

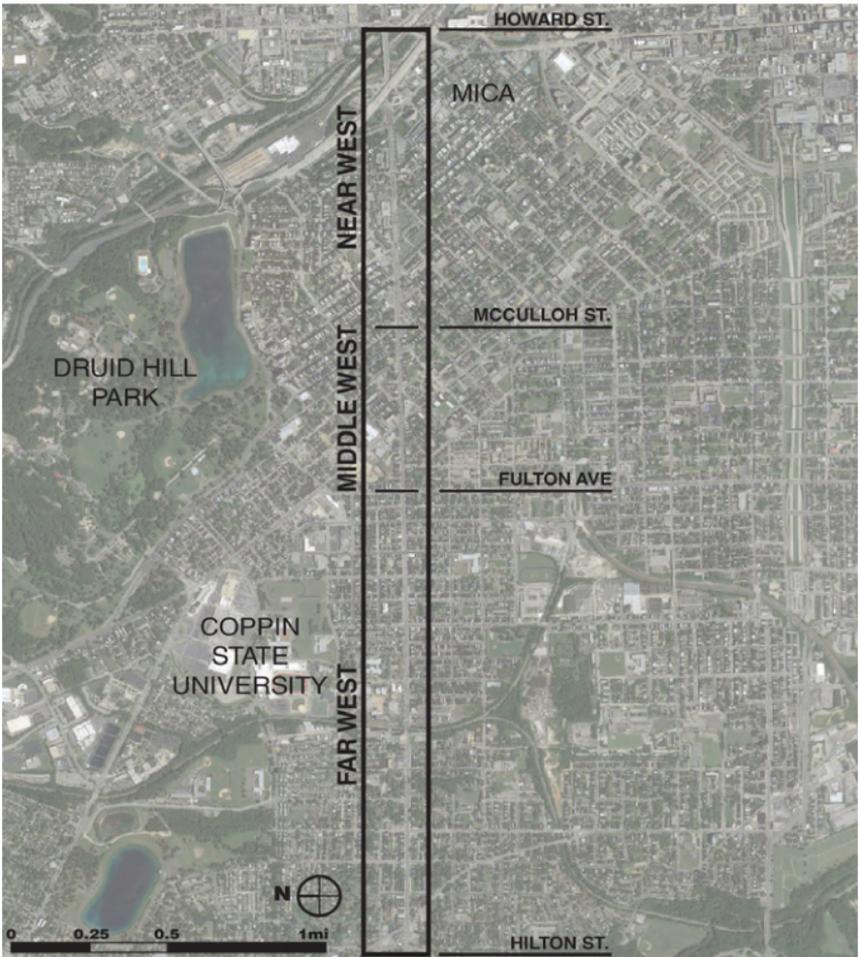


WEST NORTH AVENUE STREETScape CONCEPTUAL MASTER PLAN

Originally released June 2015

Summary booklet released October 2017

**the
Neighborhood
DesignCenter**



Streetscape Plan Area

photo on previous page of visioning workshop by Matt Roth

BACKGROUND

Upon invitation from the 7th Baltimore City Council District, Reservoir Hill Improvement Council, Druid Heights CDC, and Coppin Heights CDC, the Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) facilitated an 18-month streetscape visioning process in 2014 and 2015 with over 30 volunteer and staff designers, 25 community core stakeholders, and resident stakeholders. The process was in coordination with the Baltimore City Department of Transportation and other city agencies.

The resultant conceptual master plan addresses three miles of West North Avenue from Howard Street in the center of Baltimore to Hilton Parkway on the far west side. It was the subject of a 2015 Baltimore City Health Department health impact assessment. This booklet summarizes the plan, which is available in full at www.ndc-md.org.



photo of public design review by Laura Wheaton

COMMUNITY GOALS

Information on community goals was gathered through three visioning workshops held in 2014 as well through conversations and neighborhood walks with core stakeholders during that same period. These were then refined in the second and final drafts.

INCREASE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY & ACCESSIBILITY

The most frequently mentioned goal was increasing pedestrian safety and pedestrian accessibility along West North Avenue.

CREATE AND MAINTAIN A CLEAN, ATTRACTIVE STREETScape

Many aligned priorities expressed by community members can be summarized as a desire for a clean, beautiful streetscape.

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT RIPE FOR DEVELOPMENT

The other priorities contribute to this overarching desire to increase public and private development along West North Avenue.

RESPECT AND CELEBRATE THE IDENTITIES OF NORTH AVENUE

Development should not come at the expense of the identities of the surrounding communities, and celebrating those identities should help promote development by establishing West North Avenue as a unique opportunity for investment.



Project Kickoff in 2014, photo by Laura Wheaton



Visioning Workshop in 2014, photo by Matt Roth

OUTLINE OF PRIORITIES

Although all of the proposals in this plan are part of the community vision, there are specific proposals which attain greater importance by contributing to the previously listed community goals. Prioritization was determined by a committee of Core Stakeholders based on all the data collected during community outreach over the 18-month planning process. The following priorities are listed in no particular order within each grouping.

