

Richmond Highway Corridor Placemaking Technical Assistance Panel

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2024



Presentation Outline

- TAP Process
- Meet the Panel
- The Assignment
- Stakeholder Input
- The Panel's Approach
- Placemaking Types
- Site Selection Criteria
- Placemaking Sites
- Visualizing Interventions
- Governance



What is a TAP?

The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) offers technical analysis to communities and organizations facing land-use challenges.

ULI members volunteer their time to provide unbiased, expert advice and specific recommendations for improvement. Local industry leaders draft a plan to revive, rethink, and restore communities to ultimately enact change and improve the lives of people in the DC region

Day One

- Meetings with sponsor representatives
- Interviews with stakeholders and community representatives

Day Two

- Work session to develop recommendations
- Presentation to sponsor and stakeholders

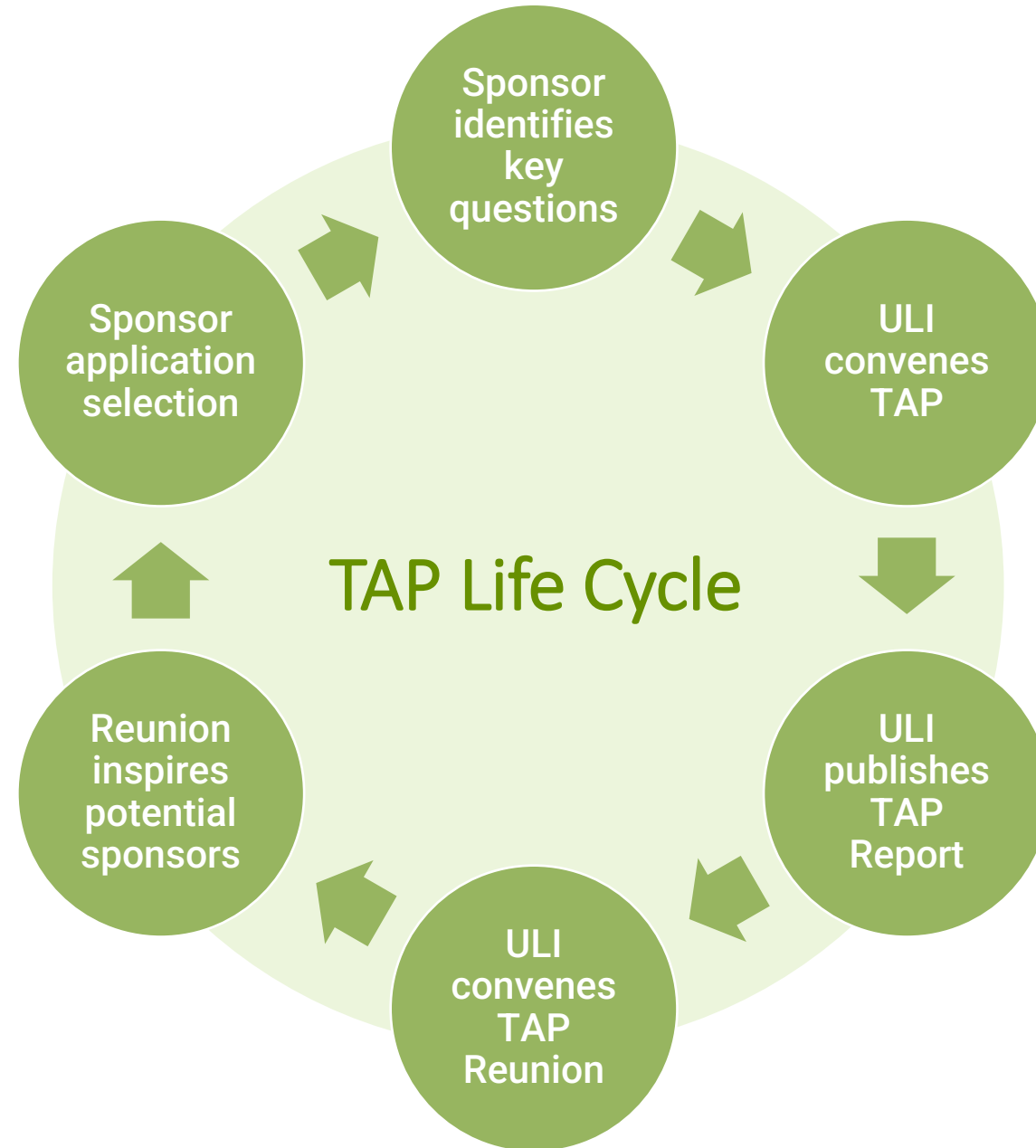
How does ULI provide this assistance?

A community group or organization approaches ULI with a request.

ULI convenes a group of experts to focus on specific questions in a concentrated, finite effort and communicates the results.

- group of experts = Technical Assistance Panel
- specific questions = defined by the sponsor
- concentrated, finite effort = two intense days
- communicates the results = presentation to the sponsor *and* published report

Sponsor pays a fee for service (\$25,000) to ULI Washington.





Panelists & Staff



Nkosi Yearwood
Montgomery
County Planning
Panel Chair



Nastasia Buckley
Marriott
International



Connie Fan
LSG Landscape
Architecture



Maria Lashinger
Grove Slade



Ellen McCarthy
Georgetown
University



Anna McCorvey
The River East
Design Center



Robert Meeks
Peerless Properties



Shane Pomajambo
Art Whino



Steven Segerlin
Amtrak



Marc Gazda
ULI Washington
Staff



Kaushambi Shah
TAP Report Writer

Thank You to Our Incredible Stakeholders!

Vanessa Aguayo, *FCDOT*
Sonya Breehey, *Coalition for Smarter Growth*

Barbara Byron, *Fairfax County BOS*

Allen Brooks, *Building Momentum*

Ingo Christ, *BGB Analytik*

Christina Cisneros, *Federal Realty*

Queenie Cox, *Gum Springs Home Owners Voice*

C.J. Cross, *Chalkboard Restaurants*

Holly Dougherty, *Mount Vernon Springfield Chamber of Commerce*

Juan Pablo Echeverria, *Arcadia Center*

Ivana Escobar, *United Community*

Rachel Flynn, *Fairfax County*

Ricky Foley, *FCDOT*

Marianela Funes, *Tenants and Workers United*

Anthony Ganguzza, *Burke & Herbert*
Leila Gordon, *Reston Community Center*

Carlos Heard, *BF Saul & Co.*

Heather Johnson, *Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House*

Alinah Kargar, *Arcadia Center*

Stephen Keat, *Economic Advisory Committee/SFDC*

Elisabeth Lardner, *FCRHA*

Rodney Lusk, *Franconia District BOS*

Tammy Mannarino, *Fairfax County History Commission*

Graham Owen, *Fairfax County DPD*

Mary Paden, *South County Task Force*

Sandy Paik, *Tower Companies*

Jack Perkins, *Elm Street Development*

Anna Ricklin, *Fairfax County Health Department*

Marty Sanchez Lowery, *Mount Zephyr Civic Association*

Josh Shumaker, *Council of State and Community Development Agencies*

Stacey Shaw, *Kettler*

Scott Sizer, *Fairfax County*

Michael Spotts, *Habitat for Humanity*

Dan Storck, *Mount Vernon BOS*

Tracy Strunk, *Fairfax County DPD*

Stephen Tarditi, *FCEDA*

Mark Viani, *Bean Kinney*

Katherine Ward, *Mount Vernon Council of Civic Associations*

Ellen Young, *Belle View Condo Association*



ULI TAP Briefing Book

The Assignment

The Goals of the TAP

1. Recommend **Steps toward Implementing** a Placemaking Vision for the Corridor's Revitalization.
2. Identify Opportune **Sites** for Placemaking Interventions along the Corridor.
3. Recommend Strategies for **Enhancing Community Identity** through Equitable Placemaking, Acknowledging the BRT Project.

The Assignment

The Big Questions to Answer



ULI TAP Briefing Book

1: Placemaking Locations

What are the best placemaking spots in the corridor?

2 & 3: Placemaking Types

What modalities will enhance the experience?

How to articulate the built environment?

4: Mitigating Construction Impacts

What strategies can be used to mitigate construction impacts?

5: Integration with New Developments

How can we integrate development with placemaking?

Stakeholder Roundtable Session



Summarized Stakeholder Comments:

Community

Highlight History

Celebrate &
Respect Diverse
Identities

"Increase
Community
Communication"

Businesses

Increased
Marketing Support
during Construction

Foot Traffic &
Visibility

"Gathering spaces
that benefit the
businesses"

Two Scales of Implementation

Identity | Marketing | Branding


Art Centric Corridor

Utilize art (murals, signage, etc) to highlight the identity of the diverse neighborhoods scattered along the 7.5 mile stretch of Richmond Highway.

The Local Experience

Community Orientation

As visitors and community members arrive via gateways, they gain orientation to the neighborhoods that make up Richmond highway and are shepherded to their destinations.



