





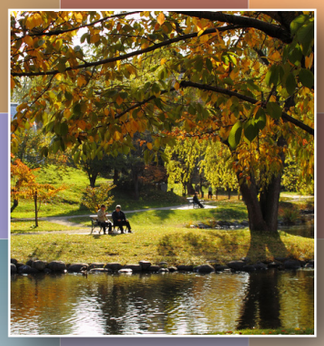



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

OF THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ELEMENTS + PLANNING AREAS

2040 ROCKVILLE

APPROVED AND ADOPTED AUGUST 2, 2021

City of Rockville Mayor and Council

Bridget Donnell Newton, Mayor
Monique Ashton, Councilmember
Beryl L. Feinberg, Councilmember
David Myles, Councilmember
Mark Pierzchala, Councilmember

Appointed Officials

Robert DiSpirito, City Manager
Cindy Walters, Acting City Attorney
Sara Taylor-Ferrell, City Clerk / Director of Council Operations

City of Rockville Planning Commission

Suzan Pitman, Chair
Anne Goodman
Charles Littlefield
Sarah Miller
Andrea Nuñez
Sam Pearson
John Tyner, II

Former Planning Commissioners

Don Hadley
Gail Sherman
Rev. Jane E. Wood

Key Contributors (current and former)

Rockville Asian Pacific American Task Force
Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee
Rockville Cultural Arts Commission
Rockville Economic Development, Inc.
Rockville Environment Commission
Rockville Historic District Commission
Rockville Housing Enterprises
Rockville Pedestrian Advocacy Committee
Rockville Recreation and Park Advisory Board
Rockville Senior Citizens Commission
Rockville Traffic and Transportation Commission

Department of Planning and Development Services

Ricky Barker, Director

David Levy, Assistant Director

Sheila Bashiri, Andrea Gilles, Barry Gore, Andrew Gunning, Cindy Kebba, Clark Larson, Susan Swift (former Director), Manisha Tewari, Ann Wallas, Jim Wasilak, Erin Wilson

Department of Housing and Community Development

Asmara Habte, Director

Janet Kelly

Department of Public Works

Craig L. Simoneau, Director

Kevin Belanger, Mark Charles, Judy Ding, Emad Elshafei, Heather Gewandter, Don Jackson, Oleg Kotov, Ilene Lish, Katie Mencarini, Faramarz Mokhtari, Alyssa Roff, John Scabis, Erica Shingara, Lisa Soukup, Susan Straus, Mark Wessel

Department of Recreation and Parks

Tim Chesnutt, Director

Steve Mader, Christine Henry, Mark Kibiloski, Wayne Noll

City Manager's Office

Hagop Balekjian, Noelle Barton, Mary Lou Berg, Hjarman Cordero, Cliff Cumber, Kathy Dantzler, Eric Ferrell, Jenny Kimball, Lori Russler

City Attorney's Office

Debra Daniel, Nick Dumais, Eliot Schaefer

...and all of the Rockville community members who contributed to this Plan!

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
OF THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
ELEMENTS

APPROVED AND ADOPTED
AUGUST 2, 2021




2040
What do you want Rockville to be like in 2040?

INTRODUCTION

Vision

Rockville will be a vibrant, multicultural, and socio-economically inclusive city with distinct neighborhoods that are supported by a strong local economy, a healthy natural environment, and a desirable quality of life founded on a responsive government.

Participants in the Rockville 2040 process gathered for the kick-off meeting in May of 2015 at the VisArts Building in Town Center. Small groups formed to discuss an overall vision statement for the Plan.

What will Rockville be like in 2040? Our kick-off for the update of the City's Comprehensive Plan in May of 2015 started with this question. It is simple enough to ask, though contemplation by each of the participants yielded different visions, hopes, and dreams. Some would like to see Rockville stay much the same as they experience it now; others, both long-time residents and newcomers, would like to see some change. A wide variety of issues were raised on how to address the city's needs over the short and long term. This Comprehensive Plan seeks to balance the many differing points of view to express a shared set of visions for guiding and shaping the community over the next 20 years.

This document is the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Rockville. It supersedes the last overall plan, which was the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*. It incorporates some previously approved neighborhood plans and supersedes others, as detailed in the Planning Areas section of this Plan.

This Plan's visions, principles, policies, and recommended actions were developed through an extensive community engagement process in which various ideas were discussed and some emerged as priorities. The goal of this Plan is that it reflects the wishes of the community, and that they are achievable, even if sometimes aspirational.

The principles of Rockville are to:

- Invite active community involvement in planning and other aspects of City government.
- Welcome and celebrate our diverse population.
- Remain fiscally fit in order to provide excellent City services, infrastructure, and facilities.
- Maintain and promote safe, attractive, welcoming, and amenity-rich neighborhoods.
- Encourage a variety of housing types that are accessible to a wide range of household needs and incomes.
- Support safe, efficient, and integrated multi-modal transportation choices.
- Provide accessible parks, open spaces, and community centers.
- Promote recreational and cultural opportunities.
- Proudly display our historic identity and character.
- Protect and enhance our natural environment and sensitive environmental areas.
- Steer the most-dense development to mixed-use, transit-served locations.
- Create the conditions necessary for equitable economic growth and opportunities.
- Support employment and businesses in a thriving local economy tied to the broader metropolitan region.
- Foster a vibrant, multicultural, and successful downtown and growing activity centers.
- Conduct our activities and planning in consideration of these inter-related principles in order to optimize their coordinated success and avoid long-term deficiencies.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

There are two central purposes for a comprehensive plan: (1) Establishing visions and goals for the future of the community with a set of policies and recommendations to achieve them, and (2) to fulfill State requirements for community planning.

Managing change and preserving what is important to the community is of particular importance in a comprehensive plan and is a core reason that communities choose to update their plans. Where change is already happening, this Plan attempts to ensure that the change will be beneficial to the community. Where change is desired but not yet occurring, a plan can help to bring about desired change. In areas where preservation is the highest priority to the community, this Plan establishes policies and recommends actions that will achieve such preservation. Throughout this Plan, Rockville's community is understood to include its residents, property owners, employers, business owners, employees, visitors, and all other stakeholders who have an interest in Rockville's future.

Comprehensive plans are implemented through various tools deployed by local governments. A primary set of tools are regulations, which include zoning, and rules/ordinances in such areas as environment and traffic. Plans are also implemented through a Capital Improvements Program (CIP), in which a government expends funds on such physical items as parks, roads, water infrastructure, and community centers. This Comprehensive Plan is the guide that is followed by implementing actions.

Government has had, and continues to have, a significant role in the creation of racial and ethnic inequities, as reflected, for example, in zoning and land uses laws, policies, and practices of many jurisdictions that have let to the perpetuation of institutional and structural racism and bias in our society. During the drafting of this Comprehensive Plan, the nation witnessed social and political unrest and a cultural shift leading to wider participation in the fight against inequity and injustices. For its part, the City of Rockville launched work, including the adoption of a Resolution on July 12, 2021, geared towards addressing racial and ethnic inequities and social injustice. This Comprehensive Plan reflects the City's commitment to incorporating racial equity and social justice in the following ways:

- The City commits itself to systematically and deliberately applying a racial and ethnic equity lens in its decision-making process to build a community that is inclusive, equitable, prosperous, and healthy for all; and
- The City commits to review existing policies and practices that may contribute to racial and ethnic inequities, and to make changes to eliminate the disparities in the areas of health, economic enrichment, education, housing, and justice within the municipal code; and
- The City will develop policies that effectively reduces and eradicates implicit bias, and advances diversity, cultural competency, fairness, and equity in all City government operations and regulated activities.

The second purpose of a comprehensive plan is to fulfill the State of Maryland requirement that all jurisdictions have a comprehensive plan. The power to regulate how land is used or occupied is granted by the State in exchange for compliance with Title 1 of the Land Use Article, Code of Maryland, which governs land use matters in municipalities. The comprehensive plan must be consistent with all State requirements, which include incorporating state visions, covering required elements, and following procedural requirements, such as soliciting public input, and reviewing and updating the plan on a regular basis. Rockville has full planning and zoning powers and is not governed by Montgomery County government planning or zoning regulations.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The policies in this Comprehensive Plan are the result of extensive community input that was gathered over a multi-year period, a process known as "Rockville 2040." In fact, community input began years before the official kick-off of the comprehensive plan process. Feedback provided by citizen survey results and the work accomplished during the 2011-2012 Rockville Summits, for instance, contributed early on toward the development of a shared community vision for Rockville. These summits included extensive research and discussion on topics related to the Comprehensive Plan, including housing, jobs, transportation, and the preservation of Rockville's unique character.

Public meetings since the plan update process formally commenced in 2015 were informed by data and analysis prepared by staff and consultants covering many of the topics included in the citywide plan elements. Reports were completed

on Community Facilities (which included Recreation and Parks as well as other civic facilities), Economic Development, Environment, Historic Preservation, Housing, Land Use, and Transportation. These reports were made available to the public during the community process to develop plan policies.

Comments received from residents and other stakeholders provided valuable insight into what the community thinks and feels are the most significant issues facing the city today and what issues may arise over the next 20 to 25 years. Overall, the community provided positive impressions of the City's policies and programs, and many participants identified a need for a collaborative approach that includes actions by the City and Montgomery County government, as well as by city residents and businesses, to achieve collective goals.

Listening sessions were the primary initial venue for individual input on the planning areas. At least one listening session was held in each planning area, as they were defined in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*, during the Rockville 2040 effort. Listening sessions were also held for special focus groups, including students from the city's three public high schools; Montgomery College students, staff, and faculty; the Rockville business community; and numerous social and cultural groups that have been under-represented in Rockville policy discussions in the past. In some planning areas, multiple meetings were held, often to focus on particular issues of interest.

The core approach of the listening sessions was to ask participants for input on what they wished to see change and what they wished remained the same in their neighborhoods, and throughout Rockville, over the next 20 to 25 years. Participants were also provided with language from their respective planning area as adopted in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* (2002 CMP) and asked to review it and provide comments. Existing neighborhood plans were also reviewed, where applicable.

Given the breadth of the topics covered, the community acknowledged the challenges and complexity of reconciling various issues and competing goals. As in most cities, complex issues are not easily solved quickly and independently, but require long-term, sustained, interdisciplinary action. These concerns underscore the importance of the Comprehensive Plan in setting clear goals for future growth, and for City projects and programs.

The opportunity to provide input on citywide elements and planning areas of the Comprehensive Plan remained available on-line and through in-person meetings throughout the Rockville 2040 planning process. Receiving official public testimony began with the release of the drafts for the Planning Commission public hearings in 2019 and 2020 for the Elements and Planning Areas sections, respectively.

It should be noted that this Comprehensive Plan was completed during a period that spanned the COVID-19 global pandemic. The pandemic changed many aspects of the daily lives of the Rockville community--how we travel, where we work, how and where we shop and, in some cases, where we choose to live and the types of housing in which we want to live. However, living through the pandemic has also highlighted the continuing importance of Rockville's



(clockwise, from top left): Listening sessions gathered community input through surveys and notes on maps; Public outreach for the Comprehensive Plan included listening sessions at Rockville's high schools, where students were engaged to think about the shape of Rockville over the next 20 years; Open house format meetings used display boards and informational hand-outs to communicate draft policy statements and planning concepts prior to writing the draft plan document; Citywide forums garnered detailed input on Element topics through small group exercises to draft policy statements and action items.

Rockville 2040 by the numbers:

1 Kick-off meeting started the public process on May 9, 2015. More than 50 members of the community attended, along with members of the Mayor and Council, Planning Commission, and City staff. Participants reviewed the 2002 plan vision and principles and offered suggestions for the new plan.

7 Background trend reports were developed by City staff and presented to the Planning Commission and to the community in preparation for the draft plan.

35 Listening sessions were held in 2015-2016 in each of the planning areas and with community groups, including students at the three high schools, Montgomery College, the Senior Center, the business community, and several ethnic and cultural advocacy organizations. The results of the Listening Sessions were compiled into two booklets: "What you Said" and "What you Wrote" and were presented to the Planning Commission in 2016 for reference during the crafting of the draft plan.

4 City-wide forums were held in the spring of 2016, featuring more than 120 participants. Participants developed policy statements to help guide plan drafting. The results of the citywide forums were presented to the Planning Commission.

3 Open houses were held in January 2018 to present draft policy statements and plan concepts. More than 100 citizens interacted with staff and gave feedback. Results of the Open Houses were presented to the Planning Commission.

6 Public hearing dates to accept testimony on the draft Comprehensive Plan (four with the Planning Commission and two with the Mayor and Council).

430 Total days were available to accept written testimony on the draft Comprehensive Plan, including both the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council public comment periods.

55 Meetings and work sessions were held in total by both the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council to prepare and revise the draft Comprehensive Plan.

... and many additional meetings were held with neighborhood groups, property owners, and other interested parties to gain input and explain the process.

community priorities: providing dynamic and high quality outdoor spaces; ensuring that everyone can safely walk, bike, roll, drive, and use transit; and offering a variety of housing types and commercial spaces to suit different needs and wants. These are priorities that the City will continue to pursue even after the immediate effects of the pandemic have passed. While it is too early to know whether trends resulting from the pandemic will continue into the future as this Plan is implemented, it is key that they are monitored so that they can be appropriately addressed.

STATE REQUIREMENTS

A comprehensive plan must include certain defined elements or topics (Annotated Code of Maryland Land Use Article, Section 3-102). The State of Maryland has established required elements that must be included in a comprehensive plan and optional elements that advance the purpose of comprehensive plans. There is no prescribed way these elements must be addressed. They may be covered in one document or in multiple documents; and chapters are not required to have titles that match the required elements. Rockville's Comprehensive Plan covers all applicable state-required elements and some optional additional elements, including Recreation and Parks and Historic Preservation.

Although this Comprehensive Plan presents the elements separately by chapter, many of the topics within them are integrated with other elements and many have overlapping themes. It is difficult to discuss land use, for instance, without housing and transportation since housing is a form of land use. Transportation investments have significant impacts on surrounding land uses. Similarly, land use patterns affect the demand for and utilization of transportation facilities. Where people live is influenced by the location of transportation facilities, and vice versa. The reader will find that a topic addressed in one element may also be included in another, perhaps with different emphasis.

Required Procedures for Plan Development

State law places planning commissions at the center of plan development whereby the planning commission develops the plan and forwards its recommendation to the legislative body (the Mayor and Council, in Rockville). The State Land Use Article establishes procedural requirements for plan adoption, as well. A draft plan must be submitted to the State (through its "clearinghouse" at the Maryland Department of Planning) and adjacent jurisdictions for review at least sixty (60) days prior to a planning commission public hearing. At least one public hearing is required, with notice being placed in the local newspaper of record.

Rockville's consistent practice has been to exceed State requirements in terms of both public notification and public engagement. This document continues in that tradition and has included intensive engagement with the community, from kick-off to adoption.

Regional Goals and State Planning Visions

Although the City of Rockville has its own planning and zoning authority, it recognizes and supports the goals and visions of the other levels of government in the plan development process. The City's Planning and Development Services Department works closely with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) to analyze growth trends and development, and often seeks technical assistance from the Maryland Department of Planning. These and other partnerships result in coordinated regional planning efforts. Below are examples of such efforts that have an impact on the plan.

Smart Growth

The State of Maryland is committed to the concept of Smart Growth, an urban planning and transportation theory that concentrates growth in compact walkable urban centers to avoid sprawl. Since 1992, the State has adopted a series of laws and policies aimed at promoting its four prime goals:

- Support existing communities by targeting resources to areas where infrastructure exists;
- Save our most valuable natural resources before they are forever lost;
- Save taxpayers from the high cost of building infrastructure to serve development that has spread far from our traditional population centers; and
- Provide Marylanders with a high quality of life, whether they choose to live in a rural community, suburb, small town, or city.

These goals are implemented through a system of designating areas of the state for differing levels of future growth, depending upon their natural resources and proximity to existing infrastructure. All Maryland municipalities, including Rockville, are designated as Priority Funding Areas within

the Smart Growth framework and are expected to absorb most of the projected future growth in the state and allow the state's more rural areas to be conserved. To support its goals, the State is committed to targeting funding to the designated growth areas. Rockville will need its Comprehensive Plan to help position itself for its fair share of State funding, and to manage the growth that the plan anticipates.

Region Forward

In 2010, the Mayor and Council endorsed "Region Forward," which is the MWCOG "vision for a more accessible, sustainable, prosperous and livable region." Region Forward lays out a series of goals that will guide growth in the region over the next thirty to forty years.

Implementation of Region Forward is progressing. In 2013, a number of Activity Centers were identified throughout the region that will be targeted for accommodating future growth and/or redevelopment. These centers tend to be compact, walkable, and aligned with the region's transportation network. Rockville has five Activity Centers within its municipal borders: King Farm, Research Center/Shady Grove, Montgomery College, Rockville Town Center, the Twinbrook transit station area, and Tower Oaks.

State of Maryland's Twelve Planning Visions

Maryland's Planning Visions Law of 2009 created twelve visions which reflect the State's ongoing aspiration to develop and implement sound growth and development policy. Local jurisdictions are required to include them in their local comprehensive plan and implement them through zoning ordinances and regulations. These visions are:

1. Quality of life and sustainability
2. Public participation
3. Growth areas
4. Community design
5. Infrastructure
6. Transportation
7. Housing
8. Economic development
9. Environmental protection
10. Resource conservation
11. Stewardship
12. Implementation

These visions are hereby adopted by the City of Rockville upon approval and adoption of this Comprehensive Plan.

A History of Planning in Rockville

The City of Rockville adopted its first master plan in 1960, the second in Maryland after the City of Baltimore. A new plan was adopted in 1970. Amendments to the 1970 Plan were adopted in 1981 and 1982. Seven area/neighborhood plans were also adopted as master plan amendments in the 1980s.

New comprehensive master plans were subsequently adopted in 1993 and 2002. In 2001, a year before the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* was completed, a new Town Center Master Plan was approved and adopted. When the 2002 Plan was adopted, it adopted the Town Center Master Plan by reference, along with all area/neighborhood plans to date. Since 2002, a new series of neighborhood plans were adopted, along with functional plans covering municipal growth, water resources, and bicycling; as well as an amendment to the Historic Preservation Element permitting Rockville to become part of the Montgomery County Heritage Area.

HOW TO READ THIS PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan is organized into two sections: Elements and Planning Areas. The elements contains policies and recommendations for ten topic areas, or 'Elements' as described by the State of Maryland Land Use Article, that generally apply citywide. The planning areas focus on policies and recommendations specific to neighborhood-scale geographic areas of the city.

Recommendations in each Planning Area are aligned with broader City policies, and all citywide policies in the Elements section also apply to all the Planning Areas, unless superseded by any overriding Planning Area policy(ies). Both the Elements and Planning Areas sections carry the same weight and make up one Comprehensive Plan for the City. Each section should be referenced to understand the full extent of City policy or recommended actions and projects for specific areas.

The Elements are divided into ten (10) chapters, each beginning with a big-picture guiding vision statement followed by an introduction to the topic, a summary of community input that was received about the Element during

the plan development process, and a summary of high-level goals for the Element. Each Element chapter is then organized by goals, and each goal includes policies and the actions steps required to implement each policy.

The Element of this Comprehensive Plan are:

1. Land Use
2. Transportation
3. Recreation and Parks
4. Community Facilities
5. Environment
6. Water Resources
7. Economic Development
8. Housing
9. Historic Preservation
10. Municipal Growth

The Planning Areas section includes information about seventeen (17) unique neighborhoods and districts that make up the city. For each planning area, a summary is provided of its distinctive characteristics and key issues and area-specific policies and recommendations for zoning changes, City projects, and topics are identified for additional study. Focusing on smaller parts of the city allows a finer-grained examination of topics than is possible in the citywide Element chapters.

The planning areas (PA) of this Comprehensive Plan are:

PA 1	Rockville Town Center
PA 2	East Rockville
PA 3	Hungerford, New Mark Commons, Lynfield and Fireside Park
PA 4	West End and Woodley Gardens East-West
PA 5	Woodley Gardens and College Gardens
PA 6	Lincoln Park
PA 7	Montgomery College Area
PA 8	Twinbrook and Twinbrook Forest
PA 9	Rockville Pike
PA 10	Montrose and North Farm
PA 11	Woodmont
PA 12	Tower Oaks
PA 13	Potomac Woods, Potomac Springs, Falls Ridge and Orchard Ridge
PA 14	Rockshire and Fallsmead
PA 15	Fallsgrove and Research Boulevard
PA 16	King Farm and Shady Grove
PA 17	Southlawn and RedGate

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan contains many recommendations that call for implementation once the Plan is adopted. It is a recommendation of the Plan that, immediately following its adoption, the City develop a strategy to implement every action item recommended in the Plan, with estimated time frames, key partners, and the resources necessary to accomplish them. Implementation items that require a Zoning Map amendment or adoption of new or revised regulations in the Zoning Ordinance should be given priority. Other Plan recommendations may also call for priority, upon adoption of the Plan.

UPDATING THE PLAN

The State of Maryland requires that jurisdictions with an adopted comprehensive plan review and, if necessary, update its comprehensive plan every ten years and complete a mid-cycle report of its comprehensive plan five years after its adoption date. The City's most recent comprehensive plan ten-year review occurred in 2010 with the adoption of the new Water and Municipal Growth Elements. This Plan continues the review cycle by replacing in its entirety the City's comprehensive plan that was last adopted in 2002.

In addition to State requirements to review and update the plan, the City recognizes that this Plan's visions, goals, policies, and recommendations may need to be updated or revised to achieve new policy goals or to address emergent trends in a rapidly changing world on a more frequent or regular basis. While this Comprehensive Plan is adopted as the long-term vision of the City and a guiding document for many City policies and regulations, the City should consider amendments to the Plan as new information emerges or needs arise.

Additionally, the City should recognize the potential need for short-term flexibility or deviation from this Plan in the face of urgent events that affect the city's residents, businesses, visitors, and municipal operations. Examples may include natural disasters, extreme weather events, or public health emergencies. With a focus on the long-term vision and evolution of Rockville, this Plan is not likely to impede immediate action. However, nothing in this Plan should be considered a limitation or hindrance to urgent, temporary action to address short-term crises.

While not necessarily requiring a change in comprehensive plan policies, the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic of 2020-21

presented significant challenges for the Rockville community. The City responded to this community-wide public health emergency by changing how it serves its customers at Rockville City Hall and other City facilities, how it utilizes its public rights-of-way, parks, and recreation centers, and how it supports its businesses and organizations. The pandemic served to show how interconnected the Rockville community is, and also how resilient and adaptable it can be. It also underscored the need for flexibility and to establish alternate means of communication to ensure that residents have multiple options to stay engaged and updated on City projects and initiatives.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Rockville is both a geographic place and the community of people who live, work, and visit in our city. Demographic analysis of the characteristics of the Rockville community is important to planning for the city's future, with particular attention given to trends and projections for future growth in residents, housing units, and number of employees in Rockville.

Regional Context

The City of Rockville is located within Montgomery County, Maryland. The southern boundary of the city is approximately 7 miles from the Washington D.C. boundary line and 12.5 miles from the Washington Monument in downtown D.C.

As Table 1 shows, for more than 50 years Rockville's population has consistently stayed between five and eight percent of the total population of Montgomery County, as both jurisdictions have grown. The maps in Figure 1 illustrate that Rockville is well within the urbanized areas of the region and Montgomery County. Consequently, there is little undeveloped land remaining in Rockville and in those portions of the county that are not preserved for agriculture or environmental purposes. As a result, accommodation of projected population growth in Rockville will be primarily through redevelopment to higher densities.

Demographic Trends

Rockville is a U.S. Census Bureau-designated 'place' and the population living within the city's boundaries is counted and recorded as part of the nationwide decennial census every ten years. As of this writing, the most recently reported decennial census count of the entire city population is from the U.S. Census Bureau 2020 Decennial Census Redistricting Data (PL 94-171), which found a total Rockville population of 67,117.

Table 1: Historical Population in the City of Rockville and Montgomery County

	City of Rockville	Montgomery County	City share of total County
1950	6,934	164,401	4.2%
1960	26,090	340,928	7.6%
1970	42,739	522,809	8.2%
1980	43,811	579,053	7.6%
1990	44,835	757,027	5.9%
2000	47,388	873,341	5.4%
2010	61,209	971,777	6.3%
2020	67,117	1,062,061	6.3%

Table 2: Population Projections in the City of Rockville and Montgomery County

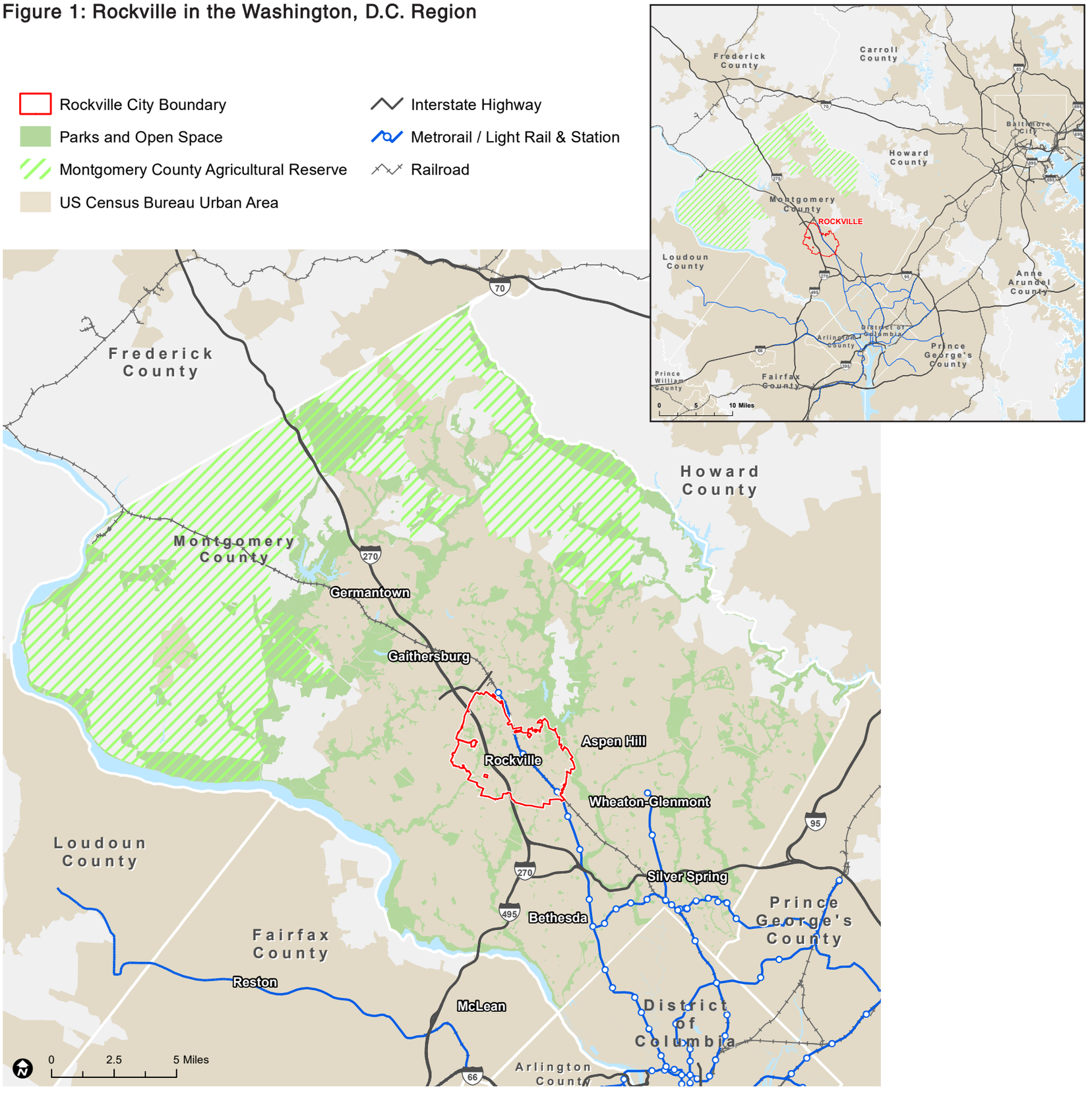
	City of Rockville	Montgomery County	City share of total County
2030	83,300	1,128,800	7.4%
2040	91,800	1,197,100	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950 to 2020 Decennial Census; 2030 and 2040 population projections from MWCOG Round 9.1 regional projections, October 2018.

Population Projections

In order to plan for the future, the City of Rockville works closely with Montgomery County government and the Metropolitan

Figure 1: Rockville in the Washington, D.C. Region



Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) to estimate population, housing unit, and employment projections for the city. The projections included in this Plan are from Round 9.1, adopted in 2018. As of October 2021, MWCOG jurisdictions were reviewing the latest population and housing unit projections to compare with data released from the 2020 decennial census and to assess the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment; a new Round of regional forecasts is expected to be developed in 2022. More information about this process can be found by contacting City of Rockville staff.

Future population projections for the City of Rockville are provided in Tables 2 and 3. The population of the city is forecast to increase from 67,117 residents in 2020 to about 91,800 residents by 2040. This is a 37 percent increase in resident population over a 20-year period. Population growth in Rockville can result from a combination of in-migration, when people move into new and existing housing units, and when there are more births than deaths in the existing city population.

Housing Unit Projections

Housing projections are calculated in concert with population projections. The long-term trend in Rockville with regard to households, which are occupied housing units, is toward smaller households. In 1950, the average household in Rockville was 3.7 persons per household, in 1970 the average was 3.6, yet by 1980, household occupancy had dropped to an average of 2.9 persons per household. By 2020, U.S. Census Bureau data indicated a further drop to 2.5 persons per household, likely due to the increase in apartment and condominium units in Rockville that tend to have smaller household sizes. Table 3 shows the recent and projected housing units in Rockville from 2010 through 2040.

Employment Projections

Steady growth in the number of jobs in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region is a key driver of population growth in Rockville, as people move to the region for those jobs. Jobs attract people to the region, and in turn, jobs are created by the fact that an increased population demands increased goods and services. Job growth within the city itself is expected to continue into the future. However, it is important to keep in mind that these projections are based on current assumptions. The policies that are adopted, both in this Plan and in others, can affect the amount and nature of the employment in the city. The Economic Development Element addresses this Plan's policies with respect to the economy and employment. Table 3 shows the projected employment growth in Rockville through 2040.

Population Characteristics

Age

The U.S. Census Bureau provides data on Rockville's population by age cohorts, corresponding to basic stages of life. The latest data on the age of Rockville's population available at the time of this writing was from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimate, which showed that 16 percent of residents were aged 65 years and over in 2019, an increase from about 5 percent for that age group in 1960. In contrast, the number of children 19 years and under decreased from a high of 48 percent in 1960 to 23 percent by 2019 (see Chart 1).

Rockville's median age has increased since 1960, from 21.5 to 38.7 years old in 2019, as the postwar 'baby boom' generation aged and as families, on average, had fewer

Table 3: City of Rockville Population, Housing Unit, and Employment Counts and Projections

	2010	2020	2030	2040	Percent Change, 2020 to 2040
Population	61,209	67,117	83,300	91,800	+37%
Housing units	25,199	27,953	33,500	37,400	+34%
Employment	74,500	78,400	82,400	90,900	+16%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census [2010 and 2020 Population and Housing Units]; MWCOG. Round 9.1 projections, 2018 [2010-2040 Employment, 2030-2040 Population and Housing Units].

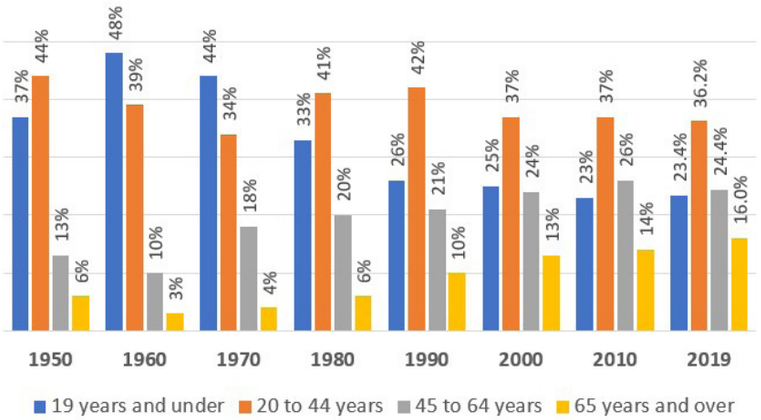
children (see Chart 2). These changes have created demands for different types of housing in the city, as discussed in detail in the Housing Element.

Racial Classification and Foreign Born Residents

The U.S. Census Bureau gathers data on the racial background of populations, recognizing in the most recently available decennial census that a growing percentage of the population self-identifies as two or more races (12 percent in 2020). The remaining 88 percent identify as one race alone. The terms 'Hispanic' and 'Latino' are self-identified categories, as well, and people identifying as 'Hispanic' may also consider themselves as White, Black, or Asian in racial categorization. Census demographic surveys allow respondents to select an ethnic identity of 'Hispanic' or 'Non-Hispanic' in addition to any racial identities of White, Black, Asian, etc.

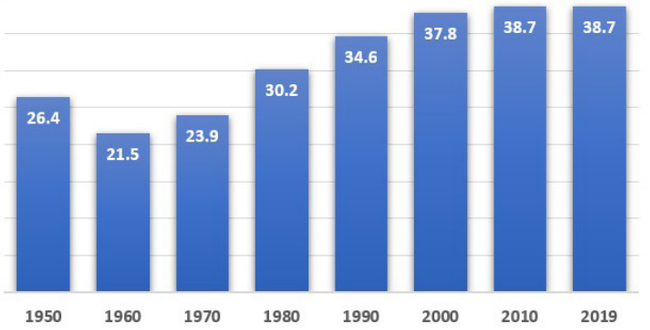
Among those who identify as one race alone, the majority of Rockville's population identifies as White, yet that percentage has dropped significantly over the years as Rockville has become one of the most diverse cities in the country. According to U.S. Census Bureau surveys, the percentage of persons who identify as Black or African American is approximately 12 percent, while the percentage identifying as Hispanic increased from under 5 percent in 1980, to just under 17 percent in 2020. Roughly 24 percent of the city's population identified as Asian in 2020, today the largest minority racial group in the city, up from only 5 percent in 1980. (See Chart 3)

Chart 1: Age Distribution in Rockville by Age Cohort



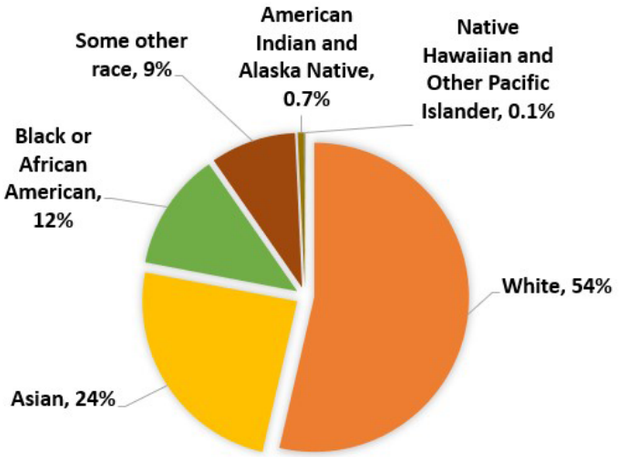
Source : U.S. Census Bureau. 1950 to 2010 Decennial Census. 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates.

Chart 2: Median Age of Rockville Residents (years)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950 to 2010 Decennial Census. 2019 ACS 5-year Estimates.

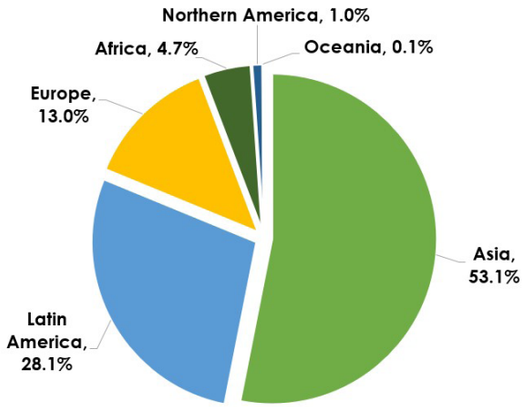
Chart 3: City Residents by Census Racial Classification



Note: Hispanic/Latino is considered to be an ethnicity by the U.S. Census Bureau. Those identifying as Hispanic/Latino can be of any race and are therefore included within each category in the chart above.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census.

Chart 4: Origins of Foreign Born Rockville Residents



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Approximately 66 percent of Rockville's 2019 population was born in the United States, while 34 percent was born abroad. A little over half of those living in Rockville who were born in a country other than the United States were born in Asia and just over one quarter in Latin America. (See Chart 4)

Income, Education, and Poverty

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, the median household income in Rockville in 2019 was $106,576. This number is well above the median for all households in the United States, at $62,843, and above Maryland's median household income of $84,805.

Rockville's high median income reflects the strength of the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area's economy and relatively high educational attainment. A very high level of Rockville residents have a high school diploma (93 percent), and nearly two thirds (65 percent) of residents have at least a bachelor's degree. However, the cost of living, particularly housing, is correspondingly high in the city and Montgomery County.

A high cost of living, combined with stagnant wages for those employed at the low end of the wage scale, places increased stress on Rockville residents living at the lower income levels and those in poverty. The poverty rate in Rockville varies for individuals by household, family status, age, and sex. More women and seniors live below the poverty line in the city compared to other demographic groups and children are the most likely age group to live in poverty. As of 2019, the poverty rate for the City of Rockville's overall population was 6.3 percent, with the rate for families at 3.5 percent. The poverty rate for families with a female head of household was even higher, at 8.5 percent. Among seniors (ages 65 and over), the poverty rate was 8.6 percent. (U.S. Census Bureau. 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.)

Employment and Commuting to Work

As of 2019, the majority of Rockville's population (60 percent) was employed in three industry sectors:

1. Professional, scientific, management, administrative and waste management services (25%);
2. Educational services, health care and social assistance (22%);
3. Public administration (13%).

Table 4: Employment Status of Rockville Residents

Population 16 Years and Over	54,518
In Labor Force	70.6%
Civilian Labor Force (38,013) Employed Unemployed	69.7% 66.6% 3.1%
Armed Forces	0.8%
Not in Labor Force	29.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 5: Work Commutes for Rockville Residents

Car, Truck, or Van - Drove Alone	62.2%
Car, Truck, or Van - Carpooled	7.7%
Public Transportation (not taxi)	19.0%
Walked	3.2%
Other means	1.7%
Worked at Home	6.2%
Mean Travel Time to Work	32.4 minutes

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

These dominant sectors are a reflection of Rockville residents' overall high educational attainment, as well as the city's location for Montgomery County government offices, the Montgomery County Public Schools headquarters, and the largest campus of Montgomery College -- all major employers.

As shown in Table 4, of the Rockville population 16 years and over, an estimated 70.6 percent of the civilian labor force was employed in 2019 while 3.1 percent were unemployed, and about 29 percent were not in the labor force.

In terms of work commutes, approximately 62 percent of Rockville workers drove alone in 2019 and 7.7 percent carpooled. Transit use was 19 percent and nearly 3 percent walked to work. Among those who commuted to work, it took them an average 32.4 minutes to get to work. (See Table 5)

EXISTING LAND USE

The land use pattern in Rockville is shaped by natural topography and a transportation infrastructure of interstate and State highways, major arterials, and railroads (see Figure 2). The basic layout of the city can be described as divided into three sections: one to the west of I-270, a middle portion between I-270 and Rockville Pike/MD 355, and a portion to the east of Rockville Pike and the railroad corridor. Each of these three sections is roughly a mile in width.

While the land use surrounding the city's historic crossroads, now the Town Center, is diverse and mixed, the overall pattern elsewhere is painted in broad brush strokes. Large areas of detached single-unit residential uses are divided by the relatively narrow commercial corridor flanking MD 355 (along its Rockville Pike and Hungerford Drive segments) and by the office uses on either side of the I-270 corridor. Open space serving as conservation parks follow and protect steep slopes and streams, most prominently along Watts Branch—its tendrils of green open space stretching across I-270 in a roughly north-south direction.

Expanses of additional green space are created by two large, private country clubs and city-owned open space at Rockville Civic Center and RedGate Park. The Woodmont Country Club is so large that it stretches across the middle section of the city. Service industrial uses, which are oriented more to distribution and repair than production, lie along the east side of the railroad tracks and on the northern edge of the city accessed by Gude Drive. Multiple unit residential uses are distributed around the city, in most cases proximate to larger roadways and Metrorail stations. Small commercial areas are also found along major roadways in a limited number of locations, nearly all on the edges of neighborhoods.

Within this overall pattern, new mixed-use development is emerging in the Town Center and near the Twinbrook transit station at the south end of Rockville Pike. These developments are creating a new pattern within the narrow commercial corridor that is vertically mixed, with commercial uses on the ground level and residential uses on upper floors.

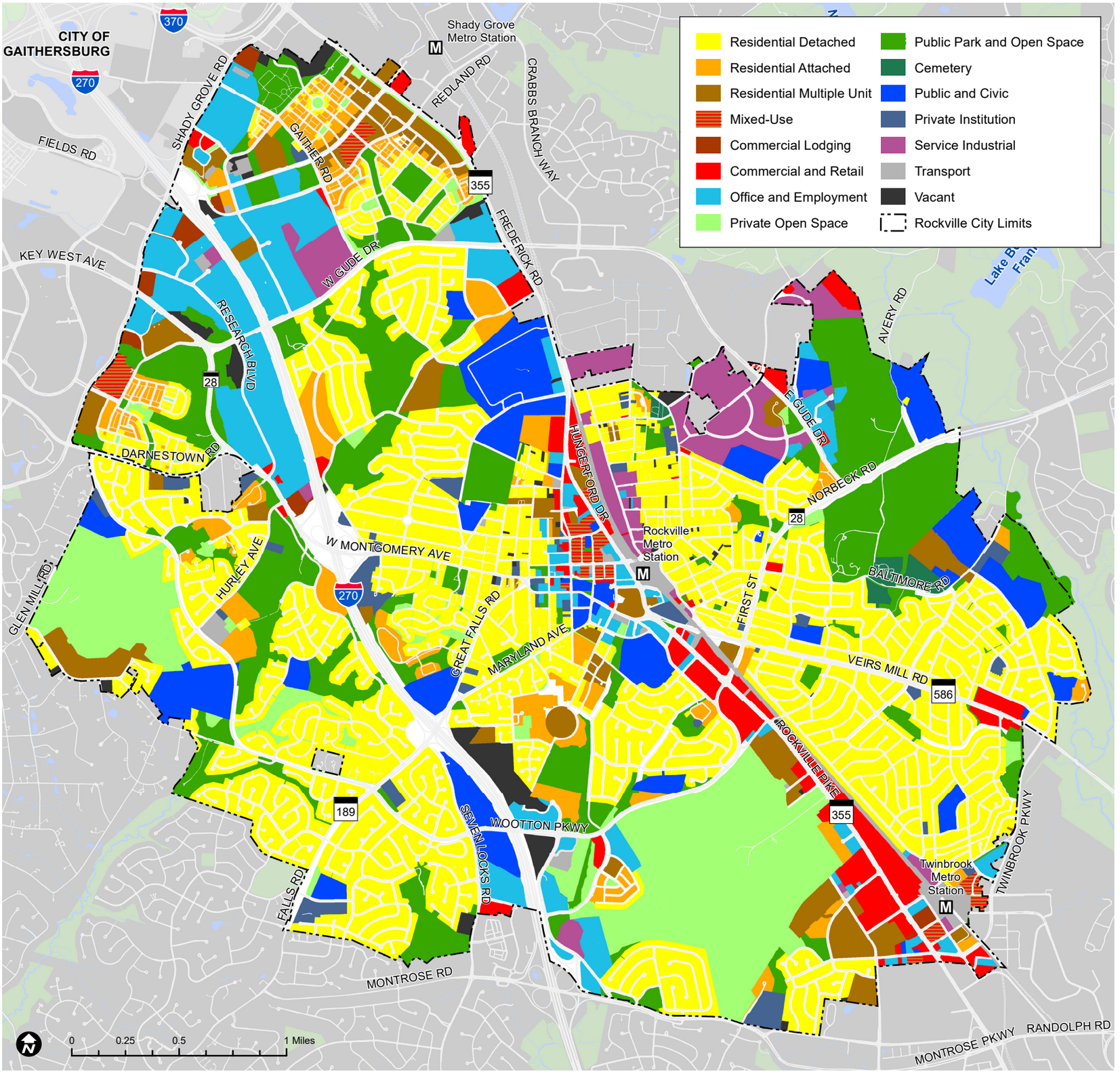
EXISTING LAND USES BY PARCELED AREA (2021)

Land Use Type	Acres	Percent
Residential (only), All	3,097	43.6%
Residential, Single-Unit Detached	2,433	34.2%
Residential, Single-Unit Attached	332	4.7%
Residential, Multiple Unit	331	4.7%
Mixed-Use (Residential and Commercial)	39	0.5%
Residential, All (subtotal)	**3,136**	**44.1%**
Commercial and Retail	266	3.7%
Commercial Lodging	41	0.6%
Office and Employment	594	8.4%
Civic and Public Institution	498	7.0%
Private Institution	112	1.6%
Service Industrial	211	3.0%
Non-Residential, All (subtotal)	**1,722**	**24.3%**
Public Park and Open Space	1,121	15.8%
Private Open Space and Recreation	898	12.6%
Cemetery	35	0.5%
Park and Open Space, All (subtotal)	**2,053**	**28.9%**
Parking and Transportation	142	2.0%
Vacant	56	0.7%
Grand Total	**7,109**	**100%**

Land Area	Acres	Percent
Area within City Boundary	8,669	100%
Area within Parcels	7,109	82.0%
Area of Right-of-Way	1,560	18.0%

Source: City of Rockville GIS, based on State property assessment classifications, June 2021

Figure 2: Existing Land Use Map (2021)





LAND USE AND URBAN DESIGN

Vision

Rockville is a city that encompasses comfortable neighborhoods where residents can walk, bike, and roll to amenities; mixed-use urban areas where residents, businesses and institutions thrive together; commercial and residential corridors where daily needs and wants are met; and areas for offices, laboratories, and industry where employment can be found.

An aerial photograph of Rockville Town Center, taken in 2015, shows a growing urban density to the east of North Washington Street, transitioning in the span of a single block to the historic houses of the West End along Adams Street.

Land use in Rockville is the result of the city's growth over more than 230 years, beginning in the 1780s. It is a pattern of development that includes an historic town with a government core at its center, commercial activity along Maryland State Route 355 (Rockville Pike/Hungerford Road/Frederick Road), suburban style residential neighborhoods and office parks from the last half of the 20th century, industrial uses along the CSX railroad corridor and Gude Drive area, and growing areas of higher density, mixed-use developments that are a hybrid of urban and suburban land use types.

Land use planning, implemented through its municipal zoning authority, is a primary responsibility of the City of Rockville government. The City is committed to thoroughly considering the potential impacts and benefits of any proposed land use change, through community-based planning, the development review process, and consistent neighborhood outreach.

Summary of Community Input

Visions for future land use in Rockville encompass a wide variety of desired neighborhood environments and lifestyles, stretching from the leafy suburban residential subdivisions found throughout Rockville, to the walkable, bikable, and transit-accessible commercial and residential areas of Town Center and south Rockville Pike to the newer communities of Fallsgrove and King Farm with their mix of housing types. Outreach for the Comprehensive Plan identified shared values, but also very different ideas about what types of development are desirable based on their location and the expectations and hopes of each individual. Fortunately, the city provides a diversity of built environments that can meet the needs of many different lifestyle choices, and residents can select the area of the city that best meets their ideals.

Goals for Rockville's Land Use Plan include:

1. Craft a land use plan that reflects existing uses and provides guidance and flexibility for future growth and redevelopment.
2. Allow for greater flexibility and affordability in residential land use types, while maintaining a high quality of life in new and existing neighborhoods.
3. Integrate land use and transportation planning to maximize the value of Rockville's transportation assets.
4. Promote a walkable and bikable city with connected neighborhoods and amenities.
5. Encourage and support office clusters in areas with good regional access.
6. Provide areas for service industrial and other high-intensity uses.
7. Support a robust commercial base.
8. Plan for parks and rich civic and cultural life.
9. Provide zoning tools for major development projects, and master plans as needed, for development of large areas.

Rockville 2040 participants expressed interest in diversifying the types of residential land uses allowed in certain locations. There was general support for urban-style development near Metro stations and a growing desire for walkable and bikable destinations and amenities within established neighborhoods. Participants also cited difficulties in traversing Interstate I-270,the WMATA and CSX railroad corridor, and busy Rockville Pike, whether by car, foot, or bike.

Concern was expressed regarding the future of suburban office campuses, specifically at a time when demand for office space is weak. Rockville Town Center is viewed as improved since the last master plan, but with serious concern about the struggles of commercial businesses. There is stated interest in maintaining service industrial land uses, such as manufacturing and shipping, both as a convenience and as a place for business and employment.

Many participants expressed a desire for a more active city with more things to do, including dining, entertainment, arts, culture, and recreation. In general, the Rockville community sought a land use plan that is coordinated with transportation infrastructure and amenities and related policies on the natural environment and community facilities.

GOAL 1
Craft a land use plan that reflects existing uses and provides guidance and flexibility for future growth and redevelopment.

The land use plan of this Comprehensive Plan consists of the policies that are presented in this Element and the Land Use Policy Map (see Figure 3) is the graphic expression of those policies. A key purpose of the land use plan is to anticipate and guide land use change based on demographic projections and the desired land use of property owners and the community.

The city has grown in population and area over its 230 years of history, and every indication is that its land use pattern will continue to evolve. The City of Rockville adopted comprehensive plans with a land use plan in 1960, 1970, 1993, and 2002. The City of Rockville is empowered by the State of Maryland to regulate land use through the adoption of the land use plan and is required to keep an updated land use plan that corresponds to the City's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map.

The Zoning Ordinance is continuously revised through text amendments and through comprehensive rewrites, the latest rewrite occurring in 2009. Changes to the Land Use Policy Map can recommend corresponding changes to the Zoning Map, which is typically adopted as a Sectional Map Amendment. Public notification and public hearings are required during the Comprehensive Plan's review and adoption process, and before any changes are made to the Zoning Ordinance or Zoning Map.

In addition to the citywide Land Use Policy Map, contained in Figure 3 of this Element, this Plan also provides land use policy direction in the Planning Areas section of this Plan.

Policy 1
Adopt a Land Use Policy Map that clearly shows where continuity, change, and growth will be allowed to meet community goals.

For the majority of land in Rockville, this Plan recommends retaining the existing land uses through a land use plan that closely matches current land use and is consistent with previously adopted plans. However, the land use plan is also forward-looking (with a planning horizon out to 2040) and land use change is anticipated or envisioned in certain locations. This Plan reflects comments expressed by Rockville 2040 participants and is consistent with good planning principles that seek to respond to changing market conditions and larger societal issues, including allowing for additional housing production and affordability, addressing environmental and health concerns, and maintaining a high quality of life.

This Plan was adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic and with its long-term impacts still unknown. This Plan therefore recognizes that market trends and societal issues may evolve and may require new thinking in the nearer future than would normally be the case with a land use plan. Nonetheless, this Element addresses policies in accordance with current understandings and desires of the community and planning best practices.

Definitions for Land Use Policy Map Designations

RESIDENTIAL

RD - Residential Detached is mapped for properties with a single house per lot, but may include institutional or home office uses. This category may also include one accessory dwelling unit, under rules defined in the Zoning Ordinance.

RA - Residential Attached includes a variety of house types that share party walls. Types of construction include duplex, triplex, fourplex, townhouses/row houses, and, depending on the location in the city, small apartment buildings with up to six units in a single structure. Detached houses are also allowed.

RF - Residential Flexible includes a mix of townhouses/ row houses, and apartment buildings, as well as detached houses. It is applied to sites where the mix of allowed residential types is flexible and to be finalized during development review. Small-scale commercial uses are an included option if integrated into the residential development.

RM - Residential Multiple Unit is mapped for apartment or condominium buildings, which are defined as construction types with shared corridors and entrances. The density of units and size of the building is regulated by the zoning ordinance. RM areas exclude detached and attached types of construction.

COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE

C - Commercial is mapped exclusively for commercial uses, which include all types of businesses that provide direct sales or customer service, including retail shops, grocery stores, restaurants, personal or professional services, and lodging. In some locations, the Plan indicates where commercial is strongly preferred along a street frontage.

CRM - Commercial and Residential Mix expresses the City's interest in retaining and introducing commercial uses in specific locations mixed with multiple unit residential and/ or residential attached types. The mix can be horizontal, with stand alone commercial next to apartment buildings on a site; or the mix can be vertical, with commercial on the ground floor and apartments above. In some locations, the Plan indicates where commercial is strongly preferred along a street frontage.

O - Office is mapped where office or other employment-generating uses, such as hotels, research & development, or laboratories, are preferred as the primary use. Commercial or other customer-serving uses are allowed as complements to the primary employment-generating use.

RO - Residential and/or Office allows either or both uses, but not commercial.

OCRM - Office, Commercial and Residential Mix is the most flexible category, allowing a wide choice in mixing office, commercial, and residential uses. Uses such as research & development, breweries, distilleries, and small manufacturing may be appropriate if they do not adversely impact surrounding properties. In some locations, the Plan indicates where commercial is strongly preferred along a street frontage.

SRM - Service Industrial and Residential Mix is mapped in areas where service industrial is the primary use, but a mix of residential, commercial, office, and other uses is also allowed.

SI - Service Industrial is inclusive of a wide variety of light industrial uses, warehouses, automobile repair, construction supply, and other distribution, repair, or wholesale businesses. It also allows for food service, kennels, or indoor recreation. Railroad and other utility properties are included.

PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL

P - Public Parks includes all public parks and open space.[1]

A green asterisk is placed on the map in the general area where a **Potential Future Public Park** is needed, but the specific location has yet to be determined.

CI - Civic and Public Institutional are uses where government and other civic functions are located on publicly owned property. These uses include public schools and colleges, courthouses, Rockville City Hall, County offices, libraries, and maintenance facilities. Public parks are mapped under the Public Park (P) designation.

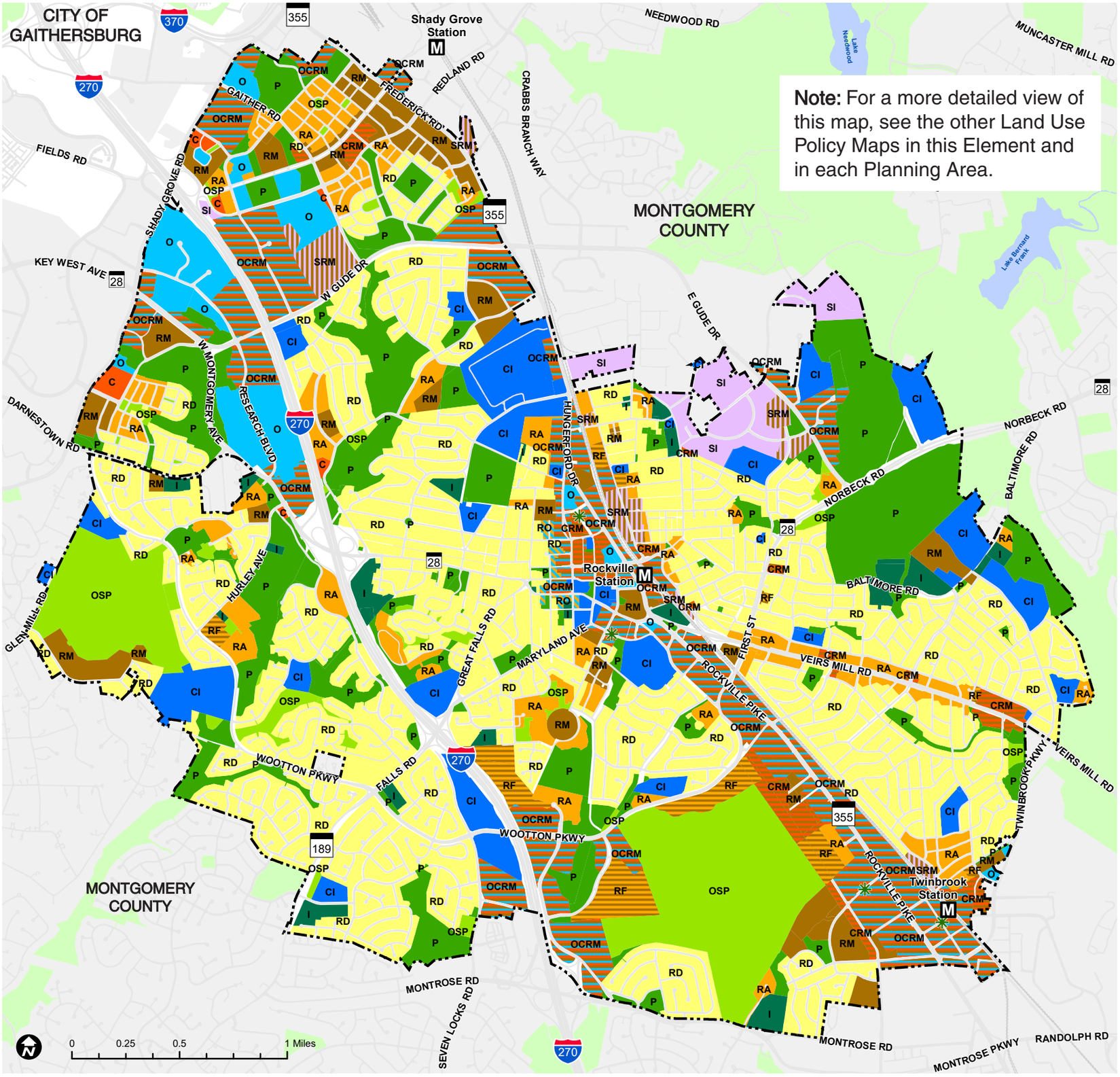
OSP - Open Space Private is private country club land and golf courses, and also large common areas owned by homeowners associations.

I - Private Institutional is mapped for private religious institutions and organizations, private schools, and cemeteries.[2]

[1] A land use designation of public park on private property or property not owned by the City of Rockville is for planning purposes. Any such property will not be zoned as "Park" and nothing in this Plan precludes an owner from developing property in accordance with the zoning designation and zoning regulations applicable to the property.

[2] The Land Use Policy Map shows existing institutional uses that are on parcels larger than three acres; for smaller parcels it shows the recommended land use for the property.

Figure 3: Land Use Policy Map



Key areas of the city planned for land use change are:

- Rockville Town Center
- Rockville Pike corridor
- Twinbrook Metro Station area
- East Rockville neighborhood
- North Stonestreet Avenue
- Shady Grove Road/Piccard Drive corridor
- Veirs Mill Road corridor

Descriptions of the land use designations in the Land Use Policy Map are provided to the left of Figure 3 in this Element and in the Planning Areas section later in this Plan. These descriptions help to guide consistent implementation of the land use plan through the adoption of zoning map amendments and the City's development review process. Some of these designations are consistent with zones that are currently in place in the City's Zoning Map. Other land use designations will be implemented through Zoning Map amendments following the adoption of this Plan.

GOAL 2
Allow for greater flexibility and affordability in residential land use types, while maintaining a high quality of life in new and existing neighborhoods.

Rockville strives to provide comfortable and convenient places that its residents are proud to call home, in both older stable neighborhoods and growing residential areas. In response to changing lifestyles, demographics, and land economics, this Plan recommends changes to the housing types and associated uses allowed in some locations to meet growing demands for safer and more comfortable walking, biking, and rolling; greater transit access; and more varied, affordable neighborhoods.

At present, residential development occupies nearly half of the total developed land in the city, with just over one-third of the total dedicated for single-unit detached homes; townhouses/row houses and multi-unit buildings each occupy 5 percent of the total developed land. The strong trend toward more townhouses/row houses and apartments reflects both a lack of undeveloped land in the city and







Rockville is home to a diverse range of single-unit detached residential dwelling types and sizes, from single-story homes without basements (top) to split-level Ranch-style homes (middle) to larger contemporary houses (bottom).

higher land and construction costs per housing unit. Most of the newer, higher density residential is being developed on land previously occupied by commercial uses, for instance, in Rockville Town Center and along the Rockville Pike and Shady Grove Road corridors.

Policy 2
Maintain large areas of Residential Detached land use, while allowing one additional accessory apartment or accessory dwelling unit per residential lot.

The City of Rockville is largely developed with detached single-unit residential homes. One way to accommodate more affordable housing options, flexible space for an office or shared family living arrangements, and financial assistance for current homeowners, while maintaining the city's predominantly residential character, is with accessory apartments and accessory dwelling units.

This Plan recommends that accessory apartments (i.e., those internal to the main residential structure) be allowed across the city. Detached accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are also recommended to be allowed, under a zoning text amendment, if the proposed new construction conforms to conditional use criteria that address size, parking, and other development standards.

Actions

2.1 Retain areas dedicated primarily for single-unit detached homes, mapped as Residential Detached (RD) on the Land Use Policy Map.

2.2 Allow one Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), attached or detached from the primary building, subject to size, parking, and development standards for Single Unit Detached lots. Revise the Zoning Ordinance and any applicable design guidelines to set standards for accessory dwelling units, assure neighborhood compatibility, and define applicability of adequate public facilities standards.

2.3 Establish development standards for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in the Zoning Ordinance and design guidelines that address compatibility of architectural design, use of

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

An accessory dwelling unit is a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family home. ADUs go by many different names throughout the U.S., including accessory apartments, secondary suites, and granny flats. ADUs can be converted portions of existing homes (i.e., internal ADUs), additions to new or existing homes (i.e., attached ADUs), or new stand-alone accessory structures or converted portions of existing stand-alone accessory structures (i.e., detached ADUs).

Internal, attached, and detached ADUs all have the potential to increase housing affordability (both for homeowners and tenants), create a wider range of housing options within the community, enable seniors to stay near family as they age, and facilitate better use of the existing housing fabric in established neighborhoods. Consequently, many cities and counties have signaled support for ADUs in their plans and adopted zoning regulations that permit ADUs in low-density residential areas.

American Planning Association. (July 2021). Accessory Dwelling Units. www.planning.org/knowledgebase/accessorydwellings/



An accessory dwelling unit sits behind a house in the West End neighborhood.

pervious surface materials, and retention of established tree canopy and landscaped settings. Standards should be developed in consultation with the Rockville community and take into consideration the unique character and development patterns of different neighborhoods in the city.

2.4 Change the Zoning Ordinance to make one accessory apartment, internal to the structure, a permitted use on a Residential Detached lot.

Policy 3
Allow diversification of the residential land use pattern in specific locations to meet varied needs, market dynamics, and high demand for all types of housing.

The Land Use Policy Map applies the Residential Attached (RA) land use designation to areas of the city where there are existing attached residential housing types, such as duplexes and townhomes, as well as new areas where there are currently single-unit detached homes, yet attached housing types are also included. For the most part, these new areas are existing residential blocks on the outside edges of neighborhoods, with pedestrian access to high-capacity transit, including Metrorail and planned bus rapid transit lines. This change in the land use plan will allow for a market-driven transition to residential attached construction types.

The allowed Residential Attached housing types include:

- Single-unit detached homes;
- Duplexes;
- Triplexes;
- Fourplexes;
- Townhouses/row houses; and
- Small apartment buildings with up to six units, though some RA areas only allow up to four-unit apartments.

These housing types can be accommodated on existing residential lots, or through assembly of a number of lots. The scale of this residential construction should be in keeping with its context and potential in relation to the transit infrastructure and other amenities.

Actions

3.1 Allow the introduction of limited areas of attached residential housing types within predominately single-unit detached neighborhoods, mapped as Residential Attached (RA) on the Land Use Policy Map.

3.2 Draft new zoning regulations and development standards to allow a varied mix of residential housing types on the same block, from duplexes to small apartment buildings, in areas mapped for Residential Attached (RA) and Residential Flexible (RF).

3.3 Consider approaches to allowing small single-unit detached homes on lots with narrower minimum frontages and smaller lots, including through lot assembly or subdivision.

Policy 4
Adopt a new high-density residential zone for existing and new multiple-unit residential projects.

The 2009 Zoning Ordinance set the Residential Medium Density (RMD) zone as the city's highest-density residential zone at 25 dwelling units per acre, i.e. RMD-25. Prior to 2009, the City Zoning Ordinance included a residential zone for high-rise buildings. Construction of Congressional Towers in the Montrose neighborhood is an example of development permitted under the high-rise building designation.

At present there is no high density zone that is exclusively residential in the ordinance. The high-rise residential developments built in the city since 2009 were only possible in locations zoned for mixed-use developments, primarily in Rockville Town Center and along Rockville Pike and Shady Grove Road.

Given that most new residential growth in the city will come in the form of multiple unit residential buildings, as apartments or condominiums, and that not all locations are appropriate for mixed-use development, Rockville needs a higher density residential zone. Mapping of the higher density zone would be limited to areas designated as Residential Multiple Unit (RM) or Residential Flexible (RF) on the Land Use Policy Map, and only where higher densities are deemed appropriate.

Attached Residential Housing Types in Rockville



A house with an accessory apartment (upper unit) in Croydon Park, built ca. 1924.



A side-by-side duplex in Fallsgrove, built ca. 2004.



A fourplex building with four units, two above and two below, each with a separate entrance in West End, built ca. 1964.



Townhouses, here with three attached units in Hungerford, built ca. 1986.

Policy 5
Develop strategies for higher density living that seek to maintain a high quality of life for all residents and reduces potential conflicts between neighbors.

Where in the past there was enough land in the city to minimize friction between neighbors by separating housing units on generous lots with setbacks on all sides—one of the main attractions of suburban style living—most new dwelling units are now built as attached townhouses/row houses, or multiple-unit buildings. Such units share party walls or are stacked above or below each other. In multiple-unit buildings, residents may also share entrances and hallways. One of the most common complaints with this type of construction is noise from the neighbors. Soundproofing construction standards can avoid future problems by ensuring that apartments are quiet and private.

Some new multiple-unit structures in Rockville span a whole block, sometimes more than 300 feet on a side. Breaking up long exterior building facades with different architectural treatments is required by the Zoning Ordinance; however, long interior corridors can pose concerns for fire safety, indoor air quality, and risks of disease transmission. Uninterrupted interior residential corridors can be also be uninviting and hinder relationship-building among residents.



Urban loft style apartments replaced former office uses in the Upper Rock development near Shady Grove Road.

Breaking up massive new structures into smaller functional buildings, with their own entrances, gathering spaces, and distinct architecture, is preferred.

Actions

5.1 Establish regulations that require interior soundproofing between units and floors and external soundproofing of walls and windows for new multiple-unit residential and mixed-use structures, especially along busy roadways and rail corridors, specified in design decibels and checked during construction plan review.

5.2 Promote the design and division of massive multi-unit residential structures into smaller functional buildings with shorter internal corridors and their own unique facades, entrances, vertical circulation, HVAC systems, and street addresses.

5.3 Encourage architectural variety for townhouse and row house developments, and individual outdoor space that allows for individual expression and landscape variety.

5.4 Develop parking strategies for residential infill locations that minimize the impacts of additional housing units.

5.5 Recognize that higher density development requires provision of an improved street environment and public or private open spaces within the immediate area.

5.6 Encourage the inclusion of usable private balconies or terraces in multiple unit residential developments.

Policy 6
Anticipate and plan for land use change from commercial to residential uses.

The majority of new residential units added during the Rockville 2040 planning horizon will be constructed on former commercial properties, either former office or laboratory sites or former retail properties. For example, the Upper Rock development project south of Shady Grove Road brought new loft style housing and retail to land that was previously developed in the late 1950s as single-story office buildings. The Shady Grove Road area is ripe for additional conversions from once-sought-after

office buildings to the current market's demand for a mix of apartments, townhouses/row houses, and commercial amenities. In addition, the south Rockville Pike area is seeing a major transition from predominantly commercial shopping centers to higher-density mixed-use projects.

Other still-dominant office and research & development areas, such as Research Boulevard, Piccard Drive, and Tower Oaks Boulevard, continue to attract new office tenants, yet are experiencing their own pressures for conversions or adaptive reuse to residential or other commercial uses. While some of these land use changes are supported by this Plan, it also challenges the City and County governments to deliver amenities and services to new residential areas. Parks, whether publicly or privately maintained, are a specific need to provide open space and recreation facilities in areas that never had residents before or where there are new demands for such spaces and facilities.

Actions

6.1 Coordinate provision of neighborhood amenities as part of the approval process for conversions of commercial uses to residential uses. Allow for publicly and/or privately built and maintained parks, recreation amenities, and open space to serve this need, as appropriate.

Policy 7
Review and revise regulations on shared housing and develop standards for short-term residential rentals.

A number of comments were made during the Rockville 2040 process on informal rental arrangements that stretch the definition of allowed housing arrangements. The Rockville Zoning Ordinance includes a definition of 'family' and also a 'single housekeeping group,' limiting the group to not more than five unrelated persons living in any single dwelling unit. This Plan encourages a community discussion on the appropriate standards and regulations on the use of dwelling units given the reality of shared arrangements, but also concern in neighborhoods regarding overcrowding, adequate parking, and transient renters.

In addition to issues regarding group houses, short-term rentals, made more accessible by Internet-based companies, can also impact neighborhoods and the supply of longer term rentals. This Plan recommends that the City develop standards and regulations to address potential issues.

Actions

7.1 Develop standards and regulations for short-term rentals to ensure safe and healthy living conditions, adequate off-street parking, preservation of neighborhood character, and an income-generating opportunity for property owners.

GOAL 3
Integrate land use and transportation planning to maximize the value of Rockville's transportation assets.

Land use and transportation planning are closely interrelated. The greater the access provided by the transportation system, the greater potential for an intense land use. For example, the high visibility and regional accessibility of Rockville Pike makes commercial and higher density residential land use a good match to its context as a major arterial corridor. On the other hand, a neighborhood cul-de-sac has limited accessibility and typically leads to low-density residential land uses.

The relationship between high-capacity transit and land use is easy to understand. Access to Rockville's Metro stations is valued by the thousands of residents, employees, and visitors who use transit to access the concentration of civic, commercial, and office uses in Rockville Town Center. Changes to land use policies in recent plans have encouraged the construction of higher density residential uses within an easy walk or bike of Metro stations in Town Center and in the Twinbrook and Shady Grove station areas. Strong support for continued intensification of development within walking or biking distance of Metro and new bus rapid transit stations was voiced during the Rockville 2040 process, as well.



The 400 apartment units in the Galvan at Twinbrook are directly across Chapman Avenue from the Twinbrook transit station, offering quick walk or bike access to the Red Line and the region. The project is an example of transit oriented development (TOD), a planning approach that locates denser residential uses near high-capacity transit stations.

The five-story structure, with ground-level commercial and four levels of residential units, occupies the whole block between Chapman Avenue and Rockville Pike. The 90,000 square feet of commercial space includes a full service grocery store and smaller storefronts.

Opened in 2015, the development is the first vertically mixed commercial and residential structure along the Pike in Rockville, realizing a planning goal first set in the 1989 Rockville Pike corridor plan. The allowed land use change from general commercial to mixed-use development required subsequent zoning changes and more than two and a half decades to be realized.

Policy 8
Promote Rockville Town Center as a transit-oriented employment, shopping, residential, and entertainment destination.

The 2001 Town Center Master Plan urban design framework emphasized an 'L-shaped pedestrian spine' with 'retail-entertainment at the ground floor' from the Rockville Metro Station's pedestrian bridge over MD-355 to an arcade of shops on East Montgomery Avenue and north along an extended Maryland Avenue.

Today, Rockville Town Center is a successful transit-oriented city center with more residents and office space than at any time in the past. Access to high-capacity transit is a major reason for these investments and choices. Hundreds of private and government office workers and others with business in Rockville arriving in the morning by transit each day provide a customer base in Town Center for storefront coffee shops and bakeries, and restaurants and shops for lunch. Residents returning in the evening stop at restaurants, grocers, and shops before walking, biking or rolling home to residences in Town Center, the West End, and East Rockville. All of these trips are made without adding to traffic congestion or pollution, and Town Center visitors, employees, and residents enjoy its walkable and bikable environment and lifestyle.

In addition to its function as an employment center, Rockville Town Center continues its long history as a commercial area, though one that is still looking to find its market niche. Steady additions of commercial and amenity space on the ground floor of new buildings bring the opportunity for new shops and restaurants, supported by new residential units and offices on upper floors. This Plan promotes

> Montgomery County's walkable, urban locations focus primarily in its traditional business districts and in new mixed-use developments at Metro stations. Bethesda, Silver Spring and Rockville have developed large office clusters within a quarter-mile of Metro stations, and White Flint and Twinbrook station areas are planned for significant new office developments.
>
> *"Office Market Assessment, Montgomery County, Maryland," Montgomery County Department of Planning, 2014, p.17*

an intensification of development that encourages an active street scene and vibrant commercial district. The Planning Area 1 (Town Center) section of this Plan, which also references the Town Center Master Plan, provides more detailed discussion on these and other aspects of Town Center's potential.

The land use plan reinforces the value of transit access for office uses within a quarter-mile of the Rockville transit station. The regional access provided by Metro and MARC is a key asset for businesses, and immediate access to transit allows a higher-intensity cluster of office buildings, with fewer needed parking spaces.



Rockville Metro Plaza is a 400,000-square foot Class A office development located diagonally across MD-355 from Rockville Metro Station.

Actions

8.1 Continue to develop Town Center as a major activity center with areas of new office, residential, arts, culture, civic, and commercial development within an easy walk or bike to the Rockville transit station.

8.2 Update the Town Center Master Plan by conducting a planning effort leading to the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan amendment of Planning Area 1 that replaces the 2001 *Town Center Master Plan*. (*See also Planning Area 1*)

8.3 Conduct focused station area planning for the Rockville transit station, in coordination with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Montgomery County government, and the State of Maryland, that envisions design of a new transit center with improved access and redevelopment.

8.4 Require commercial or amenity space on the ground level of designated pedestrian-oriented commercial streets in Town Center.

8.5 Establish urban design regulations for Town Center that require active, street-fronting ground-floor uses, pedestrian-oriented build-to lines, and prohibition of off-street parking between buildings and the public right-of-way.

8.6 Study potential revisions to off-street parking requirements for commercial uses in the core area of Town Center.

8.7 Implement Complete Streets and Vision Zero policies in the Town Center public right-of-way, such as 'road diets', bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements, and street beautification, to make the public realm a more safe and inviting place to be. (*See also Goal 1 of the Transportation Element*)

Policy 9

Allow attached residential housing types and mixed-use development in East Rockville on blocks proximate to the Rockville transit station, as mapped on the Land Use Policy Map.

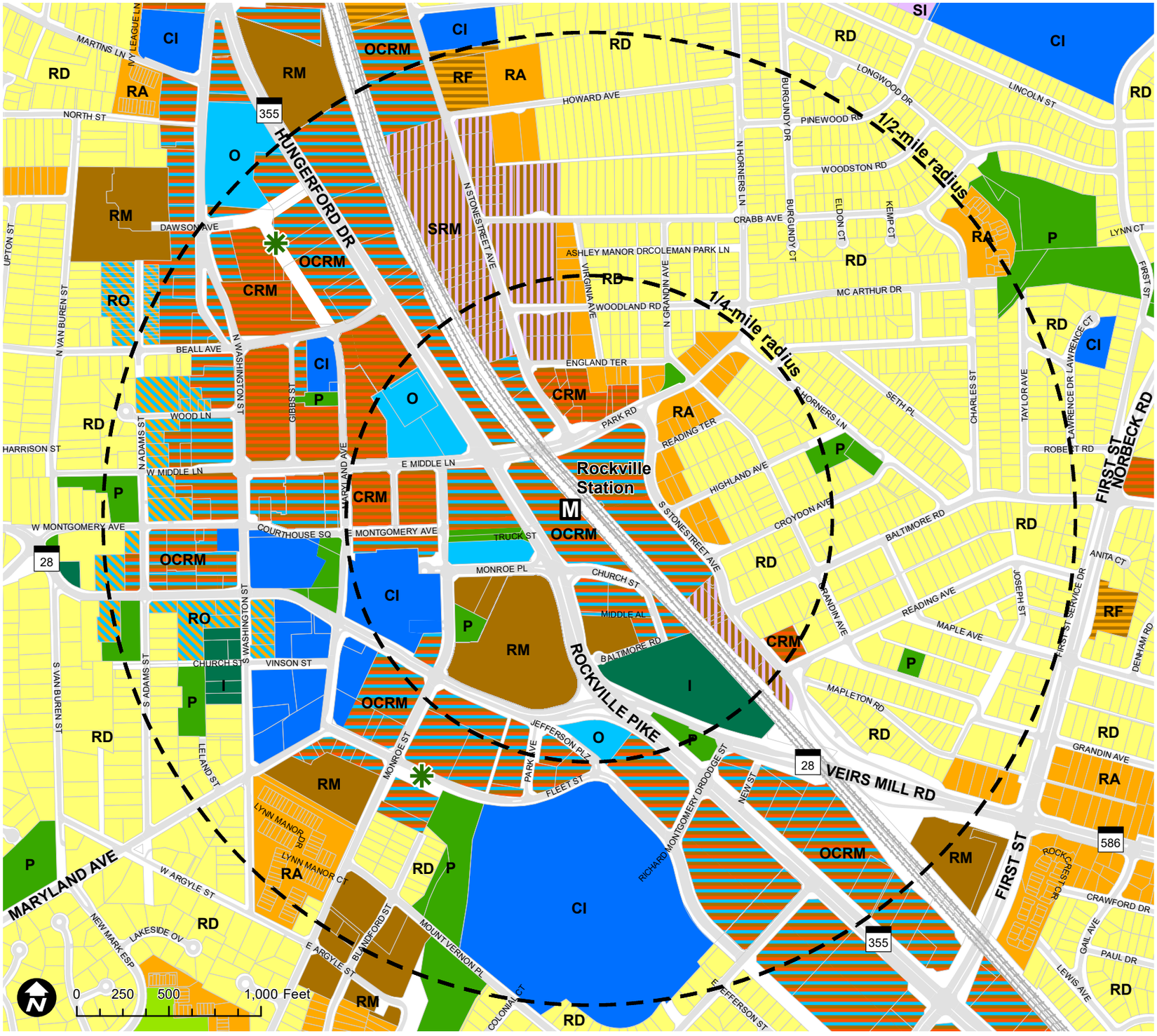
Immediately to the east of the Rockville transit station, this Plan (see Figure 4) updates past land use policy from exclusively detached houses to allow a mix of attached residential housing types, including duplex, triplex, townhouses/row houses, and small apartment buildings up to a maximum of four units on blocks facing the station across South Stonestreet Avenue. Single-unit detached homes are also allowed in this area of the land use plan.

The goal of this land use change is to allow slightly higher density within the immediate station area, provide a transition of housing types between the transit station and the single-unit detached homes of the East Rockville neighborhood, and respond to a demand for new housing types in the area. This change is in response to the fact that housing demand has grown since the opening of the Rockville Metro Station in 1984. This demand is reflected in both rising housing prices and the proliferation of informal apartments and rentals located in single-unit houses.

This Plan seeks to recognize this market-based demand for additional housing within the immediate station area, as well as interest in housing types that are more affordable because they share the cost of the underlying land across additional units, for instance in duplex or townhouse types. Allowing new development types, while also enforcing zoning regulations, is the recommended approach.

This Plan also calls for a mix of commercial and residential land uses along the north side of Park Avenue, and commercial or office uses in the narrow space between the railroad tracks and North Stonestreet Avenue. Incorporating recommendations from the 2018 Stonestreet Avenue study, this Plan provides for a mix of service industrial, commercial, and multiple-unit residential along North Stonestreet within a half-mile walk of the station. Attached and detached residential homes are allowed in specifically mapped areas

Figure 4: Land Use Policy Map, Rockville transit station area



This Plan emphasizes transit oriented development (TOD) west of the Rockville transit station and the introduction of new TOD to the east of the railroad tracks. Blocks immediately east of the station are recommended for Residential Attached ('RA' in orange) and mixed uses along Park Road as a transition to the East Rockville and Lincoln Park neighborhoods.

on the western edge of the East Rockville neighborhood, adjacent to the North Stonestreet corridor.

Creating a new gateway into East Rockville at Park Avenue and Stonestreet Avenue, in addition to more residents living nearby, will help make the station area more secure, while also strengthening a community node facing the station as a welcoming place for the East Rockville community (see Figure 6, page 36). An improved node would also be more inviting to visitors who cross under the tracks from Town Center to experience a growing variety of businesses, artist and maker studios, and accessible car repair shops.

Actions

9.1 Allow attached residential housing types in the East Rockville neighborhood on blocks in the immediate vicinity of the Rockville Metro Station, mapped as Residential Attached (RA) on the Land Use Policy Map (*see also Planning Area 2*).

9.2 Promote mixed-use development along Park Road and North Stonestreet Avenue, per the Land Use Policy Map (*see also Planning Area 2*).

Policy 10
Enhance Rockville Pike's market position as a premier shopping area, supported by residential uses and plan for additional growth near the Twinbrook Metro Station.

Rockville Pike is known around the region as a shopping destination. Major goods (e.g., cars, appliances, and furniture) are sold on the Pike, as are other sorts of retail goods and personal services. Some of the Pike's shopping centers have become dining destinations, as well, with a wide array of restaurants offering cuisine from around the world. Popular chain stores are present, as are locally owned businesses. The 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan set a new policy direction for the Pike; one that is more urban and mixed-use with a much larger residential population. Large redevelopment projects will change the look and feel of the area, especially in close walking or biking distance of the Twinbrook Metro Station. Planning Area 9 provides more detail on this portion of the city.

Infill and redevelopment within a half-mile of the Twinbrook Metro Station (see Figure 5) added nearly 1,500 dwelling units in the period from 2003 to 2016, and the transformation of this area from single-story commercial and service industrial buildings to higher-density, mixed-use development will continue.

The new urban form emphasizes the pedestrian experience with transit-oriented development elements, including:

- Multi-story buildings;
- Smaller blocks;
- A grid of connected new streets;
- Buildings with consistent street frontages;
- Wide sidewalks;
- Pedestrian-level street lighting and furniture;
- Ground-level storefronts; and
- Concealed structured parking.

Today, thousands of people walk or bike from the Twinbrook Metro Station to residences, offices, and shops. People walking and biking are visible and numerous on both sides of the railroad tracks and Rockville Pike. The land use plan provides flexibility for the future, allowing a mix of high-intensity office, residential, and commercial uses through the Office Commercial Residential Mix (OCRM) land use designation for the majority of land in the south Pike area.

Actions

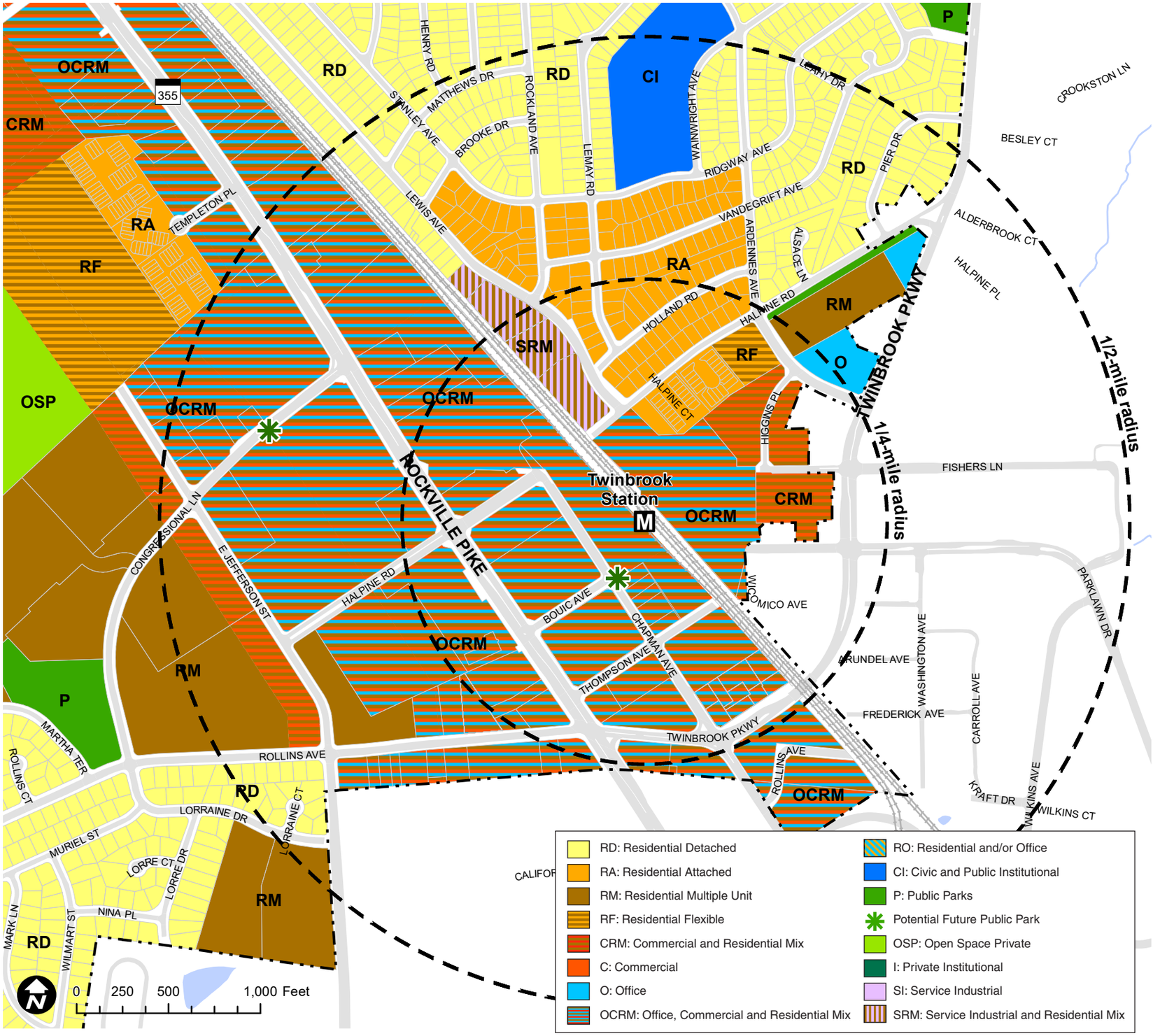
10.1 Continue to develop the Twinbrook Metro Station area and the south Rockville Pike as a major activity and growth center.

10.2 Allow small, multiple-unit and attached residential types on blocks in the Twinbrook neighborhood adjacent to the east side of the Twinbrook Metro Station, mapped as Residential Attached (RA) on the Land Use Policy Map.

10.3 Plan for new park amenities and other infrastructure to support population increases in the Twinbrook Metro Station area.

10.4 Continue a transition from highway-oriented commercial forms to a more urban Pike, based on a mix of uses, including residential, employment, and retail uses, in places oriented to bicyclists and pedestrians. (*See also Policy 9 of the Economic Development Element*)

Figure 5: Land Use Policy Map, Twinbrook transit station



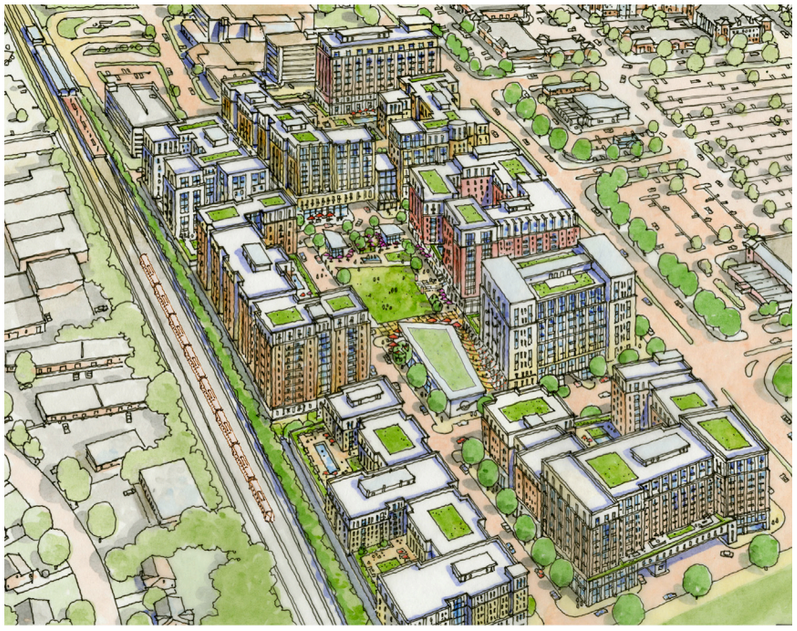
To the east of the tracks, this Plan allows Residential Attached (RA) housing types on blocks between Lewis Avenue and Ridgeway Avenue. This Plan also changes the land use from Light Industrial to Service Industrial and Residential Mix (SRM) at the south end of Lewis Avenue, allowing both residential and light industrial uses.

10.5 Add park amenities and new streetscape to the Pike, focusing in the near term on the Twinbrook transit station area.

GOAL 4
Promote a walkable and bikable city with connected neighborhoods and amenities.

One of the most repeated comments pertaining to land use from Rockville 2040 participants was that they would like to be able to safely walk or bike to a destination in their neighborhood, for instance to a park or 'for a gallon of milk.' These comments refer to broad areas of low-density residential that have little or no land use diversity or destinations within reasonable walking or biking distance and/or inadequate infrastructure.

Rockville's current land use pattern includes a handful of neighborhood shopping centers, most of them spread out along major roadways at a scale that depends on access by automobile. In some parts of the city, it is difficult to access any kind of business or public gathering space, such as a coffee shop or corner market, without driving. And yet, small shops, a corner pub, or a restaurant within walking or biking distance are desired amenities for neighborhood life.



The B.F. Saul Company project, known as Twinbrook Quarter, on 18 acres north of Halpine Road will be the largest TOD project to date in Rockville. The approved concept plan (above) calls for up to 1,900 dwelling units, 400,000 square feet of office, 475,000 square feet of commercial, and an entertainment venue. Build-out over coming decades will create a dramatic change, from a suburban highway commercial corridor, to a dense, walkable and bikable neighborhood with employment and amenities.

This Plan (including the Transportation Element) offers a number of approaches to make our existing and new neighborhoods places where residents can more safely and comfortably walk and bike, both within their neighborhood as well as between neighborhoods. Walking and biking offers health, social, and environmental benefits, such as:

- Reducing obesity, diabetes, and heart disease;
- Cutting carbon emissions associated with driving; and
- Increasing social interaction and security.





Walking is used in this Plan as a general term that includes a person traveling by foot, whether walking or running, and may include use of a white cane, audio-assistance device, or other physical assistance. While this goal focuses primarily on the land use patterns that can promote the safety, comfort and purpose of walking, such other non-vehicular modes as bikes, scooters, and wheelchairs can also support and take advantage of these policies. This Plan discusses walking, biking, and other non-vehicular rolling modes elsewhere in this and other elements and planning areas.

At the citywide scale, it is useful to consider where neighborhood-serving land uses exist, primarily in the form of commercial and civic uses open to the public, and where these uses might be introduced through land use change supported by improved transit service, higher-density housing, civic facilities, and other amenities. One way of thinking about these concentrations of uses and services is that they act as community nodes, as discussed in the text to the right of Figure 6.

Policy 11
Increase the walkability and bikability of the city's existing and new neighborhoods and between neighborhoods by expanding infrastructure and amenities at key spots to promote the increased ability, safety, and comfort of walking and biking.

Actions

11.1 Create new community nodes with small-scale commercial, diversified housing, and civic amenities. (See Figure 6)

11.2 Continue to develop new walkable and bikable, mixed-use activity centers on available land, primarily commercial sites deemed ready for conversion.

11.3 Add and improve sidewalks and trails within and between existing neighborhoods. (*See also Goal 2 of the Transportation Element*)

11.4 Ensure adequate pedestrian and bicycle safety at new and existing community nodes, including implementation of the City's Complete Streets Policy and Vision Zero Plan. (*See also Goal 1 of the Transportation Element*)

Policy 12
Develop plans for Rockville's older neighborhood shopping centers that address issues of pedestrian access, storefront aesthetics, land use mix, and urban design.

Actions

12.1 Work to retain existing neighborhood-serving commercial uses.

12.2 Consider inclusion of higher-density housing as part of shopping center revitalization and redevelopment planning, as a financial incentive and support for future businesses.

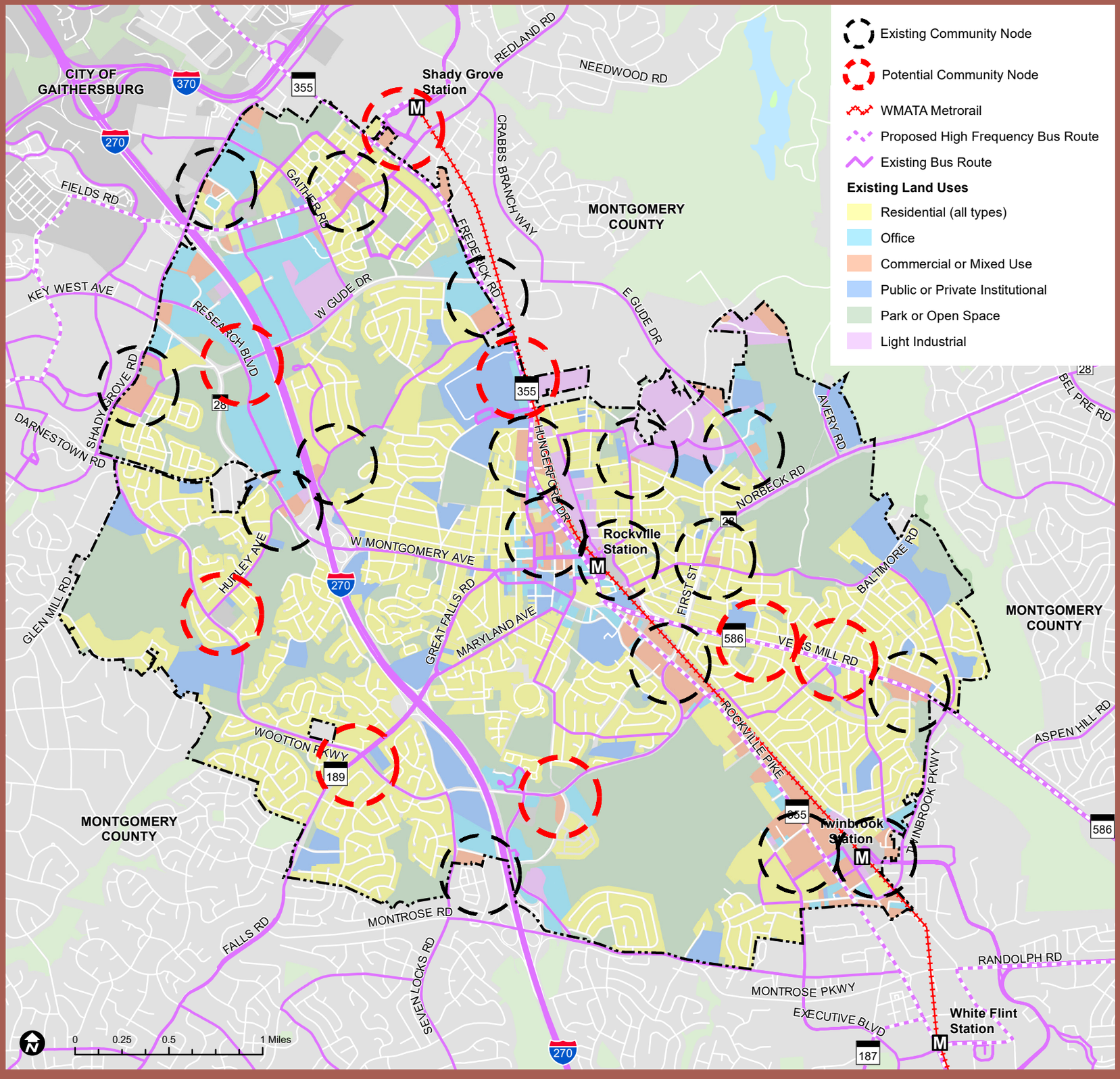
Policy 13
Allow growth at the edges of neighborhoods along major arterial roadways where vehicular movement will have the least impact on existing residential areas.

Actions

13.1 Allow a range of small-scale residential types, from single-unit detached homes to small apartments along Veirs Mill Drive, with opportunities for mixed-use community nodes at Edmonston Drive and Broadwood Drive, as shown in the Land Use Policy Map.

A man walks from the office area along King Farm Boulevard to the commercial village center (top image, opposite page), demonstrating walkability as a key New Urbanist design principle that shaped the King Farm neighborhood. Older parts of Rockville, such as Monroe Street (bottom left, opposite page), were designed for walking before wide spread use of cars.

Figure 6: Community Node Concept in Rockville



Community Nodes

Community nodes are where travel paths converge, or along paths leading to high-frequency transit service.

The components of a community node can vary, but generally include:

- Commercial businesses, such as a clothing, grocery, or convenience store;
- Gathering places like coffee shops, cafés, taverns, or restaurants;
- Safe, comfortable, and accessible pathways and infrastructure that support non-vehicular access, such as walking, biking, rolling, wheelchair, and other modes, usually at a street corner;
- Roadways designed for vehicle and non-vehicular safety and comfort, such as through Complete Streets design (*See Policy 1 of the Transportation Element*) and appropriate traffic calming;
- Transit service, with high frequency or multiple routes; and
- Civic amenities, such as a park, community center, or library.

Figure 6 shows the location of some existing neighborhood commercial centers that serve as community nodes and potential new community nodes in locations that can serve broad areas of residential neighborhoods.

The impulse to walk or bike supports goals to reduce carbon emissions and traffic congestion and is an important part of healthy lifestyles and neighborliness. But neighborhood shops, independent 'mom and pop' or franchise businesses, struggle to survive in even the best locations with much higher density residential development than found in the city's residential detached areas, because density is necessary to provide a customer base to support local businesses. Trying to hold onto the existing neighborhood shops may be difficult, let alone creating new nodes.

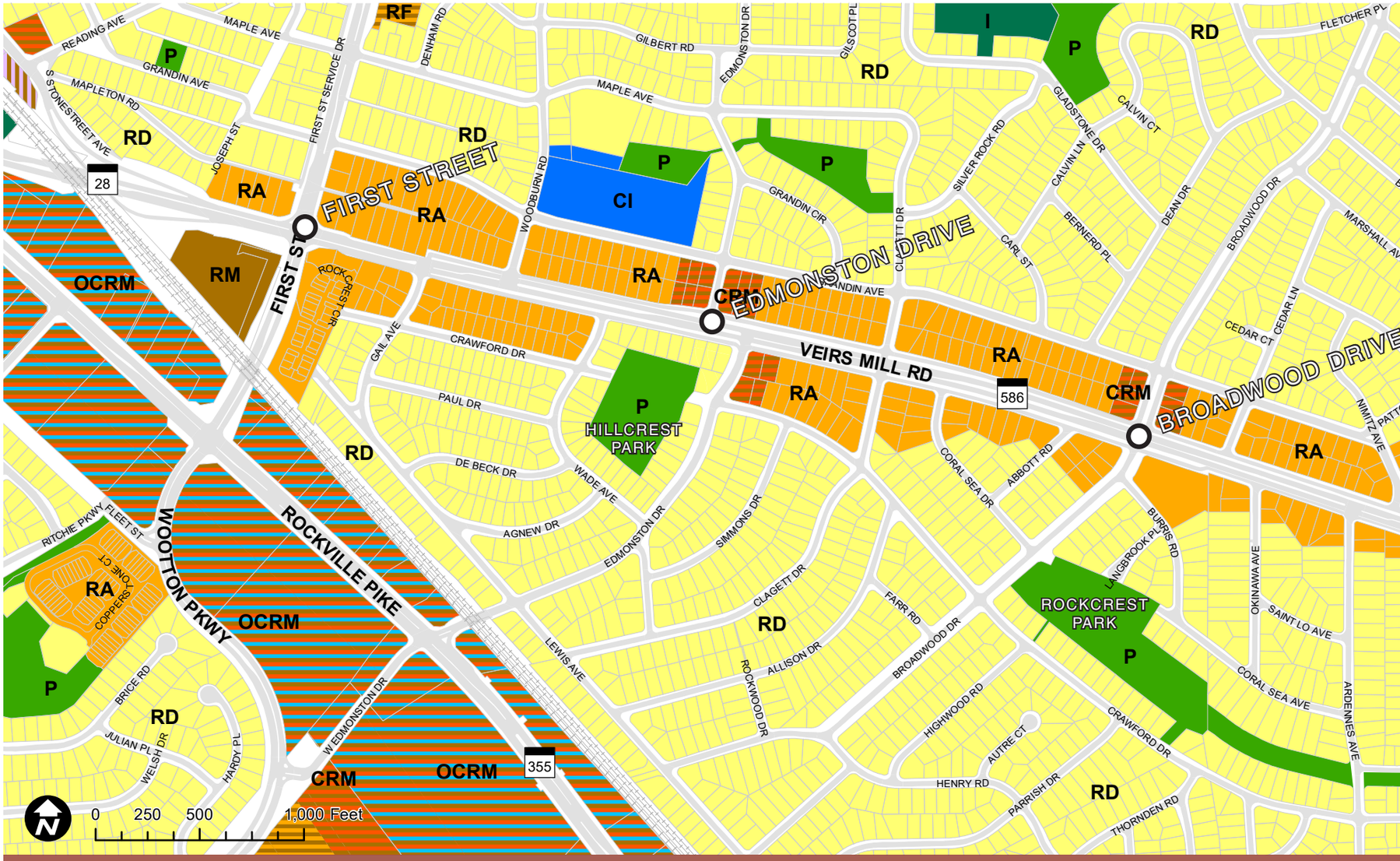
The challenge is clear in locations, such as the Rockshire Village Center, where there is strong interest in retaining the existing commercial businesses as a neighborhood amenity, and yet competition from newer grocers a short drive away contributed to the closure of the anchor grocery store in 2012. In the era of retail consolidation, 'big box' stores, and Internet shopping, each sale to a neighborhood-based business becomes crucial to the viability of the business and its continuation as a walkable and bikable neighborhood amenity. The support and expansion of community nodes in the city is one way to provide small-scale commercial and gathering places within a short distance of city residents, accessible by more than just an automobile trip.





Woodley Gardens Shopping Center (top) is a popular neighborhood destination for nearby residents as well as visitors to Woodley Gardens Park. A locally-owned retail shop in King Farm (below) with a pedestrian-oriented store front.

Figure 7: Land Use Policy Map, Veirs Mill Road Corridor (with planned BRT stations)



This Plan recommends a land use policy to create community nodes along Veirs Mill Road, with transit stations as a key component to encourage walking and biking along with higher densities and mixed uses (see Figure 6). The Commercial Residential Mix (CRM) land use designation is applied to properties within some of these nodes to allow redevelopment to small apartments with corner storefronts in the immediate vicinity of Edmonston Drive and Broadwood Drive (See Figure 7).

The land use plan anticipates the implementation of bus rapid transit (BRT), a transit system using buses that provide faster service than traditional bus routes, through improvements in infrastructure, vehicles, and scheduling, on Veirs Mill Road by identifying the City of Rockville's preferred station locations and changes to land use policy in the corridor. Results from the Rockville 2040 process strongly favor a BRT station at Atlantic Avenue, which is currently the corridor's sole area with commercial and civic uses, and also its highest ridership-generating bus stop. Land use and zoning policy has allowed mixed-use development on the commercial properties since 2009, but no new construction has occurred to date.

BRT stops are also identified on Figure 7 at Broadwood Drive, Edmonston Drive, and First Street. A choice may need to be made, in coordination with Montgomery County government,



between Edmonston or Broadwood, which are four-tenths of a mile apart, to reduce the overall number of BRT stops in the corridor.

Combining storefronts with a bus rapid transit station supports new businesses while reducing parking demand.

Allowing diversification of housing types is recommended in the areas shown as Residential Attached (RA). Expansion of Hillcrest Park towards Veirs Mill Road is envisioned. The other land use changes would depend on private transactions between private property owners, based on new zoning that would allow new housing types.

13.2 Require a portion of the mixed-use development to include storefronts that create walkable and bikable commercial or civic destinations.

13.3 Develop strategies to manage on-street parking and access along the Veirs Mill Road corridor as part of design development and review. Ensure adequate pedestrian and bicycle safety, including implementation of the City's Complete Streets Policy and Vision Zero Plan. (*See also Policies 1 and 2, respectively, of the Transportation Element*)

Policy 14
Locate bus rapid transit stations where ridership and economic development potential is greatest.

Actions

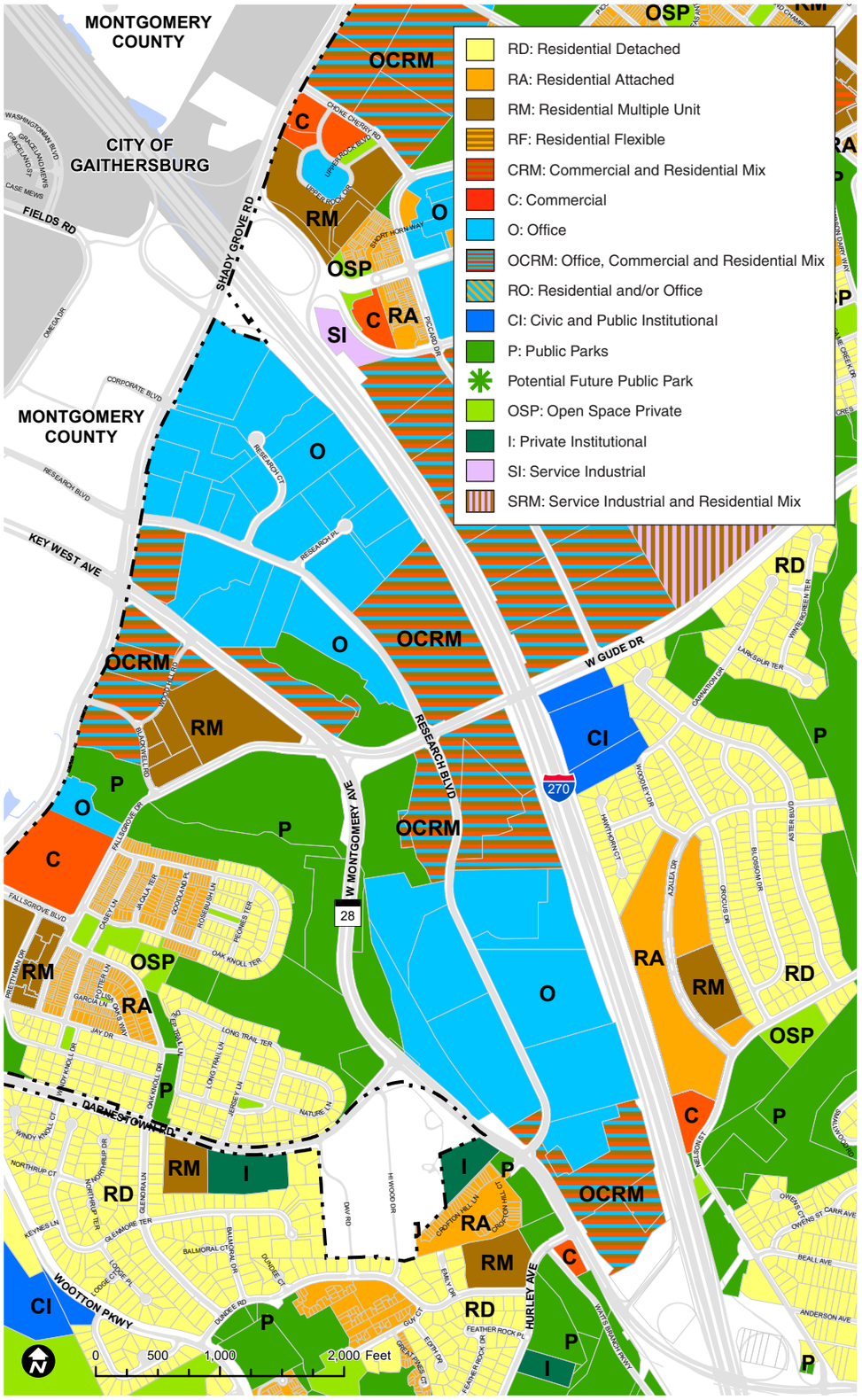
14.1 Designate Atlantic Avenue as the City's preferred bus rapid transit (BRT) station on Veirs Mill Road, instead of, or in addition to, a BRT station at Twinbrook Parkway.

14.2 Designate Edmonston Drive and/or Broadwood Drive as a preferred BRT station location and an anchor of a new mixed-use, higher intensity, community node. (See Figure 6)

14.3 Conduct station area planning for BRT stations, including identification of economic development opportunities and necessary bike and pedestrian connections. Economic development efforts along BRT routes in the city should not be at the expense of displacing residents or small businesses, unless efforts include providing assistance to return to the same location or in another area within the city.

14.4 Consider the potential for new development when selecting BRT stations along the MD 355 corridor.

Figure 8: Land Use Policy Map, Research Boulevard











Images above, top to bottom, show the intersection of Research Boulevard and West Gude Drive; the Research Boulevard corridor from above the Key West Avenue and West Gude Drive intersection; Westat headquarters on Research Boulevard; and a relatively new wet laboratory at the south end of the Research Boulevard corridor.

GOAL 5
Encourage and support office clusters in areas with good regional access.

Rockville is fortunate to have large areas with office uses, including laboratories and research & development, which help to fund City operations through property taxes, provide employment, and add to the vitality of the city and its commercial businesses. The success of office development along Research Boulevard and Piccard Drive is due in no small part to the forethought of City leaders expressed in the 1960 and 1970 master plans that designated these areas for 'restricted industrial' uses in the era of I-270 expansion. Offices and laboratories in the I-270 Technology Corridor benefit from good regional access from the expressway and this land use also provides a buffer to the expressway from nearby residential neighborhoods.

It took decades for the land planned and zoned for office uses in the Research and Piccard areas to reach build-out in the 1990s. In recent years, however, some early structures dating from the 1950s or 1960s have been demolished and/or redeveloped with a mix of uses, for example the Upper Rock project along Shady Grove Road, and land once reserved for office development is now occupied by residential buildings and commercial centers.

This interest in converting low-density, office buildings to higher-value residential or commercial uses led to the City adopting new mixed-use zones in 2009, particularly the Mixed Use Employment (MXE) zone. However the MXE zone, while focused on employment-generating uses, does not require office as a primary use in redevelopment projects, challenging the decades of planned office uses in Rockville's past master plans.

The office market in general is cyclical, but trending toward less space per employee. A report conducted for Montgomery County government and published in 2015 noted the weakness in the office market, concluding: "The most successful office clusters in Montgomery County are part of mixed-use development with a strong sense of place and quality environment. Transit connectivity is increasingly important to office tenants." Other studies have shown that office lease rates are highest within a quarter-mile of a Metrorail station, as well. Therefore, transit is a key amenity for office uses, which are also supported by nearby restaurants, attractive streetscapes, and urban park spaces.

This Plan expects that Rockville will remain a major employment center while continuing to allow some mixing of uses within office clusters in order to provide support with amenities and, where relevant, nearby residences. Additional policies and actions that support office uses and businesses are provided in the Economic Development Element and in the relevant planning area sections.

Policy 15
Plan for office land uses in locations that have good access to the regional transportation network and other amenities.

Actions

15.1 Plan for office uses as part of mixed-use developments within a quarter-mile of Rockville and Twinbrook Metrorail stations.

15.2 Consider reducing the minimum parking requirement for office uses to promote economic development.

15.3 Retain the majority of land in the Research Boulevard corridor for office uses as shown on the Land Use Policy Map. (*See Figure 8*)

15.4 Plan for a new community node to serve the Research Boulevard corridor at its intersection with West Gude Drive. (*See Figure 6*)

15.5 Explore the best methods for encouraging and preserving office land uses in those areas mapped for Office (O) on the Land Use Policy Map.

15.6 Continue to allow conversion of office uses to other land uses in areas that do not have superior access to the regional highway and transit systems.

15.7 Coordinate provision of neighborhood amenities as part of the approval process for conversions of office to residential uses.

GOAL 6
Provide areas for service industrial and other high-intensity uses.

Rockville's industrial uses are not as prominent as its civic, commercial, or residential uses; and yet businesses located in areas of the city with service industrial uses support the economic life of the Rockville community and provide services and employment needed by residents. The majority of land designated for industrial uses is occupied by service businesses, with a large percentage focused on automobile service, such as body shops and collision repair. There is some small-scale manufacturing—including machine shops, sheet metal shaping, and electrical and mechanical engineering—and a growing sector of 'maker' craft manufacturing, primarily focused on food processing such as brewing or bakeries; but also stonecutters and others.

Other types of service industrial businesses in Rockville include building contractors and building supply, and an eclectic mix of uses that provide services directly to businesses and homeowners, including movers, self storage, janitorial and lawn care, small engine repair, upholstery repair, and kennels. Their location in Rockville, or 'down county', is crucial to many of these businesses because being here cuts travel time, and therefore cost, for the concentrated population in the southern part of Montgomery County and makes access to, for instance, automobile repair convenient for residents. Other businesses that are located within, and well-suited to, the city's service industrial areas are high-intensity and/or large recreation uses—such as indoor soccer, shooting ranges, and gyms—and research and development businesses.

One use that is prominent, but not always recognized as industrial, is the railroad. In its early days, Rockville's regional position and growth was promoted by the double track railroad corridor running through town operated by the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad. While the freight railroad, now owned by CSX Transportation, no longer serves customers within the city limits, the tracks are a key physical feature of the city, reinforced by two Metrorail tracks, and the operation of freight and passenger trains in the corridor.

Just beyond the northeast border of the city, a large natural gas storage and pipeline operation precludes other potential



A common type of service industrial use found in the Southlawn area is characterized as 'flex space,' with a linear building divided into bays, individual addresses and entrances, and roll-up doors.

future uses. Elsewhere along West Gude Drive, a 40-acre Pepco maintenance facility is located among the residential neighborhood of King Farm and offices along Piccard Drive and Gaither Road. Industrial uses buffer the railroad tracks along portions of Stonestreet Avenue and Lewis Avenue, yet the presence and accessibility of Metro stations in these locations makes the eventual transition to more transit-oriented uses likely.

A study of the Southlawn service industrial area conducted by the City in 2016 concluded that the service industrial uses were still in demand and that a transition to other uses, such as retail, is not supported by the market or the physical layout of the area. In many ways, Rockville's service industrial uses are a hallmark of the community: Rockville is not just a bedroom suburb to the District of Columbia, or the County seat—it is a place where many different types of pursuits, businesses, and technical employment opportunities can be accommodated. Therefore, this Plan maintains a Service Industrial (SI) land use classification for the Southlawn area on the Land Use Policy Map, which corresponds to Light Industrial (IL) zone, in recognition of its importance as a service industrial district in the city, as well as Montgomery County.

Land along North Stonestreet Avenue has been zoned Mixed Use Business (MXB) since 2009. This zone allows a mix of

Development activity in Rockville is putting redevelopment pressure on industrial properties in the path of mixed-use redevelopment close to Metro stations, while also providing a pipeline supply of residential and commercial space that appears to be meeting Rockville's growth needs. As a result, these conditions appear to be reinforcing market interest in the industrial properties in and around the Southlawn study area while providing a path for residential and commercial growth outside of the Southlawn area. Anecdotal reports by local industrial real estate professionals indicate that the loss of service industrial buildings due to redevelopment around the Twinbrook Metro Station is prompting more industrial tenants to seek space in and around the Southlawn study area, the closest area where there is industrial space availability. At the same time, the pipeline of approved projects in three areas of the city – adjacent to the Twinbrook transit station, in Town Center, and in the King Farm area at the city's northern end – account for most of the city's recent and planned development activity.

Southlawn Industrial Area Feasibility Study, Feb. 2017, p. 28

uses, including continuation of service industrial uses, but also allows residential and commercial uses. Following a study of the Stonestreet Avenue Corridor in 2017-18, the City adopted the North Stonestreet Avenue Plan Amendment and Park Road and North/South Stonestreet Avenue Plan Amendment to recommend a change in zoning on certain properties along Stonestreet Avenue that would allow commercial and residential mixed-use development rather than service industrial uses. The policies from these plans are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan, both in the Elements and in Planning Areas 2 (East Rockville) and 6 (Lincoln Park). The Land Use Policy Map of this Plan applies a Service Industrial and Residential Mix (SRM) category to properties on North Stonestreet Avenue between these two plan amendment areas, which is consistent with their current MXB zoning.

The 2009 Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan engaged land owners of service industrial properties on Lewis Avenue in a discussion about future land use and zoning. At that time, the decision was made to retain the Light Industrial zoning, which does not allow residential uses. Given the proximity of these parcels to the Twinbrook Metro Station, however, there is potential for a transition to residential uses. This Plan changes land use policy from service industrial uses to Service Industrial and Residential Mix (SRM), and recommends a rezoning to Mixed Use Business (MXB). As with other service industrial areas, the Lewis Avenue industrial uses are a good buffer for the busy railroad tracks, and service industrial uses provide space for needed businesses and employment. This Plan offers the opportunity for property owners and the neighborhood to gradually remake the area if they find it is in keeping with their current business plans and as opportunities arise.

Policy 16
Preserve areas for service industrial, research & development, and high-intensity recreation uses, while also allowing property near Metro to transition to a wider mix of uses.

Actions

16.1 Maintain the Southlawn area as reserved for primarily service industrial uses through the Service Industrial (SI) land use designation on the Land Use Policy Map.

16.2 Allow service industrial uses to remain along Stonestreet Avenue and Lewis Avenue, while also allowing a transition to a wider mix that includes residential, commercial, arts and cultural, or office uses.

16.3 Change the Light Industrial (IL) zone on south Lewis Avenue to Mixed Use Business (MXB), to permit a wider mix of uses.

16.4 Preserve industrial land use as a valuable freight and economic development resource while mitigating impacts on surrounding communities. Industrial land uses include warehouse, shipping logistics, research and development, manufacturing, and maker/creative/artisan businesses.

16.5 Continue to allow high-intensity and/or large indoor recreation, arts, and cultural uses in the City's light industrial zones.

16.6 Support and promote the service industrial and creative/maker district of the Rock East District (RED). (*See also Planning Area 17 and Action 3.4 of the Municipal Growth Element*)

GOAL 7
Support a robust commercial base.

Commercial land uses are dynamic, changing over shorter periods of time than other uses in order to stay fresh and compete with the latest shopping experiences. This Plan defines commercial uses to include all types of businesses that provide direct customer services and sales, from retail goods to groceries to restaurants to personal care services. Professional services—such as accounting, real estate, or small medical offices—that are open to the public and mixed in with other storefronts are also included in the commercial category, as are lodging uses, such as hotels, inns, and B&Bs. In some cases, these commercial uses are mapped on the Land Use Policy Map to distinguish them from office buildings that are not generally open to the public.

Profound changes are taking place in the city's commercial sector with regard to how people shop and how goods are sold. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21 brought rapid disruptions to the city's commercial sector, expanding use of online shopping, home delivery, and in-store pick-up, and changing the types of goods and services people buy, a long-term trend of Internet shopping and home delivery brought increasing challenges to 'bricks and mortar' shops in the city.

It is uncertain at this time whether and how the pandemic-related changes in shopping behavior and the commercial environment will continue to affect the city's commercial sector and shopping districts. Still, Rockville has much to benefit from the current phase of retailing that emphasizes shopping experiences through placemaking and mixed-use development that places customers just an elevator ride or short walk or bike away from new restaurants or shops. Rockville's major corridors (e.g., MD 355, Shady Grove Road, Veirs Mill Road) remain viable locations for commercial businesses. A projected increase in the city's population may also help offset losses in Rockville's customer base as a result of any changing behavioral or market trends.

