

HAGERSTOWN CHOICE

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



SEPTEMBER 2025



On behalf of the Hagerstown Housing Authority and the City of Hagerstown, we proudly and enthusiastically present the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Final Transformation Plan.

The Plan represents the culmination of two years of robust residential engagement, collaborative work with our partners, and true community building with neighborhood residents, local organizations, and stakeholders. Their collaboration and partnership are showcased in this Plan and capture a holistic vision of a revitalized future for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods where all community members are able to thrive and have access to the services, resources, and support they need.

The Plan lays the groundwork for creating mixed-income communities, accessible services, and a vibrant neighborhood through an attainable roadmap, with intentional goals founded in guiding principles that grow the community's strengths, build pathways to opportunity, and identify strategies that will support a thriving future for all.

The residents at Frederick Manor, Parkside Homes, and Douglass Court and the larger neighborhood are at the center of the Transformation Plan. They came together to provide the vision, goals, and strategies that are setting up their community for success and will help to make the Plan a reality in the years to come.

The Hagerstown Housing Authority and the City of Hagerstown will be partners alongside the community as well as the larger network of organizations, institutions, and stakeholders who have contributed their time, expertise, and resources to building this shared vision.

Together, with purpose and thoughtful intention, the Hagerstown community will advance the redevelopment of Frederick Manor, Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and the larger neighborhood to support a thriving, vibrant, and connected future for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sean Griffith'.

Sean Griffith, Executive Director
Hagerstown Housing Authority

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Scott A. Nicewarner'.

Scott Nicewarner, City Administrator
City of Hagerstown





More Homeless
shelters

Drug Free!

I want to see more bonding.
♡

Drug free

Drug Free
Cheaper R

Take some of the
Buildings to use as
for the homeless. G
streets

community
connections

transporte publico

el & G
and
pportun

Rules for those not working
help for those who are working
and helping themselves.
Bigger Buildin

alcan
id
sm

A safe d
commu

going to th
zoo and play
the animals and

1. I would like me seeing in a vet in the future so I can help all the animals!!
2. I would like to see more events like this in the future
3. I would like to see more nice people in the future

2. for noone to die
pets and people
!!!



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GRANTEE AND CO-GRANTEE

Housing Authority of Hagerstown

City of Hagerstown

CONSULTANT TEAM

WRT

RES Advisors

COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Alyssa (Youth Ambassador)

Jennifer Colvin

Lisa Knight

Monique Broadus

Pam Hutchinson

Kayla Trovinger

HOUSING TASK FORCE

Co-Chair: Housing Authority of Hagerstown

Co-Chair: City of Hagerstown

Co-Chair: Community Action Council

CASA

Chamber of Commerce of Washington County

Greater Hagerstown

Habitat for Humanity

Hagerstown Home Store

REACH of Washington County

The Hope Center Rescue Mission

PEOPLE + NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE

Co-Chair: Hagerstown Housing Authority

Co-Chair: City of Hagerstown

Subcommittee Chair, Transportation: Community Action Council

Subcommittee Chair, Employment: Western Maryland Consortium

Subcommittee Chair, Public Safety: Hagerstown Police Department, Hagerstown Housing Authority

Subcommittee Chair, Health: Washington County Health Department, Community Free Clinic

Subcommittee Chair, Youth Services: Boys and Girls Club of Washington County

Subcommittee Chair, Early Education/K-12: Washington County Head Start, Washington County Board of Education

Subcommittee Chair, Downtown and Economic Development: City of Hagerstown

Bester Community of Hope

Big Brother's Big Sister's Mentoring

Board of Education of Washington County

Brooke's House

Brothers United Who Dare to Care

Calvalry Temple Apostolic Church
Cameo House
CASA
Chamber of Commerce
Chamber of Commerce - Spanish 4 All
Chamber of Commerce - Tele Plus
Children In Need Christ's Reformed Church
Crystal's Closet Outreach Ministries
Dad's Connection
Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)
Easterseals
Ebenezer AME Church
Greater Hagerstown
Hagerstown Community College
Horizon Goodwill
Innovative Therapeutic Services
John Wesley Preschool
Judy Center
Kings Apostle Holy Church
Lifehouse Church
Meditation First
Meritus Health
Office of Consumer Advocacy - Soul Haven
Potomac Case Management
Robert W Johnson Community Center
Second Christian Church

South Hagerstown High School
The HUB at USMH
The Judy Center
Tribe Cold Press
United Way of Washington County
University of Maryland Extension
Valor Excel
Washington County Free Library
Washington County One Stop Job Center
Washington County DSS
Washington County Department of Business
and Economic Development
Washington County Department of Commerce
Washington County Public Schools
Zion Baptist Church

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessible/Accessibility – Easy to approach, reach, and/or use a site, facility, service, and/or program.

Area Median Income (AMI) – Area Median Income is the midpoint of a region's income distribution – half of households earn more than the median and half earn less than the median. The median income for the City of Hagerstown was \$48,481 in 2022 (US Census).

Choice Neighborhoods – Sponsored by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants support the development of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that focus on three core goals: Housing, People, and Neighborhoods. To achieve these goals, communities must develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy or "Transformation Plan."

CNI – Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

Early Action Activity (EAA) – Up to \$100,000 of Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant funds to be used for limited physical neighborhood improvements during the two-year planning process.

Food Insecurity – The condition of not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs.

Free or low-cost food resources – Programs that provide food resources to meet one's basic needs for little to no-cost. Examples include programs such as SNAP and WIC, services such as food banks and feedback centers, and free or reduced meal programs.

HHA – Hagerstown Housing Authority

Housing, affordable – Housing is considered affordable if a family pays no more than 30% of its household income on housing-related costs.

Housing availability – Quantity of available, unoccupied residential property in the market that meets the needs of the person and/or family looking to rent or purchase the property.

Housing, cost burden – Paying more than 30% of gross household income on mortgage or rent.

Housing, insecure – Characterized by a number of challenges such as having trouble paying one's rent or mortgage, overcrowding, moving frequently, and/or spending the bulk of household income on housing.

Housing, moderately priced – Rental or homeownership housing that is affordable to households earning between 50 and 80 percent of area median income (note: Median Household Income in the City of Hagerstown is \$48,481, and within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods boundary the Median Household Income is \$24,983).

Housing, market rate – Housing generated by the real estate market without direct subsidy.

Housing, public – The term "public housing" refers to housing that receives funding under an Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) and in accordance with section 9 of the US Housing Act of 1937. A public housing project is a group of such housing units that has a single Project Number assigned by the Director of Public Housing of a HUD Field Office and has, or had (in the case of previously demolished units), housing units under an ACC and in accordance with section 9 of the US Housing Act of 1937. Applicants must be clear throughout their application as to the project they are targeting.

Housing rehabilitation – The repair, preservation and/or improvement of a building or structure.

Housing redevelopment – Process to rebuild or restore housing in measurable state of decline, disinvestment, or abandonment. It prioritizes that residents of a community are empowered to improve their quality of life and environment as a result of sound planning practices.

Housing, replacement – This refers to housing units (public housing and project based voucher (PBV) housing) that will replace any Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, or Frederick Manor units that are redeveloped through the implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan.

Housing, supportive – A special combination of housing and supportive services designated to respond to the individual needs of its residents to live more stable, productive lives.

HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

LIHTC – The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit provides a tax incentive to construct or rehabilitate affordable rental housing for low-income families. LIHTC subsidizes the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing for low and moderate-income tenants.

Market Rate Unit – Non-subsidized properties (rental or ownership) whose cost is based on what the market dictates, without any government subsidies or restrictions.

Master Developer – For-profit or non-profit partners carrying out physical revitalization of a mixed-finance project site, bearing financial risk and has primary responsibility with the Public Housing Authority (PHA) for development of housing units and/or non-residential structures.

MD DHCD – Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. The Department implements housing policy that promotes and preserves homeownership and creating innovative community development initiatives to meet the challenges of a growing Maryland.

MCHP – Maryland Children's Health Program provides free coverage to eligible uninsured children whose family earns too much money to get Medicaid, but not enough to afford private health insurance.

Mixed-Income Community – Intentionality of accommodating residents with a range of income levels in the housing located within a specified geographic area.

QAP – Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). A document that outlines the criteria and priorities for distributing federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs).

SNAP – Supplemental Assistance Nutrition Program. SNAP provides food benefits to low-income families to supplement their grocery budget so they can afford nutritious food essential to health and wellbeing.

SSI – Supplemental Security Income. SSI provides monthly payments to people with disabilities and older adults who have little or no income resources.

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. TANF is a state-run program that provides families with financial assistance and related support services.

Transformation Plan – Communities that receive a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant from HUD must develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy that addresses the three core goals of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (Housing, People, Neighborhood). The Transformation Plan becomes the guiding document for the revitalization of the public and/or assisted housing units while at the same time, directing transformation of the neighborhood and creating positive outcomes for families.

WIC – Special supplemental nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). It provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age 5 who are found to be at nutritional risk.

Grow. Build. Thrive.





Together, Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is **growing** local capacity, **building** partnerships and pathways to opportunity, and preparing to collectively **thrive** in the future.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan will serve as a roadmap towards comprehensive neighborhood transformation, developed by residents, for residents. This Plan is designed to be fully implemented in the next decade.





executive summary

Hagerstown, also known as the 'Hub City', is a regional center for jobs, housing, services, arts, and entertainment. The community has a strong sense of pride in its history and there is excitement for the future. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is an opportunity to GROW community capacity, BUILD on successful partnerships, and allow everyone a future where they can THRIVE.

HUB CITY: YESTERDAY, TODAY, TOMORROW

Hagerstown got its nickname the “Hub City” in the late 19th century with the expansion of the railroads into western Maryland, connecting the city to commerce and industry and bringing a population boom.

Today, Hagerstown continues to be a center of employment and economic growth in the Western Maryland panhandle. The Hub City and surrounding areas have seen a new wave of jobs and development due to its strategic location at the intersection of I-81 and I-70, resulting in industries like warehousing, logistics, manufacturing, and medical/health boosting employment. Hagerstown is a hub for arts and entertainment, the Atlantic League of Professional Baseball (ALPB) (Go Boxcars!), local government offices, community services, and a vibrant and diverse community. And with its relative affordability compared to metros such



Downtown event (City of Hagerstown)



Thunder in the Square (City of Hagerstown)

as Baltimore and Washington DC, people are relocating to the area for a lower cost of living while still being in commuting distance of the Baltimore-DC metro area.

Moving forward, there is an opportunity to think about what’s next for the Hub City and those who call it home. While the city has experienced great growth and success, it has also experienced significant challenges, particularly for its most vulnerable communities. The city has a persistently higher poverty rate when compared with Washington County and the state of Maryland. Like many communities across the US, Hagerstown is facing challenges related to the ongoing opioid epidemic which is causing a strain on community health and public safety resources. Housing affordability is also a growing concern, with more and more people spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs.



FIGURE 1 | HAGERSTOWN IN THE REGION

Source: WRT

Hagerstown is located in Maryland's Western Panhandle, within commuting distance to the Washington DC and Baltimore metro areas, and close to both the Pennsylvania and Maryland borders.



Resident Meetings at Housing Sites, February 2024 (WRT)

GROW. BUILD. THRIVE.

As the recipient of one of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants, the Hagerstown Housing Authority and the City of Hagerstown kicked off the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Planning Initiative in November 2023. The initiative brings together the Housing Authority, City, community partners, and – most importantly – Hagerstown Housing Authority residents and the larger community to envision what a neighborhood of choice looks like in Hagerstown. The planning process

is centered around three of the Housing Authority's sites in and adjacent to downtown Hagerstown – Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan is organized around the GROW, BUILD, THRIVE framework. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan is a comprehensive overview of the planning process, existing conditions analysis, and comprehensively lays out the principles, goals, and strategies for the People, Neighborhood, and Housing Plans.



FIGURE 2 | HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS

Source: WRT

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods includes downtown Hagerstown and is in close proximity to many city parks and assets/ services generally located in downtown Hagerstown.

The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative focuses on three core areas:

- **Housing:** improving distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood.
- **People:** enhancing the quality of life for residents with regards to employment and income, health, and children's education.
- **Neighborhood:** improving conditions through public and private reinvestment regarding safety, economic development and commercial activity, connectivity and mobility, and parks and open space.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods represents an opportunity to continue the energy and momentum around the revitalization of downtown Hagerstown by providing a strong foundation for the community and its neighborhoods to GROW community capacity and leadership, BUILD on existing partnerships and programs, and prepare to THRIVE through the implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan that will create a vibrant, equitable, and welcoming neighborhood for all.

GROW: CAPACITY BUILDING THROUGH THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is guided by the voices of the community including Hagerstown Housing Authority residents, neighborhood residents, and community organizations and partners.



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)



Cultural Trail (WRT)



Fairgrounds Playground (City of Hagerstown)

- **Housing Landscape:** 88% of Hagerstown Housing Authority residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor would like to return to these properties following the redevelopment through the implementation of the Choice Neighborhoods Plan. This finding speaks to the strong sense of community belonging residents feel, but also indicates that the stability and affordability provided by these housing sites is highly needed in the community. Housing affordability is a key issue in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and larger region, with a limited supply of quality, affordable housing and a mismatch between wages and housing costs.

- **Economic Development and Opportunity:** Downtown Hagerstown has seen an exciting resurgence in the last 10 years. Significant investment in infrastructure, educational institutions, businesses, entertainment, and the arts has established Hagerstown as a regional destination. A key question for Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is how the residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor as well as across the larger Choice Neighborhoods area can benefit from and partake in these opportunities to enhance economic mobility.

- **Health, Safety, and Wellness:** The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is a hub for social services, government agencies, and community organizations. These services and resources provide a strong foundation and support system for many within and outside of the Choice Neighborhoods area; however, there are still significant challenges when it comes to food access, mental and behavioral



• **Cultural Trail, CW Brooks, Mural of Unusual Size** (HHA)

health, convenient transportation options to access resources, and perceptions of public safety.

- **Children, Youth, and Education:** Compared to both the city and the county, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods has a higher percentage of community members 18 and younger. There are many resources and partners that support the young people in the Choice Neighborhoods including after-school programs. There are strong educational resources through Washington County Public Schools and parents are committed to supporting their children's education. However, Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods also faces challenges related to insufficient childcare facilities, a lack of evening programming/engagement activities for youth, and accessibility to parks and other recreational resources.



FIGURE 3 | COMMUNITY ASSETS

Source: Hagerstown Housing Authority;
City of Hagerstown; WRT

THRIVE: A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

Over the last year, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods planning team has been working alongside the community to develop the goals and strategies that will be the foundation for the implementation of the Plan to support a vibrant and equitable future for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods People, Neighborhood, and Housing Plans provide tangible recommendations and a redevelopment program for the Choice Neighborhoods that will support a mixed-income community full of economic opportunities and supportive services that will allow everyone to thrive and are guided by the following principles:

PEOPLE PLAN PRINCIPLES:

- Address food insecurity by improving access and availability of fresh and healthy foods.
- Connect residents to workforce training programs and opportunities while also providing pathways for continuing education.
- Support residents and their families in accessing quality and affordable early childhood education options.
- Work with community-serving partners to ensure a robust environment of programming especially for school-aged youth.
- Foster community wealth building and provide financial literacy training and resources.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN PRINCIPLES:

- Leverage new housing development to build needed community assets.
- Improve access to affordable, high-quality neighborhood-based services.
- Create inviting and vibrant gathering spaces that honor the identity of the neighborhood and are anchors for community building and development.
- Build trust, communication, and community relationships with public safety officers and public safety programs that serve the neighborhood.
- Investment in infrastructure improvements that enhance mobility and safety of pedestrians while creating connected communities.

HOUSING PLAN PRINCIPLES:

- Address the need for affordable housing supply in the Choice Neighborhoods area.
- Provide a healthy living environment in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that cultivates emotional connections, cohesion, and sense of belonging.
- Create safe and connected communities that prioritize safety and connections.
- Explore models for supportive housing to help those struggling with housing instability.
- Provide homeownership opportunities and support for existing Housing Authority and neighborhood residents.



There are several gaps that exist when comparing the City of Hagerstown and the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods with Washington County. Washington County presents a relatively stable picture; however, the City of Hagerstown, which comprises a significant portion of the county's households (over 30%), faces considerably more challenges. Here, the household poverty rate rises to 25.5%, and the uninsured rate doubles to 6%. Within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, the situation is more severe, with nearly 50% of households living in poverty and over 51% relying on SNAP benefits. These disparities underscore the need for targeted quality of life support and comprehensive neighborhood investment.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods process opens pathways to address these disparities and close some of the most pressing gaps within the Hagerstown/Washington County region. A great place to start is honing in on the areas of opportunity identified through the Needs Assessment and surveys. These areas include improving access to quality, affordable childcare, offering fresh food options for residents, local jobs paying livable wages, and increasing transportation options to healthcare facilities.

HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS



4,038
HOUSEHOLDS



4,709
HOUSING UNITS



25.3%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH
POPULATION UNDER 18



48.5%
HOUSEHOLD
POVERTY RATE



6.6%
POPULATION WITH NO
HEALTH INSURANCE



51.3%
HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING
SNAP BENEFITS

CITY OF HAGERSTOWN



18,159
HOUSEHOLDS



19,933
HOUSING UNITS



32.5%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH
POPULATION UNDER 18



25.5%
HOUSEHOLD
POVERTY RATE



6%
POPULATION WITH NO
HEALTH INSURANCE



32.2%
HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING
SNAP BENEFITS

WASHINGTON COUNTY



59,530
HOUSEHOLDS



63,790
HOUSING UNITS



27.5%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH
POPULATION UNDER 18



11.6%
HOUSEHOLD
POVERTY RATE



3.5%
POPULATION WITH NO
HEALTH INSURANCE



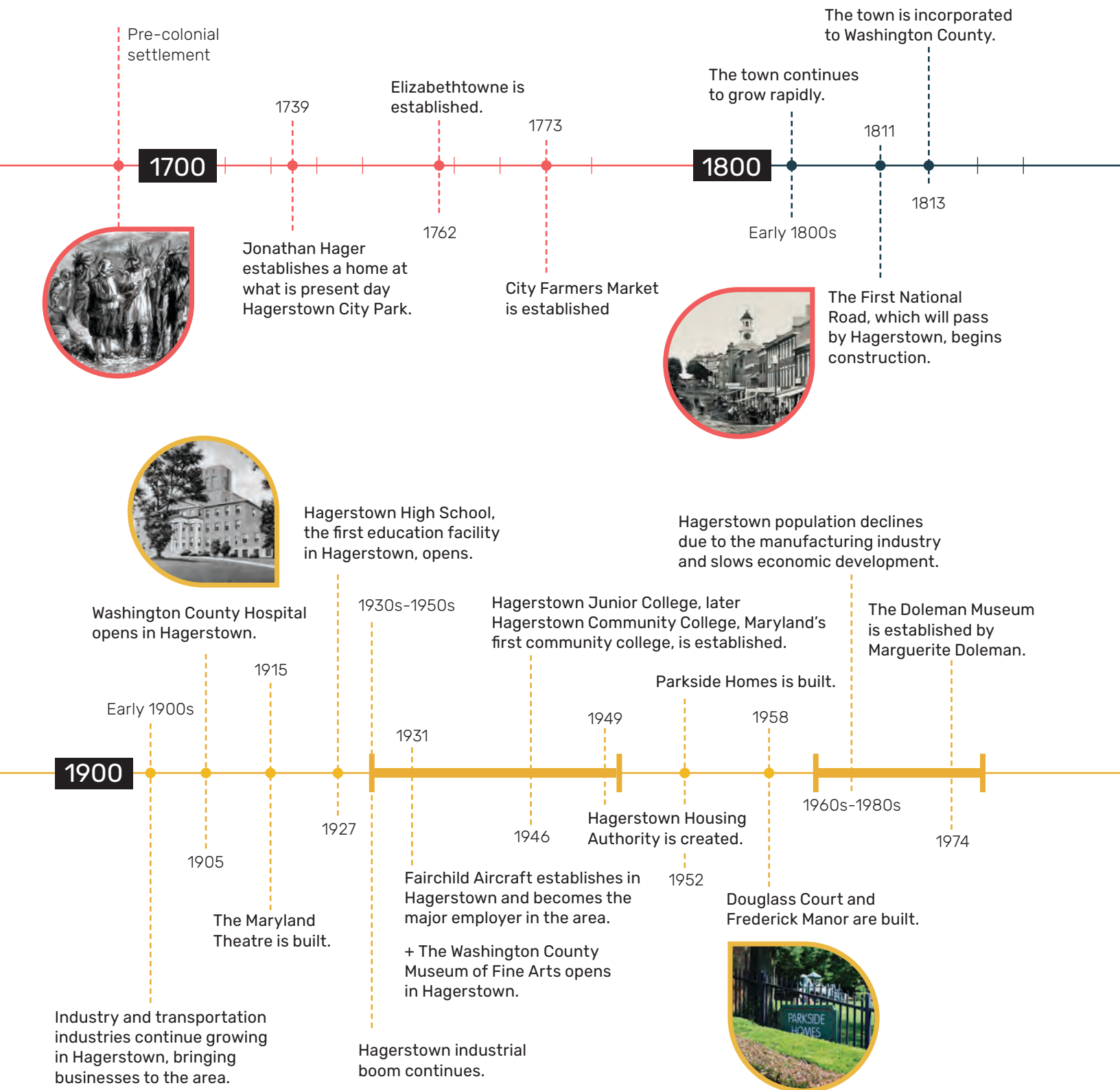
18.6%
HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING
SNAP BENEFITS

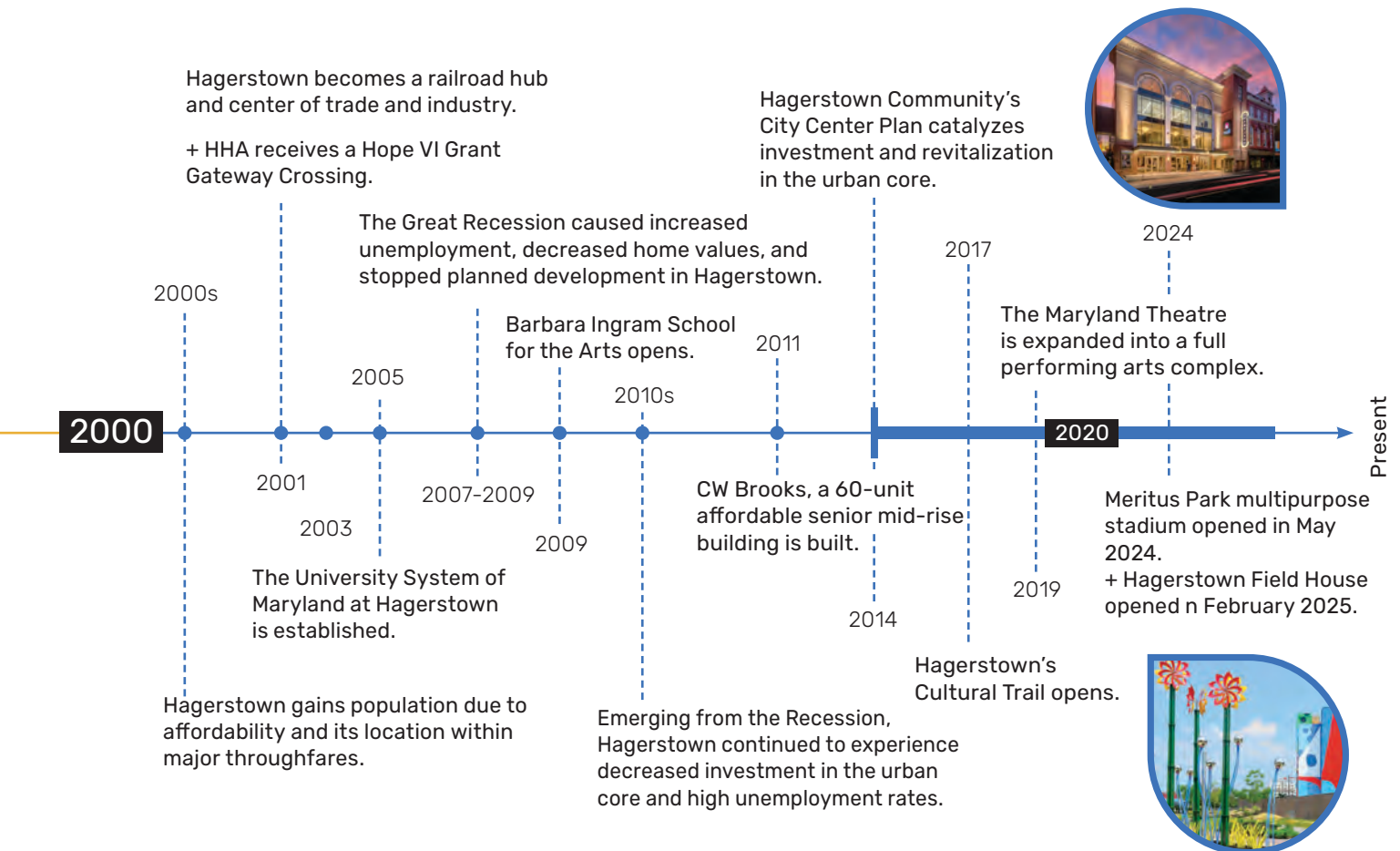
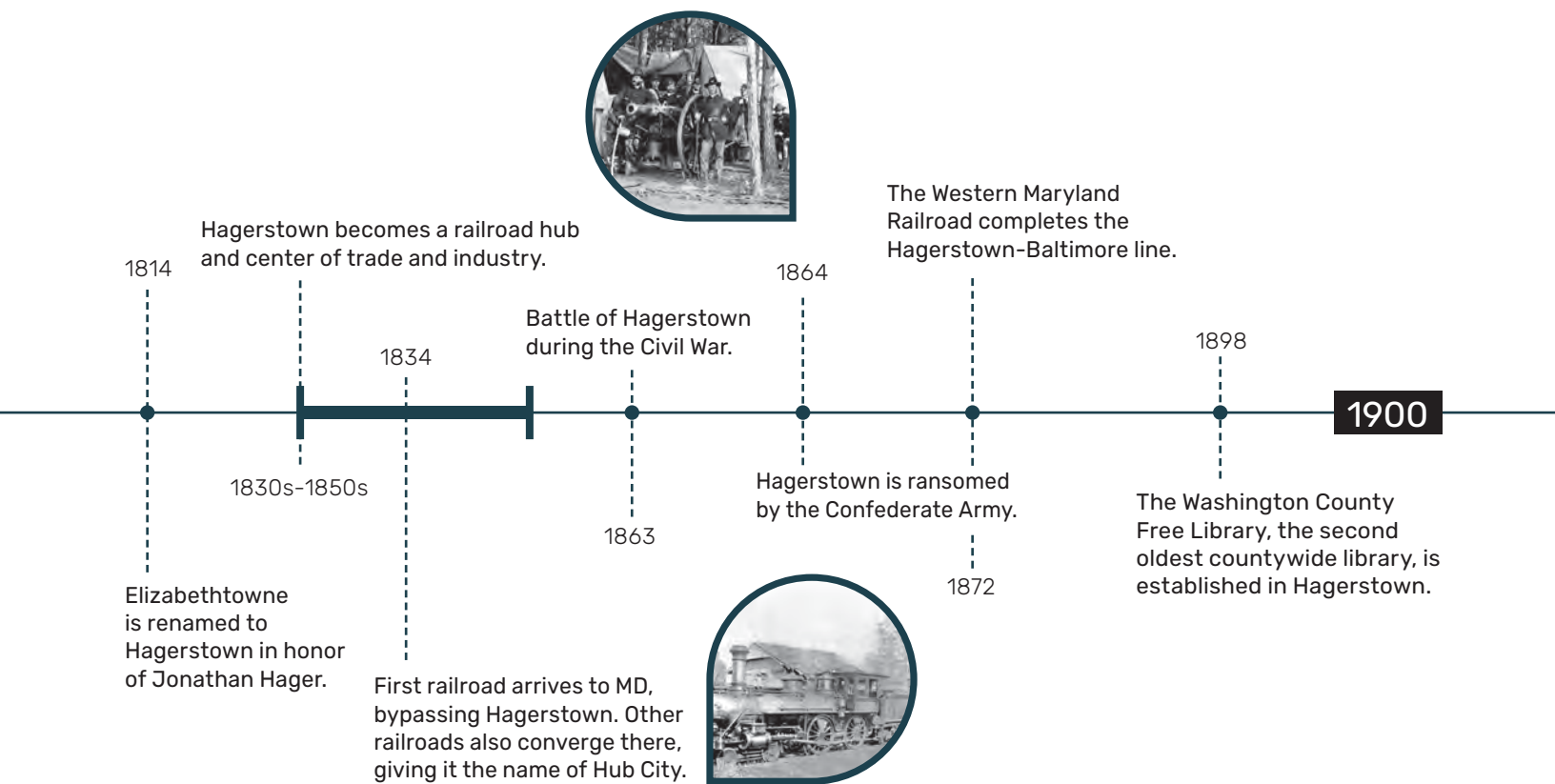


understanding THE PAST

There is a rich history of innovation and collaboration in Hagerstown. Like many small cities across the U.S., the community has experienced both exciting growth and challenging times. The city has a track record of responding to obstacles with realistic and actionable plans that enhance quality of life and provide future opportunities for its residents.

ORIGINS OF HAGERSTOWN





PRE-COLONIAL SETTLEMENT

The area of Hagerstown was originally settled by various East Coast Native American tribes, including the Susquehannock, Piscataway, Catawba, and Lenni Lenape.

ESTABLISHING A CROSSROADS: 1730S – 1820S

In 1739, Jonathan Hager purchases what he will later name “Hager’s Fancy” from Daniel Dulany, Maryland Loyalist politician. Jonathan Hager establishes a home and trading post at what is present day Hagerstown City Park. In 1762, Jonathan Hager establishes Elizabethtowne, named after his wife.

From the 1770s to early 1800s, the area continues to grow rapidly, due in large part to its location at the crossroads of the “Warrior Trading Path” and the First National Road. In 1814, Elizabethtowne is renamed to Hagerstown in honor of Jonathan Hager.

HAGERSTOWN BECOMES THE “HUB CITY”: 1830S – 1850S

The United States’ first railroad, the Baltimore & Ohio, arrives in Western Maryland. While the B&O bypasses Hagerstown, other railroads converge there giving Hagerstown the name “Hub City.” By the 1850s, Hagerstown has become a railroad hub, a transportation and service center, and a key center for trade and industry.



A DIFFERENT CROSSROADS – HAGERSTOWN & THE CIVIL WAR: 1860S

In 1863 during the Confederate Army’s retreat from the Battle of Gettysburg, Union soldiers entered Hagerstown to prevent the Confederate forces from crossing the Potomac River. The Battle of Hagerstown ensued – it lasted seven hours, involved 2,000 soldiers, and resulted in nearly 200 casualties. In 1864, Hagerstown was one of three Maryland cities to be ransomed by the Confederate Army.

GROWTH POST-CIVIL WAR: 1870S – 1920S

By the 1880s, the Hub City became a principal stop for four converging railroads, increasing industry and transportation, and bringing businesses like M.P. Moller Pipe Organ Co., Maryland Ribbon Co., Hagerstown Bookbinding & Printing Co., Beachley Furniture Co., and Steffey & Findlay Inc. It also grew as a cultural and civic hub for the region with the Washington County Free Library being established in 1898 – making it the second oldest countywide library system in the United States.

INDUSTRIAL BOOM: 1930S – 1950S

The industrial boom continues with Fairchild Aviation seeing a rise in its production during World War II and Mack Trucks arriving in 1959.

PUBLIC SQUARE AND W WASHINGTON STREET CIRCA 1905



Jonathan Street community



Images of Jonathan Street (City of Hagerstown)



The Jonathan Street neighborhood is the heart of the African-American community in Hagerstown and has played a very important role in shaping the city since the early 19th century. Two of the Hagerstown Housing Authority sites that are the focus of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, Parkside Homes and Douglass Court, are located within the historic Jonathan Street neighborhood.

Jonathan Street was home to one of the first separate African-American congregations at the Asbury Methodist Church which was established in 1818. In 1838, the Ebenezer African Methodist Church was founded.

An 1849 Census of African Americans in Hagerstown identified 389 freemen and 211 enslaved persons within the Hagerstown city limits. Hagerstown's location between Virginia and Pennsylvania led to the presence of escape routes for the Underground Railroad.

While Jonathan Street existed prior to 1865, the Jonathan Street neighborhood was established after the Civil War. Segregation, discriminatory practices, and redlining limited movement and opportunity for Blacks in Hagerstown. The Jonathan Street neighborhood became an economic center for the community with many

Black-owned businesses including the historic Harmon Hotel, barbershops, dance halls, and general stores along Jonathan Street.

There are many historic sites in the Jonathan Street neighborhood including the home site of Jacob Wheaton the first Black man to vote in the state of Maryland and whom Wheaton Park is named after. The rich history and importance of the historic Jonathan Street neighborhood is recognized across Hagerstown and the region. Hagerstown's Doleman Black Heritage Museum honors, highlights, and preserves the rich history of culture and the Black experience and will be relocating to the corner of Jonathan Street and Charles Street within the next few years.

PLANNING EFFORTS

DOWNTOWN EVENTS | Thanks to revitalization efforts, downtown is a vibrant community hub.



The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods includes downtown Hagerstown as well as historic districts, the historic Jonathan Street neighborhood, key commercial corridors, and sites of recent economic investment and growth such as the Main Street Initiative/ Downtown Hagerstown, Meritus Park, and the Arts & Entertainment District.

Over the past 10 years, there have been several planning efforts focused on Downtown Hagerstown as well as strategic citywide planning initiatives include the Vision2035 Hagerstown Comprehensive Plan, the Mayor

and Council's Strategic Plan, and the current process to update the City's Downtown Plan. By collaborating with the entities who developed and implemented these plans, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods planning process has identified synergies and areas of collaboration to further advance and enhance a vibrant, thriving, and inclusive community.

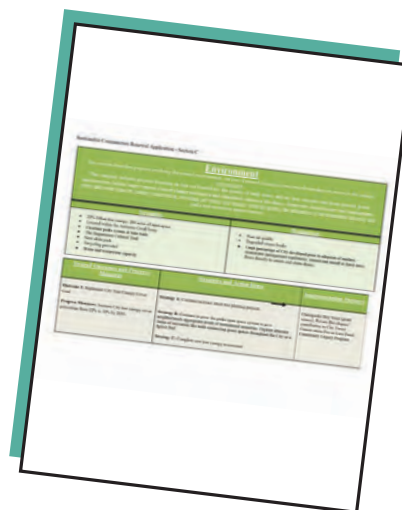
NEIGHBORHOOD/ DOWNTOWN PLANNING INITIATIVES

HAGERSTOWN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN | 2012

The Sustainable Communities Program (SCP) is a place-based designation offering a comprehensive package of resources that support holistic strategies for community development, revitalization, and sustainability. The goals of the program are to develop healthy local economies, protect and appreciate historical and cultural resources, mix land uses, create and maintain affordable and sustainable housing and employment options, protect and conserve the environment, and encourage walkability and recreational opportunities.

The Hagerstown Sustainable Community Plan was updated in 2017 and 2022. The core goals of the 2012 Plan carried through with updated projects, including:

- Improve water quality and air quality.
- Strengthen the City's role as a regional tourist destination.
- Enhance the city's economic competitiveness.
- Implementation of Downtown Parking Master Plan recommendations.
- Enhanced transportation efficiency and access.
- Improve the quality of housing stock and address blighting influences in Sustainable Community Area.
- Continue expanded homeownership support.



- Encourage adaptation of buildings for alternative housing opportunities.
- Recruitment of retail and services in downtown to serve daily needs of residents.
- Prepare workforce for employment opportunities in evolving industries.
- Promote initiatives in place or underway to enhance image and safety of downtown.
- Remove blight and enhance underutilized properties in the city and especially downtown.

RELEVANCE TO HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING INITIATIVE:

- The Hagerstown SCP boundary is similar to that of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.
- The goals of the program are to develop healthy local economies, protect and appreciate historical and cultural resources, mix land uses, create and maintain affordable and sustainable housing and employment options, and protect and conserve the environment, and encourage walkability and recreational opportunities.

MY DOWNTOWN HAGERSTOWN - DOWNTOWN PLAN UPDATE | 2025

In spring 2025, the City began the process of updating its downtown Plan. The update, entitled “My Downtown Hagerstown,” is a nine-month planning process that will result in an actionable and implementable plan that will continue the momentum of downtown redevelopment. Recent investments in downtown, such as Meritus Park and the Cultural Trail, demonstrate the community’s commitment to the success of downtown. The Plan will be an opportunity to reflect on previous work and impacts, identify areas of improvement, and create an actionable 10-year plan that builds on the downtown’s revitalization and redevelopment.

The planning process and final plan will accomplish the following outcomes:

- Assess downtown’s market conditions and opportunities.
- Build consensus and ownership among local stakeholders in the formation of implementation strategies.
- Identify linkage opportunities within downtown and between downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Coordinate with on-going planning efforts in Hagerstown.
- Create a comprehensive implementation plan that identifies and conceptualizes key catalyst projects for downtown and tests their financial feasibility.



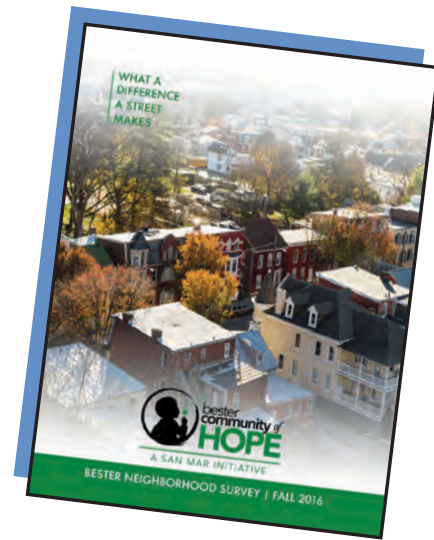
RELEVANCE TO HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS:

- The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods includes the city’s downtown and directly ties downtown’s success to opportunities for revitalization in the Choice Neighborhoods.
- The City of Hagerstown, as co-grantee for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, has aligned the Choice planning process with key priorities for the downtown plan update, including connections to surrounding neighborhoods, growth of economic opportunity and mobility, and identifying catalytic projects that will complement and support the Choice Neighborhoods planning goals.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A STREET MAKES: BESTER COMMUNITY OF HOPE NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY | 2016

Over the course of 2016, Bester Community of Hope – a nonprofit organization that serves the Southside community in Hagerstown – undertook a neighborhood survey of the entire district. They identified a representative sample of 320 households and conducted a 26-question survey to understand how residents perceived their neighborhood and provide an opportunity to connect and listen to the community. The findings of the surveying effort and subsequent analysis were utilized to guide Bester Community of Hope’s strategic investments over the next 5 years, as follows:

- Understand the sense of community including how daily needs are being met, community connections and sense of belonging, and participation in community life.
- Overview of community assets including neighborhood associations, institutions, services, nature/open space, and businesses.
- Identification of challenges, strengths, and potential opportunities of the neighborhood.



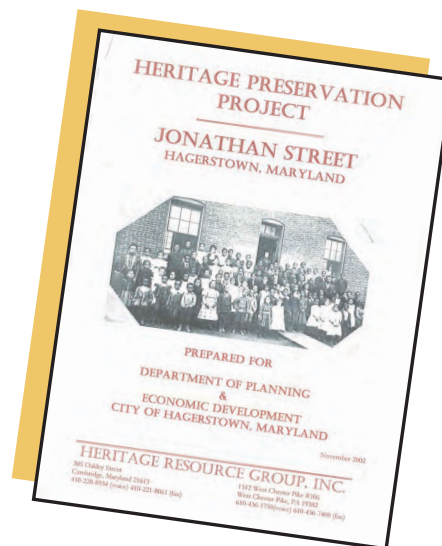
RELEVANCE TO HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS:

- Bester Community of Hope’s service area includes Hagerstown Housing Authority’s Frederick Manor, and Bester has served as a foundational community partner and provider of services to the Frederick Manor community.
- Bester employs a collaborative model that brings together public and private organizations, nonprofits, philanthropies, government, businesses, and communities to address the challenges of poverty, quality of life issues, community health, and economic opportunity. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods employs a similar model and sees Bester as a key collaborator and contributor.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION PROJECT: JONATHAN STREET | 2021

Preservation Maryland is working in partnership with the historic Jonathan Street neighborhood to lead a community-driven planning effort that will identify the places and resources that matter to the people who live there. Preservation Maryland will also deploy new resources and develop new partnerships to help invest in threatened historic resources that can be reused and revitalized to support the needs of the community.

- Rehabilitation of a historic log cabin to owner-occupied affordable housing in partnership with Habitat for Humanity of Washington County.
- Grant funding for future projects including the future site of the Doleman Black Heritage Museum and upgrades to the historic Robert W. Johnson Community Center.
- Community asset planning and mapping focused on engaging the public around the places, stories, and resources they care about.
- Understanding the community's unique historical resources through an archaeological excavation of the historic log cabin site and a documentary that tells the story of the property and its history in the Jonathan Street neighborhood.



RELEVANCE TO HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS:

- Preservation Maryland's Historic Property Redevelopment Program relaunched with the Jonathan Street log cabin rehabilitation and is expected to help save threatened historic properties and positively impact communities through the sale and purchase of structures through a revolving loan fund, option agreements, and unique partnership models.
- The project is documenting the important history of the Jonathan Street neighborhood and providing opportunities for place-based investments and revitalization efforts.

CITYWIDE PLANS

VISION HAGERSTOWN 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN | 2018

In order to ensure that the City of Hagerstown grows in a fiscally and environmentally sound manner, VisionHagerstown 2035 outlines strategies to address the relationship between planned growth and the infrastructure needed to accommodate it. VisionHagerstown 2035 also provides the land use and growth management policy framework for Hagerstown's efforts to regain and strengthen its role as the primary provider of urban services in the region:

- Growth Management and Land Use;
- Revitalization of Downtown;
- Water Resources;
- Transportation;
- Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization;
- Enhancement of Parks and Recreation Opportunities;
- Environmental Resources;
- Historic Preservation;
- Fiscal Health.

RELEVANCE TO HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING INITIATIVE:

- Encourage the location of higher wage employers and high-quality new residential developments in the city, enhance the city's fiscal foundation, and broaden the city's economic base.



- Provide the necessary flexibility and guidance to attract economic development and investment in the city's aging buildings and scattered infill properties, while removing land use conflicts for existing neighborhoods.
- Support strategies to improve existing employment centers and develop new centers to aid the City's business recruitment and retention efforts and to revitalize older retail centers.
- Recognizes that revitalization and investment in Hagerstown's downtown is important to the overall vitality of the city.
- Commitment to housing and neighborhoods to make them safe, clean, and welcoming, creating a sense of community identity, and making sure they have amenities and are walkable.

CITY OF HAGERSTOWN: MAYOR AND COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN | 2021-2024

Through a combination of financial management policies, land use and forecasting, the City will ensure stability by maximizing its use of resources. The City of Hagerstown will inspire an inclusive, business-friendly, and sustainable community with clean, safe, and vibrant neighborhoods.

The ten pillars of the strategic plan are: Neighborhoods Revitalization and Sustainability; Public Safety; Public Facilities and Infrastructure; Economic Development; Citizen-Based Government; Fiscal Accountability; Parks and Recreation for Active/Healthy Living; Innovative/Progressive Government; Community Promotion/Pride; Economic Development through Sports and Tourism; Misc. Projects, Goals, and Legislative Priorities.

RELEVANCE TO HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS:

- Promote neighborhood-based services and citizen engagement by defining neighborhood boundaries and identities and by expanding Neighborhoods first programming.
- Develop partnerships to create a public housing plan and diversify housing balance.
- Continue focus on the opioid epidemic through collaborating with community stakeholders and through the continuing opioid litigation.
- Implement the Community's City Center Plan to promote economic development and strong neighborhoods.



- Support the manpower and capital needs of the City Police, Fire, Code and Public Works Departments.
- Work with State delegation and community stakeholders to develop legislation and programs to address gangs, violence, drug activity and juvenile crimes. Invest in Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.
- Continue focus on the opioid epidemic through collaborating with community stakeholders and through the continuing opioid litigation.
- Grow a foundation of active and engaged residents to serve on various City boards and commissions.
- Continue and enhance Hagerstown Youth Council.
- Make public space inviting and a focal point.
- Grow interconnected pedestrian walkability.
- Work to address food deserts.

COMMUNITY FAIR | Planning efforts continue with the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative



GROW

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is engaging and growing community capacity and engagement through a resident-led planning process. The vision, goals, strategies, and actions of the Transformation Plan are based on community ideas, input, and priorities. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community is an important partner in all aspects of plan development and implementation.





PLANNING PROCESS

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan was developed through a 2-year planning process. The effort kicked off in fall 2023 and has engaged over 650 community members and partners. The plan has been developed in collaboration with the community and will truly be a reflection of those living, working, and visiting the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

INTRODUCTION

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan is a community-driven effort focused on creating a brighter and thriving future for the residents of HHA's Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor, and the surrounding neighborhood and community. Grounded in the principles of inclusivity, transparency, and empowerment, this Plan aims to reflect the voices, experiences, and aspirations of the community.

The main goal of the Choice Neighborhoods planning process is to foster a collaborative process where residents take the lead in shaping the development of their neighborhood, supported by a dedicated team of local leaders and stakeholders. Through a series of engagement activities and capacity-building initiatives, the planning process aims to address the needs of the community while empowering residents for long-term, sustainable growth. This Plan is not only about revitalization — it is about building a stronger, more resilient community for generations to come.



HUD Site Visit (WRT)

MEET OUR TEAM

CORE TEAM

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Core Team serves as the decision-making body and includes the grantee (Hagerstown Housing Authority), co-grantee (City of Hagerstown), local government representatives, and Community Ambassadors, all committed to fostering a positive change in the neighborhood, dedicated to creating a community-driven vision and establishing a platform where residents can be partners and take a lead in shaping their future.

PARKSIDE HOMES, DOUGLASS COURT, FREDERICK MANOR, AND NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

The residents of HHA's Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor, and the broader neighborhood are at the heart of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. With their active participation, the process is driven by their experiences, needs, and desires. These residents have taken part in meetings, initiatives, and events, and have shared their challenges, hopes, and ideas for the future. This collaboration ensures that the Plan reflects their vision and builds on the strengths that they have identified and prioritized.

PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The planning process includes essential partnerships with government agencies, non-profits, local organizations, and local businesses. These stakeholders have provided resources, insights, and support in the planning process through their involvement in monthly meetings of the Housing Task Force and People + Neighborhood Task Force, participation in key gatherings such as the HUD Site visit, community engagement events, and workshops. Our partners and stakeholders help to bridge the gap between vision and action with their knowledge of the local social, economic, service, and housing landscape.



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

**Hagerstown Choice
Neighborhoods convened over 45
Task Force members monthly!**



**Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods
Kick-Off (WRT)**

HOW ARE WE ORGANIZED?

COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Our Community Ambassadors are an essential part of the planning team and process. These dedicated and passionate residents serve as a vital link between the Core Team and their families, friends, and neighbors. Community Ambassadors gather feedback, facilitate conversations, and help drive participation in the planning process. Community Ambassadors ensure that all the voices are heard and that the Plan reflects the true needs and aspirations of the community.

TASK FORCES

The Housing and People + Neighborhood Task Forces play a critical role to inform specific areas of community concern. Our Task Forces include partners, stakeholders, and residents and meet regularly to guide planning efforts, offering strategic insights as subject matter experts, and ensuring that the actions are aligned with the vision and needs of the community.

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY COMMITTEE

The Early Action Activity (EAA) Committee focused on identifying and implementing the Early Action Activity projects that address urgent community needs. These activities were selected through direct resident feedback and are designed to build momentum.

meet our community ambassadors!



ALYSSA

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT AND RESIDENT
AT FREDERICK MANOR

Alyssa is most concerned about the safety of her community and older kids having things to do that keep them from getting bored. She believes boredom is leading to bullying and nuisance crimes being committed in the neighborhood.

“We need more color. Small gardens, if people could plant them. People want flower boxes instead of bushes. It would just be so much prettier, people would be like *“Oh! That’s Frederick Manor.”* It’s nice and colorful, and they have good stuff there.”