Managing the Impacts of BRT Construction on the Neighborhood



Washington

Construction Impact Considerations

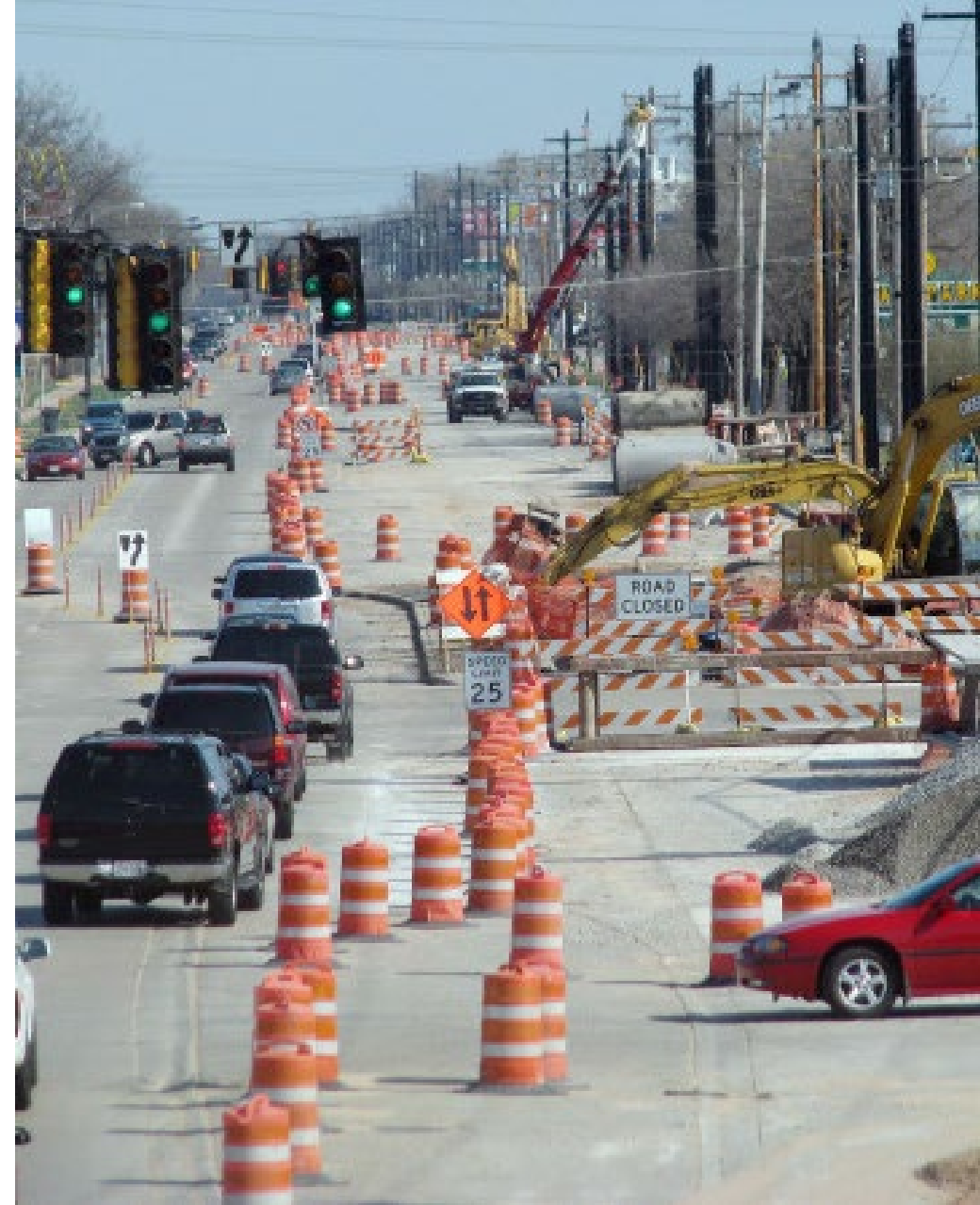
Common challenges for roadway projects that require beyond-transportation interventions

Threats to Business

- Property access & visibility
- Existing customer awareness – "still-open for business"
- New customer attraction/marketing/branding
- Tenant replacement & small biz creation

Threats to Residents

- Construction noise & visual clutter
- Traffic congestion – shifting travel & purchasing patterns to other retail corridors
- Tenant attraction – lease-up for new buildings



Strategic Priority 1

Keeping the corridor competitive during construction & disruption

- Identify community liaison to help coordinate access issues with VDOT/County/Contractor
- Support businesses with super-graphic signage that can be re-used/re-located as construction phases shift
 - Directional signage identifying points of access
 - Marketing signage promoting business clusters & retail offerings
- Embolden & beautify key entrances to shopping plazas to elevate retail corridor branding
 - Tree planters and inflatables
 - Pop-up murals on wood-framed walls & totems
 - Artistic wraps over fencing, jersey barriers, & traffic cans/cones
- Create "roving" outreach kiosks/visitors center with coffee/music promoting the BRT project and local businesses/events
- Deploy renderings illustrating the future of Route One after construction physically & virtually
 - Murals with QR codes to websites, social media, and AR experiences, e.g., ReConnect Rondo



Sydney AUS



Needham MA



Raleigh NC



Capitol Crossing DC

Strategic Priority 2

Protecting & fostering growth of small/family-owned businesses that makes the corridor unique

- Create **trails + special events** showcasing biz clusters (thrift stores, foods, music, etc.)
 - Neighborhood days, restaurant weeks, monthly event calendars
 - Circulator trolley/bus traveling through & between plazas
- Establish pop-up music venues with local performers to elevate vitality of plazas
- Allow greater flexibility to use outdoor spaces with temporary permits
 - Streeteries, parklets, beer gardens/alcohol, etc. like during COVID
- Add more green space, playgrounds, & recreational areas near or within/plazas to attract residents to continue frequenting retail
- Provide small business expert(s) that can provide pro-bono or discounted-rate advisory on County permitting process, business marketing/promotion, new space identification, etc.
- Cultivate lists of prospective tenants & vacant spaces (retail & residential)
 - Match-making service but also helps demonstrate demand to developers during BRT construction



Plaza District, Oklahoma City OK



Streeterly on Gibbs, Rockville Town Center MD



Pavilions Plaza Mall, Denver CO



Guiding Placemaking at New Developments



Washington

Planning & Design for Placemaking

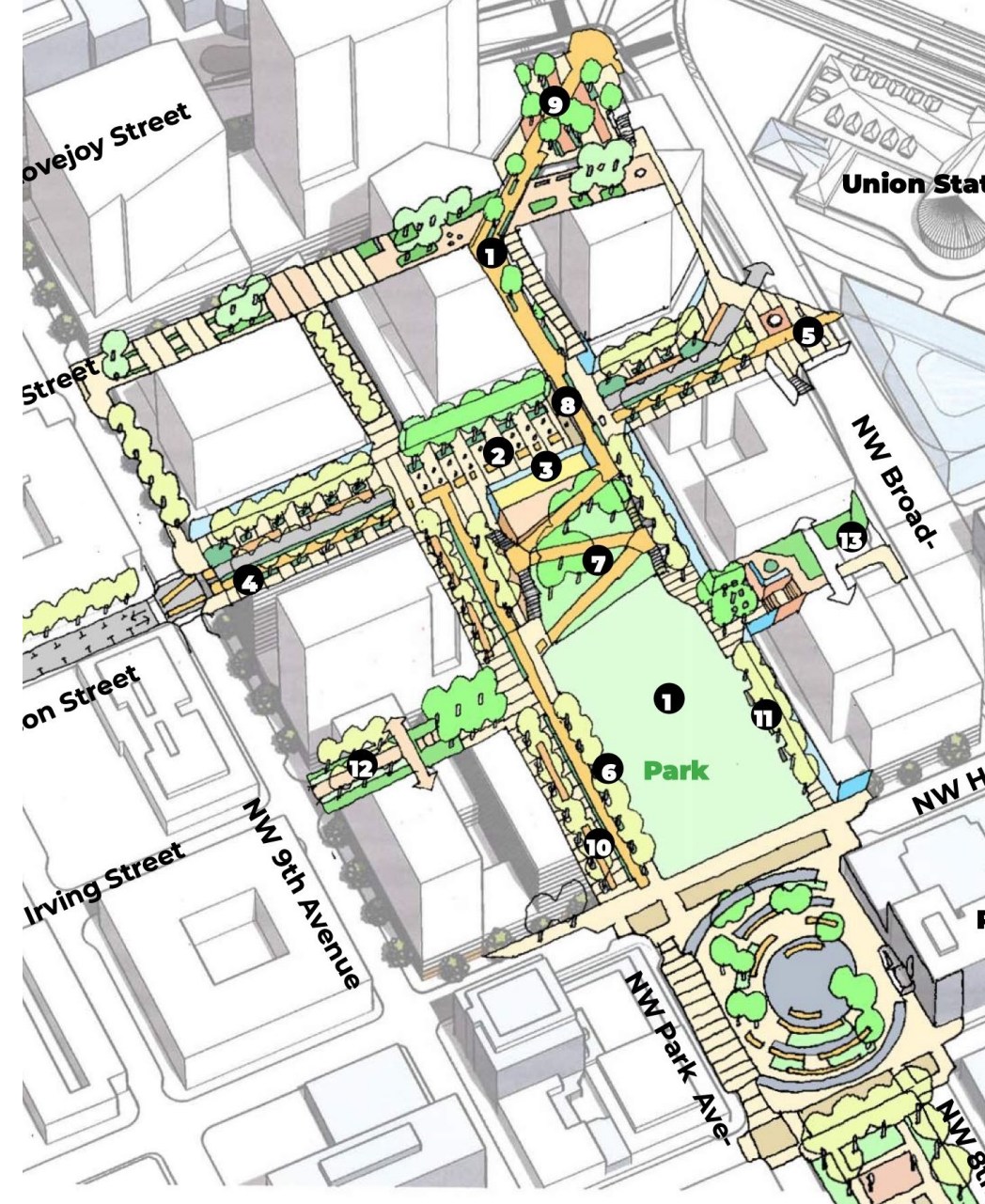
- Prioritize areas where the people reside with a concentration of residents/retail/employees within walking distance
- Create multiple small programmed spaces & not just large parks/open areas
- Great spaces have good shading by day/ creative lighting by night + lots of furniture
- Give ownership of public space to businesses to activate/program/maintain
- Design side-streets for humans first & cars second (e.g., woonerfs/curbless sidewalks)
- Avoid island parks surrounded by cars



Greet Station SC Downtown Streetscape Master Plan

Placemaking & Proffers

- Manage expectations – not all projects are the same scale & most will be smaller
 - Infill development cannot afford to deliver large quality open spaces
 - Asking every project to create park space can lead to low-quality, poorly located, and disconnected places
- Consider/expand fee-in-lieu policies for open/park space to prioritize creation of a few great places
- Create a cultural master plan for parks + plazas + arts + events & deploy fee-in-lieu funds or other grant sources to deliver them (incl. land acquisition)
- Negotiate retail to be clustered & including a variety of sizes that serve the needs / price points of chain retail chains & small businesses
- For larger projects – ask for discounted rents for a few smaller retail bays & prioritize local businesses



Broadway Corridor Master Plan, Pearl District, Portland OR

Placemaking Types



Placemaking Planning

- Engage community for ideas
- Look to community for local artists
- Employ locally when possible
- Consider places of importance that would benefit from additional placemaking efforts

Placemaking Types

- Murals
- Fair Grounds
- Exterior Gathering
- Bread Crumb Kiosk
- Creative Center



Placemaking Types: Murals

Murals serve as impactful, visual elements that enhance the aesthetics of a location, contribute to increased visibility and vibrancy, acting as landmarks that aid in wayfinding, making them valuable for both locals and visitors navigating through the environment.

