

THE GREAT SENECA PLAN: CONNECTING LIFE AND SCIENCE

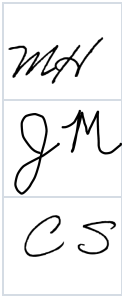


The Great Seneca Plan

CONNECTING LIFE AND SCIENCE

Description

Staff will brief the Planning Board on emerging big ideas for the Great Seneca Plan: Connecting Life and Science.



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MASTER PLAN INFORMATION

Draft

Great Seneca Plan Update – Emerging Big Ideas

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Planning Board Information

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SUMMARY

At the April 20, 2023 briefing, staff will present the emerging “big ideas” for the Great Seneca Plan: Connecting Life and Science (Great Seneca Plan). The purpose of this briefing is to share staff’s approach to recommendations and high-level big ideas emerging in the plan. Staff requests feedback from the Planning Board on the big ideas in advance of the preparation of a Working Draft Plan, anticipated in fall 2023.

The Great Seneca Plan is an update to the 2010 *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan* (2010 Plan) and follows the [2021 Great Seneca Science Corridor Minor Master Plan Amendment](#) (2021 Amendment). The 2021 Amendment focused on adjusting the staging requirements established by the 2010 Plan. It also recommended a comprehensive amendment to align the vision, recommendations, and overall staging requirements for the area with the county’s current reality and its adopted plans, policies, and priorities.

The Great Seneca Plan is a comprehensive Master Plan Amendment evaluating existing conditions for land use, zoning, urban design, transportation, environment, and community facilities and ultimately, making recommendations.

Staff began preliminary work on the Great Seneca Plan in February 2022 and presented the [Scope of Work for the Great Seneca Plan](#) to the Planning Board in May 2022. Since approval of the Scope of Work, staff have advanced community outreach and engagement, evaluated existing conditions, and initiated the visioning and analysis phase of the plan. Staff provided an update to the Planning Board in January 2022, which included existing conditions for the area.

Throughout the spring and summer of 2023, the Great Seneca team will continue to refine the big and supporting ideas. Community engagement feedback, data analysis and expert guidance will inform the development of recommendations and a Working Draft Plan.

BIG IDEAS

The following “big ideas” are high level and expected to have a transformative effect on the Master Plan area.

- Establish activity hubs that are internally cohesive, walkable and complete while being externally connected. Each hub will embrace the notion of “park once,” reducing auto trips and allowing residents, employees, and visitors to walk between destinations (home, work, parks, retail, etc.).

BIG IDEAS CONTINUED

The five hubs include:

- North Hub – National Cancer Institute, Mallory Square, Dunkin Donuts
 - The Central Hub – This primary hub forms the core of the area and includes the Adventist Healthcare Medical Center at Shady Grove, and recent developments such as 9800 and 9950 Medical Center Drive
 - South Hub – Trville, The Universities at Shady Grove
 - West Hub – The Elms at PSTA
 - Belward Hub – Belward Campus
- Pursue a technical study to examine ways of integrating retail, housing, and life sciences and/or healthcare in ‘live-work-play’ developments. A forthcoming study will examine the compatibility of these uses, identify barriers to colocation, and identify potential regulatory, policy, and financial incentives to enable colocation.
 - Relocate underutilized state- and county-owned facilities to create opportunities for life sciences, residential, retail, open space, and community facilities within the central hub.
 - Create a fine-grained street grid to improve connectivity.
 - Right size the number of personal vehicle travel lanes on existing roads. Reduce or repurpose lanes to create a safer and more comfortable environment for people walking, rolling, bicycling, riding transit, and driving.
 - Repurpose a portion of the Great Seneca Highway right-of-way between Key West Avenue and Medical Center Drive, reducing the number of travel lanes to one in each direction. Utilize the existing median and western portion of the right-of-way as a linear park. This linear park, in combination with the approved privately-owned public space forthcoming at The Elms at PSTA, could provide more than 4.5 acres of publicly accessible open space.
 - Remove the master planned grade-separated interchanges recommended in the 2010 *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan* and do not plan for new interchanges.

IMPLEMENTATION IDEAS

- Remove staging requirements established by the 2010 Plan.
- Create a funding mechanism—like the Bethesda Unified Mobility Program or White Oak Local Area Transportation Improvement Program (LATIP)—to fund transportation projects.
- Establish a Life Sciences Center Overlay Zone. Elements of the Overlay Zone could include:
 - Additional residential uses, services, and amenities that help implement recommendations of Thrive Montgomery 2050.
 - Site design requirements, including building placement and location of parking.
 - Parking requirements.
- Develop Master Plan language that clearly establishes the expectation that site design—including building placement and location of parking—must conform with the current master plan for all new applications and amendments.



BIG IDEAS CONTINUED

- Establish an entity in the Life Sciences Center that could be modeled after the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Business Improvement District or Pike District Partnership. This entity could:
 - Develop a brand for the area and market it locally, regionally, and nationally.
 - Activate underutilized sites and open spaces through public art, programming, and pop-up amenities.
 - Identify a dedicated annual funding stream to support and widely market these efforts.
- Participate in regional efforts to promote the Biohealth Capital Region.

