PORT TOWNS

Wayfinding Master Plan | Introduction

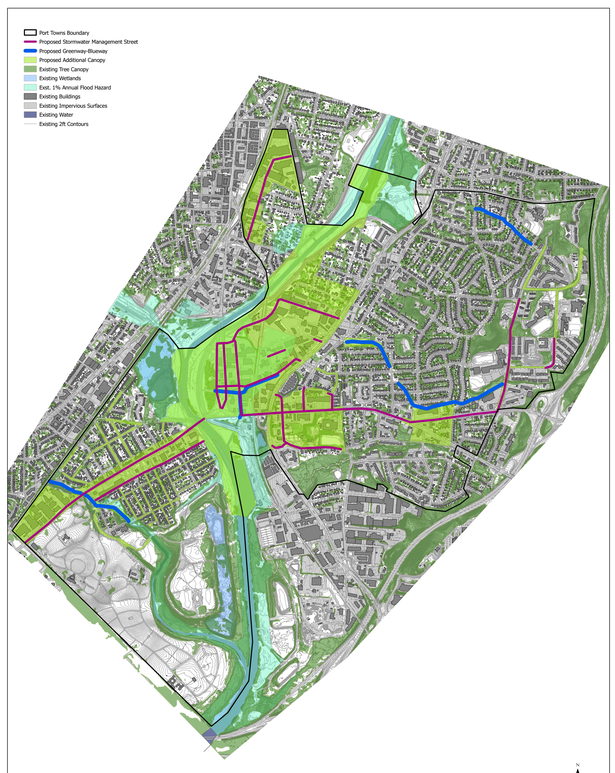




Green Infrastructure Analysis



Green Infrastructure: Existing



Green Infrastructure: Proposed

Goals and Objectives

Mission Statement

The Port Towns are four municipalities in Prince George's County, Maryland: Bladensburg, Colmar Manor, Cottage City, and Edmonston. For these towns, this project has several end goals:

1) Design signage of different hierarchies and other "furniture"
2) Place the interventions strategically
3) Develop themed walking/micromobility tours
4) Provide visualizations for all of the above

One purpose of this endeavor is **wayfinding**—encouraging newcomers to explore the Port Towns. The proposed interventions also give form to the Port Towns' cohesive identity. **Branding** is key with redevelopment coming (outlined in the 2026 County Sector Plan). Rather than bland "five-over-one" redevelopment, the Port Towns unique character should shine through their streets.

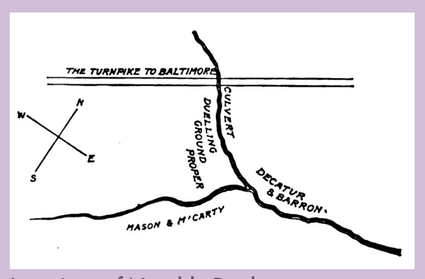
Criteria for Success

1. **Accessibility**: color, language, sight (braille), age
2. Ensures **safety** in design
3. Meets Prince George's County wayfinding **standards**
4. Design should be **diverse**, **inclusive**, respectful, cross-cultural
5. Highlight the **symbolic imagery** associated with each community
6. Weave together a **cohesive identity** for the Port Towns
7. Should be **inviting** and easily **navigable** for all users (similar to #1)
8. Highlight **sustainability** and environmental responsibility
9. Integrate **public art**
10. Provide options for design standards for **retail** signs
11. **Connected trails**/programming (e.g. art walk, greenway path, shade tree stroll, waterside way, heritage hike, diversity trail, etc.—See Sector Plan Policy HD 3, pg. 210)
12. Highlight the 27 **significant destinations** (Sector Plan)

Historic Analysis



Historic Sites and Historic Districts



Locations of Notable Duels

Adkins, M. J. (1891). The Bladensburg Dueling Grounds. In The Magazine of American History



USGS Topographic Map, 1917

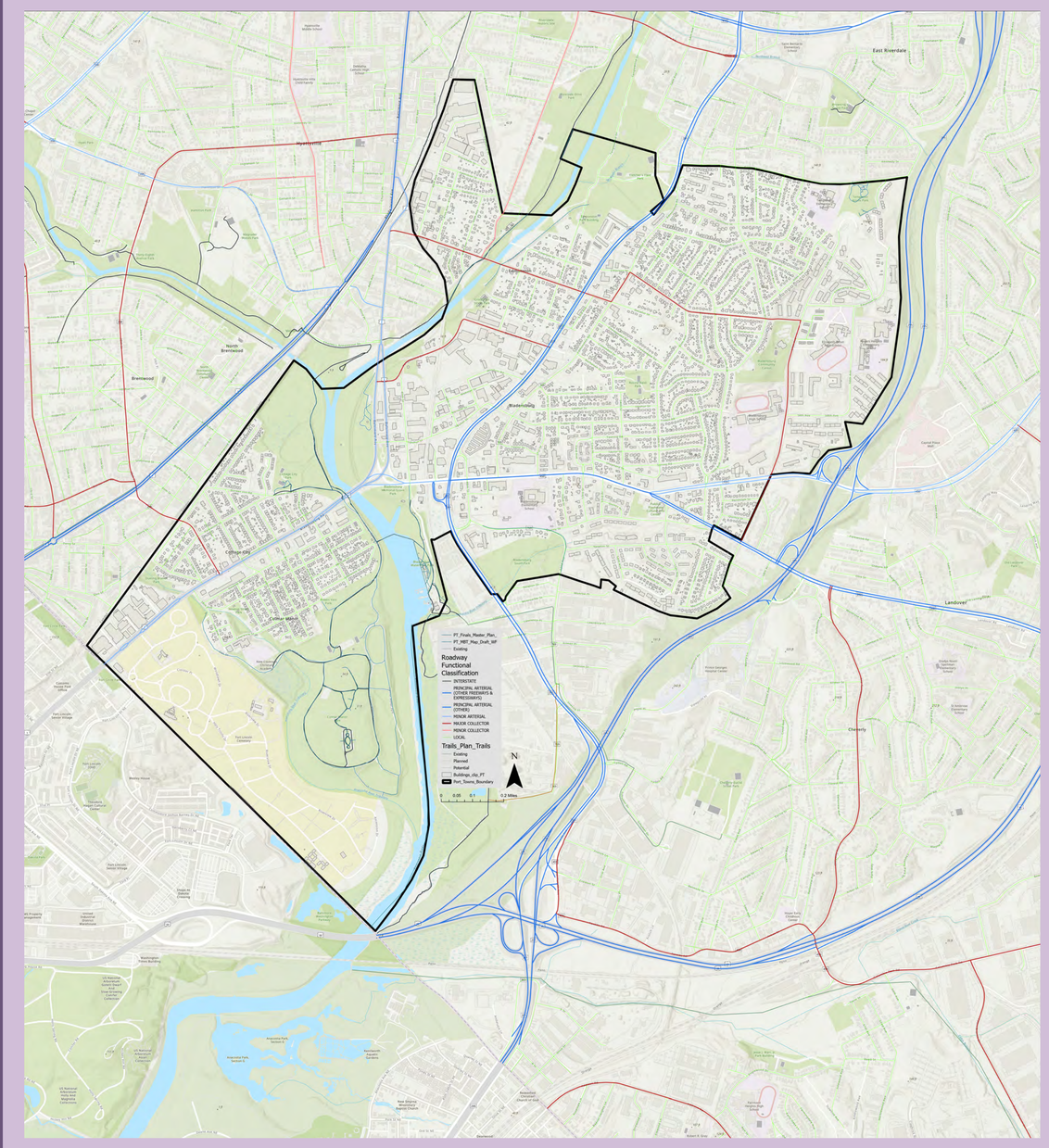
Detail of "Washington and Vicinity," U.S. Geological Survey, 1917 (surveyed 1913-1915), via Library of Congress. Original at 1:31,680

PORT TOWNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

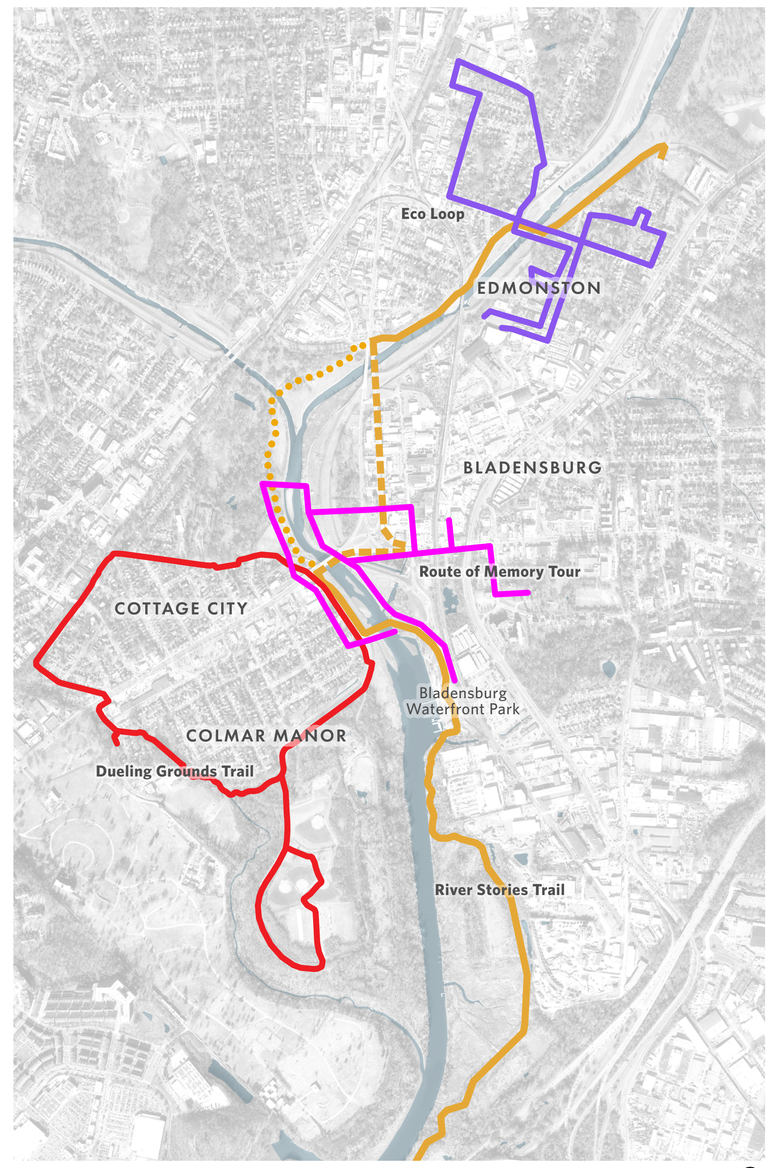
M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Department
Landscape Architecture
DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