- Community History: Tells the history and represents the identity of the community
- Place Identifier: Identifies place, serves as a landmark
- Mural Program: a broad, cohesive series of murals throughout the corridor that can serve as an attraction



Anacostia BID, Washington, D.C.

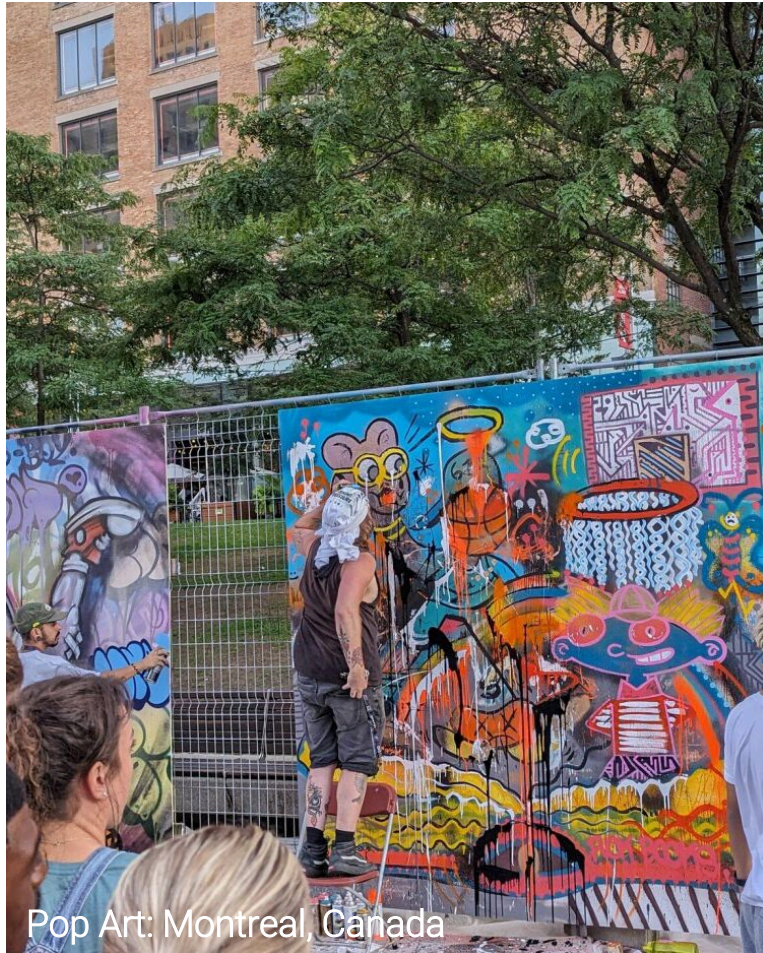
Placemaking Types: Murals

Historical Reference



Placemaking Types: Murals

Temporary



Pop Art: Montreal, Canada



Pre-Construction: Hyattsville , Maryland



Murals: Community



Washington

<https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/arts-culture/2021/07/20/403581/houston-latino-community-leaders-look-for-ways-to-preserve-recreate-local-murals/>

Murals: Identity Creation



Murals: Large Scale Tourism Focused Mural Project



Placemaking Types: Fair Grounds

Community gatherings can create place and regular programming opportunities that add to the character of a place and become a regular attraction to local residents and visitors. The gathering places don't require much maintenance or overhead as they are activated only during an event.

- Farmers markets
- Festivals
- Outdoor Kitchen



Fairgrounds: Farmers markets



Fairgrounds: Festivals



Fairgrounds: Food Festivals



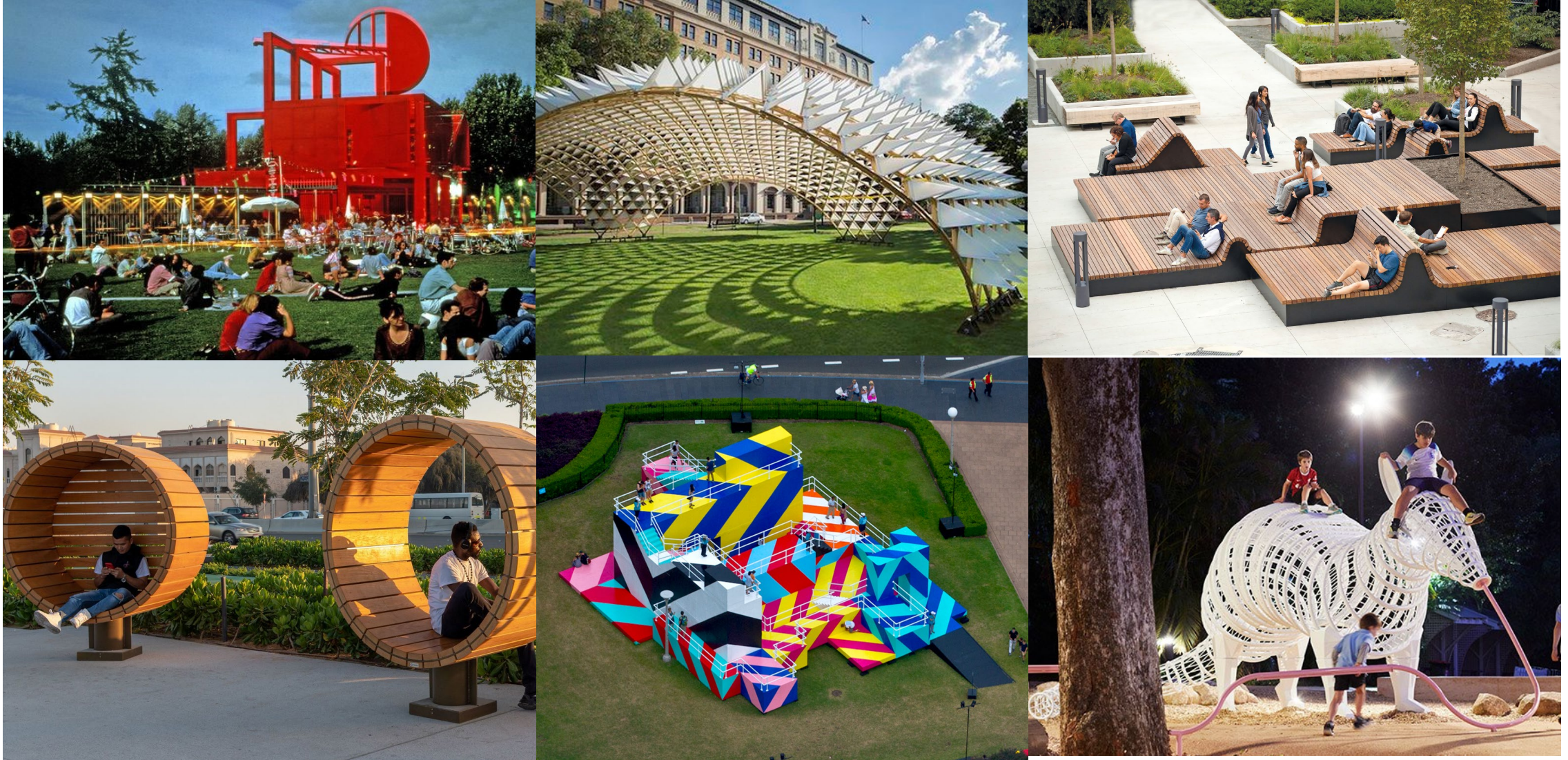
Placemaking Types: Exterior Gathering

Exterior gathering locations provide opportunity for informal, programmed or unprogrammed gathering. They can add texture and visual interest to otherwise flat and monolithic landscapes.

- Architectural follies: Sculptural pieces that users can interact with
- Large installations for youth and adults: Sculptural pieces that draw people to it
- Parklets: Defined areas (temporary or permanent) areas that offer seat/relaxation space
- Arboretum/Tree Grove: Opportunities to add some greenery/canopy cover
- Activated Activity Spaces: Gathering spaces that offer activities like an amphitheater, mini golf or skating