Policy 17
Support retail uses along Rockville's commercial corridors and other shopping areas.

King Farm and Fallsgrove shopping centers primarily serve their neighborhood and sub-regional market areas rather than as regional destinations. There are dozens of commercial centers along MD 355 north of the downtown Rockville, including many businesses on the east side of the highway beyond the city limits. Like Rockville's service industrial areas, these places provide space for a wide



A commercial strip shopping center on Rockville Pike is one of the many kinds of commercial developments located in Rockville.

variety of businesses, such as small grocers, print shops and drive-in banks or fast food. Flexible parking standards would enable new businesses to form in existing spaces without prescribing a rigid calculation based on past practices.

Actions

17.1 Review and revise regulations, specifically parking minimums, that limit the use of existing commercial space.

17.2 Allow off-site signage, where deemed useful and beneficial, to direct customers to Rockville's shopping areas that are not visible from major arterials.

GOAL 8
Plan for parks and rich civic and cultural life.

In addition to places to work, reside, and shop, a community requires civic and public spaces where residents and visitors can participate in activities that broaden the lives of individuals and the community as a whole. Participants of Rockville 2040 identified a need for a richer cultural and social life in the city, in their vision of the future. Something as simple as a walk or bike in the park can be an important part of daily routines, while participation in religious worship plays a central role in the personal and social lives of many residents. Both of these activities require space or land where the civic life of the community can flourish. In addition, the City seeks to promote a rich cultural life, including performance and material arts, and an active nightlife. Rockville successfully sponsors and hosts community events, which are an important part of the social and economic life of the city.

In the past, land was set aside for places of worship as part of large development projects and also recognized on the City's land use plan. Recent major developments have not included sites for religious or other institutional uses, and, as demographic and cultural values change, attendance at any particular institution may or may not correlate with its surrounding neighborhood. In some cases participants drive into Rockville from many miles away to attend a particular church, while Rockville residents drive out of the city to do the same. Conversely, Rockville is also home to religious communities that specifically locate their place of residence within a short distance of their house of worship.

The civic life of the community is also supported by land uses that provide space for educational, cultural, and recreational activities. Public school sites are indicated on the Land Use Policy Map with the Civic and Public Institutional (CI) land use designation, including those of Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery College.

Beyond the basics of schools, parks, and religious uses, there is a need for places where cultural activities, such as visual and performance arts, can be pursued. Commercial uses can play an important role in providing this space, whether as a dance studio, art gallery, or performance space. Rockville currently has one movie theater, and it is an important destination in Town Center.

The Arts and Innovation Center in Rockville Town Center was developed as a public-private partnership, with the City owning parts of the building that host the VisArts visual arts galleries and studios. The City also owns and operates the F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater, an auditorium for live performances with 450 seats. The Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center on the Montgomery College campus has an auditorium with 509 seats.

Weddings or other large social gatherings find space in some of Rockville's hotels, at VisArts, private country clubs, and the City's Glenview Mansion. A handful of restaurants host live music, but none have a stage, and there are no nightclubs in the city. Montgomery County government studied the nightlife issue and published a report of recommendations in 2013, with input from Rockville, that identified Town Center as one area with potential for additional activities.

The mixed-use land use designations of this Plan (CRM, SRM, and OCRM) support the creation of a richer cultural life in Rockville. These designations are mapped in the Town Center, along Rockville Pike, and other parts of the MD 355, I-270, and railroad corridors. In many cases, entrepreneurial start ups of a dance studio, art gallery, live music space, or small theater are challenging, risky businesses that require low rents. This type of space can be difficult to find in Rockville. The North Stonestreet Avenue corridor and emerging Rock East District (RED) may offer an opportunity for more experimental arts, creator, or 'maker' spaces to occupy converted industrial or warehouse buildings.

Rockville has had great success hosting annual events, with Hometown Holidays and the Antique and Classic Car Show drawing many thousands of residents and visitors each year. Opportunities to create additional events on flexible sites is supported by this Plan. One concern is that undeveloped space held by surface parking lots in the Town Center, once available for large event crowds, is being replaced by 'infill' development. This Plan recommends City action to create new park space in the Town Center to serve the many new residential units and large community events.

Policy 18
Support individual and group efforts to create space that will sustain social interaction, community life, and a flourishing arts and culture scene in Rockville.

Actions

18.1 Plan for a new public park in Rockville Town Center of sufficient size to host community-wide events and meet the needs of a growing population in the Town Center.

18.2 Establish Rockville Town Center as a civic and cultural destination, including shopping, dining, arts and cultural amenities, and a live entertainment venue.



Hometown Holidays is Rockville's most important civic and cultural event staged in the Town Center each year over the Memorial Day weekend.

GOAL 9
Provide zoning tools for major development projects, and master plans as needed, for development of large areas.

Starting in the 1960s, the City utilized a planned development (PD) approach that allowed for flexibility from the base zoning and development standards through adoption of project concept and urban design plans. This approach allowed for variation in lot sizes from the rigid standards of the single-unit residential R-60 or R-90 zones and allowed narrower or shorter lots and adjustments for topography or roadway designs. It also allowed the developer to mix in townhouses or other uses, such as a shopping center, as part of a holistic approach to community development. New Mark Commons and Rockshire are early examples of 'PD' projects in the city.

Residential planned developments were usually built out in a relatively short time frame, of less than ten years. In other cases, the project plan under a 'PD' envisioned a much longer build-out that could take decades. For example, Tower Oaks or PDs in Town Center are still being realized today and portions of them may never be as they were originally approved. These PDs were approved with a maximum amount of commercial square footage or number of dwelling units.

At present, there are 27 Planned Development (PD) zones in the city, each with their own governing documents that contain specific development standards. Over eighteen percent of parceled land in the city is currently in a PD, including some of the more recent large development sites. And yet, the rewrite of the Zoning Ordinance in 2009 did not include a planned development option and no new PDs have been created since.

The Planned Development approach is particularly useful when planning large areas of undeveloped land, with King Farm and Fallsgrove as the best recent examples. The flexibility of the PD allowed the majority of the single-unit residential lots within them to be smaller than the minimum 6,000 square feet of the R-60 zone, and also allowed reductions in setbacks, lot coverage, and other development standards. As a result, for example, King Farm has some of the largest houses in the city, but on some of the smallest lots. No comparable zone in the city's base zoning districts would allow this type of development. Any proposed development of one of the two remaining golf courses in the city would benefit from the option for a Planned Development process.

Policy 19
Establish a flexible zoning regulatory and approval procedure for major projects that allows for creative site planning.

Major development projects will continue to be proposed by property owners that could benefit from a flexible, planned development process as an option. There is value in a flexible approach for approving future projects so that public benefits can be weighed and negotiated. Creative site planning could include measures that address: mixed land uses and densities; subdivision and lot sizes; setback, lot coverage, and height standards; vehicular parking requirements; pedestrian and bicycle facilities; and open spaces and placemaking amenities.

The 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan established a development option for 'Champion Projects' in the South Pike area, near the Twinbrook Metro Station, that allows for greater building heights and other incentives for large projects in exchange for delivering benefits to the City that would not otherwise be required. However, the 'Champion Project' process leaves some site development issues unaddressed, which can slow project approval and create friction that can be avoided by starting with the optional method of a planned development.

Actions

19.1 Amend the zoning ordinance to create a Planned Development approval process while simplifying and shortening the process for amending approved Planned Developments.

19.2 Explore phasing out older Planned Development zones, specifically for projects that are complete, and where another existing or proposed zoning district can be applied.

19.3 Amend the Zoning Ordinance to establish an optional method of development review to allow development

incentives or zoning relief in exchange for significant public amenities and facilities of importance to the community.

Policy 20
Establish a floating zone specifically written to correspond with areas designated Residential Attached (RA) on the Land Use Policy Map.

The land use plan recommends an incremental approach to land use change, specifically with regard to allowing new areas of attached residential housing types within areas that previously only allowed single-unit detached residences. There are two basic approaches for allowing this change under the Zoning Ordinance: either a Zoning Map Amendment can be proposed after adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to rezone specific properties, or the current zoning can be retained and proposed zoning changes can be made under a 'floating zone' approach.

At present there is no floating zone option in the Zoning Ordinance, which, like the PD, was left out of the 2009 update. However, when the City had a Residential Townhouse (RTH) floating zone, it was used to deliver successful projects. This Plan recommends amending the Zoning Ordinance to create a new floating zone, specifically for attached residential uses. The application of this new floating zone can be restricted to those areas specifically mapped for Residential Attached (RA) on the Land Use Policy Map. This approach provides a transparent process for land use change, guided by the land use plan.

Policy 21
Require that a concept plan be completed prior to, or as part of, any substantially scaled development proposal involving Rockville's two private golf courses.

The largest remaining parcels in the City of Rockville that have the potential to become major development sites are occupied by two private golf courses. Woodmont County Club, west of Rockville Pike, is the largest at 458 acres, with two 18-hole courses. The 193-acre Lakewood Country Club, accessed from Glen Mill Road, has one 18-hole course.

Floating Zone

A 'floating' zone is a zoning district that can be applied to a property in addition or replacement to a traditional zone, where certain conditions must be met for its application and various zoning standards may be modified from a traditional zone. Rather than being placed on the zoning map as a traditional zone, the floating zone is written as an amendment in the zoning ordinance and used on an as needed basis. (Source: City of Rockville)

Both courses provide recreational opportunities, and their private clubs also have additional sports facilities and play an important role in the social life of their members and the community. However, changing demographics, costs, and time constraints in today's lifestyles have reduced interest and participation in golf in some parts of the country, including in Montgomery County. In recent years, private golf courses, such as Montgomery Village and Indian Springs have closed. The City's RedGate Municipal Golf Course closed in 2018 and the Mayor and Council thereafter opted to transition the property to active and passive recreation use.

Any proposed changes in land use to these golf courses other than that of private open space and recreation would require a concept plan that would include a significant amount of community engagement, followed by a Zoning Map amendment. A concept plan would enable any partial or complete changes in use to be considered in full context and to ensure orderly development of these large sites over time. This process could be carried out through the planned development process as recommended in Policy 19 of the Land Use Element.

Woodmont Country Club has sold land for development on the edges of their property in the past, and more recently engaged with City staff during the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan process and during Rockville 2040. The zoning along the property's Rockville Pike frontage

was changed from R-400 to new mixed-use zones after the adoption of the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan in 2016. The Pike Plan also recommends extending East Jefferson Street across the country club property in conjunction with any development or redevelopment on the country club property that produces a significant traffic impact on nearby intersections (*See also Action 19.4 of the Transportation Element and Planning Areas 3, 9, and 11*).

Any proposed development on land that is part of the Lakewood Country Club should begin with a concept plan, in conjunction with a planned development, if and when the owners of the club seek such changes.

Concept plans for these large development sites should include:

- A land use concept plan for the entire site;
- Recommended zoning, or a planned development proposal, for the area being redeveloped;
- An environmental analysis with identification of critical features for conservation and consideration of environmental impact;
- A transportation framework plan, with roads network and connections to the surrounding area, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit service concept;
- A concept plan for community facilities, such as schools, parks, and community centers; and
- Significant community engagement.

Actions

21.1 Continue to engage the Rockville community in a public visioning and planning effort to weigh options for RedGate Park (the former RedGate Municipal Golf Course), and create a master plan that retains the property for active and/or passive recreation. (*See also Action 3.3 in Recreation and Parks Element and Project 1 of Planning Area 17*)

21.2 Continue to engage with Woodmont Country Club and Lakewood Country Club about short-term and long-term planning issues on their properties. (See also Planning Area 11 for Woodmont Country Club and Planning Area 14 for Lakewood Country Club)

Policy 22
Undertake a study of parking regulations and recommended changes to the Zoning Ordinance to promote access via modes other than private automobiles and reduce the financial and site development burden.

Parking is not a land use per se, and yet the storage of automobiles takes up huge amounts of land, and is a major consideration for any development project. The impact of parking on urban design is profound. In Rockville Town Center, high minimum parking requirements for office uses are impacting the potential for new office development and limiting the use of available sites. Structured parking, while smaller in its footprint, is very expensive to build and impacts the financial feasibility and physical design of development projects, with the potential to raise the cost of housing and commercial rents.

Despite the impacts of parking lots and garages on development, vehicle parking also provides vital access to residences and businesses. Changes to parking requirements and standards should consider Rockville's older and mobility-challenged residents and visitors who may not be able to take advantage of the city's transit or walking and bicycling infrastructure to reach their destination. This Plan recommends a comprehensive study of the City's parking requirements, considering all of the issues mentioned above.

Actions

22.1 Study potential reductions to minimum parking requirements and other parking measures in order to promote non-vehicular modes of transport, as well as economic development, while ensuring sufficient access for those who to drive by choice or necessity. (*See also Actions 12.4 and 14.7 of the Transportation Element, Actions 1.4 and 10.5 of the Housing Element, and Action 10.2 of the Economic Development Element*)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TRANSPORTATION

Vision

Rockville's transportation system will provide residents, businesses, employees, and visitors with multiple options for moving about the city through a variety of modes and paths while ensuring access for persons of all abilities and mobilities. The city's commercial vitality, and position as a regional hub and employment center, will be supported by infrastructure investments that enhance connections to the broader region, while managing traffic and congestion. Rockville will continue to transition to a more-walkable community and contribute to regional efforts to create safe, efficient, and environmentally sustainable mobility.

Encouraging a multi-modal approach to mobility in Rockville includes facilitating the use of transit and bicycles and efficient transfers between modes.

Before Rockville's incorporation as a city, the area that now encompasses the municipality was a home and crossroads for the native people of the area. The indigenous population carved a path on the high ground, known as Sinequa Trail, along which downtown Rockville is now located. As a transportation artery for centuries, Rockville Pike (Maryland Route 355) can claim to be the oldest road in Montgomery County. Pike travelers have included Native Americans, early American farmers, American presidents, enslaved people seeking freedom, Confederate and Union troops, wealthy Washingtonians retreating to their summer homes, and modern-day commuters and shoppers.

The City of Rockville was founded at a regional crossroads, connecting routes to Georgetown, Frederick, Darnestown, and Bladensburg. The city's continued ability to thrive economically is dependent in part on its superior regional access and a number of high-capacity transportation facilities that make Rockville a premier address for businesses, County and State facilities, and places of residence.

Major transportation infrastructure continues to shape the city: I-270 provides access to the city's bio-technology corridor; Rockville Pike is a major highway route that sustains its success as a regional shopping destination; Town Center, which grew up around Rockville's historic crossroads and passenger rail station, is now anchored by a major Metro station and bus hub; and new growth is planned around the Twinbrook and Shady Grove Metro stations.

The city's formative growth years of the 1950's and 60's saw primarily automobile-oriented, commuter suburban development. Consistent with that "suburban" background, the attention given in those decades to bicycle and pedestrian mobility was minimal. During the 1970's, two energy crises and a new environmental sensitivity began to change the picture. The city's mix of employment-generating and residential land use became more balanced, and the City began to focus on transportation alternatives other than the automobile.

Goals for Rockville's transportation system include:

1. Provide safe transportation facilities for all modes by implementing Complete Street projects and attaining Vision Zero goals.
2. Promote walking, rolling, and bicycling modes with new and upgraded facilities.
3. Maximize the use and value of transit assets and services.
4. Update development review standards to reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote alternative modes of travel.
5. Plan for new mobility technologies and reduce carbon emissions and other pollutants from transport.
6. Manage and improve Rockville's roadway and trail network to provide for safe and comfortable, movement of people walking, rolling, and driving, for all types of trips and delivery of goods and services.

The 21st Century, especially its second decade, brought increasing awareness of the need for safe streets through Vision Zero and complete streets that encompass greater bicycle and pedestrian comfort. Rockville today is placing a greater focus on equity—new laws have been enacted, new standards set, and millions of dollars spent in expanding, improving, and maintaining bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

During the development of this Plan, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a significant short-term impact on many aspects of the city's transportation system. While it remains unclear how long-term travel behaviors will change as a result of the pandemic, this Plan acknowledges that the City should continue to monitor and adjust to emerging trends and community interests, such as shifting commuter patterns, transit ridership, teleworking, and use of alternative travel modes.

'Pedestrian', or 'walking', is used in this Plan as a general term for any type of travel mode that involves a person traveling by foot, whether walking or running, and may include use of a white cane, audio-assistance device, or other physical assistance. 'Biking' or 'rolling' is used in this Plan as a general term for travel by many types of non-vehicular transportation modes (also known as 'micro-mobility'), including bicycles, scooters, skateboards, one-wheel boards, roller blades, wheelchairs, etc. The term 'driving' refers to any type of motorized mode of vehicular travel, such as a car, truck, or motorcycle.

Any specific transportation-related recommendation in the Planning Areas section of this Plan without a direct reference to their respective goals and policy statements in the Transportation Element, requires further coordination and evaluation prior to its inclusion in any development application review or funding by the City for implementation.

Summary of Community Input

The Rockville 2040 process generated many comments on transportation issues. A common theme was a need for better pedestrian connections, between neighborhoods and activity nodes, and across major thoroughfares and the railroad tracks that physically divide the city. Better pedestrian and bicycle connections across the tracks that separate the Twinbrook and Rockville Pike neighborhoods, and across MD-355 to Shady Grove Metro Station, were mentioned as specific priorities. Also of concern is the need to ensure safe and comfortable transportation options for seniors and those of all abilities and mobilities.

Comments from Rockville 2040 support the City's continuing efforts to build out its bicycle network, with some advocating for a more aggressive approach to incorporating protected bicycle infrastructure into road rights-of-way. Others sought to ensure that on-street parking would not be sacrificed by installing bicycle lanes. This is a balance that is recognized by this Plan and in the City study's and outreach when considering new bicycle infrastructure.

There is wide support for improved transit, though no clear consensus regarding the type that it should be, with some support for a bus rapid transit (BRT) system and for a local trolley service. There was strong support for improved bus service, from residents, the business community and



Looking south at the intersection of Rockville Pike and Veirs Mill Road.

Montgomery College staff and students. Higher frequency bus service was the most mentioned desire, though the City does not manage a bus system itself. Interest was also expressed in improving the Rockville and Twinbrook transit stations, including safety, aesthetics, internal circulation and access.

With respect to roads, the input was mixed. Participants expressed concern and frustration regarding traffic on Rockville's main corridors, but did not necessarily support the increased road network that might mitigate that traffic if it would threaten the tranquility of existing neighborhoods.

GOAL 1
Provide safe transportation facilities for all modes by implementing Complete Street projects and attaining Vision Zero goals.

Recent policy efforts in transportation planning seek to promote a balanced approach to utilization of the public right-of-way for all modes of transport, with an emphasis on facilities that serve walking, rolling or cycling, rather than just driving. In this section, the Plan states broad policies relating to 'Complete Streets' for all modes of transport, and 'Vision Zero' goals to eliminate all deaths on the city's roadway network. Both of these overarching policies are comprehensive in scope, encompassing aspects of all modes of travel and relating to policy statements in the rest of this Element. Specific actions to implement Complete Streets and Vision Zero are provided under the policy statements of other goals, organized by mode.

Policy 1
Continue to implement and improve the City's Complete Streets Policy.

The City adopted a 'Complete Streets' policy in 2009 to ensure that multi-modal elements are incorporated into all transportation improvement projects. The policy states that: "New construction and re-construction roadway projects in the city shall accommodate users of all ages and abilities including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, motorists, and adjacent land users." New sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle

> "And because so many fear for their safety on our streets, there is no true freedom of mobility — no right to choose to walk or bike — and, as a result, we compromise our public health with increasing rates of sedentary diseases and higher carbon emissions."
>
> *- VisionZeroNetwork.org*





A new bicycle lane (top) was added on South Stonestreet Avenue in 2017, in keeping with the City's Complete Streets policy. Decorative fencing and landscaping (bottom) deters jaywalking across Park Street at the Rockville transit station. These types of physical impediments are part of implementation of Vision Zero principals (see Policy 2), that seek to reduce and eliminate deaths on roadways.







A woman with two small children (top) prepares to make a difficult crossing of Rockville Pike at Edmonston Drive. Pedestrian safety improvements implemented in 2018 along Chapman Avenue include the removal of a right turn lane (middle) to shorten the crossing distance at Twinbrook Parkway and a new curb extension and crosswalk (bottom) leading to the Twinbrook Metro Station.

lanes are included under this policy. Continued efforts to make the City's rights-of-way useful for all modes is a major policy goal for this Plan and for the City.

Policy 2
Implement the Vision Zero Action Plan for Rockville, with a focus on pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Vision Zero is an international movement to reduce and eliminate injury and death on roads from vehicle crashes and crashes between vehicles and other road users, such as pedestrians and bicycles. The movement takes its name from a goal set in Sweden to reduce deaths from traffic crashes to zero by 2050. Vision Zero asserts that no traffic fatalities are acceptable and that policies and physical changes to roadway design can reduce collisions among vehicles and between vehicles and other modes.

In October 2018, Rockville's Mayor and Council adopted a resolution that endorses Vision Zero as a comprehensive and holistic approach to reducing and eliminating fatal crashes. The effort relies on data-driven approaches to improve the engineering of roads, to conduct targeted education and enforcement, and to change laws to improve driver behavior and increase penalties for dangerous conduct on the roads. A Vision Zero Action Plan was approved by the Mayor and Council in June 2020 to guide the City's goal of reaching zero deaths and serious injuries by 2030. In 2020, the Mayor and Council also initiated the creation of a Pedestrian Master Plan, which will, when adopted, support the city's Vision Zero Action Plan by seeking to improve the safety and comfort of people walking and rolling in the city.

GOAL 2
Promote walking, rolling, and bicycling modes with new and upgraded facilities.

This Plan promotes the expansion of walking, rolling, and bicycling as transport modes. Infrastructure to support these modes is as important as roads are for cars, and is an essential component of a sustainable Rockville. Nearly all Rockville residents and visitors are pedestrians during their daily routines, even if it is just walking to and from their cars. Rockville residents who are not ambulatory, and use wheelchairs or scooters, also depend on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to move around the city, with specific requirements set in federal law through the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Walking produces the least amount of carbon dioxide of any mode of transport, with bicycling a close second. Facilitating and promoting walking, rolling, and bicycling is a key aspect of neighborhood design, land use mix, infrastructure planning, and public health.

Policy 3
Make walking, rolling, and bicycling a convenient and safe option for travel in Rockville.

While walking, rolling, and biking around Rockville should be a safe, comfortable, and easy activity, many conflicts with automobiles start right outside one's door. Roadways designed for fast, efficient movement of automobiles make pedestrians and bicyclists vulnerable. Long stretches of roads without safe or marked pedestrian crossings make crossing these roads a challenge. By default, people walking, rolling, and biking are at a disadvantage in the transportation system, where bicyclists and pedestrians mostly yield to vehicles. A culture of speeding, rolling stops, and failure to yield can lead to collisions, even when pedestrians are in crosswalks and have the technical 'right-of-way'. In some critical locations, these conflicts are so difficult that grade separation of the two modes may be a necessary solution. Bicyclists on major roadways and at intersections can also be at risk. And bicycles can also present risks to pedestrians and other travelers.



A crossing guard controls traffic at College Gardens Elementary before and after school hours.

The Mayor and Council recognized the need to improve pedestrian safety and increase walkability throughout the city by establishing the Rockville Pedestrian Advocacy Committee (RPAC) in 2019. The City defines 'pedestrian' generally as any person traveling by foot, whether walking or running, and may include use of a white cane, audio-assistance device, or other physical assistance. The goals of RPAC are to: (1) Advocate for pedestrian safety in Rockville in pursuit of Vision Zero; (2) Enhance pedestrian accessibility and walkability within the city's natural, business and residential environments; (3) Promote access and connectivity among the city's disparate neighborhoods and pedestrian centers to increase social connectivity; and (4) Promote walking as a viable transportation option through provision of sidewalks, pathways, and trails that are safe, usable, well-constructed, maintained, and interesting. RPAC works in collaboration with the Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee, Rockville Traffic and Transportation Commission, and other City and community groups to further the City's goals.

Actions

3.1 Plan for and construct neighborhood-to-neighborhood connections for people walking, rolling, and bicycling.

3.2 Promote and ensure safe bicycle and pedestrian routes to schools, parks, community and government centers, transit stations, and other key pedestrian destinations.

3.3 Facilitate consolidation and width reduction of curb cuts and driveways, focused on highway frontages, to minimize impacts on pedestrians and cyclists.

3.4 Work with Montgomery County and the City of Gaithersburg to improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment and connections outside the city.

3.5 Increase outreach to cyclists and pedestrians on safety through signage and other forms of education.

3.6 Increase driver education and enforcement to increase safety for and reduce incidents with people walking, rolling, and driving.

3.7 Conduct a study of bicycle and pedestrian safety 'hotspots' in the city to find the areas most in need of safety improvements.

3.8 Advocate for MDOT SHA, on State roads, and seek opportunities, on City roads, to eliminate long stretches of major roadways without safe pedestrian crossings. (*See also Action 19.8 of the Transportation Element*)

3.9 Continue coordination with the Rockville Pedestrian Advocacy Committee (RPAC) and promote pedestrian-oriented events and programs.

Policy 4
Improve infrastructure for pedestrians to promote walking as a non-polluting, healthy, sociable mode of transportation.

Rockville has a robust sidewalk network, however gaps are still found in some locations (See Figure 9). Of most concern are streets that do not have a sidewalk on either side, meaning that pedestrians must cross to another side or walk in the roadway. Major barriers include the I-270 interstate and WMATA and CSX railroad tracks.

In 2020, the Mayor and Council initiated the creation of a Pedestrian Master Plan to consider the city's overall

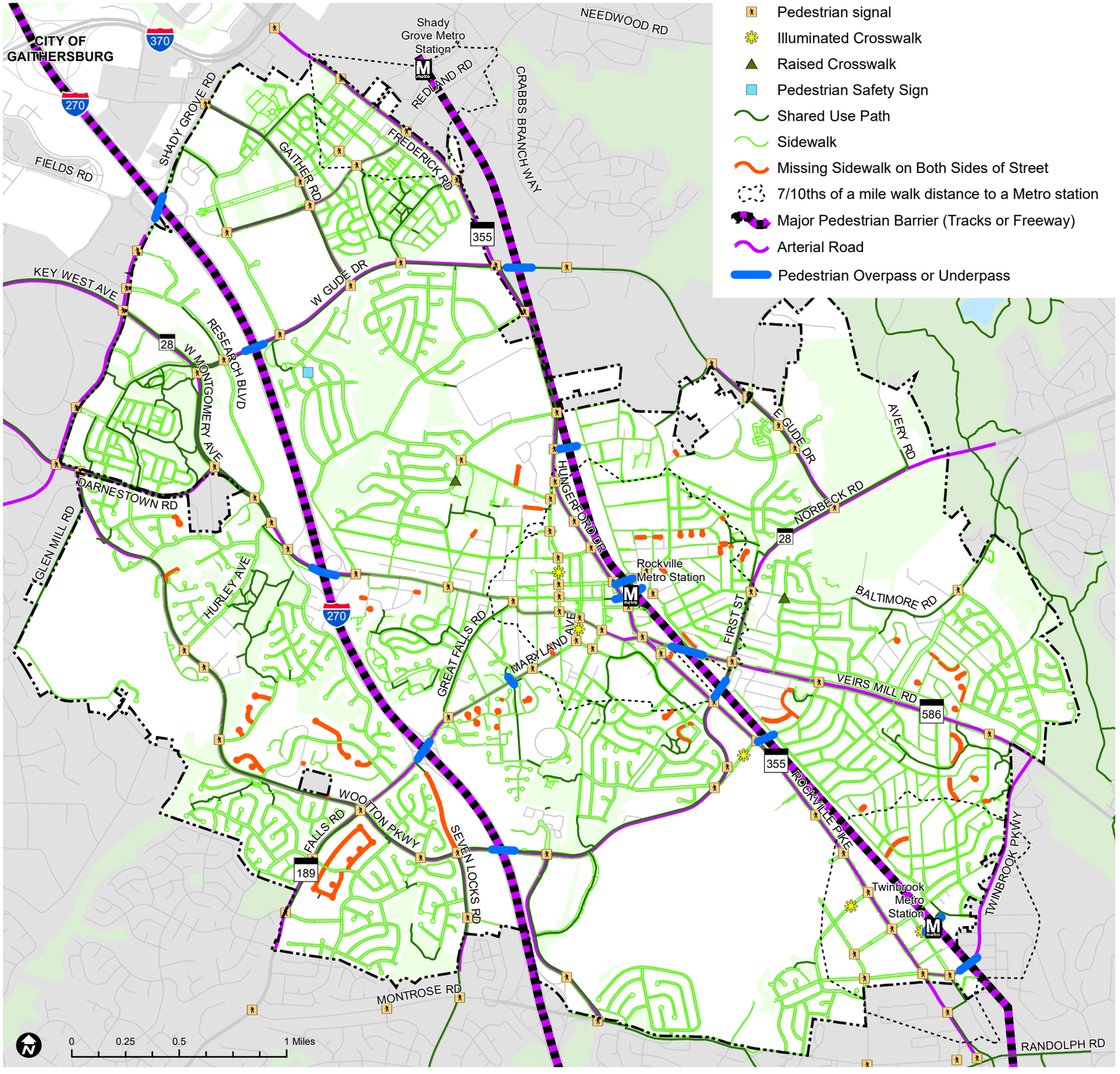






King Farm Village Center (top) was built with pedestrians in mind. The intersection of Rockville Pike at Halpine Road (bottom) is not a pedestrian-friendly crossing, though it leads directly to the Twinbrook transit station for many residents, workers, and visitors. Crossing Rockville Pike (MD-355) west of the Rockville transit station (bottom) is not a safe or pleasant experience for people walking or biking. The rail underpass of Park Road similarly offers little protection or comfort to those not traveling by automobile.

Figure 9: Pedestrian Facilities and Environment



pedestrian environment and physical design issues related to the pedestrian experience, such as crossing distances at intersections and completion or enhancement of sidewalks. This Plan recommends adoption of a Pedestrian Master Plan for the City to improve pedestrian safety, ensure pedestrian access, and enhance pedestrian experience. The Pedestrian Master Plan should focus on high use pedestrian areas, such as Town Center and Metro station areas, streets with missing sidewalks on one or both sides, including major streets and streets that lead to major roadways. Improving infrastructure for crossing major arterial roadways is also needed, and working closely with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) to improve crossing roads under their control. A pedestrian plan may also look at how to create pedestrian-only areas, flexible spaces, or passages and connections that make walking an interesting and comfortable activity.

Actions

4.1 Adopt and implement a Pedestrian Master Plan to improve pedestrian safety, ensure pedestrian access, and enhance pedestrian experience. Elements of the plan may include: improved transit wayfinding; ADA-compliant furniture and facilities; complete sidewalks; pedestrian-scale lighting; landscaping; and street trees; and parking for bikes and other wheeled, non-vehicular modes.

4.2 Continue to construct new sidewalks according to the City's Sidewalk Prioritization Policy, and bring existing sidewalks up to current standards (where possible) when projects are implemented. Review the City's Sidewalk Prioritization Policy to ensure that points are given to missing sidewalks on side streets that lead to major and state roadways. Monitor and report on progress in eliminating gaps in the city's sidewalk network.

4.3 Review City sidewalk standards to ensure that sidewalk widths and adjacent buffers (e.g., grass, trees, seating, stormwater facilities, etc.) promote walkability.

4.4 Improve pedestrian facilities when planning for bridge deck replacement or refurbishment projects.

4.5 Prioritize capital improvement projects to pedestrian facilities in the immediate area of the Rockville and Twinbrook transit stations.

4.6 Expand ADA-compliant seating areas and other amenities, such as benches and crosswalk aprons, at appropriate commercial and residential locations throughout the city to facilitate walking and rolling as a safe and comfortable activity for people of all abilities and age groups.

4.7 Coordinate with MDOT SHA to study potential pedestrian improvements at the intersection of MD-28 and MD-355, to better facilitate walking and rolling between Town Center and Rockville Pike, south of MD-28.

4.8 Coordinate with MDOT SHA to study at-grade or grade-separated pedestrian improvements at King Farm Boulevard and MD-355 to improve access to the Shady Grove Metro station.

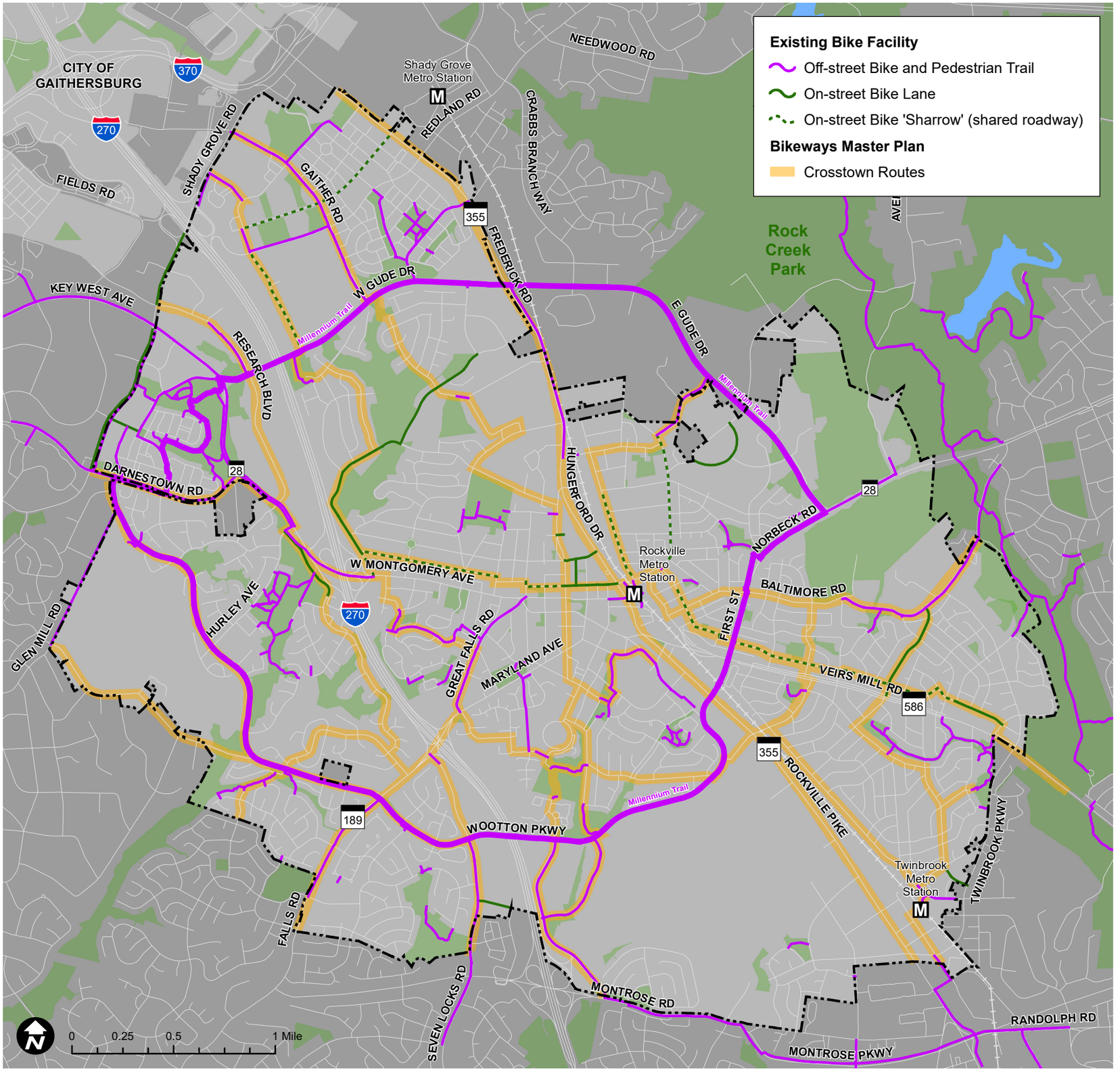
4.9 Coordinate with MDOT SHA to study grade-separated improvements on Rockville Pike (MD-355) in front of the Rockville Metro Station (*See also Policy 10 of the Transportation Element and Planning Area 1*).

Policy 5
Improve infrastructure and networks for bicyclists to increase bicycle riding.

As of the date of this writing, the City of Rockville is recognized as a bronze-level bicycle community by the League of American Bicyclists and the City hopes to improve its education, engineering, and enforcement to reach a higher level in the future. Previous comprehensive master plans have promoted the creation of bicycle facilities, first under the auspices of the Recreation and Parks Department and more recently, recognizing bikes as a form of transportation by moving bicycle planning staff to the Department of Public Works.

In 1999, the City established the Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee (RBAC) to: (1) Assist in the development of the city's bicycle and pedestrian specific policies, as well as other policies that affect the conditions for bicycling in the city; (2) Oversee the implementation of the City's Bikeway Master Plan and report progress toward completion to the Mayor and Council; (3) Review current and proposed Capitol Improvement Projects to ensure bicycle needs are incorporated into design and construction when appropriate; and (4) Deliver updates on the needs and desires of

Figure 10: Existing Bicycle Facilities and Planned Crosstown Routes



bicyclists in the community, with recommendations for action to the Mayor and Council. RBAC continues to be an essential part of the City's commitment to bicycle safety and comfort, working in collaboration with the Rockville Pedestrian Advocacy Committee, Rockville Traffic and Transportation Commission, and other City and community groups to further the City's goals.

The 2004 Bikeway Master Plan set goals for major projects, including completion of the Carl Henn Millennium Trail, and guided the construction of over 20 miles of off-street trails shared by bikes and pedestrians, on-street bike lanes, and on-street markings, called 'sharrows.' The City adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2009 requiring that the needs of bicyclists, among others, be given consideration in all roadway projects.

In 2017, a new Bikeway Master Plan was adopted, which outlines a series of projects while also noting the health benefits of biking and the important role that bicycle use can play in reducing carbon emissions and traffic congestion. The 2017 Bikeway Master Plan, as approved by the Mayor and Council, is adopted by reference as part of this Plan.

Rockville continues to build facilities for bicycling, adding infrastructure to make the system more safe and efficient. The City is working on project-by-project improvements to a network of bicycle routes across the city, as outlined in the Bikeway Master Plan. Currently, there are two signed crosstown bike routes that guide bikers across the city in the east to west and north to south directions (see Figure 10). These signed routes link available facilities including on-street bicycle lanes, marked shared roadways, and off-street trails to provide the safest route. The 2017 Bikeway Master Plan established a total of eight crosstown routes. These routes are also planned to connect with bike routes and trails that continue beyond the city limits to trails and destinations in Montgomery County.

As can be seen in Figure 10, there are missing segments in the city's bicycle facility network that would ensure safe and comfortable travel in the city by bike. Some of these include: a connection between the Carl Henn Millennium Trail and Rock Creek Trail along Southlawn Lane; protected bike lanes at the Shady Grove Road, Falls Road, and Montrose Road crossings of I-270; and the entire MD-355 corridor within the city.

As part of its implementation of the Bikeway Master Plan, Rockville's transportation planning staff utilizes the Montgomery County Bicycle Stress Map (*See www.mcatlas.org/bikestress*) and anticipates incorporating the Montgomery County government's bikeway classification system and applications in future updates to the Rockville Bikeway Master Plan.

Bicycle parking is another important element of a complete bicycle system. In order to make bike riding an option for shopping trips, businesses in commercial areas need to provide a bike rack or post for patrons to lock up their bikes. Civic destinations like schools or parks also need to make sure there is adequate bike parking to encourage bike trips by students and visitors, respectively.

In order to foster the provision of bike parking, the City established bicycle parking regulations in the Zoning Ordinance to be fulfilled by all new developments. The current requirements include short term bike parking for customers and indoor bike parking for apartment buildings. In 2015, the City developed the Bike Rack Grant Program to provide eligible businesses with safe and convenient bicycle parking.



Bicycling in downtown Rockville is increasingly becoming a mode of choice for Rockville residents and workers.

Bike share, introduced in Rockville in 2013, offers another transportation option. The ability to have quick access to a shared bike is a good complement to transit service. There are currently 15 stations within the city limits of Rockville and over two dozen in the larger Rockville/Shady Grove area. In the twelve months from July 2017 through June 2018, the Rockville/Shady Grove area bike share station network registered approximately 8,200 trips. For more information about bike share in the city, visit www.capitalbikeshare.com.

Actions

5.1 Continue to implement and enhance the 2017 Bikeway Master Plan recommendations and the City's Complete Streets Policy recommendations. Monitor and report on progress in meeting the recommendations and planned bicycle routes of the Bikeway Master Plan and recommendations of the City's Complete Streets Policy on an annual basis.

5.2 Update or amend the City's Bikeway Master Plan on a regular basis, with the purpose of improving facilities and safety for people on bikes. Updates should consider new bicycle facility locations that support a complete bicycle transportation network, increase the comfort level of people on bikes along key bicycle corridors, and propose on-street bicycle facility treatments related to the stress or comfort level of each roadway with a preference for protected bicycle lanes.



The two images above show how Rockville has changed its approach to bicycle route signage. The image on the left shows the former colored-coded crosstown routes. The image on the right shows the City's current distance and destination approach to bicycle route signage that provides more information for the person walking, rolling or biking.

5.3 Work with neighborhood groups to identify projects that will provide improved bicycle connections to major trails or destinations and build bicycle networks promoting equity.

5.4 Work with Montgomery College and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) on a new bikeway connection from the College to Rockville Town Center.

5.5 Study potential locations for a bicycle and pedestrian facility over or under the CSX tracks somewhere between Edmonston Drive and Twinbrook Parkway and work with agency partners and property owners to build the preferred option. (*See also Planning Areas 8 and 9*)

5.6 Collaborate with Montgomery County government to look for opportunities to connect Rockville bicycle routes to the County's bicycle network and trail system, especially between the Carl Henn Millennium Trail and Rock Creek Trail, and south along Falls Road from the city limits, ultimately as far as the C&O Canal Towpath.

5.7 Continue coordination with the Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee (RBAC) and promote bicycle events and programs.

5.8 Improve and expand bicycle wayfinding and signage.

5.9 Continue to provide grants and incentives for property owners to install bicycle racks.

5.10 Continue to expand the bike share system in Rockville.

5.11 Participate in the MDOT Maryland Bikeways Program supporting projects that maximize bicycle access and fill missing links in the State bike system. Extra points are awarded when reviewing projects located in or connecting to a Sustainable Community, which may also be eligible for reduced matching requirements for funding. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*)

5.12 Encourage the installation of bike parking and lockers that accommodate a range of bicycle types and sizes.

5.13 Coordinate with MDOT SHA, and Montgomery County government to achieve the goals of: 1) increasing bicycling rates; 2) creating a highly connected, convenient and low-stress bicycling network; 3) providing equal access to low-stress bicycling for all members of the community; and 4) improve the safety of bicycling.

5.14 Coordinate with MDOT SHA to establish a pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting Rockville Civic Center Park and RedGate Park, across Norbeck Road (MD-28). (*See also Planning Area 17*)

5.15 Expand on the City's Bike Racks in Parks program, initiated in 2020, to improve access to bicycle infrastructure across diverse areas of the City.

GOAL 3
Maximize the use and value of transit assets and services.

Rail and bus transit service is a crucial part of Rockville's transportation system, providing mobility across the city and access to the region. For those who do not own or drive private automobiles, the transit system is a primary means for accessing employment, shopping, and services.

Policy 6
Actively support the transit services provided by WMATA, Montgomery County government, the State of Maryland, and Amtrak.

The Metrorail rapid transit system, operated by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), connects Rockville to neighboring activity centers along the west branch of the system's Red Line, as well as regional destinations throughout the entire Metrorail system. Rockville residents use the Red Line to commute to destinations such as the National Institutes of Health campus and Bethesda, to downtown Washington D.C., and to major transportation hubs at Union Station and National Airport. Metrorail operates on a railway that is completely separate from the roadway network and therefore provides a means of travel to and from Rockville for thousands of commuters every day



MARC commuter rail operating on the Brunswick Line on track owned by CSX Railroad and 3000 series WMATA Metrorail train on the Red Line platform at the Rockville transit station.



MARC and Amtrak station platform at the Rockville transit station.

without adding regional vehicular trips to local highways and roads. Rockville, Twinbrook, and Shady Grove Metro stations are key transportation facilities and also serve as amenities that are driving employment and housing growth in their station areas. WMATA also provides regional bus service in Rockville through it Metrobus system.

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) operates the Ride On bus system. Ride On serves communities in Montgomery County, including the City of Rockville, as well as the community of Langley Park in Prince George's County and Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C. In addition to the Ride On neighborhood bus system, MCDOT also operates specialized bus services, including the limited stop, high-frequency Ride On Extra service; on-demand, zone-based Flex service; and Flash enhanced bus service. Ride On's Flex service currently only serves a limited area in Rockville, from Monday to Friday, in the immediate vicinity of the Rockville transit station.

Regional commuter train service is available at the Rockville transit station with the Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Brunswick Line, operated by the Maryland Transit Administration of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT MTA), as well as Amtrak's Capitol Limited intercity trains.

Actions

6.1 Advocate for expanded service area and greater hours for the Montgomery County Ride On Flex service in downtown Rockville.

6.2 Advocate for WMATA to rehabilitate or replace the Unity Bridge over the WMATA and CSX tracks, connecting Frederick Avenue between Hungerford Road (MD-355) and the Lincoln Park neighborhood.

Policy 7
Advocate for MDOT MTA to expand MARC commuter rail service with midday and reverse commute service, and off peak and Saturday service at the Rockville transit station.

The Rockville transit station is served by the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration's (MDOT MTA) Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) commuter rail, on the Brunswick Line operating between Martinsburg, West Virginia and Union Station in Washington , D.C. The train schedule is oriented to inbound commuter trips in the morning and outbound trips in the evening. Currently, there is no midday or reverse commute service. The Rockville MARC station generates the third highest ridership on the line, with only Silver Spring and Union Station as busier stations. Rockville supports efforts to bring all-day, inbound and outbound, MARC service to the Brunswick Line and add to the mix of transit options and destinations for commuters that do not result in the need to expand existing rail right-of-way.

Policy 8
Improve bus service, stops, and shelters in Rockville.

WMATA's Metrobus operates seven bus routes in Rockville, primarily along major arterials including MD-586, MD-355, and MD-189. The Metrobus system is designed to provide bus access between and to Metrorail stations, which also act as bus transfer hubs.

Montgomery County's Ride On operates local bus service in Rockville on 19 routes, 15 of them serving the Rockville transit station as shown on Figure 11. These routes are primarily along major and minor arterial and collector roadways (See Figure 13 for roadway classifications).

Bus routes are designed with specific purposes, which can be described as connecting communities, for instance to Gaithersburg or Glenmont; or to destinations within Rockville, for instance providing access to the Town Center from outlying neighborhoods; or linking our office and activity centers to Metrorail. For example, the Route 63 bus loops from Shady Grove Metro Station to the office parks on Piccard Drive and Research Boulevard and back to the Rockville transit station; the Route 81 bus makes a similar connection to the Tower Oaks area. This service is crucial to making Metrorail a viable option for those who work beyond walking or biking distance of Metro stations, and thereby supports investments in these employment areas. Other routes run at peak hours only to take riders to or from Metro stations.

Considered at the system-wide level, Ride On provides access to a bus stop within a quarter-mile walk for the majority of Rockville residents. The low-density development pattern in many Rockville neighborhoods makes generating ridership a challenge, and the limitations of the roadway network also complicate route planning. Some Rockville 2040 participants expressed interest in other service concepts, such as a bus or trolley circulator within the city. The City conducted a transit gap analysis in 2019, with the results providing a fresh look at transit gaps in the city and potential options for new service. This Plan supports any improvements to service.

Rockville currently owns and maintains bus shelters at 72 out of 446 bus stops. Since many bus stops have low ridership, this Plan places priority on ensuring that new shelters are available at high-ridership locations.

Actions

8.1 Collaborate with WMATA and Ride On to bring increased bus service to Rockville's growth areas and advocate for opportunities to close gaps in existing routes and service areas.

8.2 Increase the number of shelters at bus stops in Rockville, especially high-ridership locations, and convert unprotected bus stops into protected and well-lit shelters where feasible.



Bus stop on N. Washington Street with informal seating.

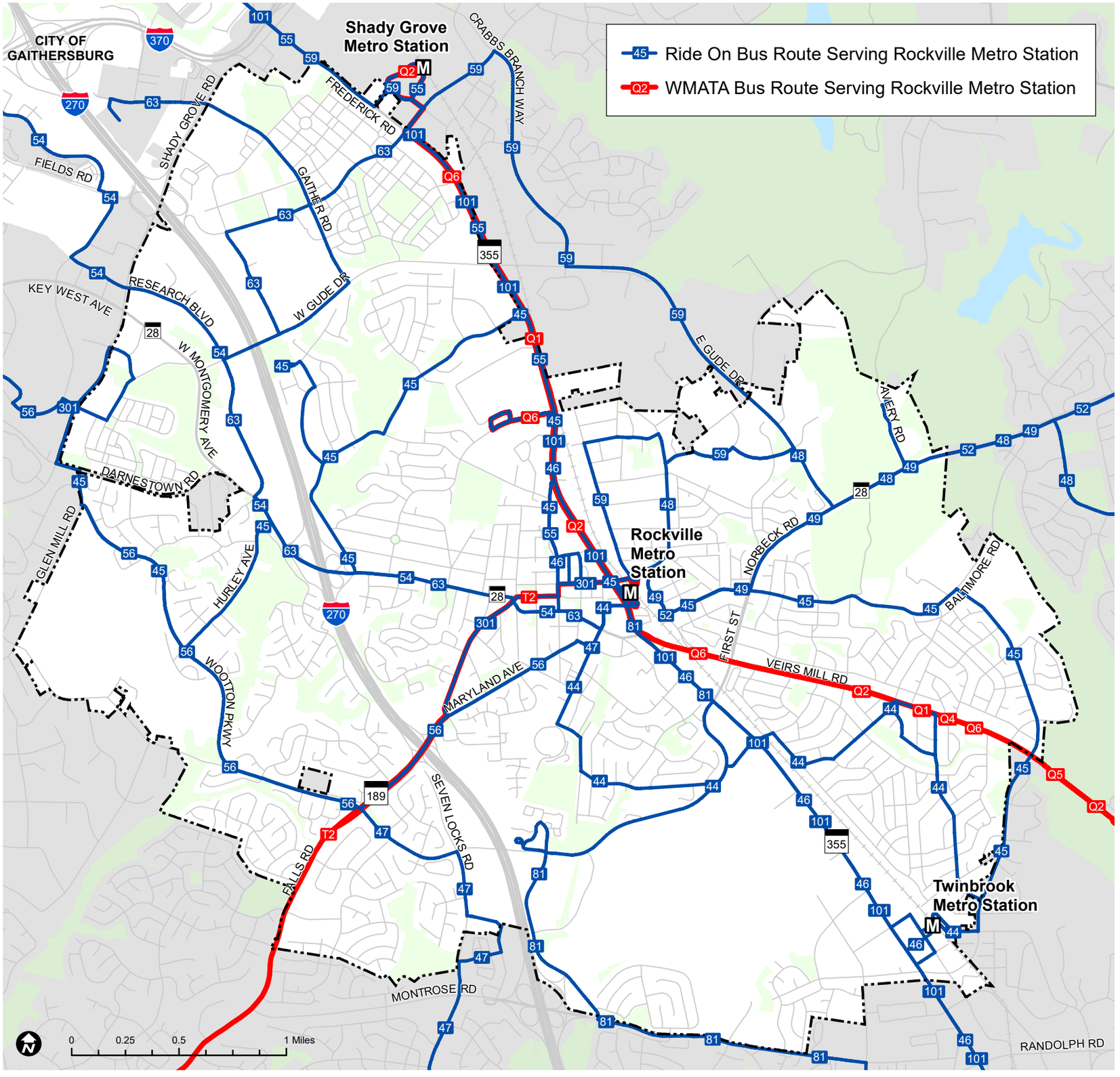


Bus shelter on Veirs Mill Road



Ride On #55 bus on E. Middle Lane in Town Center.

Figure 11: Bus Routes Serving the Rockville transit station



8.3 Improve pathways from neighborhoods to streets with bus routes and ensure ADA-accessible facilities. Identify high use bus stops most in need of accessibility improvements for priority interventions.

8.4 Collaborate with WMATA and Ride On to locate bus stops in locations that do not encourage people to cross roads at unsafe locations. Add crosswalks, as needed, to provide safe road crossings to bus stops.

8.5 Strengthen multi-modal transportation connections between Montgomery College and areas throughout the city, including Town Center, Rockville Pike, King Farm, and Fallsgrove, as well as destinations beyond the city limits.

8.6 Encourage WMATA to study the feasibility of adding a new rail station along the Metrorail Red Line in the vicinity of the Montgomery College - Rockville Campus, in consultation with the Rockville community and considering the impacts and benefits to surrounding neighborhoods. (*See also Planning Area 7*)

8.7 Collaborate with WMATA and Ride On to seek opportunities to install bike parking at bus stops, especially on high frequency bus routes, throughout the city.

Policy 9
Plan for implementation of bus rapid transit lines in Rockville.

Montgomery County Department of Transportation's Ride On service initiated its new Ride On Extra service as a limited-stop bus service along MD-355 in 2017, offering fewer stops and faster travel times than the local Route 46 bus route currently operating on Rockville Pike. This type of service is a precursor to bus rapid transit (BRT) being planned by Montgomery County government and the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA). The bus rapid transit effort is a response to the larger issue of moving people around the county and making further development possible in congested areas.

Montgomery County government is currently planning for a countywide system of bus rapid transit lines, the first of which opened in 2020 along U.S. 29, between Silver Spring and Burtonsville (see Figure 12). In all, three bus rapid transit lines are planned to serve Rockville:

- MD-586 / Veirs Mill corridor, from Wheaton to Rockville Metro Station and Montgomery College (Montgomery County)
- MD-355 corridor, its full length in Rockville, from Bethesda to Clarksburg (Montgomery County)
- Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), from Shady Grove Metro Station to Clarksburg (MDOT MTA)

These lines are planned to provide more frequent bus service with much shorter headways between buses, fewer stops, more dependable schedules, and higher amenity bus stations.

The BRT concept being developed is designed to provide faster service between parts of the county and better connections between different parts of Rockville. For instance, the MD-355 BRT would provide quick transit access to areas of the Pike between the two Red Line stations, starting with one station at Edmonston Drive, and eventually providing up to three BRT stations along that two-mile segment. Bus rapid transit will also provide transportation capacity for future development in the corridor. Rockville supports BRT station locations that will provide support for new investment and redevelopment. The ongoing WMATA study of the Rockville Metro Station is considering how best to integrate future BRT service with the already active multi-modal transit station.

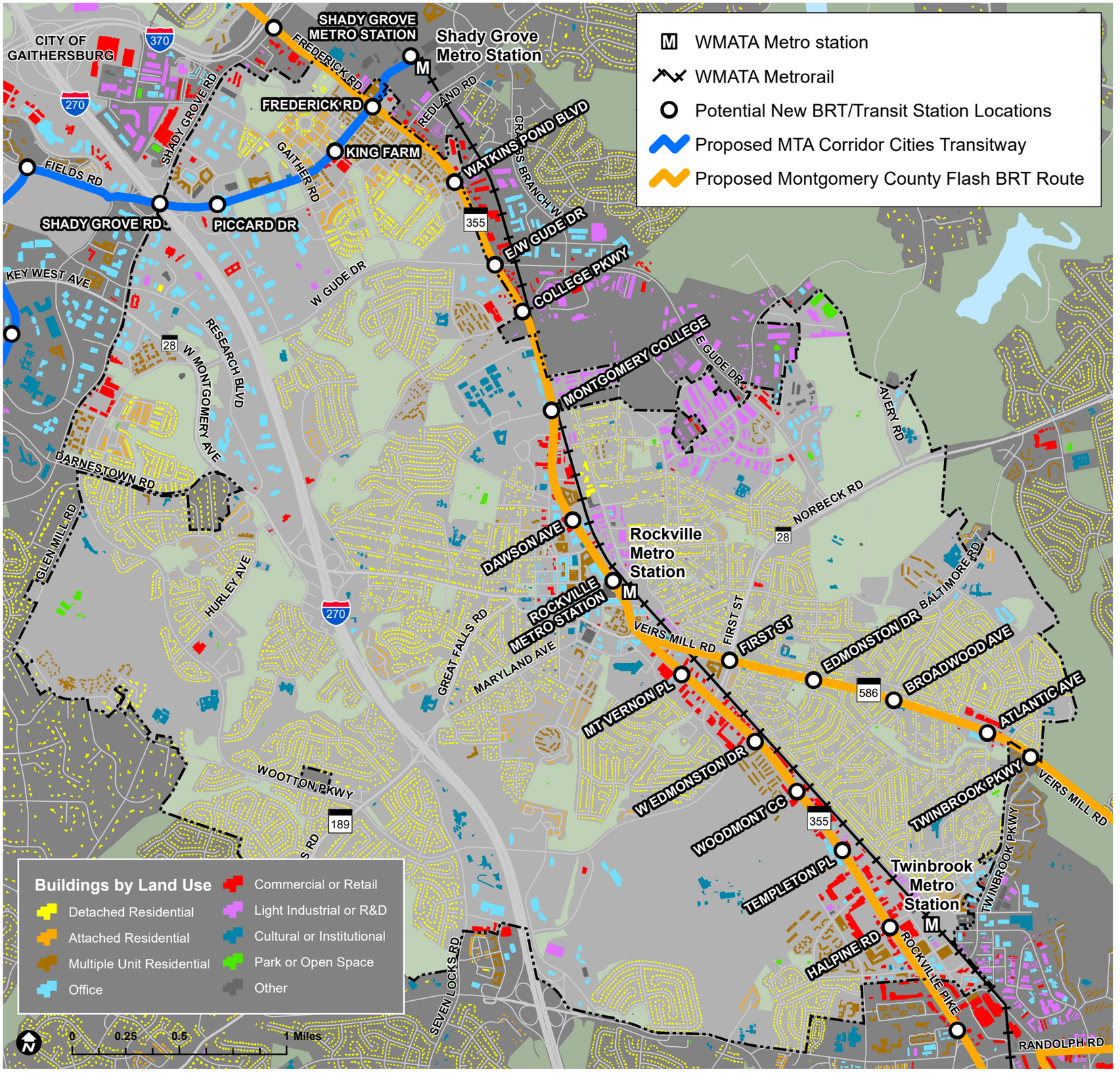
Actions

9.1 Support implementation of the planned MD-586 / Veirs Mill Road BRT with station locations that best serve Rockville.

9.2 Continue to work with Montgomery County government on MD-355 BRT, including identification of station locations, with a focus on serving as many Rockville residents, workers, and visitors as possible.

9.3 Support implementation of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) in coordination with MDOT MTA and in consultation with the King Farm Community and the City of Rockville. While the final alignment has yet to be determined by MDOT MTA, the City's preference is for a route along Shady Grove Road instead of King Farm Boulevard.

Figure 12: Planned Transit Routes and Potential Station Locations



9.4 Conduct pedestrian and bicycle access planning for all BRT station locations in Rockville.

Policy 10
Redesign and reconstruct the Rockville transit station as a 21st century multi-modal transit hub.

The Rockville transit station is a busy multi-modal transit hub, facilitating single-mode rides and transfers between rail and bus modes, as well as taxi service, bike and pedestrian, and park-and-ride customers. While its Metrorail ridership is in the middle range of stations for the overall system, the availability of commuter rail, as well as six Metrobus and fifteen Ride On bus routes, makes the Rockville transit station one of the highest combined ridership stations in the county. Currently, the Rockville bus hub generates more boardings than the Red Line station, with over 5,000 boardings on an average day. The large number of bus routes and high bus ridership is partly due to Rockville's position at the confluence of State highways.

Although Red Line ridership has not grown in recent years, new development in Town Center is expected to increase riders. Existing and new services will strain capacity at the station; in fact, the initiation of the Ride On Extra Route 101 led to the construction of a new bus stop for northbound Metrobus Q routes along MD-355 at Park Road. Expanded MARC service would also bring more activity to the station. It is good that the Rockville transit station's multi-modal hub is growing; and yet, the current station is already in need of a redesign to address capacity, circulation, maintenance, and structural issues.

Up to four different BRT routes could overlap at the Rockville transit station with dozens of bus vehicles per hour converging during peak times. However, the Rockville transit station today does not have sufficient bus bays to accommodate this increase, and the Park Road and Church Street entrances and intersections will be challenged to handle the increased traffic.

Rockville Metro Station opened in 1984 and all major station components date from that time. A number of major elements will require near-term repair or reconstruction including the pedestrian bridge, stair house, Red Line platform canopy, and bus shelters. The design of the pedestrian bridge requires Metrorail riders to descend to the ground-level, then the mezzanine, and then ascend back up to the Red Line platform.

In recognition of the need to upgrade and redesign the Rockville Metro Station, WMATA initiated a community visioning and concept design study in 2021, in collaboration with the City of Rockville and Montgomery County government representatives, to identify opportunities to increase transit ridership by improving site access and incorporating mixed-use development on Metro-owned property at the station. Potential redevelopment of the property at 255 Rockville Pike, support for redevelopment along North Stonestreet Avenue, and improvements to the City-owned Promenade Park and lower levels of 51 Monroe will be considered as part of the station redesign project.

The study was ongoing as of the writing of this Plan, yet it is expected to result in a preferred concept design that will guide future transit investments and potential redevelopment that incorporates the goals of this Plan and priorities of the Rockville community. A redesign of the Rockville transit station as a 21st century transit center would elevate the amenity value of the station for surrounding properties and



'Rockville Station' was the call on the B&O Railroad which brought rail transit to the city in 1873. The old station house is preserved a few hundred feet south of its original location, moved to make room for Metrorail. Generations of Rockvillians walked or rode to the station for commutes to the District of Columbia, for shopping, or as the point of departure and return for much longer journeys.

Town Center. The study will also consider potential options to improve the bicycle and pedestrian crossing of MD-355 by grade-separating MD-355 through traffic, local street traffic, and bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Actions

10.1 In coordination with WMATA, implement the recommendations of the Rockville Metro Station Community Visioning and Concept Design Study.

10.2 Bring all agency partners, including WMATA, CSX, MDOT MTA, and Montgomery County DOT, FTA, and FRA, to the table with the best transit center design talent and ideas for the Rockville transit station.

10.3 In coordination with agency partners, plan for added capacity at the new Rockville transit center to accommodate additional buses and BRT service and ensure seamless transfers between bus and rail modes.

10.4 In coordination with WMATA and Montgomery County government, plan to provide direct access to the Red Line platform from the pedestrian bridge level, while also maintaining access from the bridge to the ground-level bus hub and mezzanine to the MARC station.



From the inception of passenger service, the Rockville transit station has played an important role in the life of the city and its economy. Metro and MARC platforms and nearly a dozen bus bays make its multi-modal hub a portal to the region and world, and an anchor in Town Center. Given the age and condition of the station, and looking to the need to accommodate new transit services, it is a good time to redesign the Rockville transit station.







The images above show design, capacity, and maintenance issues at the Rockville transit station (from top to bottom): Buses and cars wait for traffic signals to allow an exit onto Rockville Pike (MD-355) at Church Street; Crowds queue up on the platform when escalators are under repair; Concrete spalling on the canopy is a major structural issue for the station.

10.5 Improve pedestrian facilities in the Rockville transit station area, including wider sidewalks, full crosswalks on all sides of area intersections, smaller turning radii, pedestrian warning signals, and other measures to ensure safe access.

10.6 Seek out opportunities to partner with property owners and private investors in public-private partnerships and joint development approaches to project development in the Rockville transit station area.

10.7 Work with WMATA to install historic interpretive signage as part of any redesign or renovation of the current Rockville transit station to illustrate the history and significance of the original B&O Railroad station in Rockville.

10.8 Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian access to the Rockville Metro Station and advocate for WMATA to upgrade the station to be more friendly to people arriving by walking, rolling, or cycling, including expanded bicycle parking and improved signage and connections from surrounding neighborhoods. (*See also Action 4.9 of the Transportation Element and Planning Area 1*)

Policy 11
Improve the Twinbrook transit station as an enhanced asset for the community.

The Twinbrook transit station is a multi-modal transit hub, facilitating single-mode rides and transfers between rail and bus modes, as well as taxi service, bicycle and pedestrian, and park-and-ride customers. The station serves residents, workers, and visitors of its nearby neighborhoods and commercial and office areas, including Twinbrook, Montrose, and the city's south Rockville Pike area. Though a transit-oriented development is slowly taking shape on the station property itself, it has yet to be fully realized.

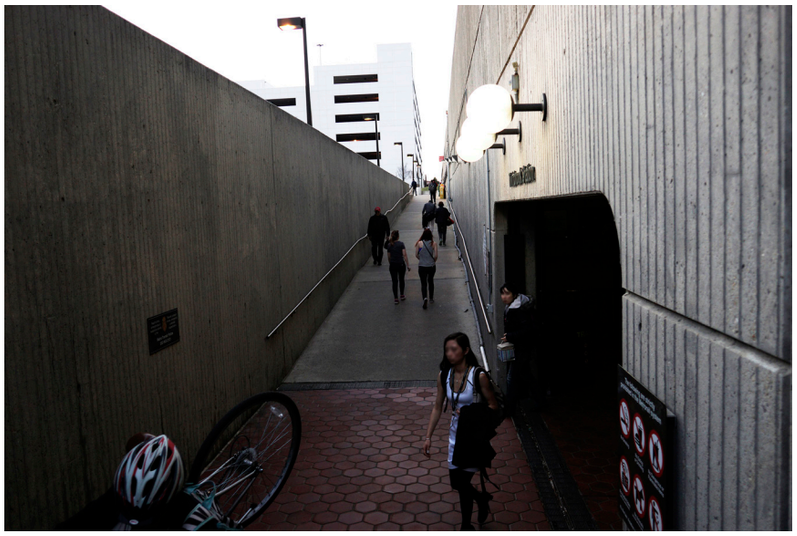
The station opened in 1984 as part of a 7-mile, four-station northwestern extension of the Red Line between Grosvenor-Strathmore and Shady Grove stations. Today, the station's Brutalist-style, heavy-concrete architecture feels stark and uninviting in its design and is dated relative to more recent Metro stations.

In 2017, the Twinbrook Red Line station saw just over 4,000 average daily boardings. While its Metrorail ridership is in the lower range of stations for the overall WMATA system,

the availability of one Metrobus and six Ride On bus routes makes the Twinbrook transit station a useful entry point into the larger regional bus and rail network.

Both the east and west sides of the station have bus bays, surface parking, and kiss and ride lots. These areas are connected to each other and to the platform by a ground-level underpass below the Metro and CSX tracks. The station is also one of the few on the WMATA system to have only a single escalator serving the platform, typically in the ascending direction. An elevator and stairs provide access to enter or exit the platform area, as well.





The pedestrian experience accessing the Twinbrook transit station, with its 'Brutalist' concrete forms and little vegetation, makes is unappealing. The western plaza (top) and dark ramp and stairs (bottom) lead to the station's turnstiles before rising up to the station platform by elevators or escalator.

Given the capacity, condition, and design issues present at the Twinbrook transit station, this Plan envisions the next decade as an opportune time to re-imagine the station. A comprehensive redesign effort is needed to solve functional issues while also considering how to create a new transit center that is a visually appealing centerpiece of the surrounding station area. Completion of development plans approved for the station properties should be re-considered as part of any future station study.

Actions

11.1 Seek design enhancements, such as improved lighting, tree canopy, and shade structures, to improve personal safety and upgrade station aesthetics.

11.2 Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian access to the Twinbrook Metro Station and advocate for WMATA to upgrade the station to be more friendly to people arriving by walking, rolling, or cycling. Include expanded bicycle parking and improved signage and connections from surrounding neighborhoods.

11.3 In coordination with WMATA, conduct a planning and redesign effort for the Twinbrook transit station in the near future.

GOAL 4
Utilize an approach to development review that seeks to reduce vehicle miles traveled and promote a shift to alternative modes of travel.

Before any development project is approved by the City, the Zoning Ordinance requires the applicant to perform an adequacy test on the impacted parts of the transportation network, which is reviewed by the City. If the test finds the impacts to be beyond City standards, the applicant must mitigate those impacts or, potentially, the project can be rejected.

At present, the standards make some provisions for a project's proximity to transit and its accommodation and promotion of other modes, such as access via bicycle. However, the focus remains on traffic impacts. This Plan

endorses regular review of the standards to incorporate best practices for calculating transportation impacts.

Of central importance is shifting the analysis from movement of vehicles to the movement of people. As such, greater accommodation of other modes would be warranted when analysis supports such changes, which could potentially affect requirements for mitigation and parking. As identified in the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan (2016), such changes are especially important near high-capacity transit stations, where a higher percentage of residents and workers use transit and therefore create less impact on roadways.

In addition to recognizing the potential to shift trips to other modes, revised standards and procedures should also allow for higher levels of congestion (and lower intersection level of service) in some locations where City policy favors higher-intensity development. Vehicle drivers understand that places like Town Center have more intersections, more pedestrians in crosswalks, and higher overall levels of activity that makes driving through the area slower, and that other goals take precedence over moving cars.

This Plan also recommends that reduced parking minimums be studied as a way to encourage access to higher-density, transit-accessible areas by other modes of transport, including by Metrorail, bus, bike, or walking.

Policy 12
Evaluate standards and methodology for measuring adequate capacity of roadways and intersections.

Actions

12.1 Apply emerging best practices for measuring and mitigating traffic impacts of new development.

12.2 Consider alternative traffic evaluation methods for development projects near Metrorail stations, or other locations that offer high-capacity transit service, a walkable environment, and connections to bicycle facilities.

12.3 Consider amending or replacing the Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR) component of the City's development review process to focus capacity review and mitigation on the potential to move people by a variety of modes, rather than trip generation projections exclusively for trips by automobile.

12.4 Recognize, and establish in the review procedures, that congestion standards can be relaxed in specific locations, provided that parking minimums are also reduced and access via non-automobile modes is enhanced. (*See also Action 14.7 of the Transportation Element, Action 10.2 of the Economic Development Element, Action 22.1 of the Land Use Element, and Actions 1.4 and 10.5 of the Housing Element*)

12.5 Gather and maintain up-to-date traffic data and local and regional trends in traffic management.

12.6 Monitor local and regional trends on traffic issues and approaches to traffic management.

GOAL 5
Monitor new mobility technologies and reduce carbon emissions and other pollutants from transport.

New transport technologies are generating interest and recommendations for cities to plan for what may lie just over the horizon, including autonomous and robotic vehicles, drones, and other new services based on computer applications and smart phones. Some new technologies, such as ride share, bike share, and real-time traffic data, have already arrived and are affecting how people get around Rockville and use roadways. Changing behaviors related to the use of home delivery services, greater access to the information superhighway, and telecommuting have the potential to further disrupt the use of transport and travel patterns in the city.

At the same time, carbon emissions from transport sources are now the leading generator of climate changing pollutants. How the necessary, drastic reductions in emissions from cars and trucks can be achieved is not clear. The period from now until 2040 will be a crucial period of change requiring a strong policy response from elected and appointed officials, and adherence by Rockville residents, businesses, visitors, and City departments.

Policy 13
Monitor and plan for emerging transportation technologies and practices.

Advocates for new mobility technologies argue that cities should respond with new policies to accommodate their unique space needs or functional characteristics, for instance reserved drop-off and pick-up space for 'ride share' service in City rights-of-way. There is also the idea that autonomous vehicles with point-to-point service could replace fixed transit lines and routes, and therefore, there is no need to plan for new mass transit lines. Some futurists predict that shared vehicles will drastically reduce private ownership and thereby the need for parking spaces. At this point, it is difficult to predict outcomes with any confidence.

Robotic delivery of packages, either flying or on the ground, is also being tested. Policies are only now emerging at the federal and State levels on regulating (or deregulating) these technologies. City policy may need to wait to see what develops, including impacts or conflicts.

Other new mobility forms marry old transport modes with enhanced technologies. For example, electric bicycles, or e-bikes, combine the conventional two-wheel bike with energy-dense batteries and pedal-assisted motors. Shared use e-scooters hit the streets in many cities across the United States in 2018, bringing quick adoption—much faster than responses in municipal policies or regulations. Given the low impact and potential saving of carbon emissions, this type of transport should be encouraged; however, riding on sidewalks is different than on the city's shared-use, off-street trails. Questions about safety must be addressed.

Policies are needed regarding where electric motor transport can be operated and at what speed. For example, Rockville will need to decide if these types of motorized, yet non-vehicular, transport modes should be allowed on the Millennium Trail and other traditionally non-motorized pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and under what rules of operation. The implementation of new mobility technologies, such as electric scooters and electric unicycles, may support land use goals by providing easier connections to transit stations.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21, home delivery of goods, groceries, and meals was on the rise, and teleworking/telecommuting was an emerging trend. The period during the pandemic saw a dramatic rise in these activities, which resulted in a significant reduction in vehicle trips by personal automobile and an increase in delivery truck traffic. At this time, it remains to be seen whether these trends will continue or will shift back to pre-pandemic 'normals'. The City should be prepared to plan for and respond to emerging trends in travel behavior as they occur.

> Every new transportation technology affects the geography of communities and the structure of people's lives. Autonomous vehicles (AVs) are one such technology. Just as the freeway system or the streetcar network shaped past cities and lifestyles, AVs will reshape the metropolis once again. The question is how and with what unintended consequences? As with most technology, the answer turns on how the technology is used.
>
> *"Autonomous Vehicles: Hype and Potential," Peter Calthorpe and Jerry Walters, March 1, 2017, Urban Land magazine*

Actions

13.1 Monitor new technologies such as robotic vehicles and drone deliveries and develop appropriate policy recommendations for the City.

13.2 Consider changing parking and other requirements based on widespread adoption of shared and/or autonomous vehicles, and any associated reduced demand for vehicle storage.

13.3 Draft development guidelines that address right-of-way issues related to ride share services and increased presence of delivery trucks for home delivery of goods, specifically adequate drop-off and loading areas.

13.4 Explore opportunities to promote use of electric bicycles, and other small personal transport modes, and determine appropriate policies for their use on city roads and trails.

13.5 Continue to monitor changing travel patterns and behaviors to anticipate emerging trends in teleworking/ telecommuting, shopping, and recreation.

13.6 Ensure safety for all users of sidewalks, paths, trails, and bike lanes, especially with such emerging transportation modes as e-scooters and motorized skateboards.

Policy 14
Reduce carbon emissions from cars, trucks, and buses operated by Rockville residents, businesses, and government.

Carbon pollution from vehicles is one of the main global sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Reducing emissions from transport sources is critical to reaching the current State-mandated goal of a 40 percent reduction by 2030. Transport emissions accounted for roughly one-third of emissions in the State in 2015 and are expected to become a larger percentage as progress is made on emissions from stationary sources. Some progress has been made in making cars and trucks more efficient, with more miles driven per gallon of gasoline.

The issue shows the close relationship between transportation planning and land use planning. Compact communities that are designed to make walking or biking a first choice for many types of trips preclude the need to make a trip with a vehicle. Walking, rolling, or bicycling will always be more energy efficient than using a vehicle, no matter what type of propulsion the vehicle uses.

Shifting trips to transit, either bus or rail, is another crucial strategy for reducing emissions. Currently, trains and buses also use carbon-based energy sources; however, the energy per passenger mile is much lower than driving in a private car, particularly if the bus or train is full of riders. Buses also require less road space per person, which reduces congestion for other vehicles and saves fuel.

New transport technologies will need to play a major role in cutting emissions. Advancements in battery storage are encouraging a transition from diesel buses to battery powered bus fleets, which are cheaper to fuel and maintain. Battery-powered bus rapid transit can make a contribution to reducing carbon emissions along Rockville's main highways and to major destinations. Electric buses, like other electric vehicles, waste less energy given off as heat compared to those of internal combustion engines; engine idling is also avoided.



New mobility technologies are quickly appearing on city streets: here an electric skateboard-style transport with one big wheel takes off from the Rockville transit station in February 2019.



An electric vehicle charging station is provided at The Tower Building offices on Wootton Parkway.

Electric cars are rapidly becoming more available and affordable for private purchase. This Plan supports steps to transition to electric, battery powered vehicles, while recognizing that electric vehicles still require energy for their manufacture, and at this time, charging from the utility power 'grid' involves coal and gas emissions. Private property owners are encouraged to install electric vehicle charging stations. This Plan recommends requiring electric charging facilities in new office, commercial, and multiple-unit dwellings, as well.

New mobility types of transport provide additional hope for cutting emissions over the coming decades, with advancements that may reshape and replace private cars. Electric bicycles are surging in popularity and battery-powered kick board scooters are showing the potential for new approaches to mobility. Cargo bikes and small three- and four-wheeled electric vehicles should also be part of the mix of light-weight, low-energy vehicles for getting around Rockville.

For decades, City policy has mandated that off-street parking be required as part of the Zoning Ordinance. The idea is that requiring parking for private vehicles will reduce impacts on local streets. However, these requirements contribute to an environment and cityscape oriented to private cars, rather than walking or biking. Sites are frequently designed with parking lots in front of buildings for convenience. The expectation of free parking is a key part of suburban lifestyles and provision of free parking makes driving an easy choice for many trips. Changing this landscape will take time, but City policy can begin by revisiting parking minimums. Other policies stated in this Plan seek to favor other modes of travel and access, ones that have far fewer environmental impacts.

Actions

14.1 Actively promote a shift to non-polluting modes of transport.

14.2 Support improved and new transit service and programs to increase the use of transit and also to make transit carbon neutral.

14.3 Create a plan for a transition to electric cars and trucks that outlines steps the City will take to become an electric vehicle-friendly city by encouraging the use of zero-emission vehicles, including expanding public electric charging stations, issuing special parking placards for electric vehicles, and adopting new building code requirements for electric vehicle charging stations in new construction and existing office, commercial, and multi-unit residential buildings. (*See also Actions 4.3 and 4.4 of the Environment Element and Action 2.7 of the Community Facilities Element*)

14.4 Seek grant funding and other financial assistance from regional governments and utilities to support electric vehicles and charging stations.

14.5 Transition the City fleet to low or no emission vehicles as soon as possible, while considering the operational needs of specialized fleet vehicles. (*See also Actions 4.3 and 4.4 of the Environment Element and Action 2.7 of the Community Facilities Element*)

14.6 Reduce vehicle miles traveled and transportation related emissions in the City's municipal operations, as well as that of the broader Rockville community.

14.7 Reduce off-street parking requirements to disincentivize driving, especially in mixed-use, high-density, and transit-served areas. (*See also Action 12.4 of the Transportation Element, Action 10.2 of the Economic Development Element, Actions 1.4 and 10.5 of the Housing Element, and Action 22.1 of the Land Use Element*)

GOAL 6
Manage and improve Rockville's roadway and trail network to provide for safe and comfortable movement of people walking, rolling, and driving, for all types of trips and delivery of goods and services.

Rockville's roadway network is at once national, regional, and local in its purpose. In addition to its connections to the U.S. interstate highway system via I-270, it provides regional connections through Rockville to the District of Columbia and adjacent activity centers in Montgomery County, including Bethesda and Wheaton, and access to the County seat and places of employment and business in Rockville. At the same time, the network of local streets provides access to individual properties and connections to major streets, which allow trips across the city while protecting residential

neighborhoods from heavy traffic. In fact, many residential communities built in Rockville from the 1960s to the 1990s were designed intentionally with limited or single-access points onto major roadways, a desirable characteristic for many of their residents today (See Figure 13).

Policy 15
Work with State and County transportation agencies to mitigate the impacts to Rockville of regional traffic and congestion.

At the regional scale, the historic south-to-north roadway alignment up the Pike and through Town Center is now MD-355, a major arterial controlled by the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) that, prior to the 2020-21 COVID-19 pandemic, carried 45,000 to 55,000 vehicles on an average day. MD-355 connects Rockville to Gaithersburg to the north and Bethesda to the south.

Interstate 270 was constructed in the 1950s to greatly increase regional network capacity for vehicle travel to Rockville and other areas north of the I-495 'beltway'. Before the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21, trips on I-270 reached nearly 250,000 vehicles on an average day (i.e., average daily vehicles or ADV), though dropped dramatically during the course of the pandemic. Peak congestion on I-270 during the weekday commute was a growing problem in Rockville prior to the pandemic due to spill-over traffic on local roads near its on-ramps. Figure 14 shows average daily traffic volumes on many of the major roads and highways in Rockville, measured over the decade prior to 2020. A return to pre-pandemic traffic volumes on I-270 will continue to impact Rockville's local roads and the City supports actions and investments that reduce or mitigate impacts from I-270 that do not result in additional lanes, toll roads, or right-of-way expansion by the State.

Veirs Mill Road (MD-586) provides a regional east-west connection between downtown Rockville, Wheaton and Silver Spring (via MD-97), while West Montgomery Avenue (MD-28) connects the city core to I-270 and a growing activity center along Shady Grove Road. Maryland Route 28 also continues east from downtown Rockville through communities in the eastern portion of Montgomery County.

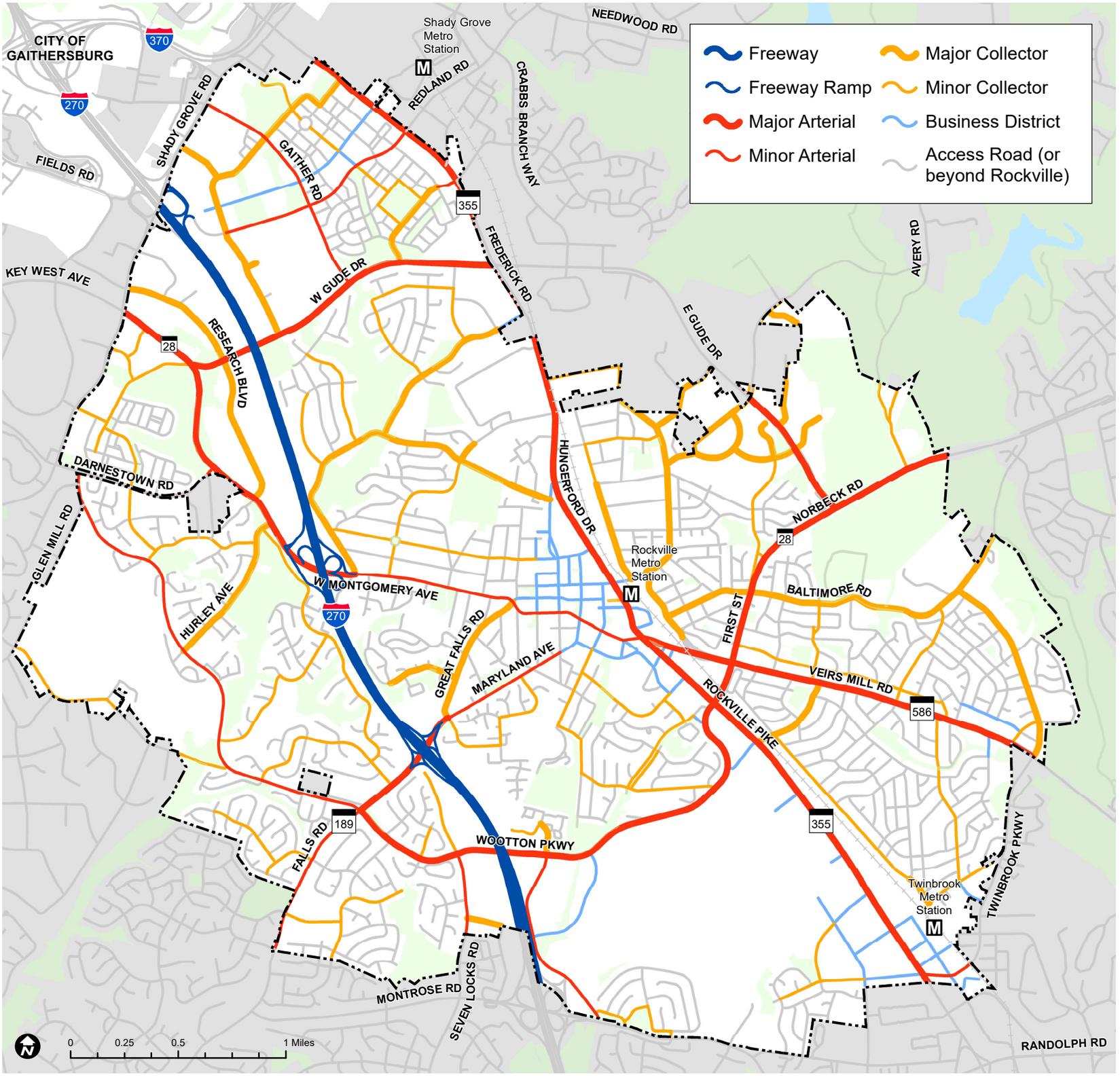
In the case of these two main arterials (MD-586 and MD-28), primarily residential uses face the roadways. Before the 2020-21 pandemic, Veirs Mill east of Twinbrook Parkway carried almost as much traffic as MD-355 (43,700 ADV) and the historic West End also experienced heavy traffic and congestion during peak periods (26,300 ADV). Wootton Parkway to the south of downtown Rockville and Gude Drive to the north experienced nearly as much traffic volume as the State roads mentioned above, yet they have no interchange with I-270 and are owned and maintained by the City of Rockville.

In all, this traffic was a mix of regional trips passing through Rockville and local trips generated by Rockville residents and businesses. It remains to be seen whether and how traffic patterns will change as a result of the life-changing COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21. The City remains committed to ensuring the safety of all traveling within and through Rockville using any mode of travel, and maintaining the high quality of life in neighborhoods and commercial districts.

Traffic congestion is often explained by the qualitative measure of Level of Service (LOS). Intersections are assigned grade letters based on the level of congestion a driver would experience as they pass through it. However, LOS only measures the congestion experienced by drivers, not the congestion, safety, or comfort experienced by other road users, such as people walking, biking, or rolling. Minimizing the congestion for drivers can often lead to compromises made in the safety and expediency of travel for non-motorized road users. Figure 14 shows a selection of major intersections in the city, and their LOS, as measured over the decade prior to 2020. The grade letters for LOS at signalized intersections and their respective capacity thresholds and qualitative descriptions are shown in the table below. Most design or planning efforts typically use service flow rates at LOS C or D, to ensure an acceptable operating level for drivers.

LOS	Intersection Capacity	Driver Experience
A	Less than 59%	Free flow
B	60% - 69%	Reasonably free flow
C	70% - 79%	Stable flow
D	80% - 89%	Approaching unstable flow
E	90% - 99%	Unstable flow, at capacity
F	Greater than 100%	Forced or breakdown flow
Source: AASHTO Geometric Design of Highways and Streets		

Figure 13: Roadway Classification System in Rockville



Actions

15.1 Protect and enhance Rockville's property, neighborhoods, and environment while supporting solutions to regional traffic congestion on I-270 and I-495.

15.2 Monitor and coordinate with Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) regarding any projects to alter I-270 through Rockville. The City strongly supports mass transit, transportation demand management (TDM), and other alternative solutions to traffic congestion on I-270 as opposed to widening or the creation of toll lanes on I-270 as a remedy.

15.3 Seek creative and sustainable solutions to local traffic impacts of congestion on I-270.

15.4 Support projects, standards, initiatives, and investments at the State and County level that promote a shift to travel modes other than private vehicles and support their related environmental benefits.

15.5 Participate in the MDOT SHA Community Safety and Enhancement Program that provides funding for transportation improvements along state highways that support planned or on-going revitalization efforts, including pedestrian and vehicular safety, intersection capacity/operations, sidewalks, roadway reconstruction or resurfacing, drainage repair/upgrade and landscaping. Projects must be in a Priority Funding Area and projects in Sustainable Community areas are given preference. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*)

15.6 Participate in the MDOT SHA Sidewalk Retrofit Program that helps to finance the construction and/or replacement of sidewalks along State highways. State highways in the city include MD-355, MD-28, MD-586, and MD-189. The program covers a higher percent of the cost for projects located in Sustainable Communities. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*)

15.7 Advocate for the MDOT SHA to address traffic congestion and bicycle and pedestrian safety at the intersections of Veirs Mill Road (MD-28/MD-586) and First Street (MD-28), Rockville Pike (MD-355) and Edmonston Drive, and Frederick Road (MD-355) and E./W. Gude Drive.

ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS

STANDARD TERM	ROCKVILLE TERMS	LOCAL EXAMPLES
Freeway	Limited Access	I-270
Major Arterial	Major	Rockville Pike W. Gude Dr.
Minor Arterial	Arterial	Gaither Rd.
Major Collector	Primary Residential Class 1, Business District, or Primary Industrial	Baltimore Rd. Nelson St. Research Blvd. Southlawn Ln.
Minor Collector	Primary Residential Class 2, Business District, or Secondary Industrial	Ardennes Ave. E. Middle Ln. King Farm Blvd. Watts Branch Pkwy.
Access	Secondary Residential	Anderson Ave. Crawford Dr. Henslowe Dr.

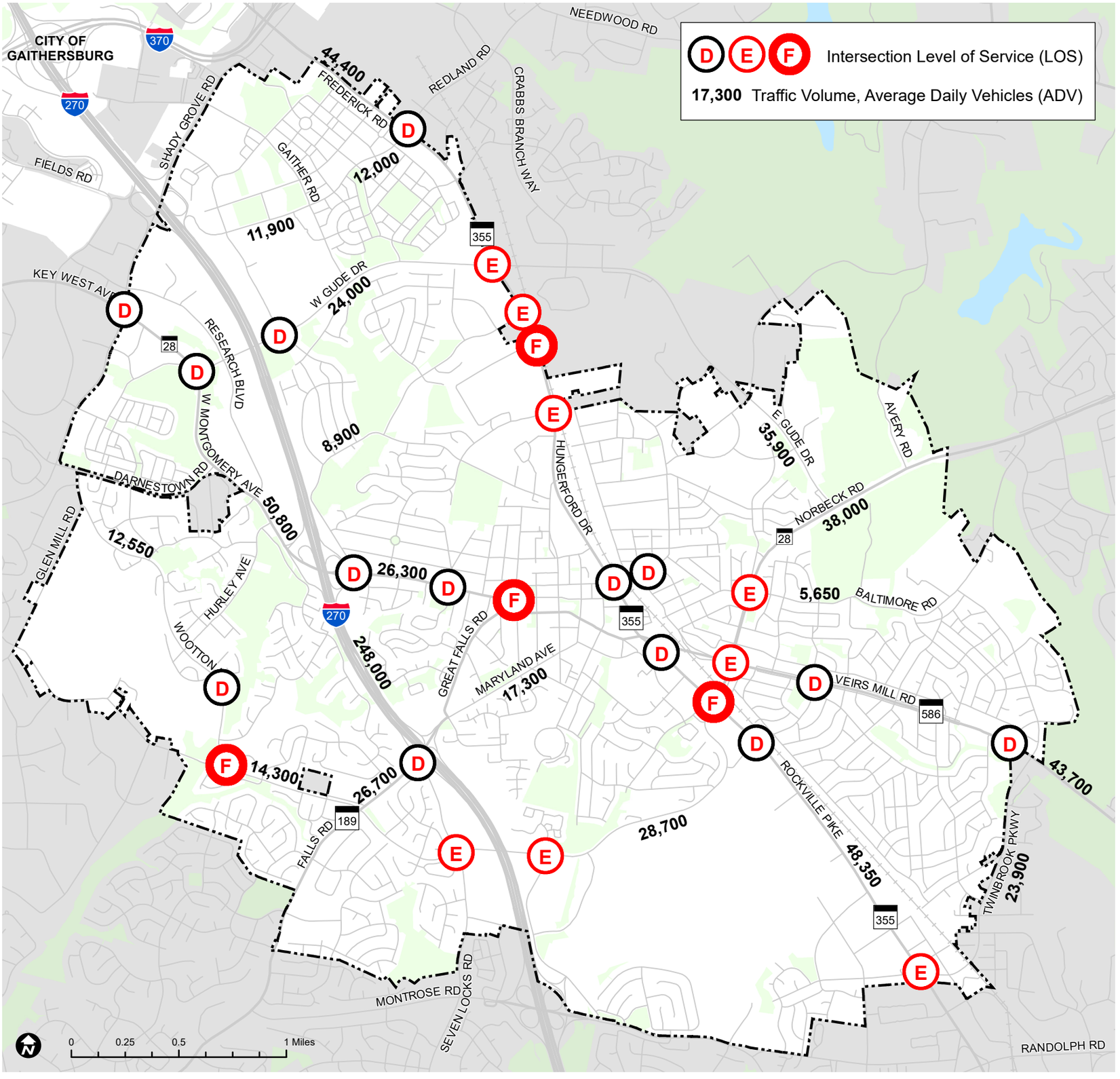
Policy 16
Protect neighborhoods from outside traffic, to the extent possible and based on the legacy road layout.

A major theme expressed by participants in the Rockville 2040 process was a desire for more neighborhood connections and reduced congestion on the streets that serve them. In some cases, missing connections require vehicles to travel farther, challenging goals to reduce vehicle miles traveled and carbon emissions. This Plan will pursue creative solutions to overcome the city's physical and perceived barriers, and improved connectivity and signage will promote equity in the City's transportation system. Where vehicular connections are not made, provision of pedestrian or bicycle paths is recommended. In addition to the action below, the Planning Areas of this Plan provide recommendations for specific opportunities to better connect the city east to west.

Action

16.1 Protect neighborhoods from the impacts of non-local through traffic.

Figure 14: Traffic as Measured by Level of Service and Average Daily Vehicles



Policy 17
Pursue opportunities for new east-west connections, when and where possible, while recognizing that connectivity is limited due to railroad tracks, MD-355, and I-270.

Rockville is divided roughly into thirds by regional transportation infrastructure that cuts across the city from north to south. Interstate I-270 separates the western portion of the city from the older parts of Rockville in the 'center', and the Metrorail and CSX railroad tracks create barriers to areas in the east of Rockville from the center. There are roadway and pedestrian and bicycle facilities that allow movement over or under the tracks and interstate, such as Wootton Parkway, West Montgomery Avenue, West Gude Drive, the Sister City Friendship Bridge, Unity Bridge, and Carl Henn Millennium Trail, but they are limited in number and spaced far apart.

This Plan will pursue creative solutions to overcome the city's perceived and physical barriers, despite the challenges from physical constraints, neighborhood opposition to new vehicular connections, and high costs. Improved connectivity and signage will promote equity in the city's transportation system. In addition to the action below, the Planning Areas of this Plan provide recommendations for specific opportunities to better connect the city east to west.

Action

17.1 Seek federal opportunities and grants to address the need for new east-west roadway and trail connections in the city.

Policy 18
Design new neighborhoods and major developments with internally connected streets and ensure connectivity to the broader roadway network.

Planning for internal and network connections at the time of a subdivision application, or during development review for single site infill projects, is recommended. Improved connectivity and signage in new neighborhoods will promote equity in the city's transportation system.

Actions

18.1 Initiate amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to add access management standards that promote vehicular and non-vehicular connectivity for new developments.

18.2 Seek to connect new development to the existing roadway network and avoid creating new areas that are cut off from surrounding neighborhood contexts and activity centers.

18.3 Establish a City street naming policy that reflects a welcoming, multicultural, and inclusive community.

Policy 19
Advocate and coordinate with MDOT SHA to develop creative solutions to mobility issues on major arterials and highways.

Major arterials provide for regional and subregional trips across Rockville. In addition, major arterials also carry traffic from local trips because the city's street layout is difficult to travel from one neighborhood to another, or to an activity center, without using an arterial for some part of the trip (see Figure 13). Congestion on major roads and at key intersections is a problem without easy solutions. In some locations, access routes to the regional network are burdened with heavy traffic and congestion. In other cases, a valued Rockville destination like Montgomery College generates peak congestion at intersections that is difficult to avoid.

This Plan establishes the City of Rockville's intention to study potential improvements along congested local streets and in partnership with the Rockville community and Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) on State roads and highways in Rockville. For instance, West Montgomery Avenue (MD-28) experiences heavy traffic from I-270 to Great Falls Road. Wootton Parkway was also the subject of many comments from the community during the Rockville 2040 process, both calling for relief from congestion and opposition to widening the roadway. This Plan recommends studying small-scale improvements on

Edmonston Drive, Veirs Mill Road, West Montgomery Avenue, Wootton Parkway, and other major roadways that may help to relieve congestion at certain locations and improve safety and mobility options for all modes.

The following actions reflect the City's current priorities for roadway improvements, whether locally or State-controlled, but is not an exhaustive list; projects may be added or removed over time as needed. Many of these actions are located on the map in Figure 15.

Actions

19.1 Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential improvements on West Montgomery Avenue (MD-28), between Hurley Avenue and Great Falls Road, that increase safety and mobility for all modes and decrease traffic congestion, especially due to traffic generated by the I-270 interchanges. The study should consider additional pedestrian crossings and other improvements without the need to widen the roadway or convert the middle turn lane to a peak hour reversible lane.

19.2 Study potential improvements on Wootton Parkway, west of I-270, that increase safety, visibility, and mobility for all modes, such as additional pedestrian crossings and effective street lighting, and that decrease traffic congestion through smaller-scale projects, such as additional turn lanes at specific intersections or lane re-striping, without widening the roadway.

19.3 Enhance the connectivity of the city's roadway network by prioritizing and programming the acquisition of needed rights-of-way and the design and construction of the following roadway improvements:

- Dawson Avenue - extend east to Hungerford Drive (MD-355)
- Maryland Avenue - extend north to planned Dawson Avenue, as extended

19.4 As part of any significant development or conceptual master plan of the Woodmont Country Club property, plan for the extension of East Jefferson Street, from its current terminus north of Congressional Lane, through the Woodmont Country Club to terminate at Wootton Parkway. An extension should specifically take into account the impacts on all surrounding and potentially affected neighborhoods, and all of the surrounding roads, including but not limited to Rockville Pike, Wootton Parkway, East Jefferson Street south of the country club property, Halpine Road, Congressional Lane, Montrose Parkway, Montrose Road, Fortune Terrace, Seven Locks Road, and West Edmonston Drive. Under all circumstances, however, the alignment and road design should be protective of existing residences and take into account impacts to the club. The exact location of the extension, as depicted in the 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan, should not be construed as its final alignment. (*See also Planning Areas 3, 9 and 11*)

19.5 Plan for the extension of Chapman Avenue, from Halpine Road north to a terminus with Rockville Pike. At the time of development review for the properties at 1460, 1470, or 1488 Rockville Pike, a determination should be made by staff whether or how Chapman Avenue is extended. The exact location of the extension, as depicted in the 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan, should not be construed as its final alignment. (*See also Planning Area 9*)

19.6 Encourage creative solutions for traffic management on local and State roads that address, for example, traffic signal timing, coordinated speed limits, and technological innovations.

19.7 Work with MCDOT and MDOT SHA to conduct a special corridor study along MD-355, from its intersection with Veirs Mill Road (MD-586) north to the city limits, to determine congestion levels, recommend significant improvements to street design, increase non-auto driver mode share, and incorporate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). (*See also Planning Areas 1, 7 and 16)*

19.8 Advocate for MDOT SHA, on State roads, and seek opportunities, on City roads, to eliminate long stretches of major roadways without safe pedestrian crossings. (*See also Action 3.8 of the Transportation Element*)

19.9 Explore ways to design, fund, and build new bike lanes or shared use paths along major arterials and highways in the city.

19.10 Assess posted speed limits on Wootton Parkway to ensure safety and mobility for all modes. (*See also Planning Area 12*)



Traffic congestion on Viers Mill Road (MD-28/MD-586) between S. Stonestreet Avenue and First Street (MD-28).



Traffic congestion at Frederick Road (MD-355) and East/West Gude Drive.

19.11 Explore locations for additional city and neighborhood gateway signage on city roads and, in coordination with MDOT SHA and Montgomery County government, State arterials and highways.

Policy 20
Advocate and coordinate with MDOT SHA for intersection improvements.

Intersections of major arterials and highways are a primary location for traffic congestion and incidents among vehicles and between vehicles and other modes (see Figure 14). Improving safety, visibility, and mobility at key intersections in the city is necessary for the City to achieve its Vision Zero goals and to keep people walking, rolling, and driving safely and comfortably throughout the city.

Restricted turning movements along MD-355 that are designed to allow for traffic flow along this State route also affect people walking, rolling and driving in Rockville every day. For example, restricted turning movements at East Middle Lane in Town Center and Rollins Avenue/Twinbrook Parkway force drivers to take an alternate, frequently longer route, and lead some drivers onto private property, to turn around and head in their intended direction. Pedestrian and bicycle safety can benefit from restricted turning movements at intersections, though drivers negotiating alternative routes can add to their safety concerns in other areas, as well. While the City recognizes the importance of keeping traffic moving along this major regional route, this Plan establishes that better solutions should be studied.

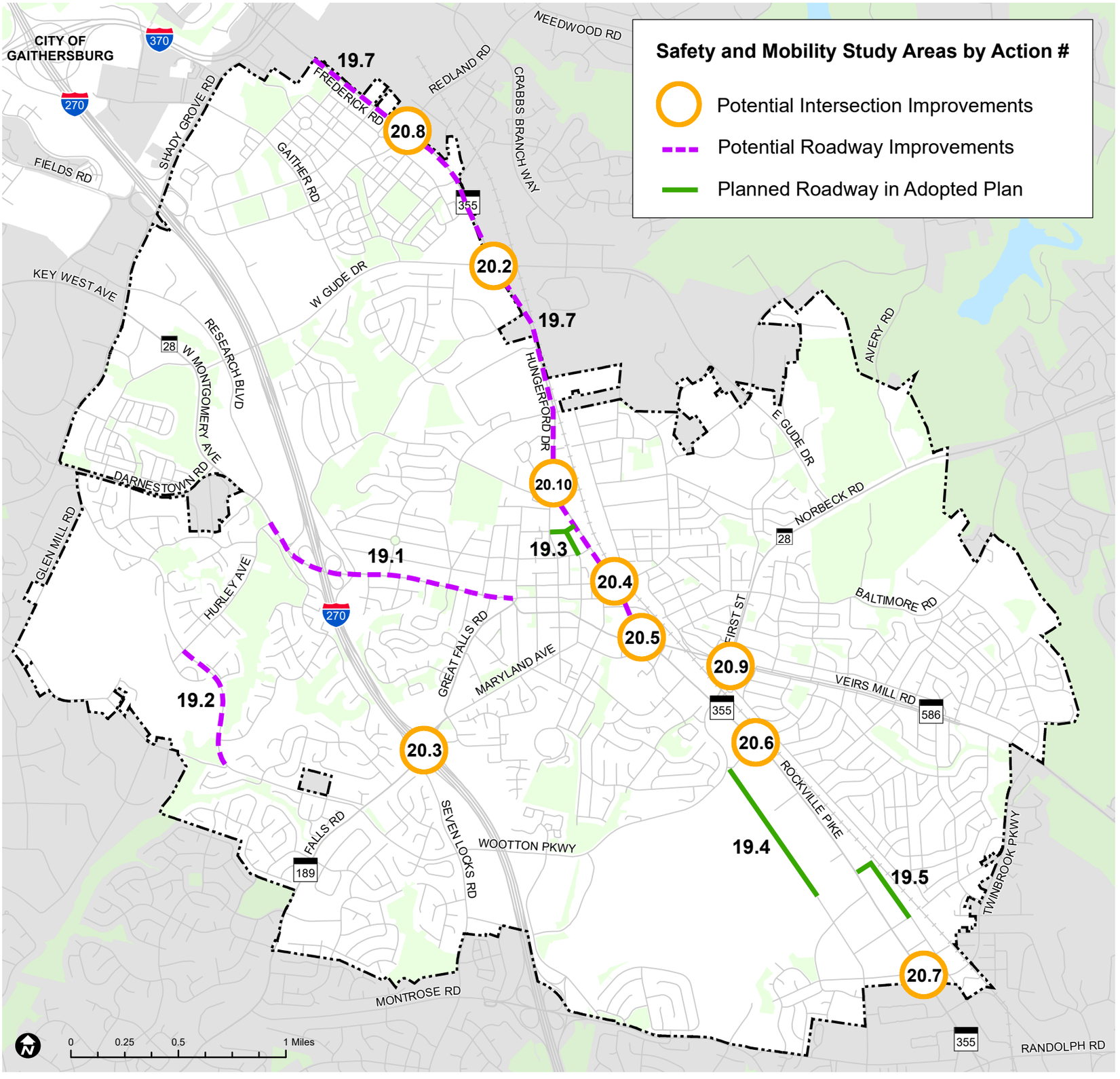
The following actions reflect the City's current priorities for intersection improvements, whether locally or State-controlled, but is not an exhaustive list; projects may be added or removed over time as needed. Many of these actions are located on the map in Figure 15.

Actions

20.1 Advocate for ADA-compliant accessibility improvements on all roadways in the city maintained by MDOT SHA.

20.2 Advocate for MDOT SHA to improve capacity, safety and comfort for all modes at the intersection of Gude Drive and MD-355. (*See also Planning Areas 7 and 16*)

Figure 15: Potential Highway Capacity and Intersection Study Areas by Action Number



20.3 Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential improvements at the I-270 interchange with Falls Road (MD-189) that increase safety, visibility, and mobility for all modes, such as improved visibility at off ramps, safer lane movements, and bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements. (*See also Planning Areas 3, 13, and 14*)

20.4 Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate improvements at the intersection of East Middle Lane/Park Road and MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal for a new left turn lane from eastbound East Middle Lane. (*See also Planning Area 1*)

20.5 Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left turn from eastbound MD-28 onto northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal. (*See also Planning Area 1*)

20.6 Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left-turn movement from eastbound Edmonston Drive onto northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal. (*See also Planning Area 9*)

20.7 Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left-turn movement from westbound Twinbrook Parkway onto southbound MD-355, and from eastbound Rollins Avenue to northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or exclusive left turn signals. (*See also Planning Area 9*)

20.8 Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left-turn lane from westbound Redland Boulevard onto northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal. (*See also Planning Area 16*)

20.9 Advocate for MDOT SHA to study measures to reduce traffic congestion and increase safety for all modes at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road (MD-586) and First Street (MD-28/MD-911). (*See also Planning Areas 8 and 9*)

20.10 Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential solutions to improving the intersection of North Washington Street and Hungerford Drive (MD-355) that increase safety and mobility for all modes. (*See also Planning Area 1*)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RECREATION AND PARKS

Vision

Rockville will continue to have a vibrant, beautiful, and easily-accessible park system with a wide variety of recreation facilities and programs, as this system is critical to supporting the health and well-being of the people of Rockville and its natural environment. Parks and recreation facilities will meet the needs and desires of Rockville's diverse users.

Rockville's first public park was a triangle of land in front of the Red Brick Courthouse formed by Commerce Lane and Montgomery Avenue. Through all of the changes to downtown Rockville over the decades, the site remains a park today (at left). Now part of Courthouse Square Park, it is the closest open space for residents living in Town Center, including the apartments just across the street.

Through its Recreation and Parks Department, the City of Rockville owns and maintains more than 1,100 acres of parkland and provides a wide variety of active and passive park and recreation facilities that are available to Rockville residents. Community centers and other indoor facilities provide recreation space and meeting rooms that host myriad cultural and educational programs that enrich the social lives of Rockville residents. Parklands also conserve sensitive environments along the city's stream valleys, which provide critical habitat and places for quiet enjoyment of nature.

Rockville's park system includes a number of specialized facilities that play a large role in community life, with the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center (RSFC) and the Senior Center being especially prominent. Cultural facilities in our parks include the Glenview Mansion and F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater. Recent investments show the City's commitment to maintaining the quality of its facilities even as it plans for new growth, which is especially important in areas experiencing a change in land use that brings new residents. Partnerships with Montgomery County government, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), and Montgomery College are crucial to providing recreation opportunities for city residents and visitors, as well.

The Recreation and Parks Department maintains a strategic plan, last adopted in December 2020, that is consistent with the policies contained in this Element, but is an implementation document intended to be updated regularly. It provides an inventory and analysis of the City's programs, parks, and open spaces and recommends strategies for the provision of these programs and services.

Summary of Community Input

Residents consistently state that the high-quality parks in Rockville are a major reason the city is such a good place to live. During the Rockville 2040 Listening Sessions and Citywide Forums, participants expressed this appreciation very clearly, discussing the many ways that they enjoyed the park system. They also expressed that certain parks seem underutilized, sometimes because of accessibility challenges; while other portions of the city are deficient in park space, such as parts of the Twinbrook neighborhood and in the urbanizing redevelopment areas in Town Center and along Rockville Pike.

Goals for Rockville's recreation and park system:

1. Provide neighborhood parks and recreation facilities that are easily accessible to residents by foot, bicycle or other transport.
2. Develop new park space in growth areas.
3. Promote active recreation and social life at community centers and special facilities with programming that serves the whole community in an equitable and inclusive manner.
4. Conserve key environmental areas.
5. Maintain and promote our parks.
6. Partner with Montgomery County government, M-NCPPC, and the private sector to serve Rockville's recreation needs.

Participants said that the city's parks are generally well maintained, but that some could use better lighting or improvements, with repeated mention that the RSFC would benefit by investments to upgrade the facility. Residents of all ages, including youth and seniors, expressed a desire for "more things to do" in Rockville, including in the park system, and many specific ideas were raised in that regard.

GOAL 1
Provide neighborhood parks and recreation facilities that are easily accessible to city residents by foot, bicycle, or other transport.

Rockville's park system is comprised of more than 60 parks in a wide variety of sizes, shapes, and functions. One measure of the system's effectiveness and value to residents is proximity, or accessibility. The City seeks to provide neighborhood scale parks within easy walking distance of every residence.

Larger scale parks, such as the Civic Center Park, and major recreation facilities are used by residents from all parts of the city. This Plan promotes access by bicycle and other non-motorized transport supported by access to citywide trails.

Given that the city and its park system are mature and largely built out, it is important to retain the parks that the city has, including open space and recreation facilities provided by our partners at the County. One strategy for improving and expanding access and facilities is to add to existing parks when and where possible, especially in those areas that are deemed to be under-served.

Policy 1
Provide a public park or recreation facility within a ten-minute walk of every residence in the city.

Neighborhood parks are most beneficial when they are within easy walk distance. The presence of a public park across the street or within a block or two is a critical amenity for a residential neighborhood, both for its utility as an open space and in terms of neighborhood cohesion, identity, and social life. Playgrounds are very popular spaces for families, and dog parks also serve as neighborhood gathering places. Parks are useful markers for identifying locations and navigating the city. In keeping with other goals to reduce traffic, pollution, and promote healthy lifestyles, providing parks within walking distance of residential uses is a priority for the City.

Actions

1.1 Analyze park distance and access issues on a regular basis and as residential uses are planned and developed in new areas of the city.

1.2 Identify opportunities to add new park entrances and paths to improve access to existing parks.

1.3 Improve access to recreational facilities from neighborhoods and commercial areas.

1.4 Identify and acquire properties as they become available to fulfill critical parks needs to address park deficiencies.

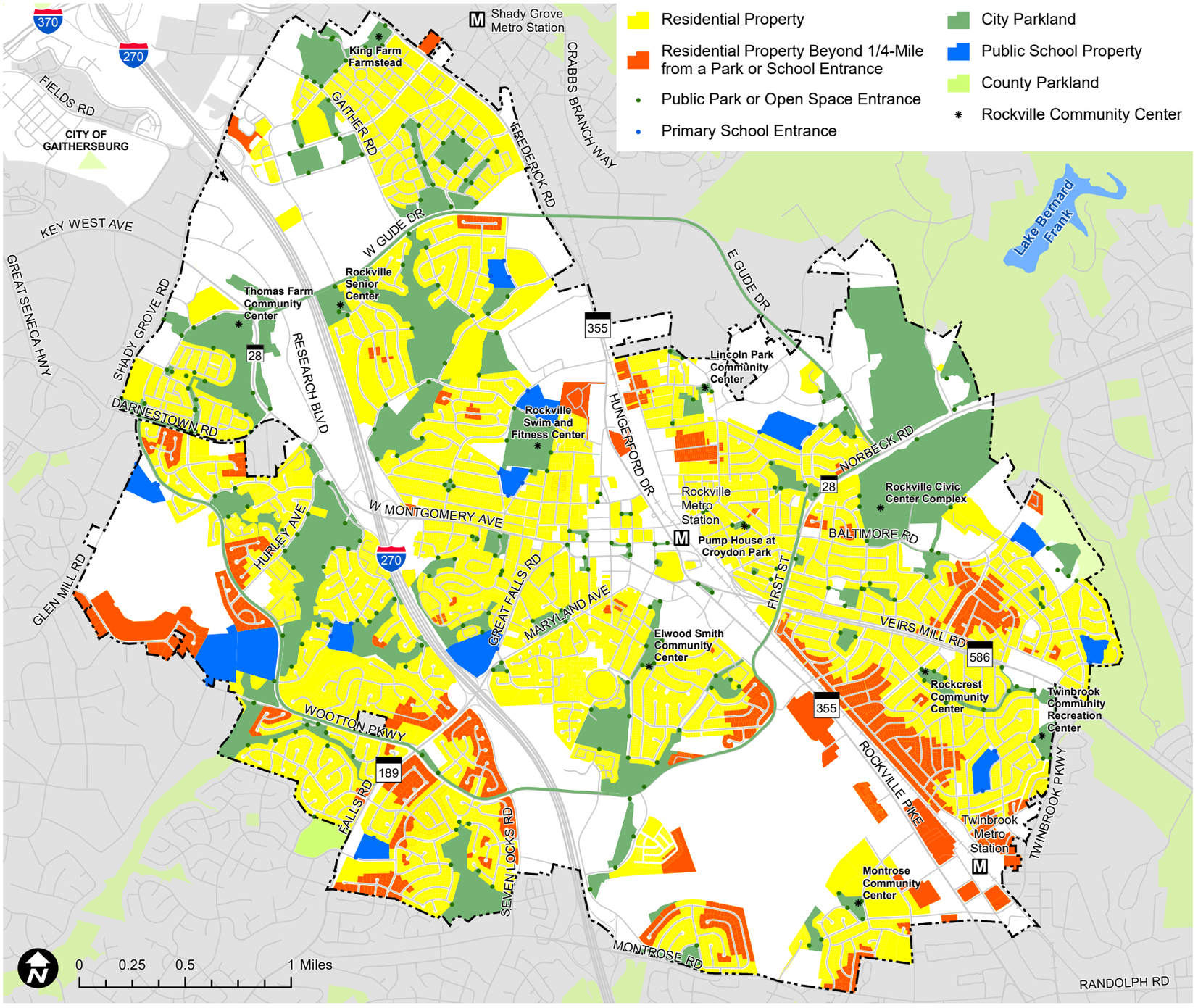
1.5 Create new parks in areas of the city that do not meet the policy standard.

1.6 Recognize that development density in relation to the presence and size of parks is a crucial factor in determining adequacy.



Rockville's Swim and Fitness Center includes a 'sprayground' popular with young children.

Figure 16: Five- to Ten-Minute Walk Analysis to Publicly Accessible Park Entrances



The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a standard to locate a public open space within a half-mile walk of residential uses. The analysis shown above measured the proximity of park entrances to residential uses within a quarter mile. Residential parcels that are more than a quarter mile from a park entrance are shown in orange. The analysis includes accessible portions of public schools and County-owned parks because these open spaces provide recreational facilities that complement the City's park system. In a number of locations, the lack of easy access to parks that are within a quarter mile, 'as the crow flies,' points to issues with the public right-of-way system where connections are not easily made due to street layouts or a lack of a pedestrian easement in a more direct route.

Policy 2
Expand and connect a network of multiple-use trails to provide safe access to city, County, and regional parks in the Rockville area.

Bicycles are a great way to access parks that are beyond an easy walk, in particular specialized facilities such as pools, community centers, and larger active recreation parks that are not available in every neighborhood. Bicycle riding, roller skating and skateboarding are popular recreation activities in themselves supported by City and regional trail facilities.

The citywide 1993 master plan included a proposed bikeway system that recommended completing a trail circling the city, which became Rockville's Carl Henn Millennium Trail. Connections to regional trails and crosstown bikeways are outlined in the 2017 Bikeway Master Plan. Providing non-motorized access to regional parks is important for accessing the large parks that protect environmental features in and just outside the city.



Shared use paths offer the opportunity for users of all ages and modes to move through the city without riding along busy streets.

Actions

2.1 Identify gaps and expand the distribution of multi-use trails.

2.2 Connect future parks, wherever possible, with existing local and regional park systems to provide continuous greenways.

2.3 Work with other jurisdictions to enhance connections to non-City park and recreation facilities.

2.4 Construct connecting multi-use paths consistent with the Transportation Element and the Bikeway Master Plan.

2.5 Consider the impact of any new park connection on natural resources and critical environmental areas.

2.6 Plan for and promote park access via non-vehicular modes.

2.7 Plan for and promote equal access for all types of users, including for persons of all abilities and mobilities.

2.8 Provide bicycle parking at all parks, as appropriate, that is conveniently available and clearly signed.



Rockville is committed to providing the opportunity for outdoor activity for all age groups and levels of ability.

Policy 3
Ensure no net loss of parkland.

The City is committed to a no-net-loss policy, which is primarily addressed to parks classified as being at-risk due to their status as leased park space, planned school sites, and MCPS active playgrounds on school sites. Rockville has a Park Zone category in its ordinance which provides strong protection for parks on property owned by the City.

Actions

3.1 Continue to categorize parkland owned by the City of Rockville as 'Park Zone' under the zoning ordinance (25.14.06).

3.2 Seek to add new parkland in the general vicinity of properties leased by the City for park use that are owned by MCPS and Montgomery County government in order to maintain park access if these properties are converted to other uses. (*See also Action 6.5 of the Community Facilities Element*)

3.3 Retain all of RedGate Park (the former RedGate Municipal Golf Course) as some type of park resource open and available to residents. (*See also Action 25.1 of the Land Use Element and Project 1 of Planning Area 17*)



Hillcrest Park in the Twinbrook neighborhood is representative of a neighborhood park that combine active facilities with large open spaces.

Policy 4
Add to existing parks, in areas with park deficiencies, when contiguous parcels become available for sale.

A good strategy to adding parks in existing, older neighborhoods is to have a policy that allows for the acquisition of parcels that are contiguous with existing parks. As an example, the City purchased a single lot with a house immediately adjacent to Isreal Park in Lincoln Park in 2017. The house was demolished to make room for additional vehicle parking for the park and community center. This policy and strategy are useful to make existing parks larger where the original subdivision provided smaller open spaces.

Actions

4.1 Acquire properties for park additions when opportunities arise.

GOAL 2
Develop new park space in growth areas.

For many decades, Rockville added parkland as previously undeveloped large land areas were annexed into the city and developed. Through that mechanism, including Rockville's requirements, wonderful parks were created in, among other neighborhoods, North Farm, Potomac Woods, Fallsgrove and King Farm.

Recent and future population growth is different. It is occurring mostly on land already within the city, and that was previously developed for commercial use. The parcels now being developed are nowhere near the size of neighborhood-scale development, such as the 254-acre Fallsgrove project. The largest current projects do not exceed 30 acres, and most are on parcels smaller than 5 acres. As a result, producing large-scale parks will not be possible as part of redevelopment. Nonetheless, population growth is significant, and focused in areas where there is either a deficiency of parkland (the Rockville Pike corridor) or where the park spaces are small and/or insufficient for the expanding mixed-use environment (Town Center). Furthermore, the density of development is higher than previous eras of growth, because

the large majority of new housing units is projected to be in multiple-unit structures.

The Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan (p. 4-37, 2016), which remains part of this Comprehensive Plan, identifies the need for at least ten acres of new parkland in the corridor, with at least two of those acres to be located in the South Pike as urban-style parks. The remaining acreage, and more if possible, should be a larger park that can accommodate sports and other field-based recreation activities.

