

Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan

Approved and Adopted

February 2000



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

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Approved and Adopted Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan

AUTHOR: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

SUBJECT: A revitalization plan for downtown Silver Spring

DATE: February 2000

PLANNING AGENCY: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
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ABSTRACT: This document contains the text and supporting maps of the Planning Board Approved and Adopted Sector Plan for the Silver Spring Central Business District. This Sector Plan is a comprehensive amendment to the approved and adopted 1993 *Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan*, as well as an amendment to the *General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District Within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties*, as amended. This Sector Plan also amends the 1997 approved and adopted *Master Plan for Silver Spring-East* and the *Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, Maryland*, as amended.

Approved and Adopted

Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan

An amendment to the Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan, 1993, as amended; The Master Plan for Silver Spring-East, 1997, as amended; The Master Plan of Bikeways, 1978, as amended; The Master Plan of Historic Preservation, 1979, as amended; The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, 1964, as amended; and The Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, as amended.

Prepared by

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Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
8787 Georgia Avenue
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March 2001

Approved by

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

February 2000

Adopted by

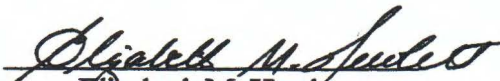
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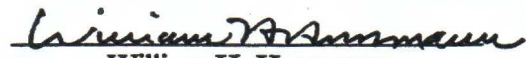
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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

THIS SECTOR PLAN, being an amendment to the *Silver Spring Central Business District Sector Plan*, 1993, as amended; *The Master Plan for Silver Spring-East*, 1997, as amended; *The Master Plan of Bikeways*, 1978, as amended; *The Master Plan of Historic Preservation*, 1979, as amended; *The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties*, 1964, as amended; and *The Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County*, as amended; and has been adopted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission by Resolution Number 00-03 on March 15, 2000, after a duly advertised Public Hearing held on September 10, 1998, and approved by the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council, by Resolution Number 14-416 on February 1, 2000, after a duly advertised Public Hearing on July 27, 1999.

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The Commission has three major functions:

- (1) The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of *The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District Within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties*.
- (2) The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system.
- (3) In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire County public recreation program.

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NOTICE TO READERS

An area master plan, after approval by the County Council and adoption by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, constitutes an amendment to The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for Montgomery County. As such, it provides a set of comprehensive recommendations and guidelines for the use of publicly and privately owned land within its planning area. Each area master plan reflects a vision of future development that responds to the unique character of the local community within the context of a County-wide perspective.

Area master plans are intended to provide a point of reference with regard to public policy. Together with relevant County-wide functional master plans (such as the Master Plan of Highways in Montgomery County; the Master Plan for Historic Preservation; and the Master Plan for the Preservation of Agricultural and Rural Open Space), they should be referred to by public officials and private individuals when decisions are made that affect the use of land within the plan boundaries.

Master plans generally look ahead about 20 years from the date of adoption, although they are intended to be updated and revised every 10 years. It is recognized that circumstances will change following adoption of a plan and that the specifics of a master plan may become less relevant over time. Generally, sketches or drawings in an adopted master plan are for illustrative purposes only and are intended to convey a general sense of desirable future character rather than a specific commitment to a particular detailed design.

It is also important to recognize that the land use and zoning recommendations in master plans do not specify all development possibilities. In order to understand the full range of development options, the reader should be aware of additional land uses and development potential available through permitted special exception uses; variances; transferrable development rights (TDRs); Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs); land rezoning by local map amendment; public projects and the mandatory referral process; and municipal annexations. These terms are described in the Glossary of Planning Terms published separately by the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning.

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- A. Glossary
- B. Silver Spring/Takoma Park Transportation and Circulation Report

Additional Resources (Under separate cover, through Information Desk at M-NCPPC, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland)

Approved Purpose and Outreach Report
Survey of Silver Spring and Takoma Park Residents
Economic Assessment of Housing in Silver Spring
Park and Open Space Concept
Stormwater Management Options for Central Business Districts in Montgomery
County, Maryland: A Technical Assessment
Fenton Street Village: Existing Conditions and Recommendations for the Future
Assessment of the Economic Health and Prospects for Class B and Class C Office
Buildings in Montgomery County, Maryland
Silver Spring Trail and Bikeway Plan

WHAT THIS PLAN ACCOMPLISHES

- **The Plan's recommendations are market-oriented, economically feasible, and offer meaningful incentives for long-term revitalization of the CBD.** Realistic recommendations based on Silver Spring's market niches encourage and support private and public sector investments that contribute to downtown revitalization.
- **Land use and zoning recommendations promote activating uses such as housing, offices, retail, culture, and recreation.** To function and thrive, the downtown must offer a mix of uses to a variety of people.
- **This Plan promotes upgrading the CBD's appearance to attract investment and activity.** An attractive environment is valuable to both businesses and residents. Street trees, lighting, and a safe pedestrian environment will contribute to downtown revitalization.
- **This Plan promotes the CBD as a center of community civic and cultural life.** Downtowns draw people to work and shop, but also to gather and socialize. Silver Spring lacks activities to bring people downtown. Improved community facilities will also add value to CBD businesses and residences.
- **This Plan advocates public amenities** including providing a open space system in downtown Silver Spring. The Commission must oversee and ensure incorporation of historic structures, parks and recreation facilities, bike trails, and pedestrian connections into downtown development.
- **This Plan promotes downtown revitalization supported by significant and continuing public sector resources.** Public investment in facilities, plans, and programs that leverage and complement private investment will ensure a strong and long-term revitalization.
- **This Plan identifies five Revitalization Areas in the CBD:** Corridors and Gateways, the Core, Ripley District, South Silver Spring and Fenton Village, and tailors recommendations to the unique needs of each area.

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

In the past year, businesses, property owners, and residents have reached consensus on an appropriate future for downtown Silver Spring. Redevelopment projects already underway, and recommendations made in this Plan will reshape the CBD into an varied, attractive, and active downtown.

This Plan recognizes that downtown revitalization can't be completed by a single project, but needs to be an effort of the entire community. Plan recommendations create opportunities for commercial and residential development of varying size and character.

The Plan first describes themes and an overall vision for downtown Silver Spring, and then addresses larger functional issues such as transportation, housing, and public facilities. Specific recommendations address the issues and opportunities in five targeted downtown locations. Finally, the Plan identifies Next Steps that should be taken to implement the recommendations.

IN SUMMARY

- This Plan confirms the general vision of the 1993 Sector Plan to **rejuvenate Silver Spring's Core as a varied and active town center**, but it redirects the vision from a regional mall with major comparison shopping to a community-oriented downtown of mixed housing, retail, and employment options. Downtown uses, such as regional offices and speciality shops, will serve a broad market.
- This Plan recommends new **zoning initiatives designed to encourage redevelopment** in the major revitalization areas of the downtown: the Core, the Ripley District, South Silver Spring, and Fenton Village.
- The Plan's goal to create a thriving downtown residential community is supported by zoning incentives and redevelopment opportunities designed to **emphasize townhouses and garden apartments** rather than high-rise construction, while providing high-rise potential for the long-term near the Transit Center.
- **Proposed land use impacts on the circulation system are consistent with the 1993 Sector Plan.** Computer modeling has found that within the CBD, land uses and transportation are generally in balance, and the transportation recommendations are essentially the same as in the 1993 Sector Plan.
- This Plan recognizes the County's role as developer through the **strategic siting and programming of community facilities** to encourage and complement private sector development.
- This Plan promotes **reusing and incorporating historic resources** into new projects to preserve Silver Spring's unique past, giving texture and depth to the CBD's redevelopment.
- Stormwater management is the CBD's most important environmental issue. This Plan recommends **new stormwater management options to improve water quality that will not discourage redevelopment**. Such measures can reduce development costs compared to traditional stormwater management structures or required waiver fees.
- **Parcel-specific issues in the Core's urban renewal area are governed by the Adopted Urban Renewal Plan**, which was amended during this planning process to ensure its consistency with this Plan.

INTRODUCTION

This Sector Plan focuses on revitalization through combined public and private efforts. It articulates a vision and principles for future development and defines the Silver Spring CBD's physical and functional aspects.

Although Silver Spring has experienced a cycle of decline over the past several decades, a new sense of optimism about the CBD's future has emerged as the local economy rebounds from a recent recession. This optimism has also been sparked by the announcements of several major community-supported development projects, including Downtown Silver Spring (a collection of retail, restaurant, and entertainment), Discovery Communications, Inc. (office headquarters for more than 1,000 employees), the Towns at Silver Spring Commons (market-rate townhouses), a redesigned Transit Center, and the expansion of Montgomery College into South Silver Spring. Smaller development projects including the renovation of the Rock Creek Foundation and the Blair Mills Arts Center on East West Highway have also proven that individual owners of small properties can achieve success in the CBD. While the recent burst of activity in Silver Spring is promising, additional efforts toward revitalization are still needed to ensure long-term success.

Silver Spring's existing infrastructure offers significant advantages—a position recognized by the community, and by the State's Smart Growth policy and funding initiative. Some projects are already underway with Smart Growth funds and this Plan creates the opportunity for more.

This Sector Plan creates a structure for revitalization and makes specific recommendations to achieve a successful downtown. The Plan's themes and recommendations are multi-faceted, approaching downtown revitalization from many angles. Past experience has shown that no one project, person, or group can itself revive Silver Spring.

REVITALIZATION APPROACH FOR THE SILVER SPRING CBD SECTOR PLAN

The Sector Plan's general approach and specific recommendations reflect the Silver Spring business, investment, and residential communities' shared vision of the future. This vision is to create a downtown for Silver Spring that will be the focal point of community life, offering a variety of activities where residents and visitors can work, live, play, and socialize. A mix of regional and national business and cultural uses will serve the greater Washington region, creating a downtown that serves, but does not overwhelm, surrounding residential neighborhoods.

This Plan for revitalization strives to stimulate appropriate and targeted development, provide flexible land uses to respond to changing market forces, identify key development initiatives, and balance the need for development with sensitivity to the potential impacts on transportation systems, historic preservation, neighborhood compatibility, and the environment.

This Plan shifts the vision for downtown Silver Spring from a single, large-scale private project to an emphasis on development of many projects to complete the whole. Coupled with public investment in

community facilities and community initiatives in programs and promotion, this incremental approach to downtown revitalization can make Silver Spring a lively and responsive community, establishing a development pattern that can grow into the future.

While proposed development in the Urban Renewal Area, combined with other private office and residential development proposals, has begun downtown revitalization, the momentum must be sustained by public investment and policy efforts. This Plan makes recommendations for public efforts and provides standards for reviewing private projects.

This Plan establishes themes that are consistent with the goals of the 1993 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan and provide the basis for its revitalization initiatives. The themes in the new Sector Plan are: a transit-oriented downtown, a commercial downtown, a residential downtown, a civic downtown, a green downtown, and a pedestrian-friendly downtown.

THE INTENT OF THIS PLAN

This Plan develops a vision, revitalization strategy, and implementation steps that set into motion coordinated, sustained public sector investment that will be used to leverage private investment in the Silver Spring CBD.

This Sector Plan is first and foremost a revitalization plan. Like plans for other communities in the County, it seeks to guide and modulate growth, but it also seeks to encourage the redevelopment of downtown from a disjointed assemblage of uncomplimentary buildings to a thriving community providing choices and opportunities. Within the framework of its themes and its specific recommendations, the Plan identifies public and private potential and responsibilities in creating a future for Silver Spring.

This Sector Plan strives to...

- Approach each component of the Plan from the point of view of **stimulating appropriate development**.
- Provide **market responsive land uses, zoning, and plan approval processes**.
- Provide more **flexible land use and zoning**, responsive to the CBD's changing real estate market.
- Identify key major public and private **development initiatives**.
- Develop **implementation strategies** and tools that will be available to realize the vision for the CBD.
- **Balance** the need for development with sensitivity to the potential negative impacts on transportation systems, historic preservation, neighborhood compatibility, and the environment.

The Sector Plan, through its broad goals and specific guidelines, will frame future development and future work efforts in the CBD.

Revitalization of the Silver Spring CBD will have both direct and indirect effects on surrounding communities. Concurrent with this Sector Plan update, master plans are being prepared for four residential communities surrounding the central business district: North Silver Spring, West Silver Spring, East Silver Spring, and the City of Takoma Park (Map 1).

Smart Growth

- **What is Smart Growth?**
Smart Growth is a State policy and funding program that invests public funds in older urban areas, revitalizing them into desirable places to live, work, and spend time.
 - **Why use Smart Growth?**
Using public funds to encourage private investment in urban areas preserves rural and suburban open space, and maximizes investments already made in urban infrastructure such as roads, transit, water and sewer.
 - **How can it work in Silver Spring?**
Silver Spring is ideally positioned to become one of Maryland's premier Smart Growth communities. This Plan identifies public and private development potential that can create jobs, housing, and civic opportunities that will return urban vitality to the community.
-

PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE SILVER SPRING CBD SECTOR PLAN

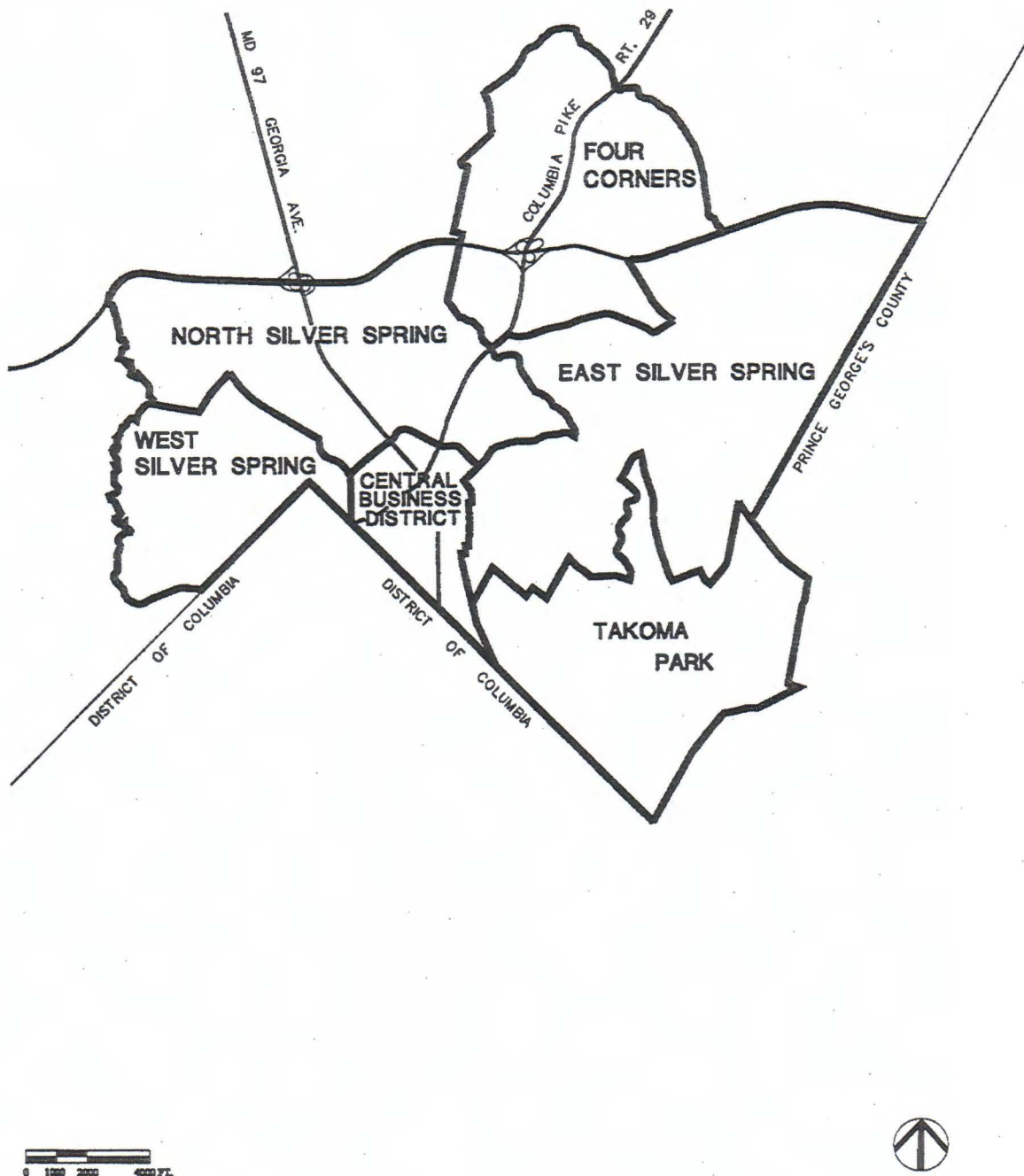
The 1993 Silver Spring Sector Plan recognized the need to monitor and evaluate development in the Central Business District and mandated a reassessment of the Plan within five years. Also since 1993, the State's Smart Growth initiative has refocused development funds and incentives on revitalizing downtowns.

This Sector Plan was completed under the streamlined planning process approved by the Planning Board and County Council. As part of this process, two rounds of focus group meetings and two open workshops were held with community leaders, developers, residents, business owners, and public officials to articulate and confirm the fundamental needs and approaches to revitalizing downtown Silver Spring.

The issues identified in the first round of focus groups were incorporated into a Draft Illustrative Concept Plan, presented to the Planning Board in July 1997. The Draft Concept Plan was presented to the community in the second round of focus group meetings that included initial participants, and sought out new participants.

The Draft Purpose and Outreach Report, completed in October 1997, outlined the rationale for undertaking this Sector Plan update, including changes in the CBD since the 1993 Plan and the larger issues to be addressed in the update. This Report was presented to the Planning Board at a public meeting and, with their comments, the update proceeded.

Map 1 Silver Spring/Takoma Park Community-Based Planning Area



A telephone survey conducted in English and Spanish also gathered information about the community—the concerns and opinions of Silver Spring and Takoma Park residents. Zoning and Transportation working papers were presented at open community forums, allowing citizen comment on draft ideas.

The County Executive's Silver Spring Redevelopment Steering Committee advised on issues and policies in lieu of a separate Master Plan Advisory Group to maintain a seamless process of community input. The comments and ideas generated by discussion of the Draft Concept Plan with public agencies; representatives of civic, community, and business groups; and the Silver Spring Core Group (representatives of local government agencies who coordinate their work in the CBD) were also refined into the specific proposals and recommendations of this Sector Plan.

The Silver Spring Master Plan Process

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Phase One</i> | Collect data and meet with community focus groups
Develop Draft Illustrative Concept Plan |
| <i>Phase Two</i> | Meet with community focus groups and hold open house
Complete Purpose and Outreach Strategy Report |
| <i>Phase Three</i> | Undertake Silver Spring/Takoma Park Phone Survey
Develop working papers and additional studies
Hold issue-based community workshops identifying concerns with
working paper recommendations
Consult with Silver Spring Steering Committee and Core Group |
| <i>Phase Four</i> | Prepare Staff Draft Sector Plan |
| <i>Phase Five</i> | Transmit Staff Draft to Planning Board
Hold community forum in preparation for Planning Board hearing
Planning Board Worksessions |
| <i>Phase Six</i> | Prepare Planning Board Draft for submittal to the County Council |
| <i>Phase Seven</i> | County Council public hearing and worksessions |
| <i>Phase Eight</i> | County Council approval and adoption of the Sector Plan |
-

OVERVIEW OF THE CBD

LOCATION

Silver Spring has tremendous advantages for residents and businesses seeking a location close to Washington, D.C. or Baltimore. Businesses are a 12-15 minute Metrorail trip to Capitol Hill and 35 miles from downtown Baltimore. Metrorail links Silver Spring with major local and national resources, including Union Station, the United States Congress, the MCI Center, the Smithsonian Institution, major federal government offices, the World Bank, Ronald Reagan National Airport, and the Washington, D.C. business district. The Silver Spring CBD is also accessible by two Capital Beltway interchanges and by Maryland Area Rapid (MARC) Commuter rail (Map 2).

As the Washington metropolitan region has developed as an information technology and computer center, and as new media and computer businesses have already committed to the CBD, the Silver Spring CBD is ideally positioned to become a high-tech center, by offering both start-up and established businesses, the computer, telephone, fiber-optic, and media network connections needed to compete effectively in this market.

BACKGROUND

The Silver Spring CBD is part of Montgomery County, Maryland, one of the most prosperous jurisdictions in the country. Montgomery County offers an excellent school and park system and proximity to Washington, D.C.'s cultural amenities. Silver Spring is located in the County's designated Urban Ring, which also includes the County's other CBDs: Bethesda, Friendship Heights, and Wheaton. Densely developed and established residential neighborhoods surround the CBD. The approximately 55,000 households within the Silver Spring market area (that extends into the District of Columbia and Prince George's County) have an aggregate annual income of over \$3 billion and estimated retail spending of two-thirds of a billion dollars that can support about 1.9 million square feet of retail space.

Silver Spring is the County's last suburban center to revitalize and its location makes it a prime candidate for the State's Smart Growth initiative. Redevelopment efforts should maximize the convenience of Silver Spring's excellent business and residential location.

THE EVOLUTION OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S FIRST COMMERCIAL CENTER

The first step in developing a vision and revitalization strategies for the downtown is to recognize that Silver Spring's development over the past 50 years has been unique in Montgomery County. While there are other CBDs in the County, none is as large as Silver Spring, none has ever experienced the same magnitude of decline as Silver Spring, and none has experienced as dramatic a shift in demographics as Silver Spring.

The Silver Spring CBD's early success and subsequent decline mirrors the experience of many of the first developed suburbs throughout the United States. Suburban outlets of downtown retailers located in Silver Spring first, then moved on to enclosed malls following expanded development and population. Today, Silver Spring competes with numerous retail/commercial centers throughout the region, including Wheaton Plaza, Montgomery Mall, White Flint Mall, Rockville Pike, Prince George's Plaza, Friendship Heights, and the Bethesda CBD.

Many workers and residents in and around the CBD generally consider themselves suburbanites. Silver Spring is not the primary downtown for the region, but rather a secondary downtown to Washington, D.C. Developers, residents, merchants, and businesses are influenced by Silver Spring's suburban location outside of downtown Washington, D.C. This perception affects private and public sector land use decisions and sets up expectations for service, convenience, and appearance.

Silver Spring today is neither urban nor suburban. It is a hybrid of the two, evidenced by its physical attributes and the desires of its populace. In some places, sites are designed with an urban building line that creates a well-defined street edge. Silver Spring also displays many suburban characteristics, such as suburban-style shopping centers with private parking lots fronting retail establishments.

Data from the 1994 Census Update Survey showed that Silver Spring's population increased since 1990, but changed from elderly and older families to more younger households and singles. Recently built apartments complexes attract younger singles.

New residents will need retail services, may seek jobs and entertainment in the CBD, and will use park and recreation facilities. This Plan offers an opportunity to shape Silver Spring to meet a new market population and serve long-time residents.

Silver Spring's 265-acre CBD has a prime location in the Washington metropolitan area. It is situated inside the Capital Beltway in the southeast corner of Montgomery County, sharing a boundary with Washington, D.C., along Eastern Avenue. The CBD is roughly bounded by Spring and Cedar Streets on the north, Fenton Street on the east, Eastern Avenue on the southwest, and 16th Street on the west.

Montgomery County is...

- The third largest office market in the region.
- One of the wealthiest counties in the U.S., with a median household income of \$66,800.
- Home to federal government offices including the National Institutes of Health, Food and Drug Administration, Department of Energy, National Institute of Standards and Technology, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (located in the Silver Spring CBD).
- One of the nation's top locations for high-tech workers.
- Home to the third largest concentration of biotechnology firms in the nation.
- Home to major corporate, education, and research organizations including COMSAT, IBM, Lockheed Martin, Marriott International, AT&T, and Hughes Network Systems.

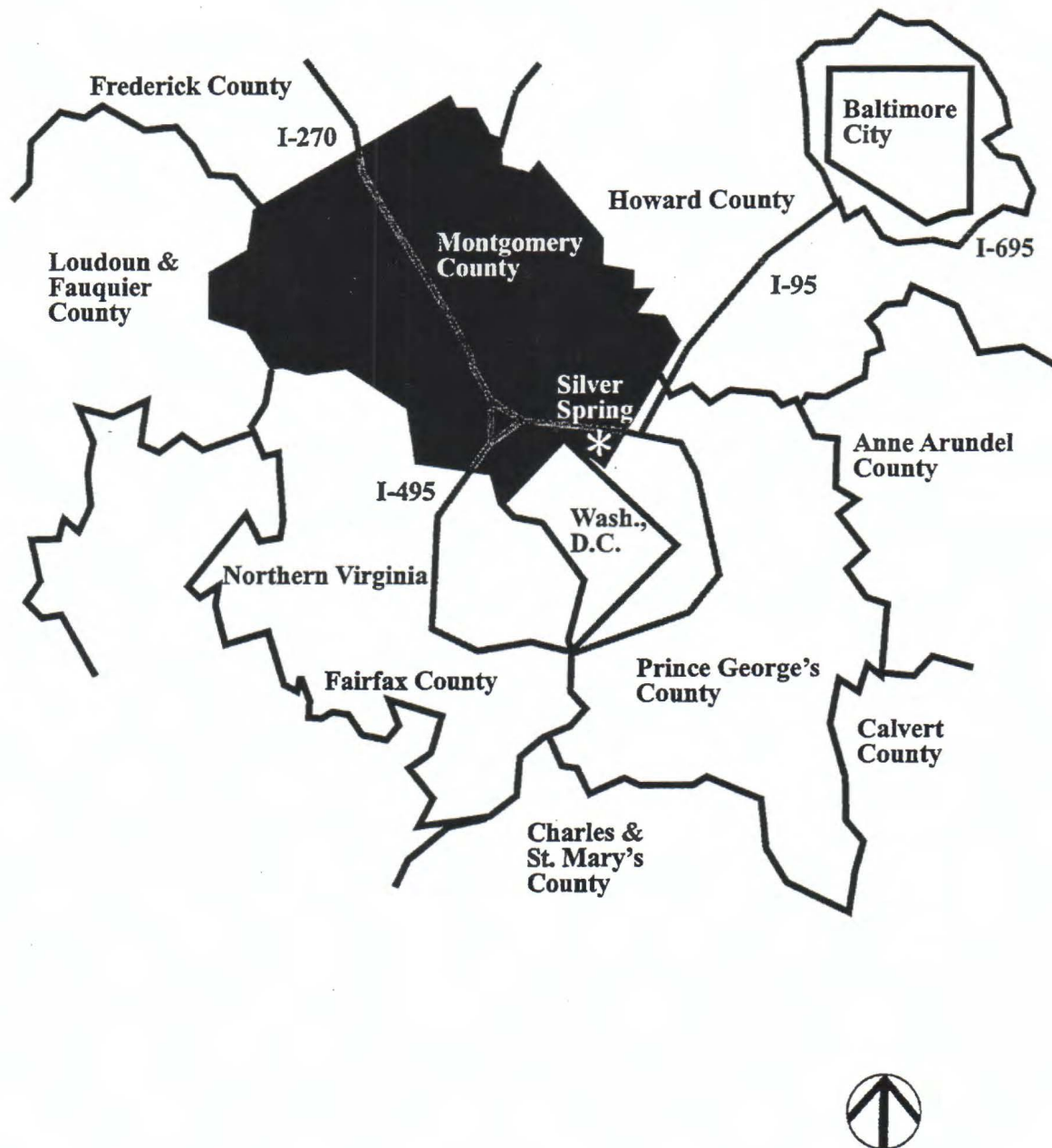
Silver Spring History

First settled in the mid-1840s, the area now known as the Silver Spring CBD was one of the first commercial centers to develop in Montgomery County.

Beginning with the Silver Spring Shopping Center and Silver Theatre, Silver Spring experienced early success as one of the region's first suburban comparison retail shopping destinations. Hecht's department store, J.C. Penney, Jelleff's, Peck and Peck, and Hahn Shoes were all major retail attractions and major land users in Silver Spring.

The building of Wheaton Plaza Shopping Center drew both retailers and shoppers away from the CBD and is often cited as the beginning of Silver Spring's decline.

Map 2 Regional Location



THE VISION—SILVER SPRING'S FUTURE

This Plan envisions a downtown serving both the surrounding residential community and a broader market.

Silver Spring will become the downtown serving the surrounding residential communities, the eastern part of the County, and a broader regional market, including the District of Columbia and western Prince George's County. The downtown's Core will re-emerge as the center of the community, with offices, shops, restaurants, and civic uses arranged along landscaped, pedestrian-friendly streets.

All of Silver Spring's districts will be enriched with amenities and linked by tree-lined sidewalks, local and regional trails, and a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks. The new connections will capitalize on Silver Spring's role as a transportation center where local and regional train, bus, road, and trail systems come together. The downtown's parks and plazas will be connected by a linked park system supplemented by sidewalks edged with trees, and buildings with shopfronts that enliven the sidewalks.

From the 1993 General Plan Refinement of the Goals and Objectives for Montgomery County:

"The County needs bustling central business districts where people can work and enjoy life. Centers should be places where residents can watch a play or visit an artist's studio, eat at an ethnic restaurant or sit at an outdoor café, meet friends while shopping on the main street or farmer's market, listen to a band concert in the summer or ice skate in the winter in the center of town, relax with a good book on their balcony or in the public library."

Silver Spring will become an even more desirable place to live, with a choice of housing types, supported by convenience shopping and enhanced with parks and gardens.

Civic and cultural uses will make Silver Spring a true community center. Private and public buildings and open spaces will provide venues for regular programs and special events that draw the community together. A network of fiber-optic and telecommunications connections, supporting electronic media, will serve businesses seeking to compete in a high-tech environment.

The CBD's excellent transit, trail, and transportation connections will combine in an improved aesthetic environment to continue Silver Spring's role as regional downtown. A variety of new and renovated buildings and activities will serve Silver Spring residents and workers, as well as visitors from throughout the region, drawn by varied shops, services, and entertainment outlets, which will enliven downtown.

As its main thoroughfares, **Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road** define the CBD and have the potential to be the front door for each of the downtown revitalization districts. Streetscaping and redevelopment will combine to create a pedestrian-friendly corridor. Likewise, distinctive signs and landscaping at the CBD gateways will mark the entrance into downtown Silver Spring.

The **Core** (see Map 7) will be the center of downtown, with retail, commercial, and residential development near the Transit Center. Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road will become true boulevards, busy with walkers, lined with trees and shops—the transportation spine of the community with cross streets connecting to Silver Spring’s other urban neighborhoods.

The **Ripley District** will become a focal point for revitalizing the west side of Georgia Avenue and linking it to other CBD neighborhoods with bike trails and pedestrian routes, connecting pedestrians and drivers to the nearby proposed Transit Center. New development will be organized around open spaces, surrounded by a mix of high-density office and apartment buildings, and complemented with civic and recreational uses.

Fenton Village will be a local neighborhood retail center, recharged with the energy of multi-cultural restaurants and businesses. Townhouse development will offer another downtown residential option. Fenton Street will be its main street, lined with low-scale buildings and refitted as a pleasant walkable street with sidewalks shaded by trees and opening into the occasional small plaza.

South Silver Spring will become a revitalized gateway to the County and the Silver Spring CBD, an area of complementary uses—including businesses supporting the emerging high-tech and communication arts development in the Core—enhanced by Montgomery College’s expansion and improvements at Jesup Blair Park.

Other areas of the CBD, primarily at its northern and southern ends, will continue to mark the entrance to the CBD and buffer surrounding residential neighborhoods. Some development projects offer the potential to strengthen and further define those edges.

The strengths of each part of the CBD will be protected and built upon to regenerate the housing, offices, and services in these districts.

THE THEMES

The Sector Plan’s themes articulate the shared goals and vision for the CBD. These themes developed from discussions with community members and will serve as guides to evaluate development proposals and future work program efforts and are reflected in the Plan’s text and recommendations.

- TRANSIT-ORIENTED DOWNTOWN
- COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN
- RESIDENTIAL DOWNTOWN
- CIVIC DOWNTOWN
- GREEN DOWNTOWN
- PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DOWNTOWN

Each theme is a tested planning approach comprising a set of ideas, tools, and projects that will contribute to downtown revitalization.

The strength of the downtown will come from applying these themes together. A successful commercial downtown hinges on a full and varied residential downtown—shops create convenience for residents, and residents create a market for shops and offices. Likewise, the other themes will affect the entire downtown.

It is this essential interconnectedness that makes a downtown interesting and successful. These themes strive to create varied land uses, development patterns, environments, and transportation choices. The Sector Plan and the development process strive to create variety, the hallmark of an active downtown.

Community Goals

- Plan recommendations and development projects should be market-oriented to ensure a long-term revitalization.
- Silver Spring should be an active place with mixed uses attracting people at all times of the day, week, and year.
- Silver Spring must be an attractive place; an upgraded urban environment will attract private investment.
- Local, state, and federal governments must commit public resources to support private investment.

These goals were articulated in focus groups and public workshops.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DOWNTOWN

The Plan's land use and development recommendations strive to balance the needs of commuter and local traffic, of walkers and drivers, and to maximize the investment in Silver Spring's transit infrastructure.

This Sector Plan's revitalization strategy envisions Silver Spring as a lively place, and along with activity comes traffic. However, the benefits of redevelopment are great and can outweigh the inconvenience of additional traffic. A mix of development projects, office, housing, retail, and entertainment, will generate traffic at different times of the day. It is imperative that Silver Spring maximize its already considerable transportation infrastructure—roads, Metro and MARC, bus service, trails, and sidewalks—and capitalize on its high transit ridership. Focusing development around these connected transportation systems meets local goals as well as the regional transportation goals of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), and the goals of the State's Smart Growth initiative.

Silver Spring developed around the crossroads of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road, State roads that are and will continue to be major commuter arteries, connecting Howard and Montgomery Counties and the Capital Beltway to Washington, D.C. The challenge comes in maintaining these routes as regional arteries, while establishing a local circulation pattern that is pedestrian-friendly, supports the development of existing and proposed businesses, and provides necessary access to and throughout the CBD.

Creating a transit-oriented community is not only a transportation effort, but also a land use effort. Providing development close to the new Transit Center will encourage its use. If transit facilities are convenient to downtown activity, they will become a viable option for local and regional travelers. (See the Land Use and Zoning section.)

ELEMENTS

- **Land use** patterns are the most influential factor in making public transportation usable and convenient. The transit system must take people where and when they need to go, and once arrived, they must be able to travel without a car. Offices, housing, stores, child care, and entertainment must all be within walking distance of the transit stop. Silver Spring's urban pattern of streets and blocks should be filled in with development that is street-fronting, pedestrian accessible, and near transit. (See the Circulation Systems section.)
- **Circulation patterns** in Silver Spring are established by the crossroads that define the downtown: Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road. As they pass through Silver Spring, these two roads must continue to link commuters to the Beltway and downtown Washington, while serving the local community by providing auto and pedestrian access. Each street in the CBD plays a role—local or regional, pedestrian or auto, through-travel or destination—and those roles must be defined and supported with streetscaping and design.

- **Transportation choices** go beyond the car to link local and regional buses and trains, bikes and foot travel. A system of paths combined with a full complement of transportation options and sidewalks can increase mobility for the elderly, handicapped, children, and those without a car. Increased mobility can open employment, residence, and entertainment options in the CBD to more people, making downtown a useful and lively place.
-

Smart Growth and Transportation

The State of Maryland is moving forward with short- and long-term solutions that create a comprehensive approach to balancing the demands of growth, traffic, and quality-of-life.

As a transportation hub with the potential for significant new housing, office, and retail development, Silver Spring is poised to take advantage of the State's commitment to expanded demand management techniques, enhanced transit opportunities, and road improvements. The CBD's urban, mixed land use patterns will encourage people to live, work, shop, and entertain themselves in downtown Silver Spring.

As a Smart Growth community, redevelopment in Silver Spring can help ease mounting traffic congestion in Montgomery County.

COMMERCIAL DOWNTOWN

Silver Spring's location, infrastructure, and position in the metropolitan area market will continue its role as an employment center. New retail development will serve the local community with a mix of chain and independent businesses offering convenience and specialty shopping, restaurants, and entertainment.

Commercial activity—a mutually supportive mix of offices, stores, and other business enterprises—is the defining feature of a successful downtown. Offices support lunch spots—from sit-down restaurants to sandwich shops—mailing services, banks, copy shops, child care services, and office supply stores. In turn, those uses generate other activities and customers.

Silver Spring's transportation infrastructure, its fiber-optic network, its proximity to Washington, D.C., and its variety of office, retail, and industrial space make it an employment center. This Sector Plan encourages a mixed commercial profile in Silver Spring to create a well-rounded local economy and a community where people can live, work, and meet their shopping and entertainment needs. Reinforcing Silver Spring's role as an employment center also meets the goals of the State's Smart Growth initiative, which focuses public infrastructure investment in existing urban centers. Focusing commercial development in the CBD also lessens the potential for commercial intrusion into surrounding residential neighborhoods.

A rejuvenated mix of commercial uses will combine with housing and civic uses, all linked to the metropolitan area by transit, to create a complete and active downtown in Silver Spring. (See the Land Use and Zoning section.)

ELEMENTS

- **Retail** should reposition itself in Silver Spring to serve both local and regional markets with a variety of quality stores, both chain and independently owned.
- **Office** uses should build on the CBD's existing base of business activity. From large headquarters to independent proprietors, Silver Spring should offer opportunities for new construction and renovation of existing space, supported by business services and regional transportation links.
- **Entertainment and restaurant** uses serving the business and resident communities should be incorporated into downtown development, to round out the available choices with leisure-time opportunities.

RESIDENTIAL DOWNTOWN

This Plan seeks to create a mix of housing choices, including low-rise, high-density apartments and townhouses, supported by parks, shopping, cultural, civic, and employment uses with transit and Beltway access to make a convenient and thriving community.

Housing desirability is generated by more than the individual building; the surrounding community makes a vital contribution. By creating a community with employment and shopping choices, and supporting it with civic facilities, parks, and recreation uses, the downtown becomes an enriched and active place attractive to a new residential population.

Developing new housing and supporting existing housing in the CBD also supports the State's Smart Growth initiative by increasing options for living near work and transit connections, and meets the General Plan goal of supporting redevelopment around transit centers.

Silver Spring's existing housing stock and new housing will be supported by the redevelopment goals stated in the Plan's themes. A green and pedestrian-friendly downtown will create the parks, plazas, and streets of a desirable residential community. The mix of uses—cultural, civic, shopping, restaurants, and employment—will also provide the amenities and necessities of a mutually supportive community. Silver Spring's access to Metrorail, Washington, D.C., and the Beltway will continue to make it a convenient place to live.

CBD housing choices will offer size, ownership, and location options to old and young, families and singles. Expanding the residential population will build a community that uses and supports the CBD. People use and care about the place they live. This Plan strives to make Silver Spring that place.

ELEMENTS

The following housing types offer housing choices that add activity and create pleasant physical spaces in the urban environment. (See the Housing section.)

- **Urban row housing** is a proven traditional pattern that creates a defined street edge, increases activity and surveillance by placing front doors and windows near the street, and offers flexibility in unit size, arrangement, and ownership.
- **Low-rise high-density housing** is an economical way to create housing in an urban area where land costs are high and development potential must be maximized. This housing type also creates an approachable residential urban scale.
- **Housing over parking garages** also offers convenience, economic feasibility, and maximizes valuable urban property.
- **Housing over retail** can offer convenience and can often create an economic opportunity for small business people.

- **High-rise housing** remains a long-term housing development option that maximizes the CBD's proximity to Metrorail, and makes the most efficient use of urban land.

Live Near Your Work Program

To encourage home ownership in targeted revitalization areas, this grant program funded by the State, the County, and participating employers offers a minimum of \$3,000 toward the purchase of a home.

Resident owners care about and become involved in their neighborhoods. Employees who live near their workplaces are more likely to walk or take transit, rather than add more car trips to already congested roads.

This program is available in designated areas of Silver Spring and Takoma Park, convenient to the CBD and its participating employers.

CIVIC DOWNTOWN

This Plan views civic facilities as partners in economic revitalization. New and regenerated facilities will draw people downtown, returning it to the center of community life and creating opportunities for economic and social connections.

Recasting Silver Spring as the community downtown is the first step in reviving the CBD as an active and useful place for residents and businesses. The buildings, spaces, and programs in Silver Spring should be enhanced by continued County investment, essential to making the downtown a center of community.

A civic presence in the CBD will be formed by the concentration and proximity of plazas, recreation facilities, community centers, historic buildings, and police and fire facilities adding to downtown's convenience and texture. The proximity of these varied activities draws people to the downtown and creates opportunities for economic and social connections.

A mixed urban environment creates opportunities for businesses and individuals. Providing civic spaces and services becomes an economic development tool, assuring private developers that their investment in Silver Spring will be supported and enhanced by public commitment. Incorporating civic services into downtown also provides increased service to the community.

ELEMENTS

As downtown redevelops, the CBD will offer a full complement of flexible community facilities. Structures, programs, and open spaces that vary in size, location, services, and operations will serve the most people and respond to the community's daily and special needs. (See the Community Facilities section.)

- **Civic structures** are often tied to the services they provide. The fire station, for instance, is a visible manifestation of community involvement and investment in public safety. Other structures are more flexible in their use and character. Meeting rooms, for example, can be used for public gatherings or private parties.
- **Civic spaces** are formal or informal, large or small, public or private—anywhere people meet, cross paths, and gather. From sidewalks to plazas, Silver Spring should have a variety of civic spaces.
- **Civic programs** A community is more than bricks-and-mortar. Its expression, values, and future are determined by the time and effort people spend with each other. From story hour at the library to job training, Silver Spring will build a stronger community. The physical environment should support that growth.

GREEN DOWNTOWN

This Plan envisions shaded, tree-lined streets and well-placed green parks and plazas, creating a comprehensive system of open spaces that provide economic, environmental, and aesthetic benefits throughout downtown.

Incorporating nature into the city makes both economic and environmental sense. An environment of superior aesthetic quality—for example, the improved image and amenity of a well-designed and located park—creates value for property owners and users, employees and residents. Shaded, tree-lined streets punctuated by parks can convey the image of success and security.

A green CBD can also improve the overall environment, improving air and water quality. Trees provide oxygen, modulate light, and buffer wind. Urban open spaces can also gather and cool stormwater run-off, lessening its impact on area streams, watersheds, and even the Chesapeake Bay. (See the Environmental Resources section.)

Incorporating environmental improvements, recreation facilities, and landscaped parks, plazas, and sidewalks into downtown revitalization will make Silver Spring more competitive in the metropolitan-area commercial and residential markets.

Every opportunity should be used to add landscaping and green respites to the CBD's hardscaped environment. Silver Spring's urban profile and its residents' quality of life will be improved by a series of tree-lined streets and connected urban parks, together creating a distinctive and safe open space system that will draw people to Silver Spring.

ELEMENTS

The Silver Spring Green Downtown will comprise a series of landscaped streets and sidewalks connecting a variety of urban open spaces.

While all downtown streets should be landscaped to create an improved pedestrian environment, the different types of urban street treatments described below should be used in different parts of downtown. (See the Circulation Systems section.)

- **Urban boulevards** are main thoroughfares that provide the first image of Silver Spring from a car. They are lined with wide sidewalks, distinct street trees and pavers, street furniture, and wide and well-marked pedestrian crossings.
- **Promenade streets** are landscaped with a double row of trees to create distinct green, linear spaces that incorporate high-quality pedestrian and bike paths.
- **Mixed streets** are designed to emphasize pedestrian circulation while allowing for limited, slow auto traffic. Trees, bollards, and street furniture are used to mark the pedestrian domain.
- **Green streets** are urban streets enhanced with landscaping.

The CBD's linked open space system of gardens and parks should be designed and located for high visibility to offer seasonal variety, to be safe, to increase property values, and to provide flexible recreation opportunities. (See the Community Facilities section.).

- **Green parks** are natural areas of respite and recreation. Grassy and shaded, parks can offer visual, physical, and recreational alternatives to the hard-edged urban environment. Parks of various sizes and character should be located throughout the CBD.
- **Landscaped plazas** are incorporated into building and site design to create visual and physical respite, to create formal and informal gathering places, and to complement street and building design. Plazas should be sized and located to complement surrounding uses and activities.
- **Green parking lots** are paved and landscaped to minimize impervious surface, lessening development impact on air and water quality. Tree-lined and pervious-surfaced parking lots will contribute to the CBD's overall green profile, and will provide areas for temporary events or markets.

PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY DOWNTOWN

This Plan encourages the development of active streets and sidewalks, busy with people walking to shop, commute, or for pleasure. They will become downtown's defining feature, and will support activity, creating the setting for community.

The feel of a community is created on its streets and paths, and Silver Spring's sidewalks should be bustling and active. An urban area's greatest economic asset and strongest physical definition comes from its pedestrian environment. Sidewalks and streets scaled to walkers create active environments where people can shop, commute, recreate, and socialize. Communities where people can walk are communities where people will spend time and money.

The design of the pedestrian-scaled environment combines buildings and streets, active sidewalks, and open spaces detailed with street furniture and landscaping to provide a safe, pleasant, and interesting environment.

The CBD's pedestrian-friendly environment must also connect to surrounding neighborhoods and facilities. In Silver Spring, direct pedestrian connections to an expanded and redesigned Transit Center will improve the pedestrian environment and contribute to economic revitalization.

ELEMENTS

- **Sidewalks** sized to accommodate walking traffic and to fit the overall street scale should be landscaped, edged by buildings, and connect urban parks, plazas, and activities.
- **Street crossings** should promote safety and access by creating a pedestrian refuge.
- **Street definition** is formed by the harmonious proportions of buildings edging the street and sidewalk, and the activity created by that arrangement. The vertical building walls and their spacing along the street should combine to create a comfortable space. The street should be articulated with building details. Blank walls, parking lots and garages, driveways, and loading docks should be located to preserve streetfront building facades for doorways, windows, and shopfronts.
- The **street pattern** should make easy pedestrian connections between downtown activities and provide the structure of a pedestrian-friendly downtown.
- **Urban plazas** are breaks in the street pattern to attract groups of people—commuters streaming off Metrorail, employees on an outdoor lunch break—ideal spots for people-watching.
- **Street furniture** includes signs, lighting, benches, wastebaskets, and other elements that combine with building features to detail the street. A pedestrian-friendly environment includes the small-scale architectural and streetscape details that contribute visual interest and texture.
- **On-street parking** buffers pedestrians from moving traffic and makes local businesses more convenient with streetside, short-term parking.

- **Scale** in buildings and streets is the measure of place in relation to people and can contribute to creating a comfortable urban environment. In Silver Spring, the scale of a corridor—composed of buildings, sidewalk—and street, is defined by its width and the height of adjacent buildings. The relationship between these dimensions determines the light, air, and character of the street.

RECOMMENDATIONS

CBD-WIDE REVITALIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Foster a development pattern that will revitalize the CBD and focus the most intense development in Core.

A plan works at varying levels of detail, laying out a sketched vision, broad policies, and specific recommendations. This section of the Plan provides detailed recommendations for systems affecting the entire CBD.

Land Use and Zoning are the Plan's backbone, justifying and beginning the legal process to establish new standards and requirements that will shape downtown development. Silver Spring's zoning will be adjusted to encourage redevelopment throughout the CBD.

Urban Design elements are intended to contribute to the downtown's function, appearance, value, and safety. A safe and attractive community is one where people will spend time and money.

Circulation Systems cover all transportation methods. The character and capacity of roads passing through the CBD are addressed, along with routes, facilities, and the overall environment for cyclists, walkers, and transit riders. As the hub of trails, buses, roads, and transit, Silver Spring offers commuting and recreation transportation options.

Housing is part of building the downtown community, as residents live in, use, and become involved in Silver Spring's daily life and future. The Plan renews the commitment to creating housing downtown while supporting existing housing in the CBD. Recommendations include new housing types to provide variety and opportunity.

Community and Cultural Facilities are the buildings and spaces that create a public presence downtown and provide useful and entertaining services to the community. Existing buildings and proposed new buildings and spaces have the potential to round out Silver Spring's offerings.

Historic Preservation preserves the past, contributes to downtown's aesthetic character, and can have significant economic return as unique structures are rehabilitated for new uses. Silver Spring's stock of historic buildings can be renovated and woven into the community fabric.

Environmental impacts of CBD redevelopment will be felt downtown and in surrounding areas. Issues in Silver Spring range from the sometimes hidden effects of stormwater run-off to the aesthetics and environmental impacts of street trees.

LAND USE AND ZONING

This Plan recommends focusing new development near transit at the Core, and offers flexible zoning options to encourage redevelopment.

VISION

This Plan is intended to create a development environment that invites revitalization. Zoning is a local government tool that affects development demand, densities, and patterns. Zoning alone, without market demand, cannot make investment happen. However, zoning can deter development.

Objective:

- Creating a development envelope that encourages revitalization and focuses high density development in the Core, and transitions down from the Core to the surrounding residential areas.

Summary Recommendations:

- **Core**—Rezone specific sites to provide additional development incentives.
 - **Ripley**—Rezone to add flexibility and development incentives including the transfer of open space off-site or contribution to a park fund through an overlay zone.
 - **South Silver Spring**—Rezone to create development and renovation incentives, while preserving the integrity of surrounding residential neighborhoods. Application of an overlay zone allows the transfer of density from demolished buildings.
 - **Fenton Village**—Rezone to encourage revitalization while remaining sensitive to the transition between the commercial district and adjacent single-family neighborhoods. Additional density with height restrictions is allowed in much of the district through an overlay zone.
 - **Other Areas**—Rezone the Easter Seals site to allow for future development.
-

SILVER SPRING CBD ZONING HISTORY

The 1975 *Sector Plan for the Silver Spring CBD* implemented CBD Zones in downtown Silver Spring for the first time. To meet the goals of the 1975 Plan, CBD-3 zoning was applied liberally in the Core, and CBD-2 zoning was applied in most of the CBD east of the railroad tracks outside the Core. The area west of the tracks was predominantly CBD-1, with some C-2 zoning remaining in South Silver Spring. Because the level of development activity resulting from the new Silver Spring Metrorail station could not be anticipated, the Plan recommended adjusting the zoning at a later date.

Although the 1975 rezoning actually reduced the maximum commercial Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in the CBD from 14 (allowed under C-2 zoning) to 8, the extent of the CBD-3 zoning would prove, 17 years later, to be more than the market or the infrastructure of the CBD could support, even with the opening of Metrorail.

As recommended in 1975, the zoning was re-evaluated in the 1993 *Sector Plan for the Silver Spring CBD*, which rezoned most of the CBD to focus high-density development in the Core and allow densities to decrease down from the Core to the surrounding residential areas. The rezoning also sought to balance CBD development with the capacity of existing and planned infrastructure. New zones were created and applied as well. The CBD-0.5 Zone was used at the edges of the CBD to make a transition into residential neighborhoods beyond the CBD. The CBD-R1 and CBD-R2 Zones were designed to provide strong housing incentives at specific downtown locations.

CURRENT ZONING PHILOSOPHY

Redevelopment of the Silver Spring CBD requires zoning that encourages development. Zoning should attract development to the CBD by providing flexibility in building design and uses. Flexibility will also allow Silver Spring to respond to market changes without cumbersome revisions to the Sector Plan.

