

A Report by

the  
Neighborhood  
DesignCenter

in partnership with Southeast Community Development Corporation  
*funded by the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative*

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*Neighborhood Design Center*

# HIGHLAND AVENUE TRANSIT PLACEMAKING



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Highland Ave Transit Placemaking

# Introduction

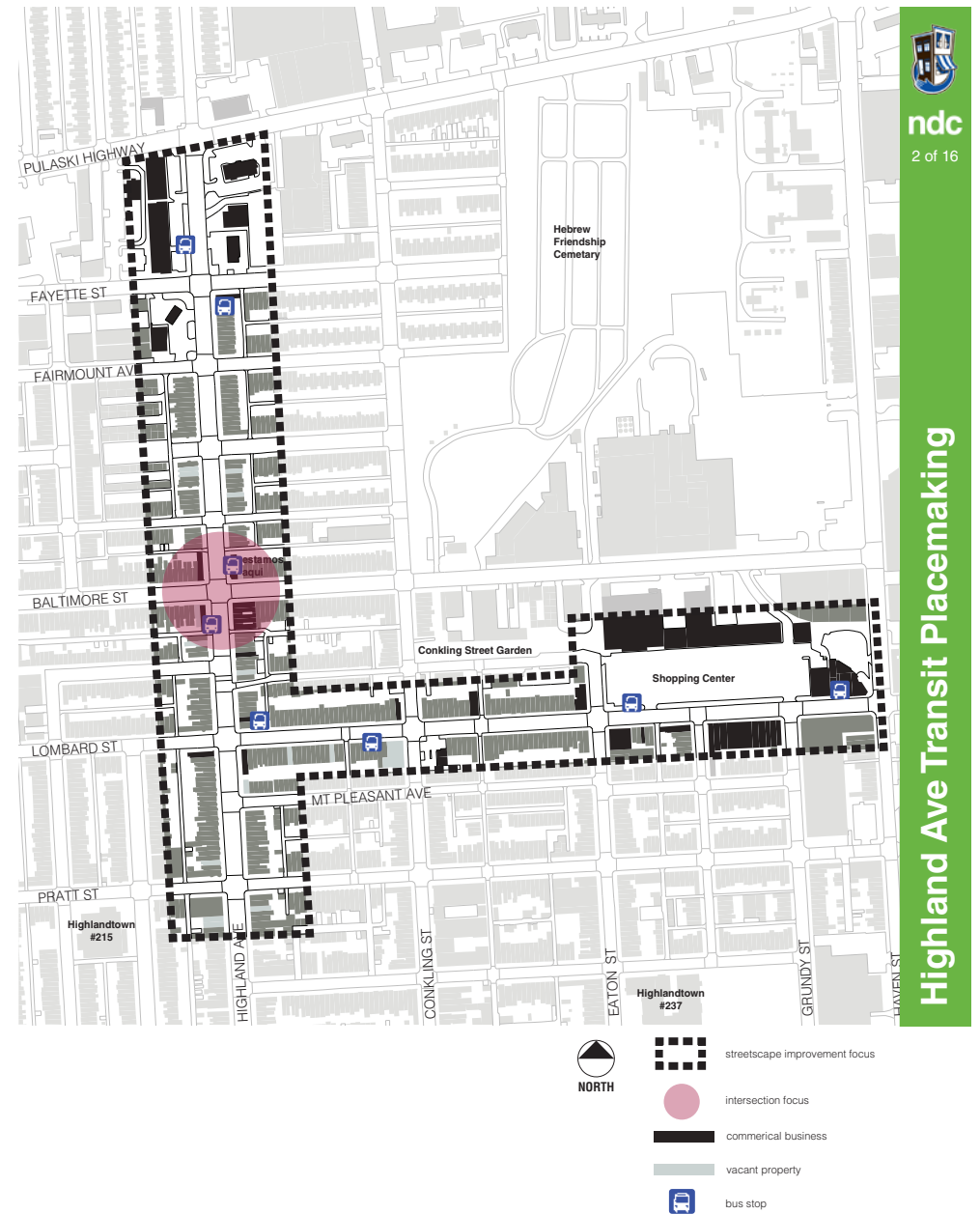
The Southeast Community Development Corporation (CDC) is one of the oldest community development corporations in Baltimore. Southeast CDC operate a number of community revitalization programs in the Highlandtown area such as the Highlandtown Main Street District and the Highlandtown Arts and Entertainment District, and they partner with Healthy Neighborhoods, Inc. on four neighborhoods in SE Baltimore, including Bayview, Greektown, Highlandtown and Patterson Park. Recently, with the assistance of the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative, the Southeast CDC has begun working in the CARE, McElderry Park, and Madison East-End neighborhoods.

In 2012, the Southeast CDC was selected by the Baltimore Community Foundation's "Targeted Neighborhoods Initiative" to develop a new, inclusive model of community development work with residents of all ages, ethnicities, nationalities and races in the neighborhoods of Baltimore Highland, Highlandtown and Patterson Park. Community School work with schools has increased parent involvement, created "green schools" and brought new community resources to schools. The Southeast CDC has also partnered with a wide variety of environmental organizations, including Blue Water Baltimore, the Parks and People Foundation and the Chesapeake Bay Trust to reduce storm water run-off and increase the tree canopy in southeast Baltimore. Most importantly, Southeast CDC values their partnerships with the community based organizations of SE Baltimore, such as the Friends of Patterson Park, Banner Neighborhoods, HEBCAC and numerous community and business associations.

Southeast CDC has secured Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative funding for a streetscaping design effort for the area of Highland Avenue between Pratt Street and Fayette Street, inclusive of Lombard Street east of Highland to Grundy Street. This design effort will inform Southeast CDC's use of implementation funding and their advocacy to public and private agencies. Southeast CDC requested Neighborhood Design Center assistance with facilitating a participatory conceptual design process.

The design process consisted of two meetings with stakeholders invited by Southeast CDC, the first being a visioning workshop for idea generation and the second a design review and prioritization session. Additionally NDC staff attended a Highlandtown community meeting to provide an update on the process.