PALS Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability

Circulation Analysis



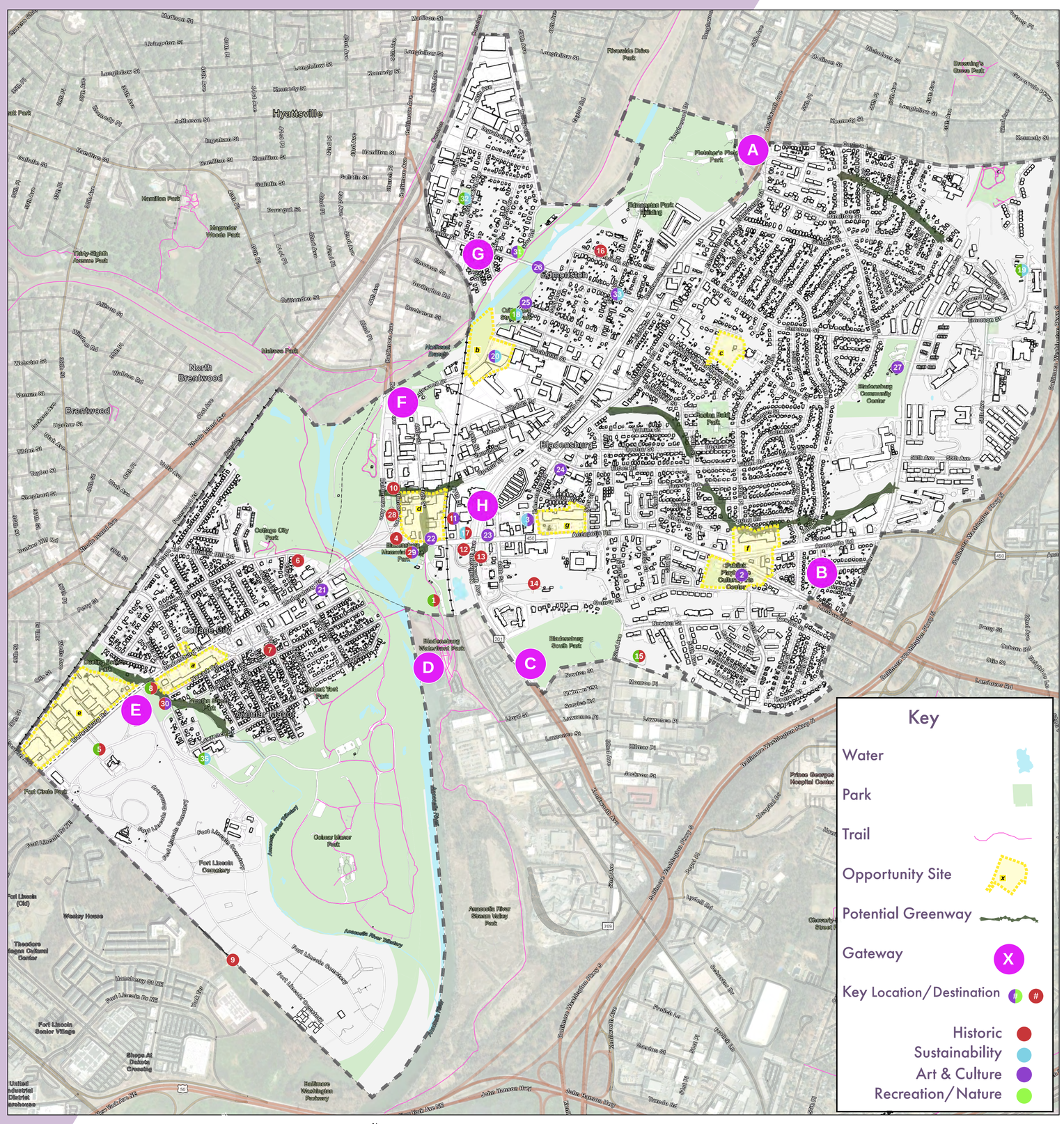
Themed Walking Tours



Sources: State of Maryland Open Data (2026), Prince George's County Open Data (2023–2026), DC Open Data

0 0.25 mi

Opportunities and Constraints Analysis



Opportunities

- Regional draws
  - Publick Playhouse
  - Bladensburg Waterfront Park
  - Community Forklift
  - Connections to Anacostia River Trail
  - Bladensburg Dueling Grounds
- Clustered Destinations
- River greenspace as backbone; visual connection

Constraints

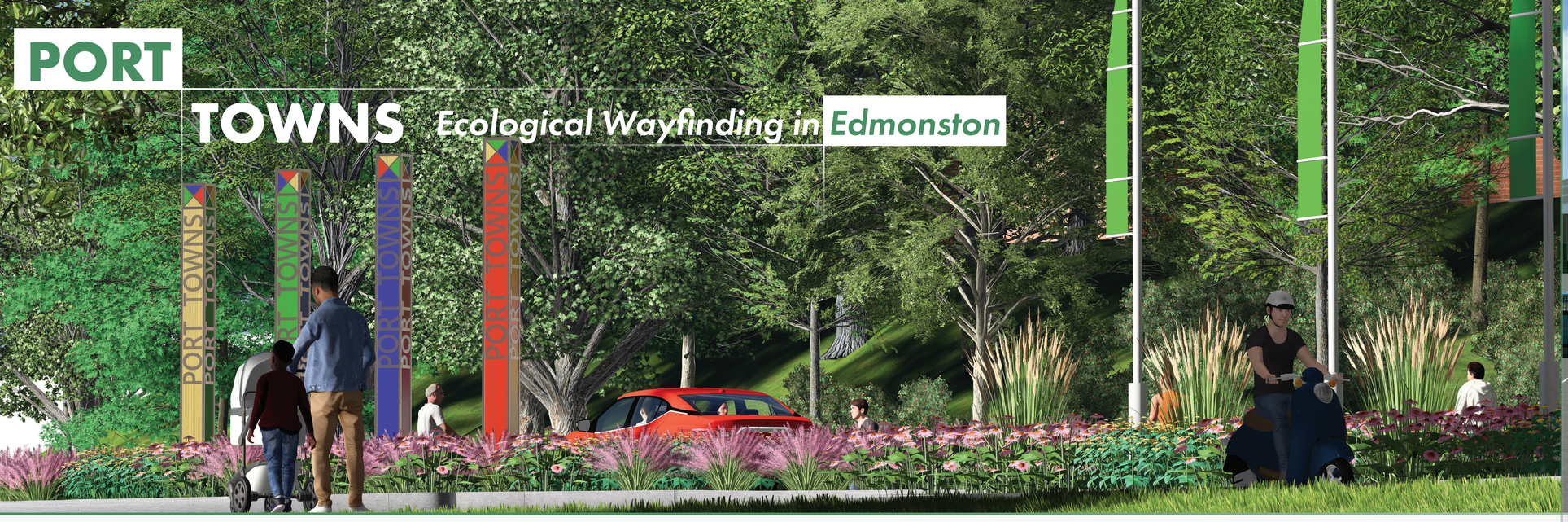
- Boundaries
  - River
  - Railroad
  - Kenilworth Ave
- Fragmented trail systems and key destinations
- Limited bridge crossings
- Auto-centric circulation

#	Location	Theme(s)
1	BLADENSBURG WATERFRONT PARK	REC/NATURE/RIVER, HISTORIC
2	PRINCE GEORGE'S PUBLICK PLAYHOUSE	ART&CULTURE
3	BLADENSBURG BRANCH LIBRARY	SUSTAINABILITY, ART&CULTURE
4	PEACE CROSS	HISTORIC
5	FORT LINCOLN CEMETERY	HISTORIC, REC/NATURE/RIVER
6	RURAL COTTAGE HIGHLANDS	HISTORIC
7	JOHN & MARY WHITE HOUSE	HISTORIC
8	DUELING GROUNDS MARKER	HISTORIC, REC/NATURE/RIVER
9	DC BOUNDARY MARKER N.E. #7	HISTORIC
10	GEORGE WASHINGTON HOUSE	HISTORIC
11	ST. PAUL'S BAPTIST CHURCH	HISTORIC, ART&CULTURE
12	HILLEARY-MAGRUDER HOUSE	HISTORIC
13	MARKET MASTER'S HOUSE	HISTORIC
14	BOSTWICK HOUSE	HISTORIC
15	EVERGREEN CEMETERY	HISTORIC, REC/NATURE/RIVER
16	POPPLETON-ROBERTS HOUSE	HISTORIC
17	ERNEST MAIER BUILDING	HISTORIC, SUSTAINABILITY
18	ECO-CITY FARMS, EDMONSTON	SUSTAINABILITY, REC/NATURE/RIVER
19	ECO-CITY FARMS, BLADENSBURG	SUSTAINABILITY, REC/NATURE/RIVER
20	COMMUNITY FORKLIFT	ART&CULTURE, SUSTAINABILITY
21	MURAL 1	ART&CULTURE
22	MURAL 2	ART&CULTURE
23	MURAL 3	ART&CULTURE
24	MURAL 4	ART&CULTURE
25	MURAL 5	ART&CULTURE
26	MURAL 6	ART&CULTURE
27	MURAL 7	ART&CULTURE
28	BLADENSBURG BALLOON PARK	HISTORIC
29	BLADENSBURG MEMORIAL GROVE	HISTORIC, ART&CULTURE
30	STREETS OF SOLIDARITY MURAL (38/37th @	ART&CULTURE, HISTORIC
31	ART MAGNET FREE LITTLE ART GALLERY - EI	ART&CULTURE, REC/NATURE/RIVER
32	EDMONSTON COMMUNITY GARDEN	SUSTAINABILITY, REC/NATURE/RIVER
33	GREEN STREET DECATUR	ART&CULTURE, SUSTAINABILITY
34	COTTAGE CITY COMMUNITY GARDEN	SUSTAINABILITY, REC/NATURE/RIVER
35	COLMAR MANOR COMMUNITY GARDEN	SUSTAINABILITY, REC/NATURE/RIVER