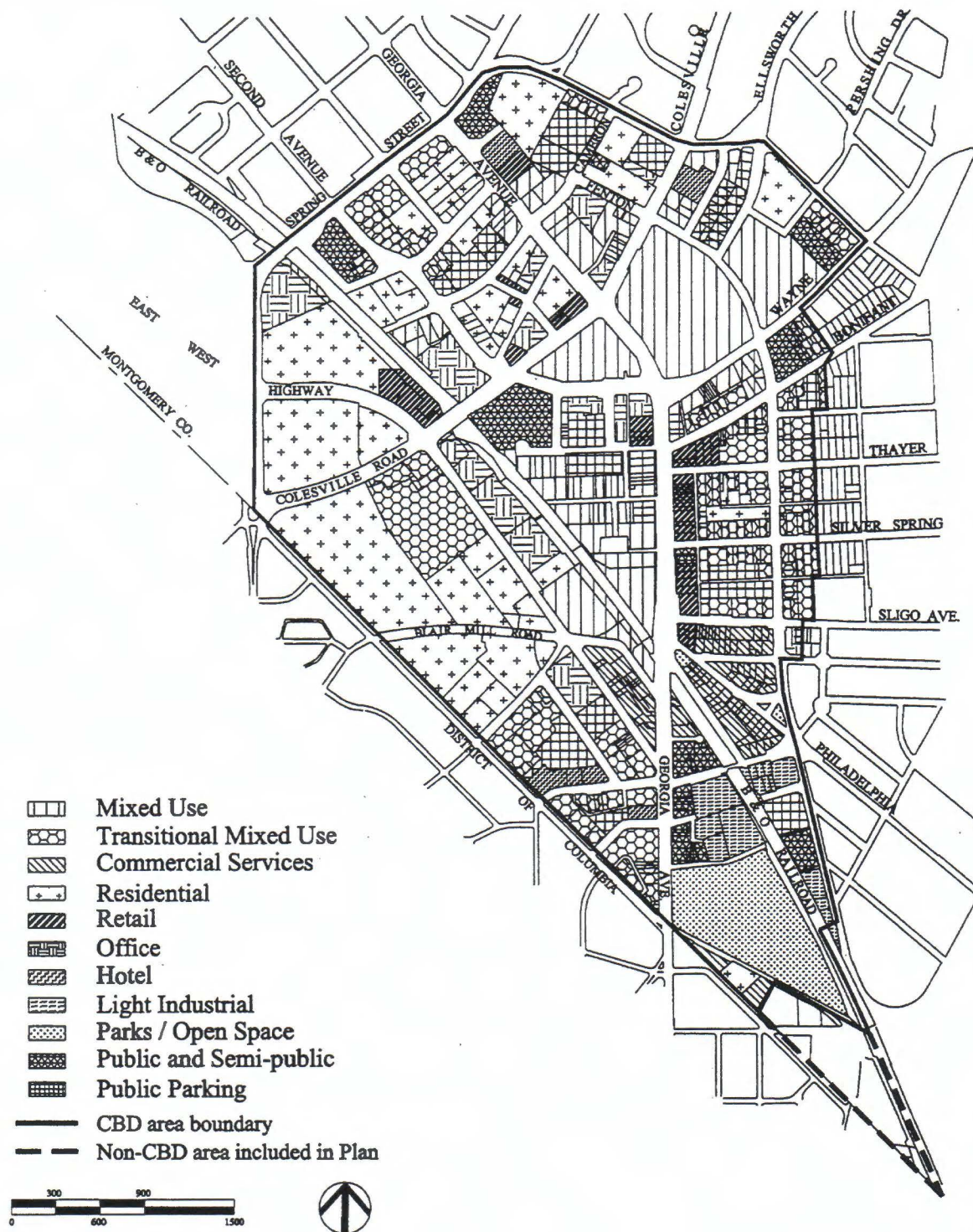
Since 1993, the residential and business communities have indicated that existing zones are disincentives to redevelopment, particularly in depressed areas of the CBD. The use limits in projects exceeding 1 FAR in the CBD-R2 Zone, and the limited allowable FAR in the CBD-0.5 Zone are some examples of how application of the CBD zones deter redevelopment in Silver Spring. This Plan's recommendations are designed to alleviate current zoning disincentives.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LAND USE

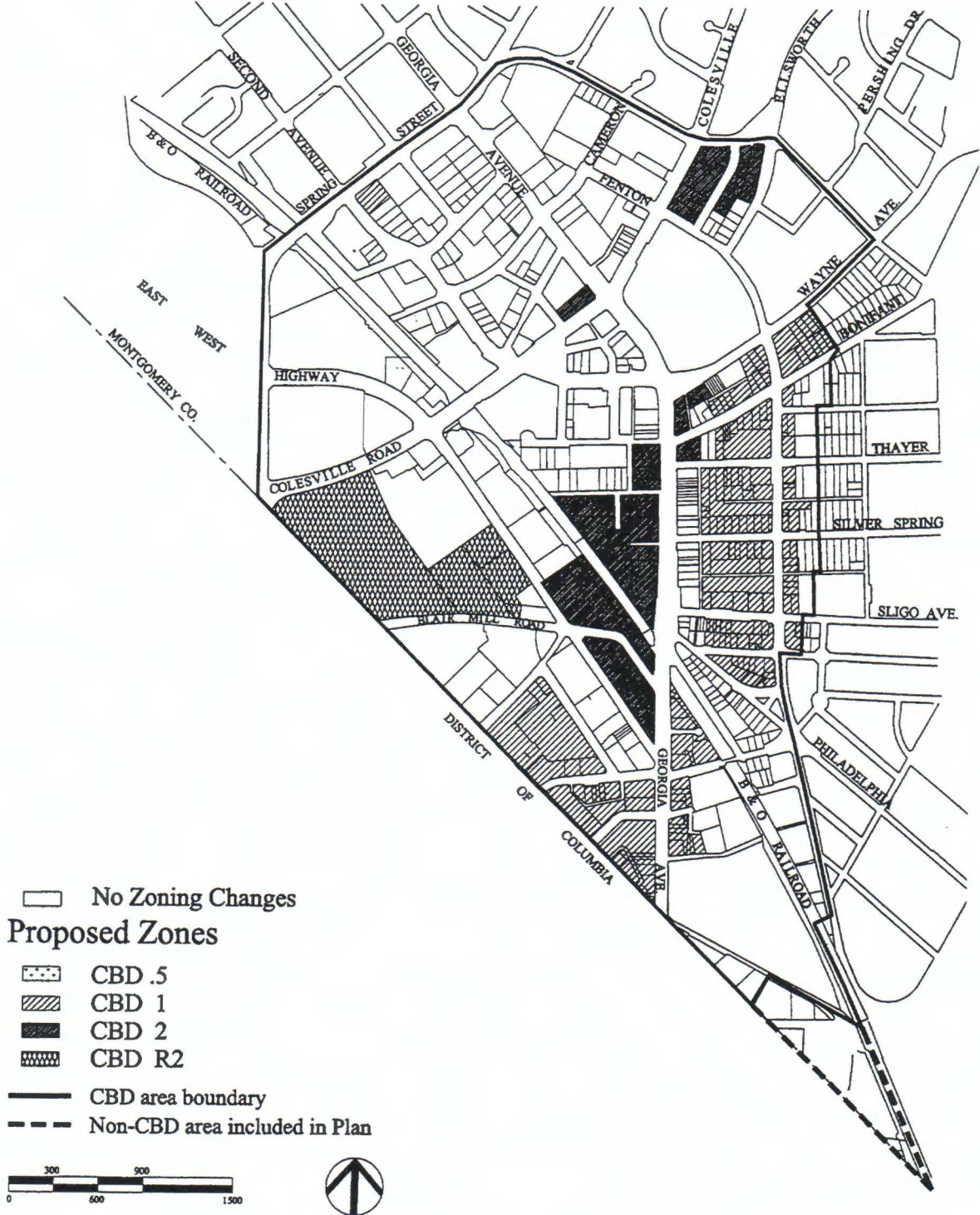
The proposed zoning changes expand land use options in some locations and also provide additional density where the allowed density may deter revitalization (Map 3).

- A mix of uses continues to be recommended for the CBD's Core. In the Urban Renewal Area, development is guided by the *Amended Silver Spring Urban Renewal Plan*, which specifies that no more than 50 percent of gross floor area should be office uses on the block bordered by Georgia Avenue, Colesville Road, Fenton Street, and Ellsworth Drive.
 - The air rights above the Metro power station located at the Metro tracks on Colesville Road are appropriate for additional development if Metro agrees to sell or lease those rights.
- The proposed zoning in the Ripley District doesn't exclude previously recommended high-rise housing, but offers additional density for commercial uses, increasing the likelihood that some of the Ripley District will develop as commercial, rather than high-rise residential, in the short-term. The overlay zone proposed for this area allows flexibility in development standards, density and open space transfer incentives, retaining existing FARs, and expanded uses.

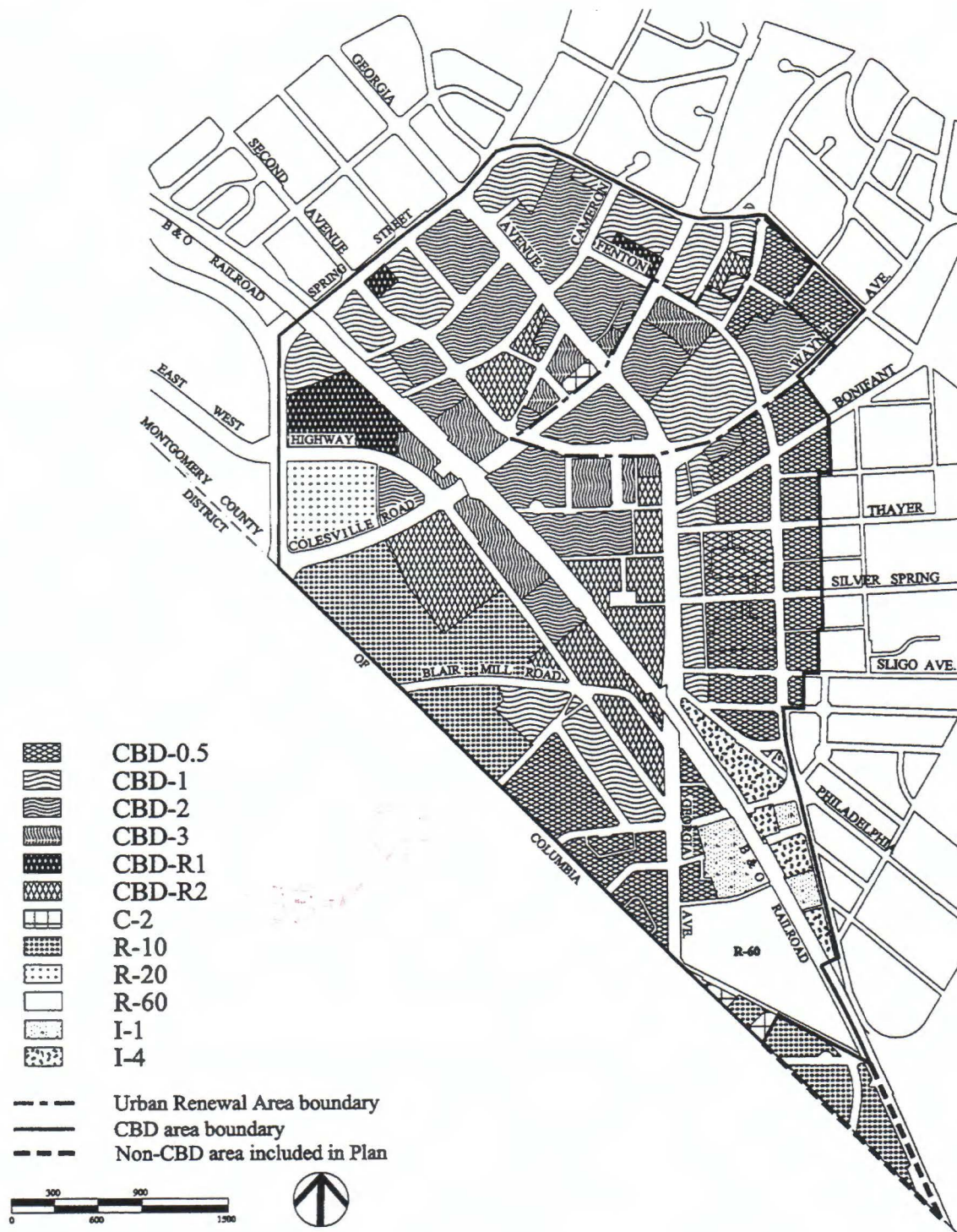
Map 3 Proposed Land Uses



Map 4 Proposed Base Zone Changes

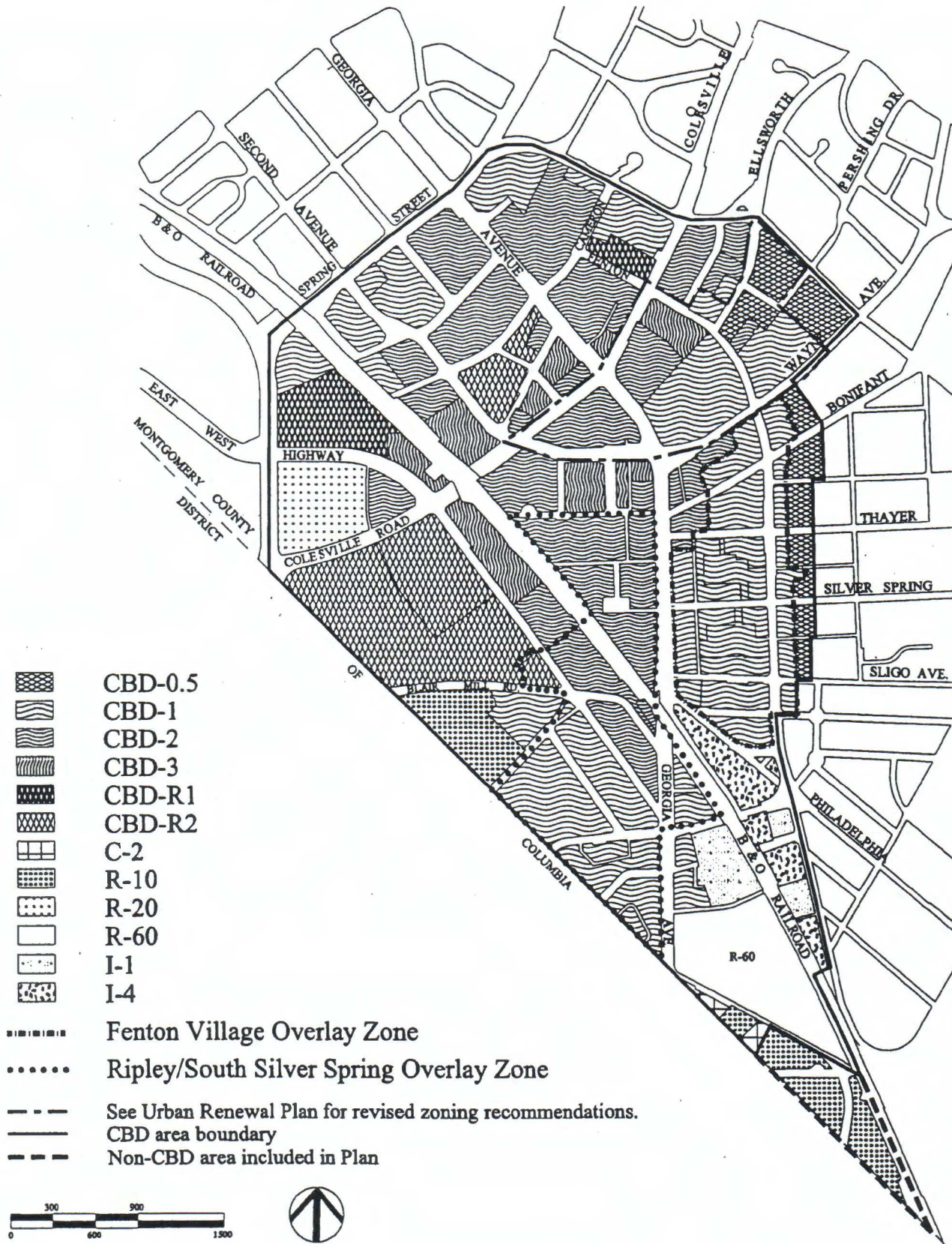


Map 5 Existing Zoning Plan



NOTE: This corrected map replaces page 33 in the bound version of the February 2000 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan.

Map 6 Proposed Zoning Plan



- **South Silver Spring** could develop businesses that support the CBD's emerging high-tech graphics and communications arts uses, depending on the market, policy decisions, and incentives. The adjacent stable residential neighborhoods could be bolstered by new housing in this area. The overlay zone proposed for this area allows flexibility in development standards, density and open space transfer incentives, retaining existing FARs, and expanded uses.
- **Fenton Village** will continue as a transitional mixed-use neighborhood of retail, residential, and office uses. The proposed zoning is designed to encourage redevelopment of existing businesses and new development, and to ensure compatibility with surrounding residential communities. The proposed Overlay Zone for portions of Fenton Village allows increased density, expanded uses, open space transfer incentives, and specific building heights.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVITALIZATION AREAS

Four revitalization areas within the Silver Spring CBD warrant zoning changes to achieve the important public goal of downtown revitalization: the Core, the Ripley District, South Silver Spring, and Fenton Village. In these areas, and on specific sites outside these revitalization areas, the Plan recommends changing the base zones, and applying two new overlay zones. Generally, the zoning is intended to provide development incentives and flexibility. Specifically, the zoning changes will increase the overall development envelope of three districts and continue development focus in the Core (Maps 4, 5, and 6).

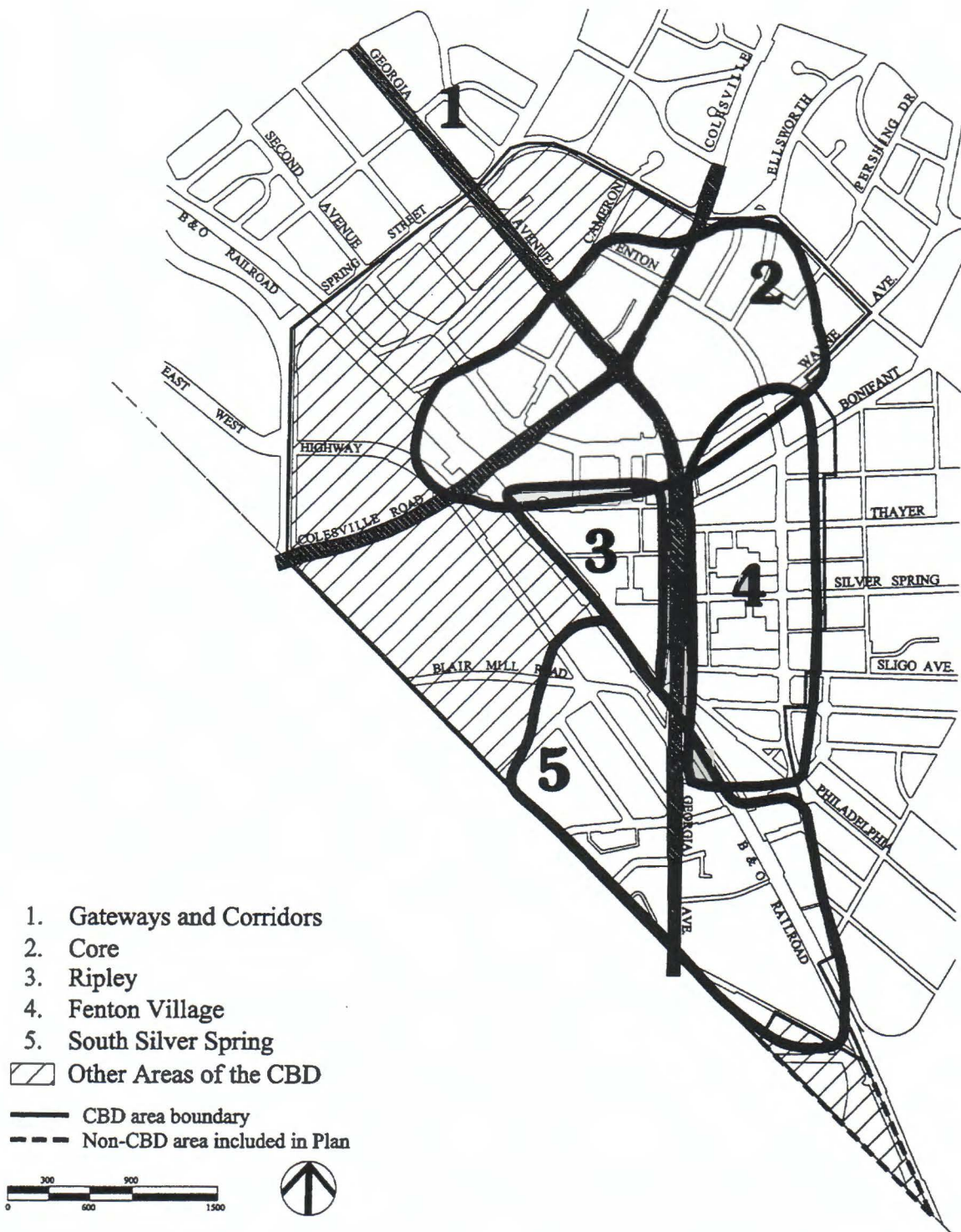
New zoning in these revitalization areas should include incentives that (1) capitalize on the momentum created by the proposed projects for Silver Spring's CBD (Discovery Communications headquarters, expansion of Montgomery College, improvements to Jesup Blair Park, Downtown Silver Spring's mixed-use entertainment center, and a new County parking facility off East West Highway); (2) create heightened investor interest and an improved investment climate in Ripley and South Silver Spring; (3) position Ripley and South Silver Spring to take advantage of their strategic locations near the Silver Spring Metro Station and proposed multi-modal Transit Center; (4) position Ripley and South Silver Spring to take advantage of land use options that can be supported by the current real estate market; and (5) achieve additional market rate housing.

The two proposed overlay zones are designed to encourage development on properties in the Ripley, South Silver Spring, and Fenton Districts. The proposed overlay zones offer development standards that provide incentives for revitalization.

Minimal zoning changes are recommended in the CBD Core or areas outside the revitalization areas discussed above. The northern and eastern sections of the CBD outside the revitalization area are mature and stable districts, with minimal new development or redevelopment anticipated. Visions established for these areas have not changed since 1993, and therefore, no significant zoning changes are warranted.

No zoning changes are recommended on land zoned for industrial uses in the southeast portion of the CBD. This area has long been envisioned as a location for service commercial and industrial land uses, and many of the businesses in this district have operated there for decades. According to the 1993 Sector Plan, "light industrial activities are valuable and necessary within the CBD and this area offers appropriate locations for these land uses." Because this industrial area is near to a single-family residential

Map 7 Revitalization Areas



neighborhood, compatibility issues have been raised. Compatibility issues can be mitigated through better code enforcement, design, etc., techniques this Plan strongly supports. The industrial area, which abuts the railroad tracks, is not considered a good location for housing.

Recommendations

The Plan's land use and zoning recommendations focus the densest development in the Core and around the Transit Center, and provide a diversity of retails, residential, office, hotel, civic, and park uses. Zoning and other plan recommendations are intended to provide additional development incentives and ensure that development projects in the Core contribute to the Plan's vision for downtown Silver Spring.

CORE

The Core will be rejuvenated as Silver Spring's varied and active town center, with housing, office, and retail development in a pedestrian-friendly environment, enhanced with parks and open spaces.

VISION

Prompted by redevelopment proposed by the Downtown Silver Spring Project, the Core will be reborn as the commercial, civic, and entertainment center of Silver Spring and its surrounding neighborhoods. Development on the Urban Renewal site will be in a pedestrian-friendly, town center pattern with stores and streetscape that encourage people to walk. A mix of public and private uses, special events, and daily shopping, will serve the community and its visitors. This repositioning of the Core with new uses in a well-integrated, pedestrian-friendly environment will be the catalyst for redevelopment throughout the CBD as existing businesses upgrade and new businesses are drawn to the CBD. Combined with public investment, Silver Spring will become a downtown for the future (Maps 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12).

Objective:

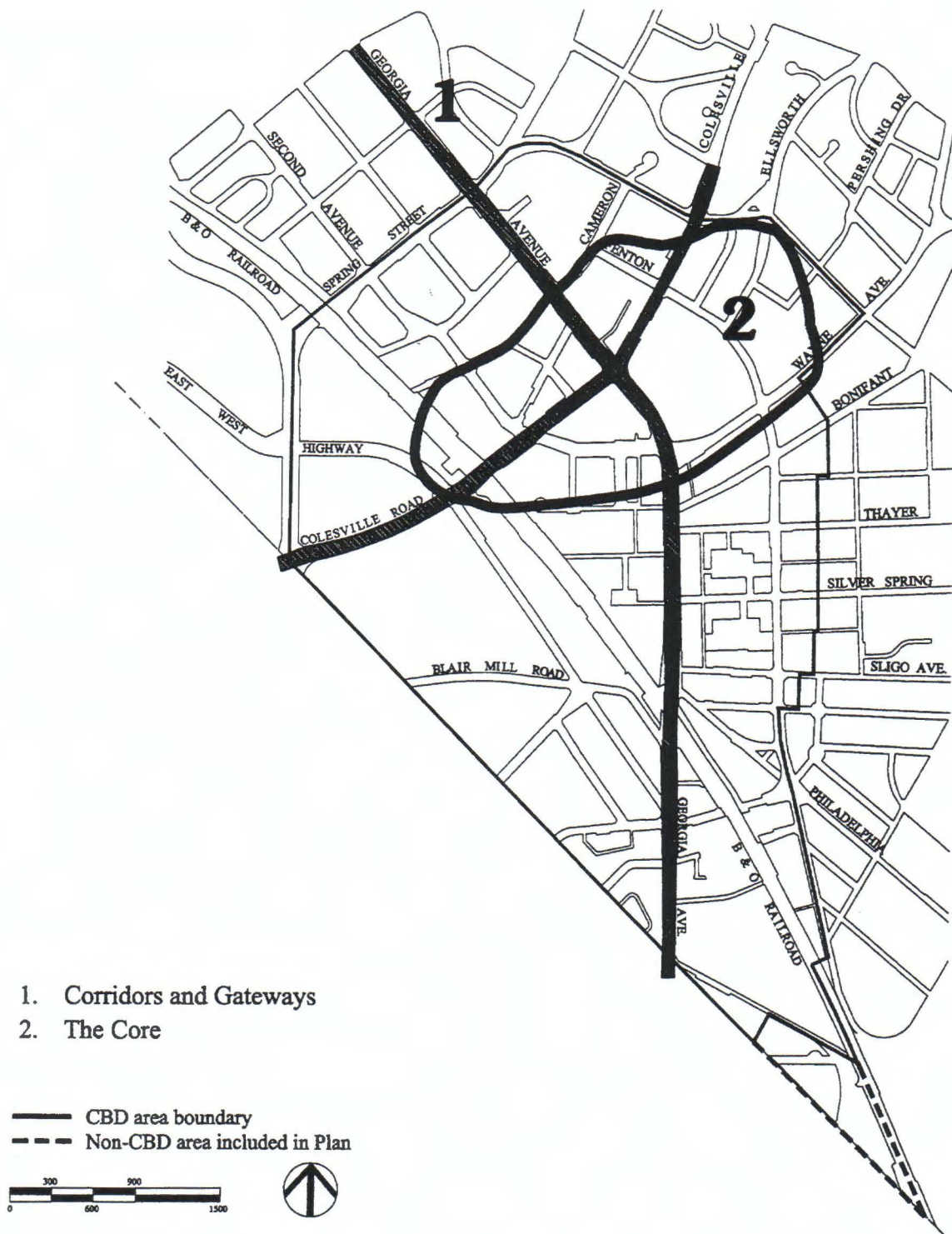
- Recreate the Core as the active center of downtown Silver Spring, ensuring that development contributes to the Plan's vision for downtown Silver Spring.

Analysis of Existing Conditions

The CBD's Core is centered on the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road and includes the traditional retail center of Silver Spring. The Core is the focus of transportation, commercial, and retail activity. It has the most varied and intensive uses, as well as a concentration of historic buildings. The Core also has an important residential component: high-rise apartments that offer convenience and housing choices.

Particular features include the 14-acre Urban Renewal Area being developed as a mixed use retail, entertainment, hotel, and office development; the existing MARC, Metrorail, and bus stations; the site of the proposed Discovery Communications corporate offices; the townhouses underway at Cameron Hill; the historic Silver Spring Shopping Center; and the Silver Theatre, being redeveloped by the American Film Institute.

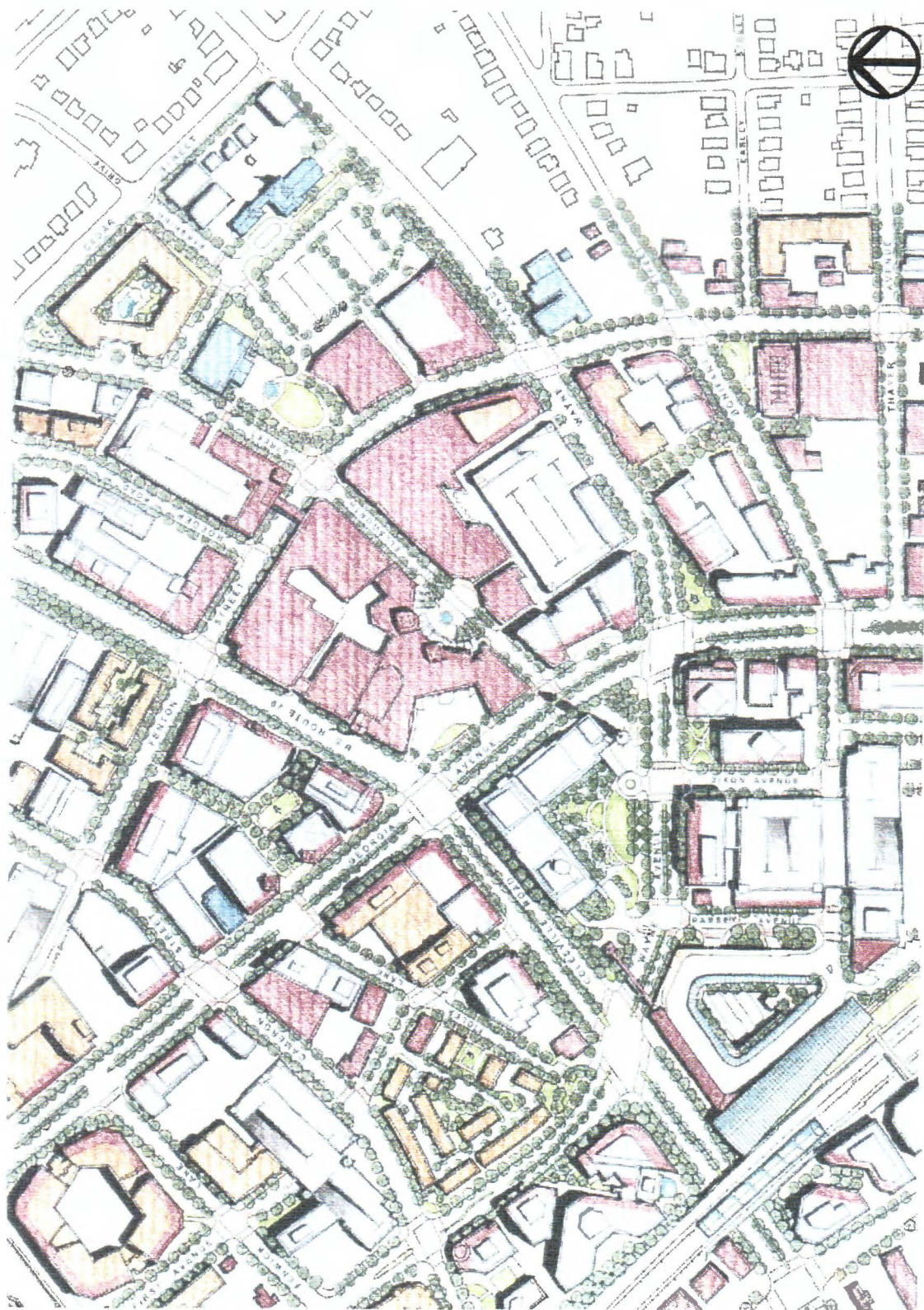
Map 8 Core Revitalization Area



Map 9 Urban Renewal Area



Map 10 Silver Spring CBD Core Plan



Central Business District Core Illustrative

Rather than seeking one large project to remake and define the CBD, a number of projects will reshape downtown. The proposed Discovery Communications corporate headquarters, combined with the Downtown Silver Spring project will refocus downtown around mixed restaurant and retail development that includes a pedestrian-oriented main street and includes indoor and outdoor civic spaces. Some features of the development, such as the American Film Institute (AFI) at the Silver Theatre, will appeal to the regional market, but are also scaled to the community and use Silver Spring's unique resources.

While there is general consensus that the development proposed on the Urban Renewal site is the correct scale, density, and mix of uses, this plan must ensure that the project encourages spin-off development by making connections to surrounding downtown neighborhoods and to transit.

This Plan also ensures that development surrounding the Urban Renewal site contributes to the complete downtown environment. This Plan must address the public realm: the CBD's roads, parks, and other community and transportation infrastructure should be enriched and designed to create a strong foundation for continued downtown economic success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Plan's land use and zoning recommendations focus the densest development in the Core and around the Transit Center, and provide a diversity of uses—retail, residential, office, hotel, civic, and park uses. Zoning and other plan recommendations are intended to provide additional development incentives and ensure that development projects in the Core contribute to the Plan's vision for downtown Silver Spring.

This Plan reconfirms the zoning applied to all parcels in the Core and sites outside the revitalization areas with the following exceptions.

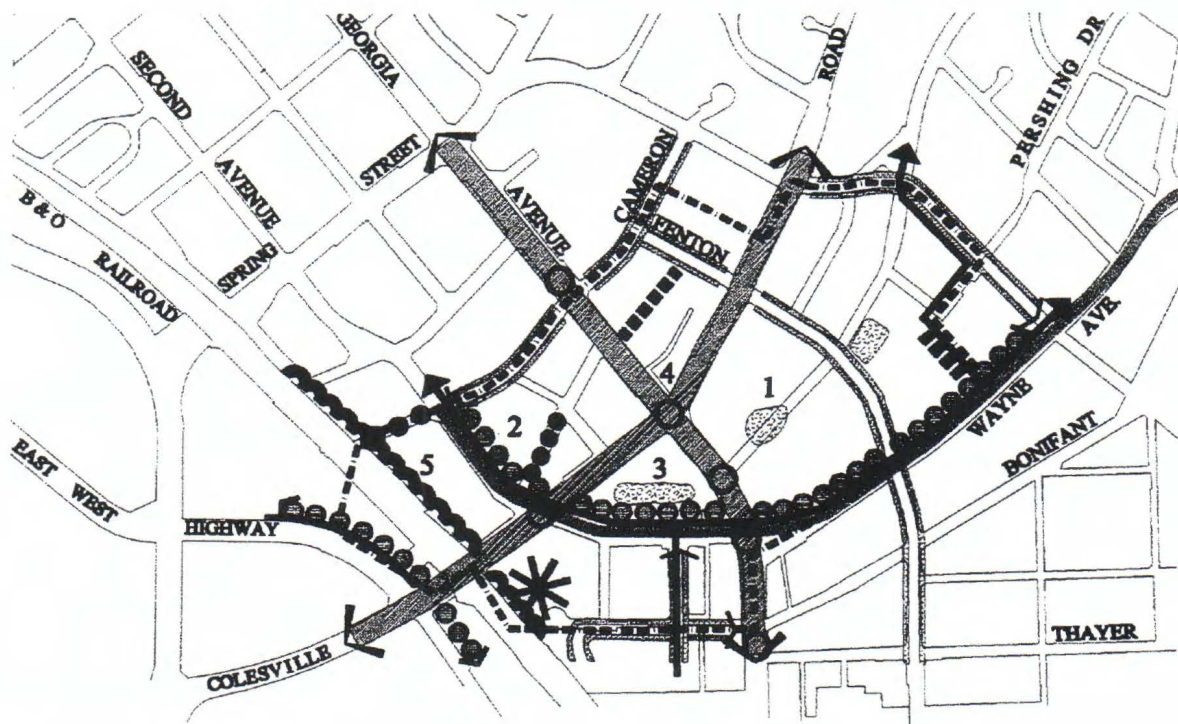
- Rezone the parcels on the northwest corner of Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue from C-2 to CBD-2.

These parcels were rezoned from CBD-3 to C-2 in 1993 to reflect the existing commercial service uses (gas station) and to limit redevelopment. A change in zone would provide this site with additional development flexibility and permit development that is more consistent with the vision for the Core and the development on adjoining parcels.

- Rezone the block bounded by Fenton Street, Colesville Road, Cedar Street, and Roeder Road from CBD-1 to CBD-2.

Rezoning to CBD-2 will reflect existing development that now exceeds the standards of the CBD-1 zone. Additionally, zoning that reflects existing structures encourages property owners to re-invest in their properties, and alleviates difficulties with lenders and insurers who may view properties that do not conform to existing zoning as a risk regardless of "grandfathering" clauses that make such properties conforming.

Map 11 Core Concept Plan

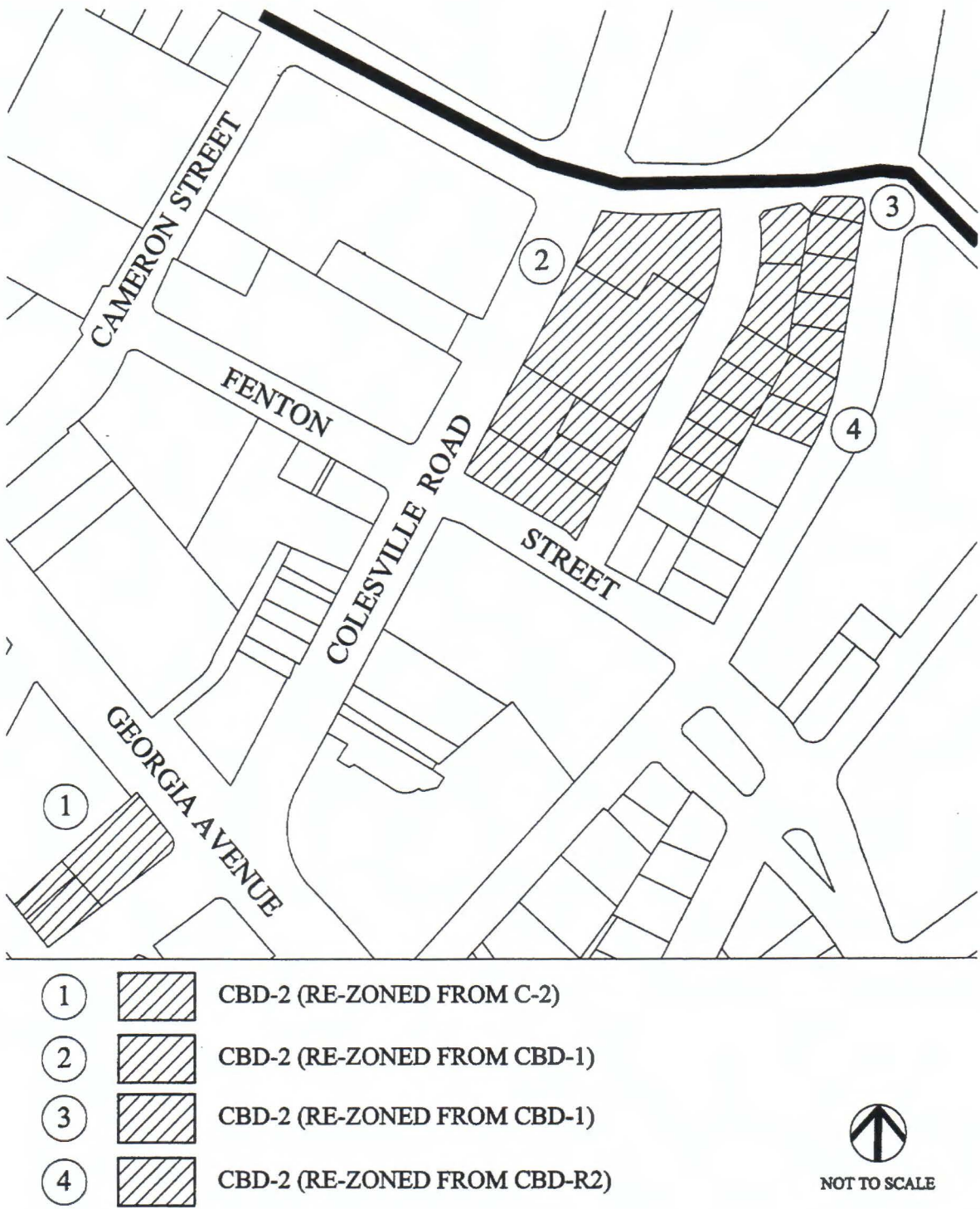


-  Green Trail
-  Regional Trail
-  Boundary of Revitalization Area
-  Improved Street Intersection
-  Green Street
-  Open Space
-  Transit Center
-  Boulevard
-  Promenade
-  Bikeway
-  Mixed Street
-  New Link - Pedestrian / Bike

1. Downtown Silver Spring
2. Townhouses at Cameron Hills
3. Silver Triangle Site
4. Lee Plaza
5. Capital Crescent Trail



Map 12 Core—Proposed Zoning Plan



- Rezone the northwest corner of the block bounded by Fenton Street, Roeder Road, Cedar Street, and Ellsworth Drive from CBD-1 to CBD-2.

Despite the intent of the 1993 down zoning, there is existing development on a portion of this blocks that exceeds the current zoning. Zoning that reflects existing structures encourages property owners to re-invest in their properties, This correction may also alleviate difficulties with lenders and insurers who may view properties that do not conform to existing zoning as a risk regardless of “grand fathering” clauses that make such properties conforming.

- Rezone the National Concrete Ready Mix parcels located on Cedar Street and Ellsworth Drive from CBD-1 to CBD-2 with a height limit of 60 feet, allowing the height to exceed 60 feet up to a maximum height of 75 feet with Planning Board approval based on compatibility with surrounding structures.

CBD-1 zoning is too restrictive on this parcel to encourage market feasible infill redevelopment to occur on this site.

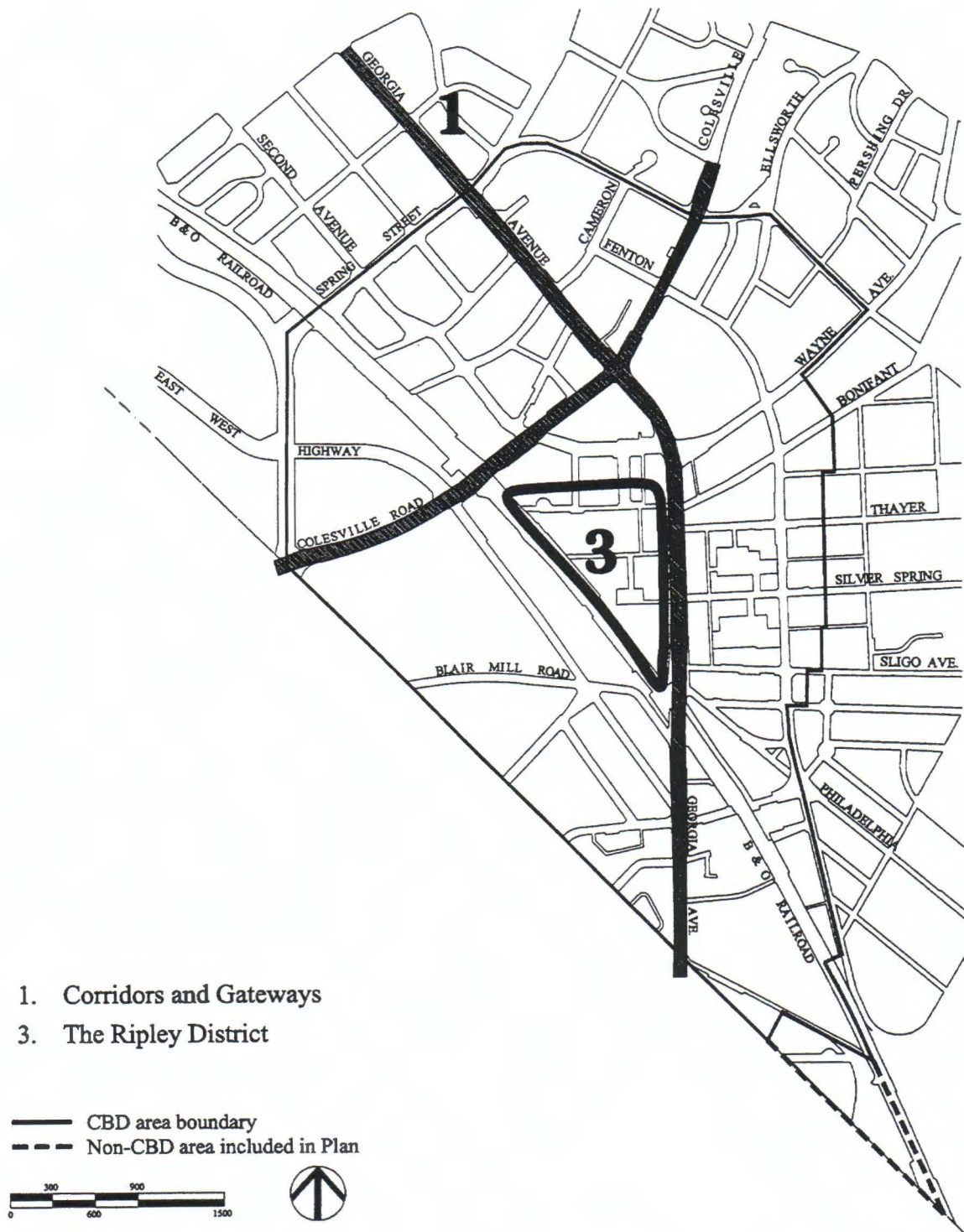
- Rezone the parcel located in the middle of the block bounded by Roeder Road, Cedar Street, and Ellsworth Drive from CBD R-2 to CBD-2.

CBD-R2 zoning is too restrictive to allow future development to occur on this site.

- Allow additional height above 143 feet on the Silver Triangle site with Planning Board approval.

Given this site’s central location in the CBD, its proximity to the proposed Transit Center, and its potential to create a downtown landmark and amenities, it is appropriate to consider increased height and density.

Map 13 Ripley District Revitalization Area



RIPLEY DISTRICT

A revitalized Ripley District will be a focal point of high-density commercial development, linking Georgia Avenue and East West Highway with bike trails and pedestrian routes, organized around civic open space.

VISION

Through the combined effort of economically viable zoning and public and private investment, the Ripley District is envisioned as a revitalized, mixed-use district with its primary focal point a high-density commercial development. It will link Georgia Avenue and East West Highway with bike trails and pedestrian routes, organized around open space (Maps 13, 14, 15, and 16). Expanding the range of uses and adding market-responsive commercial density near Metro will stimulate development and allow both commercial and high-rise residential uses. (However, high-rise housing is not viable in today's market because rents supported by the Silver Spring market cannot cover the development cost associated with high-rise housing.)

The zoning objectives for the Ripley District include providing for a new inter-connected street system; expanding the zoning options permitted near Metro to allow uses supported by the current market; addressing obstacles to redevelopment: the need for inter-connected streets creates small parcels not suitable for a combination of building floor area and required open space, and the need for dedication for the Metropolitan Branch Trail reduces the available building area; and addressing the character of Georgia Avenue to create an attractive street with adequate light and air.

Objective:

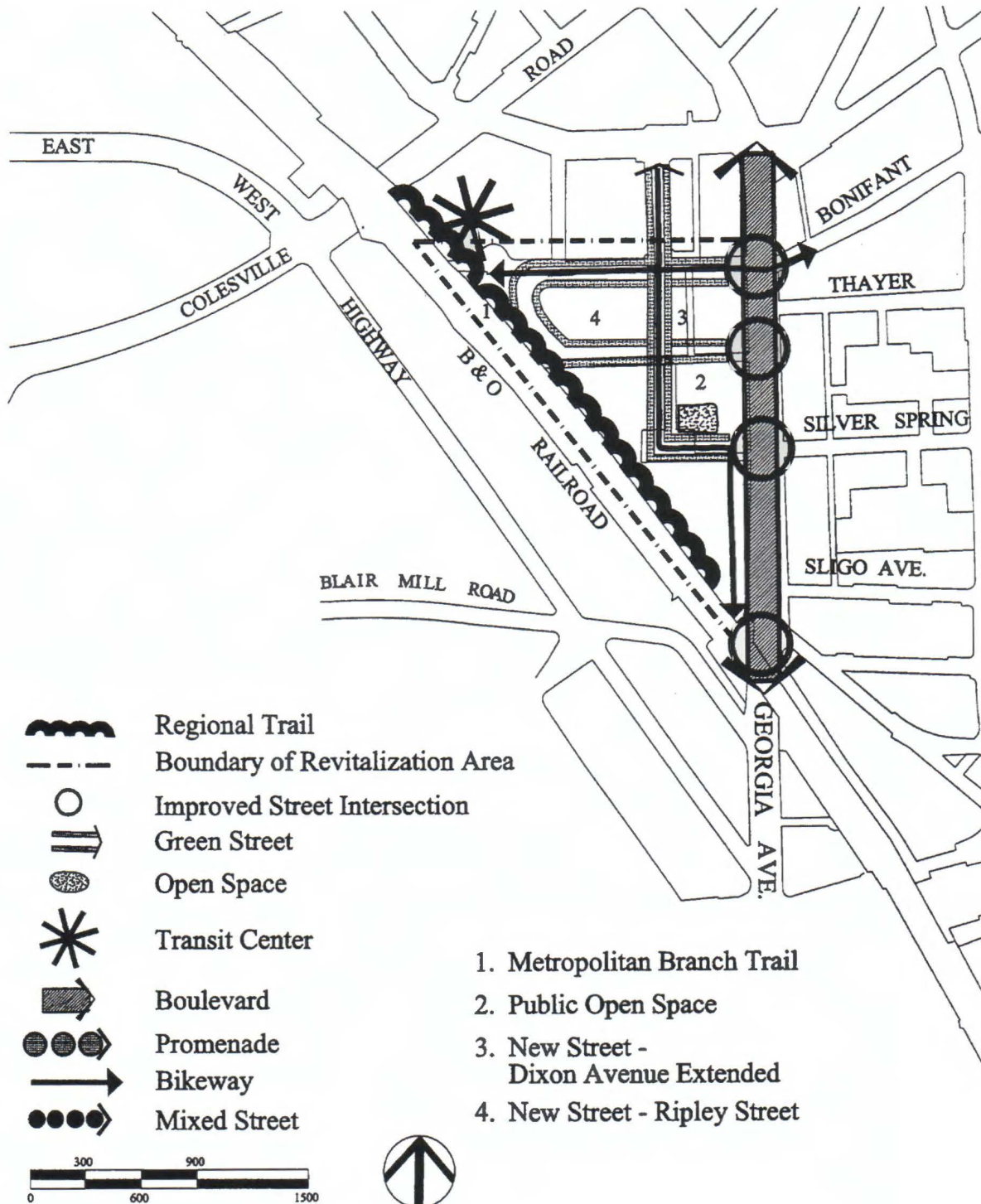
- Encourage mixed-use development near the Transit Center by facilitating market feasible development and upgrading the physical environment.
-

Analysis of Existing Conditions

The Ripley District, a triangular area just south of the Silver Spring Metrorail Station between Bonifant Street, Georgia Avenue, and the CSX railroad tracks, is centrally located in downtown Silver Spring, has frontage along Georgia Avenue, and is near the proposed Transit Center. Despite the area's central location and its proximity to Metrorail, the only new development since 1993 has been a small social service center called Progress Place.