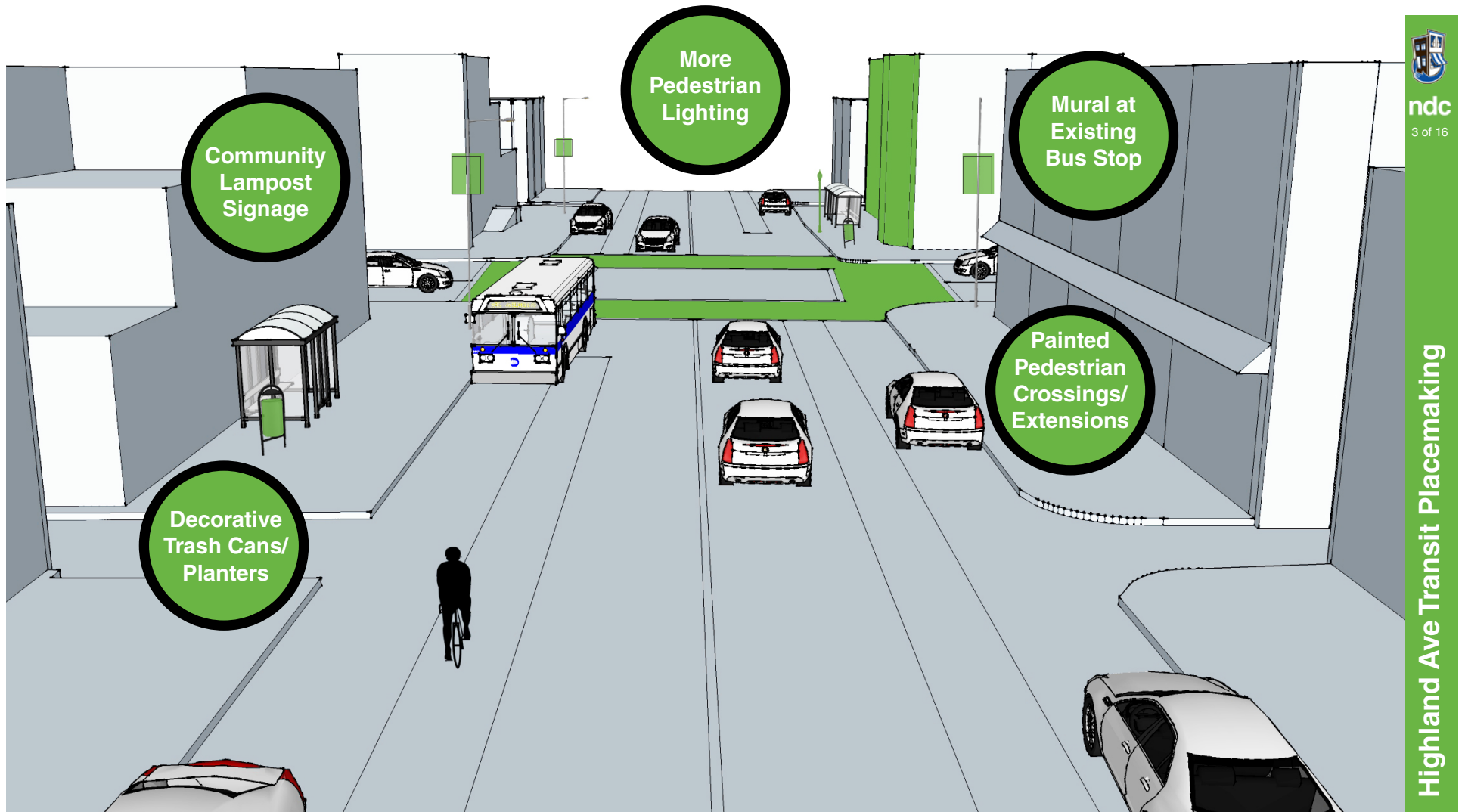
It is anticipated that Southeast CDC will secure project design services from local artists/partners and pursue implementation in coordination with residents and appropriate City agencies.



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Highland Ave Transit Placemaking



## Preferred Projects at Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue Intersection

The preferred project list was developed over two working sessions with community stakeholders facilitated by Neighborhood Design Center staff. The first session focused on documenting strengths and weaknesses of the intersection and setting goals for it and the larger Highland Avenue corridor. At the second session participants evaluated potential project ideas against their predefined goals and the program budget to determine specific priorities.

**Lighting:** More lighting was the highest priority improvement to the intersection, however participants were flexible whether it was deployed as a new formal light post or as other types of storefront lighting. The feasibility and cost of new lighting varies greatly depending on its scope.

- Street post lighting would require installation by and extensive coordination with DOT. It is likely to be the most expensive and difficult method of increasing lightig, but also the most permanent, and would be maintained by DOT. The next step in pursuing this option would be to begin conversations about feasibility with DOT.
- Storefront lighting would require permission from property owners to install, and potentially right-of-way permission from the City permitting

department. Electrical operating costs would be paid by property owners, so it would be critical to utilize LED fixtures so those costs are minimal. Installation costs would be significantly less per unit than a street post, and lumen output would also be less. However, multiple fixtures means light can be targeted to specific areas at the intersection which need it most, or spread around for ambient lighting.

- Artistic lighting would be any non-traditional fixture option: hanging string lights, lighting integrated into signage or artwork or infrastructure, etc. The two main considerations with installation are electrical supply and right of way usage, both of which would require coordination with DOT if private electrical connections are not being used.

**Vibrant Crosswalks and Painted Curb Extensions:** These strategies utilize paint to identify pedestrian-priority areas at the intersection. Paint is a lower-cost intervention compared to raised crosswalks or curb areas. As both of these occur in the right-of-way, DOT permission is needed to proceed. Painted curb extensions specifically will need to be coordinated with the required turning radii. Budget will vary based on the quality of paint used, which also will correspond with lifespan of the intervention.

**Mural:** A mural on the building at the northeast corner of the intersection will require permission from the property owner. The expense of a mural varies greatly with the existing condition of the surface, size, grade of paint and design. Application of an anti-graffiti coating is recommended.

**Trash Cans/Planters:** Objects in the right-of-way will require advance permission from DOT. Trash cans also require coordination from DPW to facilitate waste removal. Planters have ongoing maintenance requirements that must usually be met by community members or third-party organizations.

**Lampost Signs:** Lampost signs are coordinated with DOT and can be a relatively low-cost method of promoting neighborhood identity. Metal signage offers more long-term value compared to fabric which can fade.