Policy 5
Create public and publicly-accessible private parks to serve new development, especially where land use change will lead to a shortage of park space within easy walking distance.

One of the most pressing challenges for the City is to plan and develop new parks in major growth areas. In the nearly two decades since the completion of the Town Center Master Plan, 1,940 residential units were added, with another 470 approved, for a total of 2,410 additional dwelling units in Town Center. The only park space added to Town Center during this growth is Town Square Park, completed in 2006. New residents can be seen walking their dogs around Courthouse Square Park, but a larger open space is needed. Surface parking used in the past for Rockville's Hometown Holidays will be developed in coming years, requiring a reconfiguration of the annual event. Given this situation, this Plan recommends creating new park space in the Town Center as a top priority.

A similar situation is found in the south Pike near the Twinbrook Metro station. Nearly 1,500 dwelling units have been added since 2000 in the station area, but no new public open space. The Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan (2016) recommends developing ten acres of new park space in the Pike corridor. This need will become critical as new development brings thousands of new residents near the Twinbrook Metro station. In addition to parks and plazas, the Pike Plan calls for a major park with active recreation facilities.

For larger development or redevelopment sites, park and open space can be built and maintained by the private developer or land owner. Such privately developed, publicly accessible parks and open spaces can serve the same function as a City park without the need for land dedication to the City and at lower levels of public investment.

Actions

5.1 Plan for a new Town Center park of sufficient size to host community wide gatherings and events, and provide adequate open space for a growing Town Center population.

5.2 Plan for a major new park to serve population growth in the southern portion of Rockville Pike and the Twinbrook Metro station area.

5.3 Acquire and create parkland as part of new and large-scale development projects.

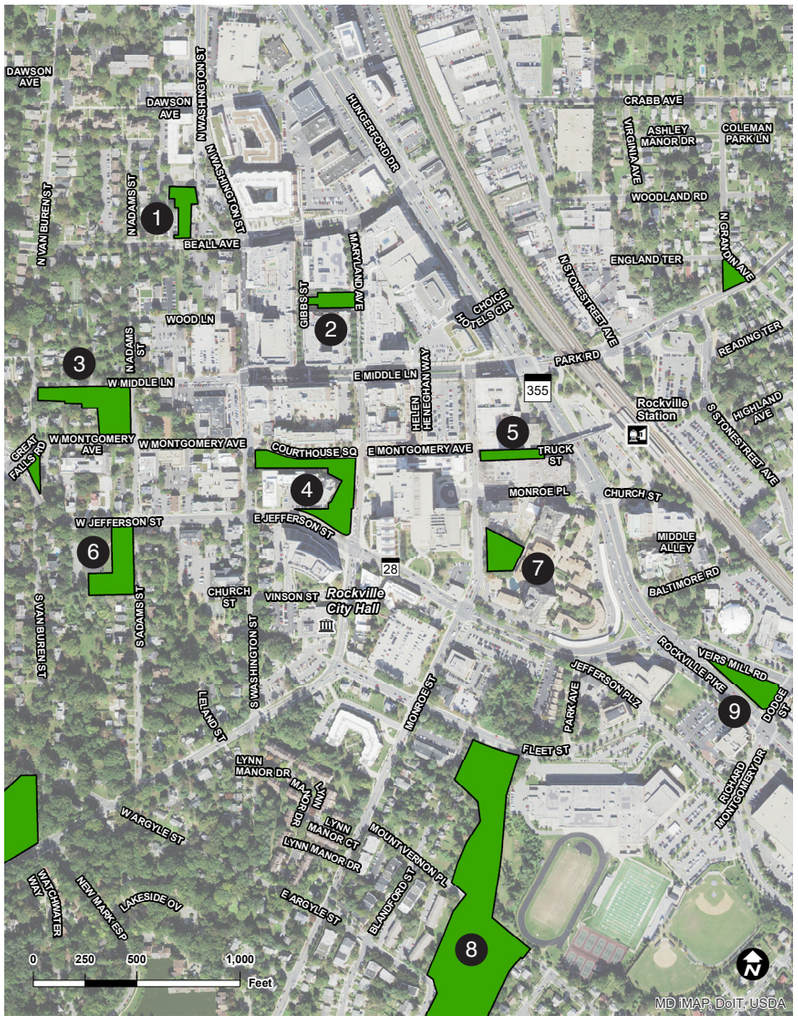
5.4 Seek opportunities to create new parkland in locations identified by the Potential Future Public Park asterisk on the Land Use Policy Maps in Figure 3 of the Land Use Element and in Planning Areas 1, 9, and 11.

5.5 Seek opportunities to incentivize large development projects to provide privately developed, publicly accessible park and open space beyond what is required as a minimum by City code, in return for greater density, intensity, or other project benefits.

Policy 6
Establish a park development fund for acquisition, design, and construction of new parks or enhancements to existing parks.

Creating parkland and other publicly accessible community spaces in redevelopment areas is challenging, because space and high costs make site assembly difficult. The City should seek new financing approaches to creating new parks, especially when dedication of property is not available or will not result in a sufficient size warranted for a park. A park development fund could receive funds through many avenues, including "fee-in-lieu" payments received as part of development projects, impact fees, budgeted amounts from City general or capital funds, creating special taxing districts, and grants and/or donations.

Figure 17: Town Center Parks



Park space is superimposed in green over an aerial photograph to show the location and size of City parks in Town Center. Numeric labels correspond to information on each park listed in the table at right. The largest park is Elwood Smith which has a walking trail along the upper reach of Cabin John Creek. The next three parks over one acre are historic properties rather than neighborhood parks. Taken together, there is a shortage of park space to serve the growing population.

Town Center Park Space

Name	Acres	Park Type
1 Kinship Park*	0.31	Neighborhood
2 Town Center Park Plaza	0.40	Citywide
3 Beall-Dawson Historic Park	2.90	Citywide
4 Courthouse Square Park	1.50	Citywide
5 Promenade Area/Park	0.18	Neighborhood
6 Jacquilin Trells Williams Park	1.06	Neighborhood
7 James Monroe Park	0.75	Neighborhood
8 Elwood Smith Park	7.50	Neighborhood
9 Veterans Park	0.77	Citywide
Total acreage	15.37	

* Note: Kinship Park is leased space.



Town Square Park hosts events and visitors in downtown Rockville, as well as serving as open space for the surrounding development.

Another option available to the City of Rockville is to use new tax revenues generated by redevelopment projects to fund park development in that area through tax increment financing (TIF), or some other action to dedicate funds from tax-generating properties served by the new park.

Actions

6.1 Deposit any park and open space fee-in-lieu payments into the park development fund as part of a process for developing public parks.

6.2 Explore contributing City funds toward the creation of a park development fund. Potential funding sources include an annual budget line item, grant awards, municipal bonds, and/or a change in the City's Financial Management Policy to allow transfer of a portion of reserve funds above a certain threshold into the fund on an annual basis.

6.3 Explore the feasibility of utilizing special assessment districts or tax increment financing (TIF) to fund park development in major population growth areas, such as the Town Center and Rockville Pike.

6.4 Seek tax deductible donations and grants to assist in capitalizing the park fund.

6.5 Seek State and other funds to supplement this effort.

6.6 Define metrics and standards for park dedication for large development projects, and provide an option for dedication of land and/or a fee-in-lieu payment.

GOAL 3
Promote active recreation and social life at community centers and special facilities with programming that serves the whole community in an equitable and inclusive manner.

While the quick access provided by neighborhood parks is important, active recreation and team sports requires larger sites with major playfields and facilities. Community centers provide indoor recreation spaces that are used year round, but are particularly crucial during the winter months. Meeting rooms are used for classes as well as community gatherings.

Key issues associated with active recreation and facilities include:

- Access to major recreation facilities and community centers in new growth areas;
- Park programming for sports and classes as demographics and interests change;
- Uncertain trends in sport popularity and the use of outdoor space in response to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-21; and
- Continued investment in specialized facilities.

Policy 7
Maintain and invest in Rockville's community centers as places to foster health and wellness, neighborhood cohesion and social life, equity, and environmental stewardship.

Community centers with indoor recreation facilities play an important role in the social life of Rockville. They provide active recreation space in gymnasiums and rooms with exercise machines, as well as rooms that can be reserved for neighborhood meetings and gatherings. The Recreation and Parks Department also programs hundreds of different types of activities for residents of all ages, from gardening classes to basic computer trainings, dance to martial arts and swim classes, and much more. Numerous single events are hosted by our facilities. Summer camp for school age Rockville children are an annual rite, keeping kids active and engaged at playgrounds and centers around the city.

Rockville seniors have a full menu of activities from which to choose, many located at the Rockville Senior Center. Results from the 2016 Senior Citizen Needs Assessment and Gap Analysis found strong support for continued use of neighborhood community centers as satellite locations for senior programs and services with the Senior Center as a hub.

The City completed a major renovation to the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center in 2020, adding indoor space and renovating the lobby and locker rooms. The work is part of the City's ongoing efforts to accommodate growing demands for the city's recreation amenities while providing modern

and accessible facilities for Rockville residents and visitors.

During the Rockville 2040 public engagement effort, the Rockville community expressed an interest in planning for additional or expanded community centers in the city's growth areas, including the Shady Grove Road corridor, west of I-270, downtown Rockville, and the Rockville Pike corridor (See Figure 18 for the city's existing community centers). Montrose Community Center is the closest to the southern Rockville Pike area, and possible expansion to offer a wider variety of activities is recommended (See Planning Area 10: Montrose and North Farm).

In 2018, the City retained a consultant, Eureka Facts, to evaluate the community's level of support for constructing a new community recreation center in Rockville, west of I-270 and south of Hurley Avenue, and if supported, identify the best location and amenities for the new center. The study results indicated moderate community support for a new recreation center and/or improving existing facilities.

Actions

7.1 Ensure equity of access in program and park/facility distribution throughout Rockville.

7.2 Seek to provide community centers that will reach all neighborhoods and serve all age groups.

7.3 Study the need for additional community and recreation centers in currently under-served areas, including on the west side of I-270 south of Hurley Avenue.

7.4 Plan for new major active recreation facilities in growth areas.

7.5 Continue to regularly reinvent community center facilities and programming to meet changing needs and emerging trends.

7.6 Retrofit existing community and recreation centers for energy efficiency and design new facilities using sustainable and universal building design principles.

Policy 8
Continue to invest in our specialized park and recreation facilities and update long-term facility plans.

Some of the City's unique park and recreation facilities include the King Farm Farmstead, the Pump House at Croydon Park, Rockville Civic Center (and Glenview Mansion), and RedGate Park, among others. These facilities require special attention due to their historic, natural, and/or cultural significance to the Rockville community, and should be maintained at the same level of quality and service as the City's modern community facilities. For more on these special facilities, see the City projects and policy recommendations in each Planning Area.

Actions

8.1 Periodically update long-term facility plans for the City's unique park and recreation facilities and ensure adequate investment to ensure they serve the Rockville community at the same high level as the City's 'modern' facilities.

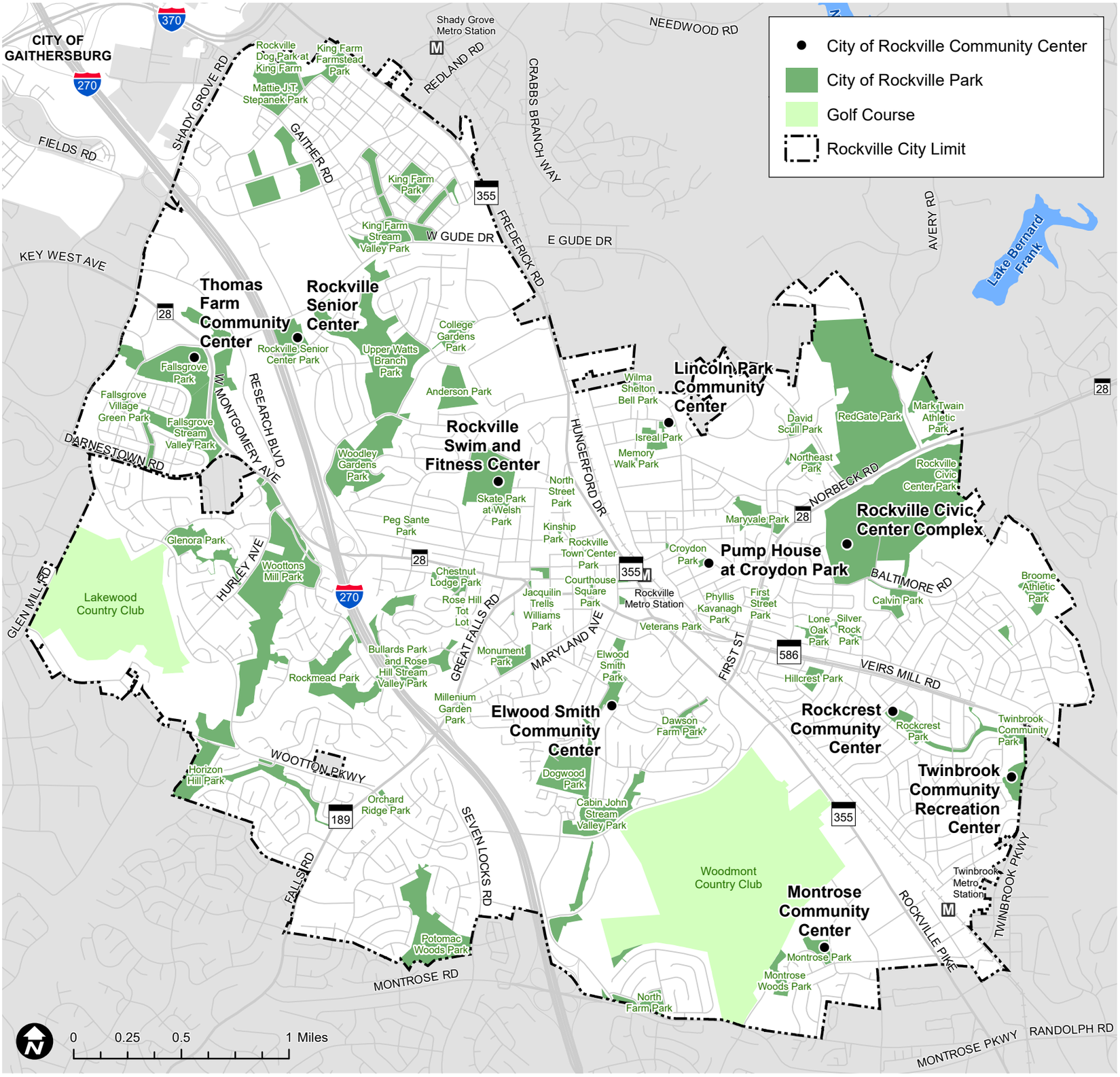
8.2 Design, develop, and maximize the use of RedGate Park as a community asset and a regional destination.

8.3 Redevelop King Farm Farmstead to balance its existing historic amenities with newer cultural and recreation offerings.



Team sports are played throughout the spring, summer, and fall on a number of ballfields. The image above is at Welsh Park.

Figure 18: Community Centers and Parkland



8.4 Evaluate the viability of a multi-generational community facility focused on new recreational programming, performing arts, and cultural offerings.

Policy 9
Consider recreation trends and demographic changes when planning and programming athletic facilities and amenities.

Park programming is evaluated continuously to meet the needs of residents and adjust to changing trends in popular sports. Rockville's diversity, and our embrace of immigrants from around the globe, is evident in the growing popularity of sports such as cricket, futsal, bocce, field hockey, lacrosse, rugby, and pickleball. Soccer has surged as an American sport and the provision of rectangular fields is as important as baseball diamonds, while the popularity of tennis has fluctuated. Changing interests in outdoor sports and the use of outdoor space occurred during the public health emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021. Whether the trends of increased outdoor recreation and the need for socially distant team and indoor sports remains to be seen. Adjustments to facilities will be considered to meet the city's changing demand.

Overall, the City's athletic and recreation facilities and amenities should always be designed to ensure equity, inclusiveness, and a recognition of diversity.

Actions

9.1 Study, on a regular basis, the utilization of active park spaces and athletic facilities, such as playfields and courts, to determine the extent to which existing facilities are being used or if there is demand for new types of facilities geared to specific sports. Ensure that active park spaces serve the needs of all age, culture, and identity interests throughout the city.

9.2 Provide opportunities for emerging sports and activities.

9.3 Continue to set park and activity fees that are consistent with the City's cost-recovery requirements and affordable to the full range of Rockville residents.

9.4 Seek opportunities for a major new facility that will act as a regional attraction, for instance an amphitheater or arboretum.

Policy 10
Strengthen cultural, educational, and social programming at community centers and parks.



Rockville's Senior Center is an active facility dedicated to serving those who are aged 60 and older within and around the Rockville community.



Lincoln Park Community Center is one of Rockville's most popular community facilities, providing community meeting space and after-school programs for neighborhood students.











Indoor and specialized outdoor recreation facilities provide the opportunity for vigorous exercise. A variety of fitness training classes are available. Team sports offer both exercise and social interaction.

GOAL 4
Conserve key environmental areas.

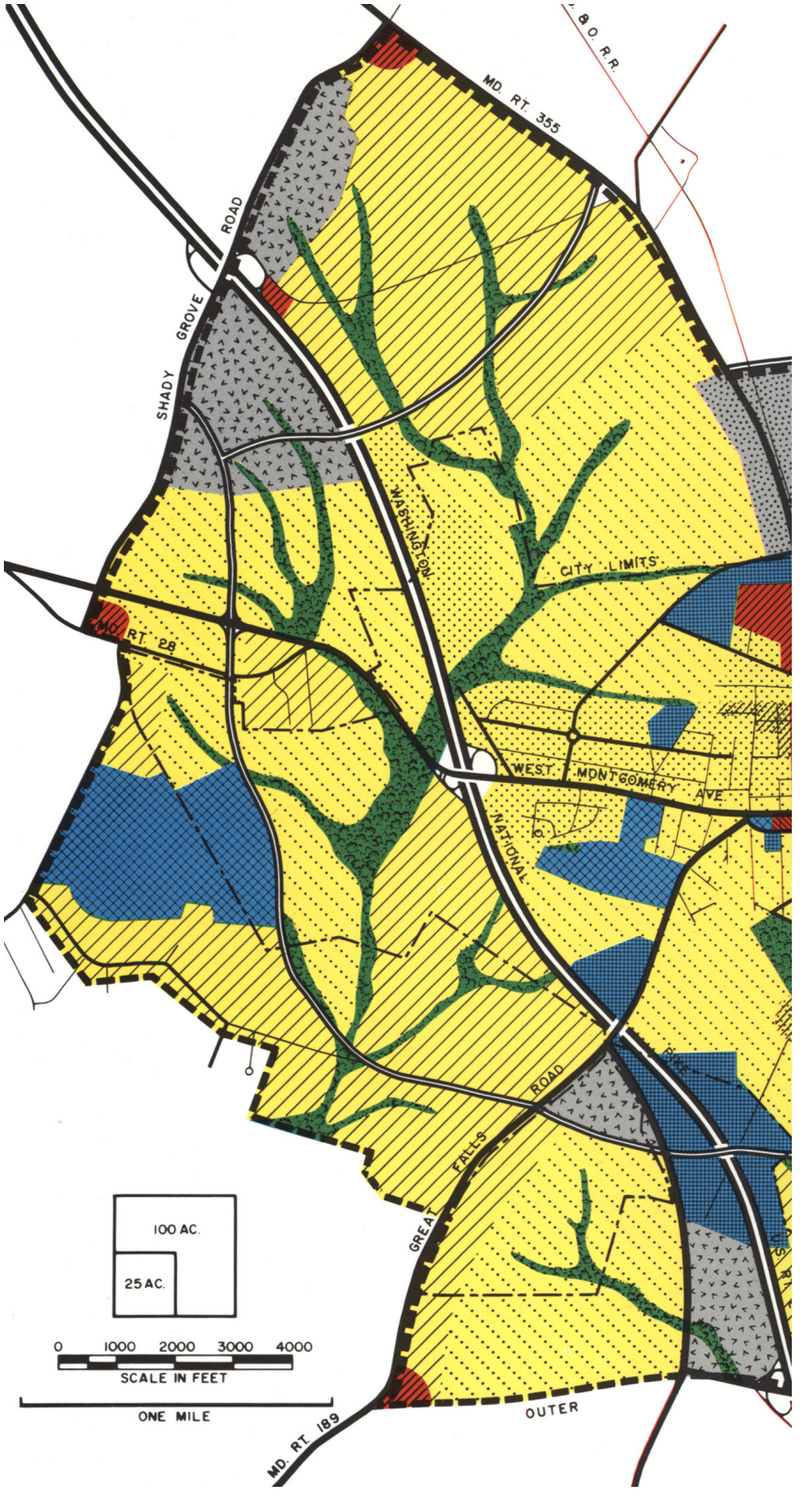
Since the beginning of master planning in Rockville, the land use plan and park recommendations have identified stream valleys as areas to be conserved as public open space dedicated to conservation. Protection of steep slopes from development is good planning and avoids erosion that can impact water quality in streams. Because steep slopes could not be plowed or planted during the days of active agriculture in the Rockville area, stream banks and slopes helped to maintain some forest cover.



Rockville's stream valley parks help protect water quality and provide natural open space for residents and visitors.

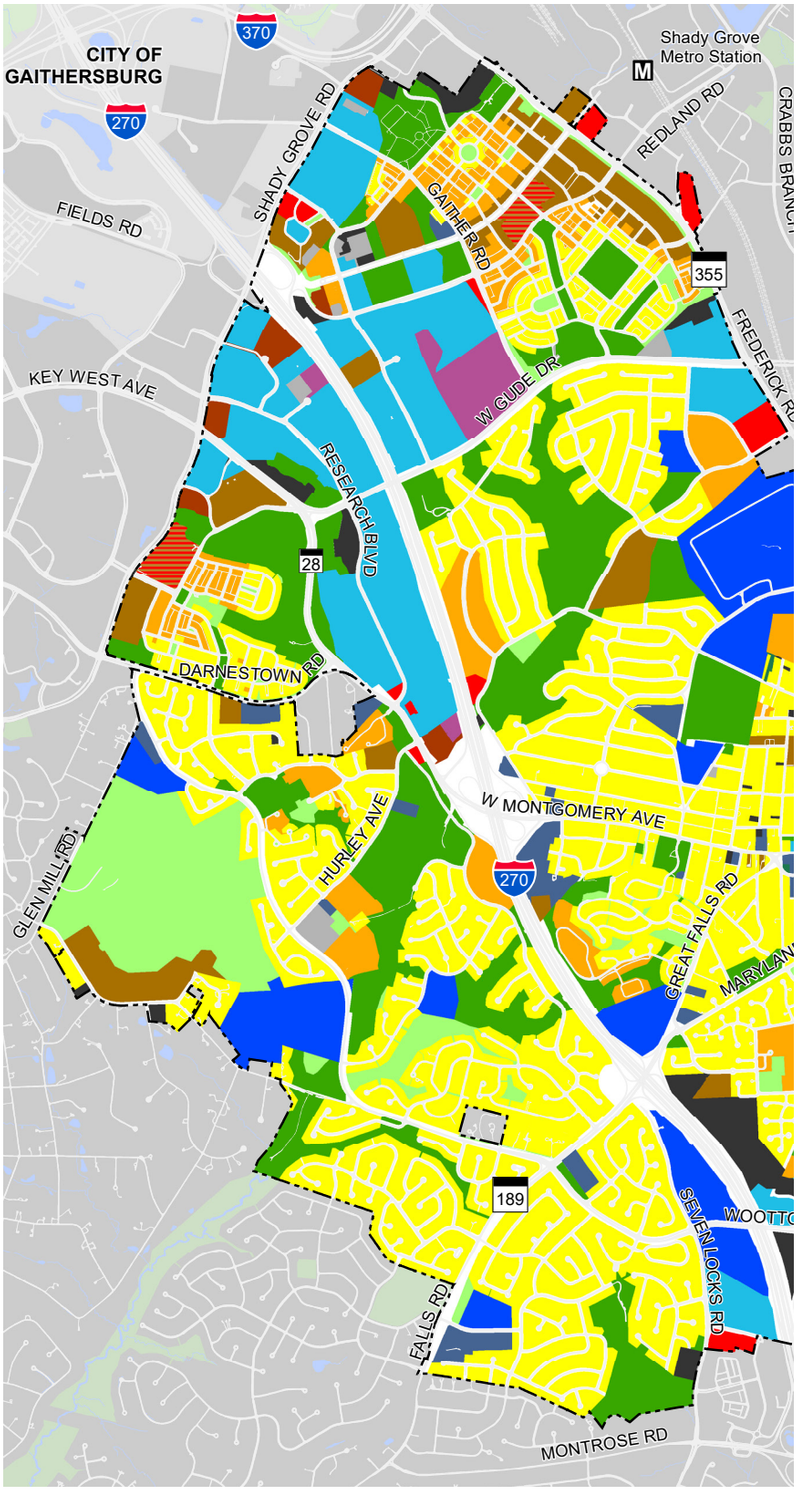
1960 Land Use Plan

Green tendrils on the plan show an intention to conserve land along stream valleys as the city expanded to the west and north.



2018 Existing Land Use

Green areas show the vision of the 1960 Plan realized with the City owning substantial park and open space buffers along stream valleys.



Policy 11
Value the important conservation role that Rockville's parks play in protecting steep slopes, streams, wildlife corridors, and forests.

Today, public parkland provides the best contiguous and connected woods in the city, which provides critical environment corridors, or greenways, for plant species and the movement of animals. This conservation role of City parks is recognized and reinforced by Plan policies. Acquisition of a five-acre parcel in 2017 added to Woottons Mill Park and the greenway protecting that part of the Watts Branch woods and stream corridor. Further acquisition or dedication of steep slopes and stream bottom land on the upper reaches of Watts Branch in King Farm, east of Piccard Drive, is recommended by this Plan. While the topography protects this land from development, adding it to the park system would allow for public access and forest management, with the potential for other enhancements. Additional policies on conservation are included in the Environment Element.

Actions

11.1 Identify and designate sensitive environmental areas in Rockville parks as conservation areas.

11.2 Seek opportunities to enhance and connect a network of open spaces and greenways.

11.3 Promote environmental awareness, education, stewardship, and the value of parks as a natural resource.

11.4 Protect native flora and fauna in our parks system, and plant locally sourced native plants when possible.

11.5 Evaluate the landscape plans for each park on a regular basis, specifically in regard to the extent of mowed turf, and maintain as much space as possible in a non-mowed or natural condition, to cut maintenance costs and the impacts of mowing.

GOAL 5
Maintain and promote our parks.

The City of Rockville is the largest land owner and property manager in the community, with over 1,100 acres maintained by the Department of Recreation and Parks. Keeping our parks in peak condition is important to the overall appearance, safety, and livability of our neighborhoods and activity centers.

Policy 12
Maintain City recreation and park facilities at the highest standards for safety, cleanliness, environmental sustainability, and user experience.

Rockville will maintain its parks and recreation facilities, even as plans are made to expand the system to serve new needs and residents.

Actions

12.1 Continue maintenance of existing parks as a priority, provide sufficient budget resources as the system grows, and research and employ best management practices.

12.2 Continue to perform routine safety inspections and maintenance of athletic facilities, playfields, and play equipment.

12.3 Monitor the urban forest for environmental and biological impacts from plant pathologies, invasive insects, and climate change.

12.4 Develop effective strategies to manage the impact of deer and other wildlife on the forest understory.





Recreation and Parks staff work all year to maintain Rockville's active recreation facilities. The pitching mound at Walter Johnson Field in Dogwood Park (above, top) is carefully prepared for another season of play on Rockville's premier baseball diamond. The soccer field lines at Mark Twain Athletic Park are being set (above, bottom) with specialized field equipment. Even Rockville's woods (opposite page) are maintained to ensure damaged or downed trees are not a hazard to woodland trail users.

Policy 13
Develop a unique identity for Rockville Recreation and Parks facilities.

Actions

13.1 Build a stand-alone brand identity for the Recreation and Parks Department to tell its story and increase community awareness and participation.

13.2 Update facility signage to create branding with a readily identifiable logo that enhances awareness and improves both wayfinding and recognition of City park and facilities.

13.3 Ensure that new park logo and signs conform with overall branding for the City.

Policy 14
Maintain and regularly update the Strategic Plan for the City's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.

In order to anticipate needs and maintain a large park system it is necessary for the Department of Recreation and Parks to conduct long range planning for its parkland, programs, and facilities. The City of Rockville Recreation and Parks Department Strategic Plan, last adopted in December 2020, provides a 'road map' for addressing community needs over a ten-year period, with a formal update after five years. The strategic plan details the current state of the City's parks, recreation and open space systems while identifying focus areas based on a comprehensive assessment of the community's vision and their priorities. It includes a full inventory of parks and details on facilities and equipment at each park and identifies issues and provides analysis of the adequacy of parks and open spaces at the citywide and neighborhood scales. Goals and recommendations are also made in regard to parks development.



A number of issues that require additional consideration, beyond the scope and detail of the Comprehensive Plan, are addressed in the Strategic Plan. The following actions are either reflected in the Strategic Plan or are included in addition to its recommendations.

Actions

14.1 Define a park classification system to help plan for the facility needs in different contexts.

14.2 Develop performance standards and recommended size for each type of park space.

14.3 Consider how neighborhoods are served with parks resources, in accordance with the classification system, and address deficits through park acquisition, design, and programming.

14.4 Consider innovative techniques and locations to provide parks.

14.5 Develop a master plan for each park and community center that addresses site design, programming, future needs, and maintenance.

14.6 Set priorities with respect to upgrading specialized facilities to meet current recreation demand and standards.

GOAL 6
Seek partnerships with government agencies and the private sector to serve Rockville's recreation needs.

Rockville is pleased to work with partners at the County level and private sectors to expand the scope and breadth of recreation facilities available to our residents. Our public agency partners include M-NCPPC, MCPS, and Montgomery County government.

Private recreation resources include recreation rooms and equipment available as an amenity to residents of apartment buildings and common areas owned and maintained by home owners associations (HOA). Some residential communities provide club houses or community centers, which sometimes include swimming pools, indoor play areas, fitness centers, and meeting rooms.

In addition, private businesses provide large indoor recreation spaces in Rockville. Three indoor recreation facilities are located on Southlawn Court in the far northeast of the city. The Rockville Ice Arena is available for hockey, recreational, and speed skating; and other indoor spaces with artificial turf host team competition, including youth leagues for indoor soccer, futsal, lacrosse, and cheerleading.

Rockville has two private country clubs. Woodmont Country Club has two 18-hole golf courses and Lakewood County Club has one 18-hole course. These clubs provide recreation and social activities, as well, for their club members within the City of Rockville.

Policy 15
Foster mutually beneficial partnerships with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS).

Facilities owned by Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) contribute to the overall recreation opportunities available in Rockville. MCPS has 16 schools within the city, each offering recreation facilities open to the public when school is out-of-session, including ballfields, tennis courts, gymnasiums, playgrounds, and basketball courts.

Other properties of former schools owned by MCPS are leased for use by private schools, non-profit organizations, and others. The City of Rockville leases and maintains some of these former school properties to allow public access to their athletic fields and amenities. These schools fill important locational gaps in the City parks system. For example, Rockville Department of Recreation and Parks leases Mark Twain School Athletic Park, which is heavily used.

Of concern in these leased facilities is the potential loss of athletic facilities on property owned by MCPS should they be developed for a use other than an athletic park, and conversely, parks on property owned by Rockville that are planned and reserved by agreement with MCPS as future school sites.

Actions

15.1 Work with MCPS to determine the future plans for three reserved school sites in the King Farm and Fallsgrove neighborhoods.

15.2 Work with MCPS to determine the future plans for the former site of the Carl Sandburg Learning Center.

15.3 Strengthen lease agreements with MCPS for athletic field use at MCPS-owned Mark Twain Park.

15.4 Consider acquiring MCPS-owned sites that become available if deemed useful as recreation and park space.

Policy 16
Foster mutually beneficial partnerships with Montgomery County government the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), and Montgomery College for shared use of park, recreation, and cultural facilities.

A number of parks in Montgomery County are located beyond the city's municipal borders, yet are easily accessible to Rockville residents. Rock Creek Regional Park, adjacent to the eastern border of the city, is the largest of these, covering approximately 1,800 acres along its full extent. Also

nearby are Cabin John Regional Park, Falls Road Park, and Watts Branch Stream Valley Park. Montgomery County Parks Department also manages community centers open to Rockville residents.

Recreation and Parks has partnered with Montgomery College over the years, including as a site for Fourth of July fireworks. The College's 400-meter track is a facility used by local track clubs, while the Municipal Swim and Fitness Center is so close to the college campus that students and faculty express an interest in an access arrangement. Continued and expanded sharing of facilities is welcomed by the City.

In addition, the City of Rockville leases and maintains some properties owned by Montgomery County government to allow public access to their athletic fields and amenities. These sites fill important locational gaps in the City parks system. For example, Rockville Department of Recreation and Parks leases athletic fields at Broome Athletic Park and Lone Oak Park, which are heavily used given the lack of a major playfield east of the CSX and Metro railroad tracks.

Of concern in these leased facilities is the potential loss of athletic facilities on property owned by Montgomery County government should they be developed for a use other than an athletic park.



Rockville Recreation and Parks staff manages our Saturday Farmer's Market on the County Circuit courthouse's jury parking lot in the southern part of Town Center.

Actions

16.1 Work with Montgomery County government to determine the future plans for Broome and Lone Oak Parks.

16.2 Strengthen lease agreements with Montgomery County government for athletic field use at County-owned Broome and Lone Oak Parks.

16.3 Consider acquiring sites owned by Montgomery County government that become available if deemed useful as recreation and park space.

16.4 Work with Montgomery County government, M-NCPPC, and MDOT SHA to foster shared use by and enhanced connections for city residents for parks and open space areas located beyond the city's municipal borders. (*See also Action 5.6 of the Transportation Element*)

Policy 17
Effectively utilize the strengths and resources of the private sector to complement the policies of the Recreation and Parks Department.

Actions

17.1 Explore the potential for public-private partnerships to provide athletic facilities, running track, visual and performing arts, and other needs.

17.2 Conduct a study to assess the potential for developing additional specialized sports facilities or a multi-purpose venue.

17.3 Continue to identify new and dedicated funding sources to ensure long-term financial sustainability for the Rockville Recreation and Parks Department.


448
497
City of Rockville Maryland
667
TENNANT

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Vision

Rockville will have a range of high-quality community facilities that are well located to provide superior services to residents, workers and visitors. Growth in the city will be coordinated with investments in community facilities.

Facilities owned by the City of Rockville are crucial to providing City services. The fleet service maintenance facility (left), constructed in 2012, provides space and equipment to maintain the City's vehicles and equipment.

The City of Rockville and Montgomery County government are responsible for developing and maintaining the public facilities on which high-quality local government service delivery relies. The Community Facilities Element establishes policies and actions for a significant portion of these public facilities, including the City's main administrative facilities of City Hall, Police Headquarters, and the Public Works and Parks Maintenance Complex. Other City facilities are covered in the Recreation and Parks, Water Resources, and Transportation Elements of this Plan. This Element also addresses facilities owned and operated by Montgomery County government, Montgomery County Public Schools, and Montgomery College.

Summary of Community Input

During the Rockville 2040 process, Rockville community participants expressed the great value that they place on services from the City of Rockville and Montgomery County government. They communicated that the high quality of life in Rockville depends on responsive and local governance; great schools with sufficient capacity; superior security services, which include police, fire and rescue; and more.

GOAL 1
Plan for the future of City of Rockville facilities, and advocate for County, State, federal, and private facilities, to meet the needs of the Rockville community.

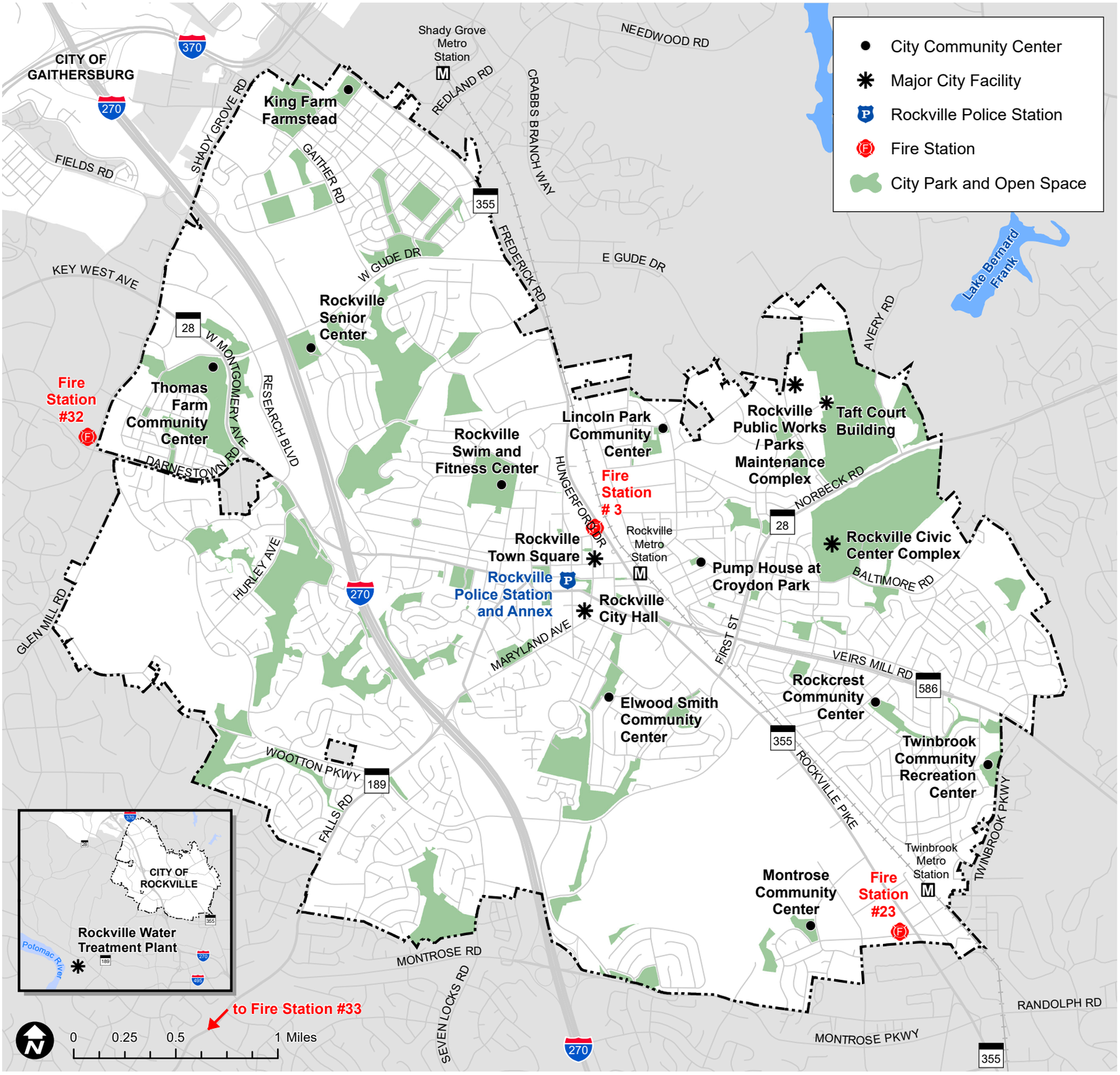
This Plan envisions growth of the city over the next twenty-year period with a strong commitment to maintain City services at the high level that the Rockville community expects. In order to ensure the delivery of services, the City needs facilities to house staff, records, materials, and equipment. For more on the city's projected growth, see the Introduction to this Plan.

The City is also committed to open government and robust engagement between citizens, elected officials, and staff, conducted frequently through public hearings and daily meetings in City facilities, primarily Rockville City Hall. Adequate meeting space and multimedia facilities are important to hosting

Goals for Rockville's community facilities include:

1. Plan for the future of City of Rockville facilities, and advocate for County, State, federal and private facilities, to meet the needs of the Rockville community.
2. Ensure adequate facilities for the Rockville Police Department and coordinate with Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services on their facility needs.
3. Actively engage on school development issues with Montgomery County Public Schools and maintain the highest standards for schools and libraries.
4. Foster better working relationships with Montgomery County government and Montgomery College on facility planning and implementation.
5. Keep Rockville on the cutting edge of information technology for City facilities, provision of City services, and infrastructure for residents and businesses.

Figure 19: City of Rockville Major Facilities and Fire Stations







Rockville City Hall (top) is the main administrative facility for the City. Facilities in City Hall include Mayor and Council Chamber and offices, staff offices and workspace, meeting rooms, and the Rockville 11 television studio (bottom).

public meetings and keeping all citizens informed through our print, video, and web-based communication channels.

In 2018, the City was served by a total full-time staff of 517 and a full-time equivalent of 95 part-time staff, for a total of 612 full-time equivalent employees. As of 2019, City staff serve approximately 68,000 residents and more than 76,000 employees who work in Rockville, plus the many thousands who shop, attend college, recreate or otherwise visit the city every day. Rockville is estimated to grow to approximately 87,000 residents and 91,000 workers by 2040.

Policy 1
Maintain City of Rockville facilities and staff levels to provide a high level of City services to the entire community.

Policy 2
Plan for the future of City of Rockville facilities.

City-owned facilities should be able to accommodate existing and future service needs. This Plan recommends development of a long-range City of Rockville facilities master plan that incorporates an analysis of space utilization and demand and strategies for meeting safety, security, and capacity needs to serve the Rockville community in the next decades. The current Rockville City Hall dates to 1962 with a number of expansions and internal reconfigurations having since been made. Analysis and consideration of options for Rockville City Hall will be necessary over the twenty-year planning horizon.

The Public Works and Parks Maintenance Complex on Rothgeb Drive is the crucial heart of operations for Rockville's heavy equipment maintenance and field technicians for the wide variety of jobs the City implements, from park maintenance to sewer and street repair and refuse collection. Storage of bulk materials, including road salt, and the City's stockroom, are located at this facility. With the purchase of an existing office building on Taft Court in 2019, the City moved to address space needs for administrative offices for the Public Works and Recreation and Parks departments. The addition of this 55,000 square feet of new space addresses a long-standing need, and its

location immediately adjacent to the Maintenance Complex on Rothgeb Drive provides convenient access between the two facilities.

For a discussion of other City facilities and amenities, including parks, playgrounds, trails, and community and recreation centers, see the Recreation and Parks Element.

Actions

2.1 On a regular basis, conduct space needs analyses using quantitative and qualitative methodologies to analyze existing facilities and functions; determine overall facility space needs; and provide recommendations for overall service efficiencies and improvements.

2.2 Develop a long-range facilities master plan that outlines strategies to meet safety, security, emergency preparedness, and capacity needs of the City's facility space, equipment, information technology systems (IT), and staff resources, including projections for growth over the next 20 years.

2.3 Identify strategies for funding space, equipment, and staff needs identified in the long-range facilities master plan, beyond the five-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) period.

2.4 Monitor space needs at Rockville City Hall to meet the service demands and staffing needs generated by the city's existing and projected population.

2.5 Retrofit the acquired office building at 6 Taft Court to accommodate the City's administrative space needs and enhance the City's emergency preparedness.

2.6 Update the facilities and emergency management plan for the Public Works and Parks Maintenance Complex on Rothgeb Drive.

2.7 Incorporate environmentally sustainable 'green' building practices in existing and new City facilities, including electric vehicle fleets and charging stations (*See also Actions 4.3 and 4.4 of the Environment Element and Policy 14 of the Transportation Element*).

2.8 Develop a emergency operations plan for City facilities and services that ensures community preparedness and





A new vehicle maintenance facility (under construction in the top image) helps to keep pace with the Public Works and Recreation and Parks needs. Conference rooms in Rockville City Hall (bottom) provide accessible and comfortable meeting spaces for Rockville staff and the public to conduct business and collaborate.

resiliency to natural disasters, security threats, extreme weather events, and public health emergencies. Coordinate emergency planning with County, State and federal partners, including the County Circuit and State District court systems located within the city.

2.9 Explore options to reconfigure or add community gathering spaces in Rockville City Hall and other publicly-accessible City buildings.

2.10 Study the need for additional community and recreation centers in currently under-served areas, including on the west side of I-270 south of Hurley Avenue.

Policy 3
Monitor County, State, and federal master plans and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) proposals.

Actions

3.1 Advocate for capital investments by County, State and federal entities, including the County Circuit and State District court systems located within the city that would benefit Rockville and its citizens, and against investments that would be detrimental.

3.2 Consider regional and local impacts as part of the City's advocacy positions.

GOAL 2
Ensure adequate facilities for the Rockville Police Department and coordinate with Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services on their facility needs.

The City of Rockville Police Department has more than 60 sworn officers, plus other staff addressing animal control, parking enforcement, photo enforcement, communications and administration. The Montgomery County Police Department also provides services to Rockville as needed, in coordination with Rockville's Police Department. Rockville is committed to having a safe and welcoming community.

Policy 4
Ensure that the Rockville Police Department has the facilities, equipment, and infrastructure needed to provide high-quality public safety services.

In 2012, the Rockville Police Department moved into renovated and new buildings on the site of the historic Rockville post office on North Washington Street, permitting the department to more than double its space to 26,000 square feet. Rockville's population increase is expected to require an increase in the number of Rockville Police Department staff, which can be accommodated in its current facilities for at least the next 10 to 15 years. However, not all vehicles and equipment can be securely located on-site.

Actions

4.1 Support the Police Department's efforts to maintain physical facilities consistent with its evolving needs and Rockville's growing population.

4.2 Find a long-term solution to the lack of non-secured equipment storage and parking for police vehicles.

4.3 Continue to monitor and invest in technology that enhances prevention of criminal activity, law enforcement, and traffic violations.

Policy 5
Support Montgomery County's Fire and Rescue Services to provide services to meet the city's current and future needs.

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services (MCFRS) provides emergency medical response and fire fighting in the city. At present Stations 3 and 23 are within Rockville, and Stations 32 and 33 are located just outside the city. Fire Stations 3, 23, and 33 are staffed and owned by the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department and Fire Station 32 is staffed by MCFRS career firefighters and is a County facility.

MCFRS updates its Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan every

six years, with the current plan covering 2016-2022. This Plan concludes that Station 3, at the corner of Beall Avenue and Hungerford Drive, where the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department is headquartered, is in need of renovation or rebuilding. The MCFRS Master Plan also suggests that relocation could be considered, should a suitable site be identified. The City would like to see Station 3 relocated to a bigger site north of Rockville Town Center. Most of the operations out of Station 23 on Rollins Avenue are slated for relocation as well, to a new facility anticipated in the North Bethesda area near the intersection of Chapman Avenue and Montrose Parkway, while retaining the existing smaller facility in Rockville.

Fire and emergency response times are measured by MCFRS in terms of goals based on the type of emergency. The goals are expected to be met 90 percent of the time. Rockville will advocate to ensure adequate coverage for all portions of the city, for current and future needs.

Actions

5.1 Periodically assess the MCFRS Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan and the Strategic Plan to determine if Rockville is serviced in an effective and timely manner.

5.2 Ensure that fire station locations are strategically located to meet the city's needs.

5.3 Work with the County to develop an acceptable solution for the renovation or relocation of Rockville Fire Station 3.

GOAL 3
Actively engage on school development issues with Montgomery County Public Schools and maintain the highest standards for schools and libraries.

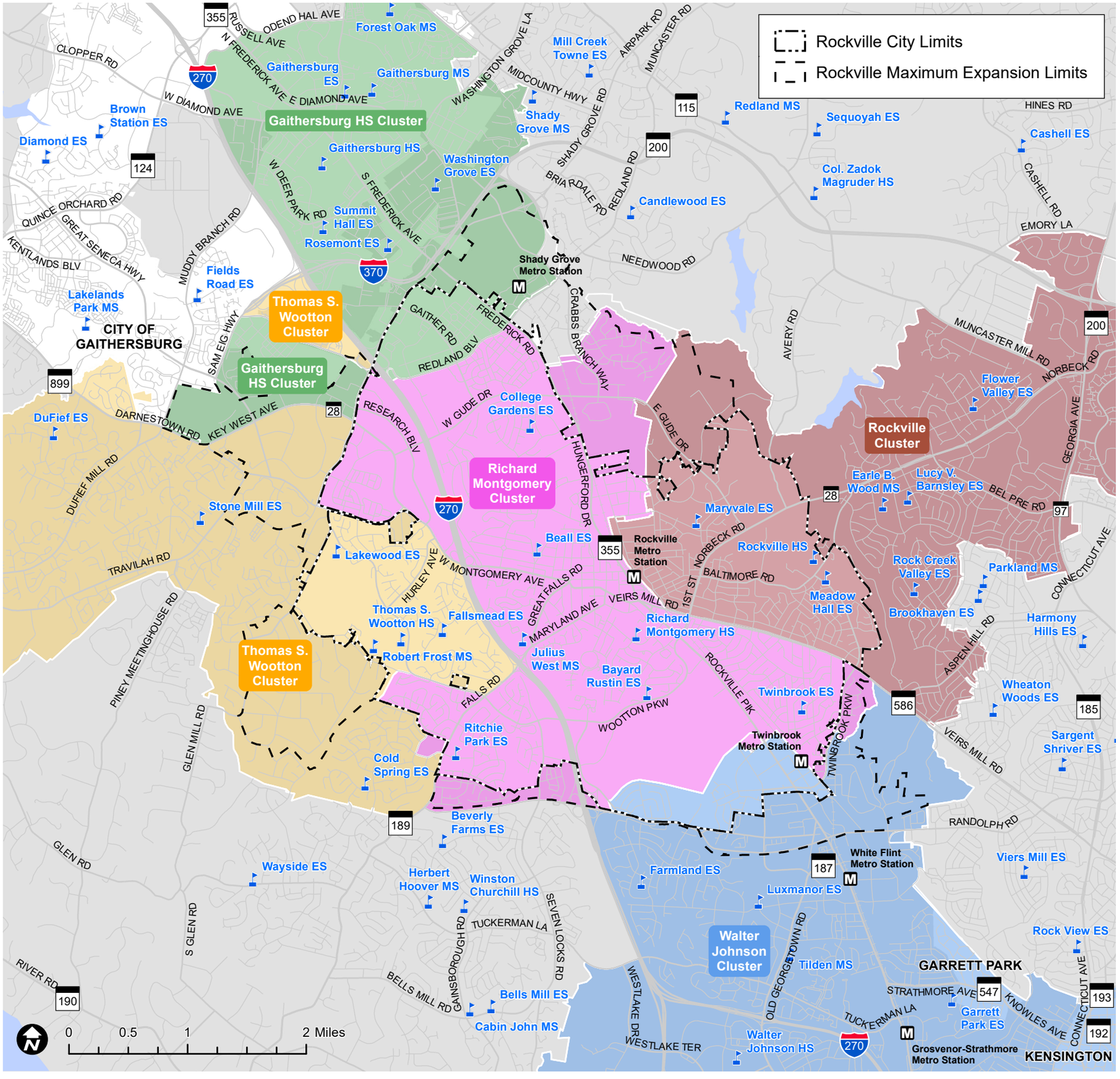
Rockville was a founding community in the formation of Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Our city hosted some of the first schools in the system and continues to be a proud participant—as citizens of the county, parents and school children—in the shaping of one of the nation's best





Students at Thomas S. Wootton High School (top) participate in a survey for the Rockville 2040 process in 2016. Richard Montgomery High School (bottom) was reconstructed and reopened in 2007 to provide the most up-to-date facilities for instruction of Rockville students.

Figure 20: Montgomery County Public Schools Clusters (2020-2021 School Year)



public school systems. The City of Rockville does not own or manage any of the community's public schools or other educational facilities. And yet, the daily life of our schools, the quality of its facilities, and other considerations (such as access and traffic or taxation impacts) are of paramount interest to Rockville residents.

MCPS owns and administers the public high schools, middle schools, elementary schools, and special education programs in Rockville. Attendance areas are organized as clusters that include elementary and middle schools that feed into a high school that names each cluster. Students who live in Rockville are served by the following MCPS high school clusters:

- Gaithersburg
- Walter Johnson
- Richard Montgomery
- Rockville
- Thomas S. Wootton

MCPS enrollment has increased in recent years and growth will continue. This growth challenges MCPS given that there are currently significant facilities deficits throughout the system, including in the clusters that serve Rockville's neighborhoods. The City monitors capacity issues and supports MCPS attempts to address needs through capital investments.

Policy 6
Advocate for Montgomery County Public Schools to ensure that there are high-quality schools at appropriate locations for Rockville students.

The provision of school space is an important consideration during the City's adequate public facilities review of proposed residential development projects. A projection of school enrollment is made for each project, checked against the available space, in the local school cluster. Consequently, the sharing of information between the City and Montgomery County Public Schools is of critical importance for ensuring current and planned schools serve existing and projected student populations in the city.

The majority of Rockville students have relatively easy access to a school in or near their neighborhood. However, sites reserved for schools in King Farm and Fallsgrove have not seen construction of new schools to serve these large neighborhoods. Rockville supports school development in growth areas and a system of supporting schools.

In addition to capacity, the age and condition of schools are of concern to Rockville residents. Comments received during the Rockville 2040 process called for improvements to schools in older parts of the city, for instance Twinbrook Elementary and Thomas S. Wootton High School, as well as school renovation and expansion in other areas. City policy and practices are to continually work with MCPS to address school capacity issues to keep our schools at the highest standards.

Actions

6.1 Work with MCPS to align the development of appropriately located and sized school facilities with anticipated growth in the number of school-age children.

6.2 Monitor the MCPS Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and advocate for funding of MCPS school projects necessary to serve Rockville students and address over-capacity and deteriorated older schools.

6.3 For housing development that would bring additional school-age children, if necessary, advocate for MCPS to ensure adequate public school facilities. The City should continue to share information about development review projects with the school district to help support school facilities planning.

6.4 Review enrollment in schools that serve Rockville's neighborhoods on an annual basis to determine whether there is capacity for residential development.

6.5 Discuss with MCPS and Montgomery County government the future of closed schools, including those leased for private or non-profit use, including if they can serve other community uses or whether they should be preserved for reopening if the need arises. (*See also Action 3.2 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)

6.6 Advocate for MCPS to provide adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities at schools located in the city, including bicycle parking, sidewalks, crosswalks, and wayfinding.

6.7 Work with MCPS to study the potential for the conversion of office or commercial buildings to school-related uses.

6.8 Advocate for schools in the city, and their grounds, to be fully compliant with the American for Disabilities Act (ADA), either in the context of a modernization project or otherwise.

Policy 7
Work with MCPS to bring resolution to long-term challenges with respect to administrative and operational facilities, as they impact Rockville.

In addition to schools, Rockville is home to other facilities important to MCPS administration and operations. Currently, the MCPS headquarters, housing the Board of Education and administrative staff, is located in the former George Washington Carver High School and Junior College, which was designed as a high school in the 1950s. Additional MCPS administrative space is leased on West Gude Drive. The City is committed to retaining MCPS headquarters in Rockville, if a new administrative headquarters is sought by MCPS.

In advance of this Plan's adoption, the City approved a plan amendment and zoning changes for the MCPS materials distribution facility on North Stonestreet Avenue as a step to encourage relocation of this vital and busy distribution center to a more accessible location. This Plan incorporates those changes, as well. The City looks forward to continued coordination with MCPS on potential development options for that site.

Actions

7.1 Collaborate with MCPS on siting a new headquarters building in Rockville, and work to maintain the historic integrity of the former Carver High School building.

7.2 Work with MCPS to facilitate the move of the materials distribution center from its current location on North Stonestreet Avenue to a location better suited for this activity and work with MCPS so that the site is redeveloped in a manner consistent with the City's Land Use Policy Map. (*See also Planning Areas 2 and 6*)

7.3 Continue to advocate for a future MCPS school bus parking depot that is centrally located in the county and does not adversely impact neighborhoods or roadways in the city.

GOAL 4
Foster better working relationships with Montgomery County government and Montgomery College on facility planning and implementation.

Rockville is the seat of Montgomery County government and is home to its executive, legislative and judicial branches, which are all headquartered in Rockville. Additionally, Rockville is also the central location for the county for providing various human support services.

The Rockville campus of Montgomery College enrolls nearly 17,000 students per semester. In addition to credit students, the campus also serves a substantial non-credit student body through programs of Workforce Development and Continuing Education. The Montgomery College Facilities Plan (2013-2023) identifies building space, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, open space, and infrastructure as being the key deficiencies in the Rockville campus.

This Plan provides a broader discussion of Montgomery College in Planning Area 7 (Montgomery College Area) later in the plan. This section simply discusses the key policies related to the College's overall facilities.

Policy 8
Advocate for high quality public libraries.

Public libraries in Rockville are provided by Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL). Two library branches are within the city limits: the Rockville Memorial Library (65,000 square feet) in Rockville Town Center, and the Twinbrook Library (25,000 square feet) on the east side of the city, along Veirs Mill Road. The American Library Association has a standard that states that there should be 1,000 square feet of library space for each 10,000 population. The two libraries, serving a population of just over 68,000, more than meet this standard. In addition, the full resources of the library system are available through inter-library transfers and electronic material.

Libraries continue to evolve in response to new technologies and material formats. In addition, the use of library space by patrons changes over time. The City of Rockville encourages MCPL to engage with the Rockville community to keep our libraries up-to-date and relevant community spaces. No new public libraries are planned in the City of Rockville. There have been preliminary discussions regarding new library services in response to recently updated master plans and expected growth in the areas of Shady Grove and North Bethesda. However, at this time, no known new facilities are currently programmed.

Actions

8.1 Advocate to ensure that MCPL provides public library facilities that permit high-quality services for the Rockville community.

8.2 Support opportunities for development of satellite libraries, especially in the new growth areas near Rockville's city limits such as Shady Grove Road and North Bethesda.



Rockville Memorial Library is a key civic facility in Rockville Town Square. Books and other materials are available for all ages and library meeting rooms provide space for community meetings. (Source: Grimm+Parker)

8.3 Participate in discussions with MCPL on the evolution of libraries and how they are used, as technology evolves, to ensure that library spaces and buildings continue as valuable community assets.

Policy 9
Encourage Montgomery County's continued investment in Rockville's role as the seat of government.

Actions

9.1 Encourage the County to retain its existing facilities in Rockville, especially as an anchor in Rockville Town Center.

9.2 Establish stronger working partnerships with the County, through proactive engagement across many service areas, to ensure that City and County facilities can meet the needs of Rockville residents.

9.3 Monitor the County's Capital Improvements Program to advocate for projects that would benefit Rockville.

9.4 Monitor the County's plans for the former location of the County District One police station on Seven Locks Road, which moved to a new facility in 2013.

Policy 10
Integrate Montgomery College into the economic and social life of the community.

The 86-acre Rockville campus of Montgomery College, with its approximately 16,000 students, is one of the most important activity centers in Rockville. Because its importance, and that of the adjacent Montgomery County Public Schools campus and commercial properties to the north along MD-355, the new Planning Area 7 has been created in this Plan. The Planning Area 7 section provides a longer discussion than is presented here. Of greatest importance is that this Plan recognizes the importance of the relationship between the City of Rockville and Montgomery College in collaborating on achieving goals of mutual interest and solving problems as they arise.

Actions

10.1 Pursue mutually beneficial agreements with Montgomery College for shared use of athletic and cultural facilities and seek opportunities for joint investment in facilities of benefit to the College and City.

10.2 Collaborate with Montgomery College to achieve the goals, policies and actions in the many relevant elements of this Plan, which include Economic Development, Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, and Recreation and Parks. (*See also Planning Area 7*)

10.3 Support Montgomery College in its effort to upgrade and renovate its Rockville campus and acquire additional sites for expansion, while limiting potential negative impacts to surrounding neighborhoods.

10.4 Seek alignment and consistency between the college's 10-year master plan and the City's Comprehensive Plan.

10.5 Engage with Montgomery College and adjacent neighborhoods, property owners, and businesses to advocate for opening non-vehicular pathways between the college campus and surrounding neighborhoods (*See also Goal 2 of the Transportation Element and Planning Areas 5 and 7*).

GOAL 5
Keep Rockville on the cutting edge of information technology for City facilities, provision of City services, and infrastructure for residents and businesses.

Advancements in computing technologies and digital networks have created a high level of uncertainty regarding future life styles, work patterns, real estate markets, and infrastructure. Change has come at an increasing pace with smart phones providing instant communication, mapping, networking, and shopping in the palm of our hands. The so called 'Internet of things' seeks to link digital networks with devices we use in everyday life and to basic infrastructure under City control. These might include linking our street lights and traffic signals and cameras to a computer network and a wide array of sensors that collect and analyze data in real time.

The implications of such integrated technologies are hard to fathom or predict, particularly in regard to personal privacy. Some governments have begun to work with digital technology companies that are promoting 'smart cities' as a path toward efficiency and control. What is clear is that change can happen quickly with unplanned for consequences for the city.

Rockville businesses have been pioneers in creation of high technology, and the City of Rockville will continue to be on the cutting edge of technology. Given the unpredictable future, this Plan recommends continual monitoring and weighing of the costs and benefits of implementation, and the potential need for new regulations at the local level. In many cases, private sector products and services can play a major role in supporting the City's information technology advancements.

Policy 11
Monitor advancements in digital technology to support City operations, and be prepared to implement and regulate as deemed appropriate.

Actions

11.1 Incorporate state-of-the-art technology and communication facilities into City operations to deliver effective and innovative solutions for residents, businesses, and government.

11.2 Develop regulations for new technologies in order to protect the best interests of the community, as needed, including for privacy.

11.3 Develop policies and procedures for archiving of digital media and records across all City departments.

11.4 Ensure that the City is defended against, and resilient to, cybersecurity attacks to its municipal infrastructure

Policy 12
Support the availability of high-speed and affordable Internet connectivity for city residents and businesses.

Actions

12.1 Work with private Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to expand or enhance broadband access to all areas of the city.

12.2 Consider financial or logistical support for city residents and businesses without reliable and/or affordable Internet access, such as through City-sponsored subscription clubs, grants, low-interest loans, or technology support.



ENVIRONMENT

Vision

Rockville strives to assure clean land, air and water, and efficient use of resources, to foster healthy, sustainable, and resilient environments for living, working, and recreation.

Integrating stormwater treatment with outdoor recreation and wildlife habitats, as shown here at College Gardens Park, brings together several of Rockville's environmental goals and provides attractive amenities in the Rockville community.

Rockville aspires to be a green, sustainable community. The City acts locally to protect critical environmental resources and address pressing environmental challenges. The City provides regulatory structures, incentives, and implementation programs, in partnership with County, regional, State, and federal agencies. For example, most stream valleys and steep banks are protected by City ownership, and ongoing restoration efforts help to protect critical wildlife habitat. Stormwater management, as required by State law, has specific, measurable targets, as discussed in the Water Resources Element. Forest cover is maintained and enhanced in City-owned forest preserves and through regulations that promote tree preservation and planting on private property.

Rockville regulations and incentives for 'green' building promote energy efficiency, environmental site design, and the use of sustainable building materials. Strides have been made to expand recycling, and other solid waste management services, in order to divert waste from landfills.

While recognizing that the issue of climate change is national and global in scope, the City of Rockville works in partnership with hundreds of other cities to seek solutions to the growing crisis and cut greenhouse gas emissions.

The policies in this Element set a framework for continued efforts regarding energy efficiency, 'green' building, waste management, food systems, and sensitive areas that provide wildlife habitat.

Summary of Community Input

Rockville 2040 participants consistently communicated the importance of environmental quality, frequently in the context of discussing other areas of the Plan because environmental quality spans all Plan elements. For instance, concentrating development near transit stations was viewed as beneficial to air quality by reducing use of the automobile, as was promotion of bicycling, rolling and walking. Preservation of environmental areas, including within City parkland, will ensure continued open space and assist in protection of both waterways and native species of plants and animals. Protecting and promoting Rockville's tree canopy will provide visual beauty, shade, and improvements to air quality. Some participants also mentioned their awareness of the importance of addressing climate change, and their desire for Rockville to contribute to regional efforts in that regard.

Goals for Rockville's environmental efforts include:

1. Bring an environment ethic when setting City policies and weighing options or actions.
2. Cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase resiliency to climate change.
3. Promote sustainable, healthy, and resilient green building design and practices.
4. Enhance community health and quality of life.
5. Reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste and yard waste.
6. Manage a sustainable urban forest and protect stream corridors, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

GOAL 1
Bring an environment ethic when setting City policies and weighing options or actions.

The City of Rockville commits itself to protection of our shared natural resources in the city's land, water resources, and air. The policies and actions in this Comprehensive Plan are guided by a recognition of the need to:

- Reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions,
- Plan for an efficient land use pattern and transportation network,
- Develop and retrofit buildings to use less energy,
- Protect the health and well being of Rockville's population, reduce solid waste, protect and restore critical environmental and wildlife areas.

Taken together, this approach is the foundation of an environment ethic, which the City will use in decision making for City facilities and actions, and promote to the rest of the community. The City of Rockville will act as a champion of this environmental ethic, placing environment concerns at the center of discussion when considering a course of action. This ethic will be confronted by other considerations, particularly the upfront cost of implementing efficiency measures and sustainable development practices. Lifestyle choices, which favor convenience, also challenge Rockville citizens in terms of changing behaviors that impact the overall environment.



Newly hatched painted turtle and red eared slider turtles from the City's Hungerford-Stoneridge Stormwater Management Facility during 'Operation Turtle Lift' in 2018.

Policy 1
Establish and promote an environmental ethic, or set of values and principles, that guide the policies and actions of the City of Rockville.

There is an urgent need to act to address threats in multiple areas. This environment ethic seeks to inspire civic engagement and partnerships with our residents, neighborhoods, businesses, and institutions. The first step is an awareness of the serious issues confronting the community, leading to sustained engagement with all interested parties on prevention of further damage and a commitment to act together on solutions.

Actions

1.1 Educate and engage with residents, businesses, neighborhoods, and institutions to be partners in environmental stewardship.

1.2 Incentivize action by residents, businesses, and institutions that support environmental goals.

1.3 Lead by example by piloting new innovative City practices, policies, technologies, and programs to promote a healthy and sustainable environment.

1.4 Develop a framework that provides the flexibility to assess and reconcile competing policy demands, such as stormwater management, tree canopy, renewable energy, recreation, housing, transportation, and historic preservation.

1.5 Demonstrate results by identifying sustainability metrics to track and assess performance.

1.6 Maintain Rockville's status as a Sustainable Maryland Certified community. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*).

GOAL 2
Cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase resiliency to climate change.

Looking to the future of Rockville in the year 2040, one thing is a near certainty: average daily temperatures will be much higher than when the community was founded in the 1790s. The scientific analysis regarding carbon pollution was established decades ago, and now the predicted impacts are clear to see, including in Rockville, as described below. The use of fossil fuels is ubiquitous to our current lifestyles, and therefore the Comprehensive Plan is the right place to set basic policies and strategies to address the issue. This Plan outlines two main policies to address the climate crises: (1) cut greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as possible to reduce the city's contribution to climate change, and (2) prepare for the impacts that climate change will bring to Rockville through increased resiliency and preparedness.

The phenomenon of climate change caused by an overabundance of greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in earth's atmosphere is global and civilizational in scale. Many of the necessary actions will be determined at the international, federal, and State levels. And yet cities both large and small are taking a leading role in addressing climate change, both by necessity in terms of preparing for flooding, drought, and heat events, and also with a recognition that a part of total emissions is generated at the community, business, and individual level where municipal governments are adept at acting.

A resolution adopted by the City of Rockville Mayor and Council in June of 2017 recommits the City to the goals set by the Paris Climate Agreement signed in December 2016, including a reduction of GHG emissions to 40 percent of 2006 levels by 2030, as mandated by Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act of 2016. This reduction target is very challenging and the 2030 deadline fast approaching. In addition, as this plan was being prepared the City was developing a comprehensive Climate Action Plan with specific and measurable action items to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase resiliency in the city.

A number of elements in this Plan seek to respond to the fact that the development pattern that previous City master plans shaped is energy intensive and produces high amounts of carbon emissions per capita. Policies on climate change are stated in the Land Use Element and the Transportation Element in regard to the need to plan future development in a way that reduces and eliminates carbon emissions, primarily by creating a more-walkable and transit oriented community.

Policy 2
Reduce Rockville's greenhouse gas emissions through a coordinated and sustained campaign to make our built environment, and our systems and practices, more efficient and less reliant on fossil fuels.

The City of Rockville is committed to slowing climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions in support of State law and in keeping with our regional partnerships. This significant and critically important effort must engage the whole community, challenging our neighborhoods, businesses, institutions, and individuals to reduce emissions.

Actions

2.1 Promote and support collective and individual actions by the City, residents, and businesses to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants.

2.2 Create a Rockville Climate Action Plan that outlines the short term and long term actions and strategies the City will undertake to promote and realize cuts in carbon emissions.



Individual homeowners in Rockville have taken action to reduce greenhouse emissions, such as by installing photovoltaic solar panels on their houses.

Community Greenhouse Gas Emissions

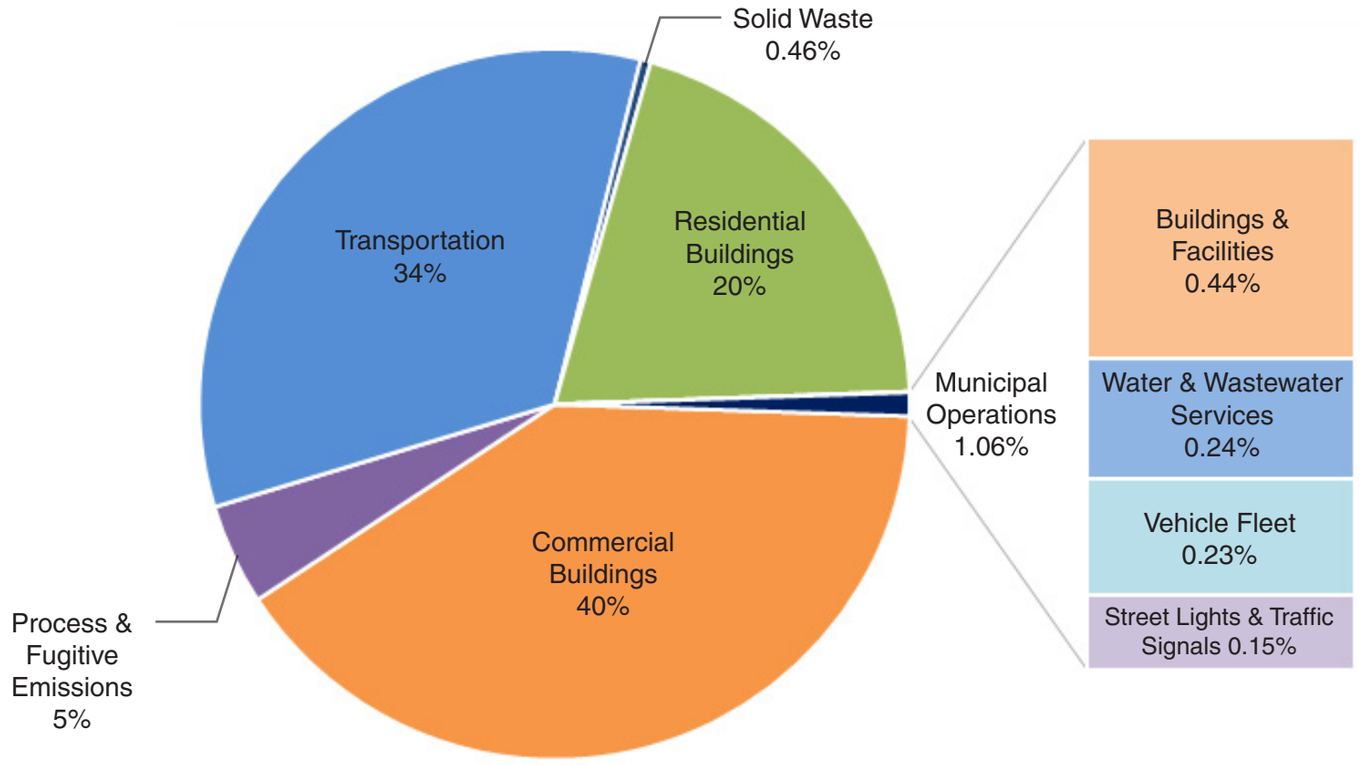
An inventory of Rockville's greenhouse gas emissions in 2015, shown in the pie chart below, was developed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments using the ICLEI U.S. Community Protocol and ClearPath tool. The three big sectors that generate 94 percent of Rockville's emissions are commercial buildings (and all the machinery and equipment in those buildings), residential buildings, and transportation.

Commercial buildings generated approximately 40 percent of emissions (31 percent from electricity and 9 percent from natural gas).

Residential buildings account for 20 percent of emissions (10.4 percent from electricity, 9 percent from natural gas, and 1% from home heating fuels).

Transportation generated 34 percent of emissions, with approximately 30 percent of total emissions from diesel and gasoline consumed by on-road sources, such passenger vehicles, buses and commercial vehicles. The remaining four percent from transport sources came from aviation, rail, and off-road vehicles.

Emissions from Rockville government operations contributed one percent of total emissions. Fugitive emissions are gases that leak into the atmosphere from pressured tanks and pipes; these emissions do not produce any energy and yet account for five percent of the total emissions.



2.3 Advocate for State and federal programs that reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

2.4 Coordinate with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) and other agencies as they collect data to calculate Rockville's greenhouse gas emissions, and as regional goals and targets are set.

Policy 3
Maximize building energy efficiency and increase capacity to generate renewable energy and deliver clean energy from regional utilities.

About 60% of Rockville's greenhouse gas emissions are generated to operate and occupy our residential and commercial buildings. This includes heating and cooling and all other activities powered through the electrical systems, natural gas lines, and fuel oil used within our buildings.

Progress in reducing emissions is being made in Rockville in two areas: first, the amount of energy consumed per capita and per square-foot of commercial space is decreasing; and second, reductions have been achieved in carbon emissions produced to generate power for the electricity grid that serves Rockville (see box at right).

Rockville's population grew between 2005 and 2015 by roughly 12,000 residents and the city also added over 3 million square feet of commercial space, and yet the consumption of electricity went down by 10% for residential uses and by 13% percent for commercial uses. Rockville is using less electricity than in the recent past. This shows real progress toward efficiency in lighting, appliances, and equipment.

Actions

3.1 Implement projects at City facilities to improve energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, and back-up power generation for critical City facilities and services. Work toward meeting or exceeding LEED, ASHRAE, ENERGY STAR, or similar 'green' building certification standards.

3.2 Transition all City-owned lighting and street lights to high efficiency lighting, such as light emitting diodes (LED).

3.3 Work with and educate property owners and commercial and residential tenants to make new and existing buildings more energy efficient in regard to heating, cooling, lighting, refrigeration, computing, and other equipment and systems.

3.4 Explore opportunities for the City to partner to develop renewable energy systems, microgrids, energy storage, and district energy systems.

3.5 Increase green power generation by utilities and property owners.

3.6 Encourage increased awareness of energy conservation.



The City of Rockville purchases renewable energy certificates for wind generated power that offset nearly all of the electricity used by City facilities. The City will continue to seek energy efficiencies, including switching all City-owned lighting to high efficiency light emitting diode (LED) fixtures. These lights use less energy, meaning less emissions, and reduce maintenance costs. New LED lights were installed in the City Hall parking lots in 2018.

Greenhouse Gas Sources and Emissions by Rockville Users			
	2005	**2015**	**% Change, 2005 to 2015**
Residential Electric Grid Average	257,387,469 kWh	232,238,356 kWh	- 10%
Commercial Electric Grid Average	808,439,228 kWh	701,245,760 kWh	- 13%
Residential Electric	133,725 $MTCO_2e$	87,922 $MTCO_2e$	- 34%
Commercial Electric	420,022 $MTCO_2e$	265,482 $MTCO_2e$	- 37%
Transportation, On Road	263,348 $MTCO_2e$	252,426 $MTCO_2e$	- 4%
Per Capita Emissions	18.2 $MTCO_2e$	13.2 $MTCO_2e$	- 28%
Note: Data based on MWCOG Community Greenhouse Gas Inventory. kWh = Kilowatt hours; $MTCO_2e$ = Metric Tons of Carbon Dioxide-equivalent emissions.			

Data from MWCOG indicates a reduction in energy use and emissions between 2005 and 2015, as shown at left. For emissions, the reduction was dramatic, with a 34 percent drop in electric grid emissions for residential and 37 percent for commercial.

This trend corresponds with an increase in cleaner-burning natural gas and reduction in coal as a share of the fuel source of the electricity grid serving Rockville. Whether or not industry will continue this conversion is unclear, with coal remaining one third of the fuel mix. About one third of Rockville's electric energy comes from nuclear power, which is relatively carbon neutral.

In terms of electrical energy, the amount of carbon emissions depends on the source of the power. Pepco, a private utility company serving Rockville, provides data on its energy sources to customers every year. A comparison of Pepco data from 2013 and 2018 shows a switch from coal to natural gas during this period; a relatively easy conversion to make. Both are fossil fuels and both add greenhouse gases and other pollutants into the atmosphere when burned, yet, per unit of heat, coal produces more GHG emissions than natural gas. Natural gas also takes much less energy to transport and burning it puts less sulfur dioxide and particulate matter into the air.

Looking at renewable energy, the region remains stuck at roughly five to six percent as a share of grid power. Other regions and countries have made great strides in solar and wind production. Maryland can do better, especially in regard to wind power. Rockville policies in this Plan support more solar installations in the city to produce power. Developers are also encouraged to consider district heating and co-generation plants. The City is interested in microgrids and battery installations to secure power at the neighborhood level.

Energy Fuel Source for Grid Electricity in Rockville			
FUEL TYPE	2013 % OF TOTAL	2018 % OF TOTAL	% CHANGE OF TOTAL
COAL	43.8	29.8	- 14.0
NATURAL GAS	16.2	28.7	+ 12.5
NUCLEAR	34.6	35.3	+ 0.7
OIL	0.2	0.3	+ 0.1
RENEWABLE ENERGY	5.2	5.9	+ 0.7
Solar	0.1	0.3	+ 0.2
Wind	1.9	3.1	+ 1.2
Hydro	1.1	1.4	+ 0.3
Other	2.1	1.1	- 1.0
Note: Based on data from Pepco energy source reports 2013 and June 2018.			

Policy 4
Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation sources.

The energy sector that has not seen significant reductions in recent years is 'on road' transportation. The cars, trucks, and sport utility vehicles that Rockville residents use to move around the city and region, and the trucks that Rockville businesses and institutions use to deliver goods and services, generate carbon emissions from consumption of gasoline and diesel fuel. In 2015, Rockville vehicles generated more than a quarter million metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions ($MTCO_2e$) (see table in the box on previous page). These emissions were nearly three times the amount of emissions from all of the energy used within our homes. As reductions are made in residential and commercial building emissions through efficiency and renewable energy sources, the relative percentage of total carbon emissions from the transportation sector will increase.

It is likely that addressing carbon emissions from mobile sources will be our most difficult challenge, in particular because a large part of the city was designed for access by automobiles. Many vehicle trips in the city, and their related tail-pipe emissions, are part of the regional transportation network and stem from worldwide vehicle production systems, limiting the impact of City policy on the transportation sector. Still, City policies and actions can have some influence at the local level. Encouraging residents and visitors to shift trips to non-polluting and healthy modes of transport is an important strategy. Locating new housing next to rail and bus transit stations is another as it promotes the use of more efficient or non-polluting transit, rolling, and walking. Opposing transportation projects crossing the city's borders that result in greater use of single-occupancy vehicles, as the City has done in response to the State of Maryland's proposed I-495/I-270 Managed Lane Study, is yet another way for City policy to influence the emission of greenhouse gases from the transportation sector.



The City operates a number of low- and zero-emissions vehicles as part of its municipal fleet.

New transport technologies will also need to play a major role in cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Advancements in battery storage are encouraging a transition from diesel buses to battery-powered bus fleets, which are cheaper to fuel and maintain. Battery-powered bus rapid transit can make a contribution to reducing carbon emissions along Rockville's main highways and to major destinations. Electric cars are also becoming more available and affordable for private purchase. The City supports the installation of electric vehicle charging facilities, including a new charging station installed at City Hall in 2018 that powers a fully electric parking enforcement vehicle. Additional policies and actions are stated in the Transportation Element.

Actions

4.1 Facilitate the use of non-polluting modes of transportation, specifically walking, rolling, and bicycling, through land use planning and infrastructure projects. (*See also Goal 4 of the Land Use Element and Goal 2 of the Transportation Element*)

4.2 Support and work with regional partners on projects that will increase transit ridership and reduce vehicle miles traveled in single occupancy vehicles.

4.3 Significantly expand alternative vehicle fuel infrastructure, including charging stations for electric vehicles, in locations across the city as well as on City property for use by the public and City fleet vehicles, and adopting new building code requirements for electric vehicle charging stations in new construction and existing office, commercial, and multi-unit residential buildings. (*See also Policy 14 of the Transportation Element and Action 2.7 of the Community Facilities Element*)

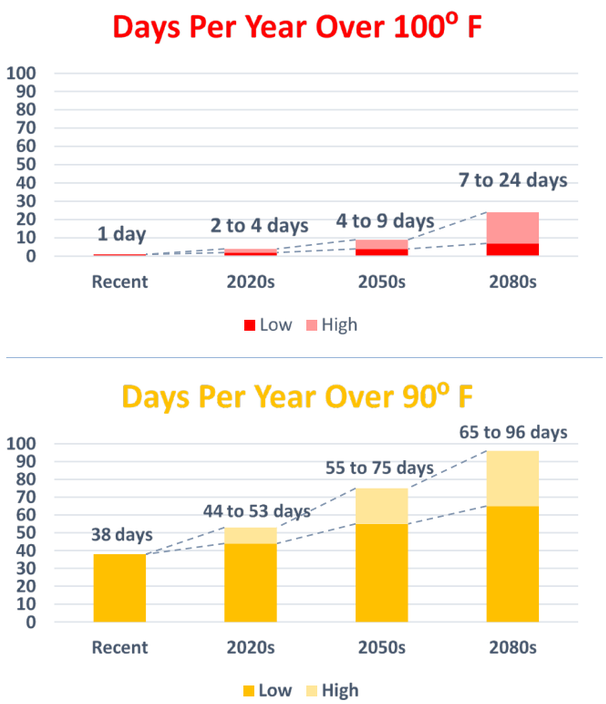
4.4 Incorporate energy efficiency, renewable energy, and alternative fuels in City facilities, operations, and fleet vehicles. Work to transition the City vehicle fleet to low or no emission vehicles as soon as possible, while considering the operational needs of specialized fleet vehicles. (*See also Policy 14 of the Transportation Element and Action 2.7 of the Community Facilities Element*)

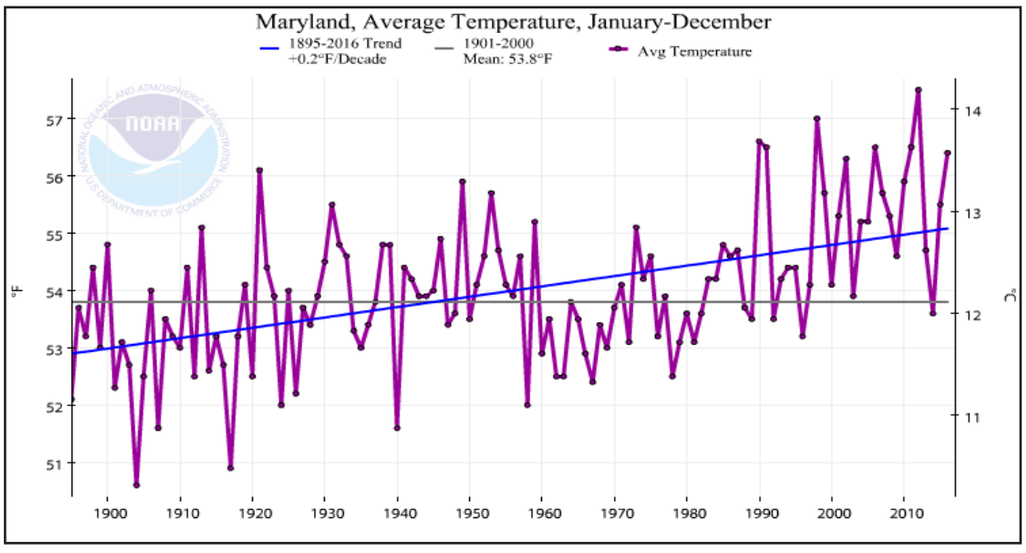
4.5 Oppose transportation infrastructure projects proposed by Montgomery County government or the State of Maryland that would facilitate increased use of single-occupancy vehicles where non-polluting and/or mass transit options are available. (*See also Policies 14 and 15 of the Transportation Element*)

Policy 5
Assess Rockville's climate-related risks and identify actions to reduce vulnerability and enhance local adaptation and resiliency capacity.

Rockville and our region are experiencing effects of climate change, and projections indicate these trends will continue. Given the city's distance from tidal ocean waters and location on high ground, coastal flooding is unlikely to be a significant problem. The major impacts will be in the increased number of very hot days and changes in precipitation patterns. Heat

Temperature projections for the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region.

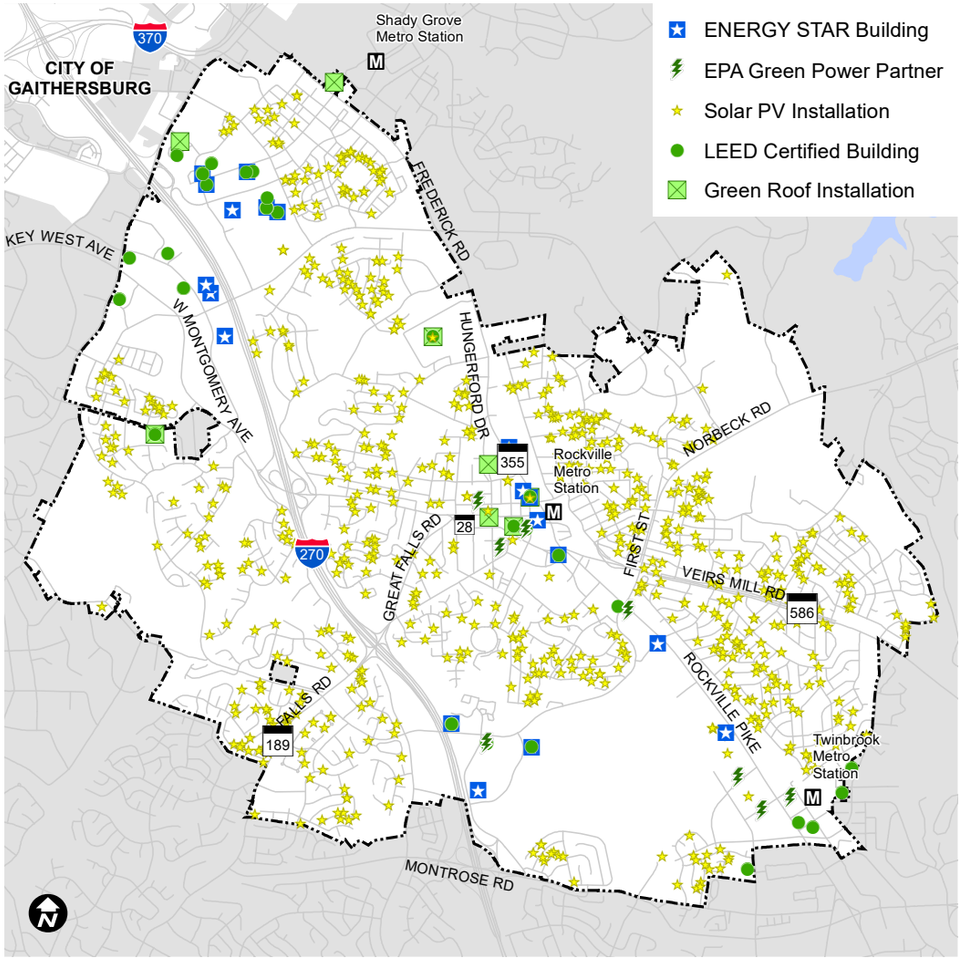




The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) demonstrates historic temperature trends in Maryland from 1900 to 2010 (at left). The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) projects an increase in the number of days over 100 degrees Fahrenheit from rare to a handful by 2040 (above), and in the range of 60 or more days over 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Source: NASA ,"Adapting to Climate Change, Federal Agencies in the Washington, D.C. Metro Area," 2012.

Figure 21: Clean Energy and Green Building Locations in Rockville







A number of rating systems track and recognize green building practices, including the federal Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partners and Energy Star programs. Commercial building owners promote their efforts by seeking certification through green building rating systems, with LEED from the U.S. Green Building Council the most widely recognized certification. Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED, is a rigorous evaluation of sustainability with a quantitative ranking in categories including:

- *Energy performance,*
- *Water performance,*
- *Sustainable sites,*
- *Materials and resources,*
- *Innovation in design.*

As of 2018, there were 21 ENERGY STAR and 47 LEED certified buildings in Rockville.

and humidity alone will stress our population during summer months, and the City must prepare to assist vulnerable populations, especially in emergencies.

Because a warmer atmosphere holds more water vapor, Rockville's infrastructure is most vulnerable to an increase in heavy precipitation events, including large snowfalls and heavy rainfall in short periods of time. These events may challenge our stormwater and transportation infrastructure, and the City must plan accordingly.

Actions

5.1 Work with federal, State, and regional partners, including Montgomery County's Health and Human Services Department and Office of Emergency Management, to identify local climate change risks.

5.2 Continue assessing the vulnerability of Rockville's critical infrastructure and services, and prioritize areas for improved resiliency.

5.3 Address climate impacts on vulnerable populations to protect public health, safety, and equity.

5.4 Factor in changing rain patterns, increased temperatures, and heat events, shifting ecosystems, and more intense weather events in City site planning and building design standards to ensure that new development is more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

5.5 Work with utilities and government agencies on grid reliability, resiliency, and security improvement efforts.

5.6 Consider climate change impacts and effects in the planning, design, and construction of City capital improvement projects and other projects.

5.7 Continue to plan for and install back-up power generation for emergencies at all critical facilities.

GOAL 3
Promote sustainable, healthy, and resilient green building design and practices.

Sustainable design is a holistic approach to the design and construction of new or retrofitted 'green' buildings that looks at all aspects of a project, including site design, energy efficiency, building material selection, water consumption, stormwater management, and the health of occupants. The goal of 'green' buildings is to reduce the impact of buildings, during and after construction, on the environment and human health.

While 'green' building practices are typically associated with new construction, the approach is also applicable for improving existing commercial, civic, and residential structures. Older structures may contain health risks, such as lead paint, mold, radon, asbestos, as well as inefficient lighting and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems. An important challenge going forward is bringing Rockville's older buildings, including public facilities such as City Hall, and its older housing stock up to current standards.

More than half of the houses in Rockville were constructed prior to the adoption of modern energy codes. Many lack sufficient insulation and energy-efficient windows, posing a problem for keeping a house warm in the winter and cool in the summer. City inspections follow energy standards set by the International Code Council (ICC) with the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) adopted by the City and took effect Jan 1, 2020 when reviewing commercial and home improvement projects. In addition to being essential to reduce carbon emissions, 'green' building practices can provide dramatic cost savings for commercial and public buildings, which help to justify the upfront expenditures. Lowering utility costs for houses is also helpful to reaching affordable housing goals.

Nevertheless, investing in affordable 'green' and efficient upgrades is complicated and requires collaborative efforts of many stakeholders, including, but not limited, to tenants, landlords, utility companies, creditors, contractors, non-profits, and housing and community service agencies. While the metropolitan Washington D.C. region is a leader in the number and square footage of 'green' and energy efficient

buildings, continued collaboration with regional partners is necessary to further advance the 'green' building market.

Policy 6
Promote holistic sustainable design, or 'green' building, as an approach to site planning, architecture, and material selection for new construction and rehabilitation of older structures.

The City of Rockville supports 'green' building through its building code and energy efficiency incentive programs, in coordination with County and State programs. In addition to what is required by the City's building code, the City can support a virtuous cycle in the adoption of 'green' building design and practices in Rockville by incentivizing and supporting building owners and building permit applicants to exceed the City's minimum required green building codes by obtaining higher certification levels in LEED, ASHRAE, ENERGY STAR, or similar 'green' building certification standards. This more concerted approach may require additional funding and resources in the City's building permit and inspection process.

On a larger scale, older commercial, office and light industrial properties can reduce their environmental 'footprint' and contribute to regional 'smart' growth by retrofitting or redeveloping at greater densities and using 'green' design practices. Redevelopment or retrofitting of these established locations should be carefully considered to balance their future potential with their existing importance as affordable spaces for local businesses.

Actions

6.1 Provide education, outreach, and incentives for new commercial and residential buildings to exceed City code and/or be certified by a high-performance 'green' building standard. 'Green' building techniques that should be encouraged include, but are not limited to, stormwater management treatments, biophilic design, 'green' roofs, pervious surfaces, shade trees or structures, and small-scale energy generation.

6.2 Continue to work with Montgomery County government on programs that support 'green' building retrofits and the 'green' building market.

6.3 Promote the use of 'green' building techniques and materials to make older structures more energy efficient as well as healthier and comfortable for occupants.

6.4 Incorporate 'green' building strategies in the construction, expansion and retrofit of City facilities.

6.5 Work with local utilities, property owners, homeowner and condominium associations, community groups, and real estate professionals to promote the long-term value of 'green' buildings, including safer materials and lower utility costs.

6.6 Update City codes each code cycle to set new high-performing building standards that reflect the most practicable and sustainable 'green' building code requirements for the City. Allocate appropriate staff resources and funding to support a more proactive and dedicated approach to 'green' building design in the City permitting and inspection process.

6.7 Encourage 'green' retrofitting or redevelopment of large, older commercial, office and light industrial properties by adding environmental elements, such as stormwater management treatments, biophilic design, 'green' roofs, pervious surfaces, shade trees or structures, small-scale energy generation, etc. Consider encouraging and supporting the retention of existing businesses to avoid displacement as a result of 'green' site redevelopment. (*See also Action 10.4 of the Water Resources Element*).

GOAL 4
Enhance community health and quality of life.

A key concern in environmental protection is how the built environment affects human health and happiness. The interaction between the shape and mechanics of our city and people living and working in our neighborhoods and activity centers is complex. Many different aspects could be considered, but the focus in this Environment Element is placed on impacts of noise and air pollution, access to healthy food, and proximity of green living plants and wildlife. Related policy recommendations may also be found as part of Goals 3 and 4 of the Land Use Element and Goals 1 and 2 of the Transportation Element.

Policy 7
Foster individual and community health by reducing stress and exposure to toxins, while providing access to healthy foods and a verdant environment.

Background and episodic noise can impact human health. Rockville is not a factory town, so sources of noise and air pollution are primarily from movement of traffic and trains. Many of Rockville's neighborhoods enjoy a low level of noise from traffic, but residential areas next to State highways, Metrorail and CSX railroad tracks, and commercial and industrial buildings can create real conflicts that affect personal well being. The City and County have ordinances related to noise conflicts and the City works to solve conflicts



Community gardens at Woottons Mill Park in the spring of 2018.



Prior to European settlement a dense, old forest covered all of what is now Rockville. This forest was cut to clear fields for small-scale agriculture and to provide wood for energy and material culture. As fields gave way to subdivisions, the number of trees increased again in most of the city. Long-term management of the urban forest includes planting new trees to replace mature trees as shown above in Wilma Shelton Bell Park.

between land uses through mitigation, sometimes including the building of walls or enclosures.

Noise from major transportation facilities can be more challenging because the source and scope of the noise is spread along a route. The City works with Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration to mitigate noise from traffic on I-270 through installation of sound walls. However, constant traffic generating noise on State routes that run through the city is difficult to mitigate, for instance along MD-355, MD-586, and MD-28.

The ongoing and planned construction of new residential units in these corridors increases the challenge in regard to noise. Heavy traffic also means air pollutants entering homes from the highway, including asbestos from brakes, carbon monoxide, and particulate matter from diesel truck exhaust. Soundproofing is an important aspect of mitigation, and recommendations for regulation are included in the Land Use Element.

Another important approach to reducing stress and ameliorating local air pollutants is to provide living plants as part of development projects and the city streetscape. The vegetation of trees, shrubs, and groundcover help to reduce stress and are important additions in areas of land use change. Living plants also produce oxygen and remove some air pollutants. Shade from trees is important to reducing the heat island effect of hard surfaces. A biophilic approach, connecting people with plants and nature both indoors and outdoors, can be incorporated in City greenspace management planning.

Planning for healthy communities integrates active transportation, recreation options, healthy buildings, and access to healthy and affordable food choices. Food access is not simply a health issue, but also a community development, equity, and sustainability issue.

A growing national obesity crisis is related to climate change and energy use issues because a lack of exercise, particularly walking, has led to sedentary lifestyles. Children, who in the past ran around Rockville's neighborhoods, are increasingly at home staring at video screens, or are driven to activities. Combine this lack of movement with unhealthy food choices and obesity and related diseases, including diabetes and heart disease, are reaching epidemic levels in all age groups.

Rockville is generally well served by a range of full-service supermarkets and specialty food stores. However residents without access to a car may face challenges, particularly those residents with lower incomes. Rockville's support for local foods systems includes the provision and promotion of community gardens, farmers markets, and programs and policies that support home gardening, healthy eating, and social services. The Montgomery County Food Council, which addresses the wide variety food issues, is another local resource available to Rockville residents.

Actions

7.1 Work to mitigate the impacts of noise and localized air pollution.

7.2 Create a green, living cityscape to reduce stress and provide opportunities to engage with nature.

7.3 Cultivate a local food system that provides residents of all income levels access to healthy fresh food and improves food security.

7.4 Preserve existing and identify new community garden sites on public property, including parks, recreation and senior centers, public easements and right-of-ways, and surplus property.

Rockville Solid Waste Facts and Opportunities

A combination of public and private entities provide solid waste services in Rockville. Special collection services are available from the City for bulk item pick up, metal and electronics recycling, and household hazardous waste. The City also schedules seasonal collections of leaves sin the spring and fall.

In 2018, the City collected a total residential waste stream of roughly 19,000 tons, which is 7.3 pounds of waste per household per day. Of the residential waste collected by the City in 2018, 4,825 tons were recycled, 3,788 tons were composted, and 9,915 tons were sent to the County's waste-to-energy facility. Residential recycling rates increased after the City implemented single stream, or commingled, collection.

Montgomery County government's Shady Grove Processing Facility and Transfer Station offers drop-off services just outside city limits on Frederick Road. This facility allows for disposal of a wide variety of materials, including hazardous items that are banned from the collection stream, such as paint, car batteries, or tires.

Recyclables are collected as a single stream and transported to a private stream materials recovery facility for sorting, processing, and marketing. Collected scrap metals are sold to a private scrap contractor located in Rockville. The market for these materials, which are processed into new products, fluctuates due to regional and global factors.

Food waste, like yard waste, is organic material and can be managed in a number of ways. Some food scraps go into garbage disposals and the sewer system. Separating and diverting food waste for composting has potential to reduce the total amount of trash. Composting can be large scale, or in backyard compost bins. The large number of restaurants and cafeterias in Rockville may have potential to manage food waste.

Another potential option for managing organic waste materials, including food waste, is to use biodigester technologies to produce methane gas from anaerobic digestion processes, which can be used as natural gas or burned for electricity.

Vegetable oil and grease from restaurants can be processed into biodiesel.

Looking to the future, the City is exploring alternative fuel powered refuse vehicles. Battery-powered refuse vehicles are also just entering the market. The City has the option to consider a transition away from the current diesel refuse vehicle fleet, which would cut fuel and maintenance costs, as well as greatly reduce emissions and air pollution.





GOAL 5
Reduce, reuse and recycle solid waste and yard waste.

A key environmental impact of a consumer-oriented society is solid waste. Rockville residents, businesses, and institutions use a wide variety of products and materials every day that result in discarded materials. These materials represent embodied energy in their manufacture and also a challenge for disposal or reuse. The City of Rockville groups its solid waste into three main types: refuse, recyclables, and yard waste.

The City of Rockville provides weekly curbside refuse, recyclable, and yard waste collections for 14,000 single-unit detached and attached residential properties. Property owners of businesses, apartments, and condominiums are responsible for contracting with private waste management services.

The environmental challenge of Rockville's solid waste stream is to manage a large volume of waste after collection. The City delivers refuse and yard waste to Montgomery County government facilities, which charges per-ton tipping fees. Rockville refuse is taken to the waste-to-energy incinerator in the Dickerson, Maryland area. This system saves land from being used as a dump and produces electricity, but the ash still requires disposal. Progress in waste management is measured as a reduction in the waste stream and the amount diverted from the incinerator by recycling and composting.

Recycling is mandatory in the city for common items such as glass and plastic bottles, jars and cans, mixed paper, newspaper, and cardboard. The value of recyclables, and associated revenues or costs, fluctuates in a global market. Yard waste is taken to the County's Dickerson complex where it is composted, or turned to mulch. One major opportunity is to develop new systems that separate food waste from refuse and send it to composting or biodigester facilities.

The best way to manage refuse is to the reduce the amount generated. The next step in sustainable solid waste management is to eliminate the concept of waste as something to be disposed of, instead viewing it as valuable and open to conversion to energy or new commodities or useful material.

Policy 8
Provide a safe, environmentally sound, integrated solid waste management program that promotes waste prevention and progressive goals for waste diversion and recycling.

Actions

8.1 Develop regional solutions to solid waste issues by working with regional jurisdictions and agencies, such as Montgomery County government, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, and the Maryland Department of the Environment.

8.2 Promote backyard and neighborhood composting in the city, including exploring options to partner with regional jurisdictional to increase its adoption.

8.3 Monitor technological advancement in organic waste processing, including biodigesters that produce energy from methane gas, and biodiesel.

8.4 Incorporate and clarify current recycling, refuse, and yard waste storage, handling and collection practices into Chapter 20 (Solid Waste) of the City Code.

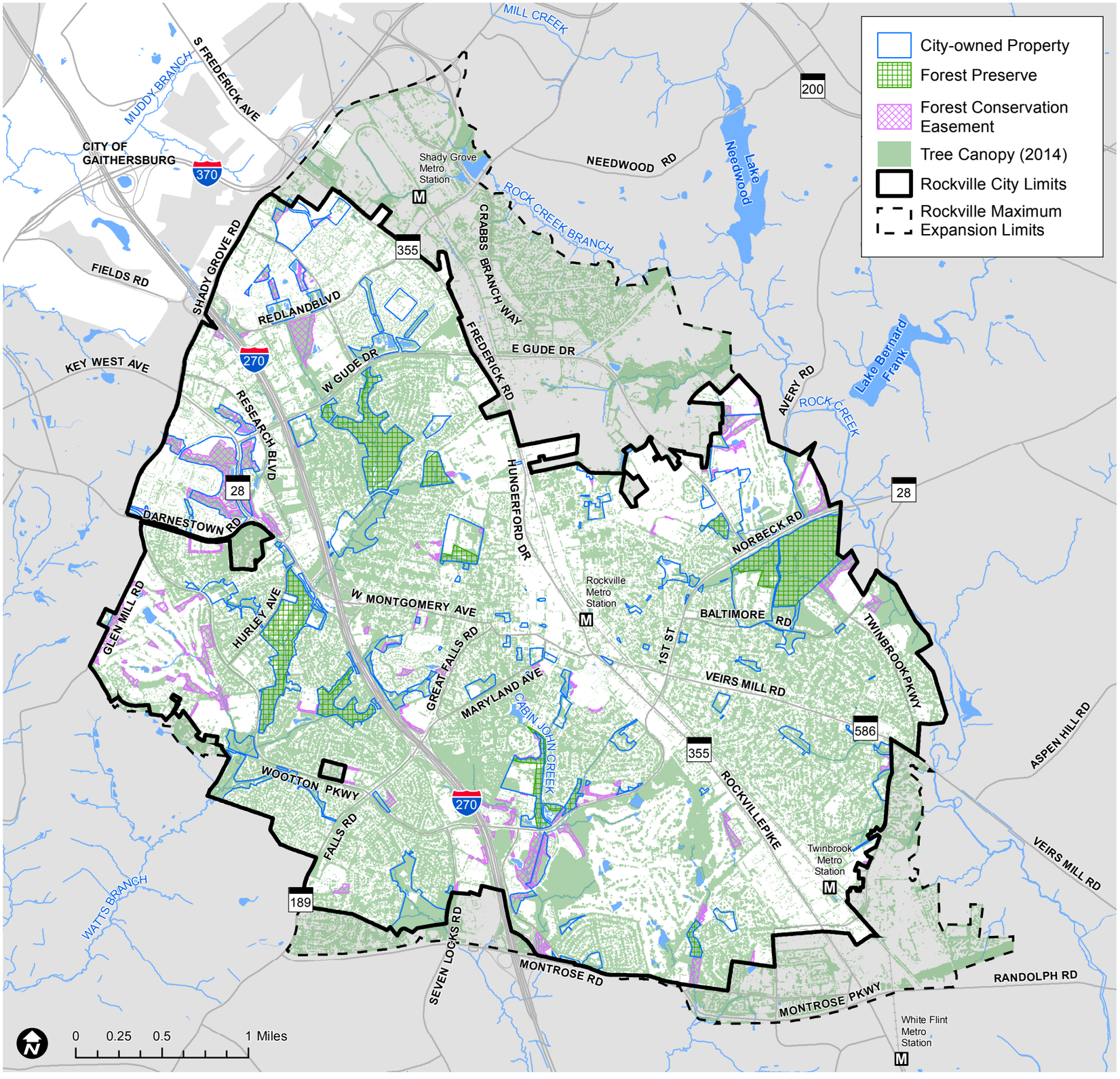
8.5 Analyze the potential to transition our refuse vehicle fleet to more efficient and lower emission technologies.

8.6 Continue to implement 'green' building standards that require construction and demolition waste management provisions, promote building life-cycle impact reduction, and promote the use of reused and recycled materials.

8.7 Encourage 'green' purchasing, waste reduction, and recycling at all levels, including City facilities and events and in commercial establishments.

8.8 Expand education and outreach initiatives to encourage sustainable consumption, resourcefulness, recycling, and composting.

Figure 22: Forest Preserves, Conservation Easements, and Tree Canopy



GOAL 6
Manage a sustainable urban forest and protect stream corridors, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

The City of Rockville has a robust urban forestry program, including ordinances that promote the preservation and planting of trees. The best of Rockville's forest overlaps with critical wildlife habitat along stream corridors and tributaries, meaning that policies to support the urban forest also support habitat protection.

Policy 9
Promote the importance and value of trees.

Trees provide a multitude of benefits to the community that extend beyond the private property on which they are planted. In addition to their aesthetic beauty, trees add to overall neighborhood character and pride and offer shady and peaceful places to gather. Among their many contributions to the environment, trees help decrease stormwater runoff, improve air quality, shelter wildlife, and moderate heat effects from buildings and paved areas. Often overlooked, trees also have both indirect and direct economic benefits. By providing shade, consumer energy expenses can be reduced, and many studies show that abundant landscape, including mature trees, can increase home values. The City has adopted a number of strong policies related to the protection and enhancement of its trees, and will continue to promote their preservation as new challenges and opportunities arise.

Urban Tree Canopy and Forest Protection

Property Type	Acres	Percent of Total UTC
Total Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) in Rockville	4,301	100% (50% of city area)
Private Property	2,856	66%
Forest Conservation Easements (FCE)	195*	-
City-owned Property	765	18%
Forest Preserves	323*	-
Road Right-of-Way	680	16%

Note: Tree Canopy calculations from analysis conducted by the University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab in 2014.
* FCE and Forest preserves are a subtotal of private property and City-owned, respectively.

Actions

9.1 Commit to further studying the multi-faceted benefits of trees and providing education about those benefits.

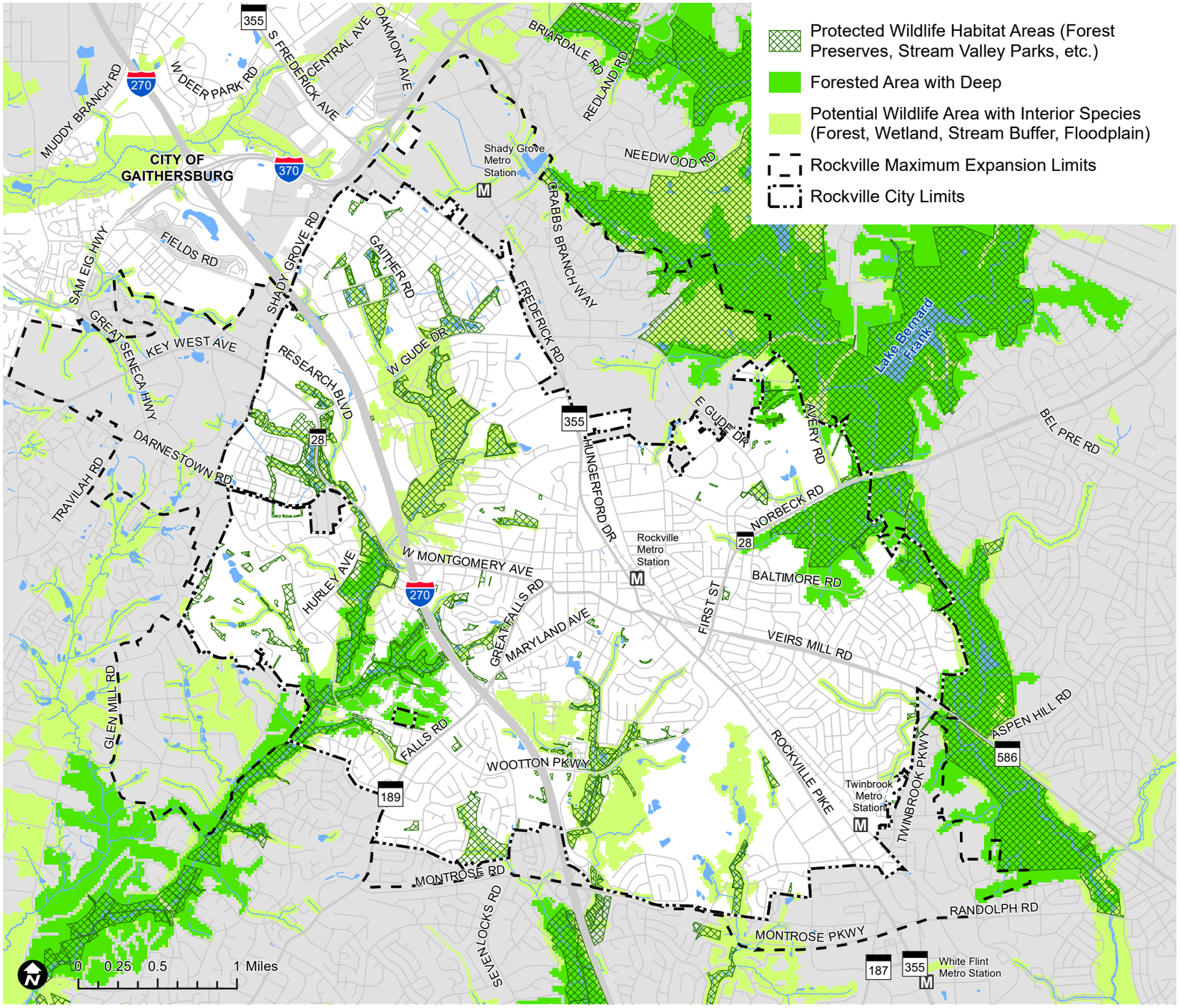
9.2 Encourage additional planting and proper maintenance of trees on both public and private property.

Policy 10
Preserve and enhance tracts of contiguous forest areas and tree canopy along stream valley buffers, wildlife corridors, and adjacent to existing forest networks.

Forest preserves are designated areas on City-owned property, set aside from disturbance for the promotion of environmental and wildlife preservation and education. The Mayor and Council has designated twelve forest preserves totaling 335 acres. As Figure 22 indicates, the City's forest preserves are primarily located along stream valleys of the main stem and tributaries of Watts Branch, Rock Creek, and Cabin John Creek. While these areas are preserved from development, the actual condition of the woods is challenged by exotic vines that damage trees and deer that can denude the forest understory. An ecosystem approach to forest management is needed to address challenges and preserve species diversity and habitat. Protecting and restoring woodland plant communities and tree canopy along streams and ponds is also a priority for improving water quality, protecting stream health, and providing wildlife habitat.

Forest conservation easements on private property are an integral part of the City's forest and tree protection strategy,

Figure 23: Protected and Potential Wildlife Habitat Protection Areas



Rockville's best wildlife habitat is contiguous with our stream corridor parks and forests. For some species, including rare plants, survival depends on a specific set of environmental factors, such as soil types, amount of sun or shade, and protection from disturbance. Populations of species that require deep forest interiors are extremely vulnerable due to fragmentation of woodland areas. Wootton Mill Park and Civic Center Park present the best habitat in Rockville with deep forest interiors. A 2014 review by Maryland DNR identified potential habitats in Rockville for five species listed as rare, threatened or endangered plant and animal species: Sedge Wren, Least Weasel, Purple Fringeless Orchid, Low Bindweed, and Tesselated Rattlesnake Plantain.

as well. Easements are generally created as part of a forest conservation plan, which is required for certain projects during the development approval process. As of this writing, there are approximately 222 acres under private forest conservation easements in the city, of which 195 acres are covered by trees. Additionally, some private properties in Rockville contain easements that protect individual trees. Tree removal is also regulated on properties designated as a Local Historic District and along known street tree corridors.

Actions

10.1 Maintain City-owned forest preserves through an ecosystem approach to forest management that considers the whole forest and its long-term viability.

10.2 Acquire or protect selected properties that will add to a connected and contiguous urban forest network.

10.3 Work with regional agencies to reduce invasive plants, insects, diseases, and pathogens that impact our urban forest.

10.4 For new development on land with existing forest stands and/or significant tree canopy, the City should encourage the preservation of tree canopy and natural features to the greatest extent possible, through site and architectural design that integrates existing natural features and/or minimizes impacts, protective construction measures, and development review incentives or relief, especially for development projects in Planning Areas 11 (Woodmont) and 12 (Tower Oaks).

Policy 11
Continue to assess tree canopy coverage, the health and condition of city forests and landscaped areas, and maintain and enhance a robust urban tree canopy.

A common measure to assess a community's urban forest is the urban tree canopy, or UTC, which consists of the layer of living leaves, branches, and stems that cover the ground when viewed from above. The tree canopy can be categorized in four contexts:

1. Trees that line Rockville's roads,
2. Forested parkland,
3. Non-forested parkland with individual trees, and
4. Forest and individual trees on private property.

Figure 22 illustrates Rockville's tree canopy coverage based on aerial imagery taken during the summer of 2014, utilizing data and methodology from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Laboratory. The analysis shows that approximately 50 percent of the city was covered by tree canopy during the summer of 2014 This is an increase from the 43 percent of tree canopy calculated in 2009, and above the target of 40 percent that was previously recommended by American Forests, a non-profit conservation organization.

While three quarters of Rockville's park land is covered by tree canopy, privately owned trees and woods make up nearly 80 percent of Rockville's overall tree canopy. The largest portion of the city's tree canopy is in large-lot residential neighborhoods. These trees and woods are not protected with easements or other regulations, yet their presence and growth show the value Rockville citizens place on their trees.

A tree assessment conducted in 2009 predicted that natural tree mortality may lead to a decline in tree canopy in residential areas over the next several decades. Maintaining the tree canopy presents several challenges, including difficult urban growing conditions, invasive species, extreme weather and climate change, overhead utilities, and land development. Educational programs on tree stewardship and incentives to plant trees will be crucial to sustaining tree canopy in the long term.

Given the city's relatively high tree canopy coverage, this Plan recommends that the City continue to monitor and evaluate its tree canopy and, based on this assessment, create a greenspace management plan. This type of plan would take a broad approach to greenspace and the urban forest. Attention would be given to stream buffers and floodplains, expanding urban wildlife habitat, mitigating the urban 'heat island' effect, and managing tree canopy.

Actions

11.1 Continue to monitor Rockville's tree canopy.

11.2 Create a greenspace management plan to guide ongoing greenspace and urban tree canopy practices.

11.3 Develop public education, stewardship, and incentive programs for planting and maintaining trees and natural landscapes to sustain and enhance tree canopy on private property.

11.4 Implement policies and programs that encourage the use of native plants and sustainable landscaping practices and discourage invasive species.

Policy 12
Update the Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance to incorporate flexibility in decision-making when there are two or more environmental goals in conflict.

Forest conservation plans are required for new developments within the city in accordance with the Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance.

The ordinance requires the following:

- A minimum amount of tree cover to be planted on-site;
- Replacement planting for removing certain trees; and
- Reforestation for cleared forest area.

An update to the Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance in 2007 requires that existing trees and forest be preserved on development sites to the extent possible. Off-site planting to meet requirements is no longer an option due to a lack of receiving areas. The options for development projects are on-site or a fee-in-lieu payment to support conservation.

The level of tree canopy in the city's commercial corridors is very low. In fact, many properties along Rockville Pike have virtually no canopy, reflecting the lack of attention to the issue in the past. Today however, the City's site plan review process requires that a certain number of trees be included in all new development projects, based on factors such as the size of the site, but with less emphasis on the existing context. This goal conflicts to some extent with other goals for more intense, sustainable development in these corridors and in Metro station areas. In order to balance between environmental goods, the number of required trees should be less in areas targeted for intense urban growth.

Actions

12.1 Revise the Forest and Tree Preservation Ordinance to: 1) consider context; 2) find a balance, including analyzing costs, benefits, and trade-offs, between the number of required trees and City objectives for stormwater management, solar or renewable energy, improved air quality through the reduction of vehicle miles traveled, 'green' building features, such as green rooftops, green walls, and solar panels, and tree placement and type; and 3) other important environmental goals.

12.2 Update and implement the Street Tree Master Plan to maintain healthy and diverse trees on municipal lands and public streets.

12.3 Implement best practices for tree and landscape planting to maintain tree health and growth, provide shade and relief, and add value to streets and private property.

Policy 13
Protect and enhance wildlife habitat.

Rockville's forested land, large-lot residential areas, and even our commercial corridors all provide habitat for wild plants and animals. However, human induced changes to the landscape—from deep forests with interiors to yards with more 'edge' conditions—have created an ecological imbalance. Some species have acclimated to human presence and urban development patterns and infrastructure, including coyote, white-tailed deer, beaver, Canada goose, raccoon, red fox, Virginia opossum, skunk, eastern cottontail rabbit, eastern gray squirrel, and brown bat. The number of white-tailed deer, a species that thrives at the forest edge, soars without wolves and cold winters with deep snow. Browsing deer can damage forests, as well as landscaping and gardens, if populations get too dense.

Other species, both plants and animals, are no longer present or are threatened due to loss of habitat. Even with Rockville's long history of human settlement, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources has identified important habitat areas within the city for rare, threatened, and endangered species. These areas are known and mapped on Figure 23, and in many cases are protected from disturbance and development.

Homeowners, businesses, schools, parks, civic and community organizations throughout Rockville are creating landscapes friendly to wildlife on their properties. As recommended by the National Wildlife Federation, community wildlife habitat sites provide food, water, cover and places to raise young. City gardening programs support planting native species of plants and replacing lawns with trees, shrubs and other plants. These collective stewardship efforts benefit wildlife by preserving and restoring habitat, supporting biodiversity, and creating corridors for wildlife to thrive throughout the community.

This Plan supports using a variety of actions to protect and enhance wildlife habitat. The City has acquired and conserved large land buffers along our stream corridors, protecting them from development through zoning protections, and as forest preserves. When parcels are available to purchase that are contiguous to these protected corridors, the City will consider adding them; for example the City purchased land from the County to add to Woottons Mill Park in 2018.

