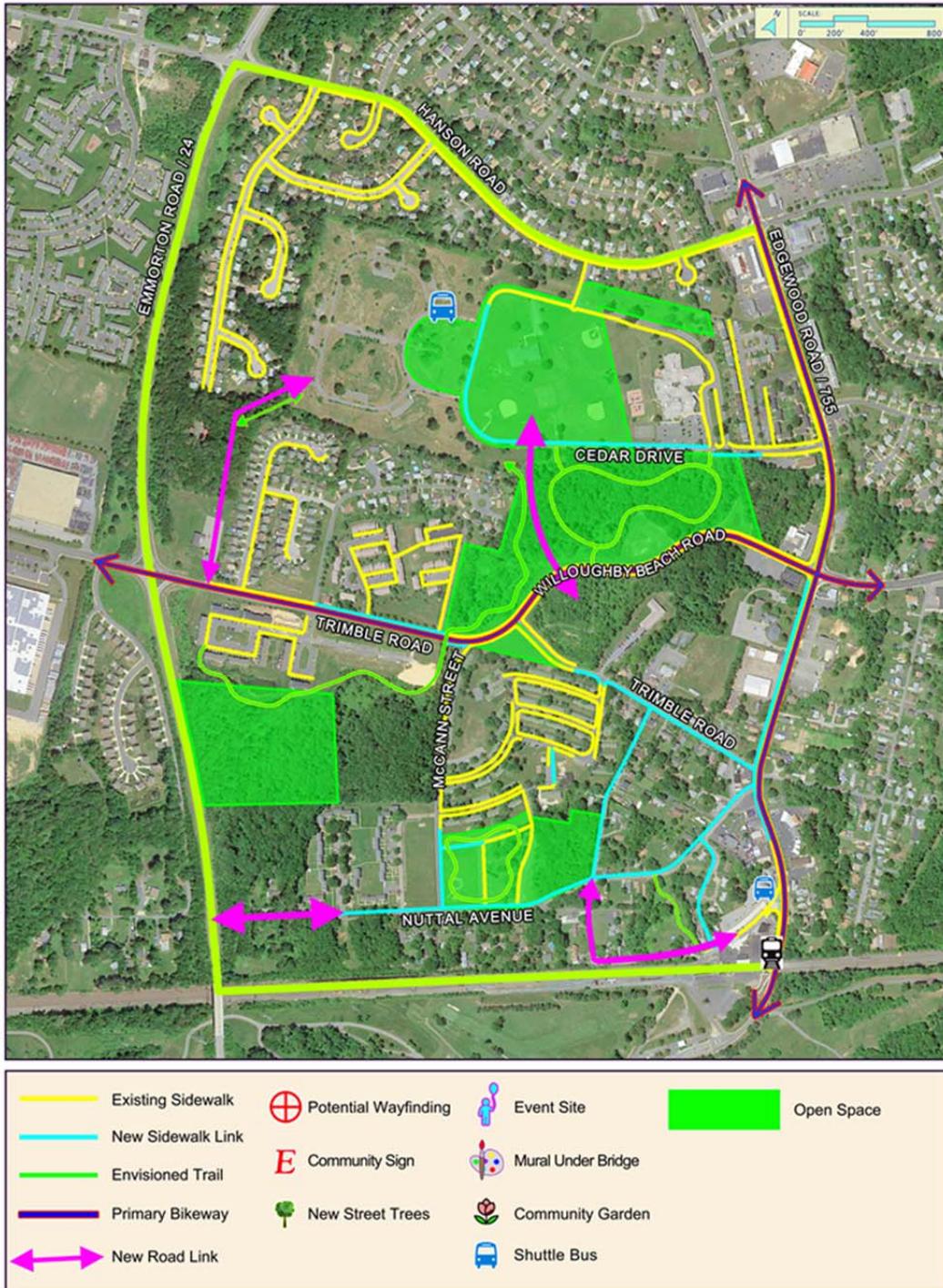
This theme reflects the community's goal for safe, convenient multimodal transportation and recreation options. Key projects to boost circulation and support development in the study area focus on several new street connections, including Nuttal Avenue to Route 24 and Cedar Drive to Willoughby Beach Drive. Additionally, the plan identifies gaps in the sidewalk network that should be filled through the redevelopment process, particularly in the area surrounding the train station, and the need for additional coordination of bus/shuttle service with the train schedules once new residents and "rooftops".

