

CNU CHARTER AWARDS 2020

# LANGLEY PARK

Connecting Crossroad; Imagining an Equitable Future for Langley Park & The International Corridor



# FACT SHEET

## Submission Category:

- The Region: Metropolis, City and Town
- Neighborhood, District and Corridor
- Block, Street and Building
  
- Emerging Project (e.g., research or early stage).

## If student project, please indicate

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduate | <input type="checkbox"/> Group/Studio          |

## Project Characteristics Check all those that apply to your entry:

- Public policy program
- Temporary installation
- Regional/town plan
- Transit-oriented development
- Incorporates universal design principles
- Infill/previously developed sites
- Incorporates and meets AIA2030 Challenge
- Greenfield/previously undeveloped site
- Placemaking plan (exclusively public space, civic buildings, or infrastructure)
- Includes affordable/subsidized /social housing – if so, how much?
- Qualifies for LEED-ND certification – if so, which level?
- Qualifies for other LEED certification – if so, list here

## Has your plan been adopted or your project broken ground?

- Adopted
- Broken Ground
- Neither

## If neither, why?

Master Thesis Project

## What percentage has been built/implemented?

N/A

## Estimated date of completion, if applicable:

N/A

## Land Area (in acres):

44-54 acres

## Project Cost (optional):

N/A

## Civic Uses (indicate type and size):

N/A - In context

## Parks/Open Space (indicate type and size):

Approximately 17 acres of park space in main focus area

## Number of Residential Units:

700 existing      4000 Created

## Residential Unit Types:

Multifamily, Town Houses, Walk-up Apartments

## Retail, Office, Industrial Square Footage:

21 acres of Commercial

## Transect zone(s) (optional):

N/A

# PROJECT DESCRIPTION

## The Project

Low-income neighborhoods have remained invisible and neglected due to their residents' lack of power and capital, racism, xenophobia, and perceived otherness. These neighborhoods are poor in capital, but they are rich in culture, hubs of cultural production, and foci of cross-cultural connections.

Langley Park, in addition to all of the above, is home to a population of over 80 percent Latin Americans. A highly challenging issue for Langley Park is plans for the future Purple Line Light Rail transit which will pass through this neighborhood in the next few years. Although transit improves access to jobs, education, and other amenities for lower-income households and attracts new housing and businesses and produces a profitable tax base that can be reinvested in the community, the appearance of a new transit system raises land values, increases rents and prices in nearby areas and results in the displacement of existing residents. If there are no affordability protections in place, the effects of the Purple Line will be devastating.

## Langley Park

Initially the Elizabeth's Delight plantations (1696–1730), then merchant farms (19th century), Langley Park was founded and named after being bought by the McCormick-Goodhart family in 1921; their still standing mansion was built in 1924. The family named their 556-acre property Langley Park after their family home in Kent England. In the 1940s and 50s it became an attraction to post-war housing and in 1963 it was sold to home developers. The neighborhood's affordable housing initially attracted young couples and families, who were largely white and Jewish. Increasing numbers of African Americans moved into the area during the 1970s after desegregation. Later, Langley Park's African, Caribbean, and Hispanic populations grew, leading to over 80% Latin American at present. Like other poor and immigrant communities, Langley park is a story of neglect and lack of investment and identity.

### Project Description

This project attempts to design an Equitable Transit-Oriented Development to minimize displacement and ensure

long-term affordability near transit. Through studying and engaging the community, design solutions considered the immigrant community and its needs. We aimed to design urban spaces that build upon the assets of their population and ease interaction and cultural communication. Our focus was on designing the urban spaces and creating guidelines for future developments.

Training/educational and community centers, transitional housing, and spaces for small businesses and startups, for instance, are all designed to address the needs of the large documented and undocumented resident. Public plazas, cosmopolitan canopies, community gardens and business incubators are examples of places that are designed to erase the lines of segregations. Designing places of income and an inclusive urban landscape as home for business incubators, job training centers, community centers, health centers, and social services are steps to create self-esteem and self-efficacy and foster identity and dignity for the residents.

Langley Park is the intersection of immigration, real estate, and design; the question is how to translate concepts of integration and diversity into design. Thus, considering the principles of place and identity, distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem, and self-efficacy seemed necessary. Places can be distinct while having continuity to historic and cultural backgrounds. In such places immigrants and communities are "free to be". These places can exist in different scales, e.g., at home, in community gardens, and the cosmopolitan canopies like food markets and public plazas. Self-efficacy and self-esteem can be found in places that provide pride, income, and support. Therefore, we had to design job markets, business incubators, affordable housing, community buildings, education spaces, and spaces for social Services. Therefore, our design are to:

- Design affordable housing in a sustainable and walkable community,
- Create Connections across the neighborhoods,
- Create places where people are "Free to Be".
- And take advantage of the transit system to better man-

age the natural resources

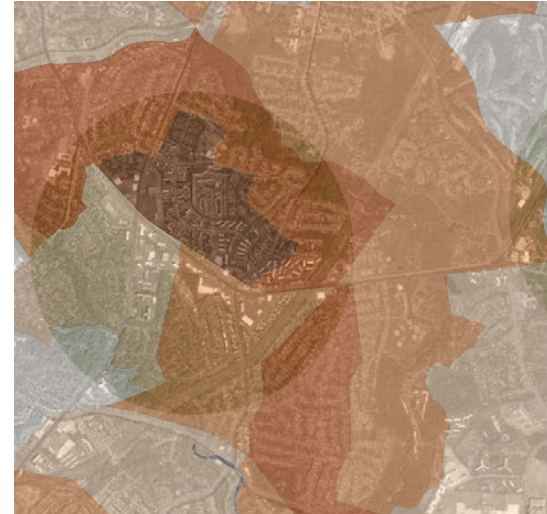
## Design Approaches

First we extracting the community needs through interviews and focus group and examined the area from a regional standpoint of services (e.g., libraries and schools). Next, the links between the Green infrastructure present to the north and south of the site was diagramed. Green would move through the site, connect to CASA and from there move to the north toward the Langley McCormick Elementary School. We recommend relocating the existing community center and adding it to the school. The library and community center were places in the center of the Green, as a transition from the commercial area around the transit centers into the residential focused area. Creating street hierarchy and breaking the large parcels into smaller blocks is a key component to organizing the large scales of the open space. By placing the uses extracted from the research and community engagement phase, amenities were placed, and urban spaces designed. The next important step was to focus on mixed-use development (housing, commercial and services) toward the two purple line stations and transition to housing in between.

