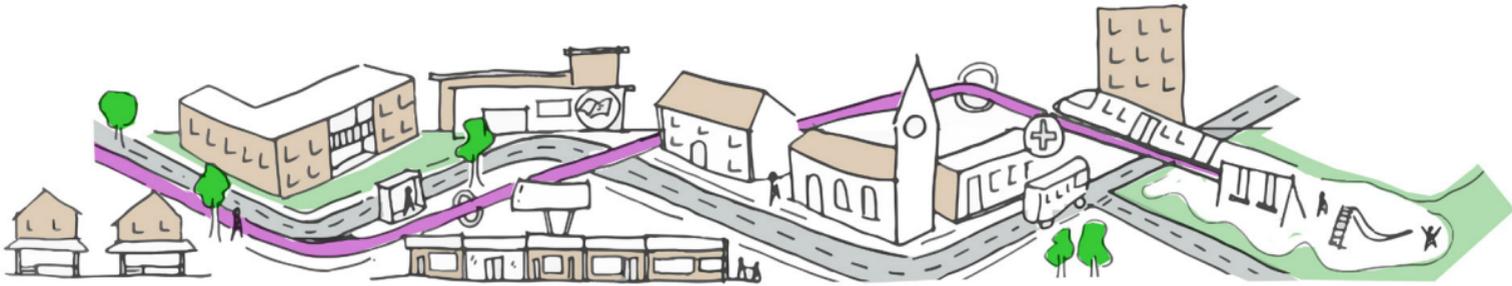


Greater Riverdale Place Based Initiative



Community Update



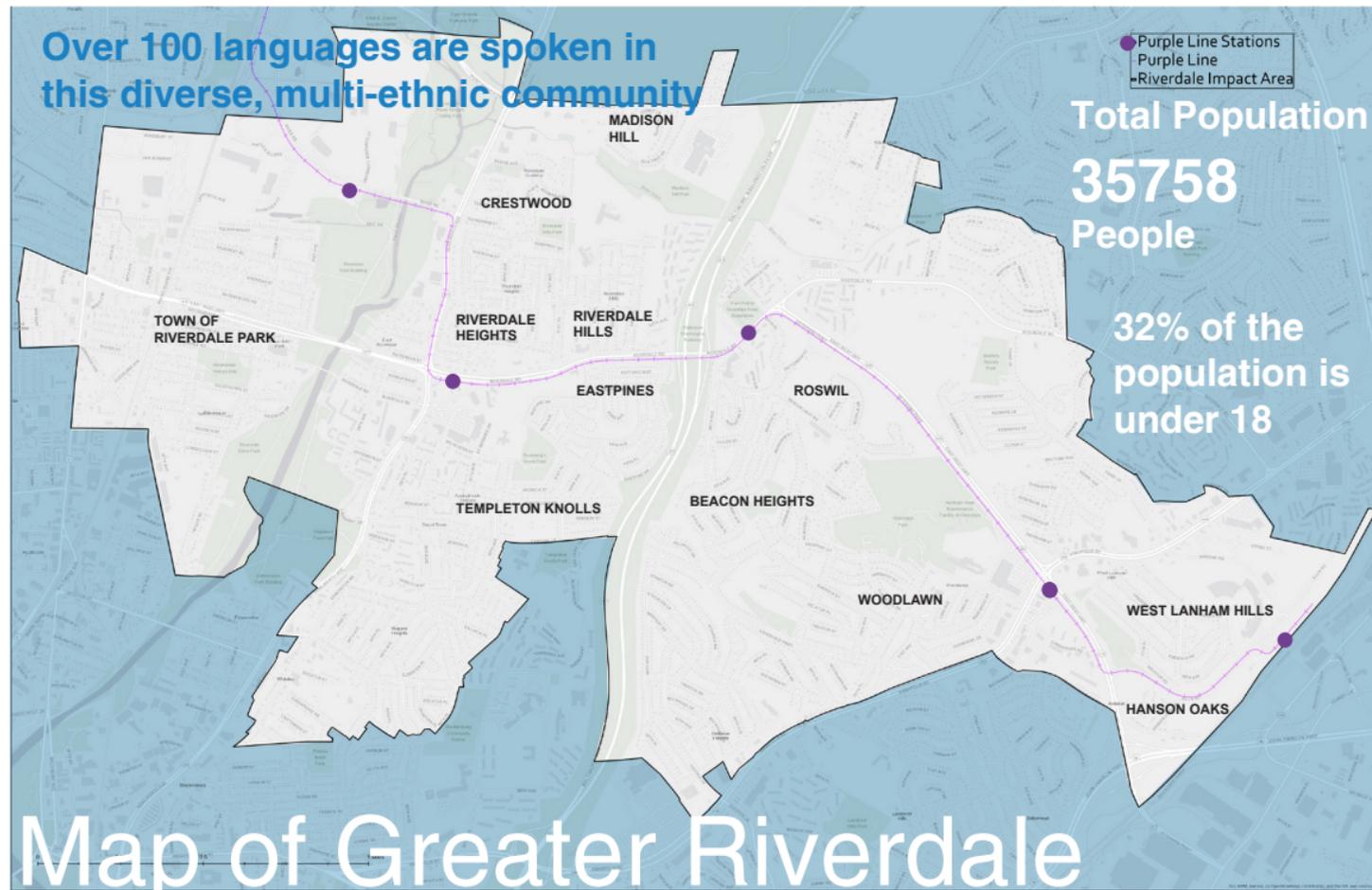
Introduction

Definition of a Place-Based Initiative

The environment that we live in has a profound impact on our health and well-being. Place-based initiatives are a tool communities use to transform their environment. Communities come together to use resources to address all factors that affect health in order to uplift their neighborhoods.

HOME IS ...  ?

A GREAT NEIGHBORHOOD IS ?



