



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL REPORT

# Identifying and Branding the Pike District

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD**

SPONSORED BY:  
White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee  
March 29–30, 2016

 **Urban Land  
Institute**  
Washington

## ABOUT ULI WASHINGTON

### A DISTRICT COUNCIL OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

ULI Washington is a district council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), a non-profit education and research organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the Institute today has over 30,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use planning and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service. As the pre-eminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information, and experience among local, national, and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better communities.

ULI's mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI Washington carries out the ULI mission locally by sharing best practices, building consensus, and advancing solutions through educational programs and community outreach initiatives.

### ABOUT THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL (TAP) PROGRAM

The objective of ULI Washington's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary, and objective advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Metropolitan Washington Region. Drawing from its extensive membership base, ULI Washington conducts one and one-half day panels offering objective and responsible advice to local decision-makers on a wide variety of land use and real estate issues, ranging from site-specific projects to public policy questions. The TAP program is intentionally flexible to provide a customized approach to specific land use and real estate issues. Learn more at [washington.uli.org/TAPs](http://washington.uli.org/TAPs).

#### Bob Youngentob

Chair, ULI Washington  
President, EYA

#### Lisa W. Rother

Executive Director  
ULI Washington

#### Richard Perlmutter

Chair, Technical Assistance  
Panel Committee  
Managing Member, Argo

#### Deborah Kerson Bilek

Director of Community Outreach  
ULI Washington

# Table of Contents

ULI WASHINGTON PANEL & PROJECT STAFF	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
BACKGROUND AND SCOPE	6
Panel Assignment	8
BRANDING THE PIKE	10
CREATING A PLACE	15
Celebrate the Intersections	15
The Subtle Power of Streetscape	18
IMPLEMENTATION	19
CONCLUSION	22
PANELISTS	23

# ULI Washington Panel & Project Staff

## PANEL CHAIR

Bryce Turner

BCT Architects  
Baltimore, MD

## PANELISTS

Sarah Barr

Hickok Cole Architects  
Washington, DC

Laura Hodgson

Louis Berger  
Washington, DC

Bob Peck

Gensler  
Washington, DC

Jon Eisen

The Eisen Group  
Washington, DC

Susan Ingraham  
Bell

Planning and Zoning  
Consultant  
Arlington, VA

Brant Snyder

Low Enterprises  
Washington, DC

Marta Goldsmith

Form Based Codes  
Institute  
Washington, DC

Camessia Johnson

BCT Architects  
Baltimore, MD

## PROJECT STAFF AND REPORT AUTHORS

Deborah Kerson  
Bilek

Director of Community  
Outreach  
ULI Washington  
Bethesda, MD

Rebecca Hertz

Senior Associate  
ULI Washington  
Bethesda, MD

# Acknowledgements

ULI Washington is deeply grateful to a number of people who worked to make this TAP successful. In particular, Brian Downie, the Chair of the White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee, courted, scoped, and tirelessly researched background for this study. He exhibited tremendous commitment to seeing this project through to completion, ensuring high quality throughout the entire process. Ken Hartman, Director of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, and Carolyn Chen, Manager of the White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee, provided top-notch support in advance of, throughout, and after the Panel occurred. ULI is also especially grateful to Bill Carey, Director of Donor and Community Relations at Strathmore, for his generous hospitality. Additionally, Dee Metz, White Flint Implementation Coordinator in the Office of the Montgomery County Executive, and Nkosi Yearwood, Planner with the Montgomery County Department of Planning, provided excellent background information, and were both available to answer questions throughout the Panel. ULI Washington also extends its thanks to all the members of the White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee for their support and for bringing ULI in to study this interesting and germane topic.

# Executive Summary

The White Flint area of Montgomery County is located 20 miles from downtown Washington, DC. The area is characterized as a suburban, car-oriented, “strip mall” centered place. The term “White Flint” means different things to different people, and there are varying interpretations of its boundaries and neighborhoods. When this TAP was commissioned, “The Pike District” intended to refer to the commercial corridor along Rockville Pike, between Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail station to the south and the Rockville City limits, just south of the Twinbrook Metrorail station. The boundaries, however, are fluid and could encompass more in the future as the Pike District identity continues to grow.

The stretch of Rockville Pike that comprises the Pike District study area presents a suburban—yet slowly urbanizing—environment that possesses the infrastructure and basic utilities in support of prime living, working, and leisure activities in Montgomery County. The anticipated levels of future development in the area will change this environment. The Panel’s task was to evaluate how these changes will create a more viable and unique place. As increasing density and diversity arrive on Rockville Pike, the Panel investigated the kinds of character-defining elements that would make Rockville Pike memorable.

According to the Panel, there is no need for a “giant sign” or an arbitrary moniker to create a sense of identity—these elements have a limited lifespan and can feel inauthentic. Instead, the Panel encouraged the sponsor to enhance the civic realm, and view the new primary, secondary, and tertiary streets as foundational assets that can create a sense of identity and place through the intersections they create. The Panel asserted that the area’s identity must evolve over time to include this vertical and horizontal growth.

The Panel’s foundational recommendation is to formulate a broad strategy for branding the area that allows for its identity to evolve as the area changes. The central tenet of this strategy is to celebrate the area’s intersections as anchors for the study area. Reclaiming this public realm will necessitate creative ways to embrace both vehicular and pedestrian activity at the intersections. The Panel’s main rendering includes taking a standard intersection and making it “art-like” by embracing the power of colorful pylons as multi-functional elements. These pylons, which should be at least 20–30 feet high and illuminated at night, would serve multiple uses contemporaneously: as gateways; as maps; as informational kiosks; as places to hang streetlights, street signs, and other graphics; and as charging stations for smartphones and other similar devices.

Implementing the recommendations of this Panel requires public and private support and investment. The Panel emphasized that public/private partnerships will be necessary to create an identity for the area, and formalizing a mechanism to coordinate private investment so that the area’s developers can work in concert with each other will be critical.

