



# 2024 YEAR END REPORT

A YEAR OF CONNECTION, COLLABORATION, AND GROWTH.



PURPLE LINE  
CORRIDOR  
COALITION

# FROM OUR DIRECTOR



2024 was a year of visible progress along the Purple Line. The first set of Purple Line tracks were laid, turning dusty and inconvenient construction sites into exciting and tangible glimpses of the new mobility we'll have in our region in less than three years.

Our mindsets are shifting too, as we continue the race to achieve equitable development along the corridor. Since 2014, the Purple Line Corridor Coalition (PLCC) has been mobilizing partners to support affordable housing, small business preservation and growth, workforce opportunity, and vibrant and sustainable communities along the planned transit line. Each year, our work has become both broader and deeper, mobilizing more people and partners to address the displacement risks that are ever more real as the Purple Line construction project approaches completion.

PLCC's strength lies in the hard work of building trust across the spectrum of power – from decision-makers to community residents. In 2024, PLCC advanced equitable policy, attracted new funding, added technical capacity to community-led work, and achieved concrete progress toward equitable development goals co-created with partners. We also made progress in pursuing shifts that put greater power in the hands of community members most impacted by displacement pressures.

We are proud of our progress this year, and we believe it's important to take stock and find moments to celebrate these wins. But the race continues. We hope you will read on and join us in the work ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Somashekhar".

**SHEILA SOMASHEKHAR**

PLCC DIRECTOR



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# ADVANCING EQUITABLE HOUSING

## THROUGH COLLABORATION AND BOLD ACTION

For over five years, PLCC's Housing Accelerator Action Team (HAAT) has been mobilizing around a common goal: no net loss of the 17,000 homes affordable to Purple Line households earning below \$72,000 annually. Purple Line renters and homeowners in this income bracket are already experiencing rapidly rising costs and displacement pressures. Our pursuit of equitable housing outcomes along the Purple Line, guided by our Housing Action Plan, involves broad and deep collaborations that address policy change, development, fundraising, and the participation of impacted communities. 2024 marked a year of remarkable progress, as well as renewed urgency for the work ahead.

The work of the HAAT is guided by the 2023-2027 Housing Action Plan, which outlines seven actions to achieve equitable housing outcomes along the Purple Line. These actions include:

- Accelerate the creation and preservation of affordable homes along the Purple Line.
- Grow affordable housing funding resources for the Purple Line corridor.
- Deepen commitment to tenant protections.
- Increase community power and voice.
- Expand opportunities for more Purple Line residents, particularly people of color, to become homeowners.
- Increase resources for existing Purple Line residents to stay homeowners.
- Increase housing affordability and committed affordable homes through land use and zoning changes.

223  
TECHNICAL  
ASSISTANCE  
SESSIONS

A PIPELINE OF  
1,274  
AFFORDABLE  
HOMES  
SUPPORTED

15  
POLICIES  
INFLUENCED

# POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Policy and advocacy are a cornerstone of PLCC's activation to achieve our housing goals. The year began with PLCC and its partners supporting a **pro-Purple Line housing agenda** during Maryland's Legislative Session. Key efforts included:

- **Protecting state funding** for housing programs
- **Pursuing property tax relief** to help long-time homeowners remain in their communities despite rising property values
- Advocating for **good-cause protections** to prevent unjust evictions.

One advocacy highlight was the **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program** and its role in financing affordable housing. In July, the HAAT hosted a discussion on Maryland's **Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP)**, which governs LIHTC allocation. This program has facilitated the development of thousands of affordable homes across the corridor and is pivotal in shaping future affordable housing development.

At the event, 58 advocates shared knowledge on how the plan works and what it means to Purple Line communities. When the state then released its draft plan a few weeks later, 28 people came together to review the draft and recommend changes to meet the needs of the Purple Line corridor. PLCC then submitted a letter to the state asking for these changes.

This effort served as a **catalyst for advancing equitable development**, developing a shared understanding of an important policy tool, aligning strategic priorities among stakeholders, and shaping PLCC's goals for expanding access to affordable housing financing through the QAP moving forward.



# DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

## PURSUING NO NET LOSS WITH STRATEGIC SUPPORT



Achieving PLCC's **no net loss goal** requires a multi-pronged strategy. One crucial tool in our approach is **Development Technical Assistance (TA)**. Since 2020, PLCC has been offering development TA that has been instrumental in influencing development pressures and ensuring affordable housing projects succeed.

With two decades of experience as a developer, Vonnette Harris, PLCC's Housing Development Consultant, leads hands-on guidance to nonprofits, faith-based institutions, market-rate developers, and other stakeholders. Her expertise helps navigate complex preservation and production projects, moving them toward tangible results.

“It was exciting to help affordable housing projects make progress this year, despite barriers like high interest rates. Achieving PLCC's goals requires finding strategic ways to move forward, no matter what is happening around us.”  
-Vonnette Harris





# HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT THE LEELAND

## EMPOWERING TENANTS THROUGH COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

In 2022, tenants at **The Leeland**, a 15-unit building in Takoma Park, faced potential displacement when the property was put up for sale. This diverse group of artists, teachers, and service workers turned to the City of Takoma Park for help, seeking to exercise their rights under the **Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA)**.

With limited time to secure funding, PLCC stepped in to assist the tenants and their nonprofit partner, Mi Casa, Inc. PLCC:

- Supported the tenant union in preparing grant applications.
- Identified key funding opportunities.
- Helped overcome barriers to public financing, reframing the purchase as a model for community land ownership.

In 2023, the tenants successfully purchased the building.

In 2024, PLCC continued helping the Leeland to raise funds for renovations and energy upgrades. PLCC has also been supporting a growing movement of tenants seeking to purchase their buildings along the Purple Line.

Beyond this project, PLCC:

- Helped the City establish a \$500,000 fund to support future tenant acquisitions.
- Is assisting tenants of two other rental complexes, as they navigate the potential to purchase their buildings.
- Is supporting new legislative efforts to make tenant purchases easier for Maryland residents.





# HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SPOTLIGHT

## EAST PINES TERRACE

### SUSTAINING AFFORDABILITY NEAR BEACON HEIGHTS

Delwin Realty, a family-owned business, has been operating locally for over 60 years. Gary Evans, general manager and son of founders Mr. and Mrs. Dorsey Evans, is the principal investor in **East Pines Terrace**, a multifamily apartment complex near the Beacon Heights Purple Line station. He has a particular passion for investments that ensure housing stability for Purple Line corridor residents. East Pines Terrace currently offers affordable rents to its residents. But the property lacks formal affordability protections, and rising maintenance costs threaten its sustainability. Recognizing an opportunity with the Purple Line, Gary envisioned a 200-unit redevelopment that would preserve affordability and prevent tenant displacement.