PAM



COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Alyssa (Youth Ambassador)

Jennifer Colvin

Kayla Trovinger

Lisa Knight

Monique Broadus

Pam Hutchinson



KAYLA

LISA

FREDERICK MANOR RESIDENT

Originally from Sharpsburg, Lisa moved to Hagerstown and has lived in Frederick Manor for 10 years. She is flattered to be a Community Ambassador for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods process. Lisa loves the beauty of her city and wants “to see Hagerstown come together and push forward.”



“It’s a very quiet area, you can hear a pin drop at times and bringing the community together would be awesome. We’re better together...I think there could be better communication for better balance.”

JENNIFER



MONIQUE

PARKSIDE HOMES RESIDENT

Monique has been a key holder for the community center at Parkside Homes for over 20 years, as well as a resident for over 30 years, and has lived in Hagerstown for over 50 years. She is incredibly proud of her three children she raised in the city and is deeply involved in supporting today’s youth.



“It [Jonathan Street] used to be where everyone would hang out like family... It’s so much going on now, so much violence. We need to get back to Community, back to love. Stop the hate. Stop the violence. Try to come together and reunite.”

community engagement

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

THE PROCESS

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods process is designed to be inclusive, transparent, and community-driven, gathering input from residents and stakeholders by fostering meaningful discussions, supporting consensus building activities, and creating opportunities for equitable and inclusive decision-making.

GROWING NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS

Engaging residents meaningfully and helping strengthen their capacity as neighborhood leaders is central to the planning process. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan strives to equip residents with the necessary tools to be influential leaders, advocates, and agents of change that can sustain the Plan's momentum and continue to drive positive change in their communities.



Hagerstown Community Fair (WRT)

COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR TRAINING

Community Ambassadors are trusted members of the community who ensure inclusivity and transparency throughout the planning process. The Community Ambassador training equips residents with the skills to engage with their neighbors, communicate the goals of the Plan, represent their community in discussions with the Core Team and other stakeholder groups, and be able to put their unique stamp on the Choice Neighborhoods process. This multi-session training included topics such as Choice 101, effective communication tools, civic engagement and community awareness, how to facilitate community engagement, and how to create a broader impact in the community.



Hagerstown Community Fair (WRT)



Hagerstown Community Fair (WRT)

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Recognizing the importance of involving the next generation, the planning team works on engaging local youth through a variety of programming and events. The Hagerstown Choice Community Ambassador Program includes one Youth Ambassador and we are looking to grow the number of Youth Ambassadors during implementation of the Plan. Additionally, the City of Hagerstown has an active Youth Council that supports youth engaging in local government and programs, and the Hagerstown Youth Council has helped

to promote Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods work including the neighborhood survey and participation in local community events. These engagements ensure youth perspectives are included in the planning process and that they are prepared to become future leaders in their community.

So far...

NOVEMBER 2023

Hagerstown Choice
Neighborhoods Kick-Off

JANUARY 2024

Choice Neighborhoods
identity building workshop

FEBRUARY 2024

HUD Site Visit
Hagerstown Choice
Neighborhoods comes to the
housing sites!

MARCH 2024

Market Study Site Tour

APRIL 2024

Care package engagement
with HHA Residents

APRIL/MAY 2024

Resident, Neighborhood, and
Business Needs Assessments

JUNE 2024

Resident Needs
Assessment Workshop

AUGUST 2024

Hagerstown Community Fair

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND EVENTS

ONGOING COMMUNICATION

Ongoing communication with the communities at the Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor housing sites and neighborhood residents has been key for a successful engagement strategy.



The project team developed a recognizable brand for the project through a collaborative workshop. The brand is rooted in the aspirations of the community, reflected in the “Grow, Build, Thrive” tagline, and the identity of the Choice Neighborhoods footprint, with bold colors and shapes that evoke the Choice Neighborhoods landscape.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods outreach utilizes this community-driven branding and understands that residents have different preferences on communication methods. For online and digital engagement, the Hagerstown Housing Authority has created a website/resource hub (<https://www.hagerstownha.com/choice-neighborhoods/>) where residents can find documents that explain the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, presentations, community meeting materials, and reports. Additionally, HHA and the City of Hagerstown are reaching out to residents through email and other communication channels like robotexts.

Additionally, postcards, door hangers, flyers, and posters are just a few ways that the word is being spread in the community.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

So far, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods process has engaged over 650 residents, neighborhood stakeholders, and businesses!

We have engaged over 300 residents through in-person meetings and workshops!

OCTOBER 2024

Hagerstown Choice Housing Tour

WINTER 2024

Early Action Activities Ideation and Workshop + Focus Groups for Goals and Strategies Development

FEBRUARY 2025

Resident Housing Workshop + Choice Implementation Tour, Baltimore MD

MARCH 2025

Draft Plan Overview

MAY 2025

Choice means Choice Conference

SUMMER 2025

Community Review of Final Plan

SEPTEMBER 2025

Plan Release and Celebration



RESIDENT HOUSING WORKSHOP

HIGHLIGHTS

On February 25, 2025, residents from Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor sat down with the Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA) and the City of Hagerstown to review potential housing redevelopment plans and prioritize the types of improvements that they would like see at each housing site.



HHA brought initial concepts for the redevelopment of the Jonathan Street area housing sites (Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and the offsite Moller Building) and for the Frederick Manor housing site. Residents highlighted what they liked, what they wanted to change, and their top priorities for the redevelopment of housing in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

Residents shared they wanted central green spaces, trees and community gardens, and murals and signage that welcomed everyone to their community. They discussed the importance of accessible living spaces that are updated, clean, and comfortable.

They want to see more activities for residents of all ages from youth to seniors. Most importantly, they want a safe, vibrant, and thriving place to call home.



Discussion of housing and amenities (WRT)

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD FIELD TRIP: BALTIMORE, MD

HIGHLIGHTS

The day after the successful Resident Housing Workshop the Planning Team, Community Ambassadors, and local elected officials from the City of Hagerstown boarded a bus to see a Choice Implementation Project at the Perkins Somerest Oldtown (PSO) Choice Neighborhood in Baltimore, MD.



Residents explore housing and amenities in Baltimore, MD (WRT)

The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) provided an inspiring and comprehensive tour of the PSO Choice Neighborhood showcasing multiple phases of redevelopment including replacement housing, LIHTC, and market-rate units. The gorgeous community spaces and beautiful design dazzled the Hagerstown group and was an incredibly inspiring window into what is possible with the Choice Neighborhoods Program!

The trip was especially impactful for the Community Ambassadors, all of whom had attended the Resident workshop the night before. The Community Ambassadors saw real examples of the proposals they had made for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods - from vibrant community spaces to beautiful and comfortable units to small touches like ceiling fans - the visit to the PSO Choice Neighborhood solidified a commitment and excitement to Choice and the transformation it can provide to communities.

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY

HIGHLIGHTS

In fall 2024, the Hagerstown Housing Authority and City of Hagerstown began convening the Early Action Activity Committee to discuss and identify the project for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

Committee Members included:

Jennifer Colvin, Hagerstown Choice Community Ambassador

Monique Broadus, Hagerstown Choice Community Ambassador

Alicia Tuluski, Bester Community of Hope

Jeannie Asbury, REACH of Washington County

Lisa Knight, Hagerstown Choice Community Ambassador

Eric Deike, City of Hagerstown

Brittney Zimmerman, Hagerstown Housing Authority

David Kump, Hagerstown Housing Authority

Jim Bender, City of Hagerstown

Margi Joe, City of Hagerstown

Rachel Paul, City of Hagerstown

Deena Holder, Hagerstown Housing Authority

Dianne Rudisill, Hagerstown Housing Authority

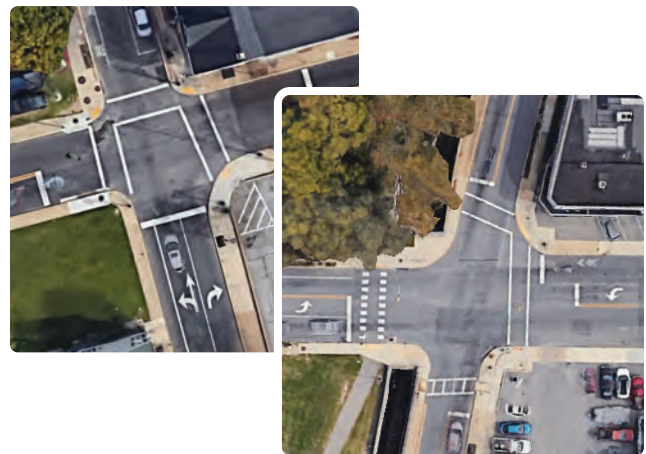
Gerry Kendle, Hagerstown Housing Authority

Sean Griffith, Hagerstown Housing Authority

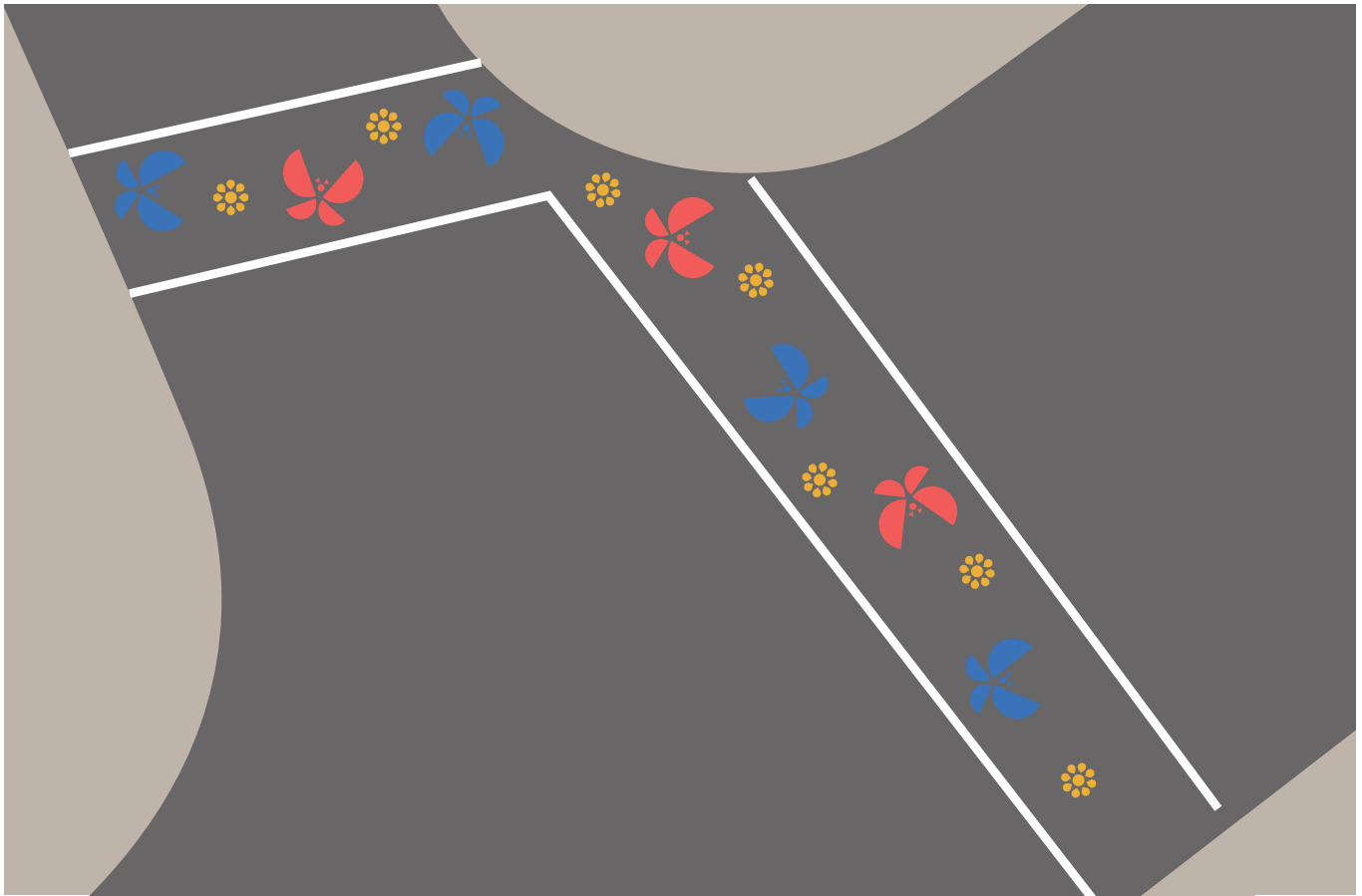
Erika Bell, Tribe Cold Press / City of Hagerstown City Council

During their work session, Committee members reviewed the purpose of the Early Action Activity and discussed examples from other Choice grantees. The Committee then divided into three smaller teams to brainstorm ideas for the Early Action Activity. Each team included at least one Ambassador, one City staff member, and a Housing Authority employee. Once the individual group activities concluded, the teams came back together to exchange ideas.

Common themes emerged from each group, including lighting, a mural, and traffic safety. The Ambassadors from Frederick Manor raised concerns about children using an alley as a shortcut to school, where evidence of drug use was frequently encountered. Meanwhile, the Ambassador from Parkside Homes emphasized the issue of lighting, noting that Sumans Avenue, a one-way street, is often misused as a two-way road, raising safety concerns for the community, particularly for children. The idea of uniting the community by highlighting its rich history was also discussed.



Decorative crosswalks will be placed at the intersection of Church St. and Jonathan St. (left) and Frederick St. and Memorial Blvd. (right) (Google Earth)



Digital sketch of crosswalk design (WRT)

COMMUNITY CONCERNS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR EAA

JONATHAN STREET AREA:

- Poor lighting/safety
- Art/beautification
- Sense of community

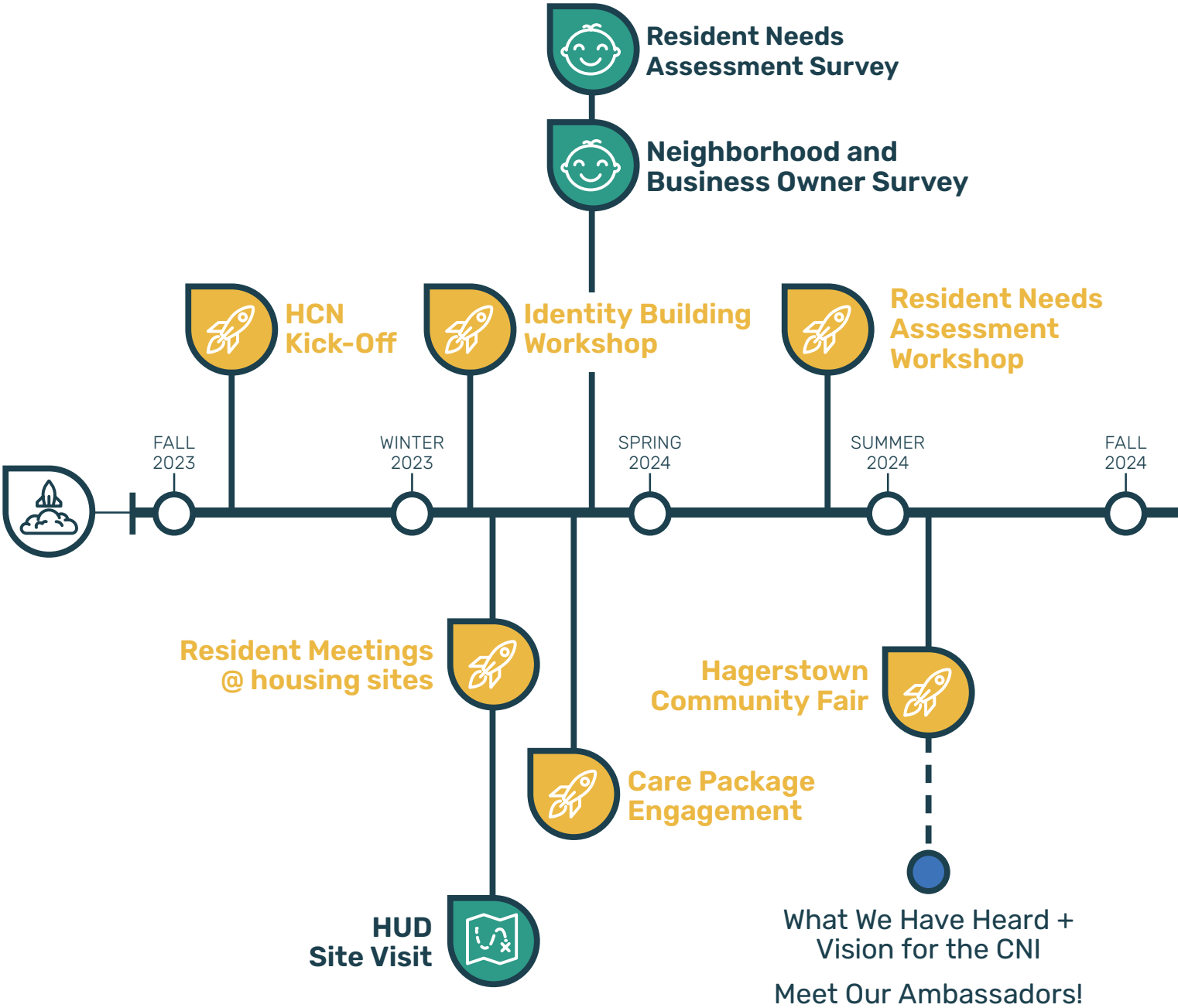
FREDERICK MANOR AREA:

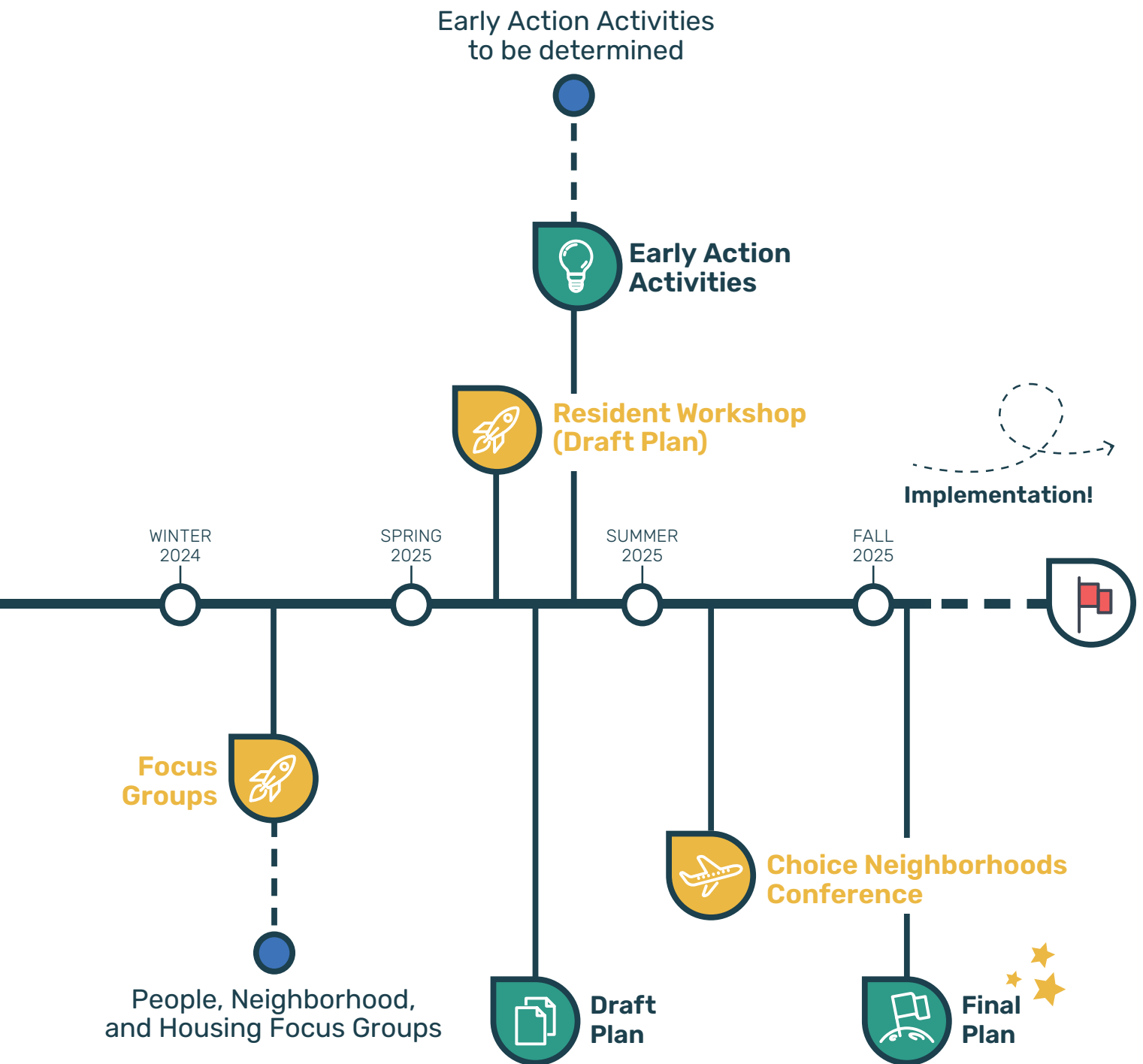
- Pedestrian safety
- Art/beautification
- Deterrence of using alley for children

NEXT STEPS AND FINAL EAA

HHa and City of Hagerstown staff helped to synthesize the ideas and suggestions and upon further discussion with the Committee it was decided that the Early Action Activity would be decorative crosswalks within the Jonathan Street and Frederick Manor areas. The design of the crosswalks is inspired by the colors and branding of the Hagerstown Choice initiative. In summer 2025, the City of Hagerstown issued an RFP for the decorative crosswalks and a contractor was selected. Installation of the crosswalks is expected in late fall 2025!

Plan Timeline





BUILD

A key first step in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods process is understanding community needs, priorities, opportunities, and challenges. Through data analysis, a Resident Needs Assessment, Neighborhood Survey, and Business Owner survey, we are beginning to understand the future vision and goals for the community. We are building on this vision alongside existing partners, programs, and initiatives to ensure a vibrant, thriving, and equitable future.





BUILDING ON... THE HOUSING LANDSCAPE

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community has shared that housing is a key priority. Ensuring that there is quality, affordable housing throughout the area is very important. Housing is the basis for community stability and providing opportunity to grow and thrive in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

GATEWAY CROSSING | HHA's Hope VI project in Hagerstown, now a thriving community



Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey results reveal the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is at a pivotal point, with residents expressing a strong desire for not only housing stability but also enhanced economic opportunity, high quality infrastructure, and access to services. The majority of HHA's residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor want to continue living at their current housing sites, which speaks to the strong neighborhood social fabric and the need for ensuring that housing options remain affordable and accessible. Residents indicated they favor mixed-use developments that combine housing with retail and services, making everyday amenities more accessible.

Overall, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods embodies a community striving for stability, safety, and opportunity. The residents' strong attachment to their homes and appreciation of their neighbors, along with a clear desire for affordable, safe, and accessible housing, reflects their commitment to their community. Residents are seeking a safe, family-friendly environment that offers stability and support, ample housing choices, and economic opportunity. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods will require targeted interventions in affordable housing, economic development, and community services to address the needs of a population that is heavily reliant on affordable rental markets and struggling with the cost of living not keeping pace with wages.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

COMMUNITY BELONGING

Residents of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor have a strong attachment to the neighborhood and want to continue living in their current housing sites. They express a sense of community, where social ties are valued, highlighting the importance of maintaining affordable housing options in the area.



HOUSING STABILITY

Residents express a strong need for housing stability - housing that is affordable, safe, and accessible for all incomes. Many favor future developments that offer both housing and essential services, which will support their desire for long-term stability and age-in-place in the community.

PARKSIDE HOMES, DOUGLASS COURT, FREDERICK MANOR

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods housing sites are central to the community's aspirations for redevelopment that maintains affordability and enhances quality of life. Residents want improvements that foster a family-friendly environment, both offering social cohesion and access to services.



LAND USE

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods includes downtown Hagerstown and the residential areas nearby, the Downtown Historic District, the Potomac/Broadway Historic District, and the South Prospect Street Historic District, creating a landscape of residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

Commercial zones are mainly concentrated downtown and along key corridors like Washington and Franklin Street (east-west) and Potomac Street (north-south). These commercial and downtown areas have seen investment and support in the last decade, creating an environment that encourages local businesses and entrepreneurship and serves as a hub for services and governmental offices. Overall, commercial corridors are integrated into the fabric of the neighborhood, providing opportunities for walkable employment, and access to services for the community.

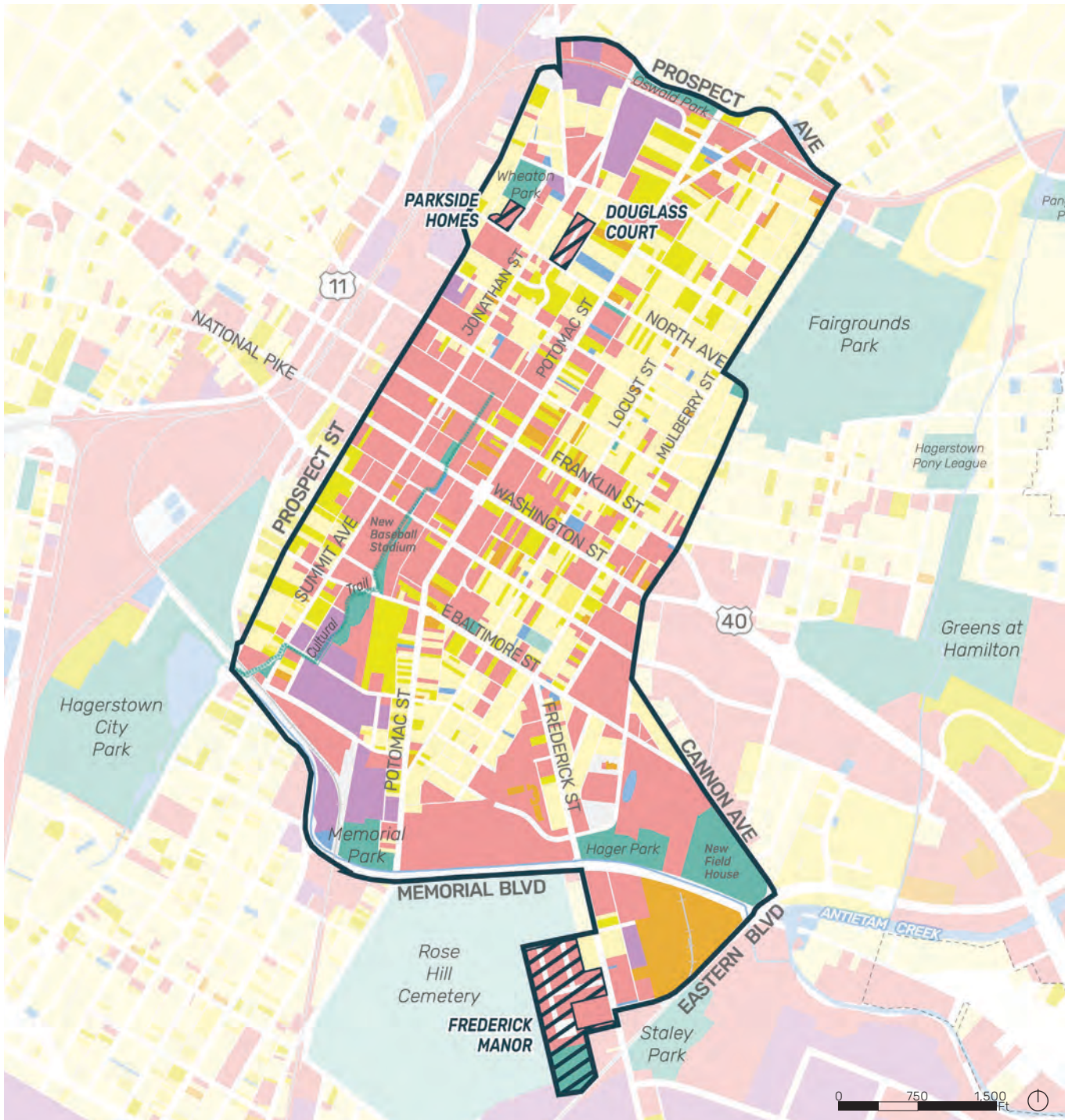
The surrounding neighborhoods are mostly residential with a mix of housing densities and housing types (Residential Moderate Density and Residential Medium Density). The northernmost areas between Franklin Street and Prospect Avenue see a higher concentration of single-family properties and medium density buildings and is where the historic Jonathan Street community is located, including Parkside Homes and Douglass Court. Other single-family and medium-density residential areas can be found in the area between Potomac Street, E Baltimore Avenue, and Memorial Boulevard. The Hagerstown



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)

Choice Neighborhoods hosts a variety of single-family typologies, including rowhomes, semi-detached homes, and single-standing properties as well as some medium-density multifamily buildings. The southernmost part of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is comprised mainly of commercial areas, open spaces, and some industrial areas as well as residential pockets including HHA's Frederick Manor property.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area has a low percentage of vacant land and properties, mainly small lots with vacant buildings spread out through downtown. A few larger properties are found in the southernmost area of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and are comprised of commercial and mixed-use land.



Land Use Categories

Commercial	Residential Medium Density
Mixed-Use	Apartments
Industrial	Parks & Open Space
Exempt	Cemetery
Residential Moderate Density	

FIGURE 4 | LAND USE

Source: City of Hagerstown

Commercial and residential uses are most common in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

HOUSING STOCK AND CHARACTER

During Hagerstown's industrial boom during its late 19th and early 20th century growth, the city experienced rapid urban expansion to support its growing population of workers drawn to factories and railroads. Hagerstown's architectural character reflects the city's industrial heritage, its early 20th century growth, and its ongoing efforts to preserve the historic fabric.

The current housing character of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods reflects the architectural trends of the time. To preserve this character, three distinct historic districts are found within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area: the Downtown Historic District, the Potomac/Broadway Historic District, and the South Prospect Street Historic District. In addition, the whole Choice Neighborhoods footprint is located within the Hagerstown National Register Historic District. Within the boundary of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, many buildings from the late 19th and early 20th century period still stand, showcasing a range of architectural styles. Downtown residential styles range from Victorian-era influenced architectural trends to early 20th century Colonial Revival trends, consisting mainly of two- and three-story buildings.



DESIRED HOUSING TYPES

There is a broad support for a variety of housing types, including mixed-use buildings that combine ground floor retail with apartments on the higher floors. This housing type was highly favored by respondents to the Neighborhood Survey. Mid-rise apartments with added amenities were also favored, signaling a desire for an integrated mix of housing types and prices.



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)

There are architecturally and historically significant buildings along the main downtown corridors, which helped establish the direction of commercial growth in the area. Notably, some of the downtown architecture reflects the influence of the railroad and transportation industry. Buildings near the railway hubs and warehouses showcase simpler, more functional designs, often constructed with heavy materials such as brick and stone.

The residential Potomac/Broadway Historic District also follows these Victorian-era and Revival styles, with larger single-family homes and smaller-scale duplexes, apartments, and urban townhouses, some of them containing both commercial and residential uses.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

>40% of respondents support creating a mix of housing on-site to attract residents of varied incomes.

The South Prospect Street Historic District has undergone renovations, but the character and variety of architectural styles still remains with Italianate- and Revival-style structures.

Other styles found in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods are brick rowhomes that are aligned closely with the sidewalks, a style which was practical during the industrial boom



S Potomac St (City of Hagerstown)

and offered affordable housing to workers while maximizing space. Of note, the historical Jonathan Street community holds a unique architectural and cultural significance. As one of the oldest African-American neighborhoods in the city, its architecture reflects the history of the community through the 19th and 20th centuries. The buildings in this area are simple structures of modest size and design that reflect the working-class roots of the community and are located on smaller lots along narrow streets. Historical structures feature brickwork, front porches, and uniform lines, creating a cohesive streetscape that gives the area a distinct character that holds historical weight. In recent years, there has been a growing effort to preserve this historical character of the Jonathan Street neighborhood while also addressing the challenges of aging infrastructure and disinvestment. The blending of older homes and renovations in this area reflects a community in transition. Historically,



PREFERRED LAND USES

Through the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey, community members have indicated that there could be interest in a return of the small-scale, neighborhood commercial uses along the Jonathan Street corridor.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

What is the best housing type for the neighborhood?

- 1 Mixed-use buildings (multiple apartments with stores and services on the ground floor)
- 2 Single family homes
- 3 Mid-rise apartment with elevators and amenity spaces for residents (20 or more units)

the Jonathan Street community was a commercial hub and had a mix of businesses and residential properties along the corridor. In more recent years, the corridor has transitioned to mainly residential uses.

Hagerstown today is a window to the late 19th and early 20th century America – the housing stock and land uses are shaped by the patterns and influences of the railroad and transportation industries and offers a way to learn history through the built environment.



Jonathan St (WRT)



Downtown Hagerstown
(City of Hagerstown)



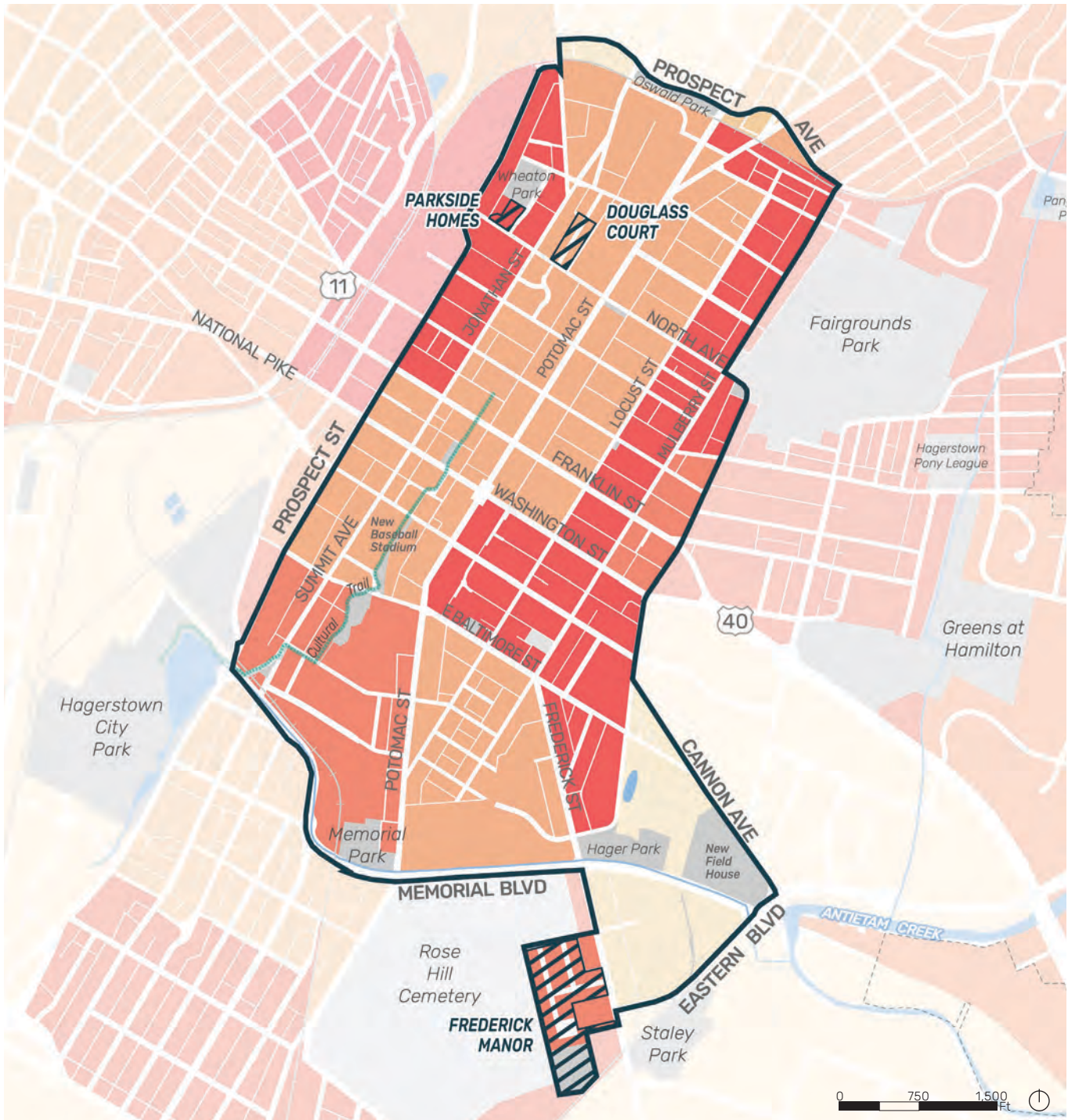
Jonathan Street (City of Hagerstown)



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)



Household Poverty Rate

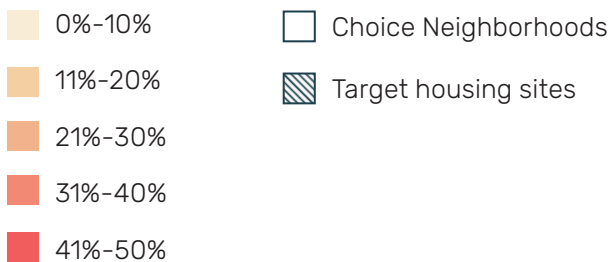


FIGURE 5 | POPULATION BELOW POVERTY

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022. ACS 5-yr Estimates

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods has some of the highest concentrations of poverty in the city.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The housing affordability landscape in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods reveals a community facing significant challenges. The median household income in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area (\$24,750) is less than half of that in the overall city and just a fraction of Washington County's median income. Within the City of Hagerstown, children under five years of age living below the poverty level threshold is 38.6%, and in some areas of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods of up to 50% of residents live below the poverty line. Almost 70% of residents in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods rent their home, and the burden of housing costs is high, with more than half of the renter households spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Affordability challenges place strain on families, particularly those with young children.

Limited vacant land and a fully developed urban fabric in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area hinder potential opportunities for new housing development in a landscape that is already limited in its offerings of affordable and workforce housing units and affordable homeownership options. Residents have expressed a clear interest in affordable rental housing, home renovation programs, and more



HOUSING NEEDS

HHA housing sites residents and neighborhood residents both agree on the need for new affordable rental housing and home renovation programs. The findings suggest there is a desired balance between the demand for newer affordable housing and improving the quality of existing homes. There is also an interest in providing affordable homes for homeownership and moderately priced rental housing.

homeownership opportunities, yet the reality of the local economy complicates these goals. Hagerstown has and continues to experience strong population, household, and employment growth trends and the area is attracting residents from adjacent metro areas.

Additionally, the recent boom of the warehousing and logistics, manufacturing, and medical/health industries are adding opportunities for economic mobility, but adding to the demand for housing, increasing rental and homeownership prices. With low household incomes and housing costs rising, many residents find themselves struggling

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

What types of housing would you like to see in the neighborhood?

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 75%** New affordable rental housing
- 59%** Home renovation/modification program
- 44%** New homes for ownership
- 36%** Supportive/transitional housing

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

- 54%** Home renovation/modification program
- 53%** New affordable rental housing
- 46%** New homes for ownership
- 38%** New moderately priced rental housing



MIXED-INCOME COMMUNITY

Many residents support the idea of a mixed-income community, as long as it retains affordable housing options. Residents see this as a positive solution to providing diverse housing options while maintaining affordability.



Downtown aerial (City of Hagerstown)



Downtown aerial (City of Hagerstown)

to afford stable and quality housing. There is also a robust rental investor community and it can be difficult for prospective homeowners to compete with the speed with which investors can purchase available homes.

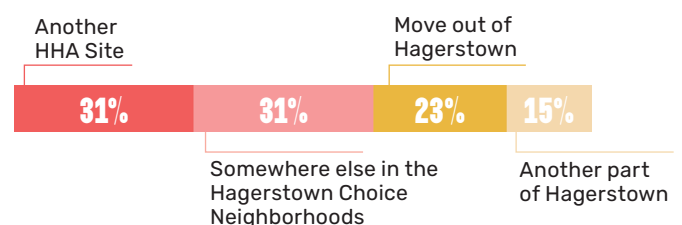
In the future, a lack of sufficient affordable housing options could slow the labor force growth and impact the community's successful economic development efforts that have been occurring in the last 10+ years. Housing costs could continue to put a strain on low- and median-income residents that want to age-in-place and affordability pressures might deepen and affect overall economic growth. It is important that the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan address both the immediate needs of residents while also planning for the creation of additional housing units that are accessibly priced and meet the needs of a growing labor force. This approach will ensure the community remains affordable, a variety of housing options are created, and residents are able to stay in place for current and future generations.

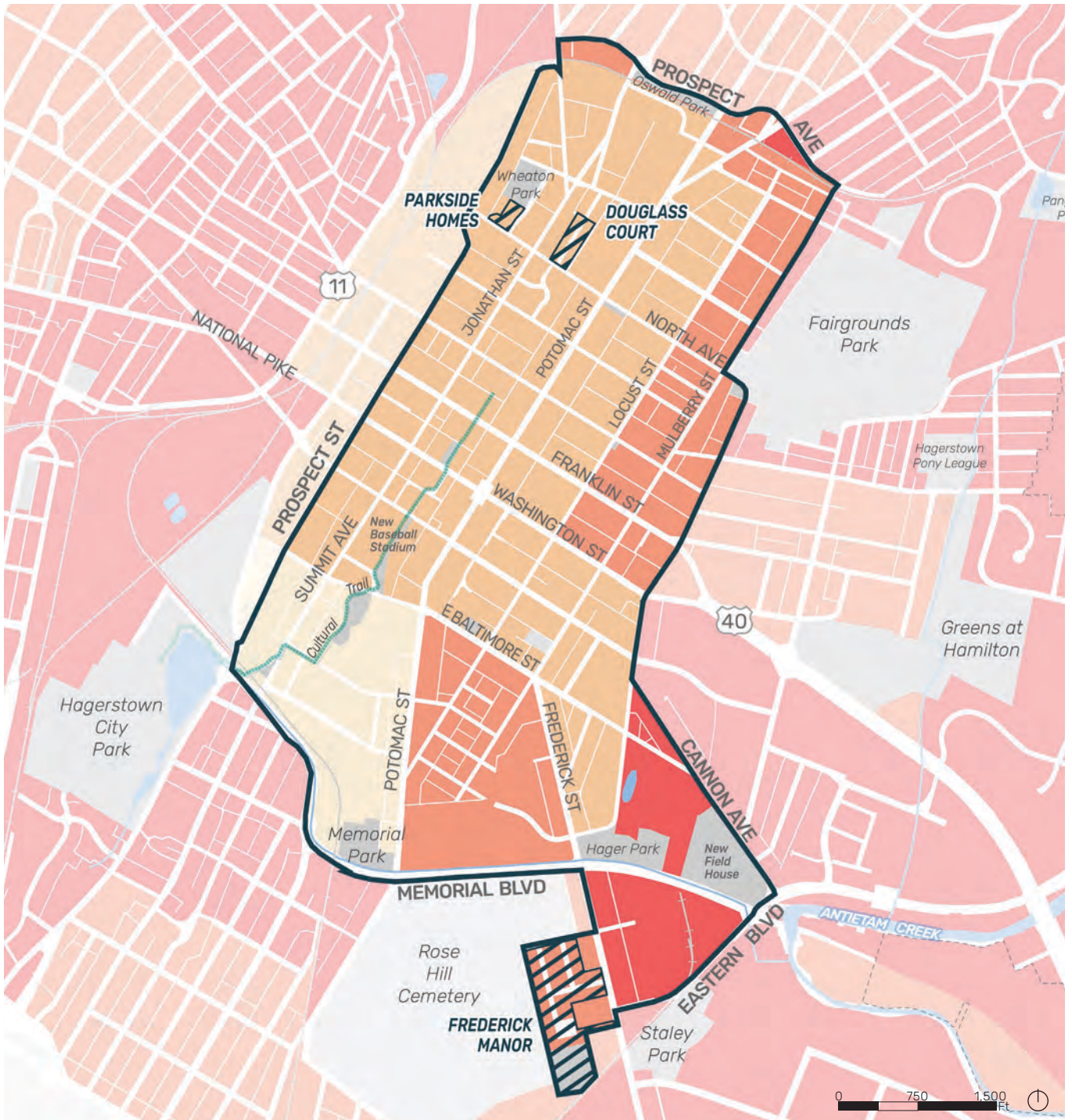
THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

88% of HHA housing sites residents would like to return to their current housing site post redevelopment.

Of those who would prefer permanent relocation...





Median Gross Rent (Monthly)

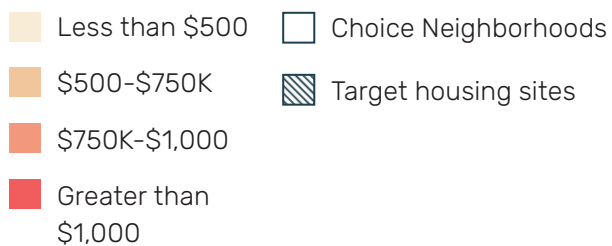
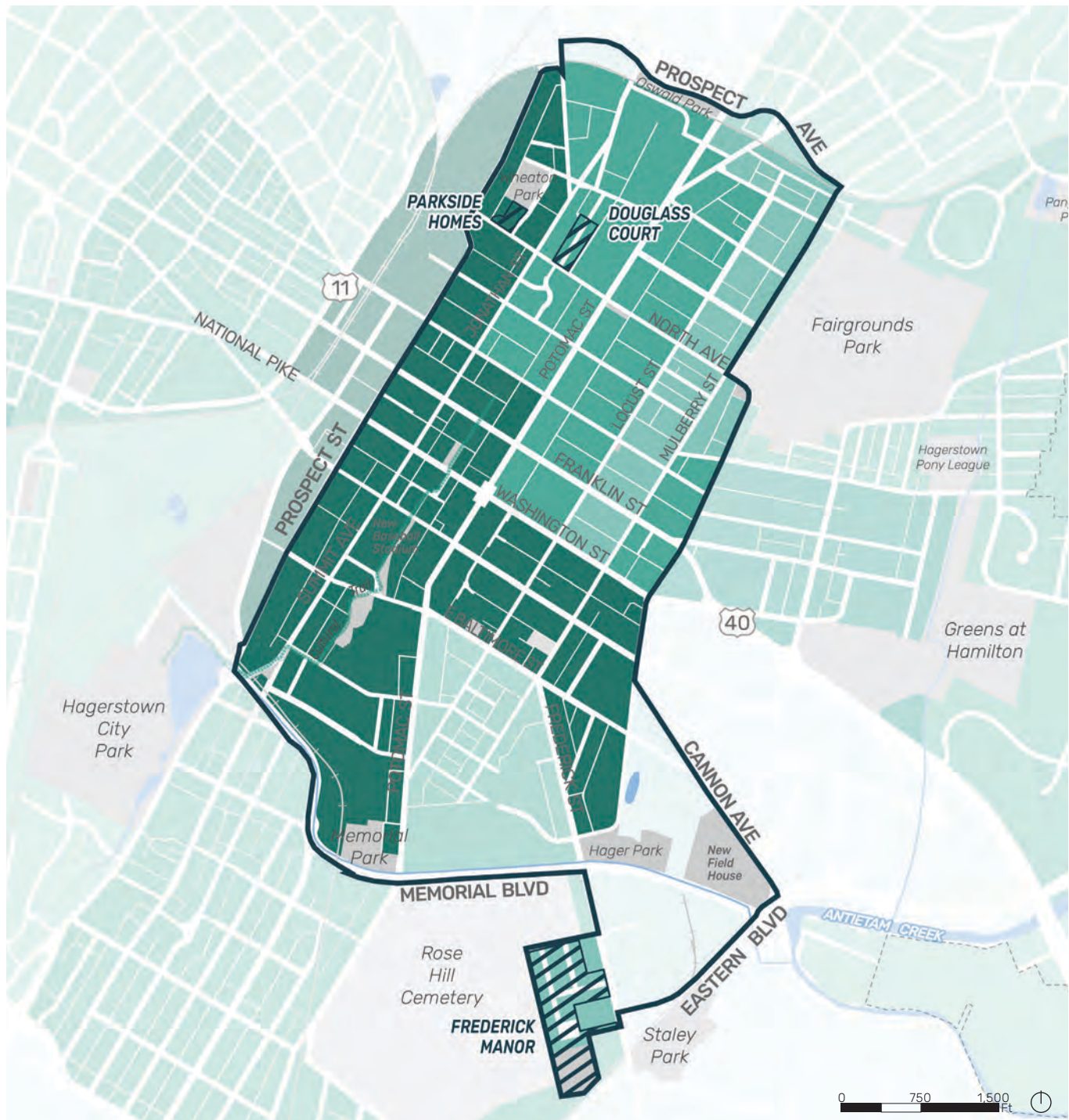


FIGURE 6 | MEDIAN GROSS RENT

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022. ACS 5-yr Estimates



Percentage of Renter Occupied HH

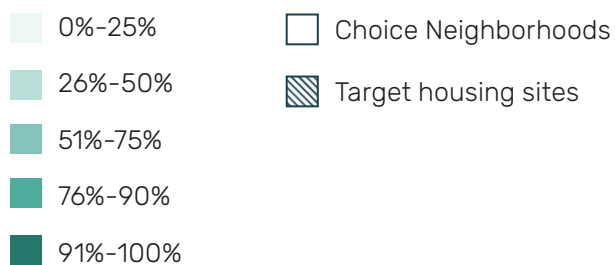


FIGURE 7 | RENTER OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022. ACS 5-yr Estimates

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods has a higher concentration of renter households compared to other areas in the city.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

70%
of HHA housing
sites residents



and **59%**
of residents from the
larger neighborhood, who
are renters, would like
to work towards buying a
home in the next 5 years.