## preferred projects



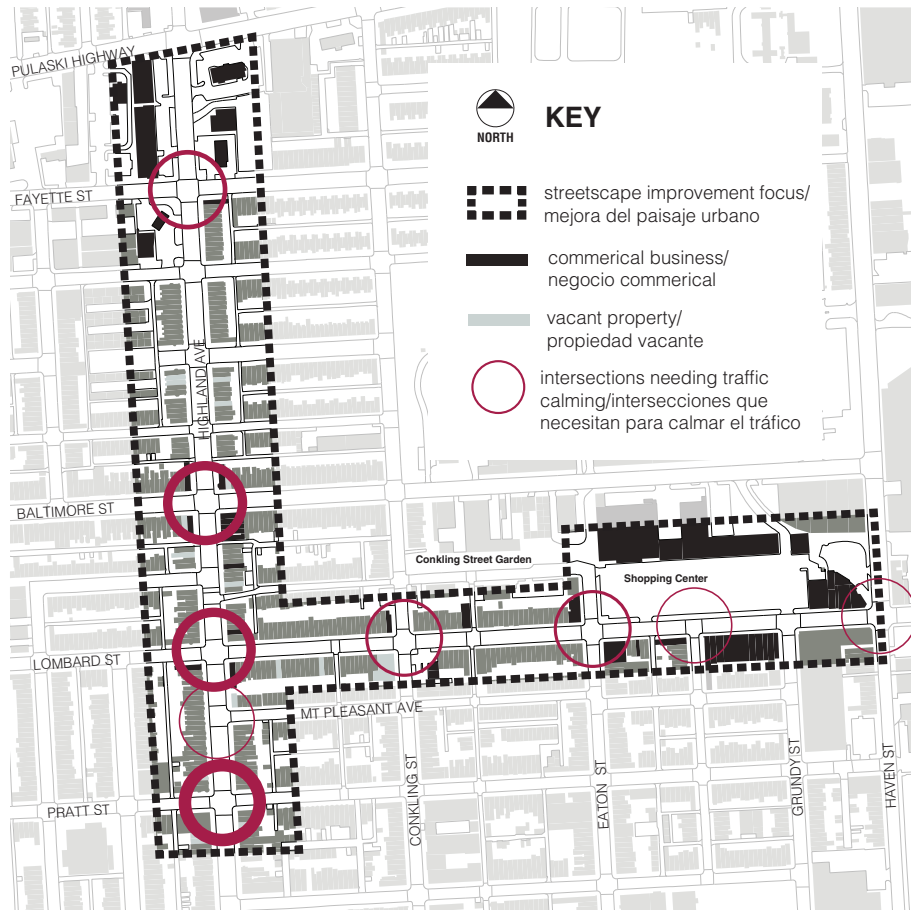
\* most preferred project

\*\* mural could include a community information component

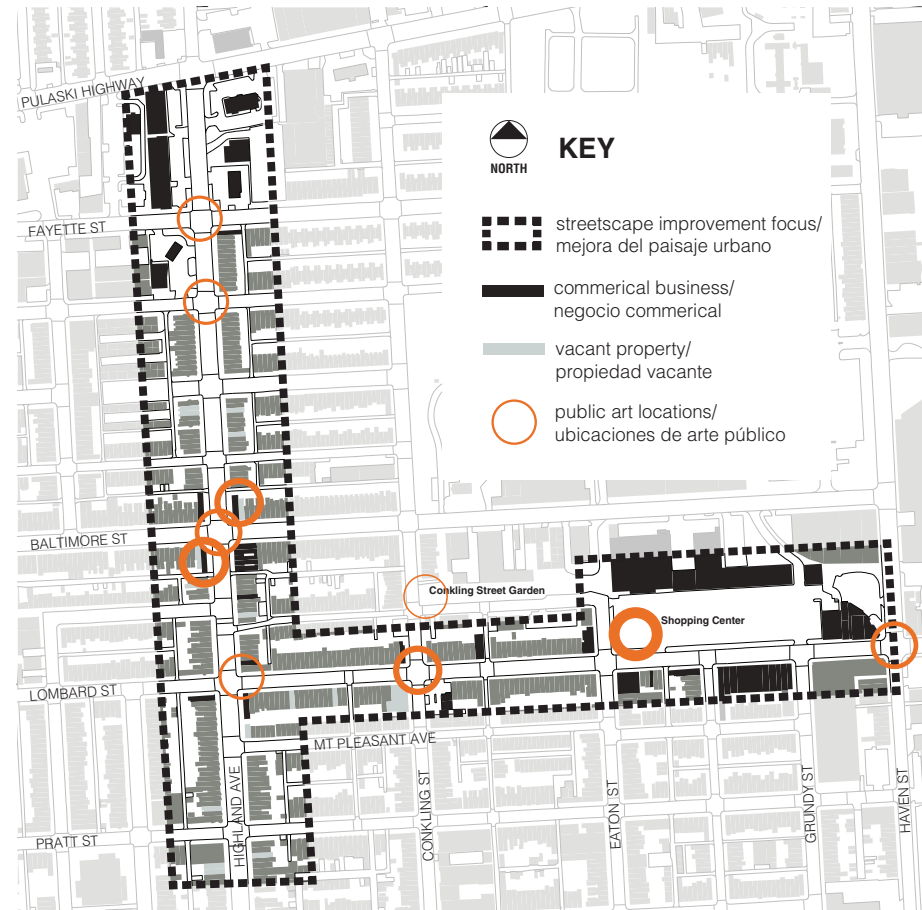


# What's Next?

After improvements are made to the intersection of Highland and Baltimore, community stakeholders would like to see additional traffic calming and public art in Baltimore Highlands, but in different locations. Traffic calming is desired mainly along Highland Avenue, while most would like to see more public art at the shopping center where there is a large parking lot and another popular bus stop.



Input for these recommendations was gathered from 13 participants at a community visioning workshop held on October 13, 2016. Stakeholders were given maps of the area and asked to document where they usually walked, at which intersections they felt needed pedestrian safety improvements, and at which areas they felt needed public art.



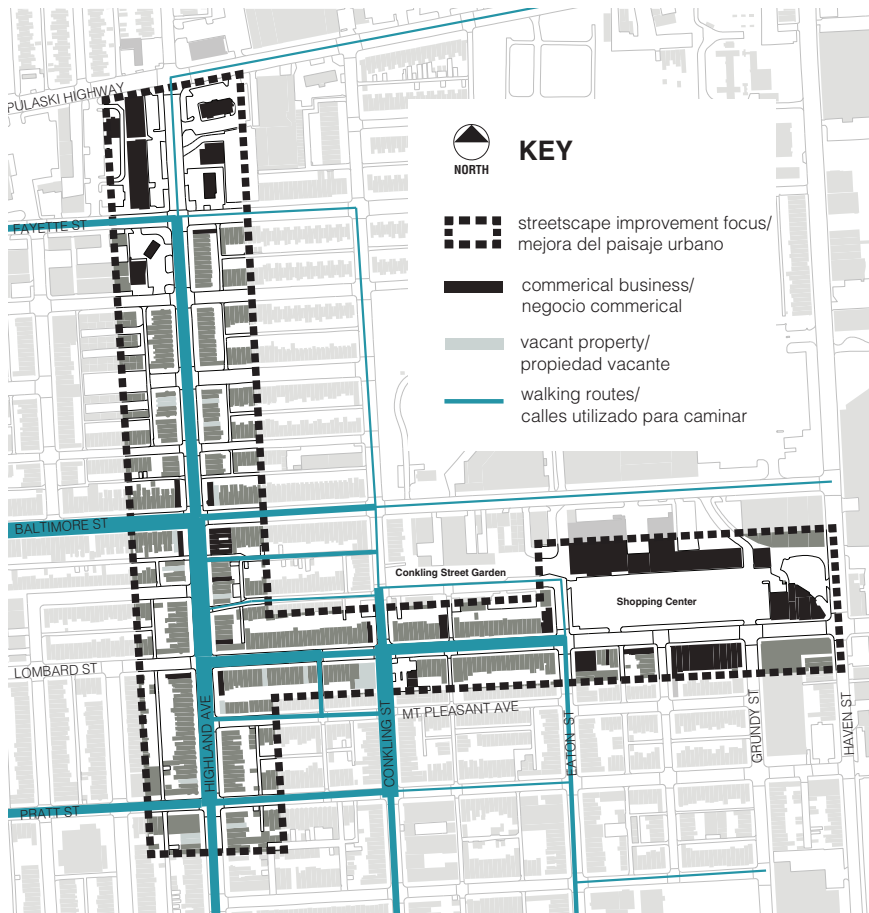
## Key Locations for Traffic Calming (in order of importance)