*"This Project proposes a community based radical proposal for an apparently intransigent urban design problem. The four corners of the intersection are controlled by profitable 20th century strip shopping centers, while including the busiest bus exchange in the Washington Metro system and a regional light rail station now under construction – both totally appropriate bases for mixed use redevelopment into real urban places. This project proposes what current ownerships are resisting: a community based plan with mixed uses, a significant public market space and an active linear open space located community activities and service. This plan could be the spark for reconsider and planning for an active and prosperous low- and moderate income community."*

Ralph Bennett, Architect; FAIA; LEED AP (bd+c); Prof.Em., University of Maryland  
CNU Charter signer; King Farm and other Community Architects  
President, Purple Line NOW; Co-chair, Montgomery County  
Affordable Housing Conference

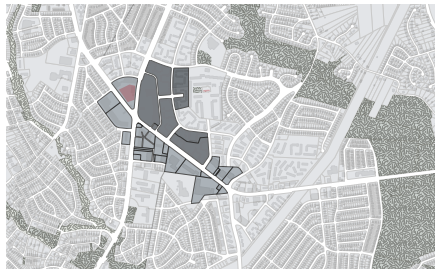
# CONTEXT



**Langley Park The Purple** line and its 2 stops at the beginning and end of the neighborhood

**% of Latin American Population**

- 80-90 %
- 60-80 %
- 40-60 %
- 20-40 %
- 0-20 %



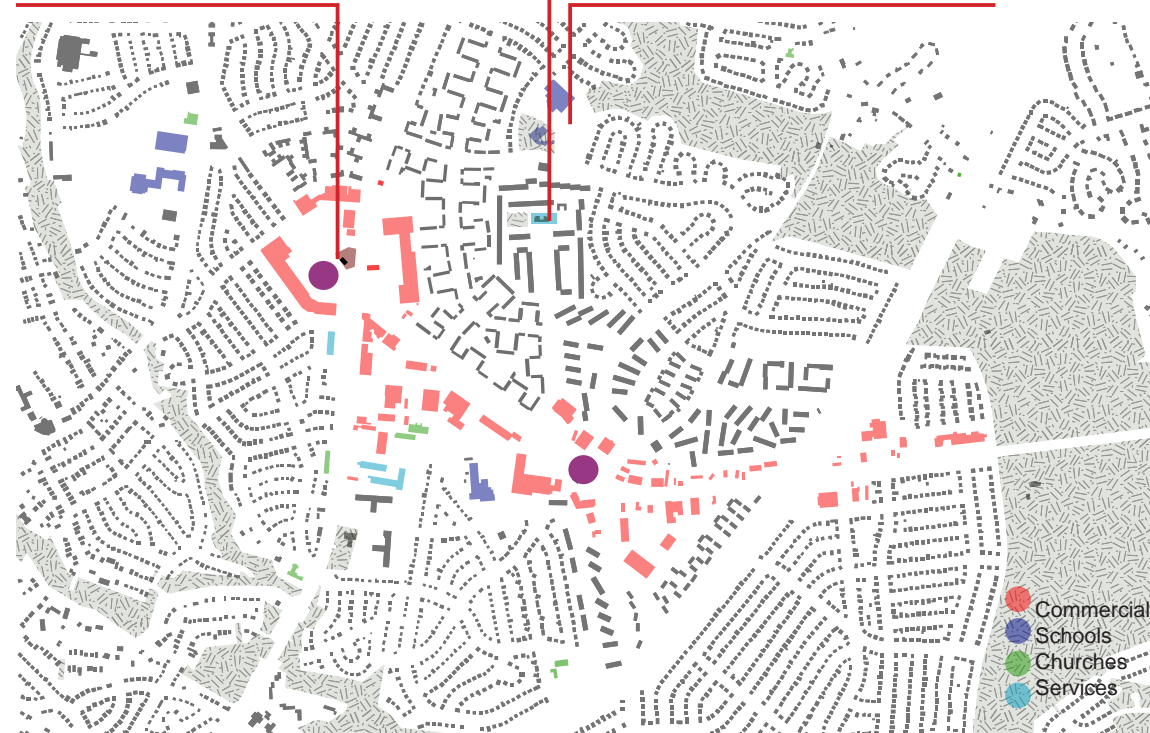
**Site Scope**  
44 acre design and 54 acre planning & massing focus

- 44 acres
- 54 acres

Takoma/ Langley Crossroad Transit Center

CASA Maryland NGO

Elementary School & Community Center



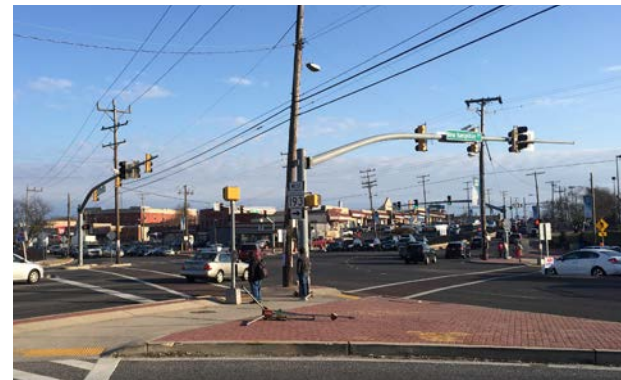
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Strip Malls ...



Garden Apartments



Neglect and Lack of Identity



But there is Opportunity in The Community & Social Networks

# RESPONSE TO CHARTER PRINCIPLES

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Transit-oriented development, especially in low-income neighborhoods, will inevitably bring about two folded changes. The Purple Line will put into motion changes in Langley Park. Prices will rise and pressure will be brought upon the neighborhood structure. How do we control these impacts? While there is no single intervention that dictates the success or failure of ETOD, prioritization and engagement among key stakeholders in transportation, housing, government, finance, and development are paramount. This buy-in is crucial to bring the necessary resources – whether human, financial, or real estate – to tackle this complex issue. Many solutions such as attracting non-profit housing developers, local resident group investments, land-value capture strategies, participation in HUD-subsidized and other solutions were suggested throughout our research. What is evident, is the power of policy and legislation upon this area. **[Principle 1]** In terms of design, due to the large parcels of commercial strip malls, phasing was shaped by taking out these parcels first. Main concepts circled around creating a green network connecting the transit center into the community and the green networks present in the larger region. Street networks and massing drew from existing street lines and aimed to maximize connections and integrate into the surrounding urban fabric. **[Principle 4]** Since many residents do not own cars and use shopping carts to do their local shopping, street networks and sections focused on creating an area best suiting the pedestrians. Street sections are shared by bikes, wide sidewalks and sufficient parking to service local residents. **[Principle 8 & 11 and Canons Streets 1]** With crime being a challenge in this area, in designing street and green networks, having eyes on public and private areas to reinforce safety was considered. **[Principle 21]** Development was shaped in a way to encourage mixed use development toward the transit stations and transition to lower density housing to connect to the existing fabric. A variety of housing alternatives are provided to encourage a diverse population in age, ethnicity and economic status, with affordable housing distributed throughout. Commercial areas are designed to uses to support the local and

regional economy and ethnic attractions. In addition, local needs, shopping and commercial attractions, recreation, civic use, job incubators, education facilities, community buildings and spaces are chosen and planned so the residents could access their daily needs within a comfortable walkable distance. **[Principle 7,12 & 13, Canons Neighborhood 1]**

Different scales of parks are distributed throughout the neighborhood. Ranging from public plazas, to community gardens and smaller residential squares. Each one named and shaped to give identity and a sense of place **[Principle 18]**. To the residents, Langley Park is known as a place where people are always walking around, street vendors are at street corners, and people of different ages are using the public realm. The natural and physical public landscapes were considered in different scales and placed in a hierarchy of public to private from the main streets into the heart of the neighborhood. Buildings such as the library and community center were places in the center of this transition. As the hear of the project, the plaza, the market, the library and the community center give identity to the resident within the city and provide a landscape of connection, interaction, culture, democracy, and in a true sense “freedom to be”. **[Principle 25]** The exterior design of buildings draws from the historic brick and architecture of the area, but at the same time setback; and the buildings heights provide a vibrant and adaptable environment according to the cultural needs of the residents and can accommodate future diversities. **[Canons Buildings 3 & 4]**

*“I think this is an idea that can be implemented in other places in the DMV area... I appreciate the spaces that are given back to the community such as the art walk. ”*

*“ This is a physical image of the positive character of what could be the future of Langley Park...”*

Faculty Panel at Thesis Presentation

**PRINCIPLE 1** Metropolitan regions are finite places with geographic boundaries derived from topography, watersheds, coastlines, farmlands, regional parks, and river basins. The metropolis is made of multiple centers that are cities, towns, and villages, each with its own identifiable center and edges.