HOUSING TENURE AND ASPIRATIONS

A majority of HHA housing residents express a desire to purchase a home within the next five years, indicating a strong interest in homeownership. Both the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey reveal the top priority in working towards homeownership is financial assistance programs to achieve this goal. There is a clear interest in financial support to make homeownership more accessible.

RENTER HOUSEHOLDS

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods housing landscape is dominated by renters, with many facing significant economic challenges. Vast portions of the area are comprised of rental units, with many areas showing between 75–100% of rental occupancy. Owner-occupied parcels are less common in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods compared to other areas of Hagerstown where owner-occupied units are the majority, reflecting a more stable economic environment. The areas of homeownership within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods footprint are limited, and where they exist, they tend to be clustered in smaller sections or near the edges of the neighborhood.

This high prevalence of rentals in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, higher poverty rates, and the lack of affordable homeownership opportunities underscore a broader challenge in creating stability, building generational wealth, and long-term investment in the community. The imbalance between renters and owners poses a significant gap in opportunities for homeownership and wealth-building, and continues a reliance on unpredictable rental markets that can worsen economic inequality.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community faces the dual challenge of accessing affordable housing while also creating viable pathways to homeownership, within the constraints of limited vacant land; however, while vacant land is limited, there are opportunities to create housing by renovating vacant or blighted properties.

MEET OUR PARTNERS!



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY

As a long-time provider of affordable housing opportunities in Hagerstown and Washington County, Habitat for Humanity is proud to partner with the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative to advance the vision for an equitable, accessible, and affordable mixed-income community. We look forward to

continuing our partnership with the Hagerstown Housing Authority and City of Hagerstown to identify opportunities to bring affordable homeownership opportunities through the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. We will be a partner to enhance stability of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and ensure that all households have the opportunity to access affordable, quality housing.





Parkside Homes (WRT)



Douglass Court (WRT)



Parkside Homes (WRT)



Douglass Court (WRT)

My Hagerstown is...
a community where
everyone trusts each
other, has a sense of
belonging, and takes
care of their neighbors.



Frederick Manor (WRT)



Frederick Manor (WRT)

OUR HOUSING SITES

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is anchored by three HHA housing sites, each with its unique history and community. Douglass Court, Parkside Homes, and Frederick Manor each tell an important story about Hagerstown's evolving urban fabric and community character.

DOUGLASS COURT

Douglass Court is a small HHA housing site embedded within Hagerstown's traditional street grid. Connected to its surroundings in a north-south direction, seven townhouse apartment buildings are situated along Park Place in the northern area of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. The complex includes 30 units and there were 81 residents at the start of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in fall 2023. Unit size ranges from one- to five-bedroom homes.

The buildings reflect the typical architecture of the area with brick materials and modest facades. Buildings are set off from the street in a barrack-style configuration, allowing for landscaped front yards and narrow sidewalks, but there are no crosswalks or greenery to

DOUGLASS COURT UNITS	
# bedrooms	# units
1 - BR	4
2 - BR	12
3 - BR	9
4 - BR	4
5 - BR	1
Total Units	30



RELOCATION PREFERENCES

If redevelopment of the HHA housing sites were to happen, most HHA residents would like to return to their current housing site. This suggests a strong connection to the local community, with many interested in maintaining local roots.

provide shade. Due to the limited amount of available land within the Douglass Court footprint, there are no true community gathering spaces; however, there are amenities such as backyards, a basketball court, and a playground.

Residents have access to open space amenities and services within walking distance, being close to Robert W. Johnson Community Center, Wheaton Park, the historic Jonathan Street corridor, and downtown Hagerstown. Despite its relatively small size, Douglass Court is strategically located to take advantage of nearby community services while maintaining a quiet, residential atmosphere.



Events at housing sites (HHA)

PARKSIDE HOMES

Parkside Homes is a slightly larger HHA housing site with 39 units across seven buildings. At the start of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in fall 2023, there was a total of 87 residents. Like Douglass Court, it is connected through a one-way, wide, north-south street, Sumans Avenue. The buildings are arranged along that street, with one structure oriented perpendicularly at the entrance, creating a semi-enclosed layout. Buildings are set off the street, allowing for wide landscaped front yards that feature mature trees and narrow sidewalks. Parkside Homes offers access to a resident community center and a playground, with the City of Hagerstown's Wheaton Park located at the end of the street. The location of Parkside Homes allows for connection and easy walkability to nearby assets including downtown Hagerstown services and amenities, the Jonathan Street corridor, and the Robert W. Johnson Community Center.

PARKSIDE HOMES UNITS

# bedrooms	# units
1 - BR	6
2 - BR	24
3 - BR	5
4 - BR	4
Total Units	39

FREDERICK MANOR UNITS

# bedrooms	# units
1 - BR	20
2 - BR	51
3 - BR	40
4 - BR	12
5 - BR	2
Total Units	125

FREDERICK MANOR

Frederick Manor is the largest of the HHA housing sites within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, and it is located in the far south end of the boundary.

Frederick Manor is comprised of 125 units, housing 309 residents at the start of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in fall 2023. Frederick Manor is isolated from the street grid, bordered by a commercial corridor to the east and a cemetery to the west. This location in a predominantly industrial and commercial area gives Frederick Manor a distinct sense of being set apart from the rest of the city. The housing site consists of a 29-building complex with its own street grid configuration with two entrances from Frederick St. The two-way streets are wide, with large front yards and buildings that reflect the Hagerstown architectural style with brick materials and modest facades. The Frederick Manor site has its own set of amenities including a large play area, multiple playgrounds, and a community center which also features a gym leased by the Boys and Girls Club of Washington County, providing additional opportunities for children and families. Walkable infrastructure is limited to narrow sidewalks with no shade and crosswalks only directly across the community center. Although somewhat disconnected from downtown activity and services, Frederick Manor is within walking distance of other assets and services like Memorial Park, Bester Elementary School and Bester Community of Hope, Potterfield Pool, the new Field House, and Hager Park.

OUR HOUSING SITES

DOUGLASS COURT



81
RESIDENTS

29
UNITS



83%
FEMALE HEAD
OF HOUSEHOLD



60%
FEMALE

40%
MALE



18-28 YRS
PREDOMINANT AGE GROUP

PARKSIDE HOMES



87
RESIDENTS

36
UNITS



86%
FEMALE HEAD
OF HOUSEHOLD



63%
FEMALE

37%
MALE



18-28 YRS
PREDOMINANT AGE GROUP

FREDERICK MANOR



309
RESIDENTS

125
UNITS



90%
FEMALE HEAD
OF HOUSEHOLD



90%
FEMALE

10%
MALE



26-34 YRS
PREDOMINANT AGE GROUP



Gateway Crossing (HHA)



Walnut Towers (HHA)



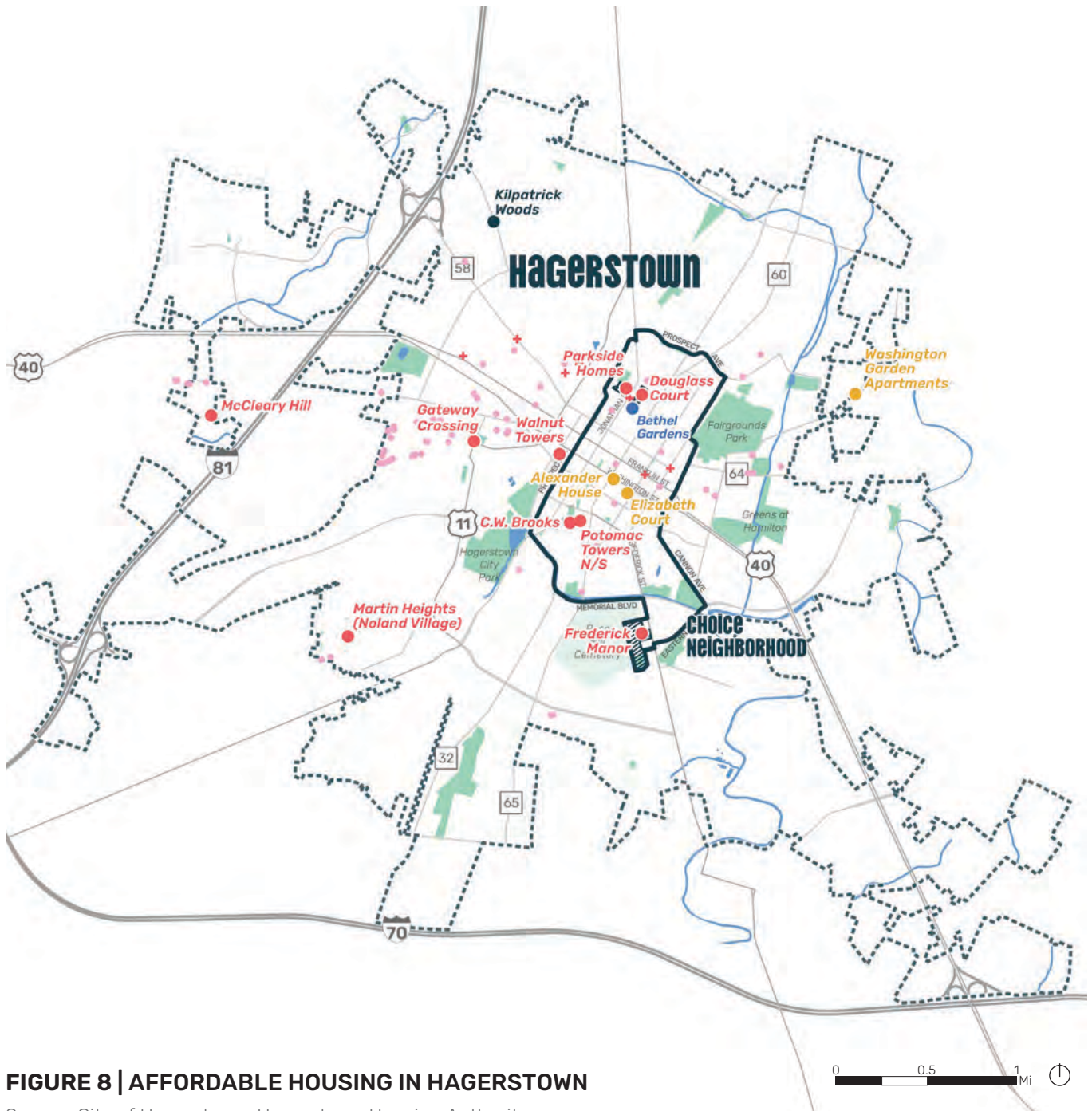
C W Brooks (HHA)

OTHER AFFORDABLE HOUSING SITES

In addition to Douglass Court, Parkside Homes, and Frederick Manor, there are a range of other affordable housing options provided by HHA and other entities within the Choice Neighborhoods footprint, serving as essential resources for low- and moderate-income families across the city. These properties are strategically located to provide residents with access to services and amenities located mainly in downtown Hagerstown.

**My Hagerstown is...
affordable housing for
all residents.**

Properties such as CW Brooks (HHA), Potomac Towers (HHA), Martin Heights (HHA), Bethel Gardens (privately owned/operated), Elizabeth Court (privately owned/operated), or Alexander House (privately owned/operated), offer a mix of housing types supported by Section 8 and other federal housing programs. Each site provides affordable housing with varying levels of services, and wait lists range from multiple months to multiple years. In addition to these properties, HHA's portfolio of properties is spread throughout Hagerstown including McCleary Hill, Gateway Crossing (Hope VI), and Walnut Towers, showcasing HHA's commitment to providing affordable housing options across multiple neighborhoods and equitable opportunities for all Hagerstown residents.



Affordable Housing

- HHA properties
- Section 8 New Construction Housing
- + HHA Scattered Sites
- Farmers Home/236 Projects
- Other affordable housing sites
- Low and Moderate Income Bonds
- Choice Neighborhoods
- ▨ Target housing sites



Gateway Crossing (HHA)



Gateway Crossing (HHA)



Gateway Crossing (HHA)



Gateway Crossing (WRT)

Over 20 years since its completion, the Gateway Crossing Public Housing Project represents a significant pillar in the transformation of Hagerstown's West End. Made possible through a \$27 million HOPE VI grant from HUD (forerunners of today's Choice Neighborhoods Grant through HUD), it sits as evidence of the impact of investment in community-oriented comprehensive neighborhood revitalization efforts. Adjacent to the heavily frequented "Hagerstown City Park," Gateway Crossing was aimed at replacing the outdated 210-unit Westview Homes with 150 new public housing units. The project developed an additional 140 affordable rental units and a mix of 110 affordable and market-rate homeownership units. In total, Gateway Crossing comprises nearly 352 mixed-income housing units. Supported by design partners Wallace, Roberts & Todd and Pennrose Properties, the Gateway Crossing development was designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing neighborhood, and features Victorian- and Craftsman-style townhouses and garden-style apartments that blend into the fabric of Hagerstown's west side.

With the Gateway Crossing Project, Hagerstown Housing Authority and the City of Hagerstown set out to create a vibrant mixed-income community that aligned with HUD's objectives of reducing poverty concentration and promoting diverse communities. The development sparked renovations in the surrounding areas, encouraging other

property owners to invest in improvements. Hagerstown attracted an additional \$44.7 million in investment towards the Gateway Crossing vision, leveraging local and state resources, including low-income tax credits and community development block grant funds. This funding supported development projects beyond housing. Elgin Station, a pivotal component of the Gateway Crossing Project, was completed in 2003 and serves as a community hub for Hagerstown's western quadrant. Designed to resemble an old train station, paying homage to the area's railroad heritage, the 23,000 square-foot facility functions as a recreation and resource center. Elgin Station provides a venue for Head Start, Boys & Girls Club and other community-based initiatives. It includes a gym, commercial kitchen, communal meeting spaces, and tech labs. Funding was also secured and allocated for neighborhood beautification efforts, including improved landscaping, street lighting, and pedestrian-friendly sidewalks.

While the impact of Gateway Crossing extends beyond housing, the main priority remains providing affordable housing for Hagerstown residents. At Gateway Crossing, residents pay rent based on 30% of their monthly adjusted income, minus a utility allowance. This structure helps ensure affordability for low-income households. The current Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan has a quality project to reference as it aims to improve quality of life for residents of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court and Frederick Manor.

5

BUILDING ON... economic DEVELOPMENT

Economic development should lead to economic opportunity and the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is already seeing significant downtown investment and growth. In order for this growth to be equitable and inclusive, jobs need to be accessible, workforce training needs to be available, and services such as childcare, healthcare, and after-school programming need to be easy to access and afford. Hagerstown is growing, and we will make sure the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is part of this exciting opportunity.



Originally known as the “Hub City” for the many railroads that run through it, Hagerstown has always benefited economically from its location. In addition to the railroad industry, the economy has historically been fueled by manufacturing tied to the aircraft and automobile industry, furniture manufacturing, silk mills, foundries, printing industry, etc.

“Hub City” still carries relevance today. Beyond its benefit as a branding tool, Hagerstown’s location at the crossroads of several major transportation routes (including I-70 and I-81) has kept it an attractive target for manufacturing companies and medical/health industries that serve as economic catalyst of the region. As Hagerstown continues its recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, a rise in job opportunities in recent years is primarily fueled by the movement of e-commerce, warehousing, distribution, manufacturing, and medical/health industries to the area.

Today, residents of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and the three HHA housing sites face significant economic challenges, with many

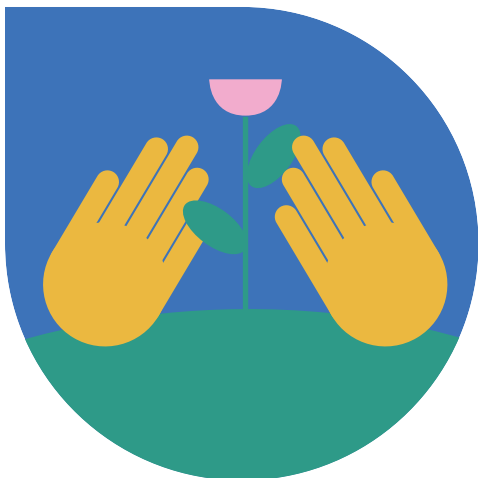
households earning well below the city’s median income. This income disparity is one of the factors that highlights the need for economic development that provides access to stable, living-wage jobs. Through the Residents Needs Assessment, the community has expressed that transportation, the lack of affordable, quality childcare, and the predominance of low-wage jobs that do not meet the economic needs of families are the main barriers to employment. Residents see transportation and childcare as critical factors to allow more households to join the workforce. The community is seeking more job opportunities within the neighborhood footprint, which can help to alleviate transportation challenges and foster a stronger local economy.

The community is eager for initiatives that support workforce development, create job opportunities, and provide skill-building and training to advance in the workforce. Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents are seeking a safer and more vibrant community with accessible services and jobs, where families can thrive, and businesses can grow.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

STABLE, LIVING-WAGE JOBS

The community has voiced a need for stable, living-wage jobs, as many residents are currently employed in positions that do not meet their families' financial needs. The low rate of job opportunities that provide a sustainable income in the immediate residents' area is a major concern.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Residents would like to participate in workforce development programs that offer skill-building and job training to boost their employment opportunities. Advancing their careers and being able to access better-paying jobs is something residents want to pursue.

TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

Transportation is one of the main barriers to access employment. For those without a personal vehicle, public transportation and costly rideshare services limit their ability to commute to work. Residents would like improved transportation options to connect to Hagerstown's employment hubs more easily.



MEDIAN INCOME

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods sits proximate to one of the region's fastest growing centers of economic activity, but it is also home to Hagerstown's most economically disadvantaged residents. The median household income of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods resident remains notably low compared to the City of Hagerstown and Washington County. Residents within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods fall into the lowest income brackets, with the median income of the area being \$24,500, which is half of the citywide median income of \$48,481.



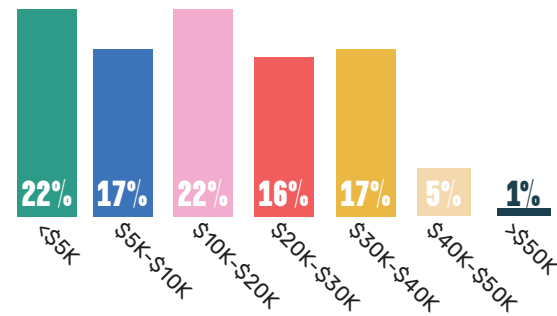
EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Residents in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods have voiced a clear need for well-paying job opportunities. About 50% of residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor are currently unemployed, and of those unemployed the majority have not had a job for 6 months or more. This long-term unemployment highlights a critical need for job options that meet the skill levels and needs of the local workforce. There is a strong desire for more employment opportunities within Hagerstown itself, as many residents currently must seek work outside the city, leading to additional transportation and time challenges.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

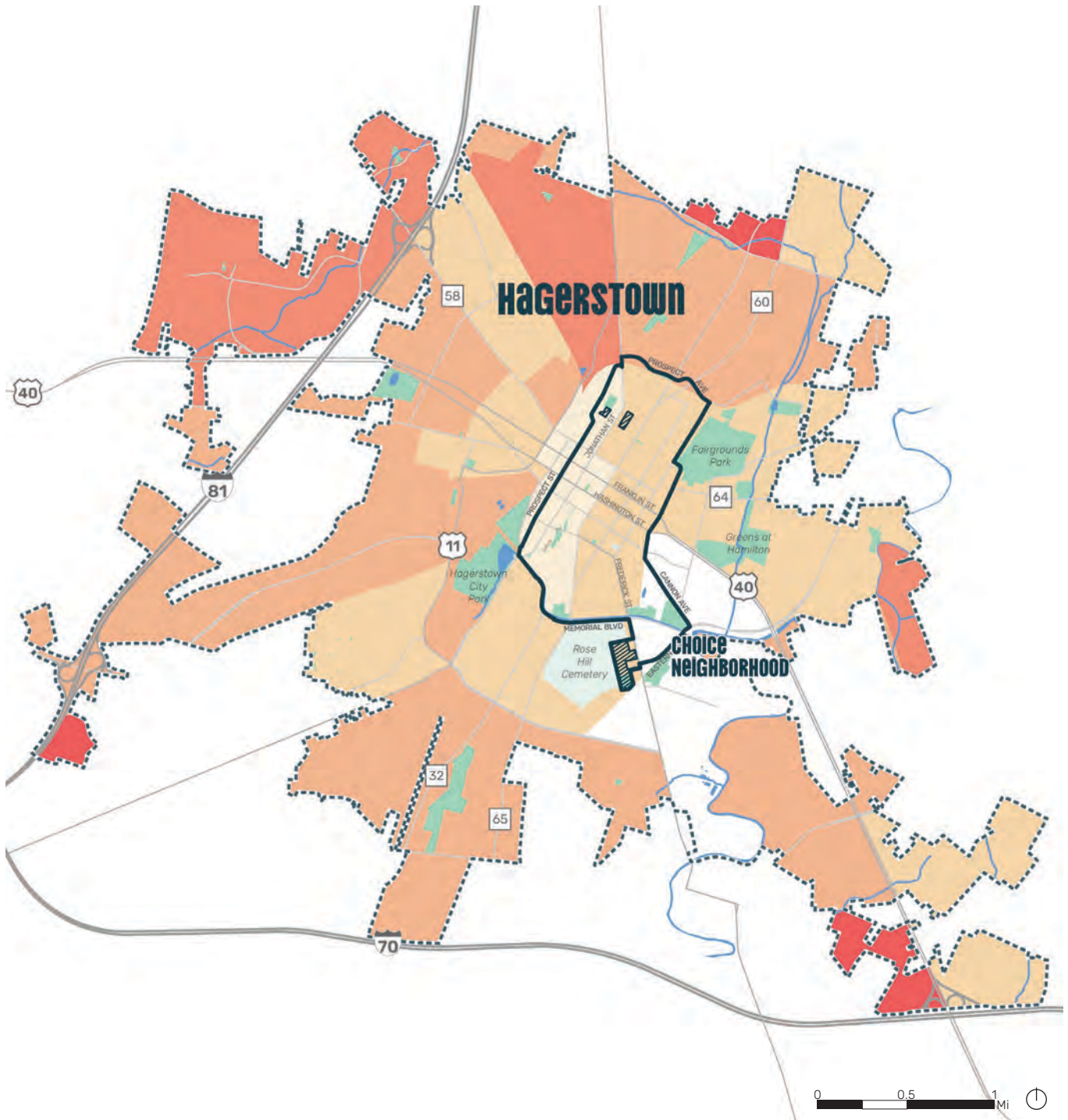
RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Income reported by HHA housing sites residents:



Focusing on the HHA housing sites of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor, 60% of residents have reported household incomes of less than \$20,000 through the Resident Needs Assessment. This disparity in incomes highlights a pressing need for economic development initiatives that can help increase economic mobility among residents.

In the Resident Needs Assessment, 38% of HHA residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor reported that they are working in areas within the city but outside the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods boundary and 31% are finding employment outside of Hagerstown. The proximity to downtown Hagerstown presents an area of opportunity for Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents, but there are other areas of opportunity for employment in proximity. Several employment hubs, like those related to logistics, distribution, and healthcare, exist within the city and region. To maximize employment opportunities for residents, multiple areas of opportunity must be addressed, including enhancing mobility and access, and workforce development training.



Median Household Income

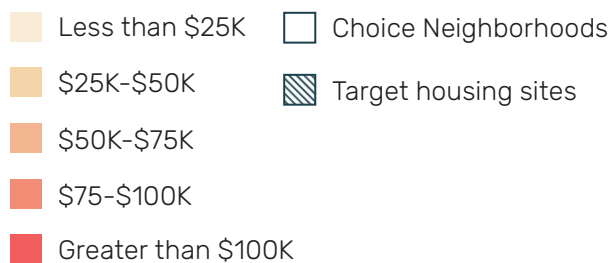
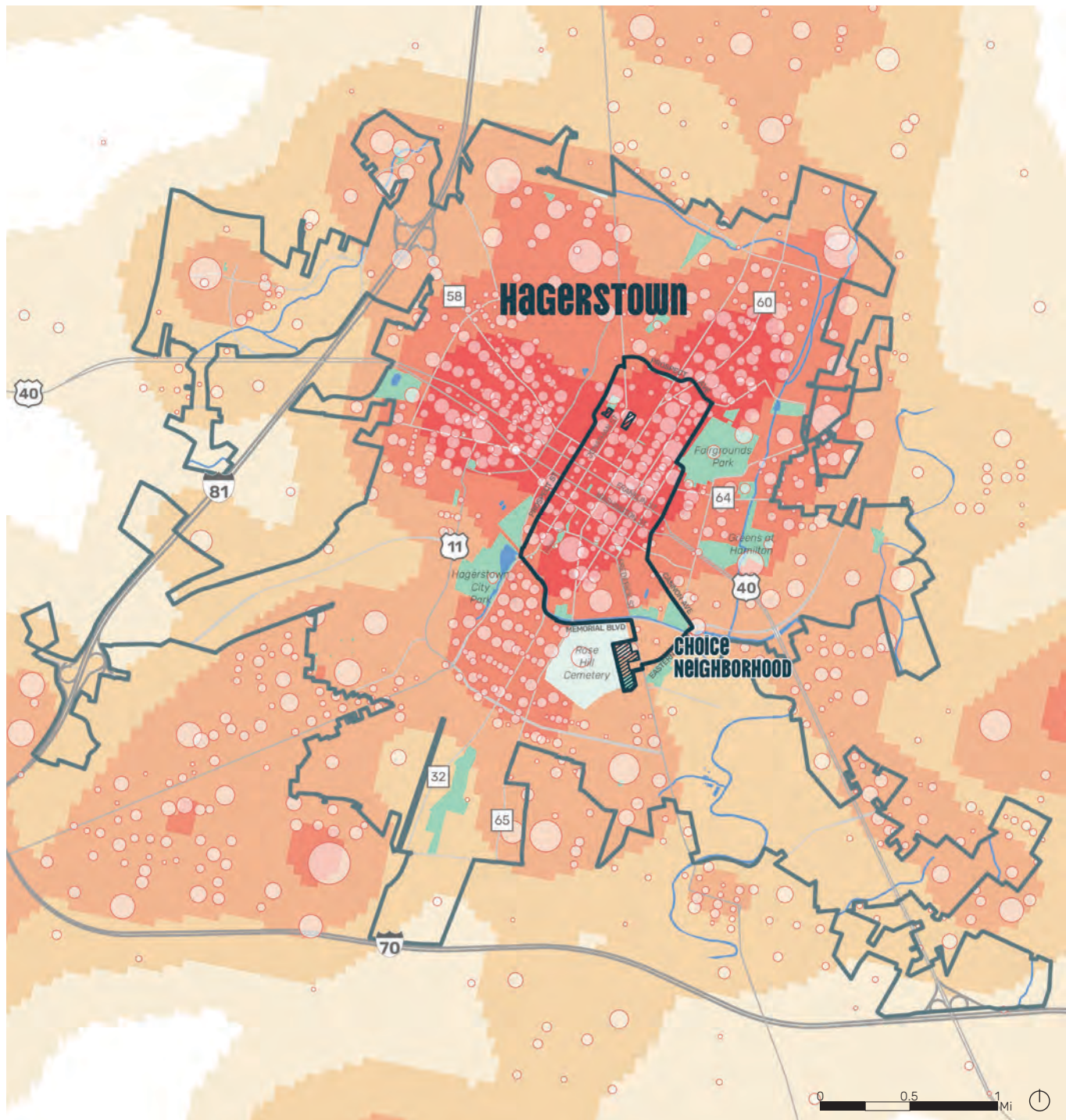


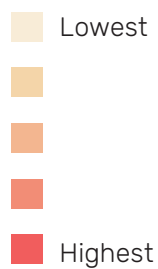
FIGURE 9 | MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Source: US Census Bureau, 2022. ACS 5-yr Estimates

Compared to other areas of the city, Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods has some of the lowest median incomes.



Jobs per Sqmi.



Places of Employment

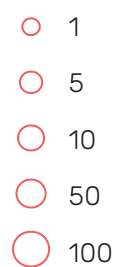


FIGURE 10 | EMPLOYMENT CENTERS

Source: US Census Bureau, 2021. On The Map

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is a hub for employment in the city and region.

EMPLOYMENT

Overall, Hagerstown shows strong workforce participation and an unemployment rate that is below the national average (~3%). As reported in the Resident Needs Assessment of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor residents, 19% are currently unemployed and seeking new employment, 18% are unable to work, and 9% are unemployed but not seeking employment. 56% of HHA residents that are employed report working in three industries, healthcare/social services (21%), food service (21%) and warehousing/distribution/logistics (15%). Healthcare/social services and food services are among the leading sectors of employment for the region overall, but warehousing/distribution/logistics is the fastest growing sector.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

BUSINESS OWNER SURVEY

Employees and hiring opportunities:

■ Agree ■ Not sure ■ Disagree

The majority of my employees (50% or more) are Hagerstown residents



I have difficulty hiring due to a lack of experience/training



It is easy for me to fill open part-time positions at my business



It is easy for me to fill open full-time positions at my business



BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Through the Resident Needs Assessment, residents at HHA's housing sites identified that low-wage jobs, even if available, do not provide sufficient income to meet basic needs. Additionally, many residents face difficulty accessing affordable, quality childcare, and they identified access to this service as the intervention that will have the greatest impact on career attainment, advancement, and quality of life.



GROWING THE WORKFORCE

19% of respondents to the Residents Needs Assessment report being unemployed and looking for a job, and among unemployed residents, difficulty finding jobs locally was identified as the top barrier to full-time employment. Setting up residents for success with workforce development training, building local connections, and an enhanced quality of life will play a critical role in ensuring residents are equipped with the tools and have the capacity to enter into the workforce.



ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey show that the community, while facing barriers to employment, is ready to overcome challenges and work towards a stronger local economy in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. Aspirations are focused on improving access to jobs that provide a wage to support their families, enhancing transportation options so that all residents can access jobs, and expanding childcare services to allow more parents to participate in the workforce.



Downtown businesses (City of Hagerstown)

Expanding and strengthening the pipeline of living wage jobs accessible to residents within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area is a real opportunity, as the elements and environment to expand job opportunities is already a priority of local businesses and employers in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. According to the Business Owner Survey, 46% of businesses in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods want to expand their operations. Less than 10% are considering downsizing over that same period. Most of these businesses rely on the local workforce and report having difficulty filling available jobs, with most of their employees currently living outside the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

The workforce support programs used most frequently by residents include Western Maryland Consortium, low barrier skill development training through Horizon Goodwill Industries, and job matching services through private companies like ManPower, Spherion and Aerotec.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

What are the barriers to employment for you and/or your family?

- 43%** It is difficult to find available jobs locally
- 41%** The available jobs do not make economic sense
- 34%** Not enough/convenient transportation options
- 33%** It is difficult to find quality, affordable childcare

TRANSIT

The available modes of transportation and ability to access them are key factors that affect residents' employment opportunities and ability to meet their daily needs. 73% of employed Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor residents rely on car transport to get to work; 61% of that report owning a car, and the other 12% rely on rideshare services or rides from family and friends. A very small percentage of HHA residents reported using public transit (2.5%) and with a slightly larger number of residents choosing to walk as their primary mode of transportation (5%).

With transportation being a significant barrier for many residents, and the reality of many employment clusters located outside of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, the ability to maximize regional job opportunities for HHA housing sites residents will be greatly aided by increased transit service to and from job centers.



TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Most residents rely on personal vehicles to get to work, but for those without access to a car, they shared there are few alternatives. The Resident Needs Assessment identified multiple transportation challenges: public transportation is seen as unreliable due to the limited routes, rideshare services are too expensive, and the lack of safe pedestrian pathways makes walking a risky option – all of which make it difficult for residents to reach job employment opportunities. HHA residents have voiced the need for more convenient and affordable transit options, which will support employment options and quality of life in the neighborhood.



A GLANCE AT OUR HOUSING SITES:

Parkside Homes residents stood out from Douglass Court and Frederick Manor residents in their focus on transit-based transportation challenges. They identified the frequency, reliability of buses, and location of bus stops as three of their top four transportation challenges.

DOUGLASS COURT

- 1 Pedestrian safety
- 2 Availability of parking
- 3 Cost of rideshare services
- 4 Road conditions and maintenance

PARKSIDE HOMES

- 1 Cost of rideshare services
- 2 Frequency of buses
- 3 Reliability of buses
- 4 Location and number of bus stops

FREDERICK MANOR

- 1 Pedestrian safety
- 2 Availability of parking
- 3 Cost of rideshare services
- 4 Road conditions/maintenance

MEET OUR PARTNERS!

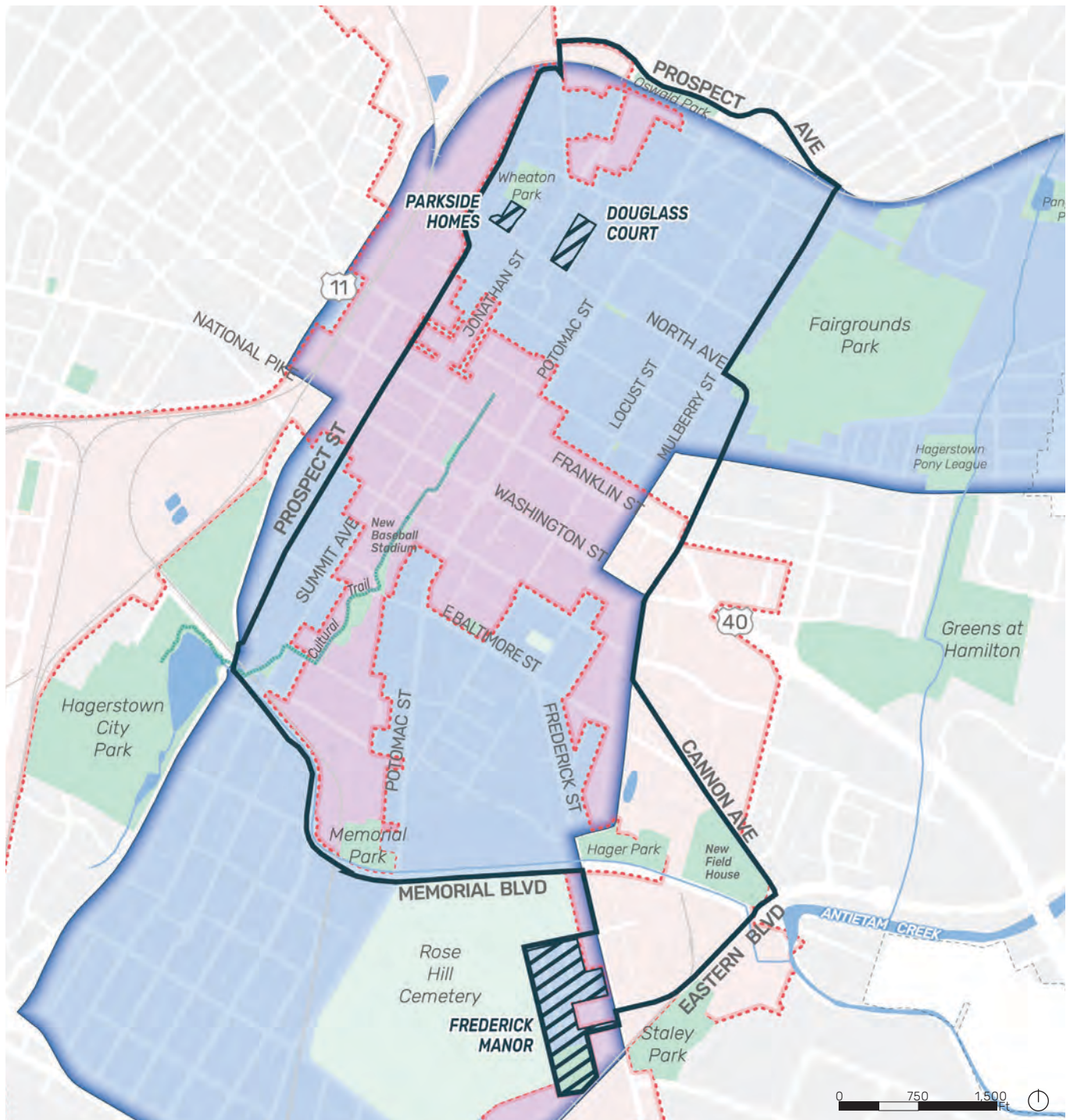


WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION COUNCIL

Washington County Community Action Council (CAC) plays a crucial role in fostering economic opportunity and mobility, effectively alleviating poverty for households in Hagerstown and the broader Washington County community. The CAC is already operating multiple programs that serve the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area including food assistance,

energy assistance, mentorship, transportation to key employment centers, and many other essential services to support and lift up those living in poverty. As the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative moves forward, CAC will continue to be a key partner in supporting the community, collaborating on new programs and initiatives, and engaging with the implementation of the Transformation Plan to build pathways to economic opportunity and stability.





Financial Investment Tools

- Enterprise Zone
- Opportunity Zone
- Choice Neighborhoods
- Target housing sites

FIGURE 11 | INVESTMENT TOOLS

Source: City of Hagerstown

OPPORTUNITY ZONES

The City of Hagerstown has implemented several economic development tools to spur community revitalization, particularly evident in recent investments and planned developments in and around the downtown area. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods includes key Enterprise and Opportunity Zones, two tax incentive tools Hagerstown has at its disposal to support economic investment and that present a valuable opportunity for urban development and community revitalization

These two place-based tax overlays function cooperatively. 4,000 acres of Hagerstown and Washington County were designated Enterprise Zone in 1992, and it encompasses key regional



BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL ECONOMY

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community has prioritized physical improvements in the commercial areas of the neighborhood. Residents feel that increasing public safety efforts, better lighting, and more beautification are essential to creating an inviting and vibrant environment and attracting more businesses and customers. Business owners have echoed the need for these improvements, and a notable percentage of business owners are interested in expanding their operations but face barriers in securing financing or finding suitable spaces for growth.

economic areas including the Central Business District in downtown Hagerstown. Enterprise Zone Incentives have allowed businesses in Hagerstown to apply for income and property tax credits to spur expansion and job development. Hagerstown further incentivizes development in this area by easing eligibility requirements for businesses locating downtown. Opportunity Zones were established in 2017 to spur long-term private investment in economically distressed communities through tax benefits for investors. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods sits inside a Federal Opportunity Zone increasing the ability to attract capital for potential development in the neighborhood.

For residents, there is a priority for economic development investments and tools that can lead to increased employment opportunities and improved infrastructure, upgraded public spaces, and additional services that directly benefit the community.



W Washington St (City of Hagerstown)



BUSINESSES IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS

There is a strong desire for a safer and more vibrant commercial environment, where local businesses can thrive and provide services and jobs directly to the neighborhood, creating a more prosperous and sustainable community and local economy.



The Maryland Theatre (City of Hagerstown)



Meritus Park (City of Hagerstown)

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT IN HAGERSTOWN

In 2014, Hagerstown drafted and began implementing the 10-Year Community's Center Plan aimed at revitalizing and enhancing the downtown area. Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents have a unique opportunity to capitalize on the ongoing downtown development. Since 2015, key projects such as the Maryland Theatre Performance Arts Center, the expansion of the Barbara Ingram School for the Arts, and the Hagerstown Cultural Arts Trail have spurred downtown development. Between 2020-2024, there has been \$190 million in downtown investment and 182 housing units have been renovated/created. Citywide, between 2020-2024, there has been \$827 million of investment (inclusive of downtown) and over 1000 housing units are planned or in the development pipeline. This surge of investment brings job opportunities in sectors such as construction, retail, hospitality, and education, providing employment prospects for local residents.

Planned future projects in the region such as the Meritus School of Osteopathic Medicine is projected to have an impact of around \$263 million on the local economy and will further the demand for local services and businesses, allowing residents to pursue economic and job opportunities in these areas.

DOWNTOWN HAGERSTOWN | N Potomac Street hosts a number of local businesses



6

BUILDING ON... SAFETY, HEALTH, and WELLNESS

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community has been clear that a healthy, safe, and connected neighborhood is key to a future in which everyone thrives. The ability to access essential services – grocery stores, doctors' offices, social service agencies – as well as the opportunity connect to resources – libraries, community centers, places of worship – greatly affects quality of life. A sense of community safety and security is essential to fostering a sense of belonging and support within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods faces challenges related to health, wellness, and safety, but there is a strong community with a shared desire and drive to overcome these difficulties. There are high rates of residents with health insurance in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, but in the Resident Needs Assessment HHA residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor reported concerns of limited healthcare facilities located in Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. Concerns include the need for extended hours at healthcare facilities and additional transportation options to access these services. Mental health is also a major concern, not only for adults but also for children and youth in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. HHA residents identified the need for more mental health services, reduced stigma around mental illness and substance abuse, and expanded services and educational programs.

Food insecurity is another pressing issue, with about 22% of HHA residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor not having enough food to eat at least once per week due to affordability and transportation barriers. Residents at Frederick Manor had the highest rates of food insecurity, with 34% of respondents indicating they do not have enough food in their household at least 1 to 2 days per week. Across all three housing sites, residents would like to see local food sources and programs that offer consistent, affordable, healthy food options that are accessible for all. Recent investments, including the Horizon Goodwill Industries grocery stores, have been positive steps towards food access in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.



Hub City 100 Miler (City of Hagerstown)

Safety is also a top concern for both HHA residents and the larger Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community, with drug use, gun violence, and mental health identified as the top three safety concerns. Public safety initiatives, such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) and increased police presence have had success, particularly in the downtown revitalization areas. The community strongly supports additional safety measures including a larger presence of public safety officers, along with a desire to be actively involved in neighborhood safety efforts.

With strong community involvement and targeted interventions, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods has the potential to overcome these challenges and create a healthier, safer, and more connected environment for all residents.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

PHYSICAL and mental WELLBEING

Residents express a need for more accessible healthcare services, especially mental health services. The community desires more mental health support and reduced stigma for youth and adults, and more local healthcare facilities with extended hours to better meet their healthcare needs.



FOOD access

Food insecurity is a significant concern, with many residents finding difficulty in accessing affordable, healthy food options. Residents voiced an interest in developing local food sources to improve access to fresh, nutritious food.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Drug use, gun violence, and public safety are some of the concerns residents have expressed within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods footprint. The community actively supports being actively involved in making the neighborhood safer through community-driven strategies.



HEALTH ACCESS

Health access in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods reveals both challenges and opportunities for the community. Washington County's top health concerns, which include mental health, substance abuse, the promotion of a healthy diet, asthma, and high blood pressure, align with the top health concerns identified in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Resident Needs Assessment.

Within the City of Hagerstown, adults with a disability make up 43.5% of the population while 10.3% of children have a disability, highlighting the importance of accessible healthcare services. Additionally, 12.2% of adults in Hagerstown lack health insurance, a rate that is higher than the county average. The absence of health insurance limits residents' access to preventive care and routine check-ups.



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Although the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey reveal high levels of health insurance coverage, residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor reported difficulty in accessing affordable, quality healthcare, with a focus on the need to extend hours of local healthcare facilities and transportation to major medical centers.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

How can access to quality healthcare be improved for you and your family?



Extending the hours of health facilities in the neighborhood



Locating more healthcare facilities in the neighborhood



Improving transportation to major medical facilities



Being able to access affordable prescriptions

In the Resident Needs Assessment, 98% of HHA residents reported that they take part on an annual medical check-up, and 57% take part in a free health screening. Despite these numbers, the majority of residents express concerns about the quality and availability of local healthcare services. HHA residents have clearly identified the need for more healthcare facilities within the neighborhood, particularly ones that are open for extended hours and provide a wider range of services that align with their most pressing health concerns. Additionally, improving transportation to major medical centers would remove significant barriers, as many have difficulties accessing healthcare outside their immediate neighborhood.

Residents also recognize the importance of addressing mental and behavioral health, particularly depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress. Based on findings from the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood

Survey, there is a growing awareness of the need for accessible mental health services, particularly as the community grapples with the stigma surrounding mental illness and substance abuse. Substance abuse, in addition to mental health, is an issue that impacts the overall perception of safety in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. There is agreement between the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey that substance abuse-related activity is the greatest threat to public safety and that initiatives should be put into place to reduce stigma, improve access to treatment, and support recovery.

The community aspires to see a healthcare system that is more locally responsive, with a focus on expanding services within the neighborhood and ensuring all residents can access the care they need regardless of access to transportation and cost.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In a typical year, do you take part in the following?



98%
Annual check-up



83%
Get vaccinations



82%
At least one dental cleaning

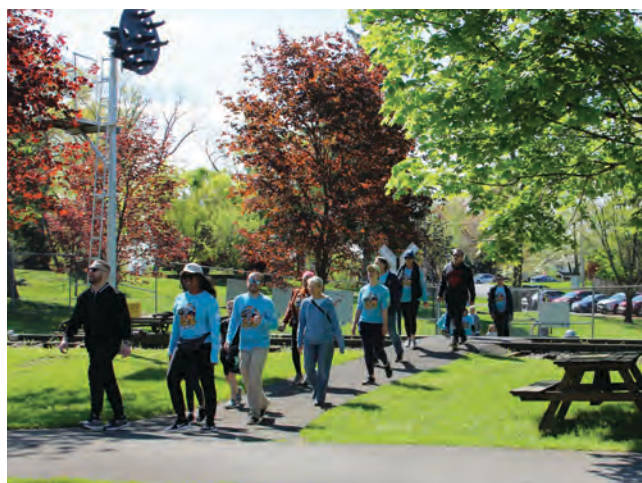


57%
A free health screening



MENTAL AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

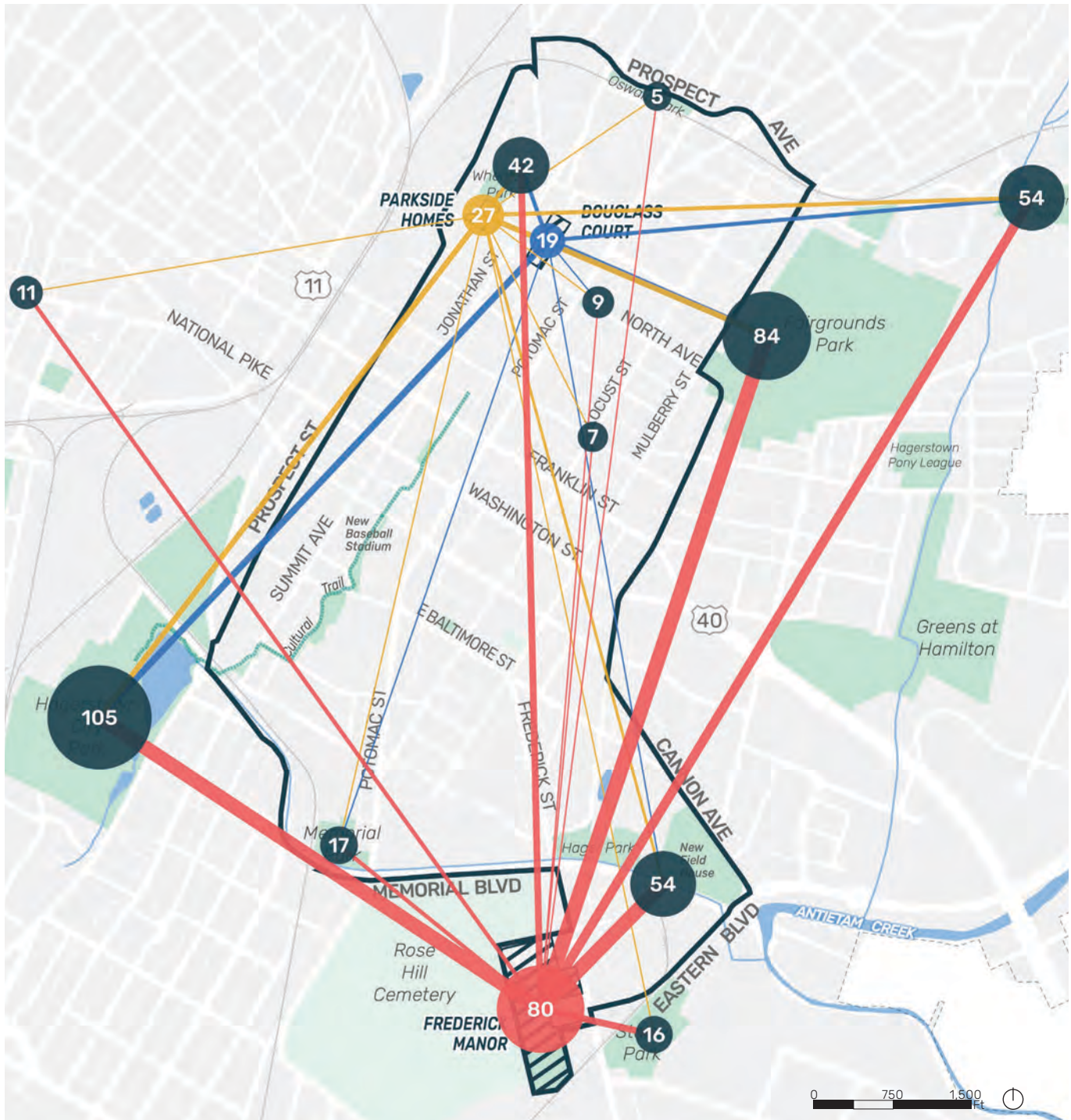
Mental health is top of mind for HHA residents. In the Resident Needs Assessment, 68% reported that at least one member of their household was diagnosed with a mental health related illness. Moreover, residents identified mental health and a sense of belonging as the greatest challenges youth face.