1. Intersection of Pratt and Baltimore Street
2. Intersection of Baltimore Street & Highland Avenue
3. Intersection of Lombard Street & Highland Avenue
4. Intersection of Fayette Street & Highland Avenue

## Key Locations for Public Art (in order of importance)

1. Intersection of Baltimore St & Highland Avenue
2. Shopping Center on Lombard Street
3. Intersection of Conkling & Lombard Street
4. Intersection of Haven & Lombard Street





## Key Walking Locations

(in order of importance)

1. Highland Avenue from Pratt Street to Baltimore Street
2. Baltimore Street west of Highland Avenue
3. Lombard Street between Highland Avenue and the Shopping Center
4. Conkling Street between Pratt and Lombard Street

Note: Some residents avoid the Lombard/Conkling Street intersection due to drug activity.

# Community Process Summary

## Visioning Workshop

October 13, 2016, 6-8pm  
Breath of God Church, Highlandtown  
13 Participants

Members of the Baltimore Highlands community were invited to participate in a visioning workshop to assist with Highland Avenue Transit Placemaking.

Following a welcome and introduction, participants broke into groups led by facilitators. There were three activities that helped to identify the types of interventions they envisioned for their neighborhood, and specific areas where these could take place. The keys areas of focus included the Highland Avenue corridor between Pulaski Highway and Pratt Street, and the Lombard Street corridor between Highland Avenue and Haven Street. Activities included a precedent image card game, a guided discussion of issues/goals for the intersection of Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue, and a mapping of individual use of the larger corridor.

## Design Review

November 10, 2016, 5:30-7:30pm  
Southeast Anchor Library, Highlandtown  
6 Participants

Stakeholders convened again to review potential project ideas curated by NDC staff that included rough scope and pricing guidelines. They then individually created their own “project stack” through an exercise designed to look at priorities given a specific budget. Participants completed the exercise for a second time as a group to arrive at a comprehensive list of project priorities.

*Meeting activities were designed and facilitated by the Neighborhood Design Center with hosting coordinated by Southeast CDC.*



October 13th Workshop, photo by Laura Wheaton



November 10th Workshop, photo by Laura Wheaton



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# Appendix: Workshop One Card Game

Each participant group was given a deck of 26 image cards and was asked to select six cards which best represented their vision for streetscape and placemaking improvements. There were 4 groups with 3-4 participants in each. The images on this page are the images chosen sized by their popularity. The images on the next page were also selected but were less popular.

**functional, community info, transit**



photo by Mack Male

**storm water, traffic calming, permanent**



photo by Center for Neighborhood Technology

**interactive, musical, self expression, colorful, family orientated, shaded**



photo by Rinna Pitucci

**complete streets, zones, bike lane NOT on street, no curbs**



photo by Eric Sehr



photo by Mad About the Mural

**multicultural, people, stories, values, context appropriate, non-graphic style**



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Highland Ave Transit Placemaking



color  
environment  
message  
water



photo by Southeast CDC

bus stop  
provides shelter  
makes people happy



photo by Majorie Pitz

fun  
interactive  
playful  
many can get  
involved



photo by NYC DOT

gateway  
helps to define  
neighborhood  
lighting



photo by Wikipedia

complete streets  
traffic calming  
green  
vibrancy  
includes wayfinding  
visual



photo by NYC DOT

colorful  
culturally inclusive  
warm welcoming  
area



photo by CharmCity123

attractive trash cans  
matching street lights  
furniture  
planned  
clean  
streamline  
discrete signage



photo by Michigan Municipal League

colorful  
horses  
bright  
visual  
attraction



photo by Southeast CDC

laid back  
people outside  
interactive

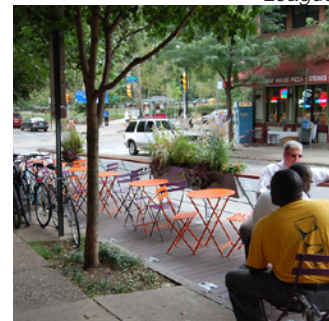


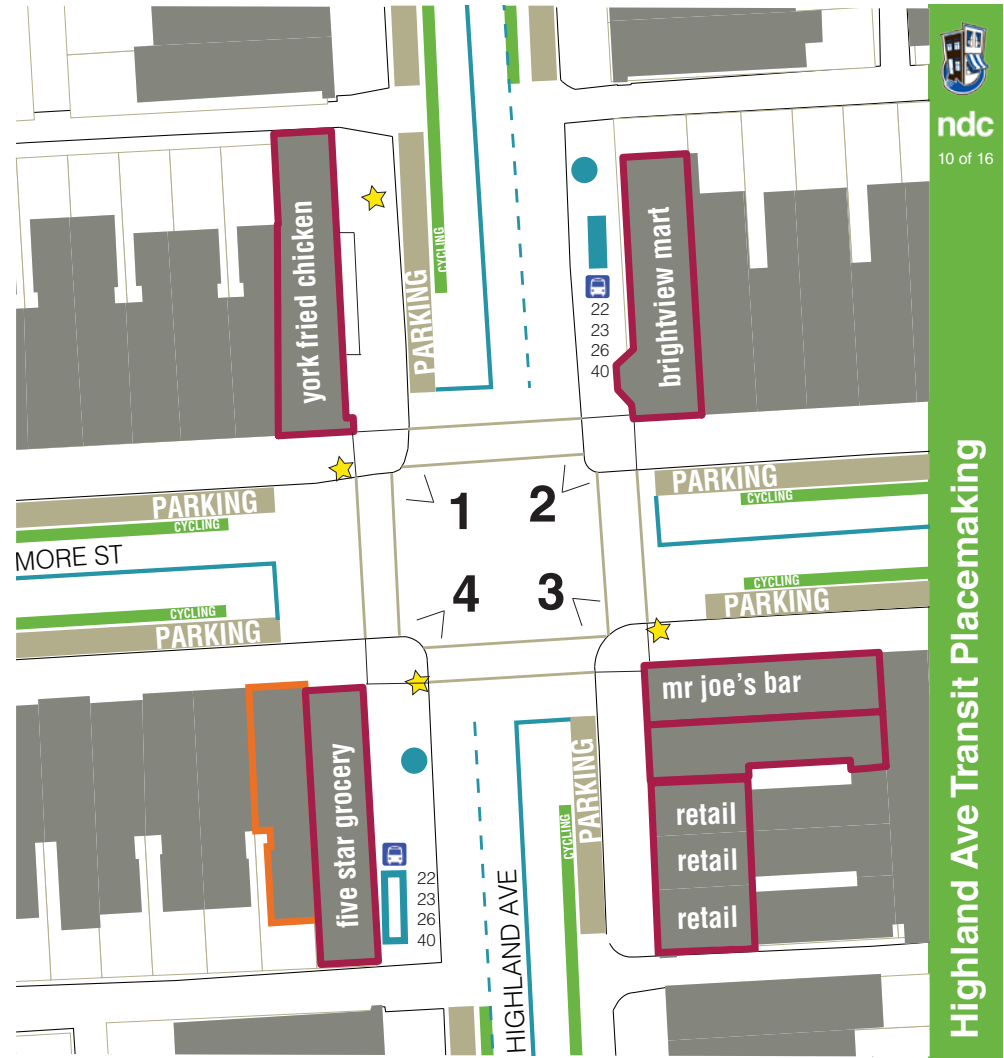
photo by Bike Coalition West Philadelphia