The attached report includes a summary of the Great Seneca Plan vision, a discussion of staff's approach to recommendations, and a more comprehensive list of big and supporting ideas that the team is pursuing in their analysis.

Attachment:

Attachment A: Great Seneca Plan Approach to Recommendations

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: The Great Seneca Plan: Vision, Approach to Recommendations, and Big Ideas

STAY CONNECTED

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ATTACHMENT A: The Great Seneca Plan: Vision, Approach to Recommendations, and Big Ideas

Geography

The Great Seneca area is located in the heart of the I-270 corridor, bordering the Intercounty Connector, MD 355 and the MARC Rail Brunswick Line. The City of Gaithersburg occupies 10 square miles in the center of the plan area. The City of Rockville borders the plan area on the east and the Town of Washington Grove is located to the northeast.

The plan's land area is dispersed and non-contiguous; it includes several distinct land areas. The primarily residential neighborhood of Quince Orchard and the state-owned Seneca Creek State Park comprise the western portion of the plan boundary. The central portion, which is completely surrounded by the City of Gaithersburg, is the National Institute of Standards and Technology and the Londonderry apartments. The focus area of the plan is on the eastern side of the boundary and includes the residential neighborhoods of Rosemont, Oakmont, Walnut Hill, and Washingtonian Residential as well as the Washingtonian Light Industrial Park and the Life Sciences Center (LSC).

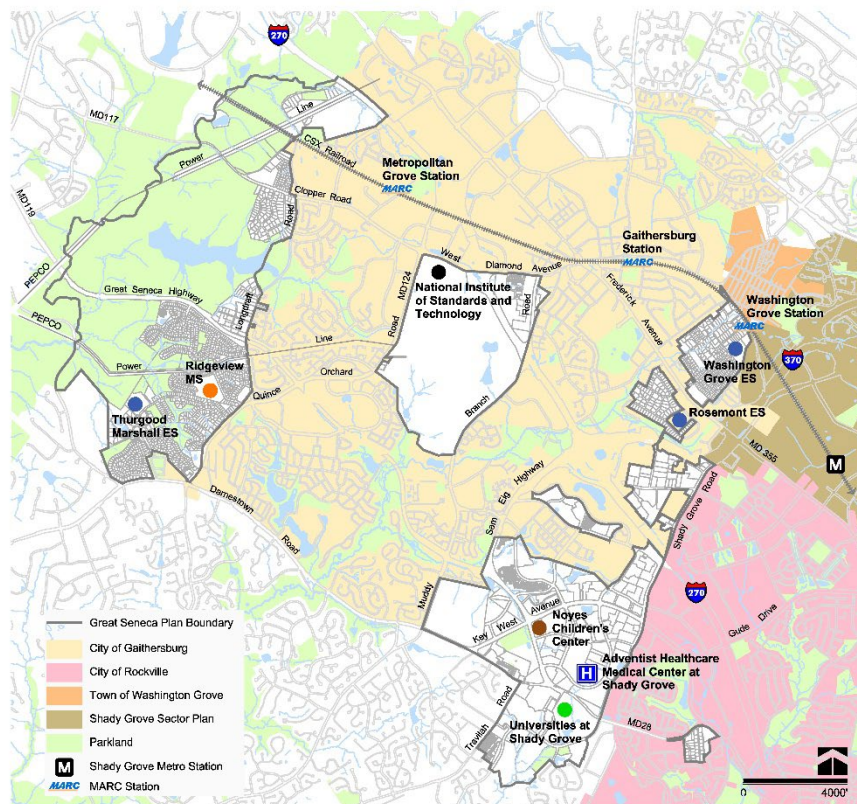


Figure 1: Great Seneca Plan Area

This focus area, particularly the Life Sciences Center, has experienced the most change over the past decade and has planned transformational investments, including the LSC Loop Trail and the Great Seneca Transit Network. Adjacent commercial centers in the City of Gaithersburg, such as the RIO

Lakefront and Downtown Crown, built since the 2010 Plan, may require new connections to the focus area. Most growth is expected in the Life Sciences Center.