The district is dominated by automotive shops, public and private parking lots and garages, and small warehouse facilities. Existing buildings and land uses do not take advantage of the area's excellent location or development potential.

Map 14 Ripley District Concept Plan



The Ripley District will most likely have the opportunity to capture future private development once key Core properties are developed. There may be potential to jump start development in the Ripley District by relocating selected community facilities, like the Fire Station. (See Community Facilities section.) Many properties in the Ripley District are virtually landlocked. A new interconnected street system and new public open spaces can improve access and circulation throughout the district. As the 1993 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan stated, the Ripley District may need public improvements to precede redevelopment. Public infrastructure improvements in roads, bike trails, and streetscape should contribute to creating a coherent and vital neighborhood. An interconnected street system, public spaces which improve access, circulation, organization, and a sense of place will change the perception of the Ripley District and attract new development to Georgia Avenue.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This Plan is intended to create a development environment that invites revitalization. Zoning alone, without market demand, cannot make investment happen. However, zoning can deter development. This has been the case in the Ripley District's CBD-R2 zone because achievable rental rates do not cover development costs for high-rise housing, the land use envisioned in Ripley by the 1993 Sector Plan.

New zoning should facilitate a new inter-connected street system, allow an expanded range of market-responsive uses near Metro, and address obstacles to redevelopment that include small parcels not suitable for a combination of building floor area and required open space, and the reduction of available building area due to dedication of the Metropolitan Branch Trail. The zoning should also facilitate improvements to the character of Georgia Avenue.

- Retain the CBD-2 Zone on parcels currently zoned CBD-2.

Existing zoning supports the Plan's vision and goal, as stated above, by allowing a variety of uses and providing enough density to encourage redevelopment of the Ripley District near the Transit Center.

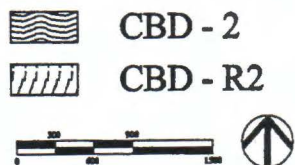
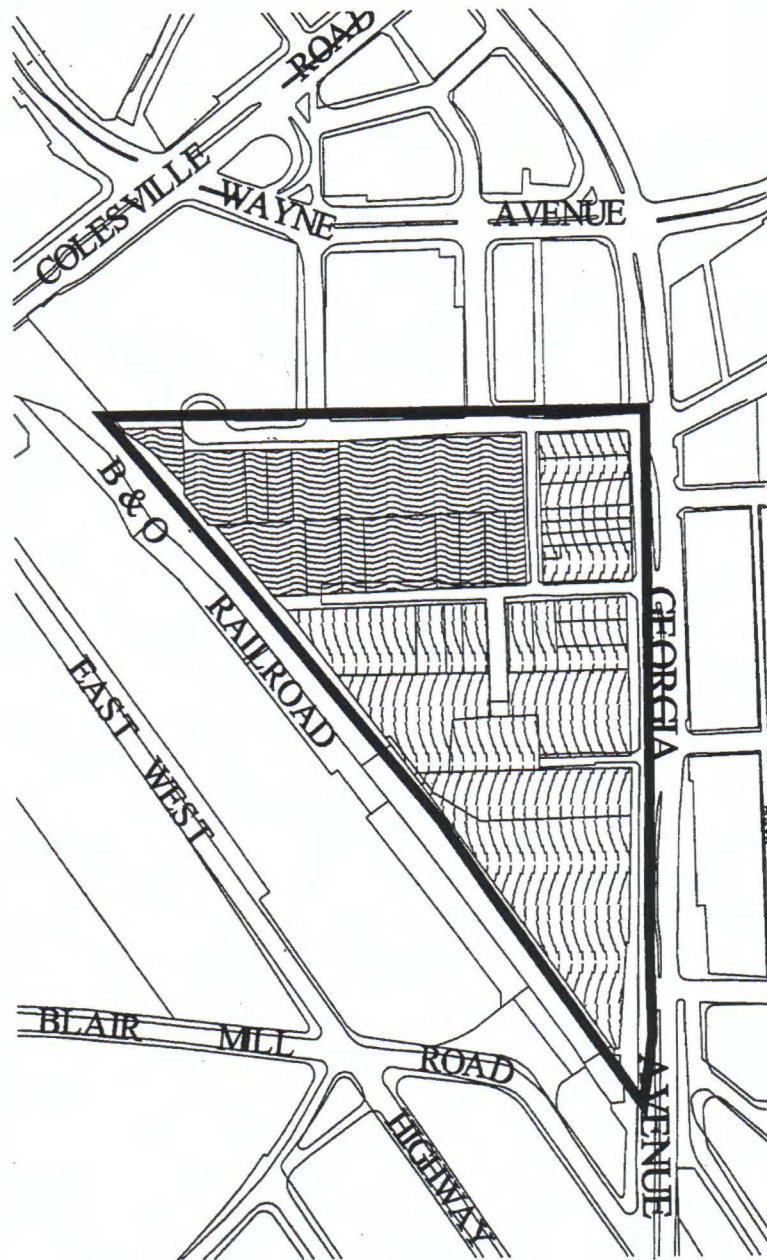
- Rezone all CBD-R2 properties in the Ripley District to CBD-2.

CBD-2 zoning will encourage redevelopment near the Transit Center by allowing more commercial density in response to the current market. CBD-2 also provides the flexibility for both commercial or residential high-rises, or mixed use projects, whereas the CBD-R2 zone was intended primarily to stimulate high-rise residential development. Projects approved under the CBD-R2 zone in the Ripley and South Silver Spring areas have not been built because high-rise housing has not been economically viable in Silver Spring in recent years. (As indicated earlier, the rents which can be supported by the Silver Spring market cannot cover the development costs associated with high-rise housing.)

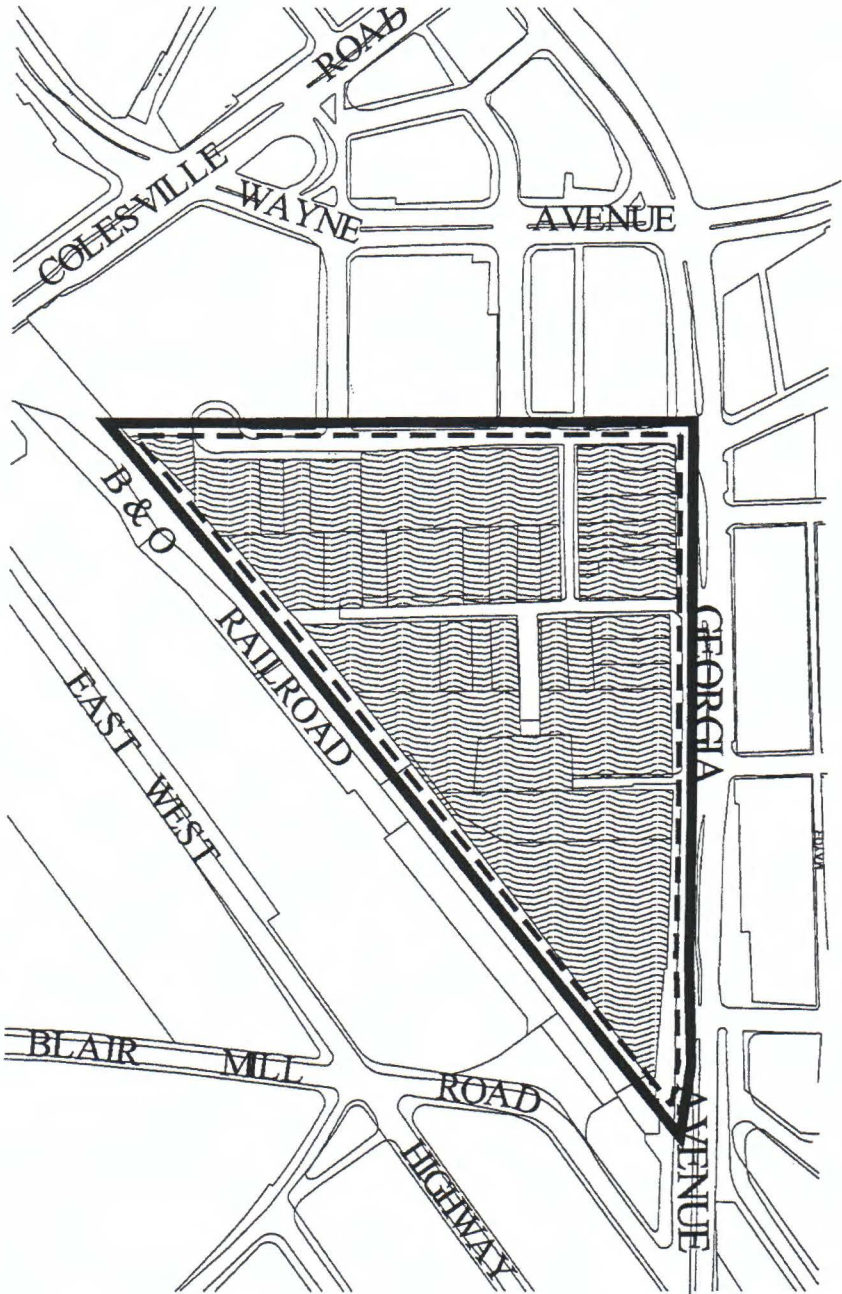
- Apply the Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone to portions of the Ripley District.

This overlay zone will encourage redevelopment in the Ripley District by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses, while ensuring that new development is compatible with nearby uses.

Map 15 Ripley District—Existing Zoning



Map 16 Ripley District—Proposed Zoning Plan



 CBD - 2 (With Overlay Zone)



SOUTH SILVER SPRING

The revitalization of the under-used buildings and properties in this gateway to the County and the CBD will create a strong economic future for a neighborhood of complementary mixed uses spurred by spin-off use from Discovery Communications, Montgomery College's expansion, improvements to Jesup Blair Park, and recent commercial improvements along East West Highway.

VISION

While public investment will create incentives and structure for revitalizing South Silver Spring, the neighborhood's character and shape must ultimately be determined by the market. A variety of reuse options for this gateway neighborhood include start-up business space, retail, and housing. With Discovery Communications located in the Core, South Silver Spring Gateway has the potential to offer supporting high-tech graphics and communication arts business uses to the CBD's emerging communications industry. Potential spin-off from Montgomery College's expansion could create demand for new business space and uses to complement the College's new Health Sciences building on Georgia Avenue. Its proposed partnership with American Film Institute should also foster development of supporting businesses. Located next to a stable residential neighborhood, South Silver Spring could also redevelop with in-fill housing, convenient to the renovated park (Maps 17, 18, 19, 20, and Figure 1).

South Silver Spring has the potential to become a unique, varied, and pleasant neighborhood. Physical improvements to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and car access will add legibility and visual interest to South Silver Spring in a neighborhood combining new and renovated buildings.

Objective:

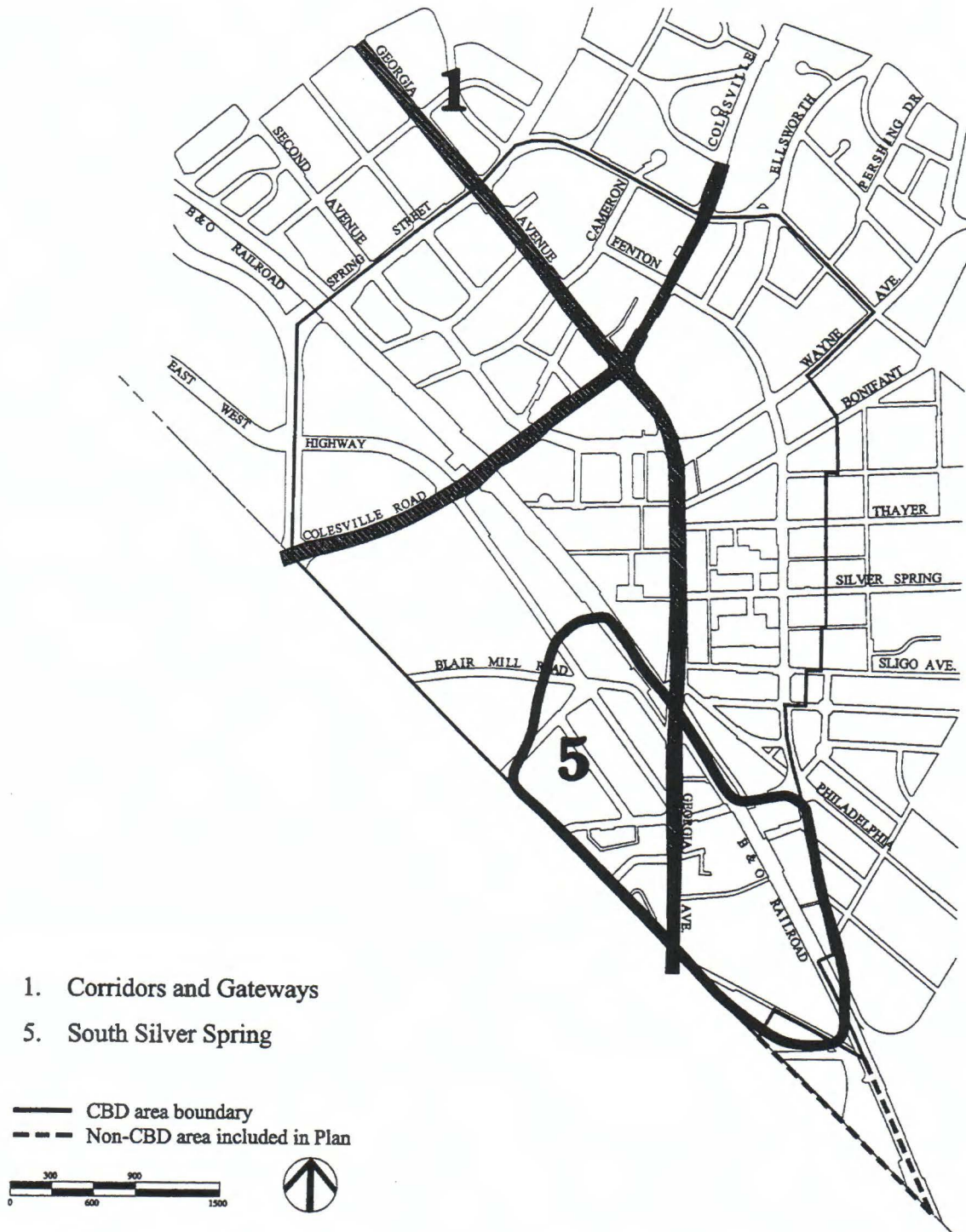
- Encourage new economic activity in South Silver Spring, including expansion of Montgomery College and other redevelopment.

Analysis of Existing Conditions

South Silver Spring is on the southwest edge of the CBD, abutting the District line, north of the intersection of Georgia and Eastern Avenues. The area is characterized by mixed building types and disparate commercial uses including aging industrial, neighborhood convenience and service retail, offices, motels, a postal facility, and the former Canada Dry bottling plant. A variety of older buildings in the area offer reuse opportunities for developing and expanding high-tech and communications businesses. North along East West Highway are the NOAA buildings, with their upgraded streetscape and the recently renovated Blair Apartments.

As are many areas of the CBD, South Silver Spring is shaped by its relationship to the Georgia Avenue Corridor. At the southern end of Georgia Avenue, this neighborhood marks the entrance into the CBD and to the County. A significant gateway feature is Jesup Blair Park which, with facilities and access improvements, can become an asset for Montgomery College and neighborhood homes and businesses. The neighborhood is composed of large blocks that, while they offer redevelopment opportunities, also make it difficult to get through and around the district. As in the past, South Silver Spring must build upon its ability to support major CBD development initiatives.

Map 17 South Silver Spring Revitalization Area



Incubator Space

Small businesses in the Silver Spring CBD could benefit from incubator space, both physical and virtual, because it provides small businesses with the resources they need to establish themselves, create jobs, and contribute to economic redevelopment.

Physical incubators are inexpensive spaces, proximate to business services and complementary businesses, that enable transferring technology, and sharing resources. Virtual incubators link developing businesses via computer, creating an on-line business community that can also share information and ideas. Both types of incubators share the goal of producing jobs and establishing businesses, a goal that also serves downtown revitalization.

Housing is also a desired goal for South Silver Spring, although it may be difficult to realize due to South Silver Spring's ownership pattern (small parcels in multiple ownership), the poor image of the area's vacant buildings, and an unwillingness to convert commercial property into residential uses. Public policies and action, including demolition and/or renovation of existing structures, land assembly, assisting office-to-housing conversions, and a transfer of development rights program could encourage housing development in the long term, particularly in the northern sector of the area nearest to the Transit Center and the Capital Crescent Metropolitan Branch Trail.

The recent renovation of five buildings into the Blair Mill Arts Center, whose tenants include advertising agencies, interior design firms, photo and art studios, and Discovery's re-use of the Caldor building may also indicate a future market direction for South Silver Spring.

The American Film Institute's plans to develop the Silver Spring Theatre as a major film and video exhibition center, and that organization's educational mission have the potential to create partnerships with Montgomery College and with new and existing media-related businesses such as film and broadcast studios and sound stages. Discovery Communications has similar potential for such partnerships.

Montgomery College's plan to expand the Takoma Park campus into South Silver Spring is a chance to introduce new and reinvigorated uses to this part of the CBD. The College plans to expand buildings along Georgia Avenue and into Jesup Blair Park with improvements to the park and to Blair Road. The plan also includes a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks, connecting the expanded campus.

As part of the revitalization efforts connected with the College's expansion, improvements are planned for Jesup Blair Park, including new and refurbished playing fields and tennis courts; improved parking, pathways, and jogging trails; and a covered pavilion and seating areas. Jesup Blair Park is also the setting for the historic Jesup Blair House. The house is currently used by the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC). The park upgrade is intended to meet the needs of surrounding residents and business owners and to accommodate the College's expansion.

The Planning Department's *Class B and C Office Study* identified seven properties in the Silver Spring market area with leasable space in excess of 700,000 square feet, clustered predominantly in South Silver Spring. These buildings are vacant and obsolete. Three of these buildings—the Gramax Building, 7915, and 7923 Eastern Avenue—are completely vacant. They create a sense of abandonment in South Silver Spring that has been difficult to overcome.

South Silver Spring's locational advantage is its relative proximity to Core development. But, its deteriorating building stock, lack of visibility and poor access, hybrid pattern of development, and uneven densities have made it difficult to define a vision for the area. South Silver Spring is relatively distant from the Metro station and is separated by the railroad tracks from the CBD's other commercial areas. Many of the buildings have not been upgraded in years and the area is dominated by several large, vacant, and under-used office, retail, and warehouse buildings.

Montgomery County and the District of Columbia are currently working on a partnership to improve the section of the Georgia Avenue Corridor between the two jurisdictions to spur revitalization. The effect of these efforts has resulted in business and development interest in South Silver Spring.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Current zoning discourages the redevelopment of vacant or under-used buildings in South Silver Spring. As in the Ripley District, the high-rise housing envisioned for South Silver Spring properties in the 1993 Sector Plan is not economically viable in the near term because achievable rental rates do not justify development costs. South Silver Spring should be rezoned to encourage redevelopment while protecting surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Zoning for revitalization in South Silver Spring includes providing flexibility for such uses as computer assembly and high-tech communication arts; creating pedestrian connections; providing incentives for redevelopment of existing, outdated buildings which detract from the area's potential; addressing the character of Georgia Avenue to create an attractive street with adequate light and air; and improving the area's image compared to other parts of the CBD.

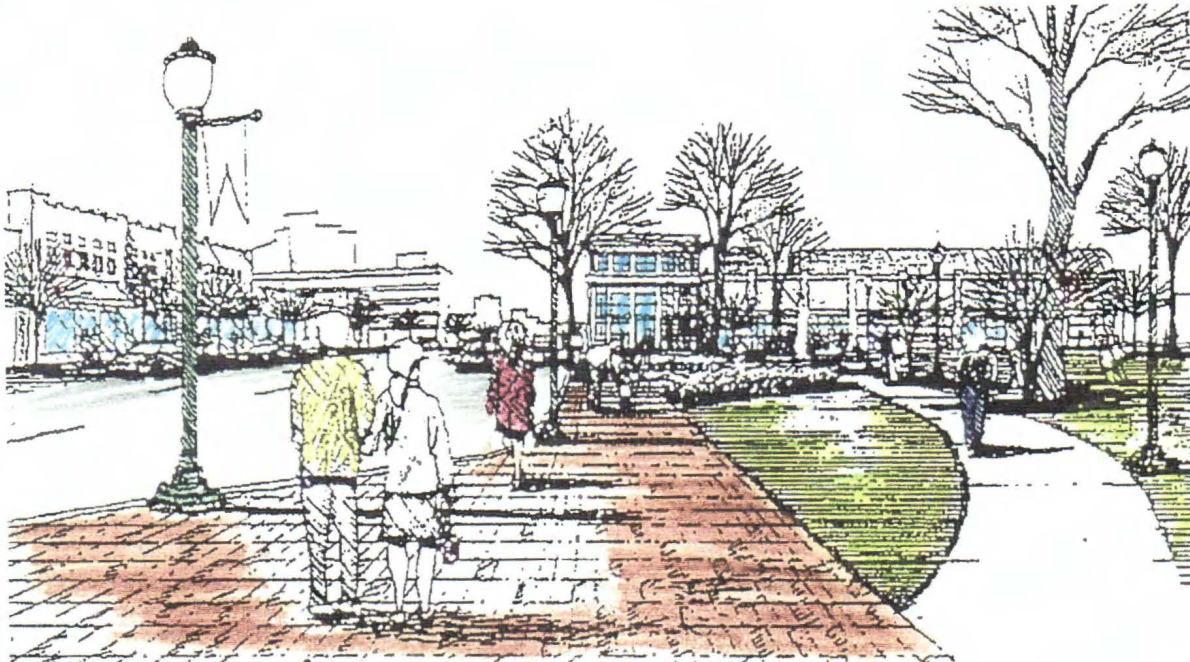
- Rezone all CBD-R2 properties in South Silver Spring to CBD-2.

CBD-2 zoning will encourage redevelopment near the Transit Center by allowing more commercial density in response to the current market. CBD-2 also provides the flexibility for both commercial or residential high-rises, or mixed use projects, whereas the CBD-R2 zone was intended primarily to stimulate high-rise residential development. Projects approved under the CBD-R2 zone in the Ripley and South Silver Spring areas have not been built because high-rise housing has not been economically viable in Silver Spring in recent years. (As indicated earlier, the rents which can be supported by the Silver Spring market cannot cover the development costs associated with high-rise housing.)

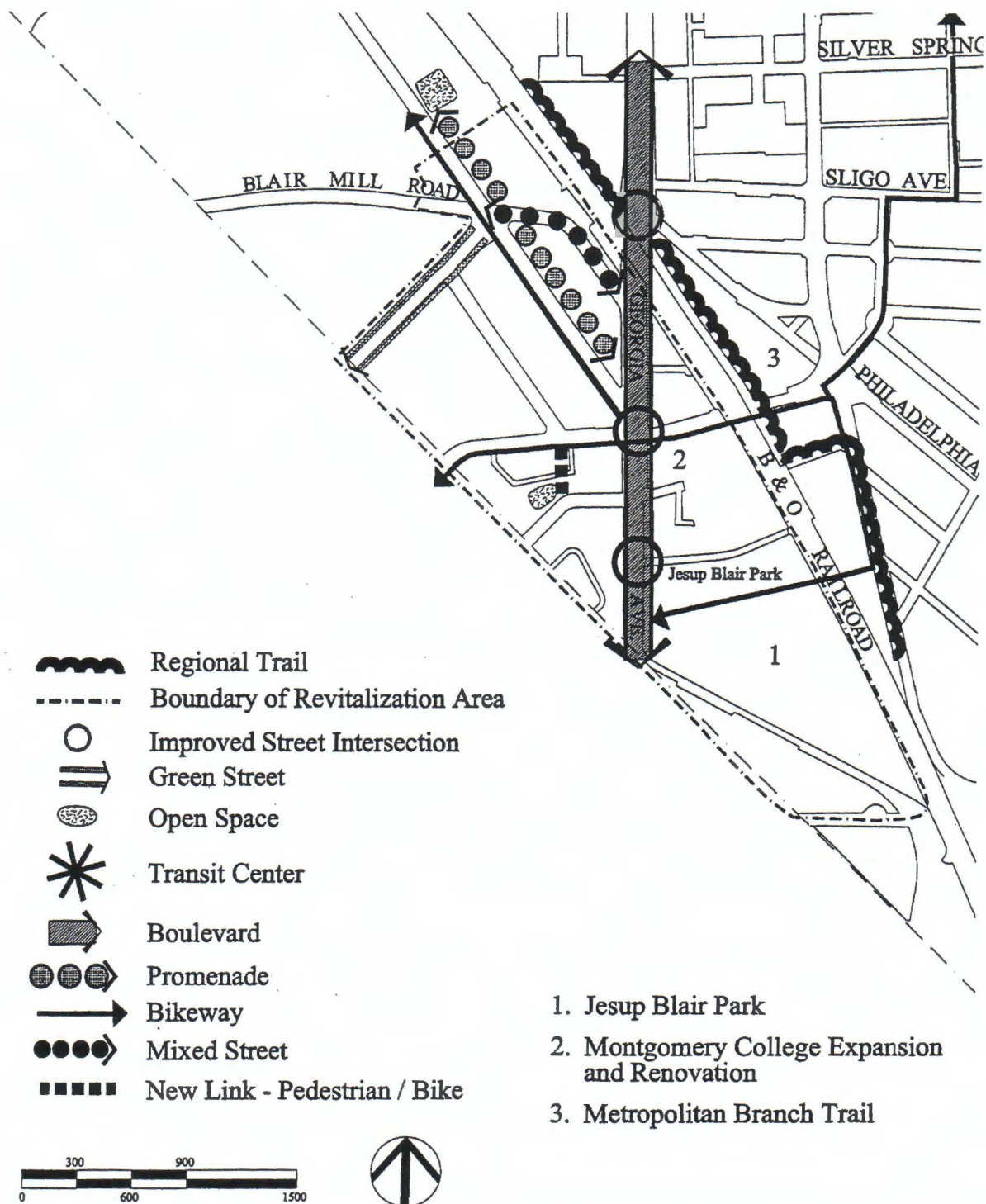
- Rezone all CBD-0.5 properties in South Silver Spring to CBD-1.

CBD-1 zoning will encourage revitalization of South Silver Spring. The CBD-0.5 Zone is a disincentive in South Silver Spring. Redevelopment of South Silver Spring's vacant or underutilized buildings is discouraged by the FAR limitations of the CBD-0.5 Zone, which reduces development options and limits potential income.

Figure 1 Views of Jesup Blair Park and Montgomery College



Map 18 South Silver Spring Concept Plan



Map 19 South Silver Spring—Existing Zoning



Map 20 South Silver Spring—Proposed Zoning Plan



- Apply the Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone to portions of South Silver Spring.

This overlay zone will encourage redevelopment in South Silver Spring by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses, while ensuring that new development is compatible with nearby uses.

Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone

This overlay zone would encourage redevelopment in the Ripley District and in South Silver Spring by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses. At the same time, the overlay zone would be structured to ensure that new development is compatible with nearby uses and that it incorporates critical design elements, such as streetscaping and useful public open spaces (Map 20).

- Apply the Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone to portions of the Ripley and South Silver Spring Revitalization areas to: allow the needs of a specific area to be addressed without affecting all of the CBD zones, provide for a mix of housing and commercial uses, allow small parcels to become usable development sites, allow transfer of density and open space within the overlay area, improve the character of Georgia Avenue, provide the option to create larger open spaces, and encourage redevelopment of the Williams and Gramax properties in South Silver Spring.

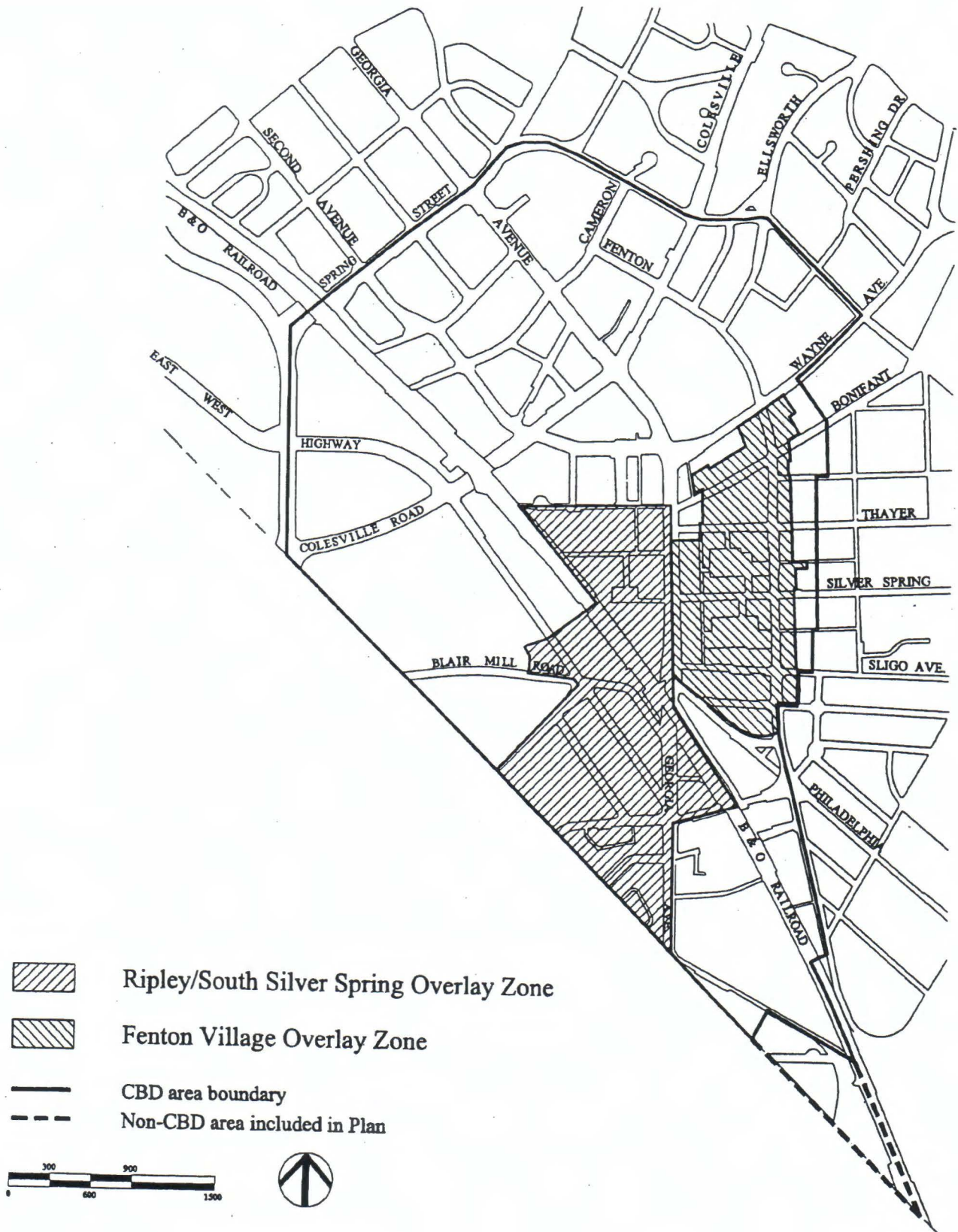
SUMMARY OF RIPLEY/SOUTH SILVER SPRING OVERLAY ZONE

Draft Purpose Clause

- Facilitate the implementation of an organized and cohesive development pattern appropriate for an urban environment.
- Encourage attractive design and ensure compatibility with existing buildings and uses within and adjacent to the overlay zone.
- Provide flexibility in development standards to encourage innovative design solutions.
- Allow for the transfer of development credits and open space requirements within the Overlay District, which would:
 - recapture some developable area lost to the construction of circulation projects, thereby making small parcels developable
 - enable the transfer of open space increases in the buildable area of the site, thereby providing market feasible floor area on small parcels.
- Allow new uses.

NOTE: This corrected map replaces page 59 in the bound version of the February 2000 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan.

Map 21 Overlay Zones



Major Provisions

- Allow new uses.
- Limit building height for new construction along Eastern Avenue, fronting one-family detached dwellings in the District of Columbia as follows: at the property line, building heights should be limited to 45 feet. Above 45 feet, the building may step back 60 feet and its height may increase to 90 feet.
- Allow the transfer of development credit from razed buildings (similar to the existing text amendments). Transfer may be to other sites within South Silver Spring or the Ripley District only.
- Allow the transfer of public use space requirement to other sites in the same district. Joint funding of off-site public use space may occur by multiple property owners.
- No front yard parking along Georgia Avenue.
- Allow alterations, repairs or reconstruction of buildings under the standards of the zone in effect at the time the building was constructed.

FENTON VILLAGE

With an upgraded streetscape, new housing, and lively mix of multi-cultural, specialty, and convenience shops serving local and regional customers, the neighborhood-scale commercial uses along Fenton Street and its cross streets can become Silver Spring's own global village.

VISION

Fenton Village is envisioned as a diverse community of people living and working together to create a tightly-knit urban neighborhood, conducive to strolling and browsing; its businesses providing personal service and a traditional town atmosphere not found in shopping centers or malls. Fenton Village has many strengths, including multi-cultural shops and restaurants, unique small businesses, a pedestrian-scaled physical environment, clusters of complementary businesses, "captive" market demand from surrounding neighborhoods, and proximity to Washington, D.C. Many of these specialty businesses already draw customers from a regional market, and by capitalizing on redevelopment in the Core, can begin to fill an unserved market niche (Maps 22, 23, 24, and 25).

New zoning should include incentives that capitalize on the momentum created by the proposed projects for Silver Spring's CBD Core. The zoning objectives for the Fenton Village include: providing development incentives, ensuring accomplishment of the vision/urban design goals for the district, and providing a housing incentive. Height limits would be implemented through the proposed overlay zones to ensure compatibility with adjoining neighborhoods.

Objective:

- Revitalize Fenton Village by positioning it to benefit from redevelopment on the Urban Renewal site, facilitate housing that will upgrade the physical environment and bring in new residents, and provide a pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages people to stroll and stay.
-

Analysis of Existing Conditions

Fenton Village is located south of Wayne Avenue and the CBD's Core, between Georgia Avenue on the west and the CBD boundary on the east. Originally a single-family residential neighborhood, today it is a mix of multi-cultural shops, neighborhood-serving retail, business services, small office buildings, and auto-related businesses, some of which draw a regional clientele. Commercial establishments are supported by public parking lots and garages. The east side of Fenton Street, while commercial, is adjacent to a single-family residential neighborhood that should be buffered from redevelopment.

There is a strong and substantial market for neighborhood-serving, small-scale retail in Fenton Village. Approximately 85 percent of the CBD's 20,000 office workers are within a ten-minute walk of Fenton Street, and there are 516,000 people living within five miles of the area. Redevelopment in the Core will also create the potential for spin-off businesses in Fenton Village. These markets, however, will remain untapped until there is a better match between businesses and the marketplace.

Fenton Village can capture some of Montgomery County's substantial market for Class B and Class C office space. Ninety percent of Silver Spring firms employ fewer than 20 people, making Fenton Village's small office buildings an ideal location for many companies.

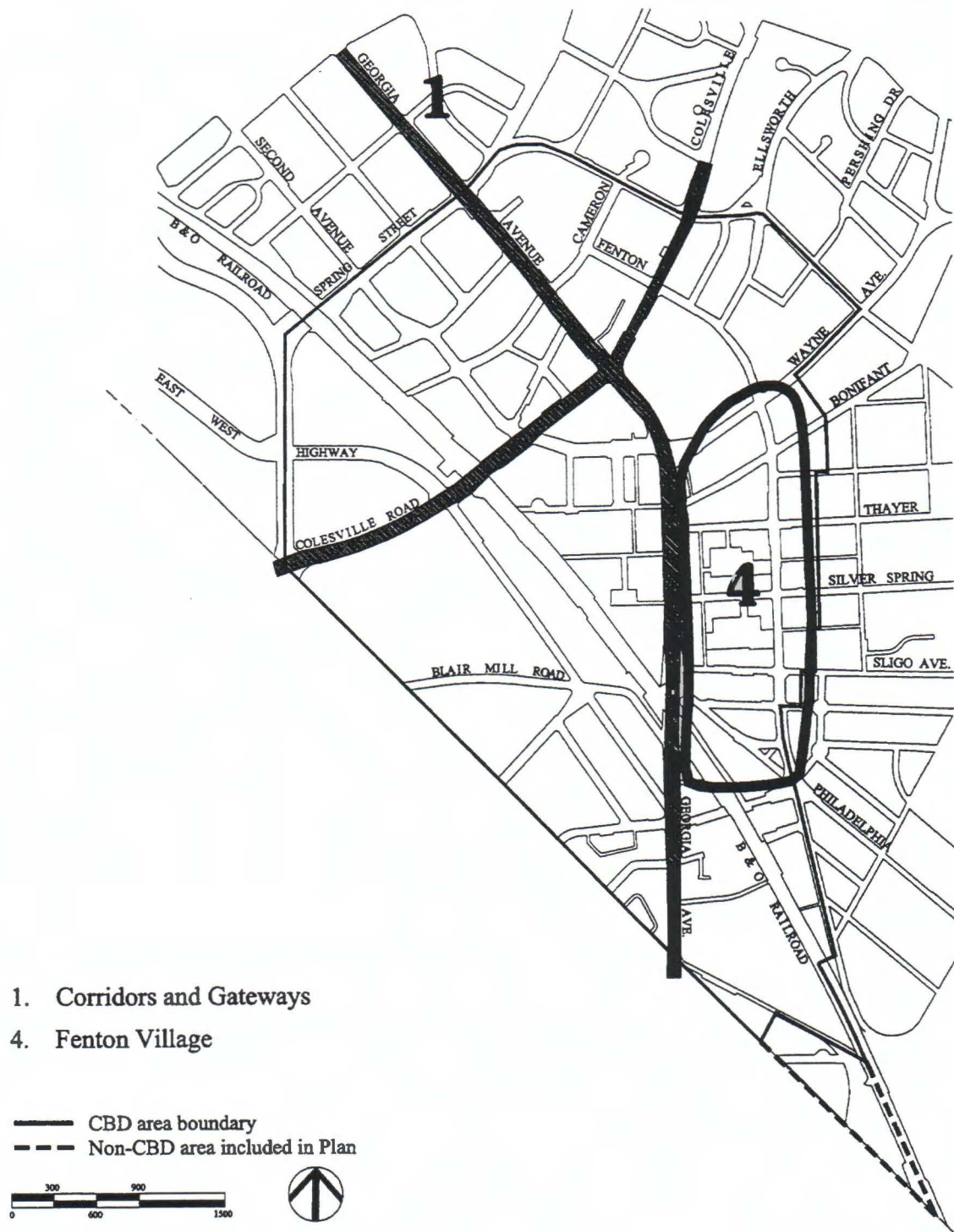
According to a recent study on B and C office space, the success of older CBD office space depends on revitalizing the economy of Silver Spring, not on extensive public financial intervention in the market. Thus, as the CBD is revitalized and Fenton Village is physically upgraded, additional stable office tenants will be attracted to the area, potentially increasing rental rates and providing incentives for more property owners to make improvements.

Housing is another development option for Fenton Village. As in other CBD revitalization areas, new housing development can upgrade the physical environment and provide a resident market for new CBD retail, employment, and entertainment opportunities.

Pedestrian traffic in Fenton Village has declined due to a variety of real and perceived problems including lack of demand for the goods and services offered in Fenton Village, inadequate pedestrian circulation, concerns about security, the ability to attract office workers from the nearby Core, and the area's deteriorating visual image.

The area is also physically disjointed, due to a lack of significant renovation or infill development in recent years. In more unified shopping districts, retailers benefit from the combined drawing power of the individual stores. In Fenton Village, the disjointed pattern of commercial activity and the lack of a resident population dilutes pedestrian traffic—a key component to retail vitality.

Map 22 Fenton Village Revitalization Area



Also, property owners have had little incentive to renovate. Past depressed commercial rents did not generate a return on investment through increased rental rates. Lease terms were shorter and landlords were not providing the tenant improvements typically included in longer leases.

While there are many public parking lots and garages in Fenton Village, some of them are not conveniently located or are unappealing to potential shoppers. Some of these facilities could be redesigned, reused, or relocated.

Many public and private entities, including the Department of Park and Planning, the County's Departments of Economic Development and Housing and Community Affairs, the Silver Spring Regional Center, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program, recognize Fenton Village's potential and the need to upgrade and market the area through both physical and economic revitalization, regulatory actions, financial assistance programs, and business assistance programs. Although some physical improvements are occurring in Fenton Village, the disparity between goods demanded and goods offered has not been fully addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals of the new zone are to heighten investor interest and improve the investment climate in Fenton Village; to strengthen the economic vitality of Fenton Village and the Silver Spring Central Business District; to position Fenton Village to take advantage of the area's proximity to the development in the Urban Renewal Area; and to position Fenton Village to take advantage of land use options supported by the current real estate market, while remaining sensitive to the transition between the commercial district and the adjacent single-family neighborhood.

This Plan's examination of Fenton Village zoning found, despite 1997 changes grandfathering existing uses and densities, that current zoning precludes development of the varied main street envisioned by this Plan. By limiting expansion capability, the zoning limits the likelihood of renovation. The examination also pointed out that as a viable neighborhood, Fenton Village could reduce car traffic, as people walk to entertainment and shopping.

- Rezone selected properties along Wayne Avenue and Georgia Avenue from CBD-1 to CBD-2.

CBD-2 zoning is recommended in some cases to reflect existing development that exceeds the standards of the CBD-1 zone. Zoning that reflects existing structures encourages property owners to re-invest in their properties, and alleviates difficulties with lenders and insurers who may view properties that do not conform to existing zoning as a risk regardless of "grand fathering" clauses that make such properties conforming. (The property on the north side of Wayne Avenue is zoned CBD-1, but it is within the Urban Renewal Area and functions like CBD-2.) The Approved Project Plan for Downtown Silver Spring on CBD-1 properties allows buildings that are consistent with CBD-2 zoning standards.

- Rezone all CBD-0.5 properties on the west side of Fenton Street to CBD-1.

A significant number of vacant or underutilized lots have limited potential (without assemblage) to attract additional retail because they do not have enough density and cannot cover enough of their lots on the ground level to achieve the needed first floor space. CBD-1 zoning will allow increased density under the standard method, up to 2 FAR under the Fenton Village Overlay Zone, with site plan review. (Under the CBD-0.5 Zone, property owners could not realize the 1 FAR optional method density

because the small parcels that make-up Fenton Village are less than the minimum 22,000 gross square feet required for optional method).

- Rezone selected properties on the east side of Fenton Street from CBD-0.5 to CBD-1.

A significant number of vacant or underutilized lots have limited potential (without assemblage) to attract additional retail because they do not have enough density and cannot cover enough of their lots on the ground level to achieve the needed first floor space. CBD-1 zoning will allow increased density under the standard method. (Under the CBD-0.5 Zone, property owners could not realize the 1 FAR optional method density because the small parcels that make up Fenton Village are less than the minimum 22,000 gross square feet required for optional method).

- Apply the Fenton Village Overlay Zone on all CBD-1 properties in Fenton Village.

This overlay zone will encourage redevelopment in Fenton Village by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses, while ensuring that new development is compatible with nearby uses.

FENTON VILLAGE OVERLAY ZONE

An overlay zone would encourage redevelopment in Fenton Village by providing more flexibility in development standards and the range of permitted uses. At the same time, the overlay zone would be structured to ensure that new development is compatible with nearby uses and that it incorporates critical design elements, such as streetscaping and useful public open spaces. (See Map 21.)

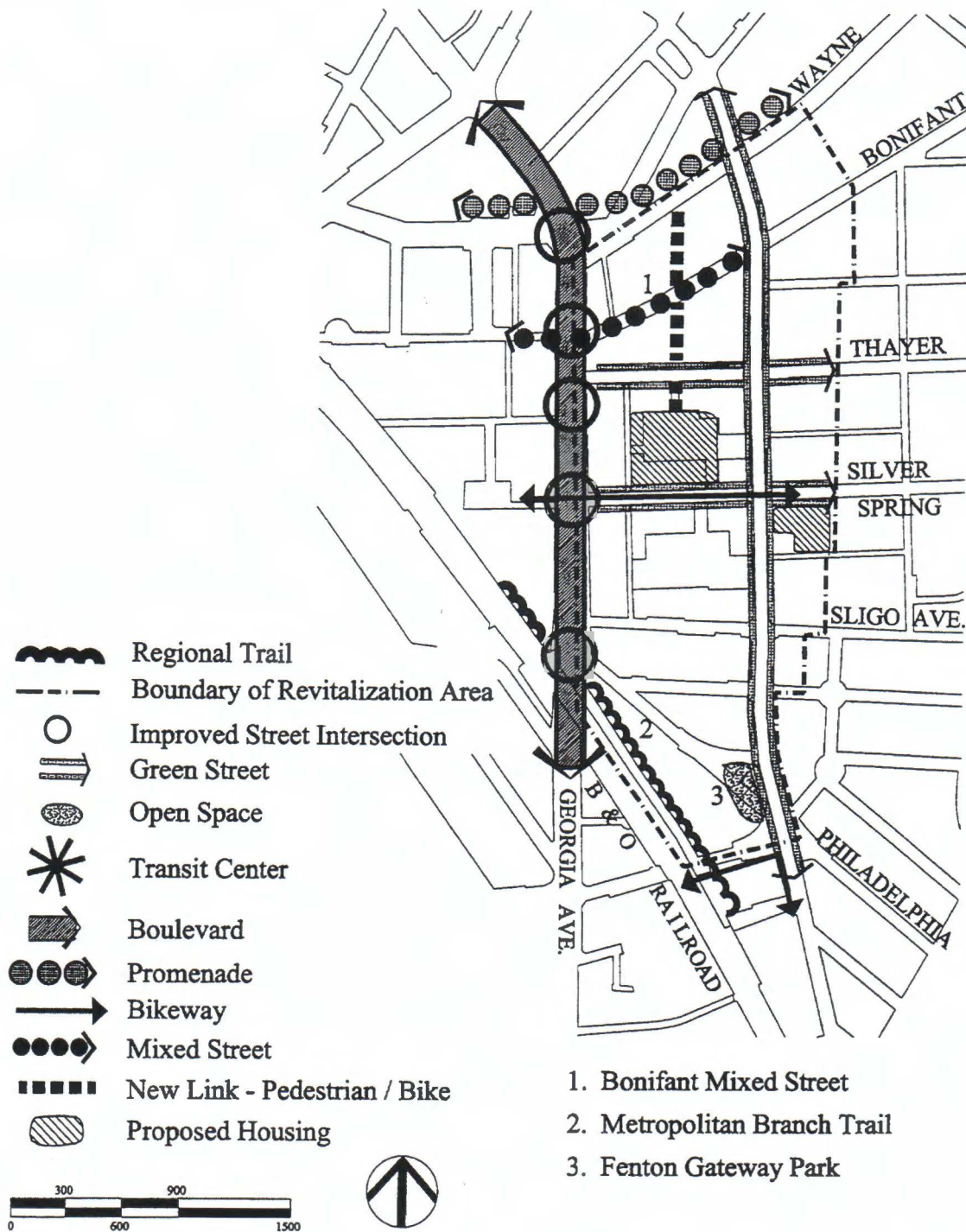
- Apply the Fenton Village Overlay Zone to portions of the Fenton Village revitalization area zoned CBD-1 to allow the needs of a specific area to be addressed without affecting all of the CBD zones. The Overlay Zone will encourage a mix of housing and commercial uses by development incentives, allow small parcels to become usable development sites, limit building heights, ensure compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods, allow the transfer of public use space requirements to other sites in the same district, and improve the character of Georgia Avenue.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED FENTON VILLAGE OVERLAY ZONE

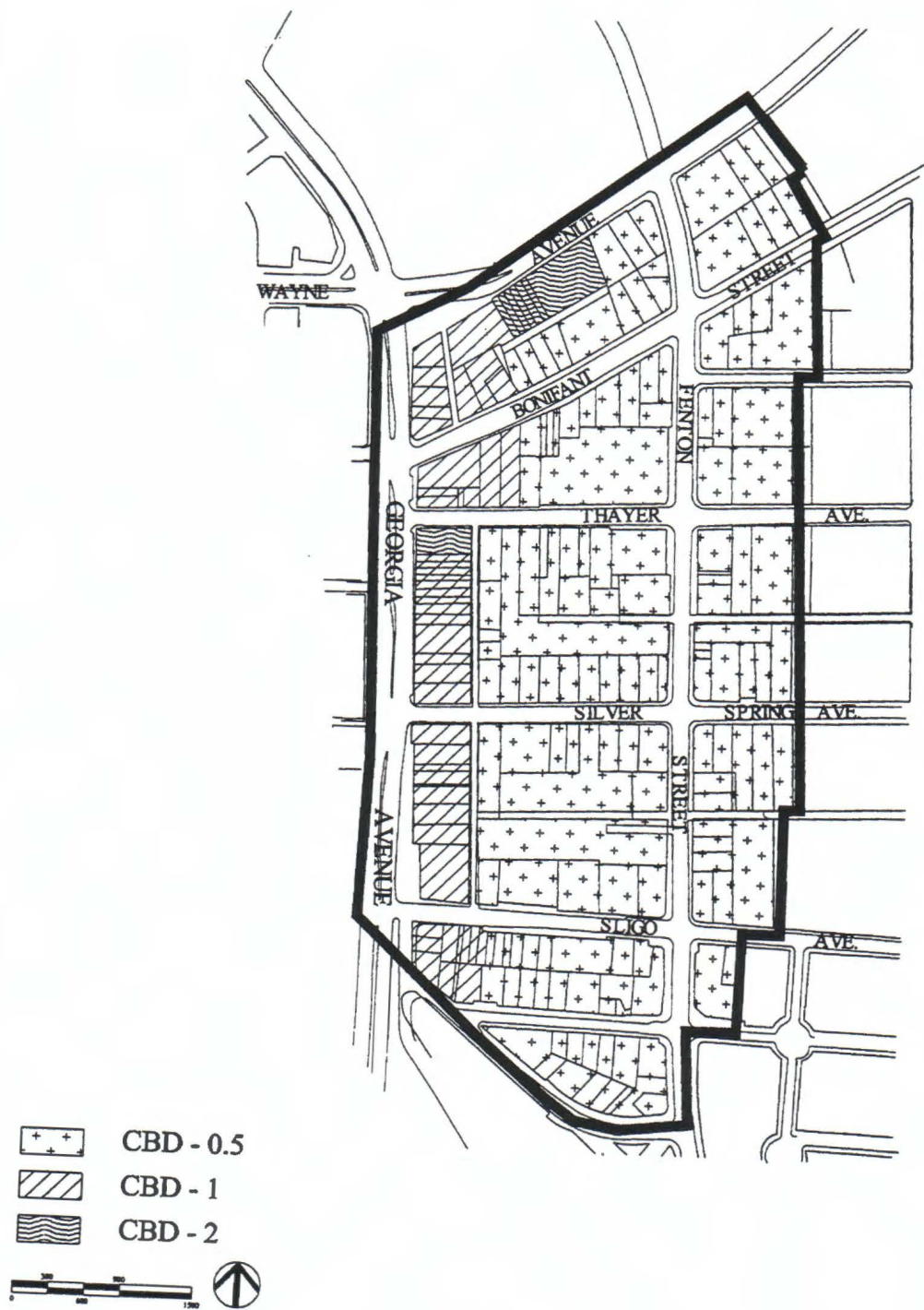
Draft Purpose Clause

- Encourage attractive design and ensure compatibility with existing buildings and uses within and adjacent to the overlay zone.
- Provide flexible development standards to encourage innovative design solutions.
- Allow the transfer of open space requirements within the overlay district.
- Implement the transfer of open space to increase the buildable area of a site, thereby providing market feasible floor area on small parcels.
- Allow new uses.