crosswalks  
safety  
traffic calming  
textured crosswalk  
median strip



photo by Dylan Passmore

# Appendix: Workshop One Intersection Discussion



## Proposed Solutions

### Uses and Activities

- family orientated businesses
- more food choices
- gated alleys
- bike share, zip car
- coffee shop

### Access and Linkages

- better traffic organization
- bumpouts
- safer pedestrian crossing
- left turn signals
- information kiosk

### Comfort and Image

- trees and vegetation, flowers
- more trash cans
- security cameras
- lighting for safety
- better seating
- better business facades
- high pressure cleaning
- murals

## Identified Issues

- dirty
- trash
- jaywalking
- pedestrian safety
- drug activity
- unpleasant
- lack of food and shopping options

# Appendix: Workshop Two Prioritization Exercise

## Details:

- Working with a fixed budget of \$75,000, each participant selected projects from the potential project list that they wanted to see happen at the Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue intersection.
- Individual choices and reasoning was shared.
- A group project list was compiled by the community members at the conclusion of the workshop.

## Purpose:

- To identify projects that were important to the workshop participants.
- To assist with determining the priorities of the community.

## Outputs:

- Group Response (1)
- Individual Responses (5 + 2 Southeast CDC)

## Potential Project List

All pricing is ballpark estimate for purposes of prioritization only

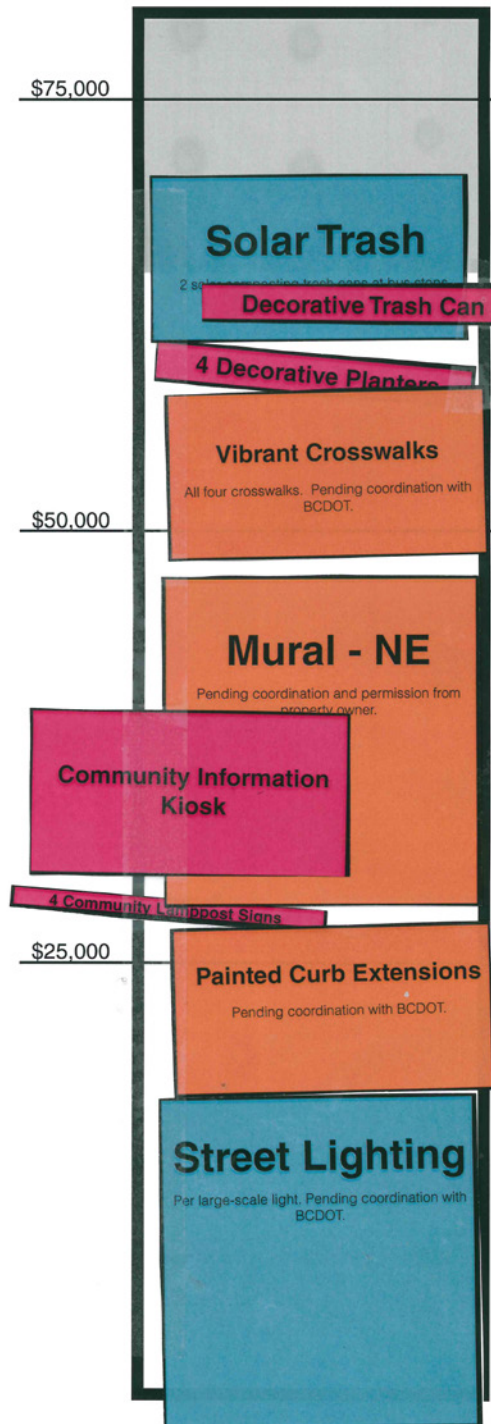
Artistic Bus Stop	\$50,000
Permanent Curb Extensions	\$50,000
Mural - NE	\$20,000
Mural - SW	\$20,000
Street Lighting	\$20,000
2 Solar Trash Cans	\$10,000
Vibrant Crosswalks	\$10,000
Painted Curb Extensions	\$10,000
Community Information Kiosk	\$10,000
2 Decorative Trash Cans	\$2,000
4 Standard Crosswalks	\$2,000
4 Decorative Planters	\$2,000
4 "State Law" Crosswalk Signs	\$1,000
4 Community Lamppost Signs	\$1,000

## Group Exercise Notes:

Trash cans were considered important with solar trash cans also worth considering if the budget could extend that far.

There was support for community information to be conveyed through a project(s) such as a mural or community lamppost signs.

Lighting could be placed on buildings rather than lampposts.



## Placemaking

at Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue

The current budget for improvements is \$75,000. There are many possible improvements that Southeast CDC can pursue within this budget.

Select the improvement card you most wish to see happen and place it at the bottom of the chart. Each card is sized based on its approximate cost. As you add more options to the chart, you'll see how much money is left in the overall budget. Keep adding options until you fill the chart.

The costs listed for each option are approximate, and will change as the project moves into design and implementation. Improvement cards you place in the grey shaded area are those you think can be added or removed from the project as budget allows. When you have filled your chart, please tape or glue down your selections and answer the following questions:

El presupuesto actual para las renovaciones es de \$75,000. Hay muchas mejoras posibles que la organización Southeast CDC puede conseguir dentro de este presupuesto.

Selecciona la tarjeta de la mejora que más deseas que suceda y colócala en la parte inferior de la tabla. Cada tarjeta se clasifica según su costo aproximado. A medida que añadas más opciones al gráfico, verás cuánto dinero queda en el presupuesto general. Sigue agregando opciones hasta completar la tabla.