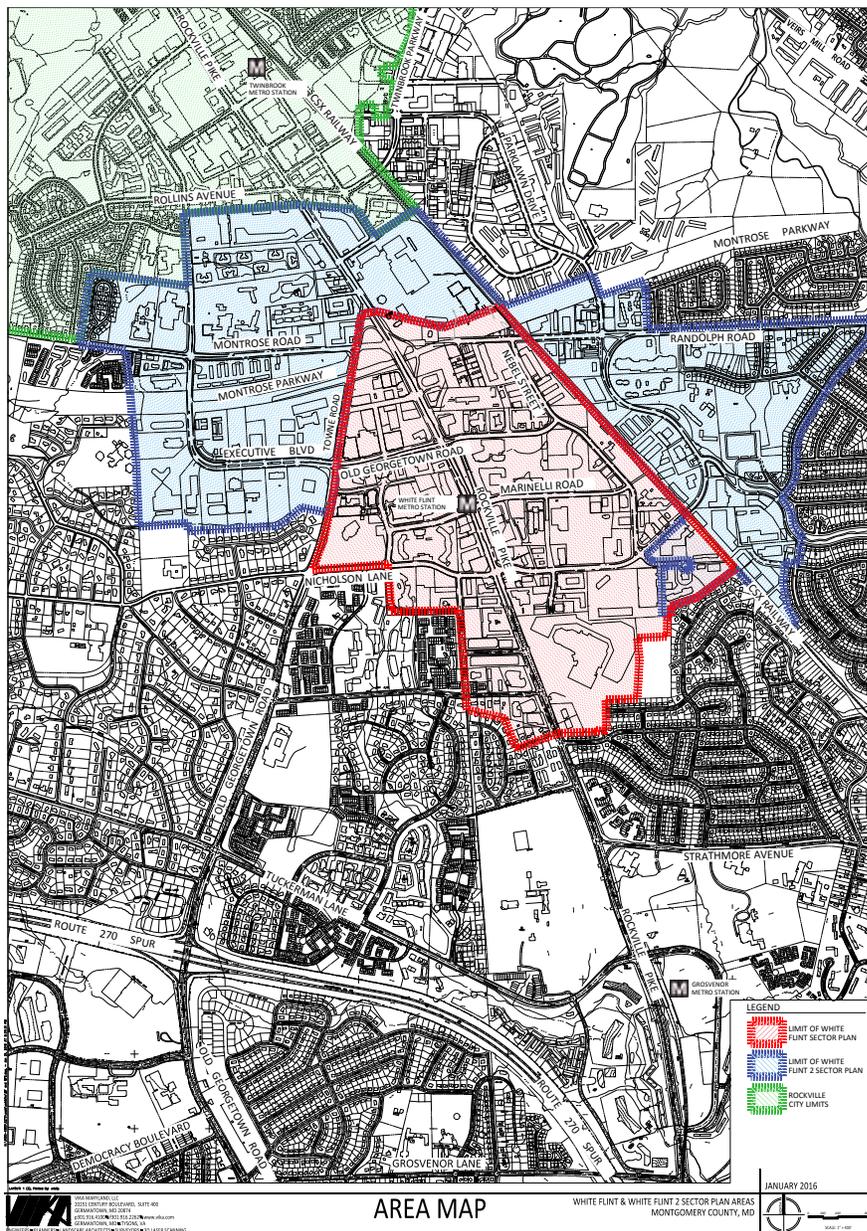
# Background and Scope

The White Flint area of Montgomery County is located 20 miles from downtown Washington, DC. The area is often characterized as a suburban, car-oriented, “strip mall” centered place. The term “White Flint” means different things to different people, and there are varying interpretations of its boundaries and neighborhoods. As a result, an effort is currently underway to create a clear, new identity for the area. The core of the study area is the commercial corridor centered on Rockville Pike (MD-355) and the White Flint Metrorail station. Boundaries of the area are fluid. Generally, northward, the study area extends just south of the Twinbrook Metrorail station, which borders the Rockville city limits. Southward, the study area extends to the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail station. While Eastern and Western limits for the study area are not easily delineated, they generally span ¼ to ½ mile away from Rockville Pike in either direction, with Rockville Pike serving as the seam of the study area. The two primary points of reference are the limits of the master plans in the White Flint Sector Plan and the White Flint 2 Sector Plan.

The name White Flint has many historical references. In the 1970’s, the White Flint Mall was built as an upscale, automobile-oriented suburban shopping experience. In 1984, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) system opened a Red Line Metrorail station in the area and named it White Flint. In 2010, the County approved the White Flint Sector Plan. It covers 430 acres generally bounded by the CSX railroad tracks, Montrose Parkway, Old Georgetown Road, and the White Flint Mall site, all within a ¾-mile radius around the White Flint Metrorail station. Recently, the County applied the name White Flint to its White Flint 2 Sector Plan, which is projected for approval in early 2018. The White Flint 2 Sector Plan area is adjacent on the north to the White Flint Sector Plan area and covers approximately 290 acres in a horseshoe shape on either side of Rockville Pike. It includes the office buildings along Executive Boulevard

## THE WHITE FLINT AREA OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

This map illustrates the White Flint Area of Montgomery County. The red area illustrates the limits of the White Flint Sector Plan, and the blue area illustrates the limits of the White Flint 2 Sector Plan. *Image source: Sponsor Briefing Materials.*



west of Hoya Street, the shopping centers along Rockville Pike north of Montrose Parkway, and the light-industrial and commercial uses along Parklawn Drive south of Randolph Road.

The study area is in the midst of transition, and is on the precipice of change. Master plan revisions, substantial investments, and changing residential, employment, and consumer preferences have triggered redevelopment in the White Flint area. Walkable mixed-use development, including residential, restaurant, and high-end retail uses, are starting to emerge along Rockville Pike. Furthermore, the County is undertaking major road projects to improve the

street grid and transportation options within the area. The State, in partnership with the County, has initiated formal planning for the Maryland Route 355 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that will run on dedicated median lanes in Rockville Pike through the White Flint area. The County is also completing a series of studies and improvement projects for dedicated bike lanes.

The White Flint Sector Plan established two advisory committees to positively influence the evolution of White Flint. The White Flint Downtown Advisory Committee (DAC), which was created by the Montgomery County Council and serves as the sponsor of this TAP, advises the County departments on public services in the White Flint area. The White Flint Implementation Committee consults on efforts to promote implementation of the White Flint Sector Plan. Additionally, the private sector and community stakeholders—including the White Flint Partnership, Friends of White Flint, homeowner and condominium owner associations, property owners/developers, and transit-oriented development advocates—have all taken action at various times, and under various circumstances, to promote a walkable and interconnected community.

The urbanization of this traditional suburban retail destination has led to a series of efforts to reinvigorate the study area. In 2014, as one segment of ongoing work to reimagine the area's identity, property owners and developers initiated a creative effort to determine a preferred name for the area. The process culminated in a wide-ranging public charrette. In that charrette, the "Pike District" was the name clearly preferred over all others presented to the charrette participants.

When this TAP was commissioned, "The Pike District" intended to refer to the commercial corridor along Rockville Pike, between Grosvenor Metrorail station to the south and the Rockville City limits, just south of the Twinbrook Metrorail station. The boundaries, however, are fluid and could encompass more in the future as the Pike District identity continues to grow.

