



PORT TOWNS

Branding and Wayfinding Plan

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Design Team: Prince Ashina, Quentin Grotheer, Artemis Maziarski, David Ramos

Under the Supervision of: Christopher D. Ellis, PhD, PLA

Edited by: Artemis Maziarski



Partnership for
Action Learning
in Sustainability



Landscape Architecture
DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

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Disclaimer

This report was prepared by students as part of the University of Maryland's Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) program. The findings are based on exploratory research, including limited qualitative data, and are not intended to be statistically representative. The content reflects the analysis and perspectives of the student authors and does not necessarily represent the views, policies, or official positions of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Prince George's County, or the University of Maryland. This report is provided for informational and educational purposes only and should not be relied upon as official planning guidance or policy.

The following staff members from the Prince George's County Planning Department participated in and provided guidance for this project:

Emily Lutz, Planner III, Point of Contact,
Long-Range Planning Section

Maha Tariq, Planner II, PALS Manager,
Neighborhood Revitalization Section

Josephine Selvakumar, Supervisor, Neighborhood Revitalization Section

Andrea Gilles, Division Chief, Community Planning Division

About PALS

The Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) is administered by the National Center for Smart Growth at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMD). It is a campus-wide initiative that harnesses the expertise of UMD faculty and the energy and ingenuity of UMD students to help Maryland communities become more environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. PALS is designed to provide innovative, low-cost assistance to local governments while creating real-world problem-solving experiences for University of Maryland graduate and undergraduate students.

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University of Maryland

Jennifer King Rice, Senior Vice President and Provost

Wendy Powers, Professor and Dean,
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

John Erwin, Professor and Chair,
Plant Science and Landscape Architecture

Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS)

Michelle Kokolis, Program Director

Kathryn Howell, Senior Advisor

Laura Sweeney, Project Graduate Assistant

Maya Assaker, Project Graduate Assistant

Port Towns Representatives

Rod Barnes, Edmonston Town Administrator

Dan Spealman, Colmar Manor Town Administrator

John Hoatson, Cottage City Town Manager

Brian Wood, Bladensburg Interim Town Administrator

Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth, former Bladensburg Town Admin.

Ray Jefferies, Marketing Specialist, Bladensburg

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Goals and Objectives

This Port Towns Branding and Wayfinding Plan establishes a cohesive framework for branding, placemaking, and public realm enhancement throughout the Port Towns communities. The goal is to establish a collective visual identity while celebrating the unique cultural, historic, environmental, and architectural character of each of the four towns. Through coordinated wayfinding, gateway features, and streetscape improvements, this plan presents several alternative strategies that seek to improve connectivity, reinforce sense of place, and elevate the Port Towns as a vibrant regional destination.

Relationship to Port Towns Sector Plan

The Branding and Wayfinding Plan advances key goals of the Port Towns Sector Plan by improving multimodal circulation, strengthening community identity, supporting environmental stewardship, and activating public spaces. This master plan takes advantage of existing transportation corridors, trails, parks, and civic destinations, while also acknowledging and justifying potential future improvements recommended by the Sector Plan, including expanded trail networks, intersection realignments, and development opportunity zones.

Key User Groups

The proposed improvements are designed to support residents, regional visitors, families, students, pedestrians, cyclists, and commuters of all ages and abilities. Wayfinding systems prioritize accessibility, safety, inclusivity, and ease of navigation through multilingual, ADA-compliant signage, improved pedestrian connectivity, and intuitive circulation strategies. Interpretive signage, integrated public art installations, and guided trail experiences further enhance user engagement and bring attention to the Port Towns' unique history, diversity, landmarks, and environmental assets.

Design Standards

The Branding and Wayfinding Plan follows contemporary best practices for urban wayfinding, placemaking, and public realm design while aligning with Prince George's County wayfinding standards. Recommendations emphasize universal accessibility, safety, use of durable materials, and sustainable practices. The plan also integrates green infrastructure, public art, contextual landscape design, and flexible programming opportunities to support long-term community needs.

Report Organization

This report is organized into two primary sections: 1. Regional Analysis of Existing Conditions and 2. Wayfinding and Branding Master Plan Recommendations.

The first section analyzes existing circulation systems, green infrastructure, historical and cultural context, and opportunities and constraints related to branding and wayfinding.

The second section presents proposed signage systems, streetscape furnishings, gateway features, and thematic walking tour networks designed to establish a clear and unified Port Towns identity as a vibrant regional destination.



PART I:

Regional Analysis

Introduction

The project team undertook a regional analysis with an eye toward understanding existing conditions and plans and opportunities for the future. Drawing from the draft sector plan, other planning documents, spatial data, and additional research, and from discussions with town officials, this analysis examines circulation, green infrastructure, history, and opportunities and constraints.

An analysis of circulation within the Port Towns identifies key transportation routes, and defines the locations of gateways where those routes enter the area. The towns' extensive off-street trail network is widely used and well integrated with the regional trail network, but it could be more closely linked with surface streets. Wayfinding systems could more explicitly tie the trails to the towns that they pass through. Future pedestrian- and micromobility-oriented streetscapes, recommended in the draft sector plan, provide more locations where wayfinding and branding could find a role.

The project team's conversations with town officials made clear how much the residents of the Port Towns value their green infrastructure, and the draft sector plan recommends further enhancements to these facilities. Green infrastructure informs our placemaking strategies, the locations of wayfinding signs, and the routes of trails.

The history of the Port Towns runs all the way back to the area's native peoples, but the oldest extant structures date to the colonial period, when Bladensburg was a seaport. Much of the area near the Peace Cross falls within the Battle of Bladensburg Historic District, but most of the visible historic resources speak to social history. Themes include slavery, the rise of the suburb, African American migration, industrialization and urban change, and more recent immigration.

The analysis of opportunities and constraints section examines significant locations and points of interest within the Port Towns, and looks at changes that the Preliminary Sector Plan proposes, particularly for the seven opportunity sites. This section further identifies key gateways and outlines the opportunities and constraints presented by both existing and potential future conditions in the context of wayfinding and placemaking.

CIRCULATION

Roadway Functional Classification and Trails

ALT US-1 Alt (Bladensburg Rd) is one of the major gateways from the District of Columbia and acts as a major commercial artery for the towns of Colmar Manor and Cottage City.

MARYLAND US-1 Alt (Baltimore Ave) and MD 201 (Kenilworth Ave) are major north-south routes for local and regional truck traffic, with MD 201 serving as a commercial corridor to Edmonston.

MARYLAND MD 450 (Annapolis Rd) and MD 202 (Landover Rd) are primary east-west commercial corridors connecting Bladensburg to New Carrollton, the greater Landover area, and the Capital Beltway. The area contains a multitude of historic sites and properties, but suffers from poor visibility and limited accessibility to those sites, especially those near MD 201.

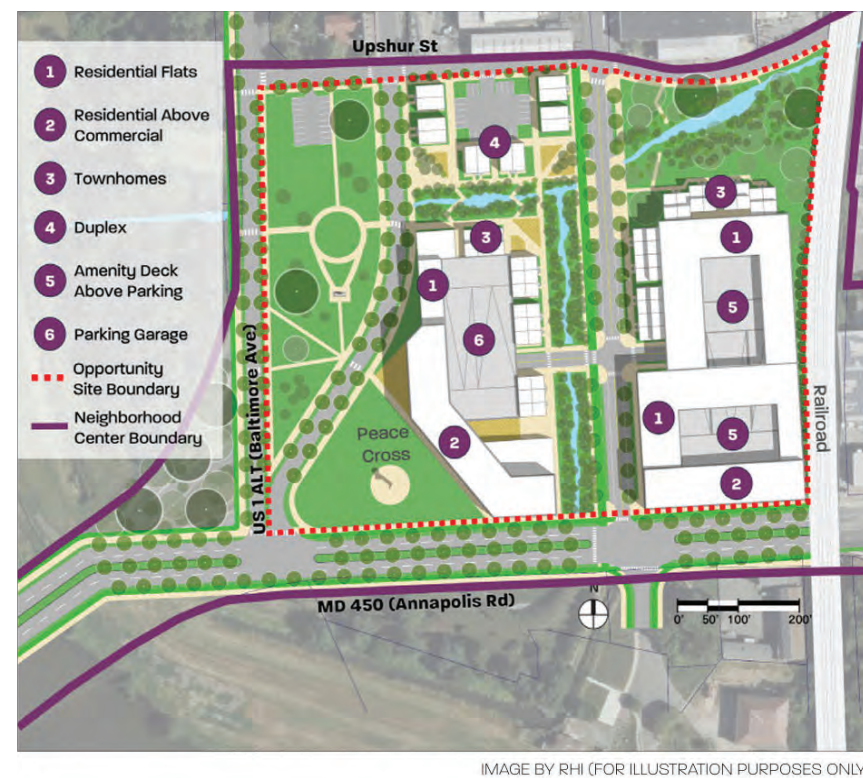
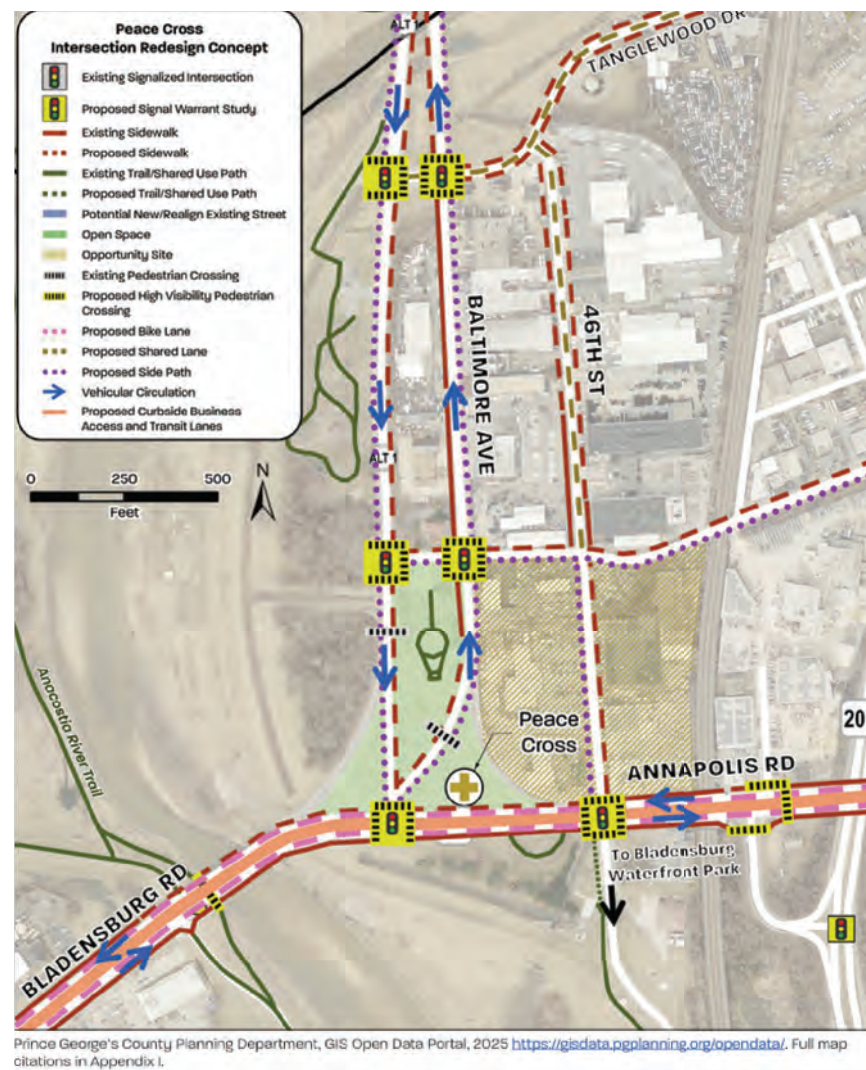
- The Baltimore-Washington Parkway borders the eastern edge of the Port Towns. Four arterial roads: US-1 Alt (Bladensburg Rd), MD 450 (Annapolis Rd), MD 202 (Landover Rd), and MD 201 (Kenilworth Ave) provide regional access.
- Six collector roads: US-1 Alt (Baltimore Ave), MD 769B (Edmonston Rd), MD 208 (38th Ave), Decatur St, 52nd Ave/Quincy St, and 57th Ave, connect neighborhoods to the major arterials.
- Industrial roads, including 46th Ave in Edmonston and Tanglewood Dr/Buchanan St in Bladenburg, support industrial and service-related traffic.

 The Anacostia River Trail connects the area to key destinations, but limited signage and gaps in trail connections remain barriers to its full potential.

Significance to the Design Team:

This circulation analysis was served to inform the identification of major gateways, potential future trail connections, and the potential locations for wayfinding signage and streetscape fixture installations throughout the Port Towns.





Sponge City Illustrative Plan:

The 2009 *Port Towns Sector Plan* focused on general recommendations to create a mixed-use district for properties between Baltimore Ave and 46th St. While aligned with the 2009 recommendations, this hypothetical development builds on the area's potential by leveraging the planned realignment of US-1 Alt (Baltimore Ave), and US-1 Alt (Bladensburg Rd), introducing a diverse range of housing options, integrating environmentally sensitive development, enhancing protection from flood events, and improving multimodal experiences.

Source:

Preliminary Port Towns Sector Plan, 2026



MD 201 (Kenilworth Avenue) and 48th Street Intersection Redesign Concept:

Proposed realignment of the intersection where MD 201 (Kenilworth Ave) intersects with 47th St, and MD 769C (48th St) both north and south of MD 450 (Annapolis Rd), within the Port Towns Neighborhood Center.

Peace Cross Intersection Redesign Concept:

Realignment of the Peace Cross intersection of US-1 Alt (Baltimore Ave) northbound, southbound and MD 450 (Annapolis Rd) to an urban style T-intersection to improve traffic circulation and increased multimodal transportation safety (as proposed in the *Preliminary Sector Plan*).

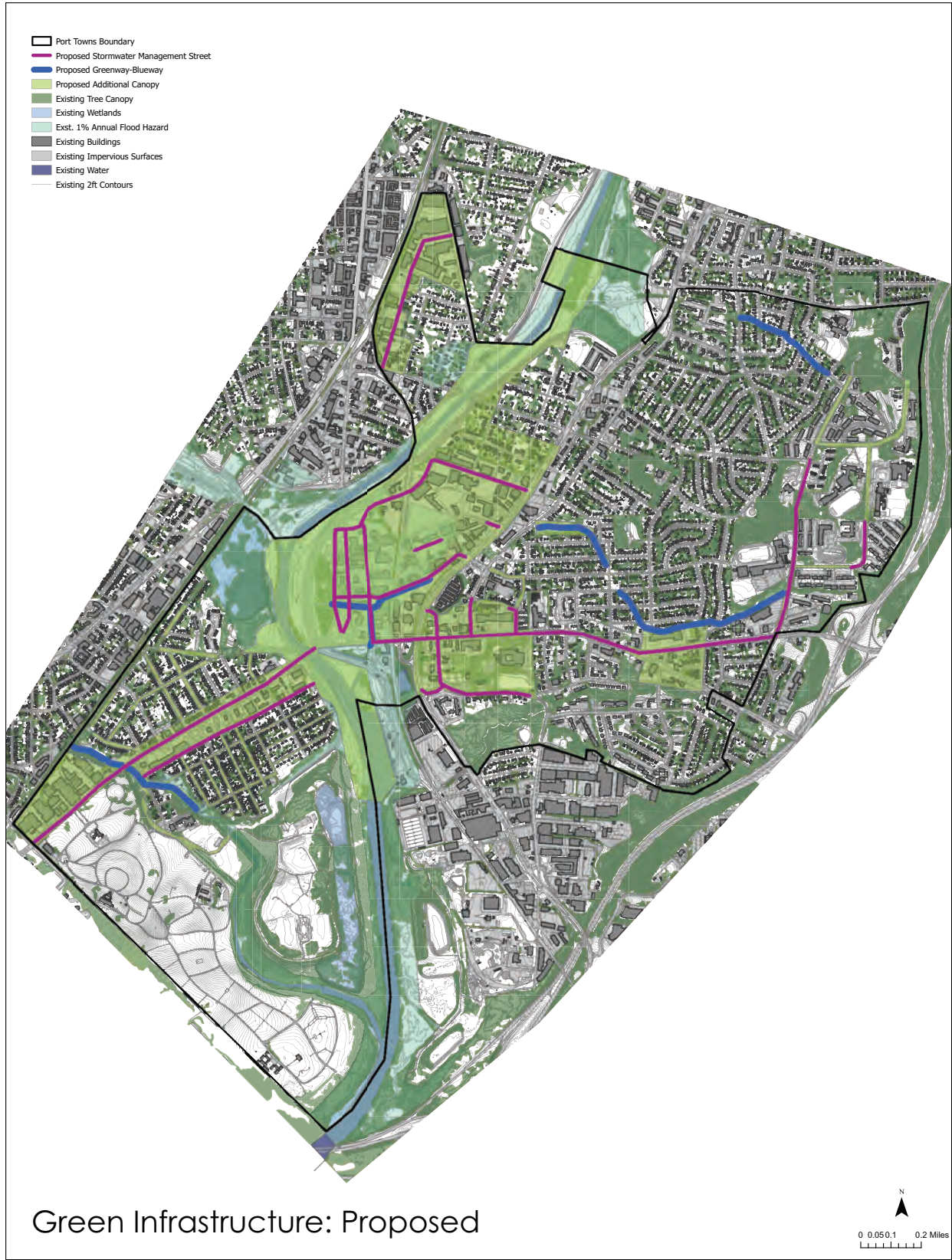
Elsewhere, a similar proposed realignment of the intersection of MD 450 (Annapolis Rd), and MD 202 (Landover Rd) into a T-intersection allows the additional space freed up to be repurposed into a public plaza fronting Publick Playhouse.

Significance to the Design Team

Potential future road realignments, trail additions, and other changes to circulation were incorporated by the design team. One thematic walking or micromobility tour (described in further detail later in this report), includes six historic landmarks and one proposed gathering space within the hypothetical

illustrative plan for this specific area shown above which incorporates improvements to intersections and crosswalks. These proposed enhancements would facilitate better pedestrian and micromobility circulation, creating a more connected, and easily navigable experience for visitors along the tour.

GREENER INFRASTRUCTURE



Placemaking Strategies

By implementing green infrastructure in more locations and educating the public about it, the Port Towns can further center values of sustainability and environmental stewardship into their collective narrative.

- 1) Green infrastructure near markers [left]: adding BMPs, like rain gardens, near wayfinding signs or public art can add aesthetic benefits while managing stormwater.
- 2) Signage about green infrastructure [right]: some signs can be educational or interpretive rather than strictly for navigation and wayfinding (using the same design language for a sense of cohesion).



Source: Golden Triangle DC. 19th Street in June, 2019. <https://goldentriangledc.com/what-we-do/sustainability/rain-gardens/>



Source: Facet. Interpreting Your Green Building and Infrastructure Projects. <https://www.facetnw.com/latest/interpretation-for-green-building/>

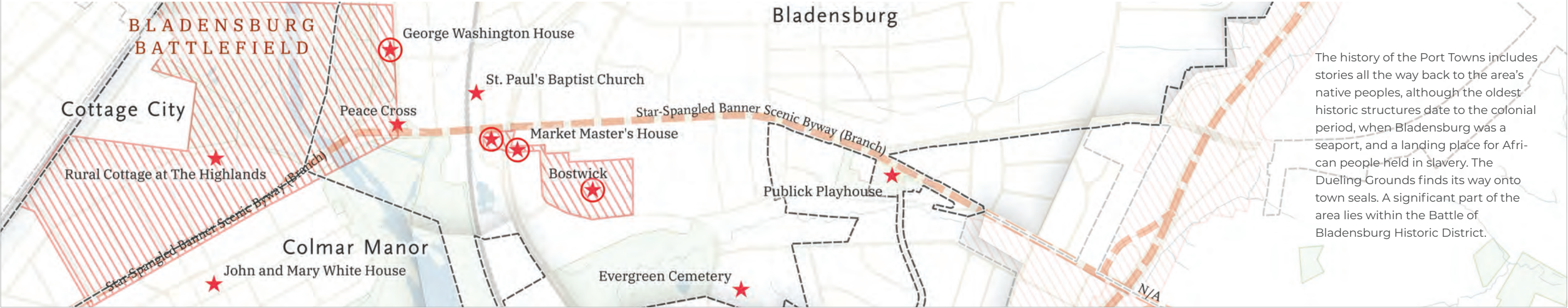
Dueling Creek Renaturalization

Transforming the creek at the Dueling Grounds [below] would strengthen the Port Towns’ initiative to incorporate green infrastructure into their collective identity. The Port Towns value the benefits of Sponge City Theory, so renaturalization is the logical next step within a “face-lift” effort for

the public park that hosts the remains of the Dueling Grounds. The idea has already been proposed by the *Preliminary Sector Plan* as a “greenway-blueway corridor”, and should be further expanded upon (p. 179).