Hub City 100 Miler (City of Hagerstown)



Hagerstown Cultural Trail (City of Hagerstown)



Resident Movement to Parks and Open Spaces

- Parkside Homes Residents
- Douglass Court Residents
- Frederick Manor Residents
- Choice Neighborhoods
- Target housing sites

FIGURE 12 | USE OF OPEN SPACE

Source: WRT; Resident Needs Assessment: 126 responses

Through the Resident Needs Assessment, we asked housing sites residents what open spaces they use the most to better understand resident movement in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. This map represents resident movement from the housing sites to open space assets. Blue circles represent parks and open spaces and includes how many times the asset was mentioned; colored lines represent amount of movement from each of the housing sites.

WELLNESS

In the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, access to open space plays a critical role in community health and recreation. One of the amenities valued most within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is access to quality parks and open spaces. While Hagerstown City Park and Fairgrounds Park are the most popular outdoor spaces, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community also frequently visits smaller parks like Pangborn Park, Hager Park, and Wheaton Park, which just recently received a \$500,000 investment for park upgrades. These patterns suggest that many community members travel outside their immediate area to access recreational and green spaces, demonstrating that there is a need for more recreational areas within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods footprint.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

What are the strengths of your neighborhood?

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 1 My neighbors and community
- 2 Parks and open spaces
- 3 Access to downtown

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

- 1 Parks and open spaces
- 2 Access to downtown
- 3 History and culture



EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

HHA residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor identified mental health and behavioral issues as one of the challenges the community is facing. The Resident Needs Assessment highlighted that activities such as fitness programs, sports leagues, and outdoor activities can help support a healthier lifestyle and overall wellbeing. The importance residents placed on wellness and mental health services reflects a broader desire to create a more supportive and active community that promotes physical and emotional wellbeing.



Hagerstown City Park (City of Hagerstown)

While many of the residential areas within the Choice Neighborhoods footprint are within a 10-minute walk to open space, there are parts of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that remain underserved thus limiting opportunities for outdoor activities. The Resident Needs Assessment also identified concerns around pedestrian safety and the walkability of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, which can be an additional challenge to accessing open space, particularly for the young and elderly who may have more limited mobility.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS: _____

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

What do you think about the following statements regarding community health in your neighborhood?

Douglass Court Parkside Homes Frederick Manor

There are adequate green spaces and trees throughout the neighborhood



This is a great neighborhood for walking

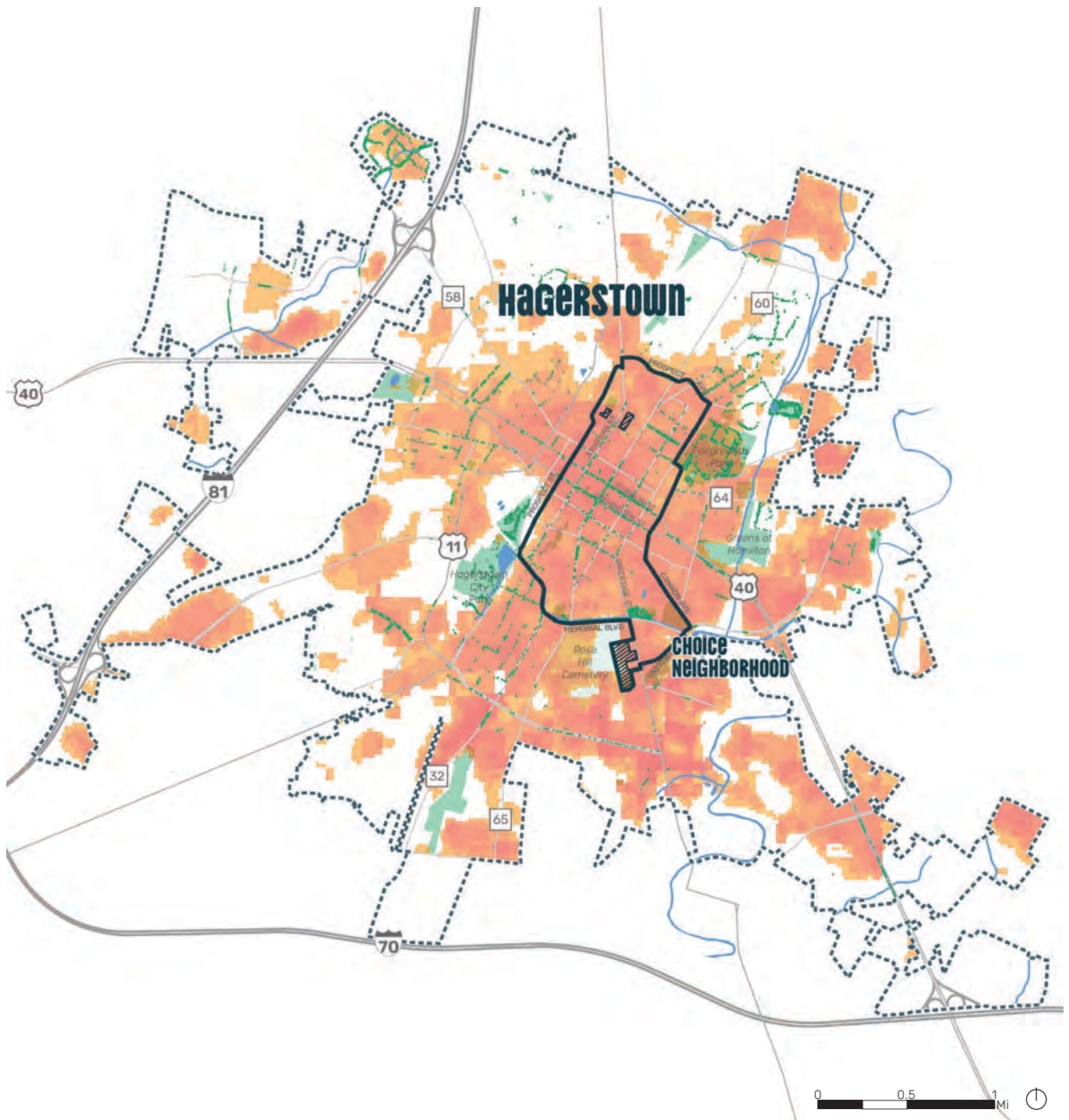


There are adequate places to exercise (gyms/parks/playgrounds)

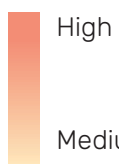


Extreme heat is another concern, especially in urban areas lacking sufficient green infrastructure and greenery. Continuing to develop existing parks and finding opportunities to create green open spaces could also have important environmental impacts for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods experiences higher levels of heat compared to surrounding areas, which can exacerbate health risks for vulnerable populations. Increasing green areas and coverage in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods would not only provide advantages to the overall quality of life of residents but can also contribute to improved physical and mental wellbeing of residents.

Feedback from the Resident Needs Assessment indicates a desire for more recreational opportunities in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. There is a lower rate of children from HHA housing sites participating in regular physical activity and there is an identified need for more adequate places for recreation and exercising. Residents expressed the need for more places where children can play safely and engage with their community. Expanding green areas and access to community spaces can help tackle effects from extreme heat and fulfill recreational needs of the community, while offering a healthier environment for physical and mental wellbeing of residents.



Heat Severity Index



- Choice Neighborhoods
- Target housing sites

FIGURE 13 | HEAT SEVERITY

Source: Trust for Public Land, 2023

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is a central area of heat severity within the city.

MEET OUR PARTNERS!

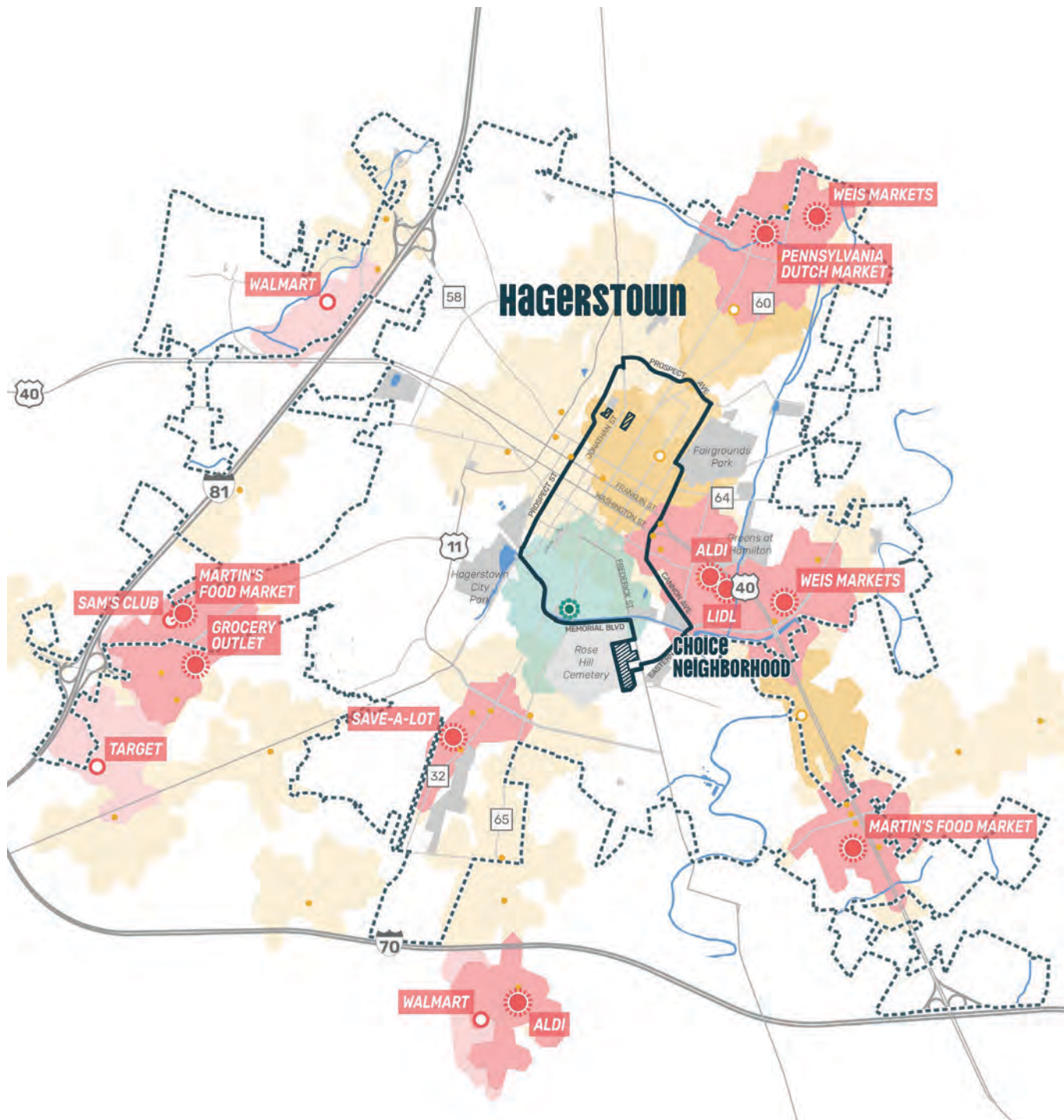


WASHINGTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Washington County Health Department is supporting the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative through community education and engagement around healthy eating, physical exercise and chronic disease prevention. We will continue to strengthen the partnership we have with after-school programs and youth groups in the identified areas to

expand behavioral health prevention programs and initiatives. We will also work with Hagerstown Housing Authority and their residents to identify new potential initiatives for residents regarding access to nutritious food, transportation, and the health and wellbeing of residents of all ages. The Washington County Health Department is dedicated to providing any necessary staff and funding resources to support the Hagerstown Housing Authority and its residents in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.





Food Resources

-  Grocery
-  Walmart/Target
-  Community Garden
-  Small Grocery
-  Convenience Store

10-Min Walkshed

-  Grocery
-  Walmart/Target
-  Community Garden
-  Small Grocery
-  Convenience Store

FIGURE 14 | FOOD RESOURCES

Source: ESRI; WRT

There are currently no full-service grocery stores within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods boundary. The map shows the locations of different food resources and areas that are within a 10-minute walk of each resource. A very small percentage of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is served by any of the full-service grocery stores.

FOOD ACCESS

Food access is among the biggest challenges in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, with disparities in availability and affordability of health food options. According to the Resident Needs Assessment, 21% of residents at HHA housing sites reported experiencing food insecurity 1 to 2 days a week, and 61% of respondents identified affordability as a primary barrier to securing enough food. 59% of residents report utilizing free or low-cost food resources in the last year, and 77% report receiving SNAP/WIC benefits in the same period.

Additionally, healthy food options in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods are limited – residents must travel outside the neighborhood to access major grocery chains that meet their needs.



Downtown community garden (City of Hagerstown)

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

What amenities could enhance the neighborhood for you and your family?

41% Large spaces for pop-ups, seasonal, and/or farmers' market

34% Community gardens



IMPROVING ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD

Food insecurity is a critical issue facing residents at the HHA housing sites that are part of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods initiative. Many community members struggle to access fresh, high-quality food, due to both the lack of easily accessible full-service grocery stores in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and cost of food and groceries. The community has expressed the need for local solutions, such as community gardens and large spaces for markets to help address food insecurity. These initiatives could not only improve access to fresh food, but also offer opportunities for education, community pride, and sustainability.

The reliance on personal vehicles, public transportation, and/or rideshare/cab services add to daily challenges residents face to accessing affordable, healthy food. The Resident Needs Assessment identified that 23% of residents have difficulty getting to the grocery store, emphasizing the need for local, accessible grocery stores that offer consistent, affordable, and nutritious food options.

Residents have expressed interest in expanding local food sources, with 41% supporting the development of spaces for markets and 34% supporting community gardens. Addressing food insecurity and availability within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods are critical steps in enhancing wellbeing and the overall quality of life of residents.



Hagerstown Farmers Market (City of Hagerstown)

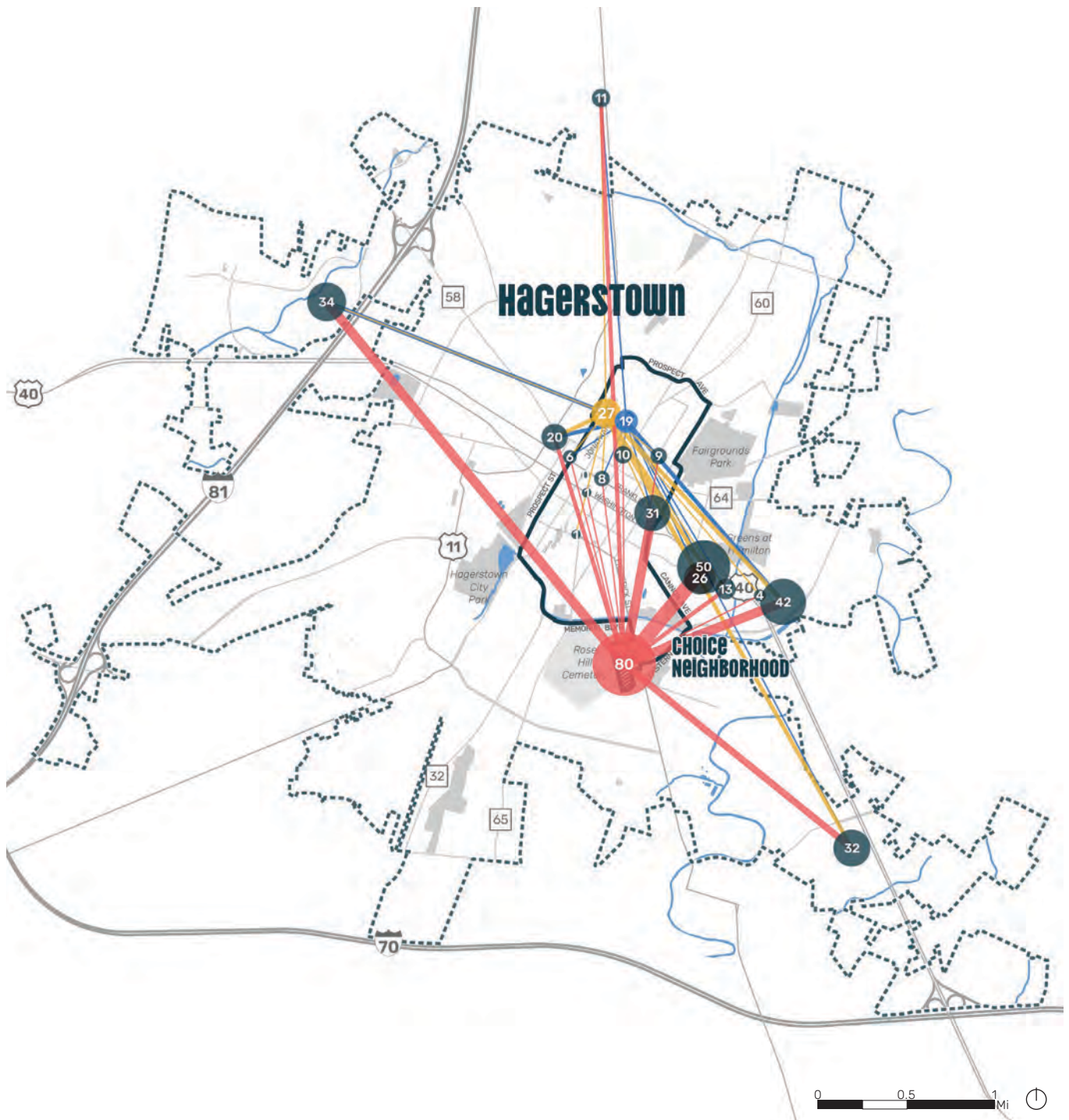


A GLANCE AT OUR HOUSING SITES:

While Parkside Homes residents agree that fresh food is available, Douglass Court and Frederick Manor show less than half of the residents agree with this statement, indicating gaps in food accessibility across the three housing sites.

High-quality fresh fruits/vegetables/food are widely available and affordable:





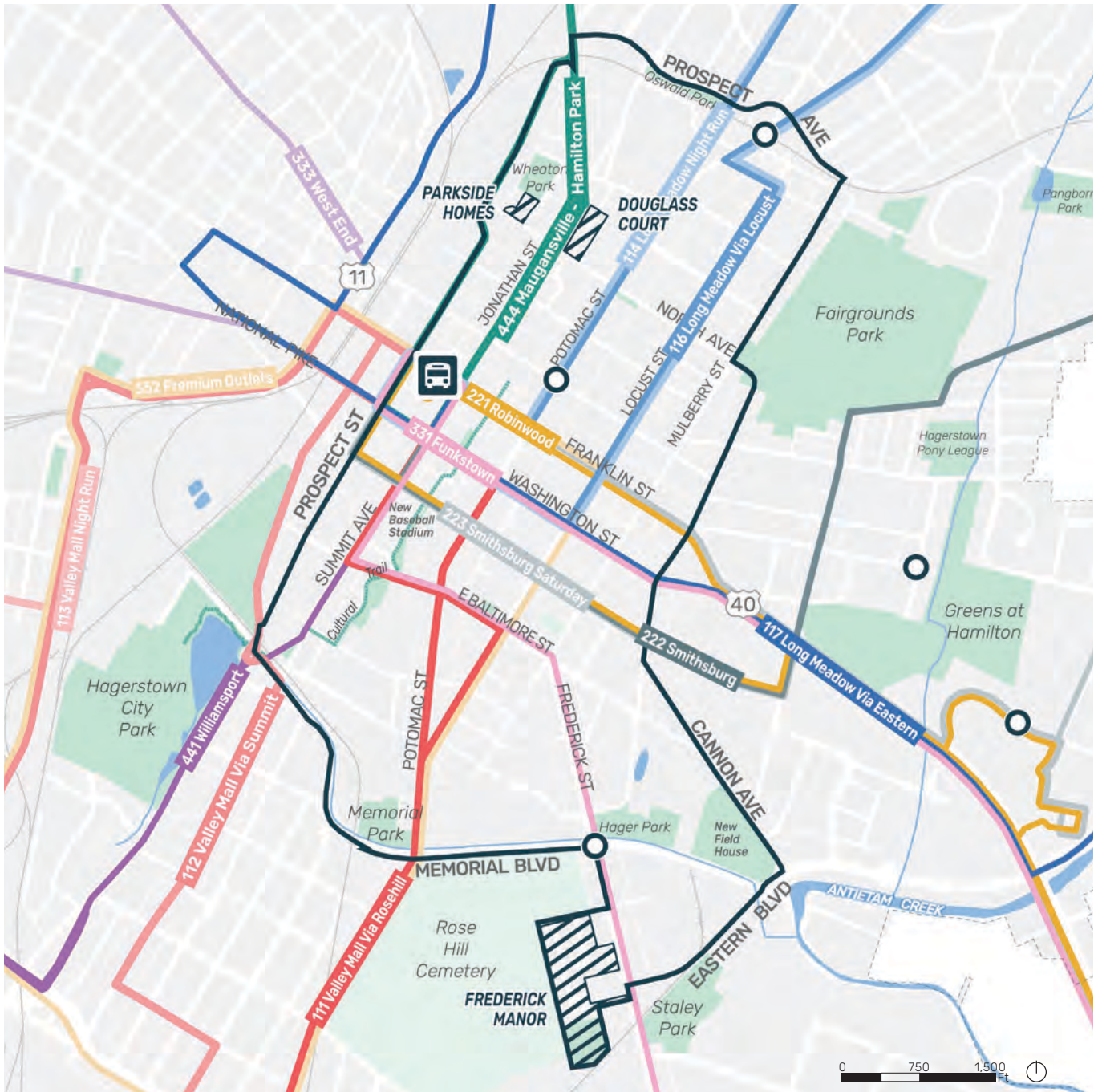
Resident Movement to Food Services

- Parkside Homes Residents
- Douglass Court Residents
- Frederick Manor Residents
- Choice Neighborhoods
- Target housing sites

FIGURE 15 | USE OF FOOD SERVICES

Source: WRT; Resident Needs Assessment: 126 responses

Through the Resident Needs Assessment, we asked housing sites residents where do they do their groceries to better understand resident movement in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. This map represents resident movement from the housing sites to grocery stores, convenience stores, etc. Blue circles represent grocery stores, convenience stores, etc. and includes how many times the asset was mentioned; colored lines represent amount of movement from each of the housing sites.



Transit Routes

- Bus Stop
- 🚏 Transfer Center
- Funkstown
- Long Meadow via Estern
- Long Meadow via Locust
- Long Meadow via Night Run
- Maugansville-Hamilton Park
- Premium Outlets
- Robinwood
- Smithsburg Weekday
- Smithsburg Saturday
- Valley Mall via Rosehill
- Valley Mall via Summit
- Valley Mall Night Run
- West End
- Williamsport

ACCESS TO DAILY NEEDS

Transportation presents a significant challenge for residents to be able to meet their daily needs. For those residents that do not own cars, availability and destinations of public transportation, and pedestrian infrastructure conditions create a barrier to access healthcare and food services, and recreational and wellbeing assets.

Hagerstown is served by the Washington County Transit Department (WCT), which operates eight bus routes connecting downtown Hagerstown to surrounding municipalities. There is one bus route that is within close walking distance to Frederick Manor, and Parkside Homes and Douglass Court residents must go downtown to access transit services.

In the Resident Needs Assessment, HHA residents identified that more affordable and convenient transit options, improved road conditions, and better pedestrian infrastructure are key to alleviate some of the barriers to accessing services.

More recently, the City has intensively invested in creating one-street bike paths and sidewalks, which are now a requirement in Hagerstown for any new development site plans. Targeted investments in pedestrian, bike and transit infrastructure have economic, health, and public safety benefits for Hagerstown and its residents.

FIGURE 16 | PUBLIC TRANSIT (LEFT)

Source: City of Hagerstown; Washington County Transportation Department

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is served by multiple WTC bus routes; however, not all three housing sites have equal levels of service.



ACCESSIBILITY

The Resident Needs Assessment identified transportation to food and healthcare services as one of the key obstacles to meeting daily needs in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. For residents without cars, options such rideshare services or public transportation are costly or inconvenient, creating additional burdens in to HHA residents and households. Addressing transportation needs is critical to improving residents' access to essential services, helping them reach daily needs more easily to contribute to their health and wellbeing.



Earth and Arbor Day, community garden
(City of Hagerstown)

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is a top concern for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents, and it is foundational to achieving a high quality of life for all residents. HHA has been successful in creating an environment where residents feel safe; however, safety concerns still exist. 42% of residents reported in the Resident Needs Assessment that they felt unsafe at night, and that drug use, gun violence, and public drinking are top safety concerns across the three housing sites. To address these concerns, residents have suggested practical measures: better lighting, more visible police presence, and security cameras in public spaces.



NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

Safety is a top priority for the community, with significant concerns about drug use and violence in Douglass Court, Parkside Homes, and Frederick Manor. The Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey identified that concerns around drug use and gun violence are the most pressing challenges. There is strong support for improved safety measures and engaging at-risk youth. Despite these concerns, there is a desire within residents to take an active role in making the neighborhood safer, with many pointing at a strong sense of community and the willingness to work towards a safer environment for all.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

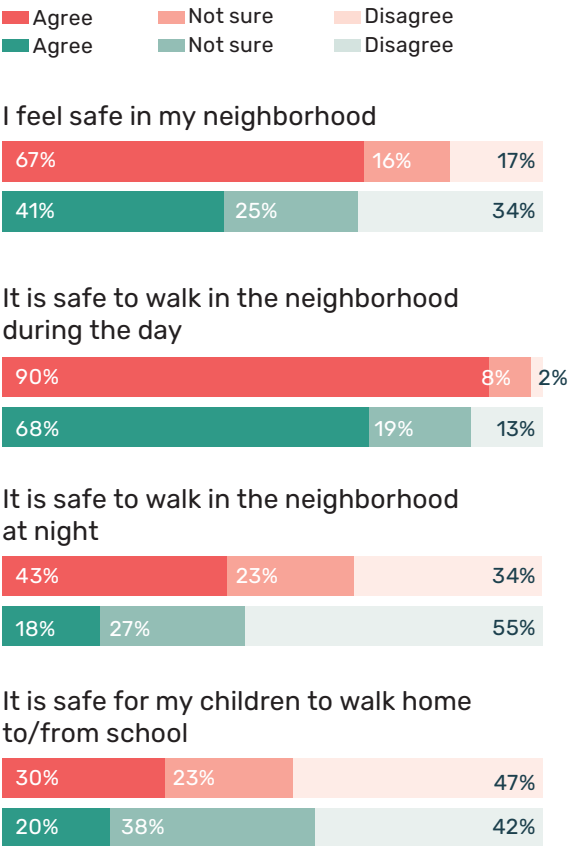
Parents would like **more awareness for mental and behavioral health, and substance abuse for children.**

81% of respondents cite **belonging in the community as an important pillar for children.**

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

Safety perception in the neighborhood:





RuthAnn Monroe Basketball League (City of Hagerstown)

The City has been working towards public safety efforts through strategies like Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), which has been implemented in the design of places such as the Field House, the Maryland Theatre, and the new multipurpose sports complex downtown.

Perception varies between residents at HHA sites, and community members that live, work or own businesses in other parts of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhood. Residents at HHA sites feel safer and have a more positive outlook on safety than other neighborhood residents. On the other hand, only 31% of business owners feel their business is “located in a safe area.” The Top safety concerns among all residents are drug and substance-related criminal activity as well as gun violence. Residents are invested in working on existing issues, a majority reported they are willing to take an active role in “making the community safer.”

Community involvement is crucial to improve safety. In the Resident Needs Assessment, 64% of residents have expressed a desire to take part in neighborhood safety initiatives, showing the community’s commitment to enhancing their community. Additionally, many parents are concerned with mental health and substance abuse, indicating a need for increased awareness and support services in these areas. Residents are hopeful that through community-driven strategies and collaboration with local authorities, a safer neighborhood can be achieved.

HHA has a security team that partners directly with Hagerstown police to address safety issues, investing in putting “more eyes on the street” and community-focused design and proactive policing efforts.



BUILDING ON... **CHILDREN and YOUTH**

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods' future is its young people. From Pre-K to high school to college, children and youth in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods need quality education, after-school programs, and recreational activities that are engaging, supportive, and build opportunities for a bright future. The community is committed to its young people and is ready to partner to ensure a future where everyone thrives.

HOLLY FEST | Hagerstown hosts several events with a focus on children and youth



Respondents to the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey have shared their perspectives on the challenges youth face in the community today, with residents expressing a desire to remain committed to addressing these issues and creating a more supportive, stable, and friendly environment for children in the community. Limited access to early childhood education is one of the key concerns in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community, with many families struggling to find affordable pre-K programs due to high costs and limited availability. Additionally, older children face challenges related to mental health, bullying, and a lack of resources in their social network, creating an environment where many young

people feel isolated or unsafe, impacting their ability to learn and thrive. On the other hand, residents shared they have strong confidence in the educational system and are willing to work alongside educators to ensure their children receive the support they need and have access to networks that create enriching environments.

The community is focused on expanding access to education, improving mental health support, and fostering a sense of belonging through recreational and creative activities. There is a collective commitment and effort to build a better future for Hagerstown's youth, and create a path towards a stronger, more supportive environment where children can grow and succeed.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS...

SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION

The community highly values children's education and is committed to continue supporting their success. Residents are actively involved in their children's education and believe in the quality of local schools although they express more resources and support is needed, especially for students facing mental health challenges and economic hardships.



ACCESSIBLE CHILDCARE SERVICES

Residents expressed a significant need for affordable, accessible childcare services in the community. Many families find it difficult to find available spots or afford quality childcare and early education programs, limiting their economic opportunities and children's early development.

YOUTH SENSE OF BELONGING

A key concern for the community is fostering a sense of belonging for youth. Many young people face challenges related to mental health, bullying, and isolation, and residents emphasize the need for more supportive environments, recreational programs, and mental health services to help youth feel safer and more connected.



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The educational landscape of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods presents both a picture of the challenges and demonstrates opportunities for growth, reflecting broader social and economic issues within the community.

Educational attainment among adults in the Choice Neighborhoods reveals that a significant portion of the population holds lower levels of formal education. Approximately 15% of adults over the age of 25 in the Choice Neighborhoods have not completed high school, and 10% hold a bachelor's degree or higher education. According to the Resident Needs Assessment, 45% of the head of household respondents across the three Hagerstown Housing Authority sites hold a high school degree and 3% hold a bachelor's degree or higher.



Resident Meetings at Housing Sites, February 2024 (WRT)

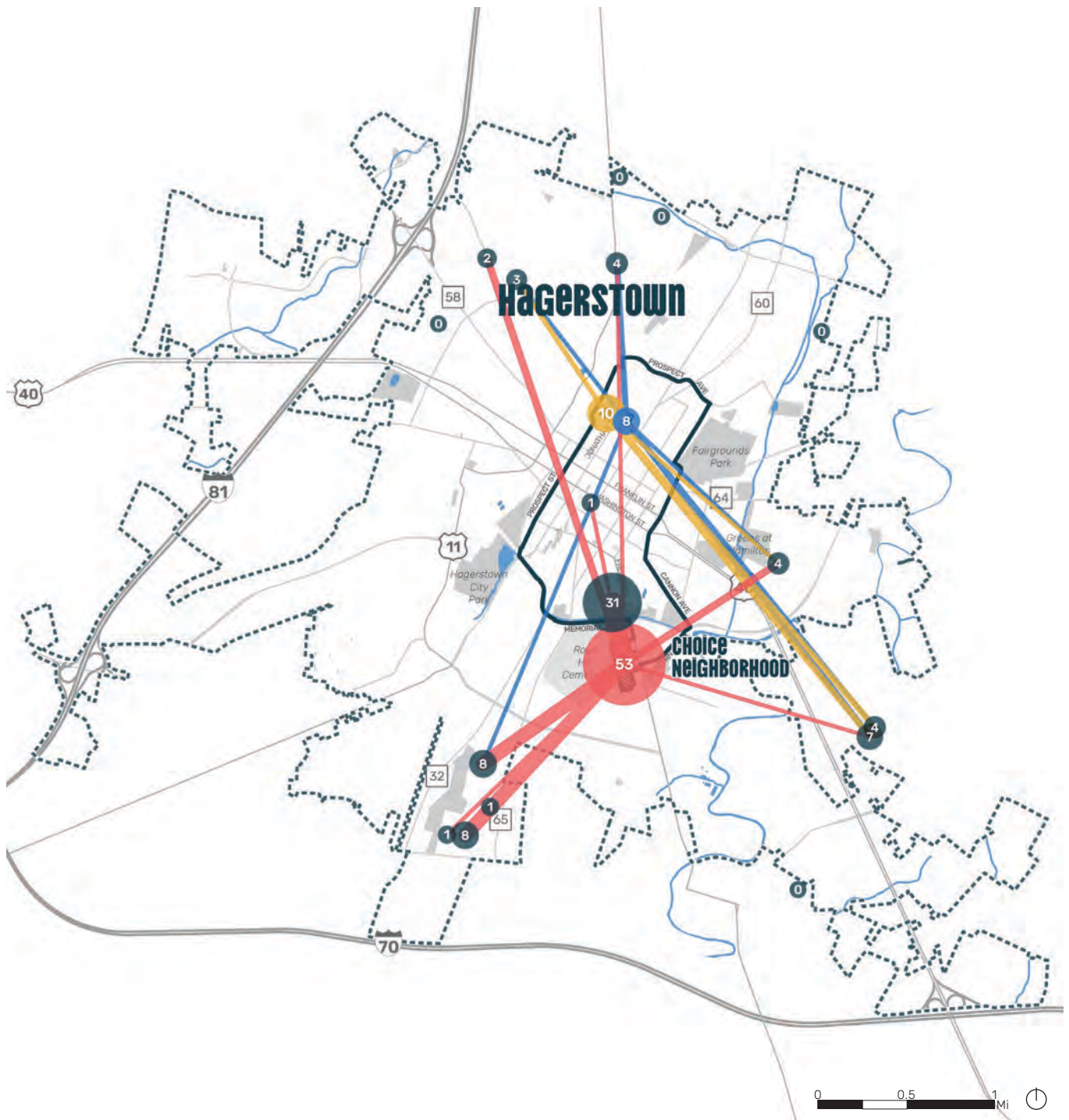
Additionally, a growing number of Hagerstown's youth (age 16–19) are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the workforce, with this trend affecting 16% of the population.

Lower levels of educational attainment can create obstacles and limitations for economic mobility of residents. Responses from the Resident Needs Assessment reinforce the need for greater investment in education and continuing education services and programs as well as engagement strategies and programs aimed at young people that will support their reentry into the educational system.



EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT AND OUTLOOK

While challenges remain, there is a shared optimism about the future of education in the neighborhood. Residents are increasingly involved in their children's education, working alongside educators to ensure that children receive the support they need. Efforts to continue providing resources that respond to family needs in schools are top of mind for parents and educators, helping to create a more inclusive educational environment.



Resident Movement to Educational Facilities

- Parkside Homes Residents
- Douglass Court Residents
- Frederick Manor Residents
- Choice Neighborhoods
- Target housing sites

FIGURE 17 | USE OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Source: WRT; Resident Needs Assessment

Through the Resident Needs Assessment, we asked housing sites residents where do their children go to school to better understand resident movement in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. This map represents resident movement from the housing sites to educational assets. Blue circles represent educational facilities and includes how many times the asset was mentioned; colored lines represent amount of movement from each of the housing sites.

SCHOOL-AGED EDUCATION

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area is part of the Washington Public Schools and it is served by 12 schools located in the city. Overall, residents of Hagerstown feel the school system provides a good education and academic opportunities to their children, and parents and staff are present in their children education, with plenty of opportunities for parents to get involved and staff offering frequent communication.

In the HHA housing sites (Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor), a high percentage of households have youth dependents, with almost 25% of the population being under 5 years, and almost 28% being between 6-18 years old. A high percentage of these children live in a single-parent household,

which often faces greater economic and time-related pressures, but parents have demonstrated to be a continuous partner in their children education.

Through the Resident Needs Assessment, residents have expressed interest in taking an active role on their children's education, and feel valued as a partner in their children's education. Additionally, residents shared that their children are being engaged and motivated at school, and are receiving a high-quality education, demonstrating that Hagerstown's educational landscape is setting up youth for success.

Still, some challenges remain. Economic hardships are also evident in the school system. Over 60% of all students in Washington County are eligible for Maryland's Free and Reduced-



RuthAnn Monroe Basketball League (City of Hagerstown)

Priced Meals (FARM) program, a number that continues to rise. All 12 schools in Hagerstown participate in the Community Eligibility Provision, which ensures students receive free meals, though the high eligibility rate of Hagerstown studies speaks to the significant economic strain that many families face.

In recent years, there has been a marked increase in students requiring Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs) and English Language Learners enrolling in the school system. Increasing demand for specialized services and support within schools may place additional pressure on the local education system to provide adequate resources for all students.

Despite these socioeconomic challenges, there are assets in place that provide a foundation for future improvements. The school district's ability to provide universal free breakfast and lunch through federal provisions helps alleviate some of the immediate economic pressure on families, ensuring students' basic needs are met during the school day. Additionally, there is a strong commitment from parents, guardians, and the larger community to address these challenges as shown in the Resident Needs Assessment and Neighborhood Survey.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

What is your outlook on your child's education?

I take an active role in my child's education

96%

My child is safe at school

77%

I feel valued as a partner in my child's education

75%

School staff respects my child

74%

My child is engaged and motivated at school

68%

My child has access to trauma-informed mental and behavioral health

67%

My child receives a high-quality education at school

65%

My child can engage and concentrate in his classes

59%

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

What programs would your children be interested in?

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- 1 Arts and crafts
- 2 Outdoor/nature programs
- 3 Dance
- 4 Community gardening

MEET OUR PARTNERS!



BESTER COMMUNITY OF HOPE

Bester Community of Hope (BCOH), an initiative of San Mar Family and Community Services, is focused on prevention with a place-based strategy for positive outcomes for the children and families located in the South End neighborhood in Hagerstown. We utilize a collective impact approach through unconditional care emphasizing proactive, voluntary, authentic, and integrated community relationships, that maximize strengths and address root causes to cultivate hope and well-being driven by children, families, and

communities. BCOH supported the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant application, serves on the People & Neighborhood Taskforce, and facilitated resident surveys for the Resident Needs Assessment. We look forward to continuing our collaborative efforts with the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods initiative by supporting residents in meeting the need of their families, strengthening the social capital through intentional investments in residents and neighborhood needs as well as leveraging resources to promote a safe & thriving community.



CHALLENGES FACING YOUTH

Over 20% of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods population is between 5–19 years old, and among the three HHA sites that are the focus of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that number is even higher. According to the Resident Needs Assessment, 58% of Douglass Court respondents, 37% of Parkside Homes respondents, and 66% of Frederick Manor respondents report to have children between 5–19 years old.

While families are deeply invested and involved in their children's education, the Resident Needs Assessment revealed that there are critical gaps in support services that limit youth opportunities and affect their educational outcomes. Youth in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods face a range of significant challenges that might affect their overall wellbeing and development. Sense of belonging, a crucial element for youth development, is identified as one of the main challenges. Mental health and bullying also contribute to a challenging environment where youth feel unsafe in educational and recreational settings. Lastly, substance abuse and exposure to drugs remain a concern for both parents and

THE COMMUNITY SAYS: —————

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

What are the most pressing issues youth face?

mental health **BULLYING**
ACCESS TO RESOURCES
BELONGING **SUBSTANCE USE**



PRESSING ISSUES FOR YOUTH:

Concerns such as mental health, bullying, and access to resources are the most pressing challenges for youth in the neighborhood, along with broader issues of safety, violence, and poverty. The residents and the larger Hagerstown community have expressed a desire to work towards community-driven solutions that create a safer and more supportive environment for children, with initiatives aimed at improving mental health services and fostering a stronger sense of belonging.

the community, creating additional barriers to a healthy development for youth.

To address these challenges, residents have emphasized the need for additional services, programming, and physical spaces that focus on creating a supportive and engaging environment for children and youth. Among the additional services that the community thinks could help, mental health support and recreational and educational activities that can keep youth engaged in positive, productive activities outside of regular school hours are top priorities for supporting the wellbeing of youth in the communities.

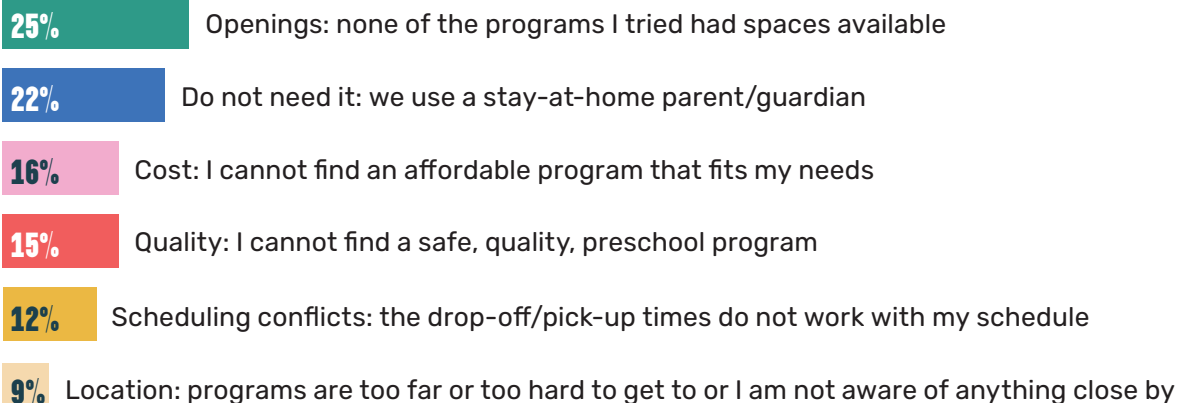
While these challenges are considerable, the community is deeply invested in its youth, aiming to foster a safer and more supportive environment for children. Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents, community members, and partners will be key to building a stronger,

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT

My child does not attend an early childhood or pre-K program because...

(of those respondents reported to have children under 5 years old)



safer neighborhood where youth can thrive and set the stage for long-term economic growth and stability of youth.

CHILDCARE AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

With a high percentage of children under five years old in HHA housing sites and the Choice Neighborhoods, early childhood education and childcare is critical to setting a strong foundation for the children, yet a number of barriers persist.

With over 8,500 children under the age of five in Washington County and only 3,500 licensed childcare spots available, less than 40% of children have access to formal childcare overall. Additionally, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods area is a “desert” for childcare services, as only one licensed provider exists within its footprint.



Neighborhoods First Picnic (City of Hagerstown)

The community feels there is a need to work towards affordability and availability of local childcare and Pre-K programs to set a strong educational foundation for the youngest members of the community. Additionally, quality, affordable childcare supports economic opportunity and mobility by ensuring children

are supported and enriched while parents and guardians are at work, school, and workforce development programs.

49% of Resident Needs Assessment respondents with children under 5 years old reported to have their children enrolled in an early childhood or pre-K program. There is an existing crisis in the field, as fewer people are entering the profession and it is harder to maintain or expand services available in the area.

The overall need for high-quality, accessible early childhood education far exceeds available resources in the Choice Neighborhoods. The challenges extend beyond just openings in childcare programs: 32% of Resident Needs Assessment respondents reported not being able to find an affordable and/or a high-quality program that fits their needs, which further limits low-income families. Additionally, respondents cited logistical hurdles to accessing childcare such as transportation, conflicting schedules with employment, and locations of services. Of note, 22% out of all households in Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor with children under the age of five report relying on a stay-at-home parent or guardian, which may limit the economic mobility opportunities of residents. The multi-faceted nature of these socio-economic issues further stresses the need for supportive educational environments and robust early education and childcare services for all families within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods footprint.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ACCESS

Many households in the neighborhood and HHA housing sites have children, underscoring the need for early childhood education and childcare programs. However, despite these rising trends, a lower percentage of households reported enrollment in early childhood or pre-K programs. Residents have shared that the barriers to enrollment are multi-faceted: limited openings and cost, finding quality programs, and having an existing support system utilizing stay-at-home guardians.



Hagerstown Skate Park (City of Hagerstown)

HARVEST HOEDOWN | A large number of events in the City involve children, youth, and families



THRIVE

As Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods moves into implementation, the community will be an essential partner to building a vibrant future. The People, Neighborhood, and Housing Plans form the basis of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan and will provide a roadmap for building a community where we all thrive.





PEOPLE PLAN

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods People Plan identifies goals, strategies, and actions that promote educational opportunity, workforce development, and an enhanced quality of life that provides everyone with the tools to grow and succeed.

PEOPLE PLAN GOALS

Goal 1: Increase local options for reliable, quality childcare and early education opportunities.

Goal 2: Enhance support for children and youth, particularly with extracurricular activities outside of regular school hours.

Goal 3: Leverage local educational institutions to create opportunities for accessible higher education programs.

Goal 4: Increase participation in workforce development programs.

Goal 5: Enhance connectivity and access to reliable transportation.

Goal 6: Increase pathways to economic opportunity to enhance economic mobility.

Goal 7: Address food insecurity and increase access to fresh and healthy foods so no households in the Choice Neighborhoods go hungry.

Goal 8: Increase access to mental health and behavioral health resources.

Goal 9: Increase options for exercise and physical activity.








Goal 10: Improve transportation to healthcare services.





The strength of a community is in its people and how they are supported and support one another. Ensuring equitable pathways to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity is key to a vibrant and thriving community. Providing support and connections to services and programs is essential across all age groups from those in pre-K to seniors. The People Plan will provide pathways to ensure community members of all ages and backgrounds can access the educational, healthcare, workforce opportunities, and services they need to secure a vibrant future.

People Framework

-  Strengthen Workforce Development Programs
-  Educational Institutions and Services
-  Youth-based spaces
-  Transit Connections
-  Priority Streets
-  Green Connections
-  Cultural Trail



Hagerstown Youth Council (City of Hagerstown)

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Address food insecurity by improving access and availability of fresh and healthy foods.

Connect residents to workforce training programs and opportunities while also providing pathways for continuing education.

Support residents and their families in accessing quality and affordable early childhood education options.

