

October, 2009

Urban Design Guidelines

Draft

Germanatown Employment Area Sector Plan



Montgomery County Planning Department
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
MontgomeryPlanning.org

Urban Design Guidelines

Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan

ABSTRACT

These guidelines are intended to provide direction in meeting the goals of the *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan*. They are approved by the Planning Board for staff use in reviewing development proposals and should be used as well by developers in shaping their projects, and by citizens interested in the pattern and character of development in their community.

SOURCE OF COPIES

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760

On line at: <http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/germantown/index.shtm>

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is a bi-county agency created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority extends to the great majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties; the Maryland-Washington Regional District (M-NCPPC planning jurisdiction) comprises 1,001 square miles, while the Metropolitan District (parks) comprises 919 square miles, in the two counties.

The Commission is charged with preparing, adopting, and amending or extending *The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties*.

The Commission operates in each county through Planning Boards appointed by the county government. The Boards are responsible for all local plans, zoning amendments, subdivision regulations, and administration of parks.

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How to Use These Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to implement the approved and adopted the *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan* by providing design guidance for applicants seeking development approval or capital improvement projects. They reflect the Planning Board's expectations to create a unified place through outstanding design.

The guidelines were developed through work with property owners, residents, institutions, interest groups, and the County Executive.

These guidelines are approved by the Planning Board for use in developing and evaluating proposed building projects and applications. They will be revised to reflect new technologies or field conditions and updated comprehensively at least once every six years.

With the exception of street standards and Sector Plan-approved features, these guidelines are not regulations that mandate specific forms and locations for buildings and open space. They illustrate how Plan recommendations and principles might be met, and encourage applicants and public agencies to propose designs that create an attractive and successful public realm.

Streets – These guidelines are in conformance with the Road Code and are binding unless a waiver is granted by the Planning Board to achieve context sensitive design. Local street layouts illustrate design principles and are not mandated.

Open Space – The guidelines are illustrative except for open spaces identified in the Sector Plan.

Buildings – The guidelines are illustrative and are intended to create an urban built environment.

The Design Framework, Area Wide Design Guidelines and specific District Guidelines provide general to specific guidance in accordance with the 2009 *Sector Plan for the Germantown Employment Area*.

Applicants are encouraged to schedule informal consultations with staff while plans are in an early conceptual stage before submitting applications. Applicants also should refer to the Germantown Employment Area sector plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other guideline documents such as the recreation and noise guidelines.

Introduction

Germantown, a corridor city located in the western end of Montgomery County along the I-270 Corridor, is evolving into a more urban place with mixed use development, tall buildings and urban open spaces. The Urban Design Guidelines assist this transformation and focus upon the public realm. The quality of Germantown's emerging public realm and built environment from lively transit centers to nature-oriented stream valleys will strengthen the long term economy, sustainability and spirit of the Germantown community.



Town Center Today, Germantown 2009



Town Center Tomorrow, Germantown

Design Framework

The Germantown Sector Plan area will be a vibrant urban center for the up-County region. Served by the MARC commuter line train station and, in the future, by the Corridor Cities Transitway, Germantown will become a walkable, transit served community.

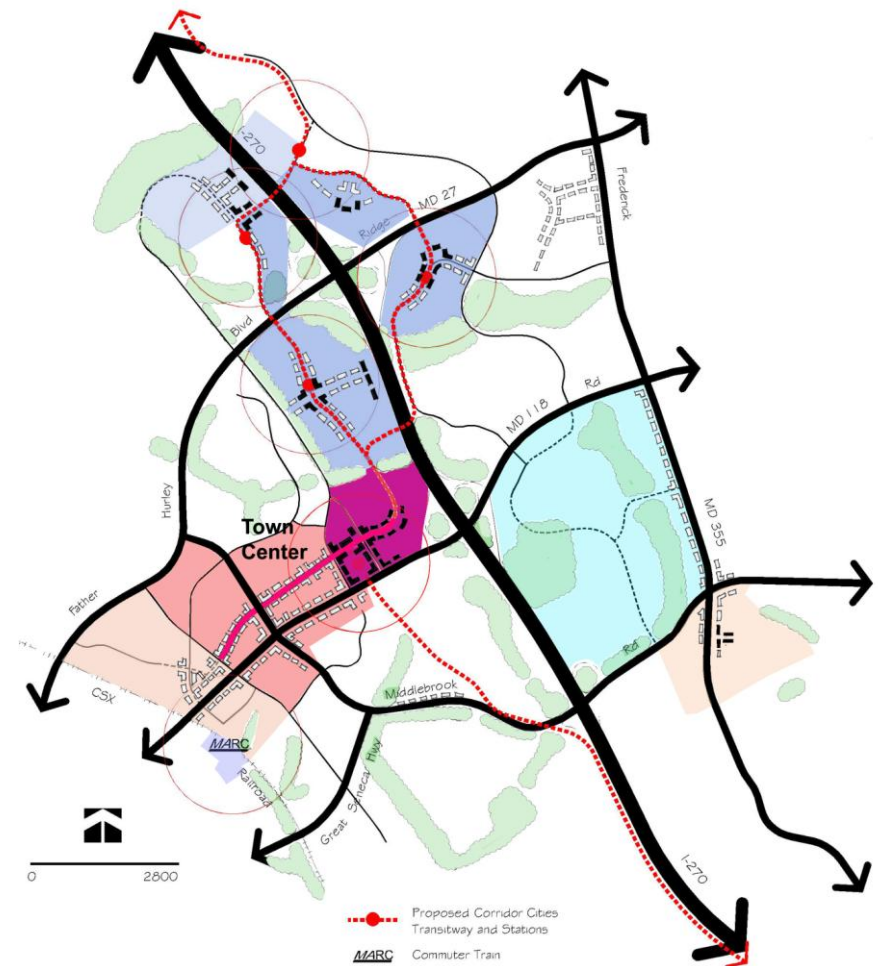
Germantown is not a blank slate. The existing residential communities that surround the Sector Plan area form a general framework to build on. The community, divided by I-270, needs a stronger Town Center, more mixed use, transit-oriented development and more design attention to the public realm.

The design framework supports the Sector Plan's goal to shift Germantown from a car oriented place to a series of walkable communities. The central principle is to cluster development around the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) stations and form distinct communities.

Germantown, a suburban community located in the western end of the County along the I-270 Corridor, is slated to transform into a more urban place with taller buildings, mixed uses and urban open spaces. The guidelines offer design direction for this evolving community focusing upon design excellence for its streets, open spaces and buildings.

On the west side of I-270, the mixed-use Town Center is identified as the major center of community life with the highest density, tallest buildings, and clustered civic uses. It the Core Neighborhood of 15-story buildings and a variety of urban open spaces and the West End, which steps down in density and building heights as a transition to nearby residential communities and the Germantown Historic District. A series of less dense, mixed-use centers are organized around the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) with signature office and technology development lining the I-270 Corridor.

On the east side of I-270, the Seneca Meadows District emerges as a less dense, mixed-use center adjacent to the existing Milestone Regional Shopping Center where little change is expected. Montgomery College will become a more walkable academic village with a compact technology and medical park that preserves significant woodland.



Wooded stream valleys run throughout the Plan area. They help define the development areas, create wildlife habitat, offer passive recreation opportunities, and contribute to the area's environmental quality.

The design framework:

- transforms existing employment areas with low-rise, surface parking into a more compact form clustered around transit stations
- integrates more urban open space in the Town Center and other districts, and preserves natural areas
- emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit, and east-west connections across I-270
- creates a more urban, compact campus for Montgomery College
- emphasizes pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit, and east-west connections across I-270
- creates a more urban, compact campus for Montgomery College
- achieves a new, mixed-use commercial center for Fox Chapel Village Center.

Design Principles

The following design principles will help improve community identity, create walkable streets and attractive safe open spaces, develop street-oriented buildings, and achieve compatible, sustainable development.

These principles are based on the Sector Plan's vision and recommendations and the guidelines that follow are intended to implement that vision. The guidelines apply to all sites in the Plan area, with final building locations and details to be determined through site plan review.



Centers and Community Identity

Compact, mixed-use centers clustered around transit stations will strengthen the sense of place and support transit use. New development should be concentrated and compact. Physical and cultural characteristics unique to Germantown such as its natural greenbelt or the I-270 technology businesses should be celebrated within each district to achieve distinct character.

Mixed use center in Bethesda, MD



Streets

An interconnected street network in each district with distinct street characters will encourage walking and provide access to transit and other destinations. The street network and streetscaping should provide connections and increase the attractiveness of the public realm with tree-lined streets. On street parking and pedestrian friendly intersection design should be achieved where appropriate.

Pedestrian-oriented street network



Open Spaces

The open space hierarchy is intended to serve a multi-age, diverse population with a variety of recreational open spaces ranging from one quarter acre to over 10 acres. Successful open spaces should be visible, safe, accessible, and inviting. Open spaces should be connected by a system of greenways, sidewalks, and trails.

Proposed Crystal Rock Drive Greenway

Buildings

Building forms should create urban character and encourage transit use by fronting the street, locating parking behind or underground, forming a consistent street wall, and defining urban space. Pedestrian scale should be achieved by architectural design that reduces building bulk and height.

Street-oriented development with stores along the sidewalk



Transitions

Compatibility between tall buildings and existing residential communities should be achieved by stepping down building heights and by using building materials that fit the context.

Transition between high rise buildings at a transit station area and adjacent residential area



Sustainability

Protecting Germantown's environmental resources and reducing the carbon footprint of development is a major goal. New public and private buildings are required to achieve a LEED Silver rating incorporating elements such as green roofs, cisterns, wind power generators, solar panels, and other green building technology to improve sustainability.

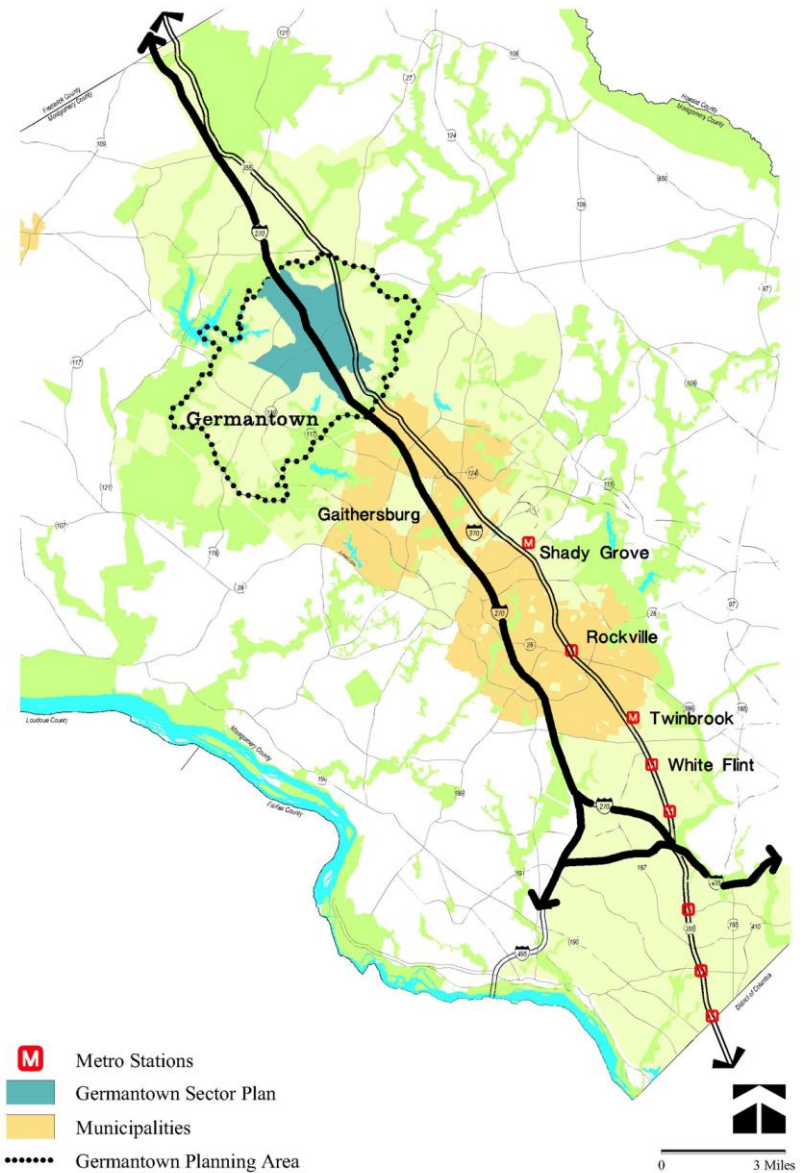
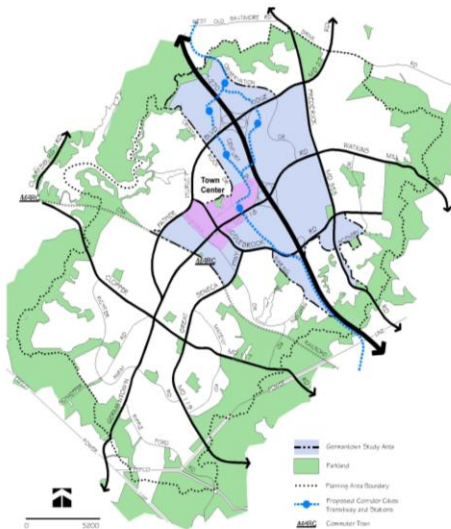
A green roof



The Germantown Planning Area covers 11,000 acres, an approximately three by five mile area, 22 miles from Washington, D.C. It is surrounded by a greenbelt of state and local parks.

The I-270 Corridor contains almost half of Montgomery County's workforce. Approximately one third of the area's employed residents commute to jobs outside the County. A significant portion of the County's future employment growth will take place on vacant or under-used sites in Germantown.

The Plan focuses on the center of Germantown, an area of approximately 2,600 acres. Its recommendations almost double the amount of housing to 15,000 dwelling units, and significantly increase non-residential square footage up to 23,000,000 square feet with an emphasis on corporate offices and advanced technology companies along I-270.



Area Wide Guidelines

Streets

Streets form the framework of any community. The Germantown street pattern is characterized by large blocks and high speed roadways with wide intersections. It is created for the car and unwelcoming to pedestrians. A change in character is required to promote transit use and encourage pedestrians.

Sector Plan Goals

- interconnected urban streets
- short blocks
- tight intersection corners and marked crosswalks
- range of street types: boulevards, main streets, and local streets
- streetscape to improve the environment, and create pleasant and safe experience for all users
- CCT integrated with the street system

The street network and character have been determined in the Sector Plan and most proposed roads in the Plan area follow Road Code standards. Other roads—promenade and greenway?—will require DOT waivers. The guidelines apply to all properties and the final route and right-of-way details will be determined through project plan review.

Street Network

- Establish an interconnected network of urban streets that makes auto, bicycle, and pedestrian travel more convenient and efficient by providing access choices.
- Integrate alleys to development to provide service access and area for stormwater infiltration.
- Design all streets with the specified streetscape improvements.



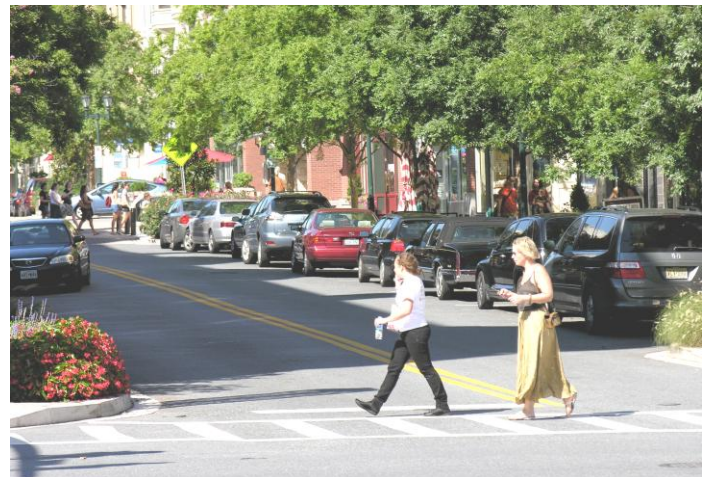
Short Blocks

- Create a network of short blocks to promote walking, solar access and to create human scaled blocks that are intelligible, improve access, and easy to navigate.



Intersections

- Design intersections to encourage pedestrian crossing with medians or neck downs, where on-street parking is permanent, to shorten crosswalk distances.
- Mark or indicate crosswalks with special paving to distinguish them from the surrounding pavement.
- Achieve an effective minimum turn radii of 30 feet to accommodate vehicle turn movements.



Street Character

Establish a variety of street characters that support the emerging urban areas. Achieving context sensitive street design is key to improving community character and to encouraging walking and transit ridership.

Boulevards - Major Highways

Wide, six-lane streets with medians that carry significant through and local traffic. Improved with new streetscapes, these streets play a primary role in creating an attractive character for Germantown.

Main Streets - Arterials and Commercial District Streets

Two to four-lane streets that distribute traffic. City life occurs along these streets due to adjacent activating uses such as retail, office, and residential uses. Allow on street parking and special streetscape where specified.

Local Streets - Non Classified Streets

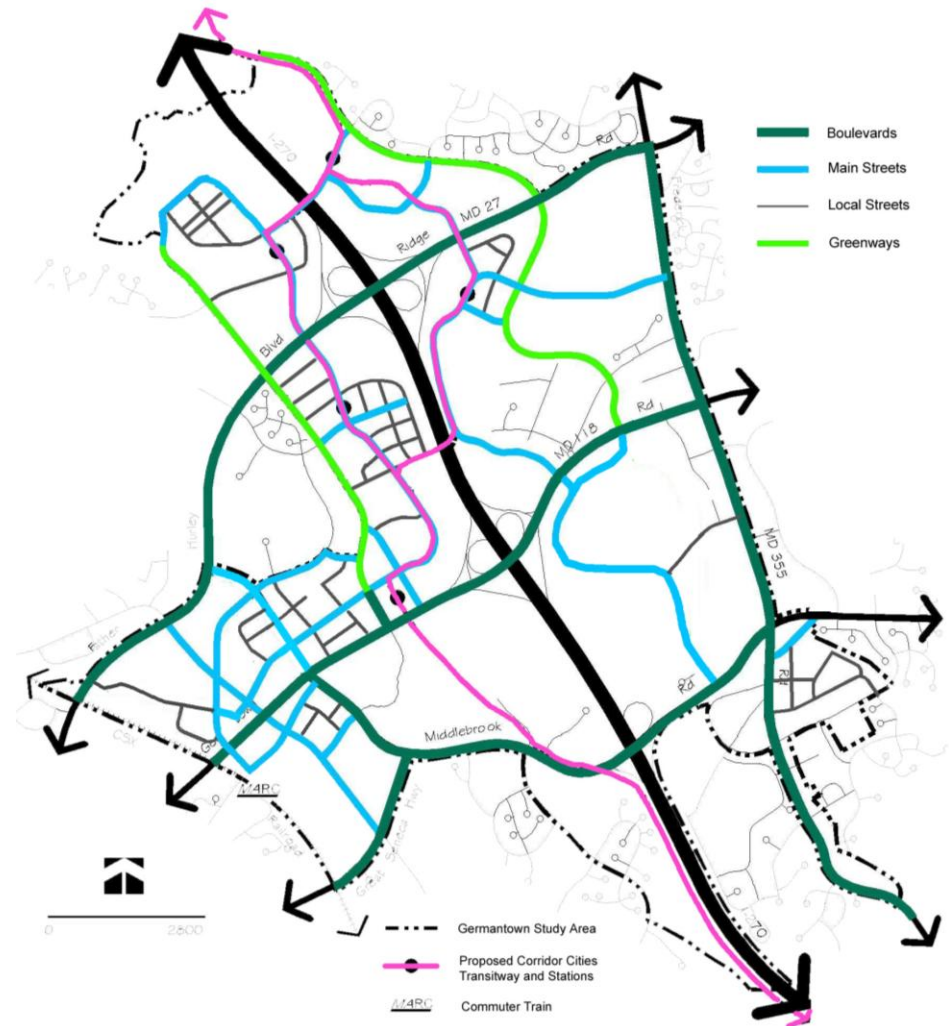
Two-lane streets with permanent on-street parking, a single row of trees, and sidewalks on both sides will provide internal circulation within each district as shown on the district maps. Final street locations are to be determined during regulatory review.

Transitways - Arterials

Four lane, divided streets with the CCT transitway in the median to conveniently serve both sides of the street. The roadways require streetscape treatments that create attractive streets and encourage pedestrian use.