PORT TOWNS HISTORY



The history of the Port Towns includes stories all the way back to the area's native peoples, although the oldest historic structures date to the colonial period, when Bladensburg was a seaport, and a landing place for African people held in slavery. The Dueling Grounds finds its way onto town seals. A significant part of the area lies within the Battle of Bladensburg Historic District.

Historic Sites and Historic Districts — North

- National Register Site
- County Historic Site
- Scenic Historic Road
- National Register Historic District

Scale: 1:12,000. Data sources: State of Maryland Open Data (2026), Prince George's County Open Data (2023–2026)



Historic Sites and Historic Districts — South

★ National Register Site
★ County Historic Site

— Scenic Historic Road
▨ National Register Historic District

Scale: 1:12,000 · Data sources: State of Maryland Open Data (2026), Prince George's County Open Data (2023–2026)

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Existing Conditions

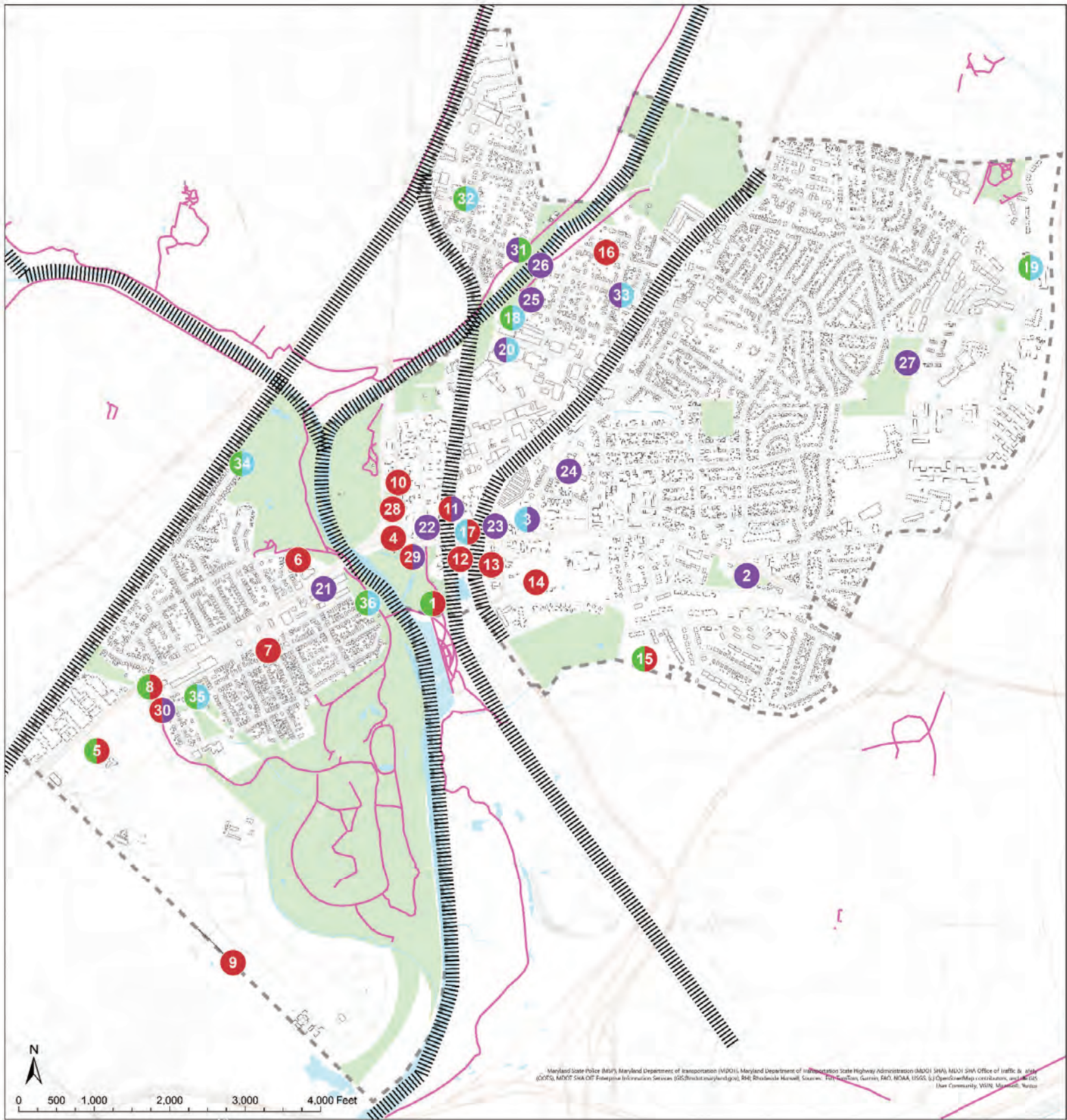
The Port Towns contain a variety of attractions and destinations that are regularly visited by locals, with several that serve as potential regional draws to the area. The map to the right depicts the locations of these significant destinations and encodes them by type into general categories. These locations were drawn primarily from the 27 Major Landmarks identified in the *Port Towns Preliminary Sector Plan*, which were further augmented with several additional locations identified by the design team. These landmarks and attractions reinforce the Port Towns' shared identity of celebrating history, diversity, art and culture, and environmental stewardship.

There are existing trail networks that run through the area, and substantial amounts of park land and greenspace, however it should be noted that many of trails within the Port Towns are relatively disconnected from one another. This presents a challenge to navigability, but also offers opportunities to augment trail connections in order to improve circulation between landmarks and attractions. This would also better facilitate themed walking or micromobility tour routes.

The presence of several significant physical barriers in the form of the Anacostia River and its levees, raised roadways, and rail lines should also be noted as a major constraint in the overall connectivity and navigability of the area. These physical barriers fragment the Port Towns and allow for only limited crossings at bridges and under- or overpasses.

Legend

-  Parks and Greenspace
-  Trails and Side Paths (Existing)
-  Physical Barrier to Circulation
- Significant Locations
-  Historic
-  Sustainability
-  Arts & Culture
-  Nature & Recreation



Points of Interest and Physical Barriers

Significant Landmarks, Attractions, and Destinations

The below were identified as significant locations throughout the Port Towns. Each of these sites would be well-suited to be listed on an informational map, referenced on wayfinding directional indicators, and featured in a themed walking or micromobility tour. Though the exact placement and availability of space may vary from site to site, each of the below would be a strong candidate

for the installation of a Port Towns wayfinding system destination sign as proposed in the second section of this report. Further study is needed to analyze available space and determine the most effective location(s) for destination signage for each of these sites.

1. Bladensburg Waterfront Park n h

4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

2. Prince George’s Publick Playhouse a

5445 Landover Road, Hyattsville, MD

3. Bladensburg Branch Library a s

4820 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

4. Peace Cross h

4500 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

5. Fort Lincoln Cemetery n h

3401 Bladensburg Road, Brentwood, MD

6. Rural Cottage Highlands h

4203 Bunker Hill Road, Brentwood, MD

7. John & Mary White House h

3602 41st Avenue, Brentwood, MD

8. Dueling Grounds Marker n h

3505 38th Avenue, Brentwood, MD

9. DC Boundary Marker N.E. #7 h

Within Fort Lincoln Cemetery

10. George Washington House h

4302 Baltimore Avenue, Bladensburg, MD

11. St. Paul’s Baptist Church a h

4107 47th Street, Bladensburg, MD

12. Hilleary-Magruder House h

4703 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

13. Market Master’s House h

4006 48th Street, Bladensburg, MD

14. Bostwick House h

3901 48th Street, Bladensburg, MD

15. Evergreen Cemetery h n

52nd Ave near Newton St, Bladensburg, MD

16. Poppleton-Roberts House h

5104 Emerson Street, Hyattsville, MD

17. Ernest Maier Building s h

4700 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

18. Eco-City Farms, Edmonston s n

4913 Crittenden Street, Hyattsville, MD

19. Eco-City Farms, Bladensburg s n

6100 Emerson Street, Bladensburg, MD

20. Community Forklift a s

4671 Tanglewood Drive, Hyattsville, MD

21. Mural #1 a

4309 Bladensburg Road, Brentwood, MD

22. Mural #2 a

4600 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

23. Mural #3 a

4726 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg, MD

24. Mural #4 a

4217 Edmonston Road, Bladensburg, MD

25. Mural #5 a

5000 Crittenden Street, Hyattsville, MD

26. Mural #6 a

5001 Decatur Street, Hyattsville, MD

27. Mural #7 a

4500 57th Avenue, Bladensburg, MD

28. Bladensburg Balloon Park h

4401 Upshur St, Bladensburg, MD

29. Bladensburg Memorial Grove h a

4603 Bladensburg Rd, Bladensburg, MD

30. Streets of Solidarity Mural a h

38/37th St And Newark Rd, Colmar Manor, MD

31. Art Magnet Free Little Art Gallery ● ●

Edmonston Veteran’s Park

32. Edmonston Community Garden ● ●

5010 47th Ave, Hyattsville, Md 20781

33. Green Street Decatur ● ●

Decatur St b/w Kenilworth And 51st Ave

34. Cottage City Community Garden ● ●

4222 Cottage Terrace, Cottage City, MD

35. Colmar Manor Comm. Garden W. s n

3800-3802 Newton St, Colmar Manor, MD

36. Colmar Manor Comm. Garden E. s n

4321 Newton St, Colmar Manor, MD

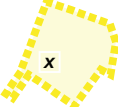
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

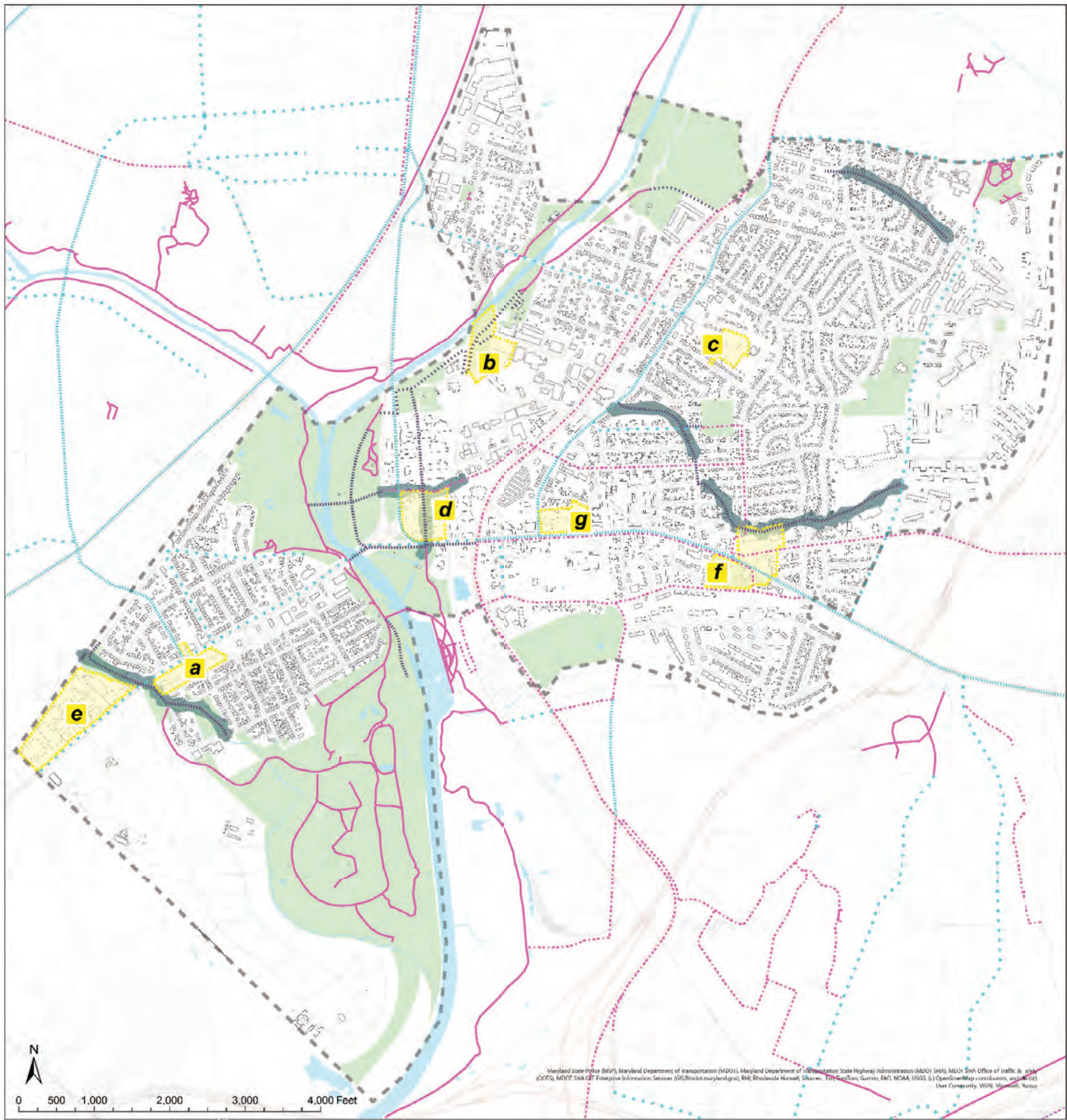
Potential Future Conditions

Port Towns Preliminary Sector Plan details various improvements that could potentially shape the area with new development activity in the medium to long term future. The *Sector Plan* establishes seven Opportunity Zones that were identified as being well-positioned to “support higher-intensity development, create inviting public spaces, and improve connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods”. Potential future greenways and improvements to pedestrian and biking circulation systems have also been identified.

In addition to future trails and side paths that have been previously proposed or planned in prior master planning documents, the design team has also identified additional trail connections that it recommends be explored. The map to the right depicts the location of these possible developments to provide a vision of how the Port Towns could potentially anticipate future changes. These potential future conditions could present valuable opportunities to further improve connectivity and establish the Port Towns as a vibrant, walkable destination.

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|--|---|
|  | Parks and Greenspace | | Trails and Side Paths (Planned or Proposed) |
|  | Sector Plan Opportunity Site | | Protected Bike Lanes (Planned or Proposed) |
|  | Sector Plan Potential Greenway | | Shared Road Bike Lanes (Planned or Proposed) |
| | Trails and Side Paths (Existing) | | Additional Trail Connector (Design Team Proposed) |



Opportunity Sites and Improved Trail Connections

Opportunity Site Conceptual Framework

The *Port Towns Preliminary Sector Plan* provides conceptual frameworks for seven opportunity sites. While the Sector Plan emphasizes that these concepts are not redevelopment proposals, they do serve to identify sites most likely to be attractive to potential developers, and to illustrate how principles set forth in the *Sector Plan* could be applied to development projects in the future. While the below illustrative plans are conceptual only, they do provide a sense of what type of development may be feasible, and at what scale.

While it cannot be assumed that any of the below will be developed beyond concepts, the design team took into account potential future changes in car circulation, population centers, public outdoor spaces, new attractions, and added parking associated with relevant potential development. The team explored how potential developments would fit into the existing fabric of the Port Towns and the ways through which larger wayfinding systems would incorporate and respond to them.

Site A: The Port Collective Mixed-Use District



Site B: Maker District Mixed-Use Maker District



Site C: The Grove at Decatur Residential In-Fill



Site G: The Mercantile Mixed-Use Hub



Site D: Sponge City Mixed-Use Sponge City District



Site E: Port Towns Junction Mixed-Use, Multi-Gen. Community



Site F: The Port Collective Mixed-Use District



Source (all this page): Preliminary Port Towns Sector Plan, 2026

OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Gateways

One of the goals of the *Port Towns Preliminary Sector Plan* and the efforts of this design team was to assist in the establishment of the Port Towns as a regional destination. Locations have been identified as major gateways which would be suitable for the installation of signage and streetscape fixtures to create a sense of arrival and establish a cohesive and instantly recognizable visual brand for the Port Towns.

Limited routes of circulation into the Port Towns as well as multiple bridges and overpasses highly visible from various modes of circulation present strong opportunities for gateway installations that announce the arrival into the Port Towns with strong visual branding. The visually prominent bridges and overpasses in particular can serve as assets in establishing gateways that are visible by both visitors and passers-by.

The general locations of proposed gateways are identified in the map to the right and categorized as: 1. Primary Entry Gateways, 2. Secondary Entry Gateways, and 3. Central Downtown District Gateways. Potential specific locations for these gateway installations are further identified for consideration. The current conditions of many potential gateway locations allow little space for monumental signage installations. However, the design team has explored ways in which even small spaces such as road medians can be utilized to create a prominent gateway that announces one's arrival into the Port Towns.

Legend



Parks and Greenspace



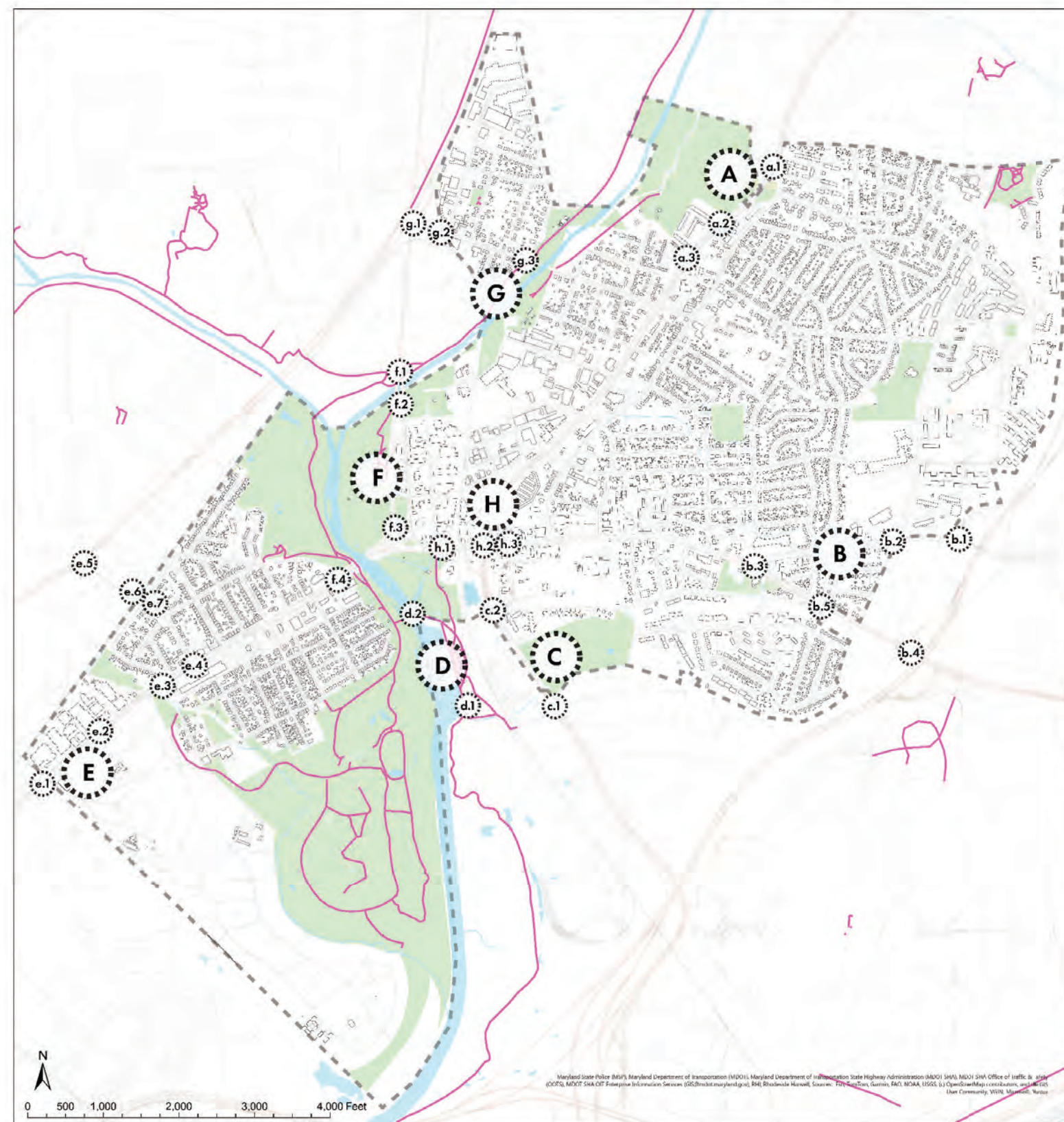
Trails and Side Paths
(Existing)



Gateway General Locations



Gateway Potential Specific Locations



Proposed Gateway Locations

A

Kenilworth Ave North Gateway - Secondary Entry

Opportunities in the median



E

West Gateway - Primary Entry / Downtown District

Capitalize on potential Opportunity Site development for high impact



B

East Gateway - Primary Entry / Downtown District

Use Publick Playhouse as an anchor



F

Baltimore Ave Gateway - Primary Entry

Levees and potential road realignment provide opportunities



C

Kenilworth Ave South Gateway - Secondary Entry

Opportunities in the median



G

Decatur St Gateway - Secondary Entry

Veterans Park provides high visibility from both trails and roadways



D

Anacostia River Gateway - Secondary Entry

Use pedestrian bridge for visibility from both trails and roadways



H

Kenilworth Ave Overpass Gateway - Downtown District

Turn a typical overpass facade into an instant visual icon for Port Towns



Source (all this page): Google Maps



PART II:

Wayfinding and Branding Master Plan

Introduction

The objectives of this wayfinding and branding exercise were to generate multiple concepts for wayfinding signage systems that help to capture the shared identity of the Port Towns. The narrative of the Port Towns is revealed and illustrated through wayfinding signage systems, innovative streetscape fixtures, and themed walking or micromobility tours that foster civic pride, drive economic growth, and assist visitors' intuitive navigation of the region. The Wayfinding and Branding Master Plan draws on and augments the *Port Towns Preliminary Sector Plan* to visually transform a system of fragmented circulation and significant flood protection infrastructure into a celebrated and easily navigable destination for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists of all ages and abilities.