Work with community-serving partners to ensure a robust environment of programming for all ages with a particular focus on programming for school-aged youth and seniors.

Foster community wealth building and provide financial literacy training and resources.



education

GOAL 1:

Increase local options for reliable, quality childcare and early education opportunities.

Access to high-quality childcare and early education opportunities is essential for supporting working families and fostering strong foundations for young learners. Recognizing this need, the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan is committed to enhancing and increasing local options for reliable, quality childcare and early education opportunities through strategic partnerships and thoughtful development.



HEAD START

The Hagerstown Choice team is actively exploring ways to expand Head Start's footprint into additional areas, ensuring more children and families have access to early education services. Through continued discussions and planning, the team aims to support their efforts in increasing their impact.

STRATEGY A.

Utilize the redevelopment of the housing sites to build upon existing resources and strategically identify additional, high-quality space for expanded childcare facilities and/or early education programming.

As the Choice Neighborhoods initiative moves forward with the redevelopment of housing sites, there is a unique opportunity to both enhance existing services and intentionally identify and design high-quality spaces for expanded childcare facilities and early education programming. At the same time, the redevelopment of the sites through the Choice Neighborhoods initiative can serve as a catalyst for re-engaging families with existing Housing Authority programming such as Parent Cafes and informal playgroups.

BUILDING ON STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

The Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA) is already working closely with established childcare and education providers such as Head Start and the Boys and Girls Club, both of which play a critical role in serving local families.



Hagerstown Farmers' Market (City of Hagerstown)

Collaboration with these organizations presents a natural avenue for expansion, particularly as both organizations seek additional space as their programming and attendance continue to increase. The Boys and Girls Club program at Frederick Manor has outgrown their space and cannot accommodate the full number of enrolled participants due to space limitations.



BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB

With the upcoming construction of a brand-new Boys and Girls Club facility, there is an exciting opportunity to enhance access to youth programming, particularly in the Jonathan Street Community, where outreach will be a priority. This expansion will provide much-needed services and support to families in the area.

50%

of respondents identified “childcare” as the neighborhood’s greatest challenge

MY CHILD DOESN’T ATTEND AN EARLY CHILDHOOD OR PRE-K PROGRAM BECAUSE...

Openings: none of the programs I tried had spaces available

25%

Don’t need it: We use a stay-at-home parent / guardian

22%

Cost: I cannot find an affordable program that fits my needs

16%

Quality: I cannot find a safe, quality pre-school program

16%

Scheduling conflicts: the drop-off / pick-up times do not work with my schedule

12%

Location: programs are too far or too hard to get to or I am not aware of anything close by

9%

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH THOUGHTFUL DESIGN AND FINANCIAL COLLABORATION

To ensure these childcare and early education programs thrive, the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan commits to designing flexible spaces that can adapt to evolving community needs. Additionally, the plan is to ensure that Head Start and the Boys and Girls Club are not burdened by rent for the newly available spaces; ways to support operational expenses, such as maintenance and utilities through additional programs will be actively explored. This approach encourages a financially sustainable framework that prioritizes service accessibility.

LOOKING AHEAD

By strategically building upon existing resources and programming as well as incorporating childcare and early education into housing redevelopment plans and strengthening our partnerships with key organizations, the creation of more reliable and high-quality early learning opportunities for families can be realized. These efforts will not only benefit children and caregivers today but will also contribute to the long-term well-being and success of the Choice Neighborhoods community.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

For entrepreneurs looking to start or expand home-based childcare services, several resources and grant programs are available:

- **Hagerstown's CDBG Microenterprise Grant Program** – A reimbursement-based grant program funded through federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), providing financial assistance to eligible small business owners.
- **Western Maryland Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** – Offers guidance, training, and resources for small-business owners navigating the industry.
- **SCORE Mid-Maryland** – A network of experienced business advisors providing free mentorship, counseling, and business planning support to entrepreneurs.
- **Western Maryland Consortium** – Additional potential support for small-business development, with further exploration needed into specific childcare-related opportunities.

STRATEGY B.

Promote existing resources and grant opportunities for small-business owners to entice more micro-childcare options.

A strong childcare network requires a mix of large-scale providers and smaller, community-based options to meet the diverse needs of families. To increase access to reliable, high-quality childcare, the Plan aims to promote existing resources and grant opportunities for small-business owners, encouraging the growth of micro-childcare providers throughout the Choice Neighborhood.

While these resources exist, there is room for greater outreach and participation. By expanding promotion efforts, the Plan looks to ensure that more aspiring childcare providers are aware of and have access to the tools they need to succeed.


ENCOURAGING HOME-BASED CHILDCARE GROWTH

The City has taken steps to make home daycare businesses accessible by maintaining flexible and supportive regulations, such as permitting home-based daycares where fewer than eight children are served. Providers must either own their home or have landlord approval to operate. Many HHA residents have successfully established licensed home daycares, demonstrating the viability of this model.

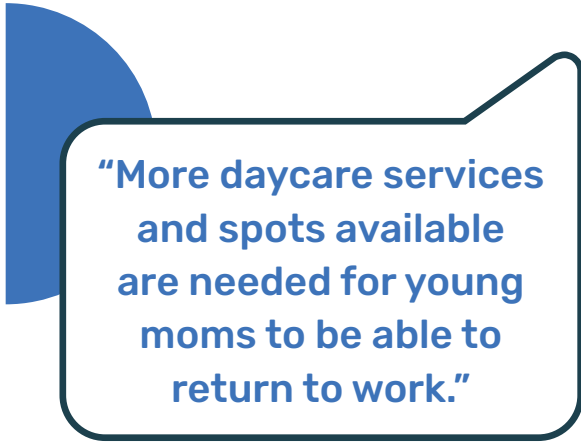
The HHA has previously promoted these opportunities, and there is potential to revitalize these efforts and encourage more residents to pursue licensing and business ownership in childcare.

EMPOWERING CHILDCARE ENTREPRENEURS THROUGH EDUCATION AND MENTORSHIP

Education and training are key to success in micro-childcare businesses. Organizations like Valor Excel already offer workshops in collaboration with the HHA, equipping residents with essential business and childcare management skills. Expanding these educational initiatives can further empower individuals to launch and sustain successful daycare operations.



**“My Hagerstown
is... a community
that invests in
education.”**



“More daycare services and spots available are needed for young moms to be able to return to work.”

LOOKING AHEAD

By actively promoting existing business resources, grants, and mentorship programs, the Plan seeks to lower the barriers for small-business owners interested in childcare. Strengthening outreach efforts, increasing participation in available programs, and reviving home daycare promotion efforts—particularly among HHA residents—will contribute to a stronger, more diverse network of childcare providers in our community.

With strategic support, micro-childcare businesses can thrive, providing families with more flexible, high-quality childcare options while fostering economic empowerment for local entrepreneurs.

STRATEGY C.

Create greater awareness of resources available to parents.

There are multiple entities within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that provide community resources and referrals dedicated to helping young children, their families, and the childcare providers that serve them. They assist families with to make informed decisions about all aspects of childcare, ensuring that children are in a safe environment.

HHA will promote entities such as Family Center, Head Start, Boys and Girls Club, Judy Center, Girls Inc., and Children in Need to encourage parents to utilize the resources available to learn more about childcare programs.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS: ---

WHAT PROGRAMS WOULD YOUR CHILDREN BE INTERESTED IN?

- 1 Arts and crafts **63%**
 - 2 Outdoor / Nature **36%**
 - 3 Dance **35%**
 - 4 Community gardening **33%**
-

STREET SIGNAGE
FROM POLES
A LIGHT
(EDUCATIONAL, IMPROVING
FIGURES FROM MATHS)

TECH LAB

FOR THE KIDS

INDOOR EXERCISE SPACE

TABLE TOPS

SENIOR
PROGRAMMING
(NOTHING CURRENTLY)

COMMUNITY ROOMS

ABLE TO HAVE PARTIES
BIGGER

GOAL 2:

Enhance support for children and youth, particularly with extracurricular activities outside of regular school hours.

STRATEGY A.

Identify existing programming and assess opportunities to expand access and participation for residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor.

Ensuring that children and youth have access to engaging extracurricular activities outside of regular school hours is essential for fostering personal growth, social development, and academic success. To achieve this, the Plan is committed to enhancing support for youth, with a focus on expanding access to extracurricular programs for families in Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor.



LIBRARIES

Libraries serve as vital community hubs that provide learning opportunities beyond the school day. By expanding access to library programming and resources, children and families can benefit from:

- **Homework help and tutoring support**
- **Early literacy programs for young learners**
- **Technology access and digital learning opportunities**
- **Strengthening partnerships with local libraries will ensure that children in these neighborhoods have consistent access to academic enrichment outside of school.**

“The future of my community involves children and youth!”

WHAT WE'VE HEARD...

WHAT ADDITIONAL SERVICES WOULD HELP YOUR CHILDREN DO WELL IN SCHOOL?

DOUGLASS COURT

- 1 Homework club on site
- 2 Recreational activities
- 3 Anti-bullying support

PARKSIDE HOMES

- 1 Recreational activities
- 2 Summer Programming
- 3 Regular after-school programs

FREDERICK MANOR

- 1 Anti-bullying support
- 2 Summer Programming
- 3 Regular after-school programs

DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?

DOUGLASS COURT



PARKSIDE HOMES



FREDERICK MANOR



WHAT ARE THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES FACING YOUTH IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD TODAY?

Graphic represents responses with the most consensus

mental health

ACCESS TO RESOURCES POVERTY

BELONGING BULLYING

SAFETY & VIOLENCE

DRUGS substance use

ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

INCREASING YOUTH SPORTS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Participation in organized sports offers children an opportunity to build confidence, learn teamwork, and stay physically active. To increase youth engagement, the Plan aims to reinforce relationships with local youth sports organizations:

- Strengthen partnerships with the Federal League (youth baseball) to encourage participation among Northside youth.
- Work with the Hagerstown Field House to increase financially accessible courses for youth who may not otherwise have access to organized sports.

By reducing financial barriers and creating low-cost or no-cost entry points, more children will be able to participate in structured, positive extracurricular activities.


LEVERAGING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FOR YOUTH-FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

Programs like those developed under the Bester Community of Hope's ENOUGH Grant provide youth-focused programming for residents in the South End of the city that could be adapted to serve the Northside neighborhoods. A key focus will be identifying existing resources that may also be initiated at Parkside Homes and Douglass Court, mirroring successful efforts already happening on the Southside to ensure balanced access to youth development opportunities across the city.

BUILDING A MORE EQUITABLE FUTURE FOR LOCAL YOUTH

By working with community partners, sports leagues, and educational organizations, expanded access to high-quality extracurricular activities that support children's social, emotional, and academic development can be achieved. Ensuring that families in Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor have the same opportunities as other areas of the city is key to fostering equity and inclusion.

Through intentional outreach, targeted partnerships, and a commitment to expanding participation, we can create a thriving ecosystem of extracurricular activities that enrich the lives of local children and youth, empowering them to learn, grow, and succeed.



"We have after-school programs and summer camps, but there should be more anti-bullying support and education."

STRATEGY B.

Expand available spaces for after-school and evening programming that are readily accessible for Housing Authority residents.

By identifying and utilizing existing community spaces, more opportunities for learning, recreation, and personal development can be created close to home.

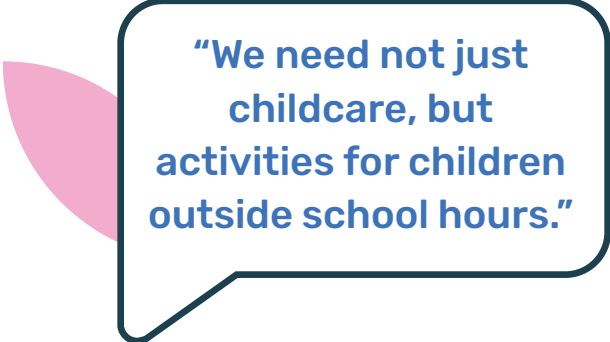
Again, we look to local libraries who offer a wealth of educational and recreational resources that can support after-school learning and engagement. Expanded library programming for Housing Authority residents could provide:

- Homework help and tutoring sessions to support academic success.
- STEM and literacy programs designed to foster curiosity and learning.
- Family-friendly events and workshops to promote community engagement.

By strengthening partnerships with library systems, the Plan creates accessible programming that meets the needs of children and youth during critical after-school and evening hours.

EXPLORE COLLABORATION WITH BETHEL GARDENS

Bethel Gardens presents a promising opportunity for collaboration in expanding community-based programming. Establishing after-school and evening activities within



“We need not just childcare, but activities for children outside school hours.”

Bethel Gardens could provide:

- A safe, central location for children and youth to gather and participate in structured activities.
- Potential partnerships with local organizations to offer mentorship, arts, and recreation programs.
- Opportunities to mirror successful programming already established in other areas of the City.

By engaging with Bethel Gardens leadership and residents, we can assess community needs and determine the best ways to utilize this space for expanded youth programming.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WHAT SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS?

66% Safe youth-based place for teens and school-aged children

53% Community garden or area for individual garden plots

44% Central gathering place for the community

Creating more readily available spaces for afterschool and evening activities will ensure that children and youth in Housing Authority communities have consistent access to enrichment programs, mentorship, and recreational opportunities. Through library partnerships, collaboration with Bethel Gardens, and the strategic use of existing community spaces, the team can:

- Increase participation in structured activities that support academic and personal growth.
- Provide accessible locations that remove barriers to engagement.
- Foster a stronger sense of community among youth and families.

Providing access to safe, supportive environments for youth is essential to their well-being, particularly for adolescents who may be at risk for substance misuse or facing other challenges. Through creation of partnerships with existing youth-focused spaces such as the Horizon Goodwill Youth-Adult Solution Center, critical resources, mentorship, and



Community Event (Bester Community of Hope)

harm reduction strategies that empower young people to make positive choices will be realized.

By expanding and enhancing available programming spaces, we take a crucial step toward ensuring that all children—regardless of where they live, and especially those most at risk—have access to the resources and support they need to maintain a positive path and thrive.



Community Event (Bester Community of Hope)



Community Event (Bester Community of Hope)



SUPPORT FROM EXISTING LOCAL PROGRAMS

Existing programs such as Ending Needless Violence with our Youth (ENVY); Hagerstown Area Religious Council (HARC)'s Lighthouse After-School Program; and Parkside Homes' Parkside Pals may find new or expanded footholds in conjunction with the redevelopment of the housing sites as programmed space is made more readily available.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WHAT SORTS OF SOCIAL ACTIVITIES ARE MISSING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

DOUGLASS COURT

63% Safe place for children and teens

37% Training & Workforce programs

26% Community garden(s)

PARKSIDE HOMES

59% Safe place for children and teens

41% Community garden(s) programs

26% Training & Workforce programs

FREDERICK MANOR

55% Safe place for children and teens

49% Community garden(s) individual garden plots

35% Training & Workforce programs

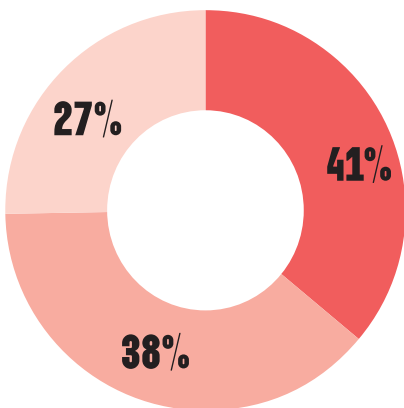
GOAL 3:

Leverage local educational institutions to create opportunities for accessible higher education programs.

Efforts to expand access to higher education in Hagerstown focus on leveraging partnerships with local institutions and organizations to create more accessible pathways for residents. These initiatives aim to address existing barriers and ensure that educational programs align with workforce needs while retaining local talent.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

OF THOSE NOT EMPLOYED, THIS IS HOW LONG THEY'VE BEEN UNEMPLOYED:



- Less than 6 months
- 6-12 months
- Over 12 months

STRATEGY A.

Strengthening career pathways through local institutions.

Hagerstown Community College (HCC) serves as a critical entry point for students pursuing higher education. By collaborating with the University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH) and the Meritus School of Osteopathic Medicine, efforts will focus on identifying career pathway programs that allow students to seamlessly transition from HCC to nearby institutions. These opportunities are designed to provide residents with clear academic and professional trajectories while supporting local workforce development. However, transportation remains a challenge, as HCC is located outside of downtown, necessitating solutions to improve accessibility.



HCC, USMH, MERITUS AS LOCAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

- **HCC has more than 100 programs from degrees, career preparation, certificates, non-credit educational courses**
- **USMH is a hub for many universities over the state; students can get a bachelor's or master's degree in Hagerstown!**
- **Meritus Osteopathic School of Medicine is MD's first new medical school in over 100 years. It will draw in many talented doctors and will attract local students to stay in Hagerstown!**

STRATEGY B.

Expanding opportunities for working parents.

Many working parents face significant obstacles in pursuing higher education, often due to childcare limitations. To address this issue, initiatives will explore opportunities to co-locate educational programs near existing and planned childcare and early childhood facilities. These plans, in conjunction with the expansion of childcare facilities via redevelopment of the housing sites, will provide further options for working parents. Additional workforce development programs will provide accessible training options, particularly for residents in the Jonathan Street area. Proposed programs include a working computer lab in the Gateway Crossing building, and promotion of the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Class A program at HCC's Northend building,

STRATEGY C.

Establishing a downtown higher education presence.

The development of an HCC satellite campus in downtown Hagerstown is a key strategy for improving access to educational opportunities. Initial steps may include utilizing existing community spaces, such as facilities within the Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA), to offer online courses or in-person classes at locations like Elgin Station. Enhancing transportation options between downtown and HCC will further support accessibility for students who face commuting challenges.



Community Fair (City of Hagerstown)

STRATEGY D.

Strengthening workforce development programs.

Collaboration with organizations such as the Western Maryland Consortium and United Way will enhance workforce development initiatives, particularly welfare-to-work programs. By expanding the access and reach of these programs to areas of high need, such as the Jonathan Street corridor, residents will have increased access to education and training opportunities that promote long-term career growth.

These strategies collectively aim to create a more inclusive and accessible higher education system in Hagerstown, providing residents with the resources needed to pursue academic and professional success.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Western MD Consortium (WMC) works to connect job seekers with local businesses. They provide preparatory services including resume building, mock interviews, and assistance with job applications. Their Youth Workforce program also assists with summer employment, apprenticeships, mentoring, and help attaining a GED.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR YOU AND/OR YOUR FAMILY?

It is difficult to find available jobs locally

43%

The available jobs do not make economic sense

41%

Not enough/convenient transportation options

34%

It is difficult to find quality, affordable childcare

33%

I/we have a disability

27%

"My Hagerstown is... a community with access to opportunities."

"We need more training for high school graduates."



Cultural Trail (City of Hagerstown)



Community Clean-Up (City of Hagerstown)

employment

GOAL 4:

Increase participation in workforce development programs.

Efforts to improve economic mobility in the Hagerstown Choice footprint include a focus on increasing participation in workforce development programs and enhancing access to reliable transportation. By expanding resources, strengthening partnerships, and addressing transportation barriers, these initiatives seek to create sustainable pathways for employment and economic stability. Many residents face challenges in accessing workforce development opportunities due to a lack of centralized information and direct support.



Community Clean-up (City of Hagerstown)

STRATEGY A.

Establishing a central workforce resource hub.

A central digital and online resource will be created to help residents easily review, evaluate, and access existing workforce development programs. An accompanying guidebook of resources will be developed for those without internet access.

The hub will be designed to connect residents identify what local agencies can assist with a variety of inquiries, including:

- Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) programs, which provide structured support for financial independence.
- Local agency resources and support services.

STRATEGY B.

Expanding the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program.

The FSS program provides five years of personalized case management to help residents overcome obstacles in pursuing higher education and workforce development. To increase participation, HHA will:

- Host monthly workshops to promote the program and provide information sessions.
- Highlight resident success stories to inspire others and showcase the benefits of workforce participation.

By expanding access to resources and direct support, more residents will be equipped with the tools needed to achieve long-term employment and financial stability.




Tree planting (City of Hagerstown)

**“We could benefit
from workforce
training programs.”**

GOAL 5:

Enhance connectivity and access to reliable transportation.

Transportation remains a significant barrier to employment for many residents. Efforts to improve mobility focus on expanding existing services and identifying new solutions that better connect residents to job centers.



“Some of the root causes for children not playing outside are safety concerns and drug activity in the area.”

STRATEGY A.

Connecting residents to the United Way no-cost rideshare program.

The United Way’s Ride United Network (RUN) rideshare program provides free transportation options for residents. However, funding constraints limit the number of rides available per person. To address these challenges, efforts will focus on:

- Securing additional funding streams to expand access to rideshare services.
- Advocating for increased ride availability, particularly for residents who require transportation five days a week.
- Building on similar success, HHA’s use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds has already fulfilled over 957 ride requests.

STRATEGY B.

Expanding the Hopewell Express service.

Washington County Community Action Council's (WCCAC) Hopewell Express provides transportation for regional employment, but limited routes restrict accessibility. Efforts will explore route expansions and securing of additional funding to better serve residents and increase connections to job centers.

**"We need more
alternatives
for affordable
transportation."**



Hagerstown Community Fair (WRT)

STRATEGY C.

Partnering with the Washington County Transit Authority (WCT) to improve public transportation.

Collaboration with the Washington County Transit Authority (WCT) will focus on:

- Utilizing findings from the ongoing WCT study, expected to conclude in spring 2025, to identify new bus routes.
- Filling transportation gaps to ensure better access to job centers and essential services.
- Increasing awareness and education about how public transportation operates in Washington County to encourage more residents to utilize available transit options.

By addressing transportation challenges through expanded rideshare options, improved bus routes, and better regional connectivity, more residents will have reliable and affordable transportation to pursue employment and educational opportunities.

These initiatives collectively support the broader goal of economic mobility and workforce accessibility, ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to build stable, successful futures.



Employment center - Warehousing (City of Hagerstown)




WCT Transit Bus (WCT)



GOAL 6:

Increase pathways to economic opportunity to enhance economic mobility.

Economic stability and upward mobility are fundamental to building strong, thriving communities. To support this vision, efforts are being made to increase pathways to economic opportunity, ensuring that residents have access to the resources, education, and support needed to achieve financial independence and long-term success.



**"Job fairs
for residents
would great!"**

STRATEGY A.

Connect residents to financial literacy programming and resources.

A key component of economic mobility is financial education. By connecting residents to financial literacy programming and resources, individuals and families can develop essential skills in:

- **Budgeting and money management** to build financial stability.
- **Credit improvement strategies** to increase access to lending opportunities.
- **Debt reduction and savings plans** to create stronger financial futures.



WORKSHOP ACCESS

Expanding access to workshops, coaching, and financial planning services will provide residents with the tools needed to make informed financial decisions, laying the foundation for economic growth and stability.



Community Garden (City of Hagerstown)

STRATEGY B.

Support first-time homebuyer initiatives to build opportunities for homeownership and generational wealth-building.

Homeownership remains one of the most effective ways to build generational wealth and create long-term financial security. Supporting first-time homebuyer initiatives will open doors for residents who may not have previously considered homeownership as an option. These efforts will focus on:

- **Providing education on the homebuying process** to empower potential buyers.
- **Connecting residents to down payment assistance and financial incentives** to reduce barriers to ownership.
- **Partnering with lenders, real estate professionals, and housing organizations** to expand access to affordable mortgage options.

The Transformation Plan includes the redevelopment of existing properties at the Douglass Court housing site into homeownership units, offering residents access to affordable homes where a base for generational wealth can begin.

By increasing opportunities for homeownership, residents will have the ability to invest in their futures, strengthen their financial foundations, and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the community.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:



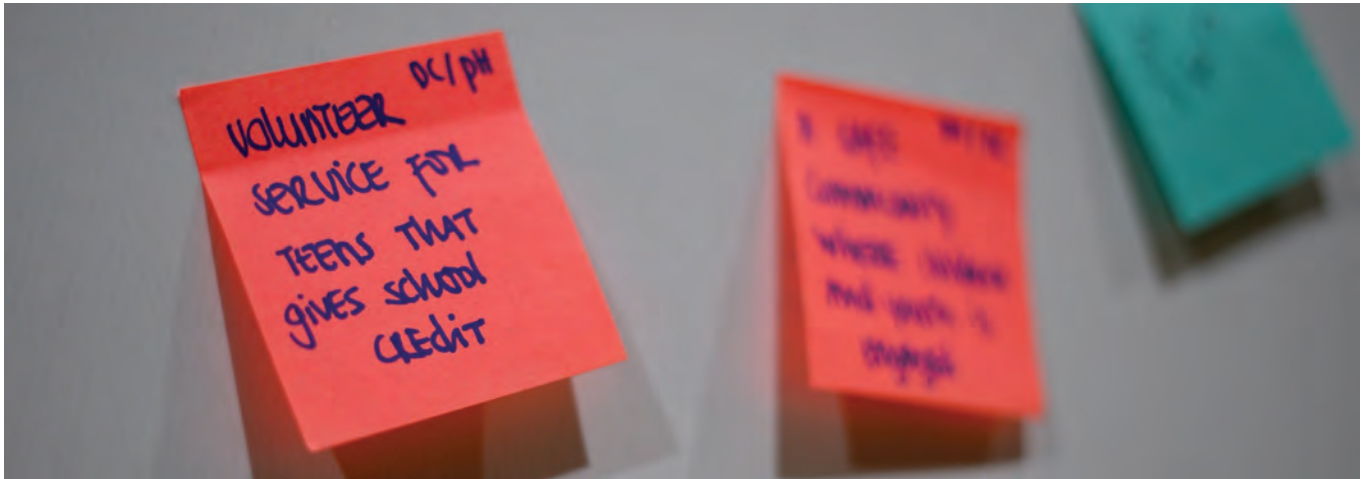
most residents want to be working towards buying a home in the next 5 years. What will they need?

- #1 Downpayment assistance
- #2 Homebuyer education
- #3 Budgeting support
- #4 Support improving credit



HOMEBUYER ASSISTANCE

Programs such as the Maryland Mortgage Program (MMP), Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership (HNDP), and the Hagerstown Homeownership Initiative provide uncomplicated down-payment and closing cost assistance for eligible homebuyers.



Housing Workshop Photos (WRT)

HEALTH

GOAL 7:

Address food insecurity and increase access to fresh and healthy foods so no households in the Choice Neighborhoods go hungry.

Limited access to fresh food remains a challenge for many residents, requiring a multi-faceted approach that includes community partnerships, educational programs, and direct food distribution efforts to ensure all households have access to nutritious options.



**“My Hagerstown
is... a healthy,
strong, inclusive
community.”**

STRATEGY A.

Identify community partnerships that will directly serve and benefit Choice Neighborhood residents for addressing food insecurity/access to fresh and healthy foods.

Collaboration with local organizations and businesses is essential to expanding food resources for residents. A key development is Horizon Goodwill Industries’ soon-to-open grocery store, which will provide a critical food resource for the Choice Neighborhood, in addition to on-site stores at HHA sites CW Brooks and Walnut Towers, offering convenient access to essential food items. Additionally, several local food pantries—including those operated by the Community Action Council, local churches, and organizations such as It’s a Blessing to Be a Blessing—play a vital role in addressing food insecurity.

“We need better food access - anything fresh to supplement basic needs.”

To further coordinate food resources, community partner TruNorth is developing a unified online platform to streamline access to support services, while the Maryland Food Bank continues to provide essential backing for place-based initiatives. Food distribution efforts are also being expanded through regular food drops across different areas and

targeted programs such as America’s Hauling for Hope, which serves low- to moderate-income seniors. To fill gaps in food access, particularly for residents facing interruptions in benefits, discussions are underway about establishing a staple food pantry within redeveloped housing sites, in collaboration with local food pantries and churches.



Community Fair (Washington County Health Department)

STRATEGY B.

Provide training and educational resources to support residents to have raised-bed gardens and/or patio gardens at the housing sites.

Empowering residents with the ability to grow their own food is another key strategy for increasing access to fresh produce. Seasonal community garden plots, raised beds, and patio gardens established at housing sites, with a focus on making gardening accessible for senior residents. However, past community gardening efforts have faced maintenance challenges, emphasizing the need for structured support and ongoing education.

To address this, partnerships with organizations like the University of Maryland Extension Service will provide training

sessions on garden maintenance and sustainability, while Master Gardeners will offer hands-on education on cultivating and utilizing fresh produce.

Previous successful initiatives, such as the Robert W. Johnson Community Center garden, demonstrate the potential for well-maintained community plots when residents receive the right guidance and resources. The Bester community garden plots have also shown promise, with more than half being successfully maintained.

By fostering strong community pride, these initiatives not only provide fresh food but also contribute to greater neighborhood engagement and long-term sustainability, aligning with the broader goals of the Choice Neighborhoods Plan.



 **Community Clean-up** (City of Hagerstown)

“The food pantry at Potomac Towers is great! It is a great service for the community and should exist in more places.”

STRATEGY C.

Create a mobile farmers' market program to bring healthy food and fresh produce to the housing sites.

For residents who may struggle to access grocery stores, a mobile farmers' market program is being explored to bring fresh produce directly to housing sites. Building on existing resources, the Farmers' Market located in the parking lot of Hub City Brewery will expand to Thursdays and Sundays, increasing fresh food accessibility to those living near Parkside Homes and Douglass Court.



ENCOURAGING HEALTH EDUCATION

Collaboration with the Washington County Health Department would integrate nutrition education into the farmers' market experience, offering incentives like "shopping bucks" that can be used as currency to residents who participate in educational sessions.



Hagerstown Farmers' Market (City of Hagerstown)

The feasibility of launching a dedicated HHA mobile farmers' market is also being considered, ideally in partnership with local farms. A previous mobile market initiative, which once served Potomac and Walnut Towers with a focus on veterans, could be revived and expanded to serve a broader population.

By expanding partnerships, enhancing food education, and improving direct access to fresh produce, the Choice Neighborhood Initiative aims to build a sustainable, community-driven food system that ensures all residents can access and benefit from nutritious food options.

GOAL 8:

Increase access to mental and behavioral health resources.

Addressing mental health needs requires a multifaceted approach that includes mobile services, onsite programs, and strengthened partnerships with local healthcare providers, community organizations, and support networks.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS: ---

HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD BEEN DIAGNOSED WITH ANY HEALTH CONDITIONS?

41% Depression / anxiety / post-traumatic stress

30% Asthma / breathing issues

27% Mental / Behavioral health

STRATEGY A.

Expanding mobile mental health services.

Partnering with local healthcare providers and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), development of a mobile mental health unit has the potential to serve multiple housing sites. Horizon Goodwill currently operates a mobile outreach vehicle that assists residents with scheduling appointments and also partners with Brook Lane to provide counseling and evaluations two days per week. Horizon Goodwill also operates a Community Health Hub in the heart of the Choice Neighborhoods boundary that provides care coordination, check-ups, flu and COVID shots, and blood pressure screenings.

Additional opportunities exist with Meritus Health's mobile van, which could expand to mental health services. Models from mobile dental programs could guide similar initiatives, but funding remains a challenge.



**“My Hagerstown
is... community
wellness and
partnerships.”**

STRATEGY B.

Strengthening onsite mental health and wellness programs.

Beyond mobile services, expanding onsite mental health support and wellness programs will help integrate mental well-being into daily community life. Partnering with local healthcare providers, efforts will focus on providing adult mental health services directly at housing sites, including yoga and meditation classes, support groups, and assistance with navigating mental health resources. Strengthening the pathways to these services will ensure that residents are aware of and able to access the support they need.

Several community-based organizations are already engaged in mental health and wellness efforts, and these partnerships will be enhanced to expand offerings. The Boys and Girls Club has an opportunity to strengthen its mental health-focused programming, while NA groups are already providing support onsite at HHA housing locations.

Additional resources are available through programs like Girl Scouts, and the homework program (funded by the City), library programming, and Girls Inc. programming, all of which contribute to a holistic approach to youth well-being.

The Jonathan Street community has also been proactive in bringing mental health resources to families in need, with Children in Need playing a key role in connecting residents to services and strengthening community ties. Similarly, the Bester Community of Hope has established strong mental health partnerships, with additional support coming from the ENOUGH grant, which has created new Community Ambassador positions to enhance outreach and engagement.

A COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is deeply intertwined with community well-being. By expanding access through mobile units, onsite programs, and partnerships, the Choice Neighborhood initiative aims to break down barriers and build a more resilient, supportive community.

GOAL 9:

Increase options for exercise and physical activity.

Expanding access to exercise and physical activity is essential for promoting health and well-being in the community. Through redevelopment, improved accessibility, and strengthened partnerships, efforts will focus on providing safe, convenient, and engaging opportunities for residents to stay active.

STRATEGY A.

Enhance onsite physical activity options.

The redevelopment and redesign of housing sites will incorporate dedicated spaces for exercise, ensuring residents have convenient access to fitness opportunities. Plans include the creation of walking paths and the integration of gyms and exercise equipment into newly developed community spaces.



Artist painting basketball court (City of Hagerstown)

STRATEGY B.

Improve access to public parks and recreational facilities.

Ensuring residents can safely and easily access local parks and recreation centers is a priority. Scholarship programs for local agencies will be explored to help residents join entities like the YMCA on Eastern Boulevard, making structured exercise programs more accessible. Additional efforts will focus on improving safe routes and connectivity between housing sites and nearby recreational spaces.

STRATEGY C.

Strengthen partnerships for expanded recreational programming.

Collaboration with the City of Hagerstown aims to enhance awareness and accessibility of public recreational programs. Increased promotion of Parks & Recreation offerings, including free sports clinics at the Hagerstown Field House, will provide more opportunities for residents to participate. Additionally, downtown events often include youth activities encouraging physical activity as part of community engagement.

By integrating on-site fitness options, improving access to public recreation, and expanding partnerships, this initiative aims to create a healthier, more active community.

GOAL 10:

Improve transportation to healthcare services.

Reliable transportation is essential for ensuring residents can access necessary healthcare services without barriers. Many individuals face challenges in reaching medical appointments, follow-up care, and specialized treatments due to limited transportation options. Through strategic partnerships and centralized resources, efforts will focus on expanding accessible, reliable, and affordable transportation solutions for healthcare-related travel.

STRATEGY A.

Expand access to free rideshare programs for medical appointments.

Collaboration with the United Way’s Run United Network (RUN) free rideshare program will provide supplemental transportation options for residents needing medical care. While this program covers crucial healthcare visits, it is not designed for daily transportation needs, highlighting the importance of additional solutions.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WAYS TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTHCARE

DOUGLASS COURT

- 1** Locating more healthcare facilities in the neighborhood
- 2** Extending the hours of health facilities in the neighborhood
- 3** Providing more services that I actually need

PARKSIDE HOMES

- 1** Funding for prescriptions
- 2** Improving transportation to major medical facilities
- 3** Extending the hours of health facilities in the neighborhood

FREDERICK MANOR

- 1** Extending the hours of health facilities in the neighborhood
- 2** Locating more healthcare facilities in the neighborhood
- 3** Improving transportation to major medical facilities

STRATEGY B.

Develop a centralized resource for medical transportation services.

A comprehensive, easily accessible resource is in the pipeline, created to help residents review and access free ride services for medical appointments. This will include information on available social services and community resources. Existing transportation options to be highlighted include:

- Meritus Health’s free transport services
- Community Action Council (CAC) medical transportation for non-emergency appointments

Additionally, the Washington County Commuter bus offers scheduled services for seniors and individuals with disabilities who need transportation to healthcare facilities. Strengthening partnerships with County agencies and community organizations like TruNorth and CAC will enhance coordination and ensure specific populations receive the transportation support they need.

By leveraging existing programs, expanding partnerships, and improving access to transportation resources, this initiative aims to remove mobility barriers and improve healthcare access for all residents.

**“I imagine my
community
to be active!”**



Resident Meeting (WRT)



NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhood Plan supports goals and strategies that catalyze investment and bring economic opportunity and mobility to the community. Essential services and key neighborhood amenities will be equitably distributed and community members will be able to easily access resources.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN GOALS

Goal 1: Create an amenities-rich community with neighborhood-based services and businesses to support resident needs.

Goal 2: Build gathering spaces that encourage community and intergenerational connections.

Goal 3: Create and enhance connections to existing public spaces and amenities.

Goal 4: Improve physical connections to downtown Hagerstown.

Goal 5: Build on investments in crime prevention through environmental design.

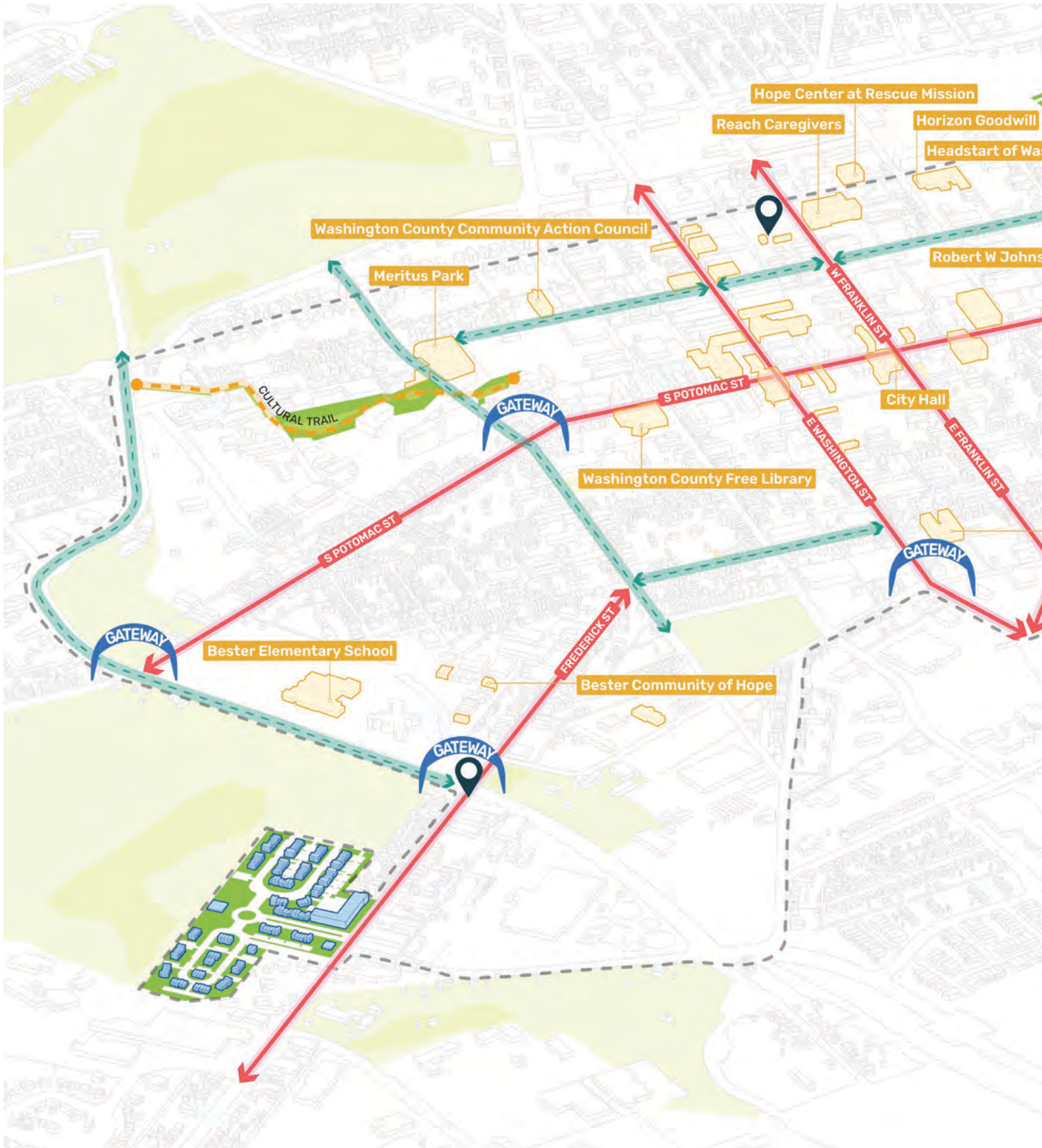
Goal 6: Build trust, communication, and community relationships with public safety officers and public safety programs that serve the neighborhoods.

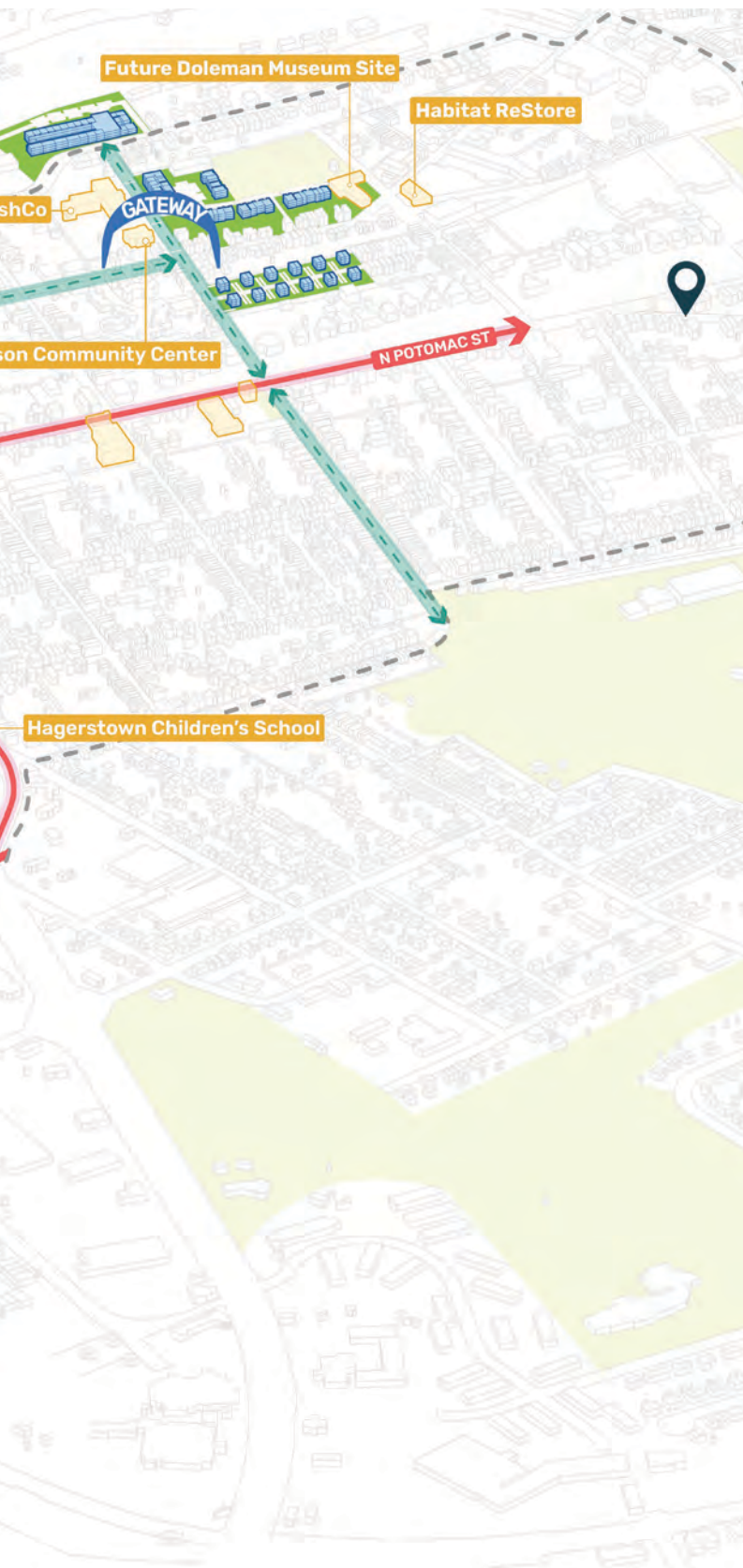
Goal 7: Support and enhance safe routes to school.

Goal 8: Coordinate efforts to support existing organizations providing resources for recovery and substance abuse to enhance public safety.

Goal 9: Employ traffic calming measures to reduce speeds, enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety, and improve connections within and into the neighborhoods.







Goal 10: Identify opportunities to collaborate and coordinate with public transit (WCT) on accessibility to employment centers and key services.





The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is an asset-rich area that provides services, employment, and arts and entertainment to the larger city and region. Through the Neighborhood Plan, there are opportunities to improve the neighborhood by enhancing infrastructure and streetscapes to boost walkability, further investing in businesses and services along key commercial corridors, improving connectivity between key neighborhood assets such as parks, schools, and essential services, and advancing public safety efforts to create a neighborhood that is connected, vibrant, and offers everyone the opportunity to thrive.

Neighborhood Framework

-  Neighborhood Assets
-  Priority Streets
-  Green Connections
-  Transit Connections
-  Cultural Trail
-  Neighborhood Gateways



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Leverage new housing development to build needed community assets.

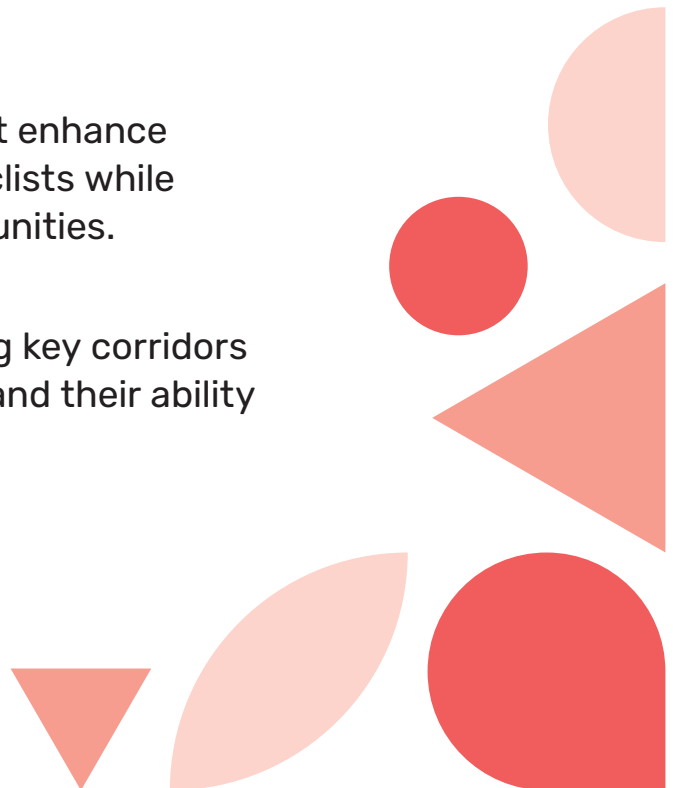
Improve access to affordable, high-quality neighborhood-based services.

Create inviting and vibrant gathering spaces that honor the identity of the neighborhood and are anchors for community building and development

Build trust, communication, and community relationships with public safety officers and public safety programs that serve the neighborhood.

Invest in infrastructure improvements that enhance mobility and safety of pedestrians and cyclists while creating connected and accessible communities.

Continue to support local businesses along key corridors and build capacity of local entrepreneurs and their ability to create local job opportunities.




NEIGHBORHOOD Amenities AND SERVICES

GOAL 1:

Create an amenities-rich community with neighborhood-based services and businesses to support resident needs.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods includes the downtown as well as areas adjacent to the north and south. While residents value the vibrancy and dynamic nature of downtown, they have expressed a need for better access to key services such as grocery stores, additional daycare facilities, and healthcare. The opportunities presented by the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan are envisioned to help expand access to services and amenities that will meet the community's daily needs.



"My Hagerstown is... a community with more services and resources."

STRATEGY A.

Consider zoning tools that will permit areas of the Choice Neighborhoods to have additional neighborhood-based services and businesses.

There are areas of the Choice Neighborhoods, such as the Jonathan Street corridor, that historically have had local neighborhood-serving businesses but in more recent years, due to both zoning updates and shifts in the local market, these local businesses have closed their doors or moved elsewhere in the area. During the Choice Neighborhoods planning process, the community expressed a strong desire to see the return of local businesses and services that could serve the surrounding community and help to address daily needs.

In evaluating ways to bring back local business and services to areas such as Jonathan Street, the City is considering the possibility of zoning tools that could allow ground floor retail/business/office space along certain corridors located in mainly residential areas.

Rezoning the Jonathan Street area to N-MU (Neighborhood Mixed-Use) is one possibility. Another is individual LCD (Local Conversion District) overlays on historically commercial or mixed-use buildings. These approaches could be evaluated across areas of the Choice Neighborhoods where there is community interest in seeing the growth of local neighborhood-serving businesses and services.

