



FREETOWN WALKABLE WATERSHED

A plan to connect people, water and communities

December 2021

Developed by Skeo Solutions for the Community Ecology Institute with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and support from Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy.

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Aerial view of Freetown Farm

Introduction

Most people do not know their local watersheds. We depend on our watersheds, we affect our watersheds, and yet we generally have little sense of their geography or health. The Freetown Walkable Watershed initiative aims to reconnect us with our life-sustaining waterways, and to help us responsibly steward them.

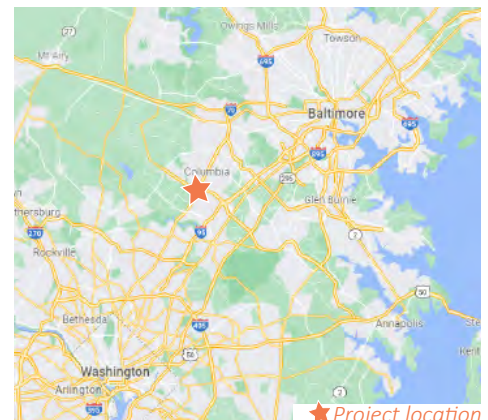
The project supports stormwater management strategies that encourage safe exploration by foot and bike as well as by car—bringing us into closer, more knowledgeable relationship with the streams and rivers that surround us. The project's ultimate goal is to improve watershed health and resilience.

This project, located in Howard County, Maryland, has been led by two local organizations: the Community Ecology Institute (CEI), a non-profit organization with a mission to cultivate communities where people and nature thrive together, and by the Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy, a program of the University of Maryland Extension. Skeo Solutions provided technical assistance and walkable watershed expertise to the project. The Freetown Walkable Watershed is located approximately 15 miles from the Chesapeake Bay, mid-way between Baltimore and Washington D.C. Its water flows into the Middle Patuxent River and the Little Patuxent River, drawing from nearly all of Columbia, Maryland, a heavily developed, planned community. The 24-mile Middle Patuxent River is contained fully within Howard County.

Background

In 2019, CEI purchased a 6.4-acre organic farm located less than a mile from the Middle Patuxent River, to protect the unique property from housing development. Over the past two years, CEI has been working to transform Freetown Farm into an experiential education center where diverse members of the community can come together to learn how they can lead happier, healthier, more connected and sustainable lives.

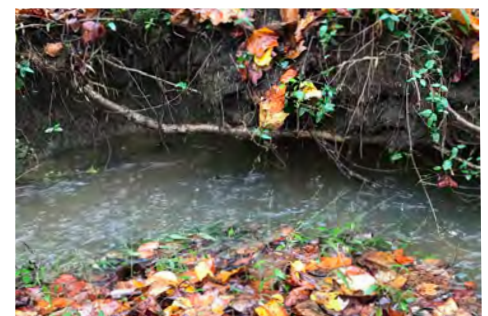
While restoring the farm, CEI began to understand how stormwater flooding issues at the property also impact the adjacent neighbors and tributaries to



Project region



Flooding adjacent to Freetown Farm



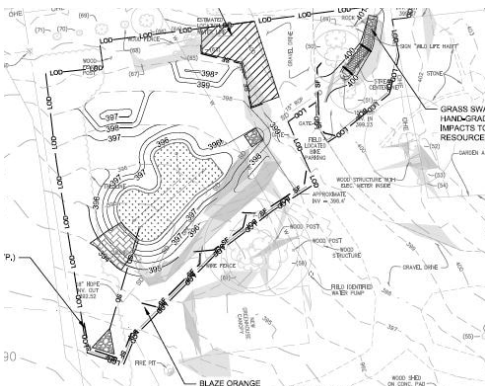
Erosion along bank of tributary

PROJECT OVERVIEW

the Middle Patuxent River. Stormwater from the rooftop and athletic fields at neighboring Atholton High School (AHS) flows downstream, causing flooding at Freetown Farm and adjacent residences during heavy rain events. CEI began exploring opportunities to address this issue and demonstrate innovative solutions to community stormwater challenges.

CEI partnered with the Howard County Watershed Stewards Academy to consider options for managing the flooding and stormwater issues both at Freetown Farm and at the source of stormwater runoff, AHS. The organizations secured several grants to fund the efforts at three scales.

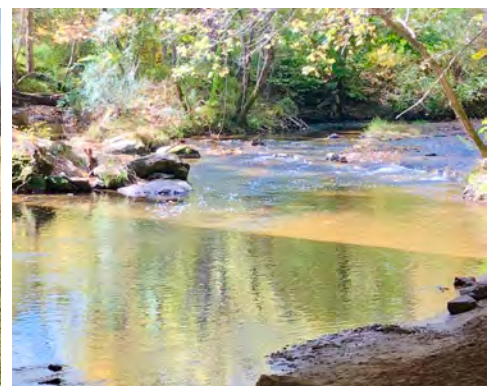
A series of Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) grants have supported the design and installation of best management practices such as swales, bioretention ponds, and conservation landscapes at Freetown Farm to reduce flooding on the property and adjacent homes (1). CBT grants also funded conceptual design and engineering plans for implementing sustainable stormwater management features and demonstration areas at AHS (2). A National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant has provided funding for a community-wide concept plan that identifies strategies to improve water quality, create safe community pedestrian connections, and foster stewardship of natural assets (3). This report focuses on the community-wide plan.



(1) Freetown Farm Ecological Master Plan. Natural drainage system design and implementation for Freetown Farm, completed 2021.



(2) AHS Green Infrastructure concept plan and engineering design. Stormwater plan and engineering design to reduce flooding and create learning opportunities.



(3) Community-wide Walkable Watershed concept plan. Recommendations to improve watershed health, connect community and foster stewardship of local ecology.

Walkable Watershed Approach

Recognizing the combined challenges of flooding and a lack of safe pedestrian connections, CEI decided to work with Skeo Solutions to take a “Walkable Watershed” approach to the community-wide project, which considers connectivity, watershed health and ecological stewardship. The approach engages community members and partners to work together to protect the watershed. Thoughtful infrastructure in communities including nature-based stormwater management and alternative transportation can help mitigate the effects of development, which often lead to poor water quality, erosion, declining biodiversity and decreased access to natural areas. By working together to steward local land and streams, communities can support both watershed and community health.



A community-focused approach fosters stewardship of watershed health.

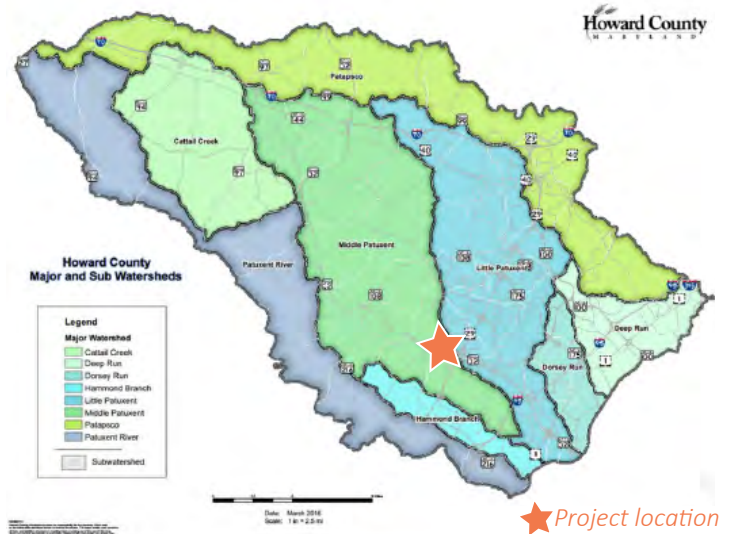
The Walkable Watershed concept is based on the idea that high-quality water goes hand-in-hand with a high quality of life, supporting access to the outdoors, enhanced community infrastructure and services, and stronger health.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