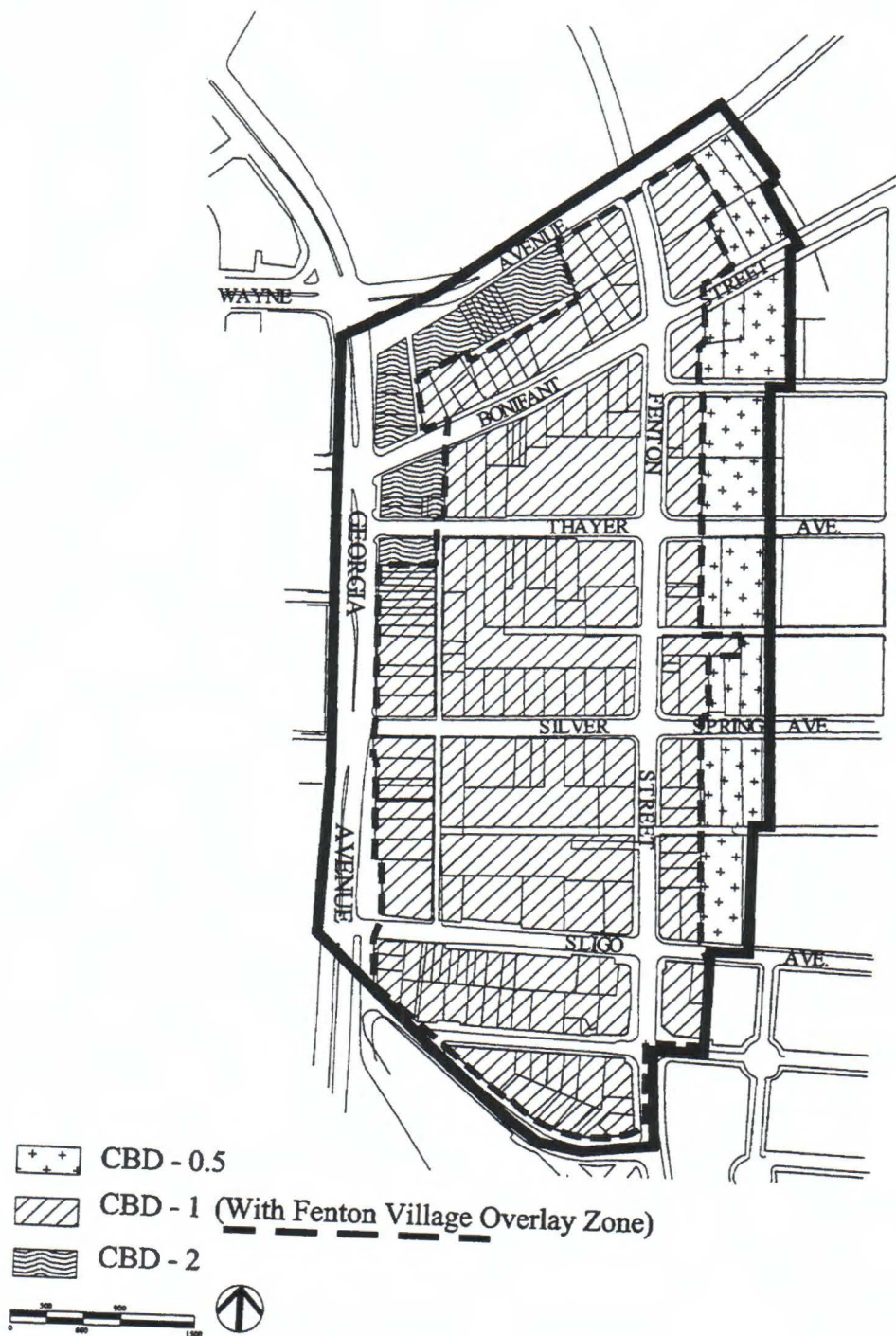
Map 23 Fenton Village Concept Plan



Map 24 Fenton Village—Existing Zoning



Map 25 Fenton Village—Proposed Zoning Plan



Major Provisions

- Allow new uses.
- Limit building height for new construction fronting along the east side of Georgia Avenue to 90 feet, and 60 feet for properties fronting on the west side of Fenton Street. Properties between Georgia Avenue and Fenton Street not fronting on either street are limited to 60 feet but may go up to 90 feet for projects that are at least 33 percent residential and where the additional height is placed closest to Georgia Avenue and tapered down moving east to Fenton Street.
- Limit building height for new construction fronting on the east side of Fenton Street to 45 feet for all uses except housing which would be allowed up to 60 feet.
- Allow the transfer of public use space requirements to other sites in the same district. Joint funding of a specific amenity may occur by multiple property owners.
- Allow 2 FAR in the CBD-1 Zone under the standard method with site plan review per 59-D-3.
- No front yard parking along Georgia Avenue.
- Allow alterations, repairs, or reconstruction of buildings under the standards of the zone in effect at the time the building was constructed.

Within the Fenton Village Overlay Zone, developers would have three choices for developing their properties:

- Standard method development.
- Under the CBD-1 Zone only: standard method development, with an 1 FAR bonus that would allow up to 2 FAR of density for non-residential development, but requiring the site plan approval pursuant to 59-D-3. Streetscaping will be required as part of the site plan approval.
- Optional method development.

OTHER AREAS OF THE CBD

This Sector Plan reconfirms the zoning applied to all parcels in the remaining areas of the CBD outside the Revitalization Areas previously discussed, with the following exception (Maps 26, 27, and 28):

OTHER AREAS ZONING CHANGES

- Rezone the parcels on the northwest corner of Second Avenue and Spring Street, from CBD-R1 to CBD-1 to encourage development.* (This is the site of the recently announced Easter Seals project.)

The CBD-R1 zoning on this site is too restrictive to allow for future development on this site. Housing could still be built under the CBD-1 zone.

- Rezone the Blair property from R-10 to CBD-R2 contingent upon the passage of a zoning text amendment to cap the density at the amount allowed by the current zoning. The change in zoning would allow more flexibility and creativity for development without increasing the amount of development or changing the mix of uses. If the text amendment to cap the density fails to pass, this rezoning should not be approved as part of the Sectional Map Amendment process.**

This 28-acre site is currently split zoned R-10 (20 acres) and CBD-R2 (8 acres). The Blair Park site is both residential and commercial, with apartments and townhouses surrounding a shopping plaza anchored by a Giant Food and several other stores and restaurants. The site is bounded by East Avenue, Colesville Road, East West Highway, and Blair Mill Road.

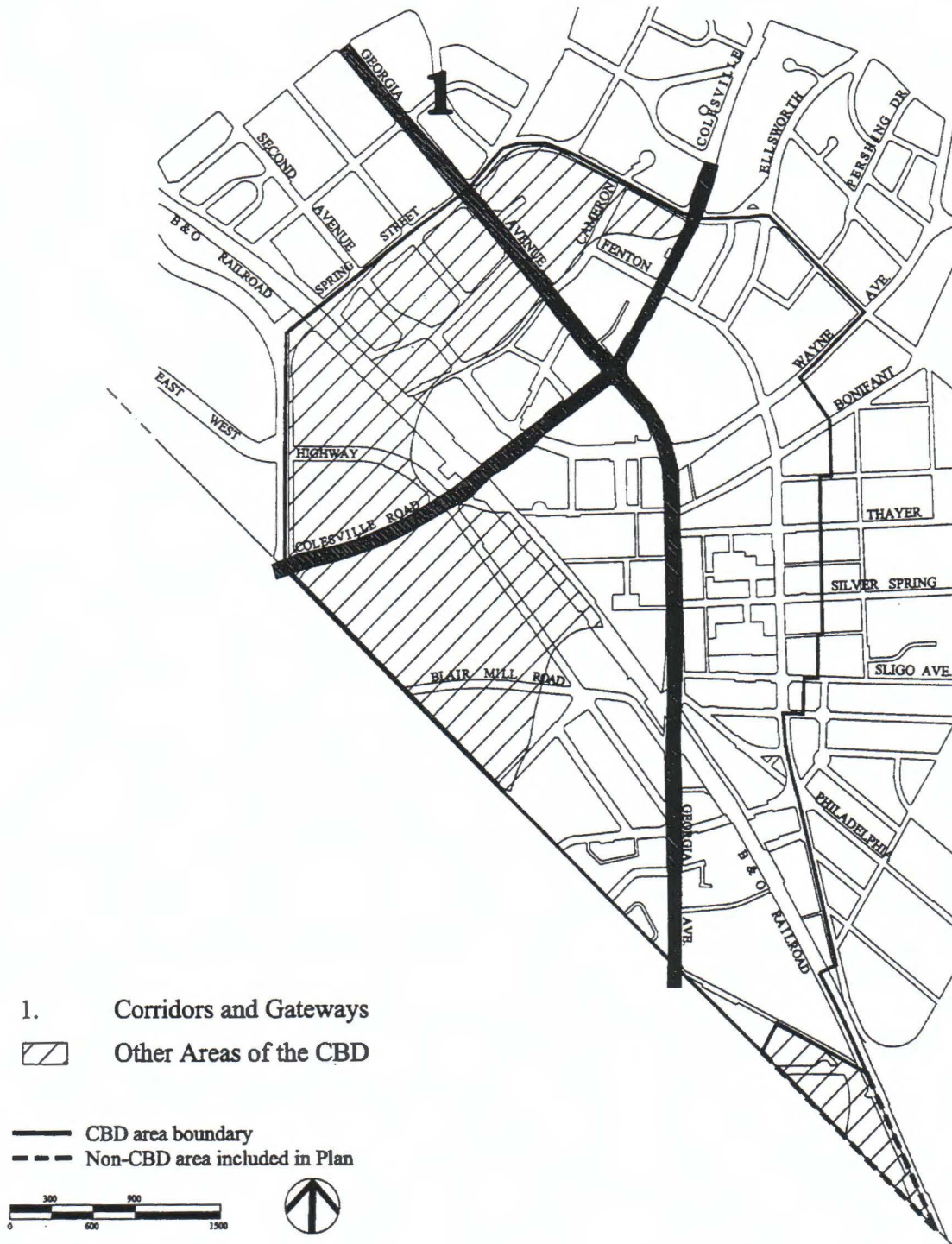
The full residential use of the property could be equivalent to 80 dwelling units per acre under standard method, or 200 dwelling units per acre or a 4 FAR under optional method development. For the Blair tract, these limits equal 2,240 dwelling units under the standard method or 5,600 units under the optional method. This Sector Plan sets a cap of 2,800 dwelling units under the optional method. This site will also be subject to the terms of a new text amendment that limits the maximum allowed commercial square footage to 450,000 square feet of standard method development in the CBD-R2 zone on sites of ten or more contiguous acres.

(The County Council applied the following limitation from the Zoning Ordinance to the text amendment: On sites of 10 contiguous acres or more, the amount of non-residential development is limited to a maximum of 450,000 gross square feet.)

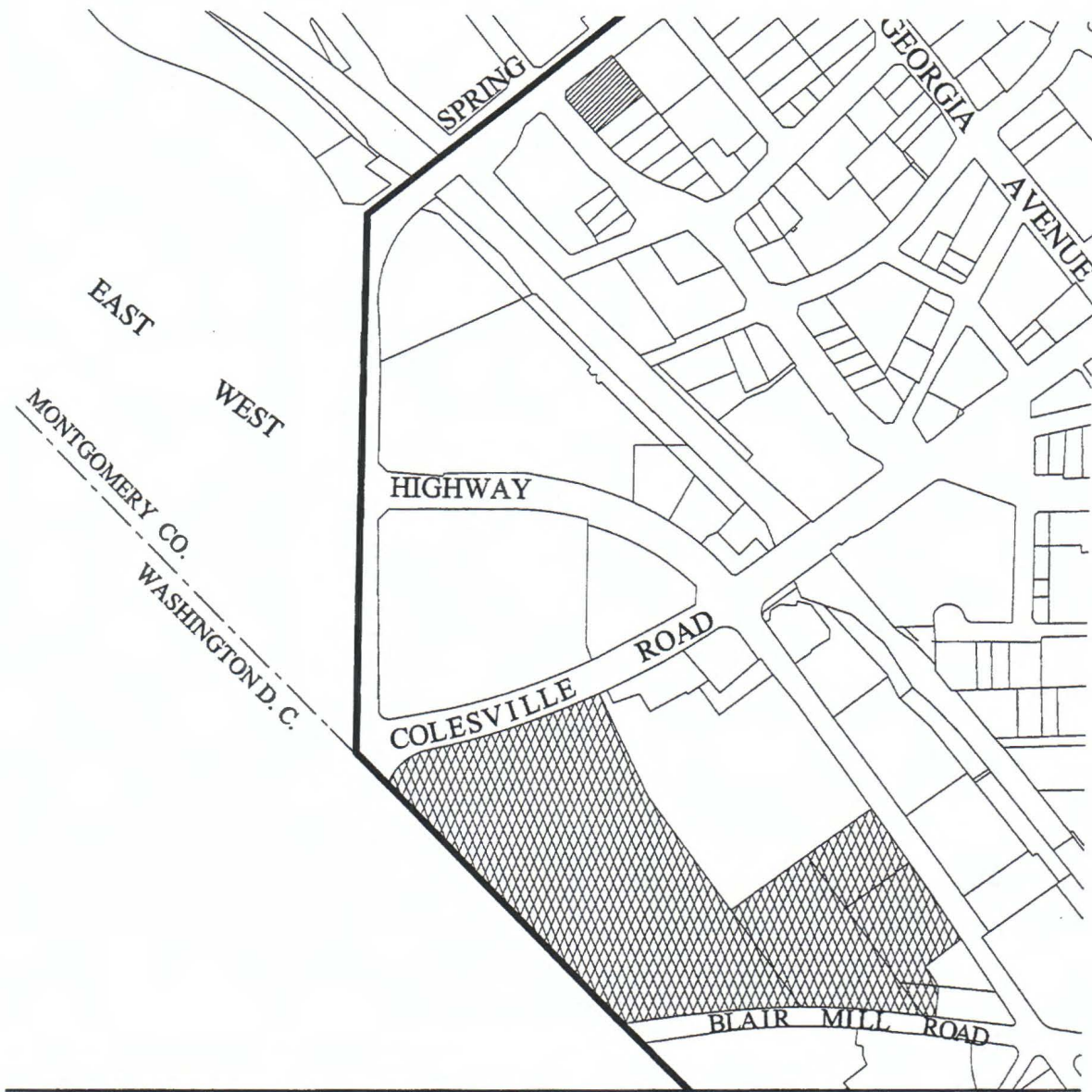
*This site remained CBD-R1 under the Sectional Map Amendment.

**The text amendment was approved by the County Council prior to the SMA.

Map 26 Other CBD Areas



Map 27 Other CBD Areas—Zoning Changes



CBD-R2 (RE-ZONE FROM R-10)



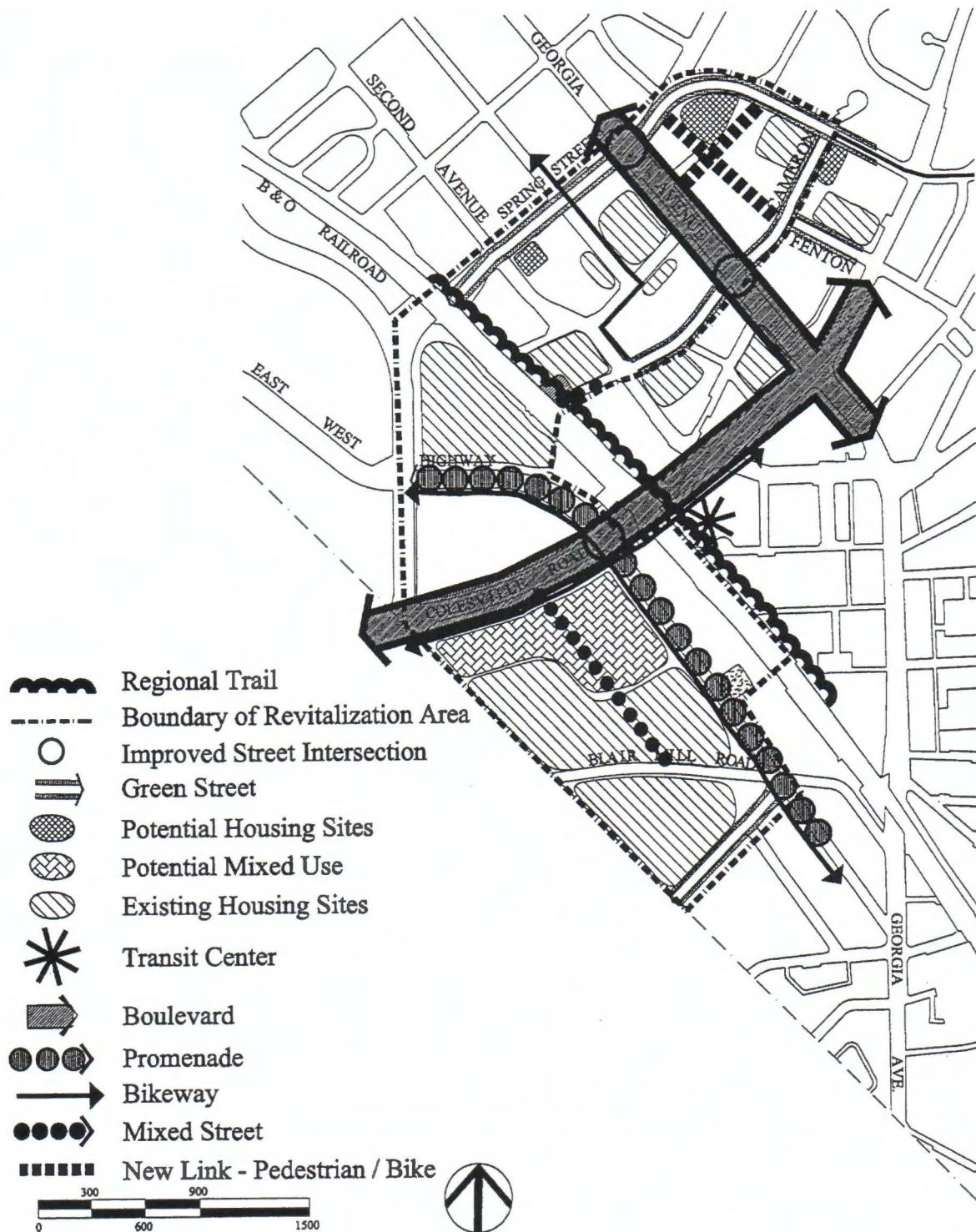
CBD-1 (RE-ZONE FROM CBD-R1) *

* at SMA site remained CBD-R1



Not To Scale

Map 28 Other CBD Areas Concept Plan



URBAN DESIGN

Sometimes dismissed as just aesthetic, a community's appearance can significantly contribute to its function, value, and safety. This Plan makes recommendations to improve the downtown environment and encourage private investment.

For Silver Spring to become a thriving downtown it must also be inviting to the pedestrian. A continuous building line, no blank walls, interesting window displays, street trees, continuous sidewalks, outdoor cafes, and parking along the street, in rear yards, and in mid-block public parking facilities will create an attractive environment that also addresses safety concerns of residents, businesses, and visitors. Incorporating green and open spaces into the downtown will create attractive and useful spaces. Bike trails and safe pedestrian routes through downtown will provide vital connections, but also make downtown a pleasant place to be.

Private sector development will be supported with public/private partnership investments in streetscape improvements, the proposed Transit Center, park projects, and community facilities. By capitalizing on existing and proposed developments, Silver Spring will meet the goals of the state's Smart Growth initiative. This combination of efforts and environments will make the CBD a more convenient place in which to live and work, and will begin to transform it into a true community downtown.

The following general urban design guidelines should be incorporated into redevelopment projects in the Silver Spring CBD. Proposed projects should:

- conform to the CBD-wide planning issues of this Plan such as transportation, historic preservation, and environmental resources, the Urban Renewal Plan for site specific issues such as land use and zoning, and the standards of a revised Silver Spring Streetscape Plan that covers the entire Core
- create an attractive pedestrian environment by creating a system of short blocks, and defining streets with buildings, open spaces, and streetscaping at a human scale created by street-front retail, frequent doors and windows, architectural detail, and appropriately scaled building heights
- through urban design treatments, establish streetscapes that emphasize the hierarchy of the circulation system
- create formal and informal civic spaces—buildings and open spaces—that add to property values, provide amenity, and improve downtown's aesthetic appearance
- provide safe and attractive pedestrian connections between new development on the Urban Renewal site and surrounding CBD neighborhoods, particularly Fenton Village
- incorporate historic resources into new development whenever possible
- contribute to implementing the Silver Spring Green Trail, a linear park intended to link downtown locations with the surrounding park and trail system, while creating a distinctive green path through the CBD
- incorporate the principles of crime prevention through environmental design by integrating visibility, pedestrian activity, and programming into project layouts.

More specific urban design recommendations follow. The CBD's primary crossroads that give the downtown its shape—Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road—are discussed first. Recommendations for each of the four revitalization areas follow.

CORRIDORS AND GATEWAYS

Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road will become urban boulevards, while remaining regional routes for commuters and visitors to and through Silver Spring.

VISION

Through the CBD, Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road should be envisioned as urban boulevards, linking the downtown's revitalization areas while balancing the needs and demands of public transportation, bicyclists, pedestrians, and car traffic. As wide, tree-lined corridors, made safer and more pleasant with improved signs, streetscaping, landscaping, and signal timing, these corridors will link redevelopment projects in the Core, Ripley District, Fenton Village, and South Silver Spring. CBD gateways and nodes will also be defined by landscaping, streetscaping, signs, public art, and buildings, all designed to signal the entrance and change to an active urban area.

Design changes in the street's public realm will be complemented by changes in the character of buildings and businesses that line Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road created by new development opportunities (Map 29). Wide sidewalks will be activated by street level shops, restaurants, and the pedestrians who visit them.

Objective:

- Improve the image of the entire downtown by improving the appearance of its primary corridors.
-

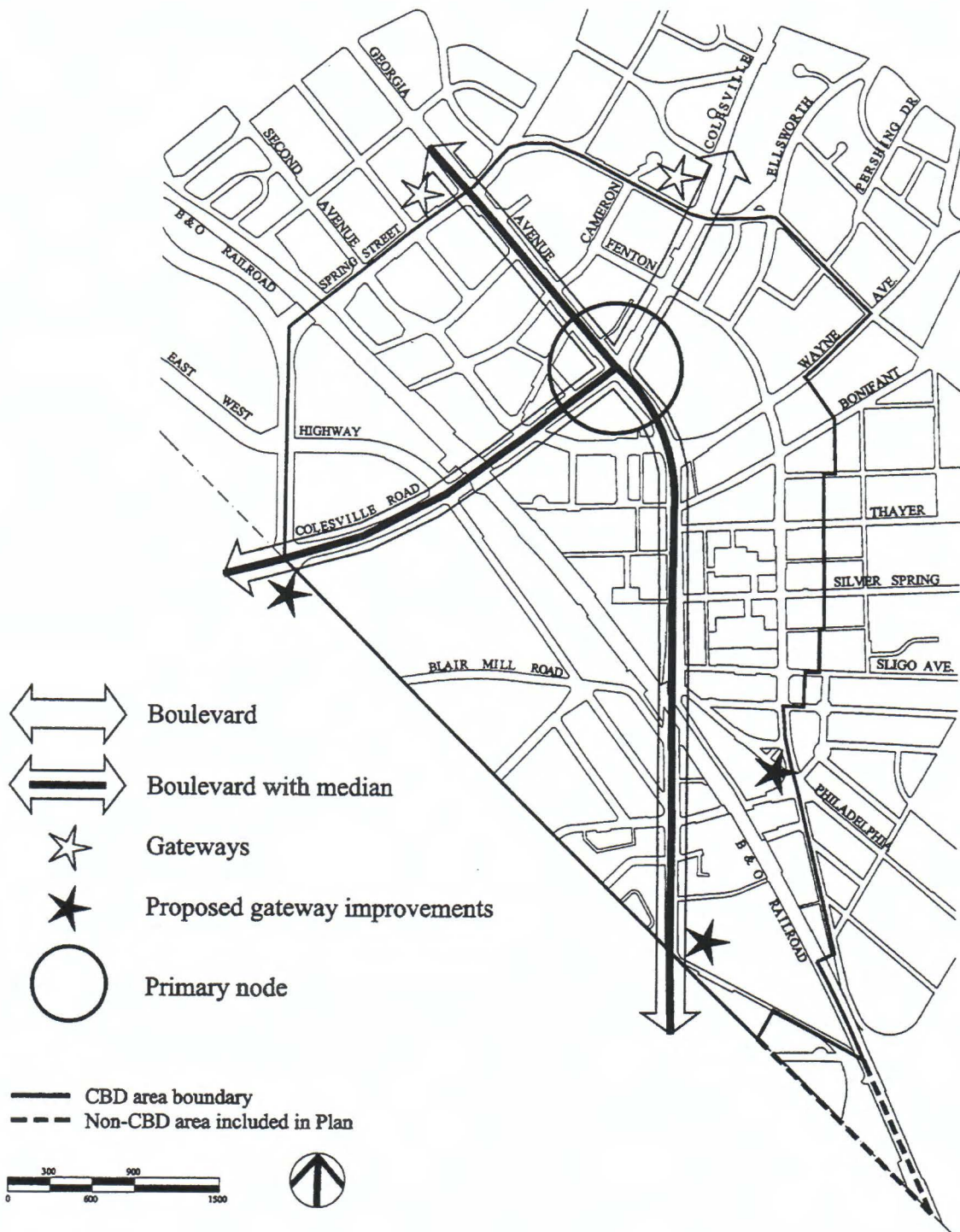
Analysis of Existing Conditions

Georgia Avenue begins in the District of Columbia and runs north out of the city, through, and eventually beyond Montgomery County. Its entrance into Montgomery County from the District is marked by Jesup Blair Park, slated for renovation. At its intersection with Colesville Road, Georgia Avenue marks the center of downtown.

Colesville Road begins at Silver Spring's eastern boundary with the District and, as US 29, runs northeast through Montgomery County to Howard County and Baltimore. Colesville Road's beginning is marked by the "portal", a landscaped traffic circle at the recently renovated Blair Apartments. Just past its intersection with East West Highway, Colesville Road gives access to the Silver Spring Metro station, planned to be rebuilt as the Transit Center.

While some stretches of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road are streetscaped, the treatment is inconsistent and incomplete. Compounding the unpleasant street environment is an overall lack of street definition, with empty lots, buildings set back from the street, and only a few street-animating uses that contribute to creating a distinct, safe, and interesting pedestrian space. Street crossing is also difficult, with major crossings barely marked and offering no pedestrian refuge, and other crossings not marked at all.

Map 29 Corridors and Gateways



Circulation

Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road are and will remain regional transportation corridors and primary transit routes, but in Silver Spring, they must also serve as urban boulevards. Although both roads experience rush-hour congestion, heavily congested intersections outside the CBD act as meters to traffic entering the CBD, limiting downtown congestion.

These corridor roads must serve pedestrians as well as vehicular traffic. An active downtown takes its life from busy streets and this Plan's streetscape and development recommendations contribute to creating a pedestrian-friendly environment. The heavy and high-speed traffic along Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road make it sometimes unpleasant to walk on these streets and difficult to cross them. This Plan also recommends considering off-peak, on-street parking to buffer pedestrians from moving traffic and create short-term parking for downtown businesses.

Redevelopment Opportunities

A number of redevelopment projects are already proposed or underway that will effect Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road and the CBD gateways. The design and development of these projects should recognize their corridor and gateway locations to improve the image and activity in the CBD.

Core redevelopment projects include the Downtown Silver Spring Project and Discovery Communications' plans to construct office headquarters, both at the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road. The vacant portion of the Lee site also offers redevelopment opportunities in the Core. Also in the Core, reconstruction of the Transit Center will include ground level retail and will make pedestrian connections to surrounding redevelopment projects.

In the Ripley District, improved streetscape and redevelopment opportunities will make this section of Georgia Avenue more attractive and competitive with other downtown development. Recommendations for Fenton Village will support redevelopment of Georgia Avenue's eastern side, and redevelopment in South Silver Spring will be focused around the expanded campus of Montgomery College and the renovated Jesup Blair Park, along Georgia Avenue.

Gateways and Focal Points

Gateways are sometimes amorphous things, nothing more than the subtle sense that your surroundings have changed, but they can also be definite and marked to send a message about the area being approached. Most of Silver Spring's gateways are marked by significant redevelopment proposals. These proposals not only upgrade and create needed facilities, by their location, they signal the beginning of the downtown.

In the Core, corridors are punctuated with focal points, the most notable being the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road. Both the Downtown Silver Spring and Discovery projects will significantly change the character of this intersection. The remaining corner of the intersection, now occupied by a gas station, also offers an opportunity to redefine this primary intersection. The section of Georgia Avenue between Wayne Avenue and Colesville Road is the major activity center of downtown and merits special treatment. Streetscaping and pedestrian improvements should make this stretch attractive and pedestrian-friendly, with particular attention to crosswalks at Colesville Road, Ellsworth Drive, and Wayne Avenue. Also in the Core, the southern end of Colesville Road will be marked by the redesigned Transit Center. Farther west along Colesville Road, the recently installed sculpture and fountain at the Blair Apartments should be enhanced with public streetscape and landscape improvements.

In the Ripley District, redevelopment will be focused on new open spaces and improved road connections, providing a focal point for development along Georgia Avenue and in the Ripley District. Fenton Village will be marked by the South Fenton gateway park, refurbishing a small, underused and unattractive public park. In South Silver Spring, the CBD's gateway is marked by Jesup Blair Park. The park's renovation will be coordinated with improvements to the Montgomery College campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ensure an active and animated corridor by rezoning gateway and corridor properties to encourage redevelopment.

- Rezone areas along Georgia Avenue—Fenton, Ripley, and South Silver Spring—to create redevelopment opportunities.
- Do not allow parking in the front yard of CBD properties, except for handicapped parking, along Georgia Avenue.

Improve the physical character of the corridors through combined public and private efforts.

- Include a gateway concept and design standards for streetscaping and gateway treatment and identify public facilities improvements by updating the *Silver Spring Streetscape Plan* to include comprehensive treatment for the Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road corridors.
- Design standards should distinguish Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road as urban boulevards and create a pedestrian-friendly environment, including comprehensive streetscape and landscape treatment that includes:
 - a new focus along Georgia Avenue at the Ripley District using open space and improved road access
 - street furniture and landscaping that emphasizes public transportation with distinctive bus shelters and other transit support
 - specially paved crosswalks, and a tree-lined median on Georgia Avenue
 - improved visual quality in the public and private realms by encouraging compatible heights, setbacks, and street activating uses
 - consider off-peak parking to replace existing neck-downs (i.e., curb extensions at intersections) on Georgia Avenue
 - continuity of design treatment along Colesville Road as remaining sites redevelop
 - cohesive streetscaping by filling in streetscape gaps in the context of an expanded *Silver Spring Streetscape Plan* to help create a pedestrian- and mass-transit- friendly corridor, including bus shelters and a tree-lined median on Colesville Road
 - focal points created by redevelopment projects at the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road emphasizing bike, pedestrian, and bus movement, linking across Georgia Avenue to connect the Transit Center and the Downtown Silver Spring Project.

Mark the CBD gateways as distinctive and defined places that create a civic presence.

Georgia Avenue

- Complete the approved design concept for Jesup Blair Park. Along Georgia Avenue the park would have a ceremonial character, which, coupled with proposed street-facing College buildings and proposed special streetscape features, would mark this gateway.
- Woodside Park, at the corner of Spring Street and Georgia Avenue is outside the CBD boundaries, but still marks the entrance into downtown Silver Spring as the buildings and streetscape change character at this point. Intersection improvements should be made here.

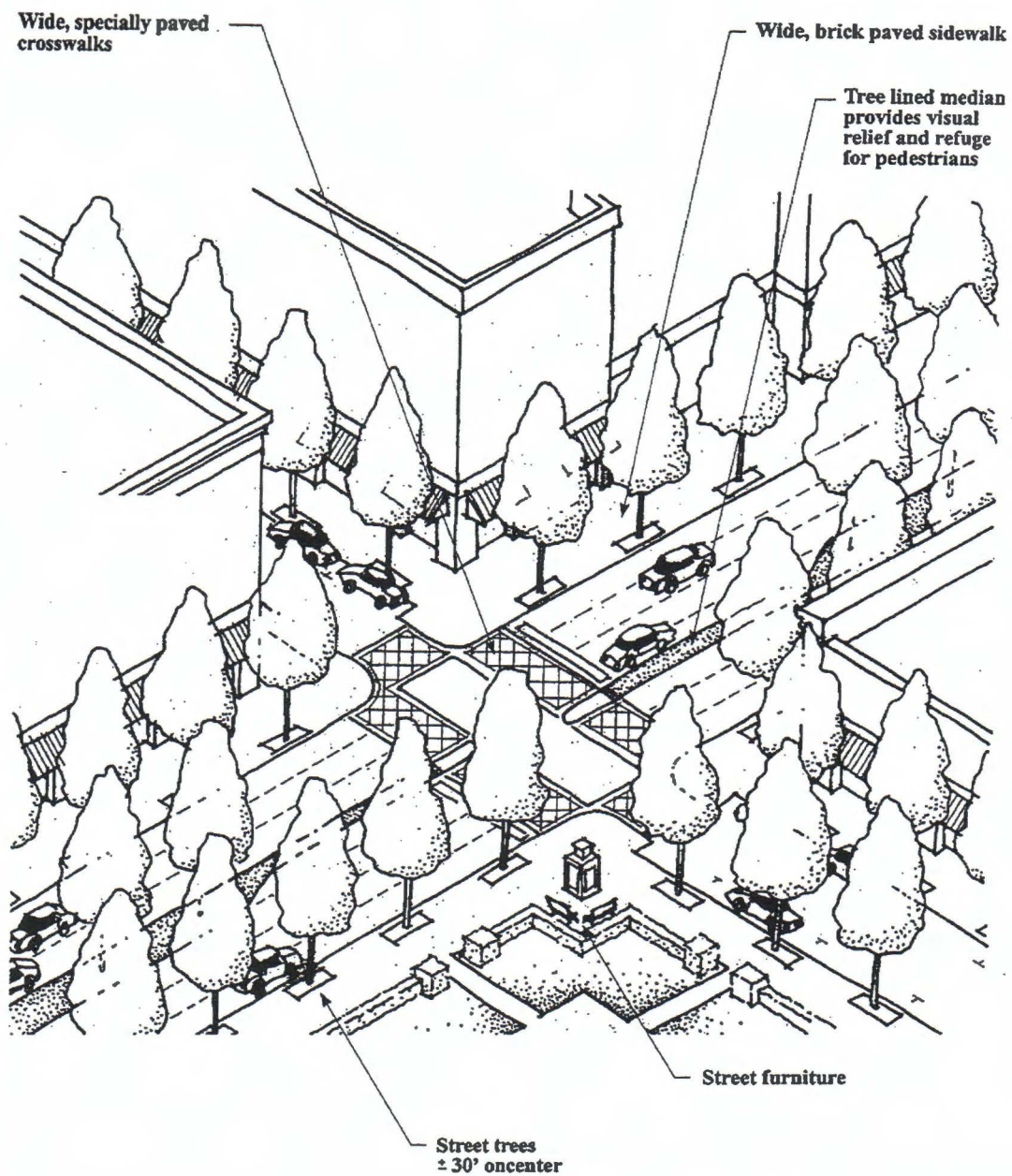
Fenton Street

- Reconfigure the park and streets at Philadelphia Avenue and Fenton Street to create an attractive and usable public park, to improve pedestrian circulation, and to maintain access to abutting properties.

Colesville Road

- Improvements at the “portal,” the intersection of Colesville Road and 16th Street, should include streetscape and landscape features, intersection improvements, and incorporating a Class I bikeway along Colesville Road linked to local and regional bike routes.
- Design the Transit Center to create a presence on Colesville Road, including street-level retail and accommodating all forms of transit.

Figure 2 Boulevard Streetscape Concept



Urban Boulevards are landscaped with rows of trees, tree lined medians and included wide specially paved sidewalks and crosswalks to create a pedestrian friendly environment.

CORE

Three significant projects in the Core of Silver Spring will be influential in shaping downtown's future. Redevelopment in the Urban Renewal Area will include regional and local retail, a hotel, movie theaters, and offices. The Transit Center redevelopment will make convenient transportation links from Silver Spring throughout the region. The Discovery Communications headquarters will bring a significant corporate presence to downtown.

URBAN RENEWAL AREA

The Urban Renewal Area (see Map 9) is located in the very center of the Core, and includes existing development, historic buildings, and vacant land. The proposed Downtown Silver Spring development and the Discovery Communications corporate headquarters capitalize on the CBD's primary intersection. Additional visibility is created by a gateway plaza proposed at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road that will also reorient the area east of Georgia Avenue around a redesigned pedestrian-friendly Ellsworth Street. This community-serving development will also reuse the historic Silver Theatre and Shopping Center. Development in the Urban Renewal Area will continue to be governed by the goals and guidelines of the Urban Renewal Plan.

- Design of individual projects within the Urban Renewal Area should contribute to the greater urban environs.
- Ensure that the Urban Renewal Area development frontage along Wayne Avenue incorporates activating uses, includes the proposed Green Trail, and allows visible pedestrian connections to Fenton Village.
- Develop the Urban Renewal Area parcels east of Georgia Avenue as a mixed use retail, entertainment, office, and hotel project.
 - Renovate the Silver Spring Shopping Center, using it to create a CBD landmark.
- Ensure that the links between the Silver Theatre and the Downtown Silver Spring project are clear.
 - Redevelop the Silver Theatre as a film education and entertainment venue maintaining, as much as possible, the building's original appearance and function.
 - Incorporate a civic building and public outdoor space into the project that can accommodate varied community activities and commemorate Silver Spring's veterans. Relocate the civic functions components of the Armory to this facility.
- Develop the Silver Triangle site west of Georgia Avenue, recognizing and using its strategic location and potential to create a focus in the Core as a mixed-use development, including a large open space that is visible and accessible from adjacent streets.
 - Should the approved project plan be changed, buildings on this site should be located next with ground floor retail along Colesville Road and be an opportunity for a signature building at the CBD's center.

- The Silver Triangle's open space should: be integrated with the Transit Center's open space, be visible and easily accessible from surrounding streets, be landscaped with shade trees, and both grassy and paved areas, include a central focal point, such as a water feature, be activated by ground floor retail uses, pedestrian routes, and programming, and be designed and sized to accommodate a variety of community activities.
- The Silver Triangle's central CBD location near Metro and the Urban Renewal Area give it the potential to be an active downtown focal point. Allow additional height above 143 feet on this site subject to Planning Board approval.
- Include a mid-block crossing of Georgia Avenue to connect to development on the Urban Renewal site
- Include pedestrian connections through the Silver Triangle site linking the Downtown Silver Spring project with the Transit Center.

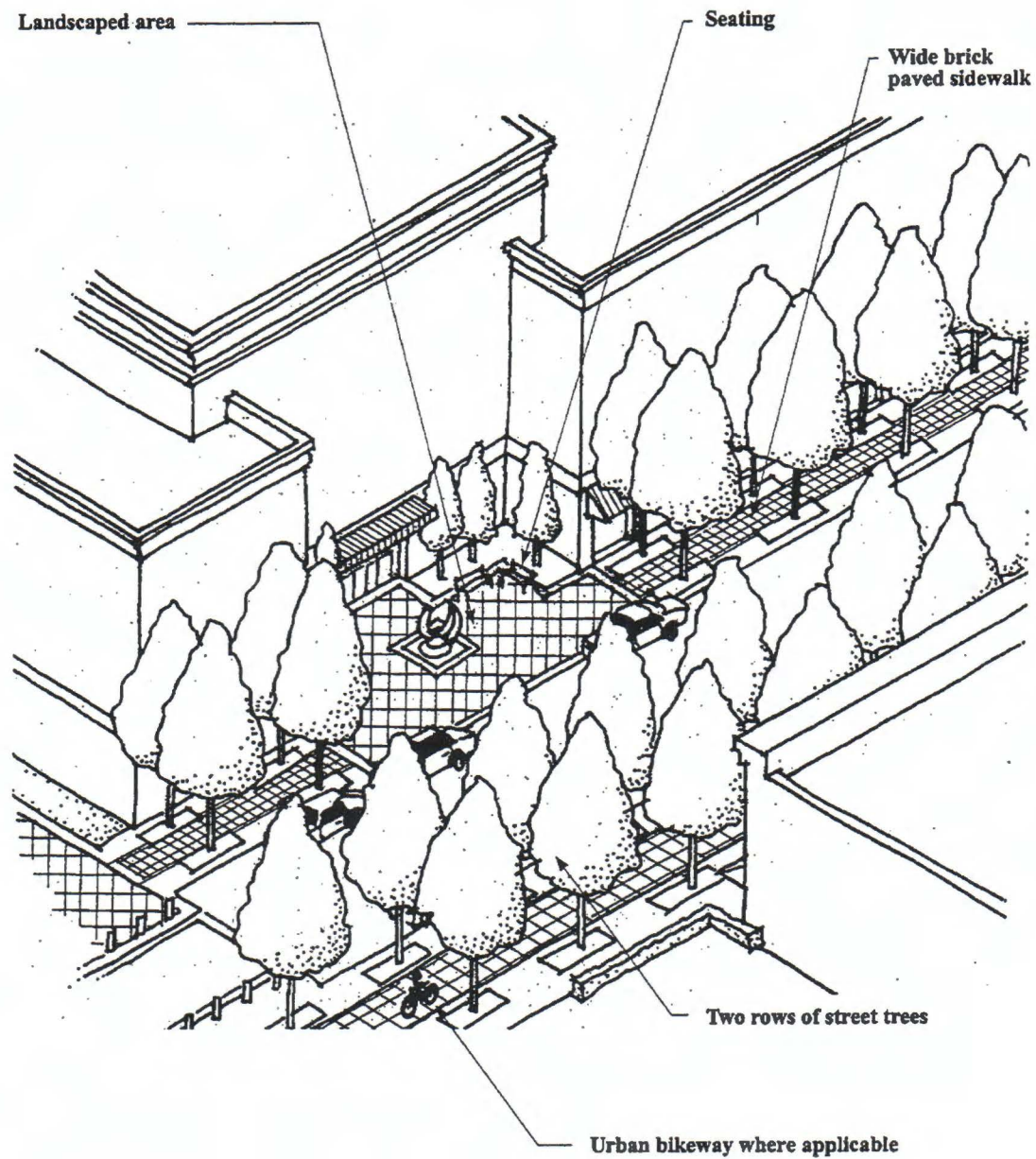
TRANSIT CENTER

The Silver Spring Metrorail Station will become part of a true transportation center and a gateway to downtown. The redesigned station will incorporate and connect bus, taxi, and local and regional rail service in one pedestrian-friendly facility. Including street-level convenience retail and a landscaped park will make transit a more convenient and attractive option for the CBD's residents, employees, and visitors, and will make the Transit Center a community crossroads and landmark.

The following project guidance is designed to ensure that the Transit Center is accessible to pedestrians and vehicles from all parts of downtown, that it is compatible with adjacent development, and that it contributes to the CBD's revitalization.

- Design and build the Transit Center to:
 - integrate access to all modes of mass transit—Metrorail, MARC, buses, and a future transit line to Bethesda—in one facility on Colesville Road
 - improve pedestrian safety and aesthetics in and around the Center with wide, tree-lined paths and specially paved crosswalks
 - include a street-front retail component facing a tree-lined Colesville Road promenade for the convenience of transit riders and other CBD users
 - meet revitalization goals by incorporating a relocated park, pedestrian and bike connections, and street-fronting retail in a landmark building
 - include direct connections to the Silver Triangle site and to the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail
 - consolidate curb cuts at the triangular corner of Colesville Road and Wayne Avenue

Figure 3 Promenade Streetscape Concept



Promenade streets are landscaped with a double row of trees to create distinct green, linear spaces that incorporate high-quality pedestrian and bike paths.

- minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, ensuring pedestrians equal or greater prominence in the design, and minimize conflict between buses and vehicles on the Transit Center and Silver Triangle sites.

OTHER CORE PROJECTS

- Develop the Lee Block with a mix of uses that could include housing, office, and retail uses. Buildings here should: incorporate street-activating uses, be designed with sensitivity to the historic Montgomery Arms Apartments along Fenton Street, and incorporate the J.C. Penney facade into new development. The remainder of the block should be included in the Silver Spring Historic District evaluation, and be configured to create through-block pedestrian paths.
- Future development on the Apple Avenue site could include a mix of uses that include housing, office, and retail uses. New development should be compatible with surrounding development including existing high-rise residential and office buildings as well as the townhouses at Cameron and Second Streets.
- Redevelopment of the northwest corner of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road should recognize that site's critical visual significance and make safe and attractive connections to the Urban Renewal site and to the Silver Triangle.
- Incorporate a public open space along Fidler Lane from Ramsey Avenue to Second Avenue, and redevelop Fidler Lane as a mixed street or park and as a bike-friendly area.
- Establish the Silver Spring Green Trail through the Core as a defining aesthetic feature, and to link pedestrian and bike routes through the downtown.
- Establish a gateway presence with building design and landscaping at Colesville Road and Cedar Street, and at Colesville Road and East West Highway.
- Review existing signs and develop a way-finding plan including directional and informational signs, identification of gateways and districts, banners, kiosks, graphics, and visual cues to enhance the CBD's image and function.

RIPLEY

The Ripley District's proximity to the Transit Center and other downtown development projects makes it a natural location for spin-off development. The following goals and guidelines should be incorporated into future development in this area.

- Prepare drawings that illustrate development options for the Ripley District.

These drawings will be used by staff to guide and evaluate optional method development proposals. They should explore development patterns; open space as an organizing feature; car, pedestrian, and bike connections to the proposed Transit Center; and a pedestrian/bike connection across the CSX railroad tracks. A bridge to cross the tracks was a condition of the NOAA phase 3 approval. Although escrow money exists, the bridge has not been built because there is no landing on the north side of the tracks. A site for the bridge should be identified when the Ripley District builds out.

- make connections to the proposed Transit Center, the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail, and other CBD facilities and neighborhoods
- incorporate one or more recreational facilities sized and programmed to meet community interests, and that make use of their urban location
- create open spaces designed to form a new image for this neighborhood, and contribute to an improved visual quality along Georgia Avenue.
- Building heights along Georgia Avenue should contribute to an attractive and coherent street.
 - At the building line, limit height to 90 feet, consistent with height limits on the east side of Georgia Avenue (Figure 5).
 - The building may step back and its height may be increased up to 143 feet, provided that the building is contained within a 2:1 slope.
- Building heights along Dixon Avenue and Ripley Street should contribute to an attractive street with adequate light and air.
 - To be in proportion with the 70- to 80-foot street widths, building height should be limited to 80 feet at the property line.
 - Beyond 80 feet, the building may step back and its height may be increased up to 143 feet, provided they are contained within a 2:1 slope.

