APPENDIX B:
TAKOMA/LANGLEY CROSSROADS
COMPARISON REPORT

INTRODUCTION

The Takoma/Langley Crossroads is a unique area that requires a specific plan of action that retains the cultural assets, minimizes gentrification, and uses revitalization to capitalize on the community’s potential for the 21st century. The Takoma/Langley Crossroads include parts of Montgomery County, Prince George’s County, and the City of Takoma Park. Much of the area consists of stable, attractive, single-family neighborhoods and has a number of multifamily complexes, especially to the north of University Boulevard. Despite the majority of its land devoted to residential uses, Takoma/Langley Crossroads is probably most identified for its mix of businesses serving a variety of ethnic groups that underpin its image as an “International Corridor.”

Takoma/Langley Crossroads is one area that will be served by the proposed Purple Line running along University Boulevard and will have two Purple Line stations—one at New Hampshire Avenue and the other at Riggs Road. In the near term, a transit center is slated for construction on the northwest corner of the New Hampshire Avenue and University Boulevard intersection, which may occur prior to the construction of the Purple Line.

These potential new transportation facilities offer an opportunity to create some form of transit-oriented development (TOD) at the heart of the area’s commercial district. Although the area today supports successful businesses, additional investment with or without TOD could improve the quality of life for area residents, strengthen the community’s identity as a multicultural corridor, and reinforce the Crossroads as the heart of the area.

A valuable step in developing an updated plan for the area involves looking at projects or case studies in similar communities to understand what they have done to create better places and to avoid some of the pitfalls that may have impeded implementation of good plans. Although case studies offer guidance, they are not prescriptive solutions. Each community has its own set of opportunities and constraints, and the solutions to them are best made by the community using best practices as models and then applying these lessons to its specific circumstances. Nevertheless, not being aware of successes elsewhere is to limit one’s perspectives and perhaps overlook potential opportunities that may not have occurred to current residents, business owners, staff, or other stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

The following report presents the applicable case study examples and best practices that were uncovered through a review of similar national and international reinvestment projects. The research was focused on a broad cross-section of communities with similar opportunities for reinvestment. For the most part, selected examples have similar demographics, physical conditions, and transportation facilities as the Takoma/Langley Crossroads project. (Although a number of interesting foreign projects were discovered, they were ultimately eliminated as potential models since the physical parameters,
process for implementation, and policies are too different from the context and legal framework that applies to the Takoma/Langley Crossroads.

There are numerous good examples of aging suburban developments transitioning to more successful, more urban environments; many of these occurred under circumstances much different than what applies to Takoma/Langley Crossroads, e.g., revitalization of commercial centers in relatively affluent communities. Examples of ethnically diverse suburban areas that have made this transition were more difficult to locate in part because the presence of ethnic groups in suburban areas is a relatively new trend in many metropolitan areas. As a consequence, the search was broadened to also include successful efforts in more urban situations when those contexts were at a scale and character similar to that of Takoma/Langley.

Following an initial review of approximately 30 possible case studies, 6 case studies were selected as most helpful to the development of the Takoma/Langley Crossroads sector plan, although the Columbia Heights neighborhood in the District of Columbia also offers valuable lessons with its integration of big box retail in an urban setting. They are:

- Barrio Logan Neighborhood, San Diego, California
- Albina Community, Portland, Oregon
- Downtown Wheaton, Maryland
- Dudley Street Neighborhood, Roxbury, Massachusetts
- City Heights Neighborhood, San Diego, California
- Downtown New Rochelle, New York

The case studies resulted in better communities and places to live, work and play, which serve as a valuable reference point for the Takoma/Langley Crossroads planning process. While each of the above case studies dealt with their own unique set of circumstances, they also share three key elements that contributed to their successful redevelopment:

1. Positive and dedicated leadership
2. Clear community redevelopment goals
3. Effective utilization of funds

Following the case study examples is a section on best practices in the areas of land use, transportation, urban design, community facilities and quality of life, and environmental and open space for each Takoma/Langley Crossroads sector plan goal. By displaying exemplar planning and design details, these best practices examples illustrate qualities and images that the sector plan for Takoma/Langley Crossroads can strive to emulate.
CASE STUDY EXAMPLES

BARRIO LOGAN NEIGHBORHOOD, SAN DIEGO, CA

Barrio Logan is a small community of roughly 6,000 people where almost 85 percent of the population is Hispanic and has experienced disinvestment for almost 30 years. The community and its residents remained united despite industrial zoning that brought hazardous land uses and a highway project that threatened to divide the neighborhood. Residents joined to prevent the land located under the Coronado Bay Bridge, which was promised to them by the city, from becoming a municipal parking lot. Chicano People's Park transformed the space and became a tribute to their heritage while another project, the Mercado Apartments, became the catalyst for reinvestment. These efforts were reinforced by the city with its own reinvestment efforts, namely, the designation of the Barrio Logan Redevelopment Project Area.

Background

- **Project Area**: 133 acres
- **Goal**: to eliminate blight while preserving the neighborhood's character
  - Objective is development that enhances the community's cultural and ethnic qualities

Redevelopment Factors

- **Partnerships**: San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG), City of San Diego, Metropolitan Transit Development Board (MTDB), Metropolitan Area Advisory Committee (MAAC, a social service agency)
- City officials adopted “City of Villages,” the strategic framework to the General Plan that encourages mixed-use and TOD:
  - Designated Barrio Logan as a Redevelopment Project Area—access to Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and federal grants
  - MTDB’s “Transit First,” which also identified Barrio Logan as a focal point, aimed to:
    - Increase residents within ¼ mile of transit from 3 to 17 percent in 20 years
    - Increase jobs within ¼ mile of transit from 15 to 43 percent in 20 years

Private and Public Projects

Completed Projects

- Mercado Apartments: 144-dwelling unit affordable housing
- Chuey’s Restaurant: 8,750-square-foot industrial warehouse rehabilitation project
- Gateway I Family Apartments: 42-dwelling unit affordable housing

Planned Projects

- Mercado del Barrio: mixed-use with grocery store on a 6.8-acre public land parcel
- La Entrada Family Apartments: 85-dwelling unit affordable housing
- Cesar Chavez Continuing Education Center: 50,000 square feet
**Why A Success**

Positive and dedicated leadership  
Clear community redevelopment goals achieved  
- Minimized gentrification  
- Resulted in new affordable housing  
- Retained local businesses  
- Introduced community amenities and open space  
- Is transit oriented  
- Improved streetscape environment  

Effective utilization of funds  
- Catalyst project that sparked reinvestment  
- Public Investment: roughly $5 million  
- Private Investment
Barrio Logan Neighborhood, San Diego, CA

Existing industrial land uses that were redeveloped because of the area’s reinvestment activities

Existing neighborhood housing that continues to offer affordable housing options

Mercado del Barrio site plan featuring mixed-use and community supporting amenities including pedestrian plazas, new parks and a community center

Mercado Apartments increased density while retaining and improving community character

Proposed elevation of Mercado del Barrio with the Coronado Bay Bridge in the background

Proposed plan for Mercado del Barrio, a mixed-use project that included a much needed grocery store and public open space
**ALBINA COMMUNITY, PORTLAND, OR**

The Albina Community in northeast Portland lost population, housing, jobs, and businesses from the 1950s through the 1980s due to disinvestment and a rise in drug-related gang activity. Community members took action to identify key locations within their community that could catalyze reinvestment. Major thoroughfares within the community, such as Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, served as important commercial corridors while providing critical bus connections. Commercial corridors, like Alberta Street, catered to smaller and local businesses where reinvestment efforts were targeted.