	Category			Opportunities					Constraints		
	Primary Entry Gateway	Secondary Entry Gateway	Downtown District Gateway	Proximity to Key Destination(s)	Proximity to Opportunity Site(s)	Potential Visibility from Multiple Modes of Circulation	Proximity to Potential Road Realignmnet	Existing Feature Opportunity	Limited Space for Inbound Visibility	Existing Features Limit Imagability	High-Conflict or Fragmented Circulation
A - Kenilworth Ave North Gateway		■									
B - Eastern Gateway	■		■	■	■		■				■
C - Kenilworth Ave South Gateway		■							■	■	
D - Anacostia River Trail Gateway		■		■		■		■			
E - Bladensburg Road South Gateway	■		■	■	■						
F - Baltimore Ave Gateway	■			■	■	■	■	■			■
G - Decatur St Gateway		■				■	■	■	■	■	
H - Library Hub Gateway			■	■	■		■	■		■	■

Prince Joseph Ashina, Quentin Grotheer, Artemis Maziarski, David Ramos | May 7, 2026 | LARC648 | Dr. Christopher Ellis

PORT TOWNS *Ecological Wayfinding in Edmonston*





Wayfinding Signs and Fixtures

Gateway Components

Materials:

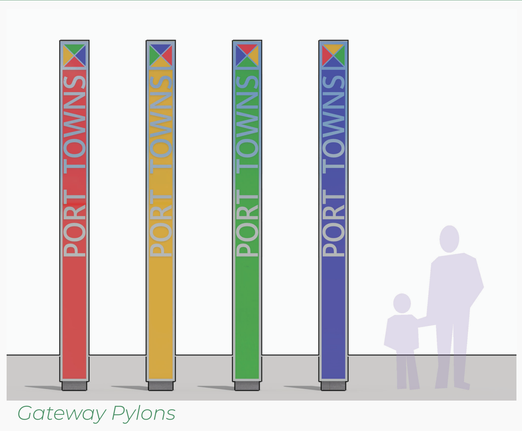

Acrylic Panels


Perforated Stainless Panels


Reclaimed Wood


Sandblasted Local Stone

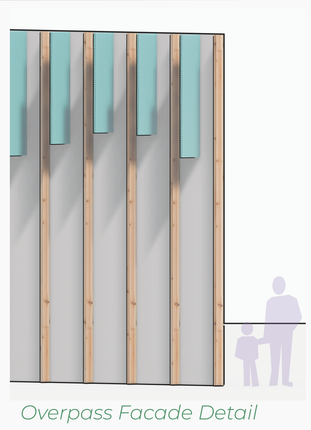

PVC-Coated Fabric



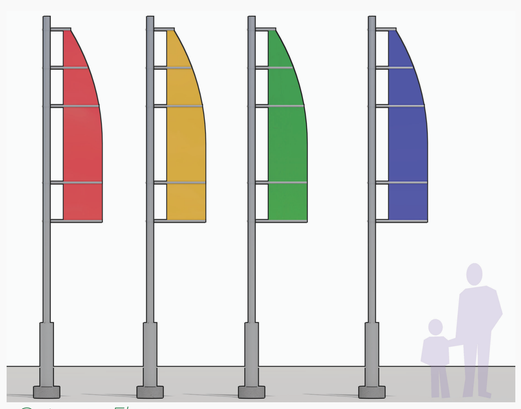
Gateway Pylons



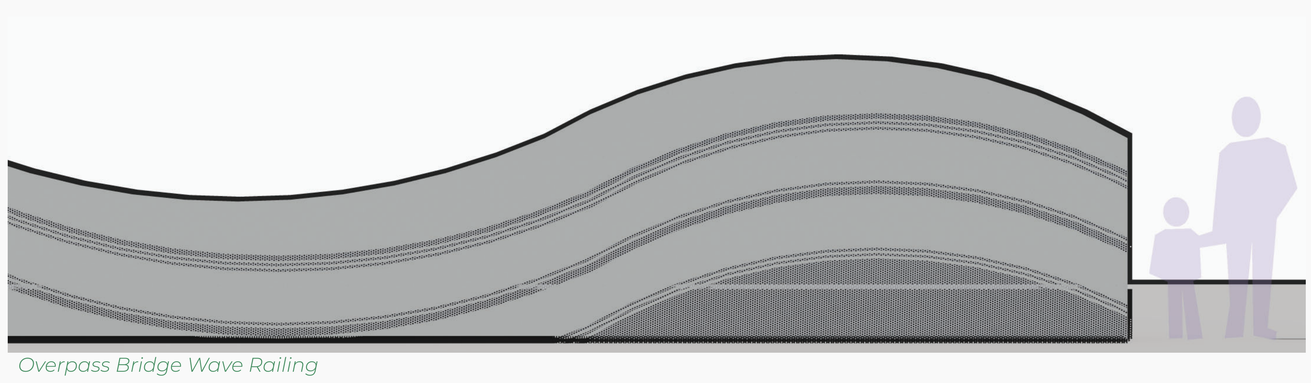
Monumental Gateway Sign



Overpass Facade Detail



Gateway Flags



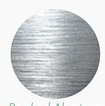
Overpass Bridge Wave Railing

Map Kiosk and Destination Signs

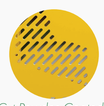
Materials:


Reclaimed Wood


Acrylic Panels


Brushed Aluminum


Perforated Stainless Panels

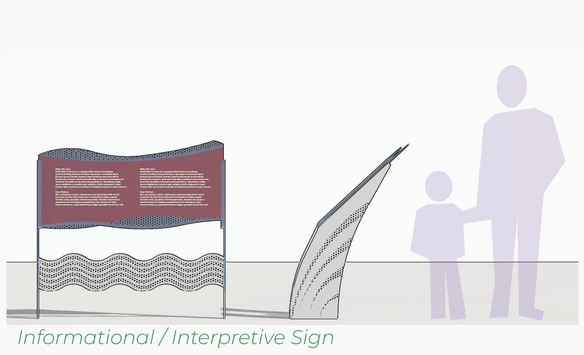

Laser-Cut Powder-Coated Steel



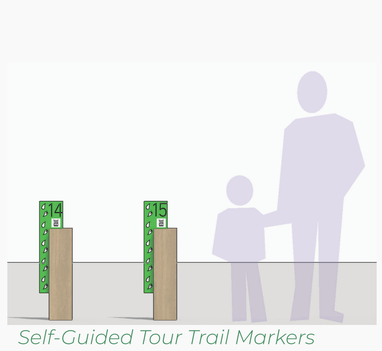
Informational Map Kiosk



Destination Sign



Informational / Interpretive Sign



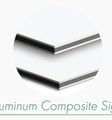
Self-Guided Tour Trail Markers

Directional Fingerposts

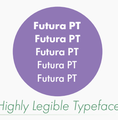
Materials:


Powder-Coated Tubular Steel


Perforated Stainless Panels


Aluminum Composite Signs


High-Contrast UV-Resistant Ink

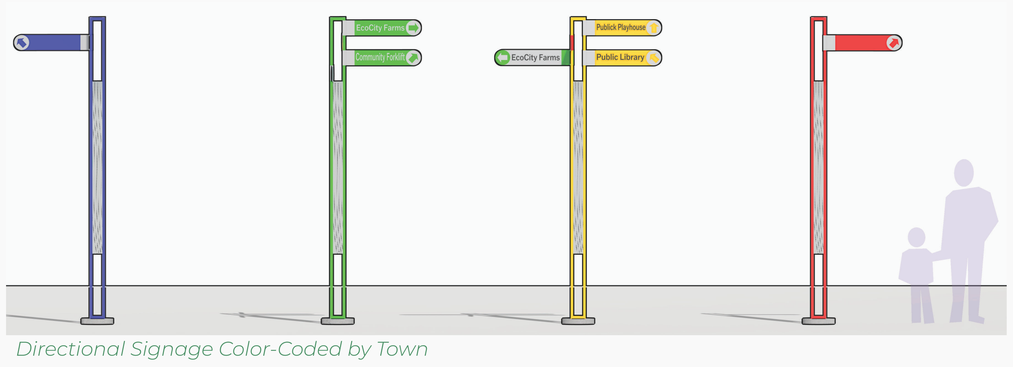


Highly Legible Typeface



Example directional for Edmonston site from within Edmonston

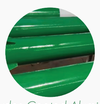
Example directional for Edmonston site from within one of the other three towns

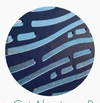


Directional Signage Color-Coded by Town

Additional Streetscape Fixtures

Materials:


Powder-Coated Aluminum


Laser-Cut Aluminum Panels

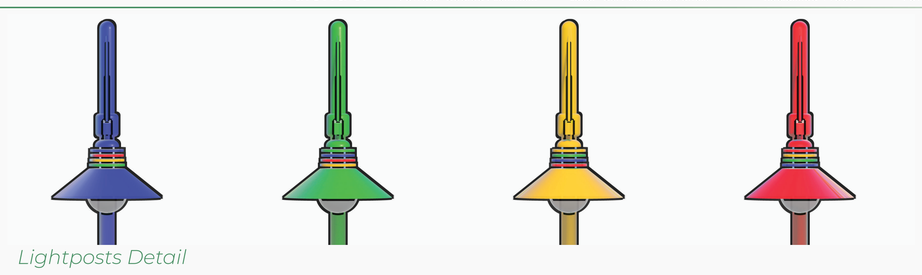

Reclaimed Wood


Powder-Coated Tubular Steel

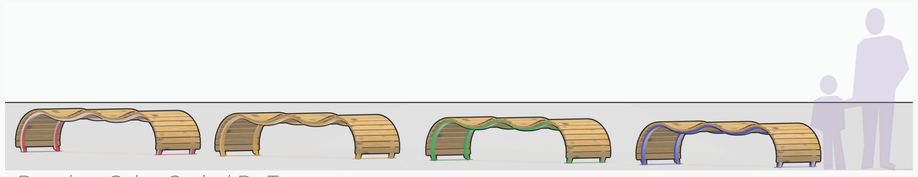

High-Efficiency LED Lighting



Lightposts Color-Coded By Town



Lightposts Detail



Benches Color-Coded By Town



Banner Detail

Precedents:





PORT TOWNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Artemis J. Maziarski
LARC 648 - Grad Studio IV
Dr. Christopher Ellis - SP26
5/7/2026

M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Department

Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability

Landscape Architecture
DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Kenilworth Ave overpass presents high impact placemaking opportunity visible at a distance from multiple modes of transit.

