



INSPIRE

Investing in Neighborhoods and Schools to Promote
Improvement, Revitalization, and Excellence

Walter P. Carter Building *INSPIRE* Area Plan



Last updated 2026 February 3

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Executive Summary

The Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School INSPIRE Plan is a resource for city agencies and community partners to work with residents, institutions, and organizations to improve the quality of life, health, and economic vitality of the neighborhoods around the school.

Every INSPIRE plan developed by the City of Baltimore’s Department of Planning shares the same key goals: to invest in regional housing and market-strengthening opportunities, to improve public safety, to create networks of safe connection and access, to create opportunities for health and wellness, and to improve sanitation and create environmentally sustainable neighborhoods.

The INSPIRE program is centered on the idea that strong schools make strong neighborhoods, and in turn, strong neighborhoods make strong schools. For the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE area, city staff identified primary walking routes around the school building and implemented sidewalk repairs, new crosswalks, and other route improvements.

The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the process of completing this recommendation report. In 2023, renewed program staffing enabled the Department to re-engage community partners and further develop the plan. The Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School INSPIRE Plan describes nine strategies based on resident input to inform the city’s approach to achieving program goals. Within each strategy, the plan recommends actions for agency staff and community partners to implement moving following adoption by the Planning Commission. This plan is scheduled for consideration by the Baltimore City Planning Commission in December 2025.

Introduction

Letter from the Director

Greetings,

I am happy to share the latest INSPIRE Plan to be produced by our Department for the Walter P. Carter Building Area. It is with deep gratitude that I extend thanks to the many community stakeholders who helped shape this plan for their commitment to working in partnership with Baltimore City. Partners from area residents and businesses to the philanthropic community and anchor institutions are maximizing the impact around the modernized 21st Century Schools built around Baltimore and making a positive difference in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Multiple divisions of the Department of Planning were involved in developing the INSPIRE plan or supporting the 21st Century School process. From offering urban design expertise, identifying opportunities to increase access to healthy food, or securing sites and funding resources for community projects, our team has been committed to working with others to develop the highest-quality school facilities and INSPIRE recommendations that will strengthen the connection between each school and its surrounding neighborhood.

Our commitment doesn't end with the adoption of this document. INSPIRE plans provide a roadmap for achieving longer-term goals around housing, environmental sustainability, safety, sanitation, transportation, and health. We will continue to work with our partners to achieve progress towards community aspirations.

Updated school facilities both improve quality of life for existing students and families and serve as catalysts for attracting new residents and development to Baltimore neighborhoods. INSPIRE plans like this aim to capture that potential. We welcome new ideas and partnerships to help us achieve that goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim".

Tim Keane
Director, City of Baltimore Department of Planning

About the 21st Century Schools Program

The 21st Century School Buildings Program began in Fall 2010, when community organizations, education advocacy groups, the Baltimore City Public School System, and other stakeholders built a coalition of support for legislation and funding to modernize Baltimore’s public schools. The promise of replaced and renovated schools is meant to help transform student opportunities and achievement and help revitalize neighborhoods.

The Baltimore City Public School System Construction and Revitalization Act of 2013 resulted in a partnership between the City of Baltimore, the State of Maryland, and Baltimore City Public Schools, financing a program that is leveraging \$60 million per year to provide approximately \$1 billion in bond proceeds for school construction issued by the Maryland Stadium Authority.

Additionally, the City of Baltimore, Baltimore City Public Schools, the Interagency Committee on Public School Construction, and the Maryland Stadium Authority are partnering through a Memorandum of Understanding to manage and oversee this plan. School construction is typically funded by municipalities and states on a project-by-project basis. Alternative financing for school construction for the Program allowed Baltimore City Public Schools to speed up significantly renovating or replacing more than two dozen school buildings.

The 21st Century School Buildings Program is supporting excellence in teaching and learning with flexible and adaptable spaces, learning areas designed for interaction and collaboration, and technology-equipped classrooms, which enables students to meet today’s—and tomorrow’s—high standards and will provide communities with a shared public resource that will enrich their neighborhoods. Baltimore City will benefit for years to come from this historic effort to provide the healthy, safe, efficient, and modern school buildings all children deserve.

Learn more about 21st Century Schools Building Program at baltimore21stcenturyschools.org.



About the INSPIRE program

Each modernized 21st Century School represents tens of millions of dollars of public investment into the neighborhood it serves. To leverage this investment, and to enhance the connection between the schools and the surrounding neighborhoods, the Department of Planning launched a new program called INSPIRE, which stands for Investing in Neighborhoods and Schools to Promote Improvement, Revitalization, and Excellence.

Learn more about INSPIRE Program at planning.baltimorecity.gov/planning-inspire.



Acknowledgements

From the beginning of the INSPIRE planning process for the Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School, this effort was supported by highly engaged and passionate members of the community who continually pushed this initiative forward and remained steadfast through various city staffing changes, Mayoral administrations and a global pandemic. We want to take the time to thank area residents and stakeholders who participated in meetings, workshops, and community walks to share their ideas and experiences and offer support for the community around the Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School.

Special thanks to the partners and neighborhood associations that supported the planning process including the Wilson Park Northern Neighborhood Association, the Wilson Park Historic Association, the Pen Lucy Neighborhood Association, the York Road Partnership, Healthy Neighborhoods, Church of the Redeemed of the Lord, Refuge Way of the Cross Church, Faith Christian Fellowship, Kingsway Bible Baptist Church, Baltimore Greenspace, and Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake. Thanks also to all residents and neighbors who participated in the planning process.

Many thanks to the Walter P. Carter parents, teachers, and school staff who participated in the planning process, especially Principal Joseph Eldridge and Ashley Antonsen, the Community School Coordinator.

We are also grateful to our partner City agencies, whose staff helped to develop this plan including the Baltimore City Department of Transportation, Baltimore City Recreation and Parks, the Baltimore City Public School System, and the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development. We would also like to express special appreciation to the Fourth District Council Office of Councilman Mark Conway and his staff for being great partners in this process.

Jaffa Batya Weiss, INSPIRE Planner, and Marie McSweeney Anderson, Northern District Planner, continued the planning process between 2023 and 2025 to revise and complete the plan with assistance from Eli Pousson, former INSPIRE Planner and Danielle Bilot, Greening Coordinator. The team built upon previously completed work conducted by former INSPIRE planners Mary Colleen Buettner and Jennifer Leonard, and former Northern District Planner Reni Lawal.



Mural in the 500 block of Reedy Avenue completed by Art @ Work YouthWorkers supported by artist landry Randriamandroso



INSPIRE community walk participants, April 2025

About the *INSPIRE* Planning Process

Summary

The Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle Building INSPIRE Area Plan covers the half-mile area around the school building, equivalent to approximately a ten-minute walk from the facility. The recommendations in this plan are focused on issues and opportunities within that half-mile area.

Focusing on a limited geographic area allows INSPIRE plans to concentrate on impact around the school so that development and investments support the school as a community resource.

For each school area, the INSPIRE program uses a three-stage process where planners:

- Listen to residents and school community members to gather information on the area
- Create recommendations based on community and city agency feedback, and
- Deliver a plan based on feedback and ideas from the community.



April 2025 Data Gallery event at Walter P. Carter EMS



Community residents at a June 2025 walk of the INSPIRE Area

Outreach and engagement

Initial outreach for this INSPIRE plan began prior to 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the process of completing this recommendation report due to departmental priorities shifting to other responsibilities. In 2023, renewed program staffing enabled Department of Planning staff to reengage community partners and further develop the plan through completion.

TABLE 1. Outreach and engagement activities

DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION
March 5, 2025	Walter P. Carter Steering Committee Kick Off Meeting	A virtual meeting to review the INSPIRE planning process and proposed timeline
April 1, 2025	Wilson Park Community Walk	Community Walk focused on the Wilson Park portion of the quarter mile area, specifically the area directly adjacent to the school
April 24, 2025	Data Gallery Walk	Worked with the community to determine data points of interest, printed large scale maps, and discussed potential recommendations based on the data.
June 10, 2025	Wilson Park Community Walk & Wilson Park Northern Neighborhood Association Meeting	Community Walk focused on the Wilson Park portion of the quarter mile area, focused on transportation and pedestrian safety, greenspace, student safety, and housing/code enforcement.
July 15, 2025	Pen Lucy Community Walk	Community walk focused on the Pen Lucy portion of the half mile area, focusing on the Old York Road commercial corridor, greenspaces, housing, and recreation.
July 16, 2025	Oral History Gathering	Gathered community stories and shared the INSPIRE process at the Blessed Sacrament Church Community Dinner.
August 12, 2025	Wilson Park Northern Neighborhood Association Meeting	Shared an update on the process and draft.
October 14, 2025	Wilson Park Northern Neighborhood Association Meeting	Shared draft recommendations for review with community leaders.
January 13, 2026	Wilson Park Northern Neighborhood Association Meeting	Shared final draft of the full plan

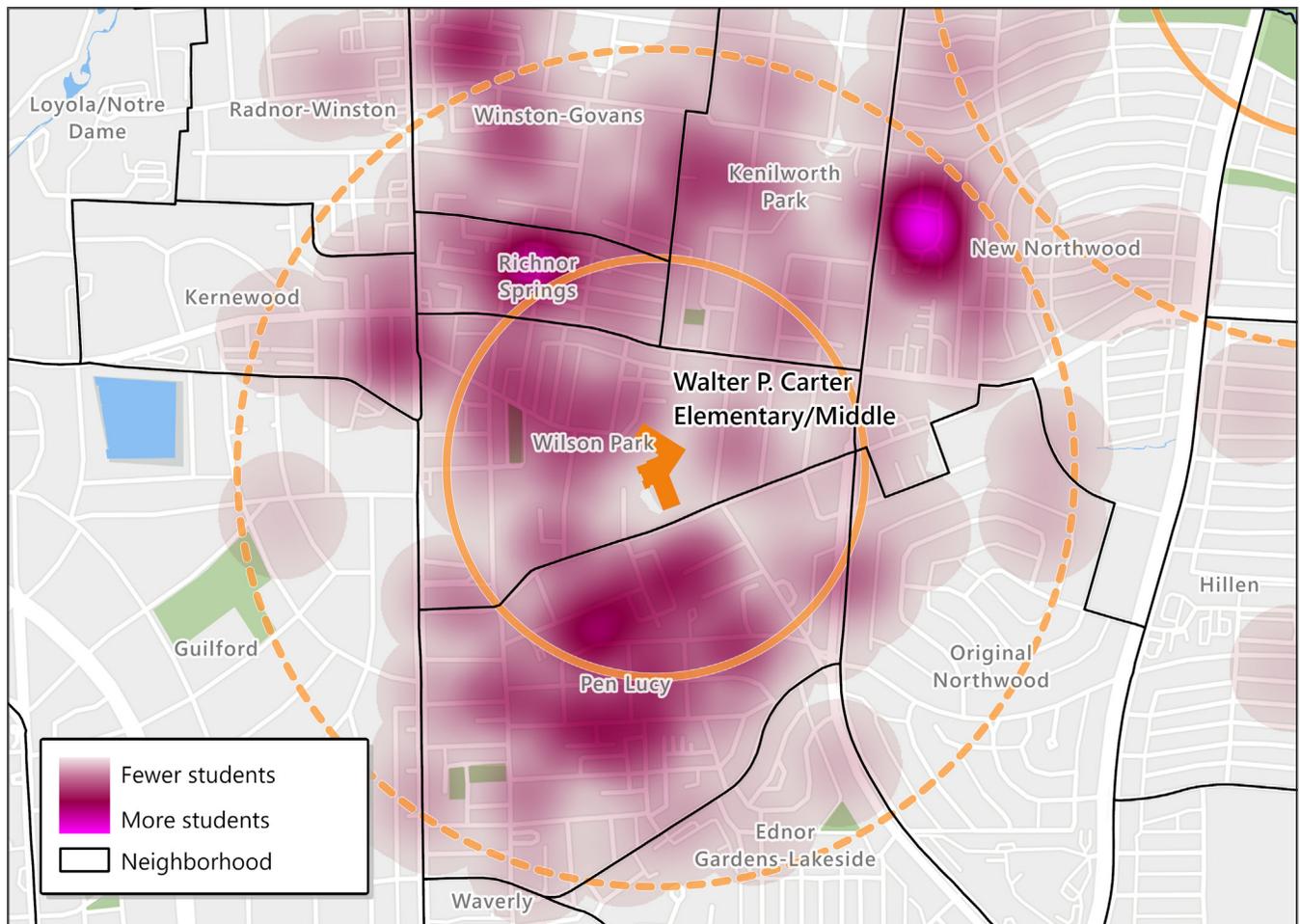


FIGURE 1. *Walter P. Carter ES Student Enrollment in INSPIRE Area*

Community Project

The Department of Planning has invested in the fulfillment of the INSPIRE Plan with funding available for the completion of one or more action items in the recommendation report. Project funding is intended to encourage additional investment in the area around the school, further strengthening the connection between neighborhood, community, and school. The community around Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School has expressed interest in investing in street furniture such as benches in Kent Memorial Garden at Old York Road and the Ivanhoe Valley Community Garden, although final decisions will be reached with community leaders after the plan has been approved by the Planning Commission.