**“My Hagerstown is...
a place with more
job and housing
opportunities.”**



Potterfield Pool (City of Hagerstown)

STRATEGY B.

Enhance walkability in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods so residents are comfortable accessing existing and new services and businesses by foot.

Most community members in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods access their daily needs by car or via public transit, with a much smaller number accessing local services and amenities by foot. In the Choice Neighborhoods surveying efforts, many community members indicated that the quality and accessibility of sidewalks as well as a lack of safety for pedestrians, discourages them from accessing local services by walking.

Additionally, concerns for personal safety in the Choice Neighborhoods, particularly in the evening, are a barrier for walkability.

Addressing the quality and condition of sidewalks, particularly around the priority streets identified in the overall neighborhood framework, will be a key component in enhancing the perceived and actual walkability of the community.

Improvements to crosswalks and efforts to slow traffic in areas with high pedestrian activity, and enhancing public safety with lighting, clear sightlines, and an increased public safety presence, especially during high traffic events, will be key to supporting a walkable, accessible, and safe Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.



Community Celebration (City of Hagerstown)



GOAL 2:

Build gathering spaces and programming that encourage community and intergenerational connections.

Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is built on a strong sense of community and a commitment to creating a sense of belonging. Community partners and organizations as well as the City of Hagerstown have led the way in creating and supporting safe, welcoming, and inclusive spaces across the city. Within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods there are key assets and spaces that currently provide opportunities for gathering and connections. The Transformation Plan will provide a pathway to support, enhance, and build out these spaces to best serve the community needs and create spaces for connection and community building.

STRATEGY A.

Identify and create spaces that provide multiple benefits for community members of all ages and abilities.

Throughout the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods planning process, community members have shared their interest in seeing more spaces for community events, markets, and performances. Whether to celebrate, buy local food, or just spend time with friends and family, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community sees great value in creating and establishing spaces where the community can come together, connect, and spend time in an inviting, welcoming space. Additionally, spaces that appeal to a range of ages and abilities are a big part of what will make them welcoming to the community. Providing opportunities for intergenerational connections and community building is a top priority.

The City of Hagerstown's University Plaza is a great example of a community space that provides an accessible, welcoming, and vibrant setting for concerts, events, markets, and much more.



Community Event (Bester Community of Hope)

University Plaza has become a hub for city events, cultural celebrations, and gatherings for community members of all ages.

As the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan serves as a catalyst for growing a vibrant and thriving community, there are opportunities to collaborate with community members to identify where additional shared spaces that promote connection, celebration, and belonging can be established.



Community Fair (WRT)

STRATEGY B.

Enhance awareness and connections to existing city programming and events.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods has no shortage of existing community programming and events that welcome all community members and visitors to enjoy the many assets of the city. In 2024, over 30 events were held in the downtown and many more across the city. From line dancing to a downtown concert series to community gardens, Hagerstown residents have many options and locations to engage with exciting events, programming, and learning opportunities.

However, there is a gap in awareness of these events and programming among the larger community, particularly for those in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods who are located in close proximity to many of the offerings and activities. As a key partner in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods initiative, the City of Hagerstown is committed to enhancing connections and awareness to programming and activities and creating opportunities for residents of the Choice Neighborhoods to become more involved in local programming and events.

STRATEGY C.

Find opportunities for intergenerational and community connections in afterschool youth programming and events.

There is a passionate community of partners, service providers, and organizations in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods who are committed to building connections among the different people they serve. The robust network of youth-serving programs and organizations provides a range of opportunities from tutoring to sports and physical activity to skill-building and career-readiness. One of the key components for the success of these programs is to not only have engaged youth but also having engaged, patient, and understanding adults to provide mentorship, guidance, and support to pave a road towards success for future generations.

“I would like to see more community support!”



Community Fair (WRT)



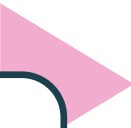
Local food truck (WRT)

The Hagerstown Youth Council is both a great example as well as an opportunity to build intergenerational connections. The Hagerstown Youth Council was established to give Hagerstown youth the ability to provide feedback and recommendations regarding community policies and programs that affect their future and to take a leadership role in creating meaningful change. Members of the Youth Council have the opportunity to raise their voices and share their experiences with local dignitaries, agencies, and other youth as well as participate in other fun activities like selecting the City’s downtown Christmas Tree or planning an Earth Day event.

GOAL 3:

Create and enhance connections to existing public spaces and amenities including parks, open spaces, and other community assets.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is well situated among many of the city's parks and recreational spaces including Hagerstown City Park, Fairgrounds Park, and University Plaza. Additionally, smaller neighborhood parks such as Wheaton Park, Hager Park, and Staley Park serve as local recreational assets. However, community members have expressed concerns and challenges in terms of easily accessing these resources, particularly by foot due to traffic safety concerns and lack of accessible infrastructure.



**"My Hagerstown is...
a community where
families can come
and have fun."**

STRATEGY A.

Enhance accessibility across the Choice Neighborhoods and prioritize safe pathways for pedestrians.

As the redevelopment and revitalization of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods moves forward, neighborhood streetscape improvements, highlighted as green connections in the overall neighborhood framework, must be a part of the overall vision. Enhancing the safety and maintenance of these green connections that bring the community to vital assets is an important piece of supporting a thriving neighborhood for all. Where possible, it will be important to pair improvements to housing sites to public realm enhancements.

Creating accessible pathways along the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhood's priority streets can accommodate and connect all community members to the city's public spaces and amenities and enhance accessibility.

Hagerstown, and particularly the areas within the Choice Neighborhoods boundary, is an older city with infrastructure and streets dating back more than 100 years. Due to the age of the



Hagerstown in bloom (City of Hagerstown)

city and its infrastructure, there can be gaps in accessibility including a lack of ADA-compliant ramps and pathways.

Additionally, as a strong partners in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan, the City of Hagerstown can help play a key role in infrastructure improvements within the neighborhood as they plan for community]streetscape and infrastructure enhancements.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS: ---

PARKS RESIDENTS USE THE MOST

- #1 Hagerstown City Park
 - #2 Fairgrounds Park
 - #3 Pangborn Park
-

STRATEGY B

Identify and evaluate areas with gaps in sidewalk infrastructure for potential future improvements.

Identifying and understanding gaps in the existing sidewalk infrastructure network is another key component of enhancing accessibility in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. While community members in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods discussed concerns of sidewalk quality and maintenance, they also highlighted that some areas within and surrounding the Choice Neighborhoods lack sidewalks and create unsafe walking conditions for pedestrians.

The City of Hagerstown has an approved Curb and Sidewalk Replacement Program Policy that helps to guide both when sidewalks and curbs should be repaired replaced as well as guidance for new sidewalks and curbing. This guidance places the main responsibility on the City to attend to maintenance and/or new



**"My Hagerstown
is... a more united
community."**



EARLY ACTION ACTIVITY

HHA and the Early Action Activity Committee decided on decorative crosswalks as the Early Action Activity. The crosswalk will be located within the Jonathan Street and Frederick Manor areas. The design of the crosswalks is inspired by the colors and branding of the Hagerstown Choice initiative. In summer 2025, the City of Hagerstown issued an RFP for the decorative crosswalks and a contractor was selected. Installation of the crosswalks is expected in late fall 2025!

sidewalks in conjunction with property owners and those initiating new construction and/or redevelopment projects.

As part of the Choice Neighborhoods Plan implementation, a sidewalk inventory, particularly for the priority streets identified in the neighborhood framework, could be a helpful tool to understanding and prioritizing where sidewalks are needed and potentially help inform and prioritize infrastructure investments and upgrades.

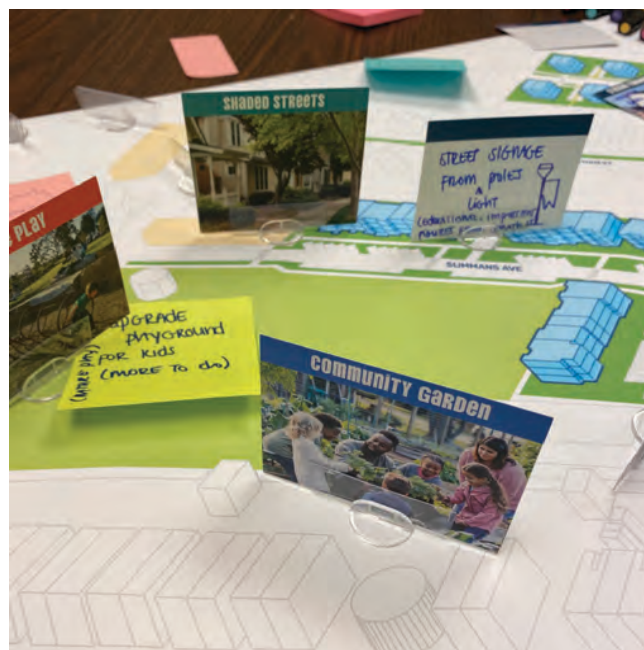
While community members in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods highly value local public spaces and amenities, they have expressed concerns with the lack of sufficient lighting and maintenance of sidewalks as barriers to accessing these spaces. Additionally, traffic safety concerns have been highlighted by

residents, and are one of the reasons many parents do not feel comfortable allowing their children to walk to these amenities.

The City of Hagerstown has been working with the community to address these gaps through their CDBG program that focuses on visible and impactful community development projects. Activities are carried out to revitalize the City's urban core, to enhance neighborhoods throughout the city, and improve the quality of life for all City residents.

The City of Hagerstown's Department of Housing and Community Development prepares the 5-Year Consolidated Plan, that is supported annual action plans, to develop a unified vision and approach to best meet the goals of the CDBG program.

The City of Hagerstown's CDBG Program has been able to identify, fund, and implement a variety of projects, including City-wide accessibility ramps. As the Choice Neighborhoods work continues into implementation, projects that enhance accessibility and could be eligible for CDBG funding, should be identified and considered.



Resident Workshop (WRT)



Resident Workshop (WRT)

GOAL 4:

Enhance physical connections to downtown Hagerstown.

Having downtown Hagerstown located in the heart of the Choice Neighborhoods was a deliberate decision in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods planning process. Serving as the connection between the three Hagerstown Authority sites – Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor – as well as being the region’s urban hub and a key employment and economic engine – downtown Hagerstown represents great opportunity for the thriving community that is there and what is envisioned for the future.

Enhancing connections to downtown Hagerstown, as it relates to access to employment, services, amenities, education, recreation, and much more, is a key priority for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and an essential piece supporting a vibrant community.

STRATEGY A.

Focus on strengthening connections to downtown Hagerstown for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Downtown Hagerstown is the region’s hub for employment, education, services, arts, and entertainment. From the new Meritus Stadium to the historic Maryland Theater to the community-serving entities like the Washington County Free Library and the Community Action Council, downtown Hagerstown is an essential part of daily life in the community. Ensuring walkable connections to downtown Hagerstown is a top priority for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. These connections will provide residents in adjacent neighborhoods access to employment, direct access to services, and opportunities for recreation and entertainment for their families.

The City of Hagerstown has already begun investing in enhancing the downtown pedestrian experience and accessibility to downtown from surrounding neighborhoods. LED streetlights are being installed within downtown and at key gateway connections.

Additionally, the expansion of the Cultural Trail to the newly opened Hagerstown Field House provides residents in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods with a safe connection to the new facility and key amenities within and surrounding downtown. These improvements support a welcoming downtown Hagerstown that is easily accessible and inviting to visit supporting the future success of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.



Discovery Station in Downtown Hagerstown
(City of Hagerstown)

STRATEGY B.

Continue to support downtown efforts for placemaking such as the Cultural Trail and the Arts & Entertainment District.

The City of Hagerstown and its partners have spearheaded many efforts to bring a vibrant atmosphere and unique experiences to downtown Hagerstown. Both residents and visitors can engage in a range of events, performances, and activities that celebrate the city's reputation as a regional destination for arts and culture. To help sustain support for arts, cultural, and entertainment offerings in downtown Hagerstown, the City has been a leader in utilizing tools that encourage place-based investments to support the current and future cultural efforts downtown.

In 2001, the City pursued a State of Maryland Arts & Entertainment District designation and has been able to renew and sustain the designation over the past 20 years. Currently, the City is in the process of renewing the designation for the 2022-2032, and as part of its renewal, is proposing an expansion of the A&E District to include the vibrant Cultural Trail.



Cultural Trail Gateway signage (WRT)



Sculpture along the Cultural Trail (WRT)

The Cultural Trail was started in 2017 to connect the downtown A&E District with the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts in Hagerstown City Park. The Cultural Trail features art, installations, and sculptures from local and international artists and is envisioned to continue to grow as pieces are added. It is not only a cultural asset for the community but also a way to enhance connectivity and build a sense of place in the downtown.

Both the A&E District and the Cultural Trail are key assets in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. They have and continue to encourage public and private investment in the downtown including alley lighting and alley improvements to enhance walkability and connectivity downtown. They also serve as generators of local economic and community development supporting tourism and creating jobs in the arts, entertainment, and cultural industries.



Historical signage (WRT)

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

RESIDENT SURVEY

#1 My neighbors, my community

#2 Parks and open spaces

#3 Access to downtown

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY

#1 Parks and open spaces

#2 Access to downtown

#3 History and culture

BUSINESS SURVEY

#1 Opportunities for growth

#2 Affordability of doing business

#3 Good market fit



Future site of Doleman Black Heritage Museum (WRT)

PUBLIC SAFETY

GOAL 5:

Build on investments in crime prevention through environmental design, including lighting, streetscape, and urban design.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the management of built and natural environments to deter crime and create a shared sense of safety in public spaces. CPTED practices can be integrated into streetscape design, landscaping and plantings, architecture, and the design of public spaces such as parks, walkways, and trails.



Cultural Trail Mural (WRT)

STRATEGY A.

Build on the City and HHA's investments in safety improvements that utilize crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).

Across the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, safety is a top concern for those living, working, and visiting the area. While the majority of community members feel safe walking through the neighborhood in the daytime, less than 50% feel safe walking at night. Additionally, most community members do not feel safe allowing their children to walk to and from school. This perceived lack of safety can come from many sources; however, residents in the Choice Neighborhoods indicated that they would feel safer with better lighting, enhanced streetscapes, and an increased police presence.

The Hagerstown Housing Authority's Director of Security Gerard Kendle is an advanced CPTED practitioner and has led the use of CPTED practices across the HHA's portfolio of properties and works closely with the City to provide trainings on best practices and advancements in the field. HHA plans to use CPTED in the

design and development of all properties under the Choice Neighborhoods initiative. In addition to the basic principles of territoriality, access control, natural and mechanical surveillance will be employed. Additionally, they plan on incorporating advanced principles of compatible and incompatible land uses, movement prediction and wayfinding, and activity support.

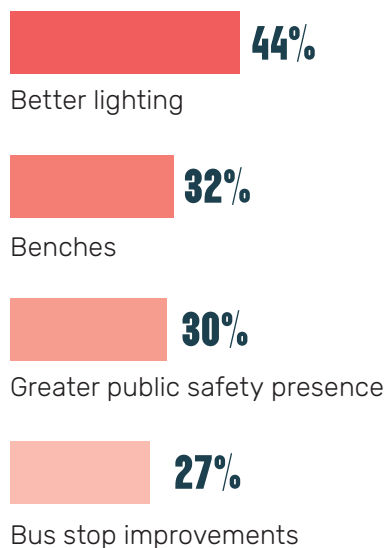
Other CPTED objectives that will be the focus in the Choice Neighborhoods redevelopment will be community culture for the primary

communities and connectivity between HHA and non-HHA communities. They also hope to build social cohesion within the communities with shared activities and amenities. To initiate the process, HHA is sponsoring a two-day CPTED training for the stakeholders of the Hagerstown Choice project. Staff from the City of Hagerstown, the HHA, the MD Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, and the Hagerstown Police Department.

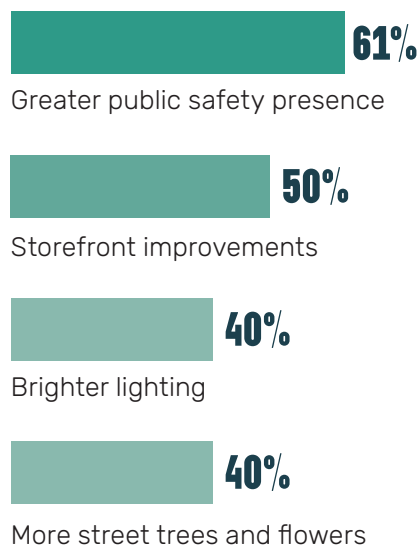
THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE COMMERCIAL IN AND AROUND THE HAGERSTOWN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS?

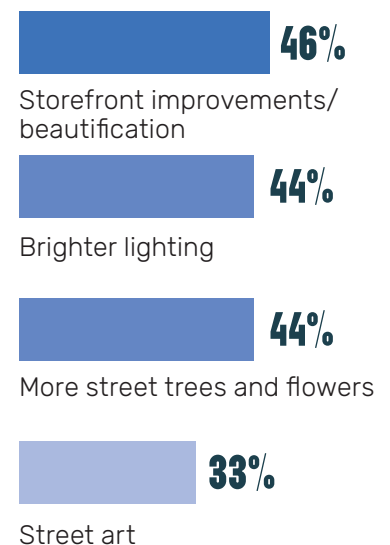
RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENT



NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY



BUSINESS SURVEY



STRATEGY B.

Work with local business and property owners to identify opportunities to integrate CPTED practices into their landscaping, site design, and façade improvements.

Business owners in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods indicated that the top three improvements that would enhance commercial corridors and make them more inviting are:

- 1) Storefront improvements and beautification;
- 2) Brighter lighting, and
- 3) More street trees and flowers.

Additionally, business owners viewed the condition of streetscapes as an opportunity to enhance both the perception of safety in the Choice Neighborhoods and bring more customers to their businesses.

The City of Hagerstown provides support to business owners efforts to enhance their properties through physical improvements via programs such as the City Center Vacant Storefront Incentive Program, Commercial Sign and Façade Grant Program, Microenterprise Grant Program, and the Spring Sprouts Grant Program. Through a variety of funding and technical assistance efforts, these programs help local businesses improve their storefronts as well as the corridors where they are located enhancing the overall sense of safety and security in these areas.

The City can explore opportunities for similar programs outside the downtown area to assist with storefront and facade improvement goals in the Choice Neighborhoods Areas.

THE COMMUNITY SAYS:

WHAT, IF ANY, PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS DOES YOUR BUSINESS/BUILDING CURRENTLY NEED?

28% Storefront rehab

26% Signage

26% Water leaks/damage

20% Flooring



Local business event (City of Hagerstown)



Hub City 100-Miler (City of Hagerstown)

GOAL 6:

Build trust, communication, and community relationships with public safety officers and public safety programs that serve the neighborhood.

Public safety is a top priority for community members across the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. There is a strong desire to see public safety officers out and about in the neighborhoods connecting with the community. The majority of residents in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhood want to be a part of making their community safer.

STRATEGY A.

Create opportunities for positive interactions with public safety officers such as community fairs, afterschool activities, and walking patrols.

Public safety officers are a core part of the local community though sometimes community members only interactions with them are in times of a public issue or crisis. Finding opportunities to have positive and meaningful interactions with public safety officers can help build trust and confidence in those who are entrusted with protecting and keeping our communities safe.

There are many community events and activities taking place throughout the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods – from downtown celebrations to basketball games at Wheaton Park to summers at Potterfield Pool – community members are out and about. The Hagerstown Police Department also holds community events such as “Touch a Truck” that encourage positive connections with local law enforcement and public safety officers. The City of Hagerstown Police Department Community Policing and Neighborhood



Policing Programs work to build relationships between public safety officials and the communities they serve.

There are designated patrol officers for each of the 50 neighborhoods across the city and these officers understand the unique concerns and issues facing the neighborhoods and its residents.

The Hagerstown Housing Authority Security Department works in conjunction with the City of Hagerstown Police Department to keep the communities safe and gets to know the different HHA community members to best respond to their needs. Like the City of Hagerstown Police Department, the HHA Security Department utilizes walking patrols to get to know community members and build relationships.

Trust is built on listening and open communication. Through community meetings, walking patrols, and attending local events and programs, public safety officers can engage with the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community and build relationships. Creating an environment of mutual trust and respect is essential to building lines of open communication and feedback.

Trusted community partners and messengers are key to helping to bridge communication gaps and create safe spaces for sharing concerns, feedback, and words of support. The many community partners in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods have strong relationships with both community members and public safety officials and can be facilitators in building and supporting these lines of communication and feedback.

GOAL 7:

Support and enhance safe routes to school.

STRATEGY A.

Establish regular events/programming focused on safely going to and from school, such as 'walking school bus' activities and community-supported volunteer programs.

Within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, community members have expressed concerns about allowing their children to walk to and from school. Community members reference a variety of factors from concerns of traffic and pedestrian safety to sidewalk conditions to overall safety of the neighborhood that prevent them from allowing their children to walk to school.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is served by 12 schools within the Washington County School District as well as multiple early childhood programs, afterschool activities, and community-based programming. Many of these facilities are accessible by foot and often accessed via walking. Identifying opportunities to work with students and families enrolled in the schools and programs



to safely access these facilities on a daily basis will help increase participation and attendance in these programs.

Programming such as a 'walking school bus' that is staffed by volunteers to take students from their homes to their schools has previously been implemented in Hagerstown and there is interest from community organizations and volunteers to restart the efforts. These types of efforts can also help address Issues such as chronic absenteeism, particularly in elementary school-aged students, which is a growing concern in the school district. Choice Neighborhoods will continue to advocate and identify partners for these initiatives in both the Jonathan Street and Frederick Manor areas.

STRATEGY B.

Work with the City and local partners to identify opportunities for improvements to crosswalks and other infrastructure that support safe routes to school.

As a key partner in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods initiative, the City of Hagerstown has been collaborating on ways to improve and enhance safe routes to school. They have previously partnered in efforts to enhance crosswalks and support other pedestrian enhancements to create safer pathways to schools and other youth-focused facilities.

The Hagerstown Housing Authority residents serving as Community Ambassadors for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods have been a great resource for better understanding these challenges and identifying potential solutions. Working together with the Housing Authority and City of Hagerstown, the Community Ambassadors have identified a Choice Neighborhoods 'Early Action Activity' for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that will make the areas around Jonathan Street/Wheaton Park and the Frederick Manor safer to pedestrians via

a series of colorful crosswalks. These decorative crosswalks will encourage pedestrians to cross at designated crossings and are anticipated to alert drivers to pedestrian and have them slow down in cross walk areas. They are expected to be implemented in late fall 2025.



Community Event (City of Hagerstown)

GOAL 8:

Coordinate efforts to support existing organizations providing resources for recovery and substance abuse to enhance public safety.

Like many communities across the US, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is affected by the ongoing opioid epidemic. With Hagerstown being the county seat and the region's hub for social services, it has a higher concentration of community members experiencing substance use disorder or in active recovery. There is a diverse and dedicated community of service providers and community organizations supporting both those experiencing substance use disorder as well as those in recovery.

Community members and stakeholders across the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, particularly within the downtown area, have demonstrated their ongoing commitment and support for those experiencing and/or affected by substance use disorder. Building awareness of resources across the downtown and neighborhood as well as destigmatizing substance abuse disorder have been key efforts of the Hagerstown community.

Addressing and working together on solutions to substance use disorder is a community and neighborhood effort, and is a key focus and component of transformation for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

STRATEGY A.

Ensure resources and support are readily accessible and located in convenient locations for those requiring such services.

Community service providers and organizations have highlighted that a barrier to accessing recovery resources and support can often be related to lack of accessible transportation options. Co-locating recovery services to other community and social services can lower the barrier to access. Additionally, locating services in areas with higher levels and frequency of public transit service can reduce the barrier of requiring access to a vehicle or utilizing more costly rideshare services.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods is already a hub for community and supportive services including multiple programs to support those experiencing substance abuse disorder and those in recovery. Ensuring there are quality places to receive treatment and support that are centrally located and accessible is an important to advancing the vision of the Choice Neighborhoods.

STRATEGY B.

Support programs that can meet people where they are and connect them to support and recovery services.

The City of Hagerstown Police Department is part of the LEAD (Let Everyone Advance with Dignity) program that can connect those who may have been apprehended due to a substance use or mental health issue with supportive services such as a halfway house or recovery program instead of facing criminal charges. The program is a partnership between Washington County and the Hagerstown Policy Department and is envisioned to help address the root causes of crime.

The City of Hagerstown includes funding for community partners working in this space in its 5-Year Consolidated Plan. Programming that can connect those in crisis with supportive services can be a tool to provide individuals with pathways to recovery as well as enhance the overall quality of life for those living in the community.

“Mental health is a concern, the community needs access to services and resources.”



Halloween event (City of Hagerstown)

TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

GOAL 9:

Employ traffic calming measures to reduce speeds, enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety, and improve connections within and into the neighborhoods.

Safer streets that are comfortable for users of all ages and abilities is a key priority for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods community. Many community members have mentioned concerns over speeding and reckless driving that make it feel unsafe to walk and bike. Identifying ways that streets can be safely shared between cars, pedestrians, and bikes will help transform the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods into a welcoming and accessible community for all.

STRATEGY A.

Utilize the redevelopment of the housing sites to help address traffic safety concerns within and into the communities.

The redevelopment and revitalization of the Jonathan Street neighborhood (Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and the Moller Building properties) and the Frederick Manor property will be a catalyst to rethinking vehicular and multimodal movement within and into these communities. Currently, cars take priority and affect how community members use the street and other public spaces. Issues such as speeding, unsafe crossings, and safety issues related to reckless driving have been highlighted as key concerns that need to be addressed.

As the roadways and public spaces in the community are viewed through a lens of connectivity and accessibility, traffic calming tools such as speed bumps, medians, and crosswalks are being integrated into the streetscape and will help slow down drivers and make them more aware of their surroundings. These approaches prioritize the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and centralize their needs and access across the community.

Within the larger Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, the neighborhood-scale approach for accessibility and connectivity prioritizes improvements on the connector streets of Frederick, Potomac, and Washington Streets. Opportunities to identify traffic calming interventions on these streets, as feasible, should also be considered in larger neighborhood transformation efforts.



 **WCT Bus** (WCT)

STRATEGY B.

Create a traffic calming campaign that provides education on the benefits of these interventions and is rooted in the community's experience and elevates their voices on the importance of safety in their neighborhoods.

While physical streetscape improvements are essential in traffic calming efforts to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety, they will only be truly effective and transformative if community members can understand the importance and see the value of changing their everyday

"I would like to see traffic-calming at the housing sites"

habits. A community-based campaign to educate and inform Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents on the benefits of traffic calming interventions will be a tool to truly shift how people drive, walk, and bike within the community. Furthermore, a campaign that is based on the everyday lived experience and realities of those who live, work, and visit the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods will make the message even more impactful.

A community-based campaign can share the stories of everyone from youth to seniors on the challenges they face moving around the neighborhood and can provide a platform for the community to share their ideas on ways to improve safety for everyone. Including an educational component of the benefits of different traffic calming tools as well as how they work and how to use them can build a shared understanding that sets up the community for success once these improvements are implemented.



University Plaza concert (City of Hagerstown)



GOAL 10:

Identify opportunities to collaborate and coordinate with Washington County Public Transit (WCT) on accessibility to employment centers and key services (i.e., grocery stores, healthcare, childcare, etc.).

Accessible and reliable public transit is key for a thriving Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and enhances connections to opportunity for all community members. Many major employment centers as well as many of the full-service grocery stores and shopping centers are located outside of the Choice Neighborhoods, requiring reliance on public transit and/or access to a personal vehicle for access. Identifying ways to collaboratively work with WCT to enhance and expand transit access will be an important component of increasing connectivity for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.

STRATEGY A.

Leverage public transit planning efforts to reflect the transit needs and current service gaps in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods to enhance access to services and amenities.

The County's public transit agency, Washington County Public Transit Department (WCT), is currently updating its Transit Development Plan in its effort to enhance the public's transit experience as well as identify areas that may be underserved in their network. In WCT's 2020 Transit Development Plan, the network's ridership growth was anticipated to grow by at least 30% by 2030 as population growth continues in Washington County, and particularly in the Hagerstown area. The urbanized fixed-route service that serves the Hagerstown area carries the majority of the County's ridership with total ridership averaging over 516,000 passenger trips annually.

In updating its Transit Development Plan, WCT is looking to understand how best they can improve their services and meet the needs for public transit in Washington County. With the Hagerstown area constituting the majority of their ridership, it is important that the community be a participant in these planning efforts and ensure their voices are heard. WCT is working with the City of Hagerstown, Hagerstown Housing Authority, and other key partners in the Choice Neighborhoods process to ensure the priorities of the communities and the opportunities for collaboration are identified.

**“My Hagerstown
is... a place with
better public
transportation.”**



Downtown Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)



STRATEGY B.

Work with service providers who can support ‘last mile’ connections between public transit stops and key services.

Last mile connections refer to the travel between a public transit stop and the user’s final destination (i.e., home, work, recreation, etc.). There are many factors that can make this final connection challenging including lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, or other unsafe walking/biking conditions, lack of accessible features (i.e., curb cuts, ramps, etc.), and distance to the final destination. Identifying opportunities to bridge this final leg of one’s daily transit ride can be very helpful in ensuring a community member can access employment, services, and meet their everyday needs.

Community partners and service providers in Hagerstown are already providing innovative solutions to help connect community members via rideshare programs, shuttles, and other ways to enhance connectivity. Building on this network of services and identifying areas where there may be a common challenge with a ‘last mile’ connection could be a next step in improving connectivity in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.



Biking in Hagerstown (City of Hagerstown)



Community concert (City of Hagerstown)



HOUSING PLAN

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods will be a mixed-income community where all community members can access quality, affordable housing.

The Housing Plan lays the groundwork for a community of choice, neighborhood stability, and opportunities for everyone to thrive.

HOUSING PLAN GOALS

Goal 1: Address the need for affordable housing supply in the Choice Neighborhoods area.

Goal 2: Provide a healthy living environment in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that cultivates emotional connections, cohesion, and sense of belonging.

Goal 3: Create safe and connected communities that prioritize safety and connections.

Goal 4: Provide homeownership opportunities and support for existing Housing Authority and neighborhood residents and explore models for supportive housing.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Leverage new housing development to build needed community assets.

Change the narrative on housing within the Choice Neighborhoods footprint to acknowledge the importance of providing quality affordable housing alongside workforce and market rate units to create a vibrant, thriving, and resilient community.

Cultivate and encourage social cohesion, close-knit connections, and community culture through design.

Create a living environment that encourages physical and emotional wellness as well as safety of its residents through environmental design.

Support and create housing stability as a foundation for economic mobility.















The Housing Plan is an opportunity to reframe the narrative on housing in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods with strategies that acknowledge the importance of providing quality affordable housing alongside workforce and market rate units to create a vibrant, thriving, and resilient community.

FIGURE 1 | HOUSING FRAMEWORK

The Choice Neighborhoods Plan strives to create new affordable housing units and homeownership opportunities across its boundary. The focus housing areas are in proximity to main downtown amenities and services, connected by primary street improvements. The sites are also connected to recreational and open space areas like Wheaton Park, the Cultural Trail, and Memorial Park through improved green corridors.

Housing Framework

-  Target housing sites
-  Home improvement focus area
-  Gathering spaces
-  Priority streets
-  Green connections
-  Improved safety of intersections
-  Amenities and services
-  Cultural Trail

RES Advisors Inc. completed a Market Study of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods primary market study (PMA) area. The PMA is defined by zip codes and includes the urban and suburban parts of Washington County including the entire City of Hagerstown and the towns of Williamsport, Maugansville, and Funkstown. The primary market area is based on demographic and economic trends, school district boundaries, topography, road networks, access to employment, and discussions with local real estate professionals who understand typical commuting trends and housing preferences in the area. The completed Market Study Report for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods can be found in the Appendix to the Draft Plan.



Housing in Hagerstown neighborhoods (City of Hagerstown)

RES Advisors completed the Market Study in two phases:

Phase 1: RES Advisors conducted a preliminary market scan in coordination with Planning Coordinator existing conditions assessment, which included a 1.5-day site visit by RES to Hagerstown.

Phase 2: RES Advisors produced a technical report identifying a market for non-replacement housing in mixed-income scenarios for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods. The report was completed in August 2024.

The Market Study utilized the following approach to understand the housing market and inform the Housing Plan for the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods:

- Collected and reviewed background material about the neighborhood, HHA target properties – Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor – and the broader region.
- Conducted a field work visit to Hagerstown in March 2024.
- Defined a PMA within which housing in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods will compete for renters and purchasers.
- Collected and analyzed economic and demographic data to understand housing demand dynamics in the PMA and regional economic trends influencing the Choice Neighborhoods and PMA.
- Evaluated spending potential in basic neighborhood retail categories (i.e., fresh food, pharmacy).
- Collected information on traffic counts in major commercial corridors in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods.
- Used Ribbon Data's proprietary HISTA tabulations (Households by Income, Household Size, Housing Tenure, & Householder Age), Census data, and demographics from Claritas and ESRI to prepare a housing demand analysis.
- Surveyed existing income-restricted and market-rate housing communities and interviewed local municipal representatives to identify planned and proposed additions to regional housing supply.
- Interviewed local rental housing managers and real estate agents to obtain first-hand information on housing market trends, renter and homebuyer profiles, perceptions of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods, and residential preferences in the broader PMA.
- Reviewed housing sales data and trends in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods and PMA including price, unit types, and sales volume data.
- Reconciled supply and demand to identify supportable housing types and pricing with market support that could be components of the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan.

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Market Study identified key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that will influence the approach to and successful absorption of new mixed-income housing in this community. These are summarized below and represent the high-level findings from the Market Study.

STRENGTHS

There are strong population, household, and employment growth trends that are driving demand for residential development.

- There are numerous well-maintained parks and recreation space within the community.
- Recent growth and investment in Theatre, arts, sports, and entertainment in Hagerstown will draw renters and buyers of all income levels.
- There are churches, nonprofits, and CDCs within walking distance of the target housing sites.
- There is a strong sense of community of long-term residents and a desire to remain in the neighborhood.

WEAKNESSES

Frederick Manor is disconnected from downtown businesses and located in predominantly industrial area.

- There is a lack of fresh food access.
- While there are many vacant or underutilized commercial properties, there is limited vacancy for new residential development.
- Missing critical community amenities include sufficient childcare facilities and a walkable full-service grocery store.

- There is limited availability of affordable workforce housing units.
- There are limited affordable homeownership options.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Housing should include options that are affordable to households employed in the warehousing and logistics industry.
- The Jonathan Street corridor (area where Parkside Homes and Douglass Court are located) has many long-time residents with a strong desire for community revitalization.
- Community Partner Horizon Goodwill Industries will open a new full-service grocery store that will help alleviate challenges for Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods residents to obtain healthy food items.
- There is market demand for LIHTC housing without a unit-based subsidy.
- There is demand for additional affordable for-sale properties targeted to first-time homebuyers.
- There is a missing middle-income rental market in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that could be addressed with new product as part of the Choice Neighborhoods housing program.

THREATS

- Failure to address the challenges of homelessness and crime downtown could slow the absorption of market rate units.
- Lack of sufficient housing options will slow the labor force growth in Hagerstown and impact the community's successful economic development efforts.

Unit Type	Type	Tenure	Public Housing Replacement	LIHTC (40-60% AMI)	60-80% AMI	Total
GENERAL OCCUPANCY RENTAL						
1 BR/1 BA	Flat	Rental	7	74	6	87
2 BR/1-2 BA	Townhouse/Flat	Rental	87	35	134	56
3 BR/2 OR 2.5 BA	Townhouse/ADA Flat	Rental	54	30	12	96
4 BR/2 OR 2.5 BA	Townhouse	Rental	20	-	-	20
5 BR/2 OR 2.5 BA	Townhouse	Rental	3	-	-	3
Age-restricted						
1 BR/1 BA (senior)	Flat	Rental	23	37	-	60
Total Rental Units			194	176	30	400
2 BR/1.5 BA	Single-Family Attached	For Sale	0	5	20	25
3 BR/1.5-2.5 BA	Single-family attached	For Sale	0	5	20	25
Total For Sale Units			0	10	40	50



Downtown (City of Hagerstown)



Downtown (City of Hagerstown)

GOAL 1:

Address the need for affordable housing supply in the Choice Neighborhoods area.

STRATEGY A.

Address the need for affordable housing rental units in the Choice Neighborhoods area to provide affordable housing for families of all incomes, in addition to one-for-one replacement.

To ensure Hagerstown and the Choice Neighborhoods' continued success and community stability, the Housing Plan focuses on the expansion of affordable, mixed-income housing. As the city continues to experience a surge in economic development, many families face challenges in securing stable, long-term housing, leading to high demand for quality housing options that accommodate a growing workforce and local families. With an increased demand for housing supply in Hagerstown, the redevelopment of the Choice Neighborhoods not only supports existing residents and working families already taking root in the area but also fosters a more inclusive and resilient neighborhood where long-term residents and new households can create community together.

REPLACEMENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Choice Neighborhoods initiative provides one-for-one replacement for residents of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor, ensuring Housing Authority residents

can remain in their community. The Housing Plan strives to develop up to 397 new housing units, of which 49% are for Housing Authority residents to ensure no resident or family is displaced and they have the first right to return.

NON-REPLACEMENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In addition to Housing Authority resident units, 26% of the Housing Plan is dedicated to non-replacement affordable housing. Introducing diverse housing opportunities that serve a range of residents of various income levels is a cornerstone of the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan. As the Plan strives to serve diverse family needs and lifestyles, it is envisioned that the Douglass Court housing site will be converted to affordable homeownership units, with these units expected to target residents in the 40-80% AMI thresholds. The one-for-one replacement of the Douglass Court units will be transferred to the Moller Building development.

MARKET RATE HOUSING

Approximately 25% of the housing program is set aside for market rate housing. The demand for these units is evident in the housing market study as well as the demographic and economic analysis and trends. Including market rate housing ensures new investments in the Choice Neighborhoods area without replacing the neighborhood identity and character.

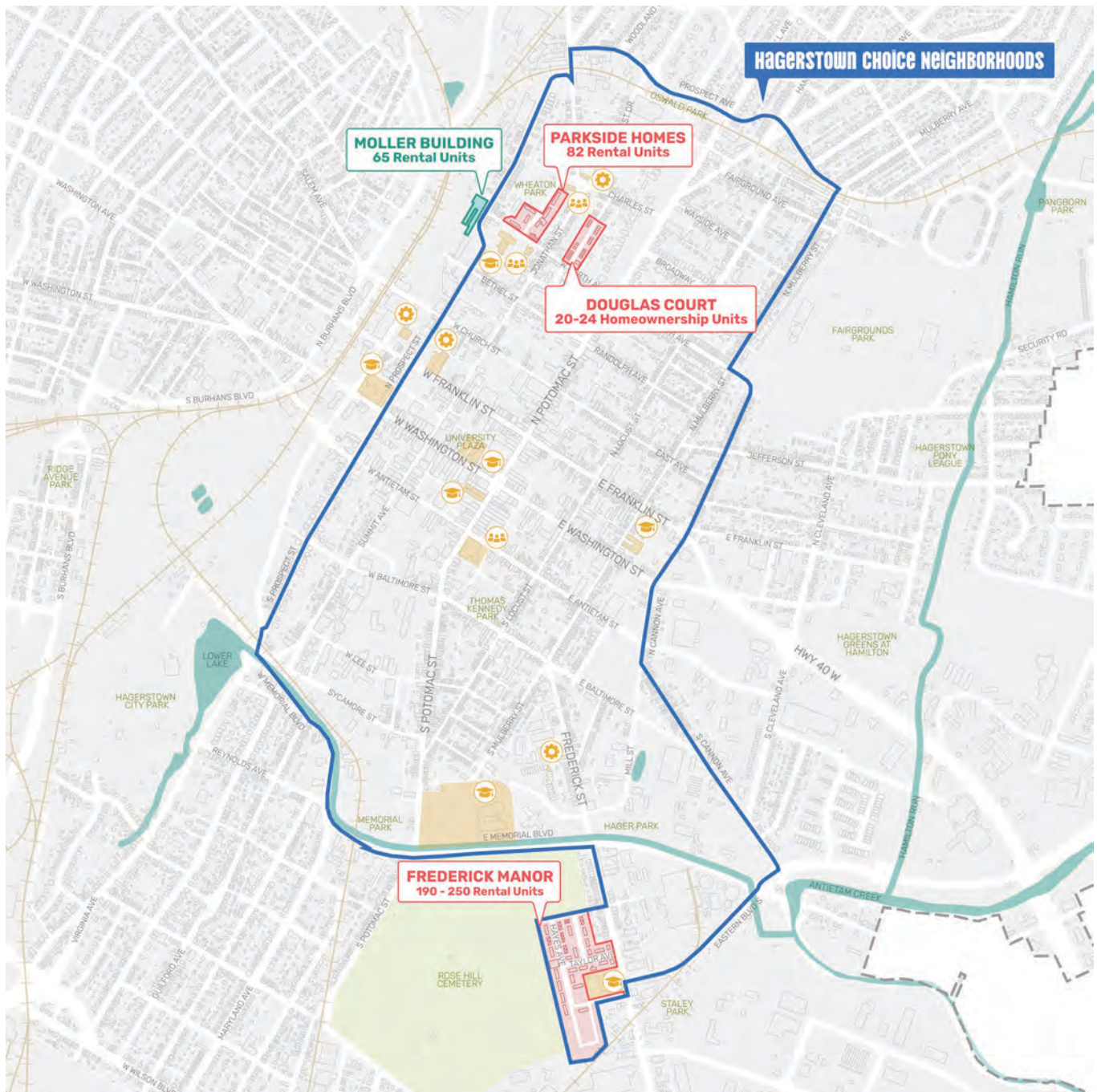


FIGURE 2 | HOUSING INVESTMENT AREAS IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS

This map shows the areas where housing investments will happen in Hagerstown through Choice Neighborhoods. By investing in different areas, these developments will contribute to stabilizing affordable housing in the neighborhoods and will allow residents to have a choice to live in Hagerstown.




FIGURE 3 | HOUSING TYPOLOGIES IN DOWNTOWN HAGERSTOWN

Attached single-family and multi-family dwelling units are typical in downtown Hagerstown.

STRATEGY B.

Integrate a variety of housing typologies and sizes that respond to neighborhood context and accommodate a large range of household needs at each redevelopment site.

The redevelopment of the housing sites in the Choice Neighborhoods introduces a diverse range of housing types that balance the neighborhood character and its integration into the existing urban fabric. The housing types reflect the city's industrial heritage and 20th century growth, creating a cohesive and inviting streetscape and environment. The Housing Plan accommodates a growing and diverse population and strengthens the neighborhood identity by offering both gentle and medium-density housing typologies that speak to neighborhood character and form to foster an inclusive environment for residents and newcomers.



**"My Hagerstown is...
a community with
housing options."**

While recent multifamily developments have expanded the housing stock, the Choice Neighborhoods offers an opportunity for more diverse and attainable options that align with the incomes, family sizes, and diverse needs of the neighborhood residents. The redeveloped housing sites offer a variety of homes that meet residents' needs, whether they are individuals, families, or multigenerational households. Townhomes and stacked townhomes provide familiar, human-scale housing that integrates well in the neighborhood fabric and surrounding streetscape. Multifamily buildings introduce medium-density housing while maintaining a scale that aligns with the neighborhood and supports a walkable, vibrant community with ground floor spaces for resident amenities and services. In addition, at least 10% of each bedroom type will be ADA accessible, ensuring that living options are inclusive for residents of all abilities.

STRATEGY C.

Promote the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of housing properties for affordable rental housing in areas close to services, resources, and transit.

With limited vacant land in the neighborhood, adaptive reuse and rehabilitation present a unique opportunity to expand affordable housing while preserving the Choice Neighborhoods' historic character. Many existing buildings, rich in architectural and cultural heritage, can be repurposed into high-quality, mixed-use housing that meets community needs and maintains neighborhood identity.

The Choice Neighborhood's rich historic fabric provides opportunities strategically located near transit, services, and community resources and can provide affordable rental opportunities for a range of residents, including those at Housing Authority properties and local workforce families and individuals. With thoughtful rehabilitation and design of these spaces, the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods can create a mixed-income community that offers opportunities for the community as well as local businesses, cultural spaces, and neighborhood amenities to ensure the community continues to grow while respecting its identity and character.

As part of this process, the Housing Plan has identified one off-site area where residents can choose to move to if they desire to do so.

THE HISTORIC MOLLER BUILDING

Located next door to Parkside Homes and Douglass Court, the former Moller Building provides the perfect opportunity for adaptive reuse— in addition to being located in an area familiar to Housing Authority and neighborhood residents so they do not have to change their lifestyle. Around 65 units will be developed as part of the rehabilitation of this former industrial structure and will also provide opportunities for resident amenities and recreation.



 **Moller building** (WRT)



Moller building (WRT)

STRATEGY D.

Follow a build-first strategy to limit displacement of Hagerstown Housing Authority residents.

The redevelopment of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor follows a build-first approach to ensure Housing Authority residents can remain in their community throughout the redevelopment of the housing sites. Prior to redeveloping any existing Housing Authority sites, the adaptive reuse of the former Moller building will occur in Phase 1. This approach allows residents to transition into new housing without the

need for temporary relocation, minimizing disruption. Through the identification of this first phase for redevelopment, the Choice Neighborhoods initiative reduces disruption and allows families to stay in their community, maintain their social ties, and continue accessing jobs, schools, and social services without having to relocate multiple times. Through planning and investment, residents can access high-quality housing options without displacing those who have long called the neighborhood home – a seamless transition for a revitalized, mixed-income community while prioritizing residents' well-being and stability.

THE HOUSING PLAN

The Housing Plan is comprised of the Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor sites, and it identifies one additional off-site area for affordable, mixed-income rental housing.

The design of the housing sites responds to the needs of the residents and the historical context of the areas. In addition to redevelopment, the Housing Authority sites include indoor and outdoor spaces that reinforce positive community health and wellbeing, and safe pedestrian connections and recreation environments. The housing sites are designed to be a place where residents are proud to live and where they can feel connected to and supported by their community.

Fostering a sense of community belonging is one of the Housing Authority residents' main priorities, closely followed by better

connections to assets and services. The revitalization of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor, and new homes at the Moller Building respond to the context and to residents' needs that include a variety of housing typologies; multifamily buildings along major thoroughfares that define the street edge and the entrance to the sites; the housing sites are reconnected to the neighborhood and downtown Hagerstown, as well as to transit through enhanced physical connections that allows for safe streetscapes for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Housing Plan is a renewed vision for and by the residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor alongside the larger Choice Neighborhoods community, where priorities for a safe, stable, and family-friendly neighborhood take the lead in the design of the housing sites.



THE JONATHAN STREET AREA – PARKSIDE HOMES, DOUGLASS COURT, AND THE MOLLER BUILDING.

The redeveloped Jonathan Street area includes the Hagerstown Housing Authority's Parkside Homes and Douglass Court properties as well as the Moller Building, a former organ factory.

"I would like to see a place all can call home, with safe areas to play and be outside."

PARKSIDE HOMES

The redevelopment of Parkside Homes builds on the multiple existing assets found nearby: Wheaton Park, Robert W Johnson Community Center, Head Start of Washington County, Children In Need, and the future Doleman Museum Site, among others. It introduces a mix of multifamily buildings, stacked townhomes, and traditional townhomes, offering a variety of housing options that cater to different household sizes and needs.



Typologies explored by residents in the Baltimore Choice trip (WRT)

The redevelopment features a low-rise, mixed-use building fronting W North Avenue. This multifamily building facing the entrance of Parkside Homes defines the street and hosts ground floor amenities that provide residents with the opportunity of fostering community interactions while also providing needed community services. Stacked townhomes and traditional townhomes are located along Sumans Avenue and facing Wheaton Park . These typologies balance the density of the site and add a human-scale feel, providing front porches and direct street access that encourage social interaction, and matching the neighborhood identity and character. In addition, some of the design elements such as windows overlooking the street, programmed open spaces, and tucked in parking provide a greater feeling of safety, which is one of the main priorities of residents. These housing typologies create a vibrant and diverse residential environment where individuals and families can find a home that fits their needs.