Actions

13.1 Protect natural areas and priority habitats through City codes and ordinances, land acquisition, conservation easements, land donations, grants, or dedication of stream valleys and environmentally sensitive areas.

13.2 Develop and implement wildlife management practices that minimize human-wildlife conflicts and support sustainable wildlife populations, by working with regional experts and stakeholders.

13.3 Include wildlife habitat protection and enhancement strategies in the review and approval of development projects, to maintain corridors for safe wildlife movement, prevent fragmentation of forested lands, and protect and restore habitats.

13.4 Monitor and manage invasive species and enhance habitats on City-owned lands.

13.5 Provide community education programs to foster wildlife appreciation and tolerance.

13.6 Implement programs and incentives to maintain and replace tree canopy and habitat loss on private property that is currently not regulated by City codes and ordinances.

13.7 Expand upon the City's current education and incentive programs (e.g., Rainscapes Rewards, fall tree give-away, Weed Warriors, etc.) and certification under the National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program to enlarge and strengthen a connected network of wildlife habitats in residential yards, building rooftops, open spaces, and public parks.



WATER RESOURCES

Vision

Rockville will continue to produce water that is safe for drinking and other uses, and, with its regional partners, will maintain capacity for wastewater conveyance and treatment, and follow best practices for stormwater management to protect health and our natural environment.

Restoration work at Watkins Pond reveals how stormwater infrastructure is grafted onto the natural surface water system, in this location near the headwaters of Watts Branch.

The City of Rockville water system is robust and the supply of water from the Potomac River dependable, such that any constraints on growth of the city are localized rather than systemic. As described in detail below, the city is served by two drinking and wastewater systems, one owned by the City and managed and operated by its Department of Public Works, and the other owned, managed and operated by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). Policies stated in this Water Resources Element address the overall system, and each of the three parts of our water infrastructure: drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater. This Element concludes with policies to secure the long-term financial viability of the City's water systems.

GOAL 1
Confirm that the City of Rockville has sufficient water capacity to serve its planned land use and growth projections.

In keeping with State of Maryland requirements, and to summarize the conclusion of this Water Resources Element, the City of Rockville confirms the following:

1. Rockville's allocation of Potomac River water from the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) is sufficient to meet projected growth per the Land Use Policy Plan.
2. The City of Rockville water treatment plant has the necessary capacity for the average day demand to produce sufficient drinking water for projected growth in its customer service area, and WSSC also has sufficient capacity for its portion of the service area within the city's municipal boundaries.
3. The City of Rockville's allocation of wastewater treatment capacity at the Blue Plains treatment plant is sufficient to meet projected growth in the city.
4. Localized areas within the drinking water distribution system and the sewer system in the city will require upgrades to meet new demand, as necessary for development projects.

Goals for Rockville's water resources include:

1. Confirm that the City of Rockville has sufficient water capacity to serve its planned land use and growth projections.
2. Provide drinking water that meets or exceeds State water quality standards from the City of Rockville and WSSC water systems.
3. Maintain adequate wastewater conveyance and treatment capacity for existing and future needs.
4. Continue to meet stormwater management requirements by applying best practices for new development sites and retrofit areas, while also protecting and restoring stream banks.
5. Manage a fiscally sound water revenue structure and funds.

Policy 1
Provide adequate water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure to meet the needs of Rockville's current land use pattern and address future growth.

At this point in the city's evolution, growth is primarily in the form of infill and redevelopment. The last few remaining undeveloped large sites within the city, with the exception of two existing golf-course properties, are reaching build-out. Most areas outside the city but within Rockville's municipal growth area, or maximum expansion limit, are also developed, and most are served by WSSC. The utility service area of WSSC is known as the Washington Suburban Sanitary District (WSSD), and is established by the State of Maryland. However, a small number of isolated properties on the city's borders continue to rely on well water and/or septic systems (see Figure 25).

Therefore, growth in Rockville is a matter of increased intensity of land use, which this Plan supports in a handful of growth areas, and incremental growth on developed residential lots in the form of accessory apartments, accessory dwelling units, or slight increases of density in areas where a transition from detached to attached residential types will be allowed. The City's development process includes a review of stormwater plans and an adequate public facilities review for water and sewer capacity and sufficiency. Construction permits can not be issued until a plan to address any capacity constraint is approved.

As a partner in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG), the City of Rockville prepares detailed population, household, and employment growth projections on a regular basis. These projections, compiled across the region, are reported as 'rounds,' with the latest projections by the City made for Round 9.1 in December 2017. Rockville generates its projections using baseline data from the decennial census and a detailed accounting of housing production built since the last available decennial census, plus development projects approved by the City, known as 'in the pipeline' projects. Trends are extrapolated into the future. Projections are provided in this Plan through 2040, with a baseline set at 2018, as shown in the table below.

Actions

1.1 Require annexations into the city to obtain Rockville water and sewer service, for those areas outside of the WSSD.

1.2 Require that all new utility construction meets Rockville and WSSC standards for utility pipe layout and easements to ensure long term maintenance and accessibility.

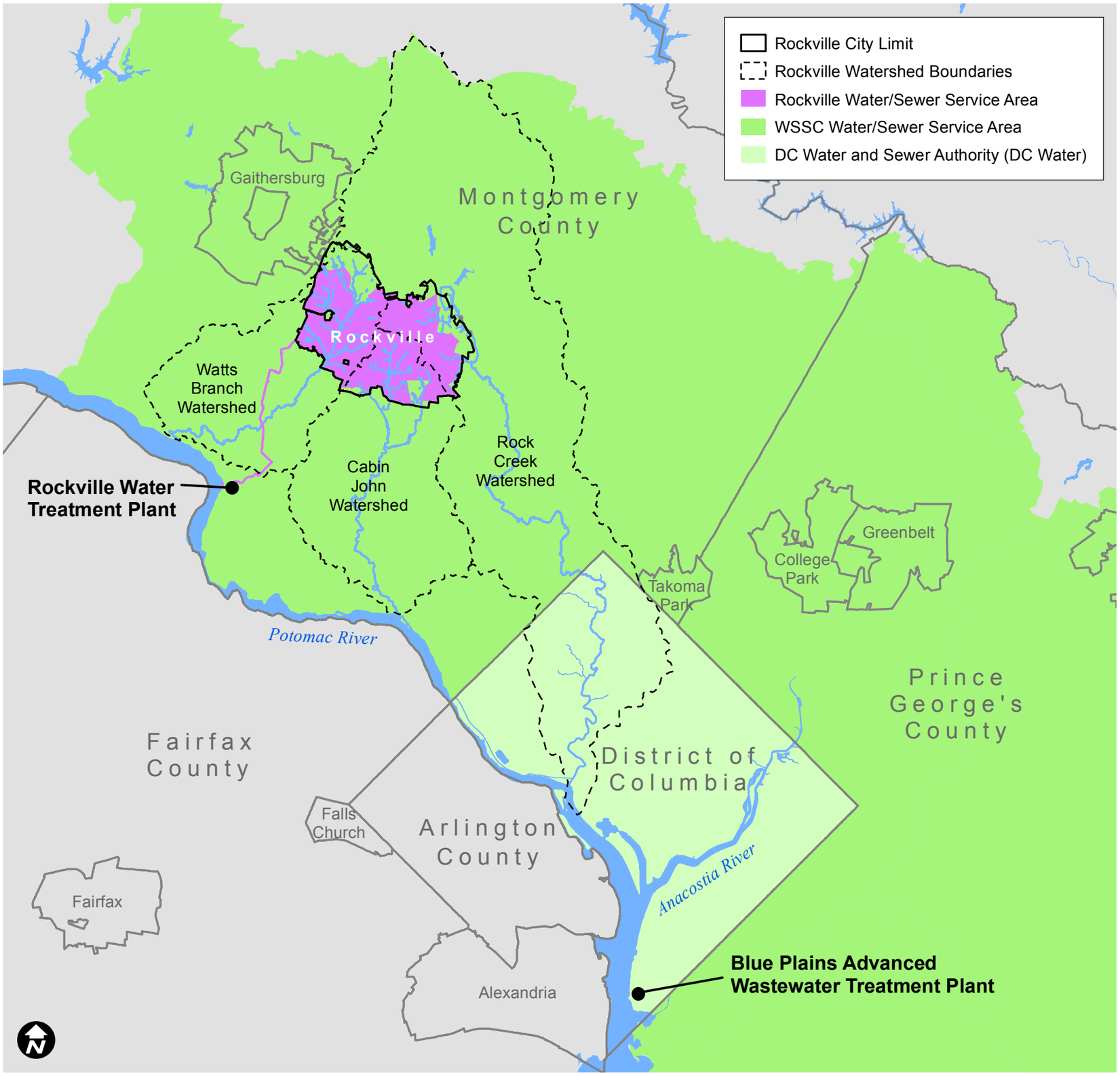
1.3 Maintain easements on private land that allow access to all portions of the City's water, sewer, and stormwater systems.

City of Rockville Population, Household, and Employment Counts and Projections

	2010	2020	2030	2040	Percent Change, 2020 to 2040
Population	61,209	67,117	83,400	91,900	+37%
Households	25,199	27,953	33,500	37,400	+34%
Employment	74,500	78,400	82,400	90,900	+16%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census [2010 and 2020 Population and Housing Units]; MWCOG. Round 9.1 projections, 2018 [2010-2040 Employment, 2030-2040 Population and Housing Units].

Figure 24: Rockville Water System Regional Context



Milestones in the Development of Rockville's Water System

As Rockville grew in population and area in the last decade of the 19th century and first decades of the 20th century, among the most important topics for the Mayor and Council to address was the provision of clean drinking water and removal and treatment of sewage. The first City of Rockville water and sewer system was constructed in 1896, starting with a deep well and pump north of Baltimore Road (below), followed by sanitary sewers in 1916 to address groundwater contamination and a typhoid outbreak.

Also in 1916, the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) was established to address the need for potable water in unincorporated Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, and remove raw sewage from streams running through the nation's capital. The two systems grew in parallel, with Rockville's focus on serving growth within its municipal limits, while WSSC grew to serve the much larger areas of the two metropolitan counties, with that system eventually surrounding Rockville on all sides. Today, WSSC continues to serve some areas annexed into the city.

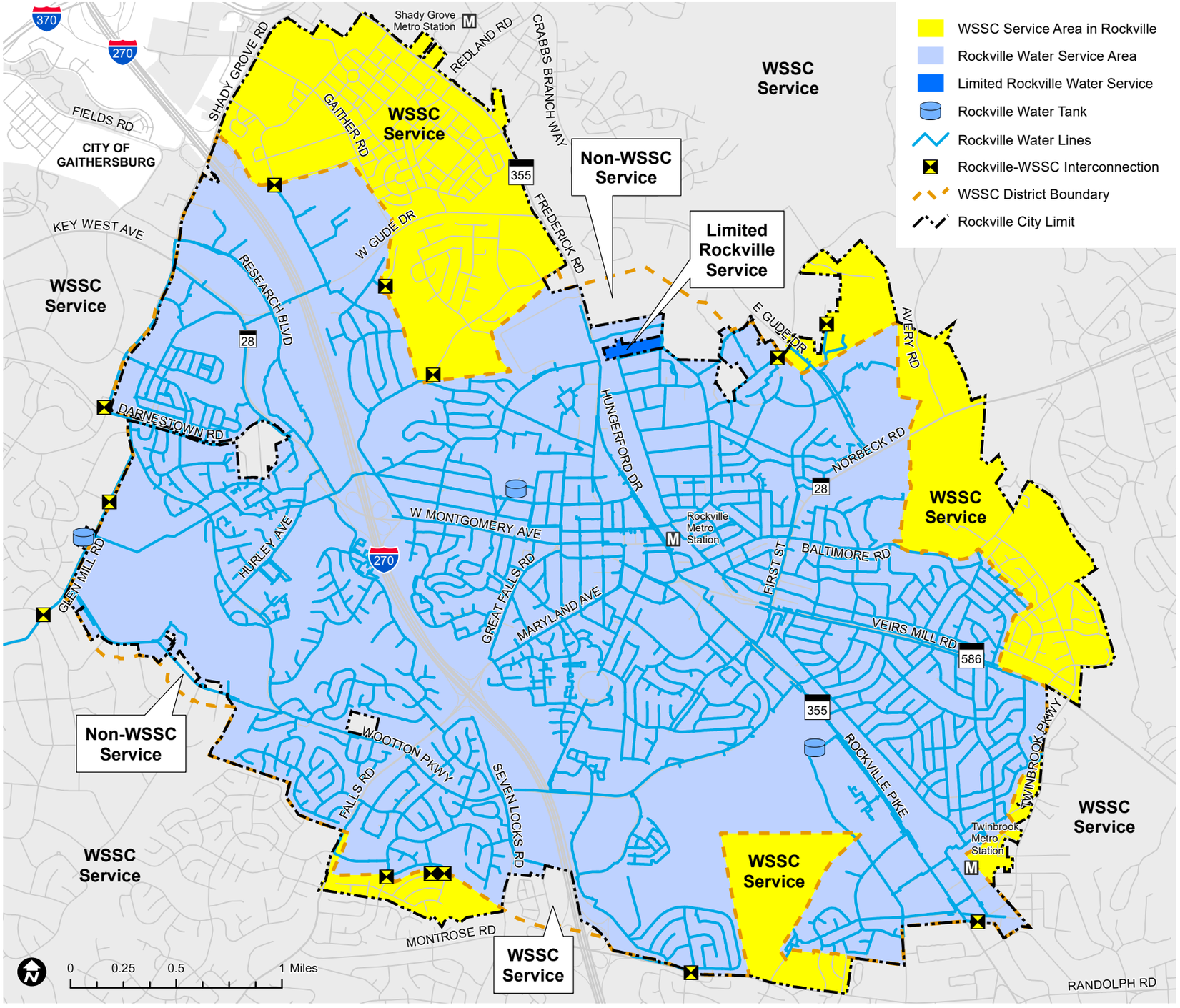
Over the decades of the 20th century, keeping the water running in Rockville became the basis for political campaigns. Major modernization projects and changes in practices were needed to address crises and plan for long-term growth. Rapid growth in the 1950s made clear the relationship between the City's water and sewer system, the need for a City master plan, and the limitations of wells and the City's wastewater treatment plant. The addition of thousands of new houses in the Twinbrook neighborhood strained the ability to draw enough water for the city from groundwater, while the State Board of Health stopped the construction of the Hungerford subdivision until sewer capacity was addressed. Drought in the summers of 1953 and 1954 brought water issues to a crisis point, leading to a new Mayor and Council and major changes to Rockville's system. Emergency connections were made to the WSSC pipes to provide drinking water to Rockville customers. A decision was made by voters for the City to extend its own pipe to the Potomac River, taking the City off well water in 1958. During the same period, the City connected to WSSC trunk sewers and the District of Columbia's treatment plant.

The decisions and actions taken during the 1950s created the system Rockville has today, which provides clean drinking water and sewer capacity to a still-growing population.



Rockville's Historic Pump House is today a community building that holds meetings and events and is located next to a small neighborhood park, Croydon Park.

Figure 25: Water Service Areas in Rockville - Municipal and WSSC



There are two systems that supply water to Rockville customers, the system owned by the City and maintained by its Public Works Department, and the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) system. The dual service within Rockville city limits derives from annexations of land in the WSSC service district and the fact that Rockville never extended service beyond its boundaries. Going forward, any land annexed into Rockville currently served by WSSC will continue to be served by WSSC. For the small number of properties near Rockville on well water, the property is required to connect to City water and sewer lines as a condition of annexation.

GOAL 2
Provide drinking water that meets or exceeds State water quality standards from the City of Rockville and WSSC water systems.

The City of Rockville's water supply is from the waters of the Potomac River. Rockville draws its drinking water from the Potomac River above Little Falls Dam, approximately five miles southwest of the city. Aside from several interconnects with the WSSC water supply system, this facility functions as the City's main water supply source. The City also has an agreement with WSSC that allows the City to request as much as eight million gallons per day from WSSC.

While available supply is more than adequate to serve Rockville's needs, quality of the river water and potential for drought are important considerations. Threats to the Potomac River's water quality and supply include:

- Urban area stormwater
- Agricultural runoff
- Municipal treatment plants
- Road surface runoff with pollutants
- Septic tank discharges
- Wildlife- and pet-generated bacteria
- Legacy pollutants in sediments
- Drought and low flow conditions
- Higher frequency of large storm events

Erosion, channel widening, and down-cutting of tributary stream banks deliver substantial sediments to the Potomac. However, the Rockville water treatment plant is capable of removing sediment. Similarly, chemical treatment kills bacteria in the water drawn from the river. Other pollutants, such as metals, pesticides, oil and grease, fertilizers, and organic materials are also removed by the plant's coagulation and filtration processes.

The leading threat to Rockville's water supply is the possibility that climate change could lead to prolonged droughts that reduce the flow of river water. So far, drought events that affect Rockville's water supply have been rare since the switch from groundwater wells to river water. During the significant low flow periods experienced in the drought of 2007 and 2008, river levels never fell below a point more than two feet above the top of Rockville's intake pipe. The lowest the river has fallen (in 1966 and 2009) was approximately 600 million cubic feet per second, which is more than adequate to support all existing river allocations, plus an additional 100 million gallons per day increment to support aquatic life. Moreover, Rockville participates in a regional partnership that manages several Potomac reservoirs that can be released into the main stem during very low-flow situations.

Policy 2
Ensure that Rockville's water supply, treatment, and distribution infrastructure meets current and future demand.

Rockville is located within a large metropolitan area and our water supply is part of a coordinated regional system. The 2015 Washington Metropolitan Area Water Supply Study, which was prepared by the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, analyzed regional growth, future water demand, and water resource availability to meet the water supply needs for the Washington Metropolitan Area for the year 2040. This study found that the demand for water across the metro area has essentially remained constant from 1990 to 2015, even though the metro area population increased 18 percent, from 3.9 million to 4.6 million people. However, the water supply study found that the regional water supply system will experience stress during severe drought events. The study model predicts that by 2035, mandatory water restrictions could be required in the Washington Metropolitan Area and that water suppliers should address this concern by identifying and evaluating potential new regional water storage facilities. If drought does impact supply, the Rockville City Code provides authority to restrict water use for some activities including lawn irrigation, vehicle washing, swimming pools, and air conditioning equipment.

Actions

2.1 Coordinate with regional agencies and utility partners to assess risks and mitigate impacts from climate change, or other threats, on the City water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.

2.2 Cooperate with efforts to provide new regional water storage facilities, should they be necessary.

2.3 Ensure WSSC has adequate capacity to serve its area.

City of Rockville					
GROWTH PROJECTIONS				**WATER DEMAND**	
Development Type	**2020 Development**	**2040 Change**	**2040 Projections**	**Existing**	**2040 (Net Increase)**
Single-Unit Detached Residential (units)	9,800	+100	9,900		0.015
Single-Unit Attached Residential (units)	2,700	+600	3,300		0.073
Multiple Unit Residential (units)	8,800	+5,700	14,500		0.713
Employment (jobs)	62,000	+10,000	72,000		0.350
			Subtotal (MGD)	4.477	1.151
				Existing	**2040 (Cumulative)**
			Total (MGD)	**4.477**	**5.628**

MGD = Average Day Demand in Million Gallons Per Day

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission					
GROWTH PROJECTIONS				**WATER DEMAND**	
Development Type	**2020 Development**	**2040 Change**	**2040 Projections**	**Existing**	**2040 (Net Increase)**
Single-Unit Detached Residential (units)	1,400	+0	1,400		0
Single-Unit Attached Residential (units)	1,400	+400	1,800		0.071
Multiple Unit Residential (units)	4,800	+1,900	6,700		0.279
Employment (jobs)	16,000	+2,600	18,600		0.094
			Subtotal (MGD)	1.778	0.444
				Existing	**2040 (Cumulative)**
			Total (MGD)	**1.778**	**2.222**

MGD = Average Day Demand in Million Gallons Per Day

Current Water Allocation and Demand

In 2018, the City-owned water system served approximately 80 percent of the resident population (or households) in Rockville, and about 80 percent of the employment. The remaining 20 percent of residential and employment water customers are within the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) service area. The boundary for the WSSC system is set by Maryland legislation, with topography and watersheds part of the consideration (See Figure 25).

The City has an allocation permit with the Maryland Department of the Environment to withdraw water from the Potomac River. The City of Rockville's water allocation is:

- A daily average of 7.1 million gallons on a yearly basis; and
- A maximum daily withdrawal of 12.1 million gallons.

In 2017, the average daily demand for water was 4.48 million gallons and the maximum demand on a given day was 6.85 million gallons. Both numbers are key factors in how the Rockville water utility system is managed; the utility must be able to supply the average daily amount of water on a sustained basis throughout the year, as well as to supply the maximum amount of water its customers need on any given day. Note that the maximum daily demand of 6.85 million gallons is significantly below the 12.1 million gallons allowed by the allocation permit, with nearly 5.2 million gallons available but not used.

Despite increases to Rockville's resident population and the number of nonresidential accounts, per capita water demand has declined. This change is attributed to customers implementing water conservation measures such as installing new lower-flow toilets, low-flow shower heads and faucets, and newer dishwashers that also use less water.

In addition, the size of lawns in new developments, such as in King Farm, are significantly smaller than previous subdivisions in the city, which means far less lawn watering per capita. Similarly, with most of the population growth accommodated in new apartment buildings, there is less landscaping to be watered per capita.

From an environmental perspective using less water is desirable. Nonetheless, it creates a challenge for the City to fund needed improvements to its aging water system, as discussed at the end of this Element. Still, the City anticipates the absolute demand for water to increase due to growth in population and employment.

Water use can be calculated several ways, with Rockville's consumption per capita approximately 81 gallons per day and per household 210 gallons per day, with an average household at 2.58 persons. Water meters are frequently by unit or house, but not in apartment buildings, which usually have a single meter for multiple units.

The City of Rockville develops projections for population, housing, and employment growth as part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government regional projections. The latest projections, known as MWCOG Round 9.1, for 2040 were used to calculate future water demand for this Plan. The calculations used the best available data, based on dwelling units, planned projects, and trends for population; and the best data for jobs by traffic analysis zone (TAZ). Projections for the rate of future growth are made for the whole city, and then divided proportionately for the two service areas.

Looking out to 2040, the projection within the City's water service area is a total of 27,700 households and 72,000 jobs. Projected maximum day demand for water from the City's system is 8.9 million gallons, which remains well below the current allocation granted by the State of Maryland. Therefore, if the city grows in population and employment at the projected rate, it still has a substantial surplus supply of water from the Potomac River. Projections for 2040 for the WSSC service area within Rockville are based on the same citywide rate of growth, and WSSC confirms that it has the necessary supply to serve customers in its service area.

Given that water allocation and supply are not limiting factors to Rockville's growth, no adjustments to the City's Land Use Element are required to meet the requirements of the Water Resources Element, as set by State statute. Limitations on growth are in the capacity of the treatment plant and localized within the distribution system, which is analyzed at the time of each development proposal during the development review process.

Policy 3
Analyze development plans and require drinking water system upgrades, where necessary, as part of the APFO and water and sewer authorization process.

Each development project is reviewed by the City of Rockville to ensure the adequacy of public facilities across a broad set of measures, including the capacity of the citywide and localized water system to handle the new demand. This review follows the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, or APFO. In terms of water supply and delivery, the key issue is usually the condition of the closest water main to the development site. If, based on modeling, the development's projected demand exceeds the capacity of the distribution system, then the development project is required to address the deficiency by installing a pipe with the needed capacity to meet demand for domestic use and fire suppression.

Policy 4
Continue to monitor water quality throughout the water distribution system to provide clean and safe water to Rockville customers.

The City's water supply is more than adequate to meet future needs. Where the City faces challenges is in maintaining its infrastructure, including all the elements of the system from the treatment plant to its system of pipes, pumps, and storage tanks. The City is dedicated to meeting water quality standards for its drinking water.

Old pipes can contribute to both capacity and quality issues. Rockville's water main rehabilitation program goal is to rehabilitate or replace all water main pipes in the system on a 100-year cycle, or 1 percent per year. The water main rehabilitation program improves water quality by removing old pipes, reducing the number of water main breaks, and improving flow to fire hydrants. At present, the City's focus is on removing cast iron water mains that are severely tuberculated (i.e., constricted due to corrosion) and replacing them with cement-lined ductile iron pipes. In 2008, Rockville initiated a Water Main Rehabilitation Program to address the City's aging water system and increase flow to fire hydrants. This sustainable infrastructure program has funded 22 miles of water main replacements and all fire hydrants flowing less than 500 gallons per minute (gpm) will be upgraded by the end of FY 2022. The water mains within City's system total 174 miles and the program's goal is to replace 1% every year or 1.7 miles per year.

The City of Rockville is fortunate to have no known lead pipe within the City-owned water delivery system. This fact greatly reduces the possibility of lead contamination in its water supply. However, there is the potential for lead pipe and lead solder to impact water quality after water leaves the City's water main and enters privately-owned service lines leading to a house or other type of building. The water treatment plant uses corrosion control in their treatment process, thereby reducing the exposure of lead and copper to the water supply and reducing the risk of leaching from customer owned piping systems and fixtures. Though privately-owned water service pipes are the responsibility of the individual water customer, the City should do its utmost to inform its water customers about the need to test and potentially replace lead pipe and lead solder in private service pipes.

Actions

4.1 Rehabilitate or repair 1 percent of water pipe each year.

4.2 Recommend that any lead pipe be removed, at owner's expense, if found in the private service line to the building or behind the water meter.

4.3 Continue a public education and information program to inform its water customers about the need to test and potentially replace lead pipes in privately-owned service lines.

Policy 5
Prepare a technical assessment of Rockville's potable water system and a master plan with recommendations for the City's water treatment plant and distribution system.

The most complex part of the City's water system infrastructure is its water treatment plant near the Potomac River. The plant has an intake capacity of 12 million gallons

per day and a treatment capacity of 8 million gallons. Water is treated by settling and filtering out solids, followed by the addition of chemicals and disinfectants to eliminate and prevent the occurrence of bacteria, pathogens, and viruses, as well as providing corrosion control.

The plant opened in 1958 and, like all equipment, requires maintenance and upgrades to keep it functioning properly. There is a need for a technical assessment of the treatment plant to plan for future investments. The plant, and the pumps that deliver water through the City's 24-inch transmission main and ultimately to the customers, have the highest electrical demand of any City facility. Pumping water uphill—from the elevation of the river into the treatment plant and up to the City's storage tanks—requires energy. In fact, treated City water is pumped uphill roughly 340 feet over an inclined course 6.1 miles in length.

In 1996, Rockville began operating its water plant as a "zero discharge" water plant, as directed by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). Before 1996, the plant discharged sediment-laden water back to the Potomac River, as WSSC is still allowed to do today. When the Potomac River is experiencing continuously high turbidity, which mixes a high amount of sediment with water coming into the plant, the filter press that removes the sediment can become over-taxed. Because of the MDE zero discharge regulation, the City's water treatment plant must cease operations until the situation is resolved.

Also, during times of rapidly changing raw water quality, the plant can be filled quickly with water that has not had the proper chemical dosages. This can result in immediate shut down of the plant. When this occurs, plant staff will then recirculate this inadequately treated water through the treatment process until the water has been determined to meet all regulations for finished water. During these times of filter press shut down or plant shut down, Rockville purchases water from WSSC to supply potable water to its customers.

Technical analysis called for in the actions below will identify potential upgrades to the treatment plant and pumps, to meet maximum-day water demand and to minimize any downtime due to components failing, and to achieve energy efficiency and maintain service and quality. Additionally, the technical analysis of the water system will also include modeling the water distribution system to identify areas that do not provide adequate fire flow protection, and areas that would benefit from improved system redundancy.

Actions

5.1 Prepare a water system master plan, based on projections for 2040 in this Element, to identify improvements at the water treatment plant and within the water distribution system that address capacity constraints, aging infrastructure, system resiliency, increasingly stringent water quality regulations, and impacts caused by climate change.





Rockville operations staff at the City's Water Treatment Plant (top); Water Treatment Plant equipment (bottom)

5.2 Incorporate energy and water efficiency and renewable energy generation, as feasible, at the water treatment plant and pump system.

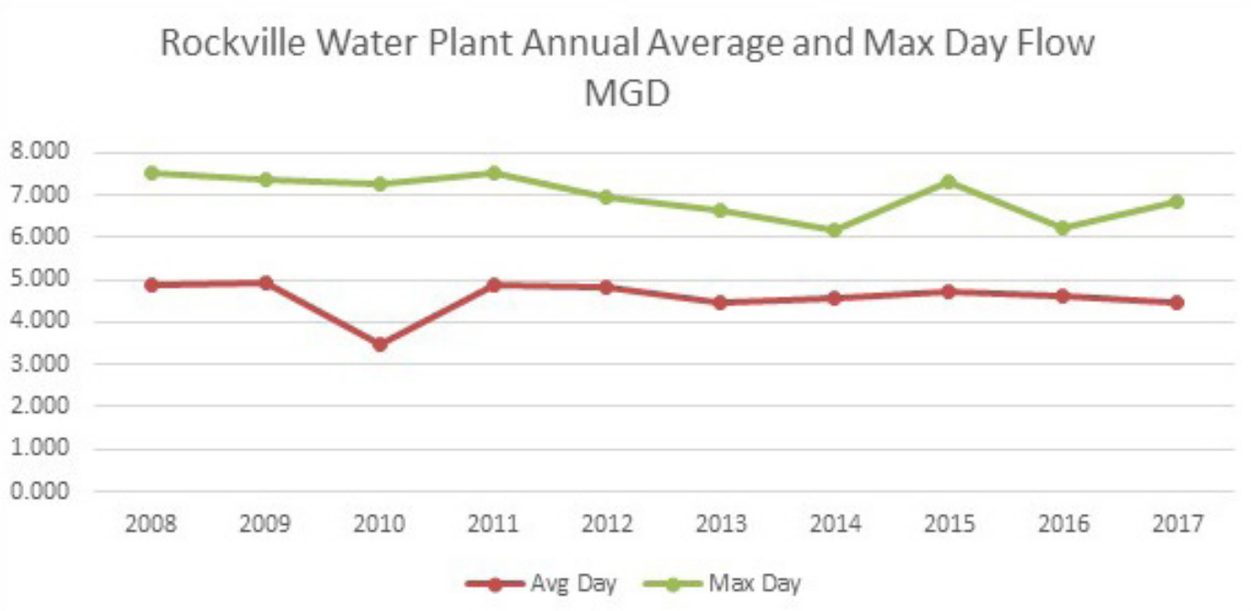
5.3 Inspect the 24-inch water transmission main on a regular basis to identify deficiencies and implement needed repairs.

5.4 Seek Maryland Department of Environment approval to allow periodic discharge of untreated water from the Rockville water treatment plant to the Potomac River.

Policy 6
Monitor growth projections and per capita water demand to ensure capital improvements are implemented when needed.

Today's 2040 growth projection and current per capita water demand usage predict a needed maximum day water production of 8.9 million gallons per day (MGD). This exceeds the current 8.0 MGD water plant production capacity. However, many sub-process upgrades were implemented over the last 15 years to primarily address more stringent water quality regulations and aging infrastructure. These upgrades also increased production capacity for the specific sub-processes. Additionally, the Glen Mill Pump Station was constructed in 2006 to ensure the water plant could deliver enough water to meet peak water demand, as predicted by the 1993 Master Plan growth projections and the per capita water demand of the early 2000s. However, Rockville's anticipated growth fell short of the predicted growth and, similar to the overall Washington Metropolitan area, Rockville's per capita water demand is decreasing. Therefore, Rockville has not experienced the water demand growth previously anticipated and has not activated the Glen Mill Pump Station.

There are two known constraints at the City's water treatment plant that prevent it from producing more than 8.0 MGD: 1) the clarification process and 2) undersized pipe at the water plant. Because resolving each of these constraints is expensive, it is important to plan for when the upgrade is needed to meet the actual demand. Future water quality regulations must also be considered, as well as on-going and future maintenance needs. Implementing either plant modification too soon may result in unnecessary large capital expenses that may not address unknown, future water quality regulations. Implementing them too late may result in periodic water purchases from WSSC to meet maximum day water demand. This type of water purchasing is known as "peak-shaving." In the short-term, it may be more economical to institute occasional peak-shaving purchase of WSSC water than to modify the water plant.



The graph at left shows that Rockville's water production has remained basically the same for the last ten years, even with growth in population. In the summer of 2010, the Rockville Water Plant was not producing water due to two breaks on Rockville's 24-inch transmission main, which is shown as a dip in the graph line. Water was purchased from WSSC in July, August, and September of 2010.

Actions

6.1 Update growth projections and per capita water demand on a five-year cycle.

6.2 Determine when to make modifications to the water plant, or to activate Glen Mill Pump Station, based on the five-year updates and the cost of capital construction.

6.3 Consider deferring expensive water plant improvements by purchasing water from WSSC to meet short-lived peak day water demands.

GOAL 3
Maintain adequate wastewater conveyance and treatment capacity for existing and future needs.

Once clean water is used it is quickly discarded: as quick as water running down the drain. The marvel of modern water systems flushes away our wastewater into a network of sanitary sewer pipes downhill to a wastewater treatment plant, without much need to consider the scope of this system serving each toilet, bath, and sink. As with the potable water system, Rockville's wastewater system is divided into two areas, one served by the City's sewer pipes and the other served by Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). However, while the City's potable water delivery stands mostly as a separate utility, the City's sewers are tied into the WSSC's pipes, which are connected to the District of Columbia's sewers and wastewater treatment plant.

The Rockville sewer system is, for the most part, designed as a gravity-fed system with pipes and wastewater flow following topography downhill. Wastewater pumping stations are needed in only two locations.

The City's system has multiple interconnections with WSSC's sewer system, which include WSSC inflows into the City's system and outfalls into WSSC's system, which ultimately conveys all Rockville wastewater to the Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant in the District of Columbia. Agreements between the City of Rockville and WSSC dictate the terms for conveyance of Rockville's wastewater through WSSC's collection system for treatment at Blue Plains.

Policy 7
Ensure that Rockville's wastewater collection infrastructure meets current and future capacity requirements and eliminates sanitary sewer overflows.

As with the water supply system, Rockville's approximately 148 miles of sewer pipe require continuous monitoring, maintenance, and upgrades to serve the growing city. The City's Sewer Rehabilitation and Improvements Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds the rehabilitation, repair, and replacement of the City's sanitary sewer infrastructure. In order to eliminate any chance of groundwater contamination the sanitary sewers must not leak and the capacity of pipes in the system must be sized to preclude backups or overflows.

Rockville inspects its sanitary sewer infrastructure by periodically running a camera through its sewer pipes. Sewer segments in the poorest condition are prioritized for rehabilitation, repair, or replacement. Repeated sewer backups are a clear indication of a problem with a pipe segment, indicating either a blockage, damaged pipe, or a capacity issue.

Aging pipe can also allow inflow and infiltration (know as I&I) of groundwater or stormwater into the sanitary sewer pipe. This extra water reduces the pipe's capacity to move wastewater and also increases the amount of wastewater going to Blue Plains. This 'I&I' can be a major problem that needs to be addressed to maintain capacity. As with drinking water mains, the City's policy is to rehabilitate or repair its sewer pipes on a 100-year cycle, or 1 percent per year.

Actions

7.1 Monitor sewer capacity to identify constraints in the system and anticipate areas where additional capacity may be needed.

7.2 Rehabilitate or repair 1 percent of sewer pipe each year.

7.3 Reduce the inflow and infiltration of groundwater and stormwater into sewer pipes to recover pipe capacity and reduce wastewater treatment costs on flow to Blue Plains.

City of Rockville					
GROWTH PROJECTIONS				**WASTEWATER DEMAND**	
Development Type	**2020 Development**	**2040 Change**	**2040 Projections**	**Existing**	**2040 (Net Increase)**
Single-Unit Detached Residential (units)	9,800	+100	9,900		0.01
Single-Unit Attached Residential (units)	2,700	+600	3,300		0.06
Multiple Unit Residential (units)	8,800	+5,700	14,500		0.57
Employment (jobs)	62,000	+10,000	72,000		0.28
			Infiltration and Inflow (MGD)	2.26	0
			Subtotal (MGD)	5.84	0.92
				Existing	**2040 (Cumulative)**
			Total (MGD)	**5.84**	**6.76**

MGD = Average Day Demand in Million Gallons Per Day

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission					
GROWTH PROJECTIONS				**WASTEWATER DEMAND**	
Development Type	**2020 Development**	**2040 Change**	**2040 Projections**	**Existing**	**2040 (Net Increase)**
Single-Unit Detached Residential (units)	1,400	+0	1,400		0
Single-Unit Attached Residential (units)	1,400	+400	1,800		0.05
Multiple Unit Residential (units)	4,800	+1,900	6,700		0.23
Employment (jobs)	16,000	+2,600	18,600		0.08
			Subtotal (MGD)	1.42	0.36
				Existing	**2040 (Cumulative)**
			Total (MGD)	**1.42**	**1.78**

MGD = Average Day Demand in Million Gallons Per Day

Current Sewer Allocation and Demand

Wastewater projections are based on the same development projections that are used for the water supply system: a total of 27,700 households and 72,000 jobs in 2040. The projected demand in 2040 for wastewater treatment at Blue Plains is 6.76 million gallons per day, which is well below Rockville's capacity limit of 9.31 million gallons per day. Therefore, if the city grows in population and employment at the projected rate, it still has a substantial surplus capacity at the Blue Plains plant. Projections for 2040 for the WSSC service area within Rockville are based on the same citywide rate of growth, and WSSC confirms that it has the necessary treatment capacity to serve customers in its service area.

Given that wastewater treatment capacity at Blue Plains is not a limiting factor to Rockville's growth, no adjustments to the City's Land Use Element are required to meet the requirements of the Water Resources Element as set by State statue. Limitations on growth are localized within the collection system, which is analyzed at the time of each development proposal during the development review process.

Policy 8
Analyze development plans and require sewer capacity upgrades where necessary as part of the APFO and water and sewer authorization process.

As the city grows in different locations, new development puts more wastewater into pipes originally sized for the existing, lower number of dwelling units and businesses. The conveyance of wastewater is cumulative, with the flow increasing downstream and requiring bigger pipes as connections are added. Therefore, the key issue for wastewater in relation to any development site is the size of the nearest sewer main.

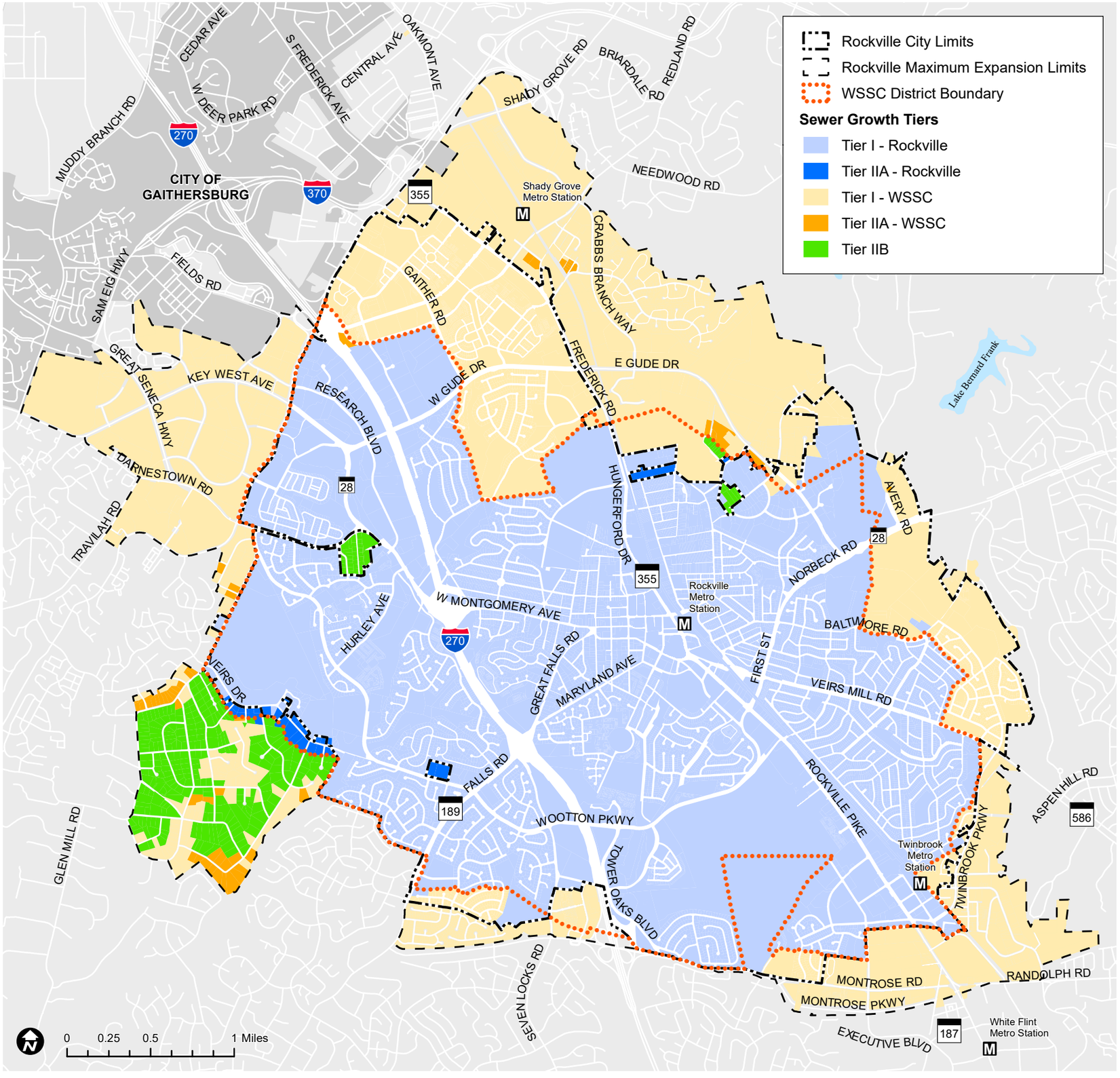
Development activity is monitored in accordance with Rockville's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) to prevent overtaxing the sewer conveyance system. There are two primary means to resolve sewer restrictions: 1) capacity upgrades through Rockville's Capital Improvement Program; and 2) capacity upgrades by developers through permits issued by the Department of Public Works. In Rockville, capacity upgrades typically are accomplished by increasing the diameter of the sewer pipe. Rockville's Department of Public Works also coordinates APFO review of water and sewer service with WSSC for private development projects in the city that are either within or near the boundary of the Washington Suburban Sanitary District (WSSD).

Upgrades funded by new development projects can be cost prohibitive for small projects that are located within areas of the collection system with capacity constraints. These projects have smaller budgets and lower revenues that cannot full fund sewer upgrades. The project must either wait for a larger development to install the upgraded sewer or for Rockville to upgrade the sewer through the City's capital improvement program. In some cases, the City has worked with developers to expand the conveyance capacity through public-private partnership agreements.

Areas with growth constraints identified in 2018 include:

- Rockville Pike (adjacent to Twinbrook Metro station)
- Rollins Avenue
- Hurley Avenue
- Veirs Mill Road

Figure 26: Sewer Growth Tiers by Service Area



It should be noted that the list above is fluid. As system improvements are made, constraints are eliminated. As development projects are approved, future constraints may be identified that the development must mitigate. The City must ensure that improvements and mitigations are implemented to maintain adequate sewer system capacity to serve the Rockville Service Area.

Sewerage Growth Tiers

In accordance with the Maryland Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012, local jurisdictions are tasked with creating a Growth Tiers Map that identifies where major and minor residential subdivisions may be located and what type of sewerage system will serve them. The City of Rockville has established growth tiers for areas within its municipal jurisdiction and maximum expansion limits (MEL), which includes property served by the City of Rockville sewer system as well as the WSSC sewer system.

The following definitions apply to the Sewer Growth Tiers in the map on Figure 26.

Tier I - Rockville: Currently served by sewer that is owned and maintained by the City of Rockville

Tier I - WSSC: Currently served by sewer that is owned and maintained by WSSC

Tier IIA - Rockville: Municipal Growth Area; not yet in the City sewerage plan. The area is within Rockville's Maximum Expansion Limits (MEL) and adjacent to Rockville's sewer service area. The City of Rockville plans to provide sewer service to these properties if the property is annexed into the city limits. The property owner generally assumes all costs to extend the public system(s) to provide service to the lot, including design, easements, and construction.

Tier IIA - WSSC: Municipal Growth Area; not yet in the Montgomery County sewerage plan. The area is within Rockville's MEL and within WSSC's sewer service area. Montgomery County's sewer service category for these properties is S-3.

Tier IIB: Property not currently served by a public sewer system that the City may consider for service on a case-by-case basis. Property may be served by the City of Rockville or WSSC. The property owner generally assumes all costs to extend the public system(s) to provide service to the lot, including design, easements, and construction.

Rockville and Montgomery County government recommend different Tier designations for properties within Rockville's MEL along Scott Drive and within the Glen Hills area of Montgomery County. Upon annexation, Rockville will require the properties to connect to public water and sewer. However, without annexation into Rockville, Montgomery County government continues to support Tier III designations, which applies to properties in large lot developments and "Rural Villages" on septic systems with no plans for future connections to public sewer. Rockville's Tier designation will apply upon annexation.

Glen Hills Subdivision

The area between Watts Branch and Glen Mill Road, known as the Glen Hills subdivision, is included in the City's MEL in large part due to problematic septic systems that have led some residents to inquire whether annexation into the City would be possible to obtain sewer service. The area is within the WSSC District boundary (known as WSSD), but is not comprehensively serviced by WSSC. The City would be permitted to provide water and sewer services only if an agreement were established between the City and WSSC. Such agreements have been achieved in the past for other properties. The City does have a drinking water service line in Rockville in the vicinity of this neighborhood.

No analysis has been done by the Rockville Department of Public Works or Department of Finance staff regarding the engineering and financial parameters involved of serving the Glen Hills subdivision area. A fiscal analysis is a key part of any annexation review process, with a determination of the level of infrastructure and other investment, if any, that the City would need to make versus the long term revenue from future property taxes on the annexed land.

This Plan recommends a proactive approach for annexation of properties where the following conditions exist:

1. Annexation is possible in the near-term, because of adjacency or the ability to create adjacency through annexation of other property or right-of-way;

2. There is an identifiable advantage to the property owner, such as City zoning or services, for being part of Rockville, and therefore a reasonable likelihood of owner interest in annexation;
3. The potential annexation is likely to be fiscally beneficial to the City and adequate public facilities can be provided;
4. The annexation is likely to benefit the overall economy, or other aspects, of the city;
5. Annexation would eliminate an enclave of unincorporated parcels surrounded by the city limit on all sides; or
6. The annexation would provide additional open space.

GOAL 4
Continue to meet stormwater management requirements by applying best practices for new development sites and retrofit areas, while also protecting and restoring stream banks.

Urbanization impacts how water moves over the surface of the land and the quality of Rockville's surface waters. Precipitation falling on a parking lot or building roof can not sink into the ground in the same way that rain or snow melt was absorbed by the deep forest that once covered all of the area now known as Rockville. These 'impervious' surfaces reduce the amount of ground area that can absorb water, lead to greater volume of water on the surface, and greatly increase the speed of water moving across the surface; hence the name 'runoff.' Stormwater runoff can lead to localized flooding during rain events and impact the quality of surface water, including streams that provide critical wildlife habitat and the source of the city's drinking water.

In order to manage stormwater, the third part of Rockville's water system was constructed: a system of stormwater drains, pipes, and treatment facilities. While separate stormwater pipes are installed throughout the city to reduce ponding or flooding during storm events, the need to treat stormwater has gained attention in recent decades, leading to increased regulatory requirements at the State and federal levels. In our region, the health of the Chesapeake Bay estuary is of critical importance as runoff from agricultural fields, animal lots, and urban areas all impact the water quality of the huge bay ecosystem. Restoration of water quality in the bay is dependent to a large part on stormwater management upstream, including in Rockville, as our three main stream corridors—Rock Creek, Cabin John Creek, and Watts Branch—carry runoff downhill to the Potomac River and ultimately into Chesapeake Bay.

Unlike many other cities, Rockville has a stormwater conveyance and treatment system that is not connected to its sanitary sewers. While other cities, including Washington D.C., struggle to treat huge amounts of extra water after storms in combined sanitary and storm sewers, Rockville's stormwater system has been separate from the start. Stencils painted on storm drains at the curb explain that there is a direct connection from the storm drain to the city's creeks, and also the potential hazard of litter or pollutants being carried to our waterways. In a sense the stormwater system is a construct that is grafted onto the natural hydrological system of the city.

For these reasons, Rockville's policy is to have a robust stormwater management program that addresses infrastructure, maintenance, and regulatory issues to minimize stormwater runoff impacts. While Rockville is already a leader in land use planning to protect steep slopes and stream corridors, and in construction of stormwater infrastructure, this Plan recommends the preparation of a comprehensive stormwater management program to meet requirements of the federal Clean Water Act's total maximum daily load (TMDL) program and the City's 2018 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, as administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment.

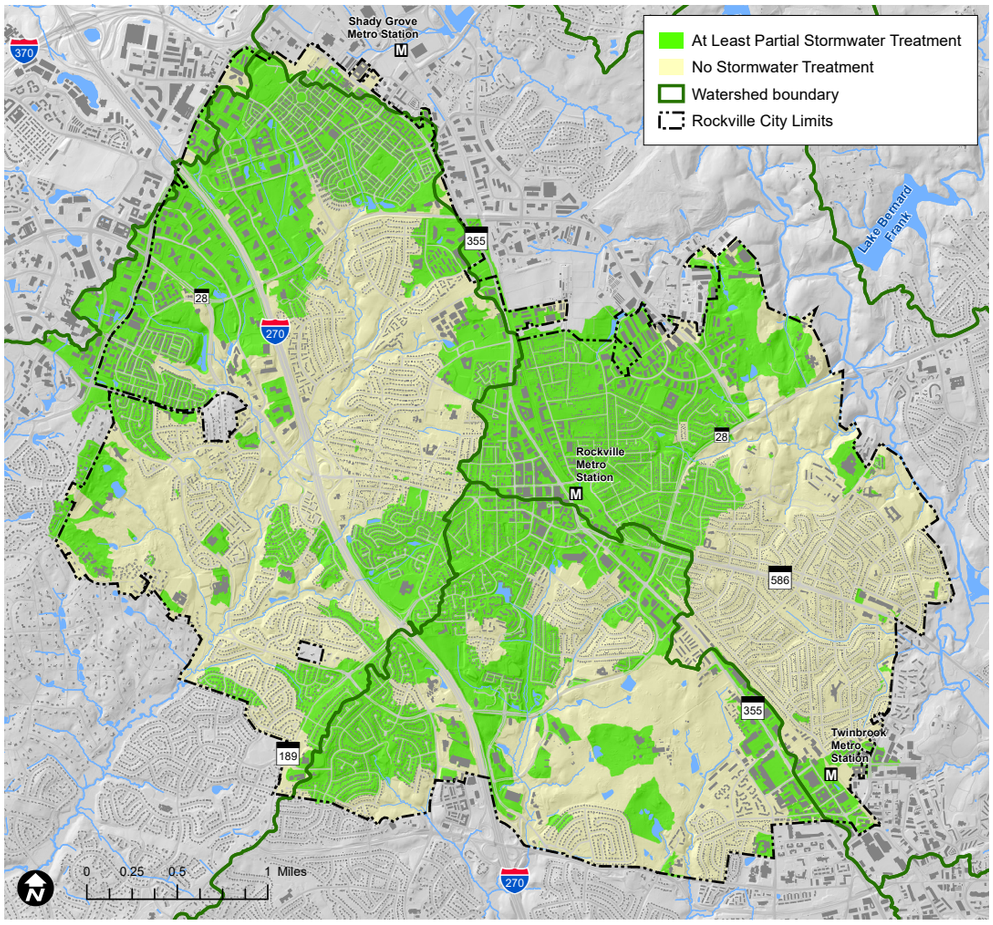
Much of the city was developed before stormwater management was required. While storm drains and conveyance pipe may be present, treatment of stormwater has been elevated in importance as the impacts of runoff on streams, rivers, and the bay have become clearer. Removing raw sewerage from streams was the first step in improving surface water quality, addressed by the sanitary sewer system in the early part of the 20th century. Treatment techniques for removing sediment and pollutants from runoff are still evolving, from holding ponds, to bio-swales, 'green' roofs, and landscape planters.

In terms of treating runoff, time is a critical factor. Slowing stormwater runoff by installing treatment facilities provides time for sediment and other pollutants to settle out of the water; slowing down runoff during storm events also helps to reduce the speed of water in stream channels, which reduces stream bank erosion. Runoff picks up pollutants from parking lots and streets, including oil, asbestos from car brakes, and heavy metals, while yards can add pet waste and fertilizers. Pollutants monitored by the State of Maryland include nitrogen and phosphorous, which causes algae growth in bodies of water.

Approximately 35 percent of the city is covered with impervious surfaces. However, parts of the city, such as Rockville Pike, have much higher amounts of impervious surfaces as a portion of its land area, with either pavement or building covering nearly all of some sites. Examples include shopping centers with large parking lots and car dealerships with hundreds of parked cars. Today, roughly 50 percent of the impervious surfaces in the city are partially or fully treated by a stormwater management facility.

The task going forward is to retrofit older, untreated parts of the city either through public works projects or as part of redevelopment to meet current standards. These standards are set so as to reduce the total amount of runoff and pollutants from Rockville in relation to watersheds and the Chesapeake Bay, calculated as the total maximum daily load, meaning the total amount of pollution that Rockville contributes to specific bodies of water. Reducing the total maximum daily load is accomplished by identifying untreated areas and constructing stormwater management facilities to treat them.

Figure 27: Stormwater Treatment Areas in Rockville



Policy 9
Prepare and implement a stormwater management program to ensure that Rockville is compliant with its NPDES permit.

Actions

9.1 Develop and implement a stormwater management program that meets or exceeds State of Maryland stormwater requirements.

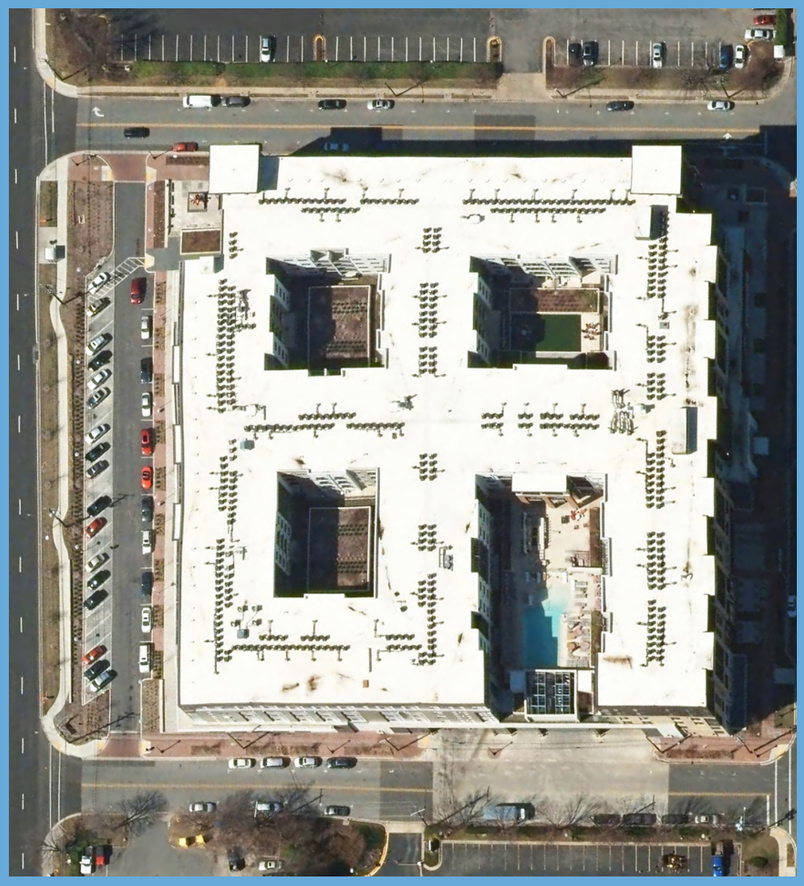
9.2 Develop next-generation tools to evaluate the effectiveness of the City's stormwater management programs and practices.

9.3 Keep an inventory of all public and private stormwater management facilities and conveyance infrastructure, including, location, size, age and material type of infrastructure.

9.4 Identify and implement effective data collection, assessment and management approaches to inform decision-making.

9.5 Recommend and implement effective inspection and enforcement controls, and a











Management and Treatment Technologies

Stormwater treatment is accomplished through structures and site design practices. In the past, the construction of large-scale holding ponds was the main form of treatment; these ponds allowed sediment and other pollutants to settle out of the water before it ran into nearby streams. Current best practices favor smaller-scale bio-retention and infiltration technologies.

Bio-retention combines living plants, usually a grass buffer strip and microorganisms in a mulch layer, with a sand bed and clay soils that retain the water, which can infiltrate into the ground or evaporate to the air. Importantly, toxic heavy metals are absorbed by the treatment facility's soils and are removed before the water enters the stream, improving water quality and habitat.

A wide variety of treatment approaches can be utilized in the context of any development site, with examples of specific facilities shown on the accompanying pages. These treatment techniques are used as part of an environment site design (ESD) process that seeks to reduce or eliminate runoff from properties under design development. Treatment facilities are incorporated into the site plan and design as part of the design for new structures, parking areas, and landscaping, usually referred to as the project's stormwater management. The most common treatment practices are permeable pavement, micro-bioretention, and 'green' roofs.

State of Maryland ESD programs compare the proposed site design and its runoff to a "woods in good condition," meaning that stormwater management should mimic how the site would have performed prior to urbanization. This challenging goal is necessary to get the state's streams and surface waters, including the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay, back to a condition that can support its vast ecological function and sustainable commercial and recreational fisheries, which of course include Maryland's celebrated crabs and oysters!

Stormwater treatment technologies installed as part of environmental site design in Rockville urban contexts retain and treat water that falls on rooftops, pavement, sidewalks, and landscaped areas. The City's police headquarters installed a green roof of sedum plants (opposite page, top left). The Galvan Apartments (opposite, top right) on Rockville Pike installed a combination of rooftop gardens in its courtyards, permeable pavement on a row of parking, and other techniques. Water from the roof of The Metropolitan building in Town Center is directed to downspouts piped to bio-retention planters that hold stormwater and provide landscaping (opposite, lower three images).

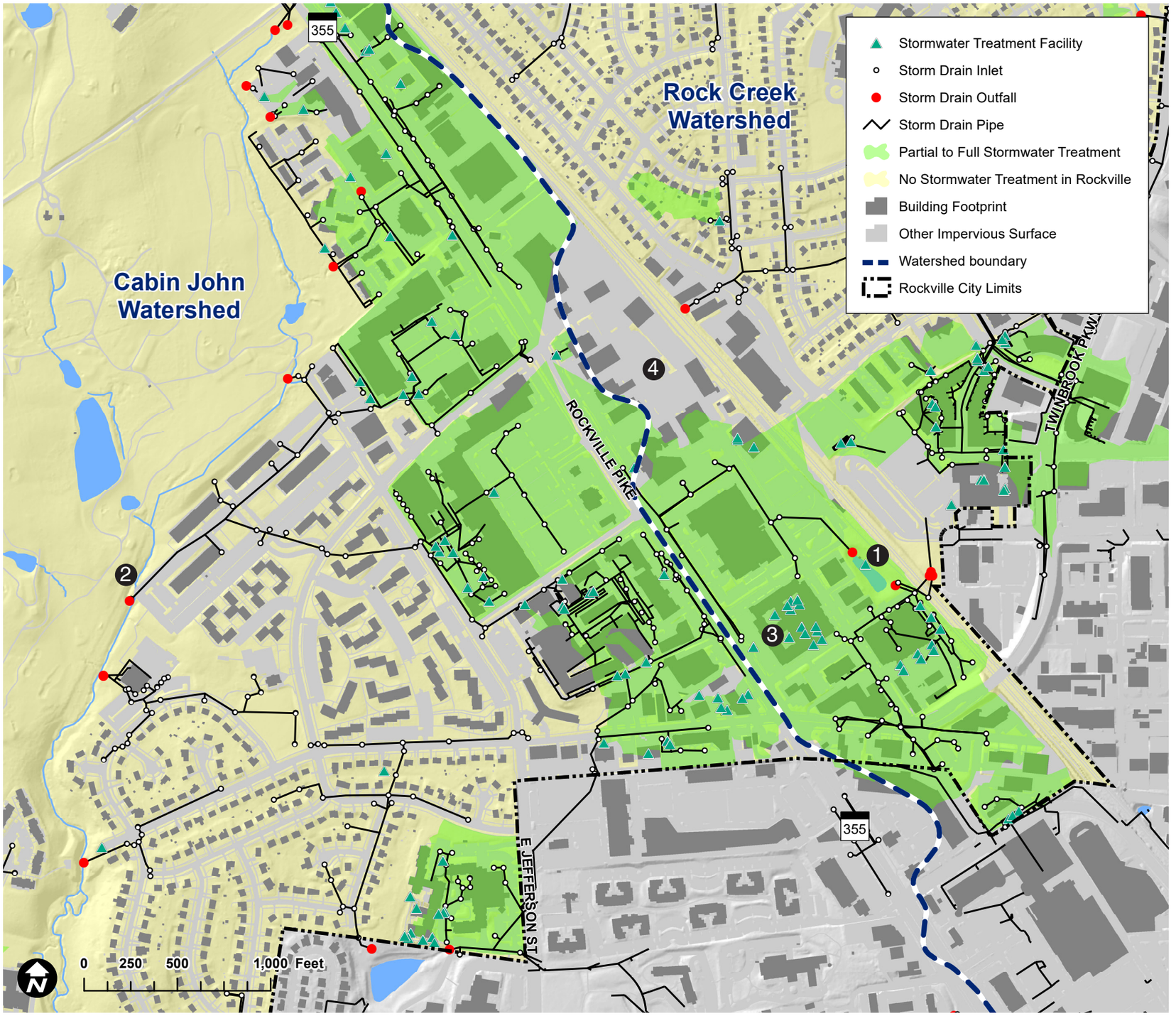


Bio-retention landscaping was installed between the sidewalk and street curb as part of new development along Dawson Avenue.



An historic house on West Jefferson Street installed a permeable paver driveway in 2018, shown here during construction of the gravel subsurface.

Figure 28: Stormwater Management and Treatment on Rockville Pike



The southern portion of Rockville Pike shows the stormwater management infrastructure in 2018. Water is captured by drain inlets and directed through pipes to surface outlets, either to treatment ponds like the one near the Twinbrook Metro station ❶, or directly to surface waterways, like the creek ❷ at the edge of the Woodmont Country Club. More recent developments have the required treatment facilities (triangles), for example The Galvan Apartments ❸ uses a variety of techniques. Impervious surfaces (gray), such as large parking lots, will have nearly 100 percent retention and treatment when redeveloped, for instance on the Twinbrook Quarter site ❹.

preventative maintenance program for public and private stormwater management facilities and conveyance systems.

9.6 Assess capacity of the conveyance system and identify potential areas with constraints that may cause flooding or maintenance issues.

9.7 Implement an effective emergency preparation and response program to protect stormwater infrastructure due to extreme storm events.

9.8 Develop agreements with other jurisdictions to, for example, clarify roles and responsibilities, establish permit credits, and address shared funding issues.

9.9 Implement recommendations from the City's three watershed assessment and management plans, Cabin John Creek, Rock Creek and Watts Branch, updating them as needed.

Policy 10
Minimize stormwater runoff impacts by constructing stormwater treatment facilities as part of new development and redevelopment projects.

Provision of stormwater infrastructure and capacity is a key part of development review for new projects. Although the regulations for stormwater are not covered by the City's adequate public facilities ordinance, they are very detailed and comply with State law. The approach for each site varies depending on whether the site is undeveloped, for instance as a forest or old field, or a redevelopment project.

Stormwater treatment requirements for new development projects are based in part on the amount of runoff from impervious surfaces, primarily the new parking lots and roofs planned for the site. A calculation is made on the volume of runoff in cubic feet of water, and a treatment system is designed into the site plan to treat that volume of water with a sufficient number of treatment facilities sized to the amount of runoff. In most cases, the design must be able to treat 100 percent of the runoff.

This Plan supports important stormwater management requirements and regional goals, with specific policies confirming Rockville's commitment to minimize runoff by constructing new treatment facilities. Redevelopment of older commercial corridors presents an opportunity to retrofit surface parking lots without any stormwater management to meet the latest standards and best practices. Improvements to the Rockville Pike corridor are most evident where new treatment facilities are installed as part of mixed use redevelopment, as shown in Figure 28.

Actions

10.1 As part of development review and permitting, ensure that all new development and redevelopment, at a minimum, meets State and federal stormwater treatment standards.



A storm drain inlet near the Twinbrook Metro station is painted with the message: "No filter, please don't litter. Healthy streams start here." The message indicating that the drain leads to a surface waterway.



Stormwater treatment facilities include naturalized facilities such as the Horizon Hills pond, which slows and treats stormwater runoff before it enters Watts Branch Creek. This project converted a dry pond to a wet pond, meaning it retains water most of the time, which enhances water quality and provides habitat for a variety of species.



Step pools were installed in Dogwood Park to retain and slow water in a series of steps as water flows from an outfall into a tributary of Cabin John Creek. The project also restored highly eroded stream banks. Slowing and retaining water behind the steps reduces the flash speed of runoff when it rains, which helps to protect banks from future erosion.

10.2 Update appropriate City ordinances when needed to keep pace with changes in treatment standards.

10.3 Partner with existing City CIP projects to showcase environment site design best practices, such as 'green streets', rain gardens, and bio-swales for reducing and slowing runoff and surface water pollution.

10.4 Develop a program to promote or incentivize environmental site design practices by private property owners, including improved stormwater treatment, less impervious surface, greater tree canopy, 'green' roofs, and reduced fertilizer and pesticide use for lawn care. (*See also Action 6.7 of the Environment Element*)

10.5 Evaluate mechanisms and develop guidelines to reduce drainage problems, stream erosion, and sedimentation on private properties.

Policy 11
Improve surface water quality by mitigating pollution sources, restoring stream banks, and retrofitting stormwater facilities in older parts of the city.

In addition to planning and regulating stormwater infrastructure constructed of concrete and pipes, the City is actively engaged in improving the condition of our surface streams to reduce erosion and improve ecological function and water quality. The City periodically studies the condition of its three watersheds. These studies identify potential capital improvement projects, which typically include stormwater management facility retrofits or stream restoration projects.

The City has used the watershed study process to assess stream-bank stability and habitat quality within streams. These are 'snap-shot-in-time' type tests that vary greatly based on the situation at the time of sampling. The City will continue to investigate different water quality sampling programs in the hopes of identifying a good balance between cost and level-of-effort for collection of data.

A portion of the sediment originating in urban areas is from edge-of-stream erosion, caused in part by fast-moving runoff

during and after storms. Stream restoration techniques are employed to reduce bank erosion, combined with upstream treatment facilities that slow down the speed and amount of runoff. All designs used by the City include habitat restoration elements, which mimic natural hydrology and reconnect the stream to the natural floodplain, whenever possible.

Recent stream restoration projects include:

- Daylighting and restoring Maryvale Creek in East Rockville;
- Watts Branch in the Wootton Mills area (1.25 miles);
- Nearly a mile of Watts Branch in Woodley Gardens; and
- Restoration of 1,000 linear feet in Dogwood Park at the confluence of branches of Cabin John Creek.

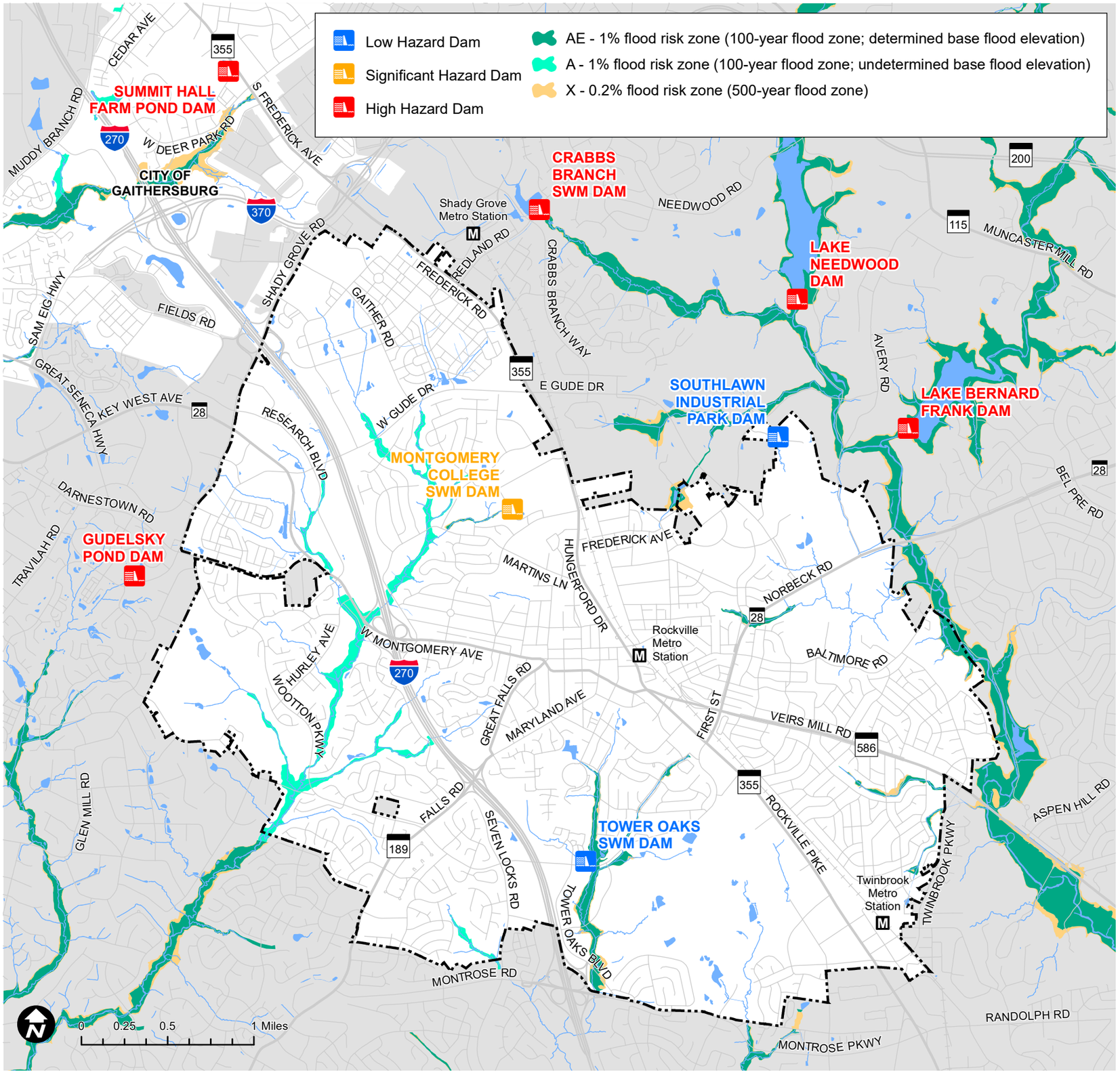
Per requirement of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits, the City monitors quality of design and implementation for five years after constructing a stormwater and stream restoration project.

Enforcement of City code established to protect clean water is an essential tool in the City's stormwater program. City staff inspect all stormwater management facilities and require maintenance activities be performed when needed. Staff routinely inspect outfalls to ensure there are no pollution flows entering the streams. Additionally, staff plans to establish a routine inspection protocol for pollution 'hot spot' areas to try and identify, and eliminate improper handling of potential pollution. There is a pollution hotline for residents and businesses to report water quality related issues. Whenever possible, pollution events are tracked back to their source and eliminated.



A stream restoration project in Upper Watts Branch Park

Figure 29: Floodplains and Hazardous Dams in the Rockville area



Actions

11.1 Retrofit stormwater treatment facilities, including stream restoration.

11.2 Investigate water quality sampling programs to identify a cost-effective method that provides accurate information about the overall health of the watershed or stream segment.

11.3 Identify and mitigate pollution 'hotspots' that may contribute pollutants such as nutrients, pesticides, road salts and snow-melt compounds, trace metals, sediment, fuels, and toxic chemicals to the waterways.

11.4 Work with the State and regional partners to better manage private and public salt use during winter weather events to address systemic watershed issues.

Policy 12
Expand education and incentive programs for stormwater management

The City runs a comprehensive stormwater education and outreach program to involve the public in stormwater issues and encourage participation in improving local water quality. Ongoing programs include a residential rebate program for small-scale stormwater management projects, known as the RainScapes Rewards program. Wide spread use of techniques like rainwater collection barrels or changing cultural practices, for instance a reduction in application of herbicides and acceptance of less-than manicured lawns, can have important cumulative effects on surface water quality. Expansion of these programs to commercial and institutional properties is also encouraged

Actions

12.1 Expand the RainScapes Rebate program for residential and non-residential properties.

12.2 Increase public awareness to improve water quality by reducing the use of fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and snow melt compounds and using Bay-friendly alternatives.

12.3 Establish methods for measuring efficacy of education and incentive programs.

Policy 13
Review and implement City ordinances to ensure compliance with the latest federal, State and local floodplain and dam safety requirements.

Flooding is the nation's most common natural disaster. Local flooding can occur because of hurricanes, over-topped dams, outdated or obstructed drainage systems, or rapid or prolonged accumulation of rainfall. Floodplain and dam safety management are necessary to minimize threats to public safety, property, and infrastructure. Adequate floodplain protection and restoration in Rockville is critical to provide temporary storage for floodwaters, regularize peak flood flow, maintain water quality, recharge groundwater, prevent erosion, provide wildlife habitat, offer recreational opportunities, and foster aesthetic quality.

The City of Rockville participates in the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program. As part of this program, FEMA identifies a community's flood risk by conducting a Flood Insurance Study that creates a Flood Insurance Rate Map. The study and map illustrate the extent of flood hazards in a community, by depicting flood risk zones, and determines the floodplain development regulations that apply in each flood risk zone, and who must buy flood insurance for their property. Generally, structures are not permitted to be built within designated flood zones in Rockville. A small number of structures in Rockville are located within existing FEMA-delineated flood zones, though, and as these structures are altered or replaced, they should be relocated to non-flood zone areas. In 2014, FEMA informed the City that a RiskMAP watershed study was in progress that may update the floodplains of the City of Rockville. Once the study is complete, the City will conduct an analysis of any new flood zones for their implications on existing or planned structures or vulnerable land uses in their vicinity.

Policy 14
Enhance stormwater system resiliency in response to changing precipitation patterns and amounts due to climate change.

Climate change is a global phenomenon that cuts through many issues related to development and the use of water in Rockville. There is now widespread scientific consensus linking global climate change to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to human activity. In recognition of this consensus, communities across the world are conducting evaluations to inventory GHG emissions for which they are responsible, identifying mitigation strategies to reduce GHG emissions generated by their community, assessing their local community and public infrastructure for potential climate change vulnerabilities, and developing adaptation plans to support community resilience.

Due to its location and elevation, Rockville is not directly impacted by rising sea levels like many of Maryland's coastal communities and the District of Columbia; however, it is still vulnerable to impacts of climate change. The main impacts include rising temperatures, precipitation variability, isolated flooding, drought, and an increase in the frequency and severity of severe storms.

Actions

14.1 Update the 1974 Rockville storm drain conveyance capacity assessment and identify areas at risk for flooding and drainage problems.

14.2 Prioritize and implement critical storm drain conveyance and stormwater facility improvements to mitigate against infrastructure impacts and property damage from flooding.

14.3 Lobby State and federal authorities to update stormwater infrastructure design, operations and maintenance standards to accommodate new rainfall/ storm event projections.

GOAL 5
Manage a fiscally sound water revenue structure and funds.

Rockville uses enterprise funds to account for operations financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises where the cost of expenses, including both operations and capital, are financed or recovered from the users of the services rather than general taxpayers. Revenue for the Water Fund and Sewer Fund is comprised primarily of usage and ready-to-serve charges. Usage charges are billed quarterly or monthly to customers, based on the size of the meter and metered water consumption. The ready-to-serve charge is a fixed fee, based on the water meter size, and is billed quarterly or monthly. The ready to serve charge is increasing at a faster rate than the usage charge to support the fixed fee expenses of the infrastructure renewal programs. Revenue for the Stormwater Fund is primarily composed of three components: stormwater utility fee, developer fees, and the fee-in-lieu as an alternative to development's required stormwater management.

Drinking Water

The main concern for the Rockville water system is how Rockville will fund the needed investments to rehabilitate its aging treatment plant and distribution system given that customers are using less water on a per capita basis. A critical challenge for Rockville's drinking water is that approximately 94 miles (55 percent) of the water distribution lines were constructed before 1970, and pipes develop problems as they age. These older pipes were constructed with unlined cast iron pipe that are susceptible to breaks and corrosion that constricts flow, known as tuberculation. Water quality can be impacted by older pipe and the flow to customers and to fire hydrants can fall below the necessary level. Action 4.1 recommends continuing a program of pipe replacement, but this work has a cost that must be projected and budgeted for within the water enterprise fund. A Revenue Sufficiency Analysis is prepared annually for the Water and Sewer Funds. This analysis considers the expenses of the capital and operational programs, as well as the revenue. The capital expenses are identified by the Water Master Plan, Sewer Master Plans, DC Water and WSSC. The revenue analysis considers the decreasing per capita demand's effect on the revenue and will consider customer class designations.

Sewerage System Financing

The City makes payments to WSSC for operating and capital expenditures at the Blue Plains treatment plant, which in turn WSSC pays to DC Water. Operating expenses are initially billed based on estimated costs and flow rates. These expenses are periodically reconciled based on actual Blue Plains operating expenses and actual wastewater flow rates. Capital expenses are billed based on actual expenses at Blue Plains and on Rockville's treatment allocation, which is 9.31 million gallons per day. The City also uses the Sewer Fund to pay for the rehabilitation of sewer pipes to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) and to increase the capacity of the pipes.

Stormwater

The City uses the Stormwater Management Fund to pay for watershed planning, stream restoration projects, retrofitting and maintaining existing regional SWM Facilities, maintaining storm drain conveyance systems, public outreach, and education, regulating stormwater and sediment control for development, and ensuring Rockville complies with State and federal regulation on stormwater. The stormwater utility fee, which is based on the amount of impervious area on a lot, accounts for approximately 90 percent of the annual revenue.

Adopting a utility fee as a source of revenue for the Stormwater Management Fund allowed Rockville to better distribute the costs of stormwater management to the entities that create stormwater runoff. The Mayor and Council approve the utility fee to ensure there is adequate funding to support the program. The fee is a charge for service assessed for all property owners—including homeowners, businesses, institutions, government property, and schools—and is necessary for the City to comply with State and federal clean water requirements. Therefore, it is structured to recover costs for the services the City must provide to protect public safety, property, and the environment, and to share these costs among all property owners equitably.

Policy 15
Ensure that Rockville's water, sewer, and stormwater enterprise funds are financially stable and able to meet long term costs for maintaining Rockville's infrastructure.

Actions

15.1 Regularly review, analyze, and communicate to Rockville customers the rate structures for the water, sewer, and stormwater systems.

15.2 Apply the utility funding models to ensure that funds are available for both operating and capital expenditure, consistent with the Mayor and Council's adopted financial policies for the water, sewer, and stormwater systems.

15.3 Implement customer assistance programs that provide for financial support, education, emergency assistance, and conservation upgrades to help low- and fixed-income customers.

15.4 Explore options with regional partners, should the current environment change, to reduce Rockville's unused sewer allocation at Blue Plains Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant, to lower the City's share of capital costs.

15.5 Seek public-private partnership funding arrangements to support longer term water, sewer, and stormwater capacity projects in areas identified as constrained or targeted for future growth.

15.6 Consider leveraging the Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund, administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment's Water Quality Financing Administration. The fund provides below-market interest rate loans and additional subsidies—such as loan-forgiveness and grants—that finance construction of publicly-owned wastewater treatment works, implementation of non-point source/estuary capital improvements, and/or implementation of U.S. EPA defined "green" projects. Projects are ranked and can receive up to 100 points. Seven points are awarded to projects within a Sustainable Communities area. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*)


46 MEDICAL CENTER
M
ABC

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Vision

Rockville will proactively adapt to the changing business environment and strategically leverage its assets and position as the County seat within a dynamic region to enable an innovative and thriving local economy. It will do so to advance equitable economic development, creative and diverse jobs creation, the quality of life for its residents and workforce, and to enhance the long-term fiscal standing of the city.

Downtown Rockville contains a range of commercial and residential development as seen from the multi-modal Rockville transit station in this view of the former Rockville Mall (now occupied by several Montgomery County government agencies), two recently built office buildings (home to the Choice Hotels corporate headquarters), and Rockville Town Square.

Rockville's core economic strengths are rooted in its strategic location within the greater Washington Metropolitan area and forward-thinking policy decisions made throughout past decades. The 1960 and 1970 comprehensive plans identified an opportunity to grow the fiscal base of the city by planning for a technology corridor along U.S. Interstate 270 (I-270), partly related to the increasing regional presence of federal contractors and high-technology industries. Today, Rockville is at the core of the I-270 technology corridor, a major economic hub for Maryland. With a high concentration of biotechnology, life sciences, information technology and advanced research companies, Rockville maintains a solid presence in the regional, state, and global economies.

As the seat of Montgomery County, Rockville is also home to multiple local, county, and state government offices and educational institutions, which attract thousands of employees and students to Rockville every day. New buildings for the State of Maryland District Court and Montgomery County Circuit Court were completed at the corner of Maryland Avenue and East Jefferson Street in 2011 and 2014, respectively, expanding the government district presence within Rockville's Town Center core.

Situated just north of Town Center is the Montgomery College Rockville campus, drawing approximately 16,000 students, faculty, and staff to its campus. The Universities at Shady Grove, just north of the city limits, offer more than eighty undergraduate and graduate degree programs at one centralized location. The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) headquarters rounds out this key cluster, further adding to a strong employee base within the city.

At the regional scale, Rockville Pike (MD-355) is a well-known commercial shopping destination. Traditionally, the Pike's land use pattern has been designed for, and dependent on, automobile access; however, as market and consumer preferences have changed, so too has its commercial retail market. A shift to capture the desire for more-walkable and bikable, experiential shopping has begun to take shape along the Pike, as well as around the city's transit stations and neighborhood-scaled shopping areas.

In addition the city's highway and local street network are two multi-modal WMATA Metrorail Red Line Stations, Rockville and Twinbrook, with a third, Shady Grove, just beyond the city limits and accessible to city residents. Each station provides extensive local bus service and Rockville Station includes MARC and Amtrak train stops. The city's mass transit and highway accessibility provide broad mobility options to its workforce, residents, students, and visitors both at the local and regional level.

This chapter brings together, for the first time in a Rockville comprehensive plan, policies focused specifically on the city's local economy and its role in the broader region.

Goals for Rockville's economic development efforts include:

1. Capitalize on Rockville's competitive advantages, including its accessible location, cluster of advanced technology industries, educated workforce, and position as the seat of Montgomery County, to continue to grow and diversify its economy.

2. Promote a positive business climate that supports local and small businesses.

3. Activate, promote, and grow Rockville's commercial destinations and urban mixed-use centers.

4. Participate in and encourage cooperative public-private partnerships that strengthen both the local and regional economy.

ROCKVILLE DELIVERS...

Supportive Business Environment

Wide-range of incentives and assistance; local and regional partnerships.

Multi-modal Transportation Hub

Metro and commuter rail; express and regional buses; three major airports within 30 miles; regional highway access; extensive bicycle network.

Highly Prepared Workforce

Three times the national average of professional degrees.

Range of Housing Options

From established residential neighborhoods to new mixed-use activity centers.

Superior Quality of Life

Walkable and bikable neighborhoods and activity centers; extensive parks and recreation system; highly rated schools; emerging arts and culture scene.



It is a short walk between the Rockville Metro Station and the government facilities, office buildings, and retail shops in Town Center.

Previous plans have woven economic development recommendations into related chapters. This Plan recognizes shifting dynamics, evolving markets, and the need for Rockville to strategically tend to its economic development in the coming decades. The COVID-19 pandemic further revealed the importance of establishing nimble responses to changes, both short- and long-term, in commuter patterns, retail owner and consumer needs and preferences, office space needs, etc.

Recognizing rapidly changing market trends and technologies, it is recommended that the policies and actions contained in this Element be continuously monitored and that appropriate adjustments be made to ensure that the City considers the most relevant economic development tools for implementing policies. Adjustments to policies that take into account changes in the long-term view of Rockville's economic advantages and opportunities would be consistent with this Plan.

Summary of Community Input

Overall, residents, business owners, and economic development professionals voiced optimism about Rockville's local economy and its status within the region. Pride was expressed about the history and future of Rockville Pike as a commercial retail destination, and there was enthusiasm for new development around the city's transit stations. Participants commented that the transit station areas should be the focus of more concentrated mixed-use development, although some cautioned that the development should not be at the expense of established residential neighborhoods.

The city's suburban office areas were also discussed, including the need for more amenities in those locations to attract and retain employees. Opportunities to work more closely with Montgomery College on economic development issues were identified, both in terms of development around the campus and in workforce preparation. From a process standpoint, it was echoed by multiple groups that certain regulations, including signage and parking, needed updating to reflect a more business-friendly environment.

GOAL 1
Capitalize on Rockville's competitive advantages, including its accessible location, cluster of advanced technology industries, educated workforce, and position as the seat of Montgomery County, to continue to grow and diversify its economy.

Policy 1
Develop an equitable economic development strategy and marketing plan that capitalizes on Rockville's competitive advantages.

Marketing Rockville's advantages to businesses as a city at the center of the region's I-270 technology corridor (with a highly talented workforce, a superior quality of life, and an extensive transportation network) has been an important component of Rockville's strong economy. As commercial and office markets evolve and new development at the city's borders adds market competition, Rockville will require more proactive, creative, and data-focused marketing, branding, and economic development strategies for the future. These strategies should capitalize on the unique qualities of the Rockville community and establish a stronger sense of place. Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI), the City's non-profit economic development entity, is committed to bolstering its strategic marketing initiatives.

Actions

1.1 In partnership with REDI, maintain and regularly refine an economic development strategy and marketing plan that is equitable and keeps pace with changing needs, technologies and market trends to promote the city as a desirable location in which to start, locate, and grow a business.

1.2 Collect and analyze data that informs Rockville's economic development strategy and marketing plan.

ROCKVILLE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INC.
MARYLAND

To formally guide economic development efforts, in 1997 the City established the Greater Rockville Partnership, a nonprofit economic development corporation. In 2004, the corporation's name was changed to Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI).

Today, REDI, a public-private partnership, works to strengthen the city's economic base through programs geared toward business entrepreneurship, expansion, retention, and recruitment. As part of its core services and resources, the Maryland Women's Business Center was created in 2010 as a special initiative of REDI to help meet the needs of entrepreneurs, especially women-owned businesses, at every stage of building their business.

1.3 Proactively identify and market Rockville's tourism and recreational opportunities in addition to its strengths and assets to emerging industries, for which support may add value and provide additional local employment opportunities.

1.4 Coordinate with REDI, the Rockville Chamber of Commerce, and other partners to implement Rockville's economic development strategy and marketing plan.

Policy 2
Actively support Rockville as a center for innovative technologies, creative industries life sciences, advanced research, and cybersecurity.

One of Rockville's greatest economic strengths is that it is home to many companies and organizations that focus on advanced technologies. The I-270 corridor in the northern part of the city is the center of this activity. The area retains

a robust cluster of biotechnology, pharmaceutical, and advanced research companies, as well as growing activity in cybersecurity and other new industries, together drawing roughly 9,000 employees.

Rockville's 1960 and 1970 master plans identified a potential to capture the growing demand for space from the federal government and high-tech industries. Research Boulevard and Piccard Drive were designated to accommodate this demand and developed as modern research and office parks on spacious lots. The area thrived for decades as an industry attractor and employment center. In recent years, however, demand for office space has softened as market trends shifted, the federal government shrunk its building footprint, and older buildings became functionally obsolete.

The City has begun to rethink ways in which to accommodate new and expanding businesses and the changing wants of their employees. In 2017, the City partnered with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to better understand Research Boulevard's market position and to outline options for future land use, urban design, and economic development actions. The ULI Technical Assistance Panel report was largely optimistic about the area's continued potential, with some re-imagining and targeted investment, to remain a strategic employment center for the city. This Plan endorses that vision.

Actions

2.1 Strengthen public-private partnerships with Montgomery County, the State, non-profit organizations, entrepreneurs, and technology companies currently located in the area.

2.2 Work with area academic institutions with life sciences, cybersecurity, and major STEM programs to maintain and enhance a skilled local workforce.

2.3 Identify potential City and REDI actions or programs for bridging the financing gap for wet laboratory space and other industry-specific infrastructure.

2.4 Develop an action plan for the Research Boulevard and Piccard Drive corridors, with a focus on the retention and growth of office uses and businesses.

2.5 Support alternative transportation options, such as shuttle buses, adjusted Ride On bus routes, and bus rapid transit (BRT), for isolated office areas to provide greater options to connect employees and goods to job centers. (*See also the Land Use & Transportation Elements*)

Policy 3
Work with Montgomery College to maximize the economic development potential of the campus and its programs for Rockville residents and businesses.

The Rockville 2040 process identified opportunities to work more closely with Montgomery College on economic development and connectivity issues, both in terms of the area around the campus and in workforce development and access. Although just outside of Rockville's city limits, The Universities at Shady Grove, which is part of the University of Maryland system, was also recognized as an important resource for the city's business community and workforce.

South of Montgomery College is the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) headquarters. Both of these institutions are employment centers for the city. They also have tremendous commercial purchasing power from an operational perspective as well as directly from the thousands of faculty, staff, and students.

Actions

3.1 Plan space for new commercial and service businesses on land adjacent to the Montgomery College campus to more efficiently meet the existing demand generated by faculty, staff, and students.

3.2 Strengthen links between programs at Montgomery College, The Universities at Shady Grove, local workforce development agencies, and the business community to leverage internships and facilitate job placement for graduates and transitioning workers.

3.3 Collaborate with Montgomery College, The Universities at Shady Grove, and other institutions to attract and retain businesses in Rockville.

Policy 4
Ensure that Rockville has first-class infrastructure (transit, roads, fiber, broadband, water, sewer, etc.) to meet evolving business needs, maintain competitiveness, and improve regional access to employment centers.

Infrastructure for the 21st century is paramount to Rockville's continued economic development. Much of Rockville's economic success is based on its strategically beneficial location and its roadway and transit infrastructure that provides relatively quick connections to other nearby activity centers and the nation's capital. The two Metrorail stations, Ride On, Metrobus, and I-270 are real assets for the business community in Rockville. Business owners have said that Rockville is in a "sweet spot" for reasonable commute times. The City supports efforts to maintain and improve regional transportation systems.

Rockville's sidewalks, trails, parks, and water systems also enable private investment in the city, which must be continually improved and maintained to enable further economic development. Fast Internet service is a new backbone for many businesses, and the City seeks to ensure that its Internet infrastructure meets the highest global standards.

Actions

4.1 Support customized local-serving transportation initiatives that will improve access (people and goods) to and from employment centers.

4.2 In coordination with the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), support Capital Improvement Program (CIP) items that target upgrades to water and sewer capacity needed for economic development. (*See also the Water Resources Element*)

4.3 Partner with Montgomery County government, service providers, and other partners to enhance, market, and leverage the city's high-speed Internet connectivity for the city's business community.

4.4 Use City information technology (IT) resources and expertise to anticipate and plan for continuous advancements in IT.

GOAL 2
Promote a positive business climate that supports local and small businesses.

Policy 5
Foster a positive business climate that supports business startups, retention, expansion, and the attraction of innovative and diverse industries.

Rockville strives for a business climate that supports local and small businesses so that they can thrive in a diversifying local economy. Entrepreneurs, inventors, restaurateurs, small-shop owners, and office owners all form the bedrock of innovative economic activity and diverse job growth. Small businesses are nimble and their workforces are diverse and adaptable. They provide important services to the city, add unique character, are a key source of local employment, and sometimes grow to become large businesses.

As with office and commercial markets, the shape of small and entrepreneurial businesses is also changing. In Rockville, like many other cities, an increasing number of small startup businesses operate out of shared work spaces or home offices, supported by Internet communications, home delivery, and pickup services. As the small business community grows and evolves, the City is committed to keeping pace with new and strategic support initiatives.

Actions

5.1 Partner with REDI to expand support for commercial business development and recruitment, with a focus on supporting Rockville Town Center and neighborhood shopping areas.

5.2 Align public investment policies with the needs of startups, existing businesses, and businesses relocating from other areas.

5.3 Ensure that policies are in place to facilitate small business incubator space, such as the Rockville Innovation Center, pilot project testing, and industry-specific infrastructure.

5.4 Establish performance standards to measure the effectiveness of business incentive programs that are funded and managed by the City and REDI.

5.5 Connect Rockville businesses with the resources and services offered by Montgomery County and State workforce development agencies.

5.6 Seek periodic input from economic development and related professionals on City regulations and policies with respect to the business environment. A task force and surveys are potential approaches.

5.7 Review the City's regulatory standards and practices for impact on business needs and City development goals.

5.8 Achieve an efficient, rapid, and transparent development review and permitting process.

Policy 6
Celebrate a culture of entrepreneurship and small business ownership to help retain existing small and local businesses as they grow and foster new opportunities.

Actions

6.1 Encourage entrepreneurship by fostering links between employers, students, unions, investors, innovators, educational institutions, incubators, and financial institutions.

6.2 Develop programs that promote, highlight and celebrate equitable economic development and support both new and existing women- and minority-owned businesses in the Rockville market.

6.3 Monitor issues regarding home-based and other small business startups, in such areas as new delivery technologies, to ensure City regulations evolve with updated business technologies.

Policy 7
Support neighborhood and local shopping centers where there is market opportunity.

Neighborhood shopping centers and smaller commercial centers directly serve the shopping needs of their immediate areas. King Farm and Fallsgrove both include 'village center' shopping areas anchored by major grocers. Twinbrook's shopping centers on Veirs Mill Road provide important neighborhood commercial uses, but also serve a broad area beyond the city's Twinbrook neighborhood. Rockshire Village Center was a successful indoor retail mall when it



A Maryland Women's Business Center (MWBC) event.

opened in 1978 and remained viable for several decades, until market conditions in its vicinity changed and the center's grocery store anchor closed in 2012. Rockshire is currently vacant, though is being considered for redevelopment as a residential development with community amenities (*for more about Rockshire Village Center, see Planning Area 14*).

Similar to Rockshire Village Center, Rockville's smaller commercial centers are challenged by low residential densities nearby, aging structures, competition from newer commercial areas, and City parking regulations that may limit new use potential by requiring more vehicle parking than there is space available in these otherwise walkable and bikable areas.

The City is committed to taking action to support its primary shopping areas and maintain its walkable and bikable, neighborhood-serving commercial centers as outlined in the following policies. The adopted neighborhood plans also provide guidance on neighborhood-serving commercial uses, and the Land Use Element of this Plan is a further resource.

Actions

7.1 Provide resources and support to small, minority, and entrepreneurial businesses, especially encouraging the establishment of small-scale uses in less-served areas.

7.2 Implement place-branding campaigns to promote local businesses and economic districts.



Twinbrook Shopping Center on Veirs Mill Road.



North Washington Street businesses.

7.3 Plan for residential density as part of shopping center revitalization to support commercial businesses by building in a customer base and allowing for site-specific mixed-use projects. Shopping center revitalization should not be at the expense of displacing small businesses, unless efforts include providing assistance to return to the same shopping center or in another area within the city. (*See also the Land Use Element*)

Policy 8
Preserve light and service industrial land and uses to ensure that productive businesses thrive and provide employment and services to area residents.

Industry is an important component of a city's economy, providing jobs, key services to the community, and relatively affordable spaces for small businesses and entrepreneurs. In recent years, growing market pressure for mixed-use and residential land uses has resulted in a loss of industrially zoned land in many municipalities. In Rockville, light and service industrial uses are clustered primarily in the Southlawn Lane and Stonestreet Avenue areas, with some also on Lewis Avenue. These areas are further discussed in the Land Use Element of this Plan, and guidance may also be found in the applicable neighborhood plans and planning areas.

The city's light and service industrial areas serve the local, regional and, to a certain degree, national market. This Plan

recommends retaining the light and service industrial land, particularly in the Southlawn Lane area, while recognizing that there may be complementary uses that could support the existing light or service industrial businesses.

Actions

8.1 Ensure that City policies and regulations are supportive of the retention and growth of light and service industrial uses, where suitable.

8.2 Consider allowing other compatible uses in light and service industrial areas if those uses are supportive of and a benefit to the existing industrial areas.

8.3 Consider targeting, as part of the Economic Development Strategy, specific industry clusters within light and service industrial areas. (*See also Policy 1 of the Economic Development Element*)

GOAL 3
Activate, promote, and grow Rockville's commercial destinations and urban mixed-use centers.

Policy 9
Maintain Rockville Pike's market position as a regional shopping destination, supported by residential uses.

Rockville has over 4 million square feet of non-office commercial space, broadly discussed as 'commercial' in this Plan. This classification covers all types of businesses with over-the-counter sales, including restaurants, gas stations, hotels, and a myriad of other types of businesses providing services directly to customers.

The city's most regionally well-known shopping area is Rockville Pike, or 'the Pike' for short. In addition to daily needs, the Pike is a place to buy durable goods, including furniture and automobiles. It is the city's main economic engine for commercial sales and a major employment area. The "power of the Pike" in terms of sales volume relates directly to the tens of thousands of vehicles that use the road every day and a land use pattern that has favored commercial uses. The Pike has 2.5 million square feet of space in a variety of development forms, primarily commercial centers with large surface parking lots.

New, urban-style mixed use developments are also planned along the Pike, which will further elevate its position as a destination for 21st century experiential shopping. Promotion and enhancement of the Pike is a continuous goal of the City.





Historic view of Rockville Pike and Congressional Plaza (top). Source: Peerless Rockville. Congressional Plaza today (bottom). Source: Federal Realty.

Actions

9.1 Work with property owners to improve the function and aesthetics of the Pike, as outlined in the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan and Planning Area 9.

9.2 Encourage the formation of a local business organization and promotional strategies for Rockville Pike businesses.

9.3 Capitalize on the cluster of diverse restaurants and shops, with foods and goods from around the globe, through a coordinated marketing and positioning strategy and activities.

9.4 Enhance and extend connections between both sides of Rockville Pike, Metro Stations, and future fixed stations for high capacity buses, capitalizing on the increased demand for transit-oriented development, creative placemaking, and amenities in these areas.

9.5 Improve wayfinding, signage and safety on Rockville Pike, for people walking, biking, rolling, and driving.

9.6 Continue a transition from highway-oriented commercial forms to a more urban Rockville Pike, based on a mix of uses, including residential, employment, and retail uses, in places oriented to bicyclists and pedestrians. (*See also Policy 10 of the Land Use Element*)

Policy 10
Promote Town Center as a business and administrative center supported by a lively mix of, restaurants, hotels, small shops, business headquarters, residential and service providers.

Rockville Town Center is a highly important commercial area, imagined and developed as a mixed-use urban area with an emphasis on capturing surrounding foot traffic and transit users. The mix of uses includes eating establishments, small shops with unique goods, offices, cultural and arts attractions, and multi-unit residential buildings.

Boutique shops and restaurants rely on the 'draw' of Town Center to bring foot traffic, but the lack of an urban-scaled anchor and arts and culture experiences is a concern. Growth in residential population in new mixed-use and multi-unit buildings, and growth of office employment, is crucial to the future of this area. Additional ground-level commercial or office space will add to the overall experience that shoppers, employees, and visitors find downtown.



View of outdoor seating and street parking on East Montgomery Avenue

Actions

10.1 Establish a coordinated public-private management approach, such as a Town Center Business Improvement District (BID), to maintain common areas, coordinate events and programming, and promote area businesses.

10.2 Improve the customer experience of parking in Town Center to make it competitive and attractive. Potential areas of action may include, among other options, coordinating among public- and privately-owned garages, adjusting the number of parking spaces required for new development, and adjusting parking fees and times. [Note: In July 2021, the City advocated for free two-hour parking in Town Square, without the need for validation.] (*See also Actions 12.4 and 14.7 of the Transportation Element, Actions 1.4 and 10.5 of the Housing Element, and Action 22.1 of the Land Use Element*)

10.3 Improve wayfinding and signage in the Town Center, for people walking, rolling, biking, and driving.

10.4 Examine the City's development regulations to ensure that they are aligned with Rockville's goal to promote further development that supports a vibrant Town Center.

10.5 Attract and retain activity generators to Town Center, such as corporate headquarters and offices.

Policy 11
Cultivate a richer arts, entertainment, and social scene in Rockville.

Arts and entertainment experiences contribute to the growth of the local economy and have the potential to generate value beyond the event itself. Artists tend to cluster, and a solid art "scene" can lead to a network of new venues, businesses, and employment opportunities.

Placemaking is an integral component of successful arts and entertainment spaces. Rockville Town Center, with its walkable blocks, outdoor areas, and mix of commercial spaces, is equipped to further grow as an entertainment district, as are some of the city's eclectic corridors near transit. Closely aligned with this aspiration is the desire by many Rockville residents, as was heard during the citywide Rockville 2040 forums and listening sessions, for more entertainment, educational, and cultural experiences.

Actions

11.1 Produce an arts and entertainment strategic plan, in coordination with economic development providers and arts and culture representatives, which provides details on City actions and results.



Hometown Holidays Memorial Day celebration in Rockville

11.2 Review City and County codes to identify and address potential impediments to creating more nightlife, specifically in regard to live music in restaurants, cafes, or other venues, while still balancing, and taking into account, impacts on residents, including noise levels and hours of operation.

11.3 Work with theater, dance, and music organizations, and private developers, to investigate potential locations for a 'black box' theater in Rockville, with special focus on Town Center.

11.4 Seek opportunities to work with arts programs at Montgomery College and promote coordination between college staff and individual artists, galleries, and performing groups in the city.

11.5 Evaluate the potential for an industrial arts or "maker" district in the city, with potential locations in or near the city's existing industrial and commercial corridors, including Stonestreet Avenue, Southlawn Lane, East Gude Drive, and Lewis Avenue. (*See also Action 16.6 of the Land Use Element, Action 3.4 of the Municipal Growth Element, and Planning Area 17*)

11.6 Explore potential public investments, or incentivized private investment, in venues for popular social activities, which may include programs supported by the Department of Recreation and Parks.

GOAL 4
Participate in and encourage cooperative public-private partnerships that strengthen both the local and regional economy.

Policy 12
Strengthen coordination between the City, County, State, and Federal government on economic development issues at the staff and elected officials levels.

While Rockville's position as a city within the much larger Montgomery County can at times be challenging to navigate, City and County goals are more frequently aligned than not. For example, a successful partnership effort between the City of Rockville and Montgomery County led to the relocation of Choice Hotels International headquarters to downtown Rockville. Rockville is committed to continuing to build partnerships and strengthening its economic development coordination with all levels of government and applicable agencies.

Policy 13
Celebrate and capitalize on Rockville's position as the seat of Montgomery County.

The governmental functions of Montgomery County located within the City of Rockville are a critical component of the city's economy. Montgomery County government employs roughly 4,700 people in Rockville offices, most of them concentrated in the Town Center. Town Center is also host to the Montgomery County Circuit and State of Maryland District courthouses, both of which underwent new construction and expansion within the past decade. Although the county government and court systems are tax exempt, the thousands they employ and the 'spin-off' businesses they create and support, contribute significantly to Rockville's economy.



County office and court buildings are group together on East Jefferson Street, between Maryland Avenue and Monroe Street.

Actions

13.1 Seek opportunities to further coordinate with Montgomery County to pursue major businesses to locate in Rockville.

13.2 Seek to retain and attract Montgomery County departments and county employees in Rockville, especially in Rockville Town Center.

13.3 Seek to retain the Montgomery County Public Schools headquarters in Rockville.

Policy 14
Work to attract and maintain government contractors and federal agencies within Rockville city limits.

While federally-owned property in Rockville is relatively limited, and the federal mandate to shrink its footprint has had less of an impact in the city than in other areas, private industries with long-term federal contracts are among the city's top ten largest employers. These include Westat and Lockheed Martin Information Systems. The City and REDI should monitor federal leases and align policies toward the attraction and retention of federal agencies and contractors, as they impact overall demand for office and lab space. Consideration should be given to expanding efforts toward international institutions, non-profit organizations, and future industries to further diversity the city's employment potential.

Actions

14.1 Monitor the state of GSA-leased office space in the city, report changes to Mayor and Council on a regular basis, and promote Rockville as a place to locate federal agencies.

14.2 Promote Rockville as a strategic location for high-employment domestic and international government contractors.

14.3 Consider how the loss of federally-leased space may impact the viability of Rockville's office parks and plan accordingly for new uses.

Rockville's Largest Employers (2021)

Employer	Employees
Montgomery County Government	5,165
Montgomery County Public Schools	2,500
Montgomery College	1,950
Westat, Inc.	1,750
City of Rockville	518
Choice Hotels International	500
Pharmavene, Inc.	500
Meso Scale Diagnostics, LLC	496
The EMMES Corporation	475
Otsuka Pharmaceutical	471
BAE Systems	440
Client Network Services, LLC	400
Turning Point Global Solutions, LLC	385
Lockheed Martin	370
Woodmont Country Club	350

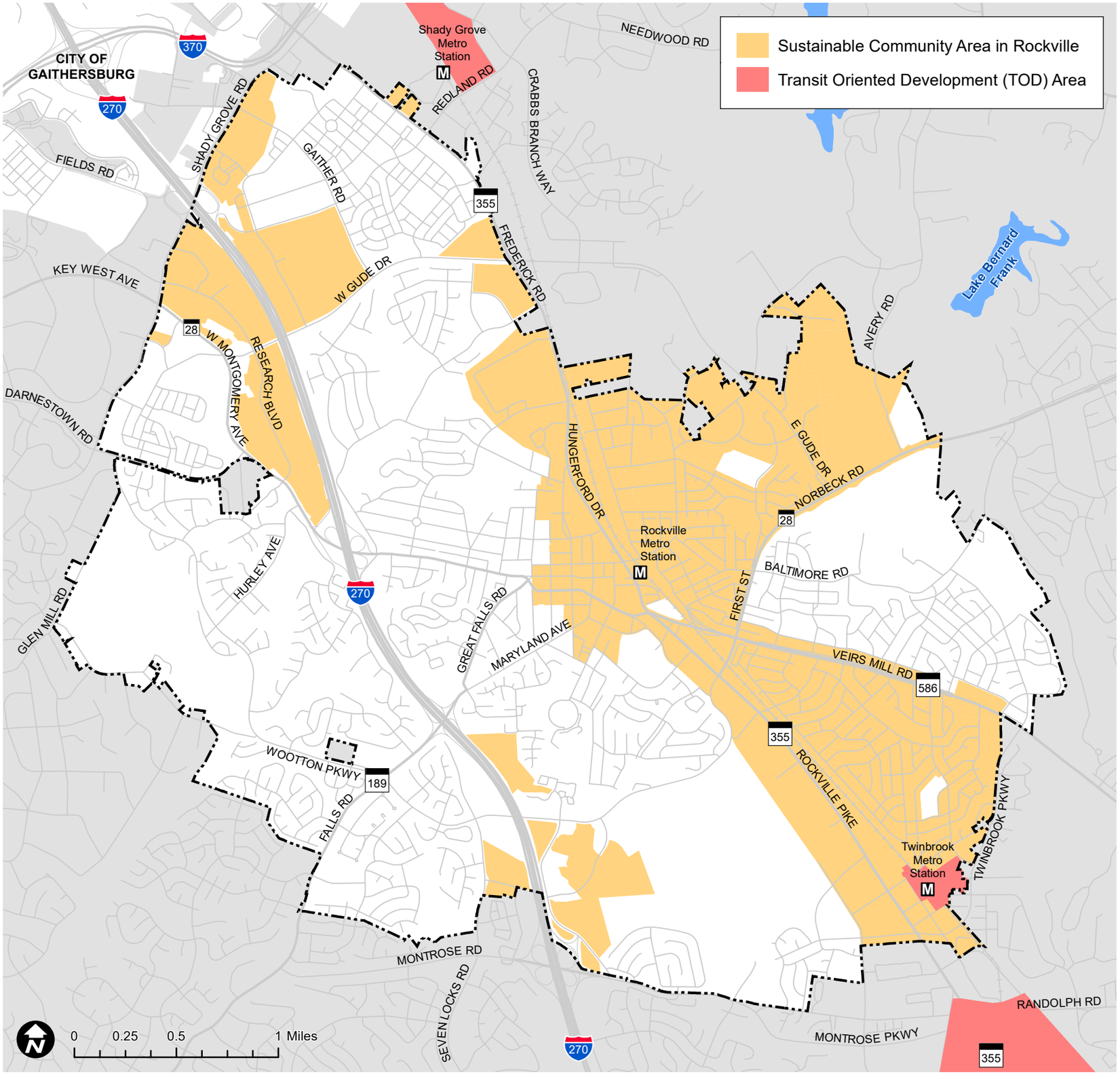
Source: CoStar, InfoUSA, Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI)

Policy 15
Improve workforce housing options for employees at a range of incomes.

Expanding workforce housing options, from an economic development lens, is a critical element of remaining competitive and sustainable. To relocate or expand, businesses want to know there is a range of nearby housing for their employees. As a community, keeping employees as local as possible also adds to economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Workforce housing is generally defined as housing that is affordable to persons who are gainfully employed in professions that do not pay a sufficient wage to afford market-rate housing, but whose income may not qualify for affordable housing programs, such as teachers, fire-fighters, day care workers, nurses, etc.

The gap between employee incomes and house prices, particularly for middle- and lower-wage earners, continues to grow in Rockville. For lower-paid workers, this gap often results in commuting long distances from places with lower housing costs, which limits time and investment in Rockville. A key challenge for the City, and many other communities, is to identify and designate appropriate strategies to accommodate a continuum of housing for a spectrum of employee income levels. This subject is explored further in the Land Use and Housing Elements of this Plan, and the

Figure 30: Sustainable Communities Areas within the City of Rockville (2020)



land use policy map includes designated areas appropriate for different housing types. The following actions target partnership building, including with private developers and government agencies, geared toward expanding housing choices and decreasing the affordability gap.

Actions

15.1 Build partnerships with applicable county, state, and federal agencies and with private developers to develop and implement programs geared toward increasing workforce housing within the city.

15.1.a At the local level, collaborate with Rockville Housing Enterprises and representatives from Montgomery College.

15.2 Support Montgomery County government and State of Maryland efforts to make the mandated minimum wage a living wage for Rockville's workforce.

Policy 16
Leverage Rockville's Sustainable Communities Designation to Support Economic Development in targeted areas.

The Maryland Sustainable Communities program, established in 2010 and administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, encourages interagency and cross-governmental collaboration by providing designated Sustainable Communities areas with access to a toolbox of State-sponsored financing programs and tax credit incentives, including the Community Legacy Program, Strategic Demolition Fund, Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program, Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing Authority, Job Creation Tax Credit, and Sustainable Maryland. Figure 30 shows the areas within the city that are designated as Sustainable Communities areas as of 2020.

Also included in Figure 30 are State-designated Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Areas. The State of Maryland defines a TOD area as a place of relatively higher density that includes a mix of residential, employment, shopping, and civic uses designed to encourage multi-modal access to the station area.

More information and updates on these programs and Rockville's Sustainable Communities areas can be found at the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's program web page.






Tyvek
NOTICE
SITE ENTRANCE
GATE #2
THOMPSON AVE

HOUSING

Vision

Ensure that current and future Rockville residents have a diverse array of quality housing choices that are affordable and livable, at all socio-economic levels.

Rockville has a variety of housing choices including detached houses, townhouses, and apartments, with the majority of new production in larger apartment buildings on former commercial sites.

From the original 1803 “Plan for Rockville” that encompassed just over 40 acres, to the 13.5 square miles of today, neighborhoods that are primarily residential or in a mixed-use context have accounted for much of Rockville’s growth. Some neighborhoods are primarily residential, while others are in a mixed-use context. All have access to parks, schools, shopping, employment centers, private institutions and government services, either by a short car drive or by walking or biking. For most of its history, Rockville was considered a highly desirable and relatively affordable place to own a home. Land and construction costs were low, and the majority of the city’s houses and neighborhoods were modest, keeping down payment costs and mortgages within reach of a broad segment of incomes for Rockville residents. With regard to housing affordability, it is clear that times have changed.

While rising housing values are beneficial to those who already own property, high housing costs are a challenge to many individuals and families, especially newcomers to Rockville and those with lower incomes. Finding a place to rent or buy is more expensive than in decades past. Much less undeveloped land is available in the city or county, while the overall regional population has increased markedly, resulting in a rapid increase in the cost of land. Other pressure points to the city’s housing challenge are Rockville’s desirability as a place to live and work within the Washington D.C. region, and a growing senior population. It is within this complex context that this Plan recommends continued housing development in Rockville’s urbanizing areas and modest additions to new residential housing construction types in the city’s established neighborhoods, complemented by policies in this Housing Element that guide the City’s response to housing cost burdens.

During the development of this Plan, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged as a significant short-term impact on many aspects of the city’s residents. The immediate and most visible implications of the pandemic on housing are wide-ranging, especially for those of low- and moderate-income households. The pandemic impacted housing supply and location as communities sought to expand both. Many communities, including Rockville, instituted temporary measures to stabilize rents and halt evictions during the emergency. The long-term housing implications of the pandemic are yet to be determined. Rockville will continue to monitor and react appropriately to continue to pursue the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

This Element is organized in three parts. The first section addresses market-rate housing production and related City policies. The second section looks at the City’s incentives to support production of affordable housing, and City programs to directly require affordable units in new projects. The third section addresses the City’s direct investment in public housing and support for other housing subsidies and services.

Summary of Community Input

Overall, Rockville residents provided positive impressions of where they live. One stated: “One of the best things about Rockville is the residential neighborhoods.” Another said:

Goals for housing in Rockville include:

1. Foster sufficient market-rate housing development to provide housing affordable for the wide range of those who live, and wish to live, in Rockville.
2. Create and improve incentives, programs, and policies for production and preservation of quality affordable housing.
3. Expand and improve Rockville’s public and assisted housing programs for low- and very-low income residents.

"The neighborhoods are comfortable; there's a community feeling." Yet individuals also expressed ideas about improving the existing housing stock, the types of housing that will be needed in the future and where new neighborhoods will be located.

Affordability was discussed as one of the most significant housing issues. It was noted that children who were raised in Rockville, and who are now adults, often cannot afford to rent or buy in the city. Rockville 2040 participants also observed a growing need for housing that is designed to meet the needs of an aging population. Many advised that there is a desire among residents to, "age in place," but that it can be difficult to do so for many reasons, especially if one wants to remain in a single-unit detached home, does not drive, or has a fixed income.

There were discussions at community meetings about appropriate locations for housing in the future, with many saying that the highest residential density should be close to the Metro stations. There was support for locating housing near amenities such as transit, parks, retail, services, restaurants, and employment. Some noted that there is a need for more housing in Town Center to further support the retail and restaurants there.

Concerns were raised that large, single-unit detached houses have been built only to be divided into multiple dwelling units and rented. There was also interest expressed in there being more middle-range housing types, such as duplexes, townhouses, rowhouses, and small-scale apartment buildings, as well as the preservation of garden-style apartments that offer affordability and two- and three-bedroom opportunities. Property maintenance and code enforcement was mentioned as a concern in some areas where the housing stock is older.

GOAL 1
Foster sufficient market-rate housing development to provide housing affordable for the wide range of those who live, and wish to live, in Rockville.

Approximately 90 percent of housing in Rockville was produced through market-rate production and transactions between buyers and sellers, or landlords and tenants. The remaining 10 percent of housing units are supported by City or other programs to produce affordable housing, or are public and assisted housing units directly subsidized by public investment. The construction of new housing by the market is shaped by housing demand within the context of land availability and costs, and regulations and impact fees set by the City of Rockville and Montgomery County.

It is important to recognize that individuals and families with different incomes, ages, resources, and arrival dates in Rockville have different experiences in the city's housing market. Most market factors are beyond the control of the City, given that the overall market is regional, particularly in regard to demand based on available jobs and overall housing supply across the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

According to housing needs projections by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG), the Washington Metro area will need to add approximately 430,000 new housing units between 2020 and 2040 to meet projected demand (MWCOG, Round 9.1 Cooperative Forecasts. October 10, 2018). The City of Rockville's share of this expected new demand is approximately 8,600 new



A small apartment building sits comfortably next to detached houses in the Lincoln Park neighborhood.

housing units by 2040, an increase to the 28,800 housing units in Rockville in 2020 to a projected demand of 37,400 housing units in 2040.

In order to better understand the housing market in Rockville, the Department of Planning and Development Services (which at the time included the Housing Division that is now a standalone department, Housing and Community Development) worked with a housing consultant to produce a "Housing Market and Needs Assessment" report in December 2016. Data, analysis, and recommendations from the report informed the drafting of housing policies in this Element.

What the analysis begins to reveal is how the housing market, based on supply and demand, continues to change in response to social changes and the fact that Rockville is a mature community, with a shrinking supply of undeveloped land.

Trends affecting the housing market in Rockville include:

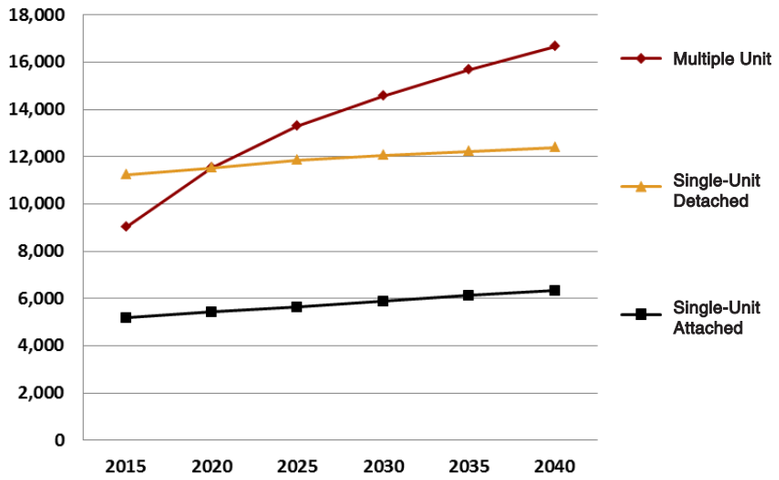
- Regional job growth;
- Lack of undeveloped land and individual lots;
- Rockville's desirability as a place to live and work;
- A growing senior population;
- Zoning changes to allow housing in commercial corridors;
- Limited new single-unit detached construction;
- Thousands of new multiple unit apartment units;
- Growth in row house and townhouse demand, but limited available land;
- Drop in homeownership level and growth in renters;
- Historically high housing values and rents;
- Critically short supply of first-time buyer opportunities; and
- Significant housing burden for many renters and buyers.

There are major changes underway in the types of units being constructed in Rockville. In 2015, 35 percent of all Rockville households were living in multiple unit (apartment or condominium) buildings. In recent years the construction of multiple unit buildings has been the fastest growing type of housing in Rockville, with a projection of an additional 7,700 units by 2040. As a result, the number of multiple unit residential dwellings is expected to surpass the number of single-unit detached houses before 2025 (see chart, above).