About the *INSPIRE* Area

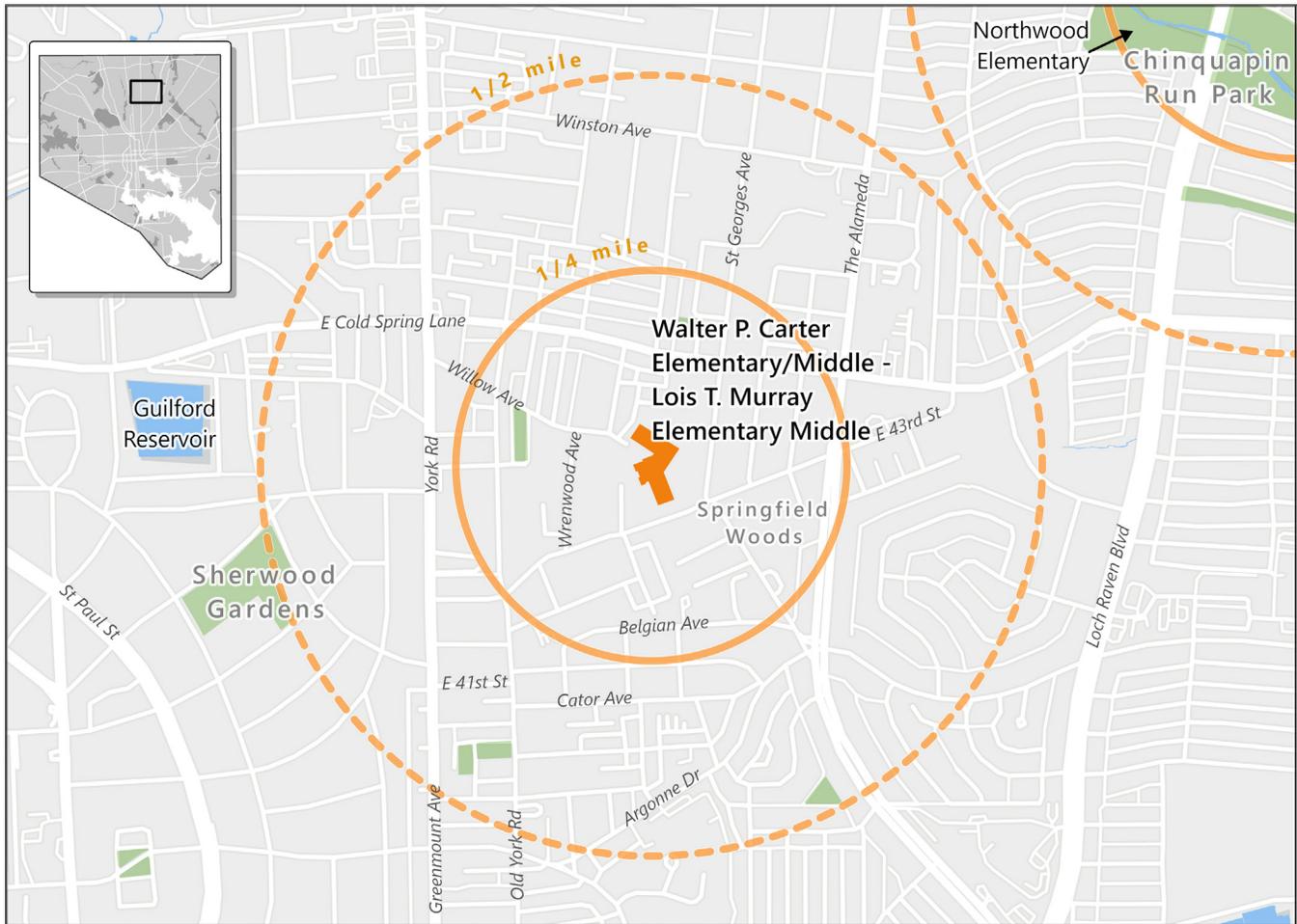


FIGURE 2. Walter P. Carter Building *INSPIRE* Area

Overview

Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School is located along E. 43rd Street on a shared campus with Lois T. Murray Elementary/Middle School, which serves Baltimore City schoolchildren with disabilities; over 850 students attend both schools. The campus is in the Wilson Park neighborhood, and the quarter-mile radius around the school building includes portions of the neighborhoods of Pen Lucy and Kenilworth Park. Further out, the half-mile radius includes more of Pen Lucy, Wilson Park, and Richnor Springs, as well as parts of Winston-Govans, New Northwood, Original Northwood, Ednor Gardens-Lakeside, Guilford, Kernewood, and Radnor-Winston.

The area is primarily residential, with the North-South commercial corridor of York Road intersecting the western half of the *INSPIRE* area. The half-mile area around Walter P. Carter is close to the half-mile area around the adjacent Northwood Elementary School *INSPIRE* area further to northeast.



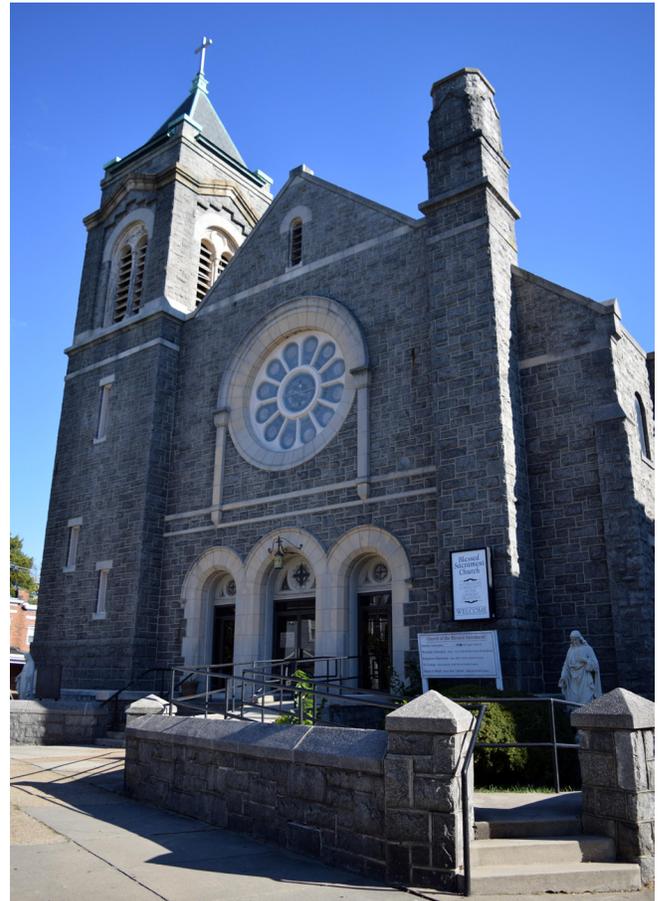
Shared Campus of Walter P. Carter and Lois T. Murray

Area History

Early history of growth on York Road

The north-central neighborhoods of southern Govans, Wilson Park, Pen Lucy, and northern Waverly began as country estates for the city’s elite during the eighteenth century. By the turn of the nineteenth century, many had been, or were in the process of being, subdivided for residential development. Development was slow but by the mid-nineteenth, the area was roughly divided into two major “villages”: Govanstown and Waverly. Aside from the small commercial establishments that sustained the communities along the York Road corridor, one of the few institutions in the area was a school that Richard Malcom Johnston opened in 1867, naming it Pen Lucy in honor of his recently deceased daughter.

Much of the area’s growth was tied to transportation improvements along the Greenmount Avenue/York Road corridor. By 1741, York Road had become an important north-south trade route linking the farms of southern Pennsylvania to Baltimore City. Its role as a regional connector strengthened after the Baltimore and York-town Turnpike was completed in 1810. But it would take the arrival of mass public transportation along York Road to really spur development along the corridor.



Blessed Sacrament Church, 4111 Old York Rd.

In 1870, the York Turnpike Railway Company built railroad tracks for double-decker horsecars carrying residents the two miles two and from downtown Baltimore. These improvements led to a jump in real estate speculation as the land along the York Road/Greenmount Avenue skyrocketed from \$600 an acre in 1866 to \$16,000 an acre after 1870. Real estate development moved off the corridor in the late 1870s following the construction of Arlington Avenue (present day 43rd Street) that connected York Road to growing neighborhoods in the east.

The arrival of the electric streetcar set off an even larger wave of subdivision and residential development. Jacob Aull, a major builder in the area, built several homes along the newly cut Radnor Road and Rossiter Avenue. The resulting development was referred to as “Aull’s Sub-Division” Other developers in the area included the Suburban Construction Company, the Potomac Development Company, and Oakmont Realty.

Over time, the area became incorporated into the city. The annexation of 1888 made 42nd Street the northern boundary of the city, and the neighborhoods north of that were incorporated in the final annexation of 1918. Developers kept a strong construction pace, building blocks of rowhouses in the new city neighborhoods. The rowhouses of Franklin Terrace, which stretched between the two York Roads, for example, were built in the 1910s and 1920s. Several blocks of rowhouses east of York Road and 42nd Street were built by the Welsh Construction Company, with many reflecting the daylight style popular of that era.

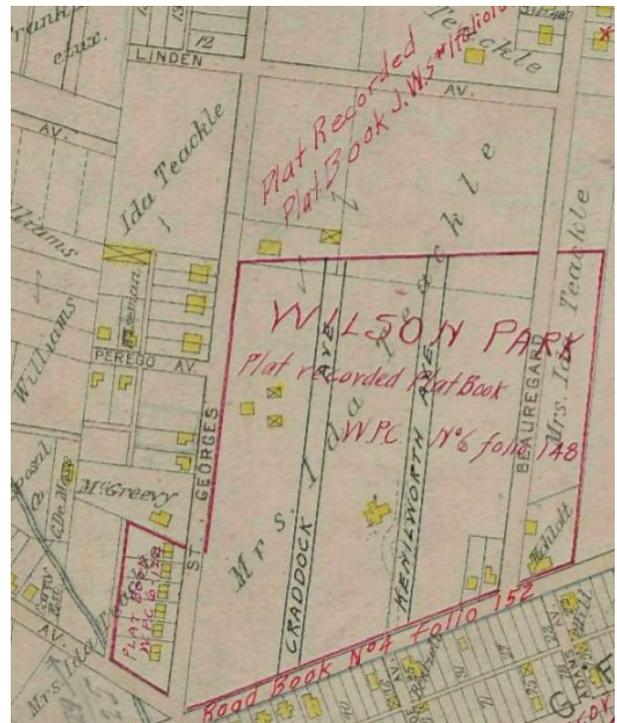
Development of Wilson Park

While the early development of the neighborhoods in the York Road corridor was similar to that of other areas annexed into the city, one neighborhood has a particularly unique origin story: Wilson Park.

Harry O’Neill Wilson, whose father was the first appointed Black principal in a public school in Baltimore, founded the Mutual Benefit Society in 1913. The Society provided sick benefits, death benefits, and health insurance for a primarily Black clientele. Wilson also founded the Helping Hands Building Association and Wilson Bank, which gave middle-class Black Baltimoreans access to savings accounts, loans, and home mortgages that they could not get through white institutions.

In 1917, Wilson purchased a portion of an estate called Glenview from Mrs. Ida Teackle. Her husband, George Teackle, an Irish American doctor, had owned the estate prior. After only three weeks, Wilson had subdivided the property into individual plots and ran the first advertisement for what would become Wilson Park in the Afro American, describing the development as:

“Open to our race. Nineteen acres, 200 lots, 6 new cottages with all conveniences [sic], hot water heat, electric lights, large porch fronts. The smallest lots are 25 ft x 112 ft; owned by one of our Leading businessmen of Baltimore City, MR. HARRY O. WILSON. This beautiful site is located 3 squares east of the beautiful Guilford on the York Road. There is no low or marsh land on this magnificent site; it is 400 feet above sea level overlooking Baltimore City. Five-cent carfare, 10 minutes’ ride from City Hall. The prices of lots range from \$300 up; Cottages from \$1600 up.”