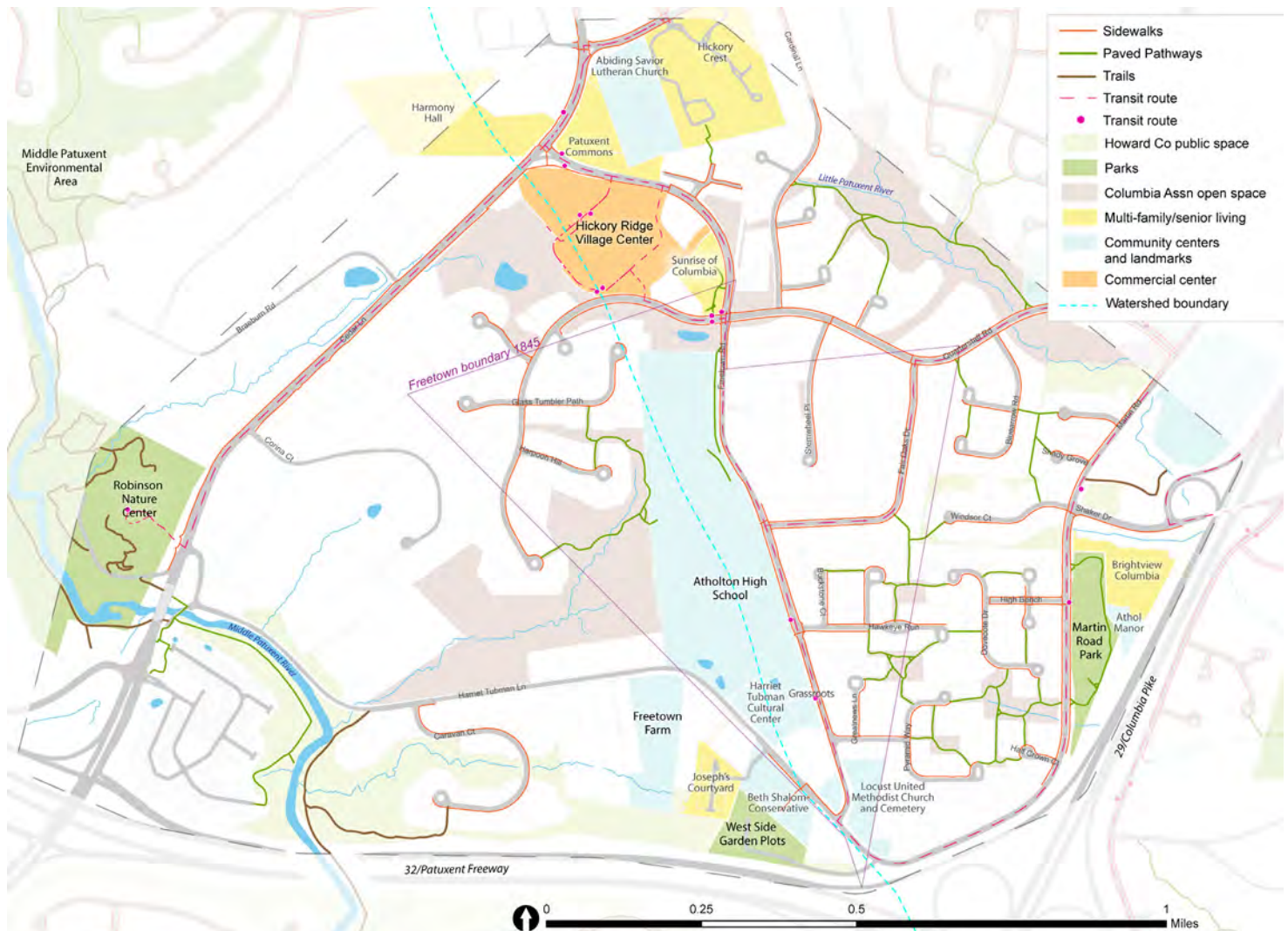
Project Area

While the Middle Patuxent watershed is the focus for the water quality issues caused by flooding around AHS, the project area, which is bound by Cedar Lane, Harriet Tubman Road, and Freetown Road, also includes the Little Patuxent watershed.

The planning process builds on the current pathway networks within neighborhoods and considers existing and new residential developments and community centers such as schools, congregations and the Hickory Ridge Village Center. The planning process also considers existing natural, historic and environmental education assets that provide learning and recreation opportunities for the community.



Howard County watersheds



Freetown Walkable Watershed project area: existing sidewalk, bike and public transit connections and community centers

History

There is a rich and important history associated with the people that have lived in this area. This is the traditional land of the Piscataway Conoy Tribe as well as the Susquehannock, Algonquian, Lenape, Nanticoke, Powhatan, and Patuxent, all of whom thrived in this area for hundreds of years. In the 1600s the arrival of European colonists to central Maryland began the violent removal of Native American communities from their lands here and brought the institution of slavery to the area.

After more than 150 years of slavery in Howard County, in 1845 a landowner freed seventeen people he had enslaved and provided them with 150 acres of land on which to live—an area that became known as Freetown. Historians believe that Freetown and the surrounding community of Simpsonville served as an important stopover point in the Underground Railroad, because of the freed Black population and because slaves seeking freedom moved north through Maryland via different waterways, such as the Middle Patuxent and Patapsco rivers. The Freetown area became a long-standing African American community and in 1948 the Harriet Tubman School, a segregated high school for African American students, was established. An integrated school, Atholton High School, was built next door in 1965.

In 1967, the new town of Columbia was unveiled, encompassing the project area. Columbia is a unique, planned community founded by James Rouse. From its inception, Columbia championed integration—across race, class, and faith.

Rouse described Columbia as “a garden for growing people.”



Middle Patuxent River



Rendering of Harriet Tubman Center renovation plan (source: <https://www.murphydittenhafer.com>)



Historic Simpsonville Mill

COMMUNITY + STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community Input

An initial online survey was conducted in November 2020 about how community members access and value neighborhood connections, local recreation and natural assets provides insight into challenges and assets in the project area. Over 100 responses from community members have informed the concept plan development. Highlights from the survey include:

- Heavy pedestrian activity in the project area (almost 90% of participants walk, run or hike daily or weekly)
- Strong interest in access to nature and recreation areas (99% of respondents rate access “very important” or “important”)
- Strong community support for prioritizing water quality and for implementing visible stormwater management best practices in public areas
- Significant interest in community learning opportunities that focus on local history and ecology
- Input on specific locations where participants identified pedestrian and bike safety issues, as well as suggestions for improved connectivity

Results of the survey informed development of a concept plan over six months, an iterative process which included numerous stakeholder group meetings to refine the plan. The draft concept plan has been shared with the community for input through a range of virtual options to address Covid-19 safety concerns.

A recorded presentation, digital plans, and a survey was available online beginning in September 2021 and followed by a virtual open house to present and discuss the Freetown Walkable Watershed Plan with the community. The survey captures input about specific strategies and opportunities identified in the plan. Response to the plan, particularly recommendations for new pedestrian connections and stormwater management practices, has been positive. Key findings include:

- Equal, enthusiastic support for the seven proposed walk/bike connections that integrate recreation, education and stormwater management best practices
- Over 90% of respondents support increased tree canopy and vegetation, enhanced habitat areas, and nature-based stormwater management practices
- Over 90% of respondents strongly support educational features such as interpretive signs and observation areas to raise awareness of local history and watershed health
- Strong support for the one-mile walking trail loop around AHS that connects existing pathways, sidewalks and community centers
- Concern about protecting wildlife and ecology in undeveloped areas