The urban design and landscape interventions at Parkside Homes are centered around fostering resident belonging, safety, and comfort, and providing a pedestrian-friendly and walkable environment. The community has narrowed streets that offer wider, tree-lined sidewalks and inviting public spaces, creating natural gathering spaces that enhance community social connections; enhanced intersections, tabletops, and reduced traffic speeds provide safety for residents, families and children. These enhanced streetscapes create better mobility for pedestrians and bicycle users, connecting residents' homes to nearby amenities and reinforcing the sense of security through active, well-lit public spaces.

The design also includes pocket parks, landscaped seating areas, and small courtyards to provide residents with relaxation and recreation spaces to foster a welcoming atmosphere. In addition, Wheaton Park serves as an extension of Parkside Homes, offering opportunities for outdoor activities, gatherings, and events and the overall location of the community ensures residents have convenient access to transit, local businesses, essential services, and community resources.



Typologies explored by residents in the Baltimore Choice trip (WRT)

VISION FOR JONATHAN STREET:

Through the Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan the Jonathan Street neighborhood will be revitalized with mixed-income rental housing and affordable homeownership units. This redevelopment better connects the community to services, provides attainable housing, and delivers an enhanced quality of life -- all key

FIGURE 4 | AERIAL RENDERING OF THE JONATHAN STREET NEIGHBORHOOD WITH REDEVELOPED MOLLER BUILDING, PARKSIDE HOMES, AND DOUGLASS COURT





PARKSIDE HOMES HOUSING PLAN				
# bedroom	Multifamily	Stacked Townhome	Traditional Townhome	Total
1 - BR	16	4	-	20
2 - BR	21	8	5	34
3 - BR	-	8	15	23
4 - BR	-	-	5	5
Total Units	37	20	25	82

MOLLER BUILDING HOUSING PLAN		
# bedroom	Historic Rehab	Total
1 - BR	41	
2 - BR	24	
Total Units	65	65

DOUGLASS COURT HOMEOWNERSHIP		
# bedroom	Affordable Homeownership	Total
3 - BR	6-8	
4 - BR	14-16	
Total Units	20-24	20-24



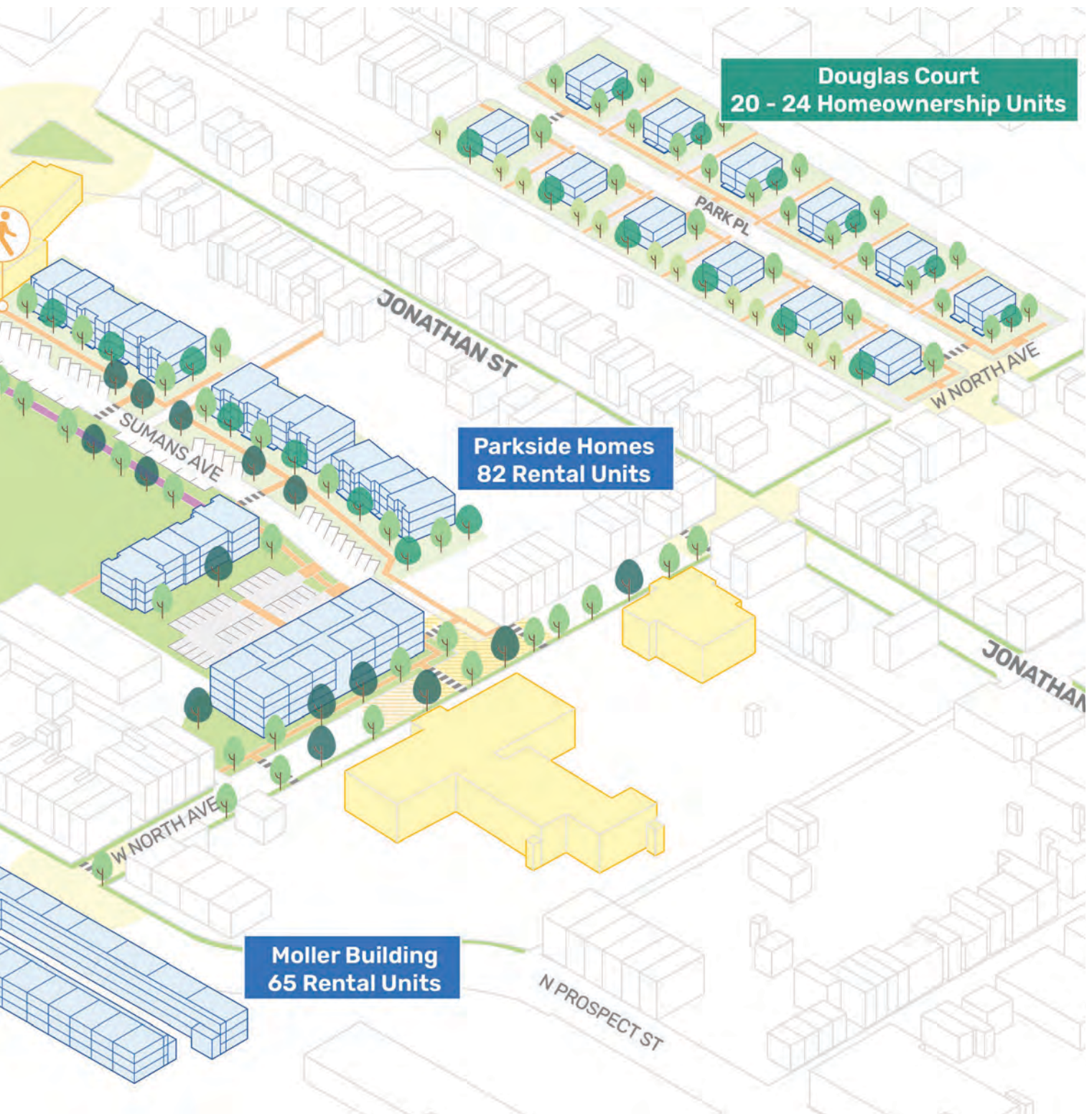


FIGURE 5 | JONATHAN STREET AREA HOUSING PLAN

DOUGLASS COURT

Due to Douglass Court's location and layout within the existing street grid, it was deemed quite difficult to pursue a full redevelopment of the site for replacement units and new mixed-income rental housing. Instead, HHA has decided to pursue the development of affordable homeownership units on the site through an anticipated partnership with a private developer and/or nonprofit organization, and transfer the Douglass Court one-for-one replacement units to the Moller Building.

This site offers an opportunity for long-term residents to access affordable homeownership opportunities and benefit from an environment that supports social cohesion and long-term neighborhood stability.

The development features street-facing twin townhomes that integrate into the surrounding neighborhood while offering diverse options that can accommodate multiple household sizes. On-site parking and private backyards are featured for each home, which allows the redesign of the streetscape – narrowed lanes, and wide and shaded sidewalks foster a pedestrian-friendly and community-oriented environment prioritizing resident safety, comfort, and accessibility.

FORMER MOLLER BUILDING

The adaptive reuse of the Moller Building transforms a former industrial site into a vibrant residential community, celebrating its historic character while adapting it to resident needs and way of living.

This site provides additional housing opportunities for residents, offering a unique framework to repurpose the existing structure and building envelope by including new residential spaces and maintaining the neighborhood's identity while adapting it to current needs.

The central community space is at the center of the building, which fosters community engagement and connections through a shared area that includes amenities for residents to gather and relax. On the sides, housing units are developed for residents, and in the middle of it, a programmed courtyard framed by the existing structure serves as a focal point for outdoor activities with seating areas, green spaces, and opportunities for resident events.

The site's urban design and landscape interventions prioritize resident comfort, safety, and accessibility. Landscaped areas in the rear of the building provide greenery and open spaces that soften the industrial past and create a more inviting environment.



Typologies explored by residents in the Baltimore Choice trip (WRT)



Typologies explored by residents in the Baltimore Choice trip (WRT)



Typologies explored by residents in the Baltimore Choice trip (WRT)



Typologies explored by residents in the Baltimore Choice trip (WRT)

FREDERICK MANOR

The revitalization of Frederick Manor includes two options for redevelopment, both of which will provide a vibrant, mixed-income community that meets the evolving needs of residents. The redevelopment builds on the area's network of community assets and services, including a redeveloped Boys & Girls Club of Washington County, Bester Elementary School, Bester Community of Hope and Hager Park and the walking path, ensuring Frederick Manor families have access to resources, educational opportunities, and recreation spaces.

Option 1 maintains the current footprint of the site with a full redevelopment of all structures and the development of a new Boys and Girls Club facility. The redevelopment will include a mix of townhomes and stacked townhomes as well as a mid-rise multi-family building that fronts Frederick Street and Taylor Avenue. The new Boys and Girls Club facility will face Frederick Street and connect to a small parking lot and large open space that can accommodate outdoor play and activities. Taylor Avenue will continue to be the gateway and main entry point into Frederick Manor; however, Hayes Street will be widened to better connect the northern and southern portions of the site as well as to improve traffic flow. It is envisioned that Option 1 can accommodate up to 190 new dwelling units.

Option 2 expands the site's footprint to include a neighboring parcel that allows for a slight increase in density and replaces Taylor Ave with a new entry point into the development. The new gateway and entry

point into Frederick Manor will provide a separated buffer for two-way traffic and a roundabout in the center of the site that allows access to the interior of the development. Similar to Option 1, there will be a mix of townhomes and stacked townhomes on the site as well as a mid-rise multifamily building. In Option 2, the multi-family building mainly fronts Frederick Street with a small portion wrapping around to face the new entry point into the development. The new Boys and Girls Club facility is located in the rear of the development behind the roundabout and is buffered from the street by open space to accommodate outdoor events and activities and walking paths. It is envisioned that Option 2 can accommodate up to 250 new dwelling units.

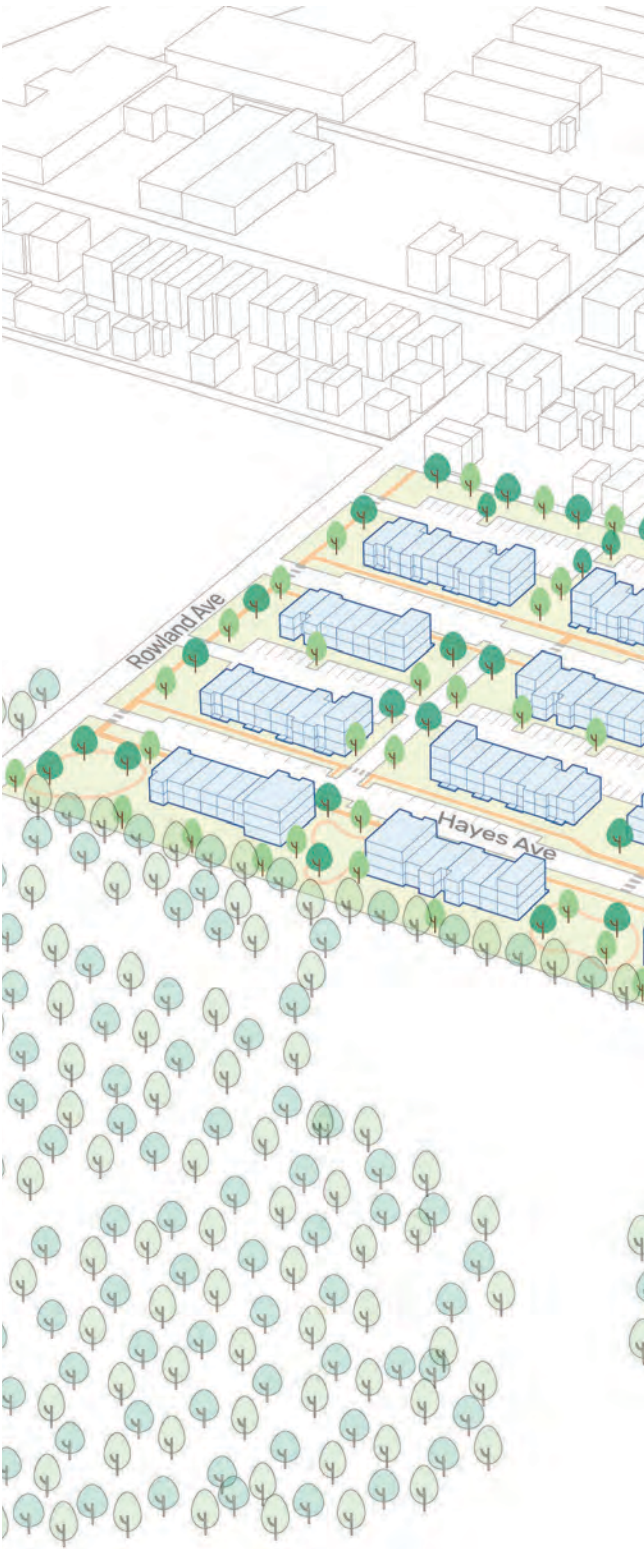
Both Options 1 and 2 include thoughtfully designed streetscape and landscape areas that provide residents with new recreational and relaxing spaces, as well as playgrounds for children and walking paths to connect across the housing site.

Both redevelopment options include a central green space that serves as a central community gathering space, offering residents with opportunities with active outdoor recreation, relaxation, and community events. This green space is designed to be flexible, supporting different activities and play areas for children, making it the key to the site.

FREDERICK MANOR HOUSING PLAN OPTION 1

UP TO 190 DUs

# bedroom	1 - BR	2 - BR	3 - BR	4 - BR	Total
%	8%	46%	29%	17%	100%



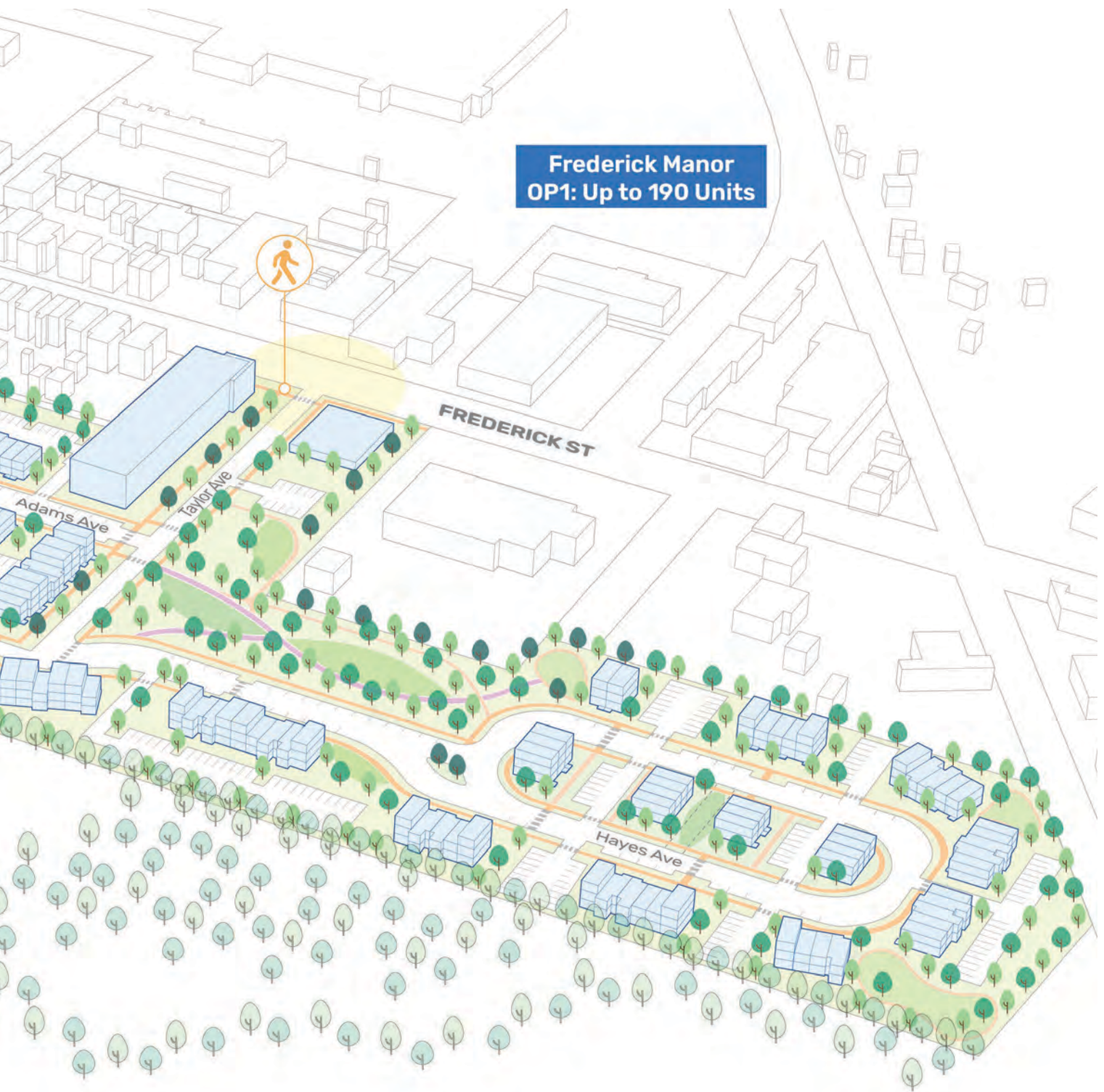
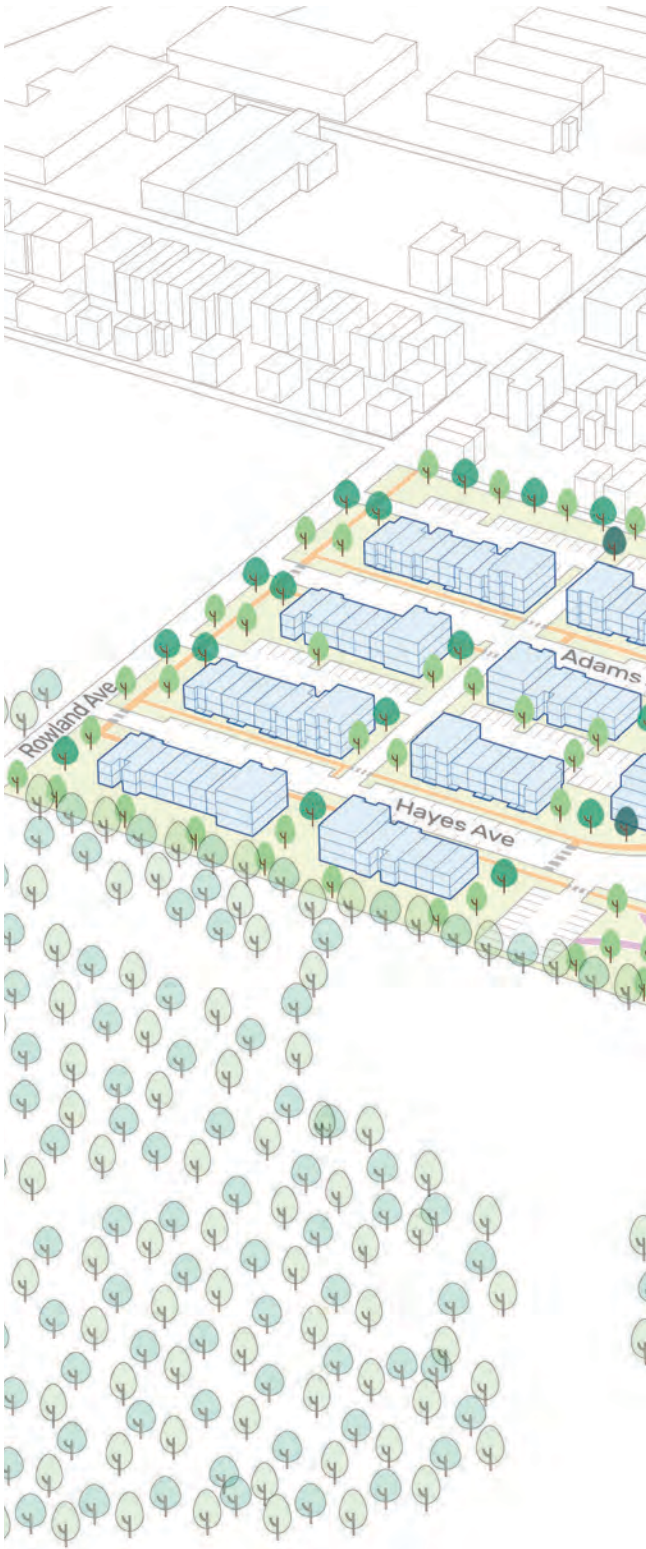


FIGURE 6 | FREDERICK MANOR HOUSING PLAN OPTION 1

FREDERICK MANOR HOUSING PLAN OPTION 2

UP TO 250 DUs

# bedroom	1 - BR	2 - BR	3 - BR	4 - BR	Total
%	25%	34%	31%	10%	100%



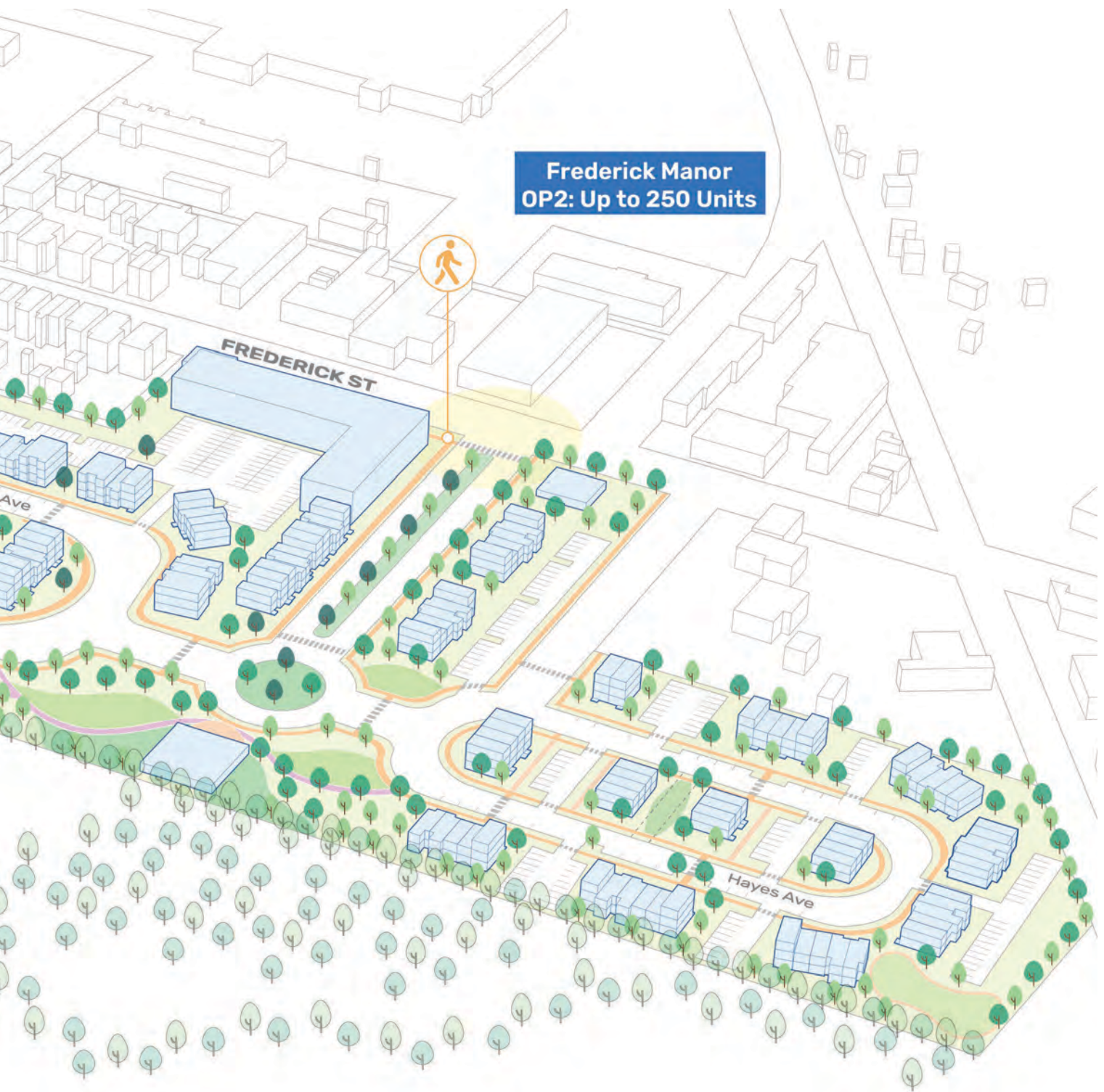


FIGURE 7 | FREDERICK MANOR HOUSING PLAN OPTION 2

RENTAL PHASING

MOLLER BUILDING – PHASE I

The Moller Building will feature 41 one-bedroom units and 24 two-bedroom units for a total of 65 units. As a historic rehab of a former pipe organ factory, a preliminary architectural review suggests this bedroom mix to be the highest and best use of the existing space. Fifty-five of the units will be available to those with incomes at 30% AMI or less, while 10 units will be available at market rate rents. This income mix is beneficial in creating a diverse tenant base and achieving high scores for the tax credit application. The development will be financed with 9% low-income tax credits, state and federal historic tax credits, state soft funds including MD DHCD Rental Housing Program Fund and Partnership Rental Housing Program Funds, a private first mortgage, deferred developer fee, and several smaller rebates and credits. The Moller Building is one of the larger and most recognizable buildings in Hagerstown, situated on top of a hill overlooking the HUD Choice target neighborhood. Its revitalization will be a symbol of hope to the community and of the positive change to come.

PARKSIDE – PHASE II

Parkside will be a new construction project and will feature 20 one-bedroom units, 34 two-bedroom units, 23 three-bedroom units, and 5 four-bedroom units for a total of 82 units. This bedroom mix will provide existing new tenants with a variety of options, including several large four-bedroom units. Sixty-two units will be available to those with incomes at or below 60% AMI, and another 20 units will

be available at market-rate rents, allowing for multiple options and diverse tenant base. The development will be financed with 4% low-income tax credits, state soft funds including MD DHCD Rental Housing Works, long-term tax-exempt bonds, deferred developer fee, transferred reserves from Hagerstown Housing Authority, \$8,000,000 in HUD Choice funds, and several smaller rebates and credits. Parkside will breathe new life to a historically African American section of the target neighborhood that regularly deals with quality-of-life issues. A new, thoughtful, and more modern layout and design will help to alleviate some of these issues.

FREDERICK MANOR – PHASE III

Frederick Manor III will be a new construction project and will feature 12 one-bedroom units, 26 two-bedroom units, 16 three-bedroom units, and 10 four-bedroom units for a total of 64 units. This bedroom mix will provide existing and new tenants with a variety of options, including large four-bedroom units. Thirty-one units will be available to those with incomes at or below 30% AMI providing opportunities for very low-income residents, twenty-one units at 60% AMI, and 12 market rate units. The development will be financed with 9% low-income tax credits, state soft funds, a first mortgage, deferred developer fee, transferred reserves from Hagerstown Housing Authority, \$3,500,000 in HUD Choice funds, Federal Home Loan Bank funds, and several smaller rebates and credits. For the tenants that enjoy residing in Frederick Manor, these units will provide continuity and ability to easily relocate within the community.

PHASE I HISTORIC REHAB 65 UNITS						
Moller Building	Unit Type	RU	LIHTC	Market	Total	%
	1 BR	25	10	6	41	63%
	2 BR	14	6	4	24	37%
	Total	39	16	10	65	100%
	%	60%	25%	15%		

PHASE II NEW CONSTRUCTION 82 UNITS						
Parkside	Unit Type	RU	LIHTC	Market	Total	%
	1 BR	7	8	5	20	24%
	2 BR	11	16	7	34	41%
	3 BR	10	7	6	23	28%
	4 BR	2	1	2	5	6%
	Total	30	32	20	82	100%
	%	37%	39%	24%		

PHASE III NEW CONSTRUCTION 64 UNITS						
Frederick Manor	Unit Type	RU	LIHTC	Market	Total	%
	1 BR	5	5	2	12	19%
	2 BR	11	10	5	26	41%
	3 BR	7	6	3	16	25%
	4 BR	8		2	10	16%
	Total	31	21	12	64	100%
	%	48%	33%	19%		

PHASE IV NEW CONSTRUCTION 51 UNITS

Frederick Manor	Unit Type	RU	LIHTC	Market	Total	%
	1 BR	20	4	12	36	71%
	2 BR	6	5	4	15	29%
	3 BR				0	0%
	4 BR				0	0%
	Total	26	9	16	51	100%
	%	51%	18%	31%		

PHASE V NEW CONSTRUCTION 64 UNITS

Frederick Manor	Unit Type	RU	LIHTC	Market	Total	%
	1 BR				0	0%
	2 BR	22	10	8	40	30%
	3 BR	32	23	12	67	50%
	4 BR	14	10	4	28	21%
	Total	68	43	24	135	100%
	%	50%	32%	18%		

HOUSING PLAN 397 UNITS

Frederick Manor	Unit Type	RU	LIHTC	Market	Total	%
	1 BR	57	27	25	109	27%
	2 BR	64	47	28	139	35%
	3 BR	49	36	21	106	27%
	4 BR	24	11	8	43	11%
	Total	194	121	82	397	100%
	%	49%	30%	21%		

FREDERICK MANOR – PHASE IV

Frederick Manor IV will be a new construction project and will feature 36 one-bedroom units and 15 two-bedroom units for a total of 51 units. Phase IV mid-rise multifamily building, reasonably allowing for one- and two-bedroom units. Twenty-five units will be available to those with incomes at or below 30% AMI, providing opportunities for very low-income residents, and 25 market rate units. The development will be financed with 9% low-income tax credits, state soft funds, a first mortgage, deferred developer fee, transferred reserves from Hagerstown Housing Authority, \$5,000,000 in HUD Choice funds, and several smaller rebates and credits. The phase will serve as a marque building in the Frederick Manor redevelopment, situated alongside the main road and an entrance to the community.

FREDERICK MANOR – PHASE V

Frederick Manor V will be a new construction project and will feature 40 two-bedroom units, 67 three-bedroom units, and 28 four-bedroom units for a total of 135 units. This bedroom mix will provide existing new tenants with a variety of options, including several large four-bedroom units. One hundred and forty-one units will be available to those with incomes at or below 60% AMI, and another 35 units will be available at market rate rents, allowing for multiple options and diverse tenant base. The development will be financed with 4% low-income tax credits, state soft funds, a first mortgage, deferred developer fee, transferred reserves from Hagerstown Housing Authority, \$7,400,000 in HUD Choice funds, and several smaller rebates and credits. The planned final phase will be the largest, bringing together of replacement units and market rate units for a community truly reflective of the goals of Choice program.

RELOCATION STRATEGY

The Hagerstown Housing Authority (HHA) and our Choice Neighborhood partners are committed to a conscious and intentional relocation strategy with the following objectives:

- Inform and continue to communicate to residents the rights, benefits, and tools for assistance needed to make well-informed decisions of housing options.
- Provide a platform for residents to communicate questions and/or concerns about relocation and redevelopment.
- Adhere to all applicable local and state statutes, as well as federal regulations as outlined in the Uniform Relocation Act (URA).
- Outline strategies and measures that will be taken to minimize the disruption of the tenants.

There will be a strong emphasis on community support services and the coalition of community partners. This will allow for a complete integration of all the necessary pieces to try to restructure people's lives to enhance their living situation and afford them opportunities, especially in the employment arena, that they might not otherwise have.

The HHA will continue to have meetings with residents to be transparent throughout the development process. Additionally, all residents will be interviewed about their needs, including residents with limited English proficiency or disabilities to determine reasonable accommodations and unit modifications that may be necessary.

All residents have the right to return and will be eligible for relocation assistance and payments

in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA), (49 CFR 24.205 (a)).

RESIDENT RETURN AND RE-OCCUPANCY

Residents of the target sites occupying a unit under a valid lease on the date the Choice Neighborhood Implementation grant is awarded will be provided first opportunity to return to a replacement unit if the resident is lease-compliant and remains lease-compliant during the relocation period. A returning resident will be provided with a preference for a replacement unit (on or off-site) before units are made available to other eligible households. Residents that are relocated retain their right to return to the project once construction/rehabilitation has been completed and the units are in decent, safe and sanitary conditions. Residents will not be subject to a re-screening of income, eligibility, criminal charges, or credit pursuant to the Resident No Re-Screening provision. However, after conversion, residents will be subject to any ongoing eligibility requirements.

The size of a unit in which a tenant currently resides shall not determine the size of a relocation unit. A Needs Assessment will determine if a family is over/under housed, and a family will be placed in the appropriate unit size as defined by the Federal Housing Quality Standards.

If a resident is unable to return to a newly constructed unit due to a change in bedroom distribution, the HHA will consult with the household and make available comparable units through public housing or private market, as per the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real

Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA), (49 CFR 24.205 (a)).

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

HHa will ensure that during relocation residents will not be discriminated based on race, nationality, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, familial status, disability or any other basis protected by the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as well as any otherwise arbitrary, or unlawful discrimination, including, but not limited to, forms of discrimination covered by the following provisions:

1. The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (The “Uniform Act” or “URA”), as amended, and its implementing regulations at 49 CFR 24.

- a. 24 CFR 970, Public Housing Program—Demolition or Disposition of Public Housing
- b. PIH 2016-17, 2019-23, 2023-19, 2025-03

2. Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Provisions:

- a. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- b. Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (as amended by the Community Development Act of 1974 and the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988);
- c. Executive Order 11063;
- d. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;

e. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975;

f. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (to the extent it applies, otherwise Section 504 and the Fair Housing Amendments govern)

3. Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2005 (VAWA), as amended.

TEMPORARY RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Any temporary relocation will be handled on a case-by-case basis with the assistance of Hagerstown Housing Authority’s Resident Services Division. Extensive surveys for every affected family will be completed and the family will have options of where to temporarily relocate, including other public housing properties owned/managed by Hagerstown Housing Authority, Housing Choice Vouchers, and privatized housing.

TRANSFER OF ASSISTANCE

In the event of a Transfer of Assistance, the HHA will follow the guidelines of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA), (49 CFR 24.205 (a)) for the Transfer of Assistance. Additionally, households will be permanently relocated by utilizing only one (1) move for the household.

ALTERNATIVE HOUSING OPTIONS AND VOLUNTARY PERMANENT RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Alternative units available to residents shall meet the financial and dwelling requirements of relocated residents. The targeted area will be the City of Hagerstown in areas that currently meet or exceed the condition of units that

the tenant currently resides. The units will be screened for unit accessibility for those that would prefer alternative housing options. The criteria for relocation assistance will be on a case-by-case basis as identified via a housing survey and one-on-one contact with the affected tenant(s).

Additional services shall be offered when a resident chooses not to proceed with the relocation options provided.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The HHA's Resident Services Staff will meet with each head of household to determine the family's unique relocation needs through a Needs Assessment. Where appropriate, the family will be referred to local agencies for special needs (family counseling, emergency food assistance, medical assistance, etc.)

ADVISORY SERVICES

Information shall be provided on the options available for voluntary permanent relocation including, availability and use of a tenant-based voucher and availability of replacement housing payments.

HOUSING SEARCH ASSISTANCE

A minimum of three comparable replacement housing units will be offered to a resident. The HHA will provide transportation services to visit replacement housing units within the City of Hagerstown or Washington County. A comparable replacement unit is a unit that meets the federal Housing Quality Standards and is appropriate to the size of the family. Outside of the City of Hagerstown or Washington County, housing search assistance

shall be limited to verification of a comparable replacement unit based on copies of lease agreements and/or move-in inspections conducted by the corresponding Landlord or Property Management Company.

UTILITY CONNECTIONS

If a barrier to utility hookup exists (outstanding debt, lack of credit, security deposit, etc.), the HHA will work with the resident to remedy the problem to enable them to transfer to new unit. Solution may include but will not be limited to a referral to the local energy assistance program, working with utility companies for resolution, and/or providing the resident with a zero-interest loan for the utilities.

TRANSPORTATION

The HHA's Resident Services department will provide transportation to view available units for all residents.

PACKING/MOVING ASSISTANCE

Packing materials and assistance will be provided as needed. Assistance may include:

- Guidance on applying for dislocation expenses consistent with the URA Fixed Relocation Moving Cost Schedule.
- Process for reimbursement for moving services and expenses consistent with 49 CFR §24.301 or at the resident's option, 49 CFR §24.302.
- Guidance on packing own possessions should they prefer to pack their own personal or valuable possessions.
- Households will be provided with packing supplies upon request.

COMPARABLE UNITS

Residents who choose not to relocate to new site or are not eligible due to bedroom distribution or a change in family composition will be offered three comparable units, including subsidized units within the HHA's public housing communities.

DAMAGE OR LOSS

Should the resident choose to utilize moving services, and a situation occurs where their property is lost, damaged or stolen during the process of moving, any damages and losses would be covered under the moving company's insurance policy.

SECURITY AND PET DEPOSITS

Existing security and pet deposits at the current public housing unit will be transferred to the converted site and will not be required to pay additional deposits. Deposits for residents wishing not to return to the converted site will be returned.

REPLACEMENT HOUSING PAYMENT

If a household fails to meet the criteria for all other alternative replacement housing, and the HHA deems the lack of housing to be of no fault of the household, the HHA may consider a replacement housing payment (RHP) to cover the increase, if any, in monthly housing costs for a 42 month period pursuant to URA requirements.

GRIEVANCE

Residents who are not satisfied with relocation services or decisions may file a grievance as outlined in the relocation plan.

RELOCATION ADVISORY SERVICES

In addition to a Needs Assessment, relocation advisory services will include detailed information on the following:

- Expected relocation time period
- Prospective location of relocation unit
- Relocation moving options
- Storage options, if applicable
- Moving assistance, including packing, unpacking, and utility hookups
- Responsibilities of the residents during the relocation period, including requirements to pay rent
- Housing Counseling/Services

RESIDENT NOTICES

Each household will receive written notice of the conversion. The written notices will ensure that all residents are aware of the conversions to RAD, the relocation process, their rights and any relocation assistance that is available to them. Hagerstown Housing Authority will provide the following notices to residents impacted by RAD:

1. General Information Notice (GIN)

This notice will inform residents of the rehabilitation and new construction proposal that may require temporary or permanent relocation. The notice will be provided to all residents of the affected community.

2. RAD Information Notice (RIN)

This notice will inform the residents of the general description of the conversion transaction, advise residents of meetings and services.

3. General Information Notice Update (GIN update)

This notice will be sent to the affected phase upon funding announcement. It will reiterate the original GIN information and provide additional meetings dates to answer questions regarding future relocation, services, and eligibility.

4. Notice of Eligibility for Relocation Assistance (NOE)

This notice will be issued after the GIN. It will describe the available relocation assistance, the estimated amount of assistance based on the displaced person's individual circumstances and needs, and the procedures for obtaining assistance. The notice will be provided to each resident. Residents will receive a NOE for assistance under the URA relocation regulations at 49 CFR 24 respectively. Persons not in good standing will receive a modified NOE informing them that eviction for cause may affect their eligibility for relocation payments. The Notice of Non-Displacement will be included with the

5. Ninety Day Notice to Vacate

All residents will receive a 90-day notice of the relocation, after first receiving the NOE. The notice will specify the date by which the property must be vacated. Residents may be required to move in fewer than 90 days if the HHA determines that the notice is impractical for reasons such as health and safety.

6. Thirty Day Notice to Move

This notice provides residents with an additional notice to vacate and notify residents of the earliest date they can move and the unit they will be moving to. Additionally, this notice can advise each head of household that, if converting to RAD, their public housing lease will be terminated and converted to a RAD lease.

All public housing residents will receive the required notices of relocation. After initial notification, residents will be scheduled for briefing sessions to explain relocation procedures. During each briefing, residents will be required to sign a written statement of acknowledgement regarding pending relocation.

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION WITH INDIVIDUAL WITH DISABILITIES AND LEP PERSONS AND USE OF ACCESSIBLE MEETING LOCATIONS

The Hagerstown Housing Authority will promptly identify the language and communication needs of the LEP person. If necessary, staff will use a language identification card (or "I speak cards," available online at www.lep.gov). The HHA will use a successful Family Self-Sufficiency graduate interpreter who has volunteered her time to the relocation process, including meetings and one-on-one interviews/surveys as needed. Through internet services, we also have the availability to translate materials to any language. For our residents who communicate through sign language, the HHA will hire an interpreter through the local Deaf Net Organization. All printed material will be provided in large print or read to the residents upon request.



GOAL 2:

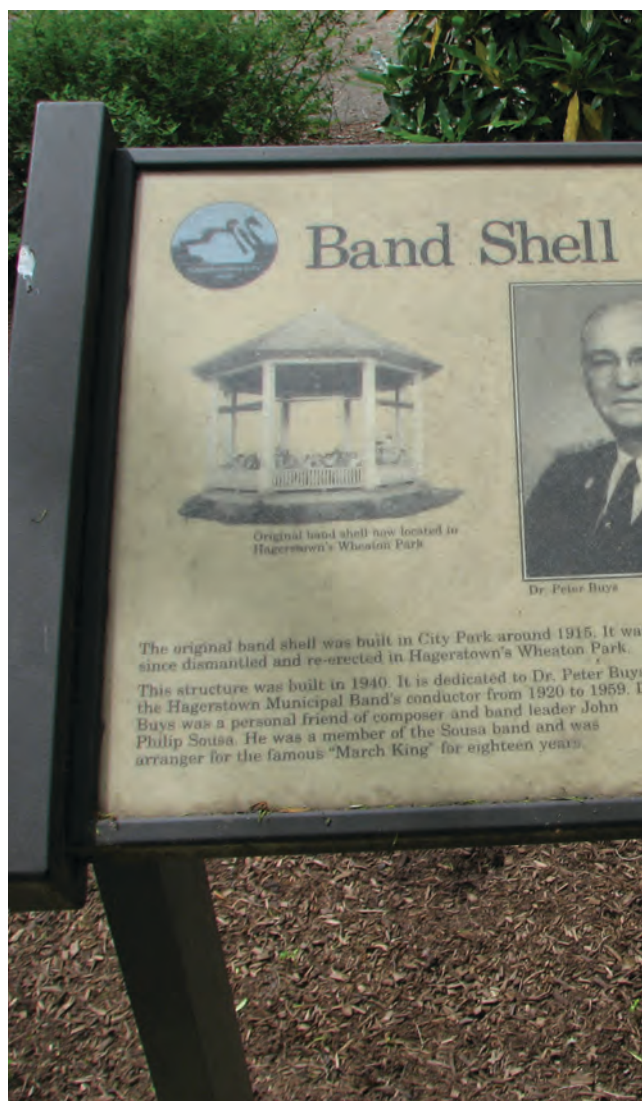
Provide a healthy living environment in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that cultivates emotional connections, cohesion, and sense of belonging.

STRATEGY A.

Improve and integrate urban design and open/gathering spaces within the former Moller Building adaptive reuse housing site for the comfortability and healthy living of residents.

The redevelopment of the former Moller Building not only includes new housing units but also urban design, landscape, and placemaking strategies that honor the industrial heritage and promote resident wellbeing, comfort, and social connectivity.

A front door that honors history and a walkable and connected community. The main entrance to the Moller Building is designed as a welcoming space where residents can gather and engage with the history of the site. Signage and historical markers highlight the Moller Building industrial past and ensures that the legacy of the site remains as it transitions into its new function. Enhanced streetscapes reinforce the Moller Building connectivity to the Jonathan Street neighborhood and downtown through well-lit sidewalks, clear wayfinding, and shaded streets.



Historical signage precedent
(City of Hagerstown)



Courtyard precedent (WRT)

A central space that gathers and connects residents. The main central space of the current Moller Building becomes the entrance to the space, a community space with informal seating for small resident gatherings and resident-led activities. This space includes other residents' amenities, including a community room for flexible, multi-use space for resident meetings, social events, and wellness programming to connect with neighbors and promote social cohesion. In addition, co-working lounges and small breakout rooms provide small gathering spaces for the community.

A green courtyard for greenery and social connectivity. At the heart of the building, between the residential wings, a central courtyard is design to be a tranquil and relaxing open space while still offering some areas for resident gatherings. A curved

walking path defines seating areas and native plant gardens so residents can pause, relax, and enjoy the outdoor space.

It will include (a) meditative seating nooks with native plantings to create a quiet environment; (b) group seatings for gatherings and informal resident meetups to foster social cohesion in the community; (c) landscaping areas with native planting and educational signage opportunities.

A flex open space for multi-generational use. At the rear of the Moller Building, a diverse recreational area offers passive and active recreation options. The space provides (a) a playground with inclusive equipment for children of all ages and abilities that promotes interaction for children in the community; and (b) flex seating areas that incorporate picnic areas, shaded seating, and casual gathering spaces for a variety of social activities for residents.

STRATEGY B.

Provide and integrate intergenerational community gathering spaces within the Parkside Homes housing site that provides healthy living for residents of all abilities.

The redevelopment of Parkside Homes is designed with historical and cultural significance elements in mind and the new spaces encourage social interaction, recreation, and education, to ensure that residents have access to outdoor amenities and environments.



Gateway and signage precedent
(WRT)

The streetscapes and gathering spaces at Parkside Homes are designed to reflect the heritage of the Jonathan Street neighborhood to foster a sense of belonging and community identity and promote walkability and accessibility to outdoor recreation. The new stacked townhomes and traditional townhomes are lined with the street, promoting “eyes on the street” to naturally enhance safety and community engagement, and front porches create a human-scaled streetscape that encourages connections.

A rooted community through placemaking.

Sumans Avenue highlights important figures from the Jonathan Street community through artistic light pole installations and storytelling panels. These elements serve as visual markers of the community’s legacy and weave cultural storytelling and education in residents’ life to enhance the sense of ownership and community belonging to the site.

An accessible and comfortable urban living environment. Shaded streetscapes with native plantings and trees create cooler, pedestrian-friendly environments, and improve walkability and comfort for residents. The network of streets and pathways ensure residents can easily navigate between their homes, the new gathering spaces, and Wheaton Park for a connected community.



Streetscape precedent (WRT)



Pollinator garden precedent (WRT)

Places for gathering and community

connections. Pollinator gardens are integrated throughout the site to serve both functional and educational purposes, helping ecology while providing learning opportunities for families, seniors, and children.

In addition, the new multifamily building fronting W North Avenue features a community room and kitchen for community events, and a fitness area to encourage active lifestyles.

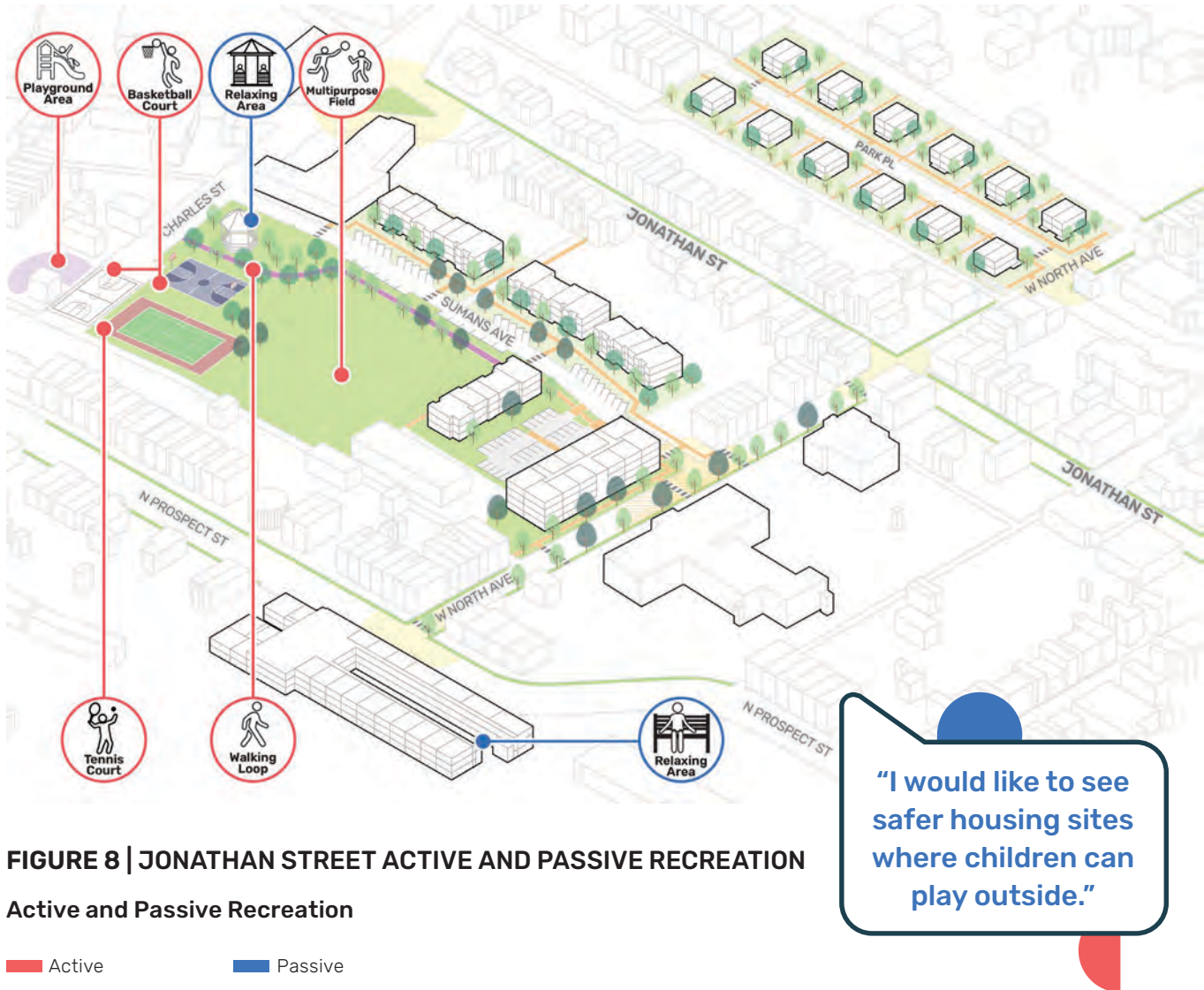


FIGURE 8 | JONATHAN STREET ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION

Active and Passive Recreation

Active Passive

STRATEGY C.