Figure 4 Georgia Avenue Street Section

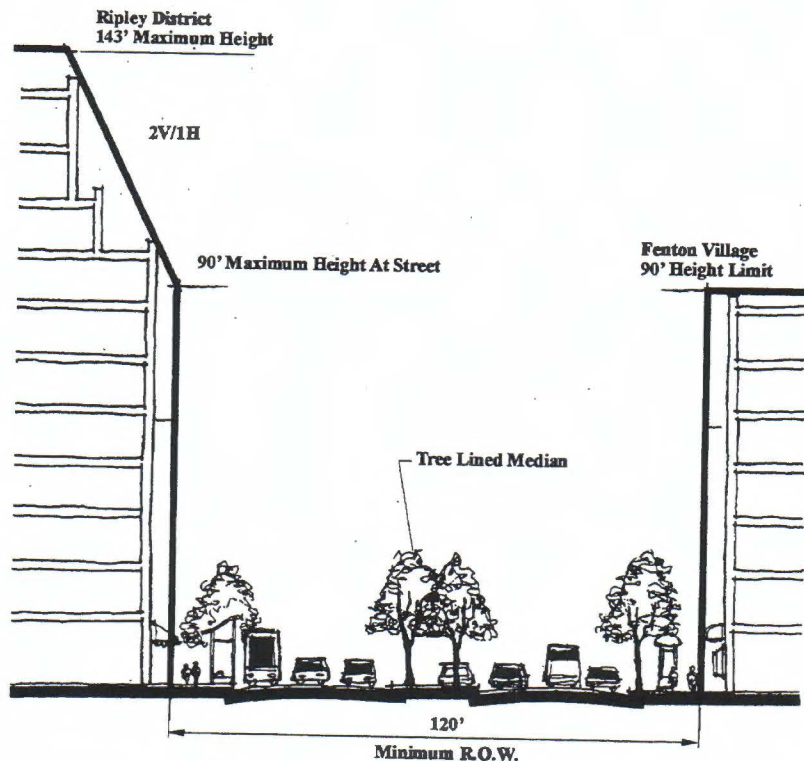
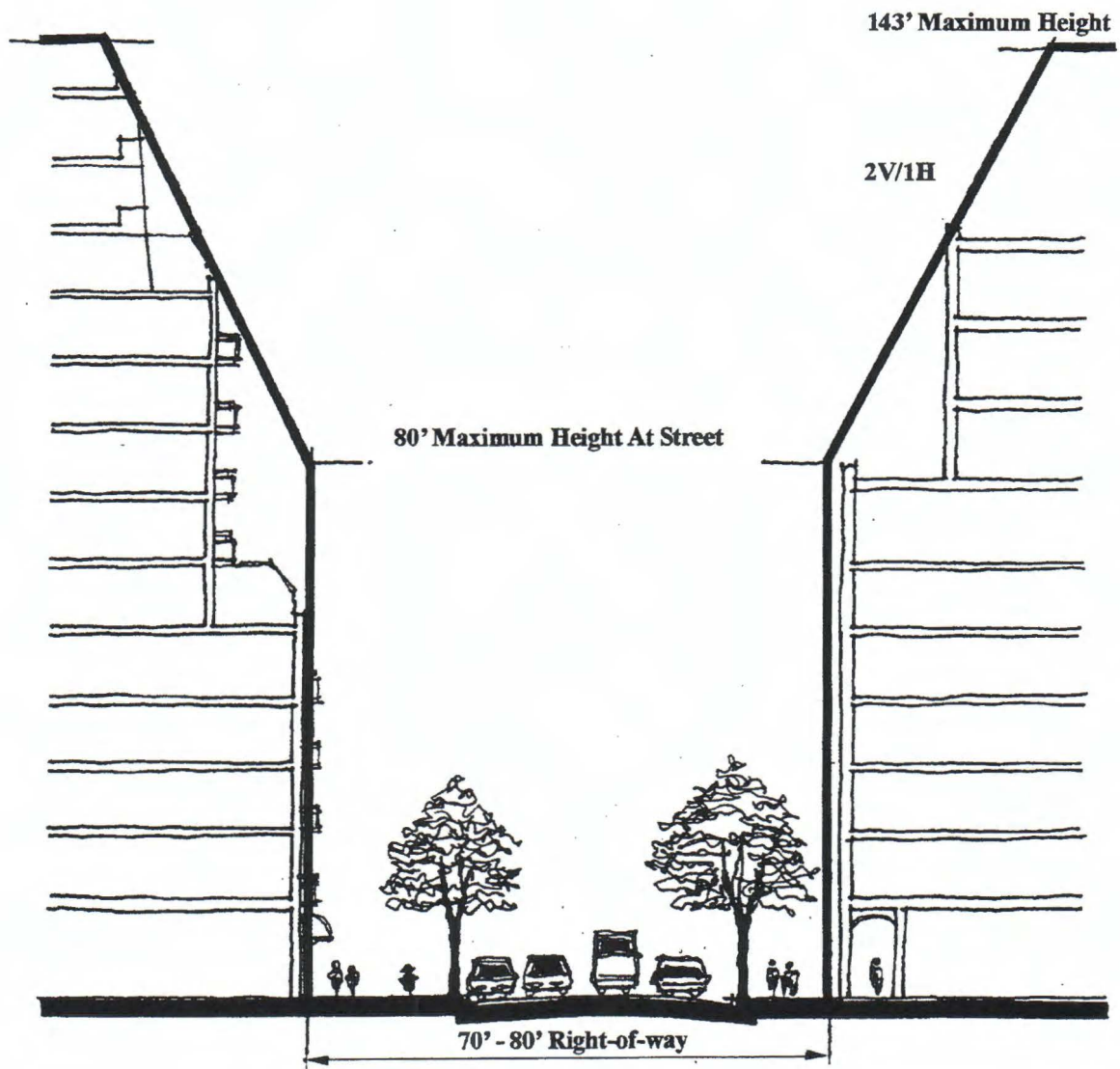


Figure 5 Typical Commercial Street in Ripley District



SOUTH SILVER SPRING

South Silver Spring is the CBD's gateway and offers many opportunities for redevelopment. The following guidelines should be incorporated into redevelopment.

- Prepare studies and drawings that illustrate development options for South Silver Spring

Further efforts to identify and examine revitalization issues and illustrate an urban design vision of the area through drawings and perspective sketches is important in realizing South Silver Spring's potential. These initiative can be used to encourage business relocation to the area and assist staff in evaluating development proposals. It should explore development patterns; open space as an organizing feature; car, pedestrian, and bike connections, as well as potential of adaptive reuse, infill development sites, and site assemblage in the context of market needs and building programs.

- Improve links within South Silver Spring and between South Silver Spring and the Core, the Ripley District, the Transit Station, Montgomery College, and the District of Columbia.
- Building heights along Newell Street and Eastern Avenue should ensure compatibility with the adjacent residential neighborhood.
 - At the property line, building heights should be limited to 45 feet.
 - Above 45 feet, the building may step back 60 feet and its height may increase to 90 feet.
- Building heights along Georgia Avenue should contribute to an attractive and coherent street.
 - At the building line, limit height to 90 feet, consistent with height limits on the east side of Georgia Avenue.
 - Beyond 15 feet, the building may step back and its height may be increased up to 143 feet, provided that the building is contained within a 2:1 slope.
- Building heights along East West Highway should contribute to a coherent and attractive streetscape with adequate light and air.
 - Building heights on the street's west side are limited to 90 feet by the CBD-1 Zone.
 - Building heights on the street's east side can go up to 143 feet, allowed in the CBD-2 Zone, provided that the building height is contained with a 2:1 slope after the initial 90 feet.

Figure 6 South Silver Spring—Eastern Avenue

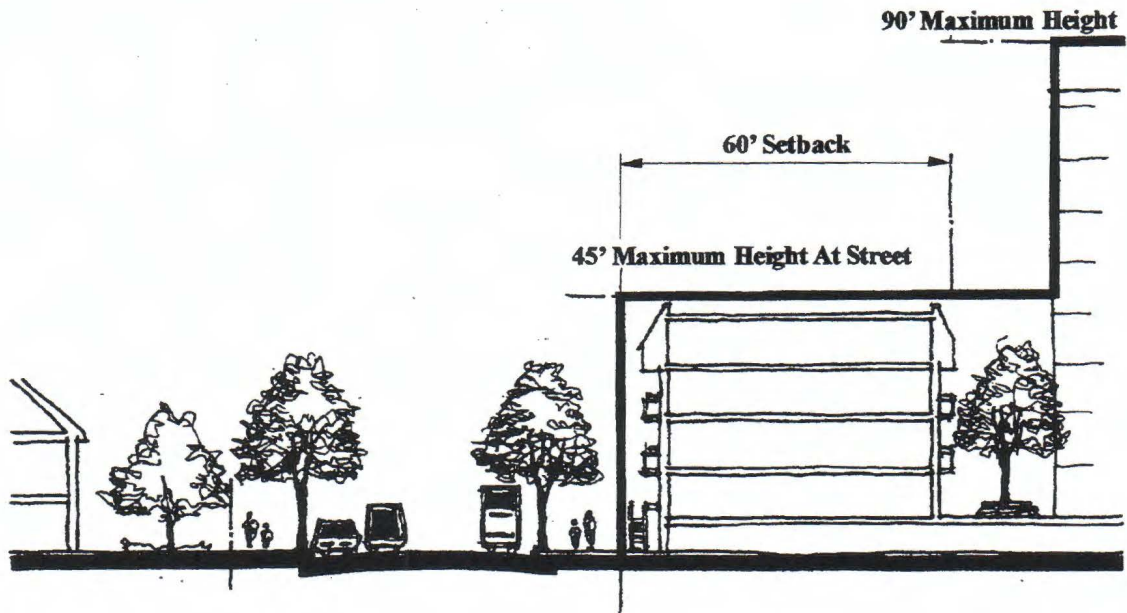


Figure 7 South Silver Spring—East West Highway

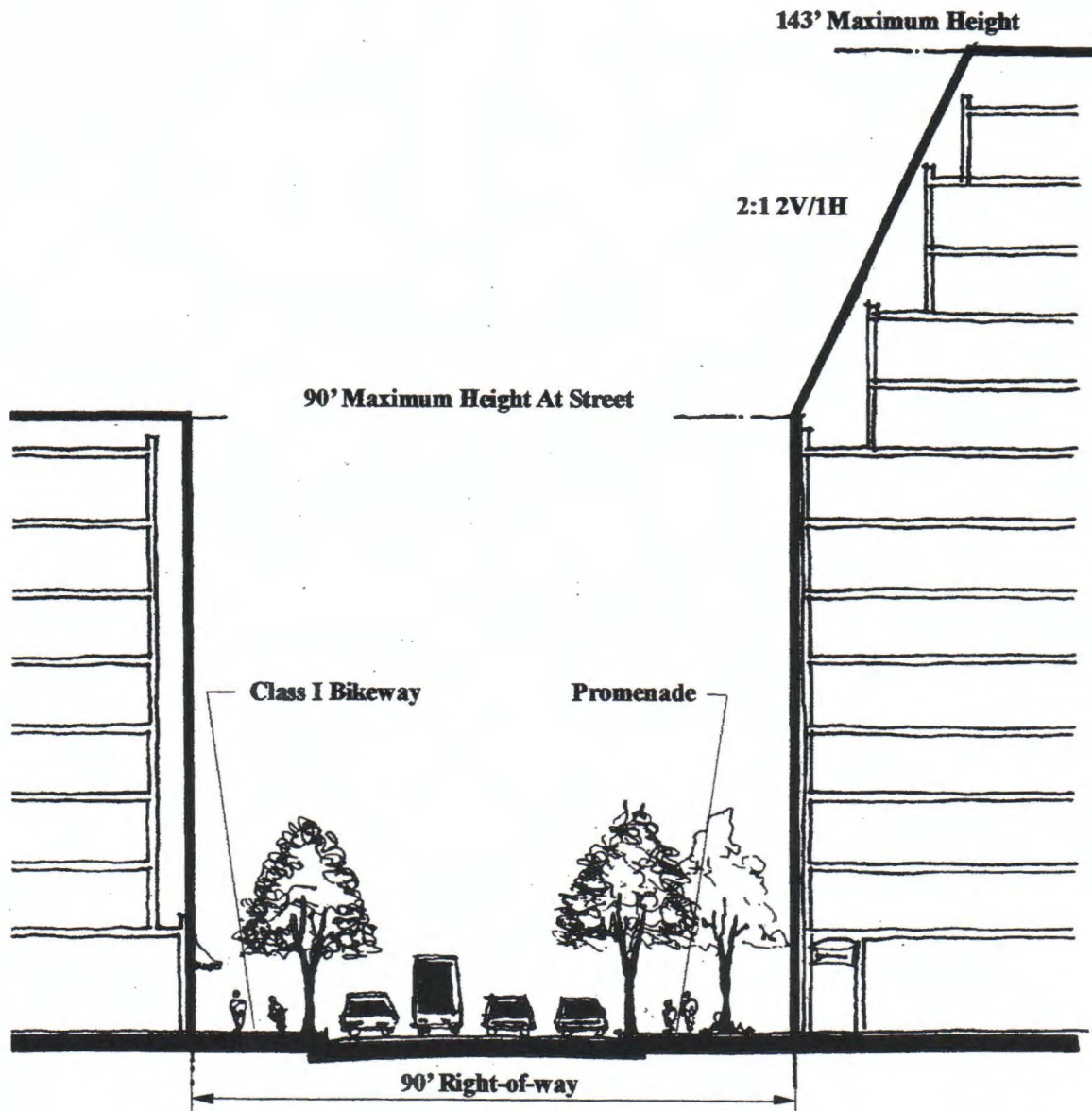


Figure 8 Adopt-a-Block Concept

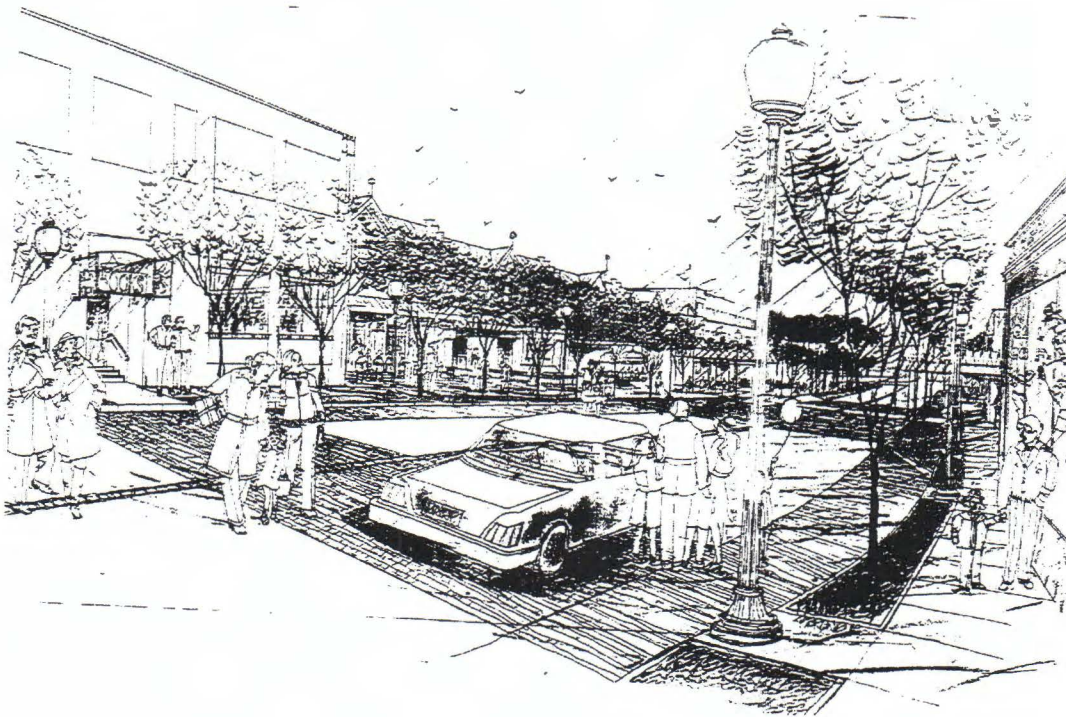
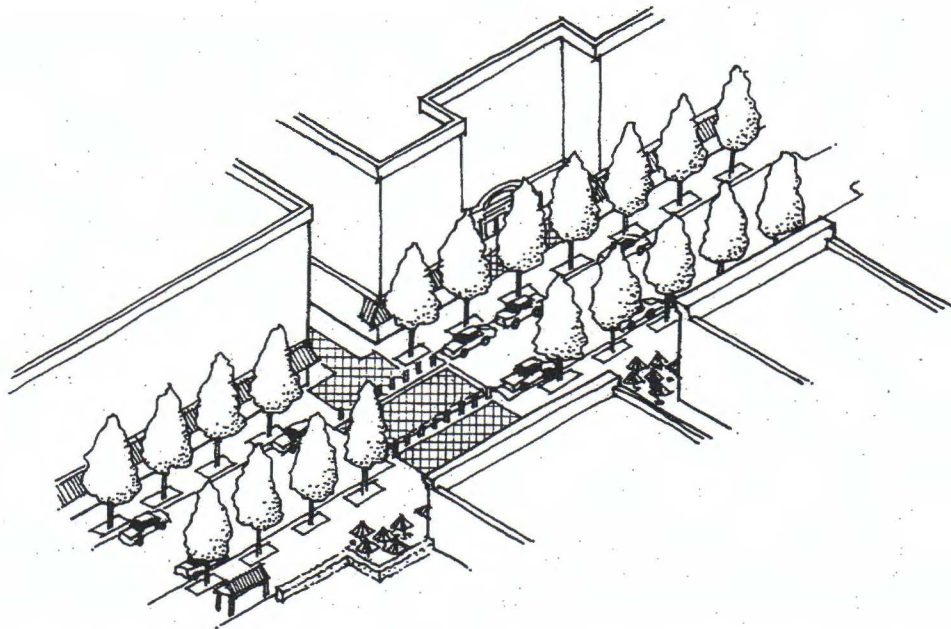


Figure 9 Mixed Street Streetscape Concept



Mixed streets are designed to emphasize pedestrian circulation while allowing for limited, slow auto traffic. Trees, bollards, and street furniture are used to mark the pedestrian domain.

FENTON VILLAGE

With its location between redevelopment on the Urban Renewal site, and residential neighborhoods, redevelopment on and around Fenton Street should create a local retail neighborhood that serves residents and CBD employees.

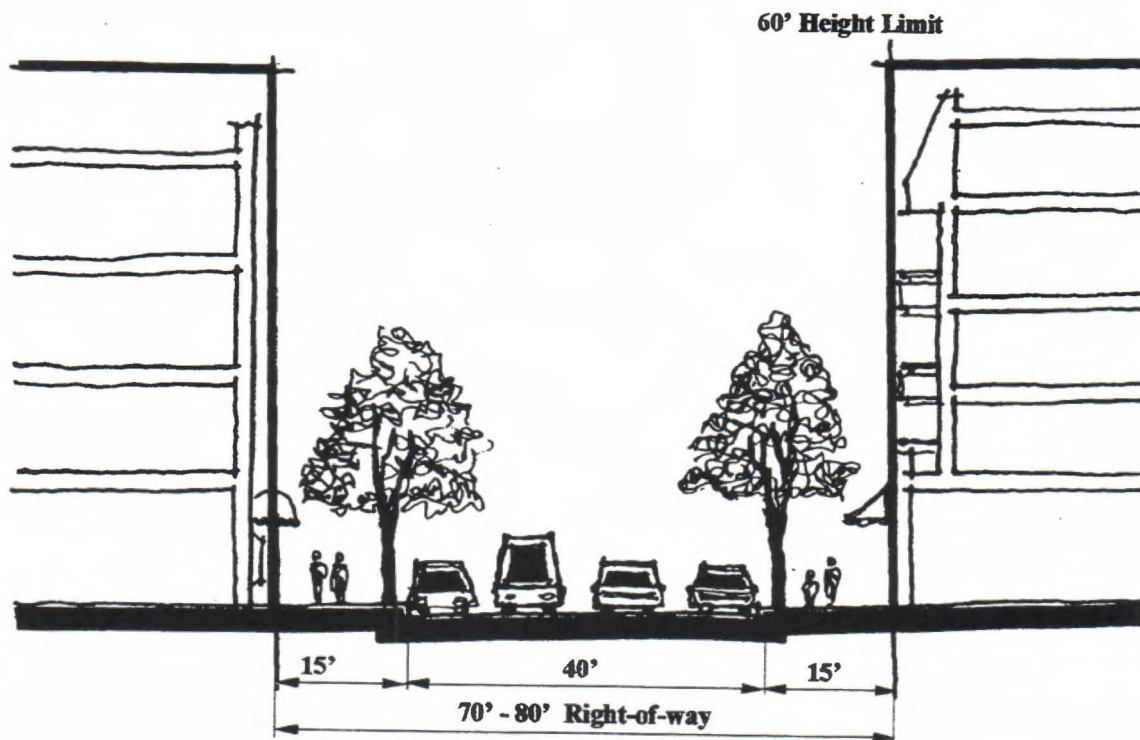
- Prepare studies and drawings that illustrate development options for Fenton Village

Further efforts to identify and examine revitalization issues and illustrate an urban design vision of the area through drawings and perspective sketches are important in realizing Fenton Village's potential. These initiatives should include:

- examining the potential for housing in Fenton Village, particularly in the transition area between the commercial and residential areas. This effort should include input from the adjacent East Silver Spring planning area
- identifying potential commercial and residential development sites and developing conceptual development scenarios
- supporting an Adopt-a-Block program on the two blocks bounded by Wayne Avenue, Fenton Street, Thayer Avenue, and Georgia Avenue
- examining parking demands and the design and configuration of parking lots and garages throughout the area, and suggesting renovations to improve their appearance, safety, and convenience. Options can include improved lighting, signs, and landscaping
- supporting Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) and Main Street recommendations to upgrade the physical appearance of Fenton Street through streetscaping, landscaped parking lots, infill development that helps define the street, and attractive screening of parking and vacant lots to help create a distinctive image, to improve the pedestrian environment, and to encourage private reinvestment. Efforts should include:
 - examining the potential for a mid-block pedestrian connection between Core redevelopment and Fenton Village
 - examining potential reuse and redesign of public parking lots with infill residential or commercial development, or improved landscaping
 - improving links and road alignments within Fenton Village and between Fenton Village and the Core, the Ripley District, the Police Station on Sligo Avenue, the Transit Station, and Montgomery College
 - landscaping the public parking lot between Silver Spring Avenue and Thayer Avenue to include landscaping at Fenton Street, shade trees distributed throughout the lot, seating, special paving, and well-defined pedestrian paths. The lot should be designed to accommodate community events.
 - examining potential for landscaping opportunities throughout Fenton Village.

- Proposed projects should provide efficient, safe, and attractive at-grade pedestrian links within Fenton Village and to the surrounding CBD.
- Projects proposed along the east side of Fenton Street should make a transition between the commercial district and the adjacent single-family homes, creating compatibility through height changes, siting, and green, landscaped buffers.
- Limit building height for new construction fronting along the east side of Georgia Avenue to 90 feet, and 60 feet for remaining properties, interior to the block, to the west of Fenton Street.
- Limit building height for new construction fronting on the east side of Fenton Street to 45 feet for all uses except housing which would be allowed up to 60 feet.

Figure 10 Fenton Village—Typical Street Section



CIRCULATION SYSTEMS

This Plan's recommendation for increased transit-oriented development generally balances land use and transportation capacity, although it recognizes that in an active urban area, some congestion is inevitable.

VISION

Silver Spring's location and transportation options make it a convenient place to live and work. Public and private development should create an integrated system of pedestrian, bike, vehicular, bus, and rail travel.

Objective:

- Create a connected system of transportation options that provides travel choice and supports downtown redevelopment by balancing car and pedestrian traffic.

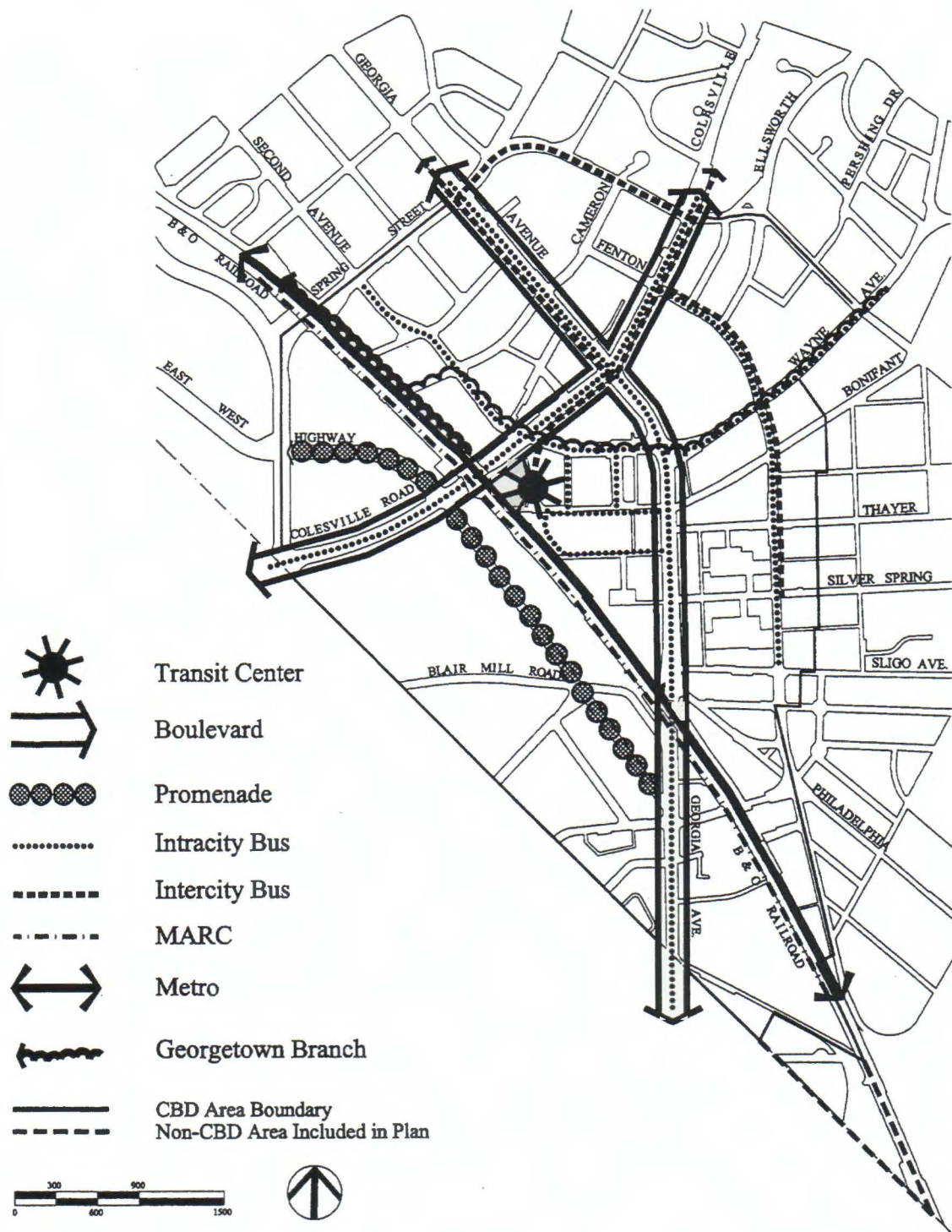
Summary Recommendations:

- Combine regional and local transportation services at the Transit Center, creating a transportation hub.
- Expand Silver Spring's existing Transportation Demand Management program.
- Create a connected system of trails and bike routes.
- Implement streetscape to create a safe and pleasant pedestrian environment.
- Assess, and where appropriate, reuse public parking facilities.
- Make circulation improvements to local roads and reserve rights-of-way where needed.

The Silver Spring CBD is served by a superior multimodal transportation system, resulting from both the CBD's location in the Washington region and investments in local transportation facilities. Silver Spring lies at the northeast edge of the capital city and is formed around the intersection of two commuter routes: Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road. Silver Spring's easy access to the Beltway, Metrorail and MARC train stations, and extensive bike routes make it a strategic location in the regional transportation system (Map 30).

Silver Spring's location within the regional transportation network has enhanced the CBD as a transportation hub and accelerated its development as an urban community. Environmental concerns, Smart Growth legislation, and increased suburban congestion have turned investment interest to redeveloping older inside-the-Beltway downtowns. In Montgomery County, Bethesda and Friendship Heights have also redeveloped around their Metro stations.

Map 30 CBD Multimodal Transportation System



Silver Spring has continued potential for redevelopment. The land use recommendations in this Plan focus density around the Transit Center to create an active community that will be well-served by transit, bikeways, sidewalks, and supporting facilities.

Circulation System Overview

- Travel demand changes will be affected by both CBD and regional growth.
 - Accessible transit is essential in managing travel demand.
 - Transportation demand management, improved traffic signalization, and road improvements will enable CBD intersections to operate at acceptable levels of service.
 - Analysis of forecasted land use and travel demand indicates that land use proposals are generally in balance with transportation capacity.
-

This more efficient and economical development pattern is supported by Maryland's Smart Growth initiative, which provides financial support for development that creates livable and varied communities using existing transportation infrastructure.

This Plan's transportation recommendations are intended to integrate Silver Spring's many travel options into the regional transportation network while retaining community convenience and aesthetics. Combined with the land use recommendations, the transportation recommendations will maximize the potential for transit use, taking full advantage of the extensive public investment in this infrastructure.

EXISTING RESOURCES

Public Transportation

As the hub for local and regional bus and rail service, Silver Spring is well-served by transit. Public transportation is also well used in the CBD, with 57,000 bus and rail boardings and alightings daily. About 37 percent of CBD office workers use transit to travel to work.

While recent COG studies show an overall reduction in regional transit use, the percentage of CBD employees using transit has been increasing steadily during the past decade. That the Silver Spring CBD is bucking the regional trend is testimony to the success of recent land use and transportation planning decisions. The desire to maintain the high levels of CBD transit use, despite regional trends, is the basis behind this Plan's recommendations to further improve transit accessibility.

Transportation Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies are intended to help reduce the percentage of peak hour (or peak period) travel by motorists driving alone. Localized strategies, such as ridesharing, reduced transportation costs (subsidies or reduced parking costs for car and van pools), transit use subsidies, better transit accessibility (shelters, sidewalks, trails, bike racks at transit stations), and pedestrian-friendly design of buildings all contribute to meeting regional vehicle trip reduction goals and to the Plan's revitalization goals.

The Silver Spring Transportation Management District (TMD) is a county-administered organization that disseminates information on alternative commuting modes, maintains match lists for potential ridesharing participants, and monitors travel patterns within the CBD. The TMD uses both field data and employee surveys to monitor performance measures described in the Annual Growth Policy (AGP). The primary measure of TMD activities in the Silver Spring CBD is the extent to which office workers in the CBD use means of travel other than driving an automobile to commute. Consistent with the goals in the AGP, the goal of this Sector Plan is to achieve a combination of transit use, ridesharing, bicycling, and walking so that no more than 50 percent of CBD employees in new development drive to work. (Additional goals are contained in the AGP.) As described in the TMD Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1997, about 60 percent of CBD employees currently drive to work.

Bikeways and Trails

Silver Spring will be served by a network of bikeways and trails. Some bikeways and trails have been completed, others are identified in the 1978 Master Plan of Bikeways, as amended, and in the Countywide Park Trails Plan. This mix of on- and off-street bikeways making local and regional connections provides a transportation alternative and an increasingly popular commuting and recreation facility through and within the CBD.

The 1994 COG household travel survey noted an increase in bicycle commuting, the Washington Area Bicyclists Association has noted that area trails are becoming more crowded, and the Park and Planning Department has counted upwards of 300 users per hour on completed sections of the Capital Crescent Trail, which serves as a commuter route and as a popular recreational trail.

Analysis of travel into and within the CBD indicates that pedestrians and bicyclists comprise 5 percent of home-to-work trips. Improved local and regional connections (routes and trails intersecting with other routes and trails) and accessibility (pedestrian-bicyclist friendly design, storage, showers, etc.) will increase this percentage or, at the very least, help it remain constant in the growing travel demand anticipated by revitalization development.

Pedestrian Circulation

While the CBD is well-served by sidewalks, crossing many streets can be challenging. High traffic volumes, permitted right turns on red lights at some intersections, and the lack of medians or other refuge areas all create pedestrian impediments. Crosswalk improvements are needed in the CBD to improve direct pedestrian connections throughout the downtown.

Parking

The CBD is well-served by public and private parking lots and garages. The existing 11,200 public parking spaces are located in 13 garages and lots around the CBD. Surveys by the County's Transportation Management District indicate that average mid-day occupancy of long-term, off-street spaces was 50 percent during 1998. The most heavily-used parking facilities are in the Core and Ripley Districts.

Through the county's AGP, the County Council capped the number of parking spaces at 90 percent of estimated need, tying demand to development and encouraging use of transit. (Currently there is a parking constraint of 17,500 public and private long-term, non-residential spaces in the AGP.) Development projects are proposed on some parking lots in the CBD, and other development projects will generate traffic. The development recommended in this Plan can be supported within AGP restrictions. Parking demand will be re-evaluated after these development projects are completed.

On-street, off-peak parking should be considered, where there are no safety conflicts, along major arteries in the CBD to encourage convenient stops at area businesses and to buffer pedestrians along busy thoroughfares.

Neighborhood Protection

The CBD is surrounded by residential neighborhoods with lightly traveled streets, many without sidewalks, some with curbside parking. Increased congestion along major routes into and out of the CBD encourages many motorists to find alternate routes, often through these residential neighborhoods. To combat commuter traffic on local streets, the County Executive has instituted a policy to reduce operating speeds by installing speed humps, traffic circles, all-way stop signs, and other impediments to discourage cut-through commuter traffic. This Plan supports continuing those efforts.

Roads

The Silver Spring CBD circulation plan emphasizes incentives to maximize transit use and thereby reduce the reliance on auto travel. Even when this objective is achieved, more than half of the commuters to CBD offices will drive a car to work. Maintaining an efficient roadway network to serve auto and bus travel is therefore critical to the success of the CBD.

This Plan recognizes, however, that greater traffic congestion will occur in the CBD than in the suburban areas of Montgomery County. The approved Annual Growth Policy defines an acceptable level of service (LOS) for the CBD as one that reflects greater traffic volumes than in the surrounding areas, largely because the extensive public transportation in the CBD offers drivers an alternative to the use of their cars. Based on this standard, most of the intersections in the CBD operate at an acceptable LOS. Furthermore, these intersections will continue to operate at an acceptable LOS given projected development activity in the CBD.

To accommodate both local and regional vehicular traffic, the Plan recommends a road system that balances land use and transportation needs. The Plan relies on the roadway classification system used by County and State highway officials to define roadway standards and the ultimate number of lanes. The road classifications include: Major Highway, Arterial, and Primary Residential roadways. The Master Plan designates rights-of-way to reserve land needed for road improvements.

The roadway network serving the Silver Spring CBD has three components: circulation within the CBD, portals at its boundary, and the arterial roadway network in adjacent master plan areas which connects the CBD to regional highways such as the Capital Beltway. All three of these components must function together and the Plan includes recommended improvements to the first two types of roadway systems. Improvements which might be considered in adjacent master plan areas are addressed in the plans for those areas.

Effect of Planned Development

The objective of the Circulation System plan is to accommodate the level of travel activity generated by Sector Plan development. Figure 1 compares the current levels of housing units and jobs in the CBD with forecast levels from the 1993 Sector Plan and from the current Sector Plan. The current Sector Plan envisions approximately 2,000 additional housing units and 8,000 additional jobs in the CBD. The CBD circulation system needs to be improved to accommodate these anticipated levels of development.

The transportation system needs generated by planned CBD development were evaluated using a travel demand forecasting process. The process and its results are described in detail in the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Transportation and Circulation Report, contained in Appendix B, provided as background material. In summary, the forecasting process found that the transportation impacts of this Plan's proposed land uses are consistent with those proposed in the 1993 Sector Plan, and that the 1993 Plan's land use and transportation demand are generally in balance. As a result, many of the 1993 Plan's recommendations still apply.

Table 1

COMPARISON OF LAND USE SCENARIOS 1993 CBD PLAN WITH PROPOSED CBD FORECAST

Land Use Activity	Unit	CBD Existing	1993 CBD Plan	Evaluated CBD Plan
Households	Dwellings	6070*	1,100	8,100
Office Employment	Jobs		33,000	35,600
Retail Employment	Jobs		7,000	6,400
Industrial Employment	Jobs		2,300	470
Other Employment	Jobs		1,400	3,260
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	Jobs	37,800*	43,700	45,730

* Includes 766 dwellings and 3,207 jobs in the pipeline as of April 1999.

This Plan's travel forecasting analysis assumed the future completion of the Georgetown Branch as a light-rail facility, and recommended that any improvements made to Colesville Road (US 29) not preclude transit in that corridor.

Through-traffic in the CBD

A cordon line (boundary) analysis of traffic patterns approaching and departing the CBD shows that approximately one-third of peak-hour trips are "through" trips, or those vehicle trips which do not have any origin or destination with the CBD. The Plan's recommended land uses play no role in generating this traffic.

Regional Road Improvements

Regional road improvements being examined by the on-going Capital Beltway Major Investment Study (CBMIS) could also affect Silver Spring. The Study considers various light and heavy rail options, including above- and below-ground routes to extend transit service as alternatives to widening the Beltway. This Sector Plan's proposed land uses and transportation network do not preclude any of the transit modes or alignment proposed in the CBMIS. (The CBMIS is in a very preliminary stage. No land use, public facility, or transportation network decisions have been made based on any of its analyses.)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are intended to develop a user-friendly, interconnected transportation system that offers travel options, supports downtown redevelopment, and serves local businesses and residents.

These recommendations will be undertaken using a variety of funding sources and through public and private efforts. The County's zoning code, and the mandatory referral, development review, and capital improvements processes will also present opportunities for implementation.

The following paragraphs describe the intent of each circulation system component and the primary facilities and services recommended.

Public Transportation

Develop an enhanced, inter-modal public transportation system to serve both CBD residents and workers as well as those transferring between transit services.

The Silver Spring Transit Center will serve as a focus for public transportation services in the CBD, linking regional rail, local rail, local bus, intercity bus, taxi, pedestrian, and bicycle options. The Transit Center should be a downtown landmark and a gateway to Silver Spring, particularly the surrounding development in the Urban Renewal area, including the Silver Triangle and Ripley District.

- Design and construct the Transit Center as a pedestrian-friendly, landmark facility connecting riders with MARC, Metrorail, Metrobus, Ride-On bus, inter-city bus, future Georgetown Branch service, taxi, bicycle, and pedestrian options. Ensure that the early design stages include citizen input and resolve potential conflicts between alternative modes of travel.
- Improve accessibility to transit and bikeways via sidewalk connections, bus shelters, bike racks, and similar facilities.

- Provide for a fixed-guideway transit service along the Georgetown Branch and Metropolitan Branch rights-of-way between Silver Spring and Bethesda.

The Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study being conducted by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is reviewing the feasibility of fixed-guideway transit and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities to serve the regional circumferential travel through areas of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties served by the Capital Beltway. The MDOT study will include a sketch-level review of several alternative routes for a new circumferential light rail or Metrorail transit route, commonly described in the aggregate as the "Purple Line." Some of the alternatives incorporate the Georgetown Branch Trolley/Trail alignment between the Bethesda and Silver Spring central business districts, include the Silver Spring Transit Center Station, and continue north or east towards Four Corners or Takoma Park.

The Sector Plan fully supports the implementation of transit service along the Georgetown Branch alignment between Bethesda and Silver Spring. The feasibility assessment of other fixed-guideway transit connections within the CBD has not yet been established. This Plan does not preclude the concept of continuing circumferential rail transit from the Silver Spring Transit Center north or east, should the MDOT study determine that such service would be both desirable and feasible from a regional perspective. In that case however, this Sector Plan should be revisited to consider any changes to right-of-way or easement acquisition, land use, design, and zoning recommendations.

Transportation Demand Management

Support ways to expand Silver Spring's existing Transportation Demand Management program.

Trails and Bikeways

Create a high quality system of direct and continuous trails and bikeways for the CBD.

Silver Spring will be served by a network of local and regional bikeways and trails that provide for both transportation and recreation. Trails are combined bike and pedestrian facilities. The Plan recommendations seek to create a high quality system of direct and continuous trails and bikeways for the CBD, with the understanding that while some can be constructed in the near term, others are long term projects. In creating this connected system, safety and a good experience are paramount design goals. This Sector Plan places a strong emphasis on providing continuous separation of pedestrians and bicyclists on the regional trails. Support facilities such as bike racks/lockers and rental services should also be provided.

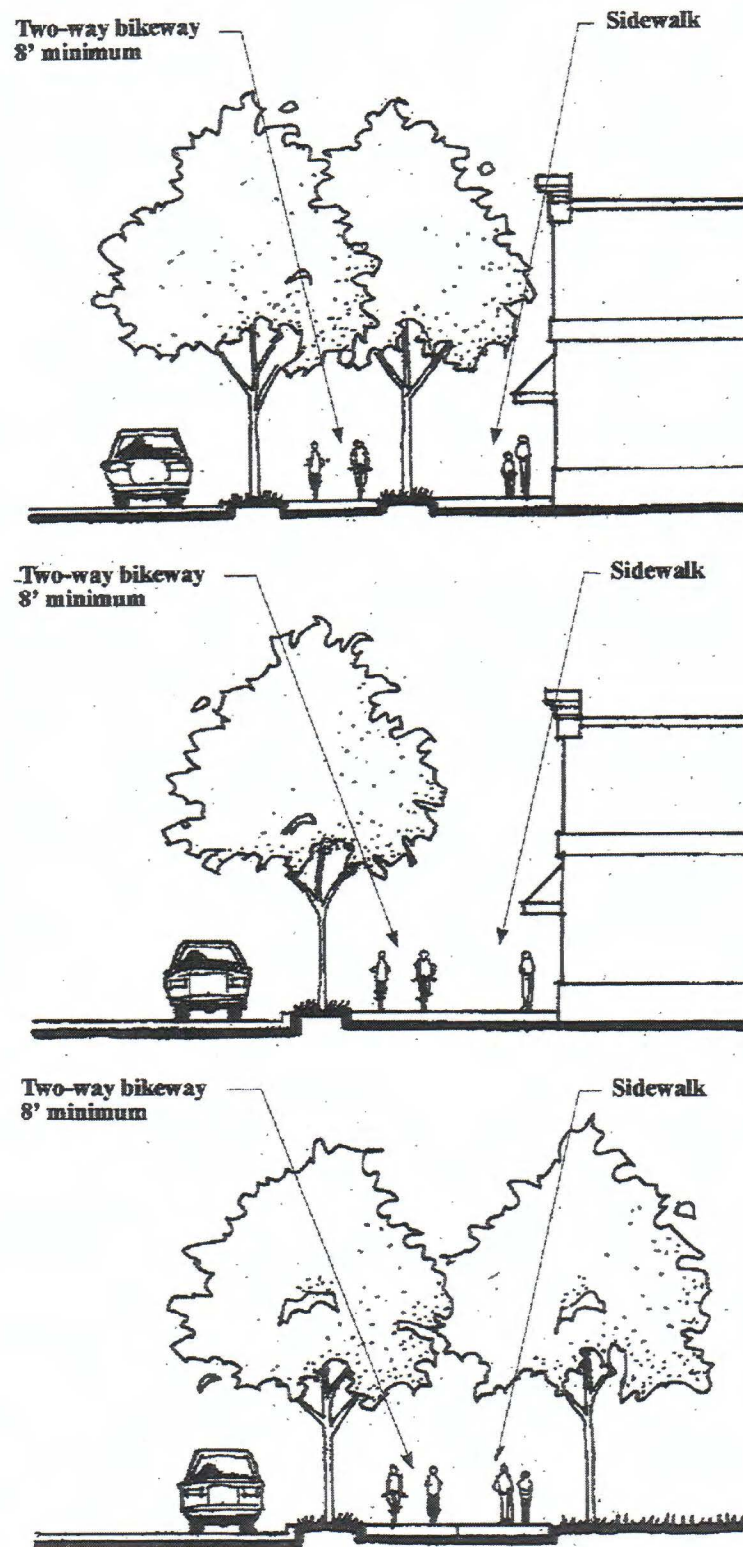
A major regional trail, the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail will run through the Silver Spring CBD along an active rail line. In the future, this trail will be a loop connecting the downtowns of Bethesda and Silver Spring with Washington DC (Map 31).

There will also be an important regional connector trail, the park-like Silver Spring Green Trail. It will link two regional park trails: Sligo Creek Park and Rock Creek Park. Two key destinations on this connector are the Transit Center and the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail. Another such trail will connect Montgomery College and the City of Takoma Park with Rock Creek Park.

Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail Guidance

- The Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail should be a direct and continuous off-road trail for pedestrians and bicyclists parallel to the proposed Georgetown Branch Transitway and the Metro Red Line in the CBD. Additional rights-of-way or easements are necessary to complete the trail. Several issues concerning exact trail alignment where there are site constraints will be addressed during facility planning.
- Design of the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail should consider aesthetics, comfort, visibility, compatibility, safety, and accessibility. Opportunities to understand the community's setting could be achieved through the use of vistas and signs to inform trail users about areas of interest along the way.
- The trail and transitway should be adequately separated. The trail design should provide for adequate space between the trail and the Georgetown Branch Transitway, landscaping, attractive fences and walls, and rest areas (Figure 11). The recommended right-of-way/easement is 35 feet to accommodate both cyclists and pedestrians. This right-of-way may be reduced to 20 feet in constrained locations where the pedestrians follow a slightly different alignment and only cyclists are accommodated.
- The trail should cross Colesville Road on a bridge and go through the Transit Center, preferably separated from conflicting pedestrian movements. A bike stop should be provided in the Transit Center with lockers, bike rental services, and amenities for trail and transit users. Provision must be made for those trail users who are destined for the Transit Center and those who are passing through it.
- The Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail should connect safely to the Silver Spring Green Trail and to nearby regional trails. It should also connect to local bikeways and other destinations of interest.
- A future concept study of the Ripley District, or a trail facility plan, should include specific recommendations for the trail route and bikeway connections which address Progress Place, possible combinations with future open spaces, and options for locating the Trail along streets generally parallel to the rail line rather than right next to it. While the continuation of the Metropolitan Branch Trail through the CSX site is desirable, site constraints may necessitate a different configuration. However, good connections must be provided at each end to ensure continuity of the bikeway.

Figure 11 Urban Bikeway—Typical Sections



- The trail recommendations for the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail made in the Georgetown Branch Master Plan are confirmed by this Plan. Any interim trail installed before the Georgetown Branch Transitway should not compromise the future combined transitway/trail.
- Safe trail crossings of roads and railways should be provided. Recommended grade-separated trail crossings are shown in Map 32.

The Silver Spring Green Trail Guidance

- This Plan recommends a park-like trail with a tree next to the curb, a two-way bike path, a sidewalk, and additional landscaping, including a second row of trees (Figure 11). The trail design should also include safe bike and pedestrians crossings of all intersections, including consideration for special paving and raised crosswalks.
- Safe access to the Transit Center must be provided.
- The intersection of Colesville Road and Wayne Avenue should be studied for safe, efficient and convenient crossings—including consideration of a bridge over Wayne Avenue—that links pedestrians and bicyclists to destinations while providing for an attractive and vibrant urban environment.

Local Trails and Bikeways Guidance

- High quality local trails and bikeways should be provided for bicycle circulation within the CBD for work, school, and recreation with good connections to surrounding neighborhoods and regional destinations such as the Transit Center and Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail and other portions of the network.
- On-road routes should be provided on designated neighborhood streets with little traffic. To establish a bike/pedestrian emphasis, use special features, such as low speed limit, landscaping, and traffic calming. Where road width permits, striped bikeway lanes (Class II) should be provided for added safety.

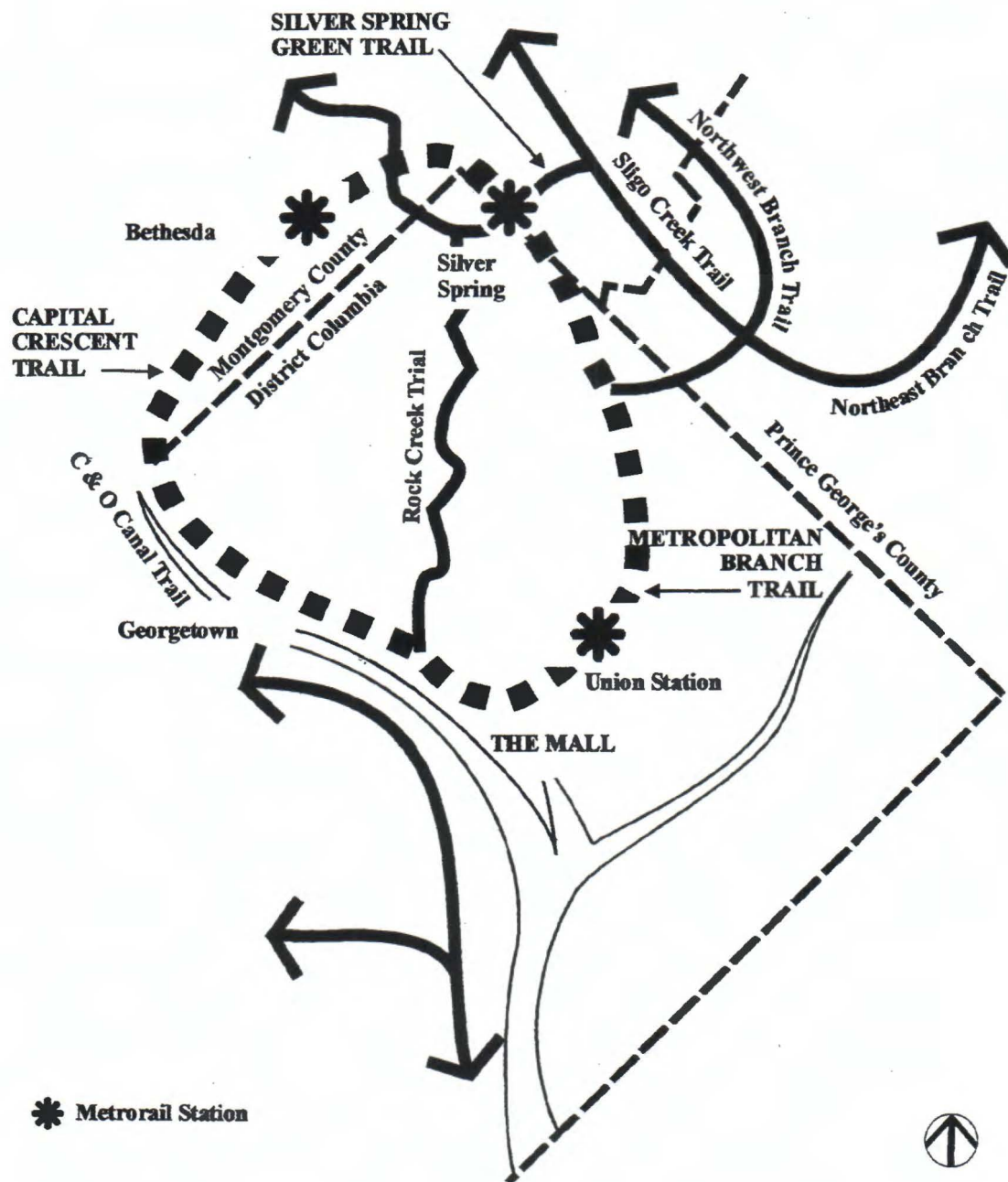
Pedestrian Circulation—Streetscape Concepts

Implement a pedestrian scaled streetscape throughout Silver Spring's CBD.