Greenways - Major Highways and Arterials

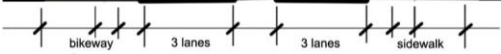
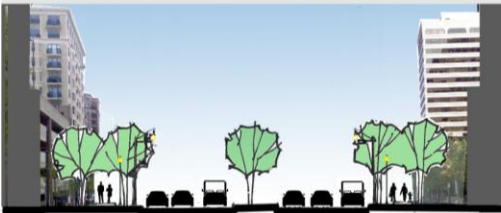
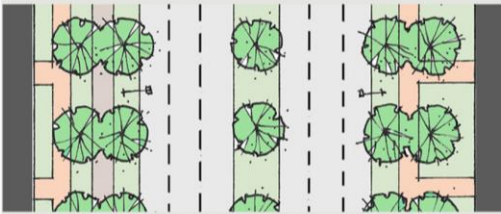
These streets combine recreation and transportation by incorporating linear parks, bikeways, and other recreational facilities within the right-of-way.



Street Standards and Guidelines

The following design characteristics for each street type are based on the Sector Plan. All streets should be context sensitive and accommodate the range of users especially pedestrians in the transit served areas. Where existing conditions and Road Code standards conflict, the Road Code allows flexibility to retrofit in a manner that minimizes impacts, such as preserving existing trees. For streets not included in this section, see the Sector Plan and Road Code for guidance. Final street locations will be determined by regulatory approval.

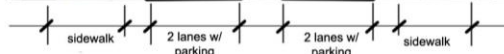
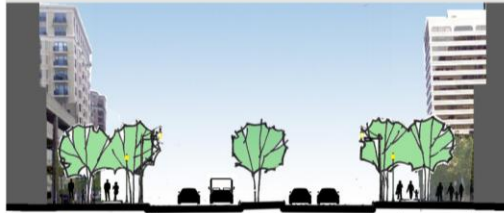
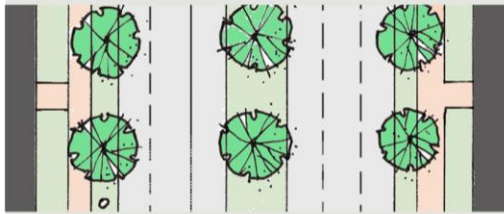
Street standards highlighted in blue on the following street type illustrations are mandated by the Road Code. Standards for building setback, tree spacing, paving and street lighting are not in the Road Code. All standards except for building setbacks are to be approved by the County Executive. The standards for Germantown's transitway and greenway are not in the Road Code. Non peak parking is encouraged to provide convenience and support for residential and non residential development and will be determined by the County Executive.



Boulevards - Highways

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| ROW | 150 feet |
| Lanes | 6 divided w/ medians |
| Parking | NA |
| Corner Turn Radii | 30 feet |
| Medians | min. 17 feet (see Road Code) |
| Sidewalk widths | min. 5 feet |

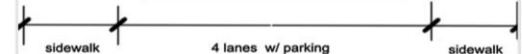
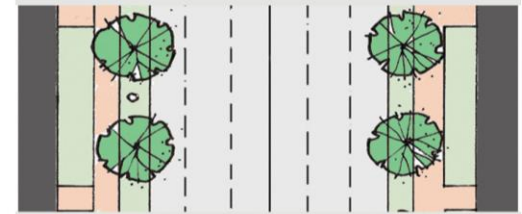
| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Bldg. Setback | 30 feet |
| Tree Spacing | 40-45 feet o.c. |
| Paving Cut-outs | Only in Mixed use Commerical |
| Street lighting | High Mount poles, cut off fixtures |



Main Streets - Arterials/Business Streets

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| ROW | 120 and 112 feet |
| Lanes | 4 divided w/ medians |
| Parking | Permanent |
| Corner Turn Radii | effective 30 feet |
| Medians | min. 8 feet (see Road Code) |
| Sidewalk widths | min. 7 feet |

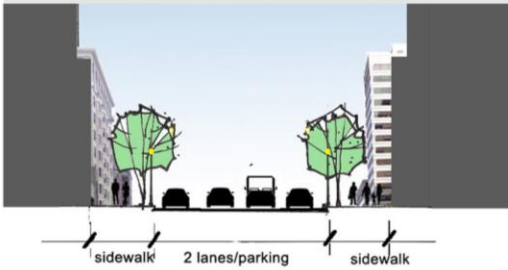
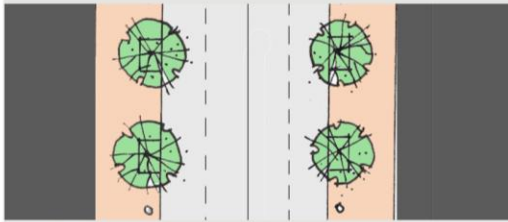
| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Bldg. Setback | 20 -25 feet |
| Tree Spacing | 30-35 feet o.c. |
| Paving Cut-outs | Only in Mixed use Commerical |
| Street lighting | Washington poles and globes |



Main Streets - Arterials/Business Streets

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| ROW | 100 and 80 feet |
| Lanes | 4 undivided |
| Parking | Permitted |
| Corner Turn Radii | 25 feet |
| Medians | None |
| Sidewalk widths | min. 6 feet |

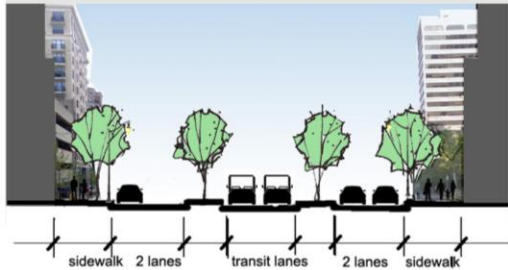
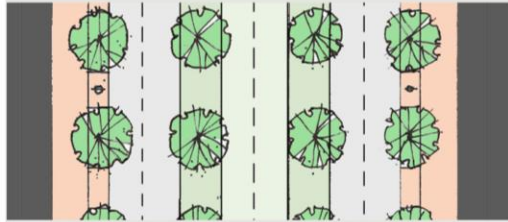
| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Bldg. Setback | 20 - 25 feet |
| Tree Spacing | 30-35 feet o.c. |
| Paving Cut-outs | Only in Mixed use Commerical |
| Street lighting | Washington poles and globe |



Main Streets - Business Streets

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| ROW | 70 -60 feet |
| Lanes | 2 undivided |
| Parking | Permanent |
| Corner Turn Radii | 25 feet |
| Medians | No median |
| Sidewalk widths | min. 8 feet |

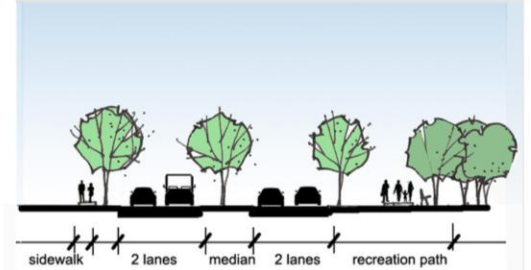
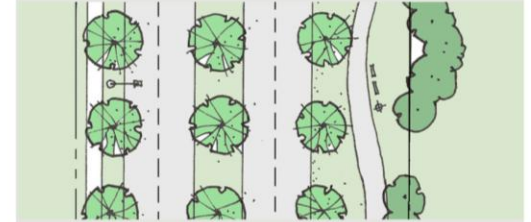
| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Bldg. Setback | 20 - 25 feet |
| Tree Spacing | 30-35 feet o.c. |
| Paving Cut-outs | Yes |
| Street lighting | Washington poles and globe |



Transitways

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| ROW | 134 feet |
| Lanes | 2 divided w/ medians |
| Parking | Permitted Non Peak hour |
| Corner Turn Radii | 25 feet |
| Medians | min. 50 feet for transitway |
| Sidewalk widths | min. 8 feet |

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Bldg. Setback | 20 - 25 feet |
| Tree Spacing | 30-35 feet o.c. |
| Paving Cut-outs | Only in Mixed use Commerical |
| Street lighting | Washington poles and globe |



Greenways - Arterials

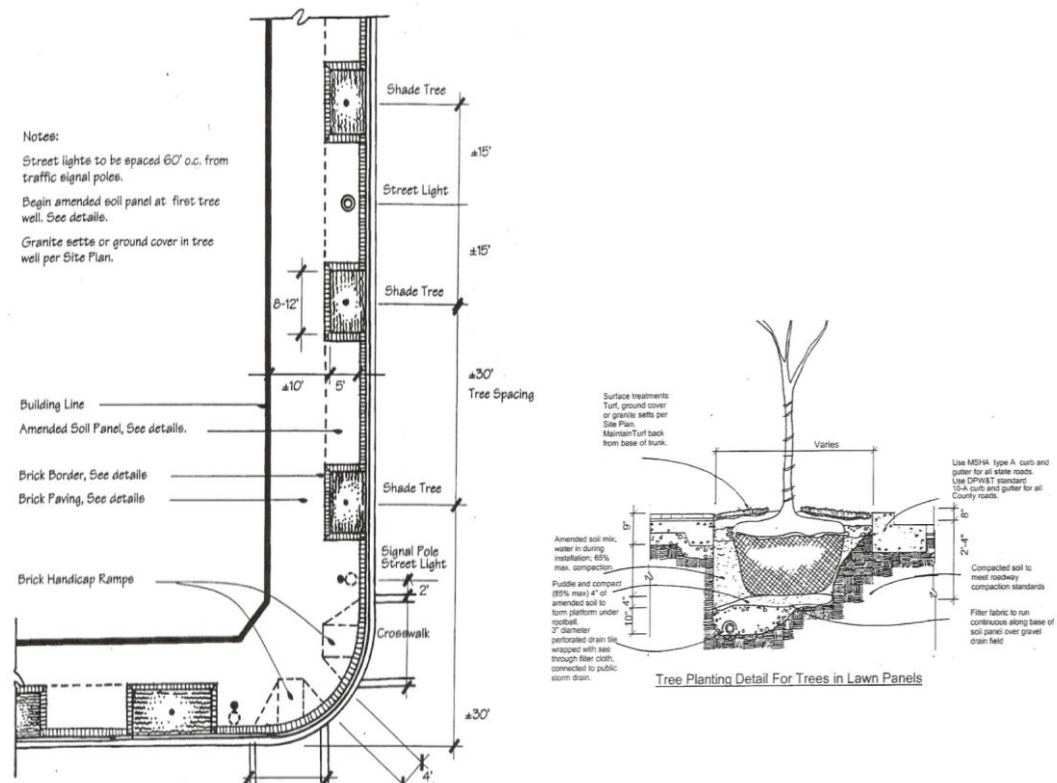
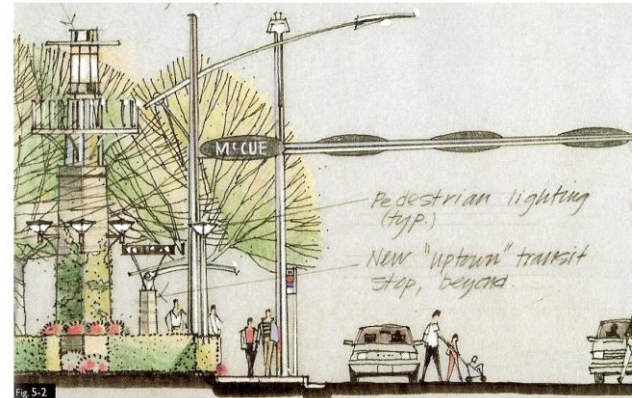
| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| ROW | 120 feet (Crystal Rock Drive) |
| Lanes | 4 undivided |
| Parking | Permitted Non Peak hour |
| Corner Turn Radii | 25 feet |
| Medians | No median |
| Sidewalk widths | min. 8 feet |

| | |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| Bldg. Setback | 20 - 25 feet |
| Tree Spacing | 40-45 feet o.c. |
| Paving Cut-outs | None, use lawn panel |
| Street lighting | High mount poles, cut off fixtures |

Streetscape

The character of the proposed streetscape supports for the Plan's mixed-use communities and results in a unified, attractive appearance. The guidelines offer general streetscape recommendations. For more specific, detailed requirements for paving, lighting and street trees and other furnishings, see the Germantown Streetscape Plan. Proposed developments must provide streetscape that includes:

- Provide details for close tree spacing, layout, and planting as shown in Typical Sidewalk Layout when pavement cut-outs are used. In all other cases, plant trees in lawn panels.
- Locate public utilities in conduit under the public sidewalk in urban areas or in alleys.
- Accommodate stormwater management within the right-of-way in the median, in curb extensions or in alleys. Sidewalk runoff should be managed with infiltration areas between tree pits. In all cases, the street tree root zone must be protected from street runoff contaminants.
- Provide special paving that incorporates artwork, historic plaques, or other unique features for sidewalks along the Promenade and other designated special places.
- Reduce energy costs by using LED lighting fixtures with color ranges that achieve natural lighting.
- Furnish the sidewalk zone with specified trash receptacles, benches, tables and chairs, and bike racks.
- Streetscape maintenance should be provided by the Urban District.



Typical tree spacing, crosswalks, and planting with a continuous soil panel for the Germantown Town Center and the other transit station areas.

Open Space

The Sector Plan recommends a hierarchy of open spaces that encourage social gathering and recreation, provide safety, and consider maintenance.

Sector Plan Goals and Objectives

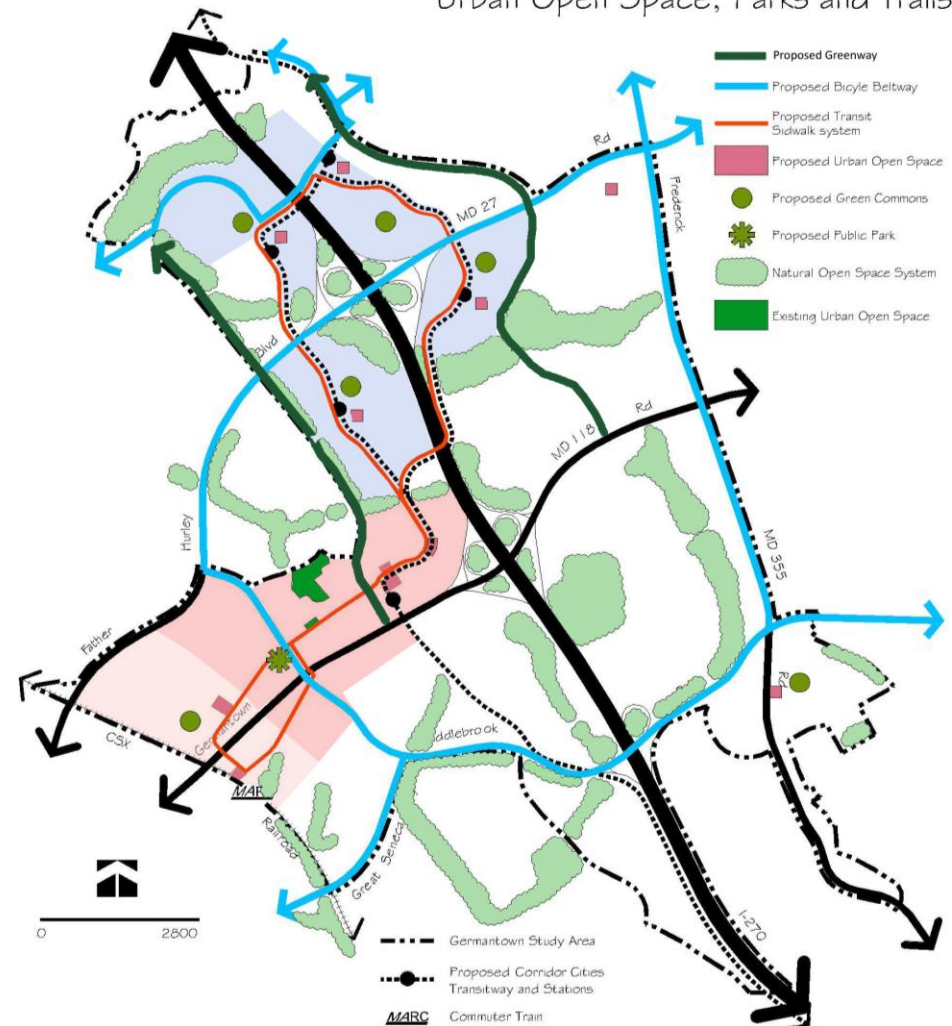
- varied urban spaces in each district
- transit station plazas in all transit-served districts
- recreation and neighborhood greens in each district
- urban open spaces along the Promenade
- greenway recreation areas
- urban open spaces with adequate amenities
- connections to open spaces and other destinations

Open Space Concept

The Plan’s open space concept creates a system of parks and open spaces linked by bikeways, sidewalks, and pathways to meet the increasing demand for indoor and outdoor recreational space. The Plan recommends several public urban parks in the Town Center to serve the entire plan area.

In the Town Center, the location of urban open spaces are identified, but in other transit-served districts, the Plan recommends floating facilities that will be landed as elements in proposed developments. Specific sizes and amenities for privately developed public use space will be determined by regulatory review unless specified in the Plan. Public sector implementation depends on resources becoming available for a maintenance district and staff of the Parks Department to perform the higher level of maintenance required for urban parks.

The open space hierarchy is recommended in the Sector Plan and is intended to accompany new development with varied recreation options. These guidelines apply to all properties and the final location, size, and facilities will be determined through project plan review.



Open Space Hierarchy

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Open Space Hierarchy | |
| Spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Parks Civic Greens Stream Valley Parks and Natural Areas Neighborhood Greens Urban Plazas Transit Station Plazas |
| Connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promenade Greenway Recreation Transit Sidewalk Loop |

Urban Parks

Town Center Urban Park and Proposed Urban Play Park

Germantown has two urban parks, the existing Town Center Urban Park and the planned Urban Play Park. They are both publically owned, managed, and maintained. They serve multi-age population including children and the elderly.

The existing Town Center Urban Park is dedicated and undergoing facility planning. The proposed family-oriented Urban Play Park's facility planning and design should consider the following:

- Include at-grade sidewalk access and hard surface walkways within the park to ensure access and circulation. Sidewalks should be a minimum of six-foot wide and walkways should be a minimum of eight-foot wide to provide vehicle access.
- Provide multi-age recreation spaces, especially family-oriented facilities such as play equipment and climbing structures. Incorporate enlivening interactive elements such as musical chime sculptures, splash fountains, climbing walls and boulders. Fences may be appropriate.
- Provide seating areas including moveable tables and chairs to promote social gathering.
- Provide amenities that make the park unique including special paving, benches, fountains, and artwork integrated into the park design.
- Incorporate landscaping that offers seasonal change and color. Provide shade with trees and structures such as arbors and gazebos.
- Integrate lighting for safety and to avoid glare following standards developed by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IES).

Civic Green

BlackRock Center's Town Commons

Germantown's civic green is the level lawn in front of the BlackRock Center for the Arts that serves the entire planning area. This space provides an opportunity for community events and programs, social gathering, and informal play.

- Provide programmed activities coordinated with the Recreation Department, schools, and BlackRock Center for the Arts with multiple outdoor programs each season.



Interactive splash fountain

Town Common Civic Green, Germantown

Stream Valley Parks

Germantown's extensive network of stream valleys and natural areas provide wildlife habitat, protects water quality, mitigates urban heat buildup and improves air quality. This existing green infrastructure also should provide opportunities for recreation and scenic views.

- Connect stream valley parks to adjacent communities and the surrounding greenbelt regional parks with trails, bikeways, and sidewalks.
- Seek opportunities to retain, establish or enhance connections between natural areas.

Neighborhood Greens

Neighborhood greens are small, level lawn areas serving the community where they are located. They will be privately developed as public use space for informal lounging, play, and exercise. These spaces are shown as floating symbols on the Open Space, Park, and Trails Concept.

- Locate neighborhood greens in mixed-use or residential developments as central open spaces, defined by streets, and developed as focal points. Do not locate on the edge of communities or along high speed roadways that are incompatible with play areas.
- Provide a usable lawn area that supports multiple activities.
- Include a periphery sidewalk, at least six feet wide that connects the neighborhood green to the surrounding sidewalk network. Incorporate internal, hard surface

walkways that define areas and provide convenient access.

- Provide seating, including moveable tables and chairs, in secure sites with identified maintenance responsibilities. Shade seating areas with trees and structures such as arbors and gazebos.
- Incorporate artwork and other amenities that give each neighborhood green a distinct character and identity.
- Provide program activities through the Urban District to meet community needs for events and social gathering.