Exterior Gathering: Follies



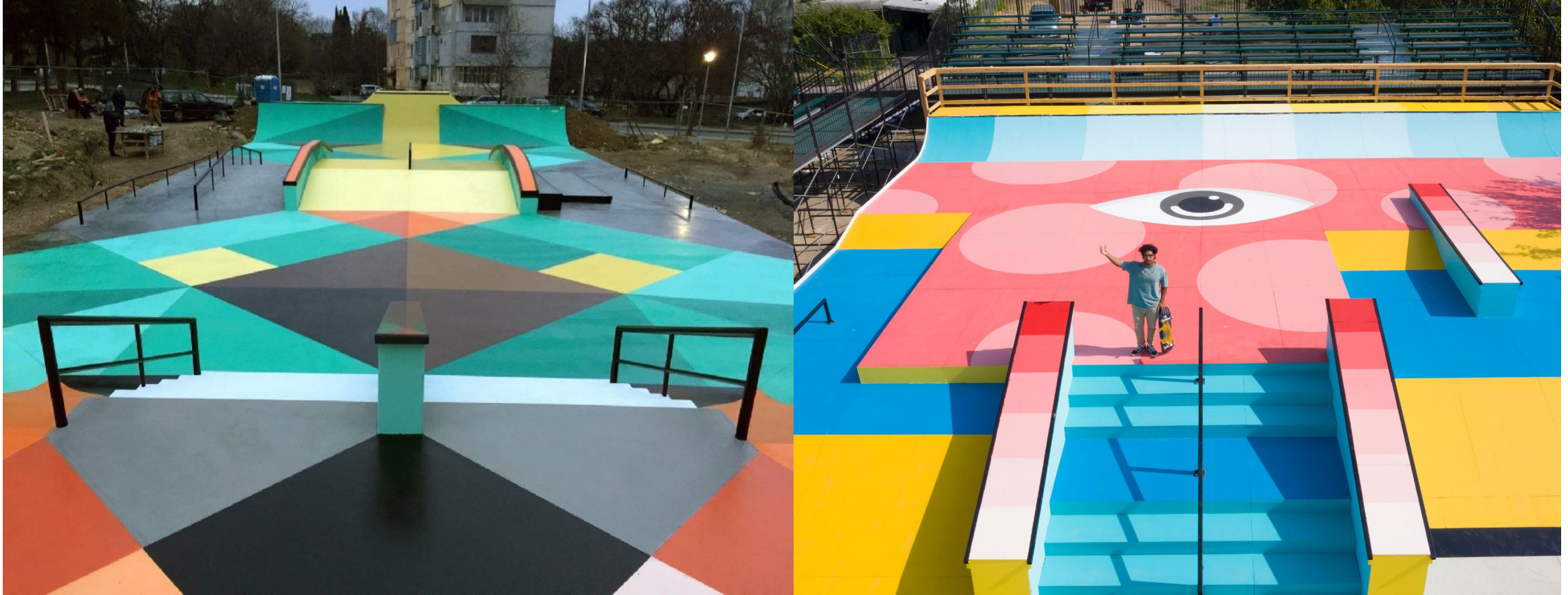
Exterior Gathering: Art Playgrounds



Exterior Gathering: Large installations for youth and adults

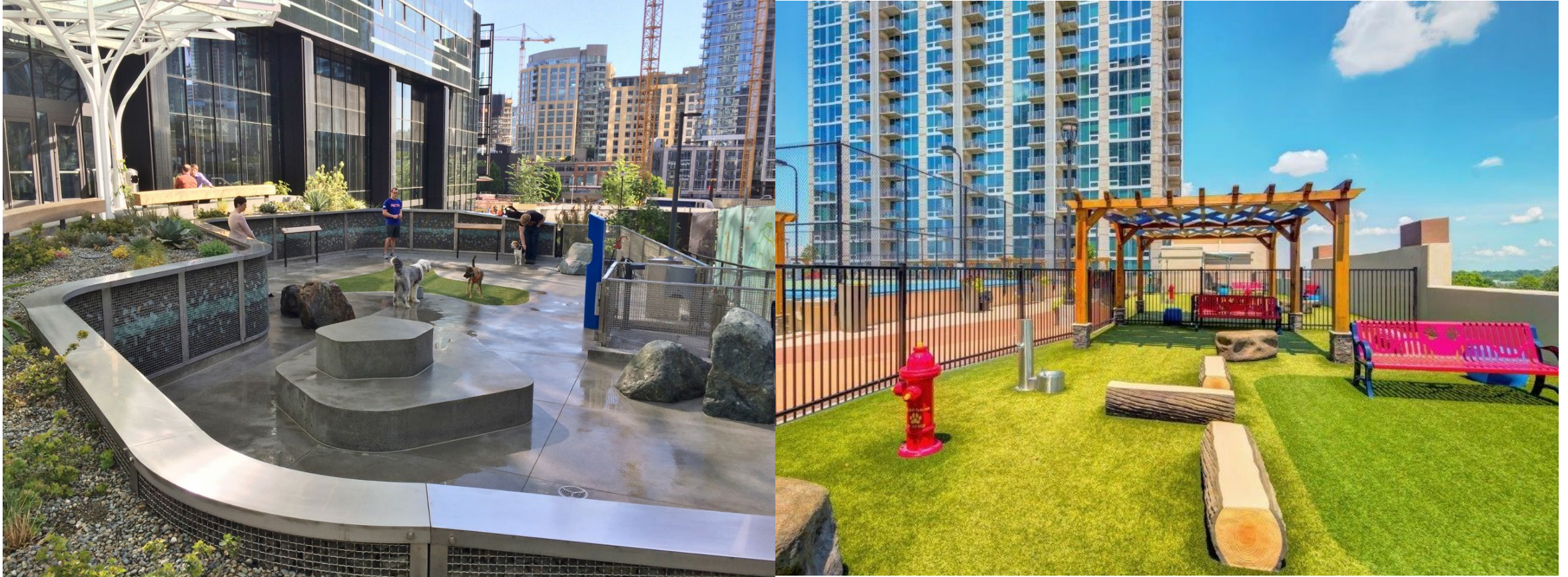


Exterior Gathering: Art Skateparks



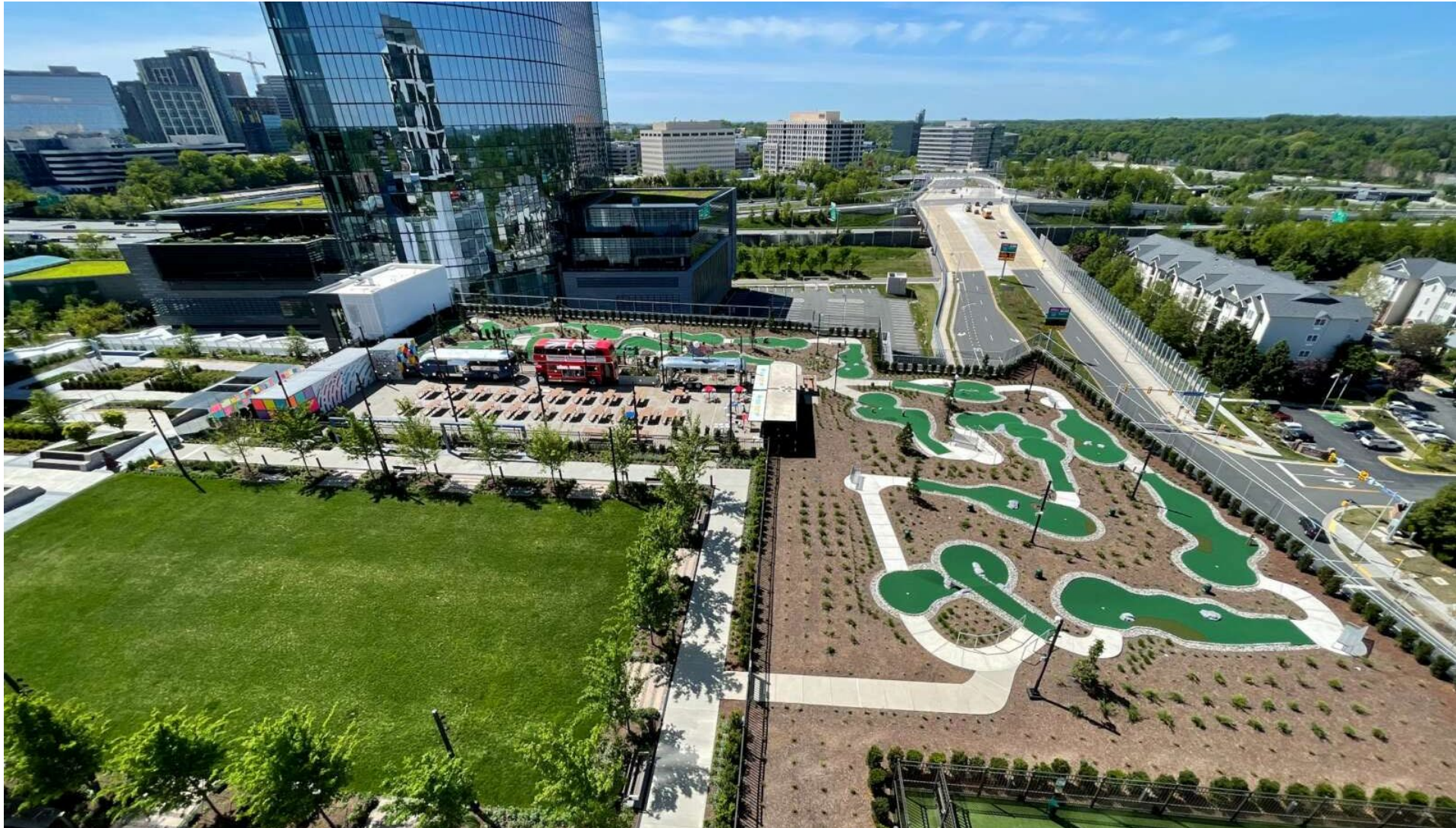
<https://www.dmagazine.com/arts-entertainment/2019/09/local-artist-drigo-puts-his-spin-on-4dwn-skatepark/>
<https://www.worldrookietour.com/2022/07/06/balkan-rookie-fest-2022/>

Exterior Gathering: Dog Parks



landperspectives.com/2017/11/18/an-urban-dog-park/ dog park2
dog-on-it-parks.com

Exterior Gathering: Artistic Mini Golf



Placemaking Types: Bread Crumb Kiosk

Kiosks can both provide information and serve as a landmark or wayfinding element. Residents can get information on events or public meetings while visitors can explore local food and retail options. These kiosks can be low tech or high tech.

- Acts as a beacon: Can help identify a place
- Trails: Can direct visitors to local eateries, shopping or nature trails
- Connection: Can connect each community business center with a similar language