The *Prince George's County Wayfinding Process Manual* was published to coordinate wayfinding projects that improve efficiency of movement, encourage sustainable transportation, and raise awareness of notable sites and attractions throughout the county. The proposed signage systems and streetscape fixtures, and implementation recommendations outlined in this section were guided by the best practices established in the *Wayfinding Process Manual*.

The design team's process was informed through repeated engagement with the Port Towns managers and M-NCPPC staff. Preliminary meetings helped the design team identify major routes of

circulation, significant locations, and community values and aspirations. A mid-point review with the aforementioned stakeholders helped to refine initial concepts and strengthen the direction of the overall design program. A set of presentation boards and this final report are the results of the design team's efforts.

This section of the report provides:

1. Four diverse suites of wayfinding signage systems and streetscape fixtures designed individually by each member of the design team
2. Visualizations and descriptions of proposed gateway locations
3. Additional visualizations of wayfinding signage and streetscape fixtures as they would appear in context
4. Proposed thematic walking or micromobility tours that highlight the Port Towns' unique history, diverse culture, and shared values and identity

Materials



Shackles: Iron restraints used during the capture and transport of enslaved Africans; the primary material inspiration for this signage



Corten Steel: Used to represent the shackles used during the Atlantic Slave Trade



Wood: Symbolizes the ships used in transporting enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean



Stone Block: Selected based on feedback from the Port Towns representative during initial consultation



Glass: Represents transparency and clarity of history, allowing visitors to visually connect the past and present in a literal sense

Colors



75% Black Wax Finish: Applied to corten steel. The finish represents African and African-American identity



Cyan: Waters of the Anacostia River and Atlantic Ocean



Yellow: Unique identity of Bladensburg



Red: Unique identity of Colmar Manor

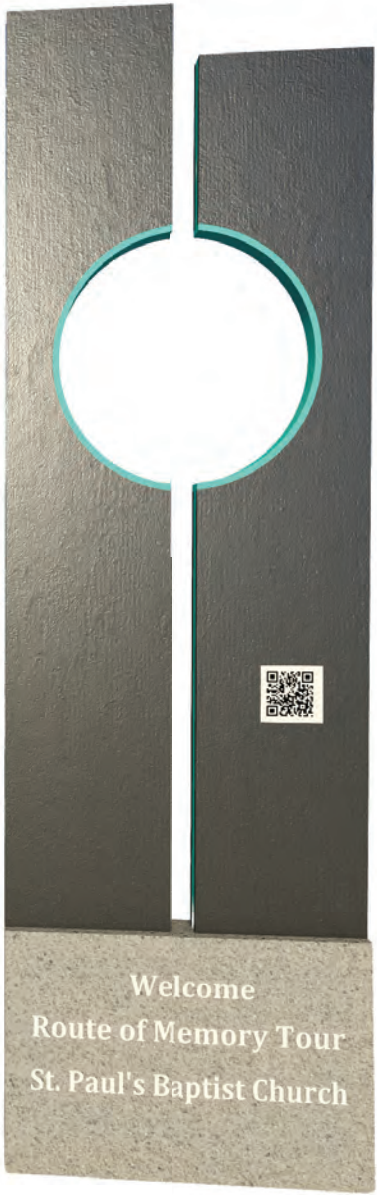
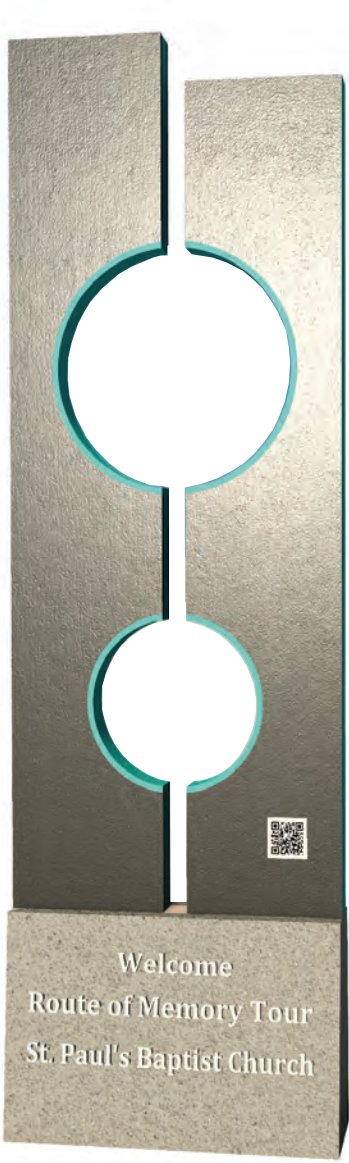


Blue: Unique identity of Cottage City



Green: Unique identity of Edmonston

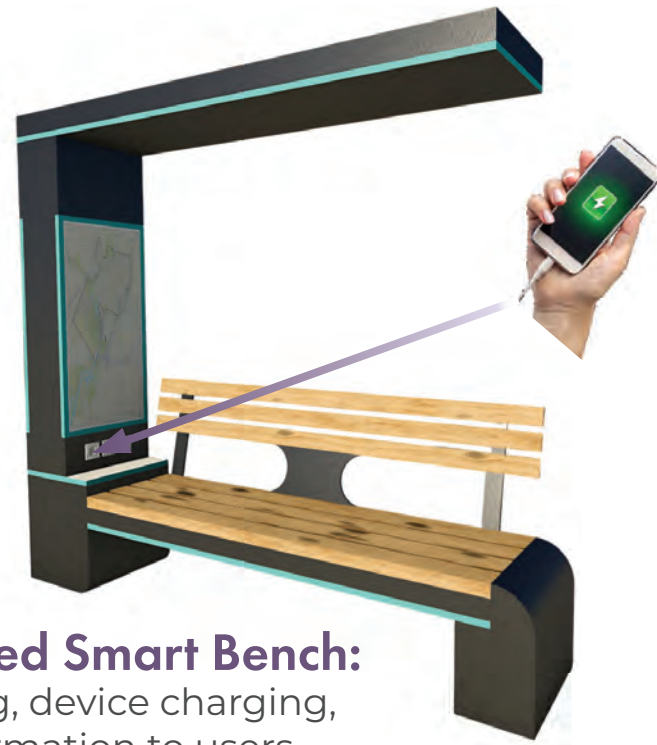
Signage



Interactive Destination Sign: The circular cut-outs create engaging photo opportunities, while a QR code links to additional information about the specific attraction or point of interest.



Past-Present Frames: Tangibly connects contemporary visitors to the past by framing the historic and present-day views of destinations



Solar-Powered Smart Bench: Provides seating, device charging, and transit information to users.



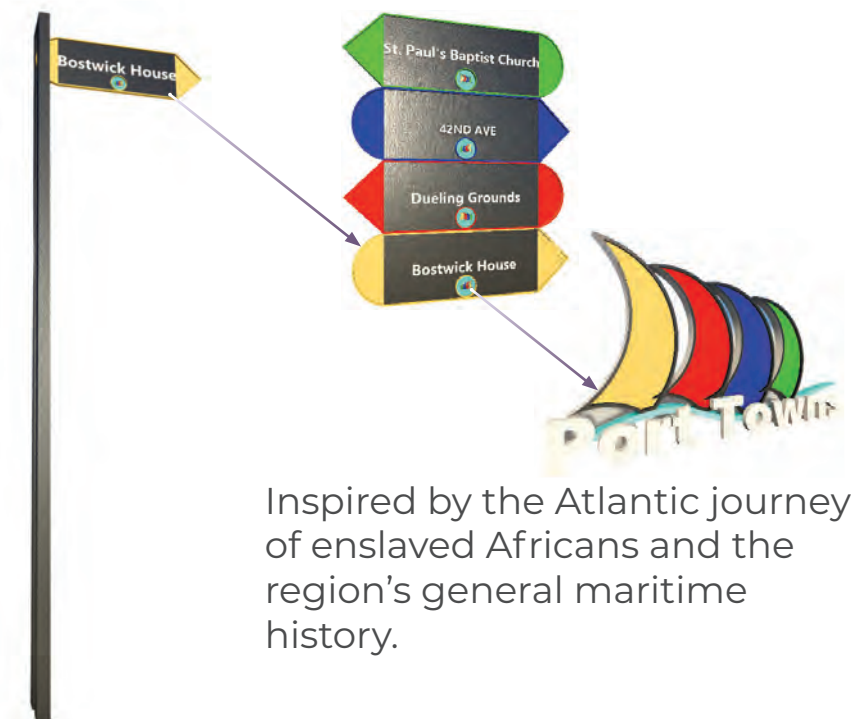
Wayfinding Bollards: Black for a unified Port Towns identity along the Anacostia Bridge; the rest for each of the four towns. For use along bicycle lanes (for example).



Sail Lights: Celebrate the Port Towns' maritime heritage while reinforcing the towns identities through color coding along the Anacostia Bridge.



Gateway: The curvilinear retaining wall doubles as a planter and provides a gathering space. Additional benches may be added to further support passive gathering and social interaction.

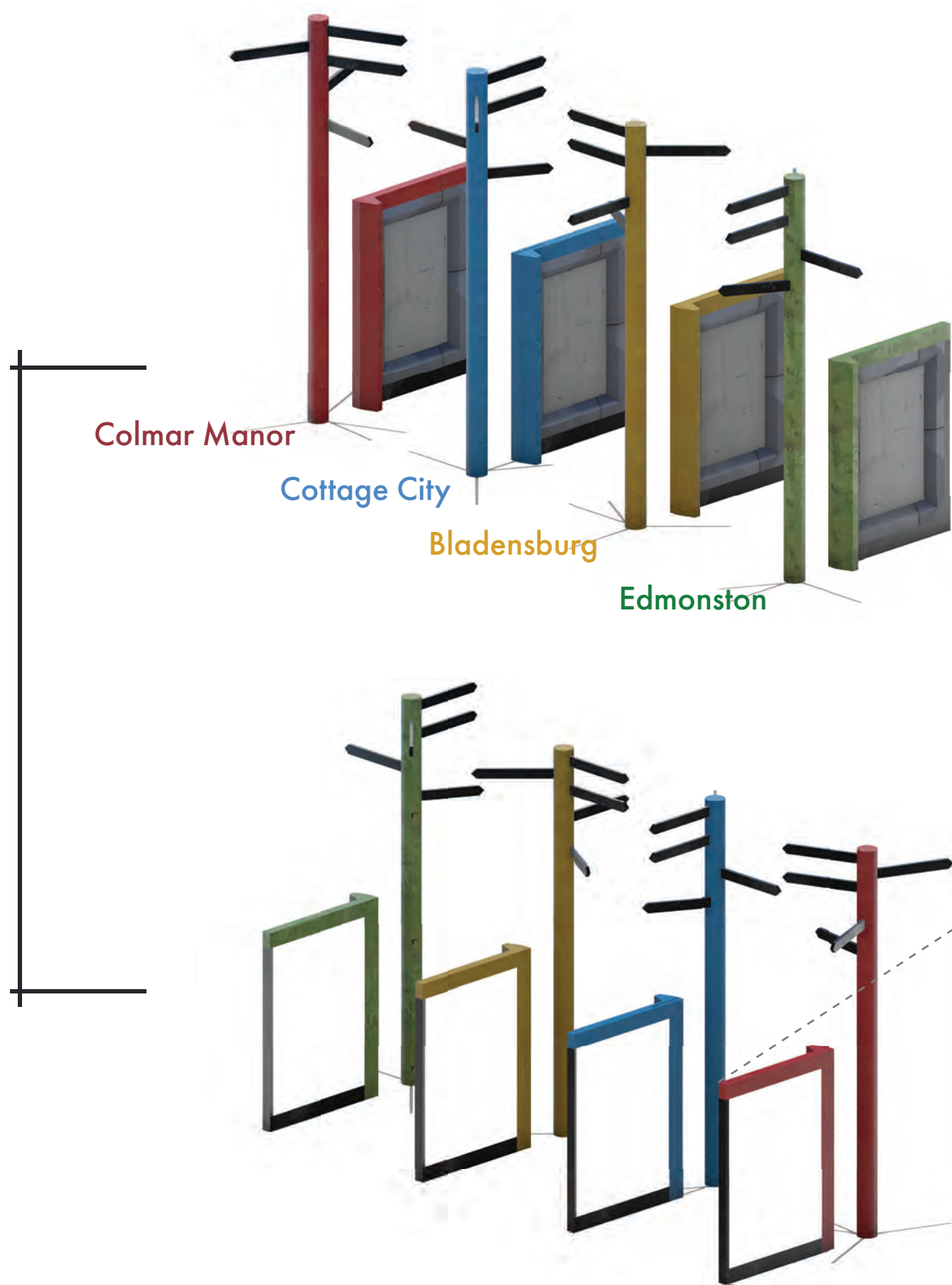


Directional Signs: Guide visitors to historic landmarks and various points of interest. Town colors indicate locations in each specific town.



Destination Signage





Painted Metal

Represent the Port Towns' chosen colors with an attractive and durable finish.

Fritted Mirrors

The kiosks' backsides provide interest and reflect the towns safely for birds.



Native Grasses

Soften the stacked stone edges and add ecosystem services and value to wildlife.

Tall species like *Panicum virgatum* are ideal for the scale of larger gateways. *Muhlenbergia capillaris* is a shorter option with stunning October blooms.



Stacked Stone

Identified by town leadership as a fitting foundation material.



Corten Steel

Evokes the industrial history of the area and references the current pedestrian bridge across the Anacostia.

Curved and welded pieces serve as a visual nod to the waterfront.



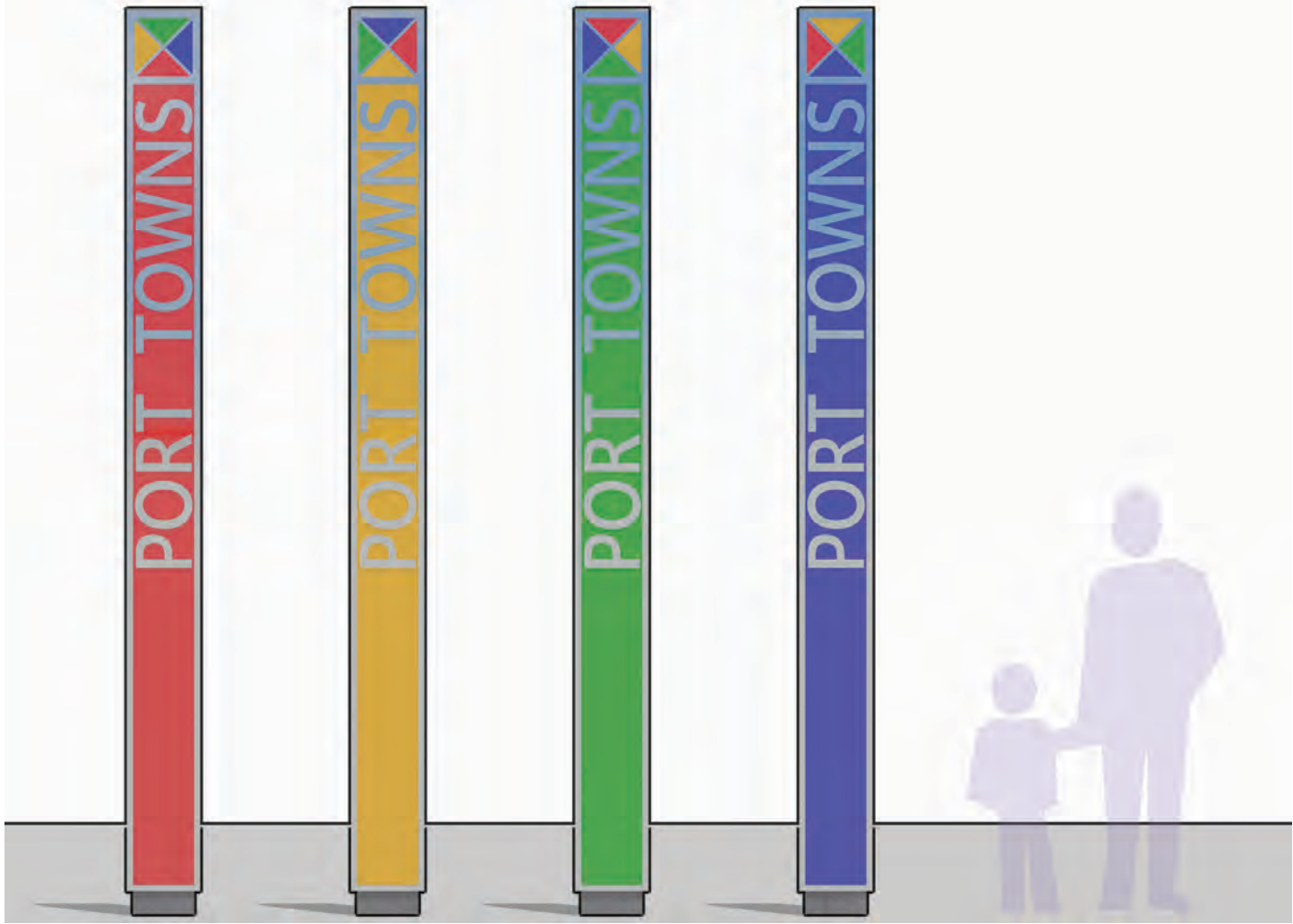
Gateway Signage

Design Approach and Philosophy

This suite of wayfinding signs and various streetscape fixtures aims to create and reinforce a cohesive visual identity for the Port Towns. Inspiration is drawn from the Port Towns’ unique cultural, historic, environmental, and architectural context, and their close relationship to nature and the Anacostia River. Flowing forms evoking the Anacostia are repeated throughout, and a multi-layered materials palette draws on surrounding historic, industrial, and

contemporary influences to bridge the Port Towns’ past and present into a cohesive visual identity for today and the future. Potential materials were further selected for their carbon footprint, renewability, and maintenance needs, in alignment with the Port Towns’ shared commitment to embodying sustainable practices and environmental stewardship.