**Redevelopment Factors**

- Adoption of the Albina Community Plan (1989)
- Formation of the North/ Northeast Economic Development Task Force and the Neighborhood Revitalization Program
- Adoption of a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy
- Task Force Economic Development Action Plan
- Roadway improvements for a complete street design (sidewalks, median, on-street parking…)
- Tax increment financing and other funds to attract new businesses and improve older ones

**Investments and Projects**

- Albina Corner: affordable housing project
- Probasco Estates Townhomes
- Henry V: commercial building
- Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives Office: a restored 1908 bungalow
- Standard Dairy Development: a mixed-use infill development project
- Renovated Smart Building for Doris’ Cafe and the Albina Coffee House

**Why A Success**

Positive and dedicated leadership
- Strong public policy guidance
- Strong community participation

Clear community redevelopment goals achieved
- Resulted in new mixed-use development
- Expanded affordable housing near mixed-use development
- Retained local businesses
- Improved community character
- Improved streetscape environment
- Reused buildings to preserve neighborhood character

Effective utilization of funds
- Strategic public investment which leveraged high returns in private investment
- Catalyst project that sparked reinvestment
Albina Community, Portland, OR

Abandoned houses in the Albina community before reinvestment

Community members working to improve their community

New neighborhood-scaled residential development increased density to support local businesses

Infill property was rehabilitated and reused for a variety of neighborhood-supportive uses

New mixed-use development that includes small businesses and local businesses

Street improvements that supports better bus connections and pedestrian safety

Improved pedestrian activity as a result of new streetscape elements
DOWNTOWN WHEATON, MD

Downtown Wheaton in Montgomery County, Maryland, featured more than 800 small, local, and ethnic businesses in a developing suburb of Washington, D.C. Once a highway commercial corridor and auto-dependent downtown, the presence of a WMATA Metrorail station offered transit-oriented development potential. Montgomery County, in an effort to retain the culturally diverse, local businesses, chose to minimize large-scale development, manage building heights, and avoid too much office development by adopting the Wheaton Retail Preservation Overlay Zone. As a result, small businesses were retained, new housing projects were developed, and a Downtown Business Improvement District organization was formed. The overlay zone, however, became a disincentive that discouraged mixed-use and commercial development and is now being revised.

Redevelopment Factors

- Montgomery County Wheaton Redevelopment Program Initiated Policies
  - Pedestrian and façade improvements
  - Clean and Safe Program – ambassadors
  - Enterprise Zone, tax credit incentives
  - Designated Arts and Entertainment District
  - Town Center Design Principles and Guidelines
  - Town Center Redevelopment Concept Plan is designed around a town common

Investments

- Private sector investment (approximately $410m)
  - 736 residential units, $416m+
  - 600,000 s.f. of retail
  - 300,000– 400,000 s.f., of office

- Public investment (approximately $20.5m)
  - Each public dollar leveraged approximately $20 of private investment

Why A Success

Positive and dedicated leadership
- Strong municipal leadership

Clear community redevelopment goals achieved
- Retained small, local and ethnic businesses
- Is transit oriented
- Improved grid pattern to facilitate a walkable community
- Increased residential uses support transit and provide demand for retail businesses

Effective utilization of funds
- Strategic public investment which leveraged high returns in private investment
This townhouse development near the downtown Metrorail Station brought residents to support local businesses.

Streetscape and façade improvements enhanced the local retail businesses along this major corridor. Once the overlay zone was established, it helped to retain local businesses but at the expense of attracting higher density and mixed-use projects.

This proposed town center design concept focuses on creating a central public open space.
DUDLEY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD, ROXBURY, MA

The Dudley Street neighborhood is one of the poorest communities in Massachusetts, located two miles outside of Boston, with a population of 24,000 Cape Verdean, African-American, Latino, and white residents. Disinvestment, illegal dumping, and arson characterized this community. In 1984, there were 1,300 abandoned lots. Property investors often burned homes to collect insurance when the urban renewal program, which provided benefits to property owners in the West End and the South End of Boston, was not utilized in Roxbury. A community cleanup effort drew the attention of the city’s mayor in the late 1980s which led to more widespread revitalization efforts. Success from these community efforts, along with a Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) upgrade to the community’s local commuter rail station in 2005—including platform renovations, canopies, and other pedestrian-friendly improvements—reassured developers, and since then the Dudley Street Neighborhood has experienced even greater community-serving reinvestment.