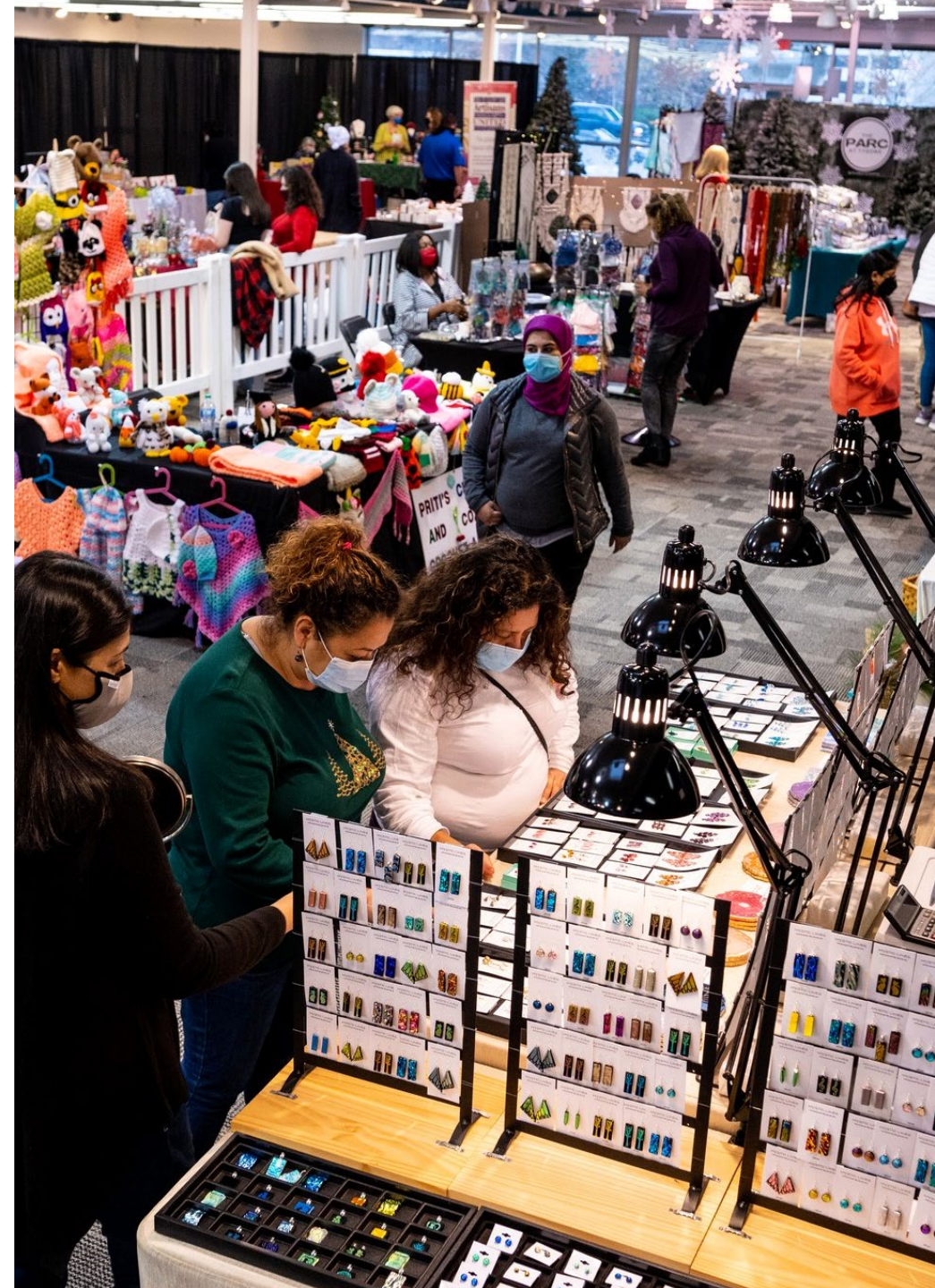
Bread Crumb Kiosk



Placemaking Types: Creative Center

Giving the community a central location to gather and explore creative opportunities is a benefit to artist and other creative entrepreneurs. It also provides an opportunity to highlight a community's cultural identity.

- Events: Art shows and workshops to highlight the cultural identity of a place
- Incubator Space: Opportunities from growth and education of local small businesses
- Public Meetings: Better access to the community to engage with them



Placemaking Types: Workshop/Incubator Space



Parc / Art Whino / Rodrigo Pradel / Michael Pachecho /Tysons

Placemaking Types: Vendors



Placemaking Art Shows



Placemaking Types: Listed by effort/potential cost/longevity

Parklets

Prefab seating, string lights on post, artificial turf on the ground

Simple mural from local artist

Mural

Farmers Market

Wood framed shelters on gravel lots with murals at the perimeter

Digital kiosk that can remotely controlled

Digital Kiosk

Cultural Center

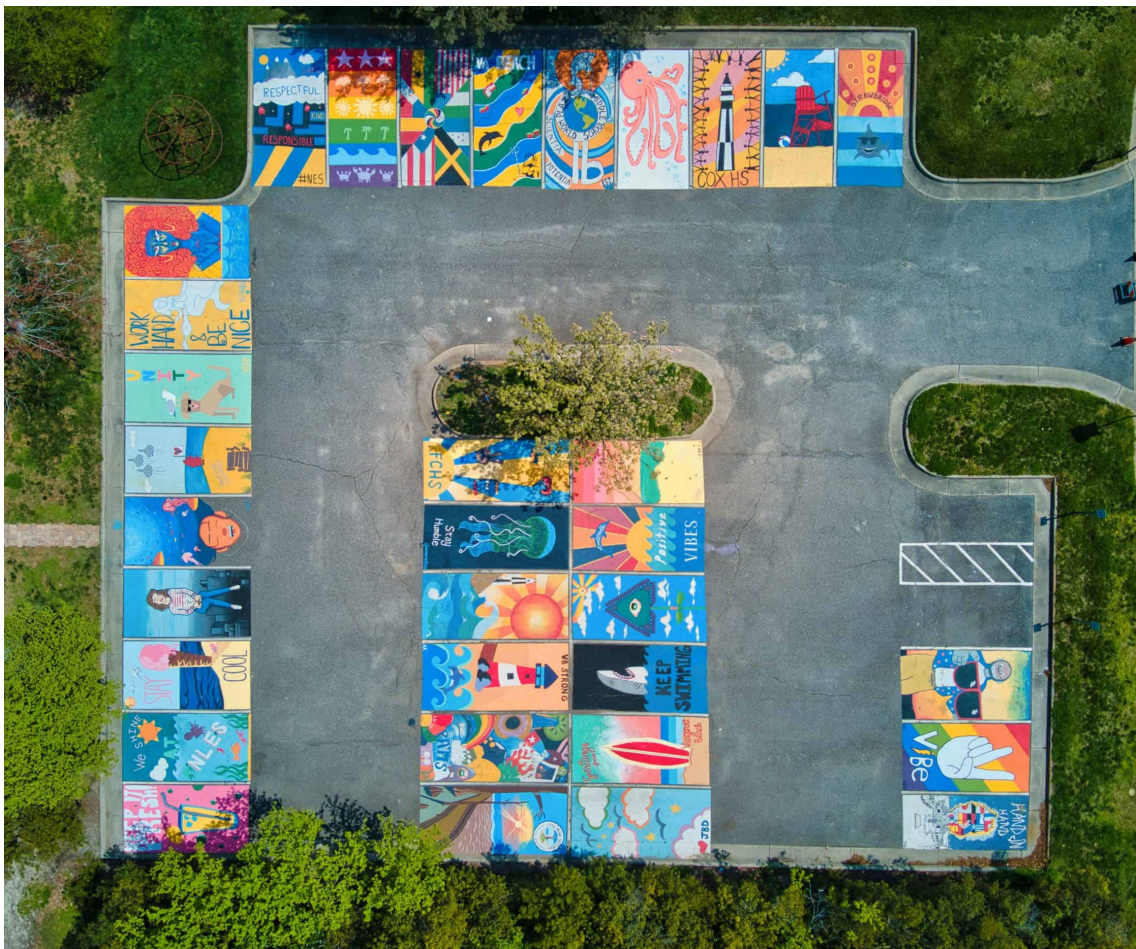
Community center devoted to cultural programming



Softening Hardscape & Rescaling



Canva



Vibe Creative District



Ivory & Deene

Site Selection Criteria



High Level Recommendation:

Unity through Connection

Pillar 1:

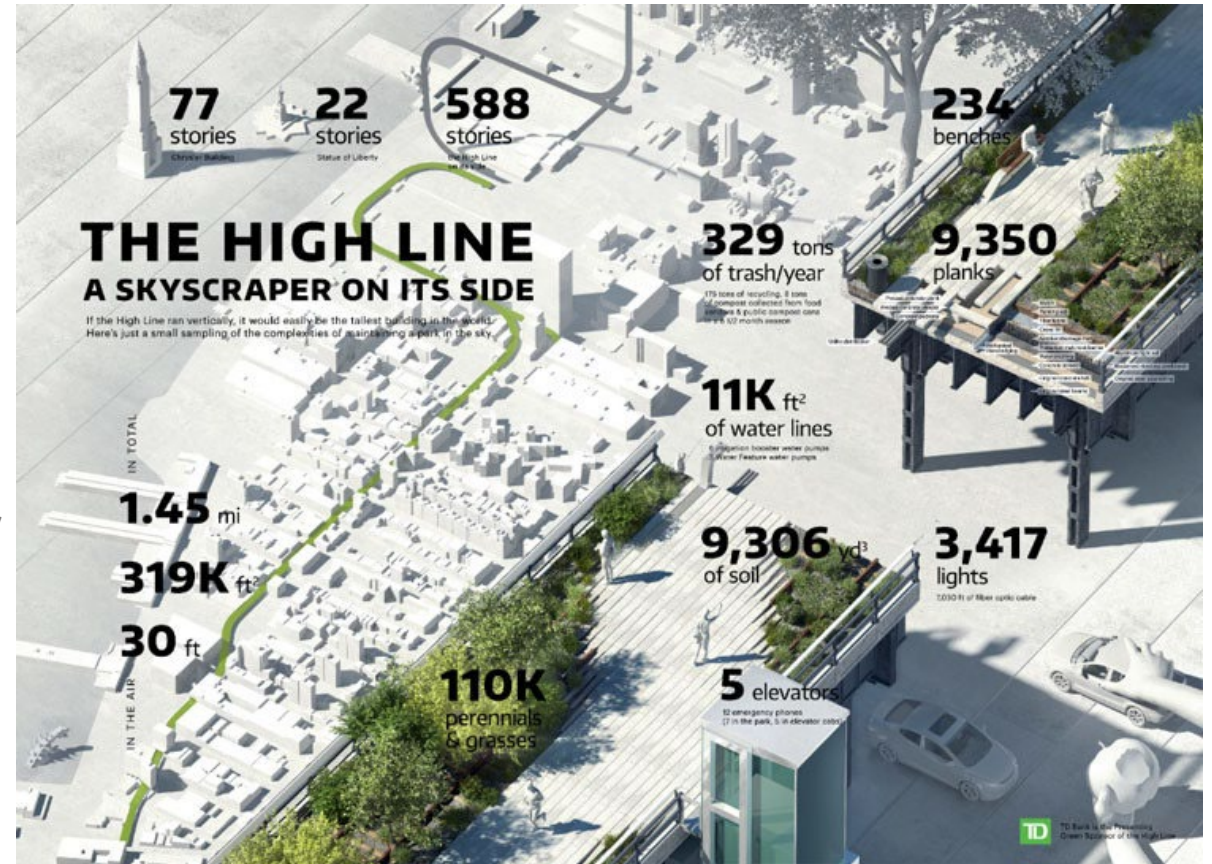


Highlight Identity

Richmond Highway embodies the concept "**Out of Many, One People**"--It boasts a diversity of ages, nationalities, ethnic groups, and incomes.

The community knows there is power in collective community bonds—which cannot be seen but can be facilitated through dedicated space to provide the services needed.

The diverse community identity tells a story that can be used for economic growth of the community. It is the corridor's richness.