A layered materials palette weaves historic, industrial, and contemporary influences to bridge the Port Towns' past, present, and future into a cohesive visual identity.

Annapolis Road view east towards Kenilworth Ave overpass

Flowing forms evoke the Port Towns' enduring relationship to the Anacostia. Bridge facade improves image-ability and establishes strong visual identity.

Annapolis Road streetscape looking towards Kenilworth Ave overpass gateway

Upright pylons and flags serve as versatile gateway fixtures to create sense of arrival in medians or other areas with limited space.

Flags, directional signs, and streetscape fixtures keyed to each of the Port Town's colors contribute to wayfinding while reinforcing each town's individual identity.

Kenilworth Ave gateway into Edmonston, southbound lanes

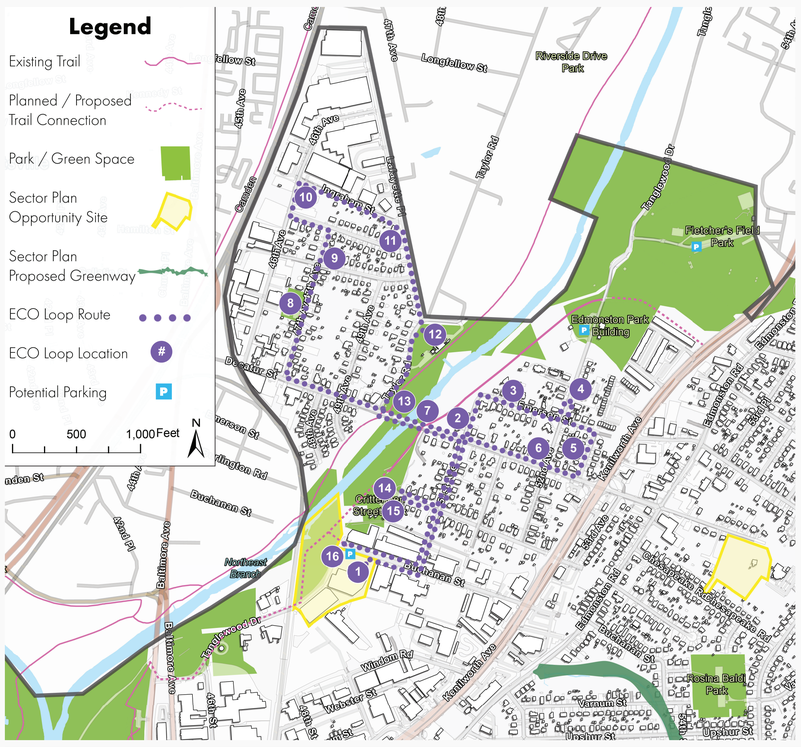
Recurring palette of low-maintenance, drought tolerant, native plantings contributes to cohesive sense of place.

Kenilworth Ave gateway into Edmonston, northbound lanes

Unified directional signage improves navigation among key sites and provides walk and bike times to destination.

Visitors read informational signage at the Hilleary-Magruder House

Themed Micromobility and Walking Tour - Port Towns ECOLoop



Tour Theming and Narrative

The Port Towns ECOLoop is conceived as an **accessible, 2.8-mile walking and micromobility loop** through Edmonston that **connects and elevates key ecological, cultural, and civic sites**. Designed for flexibility, it can be shortened to a **1–1.5 mile neighborhood circuit** or expanded into a longer fitness or event route, supporting a range of user experiences.

Stops span from **local points of interest to regionally significant landmarks**, with the loop anchored at **Community Forklift / Opportunity Site B** as a primary gateway and future regional draw. Along the route, users move through **distinct yet connected landscapes** - urban streets, green corridors, and riparian edges - guided by **clear wayfinding and material cues** that reinforce both spatial orientation and ecological awareness.

More than a path, the ECOLoop positions movement itself as the destination, framing **sustainability, resilience, and adaptive reuse as visible, everyday systems**. It invites users to experience the Port Towns as a **living network of infrastructure, ecology, and community**.

Despite current gaps in connectivity, the ECOLoop serves as both a **functional route and a long-term framework** that **reveals hidden assets, strengthens identity, and guides future investment** toward a more **connected, legible, and resilient public realm**.

#	ECO Loop Tour Stops *(Port Towns Sector Plan Key Location)*	Category					
		Institution, Business, Historic Site	Notable Tree	SWM Infrastructure	Garden	Public Art	Activity
1	Community Forklift	●					
2	Decatur Street 'Green Gallery' public art installations			●	●	●	
3	*Poppleton-Roberts House	●					
4	Edmonston Town Hall Innagural Rain Garden	●		●	●		
5	Edmonston #5 Tree - Pin Oak (33 DBH)		●				
6	Decatur Green Street Rain Gardens, Green Bus Shelter			●	●	●	
7	*Diversity Bridge Mural (#6)					●	
8	Edmonston Community Garden (w/ little free library)				●		●
9	Edmonston #2 Tree - London Planetree (42 DBH)		●				
10	Edmonston #3 Tree - Sweetgum (40 DBH)		●				
11	Edmonston #4 Tree - Silver Maple (36 DBH)		●				
12	Edmonston Pumping Station			●		●	
13	Edmonston Veterans Park ArtGallery project	●				●	●
14	Edmonston #1 Tree - Willow Oak (44 DBH)		●				
15	*ECO City Farm Edmonston (& Mural #5)	●			●	●	●
16	Sector Plan Opportunity Site B *(Makers Space, emphasis on local artists, local agriculture, potential food hall/brewery, Anacostia overlook)*	●		●		●	●



Field trip to ECO City Farm Edmonston



Levee Trail expansion at Crittenden Street



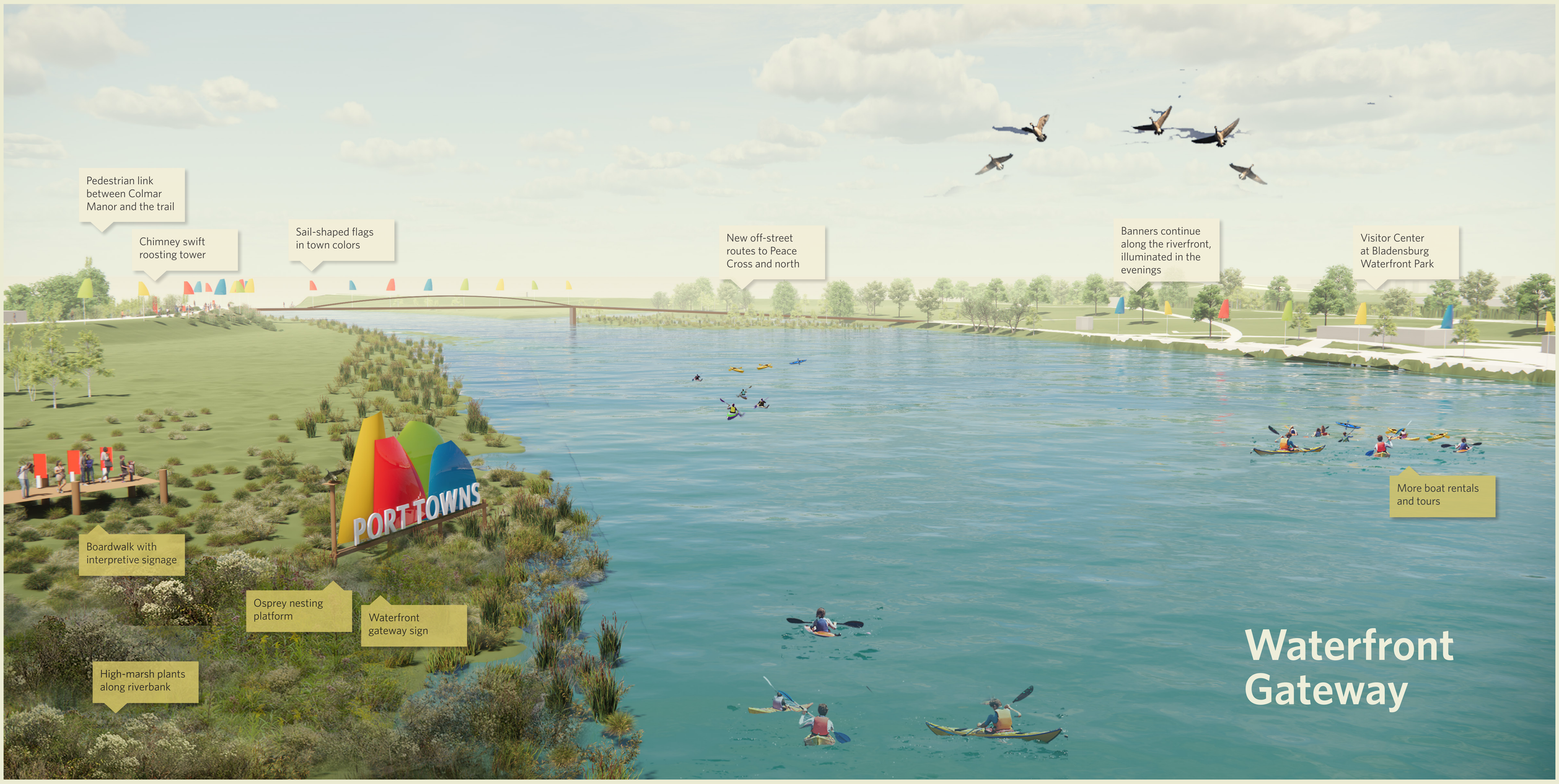
Encouraging discovery on the Port Towns ECOLoop