Goal: Maximize opportunities for people to walk, bike and use public transit for recreation and transportation.

- Consider new street connections within the study area in order to increase visibility and support for local businesses, enhance access to the train station, and boost the attractiveness of development opportunities.
- Create a safe, convenient network of sidewalks, trails and routes that provide multimodal options for all ages for both recreation and transportation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Promote and advocate for a new street connection between Nuttal Avenue and Route 24.*
2. *Require a new street connection between Cedar Drive and Willoughby Beach Road as part of the Washington Court development.*
3. *Consider a new road connection between Railroad Avenue and Old Edgewood Road.*
4. *Require sidewalk connections and distinctive crosswalks as part of infill and redevelopment to fill in the gaps, especially within the immediate vicinity of the train station, neighborhood center, and Route 755 corridor.*
5. *Enhance bus connections to the train station.*
6. *Provide on-road bicycle facilities, including signage and other design treatments.*



Making Connections Map and Inspirations

Positive Impressions

Zoning and land use will do little to overcome the negative perceptions held about the Edgewood community. Creating positive notions about Edgewood will rely in part on the resilience and pride of the existing residents and business owners, but also on the ability to create opportunities for others to see the community in a new light. Improving general appearances, introducing civic art, hosting community events, building strong community partnerships, and promoting the community's assets are all part of this multipronged approach.

GOALS:

Define and implement opportunities to present Edgewood pride, host community events, and build a positive image in the greater community.

Nurture unique partnerships that will strengthen Edgewood's resilience and community ties.

- Host community events that encourage neighbor to neighbor interactions and invite the larger community in to "get to know" Edgewood.
- Enhance the appearance of the corridors and public/semi-public areas through beautification, including street trees, landscaping, and signage.
- Foster constructive communications and education between agencies and organizations that represent various aspects of Edgewood to the public, including the School District and Association of Realtors.
- Market the positive side of Edgewood.