**PRINCIPLE 4** Development patterns should not blur or eradicate the edges of the metropolis. Infill development within existing urban areas conserves environmental resources, economic investment, and social fabric, while reclaiming marginal and abandoned areas. Metropolitan regions should develop strategies to encourage such infill development over peripheral expansion.

**PRINCIPLE 7** Cities and towns should bring into proximity a broad spectrum of public and private uses to support a regional economy that benefits people of all incomes. Affordable housing should be distributed throughout the region to match job opportunities and to avoid concentrations of poverty.

**PRINCIPLE 8** The physical organization of the region should be supported by a framework of transportation alternatives. Transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems should maximize access and mobility throughout the region while reducing dependence upon the automobile.

**PRINCIPLE 11** Neighborhoods should be compact, pedestrian friendly, and mixed-use. Districts generally emphasize a special single use, and should follow the principles of neighborhood design when possible. Corridors are regional connectors of neighborhoods and districts; they range from boulevards and rail lines to rivers and parkways.

**PRINCIPLE 12** Many activities of daily living should occur within walking distance, allowing independence to those who do not drive, especially the elderly and the young. Interconnected networks of streets should be designed to encourage walking, reduce the number and length of automobile trips, and conserve energy.

**PRINCIPLE 13** Within neighborhoods, a broad range of housing types and price levels can bring people of diverse ages, races, and incomes into daily interaction, strengthening the personal and civic bonds essential to an authentic community.

**PRINCIPLE 18** A range of parks, from tot-lots and village greens to ballfields and community gardens, should be distributed within neighborhoods. Conservation areas and open lands should be used to define and connect different neighborhoods and districts.

**PRINCIPLE 19** A primary task of all urban architecture and landscape design is the physical definition of streets and public spaces as places of shared use.

**PRINCIPLE 21** The revitalization of urban places depends on safety and security. The design of streets and buildings should reinforce safe environments, but not at the expense of accessibility and openness.

**PRINCIPLE 25** Civic buildings and public gathering places require important sites to reinforce community identity and the culture of democracy. They deserve distinctive form, because their role is different from that of other buildings and places that constitute the fabric of the city.

# LESSONS LEARNED

Diversity and Integration are the future of our communities and they will change our urban landscapes. Communities that offer a welcome mat to all immigrant communities will benefit more from their diversity and foster integration and cultural bridging.

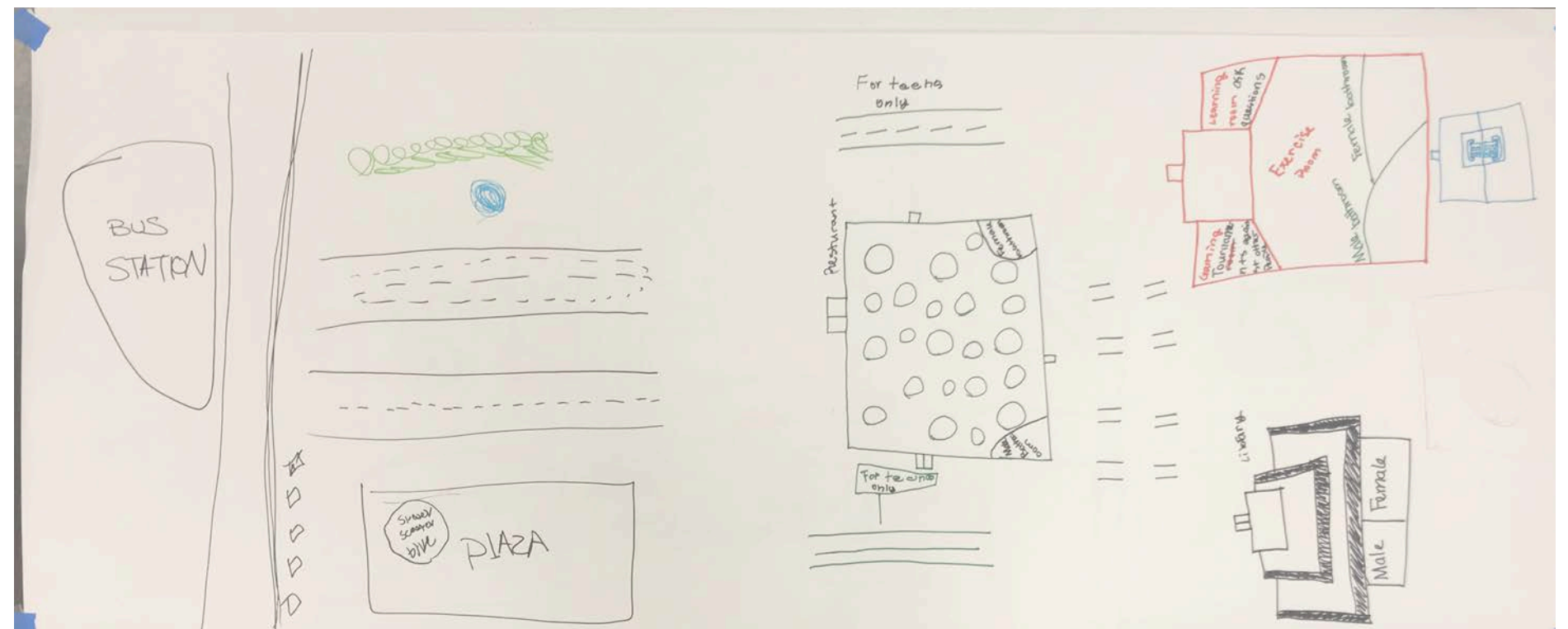
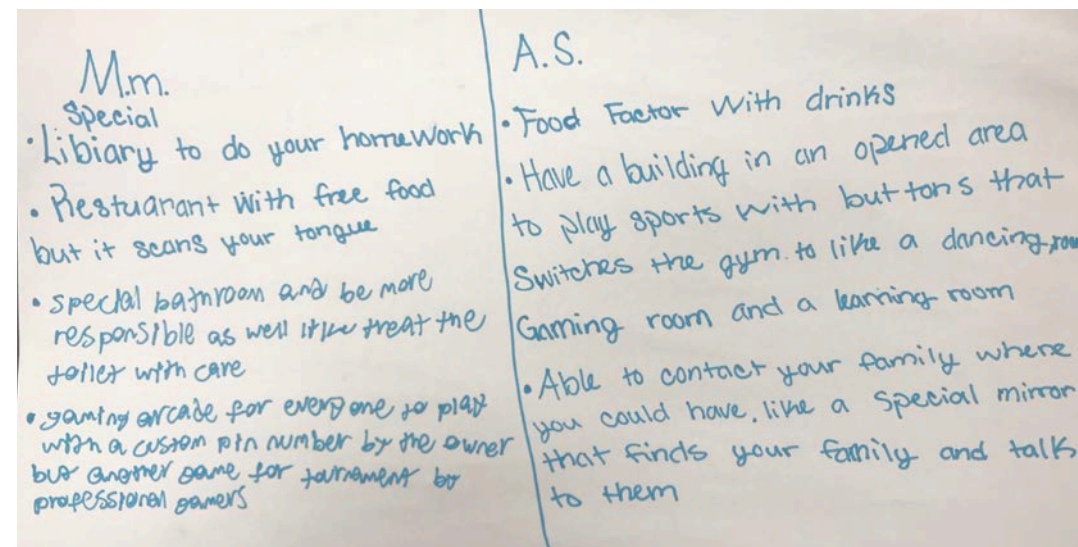
Where do cultures meet? Principles of Place and Identity tell us that such spaces can be distinct and provide continuity to cultural and historical backgrounds. Research shows that immigrants feel more welcome and at home in places where they are “free to be” and support self-efficacy and self-esteem. We found these places where people can live and work, and where jobs are located. We provided them with local job markets and business incubators to support local entrepreneurships and lastly, with social and communal services.