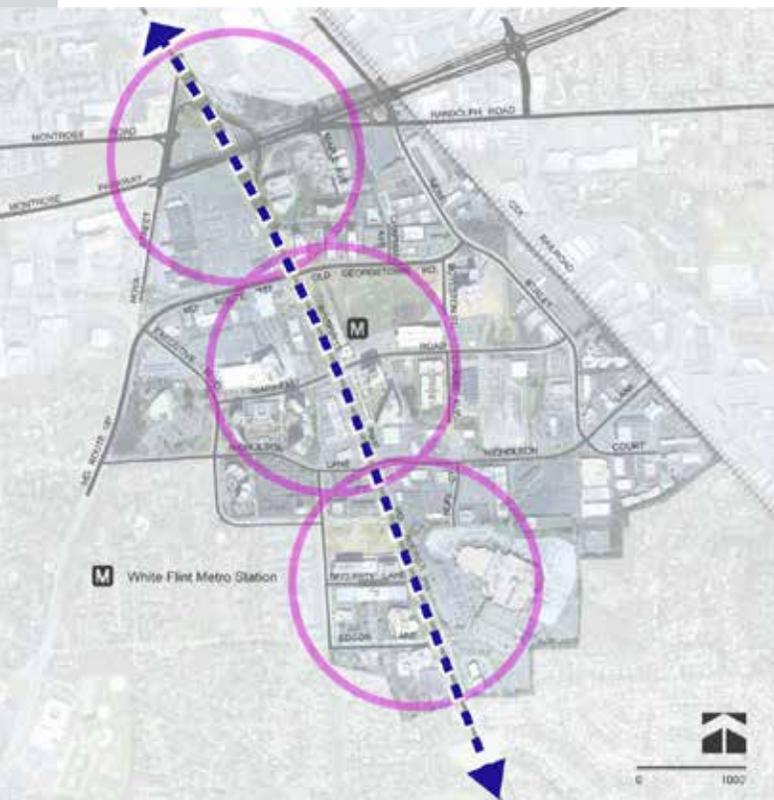
## PANEL ASSIGNMENT

The White Flint DAC approached ULI Washington to conduct a TAP that would help to develop concepts for visibly and distinctively identifying the Pike District. In particular, the White Flint DAC is interested in solidifying a new brand identity for the Pike District, establishing entry points to the area, and communicating major amenities that would attract people as the Pike District evolves.

The Panel was asked to address the following questions:

1. The Pike District includes portions of many roadways, among them Rockville Pike, Old Georgetown Road, Montrose Parkway, Executive Boulevard, and Nicholson Lane, as well as the Bethesda Trolley Trail—all of which carry traffic in and out of the Pike District. How can these entry points be used to delineate and communicate the access points to the District?
2. What would be an effective concept for design and application of wayfinding signage inside the Pike District? This wayfinding signage should be designed to be useful for drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit riders.
3. The Pike District has a hierarchy of streets and other transportation facilities; chief among them are Rockville Pike and the White Flint Metrorail station. Can scalable streetscape design criteria be developed to enhance the street cross sections in the White Flint plan that apply to Rockville Pike, to the area around the White Flint Metrorail station, and to other primary streets in the study area?
4. The Pike District will eventually include a large number of open spaces—both public and private. What design elements could be incorporated so that these open spaces are clearly and effectively integrated within the Pike District?
5. The Pike District is a large area that includes a number of “sub-areas”—Metrorail stations, commercial neighborhoods, and large redevelopments (such as Pike & Rose, North Bethesda Center, the White Flint Mall site, etc.). Similarly, several large developers individually control a number of large tracts within the Pike District. It is anticipated that these developers will operate, market, and maintain their large tracts, including the new street grids within them, as private, mixed-use developments. Given this, what broad recommendations are there for delineating sub-areas and integrating them within the larger Pike District umbrella?
6. The Pike District will be redeveloped over an extended time frame. For instance, redevelopment in the White Flint Sector Plan area will be well along before the White Flint 2 Sector Plan is even approved. Given this broad timeline: a. How can the recommendations of this TAP be used to influence the overall redevelopment of the area? b. What consideration should be given to phasing the implementation of entry points, wayfinding, and streetscape?

# Branding the Pike



The Panel initially divided the 1.2-mile stretch of Rockville Pike into 3 zones, or “mini nodes.” The redevelopment of the land in each zone will contribute to transforming the identity of Rockville Pike.

*Image Source: ULI Washington.*

Any branding effort requires analyzing what exists on the ground today. The stretch of Rockville Pike that comprised the study area is a suburban—yet slowly urbanizing—environment that possesses the infrastructure and basic utilities in support of prime living, working, and leisure activities in Montgomery County.

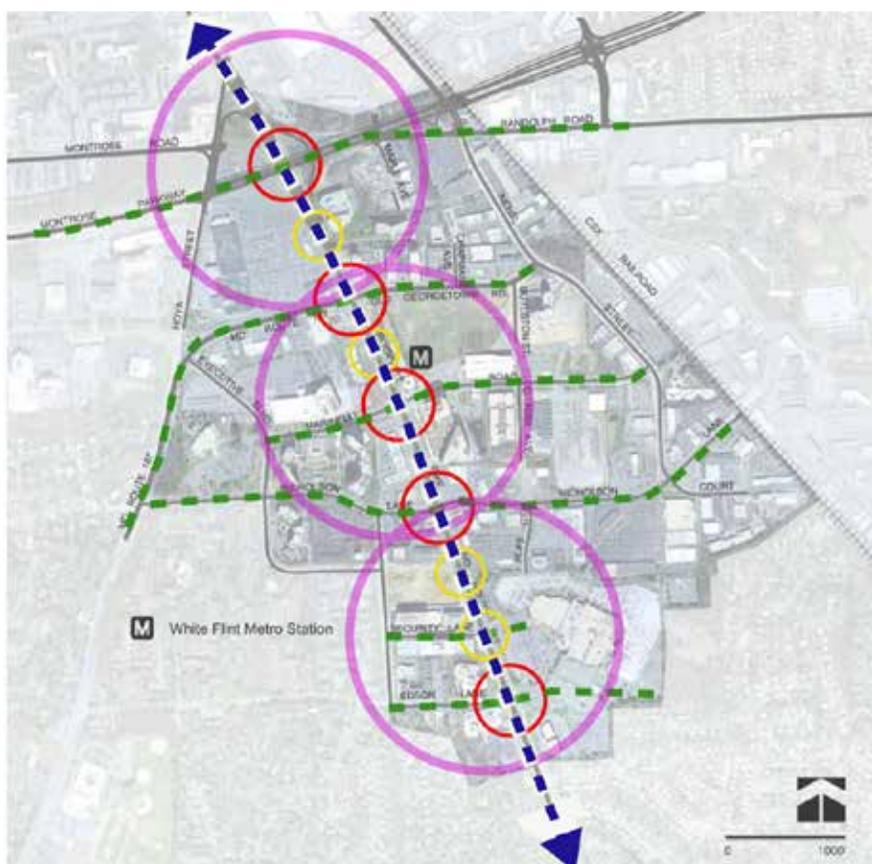
But the anticipated development in the area will change this environment. The Panel’s task was to evaluate how these changes will create a more viable and unique place. As increasing density and diversity arrive on Rockville Pike, the Panel investigated the kinds of character-defining elements that would make Rockville Pike memorable.

Rockville Pike is a primary collector street and major thoroughfare. It is a multi-lane, two-directional road that connects areas north and south, east and west. Because the 1.2-mile study area is large and the intent is to support walkable environments, the Panel divided the area into three main zones that stretch north-south along Rockville Pike—upper, middle, and lower. Each zone is approximately 4/10 of a mile, which constitutes a 15-minute walk. Within each zone, there is enough land area to create a “mini node” within the study area, and the rezoning and expected development will support the transformation and revitalization of these mini nodes into three small villages.

It is likely that each zone will see increasing pedestrian traffic as development comes to the area, but inter-zone travel would see a different dynamic. Traveling between zones would likely involve using a car or riding the future BRT or bikeshare system that is planned for the corridor.