Case Study: Highline

<https://freetoursbyfoot.com/high-line-map/>

High Level Recommendation:

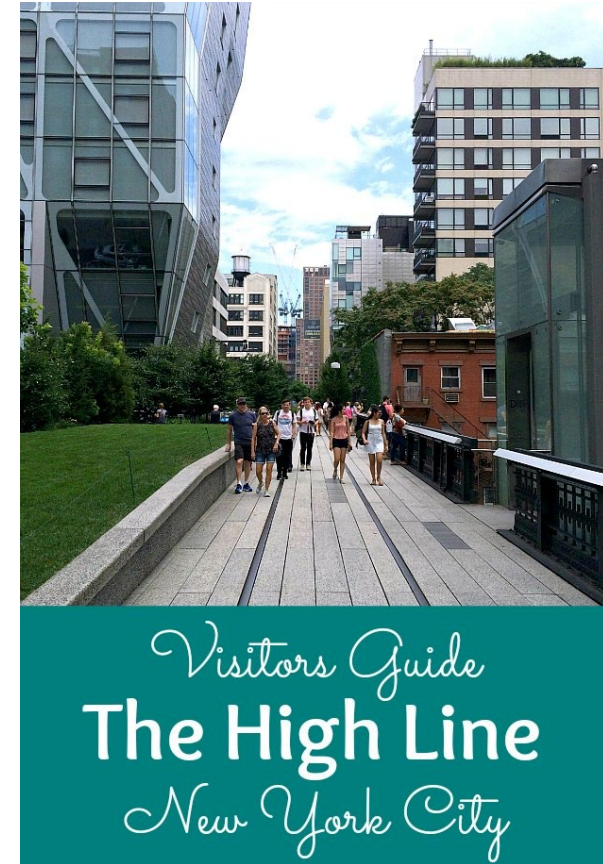
Unity through Connection

Pillar 2:

Promote Communication

Richmond Highway, having diverse and dispersed neighborhoods, **needs a means to effectively disseminate information throughout the full corridor**

"Getting the word out" is a grass-roots effort in the current disjointed landscape, requiring organizers to go store-to-store and door-to-door



High Level Recommendation:

Unity through Connection

Pillar 3:

Highlight History

Richmond Highway is a community of **the self-empowered**. It has a history of radical community building—creating space for the historically marginalized and overlooked.

Richmond Highway provides an opportunity to not only celebrate national history, **but also to herald and celebrate the legacy of those who have thrived** despite the impacts of our country's history.



Case Study: Highline

<https://freetoursbyfoot.com/high-line-map/>

High Level Recommendation:

Unity through Connection

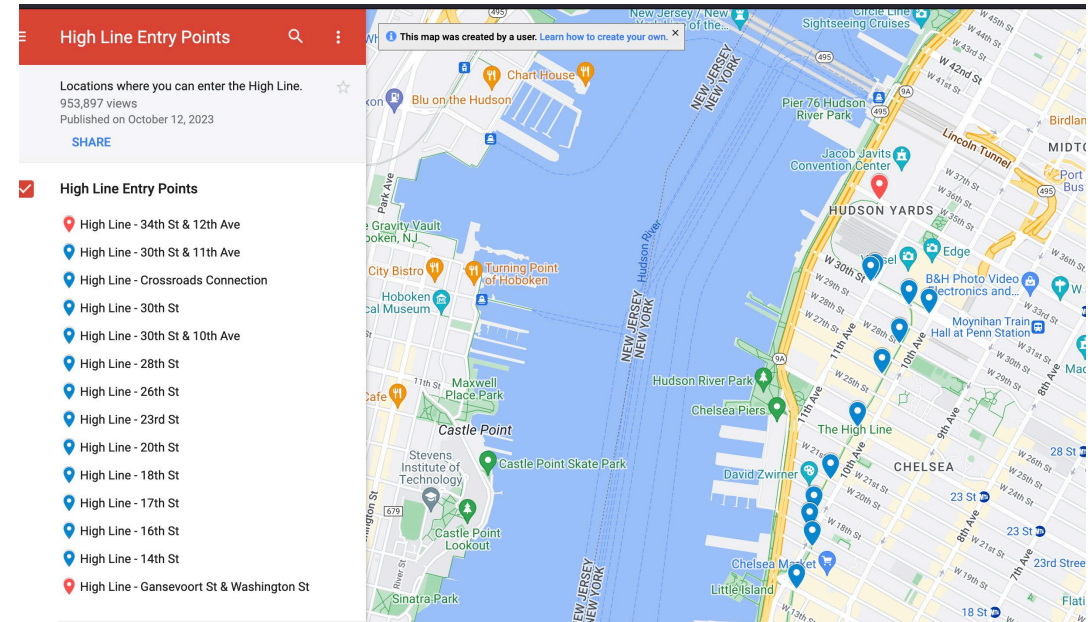
Pillar 4:



Economic Support for Small Businesses

Richmond Highway has a richness of businesses that are dispersed. **These businesses need an opportunity to gain strength in numbers that can funnel people to their individual locations.**

The strength of Richmond Highway is its small businesses. Marketing and physical space must be provided to support these businesses as the corridor transitions.



Case Study: Highline

<https://freetoursbyfoot.com/high-line-map/>

Criteria List



- Historical Significance



- Accessibility & Adjacencies



- Ability to devise a strong marketing story



- Types of Ownership
 - VDOT Acquired
 - Commercially/Privatey Owned
 - Publicly Owned



- Prioritize gateway sites (such as streams or valleys)



- Temporary Sites for Programming

A grayscale photograph of a man and a woman sitting at a table, looking at a tablet together. The man is on the left, wearing glasses and a beard, and the woman is on the right. They are both focused on the screen. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for the text.

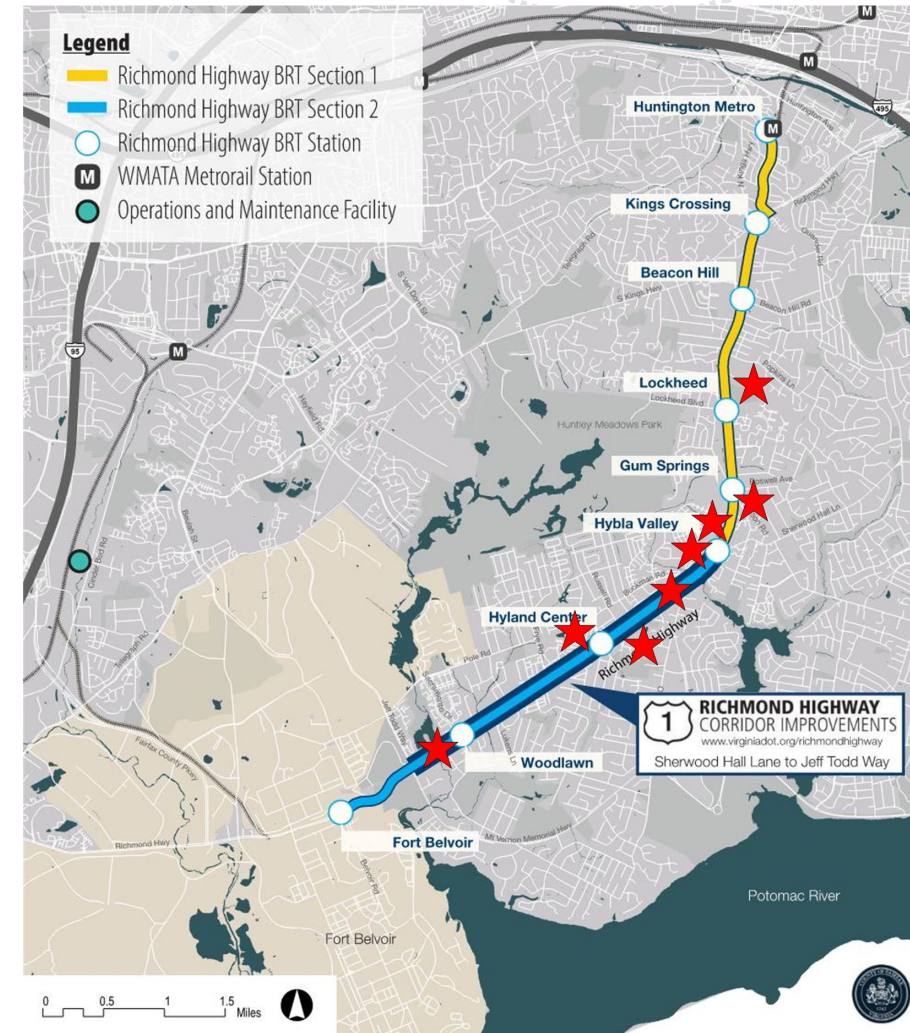
Sites for Placemaking



University of Washington

Potential Sites

- Gum Springs Gateway & Wetlands
- VDOT Acquired Site (Former 7-Eleven)
- Mount Vernon High School & Recreation Site
- Bridges/Stream Valleys
- Aldi Site
- Mount Vernon Crossroads
- Residences at North Hills
- South County Government Center



Source: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/transportation/richmond-hwy-BRT>