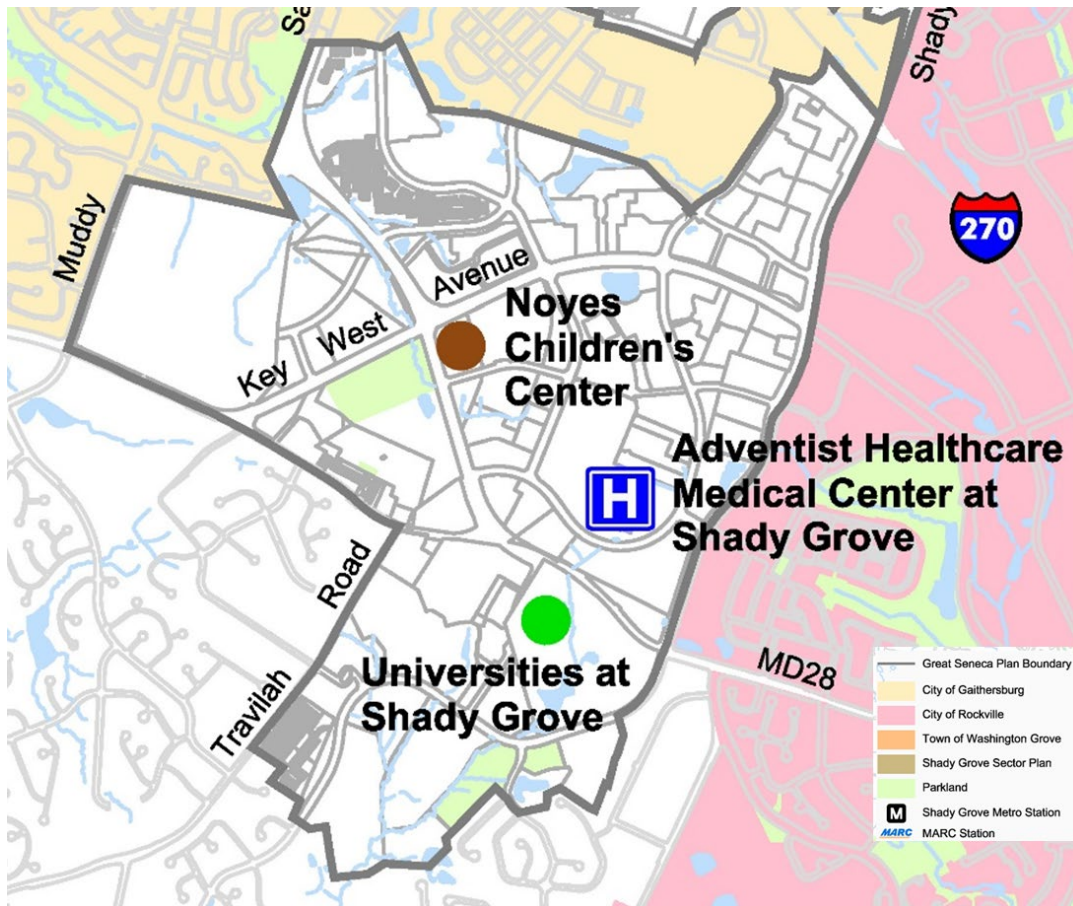


Figure 2: Plan Focus Area - The Life Sciences Center

The Great Seneca Plan will contain recommendations for all land areas within the plan boundary. This report, however, focuses on the Life Sciences Center. The report includes a vision and framework for the Life Sciences Center; emerging big ideas for land use, urban design, transportation, and economic competitiveness; strategies to implement the vision; and next steps.

Vision

The heart of the Great Seneca plan area, the Life Sciences Center is a thriving economic hub, home to a diverse population, and host to growing medical and educational institutions. It is a leader not only in the region, but in the country for life sciences research and innovation. In the face of sluggish growth in other areas of the county, the life sciences industry has continued to drive more construction in the plan area for its growing employee base.

The 2010 *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan* established a vision for the Life Sciences Center that included a first-class medical center, research facilities, academic institutions, and an array of services and amenities for residents, workers, and visitors. This big picture vision largely has and

continues to be realized. However, the desired physical form of the area—the parks and open spaces, public realm connections, transit and transportation facilities—has not been realized.

The overall vision for the area remains relatively unchanged: to support a vibrant live/work community that is an economic power center for the county which includes high quality amenities that foster social, environmental, and physical health. The Great Seneca Plan seeks to fill in the missing pieces from the 2010 Plan—the pieces that knit communities and land uses together. The Great Seneca Plan seeks to create “a place where the physical form—buildings, open spaces, and amenities—is as inspiring as the discoveries occurring inside” (2010 Plan, page 9).

Anchored by a core hub that is surrounded by supporting hubs, the plan embraces a higher-quality built environment, a more active and enriching social life, and natural features that contribute to better physical and mental wellbeing.

This plan also strives to include people who have historically been excluded from planning processes and consider the impacts of the process on racial equity and social justice. The vision of the area serves everyone and big ideas endeavor to make the vision accessible for all who live, work, and visit there.

Despite the relatively minor changes to the overall vision, the emerging big and supporting ideas are critical to achieving the vibrant, dynamic, mixed-use center envisioned by the 2010 Plan and reaffirmed by this plan.

Approach to Emerging Big Ideas

The Great Seneca Plan’s emerging big ideas are informed by existing conditions, staff analysis, guiding policies, outside expert consultation, and community input. The big ideas are an initial step in the development of the plan’s recommendations and will be refined in the coming months by additional analysis and community feedback.

Existing Conditions

Staff rely on existing conditions, shared with the Planning Board in January 2023, to help identify areas of inquiry, areas of concern and community strengths.