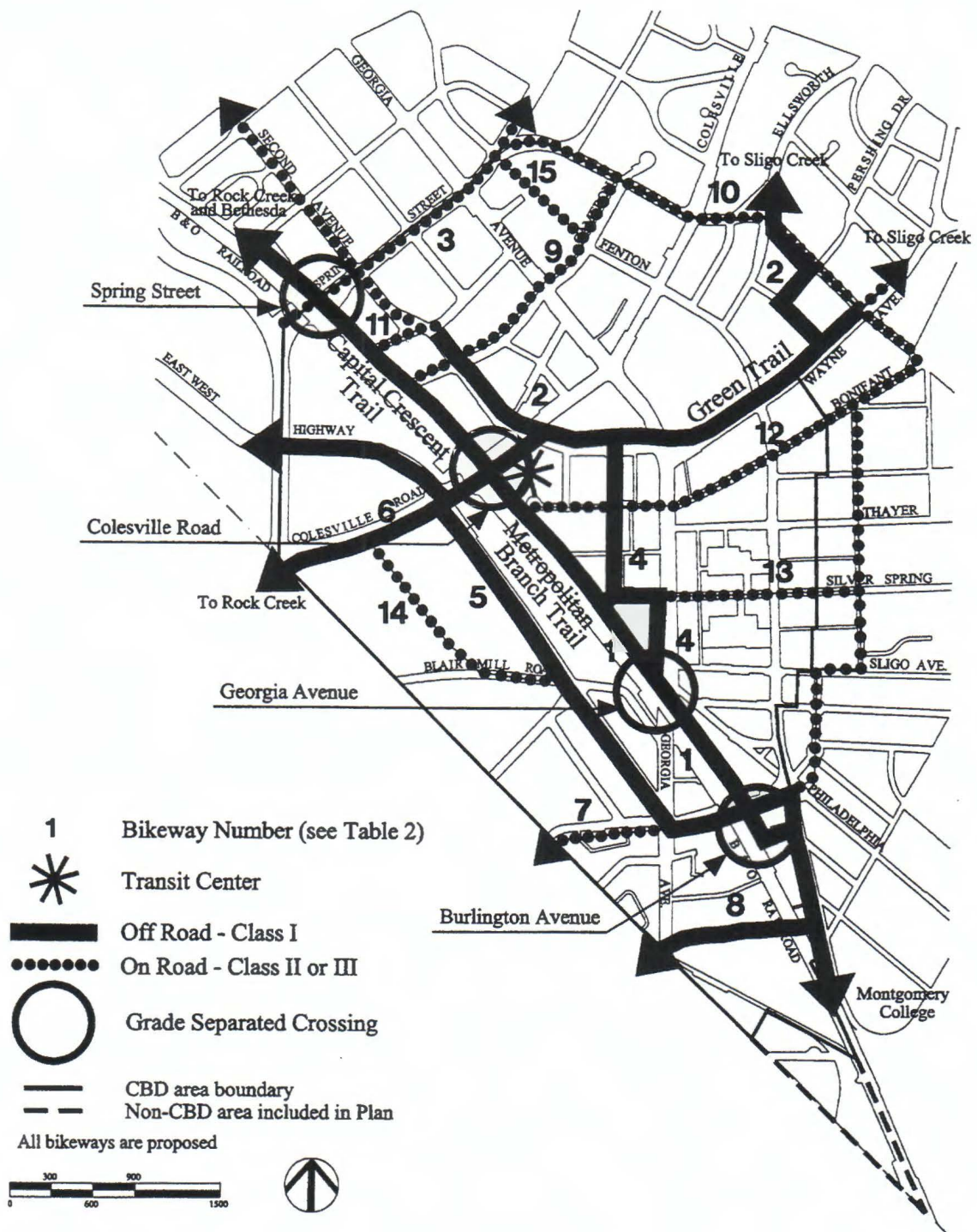
The Plan recommends development of sidewalk and streetscaping treatments that emphasize the hierarchy of the circulation system. The streetscaping treatments envisioned for the CBD are presented graphically in Figures 1-10 and are described below.

The two main thoroughfares in the CBD, Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road, should be considered as urban boulevards. These are the only streets in the CBD with more than two travel lanes in each direction. They have wide sidewalks and crosswalks creating pedestrian scale proportional to the vehicular scale.

Map 31 Regional Bikeway Network



Map 32 CBD Bikeway Network Plan



Portions of Second Avenue, Wayne Avenue, and East West Highway should be considered as promenades, focusing on pedestrian and bicycle movements to and from the Transit Center. Other CBD streets should be considered as green streets and mixed streets to emphasize pedestrian amenities where consistent with adjacent land uses.

- Provide streetscape, crosswalks, and other design features throughout the CBD that emphasize the pedestrian domain, while still moving auto traffic at a reasonable pace.
- Include pedestrian connections.
- Consider operational improvements at signalized intersections, such as right-turn-on-red prohibitions and exclusive pedestrian signal phasing to encourage pedestrian activity.
- Revise the Silver Spring Streetscaping Plan.

Roads

Make local road improvements to improve circulation in and around the CBD.

- Encourage through traffic to travel around the CBD via 16th Street, supporting the use of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road for CBD traffic.
- Examine the need for, and developing conceptual designs for intersection improvements at: Georgia and Wayne Avenues, Wayne Avenue and Cedar Street, Wayne Avenue and Fenton Street.
- Coordinate Fenton Street's realignment with improvements at Montgomery College.
- Coordinate possible improvements at Georgia and Burlington Avenues with improvements at Montgomery College.
- Construct a median for pedestrian refuge on East West Highway between Colesville Road and the entrance to the Blair Shopping Center.
- Construct Dixon Avenue to provide a continuous four-lane undivided roadway within an 80-foot right-of-way between Wayne Avenue and Silver Spring Avenue.
- Extend lane (between Colesville Road and Blair Mill Road) as a proposed new public street with a 60-foot right-of-way. Construction of this improvement as a private street may be considered during the plan approval process if the proposed design would provide greater public benefit.

Table 2

BIKEWAYS: LOCATIONS AND TYPES

ROUTE & MAP KEY	STREET NAME	LOCATION	TYPE
1 Capital Crescent/ Metropolitan Branch(CC/MB) Trail	N/A	Spring St. to King St.	off-road/Class I
	King St.	Rail line to Fenton St.	off-road/Class I
	Fenton St.	King St. to CBD Boundary	off-road/Class I
2 Silver Spring Green Trail Regional Connector	Second Ave./Wayne Ave.	Fenwick Lane to CBD Boundary	off-road/Class I
Silver Spring Green Trail: Ellsworth Link	New Street, Ellsworth Dr., and Cedar	Wayne Ave. at St. Michaels to CBD Boundary (and Sligo Creek Trail)	off-road/Class I
3 Local	Second Ave.	CBD Boundary to Fenwick Lane	on-road
4 Local	Dixon Ave.	Wayne Ave. to Silver Spring Ave.	off-road/Class I
5 Local	East-West Highway	16th St. to Georgia Ave.	off-road/Class I
6 Regional Connector	Colesville Road	Wayne Ave. to CBD Boundary (16 th St.)	off-road/Class I
7 Local	13 th St. Burlington Ave.	Eastern Ave. to Fenton St.	off-road/Class I
8 Local	Jesup Blair Park	CC/MB Trail to Georgia Ave.	off-road/Class I
9 Local	Cameron St. Apple mixed St.	CC/MB Trail to Spring St.	on-road
10 Local	Spring St./Cedar St.	Wayne Ave. to 16 th St.	on-road
11 Local	Fenwick Lane	Second Ave. to CC/MB Trail	on-road
12 Local	Bonifant St.	Cedar St. to CC/MB	on-road
13 Local	Silver Spring Ave.	Georgia Ave. to Grove St.	on-road
14 Local	Draper Lane extended and Blair Mill Road	Colesville Road to East West Highway	on-road
15 Local	Fenton St./Fenton St. extended	Lee Block to Spring St.	on-road

Parking

Work with the County Parking Authority to complete a comprehensive assessment of parking needs in the CBD that includes (Map 33):

- Re-evaluating parking demand after the Urban Renewal Area is 75 percent redeveloped. Parking should be located to conveniently serve businesses and residences, and to encourage transit use.
- Reaffirming the Annual Growth Policy of limiting the number of long-term spaces to help meet the goals of the Transportation Management District. Consider adaptive reuse of parking lots and garages that are no longer needed.

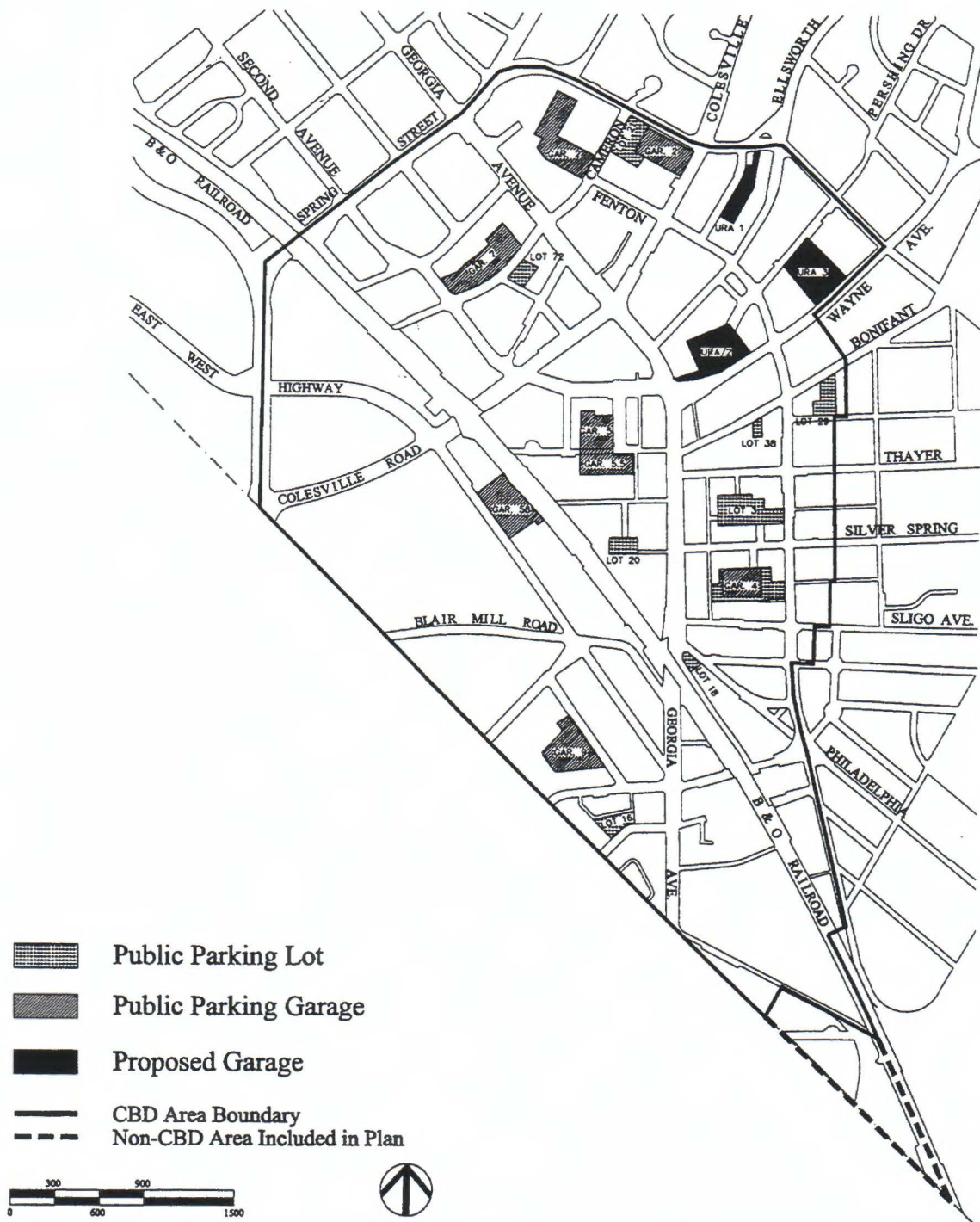
Install on-street, off-peak parking along CBD arteries, to allow convenience shopping stops and to buffer pedestrians. Provisions for parking should be included in conjunction with streetscape improvements.

Public Rights-of-Way

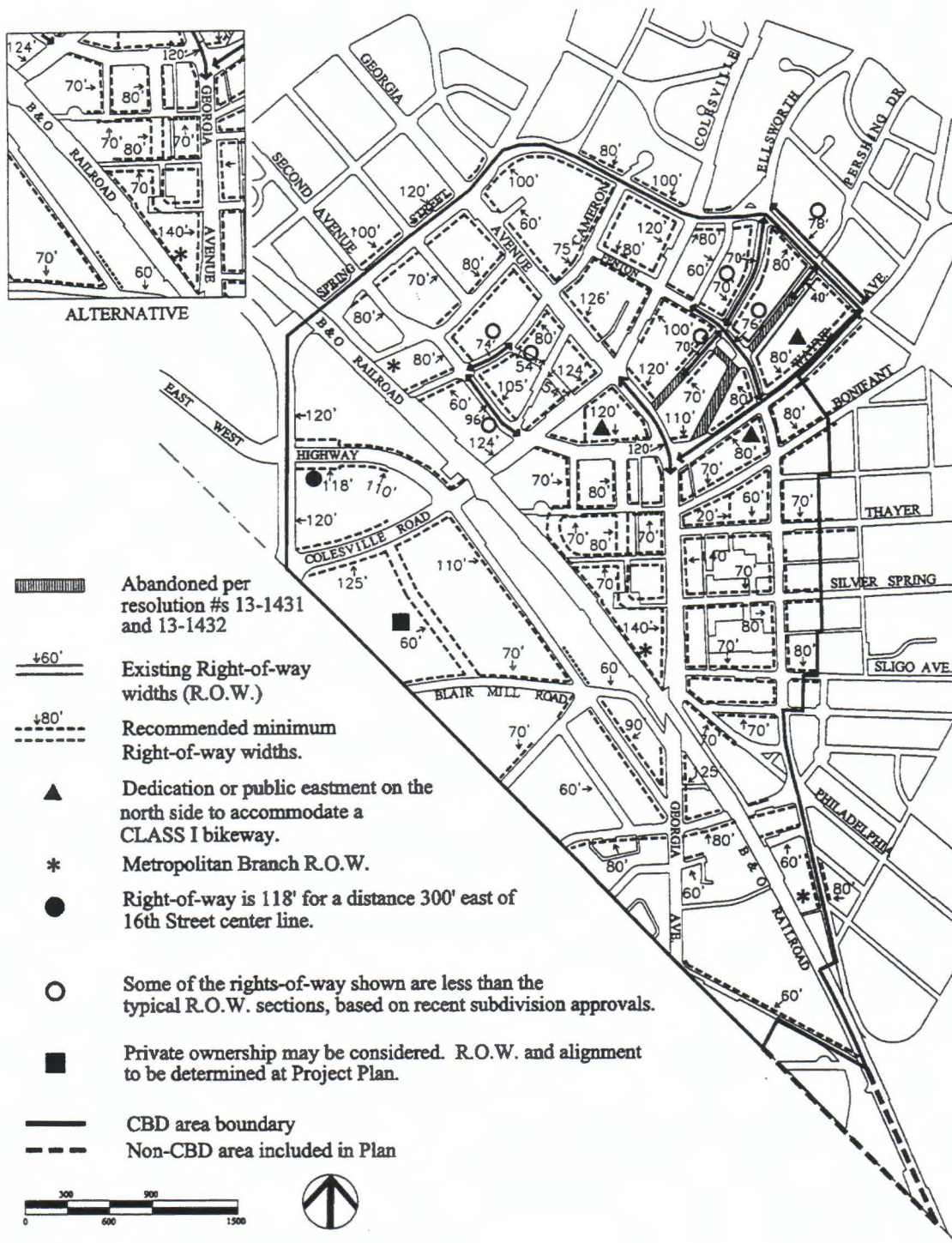
Implement public rights-of-way recommendations.

The width of a road right-of-way helps define its character and ultimate number of lanes. Designating rights-of-way in the Plan reserves land needed for road improvements to accommodate future development. This Plan also provides for the limited relocation, abandonment, and closure of selected public rights-of-way to enhance pedestrian and vehicular circulation and to improve public space (Map 34).

Map 33 Location of County-Owned Parking Facilities



Map 34 CBD Rights-of-Way



HOUSING

This Plan seeks to enhance the established downtown residential community and create new housing options in townhouses and low-rise, high-density apartments.

VISION

Housing in the CBD offers residential options near work, services, and shopping, and creates a natural market for local businesses. The CBD's residents activate streets, parks, and civic spaces. They become a local population with a vested interest in the downtown. CBD housing also supports the State's Smart Growth initiative by rebuilding and enhancing an already established community.

Objective:

- Develop new residential projects to provide housing and encourage maintenance of existing housing, creating Silver Spring as an even more desirable residential market.

Summary Recommendations:

- Provide housing choice and market-feasible development options, including apartments and townhouses.
 - Rezone CBD properties to encourage residential development.
 - Convert selected public sector surface parking lots to housing.
-

Silver Spring's residents are overwhelmingly renters, and the CBD's housing stock is a mix of market rate and affordable high-rise and garden apartments that offer a variety of amenities and convenience to Metrorail and downtown Washington, D.C. Over half of the CBD's residents commute by Metro.

As might be expected given the many apartment options, Silver Spring's residents are mostly young, working people who use and enjoy the amenities of a CBD—shops, parks, restaurants, and proximity to Metrorail. This population will offer important support to new downtown commercial and cultural activity. Apartment living and the proximity of the CBD's transit and service also attract a large senior citizen population.

While both Lenox Park and Alexander House, high-rise apartments recommended by the 1993 Plan, added to Silver Spring's housing stock, high-rise construction is expensive and rental rates do not presently cover construction costs. An examination of the CBD's housing potential found a strong demand for high-rise housing in the CBD, but that construction costs are too high to generate an economic return. The analysis also indicates low-rise, high-density apartment and townhouses could be economically feasible.

This Plan reaffirms the 1993 Plan's goal to create a thriving downtown residential community. Pursuant to this goal, it emphasizes market-based housing forms rather than high-rise construction. Townhouses and low-rise, high-density apartments are specifically encouraged since they are feasible in today's market and

offer size and ownership options to CBD residents (Figure 13, Map 35). At the same time, this Plan retains the potential for high-rise development near the Transit Center over the long-term.

Overall, the Plan seeks to create a downtown with amenities, services, and options that serve current residents, and also serve the surrounding residential neighborhoods. New housing options—townhouses and low-rise, high-density housing—will attract new residents to an activated downtown. The development of new residential projects will also stimulate reinvestment in existing housing, as Silver Spring becomes an even more desirable residential market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Supporting existing housing and creating a diverse housing stock are important components of revitalizing the CBD. This Plan's recommendations seek to create flexible, market-based, residential options for lifestyle, ownership, and location choices. Also, the Plan's streetscape and development recommendations seek to create an attractive and active downtown for new and current residents. The following recommendations should be explored by the appropriate County agencies.

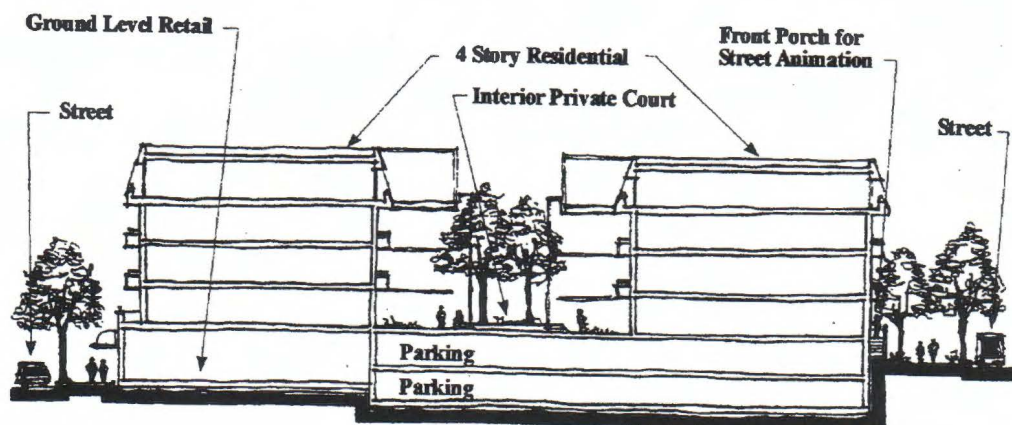
Rezone CBD properties to encourage residential development.

- Rezone CBD-0.5 sites to create additional densities that might be used for desired housing types—townhouses and low-rise, high-density housing in Fenton Village and South Silver Spring. Also, CBD zones include density bonuses for housing.

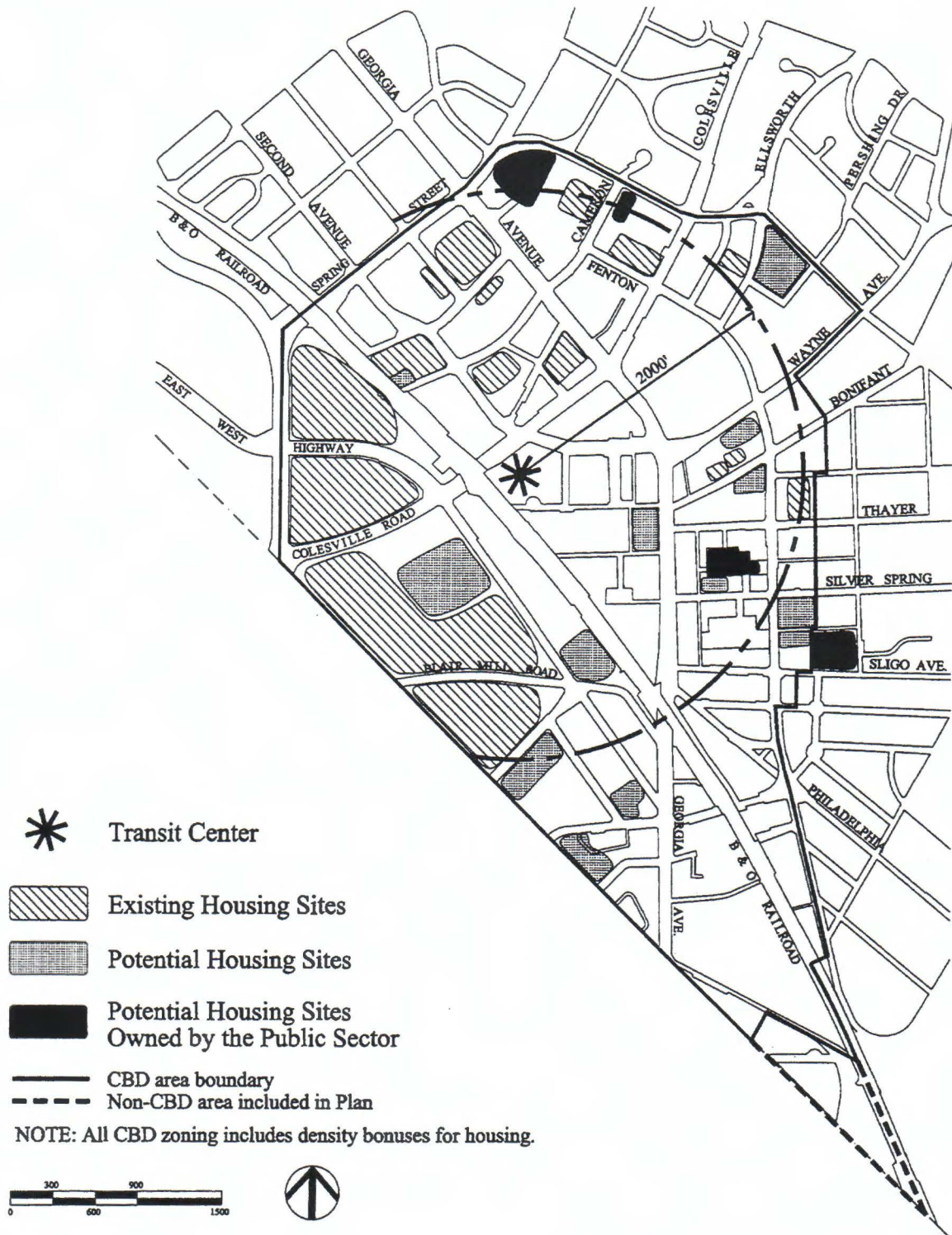
Create housing incentives in the CBD by converting publicly owned surface parking lots to housing.

- Fenton Village Parking Lot #3 on the block bounded by Thayer Avenue, Fenton Street, Silver Spring Avenue, and Georgia Avenue.
- Parking Lot #21 at the corner of Cameron and Spring Streets.
- M-NCPPC surface Parking Lot #2 along Spring Street.
- Conversion of publicly-owned surface parking lots should be preceded by analysis of parking needs and supply.

Figure 12 Low-Rise, High Density Housing Prototype



Map 35 Residential Downtown



COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Both public and private investment in community facilities will contribute to Silver Spring's growing cultural and civic presence. This Sector Plan recommends the strategic siting and programming of community facilities to encourage downtown revitalization.

VISION

A well-rounded downtown is one where people come to live, work, shop, and participate in the community. Public and private efforts to incorporate civic facilities into downtown Silver Spring will make it a more complete community.

Objective:

- Develop public and private community facilities to spur revitalization, provide needed services, and create places and programs where people can participate in the community.

Summary Recommendations:

- Encourage the development of a variety of civic and cultural facilities in Silver Spring's CBD.
 - Renovate the Silver Theatre, Silver Spring Train Station, and Fire Station One for community, cultural, and/or private use.
 - Construct the Town Center Civic Building.
 - Develop a new downtown fire station and courthouse, and eventually, if needed, a new downtown library and police sub-station in central CBD locations.
 - Explore the potential for a downtown public or private farmers market.
 - Develop a connected open space and trail system for active and passive recreation.
 - Introduce special urban recreational facilities to the CBD, including a skateboard park.
 - Establish an off-site transfer of open space mechanism and open space fund alternative.
 - Renovate existing parks: Jesup Blair Park, South Fenton Gateway Park.
-

Public investment in community facilities, including both civic and cultural facilities and parks and open spaces, will send a message to private investors that Montgomery County is committed to Silver Spring's future. Community facilities at the heart of the CBD will serve everyone. The following discussion of community facilities identifies opportunities and makes recommendations intended to accomplish the following objectives:

- Provide adequate community facilities that meet the human service, security, and active and passive recreational needs of residents and employees of the area.
- Provide community facilities that complement and encourage adjacent development.
- Explore opportunities to create a variety of cultural and civic facilities that will contribute to an active downtown.
- Consider ways to support and encourage the creation of civic and cultural facilities through the use of the optional method of development.

At every opportunity, community facilities including the civic and cultural facilities, and the parks, recreation, and open spaces should be viewed as engines of economic development and as investments in Silver Spring's future.

Civic and Cultural Facilities

Civic and cultural facilities are essential elements to the real business of downtown. Successful civic and cultural facilities are central to a community's economic and social life. Silver Spring has the opportunity to become a successful cultural and civic center amid a supportive physical and economic environment.

A number of groups are interested in the arts and social components of downtown Silver Spring, and see a potential for dances, concerts, live performance, and film presentations that coupled with educational components at area schools, library, and the NOAA Science and History Center can create a varied and active downtown.

Community-based cultural facilities would serve the residents and employees, as well as draw visitors from the larger community. Those who come for exhibits, performances, classes, or other events will stay to shop and eat. This combination of activities, commercial and cultural, for-profit and non-profit, can create a mutually supportive and active urban environment. Cultural facilities in Silver Spring can be an integral part of revitalizing the CBD. Silver Spring has a variety of civic and cultural facilities, described below and in Map 36, that can support downtown revitalization.

Montgomery College

Educational facilities bring life, people, and opportunities to downtown. Montgomery College's plan to expand the Takoma Park campus into South Silver Spring is a chance to introduce new and reinvigorated uses to this part of the CBD.

Approved plans expand College buildings along Georgia Avenue and into Jesup Blair Park with improvements to the park and to Blair Road. The concept plan also includes a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the railroad tracks, connecting the expanded campus.

Map 36 Existing and Proposed Community Facilities

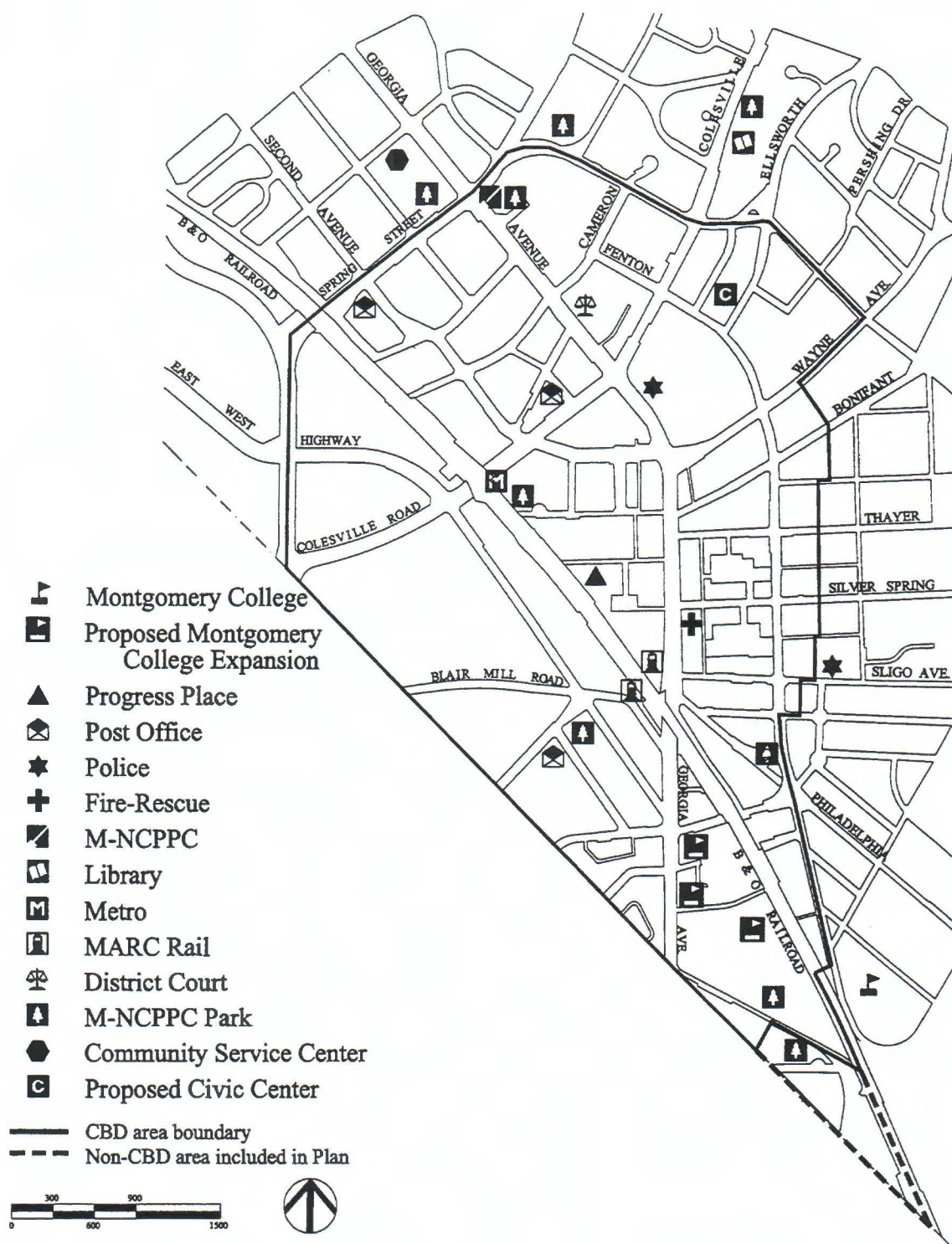


Figure 13 Jesup Blair Park Concept Plan



Improvements will also be made to Blair Road by the State Highway Administration, including repaving, repairing curbs and sidewalks, adding on-street parking, and crosswalks for safe pedestrian access to the park (Figure 13).

Library

The Silver Spring Library is located at 8901 Colesville Road, about one block north of the CBD's Spring Street boundary, next to Ellsworth Park. Silver Spring is also served by a library in East Silver Spring. The closest regional library is located in Wheaton. Though the Silver Spring Library is located near the CBD, it is not a central location and is not a visible downtown community facility. In its semi-suburban location at the edge of the downtown, the library acts as a buffer between commercial CBD development and the adjacent residential neighborhood. This location encourages patrons to drive to the library, and makes it inconvenient to other downtown uses. In this location, the library cannot act as a downtown anchor.

County agencies have noted that a new Silver Spring library in a central, CBD location could be the kind of significant public facility investment that would draw users of all ages downtown. While the Department of Libraries believes that the current library is adequate to serve community needs, both librarians and the community believe its collection and range of services could be expanded. The Libraries' *Strategic Facilities Plan, Fiscal Year 1998-2003* recognizes that "residents value libraries as a community building and focal point." That Plan recommends that library sites be "located near places where the community congregates, which have major traffic arteries, and easy access to public transportation." Locating the library convenient to other public and private downtown activities and near the Transit Center would make it an anchor in downtown's revitalization.

The Department of Public Libraries is currently in the process of defining future library needs and is considering a CBD location for a future library. Locating a library within the CBD could have traffic benefits—consolidating trips—and could contribute to a cultural and educational environment in the downtown. Map 37 shows potential siting opportunities for an urban library in Silver Spring's CBD.

Fire and Rescue Services

Fire Station One, located at 8131 Georgia Avenue, serves the Silver Spring CBD. The building was built in 1914 to house Silver Spring's Armory and was converted into a fire station in 1927. The building was significantly altered with an addition in the 1950s. It has not been evaluated by the Historic Preservation Commission for its historical significance. The building was renovated in 1984, but its size, site, and interior arrangement make further renovation for fire and rescue services impractical. Station One is owned by the Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department. A new station would be owned by the County.

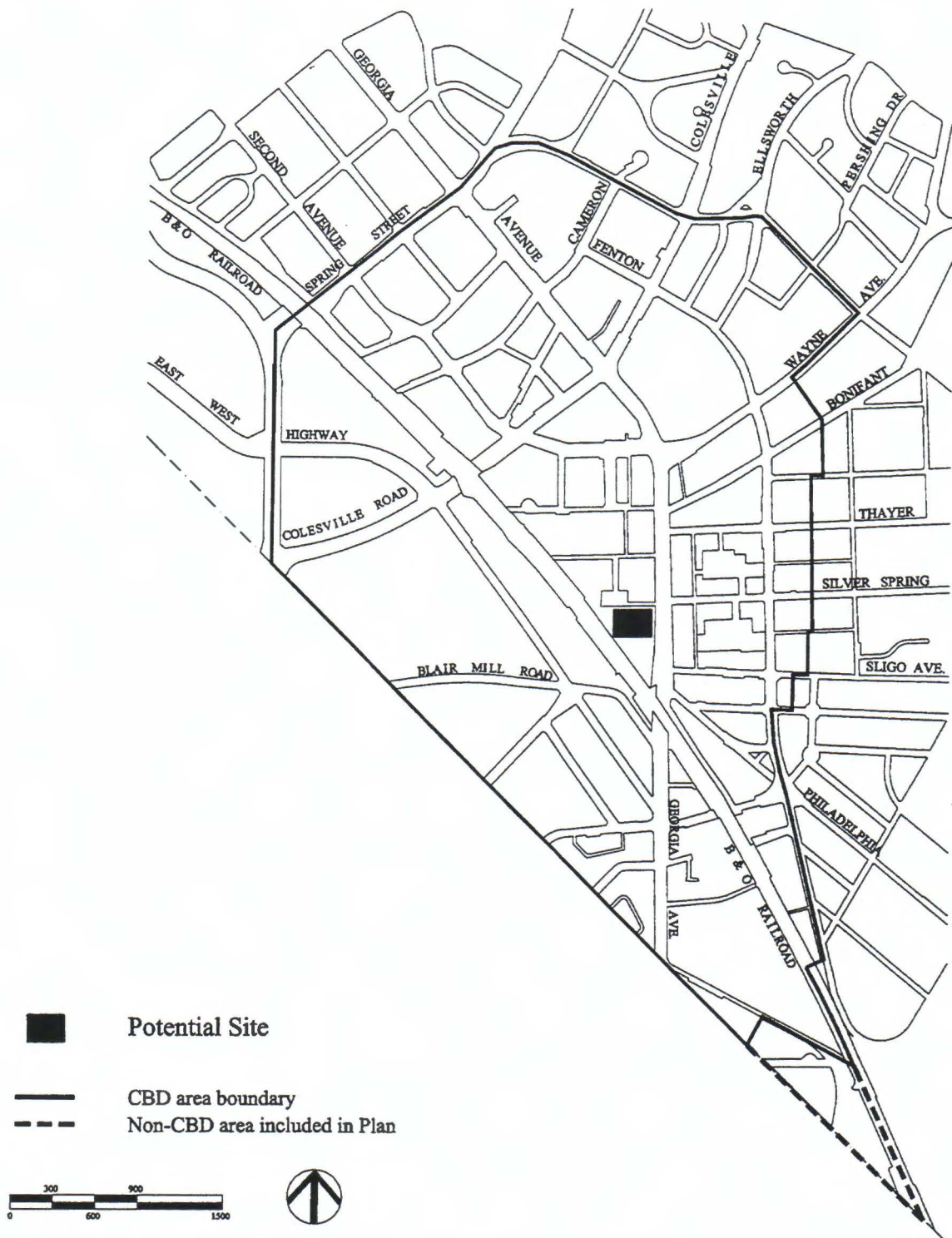
The replacement of Fire Station One is included in the current Capital Improvements Program, scheduled for construction in FY 02-03. The Fire and Rescue Commission has formed a site selection committee. The Executive has endorsed replacing Fire Station One in the immediate vicinity of the current station.

The Fire Commission has established building standards for fire station construction to reduce costs and to avoid repeating professional services. Using these standards, and based on transportation and accessibility issues, the Silver Spring station should be constructed within the boundaries of Bonifant Street, Fenton Street, Philadelphia Avenue, and the rail right-of-way. The best arrangement would be a drive-through building with on-site parking. Within the land limits of the CBD, the new station could be constructed as a two-story building or could share space with another tenant (Map 38).

Map 37 Potential Siting Opportunities for an Urban Library



Map 38 Potential Siting Opportunities for an Urban Fire Station



Public Safety

Montgomery County is divided into five police districts. The CBD is part of the Silver Spring police district, which stretches roughly along US 29 from the Howard County line to the District line. The police station for this district is located at 801 Sligo Avenue. Funds have been allocated to study the potential relocation of this station, but relocation is unlikely in the near future.

While this 27-square-mile area is only 7 percent of the County, it is the most densely populated police district and generates many service calls. To cover this area effectively, the Police Department has created two substations, one at Castle Boulevard in the Fairland planning area, and a second in the CBD at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road in the vacant Silver Spring Shopping Center. Though this is a temporary location—the satellite station will likely be displaced by redevelopment of the Urban Renewal Area—the Police Department plans to relocate its CBD satellite station.

The relocated satellite station should be visible and accessible by the community. To help the officers best perform their duties, a single CBD location is preferred over smaller sub-stations located throughout the downtown. The satellite station should accommodate about 30 officers on a shift schedule, with space to store bikes and other gear, with parking directly accessible.

The CBD's parks are also covered by the Maryland-National Capital Park Police, located on Layhill Road. Statistics indicate that crime in the CBD's parks is not high, but a perception of danger can diminish park use. The Park Police have begun an inventory of all CBD park facilities to identify opportunities for incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. CPTED elements include lighting and landscaping to address residents' safety concerns and help park police in their patrol efforts.

District Court

The Silver Spring Courthouse is a satellite facility of the State's District Court 6, located in Rockville. The CBD facility is located at 8665 Georgia Avenue and handles criminal, non-jury cases, traffic cases, civil cases, and landlord-tenant matters. The Georgia Avenue facility is leased and has three courtrooms and about two dozen employees.

The District Court has recently acquired property at Apple Avenue/Second Avenue to build a new courthouse. The new facility will house approximately 67,000 square feet with four courtrooms. It will be owned rather than leased by the District Court and will have more employees to manage expanded court operations. Planning and design of the building is expected to begin in Fiscal Year 2001 with construction in Fiscal Year 2003.

The new courthouse should be designed to create a distinct public presence. A courthouse is a traditional downtown public use, and as with other public facilities in this Plan, offers an opportunity to bring jobs and services downtown. A new courthouse also offers an opportunity to create an attractive and visible public presence through the building's siting, design, and landscaping.

Public Market

The Silver Spring seasonal farmers market, overseen by the County's Agriculture Services Division, used to operate on weekends in the public plaza behind the Armory. Due to construction in the Urban Renewal area, the market has been moved to a public parking lot on Fenton Street.

While the proposed Town Center development on this site and surrounding areas will update the Silver Spring retail market with current design and tenants, an improved public market can become part of a unique retail mix that will serve both local residents and shoppers from surrounding areas. Each retail element is distinct, but together a combination of public and private efforts can help re-create Silver Spring as a vital urban environment.

Understanding the following issues are key to creating a successful Silver Spring farmers market.

- While phone surveys have indicated a strong community interest in a Silver Spring public market, the specific characteristics of potential buyers and vendors should be identified.
- What is the market's role and what kind of market will best meet those goals? Is the market intended to generate revenue, provide a retail alternative, define ethnic or cultural character, incubate small businesses? The market can do all or some of these things, but they must be identified and pursued with a defined strategy.
- Who will manage the market and what are the best short- and long-term organizational structures? The organization must recruit vendors, publicize the market to Silver Spring residents and employees, and manage the market's budget and expenses.
- What is the best size, location, and type of facility for a market? Physical issues like access and visibility, as well as operational issues like expenses and revenue, will direct these options.

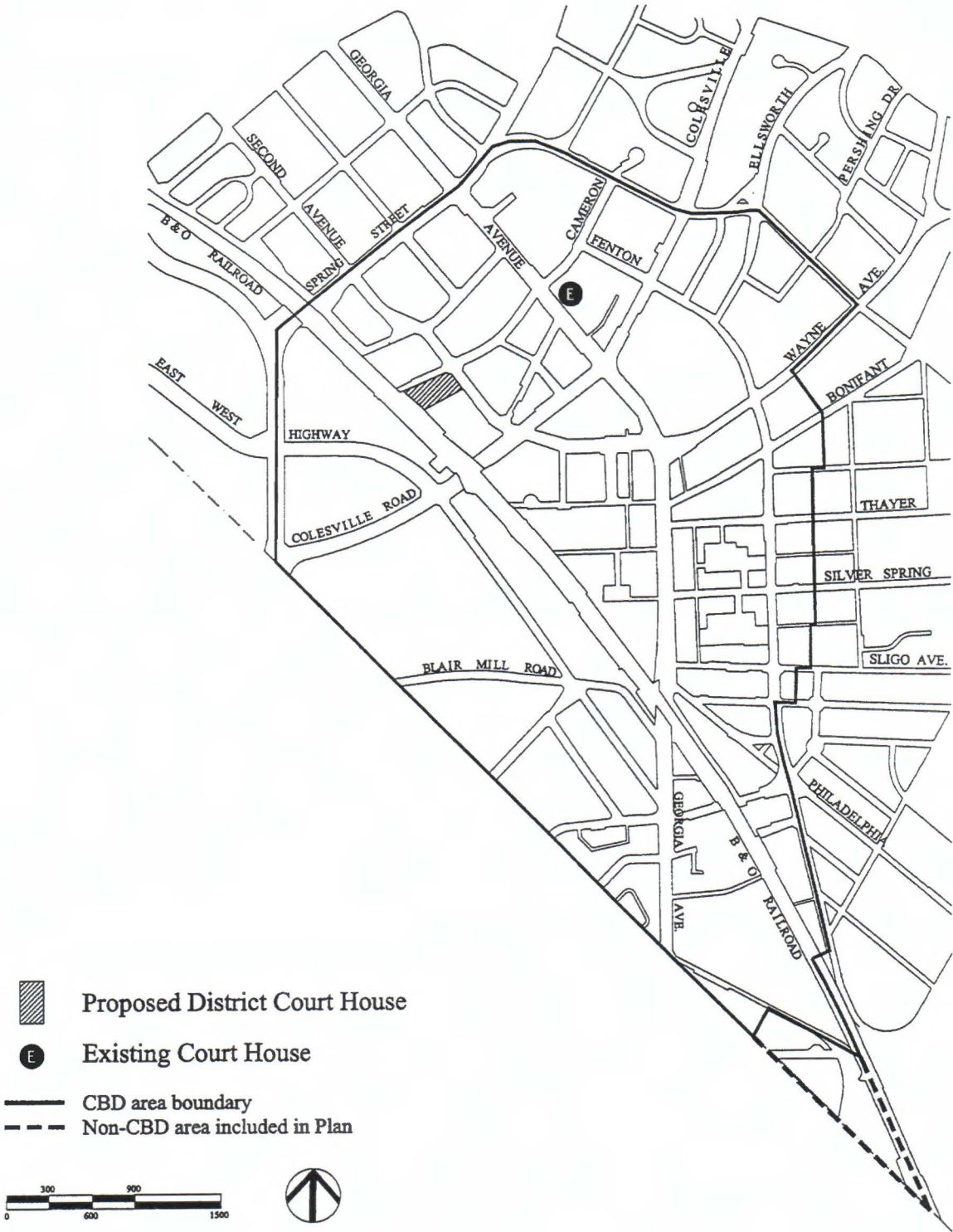
A feasibility study of a public market in Silver Spring should be undertaken and should include:

- input from other County agencies and community groups to evaluate the demand and potential program for an appealing and successful market in Silver Spring
- public, private, and partnership alternatives for operating a successful for-profit or non-profit market in Silver Spring
- possible short- and long-term locations for a visible and accessible market that is convenient to other downtown uses such as the library, retail, entertainment, and the Transit Center.

Health and Human Services

The redevelopment of downtown Silver Spring has the potential to help all members of the community. In its design, the downtown can foster independence and opportunity. Transit and pedestrian accessibility increase the availability of services, and a densely developed downtown locates jobs, housing, and services within easy walking or transit distance.

Map 39 Proposed Site for the District Courthouse



In the past six years, Montgomery County's population has increased 7 percent. Changing resident characteristics and changes in federal laws have continued to require County involvement in creating opportunity and safety for all its citizens.

Downtown revitalization is often viewed as abstract policies or as concrete and buildings, but revitalization's most important results are the opportunities created for people. Parks, housing, job creation, recreation, and more come together to build a community. Future efforts and needs in the CBD include establishing an elder daycare facility, expanding child care facilities, clustering information and services, creating affordable housing, and establishing strong working connections between public and private service providers.

In Silver Spring, Progress Place and the County have established co-located services to conveniently serve medical, job training and placement, and emergency needs of a varied and growing low-income and homeless population. The County continually seeks opportunities to efficiently provide services and not overlap with other public and private service providers.

This Plan encourages:

- the joint effort of the County's Health and Human Services Department and Easter Seals to create an elder daycare facility in the CBD.
- designing the CBD to be pedestrian-friendly and transit-oriented, opening its opportunities to the entire population.
- the State to monitor the provision of child care for residents and employees as the CBD redevelops.

Recommendations

Encourage the development of a variety of civic and cultural facilities in Silver Spring's CBD.

Civic and Cultural Facilities

- Renovate the Silver Theatre and retain its potential to function as a film and arts facility for the CBD. The building should be attractively and accessibly integrated into surrounding development. The County has entered into an agreement with the American Film Institute to operate the Silver Theatre as a companion to its theater at the Kennedy Center. AFI's proposed program of seminars and films will restore the building to its original use and create a unique entertainment anchor for downtown Silver Spring.
- Ensure that the Town Center development includes a well-located civic building as part of the optional method of development that will accommodate cultural and community programs and events.
- Ensure that the civic building constructed as part of the Urban Renewal Area project is visible, accessible, connected to surrounding outdoor space, can be programmed to meet a variety of community interests, replaces uses formerly accommodated at the Armory, and is effectively marketed and operated.

- Develop an art theme for revitalization projects. Include art spaces, programming, and objects whenever possible in new development and in existing buildings and parks. Use the arts to add value, character, and amenity to the CBD and explore groups and techniques that could help Silver Spring compete effectively for arts funding and programming.
- Program public facilities to complement and support, not compete with, private cultural and entertainment facilities.
- Support the renovation and reuse of the historic Silver Spring Train Station.

Montgomery College

- Support the planned expansion of Montgomery College to promote reinvestment in South Silver Spring and provide expanded educational services for the community. Incorporate civic and cultural facilities in the expansion of Montgomery College and the renovation of Jesup Blair Park.

Library

- Should the library relocate, the Department of Libraries should strongly consider the central CBD as the location for a new downtown library.

Fire and Rescue Services

- Locate fire and rescue services along Georgia Avenue.
- Examine the reuse potential of Fire Station One on Georgia Avenue for a community, cultural, or private use.

Public Safety

- Encourage greater visibility of the police through community policing efforts and relocate a visible and accessible downtown Silver Spring substation to contribute to the comfort level and safety of local residents and businesses.

District Court

- Locate the courthouse in a CBD location convenient to Metro, and design it to have a civic presence.

Public Market

- Enhance the current farmer's market as an active public market to add variety and economic options to the Silver Spring retail mix.

Health and Human Services

- Support the public/private child and elderly care facility proposed for the CBD.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

Urban parks, recreation, and open space serve as the forefront for buildings, as a place to eat lunch on a warm day, for scheduled concerts, for active games, and to provide areas for community events. These spaces become community nodes, places that define their surroundings and gather people, becoming centers of community life. The urban parks, recreation, and open spaces in Silver Spring serve at least two purposes:

- supporting the recreation needs and desires of the employees and surrounding residential communities
- contributing to downtown revitalization by providing another convenient and interesting reason to come to Silver Spring.

The parks proposed for the CBD are designed to meet the recreation and open space needs of the residential and employee community, as amenities that will increase surrounding property values, and as elements in a linked system. Along with meeting recreation needs and supporting Silver Spring revitalization, the park system and the special facilities contribute to realizing Plan themes—including the Green Downtown, Pedestrian-Friendly Downtown, and Residential Downtown themes.

The County's *Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan* identifies the needs for urban parks, and includes them in its hierarchy of open and recreational spaces. This Plan and the PROS Plan share the goals of physically and socially linking urban parks to the surrounding community, making the parks safer and more accessible, and making the downtown a greener and more varied place. Both this Plan and the PROS Plan also recognize the need to creatively balance active and passive recreation uses in the CBD.

The park system and special facilities combine to meet General Plan Refinement goals of promoting public activity and creating a community identity in urban areas. They also are consistent with the Recreation Guidelines (1992) which identify the growing popularity of paths and trails as recreational facilities and their ability to provide access to other park uses. The proposed system and facilities also begin to fulfill the goal of creating a linked park system in Silver Spring and Takoma Park, which was identified in the Urban Park and Open Space Concept supported by the Planning Board in 1997.

Recreation options that enrich our leisure time and daily activities will vary with age, income, interests, and available facilities. For example, Both the PROS Plan and research completed for the Urban Park and Open Space Concept surveyed users and found a growing interest in walking as a leisure time activity—a use suited to an urban environment that supports the design, social, and economic goals for the CBD. But without facilities, there are no opportunities.

Parks and Open Space System

This Plan proposes a series of open spaces through the CBD linked by trails and landscaped streets. These open spaces will vary in size, ownership, and activity, responding to their urban surroundings and should offer a variety of public open spaces to accommodate a wide range of activities associated with urban life, gathering places, and active and passive recreation. A linked park system will provide connections to destinations inside and outside the CBD, will help improve downtown's appearance, and will include special recreation facilities for new and traditional leisure time activities. Together, open spaces and special facilities will complement other varied uses. These facilities will be created through private and public investment. Some facilities will be created as part of development, others will be encouraged by public investment in amenities that increase surrounding land values. Map 40 shows existing parks, recreation, and open spaces.

The Silver Spring CBD already includes a variety of parks, recreation, and open spaces. These spaces have been provided both through public funds and through the private sector as part of the optional method of development. This Plan augments and expands the number and variety of parks, open spaces, and recreation facilities. The major spaces and links are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Woodside Park and Jesup Blair Park - Located at the northern and southern ends of the Silver Spring CBD are Woodside Park and Jesup Blair Park. These major public parks were built at a time when the CBD was a suburban residential community with a commercial center. These parks, and the more recently created Fairview Park at the CBD's northeast edge, were located and designed to buffer residential communities from commercial development and to offer active recreation opportunities—tennis, soccer, and basketball.

These parks now serve both the business community and the surrounding residential areas. This Plan proposes the renovation of the existing Blair Park in tandem with the expansion of Montgomery College. The expansion of the College will also include a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the railroad tracks and a 500-square-foot auditorium in the building in the park.