Artemis J. Maziarski
LARC 648 - Grad Studio IV
Dr. Christopher Ellis - SP26
5/7/2026

Landscape Architecture
DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

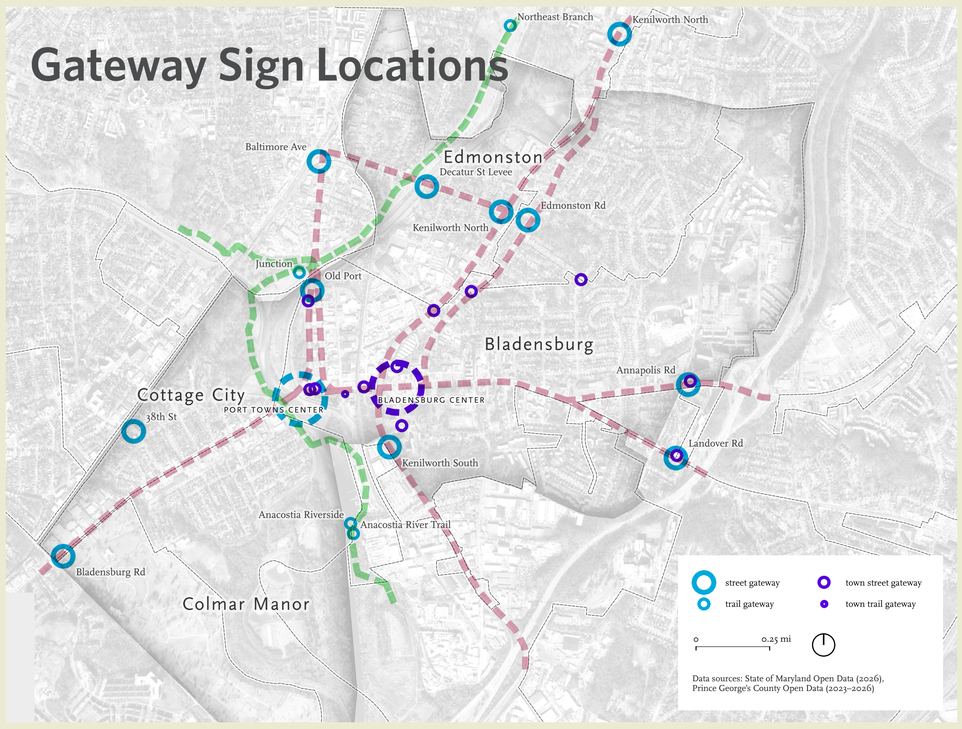
PORT TOWNS *Wayfinding Master Plan*

A PLACE FOR PEOPLE +



Waterfront Gateway

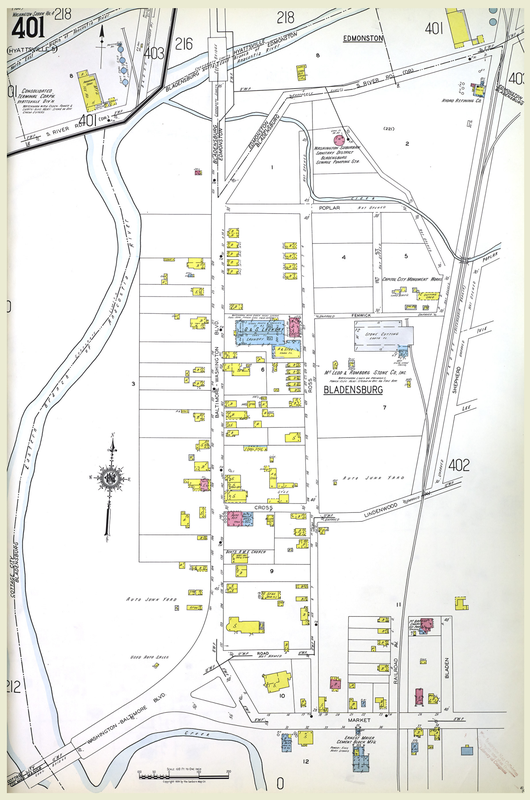
Gateway Sign Locations



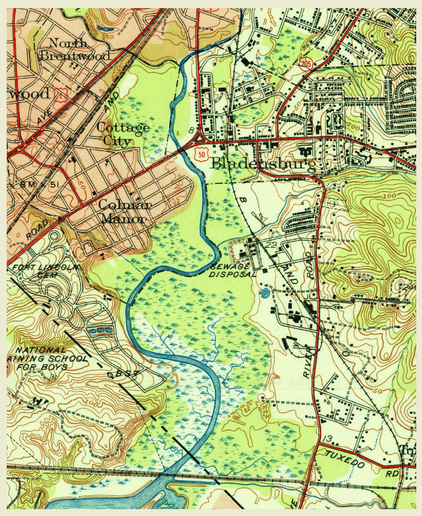
Anacostia Waterfront Gateway Sign

Addresses people arriving or returning by boat, but also visible from Bladensburg Waterfront Park. A boardwalk brings visitors from Colmar Manor Park to the riverside at the rear of the sign, which also has its own "PORT TOWNS" lettering. The sign includes an osprey nesting platform.





Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Bladensburg and the Peace Cross area, 1939.





↑↑ USGS topographic map of the towns, 1951.
↑ HABS/HAER image of the George Washington House (Union Tavern) in the mid 20th century.

River Stories Trail

This trail links the four Port Towns with the Anacostia, and with the broader regional trail system, which already attracts visitors from the area and from neighboring jurisdictions.

It uses existing off-street routes, adding layers of meaning and experience through new interpretive signage, wayfinding hardware, and amenities. A new leg of the trail would link the Peace Cross area with the new, multiuse district in the area of historic downtown Bladensburg.



LOCATION	FACILITIES
Edmonston Rec Center	*trailhead, kiosk, car parking*
Levee System	*wayside sign*
B&O Wye	*wayside sign*
Dorr House	*wayside sign*
Northeast Branch	*gateway, kiosk*
Spa Spring	*wayside sign*
George Washington House	*wayside sign*
Mural 2	*wayside sign*
War Memorials	*wayside sign*
Bridge	*wayside sign*
Battle of Bladensburg	*kiosk, bike repair stand*
Colmar Manor	*wayside sign, flags, chimney swift tower*
Sedimentation	*wayside sign, live stream gage*
B&O Alexandria Extension	*wayside sign, flags*
Bladensburg Waterfront Park	*visitor center, ex. parking*
New River	*wayside sign*
Floodplains and Forests	*wayside sign*
Sand and Gravel	*wayside sign*
Bladensburg Wetlands	*wayside sign viewing platform*
Old River	*gateway, kiosk*

PORT TOWNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION · M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Department · Landscape Architecture, Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture · PALS Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability

Alberto David Ramos · *May 4, 2026* · UMD Landscape Architecture, LARC 468 (*Dr. Christopher D. Ellis*)

A PLACE FOR NATURE



Compact Gateway Sign

Sized for pedestrians and people on bikes. Colors vary from town to town. Built from wood, bent as in wooden boats, or fiberglass.

Signature Fingerboard Sign

Placed at major junctions. The top of the sign is a weathervane.

Standard Fingerboard Signs

These are the majority of the directional signs in the system. Tips of signs reflect the destination town.

Chimney Swift Tower

Roosting structure for chimney swifts. After plans from Maryland Department of Natural Resources.

Bat Box or Birdhouse

Large Destination Sign

For locations that require a more prominent sign.

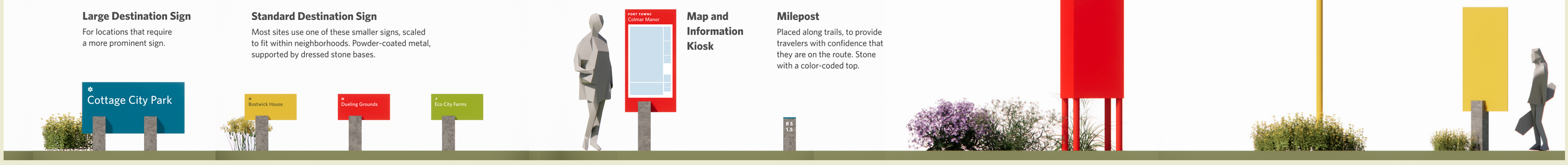
Standard Destination Sign

Most sites use one of these smaller signs, scaled to fit within neighborhoods. Powder-coated metal, supported by dressed stone bases.

Map and Information Kiosk

Milepost

Placed along trails, to provide travelers with confidence that they are on the route. Stone with a color-coded top.



5 min Dueling Grounds

15 min Cottage City Park

Eco City Farms 5 min

River Stories Trail *to Edmonston*

Northwest Branch Trail *to West Hyattsville*

Example Fingerboard Signs

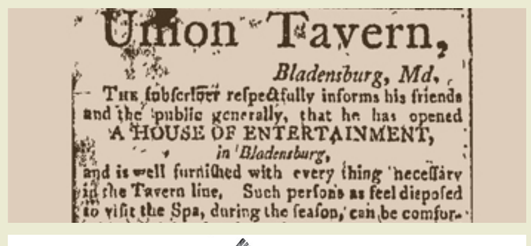
Recommended typeface for signage and branding: *Whitney*, a very high performance, legible font that is designed for wayfinding and identity work, originally created for the Whitney Museum.

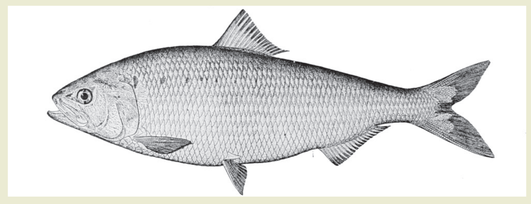


An osprey.