Guiding Policies

Over the past 13 years, since the adoption of the 2010 *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan*, Montgomery County has adopted policies and enacted legislation that have far-reaching consequences for planning. Montgomery Planning has also developed guidelines to direct safe, equitable and sustainable development.

County initiatives, including the following, have informed the development of the big ideas and will be a significant component of future recommendations:

1. *Thrive Montgomery 2050*, the update to the county’s General Plan, was approved by the Montgomery County Council in October 2022 and provides guidance for all master plans. It includes key recommendations like emphasizing walking, biking, and transit, prioritizing racial equity and economic competitiveness, and focusing growth in downtowns and activity centers.

2. The Racial Equity and Social Justice Act, approved and adopted by the Montgomery County Council in December 2019, requires that the Planning Board consider racial equity and social justice when preparing master plans.
3. The Climate Action Plan (CAP), released by the County Executive in June 2021, identifies short-, mid- and long-range actions to combat and adapt to climate change. Montgomery Planning and Montgomery Parks have committed to implement the CAP actions within the scope of their authority, including within master plans.
4. The Complete Streets Design Guide (CSDG) provides direction for designing roadways that provide safe, accessible, and healthy travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. The CSDG is codified in the *Montgomery County Code Sec. 49-25. Complete streets policy and standards.*
5. A Vision Zero resolution was adopted by the Montgomery County Council in 2016 and commits to eliminating traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2030.

Outside Expert Consultation

Agency Partner Coordination

Seeking input from local government experts is crucial to developing and refining ideas and recommendations. Agency partners help identify potential issues and opportunities as well as the feasibility of recommendations. The Great Seneca team has met with, among others:

- Montgomery County Department of Transportation
- Department of General Services
- Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration
- Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation
- Department of Housing and Community Affairs
- Upcounty Regional Services Center
- Housing Opportunities Commission
- Montgomery County Public Schools
- City of Gaithersburg
- City of Rockville
- Town of Washington Grove
- Office of the County Executive

The Great Seneca team will continue to develop and refine recommendations through an iterative process with agency partners.

Life Sciences and Housing Colocation Study

Montgomery Planning's Research and Strategic Projects Division is pursuing consultant assistance to study the compatibility of collocating retail, housing, and life sciences uses. The study will identify barriers to integrating these uses in infill or new developments. It will also look at potential regulatory, policy, and financial incentives to make it easier to infill housing with healthcare and life sciences. The findings of this study, expected this summer, will be incorporated into the Working Draft, informing recommendations of this plan.

Transportation Modeling

The Great Seneca Plan team is evaluating whether the potential land use and transportation recommendations being considered will improve transportation adequacy. Adequacy is being measured by metrics established by the former County Council’s Planning, Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee in December 2020. In addition, the team is evaluating the recommendations’ effects on roadway and selected intersection traffic volumes and capacities. The Great Seneca team is working with consultants to model the ideas contained in this report and will modify recommendations based on the results. Once this analysis is complete, the team will make more detailed recommendations about street cross sections, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities and needed right-of-way widths. Transportation modeling is expected to be finished in Summer 2023.

Community Input

A vision for the future must incorporate the wants, needs, values, vision and lived experience of community members, business owners, and other community stakeholders. The Great Seneca team has focused on meeting people where they are in their lives, in their communities, and online using approaches like pop-up events, door-knocking, and online surveys. Community outreach has included partnering with local organizations, holding focus groups, and hosting virtual and in-person meetings. The team has emphasized equity in information and access by offering translation and interpretation at engagement activities, providing educational materials and videos, and avoiding jargon throughout our engagement process.

The robust engagement strategy has yielded thousands of comments and ideas. This input has been integrated into the big ideas. Additional outreach and engagement initiatives are planned for the Spring. The team continues to record and analyze community comments and will return to the Planning Board this Spring with a Community Engagement Report.

Big Ideas

Staff requests feedback from the Planning Board on the following big ideas in advance of delivering a Working Draft Plan for their review in Fall 2023. These big ideas are high level and expected to have a transformative effect on the Master Plan area. The Planning Board’s direction, continued community feedback, and expert consultant input will help the team further refine these big ideas and develop plan recommendations.

Land Use and Urban Design

1. Establish activity hubs that are internally cohesive, walkable and complete while being externally connected. Each hub will embrace the notion of “park once,” reducing auto trips and allowing residents, employees, and visitors to walk between destinations (home, work, parks, retail, etc.).
 - a. Create five hubs
 - Central Hub – This primary hub forms the core of the area and includes the Adventist Healthcare Medical Center at Shady Grove
 - North Hub – National Cancer Institute, Mallory Square, Dunkin Donuts
 - South Hub – Trville, The Universities at Shady Grove
 - West Hub – The Elms at PSTA
 - Belward Hub – Belward Campus