Wilson Park boundaries overlaid on 1915 Bromley Atlas

The description of the development being on high ground with “no low marsh” was critical because at the time, the land that Black communities could acquire for suburban developments were largely low-lying, nuisance-prone areas. Following the ideas of racial economic uplift that Black leaders of the era, namely Marcus Garvey, promot-

ed, Wilson declared in 1926 that he had consistently employed Black doctors and tradespeople and made a point to purchase supplies from Black-owned businesses. He encouraged other Black business leaders to do the same.

Opening in 1918, Wilson Park soon grew into a suburban enclave for elite Black Baltimoreans including civil rights leaders W. Ashbie Hawkins, Geroge W.F. McMechen, and Garnett Russell Waller. But it wasn't just home to the upper middle-class. Charles McDaniels, whose father was a cement finisher who purchased a plot directly from Wilson, explained to the Evening Sun, "The place was slowly built up by working-class [B]lacks—you know, maids, chauffeurs, and garbage men who wanted to own their own home." Even the famous band leader Cab Calloway spent part of his childhood in the neighborhood.

Despite the opportunity to achieve home ownership, the Black residents of Wilson Park and nearby communities still had to deal with the problem of inadequate educational facilities. Local children were forced to attend a segregated school on the Morgan College campus over half a mile away. In 1923, Wilson petitioned the School Board to turn a former white school into a school for Black children after making "suitable repairs," according to the Afro American.

The neighborhood grew at an even pace over the next few decades, providing one of the only all-Black residential communities that consisted of new construction. Home ownership was of strong value in the community and, as in white suburbs, residents fought large-scale developments. This included a plan to construct 164 townhomes in the center of the community in 1981. As with other communities, residents perceived the higher-density rental units as a threat to their property values and the stability of the neighborhood. The residents wanted any housing to be full ownership, reflecting the historical nature of the community. According to a neighborhood community profile conducted by Morgan State University in 1995, the neighborhood sustained homeownership rates that were "significantly higher" than the rest of the city and had lower vacancy rates as well.

New Black families continued to move into the neighborhood throughout the twentieth century, seeing it as a good place to raise a family. One such family was Deacon Lynwood Wimbish, his wife Elizabeth Wimbish, and their children, who moved to Wilson Park in 1965. Together, they started what is now the Wilson Park Christian Community Church on York Road, and Elizabeth Wimbish became active in the Willow Avenue playground. In fact, the Wimbishes recalled the playground as "the place to be," a central gathering for both children and the community.

Changes in the 21st Century

During the 1980s and 90s, middle-class residents began moving to the Baltimore suburbs in increasing numbers, making room for real estate speculators. According to the Community Profile of Pen Lucy conducted by Morgan State, there was a correspondingly notable increase in absentee landlords in the area. Most of the investor-owned



Marian House Independence Place is a supportive housing program at 4103 Old York Rd.

properties were along the Old York Road. Between 1987 and 1991, for instance, 89 percent of the real estate sales on one block went to investors.

The communities' strength and resilience helped to sustain residents through this period. Various community institutions worked with residents to support community needs. One of these was the Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. In 1993, community members in Pen Lucy held a fifty-person anti-drug march led by Robert and Erlene Nowlin, parishioners at Blessed Sacrament, and accompanied by city councilperson Mary Pat Clark and Mayor Kurt Schmoke. The campus of Blessed Sacrament continued to serve residents in need into the twenty-first century. As of 2006, the building of the former parochial school was being used by Safe Haven of Blessed Sacrament for transitional housing for chronically mentally ill. The former convent was home to the Mirian House II program, which provided housing and counseling to women.

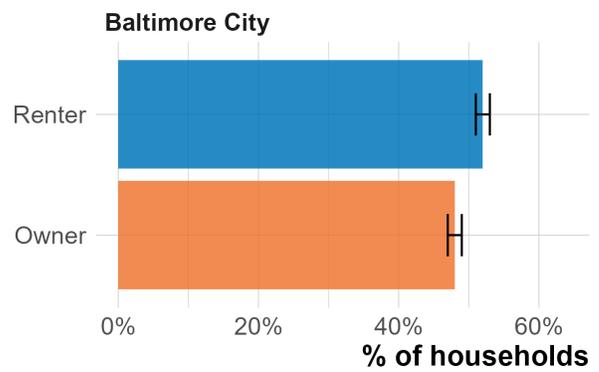
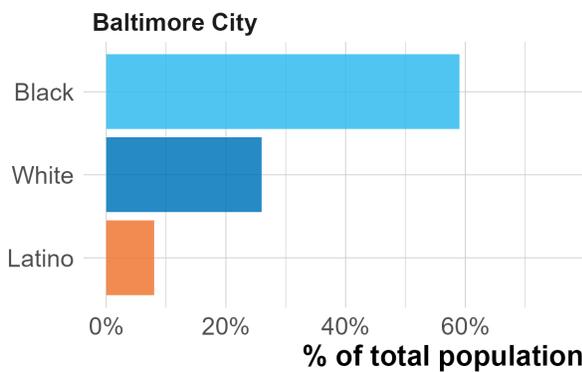
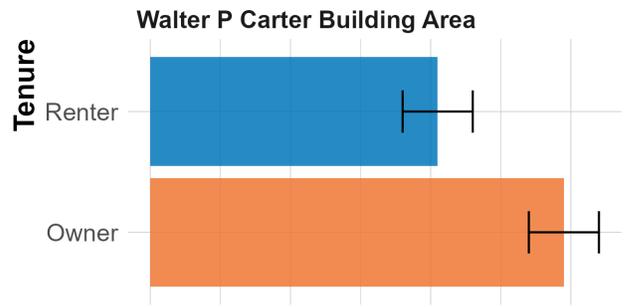
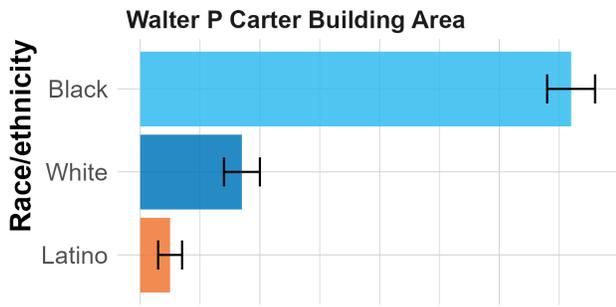
The neighborhoods around Walter P. Carter continue to grow, change, and adapt to the times. Commercial change is one of the most notable features of the York Road corridor. Where once there were several small businesses like bakeries and five and dime shops, most of them have disappeared from the landscape. Resident Lynwood Wim-bish, Jr. noted, "All the grocery stores that we used to have around here, all of them are gone." But as people and places move out of the neighborhoods, new ones move in, contributing a new chapter to the history around Walter P. Carter.

WHO WAS WALTER P. CARTER?

Born in 1923, Walter Percival Carter was a key figure in the Civil Rights Movement in Baltimore City during the 1960s and 1970s. His roles included chairing the Baltimore chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and being an organizer for the 1963 March on Washington. An ardent desegregationist, he led many efforts against housing discrimination.

Area Demographics and Existing Conditions

Demographics



Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table B03002.

Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table B25003.

FIGURE 3. Race/ethnicity in INSPIRE Area and Baltimore City

FIGURE 4. Household tenure in INSPIRE Area and Baltimore City

In comparing demographics between the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE area, the entirety of Baltimore City, and the Baltimore metropolitan statistical area (MSA), there are some notable contrasts. Compared to the wider metropolitan statistical area, the INSPIRE area has a substantially higher proportion of Black residents and a significantly lower proportion of White residents. Similar to all of Baltimore City and the metro area, there is a small proportion of Latino residents in the INSPIRE area, less than ten percent of total residents.

TABLE 2. Comparison of Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area and Baltimore City

	TOTAL POPULATION	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	HOUSEHOLDS
Walter P. Carter Building Area	20,169 ± 1,290	\$90,013	6,621 ± 445
Baltimore City	577,193	\$59,623 ± \$1,145	250,608 ± 1,325

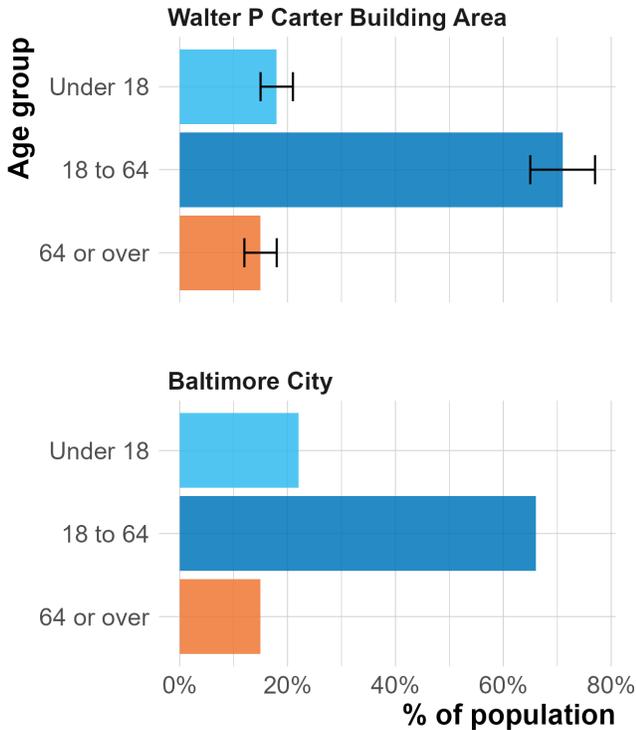
SOURCE: 2019-2023 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES, TABLES B01003, B25003, AND B19013.

In comparing homeownership versus rental rates between the INSPIRE area and Baltimore City, both geographies have similar numbers. There is a higher rate of legacy residents (residents living in the neighborhood for twenty years or more) in the INSPIRE area than in Baltimore City as a whole.

Both the INSPIRE area and Baltimore City at large have similar proportions of children under age 18, working-age adults between 18 and 64, and elder residents aged 64 and over, although the INSPIRE area has a slightly

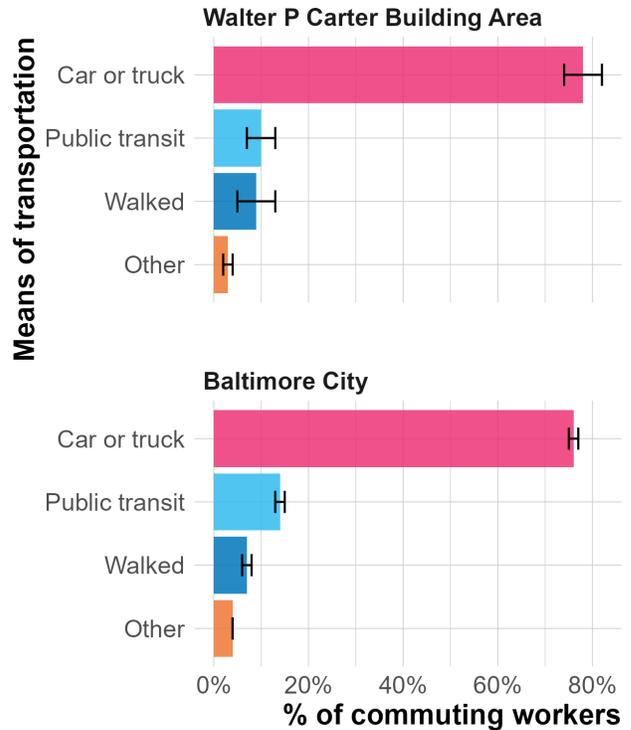
higher share of elder community members. The median household income for the entire city is slightly higher than in the INSPIRE area. It should be noted that Baltimore City has a higher share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher educational attainment than the INSPIRE area, although in most other educational categories both geographies have comparable numbers.

Assessing area means of transportation for the INSPIRE community and larger city and MSA yields a mix of results. Excluding workers who work entirely remotely, the share of community area commuters who drive is similar to the share for Baltimore City overall. A slightly higher proportion of INSPIRE area residents commute with public transportation and a slightly higher proportion of City residents commute by walking. Total vehicle ownership rates are similar between the INSPIRE area and Baltimore City.



Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table B01001.

FIGURE 5. Population by age in INSPIRE Area and Baltimore City



Source: 2019-2023 ACS 5-year Estimates, Table B08134.

FIGURE 6. Means of transportation to work in INSPIRE Area and Baltimore City

Existing Housing and Land Use

Most of the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area is zoned for residential use. The Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE area has an assortment of housing options, including attached rowhomes, detached units, and small apartment complexes. See Figure 7 on page 19 for a detailed map.