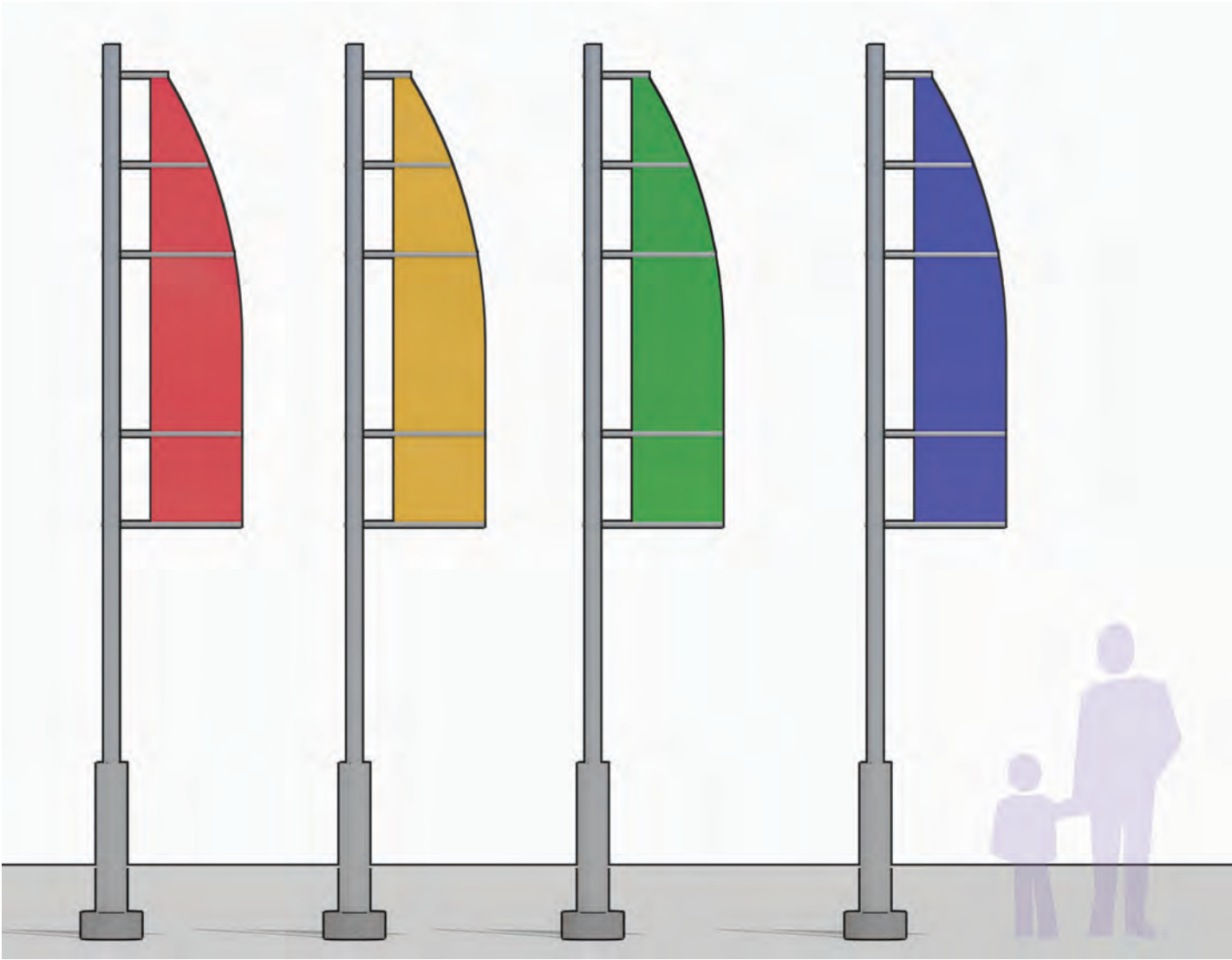
Gateway Elements



Gateway Vertical Pylons

With one town’s color on each of the pylon(s)’ four sides, these versatile vertical elements can be used in medians, along roadways, or in other sites with limited space to create a visually impactful sense of arrival.

Materials: tubular steel, acrylic panels, perforated aluminum/stainless steel



Gateway Flags

These flags can be used together to represent the Port Towns collectively, or one color at a time to identify each town. These elements can be installed in prominent sites such as on top of bridges and levees to boost visibility.

Materials: powder-coated steel, PVC-coated fabric

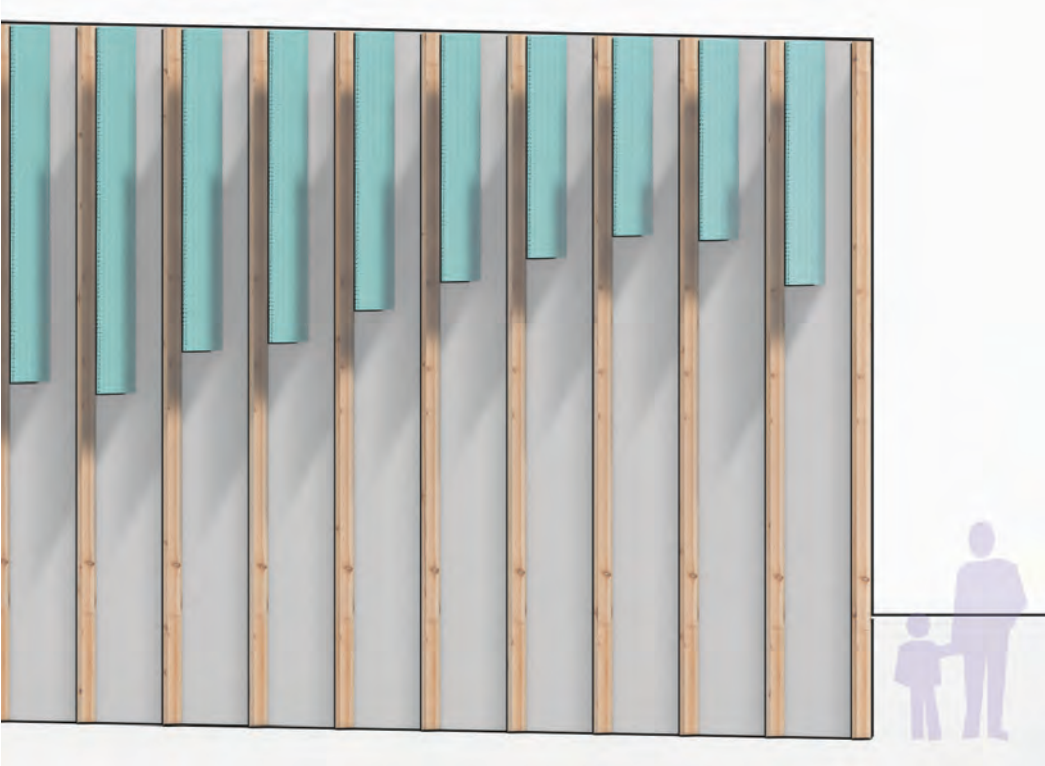
Gateway Elements



Monumental Gateway Sign

This monumental gateway sign is of an appropriate scale for a major intersection, ensuring visibility from the road even at speed.

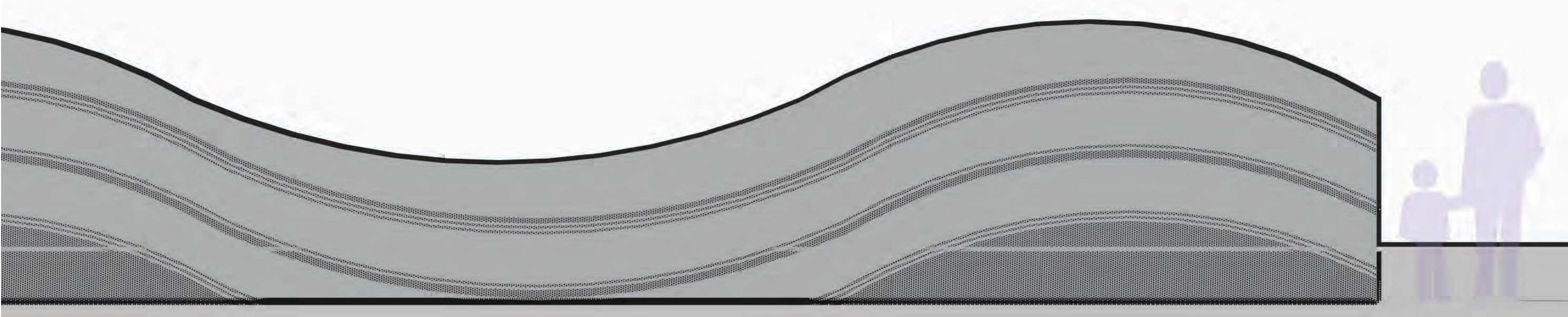
Materials: reclaimed wood, sand-blasted local stone, perforated aluminum/stainless steel



Bridge Facade Detail

Bridges and overpasses can be easily and affordably retrofitted with facade elements evoking the flowing forms of water and turning a current barrier into a future asset.

Materials: reclaimed wood, perforated steel panels

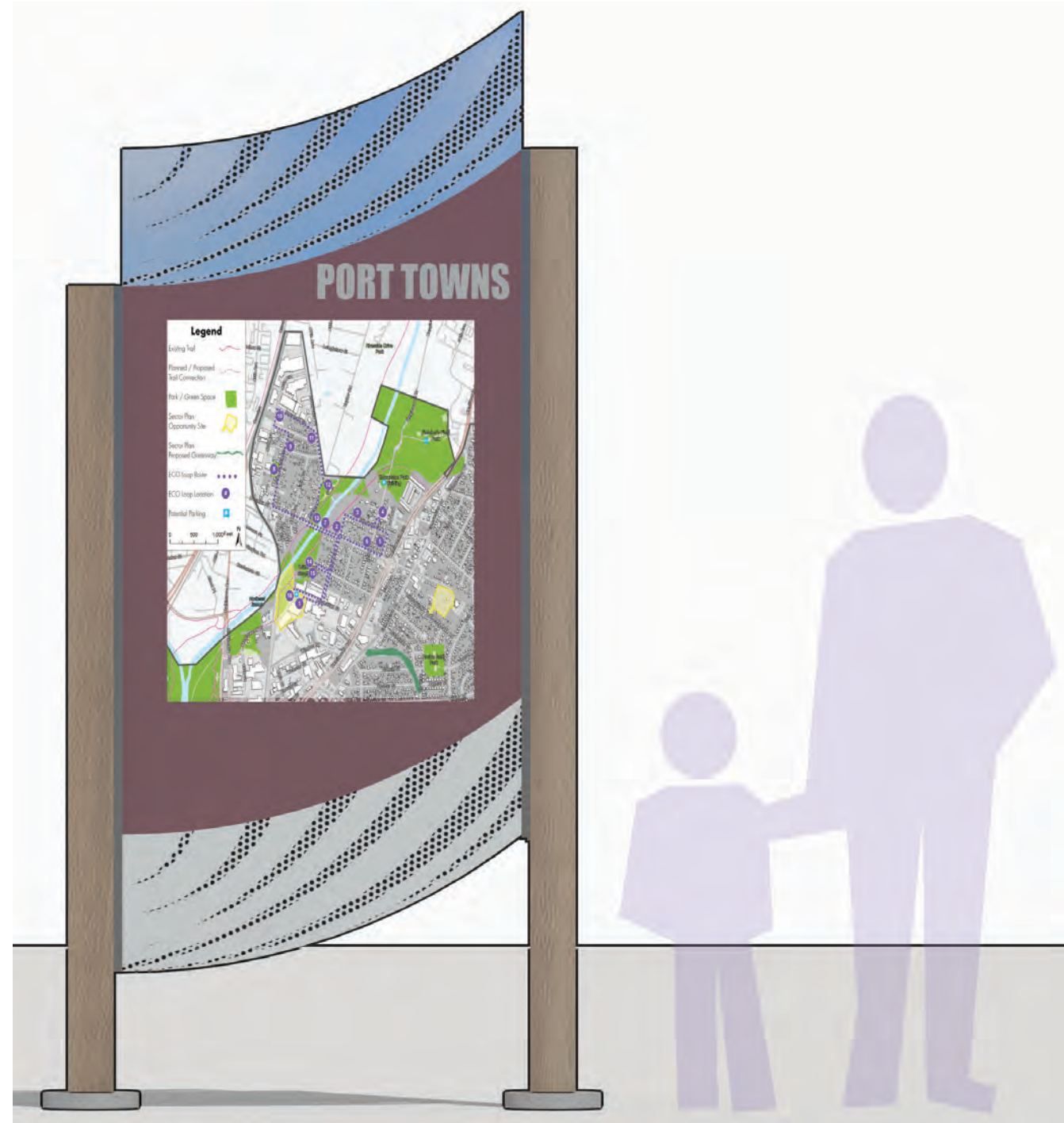


Wave Railing/Facade

The standard railings or barriers on overpasses and bridges in the Port Towns can be replaced with visually distinct scrims or facades that evoke the Anacostia in flowing forms and wave patterns on perforated metal panels. An intervention such as this can turn a visual and physical barrier into an instantly recognizable gateway to the Port Towns.

Materials: perforated aluminum/stainless steel panels

Map Kiosks and Destination Signs



Informational Map Kiosk

Maps of the Port Towns are provided at key junctions and intersections to improve navigation and wayfinding.

Materials: reclaimed wood, acrylic, powder-coated steel, perforated aluminum/stainless steel panels

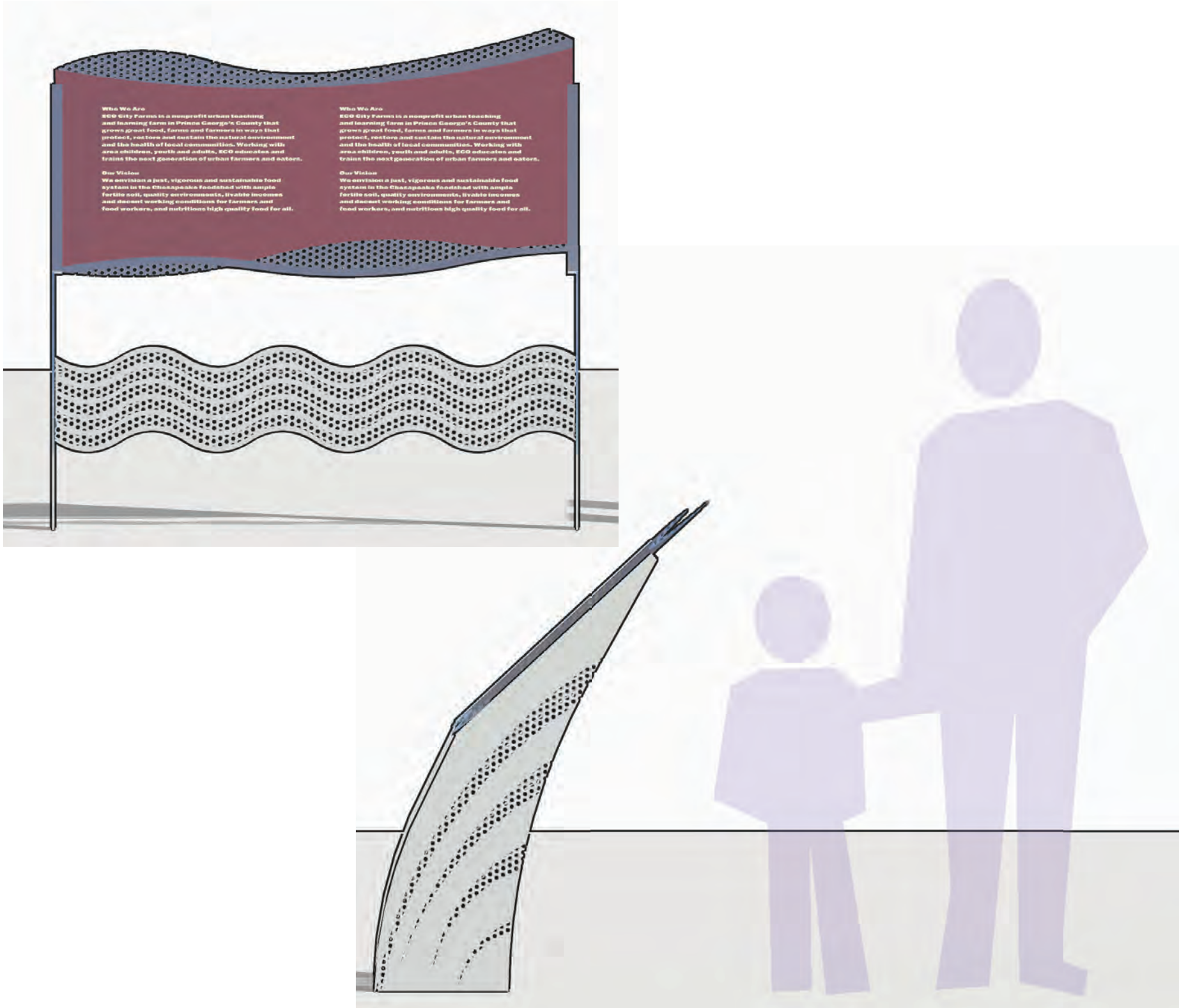


Destination Sign

Signage for significant attractions and points of interest throughout the Port Towns. Provides street address and year of founding or construction.

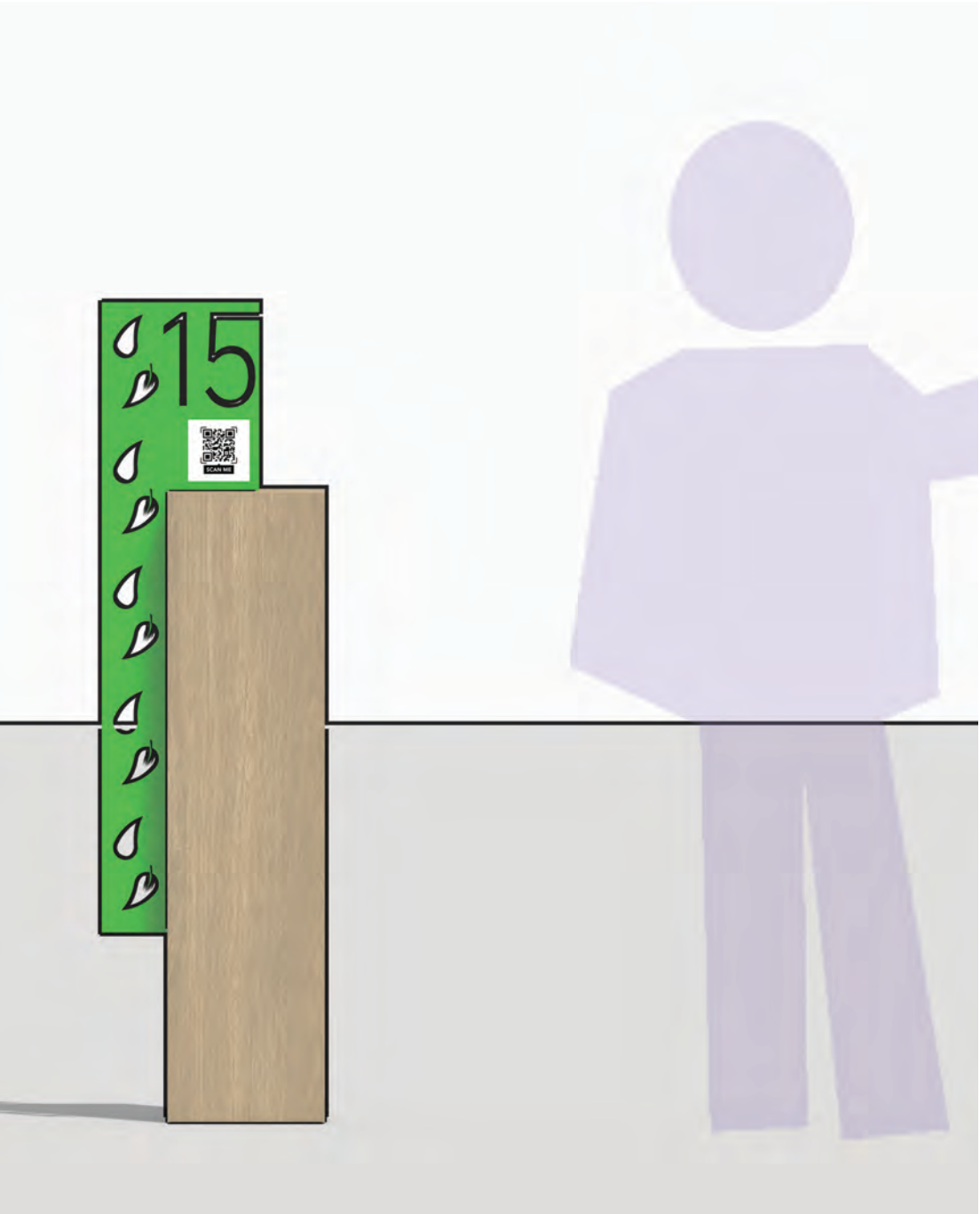
Materials: reclaimed wood, powder-coated steel, perforated aluminum/stainless steel panels