Each zone contains one or more primary intersections that are a result of the existing east-west roads that cross Rockville Pike—such as Nicholson Lane, Marinelli Road, and Old Georgetown Road. These cross streets contribute to creating a perpendicular road system across Rockville Pike. The panel emphasized the importance of these intersections as civic space that could be greatly enhanced. The Panel also acknowledged that some of these intersections might serve as possible locations for future BRT stations.

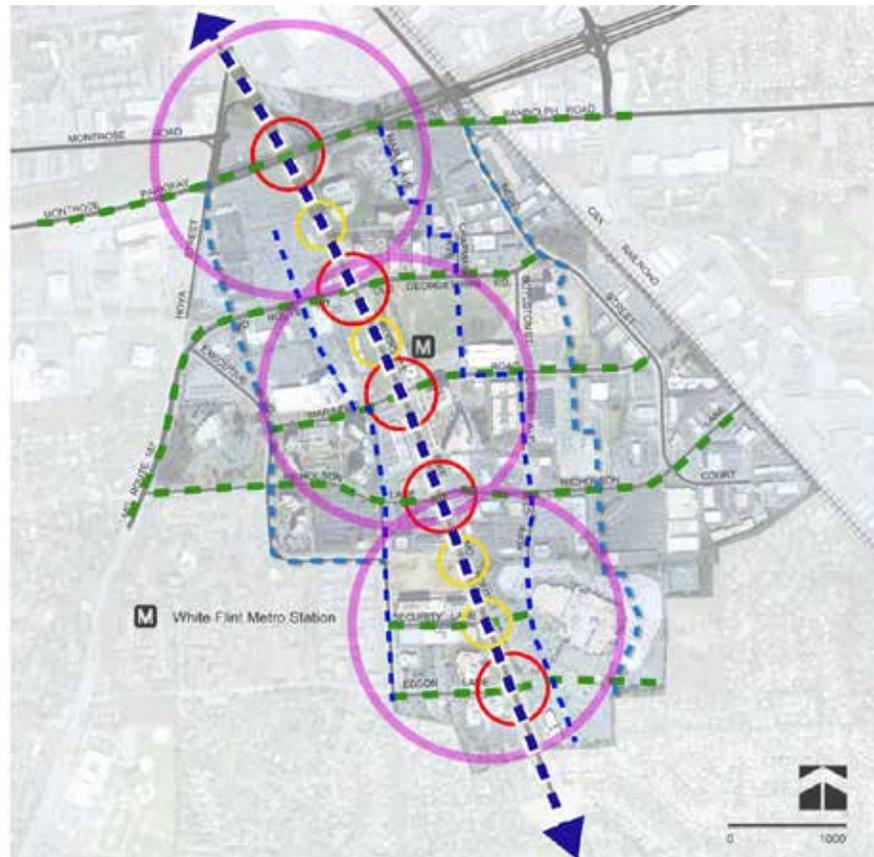
These primary intersections are joined by secondary intersections along Rockville Pike. According to the Panel, as new developments come to Rockville Pike, these secondary intersections may vary from how they look today—new roads may be built, old roads may remain, or even disappear—but nonetheless, these secondary intersections create more opportunities for auto and pedestrian movement across and through the study area.



Secondary intersections on Rockville Pike add an opportunity for people to interact with Rockville Pike as they move through the area. *Image Source: ULI Washington.*

Furthermore, the Panel acknowledged that the sector plan calls for additional roads to be added to the study area—both north-south and east-west. This sets the stage for secondary and tertiary road systems that will eventually surround Rockville Pike. The Panel emphasized the importance of this growing infrastructure: the resulting intersections will be long-lasting and create a new civic realm, which presents a unique placemaking opportunity.

Tertiary streets to specific buildings, parking, loading, and servicing are planned for the study area. These added streets, parallel to Rockville Pike, enhance the number of intersections and present unique branding and placemaking opportunities for the study area.  
*Image Source: ULI Washington.*

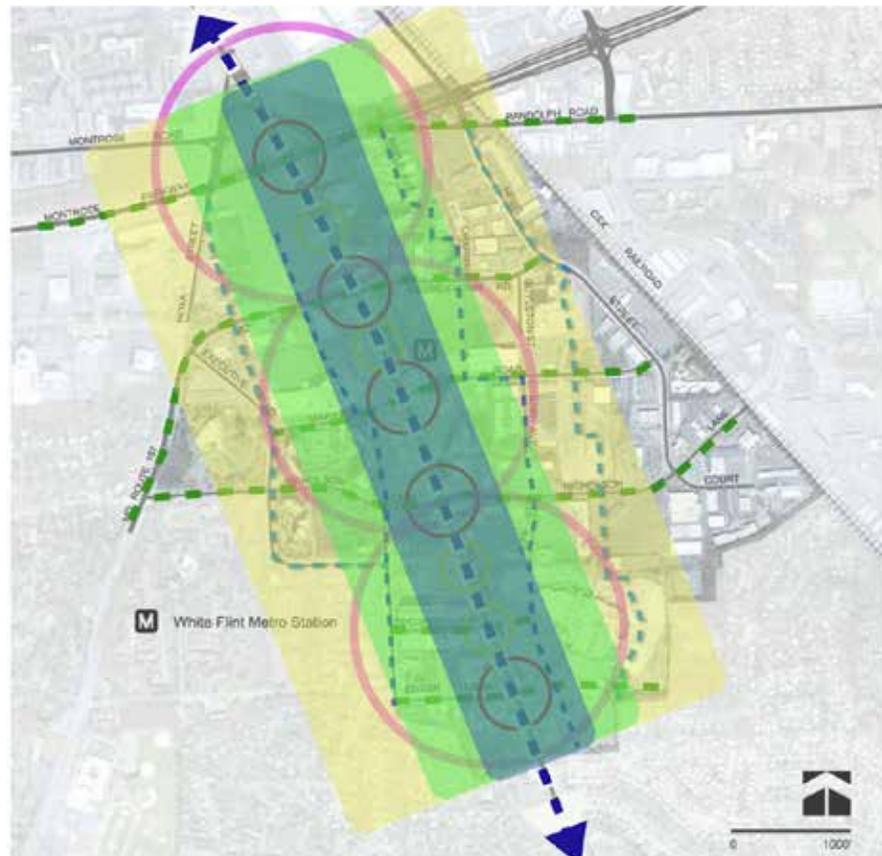




According to the Panel, there is no need for a “giant sign” or an arbitrary moniker to create a sense of identity—these elements have a limited lifespan and can feel inauthentic. Instead, the Panel encouraged the sponsor to enhance the civic realm, and view the new primary, secondary, and tertiary streets as foundational assets that can create a sense of identity and place through the intersections they create. As increasing numbers of people start to move through this infrastructure, new opportunities abound for creating a civic realm that celebrates the burgeoning changes expected for Rockville Pike.

The Panel also emphasized that expected activity along Rockville Pike will transform the way it is used today, and so any identity strategy must be designed to evolve as well. Currently, visitors to the area are accustomed to driving along Rockville Pike, pulling into a surface lot, and departing their car for their final destination on the Pike. Over the next 10–25 years however, Panelists contended that the majority of retail development will occur parallel to and behind Rockville Pike. As a result, visitors will instead frequent the secondary roads that are adjacent to Rockville Pike, as these are the spaces that are expected to house critical masses of new uses.