Create new community places and placemaking within the Frederick Manor housing site that promotes a sense of belonging and safe places for active and passive recreation.

The redevelopment of Frederick Manor includes vibrant and interconnected community and gathering spaces that foster resident wellbeing, sense of belonging, and encourage intergenerational social interaction and inclusion. The spaces are designed to enhance the daily lives of Frederick Manor residents

through placemaking strategies, public space design, and active streetscapes to create an urban environment that promotes a sense of belonging and safety so all residents can access recreational, relaxation, and gathering spaces.

At the main entrance to the housing site, residents and visitors can experience a distinct sense of arrival through wayfinding elements and gateway art installations to establish a strong sense of neighborhood identity. Inspired by the history of the site and its community, the gateway should feature bold, artistic elements that capture the essence of the Frederick Manor community. These

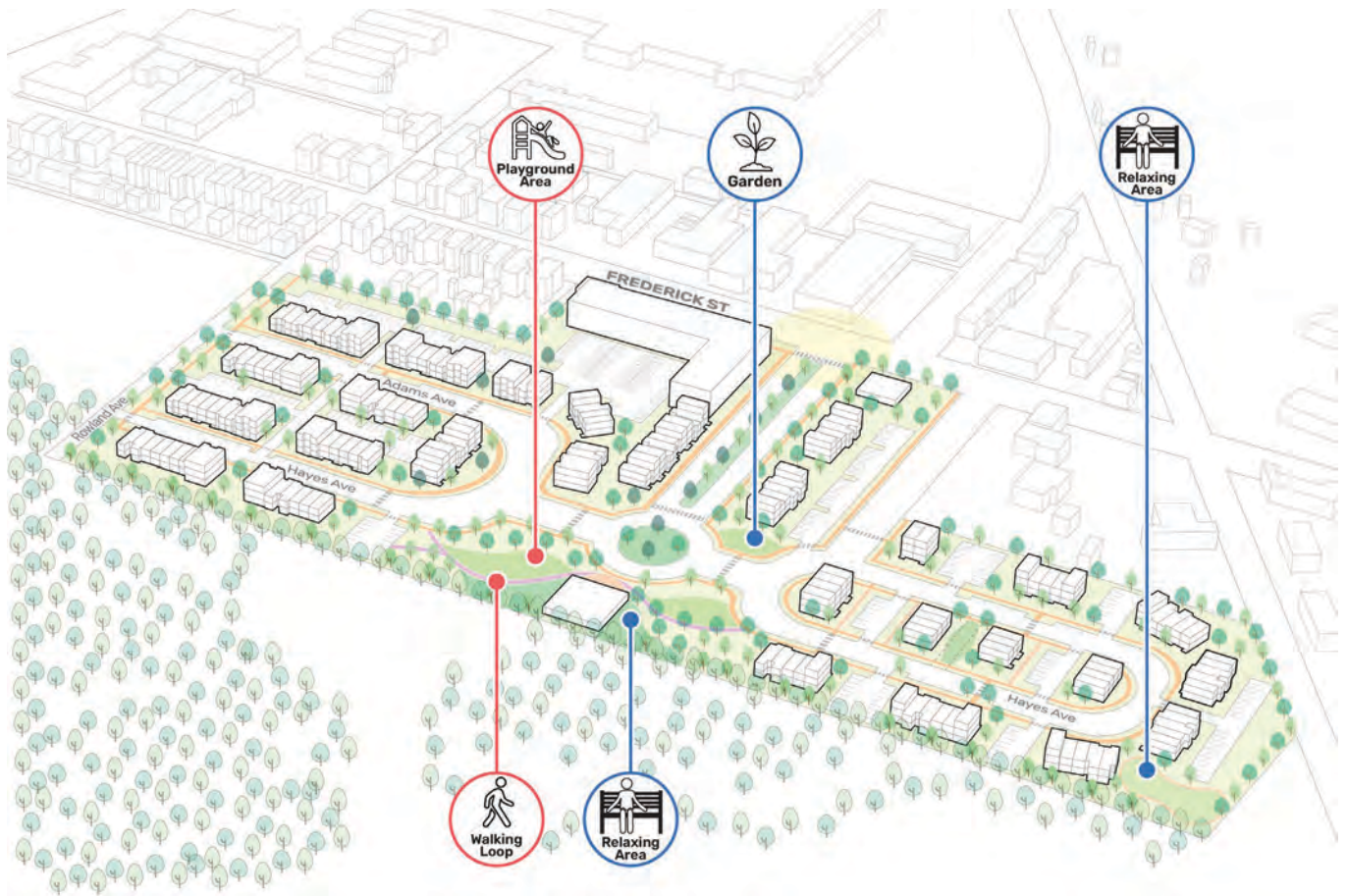


FIGURE 9 | FREDERICK MANOR OPTION 2 ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION

Active and Passive Recreation

■ Active ■ Passive

installations should serve as orientation to the site and visual landmarks to help residents and visitors navigate through the site and reinforce the sense of pride and ownership.

A new green central park serves as the social and recreational heart of the Frederick Manor community. The park is designed as a multi-functional, all-ages gathering space. The park is programmed to include (a) a large, universally accessible playground for children of all ages and abilities for inclusive play opportunities and shaded areas with interactive play elements. The space will serve as an active, recreational area for children to create community ties and

establish a sense of belonging; (b) a flex space is designed within the park to host community gatherings, seasonal festivals, outdoor performances, pop-up markets, and other events for the community, fostering community interaction. The space is adaptable in nature and features lighting elements to support both day and evening activities; (c) a relaxation garden, designed as a peaceful area for residents with shaded seating and native plants to create a calming and meditative environment for the community. The garden offers spaces for reading, reflection, and small social gatherings to reinforce the importance of mental and emotional wellbeing.

“It is important to address the sense of ownership in the community so neighbors take care of it.”

The redevelopment integrates new recreational and social spaces that ensure all residents benefit from improved community amenities and have equitable access to these areas. The areas will include (a) a dog park for pet-friendly activities that encourage social interaction for dog owners; (b) picnic areas with covered seating and communal tables to host family gatherings and informal community meetups; (c) community gardens where residents can engage

in urban agriculture, gardening education, and community activities for self-sufficiency and neighbor-neighbor connections. Within the multifamily building, residents can enjoy a new community room for gatherings and events and a fitness facility to further promote active living.

A continuous walking loop serves as the primary pedestrian corridor that links all the community amenities, promotes physical activity within children, families, and seniors, and educates residents on the history of Frederick Manor as well as the nature and plantings within it.

The walking loop features (a) interactive and educational signage showcasing the history of Frederick Manor, allowing residents to learn about the past of the site and connect with its roots; (b) nature-focused signage, highlighting native plantings and trees featured within the walking loop; (c) mile markers to encourage runners and walkers; and (d) small gardens located along the loop.



Walking loop precedent (WRT)



Gathering space precedent
(WRT)

STRATEGY D.

Promote social cohesion and community activities and events that engage residents across housing sites and provide a way to connect and feeling of belonging to the community.

The redevelopment of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor, and the former Moller Building provides safe and stable housing but also cultivates a connected, engaged, and thriving community through shared experiences and meaningful interactions that take place in the intentionally design spaces for community-building opportunities.

Across all housing sites, gathering spaces, flexible areas, and outdoor amenities facilitate family-friendly events, cultural celebrations, educational programming, and wellness activities to foster resident connections that are also responsive to residents' evolving needs. These are ideal settings for weekly or monthly resident-led events that reflect the diversity and cheerful spirit of the community. Parks and walking loops encourage both passive and active recreation and support mental and physical wellbeing for resident recharge and family-friendly community interaction and spaces. Gateway and marker art installations and signage elements reinforce the community identity and allow residents to feel connected to the history of their community, creating a stronger sense of belonging and community connections.

Spaces are only as impactful as the programming that activates them. These outdoor and indoor spaces should encourage resident-led initiatives that can be paired with partnerships with local organizations, or city and stakeholder programs to bring consistent and valuable programming to the neighborhoods. Residents would like to see family-oriented activities that are inclusive of children of all ages and that foster intergenerational connections so it can be a strong support system for families. In addition, educational programming and after-school activities for children are in high demand to help community children with learning opportunities and personal growth across all age groups. Health and wellness events that promote physical and emotional wellbeing can also reinforce the role of public spaces as places of healing and support for the community.

GOAL 3:

Create safe and connected communities that prioritize safety and connections.

STRATEGY A.

Incorporate trauma-informed design guidelines and best practices at all redevelopment sites.

Trauma-informed design prioritizes safety, dignity, and wellbeing by creating spaces that promote healing, stability, and empowerment for residents. We have heard from residents that emotional and mental health wellbeing is one of their priorities. By integrating best practices in trauma-informed design at all redevelopment sites, the Housing Plan fosters a sense of security, control, and community belonging, ensuring residents feel both physically and emotionally supported in their living environments.

Key principles of trauma-informed design include predictability, choice, and connection to nature, which helps reduce stress while promoting positive social interactions. Clear wayfinding, open sightlines, and well-lit paths are strategies included in all housing sites that enhance visibility and clear navigation for residents and other neighbors, reducing feelings of uncertainty and promoting a sense of control over their surroundings. Housing



Trauma-informed strategies precedent
(City of Hagerstown)



CPTED strategies precedent (City of Hagerstown)



CPTED strategies precedent (WRT)

**“My Hagerstown
is... a more united
community.”**

sites incorporate private and semi-private spaces, allowing residents to regulate their level of social engagement while green and calming color palettes, materials, and design elements create a soothing environment that supports emotional wellbeing. Outdoor and shared spaces are intentionally designed to encourage social connection and community support. Open spaces, community rooms, and programmed gathering spaces provide opportunities for residents to engage at their own comfort level, which allow them to create relationships and build community resilience. Access to nature and green spaces, including gardens, tree-lined streets in the housing sites,

in addition to a walking loop in Frederick Manor, will further contribute to physical and mental wellness, offering areas for relaxation and physical activity. All of these elements together will create neighborhood cohesion in the housing sites and reinforce a stable and supportive environment that helps residents, families, and children thrive and contribute to the empowering spaces that foster long-term wellbeing.

STRATEGY B.

Design the new housing sites following CPTED strategies for the safety of all families living at the housing sites.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a proactive approach to design that enhances safety, security, and community wellbeing, some of the qualities residents were hoping to achieve through the redevelopment of the Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor sites. By implementing CPTED strategies at the housing sites, residents are able to live in safe and welcoming environments where individuals and families feel secure and connected to the surroundings. Some of the key features that are integrated in the design include the following strategies:

incorporating ample windows, and porches that overlook streets, courtyards, and open and public spaces ensure that “eyes are on the street” to deter crime and enhance community awareness. Strategic lighting along sidewalks, pathways, and community spaces improves


visibility and safety, reducing dark or hidden areas that can cause concern for Housing Authority and neighborhood residents.

Clearly defined entrances, walkways, and streetscape treatments can guide movement and minimize opportunities for non-resident access. Landscaping and gateway elements are designed and placed to differentiate between public, semi-private, and private spaces, to foster a sense of ownership and security while maintaining an open and welcoming feel.

Community spaces are designed with clear boundaries that reinforce a sense of place and responsibility among residents. Well-maintained streetscapes, shared open spaces, and activated communal areas encourage engagement and deter unwanted activity. Durable, high-quality materials and consistent upkeep promote pride and long-term investment in the community.

Regularly programmed spaces such as play areas, parks, gathering and open spaces support the continuous community presence to ensure areas are vibrant and well-used. On-site management and responsive maintenance further contribute to the feeling of safety and address concerns reinforcing a well-kept environment.

By including CPTED strategies and principles into the design of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor, and the former Moller Building, the Choice Neighborhoods initiative can ensure that crime risk is reduced and the housing sites are safe, resilient, and connected to the neighborhood to allow all residents to live, play, and thrive.



**“My Hagerstown is...
a safe and welcoming
community!”**

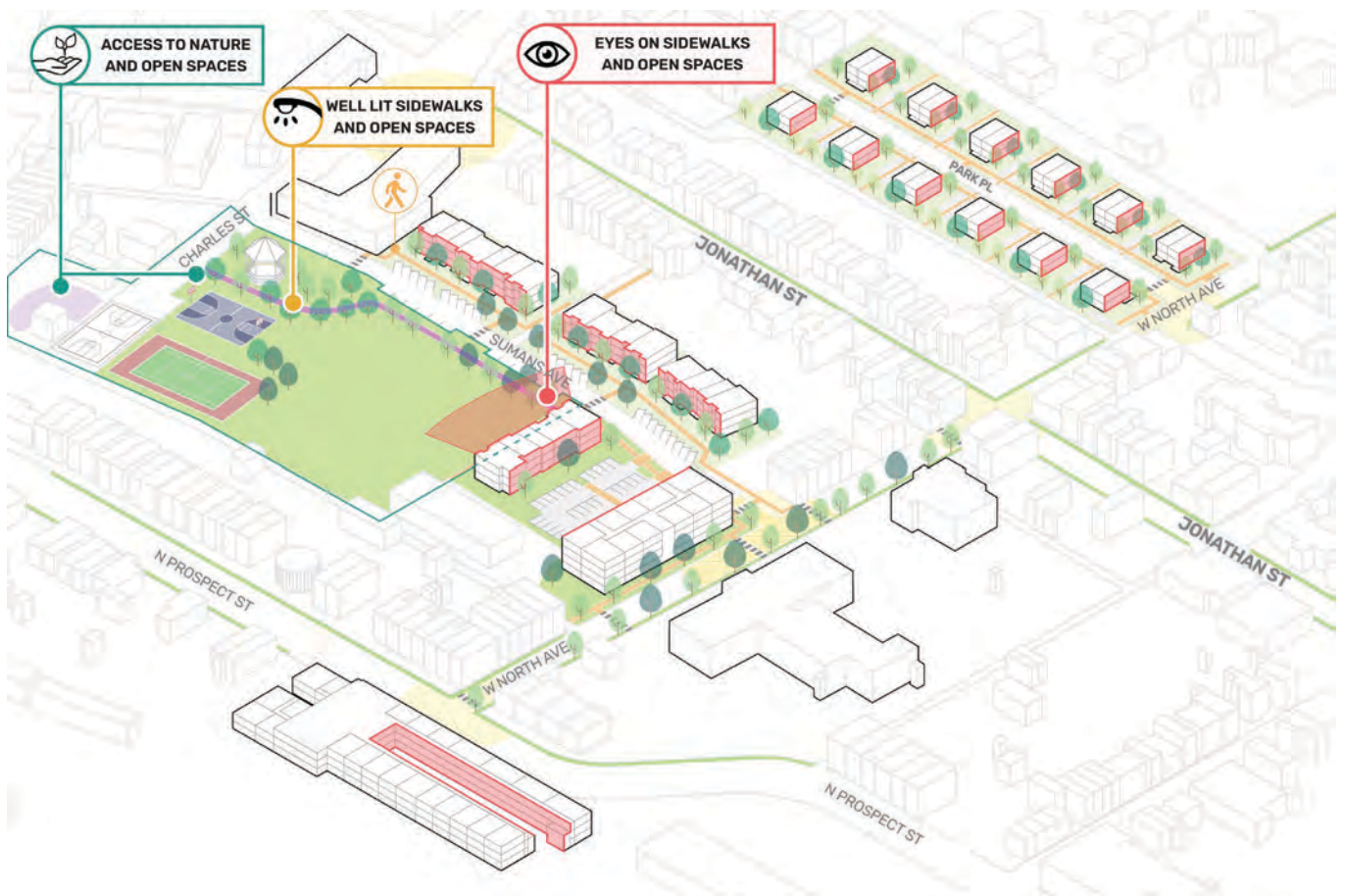
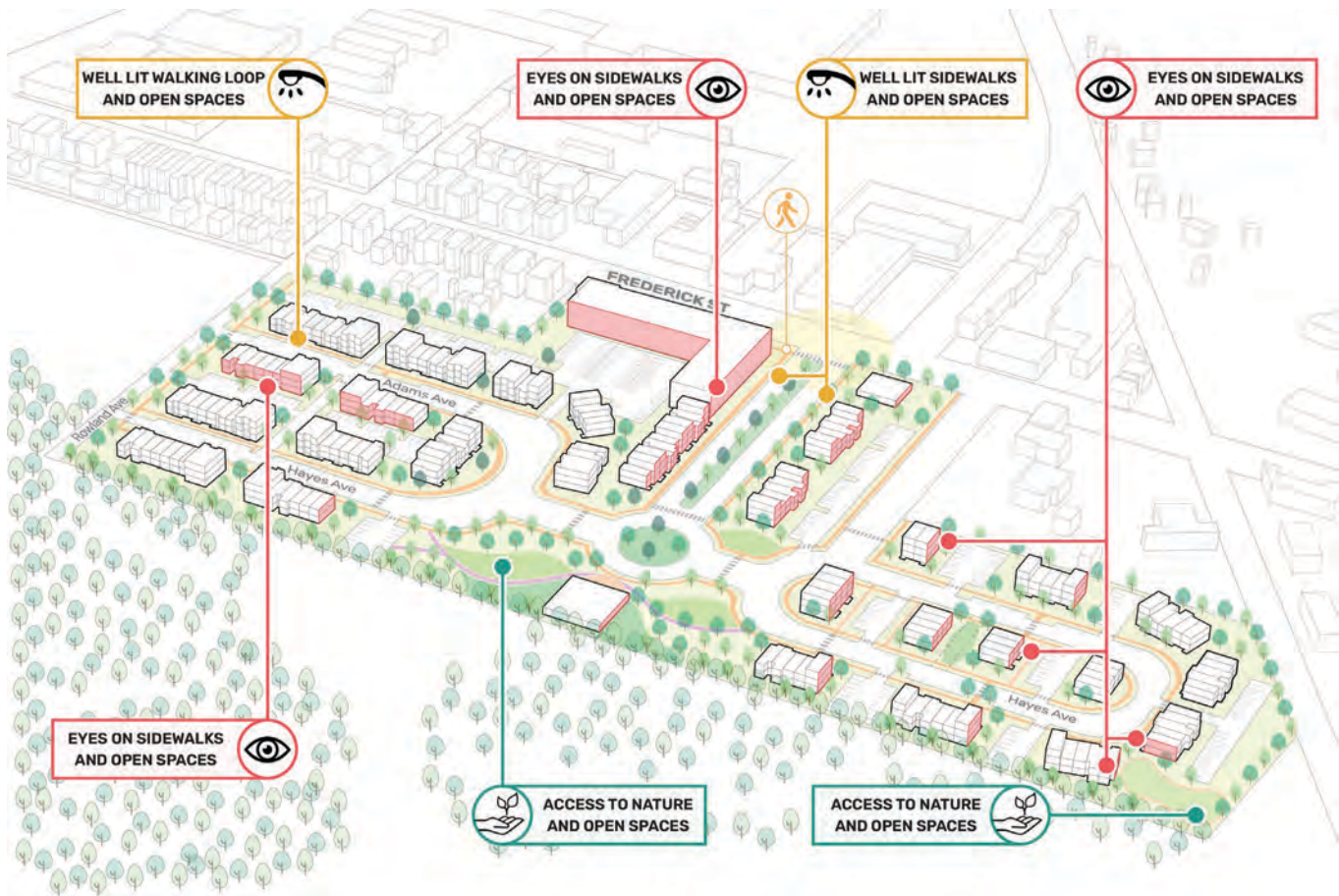


FIGURE 10 | JONATHAN STREET TRAUMA-INFORMED AND CPTED STRATEGIES

The CPTED design provides a sense of ownership of the place, creating a threshold between public and private areas through connection with nature and pathways, while overlooking streets and open spaces.



**FIGURE 11 | FREDERICK MANOR OPTION 2
TRAUMA-INFORMED AND CPTED STRATEGIES**

The CPTED design provides a sense of ownership of the place, creating a threshold between public and private areas through connection with nature and pathways, while overlooking streets and open spaces.

STRATEGY C.

Support and leverage existing assets and services to better connect residents to resources and enhance their quality of life.

The redevelopment of Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, Frederick Manor, and the Moller Building site presents a unique opportunity to strengthen connections between residents and the rich network of community assets and services located in and around downtown Hagerstown. Leveraging the existing educational, cultural, recreational, and social service resources ensures that Housing Authority families have access to opportunities and their wellbeing, stability, and quality of life can be enhanced to ensure they can thrive in their community.

STRENGTHENING CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY

The housing sites location in or nearby downtown allow residents to engage with culture and recreation, as well as connect them to essential educational, health, and social services. The redevelopment of the housing sites prioritizes walkability, public transit access, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, to ensure residents can easily navigate to employment centers, downtown businesses, and essential services without solely relying on personal vehicles. Safe sidewalks, bike-friendly pathways, and improved transit connections help enhance economic and social mobility, allowing residents to fully participate in the city's expanding opportunities.

GOAL 4:

Provide homeownership opportunities and support for existing Housing Authority and neighborhood residents and explore models for supportive housing.

STRATEGY A.

Explore models and locations for supportive housing, ensuring access to integrated services that help tenants remain housed and work towards self-sufficiency.

Supportive housing is critical in ensuring housing stability, self-sufficiency, and long-term wellbeing for individuals and families facing economic hardship, housing insecurity, and other challenges. Through the Choice Neighborhoods initiative, exploring models and locations for supportive housing can ensure that all Hagerstown residents can access safe, service-enriched housing environments where they can access the necessary resources to maintain a stable housing environment and work towards social and economic reintegration.

The approach towards supportive housing should include permanent, affordable housing with integrated wrap-around services, ensuring residents have access to case management, healthcare, mental health support, job training, and financial literacy programs.

Models such as mixed-income developments with designated supportive housing units, co-located service hubs, and transitional housing should be evaluated to determine the best fit for the Hagerstown community. They should include on-site coordination and partnerships with community organizations that focus on housing retention, employment readiness, substance use recovery, and life skills training so tenants can receive tailored support based on their needs and it empowers residents to achieve independence and long-term stability. Additionally, community-building initiatives, mentorship programs, and peer support networks should be offered to encourage social connections and engagement. Potential sites for housing should prioritize proximity to public housing, healthcare facilities, and social services to ensure that residents can easily access critical resources.

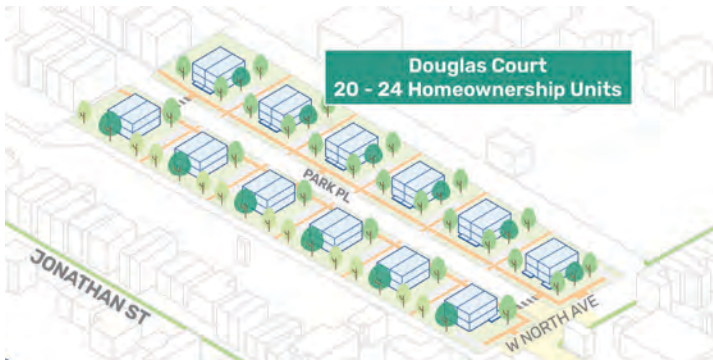


FIGURE 12 | DOUGLAS COURT HOMEOWNERSHIP UNITS

STRATEGY B.

Work with residents to bring awareness about existing homeownership programs developed by public and non-profit organizations.

Homeownership is a key pathway to long-term financial stability, generational wealth-building, and neighborhood investment, yet many residents are unaware of available resources to support first-time buyers.

Several programs are already in place and outreach and engagement should be conducted to bring awareness. The Hagerstown Homeownership Initiative (HHI), offered by the City of Hagerstown, provides down payment/closing cost assistance for home purchases within Hagerstown limits. This program is structured as a forgivable loan if conditions apply, converting it into a grant for those who maintain their primary residence in the home for at least five years. The Hagerstown Housing Authority's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Homeownership Program allows families that are assisted under the HCV program to use their voucher

to buy a home and receive monthly assistance in meeting homeownership expenses.

Increasing awareness and accessibility to existing homeownership programs developed by public and non-profit organizations can empower residents to transition from renting to owning a house and strengthen their connection to the community. Eligible residents may be unaware of these opportunities or face barriers to participation due to lack of information about financial requirements. Outreach efforts should engage residents through workshops and information sessions hosted at the Housing Authority's sites, where families can learn about homeownership and how to qualify for existing programs; provide one-on-one counseling as needed, helping residents understand how to prepare for homeownership; strengthen partnerships with local organizations and non-profits to create a coordinated pipeline of rent-to-own households, making the process more accessible. As more families can transition from renting to owning, the Choice Neighborhoods will benefit from increased neighborhood stability and a stronger sense of pride in the area by residents.

STRATEGY C.

Connect residents to HHA's Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) that provides financial literacy education and pathways for residents to become homeowners.

In addition to outreach and awareness about homeownership programs, access to financial literacy education is essential for residents looking to achieve financial stability and homeownership. Many families' barriers lie in knowledge of the homebuying processes, credit requirements, and available resources. Developing workshops designed to empower residents with financial knowledge and building confidence in managing finances help residents build pathways to own a home. Understanding credit scores and improving credit to qualify for mortgages, budgeting and saving strategies to help plan for a downpayment and future home expenses, navigating mortgage options and financial assistance programs, and learning how to make informed decisions are all topics that help residents bridge the gap between renting and owning and gain knowledge in the process and their finances. In addition to the homeowner workshops, there should be guidance from the Housing Authority counselors and local organizations that specialize in first-time homebuyer support that can provide one-on-one assistance and support and step-by-step guidance.

STRATEGY D.

Stabilize blight in the Jonathan Street area and identify key opportunity sites to expand affordable homeownership opportunities by partnering with local anchor organizations.

The Jonathan Street area is one of Hagerstown's most historically significant neighborhoods, yet there are challenges related to vacant properties and housing instability. Blighted and vacant properties contribute to safety concerns and a lack of quality affordable housing. The Choice Neighborhoods efforts should focus on identifying and prioritizing vacant, abandoned, and underutilized properties for rehabilitation and new homeownership opportunities;



Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Meeting (WRT)

implementing strategies to secure and maintain vacant properties to prevent further deterioration; preservation of historic homes and neighborhood character, so revitalization efforts reflect the neighborhood significance. These strategies should lead in the long-term to rehabilitating existing structures to provide move-in ready, affordable housing, in addition to developing infill housing on vacant lots that are in line with the neighborhood housing, and should prioritize long-term neighborhood residents as the target population to make sure the efforts benefit the existing community. Identifying these redevelopment opportunities and providing additional affordable homeownership ensures reinvestment benefits the community and residents have equitable access to stability and economic opportunity. In addition, partnerships with local organizations and nonprofits can ensure that the City and the Housing Authority are leveraging resources to preserve the Jonathan Street area's affordability, provide financial education for first-time buyers, and coordinate with organizations that provide opportunities for local entrepreneurship and businesses as redevelopment takes place.



FIGURE 13 | CITY ASSESSMENT FOR POTENTIAL AFFORDABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP

Source: City of Hagerstown, 2024

This map shows the City assessment for potential affordable homeownership through rehab strategies.

Jonathan Street area opportunities

- Potential affordable homeownership through rehab strategies
- Rehabbed properties
- Vacant property stabilization
- Target housing sites
- Downtown
- Choice Neighborhoods

STRATEGY E.

Create an Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund (AHRF) to help low- and moderate-income residents and families access opportunities for first-time home purchase.

An Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund (AHRF) is a self-sustaining financial tool to assist low- and moderate-income residents in overcoming barriers to homeownership such as downpayment requirements, interest rates, and access to mortgage lending. This program ensures to follow a model that can continue to expand access to affordable homeownership over time, strengthens neighborhood stability and economic mobility of residents by helping them transition from renting to owning, and reduces displacement.

The fund should serve long-term residents and historically underserved populations to ensure that homeownership remains equitable and inclusive in the Choice Neighborhoods. The Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund is a continuous replenishing resource so it can provide affordable, low-interest loans to first-time homebuyers to help residents secure stable, long-term housing and build generational wealth through the opportunity to buy a home in their own community. As new homeowners repay their loan, funds will replenish back the program to ensure ongoing support for future homebuyers. Paired with public and nonprofit partnerships, the fund can also provide financial literacy education to help residents be informed and make sustainable decisions about their future.



Jonathan Street neighborhood
(City of Hagerstown)

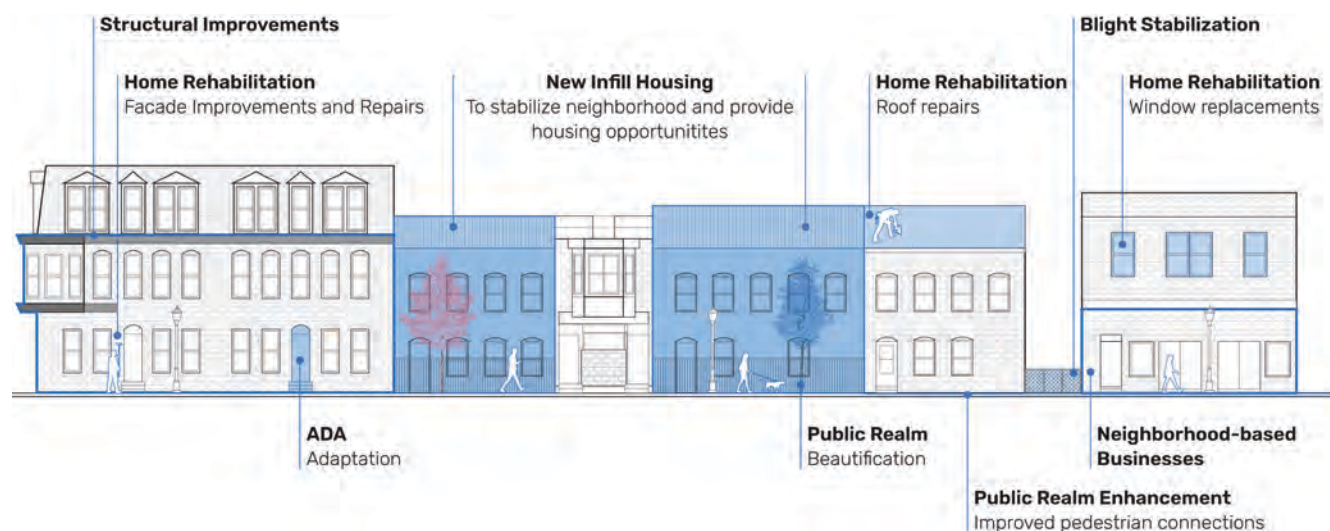
STRATEGY F.

Expand and continue supporting neighborhood homeowners through programs for home improvement and repair assistance to ensure residents are able to age-in-place.

Ensuring neighborhood homeowners can remain in their homes is essential to maintain neighborhood stability and affordability. Neighborhood residents have stated that continued support for homeowners is a priority to maintaining a safe, stable, and thriving community while helping them age-in-place.

FIGURE 14 | HOME IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Hagerstown and several Choice Neighborhoods stakeholders have home repair programs and services available to help residents age-in-place.



Many homeowners, especially those with fixed or limited income, might struggle to keep up with the cost of essential repairs and maintenance to their homes. Expanding access and awareness to home improvement and repair assistance programs helps preserve existing housing stock, prevent displacement, and improve overall neighborhood quality.

Several programs already exist in Hagerstown and the City, County, and Housing Authority should conduct expanded engagement and outreach to bring awareness of existing resources for homeowners. The City of Hagerstown Residential Rehab Loan and Emergency Repair Assistance Program provides low-interest loans to help homeowners make necessary repairs, including roof and plumbing repairs, electrical work, and structural

improvements to their home between others. The Washington County Commission on Aging offers home repair assistance for older adults, allowing them to receive contractor-based services to adapt their homes to necessary modifications. In addition, the City of Hagerstown has explored nonprofit partnerships in the past to rehabilitate homes, leveraging other models to provide cost-effective home repair services to homeowners. These programs can help homeowners complete essential repairs and ensure that their homes remain safe and habitable. Expanded programs and outreach through City communications, workshops, or seminars to bring awareness of existing tools helps supporting residents to age-in-place and contributes to the Choice Neighborhoods revitalization and community pride.



implementation

The Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods Plan is anticipated to be fully implemented within the next decade. Collaboration and partnerships between the many community partners, public agencies, and institutional leaders is essential to create a thriving community.

GOAL 1: Increase local options for reliable, quality childcare and early education opportunities.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Utilize the redevelopment of the housing sites to build upon existing resources and strategically identify additional, high-quality space for expanded childcare facilities and/or early education programming.	Add at least 75 new spots over 7 years	HHA; Head Start; Boys and Girls Club	Long-Term	Head Start; Boys and Girls Club
Promote existing resources and grant opportunities for small-business owners to entice more micro-childcare options.	Add at least 10 new providers over 7 years	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	Valor Excel; Western Maryland Consortium
Create greater awareness of resources available to parents.	Build awareness by 50% in HHA Households	HHA	Medium-Term	Family Center; Head Start; Boys and Girls Club; Judy Center; Girls Inc.; Children in Need

GOAL 2: Enhance support for children and youth, particularly with extracurricular activities outside of regular school hours.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Identify existing programming and assess opportunities to expand access and participation for residents at Parkside Homes, Douglass Court, and Frederick Manor.	Increase participation by 25% for HHA Households	HHA	Medium-Term	Bester Community of Hope; Washington County Public Library; Federal League; Hagerstown Field House; Boys and Girls Club
Expand available spaces for after-school and evening programming that are readily accessible for Housing Authority residents.	Add at least 5 expanded program options within 7 years	HHA; Bethel Gardens	Long-Term	Washington County Public Library; Boys and Girls Club; Bester Community of Hope; ENVY; Horizon Goodwill Youth-Adult Solutions Center; HARC Lighthouse After-School Program; Parkside Pals

GOAL 3: Leverage local educational institutions to create opportunities for accessible higher education programs.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Strengthening career pathways through local institutions	Connect at least 40 HHA residents to programs within 7 years	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	Hagerstown Community College (HCC); University System of Maryland at Hagerstown (USMH); Meritus School of Osteopathic Medicine; HHA FSS Program
Expanding opportunities for working parents	Locate at least three workforce programs in close proximity to housing sites	HHA	Long-Term	HCC; Western Maryland Consortium
Establishing a downtown higher education presence	Identify downtown site within 2 years	City of Hagerstown; HCC	Short-Term	Downtown Hagerstown; Greater Hagerstown Partnership; Washington County Chamber of Commerce
Strengthening workforce development programs	Connect at least 40 residents to programs within 7 years	HHA	Long-Term	Western Maryland Consortium; United Way; HHA FSS Program

GOAL 4: Increase participation in existing workforce development programs.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Establishing a central workforce resource hub	Connect at least 50 HHA residents to resources over 7 years	HHA	Long-Term	Western Maryland Consortium; City of Hagerstown
Expanding the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program	Enroll at least 5 HHA residents per Housing Site every year	HHA	Short-Term	

GOAL 5: Enhance connectivity and access to reliable transportation options.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Connecting residents to the United Way no-cost rideshare program	Service increase over next 7 years	United Way	Long-Term	HHA; City of Hagerstown
Expanding the Hopewell Express service	Service increase over next 5 years	Washington County Community Action Council	Medium-Term	
Partnering with the Washington County Transit Authority (WTA) to improve public transportation	Service improvements within next 7 years	WTA	Long-Term	Washington County Community Action Council; United Way

GOAL 6: Increase pathways to economic opportunity to enhance economic mobility.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Connect residents to financial literacy programming and resources.	At least 25 residents are connected within 3 years	HHA	Medium-Term	Bester Community of Hope; Washington County Free Library
Support first-time homebuyer initiatives to build opportunities for homeownership and generational wealth-building.	At least 10 residents are able to purchase homes within 7 years	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	Maryland Mortgage Program; Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership; Hagerstown Homeownership Initiative; Bester Community of Hope

GOAL 7: Increase access to fresh and healthy foods and ensure no households in the Choice Neighborhoods go hungry.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Identify community partnerships that will directly serve and benefit Choice Neighborhood residents for addressing food insecurity/ access to fresh and healthy foods.	Partnerships for local/fresh food access established at each housing site	HHA; Horizon Goodwill Industries	Medium-Term	Washington County Community Action Council; It's a Blessing to be a Blessing; TruNorth; Maryland Food Bank; America's Hauling for Hope
Provide training and educational resources to support residents to have raised-bed gardens and/or patio gardens at the housing sites.	Raised beds are installed at all housing sites	HHA	Medium-Term	University of Maryland Extension
Create a mobile farmers' market program to bring healthy food and fresh produce to the housing sites.	Mobile farmers' market program established at all housing sites	HHA	Long-Term	Washington County Community Action Council; Washington County Health Department

GOAL 8: Increase access to mental health and behavioral health resources.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Expanding mobile mental health services	Expand mobile services to all housing sites	HHA; Horizon Goodwill Community Health Hub	Long-Term	Brook Lane
Strengthening onsite mental health and wellness programs	Establish mental health and wellness programs at all sites	HHA	Long-Term	Bester Community of Hope; Boys and Girls Club; Girl Scouts; Girls Inc., Children in Need

GOAL 9: Increase options for exercise and physical activity.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Enhance onsite physical activity options	Establish physical activity spaces/options at each housing site	HHA; DVDC (Developer Partner)	Long-Term	
Improve access to public parks and recreational facilities	All housing sites have a walkable/ bikeable path to local parks and recreation facilities	City of Hagerstown; HHA	Medium-Term	
Strengthen partnerships for expanded recreational programming	At least 50% of HHA residents engage and/ or visit local recreational programming	City of Hagerstown; HHA	Medium-Term	

GOAL 10: Improve transportation to healthcare services.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Expand access to free rideshare programs for medical appointments	Increase access to free rideshare services	United Way	Medium-Term	
Develop a centralized resource for medical transportation services	Centralized Resource is launched and fully accessible	Meritus Health; Washington County Community Action Council; Washington County Commuter Bus	Medium-Term	



neighborhood

GOAL 1: Create an amenities-rich community with neighborhood-based services and businesses to support resident needs.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Consider zoning overlays that will permit areas of the Choice Neighborhoods to have additional neighborhood-based services and businesses.	Increase in neighborhood-based businesses within the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhood	City of Hagerstown	Medium-Term	
Enhance walkability in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods so residents are comfortable accessing existing and new services and businesses by foot.	Increase in foot traffic along key routes connecting housing sites to commercial corridors	City of Hagerstown	Medium-Term	HHA

GOAL 2: Building gathering spaces that encourage community and intergenerational connections.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Identify and create spaces that provide multiple benefits for community members of all ages and abilities.	Additional spaces for gathering are established	City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	
Enhance awareness and connections to existing city programming and events.	More neighborhood and HHA residents attend city programs and events	City of Hagerstown	Short-Term	HHA; Downtown Hagerstown
Find opportunities for intergenerational and community connections in afterschool youth programming and events.	More participation in afterschool programming and events for youth	City of Hagerstown	Short-Term	Washington County Public Library; Washington County Public Schools

GOAL 3: Create and enhance connections to existing public spaces and amenities.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Enhance accessibility across the Choice Neighborhoods and prioritize safe pathways for pedestrians.	Fewer accidents involving pedestrians; walkability increases	City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	HHA; Downtown Hagerstown
Identify and evaluate areas with gaps in sidewalk infrastructure for potential future improvements.	Improved sidewalks	City of Hagerstown	Medium-Term	

GOAL 4: Improve physical connections to downtown Hagerstown.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Focus on strengthening connections to downtown Hagerstown for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods.	Improved walking and cycling routes to downtown	City of Hagerstown	Medium-Term	Downtown Hagerstown; The Hagerstown Cultural Trail
Continue to support downtown efforts for placemaking such as the Cultural Trail and the Arts & Entertainment District.	Continued development of placemaking efforts	City of Hagerstown; Downtown Hagerstown; The Cultural Trail	Medium-Term	Main Street Hagerstown; Arts & Entertainment District

GOAL 5: Build on investments in crime prevention through environmental design.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Build on the City and HHA's safety improvements that utilize crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED).	Continued integration of CPTED into design and programming	City of Hagerstown; HHA	Short-Term	
Work with local business and property owners to identify opportunities to integrate CPTED practices into their landscaping, site design, and façade improvements.	Implement CPTED practices at local businesses	City of Hagerstown; Downtown Hagerstown	Medium-Term	HHA Advanced CPTED expert on staff

GOAL 6: Build trust, communication, and community relationships with public safety officers and programs that serve the neighborhoods.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Create opportunities for positive interactions with public safety officers such as community fairs, afterschool activities, and walking patrols.	Enhanced relationships between the community and police	City of Hagerstown Police Department; Hagerstown Housing Authority Security Department	Short-Term	Neighborhoods 1st

GOAL 7: Support and enhance safe routes to schools.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Establish regular events/programming focused on safely going to and from school, such as 'walking school bus' activities and community-supported volunteer programs.	Safer routes to school are established	Washington County Public Schools; City of Hagerstown; HHA	Medium-Term	Washington County Board of Health
Work with the City and local partners to identify opportunities for improvements to crosswalks and other infrastructure that support safe routes to school.	Enhancements to local infrastructure are made	City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	

GOAL 8: Coordinate efforts to support existing organizations providing resources for recovery and substance abuse to enhance public safety.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Ensure resources and support are readily accessible and located in convenient locations for those requiring such services.	Maintained and enhanced access to resources	Washington County Board of Health; City of Hagerstown Police Department	Short-Term	
Support programs that can meet people where they are and connect them to support and recovery services.	Ensure support services are readily available	Washington County Board of Health; City of Hagerstown Police Department	Short-Term	LEAD Program (Hagerstown Police Department)

GOAL 9: Employ traffic calming measures to reduce speeds, enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety, and improve connections within and into the neighborhoods.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Utilize the redevelopment of the housing sites to help address traffic safety concerns within and into the communities.	Traffic safety improves within and around the housing sites	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	
Create a traffic calming campaign that provides education on the benefits of these interventions and is rooted in the community's experience and elevates their voices on the importance of safety in their neighborhoods.	Educational programming is implemented	City of Hagerstown; HHA	Medium-Term	

GOAL 10: Identify opportunities to collaborate and coordinate with Washington County Public Transit (WCT) on accessibility to employment centers and key services (i.e., grocery stores, healthcare, childcare, etc.).

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Leverage public transit planning efforts to reflect the transit needs and current service gaps in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods to enhance access to services and amenities.	Public transit planning efforts meet transit needs and close service gaps	WCT	Long-Term	HHA; City of Hagerstown
Work with service providers who can support 'last mile' connections between public transit stops and key services.	Last mile connections are implemented	United Way; Washington County Community Action Council	Long-Term	City of Hagerstown

Housing

GOAL 1: Address the need for affordable housing supply in the Choice Neighborhoods area.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Address the need for affordable housing rental units in the Choice Neighborhoods area to provide affordable housing for families of all incomes, in addition to one-for-one replacement.	Number of affordable units increase in the Choice Neighborhood	HHA; DVDC (developer partner); City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	CNI Implementation Funds; LIHTC (9% and 4%); State and Federal historic tax credits; State soft funds; private first mortgage; developer fee, rebates, and credits
Integrate a variety of housing typologies and sizes that respond to neighborhood context and accommodate a large range of household needs at each redevelopment site.	Variety of housing typologies/ sizes achieved	HHA; DVDC (developer partner); City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	CNI Implementation Funds; LIHTC (9% and 4%); State and Federal historic tax credits; State soft funds; private first mortgage; developer fee, rebates, and credits
Promote the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of housing properties for affordable rental housing in areas close to services, resources, and transit.	Adaptive reuse/ rehabilitation completed	HHA; DVDC (developer partner); City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	LIHTC (9% and 4%); State and Federal historic tax credits; State soft funds; private first mortgage; developer fee, rebates, and credits
Follow a build-first strategy to limit displacement of Hagerstown Housing Authority residents.	Build first strategy implemented	HHA; DVDC (developer partner)	Short-Term	LIHTC (9% and 4%); State and Federal historic tax credits; State soft funds; private first mortgage; developer fee, rebates, and credits

GOAL 2: Provide a healthy living environment in the Hagerstown Choice Neighborhoods that cultivates emotional connections, cohesion, and sense of belonging.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Improve and integrate urban design and open/gathering spaces within the former Moller Building adaptive reuse housing site for the comfortability and healthy living of residents.	Urban design and gathering spaces designed and implemented	HHA; DVDC (developer partner)	Short-term	
Provide and integrate intergenerational community gathering spaces within the Parkside Homes and Douglass Court housing sites that provide healthy living for residents of all abilities.	Spaces are constructed	HHA; DVDC (developer partner)	Medium-Term	
Create new community places and placemaking within the Frederick Manor housing site that promotes a sense of belonging and safe places for active and passive recreation.	Community places and placemaking is implemented	HHA; DVDC (developer partner)	Long-Term	
Promote social cohesion and community activities and events that engage residents across housing sites and provide a way to connect and feeling of belonging to the community.	Community events and activities take place	HHA	Short-Term	

GOAL 3: Create safe and connected communities that prioritize safety and connections.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Incorporate trauma-informed design guidelines and best practices at all redevelopment sites.	Trauma-informed design is integrated	HHA; DVDC (developer partner)	Long-Term	
Design the new housing sites following CPTED strategies for the safety of all families living at the housing sites.	CPTED strategies are implemented	HHA; DVDC (developer partner)	Long-Term	
Support and leverage existing assets and services to better connect residents to resources and enhance their quality of life.	Assets and services are leveraged and accessed	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Short-Term	

GOAL 4: Provide homeownership opportunities and support for existing Housing Authority and neighborhood residents and explore models for supportive housing.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe	Leverage Resources
Explore models and locations for supportive housing, ensuring access to integrated services that help tenants remain housed and work towards self-sufficiency.	Models and locations are identified	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Medium-Term	Horizon Goodwill; Washington County Community Action Council
Work with residents to bring awareness about existing homeownership programs developed by public and non-profit organizations.	Awareness building is achieved	HHA; City of Hagerstown	Short-term	Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership (HNDP)
Connect residents to HHA's Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) that provides financial literacy education and pathways for residents to become homeowners.	At least 5 HHA residents are connected to these resources per year	HHA FSS Program	Short-Term	City of Hagerstown
Stabilize blight in the Jonathan Street area and identify key opportunity sites to expand affordable homeownership opportunities by partnering with local anchor organizations.	Neighborhood is stabilized and reports of blight have decreased	City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	Habitat for Humanity
Create an Affordable Homeownership Revolving Fund (AHRF) to help low- and moderate-income residents and families access opportunities for first-time home purchase.	Fund is created	City of Hagerstown	Long-Term	Hagerstown Neighborhood Development Partnership (HNDP); Bester Community of Hope; Washington County Community Action Council
Expand and continue supporting neighborhood homeowners through programs for home improvement and repair assistance to ensure residents are able to age-in-place.	Program expansion is achieved	City of Hagerstown	Medium-Term	Washington County Commission on Aging; Habitat for Humanity

