



National Road in Maryland



Baltimore City: Enhancing Urban Streetscapes Along the National Road

The presence of the Historic National Road Scenic Byway along Frederick Avenue in Baltimore City has the potential to help attract more reinvestment to Southwest Baltimore. The area has suffered from disinvestment over the last several decades, yet is also the site of a major shopping center and an elementary school. The planned Gwynn Falls Greenway is located a few blocks to the west.

One of the goals of the Corridor Partnership Plan is to enhance the function and appearance of urban neighborhoods along the National Road. The area of Frederick Avenue is sorely lacking in **urban amenities** such as **street trees** and **pleasant places to walk**. Proposed plan elements have also been designed to **improve pedestrian safety**. Plan elements include brick-paved **extra-long planting beds** to insure street tree survival, **custom bus shelters** and **benches**, **interpretive panels** to share the history of the National Road, a **permanent landscaped median**, **hazard identification beacons** for pedestrian brick-paved crosswalks with **pedestrian crossing warning signs**.

The community planning organization **Operation ReachOut Southwest (OROSW)** has recently submitted a grant proposal for a portion of the streetscape enhancements outlined in this case study. The proposal seeks to foster a partnership between the community, a local shopping center, the Mass Transit Authority, and the City of Baltimore. The proposal capitalizes on the fact that Frederick Avenue is a **well-used bus line** that serves residents as well as patrons of the Westside Shopping Center. The shopping center represents a major reinvestment in the community over the last decade. New housing has also been built recently just north of Frederick Avenue, signaling more positive investment in the community.

The revitalization of Frederick Avenue also supports Baltimore City's **Gateways Program** to improve the appearance and the quality of life along the major arterial gateways into the City.



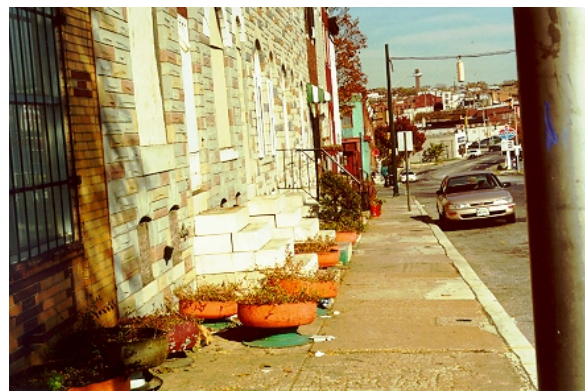
This view of Gwynn Falls can be seen from a bridge located a few short blocks from the study area. A greenway trail along the river is currently being planned.



Victorian-era features are apparent in this blue "mansion" at the corner of Millington and Frederick Avenues. Resources are needed to research the building's history and connection to the National Road.



View of Frederick Avenue west. Boarded-up windows on the right are faced by the new West Side Shopping Center across the street.



1 "Tire plantings" near S. Catherine Street intersection. Street trees cannot be planted due to lack of space. A median to replace the center turn lane between S. Catherine and Franklinton Road could add desirable greenery.



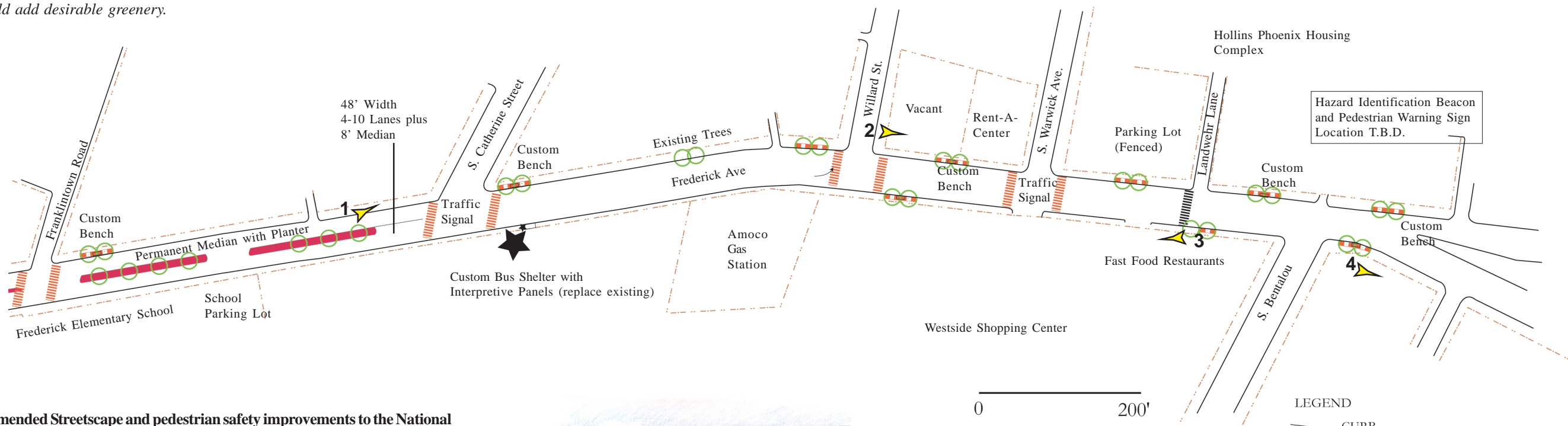
2 Vacant lot on the corner of Willard Street and Frederick Ave.