Neighborhood Green, Carlyle Alexandria, Virginia



Octavia Boulevard Green, San Francisco, California

Urban Plazas

Urban plazas are small spaces designed for outdoor enjoyment and social gathering; they are privately developed and maintained for public use. Each district should have a series of urban plazas integrated into development. The Plan's incentive zoning requires public use spaces in exchange for higher density.

- Locate public use spaces in highly visible locations and animate them with adjacent uses such as retail or restaurants.
- Disperse urban plazas throughout the district and avoid eroding the building line with too many open spaces along the street.
- Design space to be welcoming to the public and not viewed as private area. Railings, fences, or gates are not permitted. Avoid privatization of public use spaces.
- Provide seating areas that include moveable tables and chairs in secure sites with identified maintenance responsibilities. Locate urban plazas to receive sunlight but also provide shade with trees or structures.
- Provide extensive landscaping using large 5 ½ inch caliper shade trees.
- Provide amenities such as fountains, special paving, and other elements, and include artwork as an integrated design element on the walls, floors, and ceilings of outdoor space. Promote participatory artwork that moves or responds to the viewer and incorporate historic, nature-oriented, or cultural themes into the design.
- Use quality materials such as special pavers.

- Integrate lighting for safety and to avoid glare using IES lighting standards.
- Provide programming through the Urban District.



Urban Plaza, Bethesda Row



Urban Plaza, Market Commons, Clarendon, Virginia

Transit Station Plazas

Transit districts should have a transit plaza at each station with comfortable seating and shelters to promote transit ridership, ensure safety, and accommodate rider comfort. The transit plaza is not the station platform.

- Require private development to provide and maintain transit station plazas.
- Locate transit plazas along the sidewalk adjacent to development and close to the transit platform. Access to the transit platform by marked crosswalks.
- Integrate transit plazas with the design of the adjacent development, providing wider sidewalks and building setbacks to accommodate pedestrians.
- Design each transit plaza as a unique place with seating, shelter, and amenities that invite use.
- Include place-making artwork in the transit plaza designs, including the work of local artists.
- Design CCT station platforms with standard components for shelters, seating, and information systems that give identity to the transit line. Components should be of high quality and attractive design. Provision of the station platforms and furnishings is the responsibility of the Maryland Transit Authority.

Promenade

The Century Boulevard Promenade should be developed as a linear public space along the street that functions as a social gathering place activated with restaurants, cafes, retail, and other uses. It should be developed with wide sidewalks (between 22 and 25 feet measured from the street curb to the building line), special paving, seating, extensive street furnishings, and artwork.



*Transit art by Nikolai Pakhomov,
Germantown Transit Station*



Germantown Transit Station



Example of Promenade, Silver Spring, MD

Transit Sidewalk Loop

This continuous sidewalk system connects to all transit stations and helps users find their way to transit. It will be a specially marked sidewalk with a special pavement that separates it from other sidewalks. See Urban Open Space, Parks, and Trails Concept.

Greenways

Greenway streets provide a linear recreational facility such as bike trails, a heart smart exercise trail, and walks along informal groves of trees. Germantown's two designated greenways, along Crystal Rock Drive along Observation Drive, will be created through the Capital Improvements Program with adjacent private sector participation.

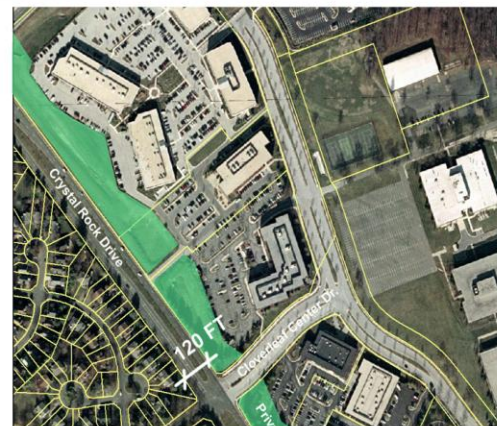
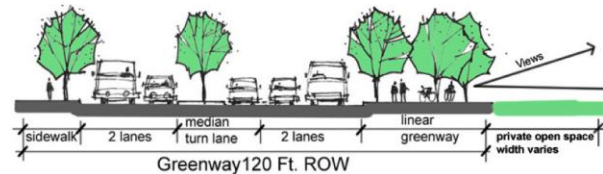
The **Crystal Rock Greenway** will connect the Town Center to Black Hills Regional Park.

- Create the greenway by rebuilding the existing roadway to create a 40-foot-wide linear park along the east side of the right-of-way.
- Provide an eight-foot wide pathway that meanders through a linear park from Century Boulevard to Father Hurley Boulevard. North of Father Hurley Boulevard, the curbside area narrows, allowing only the eight-foot wide trail to connect to the entrance to Black Hill Regional Park.
- Incorporate recreation facilities such as a skateboard facility, a heart smart exercise trail, and benches along the pathway sited for views of the adjacent open space in the Cloverleaf District, and provide historic or nature interpretative signage.
- Landscape extensively with a variety of shade trees that maintain good visibility for safety while shading the pathway. Create tree groupings that define areas and provide seasonal change.
- Provide pedestrian scaled lighting along the entire pathway to accommodate night use and ensure safety.

- Incorporate artwork in special paving for the linear pathway, benches, lighting, and sculpture and fountains.

The **Observation Drive Greenway** will connect Montgomery College with Milestone Regional Shopping Center.

- Provide an eight-foot wide bikeway along the eastern side of the roadway within the 80-foot right of way.
- Provide seating along the right-of-way at adjacent open spaces such as the Germantown Bog. Benches should be oriented to the views of those open spaces.



Buildings

Community character, defined by building arrangements, massing, heights, and facade design, should create an urban identity that encourages walking, transit use, and social interaction. The Plan's fundamental vision of street-oriented development should be achieved by framing the street with building walls, entrances, and activating uses. Avoid the suburban character created by low-rise buildings set back from the street with parking in front.

Sector Plan Goals

- **street-oriented development**
- **massing and height to emphasize centers, stepping down toward residential neighbors**
- **streets active with uses retail and restaurants**
- **integrated urban residential uses**
- **historic and cultural themes distinctive to Germantown**
- **visually interesting rooftops**
- **sustainable building design such as green roof tops, cisterns, and urban storm water management.**

The building recommendations reflect the Sector Plan's goals to create a walkable urban environment. These guidelines apply to all properties and the final location, size, and details will be determined through project plan review.



Emphasize centers and step down towards residential neighbors.

Building Form

Street- Oriented Development

Germantown's existing development pattern should evolve into an urban form with buildings lining streets and parking located to the rear or mid-block.

- Locate buildings along both sides of a street to create building walls that define the street corridor and sidewalk.
- Locate primary entrances along the street. Entrances to retail or commercial uses should be at sidewalk level.
- Develop blocks with alleys to locate service areas and loading from the rear of the building.
- Locate heating and air conditioning, telecommunications facilities, and other utilities in rooftop enclosures.
- Locate electricity, cable, and other wire services in underground conduit in a public improvement easement in alleys or under the public sidewalk.

Parking

Parking, in general, should not be seen from the street in an urban, pedestrian-oriented environment.

- Provide parking in mid-block locations behind buildings with driveway access from side streets or alleys, where feasible.
- Design structured parking, if visible from the street, with facades that are compatible with adjacent buildings. Ramps and parked vehicles should not be visible. Locate primary entries from side streets. Lighting should avoid glare and excessive brightness to be compatible with adjacent development.
- Surface parking should be behind buildings and screened with hedges, fencing, or low walls.



Street oriented development, view of Town Center looking east from Crystal Rock Drive



Parking structures should not look like a parking garage.

Massing and Height

Germantown's seven districts should each have an identifiable center created by clustering density in a core area with building heights stepping down toward adjacent residential areas.

- In districts served by transit, cluster development around stations, placing the greatest density and tallest buildings closest to the station. In districts without transit, create a center by closely arranging taller buildings in a core area.
 - Arrange buildings to create social gathering places and urban open spaces along the street.
 - Design buildings at street corners to facilitate pedestrian movement with, for example, chamfered corners.
 - Fill out blocks with two- to four-story base buildings. Set back taller, high rise towers behind the base to reduce shadows and mitigate building mass.
 - Design slender floor plates for buildings over five stories to avoid massive, bulky forms. Minimize long shadows.
 - Set back towers from the street to help disperse winds, avoid accelerating drafts, and protect pedestrians. Buildings over 150 feet tall must submit a wind analysis by a certified expert and demonstrate that the wind patterns won't exceed levels comfortable for pedestrians.
 - Provide first floor ceiling heights of 15 to 20 feet to accommodate a wide range of uses.
 - In the short term, construct buildings of at least two to three stories, where feasible, if market conditions do not result in buildings that use the allowable density.
 - Vary building heights along a street to achieve more visual interest and distinct building character, avoiding the monotony of continuous building heights.

- Step down building heights adjacent to residential communities to a maximum of 50 feet, including bonus density to achieve compatible transitions.



Cluster development at transit, view of Town Center's Core Neighborhood



Transition height down to adjacent residences, view of transit station from adjacent residential areas

Facades

Building façades and entrances define the public realm and contribute to community character. In Germantown, they should create a visually interesting and active public realm and be compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

- Design buildings with a base, middle and top, maintaining a continuous cornice or horizontal line along the street.
- Create active streets by placing entrances close together with no more than 50 feet between entrances. Not all streets should be developed as active streets.
- Define the two- to four-story building bases with facades that include marked entrances; a change in materials, textures, or color; recesses and projections; and a cornice lines or other horizontal element.
- First floor retail, commercial, hotel, and residential lobbies should be at sidewalk level. Residential units should have slightly raised first floors for privacy.
- Parking structures fronting a street should have ground floor commercial uses with facades that express a commercial building with no vehicles or ramps seen from the street.
- Design facades that include place-making elements drawn from historic or cultural themes identified in the Sector Plan.
- Commercial buildings, in general, should look different from residential buildings utilizing materials such as more glazing to reflect the building's use and provide natural lighting for office workers.
- Design signage as an integral element of the building. Pole mounted signs are not permitted. All commercial signage along streets should be monument type signage on a base or placed within a landscaped setting. The top of the sign should be no higher than six feet.



First floor, ground level retail along Century Boulevard's Promenade



Transparent ground floor, Carlyle, Alexandria, Virginia

Street Level Retail

Retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses help animate the public realm and provide needed services. These uses should be located along retail streets providing synergy and visibility for the businesses, with parking on the street, behind the buildings, within parking structures, or underground.

- Cluster retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses along identified retail streets shown for each district. Retail in other locations is not precluded but should not detract from the synergy of the designated retail streets.
- Activate the street by closely spacing retail entrances, approximately 30 to 50 feet between entrances. Locate entrances at street level, avoiding steps. Use façade treatment, such as awnings, to increase legibility, emphasize storefronts, and enliven the street.
- Achieve a significant amount of transparency, between 60 to 70 percent for the ground floor, along retail streets to help activate and enliven the public sidewalk. Highly reflective or dark glass is not permitted.
- Large floor plate retailers should have liner retail shops along the sidewalk to avoid long blank walls.
- Drive through restaurants or retailers should not be permitted within the Core Neighborhood of Town Center.
- Set buildings back 22 to 25 feet from the curb to create outdoor space for café seating where appropriate.
- Permit on-street parking adjacent to retail, restaurant, and entertainment uses.



Setback buildings for urban space, Bethesda Row, Bethesda



Transparency, retail store fronts, Market Commons, Clarendon, Virginia

Residential Buildings

Germantown's mixed-use communities will bring housing close to jobs, promote transit use, and create diverse communities. The residential design guidelines ensure successful integration of residential uses into the urban settings.

- Provide a variety of residential unit types within a block such as townhouses and apartments.
- Ensure light and air for residential units by providing adequate space between buildings, southern orientation of units, and placement of taller buildings in the middle of the block.
- Locate urban open space such as plazas, neighborhood greens, or other gathering places adjacent to or nearby residential buildings, to create outdoor recreation and social gathering opportunities.
- Include activating uses at the ground floor if located along a primary retail street
- Meet recreational needs within multifamily buildings by providing exercise rooms, gyms, and common spaces such as lounges and meeting rooms, and roof top sundecks and pools
- Place primary front entrances along the street with rear garage entrances for resident convenience. Locate residential lobbies to activate the street.
- Provide parking underground or behind the building in mid-block locations. Provide secure storage space for bikes within the garage.



Residential building over ground floor retail, Washington, D.C.



Residential building over ground floor retail, Falls Church, Virginia



Residential building over ground floor retail, Rockville, Town Center

Building Roof Tops

Varied roof designs create visually interesting skyline. Roof tops in an urban setting need careful design attention because they are viewed from above as well as from the street. Mechanical equipment, recreational facilities, stormwater retention facilities, and other miscellaneous structures should create attractive, visually interesting roofs that also provide environmental benefits.

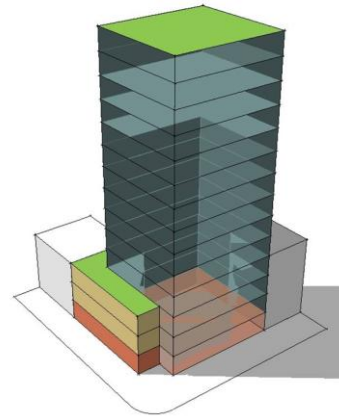
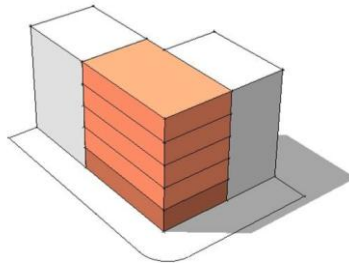
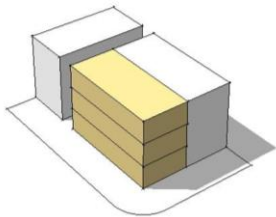
- Encourage varied roof designs such as sloped, flat, stepped, or angled to achieve visual interest and character.
- Railing or parapet walls should be designed as an integral element of the architecture.
- Incorporate artwork such as “roofscapes” of colored stones or pavers where roofs can be seen.
- Reduce stormwater runoff by providing green roof areas for buildings that can support green roofs with special plant material or collect storm water in cisterns and recycle. Use cisterns for roofs that need to be developed for recreational purposes.



Varied roof lines on residential development, Clarendon, Virginia



Varied building heights and roof lines, Clarendon, Virginia



Base 1: Transition Buildings

- Residential buildings preferred
- 3 stories
- 35 feet high (50 feet maximum with housing bonus)

Base 2: Mixed –Uses

- Ground floor retail
- Office or residential above
- 3-5 stories
- 60 feet high

Tower and base: Mixed Uses

- Ground floor retail
- Office or residential above
- 3-4 story base
- 180 feet high maximum without an affordable housing bonus, see description for each district

Green Buildings

Recent County legislation requires new public and private buildings to achieve a LEED Silver rating.

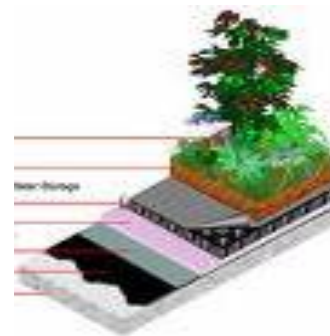
- Filter or reuse stormwater, and reduce heat gain by such measures as green roofs, cisterns, or other technologies to capture stormwater.
- Integrate roof top wind power or hydro generators, if feasible
- Integrate solar panels.
- Provide Zipcars, pedestrian orientation, bike parking, and showers.



Green roof



Roof solar cells



Green roof detail



Wind generator

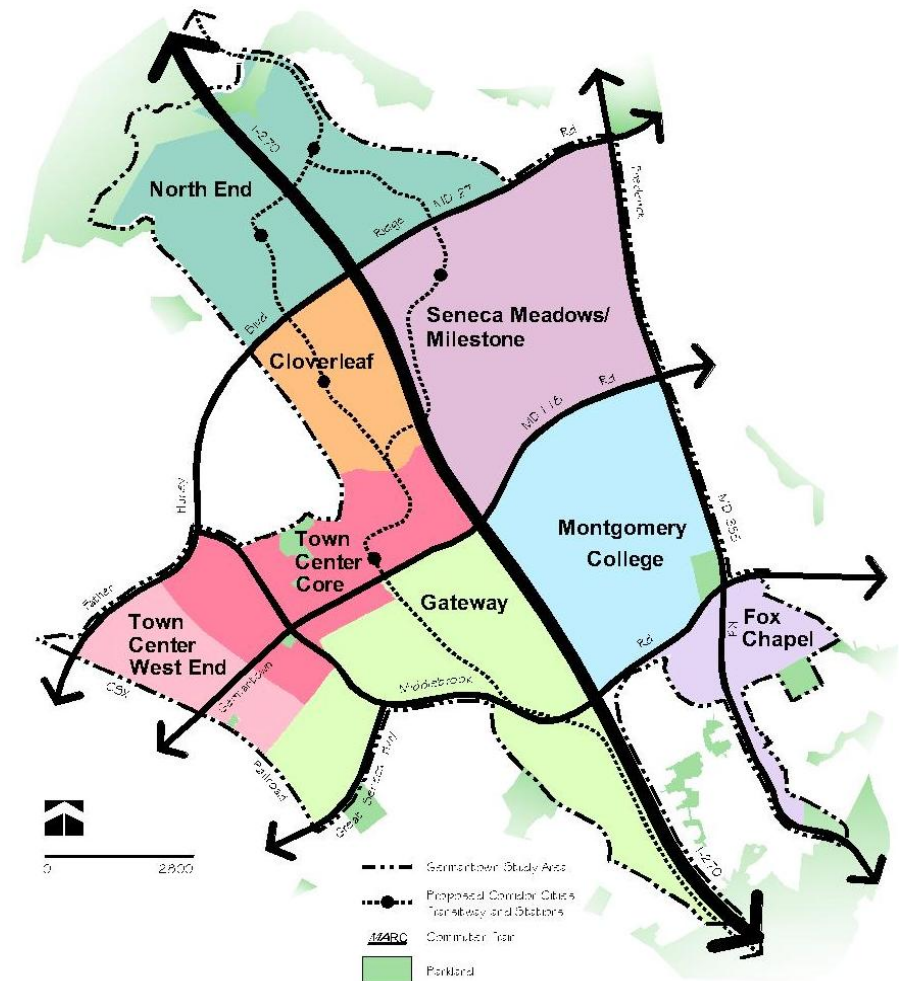
Area Guidelines

Germantown’s districts should be developed as distinct communities with unique features that are supported through the guidelines. The guidelines not only help distinguish these districts but also provide a cohesive landscape concept for the I-270 right-of-way achieving a pastoral natural setting for the I-270 Technology Corridor.

- Town Center
- Gateway
- Cloverleaf District
- North End District – West Side and Milestone North
- Seneca Meadows
- Montgomery College
- Fox Chapel
- I-270 Landscape Concept

The urban design concepts for each district illustrate the urban character, interconnected streets and desired locations of the open spaces. In the Town Center District, open spaces are specified, but in other transit-served districts, the Plan recommends floating facilities that will be landed as elements in proposed developments. Unless specified, sizes and amenities for privately developed public use space will be determined by regulatory review. All streets should have standards and streetscape improvements specified in the Area Wide Guidelines on Streets and Streetscape Plan.

Germantown Districts



Town Center

The Sector Plan views the Town Center as an emerging up-County cultural center, the heart of Germantown with civic uses, restaurants, entertainment, and retail shops. Attractive design of its public realm is critical to strengthening the Town Center's economic vitality, social life, and sense of place.

The Town Center is comprised of the Core Neighborhood and West End. Each block shown on the illustrative Urban Design Concept reflects the Sector Plan's recommendations.

Block 1

Redevelop this block as a single project integrating the transit station, housing, and office buildings. Locate residential buildings with ground floor retail along Century Boulevard that define the green common and transit plaza open spaces. Develop a promenade along Century Boulevard. Allow building heights up to 100 feet along MD 118.

Block 2

Redevelop the public uses as a single project integrating an expanded police and fire station with housing and ground floor retail along Century Boulevard. Step down building heights to 50 feet with a bonus density in the northern end of the block adjacent to residential neighbors.

Block 3

Integrate the cinema use into a mixed-use redevelopment. Orient housing along a new street connecting Aircraft Drive with Century Boulevard. Terminate the view east down Century Boulevard with a vertical building element. Relate the building form to the curve of Century Boulevard.