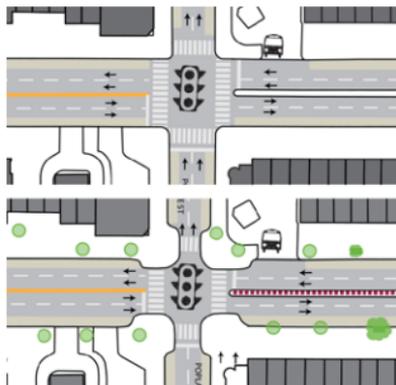
HIGHEST PRIORITY

- Maintain/upgrade all sidewalks to ADA standards for accessibility, including level surfaces and ramps at intersections
- Conduct a traffic study to determine feasibility of signaling proposals
- Adjacent traffic lights should be coordinated to facilitate consecutive green lights for vehicles traveling at below the posted speed limit, and signs should be posted that indicate the speed for which traffic lights are timed
- Repaint all crosswalks to a standard of “high visibility”
- Install pedestrian timers at every stoplight
- Apply “pedestrian lead” programming at intersections, where pedestrians get the walk signal seconds before the parallel green light for vehicles, to enable pedestrians to begin crossing before cars start right or left turns

- Install curb extensions at every intersection to increase pedestrian visibility, shorten crossing distances, and visually narrow the roadway
- Add consistent street trees to every block
- Add pedestrian-scale lighting to every block
- Add more waste cans, with a waste-removal strategy that accommodates the actual disposal rate of trash in the waste cans
- Every bus stop should have at least a bench and a waste can
- Improve bus service reliability
- Implement mobile and computer accessible bus tracker app
- Coordinate all improvements with plan and community branding strategies



Full tree canopy, 1300 block Hollins Street, photo by Ross Hackett



Existing (top) and proposed (bottom) conditions at West North Ave and Poplar Grove St, showing the reduction in crossing distance attained through curb extensions.

OUTLINE OF PRIORITIES cont'd

HIGH PRIORITY

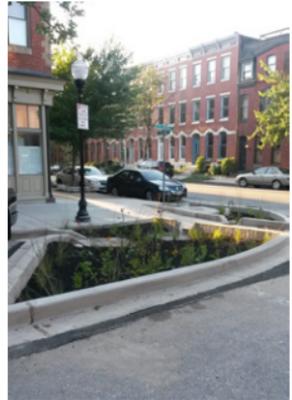
- Restrict left turns at intersections where there is not a left turn lane, with traffic study to determine whether turns are restricted part or all-day
- Restrict right turns on red at major intersections, especially at Mount Royal
- Repaint lane markings east of McCulloh Street to allow for a bike lane between the street parking lane and the curb (this priority is especially important to Near West residents)
- Install decorative planting at major intersections, including in curb extensions as feasible
- Implement community front yard/step beautification programming
- Install a historical marker series along West North Avenue
- Implement more public art installations
- Add more bike racks
- Add bus shelters at every major bus stop, including all that are switching points between major bus lines
- Improve all vacant lots along West North Avenue to stable green spaces, and ideally positive community spaces
- Add signage identifying the communities along West North Avenue

GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITY

The Core Stakeholders from the prioritization committee believe that all parts of West North Avenue need and deserve streetscape improvements, and do not prioritize one geographic portion of the corridor over another. However, should simultaneous deployment of improvements not be possible, they believe that a greater initial impact may be had if installations first occur at key intersections along West North Avenue, then spread to the full corridor. Key intersections include crossstreets such as Hilton, Bloomingdale, Warwick, Monroe, Fulton, Pennsylvania, Eutaw, Park, and Mount Royal.



*Artistic bike rack, Station North, photo by
Laura Wheaton*



*Curb extension
planted for
stormwater, Butcher's
Hill, photo by Jared
Barnhart*

IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES

Some progress has been made towards the goals espoused in the plan since its release in June 2015. The various implementation processes described here do not all have a formal connection to this plan nor to the Neighborhood Design Center.

STREET TREE PLANTING

Blue Water Baltimore, a nonprofit organization, has planted street trees throughout West North Avenue in 2015-2017. They focused efforts in this area due to the streetscape plan. Website: bluewaterbaltimore.org

INNOVATION VILLAGE

A nonprofit founded in 2016 focused on development opportunities in West Baltimore. Website: innovatebaltimore.org

MADISON PARK NORTH

Per agreements with HUD and the City of Baltimore, the Madison Park North Apartments complex was demolished and a new mixed-use development is proposed by MCB Real Estate.

COPPIN STATE UNIVERSITY STREETSCAPING

Coppin State University has implemented streetscape improvements in their portion of West North Ave, adjacent to their expanded facilities south of the corridor.

NDC CONCEPTUAL DESIGN ASSISTANCE

The Neighborhood Design Center has subsequently provided or is providing design assistance for community-initiated projects including improvements at German Park in Reservoir Hill, neighborhood branding with RHIC and Druid Heights CDC, planning with the Penn North Association, development advising with the Arch Social Club, and planning with the Pennsylvania Avenue Main Streets. Website: ndc-md.org

WALBROOK MILL

Demolition and redevelopment plans are in progress for this site just west of Coppin State University by Osprey Property Co. based in Annapolis.

NORTH AVENUE RISING

The project proposes the following investments at various locations along North Avenue: sidewalk improvements, dedicated bus lanes supported by transit signal priority, enhanced bus stops, roadway repaving, and bikeshare stations. North Avenue Rising is funded through a collaboration between Federal, State, and local funding. The total project budget for North Avenue Rising is \$27.3 million. Website: northavenuerising.com

STAY INVOLVED

All implementation processes by any organizer should include additional community engagement. Participate in those processes to ensure your voice is heard:

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Meetings of your local neighborhood association can be great places to receive updates on ongoing processes and share feedback. Your neighborhood association can also invite implementing partners to attend and present at these meetings.

PROCESS MEETINGS

Some implementation processes will have their own meetings or events at which to engage potential stakeholders. Attend them and share the meeting information with others you think should attend.

CALL 311

Calling 311 ensures there is a log of problems you perceive in your neighborhood.

ASK YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Your elected officials are great resources for information on ongoing processes and funding designated for your community.