We learned that by engaging with the community, we can find not only the challenges, but opportunities and solutions. Through many interviews with community advocates, lawyers and residents, in addition to community engagement through a focus group with local teenagers, community needed spaces, assets, challenges and opportunities were dissected. We can see that in comparison to existing circumstances, we:

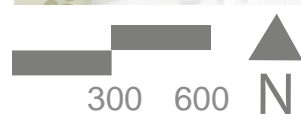
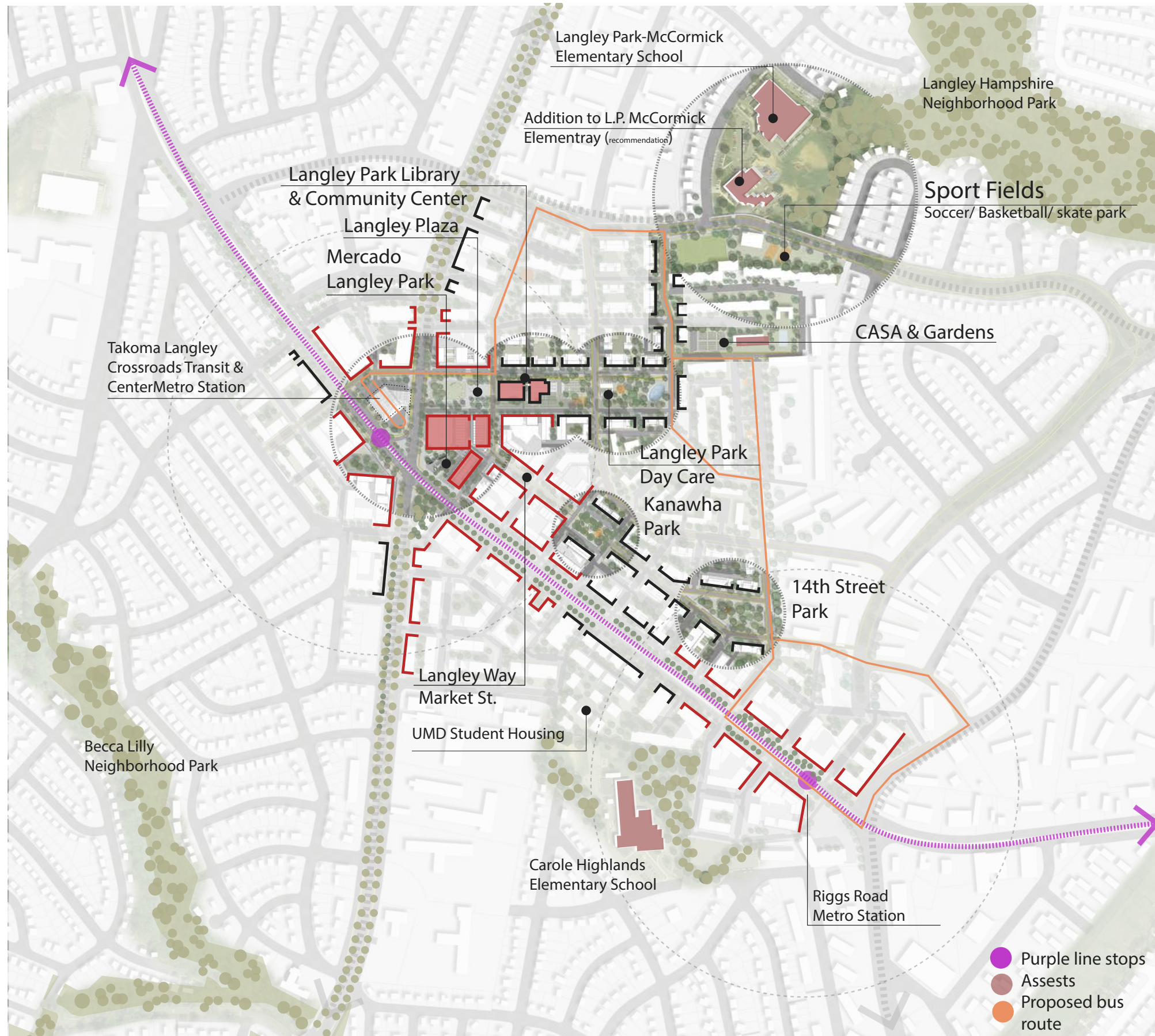
- Have created a public transit oriented walkable, and therefore, sustainable area.
- Placed services and amenities that provide the area with identity and pride, interaction and integration.
- Created a town center for future growth of the Langley Park region
- Provided enough housing to support the population in place, bring mixed income housing to create diversity and foster growth. In total, the area was home to approximately 700 housing units, with new development we have created enough square footage to create approximately 3900-4000 new units. Therefore, by only making 20% of the newly developed housing affordable, we can easily replace the existing residents. By further developing the parcels south of University Blv. and later surrounding garden apartments, we can add to the stock of affordable and market-rate housing. In total, about 78 acres of housing and 21 acres of commercial space are provided in the focus area.