While Rockville Pike will continue to serve as the major thoroughfare, development activity will expand eastward and westward from the Pike over time, which will contribute to changing and evolving boundaries. In this image, the blue shading on either side of Rockville Pike broadly illustrates activity around Rockville Pike, while the green shading illustrates the anticipated direction of this growth and activity over the medium term. The yellow shading illustrates long-term growth on either side of Rockville Pike. Image Source: ULI Washington.



# Creating a Place

## CELEBRATE THE INTERSECTIONS

Recognizing that big change is coming to Rockville Pike, the Panel's foundational recommendation is to formulate a broad strategy for branding the area that allows for its identity to evolve as the area changes. The central tenet of this strategy is to celebrate the area's intersections as anchors for the study area.

Reclaiming this public realm will necessitate creative ways to embrace both vehicular and pedestrian activity at the intersections. At the vehicular level, where all modes of transportation are traveling fast and the scale requires grandeur, the Panel recommended embracing pylons, or large upright structures, that can serve a multitude of uses: navigational, whimsical, artistic, and technological. These creative uses of illumination and color can make pylons interactive at all hours of the day. At the pedestrian level, employing light and color at crosswalks can render intersections more whimsical and interactive.

These basic ingredients served as the foundation for generating visual ideas about how intersections can be celebrated and branded in a way that renders the study area memorable and unique. According to one Panelist, "Authenticity comes through the public realm, and comes organically, over time." Recognizing that influential developers along Rockville Pike will likely be branding their own developments through marketing, signage, and other elements, Panelists encourage the sponsor to differentiate from this approach in order to avoid causing competition and confusion. Instead, creatively reclaiming the public space provides an overarching sense of identity that can unify the entire study area in its present state and as it grows.

The Panel's rendering includes taking a standard intersection and making it "art-like" by embracing the power of colorful pylons as multi-functional elements. These pylons, which should be at least 20-30 feet high and illuminated at night, would serve multiple uses contemporaneously: as gateways;



In Austin, TX at one of the city's busiest intersections, blue and green polka dots that are painted on the street provide curb extensions that create safe space for pedestrians. These artistic improvements also create a unique way for people to interact with the civic space. *Image credit: [www.citylab.com/design/2016/01/polka-dots-help-pedestrian-reclaim-space-in-austin/433749/](http://www.citylab.com/design/2016/01/polka-dots-help-pedestrian-reclaim-space-in-austin/433749/).*

The pylon at Symphony Park in Las Vegas, Nevada uses color and illumination so that it is interactive all the time.

*Photo credit: [www.lasvegas360.com](http://www.lasvegas360.com).*



as maps; as informational kiosks; as places to hang streetlights, street signs, and other graphics; and as charging stations for smartphones and other similar devices. Looking to Denver as an example, Panelists recommended that the pylons could extend along the corridor, decreasing and then increasing in size until they reach a “crescendo” of height and gravitas at the next major intersection. This placemaking progression enables both vehicle passengers and pedestrians the ability to contextualize where they are headed, while also signaling that they are experiencing something different.

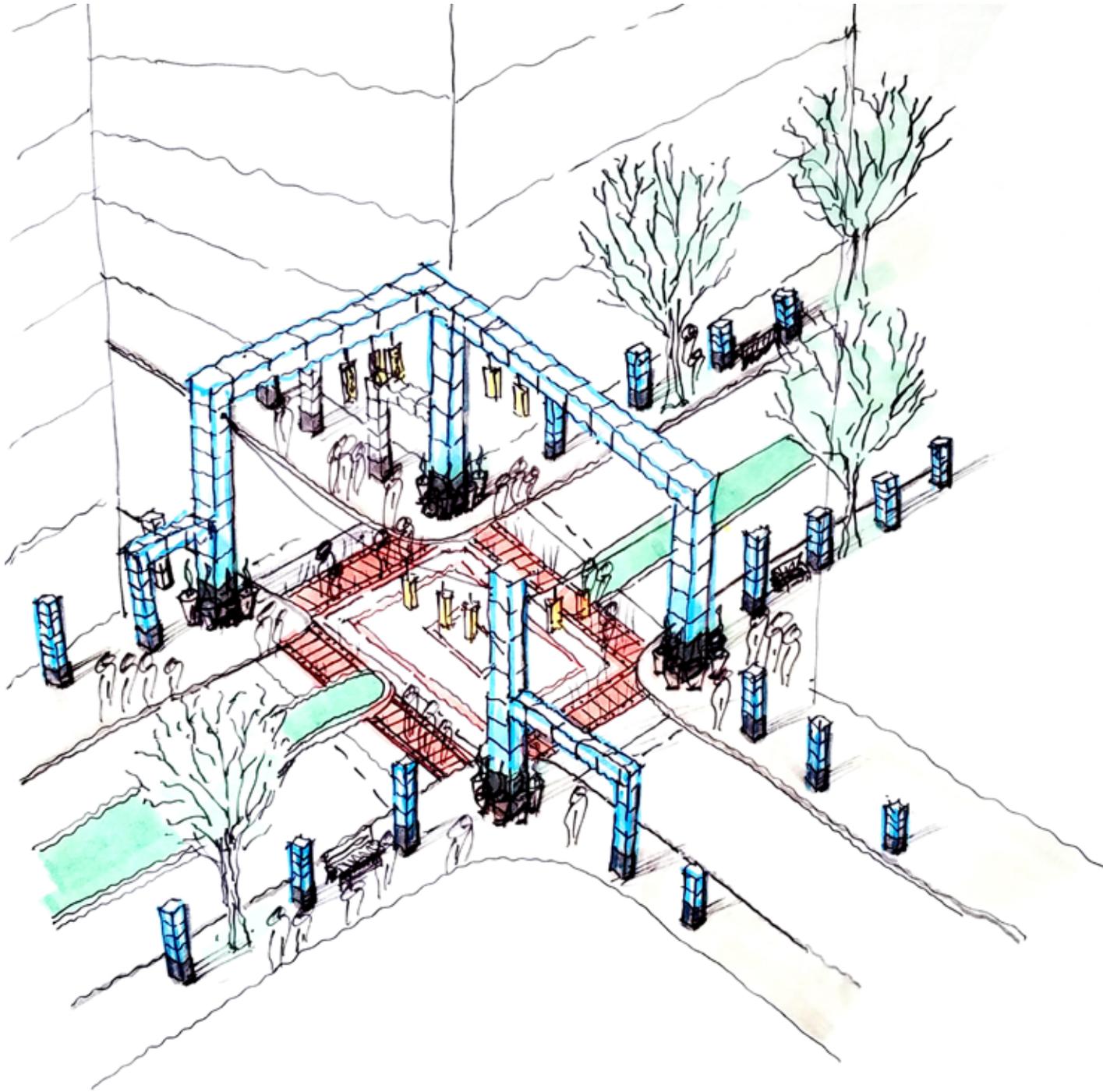
Furthermore, adding LED lighting to sidewalks, enhancing crosswalks in all directions, and raising the road level at the intersections signal to both pedestrians and auto-travelers that they are crossing something different and unique. Such elements also calm traffic and will reduce speeds throughout the study area. Building all of these design and functional elements into one civic space will have innumerable benefits, and will result in making the intersection truly unique and memorable. Coordination with the proposed BRT system would be critical to unifying and augmenting the area.