Informational Point of Interest Signs and Trail Markers



Informational Point of Interest Sign

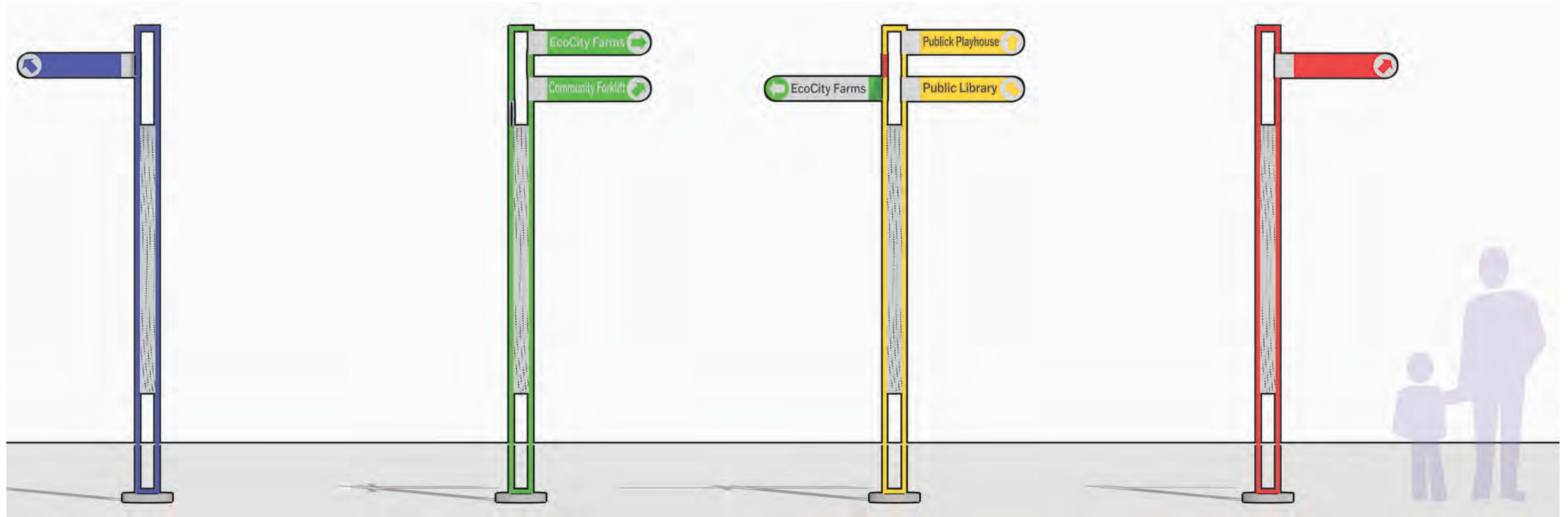
Signage at various destinations and points of interest provides background and historic context of a site as well as interpretive text. The strong visual cohesion across wayfinding and navigational signage makes them instantly identifiable even from a distance.
Materials: acrylic, powder-coated steel, perforated aluminum/stainless steel panels



Guided Tour Trail Marker

The design of this trail marker is for the Port Towns ECOLoop themed tour. Durable and highly visible trail markers aid navigation from site to site along a guided tour. A scannable QR code links to a living GIS Story Map providing additional information about each stop.
Materials: reclaimed wood, powder-coated laser-cut steel

Navigational Signs



Directional Fingerpost Signs

A unified wayfinding signage system allows for intuitive, accessible navigation and improves the pedestrian experience. Sign posts color coded by town further aid in indicating a viewer's current position.
Materials: Tubular steel, acrylic, powder-coated steel, perforated aluminum/stainless steel panels



Navigational Signs

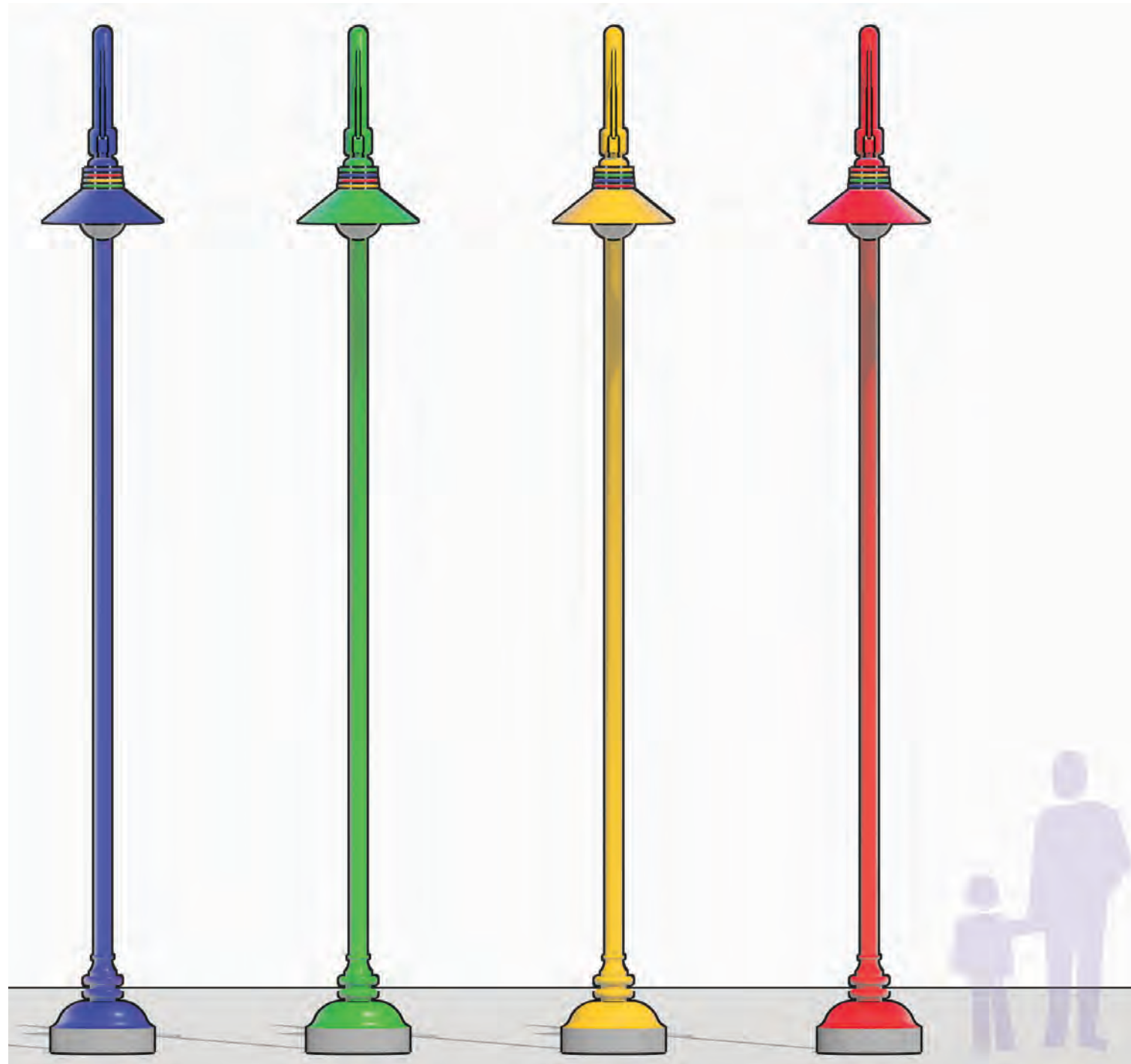


Directional Fingerpost Signs Detail

Individual signs provide direction and distance to destination in walking and biking times to encourage sustainable circulation methods. Directional signs are further coded by each town’s color to indicate whether a destination is in one’s current location or in one of the other three Port Towns.

Materials: Acrylic, powder-coated steel

Additional Streetscape Fixtures



Streetlight Posts

Streetlights of a distinctive design color coded to each of the town serve to enhance the visual brand of the Port Towns, while aiding in wayfinding and navigation through instantly indicating which town one is currently in with no more than a glance.

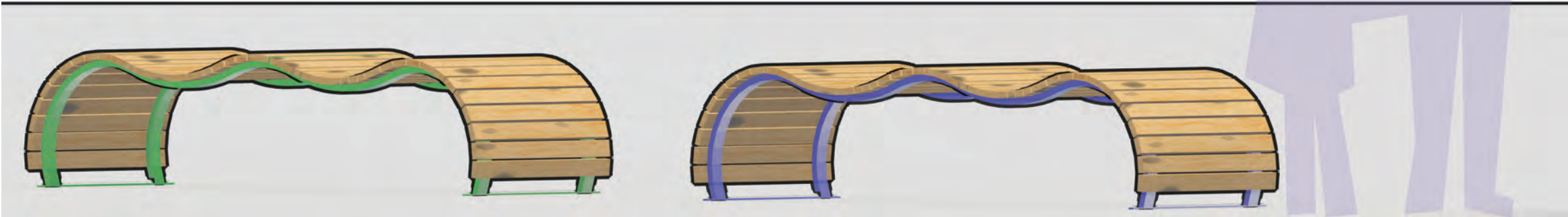


Materials: powder-coated steel, high-efficiency LED lights



Lightpost Banner Detail

Banners on lightposts are a relatively affordable and easily implemented intervention that would instantly elevate the brand of the Port Towns and aid in creating a sense of destination. Banners could be easily retrofitted onto existing lightposts and other street infrastructure. Laser-cut metal panels will be more durable than fabric or plastic banners, reducing frequency of maintenance and replacement.
Materials: laser-cut aluminum/stainless steel



Benches

These benches further reinforce the cohesive visual identity of the Port Towns while also aiding wayfinding by identifying each bench's location with color coding by town.

Materials: reclaimed wood, powder-coated tubular steel



Large Gateway Sign

Each gateway has its own configuration of sails.

Small Gateway Sign

Sized for pedestrians and people on bikes. Colors vary from town to town. Built from wood, bent as in wooden boats, or fiberglass.



Signature Fingerboard Sign

Placed at major junctions. The top of the sign is a weathervane. The color of stanchions changes from town to town.

Standard Fingerboard Sign

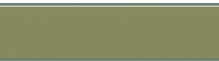
These are the majority of the directional signs in the system. Tips of signs indicate the destination town.



Large Destination Sign
For locations that require a larger sign.



Standard Destination Sign
Most sites use one of these smaller signs, scaled to fit within neighborhoods. Powder-coated metal supported by dressed stone bases.



Map and Information Kiosk

Milepost

Placed along trails, to provide travelers with confidence that they are on the route. Stone with a color-coded top plate.

Chimney Swift Tower

Roosting structure for chimney swifts. After plans from Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Bat House or Birdhouse



Graphic System

 Eco City Farms

 5 min



 Bladensburg Market

 10 min



5 min



Dueling Grounds





15 min



Cottage City Park





 Bostwick House

 5 min



River Stories Trail

to Edmonston

Northwest Branch Trail

to West Hyattsville

The colored waves indicate which town a destination is located in.

Port Towns

ANA
TRAIL S

Bike route



"There exists a designerly way of thinking and communicating that is both different from scientific and scholarly ways of thinking and communicating, and a powerful designerly method of enquiry when applied to its own kinds of problems." (Bruce Archer)

Recommended typeface: Whitney, designed by Tobias Frere-Jones. An exceptionally legible, high performance font, created for wayfinding and identity work (originally for the Whitney Museum in New York).

PROPOSED GATEWAY

ANACOSTIA BRIDGE



Cottage City Gateway Monumental Signage



Gateway Placement and Town Identity

The Anacostia Bridge provides vehicular, and pedestrian access between Cottage City-Colmar Manor and Bladensburg-Edmonston. To reinforce this connection, a gateway is proposed at each of the bridge's four edges, ensuring that all four towns are represented. The proposal also incorporates principles of complete-streets to support safe pedestrian and micromobility circulation along the bridge.

The gateway structures and surrounding plantings are consistent across locations to establish a unified visual identity for the Port Towns. Each gateway incorporates a town-specific sail light that reflects the identity and color of the towns. The sail lights contribute to wayfinding by helping visitors recognize their location and identify which town they are entering or leaving.



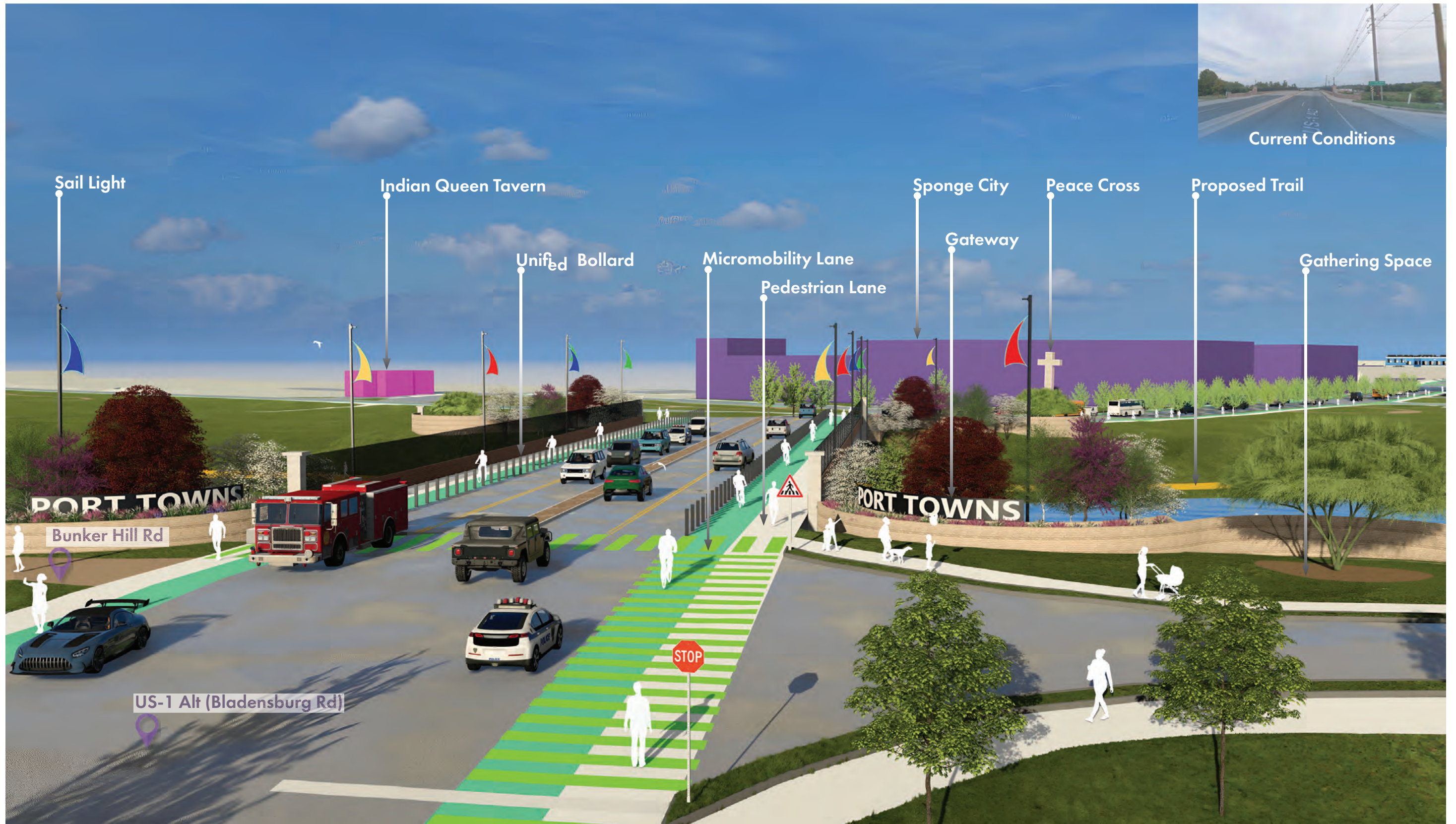
Colmar Manor Gateway Monumental Signage



Edmonston Manor Gateway Monumental Signage



Bladensburg Gateway Monumental Signage



Anacostia Bridge - Cottage City-Colmar Manor Side:

Proposed gateway monumental signage, wayfinding bollards, sail lights, and complete-streets improvements.

PROPOSED GATEWAY BLADENSBURG RD & 38TH AVE

Framing the Street
Signage on both sides to ensure legibility



Port Towns' Future Center: Port Collective

Source: Rhodeside Harwell, Inc. in PG County Planning Dept. 2026 Sector Plan

Gateway Description

Focusing on Colmar Manor, the Historic Bladensburg Dueling Grounds are a key site due to their story and prominent location at the corner of Bladensburg Rd and 38th Ave. Not only is this intersection the most straightforward gateway location to introduce the collective Port Towns to Washington, DC — it is also the location of a potential mixed-use central gathering space, aptly named Port Collective.





Upright pylons and flags serve as versatile gateway fixtures in medians or other areas with limited space.

Kenilworth Ave Entering Edmonston - Southbound Lanes

Gateway Description

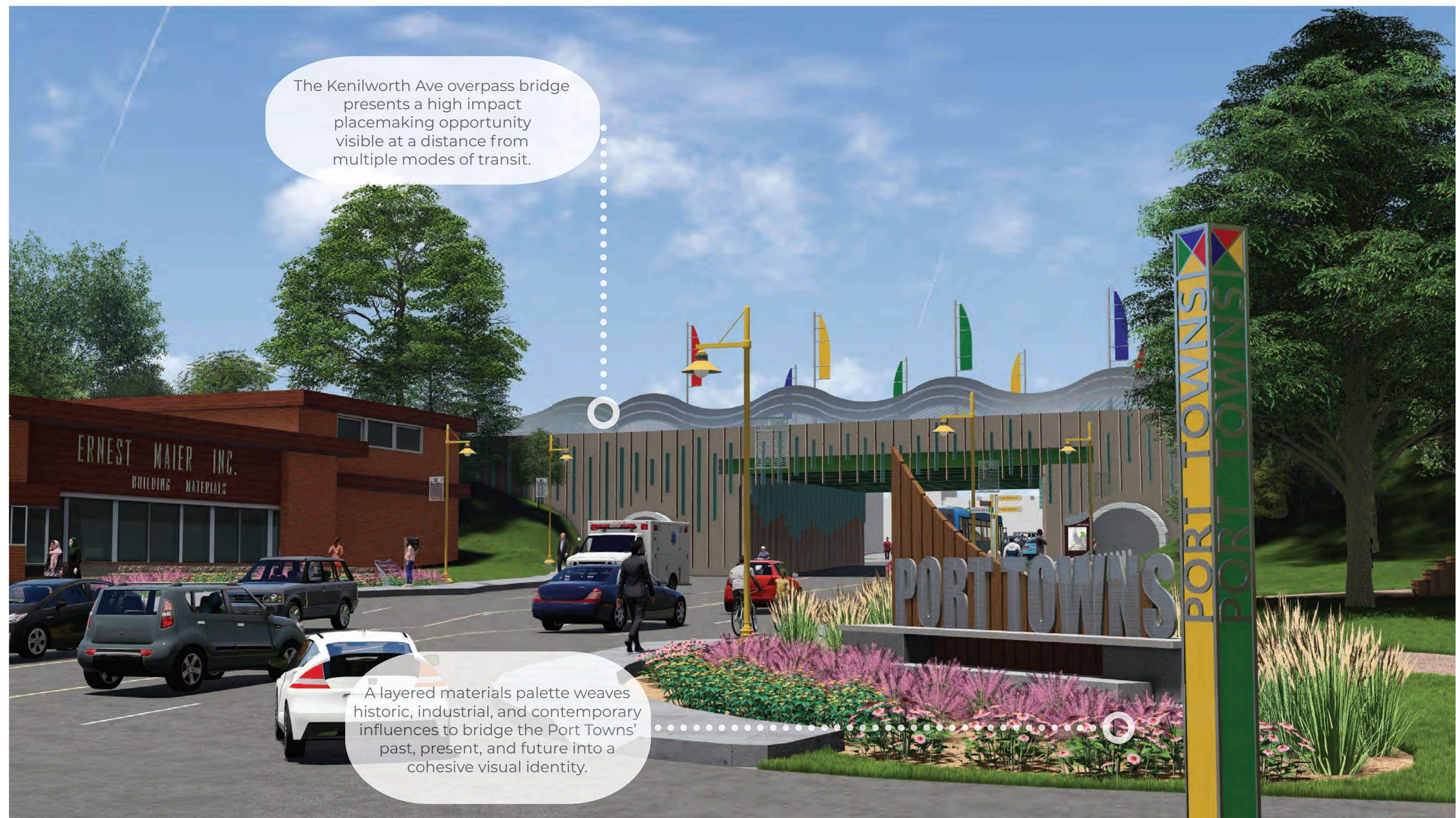
The Kenilworth Ave North Gateway (located at approximately 5124 Kenilworth Ave, Hyattsville, MD) serves as a secondary entry gateway into Edmonston and the Port Towns. Though there is limited space available to accommodate monumental gateway signage to either side of the road, this concept explores ways to take advantage of the available median for potential installations.

ight flags and pylons can be used in medians to signal an immediate sense of arrival to the Port Towns, and instantly identify the town into which one is entering. In addition to the installation of hardscaping and specific streetscape fixtures, a recurring plant palette can be implemented at gateway locations throughout the Port Towns in order to reinforce a cohesive sense of identity.