Potential Sites

Gum Springs Gateway & Wetlands

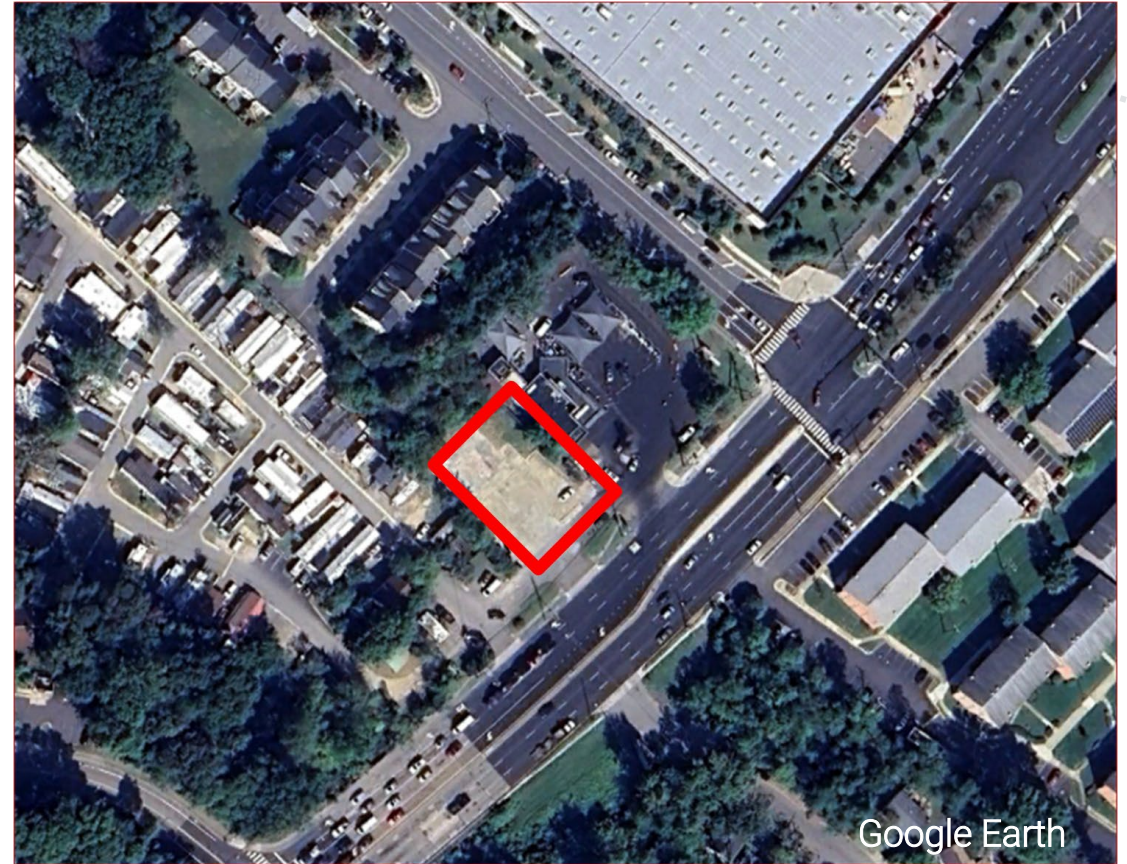
- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming with potential to convert to permanent



Potential Sites

VDOT Acquired Site (Former 7-Eleven)

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming



Potential Sites

Mount Vernon High School & Recreation Site

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming (Special Events)



Source: ULI

Potential Sites

Bridges/Stream Valleys

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming with potential to convert to permanent



Potential Sites

Aldi Site

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming



Source: ULI

Potential Sites

Mount Vernon Crossroads

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming



Source: ULI

Potential Sites

Residences at North Hill

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privatey Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned - Residential
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming



Source: ULI

Potential Sites

South County Government Center

- Historical Significance
- Accessibility & Adjacencies
- Ability to devise a strong marketing story
- Types of Ownership
 - ☐ VDOT Acquired
 - ☐ Commercially/Privately Owned
 - ☐ Publicly Owned - Civic
- Gateway site
- Temporary Site for Programming