What would a healthy and thriving Greater Riverdale look like if we invested to secure and elevate our diverse community?

We asked and you told us

422 surveys

50+ one-on-one & small group meetings with schools, community groups, nonprofits, and businesses

5 Visioning Workshops with 74 participants

5 Coalition of Community Leaders Meetings, averaging 32 participants

Timeline of Activities



Inaugural Coalition of Community Leaders Meeting



Visioning Workshop 1



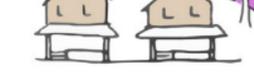
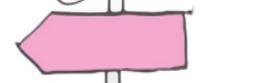
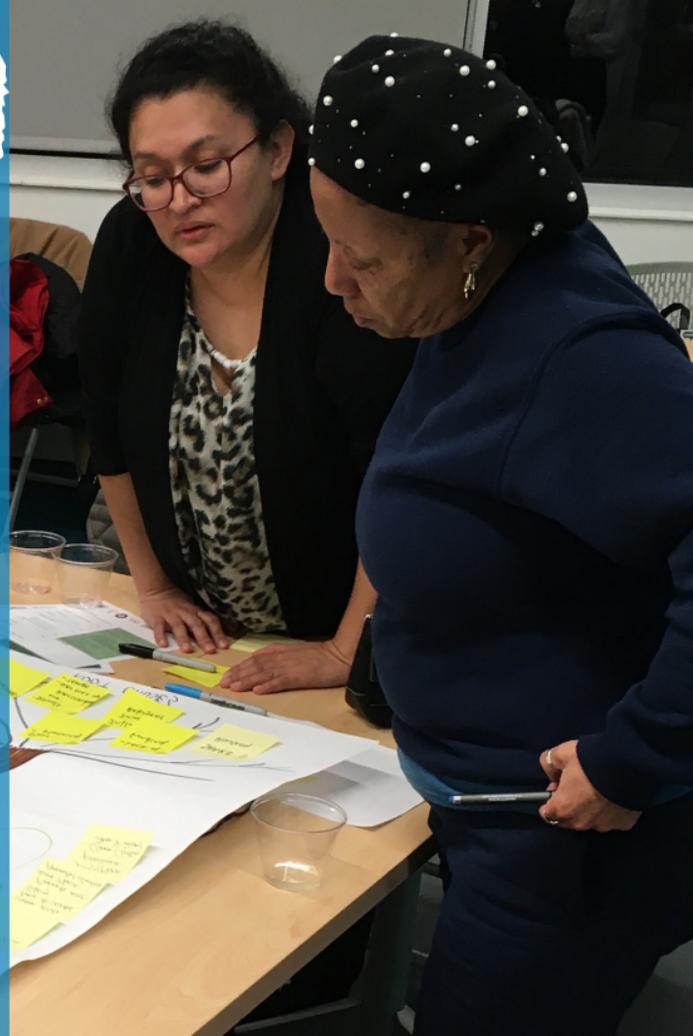
Templeton ES Day of Service