Kenilworth Ave Leaving Edmonston - Northbound Lanes

PROPOSED GATEWAY KENILWORTH AVE OVERPASS



The Kenilworth Ave overpass bridge presents a high impact placemaking opportunity visible at a distance from multiple modes of transit.

A layered materials palette weaves historic, industrial, and contemporary influences to bridge the Port Towns' past, present, and future into a cohesive visual identity.

Monumental Gateway Signage at Annapolis Road Entry Ramp

Gateway Description

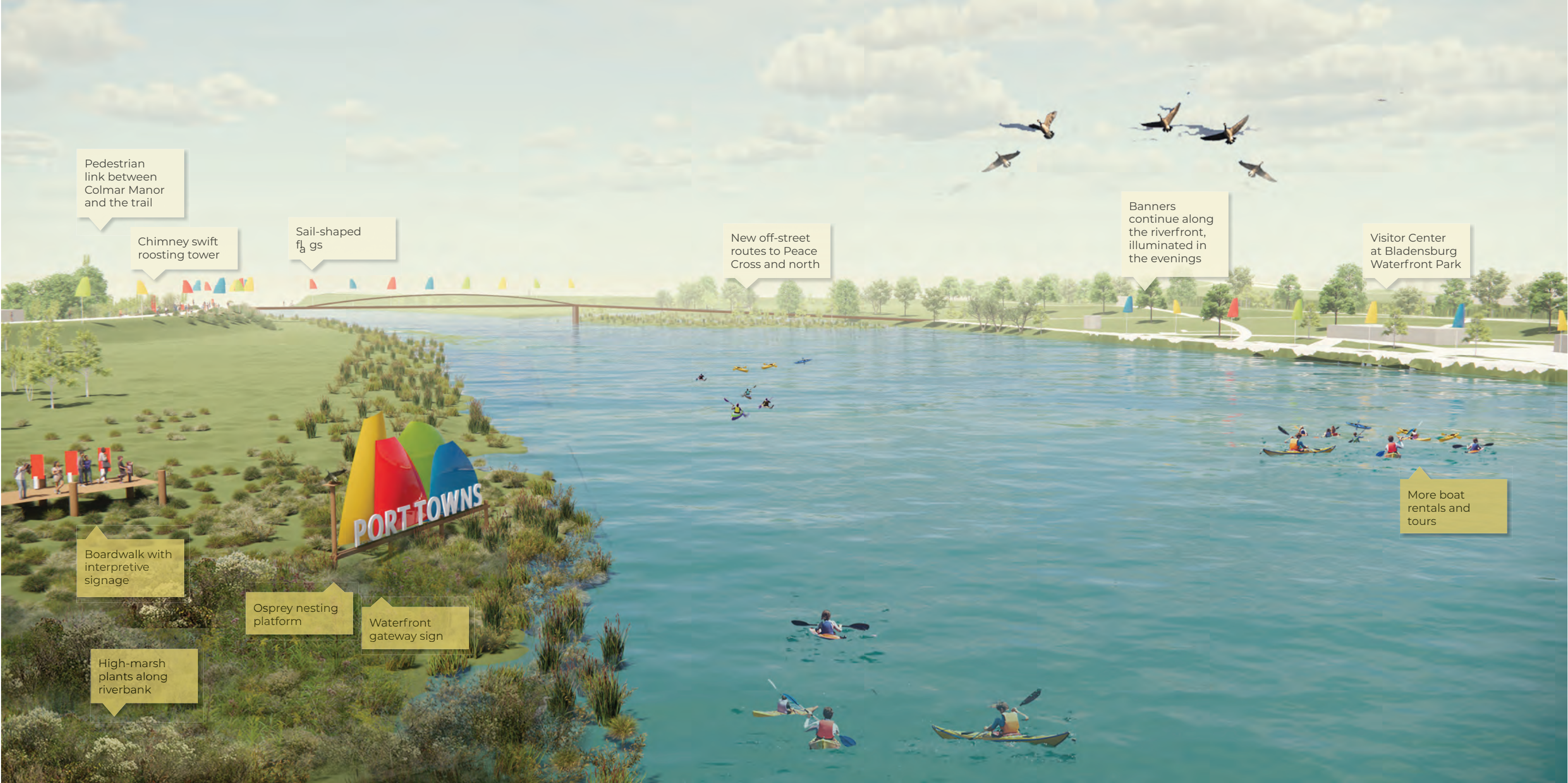
The Kenilworth Ave Overpass Gateway (located at the intersection of Kenilworth Ave and Annapolis Rd in Bladensburg, MD) serves as a gateway into a central downtown district of the Port Towns. Though the Kenilworth Ave and railroad overpasses on Annapolis Rd currently serve to physically divide the area, their prominence and high visibility make valuable opportunities for high-impact placemaking. These bridges can be enhanced through the installation of facades and scrims, visually distinct railings, and additional

gateway streetscape fixtures such as flags and banners - turning barriers into assets. There is also adequate space beside the Kenilworth Ave ramps for monumental gateway signage installations with additional space in the median. This collectively makes the area an ideal gateway location to signal an arrival into the vibrant downtown central district and cement the visual brand of the Port Towns to visitor and passerby alike.



Kenilworth Ave Overpass Bridge

PROPOSED GATEWAY ANACOSTIA WATERFRONT



Waterfront Gateway Area



Waterfront Gateway Sign

Addresses people arriving or returning by boat, but also visible from Bladensburg Waterfront Park. A boardwalk brings visitors from Colmar Manor Park to the riverside at the rear of the sign, which also has its own "PORT TOWNS" lettering. The sign incorporates an osprey nesting platform.

Historic and Present Day Use

Built in 1746, Bostwick House is one of the oldest surviving buildings in Bladensburg. It was once the home of merchant Christopher Lowndes, whose wealth was connected to the Port of Bladensburg and the labor of enslaved Africans. The site reflects both the economic success of the colonial port and the difficult history of slavery that helped support it.

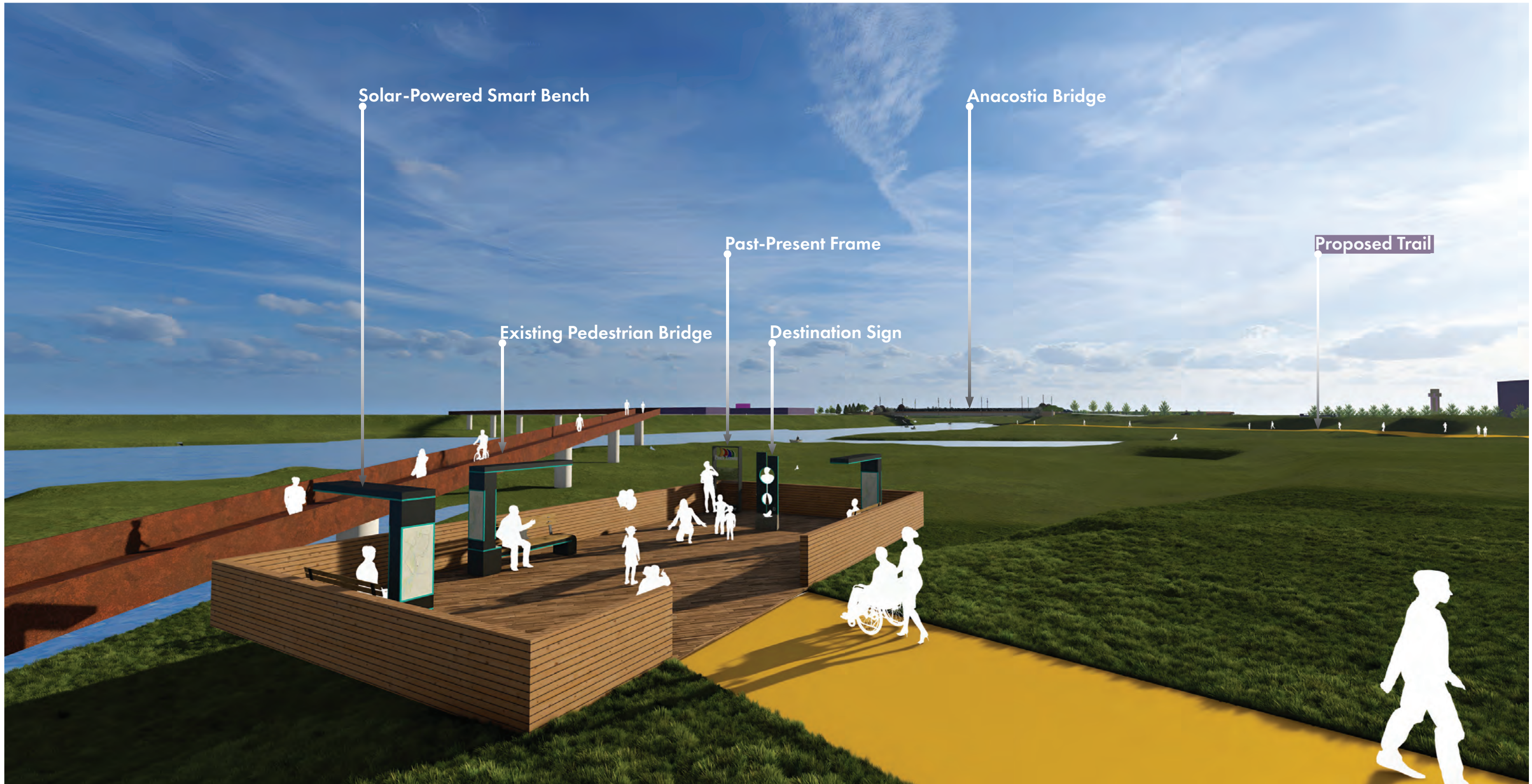
Today, Bostwick House is preserved by the Town of Bladensburg as a historic and educational resource. It serves as a place for preservation, learning, and community, making it an important stop.



Bostwick House

The directional sign points visitors to the Bostwick House from 48th Street. The Past-Present Frame allows visitors to view how the house has evolved over time - connecting its historic character

with its present condition. Bollards and planted areas help reinforce wayfinding and guide visitors to the destination.



Proposed Gathering Space

This proposed gathering space is designed to support reflection and engagement through the solar-powered smart bench with outlets, a Past-Present Frame overlooking the Anacostia Bridge, and the destination

sign for fun photo opportunity. The space encourages visitors to pause, learn, and enjoy views of their surroundings.

FIXTURES IN CONTEXT SUITE II



Dueling Grounds Entrance at 37th Ave



Dueling Grounds Entrance at Bladensburg Rd & 38th Ave

FIXTURES IN CONTEXT SUITE II



Trail Fork Near Lawrence St & 42nd Ave



Entrance to Bladensburg Park Pedestrian Bridge

FIXTURES IN CONTEXT SUITE III



Hilleary-Magruder House in Bladensburg



Informational signs provide history and context for key locations and attractions throughout the Port Towns.

Use of QR codes on signage allows linking to additional information that is easier and more affordable to keep updated than physical signage.

ECO City Farm in Edmonston

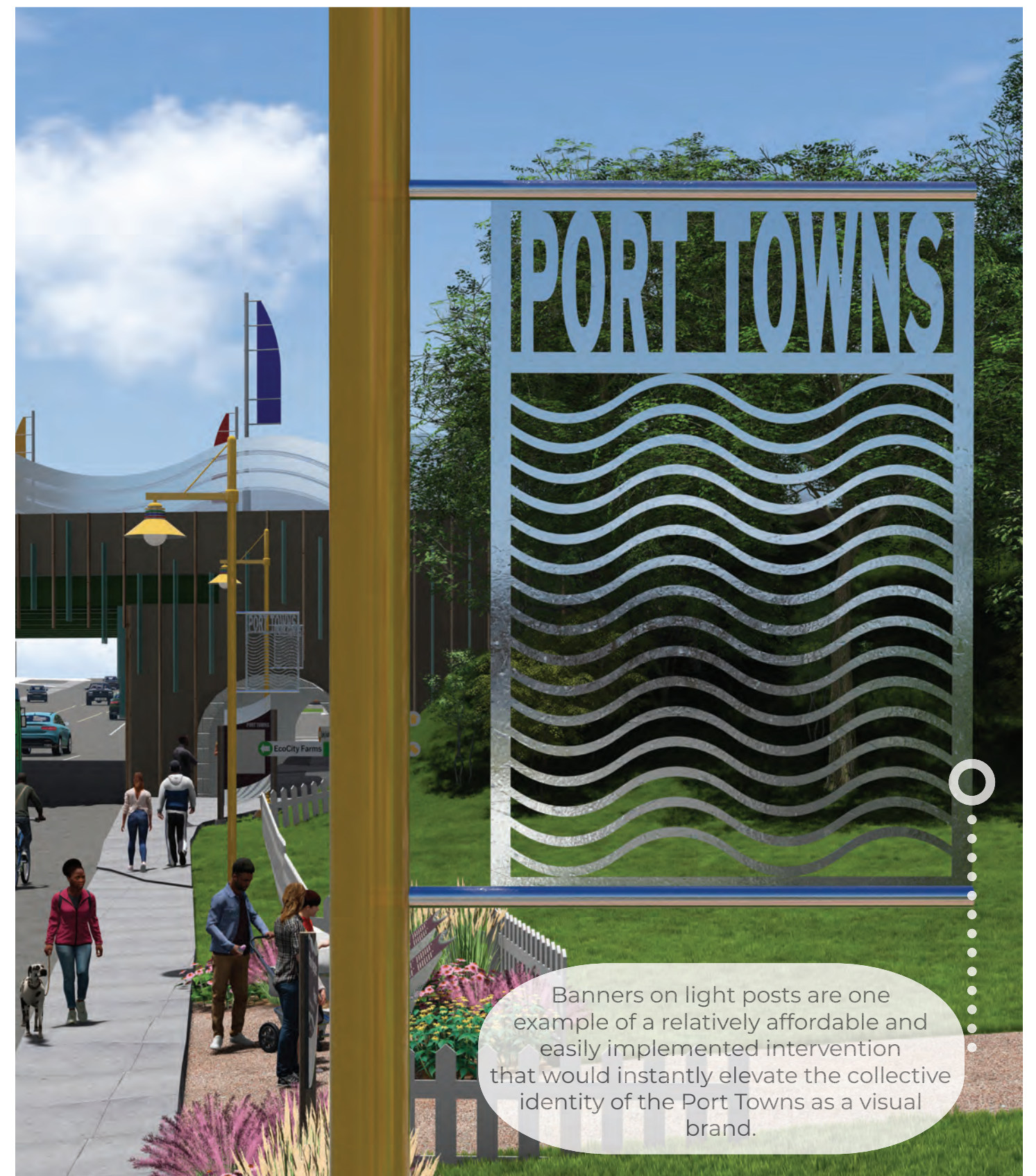
FIXTURES IN CONTEXT SUITE III



Annapolis Rd and Kenilworth Ave in Bladensburg



Kenilworth Ave in Edmonston - Southbound Lanes



Annapolis Rd in Bladensburg - View East

FIXTURES IN CONTEXT SUITE IV



THEMATIC TOUR ROUTES OVERVIEW

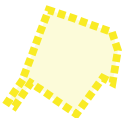
Proposed Themed Walking and Micromobility Tours

The layout and relative concentration of the Port Towns’ greenspaces and various points of interest, coupled with their adjacency to robust existing trail systems present ample opportunities for themed walking or micromobility tours. These tours would function as routes that take users on a journey to various historic sites, landmarks, public art installations, and other attractions throughout the Port Towns, guided by navigational signage with informational and interpretative signage at each tour stop. These tours would be largely suitable for pedestrians or those using micromobility devices. Routes are accessible wherever possible and signage is designed to be accessible to visually impaired and non-English speaking people. These themed guided tour routes would serve a variety of ages and user groups, performing as both a route of circulation throughout the Port Towns and their own regional draws.

The map to the right shows the routes of the design team’s four proposed themed tours: 1) Route of Memory, 2) Dueling Grounds Trail, 3) Port Towns ECOLoop, 4) River Stories Tour. These routes are shown in context with existing and potential trails and bike lanes, and significant points of interest. Planned or potential expansions to trail connections, taken with potential future development of opportunity sites and greenways would further enhance the connectivity, accesibility, and user experience of the proposed tour routes. This map further demonstrates the immense potential to activate disparate points of interest into themed guided tours, as well as the value that potential future trail connections and greenways could provide in this context.