In 2021, Delwin Realty partnered with PLCC's Housing Development Consultant for support in creating a tenant relocation plan and addressing financing gaps. They uncovered a key challenge: the original plan would not be competitive for federal affordable housing tax credits and faced other barriers to economic feasibility.

Determined to improve the property and maintain affordability, PLCC worked with Gary in devising a rehabilitation plan that would improve the energy efficiency of the apartment community and long-term economic viability of the property. In 2024, we jointly finalized a **scaled-back redevelopment strategy**, ensuring:

- **50% of units income-restricted** for families earning 50%-80% AMI.
- Unrestricted affordable units for residents challenged with income documentation, including immigrants.
- Opportunities for higher-income renters to generate revenue.

This balanced approach ensures **zero displacement** while preserving affordability. PLCC continues to support Delwin Realty to pursue financing to make this vision a reality.





# EQUITABLE HOUSING TRAINING SERIES

## CULTIVATING COMMUNITY BASED CAPACITY

Led by Enterprise Community Partners, PLCC, and Reemberto Consulting, the Purple Line Equitable Housing Training Series equipped Purple Line residents and community leaders with the knowledge and skills to directly participate in housing-related decisions in their communities. Over five (5) in-depth sessions, six (6) community-based organizations built relationships, gained advocacy skills, and explored how to increase housing affordability in and around Purple Line communities. Each organization generated a brief Advocacy in Action strategy to guide future action on a housing-related issue that matters to them. They received tools, such as a messaging worksheet, state and local leaders guide, and action alert and testimony templates, to support their advocacy efforts after the training series.

In the words of one participant, “There’s power in the people, in the numbers...it’s always been a question of where are the voices, who is out there speaking for us? And understand now, hey, you have to be that voice.”

Hear more from the participating organizations [in this short video](#).

### Participating organizations:

- Centro de Apoyo Familiar
- Friendship Arms Tenant Association
- Greater Riverdale Thrives
- MHP, Making Home Possible
- Maryland Legal Aid (Prince George’s County office)
- Open Doors Outreach Center



# ACHIEVING OUR HOUSING GOALS

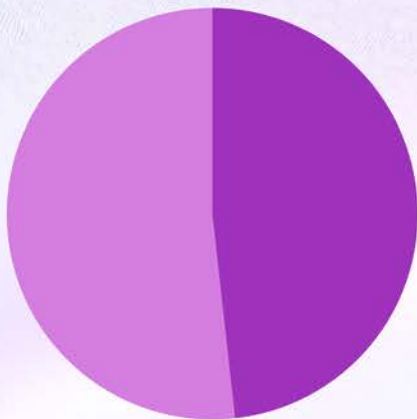
## PROGRESS TOWARD NO NET LOSS

PLCC is committed to the ambitious goal of preserving or producing 17,000 affordable homes within a mile of the Purple Line—ensuring formal protections to keep rents affordable despite development pressures.

In early 2024, with support from NCSG and Enterprise Community Partners, PLCC assessed our progress:

- Roughly 8,800 homes have been committed as affordable along the Purple Line across Montgomery and Prince George’s counties.
- Roughly 1,300 affordable homes are in the pipeline, with a need for new capital in order for them to become committed affordable homes.

To address the remaining need, Enterprise Community Partners conducted a capital analysis, revealing that \$740 million is required from public, private, and philanthropic sources to meet this goal.



## PROGRESS TOWARD 17K HOUSING GOAL

8,200 AFFORDABLE HOMES AT RISK

8,800 AFFORDABLE HOMES EXISTING

## THE PATH FORWARD

Securing this funding is a shared priority for PLCC and its partners as we look to the next few critical years. Through policy advocacy, technical assistance, and convening, PLCC will continue to drive progress and ensure equitable development along the Purple Line.

Learn More:

- [Investing in Communities Along the Purple Line: 2024 Capital Needs Analysis | Enterprise Community Partners](#)
- [Purple Line must not jeopardize affordable housing. | Guest Commentary in the Baltimore Sun](#)

“\$740 million of public, private, and philanthropic investment is needed along the Purple Line corridor to ensure it is an affordable and accessible place to live, especially for households earning less than \$72,000  
-2024 Purple Line Capital Needs Analysis, Enterprise Community Partners

# PARTNER SPOTLIGHTS

# HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

# METRO MARYLAND

EQUITABLE HOMEOWNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY VOICE

*Sarah Reddinger, Vice President of Housing & Community Strategies*



The mission of Habitat for Humanity Metro Maryland (HHFMM) is to build strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable housing.

HHFMM co-led a number of PLCC convening and advocacy activities this year, including planning for our spring community-wide event.

HHFMM appreciates contributing to PLCC as a platform for community voice and power building. At PLCC's events this year, we made a very effective push for community members to tell their own stories, including the journey to homeownership, and to participate in advocacy. The engagement with the community helped keep us accountable and convey the right messages to decision-makers.

# NATIONAL CENTER FOR

# SMART GROWTH

SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH RESEARCH

*Dr. Kathryn Howell, Director & Dr. Nick Finio, Associate Director*

The National Center for Smart Growth (NCSG) is the administrative home of PLCC at the University of Maryland. NCSG leads research and engagement that prioritizes community agency and equitable policy change for those traditionally left out of Smart Growth conversations, like Black, Brown, and immigrant communities and those living with low- and moderate- incomes.

Dr. Kate Howell, NCSG's Director, and Dr. Nick Finio, NCSG's Associate Director, co-taught a community planning studio class this spring focused on the Riverdale area. The studio generated data on the area's unique housing conditions, including the high concentration of single-room rentals in single family homes, consolidated corporate ownership of multifamily buildings, and rapidly rising rents and home costs. Additionally, they explored development concepts for Riverdale Plaza, a sprawling strip mall adjacent to the Riverdale Park-Kenilworth Purple Line station. Working with an engaged set of community partners, the studio team developed a roadmap for locally-driven action to achieve equitable housing outcomes. NCSG will continue supporting PLCC's work with research and student capacity in 2025. We will do so in a way that embodies our values as a center: *Power-conscious; Community-centered Processes and Outcomes; Ethical Research; Collaborations Built on Reciprocity and Respect; Environmentally Just Communities; A Learning Posture.*

# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

# DEPT OF HOUSING &

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## TRANSIT CORRIDORS AND POLICY CHANGE

*Aspasia Xypolia, Director*



The Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) supports equitable economic growth in the County by creating and preserving quality homes that both current and future County residents of all incomes can afford. In 2024, we supported several major development projects that will preserve affordability in the Purple Line corridor. Developments at New Carrollton, Hamlet Woods in Bladensburg, and the Atworth in College Park will bring a total of 1,140 affordable homes to an area of the County undergoing rapid change.