## Community Engagement and group drawing results :

Focus group with teenagers at the Langley Park Community Center



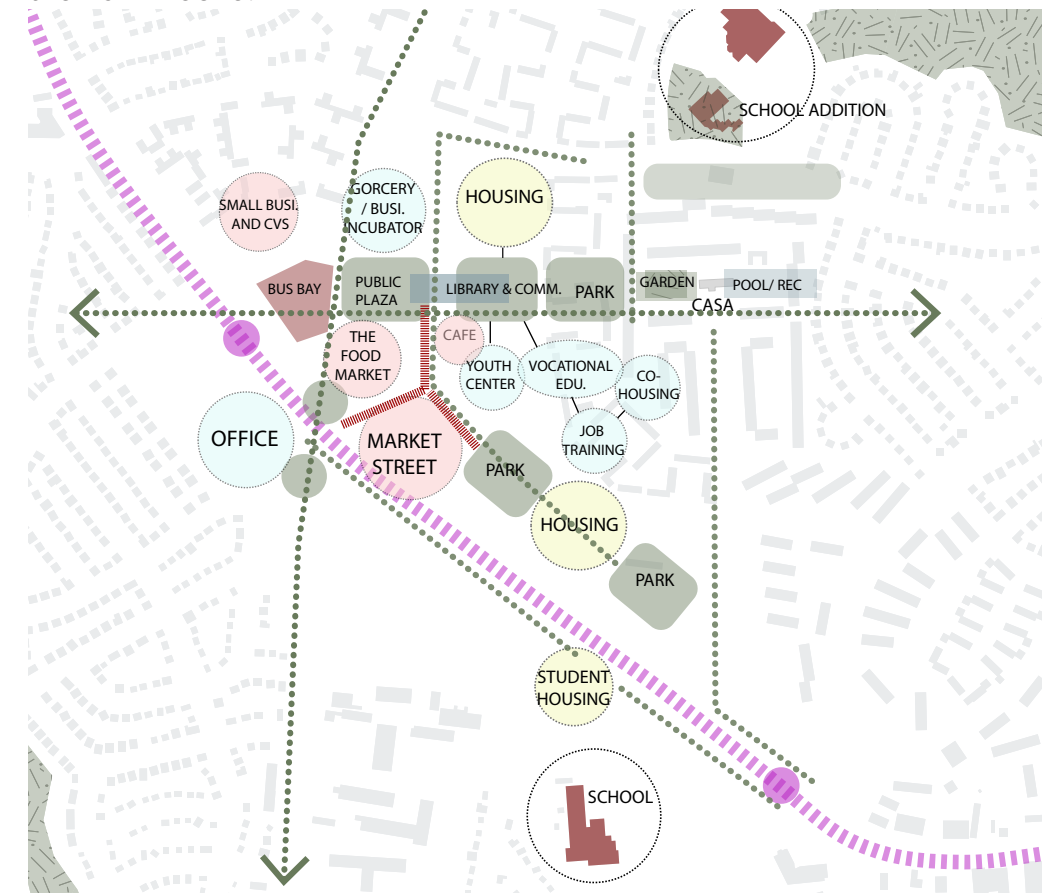




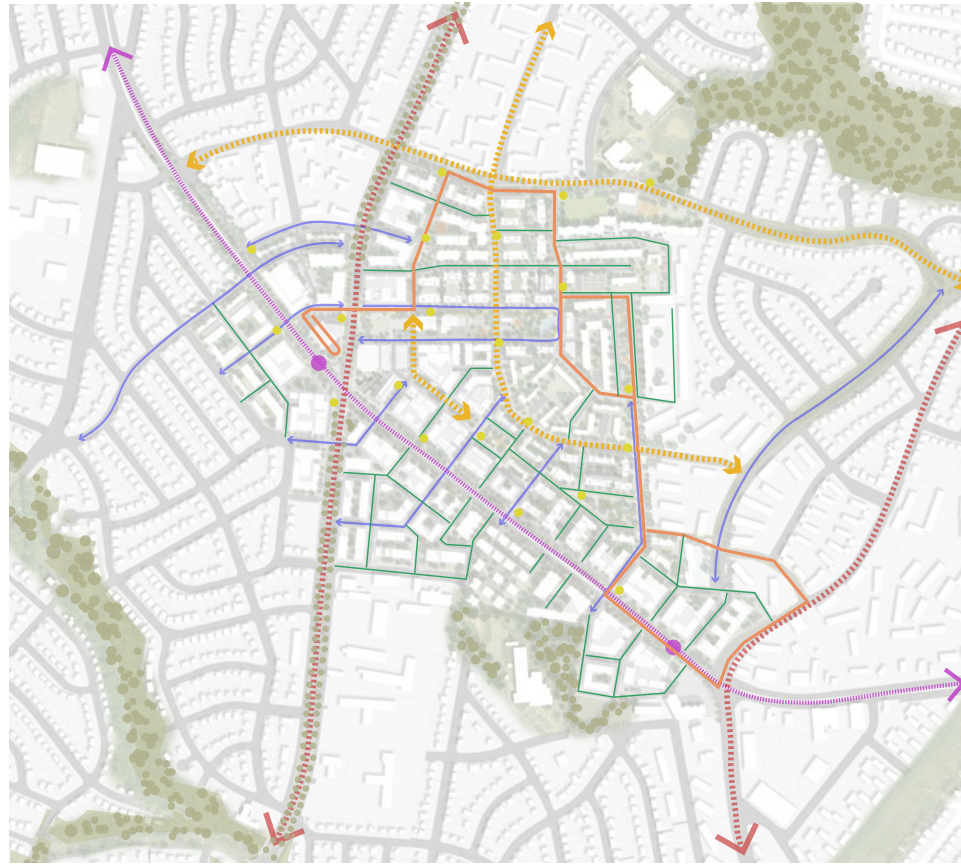
**Places Diagram:** Programming and placing all community need and services + Place making and naming each center + creating a green network and connecting through main street boulevards, into the Green and Plaza, Passing the Library and Community Center and moving upward toward the Park. In addition, a green set back was considered for the south side of University Bl. in order to control storm water due to the intense topography of the south side pouring into the Boulevard.



**Proposal Concept Diagram 1:** TOD development around the two Purple Line Stations + Connecting the transit center with a green and community spaces to CASA Maryland + Green network connections along main streets and through the neighborhood to the school and the Park Above.







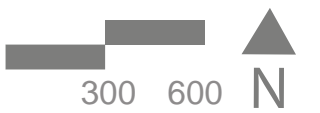
**Proposal Street Change Hierarchy**



**Land Use of Langley Park's Full Build Out Proposal:**  
Mixed- Use and commercial toward the two Purple Line stops  
and residential in-between



**Illustrative Master Plan of Langley Park's Full Build Out Proposal**





First, we look at the intersection of University Blv. and New Hampshire Avenue which houses **Mercado Langley Park and its public plaza as our first cosmopolitan Canopy.**

The market houses booths for selling goods, local produce, and restaurants of different ethnicities. Some booths have seating areas above them.



**Above:** Here we can see the Mercado Langley Park Market Building and its relationship to the green on the right and its own plaza on the left. The plaza is hosting a farmers market in this diagram. Buildings to the right of the plaza are two-story retail, restaurants, and bars. There is a service street in between the bars and the farmers market that doubles as a street art walk (see far right rendering).

**Right:** Adjacent buildings are two-story retail, restaurants, and bars to support the night life of the area. Toward the end of the plaza, a large pine tree is located as an ending element.

**Far Right:** Further on, the service street of the food market doubles as an art walk with street art covering the brick walls.





**Langley Park Library and Plaza in front :** Next, we have the public plaza and green open space as places of freedom and open spaces that can house festivals, farmer's markets, concerts, an ice rink (teenager focus group outcome), etc. There are also designated places for street food and food trucks by the edge adjacent to Mercado Langley park.