Riverdale ES Day of Ser-

What is already working?

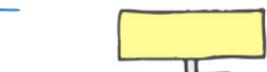
1. Diversity
2. Transit Accessibility
3. Housing Stock
4. Schools
5. County Programs
6. Involved neighbors and institutions
7. Connections to other neighborhoods and DC

“This is a wonderful community.”



Greater Riverdale Community Vision

A Great & Healthy Greater Riverdale has neighbors from all over the globe. They live full lives- grow up, raise children, and grow old- within Greater Riverdale because there are resources that support a good life here. Neighbors feel they belong here and it is where they choose to be. The streets of Greater Riverdale are clean and beautiful, the shops are a mix of small businesses that are run by neighbors and larger stores that offer reasonably priced goods. A life in Greater Riverdale supports relaxation of its neighbors and provides the opportunity for a better life.



Where Should Our Investment be Focused?

After hearing from community members, five focus areas arose. These reflect community assets that would benefit the community by being amplified and opportunities to improve situations that needs to be addressed.

Safety
Streets
Kinship
Stable Futures
Schools



Cross cutting these issues are a need to innovate ways to get accurate information to the entire community. There is also a need to broaden civic participation by articulating the value of being involved and making needed changes for inclusion.

In the following pages, you will find the issues laid out in more detail as well as descriptions of projects designed to address one or several of the focus areas. We hope to have you, neighbors, business owners, teachers & principals, parents & children, and faith leaders- the community of Greater Riverdale- give us guidance about what should be a priority and why.

As you read the document, we ask you to consider the following questions:

What is most important to do first?

Why?

What is missing?

Is this something we already do well?



Safety

A safe neighborhood is desired by neighbors of all ages, but there are several obstacles to Greater Riverdale protecting all of its residents. There are issues of school safety, gang presence, barriers to reporting, and specific groups are being targeted for crimes.

In More Depth

- Gang violence is an issue in Greater Riverdale. Gang recruitment and activity is an issue in Greater Riverdale's schools, parents are seen with gang affiliated clothing and symbols. The crimes related to gangs are robbery, breaking and entering, sex trafficking, and car theft. There is concern that parents don't know signs of gang involvement.
- Drug and alcohol abuse was reported as a desired class topic, as was anger management (survey: 319 votes, 307 votes respectively)
- The area is in need of better communication about issues of safety (both in school

and outside school). It needs to be acknowledged that hosting a forum on gang involvement at a school is very volatile perception-wise; no school wants to be perceived to be a gang school.

- We heard from community members that there are specific groups being targeted for crimes.
- There are barriers to reporting, including but not limited to: a lack of understanding of rights and protections, a feeling of lack of justice, fear of reprisal, and legal status.
- Police relationships are reported to be positive and first responders are seen as community assets. Community policing is at its best when there is presence at community meetings, but there is not a sense of police presence on the streets.
- Dogs are not managed on leashes properly and stray animals have also been raised as concerns.

Possible Programs / Projects That Address This Issue

Community Resource Center Network, Community Classes, Intergenerational Mentoring, Neighborhood Watch & Block Captains

Streets

Our streets are not functioning to create the safe, beautiful community we aspire to be. We want the ability to safely walk, bike and drive and to get where we need to around the region but also within our community.