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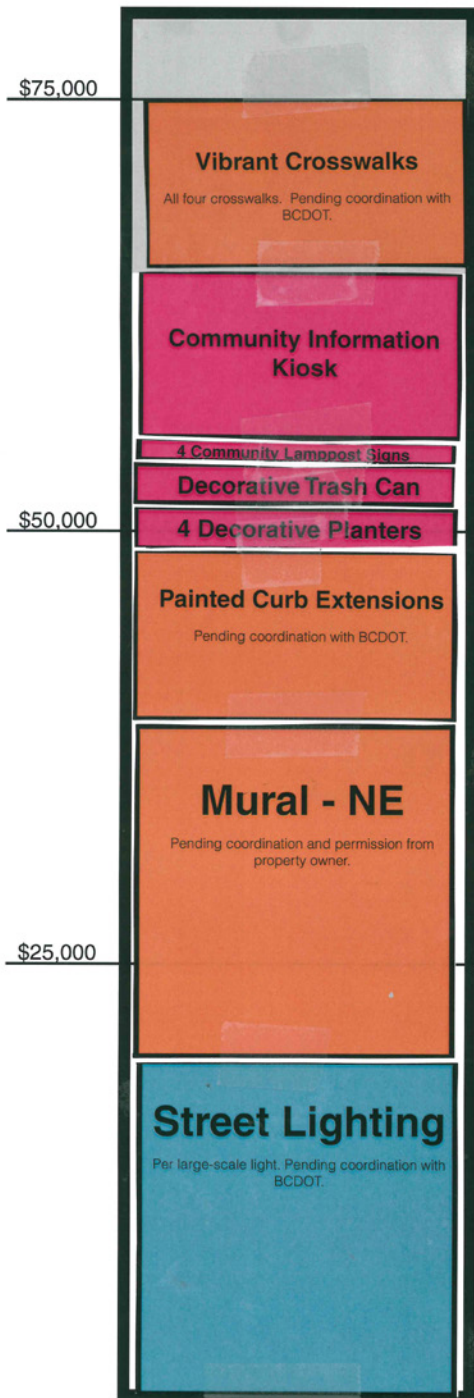
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2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

3 - Which improvement card(s) did you place in the grey shaded area? Why are these optional for you based on budget? ¿Qué tarjeta (s) de mejora (s) colocaste en el área sombreada gris? ¿Por qué son opcionales para ti basado en el presupuesto?

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

Group



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1 - Overall, why did you select these improvements? En general, ¿por qué seleccionaste estas mejoras?

*I feel like they cover the major improvements for the intersection without overwhelming it.*

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

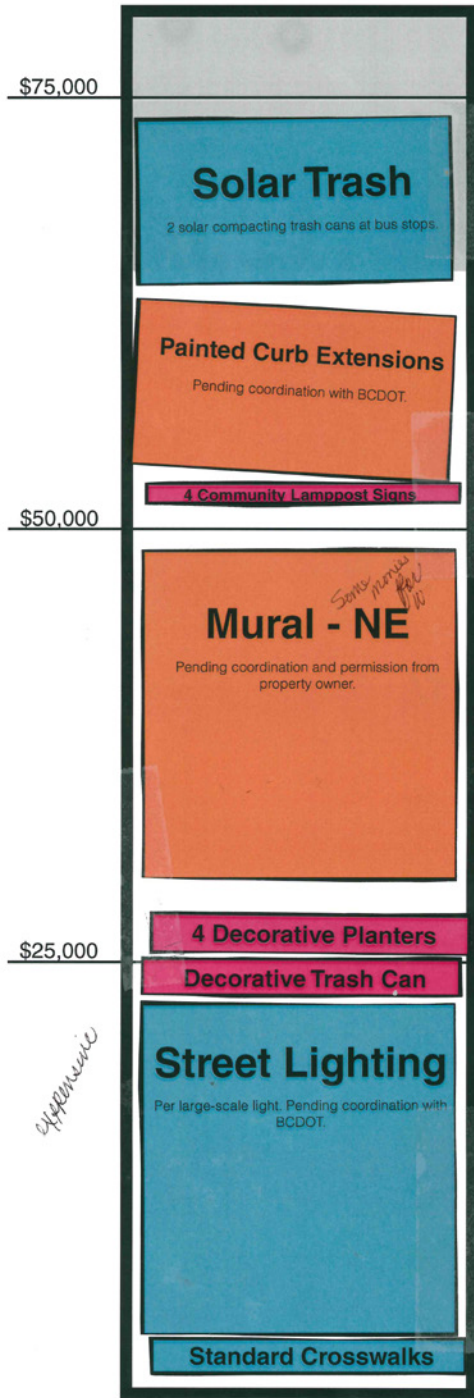
*Street lighting because a well lit street feels safer for pedestrians and allows drivers to see them better. This is a very busy intersection for both*

3 - Which improvement card(s) did you place in the grey shaded area? Why are these optional for you based on budget? ¿Qué tarjeta (s) de mejora (s) colocaste en el área sombreada gris? ¿Por qué son opcionales para ti basado en el presupuesto?

*Not I feel like I would most of the projects without going into the grey. Vibrant on walk. It's an improvement on a standard crosswalk but so is as the crosswalk is highlighted it.*

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

*Changes to the traffic pattern that allow for better flow. This might take a traffic law so I didn't want to put permanent curb extensions*



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*Some solar might not even reach or under stand what gang on. We like the decorative planter + trash can makes the front + backyards look better*

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

*Standard crosswalk it would take us a while to get use to the vibrant one*

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*Solar Trash + painted curb*

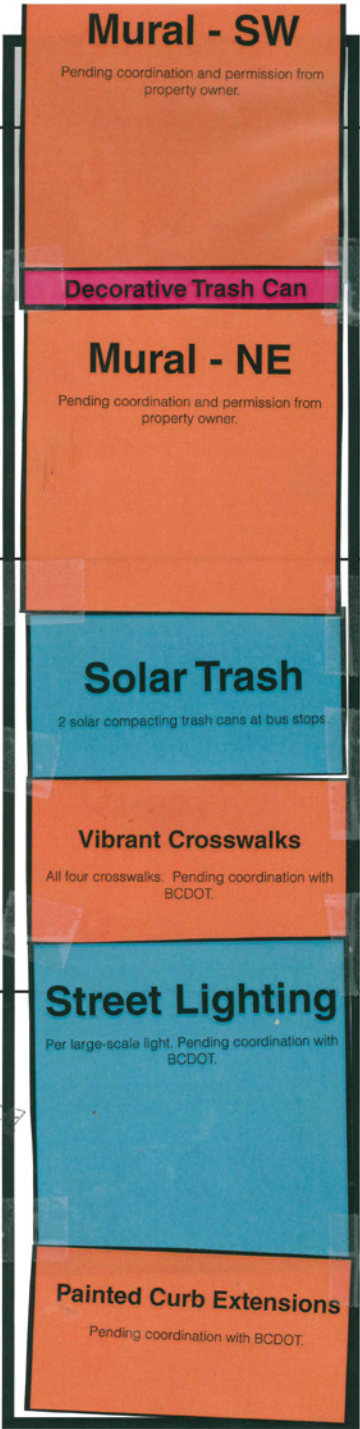
4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

*Not sure @ now*



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Lighting to make it feel safer, painted curb extensions + vibrant crosswalks for safety + visual fun

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

Painted Curb Extensions — they are visually fun + may also calm traffic

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Mural SW it would be nice to have one there, but 1st NE corner

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

Something fun + interactive like the painted piano



\$75,000

\$50,000

\$25,000



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I tried to chose a variety of projects that would be both practical + artistic, + cost-effective to create the largest impact.