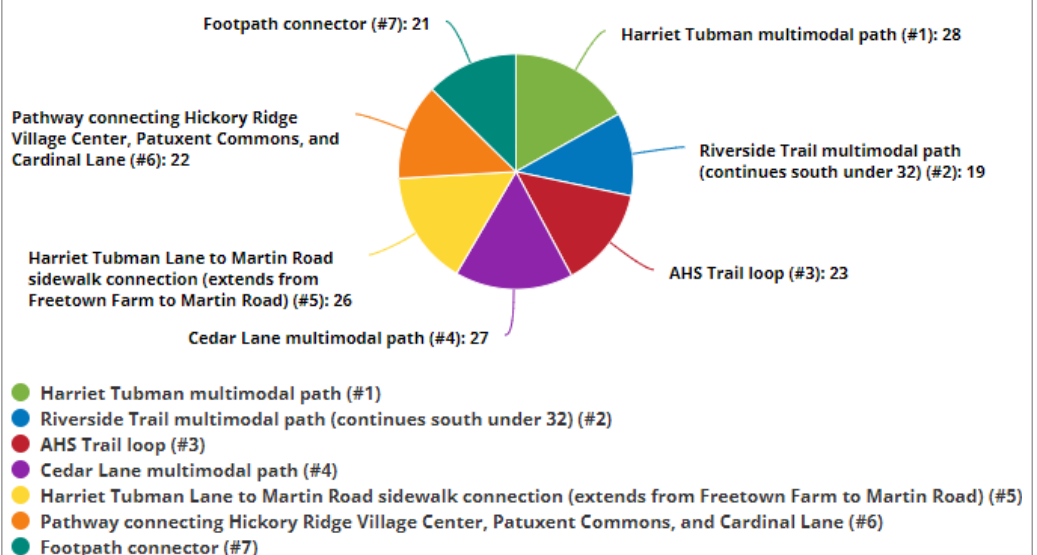
“There is a rich history of African American families who owned or currently own land along Harriet Tubman Lane, and they have been a part of Howard County's history for decades. It is imperative that we include this history as it is an obvious connection to celebrating the life and mission of Harriet Tubman, and would elevate awareness of the modern-day impact of her sacrifice.”

Community input from initial survey



Community input from initial survey about walk/bike connectivity in the project area

Q1. Which proposed trails or sidewalk connections would you prioritize as most important for the community?



COMMUNITY + STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholder Input

Stakeholders from county and community organizations also have shared input about initiatives planned and underway across the county and within their organizations that align with the approach or are relevant to the stormwater and connectivity goals and challenges in the project area.

Several existing and proposed projects, such as those documented in *WalkHoward* and *BikeHoward* plans align with the needs and concerns identified by the community and early studies of the project area.

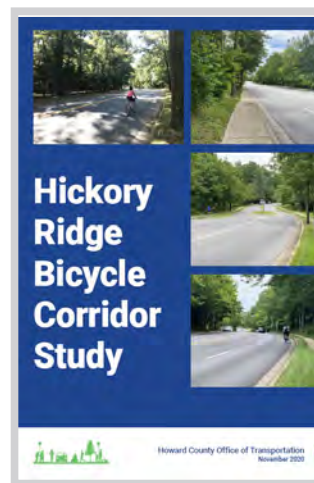
Additionally, leaders of local development and redevelopment projects such as new senior housing at Brightview Columbia, the Harriet Tubman Center, and the Hickory Ridge Village Center have identified interests that support the need to address challenges connectivity and watershed health.

“Since moving to Caravan Court a couple years ago, it has been hard walking anywhere due to no walking path on Harriet Tubman Lane. The (existing) river walk is so close but we cannot access easily with small children. I want to expose my kids to nature and teach them to care for our environment, which is hard to do. Please build these trails.”

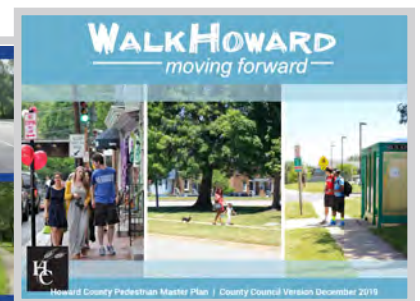
Comment from resident about draft concept plan



Stakeholder discussion about existing stormwater retention ponds and flooding at AHS



Relevant projects identifying local pedestrian and bicycle priorities



Local and Regional Participation

Many community leaders and organizations including those listed below have shared input about the community's needs, priorities, resources, and relevant projects to guide the Walkable Watershed Concept Plan development. Continued support is needed to build partnerships that can support implementation of the plan to enhance quality of life and watershed health in the community.

- Atholton High School Administrators and PTA
- Howard County Autism Society
- Bike Hoco
- Bray Hill LLC
- Brightview Columbia Senior Center
- Columbia Association
- Grassroots Crisis Intervention Center
- Harriet Tubman Center
- Hickory Ridge Community Association
- Hickory Ridge Watershed Advisory Committee
- Horizon Foundation
- Howard Community College

- Howard County (Office of Community Sustainability, Office of Transportation, Planning and Zoning, Public School System, Public Works, Recreation and Parks)
- Howard County Community Foundation
- Howard EcoWorks
- Kimco Corporation
- Locust United Methodist Church
- Middle Patuxent Environmental Area Foundation
- Robinson Nature Center
- Rotary of Columbia Patuxent
- Soil Conservation District
- Spatial Systems Associates

PROJECT AREA CHALLENGES

Pedestrian/Bike Safety and Flooding

The diagram at the bottom of the page illustrates the location of many issues around connectivity, pedestrian safety, and water flow identified in the survey:

- Lack of off-road connections to recreation destinations (Little Patuxent pathway, Robinson Nature Center, AHS)
- Pedestrian safety on key roads, (Cedar Lane, Harriet Tubman Lane, and Martin Road)
- Walk/bike connection under Patuxent Freeway/32 to connect neighborhoods
- Limited access to Middle Patuxent recreation amenities, such as the riverside trail connection to natural areas east of Cedar Lane
- Disconnected neighborhoods
- Habitat loss and stormwater quality due to development
- Flooding along Harriet Tubman Lane

“This (curve along Martin Road) is a very dangerous part of the road. There is a very sharp turn and the sidewalk must not be adequate because people are always walking or running on both sides of the road.”

“The lack of sidewalks on Harriet Tubman disconnects [neighborhoods] and makes it unsafe for people to walk/bike to school, the park, or Hickory Ridge Village Center.”

Community input from initial survey



Flooding and lack of sidewalks along the south side of AHS



This diagram illustrates key gaps in pedestrian/bike connections, flooding, and locations of safety concerns

PROJECT AREA CHALLENGES

Site Conditions

The diagram below identifies some of the areas where site conditions present the most significant challenges for both watershed health and safe pedestrian-bike connections.

Creating sidewalks, bike lanes and other safe connections in some areas (such as Harriet Tubman Lane and Cedar Lane) is difficult because of natural features such as streams, rivers and steep grades. The lack of easements or right-of-ways along contiguous parcels (such as those along the east side of Cedar Lane) also presents a challenge for improving off-road connections in the project area.

“Construction of Patuxent Commons will change the water flow for the surrounding housing and increase impervious surfaces.”
Community input from initial survey