Our support is not limited to renters. The Homeownership Preservation Program (HOPP) and the Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Program (HRAP) completed rehab activities to a total of 20 income-qualifying homes along the Purple Line.



Our involvement with PLCC has helped us test policy solutions that will benefit the entire county. The HOPP program, for example, began with priority funds for Purple Line homeowners in need of home maintenance. The County's Right of First Refusal program now has teeth as an anti-displacement tool, in part because of PLCC's push to unlock the program's potential. We are now exploring the potential for inclusionary zoning in transit-oriented development (TOD) areas across the County, building on the National Center for Smart Growth's 2022 study that established the economic feasibility of such a policy in the Purple Line corridor. We remain committed to housing affordability in growth corridors like the Purple Line, as a cornerstone of the County's economic development platform. We look forward to continued partnership with PLCC in 2025.



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# HOUSING INITIATIVE

# PARTNERSHIP

SUPPORTING AFFORDABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SYSTEMS CHANGE

*Stephanie Proestel, Executive Director*

Housing Initiative Partnership, Inc. (HIP) develops innovative affordable housing, revitalizes neighborhoods, and equips people to achieve their housing and financial goals.

HIP was very active within PLCC this year, through both programming and advocacy. Notably, we became a partner in the Phase III and IV affordable housing being built at New Carrollton by Urban Atlantic. We will serve as owner and developer while providing robust resident services to tenants. We also served 6 Purple Line homeowners through the Housing Rehabilitation Assistance Program (HRAP), supporting homeowners to access home repair funds to revitalize their homes in partnership with the County. HIP's Community Navigation team assisted 114 PLC renters at risk of eviction in 2024. The team helped these residents access Emergency Rent Assistance funds available through PG DHCD. Many of these residents had language or technology barriers preventing them from successfully accessing these available resources. HIP's Certified Housing Counselors provided in-depth one-on-one housing counseling to the following Purple Line corridor residents: 2 Homeowners with Homeowners Tax Credit applications, 17 Renters with assistance locating affordable rentals or with services to prevent eviction, 9 Homebuyers seeking to purchase a new home, and 32 Homeowners at risk of foreclosure. Finally, we served as a technical resource to the PLCC network on how to do advocacy to achieve PLCC's goals. PLCC has played a remarkable role in community engagement this year. The coalition is a powerful vehicle to get a lot more people engaged in the process.



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# ENTERPRISE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

MAKING STEADY PROGRESS TOWARD THE GREATER GOOD

*Laura Searfoss, Senior Program Director*



Enterprise Community Partners' mission is to make home and community places of pride, power, and belonging, as well as platforms for resilience and upward mobility.

In 2024, Enterprise Community Partners engaged a diverse group of leaders and organizations active in the Purple Line corridor; supported the creation and preservation of affordable homes; and added resources to an already robust housing toolbox in Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

Enterprise invested \$10 million in permanent financing for MHP's Colonnade at the Creek in Takoma Park. Through our support from JPMorganChase, Enterprise provided financial support to the Latino Economic Development Corporation and PLCC, resulting in on-call technical assistance to 15 developers and 186 small businesses; nearly 950 technical assistance consultations; and a pipeline of 1,200+ homes.

As a host for the federal Economic Development Administration's Economic Recovery Corps, Enterprise Community Partners launched the Purple Line Preservation Network, in collaboration with the National Center for Smart Growth. This network brings stakeholders together to identify at-risk properties and discuss ways to preserve and improve existing rental buildings in the corridor.

Enterprise worked hard to keep the Purple Line's impact on nearby communities at the forefront of conversations about resource allocation; community power and voice; and zoning reforms. Through our policy outreach and education, training, and technical assistance, Enterprise reached 50+ public, private, and community-based groups. This engagement ranged from advising on key policy questions to specific developments to how to undertake systems-levels advocacy.



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# GREATER RIVERDALE THRIVES

## COMMUNITY DRIVEN CHANGE

*Pastor Mike Dickson, Chair*



Greater Riverdale Thrives' (GRT's) vision is to create a non-partisan, inclusive and thriving network of people working together to advocate, collaborate, share resources, and serve as a collective voice to uplift the Greater Riverdale community.

An initiative of the Metamorphosis Community Project, GRT accomplished a great deal this year. We held several events, including our signature Greater Riverdale Thrives Day, which drew nearly 100 community members for a day of fun and positivity. We also offered drop-in events for the community to meet specific needs, and we connected the community with food distributions happening in the area.

Our partnership with PLCC offered new opportunities this year. We co-hosted the spring *Surviving to Thriving* event, helped create a coloring book to engage our community in conversation about the Purple Line, and worked with a UMD course to develop a housing strategy for the Riverdale area. We also participated in intensive training with PLCC, including as ROC cohort members and participants in Enterprise's Equitable Housing Training. It's been exciting being a part of the Purple Line community. We want to ensure that we negate the kind of displacement that usually happens when a neighborhood undergoes such expansion. Our desire is that as many people as want to stay in our neighborhoods are able to stay, and rise with the tide.

We plan to expand in 2025, with a new monthly community conversation and collaboration meeting. The GRT Dinner Table will take place on the fourth Wednesdays from 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at various locations. We invite all who live, work, play, pray and/or pay in the Area to join us. These events will help our community build connections and resiliency to changes the Purple Line brings.

We are so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with and expand our own capacity through training, networking and partnership. We look forward to the future with more hope for our community as a result of our interaction with PLCC!!!



# SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES TO THRIVE THROUGH CHANGE

Support small, locally owned businesses to remain integral to their communities, strengthen connections with their surrounding networks, and thrive during and beyond the construction period through tailored support, resources, and collaboration.