Denver’s 14th Street Redevelopment Project includes monumental pylons that serve as wayfinding, placemaking, and informational kiosks throughout the heart of downtown Denver. *Image source: [arthousedenver.com/portfolio/14th-street-redevelopment/](http://arthousedenver.com/portfolio/14th-street-redevelopment/).*



“Authenticity comes through the public realm,  
and comes organically, over time.”

– JON EISEN, ULI WASHINGTON PANELIST



This rendering captures several ideas for celebrating how the intersections in the study area can reclaim the civic space and build identity. Large pylons serve a multitude of uses, chief among these uses are placemaking archways, and meeting destinations, as well as pragmatic pillars on which street lights can hang and phones may be charged. *Image Source: ULI Washington.*

## THE SUBTLE POWER OF STREETScape

As the connective tissue that ties together the growing activity nodes, Rockville Pike is the spine of the study area. Currently, the study area suffers from a confused identity—the same location in the study area might be referred to as White Flint, North Bethesda, or Rockville. Knowing that the area’s identity will grow organically, and understanding that public resources are limited, the Panel formulated strategic recommendations for investing in the area’s streetscape as a way to further brand it and reinforce its identity as the area evolves.

Investing in a streetscape is a subtle yet powerful way to create a sense of place. Panelists pointed to several examples of nearby neighborhoods that recently shifted from relative anonymity to places of great investment and foot traffic. For instance, the H Street Corridor in northeast Washington, DC—which also spans approximately 1.2 miles—was an area that did not see much new development until the announcement and subsequent planning for the District streetcar. Adding transit facilities and widening the area’s sidewalks were two public investments that spurred a change in the area’s sense of place, which consequently led to developer private-sector investment.

The Yards, in southeast Washington, DC, is presently only 30% built out, but its programming, its park, and its signage give the area a unique identity within the broader Navy Yard neighborhood.<sup>1</sup> In each of these neighborhoods, investing public resources in streetscape provided a sense of identity that accelerated private sector development. Panelists emphasized building a unique and memorable sense of place where one otherwise does not exist need not be “heavy-handed,” and can instead be a “light touch” that slowly works to change the public’s perception.

Panelists acknowledged that the ability to invest in the streetscape on and around Rockville Pike may depend on the future plans for the BRT system, and could therefore take a long time. Panelists therefore recommended a series of short-term, supplemental, and low-cost enhancements that will have long-lasting effects on enhancing Rockville Pike. Some of these enhancements include: wide and well-designed sidewalks, wayfinding signage for all modes, lighting, public art and street furniture, well-designed BRT stations, appropriate signal timing, functional and whimsical crosswalk design, and landscaping.



The Yards Park in Washington, DC demonstrates an area where identity has evolved over time due to place-making, streetscape, and investment in public spaces. *Photo Credit: Forest City.*

---

<sup>1</sup> The Yards Park was a 2013 ULI Open Space Award Winner. To learn more, visit <http://uli.org/awards/yards-park-2013-urban-open-space-award/>.

# Implementation

Implementing the recommendations of this Panel requires public and private support and investment. The Panel emphasized that creating and affirming an identity for the area will necessitate a public/private partnership. Furthermore, formalizing a mechanism to coordinate private investment so that the area's developers can work in concert with each other will be critical.

Often, a Business Improvement District, or BID, can serve the role of centralizing private investment and assist in building and marketing an identity for an area. Establishing a BID that is dedicated to serving the study area would be optimal. The Panel acknowledged, however, that there may be hurdles to creating a BID, and that establishing such a formal body could be a timely and burdensome endeavor. Until a BID is formed, the Panel recommended empowering the White Flint Partnership as the main entity that would convene local private stakeholders in the immediate term.

The White Flint Partnership can carry out typical BID-like activities, such as unified maintenance, security, marketing, programming, and oversee efforts that unify the area, including holding area property owners accountable for implementing development according to existing sector plans and design guidelines. The Panel suggested exploring how property covenants and other similar mechanisms can keep developers accountable to remaining consistent with the overall vision for the area. The White Flint Partnership could also take on tasks that go beyond those of a typical BID, such as coordinating shuttle service that would provide internal circulation to the various nodes within the study area.



The Golden Triangle BID in Washington, DC oversees landscaping throughout the year along Connecticut Avenue, NW, including this programmable light installation that changes color as it cascades down the street. *Image source: [goldentriangledc.com/initiative/connecticut-avenue-median-lights/](http://goldentriangledc.com/initiative/connecticut-avenue-median-lights/).*

In addition, the White Flint Partnership should be charged with raising private funds, advocating for public funds, and advocating with State and County authorities to support public amenities that prioritize the nodes along Rockville Pike. While the White Flint Partnership works to establish a formal BID, it can continue to convene local stakeholders—including neighborhood groups, resident associations, and business owners—to solicit input on connecting the public realm of the study area.

And finally, the White Flint Partnership should explore ways to creatively program the study area through the use of public art. The Panel pointed to several successful examples of BIDs throughout the region as models. The Golden Triangle BID, for instance, hosts several initiatives that bring art and community events to downtown Washington, DC.

The Crystal City BID in northern Virginia has integrated art through its Art Walls program, where color and character are whimsically infused throughout Crystal City. Crystal Wings, an art project that was on display from August 2014 through June 2015, featured painted wings on construction fences by artist Colette de Batz Miller. This artwork engaged people in different ways, and allowed for imaginative interactions with the space.



Visitors to Crystal City interact with the #crystalwing Angel Wings Project. This unique artwork serves as a great example for how to program a construction fence in an inviting and whimsical way. *Image source: [www.crystalcity.org/artful/art-walls/numcrystalwings-global-angel-wings-proje](http://www.crystalcity.org/artful/art-walls/numcrystalwings-global-angel-wings-proje).*

“Continuity of public policy is the most important contribution that the County can make to the community over time.”

– SUSAN BELL, ULI WASHINGTON PANELIST

Coordinating private investment must be paired with public support. Montgomery County, which serves as a regulator, a decision-maker, a policy setter, and a convener of the public, plays a critical role in building an identity for the study area. According to the Panel, the County should continue its strong role in implementing sector plans, particularly the established design guidelines, which incorporate best practices in urban design and placemaking. County staff should also work to collaborate and involve staff and decision-makers from the City of Rockville. The boundary between these jurisdictions is contained within the study area, and as the area evolves over time, enhanced cooperation will be an important part of creating a seamless identity for area visitors.

The County must also continue to build public support and goodwill for the study area by leveraging established partnerships. Additionally, the County must prioritize public investment in the civic realm. Allowing these intersections to flourish through prioritized investment will set the stage for success for the entire study area. Finally, the Panel emphasized that continuity in implementation of public policy is necessary for success, and encouraged the County to “stay the course” over the long-term to see this plan to fruition.

# Conclusion

Above all else, the Panel advocated that establishing an area's identity must be organic in order to be authentic, and asserted that the identity of the study area will evolve over time. As anticipated development projects and infrastructure investment become reality, the look and feel of the area will change, and its identity will follow.