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

Painted curb extensions. I wanted to chose permanent curb extensions, but was deterred by the price.

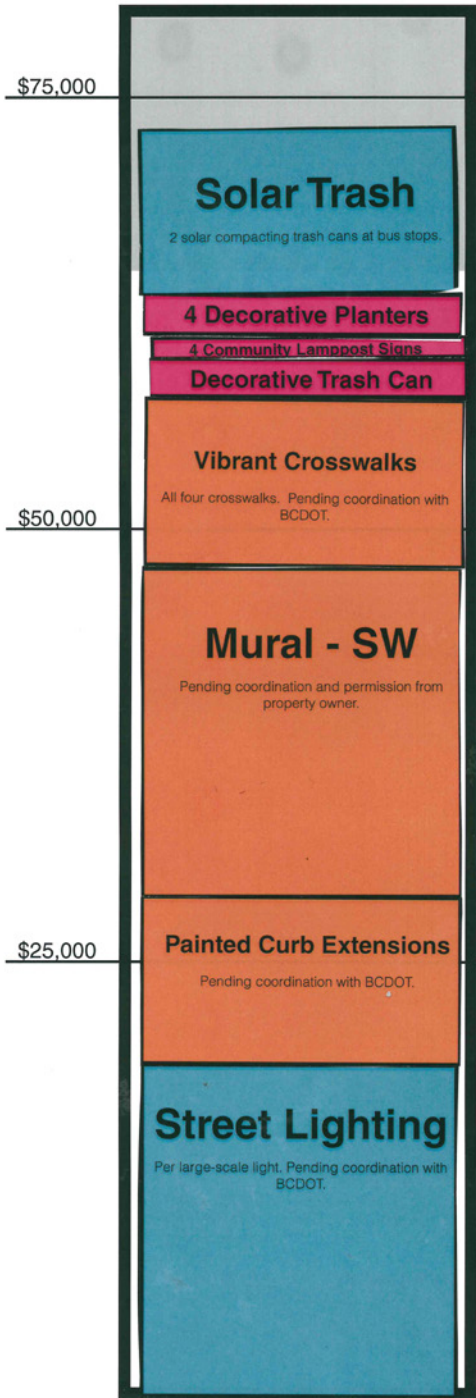
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Community information + Street lighting. They would be excellent projects, but are a lower priority for me.

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

I would like to see more family oriented businesses like a cafe and coffee shop, organic produce shop, kids community center





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Los costos enumerados para cada opción son aproximados y cambiarán a medida que el proyecto avance hacia el diseño y la implementación. Las tarjetas de mejoras que coloques en el área sombreada gris son las que tú piensas que se pueden agregar o quitar del proyecto según lo permita el presupuesto. Cuando hayas llenado tu carta, escribe o pega las selecciones y responde a las siguientes preguntas:

1 - Overall, why did you select these improvements? En general, ¿por qué seleccionaste estas mejoras?

Safety, Security, Trash mgmt.  
\$ vibrancy

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

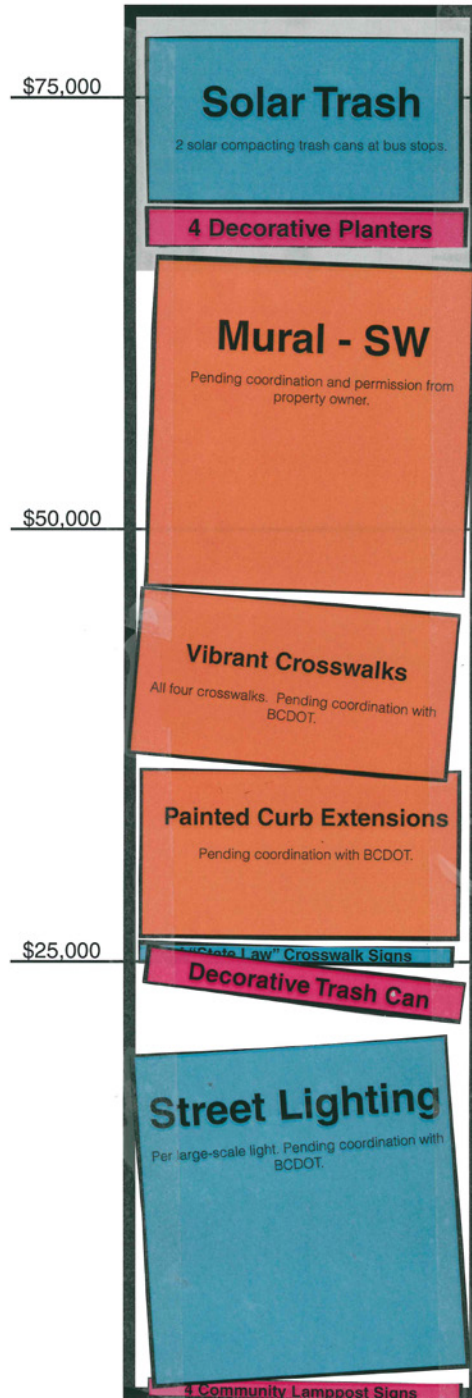
Lighting helps with all of the above

3 - Which improvement card(s) did you place in the grey shaded area? Why are these optional for you based on budget? ¿Qué tarjeta (s) de mejora (s) colocaste en el área sombreada gris? ¿Por qué son opcionales para ti basado en el presupuesto?

Solar Trash - expensive + possible long term costs

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

additional greenery



# Placemaking

at Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue

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Select the improvement card you most wish to see happen and place it at the bottom of the chart. Each card is sized based on its approximate cost. As you add more options to the chart, you'll see how much money is left in the overall budget. Keep adding options until you fill the chart.