Legend

- 

Parks and Greenspace
- 

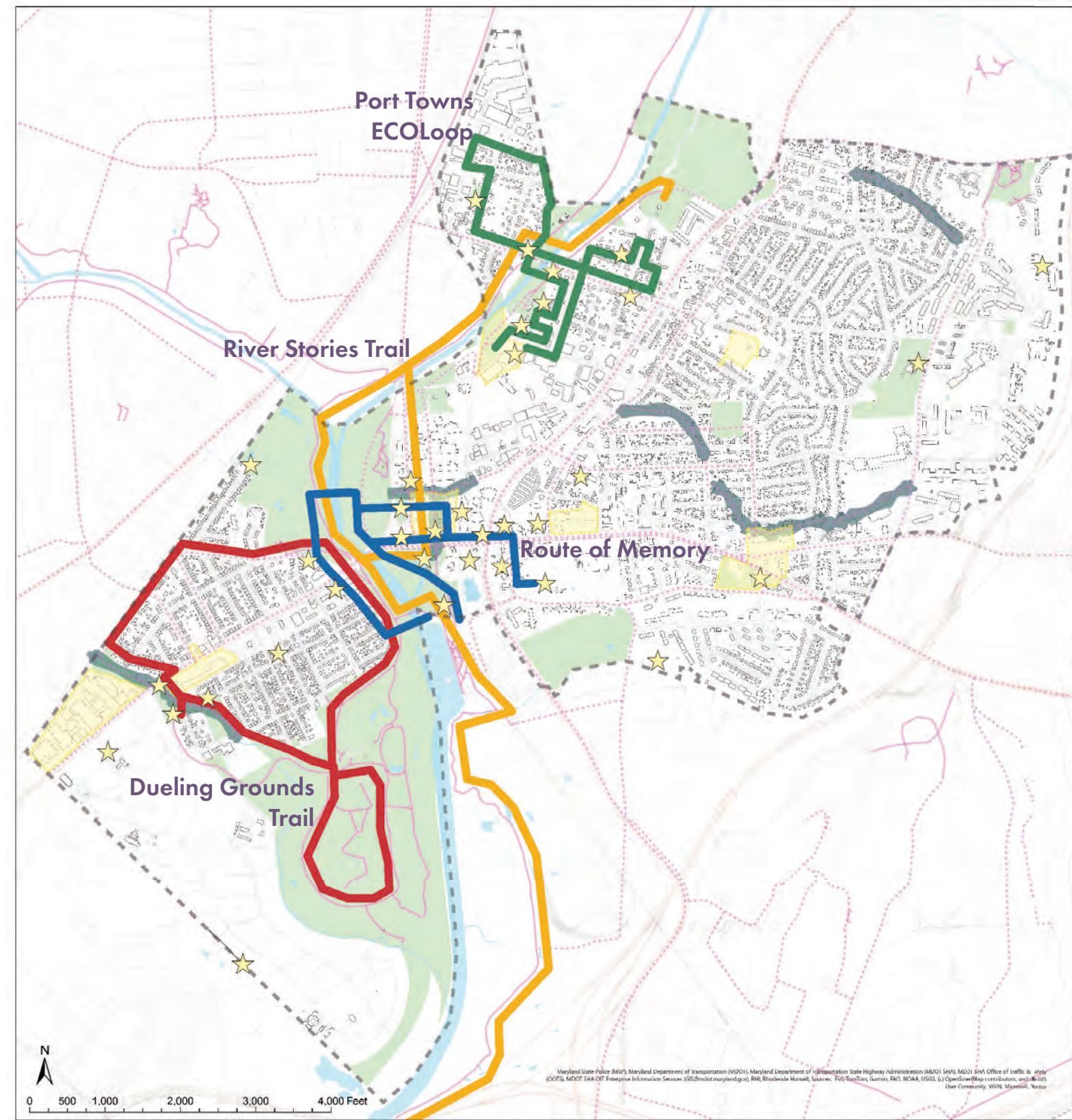
Sector Plan Opportunity Site
- 

Significant Landmark, Attraction, or Destination
- 

Trails and Bike Lanes (Existing)
- 

Trails and Bike Lanes (Planned or Proposed)
- 

Sector Plan Potential Greenway



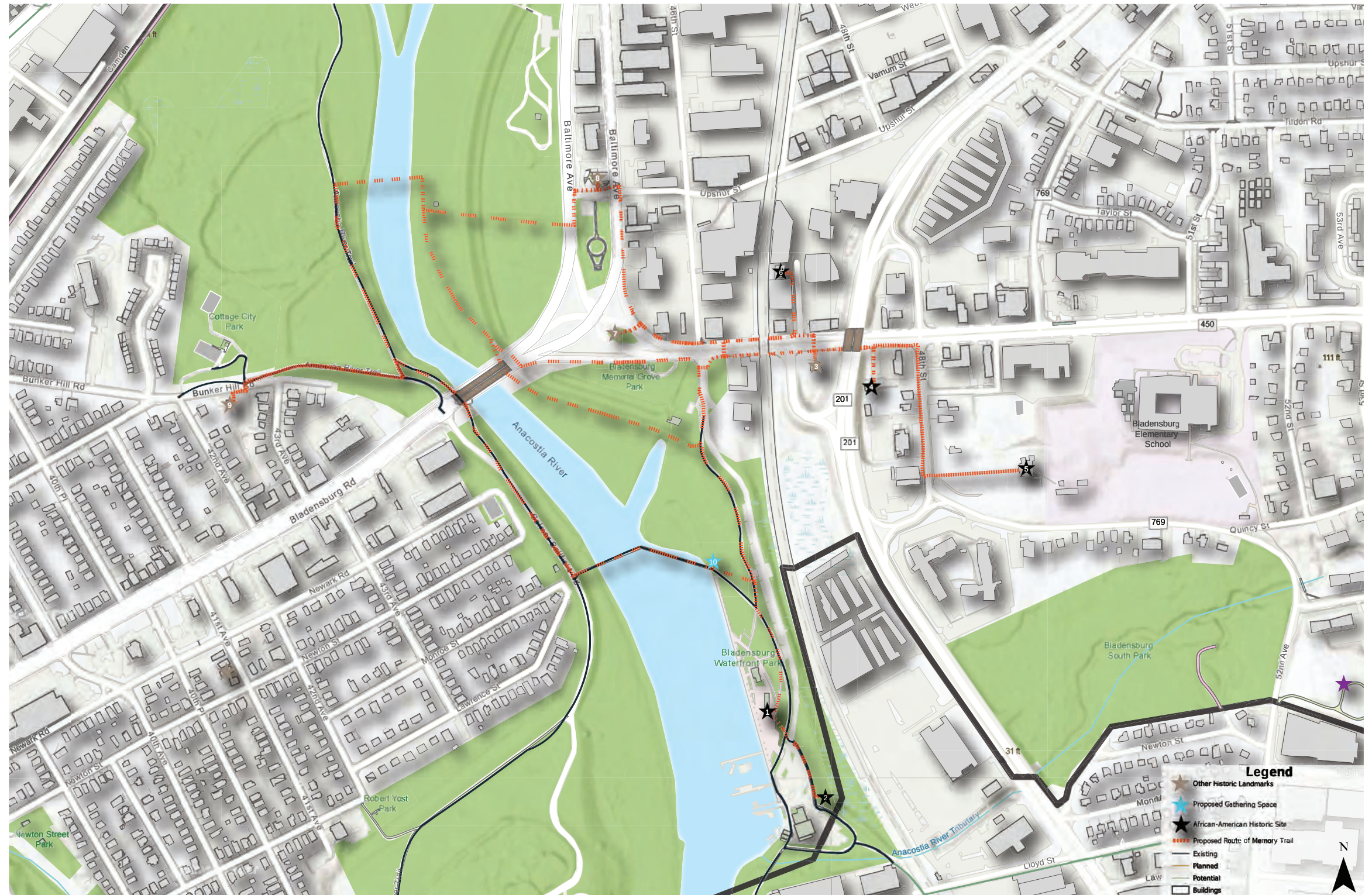
Themed Tour Routes - Overview

THEMATIC TOUR ROUTE ROUTE OF MEMORY

The Story

The Route of Memory is a walking and micromobility tour designed to commemorate the journey of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to the Port Towns, which became one of their final destinations following the legalization of African Slavery through a series of laws beginning in the 1660s. The tour also honors the contribution of Africans and African-Americans to the area's development, history, and culture.

The trail connects ten destinations: five historic landmarks significant to the African slavery narrative, four notable Port Towns landmarks, and one proposed gathering space. The guided tour route takes advantage of existing and proposed trails, crosswalks, and pedestrian connections throughout the Port Towns, and makes the case for additional future river crossings and trail connections.



Route of Memory Route and Points of Interest

The map identifies sites associated with African Slavery in the Port Towns (black stars), significant historic landmarks (tan stars), and the proposed gathering space (cyan stars).



Route of Memory 3D Visualiztion

This visualization shows the arrangement of nine historic landmarks and one proposed gathering space along the Route of Memory Tour route.

10. Proposed Gathering Space

5. Bostwick House

Photo Sources

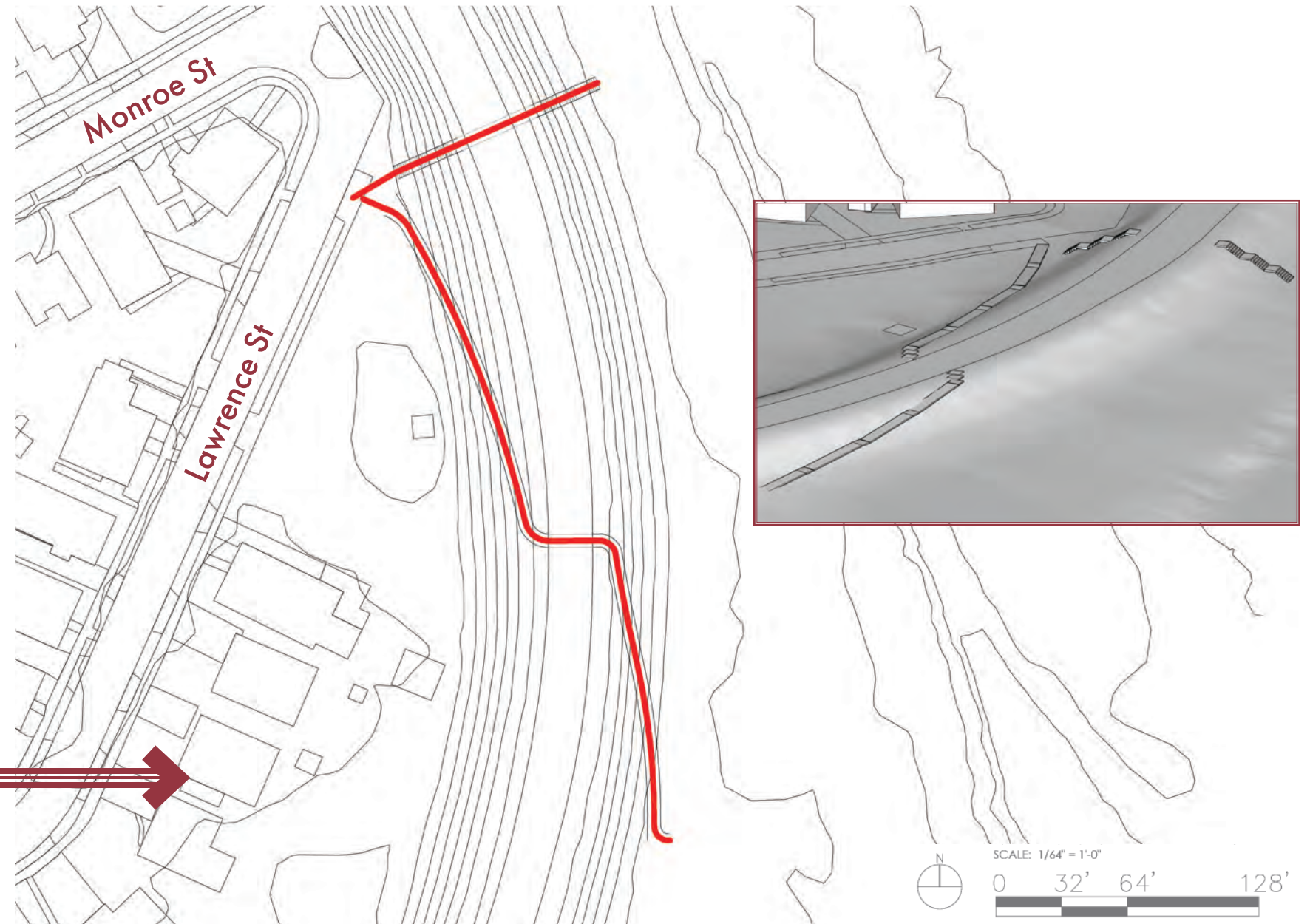
1. PY, 2026
2. Town of Bladensburg, 2024
3. Google Maps, 2026
4. Pubdog, 2008
5. UMD School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, 2026
6. Google Maps, 2026
7. Gail, 2019
8. Pubdog, 2008
9. Van Erem, 2007

THEMATIC TOUR ROUTE DUELING GROUNDS TRAIL

Improving Connections

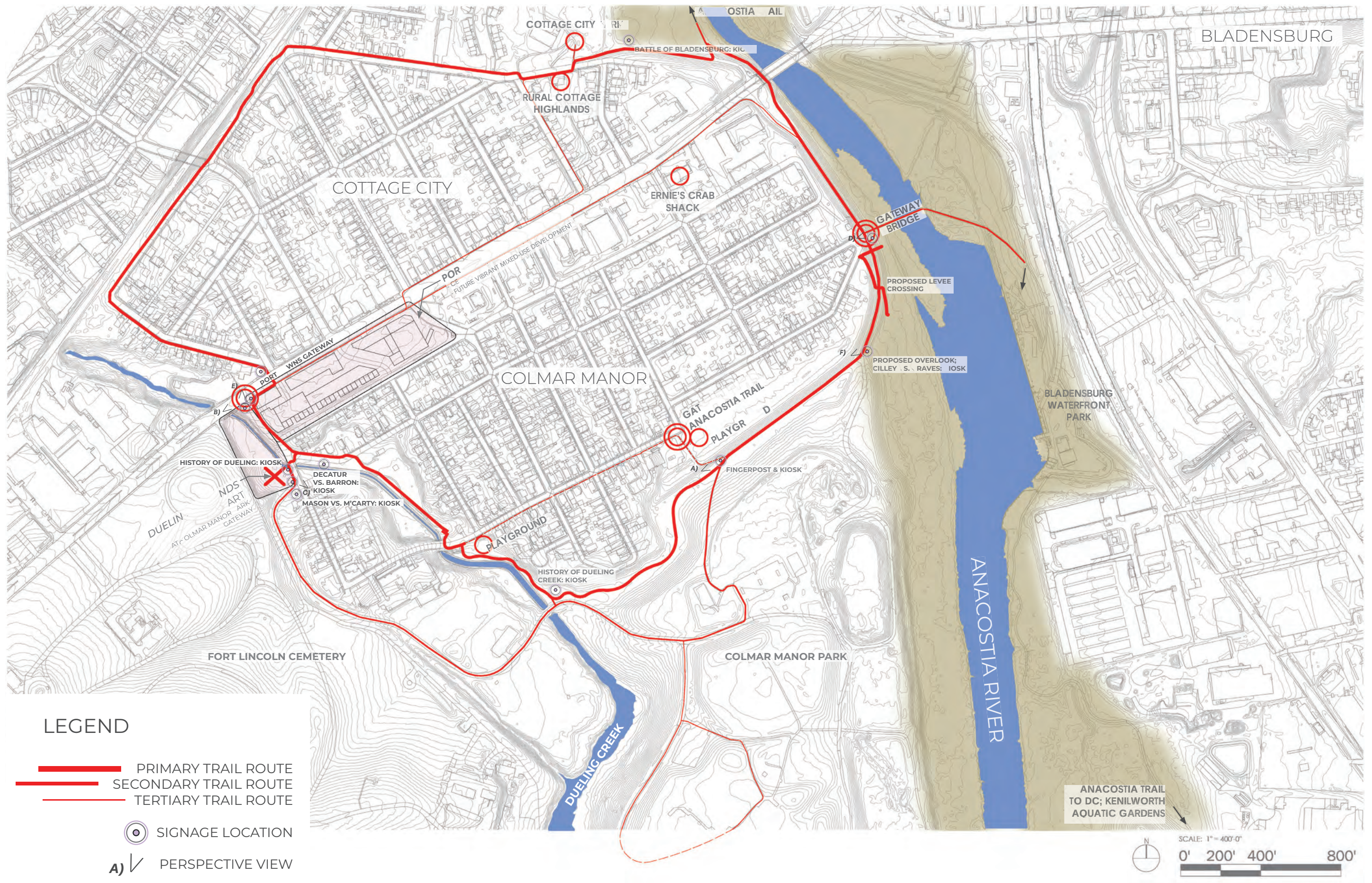
The Dueling Grounds Trail emerged as a method to increase connections for Colmar Manor, such as: park to river, creek to river, park to park, people to nature, people to history, and people to people.

One potential connection would provide waterfront access for Colmar Manor by way of a levee crossing.



Levee Crossing

Near Bladensburg Park Pedestrian Bridge



Thomas Smallwood & the Underground Railroad

There was more to the story than dueling. There was also abolitionist activity on the site because it provided cover. Thomas Smallwood was a freedman, activist, and writer who created a branch of the Underground Railroad that helped slaves escape from Washington, DC. In 1842, this hero began conducting the escape route on horse-drawn carts along what is now Bladensburg Road. The route passed by the Dueling Grounds on that road. When patrols approached, the abolitionists and slaves had to turn off the road and hide. Smallwood wrote about hiding in the woodlands that surrounded the Dueling Grounds, according to historian Doug McElrath. The Grounds were expansive in those days.

Thomas Smallwood's experiences constitute a lesser known part of the Dueling Grounds narrative. Revealing this part of the place's story is essential.

Stephen Decatur vs. James Barron

March 22, 1820

- "Gave the site its greatest and world-wide notoriety" (Adkins, 1891, p. 27)
- Decatur is the 7th great-granduncle of Design Team member Quentin Grotheer
- Adkins wrote an extensive history with letters between Decatur and Barron
- In terms of duels, this story "ranks second only to that in which the lamented Hamilton lost his life at Weehawken in 1804" (Adkins, 1891, p. 27)

Armisted T. Mason vs. John M. M'Carty

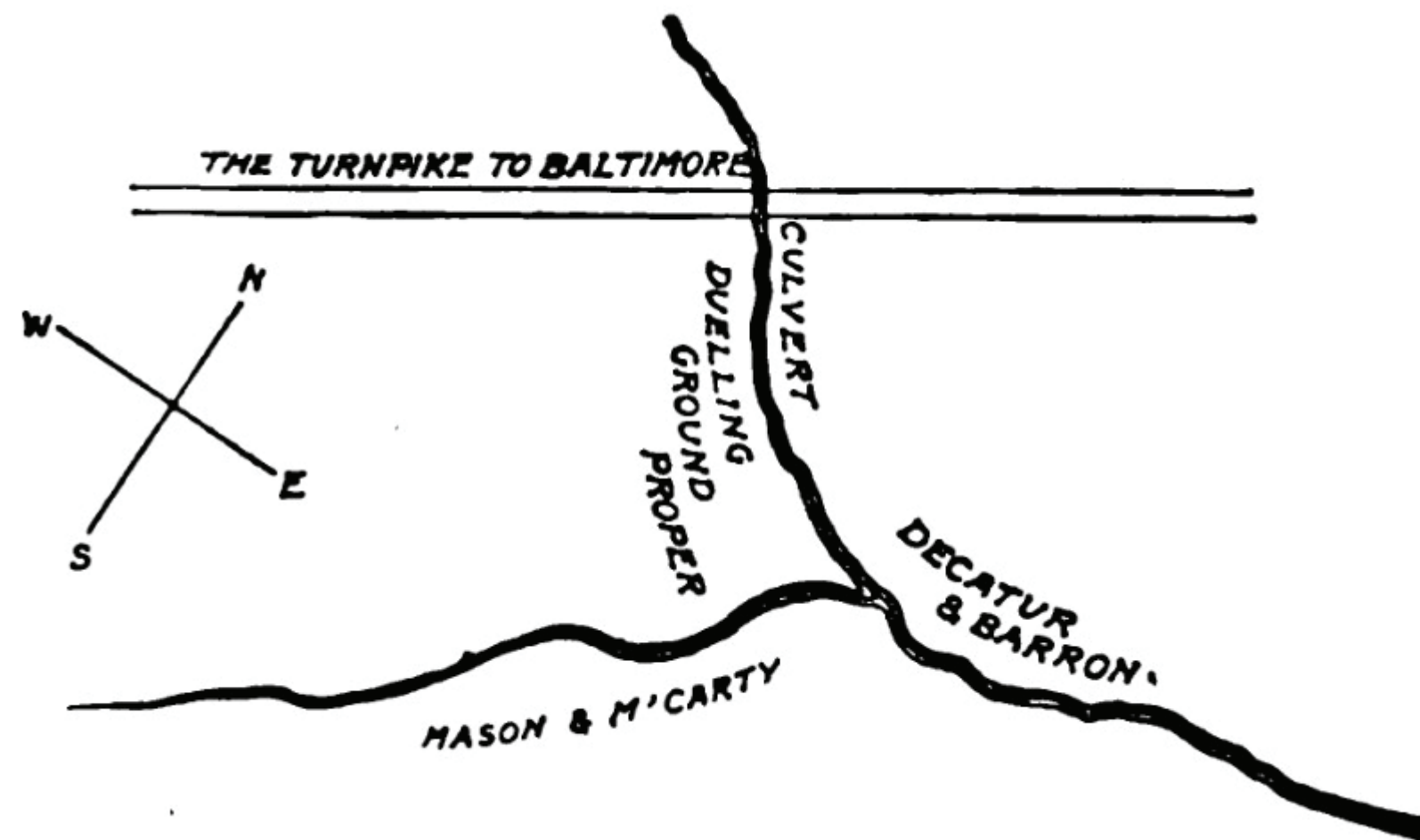
February 6, 1819

- "The first duel on site that attracted universal attention on account of the prominence of the parties, the implacable bitterness of the quarrel, and the melancholy results" (Adkins, 1891, p. 24)
- "Desperate and fatal...haunting" (Adkins, 1891, p. 24-26)

Jonathan Cilley vs. William J. Graves

February 24, 1838

- "Considered the third most noted duel that ever occurred in the United States, and there was certainly less excuse for it and the vindictive animus displayed by one of the parties than for any whose particulars have been recorded" (Adkins, 1891, p. 33)
- Occurred "not upon the immediate site, but a spot two or three miles away, near the Marlborough Road, **across the eastern branch**" (Adkins, 1891, p. 33). **This duel could be mentioned when bringing visitors to the water for a moment of reflection [right].**



Map of Dueling Locations from Adkins, M. J. (1891). The Bladensburg Dueling Grounds. In The Magazine of American History with Notes and Queries (pp. 18-34). A. S. Barnes.