PLCC's Small Business Action Team focuses on supporting small businesses, especially BIPOC and immigrant-owned micro-businesses, facing challenges such as construction disruption, rising rents, and market shifts as neighborhoods evolve. Through partnerships, we expanded funding opportunities, coordinated services, enhanced marketing for businesses and commercial districts, and strengthened policies to ensure that existing businesses can remain in place and benefit from the Purple Line's arrival in 2027.

**\$5.5M**  
IN GRANTS TO  
BUSINESSES AND  
ORGANIZATIONS

**475**  
BUSINESSES  
ASSISTED

**3**  
ADVOCACY  
CAMPAIGNS



# INVESTMENTS IN SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT



As the first Purple Line tracks were laid this year, construction disruption was also at its peak. Partners across the corridor successfully secured new funds to support small businesses to survive this period, and to make sure the most impacted businesses are able to take advantage of them. Allies within the public sector and philanthropy also invested in the success and growth of small businesses and the organizations that support them.

Specifically, small businesses experiencing disruption in Montgomery County had access to \$900,000 following a new allocation of County funds in fiscal year 2025. These funds were targeted in certain corridors of Bonifant Street and Piney Branch Road based on direct construction impacts to the frontage of these small businesses. The funds are being distributed through the Montgomery County Business Center during the County's Fiscal Year - July 2024 through June 2025. To date, 38 businesses on Bonifant Street and Piney Branch Road are receiving monthly rent stabilization grants. Remaining Prince George's County construction disruption funding at the start of this year was fully expended, thanks to the work of FSC First and its partners.

The Greater Washington Community Foundation awarded over \$330,000 in grants to invest in small business infrastructure and development in Prince George's County. The program was made possible by funding from the PNC Foundation. Small businesses along the Purple Line and Blue Line corridors received up to \$20,000 in grant funding, plus business coaching and technical assistance. Seven of the seventeen grant awardees are operating along the Purple Line.

Commercial clusters in and around future Montgomery County Purple Line stops, including Takoma Park, Takoma-Langley Crossroads, and Long Branch, received over \$245,000 in place-based management grants, from Montgomery County.

\$4,000,000 in new state construction disruption funding was announced this year. The funds were approved as part of the expanded Purple Line construction contract in February, and dollars are expected to be available in early 2025.



# PLACE-BASED CAPACITY BUILDING



Place-based management models, such as Main Streets, are a powerful organizing approach for commercial district management. Successful place-based management programs are led by community-based organizations with deep neighborhood ties. For the past five years, PLCC has been working to strengthen local capacity for proven place-based management models, putting more power into the hands of community partners and small business leaders to shape their neighborhoods and local economies. This fulfills a key priority developed with the PLCC Small Business Action Team in 2021. These practices are now taking root, and PLCC will continue its support to place-based management organizations into 2025.

## **Main Streets Training Program:**

PLCC offered a four-part Main Streets training program to community-based organizations that serve small businesses across the Purple Line. These strategies are key in helping small businesses who need to pivot during construction as well as reposition their businesses once the rail line opens. Attendees left with new tools and a draft workplan, as well as an expanded network for continued shared learning among the six commercial districts that are the focus of PLCC's small business support work.

## **Resources and Networking:**

PLCC also connected all six areas with resources and networking opportunities, including:

- Attending the Maryland Main Street program conference in Frederick, MD in October
- Assisting organizations with grant applications to Prince George's County CDBG and Montgomery County place-based management grants.
- Arranging commercial corridor site visits from the Main Street Maryland program.



# SMALL BUSINESS VOICE



**Ensuring the leadership of small business owners in their own futures is critical to creating lasting change and ensuring that businesses thrive in changing environments.**

#### **Small Business voice in PLCC's work:**

Through the Small Business Action Team (SBAT) and partner organizations, PLCC worked to amplify the voices of BIPOC and immigrant-owned small businesses.

- PLCC held several SBAT meetings at small business locations throughout the corridor, hearing from the owners on their concerns and aspirations. These perspectives then helped shape PLCC's coordinated goal setting and advocacy.
- LEDC led a training initiative for a cohort of ten small businesses focused on advocacy, policy influence, and leadership development to help small business owners play an active role in shaping the future of their communities.

“  
*My family has been running this business for more than 20 years. Purple Line construction has been hard, but we are committed to serving our community and supporting other local businesses to succeed as well.*  
-Silvia Huezo  
Owner, Pupuseria El Comalito





## SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# SIGNARAMA SILVER SPRING

### LYTTONSVILLE

**Signarama Silver Spring** takes pride in being a full-service sign company dedicated to delivering exceptional signage solutions. The business is a neighborhood anchor in the Lyttonsville neighborhood in Silver Spring. In addition to running her business, Stacey Brown, the local owner, has been organizing the businesses along Brookville Road to advocate for the business area, strengthen visibility of their offerings, and build community ties.

After years of juggling roles as business owner and community organizer, Stacey and other business leaders got a boost in 2023, when MHP dedicated staff capacity to support the Lyttonsville small business community as part of its commitment to PLCC's equitable development vision. They were able to organize as the Lyttonsville Business Group, an affiliate of the Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce.

In 2024, Signarama Silver Spring:

- Adapted to Market Shifts: Leveraging enhanced marketing strategies to reach new customers.
- Benefited from Expanded Funding: Accessing financial resources to mitigate construction disruptions.
- Strengthened Community Ties: Remaining a vital resource for other local businesses by providing signage solutions that enhance visibility and branding.

Signarama Silver Spring's success underscores the critical role that small businesses play in the economic and cultural fabric of their communities. With support from PLCC partners, businesses like Signarama are not just surviving—they are thriving, ensuring a bright future for the entire corridor.

“*The Lyttonsville business community really got to work this year. Having MHP, PLCC, and GSSCC working alongside us has made a huge difference in our ability to move ideas forward, and I'm excited about where we are headed in 2025.*

*-Stacey Brown  
Owner, Signarama Silver Spring*



## SMALL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

# EL COMALITO

RIVERDALE AND TAKOMA LANGLEY

**El Comalito**, a Salvadoran restaurant beloved by its community, stands as a shining example of collaboration that lifts up an entire community. With two locations in the Purple Line corridor -- in Riverdale and in Takoma Langley -- this anchor business is known for its authentic flavors and warm hospitality. In addition to serving up the comforts of home, El Comalito's owner, Silvia Huezo, works to strengthen her community, including through her role on the board of the Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority.

In 2024, El Comalito invested in its own growth through an 8-week small business marketing and social media training offered by PLCC and LEDC. Recognizing the value of the skills she learned, Silvia recruited several other small businesses in the corridor to participate.