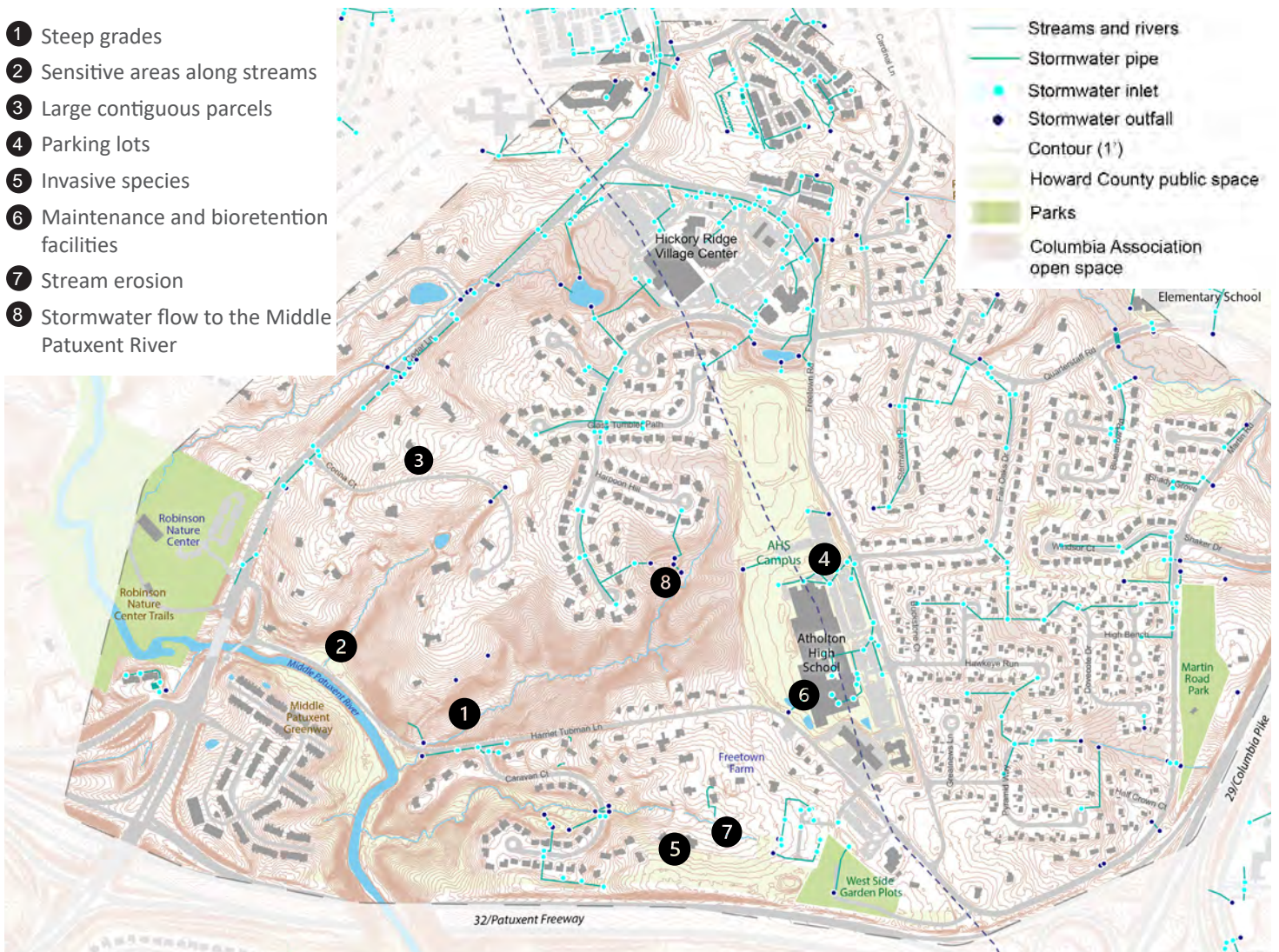


Pedestrians walk along the side of Harriet Tubman adjacent to the Middle Patuxent River.



An existing trail along the Middle Patuxent River is difficult to find and access without a sidewalk connection.

- 1 Steep grades
- 2 Sensitive areas along streams
- 3 Large contiguous parcels
- 4 Parking lots
- 5 Invasive species
- 6 Maintenance and bioretention facilities
- 7 Stream erosion
- 8 Stormwater flow to the Middle Patuxent River



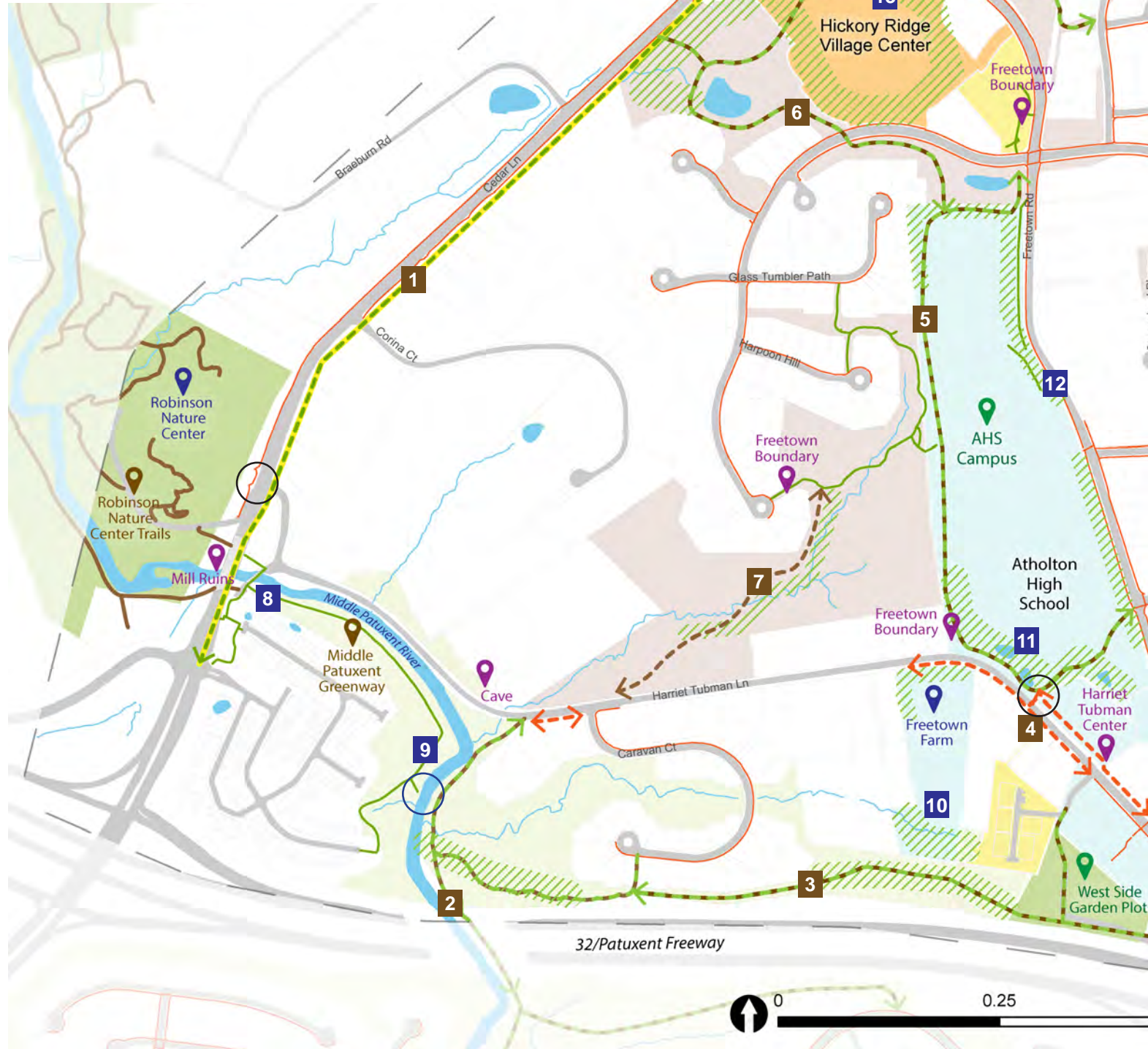
This diagram illustrates site conditions that create challenges for addressing gaps in pedestrian/bike connections and safety concerns.

WALKABLE WATERSHED CONCEPT PLAN

The Walkable Watershed Concept Plan outlines recommendations based on project goals, site analysis, challenges and community input. The concept plan is organized around:

- » Trails and connections
- » Ecology and nature Education
- » Recreation areas
- » Historic features
- » Watershed/habitat enhancement areas

Each of these recommendations is described in more detail on the following pages.