Redevelopment Factors

• The mayor, along with the Boston Redevelopment Authority, yielded the power of eminent domain, allowing the community to assume control of a 1½-square-mile area in Roxbury
• A community land trust was formed to create and implement a redevelopment plan for an urban village
• The land trust was instrumental in holding ownership to land and for lending and financing mechanisms that provided affordable housing in perpetuity

Investments and Projects

• 250 affordable homes (duplexes, single-family, townhomes)
• Project Hope Community Center with educational and workforce development resources
• Mixed-use development (commercial development with low income rental space)

Why A Success

Positive and dedicated leadership
• Local champion
• Strong community vision

Clear community redevelopment goals achieved
• Minimized gentrification
• Provided for new affordable housing
• Resulted in new mixed-use development
• Is transit oriented
• Included community services and facilities in new development

Effective utilization of funds
• Catalyst project that sparked reinvestment
Dudley Street Neighborhood, Roxbury, MA

Vacant lots in the Dudley Street Neighborhood

Project Hope community center: a commercial building that provides educational and workforce development resources

A Housing Cooperative Development that provided a 36-unit affordable housing

A new mixed-use development with low income rental and ground floor commercial space
**CITY HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD, SAN DIEGO, CA**

One of the most diverse communities in San Diego, City Heights has an ethnically diverse population with more than 30 languages spoken. Divided by major thoroughfares and facing poverty and lack of educational opportunities, it was difficult for the neighborhood to maintain a strong sense of community. Price Charities, a local nonprofit, along with community leaders set about creating change through the City Heights Initiative. This initiative began with the creation of an Urban Village development on eight square blocks or almost 30 acres of land. The City Heights Urban Village included a library, pool, and police substation. The project attracted even more community investment that reinforced the community’s commercial district. New development with a mix of uses and affordable residential units enhanced the ethnic mix making it a great place to live, work, and play.

**Background**

- 1,984-acre redevelopment project area
- 30-acre Urban Village development

**Redevelopment Factors**

- **Public Partner**: City of San Diego
- **Private Partners**: more than ten committees, Community Development Corporations (CDC), and business and neighborhood associations
- **Public Redevelopment Incentives**
  - Site assembly
  - Fee reductions
  - Permitting assistance
  - Off-site improvements
  - Housing programs
  - Facade rebates
  - Low-cost financing incentives

**Investments and Projects**

- Award-winning City Heights Urban Village: $137 million public/private partnership
- Hollywood Palms: 94-dwelling unit affordable housing
- Urban Village Retail Center
- Urban Village townhomes and office space project
- Park de la Cruz
- Teralta Park
- Metro Center: a mixed-use redevelopment project
Why A Success

Positive and dedicated leadership
  • Strong public policy guidance

Clear community redevelopment goals achieved
  • Resulted in new affordable housing
  • Created mixed-use development
  • Provided incentives that assisted new and existing businesses
  • Included community services and facilities (library, education center and police substation)

Effective utilization of funds
  • Public-private partnerships
City Heights Neighborhood, San Diego, CA

Interstate 805, Chollas Parkway, Fairmount Avenue and Escondido Freeway (CA 15) make pedestrian activity in City Heights a challenge.

Village Townhomes, 34 of the 116 townhomes are available to residents whose income is 50 percent below the average median income.

Existing community retail

City Heights Center, a six-story office building that houses public agencies and nonprofit organizations, was an anchor to revitalizing the commercial corridor.