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Por que son mas faciles de implementar y mas urgentes y beneficie directamente a los vecinos

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

4 community lamppost signs  
Porque podemos recuperar la historia de nuestra ciudad y e identificarnos con la ciudad

3 - Which improvement card(s) did you place in the grey shaded area? Why are these optional for you based on budget? ¿Qué tarjeta (s) de mejora (s) colocaste en el área sombreada gris? ¿Por qué son opcionales para ti basado en el presupuesto?

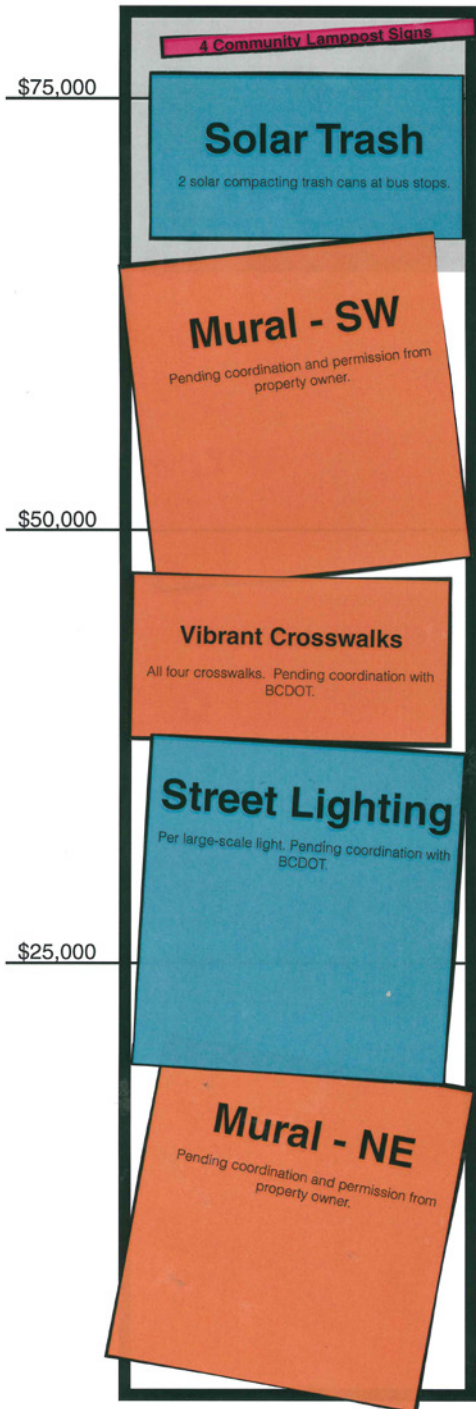
Solar trash  
Por que sirve para educar a los personas lo importante reciclar y mantener limpio nuestro mundo

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?



ndc

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at Baltimore Street and Highland Avenue

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*The Estabroo bus stop needs more vibrancy & the table are light, & consistency improve street safety*

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

*must behind the Estabroo bus stop - that will be so dismal!*

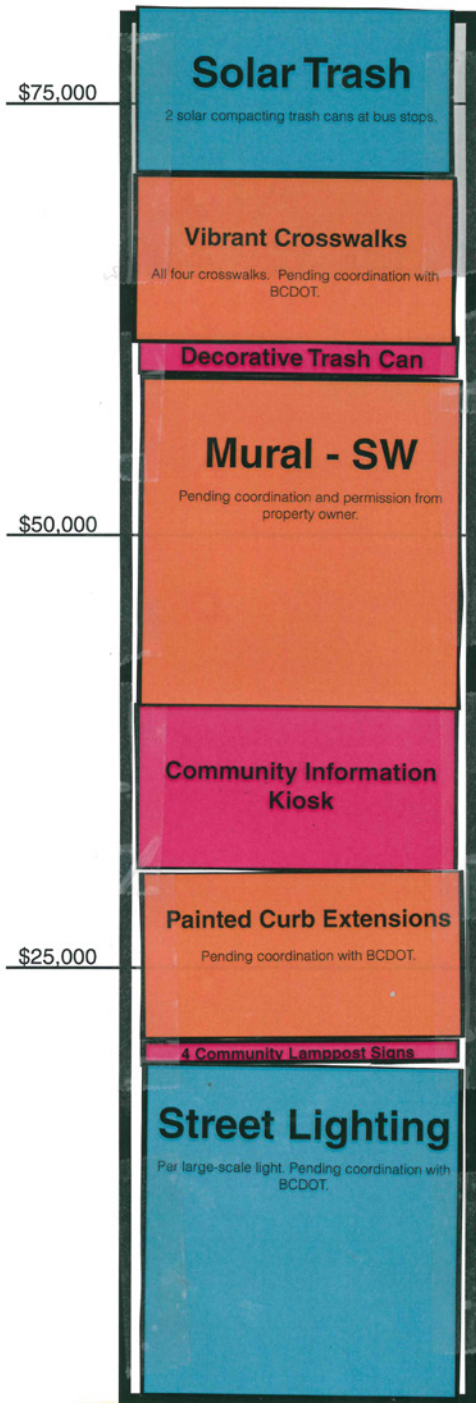
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*Solar trash cans I like this but I'm concerned about pick-up*

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?

*building lighting*

Shannon from SECD



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*would a mix of improvements that are practical, but also improve the aesthetics of the intersection.*

2 - Which improvement card did you place at the bottom of the chart? Why did you select this option? ¿Qué tarjeta de mejora colocaste en la parte inferior de la tabla? ¿Por qué seleccionaste esta opción?

*street lighting - safety concern can have the most impact*

3 - Which improvement card(s) did you place in the grey shaded area? Why are these optional for you based on budget? ¿Qué tarjeta (s) de mejora (s) colocaste en el área sombreada gris? ¿Por qué son opcionales para ti basado en el presupuesto?

*Solar trash cans + vibrant crosswalks because they seemed like a duplicate of decorative painted curb extensions + decorative trash cans*

4 - What features or options are not offered here that you would like to see? ¿Qué características u opciones no se ofrecen aquí que te gustaría ver?



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## Appendix: Direct Outreach



**What do you MOST want to see happen here?**

**BALTIMORE ST**

**HIGHLAND AVE**

**A** - murals by bus stops  
**B** - artistic bus shelter  
**C** - lighting

**D** - community sign  
**E** - safer pedestrian crossing

 **TEXT 617967 AND THE LETTERS OF YOUR SELECTION TO**

**22333**

YOU MAY CHOOSE TWO LETTERS



ndc  
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Highland Ave Transit Placemaking

To reach users of the space who weren't attending design meetings, two strategies were employed. First, Andy Dahl of Southeast CDC canvassed users of the bus stations. Second, flyers as shown above in English and Spanish were hung on all four corners of the intersection requesting responses via text message. No text responses were received, but Andy recorded 30 responses from bus riders in English and Spanish.

This was the first time either organization had attempted text message canvassing, and future attempts will strive to promote responses.

**A - 6**  
**B - 2**  
**C - 7**  
**D - 0**  
**E - 15**