**Mercado Langley Park Market & Food Truck Area**

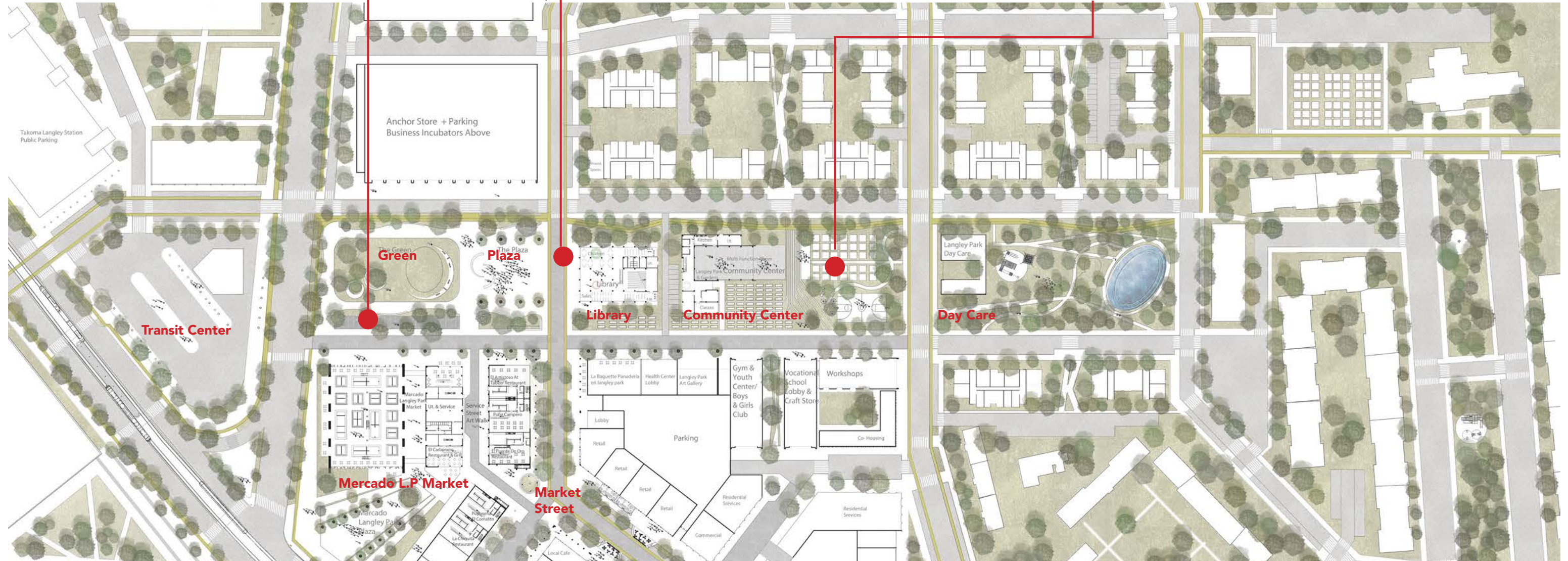


**Langley Park Library and Plaza in front (serving farmers market)**



**Langley Park Community Center Outdoor Event Space and Community Gardens**

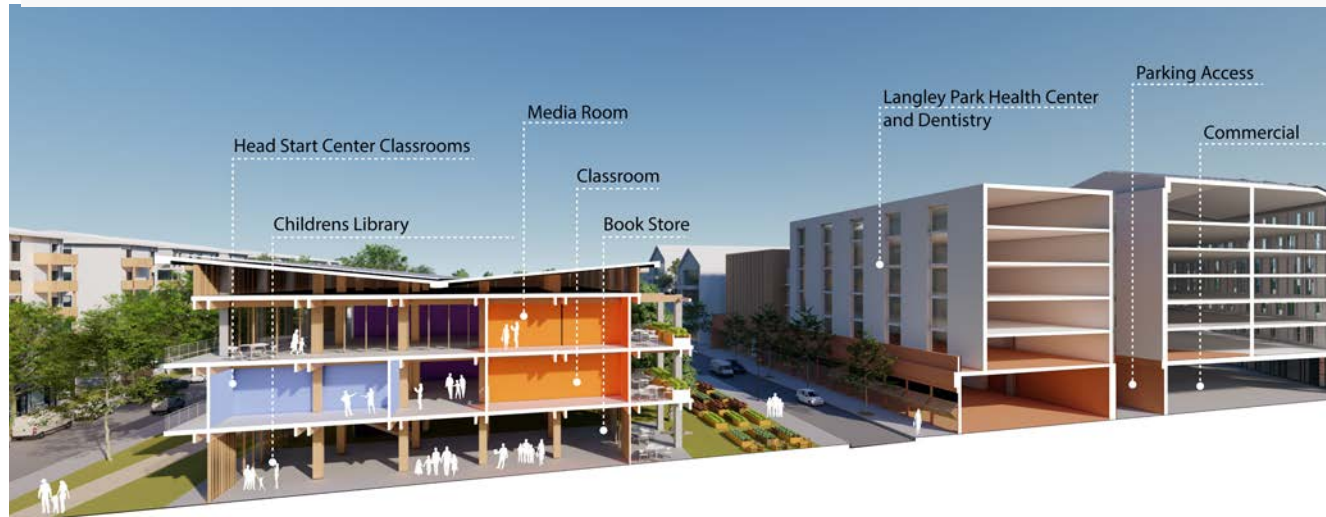
**Above:** In the middle of the liner plaza and park, we find the library and community center. Home to : children's section, bookstore, and a small amphitheater, Head Start, activity rooms, a community kitchen and a multi-function room, and community gardens.



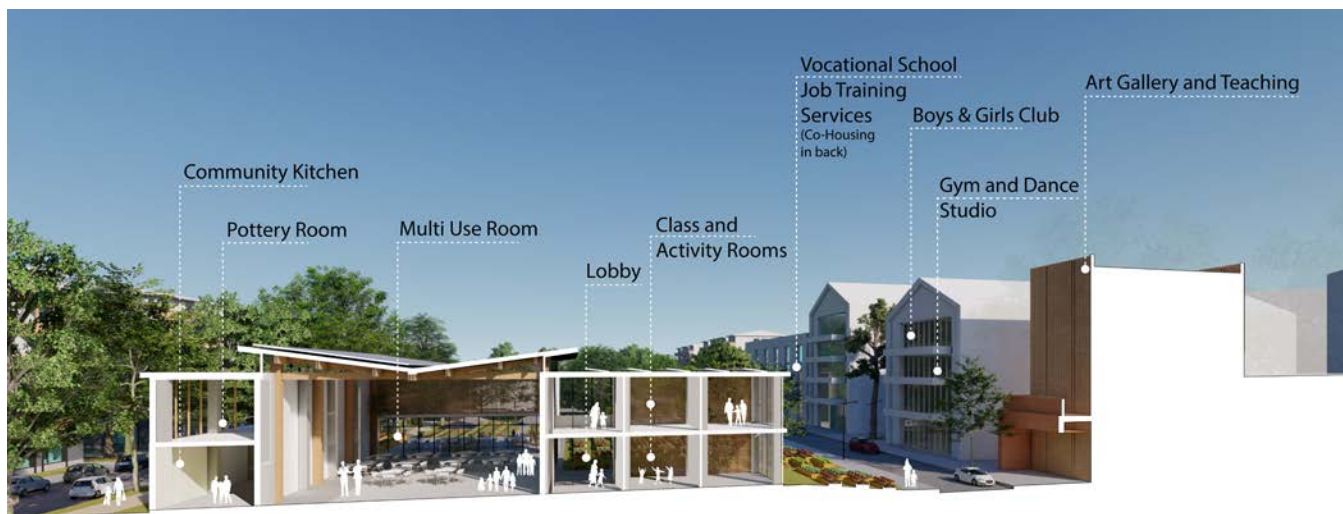
**Above Ground Floor Plan:** To the south of the Library we have: a bakery and café, the Langley Park health center and Dentistry, The Langley Park Art Gallery, a gym and dance studio, The Boys and Girls Club, The vocational school. The vocational school consists of job training workshops, job finding services and landscaping workshops within its courtyard+ location for day workers + co-housing targeted to the population of single male immigrants



**Mercado Langley Park Interior and Green Plaza in Front:** Booths are Designed to have seating on top of them.



**Langley Park Library Interior:** Rooms within boses and communal areas and library stacks in between.



**Langley Park Library Community Center:** Large multi- use communal room that extends to outdoor area + community gardens in the rear.