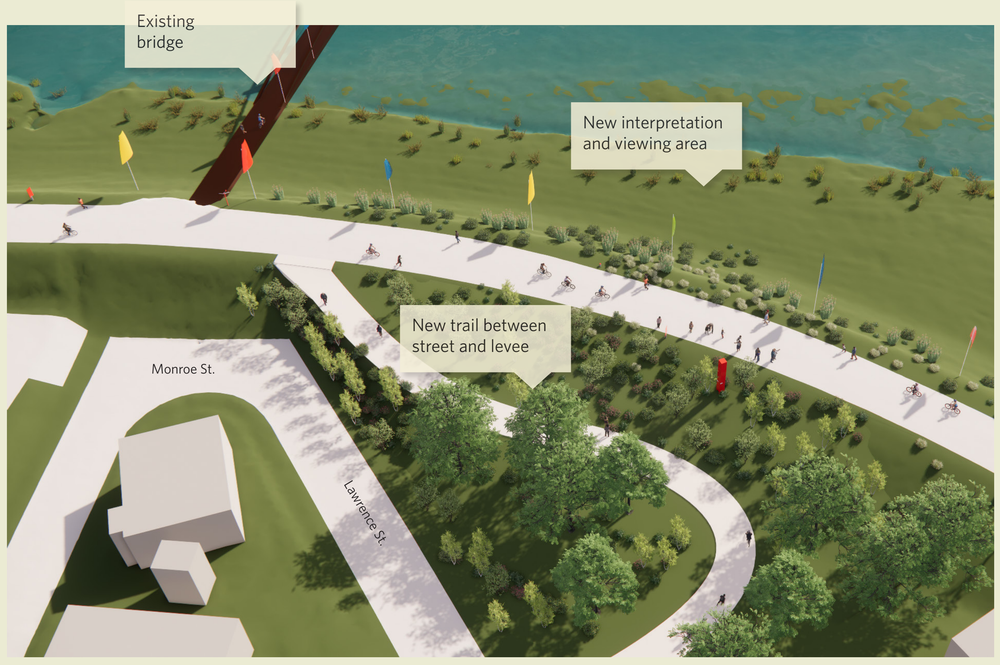


A chimney swift in flight.





↑ Shad, returning to the river. ↑↑ *Washington Federalist*, June 8, 1804.

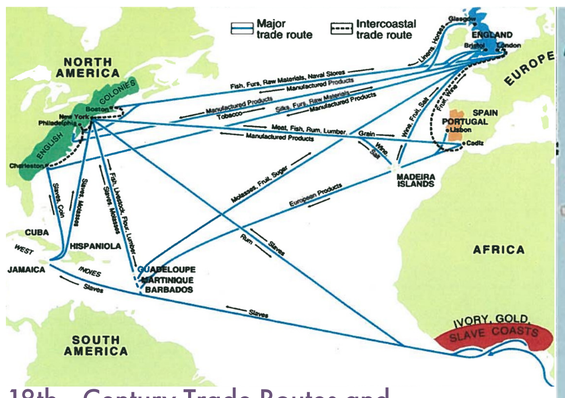


Overhead View: The Colmar Manor Levee Connection

A new sloped system provides an accessible, all-abilities link between Lawrence Street, the trail, and the nearby bridge. It can be built entirely on publicly-owned parcels.

Photo credits: American osprey (Mike L. Baird on WP, CC BY 2.0), chimney swift (Adam Jackson on inaturalist, CC0), Union Tavern clipping via UMD Hornbake Library, historic maps and tavern photo via Library of Congress.

PORT TOWNS :Route of Memory



18th - Century Trade Routes and Commodities ca. 1750



Rigid Iron Shackles Placed around the Necks, Hands & Legs of Captured Slaves



Slave Ports West Africa in 1750 (Slaverysite)

Route of Memory: The Story

The Route of Memory is a walking and micromobility tour designed to commemorate the journey of enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean to the Port Towns, which became one of their final destinations following the legalization of African slavery through a series of laws beginning in the 1660s. The tour also honors the contributions of African and African-American communities to the area's development. The trail connects ten destinations, including nine historic landmarks and one proposed gathering space. It uses existing and proposed trails, crosswalks, and pedestrian connections throughout the Port Towns.

The proposed wayfinding and branding elements draw inspiration from the history of the transatlantic slave trade through their materials and colors. Corten steel symbolizes the iron shackles placed on enslaved Africans, wood represents the ships used during transportation across the Atlantic, glass reflects transparency between the past and represent, and stone brick connects to the historic character of the Port Towns. The color palette incorporates black to represent resilience and identity, cyan to symbolize the Atlantic Ocean and Anacostia River, and the town colors reflect the identity of each Port Town.

The signage is designed to do more than guide people along the route. QR codes allow visitors to learn more about the history of each stop, glass help people see the connection between the past and present, and the solar powered smart benches create spaces for people to sit, reflect, and experience the journey.