El Comalito's story is one of resilience, collaboration, and a deep commitment to community impact. As an anchor business in the Purple Line corridor, it highlights the importance of supporting BIPOC-owned businesses not just for economic reasons but to preserve the vibrant identity of the neighborhood.





## NEIGHBORHOOD SPOTLIGHT

# GLENRIDGE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

### UNLOCKING ACCESS TO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In 2024, PLCC invested in specialized support to the Glenridge business community -- located in a strip mall immediately adjacent to the future Annapolis Road Purple Line station and deeply impacted by construction disruptions. Unlike some other Purple Line communities, Glenridge has not historically had sustained and place-based support from a small business serving organization. This project was intended to remedy this lack of connection to the local ecosystem of support.

Focusing on 20 small businesses, including Jollof Etc., Jamaican Country Kitchen, and Gaby's Hair Salon, PLCC connected with owners to hear their stories and help them navigate these challenges. With foot traffic reduced to nearly zero, we identified visibility as their greatest need. Our hands-on approach included creating social media accounts, teaching digital marketing strategies, and showcasing the power of online engagement.

These efforts yielded immediate results. Businesses saw increased online visibility, bringing new customers and proving they were active and open despite the disruptions. Social media became a lifeline, allowing owners to share their stories, showcase services, and connect with the community.

Equally important, we built trust and connected these businesses with ongoing technical assistance offered by organizations like LEDC. These connections ensure that the businesses have a full suite of services available to them, as they work to adapt to changes in the years ahead.

PLCC remains committed to uplifting communities along the corridor, driving meaningful change, and equipping every business with the tools to succeed.





# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

## MHP

### FLOWER TO THE PEOPLE: HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

*Chris Gillis, Director of Policy and Neighborhood Development*



Making Home Possible (MHP) is a nonprofit affordable housing and community development organization which has a strong presence in the Purple Line corridor. MHP owns and manages almost 1,000 units of affordable housing in the Purple Line corridor and does community development work in three separate station areas - including Flower Avenue and the Long Branch business district, Bonifant Street, and Lyttonsville.

2024 was a critical year for the Purple Line as we saw actual tracks being laid in the ground. With that came huge impacts on small businesses in the corridor. For this reason, MHP concentrated on connecting the small businesses with construction impact grants to help keep their businesses afloat during this difficult time.

A highlight from 2024 was leading business owners and residents from Lyttonsville on a leadership conference in Baltimore. The conference gave us an opportunity to strengthen connections between one another and develop a set of goals for the community which will inform the work we do for years to come.

The PLCC has been instrumental in supporting MHP's entry into the Lyttonsville neighborhood of Silver Spring. Additionally, the PLCC has helped MHP in moving the Long Branch neighborhood towards becoming one of Maryland's Main Street programs.



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

## LEDC

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND LEADERSHIP

*Maria Teresa Llanos, Small Business Coach*



The Latino Economic Development Center's (LEDC) goal is to drive the economic and social advancement of low to moderate income Latinos and other underserved communities in DC, Maryland, Virginia, and Puerto Rico by equipping them with the skills and tools to achieve financial independence and become leaders in their communities. We have helped co-lead PLCC's Small Business Action Team since 2018, and we are committed to delivering technical assistance services along the entire corridor. In 2024, LEDC provided technical assistance to 186 Purple Line businesses and helped 42 businesses access loans and grants.

With support from JPMorgan Chase, we offered a two-part advocacy training and cohort building program in the fall. 10 Purple Line small business owners participated in an interactive program that included problem identification, advocacy tools, and coalescing around an advocacy campaign. The ultimate goal was for more small business owners to drive policy change that addresses the opportunities and challenges of the Purple Line. We will continue creating opportunities for small business owners to exercise their leadership.



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# TAKOMA LANGLEY CROSSROADS

## INVESTING IN OUR BUSINESSES

*Javier Rivas, Executive Director*



The mission of the Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority (TLCDA) is to transform the Takoma Langley Crossroads into a vibrant, sustainable hub of economic and cultural activity that celebrates diversity and fosters prosperity for all community members. 2024 marked my first full year as Executive Director. My priorities at TLCDA include pursuing greater small business voice in decision-making, as well as new funding to expand services to businesses.

It's been a growth year. Funding through Montgomery County's place-based management program and through Maryland DHCD's Community Health and Safety Works Program has allowed us to scale up our services in ways that haven't been possible in the past. In 2025 we envision deeper work with our businesses and PLCC to advocate around important issues in our community.



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# CASA

POWER BUILDING THROUGH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION

*Josefina Estrada, Small Business Officer*



CASA is a national powerhouse organization building power and improving the quality of life in working-class: Black, Latino/a/e, Afro-descendent, Indigenous, and Immigrant communities. CASA creates change with its powerbuilding model blending human services, community organizing, and advocacy in order to serve the full spectrum of the needs, dreams, and aspirations of members.

CASA's mission is to create a more just society by building power and improving the quality of life in working class and immigrant communities. With our roots in Langley Park, we provide services and organize with the community to build an eco-system that supports our community members in achieving the socio-economic justice they pursue.

In 2024, CASA provided technical assistance and counseling to 289 informal/start up business owners and entrepreneurs. Assistance and training covered topics such as how to start a business, licensing/permits, registering and incorporating a business, procurement with the county, getting an ITIN # to start a business, and becoming a small woman and minority business. In addition, CASA provided specialized information on commercial kitchen and food truck requirements, cottage foods, cosmetology license, trader's and hand dealer license, and laundromat requirements.

CASA also began a pilot cooperative project with 12 Montgomery County residents and 3 from Prince George's County. They are supporting each other to become a worker cooperative. CASA provides weekly training classes as well as technical training during the week. Furthermore, CASA started a What's App group for street vendors and a Band App group for the cooperative to communicate and schedule meetings for those affected by the Purple Line construction.

CASA organized/was part of over 40 community meetings that brought together the business community, residents, organizational partners and County leaders, including PLCC'S Small Business Action Team meetings. We look forward to continuing the important work to build power and support entrepreneurs in 2025.



# PROMOTING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

## TO ENHANCE HEALTH, CULTURE AND A SENSE OF PLACE

Fostering vibrant communities that enhance health, culture and a sense of place remains a key goal of our work. This goal weaves together interconnected priorities such as pedestrian safety, strengthening community engagement, and placemaking as vital contributors to sense of place. We aspire to create lasting improvements that elevate the quality of life for all residents, building communities where health, culture, and a true sense of belonging thrive.