In contrast, parks in the central part of the CBD are located in a densely built environment, some edged by major roads. These large and small parks serve office workers, shoppers, and a small residential population and often have hard surfaces, providing spaces for a large number of people to gather, or serving as outdoor lunch spots for office workers. These spaces are ideal for unique urban recreational facilities, which are often themselves destination points for both entertainment and recreation. A variety of facilities can be integrated into tight urban situations such as building walls, parking garages, or sited on small pieces of land. Urban parks are often created through optional method development or by public/private partnerships.

Core

Existing NOAA Discovery Park - This park, the wave fountain, and related open spaces were created as optional method development amenities.

Proposed Town Square Civic Green Space and “Silver Circle” - These new park spaces will be provided by the proposed Downtown Silver Spring project featuring restaurants, entertainment, stores, offices, and a hotel located in the Urban Renewal Area.

Silver Triangle/Proposed Headquarters for Discovery Communications - The development of this privately owned site will create a major open space and focus for the Core. The park and public areas could include interactive features oriented to science, technology, and the natural environment, inspired by Discovery Communications' programs and products.

Proposed Fidler Lane Green Space - A small public open space is included in the Cameron Hills townhouse development and a landscaped pedestrian route along Fidler Lane to the Transit Center will be completed using other funding sources.

Ripley District

Existing Acorn Park - This park is the site of Silver Spring's original spring and its acorn-shaped gazebo was originally located on the farm of Francis Preston Blair, Silver Spring's founder.

Open Space for the Ripley District - The area has no existing parks and few open spaces. Open space in the Ripley District and South Silver Spring could be provided at small urban spaces on each development site

throughout the district or by allowing off-site consolidation or transfer of open space and/or contribution to an open space fund to be used in this district. Consolidating public open space could create a large open space that could be built in conjunction with a community facility such as a library or fire station.

Fenton Village

South Fenton Gateway Park - This park, located at the intersection of Philadelphia Avenue and Fenton Street is an under-used park with the potential to become an anchor and gateway that improves the overall image of the community. This Plan recommends that the park be expanded through the purchase of additional land. The Fenton Street/Burlington Avenue intersection may need to be redesigned as a result of the gateway park, but no specific intersection reconfiguration is recommended at this time (Figure 14). The park should include trees, playful sculptures, garden areas, and seating. Direct pedestrian access should be provided to adjacent properties.

Urban Recreation Opportunities

Enhancing Silver Spring's environment is vital to improving the downtown's aesthetic character and signals private investors that their efforts will be enhanced by public investment. Accessible and attractive parks layered with uses and recreation options can contribute to revitalization by filling a market niche, drawing local users and visitors downtown to spend their time and money.

Both the public and private sector should develop recreational facilities that can stimulate private investment and contribute to the complete environment of downtown Silver Spring.

Options for urban recreation facilities include responding to new recreation trends such as skateboarding and in-line skating. More traditional park features can be enlivened with new dimensions, for example, fountains and sculptures that also serve as play places. Existing and new urban buildings can also be adapted for recreation with outside climbing walls (Map 41).

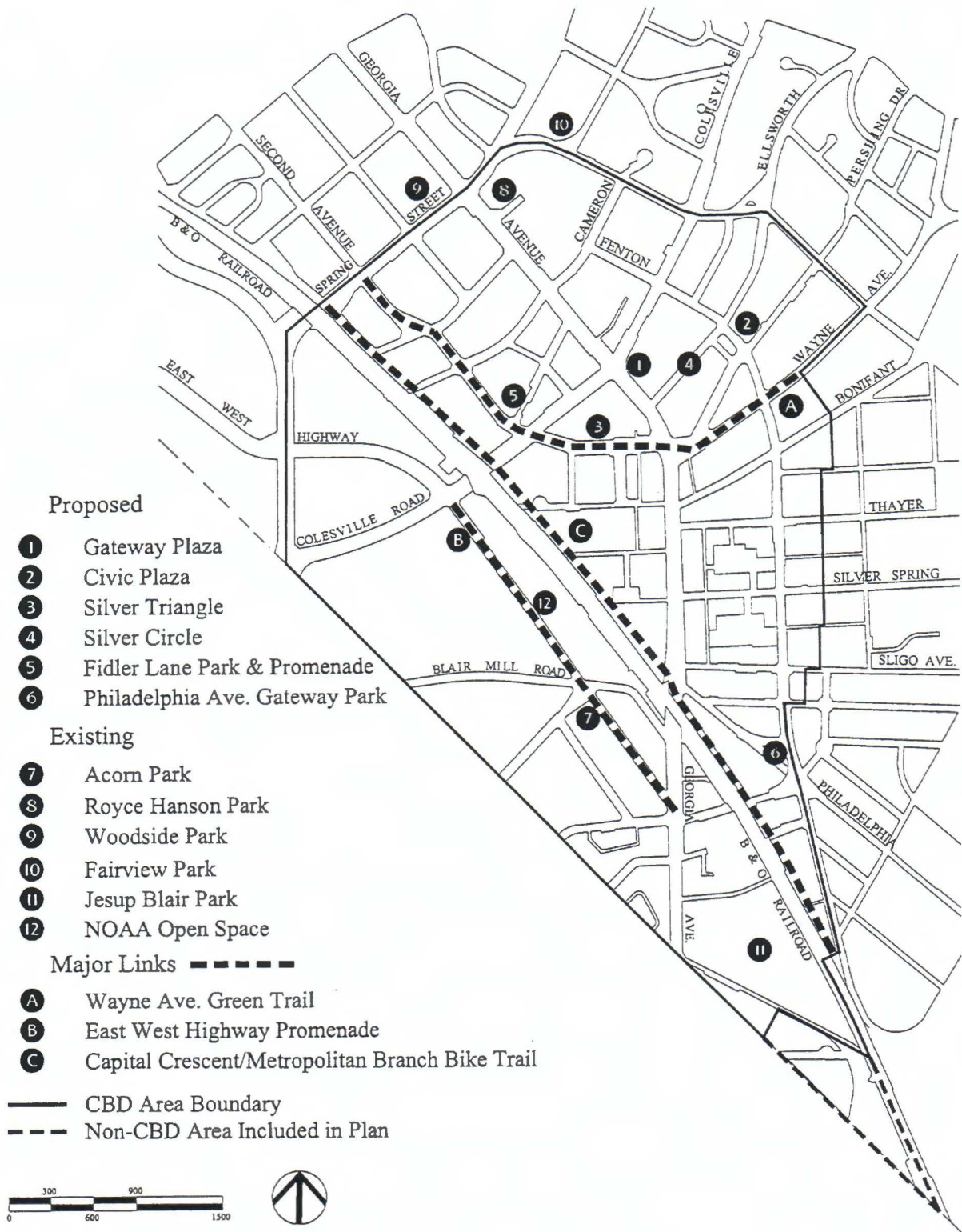
New public recreation facilities can complement private investment in office, retail, housing, and entertainment to create a complete downtown.

Special Recreation Facilities

At the September 1997 workshop residents pointed out that the skateboard park was unique, provided badly needed recreational space for teenagers, and was well-run despite its temporary construction. Likewise, the County's Recreation and Police Departments both recognize that when the existing skateboarding facility is redeveloped there will be no legal place to practice skateboarding. This burgeoning sport is developing a sponsorship circuit drawing participants and spectators. A skateboarding facility could be a unique aspect of Silver Spring. This Plan supports:

- working with the current operator and the County's Recreation Department to find a suitable CBD location for a covered in-line skate facility
- considering sites throughout the CBD for the relocated skateboard park, including under-used parking garages, the Ripley District, and South Silver Spring
- exploring integrating other recreational uses into public and private CBD development
- working with the Parks and Recreation Departments to identify and locate unique play features.

Map 40 Existing and Proposed Parks and Open Spaces



Possible facilities include a rock climbing wall, fitness facilities, sculpture play ground, water play fountain, ice rink, skate parks, in-line hockey rinks, miniature golf, life-size chess, horseshoe and boccie ball courts, marble rings, and recreational use of parking lots, garage roofs, and other temporary opportunities. All these facilities use the walls, limited space, and structures particular to an urban environment to create active recreation opportunities. At the same time, they also contribute to the aesthetic quality of downtown and draw users to unique facilities in the CBD.

Creating the Connections Between Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces

Trails, sidewalks, and bikeways serve a functional transportation purpose, but they also offer a safe and pleasing experience. Trail systems are recommended to meet both transportation and recreation needs. Trails offer a convenient recreation alternative for people of all ages and can be part of the urban environment that provides a respite from daily life, but that fits easily into ever-tighter schedules.

Sidewalks – This Plan also recommends streetscaped sidewalks that are wide and shaded, offering a pleasant and safe walk through the downtown. Pedestrian safety can be improved through wide, specially-paved crosswalks linking downtown destinations. This Plan also recommends a full system of regional and local bikeways connecting downtown Silver Spring with area parks, and with the larger metropolitan region.

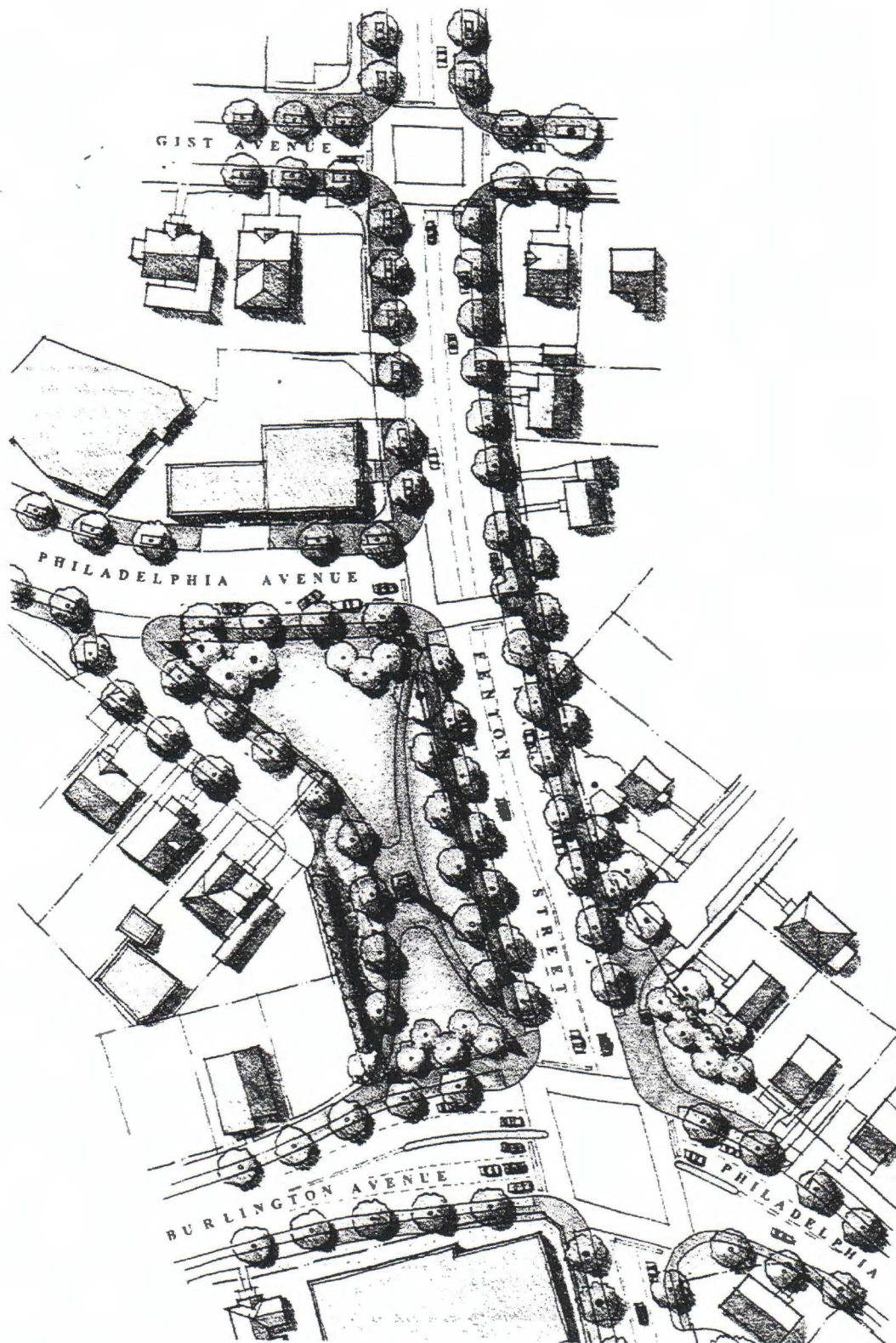
Bikeways and Urban Trails – In Silver Spring, Wayne Avenue, East West Highway, and the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch bike route offer opportunities for links within and outside the CBD. The Silver Spring Green Trail will be streetscaped and landscaped, constructed with separate bike and pedestrian ways. As it swings through downtown, the Green Trail will connect parks, new development, and bike trails and parks outside the CBD. The East West Highway Promenade will also be created with streetscaping and landscaping to extend existing streetscape and create safe and pleasant pedestrian and bike routes. Finally, the continuation of the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch trail through the CBD creates a regional park link and a downtown attraction.

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

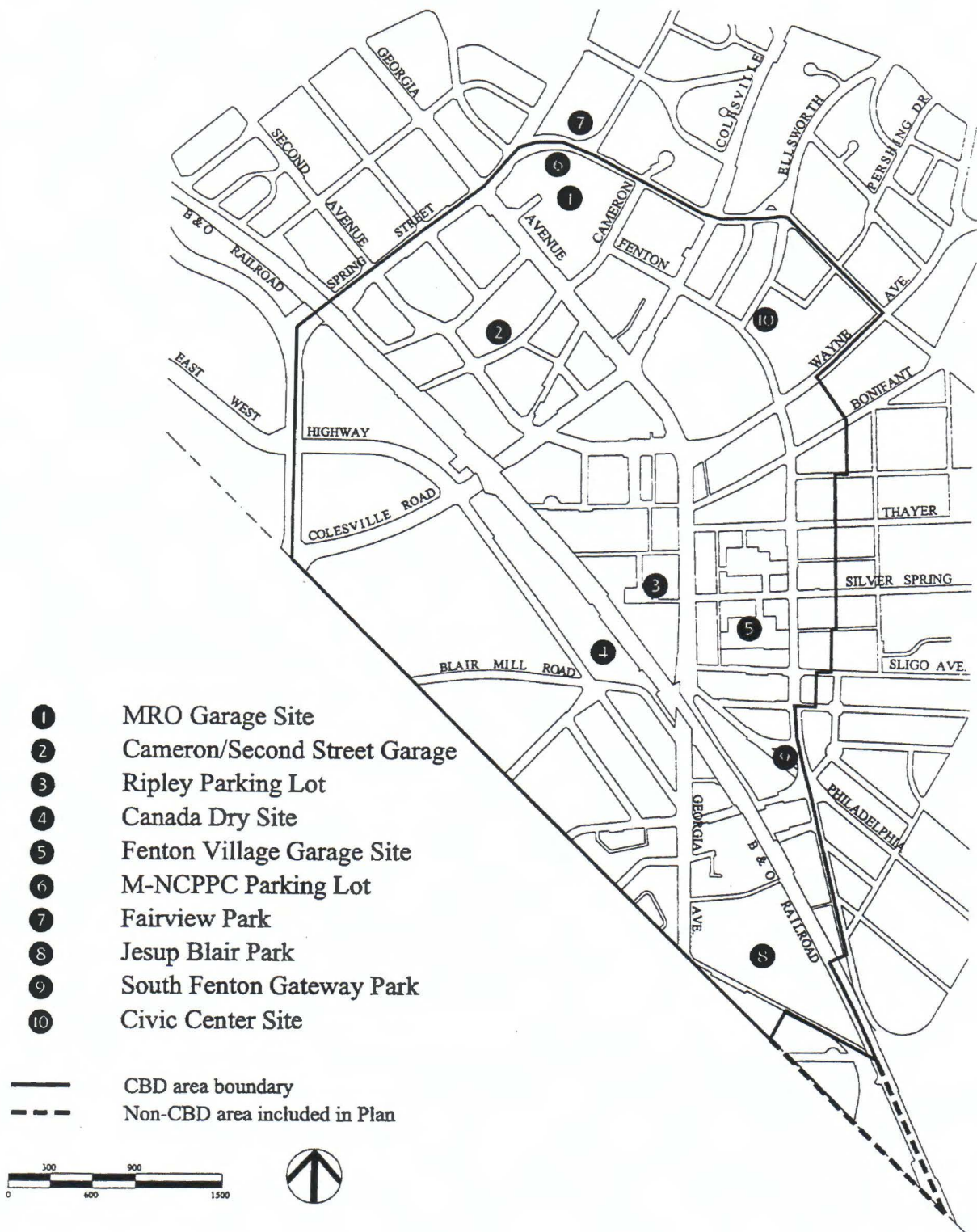
Develop a connected open space and trail system for active and passive recreation.

- Renovate and expand the existing park located at the intersection of Philadelphia Avenue and Fenton Street to provide a strategic gateway and public space.
- Establish an off-site transfer of open space mechanism to encourage redevelopment and create new open spaces in the Ripley District and South Silver Spring District.
- Establish an open space fund alternative for optional method development. Monies from this fund will be used to create open spaces in the Ripley District, South Silver Spring, and Fenton Village.
- Establish a major civic open space on the site of the Silver Triangle as part of the potential development the Discovery Communications headquarters.
- Create a town square or civic green space and a “Silver Circle” along Ellsworth Drive as part of the redevelopment of the retail core of the Silver Spring CBD.

Map 41 Potential Siting Opportunities for Urban Recreation



Map 41 Potential Siting Opportunities for Urban Recreation



- Relocate the Metro Urban Park as part of the reconstruction of the Transit Center.
- Renovate the existing Jesup Blair Park to provide active and passive recreation spaces.
- Explore relocating a skateboard park within the Silver Spring CBD.
- Ensure continued commemoration of the contribution of Silver Spring's military veterans.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Use the aesthetics, character, and economic potential of Silver Spring's historic buildings to help create a revitalized downtown.

VISION

The CBD's historic buildings preserve history and are also good architectural neighbors, make economic sense, and add texture to the community. They should be a vital and visible part of downtown revitalization.

Objective:

- Reuse and incorporate historic resources into new projects, preserving Silver Spring's unique past.

Summary Recommendations:

- Evaluate Locational Atlas sites for designation in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.
 - Consider the designation of an Art Deco District.
 - Support the reuse of Silver Spring's historic resources.
-

The CBD's historic buildings illustrate the development of Silver Spring, from the community's beginnings at the spring itself to its development as a suburban center enlivened by the Art Deco-style Silver Theatre and Shopping Center.

Preserving Silver Spring's historic resources saves more than just old buildings. Reusing and incorporating historic resources into new projects preserves Silver Spring's unique past, giving texture and depth to the CBD's redevelopment. Historic buildings stand out on the urban landscape; they look different and they resonate with meaning, recalling memories and experiences.

Silver Spring's historic buildings are also good urban neighbors. They are well designed, oriented to the street and pedestrian, because they were built at a human scale. The buildings not only remind people about Silver Spring's past, they provide models for what has always been great about Silver Spring—the street life of the city.

Beyond the intangible, historic buildings make economic sense. They can be adapted to new uses, sometimes more economically than new construction, and their unique appearance can add market value. The CBD's historic resources are both publicly and privately owned and contribute to the community's commercial and civic life. Silver Spring's historic resources can contribute to a new market image for the CBD.

Montgomery County's historic resources were initially listed in the Locational Atlas and Index of Historic Sites, which was compiled from a 1976 survey. In 1979, the County established planning and regulatory techniques to protect historic resources by adopting the Master Plan for Historic Preservation and Chapter 24A, the

Historic Preservation Ordinance of the County Code. The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is charged with evaluating Atlas properties for designation under Chapter 24A.

The exteriors of properties in the Locational Atlas cannot be substantially altered or demolished without review to determine if they merit inclusion in the Master Plan. Master Plan designation requires review and regulation of exterior changes to maintain historic integrity. Historic properties are eligible for tax credit programs at the county (10 percent), state (25 percent), and federal (20 percent) levels to assist with restoration and maintenance costs. Millions of dollars in restoration work has been completed in the County through these programs, benefitting the entire community. Silver Spring's historic resources are discussed below (Map 41).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Evaluate Locational Atlas Sites for designation on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

Silver Spring's Locational Atlas sites should be quickly evaluated for designation on the Master Plan. Those properties which are designated will receive the protection of Chapter 24A; those properties which are not designated will be removed from the Locational Atlas and the property owners will not be governed by the historic preservation ordinance.

The 1993 CBD Sector Plan recommended that the HPC consider whether the Silver Spring Fire Station at 8131 Georgia Avenue should be included on the Locational Atlas and, eventually, on the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

- The fire station should be considered for designation in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation.

The Silver Spring Historic District - site #36/7

The proposed district comprises properties on both sides of Colesville Road from Georgia Avenue to Fenton Street, including the corner buildings at Colesville Road and Fenton Street. Since 1984, when the district was proposed in the Locational Atlas, several of the individual buildings have been individually evaluated and either removed from the Atlas or designated on the Master Plan. Others have been demolished.

- There is still potential for a thematic district in the CBD. A proposed amendment to the Master Plan for Historic Preservation should be considered in the near future to designate an Art Deco district that includes the J.C. Penney facade and several buildings along the north side of Colesville Road.

The Hecht Company Department Store (1947, 1950) - site #36/7-4

Most of the original structure's exterior has been retained and incorporated into the City Place Mall. The Art Deco/Moderne facade represents a pioneering venture in retail trade when this major downtown retail company chose Silver Spring for establishing its first suburban department store. The business was highly successful in the expanding suburban market.

- The Art Deco facade has been stabilized by its incorporation into the City Place facade, but any future reuse should retain the original facade intact, pending evaluation for designation in the Master Plan.

Ensure that Master Plan Resources are preserved and contribute to downtown revitalization.

The Silver Spring Train Station Complex (1945) - site #36/15

This Colonial Revival style station was built on the foundations of the original Silver Spring train station and is the only extant 20th century station building in the County. In 1936, the B&O Railroad established a suburban stop for mainline trains in Silver Spring, creating the impetus for it to grow from a country village to one of the area's largest business communities.

The station was recently approved by the County Council for Master Plan designation along with 1/4 acre of land and the connecting tunnel as a historic resource. The remainder of the property was not designated.

- The Station should be reused by an appropriate public or private sector owner/tenant.
- Consider the design, access, and open space goals of the Ripley District in reuse plans for the Train Station.

The Silver Spring/Acorn Urban Park - site #36/5

Acorn Park is the site of the original Silver Spring, for which it is said the community was named. The Park's acorn-shaped gazebo was originally located on the farm of Francis Preston Blair, Silver Spring's founder. The gazebo is an example of picturesque garden features popular in the 19th century. The gazebo was moved to the park in 1955.

- The park should retain its visibility and accessibility amid redevelopment of South Silver Spring.

The Jesup Blair House - site #36/6

Built circa 1850 as a summer residence, the Jesup Blair House incorporates elements of the Federal and Greek Revival styles, including a hipped roof with cupola, wooden quoin blocks, pilasters, a molded architrave, and a front door framed with transom and sidelights. The house has served a variety of community uses since its donation to the State of Maryland in 1933 by Violet Blair Janin, and was renovated in 1990 as transitional housing for single-parent families. The property is currently owned by M-NCPPC.

- The Jesup Blair House should be incorporated into park renovations and continue to serve a public use.

The Montgomery Arms Apartments - site #36/7-2

This Art Deco apartment complex was built in 1941, and is an important example of pre-World War II apartment design in Montgomery County. The buildings' Art Deco details mirror those of the Fenton Building and Silver Theatre. In 1993, the apartments were zoned CBD-R1 (a designation that allows maintenance, but doesn't encourage redevelopment).

- The Montgomery Arms should continue to provide affordable market-rate housing in the CBD and its historic character should be preserved to contribute visual interest to the CBD.

The Silver Theatre and Shopping Center Complex - site #36/7-3

This complex of connected buildings, at the visible intersection of Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue, was built in 1938 in the Art Deco style and reflects Silver Spring's role as the County's shopping and entertainment center. The buildings were designated on the Master Plan in 1993 and are proposed to be integrated into the Downtown Silver Spring main street-style development that will include the American Film Institute, returning active retail and entertainment uses to these historic buildings.

- The Silver Theatre and Shopping Complex should be retained, restored, and reused.

The Silver Spring Post Office - site #36/11

The Georgian Revival style post office building is prominently located on Georgia Avenue and was built in 1936-37. It is one of three post offices in the County built by the Works Progress Administration. It is now privately owned and operated as a medical facility. The site was rezoned to CBD-R2 in the 1993 Plan and this Plan proposes to rezone it to CBD-2.

- The Post Office should retain its visibility at its prominent location on Georgia Avenue.

The Falkland Apartments—Cupola Building - site #36/12

The Falkland Apartments' Cupola Building provides a landmark entrance to the CBD at Sixteenth Street. The apartments were built in 1936-38 and were one of the first three projects insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), serving as a model for later projects. In 1993, the southern portion of the Falklands complex was rezoned to R-20 to preserve this rental housing convenient to jobs and metro.

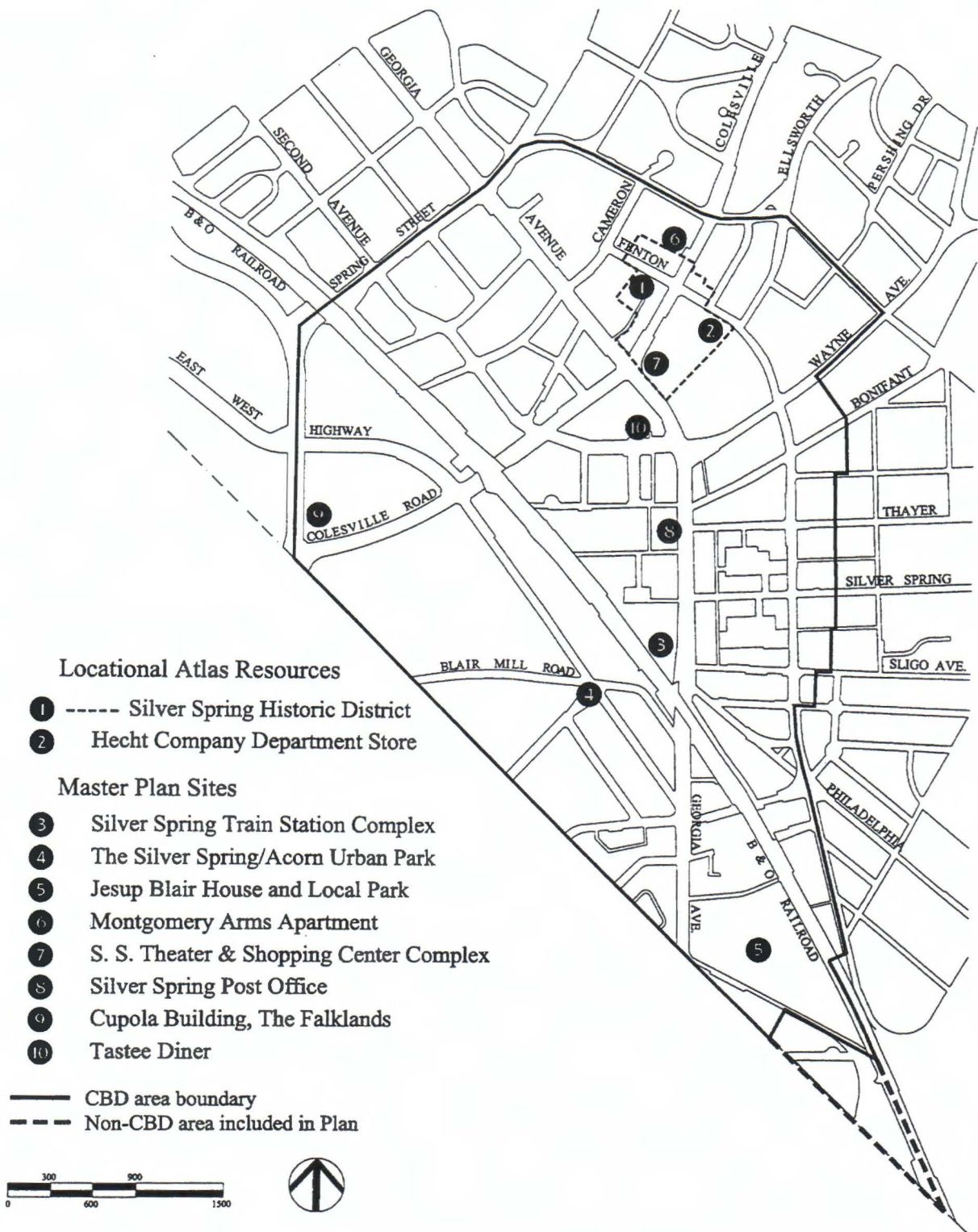
- The architectural prominence of the Cupola Building on its site should be retained.

The Tastee Diner - site #36/13

The Tastee Diner was assembled at its Georgia Avenue site in 1946 and, with the Bethesda Tastee Diner, remains one of two original diners in the County in the classic railroad car design. Since the 1993 Plan, the diner has been evaluated and designated on the Master Plan with the understanding that it would be moved to another CBD site. It is now proposed to be moved to a site at Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue, where it will be attached to a new, larger restaurant and will include a transit information and ticket center.

- After site plan review by the Planning Board, the diner should be moved to its new location and continue to serve the public as an example of a classic diner-style restaurant.

Map 42 Historic Resources



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

Protect and enhance environmental resources to achieve to a healthy, pleasant, and revitalized downtown.

VISION

The CBD's environmental quality should support existing and proposed development by creating a clean and attractive downtown and one that contributes to the environmental quality of the larger community.

Objective:

- Improve the aesthetics and the quality of the natural environment in and near the Silver Spring CBD.

Summary Recommendations:

Improve the quality of the CBD's urban environs by implementing innovative environmental policies and practices.

- Encourage the use of alternatives to automobile transportation to reduce air pollution.
 - Incorporate recycling and energy efficiency programs and standards into new development.
 - Enhance the natural environment by creating green space.
 - Enhance water quality through a variety of stormwater management techniques.
-

Environmental quality is a key element of the overall quality of life. Residents and employees in downtown areas desire pleasant, cool, green surroundings with adequate open space to lessen the impact of noise, wind, temperature, and glare that can result in a built environment. Downtown redevelopment provides an opportunity to improve the aesthetics and the quality of the natural environment in and near the Silver Spring CBD.

Concentrating growth reduces regional and county-wide environmental impacts. Localized environments have often been adversely affected by past activities, and additional development or redevelopment will cause little further environmental impact. Silver Spring was originally developed prior to modern standards for landscaping, green space, forest conservation, and stormwater management. Enhanced landscaping and green spaces around new development, larger green areas around residential development, and managed stormwater runoff to neighborhood streams will create positive environmental, aesthetic, and even economic benefits over time.

Within the CBD air quality, noise, water and sewer, landscaping/forest conservation and water quality/stormwater management are the primary environmental issues.

AIR QUALITY

Air quality problems respect no boundaries, so most air quality policies are implemented at the state and regional level. The Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area is still in non-compliance with federal ozone standards but is in attainment with carbon monoxide standards. The metropolitan area will likely be in non-attainment with new federal standards for fine particulate matter, as well. The State's Smart Growth initiative will eventually contribute to an overall improvement in air quality.

While air quality is generally a regional problem, local air pollution nuisances can occur when incompatible uses are located together or when site design does not consider micro-environmental issues. For instance, public gathering places and residential air intakes should be protected from garage, restaurant, or other commercial exhaust fumes. A new County Air Ordinance is in development to address the issue of facility emissions that affect neighboring facilities. Early prevention and management through site design can help prevent these conflicts from arising, reducing the need for often costly retrofits.

NOISE

Noise prevention and control is an abiding concern for the quality of life in any community, especially in the Silver Spring Central Business District. The CBD contains several sources of significant noise volumes, including large amounts of stop-and-go traffic, commuter, freight, and Metrorail lines, and large reflective buildings. Stationary noise sources can also become nuisances on a site specific basis.

Effective noise control is instrumental in assuring the extended sustainability of a community as a desirable place to live, work, and conduct business. The public sector has the responsibility to design roads, streetscapes and public areas to maximize noise attenuation. For example, noise sources should be located away from public gathering places. The private sector should plan and design development using the receiving property standards of the 1997 County Noise Control Ordinance as a minimum guideline.

COMMUNITY WATER AND SEWER

Under the County's Comprehensive Water and Supply Sewerage Systems Plan, community (public) water and sewer service is available throughout the master plan area and is provided by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC).

Two major sewer lines serve the CBD: Sligo Creek and Rock Creek. The WSSC recently upgraded the Sligo Creek trunk sewer, which has sufficient transmission capacity for projected sewer flows through at least 2010. The WSSC recently performed an extensive review of Rock Creek trunk sewer, which has historically experienced very high peak flows due to extraneous flows of groundwater (infiltration) and rainwater (inflow). The 1985 Blue Plains Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) specifies the maximum peak flow allowed at the point where the trunk sewer enters the District of Columbia. The WSSC's review of the Rock Creek sewer system indicated that the peak flow may exceed the IMA limit in the next ten years if actions are not initiated to reduce the impacts of extraneous infiltration and inflow into the sewer system.

Key elements include an aggressive infiltration/inflow control program and optimized use of the existing Rock Creek sewer storage facility, in addition to other flow reduction projects. The WSSC will closely monitor flows within the sewer system to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to manage the peak flows in conformance with the IMA. The analysis of the Rock Creek sewer system indicated that, with the implementation of the appropriate flow management project, the capacity of this system will support redevelopment of the CBD.

BUILDING STANDARDS TO MEET ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Two County environmental programs have the potential to affect the design of development in the Silver Spring CBD. The first is a new solid waste law that mandates recycling and waste reduction programs for all employers. To meet this requirement and to help meet the County-wide recycling goal of 50 percent by the year 2000, new development should provide adequate on-site facilities for storage and pickup of recyclable materials at commercial and multi-family residential buildings.

The second program is the Energy WiSe program, designed to educate businesses and the public about the pollution prevention benefits of increased energy efficiency. The County encourages all new construction and building retrofits to follow the County's model energy efficient design standards.

LANDSCAPING/FOREST CONSERVATION

As redevelopment occurs, zoning requirements and urban forest conservation standards will create improved landscaping and tree planting in green spaces. In most parts of the CBD, forest conservation standards can be met by street trees and landscaping requirements.

WATER QUALITY/STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

The Silver Spring CBD straddles two watersheds: Lower Rock Creek and Sligo Creek. Streams that drain the CBD have been placed underground in a storm drain network that empties to small tributary streams just outside the CBD, feeding Rock Creek and Sligo Creek. Since most of Silver Spring was developed prior to the adoption of stormwater management requirements, these tributary streams are highly degraded with poor water quality and biological diversity, according to the Countywide Stream Protection Strategy (CSPS). The CSPS identifies these areas as Watershed Restoration Areas. Even though significant improvement of stream quality in or near the CBD is unlikely, stormwater management measures applied during redevelopment provide some opportunity to reduce pollutants and storm flows to the newly-restored Sligo Creek watershed and the Rock Creek mainstem.

Stormwater management is the most important environmental issue to address in the Silver Spring CBD. Current stormwater management regulations, enforced by the Department of Permitting Services (DPS), can be expensive and technically difficult to meet in areas with small lot sizes and high existing impervious levels. Redevelopment scenarios estimate that about \$20 million dollars could be needed to actually construct the stormwater facilities needed in the CBD over the next 20 years if county-wide standards were applied. Much of this expense is due to the technical difficulty of designing and building stormwater quality treatment and holding facilities on small lots with high density development, often resulting in underground facilities. Adding to the difficulty of meeting requirements in existing CBDs is the fact that statewide stormwater management standards are likely to tighten even further in the near future.

To address the difficulty of stormwater management in more developed areas while still protecting water quality, the State and County are working to create new policies for the redevelopment of sites with high existing imperviousness with the goal that stormwater management should not become a barrier to redevelopment. Common themes in the County and State policy re-evaluation include the recognition that stormwater management requirements should not become an impediment to Smart Growth, should be flexible in nature, and should promote impervious cover reduction. In addition, the County is undertaking Watershed Restoration Studies to identify stream restoration and stormwater management retrofit projects that address stormwater on a watershed basis.

As an interim measure, the County Executive approved a policy in September, 1997, waiving stormwater quantity requirements on small CBD lots that don't propose significantly more impervious area. The collected waiver fees will be earmarked for stream restoration and stormwater management retrofit projects that address stormwater on a watershed basis. Watershed-based stormwater management is practical and effective in urban areas, providing greater environmental protection than could be provided through smaller isolated stormwater management facilities.

Redevelopment scenarios for the Silver Spring CBD indicate that several million dollars in waiver fees could be collected over the next 20 years if the interim CBD stormwater policy of waiving quantity controls on certain sites is continued. Developers would still need to spend funds to construct on-site stormwater quality facilities on those sites. On balance, the interim County CBD stormwater policy appears to save developers about half of the full cost of on-site compliance and thus provides a significant incentive to attract redevelopment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improve the quality of the CBD's environs by implementing innovative environmental policies and practices.

Air Quality

- Encourage the use of alternatives to automobile transportation to reduce air pollution. The recommendations in this Plan concerning pedestrian access, bikeways, and connections to transit stops support transportation and urban design goals and will also contribute to improving air quality in the region.
- Design new development to prevent conditions that may create local air pollution nuisances.

Noise

- Design new development to prevent conditions that may create local noise pollution nuisances.

Building Standards

- Incorporate recycling and energy efficiency programs and standards in the design of new development and where possible into renovations.

Landscaping/Forest Conservation

- Enhance the natural environment in Silver Spring by creating green space as part of landscaping and forest conservation requirements.

Water Quality/Stormwater Management

The following stormwater management options can improve water quality without discouraging development, and can reduce development costs compared to traditional stormwater structures or required waiver fees. These options can also enhance the aesthetic quality of the CBD and help to create a Smart Growth community. During redevelopment, Silver Spring is an ideal location to implement and test innovative stormwater management policies and techniques. This Sector Plan suggests that the Department of Permitting Services and the Department of Environmental Protection consider Silver Spring as a test case and promote the recommended alternatives for stormwater management.

- Continue to provide on-site stormwater treatment, where feasible and with effective technologies.
- Use stormwater quantity waivers where necessary on previously developed sites to support further off-site watershed restoration activities in Rock Creek and Sligo Creek.

For sites where stormwater flow control is infeasible or inappropriate, waiver revenues will provide critical funding support for public watershed projects that restore stream quality or protect flood plains, and provide an important offset for past uncontrolled development.

- Incorporate innovative stormwater management techniques into new development when possible.
- Explore opportunities to create linear stormwater ponds/wetlands within urban open space or along greenways.

Despite its namesake, Silver Spring does not currently possess any significant water features. Stormwater treatment for multiple small parcels can be consolidated in linear ponds or wetlands located in urban parks and public open space. A related option is to 'daylight' urban streams by converting a stream channel that had been enclosed in a storm drain to a more natural open channel. These water features can be attractively landscaped and can serve as a focal point that links the natural environment to the built environment in downtown Silver Spring.

- Continue the current program of vacuum street sweeping and expand to include parking lots and driveways.

The regular use of advanced vacuum sweepers on all paved surfaces, even if the sweepers are only 25 percent efficient, could achieve a 12 percent reduction in the total stormwater pollutant load generated by the CBD. The Urban District program regularly sweeps the curb areas of County roads, alleys, and sidewalks. Significant areas of pavement in public and private parking lots and private driveways could be added to the vacuum sweeping program to make water pollution and litter control more effective.

- Promote the use of areas designed to increase infiltration within required open or green space.

Pavement often makes up much of the 'open space' required in urban development. These areas should be designed to increase the infiltration of rainfall wherever possible. One incentive would be to count areas so designed toward compliance with stormwater quality requirements. Acceptable techniques might include alternative pavers, soil amendments and conditioning, small bioretention areas, rooftop gardens, disconnection of impervious cover, or other landscaping techniques that increase infiltration or enhance natural hydrology.

- Explore opportunities to improve the permeability of surface parking areas with green space, particularly at parking facilities owned or managed by the County.

Currently, about 25 percent of the total CBD area in Silver Spring is devoted to surface parking. Conversion of surface parking to parking garages would provide opportunities for creating true green space.

- Expand voluntary business pollution prevention programs within the CBD.

The County currently has two water pollution prevention programs. The Clean Water Partners Program is a cooperative venture between businesses and the County that encourages businesses to pledge to protect water quality through a variety of on-site procedures, including changes in the use of hazardous chemicals and pollution prevention preparedness. The County is also educating businesses and the public about the impacts of automobile leakage on water quality.

NEXT STEPS

Public and private sector commitment and investment are necessary to make this Plan's recommendations a reality.

Achieving the Silver Spring Sector Plan recommendations will require the coordinated efforts of a variety of participants. In urban revitalization efforts, there are usually five groups that play key roles in turning an area into a thriving center: land owners, developers, and investors; local business owners; residential communities; local, state and federal governments; and non-governmental organizations. Each of these groups affects various aspects of the revitalization effort.

Land owners, developers, and investors are key players in revitalization and they must be willing and able to redevelop their properties, as well as actively maintain and update them. They need to work in a stable development environment created by policy and financing assurances to create projects that garner community support.

Local business owners must be alert to changes in national, regional, and local markets, and must be active in promoting their services and products to existing and new customers. At the same time adjacent residential communities must support local businesses, as well as creating and supporting community events, and participating in creating a community vision.

Local, state, and federal government policies and funding decisions will also impact revitalization. In Silver Spring, the State's Smart Growth initiative directs funds and efforts to existing downtowns and their considerable infrastructure. Local zoning decisions also effect opportunity to redevelop.

Non-governmental organizations, such as not-for-profit groups reflect the community's desires and priorities, giving a community its unique character. By creating arts opportunities, meeting human service needs, or promoting local businesses, these organizations can focus on specific needs quickly and efficiently.

Each group must understand the strategic links needed to implement revitalization, organize, set goals, and implement plans in areas where that group can be most effective. Additionally, all stakeholders must find a way to coordinate their actions into complementary efforts and work toward the common goal of revitalization.

Some forces in revitalization are beyond local control—national and local economies, market competition, politics, and demographic changes. These factors can either positively or negatively impact the success of revitalization. The stakeholders playing key roles can't control these forces, but can't ignore them, either. Revitalization strategies in Silver Spring must reflect the reality of these factors and must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in the marketplace. As market forces change, it will be important to re-evaluate periodically the Plan's proposed development, land uses, zoning and plan approval processes.

Working together, the stakeholders can spearhead Silver Spring's revitalization, each working toward their strengths, and strengthening the entire community in the process. The private sector will be a primary player in revitalization through development and redevelopment projects. However, the public sector also plays a development role with its own investment in public facilities, and through its development review processes.

The new master plan process commits staff to continued involvement in implementing the Plan's recommendations. (See the list of proposed development projects below.) The Framework for Action summarizes the steps that must be undertaken to implement the Plan's recommendations, identifying the anticipated time frames for implementation, and the public and private sector groups that will be responsible for implementation. In some cases, joint public/private funding will be appropriate. Coordination and cooperation between public and private sectors on projects within the CBD and on both sides of the Maryland/District of Columbia line are important to revitalizing the downtown and implementing some of the Plan's recommendations.

Following the new master plan process described earlier in this Plan, the Department of Park and Planning will facilitate the Plan's implementation where possible and will report their progress to the Council every two years. As an important provider of community facilities and as a regulatory body, the M-NCPPC will also be responsible for implementing a number of key Plan recommendations.

Zoning recommendations in this Plan will be implemented through the Sectional Map Amendment process. The mandatory referral process will involve Executive and Park and Planning staff in site selection and development plan review for the proposed Montgomery College expansion, Transit Center, library, fire station, and courthouse. The Commission's development review process will involve staff in the development of the Silver Triangle site and other private development projects in the Silver Spring CBD.

A coordination mechanism should be created to support and promote the revitalization of South Silver Spring. This multi-jurisdictional committee will include representatives from: the District of Columbia, the County's Department of Housing and Community Development, the Silver Spring Regional Center, the Gateway Georgia Avenue Revitalization Corporation, and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Additional implementation activities will be initiated by Department of Park and Planning staff as needed.

The following sections summarize the proposed development plans and revitalization actions in the Silver Spring CBD.

CBD - WIDE

Foster a development pattern that will revitalize the CBD and focus the most intense development in the Core.

- Implement the Plan's rezoning recommendations.
- Locate and build a new courthouse, library, and fire station.
- Re-establish the farmers market.
- Relocate the skateboard park.
- Design and build the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail.
- Design and build local trails and bikeways.
- Revise the Silver Spring Streetscaping Plan.
- Implement the Georgetown Branch connection to Bethesda.

- Improve the physical character of the Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road corridors.

THE CORE

Recreate the Core as the active center of downtown Silver Spring.

- Develop the Silver Triangle site and public open space.
- Implement the approved plans for the Downtown Silver Spring project.
 - Construct a new civic center building and plaza, and veterans memorial in the Urban Renewal Area.
 - Renovate the Silver Theatre.
- Design and build the new Transit Center.
- Build the Silver Spring Green Trail.
- Relocate the Tastee Diner.

RIPLEY DISTRICT

Encourage mixed-use development near the Transit Center by facilitating market feasible development and upgrading the physical environment.

- Renovate the Silver Spring Train Station.
- Build Dixon Avenue.
- Assess development options for the Ripley District.
- Build pedestrian bridge to NOAA.

SOUTH SILVER SPRING

Encourage new economic activity in South Silver Spring, including expansion of Montgomery College and other redevelopment.

- Renovate and update the facilities at Jesup Blair Park in coordination with the College renovation.
- Support Montgomery College's expansion and relocation.
- Support the creation of landscape, building, or other design feature that defines this area as a gateway to the County and CBD.
- Incorporate a way-finding plan to enhance the image and function of the CBD.

- Design and construct a street pattern and streetscape that breaks up large blocks and improves visibility and access for developable parcels.
- Provide incentive programs to support private sector investment in business development and building construction, refurbishing, or reconstruction, including:
 - supporting locally targeted streetscape and facade easement programs, financing assistance, tax credits, the Enterprise Zone, green tape permitting process, and urban district activities
 - supporting a constructive demolition program that will help subsidize the cost of demolition to encourage new construction and will allow the owner to retain existing FAR.
- Support educational opportunities for small businesses on marketing, promotion, customer retention, etc. Expand business administration and retail training efforts.
- Encourage housing development through incentive programs, such as the State legislation enacted for the Downtown Management District in Baltimore that provides tax assistance for conversion of commercial space to market-rate housing.
- Support the Gateway-Georgia Avenue Revitalization Corporation's efforts.
- Assess development options, including options for vacant buildings.

FENTON VILLAGE

Revitalize Fenton Village by positioning it to benefit from redevelopment on the Urban Renewal site and facilitating housing development.

- Renovate and expand the Fenton Gateway Park.
- Encourage establishment of an active merchants and property owners group.
- Assess development options with regard to parking needs, potential for housing, and other infill development.
- Work with the public and private sectors to attract new businesses and strengthen existing businesses through recruitment, marketing, promotion, physical improvements, and maintenance.
- Encourage redevelopment efforts that include a marketing and promotion campaign, identifying, developing, promoting, and recruiting for niche markets, an Adopt-a-Block initiative on Bonifant Street, education opportunities for small businesses, reviewing existing economic development programs, and a way-finding plan.

Explore incentive programs to develop vacant properties and redevelop under-used properties, including:

- financial incentives to prevent existing businesses from moving elsewhere and future businesses from choosing another location
- encouraging owner-occupancy of businesses through low-interest or no-interest loans
- continuing existing programs such as the 50/50 Facade Easement Program, Green Tape Zone, Incubator Without Walls program, the streetscaping project for Fenton Street, code enforcement, and the Silver Spring Enterprise Zone.

OTHER CBD AREAS

Encourage infill development that contributes to the CBD's urban environment and is sensitive to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

- Develop low-rise housing on Parking Lot # 2 behind M-NCPPC offices.
- Encourage housing on Lot #21 at Cameron and Spring Street.

Resolution No.: 14-416
Introduced: February 1, 2000
Adopted: February 1, 2000

COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PORTION
OF THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT
WITHIN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

By: District Council

Subject: Approval of Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan

1. On, April 22, 1999, the Montgomery County Planning Board transmitted to the County Executive and the County Council the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan.
2. The Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan amends the approved and adopted 1993 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan, as well as an amendment to the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District Within Montgomery County and Prince George's Counties, as amended. This Sector Plan also amends the 1997 approved and adopted Master Plan for Silver Spring-East and the Master Plan of Highways within Montgomery County, Maryland as amended.
3. On June 21, 1999, the County Executive transmitted to the County Council his comments on the Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan.
4. On July 27, 1999, the County Council held a public hearing regarding the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan. The Master Plan was referred to the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee for review and recommendation.
5. On October 25, 1999, and November 22, 1999, the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee held worksessions to review the issues raised in connection with the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan.

6. On December 7, 1999, the County Council reviewed the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan and the recommendations of the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following resolution:

The Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan, dated April 1999 is approved with revisions. Council revisions to the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan are identified below. Deletions to the text of the Plan are indicated by [brackets], additions by underscoring.

Page 7: Add at end of page:

As the Washington metropolitan region has developed as an information technology and computer center, and as new media and computer businesses have already committed to the CBD, the Silver Spring CBD is ideally positioned to become a high-tech center, by offering both start-up and established businesses, the computer, telephony, fiber-optic, and media network connections needed to effectively compete in this market.

Page 11: Paragraph 5, add as second sentence:

A network of fiber-optic and telecommunications connections, supporting electronic media will serve businesses seeking to compete in a high-tech environment.

Page 16: Paragraph 2, add phrase:

Silver Spring's transportation infrastructure, its fiber-optic network, ...

Page 27: Add sub-bullet after first bullet under Implications for Land Use heading:

- The air rights above the Metro Power Station located at the Metro tracks on Colesville Road are appropriate for additional development if Metro agrees to sell or lease those rights.

Page 32: Add the following sentence as the third sentence in the first paragraph under Revitalization Areas heading:

Generally, the zoning is intended to provide development incentives and flexibility. Specifically, [T] these zoning changes...

Page 32: Insert the following from Page 35, as the second paragraph under Revitalization Areas heading.

New zoning in these revitalization areas should include incentives that (1) capitalize on the momentum created by the proposed projects for Silver Spring's CBD: Discovery Communications headquarters, expansion of Montgomery College, improvements to Jesup Blair Park, Downtown Silver Spring's mixed-use entertainment center, and a new County parking facility off East West Highway; (2) create heightened investor interest and an improved investment climate in Ripley and South Silver Spring; (3) position Ripley and South Silver Spring to take advantage of their strategic locations near the Silver Spring Metro Station and proposed multi-modal Transit Center; (4) position Ripley and South Silver Spring to take advantage of land use options that can be supported by the current real estate market; and (5) achieve additional market rate housing.