Trails and Connections

- 📍 Robinson Nature Center trails
- 📍 Middle Patuxent pathway
- 📍 Little Patuxent pathway

Proposed connections between existing paths, trails and destinations:

- 1 Cedar Lane multimodal path
- 2 Riverside path (continues south)
- 3 Harriet Tubman multimodal path
- 4 Harriet Tubman Lane sidewalk extension
- 5 AHS loop path
- 6 Village Center-Patuxent Commons-Cardinal Lane path
- 7 Trail connector

Ecology and Nature Education

- 📍 Robinson Nature Center
- 📍 Freetown Farm

Proposed features to promote watershed health and stewardship:

- 8 Middle Patuxent River overlook
- 9 Middle Patuxent River bridge
- 10 Water monitoring station
- 11 Bioretention pond overlook
- 12 Rain garden
- 13 Stormwater demonstration sites
- 14 Preserved birdwatching habitat

Recreation Areas

- 📍 Middle Patuxent Environmental Area
- 📍 West Side Garden Plots
- 📍 Martin Road Park
- 📍 AHS campus

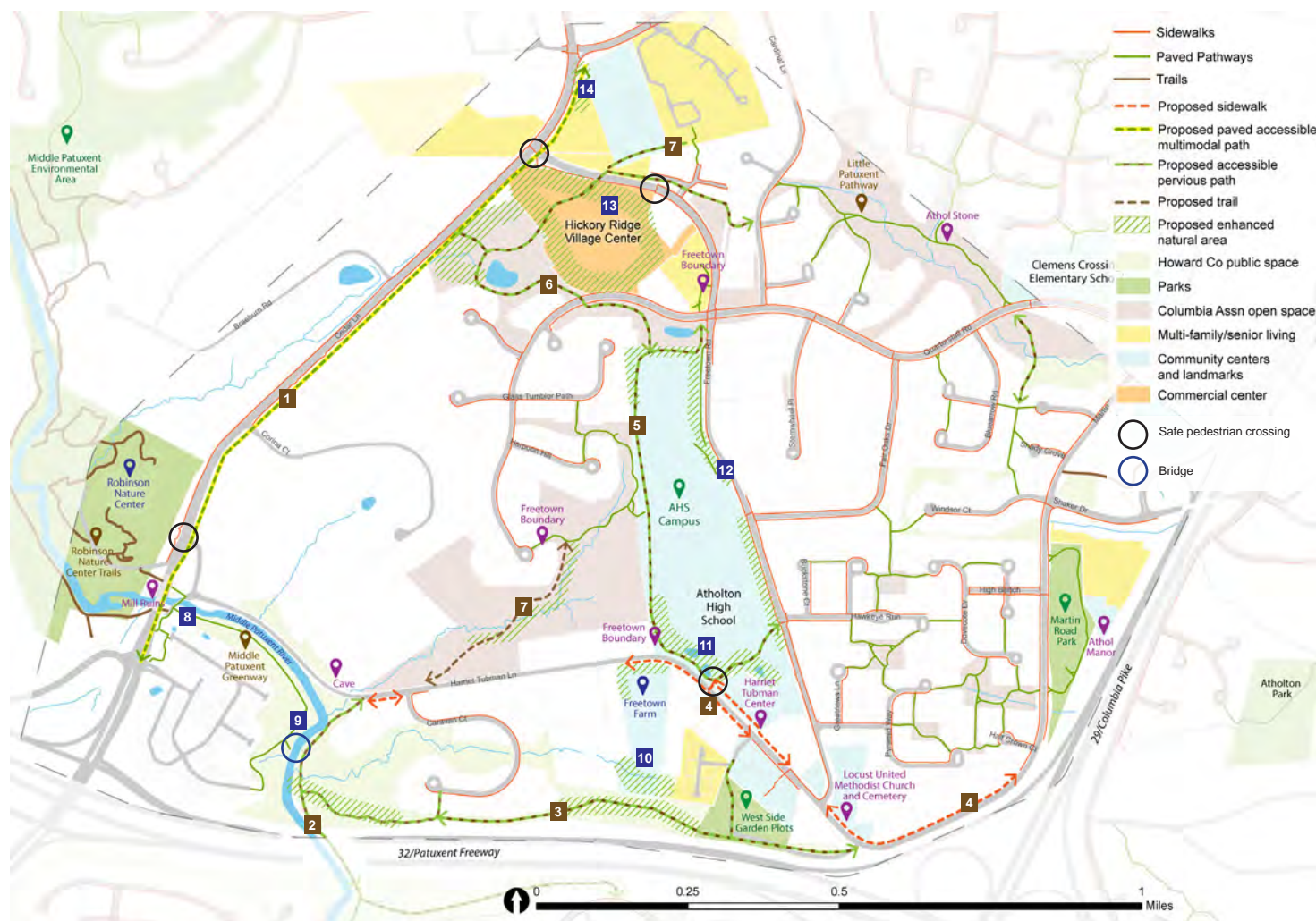
Historic Features

- 📍 Mill Ruins
- 📍 Cave
- 📍 Locust Cemetery
- 📍 Athol Manor
- 📍 Athol Stone
- 📍 Harriet Tubman Cultural Center
- 📍 Freetown boundary markers

Watershed + Habitat Enhancement

- 📍 The plan proposes improvement areas along new trails to mitigate disruption and improve water quality and biodiversity.

WALKABLE WATERSHED CONCEPT PLAN



Freetown Walkable Watershed concept plan

Walkable Watershed Concept Plan

The Freetown Walkable Watershed Concept Plan proposes an innovative approach to enhance community and watershed health that can:

- Showcase sustainable stormwater management approaches to enhance watershed health
- Foster stewardship of local ecological systems through demonstration landscapes and increased access to local learning centers, such as the Robinson Nature Center, the Harriet Tubman Center, and Freetown Farm
- Recognize the history of Freetown and the Underground Railroad landmarks in the project area and identify historic landmarks such as the Freetown boundary and the cemetery of Locust United Methodist Church
- Improve walk-bike connections between destinations
- Provide alternative transportation for bicycle commuters traveling north-south
- Expand recreation along Middle Patuxent River

“Not only would this (riverside path) be a nice, long trail along the river, it would connect two communities and dramatically improve access to a neighborhood otherwise cut off from others.”

Survey participant



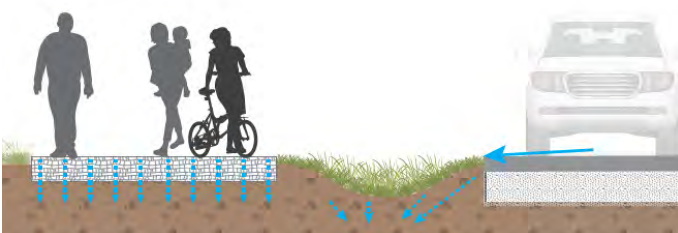
Historic sugar mill along Middle Patuxent River

WALKABLE WATERSHED CONCEPT PLAN

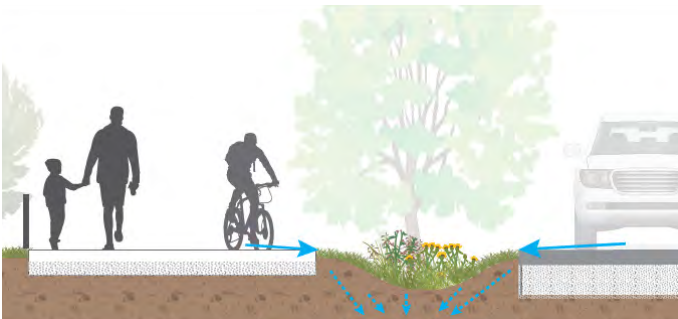
Trails and Connections

- 1 Cedar Lane multimodal paved path.** This path, also proposed by *WalkHoward*, creates a safe route for pedestrians and bicyclists along the busy road.
Recommended: a complete street design that integrates a planted swale to buffer vehicular traffic and manage stormwater from the roadway and paved path.
- 2 Riverside path.** A multimodal path along the river proposes an important link to neighborhoods south of Route 32 and for bicycle commuters to Applied Physics Laboratory (APL). The *BikeHoward* plan also proposes a multimodal path on the west side of the river.
Note: A river crossing and multimodal path on the west side of the river south of Route 32 will be critical to connect commuters and residents on the west side of the river.
- 3 Harriet Tubman multimodal path.** A multimodal path with a sturdy pervious surface (such as crushed stone) proposes a safe alternative to Harriet Tubman Lane for pedestrians and bicyclists between Martin Road and Cedar Lane. The proposed path, which extends across Howard County public property, links to an existing footpath along the east side of the river. A river crossing and improvements to the existing footpath connects neighborhoods and senior housing developments to Robinson Nature Center, the Middle Patuxent River Greenway, Atholton High School, Freetown Farm, and Martin Road Park.
- 4 Harriet Tubman Lane sidewalk extension.** A sidewalk from Freetown Farm to Martin Road connects six community centers near Freetown Road (Freetown Farm, AHS, Harriet Tubman Cultural Center, two congregations, multi-family housing) to three destinations near Martin Road (Martin Road Park, Athol Manor, Brightview Columbia). *The sidewalk also offers safe pedestrian access to the proposed Harriet Tubman multimodal path (#3).*
- 5 Atholton High School (AHS) loop path.** A one-mile path around Atholton High School provides a recreation and wellness amenity, and the extension to the Village Center creates an off-road connection to community destinations along the north-south axis of the project area.
- 6 Village Center-Patuxent Commons-Cardinal Lane path.** A path with a sturdy permeable surface (such as crushed stone) or a paved path like existing neighborhood pathways creates a safe off-road connection between the Village Center, Patuxent Commons, and the Little Patuxent River pathways.
- 7 Trail connector.** A narrow, low impact footpath trail through the Columbia Association land offers a shortcut to the riverside amenities on the west side of the project area for recreation enthusiasts. Portions may be elevated (like a boardwalk) to protect ecologically sensitive or sloped areas.