The quarter-mile radius primarily includes R-3, R-4, R-6, and R-7. R-3 and R-4 zoning designations are intended for neighborhoods that accommodate detached and semidetached dwellings, as well as some non-residential uses. R-6 and R-7 zones include low density rowhouses, detached dwellings, and semi-detached dwellings. Small portions of the INSPIRE area in Kernewood and Guilford are categorized as R-1.

In Wilson Park and Pen Lucy combined, there are almost 2,000 housing units. It should be noted that the Restoration Garden building along E. 42nd Street has a zoning designation of OR-1 for Office/Residential zoning. The quarter-mile radius also includes two designated Open Space areas: Willow Avenue Park, Kimberleigh Road Park, and Mullan Park (all managed by the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks).



Commercial: 43rd Flavor Barber Shop & Beauty Salon, York Road and 43rd Street



Multi-Family Residential: Restoration Gardens 2 (2017), 4201 York Rd.



Rowhouse Residential: Area rowhouses

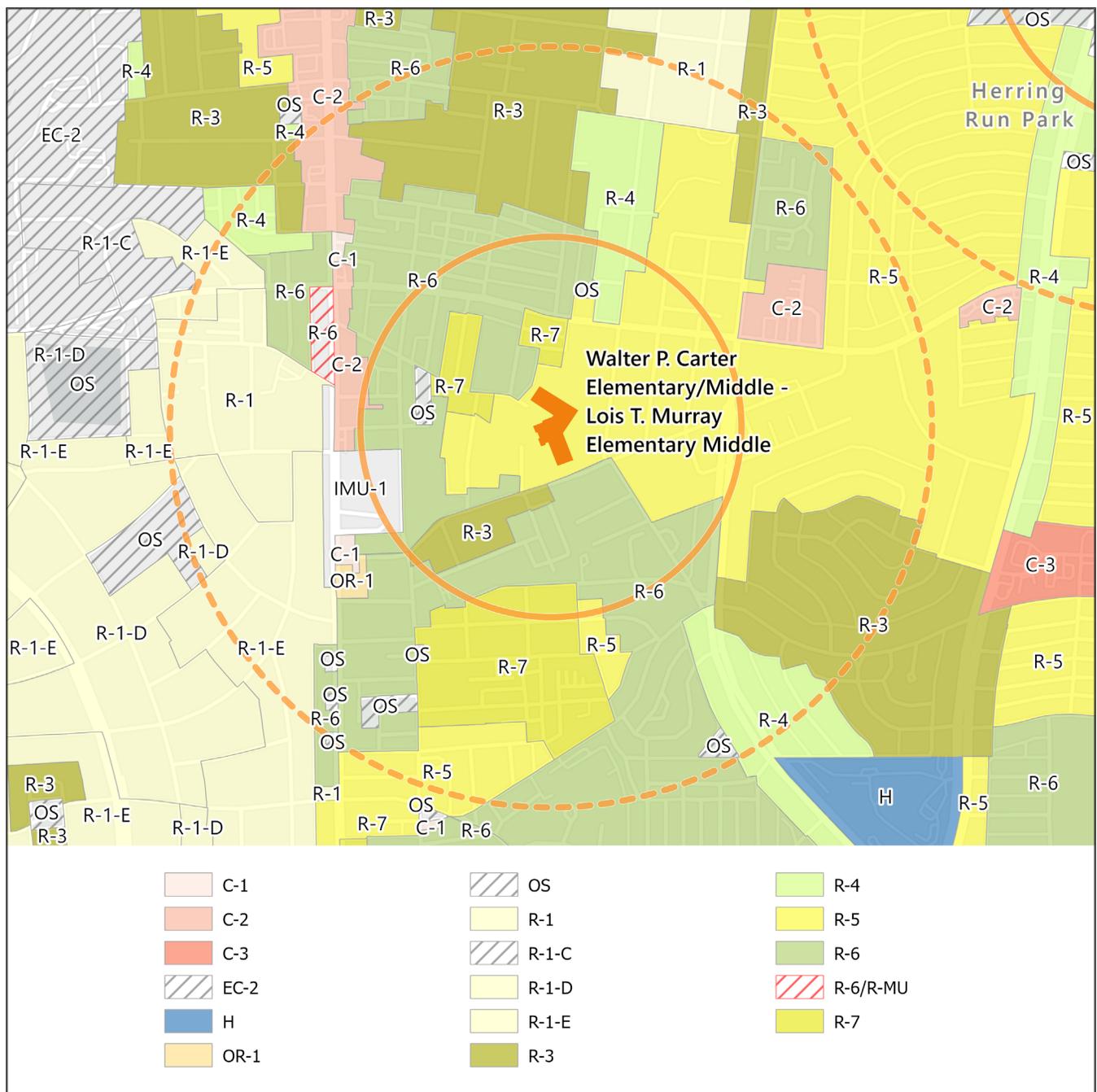


FIGURE 7. Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area Zoning

The commercial zones in the INSPIRE area are designated as C-1 or C-2. C-1 designations are Neighborhood Commercial zones and include commercial clusters and pedestrian oriented corridors of commercial use that serve the immediate neighborhood. In contrast, C-2 designations are for small- to medium-scale commercial uses such as office buildings that can accommodate pedestrians and possibly some automobile traffic and can include mixed-use development. Industrial zoning in the area is designated IMU-1, primarily for existing buildings such as a public storage center, and allows for new light industrial uses and a variety of nonindustrial uses, creating a mixed-use environment.

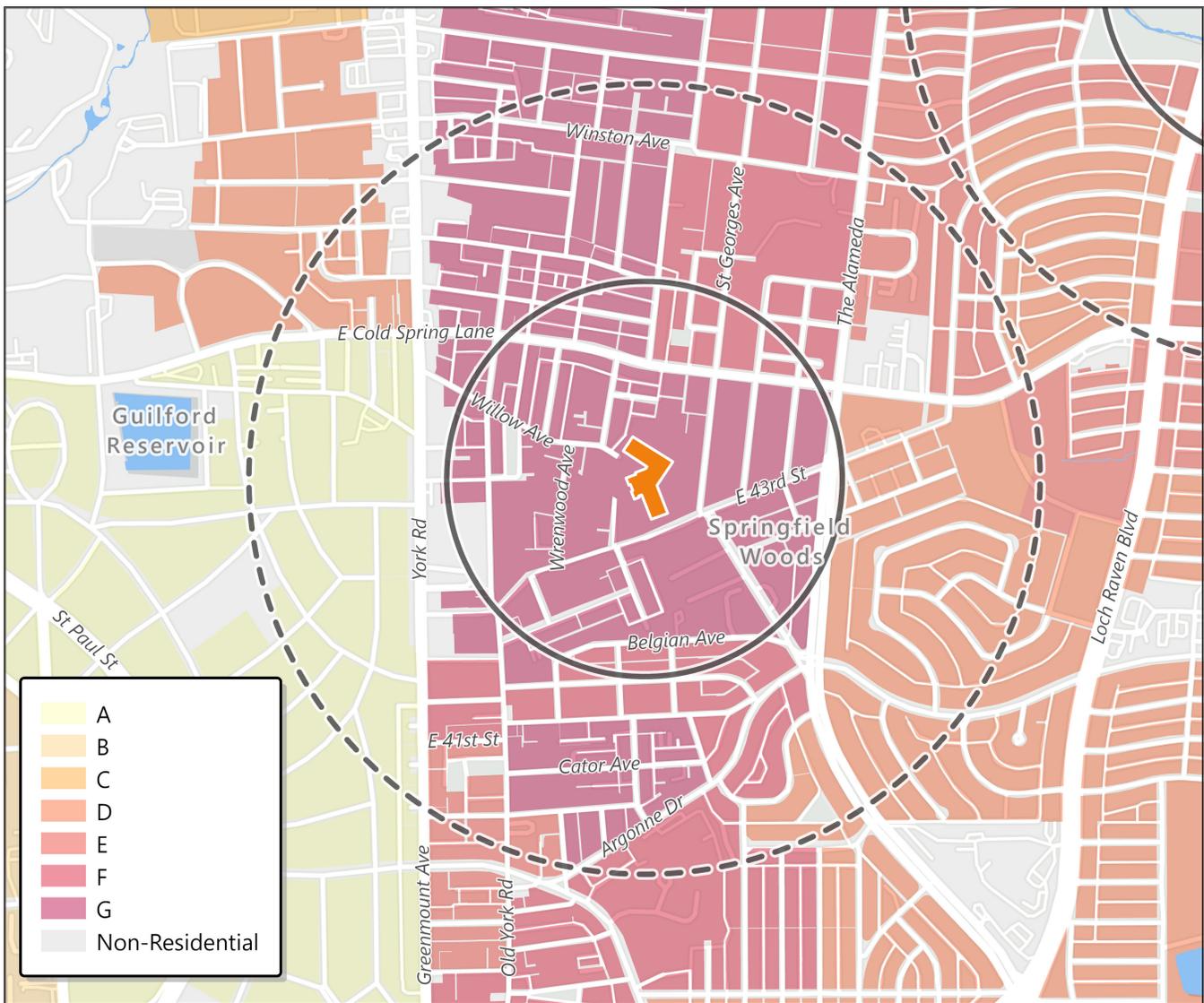


FIGURE 8. 2023 Housing Market Typology in the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area

The Baltimore City’s 2023 Housing Market Typology classifies the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area into a range of groups. The Guilford and Kernewood areas located west of Greenmount Ave. have the strongest housing market conditions (Category A). these areas have the highest home sale prices, very low housing density, and the highest share of homeowners in comparison to the rest of Baltimore City.

A significant portion of the INSPIRE area includes typology categories D, E, and F. These three categories host home sales prices close to the citywide average, with Category D having a higher share of homeowners and Category E consisting mostly of renters. Home sale prices in Category F areas typically have lower sales prices, but also low levels of housing distress. The remaining portions of the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area are listed as typology Category G, with lower home sales prices and some housing distress.

The estimated vacancy rate for the Walter P. Carter neighborhood area is between 14 and 15 percent, close to Baltimore City’s rate of 16 percent.

WHAT IS A MIDDLE NEIGHBORHOOD?

The National Community Stabilization Trust (NCST) defines middle neighborhoods as: “a category of neighborhoods that are neither clearly healthy and thriving, nor overtly distressed. Millions of middle and working-class families in cities and suburbs across the nation call middle neighborhoods home.” Based on the City’s 2017 housing typology, 146 neighborhoods can be categorized as middle neighborhoods. As part of the Baltimore City Middle Neighborhoods Strategy, twenty-six neighborhoods, including several along the York Road corridor from Mid-Govans to Wilson Park, have been targeted for strategic funding opportunities. The Baltimore City Comprehensive Plan also cites the York Road Corridor as a critical investment area; this INSPIRE Plan aims to align with Comprehensive Plan priorities.

