ATTACHMENT 1

1. SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks parallel to public streets are the main component in any system of urban pedestrian access. As of June 30, 1993, the City maintained 200 miles of sidewalks adjoining 147 miles of public streets, including State highways.

The City's Subdivision Regulations (Chapter 25, Rockville City Code) and Street Construction Standards (Chapter 21, Rockville City Code) provide the legal basis for Rockville's sidewalk system. These laws require that sidewalks be constructed on both sides of the street in most new subdivisions; in Planned Residential Unit (PRU) developments, specific requirements for sidewalks are prescribed by the Mayor and Council. The City also installs sidewalks on its own roadway projects. On newer arterial streets like Wootton Parkway, practice has been to provide an extra-wide sidewalk/bike path combination on at least one side of the street.

In general, the State Highway Administration (SHA) does not provide for sidewalks, so installation adjacent to State highways in Rockville is almost always the responsibility of the City. Since the mid-1980's, the SHA has been installing some sidewalks in conjunction with new roadway construction, but, similar to other sidewalks along State highways, maintenance remains a City responsibility.

Many streets in Rockville remain without sidewalks, particularly in older neighborhoods. Construction in these areas is made more difficult by such factors as insufficient right-of-way, poorly defined road edge, adverse grading, or private landscaping within the right-of-way. Projects can also be hampered by a lack of support from owners of properties directly adjacent to the proposed sidewalk. Without even considering funding, the goal of "a sidewalk on every street" (see Appendix 1) is expected to be elusive.

As important as the expansion of the sidewalk system is the quality of maintenance for existing sidewalks. Repair or replacement of sidewalks is accomplished both by City forces and by private enterprise under annual City contract. Over the last several years, the City has committed about $300,000 annually to sidewalk repair.

1a. Sidewalk Construction - General

- Along major and arterial streets, sidewalks should be provided on both sides within residential and business areas, and on one side of the street in all other areas.

- Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of business streets, and on at least one side of industrial streets.

- In residential areas, sidewalks should be provided on both sides of primary streets, and on at least one side of secondary streets. Around schools, secondary streets should be provided with sidewalks on both sides.

- For all street classifications, sidewalks should be placed on both sides of the street on routes served by local mass transit.

- All sidewalks shall be at least 4 feet in width, and constructed from hard-surface materials such as concrete, asphalt, or brick. Concrete is to be preferred in residential and business areas generally, with brick being reserved for use in areas of institutional or historical significance. Asphalt should be limited to use in combined pedestrian/bicycle facilities, and for sidewalks of a temporary nature. Asphalt may also be used in place of concrete for pedestrian pathways not adjacent to public streets (see under Exclusive Pedestrian Facilities).

- Sidewalks should be separated from the adjacent roadway by a buffer strip at least three (3) feet wide. This is especially important along high-speed, high volume streets on which vehicle travel occurs adjacent to the curb. Separation can take the form of a grass strip, a protective berm, or a wider sidewalk section that effectively provides a buffer while also supporting traffic control devices, street lighting and landscaping.

- In both new and existing developments, raised pedestrian refuge areas may be provided at intersections and other street crossing points. These refuges can take the form of islands, or peninsular curb extensions ("chokers"). In coordination with sidewalks, chokers are to be particularly encouraged at intersections where both vehicle and pedestrian movements are heavy, and where on-street parking may be desirable.

1b. New Development and Road Construction

- In new subdivisions, sidewalks shall be constructed on both sides of each street.

- In PRU developments, sidewalks should be constructed on both sides of each street, with specific requirements for sidewalks and other walkways to be determined by the Mayor and Council.

- In the Town Center, sidewalks shall be provided on both sides of each street, and shall be constructed in compliance with the design criteria contained in the Town Center Urban Design Plan.

- In conjunction with new roadway construction or major reconstruction, the City should construct sidewalks on both sides of the street within residential areas, business areas, and along routes served by local mass transit. In all other areas, sidewalks should be constructed on at least one side of the street.

- Parallel to arterial streets, the City may provide a wider hard-surface pathway to accommodate bicycles as well as pedestrians. The width of such facilities shall be at least 8 feet, and preferably 10 feet.

→→ - In reviewing plans for construction or reconstruction of State highways, the City should encourage the construction and/or improvement of sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities by the State, consistent with these policies.

- The appropriate standards of the Rockville Pike Plan and the Town Center Urban Design Plan shall be followed in the sizing and buffering of sidewalks. Protective berms are to be especially encouraged as sidewalk buffers along Rockville Pike and Hungerford Drive, Rockville's busiest and most hazardous streets.