The Panel viewed Rockville Pike as a seam—not a border—to an area that is braced for tremendous change, and warned against selecting and promoting an arbitrary name to create a sense of identity. Instead, the Panel favored a broad strategy that brands the area through celebrating its intersections as anchors for reclaiming civic space. In this way, the area's identity can grow organically and authentically. Streetscape, placemaking, and other “light touch approaches” can be used to foster a sense of identity, and empowering the White Flint Partnership to carry out BID-like activities can set the stage for public and private sector collaboration. Montgomery County, along with the City of Rockville, also plays a critical role in ensuring implementation stays on task.

Above all else, the Panel acknowledged that the study area falls within Montgomery County, a healthy and resource-rich jurisdiction. The County's assets, including the its sector plans, zoning code, design guidelines, and transportation plans, combined with the area's history of stakeholder support, provide a strong foundation for building success.

# Panelists

## Bryce Turner, CHAIR

President and CEO, BCT Architects  
Baltimore, MD

Bryce Turner is the President and CEO of BCT Architects. A registered architect in twenty U.S. states, he has directed the design of projects in five countries within Europe, North America, and Asia, and is a major force in obtaining entitlements and approvals for the firm's complex retail, commercial and mixed-use projects. Mr. Turner frequently testifies before public commissions and agencies regarding the merits of the firm's mixed-use projects, and is an asset to a development team. Prior to joining BCT, Bryce was a Vice President with Development Design Group—Baltimore.

Mr. Turner's achievements include mixed-use and retail buildings at National Harbor in Prince George's County, (MD), Pike & Rose (MD), Pentagon Row Retail Renovation (VA), Downtown Silver Spring, (MD), Lockwood Place Retail, Baltimore (MD), Amerces (Istanbul, Turkey), East gate Complex (Harare, Zimbabwe), and Belvedere Square, Baltimore (MD). Mr. Turner has served as Chair of the Urban Land Institute—Baltimore (ULI) from 2002 through 2007. As Chair, he tripled membership, added new programs; and created consensus-building strategies in redeveloping communities that enabled greater density in urban areas and inner suburbs. In 2007, Mr. Turner received a Governor's Citation for transforming ULI Baltimore and for Reality Check Plus—a 2005 program focused on proposed population and job growth strategies across Maryland that aligned with "quality growth principles". In 2011, Former Governor Martin O'Malley appointed Bryce to the Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission.

Today Mr. Turner speaks nationally and regionally about the importance of redevelopment for the revitalization of urban and suburban communities; and advocates for greater mixed-use density near existing infrastructure and transportation hubs. Mr. Turner is a Board Advisor to the University of Maryland Real Estate School and sits on the Boards of the Maryland Family Network, Higher Achievement, Charles Street Development Corporation and ULI, Washington Advisory Committee. A member of the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) and former Chair of the GBC Built Environment and Sustainability Committee, Mr. Turner is a 1980 graduate of Virginia Tech's College of Architecture and Urban Studies. He has completed various graduate business courses at Loyola of Maryland.

## Sarah Barr

Associate Principal and Creative Director, Hickok Cole  
Washington, DC

Sarah Barr is an Associate Principal and Creative Director for Hickok Cole Creative. Ms. Barr joined Hickok Cole in 2004, and has over 15 years of experience in design leadership and creative strategies for print, electronic media and environmental graphic design. She has won numerous industry awards and has spoken to regional and national audiences about brand value and strategy. In her years with the firm, she has collaborated with the marketing team and professional staff to launch several, award-winning, highly successful creative campaigns.

An artist at heart, Ms. Barr received her BA with Honors in Studio Art from the University of Mary Washington. Prior to joining Hickok Cole Architects, Ms. Barr was a design consultant with Beveridge Seay, Inc., an identity and branding consultancy in Washington, DC, where projects included work for national and international corporations such as ExxonMobil Corporation and US Airways.

Hickok Cole Creative's current roster of projects include branding and marketing for The Hepburn Grand Apartment Residences (Lowe) in Kalorama and First Potomac's Redland in Rockville, MD. Recent past projects include the comprehensive rebranding of Washington REIT's Silverline Center in Tysons.

## Jonathan B. Eisen

Managing Principal, The Eisen Group  
Washington, DC

A native of Washington, DC, Jon Eisen enjoys the history of his hometown, as well as the constantly evolving cities where he does his work. Across the United States, Mr. Eisen has contributed to more than 60 mixed-use projects.

Trained as an architect and urban planner, Mr. Eisen works with private developers, universities and municipal officials to create special—and successful—places. He is currently leading the planning, architecture and strategy for developments in Maryland, Virginia, DC, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Florida, Washington, North Carolina, Oregon, New Jersey, Kansas and Colorado. National Harbor, Crown Farm, Crystal City Revitalization, Reston Town Center Phase II, Bethesda Row, Park Potomac, Crocker Park and The Village of Valley Forge all bear his handiwork.

At TEG, Mr. Eisen has had a hand in more than 20 million square feet of mixed-use planning, architecture and development consulting. Earlier in his career, he worked on such large scale projects as the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington DC, Mizner Park in Boca Raton, Colorado Center in Denver and Channelside in Tampa, Florida. He also counsels developers, land owners, universities, cities and towns, providing them with market analyses and clear-headed thinking about development possibilities in their sites and municipalities. Washington, DC officials recently engaged Jon to scrutinize and recommend improvements to its aging commercial districts across the entire city.

Mr. Eisen speaks regularly at local and national industry conferences and before government gatherings. He sits on a National Council with the Urban Land Institute and is on the board and teaches for the College of Architecture and Real Estate at the University of Maryland. Whenever he travels, he continues to study and photograph the physical elements of municipal life that contribute to urban vitality. As managing principal of TEG, Mr. Eisen leads the company, particularly in the planning, entitlements, market analysis, architecture development consulting and sustainability. From his long experience, Jon has gained considerable expertise in creating great places.

## Marta Goldsmith

Principal, MVG Consulting LLC  
Washington, DC

Marta Goldsmith has over 30 years of experience working with nonprofit, corporate, and governmental organizations on issues relating to real estate and land use, intergovernmental relations, and organizational development and operations. She is a highly accomplished executive and forward-thinking leader experienced in strategic planning, program development, and project management, both domestically and internationally.

From 2013–2015, Ms. Goldsmith served as senior adviser to the Commissioner of the Public Building Service, General Service Administration. In this role, she led special projects, which integrated PBS business lines and interfaced with the private sector.

Prior to joining GSA, Ms. Goldsmith served as the chief operating officer of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), where she was responsible for day-to-day operations of the New York-based headquarters and field offices in six countries. In this capacity, she oversaw a staff of 85 and a budget of \$9 million supervising strategic planning, fundraising and development, communications, finance and administration, and human resources, and global contracts.

In 1989, Ms. Goldsmith joined the staff of the Urban Land Institute—an international research and education organization that promotes best practices in real estate development and land use—where she held progressively senior management positions, for more than 20 years. Her accomplishments at ULI include growing ULI’s Advisory Services program to twenty assignments annually; leading the creation of ULI’s first international program; creating and growing ULI’s community outreach program to become one of the most visible and effective programs in the organization, operating in more than 40 district councils, worldwide; creating a new award program for urban open space; and significantly increasing foundation grants to the organization.