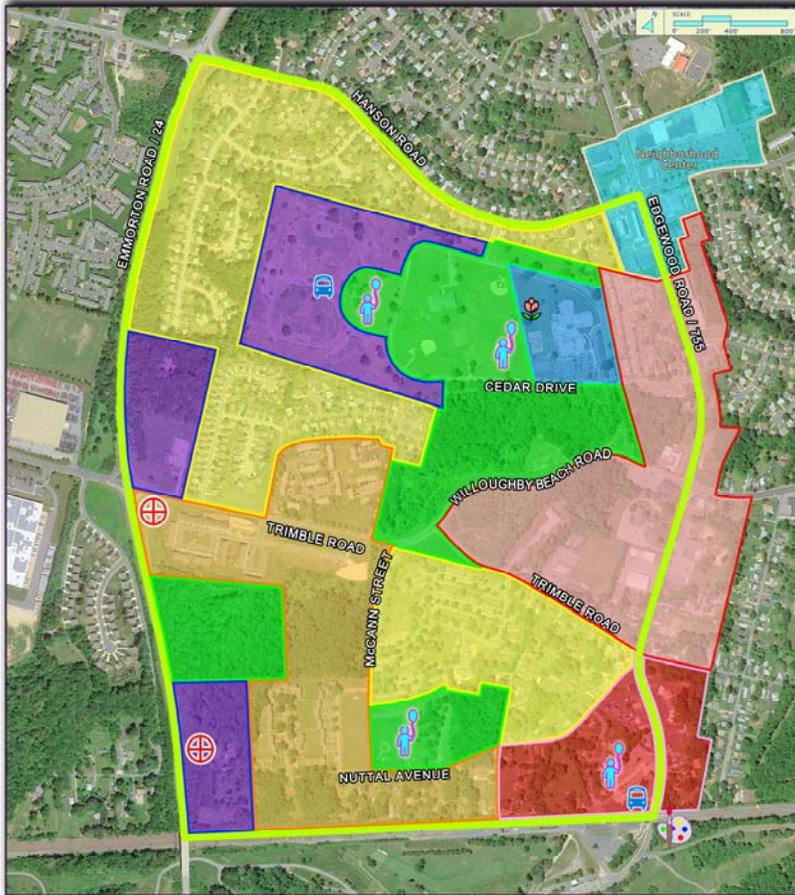
Pop-up Beer Garden



Summer Concert or Movie



Welcoming Gateways



	Event Site		Transit Oriented Development Area		High Density Residential Areas
	Mural Under Bridge		Corridor Mixed Use Area		Medium Density Residential Areas
	Community Garden		Mixed Use Areas		Community Open Space
	Gateway Option		Educational Use Area		Neighborhood Center

Facade Improvements



Alternative Gateway



Rail Overpass Mural



Positive Impressions Map and Inspirations

Implementation

The Edgewood Small Area Plan represents a long range vision that will take many years to implement fully. Still there is much that can and needs to be done in the immediate future to bring the vision to life. The implementation strategies listed herein are divided into three categories: short term (1 to 3 years); intermediate (3 to 5 years) and long term (5+ years). Strategies are shown in each table and listed with the agency or organization responsible for its implementation.



Priority/Short Term Implementation Tasks

1. Form an Implementation Committee
 2. Develop and adopt Zoning Ordinance Amendments to the Edgewood Neighborhood Overlay District
 3. Expedited land development and building permit review (FAST trak and priority review)
 4. Evaluate a Permit and Impact Fee Grant Program
 5. Evaluate Tax Abatement for improvements
 6. Implement a Small Business Façade Improvement Program
 7. Provide educational opportunities for realtors regarding Edgewood Public Schools
 8. Move forward with plans for Nuttall Avenue Park
 9. Initiate discussions with MTA regarding land at train station
 10. Initiate discussions with SHA regarding new Nuttall Avenue/Route 24 connection
 11. Strengthen coordination and marketing with APG
 12. Further study the impact of proposed growth at APG-South, Edgewood
 13. Coordinate with Harford Community College on potential satellite location in Edgewood
-

Intermediate Implementation Tasks (3 to 5 years)

1. Evaluate effectiveness and need for Tax increment Financing
2. Consider a Redevelopment Authority
3. Works with Harford County Board of Education to upgrade sports fields at Edgewood Elementary
4. Explore housing assistance programs for teachers, law enforcement, APG, etc.
6. Work with SHA to add APG-South (Edgewood) to highway signage
7. Develop a plan for gateway and wayfinding signage for the Edgewood area
8. Approach potential partners for a Train Overpass Mural
9. Develop a Marketing Brochure promoting Edgewood's assets
10. Work with potential developer of Washington Court to construct the Cedar Drive/Willoughby Beach Road connection.

Long Term and Ongoing Implementation Tasks (5+ years)

1. Advocate to MTA for improved train schedules and coordination with bus schedules
2. Evaluate options for the Nuttal Avenue/Route 24 street connection
3. Work with APG to strengthen community ties and partnership opportunities, collaboration on housing needs, etc.
4. Facilitate community access to the County and School District, such as public meetings.
5. Work to expand police presence/community policing in and around the study area and create a sense of security for visitors and residents alike.
6. Develop the Cedar Drive Trails on County owned land.
7. Develop the interactive playground on Trimble Road.
8. Collaborate with the Route 40 Business Improvement District
9. Promote the positive side of Edgewood through community events, assets, etc.
10. Coordinate community events on open space