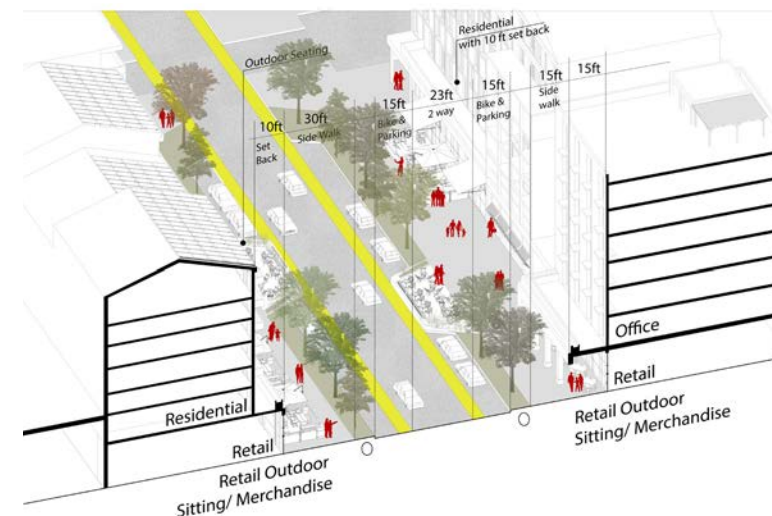
**Below Langley Way Market Street** is designed to have an extra 15-foot setback for local shops to have spaces on the sidewalk for seating or merchandise. This is where local and ethnic shops will have the opportunity to show their identity and shape the space as they wish. Some of these spaces are covers by loggias for further distinction. Housing is placed above these buildings with a 10 ft setback. The market street ends with a small neighborhood block that shifts to the scale of walk-up apartments and townhouses. Moving forward along the street we reach a denser residential area and end with the 14th Street Park.



**Langley Way Market Street**



**Below: Inner Block Park:** End to Langley Park Market Street. Here we transition to a residential area with walk up apartments and multi- family housing.



**Above:** Langley Park Market Street Section: extra 15-foot setback for local shops v to have spaces on the sidewalk for seating or merchandise.

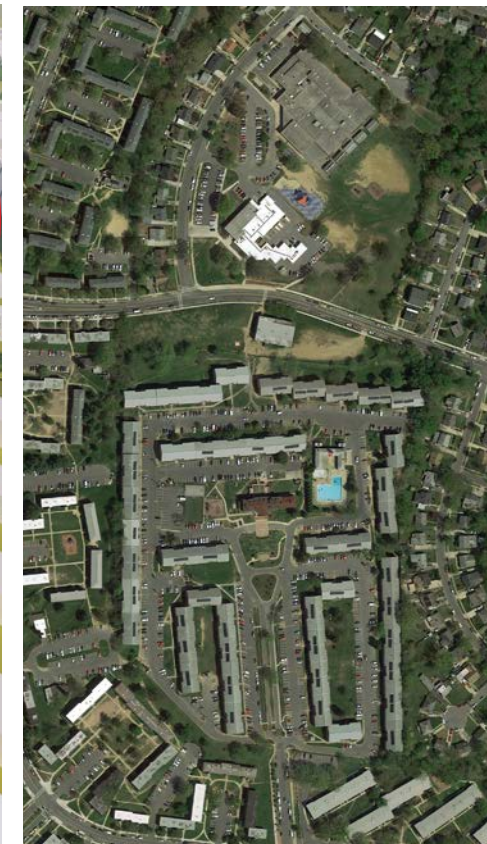


# URBAN REPAIR

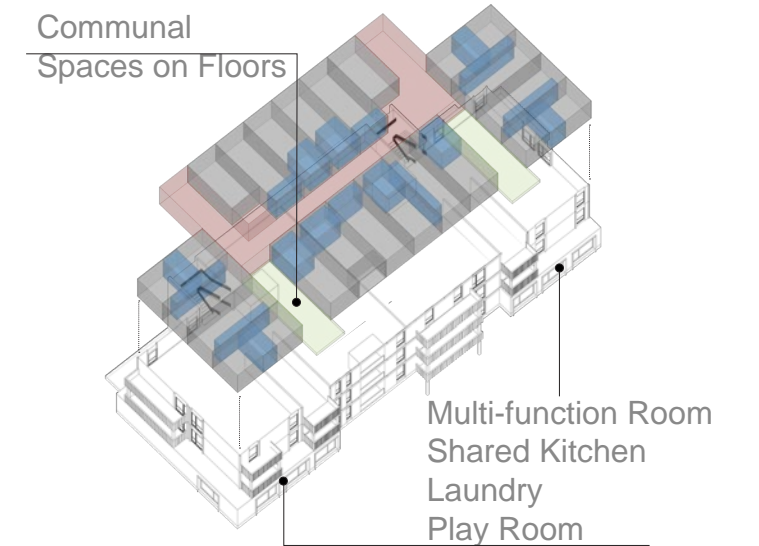
**Below** The Area in front of the CASA Maryland mansion is known to the community as a dangerous place due to the extra street running in the middle of the open area in between the parking lots. This thesis proposes to repair this area by converting it into a neighborhood park.



**Above: University Blv.** Street section. changes made to the planned section of the sector plan is flipping the green and bike paths. This way, the bikes are protected from the 3 way car lane.



**Right: Housing** was briefly looked at as a concept for future development. With the aim of bringing down construction and mechanical costs, the main idea is to create **a modular system** that can be added and subtracted as needed. Units range from studios to three and four bedrooms. Modules are designed to be 12'6 x 28' or 12'6x 24' as a minimum. To provide larger and more market-rate units, modules can simply be added for larger square footage. Modules can be taken out to provide communal spaces on each floor. On the Ground floor, we can provide laundry rooms, multi-function rooms, and a communal kitchen. Parking will be located behind and in-between buildings with open green community spaces above them. An additional typology of two units with a shared kitchen is considered for families that may live with their extended family, in order to bring down rent prices.

