

# Site Criteria

## Site Layout Criteria

(Re-printed with modifications from the Rockville Town Center Master Plan; approved and adopted on October 22, 2001; modifications were made to specify only site criteria that apply to the "focus" area as described in this document)

**SL-1:** All site plan layouts shall give first consideration to pedestrians

**SL-2:** All buildings must be built at the edge of public right-of-way and building setbacks shall be sufficient to provide for pedestrian circulation and activity. Thus, additional dedication of public right-of-way may be required. All MD 355 frontage may be set back to incorporate green space that complements proposed open space on the east side of MD 355.

**SL-3:** No side or rear setbacks are required; minimum ten feet if provided.

**SL-4:** Parking must be located to the side or rear of the structure except as described in the Parking Design Regulatory Recommendations in Section 13.5.

**SL-5:** Building facades on Maryland Avenue between Courthouse Square and Dawson Avenue, and on North Washington Street between Montgomery Avenue and E. Middle Lane must occupy 100% of the street frontage. This street frontage requirement may be reduced to 80% if the development creates plazas or courtyards, and allows for alley access to parking in the rear with pedestrian walkways.

**SL-6:** Recessed entrances shall be designed so that they do not exceed 50% of the width of the storefront, nor 10 feet in depth.

**SL-7:** New curb cuts shall be avoided or minimized on Maryland Avenue and Washington Street.

**SL-8:** Loading and service areas shall be located and designed to minimize visibility from public rights-of-way and public spaces. Placement within parking garages is preferred and the use of walls and landscaping to screen views of these areas is encouraged.



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## **Building Scale & Massing Criteria**

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**BSM-1:** Buildings throughout the overlay district should be at least two (2) stories in height. Along Maryland Avenue north of Jefferson Street, buildings should be at least three (3) floors in height.

**BSM-2:** Building frontage widths or bays in all areas west of MD355 should be scaled to the pedestrian with a rhythm of 15-30 feet spacing that creates facade interest.

**BSM-3:** An upper floor building setback shall be encouraged on Maryland Avenue and North Washington Street. Upper floors 45 feet above the street level of buildings that exceed 75 feet in height may be required to set back 15 feet from the lower facade on both streets. Building heights above the required setback are determined by zoning classifications. The goal of this guideline is to allow more sunlight to reach the street and, more importantly, to maintain a low- to medium- rise streetscape character that will be more comfortable to pedestrians. Building setbacks that result in the mass of tall buildings being recessed so that they appear to be out of view from pedestrians at street level can help to maintain an appropriate, pedestrian-friendly scale to both Maryland Avenue and North Washington Street. Building setbacks become more critical the taller the building is. An appropriately designed 75 foot tall building may still feel comfortable to pedestrians, so some flexibility in regard to this guideline should be utilized.

**BSM-4:** Buildings located at corners should serve as gateways distinguishable from the rest of the buildings. As such, building heights at corners shall be allowed greater flexibility than described in BSM-3 as long as the design elements reinforce the corner location and are pedestrian friendly.

**BSM-5:** Distinctive roof forms, profiles, and cornices shall be encouraged to provide a termination to the top of the building in such a manner as to complement and enhance the character of Town Center. On sites at corners, the roof design should emphasize the corner.



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## **Fenestration Criteria**

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**F-1:** *Windows should comprise 25-50% of upper facades visible from public rights-of-way and should reflect a rhythm, scale and proportion compatible with the overall building design.*

**F-2:** *All buildings on Maryland Avenue shall incorporate a traditional storefront design with a large display window or windows of clear glass, bulkheads, recessed entries (where appropriate), transom windows, and suitable locations for signs at their ground levels. Modern and creative design solutions may be employed as long as the traditional storefront proportions are referenced. Multiple storefronts within the same building should be visually compatible in terms of scale, alignment, color and materials. On Maryland Avenue, at least 75% of the ground floor facade shall be glass.*

**F-3:** *Retail spaces on Maryland Avenue, Market Street and North Washington Street shall be accessed directly from the sidewalk or via, rather than through lobbies or other internal spaces.*

**F-4:** *Traditional elements found around windows such as balconies, shutters, lintels, and window sills are encouraged to provide character and detail to facades.*



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## Architectural Detailing Criteria

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**AD-1:** All buildings shall have their principal building pedestrian entrance on the primary facade. Additional entrances that are publicly accessible may be on a via.

**AD-2:** Above 7 feet, encroachments for projecting signs or awnings should be permitted into the right-of-way, providing encroachment does not interfere with trees, utilities, transit shelters, or other street furnishings.

**AD-3:** Awnings, canopies, and recessed entries should be designed as integral parts of the building.

**AD-4:** Awnings shall fit within framed openings and shall be a traditionally-designed sloped awning consistent with the architectural style and character of the building.

**AD-5:** All buildings shall incorporate elements which break up facade planes and create a visual play of light and shadow. Avoid long, un-interrupted horizontal elements.

**AD-6:** Vertical divisions of ground and upper floors should be consistent. Major horizontal elements of neighboring buildings and storefronts, such as awnings, sign bands, and cornices shall align, if feasible.

**AD-7:** For all buildings above two (2) stories, the ground floor shall be architecturally distinguished from the upper facade to form a visual base for the building, and create an intimate scale for the pedestrian.

**AD-8:** Sides and rears of buildings that are visible from the right of way should be designed in a compatible manner utilizing a similar architectural treatment. No large blank wall surfaces will be allowed on facades that are visible from a public right-of-way.

**AD-9:** The use of high quality, durable materials which enhance the building and convey a sense of permanence shall be required. Desirable facade materials for new or renovated facades include brick, concrete, stucco, marble, granite, tile, and terra cotta.

**AD-10:** Sloped roofs visible from public rights-of-way should be of slate, tile, standing-seam metal, or other high quality materials.



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## **Parking Design Criteria**

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**PD-1:** No surface parking shall be allowed along Maryland Avenue except for on-street parallel parking; structured parking would be allowed, but it must be faced with other uses on the first and second floors at a minimum.

**PD-2:** Structured parking is allowed but it must incorporate well-designed architectural elements on facades that face the street or other buildings.

**PD-3:** Surface parking must be screened with landscape or hardscape materials. When utilized, surface parking lots must be located to the side or rear of buildings.

## **Signage Criteria**

**S-1:** Signs shall be integrated into the building design, but not detract from the architectural quality of individual buildings. Signs should respect the building facade. Signs are most effective when the architecture and rhythm of the street are preserved or emphasized by the design of the signs. Signs should not obscure architectural details including any projection, relief, cornice, column, window, door opening or trim, or change of building material or pattern.

**S-2:** The proper sign location shall be the area of any building that is free of architectural detail and not higher than the lowest of the following: 25 feet above the adjacent sidewalk, the bottom of the window sills on the second story, or the highest part of the building under the roof.

**S-3:** Creativity in signage design is encouraged; non-descript box signs are discouraged.

**S-4:** No freestanding signs other than directional or street signs.