19  
**COMMUNITY  
SPEAKERS**  
AT PLCC WALKS

7  
**EVENTS &  
GATHERINGS**

17  
**PUBLIC AGENCIES  
& ELECTED  
OFFICIALS  
ENGAGED**



# COMMUNITY LED WALKS LONG BRANCH



As part of an exciting expansion of our coalition’s commitment to improving access and safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit users, PLCC hosted two Community-Led Walks this year around the Long Branch and Riverdale Park-Kenilworth Purple Line stations. These walks, organized in partnership with CHEER in Long Branch and CKAR in the Riverdale community, brought together residents, policymakers, and technical staff to experience and discuss neighborhood changes and challenges firsthand.

During the walks, residents guided participants through areas under construction and stopped at key locations to ask questions about pedestrian safety, traffic control, and planned development projects. At the conclusion of each walk, state and local officials helped answer these questions directly, which PLCC published in a “Frequently Asked Community Questions” document.

The Community-Led Walks emerged from a need to consolidate many different municipal plans and agency documents impacting Purple Line communities, in order to develop a shared understanding of what the post-construction environment will look like. Prior to the walks, PLCC organized technical sessions to confirm insights gained from reviewing technical planning documents across state, county, and local agencies connected to Purple Line development. These sessions helped PLCC develop a comprehensive overview of the improvements planned for each neighborhood.



# COMMUNITY LED WALKS RIVERDALE



The team then shared this technical knowledge with residents, through a community gathering. This enabled residents to ask informed questions and initiate new conversations with officials and planners with a greater understanding of what is planned in their neighborhoods. The issues discussed in these sessions formed the basis for the questions raised during the walks, which also engaged elected officials and other leaders.

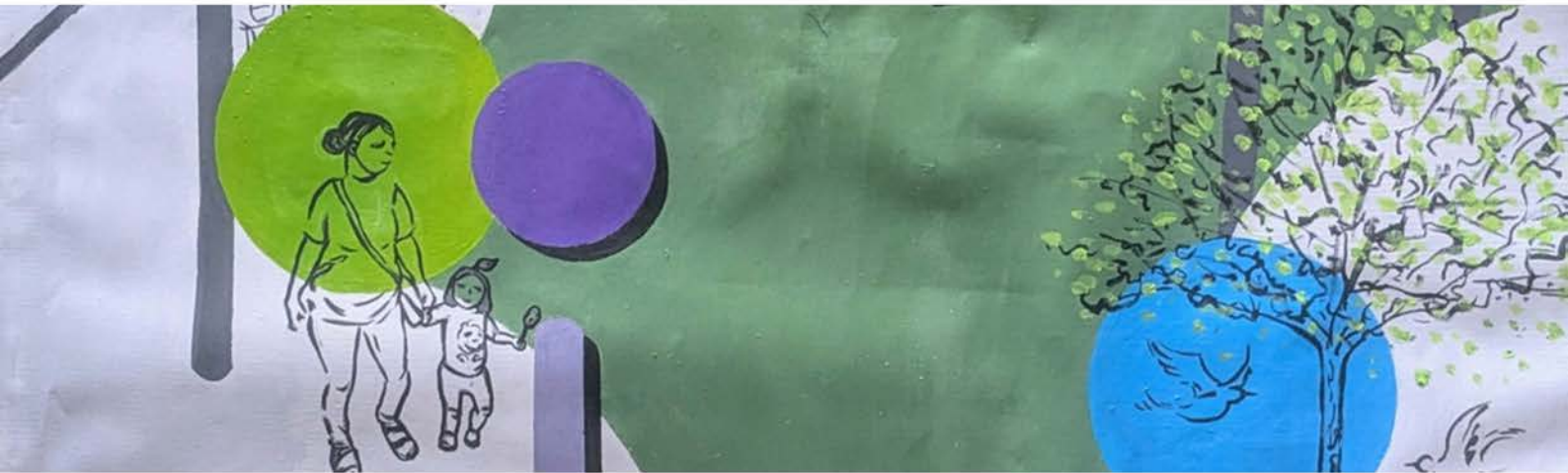


Participants left the walks with answers to their questions, new connections to state and local offices, and an improved understanding of the construction progress and public agency commitments affecting their communities. The Q&A documents are fostering community knowledge and aim to support residents deepen their understanding of planning processes and build organizing capacity around transit-oriented development.



PLCC plans to host the next Community-Led Walk at the Takoma-Langley station in Spring 2025. Through these events, we reach residents who may not typically participate in the development process but are most affected by its impacts, including disruption and displacement. Community-Led Walks provide a vital opportunity to make technical information accessible, build community through shared learning, and strengthen organizing capacity around development that truly reflects community needs and aspirations.

# PLACEMAKING & URBAN DESIGN



## RE-ENVISIONING A LONG BRANCH STRIP MALL

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROFESSOR JANA VANDERGoot, AFAAR, RA

A graduate UMD urban design studio course, working with MHP and PLCC, explored possible futures for a strip mall in Long Branch. Ideas included covered outdoor markets, with design inspiration coming from as far as Marrakesh. Such markets would add year-round interest -- and potentially offer temporary or permanent locations for businesses displaced by strip mall redevelopment in the future. Ideas also included models that could be helpful to shopping centers facing similar challenges along the entire Purple Line Corridor.

This course was supported through the UMD Partnership in Action Learning and Sustainability program.

## CREATIVE SIGNAGE IN TAKOMA-LANGLEY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PROFESSOR BRANDON DONAHUE

A UMD undergraduate painting course worked with the Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority (TLCDA) on new street banner designs to highlight the culture of the majority Latinx-owned small businesses at this busy commercial shopping hub. Students participated in a walking tour led by local community development leader and Executive Director of TLCDA, Javier Rivas, and interviewed business owners to inform the students' designs. This co-design process strengthened university/partner relationships for ongoing creative placemaking work to be continued in the Spring. It also supports a longstanding PLCC goal to strengthen commercial districts through design and placemaking.



# COLORING AND CONVERSATION



This year, a team at UMD used research tools, such as focus groups and PhotoVoice, to generate conversation about the Purple Line and support local organizing for positive change. Youth at the Latin American Youth Center, congregants at Solid Rock Church, visitors to Sarvis Cafe, and members of the Greater Riverdale Thrives Community Coalition shared a mix of hope and anxiety about the Purple Line and how it will change the Greater Riverdale area.