Townhouses, and other attached houses, are projected to have the second highest growth, increasing by 1,200 units over the forecast period. The number of detached houses is expected to have the slowest growth of the building types. In 2015, 44 percent of all households in the city lived in detached houses. By 2040, it is projected that just 35 percent will. While there will still be demand for detached houses, the availability and cost of land will limit production.

The table below summarizes the city's housing stock by housing type, as of the most recent housing inventory conducted in June 2021.

Projected Rockville Housing Growth, 2015-2040



Source: City of Rockville demographic forecasts, 2018

Summary of Residential Units by Housing Type

Detached Single-Units	Attached Single-Units	Multiple Units	Senior Living Units	Total
11,300	4,150	11,560	2,800	29,810

Source: City of Rockville property records, 2021

With recently completed and approved development projects taken into account, the city anticipates that by the end of 2021, 60 detached single units, 4,130 attached single units, and 840 multiple-unit residential dwellings will add to the city's total housing supply.

Looking beyond 2021, additional residential dwellings units are expected to be produced in the city over the next few years, based on their current construction or application status. The table below summarizes these projects by their housing type and project status. Altogether, the total dwelling units in the development pipeline, as of July 2021, is 5,853 new units.

Policy 1
Recognize that City regulations affect the supply of market-rate housing in Rockville and consider adjustments as demographic and market trends change.

The Washington metropolitan region attracts thousands of new workers, who in turn create demand for housing. Analysis of the housing market is based on regional demand, but only a portion of the region's residents will choose to

Residential Project Development Pipeline, July 2021

	Detached Single Units	Attached Single Units	Multiple Units	Senior Living Units	Total Units
Site Plan Approved and Under Construction	30	354	378	150	912
Site Plan Approved	-	180	460	-	640
Project Plan Approved	-	194	2,951	-	3,145
Pending Application	-	353	564	239	1,156
Site Plan Approved or Under Construction Units	30	534	838	150	1,552
Total Units in Development Pipeline	30	1,081	4,353	389	5,853

Source: City of Rockville records, 2021

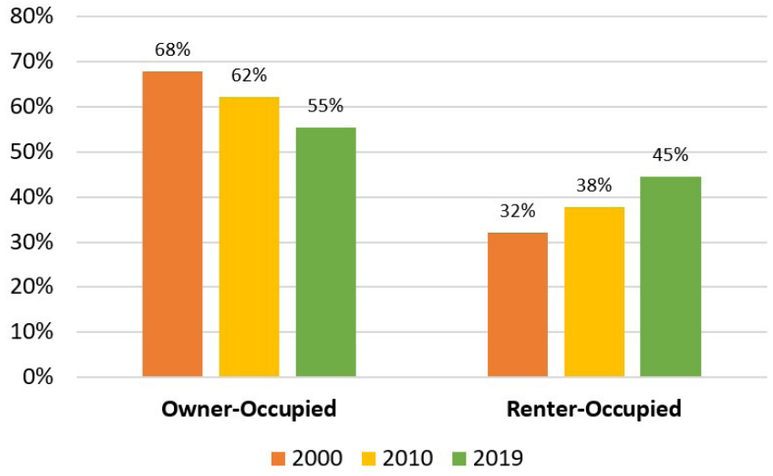
Importance of Zoning in Housing Supply

Land use policies and zoning, in particular, are important tools for supporting the development of housing for individuals and families at all income levels and of all household types. These tools can facilitate or incentivize the production and/or preservation of the types of housing that are needed. However, changes may be appropriate in some parts of the city and not in others. (p. 5)

Medium density housing, including townhouses, but also triplexes, fourplexes and other small multiple unit properties, can be a source of affordable rental and ownership housing in the city and provide housing options for a wide range of incomes. Zoning for medium density housing will likely be most appropriate in transition areas, between single-unit detached neighborhoods and higher-intensity or commercial areas, but there may be other areas in the city where medium density zoning would make sense. Creating opportunities for the development of a wider range of smaller housing types can potentially create more lower-cost housing, but can also broaden the range of housing options for individuals and families in different phases of their lives . . . . (p. 64).

"Housing Market and Needs Assessment," December 2016

Change in the Percentage of Homeownership



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 decennial Census and 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-year estimates.

buy or rent housing in Rockville. City policies, both past and present, are a factor in the supply of housing and the types of housing available within the city. The housing market analysis conducted prior to this Plan shows that demographic shifts are changing both the demand for specific housing types, and the types of housing being constructed. Conditions and markets will continue to change over this Plan's 20-year planning horizon and a continuous discussion and analysis is recommended.

One example of a demographic trend is the increase in one-person households living in Rockville, from 24 percent in 2000 to just over 27 percent in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 decennial Census and 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, respectively). Part of this increase is the result of construction of new apartment buildings with a majority of the units being one bedroom; another is the increase in seniors living alone.

As of 2019, about one-third of households in the city were two-person households, 18 percent were three-person households and 22 percent had four or more people living together. The overall average household size in the City of Rockville was relatively stable between 2000 and 2019, declining only slightly from 2.65 to 2.61 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 decennial Census and 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, respectively).

In general, the demographics of the Rockville population have changed somewhat from the predominate 'nuclear' family model that shaped residential land use and zoning policies in the city's post-war period. Rockville's supply of existing single-unit detached houses will remain in strong demand for families with children, yet very few new detached houses are projected to be built in the future.

The issues are complex and dynamic. Therefore, this Plan recommends a continual monitoring and adjusting of City policies to respond to future needs.

Actions

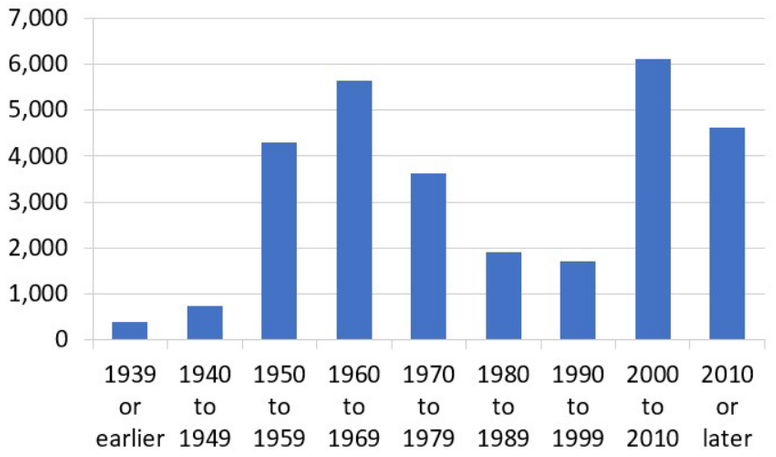
1.1 Develop a plan to provide a comprehensive approach to guide the City's affordable and mixed-income housing development efforts.

1.2 Monitor housing supply and demand over time through surveys or studies to determine if the City should encourage particular housing types.

1.3 Monitor and evaluate impact fees imposed on new residential development to determine their cumulative impact on the production and cost of market-rate housing units.

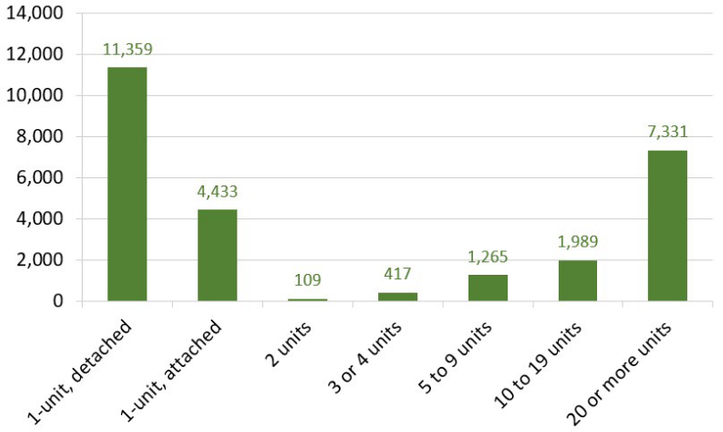
1.4 Identify regulatory approaches to reduce housing costs that balance the competing needs of development, such as amending minimum requirements in exchange for more affordable units or other needs. (*See also Action 10.5 of the Housing Element, Action 10.2 of the Economic Development*

Residential Units Built each 10-Year Period



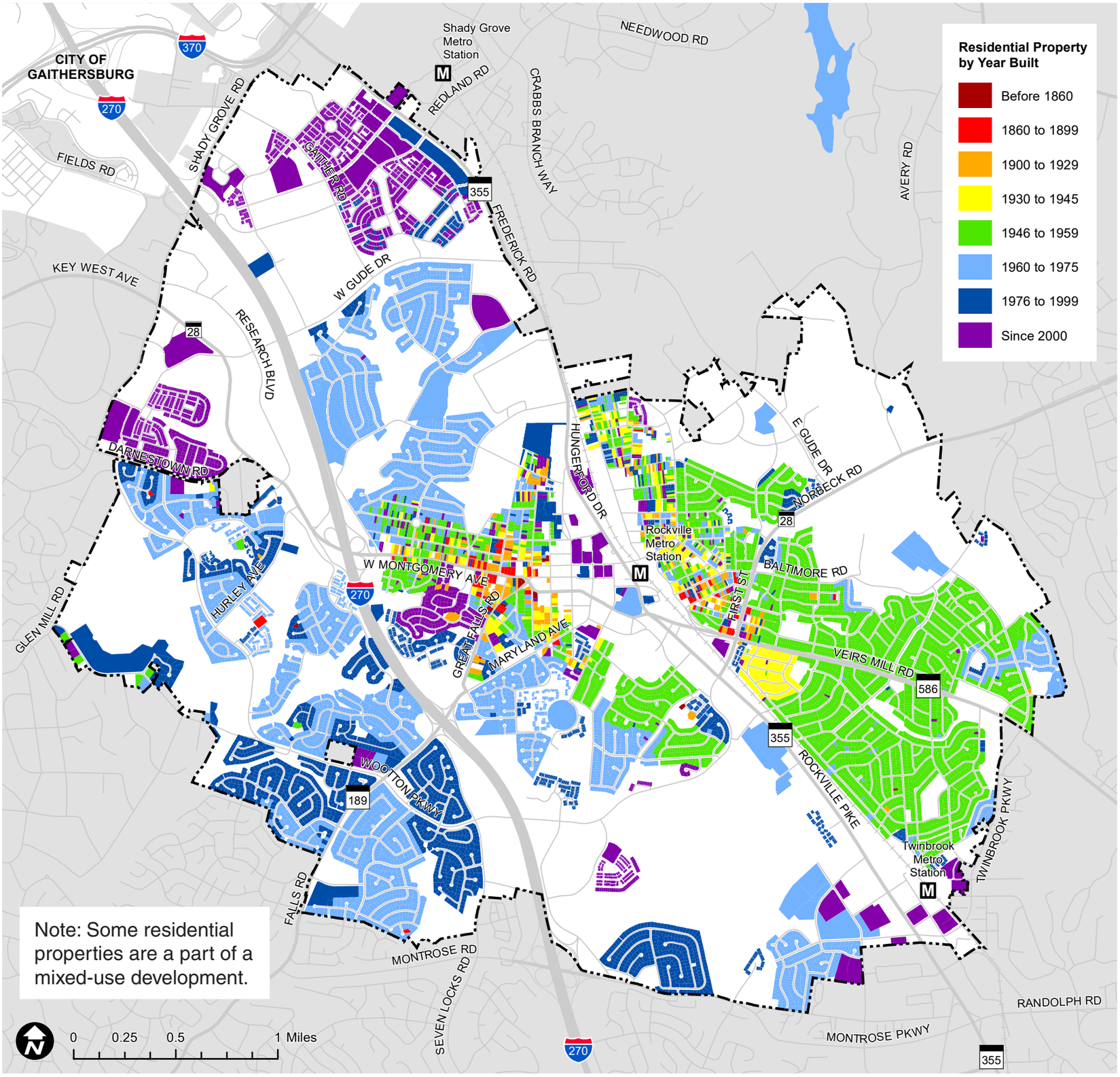
Source: City of Rockville property records, 2020

Dwelling Units by Type (2019)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Figure 31: Housing Eras by Year Built in Rockville



Element, Action 22.1 of the Land Use Element, and Actions 12.4 and 14.7 of the Transportation Element)

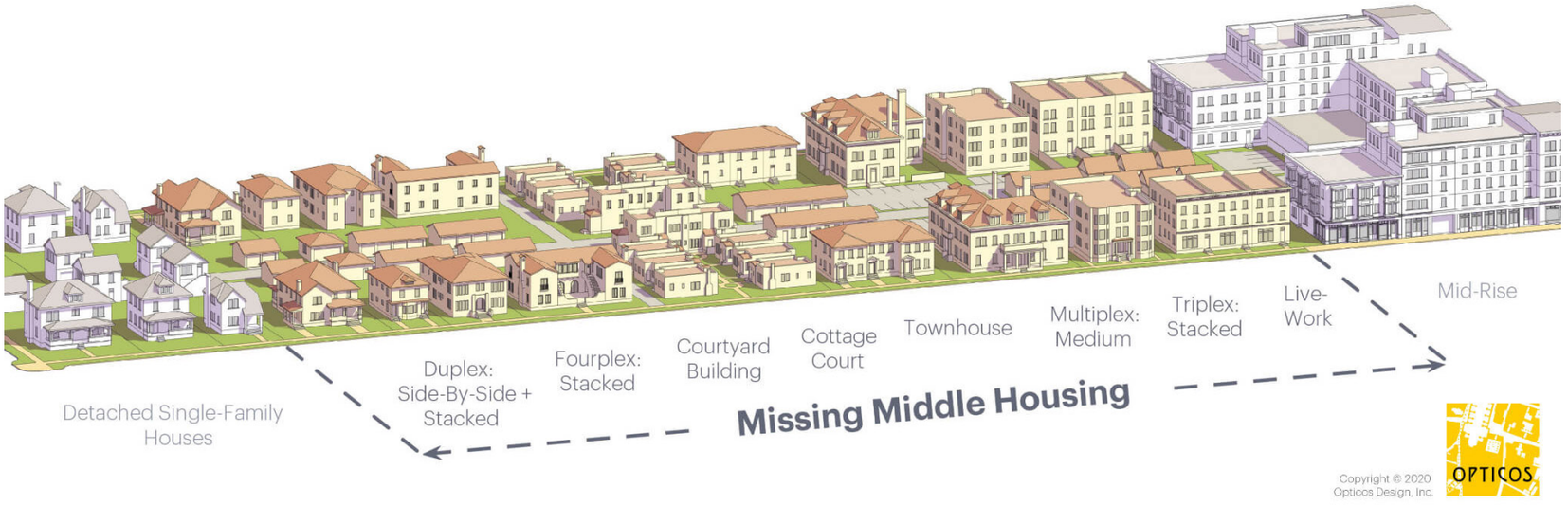
1.5 Monitor trends in generational housing turn-over in the city to anticipate changing demands for land uses, various housing types, City programs and services, school enrollment, and travel patterns.

Policy 2
Promote diversity in the supply of housing to meet market demand and the wide range of community needs and household incomes.

Two key factors have changed the housing market in Rockville over the last few decades: the growth in the regional population, creating more demand; and the lack of easily accessible undeveloped land, limiting supply. Both factors increase the cost of land for new construction or redevelopment, which is leading to a steep drop in the construction of single-unit detached houses, and steady growth in the number of new apartment buildings. Between 2011 and 2021, while the number of single-unit detached homes remained relatively stable in Rockville, multiple unit residential (apartment and condominium) units increased by about 2,500 units, to a total of 10,506 (City of Rockville, 2018 Residential Unit Count and Associated Estimated Population). Recent large-scale residential projects, such as King Farm, Fallsgrove, and Tower Oaks, are prime examples of this trend that delivered a mix of apartments, condos, and townhouses, with only a limited number of detached residential homes.

While a rental apartment is more attainable to people moving into Rockville (especially those without any savings for a mortgage down payment), a number of factors, including land, construction, permitting costs, and regulatory requirements lead large developers to build at the high end of the rental market. The City's housing market analysis also shows that rental costs are rising for those moving to Rockville.

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau, rents in the city have increased at a higher rate than household incomes. Per the 2000 Decennial Census, the city's median household income in 1999 was $68,918 and the median rent was $972. In 2019, median household income was $106,576 (a 55 percent increase) and median rents were $1,921 (a 98 percent increase) (U.S. Census Bureau. 2019 ACS 5-year estimates). This reflects a nearly doubling of rents in the city over the 19-year period, similar to the rent increases in other high-cost, desirable neighborhoods in the region, including in the District of Columbia, Bethesda and Arlington.
The result of this rapid rise in rents is that the cost of both



Missing Middle Housing is a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units—compatible in scale and form with detached single-unit detached homes—located in a walkable neighborhood. (Source: Opticos Design)

detached houses and rental apartments are rising out of reach for segments of the population. Part of the problem is the limited housing types currently available. While some city residents live in older, more affordable apartment communities, such as garden apartments, a wide variety of traditional construction types, those in between single-unit houses and big apartment buildings, is missing. These 'missing middle' housing types, also discussed in the Land Use Element, include:

- Duplexes;
- Triplexes;
- Fourplexes or quads;
- Sixplexes;
- Townhouses or rowhouses;
- Small apartment buildings; and
- Garden apartments.

These housing types are largely missing in American suburbs, including Rockville, in part because land use policies and zoning do not allow their type of construction in single-unit detached residential zones, which in Rockville is more than a third of all parceled land. The great benefits of these 'missing middle' housing types is that they share the cost of land among more units, and create smaller units that share party walls, which is especially important for providing new market-rate affordable housing.

Another approach to attaining greater housing affordability is to allow small-lot detached houses, which can reduce the cost of land for individual homes. Some cities have changed their regulations to allow for narrower lot frontages and 'skinny houses,' that have cost benefits similar to townhouses or rowhouses, but do not share party walls.

Production of duplexes, triplexes, and quads are rarely included in contemporary housing projects delivered by large development corporations (with the exception of duplex units delivered to meet the City's affordable housing requirements.) In fact 'missing middle' types are usually more like 'mom and pop' businesses, frequently as simple as an owner renting out the lower half of their house in order to make the mortgage affordable or a large lot being split into a few individual lots. Allowing dwelling units above commercial space may also be appropriate in some locations. Similar benefits are possible with an accessory apartment internal to a single-unit house, and an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), which locates a second separate unit on an existing lot.

The small scale of 'missing middle' housing projects also means wood-frame construction, and driveway or small garage parking, which is less costly on a per unit basis than construction of structured parking in large apartment buildings built of concrete and steel. Duplex or triplex units sold as condominiums can provide a much-needed path to homeownership.

Clearly there is demand in Rockville for these types of housing arrangements, evidenced from enforcement challenges regarding accessory apartments and families doubling up into the existing housing stock to share the cost. Many anecdotal accounts were heard during the Rockville 2040 process, along with calls for changes to allow more flexibility to allow accessory apartments and ADUs. The Mayor and Council directed staff late in 2018 to draft zoning text amendments to allow accessory apartments and freestanding ADUs and this Plan establishes policies for these types of living arrangements, as well.

Overall, the City's challenge is to ensure that the appropriate mix of housing, whether by construction type, tenure, affordability level, or available amenities, is available to those who wish to live in the city while preserving the high quality of life that Rockville residents enjoy.

Actions

2.1 Explore revising zoning regulations that may present obstacles to new housing types. (*See also Goal 2 of the Land Use Element*)

2.2 Develop design guidelines for 'missing middle' housing types, as infill product or at the edges of existing neighborhoods, so that the new product will be compatible with existing neighborhoods. (*See also Policy 2 of the Land Use Element*)

2.3 Work with neighborhoods to promote small-scale infill and redevelopment projects that will diversify the housing stock and lower per unit land costs for new housing, including townhouses, rowhouses, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and small multiple-unit properties.

2.4 Seek to provide housing opportunities affordable to first-time home buyers.

2.5 Continue to accommodate development of mixed-use communities with varied housing types in transit-proximate areas.

2.6 Explore options for co-housing, co-ops, or other shared ownership structures with construction types to suit.

2.7 Consider alternative housing solutions, such as modular units, 'tiny houses', and micro-unit apartments.

2.8 Identify potential opportunities for conversion of obsolete offices and hotels to residences.

Policy 3
Ensure that new housing in more urban contexts has neighborhood amenities and infrastructure that supports a community.

A challenge for the City is to ensure that new housing is built in a context so that residents will be living in neighborhood settings, whether suburban or urban, and in which other plan policies are achieved, such as living near parks and ensuring that there is adequate infrastructure and school capacity to support the growth.

Due to zoning changes in the city over the years, areas that were once exclusively commercial are now seeing residential development. Because of the historical uses of these sites, there are few, if any, neighborhood amenities, such as parks, nearby. Addressing this challenge will require provision of additional amenities by the development community, the City, or both. Another approach is to find ways to accommodate a greater proportion of the anticipated residential growth in existing neighborhoods that already have these amenities.

Actions

3.1 Allow new housing in locations where amenities and infrastructure already exist, and that are compatible with the existing neighborhood.

3.2 Plan and ensure construction of new parks and other neighborhood amenities in areas where housing is new to an area.

Policy 4
Support life cycle housing strategies that will enable Rockville's seniors to continue to live within the community.

The number of older adults in Rockville has increased substantially in recent years, from 13 percent in 2000 to 16 percent in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau. 2000 decennial Census and 2019 ACS 5-year estimates, respectively). The leading edge of the Baby Boom generation has reached retirement age, and over the coming decades the senior population will grow much faster than the population under age 65. As seniors comprise a larger share of Rockville's population, there will be more demand for a variety of housing types that can facilitate aging within the community.

Elements that appeal to seniors include single-level living, greater accessibility standards in building codes, and proximity to shopping, services and transit. Many residents express a hope to 'age in place' in Rockville, but that can be a challenge for a senior living in a single-unit home on a fixed income in a neighborhood that requires driving for nearly all trips.

Policy and regulatory issues also directly affect the market for senior housing in two areas. First, senior housing can get an exemption from certain impact fees charged per unit to fund school construction. This is leading some developers to focus on senior housing to reduce costs. Second, senior



The Victory Courts Apartments is one of several specialized residential communities that offers senior living accommodations within a short distance to downtown Rockville and regional transit.

housing can also be developed in school cluster areas that are over capacity, while other housing types that generate school age children are not allowed until the classroom shortage is addressed. In both situations, the current regulatory structure in Rockville favors the production of senior housing.

Another emerging trend in senior housing in Rockville is senior housing with services. Unlike conventional senior housing rentals, which only provide dwelling units, senior housing with services may include meals, transportation, assisted living, and skilled nursing living for a set monthly fee. The senior housing development community believes there is strong demand for such housing in Rockville. There are currently three service-rich senior housing developments in the city and another such development in early planning. While this housing type is vital to ensuring life-cycle housing, it is financially out of reach for most seniors.

The City of Rockville has applied its Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) regulations to these service-inclusive housing types, requiring 12.5 percent of the independent living units in such developments be set aside as MPDUs (*See Goal 2, below*). However, the all-inclusive fee structure has made affordability a challenge for prospective residents.

Actions

4.1 Identify locations and strategies to construct senior housing in community settings, with preference for locations that are walkable to basic goods, services, and transit.

4.2 Encourage developers to incorporate barrier-free design features in new and rehabilitated residences so that those units may be occupied by a wide range of people, including aging adults.

4.3 Work with Montgomery County government and non-profit developers toward providing more options for affordable senior housing.

4.4 Assist in connecting older residents to a system of local service providers that can help them to age in place, whether in their current homes or in other housing within the city that enables them to retain their independence, including financial and/or technical support for home maintenance and repair.

4.5 Where appropriate, consider reducing minimum parking requirements for senior housing in exchange for more affordable housing or other City priorities.

4.6 Explore partnership opportunities with other governmental entities, such as the Social Security Administration, Montgomery County government, and the non-profit development community to support affordable senior housing with services.

Policy 5
Support projects and programs that provide housing for people with disabilities.

Demographic projections indicate that households with a person with a disability will increase at a faster rate than other household types, in part because of the growing senior population. Those with physical and cognitive disabilities often require housing types or homes that are specially equipped, for instance with ramps for wheelchairs; and often need affordable units.

In 2020, an innovative residential building, Main Street Apartments, opened in Rockville Town Center to serve adults with disabilities. The development is an inclusive apartment building and community center, where 25% of the building's 70 units are set aside for adults with disabilities, and the



Main Street Apartments in downtown Rockville. Credit: HerculesLiving.com

remaining 75% are affordable housing options for all. The City recognizes that more of these types of residential communities, as well their related support services and amenities, are needed in the Rockville community.

Actions

5.1 Connect individuals who have disabilities to financial and social services support so that they can live in Rockville through a combination of affordable, accessible housing and linkages to services.

5.2 Encourage developers to incorporate design features in new and rehabilitated residences so that those units may be occupied by people of all abilities.

5.3 Work with Montgomery County government and the non-profit community toward providing more housing options for persons with disabilities, including options for independent living.

Policy 6
Ensure that all housing is safe and code compliant.

The City enforces the maintenance and upgrade of the housing stock by inspecting neighborhoods and the exteriors of individual properties to bring them into compliance with City code requirements for property maintenance, zoning enforcement, and rental licenses. As the city's housing stock ages, maintenance and upkeep becomes crucial to preserving value and livability. Residents cite code enforcement as a key tool for ensuring the preservation of housing and neighborhood quality of life.



A privately-owned house under repair in 2017, with assistance from a City of Rockville grant under the CDBG program.

Actions

6.1 Proactively enforce all building codes related to housing units, in single-unit or multiple-unit constructions, owner-occupied or rental units, and maintenance in all neighborhoods.

6.2 Continue to provide assistance to low- and moderate-income homeowners to maintain their property in a safe, healthy and acceptable physical condition.

6.3 Continue to track building code violations among rental properties and ensure compliance.

6.4 Deploy Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to support building maintenance and improvements, including for historic buildings, in exchange for a commitment to keeping housing affordable.

6.5 Require construction standards that ensure that noise levels are at acceptable levels between units in multiple-unit developments and from external noise pollution.

GOAL 2
Create and improve incentives, programs, and policies for production and preservation of quality affordable housing.

Rockville's median household income is relatively high, though the income distribution in the city is becoming increasingly bifurcated. The number of lower-wage jobs have increased at faster rates than higher-paying jobs, while housing costs continue to rise. This trend has made it difficult for low- and middle-income households to find housing that they can afford in Rockville.

Measuring Housing Affordability: Understanding AMI

Area Median Income, or AMI, is the median household income for a metropolitan area and varies by household size. The measure is used by housing programs to provide a standard for incomes, specifically in regard to income-restricted housing programs, such as Rockville's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program. The median is the center point where half of all incomes are higher and half are lower. The household size matters because typically families with children, or other dependents without income, require more bedrooms, so housing cost burdens are calculated with that in mind.

AMI is used to set targets for housing affordability, which of course relates to household income. The target is then set as a percentage of AMI. For example, the City of Rockville and Montgomery County government assisted the purchase of Fireside Apartments by Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) in 2012. Rockville then provided loans and a grant to help ensure that half of the 236 apartments would be affordable to households earning at or below 80% of AMI. In 2020, RHE closed on a $60 million refinance package for Fireside Park that included LIHTC and other public and private financing to undertake a substantial rehabilitation of the property. RHE was also able to leverage recent change in LIHTC law that allowed for income averaging, resulting in 75% of the units being affordable at or below 80% of AMI.

In 2021, the AMI for the Washington metropolitan region was:

Household Size	Median Household Income
1 person	$90,300
2 persons	$103,200
3 persons	$116,000
4 persons	$129,000
5 persons	$139,320

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and City of Rockville, 2021.

The table below shows income groupings as a percentage of AMI with examples of the types of jobs than are in that income range, and what an affordable rent would be based on roughly a third of the income going to rent, a typical metric for housing affordability.

Area Median Income, 2021

Income Group	Type of Household	Affordable Rent or 30% of Income
0-30% AMI $0 - $38,700 family of four $0 - $27,090 single person	People who are unable to work due to disability or age. Seniors on fixed incomes. Low-wage workers, including many retail, restaurant and day care workers.	$0 - $968 family of four $0 - $677 single person
30-60% AMI $38,700 - $77,400 family of four $27.090 - $54,190 single person	One person working as an administrative assistant, electrician, or teacher's aide. Two workers in the retail, restaurant or childcare sectors.	$968 - $1,935 family of four $677 - $1,355 single person
60-80% AMI $77,400 - $103,200 family of four $54,190 - $72,240 single person	One or two workers in entry-level, including research associates, program managers, nursing aids and nurses (LPNs).	$1,935 - $2,580 family of four $1,355 - $1,806 single person
80-100% AMI $103,200 - $129,000 family of four $72,240 - $90,300 single person	One or two workers in entry- or mid-level jobs, including police officers, fire fighters, school teachers and IT support personnel.	$2,580 - $3,225 family of four $1,806 - $2,258 single person
100-150% AMI $129,000 - $193,500 family of four $90,300 - $135,950 single person	One or two workers in mid-level professional jobs, including researchers, scientists, association professionals and financial analysts.	$3,225 - $4,838 family of four $2,258 - $3,399 single person

Note: The median rent in Rockville in 2019 was $1,912 (ACS) and the median listing home price was $562,000 as of July 2021 (Realtor.com).
Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; City of Rockville, 2021.

Fireside Park Apartments

The Fireside Park Apartment project is an example of the City of Rockville acting in the housing market though incentives and direct investment of City funds. Located at 735 Monroe Street, Fireside Park Apartments was built in the 1960s and includes 236 garden apartment units contained in 22 buildings. The complex has a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom units that have provided affordable housing for many decades, along with amenities including green space, a playground, and a swimming pool. During the rapid climb of housing values in the early 2000s, investors in the property considered redevelopment and replacement with higher priced luxury housing. However, the social value of the affordable units, especially with two and three bedrooms for families, was recognized and the City acted to preserve the apartments as lower cost housing.

In 2012, to implement and exercise its policy on the preservation and furtherance of affordable housing, the Mayor and Council voted to support Rockville Housing Enterprises in its acquisition of Fireside Park Apartments by providing financing toward the purchase of the property. The project was structured so that 118 of the 236 units will remain affordable at up to 80 percent of the Area Median Income. The other half of the units support the overall project with market-based rents.

On November 5, 2012, the Mayor and Council approved a $1,800,000 loan and $200,000 grant to RHE toward the purchase of the Fireside Park Apartments. In addition to City's funds, RHE also secured a $3.19 million loan from Montgomery County government's Housing Initiative Fund, and a $32.4 million first mortgage from Citibank. The City's support of RHE helped preserve Fireside Park Apartments as a mixed-income affordable community that's a residence for over 230 Rockville families. In 2018, the City of Rockville again assisted RHE in its plan to modernize the development by providing a $500,000 grant, allowing RHE to leverage other funding sources including County and State loans, LIHTC credit proceeds, and FHA loans. RHE closed on the refinancing of Fireside in 2020.

Legacy Apartments

The City of Rockville pursued and received a HOPE VI grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development to demolish obsolete public housing owned by Rockville Housing Enterprises in Lincoln Park neighborhood. Those older public housing unit apartments, which were originally constructed with federal funds, were replaced with townhouses, with the majority being offered as market rate units for sale and a set aside number of units at a discounted price to qualified income-restricted owners. RHE retains an ownership stake in those units, so that when they are sold, a portion of capital gains will add revenue to Rockville Housing Enterprises program income through an equity share provision. The redevelopment of the site provided much needed new and modern housing opportunities for some, but the city also lost half of its public housing portfolio, and the new units did not provide housing for those in most need. Like in many other cities, the former residents were not rehoused in public units, but instead were supported by Section 8/HCVP vouchers to enter the private rental market.



As of 2016, approximately 10,000 Rockville households earned less than 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI, see sidebar on opposite page). This corresponds to an estimate that more than 10,000 Rockville households are cost burdened, meaning that they spend 30 percent or more of their gross income on housing. More than 4,000 households (about 15 percent) were severely cost-burdened in 2016, with housing costs accounting for half, or more, of their income. More renters (53 percent) than home owners (29 percent) are cost burdened. This fact is significant because it makes it difficult for renters to save for a mortgage down payment, or choose an ownership option when rents get too high.

Households who earn less than 30 percent of AMI are projected to increase at the fastest rate of all income groups over the next 25 years. This trend is driven largely by the rapid growth of the senior population, many of whom are no longer earning employment income, but also as a result of the shift in the types of jobs expected to be coming to the Washington metropolitan region by 2040.

The City's housing policies seek to address the affordability issue through voluntary incentives for the production and preservation of affordable housing units, as well as requirements for the production of units through the City's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit program.

Policy 7
Assure that affordable housing is distributed equitably throughout the city.

Affordable housing includes a range of housing types and pricing structures, from market-rate housing that is older and therefore more affordable than newer products, also known as 'market-rate affordable' or 'naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)', to public housing that serves extremely low-income individuals and families. Rockville's primary policy designed to produce new housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households is its inclusionary zoning program, the Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program. Also supporting affordable housing in the city is Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE), an independent housing agency that owns and manages several public housing properties throughout the city and administers federal housing choice vouchers.

It is in the city's best interest to locate new affordable housing developments of any type or attainable at any income level in a manner that is distributed equitably throughout the city. Such a strategy allows lower-income residents to benefit from proximity to opportunities; enables families to remain in familiar neighborhoods where they have long-time family and friendship ties as well as access to public transportation; and supports a stable, high-quality community that is home to residents of diverse backgrounds.

Action

7.1 Discourage the concentration of predominantly income-restricted or subsidized housing developments in any single geographic area of the city by encouraging mixed-income developments.

Policy 8
Provide financial incentives for the production and preservation of affordable housing.

In recognition of the city's current and anticipated housing needs, this Plan supports the expansion and preservation of affordable housing through financial incentives. These incentives are a form of intervention in the housing market to achieve specific goals to provide housing for lower-income segments of our community. In most cases, the incentive approach to affordable housing relies on a mix of public monies and private investments, or a mix of subsidized and market-rate units in a development project.

As discussed below, the City's primary affordable housing program requires, through the Zoning Ordinance, affordable units delivered as part of market-rate projects. This approach reflects the substantial reduction in federal funds to construct public housing since the 1980s, which was replaced by a series of federal programs that removed public housing in favor of a mix of subsidized and market-rate replacement projects, the largest being the HOPE VI program. The City's housing authority, Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE), pursued and received a HOPE VI grant for what became the Legacy townhouse project in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. Federal housing funds have been reduced even further in recent years, and available program money is limited and awarded through a highly competitive process.

The federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has remained a consistent funding source. However, the amount that Rockville receives is insufficient to make a major impact. Rockville uses all of its allocation of CDBG funds to assist low-income homeowners and housing provider organizations to maintain their homes. The grant program typically funds assistance to about six homeowners per year. Projects can include electrical system upgrades, roof repairs, and additional insulation. The program also typically funds three to four organizations, including Rockville Housing Enterprises, for rehabilitation and maintenance of their existing affordable housing stock.

With the reductions in federal funding, communities such as Rockville are left to develop other local strategies. This Plan recommends working with Montgomery County, housing developers, and private investors to make strategic investments where deemed appropriate; for instance, using the City's financial tools to bridge financing gaps or support worthy development projects. The City's most recent example of support and direct grants to a project is the Fireside Apartments, described above. This Plan envisions continued and enhanced investments through RHE and the City's Housing Opportunities Fund, particularly in terms of acquisition and rehabilitation of older units.

Actions

8.1 Leverage federal resources and identify local and State funding sources to support the production of housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

8.2 Establish stable sources of funding for Rockville's local Housing Opportunities Fund that can be used for affordable housing rehabilitation or development projects.

8.3 Explore strategies and seek opportunities to preserve existing market-rate affordable rental dwelling units through actions by the City of Rockville and Rockville Housing Enterprises.

8.4 Participate in regional efforts to advocate the State of Maryland for a special set-aside of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit tax credits for Washington, D.C. suburbs.

8.5 Promote and advocate for tax-exempt financing in conjunction with the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to support the development of multiple unit affordable housing, especially in areas of the city where priority is given for State-designated Transit Oriented Development and/or Sustainable Community areas. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*)

8.6 Pursue and leverage funding from Montgomery County government's Housing Initiative Fund for affordable housing projects in Rockville.

8.7 Provide incentives to owners of older, market-rate multiple unit rental properties, such as garden apartments, to maintain and improve their properties while preserving affordability of their existing units and avoiding displacement of residents.

8.8 Explore strategies and seek opportunities with the development community, foundations and non-profit to utilize New Markets Tax Credits to promote mixed-use developments, including rental and homeownership affordable housing, in eligible Census tracts.

Policy 9
Sustain and develop programs that assist Rockville residents' entry into the home buying or rental market.

In most cases, the cost of older housing of all types is less expensive than new construction. This Plan recommends providing incentives to owners of older, market-rate housing to keep those units in the overall stock, but with an understanding that some obsolete housing is also the most logical to be redeveloped as new housing.

9.1 Restructure the Real Estate Effort for Affordable Community Housing (REACH) program to provide down payment and closing cost assistance to low- and moderate-income first-time home buyers in Rockville.

9.2 Encourage and explore ways for employers to provide financial assistance to their workers to enable them to live closer to their jobs in Rockville.

9.3 Conduct an inventory of vacant and under-utilized land to identify any sites that may be suitable for needed affordable units.

Rockville Housing Assistance Programs

The City of Rockville has four main programs to address housing affordability issues:

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The City's Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program is a program funded by the federal CDBG that provides low-interest loans to low income homeowners to address emergency and health and safety related home repairs. Funding for the program is provided to the City by the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) through Montgomery County government.

- Rockville has received funding for the past 41 years.
- CDBG grants haves decreased by nearly 30 percent due to federal budget cuts. The grant was reduced from $325,348 in 2010 to $263,000 in 2018.
- In previous years, the City assisted an average of 11 households compared to six households in the current fiscal year.
- Typically, assisted homes were built in 1940s and 50s, and are owned by elderly residents.

Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)

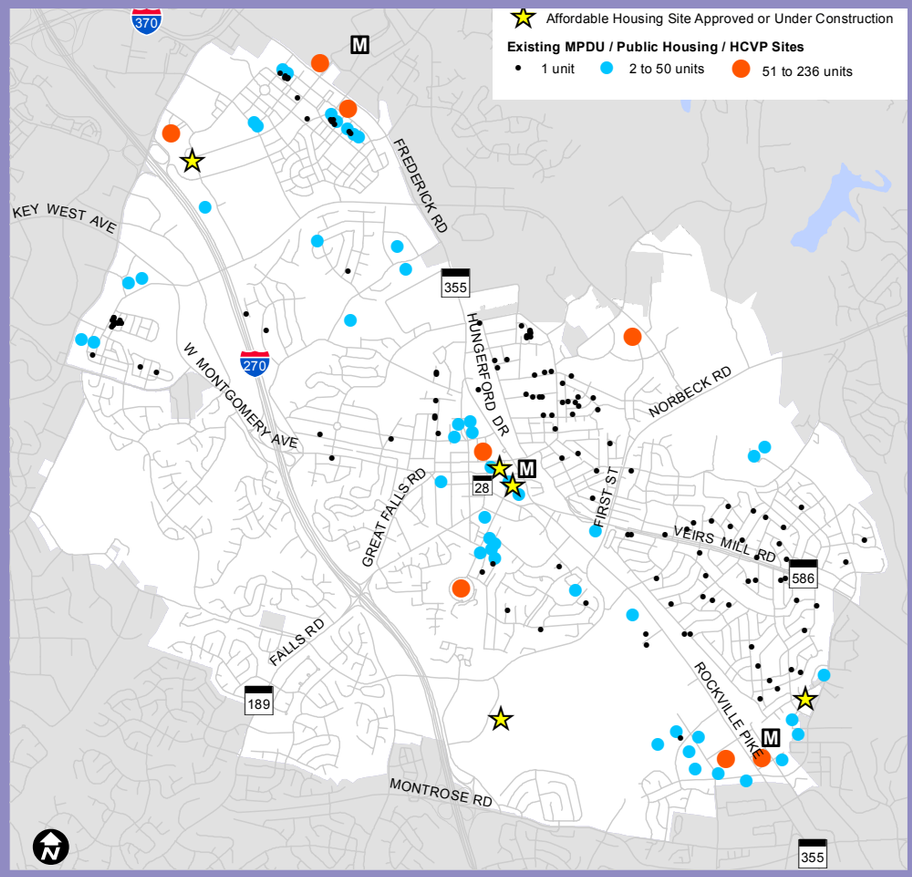
A City inclusionary zoning program in which the rental rate for a unit is restricted to below the rental rate of market rents. There are homeownership and rental MPDUs.

- Developers of eligible projects are required to set aside between 12.5% and 15% of units as MPDUs.
- As of 2021, there are currently approximately 900 rental MPDUs and 400 homeownership units in the city.
- Households seeking a rental MPDU must meet a minimum annual income of 2.5 times the MPDU rent for specific units of interest and must not exceed 60% of AMI, adjusted for household size. For the purchase program, households must be able to have a purchase power of $135,000 at a minimum and not exceed 80% of AMI, adjusted for household size.

Housing Choice Vouchers Program (HCVP)

Administered by Rockville Housing Enterprises, Housing Choice Vouchers is a rental program where rents are based on 30% of resident income. Vouchers are funded by rents paid by residents and a subsidy from HUD. Units are managed and operated by private owners and scattered throughout the city.

- RHE manages 414 HCVP tenant-based vouchers.
- Household income cannot exceed an annual income of 50% of the AMI.



- As of 2020, 4,401 households were on the wait list for a voucher.

Public Housing

A rental program where rents are based on 30% of income. The public housing program is operated by the Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE). Units are funded with rents paid by residents and an operating subsidy from HUD.

- There are currently 108 public housing units.
- Household income cannot exceed an annual income of 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).
- As of 2020, 125 households were on the wait list for these units.

9.4 Consider including the development of housing in conjunction with the construction or redevelopment of community facilities.

9.5 Promote the preservation and development of projects with large (two or more bedroom) rental dwelling units with a goal of providing more affordable housing for families and larger households.

9.6 Promote the Maryland Mortgage Program - You've Earned It! Initiative that offers mortgage rate discounts and down payment assistance to qualified home buyers who are purchasing a home in portions of the city designated as one of Maryland's Sustainable Communities. (*See also Policy 16 of the Economic Development Element*)

9.7 Explore the creation of workforce homeownership programs that seek to create financial stability for such buyers through less restrictions and ability to build home equity.

9.8 Explore the creation of a homeownership assistance program for City employees and those who live or work in Rockville.

9.9 Explore an annual budget line item to fund allocation for an affordable housing ownership program.

Policy 10
Maintain a Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit program and continue to add MPDUs to the housing stock as residential development occurs.

In Rockville the primary program designed to construct new housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households is our Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program. The MPDU program, adopted in 1990 and modeled after Montgomery County government's pioneering inclusionary zoning program, requires that a percentage of units in new housing projects with 50 or more total units be made affordable at prices or rents that are affordable to households with incomes between 30 percent and 120 percent of AMI. The requirement is enforced through the Zoning Ordinance with specifics of project delivery and rental and sales price set during the development review process.

As of 2021, there were about 1,300 MPDUs in Rockville, of which about two-thirds were rental and one-third were ownership units. All MPDUs must be provided on site (within the development) unless the Mayor and Council approve an alternative option to allow the provision of affordable units off site, donation of land, or a fee-in-lieu of units payment to the City's Housing Opportunities Fund/Affordable Housing Fund. Fee-in-lieu refers to payment required of an owner or developer as a substitute for providing MPDUs as part of the development. So far, no developer has pursued any of these alternative compliance options.

Other programs provide housing support for households with lower incomes. As of 2017, there were 2,990 income-based assisted housing units in the city, aimed at households who earn up to 80 percent of AMI. There were another 218 MPDU units either under construction or planned. Nonetheless, there remains a severe need for more affordable housing in Rockville. The City is considering other changes to increase the supply of affordable units.

Actions

10.1 Continue to monitor and adjust income requirements and other aspects of the MPDU program to encourage the production of affordable units.

10.2 Adjust the structure of the MPDU program to encourage the production of more MDPUs. Examples include:

10.2.a Explore and study requiring MPDUs for residential developments of 10 units or more.

10.2.b Explore and study requiring a fee-in-lieu payment into the City's Housing Opportunities Fund for developments with less than 10 units.

10.2.c Explore imposing 15 percent MPDU set-aside for developments throughout the city with 20 or more units of total unit count regardless of zoning district.

10.3 Impose restrictions on refinancing of homeownership MPDUs by owners to avoid over-leveraging and potential subsequent foreclosure.

10.4 Offer incentives to developers of properties near Metrorail stations to provide a higher percentage of MPDUs or units that serve low- or very low-income households.

10.5 In areas near transit, consider reducing parking requirements to build parking spaces for MPDU units in exchange for more affordable units; while requiring that occupants of MPDUs have equal access to parking spaces built in the overall project. (*See also Actions 1.4 of the Housing Element, Action 22.1 of the Land Use Element, 10.2 of the Economic Development Element, and Actions 12.4 and 14.7 of the Transportation Element*)

10.6 Explore extending the affordability period of rental MPDUs from the current 30 years to a period comparable to Montgomery County government's MPDU program or other feasible terms that ensure long-term affordability.

10.7 Explore strategies that seek to restructure the MPDU in-lieu fee payment option to allow for more feasible and wider application when such options better meet the City's housing objectives.

10.8 Explore ways to grow the City's Housing Opportunities Fund, such as through a dedicated budget line item and/or expanded MPDU fee-in-lieu requirement.

GOAL 3
Expand and improve Rockville's public and assisted housing programs for low- and very-low income residents.

Public and assisted housing programs serve extremely low-income individuals and families (i.e. with incomes below 50 percent of AMI). Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) is an independent body that was created by the Mayor and Council in 1959 to address the housing needs of extremely low-income households within the city and to administer public housing units and assisted housing programs under federal law. RHE continues to be the City's public housing agency, supported primarily by federal funding. Oversight is provided by the RHE Board of Commissioners, who are appointed by the Mayor and Council.

Policy 11
Work with Rockville Housing Enterprises to maintain the city's public housing units and support projects and programs that provide housing to Rockville's low-income residents.

Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) owns and operates 105 public housing units in the City of Rockville. This housing is located at David Scull Courts (76 units) and various single-unit detached sites throughout the city (29 units). Rockville Housing Enterprises' non-profit subsidiaries, RELP One, LLP (RELP) and RHE Properties Inc., own and operate 60 units of low-income housing in scattered sites located primarily in the King Farm and Fallsgrove neighborhoods, financed in part by RHE and in part by the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. Another RHE affiliate owns the 236-unit Fireside Park apartment community in Rockville, which provides 177 affordable apartments at below market rates with the remainder rented at unrestricted market rates. RHE also administers 430 units in its Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCVP) that enables households to rent housing in the private market.

Actions

11.1 Continue to support Rockville's and Montgomery County government's public housing agencies and non-profit organizations in site acquisition and construction, and in preservation of existing assisted housing.



David Scull Courts comprise the majority of Rockville's public housing units with 76 total units.

11.2 Work with Rockville Housing Enterprises to develop and maintain a long-term comprehensive strategic plan that seeks to preserve and maintain its existing portfolio of affordable housing and produce new units.

11.3 Work with Rockville Housing Enterprises to improve the living environment in the vicinity of David Scull Courts, and ensure that new public housing is located so that residents are not isolated.

11.4 Support RHE in its outreach to property owners and landlords about the opportunities and social benefits of participating in the Housing Choice Vouchers Program.

Policy 12
Support programs and services to end homelessness in the city and county.

While the small number of public housing units in the city provide needed support for struggling families, the program is oversubscribed. Some individuals and families find themselves living without a home, moving in temporarily with friends or family, or sleeping in an automobile or outdoors. The majority of homeless individuals and families have little or no income and therefore fit into the definition of extremely low income. For some individuals, mental health or substance abuse issues are a factor, which can be exacerbated by homelessness.

Montgomery County government established the Interagency Commission on Homelessness in 2014 with the goal of preventing and ending homelessness. The Commission is the Governing Board of the County's Continuum of Care program planning network whose purpose is to coordinate the implementation of a housing and social service system. The Commission is composed of non-profit housing providers, local public housing authorities and other landlords, and governmental entities and municipalities, including the City of Rockville. Its mission is to end homelessness in the county by 2024.

According to an annual point-in-time survey taken by Montgomery County government, from 2016-2021, an average 768 people are homeless in the county on any particular day. The number of unhoused people has been on a declining trend since 2016. Between 2016 and 2021, the homeless population decreased from 981 to 557, representing a 41% decrease. Between 2020 and 2021, homelessness in the county decreased by nearly 14%, from 670 to 577. The drop in homelessness count can be attributed to the County's aggressive re-housing and sheltering programs of a targeted approach to meeting the housing needs of specific populations.

It should be also noted the County implemented measures to homeless continuum of care in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, thereby leading to the continued decrease in the number of homeless individuals. It is possible, however, that the eventual lifting of eviction moratorium and shifting priorities as the immediate emergency of the pandemic lifts, could result in an increase of homelessness and may require additional resources. These individuals and families will require public intervention and assistance to secure shelter and to have access to other social services.

Rockville supports human services needs through an annual grant program to local non-profit organizations. Caregiver grants are intended to enhance programs and services by supplementing funding from other sources, including but not limited to the federal, State and County government; program fees; individual and corporate donors; and foundations.

The City provides grants to the non-profit human services community through the annual budget process. Each year the City appropriates funds to support Rockville individuals and families who are experiencing difficulty meeting basic needs related to housing, food, clothing, financial resources, and health care.

Actions

12.1 Reduce regulatory barriers to the placement and operation of shelter facilities and supportive services in appropriate locations of the city.

12.2 Work toward Montgomery County government's Continuum of Care goal to make homelessness a rare, brief, and nonrecurring event.

12.3 Improve awareness of shelters and the need for volunteers to encourage broad-based community support.

12.4 Evaluate the city's capacity to provide community facilities for shelter use during extreme weather conditions.

12.5 Continue to deploy CDBG and the City's Caregiver Grant funds to housing providers to ensure the maintenance and operations of permanent and supportive housing.


West Montgomery Avenue
Historic District

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Vision

Enhance the character of Rockville and contribute to its quality of life and local economy by proactively identifying and safeguarding its physical and cultural heritage to preserve the themes and periods of the city's history and development, no matter the era.

The Jerusalem-Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church at 21 Wood Lane (left), dating from 1858 and designed in the Romanesque style, is part of the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District, along with the Italianate-style parsonage next door at 17 Wood Lane.

Rockville is one of Maryland's oldest municipalities. Its character and identity are closely tied to its history, and its buildings and other features illustrate its evolution over the past two centuries. The city has grown from an agrarian society and small village to the County seat, commuter suburb, and more recently to a commercial destination and employment center. Most of its residential areas continue to have a suburban feel, while Town Center and areas close to the Metrorail stations are becoming increasingly urban.

Despite its transformation, Rockville retains many of its historical qualities. The original six streets that formed the town are still at the heart of the city, as shown in the 1803 "Plan of Rockville" (see image on opposite page). Rockville Pike, once known as the 'Great Road,' is still the main north-south arterial through the city, and examples of Rockville's historic neighborhoods, buildings, sites, and landscapes, dating to the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, have been preserved for the benefit of current and future generations.

Rockville's history is communicated through its built environment. Its historic buildings convey the city's character and identity and are the most visible evidence of the city's past. The results of Rockville's long-term preservation efforts articulate the value the community places on its history and provides a richness and depth that are important to maintaining its high quality of life.

Summary of Community Input

Comments received at Rockville 2040 community meetings emphasized the continued identification, preservation and protection of Rockville's historic resources, including mid-20th century resources that had not been a focus of previous master plans. A desire for a more proactive approach to the designation of new historic districts and the expansion of existing districts was expressed. The historic preservation policies that follow primarily stem from the feedback provided by the public and historic preservation stakeholders, in addition to an analysis of the City's historic preservation program and designation process that was done by a consultant in 2016.

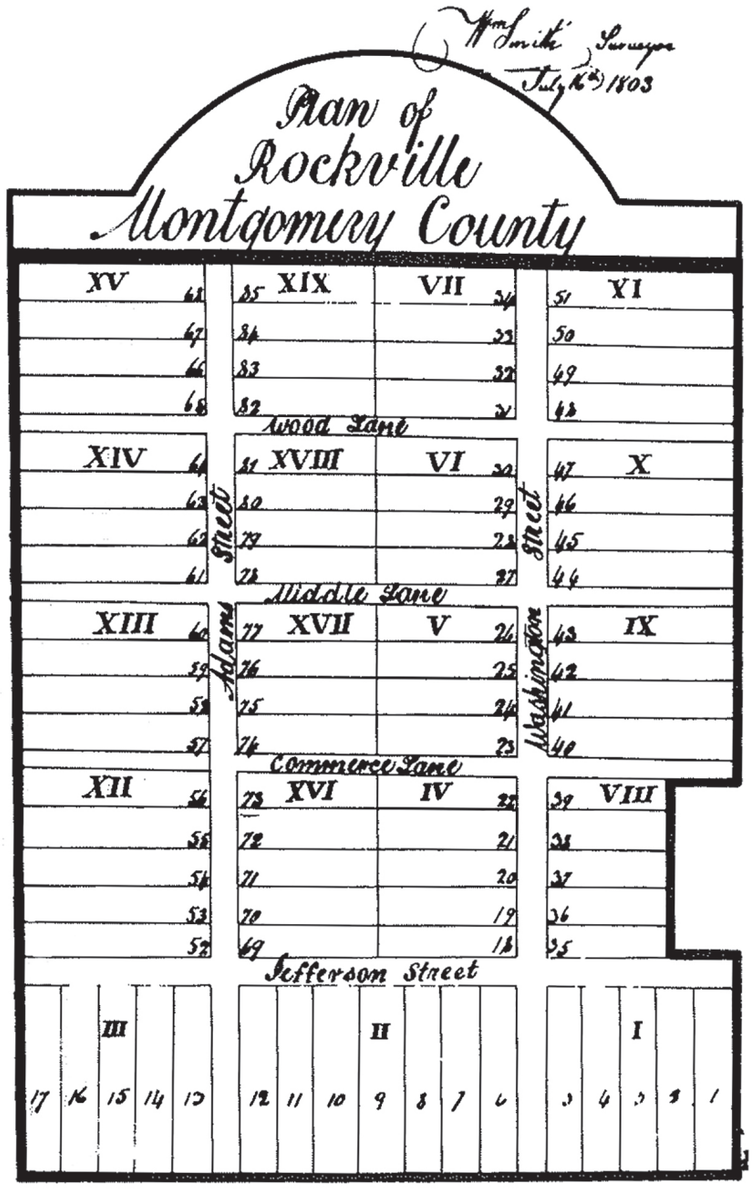
Goals for historic preservation in Rockville include:

1. Safeguard Rockville's physical and cultural heritage through a proactive historic preservation program.
2. Preserve significant examples of architectural periods and historic themes through local historic designation.
3. Promote the benefits of preservation through education and partnerships, programs, and heritage tourism.
4. Act as a strong steward of City-owned historic sites, structures, parks and other properties.
5. Purse an equity and inclusion framework to recognize the diversity of Rockville's history and historic resources.

GOAL 1
Safeguard Rockville's physical and cultural heritage through a proactive historic preservation program.

The Mayor and Council created the Rockville Historic District Commission (HDC) and adopted the City's first regulations for historic preservation in 1966. The National Historic Preservation Act was passed in the same year. In Rockville, the preservation movement was initially driven by the threatened loss of some of the city's landmark buildings, including the designation in 1974 of St. Mary's Chapel. Later, continued preservation efforts through the 1970s saved a number of buildings that were in the path of urban renewal, and the B&O Railroad Station was moved, rather than demolished, to make way for the Rockville Metro station. In more recent years, the City has recognized the value of mid-20th century assets, as demonstrated by its designation in 2017 of the Americana Centre, built in 1972 as the residential component during the era of urban renewal, as well as its support for listing the New Mark Commons neighborhood on the National Register of Historic Places in 2017. Rockville's first National Historic Landmark, the Frieda Fromm-Reichmann Cottage, was designated by the Secretary of the Interior on January 13, 2021. Located on the former grounds of the Chestnut Lodge sanitarium and restored by Peerless Rockville, the 1936 home, also known as Frieda's Cottage, served as home and office for Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, a pioneering psychiatrist in the treatment of schizophrenia.

Rockville's historic sites and structure, no matter the historical era, continue to be considered for local and national historic recognition in order to continue the preservation of the city's physical and cultural heritage.

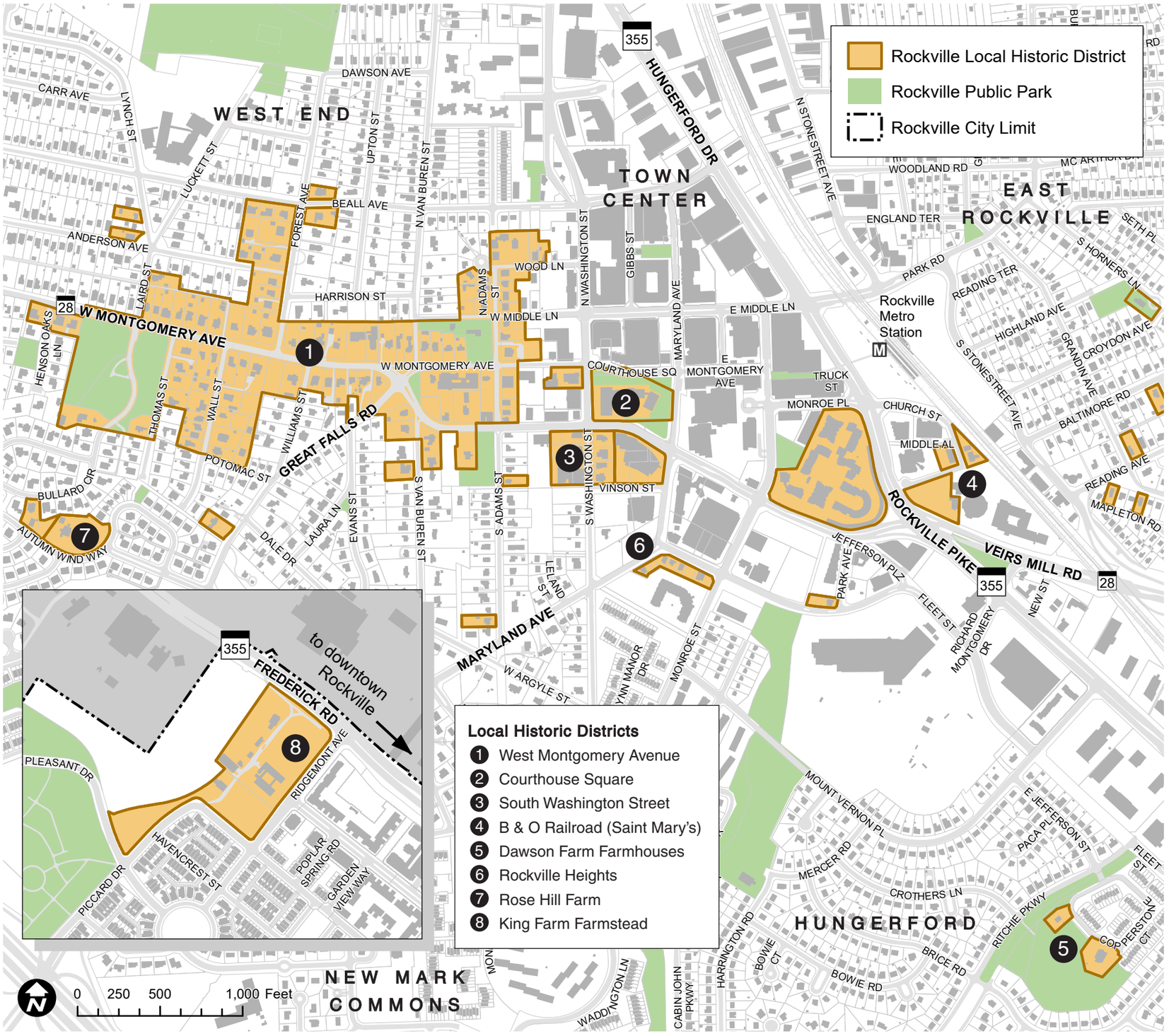


The first plan and plat for 'Rockville' dates to 1803 (above). The street and block layout is still recognizable 215 years later for the core section between Washington and Adams streets. The notch between Jefferson Street and Commerce Lane indicated the location of the courthouse.

Policy 1
Maintain Strengthen the City of Rockville's historic preservation program.

Since adoption of the *2002 Comprehensive Plan*, Rockville has been successful in expanding its inventory of historic designated resources. Between 2002 and 2018, the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District was expanded to

Figure 32: Locally Designated Multi-Site Historic Districts



In 1974, the Mayor and Council established Rockville's first three historic districts: the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District, the South Washington Street Historic District, and the B&O Railroad Station Historic District. These districts, were concurrently recognized with listing in the National Register of Historic Places. As of 2018, more than 150 sites and buildings are either individually designated or located within local historic districts, and more than 90 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Local Historic District Architecture in Downtown Rockville



1 West Montgomery Avenue Historic District
(Designated 1974)



2 Courthouse Square Historic District
(Designated 1979)

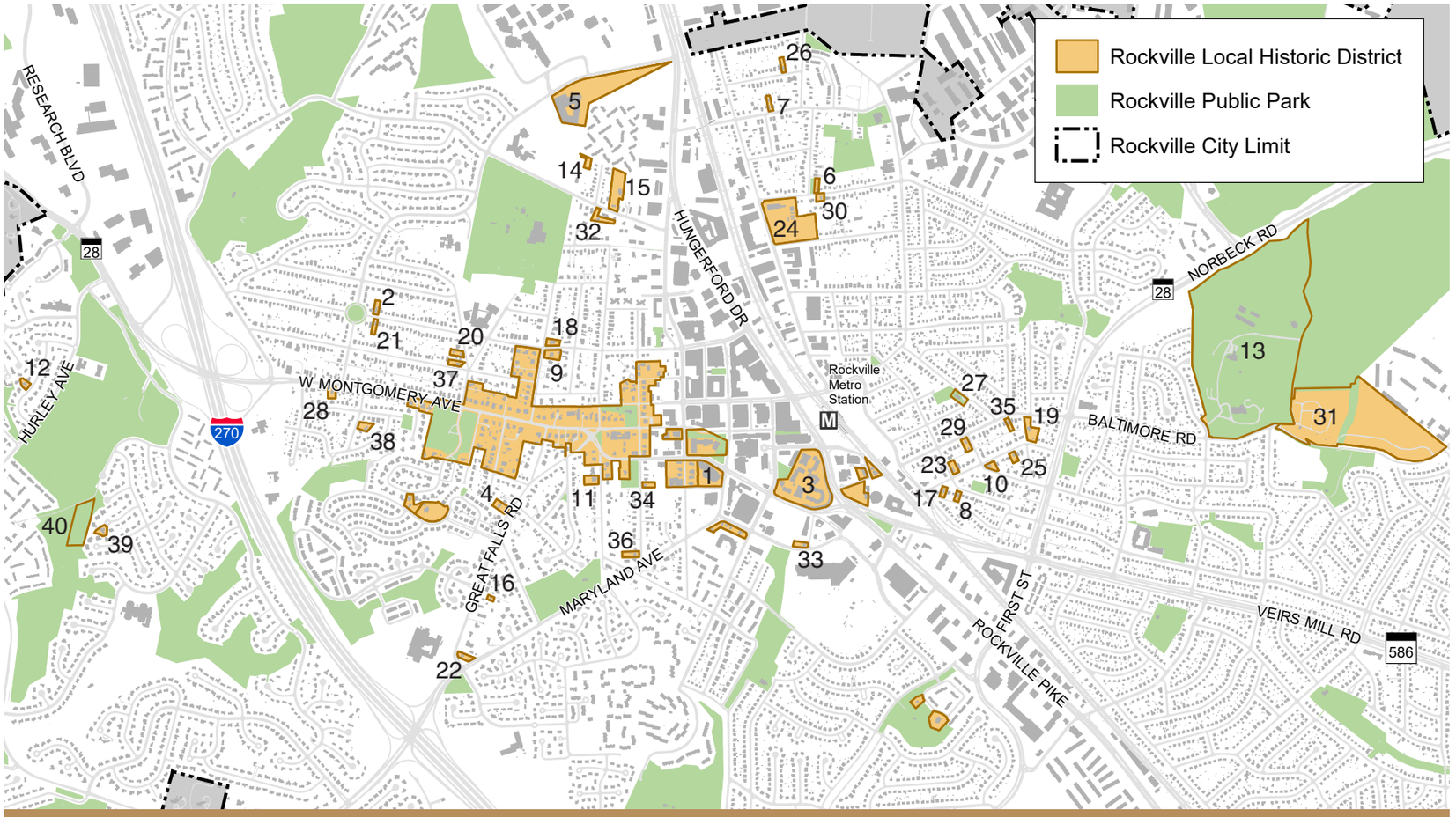


3 South Washington Street Historic District
(Designated 1974)



4 B & O Railroad Historic District
(Designated 1974)

Figure 33: Locally Designated Individual Historic Properties



1. 1971 Rockville Library, 99 Maryland Avenue (demolished)
2. Allnutt House, 541 Beall Avenue
3. Americana Centre, 4-150 Monroe Street
4. Brewer Summer Residence, 315 Great Falls Road
5. Carver High School, 850 Hungerford Drive
6. Cook-Waters-Lewis House, 302 Lincoln Avenue
7. Cooper House, 214 Frederick Avenue
8. Corrick-Robertson House, 709 Grandin Avenue
9. Judge Delashmutt House, 119 Forest Avenue
10. Edmonds Family House, 702 Maple Avenue
11. Evans Summer House, 117 S. Van Buren Street
12. Flint Hill Farm/Hurley-Carter House, 411 Feather Rock Court
13. Glenview Farm, 603 Edmonston Drive
14. Haiti Cemetery, 205 Martins Lane
15. Hebron House, 17 Martins Lane
16. Bessie Hill House, 602 Great Falls Road
17. Hipsley-Thompson House, 701 Grandin Avenue
18. Hoch-Richardson House, 203 Forest Avenue
19. Homewood, 550 Reading Avenue
20. Howes-Grossman House, 104 Lynch Street
21. Howland House, 540 Beall Avenue
22. Kelley House, 628 Great Falls Road
23. Carey and Hattie Kingdon House, 300 Reading Avenue
24. Lincoln High School, 595 N. Stonestreet Avenue
25. Fred and Mary Nellinger House, 419 Reading Avenue
26. Letha E. Payton House, 224 Elizabeth Avenue
27. The Pump House, 401 South Horners Lane
28. Mrs. Rickett's Cottage, 710 W. Montgomery Avenue
29. Rabbitt/Ray House, 315 Baltimore Road
30. Reuben Hill House, 305 Lincoln Avenue
31. Rockville Cemetery, 1350 Baltimore Road
32. Ross/Powell/Crutchfield House, 22 Martins Lane
33. Spates Bungalow, 115 Park Road
34. Steinberg House, 110 S. Adams Street
35. Thompson-Ray House, 503 Baltimore Road
36. Tyler House, 149 S. Adams Street
37. Wilt/Barnsley House, 100 Lynch Street
38. Wells House, 102 Aberdeen Road
39. Wootton's Mill Miller's House, 8 Camden Court
40. Wootton's Mill Park, Aintree Drive

include portions of Chestnut Lodge and the adjacent Thirty Oaks properties. King Farm Farmstead Park, Glenview Farm, Rockville Heights, the Americana Centre, and other sites were locally designated. In addition, Glenview Farm, Rockville Park, and New Mark Commons residential neighborhoods were added to the National Register.

Rockville's historic preservation efforts and its HDC are recognized by the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) as a Certified Local Government program. The Trust awards ten percent of its annual allocation from the Historic Preservation Fund to projects and educational opportunities each year for certified programs. Rockville has received grants in the past and maintains eligibility for future projects.

Actions

1.1 Maintain the City's Certified Local Government (CLG) status.

1.2 Regularly update the design guidelines and other policy documents that the Historic District Commission uses to issue Certificates of Approval.

1.3 Prioritize completion of the update to the Historic Resources Management Plan (HRMP), with completed historic context statements to include new periods associated with the later 20th century and the histories of under-represented communities and cultures in Rockville.

1.4 Prioritize areas of the City for future survey and conduct those surveys.

GOAL 2
Preserve and recognize significant examples of architectural periods, historic themes and the diversity of Rockville's history and historic resources through local historic designation.

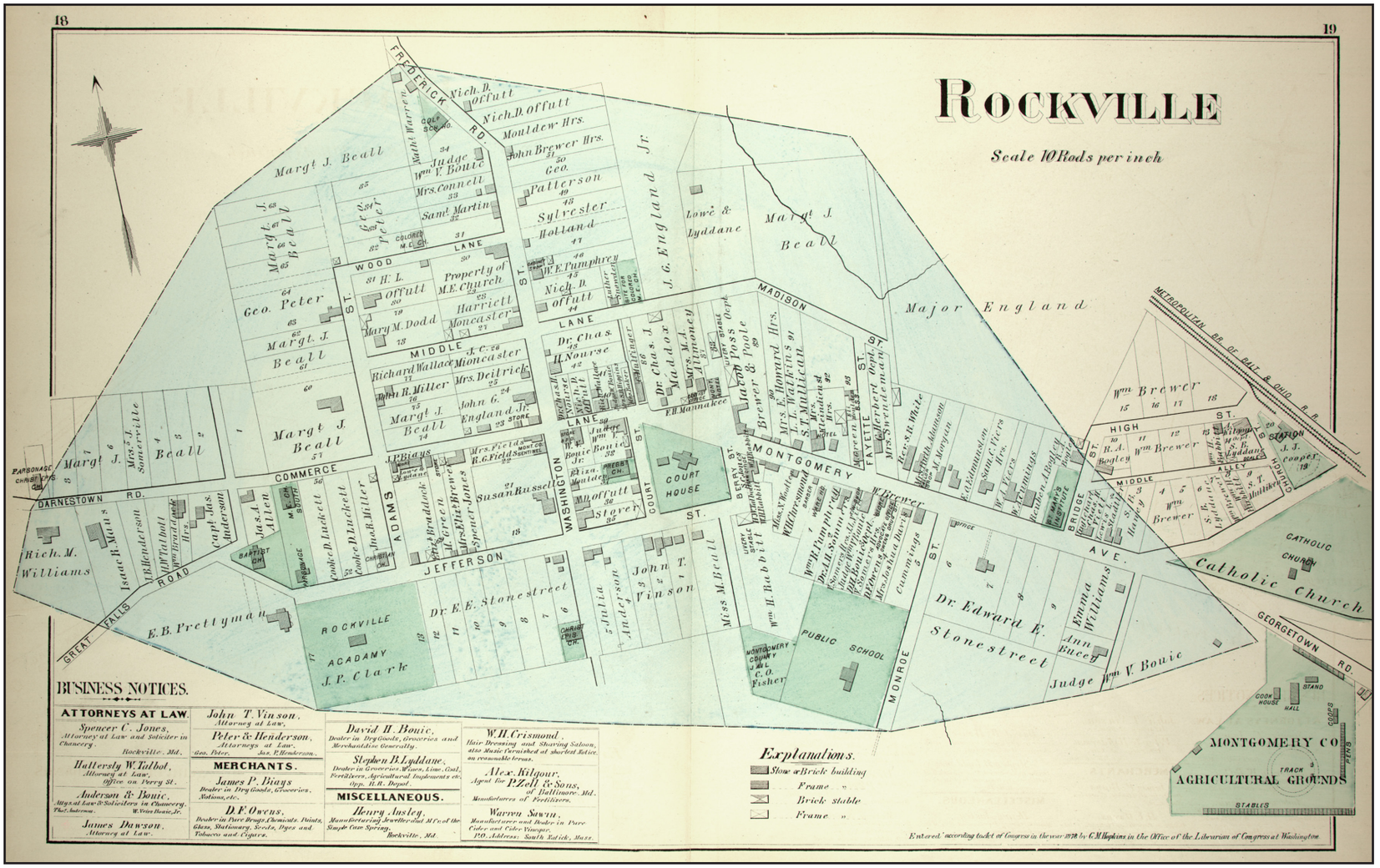
The two main methods of historic designation are national and local. As applied in Rockville there are overlapping national and local historic districts, with slight variations in boundaries, but also larger differences. For instance the Rockville Park Historic District is in the National Register,



The former Lincoln High School at 595 N. Stonestreet Avenue is a locally designated historic property, preserving the history of African-American educational institutions in Rockville. The building has been adapted for a new use.



The Pump House at 401 S. Horners Lane is an example of adaptive reuse of a locally designated historic property, owned by the City of Rockville and retrofitted from a water pump house to an activity center with meeting room used primarily by the East Rockville community.



An early map of Rockville from 1878 (above) shows growth in the 75 years following the original 1803 town plat. The regular spacing of streets and lots is abandoned with the first additions and the regional roads—including Montgomery Avenue/Georgetown Road, Frederick Road, and Great Falls Road—meet the grid at angles. Narrow, deep lots along the main commercial street, Montgomery Avenue, are laid out to maximize frontage for businesses and shops. The 'Great Road' from Georgetown to Frederick passed through the heart of Rockville, running through Courthouse Square, then north on Washington Street and jogging back to Frederick Road. This difficult circulation pattern would pose challenges to the town center and bring on wholesale reordering of streets during the urban renewal of the 1960s, continuing to the current time: an unusual uncertainty about the location of streets at the heart of a town that dates back to the 1790s. The sharp angle of the unlabeled Veirs Mill Road and Georgetown Road intersection would later become known as the 'mixing bowl.' The new railroad track hints at the coming expansion to the east.

which provides for certain tax benefits to owners, but the majority of those properties are not locally designated. Local designation enforces a much stricter regulatory system on alterations or demolitions. Some anomalies are left over from the way that designations were applied, for example the Beall-Dawson House was listed in the National Register in 1973, two years before the larger, encompassing West Montgomery District was listed.

Historic properties in Rockville are designated as local historic sites either individually or as part of a multi-site historic district. In terms of the regulatory structure and review process, there is no distinction between the two.

Rockville has adopted eligibility criteria for local historic designation. The HDC uses the criteria to determine if a property is significant because of its association with historic

events or with the lives of people who were important in the past (cultural and historical significance), and whether or not it has architectural, design or landscape significance. The property must also retain sufficient integrity to convey the sense and time of its significance.

The Zoning Ordinance is the local enabling legislation by which the HDC exercises its authority to evaluate properties to determine if they meet the criteria for historic designation and recommend those that do to the Mayor and Council. The Mayor and Council make the final determination on all local designations. Historic district (HD) designation is implemented through an overlay zone which defines the boundaries and protects the character of the historic district.

Rockville values buildings, structures, sites, landscapes, viewsheds, and objects that:

- Represent the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the city;
- Are sites of important events;
- Are identified with a person or group of persons who influenced the city's history;
- Exemplify the cultural, economic, industrial, social, political, archaeological, or historical heritage of the city;
- Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction;
- Represent the work of a master architect, craftsman, or builder;
- Possess styles or elements distinctive to the region or city;
- Represent a significant architectural, design, or landscape entity in the city; and,
- Represent an established visual feature of the neighborhood or city because of its physical characteristics or landscape components.

Policy 2
Follow a clear and proactive process for evaluating and designating historic districts based on established criteria and an ongoing preservation strategy and work program.

Since 2009, Rockville's Zoning Ordinance has required that any building or structure must be evaluated for historic significance by the HDC before a demolition permit can be issued. Because of this change, the vast majority of evaluations for historic significance over the past decade have been initiated by demolition permit applications, rather than by planned survey work intended to identify potential historic districts. Only a small number of designations have resulted from these evaluations. This approach has resulted in some piecemeal additions to the city's historic district inventory and historic preservation program that has been focused on individual properties over multi-site districts.

This Plan supports a more proactive and comprehensive approach to historic designation. Rockville should actively create new, and expand existing, historic districts, based on surveys, oral histories, public input, and other research. A more proactive approach will provide greater predictability for individual property owners and communities as a whole.

Actions

2.1 Prioritize potential new or expanded historic districts and sites identified in the 2016 Historic Preservation Report and the updated Historic Resources Management Plan for evaluation by the HDC as the starting point for an evolving list.

2.2 Maintain and update the priority list of potential new or expanded districts and sites on a regular basis as evaluations of significance and designations occur and as new knowledge is gained.

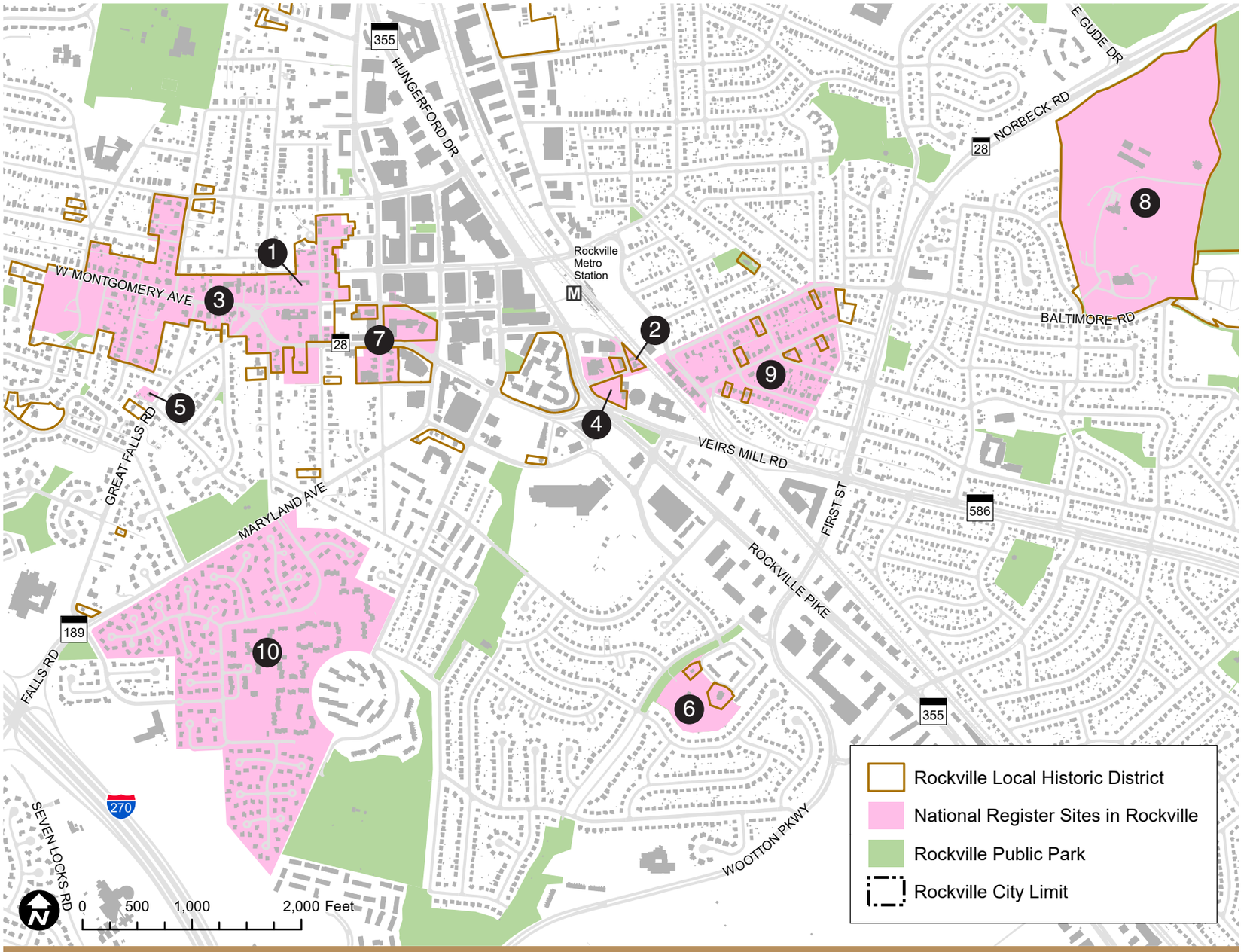
2.4 Design and fund a multi-year work program to research, survey, and evaluate potential historic districts. Such a program should include consideration of underrepresented communities, places, and time periods of development in Rockville.

2.5 Establish clear boundaries and define the environmental setting for historic districts when they are designated.

2.6 Identify and evaluate properties, and elements of properties, that are contributing to an historic context and those that are non-contributing when historic districts are designated.

2.7 Periodically re-evaluate Rockville's designation process and criteria used to evaluate historic and architectural significance.

Figure 34: National Register-Listed Historic Districts



1. Beall-Dawson House (1973)
2. Rockville B&O Railroad Station (1974)
3. West Montgomery Avenue Historic District (1975)
4. Third Addition to Rockville & Old St. Mary's Church (1978)
5. Bingham-Brewer House (1980)
6. Dawson Farm (1985)
7. Montgomery County Courthouse Historic District (1986)
8. Glenview Farm (2007)
9. Rockville Park Historic District (2011)
10. New Mark Commons Historic District (2017)

Policy 3
Review nominations to the National Register of Historic Places.

The National Register of Historic Places is a federal program administered by the National Park Service in partnership with State governments. The National Register was created by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 to recognize and protect properties of historic and cultural significance. The program's protection is limited to properties potentially impacted by projects with federal or State funding, such as highway construction, which must be mitigated.

The relocation of Rockville's B&O Railroad station in the 1980s to make room for Metrorail, which was a federally funded project, is an example of mitigation. Listing on the National Register also offers eligibility for certain tax benefits. The HDC has no authority over alterations to properties that are on the National Register, unless they are also locally designated.

Actions

3.1 Consider local historic designation and/or provide support to protect historic sites and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places that are not already locally designated.

National Register versus Local Designation

The National Register of Historic Places and local historic district designations are two very different programs that each recognize historic properties. National Register listing is primarily an honor. Alterations to properties that are listed on the National Register, but not locally designated are not reviewed by the Historic District Commission. All locally designated properties must receive a Certificate of Approval from the HDC for exterior alterations.



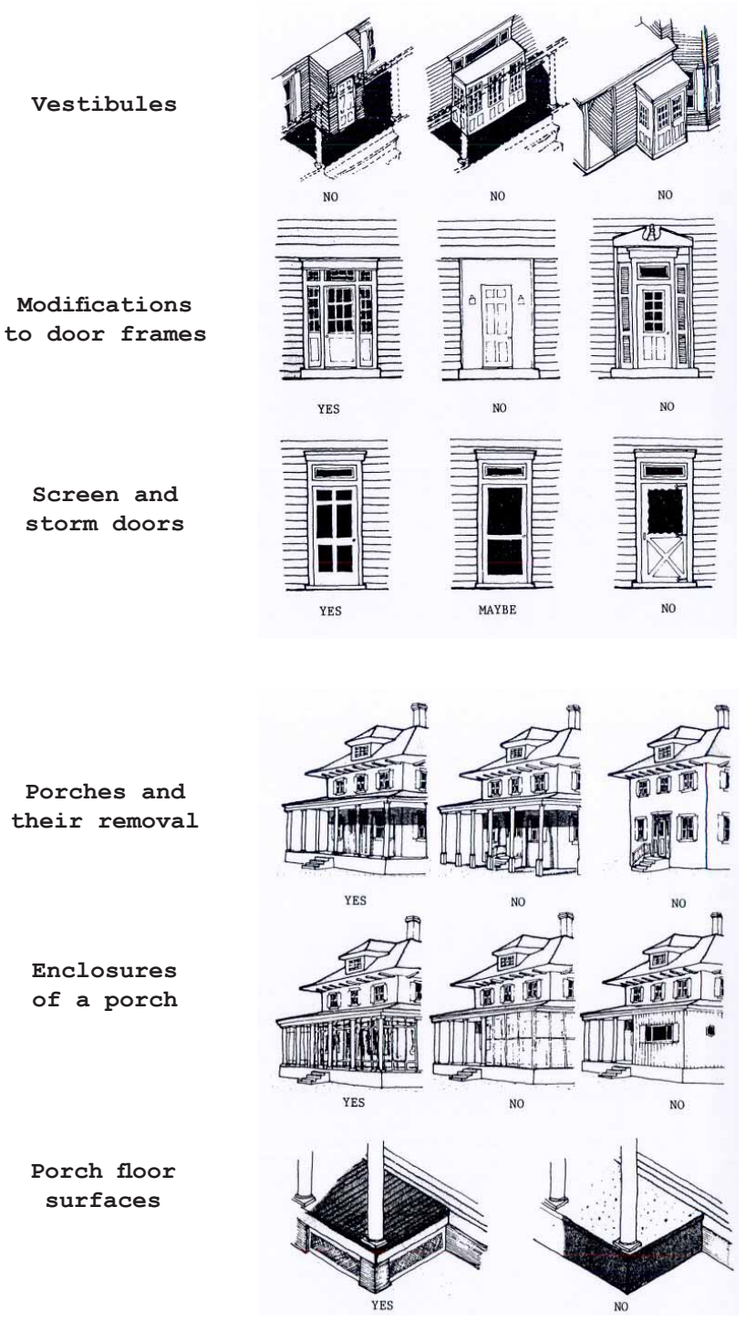
550 Reading Avenue is a locally designated historic property, adjacent to, but not in, the nearby Rockville Park National Register historic district (shown on Figure 34 as item #9).



720 Maple Avenue is within the National Register's Rockville Park Historic District as a contributing structure, but is not locally designated as historic by the City of Rockville.

National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106

The Section 106 review process is an integral component of the National Historic Preservation Act, requiring federal agencies to consider the effects on historic properties of projects they carry out, assist, license or approve. A fundamental goal is to ensure that federal agencies consult with interested partners to identify and evaluate historic properties, assess the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, and attempt to negotiate an outcome that will balance project needs with historic preservation values.



Examples from the *Architectural Design Guidelines For The Exterior Rehabilitation Of Buildings In Rockville's Historic Districts.* Adopted September 1977, Rockville Historic District Commission.

Policy 4
Ensure that Rockville has effective tools to protect and preserve its historic resources.

Historic preservation objectives must be thoughtfully weighed in planning for the city's future and should align with land use, housing, environment, transportation and other City objectives. Rockville should integrate historic preservation policies into its larger planning activities, neighborhood plans, and development projects.

Within local historic districts, the HDC has the authority to review changes to a site or the exterior appearance of a structure to ensure that changes are compatible with the structure, streetscape and surrounding district. The HDC issues Certificates of Approval for work that meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and locally adopted design guidelines. The HDC also promotes tax credits to incentivize continued use of historic properties and appropriate alterations. These and other tools are essential to an effective historic preservation program.

Actions

4.1 Update existing and establish new regulations to avoid demolition by neglect and respond to cases of demolition by neglect.

4.2 Ensure that preservation issues are identified and resolved as early as possible in the development process.

4.3 Continue to update and revise design guidelines to reflect current best practices and appropriate materials.

4.4 Develop and implement architectural design guidelines specific to individual historic districts, where they do not currently exist, including guidance for new construction and non-contributing elements.

4.5 Encourage the adaptive re-use of historic properties when the original use is no longer practical.

4.6 Maintain the residential character of designated residential buildings even when the structures are used for non-residential purposes, such as along North Adams Street.

4.7 Enforce maintenance and protect the structural integrity of designated historic structures.

4.8 Develop and enforce appropriate stabilization and protection plans for vacant designated historic properties that follow National Park Service guides.

4.9 Ensure that all locally designated properties are compliant with building codes, to avoid demolition by neglect.

4.10 Determine appropriate methods to preserve and maintain historic cemeteries and archaeological resources.

4.11 Support federal, State and Montgomery County government tax credits and other economic incentives for historic preservation.

4.12 Evaluate instituting a Rockville tax credit specifically for contributing resources in historic districts and individually designated resources as an added incentive to existing credits, such as to assist property owners with maintenance of historic properties, providing resources to protect property owners from displacement, or to assist in returning structures to their previous residential use.

4.13 Consider alternative preservation strategies such as easements, area plans, and conservation districts when historic designation is not feasible or desired.



Doctor Edward E. Stonestreet's office (left) is preserved as part of the Beall-Dawson House, the oldest home in Rockville, at 103 W. Montgomery Avenue.

4.14 Allow for routine maintenance as well as appropriate alterations to historically designated properties, as determined by the Historic District Commission through Certificates of Approval.

Policy 5
Maintain the historic character and identity of historic districts when street, sidewalk, utility, street furniture, signage and other improvements are undertaken.

Actions

5.1 Initiate streetscape design projects for large multi-site historic districts.

5.2 Ensure that modifications or additions proposed for historic districts preserve the historic character of the streetscape and add signage, if appropriate.

GOAL 3
Promote the benefits of preservation through education and partnerships, programs, and heritage tourism.

Programs to educate citizens about Rockville's historic places and stewardship of historic properties help property owners and interested individuals appreciate the importance of preservation and understand the goals and processes associated with maintaining the resources.

Policy 6
Enhance understanding of and appreciation for Rockville's history and historic character.

The visible evidence of Rockville's unique identity derives from its geographical setting, its development pattern and street layout, its wide range of building ages and architectural styles, and the people who have lived here. These qualities help to create a sense of place and continuity that contributes to community pride and identity. Providing context

through educational materials and events allows residents and visitors to connect with and promote awareness and appreciation for Rockville's past. The City partners with Peerless Rockville, Montgomery County Historical Society, and other organizations in producing educational programs.

Actions

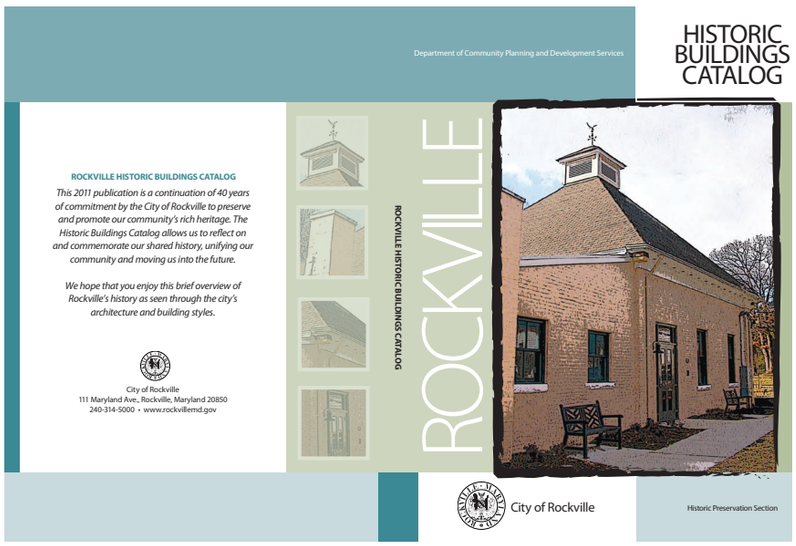
6.1 Expand educational efforts to promote understanding of Rockville's history and the benefits and responsibilities of historic designation.

6.2 Strengthen partnerships with preservation organizations to achieve and advocate for historic preservation objectives.

6.3 Implement programs to increase awareness of Rockville's history and historic preservation, including historic sites without structures where significant moments or points in time occurred in Rockville, through interpretive signage, online resources, and school and community programs.

6.4 Provide technical assistance to property owners who wish to nominate their property for designation and properly conserve and maintain their historic properties.

6.5 Provide training opportunities for historic district commissioners, owners of historic property, and historic preservation staff.



The Historic Buildings Catalog published by the City in 2011 is both a resource for historic preservation work and an educational tool.

6.6 Work with community partners to gather and preserve historical information through recorded interviews as a way to obtain information about past events and people that may not be found in written sources.

6.7 Work with Montgomery College, Montgomery County government, local archaeological organizations, and other partners to develop educational materials on archaeology and recommendations for testing, excavation and analysis under qualified supervision.

Policy 7
Promote and support heritage tourism as a tool for economic development, recreation, and community education.

Heritage tourism offers multiple benefits. It can help create jobs and diversify a local economy, increase property values and revenue, build community pride and help preserve a community's unique character. It can be a valuable component of an economic development strategy and is a growing industry. Heritage tourism also provides recreational and educational opportunities for the Rockville community and visitors; it can be fun as well as financially beneficial.

The Montgomery County Heritage Area (MCHA) was certified for inclusion in the State of Maryland's Heritage Areas Program in 2004. Rockville joined the Heritage Area in 2013 through an amendment to the Montgomery County Heritage Area Management Plan. In order to do so, Rockville was required to adopt the County's Management Plan into its *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* and it is hereby adopted into this Plan as well. The Rockville amendment to the Management Plan includes a list of projects that could be eligible for grants through the program.

Actions

7.1 Prioritize the proposed Target Investment Projects in Rockville's amendment to the Montgomery County Heritage Area Management Plan and apply for capital grants.

7.2 Promote visitation and tourism in Rockville through events such as Hometown Holidays and Montgomery County Heritage Days.

7.3 Support City programming in publicly owned structures and sites that are significant historic resources.

7.4 Develop and produce a comprehensive interpretive and wayfinding plan to showcase the city's historic resources.

7.5 Expand walking tours and enhance with attractive and coordinated interpretive signage and online resources.

7.6 Replace deteriorating wayfinding and interpretive signage in Rockville historic districts.

7.7 Integrate isolated commercial historic districts, such as the B&O Railroad Station District, into the city's economic fabric.

7.8 Create linkages between Rockville's bicycle trails and the Rock Creek trail and the C&O Canal trail.

7.9 Encourage the use of markers and plaques to identify significant historic structures and sites.

7.10 Re-implement and fund the house plaques program to provide all historic property owners with date plaques.

7.11 Incorporate into this Plan the Rockville Chapter of the Montgomery County Heritage Area Management Plan.

7.12 Partner with Visit Montgomery, the County's destination marketing organization, to promote and market Rockville's historic resources and events.

Policy 8
Support the synergistic connection between historic preservation and environmental sustainability.

Good preservation practice is often synonymous with sustainability and Smart Growth. Reinvestment in existing neighborhoods saves resources and promotes socially, culturally, and economically rich communities. Because historic resources already exist, they use public infrastructure and services that are already in place. The retention of older buildings also preserves the materials, energy, and human capital already expended in their construction. Rockville's



St. Mary's Church cemetery contains some of the oldest monuments in the city, and the graves of F. Scott Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda.

19th and early 20th century buildings, in particular, were designed to work with their environment through site orientation, landscaping, and building features such as porches, operable shutters, and wide eaves.

Actions

8.1 Communicate the ways that historic preservation is environmentally sustainable.

8.2 Provide information on the preferred, minimally invasive means for achieving energy efficiency in historic buildings.

GOAL 4
Act as a strong steward of City-owned historic sites, structures, parks and other properties.

The city is home to several significant historic structures and properties including structures, parks and cultural sites. The City's active involvement, in partnership with other agencies and individuals, with the future planning of these properties is important to their preservation and future viability.

Policy 9
Determine suitable uses for City-owned historic buildings, especially the King Farm Farmstead and Beall-Dawson House, and implement appropriate maintenance, restoration, and/or adaptive re-use in keeping with recognized historic preservation standards.

Actions

9.1 Consider options for adaptive reuse and/or restoration of City-owned historic buildings that support their usefulness while ensuring their continued integrity and historical significance.

9.2 Investigate and implement a viable adaptive reuse of the King Farm Farmstead.

9.3 Ensure necessary maintenance and preservation of City-owned historical buildings and property, that retains their historical context while providing a useful community amenity.

9.4 Determine appropriate methods to preserve and maintain historic cemeteries and archaeological resources.

GOAL 5
Pursue an equity and inclusion framework to recognize the diversity of Rockville's history and historic resources.

Moving forward, the City has an opportunity to strengthen and expand its historic preservation program to add further focus on its diverse history. Viewing historic preservation through a more inclusive lens is key to reaching greater equity within our community. Recognition and preservation of historically under-represented populations, time periods and building styles must go hand-in-hand with ensuring inclusive representation in all preservation efforts.

Policy 10
Recognize native, under-represented, and diverse historical contexts, communities, and periods of development in Rockville.

Actions

10.1 Develop a designation and preservation strategy for under-represented and diverse contexts, populations, and periods of development in Rockville to increase appreciation, understanding and equity in historic preservation.

10.2 Support City acquisition of properties representative of Rockville's diverse history, including African American sites (e.g., Lincoln High School and Carver School) and sites identified by working with Rockville's Asian-American and Latin-American communities.

10.3 Dedicate space in Rockville City Hall, other City facilities, and on the City's website for education and awareness of the city's multi-faceted and diverse history and people.

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MUNICIPAL GROWTH

Vision

Rockville will expand and annex land in a manner that enhances the city's quality of life, while continuing to provide and advocate for adequate public facilities, services, and infrastructure.

An aerial photograph from 2015 shows the eastern edge of the City of Rockville near Twinbrook Parkway and Rock Creek Park, which is a good topographical boundary for future expansion of the city.

State of Maryland law requires all municipal comprehensive plans to include a Municipal Growth Element, or MGE. The law requires that the MGE include consideration of future growth areas outside the existing corporate limits, and define the limits of municipal growth. These limits are defined and mapped by Rockville as its maximum expansion limit, or MEL. State law stipulates that a property must be within a municipality's defined growth limits for that property to be annexed.

The City of Rockville has grown in land area and population for a variety of reasons since its founding in 1803. Annexations from Montgomery County have added to the city's municipal boundary over the years, from whole planned communities to single properties at a time. A map depicting how the city has annexed land over time is shown on Figure 35.

This Municipal Growth Element defines Rockville's maximum expansion limit. Growth projections and trends are provided in the demographic section of the Introduction chapter; and the Land Use Element shows the City's plan for future land use within the city. A map of Rockville's preferred land use for areas outside the city but within the MEL is provided at the end of this Element (see Figure 41).

Rockville is situated within the larger urbanized area of Montgomery County, with a mix of development and parkland surrounding the city. In general, annexation in Rockville is a matter of shared interest between the City and property owners within potential annexation areas, rather than that of increasing land capacity to sustain growth. The following goals and policies establish the City's priorities and guidance for annexing property.

GOAL 1
Guide orderly annexation of land into the city, including a proactive annexation strategy.

Annexation is the legal process by which land is incorporated into a city. A municipal corporation may annex land from unincorporated areas of a county if that land is contiguous and adjacent to parcels within the city. An annexation may be initiated by a petition by the owner, or owners, of the property seeking annexation, or by a municipal legislative body, under rules defined in State law.

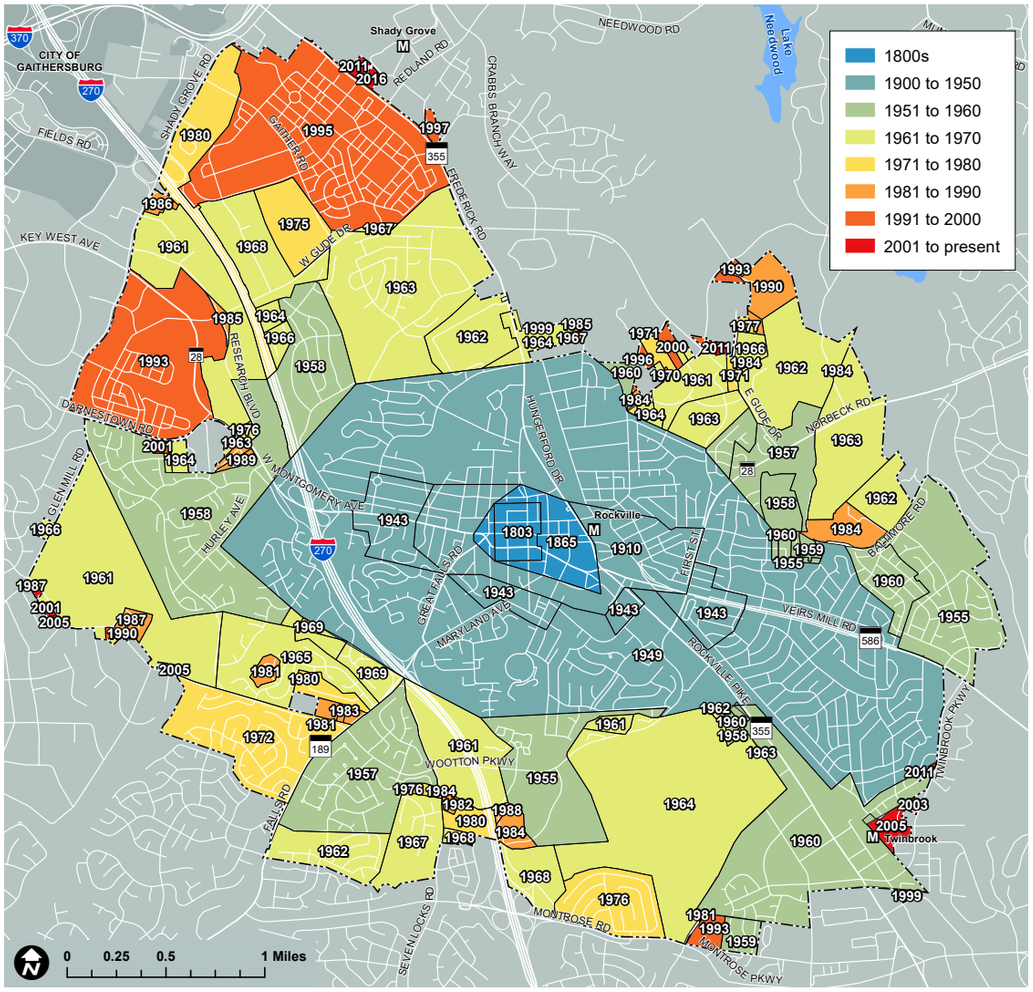
Policy 1
Strategically annex property into the City of Rockville, in accordance with State of Maryland law and the best interests of the City.

This Plan recommends an annexation strategy within the maximum expansion limit (MEL) based on a preliminary analysis of the potential for and value of annexation. Maps and descriptions provided in this element show where the City should conduct proactive outreach to property owners to explore any interest in annexations; and areas where the City should take a passive approach, and wait for property owners to approach the City. Properties within the MEL, but not in the indicated proactive annexation areas, may also annex into the city, either from initiation by either the property owner or the City.

Goals for Rockville's municipal growth include:

1. Guide orderly annexation of land into the city, including a proactive annexation strategy.
2. Establish a maximum expansion limit for the city.
3. Evaluate the impacts of annexation on a case-by-case basis.

Figure 35: Rockville Annexation Over Time



This Plan recommends a proactive approach for properties when the following conditions exist:

1. Annexation is possible in the near-term, because of adjacency or the ability to create adjacency through annexation of other property or right-of-way.
2. There is an identifiable advantage to the property owner, such as City zoning or services, for being part of Rockville, and therefore a reasonable likelihood of owner interest in annexation.
3. The potential annexation is likely to be fiscally beneficial to the City and adequate public facilities, services, and infrastructure can be provided.
4. The annexation is likely to benefit the overall economy, or other aspects, of the city.
5. Annexation would eliminate an enclave of unincorporated parcels surrounded by the city limit on all sides.
6. The annexation would provide additional open space.

A fiscal analysis is a key part of any annexation review process, with a determination of the level of infrastructure, additional programs and services, and other investments, if any, that the City would need to make versus the long term revenue from future property taxes on the annexed land.

Where the proactive analysis shows a benefit to the City, outreach to property owners is supported. The City will be more passive with respect to properties in other portions of the MEL. While the City may have a long-term interest in these properties becoming a part of Rockville, those decisions can be made on a case-by-case basis as the situation arises.

Actions

1.1 Consider annexation only for properties that are within the City's maximum expansion limit, per State law.

1.2 Consider annexation only for properties that are adjoining to property or right-of-way within the city, per State law.

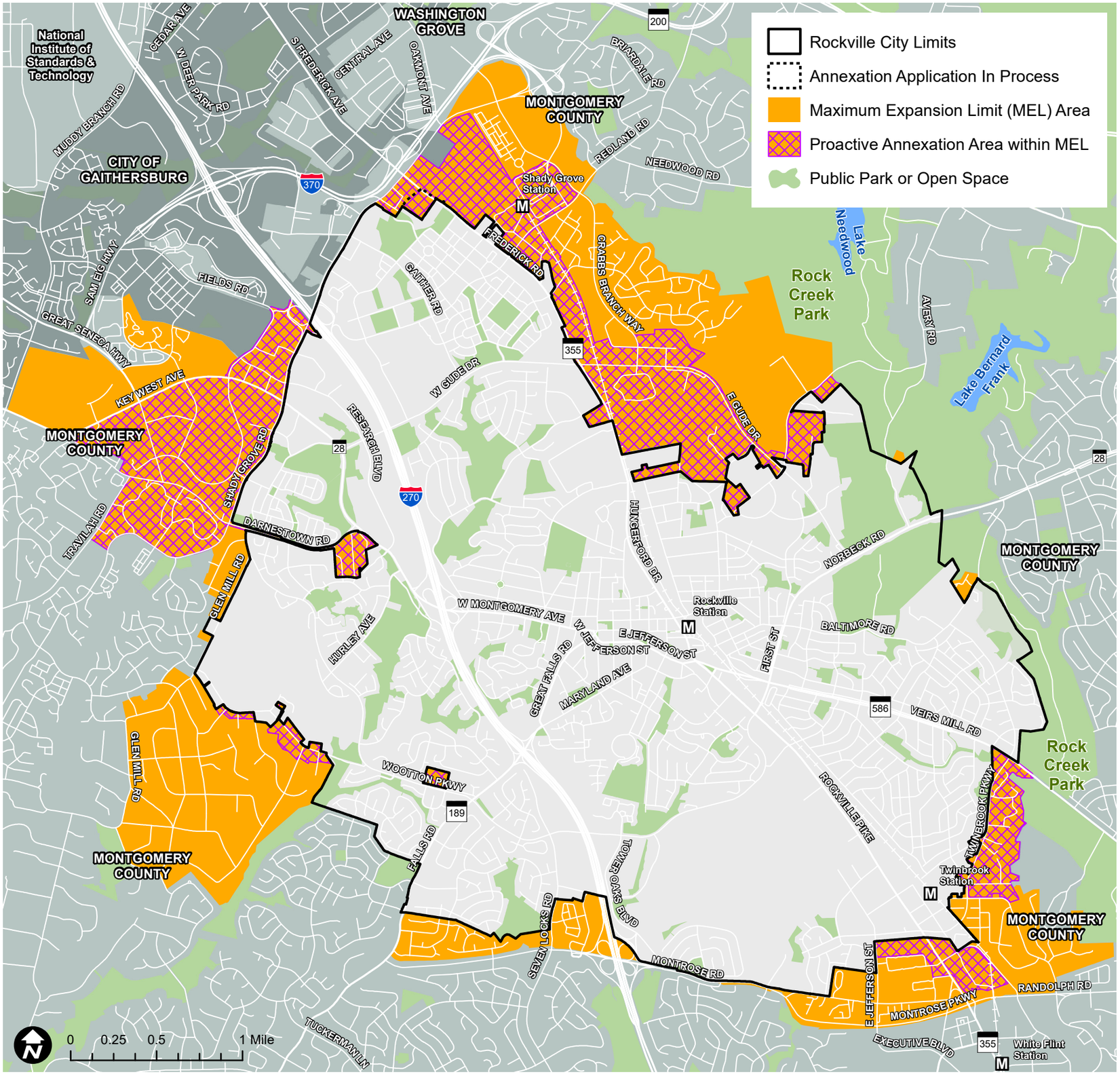
1.3 Annex properties that are completely surrounded by the City of Rockville.

1.4 Consider each annexation petition on its own merits and on a case-by-case basis.

1.5 Be proactive in regard to annexations that are logical and feasible and in the City's interest.

1.6 Conduct a fiscal analysis for each proposed annexation to determine the costs and benefits to the City that includes additional infrastructure, programs, and services.

Figure 36: City of Rockville Maximum Expansion Limit



Policy 2
Re-establish a working arrangement with the City of Gaithersburg and Montgomery County governments in regard to logical annexations.

In 1992, Montgomery County government and the cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg signed a memorandum of understanding that established a framework for annexation that was to be followed for a "twenty-year planning horizon." That horizon ended in 2012 and no subsequent agreement has been discussed since then.

Montgomery County government continues to plan for a significant amount of development just beyond Rockville's municipal boundaries. State of Maryland law requires municipalities to complete a municipal growth element. To the north and northwest are areas that could potentially annex into Rockville, or Gaithersburg, since both the cities of Gaithersburg and Rockville have overlapping areas in their maximum expansion limits, or remain outside of both in Montgomery County.

In areas just outside Rockville's city limits, the County continues to allow growth in both jobs and residential units. For instance, the County's Shady Grove Sector Plan, Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan, and its White Flint Sector Plans 1 and 2 all envision major activity centers with thousands of jobs and new residential units. This growth can be beneficial to the city, but also impacts roadway capacity within the city and capacity for other County-controlled community facilities, schools in particular. Rockville's MEL includes portions of these County growth areas, which provide the City some ability to engage with the County and landowners in planning for land development at the city's borders.

It is in the City's best interest to engage in active discussion with the City of Gaithersburg and Montgomery County governments regarding a shared understanding on annexation since it is likely that Rockville and Gaithersburg will continue to annex land from the County in the Shady Grove Road area.

Actions

2.1 Work towards an updated memorandum of understanding with the City of Gaithersburg and Montgomery County governments regarding future annexations.

GOAL 2
Establish a Maximum Expansion Limit for the city.

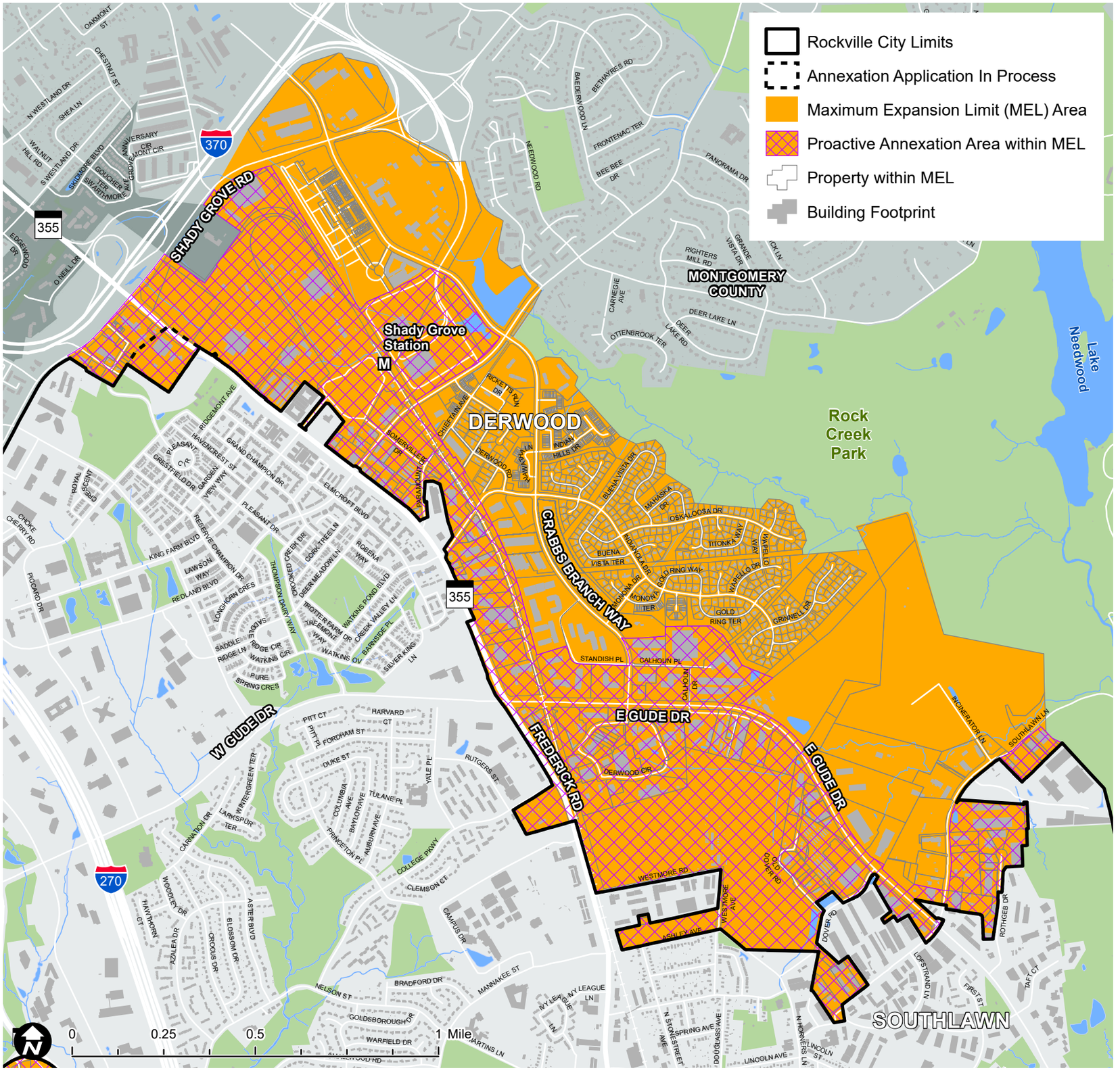
In prior City plans, the ability of Rockville to provide water and sewer services was central to the question of annexation because properties just outside of the city were not comprehensively served by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC). That condition is rarely the case anymore, though there are exceptions. As such, other principles will influence where the City establishes its Maximum Expansion Limit (MEL). In general, because inclusion in Rockville's MEL does not obligate Rockville to annex, being more expansive leaves more options available to the City, with little identifiable cost.

The following general guidelines were used to determine this Plan's recommended MEL:

- Base the MEL location on logical topographic features (i.e., major roads, water features, or neighborhoods).
- Only include areas where the City will be able to provide public services in an efficient and effective manner.
- Include areas for which there is a reasonable possibility that annexation could occur over the next 25 years.
- Include properties that have the potential to yield economic, fiscal, or other benefits if annexed.
- Include areas that offer the potential to add to the customer base for Rockville water services.
- Include properties that could help to support Rockville's image and marketing brand.

The Rockville MEL established in this Plan is shown in Figure 36. Detailed views are included in subsequent pages, divided into city quadrants.

Figure 37: Maximum Expansion Limit - Northeast Detail



Policy 3
Set the MEL north and east from the Southlawn area to Rock Creek Park and I-370.

Rock Creek Park makes a logical eastern boundary for the city's municipal boundary. The current city limit in the Southlawn area is a relatively complex boundary, meandering between various adjacent industrial properties (see Figure 37). The County zoning allows heavy industry in this area, which includes needed services, for instance metal and paper recycling. The city does not have a heavy industrial zone, so annexation is not a priority for these uses; however, proactive annexation in select properties on the border could benefit the city.

The site of the former WINX radio station, at 1000 Westmore Avenue, was recommended for residential development if annexed into the city, per the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan (2007). Currently the WINX property is zoned for industrial uses in the county. The City provides the property with a small amount of water service, which would need to be expanded if additional development were to take place. A forest conservation easement on a portion of the land is held by the Montgomery County Planning Board. Annexation of 1000 Westmore Avenue into the city for the purpose of residential development would be consistent with this Plan, subject to maintaining the forest conservation easement as a buffer between any future development on the site and the residences in Lincoln Park to the south.

Moving north, the Washington Gas fields and former landfill site on either side of East Gude Drive do not offer any redevelopment opportunities; however, annexation would allow adjacency to the properties along East Gude Drive and enable a consolidation of the overall East Gude Drive corridor into the city, some of which is already within city limits. Existing office uses along Crabbs Branch Way and residences in the Derwood subdivision appear to be stable, as well. The City does not anticipate redevelopment of these properties should they be annexed into the city in the future. Annexing property along East Gude Drive would also provide the benefit of the City owning and maintaining the roadway right-of-way that includes the Carl Henn Millennium Trail.

Properties on the East Gude Drive corridor, both within the city and within the city's MEL, are associated with the emerging Rock East District (RED), a business district promoted by Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI) that seeks to foster and support art, creator, and 'maker' spaces along the corridor. The district will focus on businesses such as breweries, distillery, restaurants, trails, sports businesses, retail, auto repair, and home improvement businesses.

This Plan shows the area between Frederick Road (MD 355) and the CSX railroad tracks as an area for proactive annexations, along with properties at the intersection of Frederick Road and Shady Grove Road. There are opportunities for land use change in both of these areas, which are currently used for a wide variety of highway-oriented commercial uses. Rockville's most recent annexations to the east side of Frederick Road, for a multiple-unit residential development, shows the potential for reinvestment proximate to the Shady Grove Metro station.

Actions

3.1 Be proactive in outreach to property owners for potential annexation in the Southlawn industrial area.

3.2 Work with owner of the property at 1000 Westmore Avenue (former WINX site) to reach an annexation agreement for a primarily residential development.

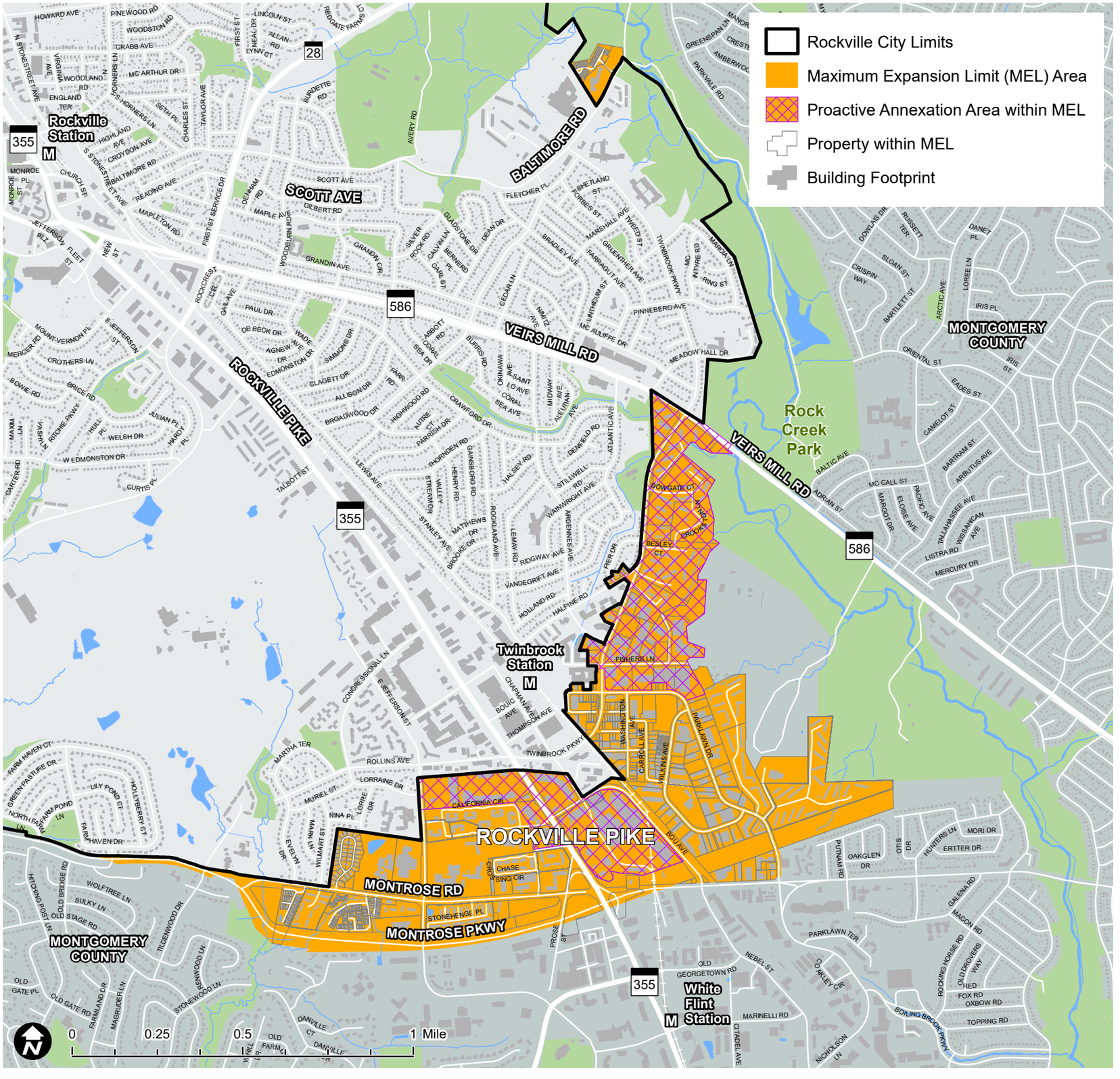
3.3 Make annexing property on the east side of MD 355 (Frederick Road, north of College Parkway) to the CSX railroad tracks a priority for Rockville and reach out to the property owners to discuss annexation options.