Page 33: Make the following revisions to the third bolded heading:

[Zoning Changes] Recommendations

Page 33: Replace the two sentences under the Recommendations heading with the following paragraph:

[The following zoning recommendations will be implemented through the Sectional Map Amendment process.]

[Zone CBD sites and districts to provide additional development incentives and flexibility.]

The Plan's land use and zoning recommendations focus the densest development in the Core and around the Transit Center, and provide a diversity of retail, residential, office, hotel, civic, and park uses. Mixed-use development is encouraged wherever feasible. Zoning and other plan recommendations are intended to provide additional development incentives and ensure that development projects in the Core contribute to the Plan's vision for downtown Silver Spring.

Page 33: Insert the following text from Page 110 under the heading "CORE".

The Core will be rejuvenated as Silver Spring's varied and active town center, with housing, office, and retail development in a pedestrian-friendly environment, enhanced with parks and open spaces.

Vision

Prompted by redevelopment proposed by the Downtown Silver Spring Project, the Core will be reborn as the commercial, civic, and entertainment center of Silver Spring and its surrounding neighborhoods. Development on the Urban Renewal site will be in a pedestrian-

friendly, town center pattern with stores and streetscape that encourage people to walk. A mix of public and private uses, special events, and daily shopping, will serve the community and its visitors. This repositioning of the Core with new uses in a well-integrated, pedestrian-friendly environment will be the catalyst for redevelopment throughout the CBD as existing businesses upgrade and new businesses are drawn to the CBD. Combined with public investment, Silver Spring will become a downtown for the future. (See Map 34 and Figure 8.) See insert map.

Objective:

Recreate the Core as the active center of downtown Silver Spring, ensuring that development contributes to the Plan's vision for downtown Silver Spring.

Insert the following text, from Page 111:

Analysis of Existing Conditions

The CBD's Core is centered on the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road and includes the traditional retail center of Silver Spring. The Core is the focus of transportation, commercial, and retail activity. It has the most varied and intensive uses, as well as a concentration of historic buildings. The Core also has an important residential component: high-rise apartments that offer convenience and housing choices.

Particular features include the 14-acre Urban Renewal Area being developed as a mixed use retail, entertainment, hotel, and office development; the existing MARC, Metrorail, and bus stations; the site of the proposed Discovery Communications corporate offices; the townhouses underway at Cameron Hill; the historic Silver Spring Shopping Center; and the Silver Theatre, being redeveloped by the American Film Institute.

Rather than seeking one large project to remake and define the CBD, a number of projects will reshape downtown. The proposed Discovery Communications corporate headquarters, combined with the Downtown Silver Spring project will refocus downtown around mixed restaurant and retail development that includes a pedestrian-oriented main street and includes indoor and outdoor civic spaces. Some features of the development, such as the American Film Institute (AFI) at the Silver Theatre, will appeal to the regional market, but are also scaled to the community and use Silver Spring's unique resources.

While there is general consensus that the development proposed on the Urban Renewal site is the correct scale, density, and mix of uses, this plan must ensure that the project encourages spin-off development by making connections to surrounding downtown neighborhoods and to transit.

This Plan also ensures that development surrounding the Urban Renewal site contributes to the complete downtown environment. This Plan must address the public realm: the CBD's

roads, parks, and other community and transportation infrastructure should be enriched and designed to create a strong foundation for continued downtown economic success.

Page 33: Add the following text under the second bullet:

- Rezone the block bounded by Fenton Street, Colesville, Road, Cedar Street, and Roeder Road from CBD-1 to CBD-2.

Rezoning to CBD-2 will reflect existing development that now exceeds the standards of the CBD-1 zone. Additionally, zoning that reflects existing structures encourages property owners to re-invest in their properties, and alleviates difficulties with lenders and insurers who may view properties that do not conform to existing zoning as a risk regardless of “grandfathering” clauses that make such properties conforming.

Page 33: Change the third bullet to read:

- Rezone the north[ern]west corner of the block bounded by Fenton Street, Roeder Road, Cedar Street, and Ellsworth Drive from CBD-1 to CBD-2.

Despite the intent of the 1993 down zoning, there is existing development on a portion of these blocks that exceeds the current zoning. Zoning that reflects existing structures encourages property owners to re-invest in their properties. This correction may also alleviate difficulties with lenders and insurers who may view properties that do not conform to existing zoning as a risk regardless of “grandfathering” clauses that make such properties conforming.

Page 33: Change the fifth bullet to read:

- Rezone the parcel located in the middle of the block bounded by Roeder Road, Cedar Street, and Ellsworth Drive from CBD R-2 to [CBD -1] CBD-2.

[Rezoning this parcel will allow consistent zoning on the site where the new parking garage will be built for the Downtown Silver Spring Project.] CBD R-2 zoning is too restrictive to allow for future development to occur on this site.

Page 35: Make the following revision to bolded heading:

RIPLEY DISTRICT [AND SOUTH SILVER SPRING]

Page 35: Insert the following text from Page 122, under Ripley District heading:

A revitalized Ripley District will be a focal point of high-density commercial development, linking Georgia Avenue and East West Highway with bike trails and pedestrian routes, organized around civic open space.

Page 35: Move the paragraph under the heading Ripley District and South Silver Spring to page 32 as noted earlier in the resolution.

Page 35: Make the following revision to the bolded heading:

VISION [AND OBJECTIVES]

Change the first paragraph under the Vision heading to read:

Through the combined effort of economically viable zoning and public and private investment, [T]he Ripley District is envisioned as a revitalized, mixed-use district with its primary focal point a high-density commercial development. It will link Georgia Avenue and East West Highway with bike trails and pedestrian routes, organized around open space. (See Map 35, 36, and Figure 11.) Expanding the range of uses and adding market-responsive commercial density near Metro will stimulate development and allow both commercial and high-rise residential uses. (However, high-rise housing is not viable in today's market because rents supported by the Silver Spring market cannot cover the development cost associated with high-rise housing.)

Insert the following heading and text after the second paragraph under Vision heading:

Objective:

- Encourage mixed-use development near the Transit Center by facilitating market feasible development and upgrading the physical environment.

Delete bolded heading South Silver Spring, and all text under that heading.

Insert the following text, with revisions, from Page 124:

Analysis of Existing Conditions

The Ripley District, a triangular area just south of the Silver Spring Metrorail Station between Bonifant Street, Georgia Avenue, and the CSX railroad tracks, is centrally located in downtown Silver Spring, has frontage along Georgia Avenue, and is near the proposed Transit Center. Despite the area's central location and its proximity to Metrorail, the only new development since 1993 has been a small social service center called Progress Place.

The District is dominated by automotive shops, public and private parking lots and garages, and small warehouse facilities. Existing buildings and land uses do not take advantage of the area's excellent location or development potential.

The Ripley District will most likely have the opportunity to capture future private development once key Core properties are developed. There may be potential to jump start development in the Ripley District by relocating selected community facilities, like the Fire

Station (see Community Facilities section). Many properties in the Ripley District are virtually landlocked. A new interconnected street system and new public open spaces can improve access and circulation throughout the district. As the 1993 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan stated, the Ripley District may need public improvements to precede redevelopment. Public infrastructure improvements in roads, bike trails, and streetscape should contribute to creating a coherent and vital neighborhood. An interconnected street system, public spaces which improve access, circulation, organization, and a sense of place will change the perception of the Ripley District and attract new development to Georgia Avenue.

Page 40: Modify the text under the heading Ripley District Zoning as follows:

- Retain the CBD-2 Zone on parcels currently are zoned CBD-2.

Existing zoning supports the Plan's vision and goal, as stated above, by allowing a variety of uses and providing enough density to encourage redevelopment of the Ripley District near the Transit Center.

- Rezone all CBD-R2 properties in the Ripley District to CBD-2.

CBD-2 zoning will encourage redevelopment near the Transit Center by allowing more commercial density in response to the current market. CBD-2 also provides the flexibility for both commercial or residential high-rises, or mixed use projects, whereas the CBD-R2 zone was intended primarily to stimulate high-rise residential development. Projects approved under the CBD-R2 zone in the Ripley and South Silver Spring areas have not been built because high-rise housing has not been economically viable in Silver Spring in recent years. (As indicated earlier, the rents which can be supported by the Silver Spring market cannot cover the development costs associated with high-rise housing.)

- Apply the Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone to portions of the Ripley District. (See page 42 and Map 12.)

This overlay zone will encourage redevelopment in the Ripley District by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses, while ensuring that new development is compatible with nearby uses.

Insert new heading: South Silver Spring

Insert the following language, with revisions, from Page 130.

The revitalization of the under-used buildings and properties in this gateway to the County and the CBD will create a strong economic future for a neighborhood of complementary mixed uses spurred by spin-off use from Discovery Communications, Montgomery College's

expansion, improvements to Jesup Blair Park, and recent commercial improvements along East West Highway.

Vision

While public investment will create incentives and structure for revitalizing South Silver Spring, the neighborhood's character and shape must ultimately be determined by the market. A variety of reuse options for this gateway neighborhood include: start-up business space, retail, and housing. With Discovery Communications located in the Core, South Silver Spring Gateway has the potential to offer supporting high-tech graphics and communication arts business uses to the CBD's emerging communications industry. Potential spin-off from Montgomery College's expansion could create demand for new business space and uses to complement the College's new Health Sciences building on Georgia Avenue. Its proposed partnership with American Film Institute should also foster development of supporting businesses. Located next to a stable residential neighborhood, South Silver Spring could also redevelop with in-fill housing, convenient to the renovated park. (See Maps 37, 38 and Figure 14.)

South Silver Spring has the potential to become a unique, varied, and pleasant neighborhood. Physical improvements to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle and car access will add legibility and visual interest to South Silver Spring in a neighborhood combining new and renovated buildings.

Objective:

- Encourage new economic activity in South Silver Spring, including expansion of Montgomery College and other redevelopment.

Insert the following text, with revisions, from Page 131:

Analysis of Existing Conditions

South Silver Spring is on the southwest edge of the CBD, abutting the District line, north of the intersection of Georgia and Eastern Avenues. The area is characterized by mixed building types and disparate commercial uses including aging industrial, neighborhood convenience and service retail, offices, motels, a postal facility, and the former Canada Dry bottling plant. A variety of older buildings in the area offer reuse opportunities for developing and expanding high-tech and communications businesses. North along East West Highway are the NOAA buildings, with their upgraded streetscape and the recently renovated Blair Apartments.

As are many areas of the CBD, South Silver Spring is shaped by its relationship to the Georgia Avenue Corridor. At the southern end of Georgia, this neighborhood marks the entrance into the CBD and to the County. A significant gateway feature is Jesup Blair Park which, with facilities and access improvements, can become an asset for Montgomery

College and neighborhood homes and businesses. The neighborhood is composed of large blocks that, while they offer redevelopment opportunities, also make it difficult to get through and around the district. As in the past, South Silver Spring must build[s] upon its ability to support major CBD development initiatives.

Incubator Space

Small businesses in the Silver Spring CBD could benefit from incubator space, both physical and virtual, because it provides small businesses with the resources they need to establish themselves, create jobs, and contribute to economic redevelopment.

Physical incubators are inexpensive spaces, proximate to business services and complementary businesses, that enable transferring technology, and sharing resources. Virtual incubators link developing businesses via computer, creating an on-line business community that can also share information and ideas. Both types of incubators share the goal of producing jobs and establishing businesses, a goal that also serves downtown revitalization.

Insert Map 37 "South Silver Spring Revitalization Area" from Page 132.

Insert following text from Page 133:

Housing is also a desired goal for South Silver Spring, although it may be difficult to realize due to South Silver Spring's ownership pattern (small parcels in multiple ownership), the poor image of the area's vacant buildings, and an unwillingness to convert commercial property into residential uses. Public policies and action, including demolition and/or renovation of existing structures, land assembly, assisting office-to-housing conversions, and a transfer of development rights program could encourage housing development in the long term, particularly in the northern sector of the area nearest to the Transit Center and the Capital Crescent Metropolitan Branch Trail.

The recent renovation of five buildings into the Blair Mill Arts Center, whose tenants include advertising agencies, interior design firms, photo and art studios, and Discovery's re-use of the Caldor building may also indicate a future market direction for South Silver Spring.

The American Film Institute's plans to develop the Silver Spring Theatre as a major film and video exhibition center, and that organization's educational mission have the potential to create partnerships with Montgomery College and with new and existing media-related businesses such as film and broadcast studios and sound stages. Discovery Communications has similar potential for such partnerships.

Montgomery College's plan to expand the Takoma Park campus into South Silver Spring is a chance to introduce new and reinvigorated uses to this part of the CBD. The College plans to expand buildings along Georgia Avenue and into Jesup Blair Park with improvements to the

park and to Blair Road. The plan also includes a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks, connecting the expanded campus.

As part of the revitalization efforts connected with the College's expansion, improvements are planned for Jesup Blair Park, including new and refurbished playing fields and tennis courts; improved parking, pathways, and jogging trails; and a covered pavilion and seating areas. Jesup Blair Park is also the setting for the historic Jesup Blair House. The Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) currently uses the house. The park upgrade is intended to meet the needs of surrounding residents and business owners and to accommodate the College's expansion.

Insert the first paragraph from Page 135 as follows:

The Planning Department's B and C Office Study identified seven properties in the Silver Spring market area with leasable space in excess of 700,000 square feet, clustered predominantly in South Silver Spring. These buildings are vacant and obsolete. Three of these buildings, the Gramax Building, 7915, and 7923 Eastern Avenue, are completely vacant. They create a sense of abandonment in South Silver Spring that has been difficult to overcome.

[What are South Silver Spring's opportunities?]

Combine the last two paragraphs on Page 135 and insert with the following revisions:

South Silver Spring's locational advantage is its relative proximity to Core development. [South Silver Spring once enjoyed a role as the secondary business services center supporting the CBD's Core. However, as the CBD's retail primacy declined, South Silver Spring was hit hard. South Silver Spring's] But, its deteriorating building stock, lack of visibility and poor access, hybrid pattern of development, and uneven densities have made it difficult to define a vision for the area. South Silver Spring is relatively distant from the Metro station and is separated by the railroad tracks from the CBD's other commercial areas. [It lacks visibility, access, and an easily comprehensible street pattern.] Many of the buildings have not been upgraded in years and several large, vacant, and under-used office, retail, and warehouse buildings dominate the area.

Insert the following text, with revisions, from Page 135:

Montgomery County and the District of Columbia are currently working on a partnership to improve the section of the Georgia Avenue Corridor between the two jurisdictions to spur revitalization. The effect of these efforts has resulted in business and development interest in South Silver Spring.

Insert Figure 12 Views of Blair Park and College from Page 134.

Insert the following heading and text from Page 135:

Recommendations

Current zoning discourages the redevelopment of vacant or under-used buildings in South Silver Spring. As in the Ripley District, the high-rise housing envisioned for South Silver Spring properties in the 1993 Sector Plan is not economically viable in the near term because achievable rental rates do not justify development costs. South Silver Spring should be rezoned to encourage redevelopment while protecting surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Zoning for revitalization in South Silver Spring includes providing flexibility for such uses as computer assembly and high-tech communication arts; creating pedestrian connections; providing incentives for redevelopment of existing, outdated buildings which detract from the area's potential; addressing the character of Georgia Avenue to create an attractive street with adequate light and air; and improving the area's image compared to other parts of the CBD.

Insert Map 10 "South Silver Spring, Existing Zoning"

Insert Map 11 "South Silver Spring, Proposed Zoning"

Page 40: Revise the section titled South Silver Spring as follows:

- Rezone all CBD-R2 properties in South Silver Spring to CBD-2. See bullet #2, above.

CBD-2 zoning will encourage redevelopment near the Transit Center by allowing more commercial density in response to the current market. CBD-2 also provides the flexibility for both commercial or residential high-rises, or mixed-use projects, whereas the CBD-R2 zone was intended primarily to stimulate high-rise residential development. Projects approved under the CBD-R2 zone in the Ripley and South Silver Spring areas have not been built because high-rise housing has not been economically viable in Silver Spring in recent years. (As indicated earlier, the rents which can be supported by the Silver Spring market cannot cover the development costs associated with high-rise housing.)

- Rezone all CBD-0.5 properties in South Silver Spring to CBD-1.

CBD-1 zoning will encourage revitalization of South Silver Spring. The CBD-0.5 Zone is a disincentive in South Silver Spring. Redevelopment of South Silver Spring's vacant or underutilized buildings is discouraged by the FAR limitations of the CBD-0.5 Zone, which reduces development options and limits potential income.

- Apply the Ripley/South Silver Spring Overlay Zone to portions of South Silver Spring.

This overlay zone will encourage redevelopment in South Silver Spring by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses, while ensuring that new development is compatible with nearby uses.

Page 42: Modify the ninth bullet as follows:

- Allow the transfer of public use space requirements to other sites in the same district [, or contribute to a fund]. Joint funding of offsite public use space may occur by multiple property owners.

Page 42: Add the following bullet at the end of the bulleted list under Major Provisions:

- Allow alterations, repairs or reconstruction of buildings under the standards of the zone in effect at the time the building was constructed.

Page 43: Replace paragraph under Fenton Village heading with the following text from Page 141:

With an upgraded streetscape, new housing, and lively mix of multi-cultural, specialty, and convenience shops serving local and regional customers, the neighborhood-scale commercial uses along Fenton and its cross streets can become Silver Spring's own global village.

Page 43: Modify the second bolded heading to as follows:

VISION [AND OBJECTIVES]

Page 43: Replace two paragraphs under Vision heading with the following text from Page 141:

Fenton Village is envisioned as a diverse community of people living and working together to create a tightly-knit urban neighborhood, conducive to strolling and browsing; its businesses providing personal service and a traditional town atmosphere not found in shopping centers or malls. Fenton Village has many strengths, including multi-cultural shops and restaurants, unique small businesses, a pedestrian-scaled physical environment, clusters of complementary businesses, captive market demand from surrounding neighborhoods, and proximity to Washington, D.C. Many of these specialty businesses already draw customers from a regional market and, by capitalizing on redevelopment in the Core, can begin to fill an unserved market niche. (See Maps 39 and 40.)

New zoning should include incentives that capitalize on the momentum created by the proposed projects for Silver Spring's CBD Core. The zoning objectives for the Fenton Village include: providing development incentives, ensuring accomplishment of the vision/urban design goals for the district, and providing a housing incentive. Height limits would be implemented through the proposed overlay zones to ensure compatibility with adjoining neighborhoods.

- Revitalize Fenton Village by positioning it to benefit from redevelopment on the Urban Renewal site, facilitating housing that will upgrade the physical environment and bring in

new residents, and providing a pedestrian-friendly environment that encourages people to stroll and stay.

Insert Map 39 Fenton Village Revitalization Area from Page 142

Insert following text, with revisions, from Pages 143-144:

Analysis of Existing Conditions

Fenton Village is located south of Wayne Avenue and the CBD's Core, between Georgia Avenue on the west and the CBD boundary on the east. Originally a single-family residential neighborhood, today it is a mix of multi-cultural shops, neighborhood-serving retail, business services, small office buildings, and auto-related businesses, some of which draw a regional clientele. Commercial establishments are supported by public parking lots and garages. The east side of Fenton Street, while commercial, is adjacent to a single-family residential neighborhood that should be buffered from redevelopment.

There is a strong and substantial market for neighborhood-serving, small-scale retail in Fenton Village. Approximately 85 percent of the CBD's 20,000 office workers are within a ten-minute walk of Fenton Street, and there are 516,000 people living within five miles of the area. Redevelopment in the Core will also create the potential for spin-off businesses in Fenton Village. These markets however, will remain untapped until there is a better match between businesses and the marketplace.

Fenton Village can capture some of Montgomery County's substantial market for Class B and Class C office space. Ninety percent of Silver Spring firms employ fewer than 20 people, making Fenton Village's small office buildings an ideal location for many companies.

According to a recent study on B&C office space, the success of older CBD office space depends on revitalizing the economy of Silver Spring, not on extensive public financial intervention in the market. Thus, as the CBD is revitalized and Fenton Village is physically upgraded, additional stable office tenants will be attracted to the area, potentially increasing rental rates and providing incentives for more property owners to improve their properties.

Housing is another development option for Fenton Village. As in other CBD revitalization areas, new housing development can upgrade the physical environment and provide a resident market for new CBD retail, employment, and entertainment opportunities.

Pedestrian traffic in Fenton Village has declined due to a variety of real and perceived problems including lack of demand for the goods and services offered in Fenton Village, inadequate pedestrian circulation, concerns about security, the ability to attract office workers from the nearby Core, and the area's deteriorating visual image.

The area is also physically disjointed, due to a lack of significant renovation or infill development in recent years. In more unified shopping districts, retailers benefit from the

combined drawing power of the individual stores. In Fenton Village, the disjointed pattern of commercial activity and the lack of a resident population dilute pedestrian traffic, a key component to retail vitality.

Also, property owners have had little incentive to renovate. Past depressed commercial rents did not generate a return on investment through increased rental rates. Lease terms were shorter and landlords were not providing the tenant improvements typically included in longer leases.

While there are many public parking lots and garages in Fenton Village, some of them are not conveniently located or are unappealing to potential shoppers. Some of these facilities could be redesigned, reused, or relocated.

Many public and private entities, including the Department of Park and Planning, the County's Departments of Economic Development and Housing and Community Affairs, the Silver Spring Redevelopment Office, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program, recognize Fenton Village's potential and the need to upgrade and market the area through both physical and economic revitalization, regulatory actions, financial assistance programs, and business assistance programs. Although some physical improvements are occurring in Fenton Village, the disparity between goods demanded and goods offered has not been fully addressed.

Page 43: Modify the third bolded heading as follows:

[Zoning Changes] Recommendations

Page 43: Insert the following text under bullets:

- Rezone selected properties along Wayne Avenue and Georgia Avenue from CBD-1 to CBD-2.

CBD-2 zoning is recommended in some cases to reflect existing development that exceeds the standards of the CBD-1 zone. Zoning that reflects existing structures encourages property owners to re-invest in their properties, and to alleviate difficulties with lenders and insurers who may view properties that do not conform to existing zoning as a risk regardless of "grand fathering" clauses that make such properties conforming. (The property on the north side of Wayne Avenue is zoned CBD-1, but it is within the Urban Renewal Area and functions like CBD-2.) The Approved Project Plan for Downtown Silver Spring on CBD-1 properties allows buildings that are consistent with CBD-2 zoning standards.

- Rezone all CBD-0.5 properties on the west side of Fenton Street to CBD-1.

A significant number of vacant or underutilized lots have limited potential (without assemblage) to attract additional retail because they do not have enough density and

cannot cover enough of their lots on the ground level to achieve the needed first floor space. CBD-1 zoning will allow increased density under the standard method — up to 2 FAR under the Fenton Village Overlay Zone, with site plan review. (Under the CBD-0.5 Zone, property owners could not realize the 1 FAR optional method density because the small parcels that make-up Fenton Village are less than the minimum 22,000 gsf required for optional method).

- Rezone selected properties on the east side of Fenton Street from CBD-0.5 to CBD-1.

A significant number of vacant or underutilized lots have limited potential (without assemblage) to attract additional retail because they do not have enough density and cannot cover enough of their lots on the ground level to achieve the needed first floor space. CBD-1 zoning will allow increased density under the standard method. (Under the CBD-0.5 Zone, property owners could not realize the 1 FAR optional method density because the small parcels that make up Fenton Village are less than the minimum 22,000 gsf required for optional method).

- Apply the Fenton Village Overlay Zone on all CBD-1 properties in Fenton Village.

This overlay zone will encourage redevelopment in Fenton Village by providing more flexibility in the development standards and the range of permitted uses, while ensuring that new development is compatible with nearby uses.

Page 43: Modify the last bullet on the page as follows:

- Apply the Fenton Village Overlay Zone to portions of the Fenton Village revitalization area zoned CBD-1 to allow the needs of a specific area to be addressed without affecting all of the CBD zones [, particularly to] The Overlay Zone will encourage a mix of housing and commercial uses by development incentives, allow small parcels to become usable development sites, limit building heights, ensure compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods, allow the transfer of public use space requirements to other sites in the same district, [or contribute to a fund] and improve the character of Georgia Avenue.

Page 46: Modify the second bullet under Major Provisions heading to read:

Limit building height for new construction fronting along the east side of Georgia Avenue to 90 feet, and 60 feet for [remaining] properties[, interior to the block, to] fronting on the west side of Fenton Street. Properties between Georgia Avenue and Fenton Street not fronting on either street are limited to 60 feet but may go up to 90 feet for projects that are at least 33 percent residential and where the additional height is placed closest to Georgia Avenue and tapered down moving east to Fenton Street.

Page 46: Modify the fourth bullet under Major Provisions heading to read:

Allow the transfer of public use space requirements to other sites in the same district [, or contribute to a fund]. Joint funding of a specific amenity may occur by multiple property owners.

Page 46: Add the following bullet the end of the bulleted list under Major Provision:

- Allow alterations, repairs or reconstruction of buildings under the standards of the zone in effect at the time the building was constructed.

Page 46: Modify the second to last bullet on the page as follows:

- Under the CBD-1 Zone only: standard method development, with an 1 FAR bonus that would allow up to 2 FAR of density for non-residential development, but requiring the site plan approval pursuant to 59-D-3. Streetscaping will be required as part of the site plan approval.

Page 47: Add the following bullet at the end of the page:

Rezone the Blair property from R-10 to CBD-R2 contingent upon the passage of a zoning text amendment to cap the density at the amount allowed by the current zoning. The change in zoning would allow for more flexibility and creativity for development without increasing the amount of development or changing the mix of uses. If the text amendment to cap the density fails to pass this rezoning should not be approved as part of the Sectional Map Amendment process.

This 28-acre site is currently split-zoned R-10 (20 acres) and CBD-R2 (8 acres). The Blair Park site is both residential and commercial, with apartments and townhouses surrounding a shopping plaza anchored by Giant Food and several other stores, restaurants, etc. The site is bounded by East Avenue, Colesville Road, East West Highway and Blair Mill Road.

The full residential use of the property could be equivalent to 80 dwelling units per acre under standard methods, or 200 dwelling units per acre or a FAR 4 under optional method of development. For the Blair tract, these limits equal 2240 dwelling units under the standard method or 5600 units under the optional method. This Master Plan sets a cap of 2,800 dwelling units under the optional method. This site will also be subject to the terms of a new text amendment that limits the maximum allowed commercial square footage to 450,000 square feet of standard method development in the CBD-R2 zone on sites of ten or more contiguous acres.

Page 49: Insert the following new chapter with text moved from the chapter on Revitalization Area Recommendations:

Urban Design Chapter

Sometimes dismissed as just aesthetic, a community's appearance can significantly contribute to its function, value, and safety. This Plan makes recommendations to improve the downtown environment and encourage private investment.

For Silver Spring to become a thriving downtown it must also be inviting to the pedestrian. A continuous building line, no blank walls, interesting window displays, street trees, continuous sidewalks, outdoor cafes, and parking along the street, in rear yards, and in mid-block public parking facilities will create an attractive environment that also addresses safety concerns of residents, businesses, and visitors. Incorporating green and open spaces into the downtown will create attractive and useful spaces. Bike trails and safe pedestrian routes through downtown will provide vital connections, but also make downtown a pleasant place to be.

Private sector development will be supported with public/private partnership investments in streetscape improvements, the proposed Transit Center, park projects, and community facilities. By capitalizing on existing and proposed developments, Silver Spring will meet the goals of the state's Smart Growth initiative. This combination of efforts and environments will make the CBD a more convenient place in which to live and work, and will begin to transform it into a true community downtown.

The following general urban design guidelines should be incorporated into redevelopment projects in the Silver Spring CBD. Proposed projects should:

- conform to the CBD-wide planning issues of this Plan such as transportation, historic preservation, and environmental resources, the Urban Renewal Plan for site specific issues such as land use and zoning, and the standards of a revised Silver Spring Streetscape Plan.
- create an attractive pedestrian environment by creating a system of short blocks, and defining streets with buildings, open spaces, and streetscaping at a human scale created by street-front retail, frequent doors and windows, architectural detail, and appropriately scaled building heights.
- through urban design treatments, establish streetscapes that emphasize the hierarchy of the circulation system
- create formal and informal civic spaces, buildings and open spaces, that add to property values, provide amenity, and improve downtown's aesthetic appearance.
- provide safe and attractive pedestrian connections between new development on the Urban Renewal site and surrounding CBD neighborhoods, particularly Fenton Village.
- incorporate historic resources into new development whenever possible.

- contribute to implementing the Silver Spring Green Trail, a linear park intended to link downtown locations with the surrounding park and trail system, while creating a distinctive green path through the CBD.
- incorporate the principles of crime prevention through environmental design by integrating visibility, pedestrian activity, and programming into project layouts.

CORE

Three significant projects in the Core of Silver Spring will be influential in shaping downtown's future. Redevelopment in the Urban Renewal Area will include regional and local retail, a hotel, movie theaters, and offices. The Transit Center redevelopment will make convenient transportation links from Silver Spring throughout the region. The Discovery Communications headquarters will bring a significant corporate presence to downtown.

Urban Renewal Area

The Urban Renewal Area is located in the very center of the Core, and includes existing development, historic buildings, and vacant land. (See Figure 13 and Map 33.) The proposed Downtown Silver Spring development and the Discovery Communications corporate headquarters capitalize on the CBD's primary intersection. Additional visibility is created by a gateway plaza proposed at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road that will also reorient the area east of Georgia Avenue around a redesigned pedestrian-friendly Ellsworth Street. This community-serving development will also reuse the historic Silver Theatre and Shopping Center. Development in the Urban Renewal Area will continue to be governed by the goals and guidelines of the Urban Renewal Plan.

- Design of individual projects within the Urban Renewal Area should contribute to the greater urban environs.
- Ensure that the Urban Renewal Area development frontage along Wayne Avenue incorporates activating uses, includes the proposed Green Trail, and allows visible pedestrian connections to Fenton Village.
- Develop the Urban Renewal Area parcels east of Georgia Avenue as a mixed-use retail, entertainment, office, and hotel project.
 - Renovate the Silver Spring Shopping Center, using it to create a CBD landmark.
- Ensure that the links between the Silver Theater and the Downtown Silver Spring project are clear.
 - Redevelop the Silver Theatre as a film education and entertainment venue maintaining, as much as possible, the building's original appearance and function.

- Incorporate a civic building and public outdoor space into the project that can accommodate varied community activities and commemorate Silver Spring's veterans. Relocate the civic function components of the Armory to this facility.
- Develop the Silver Triangle site west of Georgia Avenue, recognizing and using its strategic location and potential to create a focus in the Core as a mixed-use development, including a large open space that is visible and accessible from adjacent streets.
- Should the approved project plan be changed, buildings on this site should be located with ground floor retail along Colesville Road and be an opportunity for a signature building at the CBD's center.
- The Silver Triangle's open space should be integrated with the Transit Center's open space, be visible and easily accessible from surrounding streets, be landscaped with shade trees, and both grassy and paved areas, include a central focal point, such as a water feature, be activated by ground floor retail uses, pedestrian routes, and programming, and be designed and sized to accommodate a variety of community activities.
- The Silver Triangle's central CBD location near Metro and the Urban Renewal Area give it the potential to be an active downtown focal point. Allow additional height above 143 feet on this site subject to Planning Board approval.
- include a mid-block crossing of Georgia Avenue to connect to development on the Urban Renewal site
- Include pedestrian connections through the Silver Triangle site linking the Downtown Silver Spring project with the Transit Center.

Map 33 CBD Boundary With Urban Renewal Area

Transit Center

The proposed Silver Spring Metrorail Station will become a true transportation center and a gateway to downtown. The redesigned station will incorporate and connect bus, taxi, and local and regional rail service in one pedestrian-friendly facility. Including street-level convenience retail and a landscaped park will make transit a more convenient and attractive option for the CBD's residents, employees, and visitors, and will make the Transit Center a community crossroads and landmark.

The following project guidance is designed to ensure that the Transit Center is accessible to pedestrians and vehicles from all parts of downtown, that it is compatible with adjacent development, and that it contributes to the CBD's revitalization.

- Design and build the Transit Center to:

- integrate access to all modes of mass transit, Metrorail, MARC, buses, and a future transit line to Bethesda, in one facility on Colesville Road
- improve pedestrian safety and aesthetics in and around the Center with wide, tree-lined paths and specially paved crosswalks
- include a street-front retail component facing a tree-lined Colesville Road promenade for the convenience of transit riders and other CBD users
- meet revitalization goals by incorporating a relocated park, pedestrian and bike connections, and street-fronting retail in a landmark building
- include direct connections to the Silver Triangle site and to the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail
- consolidate curb cuts at the triangular corner of Colesville Road and Wayne Avenue
- minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, ensuring pedestrians equal or greater prominence in the design, and minimize conflict between buses and vehicles on the Transit Center and Silver Triangle sites.

Map 34 Core Concept Plan

Figure 9 Typical Promenade Streetscape

Promenade streets are landscaped with a double row of trees to create distinct green, linear spaces that incorporate high-quality pedestrian and bike paths.

Other Core Projects

- Develop the Lee Block with a mix of uses that could include housing, office, and retail uses. Buildings here should: incorporate street-activating uses, be designed with sensitivity to the historic Montgomery Arms Apartments along Fenton Street, and incorporate the J.C. Penney facade into new development. The remainder of the block should be included in the Silver Spring Historic District evaluation, and be configured create through-block pedestrian paths.
- Future development on the Apple Avenue site could include a mix of uses that include housing, office, and retail uses. New development should be compatible with surrounding development including existing high-rise residential and office buildings as well as the townhouses at Cameron and Second Street.
- Redevelopment of the northwest corner of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and

Colesville Road should recognize that site's critical visual significance and make safe and attractive connections to the Urban Renewal site and to the Silver Triangle.

- Incorporate a public open space along Fidler Lane from Ramsey Avenue to Second Avenue, and redevelop Fidler Lane as a mixed street or park and as a bike-friendly area.
- Establish the Silver Spring Green Trail through the Core as a defining aesthetic feature, and to link pedestrian and bike routes through the downtown.
- Establish a gateway presence with building design and landscaping at Colesville Road and Cedar Street, and at Colesville Road and East West Highway.
- Review existing signs and develop a way-finding plan including directional and informational signs, identification of gateways and districts, banners, kiosks, graphics, and visual cues to enhance the CBD's image and function.

RIPLEY

The Ripley District's proximity to the Transit Center and other downtown development projects makes it a natural location for spin-off development. The following goals and guidelines should be incorporated into future development in this area.

- Prepare drawings that illustrate development options for the Ripley District.

These drawings will be used by staff to guide and evaluate optional method development proposals. They should explore development patterns; open space as an organizing feature; car, pedestrian, and bike connections to the proposed Transit Center; and a pedestrian/bike connection across the CSX railroad tracks. A bridge to cross the tracks was a condition of the NOAA phase 3 approval. Although escrow money exists, the bridge has not been built because there is no landing on the north side of the tracks. A site for the bridge should be identified when the Ripley Districts builds out.

- Proposed projects should define public activity nodes and a path network that:
 - make connections to the proposed Transit Center, the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail, and other CBD facilities and neighborhoods
 - incorporate one or more recreational facilities sized and programmed to meet community interests, and that make use of their urban location
 - create open spaces designed to form a new image for this neighborhood, and contribute to an improved visual quality along Georgia Avenue.

- Building heights along Georgia Avenue should contribute to an attractive and coherent street.
 - at the building line, limit height to 90 feet, consistent with height limits on the east side of Georgia Avenue. (See Figure 6.)
 - the building may step back and its height may be increased up to 143 feet, provided that the building is contained within a 2:1 slope.
- Building heights along Dixon Avenue and Ripley Street should contribute to an attractive street with adequate light and air.
 - to be in proportion with the 70 to 80 foot street widths, building height should be limited to 80 feet at the property line. (See Figure 13.)
 - beyond 80 feet, the building may step back and its height may be increased up to 143 feet, provided they are contained within a 2:1 slope. (See Figure 13.)

SOUTH SILVER SPRING

South Silver Spring is the CBD's gateway and offers many opportunities for redevelopment. The following guidelines should be incorporated into redevelopment.

- Prepare studies and drawings that illustrate development options for South Silver Spring

Further efforts to identify and examine revitalization issues and illustrate an urban design vision of the area through drawings and perspective sketches is important in realizing South Silver Spring's potential. These initiatives can be used to encourage business relocation to the area and assist staff in evaluating development proposals. It should explore development patterns; open space as an organizing feature; car, pedestrian, and bike connections, as well as potential of adaptive reuse, infill development sites, and site assemblage in the context of market needs and building programs.

- Improve links within South Silver Spring and between South Silver Spring and the Core, the Ripley District, the Transit Station, Montgomery College, and the District of Columbia.
- Building heights along Newell Street and Eastern Avenue should ensure compatibility with the adjacent residential neighborhood.
 - at the property line, building heights should be limited to 45 feet
 - above 45 feet, the building may step back 60 feet and its height may increase to 90 feet.

- Building heights along Georgia Avenue should contribute to an attractive and coherent street.
 - at the building line, limit height to 90 feet, consistent with height limits on the east side of Georgia Avenue
 - beyond 15 feet, the building may step back and its height may be increased up to 143 feet, provided that the building is contained within a 2:1 slope.
- Building heights along East West Highway should contribute to a coherent and attractive streetscape with adequate light and air.
 - building heights on the street's west side are limited to 90 feet by the CBD-1 Zone
 - building heights on the street's east side can go up to 143 feet, allowed in the CBD-2 Zone, provided that the building height is contained with a 2:1 slope after the initial 90 feet.

FENTON VILLAGE

With its location between redevelopment on the Urban Renewal site, and residential neighborhoods, redevelopment on and around Fenton Street should create a local retail neighborhood that serves residents and CBD employees.

- Prepare studies and drawings that illustrate development options for Fenton Village

Further efforts to identify and examine revitalization issues and illustrate an urban design vision of the area through drawings and perspective sketches is important in realizing Fenton Village's potential. These initiatives should include:

- examining the potential for housing in Fenton Village, particularly in the transition area between the commercial and residential areas. This effort should include input from the adjacent East Silver Spring planning area
- identifying potential commercial and residential development sites and developing conceptual development scenarios
- supporting an Adopt-a-Block program on the two blocks bounded by Wayne Avenue, Fenton Street, Thayer Avenue, and Georgia Avenue
- examining parking demands and the design and configuration of parking lots and garages throughout the area, and suggesting renovations to improve their appearance, safety, and convenience. Options can include improved lighting, signs, and landscaping

- supporting DHCA and Main Street recommendations to upgrade the physical appearance of Fenton Street through streetscaping, landscaped parking lots, infill development that helps define the street, and attractive screening of parking and vacant lots to help create a distinctive image, to improve the pedestrian environment, and to encourage private reinvestment. Efforts should include:
 - examining the potential for a mid-block pedestrian connection between Core redevelopment and Fenton Village
 - examining potential reuse and redesign of public parking lots with infill residential or commercial development, or improved landscaping
 - improving links and road alignments within Fenton Village and between Fenton Village and the Core, the Ripley District, the Police Station on Sligo Avenue, the Transit Station, and Montgomery College
 - landscaping the public parking lot between Silver Spring Avenue and Thayer Avenue to include landscaping at Fenton Street, shade trees distributed throughout the lot, seating, special paving, and well-defined pedestrian paths. The lot should be designed to accommodate community events
 - examining potential for landscaping opportunities throughout Fenton Village.
- Proposed projects should provide efficient, safe, and attractive at-grade pedestrian links within Fenton Village and to the surrounding CBD.
- Projects proposed along the east side of Fenton Street should make a transition between the commercial district and the adjacent single family homes, creating compatibility through height changes, siting, and green, landscaped buffers.
- Limit building height for new construction fronting along the east side of Georgia Avenue to 90 feet and 60 feet for properties fronting on the west side of Fenton Street. Properties between Georgia Avenue and Fenton Street not fronting on either street are limited to 60 feet but may go up to 90 feet for projects that are at least 33 percent residential and where the additional height is placed closest to Georgia Avenue and tapered down moving east to Fenton Street.
- Limit building height for new construction fronting on the east side of Fenton Street to 45 feet for all uses except housing which would be allowed up to 60 feet.

Page 53: Modify the first full paragraph as follows:

On-street, off-peak parking should be [provided] considered where there are no safety conflicts, along major arteries in the CBD to encourage convenient stops at area businesses and to buffer pedestrians along busy thoroughfares.

Page 55: Replace the text under heading for Public Transportation with the following:

[Combine regional and local transportation services at the Transit Center, creating a hub for] Develop an enhanced, intermodal public transportation system to serve both CBD residents and workers as well as those transferring between transit services.

The Silver Spring Transit Center will serve as a focus for public transportation services in the CBD, linking regional rail, local rail, local bus, intercity bus, taxi, pedestrian, and bicycle options. The Transit Center should be a downtown landmark and a gateway to Silver Spring, particularly the surrounding development in the Urban Renewal area including the Silver Triangle and Ripley District.

- Design and construct the Transit Center as a pedestrian-friendly landmark facility serving connections between MARC, Metrorail, Ride-On bus, intercity bus, and future Georgetown Branch service, with auto, taxi, bicycle, and pedestrian options. Ensure that early design stages include citizen input and resolve potential operating conflicts among the different modes of travel.
- Provide for fixed-guideway transit service along the Georgetown Branch and Metropolitan Branch rights-of-way between Silver Spring and Bethesda.
- Improve accessibility to transit and bikeways throughout the CBD via sidewalk connections, bus shelters, and similar facilities.

The Capital Beltway Corridor Transportation Study being conducted by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is reviewing the feasibility of fixed-guideway transit and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities to serve regional circumferential travel through areas of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties served by the Capital Beltway. The MDOT study will include a sketch-level review of several alternative routes for a new circumferential light rail or Metrorail transit route, commonly described in the aggregate as the "Purple Line." Some of the alternatives incorporate the Georgetown Branch Trolley/Trail alignment between the Bethesda and Silver Spring central business districts, include a Silver Spring Transit Center station, and continue north or east toward Four Corners or Takoma Park.

This Sector Plan fully supports the implementation of transit service along the Georgetown Branch alignment between Bethesda and Silver Spring. The feasibility assessment of other fixed-guideway transitway connections within the CBD has not yet been established. This Plan does not preclude the concept of continuing circumferential rail transit from the Silver

Spring Transit Center to the north or east, should the MDOT study determine that such service would be both desirable and feasible from a regional perspective. In that case however, this Sector Plan should be revisited to consider any changes to right-of-way or easement acquisition, land use, design, and zoning recommendations.

Page 60: Change CBD Rights-of-Way map to reflect 60-foot right-of-way for Draper Lane extended and that additional the right-of-way for Blair Road be taken from the north side.

Page 68: Add the following text under second italicized the recommendation:

Conversion of publicly-owned surface parking lots should be preceded by analysis of parking needs and supply.

Page 74: Modify the 2nd sentence of the 2nd full paragraph as follows:

“While the Department of Libraries believes that the current library is adequate to serve community needs, both librarians and the community believe its collections and range of services could be expanded.”

Page 74: Modify the second to last sentence in the fourth full paragraph on the page as follows:

Station One is owned by the [volunteer fire fighters] Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department.

Page 74: Modify the second sentence of the fifth full paragraph as follows:

“The Fire and Rescue Commission [is] has form[ing]ed a site selection committee.”

Page 74: Modify the last paragraph on the page as follows:

“The Fire Commission has established building standards for fire station construction to reduce costs and to avoid repeating professional services. Using these standards, and based on transportation and accessibility issues, the Silver Spring station should be constructed within the boundaries of Bonifant, Fenton, Philadelphia, and the rail right-of-way.”...

Page 77: Update the schedule for acquisition, planning, and construction of the new District Court prior to final printing since the schedule in the Draft is out of date.

Page 77/81: Rewrite and update the sections that discuss the CBD satellite station (as well as related maps) since a decision regarding its location was made as part of the FY2000 budget.

Page 77: Modify the 2nd sentence of the 1st paragraph which reads:

“The CBD is part of the Silver Spring police district headquartered at 801 Sligo Road [(though a draft Policies Facilities Master Plan suggests relocating the station farther north, outside of the Silver Spring/Takoma Park planning area)].

Page 77: Replace the word “substation” with “satellite stations” wherever it appears on this page in reference to police facilities in the Silver Spring District.

Page 81: Modify the seventh bullet, under “Library” as follows:

Should the library relocate, the Department of Libraries should strongly consider the central CBD as the location for a new downtown library [should be developed in a central CBD location].

Page 80: Modify the first sentence of the fourth paragraph as follows:

“In Silver Spring, Progress Place and the County have established co-located services to conveniently serve medical, job training and placement, and emergency needs of a varied and growing low-income and homeless population.”

Page 80: The Plan states: “This Plan encourages.... encouraging and monitoring the provision of child care for residents and employees as the CBD redevelops.” The **State, not the County**, is responsible for monitoring childcare and the text should be changed accordingly.

Page 80: Delete the text in brackets below that appears as the last dashed item on the page:

[- examining the need for physical modifications to the Progress Place facility that may be required to meet the Plan’s transportation goals.]

Page 80/82: Update statements in the Plan regarding the need to establish and elder day care facility in the CBD since one has recently been established.

Page 81: Revise the text that states “Locate Courthouse along Georgia Avenue” to conform to the map that indicates that there are a number of different potential sites some of which are not on Georgia Avenue.

Page 82: Modify second bolded heading:

Health and Human [Resources] Services

Page 85: Change second sentence under South Fenton Gateway Park as follows:

This Plan recommends that the park be expanded through the purchase of additional land [and the redesign of the Fenton Street/Burlington Road intersection]. The Fenton Street/Burlington Avenue intersection may need to be redesigned as a result of the gateway park, but no specific intersection reconfiguration is recommended at this time.

Page 86: Eliminate from Figure 5 the reference: "Intersection Improvements to Eliminate Free Right Turns"

Page 96: Replace the existing text under the heading Community Water and Sewer with the following:

Under the County's Comprehensive Water and Supply Sewage Systems Plan, community (public) water and sewer service is available throughout the master plan area and is provided by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission.

Two major sewer lines serve the CBD: Sligo Creek and Rock Creek. The WSSC recently upgraded the Sligo Creek trunk sewer, which has sufficient transmission capacity for projected sewer flows through at least 2010. The WSSC recently performed an extensive review of the Rock Creek trunk sewer, which has historically experienced very high peak flows due to extraneous flows of groundwater (infiltration) and rainwater (inflow). The 1985 Blue Plains Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) specifies the maximum peak flow allowed at the point that the trunk sewer enters the District of Columbia. The WSSC's review of the Rock Creek sewer system indicates that the peak flow may exceed the IMA limit in the next ten years if actions are not initiated to reduce the impacts of extraneous infiltration of and inflow into the sewer system. Key elements include an aggressive infiltration/inflow control program and optimized use of the existing Rock Creek sewer storage facility, in addition to other flow reduction projects. The WSSC will closely monitor flows within the sewer system to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to manage the peak flows in conformance with the IMA. The analysis of the Rock Creek sewer system indicated that, with the implementation of the appropriate flow management project, the capacity of this system will support the redevelopment of the CBD.

Delete chapter entitled "Revitalization Area Recommendations", Pages 101 – 158.

Page 160: Modify the first sentence of the second paragraph to read:

[Pursuant to] Following the new master plan process described earlier in this Plan,...

Page 160: Add the following text to the beginning of the second sentence in the third paragraph:

The mandatory referral process will involve Executive and Park and Planning staff [will assist] in site selection and...

Page 160: Divide the third paragraph into two paragraphs, with the following the first sentence of the new fourth paragraph:

“A coordination mechanism should be created to support and promote the revitalization of South Silver Spring.”

Page 161: Make the following revisions to the first bolded heading:

THE [CBD] CORE

Page 162: Make the following revision to the first heading:

South Silver Spring [Gateway]

Page 162: Delete first bullet under South Silver Spring heading:

- [Design and build the Montgomery College expansion and renovate Jessup Blair Park.]

Page 162: Add the following nine bullets under South Silver Spring Gateway heading:

- Renovate and update the facilities and infrastructure at Jesup Blair Park in coordination with the College renovation.
- Support Montgomery College’s expansion and relocation.
- Support the creation of a landscape, building, or other design feature that defines this area as a CBD and County gateway.
- Incorporate a way-finding plan to enhance the image and function of the CBD.
- Design and construct a street pattern and streetscape that breaks up large blocks and improves visibility and access for developable parcels.
- Provide incentive programs to support private sector investment in business development and building construction, refurbishing or reconstruction including:
 - supporting locally targeted streetscape and facade easement programs, financing assistance, tax credits, the Enterprise Zone, green tape permitting process, and urban district activities
 - supporting a constructive demolition program that will help subsidize the cost of demolition to encourage new construction and will allow the owner to retain existing FAR.

- Support educational opportunities for small businesses on marketing, promotion, customer retention, etc. Expand business administration and retail training efforts.
- Encourage housing development through incentive programs, such as the State legislation enacted for the Downtown Management District in Baltimore that provides tax assistance for conversion of commercial space to market rate housing.
- Support the Gateway-Georgia Avenue Revitalization Corporation's efforts. Support educational opportunities for small businesses on marketing, promotion, customer retention, etc. Expand business administration and retail training efforts.
- Encourage housing development through incentive programs, such as the State legislation enacted for the Downtown Management District in Baltimore that provides tax assistance for conversion of commercial space to market rate housing.
- Support the Gateway-Georgia Avenue Revitalization Corporation's efforts.
- Assess development options, including options for vacant buildings.

Page 162: Add the following as the fourth through seventh bullets under the Fenton Village heading:

- Work with the public and private sectors to attract new businesses and strengthen existing businesses through recruitment, marketing, promotion, physical improvements, and maintenance.
- Encourage redevelopment efforts that include a marketing and promotion campaign, identifying, developing, promoting, and recruiting for niche markets, an Adopt-a-Block initiative on Bonifant Street, educational opportunities for small businesses, reviewing existing economic development programs, a way-finding plan,
- Explore management options, potential customers, promotion techniques, financing, and potential locations for a successful farmer's or public market
- Examine incentive programs to develop vacant properties and redevelop under-used properties, including:
 - financial incentives to prevent existing businesses from moving elsewhere and future businesses from choosing another location
 - encouraging owner-occupancy of businesses through low-interest or no-interest loans

- continuing existing programs such as the 50/50 Facade Easement Program, Green Tape Zone, Incubator Without Walls program, the streetscaping project for Fenton Street, code enforcement, and the Silver Spring Enterprise Zone

General

All figures and tables included in the Plan are to be revised where appropriate to reflect District Council changes to the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan. Maps should be revised where necessary to conform with Council actions. The text is to be revised as necessary to achieve clarity and consistency, to update factual information, and to convey the actions of the District Council. All identifying references pertain to the Planning Board (Final) Draft Silver Spring Central Business District and Vicinity Sector Plan.

This is a correct copy of Council action.


Mary A. Edgar, CMC
Clerk of the Council

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... and special thanks to all Park and Planning Department staff who contributed to the revitalization planning effort in the Silver Spring CBD.

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Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan

Approved and Adopted

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