Examples of trail and connection types



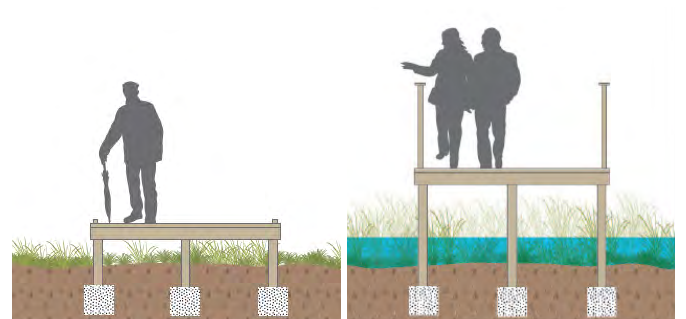
Pervious multimodal path (pervious paving or crushed stone for accessibility) with a bioswale capturing runoff from the street. Blue arrows illustrate the water flow.



A complete street/multimodal paved path with a bioswale capturing runoff from the greenway and street. Blue arrows indicate water flow.

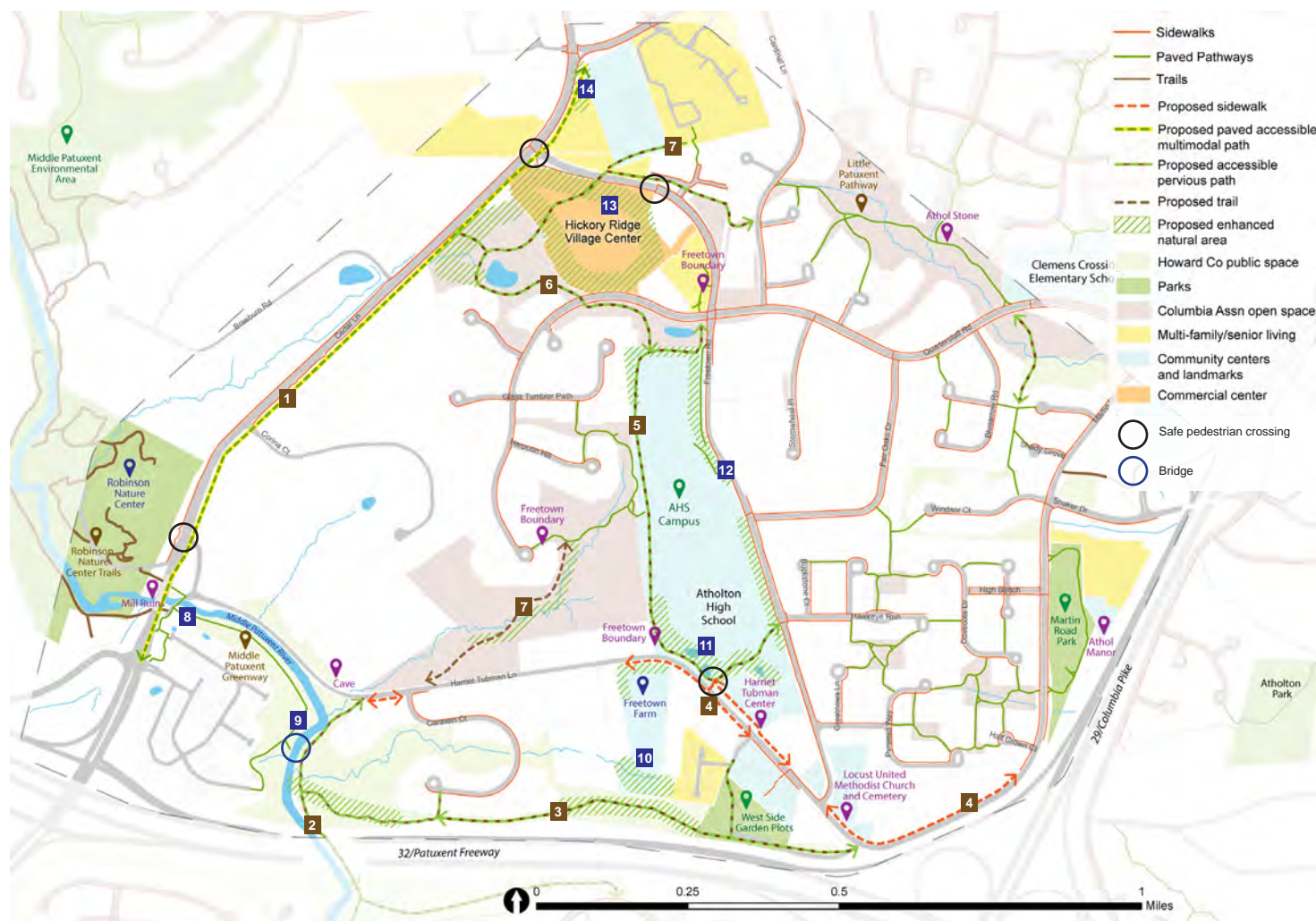


Cleared path with soil, gravel or mulch surface.



Section elevation of an elevated boardwalk to protect wetland and woodland ecology.

WALKABLE WATERSHED CONCEPT PLAN



Freetown Walkable Watershed Concept Plan

Ecology and Nature Education Opportunities

- 8 Middle Patuxent River overlook.** Observation point along existing bridge with interpretive signage.
- 9 Middle Patuxent River bridge.** Multimodal bridge to connect proposed and existing trails.
- 10 Water monitoring station.** Located behind Freetown Farm, farm staff, students, and community members use the station to monitor water quality in the Middle Patuxent tributary.
- 11 Bioretention pond overlook.** Outdoor learning area proposed for community members and AHS students to observe and learn about bioretention and infiltration.
- 12 Rain garden.** Planted infiltration area and sign that illustrates stormwater flow from the high school into the underground pipe network into the Little Patuxent River.
- 13 Stormwater demonstration sites.** Visible best management practices planned for the redeveloped Hickory Ridge Village Center provide examples that can be used by commercial and residential property owners to manage stormwater.
- 14 Preserved birdwatching habitat.** The plan proposes preserving existing woodland adjacent to the Patuxent Commons development for birdwatching and habitat.



Example of bridge and overlook



Wetlands, gardens, forest restoration area, and a tributary offer many learning opportunities at Freetown Farm and along public land south of Harriet Tubman Lane

WALKABLE WATERSHED CONCEPT PLAN

Historic Recognition

Markers and informational signs for each historic feature identified in the project area shed light on the area's rich history and highlight the connection between natural features, landforms, land use, and development. These features are identified with a pin. 📍

Freetown boundary markers placed along areas where the original Freetown boundary intersects with proposed paths provide a sense of scale for the historic area located within the community.

Watershed and Habitat Enhancement Areas

The plan proposes improvement areas along new trails to mitigate disruption and improve water quality and biodiversity.

Native plants, increased tree canopy, and sustainable maintenance practices are proposed for the areas that can be improved to support watershed health.

In existing woodland areas, habitat preservation and low impact paths, such as narrow trails with minimal clearing, can protect the unique environment.

Pervious material is proposed for most paths to reduce stormwater runoff. An infiltration swale to capture stormwater from the road and path is recommended along the proposed Cedar Lane multimodal path, which is likely to be paved to withstand heavy pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

These areas are identified with a green hatch. ▨

“There is excellent birding in the old growth woods (at the Patuxent Commons site), including pileated woodpeckers and bald eagles.”