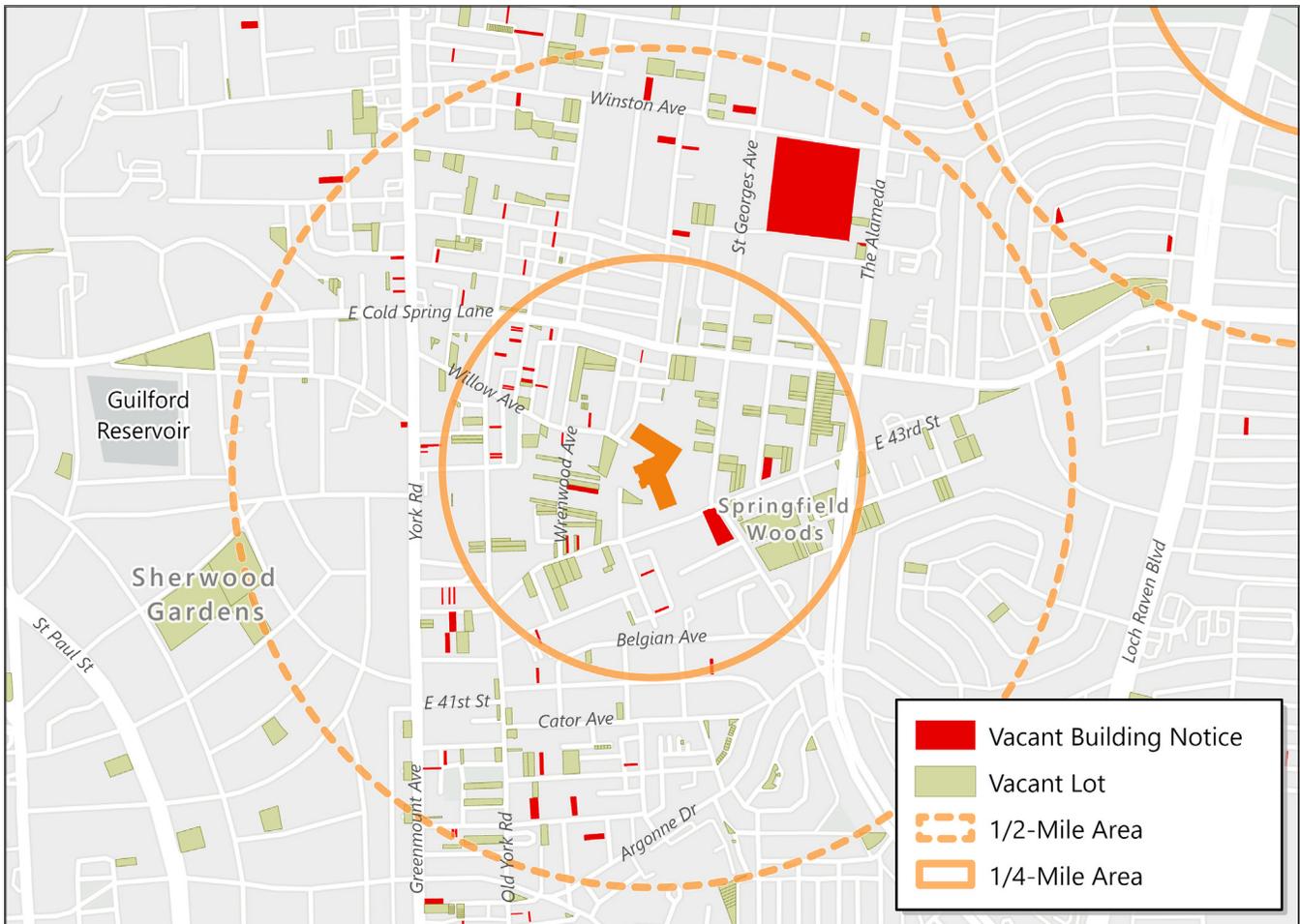


FIGURE 9. Vacant Building Notices (VBNs) and vacant lots in the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area

Public Safety and Sanitation

According to the [Baltimore City Crime Data Dashboard](#), both Pen Lucy and Wilson Park are experiencing downtrends in crime in alignment with city-wide trends. The city as a whole is experiencing the lowest number of homicides in fifty years. In 2025, there were no homicides in either Pen Lucy or Wilson Park. In 2025, Wilson Park experienced a 45% decrease in violent crimes from 2024. In total, only 11 violent crimes were committed in Wilson Park. There was an increase in property crimes in Wilson Park, but again, with only 28 property crimes for the entire year in the neighborhood. In Pen Lucy, there were 42 total violent crimes in 2025, a 4.5% reduction from 2024. There were 68 property crimes in Pen Lucy in 2025, a 6.8% reduction from last year.

Code enforcement is conducted by the Department of Housing and Community Development to maintain safe and appealing neighborhoods throughout the city. Feedback from the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE area community members indicated that code violations, especially illegal dumping, are a persistent issue. Since early 2025, the city’s code enforcement division has issued over fifty citations for violations, including grass and plant overgrowth to garbage waste, among other issues.

The York Road Business Improvement District (BID) was created in 2023 and is in the process of installing additional trash receptacles along York Road. As of Fall 2025, five prototype cans have been installed along portion of York Road south of E. Cold Spring Lane. A total of thirty-five more are anticipated to be installed along more portions of York Road in 2026. The York Road BID also has staff who clean the York Road commercial corridor and has had partnerships with My Father’s Plan organization for regular street cleaning and sanitation partnerships.



York Road Corridor includes varied commercial and residential uses

Transportation

PUBLIC TRANSIT

The Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE area is serviced by several Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) bus routes. The CityLink Red line runs northbound and southbound along York Road and connects the University of Maryland Medical Campus downtown with Towson and the Lutherville Light RailLink station in Baltimore County. LocalLink 52 also runs along York Road and provides a direct connection for city residents to the Loch Raven Reservoir near Cockeysville in Baltimore County.

East of the York Road corridor, LocalLink 53 runs along The Alameda and terminates at State Center at its southern end in Baltimore City and the Greater Baltimore Medical Center at its northern end in Towson. Along E. Cold Spring Lane, LocalLink 28 provides residents with a mode of east-west transit, connecting the area to the eastern City/County border and the shared campus of the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute and Western High School. Outside of the INSPIRE half-mile boundary but adjacent to the school are the CityLink Green and Express BusLink 103 that run along Loch Raven Boulevard and connect downtown Baltimore to Towson University and the Cromwell Bridge Road commercial area, respectively.

BIKING

Outside of the INSPIRE boundaries but immediately adjacent is the cycling route along Beaumont Avenue, connecting the campuses of Morgan State University, Loyola University of Maryland, and Notre Dame of Maryland University.

The 2015 Baltimore City Bike Master Plan identifies several additional potential cycling infrastructure installations within the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area:

- The full length of The Alameda within the INSPIRE area is proposed to serve as a main bike route, equipped with separated or buffered bike lanes. Old York Road is also noted as a potential location for a separated bike lane from East Cold Spring Lane to Ellerslie Avenue.
- E. 43rd Street has been cited as a potential Neighborhood Route, either a bike boulevard or a bike cut-through; this would create a connection to another slated Neighborhood Route along Marble Hill Road along Chinquapin Run Park.
- E. Cold Spring Lane between Kerneway and The Alameda, as well as the segment of Argonne Drive within the INSPIRE area, have been proposed to receive treatment as Minor Routes, consisting of either a shared route or shared and signaled bus lane.

The 2017 Baltimore City Separated Bike Lane Network Addendum provides updated priorities and implementation strategies for major bike network development projects. However, the update did not include specific recommendations for the INSPIRE planning area. The Department of Planning expects to work with the Department of Transportation to encourage additional analysis and consideration for area facilities in future Bike Master Plan updates.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

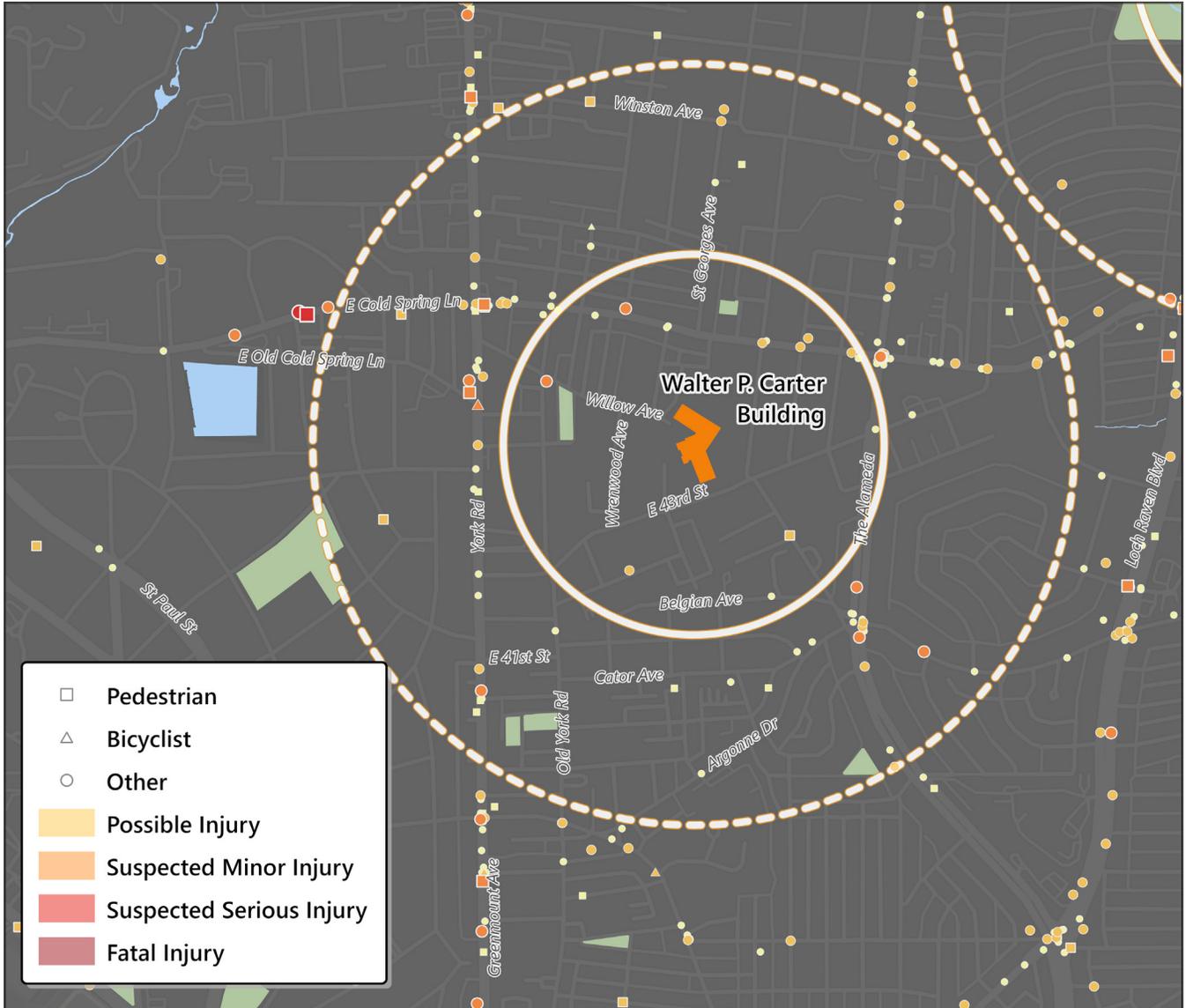


FIGURE 10. Injury crashes in the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area

Crashes involving pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers happen periodically in the INSPIRE area. Between 2020 and 2023, the highest concentration of crashes occurred along E. Cold Spring Lane where it intersects with York Road and The Alameda, as well as the intersection of The Alameda, St. Georges Avenue and Argonne Drive. In response to these safety issues, the Department of Transportation installed speed humps on St. Georges Avenue in 2021.

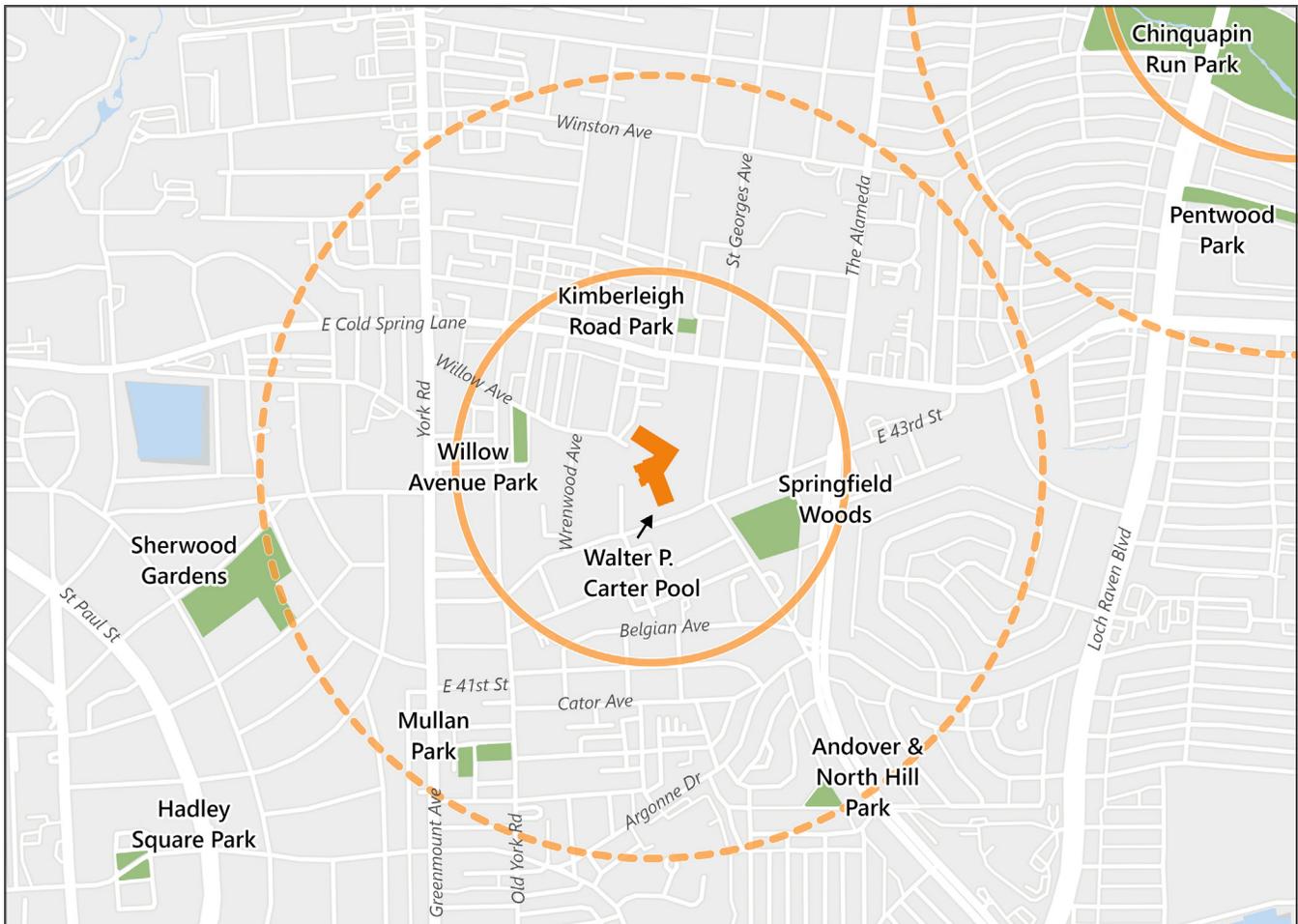


FIGURE 11. Parks and recreational facilities in the Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area

Recreation and Open Spaces

Within the quarter-mile radius around the school there are several greenspaces. Springfield Woods is a 3.5-acre forest that is over one hundred years old, with walking trails and a freshwater stream directly adjacent to the school, maintained with the support of Baltimore Greenspace. Additional work is planned for summer 2026 to increase the number of trails and improve access to Springfield Woods.