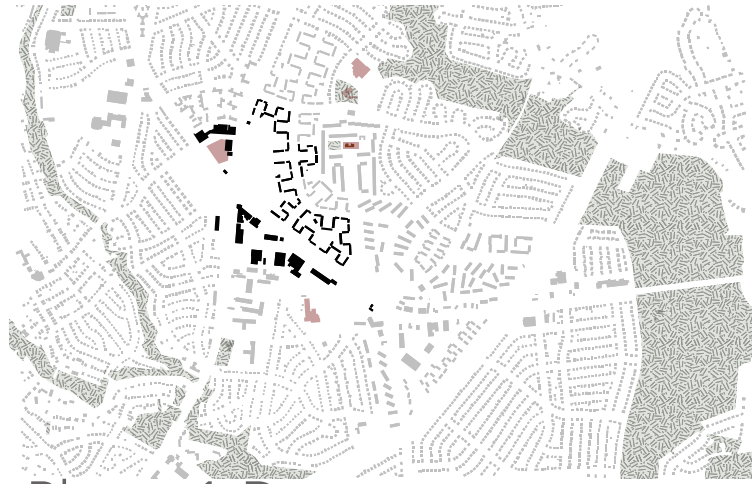


700 Housing Units Existing

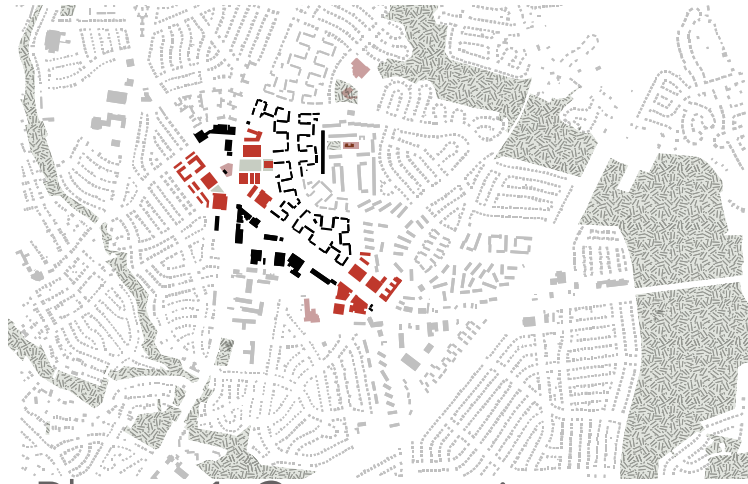


4000 Created to The North of the Purple Line

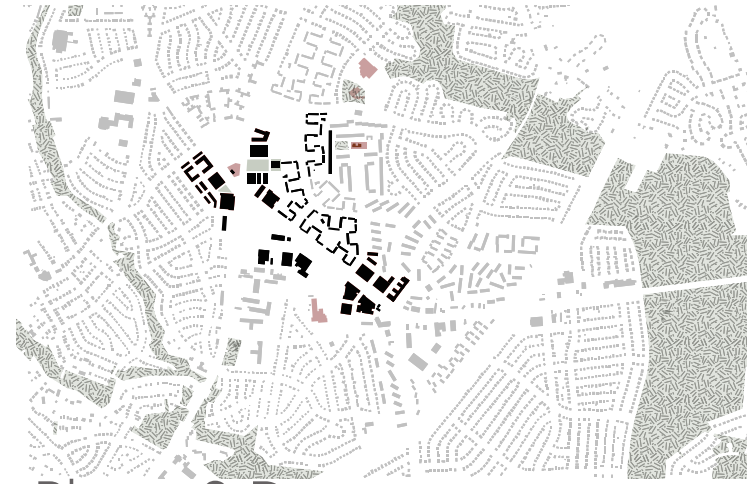
# PHASING



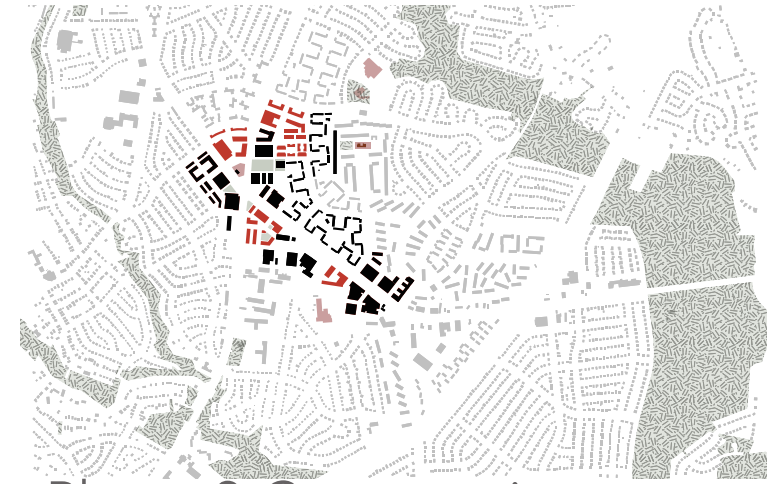
Phase 1 Demo



Phase 1 Construction



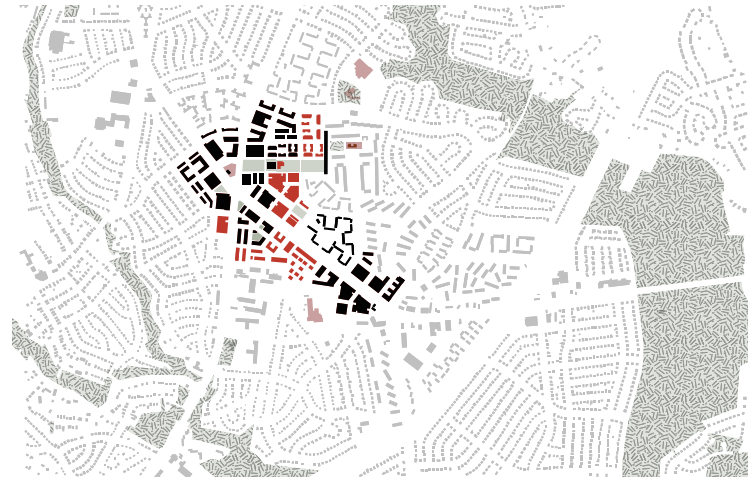
Phase 2 Demo



Phase 2 Construction



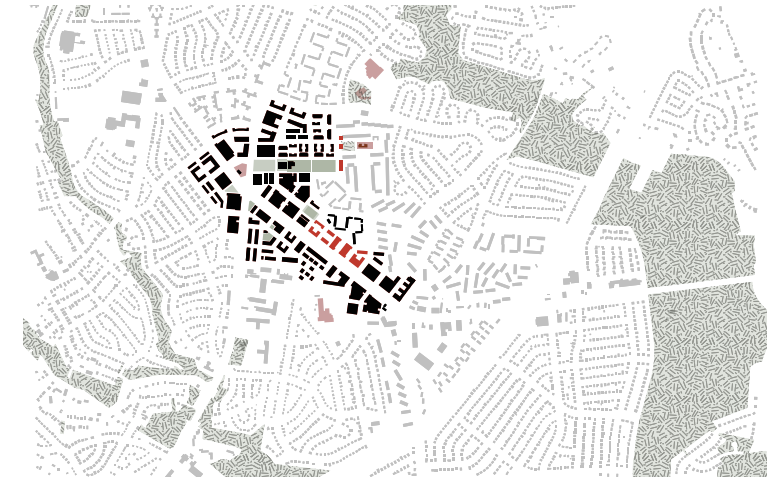
Phase 3 Demo



Phase 3 Construction



Phase 4 Demo



Phase 4 Construction



Phase 5 Demo



Full Build Out

**Left and Above:** Phasing is programmed in such a way to first take out the larger parcel commercial strip malls and replace them with mixed-used blocks. Housing parcels are demolished in such a way as to first relocate the residents into built housing and replaced the demolished parcels with new development.