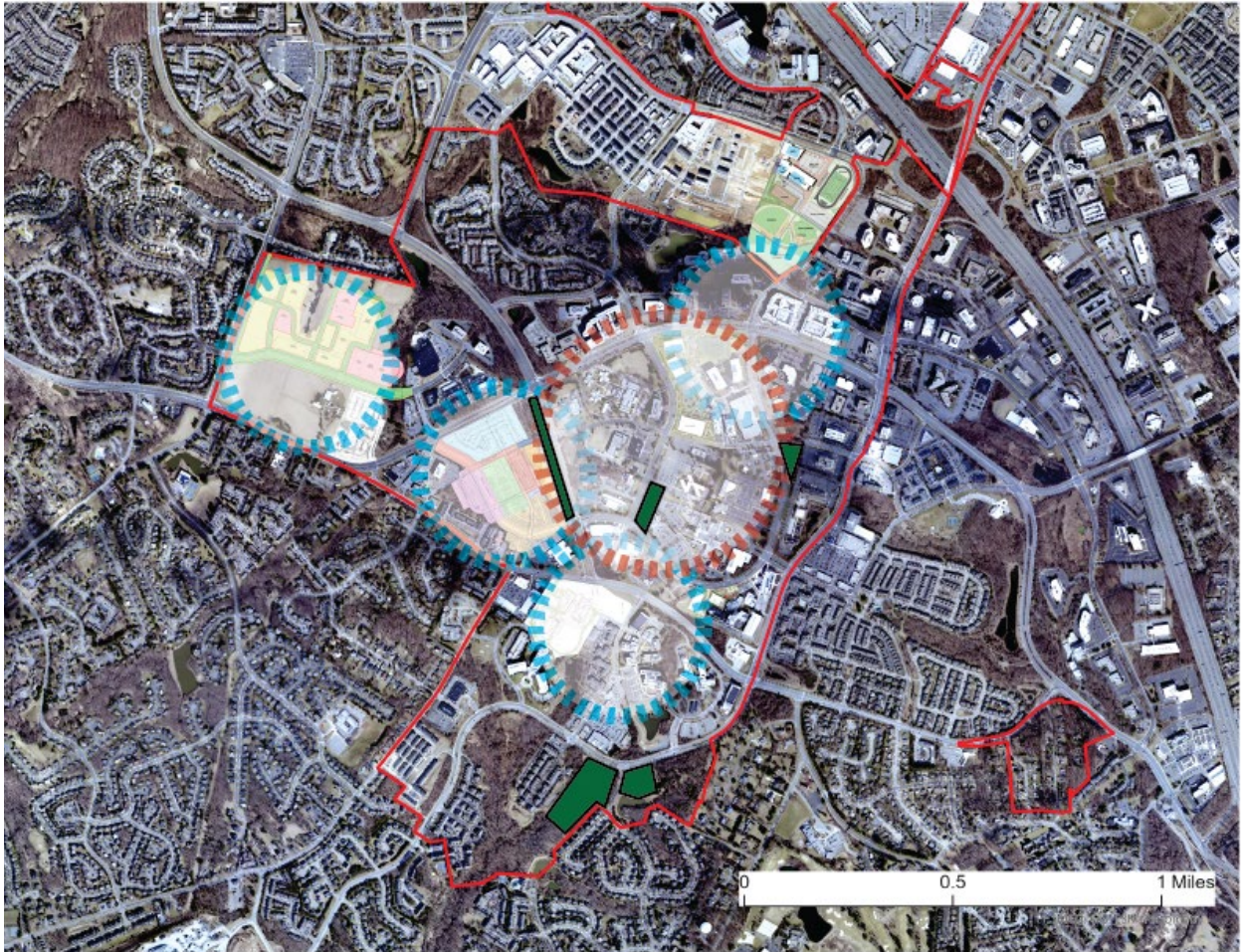


Figure 3: Proposed Activity Hubs

- b. Support Complete Communities within each hub and “15 minute living” between hubs. Complete Communities, as envisioned by Thrive 2050, enable people to meet many of their daily needs within walking or biking distance from where they live or work. They include a range of land uses, infrastructure, services and amenities, and building types.
 - i. Encourage the colocation of retail, housing, and life sciences to create ‘live-work-play’ developments. A forthcoming study will examine the compatibility of these uses, identify barriers to colocation, and identify potential regulatory, policy and financial incentives to enable colocation.
 - ii. Continue to support and encourage mixed-use development projects that include retail.
 - iii. Relocate underutilized state- and county-owned facilities to create opportunities for life sciences, retail, open space, and community use within the core hub.
 - iv. Establish a green space network (discussed in the Parks and Open Space section of this report).