Mullan Park, 4000 Old York Road



Springfield Woods gateway sign



Trail in Springfield Woods

Willow Avenue Park is operated by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks and has play facilities and shaded areas open for community use. In 2017, Willow Avenue Park received maintenance and cleaning from the organization Rebuilding Together Baltimore. While there are no capital improvements currently scheduled for Willow Avenue Park, BCRP is expected to release the BCRP Playbook report in 2026 to outline needed capital improvements at all of the agency’s parks and facilities.



Map showing proposed trail improvements for Springfield Woods

Kimberleigh Road Park is situated near the Kingsway Bible Baptist Church along Kimberleigh Avenue and is also operated by Baltimore City. The playlot has equipment for children and several areas for games and outdoor recreation.



Willow Avenue Park repairs at Rebuilding Together Baltimore's Build a Healthy Neighborhood event in 2017

Within the half-mile radius there are two additional park spaces. Mullan Park is an L-shaped greenspace that abuts the St. James Free Baptist Church. It contains basketball courts, open green space, and a small playground. In 2021, the City Council member for District 4 submitted legislation to rename Mullan Park in honor of the music artist Tupac Shakur, to commemorate the formative years the artist spent living in Baltimore City in the Pen Lucy neighborhood. The legislation was ultimately withdrawn from consideration in 2022.

Andover & North Hill Park is a small, triangular greenspace with playground equipment located behind the houses of Andover Road and The Alameda. Both are operated by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks.

Prior to the reconstruction of the Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School, a recreation center was attached to the former school building. After a series of program relocations and the reconstruction of the school building, Baltimore City ultimately closed the existing recreation center. Future conversations facilitated by the Department of Planning hope to augment the relationship between both the school and BCRP to increase the amount of programming at the school. BCRP replaced and reopened the pool in summer 2025.

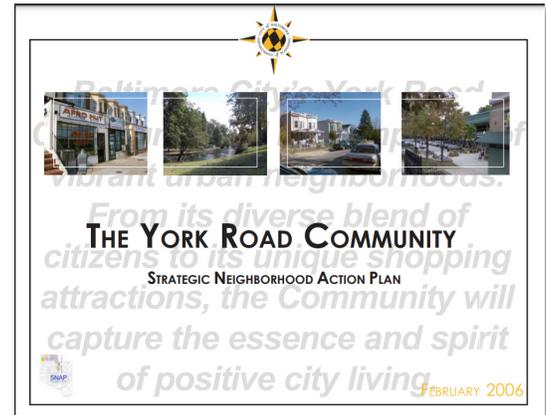
Existing Plans

The Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area is included in several community plans. During community outreach and the development of the recommendation report found in this document, the Department of Planning closely reviewed the existing planning documents and used them as tools in the prioritization of recommendations within the INSPIRE area.

York Road Community Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (2006)

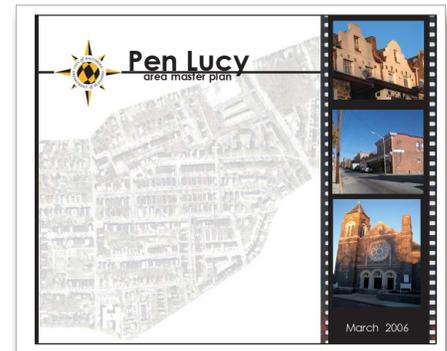
In 2002, former Mayor Martin O'Malley launched the Strategic Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP) program to develop comprehensive plans for neighborhood clusters throughout the city. These clusters included one centered on the York Road Corridor in northern Baltimore. The plan analyzes the impact of area assets and opportunities to achieve maximum positive impact on the community.

The York Road Community SNAP was adopted by the Planning Commission in February of 2006. Plan focus areas included housing and neighborhood revitalization, public safety, and open space and recreation. The York Road Partnership's current active committees reflect the plan focus areas and are tasked with the implementation of the long-term work.



Pen Lucy Area Master Plan (2006)

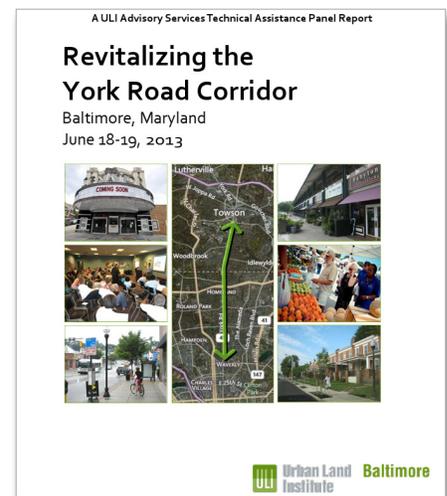
The Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area includes most of the Pen Lucy neighborhood, which received an area master plan in March 2006 during the administration of Mayor Martin O'Malley. During the early 2000s, the Department of Planning prepared several planning documents under the Small Area Plans (SAP) Initiative, focusing on physical redevelopment and investment into areas where significant intervention was deemed necessary to address areas of improvement. This planning work was done in conjunction with the SNAP Initiative, as discussed previously.



York Road Technical Assistance Panel (2013)

The Baltimore chapter of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) produced a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) report on York Road in 2013. The study grew out of a 2012 effort by the City of Baltimore and community partners interested in the future of the York Road Commercial Corridor. It provides guidance on regional land use and real estate opportunities and captures the interest of local institutions of higher education to connect and collaborate beyond campus boundaries. The report divides York Road into four key nodes, going from E. 39th Street in Baltimore City to Towsontown Boulevard in Baltimore County:

- The Southern Gateway Node
- The College and Neighborhood Node
- The Entertainment Node
- The Northern Gateway Node



Overall recommendations from the report included:

- Create “Main Street” Environment to Improve and Attract Commercial Uses
- Meet the Demand for Basic Services
- Address Destabilizing Elements
- Pursue Mixed-Use and Co-Located Uses
- Grow Universities’ Presence
- Improve Transit Hubs
- Learn from Good Examples on the Corridor
- Correct Poor Examples on the Corridor

Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School is in the area designated The Southern Gateway Node: Govans Main Street Zone 3. The TAP Report set the stage for the later planning for the larger York Road Corridor Vision and Action Plan.

York Road Corridor Vision and Action Plan (2015)

The York Road Corridor Vision and Action Plan was published in 2015 as a tool for strengthening the York Road corridor’s role as an anchor in the northern region of Baltimore City. The plan is organized around three areas: Market Assessment and Economic Development; Transportation, Public Realm & Infrastructure; and Private Realm Improvements.

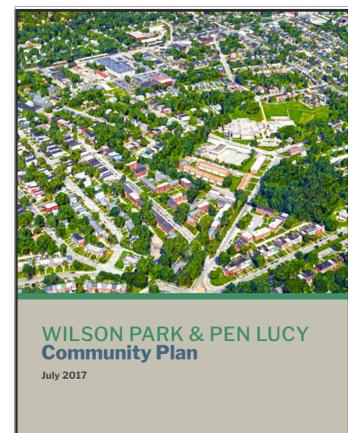
The Vision and Action Plan boundaries intersect the western portion of the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area. The majority of the INSPIRE area falls within the “York Road Corridor South Gateway” Zone 1. Action initiatives for this zone include identifying greenspace creation and urban reforestation/tree planting opportunities, creating building murals, and adaptive reuse of local auto dealers and repair shops.



Wilson Park & Pen Lucy Community Plan (2017)

From 2016 to 2017, the Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO), Strong City Baltimore, and the Neighborhood Design Center facilitated community conversations with residents from the Wilson Park and Pen Lucy neighborhoods in anticipation of the major investment of a newly renovated Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School. From this work, a community plan was produced that serves as a near-prototype of the INSPIRE Plan.

This community plan breaks down resident desires into key goal categories focusing on issues from infrastructure to civic leadership. While not formally adopted by the Baltimore City Planning Commission, this document served as a resource for the INSPIRE team to restate or reframe community desires.



Baltimore Green Network Plan (2018)

The Baltimore Green Network Plan is an initiative to increase open space and develop multi-use trails across the city. This endeavor will create new usable green spaces and active transportation corridors that connect residents to schools, commercial corridors, and other parks, especially in neighborhoods experiencing population loss. The Green Network Plan is intended to promote urban resiliency, public health, a cleaner environment, and improved quality of life for residents.

While the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE planning area does not currently intersect with targeted focus areas in the Green Network Plan, but there is planning in progress for Chinquapin Run, which is located just outside of the half-mile radius. Future endeavors can connect the area to other priority corridors in the plan.

York Road Traffic Study (2023)

Building on the 2015 York Road Corridor Vision and Action Plan, the Maryland Legislature appropriated funding in 2019 to study the York Road corridor and consider reconfiguring the street to meet the needs of all roadway users. The Baltimore City Department of Transportation and RK&K completed the study and initial design concepts in Fall 2023. The study outlined three design concepts:

- Concept 1: Preserve existing curb lines and designate the outer lane as a bus only lane during peak hours (southbound in the morning and northbound in the evenings). This would keep two lanes in both directions but preserve the outer lane for buses and bikes during peak hours. The center lane or a median would also be present.
- Concept 2: Remove the outside curb lane to increase the width of the sidewalk or dedicate to on-street parking where necessary. This would reduce the lanes of traffic from two lanes to one in both directions but keep a central median.
- Concept 3: This hybrid concept combines the ideas in Concepts 1 and 2 to create separate bus lanes only where there is significant traffic congestion on the corridor, called queue jumps. This would still allow for increased sidewalks or parking, while allowing transit times to be less affected than having only one lane in either direction.

The study makes additional recommendations for improvements to landscaping and roadway alignments to improve the pedestrian experience as well as roadway safety.

About the *INSPIRE* Plan Recommendations



Mural artwork along Old York Road

Summary

The Department of Planning staff has worked with members of the school and neighborhood communities to better understand their neighborhood experiences, concerns, and needs. Stakeholders helped inform the following draft recommendations through various engagements including INSPIRE meetings, steering committee meetings, surveys, and neighborhood association meetings. Recommendations from previous neighborhood, school, and City of Baltimore adopted plans were reviewed and included where appropriate. In many cases, INSPIRE recommendations build on what’s already happening in the community.

ABOUT THE INSPIRE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ivanhoe Avenue between Willow Avenue and E. Cold Spring Lane
- 800 block of Wilbert Avenue

The Department of Transportation completed sidewalk improvements along these Primary Walking Routes before the school re-opened in 2021, improving the conditions for walking to and from the school on those streets.

Goals, Strategies, and Actions

1. Invest in Housing and Market-Strengthening Development Opportunities

1.1. Support area residents in maintaining buildings and stabilizing neighborhoods

1.1.1. Support the York Road Partnership's strategies for managing vacant building inventory within the area.

Baltimore City agencies such as the Departments of Planning and Housing and Community Development should continue working with the York Road Partnership Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization committee to address vacant housing in the area with input and engagement from the Wilson Park and Pen Lucy Neighborhood Associations. YRP already maintains a database of vacant buildings through support from Community Development Services, and, with support from funders, could provide resources to support stabilization and rehabilitation.