Overlook Facing Bladensburg Waterfront Park

THEMATIC TOUR ROUTE

PORT TOWNS ECOLOOP

Tour Theming and Narrative

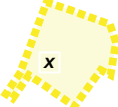
The Port Towns ECOLoop is conceived as an accessible, 2.8-mile walking and micromobility loop through Edmonston that connects and elevates key ecological, cultural, and civic sites. Designed for flexibility, it can be easily shortened to a 1–1.5 mile neighborhood circuit or expanded into a longer fitness or event route, supporting a wide range of user experiences.

Stops span from local points of interest to regionally significant landmarks, with the loop anchored at Community Forklift / Opportunity Site B as a primary gateway and future regional draw. Along the route, users move through distinct, yet connected landscapes - urban streets, green corridors, and riparian edges - guided by clear wayfinding and material cues that reinforce both spatial orientation and ecological awareness.

More than a mere path, the ECOLoop positions movement itself as the destination, framing sustainability, resilience, and adaptive reuse as visible, everyday systems. This tour invites users to experience the Port Towns as a living network of infrastructure, ecology, and community.

Despite current gaps in connectivity, the ECOLoop serves as both a functional route and a long-term framework that reveals hidden assets, strengthens identity, and guides future investment toward a more connected, legible, and resilient public realm.

Legend

-  Parks and Greenspace
-  Sector Plan Opportunity Site
-  Sector Plan Potential Greenway
-  Trails and Side Paths (Existing)
-  Trails and Side Paths (Planned or Proposed)
-  Port Towns ECOLoop Route
-  Port Towns ECOLoop Tour Point of Interest
-  Potential Parking for ECOLoop



EcoLoop Route and Points of Interest

ECOLoop Guided Tour Destinations and Points of Interest

The below sites were identified as significant locations throughout Edmonston that highlight the Port Towns’ shared values of sustainability and citizen stewardship of the environment. The points of interest range from significant landmarks identified in the *Port Towns Preliminary Sector Plan* (marked with an asterisk* below), public art installations, community gardens, significant trees, and stormwater management infrastructure.

1. Community Forklift* - 4671 Tanglewood Dr, Hyattsville, MD
Highlights sustainable practices and creative approaches to adaptive reuse.

2. Decatur Street Green Gallery - Decatur St, Hyattsville, MD
Public art installations along Decatur St make creative reuse of recycled materials.

3. Poppleton-Roberts House* - 45104 Emerson Street, Hyattsville, MD
Historic home can be used to highlight changes in building techniques and sustainable practices over the years.

4. Edmonston Municipal Building - 5005 52nd Ave, Hyattsville, MD
Location of Edmonston’s inaugural official rain garden, highlights values of sustainability and environmental awareness

5. Edmonston’s #5 Tree - ~4903 52nd Pl, Hyattsville, MD
This Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*) with a diameter at breast height [DBH] of 33” is Edmonston’s 5th largest tree and a great provider of ecosystem services and benefits. This is a tree to be protected and celebrated.

6. Decatur Green Street - Decatur St, Hyattsville, MD
Extensive rain gardens, pollinator patches, and the “Green Bus Shelter” reinforces the Port Towns’ shared values of environmental stewardship.

7. Mural #6* - ~5000 Decatur St, Hyattsville, MD
The Diversity Bridge mural highlights shared Port Town values of appreciation for art, culture, and diversity.

8. Edmonston Community Garden - ~5009 47th Ave, Hyattsville, MD
Located adjacent to Edmonston Neighborhood Mini-Park, which also boasts a playground and a free little library, highlighting values of sustainability and self-sufficiency.

Though the ECOLoop focuses primarily on Edmonston in its current iteration, there would be adequate opportunities to expand to relevant sites in the surrounding Port Towns. This future expansion beyond Edmonston, and potential connections to other themed guided tours could be further facilitated through improved trail connections.

9. Edmonston’s #2 Tree - ~5200 47th Ave, Hyattsville, MD
This London Plane Tree (*Platanus x acerifolia*), 42” DBH is Edmonston’s 2nd largest tree and an invaluable provider of ecosystem benefits.

10. Edmonston’s #3 Tree - ~4601 Ingraham St, Hyattsville, MD
This Sweetgum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), 40” DBH is Edmonston’s 3rd largest tree and an invaluable provider of ecosystem benefits.

11. Edmonston’s #4 Tree - ~44619 Ingraham St, Hyattsville, MD
This Silver Maple (*Acer saccharinum*), 36” DBH is Edmonston’s 4th largest tree and an invaluable provider of ecosystem benefits.

12. Edmonston SW Pumping Station - ~4998 Taylor Rd, Hyattsville, MD
Critical storm water infrastructure that prevents flooding. Can be tied back to rain gardens and stormwater benefits of significant trees

13. Edmonston Veterans Park - ~4999 Taylor Rd, Hyattsville, MD
Boasting a Little Free Library, Community Food Pantry, and Little Free Art Gallery, this park embodies values of sustainability and resilience.

14. Edmonston’s #1 Tree - ~44913 Crittenden St, Hyattsville, MD
This Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*), 44” DBH is Edmonston’s largest tree and an invaluable provider of ecosystem services and benefits.

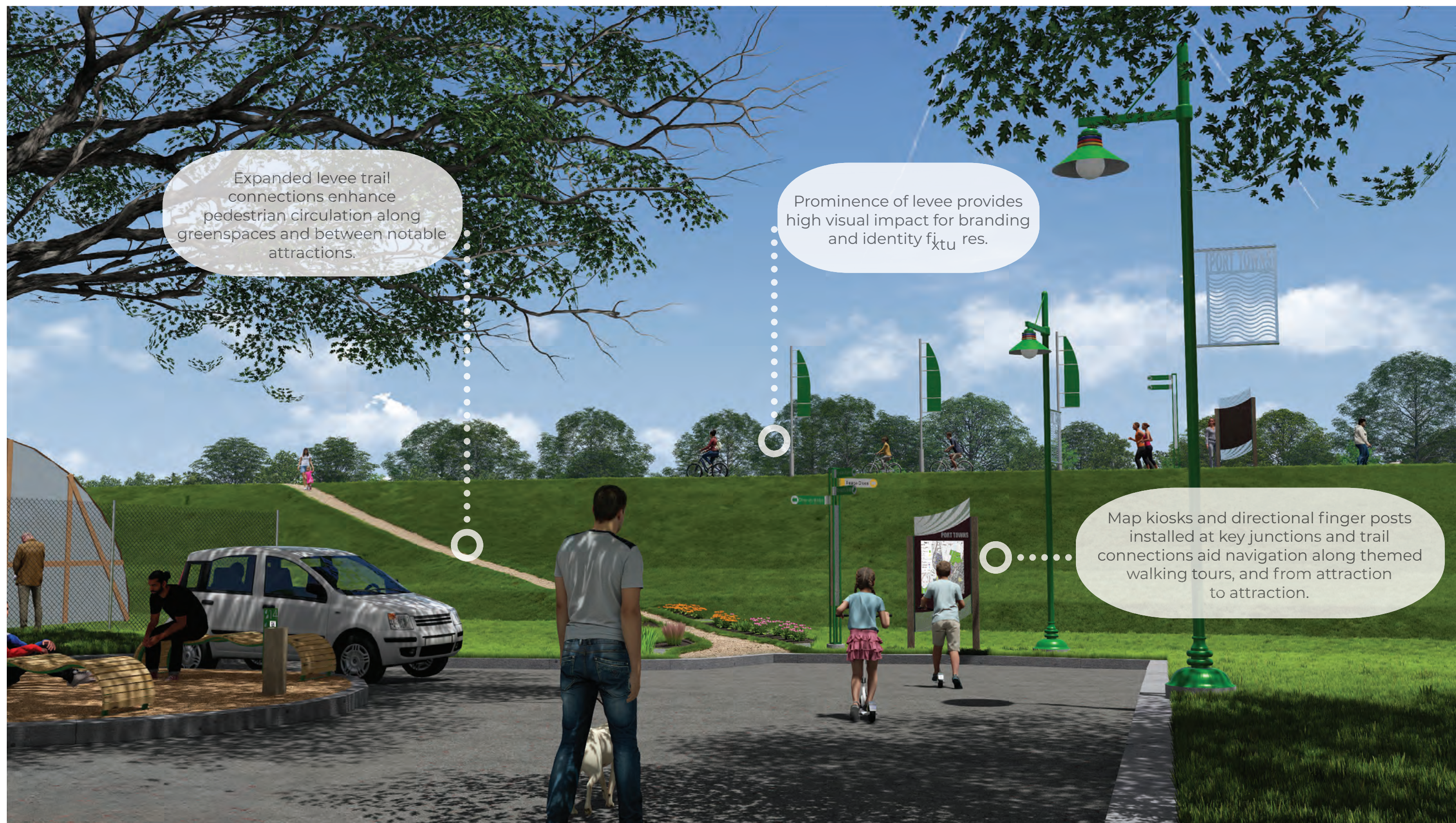
15. EcoCity Farms & Mural #5* - 44913 Crittenden St, Hyattsville, MD
The vibrant urban farm with a mural on its fence highlights values of sustainability, self-sufficiency, diversity, and appreciation of the arts.

16. Sector Plan Opportunity Site B - ~4671 Tanglewood Dr, Hyattsville, MD
Potential future development that could someday act as a regional draw, centering local art and agriculture with possible attractions ranging from a makers space, food hall, brewery, roastery, performance space, to a scenic Anacostia River overlook platform.

THEMATIC TOUR ROUTE | PORT TOWNS ECOLOOP



Port Towns ECO Loop - Encouraging a sense of discovery



Expanded levee trail connections enhance pedestrian circulation along greenspaces and between notable attractions.

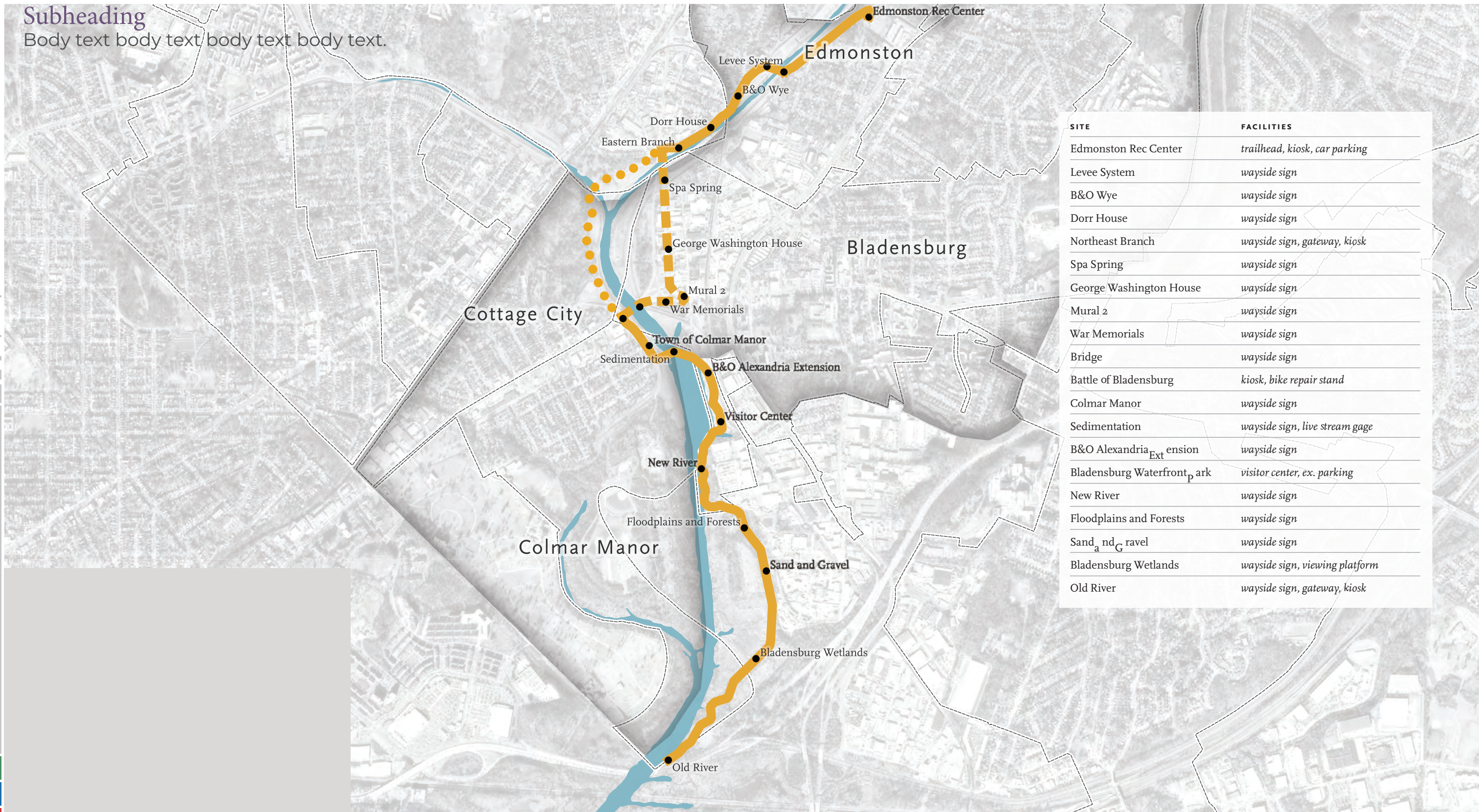
Prominence of levee provides high visual impact for branding and identity fixtures.

Map kiosks and directional finger posts installed at key junctions and trail connections aid navigation along themed walking tours, and from attraction to attraction.

Proposed Levee Trail Expansion at Crittenden Street

THEMATIC TOUR ROUTE RIVER STORIES TRAIL

Subheading
Body text body text body text body text.



River Stories Tour — Themes and Content

Nature

Tidal freshwater

Wetland species
Changes in trees—Emerald Ash Borer

Migratory fish

Herring and shad, and restoration projects

Birds along the river

Birds species, esp. blue herons, eagles, and osprey
Updates about individual birds and pairs

Habitat restoration

Bladensburg Wetlands; small projects; future projects

Fishing today

History and People

American Indian life along the river

Maryland and the Algonquian peoples
The Nacotchtank (Anacostan) lived downstream, and the draws gets its name from them.
Piscataway tribes in Maryland today

African American history

Slavery, resistance, and abolition
Black Marylanders before the Civil War
The Great Migration

War of 1812

The Anacostia as a barrier, with the British and American armies fighting over the crossing-point at Bladensburg.

Connections

The Port of Bladensburg

The colonial tobacco economy and the early port

Roads and Railroads

The Old Post Road, now Route 1
The Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's Alexandria Extension, 1873
Kenilworth Ave. and demolition

Reshaping the River

Tobacco and sedimentation

Agriculture upstream, erosion, and increased sediment loads

Floods

Low ground and a history of flooding

The levee system and pumping stations

Levees and weirs, sewage pumping stations, and the straightened river channel

Future

Green infrastructure
Flood risk
Planned (and realized) projects

Audiences

Port Towns residents
Prince George's County students
Maryland and D.C. residents following the trails
Regional visitors for events, food and retail, and arts + culture
People on arts tours

THEMATIC TOUR ROUTE RIVER STORIES TRAIL

Edmonston Rec Center (Edmonston)

Trailhead. Panel about links to communities in Central Maryland and Southern Maryland.

Levee System

Flooding, the managed Anacostia, US Army Corps of Engineers and the levee system, later approaches and green infrastructure.

B&O Wye

Railroads and the area, Edmonston history.

Dorr House

Late 19th and early 20th century history, suburban communities.

Northeast Branch

This is the site where the Northeast Branch and Northwest Branch diverge. Topics: tributaries of the Anacostia River, migratory fish, traditions of fishing.

Spa Spring

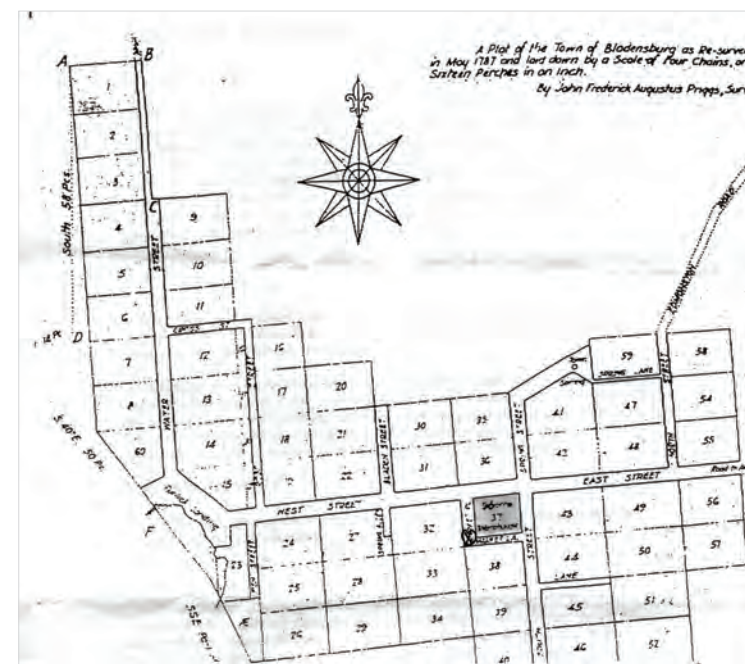
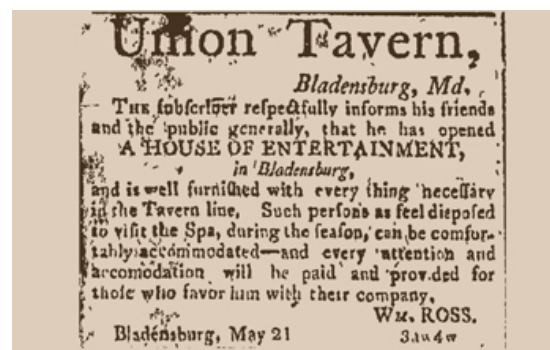
The WSSC pumping station is the subject of a forthcoming Maryland Inventory of Historic Places report. The spring was a local destination. Topics: the Port Towns as resorts, water supply.

George Washington House

Colonial and early 19th century history, the Port of Bladensburg; Anacostia Watershed Society and community organizations.

Mural 2

Public art in the Port Towns. St. Paul's Baptist Church and African American communities.



War Memorials

The memorials themselves; veterans and the GI Bill.

Bridge

Bridge 16006, built 1955. Highways and the Port Towns, levee system, Latino immigration.

Battle of Bladensburg

The Battle of Bladensburg, Colmar Manor history.

Colmar Manor

Colmar Manor history, local birds.

Sedimentation

Bladensburg as a port, the tobacco economy, sedimentation, submerged aquatic vegetation.

B&O Alexandria Extension

Railroads, Bladensburg history.

Bladensburg Waterfront Park

Trailhead and visitor center

New River

The flood control project, lost wetlands

Floodplains and Forests

Connections between the river and its floodplain.

Sand and Gravel

Extractive industries in the watershed.

Bladensburg Wetlands

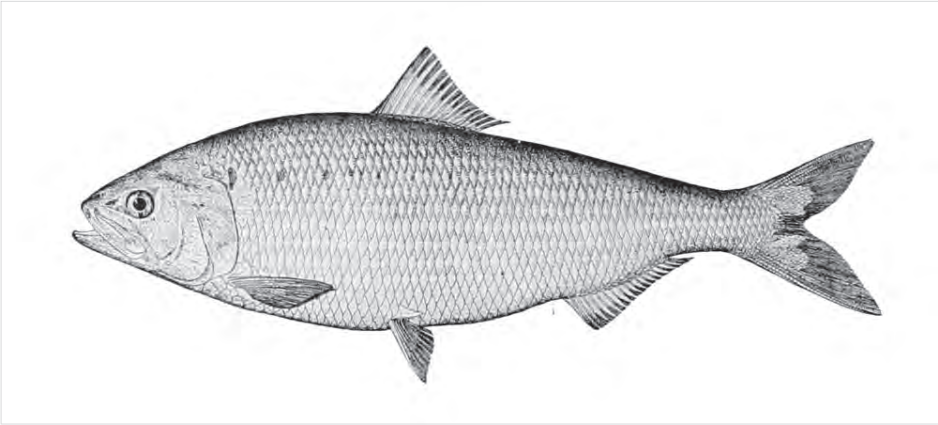
Wetland restoration, migratory birds, aquatic animals

Old River

Emerald Ash Borer, invasive species, habitat restoration, mussels



American osprey (Mike L. Baird on WP, CC BY 2.0)



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