3.4 Support and promote the service industrial and creative/maker district of the Rock East District (RED). (*See also Planning Area 17 and Action 16.6 of the Land Use Element*)

Policy 4
Set Rock Creek Park as a logical boundary for the city east of the Twinbrook neighborhood.

The MEL encompasses properties on both sides of Twinbrook Parkway up to the edges of Rock Creek Park and Parklawn Memorial Park, a cemetery (see Figure 38). The

Figure 38: Maximum Expansion Limit - Southeast Detail



area between Twinbrook Parkway, south of Veirs Mill Road, and the parks is recommended for proactive annexation. The current land use for these properties is multiple-unit residential in the form of garden apartments. Residents of these apartments shop in the commercial area at Atlantic Avenue within the city and use Rockville facilities, including the Twinbrook Community Center. Some of these property owners have expressed interest in redevelopment to higher intensity residential uses, which have the potential to impact City services, facilities, and infrastructure. Additionally, the City recognizes the importance of the existing apartments as affordable and family-oriented communities. Annexation of these properties should not necessitate redevelopment of the existing garden apartments and any future redevelopment should seek to avoid gentrification and displacement of the current residents. Engaging these property owners in discussions regarding annexation to the city is recommended.

Further south, the current city boundary twists around a number of properties to the west of Twinbrook Parkway; annexation would provide a logical boundary for the city.

Annexations of former light industrial properties have been an important step in the creation of transit-oriented development on the east side of the Twinbrook Metro station. New mixed-use development on Fishers Lane, with ground-floor storefronts, provides a good walking environment from the station to the cluster of offices further east on Fishers Lane, anchored by large buildings occupied by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This area served by Fishers Land and Parklawn Drive is recommended for proactive outreach to property owners for consideration of annexation.

East of the Twinbrook Metro station, the large area from Twinbrook Parkway to Rock Creek Park is covered by the County's Twinbrook Sector Plan (2009), which includes a technology employment area and light industrial area. Residential uses are adjacent to the park. All of this area is within Rockville's MEL, which extends south to the County right-of-way corridor reserved for the extension of Montrose Parkway to Veirs Mill Road. Annexation of office and laboratory properties in this area would promote economic development in Rockville, with a focus on biotechnology, science, and health technology.

Policy 5
Follow Montrose Parkway and Randolph Road as the MEL in the south Rockville Pike area.

The area immediately to the south of the city limits along Rockville Pike is recommended for proactive outreach to explore annexation (see Figure 38). Shopping centers are the primary current uses. A proactive annexation strategy is recommended for the properties in the area for the following reasons:

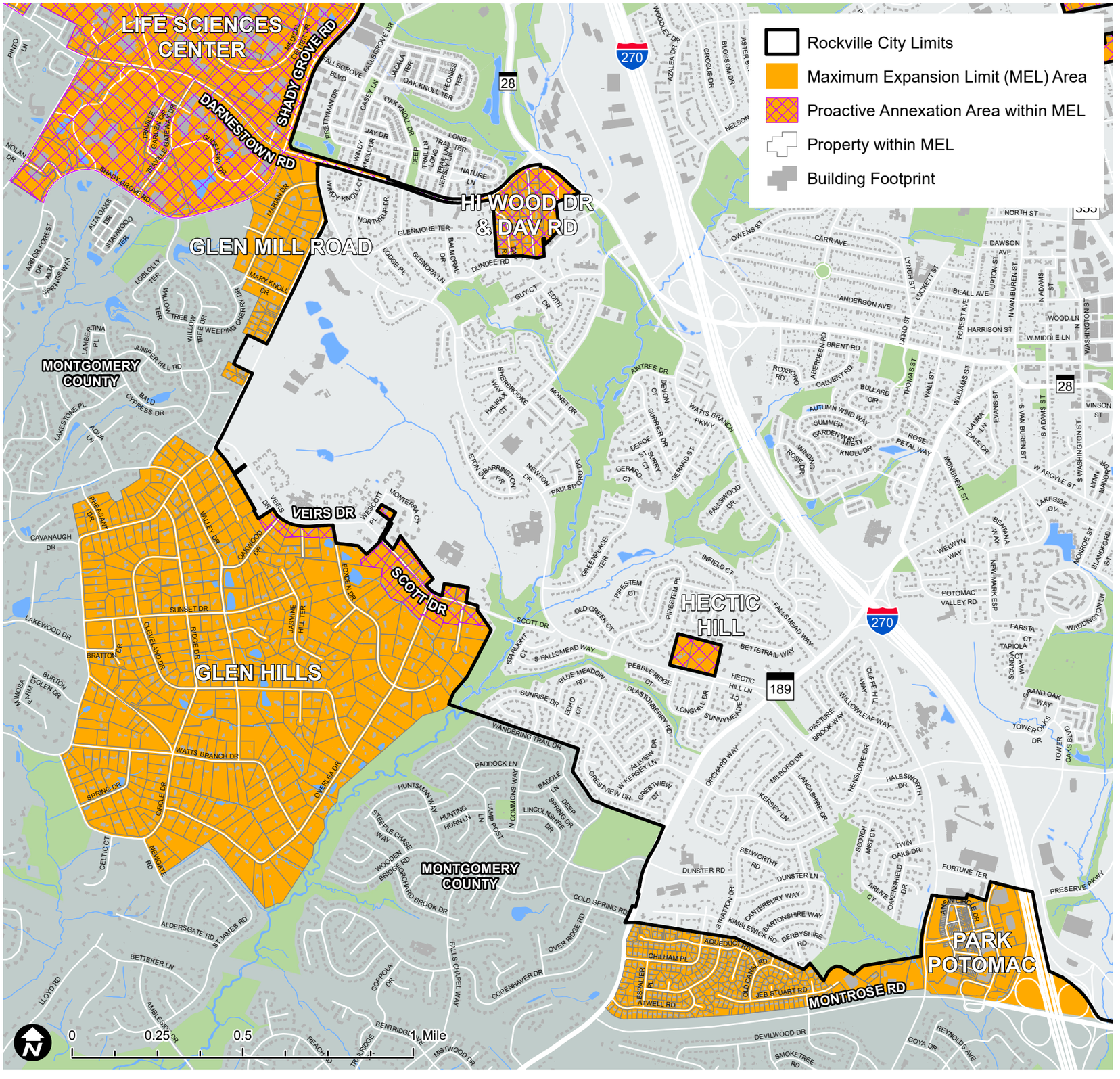
- The properties are consistent with the character of the MD 355 corridor within the city and the themes in the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan.
- The properties have a high likelihood of being economically beneficial to the City.
- Rockville will be in a better position to control impacts and promote a favorable development if the sites were located within the city.

Using the new Montrose Parkway alignment as a boundary for the MEL allows for a logical expansion of city boundaries, allowing for a better-defined service and delivery area. Montrose Road served this purpose in the past. There are many property owners in this district who already use Rockville as a mailing address, indicating their affinity and identification with the City of Rockville.

Policy 6
Include all land north of Montrose Road between I-270 and MD 189 in the MEL, including Park Potomac.

The MEL encompasses all land north of Montrose Road from I-270 west to MD 189 (see Figure 39). This area includes the growing Park Potomac development, which was in discussions with the City about annexation prior to its development. A benefit to the City would be its additional tax base. The area also includes a neighborhood of single-unit detached houses, which is immediately adjacent to an established neighborhood within the city.

Figure 39: Maximum Expansion Limit - Southwest Detail



Policy 7
Include all of the Glen Hills subdivision in the MEL, along with similar large-lot property west of Glen Mill Road and south of Darnestown Road without sewer access.

The area between Watts Branch and Glen Mill Road, known as the Glen Hills residential subdivision, is included in the MEL because problematic septic systems have led some residents of this neighborhood to inquire whether annexation into the city would be possible to obtain City sewer services (see Figure 39). Some properties in the Glen Hills area also have well water as their source of fresh water and may need City water service at some point in the future. The area is within the WSSC District boundary (known as WSSD), but is not comprehensively serviced by WSSC. The City would be permitted to provide water and sewer services only if an agreement were established between the City and WSSC. Such agreements have been achieved in the past for other properties. The City does have a water service line in Rockville near this neighborhood.

Analysis has not been undertaken by Department of Public Works, Recreation and Parks, or Finance staff regarding the engineering, City programs and services, and financial parameters involved in serving this area. Such analysis would need to be conducted before any annexations were to take place.

Additionally, the properties in this area are zoned RE-1 (minimum 40,000 square-foot lots) by the County and reserved for large-lot single-unit detached houses. Some property owners have expressed an interest in subdividing and developing additional single-unit houses as a means to help finance needed water and sewer improvements. The City can accommodate such development if the properties are connected to Rockville utilities and annexed into the city. This area is solely residential and is expected to remain so.

Policy 8
Offer annexation to residential lots fronting on Scott Drive and Veirs Drive.

These properties are adjacent to the current city limits and this Plan recommends reaching out to the property owners to discuss annexation (see Figure 39). The properties are relatively high value and are likely to be net fiscally positive to the City. However, infrastructure costs of providing water and sewer, if needed, should be determined prior to any annexation considerations.

Policy 9
Make annexing enclave properties a priority.

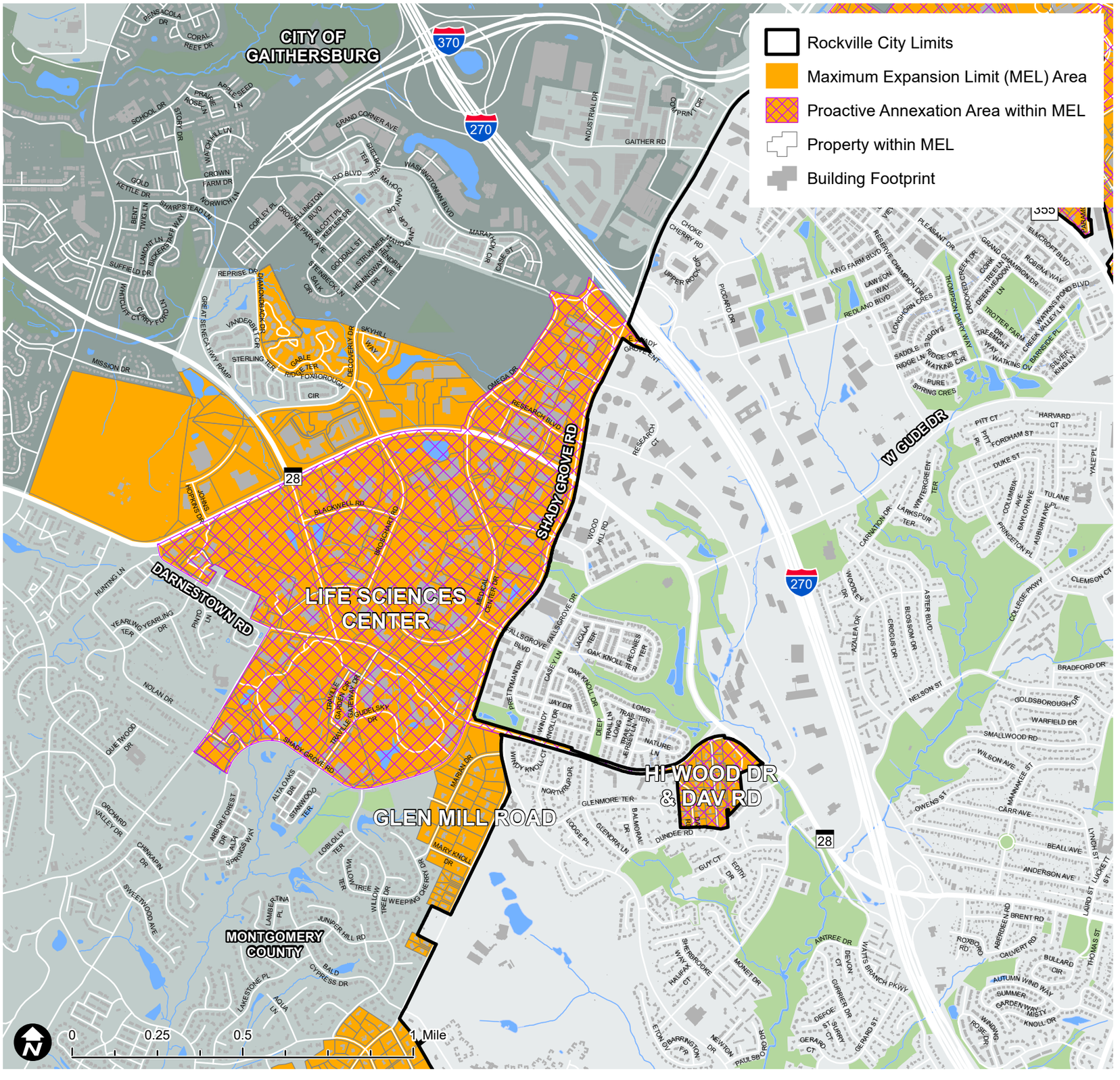
Enclaves are areas that are either completely or nearly surrounded by city land. State law provides municipalities certain rights to annex enclaves, subject to set procedures.

Two properties, at 8321 and 8311 Hectic Hill Lane, are unincorporated enclaves surrounded by the city (see Figure 39). Prior annexation agreements from 1983 with respect to the Hectic Hill subdivision annexation should be reviewed to determine if the properties are in compliance with the annexation agreements. The City is prepared to annex these properties if it is determined that the terms of annexation agreement are not in compliance.

Properties along Hi Wood Drive and Dav Road are practically, but not legally, an enclave because they are connected to areas of the county along Darnestown Road, which is a County road (see Figure 39). Therefore the City cannot annex the properties by-right under the State allowances for true enclaves. The major obstacle, for years, has been the cost of bringing the entire neighborhood up to City standards for sidewalks and water and sewer service; these properties are on well water and septic systems. Annexation has been discussed in the past without resolution because of significant infrastructure costs.

The area comprised of Hi Wood Drive and Dav Road is a proactive annexation area, with the understanding that it would take a broad plan and agreement for how to build and finance the infrastructure. The annexation should only be

Figure 40: Maximum Expansion Limit - Northwest Detail



considered if the fiscal analysis shows the long-term impacts to be positive for the City.

Policy 10
Include the Shady Grove Road and Life Sciences areas northwest of Shady Grove Road and southwest of I-270 within the MEL.

The northwest maximum expansion area quadrant includes properties to the northwest of Shady Grove Road, and southwest of I-270, where the Life Sciences Center is being developed (see Figure 40). This area is part of the larger Great Seneca Science Corridor Master Plan area, as planned by the County. The city's MEL also includes adjacent industrial and commercial properties.

Major current uses within the area include:

- Shady Grove Adventist Hospital
- The Universities at Shady Grove
- Johns Hopkins University-Montgomery County
- National Cancer Institute
- National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

These are major institutions that would add to services available within the city and the prestige of Rockville. There is significant potential benefit, and no risk, to including these areas in the MEL, as Gaithersburg has done.

The vision of the County's Great Seneca plan calls for enhancing the Life Science Center and the biotech niche by adding development and infrastructure capacity, a greater mix of uses, and creating a walkable, multi-modal activity center. Construction of the Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT), a bus rapid transit project proposed by the Maryland Transit Administration, is a centerpiece of the development plan. Four CCT stations are planned to serve the area, which will open additional development capacity that is currently limited by County-imposed calculations for traffic, by shifting trips to the bus mode. All of the planning for growth, up to 17.5 million square feet of new development, is being done by Montgomery County government, and this growth will happen whether or not it is included in Rockville's MEL. Project approvals are phased by the County, based on shifting more and more trips to non-automobile modes, with the bus rapid transit a key aspect of serving those trips.

This Plan recommends proactive outreach for annexation of properties fronting along the west side of Shady Grove Road. This proactive area also includes Shady Grove Adventist Hospital and The Universities at Shady Grove.

Actions

10.1 Establish a strategy to conduct outreach to owners of property fronting on the northwest side of Shady Grove Road to discuss potential annexation.

GOAL 3
Evaluate the impacts of annexation on a case-by-case basis.

The State of Maryland requires that comprehensive plans include in the Municipal Growth Element (MGE) an assessment of the impacts of projected growth, including whether the municipality will be able to provide service to new areas. This section provides the required discussion, in a manner similar to Rockville's 2010 MGE, which was approved by the State.

There is no expectation that all areas within the MEL will be annexed into the city in the foreseeable future. Therefore, prematurely projecting the impacts on City services of this growth will not provide a meaningful view of future



The northwest side of Shady Grove Road is lined by commercial and institutional uses, include many professional office buildings. Annexation into the City of Rockville may provide an opportunity to coordinate new investments and an improved environment along Shady Grove Road.

City service needs. It should be noted, however, that the County provides public schools, libraries, and the fire and emergency medical services for all properties within the MEL; and the City shares the responsibility for providing police service as well as recreation services and parks. In order to ensure that adequate services are provided to properties annexed into the city, the City should advocate for Montgomery County government to provide adequate public facilities, services, and infrastructure in those areas for which the County is responsible.

Policy 11
Analyze the potential impacts of each proposed annexation on public services.

By 2040, the population of Rockville within the existing municipal boundaries is projected to grow to nearly 92,000 people, living in nearly 37,000 households; employment is projected to grow to more than 90,000 (MWCOG Round 9.1 regional projections, October 2018). Areas available for growth in Rockville are virtually all infill locations, where projects will involve redevelopment of previously developed sites, mostly along the MD 355 and Shady Grove Road corridors. At present, these areas are mostly single-use commercial or single-use office/laboratory spaces, where the existing zoning and the future market are likely to support mixed-use development; the past decade has already begun to see these changes. None of these growth areas are suitable for large amounts of single-unit housing, which bring high demands for school, roadway, and water investments. As a result, the vast majority of new residences in Rockville are projected to be apartments (or condominiums) and townhouses.

Rockville maintains prudent budgeting and investment policies and has adjusted quite well, historically, to its projected growth; yet the City of Rockville does not control all of the services and facilities that will be needed to accommodate future growth. Montgomery County government and the State of Maryland are also important service providers in accommodating growth.

Rockville, Montgomery County government, and the State of Maryland will, at minimum, need to be prepared to provide resources for schools, higher education, community and recreational facilities, facilities for police,

Land Use Policy Map Designations

RESIDENTIAL

- RD: Residential Detached
- RA: Residential Attached
- RF: Residential Flexible
- RM: Residential Multiple Unit

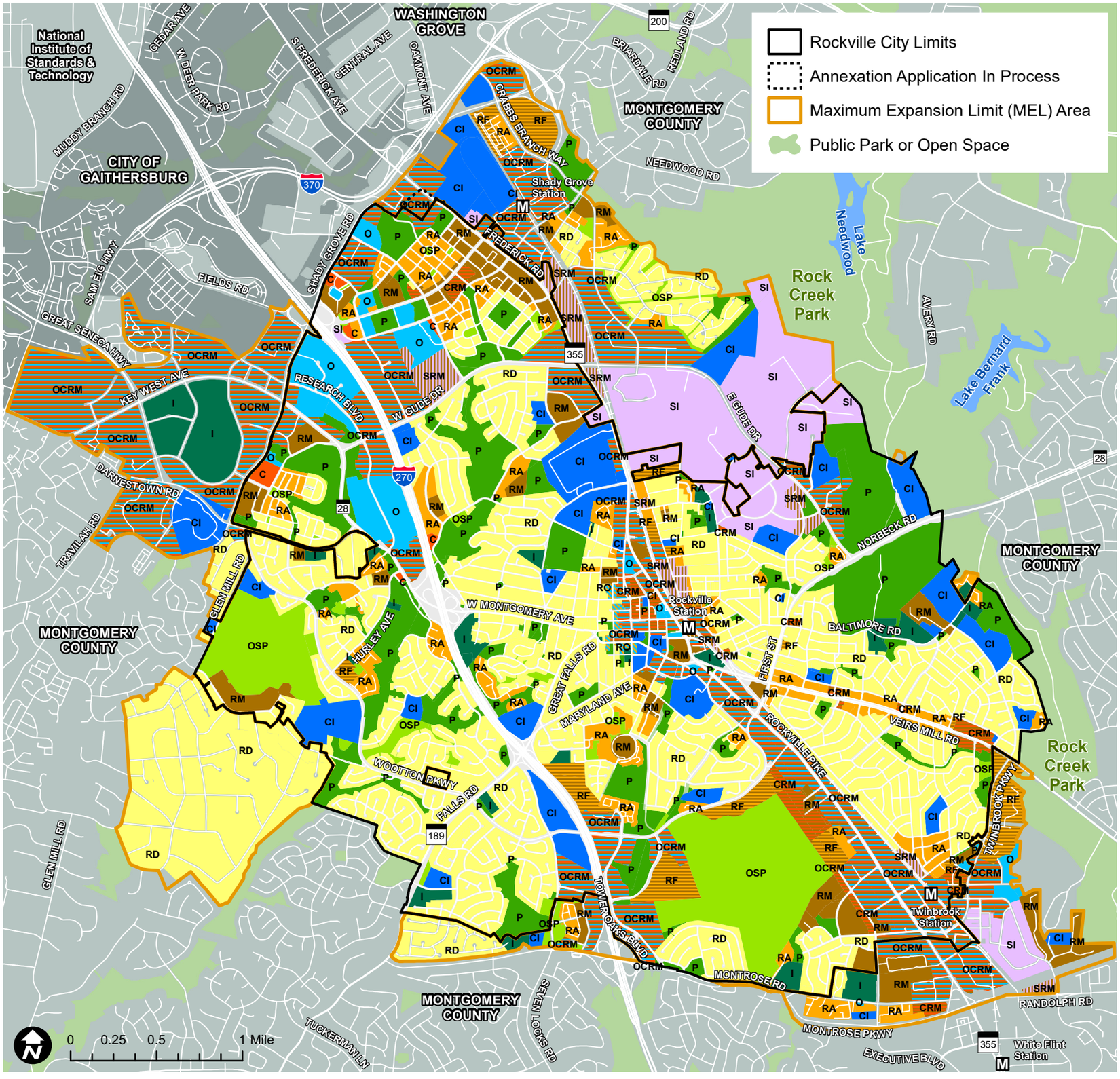
COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE

- O: Office
- C: Commercial
- RO: Residential and/or Office
- CRM: Commercial and Residential Mix
- OCRM: Office, Commercial and Residential Mix
- SI: Service Industrial
- SRM: Service Industrial and Residential Mix

PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL

- CI: Civic and Public Institutional
- I: Private Institutional
- OSP: Open Space Private
- P: Public Parks
- Potential Future Public Park

Figure 41: Maximum Expansion Limit with City of Rockville Land Use Policy Map Designations



fire, and emergency medical personnel and services, and transportation infrastructure. Rockville and Montgomery County government will also need to maintain policies by which developers provide appropriate levels of infrastructure, or resources that help to fund such investments, as part of their project approvals.

The projected growth in Rockville by 2040 can be accommodated within Rockville's existing municipal boundaries, as long as the public facilities and infrastructure are available to meet the public needs generated by that growth. Therefore, there is no demand-generated need for Rockville to expand its municipal boundaries. However, there may be positive benefits to opportunistic expansion if an owner adjacent to Rockville expresses the desire to become part of the city. Furthermore, there are benefits to expanding Rockville's municipal boundaries in order to open the possibility for the positive fiscal benefits and obtain some control over future development in areas that already affect Rockville.

Rockville is identified by Montgomery County government and the State of Maryland as being in the center of a key growth corridor. Rockville also sees value in vitality-enhancing growth, though not at the expense of important quality-of-life measures for the city's residents, businesses, property owners, and visitors. Rockville will continue to invest in services, facilities, and infrastructure for which it has authority, but Montgomery County and Maryland must do the same in their areas of authority and service.

Development Capacity Analysis (Growth Projections)

Maryland State law requires that the Municipal Growth Element includes a projection of future growth in population and resulting land needs based on a capacity analysis of areas selected for future municipal annexation and growth. It also requires an examination of the effects of growth on infrastructure and natural features both within and adjacent to the present municipality and on future growth areas that may be annexed. The primary purpose of the development capacity analysis is to estimate the growth that is expected in a local jurisdiction, including whether the available land within a jurisdiction can accommodate the projected demand. State guidance provides local governments with flexibility regarding the approach to the development capacity analysis.

Rockville has limited remaining vacant land available for development within its municipal boundaries and in its defined Maximum Expansion Limits (MEL) for which there is any near-term prospect for development. As a result, almost all new development in the City of Rockville, or within its MEL, are expected to be in the context of redevelopment and/or adding density to locations that currently have low-density development.

The State had endorsed Rockville's methodology of projecting growth with the approval of Rockville's Municipal Growth Element in 2010. The City is currently using the same methodology to generate population, housing, and employment forecasts 20 to 30 years into the future, and coordinate its forecasts with local jurisdictions by participating in the regional cooperative forecasting effort that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) coordinates for the region. The Council of Governments Board of Directors approves the regional forecasts, that are generally updated every two to three years. Montgomery County government also participates in the same forecasting process and generates projections for areas that are within the City's MEL. Therefore, growth projections are in place for the areas within the City's MEL. The City of Rockville and Montgomery County government continue to plan for future growth and infrastructure in the areas of authority within their respective jurisdictions.

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
OF THE CITY OF ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
PLANNING AREAS

APPROVED AND ADOPTED
AUGUST 2, 2021

INTRODUCTION

This section of the Comprehensive Plan recognizes the unique neighborhoods and districts that make up the city, provides a summary of their distinctive characteristics and key issues, and identifies area-specific policies and recommendations for zoning changes, City projects, and topics for additional study. Focusing on smaller parts of the city in this way allows a finer-grained examination of topics than is possible in the citywide Elements section. Recommendations in these planning areas are aligned with broader City policies and all citywide policies in the Elements section also apply to all planning areas, unless superseded by any overriding planning area policy(ies). Both sections should be referenced together to understand the full extent of City policy for each of the recommended actions and projects.

The planning areas (PA) in this section are as follows:

PA 1	Rockville Town Center
PA 2	East Rockville
PA 3	Hungerford, New Mark Commons, Lynfield, and Fireside Park
PA 4	West End and Woodley Gardens East-West
PA 5	Woodley Gardens and College Gardens
PA 6	Lincoln Park
PA 7	Montgomery College Area
PA 8	Twinbrook and Twinbrook Forest
PA 9	Rockville Pike
PA 10	Montrose and North Farm
PA 11	Woodmont
PA 12	Tower Oaks
PA 13	Potomac Woods, Potomac Springs, Falls Ridge and Orchard Ridge
PA 14	Rockshire and Fallsmead
PA 15	Fallsgrove and Research Boulevard
PA 16	King Farm and Shady Grove
PA 17	Southlawn and RedGate

These planning areas and their boundaries, shown in Figure 42, may be changed only by Planning Commission recommendation of a Comprehensive Plan amendment to the Mayor and Council for adoption, consistent with State law.

Community Involvement

The public engagement process for this Comprehensive Plan is described in the main introduction of the Comprehensive Plan. In short, the effort, known as “Rockville 2040”, included a citywide kick-off meeting on May 9, 2015, followed by thirty-five planning area-based listening sessions, four citywide forums, and three open houses in January 2018. Many additional meetings were held with individuals and representatives of neighborhoods, businesses, and other institutions to gather feedback and craft portions of the plan. Community input relevant to the city’s planning areas was received at every one of these opportunities. Formal public hearings were then held by other the Planning Commission and the Mayor and Council, and both oral and written testimony was received and considered.

The Relationship of Planning Areas and Neighborhood Plans

Neighborhood and other small area plans integrate local community concerns with long-range planning policies and programs at the citywide level. They provide the City, and its residents, businesses, and institutions, the chance to clarify and refine citywide visions and goals on a smaller geographic scale, based on community identified goals and Mayor and Council priorities.

Neighborhood plans are part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan and, therefore, hold as much weight as any other part of the Comprehensive Plan. As with the Comprehensive Plan, neighborhood plans must also comply with State planning requirements.

Three neighborhood plans were approved in the 1980s, before the adoption of the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* (2002 CMP). These plans are superseded and replaced by the policies of this Comprehensive Plan for their corresponding planning areas, including:

- Hungerford-Stoneridge, New Mark Commons, Monroe-Lynfield (adopted 1985) - superseded by Planning Area 3
- West End-Woodley Gardens East/West (1989) - superseded by Planning Area 4
- I-270 North of Montrose Road (1985) - superseded by Planning Area 12

Other, more recent, neighborhood plans are adopted into this Comprehensive Plan by reference for portions of the former neighborhood plan area that coincide with their respective

new planning area boundary. However, policies in this plan supersede any policies in conflict with those in previously adopted neighborhood plans. These neighborhood plans are:

- Town Center Master Plan (2001) - superseded in part by portions of Planning Areas 1, 2, 4, 6, and 9
- East Rockville Neighborhood Plan (2004) - superseded in part by Planning Area 2
- Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan (2007) - superseded in part by Planning Area 6
- Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan (2009) - superseded in part by Planning Area 8
- Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan (2016) - superseded in part by Planning Area 9

It is the City's intention to discontinue the production of stand-alone and separate neighborhood plans that correspond to planning area boundaries and, instead, adopt policies and recommendations within the Planning Areas section of this Comprehensive Plan. Until such time as the following plans are completely superseded, they will be considered adopted by reference, as described above.

One full neighborhood plan update is included in this Plan. The *West End-Woodley Gardens East/West Neighborhood Plan* was originally adopted in 1989 and was among the oldest plans still in effect while this Comprehensive Plan was being prepared. For this reason, as well as for the planning area's unique historic character and its adjacency to Town Center and its associated development pressures, it was determined that a neighborhood plan should be produced simultaneously and in conjunction with the citywide Comprehensive Plan update. The updated *West End-Woodley Gardens East/West Neighborhood Plan* is incorporated into this section as Planning Area 4. It supersedes the 1989 plan as well as previous policies for the planning area from the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Planning Area Changes from 2002

Neighborhood-based planning in Rockville began in 1979 with the adoption of the Town Center Urban Design Plan. In 1982, the City established eighteen planning areas to highlight locally-focused planning policies within the Comprehensive Master Plan. Planning areas were incorporated into the 2002 CMP and are once again incorporated here.

Two new planning areas are introduced in this plan to reflect their unique character from adjacent areas: Montgomery College Area (PA 7) and Woodmont (PA 11). Some planning areas have been combined, such as Twinbrook with Twinbrook Forest and Montrose with North Farm, while others have seen boundary changes from their previous 2002 CMP extents. In general, the adjusted planning area boundaries reflect common characteristics within each area and the location of practical delineations, such as major roads, railways, natural features, and established neighborhoods or commercial districts.

How to Read this Section

This Planning Areas section is written as a complement to the Elements section of the plan, which includes the broader citywide policies consisting of the plan's ten topical elements. Each planning area includes a summary of their distinctive characteristics; a history of previously approved plans, studies, and major developments; and key issues facing the planning area now and in the near future. Most planning areas include focus area recommendations, which are properties or groups of properties with recommended zoning changes and/or urban design recommendations; public projects or studies recommended to be undertaken over the life of the Plan; and other recommendations particular to each planning area.

Focus areas are denoted in each planning area's Land Use Policy Map by a purple circle with the letter "A" followed by a number; recommended City projects are numbered in a black square and the letter "P". Land use policy changes take effect with the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan. Zoning changes are recommended in the plan but require implementation through separate Zoning Ordinance or Map amendments; and urban design recommendations are intended to guide future redevelopment of the subject area.

Many policies and recommended public projects in this section have their foundations in one or more of the Comprehensive Plan's Elements. Where such relationships exist, references are made to their respective policy or action in the Elements.

Definitions for land use policy designations in each planning area's Land Use Policy Map are shown on the next page, as well as a map for the entire city, overlaid by planning areas. The definition of some land use designations vary from the general definitions and are explained in the relevant planning area Focus Areas.

Definitions for Land Use Policy Map Designations

RESIDENTIAL

RD - Residential Detached is mapped for properties with a single house per lot, but may include institutional or home office uses. This category may also include one accessory dwelling unit, under rules defined in the Zoning Ordinance.

RA - Residential Attached includes a variety of house types that share party walls. Types of construction include duplex, triplex, fourplex, townhouses/row houses, and, depending on the location in the city, small apartment buildings with up to six units in a single structure. Detached houses are also allowed.

RF - Residential Flexible includes a mix of townhouses/ row houses, and apartment buildings, as well as detached houses. It is applied to sites where the mix of allowed residential types is flexible and to be finalized during development review. Small-scale commercial uses are an included option if integrated into the residential development.

RM - Residential Multiple Unit is mapped for apartment of condominium buildings, which are defined as construction types with shared corridors and entrances. The density of units and size of the building is regulated by the zoning ordinance. RM areas exclude detached and attached types of construction.

COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE

C - Commercial is mapped exclusively for commercial uses, which include all types of businesses that provide direct sales or customer service, including retail shops, grocery stores, restaurants, personal or professional services, and lodging. In some locations, the Plan indicates where commercial is strongly preferred along a street frontage.

CRM - Commercial and Residential Mix expresses the City's interest in retaining and introducing commercial uses in specific locations mixed with multiple unit residential and/ or residential attached types. The mix can be horizontal, with stand alone commercial next to apartment buildings on a site; or the mix can be vertical, with commercial on the ground floor and apartments above. In some locations, the Plan indicates where commercial is strongly preferred along a street frontage.

O - Office is mapped where office or other employment-generating uses, such as hotels, research & development, or laboratories, are preferred as the primary use. Commercial or other customer-serving uses are allowed as complements to the primary employment-generating use.

RO - Residential and/or Office allows either or both uses, but not commercial.

OCRM - Office, Commercial and Residential Mix is the most flexible category, allowing a wide choice in mixing office, commercial, and residential uses. Uses such as research & development, breweries, distilleries, and small manufacturing may be appropriate if they do not adversely impact surrounding properties. In some locations, the Plan indicates where commercial is strongly preferred along a street frontage.

SRM - Service Industrial and Residential Mix is mapped in areas where service industrial is the primary use, but a mix of residential, commercial, office, and other uses is also allowed.

SI - Service Industrial is inclusive of a wide variety of light industrial uses, warehouses, automobile repair, construction supply, and other distribution, repair, or wholesale businesses. It also allows for food service, kennels, or indoor recreation. Railroad and other utility properties are included.

PUBLIC AND INSTITUTIONAL

P - Public Parks includes all public parks and open space.[1]

A green asterisk is placed on the map in the general area where a **Potential Future Public Park** is needed, but the specific location has yet to be determined.

CI - Civic and Public Institutional are uses where government and other civic functions are located on publicly owned property. These uses include public schools and colleges, courthouses, Rockville City Hall, County offices, libraries, and maintenance facilities. Public parks are mapped under the Public Park (P) designation.

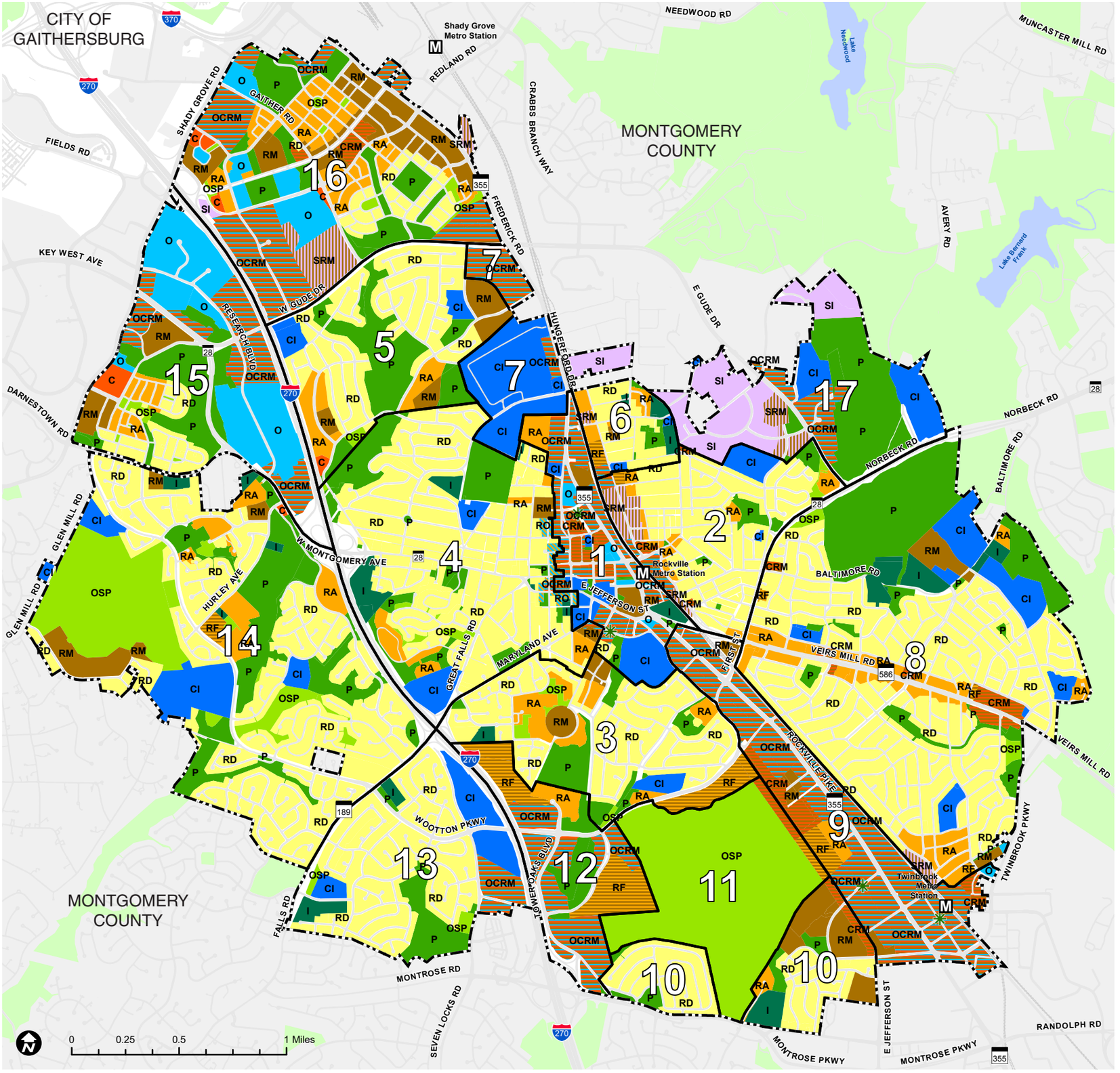
OSP - Open Space Private is private country club land and golf courses, and also large common areas owned by homeowners associations.

I - Private Institutional is mapped for private religious institutions and organizations, private schools, and cemeteries.[2]

[1] Any land use designation of Public Parks on private property or property not owned by the City of Rockville is for planning purposes only. Any such property will not be zoned as "Park" and nothing in this Plan precludes an owner from developing property in accordance with the zoning designation and zoning regulations applicable to the property.

[2] The Land Use Policy Map applies the Private Institutional designation to existing institutional uses on parcels larger than three acres; smaller parcels are designated with the recommended land use for the property as if it was not occupied by an institutional use. In either case, institutional uses should be an allowed use in the Zoning Ordinance.

Figure 42: Planning Areas of the Rockville Comprehensive Plan with Land Use Policy Map Designations



THE 2025 ROCKVILLE TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN, ADOPTED ON JANUARY 27, 2025, SUPERSEDES THIS CHAPTER. THE PLAN CAN BE FOUND ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE: ADOPTED 2025 ROCKVILLE TOWN CENTER MASTER PLAN

1



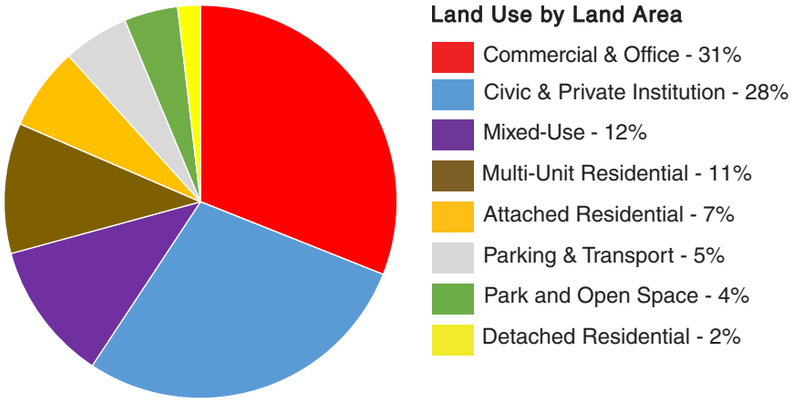
Planning Area 1

ROCKVILLE TOWN CENTER

Town Center is Rockville's downtown. Situated at the city's geographic center, it serves as the seat of government for the City of Rockville and Montgomery County, as well as Montgomery County's State District and County Circuit courthouses. Boundaries of the planning area are shown in Figure 44.

This Comprehensive Plan adopts by reference the *2001 Town Center Master Plan* for portions of the neighborhood plan area that coincide with this planning area boundary. Policies in this Comprehensive Plan supersede any policies that are in conflict with those in the *2001 Town Center Master Plan*, as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 1



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	19
Attached Residential	156
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	2,187
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	284
Total units	**2,646**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Area Characteristics

The Rockville Town Center planning area has a wide mix of land uses and building types. Government offices, residences, private offices, cultural institutions, non-profit entities, restaurants, and retail shops are major features in the planning area.

Government and civic uses include: Rockville's City Hall and Police Station; the executive, legislative, and judicial offices of Montgomery County government; a State of Maryland courthouse; the County's Rockville Memorial Library branch; and Richard Montgomery High School.

Town Center is also a neighborhood, with residents living in a wide variety of building types, including high- and mid-rise apartments and condominiums, townhouses, row houses, and single-unit detached dwellings. More than 5,000 people make Town Center their home, with communities including Americana Centre, College Square, The Fitz, The Upton, The Fenestra, The Palladian, The Metropolitan, Main Street, The Victoria, Brightview West End, Beall's Grant, Sunrise Assisted Living, the Town Center Apartments, and the Ansell Apartments.

Prices range from market-rate expensive units to units affordable to, and restricted to, those with moderate and lower incomes. Private offices of many types and sizes are also located in Town Center, from 51 Monroe Street (the city's tallest building at 21 stories) to small office suites. The 140-room Cambria Hotel and Suites opened in 2015, bringing the first hotel into downtown Rockville in recent years. Cultural, educational and other non-profit organizations are also a part of Rockville's active, mixed-use downtown.

The Rockville Transit Station is a key transportation amenity for Town Center, serving as a rail station for the WMATA Metrorail Red Line, the MARC Brunswick Line, and the Amtrak Capitol Limited route. It is a major bus hub for Montgomery County's Ride On and WMATA's Metrobus routes, and is served by private taxi companies, ride-share services, Capital Bike share, and dockless bike and scooter providers. The station also offers surface parking for commuters and other

transit users. Maryland Route 355 (called both Rockville Pike and Hungerford Drive within Town Center) is also a major transportation feature of the planning area.

The combination of government uses, cultural attractions and employment, all served by transportation assets, make Rockville Town Center an important area for visitors coming to (or through) Rockville's downtown.

Planning History

From its early beginnings as a simple crossroads and County seat at the birth of our nation, to a bustling and urbanizing suburb in the Washington, D.C. region today, Rockville Town Center is a key activity center in Montgomery County.

Planning in Town Center began even before Rockville's incorporation in 1860, when a small settlement on the main road between Georgetown and Frederick was selected as the seat of the newly formed Montgomery County government in 1776. By 1873, the opening of the Metropolitan Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad enabled Rockville residents to work in Washington, D.C. The town continued to grow around this transportation hub to become an employment center and the collection of diverse neighborhoods that exists today.

Creating an active downtown has been a major goal in Rockville for decades. In the early 1960s, Rockville was the second community in the state to initiate a federally-supported urban renewal program to construct a new downtown. The Mid-City Urban Renewal Area sought to position Town Center competitively with nearby suburban shopping centers by providing amenities that would draw people into Rockville's downtown. Urban renewal resulted in the removal of some then-existing streets and businesses, which were at the time considered by the municipality to be in need of redevelopment, and the construction of the 350,000-square-foot Rockville Mall. However, the renewal project was not successful in its goal and, by 1990, the mall had closed. Forced to find a solution for its redevelopment, the City approved a new development plan for the mall site, and in 1996, it was demolished. Demolition of the mall paved the way for a reconnected street grid and a new 100,000-square-foot retail pavilion of restaurants and a movie theater on East Montgomery Avenue.

The *Town Center Master Plan* was adopted in 2001, after an extensive public engagement effort, to implement a new vision for Rockville's downtown. Though many of the Master Plan's goals and objectives have been met (or are still coming to fruition), its overarching goal is still relevant today:

Create a daytime, evening, and weekend activity center that is easily identifiable, pedestrian-oriented, and incorporates a mix of uses and activities.

Objectives of the *2001 Town Center Master Plan* included:

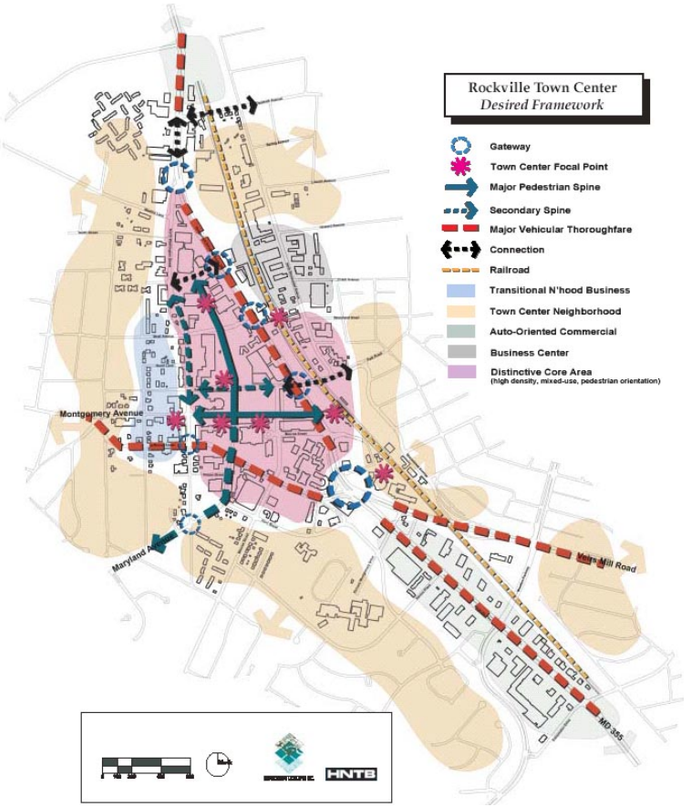
1. Provide an environment conducive to and supportive of living, working, shopping, and entertainment.
2. Accommodate a variety of densities and scales of development that are sensitive to an urban neighborhood environment and the demands of the marketplace.
3. Enhance links to transportation options which improve their visibility and accessibility.
4. Provide improved connections from neighborhoods to the Town Center.
5. Minimize the divisive impact of Rockville Pike and the Metro and CSX rail lines.
6. Make the Town Center a unique, high amenity destination for local and regional customers.
7. Utilize urban design to establish zoning and density requirements that will assist in defining the Rockville Town Center.
8. Provide sufficient parking for new mixed-use development and visitors to the Town Center.
9. Address integrating new aesthetic public parking garages with linkages from road networks.

These objectives continue to be embraced by this Plan while adding an important new principle to the list above:

10. Provide an environment that is safe and appealing for pedestrians and bicyclists.

A fundamental concept of the *2001 Town Center Master Plan* is the Desired Framework diagram (see Figure 43). The Framework represents a culmination of analysis and discussion within the community regarding the conceptual physical ideas of the 2001 Plan. One major theme of the framework is the L-shaped 'spine', which leads from the Rockville Transit Station, across a pedestrian bridge spanning MD-355, to East Montgomery Avenue, then turns north at Maryland Avenue to continue past Beall Avenue. This plan generally continues this desired 'spine' concept.

Figure 43: Town Center Master Plan Desired Framework



Rockville Town Square is a 12.5-acre development project covering five blocks within the larger 260-acre planning area. It was developed through a public-private partnership between the City of Rockville, Montgomery County government, and private developers. First opening in 2006, Rockville Town Square was the first development in Town Center to implement the vision of the *Town Center Master Plan*; a vision that continues to be realized throughout the city's downtown.

Since 2006, additional development projects have been completed in Town Center, including three multi-unit residential buildings (with two more under construction as of this writing); high-rise offices, including the headquarters of Choice Hotels, International; and the Choice Hotels' headquarters hotel, Cambria Hotel and Suites, as part of a separate mixed-use development of commercial and residential uses.

In July of 2019, a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Washington Chapter was jointly sponsored by the City of Rockville and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Some of the major recommendations from the ULI TAP report, *Rockville Town Center: Strengthening Its Vitality*, are included in this section where they relate to the City's comprehensive planning policies. Other recommendations and background materials can be found in the full report and will be considered during future Comprehensive Plan updates.

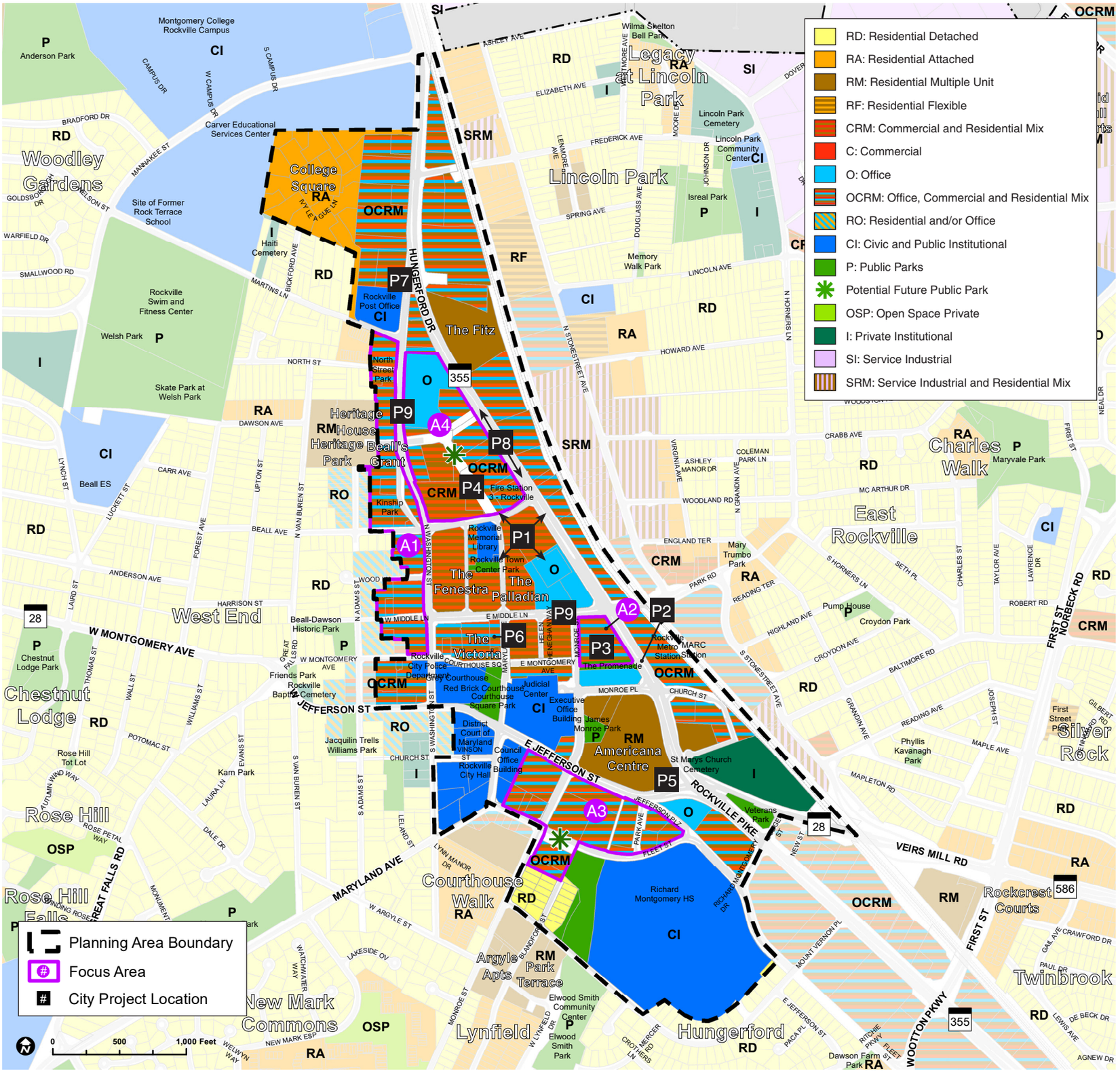
Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire and opportunities for commercial activity and business in the planning area;
- Need for improved vehicular and pedestrian signage and wayfinding into and throughout Town Center;
- Implementing Vision Zero principles to provide a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists within Town Center and for connections with Town Center from nearby neighborhoods;
- Parking challenges in Town Center, both real and perceived;
- Interest in completion of the Phase II vision for Town Center (north of Beall Avenue);
- Strong desire for improvements to the Rockville Station, including providing for safe and convenient access and better overall connectivity with the rest of Town Center and nearby neighborhoods;
- Potential impacts of the County-planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes along MD-355 and Veirs Mill Road;
- Interest in preservation of historic structures in downtown Rockville;
- Desire for more parks and open space for downtown residents and visitors;
- Better integration of government facilities with the Town Center urban environment.

Despite a significant amount of success, Town Center has not fully reached the level of vitality many in the community desire, a sentiment consistently expressed during the Rockville 2040 public engagement effort. Street-level commercial activity, which was, and is, a core component of the mixed-use vision of the *Town Center Master Plan*, has experienced challenges due to increased competition in the

Figure 44: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 1



region, the advent of e-commerce, which has reduced the amount of commodities sold in physical stores throughout the U.S. economy, and an overall shift in consumer preferences. The policies in this planning area section represent adjustments to the *Town Center Master Plan*, due to both the significant progress made since 2001 and the changing circumstances since that time.

During the development of this plan, the COVID-19 pandemic emerged and had a significant short-term impact on all aspects of Town Center from both the pandemic itself and the City's policy responses. It is not yet known what the long-term impacts will be. It will be important for the City to keep track of whether important changes occur in the demand for office and other commercial space, the desire to live in high-density environments and the use of transit.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

West side of North Washington Street

These properties on the west side of North Washington Street, between West Montgomery Avenue and Martins Lane, have seen little development activity over the past 20 years even as other parts of Town Center have improved or redeveloped. However, this portion of the planning area has the potential to intensify, especially in residential or office uses, and bring greater community vitality and economic value to Town Center.

Land Use Policy Map

Given its close proximity to the core of Town Center, this area is planned for a mix of uses under the land use designation of OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix). Residential uses are particularly desired for this area, though development should be sensitive to the historic buildings and residents immediately to the west.

Zoning Recommendations

The current zoning for most of these properties is MXNC (Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial), which limits building heights to 45 feet, with an opportunity to build somewhat taller based on providing such community needs as additional parks or open space and/or affordable housing. No change in height limits is recommended, though adjustments to the incentives for permitting additional height should be addressed.

Urban Design Recommendations

Buildings facing North Washington Street, as well as the public realm of sidewalks and amenities, should be designed to facilitate interaction and interest at the ground level, where they interact with a redesigned North Washington Street. An approved 'road diet' on North Washington Street is designed such that people walking, bicycling or rolling across or along North Washington Street feel safe and comfortable. Although not required, services and cultural/educational institutions are encouraged, as are commercial uses if the market supports them. On the west side of this area, buildings should be designed so as not to dominate the scale of the single-unit detached homes or commercial structures immediately to the west; designs should be sensitive to the views that those structures will have of new buildings.

AREA 2 A2

255 Rockville Pike (Rockville Center)

This property is occupied by a building that was part of the former Rockville Mall. Montgomery County governmental functions, which had occupied the building for more than 20 years, have largely relocated to a new County headquarters in Wheaton. Once the building and its parking garage becomes vacant, it may be considered for major redevelopment.

Land Use Policy Map

The area is planned for high-density, mixed-use development with a land use designation of OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix), given its close proximity to the Rockville Transit Station and the core of Town Center.

Zoning Recommendations

No changes are recommended to the current MXTD (Mixed-Use Transit District) zone.

Urban Design Recommendations

It is recommended that the City take an active role in the redevelopment of this area as a prominent site in Rockville's downtown. Redevelopment of this property should contribute to the realization of the Town Center downtown L-shaped 'spine' and incorporate an expanded pedestrian promenade over MD-355 to the Rockville Transit Station.

AREA 3 A3

Properties along Fleet Street and East Jefferson Street, between Maryland Avenue and Jefferson Plaza

This area consists of a group of properties south of the current core downtown area that have the potential to become a new activity center in the city, focused around a large public park and event space.

Land Use Policy Map

The mixed-use designation, OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix), is applied to properties in this focus area to allow for future infill and/or redevelopment.

A future public park is recommended in the general location where the green asterisk is placed in this focus area on the Land Use Policy Map (Figure 44). The asterisk indicates the City's intention to establish a public park in this general area, either by means of land dedication as part of a development project, purchase, land swap, or some other method that would serve as a significant public gathering and event space for the Rockville community and beyond. (*See also Policies 5 and 6 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)

Zoning Recommendations

The current zoning for these properties is MXNC (Mixed Use Neighborhood Commercial) in the portion north of Fleet Street and MXT (Mixed Use Transition) south of Fleet Street. A change in zoning to MXCT (Mixed Use Corridor Transition) is recommended for all properties within this focus area in order to permit heights of up to 75 feet.

Figure 45: Conceptual Park at Fleet Street and Monroe Street



Concept A *Concept B*

Source: Mahan Rykiel Associates

The City should work with Montgomery County government and other private land owners to realize the land use and design vision of the plan as part of any future redevelopment proposals.

Urban Design Recommendations

Redevelopment of property in this area should contribute toward the realization of a public park, indicated by the Future Potential Public Park asterisk, surrounded by pedestrian-oriented, urban-scale buildings that help to frame the public space. New developments should orient primary building facades and front doors toward a street or public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open spaces, and to foster activated pedestrian areas. Building frontages should include ground-floor uses that attract customers or regular visitors, enhanced pedestrian areas and amenities, attractive landscaping, and bicycle infrastructure. Potential park development concepts are shown in Figure 45. Concept A envisions a naturalistic park with curvilinear paths and an amphitheater facing onto a circular green. Concept B is a more formal design with an amphitheater facing onto a rectangular green.

AREA 4 A4

Properties along Maryland Avenue (north of Beall Ave.) and Dawson Avenue (between MD-355 and N. Washington St.)

This area comprises a group of properties with frontage along the extension of Maryland Avenue, north of Beall Avenue, and Dawson Avenue, between Hungerford Drive (MD-355) and North Washington Street. They represent a second phase to the downtown redevelopment area of Town Center and are envisioned as an extension to the current Rockville Town Square project.

Land Use Policy Map

Several land use designations are applied to property in this area, either to allow for future infill and/or redevelopment or to reflect a continuance of their existing land uses.

A future public park is recommended in the general location where the green asterisk is placed on the Land Use Policy Map of Figure 44. The asterisk indicates the City's intention to establish a public park in this general area, either by means of land dedication as part of a development project, purchase, land swap, or some other method, that would serve as a small gathering and amenity space for visitors to the area. (*See also*

Policies 5 and 6 of the Recreation and Parks Element)

Zoning Recommendations

No zoning changes are recommended for the properties in this area, which are all zoned MXCD (Mixed Use Corridor District) with the exception of 255 N. Washington Street, which is in the planned development zone, PD-KSI.

Urban Design Recommendations

Redevelopment of property in this area should contribute toward a pedestrian-oriented, urban-scale streetscape. New developments should orient primary building facades and front doors toward a street or public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open spaces, and to foster activated pedestrian areas. Building frontages should include ground-floor uses that attract customers or regular visitors, enhanced pedestrian areas and amenities, attractive landscaping, and bicycle infrastructure.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Conduct a planning effort leading to the adoption of a Comprehensive Plan amendment to Planning Area 1 that updates and replaces the 2001 *Town Center Master Plan*. (*See also Policies 8, 9, and 22 of the Land Use Element and Policy 10 of the Economic Development Element*)

PROJECT 2 P2

Work with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Montgomery County government, and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to redesign the Rockville Station for better and safer access, and an improved architectural approach that creates a better experience for users. As of this plan's adoption, a WMATA-sponsored study is underway and will produce options for review by the Rockville community. It is likely that implementation of the study's results will require significant capital investment from multiple layers of government and, potentially, the private sector if private development emerges as part of the plan. Improvement of the station is a high priority of this plan and is also discussed in Policies 4 and 10 of the Transportation Element. The result should be better connections between the station and surrounding commercial and residential areas; an improved "welcoming" experience for those entering Rockville; easier and safer routes to and from the station; artwork; and other placemaking features.

PROJECT 3 P3

Redesign Promenade Park as a pleasant and inspiring public space and connection between the Town Center core and an expanded pedestrian bridge to the Rockville Transit Station. Partner with WMATA, MDOT SHA, MDOT MTA, MCDOT, and surrounding property owners, in consultation with the Rockville community and the Cultural Arts Commission, the Rockville Traffic and Transportation Commission, the Rockville Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Rockville Pedestrian Advocacy Committee, and others, for the redesign of the park and pedestrian bridge.

PROJECT 4 P4

Design Maryland Avenue as a continuous commercial corridor between East Montgomery Avenue and Dawson Avenue. The extension of Maryland Avenue between Beall Avenue and Dawson Avenue should include streetscape amenities, such as wide sidewalks, significant landscaped areas, street trees, decorative lighting, wayfinding and landmark elements, outdoor seating, on-street parking, and bike facilities. (*See also Policy 19 of the Land Use Element and Action 19.3 of the Transportation Element*)



Pedestrian bridge over MD-355 connecting Rockville Transit Station to Town Center, with the former Rockville Mall building at 255 Rockville Pike beyond.

PROJECT 5 P5

Work with MDOT SHA to improve the safety and experience for people walking, rolling, and biking along MD-355, south of the Rockville Transit Station. A sidewalk should continue along the entire street frontage of the Americana Centre. The pedestrian crossings at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road, East Jefferson Street and Rockville Pike should be designed for maximum safety and comfort. (*See also Action 4.7 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 6 P6

Encourage redevelopment of the surface parking lot at the southwest corner of Maryland Avenue and East Middle Lane as a mixed-use development with ground-floor commercial or another pedestrian-serving use. Based on the intended use, consideration should be given for reducing or waiving on-site parking requirements because of the site's limited area, prime Town Center location, nearby structured parking options, and transit access. A cultural use or amenity is encouraged for this site.

PROJECT 7 P7

Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential solutions to improving the intersection of North Washington Street and Hungerford Drive (MD-355) that increase safety and mobility for all modes. (*See also Action 20.10 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 8 P8

As a result of increased residential development, work with MCDOT and MDOT SHA to conduct a special corridor study along MD-355 to determine congestion levels, recommend significant improvements to street design, increase non-auto driver mode share, and incorporate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). (*See also Action 19.7 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 9 P9

Implement 'road diet' projects for East Middle Lane and North Washington Street with the goals of implementing Vision Zero principles of safety for all users, including pedestrians and bicyclists; and to improve access and circulation for pedestrians within and from outside of Town Center. Road diets were recommendations of the ULI Technical Assistance Panel study in 2019, which the Mayor and Council directed staff to implement.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Develop a clear identity and vision for downtown Rockville, shared jointly by Town Center's user groups.
2. Improve awareness of the arrival points of Town Center by engaging a branding, marketing, and wayfinding consultant to develop a strategy to raise the profile and accessibility of Rockville Town Center.
3. Continue development of the L-shaped 'spine', extending along East Montgomery Avenue and Maryland Avenue, with a mix of ground-floor commercial, service, and entertainment uses; and office, residential, and institutional uses located above.
4. Develop a strategy to create public landmarks throughout the Town Center and Rockville Transit Station area. Landmarks could include architectural building elements, sculptures, public art, and unique signage.
5. Buildings with ground-level parking and blank building walls should not be allowed along street edges, especially along Maryland Avenue, East Middle Lane, North Washington Street, Courthouse Square, and East Montgomery Avenue.
6. Streets in Town Center should be designed to encourage interaction and activity for people on the sidewalk, through the provision of wide sidewalks, gathering places, and interesting ground-floor uses. Sidewalk activity, such as outdoor café seating and other retail displays visible from the street, should be encouraged.
7. Develop and adopt streetscape guidelines for the Town Center planning area. Guidelines should establish appropriate and attractive street furniture, including bus shelters, seating, surface treatment, and lighting, into all major pedestrian areas.
8. Work with Montgomery County government to find a new location in, or near, downtown Rockville for Fire Station #3. Relocation would open new development opportunities for the current station site, possibly in

combination with properties to the north; and better accommodate modern fire equipment and fire house standards (*See also Action 5.3 of the Community Facilities Element*)

Recreation and Parks

9. Study the potential for a new public park in Town Center that can be used for large public events, music concerts, theater performances, farmers markets, and holiday festivals; and for passive recreation and relaxation at other times.
10. Explore the potential for a new dog park in Town Center.
11. Small urban parks should be maintained and added to enhance the pedestrian environment throughout Town Center and serve as locations for public landmarks.
12. Design and implement landscaping of the public realm, including parks and sidewalks, that connects open spaces as a network.

Transportation and Vision Zero

13. Improve connections between Montgomery College and Town Center, to serve the thousands of students and staff at the college, by:
    - Establishing an off-street, shared use path connecting the College with downtown Rockville. Consider path alignments that follow existing rights-of-way or new easements or dedications on private property to create the safest and most comfortable connection.
    - Studying the potential for a shuttle bus that links Montgomery College, Town Center, and the Rockville Transit Station.
14. Develop and approve a pedestrian master plan for the Town Center area, including transit wayfinding and an audit of the pedestrian environment in and around Town Center for safety, ease of navigation, accessibility, and aesthetics.
15. Implement the planned 'road diets' for North Washington Street and East Middle Lane.
16. Implement the Dawson Avenue street connection, between North Washington Street and MD-355, to provide additional travel options through Town Center.
17. Facilities (i.e., bike lanes, racks, etc.) for cyclists should be incorporated into street improvements and open space plans in Town Center to the greatest extent possible.
18. Enhance pedestrian accessibility between East Rockville neighborhoods and Town Center, such as through enhanced or upgraded sidewalks, safe street crossings, accessibility improvements, and wayfinding signage.
19. Above-ground utilities, particularly overhead electricity lines, should be placed underground wherever feasible. Further study should be undertaken to determine both the physical and financial feasibility of under-grounding utilities in Town Center.
20. Ensure that BRT routes and stops serving Town Center are compatible with existing and planned land uses and serve the transit needs of the Rockville community, property owners and developers, and BRT riders. (*See also Action 9.2 of the Transportation Element*)
21. Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate improvements at the intersection of East Middle Lane/Park Road and MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal for a new left turn lane from eastbound East Middle Lane. (*See also Action 20.4 of the Transportation Element*)
22. Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left turn from eastbound MD-28 onto northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal. (*See also Action 20.5 of the Transportation Element*)

Parking

23. Continue to develop solutions for parking challenges in downtown Rockville, including the following options:
    - Adjust parking standards for new development and occupancies in Town Center to reflect the reduced need for parking spaces in its transit- and pedestrian-friendly environment.
    - Explore options to make parking fees and charged hours regionally competitive.
    - Coordinate among the public and private parking providers in Town Center to improve driver understanding and experience (e.g., consistent fee structures, time limits, and signage, etc.).

- Implement technology to make finding and paying for parking easier in Town Center in partnership with Montgomery County Department of Transportation.
- Conduct outreach and education to Rockville residents and visitors about parking facilities and improvements.

Economic Development

24. Retain significant employers in Town Center.
25. Recruit new for-profit and non-profit employers to Town Center, taking advantage of its mixed-use, transit-accessible location.
26. Attract 'anchor uses' that serve Town Center's user groups of its residents and families, government employees, visitors to local government and courthouse facilities, and the city at-large. Anchors may be large-scale employers, cultural organizations that attract visitors, educational institutions, and any other uses that attract people to Town Center.
27. Identify, and then reduce or eliminate, unneeded regulatory obstacles to Town Center's economic vitality.
28. Develop and implement marketing efforts to attract visitors to Town Center, from such nearby entities as Montgomery College; and to induce those already visiting Town Center (e.g., jurors, visitors to government buildings and offices) to be customers of Town Center establishments.

Culture and Arts

29. Attract arts and cultural institutions to Town Center, for the improvements to quality of life and to bring more vitality and support to Town Center street-level retail and services.
30. Bring additional arts and culture programming to the public and private spaces in Town Center.
31. Create a broader arts environment, through the deployment of art in streets, sidewalks, parks, private buildings, public buildings and elsewhere.

Housing

32. Increase the number of residents and housing density in Town Center, to provide additional housing options for residents across the full range of income levels and to provide additional demand for the commercial uses in this mixed-use environment.

Community Partnerships

33. Continue to build and foster relationships with Town Center stakeholders, including business owners, employers, residents, WMATA, Montgomery College, and Montgomery County's governmental agencies. These relationships should result in greater vitality and improved design and placemaking for an overall better environment.
34. Explore formation of a formal organization, such as a BID (business improvement district), Transportation Management District (TMD), or Urban Partnership, to support operations, management, and promotion in Town Center.



Planning Area 2
EAST ROCKVILLE

2

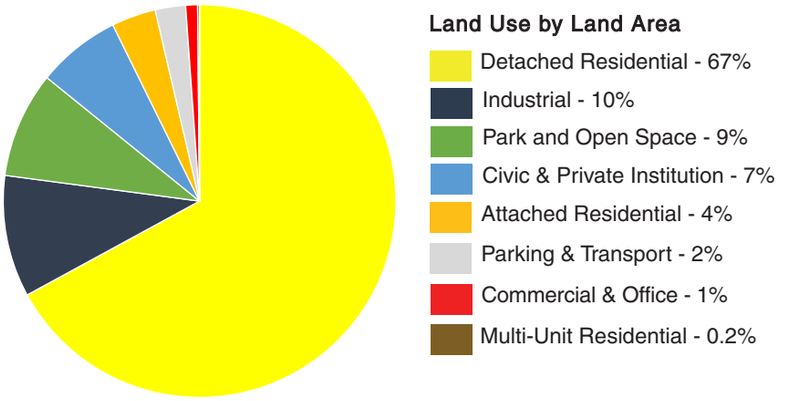
East Rockville is an established, predominantly single-unit detached residential neighborhood located just east of Rockville Town Center and the Rockville Transit Station. Residential communities located within the planning area include East Rockville and Burgundy Knolls, in addition to the townhome communities of Charles Walk and Redgate Farms, The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 47.

This Comprehensive Plan adopts by reference the *2004 East Rockville Neighborhood Plan* for portions of the 2004 Plan Area that coincide with this new planning area boundary, noting that this current planning area now includes portions of both sides of North and South Stonestreet Avenues. Policies in this Comprehensive Plan supersede any policies that are in conflict with those in the 2004 plan as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Area Characteristics

Most of the housing stock in the neighborhood was built in the 1940s and early 1950s during the development boom that occurred after World War II. However, historic homes dating from the late 1800s still stand today. The *2004 East*

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 2



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	1,028
Attached Residential	65
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	6
Total units	**1,099**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.



Croydon Park, adjacent to the historic Pump House. Photo courtesy of Sheila Sweeney, April 2019.

Rockville Neighborhood Plan provided a thorough history of the neighborhood's development and outlined several historic preservation goals, most of which have since been accomplished. In conjunction with the 2004 plan update effort, all buildings constructed before 1945 in East Rockville were surveyed and their resources documented. Several homes along Baltimore Road and Reading Avenue as well as the Croydon Park Pump House have been locally designated and are included in the *2011 City Historic Buildings Catalog*. In addition to local designations, the original Rockville Park subdivision was listed as a National Register Historic District in 2011.

Over the past decade, the neighborhood has experienced development pressures, common in transit-proximate, high-cost growth areas. These pressures, in addition to changing demographics and projected increases in future housing demand, have spurred fresh discussions with residents about the future of housing in the neighborhood. The increase in original-home tear-downs and rebuilds to a larger scale has raised concern. Residents have expressed concern that the height and massing of new residential development, and how it is used, is changing the character and context of the established neighborhood. Residents also acknowledge that certain locations provide opportunities for incorporating more housing types within the area, especially portions of North and South Stonestreet Avenue, properties abutting commercial and service industrial uses, and areas closest to the Rockville Transit Station. There is also a desire to see a transition to more-walkable, neighborhood-serving commercial uses near the Metro.

In addition to the primarily single-unit detached homes in the neighborhood, there are townhouse developments on Charles Street as well as the Redgate Farms townhouse community near the intersection of Norbeck Road and East Gude Drive. The only multi-unit developments in the neighborhood are two formerly single-unit detached homes that have each been converted into three-unit apartments.

Light- and service-industrial uses border residential portions of the neighborhood to the west, along North and South Stonestreet Avenues, and a portion of its northern boundary is adjacent to the Southlawn Lane light industrial area. Three local-serving commercial properties are in the neighborhood: a small retail center at the corner of Lincoln Avenue and North Horners Lane; the Maryvale Market, located at the corner of North Horners Lane and Howard Avenue; and, further south at South Stonestreet and Reading Avenues, a former small convenience mart. Additionally, a few properties interspersed throughout the neighborhood are utilized for small commercial uses and in-home businesses under special provisions of the Rockville Zoning Ordinance.

East Rockville is home to several well-used parks and community facilities. Maryvale Park is the largest of the parks, with 7.5 acres devoted to active and passive recreation as well as a small forest preserve area. Northeast Park, located at the southwest corner of the East Gude Drive and Taft Street intersection, is nearly 7 acres and includes an urban wildlife sanctuary. Smaller parks include Mary Trumbo Park, Phyllis Kavanagh Park, and Croydon Park, the latter of which contains the historic Pump House and is a core community gathering space. Maryvale Elementary School is located along the northern boundary of the neighborhood on First Street and for which Montgomery County Public Schools completed a revitalization and expansion project in January 2020.

Planning History

The *1970 Master Plan for Rockville* organized the city into fifteen neighborhood planning areas, including Croydon Park on Rockville's east side. A neighborhood plan for Croydon Park was approved in 1982 and updated in 1986, a year after the Rockville Metro Station was completed. The City's *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* expanded the Croydon Park planning area boundaries to include the Burgundy Knolls and Redgate Farms neighborhoods and updated the planning area name to East Rockville. In 2004, a neighborhood plan was adopted for East Rockville to replace the 1982 and 1986 plans for Croydon Park.

Prior to the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan, two plan amendments were adopted for areas identified as part of the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*; the MCPS and County sites between Howard and Spring Avenues, and properties near the intersection of North Stonestreet Avenue and Park Road. Both amendments included changes to the land use map and text, including design guidance for the subject areas. The map and policy changes from those plan amendments are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan. Additionally, the planning area boundary has been adjusted from the *2001 Town Center Master Plan* and the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* boundaries to incorporate

segments of North and South Stonestreet Avenues, between the rail lines and the East Rockville residential neighborhood, into Planning Area 2. This recommendation dates back to the *2001 Town Center Master Plan* and also supports recommendations from the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*.

Most recently, based on recommendations from the 2004 Neighborhood Plan, the neighborhood engaged in the preparation of design guidelines for new single-unit detached homes, and additions to existing homes, in East Rockville. On February 1, 2021, the Mayor and Council adopted the East Rockville Design Guidelines, incorporating the document into the City's Zoning Ordinance. The Design Guidelines are requirements in addition to the existing base zoning standards in the neighborhood.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan update effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;
- Concern with new detached residential structures built out-of-scale with adjacent homes and out-of-context with the neighborhood;
- Interest in more diverse housing types, including accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and increasing residential density in designated areas;
- Need to preserve the neighborhood's abundant mature tree canopy;
- Interest in directing more intense development, with a mix of uses, toward North and South Stonestreet Avenues;
- Desire to minimize impacts on the neighborhood from proximity to light- and service-industrial uses;
- Concern for the impacts of spill-over parking on residential streets from Rockville Transit Station users and future residential infill redevelopment;
- Interest in constructing more safe and aesthetically pleasing infrastructure for bikers and walkers in the neighborhood, such as bike lanes, bike parking, greenways, and accessible and landscaped sidewalks.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREAS 1-3 A1 A2 A3

North Stonestreet Avenue and Howard Avenue

This area was part of the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*, which was the impetus for the North Stonestreet Avenue Comprehensive Master Plan Amendment, adopted on March 25, 2019. The 2019 Plan Amendment included properties located in this planning area as well as in Planning Area 6, Lincoln Park (*see Figure 46*), and changed the land use of those properties as well as provided zoning and design guidance. The recommendations that were adopted as part of the 2019 Plan Amendment, and now incorporated into this Planning Area, are outlined in the following sections.

The Board of Education is the current owner of properties A1-A3, and office, warehouse, and storage facilities for the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Department of Materials Management are located on these sites. The

Figure 46: 2019 Plan Amendment Area

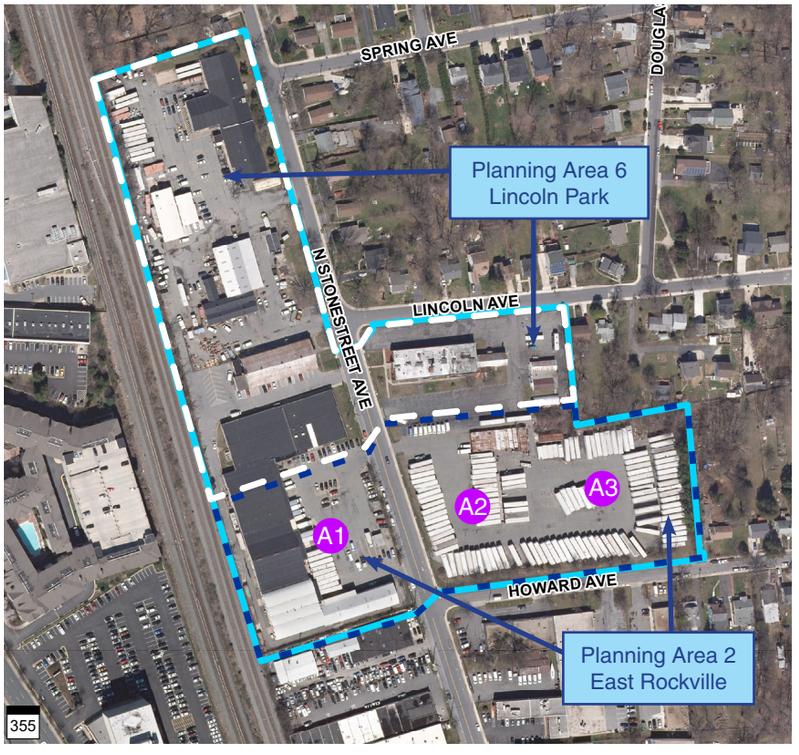
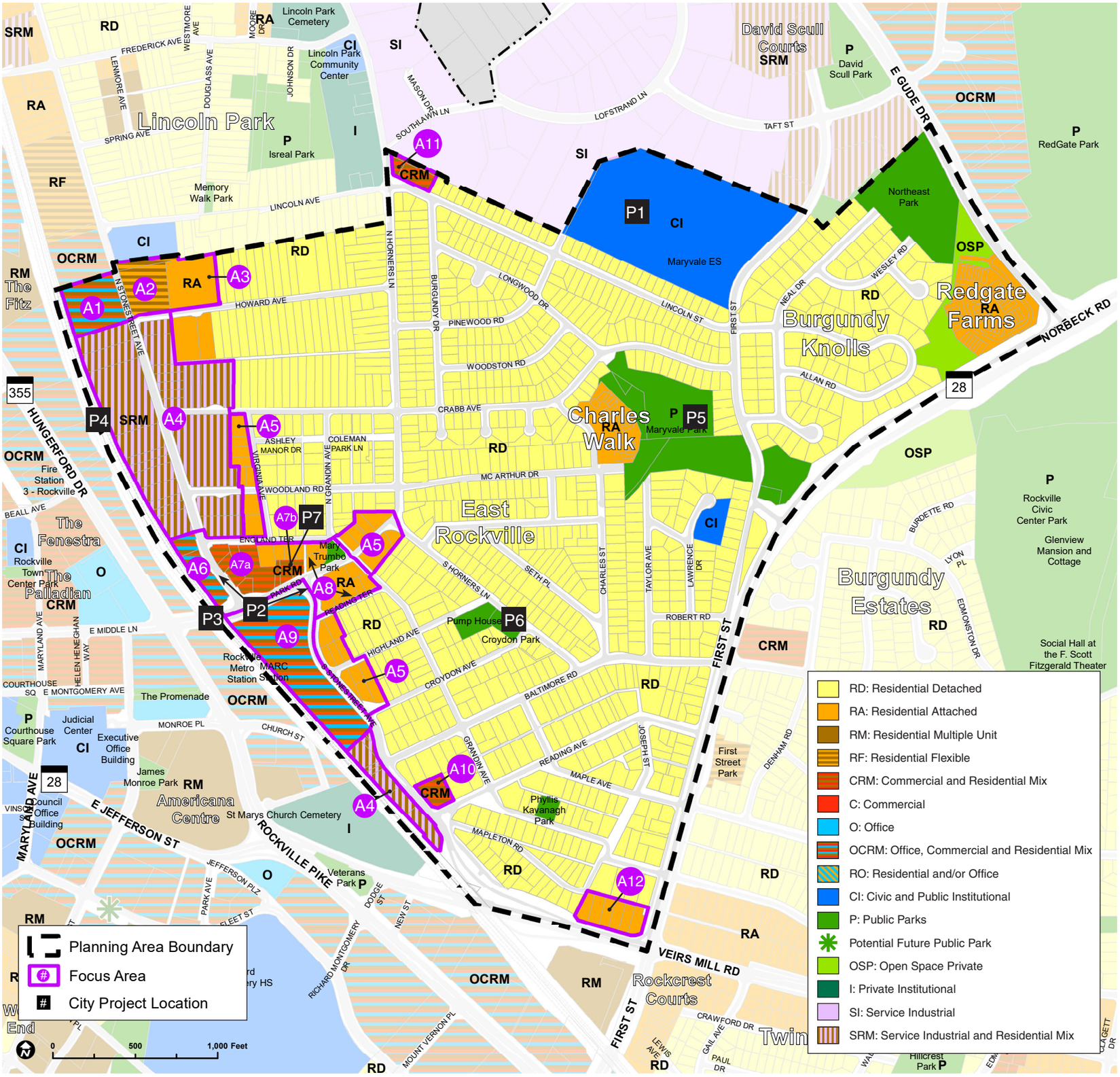


Figure 47: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 2

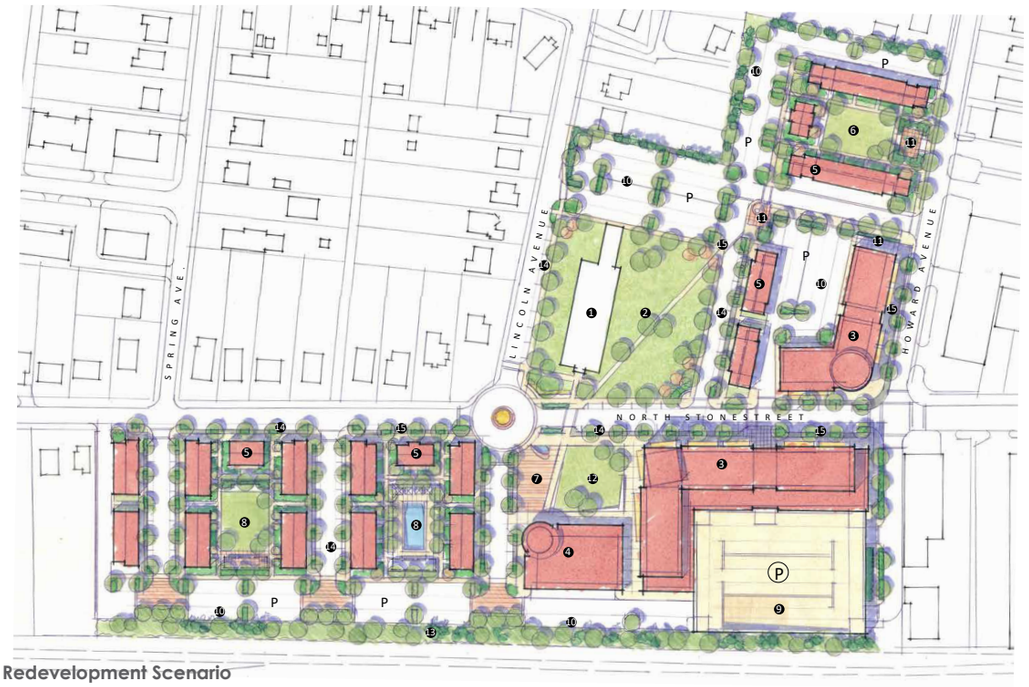


public process for the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study* resulted in generally strong support for setting a framework for redevelopment that promoted a mixed-use concept with moderate density potential. (*See also Action 7.2 of the Community Facilities Element*)

In the event that the subject properties become available, redevelopment should meet the following goals that were established for the larger 2019 Plan Amendment area:

- A mix of local-serving commercial, creative and maker spaces, community facilities, and diverse housing opportunities, which are well integrated with the Lincoln Park and East Rockville neighborhoods and take advantage of transit proximity.
- A range of new, well-designed housing types, ensuring compatibility in scale with adjacent single-unit detached homes in Lincoln Park and East Rockville. New housing should be diverse and build upon the eclectic nature and history of the housing stock of the neighborhoods to the east.
- A balanced mix of housing, which should include market-rate, moderately priced, and lower-priced units. New housing and other non-residential development should strengthen the surrounding neighborhoods. The housing should be accessible to existing residents as well as to new buyers or renters.
- Consideration about affordability for long-term residents in the adjacent neighborhoods. Current residents raised concerns about new development over-gentrifying the area. Given that the properties are publicly owned, prior to redevelopment, the City and the County should explore approaches to minimize potential pressures and explore the feasibility of implementing anti-displacement measures as a result of new development.
- An upgraded pedestrian environment including enhanced sidewalks on both sides of North Stonestreet Avenue, landscaping, street trees, and pedestrian-scale lighting. Underground utilities are preferred.
- Preservation and rehabilitation of the historic structures once occupied by Lincoln High School. Adaptive reuse

Figure 48: 2019 Plan Amendment Area Conceptual Scenario



Potential Redevelopment Scenario

1 Existing Building - Church and Potential Community Space
2 Community Park
3 Mixed Use Building - Ground Floor Commercial, Multi-unit residential above
4 Civic Building (Arts/Sciences) or Mixed Use
5 Townhomes
6 Pocket Park
7 Public Plaza
8 Private Residential Amenity Spaces
9 Parking Garage
10 Off Street Surface Parking Areas
11 Small Courtyards/Plaza Spaces
12 Focal Event Lawn
13 Landscape Buffer from Rail Lines
14 On Street Parallel Parking
15 Streetscape Improvements
P Off Street Surface Parking Areas
P Parking Garage

This figure is a concept of one potential redevelopment scenario that graphically represents ideas and written input received during the *Stonestreet Corridor Study* process. It also illustrates a general feasibility, given certain assumptions, for this alternative. The figure is conceptual and is for illustrative purposes only. At the time of this amendment, there was no proposed development project. Actual development will be required to comply with applicable plan guidance, development regulations, and site constraints and will most likely result in a different build-out configuration. The concept was generally well received by the community when presented at two different public meetings, as it helped the public to understand visually the ideas that had been discussed.

of the historic structures should be encouraged for community use and/or access (e.g., maker/art/museum spaces, market stalls, etc.).

- New, well-connected and publicly accessible community gathering and civic spaces.

Land Use Policy Map

The area is planned for a range of mixed-use development through the A1 OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix), A2 RF (Residential Flexible), and A3 RA (Residential Attached) designations. This plan upholds the land use designations that were adopted as part of the 2019 Plan Amendment. (*See Figure 46 for the plan amendment boundary*)

Zoning Recommendations

A1 Rezone the property from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a mixed-use zone that allows for uses including multi-unit residential, commercial, spaces for artists and makers, and community facilities.

A2 Rezone the property from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a neighborhood-scale mixed-use zone that allows a mix of residential and limited commercial.

A3 Rezone the property from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a zone specifically designed for infill residential.

Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District (LPNCD) Boundary Adjustment: In addition to property-specific recommendations, it is also recommended that the LPNCD boundary be amended to remove this area from the District. The LPNCD includes regulations geared toward single-unit detached development on individual lots and not large-lot, non-residential parcels. The Lincoln Park Civic Association testified in support of the boundary amendment during the public hearing process for this plan.

Urban Design Recommendations

The recommendations in this section provide guidance for new development in both the private and public realms. The following guidance was adopted as part of the 2019 Plan Amendment and considers the entirety of the Plan Amendment area, which includes the properties in this planning area as well as Planning Area 6 (Lincoln Park).



A parking lot owned by MCPS used for tractor-trailer storage on North Stonestreet Avenue. The former Lincoln High School is in the background.

Every effort should be made to integrate new development with the surrounding neighborhoods to further strengthen the existing community fabric.

Neighborhood Transitions: Provide sensitively-scaled transitions between new development and existing neighborhood homes.

- Orient maximum building heights along North Stonestreet Avenue, away from the existing single-unit residential.
- New buildings should taper down in height and scale toward existing single-unit detached homes to establish a compatible relationship between buildings.

Public Realm Improvements: Enhance pedestrian and bike connections to the Rockville Transit Station, to new open spaces, and to the surrounding neighborhoods through improved sidewalks, bike infrastructure, signage, landscaping, lighting, and public art.

- Ensure that streetscape improvements that result from the redevelopment of individual properties are compatible with the overall street and sidewalk improvement recommendations from the *Stonestreet Corridor Study*.
- Consider additional street connections and pathway crossings to break up block sizes between Howard Avenue and Lincoln Avenue and between the east and west sides of North Stonestreet Avenue to create

greater ease of access and pedestrian safety within the area. Any new street connections or pathways should be well-landscaped and designed for pedestrian safety.

- Study the feasibility of a neighborhood-scale roundabout at the intersection of North Stonestreet Avenue and Lincoln Avenue to calm traffic and provide a transition to the Lincoln Park neighborhood.
- Burying utility lines should be explored at the time of new development and/or street and sidewalk reconstruction.

Building Orientation: In general, orient the primary facades of buildings and front doors parallel to the street or to a public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks and open spaces, and to activate pedestrian areas.

Facade Articulation: Create an architectural feature at the corner of North Stonestreet Avenue and Howard Avenue by focusing new development at that intersection, incorporating high-quality design features, and enhancing the public realm.

Parks and Open Space: Incorporate accessible community use space, including parks and other contiguous outdoor green space into the overall redevelopment concept. In addition to connected and accessible open space within private developments, opening and enhancing public green and community space on the grounds of the former Lincoln High School/current church would provide a central gathering area for existing and future residents.

Parking: In general, parking areas should be set back behind front building lines, away from the public realm and screened from public view. New structured parking should be located internal to new development. For attached dwellings, rear garage access is preferred, whether the garage is integrated into the primary structure or whether it is a separate structure; front-loaded garages should be avoided.

Rail Line Impact Mitigation: Mitigate impacts on new development, particularly residential developments, related to the area being proximate to the rail line, in such areas as safety hazards, noise, vibrations and odors. The purpose is to safeguard residents, customers, and employees of these new buildings.

AREA 4 A4

North and South Stonestreet Avenues

The properties within these two areas: 1) both sides of North Stonestreet Avenue between Howard Avenue to the north and England Terrace to the south; and 2) the west side of South Stonestreet Avenue, south of the WMATA Metro Station parking lot, have been zoned MXB (Mixed-Use Business) since 2009. The MXB zone is mapped in areas where service industrial is currently the main use, but allowing the incorporation of residential, commercial, office, and other uses within the area is desired.

Both the *2004 East Rockville Neighborhood Plan* and the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study* included language that supported the continued operation of the existing service industrial businesses in these areas. However, if the existing businesses were to relocate or to close, more-walkable, neighborhood-serving uses are preferred. Improvements to the pedestrian realm--enhanced sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and bicycle facilities are encouraged, as well.

Land Use Policy Map

The land use designation for these properties is SRM (Service Industrial and Residential Mix), allowing the continuation of existing service industrial businesses while also allowing for the incorporation of a wider mix of uses including residential, commercial, and office. (*See also Policy 17 of the Land Use Element*)



View looking north on North Stonestreet Avenue with bicycle 'sharrows'

Zoning Recommendations

The properties within these areas are zoned MXB (Mixed-Use Business). No change to the zoning is recommended.

Urban Design Recommendations

Neighborhood Transitions: Multiple properties with service industrial uses abut properties with residential dwellings. Sensitively scaled transitions (heights, facade articulation, etc.) and ample screening between new development and existing neighborhood homes should be provided.

Public Realm Improvements: There is currently no sidewalk on the west side of North Stonestreet Avenue and the sidewalk on the east side needs improving. There is also very little landscaping or tree canopy in this portion of North Stonestreet Avenue. Streetscape improvements that result from the redevelopment of individual properties should be compatible with the overall street and sidewalk improvement recommendations from the *Stonestreet Corridor Study*.

AREA 5 A5

Residential Attached Transition Areas

These areas are generally on the edges of the neighborhood and identify locations where a mix of residential types would be appropriate transitions between single-unit detached homes and more intense, non-residential uses. They may also provide a transition from busier streets or are within a short walking distance of the Rockville Transit Station. (*See also Policy 3 of the Land Use Element*)

Land Use Policy Map

These areas are planned for a variety of attached and detached residential dwellings through the RA (Residential Attached) land use designation.

Zoning Recommendations

Rezone the properties in this area from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a new zone that allows a diverse range of housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and row houses, in addition to single-unit detached dwellings. Fourplexes should only be allowed on corner lots in the zone. Multiplexes of greater than four units are not appropriate in this area.

Urban Design Recommendations

Neighborhood Context

- Buildings should be designed and oriented in a manner that is inviting, promotes walkability, and contributes positively to the neighborhood context.
- Porches or enhanced entryways are encouraged and entrances should be oriented toward the street, connected by a walkway, to provide more opportunities for “eyes on the street” and community interaction.
- The siting of new buildings should be consistent with the established setback pattern along the block. If too much variation exists between existing buildings, a new building should be placed in a manner that establishes a street presence and enhances neighborhood character.
- Mature trees and tree canopy should be prioritized and preserved.

Open Spaces

- Open spaces should be consolidated into larger usable areas and designed as an integral part of the project, rather than scattered throughout the site, rendering them unusable.

Building Form

- New residential attached buildings should be proportional in height, mass, and scale with adjacent homes and blend well into the existing neighborhood.
- When adjacent to a lower-scaled structure, a gradual transition should be utilized. This recommendation can be accomplished through design elements, including stepping back upper stories, varying roof lines, recessing a portion of the wall plane, and lowering the roof pitch.
- Side elevations should include windows of consistent proportion and placement as the front elevation. Large, blank walls should be avoided.
- On corner lots, both facades should be similarly designed and detailed and have similar opening proportions, placements, and alignments.

Parking

- Parking considerations should be balanced between taking advantage of proximity to high capacity transit stops (existing and planned); keeping construction costs down by not requiring more parking than is needed at transit-proximate sites; and considering the surrounding neighborhood's parking constraints, especially in areas with limited-to-no off-street parking.
- The visibility and prominence of parking facilities should be minimized. Parking to the rear or to the side of the building is encouraged. Front yard pavement should be minimized as much as possible and permeable paving materials are highly encouraged throughout the site.

AREAS 6-8 A6 A7 A8

Park Road and North Stonestreet Avenue Area

Park Road is a critical east/west connection within the city. Its intersection with North Stonestreet Avenue is the first introduction to the east side after passing under the railroad overpass from the west. The Rockville Transit Station is located on the south side of Park Road, a significant opportunity for any future east side transit-oriented development.

This area was part of the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*, which was the impetus for the Park Road / North Stonestreet Avenue Comprehensive Master Plan Amendment, adopted on July 13, 2020. The Plan Amendment changed the land use of those properties as well as provided design guidance and zoning recommendations. The goals, adopted land use, design guidance, and zoning recommendations that were adopted by the 2020 Plan Amendment, and now incorporated into this Planning Area, are outlined in the following sections.

The following goals were established for the subject area:

- A revitalized area and focal point at the corner of Park Road and North Stonestreet Ave, establishing an anchored entrance to Rockville's east side, integrating such elements as building form and design, public art, landscaped open spaces or plazas, and wayfinding.
- Redevelopment that takes advantage of transit proximity, is well-connected, and that transitions appropriately to the East Rockville neighborhood.
- An upgraded pedestrian environment, including enhanced sidewalks, landscaping, street trees, public/civic gathering spaces, and pedestrian-scale lighting.
- A mix of walkable, local-serving commercial uses and multi-unit residential, and residential attached uses at the North Stonestreet Avenue and Park Road intersection.
- A range of new, high-quality residential attached housing types, designed to be compatible with the scale of adjacent detached residential homes.

Land Use Policy Map

The area is planned for a range of mixed-use development through the following land use designations:

Area A6, OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix).

Areas A7a and A7b, CRM (Commercial Residential Mix).

Area A8, RA (Residential Attached) designations. (*See also Policy 9 of the Land Use Element*)

Zoning Recommendations

A6 Rezone the properties from MXB (Mixed-Use Business) to a mixed-use zone that allows for uses including retail, office, neighborhood services, and artisan/craft manufacturing with building heights up to 4-5 stories (or 50-65 ft).

- Artisan and craft/maker manufacturing spaces are light-impact uses that have their operations generally enclosed within a building and produce little-to-no noise, vibrations or fumes outside of the building.
- No new Service Industrial uses should be permitted, but existing uses should be allowed to remain.

A7a Rezone the properties from MXB (Mixed-Use Business) to a mixed-use zone that promotes a mix of local retail and service uses and multi-unit residential across from the Rockville Metro Station with building heights up to 4-5 stories (or 50-65 ft).

- No new Service Industrial uses should be permitted, but existing uses should be allowed to remain.

A7b Rezone the properties from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a mixed-use zone that promotes a greater mix of uses, including smaller-scale multi-unit residential, attached townhouses/row houses, and limited commercial at this transit center.

A8 Rezone the properties from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a zone that promotes a mix of infill housing types, compatible in scale with single-family homes, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses/row houses. Multiplexes of greater than four units are not appropriate in this area.

- New buildings should blend well with the surrounding residential detached neighborhood, transition well in scale, mass, and height to surrounding homes, provide enhanced connections to the Rockville Metro Station, and limit curb cuts on Park Road so as to focus vehicular access and parking to the rear of the building.

Urban Design Recommendations

- Orient maximum building heights along Park Road and North Stonestreet Avenue, away from the existing single-unit residential.
- New buildings should taper down in height and scale toward existing single-family homes to establish a compatible relationship between buildings.
- Exterior lighting for new buildings should utilize a cut-off design to minimize light spillover onto surrounding properties.
- Encourage an architecturally enhanced feature at the corner of North Stonestreet Avenue and Park Road by focusing new development at that intersection, incorporating high-quality design components, and improved public realm.
- Establish building frontages along Park Road and North Stonestreet Avenue to include ground-floor commercial, enhanced pedestrian areas and amenities, landscaping, and bicycle infrastructure.
- Incorporate community use space, including plazas and outdoor green space, into the overall redevelopment concept.
- Reduce the number of properties with multiple curb cuts to minimize conflicts with pedestrian and bicycle areas.
- Consider additional street connections and pathway crossings to break up block sizes and to create greater ease of access and pedestrian safety within the area. Any new street connections or pathways should be well-landscaped and designed for pedestrian safety.
- Provide upgraded pedestrian and bicycle connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and to the Rockville Transit Station. (*See the 2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*)
- Redesign the intersection of Park Road and South Stonestreet Avenue, with emphasis on improving pedestrian and bicyclist connections, but also improving driver experience. (*See the 2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*)
- Explore burying utility lines at the time of new development and/or street and sidewalk reconstruction.
- In general, parking areas should be set back behind front building lines, away from the public realm and screened from public view. For attached dwellings, rear garage access is preferred, whether the garage is integrated into the primary structure or whether it is a separate structure. Avoid front-loaded garages whenever possible. For multi-unit dwellings, parking requirements should take into account the area's transit proximity.
- Mitigate impacts on new development, particularly residential developments, related to the area being proximate to the rail line, in such areas as safety hazards, noise, vibrations and odors. The purpose is to safeguard residents, customers, and employees of these new buildings.

AREA 9 A9

Rockville Transit Station / WMATA / MDOT MTA Properties

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for mixed-use development through the OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix) designation.

Zoning Recommendations

Rezone the properties from MXNC (Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial) to MXCD (Mixed-Use Corridor District) to allow for higher intensity transit-oriented development if the parking lot is proposed for redevelopment.

Urban Design Recommendations

- Continue to partner with WMATA, MDOT MTA, and MDOT SHA as part of the WMATA Rockville Transit Station Study process currently underway (Summer 2021) to develop concepts and plans for site enhancements, facility improvements, and/or property redevelopment, pursuant to that Study or any subsequent efforts.
- Provide sensitively scaled transitions between new development and existing neighborhood homes.



Bike parking at Rockville Transit Station

  - Orient maximum building heights toward Park Road, away from the existing single-unit detached homes.
  - New buildings should taper down in height and scale toward existing single-unit detached homes to establish a compatible relationship between buildings.
- Enhance pedestrian and bike connections to the Rockville Transit Station, to new open spaces, and to the surrounding neighborhoods through improved sidewalks, bike infrastructure, signage, landscaping, lighting, and public art.
- In general, orient the primary facades of buildings and front entrances parallel to the street or to a public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks and open spaces, and to activate pedestrian areas.
- Incorporate accessible community use space, including parks and other contiguous outdoor green space, into the overall redevelopment concept.
- Mitigate impacts on new development, particularly residential developments, related to the area being proximate to the rail line, in such areas as safety hazards, noise, vibrations and odors. The purpose is to safeguard residents, customers, and employees of these new buildings.
- New structured parking or parking garages should be located internal to new development and be oriented so as not to face the public street or adjacent residential homes.

AREAS 10 and 11 A10 A11

Walkable Commercial, Potential Mixed Use Areas

Area 10 is the existing commercial property at the northeast corner of South Stonestreet Avenue and Reading Avenue. The property was formerly a convenience mart and a Chinese restaurant and is currently a business for sales of hot tubs and saunas. Area 11 is the Maryvale strip shopping center which includes a mix of restaurants, a small market and a laundromat. Both areas provide the neighborhood with options for walkable, neighborhood-serving commercial, with the potential to add in additional housing. Should either of the properties redevelop, a mix of moderately dense residential development, with ground-floor commercial would be appropriate.

Land Use Policy Map

These properties are designated CRM (Commercial Residential Mix) to allow for commercial and/or mixed-use residential and commercial development.

Zoning Recommendations

No change in the current MXC (Mixed-Use Commercial) zone is recommended.

Urban Design Recommendations

If either of the areas redevelop, the following guidelines should be incorporated whenever feasible:

- Incorporate a community gathering space, which could include outdoor cafe seating where neighbors can meet, or an amenitized plaza with benches, landscaping, and public art.
- Frame the street corner with commercial uses to activate pedestrian areas and create an inviting focal point through unique and interesting design.
- Provide sensitively scaled transitions between new development and existing neighborhood homes.
  - Orient maximum building heights away from any abutting single-unit detached homes.
  - New buildings should taper down in height and scale toward existing single-unit detached homes to establish a compatible relationship between buildings.



View looking south on North Stonestreet Avenue toward Park Road and the Rockville Transit Station. Missing sidewalks on the west side of the street are a critical gap in the walking network on North Stonestreet Avenue.



Sidewalks along the Park Road where is passes under the Metro and CSX bridges are not comfortable to use for people walking and are not well-lit at night.

- Enhance the public realm through improved sidewalks, bike infrastructure, pedestrian-oriented signage and lighting, landscaping, and public art.

AREA 12 A12

800 blocks of Veirs Mill Road and Grandin Avenue

The intersection of Veirs Mill Road and First Street has been identified by the County as a potential Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station location. The intent of the land use policy and zoning recommendations in this area is to plan for a mix of residential housing types in this future transit area while respecting the compatibility of new development with existing residential homes. This area is adjacent to the southern edge of the Rockville Park Historic District, a National Register of Historic Places site, which includes some of the oldest homes in Rockville.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is designated RA (Residential Attached) to allow for attached and detached residential development.

Zoning Recommendations

Rezone the properties from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a new zone that allows a diverse range of housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses/row houses, in addition to single-unit detached dwellings. Multiplexes of greater than four units are not appropriate in this area.

Urban Design Recommendations

- Any redevelopment on this site should ensure compatibility with, and appropriate transitions to, lower-intensity residential uses, especially single-unit detached dwellings.
- Redevelopment proposals should consider creating a pedestrian-oriented streetscape that is safe and pleasant for residents and all modes of travel due to the adjacency to the intersection of Veirs Mill Road and First Street.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Work with Montgomery County Public Schools to increase public access to Maryvale Elementary School grounds while maintaining security of the building and grounds. Allow after hours and weekend community access to the school grounds to increase park and recreational space within the community.

PROJECT 2 P2

Implement recommendations in the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study* for street and sidewalk improvements on North Stonestreet Avenue and Park Road, and the intersection of Park Road and South Stonestreet Avenue.

PROJECT 3 P3

Install additional and ample lighting on Park Road near the rail lines and within the underpass.

PROJECT 4 P4

Consider a pedestrian and bicycle crossing over the CSX / WMATA rail lines near Crabb Avenue to provide an additional access point to and from Town Center.

PROJECTS 5 AND 6 P5 P6

Implement safety improvements at Maryvale and Croydon Parks. Provide adequate lighting to illuminate pathways to, from, and through each park to promote greater visibility and safety. Lighting could be on timers, solar, or motion-sensitive. Explore the option of lighting play areas and courts, particularly when it darkens early, to provide youth more active recreational opportunities after school.

PROJECT 7 P7

Consider exploring a range of options to implement plan goals, including a public/private partnership or purchase, for the vacant properties on Park Road, labeled ‘A7b’ on the Land Use Policy Map. Street improvements for the Park Road and South Stonestreet Avenue intersection are proposed, and the City may want to consider exploring options in coordination with future street reconstruction.



Interpretive signage highlighting the stormwater and wildlife elements of Maryvale Park

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Planning Area 3

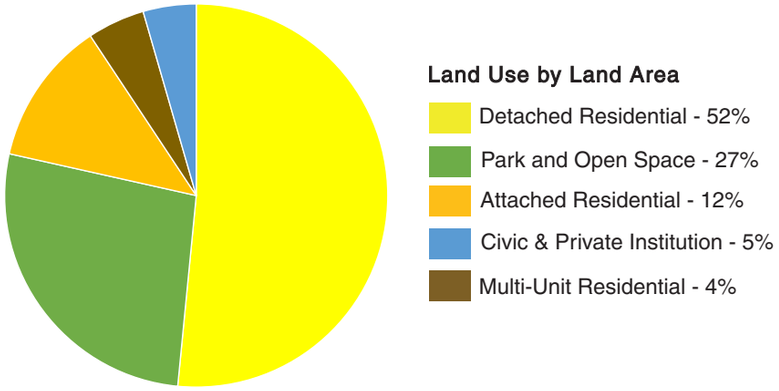
HUNGERFORD, NEW MARK COMMONS, LYNFIELD, AND FIRESIDE PARK

3

Planning Area 3 is primarily residential, containing the neighborhoods of Hungerford, Lynfield, Markwood, and New Mark Commons, as well as the townhouse communities of Waddington Park, Jefferson Square, and Wootton Oaks. Several apartment communities are also located in the planning area, including Fireside Park, Argyle Apartments, and Park Terrace, as well as an assisted living facility. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 49.

This section supersedes the *1985 Hungerford-Stoneridge, New Mark Commons, Monroe-Lynfield Neighborhood Plan*, as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 3



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	883
Attached Residential	367
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	493
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	175
Total units	**1,918**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Area Characteristics

The Monroe-Lynfield neighborhood is the oldest in the planning area, with a mix of single-unit detached homes, duplexes, and apartment buildings that were built between 1947 and 1960. The Hungerford subdivision consists predominantly of single-unit detached homes that were built in the 1950s and 1960s.

The garden-style apartment community of Fireside Park was built in 1961 and acquired by Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) in 2012, with financial support from the City of Rockville and Montgomery County government, to preserve mixed-income, affordable rental housing in the city. Now owned by the RHE subsidiary, RHE Fireside Inc., half of the 236 rental units are maintained as affordable to residents making less than 80 percent of the Area Median Income. The other half of the units supports the overall project with market-based rents. Fireside Park is an example of the City of Rockville acting in the housing market though incentives and direct investment of City funds to support affordable housing opportunities.

New Mark Commons is a 96-acre residential community within the planning area that was a unique development from its inception. Designed to be a “new mark upon the



New Mark Commons Lake. Image credit: New Mark Commons HOA

landscape," the community was one of the first planned unit developments to be approved under an ordinance adopted by the City of Rockville in 1964. The ordinance allowed a developer to build at higher densities in exchange for the provision of public goods, including open space and recreational facilities. Today, New Mark Commons contains a mix of housing types from single-unit detached homes to attached townhouses, as well as common open space and recreational amenities. The New Mark Commons model of negotiating for public goods in exchange for flexibility during the development review process, is one potential path for future development in Rockville.

There are no office or commercial centers within the planning area, though Wintergreen Shopping Center, Ritchie Center, and other stores and restaurants along Rockville Pike and in Town Center are located nearby.

One of the city's preeminent active recreational parks, Dogwood Park, is nestled in the heart of the planning area. It is enjoyed by nearby residents as well as the broader Rockville community. Dogwood Park contains two premiere baseball fields, a softball/practice field, batting cages, a concession stand, tennis courts, basketball courts, playground equipment, and a forested wildlife sanctuary within its 44 acres. Elwood Smith Park, Dawson Farm Park and Cabin John Valley Park add to the area's natural and historic public space.

Bayard Rustin Elementary School opened for the 2018-2019 school year on the site of a previously decommissioned



Dogwood Park is centrally located in the planning area and is one of the city's premier recreational parks.



Single-unit detached homes in Hungerford.

Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) elementary school. Named for the openly gay, civil rights activist who was influential in organizing the 1963 March on Washington, the school honors Bayard Rustin's legacy as a leader in the community, receiving LEED Gold Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Bayard Rustin ES serves both neighborhood students and students from throughout Montgomery County enrolled in the Chinese Language Immersion Program.

Planning History

The previous neighborhood plan for this planning area was adopted in 1985. The primary concern of the *1985 Hungerford-Stoneridge, New Mark Commons, Monroe-Lynfield Neighborhood Plan* was the preservation of its neighborhoods. Policy recommendations focused on the potential impact of the planned Tower Oaks development, the closures of the Hungerford elementary school (now rebuilt as Bayard Rustin Elementary School) and the Park Street School (on the site of the current Richard Montgomery High School), and neighborhood cut-through traffic. A series of recommendations were made in the 1985 plan to mitigate these concerns and most have been implemented. Preservation of the residential character of the planning area is reaffirmed by this Comprehensive Plan.

The *1993 Comprehensive Master Plan* and *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* supported recommendations from the 1985 plan and drew attention to the desire for buffers between any future commercial or institutional development

and adjacent residential properties. A neighborhood plan update was not recommended at the time.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;
- Need to address aging housing stock in parts of the neighborhood;
- Concern with limited traffic access in the neighborhood due to a lack of entrance/exit points and limited internal road connections;
- Support for controlling traffic volumes and speeds on neighborhoods streets through limited internal and external road connections, speed limits, and traffic calming;
- Need to mitigate traffic and safety issues at the Falls Road / Maryland Avenue / I-270 interchange for all travel modes;
- Desire to minimize neighborhood traffic impacts from Bayard Rustin Elementary School, with its single access point through the neighborhood, while ensuring that students can safely walk, bike, or roll to school;
- Desire to minimize traffic on East Jefferson Street, between Mt. Vernon Place and Ritchie Parkway, due to its proximity to Richard Montgomery High School;
- Interest in expanding community programs at Elwood Smith Community Center and improving facilities at Elwood Smith Park;
- Need for future maintenance of the New Mark Commons lake, owned and maintained by the private homeowners association.

While some community members raised concerns about traffic and the lack of inter-connected streets within the planning area, proposed additional road connections were not supported during the Rockville 2040 public engagement process. This plan recommends that the City continue working with the community to address traffic concerns as they arise, including through creative solutions that the neighborhood supports.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Wootton Parcel

This area is part of the Woodmont Country Club property and is the only property in Planning Area 3 south of Wootton Parkway. It consists of a 27-acres portion of the Woodmont Country Club property adjacent to Wootton Parkway and is not currently part of the club's golf courses. When Wootton Parkway was constructed in the 1990s, this parcel was identified by the City of Rockville as newly developable because of the road frontage of the parcel that had been created. As a result, the City of Rockville assessed and charged Woodmont Country Club for the new land value. This plan acknowledges this history and establishes a planned land use and recommendations that are consistent with this history.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for a range of residential densities and housing types, including townhouses, row houses, apartment buildings, and other attached or detached housing types, through the RF (Residential Flexible) land use designation. Unless development occurs in the context of a broader development project of the country club property, a mixed-use designation is not appropriate. Consistent with the RF designation, small-scale amenities are also acceptable.

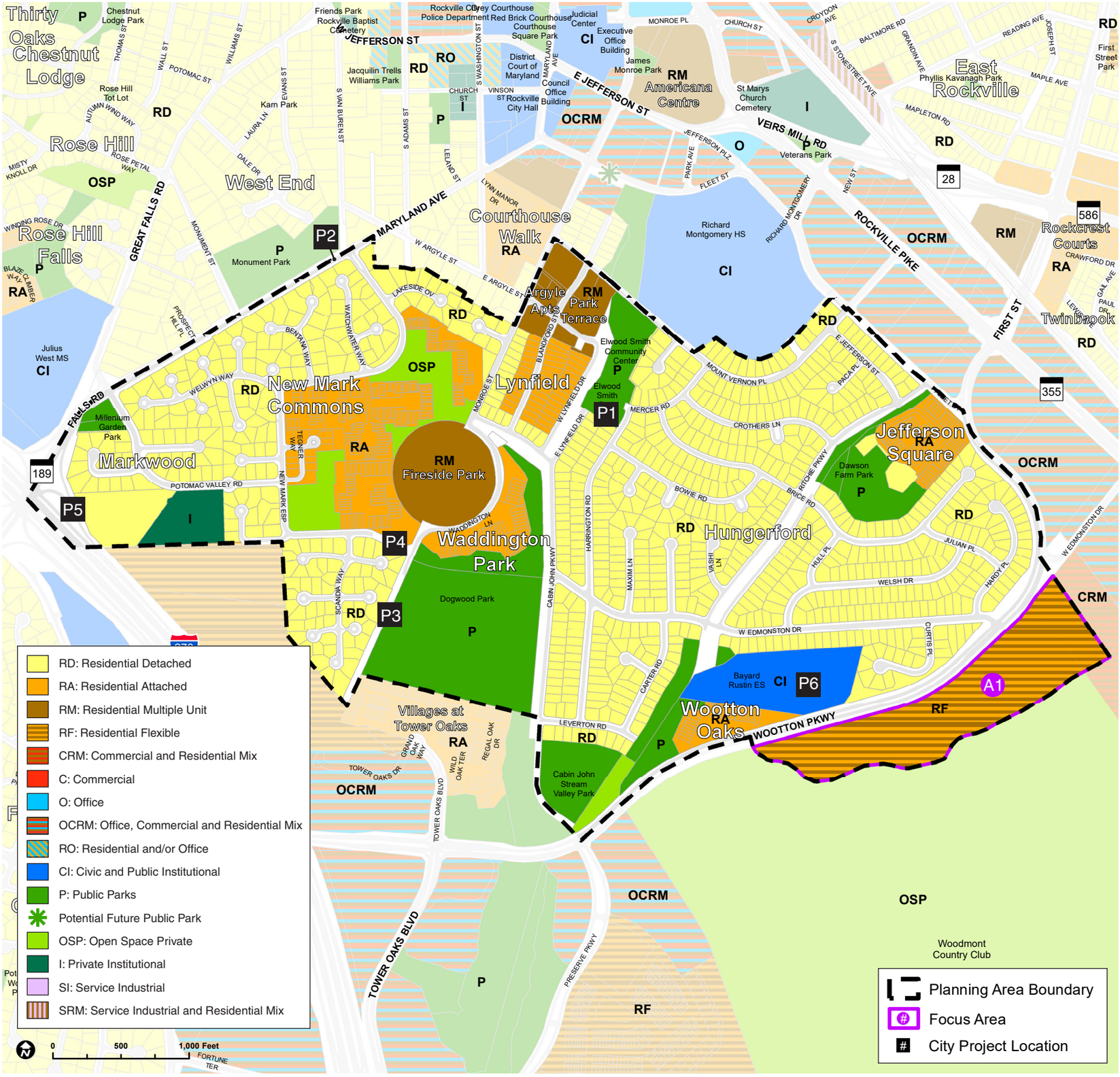
Zoning Recommendation

Allow future rezoning of the 27-acre Wootton Parcel from R-400 (Residential Estate) to RMD-25 (Residential Medium Density) or a similar zone that is consistent with the range of housing types of the RF land use designation.

Urban Design Recommendations

Any development should take into account and manage traffic impacts on Wootton Parkway and protect nearby tree stands and forest preservation areas. Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDU) requirements should apply to residential projects, as well. Proposed development on the eastern portion of the Wootton Parcel should account for future alignment of the East Jefferson Street extension

Figure 49: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 3



(*See also Planning Areas 9 and 11 and Action 19.4 of the Transportation Element*).

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Explore the demand for additional equipment, shelters, and facilities at Elwood Smith Park and additional programming and related improvements and/or expansion of the Elwood Smith Community Center, as part of any related CIP project to strengthen and expand their programming and services.

PROJECT 2 P2

Improve lighting in, and explore potential maintenance and upgrades to, the bicycle and pedestrian tunnel under Maryland Avenue that connects the New Mark Commons neighborhood with Monument Park.

PROJECT 3 P3

Explore the feasibility of a new bicycle and pedestrian connection between Monroe Street with Tower Oaks Drive, extending Monroe Street along the western boundary of Dogwood Park within existing City right-of-way.

PROJECT 4 P4

Retain the City right-of-way for the existing bicycle and pedestrian connection between New Mark Esplanade and Monroe Street.