In More Depth

- Multi-lane, high speed roads that lack safe pedestrian infrastructure divide Greater Riverdale.
- Intra-neighborhood connectivity is lacking, while regional level connectivity is a strength of the community, from light rail, metro, and regional rail to highways. All ages identified intra-neighborhood connectivity as a high priority.
- Streets are currently in need of repair and many lack (adequate) sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure.
- Streetscape does not currently address issues of handicap accessibility.

- A lack of quality street lighting and no pedestrian lights do not support feelings of safety. Lighting is needed to support safety and visibility at night for safe driving and also for pedestrians and cyclists to feel safe.
- A safe and affordable means of getting students to afterschool opportunities and/or jobs is of high interest for the community.
- A significant portion of the population of Greater Riverdale utilizes the cash economy, making ride share (which fills the inter-community connectivity gap) unusable.
- A lack of safe, walkable routes to school has led to a dangerous and unregulated practice of private van transport.
- School pickup and drop off is also unsafe, parents are struggling to navigate the buses and private vans safely.
- Street trees to protect pedestrians from traffic and reduce urban heat island effects.

Possible Programs / Projects That Address This Issue

Community Resource Center Network, Neighborhood Connectivity Plan, Desired Community Amenities Inventory, Greater Riverdale Welcomes You!

Kinship

We hold our diversity as one of our core strengths and desire to be welcoming, but there are issues of communication and we do not have a strong sense of kinship yet. We want places to gather and celebrate.

In More Depth

- Information exchange is a challenge, due to a number of factors, including lack of literacy and more than 70 languages being spoken.
- It has been identified that between the different groups that make up of this diverse community, there is a need for more trust building.
- Leadership of the community needs to become more representative of the community today.
- Our parks and green spaces work for adults, but leave children and teens out.
- There is no central gathering space for the community to reliably and safely convene.

Possible Programs / Projects That Address This Issue

Community Resource Center Network, Greater Riverdale Welcomes You!, Hire Moms, Community Classes, Alternative methods for getting information out- Video, radio ads, YouTube



Schools

Our schools are some of our most trusted anchor institutions, but they are stretched thin.

In More Depth

- Much of what schools are asked to address are community-level needs that affect students' ability to learn effectively.
- Students are often absent due to lack of vaccinations or other health needs.
- Mental health providers in schools are fully booked and only deal with students, not families.
- Getting to school safely is not easy.
- Students don't always have a place to go afterschool that supports productive use of their time.

- Students and families are coming from many different places and situations and much of what they have and what they continue to experience affects their ability to thrive.
- Information exchange is a challenge, due to a number of factors, including lack of literacy and more than 70 languages spoken in the impact area.
- Changes of leadership make for a discontinuity in programs.

Possible Programs / Projects That Address This Issue

Community Resource Center Network, Community Classes, Intergenerational Mentoring, Parent Café

Stable Futures

We want our residents to be able to build a stable future here. In order to do this, we need to address issues of housing affordability, aging in place, and economic opportunity. We have skilled workers and a desire to create jobs here in Greater Riverdale as well as to connect to other jobs in the region.

In More Depth

- Our skilled workers have a gap in understanding how to navigate bureaucratic processes for licensure.
- We have empty storefronts available. Vacant storefronts provide areas for crime to occur, give a sense of disinvestment in community.
- Not all groups have the businesses they need within Greater Riverdale.
- Job skills training exists, but does it meet the needs of the jobs we have?
- Intra-community transportation is critical to get to jobs.
- Our housing stock works well for some parts of our community, but leaves others out.

- Renters make up 44% of households in Greater Riverdale*, but there are challenges with renters feeling connected to and participating in, community governance.
- Not all of our residents are homeowners, but we want our residents to continue to be able to stay.
- Fear of the displacement and changes that come with the Purple Line are very real in Greater Riverdale.
- We have families experiencing homelessness.
- Some of our homeowners are unable to age in place safely.

Possible Programs / Projects That Address This Issue

Block Captain program to engage on a person to person level, Build out a more robust renter to homeowner pipeline, Community Classes, Monitor living conditions and code compliance for multifamily housing, Community-wide skills assessment, Neighborhood Connectivity Plan, Desired Community Amenities Inventory, Community Resource Center Network