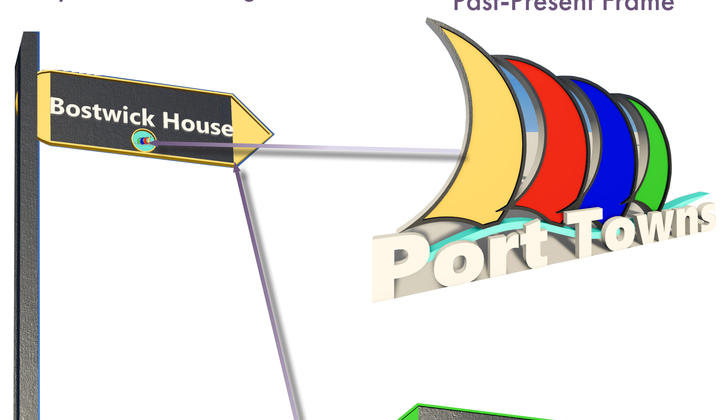
Interpretive Photo Sign

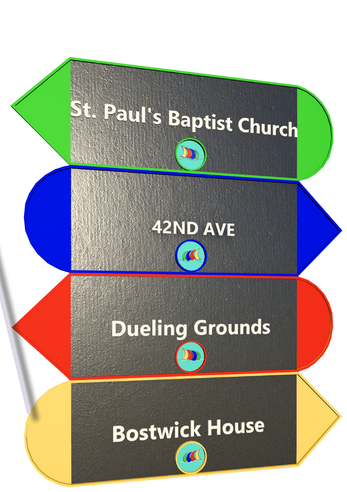


Past-Present Frame



Sail Light





Pedestrian Buffer Bollards

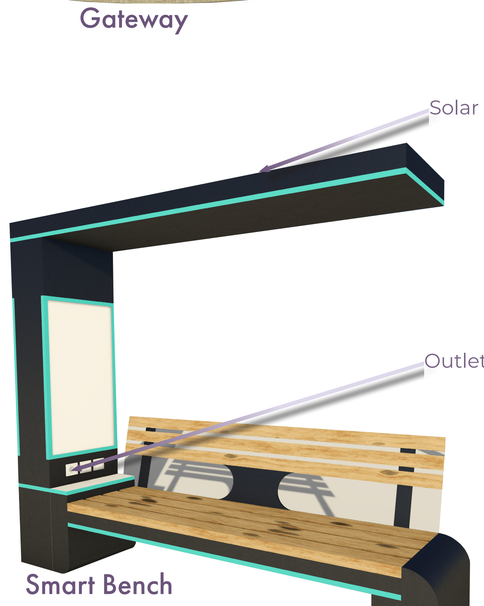
Finger Post Signage



Aerial View of Gateway



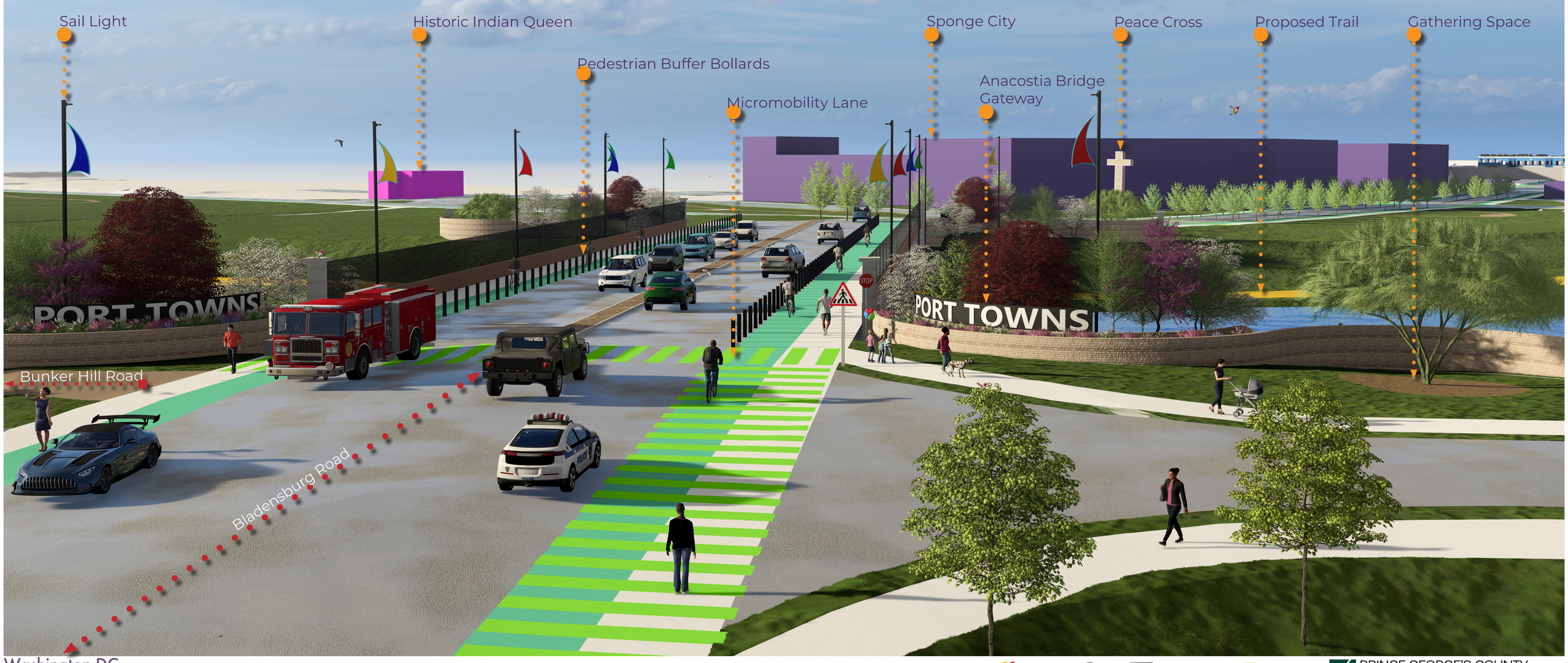
Gateway



Smart Bench



Existing Condition of Anascotia Bridge



Prince Ashina/Larc 648.
Dr. Christopher Ellis/Spring 2026

PORT TOWNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

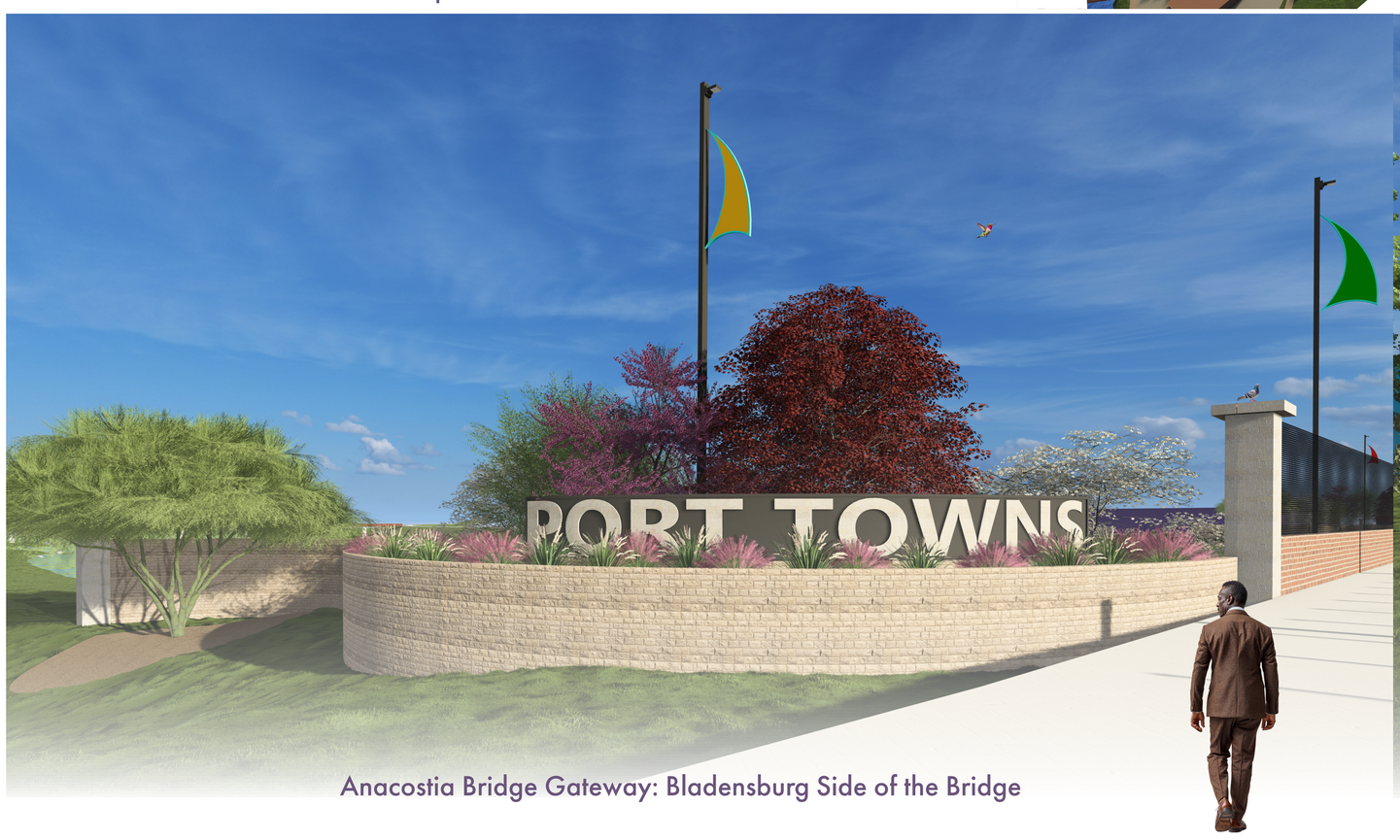
PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
Planning Department
Landscape Architecture

PORT TOWNS :Route of Memory

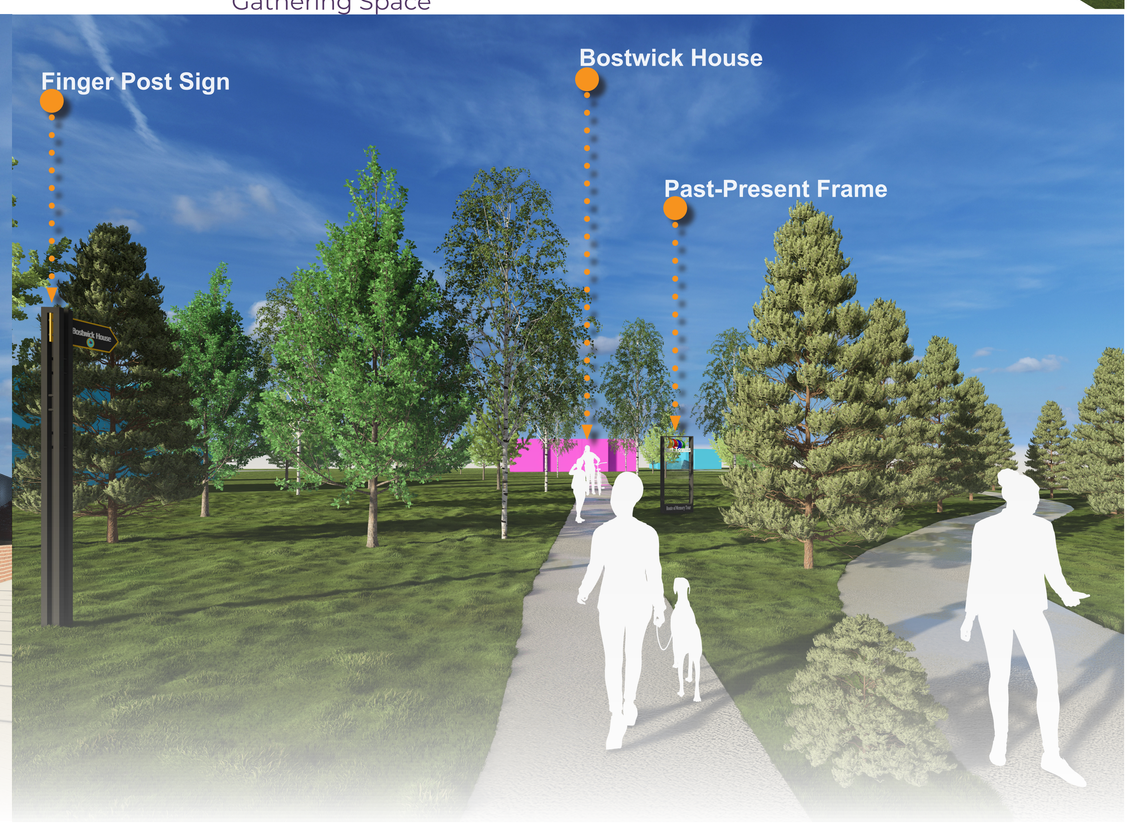


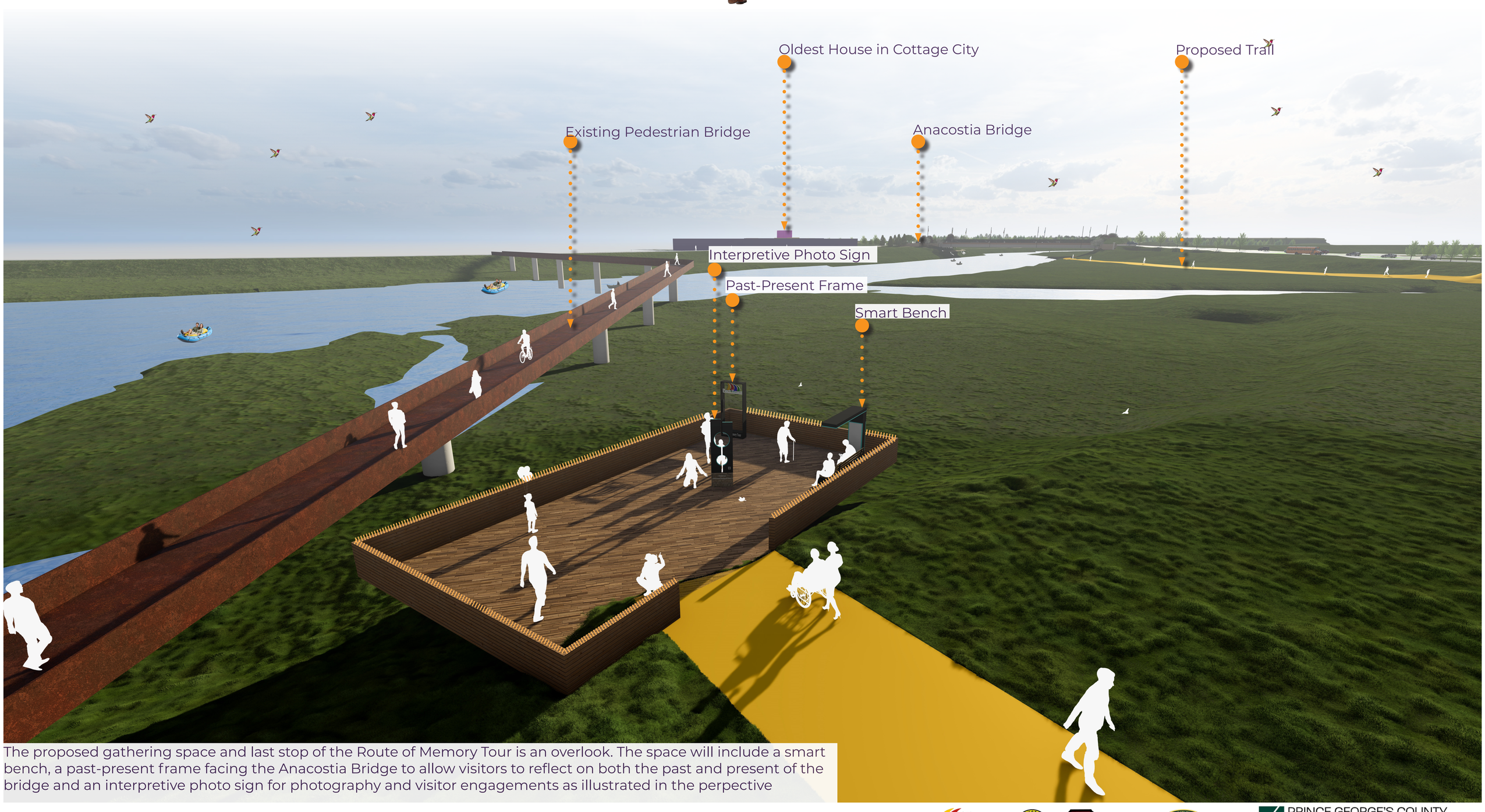
2D Trail Map of Route of Memory. Refer to the 3D map on the right to better understand the tour's route and its stops.