Block 4

Redevelop properties to define the gateway into the Town Center from I-270. Encourage property assemblage. Terminate views down Century Boulevard with signature buildings on the Matan Property. Provide

extensive informal landscape treatment along I-270 to screen the base of garages, and create a setback of green space along I-270.

Block 5

Existing multifamily residential units are expected to remain.

Block 6

Improvements to the library, BlackRock Center for the Arts, and the Town Center Urban Park should encourage public use, provide safety, and strengthen the sense of place. Provide additional seating and interactive elements such as musical chimes, climbing rocks, or a splash fountain if maintenance responsibilities are identified.

Block 7

Existing housing is expected to remain. The redevelopment of commercial frontage along Century Boulevard should integrate housing with ground floor retail.

Block 8

Provide a grocery store use, if feasible, and redevelop with retail uses that line Century Boulevard. Provide a street connecting the Safeway property to Pinnacle Street. Locate a signature building fronting the intersection of MD 118 and Middlebrook Road. Develop the promenade along Century Boulevard with wide sidewalks.

Block 9

Develop a consistent building line along MD 118, encourage shared access, and connect an internal private drive behind buildings. Allow 100-foot building heights along MD 118 and step down buildings to 50 feet with a housing bonus adjacent to the existing residential community.

Block 10

Redevelop the shopping centers creating new blocks with private streets. Terminate views down Century Boulevard with vertical building elements. Design the new urban park with interactive play equipment, streetscape, and lighting. Locate structured public parking at the Upcounty Regional Services Center.

Town Center Urban Design Concept

Block 11

The existing mix of commercial townhouses, veterinary clinic, and church is not expected to redevelop. If redevelopment occurs, follow area wide design guidelines.

Block 12

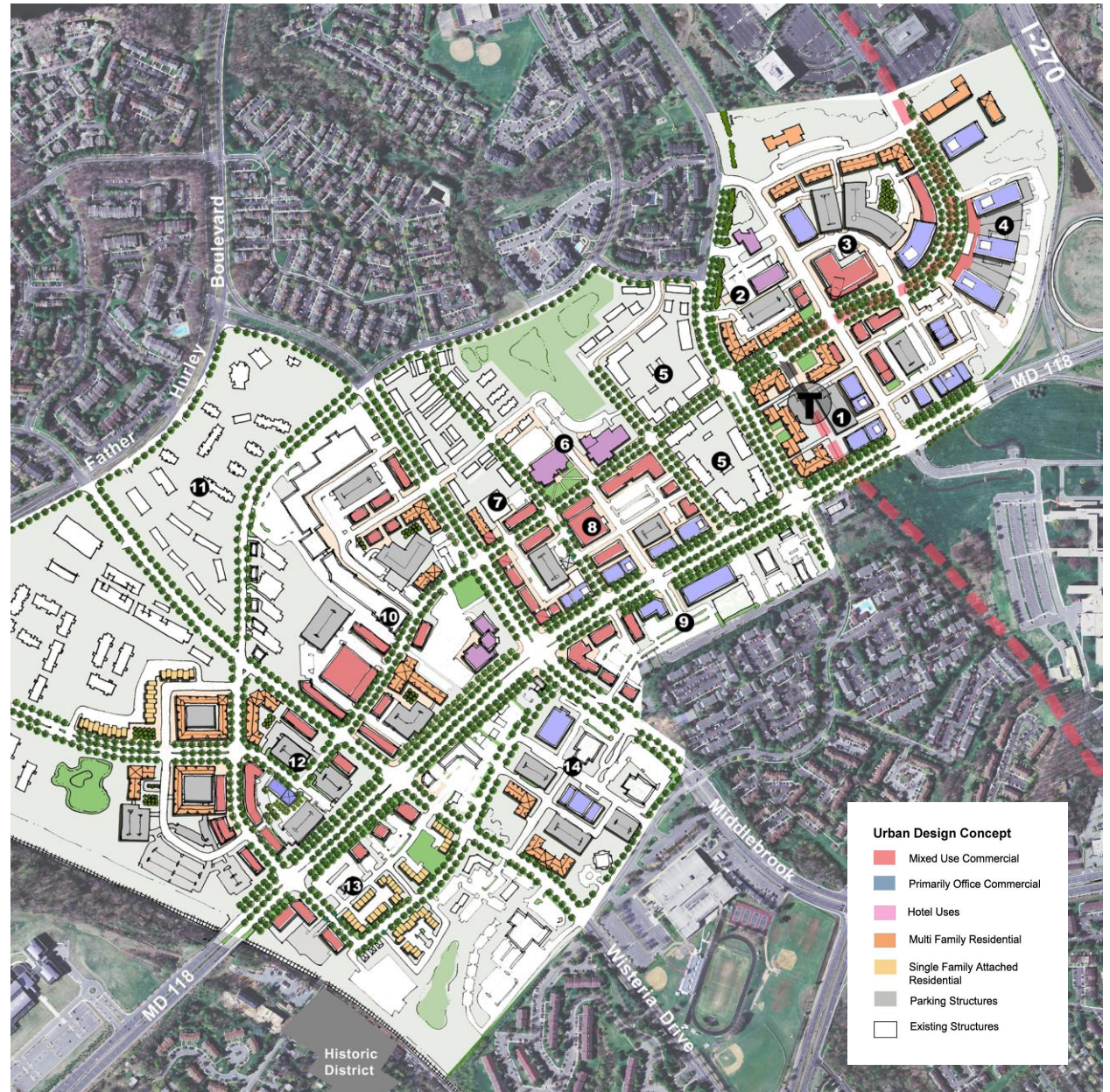
Locate new development with housing oriented to Waters Road and Waterford Hills Boulevard. Allow development of the hillside along MD 118 if development fronts the boulevard. Step down building heights to 50 feet including a bonus density adjacent to the existing residences.

Block 13

Redevelop the County commuter parking lot with two buildings located along MD 118.. Building heights should not exceed 40 feet (three stories). Along Walter Johnson Drive, develop new housing with architectural elements and materials that are compatible with the adjacent historic Pumphrey-Matenev House.

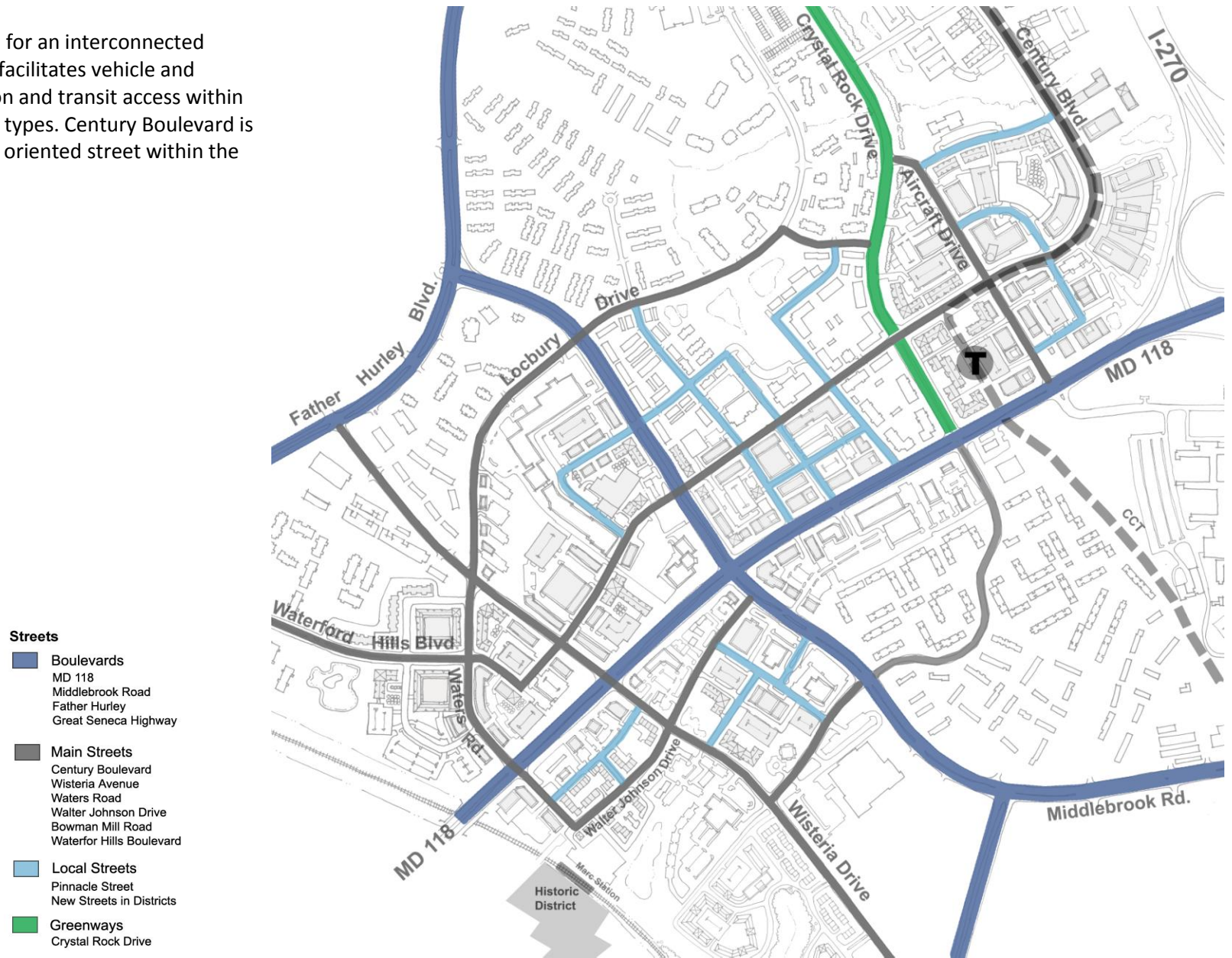
Block 14

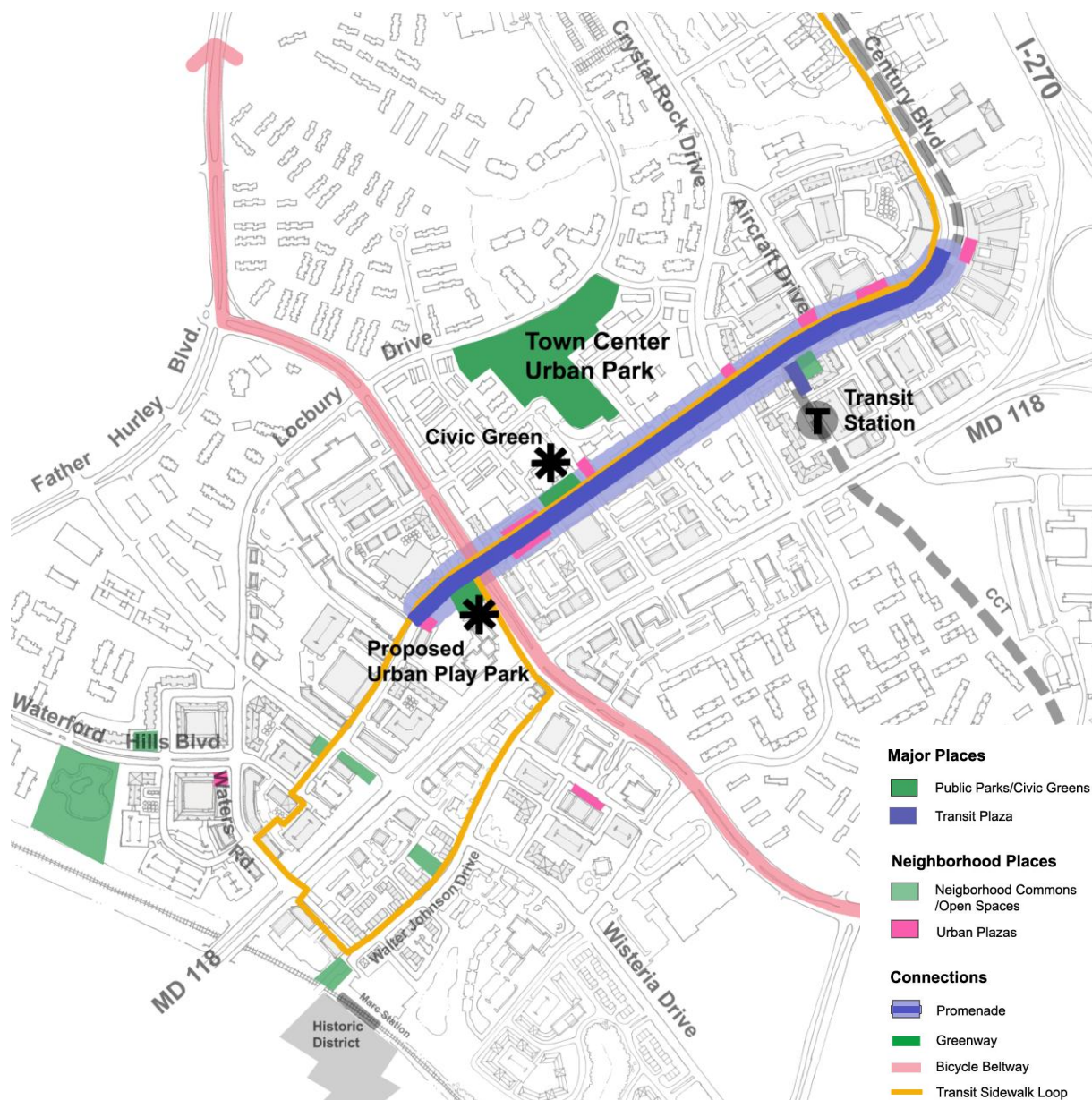
Locate new commercial office buildings along Middlebrook Road and residential buildings along Wisteria Drive. Redevelopment along MD 118 is not expected, but if redevelopment occurs, follow the area wide design guidelines. Connect pedestrian sidewalks along Walter Johnson Drive to Middlebrook Road.



Streets

The Sector Plan calls for an interconnected street network that facilitates vehicle and pedestrian circulation and transit access within a hierarchy of street types. Century Boulevard is the main pedestrian oriented street within the Town Center.





Open Spaces

The Sector Plan identifies an open space network for the Town Center that includes the Town Center Urban Park, the proposed Urban Play Park, a variety of urban plazas, a transit plaza, and Century Boulevard's promenade. These open spaces will support economic vitality, encourage social gathering, and meet recreational needs of residents and workers.

The proposed Urban Play Park should be at least one half acre. The existing Town Commons needs an irrigation system with maintenance and management becoming M-NCPCC's responsibility when the Urban District is created. Programs should be scheduled at a minimum of three times a year and partnerships with other organizations are encouraged. The urban plazas' sizes are not specified and should be determined through development review.

The Crystal Rock Drive Promenade should create a linear urban space developed with wide sidewalks, extensive public seating with benches and moveable tables and chairs, and special pavement with artwork. The Transit Sidewalk Loop should be created connecting all open spaces and destinations to transit. It should be a minimum of eight feet wide and have special paving.

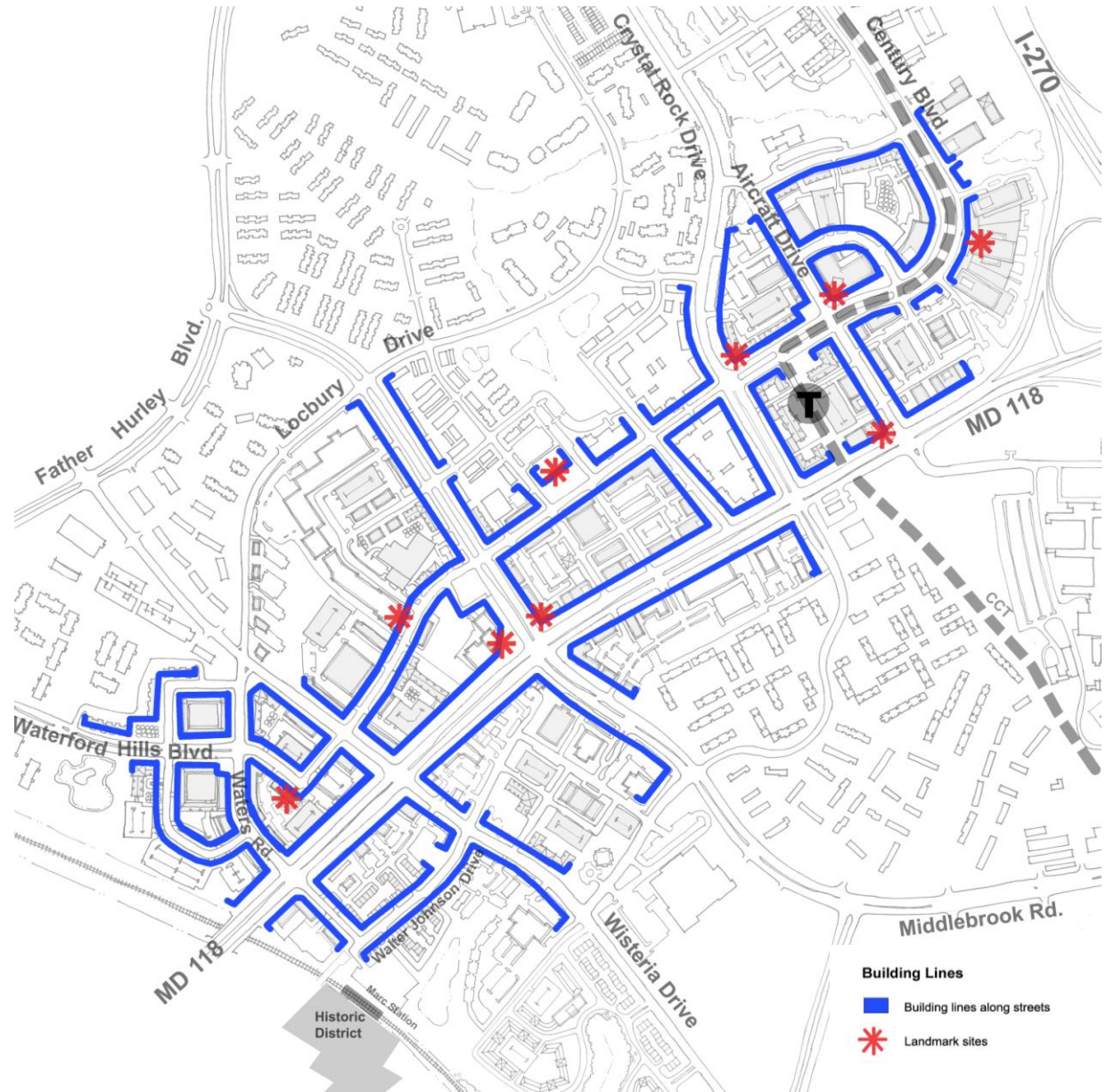
Building Lines

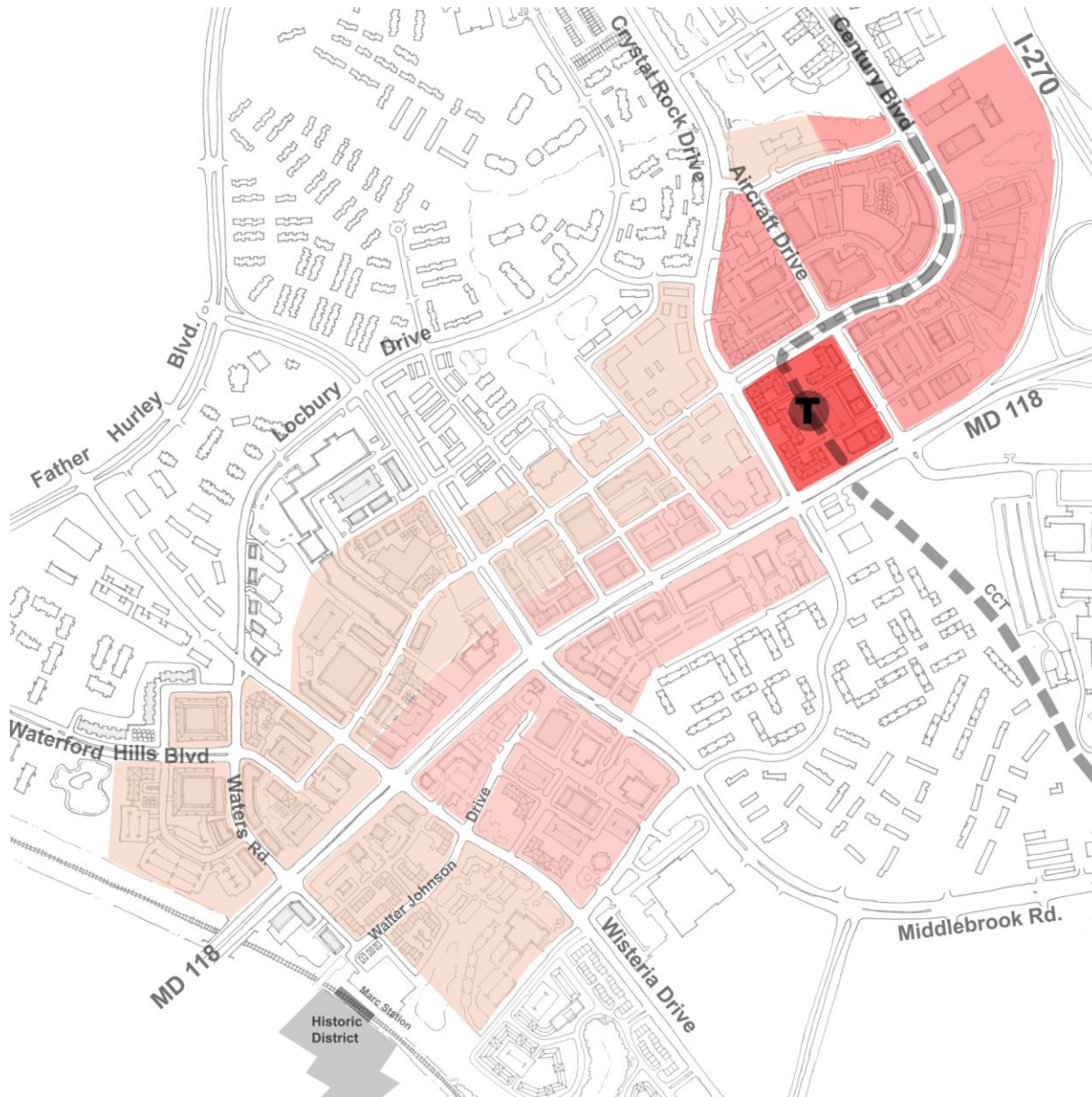
Building lines should define the public realm and all streets. Deviation from the building line is allowed to create urban space, wide sidewalks for outdoor cafes, or accent building entrances. As a general guide, building setbacks should be as follows:

- Along major highways, set back buildings 30 to 35 feet from the curb.
- Along arterials and commercial business streets, setback buildings 20 to 25 feet from the curb.
- Along right of ways of less than 80 feet in width, set back buildings 15 to 20 feet from the curb.
- Along the Century Boulevard Promenade, to be developed with outdoor cafes along the public sidewalk, set back buildings 22 to 25 feet from the curb to ensure adequate pedestrian passage.
- Along I-270, set back buildings 200 feet from the existing right-of-way. Maintain the existing building setback if the I-270 right-of-way widens.