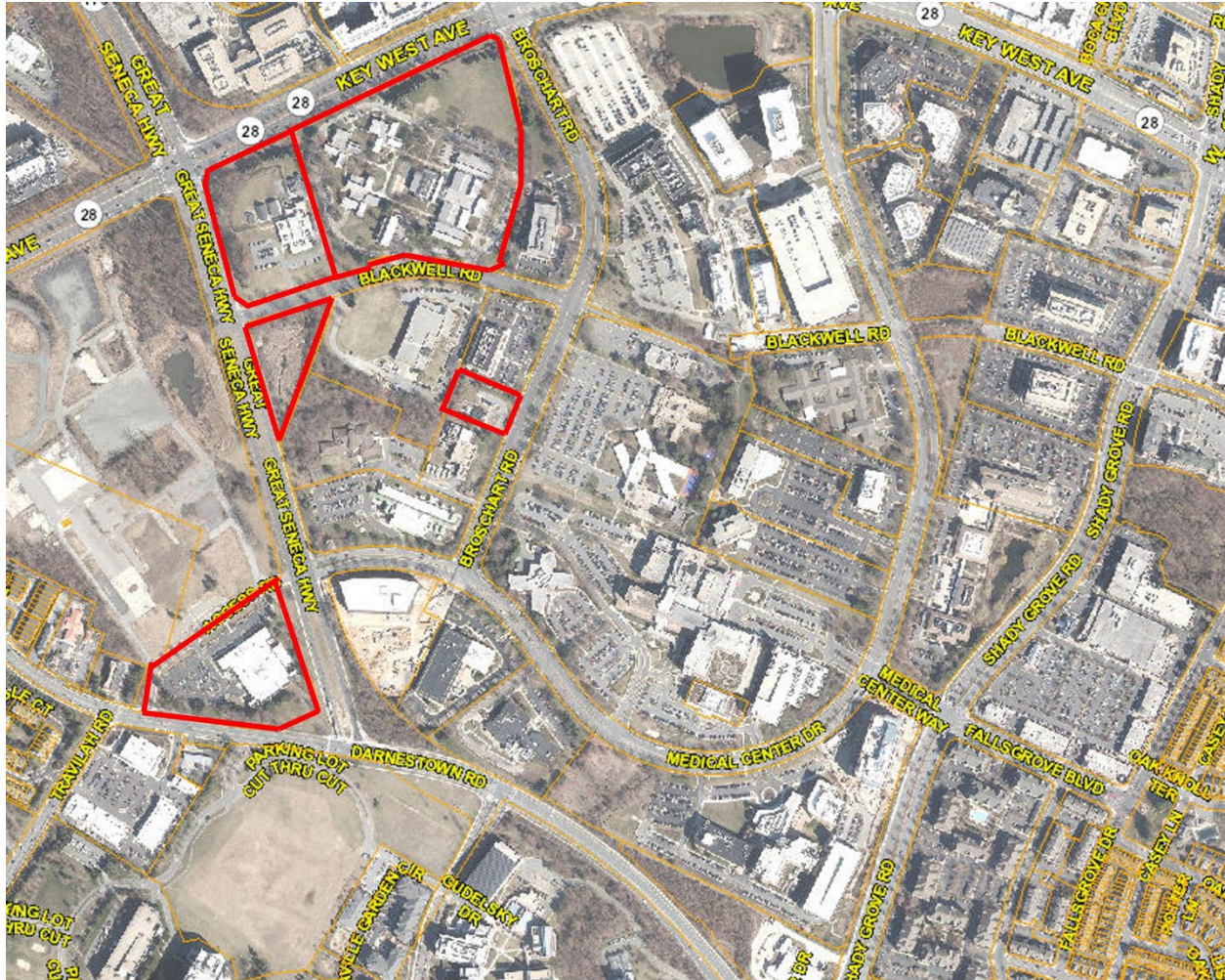


Figure 4: State- and County-Owned Land

- c. Design human-scale buildings that promote connections, walkability, and a sense of place. Buildings should front onto streets and public spaces to contribute to the community fabric. Buildings and architecture should be seamlessly incorporated into the existing built environment to allow for more connectivity in the Life Sciences Center.
 - i. Locate parking in structured facilities away from public view. Line structured parking with active uses and visually attractive screening.
 - ii. Building entrances must be recognizable and clear to pedestrians, incorporating human scale design elements and unique textures.
 - iii. Orient building entrances and commercial spaces toward streets. Campus style development should still create frontages along the adjacent streets and locate the open spaces in highly visible locations.

Transportation

- 2. Transform the Life Sciences Center into a place where all travelers—regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation—have multiple safe and convenient transportation options. In line with county policy, the plan prioritizes safety over convenience.

- a. Provide safety for all road users. The County Code requires that each transportation facility be planned and designed to “maximize the choice, safety, convenience, and mobility of all users, regardless of age, ability, or mode of transportation ...”. Streets designed to protect and serve the most vulnerable road users are safer for everyone. Street design should reduce excessive vehicle speeds and uncontrolled conflict points.

Right-sizing roadways is a step toward achieving the stated goals in the County Code, as well as other policies such as Vision Zero, Complete Streets and Thrive Montgomery 2050. Since the previous 2010 Plan was adopted, lower than anticipated auto-traffic, shifts in countywide transportation policy guidance and improved understanding of safe street design encourage a reevaluation of right of way allocation. Wide road widths increase crossing distances, acting as a barrier to walking, biking, rolling and using transit. They can also contribute to traveling at higher speeds which increases the risk of serious crashes. Additionally, excessively wide roadways detract from the sense of place by disrupting the street scape and contributing to a disconnected and sprawling public realm. The team will evaluate street by street possibilities to repurpose, reduce or retain travel lanes.