Anacostia Bridge Gateway: Bladensburg Side of the Bridge





The proposed gathering space and last stop of the Route of Memory Tour is an overlook. The space will include a smart bench, a past-present frame facing the Anacostia Bridge to allow visitors to reflect on both the past and present of the bridge and an interpretive photo sign for photography and visitor engagements as illustrated in the perpective

Prince Ashina/Larc 648.
Dr. Christopher Ellis/Spring 2026

PORT TOWNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Planning Department
Landscape Architecture

Quentin Grotheer | May 7, 2026 | LARC648 - Graduate Studio IV | Dr. Christopher Ellis

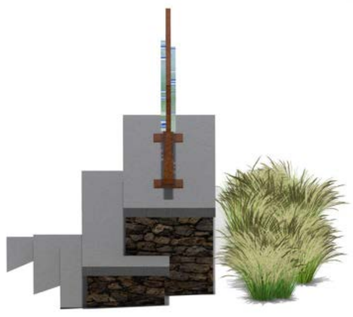
PORT TOWNS

Identity & Wayfinding in Colmar Manor

As part of the Wayfinding Master Plan, the goal of this project is to channel the unique character of the Port Towns and reveal it within spaces people pass through. The signage is both a functional and aesthetic endeavor through which the Port Towns identity is unearthed.

Focusing on Colmar Manor, the Historic Bladensburg Dueling Grounds are a key site due to their story and location at the corner of Bladensburg Rd and 38th Ave. Not only is this intersection the most straightforward gateway location to introduce the collective Port Towns to Washington, DC — it is also the location of a potential mixed-use central gathering space, aptly named Port Collective. The Dueling Grounds Trail emerged as a method to increase connections for Colmar Manor, such as: park to river, creek to river, park to park, people to nature, people to history, people to people.



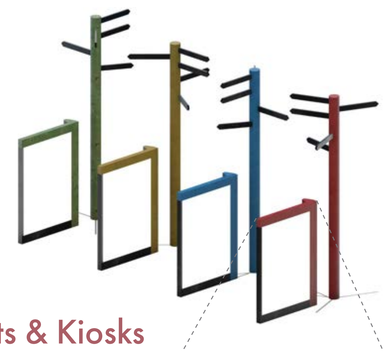


Destinations

Painted Metal

Corresponds to the Port Towns' chosen colors with a durable finish





Fingerposts & Kiosks

Fritted Mirrors

The kiosks' backsides provide interest and reflect the towns safely for birds



Corten Steel

Reflects the industrial history and current pedestrian bridge across the Anacostia

Curved and welded pieces nod to the waterfront







Stacked Stone

Identified by town leadership as a fitting foundation

Gateways



Furniture & Materials Catalog

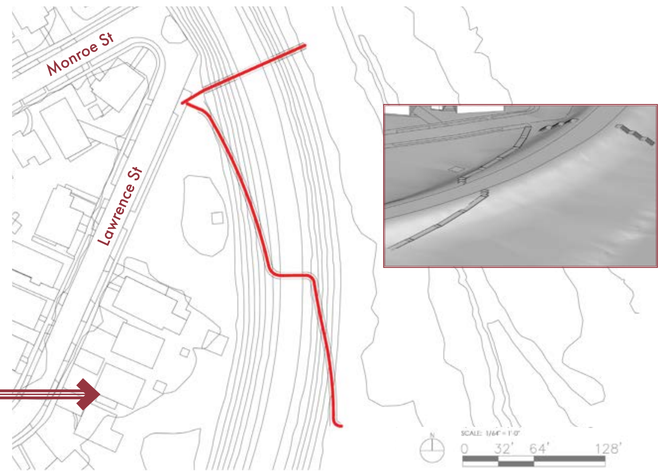
Native Grasses

Soften the stacked stone edges and add wildlife value

Tall species like, *Panicum virgatum*, are ideal for the scale of gateways. *Muhlenbergia capillaris* is a shorter option with stunning October blooms.



Levee Crossing Near Bladensburg Park Pedestrian Bridge





Perspective A: Trail Fork Near Lawrence St & 42nd Ave



Perspective B$_i$: Gateway at Bladensburg Rd & 38th Ave



Perspective B$_{ii}$: Gateway at Bladensburg Rd & 38th Ave





Dueling Creek Renaturalization at the Dueling Grounds

PORT TOWNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

M-NCPPC Prince George's County Planning Department
Landscape Architecture
DEPARTMENT OF PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE



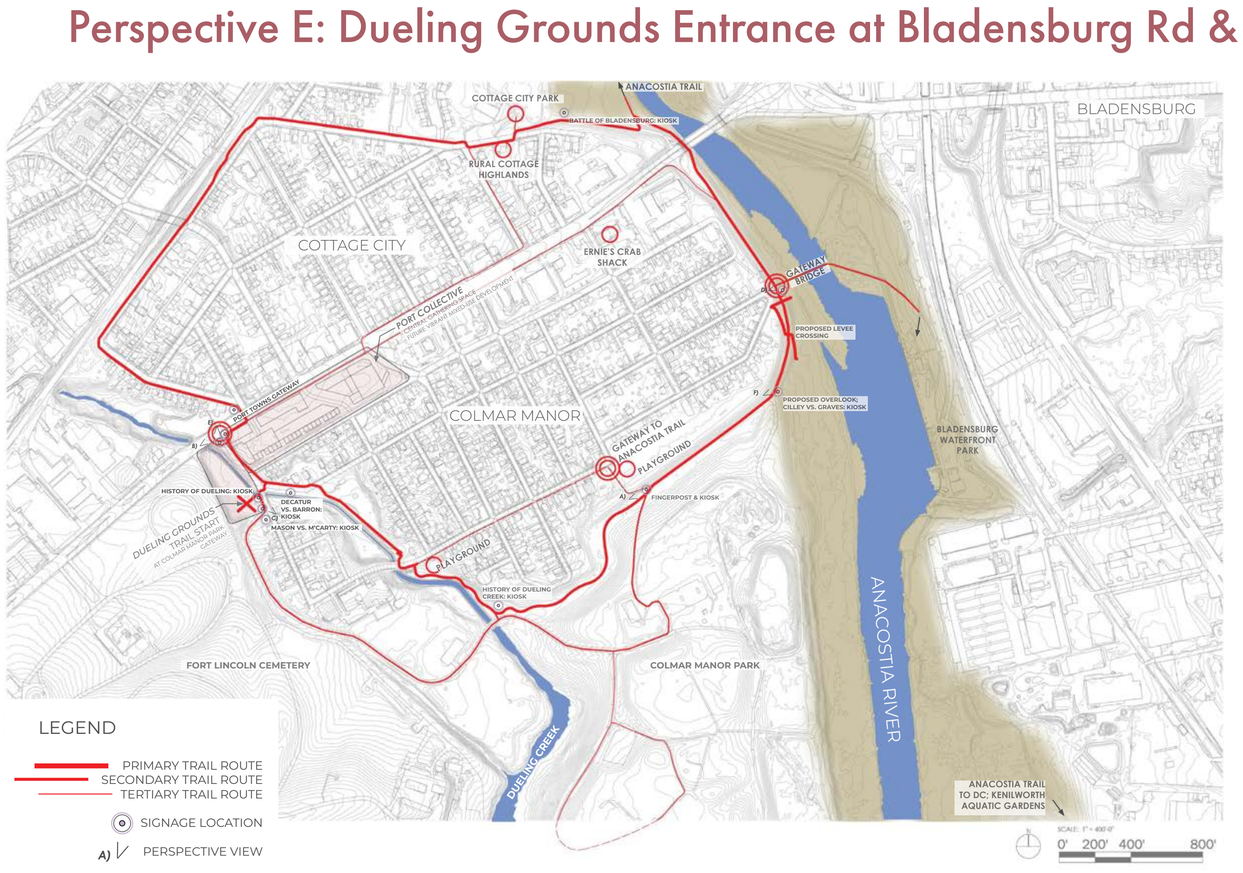
Perspective C: Dueling Grounds Entrance at 37th Ave



Perspective D: Entrance to Bladensburg Park Pedestrian Bridge



Perspective E: Dueling Grounds Entrance at Bladensburg Rd & 38th Ave



Plan: Dueling Grounds Trail



Perspective F: Overlook Facing Bladensburg Waterfront Park