Prior to joining ULI, Ms. Goldsmith worked at the intersection of federal, state and local governments with the National League of Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the State of Florida—Washington Office, and the Southern Governors Association.

Committed to community service, Marta has served on several volunteer boards and committees. These include her tenure as founding president of the Temple Sinai Assisted Housing Foundation of Temple Sinai Congregation in Washington, DC, where she also served as deputy treasurer; serving on the Advisory Board of the Real Estate Associates Program, which provides internships for young minority professionals in the real estate industry; and serving on the board of arts organizations such as Young Audiences, DC and the Theater Lab School of the Dramatic Arts.

Ms. Goldsmith was awarded a three-year W.K. Kellogg National Leadership Fellowship and enjoys sharing her knowledge and experience as a teacher and mentor. She has lectured at the University of Virginia and Harvard University, where she earned her masters degree in city planning.

## Laura Hodgson

Urban/Transportation Planner, Louis Berger  
Washington, DC

Laura Hodgson is native of Montgomery County and an urban planner with close to ten years of experience in urban planning. Ms. Hodgson joins the

panel with experience working with the built environment, planning regulations, real estate development principles, design, land use, urban planning, architecture, and transportation.

Ms. Hodgson currently works in the transportation planning group at Louis Berger, a multi-disciplinary planning and engineering company where she focuses on land use and multi-modal transportation planning. Ms. Hodgson has supported visioning and planning projects involving large community events or advisory committees for local community plans; analyzed transportation systems across the Washington, DC, area and recommended improvements to accompany future planned development; and developed or refined multiple transportation management plans for naval installations in the Washington, DC area.

Prior to Louis Berger, Ms. Hodgson worked as an urban planner and designer at RTKL, an international architecture and planning firm. Her work included development of master plans for planned communities and mixed-use developments, planning and schematic design of realistic redevelopment scenarios of downtown catalytic projects, and development of design guidelines for urbanizing suburban areas. Many of the projects she worked on included Transit Oriented Development (TOD) sites, which complemented her interest in transit and transportation systems highlighted in her Master's Capstone project, "Factors Influencing Implementation of Light Rail Transit in Suburbs."

Ms. Hodgson has been involved with ULI Young Leader's Groups and various volunteer committees for over five years. Ms. Hodgson earned a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Virginia Tech and a Master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning also from Virginia Tech.

## Susan Ingraham-Bell

Planning and Zoning Consultant  
Arlington, VA

Susan Ingraham-Bell is an independent planning and zoning consultant. She provides planning and land use policy guidance, evaluates zoning issues, and provides expert testimony in land use cases to local government and private clients. Recent projects include preparation and review of zoning text amendments as part of a zoning ordinance rewrite, planning consultant to a county-wide community facilities study, chairing a citizen-developer working group to review office parking policy (adopted December 2013), and providing planning and land use advice to an affordable housing nonprofit regarding properties in their portfolio.

Ms. Bell is the former Director of Arlington County's Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development (DCPHD). Prior to becoming Director, Ms. Bell served as the County's Zoning Administrator for 10 years. She is a member of the Urban Land Institute and has served on the Executive Committee of the Washington District Council for several years. She also is a member of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and a Lifetime member of Leadership Arlington. Ms. Bell holds a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning from George Washington University and a Bachelor's Degree in political science and American Studies from Dickinson College in Carlisle Pennsylvania

## Camessia D. Johnson

Architectural + Graphic Designer, BCT Architects  
Baltimore, MD

Camessia Johnson is an Architectural and Graphic Designer at BCT Architects. Working at BCT has given Ms. Johnson the opportunity to work on a variety of design projects including mixed-use, retail, multi-family housing, adaptive-reuse, master planning, and environmental graphics. She also has hands on experience working with nonprofit groups, providing pro-bono design consulting and branding for local community organizations.

In May 2014, Ms. Johnson earned her Bachelor of Science in Architecture and Environmental Design from Morgan State University, from which she graduated cum laude. She was honored as one of four recipients of the inaugural AIA Baltimore Future Architects Resources (FAR) Scholarship in 2014. She now serves as Chair of the FAR Committee and focuses on increasing student awareness and appreciation of the built environment while exposing local elementary and middle school students to career paths in architecture and design.

Ms. Johnson's passion for art, culture, community sustainability, education, advocacy, and youth outreach motivates her to inspire others to become more knowledgeable about careers in design and to become confident leaders early in their academic and professional careers.

## Bob Peck

Principal, Gensler  
Washington, DC

Bob brings tremendous professional experience and industry expertise to his dual roles as a Leader of Gensler's Firmwide Government Practice and the Southeast Region Director of Consulting. Mr. Peck served for eight years as Commissioner of the U.S. General Services Administration's Public Buildings Service, responsible for design, construction, leasing and management for

more than 375 million square feet of space housing more than 1.1 million employees with an annual budget of more than \$9 billion.

Mr. Peck has been a land use attorney, commercial real estate mortgage banker and broker and has also served as President of the Greater Washington Board of Trade and Vice President for Public Affairs at the American Institute of Architects. He received his B.A. cum laude with distinction in economics from the University of Pennsylvania and his J.D. from Yale Law School. A Gensler Principal, Mr. Peck has been a visiting Loeb Fellow at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design and a visiting lecturer at Yale College. An Honorary Member of both the AIA and American Society of Landscape Architects, in 2012 he received the AIA Thomas Jefferson Award for Public Architecture.

## Brant Snyder

Vice President, Lowe Enterprises Real Estate Group, Inc.  
Washington, DC

Brant Snyder is a Vice President with Lowe Enterprises, focusing on Lowe's residential development and acquisition efforts in the Washington, DC Region. Mr. Snyder manages the development of The Hepburn, a 195-unit residential building adjacent to the historic Washington Hilton hotel.

Mr. Snyder previously served as a Development Manager at Madison Marquette, where he focused on the development and capitalization of The Wharf, a 3.2m square foot mixed-use development transforming Washington, DC's Southwest Waterfront. Mr. Snyder was a key member of the deal team responsible for securing a \$220MM equity investment from PSP Investments, a Canadian pension fund. Mr. Snyder also oversaw the development of Parcel 4 at The Wharf, comprised of 112 waterfront condominium units, 150 apartments and 66,000sf of retail. Prior to Madison Marquette, Mr. Snyder served as a Vice President at McWilliams Ballard, the largest new-home sales and marketing company in the Mid-Atlantic, where he oversaw the sales and marketing of over 2,000 units of market rate and affordable housing.

Mr. Snyder grew up in Alexandria, Virginia and currently resides in Washington, DC with his wife and son. He is an active member of ULI, currently serving as Chair of ULI Washington's Young Leaders Group and is a graduate of ULI Washington's Regional Land Use Leadership Institute. He earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, majoring in Finance from Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business and Masters of Science in Real Estate Development from Columbia University.



**Urban Land  
Institute**

**Washington**

ULI Washington  
2001 L Street, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (240) 497-1919  
Fax: (240) 497-1818  
[www.washington.uli.org](http://www.washington.uli.org)