PROJECT 5 P5

Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential improvements at the I-270 interchange with Falls Road (MD-189) that increase safety, visibility, and mobility for all modes, such as improved visibility at off ramps, safer lane movements, and bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements. (*See also Action 20.3 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 6 P6

Monitor the traffic impacts of Bayard Rustin Elementary School on neighborhood streets. If warranted, consider solutions for traffic mitigation and/or greater safety, in coordination with MCPS, such as revisiting the feasibility of a vehicular and/or bicycle and pedestrian access point from Wootton Parkway, trip reduction techniques, bus routing, etc. Any proposed solutions will need to account for the topographic and environmental constraints of the site and traffic and safety impacts on Wootton Parkway. (*See also Policy 15 of the Transportation Element*)

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Maintain the residential character of the planning area.
2. Focus on improving factors that enhance quality of life.
3. Consider the creation of residential design guidelines that include a residential facade improvement program to improve aging housing stock. Guidelines should include standards to avoid “mansionization” and incompatible residential styles.

Transportation

4. Study the need for additional speed controls and traffic calming on West Edmonston Drive, New Mark Esplanade, and other high traffic volume local streets, in consultation with neighborhood residents.

Historic Preservation

5. Consider enlarging the Dawson Farm Houses Local Historic District boundary to include the adjacent City-owned Dawson Farm Park property, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but not currently designated as a local historic district.

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Planning Area 4

WEST END AND WOODLEY GARDENS EAST-WEST

4

This plan for Planning Area 4 informs future land use decision-making, guides zoning and capital improvements, responds to pressures of change and growth, and helps to maximize the compatibility of residential and non-residential uses. This plan replaces the *1989 West End-Woodley Gardens East/West Neighborhood Plan* and the Planning Area 4 discussion in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*. It constitutes the entire policy document, in addition to the citywide elements, for this portion of the city.

Planning Area Description

The West End and Woodley Gardens East-West planning area consists of 774 acres just west of downtown Rockville. The planning area is generally bordered on the west by I-270, on the north by Nelson Street and Martins Lane, on the east by Rockville Town Center (Planning Area 1), and on the south by Maryland Avenue. It also includes properties southeast of Maryland Avenue on both sides of Argyle Street and the Courthouse Walk development.

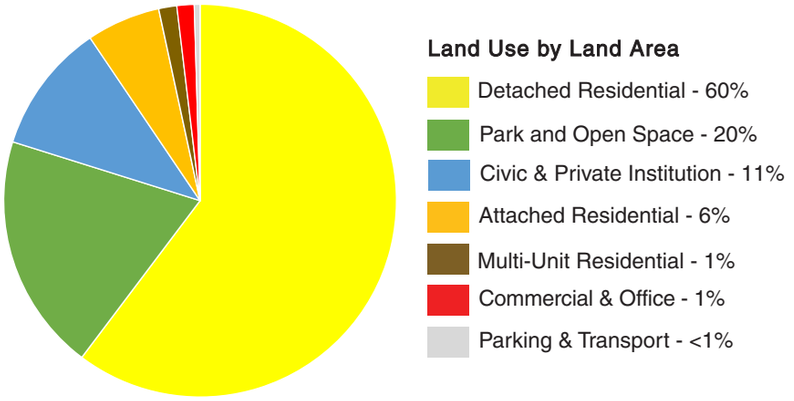
Within the planning area, there are residential blocks that are governed by Home Owner Associations (HOAs), such as Rose Hill, Rose Hill Falls, Chestnut Lodge, and Courthouse Walk. There are also residential blocks that do not have their own covenants but have a common identity based on historical events or locations, such as Haiti, Roxboro, Dale-Evans, West End Park, and Woodley Gardens. Three major roadways pass through the planning area: West Montgomery Avenue (State Route 28), Maryland Avenue, and Great Falls Road. Interstate 270 (I-270) borders the planning area to the west.

The city's highest concentration of historic buildings and districts are in this area, as well as two historic cemeteries, reflecting the rich history that dates to the very earliest founding of Rockville. Churches of many denominations are located in these neighborhoods. Important parks and community facilities serve the community and the broader city, including: Welsh Park, and the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center and Skate Park that lie within it; Woodley Gardens Park; Bullards Park; Thirty Oaks Park; Jacquiline Trells Williams Park; Peg Sante Park; Friends Park; Monument Park; the Beall-Dawson Historic Park; and Chestnut Lodge Park. In addition, Rose Hill Stream Valley Park was developed as part of the Rose Hill and Rose Hill Falls neighborhoods and are owned and maintained by the City.

A key feature of this mostly residential area is its close proximity to such important activity centers as Rockville Town Center and Montgomery College, bringing both benefits and impacts. Many properties near the boundary with Town Center, on the east, were originally built as residences but are now used as offices for for-profit or non-profit organizations. Many of these have been designated as historic.

The boundaries of Planning Area 4, as shown in Figure 50, shall be preserved as amended for this plan.

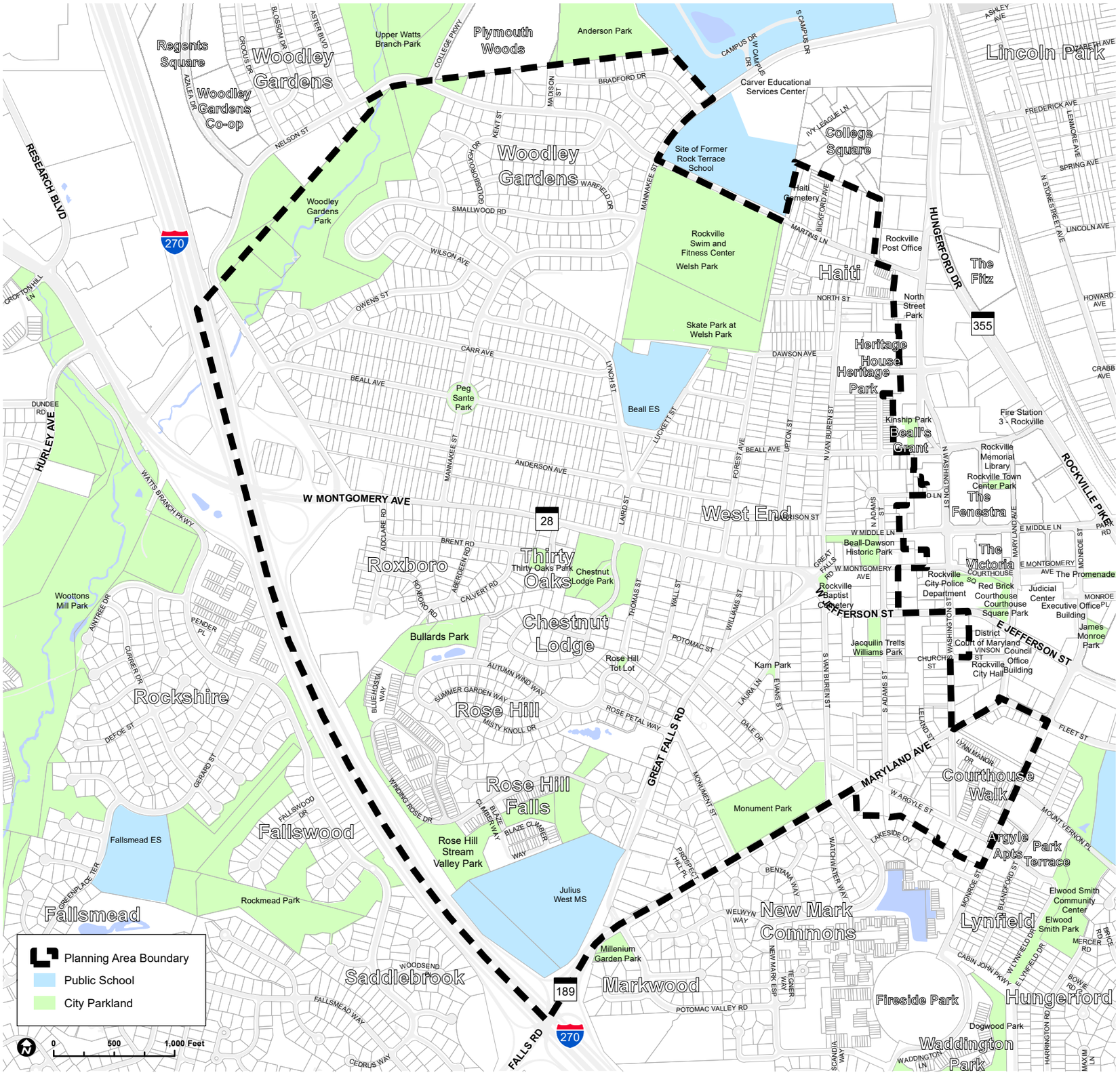
Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 4



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	1,477
Attached Residential	291
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	292
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	100
Total units	**2,160**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Figure 50: Planning Area 4 Boundary Map



Plan Goal/Vision

Preserve, protect, and enhance the quality of life in, and the unique history and identity of, the Planning Area 4 neighborhoods by addressing their challenges, issues, and opportunities.

Planning Principles

4

- Maintain and improve this planning area as stable, attractive, safe, and predominantly single-unit detached homes;
- Invite active community involvement in planning and other aspects of City government;
- Limit the impacts of through traffic;
- Mitigate the severe negative impact of traffic noise from I-270 and West Montgomery Avenue by pursuing construction of a sound wall along I-270 and other means;
- Improve infrastructure for pedestrians and promote convenient and safe walkability within the neighborhoods and to destinations such as Town Center;
- Limit the expansion of commercial and institutional uses;
- Ensure that all housing is safe and code compliant;
- Maintain the historic character and identity of historic districts;
- Celebrate and display the rich history of the planning area;
- Seek opportunities for the addition of new parkland and green space, and ensure no net loss of parkland by preserving existing parks.

Planning Process

WHY A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN NOW?

A series of neighborhood plans, including one for Planning Area 4, were first adopted in the 1980s. The plans were, in part, attempts to anticipate and plan for the significant land use and transportation changes that would follow the opening of the Twinbrook and Rockville Transit Stations in 1984. It has been three decades since these initial plans were adopted. Three of them - Lincoln Park, East Rockville, and Rockville Pike - have been updated since 2000. Other planning areas have not changed significantly and do not need an updated neighborhood plan at this time. Planning Area 4 is different, in that it includes the oldest parts of the city; has numerous unique historic resources; and abuts the Town Center and Interstate 270, benefiting from that proximity but also bearing negative impacts of traffic and causing concerns about commercial and institutional encroachment.

The inclusion of the entire Planning Area 4 neighborhood plan in this document is intended as the first of what will be the general approach to neighborhood plans throughout the city. Since the introduction of the concept of planning areas in the City's comprehensive plans in the 1980s, a dual track has existed that has sometimes led to confusion. In some portions of the city, planning areas have had both longer stand-alone neighborhood plans and shorter planning area discussions that are incorporated into the central citywide plan. For example, the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* included a section on Planning Area 4 but did not eliminate the 1989 stand-alone neighborhood plan. As a result, anyone needing to understand the applicable policies has been required to review both documents. This plan introduces the precedent that there will only be one document to reference policies and recommendations for each planning area. Planning Area 4 achieves this goal, as the first of its kind. Future updates to neighborhood plans for such areas as East Rockville, Lincoln Park, Twinbrook, Town Center, and Rockville Pike will take this approach.

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

Within Planning Area 4, there are two neighborhood associations: West End Citizens Association, representing more than 1,600 households, and Woodley Gardens East-West Association, representing about 225 households. As part of these neighborhood-wide organizations, smaller groups of residences exist, including Rose Hill, Rose Hill Falls, Courthouse Walk, Haiti, and Chestnut Lodge, some with homeowners' associations of their own.

History of the Neighborhood Plan

As noted above, the last neighborhood plan for Planning Area 4 was adopted in 1989. To advise the Planning Commission of the neighborhood's concerns and recommendations and launch the planning process, a Neighborhood Planning Advisory Group (NPAG) was

formed in 1986, with members appointed by the Planning Commission. The NPAG surveyed the residents of the planning area in October 1986 and presented a report on survey results to the Commission in September 1987. City staff provided its evaluation of the NPAG report to the Commission in February 1988. These reports were followed by a public forum attended by area civic associations, the Historic District Commission, and the Traffic and Transportation Committee.

Work sessions with the Planning Commission and a joint public hearing with the Mayor and Council and Planning Commission were then held before the Planning Commission voted on policies and strategies that formed the basis of the 1989 plan. At that time, the primary goals for Planning Area 4 were to: 1) maintain the integrity of the planning area as a residential community; and 2) improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. The Mayor and Council adopted the neighborhood plan in September 1989. The 1989 plan goals continue in this plan update.

Planning Area 4 was again addressed, more briefly, in the 1993 and 2002 citywide Comprehensive Master Plans, along with discussions of the city's other 17 planning areas. The Rose Hill subdivision was under construction on land formerly owned by the Chestnut Lodge Hospital at the time of the 2002 plan. Specific recommendations were made to address critical issues. Some of these issues have since been resolved, such as with the residential developments of the Buckingham Property (Thirty Oaks) and Chestnut Lodge, and with the creation of Chestnut Lodge Park. Others are on-going, including land uses in the transition area between Planning Area 4 and Planning Area 1 (Town Center), impacts of commercial and institutional uses, and designated land use and zoning of specific properties.

Neighborhood Plan Update

In June 2015, West End Citizens Association (WECA) representatives briefed the Planning Commission on the neighborhood planning process that the community had undertaken decades prior to provide input for the 1989 Neighborhood Plan. A committee of about a dozen residents from the West End and Woodley Gardens East-West formed with the purpose of updating the 1989 neighborhood plan and held an initial meeting on December 7, 2015. The committee applied to the City for grants to support a survey that would be similar to the one that was conducted to provide input for the 1989 plan. Two grants were awarded, one each to the West End and Woodley Gardens East-West neighborhood associations, to conduct a survey of households in the planning area. The survey was sent to all 1,800+ households in Planning Area 4 and made available online in May 2016. More than 500 households (29%) completed the survey and submitted responses. The results were presented to each neighborhood association and posted online in Fall 2016.

Committee members, many of whom were active during the development of the 1989 plan, wrote a new draft plan, based largely on the survey results, and shared it with Planning Area 4 residents in May 2017. The committee revised the document based on residents' comments and then provided its recommended draft to Rockville planning staff in December 2017. The committee began to meet with planning staff regularly beginning in Spring 2018 to collaboratively develop a final draft neighborhood plan to deliver to the Planning Commission for its review and action. This plan is the result of that effort.

Concurrent with the development of this neighborhood plan, the Rockville 2040 update to the citywide Comprehensive Plan was being prepared. The neighborhood plan is adopted as part of the updated Comprehensive Plan and, as previously indicated, replaces the *1989 West End-Woodley Gardens East-West Neighborhood Plan* as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Neighborhood Survey Results

The results of the neighborhood survey conducted in 2016 provide much of the basis of the vision for the future of Planning Area 4. Through the in-depth questions posed to residents of the planning area's neighborhoods, it was possible to understand key values and concerns. Below is a summary of the survey responses.

- ***Quality of life and preservation of the neighborhood.*** Nearly all respondents (96%) feel that the neighborhood has an excellent quality of life. Residents stated in overwhelming numbers (more than 80%) that they want to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood and that they do not

want encroachment of commercial businesses, offices or large institutions.

- ***Growth.*** Nearly half (48%) of the survey respondents expressed concerns about too much development in Rockville and the need to preserve the quality of life in their neighborhood in the face of more development. While residents of the West End and Woodley Gardens East-West neighborhoods support growth for Rockville ranging from little or no growth (34%) to a moderate level (59%), they have stated that it is critically important to preserve the quality of life and services (93%) and maintain the quality of schools (81%). Further, more than 80% oppose growth of new housing if schools are over capacity.

  Traffic is of great concern and residents feel traffic congestion needs to be managed to prevent overburdening of neighborhood streets and existing roadways. Residents recognize that growth will put increased burdens on infrastructure and public facilities and they strongly believe that the costs of new infrastructure should be borne by developers (98%) and new residents (56%), not existing residents.

- ***What do you like MOST about your neighborhood?*** Convenience of the neighborhood and its friendliness/ small-town atmosphere topped the list, as it did in a survey conducted in 1986.

- ***What do you like LEAST about your neighborhood?*** Respondents cited too much traffic, speeding, and poor enforcement of traffic laws more frequently (i.e. six times more) than any other adverse condition in the neighborhood.

Rockville 2040 Outreach

A listening session with the West End and Woodley Gardens East-West communities was held on September 24, 2015. Planning Area 4 residents were asked to review the planning area language from the 2002 CMP that referred to the *West End-Woodley Gardens East/West Neighborhood Plan* and provide feedback. Representatives from the planning area also chose to initiate an update to their 1989 neighborhood plan.

LISTENING SESSION RESULTS

Documents that contain the comments articulated at each listening session are available on the City's Web site at: www.rockvillemd.gov/1757/Community-Meeting-Results. At the Planning Area 4 session, 27 residents attended and provided feedback. Concerns were expressed about mansionization, including comments about massing, scale, incompatibility with existing houses, and new large houses in the city that are being used as de facto apartment units. Other concerns were expressed about preserving the character of the neighborhood, pressure to convert housing to non-residential uses in certain locations, safety at Welsh Park, appreciation for the range of housing types and the neighborhood's history, and desire to preserve historic resources. There was some disagreement on support for more affordable housing within the planning area, concerns about the viability of the adjacent Town Center, desire for more retail variety and better bicycle and pedestrian connections, in addition to other comments.

History of the Planning Area and its Neighborhoods

Parts of Planning Area 4 were among the areas first settled in Rockville. The planning area encompasses part of the 1784 "Williamsburgh" tract of 200 acres surveyed by William Prather Williams that was later subdivided into 85 lots along Wood Lane, Middle Lane, Commerce Lane (Montgomery Avenue), and Jefferson Street.

In the late 1770s, the Beall family settled on land near what is now North Adams Street. The family homestead was built in 1815 and extended well to the north to Martins Lane. The house still exists at 103 West Montgomery Avenue. The house and grounds have been owned by the City of Rockville since 1965 and are occupied by the Montgomery County Historical Society. Margaret Beall, one of the area's largest landowners at the time, later gave or sold land along the south side of Martins Lane to people who were formerly enslaved to her and to her servants.

The north side of Martins Lane had been farmed in the 1830s by Samuel Martin, a free black person. Many descendants of these original families still reside along Martins Lane. The community is known as Haiti and the neighborhood contains homes dating from the mid-1800s through the late twentieth century. The area was annexed

into Rockville in 1949 as part of a massive annexation of 2,210 acres that greatly enlarged the geography of the city and brought sewer, water, and paved roads to the neighborhood. Of particular note is the historic Haiti Cemetery that is located to the rear of 205 Martins Lane. Currently owned and maintained by the Crutchfield family, this is the earliest known cemetery for black residents of Rockville and is a locally designated historic site.

Another community of free black residents was established prior to the Civil War near the intersection of Great Falls Road and Maryland Avenue. Three free African American women and one man purchased contiguous properties that encompassed more than ten acres. After the Civil War they were allowed to marry their partners who were enslaved people and bring their families to their land holdings. Previously the children and spouses had been scattered around Montgomery County. This community endured for more than 100 years. Today there are two locally designated historic properties. One, the Bessie Hill House (602 Great Falls Road), is the home of a grandchild of Ann Wilson, who was an original purchaser in 1845. The other, the Kelley House, at the corner of Maryland Avenue and Great Falls Road (628 Great Falls Road), is located on the property of Thomas Price, another of the original free black settlers.

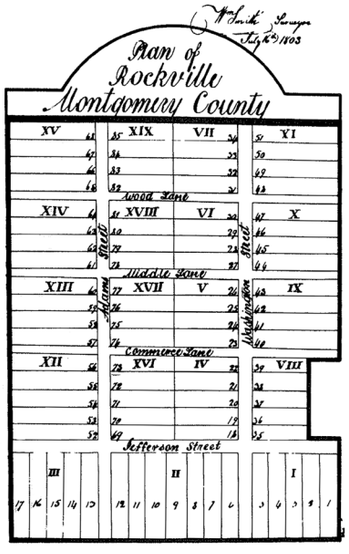
Rockville grew slowly as a mostly farming community in the 19th century until the Metropolitan Branch of the B&O Railroad arrived in 1873. The railroad provided a new gateway to Washington, DC and spurred the creation of a summer resort, attracting Washington residents to Rockville's "healthy" climate. Several large houses in the West End became boarding houses and the Woodlawn Hotel (opened 1889 and later became Chestnut Lodge Hospital) was constructed on West Montgomery Avenue; one of three grand hotels in the area. The Woodlawn was Rockville's premier destination during the town's heyday as a summer resort. The hotel became the westernmost destination point for the Washington and Rockville Electric Railway Company's trolley line.



Historic Beall-Dawson House

Prompted by Rockville's growing reputation as a resort destination in the late 1800s, farmland at the western limits of town, along Darnestown and Great Falls Roads, was subdivided by developers from Rockville and Washington, DC. Margaret Beall subdivided her 67-acre estate in 1875 and began to sell lots for new houses to the north and northwest of the Beall-Dawson House. Another local woman, Rebecca Veirs, bought and developed land for housing along Darnestown Road in 1887-1888 around what is now Thomas and Wall Streets, which became R.T. Veirs Addition.

Other subdivisions were created in the West End throughout the nineteenth century. The most ambitious was West End Park by Washingtonian Henry N. Copp around 1890. Copp designed the 520-acre West End Park subdivision in a plan of diagonal streets with connecting circles, large lots, and land set aside for churches, schools, and parks. The traffic circles at Mannakee Street and Beall Avenue and at Laird,



The first plan and plat for 'Rockville' dates to 1803. The street and block layout is still recognizable 215 years later for the core section between Washington and Adams Streets. The notch between Jefferson Street and Commerce Lane indicated the location of the courthouse. The western half of this plan is in Planning Area 4. The eastern half is in Town Center (Planning Area 1).

Luckett and Lynch Streets are enduring results of the original design.

Quarter-acre lots sold quickly, and large Victorian homes were built before Copp's development went bankrupt following economic recessions and lawsuits. Many of the lots remained vacant until well into the twentieth century. Rockville's first suburban building boom was over by the end of the 19th century.

Large ornate Victorian houses were the typical prototype in the West End prior to the turn of the 20th century. These are the homes that "provide the flavor of the historic district" according to the Maryland Historical Trust survey form for the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District.

The start of the new century, through the mid-1900s, brought a variety of residential styles. Bungalows, Craftsman, Colonial Revival, and Cape Cod styles were commonly constructed. Between World Wars I and II, the 100 block of South Adams Street filled in with modest homes of varying architectural styles.

The gradual development of the area gives Planning Area 4 its eclectic mix of architectural styles ranging from distinctive Victorians to modern split-level houses. The result of this patchwork development pattern and variety of architectural styles is a unique neighborhood reflecting the evolution of small towns in America beginning in the late 1800s and continuing into the 21st century.



Homes in Woodley Gardens East-West

Land Use

DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING

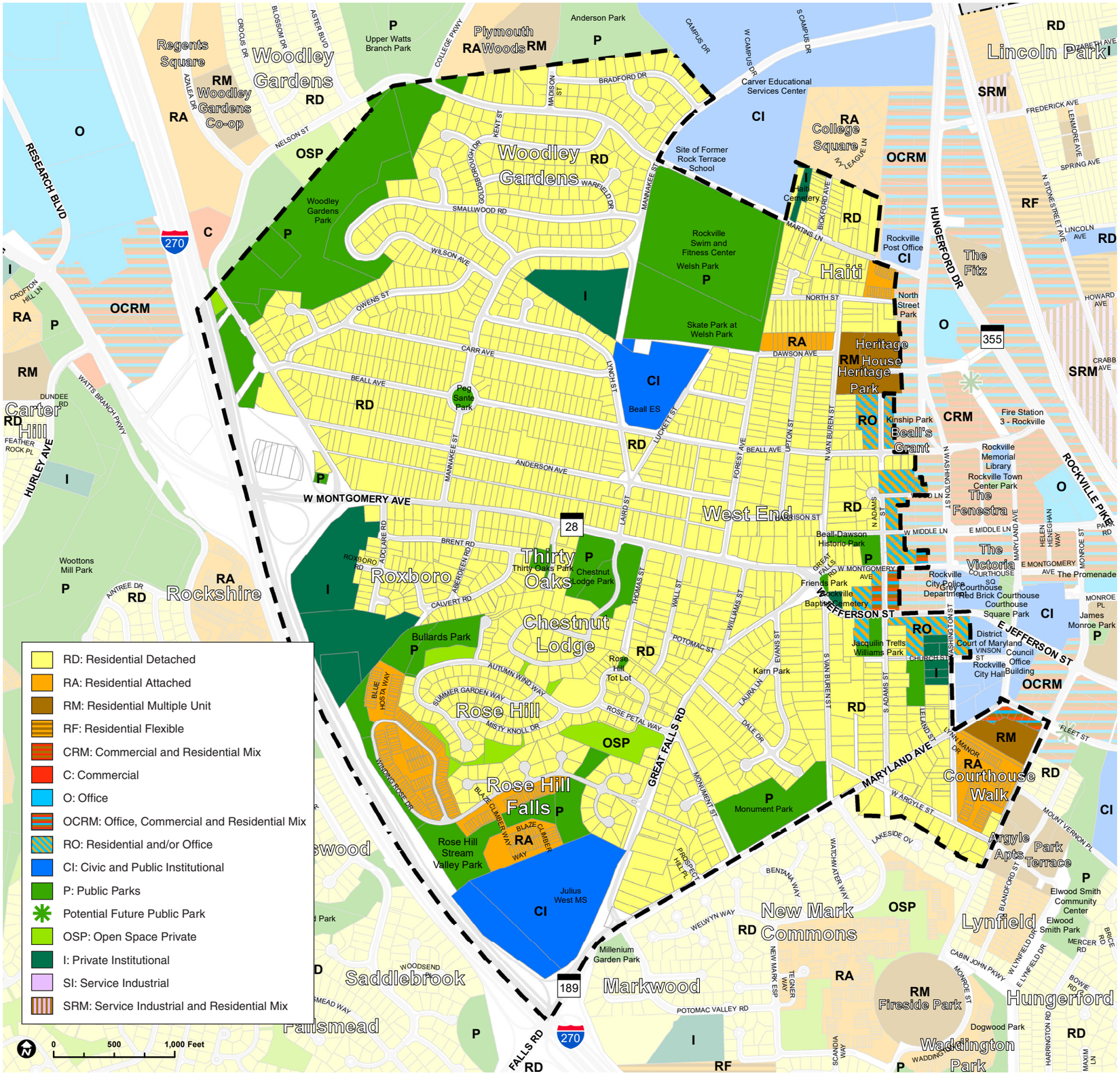
Housing in Planning Area 4 reflects the history of the community's development beginning with Victorian neighborhoods constructed in the late 1800s along West Montgomery Avenue and South Washington Street, followed by post WWII expansion, the development of the Woodley Gardens East/West neighborhood in the mid-1960s, and the Rose Hill neighborhoods in the 1990s, followed by Chestnut Lodge in the 2000s. Other than land dedicated to parkland or undeveloped portions of church-owned parcels, no large tracts of land remain undeveloped. With existing zoning, expansion of housing in the neighborhood is limited to in-fill lots and additions/replacements of existing residences.

The area remains predominantly residential. The majority of the planning area is identified as Residential Detached on the Land Use Policy Map (*see Figure 51*) and most of the single-unit detached homes (72% of the planning area's total) are zoned either R-60 or R-90. There are some townhouses (12.5% of total units), and multi-unit residential developments (5.7% of total units) in the northeastern portion of the planning area. There are mixes of single-unit detached houses and townhouses in the Rose Hill and Rose Hill Falls Planned Developments and more townhouses at Courthouse Walk and Cambridge Cluster. The remaining 9.8% is assisted living or senior housing.

Planning Area 4 had an estimated population of approximately 5,650 in 2018, representing about 8% of the total city population. There are about 2,025 dwelling units, or 7% of the total. The small percentage difference between population and number of residential units indicates that the average household size in Planning Area 4 is slightly larger than the citywide average, due to the fact that the majority of housing in the planning area consists of single-unit detached residences. Almost 13% of Rockville's single-unit detached units are located in Planning Area 4.

As there is very little developable land in Planning Area 4 and other established neighborhoods, most of the city's future population growth will be multi-unit residences, in a mixed-use context, in more urban locations such as the Rockville Pike corridor. Incremental population growth may occur within the planning area as small-scale infill projects,

Figure 51: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 4


RD: Residential Detached
RA: Residential Attached
RM: Residential Multiple Unit
RF: Residential Flexible
CRM: Commercial and Residential Mix
C: Commercial
O: Office
OCRM: Office, Commercial and Residential Mix
RO: Residential and/or Office
CI: Civic and Public Institutional
P: Public Parks
Potential Future Public Park
OSP: Open Space Private
I: Private Institutional
SI: Service Industrial
SRM: Service Industrial and Residential Mix
0
500
1,000 Feet
Woodley Gardens
Regents Square
Woodley Gardens Co-op
Upper Watts Branch Park
Plymouth Woods
Anderson Park
Carver Educational Services Center
Lincoln Park
College Square
Site of Former Rock Terrace School
Haiti
Haiti Cemetery
Rockville Swim and Fitness Center
Welsh Park
Skate Park at Welsh Park
Rockville Post Office
The Fitz
North Street Park
Heritage House
Heritage Park
Woodley Gardens Park
Beall ES
Peg Sante Park
Kinship Park
Beall's Grant
Fire Station 3 - Rockville
Rockville Memorial Library
Rockville Town Center Park
The Fenestra
The Victoria
Beall-Dawson Historic Park
Rockville City Police Department
Courthouse Square Park
Red Brick Courthouse
James Monroe Park
The Promenade
Friends Park
Rockville Cemetery
Jacquelin Trells Williams Park
District Court of Maryland
Council Office Building
Rockville City Hall
Courthouse Walk
Monument Park
Karn Park
Rose Hill Tot Lot
Rose Hill Stream Valley Park
Julius West MS
Millenium Garden Park
Argyle Apts
Park Terrace
Elwood Smith Community Center
Elwood Smith Park
New Mark Commons
Lynfield
Fireside Park
Dogwood Park
Waddington Park
Hungerford
Markwood
Saddlebrook
Fallsmead
Thirty Oaks
Chestnut Lodge
Roxboro
Rockshire
Carter Hill
Woottons Mill Park
West End
Bullards Park
Rose Hill
Rose Hill Falls
Woodley Gardens
Woodley Gardens East
Woodley Gardens West
Woodley Gardens Park
Rose Hill Stream Valley Park
Millenium Garden Park
Dogwood Park
Waddington Park
Fireside Park
Monument Park
Courthouse Walk
Argyle Apts
Park Terrace
Elwood Smith Community Center
Elwood Smith Park
Rockville Town Center Park
Rockville Memorial Library
Beall-Dawson Historic Park
Rockville City Police Department
Courthouse Square Park
Red Brick Courthouse
James Monroe Park
The Promenade
Friends Park
Rockville Cemetery
Jacquelin Trells Williams Park
District Court of Maryland
Council Office Building
Rockville City Hall
Karn Park
Rose Hill Tot Lot
Rose Hill Stream Valley Park
Julius West MS

potentially to include some apartment units in the historic homes in the transition area adjacent to Town Center.

HOUSING ISSUES

Residents have expressed several concerns regarding housing in the neighborhood:

Single-Unit Detached Residential Housing: Residential Redevelopment, Infill Development, and Modifications to Existing Structures on Residential Lots

An overwhelming sentiment of the residents of Planning Area 4 is to preserve the single-unit detached housing character of the neighborhood. As land values increase, property owners and developers sometimes seek to achieve a higher return from their land by tearing down single-unit detached existing homes and replacing them with new, larger homes or other types of housing structures, such as townhouses and multi-unit buildings (if compliant with the Comprehensive Plan and allowed by zoning). Such changes can benefit the neighborhood by enhancing its desirability, increasing property values, and boosting property tax revenues paid to the City.

However, they can also result in negative impacts on neighbors, especially if the new structures are significantly taller than, or out of scale with, existing homes. These negative impacts can include but are not limited to: reduced access to sunlight, loss of mature trees and open space, increased storm water runoff, increased noise from heating/cooling and other equipment, reduced privacy, and a change in the character of the neighborhood. New construction or second-story additions to existing structures can potentially affect access to sunlight, for example, by casting a significant shadow onto adjacent properties.

Policies

1. Balance the rights of property owners who build new homes as replacements of older homes, or as infill, with the interests of existing homeowners and residents, such that adverse impacts on existing residences are minimized.
2. Review development standards in the Zoning Ordinance. Amend the standards and/or develop design guidelines for single-unit detached housing, with the purposes of a) addressing potential adverse impacts of new structures and additions on abutting houses (such as reduction of access to sunlight, unhealthy noise levels, and loss of privacy), and b) preserving the existing character of the neighborhood.
3. Ensure that new construction adheres to the City's codes, including the Property Maintenance Code, so that stormwater runoff and other impacts from new development do not adversely affect neighboring properties either during construction or afterward. If a review of the codes finds them to be insufficiently protective, amend the codes.
4. Continue to prohibit the creation of new pipestem lots in single dwelling unit residential zones within Planning Area 4.
5. The subdivision of parcels should not detract from the existing character of the surrounding neighborhood. Where a large property is being subdivided into smaller parcels, the new parcels should be similar in size to those in the immediate vicinity.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory Dwellings Units, or ADUs, are a separate additional living unit to a primary single-unit detached home that includes separate kitchen, sleeping, and bathroom facilities. They may be attached or detached from the primary home and are usually subordinate in size, location, and appearance to the primary dwelling. ADUs can provide opportunities for more affordable housing, shared family living arrangements, and financial assistance for current homeowners to afford mortgages and other costs, within the context of existing neighborhoods. However, ADUs are not always appropriate or welcome within established neighborhoods.

A survey of the residents in this planning area prior to this plan's adoption indicated a concern for allowing ADUs on existing single-unit residential lots due to their potential to change or diminish the residential character of the planning area. Any change in the allowance or standards for ADUs in the planning area should be considered in consultation with planning area residents and property owners and account for the established residential character of the planning area.

1. Establish development standards for Accessory Dwelling Units in the Zoning Ordinance, such as compatible

architectural design, use of pervious surface materials, and retention of established tree canopy. Standards should be developed in consultation with planning area residents and property owners and take into account the unique character and development patterns of the planning area's neighborhoods.

Residential Attached (RA) Housing

The types of housing generally indicated by this land use category include, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, and other small multi-unit buildings that can fit comfortably into or adjacent to single-unit detached neighborhoods. Single-unit detached housing is also permissible. A greater range of Residential Attached types is appropriate for some locations within Planning Area 4 and a more limited range is appropriate elsewhere, as described below:

Policies

1. Explore the impacts of revising the zoning ordinance to permit only single-unit detached homes, duplexes, and residential townhouses for the block of townhouses on the east side of the 200 block of North Adams Street, north of Beall Avenue. The townhouse communities at Courthouse Walk, Rose Hill, Rose Hill Falls, and Cambridge Cluster (Martins Square Lane) are not expected to redevelop during the life of this plan (estimated to be approximately 20 years). They are identified as Residential Attached on the Land Use Map and should remain as townhouses.
2. The Dawson Avenue Apartments between North Van Buren Street and Forest Avenue are conducive to a wider range of Residential Attached housing and could be redeveloped with single-unit detached homes, similarly-scaled multi-unit residential buildings (containing 6 or fewer units), duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, stacked flats, or townhouses. Consideration must be given to good architectural design, massing and building heights that are compatible with existing nearby single-unit detached houses, and adequate off-street parking so that the new development fits well into the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Affordable Housing

Affordable housing includes a range of housing types and pricing structures, from market-rate housing that is older and therefore more affordable than newer product, to public housing that serves extremely low-income individuals and families. The majority of what is considered affordable housing in Planning Area 4 is located along the outer edge and in the transition area adjacent to Town Center.

Rockville's primary policy designed to produce new housing affordable to low- and moderate-income households is its Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit program (MPDU), established in 1990. There have been few large residential developments in Planning Area 4 since 1990; the only MPDUs are in the Rose Hill neighborhood. Many Planning Area 4 residents support integrated affordable housing programs such as the MPDU program rather than projects that create concentrations of affordable housing in stand-alone buildings or blocks of buildings.

Public housing is one of very few programs that target extremely low-income individuals and families. Rockville Housing Enterprises (RHE) is the City's housing authority. Heritage House and Heritage Park Apartments (Dawson Adams Mutual Homes, Inc.) are subsidized rental apartments at the northeastern end of the planning area. Heritage House has 100 one-bedroom apartments that serve low-income seniors. Heritage Park offers two- and three-bedroom apartments for low-income families.

The City, through RHE, also administers federal housing choice vouchers to low-income individuals and families. These are not tied to particular housing developments.

Policies

1. Assure that affordable housing is distributed throughout the city.
2. Encourage mixed-income and subsidized housing developments to be distributed throughout the city.
3. Allow multi-unit residential housing as a use in historic houses in limited transitional locations near Town Center, as indicated on the Land Use Policy Map (Figure 51), to provide opportunities for affordable market-rate housing.

Short-Term Residential Rentals

Short-term residential rentals, made more accessible in recent years by Internet-based companies, can impact neighborhoods. As of this writing, the City has not developed policies and regulations to address this growing trend.

Policy

1. Develop standards and regulations for short-term residential rentals, with the goal of preserving the predominantly owner-occupied, residential character of the planning area's neighborhoods.

INTERFACE WITH ROCKVILLE TOWN CENTER

The eastern border of Planning Area 4 abuts Town Center (Planning Area 1), with the division generally coincident with the rear property lines of properties that front North and South Washington Street, with some variations. Because of its proximity to the neighborhood, Town Center is the shopping and dining location of choice for many Planning Area 4 residents who value its ready access and walkability. At the September 2015 listening session, half of the survey respondents cited Town Square or Town Center as their "favorite spot or hangout in the neighborhood." In the neighborhood-wide survey conducted in 2016, almost half of the respondents said that they visit Town Center businesses, with one-third visiting at least monthly.

As far back as the 1960s, however, residents have had concerns that the West End -- and particularly the historic buildings on South Washington Street, Adams Street, and West Jefferson Street -- were threatened by encroachment of more intense commercial uses in the Town Center.

The City's 1970 Master Plan was the first to acknowledge this issue and advocated creating a transition between the central business district and the adjacent residential areas to the west. The O-1 and O-2 zones were introduced as transitional office zones, with the O-2 zone specifically targeted to historic buildings on these streets that were seen as potentially no longer conducive to single-unit detached residential use. With the new zone, owners could convert the buildings to office use but could not enlarge them. Several historic homes in Planning Area 4 in and near the transition area have been re-purposed as small professional offices. The first conversion to O-2 occurred in 1972 and within a decade most of the houses on the east side of North Adams Street and both sides of South Washington Street had transitioned to office use. In 2009, a citywide update of the Zoning Ordinance changed the O-2 zone to Mixed-Use Transition (MXT) which, in addition to residential and office uses, includes limited retail uses. No retail uses have occupied space in the MXT zone within Planning Area 4, even though such uses have been allowed for a decade.

During the redevelopment of Town Center, residents worked with developers to aim for high quality, commercially successful projects that would enhance and serve the City well, without overburdening the neighborhood with overflow parking and excessive cut-through traffic. While residents value Town Center highly, they do not support creeping expansion of commercial enterprises into the neighborhood. More than 86% of survey respondents said that they are opposed to the conversion of residential property to commercial uses.

Policies

1. Maintain a positive relationship between the neighborhood and Town Center's commercial enterprises and property owners.
2. Assure adequate parking for commercial enterprises within the Town Center to avoid patron parking on residential streets in Planning Area 4.
3. Ensure that zoning actions are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including Planning Areas 1 (Town Center) and 4 (West End and Woodley Gardens East-West.
4. Establish a new zone to implement the Residential and/or Office (RO) land use designation that reflects the limited land uses (residential and/or office only) for properties in Planning Area 4 along its border with Planning Area 1 (Town Center).
5. Retail uses are allowed only where indicated in the table of Figure 53 and on the Land Use Map in Figure 51, in order to protect Planning Area 4 from expansion of commercial businesses into the neighborhood.
6. Off-street parking areas and trash receptacles/ dumpsters of commercial properties should be screened, to the extent possible, to minimize the visibility of such areas to residences, public streets and walkways.
7. Improve the streetscape on both sides of West Jefferson Street between 100 South Washington

Street and the intersection at South Adams Street to provide for a more attractive transition to the residential West End.

RETAIL USES

The Planning Area 4 neighborhood plan committee was opposed to allowing retail at the properties in the transition area, citing several concerns: 1) such uses could erode the residential character of the neighborhood; 2) no retail has located in these buildings, even though retail has been allowed since 2009; 3) retail is already a weak market sector and the City should focus on concentrating such uses in Town Center; and 4) the majority of survey residents (86%) oppose conversion of residential property to commercial uses.

The limited application of the Office Commercial Residential Mix (OCRM) land use designation within Planning Area 4, as shown on Figure 51, is designated only for the small existing retail strip at the northeast corner of West Montgomery Avenue and South Adams Street and the historic buildings along the block of South Adams Street, between West Jefferson Street and West Montgomery Avenue. This land use category includes all properties with frontage on South Adams Street except for 100 West Montgomery Avenue. The historic buildings on this block, with the noted exception, are encouraged to revert to their original single-unit detached residential use but are also permitted to be occupied as offices (as most currently are used now), small multi-unit residential buildings, or limited retail and service uses.

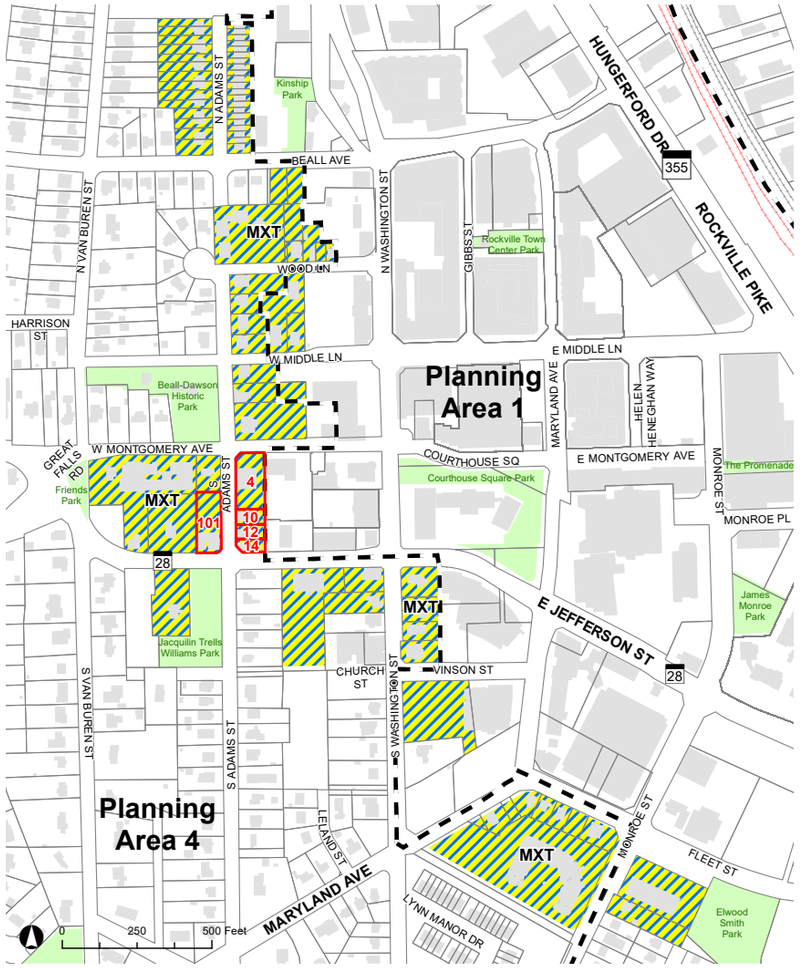
Retail and service uses on this block are intended to provide for convenience and specialty shopping primarily for residents within walking distance, rather than uses of a type that would increase parking on neighborhood streets, generate traffic, noise, lighting or significant modifications that would detract from the historic character. The types of businesses permitted should be restricted to allow for neighborhood-enhancing retail, such as boutiques, artisanal shops, galleries, small markets, sandwich and floral shops, tailors, or equivalent low-impact retail and service uses; and should be limited in size by a maximum gross floor area. Implementation of this plan should include consideration of a new land use category and zone that reflects this recommendation.

Policies

1. Explore the impacts of amending zoning for all properties currently in the MXT zone within Planning Area 4, except for those that abut North Adams Street between West Jefferson Street and West Montgomery Avenue (4, 10, 12, and 14 South Adams Street and 101 West Jefferson Street) as shown in Figure 52, so as not to allow retail uses, but to allow office uses and both single-unit detached and multi-unit residential uses. This could be achieved via a new zone or an overlay district.

   The five properties outlined in red in Figure 52 (one of which is a commercial retail use now) would allow, in addition to residential and office uses, limited small,

Figure 52: MXT (Mixed-Use Transition) Zone in Planning Area 4



The existing (as of 2019) MXT zone allows retail, office and certain residential uses. This plan recommends allowing limited retail only at the properties outlined in red within Planning Area 4. Red numbers are street addresses referenced in this section's policies.

neighborhood-serving retail uses, as described above, if they are determined to have no adverse impacts in terms of traffic, parking, or erosion of the historic, residential character of the block.

2. Promote the continued use and preservation of other historic buildings in the transition area adjacent to Town Center, listed in Table 1, by allowing use options including single-unit detached homes, multi-unit residential buildings, and business and professional offices, as long as the historic integrity of the exterior is preserved. Small additions to historic buildings may be allowed, if approved by the HDC. The land use designation of these buildings is Residential and/or Office on the Land Use Policy Map. Revise zoning to indicate the change from MXT zoning to a zone that reflects the Residential and/or Office (RO) land use designation.
3. Maintain the residential character of historic properties identified as Residential and/or Office (RO) by incorporating street trees and landscaping, appropriately dimensioned driveways, and small, unobtrusive signage.

HOME-BASED BUSINESSES

Minor home-based businesses that have no or very minimal impact on the residential character of the neighborhood are encouraged. Home-based businesses that are classified as "Major" may be permitted as Special Exception uses if they satisfy applicable requirements detailed in Article 15 in the Zoning Ordinance. It is important that there not be a large concentration of Major home-based businesses that would alter the residential character of the street.

Policies

1. Explore the impacts of amending the Zoning Ordinance to limit the number of Major home-based businesses allowed within a concentrated geographic area.
2. Explore the impacts of amending the findings required for a Special Exception to indicate that there is a presumption that the residential character of the neighborhood would be changed if the number of Major home-based businesses on any residential block exceeds 25% of the residences on that block. This policy applies to Planning Area 4 and may be accomplished by creating an overlay zone.
3. Explore the impacts of amending the Zoning Ordinance to prohibit Major home-based businesses in residences that share a driveway with a neighboring residence, unless the owners of all residences that share the driveway are supportive.

INSTITUTIONAL USES

Institutional uses include houses of worship and such uses as charitable or philanthropic offices, child care homes, daycare centers, private educational institutions, life care facilities, and nursing homes. Houses of worship are allowed anywhere in the city. Most other types of institutions are allowed in some residential zones and in all mixed-use zones, either by right, Special Exception, or as a Conditional Use.

Planning Area 4 includes the following institutional uses, all of which are private cemeteries or houses of worship and their accessory uses (such as private schools and nursing homes), including several that are designated as historic(*).

Christ Episcopal Church*
First Baptist Church of Rockville
First Church of Christ Scientist
Jerusalem Mt. Pleasant UMC Church*
Rockville Christian Church*
Rockville Presbyterian Church*
Rockville Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses
Rockville United Methodist Church*
Rockville Nursing Home
Rockville Seventh Day Adventist Church
Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville
Old Baptist Cemetery*
Haiti Cemetery*

Planning Area 4 residents are concerned about expansion of institutional uses (by purchasing adjacent or nearby properties to expand the square footage/acreage of the use) or change in use, particularly from a house of worship to a different type of institution (such as a private educational institution or childcare facility). The cumulative impacts of too many institutional uses, including overflow parking, increased vehicular traffic, reduced pedestrian safety on residential streets, and noise, have the potential to reduce the residential character of the neighborhood.

Planning Area 4, given its adjacency to I-270 and Rockville Town Center, and the fact that sites for houses of worship

were included in early plans for the West End (unlike in more recent planned development communities such as King Farm and Fallsgrove) has a considerable number of institutional uses relative to many other predominantly residential neighborhoods in Rockville. In the neighborhood-wide survey conducted in 2016, respondents were overwhelmingly opposed to expanding commercial and institutional uses in Planning Area 4. More than 80% said they oppose conversion of residential properties in the neighborhood to commercial or institutional uses.





The historically largest institutional use in Planning Area 4, Chestnut Lodge Hospital, comprised more than 100 acres as recently as the early 1990s but the property was sold off in pieces over time for residential development. It was purchased by CPC Health, Inc. in 1996 and by the Washington Waldorf School, Inc. in 2001 before a large portion of the property was finally developed as residential. The balance of the property fronting West Montgomery Avenue, is now a City park. The property's longest use was institutional in a campus setting.

Child Care Homes and Centers

Current zoning permits up to eight children to be cared for in a child care facility in any residence in all residential zones. A Special Exception is required for nine or more children in the R-60 and R-90 zones that make up most of Planning Area 4. Currently, up to 25 children are permitted in a child care center if the lot area is at least 10,000 square feet and if all other Special Exception requirements are met. There are hundreds of lots that meet or exceed that lot size in the planning area. Residents have indicated concerns about potential adverse impacts of traffic, excessive on-street parking, and noise; and believe that the number and size of child care centers should be limited to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood.

Monument Triangle

The southwestern portion of the planning area is often referred to as "Monument Triangle". The triangle is formed by Maryland Avenue, Great Falls Road, and Monument Street. The opening of the interchange with I-270 at the western edge of the triangle in the late 1980s, along with potential redevelopment of the then adjacent portions of the Chestnut Lodge property, caused concern among residents about the stability of the residential character of this portion of the neighborhood. This area includes a pre-Civil War community of free black persons, including two properties that are designated historic. The area also comprises institutional uses, including the Masonic Hall (612 Great Falls Road), the Boys and Girls Home (635 Maryland Avenue), and the Jehovah's Witnesses properties (624-628 Great Falls Road). Residents have expressed concerns that further institutional expansion in this area would imperil the residential and historic character of the neighborhood.

I-270 at West Montgomery Avenue

There are similar concerns about the area near the I-270 interchange with West Montgomery Avenue and potential pressures to convert residential property to institutional uses there because of nearby access to the interstate. That convenience makes the location appealing to institutional uses that serve a wider area than the immediate neighborhood. However, this area, like Monument Triangle, has many institutional uses now and residents are concerned that further expansion of institutional uses in this area, as well, would imperil the residential and historic character of the neighborhood.

Institutional uses are components of older neighborhoods and serve important functions for residents. Historic churches, in particular, add vitality and character to the neighborhood. However, a concentration of large-footprint institutional uses leads to impacts that are not compatible with the residential and historic character of this area.

Policies

1. In the event that existing institutional uses cease to operate, the preferred option is for the properties to be redeveloped per the underlying zone, which in most cases is low-density residential. Under the Zoning Ordinance, redevelopment of the properties with new institutional uses may require approval of a Special Exception. Any redevelopment of these properties should minimize impacts on the residential and historic character of the surrounding area.
2. Avoid concentrations of land uses that require a Special Exception and other nonresidential land uses.
3. Review and explore amending Special Exception and Conditional Use provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that they prevent cumulative, undesirable consequences that are incompatible with residential neighborhoods, such as extensive aggregation of land for expansion, increased vehicular traffic, and reduced pedestrian safety.
4. Explore establishing standards that set maximum property acreage for large institutions and prevent aggregation of the majority of residential lots on a block, or the equivalent aggregation of lots in different locations, for the purpose of creating a large institution. Review and explore amending other standards, such as building heights and set-backs, to prevent erosion of the residential character of the neighborhood.
5. Explore the impact of limiting the number of children allowed, or increasing the minimum lot area, for Special Exceptions for a home-based or center-based child care facility when that home or center is adjacent to residences in single-dwelling unit residential zones. Explore the impacts of amending the findings required for a Special Exception to indicate that if the number of child care centers exceeds 15% of the residences on a residential block, there is a presumption that the residential character of the neighborhood would be changed. This policy would apply to Planning Area 4 and may be accomplished by creating an overlay zone.
6. Explore amending the findings required for a Special Exception to indicate that if the total number of child care centers and Major home-based businesses, combined, exceeds 25% of the residences on a residential block, there is a presumption that the residential character of the neighborhood would be changed.
7. Explore requiring screening from adjacent and abutting residential lots when modifications or additions to institutional properties are approved to accommodate or expand a Special Exception use to prevent negative impacts on the residences.
8. Ensure strict compliance with all conditions of approval so that the protections specified in Special Exceptions and/or use permits or site plans are fully and continuously maintained.
9. Explore changing the underlying zone for the parcels currently owned or occupied by the Rockville United Methodist Church from MXT to a zone that would indicate the Residential and/or Office (RO) land use designation that would be compatible with the immediate neighborhood (residential and/or office, but not retail), although no change in use is anticipated for this historic church.
10. Allow Jefferson House, located at 111 West Jefferson Street, to continue operating as a personal living quarters or group home under any new zoning.

Land Use and Zoning Policies

The table in Figure 53 is a summary of land use designations and zoning changes that would be needed to implement policies described above. Many of these properties are designated as historic and located in the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District.

Office Duplexes on North Adams Street (200-226 North Adams Street, even-numbered on west side)

These seven office condominium buildings are individually owned. Originally, they were built as fourteen residential duplex units with one owner. They were renovated in the 1980s for use as offices. They have surface parking to the

Figure 53: Summary of Land Use Changes and Zoning Revisions

Property	Land Use Policy Map Designation	Current Zone	Zoning Revisions
Office duplexes on North Adams Street, north of Beall Avenue	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow attached residential and office uses, but not retail
North Adams Street Attached houses	Residential Attached (RA)	MXT	Revise to allow only attached residential units and single-unit detached residences (not retail or office)
Dawson Avenue Apartments	Residential Attached (RA)	RMD-25	Revise to allow attached residential units but limit building height to be compatible with surrounding neighborhood
22 West Jefferson Street	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow office and multi-unit residential uses, but not retail
101 West Jefferson Street	Office Commercial Residential Mix (OCRM)	MXT	Revise to allow any residential, office and limited retail use
107 West Jefferson Street	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow office and single-unit or multi-unit residential uses, but not retail
10, 12, 14 South Adams Street	Office Commercial Residential Mix (OCRM)	MXT	Allow residential, office and limited retail uses. No zone change but limit retail uses allowed.
100 South Adams Street	Residential and/or Office (RO)	R-90	Revise to allow single-unit detached homes and office uses
103 South Adams Street (Rockville Academy)	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow office and multi-unit residential uses, but not retail
25 Wood Lane	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow office and multi-unit residential uses, but not retail
Jerusalem-Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church-owned properties on Wood Lane	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow office and residential uses, but not retail
Jerusalem-Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church-owned properties at 12 Beall Avenue and adjacent vacant lot	Residential Detached (RD)	MXT	Change the zone for these two properties to R-60
100, 101, 104, 105, 108, 110 South Washington Street	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow office, single-unit and multi-unit residential uses, but not retail
5, 9 North Adams Street	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow residential and office uses, but not retail
101, 103, 107 109 North Adams Street	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow residential and office uses, but not retail
39 West Montgomery Avenue	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow residential and office uses, but not retail
100 West Montgomery Avenue	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	Revise to allow residential and office uses, but not retail
Rockville United Methodist Church properties (including 112 and 114 West Montgomery Avenue and a parking lot on West Jefferson Street)	Residential and/or Office (RO)	MXT	No land use change anticipated. Change underlying zone to allow residential and office uses, but not retail
Old Baptist Cemetery	Residential Detached (RD)	R-90	No change
Haiti Cemetery	Private Institutional (I)	R-60	No change

rear (west) and will likely remain as office space in the foreseeable future. If redeveloped, however, single-unit detached homes, residential townhouses and office uses would all be appropriate. Retail uses should not be allowed. The land use designation for these properties is Residential and/or Office (RO).

North Adams Street Attached Houses (201-242 North Adams Street, odd-numbered east side)

Located across from the office duplexes on North Adams Street, these 21 attached residences are individually owned, reducing the likelihood that they will be assembled for redevelopment. The land use designation for these properties is Residential Attached (RA). The narrow configuration of the land and the lack of parking make these properties more conducive to residential townhouses rather than more intensive residential, retail, or office uses. Single-unit detached houses, residential townhouses should replace them if redevelopment occurs.

Dawson Avenue Apartments (north side of Dawson Avenue, between North Van Buren Street and Forest Avenue)

These small apartment buildings are each in private ownership. The plan's land use designation is Residential Attached (RA). Redevelopment with single-unit detached homes or similarly scaled multi-unit residences, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, or townhouses would be appropriate. Consideration must be given to good architectural design, massing, and building heights that are compatible with nearby single-unit detached homes so that the new development fits well into the surrounding residential neighborhood. Adequate off-street parking should be provided.

22 West Jefferson Street was constructed as an office building in 1959, then sold to Christ Episcopal School in 2004 for use as classrooms. The church has preliminary plans to construct a new classroom building on a lot that it owns on South Washington Street and sell the building at 22 West Jefferson Street. This plan recommends that both office and multi-unit or single-unit attached residential uses be allowed if the existing building is reoccupied or the property is redeveloped. Retail uses are not allowed. The plan's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

101 West Jefferson Street

The former Rockville Christian Church, built in 1893 by local builder Edwin M. West, is located at the corner of West Jefferson Street and South Adams Street. It was purchased by John Bell in 1973 and converted to office use for his law firm. The historic building also would be suitable for multi-unit housing or limited commercial uses, given its busy corner location and the property's surface parking lot. This is one of the few properties in Planning Area 4 that is identified as Office Commercial Residential Mix (OCRM) on the Land Use Policy Map.

107 West Jefferson Street

The historic Luckett House was built in the Italianate style in 1885 and is an example of Rockville's late 19th century building boom. It was originally owned and occupied by Cooke D. Luckett, a teacher and principal at the Rockville Academy across the street. It was approved for conversion to office use in 1976. The plan's land use designation for the property is Residential and/or Office (RO).

10, 12, 14 South Adams Street

These three contiguous historic houses were built in the late 1800s and were all originally owned by Stephen Lyddane. They were each converted to office use in the 1970s. In addition to allowing residential and office uses, limited neighborhood-enhancing retail uses should also be allowed at these properties because they currently abut existing commercial uses, are not adjacent to any single-unit detached homes, and have adequate parking for limited retail uses. The plan's land use designation is Office Commercial Residential Mix (OCRM).

100 South Adams Street is an American Foursquare house, built in 1920. The house is located at the corner of South Adams and West Jefferson Streets, less than six feet from the curb on Jefferson Street (MD-28), making it less than ideal for residential occupancy. Properties directly across West Jefferson are zoned MXT and used as offices now. Although currently only zoned for residential use, this plan recommends both residential and office as appropriate uses for 100 South Adams, but not retail uses. The plan's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO). Any change of use to office should include screening from residences along South Adams Street and aesthetic improvements to the property, especially the rear parking area. Other properties on this block of South Adams Street are located further from West Jefferson Street and less impacted by the noise and

traffic. They should remain as detached single unit dwellings in their current residential zones.

103 South Adams Street

The former Rockville Academy was built as a private educational institution in 1890 and replaced an earlier (1812) school building. The historic building was vacant and threatened with demolition when it was purchased in 1980 for use as an office building. The building is now for sale or lease. Allowing multi-unit dwelling units, in addition to office uses (but not retail), would offer more options to the owner to retain and protect the historic structure. The plan's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

25 Wood Lane

The Adams Law Center, a collection of brick office buildings on 1.09 acres, was built in 1979. Continued use for office is recommended, but the property could be redeveloped as single-unit detached houses, row houses, or small multi-unit residential buildings that would be compatible in scale and height with the surrounding single-unit detached housing. Retail uses would not be allowed. The plan's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

Jerusalem Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church Properties, Wood Lane / Beall Avenue

The multi-lot property includes the church, the old parsonage building, the Hebron Print Shop, vacant parcels fronting Beall Avenue, and a vacant parcel between the church and Beall Avenue. The church and parsonage are designated historic; the Hebron Print shop is not currently. This plan's land use designates the church at 21 Wood Lane, the vacant lot behind the church, the former parsonage at 17 Wood Lane, and the former Hebron Print Shop at 11 Wood Lane as Residential and/or Office (RO); and two parcels behind the church on Beall Avenue as Residential Detached (RD). The land use for the property at 12 Beall Avenue is Residential Detached. It abuts an existing single-unit detached house.

100, 101, 104, 105, 108, 110 South Washington Street

These houses have a long history of use as professional offices due to their proximity to the courthouse and the main crossroads in town. Office uses will likely continue, but single-unit and multi-unit residential uses are also acceptable. Retail uses are not allowed. The plan's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

5, 9 North Adams Street

These former houses, also now used as offices, should allow for residential and office uses, but not retail. The plan's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

101, 103, 107, 109 North Adams Street

The four houses on the east side of North Adams, between Middle and Wood Lanes, include Rockville's oldest residence at 101 North Adams Street. This house was also the first to be changed to the O-2 zone in an attempt to establish a buffer between the central business district and the residential areas to the west. The O-2 zone was a transitional office zone specifically targeted to historic buildings that were seen as no longer conducive to single-unit detached residential use. All of the houses are used as offices now, but single-unit and multi-unit residential uses are acceptable Retail uses are not allowed. The land use designation should be Residential and/or Office (RO). The houses on the west side of this block are occupied as residences. It is very important to retain the residential character of this block.

39 West Montgomery Avenue

Judge Anderson's House was built in 1881 and underwent a major remodel to the Colonial Revival style in 1915. A residence for generations, the house is currently used as offices; Single-unit detached and multi-unit residential uses are also acceptable; retail uses are not. The property's land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

100 West Montgomery Avenue

This Queen Anne style residential structure was built in 1888. It is situated on a quarter-acre lot at the southwest corner of West Montgomery Avenue and South Adams Street. The property was partially destroyed by fire in 1945 and lost most of its distinctive architectural features. The condition of the house continues to deteriorate and it is currently vacant. The property owner must make repairs and correct all code violations prior to any future occupancy. Single-unit detached or multi-unit residential uses are encouraged. Office uses are also acceptable in order to encourage use and rehabilitation, though providing adequate parking may be difficult given the small lot size. Retail uses are not allowed. The plan's land use is Residential and/or Office (RO). However, this plan recognizes the challenging condition and location of this house and property and would welcome alternative approaches that would solve the longstanding blight.

Rockville United Methodist Church (112 and 114 West Montgomery Avenue and a parking lot on West Jefferson Street)

Originally built in 1869, the church building was altered in 1900, 1942 and 1982. This plan recommends changing the underlying zone from MXT to a zone that would only allow residential and/or office uses, to better reflect appropriate alternative uses for this site, although no change in use is anticipated for the historic church. The land use designation is Residential and/or Office (RO).

Old Baptist Cemetery

This cemetery was used until the late 19th century, when development of the West End necessitated widening of streets and resulted in the relocation of some graves. Twenty-eight grave markers remain. In 1973, the Montgomery County Historical Society deeded the land to Peerless Rockville Historic Preservation, Ltd. for continued preservation and maintenance. It is identified as Private Institution on the Land Use Map.

Haiti Cemetery is the earliest known burying ground for black residents in and around Rockville. It was first used in the late 19th century for members of families who lived in the Martins Lane area. It is privately owned and is identified on the Land Use Map as a Private Institution.

Transportation and Roadways Policies

In the 2016 neighborhood survey, residents were asked: What do you like LEAST about your neighborhood? Respondents cited traffic as their number one concern. Traffic issues, including the volume of traffic, excessive vehicular speeds, and poor enforcement of traffic laws, were cited six times more than any other adverse condition in the neighborhood.

WALKABILITY AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Walkability and pedestrian safety are very important to residents of Planning Area 4. In the 2016 survey respondents said that walkability was the second most important reason for continuing to live in Rockville, more important than proximity to work, good schools, or easy access to public transportation. Only friendliness of the community surpassed walkability.

In the last decade a number of new sidewalks have been constructed in Planning Area 4 in accordance with City policy to improve pedestrian safety in the neighborhood. The planned project for the portion of Maryland Avenue on the border of this planning area will be a great improvement in this regard, for both pedestrians and bicyclists. Yet, because of the high volume of vehicular traffic that passes through the neighborhood, risks to pedestrians remain. Many areas are still missing sidewalks or are otherwise not as safe for walking as they should be.

Policies

1. Develop a streetscape plan for the portion of West Montgomery Avenue within the historic district that includes recommendations for sidewalk material, street furniture, street lighting, and other elements that are consistent with the historic character of the district, that provide a cohesive setting, and that help to improve safety, comfort, and attractiveness for pedestrians.
2. Review the City's Sidewalk Prioritization Policy for Planning Area 4 in conjunction with affected residents and revise, as needed. Determine where new sidewalks are needed and where improvements are required to make existing sidewalks safer and more welcoming to pedestrians.
3. Bring existing sidewalks up to current City standards, when feasible, when development projects are implemented.
4. Ensure safe and accessible pedestrian routes to schools, parks, Town Center, community and government centers, the Rockville Transit Station, and other key pedestrian destinations. In particular, find solutions to improve dangerous sections of sidewalk that are heavily used by students, including the sidewalk on the south side of Maryland Avenue from South Washington Street to New Mark Esplanade.
5. Improve street crossings at high volume intersections, including Great Falls Road at Monument Street, on West Montgomery Avenue, Maryland Avenue and other locations.
6. Identify road sections that present risks to pedestrians. Based on that assessment, create a plan and schedule for improving pedestrian safety at those locations.
7. Install tree lawns to separate pedestrians from traffic and provide shade where feasible.

8. Plan for and construct neighborhood-to-neighborhood connections for pedestrians and bicycles.
9. Improve the walkability of the neighborhood by providing good lighting and resting spots with attractive benches along arterial and primary residential streets.

BICYCLING

Residents of Planning Area 4 support safety for bicyclists in the neighborhood, although few reported using bicycles as a primary form of transportation in the 2016 survey. The survey indicates that only a small minority of residents travel to work by bicycle daily (3%). The vast majority of people, more than 90%, get to work by driving, using Metro or walking. According to the survey, most Planning Area 4 residents who bike do it for recreation. However, there may be more people bicycling and using scooters or other rolling modes, especially near school, than the survey has reported.

Interestingly, the 1986 NPAG survey showed that more Planning Area 4 residents biked to work daily than used MARC Rail, Metro Bus, or Ride-on bus service, even though the percentage reported was only 4%, just slightly higher than reported in the more recent survey. Ridership on Metrorail increased from 14% to 20% between 1986 and 2016, based on neighborhood survey results from both years.

Policies

1. Establish a process for updating the *2017 Bikeway Master Plan* such that it involves citizen and neighborhood organizations as stakeholders from the beginning through the decision and adoption process.
2. Work with residents early in the planning process to identify projects that will provide improved bicycle connections to major trails and destinations, while balancing the needs for street parking, street trees and tree lawns, and equal protection of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Comprehensive analysis should be conducted of the impacts of any new bikeway on private property, on-street parking, trees, tree lawns, and pedestrian safety to ensure the best approach for all stakeholders, including residents, business owners, pedestrians, automobile drivers, and bicyclists.

PUBLIC ALLEYS

Public alleys are unique community spaces. Often, alleys serve abutting properties where residents may use them for access. They provide valuable connectivity that allows residents to walk or bike, away from vehicular traffic on busy streets. The community supports retaining alleys that are in the public domain. If an individual property owner wishes to take over a public alley, he or she may petition to abandon the alley. Alleys located in Planning Area 4 are illustrated in Figure 54 and policies that apply to individual alleys are discussed below. All alleys are unimproved in that they are not maintained by the City of Rockville. Figure 54 shows paved alleys in red and unpaved alleys in blue.

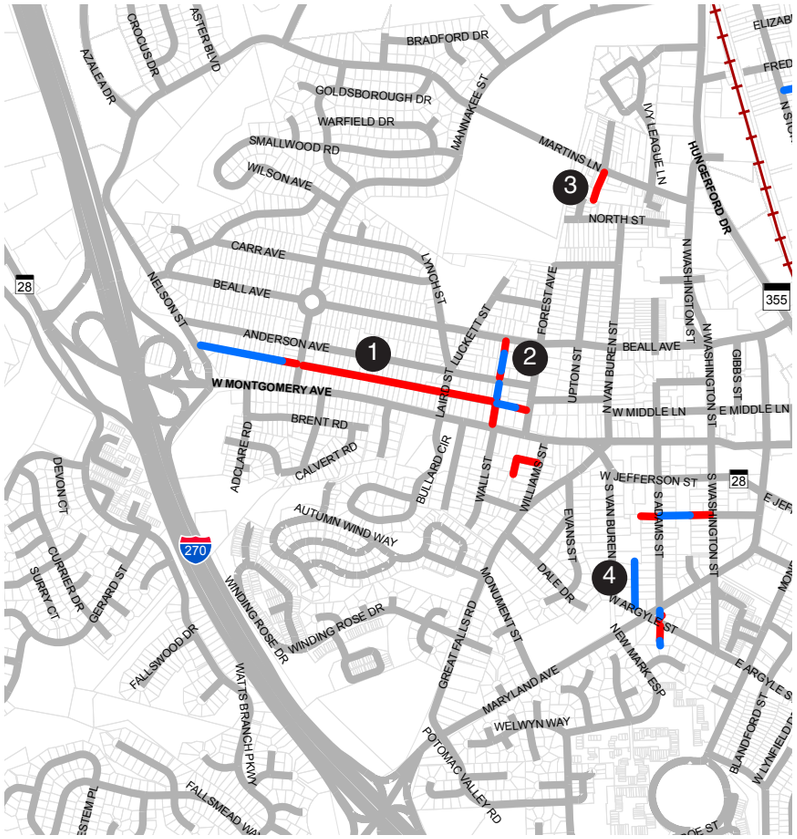
❶ The longest unimproved public alley in Planning Area 4 is one that extends from Forest Avenue to Nelson Street between West Montgomery Avenue and Anderson Avenue. About two-thirds of this alley is paved to allow vehicular access to houses that back up to it. The portion west of Mannakee Street to Nelson Street and a smaller portion west of Forest Avenue are unpaved. This alley could form a major segment of the bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Friendship bike/pedestrian bridge and Town Center and be an alternative to sharrows on parallel Anderson Avenue, which is narrow and has parking on both sides of the street.

Policy

1. The City will attempt to implement an improved public alley between West Montgomery Avenue and Anderson Avenue to provide a continuous pedestrian and bicycle connection between Forest Avenue and Nelson Street. This connection would provide an alternative to the existing sharrows on Anderson Avenue. However, grade changes would make this improvement difficult and costly. The City should determine the feasibility for this improvement. If it is found to be feasible, a plan should be developed for it. Areas allowing vehicular access for abutting properties should incorporate appropriate measures to prohibit cut-through vehicle traffic.

❷ Another unimproved alley connects West Montgomery Avenue (across from the Wall Street intersection) to Beall Avenue and is perpendicular to the longer alley behind West Montgomery Avenue. Portions are paved and others unpaved. The segment from West Montgomery Avenue to the alley

Figure 54: Public Alleys in and near Planning Area 4



Alleys shown in red are paved, but unimproved; alleys shown in blue are unpaved and unimproved.

behind houses on West Montgomery Avenue is paved. If the entire alley were paved and improved, it could serve as a north/south alternative to sharrows that are proposed for Forest Avenue in the *2017 Bikeway Master Plan*.

Policy

1. Determine the feasibility and develop a plan, with broad community input, for improving the alley that connects West Montgomery Avenue to Beall Avenue to provide a continuous pedestrian and/or bicycle connection (and vehicular access to adjacent homes, where feasible). This connection could provide an alternative to sharrows on Forest Avenue.

3 A private driveway extends south from Martins Lane and provides access to several residential properties. An adjacent unimproved public alley has potential to provide a pedestrian/bicycle connection between Martins Lane and North Street.

Policy

1. Determine the feasibility and resident interest in creating a connection between Martins Lane and North Street along the existing alley. Such a connection would likely require acquisition of private property or an easement.

4 An unimproved and unpaved alley extends northward from Argyle Street between South Van Buren Street and South Adams Street but does not provide any needed access or make any useful connections.

Policy

1. Consider reverting the public right-of-way of the unpaved alley that extends northward from Argyle Street between South Van Buren Street and South Adams Street to adjacent property owners if the City determines that no current or potential future public purpose is served from the alley right-of-way. Reversion of the public right-of-way would follow the City's typical abandonment rules and process.

There are a number of other short alleys in Planning Area 4.

Policy

1. Preserve alleys that have a current or potential future public purpose, for pedestrian and bicycle pathways though not for streets beyond local access to homes.

MAJOR ROADS AND USE OF LOCAL STREETS

Interstate 270 defines the western boundary of Planning Area 4. Three major roadways pass through the neighborhood; West Montgomery Avenue/Jefferson Street (MD-28) which bisects the neighborhood, Great Falls Road which cuts diagonally through the southern portion of the neighborhood; and Maryland Avenue, which is the southern border for most of the neighborhood. These roads function as collectors of local traffic, as well as main commuter routes.

There are two exits from I-270 within the planning area, one at Falls Road/Maryland Avenue (Exit 5) and one at West Montgomery Avenue (Exit 6). A heavy burden of traffic from these exits is channeled through the neighborhood on the major roads. Large numbers of motorists and commercial vehicles use them to reach destinations beyond the neighborhood, such as Town Center, Montgomery College,

and Rockville Pike (MD-355). Traffic on these roads is especially heavy during peak commuting periods, but also when there are major events in downtown Rockville.

Use of neighborhood streets by through traffic avoiding congestion on the primary roads is a particular problem for the planning area, given its location between I-270 and Town Center. The City's Comprehensive Plan and the Guidelines for Neighborhood Traffic Management seek both preservation of the residential and peaceful character of Planning Area 4 neighborhoods, and vitality of the Town Center.

Excessive noise from I-270 has had, for many years, a severely adverse effect on residents who live in blocks near the interstate. When I-270 was widened in the 1990s, the State did not build a sound wall to protect neighbors from noise levels that exceed State standards. For the last two decades, residents have worked closely with City and State officials to remedy this problem through construction of the sound wall. Recent discussions of further widening of I-270 have postponed addressing the issue. It is extremely important to residents that sound levels be reduced and conform with State noise standards.

Policies

1. Protect neighborhoods from the impacts of non-local pass-through traffic that is generated by the planning area's location adjacent to I-270 and Town Center.
2. Use signage and consider travel restrictions to help divert through traffic off residential streets.
3. Seek solutions to local traffic impacts of congestion on I-270 and advocate for improvements to I-270 to reduce the volume of vehicles traveling through neighborhoods.
4. Advocate for a sound wall along I-270 between West Montgomery Avenue and the Woodley Gardens shopping center on Nelson Street to protect adjacent households from I-270 traffic noise. Expedite City actions that are required for construction of the sound wall to occur.
5. Advocate for sound walls to protect other portions of the planning area, including but not limited to Rose Hill Falls and Roxboro.
6. In order to protect the historic resources on W. Montgomery Avenue, work with the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) to direct traffic traveling east through Rockville to use alternative routes.

WEST MONTGOMERY AVENUE (MD-28)

West Montgomery Avenue is a State highway that handles, per 2017 data, 26,300 Average Weekday Traffic generated by all vehicle trips. The high volume of traffic has led some motorists to use secondary residential streets to cut through the neighborhood, creating safety and noise problems. It also makes it very difficult for residents facing this street to turn into and out of their driveways. Traffic from Montgomery College at the intersection of West Montgomery Avenue and Mannakee Street is also a safety and congestion concern of residents.

Currently, there are no limitations on the sizes of trucks that are allowed to use West Montgomery Avenue, most of which are traveling to destinations beyond the neighborhood. Sidewalks are located at the curb without the protection of a buffer for much of the roadway. Because of the high volume of traffic, especially during commuting hours, it is difficult for property owners on West Montgomery Avenue to reach or exit their homes by vehicle except via the public alley to the rear of their properties, where it exists.

Policies

1. Advocate for the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) to study design options to mitigate peak hour congestion and safety on West Montgomery Avenue (MD-28).
2. Explore providing additional crosswalks so that pedestrians and bicyclists have more options for safe crossing of West Montgomery Avenue (MD-28).
3. Advocate for maintaining the existing roadway width (except for spot improvements as needed, such as at an intersection or to improve safety) and the current number of automobile travel lanes.

MARYLAND AVENUE

Maryland Avenue is a City street that serves as a primary artery for vehicles heading to Town Center, State and County courts, County office buildings, and destinations to the east. Maryland Avenue, east of the I-270 interchange, had an Average Weekday Traffic count of 18,800 in 2017, with the highest peak of more than 1,600 cars at the 5 pm to 6 pm

peak hour. Currently, truck traffic over one ton is prohibited from using Maryland Avenue. Because relatively few side streets intersect with Maryland Avenue, the traffic moves at speeds that often exceed the speed limits.

Much of Maryland Avenue has sidewalks, tree lawns and trees on both sides of the street. However, there are sections of the roadway, particularly between South Washington Street and New Mark Esplanade, where there is no buffer between the sidewalk and the fast-moving traffic.

Policies

1. Preserve Maryland Avenue as a pedestrian-safe, tree-lined street, and an important western gateway to Rockville.
2. Explores strategies to improve bicycle safety and the overall bicycle route on this important corridor, in concert with the *2017 Bikeway Master Plan* and in consultation with the community.
3. Continue to restrict trucks weighing more than one ton from traveling on Maryland Avenue.
4. Do not increase the existing curb-to-curb roadway width (except for spot improvements as needed, such as at an intersection or to improve safety).
5. Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential design improvements to peak-hour congestion and safety for vehicles exiting I-270 North and turning left onto Great Falls Road.

GREAT FALLS ROAD

Great Falls Road is another primary artery for vehicles heading to and from Town Center to points beyond the neighborhood. Currently, trucks of all sizes are allowed to use it, most heading for destinations beyond the neighborhood. A November 2018 traffic count indicated Average Weekday Traffic of 9,140, with the highest count between 8 and 9:00 a.m.

Policies

1. Enhance the safety and character of the road by advocating for approaches that would reduce the high volume of traffic that uses Great Falls Road through Planning Area 4.
2. Do not increase the existing curb-to-curb roadway (except for spot improvements as needed, such as at an intersection or to improve safety).
3. Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential design improvements to peak-hour congestion and safety for vehicles exiting I-270 North and turning left onto Great Falls Road from Falls Road (MD-189).

Historic Preservation Policies

WEST MONTGOMERY AVENUE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Planning Area 4 includes the city's largest historic district, the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District, which is both a locally designated district and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, with slightly different boundaries. Both were established in 1974. The district is located principally along West Montgomery Avenue and immediately adjacent side streets. It predominately consists of residential structures that represent a wide range of architectural styles from the 18th through the 20th centuries.

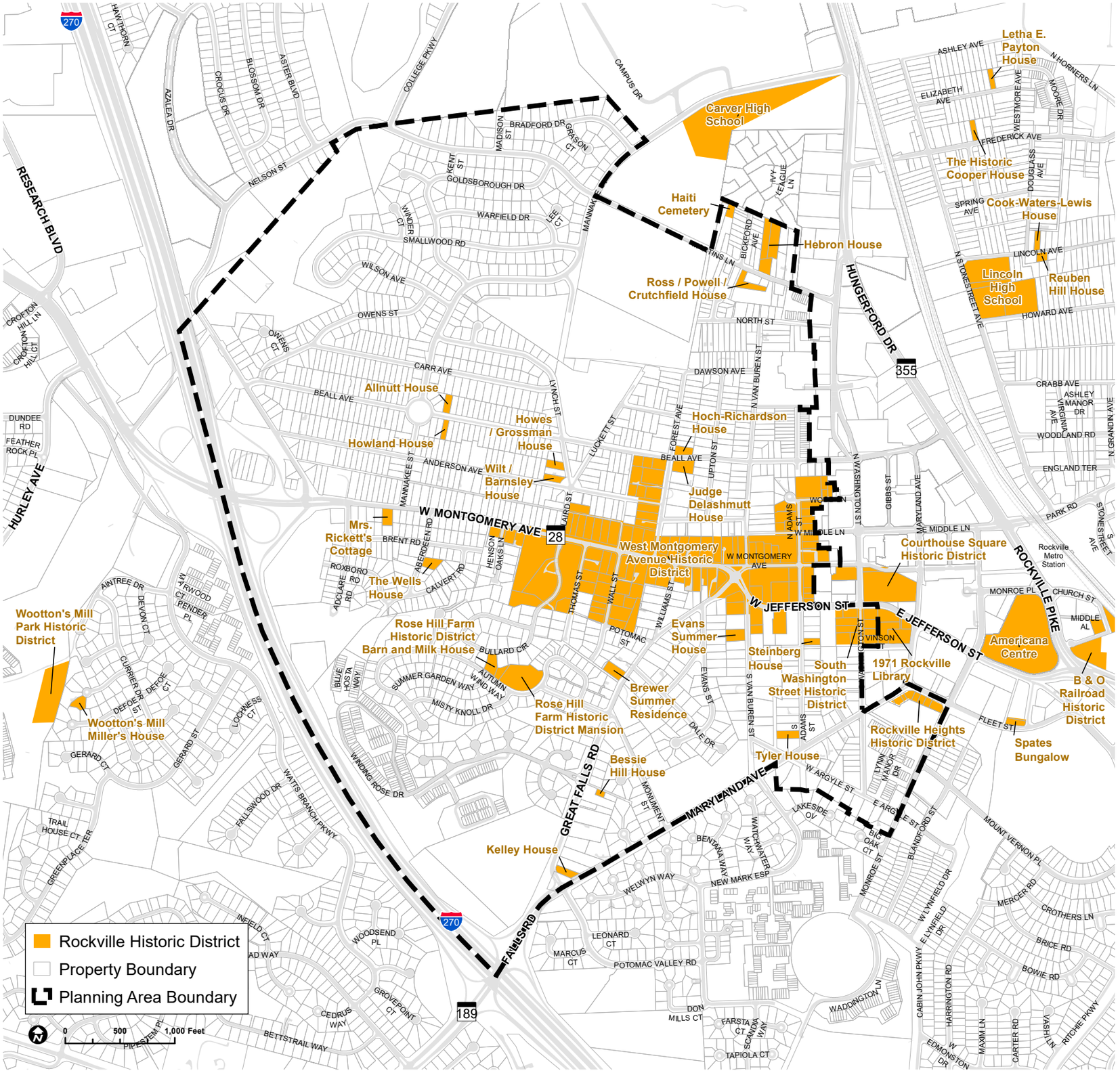
OTHER HISTORIC DISTRICTS AND SITES

The planning area includes other historic districts and individually designated properties that are outside of the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. These include the Rose Hill Farm Historic District, part of the South Washington Street Historic District, and several individual sites, listed below:

Steinberg House	110 South Adams St.
Tyler House	49 South Adams St.
Howland House	540 Beall Ave.
Allnutt House	541 Beall Ave.
Judge Delashmutt House	119 Forest Ave.
Bingham-Brewer House *	307 Great Falls Rd.
Brewer Summer House	315 Great Falls Rd.
Bessie Hill House	602 Great Falls Rd.
Kelley House	628 Great Falls Rd.
Wilt-Barnsley House	100 Lynch St.
Howes-Grossman House	104 Lynch St.
Hebron House	17 Martins Lane
Ross-Powell-Crutchfield House	22 Martins Lane
Haiti Cemetery	205 Martins Lane
Evans Summer House	117 South Van Buren St.
Mrs. Rickett's Cottage	710 W. Montgomery Ave.
Frieda Fromm-Reichmann Cottage	19 Thomas St.

* National Register only

Figure 55: Local Historic Districts in or near Planning Area 4



This list will likely grow as more properties are designated over time. It is important to preserve the integrity and character of historic districts and properties within Planning Area 4 as they, to a large extent, define the character and appeal of Planning Area 4.

The preservation and care of these properties is essential. Residents who have received historic designation for their homes, or who have purchased homes already designated as historic, have taken on the responsibility of preserving and maintaining these properties.

Policies

1. Protect and enhance the historic and architectural integrity and value of the historic districts and sites, including their landscapes and environmental setting, with the exception that removal of non-native or invasive species and new plantings of native or non-invasive species on historic properties is strongly encouraged.
2. Maintain the residential character of designated historic residential buildings even when the structures are used for non-residential purposes, such as along North Adams Street. Revise zoning such that exterior modifications to designated historic properties that were built as single-unit detached homes meet the development standards of the closest residentially zoned properties and avoid the loss of original grounds, trees, and landscaping.
3. Severely damaged and destroyed historic buildings may be reconstructed if the proposed reconstruction meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Reconstruction and is approved by the Historic District Commission. Multi-unit residential uses would be allowed in the reconstructed historic buildings if they had been allowed in the original historic buildings.
4. Preserve the historical setting, environment, and residential character of the surrounding neighborhood by ensuring that expansions or additions to historic structures are appropriate in mass, scale, parking location and design, and environmental setting to the main historic structure and surrounding neighborhood. Exterior modifications to historic properties, except as described in the Zoning Ordinance, must receive a Certificate of Approval from the Historic District Commission.
5. Enforce the property maintenance code and protect the structural integrity of designated historic resources.
6. Determine the conditions of neglect that meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of demolition by neglect, the corrective measures required, and penalties that may be assessed for failure to comply.
7. Ensure that all locally designated properties are compliant with the property maintenance code, to avoid demolition by neglect.
8. Update design guidelines for Rockville's historic districts in coordination with the Rockville Historic District Commission and the Rockville community.
9. Install signs or markers to indicate the presence and boundaries of the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District.
10. Update and standardize signage in historic districts. Repair or replace worn, damaged and missing signage.
11. Encourage the use of markers and plaques to identify particularly significant historic structures and sites, such as at the Haiti Cemetery, the site of the former Chestnut Lodge, the Great Falls Road Black Kinship Community, Hebron print shop, and Jerusalem-Mt. Pleasant church.
12. Re-implement and fund the house plaques program to provide all historic property owners with date plaques.
13. Research and develop historic markers about lynchings that took place in Rockville.

Some of the unique designated historic properties within the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District include Chestnut Lodge, the Beall-Dawson House and grounds, Haiti Cemetery and Jerusalem-Mount Pleasant Church and Parsonage. These are briefly described below with policies that are specific to each.

CHESTNUT LODGE

The West Montgomery Avenue Historic District includes eight acres of the former Chestnut Lodge property, including the site of the Main Lodge that was destroyed by fire in 2009, the Little Lodge, Frieda's Cottage, and other accessory buildings.

The Chestnut Lodge historic site has been a landmark in Rockville for more than a century. It was established as the

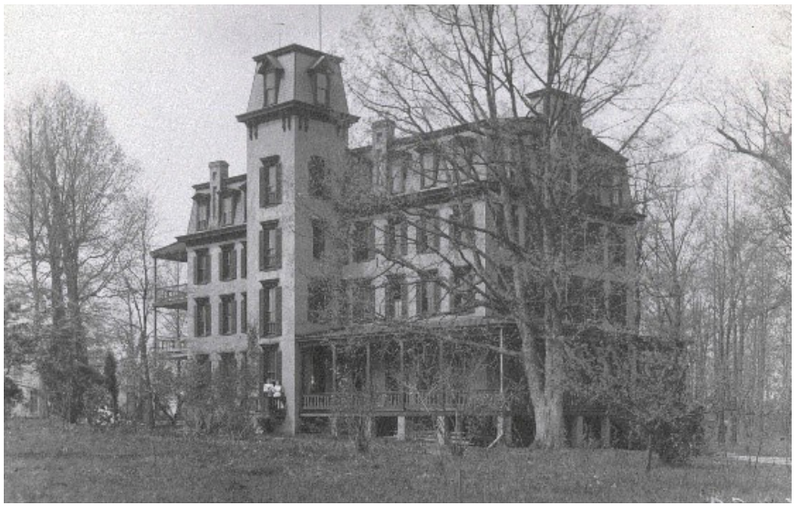
Woodlawn Hotel in 1889 to serve Washingtonians seeking relief from the summer heat. The hotel was noted for its all-brick construction, distinctive architecture, and idyllic setting.

Economic downturns near the turn of the century led to the sale of the property to the Bullard family. In 1910, Dr. Bullard opened the Chestnut Lodge Sanatorium in the original hotel building. Chestnut Lodge served mental health patients through the year 2000. During its 90-year history, Chestnut Lodge became one of the most notable mental health institutions in the world, renowned for its research and innovative treatments.

Frieda's Cottage, for its association with Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the Secretary of the Interior in 2021. Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann (1889–1957) was an internationally renowned psychiatrist, known for her pioneering contribution to the treatment of schizophrenia during her tenure as director of psychotherapy at Chestnut Lodge.

In the 1990s, the acreage between the Chestnut Lodge facility and I-270 was sold and developed as the Rose Hill and Rose Hill Falls neighborhoods. After the sale, the remaining Chestnut Lodge property was reduced to 20 acres. The hospital closed in the year 2000, and in 2002 the front eight acres containing the Main Building, six other historic structures, and the expansive tree lawn facing West Montgomery Avenue were designated historic and incorporated into the locally designated West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. This portion of the property was already part of the West Montgomery Avenue National Register District.

The property was purchased in 2003 by developer Chestnut Lodge Properties, LLC. In 2006, the City approved a proposal by Chestnut Lodge Properties, LLC to build single-unit homes on the remaining 12 acres of the property. Essential to the approval was the developer's agreement to preserve five of the historic structures, namely: the Chestnut Lodge Main Building; Frieda's Cottage, home and office of Dr. Frieda Fromm-Reichmann; the Little Lodge; the Stables; and the Ice House/Music Room. The Chestnut Lodge Main Building was approved to be converted into seven condominiums, while maintaining most of the original building exterior and adding a compatible rear addition. The developer was granted permission to demolish one historic structure, the Nurses' Quarters/Laundry, as it had lost its historic integrity.



The Woodlawn Hotel

Design Guidelines for Chestnut Lodge were adopted by the Mayor and Council in 2004. The purpose of the Guidelines is to guide exterior alterations to historic buildings and the grounds within the historic areas of the Chestnut Lodge site so that historical, architectural, and environmental features that are the basis of the site's significance to the City are preserved.

On June 7, 2009, a fire destroyed the vacant Chestnut Lodge main building prior to its rehabilitation and conversion to condominiums. In June 2017, the City acquired more than six acres of the site of the main building and treed lawn area along West Montgomery Avenue. This was accomplished through the transfer of 4.7 acres from the Chestnut Lodge Community Association, and the purchase of 1.6 acres, where the main building stood, from a developer. These parcels were combined to form a passive park within the West Montgomery Historic District.

Policies

1. Celebrate and make accessible, to current and future generations, the eight-acre site's unique history – as a hotel in the 1890s and as one of the world's leading mental health institutions through most of the 1900s.
2. Adhere to the Chestnut Lodge Design Guidelines (2004, or as amended) when alterations to the site and remaining historic buildings are proposed.
3. Update the Chestnut Lodge Design Guidelines to

reflect changes that have occurred since 2004, including the loss of the Main Lodge building.

4. Allow for the historically accurate reconstruction of the building that was the Woodlawn Hotel, then the Chestnut Lodge Main Building, if the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Reconstruction are followed.
5. Preserve the park that fronts on West Montgomery Avenue for passive uses only.
6. Evaluate the feasibility of adding disease-resistant American Chestnut trees to the east lawn.

BEALL-DAWSON HOUSE AND HISTORIC PARK

The existing Federal-style house located at 103 West Montgomery Avenue was built circa 1815 for Upton Beall, a wealthy landowner and clerk of the County Court, and his family. The Beall family was prominent in Rockville and became one of the families that owned the largest number of enslaved people in Montgomery County. When Upton Beall died in 1827, he owned 25 enslaved people who worked at the Beall-Dawson house, at the mill on Watts Branch, or on his additional rural property named Beallmont. Descendants of the Beall family sold numerous small parcels of their land to freed formerly enslaved people after the Civil War. These parcels were predominantly along Martins Lane, which became the prominent black neighborhood known as Haiti.

The house and grounds of the Beall-Dawson house were purchased by the City of Rockville in the 1960s when the property became the headquarters of the Montgomery County Historical Society. All but one of the outbuildings are now gone, but the house contains most of its original architectural features.

Policies

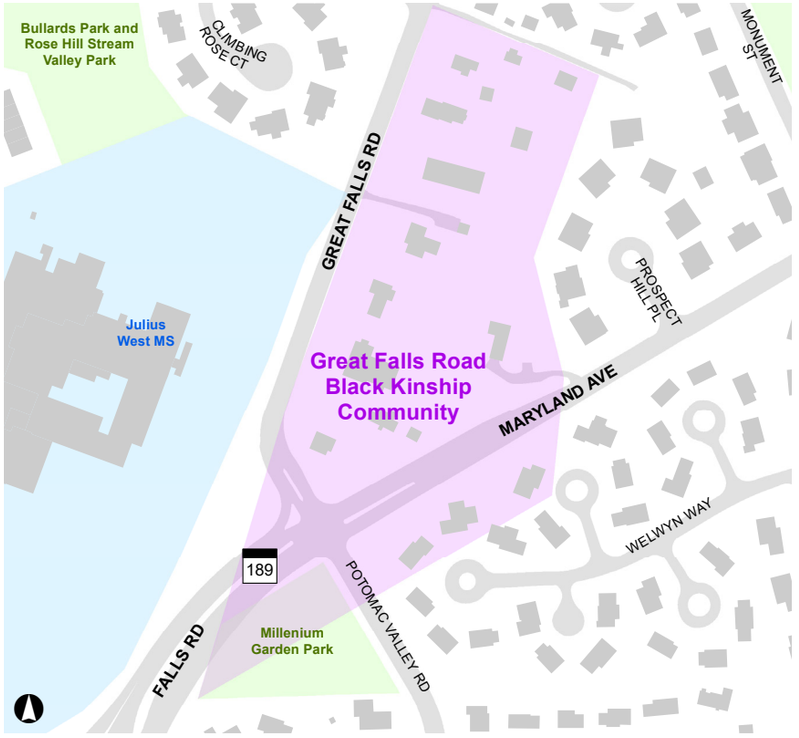
1. Restore the Beall-Dawson House grounds and gardens, based on historical records and following the Secretary of the Interior Standards.
2. Protect and enhance the Beall-Dawson property as historic resource and preserve the structure to assure that it remains true to its original design, materials, construction, craftsmanship and appearance, consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the City's technical guides and design guidelines.

GREAT FALLS ROAD BLACK KINSHIP COMMUNITY

Research conducted in 2013-14 found that a significant community of free black residents lived near the intersection of Great Falls Road and Maryland Avenue. This community was established prior to the Civil War and continued into the middle of the 20th century. To date, it is known that the community encompassed at least ten acres owned by four families of free black women and men. Previously only a one-acre parcel belonging to Ann Willson was known. Two houses are designated as local historic districts within the Community: the Bessie Hill House at 602 Great Falls Road and the Kelley House at 628 Great Falls Road.

The existence of Great Falls Road free black community is little known or recognized, yet the women and men who lived here were leaders in building black schools and churches after the Civil War. Their work and the homesteads that they created illustrate how free black citizens initially obtained land for homes and enterprises. After slavery was abolished they brought their spouses and children to their holdings. As their families expanded the women valiantly protected and preserved their holdings so that their families could thrive.

Figure 56: Great Falls Road Black Kinship Community



The approximate boundaries of the Great Falls Road Black Kinship Community

Policies

1. Disseminate knowledge and increase recognition of the Great Falls free black community.
2. Continue research to understand and document the full extent of the families and the acreage associated with the community near Maryland Avenue and Great Falls Road
3. Evaluate the historic significance of existing structures that have not yet been evaluated.
4. Develop and install interpretive historic signage that tells the story of this community and identifies its location and significant buildings.

HAITI / MARTINS LANE COMMUNITY

Another distinct black community is centered on Martins Lane with properties located in areas north and south of the street. The community consists of single-unit detached houses, duplexes, and townhouses situated at the edge of Town Center. Many of the community's older homes are on large lots with lush landscaping and mature trees. In 1831, the area known as Haiti consisted of eight acres owned by Samuel Martin, a freed black man. It lies just outside the old northern limits of the original town of Rockville, and near the former housing for the enslaved people of the Beall family. Haiti is one of Rockville's oldest black communities and is historic resource. Its residential character should be maintained.

The Hebron House at 17 Martins Lane and the Ross-Powell-Crutchfield House at 22 Martins Lane are designated as local historic districts within this community.

Policies

1. Generate public awareness and greater recognition of the Haiti/Martins Lane community.
2. Evaluate historic preservation of Haiti historic buildings and properties.
3. Develop a well-researched written history of the Haiti Community including the location of its boundaries.
4. Add signage and historical markers to identify the boundaries of the community and significant historic buildings and/or properties.

Figure 57: Haiti / Martins Lane Community



The approximate boundaries of the Haiti / Martins Lane Community

HAITI CEMETERY

Haiti Cemetery, located at 205 Martins Lane, was one of the earliest burying grounds near Rockville. It was opened in the 1880s when an heir of Samuel Martin, Lottie Crutchfield, sold burial sites to local families on an unused portion of the land behind her house. Burials slowed after 1917 when the Order of Galilean Fishermen opened a cemetery in Lincoln Park. Many of the families now living on Martins Lane are direct descendants of the freed and enslaved people who first settled there in the 19th century. In 2002, the Haiti Cemetery was designated as a Rockville Local Historic District. Peerless Rockville has been active in helping the family to maintain the grounds.

Policies

1. Create greater awareness and recognition of the Haiti Cemetery and its importance to Rockville and Montgomery County.
2. Preserve the historic Haiti Cemetery in perpetuity.
3. Create a well-researched and well-documented history

of the Haiti Cemetery, to the extent that sources are available.

4. Install historical markers near Haiti Cemetery, with the property owners' permission, and consider adding the Haiti Cemetery to Rockville's African-American Heritage Walking Tour.

JERUSALEM-MT. PLEASANT UMC CHURCH AND PARSONAGE

The Jerusalem-Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church and Parsonage are located at 21 and 17 Wood Lane, respectively. The church owns several other adjoining parcels, most of which are unimproved.

In 1834, the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church purchased the land on which to build the church, but funds for construction were limited. The congregation continued to meet in private homes with occasional visits from a "circuit rider," a traveling minister, until the church was erected circa 1858.

The church was initially segregated, with white parishioners seated in the main sanctuary and black parishioners relegated to the upstairs gallery. Racial tensions reached a peak preceding and during the Civil War. Pro-slavery white parishioners moved to another Methodist church in 1868 and, after some legal disputes, relinquished ownership of this building to the predominantly black congregation in 1868. It was renamed Jerusalem M.E. Church in 1881 and merged with the Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Church in 1989, thereby assuming its present name.

The church was substantially rebuilt in 1892, and for several years housed Rockville's black students after the local segregated elementary school burned in 1919. The Montgomery County chapter of the NAACP was founded on the church site in 1937. Throughout the 1950s the church was the site of graduation ceremonies for Rockville's 'Colored School.'

The church parsonage was completed in 1912. It served as the home of Reverend James Cole, his wife, and nine children for many years. The parsonage was used for this purpose until 1986, when a new parsonage was built in a different location. The existing structure became 'Cordelia House,' a women's resource center. In 1999, the old parsonage was damaged by fire, but has since been rehabilitated.



Jerusalem Mt. Pleasant UMC Church (21 Wood Lane)

The church and parsonage are among the few remaining church/parsonage units still left in Montgomery County. Both the church and parsonage are within the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District.

Policy

1. Generate greater recognition of the Jerusalem-Mount Pleasant Methodist Church and Parsonage.

HEBRON PRINT SHOP

Jesse and Celestine Hebron operated a printing business at the same location on Wood Lane for over 50 years. It was one of the most successful black business ventures in the county. The structure was built by Mr. Hebron from hand-cast concrete blocks that he tinted himself. The Hebrons set up printing operations in the basement, providing services to corporations, churches, and other entities within Montgomery County. The Hebrons were long-standing members of the Jerusalem-Mount Pleasant Church, next door. Mr. Hebron served as the church treasurer for over 50 years. After the couple passed away, the church purchased the property and house. Currently the structure is owned and used by the church for administrative functions. Currently, the property is not designated as historic.

Policy

1. Create greater recognition of the Hebron House and Print Shop as a model of a successful minority

business. Discuss historic designation with church members and evaluate the significance of the Hebron House and Print Shop for potential historic designation.

Recreation and Public Parks Policies

Parks are an important amenity for neighborhoods. There are several parks in the planning area. Very few homes are further than a quarter-mile walk from a park or public school entrance. Public schools, such as Beall Elementary, also provide recreational facilities for public use and complement the City and County park systems.

Woodley Gardens Park is the largest park. It is located along the western edge of the neighborhood and divides Planning Area 4 from Planning Area 5. This 37.5 acre-park is situated on each side of Watts Branch and provides some environmental protection to that stream.

Welsh Park, located in Planning Area 7, but immediately adjacent to Planning Area 4, contains the Rockville Swim and Fitness Center and a variety of other recreational facilities on 33 acres. According to the 2016 Planning Area 4 neighborhood survey, the facilities at Welsh Park are used by almost half of the respondents at least monthly, more than any other City park in the planning area.

Bullard's Park and Rose Hill Stream Valley Park comprise the southwestern edge of the neighborhood adjacent to I-270. The eight-acre Monument Park is located along Great Falls Road. The land for Chestnut Lodge Park was purchased by the City for a park in 2017. Other, smaller, parks such as Beall-Dawson Historic Park, Jacquilin Trells Williams Park, Peg Sante Park, Karn Park, and Thirty Oaks Park are found throughout the neighborhood.

Policies

1. Preserve existing parks and seek opportunities for expansion and the addition of new parkland and green space. Ensure no net loss of parkland.
2. Follow an open and transparent public process before any publicly owned land is transferred to private ownership. Any such transaction must be approved by the Mayor and Council. No such proposal or plan exists at this time.
3. Continue to maintain parkland and recreational facilities at the highest standards for safety, cleanliness, environmental sustainability, user experience and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.
4. Minimize the impacts of vehicular traffic, overflow parking, noise, and outdoor lighting at public parks and recreational facilities on residential areas.



Planning Area 5

WOODLEY GARDENS AND COLLEGE GARDENS

5

Planning Area 5 consists primarily of the neighborhoods of Woodley Gardens and College Gardens and is also home to the townhome and apartment communities of Plymouth Woods, Regents Square, Scarborough Square, Woodley Gardens Co-op, and Yale Village. Upper Watts Branch Park and Woodley Gardens Park create a continuous stream valley park running through the planning area and a major natural and recreational amenity for its residents and visitors. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 58.

Area Characteristics

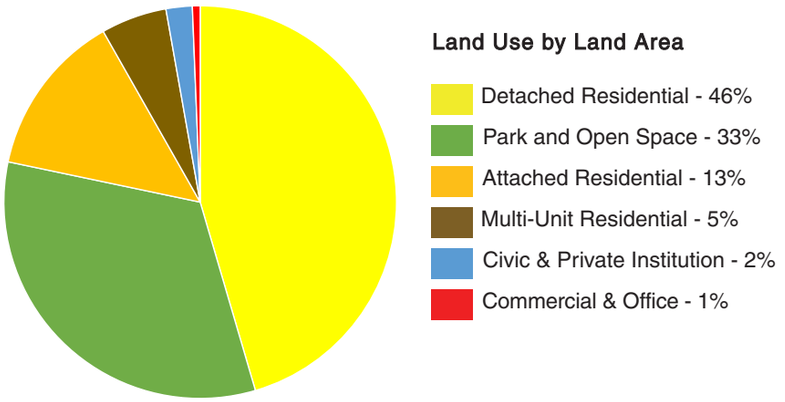
The planning area contains a mix of single-unit detached houses on fee simple lots and townhouses and apartments on parcels held in common by homeowners associations and commercial property owners. Residential development in the area began in the early 1960s, with the majority of blocks built out from the mid-1960s to early 1970s. A small number of lots at the northern edges of the neighborhood were constructed in the early 1980s.

House styles in Woodley Gardens are representative of their period of construction, with large lots and Colonial and Federal styled architecture, hallmarked by generous brick facades and mansard or gambrel style roof lines. Streets have lush landscaping and generous setbacks from the street with shade trees planted between the curb and sidewalk. Azalea Drive is notable for its wide, landscaped medians and a mix of street parking and parking courts, perpendicular to the public street, serving attached townhouse and row house clusters.

The street layout in the planning area is representative of its period of development, as well, favoring safety and traffic mitigation over connection. Vehicle access to and from the north is limited, with no road connection to West Gude Drive; requiring long drives on neighborhood streets, such as Nelson Drive and College Parkway to access destinations to the north.

Blocks in Woodley Gardens are long. For example, Crocus Drive, between Nelson Street and Azalea Drive, is 1,700 feet, with the curving Azalea Drive being the only east-west connection between the four long blocks. The presence of

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 5



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	632
Attached Residential	641
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	272
Total units	**1,545**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.



Residential street in the College Gardens neighborhood



Woodley Gardens Shopping Center

Upper Watts Branch Park to the east, I-270 to the west, and lack of vehicular connections to West Gude Drive all serve to create a transportation enclave. To the east of Watts Branch Park, the layout of College Gardens is similar, with even more cul-de-sac courts than Woodley Gardens. The only vehicle access in and out of the neighborhood is via College Parkway.

The City's Senior Center occupies the site and building of the former Woodley Gardens Elementary School, adjacent to I-270 and West Gude Drive. The Woodley Gardens shopping center, with its restaurants and neighborhood-serving retail shops, is located on Nelson Street adjacent to I-270 and is the only commercial property within the planning area. However, the College Plaza Shopping Center and Rockville Town Center are within a short walk, bike, or drive from most points in the planning area.

Upper Watts Branch Park is a 79-acre forested park in the planning area that contains Watts Branch C;reek, nature trails, and an urban wildlife sanctuary. Major work was completed in 2018 to control erosion, reduce pollutants entering the stream, and protect and enhance forest areas, wetlands, habitats and trail systems in the park. Although it is an appealing natural amenity, Upper Watts Branch Park bisects the planning area and limits east-west connections for both drivers and people walking, rolling and biking.

College Gardens Park is a smaller park, with passive and recreational amenities and a landscaped stormwater management pond. The park is situated next to College Gardens Elementary School, an International Baccalaureate World School--the first IB elementary school in the state. In 2011, the City received the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Smart, Green and Growing Sustainable Infrastructure/Innovation in Stormwater Management Award for its commitment to foster a smarter, greener and more sustainable future for residents as part of a stormwater retrofit and park renovation project at the park.

Planning History

There is no neighborhood plan for this planning area and none is recommended. The corresponding planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* included Montgomery College and other institutional and commercial properties along MD-355. These properties are now situated within the new Planning Area 7 (Montgomery College Area).

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;
- Need to increase bicycle and pedestrian connections, east-west across the planning area and north to West Gude Drive;
- Interest in restoring bicycle and pedestrian connections between Montgomery College and adjacent neighborhoods and streets;
- Concern over traffic noise pollution from I-270 in the western portion of the planning area;
- Concerns over the long-term economic viability of Woodley Gardens Shopping Center.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Woodley Gardens Swim Club property

This property has, for many years, been jointly occupied by a private swim club and private preschool. During the preparation of this plan, the continued use of the property as a swim club and preschool came into question after a fire damaged a portion of the preschool building. If the pool and preschool cease operation and the property owner considers

redevelopment, this plan's preference is that some kind of private community amenity take their place.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is designated OSP (Open Space Private) in recognition of its primary current use as a private recreation facility. If this land use proves impractical, residential development consistent with the RD (Residential Detached) designation may be considered, due to its proximity to nearby residential homes.

Zoning Recommendations

No zoning change is recommended to the existing R-90 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling, Restricted Residential) zone.

Urban Design Recommendations

If a private recreation/education use proves impractical, the property should redevelop into residential housing that is compatible in size, scale, and design with the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Create a new vehicle entrance to the Rockville Senior Center parking lot from West Gude Drive while restricting vehicle access through to the residential neighborhood.

PROJECT 2 P2

Work with Montgomery College to construct a bicycle and pedestrian connection between Princeton Place and Campus Drive. Engage affected neighborhoods, property owners, and businesses in any such planning efforts. (*See also Goal 2 and Action 8.5 of the Transportation Element, Action 10.5 of the Community Facilities Element, and Planning Area 7*)

PROJECT 3 P3

Design and construct an attractive and safe bicycle and pedestrian path in the Yale Place right-of-way, connecting to the Millennium Trail along West Gude Drive.

PROJECT 4 P4

Explore the feasibility of one or more new bicycle and pedestrian path(s) across Upper Watts Branch Park to better link the east and west sides of the park. This project may be implemented at one or more locations throughout the entire park, between Nelson Street and West Gude Drive. (*See also Policy 17 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 5 P5

Explore the feasibility of a new bicycle and pedestrian path connecting Upper Watts Branch Park with West Gude Drive, opposite Gaither Road, to increase north-south connections. (*See also Policy 16 of the Transportation Element*)

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

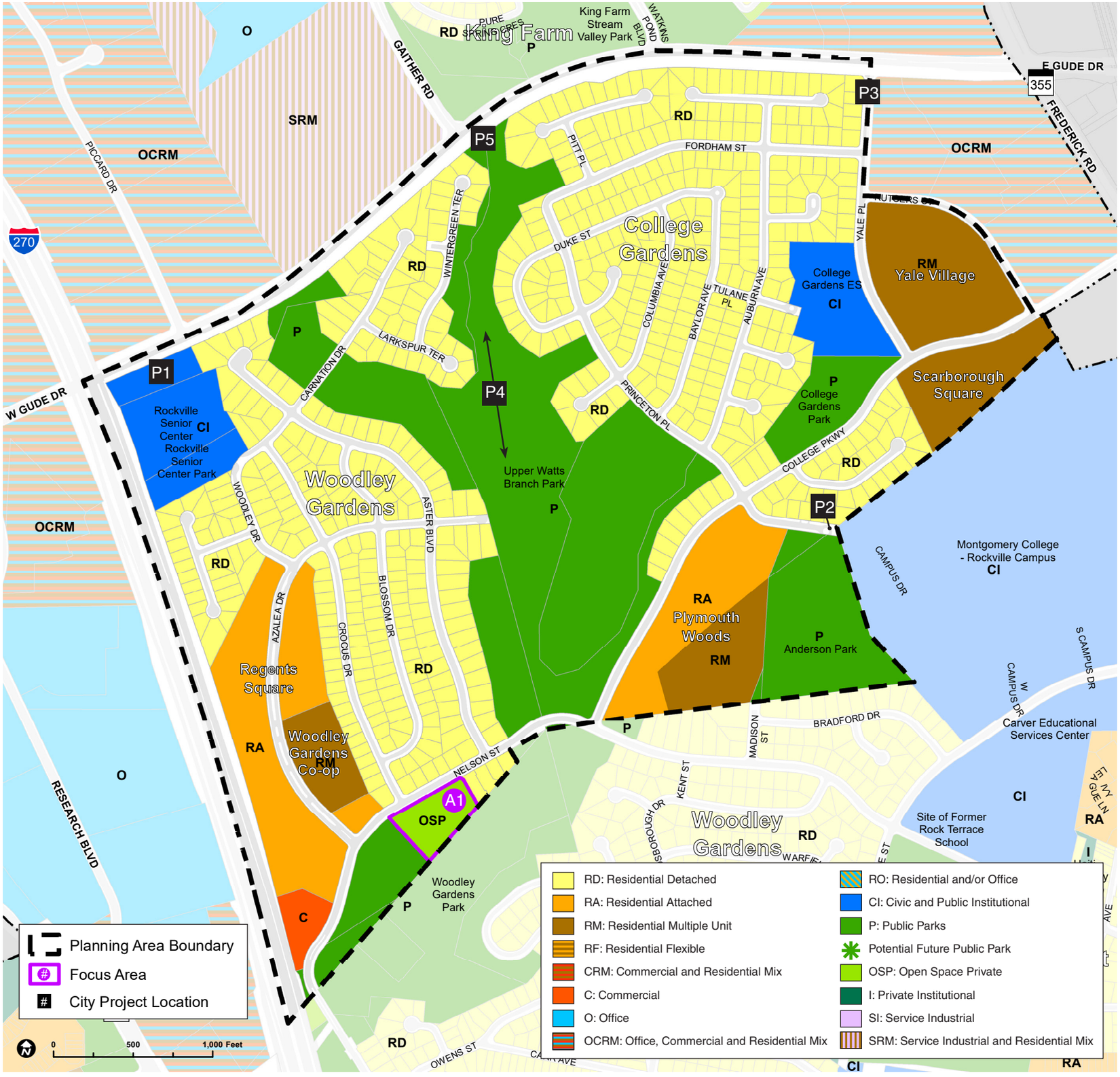
Land Use & Urban Design

1. Maintain the residential character of the planning area.
2. Focus on improving factors that enhance quality of life.
3. Support the continued operation of the Woodley Gardens Shopping Center as a commercial shopping center.



Stream restoration location at Upper Watts Branch Park after 3 years

Figure 58: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 5



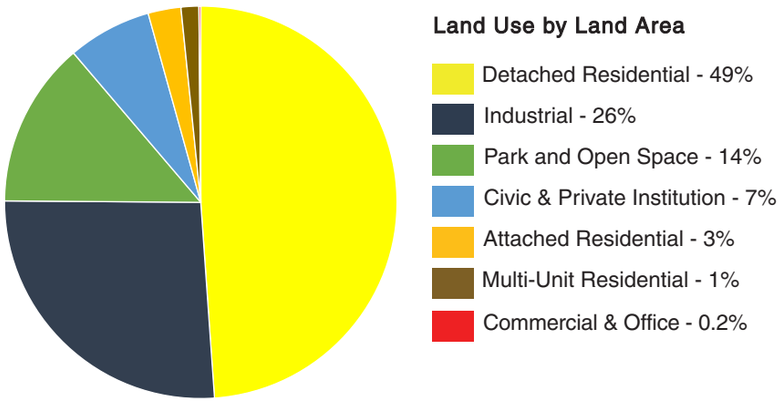


Planning Area 6
LINCOLN PARK

Lincoln Park is a well-established, predominantly residential neighborhood located in central Rockville, to the east of the WMATA and CSX rail lines. The neighborhood is one of the oldest African-American communities in Montgomery County, dating back to the 1850s. Lincoln Park has a strong neighborhood identity, due in large part to long-term residents, some of whom are part of families who have lived in the community for several generations.

This Comprehensive Plan adopts by reference the *2007 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* for portions of the former neighborhood plan area that coincide with its respective new planning area boundary, noting that the current planning area includes properties on the west side of North Stonestreet Avenue as well as the Westmore Road light industrial area. Policies in this chapter supersede any policies that are in conflict with those in the 2007 plan as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 6



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	219
Attached Residential	57
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	59
Total units	**335**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Area Characteristics

The majority of Lincoln Park consists of single-unit detached homes, with the exception of Rocklin Apartments and Legacy at Lincoln Park. Rocklin Apartments is a compact cluster of 3- and 2-story, smaller-scaled units on Lenmore Avenue. Legacy at Lincoln Park, along Moore Drive, is a primarily townhouse development. It was completed in 2007 as a mixed-income, public-private redevelopment effort to replace the obsolete buildings of Lincoln Terrace, one of the first public housing developments in Montgomery County.

Over the past decade, there has been an increase in the number of original homes being torn down and replaced by new houses of a much larger scale. The Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District (LPNCD) was adopted in 2007 as a zoning tool to attempt to retain the character of the community by addressing issues such as the height, massing, and site design of new single-unit detached homes and additions to original structures. The Lincoln Park Civic Association has expressed an interest in reviewing the existing LPNCD standards to determine whether they are achieving their purpose and whether updates to the standards are warranted to address changes in



Historically designated, former Lincoln High School building



Lincoln Park Community Center (LPCC)

residential demand and building design. The boundary of the conservation district may also need to be revisited to exclude areas of the neighborhood that are not planned for single-unit detached homes, a primary focus of the district.

Residents in Lincoln Park are within walking distance to multiple parks, including the facilities at Isreal Park, the Wilma Shelton Bell neighborhood park, and Memory Wall Park, a small commemorative green space. The Lincoln Park Community Center, within Isreal Park, provides a second home to many children in the neighborhood and is a tremendous base and resource for the community.

The non-government institutional uses in the planning area are mainly churches. Mount Calvary Baptist Church is the largest church in the neighborhood, and it owns several non-residential buildings, houses, and parking areas along North Horners Lane and Lincoln Avenue. The Clinton AME Zion Church and the Iglesia De Dios Church are located at the corners of Westmore and Elizabeth Avenues. The Crusader Baptist Church holds services in the former Lincoln High School, an historically designated building and property owned by Montgomery County government, located at the corner of North Stonestreet and Lincoln Avenues. The building is the oldest remaining structure built for African-American students within Montgomery County.

Light- and service-industrial land uses surround Lincoln Park on three sides. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) warehouses and storage facilities are located to the west on North Stonestreet Avenue, portions of the Southlawn Industrial Park are located to the east along North Horners Lane, and 1000 Westmore Avenue (former WINX site) and the Westmore Industrial Park and Washington Gas fields are located to the north. Minimizing adverse impacts from adjacent industrial uses continues to be a priority for the neighborhood. The MCPS and 1000 Westmore Avenue properties were discussed in detail as part of the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*. Previous neighborhood plans have included detailed recommendations for both properties, but little change has occurred.

Planning History

The original *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* was adopted in 1984 as one of the initial neighborhood efforts in the city to integrate local concerns with long-range planning policies. The City's *1993 Comprehensive Master Plan* and *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* reaffirmed recommendations from the 1984 Neighborhood Plan, further emphasizing goals toward maintaining a secure and stable residential neighborhood, ensuring compatible infill development, restricting further encroachment from industrial areas, and improving commercial traffic circulation throughout the neighborhood.

The *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* also included a recommendation to update the 1984 Plan. The *Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan* update was completed in February 2007 along with the Neighborhood Conservation District. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, policies in this section supersede any policies that are in conflict with those in the 2007 plan as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;
- Interest in designating suitable areas for diverse, well-designed, and neighborhood-affordable housing types;
- Preference for higher intensity development on the west side of North Stonestreet Avenue, along the railroad tracks;

- Desire to mitigate the impacts of neighboring light industrial uses on the residential neighborhood;
- Interest in ensuring the vitality and compatibility of small-scale commercial sites within the planning area;
- Desire to minimize the impacts of 'cut-through' traffic on residential streets within the planning area;
- Concern about spill-over parking on residential streets from the Rockville Transit Station and future infill redevelopment;
- Interest in expanding the Lincoln Park Community Center to meet community needs;
- Need to improve safety and ease of travel for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREAS 1-3 A1 A2 A3

North Stonestreet Avenue and Lincoln Avenue

This area was part of the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study*, which was the impetus for the North Stonestreet Avenue Comprehensive Master Plan Amendment, adopted on March 25, 2019. The 2019 Plan Amendment included properties located in this planning area as well as in Planning Area 2, East Rockville (*see Figure 59*), and changed the land use of those properties as well as provided design guidance and zoning recommendations. The properties identified as A1 and A3 on Figure 60 are operations facilities for Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), and A2 is home to the historic Lincoln High School building, currently used by the Crusader Baptist Church.