The City Heights Square project included affordable senior housing with mixed-use office, retail, and community services in addition to a public park.
DOWNTOWN NEW ROCHELLE, NY

New Rochelle, population of more than 70,000, is 20 miles to the northeast of Manhattan and a 35-minute train ride to Grand Central Terminal. It is an economically and ethnically diverse community that faced economic downturn in the 1980s and ‘90s. Signs of this downturn peaked when the community’s suburban-style mall closed its doors in 1995. This setback was turned into an opportunity when city officials teamed with developers to reinvent the mall and create an urban shopping destination—New Roc City. New Roc City is a 500,000-square-foot, mixed-use redevelopment project that reintroduced the grid to the 15 acres that the New Rochelle Mall once occupied and served as a catalyst for reinvestment in the downtown. The design for New Roc City reintroduces storefront retail complementing the nearby Main Street commercial corridor. City and county officials also transformed the city’s library parking lot into Library Green, an active park space, which served as an amenity for the area that encouraged new residential development.

Background

- Downtown reinvestment supported by City of New Rochelle, Westchester County and New Rochelle Business Improvement District (BID)

Redevelopment Factors

- City investment including a $24 million parking garage as part of the $190 million, 500,000-square-foot New Roc City development
- Construction of an Intermodal Center on city-owned land with over $15 million in federal, state, and county funds
- Westchester County funded the $2.8 million Library Green by purchasing the land from the city; funds were used by the city to design and construct the park.
- Efforts by the New Rochelle BID included $150 million in Main Street improvements (façade improvement, streetscape and pedestrian improvements, and business development loans)

Investments and Projects

- New Rochelle Intermodal Transportation Center, built at the Metro North train station, included the construction of a multilevel garage and pedestrian circulation improvements
- Several condominium projects including Avalon-on-the-Sound, the Lofts at New Roc, Trump Plaza, and apartments above retail in the historic downtown
- Library Green provided two acres of open-space
Why A Success

Positive and dedicated leadership
• Strong public policy guidance

Clear community redevelopment goals achieved
• Created mixed-use development
• Is transit oriented
• Retained local businesses
• Provided incentives that attracted businesses
• Introduced community amenities and open space

Effective utilization of funds
• Strategic public investment which leveraged high returns in private investment
• Catalyst project that sparked reinvestment
Downtown New Rochelle, NY

New Roc City, a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use shopping district replaced a suburban shopping mall

Library Green, a major public open space project, made the area more attractive to development while establishing a civic amenity and creating a place for its residents

Construction of the Intermodal Center with improved pedestrian amenities encouraged a greater use of the rail station and the area around it
BEST PRACTICES

LAND USE

Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan Goal: to provide for transit-oriented development consistent with the General Plan Goals.

Transit-oriented development is creating vital communities around transit and optimizing the opportunities for welcoming, walkable, and mixed-use neighborhoods where there is a delicate balance between the types of uses and their densities, the location of buildings and streets, architectural and streetscape design, and inclusion of civic spaces that make the difference.

Transit-oriented development in Denver, Colorado, illustrates how a new mixed-use project along a commercial corridor encourages vital pedestrian street activity to create a place.

Transit-oriented development in Portland, Oregon, features five stories of residential over ground floor retail. Located across the street from a park, it provides convenient access to transit and is sited close to the street, creating an important street wall. This new urban edge defines a pedestrian and vehicular space that is at a scale that is comfortable and allows for pedestrian activity on the street.
TRANSPORTATION

Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan Goal: to create an effective and efficient multimodal transportation system that takes into account land development near the proposed Purple Line and transit center and that balances with proposed development.

Transportation creates connections between and through places for all modes of travel—vehicular, transit, pedestrian and bicycle—and the quality of that experience is defined by the scale and design of the facility to make the journey attractive and enjoyable.

This attractive street in Dallas, Texas, is pedestrian friendly because of the scale and location of the sidewalk, trees, benches, and on-street parking. By moving the sidewalk away from the street and using parked cars as a buffer, the pedestrian zone is clearly delineated and made more inviting.

A separated bikeway in New York City improves safety for all modes by providing pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles with their own designated space.