Community input from initial survey



Example of a rain garden for stormwater management demonstration



Examples of interpretive markers and signage



Children and families participate in programs to support local ecology

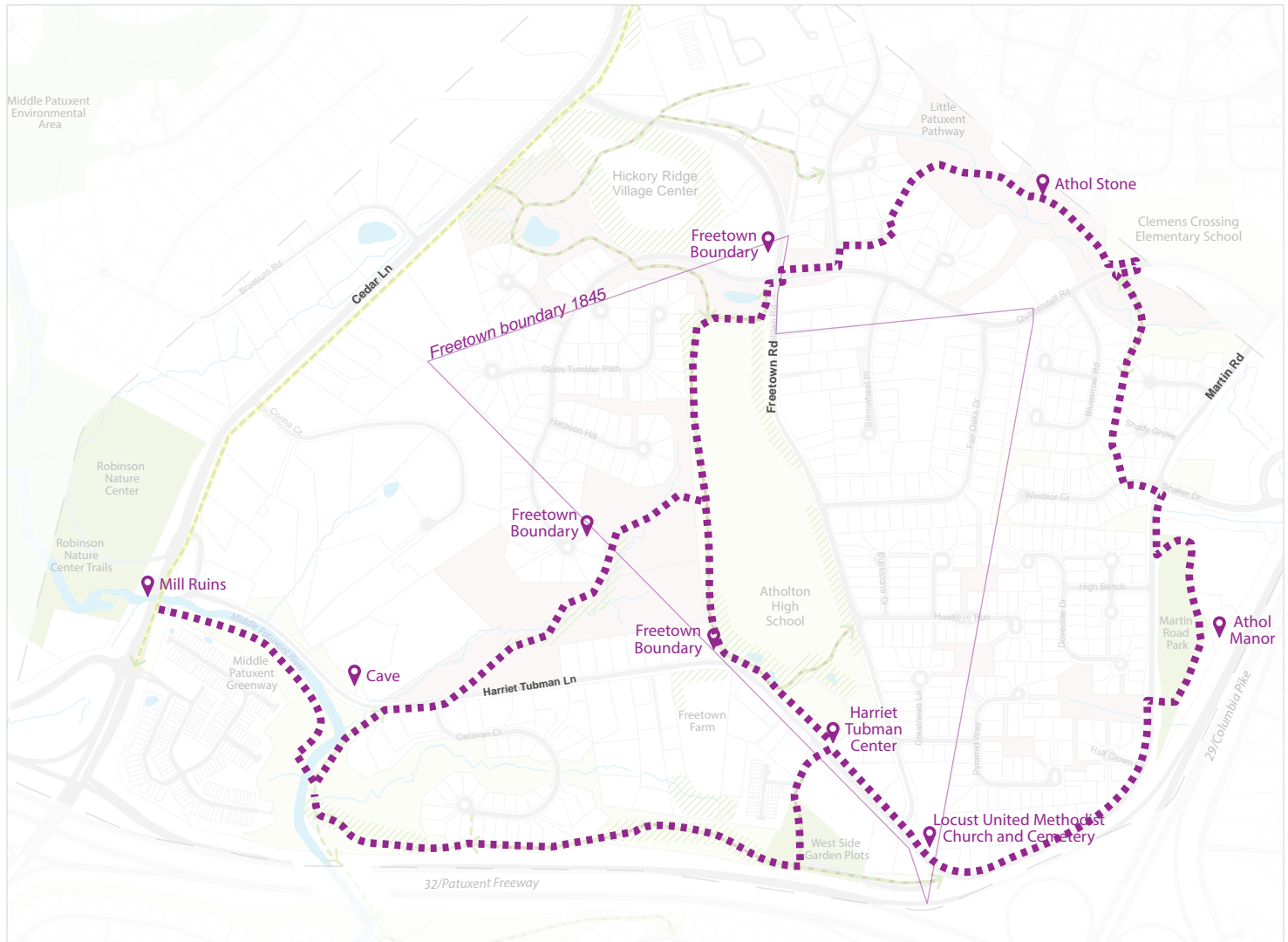


Example of trail extension over woodland ravine to minimize erosion

LEARNING LOOPS

Learning Loops are walking routes using existing and proposed paths that connect recreation, education and stewardship opportunities. The paths, which are narrated with interpretive signage, link features to create routes focused on specific themes such as local history, ecology and nature. Community members and visitors can use the themed loops to learn more about this rich community while meeting neighbors and improving health and wellness.

Local History Loop

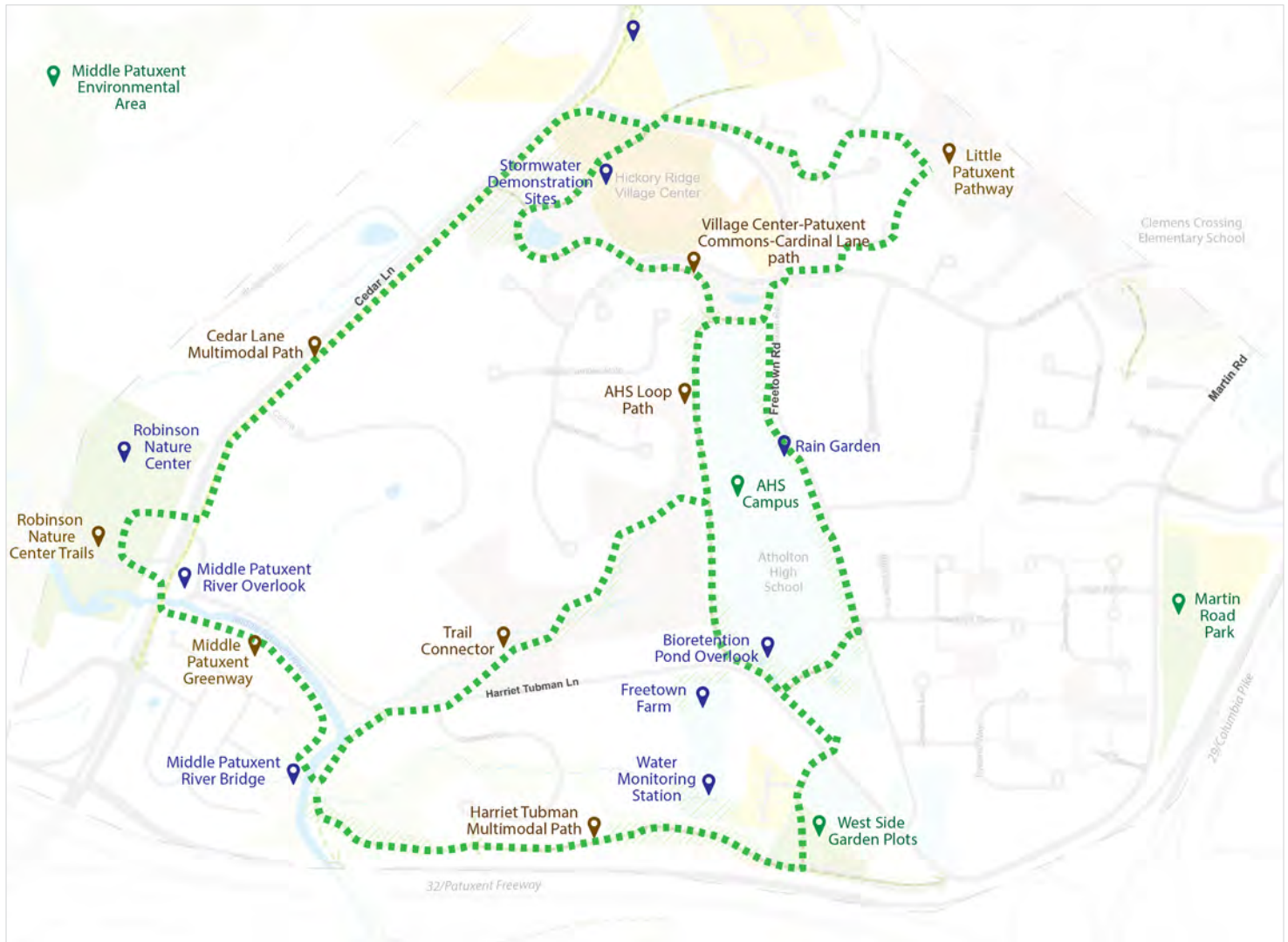


The local history loop can serve as a self-guided tour or as part of programming with local organizations and institutions.