There are several blocks that could benefit from targeted rehabilitation and marketing, including:

- The 700 block of E. 43rd Street
- The 4400 block of Old York Road
- The 4700 block of Alhambra Avenue
- 4200 block of St. Georges multifamily buildings

1.1.2. Identify properties for stabilization or demolition.

Wilson Park and Pen Lucy Associations should work together with Department of Housing and Community Development to do a survey and review of all the buildings that are vacant and unoccupied and identify properties to add to the emergency demolition or stabilization list.

Community Development services can support putting together this list as part of York Road Partnership's Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee. An initial recommendation includes 702 E. 43rd Street.



Vacant rowhouse, 702 E. 43rd Street

1.1.3. Recognize and celebrate Black leaders from Wilson Park with street name markers.

Wilson Park is one of the oldest historically Black neighborhoods in the City of Baltimore. Many prominent Black Baltimoreans hailed from the neighborhood, including Cab Calloway, and civil rights leaders like W. Ashbie Hawkins. Wilson Park Northern residents would like to see additional memorials to some lesser known, but important neighborhood historical figures including:

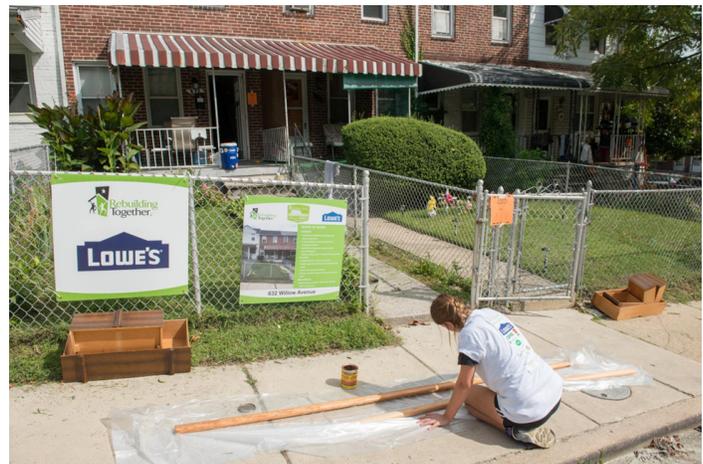
- **Olufunmilayo Jomo:** A prominent Baltimore artist and dancer who started a dance company out of the CAP Urban Youth Ballet program. The company created America's first urban production of the Nutcracker Ballet.
- **Tucker R. Dearing:** A Civil Rights lawyer with the Maryland branch of the NAACP.
- **Arthur C. Lamb:** A Morgan State theatre professor and one of the founders of Morgan State's WEAA radio station.

1.1.4. Continue to promote public and nonprofit residential repair grants and services to qualifying area legacy homeowners.

Community members have previously voiced that in addition to managing vacant properties, investing in the maintenance and longevity of occupied buildings would benefit the wider area. From pest management to energy efficiency to facade improvements, there is opportunity for improvement of the occupied buildings in the neighborhoods.

The York Road Partnership has previously hosted workshops to connect residents with resources for home repair in partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development's Office of Homeownership and Housing Preservation, Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake, Civic Works, Healthy Neighborhoods, and Rebuilding Together Baltimore.

Some program examples include the City of Baltimore DHCD LIGHT program and the Housing Upgrades to Benefit Seniors (HUBS) program. The York Road Partnership, in conjunction with city agencies, can organize additional targeted workshops focused on seniors, legacy residents, and low-income community members to expand local access and knowledge of grants, low-interest loans, and installation and repair assistance.



Building a Healthy Neighborhood Day sponsored by Rebuilding Together Baltimore in 2017

1.2. Explore opportunities for entrepreneurial engagement along existing commercial corridors

1.2.5. Expand access for local entrepreneurs to showcase local businesses.

For many local entrepreneurs, establishing brick and mortar storefronts is prohibitive due to cost and available space. Creating pop-up events in the community creates venues for local business to sell products and build a customer base before committing to a storefront.

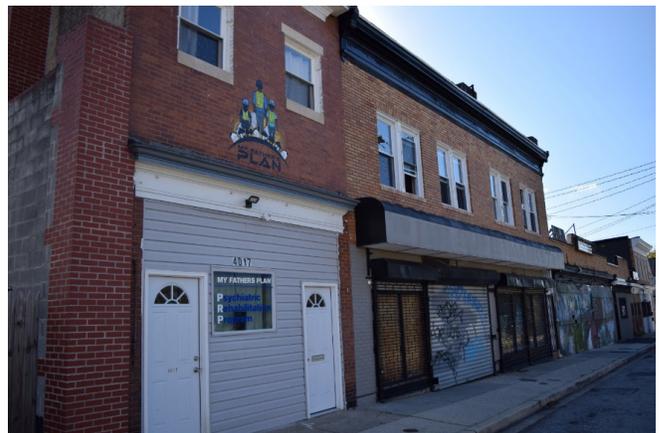
Pop-up events can be centerpieces of community gatherings. Support for establishing pop-up events can come from partnerships with groups like the York Road Partnership’s Business Engagement Committee and the York Road Business Improvement District, as well as from agencies like the Department of Planning. These events create a network of support for entrepreneurs in the area.

Possible sites for activation include:

- Commercial property at 4518 York Rd.
- Church of the Redeemed at 4220 York Road
- Properties on the 4000 block of Old York Road



Vacant building, 4518 York Road



Exterior of My Father's Plan, 4017 Old York Road

1.2.6. Host a community forum on the potential redevelopment of 4220 York Road.

As of winter 2026, the Robert Franklin Stokes Christian School at 4220 York Road is sitting vacant. The site of a former bowling alley and now owned by Church of the Redeemed of the Lord on Old York Road, the building has a large, cream-colored facade that provides no distinguishing community gateway art or curb appeal. See page 39 for a photo of the building.

There is community interest in developing resources for the community along the portion of York Road south of E. Cold Spring Lane. The Department of Planning, with coordination from other agencies such as the Baltimore Development Corporation and community partners like the York Road Partnership and York Road Business Improvement District, can facilitate community

conversations with residents from Wilson Park and Guilford Association to envision the future for this building and its impact on the surrounding community.

1.3. Support residents in promoting area homes and homeownership

1.3.7. Build relationships with developers to increase interest in development opportunities in the area.

Communities that cultivate relationships with local property developers can advocate for resources that advance area homeownership. This can include improved housing stock and facilities for small businesses to start and thrive. Recent housing developments adjacent to the INSPIRE area include Restoration Gardens 2 along York Road, offering apartments for young people who are aging out of foster care or have experienced being unhoused. Initial investments like these can catalyze further development of the area's housing sector.



Rowhouses on Greenmount Ave., Pen Lucy neighborhood

Developers are interested in ensuring a return on capital. The housing market surrounding Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School has capacity for improvement, and its adjacency to the York Road commercial corridor makes the area attractive for new investment. Matchmaking or direct communication with developers will be important to create opportunities for rehab. Representatives from local community associations and the York Road Partnership's Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Committee can strategize with Wilson Park and Pen Lucy Association around how to build relationships with regional developers who are interested in filling development needs. Healthy Neighborhoods has participated in similar programs like this in other neighborhoods and can support coordination with for profit and non-profit developers like Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake.

2. Create Connectivity and Access

2.4. Improve pedestrian experience along major roadways and local streets

2.4.8. Install traffic calming measures to reduce accidents.

The Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE area is adjacent to several roadways that community members from Wilson Park and Pen Lucy have cited as unsafe due to speeding vehicles. In partnership with the Department of Transportation, the Department of Planning can help commu-

nity members prioritize installations and advocate for investment. See “Table 3. Potential Traffic Calming Improvements in Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area” for details on opportunities identified through the INSPIRE planning process.

TABLE 3. *Potential Traffic Calming Improvements in Walter P. Carter Building INSPIRE Area*

LOCATION	NEIGHBORHOOD	DETAILS
The 900 block of Belgian Avenue between Elkader Road and St. Georges Avenue	Pen Lucy	The street is location of a garden apartment complex, and both narrows and curves going toward and including St. Georges Avenue. Residents have noted that parked cars have been hit in multiple crashes. Evaluation of solution alternatives should be considered, such as speed humps or flex post installations.
Old York Road between Ellerslie Avenue and Radnor Avenue, with particular attention to the commercial segment of the 4000 block of Old York Road	Pen Lucy	This roadway should be studied as a candidate for speed bump installation.
The Alameda and E. 43rd Street	Wilson Park	Crosswalk striping across The Alameda at 43rd Street on the south side of the intersection to the median to support students crossing safely from the east side of The Alameda; evaluate for need for a speed camera at this site.
E. Cold Spring and Midwood	Wilson Park/ Richnor Springs	This is a walking route for school kids coming from north of Cold Spring Lane. Evaluate opportunity for crosswalk installation. Simultaneously, explore alternatives for crossing infrastructure along adjacent streets.
E. 43rd Street between St. Georges Avenue and The Alameda	Wilson Park	This area experiences a lot of morning and afternoon congestion due to buses. A traffic study and coordination between the school system and DOT is needed to create a more organized flow of traffic to ensure gridlock doesn't occur and students can safely get to school. Changing the bus staging area to St. Georges Avenue is recommended to reduce these issues.
E. Cold Spring between York Road and St. Georges Avenue	Wilson Park	Along this stretch of East Cold Spring Lane, there is a hill where vehicles can easily speed as the only traffic signal is at Old York Road. Opportunities for additional stops or controls to slow down speeding vehicles should be evaluated. This may include speed cameras, additional stop signs, and/or traffic signal retiming.
Willow Avenue	Wilson Park	Evaluate traffic calming opportunities and Safe Route to School demarcation/programming, as this is a main route for students coming in from the back of the school.

LOCATION	NEIGHBORHOOD	DETAILS
The Alameda and Argonne Drive	Pen Lucy/Ednor Gardens-Lakeside	Evaluate this intersection for upgraded signals for safe crossing.

2.4.9. Survey area lighting conditions and repair/upgrade streetlights as recommended by DOT.

Street lighting that sufficiently illuminates the surrounding areas can make walking in neighborhoods safe and accessible for longer periods of time. The Department of Transportation staff can survey streetlight conditions to determine where bulbs can be replaced due to outages or increasing lighting illumination.

In addition, neighborhood residents from Wilson Park and Pen Lucy Associations can support improved street lighting through café lighting installations or a front porch light campaign to encourage residents to keep

porch lights on during the evening. Some communities across Baltimore City have applied for grant funding to complete café lighting projects or to fund light bulbs for front porchlights. The Department of Planning can assist in the search for funding.



4220 York Road

Potential locations for resident-led lighting improvements include:

- Old York Road Commercial Corridor
- Wilson Park Community Gardens
- Ivanhoe Valley Community Garden (4726 Ivanhoe Ave)

3. Enhance Opportunities for Health and Wellness



Businesses along the 4000 block Old York Road

3.5. Explore updates to the local food environment to meet resident needs

3.5.10. Conduct one or more workshops with the Department of Planning Food Policy and Planning staff to explore options for increasing food access and develop long-term strategies.

Community members have previously expressed interest in advocating for a local grocery store to open in the area around Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School. The Department of Planning wants to be responsive to this need for community food security but must acknowledge the volatility that comes with the opening of grocery stores and supermarkets, including store closure.

Within the Department of Planning, the Food Policy & Planning division is working with local communities within Baltimore to explore alternatives to brick-and-mortar grocery stores, from using SNAP benefits for online food shopping to supporting local urban agriculture networks that distribute locally.

The DOP Food Policy & Planning Division and Community Planning & Revitalization Division can facilitate at least one workshop with the Wilson Park and Pen Lucy community associations to discuss available programming, as well as envision long-term solutions to area food insecurity. Additional partners in these workshops can include the York Road Business Improvement District, the York Road Partnership, and the Govans Ecumenical Development Corporation (GEDCO).

4. Improve Safety

4.6. Prevent unsupervised access to the Walter P. Carter Swimming Pool

4.6.11. Install monitoring and safety equipment around the pool area to prevent unsafe use.

Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School has an on-campus pool managed by Recreation and Parks that is open to the public and supervised by life-guard staff at set hours. However, since the school's opening, there have been multiple reported uses of the pool in the evening by both youths and adults when the site is closed and no lifeguard is present. This has resulted in at least one near-drowning experience in 2025, and neighbors have cited that late-night pool gatherings are disruptively loud.