Landmark Sites

Landmark sites are prominent locations offering important views or cultural significance. Building design should terminate the view with elements such as towers or other vertical features calling attention to the building.





Building Heights

The Sector Plan provides height guidance for several areas within Town Center. It locates the tallest buildings in Germantown within the Town Center, providing the main focus and center in the planning area. The adjacent building height map illustrates the different zones of building heights that will create this sense of center.

Setback buildings 200 feet from I-270's right-of-way and maintain existing building line along I-270 if the right-of-way expands.

At the edges of the district adjacent to existing residential areas, building heights are limited to 50 feet including a bonus density to achieve compatible transitions. The MARC station parking lot development should not exceed 40 feet (three stories) to achieve a compatible relationship with the Historic District.

Building Heights

- 180 FT (13- 15 stories)
- 143 FT (9 - 12 stories)
- 100 FT (6 - 8 stories)
- 60 FT (4 - 5 stories)
- 40 FT (1 - 3 stories)

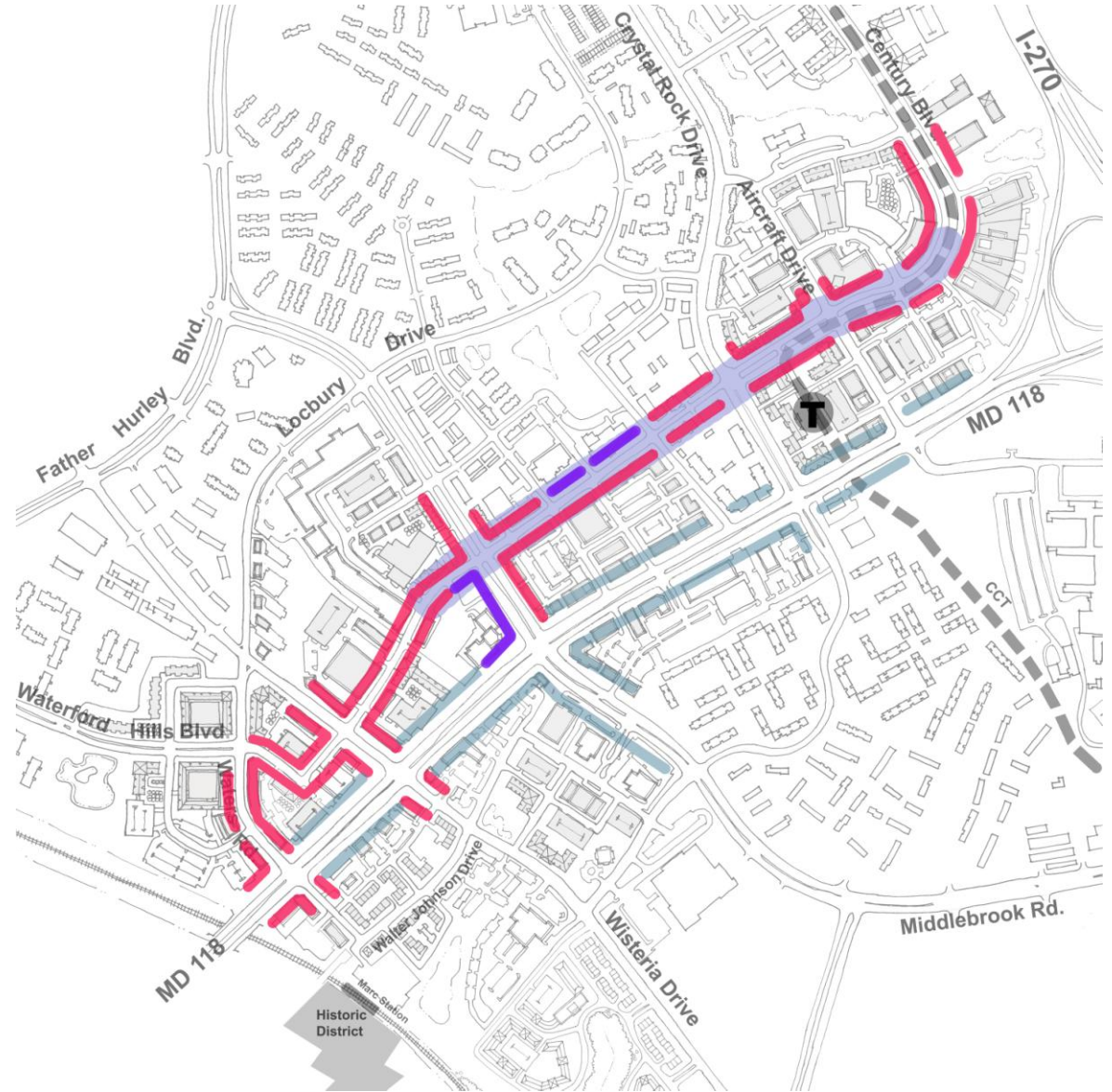
Retail Locations

Retail, restaurants, and other activating uses should be concentrated along the Century Boulevard Promenade to strengthen the existing pattern of retail and enliven the street. Permit on-street parking along streets designated for retail.

Town Center primary retail locations are in accordance with the Sector Plan and intended to strengthen retail synergy and enliven the Promenade. MD 118 is not a primary retail street although office serving retail uses will be allowed.

Retail and Mixed Used Commercial Streets

- Primarily Retail at ground floor
- Primarily Mixed Use Office Commercial
- Civic Uses
- Promenade



Gateway District

The Gateway District is a mix of industrial and commercial uses along I-270 and Middlebrook Road. It is a gateway to the Town Center from I-270 and its buildings and site design should mark this entrance.

Rolling Hills, a residential property adjacent to the CSX Rail line, is one of the few residential properties likely to redevelop. Along Great Seneca Highway, just outside the Sector Plan's boundary line, is the community's retail shopping center.

Block 1 Rolling Hills Property

If redeveloped, locate single-family attached units along Wisteria Drive and multifamily units within the property's interior. Provide over 50 percent of the units north of the existing stream valley within walking distance of the MARC transit station.

Block 2 Seneca Valley High School

Construct future expansions of Seneca High School as multilevel buildings, minimizing the loss of play fields and open spaces. Renovations should be oriented to the front of the school along Crystal Rock Drive.

Commercial Properties along Middlebrook Road

Orient commercial and industrial redevelopment to front Middlebrook Road with rear service and parking areas.

Industrial Properties along I-270 (not shown in illustration)

Locate signature office, technology or biomedical buildings along the I-270 frontage and design them with two-sided front facades to take advantage of I-270 visibility.



Streets

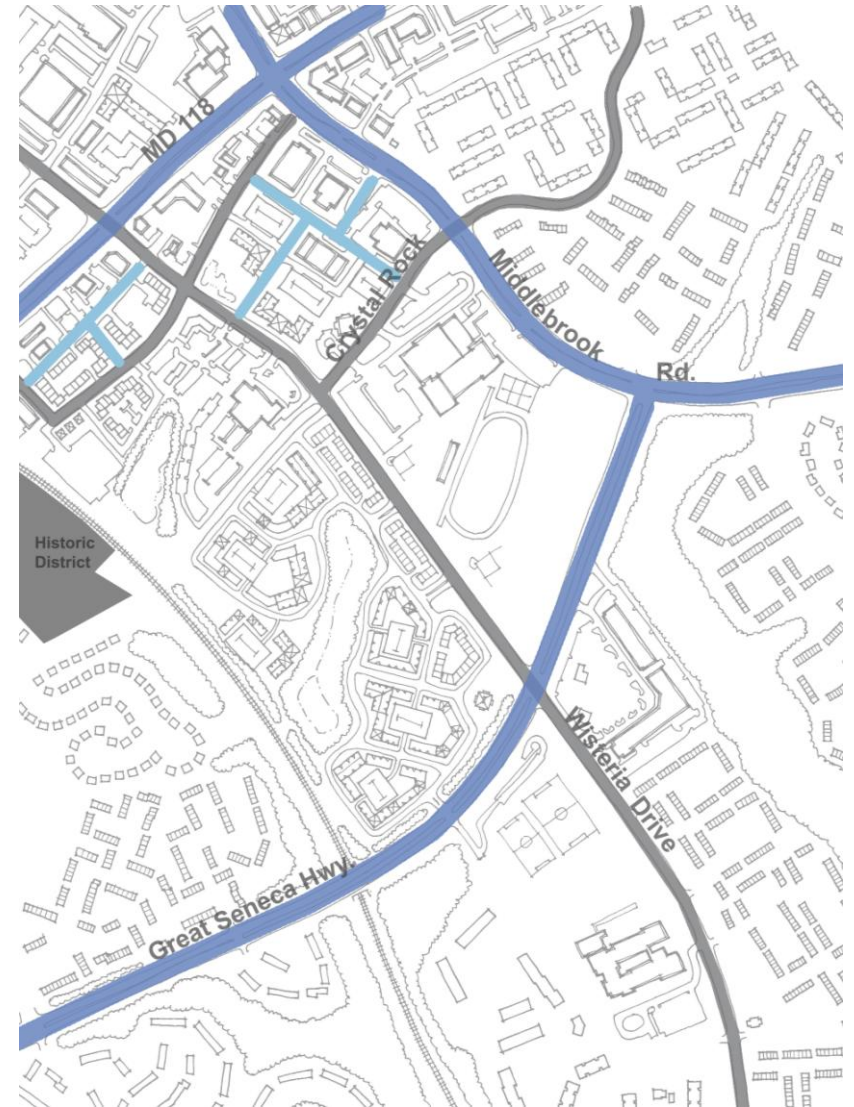
Middlebrook Road and Great Seneca Highway are the two major roadways serving the district. Both should be treated as boulevards given their width and importance as gateways to the Town Center.

Wisteria Avenue and Crystal Rock Drive are designated as Main Streets that distribute traffic and pedestrians to nearby destinations such as the high school, shopping center along Great Seneca Highway, and the MARC station. Safe and clearly marked pedestrian crossings are important.

Local streets within the redeveloped Rolling Hills Property should be interconnected with several access points along Wisteria Avenue and one along Great Seneca Highway. The street layout for Rolling Hills should locate a loop street along the edge of the stream valley to provide access and views of the open space. The precise layout illustrated is not required but should be determined during regulatory review.

Streets

-  Boulevards
MD 118
Middlebrook Road
Great Seneca Highway
-  Main Streets
Wisteria Avenue
Waters Road
Walter Johnson Drive
Crystal Rock Drive
-  Local Streets
New Streets in Districts





Open Spaces

The existing stream valleys, the high school playing fields, and the local park just outside the Plan boundary along Great Seneca Highway provide the district with a variety of open spaces. Though not useable for recreation, the existing open spaces along I-270 should be filled with trees, creating an informal, natural landscape along the I-270 highway.

The following guidelines apply:

- Rolling Hills Property
 - Preserve the existing, internal open spaces created by the stream valley buffer. Existing mature trees within the stream buffer, along the CSX rail line, and along Great Seneca Highway should be preserved.
 - On site recreation facilities within the Rolling Hills Property should include children’s multi-age play areas, a swimming pool, a community center and a loop, paved pathway around the central open space with seating areas.
 - Provide a paved pedestrian walk to the MARC station.
 - Preserve existing trees along the I-270 right-of-way (not illustrated) and screen parking structures.
 - Improve the street character of Middlebrook Road by planting a double row of street trees on both sides and replanting the south hillside with native trees. Improve the street character of Great Seneca Highway by planting an informal arrangement of native trees and shrubs.

Building Lines






Existing building lines within the district are varied and setback considerably from the streets. Rolling Hill's buildings should setback 25 feet from the curb of Wisteria Drive and a minimum of 50 feet from Great Seneca Highway's right-of-way. Along Middlebrook Road, buildings should be setback a minimum of 30 feet from the right-of-way and parking and service areas should be located behind the buildings. Building setbacks from I-270 should be 200 feet from the existing right-of-way. Maintain existing building line along I-270 if the right-of-way widens.

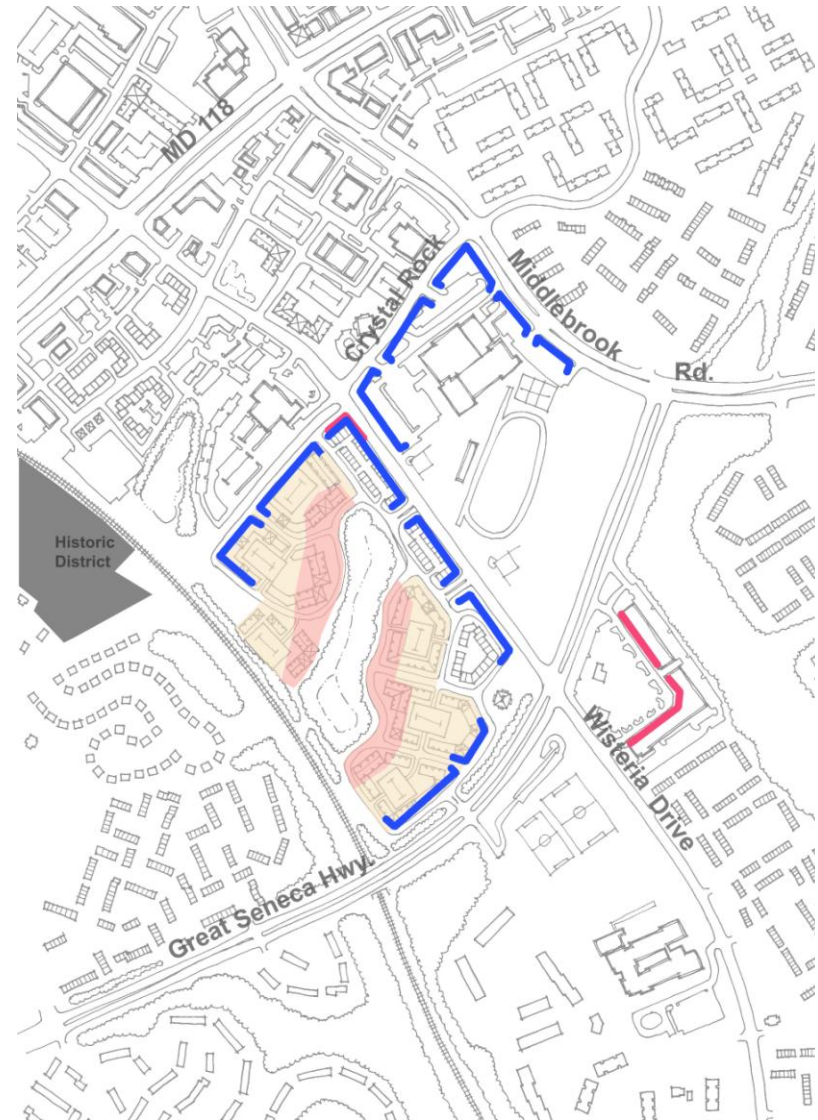
Heights

The Gateway District is a low-rise area characterized by one to three story buildings. Along Middlebrook Road, achieve compatibility with the surrounding residential communities with a building height limit of 65 feet (five stories). On Rolling Hills, allow up to 90 feet (eight residential stories) in the property's interior to locate density close to the MARC station. Along I-270 frontage, allow 100 feet (eight stories) to accommodate signature office and technology development.

Retail

The existing shopping center along Great Seneca Highway should remain the district's retail focus. A very limited amount of retail is permitted on the Rolling Hills Property along Wisteria Drive near the Town Center.

- Building Lines**
 -  Building lines along streets
- Building Heights**
 -  90 FT (6 - 8 stories)
 -  60 FT (4 - 5 stories)
 -  40 FT (1 - 3 stories)
- Retail**
 -  Retail Locations



Cloverleaf District

Cloverleaf is a mixed-use, transit-served neighborhood of predominately employment and technology uses. The Sector Plan recommends this neighborhood to have housing and some limited amount of retail near the transit station. The highest density and tallest buildings will be clustered around the transit station. The neighborhood's main assets are the future transit station, a linear recreational open space along Crystal Rock Drive, and excellent visibility from I-270.

Block 1

Redevelop along Century Boulevard with mixed uses. Establish a route for the Phase II transitway in the median of Century Boulevard, and provide a transit bridge over I-270.

Block 2

Redevelop along Century Boulevard with mixed uses and establish a new local street that connects to Crystal Rock Drive. Provide extensive native landscape plantings along adjacent stream valley open space.

Block 3

Locate office buildings along I-270 and mixed-use residential buildings within the block and along Century Boulevard. Create a network of local streets and short blocks. Provide a range of housing types. Locate a neighborhood green here if not provided on Blocks 5 or 8.

Block 4

Redevelop Century Boulevard frontage with mixed-use development. Locate the tallest mixed-use building close to the transit station at the corner of Cloverleaf Center Drive and Century Boulevard. Extend a new local street through the block.

Block 5

Cluster mixed-use density adjacent to the transit station. Locate office buildings along I-270 and mixed-use residential buildings within the block and along Century Boulevard. Create a network of local streets and short blocks. Provide a range of housing types. Locate a neighborhood green here if not provided on Blocks 3 or 8.

Block 6

Redevelop and cluster density adjacent to the transit station along Century Boulevard and Cloverleaf Center Drive.

Block 7

Redevelop with mixed uses oriented toward Century Boulevard. Provide several new local streets connecting Crystal Rock Drive to Century Boulevard.

Block 8

Existing office buildings are anticipated to remain. Locate new housing along Century Boulevard. Locate a neighborhood green along Century Boulevard if not provided on Blocks 3 or 5.

Cloverleaf Urban Design Concept

The Cloverleaf District should have an urban character created by interconnected streets and open spaces.

- Urban Design Concept**
- Mixed Use Commercial
 - Primarily Office Commercial
 - Hotel Uses
 - Multi Family Residential
 - Single Family Attached Residential
 - Parking Structures





Streets

The Century Boulevard Transitway's alignment and Cloverleaf Center Drive form the district's two main streets where significant development will occur. An expanded network of local streets and walkable blocks is designed to improve circulation and transit access. Century Boulevard and Cloverleaf Center Drive should have short blocks to encourage pedestrian and transit use. Streetscape improvements are required along all streets and should include closely spaced street trees. The transitway should be designed as an integral element of Century Boulevard with a tree planted median and easy pedestrian access to the center platforms.