3 Remnant brick alley driveway near entrance to Kentucky Fried Chicken at shopping center. Brick pavers have been recommended for tree pits and cross walks.



4 Carrollton Ridge Mural welcomes visitors to Crab Alley located a few blocks away.



Recommended Streetscape and pedestrian safety improvements to the National Road through Southwest Baltimore:

Tree plantings - 21 new street trees in continuous planting beds to insure street tree survival. Soil amendments are recommended. Brick pavers could partially cover the beds to allow for pedestrian traffic as well as water and air flow to tree roots.

Custom Bus Shelter - Replace existing shelter at main entrance to Westside Shopping Center with custom bus shelter. More shelters could be installed in the shopping center vicinity as determined by ridership and additional planning.

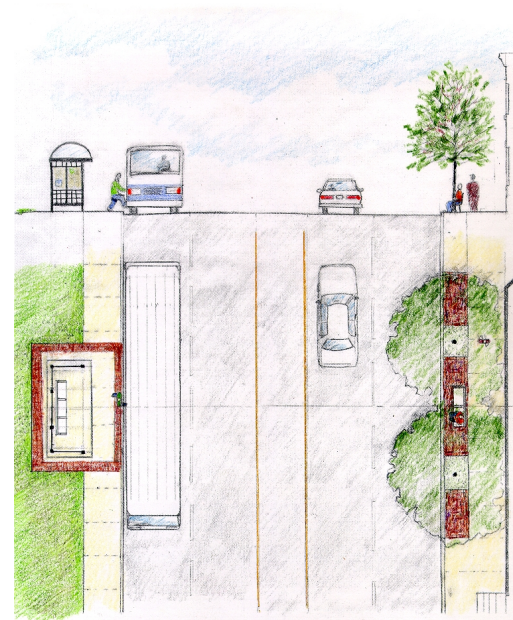
Interpretive Panels - To be embedded in the custom bus shelter(s). Panels guaranteed to be graffiti and vandalism-proof are available at relatively low cost. The panels can be installed directly into the custom bus shelters during construction.

Custom Benches - For bus stops unable to be served with shelters, custom benches with arm rests (to prevent sleeping) are recommended. Interpretive panels may also be installed into the backs or even seats of the benches if desired.

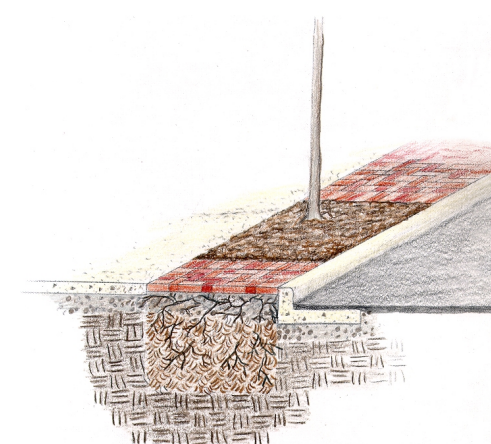
Permanent 8' Median with Planter - Recommended to replace left turn lane from Franklinton Road to S. Catherine Street in order to narrow the look and feel of the road. The right-of-way along the sidewalks in this vicinity is too narrow to plant street trees next to the row-houses.

Hazard Identification Beacon and Pedestrian Warning Sign - Recommended to warn motorists of heavy pedestrian traffic at Landwehr Lane, which is used by residents of the new Hollins Phoenix complex.

Brick Paver Crosswalks - Recommended to replace painted crosswalks to add color to streetscape.



Example bus shelter detail. Custom bus shelters available from the Mass Transit Authority lend an historical flavor to the streetscape. Interpretive panels about the National Road can be embedded directly into the shelter. Custom benches can be installed in areas where a shelter is unwarranted.



Tree planting pit detail. To facilitate street tree survival, a continuous planting bed with amended soil is recommended. Brick pavers on gravel base allow for pedestrian traffic and add color

- LEGEND
- CURB
 - - - PROPERTY LINE (MAJOR ONLY)
 - EXISTING STREET TREE
 - with brick paver bed NEW STREET TREE WITH BRICK PAVER PLANTING BED
 - #2 EXISTING BUS STOP #2 ROUTE WITH NEW BENCH
 - ★ CUSTOM BUS SHELTER WITH INTERPRETIVE PANEL
 - ▬▬▬ NEW BRICK PAVER CROSSWALK (PHASE 2)
 - ▬▬▬ NEW PAINTED CROSSWALK (PHASE 2)