Installation of additional security equipment by BCRP, such as motion sensor lights, can help reduce the likelihood of off-hour pool use. The adjustment of existing security cameras around the school can be used to help identify individuals using the pool when it is closed. Neighbors also asked for additional signage to direct emergency vehicles in case of a future emergency. The Department of Planning can support BCRP to host at least one community conversation with area residents, school staff, and Baltimore City Police to learn accurate details regarding illicit use of pool facilities; these conversations can help guide the implementation of deterrents.



"Swimming after hours prohibited" sign at the Walter P. Carter Building pool

5. Create an Environmentally Sustainable Neighborhood

5.7. Mitigate flooding and water damage around the school grounds.

5.7.12. Evaluate stormwater runoff and drainage in the immediate area surrounding the school building.

During the community walks, multiple locations came up as sites where water drainage issues were present:

- E. 43rd Street at school's rear service entrance: Residents shared that during wintertime, this area becomes a pool of ice when it rains or snows. There were rocks and debris visible where water flows had deposited sediment from areas uphill.
- Rear greenspace: Behind the school, near the Lois T. Murray playground, there is a large dirt patch. Staff and administrators from the school shared that when it rains, this area becomes

unusable because of muddy conditions, and it takes a long time for the area to drain. Possible mitigation ideas include a rain garden or a drainage solution.

- Residential area in the 800 block of Wilbert Avenue and 700 block of E 43rd St: Residents adjacent to the school, especially on the block of 801-819 Wilbert Avenue in Wilson Park, have shared flooding issues in the past and have experienced sink holes in their back yards. Residents request further investigation into unresolved concerns regarding street repair issues that may be related to prior utility work in the vicinity.

Further investigation to evaluate the drainage issues and recommend next steps can be conducted by partners at the Department of Public Works.



Rear greenspace at the Walter P. Carter Building



Front exterior of Walter P. Carter Building

5.8. Improve maintenance of area near Walter P. Carter EMS

5.8.13. Assess illegal dumping at area properties.

Illegal trash dumping is a persistent issue within the Walter P. Carter INSPIRE area. Vacant properties and underutilized lots in Wilson Park and Pen Lucy are frequent sites for the drop-off of leftover materials from construction, household garbage, and other types of waste. Baltimore City’s 311 call line is a helpful tool for reporting incidents of dumping and other code violations; individual reports can assist in establishing dumping patterns that can be used to create solutions. Ongoing collaboration with Department of Public Works, Department of Housing and Community Development’s Code Enforcement, and 4th District Council Office can ensure immediate response and work towards prevention.

According to 311 data from the last five years, chronic illegal dumping sites include:

- 500 block of Ready Ln.
- 600 block of Dumbarton Ave.
- 700 Belgian Ave.

- 900 Cator Ave.
- 918 E. 41st St.
- E. 41st & Frisby St.
- E. 43rd and The Alameda
- Springfield Ave. & The Alameda
- The Alameda and Argonne Dr.
- 4400 Kenilworth Ave.

5.8.14. Increase the number of community dumpster days with volunteer Pitch-In Events

The Department of Public Works’ Community Pitch-In Program registers community associations for community cleanup events and access to a collection dumpster from the Bureau of Solid Waste. Communities are eligible for up to four dumpsters during community cleanup events per year and must be registered through Baltimore City’s 311 call line. Wilson Park and Pen Lucy community associations, with support from Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School for outreach, can create community cleanup events that reduce street trash.

5.9. Increase use and quality of experience of area greenspaces

5.9.15. Install street furniture at the Kent Memorial Garden.

Located at the intersection of Cator Avenue and Old York Road, the Kent Memorial Garden is a small park named after a neighborhood resident who was killed on Old York Road by a stray bullet. The park is where neighborhood jazz events are held and generally serves as a shaded community gathering space. My Father’s Plan maintains and mows the site regularly, and the addition of street furniture like benches would help further activate the space.

The Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development can work with Pen Lucy community leadership on gaining right of entry licensing and insurance for materials, while the Department of Planning can assist in the purchase of the furniture.

5.9.16. Secure funding for community-selected recreational activities.

Currently, there are no program offerings at Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School for the community by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks. Wilson Park and Pen Lucy community members have expressed an interest in supporting recreational activities for area youth. The community space and open grounds of Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School can serve as centers of activity, as can Mullan and Willow Avenue Parks.



Entrance to the Kent Memorial Garden

Activity suggestions range from outdoor sports like a baseball and basketball league to other pursuits such as chess and computer programming. The inclusion of outside funding sources can support these endeavors. The Department of Planning can support the efforts of community-based organizations like York Road Partnership and Healthy Neighborhoods in finding and applying for funding.

5.9.17. Support renewed recreational programming at the Walter P. Carter Building.

When the school reopened, there was a partnership between Baltimore City Public Schools and Baltimore City Recreation and Parks to provide recreational programming to the school and community. Currently, there are no program offerings at Walter P. Carter for the community by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks.

The Wilson Park and Pen Lucy communities have expressed interest in exploring options, such as water aerobics for seniors or a youth swim team at the recently opened swimming pool. A survey and identifying program leads are both needed to help organize and communicate programming in coordination with the school, recreation, and surrounding neighborhoods.

5.9.18. Develop programming to increase knowledge and use of Springfield Woods.



Neighborhood residents enjoying Springfield Woods. Courtesy Baltimore Greenspace.



Entrance to Springfield Woods

Springfield Woods is a 3.5-acre forest located adjacent to the Walter P. Carter campus along St. Georges Avenue. Urban forests are a critical feature of the built environment in Baltimore City, providing stormwater management and a habitat for wildlife, as well as being sites for recreation like birding and nature walks. Springfield Woods, managed by Baltimore Greenspace, is equipped with paths and a freshwater spring.

The Walter P. Carter Elementary/Middle School, the local Wilson Park and Pen Lucy community associations, and Baltimore Greenspace have partnered to develop organized programming

involving Springfield Woods like the annual Fall Harvest event which is well-attended. Many residents and local neighborhoods can benefit from this welcoming and attractive resource available in the community.

Site activation can include partnership with other neighborhood associations, churches, and greening organizations to help with site maintenance as well as increasing the awareness of this community asset. Activities can be geared toward both students and adults in the community to create intergenerational care for the site.

5.9.19. Update community garden infrastructure at Ivanhoe Valley Community Garden.

Located at 4726 Ivanhoe Avenue just north of the Walter P. Carter Building, Ivanhoe Valley Community Garden provides a space for a small number of plots for safely planting garden vegetables. Members of the Wilson Park community help to maintain the lots. The garden space could be better utilized with the input of some resources, such as additional raised bed, safe pathways through the greenspace, and garden bed protection from pests.

The neighborhood associations, along with community volunteers, could facilitate activating Ivanhoe Valley with greenspace infrastructure, and the Walter P. Carter and Lois T. Murray school communities can develop gardening programming as a teaching tool for students. Volunteers shared a potential interest in working with Baltimore Greenspace to permanently protect the property as a garden. Department of Planning staff recommend that the community work with the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Neighborhood Design Center for future planning of this site.



*Ivanhoe Valley Community
Garden Greenspace*



Greenspace at 703-709 E 43rd Street

5.9.20. Create long-term plans for community green space at 705-707 E. 43rd Street.

Area residents expressed the need to maintain the existing lots at 705 and 707 E. 43rd Street as greenspace. This is also recommended in the 2006 Pen Lucy Plan. The properties are part of a group of four adjacent vacant lots, two city-owned and two privately owned. Since this is on the Pen Lucy side of E. 43rd Street, neighborhood leaders should collaborate to envision the best use of this space. This was the site of four demolished houses and there are concrete steps leading to the greenspace. The area is a large grass field with some older trees in varying health.

Additional organizations to engage include Baltimore Greenspace who is already an active partner in the neighborhood, and the Neighborhood Design Center who can support design. Department of Planning can help support and coordinate visioning and coordination of organizations.

Plan Implementation

Summary

Across Baltimore City, Department of Planning and city agency staff are working to support the implementation of INSPIRE plans. We look forward to continuing work with community members as we seek to turn the ideas in this plan into reality.

The Department of Planning expects that the city and state existing investment in 21st Century School Buildings builds support for additional investment by public agencies and partner organizations in this and other INSPIRE areas. However, any action that requires capital funding through Baltimore City’s Capital Budget or other new resources may not move forward until funding is identified.

For each action described in the prior section, the implementation tables include a potential time frame and appropriate lead and supporting agencies or organizations. As implementation moves forward and funding is committed to any action, the implementation table should be updated with additional information on the status, funding availability, cost estimates, or other relevant information related to the individual actions. The Department of Planning, city agencies, community stakeholders, and others can refer to these tables to hold one another accountable to the implementation of this plan.

Implementation Table

#	RECOMMENDATION	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
1. Invest in Housing and Market-Strengthening Development Opportunities			
1.1. Support area residents in maintaining buildings and stabilizing neighborhoods			
1.1.1	Support the York Road Partnership’s strategies for managing vacant building inventory within the area.	WPNNA; PLNA; YRP; DHCD; DOP	Medium
1.1.2	Identify properties for stabilization or demolition	WPNNA; PLNA; YRP; DHCD; CDS	Short
1.1.3	Recognize and celebrate Black leaders from Wilson Park with street name markers.	WPNNA; DOP	Medium
1.1.4	Continue to promote public and nonprofit residential repair grants and services to qualifying area legacy homeowners.	WPNNA; PLNA; YRP; DHCD; HFH; RTB; HN; CW	Short
1.2. Explore opportunities for entrepreneurial engagement along existing commercial corridors			
1.2.5	Expand access for local entrepreneurs to showcase local businesses	YRBID; YRP	Medium
1.2.6	Host at least one community forum on the potential redevelopment of 4220 York Road	YRBID; CRL; WPNNA; GA; YRP; BDC; DOP	Medium

#	RECOMMENDATION	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
1.3. Support residents in promoting area homes and homeownership			
1.3.7	Build relationships with developers to increase interest in development opportunities in the area.	YRP; WPNNA; PLNA; HN; HFH	Medium
2. Create Connectivity and Access			
2.4. Improve pedestrian experience along major roadways and local streets			
2.4.8	Install traffic calming measures to reduce accidents.	WPNNA; PLNA; DOT; DOP	Short
2.4.9	Survey area lighting conditions and update streetlights wherever advised by DOT.	WPNNA; PLNA; DOT; DOP	Short
3. Enhance Opportunities for Health and Wellness			
3.5. Explore updates to the local food environment to meet resident needs			
3.5.10	Conduct one or more workshops with the Department of Planning Food Policy and Planning staff to explore options for increasing food access and develop long-term strategies.	WPNNA; PLNA; DOP; YRBID; YRP; GEDCO	Long
4. Improve Safety			
4.6. Prevent unsupervised access to the Walter P. Carter Swimming Pool			
4.6.11	Install monitoring and safety equipment around the pool area to prevent unsafe use.	WPNNA; PLNA; BCRP; DOP; BCPSS; BPD	Short
5. Create an Environmentally Sustainable Neighborhood			
5.7. Mitigate flooding and water damage around the school grounds.			
5.7.12	Evaluate stormwater runoff and drainage in the immediate area surrounding the school	WPNNA; WPC EMS; DPW; BCPSS	Long
5.8. Improve maintenance of area near Walter P. Carter EMS			
5.8.13	Assess illegal dumping at area properties.	WPNNA; PLNA; DHCD; DPW; D4	Medium
5.8.14	Increase the number of community dumpster days with volunteer Pitch-In Events	WPNNA; PLNA; DPW; WPC EMS	Short
4.9. Increase use and quality of experience of area greenspaces			
5.9.15	Install street furniture at the Kent Memorial Garden.	PLNA; MFP; DOP; DHCD	Short
5.9.16	Secure funding for community-selected recreational activities.	YRP; WPNNA; PLNA; HN; BCRP	Long
5.9.17	Support renewed recreational programming at Walter P. Carter	WPNNA; PLNA; BCRP; DOP; BCPSS; WPC EMS	Medium

#	RECOMMENDATION	PARTNERS	TIMEFRAME
5.9.18	Develop programming to increase knowledge and use of Springfield Woods.	BGS; WPNNA; PLNA; WPC EMS	Medium
5.9.19	Update community garden infrastructure at Ivanhoe Valley Community Garden.	WPNNA; WPC EMS; LTM; DHCD	Short
5.9.20	Create long-term plans for community green space at 705-707 E 43rd Street.	WPNNA; PLNA; DOP; BGS; NDC	Medium