- i. Right size the number of personal vehicle travel lanes on existing roads. Reduce or repurpose lanes to create a safer and more comfortable environment for people walking, rolling, bicycling, riding transit, and driving.
 - ii. Narrow travel lane widths and reduce roadway design speeds to targets identified in the Complete Streets Design Guide.
 - iii. Right-size intersections to appropriate geometries for the desired mix of pedestrian, bicycle, transit, auto, and other users:
 - 1. Remove channelized right turn lanes from all intersections.
 - 2. Reduce the number of dedicated left and right turn lanes to shorten crossing distances.
 - 3. Minimize curb radii, using curb extensions rather than painted buffers. Include mountable curbs for fire and truck access if necessary.
 - iv. Signalize, restrict, or close median breaks.
- b. Establish a comfortable, well-connected bicycle and pedestrian network. Focus on making the Life Sciences Center optimal for biking, connecting each hub and destination through high-quality bike facilities. Establish pedestrian connections through and/or between parcels that support walking within hubs.
 - i. Provide protected pedestrian crossings consistent with the Complete Streets Design Guide’s maximum spacing for protected crossings, including at existing and new intersections and at mid-block locations where needed.
 - ii. Ensure ADA accessibility on all public pathways including sidewalks, trails, and street crossings in accordance with current best practices.
 - iii. Implement protected intersections at all intersections that have existing or planned separated bike lanes, sidepaths, buffered bike lanes, or conventional bike lanes.
 - iv. Implement the Life Sciences Center Loop Trail and improve bicycle and pedestrian access to nearby park trails, including Muddy Branch Trail, Seneca Greenway Trail, and Powerline Trail.

- v. Strengthen walking and biking connections between the Life Sciences Center, Downtown Crown, the Washingtonian Residential, the Rio Lakefront, and Falls Grove.
- c. Establish a high-quality transit network and street network. Transit services should connect internal and external destinations to the Life Sciences Center.
 - i. Implement the Great Seneca Transit Network, including repurposing auto travel lanes to dedicated transit lanes.
 - ii. Provide dedicated transit lanes for the Corridor Connectors identified in Corridor Forward: the I-270 Transit Plan.
 - iii. Implement a fine-grained street network that supports people walking, biking, rolling, driving and taking transit.
 - iv. Reduce or repurpose the number of vehicle travel lanes, where appropriate, to create a safer and more comfortable environment for all road users.
 - v. Remove the grade-separated interchanges recommended in the 2010 *Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan* and do not plan for new interchanges.

Parks and Open Space

- 3. Promote a rich open and green space network of publicly and privately owned parks, open spaces, trails and public realm. A hierarchy of well-connected open spaces and parks will facilitate physical activity and social interactions, and support the well-being of residents, workers, and visitors.
 - a. Create a variety of new public open spaces accessible to people of different ages, abilities, and interests. There should be a mix of active, contemplative, and social space.
 - i. Repurpose a portion of the Great Seneca Highway right-of-way between Key West Avenue and Medical Center Drive, reducing the number of travel lanes to one in each direction. Utilize the existing median and western right-of-way as a linear park. This linear park, in combination with approved privately-owned public space forthcoming at The Elms at PSTA could provide a significant publicly accessible open space.
 - ii. Reaffirm the recommendations from the 2010 Plan and approved preliminary plans and require adaptive reuse of the historic Belward Farm buildings for recreational, educational, social, or cultural uses that complement the community and new development.
 - iii. Request consolidated open space in the design of future projects along Blackwell Road and Broschart Road that could serve as an urban park or civic green.
 - b. Develop open spaces that are central, focused, and tied into the greater street network. Use these spaces to support and encourage economic growth and social interaction.
 - i. Design central open spaces that tie together different buildings and foster exchange between different people.
 - ii. Make open spaces attractive to employees to recreate after and during business hours.
 - iii. Utilize the natural assets (forests, streams, etc.) of the plan area to encourage visitation.
 - iv. Provide amenities such as consistent lighting, publicly accessible restrooms, and water fountains throughout the plan area that will encourage the extended use of public and private open and recreational space.

- v. Program public and private spaces with events such as farmers markets, classes, food truck pop-ups and performances.