A team of artists then translated their perspectives into a 14-page coloring book, *Transit & Transition: A Bridge to Rapid Change*.

At a release event and artists' talk at the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center this summer, more than two dozen participants of all ages came together to make art and talk about the Purple Line. The coloring book continues to be a tool to start important dialogue about the Purple Line in the community. [See this video to learn more about the project.](#)

*This project was supported with a generous Healthy Places SEED grant from the UMD School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation and the School of Public Health. The project team included the UMD Center for Health Equity, the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, and PLCC, with participation from Transverse Cooperative, Dr. Jean Breny, Pastor Mike Dickson, and Bethany Swain.*



# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# CHEER

## A PLATFORM FOR COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

*Kent Sovine, Executive Director*

Community Health and Empowerment through Education and Research (CHEER) is a Long Branch-based nonprofit whose mission is to provide people with the knowledge and ability to create healthy, thriving communities. CHEER is a community-driven process for identifying community vision and goals, and for gathering the information and resources needed to measure and fulfill them.

In 2024, CHEER led a number of projects that helped Long Branch residents take control of changes happening in their community. We co-hosted a community-led walk with PLCC in the spring, where community members lifted up their questions and concerns about the Purple Line -- especially the pedestrian experience. In addition, CHEER convenes the Long Branch Housing Action Team (LBHAT), which brings neighbors together to address housing affordability and stability in our neighborhood. In September, the LBHAT sponsored a tenant's rights panel and resource fair featuring Councilmember Kate Stewart. Twelve partner organizations and elected officials came out to table, talk, and provide valuable resources to more than 50 community members. Through events and projects like these, we are increasing awareness and supporting local leaders to influence the changes the Purple Line is bringing.

We are ready for the work ahead in 2025. We are especially excited that CHEER, supported by its Long Branch coalition of partners, has been awarded a grant through Governor Wes Moore's ENOUGH Initiative. With this grant, we will be able to foster more meaningful participation with community members, conduct greater outreach to schools and government, and increase engagement with community members and potential partners to map out potential solutions to issues facing those in our region in the areas of: Cradle to Career Education, Healthy Families, Economic Secure Families, and Safe and Thriving Communities. We look forward to continued work with PLCC in 2025.





# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# CKAR

MOBILIZING TO STRENGTHEN RIVERDALE

*Pat Parker, Executive Director*



Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization CDC (CKAR) has a mission to promote the social, environmental and economic development of Greater Riverdale.

This year we advanced PLCC's mission in a number of ways. We supported ten Riverdale-area small businesses with marketing, web design, social media, ESOL for customer service, franchise opportunities and other technical assistance. We also participated regularly in the Small Business Action Team, to strengthen the outreach and TA services we offer. 2024 also marked the one-year anniversary for the opening of Sarvis Empowerment Cafe, a social enterprise operated by CKAR; and the importance of improving our environment through greening, continuous sidewalks and improved seating at transit locations within the communities. CKAR has been fully engaged since 2020 in food insecurity; and the effort to bring East and West together through engagement. We co-hosted a community-led walk with PLCC, bringing homeowners, renters, and small business owners together with elected officials and public agencies, to walk the Riverdale Kenilworth station area and experience the needs of pedestrians.

In 2025, we will continue to strengthen our neighborhood, especially focusing on the Kenilworth Avenue corridor.

# PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

# MONTGOMERY PLANNING

SUPPORTING NEIGHBORHOODS TO ACHIEVE EQUITABLE PROGRESS

*David Anspacher, Division Chief, Countywide Planning and Policy*



Montgomery Planning builds thriving, resilient communities for everyone, today and in the future. We collaboratively plan for equitable, sustainable, and economically healthy communities. In 2024, the Montgomery County Planning Board complete the Attainable Housing Strategies report and transmitted their recommendations to the Montgomery County Council. The report identifies zoning reforms that will allow and encourage the creation of a more diverse range of housing typologies across the county. The recommendations in this report serve as a menu of options for the County Council to consider, which can be implemented by introducing and adopting relevant zoning or subdivision text amendments that address all or portions of the recommendations. Additionally, the County Council approved the Takoma Park Minor Master Plan Amendment and the Planning Board began its review of the Bethesda Downtown Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment. PLCC continues to support Montgomery Planning’s mission, including with community-led walks, most recently highlighting perceived challenges to safe pedestrian and bicycle access to the Long Branch Purple Line station.

Working with PLCC has been transformative in aligning our work with policies that promote equitable development and protect our communities from displacement.



# PLCC IN THE SPOTLIGHT



PLCC had several opportunities to share our work with a broad audience this year. These opportunities help drive attention to the urgency of our efforts and attract new capacity to achieve our goals.

**“Our goal is ambitious, but the stakes are high. The Purple Line is a nearly \$10 billion transit project. Its success should be measured by how well it bolsters communities and serves the people who live and work along the corridor.”**

**David Bowers and Sheila Somashekhar**  
*Baltimore Sun*



**“Many local residents are aware of the context of conflict surrounding the Purple Line. They and their elected leaders may be conflicted over whether the Purple Line will be good or bad on the whole; but it will undoubtedly bring change.”**

**Nick Finio**  
*Journal of Planning Education and Research*



# PLCC IN THE SPOTLIGHT



## RESEARCH

In 2024, NCSG's research supported PLCC across several fronts. Dr. Nick Finio completed a journal article, focusing on the lived experience of residents in the Long Branch neighborhood with regard to gentrification and displacement prior to the opening of the Purple Line. Dr. Finio is also continuing a research project, with student analysts and Dr. Casey Dawkins, focusing on quantifying displacement near Purple Line stations. These research projects help anchor the coalition in a deeper understanding of the changes underway along the Purple Line.

[Suburban Gentrification: Change, Stasis, and TOD along the Purple Line](#)

## MEDIA & ARTICLES

[Baltimore sun op.ed: The Purple Line Must Not Jeopardize Affordable Housing](#)

[Researchers create coloring book about Purple Line](#)

## CONFERENCES & PRESENTATIONS

**ITGA.** PLCC organized two sessions at the International Town-Gown Association conference this spring, including a panel discussion describing the coloring book development process, and a mobile workshop that introduced a national audience to the Purple Line Corridor.

**SGA webinar.** PLCC presented to a national audience on community engagement and partnership building to prevent displacement.