Sites along historic loop include the Middle Patuxent River, the Harriet Tubman Center (source: <https://www.murphydittenhafer.com>) and Locust Cemetery.

Ecology and Nature Learning Loop



The ecology and nature learning loop connects demonstration and observation areas, natural assets and water systems with local learning centers.



Ecology and nature loop includes educational opportunities at Robinson Nature Center and Freetown Farm and many paths and spaces for recreation.

AHS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CONCEPT PLAN

Green Infrastructure Opportunities



Above: The concept plan for the AHS campus proposes increasing tree canopy and capturing runoff from large parking lots to reduce stormwater that is currently directed into the stormwater pipe network.

Right: Examples of features proposed by the AHS green infrastructure concept plan.

CEI and AHS are in a unique position to support the health of the Middle Patuxent watershed by treating stormwater runoff in a socio-ecological manner that models best practices for local property owners. The approach can also provide extensive learning and service opportunities for students.

The concept shown on the left focuses on the AHS campus. Developed as a part of both CBT and NFWF grant-funded projects, this concept is an integral part of the Walkable Watershed Plan. The proposed design mitigates runoff from the high school and integrates walking paths, gathering spaces and learning features to engage people and the working landscape.

Goals

- Improve water quality and reduce flooding
- Provide teaching landscapes and educational opportunities
- Create new outdoor spaces and connections for students and community members who use the AHS campus
- Enhance biodiversity
- Support human health and wellness through interaction with nature and enhanced recreation

Key features

- Trees and shrubs to improve infiltration and provide shade
- Differentiated mow zones
- Enhanced bioretention features (basins, swales, rain gardens)
- Parking lot runoff capture (retrofit)
- One-mile walking path loop
- Outdoor learning stations (interpretive signs along path, overlook)



AHS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CONCEPT PLAN



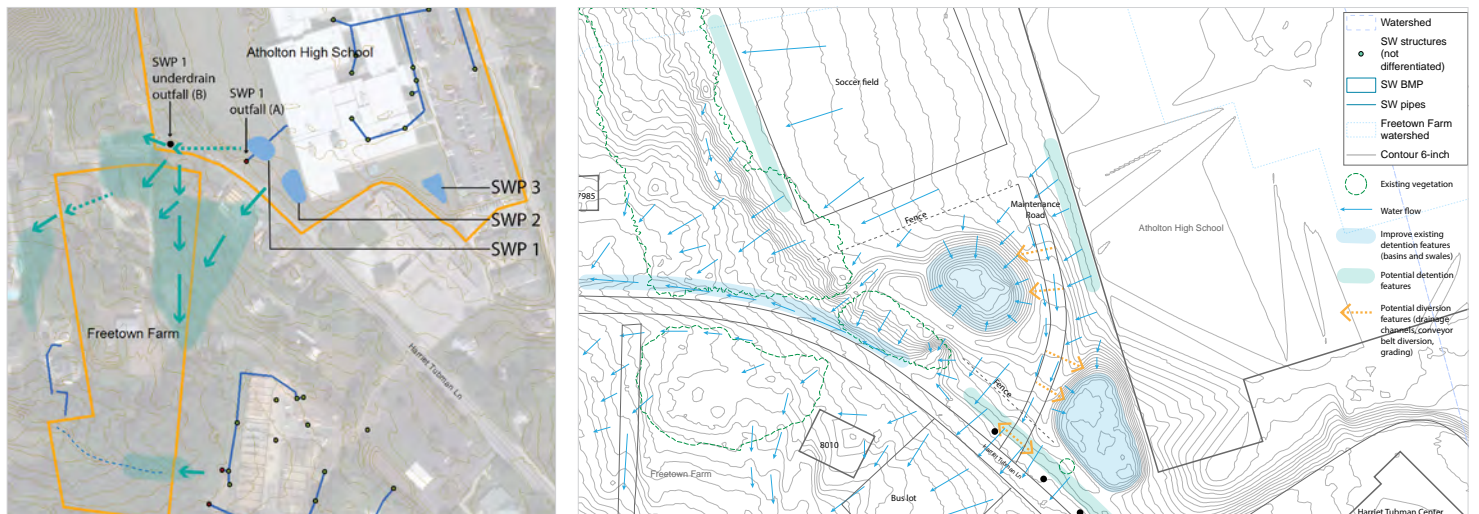
Closer view of the stormwater features proposed for the southwest area of the high school

The concept plan for the southwest corner of Atholton High School includes redesigning the existing retention basins to filter and hold stormwater; increasing ground cover, shrub and tree plantings; installing signage and observation areas; and integrating a pathway that connects to sidewalks and trails around the school.

Two Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) grants have supported development of the AHS concept plan (completed in 2021), and engineering plans, which are underway. CEI plans to apply for implementation funding in 2022.



Existing AHS stormwater retention basins adjacent to Harriet Tubman Lane. Note the area available for sidewalk and path connections.



Flooding around Freetown Farm. This map illustrates the existing water flow from AHS toward Freetown Farm and neighboring properties.

Proposed water flow for southwest corner of AHS campus. Reducing the flow from the high school can prevent flooding and erosion of the stream along the south end of the farm.

NEXT STEPS

The Freetown Walkable Watershed Concept Plan proposes a set of features that integrate green infrastructure and learning landscapes to improve watershed health and quality of life. The concept plan creates opportunities for people to protect the watershed, reduce flooding, enjoy the rich local history and environment, and promote walking and biking.

Community members who live and work in the project area shared input on the plan. Over 85% of participants “very strongly” or “strongly” supported the priorities around environmental stewardship, improving watershed health, increasing walk-bike connections, and recognizing local history. Participants evenly prioritized the seven opportunities listed below.

Implementation Planning

The following table outlines stakeholders and benefits for key concept plan projects that can be used for mobilizing, funding, and phasing. Each project includes best management practices for stormwater management, ecological restoration and/or preservation, community connectivity, and outdoor learning.

The next step for each project is to identify and convene stakeholders and community members who are willing to advance the planning process into design development and implementation funding.

Opportunity	Stakeholders	Watershed Health	Bike/walk Benefits	Education and Engagement
Harriet Tubman Path Pervious multimodal path, including habitat and riparian enhancement	Howard County Parks and Recreation CEI Beth-Shalom St. Joseph’s Villa			
Cedar Lane Multimodal Path Paved path for bicyclists and pedestrians, including vegetated swales for infiltration and safety buffer	Howard County Transportation Hickory Ridge Community Association			
Harriet Tubman to Martin Road sidewalk extension Sidewalk to address gap between Freetown Farm, AHS, Harriet Tubman Center and Martin Road Park, including infiltration swales adjacent to road	Howard County Transportation CEI Beth-Shalom Harriet Tubman Center AHS/Howard County Schools			
AHS Trail Path One-mile loop around school, connecting existing paths and sidewalks, including habitat enhancement, tree plantings, stormwater demonstration areas and interpretive signage about local history and watershed health	AHS/Howard County Schools Hickory Ridge Community Association			
Village Center/Patuxent Commons/Cardinal Lane Path Pervious path connects existing CA paths and multi-family developments, includes interpretive signage around CA and Hickory Ridge Village Center stormwater demonstration sites and historic markers	Columbia Association Kimco Patuxent Commons Hickory Ridge Community Association			
Footpath Connector Narrow cleared path through CA property for a woodland hike and shortcut between neighborhoods and Middle Patuxent River area recreation opportunities	Columbia Association Hickory Ridge Community Association			
Riverside Trail South Multimodal path extension along Middle Patuxent that connects to neighborhoods south of Patuxent Freeway/32	Howard County			

Maintains/adds low additional value
 Adds some value
 Adds significant value

Contact info

For more information about the Freetown Walkable Watershed project, contact:

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