Streets

- Boulevards**
Father Hurley Boulevard
- Main Streets**
Century Boulevard
Cloverleaf Center Drive
- Local Streets**
New Streets in Districts
- Greenways**
Crystal Rock Drive

Open Space

A variety of open spaces including the existing open space along I-270, a series of stormwater ponds along Crystal Rock Drive, a variety of plazas and gathering places along Century Boulevard, and a transit station plaza will define the area. The existing open spaces along I-270 and Crystal Rock Drive frame and define the buildable area within the district. The following guidelines apply to all properties.

- Provide a green, landscaped character along I-270 and screen parking structures.
- Develop the Crystal Rock Greenway as a linear recreation area with a winding eight-foot wide path, groves of trees, and recreational facilities. Facilities may be provided by private development and supplemented by a capital improvement project.
- Improve the existing, private stormwater open space facilities with natural, informal landscape using native species.
- Locate public use spaces such as urban plazas and an at least one half acre neighborhood green along Century Boulevard where retail uses will activate the spaces. The neighborhood green may be located anywhere along Century Boulevard where it serves adjacent residential development and provides good visibility.

Major Places

 Transit Plaza


Neighborhood Places

 Neighborhood Greens / Open Spaces

 Urban Plazas

Major Open Spaces

 I-270 Landscape Open Space

 Crystal Rock Drive Stormwater Open Space

Connections

 Greenway

 Bicycle Beltway

 Transit Sidewalk Loop





Building Lines

■ Building lines along streets

Building Heights

■ 143 FT (11 - 12 stories)

■ 125 FT (8 - 10 stories)

■ 90 FT (5 - 7 stories)

Retail

■ Retail Locations

Building Lines

Building lines should define the street network and help establish the Century Boulevard Transitway and Cloverleaf Center Drive as Main Streets. Deviation from the building line is allowed to create urban open space, wide sidewalks for outdoor cafes, and to accent building entrances. Set back buildings 200 feet from I-270's right-of-way. Maintain existing building line along I-270 if the right-of-way expands.

Heights

The Sector Plan establishes the tallest buildings (12 stories) adjacent to the transit station, creating a focus for the district. The following guidelines apply to all properties:

- Allow 125 feet (eight to ten stories) along the frontage of I-270 with taller buildings clustered around the transit station.
- Vary building heights throughout the district to create a visually interesting skyline.
- Step down buildings to 60 feet (five to six stories) along the Crystal Rock stormwater open space to ensure a compatible transition to nearby residential areas.

Retail

- Locate retail along Cloverleaf Center Drive and Century Boulevard near to the transit station.

North End District – West Side

The North End straddles I-270 and is bordered by Germantown's greenbelt park. The district's two transit stations on either side of I-270 create an opportunity to cluster mixed-use development near each station. On the West Side, the Sector Plan envisions a mix of signature office along I-270 and housing. Black Hill Regional Park, north of the Lerner Property is an important asset offering recreation and scenic views.

Block 1

Locate office and technology development adjacent to the I-270 Interchange and residential development adjacent to Kinster Drive. Screen parking from I-270 and locate garages in the middle of the block.

Block 2

Locate commercial mixed-use and hotel uses adjacent to the transit station. Cluster the highest density and tallest buildings at the corner of Dorsey Mill Road and the transitway. Provide public transit parking near the station.

Block 3

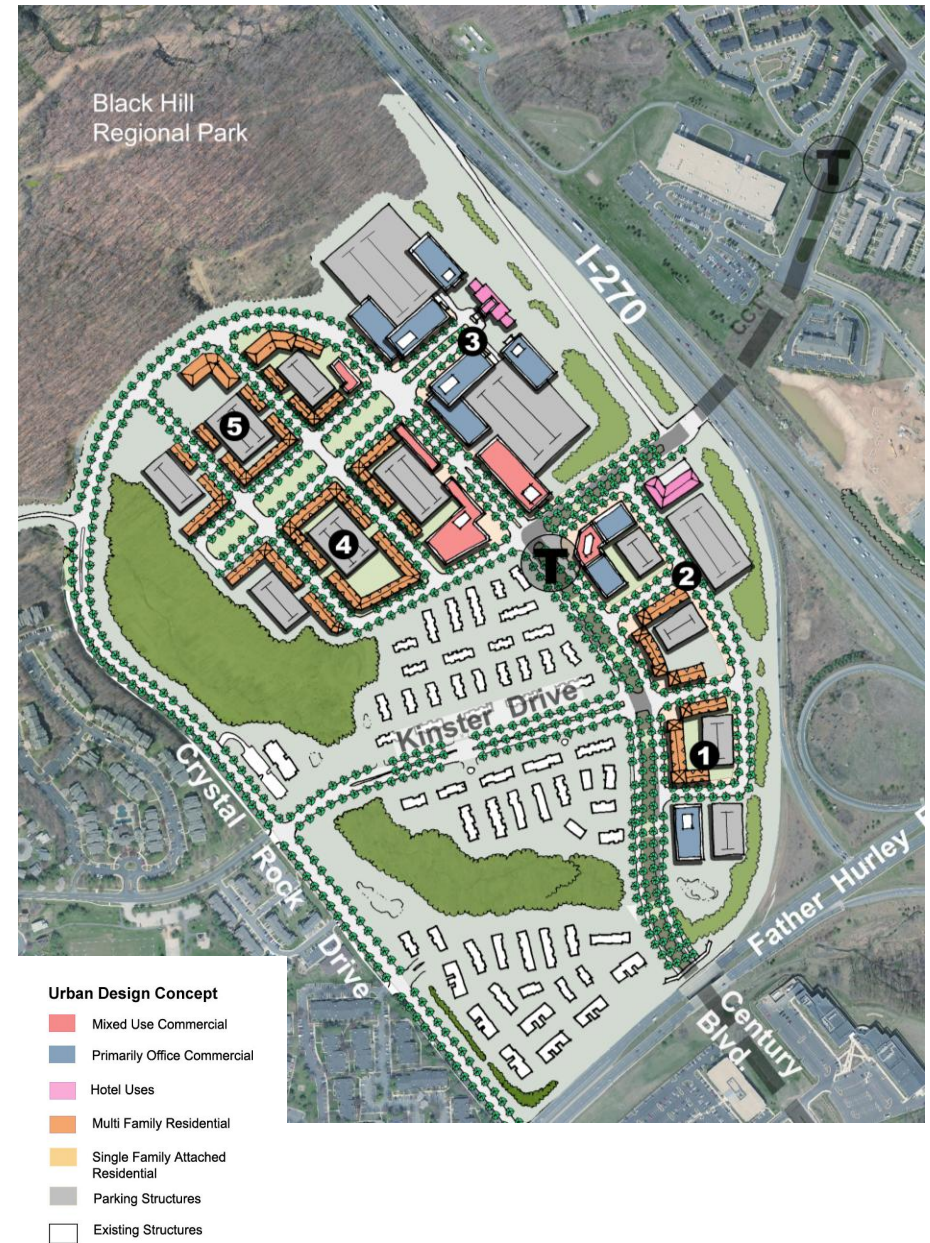
Provide office, technology, and hotel uses along the I-270 frontage. Locate mixed-use commercial space along Century Boulevard to create a retail street just north of the transit station. Screen parking.

Block 4

Develop predominately with low-rise, residential buildings and retail along Century Boulevard. Place parking in a mid-block location.

Block 5

Develop low- and high rise residential buildings to take advantage of proximity to the park. Locate parking in the middle of the block.





Streets

The Sector Plan establishes Century Boulevard as the West Side neighborhood’s main street running north alongside the transitway and curving west at Black Hill Regional Park to meet Crystal Rock Drive. Near the transit station, Century Boulevard will be lined with mixed-use commercial and residential buildings. The new local street network creates a series of walkable blocks designed to improve circulation and transit access. Century Boulevard’s curving alignment along adjacent woodland may be straightened to preserve woodland.

The Crystal Rock Greenway, identified in the Sector Plan, provides an important connection to the Black Hill Regional Park’s trail system. An eight-foot wide pathway should be located on the east side, crossing over to the park’s at its entrance road.

Streets

- Boulevards**
Father Hurley Boulevard
- Main Streets**
Century Boulevard
Dorsey Mill Drive
- Local Streets**
New Streets in Districts
Kinster Drive
- Greenways**
Crystal Rock Drive

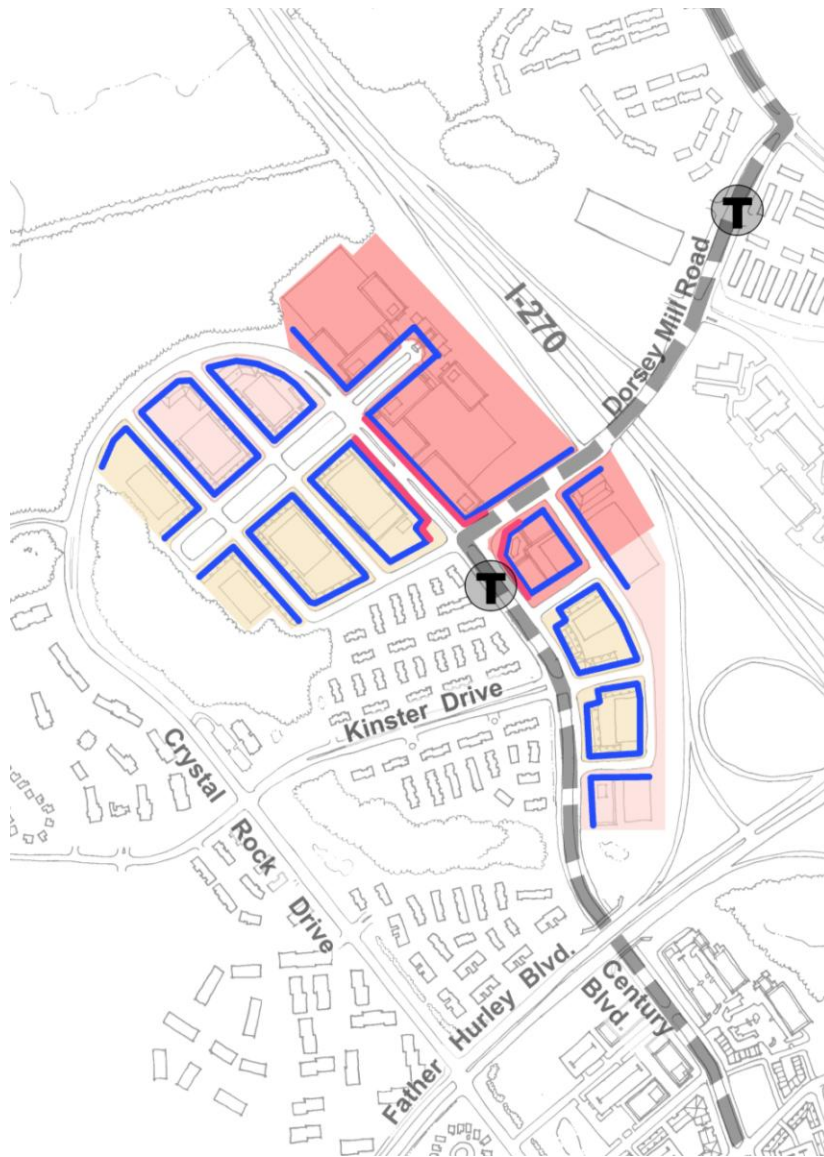
Open Space

The West Side is bordered by significant open spaces: Black Hill Regional Park to the north, the stream valley to the west, and the landscaped areas of I-270 to the east that are preserved by the Sector Plan. Open spaces created through private redevelopment, including a series of plazas along Century Boulevard, a transit station plaza, and a neighborhood green also are required.

- Provide the I-270 landscape treatment along the highway and screen parking structures.
- Contribute to the development of the Crystal Rock Greenway.
- Landscape the existing stormwater management ponds to recreate a natural, informal landscape using native species.
- Locate public use spaces, such as urban plazas, primarily along Century Boulevard where adjacent retail uses will activate the spaces. The neighborhood green defined by streets should be located close to residential development.
- Preserve existing forest adjacent to Black Hill Regional Park as required by the Sector Plan.
- Provide the transit sidewalk loop with special paving.

| | |
|--|---|
| Major Places | Neighborhood Places |
|  Transit Plaza |  Neighborhood Commons /Open Spaces |
| Major Open Spaces |  Urban Plazas |
|  I-270 Landscape Open Space | Connections |
|  Stream Valley Open Space |  Greenway |
|  Black Hill Regional Park |  Bicycle Beltway |
| |  Transit Sidewalk Loop |





Building Lines

Buildings should front the Century Boulevard Transitway, Dorsey Mill Road, and all local streets. Deviations from the building line are allowed to create urban open space, accommodate sidewalk cafes, and accent building entrances. Along I-270, building facades should be designed to take advantage of the significant I-270 view. Along I-270, set buildings back 200 feet from the existing right-of-way. Maintain existing building line if I-270's right-of-way expands.

Heights

The Sector Plan calls for the tallest buildings, up to 143 feet (12 stories) to be located at the transit station, creating a focus for the district.

- Allow 125 feet (8 to 10 stories) along the I-270 frontage with the predominant building height to be 8 stories, determined by project plan approval.
- Vary building heights to create a visually interesting skyline.
- Step down buildings to 72 feet (four and six stories) along Century Boulevard adjacent to Kinster Drive to ensure a compatible transition to nearby residential areas.

Retail

- Locate retail close to the transit station along Century Boulevard.

Building Lines

■ Building lines along streets

Building Heights

■ 143 FT (9- 12 stories)

■ 100 FT (7 - 8 stories)

■ 72 FT (4 - 6 stories)

Retail

■ Retail Locations

North End District – Milestone North

The Sector Plan envisions Milestone North, on the east side of I-270, as predominately an employment area with some residential uses. Its proximity to the Dorsey Mill Road transit station offers an opportunity to create a mixed-use center that enjoys I-270 visibility.

Block 1

Locate signature office, technology, or biomedical buildings along I-270 designed with two front facades to take advantage of I-270 visibility. Parking should be located in garages and screened from I-270. Maintain the existing neighborhood green and orient new urban open space along Milestone Drive.

Block 2

Locate residential development along the eastside of Milestone Drive adjacent to the transitway. Provide transitional building heights adjacent to existing multifamily residences. Screen residential views of the transitway.

Block 3

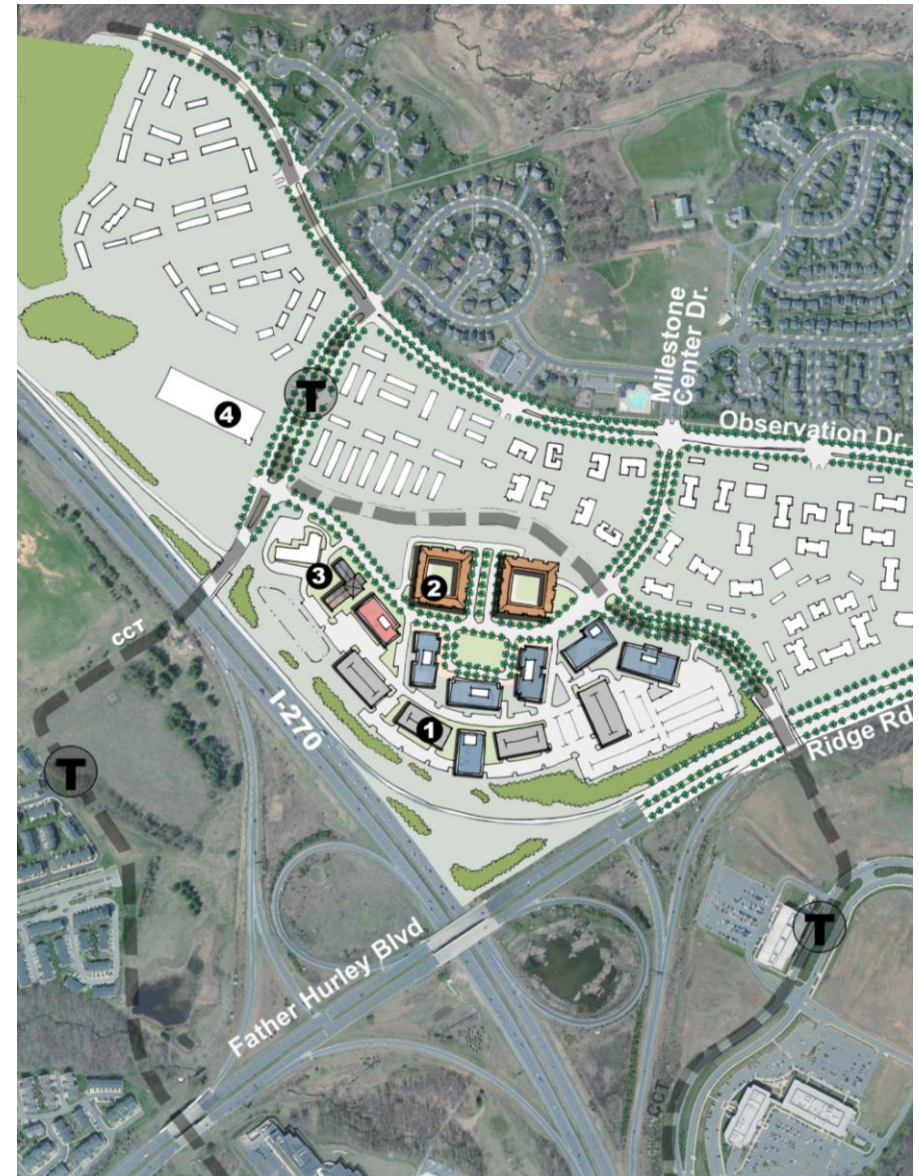
Locate mixed-use commercial and hotel uses near the transit station. Parking garages should be screened from I-270 views.

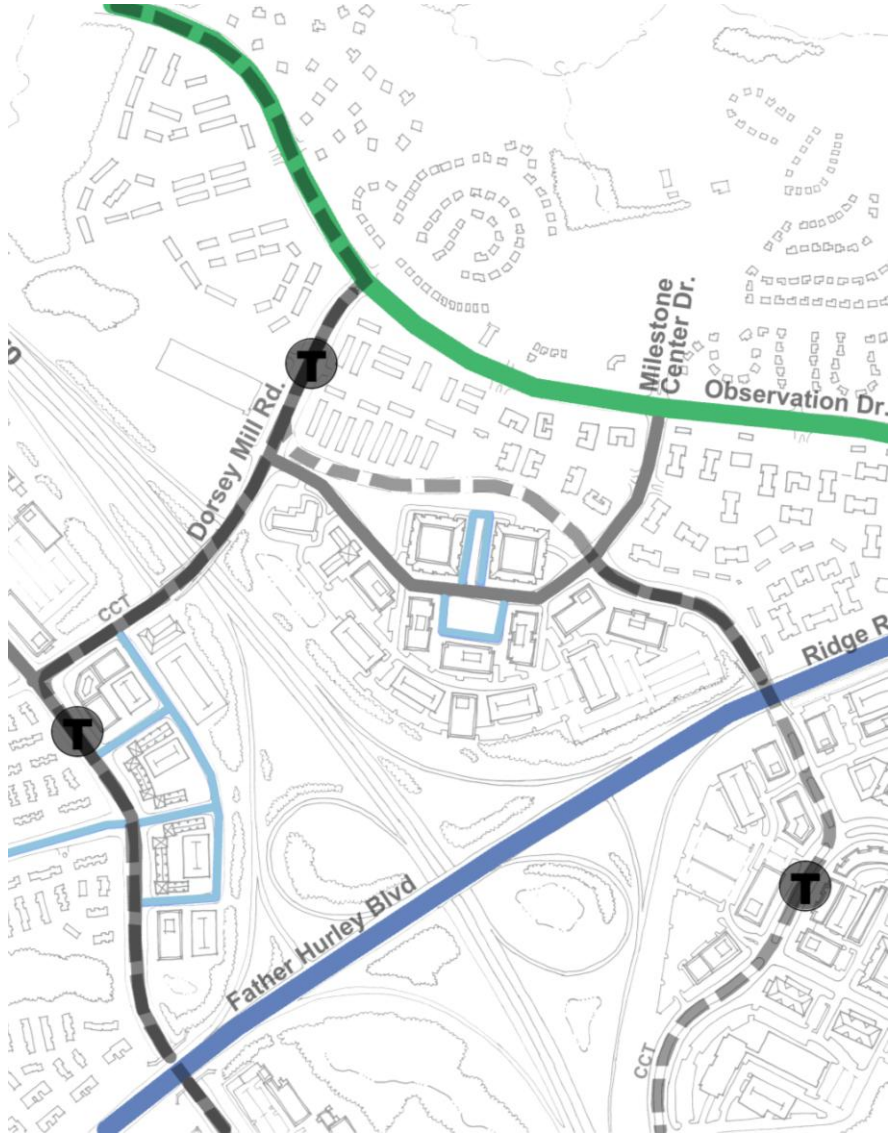
Block 4

Any redevelopment of the Wabtec Electronic property should follow area wide design guidelines.