**Tracking Equity.** NCSG co-hosted an event with LISC DC, MHP, and Wells Fargo, to highlight shared efforts to promote equitable development along the Purple and Blue Line corridors in Maryland.

**Book Talk.** NCSG hosted an event to celebrate Dr. Willow Lung-Amam's new book *The Right to Suburbia: Combating Gentrification on the Urban Edge*. PLCC joined a panel of scholars and activists to discuss gentrification, displacement, and equitable development in the Washington, D.C. region.



# REINVENTING OUR COMMUNITIES

PLCC was selected to participate in the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia's fourth Reinventing Our Communities (ROC) Cohort Program, joining ten other communities across the country. Each cohort of cross-sector community leaders is developing a locally tailored, multi-year plan to strengthen their regional economy through a racial equity lens.

PLCC's local cohort includes representatives from CHEER, Greater Riverdale Thrives, Montgomery Planning, Prince George's Planning, Enterprise Community Partners, and NCSG.

During the 14-month program, which began in February, the team has been engaging in webinars, coaching from national community development leaders including Race Forward and NeighborWorks, racial equity training, and peer learning.

The work completed through the cohort is intended to help PLCC be an effective agent for community voice and power in our region's housing and planning ecosystem.

**FEDERAL RESERVE BANK PHILADELPHIA**

*Reinventing Our Communities*  
**Cohort Program**

### Program Description

The ROC Cohort Program equips local leaders with the skills and knowledge to build strong, inclusive regional economies. Cross-sector teams engage in racial equity and economic development training, coaching and advising, and peer learning. Each cohort develops their own equity plan to strengthen their local economy using community-led, data-driven strategies.

### Program Pillars

- Inclusive Regional Economies**  
Communities, program managers, partners, and trainers share a common mission to remove historical barriers that prevent communities from reaching their full economic potential.
- Capacity Building**  
Cohorts build community capacity to address key community development challenges through racial equity-centered collaboration.
- Collaborative and Community-Led**  
Program trainings are designed in response to the community needs of participating cohorts. Cohorts learn from and alongside other communities through peer learning opportunities.
- Evidence-Based and Data-Driven**  
Program elements are rooted in a data-driven and evidence-based approach to collaborating, planning, and implementing different strategies that advance inclusive economic mobility.
- Sustainable Systems Change**  
Cohorts build the community's capacity to deliver more equitable policies, partnerships, and resource outcomes.

### Program Components

- Asset Mapping**  
An interactive data exercise led by expert facilitators to identify and build on local community resources
- Racial Equity Training**  
Sessions facilitated by leading racial equity trainers to inform an implementation plan
- Track-Specific Training**  
Small group trainings with leading industry research and practitioner experts
- Coaching, Advising, and Mentorship**  
Individualized coaching and advising from racial equity and industry-specific experts
- Multiyear Inclusive Development Plan**  
A cohort-informed implementation plan for inclusive growth in a region



# SURVIVING TO THRIVING ALONG THE PURPLE LINE



At PLCC's spring community-wide event, *Surviving to Thriving Along the Purple Line* event, about 100 community members and partners came together at Solid Rock Church in Riverdale to build community and talk about the Purple Line. The group explored what it would take for the Purple Line to be a positive force, ushering in new opportunities for communities to truly thrive.

During the speaking program, we heard about initiatives at the state level to make "Just Communities" the Maryland standard. We heard from community speakers who are staking their claim in the corridor through homeownership, entrepreneurship, and collective ownership. Elected leaders shared their views on how to make pathways to ownership more attainable. A small group of attendees participated in an intensive training on housing advocacy,

led by Enterprise Community Partners. Attendees made new connections, explored resource tables, and had conversations about data points on display.

The event was a powerful example of PLCC's greatest strength -- bringing people together across the spectrum of power to connect, see new possibilities, and carve out unprecedented solutions. PLCC will continue creating these opportunities for meaningful connections and collective problem solving, as we believe this is the key to unlocking the generational opportunity for equitable change in the Purple Line corridor.

*This event was made possible through generous support from Kaiser Permanente and JPMorgan Chase.*

*"Our goal in this decade is to see a meaningful and material change in the lives of people, to ensure that these beautiful places that we're building are built for the people who have been here, not just for people who might come here."*

- **Cat Goughnor** - Featured Speaker - Assistant Secretary for Just Communities of the State of Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development



# OUR BRIGHT FUTURE

## THE PATH FORWARD



We know that 2025 will bring new challenges. Political change at all levels of government brings new uncertainty and unknown paths to navigate. But tenacity and resolve are baked into the DNA of the community response to the Purple Line. From lawsuits to work stoppages to pandemic shutdowns, communities and the organizations that support them have pushed for solutions to meet the challenges of the moment.

The work of pursuing justice and equity has never been easy. And the wins are not guaranteed. But PLCC has seen a constellation of equitable development wins manifest in the past few years, sometimes against great odds. We celebrate the successes in this report, knowing that they impact the lives of real people -- and that even small wins can catalyze bigger ones in the future.

As we enter 2025, PLCC is optimistic about the possibilities that remain at the local level. We will work together to push for new resources and commitments to Purple Line communities. We will seek solutions that center the voices of and drive benefits to Black, Latino/a/e, and immigrant community members. We will push for concrete wins, because the challenges of this moment demand an unyielding focus on positive results for communities most impacted by change. We hope you will connect with us and contribute your talents in the year ahead.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are so many people and organizations who contribute every day to anti-displacement and equitable development along the Purple Line. We thank some of the key partners and people who were especially active in PLCC's work this year.

## **PLCC Steering Committee, Action Team Leaders, and Community Leaders**

National Center for Smart Growth • Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. • CASA • CHEER • CKAR CDC • Greater Riverdale Thrives Community Coalition • Habitat for Humanity Metro Maryland • Housing Initiative Partnership • Kaiser Permanente • Latino Economic Development Center • Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission • Montgomery and Prince George's Counties • MHP • Montgomery County Government • Members of Montgomery County Council • Prince George's County Government • Members of Prince George's County Council • National Housing Trust • Purple Line NOW

## **2024 PLCC Backbone\* Sponsors**

Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. • JPMorgan Chase • Kaiser Permanente • Maryland Transit Administration (Federal Transit Administration grant) • Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments • Montgomery County • Montgomery County Planning • National Center for Smart Growth • Truist Foundation • University of Maryland School of Public Health and School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation • University of Maryland

*\*We also thank the numerous funders who support the partners at PLCC's tables*

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