Sustainability

4. Incorporate environmentally sustainable strategies into all developments that align with best practices and mirror the life sciences industry's state of the art technology.
 - a. Increase environmental resiliency and reduce vulnerability to climate events. Climate events are increasingly frequent and can cause disruptions to basic economic functions and threaten human health.
 - i. Increase on-site clean energy generation to reduce energy demand on the power grid, and energy loss in transmission from the generation site to the end user.
 - ii. Design and build new community centers and retrofit existing ones to serve as resilience hubs and cooling centers. These could be designed to be “off the grid” and to convert to emergency centers in times of disruption from storms, extreme heat and other disasters.
 - iii. Reduce impervious surfaces which are associated with the creation of heat islands, increased flooding from runoff, erosion and poor water quality.
 - b. Reduce the heat island effect and provide shade throughout the Life Sciences Center.
 - i. Reduce impervious surfaces, eliminate surface parking in new development, and replace existing parking lots with structured or below grade parking.
 - ii. Increase tree canopy.
 - iii. Include artificial shading features in paved and hardscaped areas where there is limited soil to support tree growth.
 - iv. Increase green cover, including forest and tree cover, landscaped areas, green roofs, bioswales, etc.
 - c. Commit to Environmental Justice evaluation and practices. Use tools such as the Environmental Protection Agency’s EJScreen Tool to help identify communities within the planning area that may suffer disproportionately from environmental impacts due to the lingering effects of past practices.

Economic Competitiveness

5. Support the life sciences industry in the Life Sciences Center. The Life Sciences Center is the geographical heart of Montgomery County’s life sciences industry, which is the county’s key private sector driver of economic competitiveness. The Life Sciences Center and areas immediately adjacent grew from almost 4,300 employees to over 8,500 between 2010 and 2021. During this time, the life sciences industry grew by only 10 percent in the remaining areas of the county, signaling that the industry is consolidating, and benefitting from colocation and economies of scale. The area now employs 63 percent of the county’s life sciences workforce.
 - a. Continue to refine rapid permitting processes for life sciences real estate development, including streamlining the entitlements process to assist with speed to market.
 - b. Through the Housing and Life Sciences Colocation Study, identify factors that differentiate Montgomery County’s life sciences cluster from other internationally competitive clusters.
 - c. Encourage life sciences companies of different sizes and at different stages of development.
 - i. Create and strengthen pipelines for life sciences talent at all education levels.

- ii. Encourage the development of small- and medium-scale lab space.
- iii. Consider public investments to help early-stage life sciences companies grow such as shared lab space, supplies, and business assistance.
- iv. Evaluate sites to develop publicly funded/subsidized shared resource facilities for the life sciences industry, such as shared lab space and equipment storage.
- d. Continue to support housing development that meets the needs of life sciences employees, healthcare workers, and students.

Implementation

The 2010 Plan established a strong vision, but it has not been realized. The Great Seneca Plan reaffirms and augments the 2010 Plan vision. Staff have identified barriers that plagued the 2010 Plan implementation and could continue to hinder the realization of the Great Seneca Plan vision. These barriers include:

- Staging requirements linked to Corridor Cities Transitway—which has been replaced by other planned projects—has stymied development in the area and has not met its intended purpose.
- Lack of funding mechanism for public infrastructure projects.
- Site plan applications coming in under former zoning—often with multi-decade Adequate Public Facility validity—that do not include current planning best practices and deliver designs that are not consistent with current master plans or county policies.
- Weak language in the LSC Zone for achieving desired urban design, particularly around the placement of parking and building orientation.
- Limitations on mixed-use opportunities (life sciences use not allowed in CR zones, housing limited in LSC zone) that have perpetuated single use campuses and enclaves.
- Lack of programming and coordination to attract new businesses and create a sense of identity for the Life Sciences Center.

To address these issues, staff proposes the following as a complement to the big ideas:

- Remove staging requirements established by the 2010 Plan.
- Create a funding mechanism—like the White Oak Local Area Transportation Improvement Program—to fund transportation projects.
- Establish a Life Sciences Center Overlay Zone. Elements of the Overlay Zone could include:
 - Additional residential uses, services, and amenities that help implement recommendations of Thrive Montgomery 2050.
 - Site design requirements, including building placement and location of parking.
 - Reductions in required parking.
- Develop Master Plan language that clearly lays out the expectation that site design, including building placement and location of parking, must conform with the current master plan for all new applications and amendments.
- Establish an entity in the Life Sciences Center that could be modeled after the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Business Improvement District or Pike District Partnership. This entity could:
 - Develop a brand for the area and market it locally, regionally and nationally.
 - Activate underutilized sites and open spaces through public art, programming, and pop-up amenities.

- Identify a dedicated annual funding stream to support and widely market these efforts.

Next Steps

The Great Seneca team will present a community engagement report to the Planning Board in May detailing the approach to engagement, strategy, tactics and a summary of who participated and their main ideas, concerns, and comments.

Staff will refine the big ideas and develop recommendations for the full plan area throughout the summer, including evaluating opportunities to achieve additional housing in the plan's Londonderry area. The Great Seneca team will continue to engage with community members, host and participate in events, produce educational materials, and meet with agency partners. Collected feedback, as well as the findings from the transportation modeling and housing and life sciences colocation study, will inform the plan recommendations and Working Draft.

The Great Seneca team will present the Working Draft Plan to the Planning Board in Fall 2023. Montgomery Planning anticipates transmitting the Planning Board Draft Plan to the County Council for review and approval in early 2024.