Urban Design Concept

- Mixed Use Commercial
- Primarily Office Commercial
- Hotel Uses
- Multi Family Residential
- Single Family Attached Residential
- Parking Structures
- Existing Structures





Streets

Milestone Drive is the main street serving Milestone North. The Sector Plan recommends extending Dorsey Mill Road over I-270 and creating a new street connection bridging Father Hurley Boulevard and providing access to the south.

The transitway’s western and eastern alignments converge at the Dorsey Mill Transit Station. The station is located north of development along Milestone Drive and development should include pedestrian access to the station. Local streets are limited to residential areas and the existing private street defining the green. A private, internal street with sidewalks connecting all the parking areas to development and open spaces should be provided.

- Streets**
- Boulevards
 Germantown Road MD 118
 Frederick Road MD 355
 - Main Streets
 Goldenrod Lane
 - Local Streets
 New Streets and Campus Loop
 - Greenways
 Observation Drive

Open Space

Milestone North enjoys an existing neighborhood common located along Milestone Drive. New plazas, gathering places, and a transit plaza are required of new development.

- Provide I-270 landscape treatment along the highway and screen all parking and parking structures.
- Contribute to the development of the transit station plaza.
- Locate public use spaces primarily along Milestone Drive where adjacent retail uses will activate the spaces.
- Provide the transit sidewalk loop with special paving.
- Outdoor residential recreation space should be located close to residential development and within the linear open space defined by the local street network.

Major Places

■ Transit Plaza

Major Open Spaces

■ I-270 Landscape Open Space

■ Streak Valley Open Space

■ Black Hill Regional Park

Neighborhood Places

■ Neighborhood Commons /Open Spaces

■ Urban Plazas

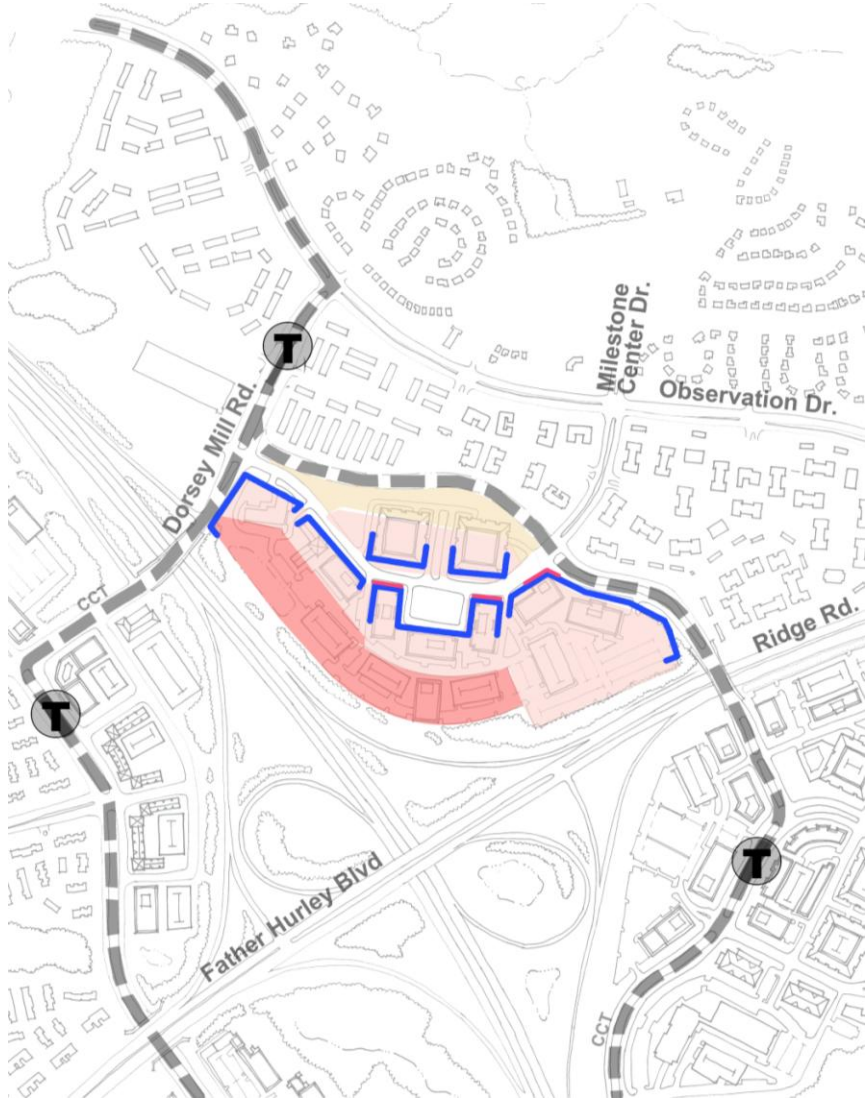
Connections

■ Greenway

■ Bicycle Beltway

■ Transit Sidewalk Loop





Building Lines

Buildings should front Milestone Drive. Buildings along I-270 building should have two front facades to take advantage of the significant I-270 views. Set buildings back 200 feet from I-270’s existing right-of-way. Maintain existing building line if I-270’s right-of-way is expanded. On other streets, building should setback a minimum of 25 feet from curb.

Heights

Building heights should create a focus with the tallest buildings located along Milestone Drive near the I-270 Interchange.

The following guidelines apply to all properties.

- Allow up to 125 feet (eight to ten stories) along the frontage of I-270 with a predominant building height of eight stories.
- Vary building heights to create a visually interesting skyline.
- Step down buildings to four stories adjacent to existing residential areas to the east to ensure a compatible transition.

Retail

- Allow limited retail uses to support commercial and residential development. Locate retail uses along Milestone Drive adjacent to the existing neighborhood green.

Building Lines
■ Building lines along streets

Building Heights

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| | 125 FT (9- 10 stories) |
| | 100 FT (6 - 8 stories) |
| | 60 FT (4 - 5 stories) |

Retail
■ Retail Locations

Seneca Meadows

Seneca Meadows has an industrial park in its southern end and a mixed-use employment area planned for the north end. The district benefits from extensive I-270 visibility, stream valley open space, and a future transit station.

Block 1

Locate signature office, technology, and medical development adjacent to I-270 and design two front facades to take advantage of I-270 views. Garages should not front Seneca Meadows Parkway and should be screened from I-270. Preserve existing open spaces and stream valley areas.

Block 2

Locate any proposed residential development between Seneca Meadows Parkway and Observation Drive. Locate mixed-use commercial and hotel uses along Seneca Meadows Parkway and near the transitway. Locate parking in middle of block.

Block 3

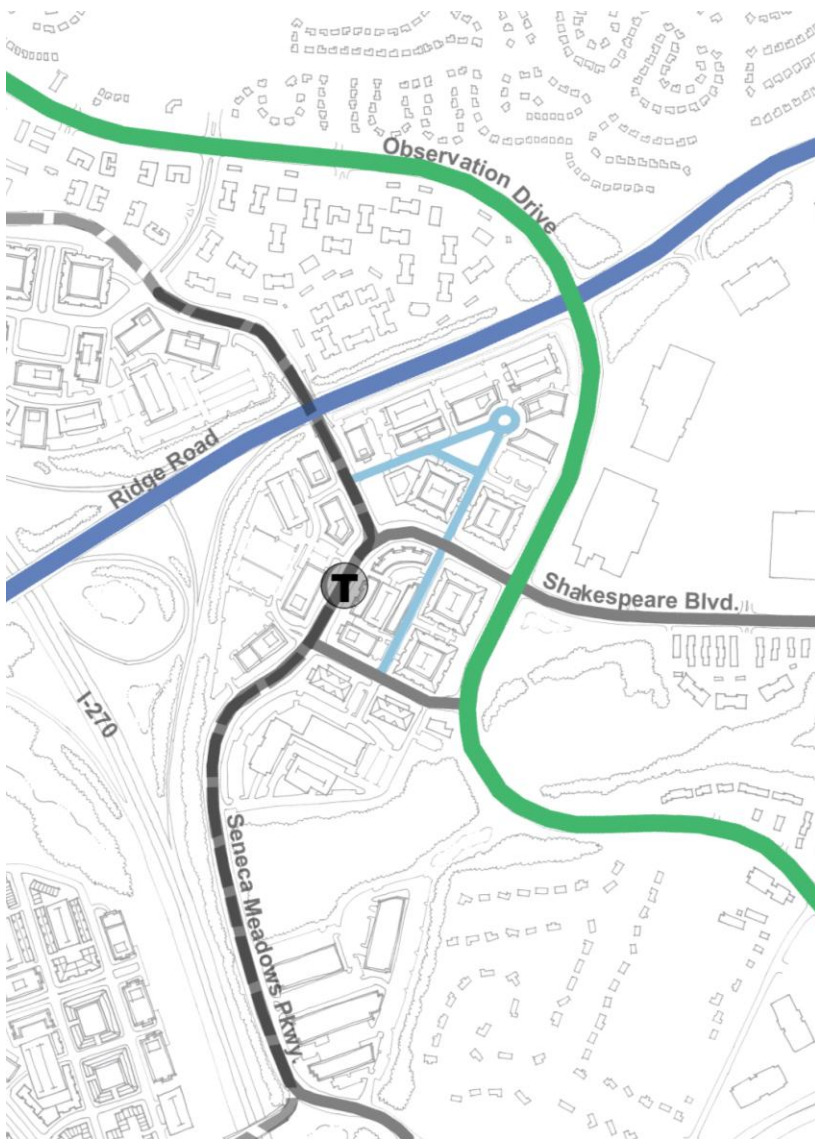
Locate office, technology, and medical development adjacent to Father Hurley Boulevard. Residential development, if proposed, should be oriented toward Seneca Meadows Parkway. Screen views of garage structures from Father Hurley Boulevard. If a recreation center is developed, locate near residential uses. If a large, single-use retail project is proposed; it must achieve a street-oriented pattern and be integrated into a mixed-use development.

Block 4

Locate office, technology, and medical development adjacent to I-270. Screen views of garage structures from I-270.



Seneca Meadows should have an urban character created by interconnected streets and open spaces.



Streets

Seneca Meadows Parkway is the district’s main street connecting to Observation Road. New development should be oriented toward Seneca Meadows Parkway and a network of new local streets must be provided to ensure good circulation within the district.

The transitway will cross over I-270 into the median of Seneca Meadows Parkway with a station near the intersection of B-25, a new street bridging Ridge Road. Safe and convenient pedestrian access to the transit station must be achieved with the alignment of the new local street network.

Streets

- Boulevards
Father Hurley Boulevard
- Main Streets
Seneca Meadows Parkway
- Local Streets
New Streets in District
- Greenways
Observation Drive

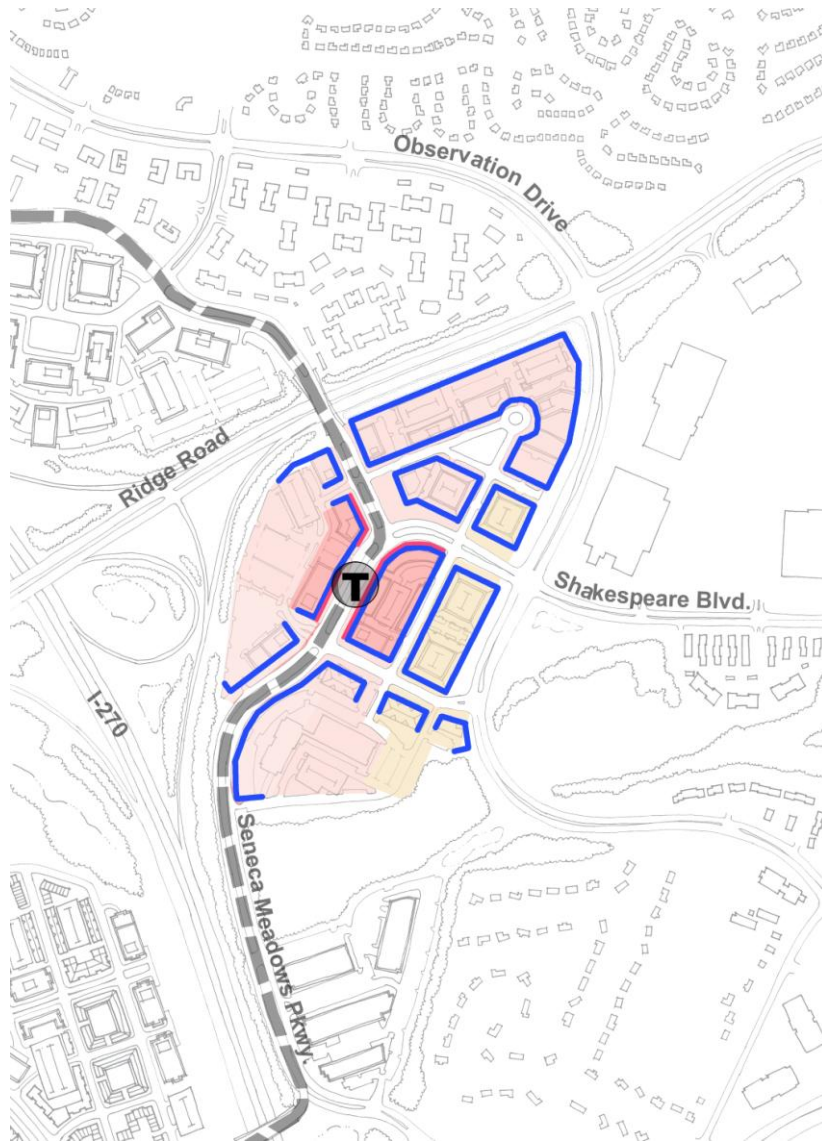
Open Spaces

The Sector Plan calls for urban open spaces, a half-acre neighborhood green, and pedestrian access to the extensive open spaces of the stream valley park. The I-270 frontage and the stream valley open spaces define the buildable areas within the district.

- Provide I-270 landscape treatment along the highway and screen parking structures.
- Improve the existing, private stream valley open spaces with natural, informal landscape using native species. Provide trails, seating areas, and environmental interpretation in the stream valley.
- Locate public use spaces, such as an urban plaza adjacent to the transit station and development along Seneca Meadows Parkway.
- Provide a privately developed half-acre neighborhood green within the most densely developed area.
- Provide a public civic green (approximately 2 acres) if a community recreation center is located in the district.
- Provide a transit plaza adjacent to the transit station.

| | |
|---|--|
| Major Places | Neighborhood Places |
|  Transit Plaza |  Neighborhood Commons/ Open Spaces |
| Major Open Spaces |  Urban Plazas |
|  I-270 Landscape Open Space | Connections |
|  Stream Valley Open Space |  Greenway |
|  Existing Woodland |  Bicycle Beltway |
| |  Transit Sidewalk Loop |





Building Lines

Buildings should front Seneca Meadows Parkway and all streets. Along I-270, design buildings with two front facades to take advantage of the significant I-270 views. Setback buildings 200 feet from I-270's existing right-of-way. Maintain existing building along I-270 if the right-of-way widens. Along other streets, buildings should be a minimum of 20 to 25 feet from curb.

Heights

The Sector Plan allows up to 143 feet (12 stories) at the transit station and up to 125 feet (10 stories) along I-270 to be determined by project plan approval. Building heights along Observation Drive should be four to five stories to ensure that the tallest buildings are located at the transit station creating a focus.

Retail

If developed with primarily office uses, allow a limited amount of retail uses to support commercial and any residential areas. Locate retail along Seneca Meadows Parkway adjacent to the transit station.

A major retail use may be allowed if the building is integrated with mixed uses achieving street orientation with mid-block parking and activating the street frontage with smaller retail shops.

Building Lines

 Building lines along streets

Building Heights

 143 FT (9 - 12 stories)

 100 FT (6 - 8 stories)

 60 FT (4 - 5 stories)

 40 FT (1 - 3 stories)

Retail

 Retail Locations

Montgomery College

The district is composed of Montgomery College, office and technology uses along I-270, and residential properties along MD 355. It should be redeveloped with an urban campus, signature development along I-270, and mixed-use development or medical uses in the southern end of the site accessed from Middlebrook Road. The district is distinguished by high-quality woodland located south of the campus and visibility from I-270.

Area 1

Development should take advantage of I-270 views providing signature office or technology buildings with parking structures screened from views. Existing woodland should be preserved.

Area 2

The Montgomery College campus should develop into an urban campus with a loop road and a main street created by new street-oriented buildings. The core campus on the hilltop should remain the campus' main open space. Surface parking may be provided but should be redeveloped into structures over time and placed in mid-block locations. Development should preserve as much as possible the existing 50-acre woodland.

Area 3

The southern end of the college property should be developed with mixed-use technology, office, housing, or medical uses such as a hospital. Develop the extension of Observation Drive as a main street with street-oriented development on both sides.

Area 4

Properties fronting MD 355 should continue the existing building line, orient toward MD 355 with service streets, and connect to the existing local street system. Streetscape improvements along MD 355 are required.

Area 5

Expansion of existing technology office buildings along I-270 should take advantage of I-270 views, develop signature buildings and provide parking in structures screened from views.



Urban Design Concept

- Mixed Use Commercial
- Primarily Office Commercial
- Hotel Uses
- Multi Family Residential
- Single Family Attached Residential
- Parking Structures
- Existing Structures



Streets

Goldenrod Lane and Observation Drive Extended are the district's main public streets. A network of new private streets will be needed to serve the campus. New public, local streets are required to serve private development within the Technology Park.

Observation Drive Extended will connect to Goldenrod Lane and continue south of the campus to Middlebrook Road with an alignment that preserves an extensive amount of the existing forest. The 80-foot right-of-way and an eight-foot pathway connect the college to residential and major shopping centers to the north. The alignment should minimize grading of the woodland area.