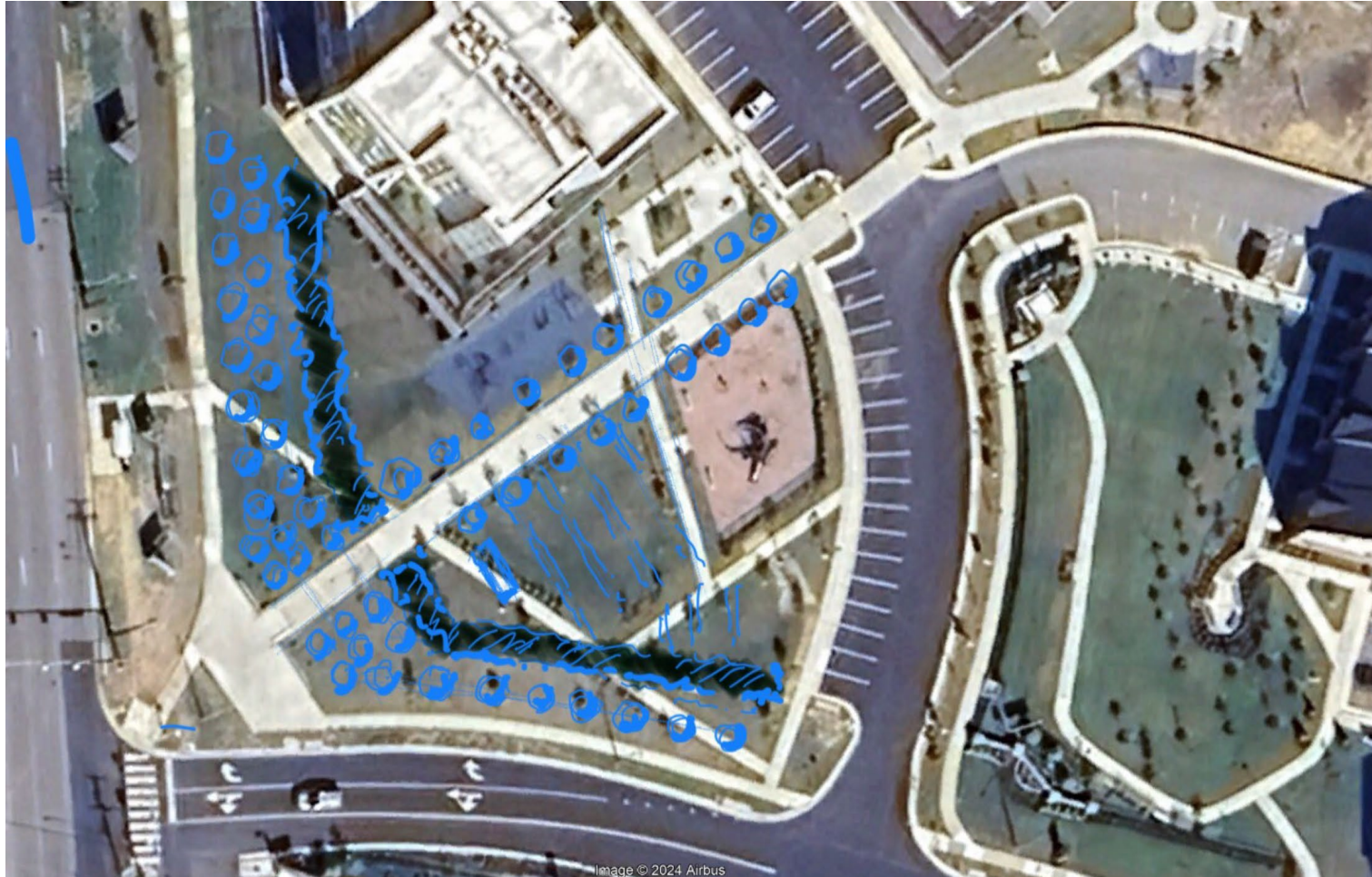


Visualizing Placemaking Interventions Along the Corridor



Washington

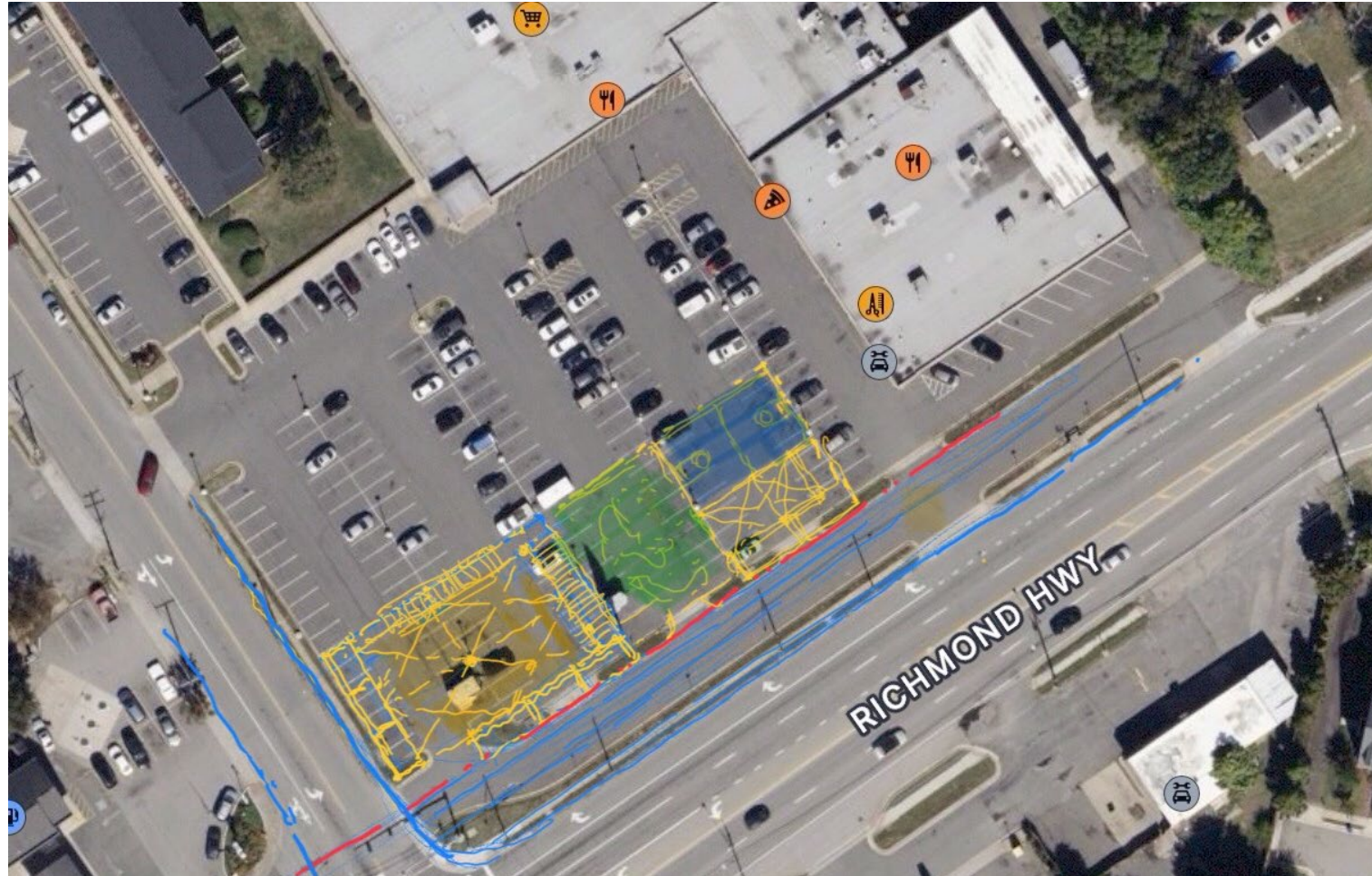
Residences at North Hill



Residences at North Hill



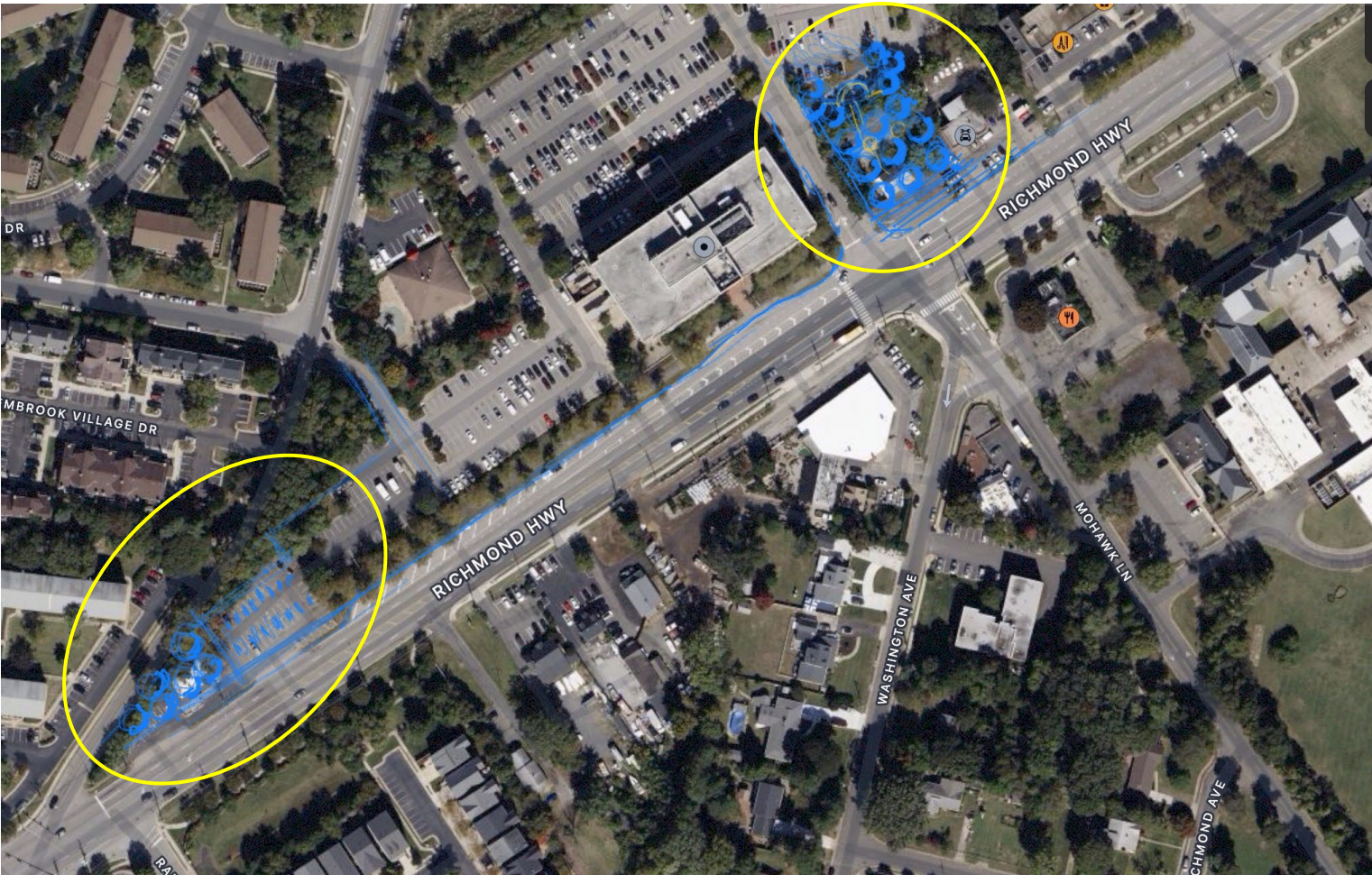
Aldi Shopping Center



Aldi Shopping Center



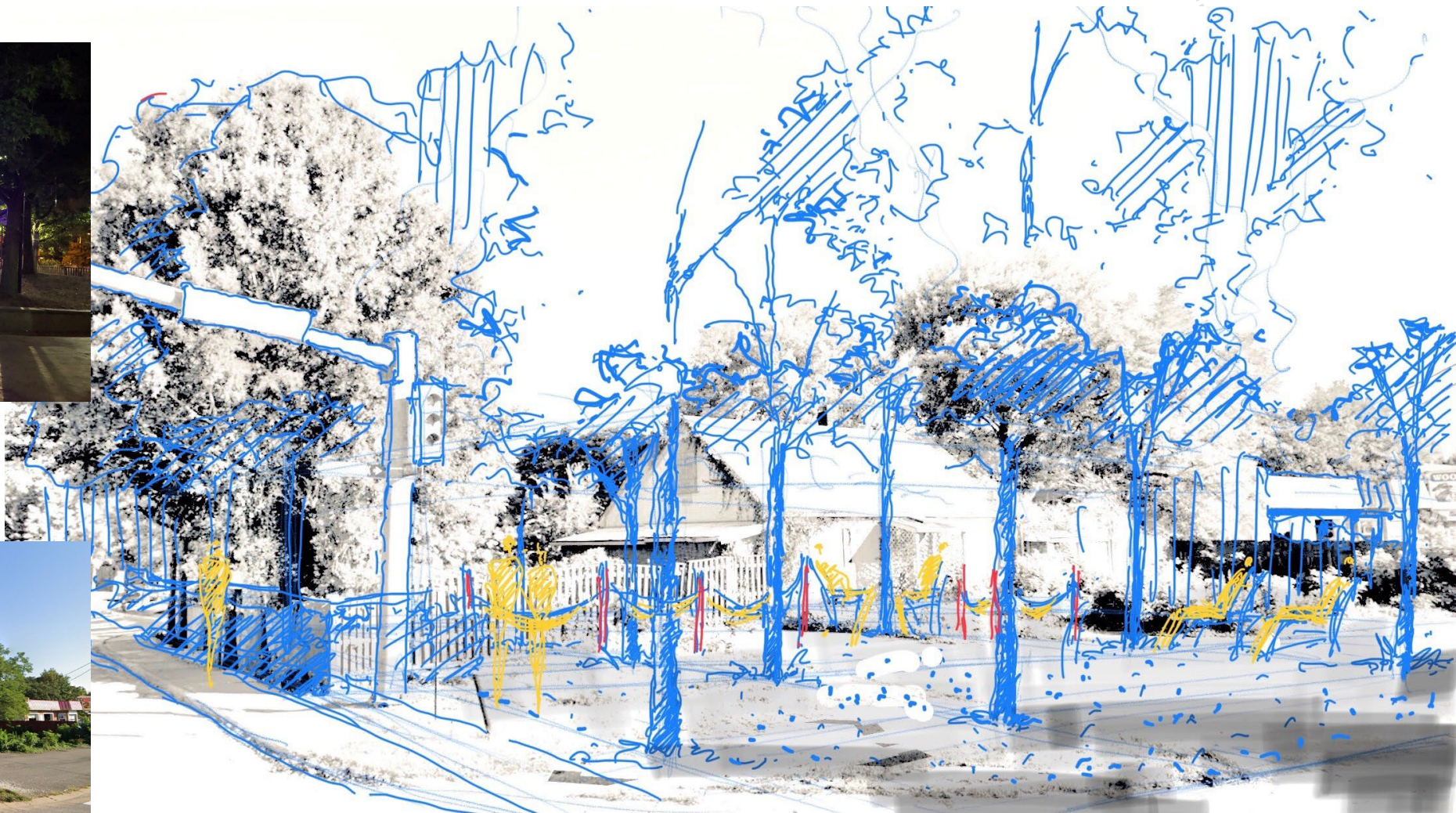
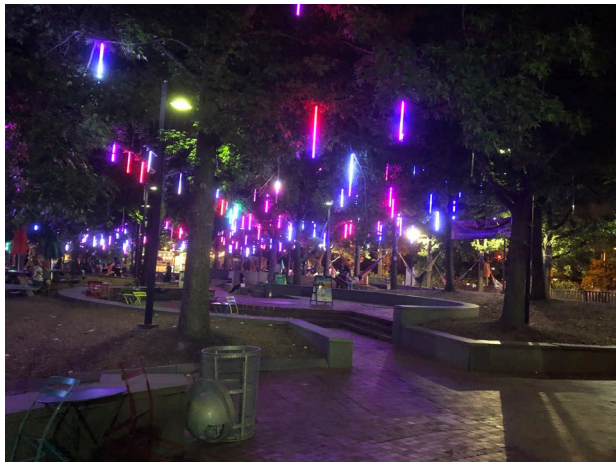
South County Government Center



South County Government Center



South County Government Center



Governance and Management



University of Washington

Place Management

Management is Essential for Placemaking Projects

Place Management Actions:

- Help plan the projects
- Coordinate implementation among the parties
- Promote / communicate
- Manage place space closely, esp. maintenance & security
- Monitor and make necessary adjustments



*International Downtowns Association -
Professional Domains 2017*

Recommendations for Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation

- Coordinate communications from VDOT, BRT re: upcoming construction actions
- Coordinate implementation of placemaking projects with County offices
- Small business outreach
 - Be ombudsman with construction firm to minimize obstruction to businesses
 - Help provide signage, etc. to let customers know how to access during construction
 - For businesses to be relocated, act as matchmaker with available temporary or permanent sites
- Coordinate promotional events with Celebrate Fairfax
- Actively manage placemaking projects



Demolition of gas station at 8851 Richmond Highway/ Credit: ULI

Key Recommendations



Key Recommendations

- 1. Placemaking must be informed by the communities**
- 2. Proactively mitigate impacts from construction**
- 3. Manage expectations for placemaking with development size**
- 4. Prioritize ownership, adjacency, and immediacy**
- 5. Plant trees NOW**
- 6. Place management is ESSENTIAL**



Q&A

More Questions?
Contact ULI Washington at:
Washington@uli.org



Washington