A neighborhood retail street with a landscaped median is attractive and is at a scale that calms traffic and encourages retail on both sides of the street.
URBAN DESIGN

*Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan*: to achieve quality development that creates a sense of place that people can associate with, feel proud of, and have community gathering places.

Urban design is the creation of people-friendly environments devoted to civic vitality and a lasting identity, which fosters a sense of place; are active, vibrant, and inviting to people; and where travel is enjoyable and not just functional.

A well-designed retail street can make a shopping trip an outing rather than an errand. Good design can also include cultural elements that help create a unique sense of place, setting the location apart from others.

Sidewalk cafes liven up the sidewalk while landscaping reinforces the pedestrian zone, separating it from the street.

This urban square provides a place to relax and meet people while providing valuable open space and eyes on the street from adjacent buildings.

In Mizner Park, Florida, an active plaza can become a landmark for a community, providing a balance of activities within the space that creates interest and fosters diversity.

Good design can combine a wide mix of uses, such as the public space, sidewalk connections, retail, and residential space seamlessly blended together in Clarendon, Virginia.
QUALITY OF LIFE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan Goal: to provide the facilities needed by the community and ensure access to those facilities; to facilitate relationship-building among existing community-based organizations and leverage county agencies to address social priorities; and to encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic resources as vital elements of any community redevelopment strategy.

Whether the heart of a community evolves or is planned, dedicating resources and integrating community facilities can improve a neighborhood’s quality of life particularly when they are seen as places where neighbors interact and bonds are made.

*This active park is a center of activity and an attractive amenity for the community and the residential buildings around it*

*Mallete playground in Detroit offers youngsters an activity center that encourages impromptu and vital community connections.*

*Investment in quality community facilities, such as this recreation center in Detroit, Michigan, can help improve quality of life within a neighborhood. The design of this facility with multiple uses ensures a better utilization of the space and broadens the reach of the facility potential users.*
ENVIRONMENTAL/OPEN SPACE

Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan Goal: to ensure that the unique environmental features are protected and all new development incorporates improvements to reduce the impact on the environment; and to create a strategy for development and improvement of park properties, open space, and public activities.

Green spaces breathe life into a community while providing environmental benefits. If well-designed, they can become the community’s identity, connection to the natural world, and recreational outlet.

Tanner Park in Portland, Oregon, serves as valuable open space for its community. The park provides environmental benefits such as runoff mitigation and filtration while the adjacent buildings provide “eyes on the street” security for the park.

Although the park provides important environmental services, it is designed to promote activity and serves as vital open space for the community.
**Included Case Studies**
Barrio Logan, San Diego, CA  
Albina Community, Portland, OR  
Downtown Wheaton, MD  
Dudley Street Neighborhood, Roxbury, MA  
City Heights Neighborhood, San Diego, CA  
Downtown New Rochelle, NY

**Other Researched Case Studies**
Fruitvale, Oakland, CA  
Florin Mall, Sacramento County, CA  
Ybor City district, Tampa, FL  
Bailey’s Crossroads, VA  
Curitiba, Brazil  
South Side Works, Pittsburgh  
Eastlands Area, Charlotte, NC  
South Bank, Brisbane, AU

**Other Recommendations/Research-Directed Locations**
Country Club Plaza, Kansas City  
Adams Morgan, Washington, DC  
Rockville Town Center, Rockville, MD  
Emeryville, CA  
Columbia Heights, Washington D.C.  
North Lawndale, Chicago  
Humboldt Park, Chicago  
Columbia Pike, VA  
Annandale, VA  
Downtown Troy/Birmingham, Detroit, MI  
Netcong, NJ  
Collingswood, NJ  
Cranford Crossings, Cranford, NJ

**Regions of Promise**
Fort Worth, TX  
San Bernardino, CA  
Modesto, CA  
Atlanta, GA  
Phoenix, AZ  
Orlando, FL  
Chicago, IL  
Bogotá, Columbia