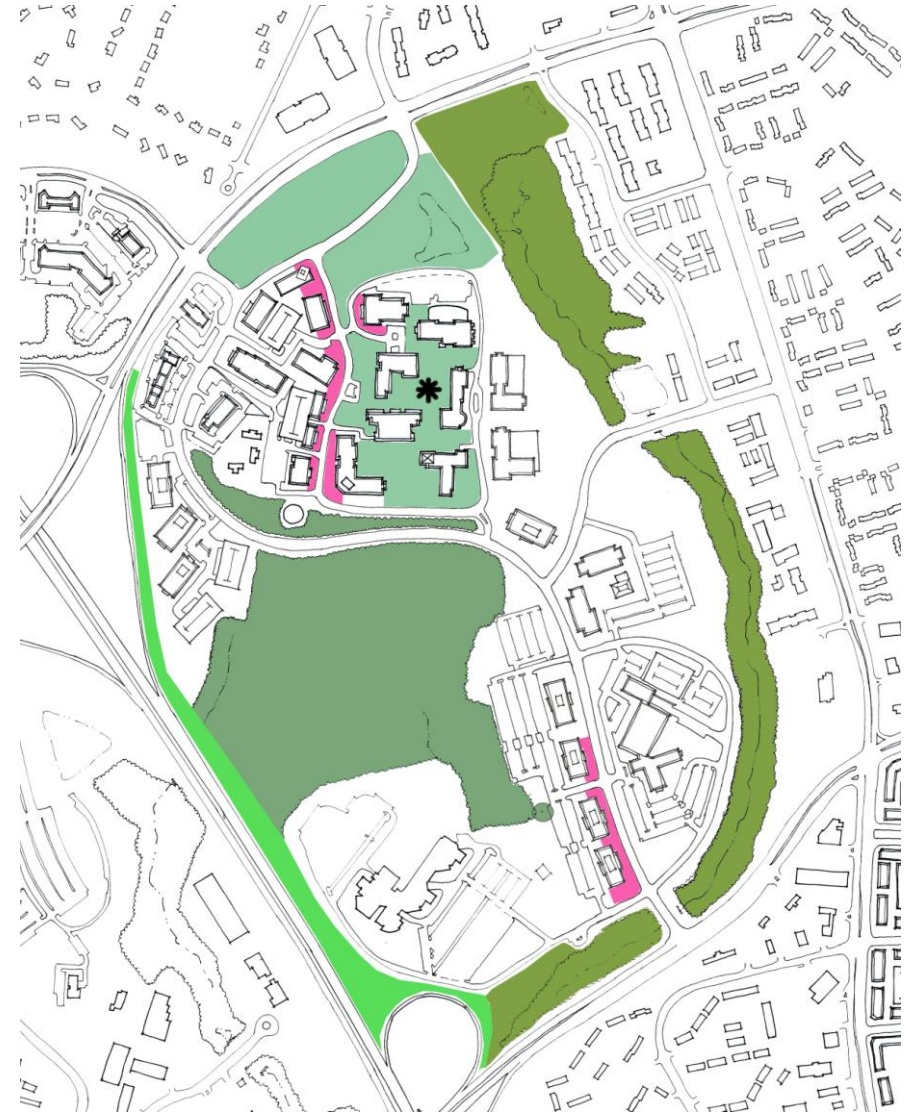
Streets

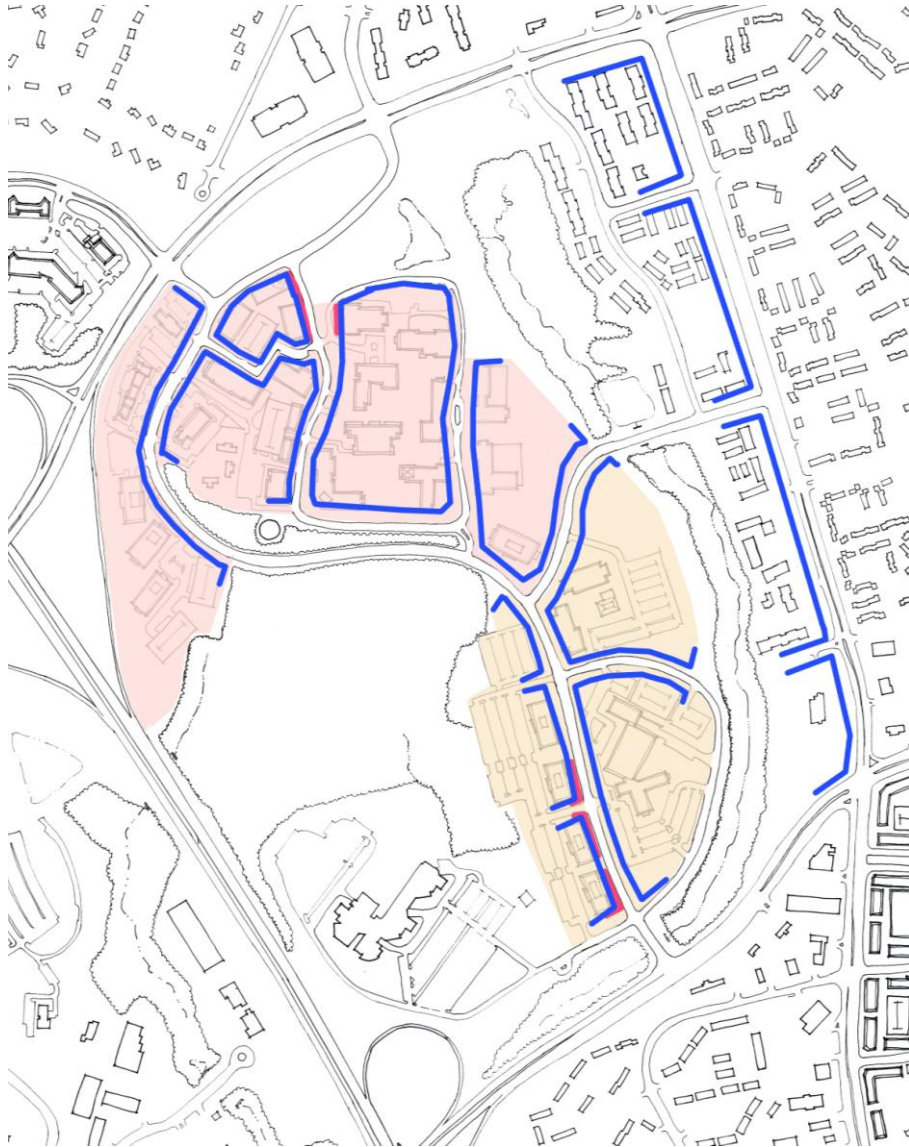
- Boulevards**
Germantown Road MD 118
Frederick Road MD 355
- Main Streets**
Goldenrod Lane
- Local Streets**
New Streets and Campus Loop
- Greenways**
Observation Drive

Open Spaces

The students and technology workers will enjoy a variety of natural, preserved woodland areas and urban open space within the campus. The open space system will help distinguish the college and give students a communal setting for social life. The Sector Plan requires preservation of existing I-270 open space frontage, the central woodland and the stream valley open spaces.

- Provide the I-270 landscape treatment along the highway and screen parking structures.
- Improve the existing, Gunner's Branch Stream Valley open spaces with natural, informal landscape using native species.
- Locate public spaces within the college along the main street and the Student Service Center and near major buildings within private development area.
- Provide a privately developed neighborhood green for public use within the residential area.
- Preserve the existing woodland on public land and develop trails, seating areas, and interpretive areas for educational benefit.





Building Lines

Buildings should front all streets to create a walkable, pedestrian environment. Within the campus, buildings also should be oriented toward streets. Parking should be located behind buildings and, over time, developed into garages. Along I-270, design buildings with two front facades to take advantage of I-270 views. Set buildings back 200 feet from I-270's existing right-of-way and 100 feet from ramps. Maintain the existing required building setbacks if I-270's right-of-way widens.

Heights

Building heights along I-270 should be 100 feet (eight stories). Within the college, multi-story buildings should create a compact campus. Private office, technology, or medical buildings should be a minimum of three stories, where feasible. Building heights adjacent to the existing residential community should transition down in height to match existing residential buildings.

Retail

- Allow a limited amount of retail uses to support commercial and potential residential areas. Locate near housing and mixed-use development.
- Retail within the campus should be clustered near the Student Service Center.

Building Lines

■ Building lines along streets

Building Heights

■ 100 FT (6 - 8 stories)

■ 60 FT (4 - 5 stories)

Retail

■ Retail Locations

Fox Chapel

The Sector Plan calls for the district's existing commercial center to be redeveloped into a mixed-used, retail center that includes housing. Properties on the east side of MD 355 are encouraged to assemble to achieve an integrated pattern of mixed-use commercial, and housing development. Commercial properties on west side of MD 355 are not expected to redevelop due to fragmented property ownership. The street network is subject to change if a future study, called for in the Sector Plan, produces an urban street network for the intersection of MD 355 and Middlebrook Road.

Area 1

Existing commercial development, if redeveloped, should achieve street oriented development following the guidance in the Area Wide Design Guidelines.

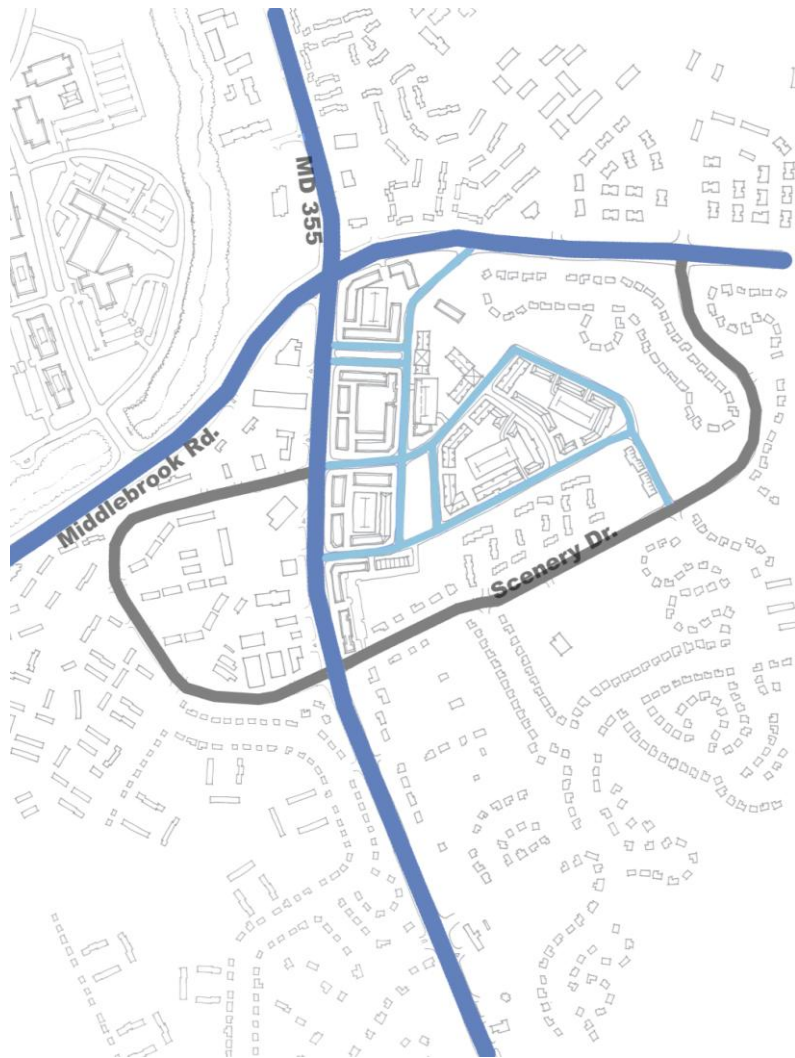
Area 2

East side properties should be encouraged to assemble and create a mixed-use center with retail, office, and housing, a set of interconnected streets creating development blocks and open spaces. If assemblage does not occur, individual properties should redevelop with street-oriented buildings along MD 355 following the guidance in the Area Wide Urban Design Guidelines.

Area 3

If redeveloped, the existing commercial and residential uses along MD 355 should be street-oriented with parking behind buildings.





Streets

The Sector Plan calls for MD 355 to be developed as a boulevard with median trees and a double row of street trees . Scenery Drive should develop a Main Street character and all other streets should be treated as Local Streets with permanent parking, street trees and sidewalks.

If east side properties are assembled, a local street paralleling MD 355 should be provided. If no assemblage occurs, an interconnected street and driveway system should be encouraged. Blunt Road is recommended as a Local Street in either scenario.

Streets

- Boulevards**
 Frederick Road MD 355
 Middlebrook Road
- Main Streets**
 Scenery Drive
- Local Streets**
 New Streets on Eastside

Open Spaces

The Sector Plan requires a variety of urban open spaces and a neighborhood green to serve the mixed-use and new residential development. The following guidelines apply to all development.

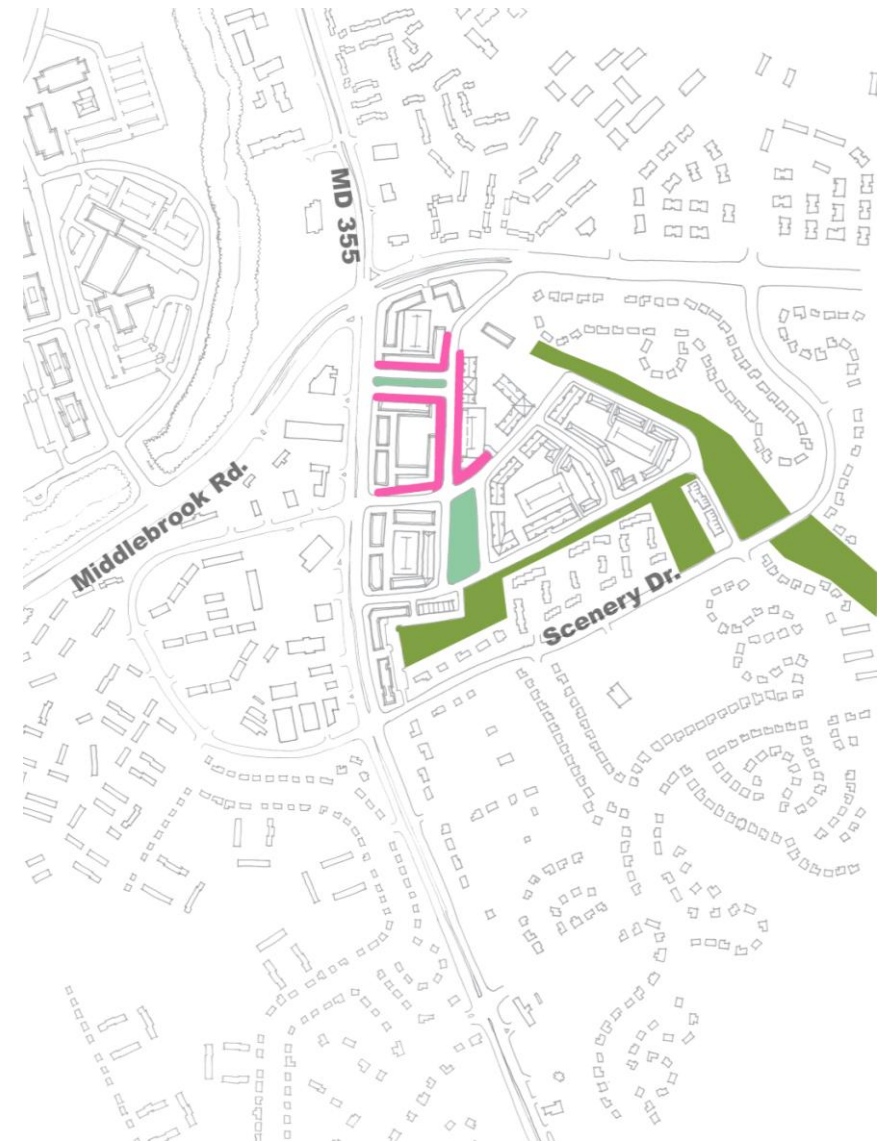
- Provide a neighborhood green on the east side defined by streets or buildings within new residential development.
- Locate public use spaces designed as urban plazas and a neighborhood green within mixed-use commercial and housing development.
- Provide seating areas and shelters for all bus stops to encourage transit use.
- Achieve adequate sidewalk connections to all destinations and transit stops within the district.
- For the mobile home property, preserve a minimum of 50 feet of woodland edge along the eastern property line with the existing R-200 zoned neighborhood.

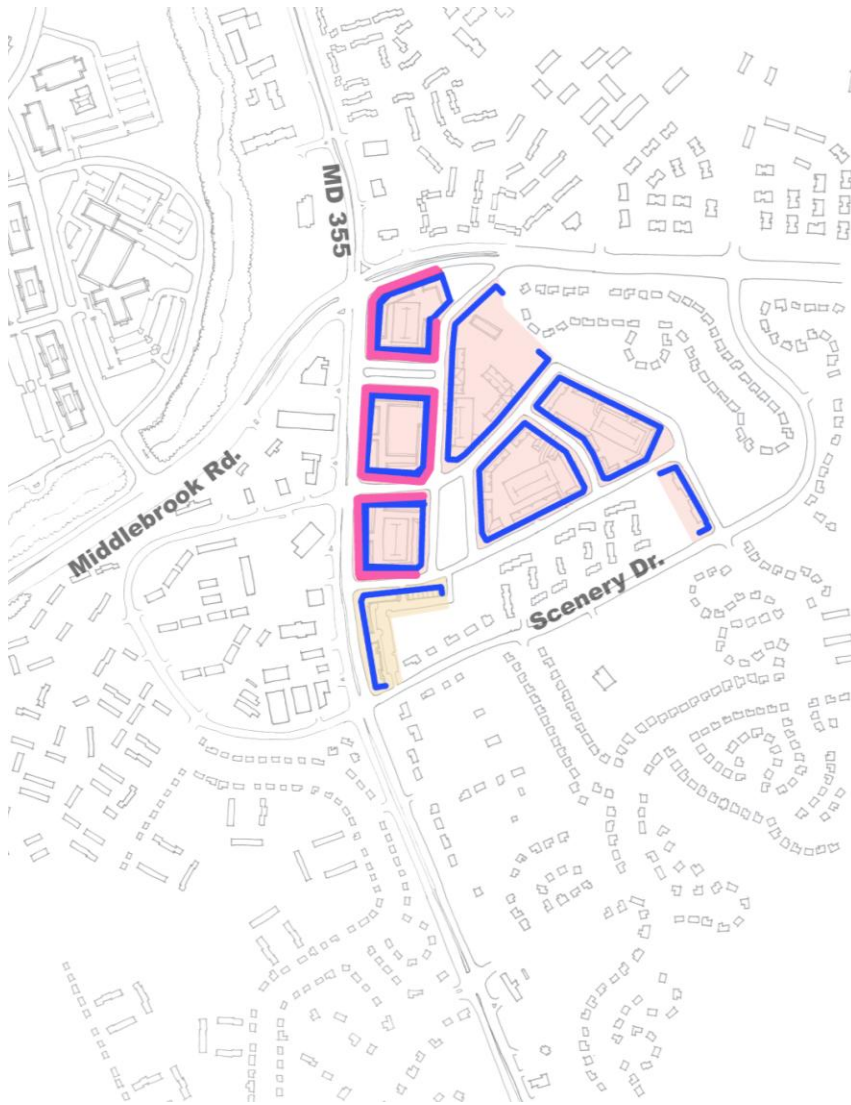
Major Open Spaces

- Stream Valley Open Space
- Existing Woodland

Neighborhood Places

- Neighborhood Commons/ Open Spaces
- Urban Plazas





Building Lines

Buildings should front all streets to create a pedestrian environment. Along MD 355, buildings should include activating uses.

Heights

Building heights should be predominately 40 to 60 feet (three to five stories). Taller buildings, up to six floors to achieve residential density, will be allowed. Building heights adjacent to the existing residential community should be 50 to 60 feet (four - five stories) or less to transition down adjacent to residential buildings.

Retail

Retail development should achieve an urban form with parking in the rear or side of buildings. Encourage mixed-use commercial buildings with retail on the ground floor. Integrate retail in the ground floor of parking structures if parking structures are proposed along the street.

Building Lines

■ Building lines along streets

Building Heights

■ 60 FT (4- 5 stories)

■ 50 FT (4 stories)

Retail

■ Retail Locations

I-270 Landscape Concept

The character of the I-270 landscape creates a setting for signature office and technology development. A unified, attractive character supports economic development, provides an attractive view for motorists, will give identity and regional character to the corridor. The landscape concept applies to the I-270 right-of-way and adjacent, privately owned open space along the highway.

The landscape character should be pastoral and natural with native woodland and meadows. A unified treatment will give identity and regional character to the corridor. Planting designs should:

- Create or maintain views of signature office or technology buildings along the corridor.
- Preserve existing woodland and increase woodland along the edges and within the interchanges.
- Create meadows using natural grasses and flowers.
- Use native species or compatible plant material.
- Eliminate invasive species.
- Develop stormwater management facilities as part of the pastoral landscape with native plantings and natural (non-engineered) grading.

The I-270 landscape will be improved over time by adjacent development and by the State of Maryland's capital improvement projects.



Draft Resolution

As called for by the *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan* and by the standards in mixed-use zones, the Montgomery County Planning Board of the National-Capital Park and Planning Commission has reviewed, made recommendations, and formally adopts the *Germantown Design Guidelines* as a guide for future development and capital improvement projects.

The Design Guidelines are intended to create in Germantown an urban form of compact development that promotes walking, transit use, and social interaction.

The Design Guidelines provide street design guidance to promote safety, pedestrian and bicycle use, and distinctive streetscape character. A detailed Streetscape Plan will be developed and adopted as a part of the *Germantown Design Guidelines*.

The Design Guidelines provide open space guidelines to achieve safe, accessible, public-oriented, and attractive open space accommodating a range of users.

The Design Guidelines provide urban form and building guidelines to achieve street-oriented development, compact centers, and compatible transitions with adjacent residential communities.

The Design Guidelines apply to all properties within the *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan*.

The Design Guidelines are a flexible guide to developers and property owners implementing the *Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan*, and to community groups, the Montgomery County Planning Board, and staff reviewing development proposals.

The Design Guidelines will be updated every six years to ensure that design guidance is current and reflects innovations and new technologies.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Montgomery County Planning Board does hereby adopt said *Germantown Urban Design Guidelines*.

Urban Design Guidelines
Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan

Montgomery County Planning Department
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

MontgomeryPlanning.org