The public engagement effort for the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study* resulted in generally strong support for setting a framework for redevelopment that promoted a mixed-use concept with moderate density potential, with the more intense development occurring on the rail side and scaling down when adjacent to any existing single-unit detached residential use. Given the historical significance of the Lincoln High School building to the neighborhood, residents expressed a desire to see it preserved and include at least some availability for community-serving and educational uses open to the public. The grounds around the building were envisioned as accessible green gathering spaces for the community.

Figure 59: 2019 Plan Amendment Area



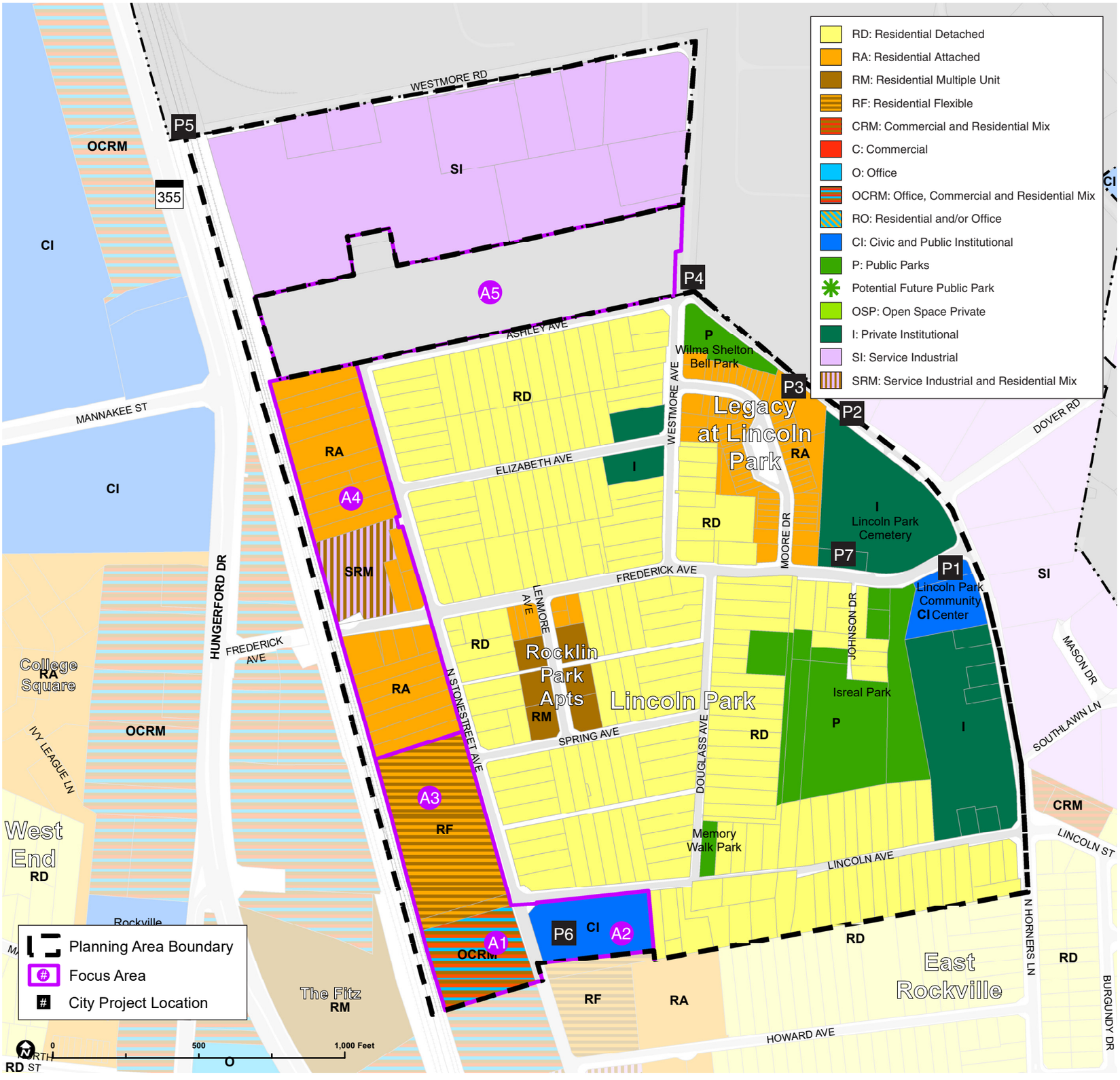
The primary point of contention over the MCPS properties are the tractor trailers at the corner of North Stonestreet and Howard Avenues that MCPS uses for storage. The trailers abut single-unit detached homes to the east and the historic former Lincoln High School building. For years, neighbors have advocated for the removal of the trailers due their incompatibility with the neighborhood. MCPS acknowledges that the facilities are less than ideal, but that funding for new schools and classroom space has taken precedence over relocating or upgrading the MCPS operations facilities, of which this is one.

The goals, adopted land use, design guidance, and zoning recommendations that were adopted by the 2019 Plan Amendment are outlined in the following sections.

In the event that the subject properties become available, redevelopment should meet the following goals that were established for the larger 2019 Plan Amendment area:

- A mix of local-serving commercial, creative and maker

Figure 60: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 6



spaces, community facilities, and diverse housing opportunities, which are well integrated with the Lincoln Park and East Rockville neighborhoods and take advantage of transit proximity.

- A range of new, high-quality housing types, designed compatible with the scale of adjacent single-unit detached homes in Lincoln Park. New housing should be diverse and build upon the eclectic nature and history of the housing stock of the neighborhoods to the east.
- A balanced mix of housing, which should include market-rate, moderately priced, and lower-priced units. New housing and other non-residential development should strengthen the surrounding neighborhoods. The housing should be accessible to existing residents as well as to new buyers or renters.
- Consideration about affordability for long-term residents in the adjacent neighborhoods. Current residents raised concerns about new development over-gentrifying the area. Given that the properties are publicly owned, prior to redevelopment, the City and the County should explore approaches to minimize potential pressures and explore the feasibility of implementing anti-displacement measures as a result of new development.
- An upgraded pedestrian environment including enhanced sidewalks on both sides of North Stonestreet Avenue, landscaping, street trees, and pedestrian-scale lighting. Underground utilities are preferred.
- Preservation and rehabilitation of the historic structures once occupied by Lincoln High School. Adaptive reuse of the historic structures should be encouraged for community use and/or access (e.g., maker/art/museum spaces, market stalls, etc.).
- New, well-connected and publicly accessible community gathering and civic spaces.

Land Use Policy Map

Area A1 is designated OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix), Area A2 is CI (Civic and Public Institutional), and Area A3 is RF (Residential Flexible). This plan upholds these land use designations that were adopted as part of the 2019 Plan Amendment (*see Figure 59*).

Zoning Recommendations

A1 Rezone the property from Single Unit Detached Dwelling (R-60) to a mixed-use zone that allows for uses including multi-unit residential, commercial, spaces for artists and makers, and community facilities.

A2 No zoning change recommended.

A3 Rezone the property from Single Unit Detached Dwelling (R-60) to Residential Medium Density (RMD-15) or to a new zone specifically designed for infill residential to promote a mix of housing types, compatible in scale with the single-unit homes to the north and east, including townhouses and small multi-unit development.

Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District (LPNCD) Boundary Adjustment: In addition to property-specific recommendations, it is also recommended that the LPNCD boundary be amended to remove this area from the District since the LPNCD includes regulations geared toward single-unit detached development on individual lots rather than large-lot, non-residential parcels. The Lincoln Park Civic Association testified in support of the boundary amendment during the public hearing process for this plan.

Urban Design Recommendations

The recommendations in this section provide guidance for new development in both the private and public realms. The following guidance was adopted as part of the 2019 Plan Amendment and considers the entirety of the Plan Amendment area, which includes the properties in this planning area as well as Planning Area 2 (East Rockville). Every effort should be made to integrate new development with the surrounding neighborhoods to further strengthen the existing community fabric.

Neighborhood Transitions: Provide sensitively scaled transitions between new development and existing neighborhood homes.

- Orient maximum building heights along North Stonestreet Avenue, away from the existing single-unit residential.
- New buildings should taper down in height and scale toward existing single-unit homes to establish a compatible relationship between buildings.

Public Realm Improvements: Enhance pedestrian and bike connections to the Rockville Transit Station, to new open spaces, and to the surrounding neighborhoods through improved sidewalks, bike infrastructure, signage, landscaping, lighting, and public art.

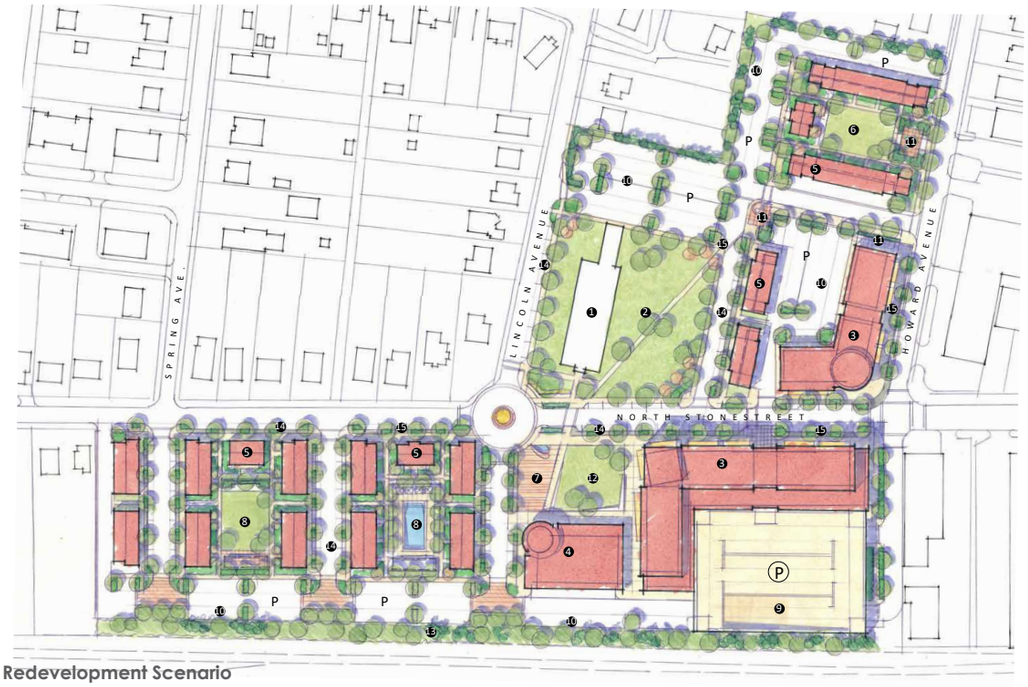
- Ensure that streetscape improvements that result from the redevelopment of individual properties are compatible with the overall street and sidewalk improvement recommendations from the *Stonestreet Corridor Study*.
- Consider additional street connections and pathway crossings to break up block sizes between Howard Avenue and Lincoln Avenue and between the east and west sides of North Stonestreet Avenue to create greater ease of access and pedestrian safety within the area. Any new street connections or pathways should be well-landscaped and designed for pedestrian safety.
- Study the feasibility of a neighborhood-scale roundabout at the intersection of North Stonestreet Avenue and Lincoln Avenue to calm traffic and provide a transition to the Lincoln Park neighborhood.
- Burying utility lines should be explored at the time of new development and/or street and sidewalk reconstruction.

Building Orientation: In general, orient the primary facades of buildings and front doors parallel to the street or to a public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks and open spaces, and to activate pedestrian areas.

Facade Articulation: Create an architectural feature at the corner of North Stonestreet Avenue and Howard Avenue by focusing new development at that intersection, incorporating high-quality design features, and enhancing the public realm.

Parks and Open Space: Incorporate accessible community use space, including parks and other contiguous outdoor green space, into the overall

Figure 61: 2019 Plan Amendment Area Conceptual Scenario



Potential Redevelopment Scenario

1 Existing Building - Church and Potential Community Space
2 Community Park
3 Mixed Use Building - Ground Floor Commercial, Multi-unit residential above
4 Civic Building (Arts/Sciences) or Mixed Use
5 Townhomes
6 Pocket Park
7 Public Plaza
8 Private Residential Amenity Spaces
9 Parking Garage
10 Off Street Surface Parking Areas
11 Small Courtyards/Plaza Spaces
12 Focal Event Lawn
13 Landscape Buffer from Rail Lines
14 On Street Parallel Parking
15 Streetscape Improvements
P Off Street Surface Parking Areas
P Parking Garage

This figure shows a concept of one potential redevelopment scenario that graphically represents ideas and written input received during the *Stonestreet Corridor Study* process. It also illustrates a general feasibility, given certain assumptions, for this alternative. The figure is conceptual and is for illustrative purposes only. At the time of this amendment, there was no proposed development project. Actual development will be required to comply with applicable plan guidance, development regulations, and site constraints and will most likely result in a different build-out configuration. The concept was generally well received by the community when presented at two different public meetings, as it helped the public to understand visually the ideas that had been discussed.

redevelopment concept. In addition to connected and accessible open space within private developments, opening and enhancing public green and community space on the grounds of the former Lincoln High School/ current church would provide a central gathering area for existing and future residents.

Parking: In general, parking areas should be set back behind front building lines, away from the public realm and screened from public view. For attached dwellings, rear garage access is preferred, whether the garage is integrated into the primary structure or whether it is a separate structure; front-loaded garages should be avoided.

Rail Line Impact Mitigation: Mitigate impacts on new development, particularly residential developments, related to the area being proximate to the rail line, in such areas as safety hazards, noise, vibrations and odors. The purpose is to safeguard residents, customers, and employees of these new buildings.

AREA 4 A4

Residential Attached Transition Areas

This area is on the edges of the neighborhood, adjacent to the rail lines, where providing the option for a greater mix of residential types would be appropriate. (*See also Policy 3 of the Land Use Element*)

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for a variety of attached and detached residential dwellings through the RA (Residential Attached) land use designation.

Zoning Recommendations

Rezone the properties in this area from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a new zone that allows a diverse range of housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and row houses, in addition to single-unit detached dwellings. Fourplexes should only be allowed on corner lots in the zone. Multiplexes of greater than four units are not appropriate in this area.

Urban Design Recommendations

Neighborhood Context

- Buildings should be designed and oriented in a manner that is inviting, promotes walkability, and contributes positively to the neighborhood context.
- Porches or enhanced entryways are encouraged and entrances should be oriented toward the street, connected by a walkway, to provide more opportunities for “eyes on the street” and community interaction.
- The siting of new buildings should be consistent with the established setback pattern along the block. If too much variation exists between existing buildings, a new building should be placed in a manner that establishes a street presence and enhances neighborhood character.
- Mature trees and tree canopy should be prioritized and preserved.

Open Spaces

- Open spaces should be consolidated into larger usable areas and designed as an integral part of the project, rather than scattered throughout the site, rendering them unusable.

Building Form

- New residential attached buildings should be proportional in height, mass, and scale with adjacent homes and blend well into the existing neighborhood.
- When adjacent to a lower-scaled structure, a gradual transition should be utilized. This recommendation can be accomplished through design elements, including stepping back upper stories, varying roof lines, recessing a portion of the wall plane, and lowering the roof pitch.
- Side elevations should include windows of consistent proportion and placement as the front elevation. Large, blank walls should be avoided.
- On corner lots, both facades should be similarly designed and detailed and have similar opening proportions, placements, and alignments.

Parking

- Parking considerations should be balanced between taking advantage of proximity to high capacity transit stops (existing and planned); keeping construction costs down by not requiring more parking than is needed at transit-proximate sites; and considering the surrounding neighborhood’s parking constraints,

especially in areas with limited-to-no off-street parking.

- The visibility and prominence of parking facilities should be minimized. Parking to the rear or to the side of the building is encouraged. Front yard pavement should be minimized as much as possible and permeable paving materials are highly encouraged throughout the site.

AREA 5 A5

1000 Westmore Avenue

This focus area is just outside of Rockville's city limits, and is zoned by Montgomery County government for industrial land uses. The property is approximately 10 acres and is largely undeveloped, though some areas are being utilized for outdoor storage of vehicles and equipment. The surrounding land uses are the Westmore Industrial Park to the north; the Lincoln Park neighborhood to the south; the Washington Gas fields to the east (outside city limits); and rail lines to the west. Primary access is from Westmore Avenue, though there is an emergency vehicle access easement where North Stonestreet Avenue dead ends at Ashley Avenue.

Approximately 3 of the 10 acres on the site are within a Forest Conservation Easement, primarily along the southern boundary adjacent to Ashley Ave, but also on the west next to the rail lines. The Forest Conservation Easement was established in 2012, on the plat for the property. 1000 Westmore Avenue is located outside of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) service district, and currently has a limited capacity water connection from the City of Rockville. Any additional water and sewer service provided by the City would occur, by City policy, only through annexation.

Current City policy, as outlined in the *2007 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Plan*, recommends annexation for a mix of single-unit detached and attached housing. This recommendation was established before the implementation of the Forest Conservation Easement, which now provides a buffer between industrial activity and the neighborhood. In addition to the language in the neighborhood plan, this property is also included within the boundary of the 2007 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District.



Ashley Avenue with Lincoln Park neighborhood homes on the right and the forested easement of 1000 Westmore Avenue on the left of the photo.

Public input did not result in a consensus view on the future of this property. Some participants, particularly some residents of Lincoln Park, expressed their preference for residential development, with park space, on the site. In the mid-2000s, prior to the approval of the Forest Conservation Easement and under different property ownership, there had been a proposal by a developer for residential on the site. Other participants, including the current property owner, expressed a view that residential development is not appropriate, especially considering that the location on site of the Forest Conservation Easement will likely direct any development to be adjacent to industrial uses to the north and/or the gas field to the east. Removal or relocation of the Forest Conservation Easement would require approval by the Planning Board of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and, likely, off-site mitigation.

Given that the property is currently outside of city limits and opinions vary greatly about how the property should be developed, the Study recommendations for this site, should it be annexed into the city, provide options rather than establishing a specific direction. (*See also Action 3.2 of the Municipal Growth Element*)

The following goals were established as part of the *2018 Stonestreet Corridor Study* public engagement effort and are incorporated here into this plan:

- Provide feasible development options, should the property be annexed into the city;
- Minimize and mitigate any negative impacts that development may have on the Lincoln Park Neighborhood;
- Preserve the Forest Conservation Easement as a buffer between industrial activities and residential uses. If a residential development is proposed for the site, the Forest Conservation Easement, or equivalent buffer, should be shifted to the north side of the site between any new residential and the Westmore Industrial Park to the north.

Land Use Policy Map

Should the property be annexed into the city, a land use designation should be applied that allows for a mix of residential types including multi-unit, multiplexes, townhouses, row houses and single-unit homes, consistent with the Residential Flexible (RF) land use designation on the Land Use Policy Map.

Zoning Recommendations

- Amend the Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District (LPNCD) boundaries to remove this property from the District.
  - The LPNCD includes regulations that are geared toward single-unit detached homes on individual lots.
- Rezone the property from its current industrial zoning (County Zoning IM-2.5) to a zone consistent with its land use designation.

Urban Design Recommendations

- Ensure that any future use will not diminish the residential character of Lincoln Park and that a significant buffer is in place to mitigate any potentially negative impact on the neighborhood.
- Improve Ashley Avenue, and establish a walkable street environment if new residential is developed.
  - For residential developments, a portion of the development's residences should front Ashley Avenue to establish a relationship with the existing residences to the south and establish a pedestrian-friendly street presence. A contiguous sidewalk on the north side will be required with new residential development, and it should include enhanced landscaping and pedestrian-scale lighting.
- If a residential use is developed, a contiguous, well-connected park or open space, usable to the public, should be provided on this property.
- The park should be comparable in size, at a minimum, to the Wilma Shelton Bell Park, located to the southeast of 1000 Westmore Avenue
- Preserve the existing Forest Conservation Easement.
  - If any non-residential uses are developed, the forest conservation easement should remain and continue to provide a significant buffer to the existing residences to the south.
  - Should a residential use be proposed, development should be contingent on the Montgomery County Planning Board approving the Forest Conservation Easement being flipped to the north side of the site, and the development being focused to the south on Ashley Avenue to buffer any new residential from the industrial uses to the north. This Plan does not recommend approving isolated residential development adjacent to industrial uses.

Recommended City Projects

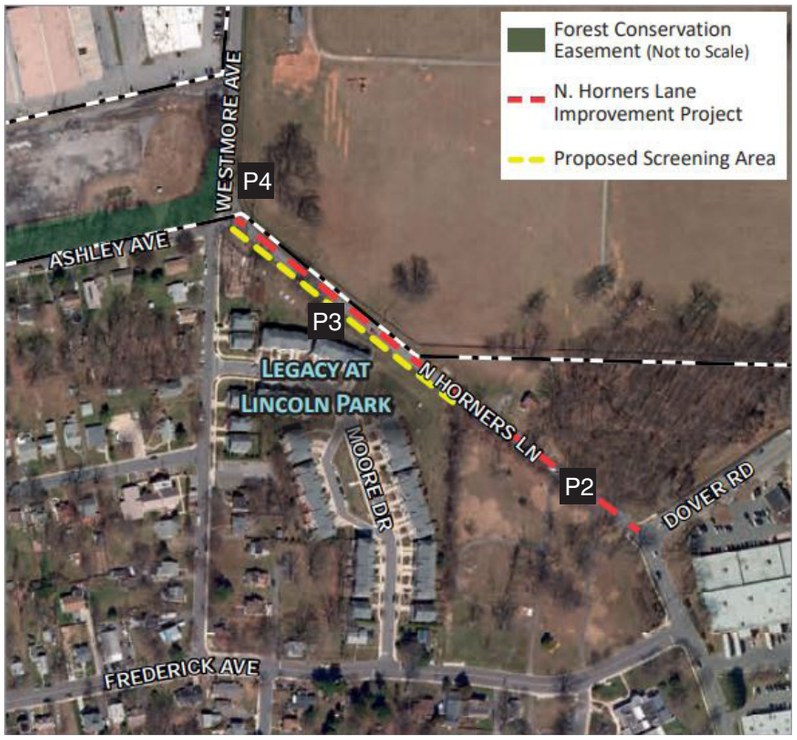
These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Evaluate the use of space and facilities at the Lincoln Park Community Center to determine which improvements will help to accommodate current and future demand.

The Lincoln Park Community Center opened in 1970 and is a key anchor for the neighborhood. Its programing and usage have grown over the years, but space, and especially parking, have not kept pace. The community would like to see an overall upgrade to the center that would include improved exercise facilities. Expansion of the community center building should also be considered to accommodate programming and space needs of the surrounding community.

Figure 62: North Horners Lane Recommended Improvements





The open space and stormwater management facility behind the Legacy at Lincoln Park community on North Horners Lane

PROJECT 2 P2

Improve North Horners Lane between Dover Road and Westmore Avenue.

One of the primary concerns for some of the residents in Lincoln Park about the development of a non-residential use at 1000 Westmore Avenue is additional commercial or industrial truck traffic through and around the neighborhood. The intent of Projects 2-4 is to provide upgrades to the roadway and protection to the neighborhood from the potential impacts of additional traffic.

- Fund proposed construction of the North Horners Lane sidewalk project as part of its Sidewalks Capital Improvements Program (see Figure 62). The City is currently designing the improvement of North Horners Lane between Dover Road and Ashley Avenue to include a sidewalk on the southwest side of the road, new curb and gutter for portions of the road, roadway resurfacing, and wider lane widths adjacent to the proposed curb and gutter.
- Explore redesign options at the intersection of North Horners Lane, Westmore Avenue, and Ashley Avenue, to reduce truck traffic through the neighborhood.

PROJECT 3 P3

Provide additional screening between the Legacy at Lincoln Park residences and North Horners Lane. Screening (landscape, fencing, or similar treatments) should be installed along the portion of North Horners Lane adjacent to the Legacy at Lincoln Park residential development, to protect homes from truck traffic (*see Figure 62*).

PROJECT 4 P4

Retain primary vehicular access into the industrial area off of Westmore Avenue. If a non-residential use is developed at 1000 Westmore Avenue, primary access should remain off of Westmore Avenue. Truck traffic through the neighborhood should be prohibited unless for emergency access.

PROJECT 5 P5

Re-examine an east/west vehicular crossing of the Metro/ CSX rail lines to connect to MD-355. Connections at Westmore Road and Ashley Avenue have been explored in

the past after the extension of the Metro rail lines closed off the once existing railroad crossing at Frederick Avenue. (*See also Policy 17 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 6 P6

Preserve the existing historic structure, formerly the Lincoln High School building.

PROJECT 7 P7

Add an historic landmark sign at Galilean Fishermen's Cemetery.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Review the existing 2007 Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District (LPNCD) standards to determine whether updates or amendments are warranted.
2. Partner with the neighborhood to establish design criteria, whether through an overlay district, floating zones, or base rezoning, that provides guidance for new development within the area identified for RA (Residential Attached) land uses along North Stonestreet Avenue. (See the Land Use Policy Map for specific areas). Focus on compatibility with, and appropriate transitions, to single-unit detached residential uses.
3. Implement recommendations in the 2016 Southlawn Feasibility Study that address making improvements to the existing environment around the industrial properties to create more appropriate transitions to the abutting residential areas.

Transportation

4. Implement effective parking management and enforcement solutions to ensure adequate on-street parking for area residents where off-street parking is not available or constrained. Study the possibility of adding or expanding residential permit parking in the neighborhood, in consultation with neighborhood residents and businesses, due to its proximity to Rockville Station and future infill development.
- Consider adding new traffic calming measures on neighborhood through roads (e.g., North Stonestreet Avenue and North Horners Lane), in consultation with neighborhood residents, to increase safety and comfort of public streets, and to control excessive vehicle speeds.
5. Encourage WMATA to study the feasibility of adding a new rail station along the Metrorail Red Line in the vicinity of the Montgomery College - Rockville Campus, in consultation with the Rockville community and considering the impacts and benefits to surrounding neighborhoods. (*See also Action 8.6 of the Transportation Element*)
6. Continuously monitor traffic management operations at the following intersections to assess delays for residents exiting and entering the neighborhood:
   - Lincoln Avenue at North Horners Lane; and
   - Dover Road at North Horners Lane.

Community Partnerships

7. Partner with the Lincoln Park Civic Association to educate residents in need about programs available for home maintenance and rehabilitation. For vacant properties, hold property owners accountable for upkeep and maintenance.
8. Continue to work with the Board of Education/ MCPS to improve the short-term maintenance and appearance of their properties on North Stonestreet Avenue. Of particular concern is the property that contains the storage trailers at the corner of North Stonestreet Avenue and Howard Avenue. In the long run, these uses should be relocated.
9. For new or expansions to existing institutional uses, examine whether shared parking agreements can be established with other institutional uses to 1) meet parking needs by sharing existing resources, and 2) minimize additional surface parking in the neighborhood.

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Planning Area 7

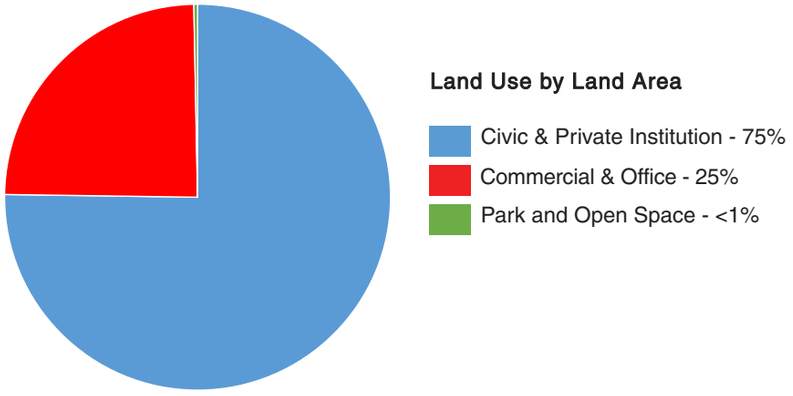
MONTGOMERY COLLEGE AREA

The plan establishes this new planning area on the west side of MD-355, from the north edge of Town Center to its intersection with West Gude Drive. The Rockville campus of Montgomery College is the largest and most active site in the planning area; also important are the headquarters of Montgomery County Public School and existing office and commercial developments. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 64.

Area Characteristics

The land uses in this planning area generate a large amount of activity, with Montgomery College being perhaps the largest single attractor of people in Rockville and one of the most important and valuable assets in the city. The transportation corridor of MD-355 (Hungerford Road/ Frederick Road) is heavily traveled, not only by College visitors, but also by drivers from across the region as it is one of the few major north-south corridors in this part of the county.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 7



Montgomery College - Rockville

The Rockville campus of Montgomery College is approximately 86 acres, with nearly one million square feet of space that includes: academic classrooms, a performance arts center, various administrative services, a library, information technology, admissions, financial aid offices, a bookstore, food services, and more. The campus opened in 1965, with an enrollment of approximately 2,500 students. Since then, the Rockville campus enrollment has grown to a student attendance of about 17,000.

In addition to students, the college hosts thousands of visitors every year for art exhibits, concerts, theatrical events, athletic events, conferences, lectures, and other events, many of which are open to the public. The City of Rockville has partnered with the college for such events and many other activities. Rockville residents, as well as others throughout Montgomery County and beyond, take advantage of the great diversity of educational and cultural offerings at this high-quality community college.

Montgomery County Public School property

The Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) property consists of two entities, the Carver Educational Service Center (CESC) and Rock Terrace School.

Carver Educational Service Center

The original Carver building opened in 1951 as a high school and junior college for African-American students. The facility



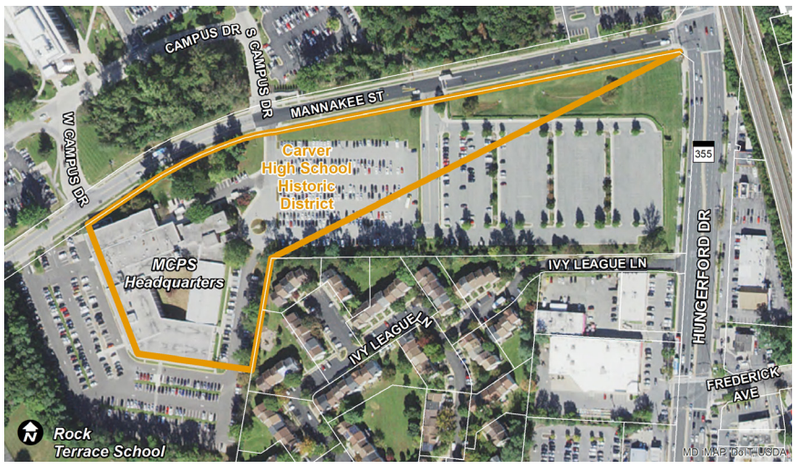
Aerial view of Montgomery College and the Carver Educational Services Center
Source: Google Maps, 2019

was re-purposed in the early 1960s to serve as the MCPS headquarters when the County school system became racially integrated. Today, the expanded 200,000-square-foot Carver building houses more than 500 MCPS staff, though the building was never designed for office use and has numerous operational deficiencies. Investment for a new headquarters facility, however, is constrained by demands for the construction and renovation of schools throughout the school system.

A surface parking lot at the corner of Mannakee Street and MD-355 is a part of the CESC, and MCPS leases its use to Montgomery College for parking. To recognize its significance as the first post-secondary school built in Montgomery County for African-American students, the original school building and a viewshed from the corner of Mannakee Street and MD-355 were designated as a local historic district in 2003 (see Figure 63). The historic designation means that any proposed exterior alteration to the building or within the designated viewshed must be reviewed and approved by Rockville's Historic District Commission.

Rock Terrace School
The original Rock Terrace School opened in 1951 as a public elementary school for African-American students. After integration of the school system, the building served for years as an MCPS special needs educational facility. That program has been relocated, along with the name "Rock Terrace School", to the newly-built structure in North Bethesda that houses both Tilden Middle School and the Rock Terrace School. MCPS plans to relocate another special needs program, currently at the Blair G. Ewing Center, to this site.

Figure 63: Carver High School Historic District Viewshed



Commercial Uses
The planning area is also home to a shopping center and offices along MD-355. The College Plaza Shopping Center is a commercial center at the busy intersection of MD-355 and College Parkway, with just over 110,000 square feet of retail space. It was built in the early 1970s and has not been upgraded in many years. The center is not bicycle- or pedestrian-friendly and much could be done to improve its overall appearance. It is within close proximity to neighborhoods and Montgomery College, and is at the crossroads of a very busy intersection. This center has potential that is not being fully realized and may be renovated or redeveloped during the life of this plan.

Four multi-story office buildings totaling nearly 280,000 square feet on more than 20 acres are located at the southwest corner of West Gude Drive and MD-355. Jackson Place, an office condominium complex with 112 townhouse-style office units, is located next to the Montgomery College Rockville campus along MD-355.

Planning History

In the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*, the properties in this planning area were part of Planning Area 5, which also included the Woodley Gardens and College Gardens neighborhoods. In that plan, the planning area discussion focused on the residential areas, with very little coverage of non-residential uses, including Montgomery College. This new planning area was created to highlight the importance of this key activity area and its distinct nature in relation to the city, including its proximity to Rockville Town Center, and to address improvements to this portion of the MD-355 corridor.

The Montgomery College area has been a focus of planning by the City in the past. In 1968, The Mayor and Council approved an urban renewal plan entitled the Junior College Urban Renewal Project, which established a framework for improvements to the area around the college. Implementation of this framework followed in the 1970s, resulting in a series of land transfers between the College and the City and the construction of the office townhouses and other office buildings that face MD-355 today.

Various property redevelopment options have been considered over the years for the CESC parking lot, including but not limited to, building a new MCPS headquarters, expanding the Montgomery College Campus, and building a new Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Station. In 2002, the property was listed as a Critical Site in the City's Land Use chapter. Projects contemplated at that time included an educational facility serving the Montgomery County Board of Education or Montgomery College. The 2002 plan further recommended retaining the historical significance of the site and that any new development minimize adverse effects on its adjacent neighborhoods: Woodley Gardens and College Gardens.

A 2015-2018 co-location study was conducted by Montgomery County government to find opportunities for County agencies and departments to share real estate (land and buildings) and services (infrastructure, technology, etc.). The MCPS CESC was one site studied. While no final decisions were made, some of the options included establishing a new MCPS headquarters building on the site, expanding Montgomery College, and building a new educational facility, new fire station, housing, or commercial.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Need to accommodate future expansion of the Montgomery College Rockville campus and minimize its impacts on the surrounding community;
- Obsolescence of the Montgomery County Public Schools headquarters building in the former Carver High School;
- Need for preservation and enhancement of the historic portion of the former Carver High School building;
- Need to reduce traffic congestion at major intersections, in and near the planning area, related to significant vehicle trips associated with Montgomery College;
- Desire for improved pedestrian and bicycle connections among Montgomery College, surrounding neighborhoods, and nearby shopping destinations, such as Town Center and King Farm Village Center;
- Challenge of limited affordable housing opportunities for Montgomery College students and staff near campus;
- Visually unappealing streetscape along MD-355 and WMATA/CSX tracks.

Montgomery College is a key stakeholder in the planning area. The College develops its own strategic, facilities and master plans to meet its requirements with the State of Maryland Higher Education Commission and to support its own vision and educational plans. The current approved Facilities Master Plan covers the ten-year period from 2013 to 2023. In addition to the Facilities Master Plan, the overall planning effort includes a 20-year land use plan (2013-2033) to establish a framework for the development of its three campuses county-wide. The Facilities Master Plan projects a deficit of 500,000 square feet of building space over the next 10-15 years for all campuses.

With some exceptions, there are limited opportunities for vehicle movement between the properties within the planning area other than along busy MD-355. As a result, traffic congestion can be a significant problem at key intersections along MD-355, especially due to the traffic from and to the college. Both vehicular and non-vehicular travel is difficult and perceived as unsafe throughout the planning area. The WMATA and CSX train tracks, running along the east side of MD-355, further limit movement and, along with the Washington Gas fields east of the tracks, contribute to the visually unappealing nature of this stretch of the MD-355 corridor.

Focus Area Recommendations

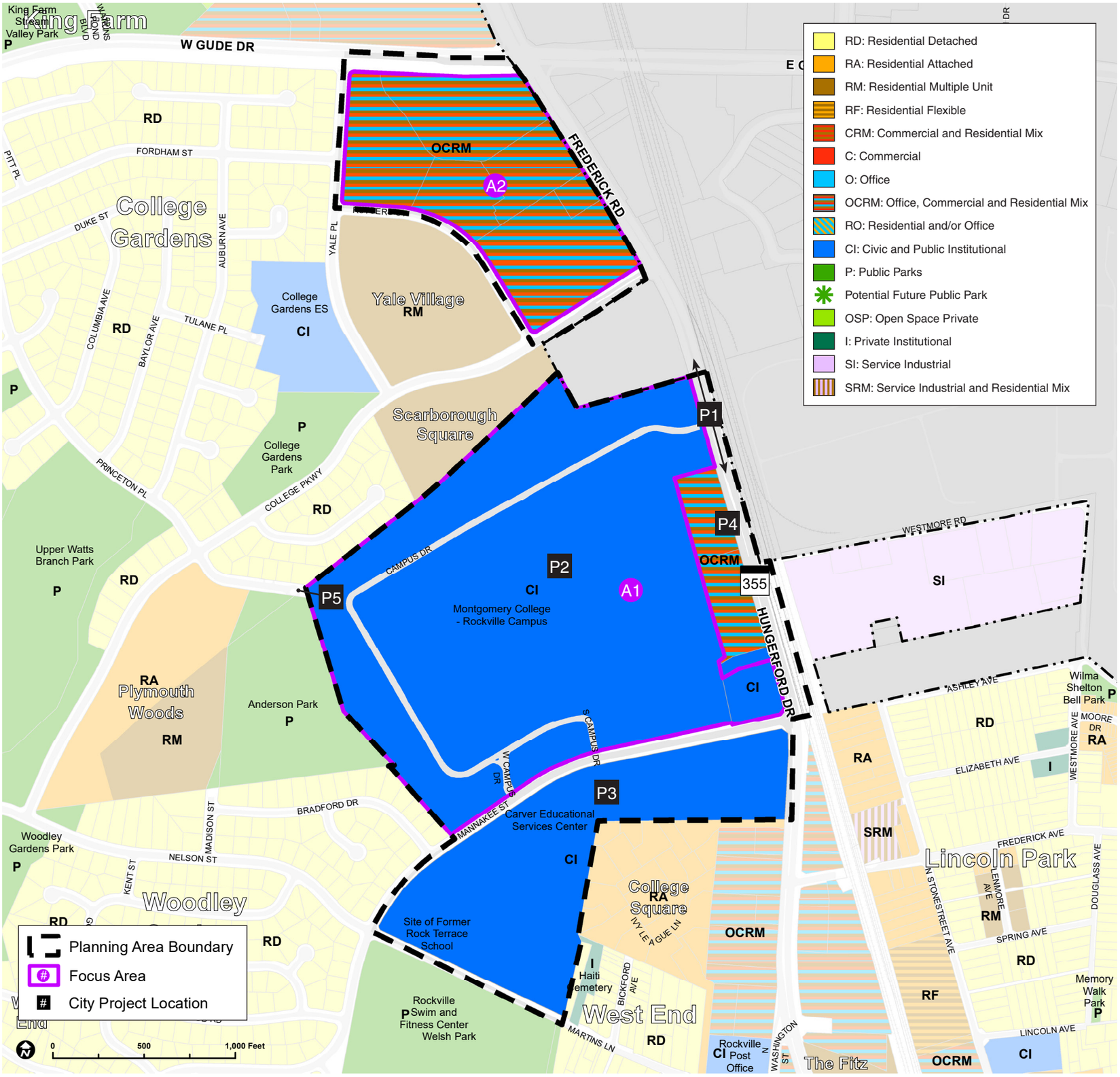
These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area. Area 1 is an exception for this section since it recommends the ways in which the City may work with Montgomery College to further City and College policy.

AREA 1 A1

Montgomery College

The policies for this area were developed in coordination with college staff as part of the Rockville 2040 effort. Their main goal is to better integrate Montgomery College into the economic and social life of the larger Rockville community by anticipating and addressing future needs of the city, including the adjacent neighborhoods and nearby commercial areas, as well as the college as an institution and its student body,

Figure 64: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 7



faculty, and staff. Since the college and the City master plans are on different cycles, a coordinated effort can be helpful to both parties in identifying policies that are mutually beneficial.

The City should maintain and strengthen the collaboration with Montgomery College, recognizing the importance of the College to the daily life and long-term success of the city. (*See also Policy 10 of the Community Facilities Element*)

Potential collaborations include:

1. Develop a long-term vision for the broader campus area of Montgomery College and the MCPS headquarters property, in collaboration with Montgomery College, Montgomery County Public Schools, and Montgomery County government. The vision should recognize the importance of the college, with its approximately 16,000 students, and the MCPS headquarters, with over 700 employees, as a key asset and activity center in the city.
2. Reestablish the MD-355 corridor, between the northern extent of Rockville Town Center and East/West Gude Drive, as a priority area of focus for Rockville.
3. Pursue mutually beneficial agreements with Montgomery College for use of athletic, cultural and other facilities. Seek opportunities for joint investment in facilities that would benefit the College and the City.
4. Partner with Montgomery College to address college-neighborhood relations and safety concerns.
5. Support Montgomery College in its efforts to grow and evolve to meet increasing and changing demands for its services. Ensure that its growth considers and minimizes impacts on nearby neighborhoods.
6. Seek alignment and consistency between the college's 10-year master plan and the City's master plan and other policies.
7. Work with Montgomery College on opportunities to identify and/or develop housing that is affordable to students, faculty, and employees, ideally, as part of new mixed-use developments.
8. Collaborate with Montgomery College to improve its frontage on MD-355, to increase visibility of the college, improve the visual appeal of the MD-355 corridor and potentially accommodate a new mixed-use area with retail shops, restaurants, and services that have a beneficial economic impact. (*See also Action 3.1 of the Economic Development Element*)
9. Collaborate with Montgomery College, Montgomery County government, and the State of Maryland to identify the best location for a bus rapid transit station in the campus area, including an evaluation based on potential co-location with other transit stops, long-term land use and economic development plans.
10. Seek opportunities to provide additional vehicular access to the Montgomery College campus from the north, to relieve traffic pressure on the intersection of East/West Gude Drive and MD-355.
11. Explore opportunities to open or remove barriers to access Montgomery College by non-automobile travel modes and make physical connections to the surrounding areas, while considering community and college safety concerns. Engage affected neighborhoods, property owners, and businesses in any such planning efforts. (*See also Goal 2 and Action 8.5 of the Transportation Element, Action 10.5 of the Community Facilities Element, and Planning Area 5*)
12. Leverage the academic assets of Montgomery College, the Universities at Shady Grove, and other institutions to attract and retain businesses in Rockville. (*See also Policy 3 of the Economic Development Element*)
13. Support efforts to strengthen links between programs at Montgomery College and Universities at Shady Grove and local workforce development agencies and the business community, to facilitate job placement for graduates and transitioning workers. (*See also Policy 3 of the Economic Development Element*)

AREA 2 A2

College Plaza Shopping Center and West Gude Office Park

The intersection of East/West Gude Drive and MD-355 is one of the busiest and most important crossroads in the Rockville area. This area is likely to see investment during the plan's time horizon.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is designated OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix) to allow for a mix of office, commercial, and residential development serving households of a range of income levels.

Zoning Recommendation

A zoning change from the current MXCD (Mixed-Use Corridor District) is not recommended, though potential creation of a future bus rapid transit station at the intersection of MD-355 and E/W Gude Drive may warrant consideration of the MXTD (Mixed-Use Transit District) zone in the future.

Urban Design Recommendations

This plan supports a long-term solution for College Plaza Shopping Center that results in redevelopment of the site into a more cohesive, walkable, urban-scale pattern with a mix of housing, educational, and commercial uses. The plan also supports establishing a walking path that is not along MD-355, between the Montgomery College campus and the College Plaza Shopping Center site. The West Gude Office Park is similarly envisioned as a potential mixed-use and mixed-income district with either infill buildings and amenities or a completely redeveloped site in the future.



College Plaza Shopping Center

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Work with MCDOT and MDOT SHA to conduct a special corridor study along MD-355 to determine congestion levels, recommend significant improvements to street design, increase non-auto driver mode share, and incorporate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). This study should include improvements to pedestrian safety and strategies to implement the vision for this area from the *2017 Bikeway Master Plan*, which includes a cycletrack (bike lane) along the west side of MD-355. (*See also Action 19.7 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 2 P2

Study the creation of safe routes for non-automobile travel, by wheel or on foot, between Montgomery College and the Shady Grove and Rockville Transit stations. Engage affected neighborhoods, property owners, and businesses in any such planning efforts.

PROJECT 3 P3

Improve pedestrian and bicycle access between Montgomery College, College Plaza Shopping Center, and Rockville Town Center, including significantly improving sidewalks and bicycle facilities on MD-355 and creating a potential new pedestrian path and bikeway connecting the properties owned by the College, MCPS and the City of Rockville, to each other and to areas north and south. (*See also Actions Goal 2 and Action 8.5 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 4 P4

Study the potential for a community node on MD-355, between Mannakee Street and North Campus Drive, creating improved frontage for the college campus on MD-355. Housing, retail and other services that complement Montgomery College's educational offerings and serve the Montgomery College community would be significant components of this node. (*See Figure 6 in the Land Use Element*)

PROJECT 5 P5

Work with Montgomery College to construct a bicycle and pedestrian connection between Princeton Place and Campus Drive. Engage affected neighborhoods, property owners, and businesses in any such planning efforts. (*See also Goal 2 and Action 8.5 of the Transportation Element, Action 10.5 of the Community Facilities Element, and Planning Area 5*)

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Transportation

1. Advocate for Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT SHA) and Montgomery County government to improve capacity, safety, and comfort for all modes at the intersection of MD-355 (Frederick Road) and Gude Drive, while accommodating a future bus rapid transit station. (*See also Action 20.2 of the Transportation Element*)
2. Improve connections between Montgomery College and Town Center and between Montgomery College and the College Plaza Shopping Center, to serve the thousands of students and staff at the college, by:
   - Establishing an off-street, shared use path connecting the College with downtown Rockville and College Plaza.
   - Studying the potential for a shuttle bus that links Montgomery College, College Plaza, Town Center, and Rockville Transit Station.
3. Encourage WMATA to study the feasibility of adding a new rail station along the Metrorail Red Line in the vicinity of the Montgomery College - Rockville Campus, in consultation with the Rockville community and considering the impacts and benefits to surrounding neighborhoods. (*See also Action 8.6 of the Transportation Element*)

Community Partnerships

4. Develop a long-term vision for the MCPS headquarters property, in coordination with MCPS and the Rockville Historic District Commission. Consider adjustments to the Carver High School Local Historic District that provides a higher level of respect for the history of the historic school building and grounds than does the current viewshed, while allowing appropriate development to occur within the historic district and the property's surface parking lots. Educational or public safety-related uses remain the preferred use for the Carver Educational Service Center site. The site is a good potential new location for the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department, which is currently located on Hungerford Drive in Town Center and needs a new facility (discussed in the Community Facilities Element and in Planning Area 1). Opportunities to provide housing for fire fighters, both active and in training, would also be beneficial either on that site or on other sites in this planning area.
5. Support MCPS in its efforts to maintain its headquarters within the city if it seeks to relocate from the Carver High School building. (*See also Action 7.1 of the Community Facilities Element*)

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Planning Area 8

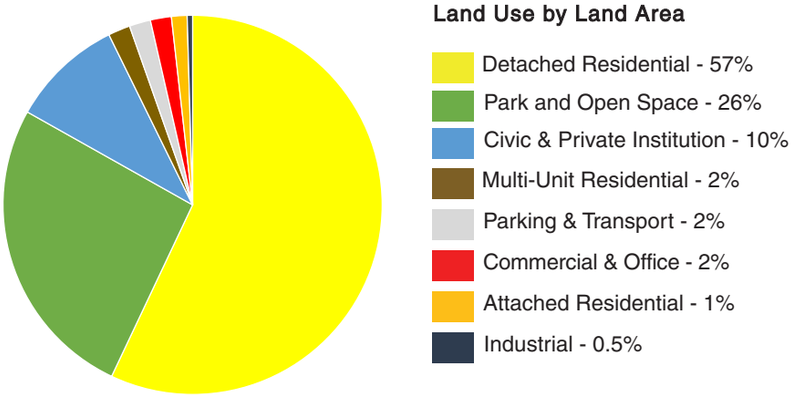
TWINBROOK AND TWINBROOK FOREST

Planning Area 8 is a collection of neighborhoods and active commercial nodes, with single-unit detached housing interspersed with apartment and townhouse communities. In addition to the neighborhoods of Twinbrook, Twinbrook Forest, Silver Rock, and Burgundy Estates, the planning area is home to the townhome communities of Ashleigh Woods, Rockcrest Courts, Twinbrook Forest Condos, and Cambridge Walk I & II, as well as the apartment communities of The Forest and Woods Edge. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 65.

This Comprehensive Plan adopts by reference the *2009 Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan*. Policies in this chapter supersede any policies that are in conflict with those in the 2009 plan as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

8

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 8



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	3,455
Attached Residential	129
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	331
Total units	**3,915**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Area Characteristics

Much of the land in the planning area was annexed into the city around 1949, during the post-World War II population boom in the Washington D.C. region, and was primarily developed as single-unit detached residential housing. Two apartment communities are located in the planning area on Baltimore Road: Woods Edge, built in 1965; and The Forest, built in 1972. More recently, five townhouse communities were established in the planning area: Ashleigh Woods, Cambridge Walk I & II, Rockcrest Courts, and Twinbrook Forest Condos.

Three commercial areas are located in the planning area: Burgundy Center, with neighborhood-serving stores and restaurants; Twinbrook Center, with a grocery store, retail shops and restaurants, and the Twinbrook Library branch of the Montgomery County Public Library system; and Twinbrook Marketplace, with the Twinbrook branch of the U.S. Post Office, among other retail stores. At the southern portion of the planning area, adjacent to the Twinbrook transit station, is a commercial and light industrial cluster on Lewis Avenue.

The planning area is home to many civic and institutional sites, including Rockville High School; Meadow Hall and Twinbrook Elementary Schools; a Montgomery County Public Schools special-purpose school (the former Lone Oak Elementary School); and several places of worship. The Rockville Civic Center comprises a large portion of the northern part of the planning area. It includes the historic Glenview Mansion, Croydon Creek Nature Center, F. Scott Fitzgerald Theater, and John Hayes Forest Preserve. The area's proximity to Rock Creek Park also provides access to an extensive regional park and trail system.

Planning History

Current land use patterns in the Twinbrook neighborhoods were established when the area was first developed between the 1940s and 1960s. This era saw rapid development of neighborhoods in Montgomery County as a response to the post-World War II population boom in Washington D.C. at the time.



Residential homes in Twinbrook

The latest *Twinbrook Neighborhood Plan* was adopted in 2009, after considerable community input that was led by an advisory group of Twinbrook residents appointed by the Mayor and Council. The 2009 plan made recommendations for areas north and south of Veirs Mill Road and included the areas designated in the 2002 CMP as Planning Area 7 (Twinbrook Forest and Northeast Rockville) and 8 (Twinbrook). Because of the general acceptance by the community that these areas should be planned together, this plan consolidates the two areas into one.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain residential character in the planning area while supporting neighborhood revitalization;
- Need for additional parkland and neighborhood and recreational amenities;
- Need to address aging housing stock and housing maintenance;
- Concern over limited availability of affordable housing;
- Need to improve pedestrian safety, particularly at crosswalks and street intersections;
- Interest in expanding walkable community and commercial amenities;
- Desire to explore options to reduce traffic congestion and increase safety at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road (MD-586) and First Street (MD-28);
- Need for better understanding of the potential impacts and benefits of the proposed Montgomery County government's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route along Veirs Mill Road, connecting Rockville with Wheaton;
- Concern over potential for right-of-way expansion due to a potential third rail along the CSX railway;
- Concern for the future strength of the shopping areas at Veirs Mill Road and Twinbrook Parkway;
- Interest in supporting the future viability of the Lewis Avenue industrial area;
- Interest in the future prospects for the former Broome and Lone Oak school sites.

The housing stock in Twinbrook's neighborhoods is generally well-maintained. However, the age of the housing stock and increasing demand for infill and small-scale, multi-unit housing in several areas of the neighborhoods call for targeted solutions. The Rockville 2040 collaborative effort with the community identified townhouses, duplexes, or quad-style units as appropriate for facilitating limited site assembly and redevelopment in portions of the planning area.

The Twinbrook neighborhoods are bounded by arterial roads carrying a large volume of both local and non-local commuter traffic. Veirs Mill Road bisects the planning area and is an important cross-county link between Silver Spring, Wheaton, and the City of Rockville. Montgomery County government has proposed a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route along this corridor, which already has a high number of bus riders on existing bus routes. Yet, residents of the planning area expressed concerns during the Rockville 2040 effort about what impacts the proposed BRT route would bring along with its expected benefits.

The residential land use pattern of the planning area largely dictates the neighborhood's internal circulation system, where traffic is directed onto the few collector streets forcing backups to occur at the limited number of entrance and exit points. Many of the residential streets are relatively narrow, and, with limited off-street parking available on residential lots (most houses lack garages or carports and some have no driveways at all), parking on these streets can contribute to traffic congestion.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Veirs Mill Road Corridor

Veirs Mill Road provides an important east-west connection in the county, connecting downtown Rockville to the Wheaton area and beyond. A vehicular service lane runs parallel to the main travel lanes of Veirs Mill Road on both sides, providing access to the single-unit detached homes that predominate this part of the corridor. Existing bus routes along Veirs Mill Road have high ridership levels and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route is proposed by the County to run along this roadway, with two BRT stations proposed within this area.

Land Use Policy Map

In recognition of the need for housing that serves a variety of family incomes, from affordable to middle-income to more affluent, as well as high transit usage along Veirs Mill Road, today and in the future, this area is planned for a variety of attached and detached residential dwellings through the RA (Residential Attached) land use designation. (*See also Policy 14 of the Land Use Element*)

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the properties in this area from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a new zone that allows a diverse range of housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses, in addition to single-unit detached dwellings. Fourplexes should only be allowed on corner lots in the zone. Multiplexes of greater than four units are not appropriate in this area.



The main travel lanes and service lanes of Veirs Mill Road

Urban Design Recommendations

Neighborhood Context

- Buildings should be designed and oriented in a manner that is inviting, promotes walkability, and contributes positively to the neighborhood context.
- Porches or enhanced entryways are encouraged and entrances should be oriented toward the street, connected by a walkway, to provide more opportunities for “eyes on the street” and community interaction.
- The siting of new buildings should be consistent with the established setback pattern along the block. If much variation exists between existing buildings, a new building should be placed in a manner that establishes a street presence and enhances neighborhood character.
- Mature trees and tree canopy should be prioritized and preserved.

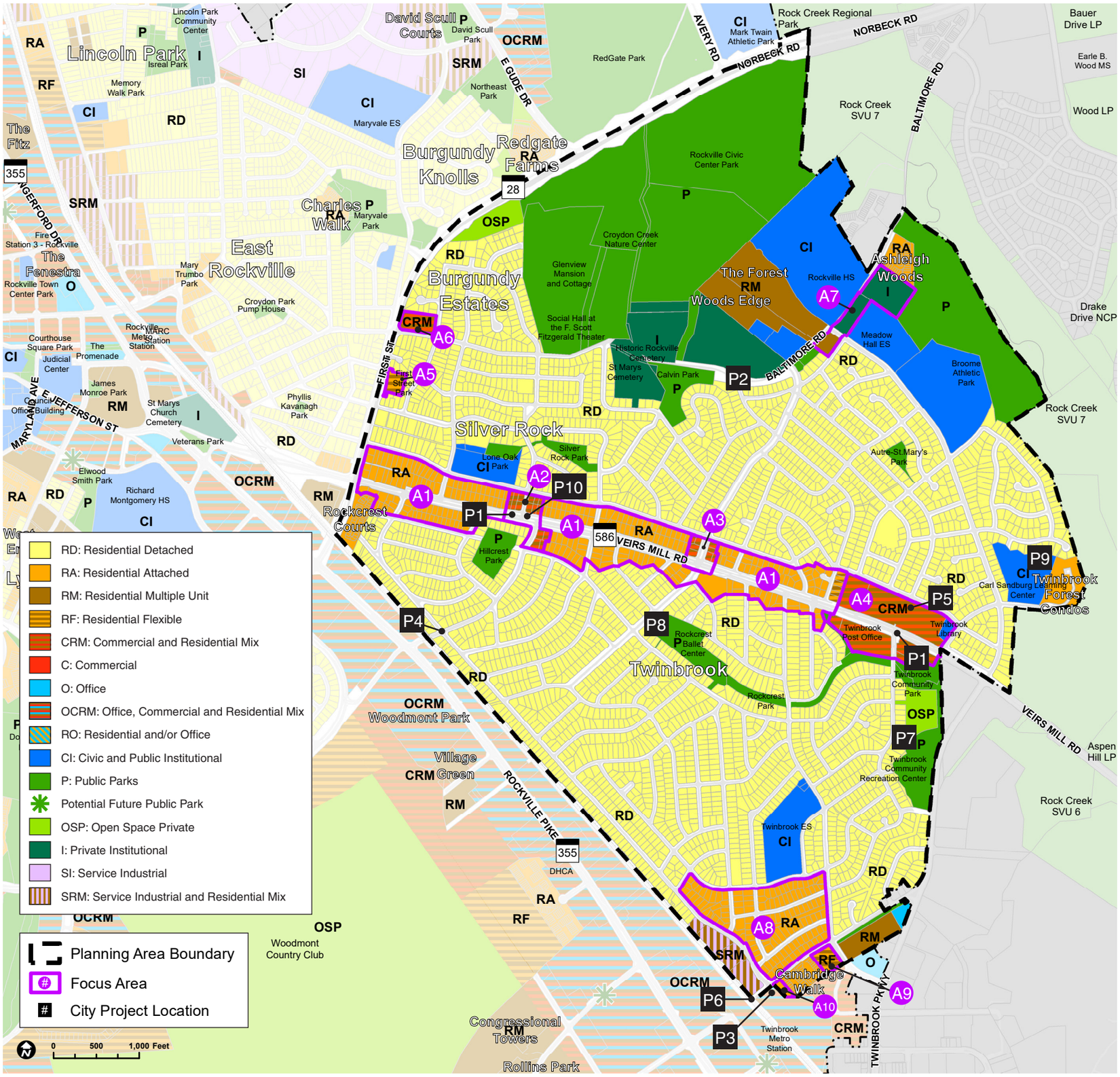
Open Spaces

- Open spaces should be consolidated into larger usable areas and designed as an integral part of the project, rather than scattered throughout the site, rendering them unusable.

Building Form

- New residential attached buildings should be proportional in height, mass, and scale with adjacent homes and blend well into the existing neighborhood.
- When adjacent to a lower-scaled structure, a gradual transition should be utilized. This can be accomplished through design elements, including stepping back upper stories, varying roof lines, recessing a portion of the wall plane, and lowering the roof pitch.
- Side elevations should include windows of consistent proportion and placement as the front elevation. Large, blank walls should be avoided.
- On corner lots, both facades should be similarly designed and detailed and have similar opening proportions, placements, and alignments.

Figure 65: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 8



Parking

- Parking considerations should be balanced between taking advantage of proximity to high capacity transit stops (existing and planned); keeping construction costs down by not requiring more parking than is needed at transit-proximate sites; and considering the surrounding neighborhood's parking constraints, especially in areas with limited-to-no off-street parking.
- The visibility and prominence of parking facilities should be minimized. Parking to the rear or to the side of the building is encouraged. Front yard pavement should be minimized as much as possible and permeable paving materials are highly encouraged throughout the site.

AREA 2 and 3 A2 A3

Veirs Mill Road at Edmonston Drive / Broadwood Road

These areas are located at expected BRT station locations along Veirs Mill Road and planned as community nodes that support neighborhood-scale commercial destinations that serve transit riders and Twinbrook residents. (*See Figure 6 and Policy 14 of the Land Use Element*)

Land Use Policy Map

The CRM (Commercial Residential Mix) designation is applied to properties in both areas that could, over time, develop into low- to mid-rise residential buildings with some street level commercial to serve the community.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone these properties from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to MXNC (Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial).

Urban Design Recommendations

(See Urban Design Recommendations under AREA 1)

AREA 4 A4

Twinbrook Center and Twinbrook Marketplace

This group of properties comprise the shopping centers of Twinbrook Center and Twinbrook Marketplace, among other commercial properties. A public library and United States Post Office is also located within this focus area.



Bus Stop on Veirs Mills Road at Twinbrook Shopping Center

Land Use Policy Map

The CRM (Commercial Residential Mix) designation is applied to properties in this area that could, over time, develop into low- to mid-rise residential buildings with some street-level commercial to serve the community.

Zoning Recommendation

No zoning change is recommended to the existing MXNC (Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial) zone.

Urban Design Recommendations

Redevelopment of property in this area should contribute toward a pedestrian-oriented, urban-scale streetscape. New developments should orient primary building facades and front doors toward a street or public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open spaces, and to foster activated pedestrian areas. Building frontages should include ground-floor uses that attract customers or regular visitors, enhanced pedestrian areas and amenities, attractive landscaping, and bicycle infrastructure.

AREA 5 A5

First Street Park

This 1.25-acre property is owned by the City and maintained as First Street Park. Other than pedestrian access from a sidewalk along First Street (MD-28), there is no access to the

park and no public amenities or facilities. It has the potential for modest residential development that is compatible with the adjacent single-unit detached homes.

Land Use Policy Map

The area is planned for a range of residential development with the RF (Residential Flexible) land use designation.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the property from PARK (Park Zone) to RMD-10 (Residential Medium Density) to allow residential development.

Urban Design Recommendations

(See Urban Design Recommendations under AREA 1)

AREA 6 A6

Burgundy Park Shopping Center

This commercial center dates from the 1960s and is the home of several long-time tenants and local businesses. The property has the potential for infill development with residential units above updated commercial spaces.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is designated CRM (Commercial Residential Mix) to allow for redevelopment of the shopping center into a mixed-use, neighborhood-scale infill development.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the property from MXC (Mixed-Use Commercial) to MXNC (Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial).

Urban Design Recommendations

Redevelopment of property in this area should contribute toward a pedestrian-oriented, urban-scale streetscape while respecting the proximity of new higher density housing to existing residences by limiting impacts from height, massing, ancillary equipment, and parking facilities on adjacent or nearby single-unit residential properties. New developments should orient primary building facades and front doors toward a street or public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open spaces, and to foster activated pedestrian areas. Building frontages should include ground-floor uses that attract customers or regular visitors, enhanced pedestrian areas and amenities, attractive landscaping, and bicycle infrastructure. New buildings facing the street should also present an aesthetic appearance that blends into the neighborhood.

AREA 7 A7

Properties at Baltimore Road and Twinbrook Parkway

This group of properties along Baltimore Road are home to three institutional uses: a non-profit mental health facility (1000 Twinbrook Parkway) and two places of worship (1001 Twinbrook Parkway and 2181 Baltimore Road).

Land Use Policy Map

1000 Twinbrook Parkway is designated RM (Residential Multiple Unit) to allow for future multi-unit residential use.

1001 Twinbrook Parkway and 2181 Baltimore Road are designated I (Private Institutional) as institutional uses are expected to continue.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone 1000 Twinbrook Parkway from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to RMD-15 (Residential Medium Density). The remaining properties are not recommended to be rezoned.

AREA 8 A8

South Twinbrook near the Twinbrook transit station

This area is currently built as single-unit residential dwellings and is within 1/4-to-1/2 miles of the Twinbrook transit station.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for a variety of attached and detached residential dwellings through the RA (Residential Attached) land use designation. (*See also Action 10.2 of the Land Use Element*)

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the properties in this area from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a new zone that allows a diverse range of housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses, in addition to single-unit detached dwellings. Fourplexes should only be allowed on corner lots in the zone. Multiplexes of greater than four units are not appropriate in this area.

Urban Design Recommendations

(See Urban Design Recommendations under AREA 1)

AREA 9 A9

5906 Halpine Road

This property is used as a church and daycare. During Rockville 2040, the possibility of redevelopment of the site to a residential project was raised by the property owner, Twinbrook Community Church.

Land Use Policy Map

The area is planned for a range of residential development with the RF (Residential Flexible) land use designation, though the existing church and daycare use are also allowed under this designation.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the property from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to RMD-15 (Residential Medium Density) or MXNC (Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial) to allow for attached residential or multi-unit residential development and ancillary commercial uses. A church and/or daycare is allowed in both zones.

Urban Design Recommendations

Allow a maximum height of up to 50 feet as an urban infill project within a quarter-mile of a high frequency transit station, the Twinbrook transit station. Any redevelopment of the property should provide a sensitive transition to the adjacent and confronting residential uses through height step-downs, massing articulation, and landscaping. Established forest conservation areas adjacent to this property should be protected.

AREA 10 A10

5946 Halpine Road

This property is currently occupied by a single-unit residential dwelling and is situated immediately north of the Twinbrook Metro Station and adjacent to a residential townhouse community to the east.

Land Use Policy Map

The area is planned for a small-scale residential development with the RA (Residential Attached) land use designation.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the property from R-60 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling) to a new zone that allows a diverse range of housing types, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhouses, in addition to single-unit detached dwellings.

Urban Design Recommendations

Any redevelopment of the site should limit the height and massing impacts on the sides of the property facing the adjacent townhouses and single-unit detached homes, through step-downs, massing articulation, and landscaping.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Advocate for a BRT station on Veirs Mill Road at Atlantic Avenue and at Edmonston Drive to serve anticipated ridership and to support potential new community nodes at each intersection (*see Figure 6 of the Land Use Element*). If Edmonston Drive is selected as a BRT station, its intersection with Veirs Mill Road should be realigned to create a single, four-way intersection, replacing the existing jogging, double intersection. Consider the implications of potential transit improvements on the access to and functionality of the Twinbrook commercial sites at Atlantic Avenue.

The City should work with Montgomery County government, as well as the Rockville community, to conduct station area planning for the selected BRT stations, including identification of land use, redevelopment, and economic development opportunities. (*See also Policy 15 of the Land Use Element and Action 9.1 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 2 P2

Implement planned improvements on Baltimore Road to improve conditions for people driving, walking, biking, and rolling.

PROJECT 3 P3

Study the feasibility of a new vehicular connection between Lewis Avenue and Fishers Lane. Consider the potential

benefits and impacts to the neighborhood and mitigate impacts as needed through traffic calming measures, signage, roadway design, etc. Any future vehicular connection should be located on the WMATA property rather than the adjacent private property.

PROJECT 4 P4

Review the functioning of the intersection of Lewis Avenue and Edmonston Drive to determine how it can be improved and study the feasibility of additional traffic calming measures on Edmonston Drive.

PROJECT 5 P5

If the Twinbrook Shopping Center redevelops, the extension of Atlantic Avenue, through the shopping center to McAuliffe Drive, should be studied to determine if the extension will improve traffic circulation for the surrounding community. The study should address traffic calming and pedestrian and bicycle access and safety by utilizing the existing signalized intersection.

PROJECT 6 P6

Study the feasibility of a pedestrian crossing across the CSX / Metro railroad tracks at Halpine Road, or other locations, to link the Twinbrook neighborhood with the Rockville Pike area.

PROJECT 7 P7

Explore the feasibility of expanding the Twinbrook Community Center building and/or Twinbrook Community Park property.

PROJECT 8 P8

Study the need to enhance and/or expand the Rockcrest Ballet Center in the near term and consider the most appropriate long-term use of the space that meets the community's current and future needs.

PROJECT 9 P9

Education programs located at the Carl Sandberg Learning Center (451 Meadow Hall Drive) moved to a co-locate with Maryvale Elementary School in late 2020. The City should work closely with MCPS regarding the future use of the Carl Sandberg property and, if it should become available, acquire it for community use.

PROJECT 10 P10

Study the potential for a community node at the intersection of Veirs Mill Drive and Edmonston Drive. (*See Figure 6 of the Land Use Element*)

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Maintain the residential character of the planning area.
2. Focus on improving factors that enhance quality of life.

Transportation

3. To reduce the impact of cut-through traffic, study the feasibility of one-way circulation systems throughout the Twinbrook neighborhoods, especially in areas with "short blocks".
4. Advocate for the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration to study measures to reduce traffic congestion and increase safety for all modes at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road (MD-28/MD-586) and First Street (MD-911) (*See also Action 20.9 of the Transportation Element*).
5. Continue to install bus shelters throughout the community at bus stop locations without shelters. (*See also Action 8.2 of the Transportation Element*)
6. Coordinate with Montgomery County Ride On and WMATA Metrobus to increase bus service frequency and expand the number of bus shelters in the Twinbrook neighborhood.
7. Conduct a safety audit of key danger spots for walking, rolling, and bicycling in the planning area to, in part, inform future bicycle and pedestrian master plans.
8. Study neighborhood streets, in consultation with residents and homeowners, to determine where new street lighting should be added in the planning area. (*See also Policy 11 of the Transportation Element*)
9. Study routes that can serve as alternatives to Veirs Mill Road for a planned bikeway linking Town Center and Rock Creek Park. (Consider the Rockcrest Park

greenway as a bike/pedestrian way by upgrading its path surface, street crossings, and installing environmentally-friendly lighting.)

10. Support and expand school safety initiatives in the planning area, including the installation of missing or inadequate sidewalks and crosswalks. (*See also Action 3.2 of the Transportation Element*)
11. Establish dedicated pedestrian routes, with accompanying street markings, throughout the planning area. (*See also Policy 4 of the Transportation Element*)
12. Address on-street parking concerns in the neighborhood through the following mechanisms:
    - Review the City's Permit Parking policy to determine its impact on residential streets in the planning area and whether community's needs are met.
    - Explore the application of parking permits on residential streets near the Twinbrook transit station to avoid overflow parking from the station area.
    - Consider right-of-way incentives, such as an expansion of the City's driveway apron program, to implement new, environmentally-friendly off-street parking.
13. Public rear alleys, such as those in older portions of the planning area, adjacent to First Street, should be retained.
14. Mitigate noise impacts from trains. Determine whether a railroad "Quiet Zone" should be recommended for the Randolph Road crossing to reduce train-horn and related train noise in the planning area. (*See also Action 5.5 of the Land Use Element*)
15. Study potential locations for a bicycle and pedestrian facility over or under the CSX and Metro tracks, somewhere between Edmonston Drive and Twinbrook Parkway. (*See also Action 5.5 of the Transportation Element*)

Historic Preservation

16. Consider installing neighborhood welcome signage on major roads leading into the Twinbrook neighborhood, such as Ardennes Avenue, Baltimore Road, Edmonston Drive, Halpine Road, Lewis Avenue, Twinbrook Parkway, and Veirs Mill Road, as well as historic signage for the original 1947 Twinbrook subdivision and Twinbrook Community Pool. (*See also Action 19.11 of the Transportation Element*)

Environment

17. Explore the possibility of adding conservation easements on suitable private property for the installation of stormwater management facilities.

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Planning Area 9
ROCKVILLE PIKE

The Rockville Pike planning area is one of Rockville's most active commercial corridors, with the Twinbrook transit station located to the south and a range of commercial, residential, and office uses throughout. Residential communities in the planning area include: The Alaire, Bethany House, The Escher, The Galvan, Residences at Congressional Village, The Terano, Village Green, Westchester Rockville Station, Woodmont Overlook, Woodmont Park, and Woodmont Spring. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 66.

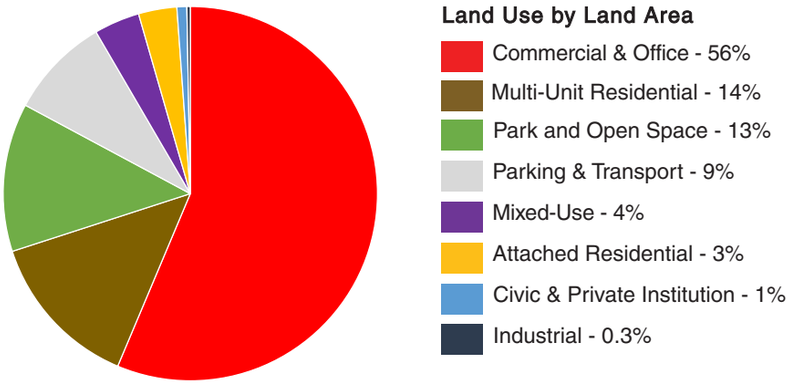
Area Characteristics

For decades after the opening of the Twinbrook Metro Station in 1984, the Rockville Pike corridor was primarily an auto-oriented, regional commercial destination, with a transit station serving nearby government offices and residential commuters. In 2009, as part of a comprehensive zoning update, much of the planning area was rezoned to allow for mixed-use development. New development projects since then have consisted mostly of multi-unit residential apartments and stand-alone retail, restaurant, and service establishments.

New office development has not occurred in the planning area since the 1980s, primarily due to unfavorable market conditions in the region. However, proximity to the Twinbrook transit station and anticipation of a proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route along the Pike may bring new office and other mixed-use development to the area in the future.

This plan adopts, by reference, the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* for portions of the neighborhood plan area that coincide with their respective new planning area boundary, noting that the current planning area now includes the property at 100 First Street (the Westchester Apartments) and 12501 Ardennes Avenue. Policies in this chapter supersede any policies that are in conflict with those in the 2016 plan as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 9



Residential Dwelling Units	
Attached Residential	149
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	2,789
Total units	**2,938**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Planning History

As a transportation artery for centuries, Rockville Pike (Maryland Route 355) can claim to be the oldest road in Montgomery County. Pike travelers have included Native Americans, early American farmers, American presidents, enslaved people seeking freedom, Confederate and Union troops, wealthy Washingtonians retreating to their summer homes, and modern day commuters and shoppers.

Growing development pressures along Rockville Pike as a result of its commercial success, as well as the opening of the Twinbrook Metro Station in 1984, resulted in the Mayor and Council adopting the *1989 Rockville Pike Corridor Neighborhood Plan*. The plan focused on urban design and transportation system management strategies to regulate development and maintain a high quality district and streetscape. In 2007, the City determined that an update to the 1989 plan was needed and initiated Rockville's Pike: Envision a Great Place. The *Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* was adopted in August 2016, replacing the 1989 Rockville

Pike Corridor Neighborhood Plan and the Planning Area 9 recommendations from the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*.

One emphasis of the 2016 plan is to improve place-making near the Twinbrook transit station by encouraging a mix of uses, improved walkability, diverse commercial establishments and housing choices, and ensuring that there are adequate parks to serve the expected population growth. The plan also calls for a larger, recreational park in the 'Middle Pike' area to serve residents and employees of the planning area and city at-large.

The 2016 plan established a new development option for "Champion Projects" in the South Pike area, near the Twinbrook transit station, that allows for greater building heights and other incentives for large projects in exchange for delivering benefits to the City that would not otherwise be required. As of 2019, only one developer had applied as a Champion Project; but others are possible, particularly on the west side of Rockville Pike where there are large sites that could meet the criteria, if redeveloped.

The Twinbrook Commons Planned Development (PD-TC) zone was established in 2005 under the Twinbrook Metro Performance District's Optional Method of Development. The 26.5-acre planned development originated from property owned by WMATA on either side of the Twinbrook transit station. Its land use objectives are compatible with those of the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*. However, the development agreement between JBG-Smith and WMATA to implement this planned development expired in 2018. The



Congressional Plaza sign on Rockville Pike, c. 1960. Source: Peerless Rockville



West side of the Twinbrook transit station and Park-n-Ride lot

agreement had called for the site to be developed in multiple phases over a 12-year period. Two of the six phases were completed, including the Alaire and Terano apartments with ground-floor commercial on Fishers Lane, prior to expiration of the agreement. JBG also built a 428-space parking garage to replace a WMATA surface parking lot. The future of the remaining development parcels remains uncertain at this time.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Interest in the improvement of the built environment, streetscape and walkability along Rockville Pike;
- Uncertainty about the future of the remaining phases of the Twinbrook Commons Planned Development at Twinbrook Metro Station, after the approved developer ended its development agreement with WMATA;
- Monitoring implementation of the Twinbrook Quarter development project as the City's first "Champion Project";
- Need for improved bicycle and pedestrian safety in the Rockville Pike corridor;
- Reduction of traffic congestion at the intersections of First Street, Wootton Parkway and Rockville Pike; Edmonston Drive and Rockville Pike; Twinbrook Parkway, Rollins Avenue and Rockville Pike; and Veirs Mill Road and First Street;
- Planning, design, and implementation of the proposed

Montgomery County Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route along MD-355 and its station locations;

- Concern over the changing environment of retail and office markets that could impact existing businesses and jobs;
- Need for additional parkland to accommodate the growing population along the Rockville Pike corridor.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Establish Rockville Pike as vibrant and safe multi-way, multi-modal boulevard, as described in the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*.



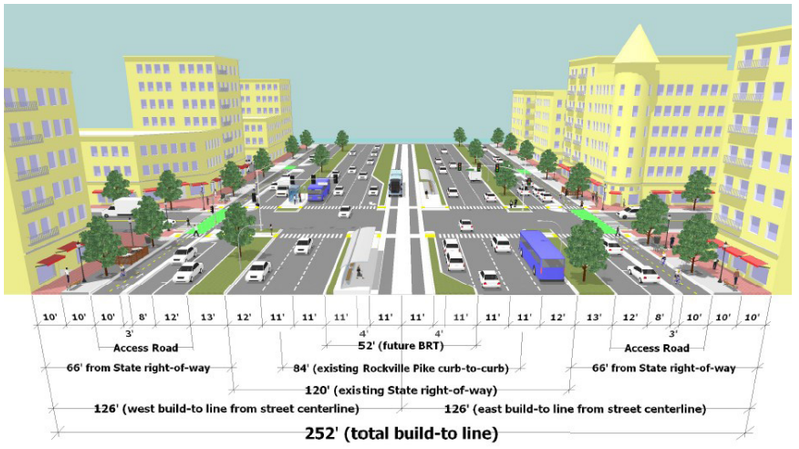


View of North (top) and South (bottom) Rockville Pike sections.

The core recommendation of the 2016 Pike plan is to redesign and reconstruct Rockville Pike as a multi-way boulevard. A multi-way boulevard attempts to balance the competing needs of roadway capacity, local access, transit, street parking, bicycle accommodation, and pedestrian comfort. It consists of through lanes for faster-moving traffic and transit; access lanes for slower-moving local traffic, bicycles lanes and on-street vehicle parking; wide sidewalks; and green medians. The boulevard concept is crucial to meeting the transportation, place-making, and economic goals of the plan and addresses the dual (local and regional) nature of the Pike.

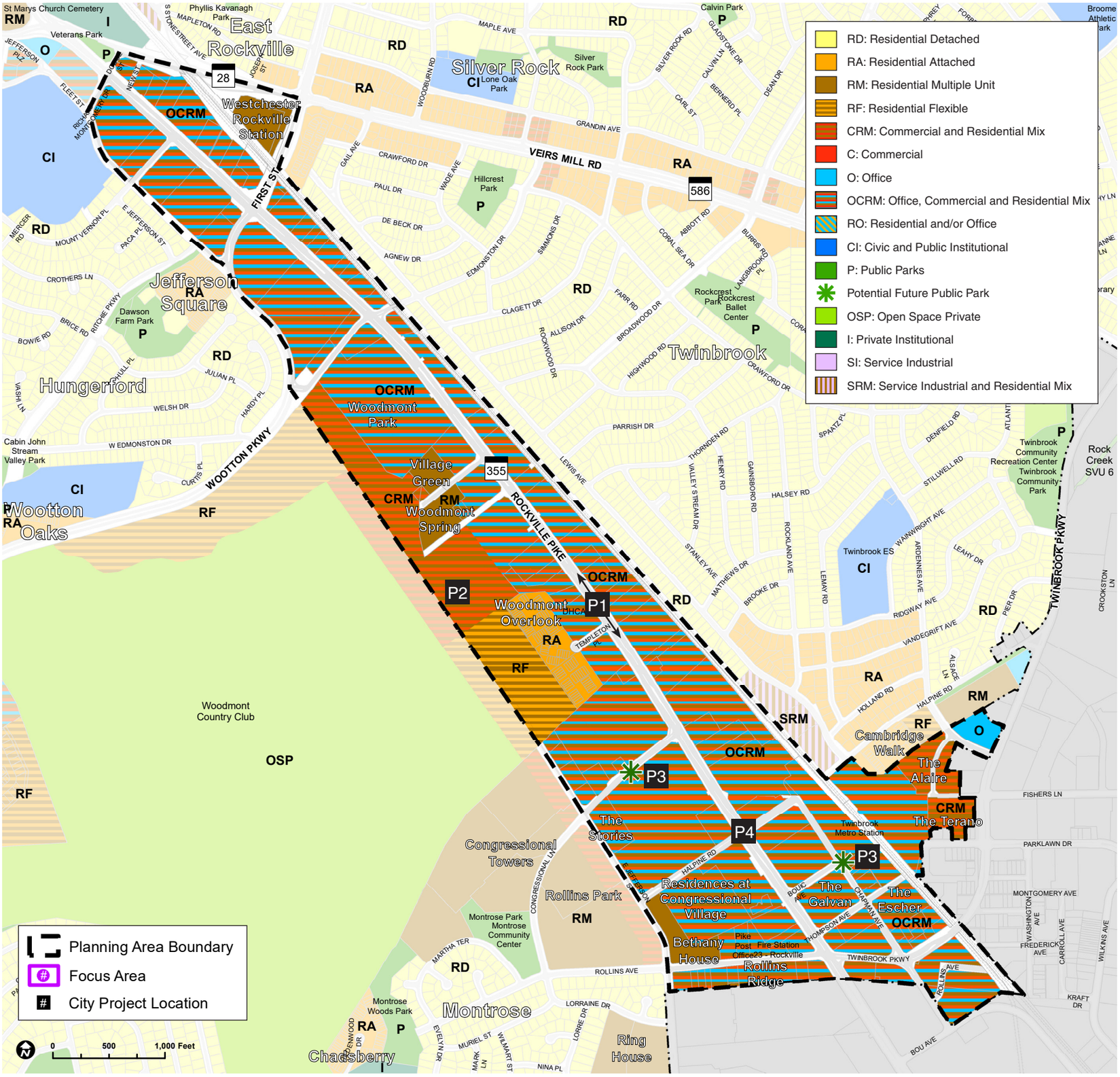
While the boulevard concept is a central element of the 2016 Plan, re-design of the Pike as a multi-way boulevard is not expected to be fully implemented, due to exceptions allowed by the plan. One exception allows for modifications to the full boulevard design for parcels on the east side of Rockville Pike in the 'north' and 'middle' sections of the planning area that are physically constrained by the CSX/Metro tracks and the Pike. The other exception stipulates that approved "Champion Projects" in the 'south' section with property frontage on Rockville Pike are not required to provide access roads or easements for access roads.

The only approved "Champion Project" as of the date of this writing (with approximately one-quarter mile of Pike frontage) does not incorporate an access road along its Pike frontage. Effectively, there will not be a continuous access road on the east side of the Pike within the planning area. However,



2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan Multi-Way Boulevard Typical Street Section. This street section is not expected to be fully realized along Rockville Pike due to space constraints and design exceptions.

Figure 66: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 9



implementation of the full boulevard concept is still possible on the west side of the Pike and continues to be supported by this plan.



The Alternative Street Section from the 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan as it applies to 'Champion Projects'.

The 2016 Pike plan also accommodates space for a future bus rapid transit (BRT) line along MD-355, as conceived by Montgomery County government and, at the time of this writing, is still being studied by the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration.

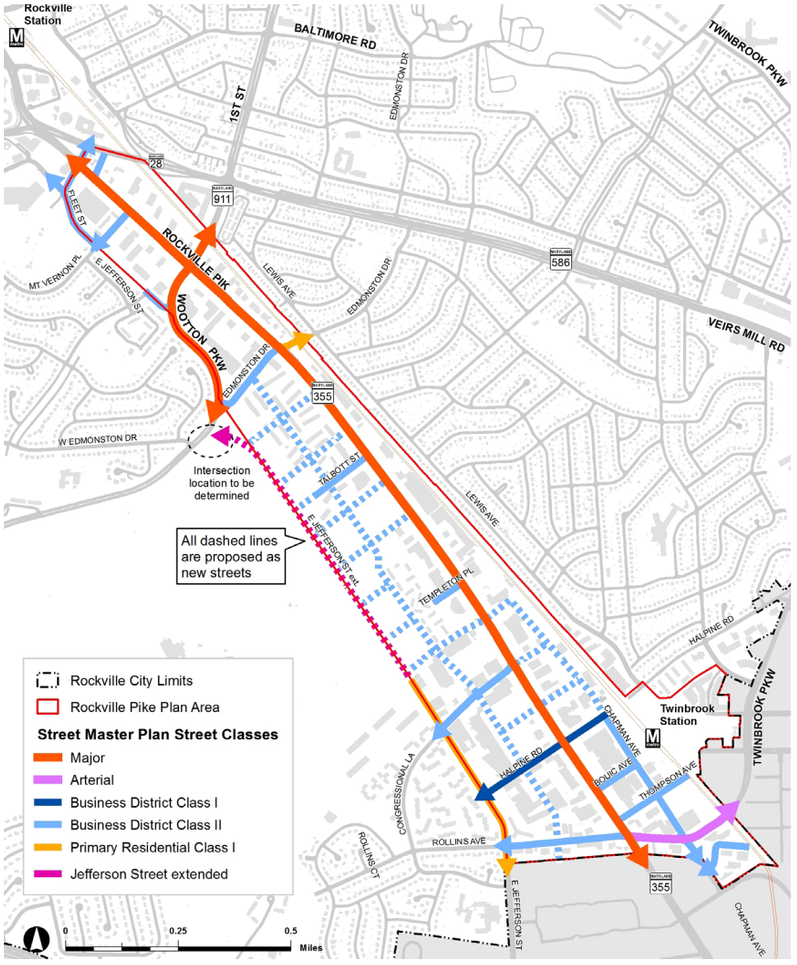
PROJECT 2 P2

Expand the street grid on Rockville Pike's west side.

The *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* calls for expansion of the street grid within the planning area to increase connectivity and travel choice, diffuse traffic congestion, space intersections for more frequent and convenient pedestrian crossing opportunities, and create a regular pattern of developable urban blocks. Most, if not all, of the new street grid will occur in conjunction with redevelopment and all new streets will be built according to the City's Road Code and Complete Streets Policy. The 2016 plan provides additional guidance regarding the design of the extension of East Jefferson Street. This plan amends the 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan's Street Master Plan by establishing that the street grid should not be required as part of any future development on the Woodmont Park apartment property in order to preserve and support continuation of the existing residential community (*See also Planning Areas 3 and 11 and Action 19.4 of the Transportation Element*).

PROJECT 3 P3

A future public park is recommended in the general location where a green asterisk is placed alongside this project label on the Land Use Policy Map of Figure 66. The asterisk indicates the City's intention to establish a public park in this vicinity, either by means of land dedication as part of a development project, purchase, land swap, or some other method, to serve existing residents and workers, as well as expected population and employment growth in the south Rockville Pike area. (*See also Policies 5 and 6 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)



2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan Street Master Plan shows proposed new streets that are envisioned by the plan in conjunction with future development.

PROJECT 4 P4

In accordance with the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*, work with Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) and Montgomery County government to improve pedestrian and bicycle access to the Twinbrook transit station with a bridge or tunnel across Rockville Pike (MD-355) at its intersection with Halpine Road.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Ensure that any amendments to the Twinbrook Commons Planned Development (PD-TC) are consistent with the policies of the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* and compatible with development in the Core portion of the planning area, west of the Twinbrook transit station. (*See also Action 10.1 of the Land Use Element and Policy 11 of the Transportation Element*)
2. Work with property owners to improve the function and aesthetics of Rockville Pike, as outlined in the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*. (*See also Policy 9 of the Economic Development Element*)
3. Amend the zoning district boundary on the property at 1601 Rockville Pike such that the building addressed as 1626 East Jefferson Street is entirely within the MXCD (Mixed-Use Corridor District) zone and not partially located in the MXCT (Mixed-Use Corridor Transition) zone.

Transportation

4. Collaborate with Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) to implement the City's Complete Streets Policy and Vision Zero Plan in the planning area to increase the safety and comfort of people traveling through the Rockville Pike corridor by foot, bike, vehicle, or other mode.
5. Collaborate with WMATA, Ride On, and MDOT SHA to locate bus stops in locations along Rockville Pike that do not encourage people to cross roads at unsafe locations. Add crosswalks and/or traffic signals, as needed, to provide safe road crossings to bus stops. (*See also Action 8.4 of the Transportation Element*)
6. At the time of development review for the properties at 1460, 1470, or 1488 Rockville Pike, a determination should be made by the city whether or how Chapman Avenue is extended. The exact location of the extension, as depicted in the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*, should not be construed as its final alignment.
7. Continue to participate in the planning effort regarding the ultimate design of a MD-355 BRT line and its station locations within the city, including bicycle and pedestrian access. (*See also Action 9.2 of the Transportation Element*)
8. Study potential locations for a bicycle and pedestrian facility over or under the CSX/Metro tracks, somewhere between Edmonston Drive and Twinbrook Parkway and work with agency partners and property owners to build the preferred option. (*See also Action 5.5 of the Transportation Element*)
9. Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left-turn movement from eastbound Edmonston Drive onto northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal. (*See also Action 20.6 of the Transportation Element*)
10. Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left-turn movement from westbound Twinbrook Parkway onto southbound MD-355, and from eastbound Rollins Avenue to northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or exclusive left turn signals. (*See also Action 20.7 of the Transportation Element*)
11. Advocate for MDOT SHA to study measures to reduce traffic congestion and increase safety for all modes at the intersection of Veirs Mill Road (MD-28/MD-586) and First Street (MD-911) and the intersection of Edmonston Drive and Rockville Pike (MD-355). (*See also Action 20.9 of the Transportation Element*)

Housing

12. Provide incentives to owners of older, market-rate multiple unit rental properties, such as older garden-style apartments, to maintain and improve their properties while preserving affordability of their existing units. (*See also action 8.7 of the Housing Element*)
13. Seek to avoid gentrification of residents and businesses when development is proposed in the planning area, through City or other agency programs and/or incentives.



Planning Area 10

MONTROSE AND NORTH FARM

Planning Area 10 consists of the neighborhoods of Montrose and North Farm and residential communities of Chadsberry, Congressional Towers, Rollins Park, and Ring House. A portion of the Woodmont Country Club separates the area into two distinct sub-areas, yet they are connected via Montrose Road. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 67.

Area Characteristics

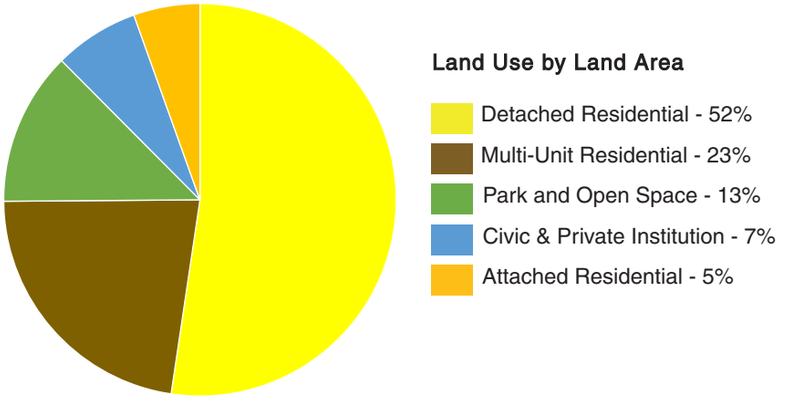
The Montrose portion of the planning area consists of single-unit detached houses, the Chadsberry townhouses, and the rental apartments of Congressional Towers and Rollins Park. The Ring House residential community, along East Jefferson Street, provides apartments exclusively for seniors. Most of the neighborhood was constructed in the early 1960s, while the Chadsberry townhouses were built in 1983-1984.

North Farm is a residential subdivision of single-unit detached homes, subdivided from a portion of the Woodmont Country Club property in the 1970s. The neighborhood was built between 1978 and 1983 with lots averaging one quarter acre in size. Vehicle access is limited to the south of the neighborhood, onto Tower Oaks Boulevard and Montrose Road.

There are three City parks in the planning area, each about six acres in size: North Farm Park, Montrose Park and Community Center, and Montrose Woods Park. There are no commercial centers in the planning area, though shopping and services are located close by, along Rockville Pike, Rollins Avenue, Halpine Road, and Congressional Lane. Several active religious institutions are located within the planning area, as well.

The planning area has good access to the regional highway network and is located near transit services, especially those who live on the east side of the Montrose neighborhood. Many Montrose residents walk to the Twinbrook transit station, across Rockville Pike, for their work commutes or use Montrose Road to access nearby I-270 by car, to destinations throughout the region.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 10



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	481
Attached Residential	143
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	1,053
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	326
Total units	**2,003**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.



Residential homes in North Farm

Planning History

There is no neighborhood plan for this planning area and none is recommended.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;
- Potential redevelopment of the Rollins Park and Congressional Towers rental apartments;
- Traffic and pedestrian and bicyclist safety on Montrose Road and Tower Oaks Boulevard, including speeding.
- Need to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety in and around the planning area and connections to Twinbrook Metro Station, especially across East Jefferson Street and Rockville Pike;
- Need to address limited vehicular access into and out of the Montrose neighborhood;
- Concern over impacts of future redevelopment in the Rockville Pike corridor on the Montrose neighborhood;
- Interest in impacts and benefits of the future potential extension of East Jefferson Street through neighboring Woodmont Country Club;
- Need for additional open space and recreation facilities available to the community, including a desire for broader use of an expanded Montrose Community Center and/or enhancement of the Montrose Woods Park.

'Cut-through' traffic in the Montrose neighborhood, between Montrose Road and Rockville Pike, is a long-running concern for neighborhood residents. Turning movement restrictions have been implemented over the years on Montrose Road to limit access to the neighborhood in attempts to address this issue. However, these restrictions have made access to the neighborhood challenging for residents. Restricting 'cut-through' traffic also leads drivers to only a handful of major roads and intersections, causing congestion and delay on these roads. With the completion of Montrose Parkway in the late 2000s, Montrose Road today (north of the Montrose Parkway bypass) tends to be used more by local traffic and these restrictions can prove time-consuming and burdensome.

The Montrose Community Center building is used almost exclusively as a childcare center and is not available to serve the needs of the general community, while the adjacent Montrose Park is one of the most heavily used parks in the city. More demands will be placed on the park in the future, given the lack of parks in this part of the city and the rapidly increasing population in the nearby Rockville Pike corridor. Additional indoor community space and outdoor park space is expected to be needed in the future to serve the existing and future population of the planning area.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Rollins Park and Congressional Towers

This area encompasses the Rollins Park garden apartments and townhouses and the seven-story concrete and steel apartments at Congressional Towers, as well as the private swim club associated with these properties at 1621 Martha Terrace (Residents of the Montrose community are eligible to be members of the private swim club). As these properties age, and their maintenance and marketability become more challenging, a phased redevelopment of the residential apartments and townhouses may take place.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for residential apartment development



Rollins Park Apartments

through the RM (Residential Multiple Unit) land use designation. This designation is consistent with the existing use on the property, and also with redevelopment to higher density residential units in the future. Its frontage with East Jefferson Street is planned for a mix of commercial uses and residential units through the Commercial Residential Mix (CRM) land use designation but does not require a specific amount of commercial development. The Comprehensive Plan envisions neighborhood-serving commercial along East Jefferson Street that can better serve the residential neighborhood to the west than the regional shopping destinations currently found along the Pike. The extent and depth of redevelopment under the RM or CRM designation should be considered at the time of a future development application. This plan is opposed to redevelopment that would result in resident displacement or gentrification, and views the existing garden apartments as a valuable asset.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the strip of land along the west side of East Jefferson Street, designated as CRM in the Land Use Policy Map, from RMD-25 (Residential Medium Density) to MXCT (Mixed-Use Corridor Transition), to allow for redevelopment with a mix of commercial and residential uses. This new zone would mirror the zoning adopted on the east side of East Jefferson Street, as an implementation of the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*. A new, higher-density residential zone, limited to residential uses, is appropriate for the remainder of the site to permit new investment and upgrades, though it should not result in resident displacement (*See also Policy 4 of the Land Use Element*).

Urban Design Recommendations

Any redevelopment should include a mix of housing types: high-rise apartments overlooking the golf course and a mix of low- to medium-height buildings that feature appropriate transitions between the new community and the adjacent single-unit detached homes on Rollins Avenue and Martha Terrace. Units providing multiple bedrooms would be encouraged, to continue to house families with children. A requirement of 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) should be applied to any redevelopment.

Redevelopment proposals should establish a more functional street network with adjacent blocks, offering direct connections to the Twinbrook transit station and surrounding



Montrose Community Center

areas. Attention should be paid to creation of new and improved pedestrian and bicycle paths to maximize non-auto mode use in the neighborhood.

Adequate public open space, trails, and recreation amenities should be included as part of any redevelopment plans for the Rollins Park and Congressional Tower properties. These amenities should complement and, where feasible, connect with park or open space areas in the surrounding area.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

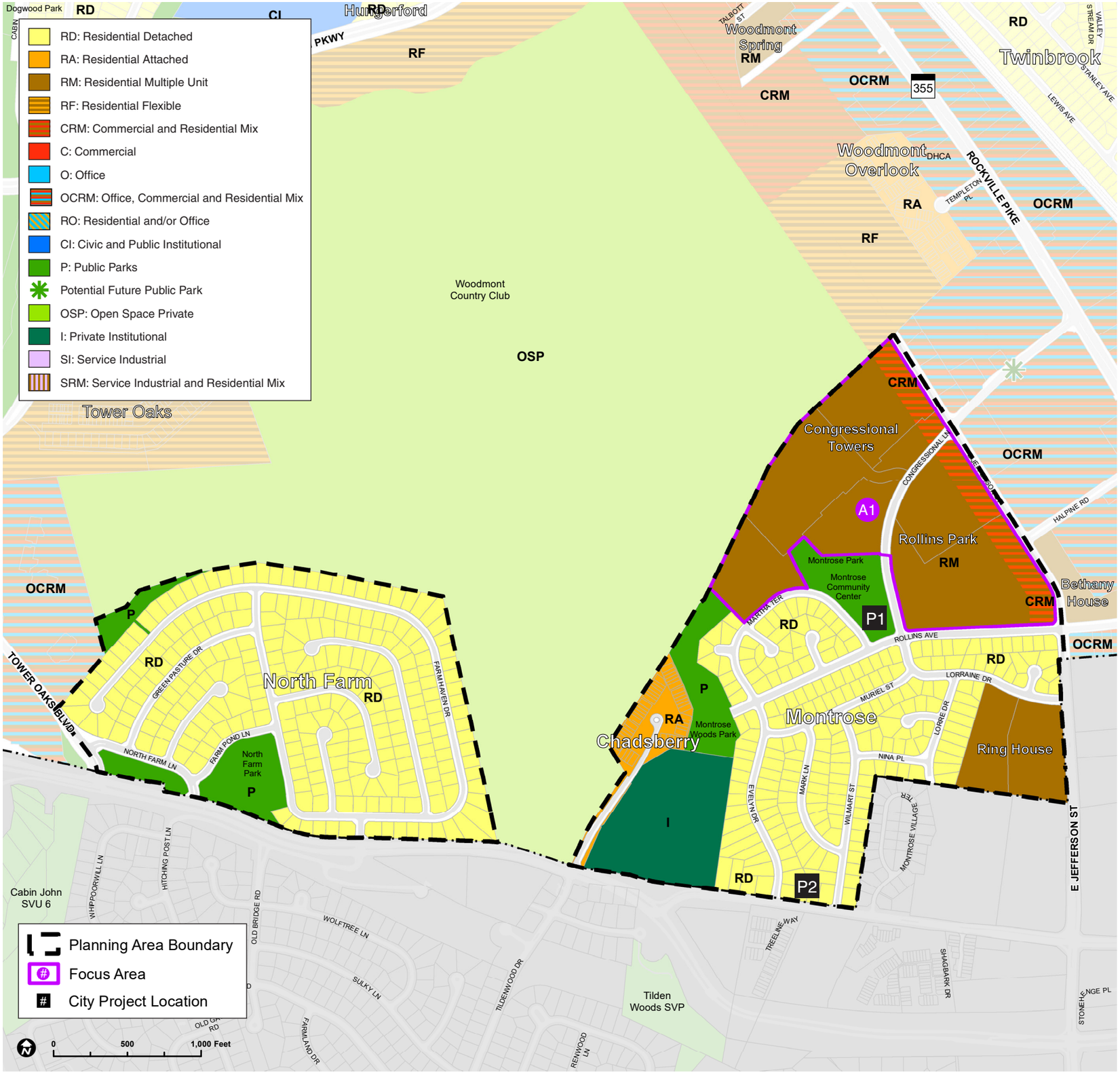
PROJECT 1 P1

Expand and improve the Montrose Community Center and Montrose Park, to provide a recreation amenity for current and future neighborhood residents. Explore creative interim options for additional space at the community center until a long-term solution can be found and funded.

PROJECT 2 P2

Review traffic access and circulation in the Montrose area to determine critical issues and what improvements can be made to alleviate them. The City of Rockville will work with the Montrose neighborhood before proposing any changes regarding traffic and bicycle and pedestrian safety in and

Figure 67: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 10



around the Montrose neighborhood, whether to City or County streets.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Maintain the residential character of the planning area.
2. Focus on improving factors that enhance quality of life.
3. If the southern area of Woodmont Country Club is proposed for development, street and path connections to, and compatible land uses with, the North Farm and Montrose neighborhoods should be encouraged. The redeveloped area should also be considered to join the North Farm and Montrose planning area to enhance its cohesion.

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Planning Area 11
WOODMONT

Planning Area 11 is a new planning area. It is unusual in that it is defined solely by a large majority of the Woodmont Country Club property. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 68.

Area Characteristics

The entirety of Planning Area 11 consists of Woodmont Country Club, a member-owned club with two 18-hole golf courses and recreational facilities serving its members and guests. However, the entire club property is not situated within the planning area since one portion is located within Planning Area 9 (Rockville Pike) and another, the Wootton Parcel, is within Planning Area 3 (Hungerford, New Mark Commons, Lynfield, and Fireside Park). A visual comparison of the 459-acre Woodmont Country Club property and the smaller 397-acre planning area is shown to the right.

Planning History

The Woodmont Country Club purchased the 515-acre Rosemont Farm on the then-rural, two-lane Rockville Pike in 1948 and then relocated here from its previous site, adjacent to the National Institutes of Health campus in Bethesda. Since its opening in Rockville, the club has expanded and improved its golf courses, buildings, and amenities. Portions of the original Rosemont Farm acreage have been sold by the club for development over the years, including the North Farm neighborhood and several residential and commercial properties along Rockville Pike.

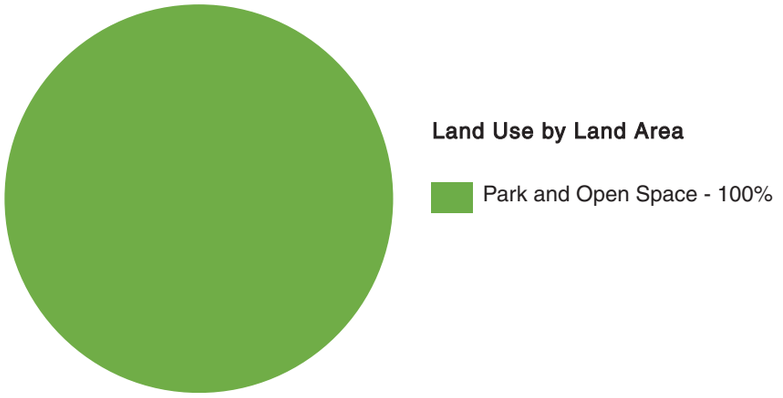
The *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan* noted that neither the City nor the Club anticipated or desired redevelopment of the club property. If, however, a golf course club was no longer seen as viable, it should be redeveloped in its entirety as a Comprehensive Planned Development. Through redevelopment, a minimum of 35% open space was recommended for both passive and active recreational use, with a maximum of a 0.5 Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) in non-residential space and no more than 6.5 dwelling units per buildable acre. Recommendations also encouraged the preservation of on-site historic and environmental resources and for multi-modal site circulation and access.

The *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* incorporated the eastern portion of the Woodmont property, adjacent



Aerial image of the Woodmont Country Club property (white line) and the planning area boundary (dashed red line). (2017 USDA NAIP aerial)

Existing Land Use in Planning Area 11



11



Entrance to Woodmont Country Club from MD-355 (Rockville Pike)

to Rockville Pike, into its planning area and policies. That plan established the conditions by which East Jefferson Street would be extended from its current terminus at the Club's southern boundary, just north of Congressional Lane, northward to meet Wootton Parkway. The 2016 plan states that the roadway extension should be considered in conjunction with any development that produces a significant impact on the Pike's intersections with Congressional Lane or Twinbrook Parkway. Significant development on the Woodmont property within the *Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* area would also trigger the creation of a new street grid with small blocks to encourage pedestrian activity and alternatives to vehicular traffic. The *Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* indicates that the City should seek the creation of a large active park in the context of any larger-scale redevelopment of the club.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Preservation of the original historic structures and setting of Rosemont Farm;
- Potential for redevelopment of the Woodmont Country Club in whole or in part, including the Wootton Parcel that is part of Planning Area 3;
- Interest in the extension of East Jefferson Street, from its current terminus, north of Congressional Lane, through the Woodmont Country Club to terminate at Wootton Parkway, as a part of any significant future redevelopment of the Country Club, while considering impacts on surrounding and potentially affected neighborhoods and roads;
- Protection of sensitive environmental resources, including forests, streams, and wildlife habitat, especially during any future development;
- Creation of new active community amenity, such as a recreational park with facilities, as a part of any significant development.

The Country Club today has an active membership and, based on meetings with club officials during the Rockville 2040 and *Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* efforts, intends to continue its current operations into the foreseeable future. The City does not anticipate or desire redevelopment of the property in this Comprehensive Plan. However, if all or a significant portion of the site is proposed for development, such a project should be considered in a broader context, which may include the approval of a conceptual master plan in the context of a planned development. Redevelopment of the Wootton Parcel (See Planning Area 3) would not trigger the need for a plan for the broader site.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Future frontage of East Jefferson Street extended

This area is located immediately west of the planning area boundary that is shared with Planning Area 9 (Rockville Pike). It reflects a portion of the corridor of the future extension of East Jefferson Street, from where it currently ends, just north of Congressional Lane, northward to Wootton Parkway.

The East Jefferson Street extension was adopted as a planned roadway in the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan* and remains in this plan to provide a parallel alternative to Rockville Pike. According to the Rockville Pike Plan, the East Jefferson Street extension should be considered in conjunction with any development or redevelopment that produces a significant impact on Rockville Pike intersections. The roadway extension approximately follows the shared boundary between PA 9 and PA 11. Policy recommendations in this planning area address the western frontage of the planned roadway extension. (*See also the Rockville Pike*

Neighborhood Plan for more on the East Jefferson Street extension)

Land Use Policy Map

The northern section of the area is designated CRM (Commercial Residential Mix) to encourage mixed-use development. The southern section is designated RF (Residential Flexible) to allow a range of residential development types, since the area is closer to other solely residential uses. The boundary between these two designations should be roughly even with the northern property boundary of the Woodmont Overlook townhouse community. These designations match those in Planning Area 9 (Rockville Pike) with similar types and scale of redevelopment.

Zoning Recommendation

No change in zoning is recommended in this plan from the current R-400 (Residential Estate) zone, since any future substantially scaled development of the Woodmont Country Club that might implement the land use policy designation will be reviewed in a more holistic way when, and if, it is proposed.

Urban Design Recommendations

Require a street plan that provides for adequate dispersal of site-generated traffic as part of any large-scale redevelopment scenario. The street plan should identify access to the future East Jefferson Street extension, as outlined in the *2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan*, together with a pedestrian and bikeway connection to the Millennium Trail along Wootton Parkway, and to other bikeways designated in the City's *2017 Bikeway Master Plan*. Development should be sensitive to on-site environmental and historical resources, as well as to neighboring properties.

AREA 2 A2

Woodmont Country Club

With the exception of the portion of the country club identified in AREA 1, above, the remainder of the country club property within this planning area is designated OSP (Open Space Private) due to its current use as a private golf course and recreational facility. The current zoning is R-400 (Residential Estate), largely as a placeholder for the private golf course, and is not recommended to change.

However, if any substantially scaled part of the country club property, or its entirety, is proposed for development as anything other than its current use, a conceptual master plan is recommended that considers the relationship of the proposed development with any potential future phases. Such a plan could be conducted in the context of a planned development and would need to include direct community engagement beginning early in the process. (*See also Policy 21 of the Land Use Element*)

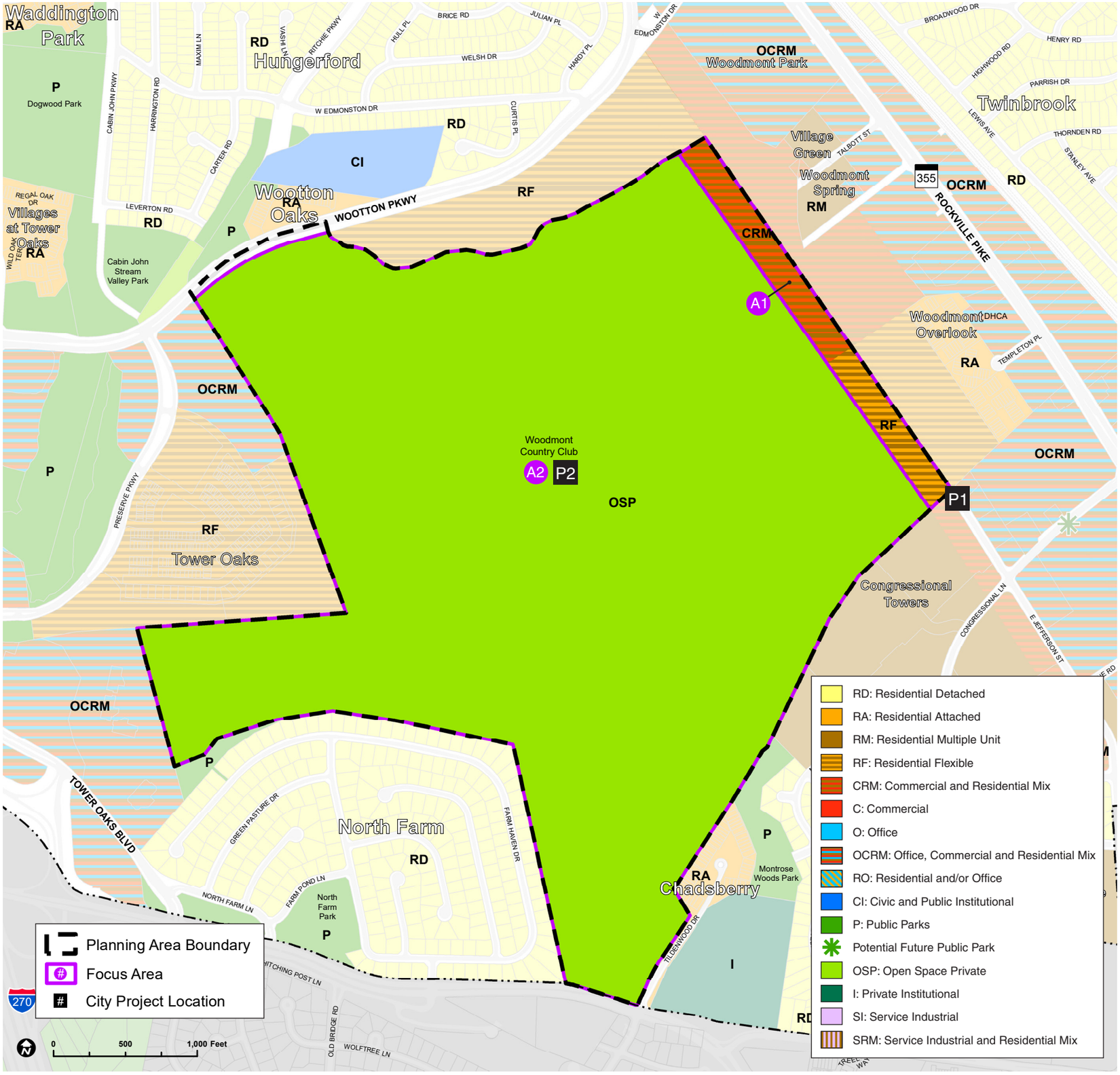
Land Use & Urban Design

- Any proposed redevelopment or construction that impacts the Lyddane-Bradley House should seek to



Woodmont Country Club golf course, looking north from the current terminus of East Jefferson Street.

Figure 68: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 11



preserve the structure and its environmental setting.

- Any proposed redevelopment should protect existing streams, wetlands and floodplains on the site.
- Any proposed development should preserve existing tree stands and forested areas to the greatest extent possible (*See also Action 10.4 of the Environment Element*).
- Any conceptual master plan prepared for the property should consider inclusion of a large-scale community amenity, such as an educational, sports, or cultural facility. This property would present an unusual opportunity, should the country club cease its operations.
- Any conceptual master plan prepared for the property should retain a minimum of 35% open space for both passive and active recreational use, including any wetland, stream buffer, and/or floodplains that are on the site.
- If the southern area of Woodmont Country Club is proposed for development, street and path connections to, and compatible land uses with, the North Farm and Montrose neighborhoods should be encouraged. The redeveloped area should also be considered to join the North Farm and Montrose planning area to enhance its cohesion.

11

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

As part of any significant development or conceptual master plan of the Woodmont Country Club property, plan for the extension of East Jefferson Street, from its current terminus, north of Congressional Lane, through the Woodmont Country Club to terminate at Wootton Parkway. An extension should specifically take into account the impacts on all surrounding and potentially affected neighborhoods, and all of the surrounding roads, including but not limited to Rockville Pike, Wootton Parkway, East Jefferson Street south of the country club property, Halpine Road, Congressional Lane, Montrose Parkway, Montrose Road, Fortune Terrace, Seven Locks Road, and West Edmonston Drive. Under all circumstances, however, the alignment and road design should be protective of existing residences and take into account impacts to the club. The exact location of the extension, as depicted in the 2016 Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan, should not be construed as its final alignment. (*See also Planning Areas 3 and 9 and Action 19.4 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 2 P2

A future public park (or parks) and/or a community amenity (such as a community center) should be part of any significant development or conceptual master plan of the club property, to serve the expected population and/or employment growth. The locations of these community assets will be determined as part of the planning process for the development. (*See also Policies 5 and 6 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)

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Planning Area 12
TOWER OAKS

Tower Oaks is an area consisting of offices, residences, and large natural open space that has been built up over time, largely under the direction of a planned development. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 69.

This Comprehensive Plan supersedes the *1985 I-270 North of Montrose Road Neighborhood Plan*, as well as all previous policies for the planning area in the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*, but does not alter the approved Tower Oaks Planned Development and its relevant development agreements and subsequent amendments.

Area Characteristics

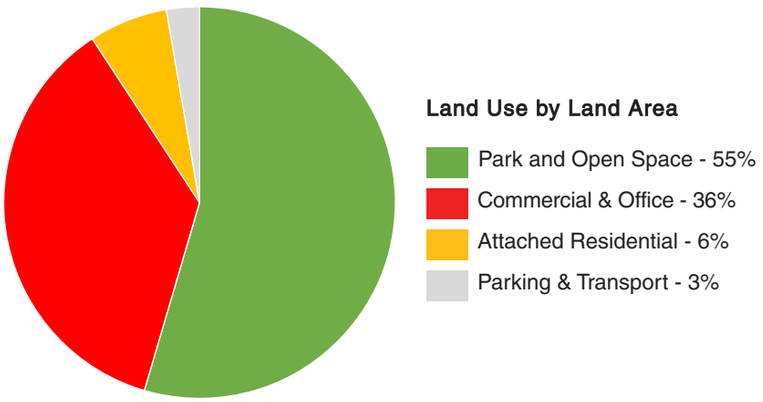
The planning area is composed of office and research & development buildings, two restaurants, and two residential communities. The Villages at Tower Oaks is an established townhome community, just south of Dogwood Park, and a new residential development is nearing completion on Preserve Parkway, with detached and attached homes, multiple unit buildings, and community open spaces and amenities. Several undeveloped, forested properties and a City-owned stream valley park are also located here.

Properties in Tower Oaks enjoy ready access to the I-270 highway corridor and the east-west arterials of Wootton Parkway and Montrose Road; one of the reasons that a major office cluster was planned here in the 1980s (*see Planning History, below*). However, the market for commercial office space was never strong enough to lead the primary property owner to complete the entire planned development. As a result, a new residential community, The Preserve, was approved in a portion of the planning area to replace previously entitled office space and was under construction during the preparation of this plan.

Planning History

The *I-270 North of Montrose Road Neighborhood Plan* was approved in 1985 to lay out recommendations for a development agreement and master plan with the land owner and to amend the City's 1970 Master Plan land use map. The neighborhood plan included a list of public improvements to be carried out by the City, as well as improvements to be completed by the developer, as the project progressed. All required improvements to City infrastructure are now complete.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 12



Residential Dwelling Units	
Attached Residential	136
Total units	**136**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.



Office building in Tower Oaks



Residential townhouses in The Villages at Tower Oaks

Tower Oaks was one of the last large parcels of undeveloped land within the city limits at the time its 192-acre Comprehensive Planned Development (CPD) was approved in 1987. Situated along I-270, it was then regarded as one of the most desirable areas in Montgomery County for a suburban office park. The Tower Oaks CPD called for 2 million square feet of office space, a hotel, restaurants, 275 dwelling units, and a 12-acre lake for recreational purposes and stormwater management. The original plan has been amended three times, eliminating the lake and altering the land use mix based on changing market trends, and has never been fully implemented. At the time of this writing, it is uncertain whether the remaining entitled parcels will be developed according to the approved planned development.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Concern about the current weak market demand for office space;
- A desire for future development that is better connected to the surrounding community;
- Interest in minimizing adverse environmental impacts from development of remaining natural areas on forests, habitat fragmentation, and species displacement;
- Concern about the relatively slow pace of site development.

The Tower Oaks Development Agreement has been amended on a site-by-site ad hoc basis, most recently by converting a site previously planned for 755,000 square feet of office space to 375 residential units (a mix of single-unit detached homes, townhouses/row houses and condominium apartments).

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Forested tracts north of Tower Oaks Drive

This focus area consists of two parcels owned by the Tower Companies, the entity that has developed much of the planning area. The 20-acre parcel to the south is a part of the Tower Oaks Planned Development (PD-TO), while the 9.75-acre parcel to the north is a separate property.

The City of Rockville holds an easement on a portion of the northern parcel in this focus area for a stormwater management facility; a constructed wetland built in mitigation for stormwater disturbance caused by the construction of Wootton Parkway. In 1991, the City entered into individual agreements with the residents of Don Mills Court regarding access to the driveway for the City-maintained stormwater facility. The agreements remain in effect for as long as the agreement signers own and reside at their respective residence(s) on Don Mills Court, plus five years. Eight of the nine homeowners entered agreements with the City. As of June 2017, four agreements remain in force. Until such agreements expire and, unless the City approves an appropriate development on this site that retains the stormwater management facility and is compatible with the adjacent neighborhood, this parcel is likely to remain undeveloped.

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for a range of residential densities and housing types, including townhouses, apartment buildings, and other attached houses, through the RF (Residential Flexible) designation.

Zoning Recommendations

Rezone the northern parcel from R-90 (Single Unit Detached Dwelling, Restricted Residential) to RMD-25 (Residential Medium Density). The southern parcel is not recommended for rezoning because it is within the PD-TO (Planned Development - Tower Oaks) overlay zone, which was established as part of approving the Tower Oaks Planned Development project.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Establish Cabin John Stream Valley Park as a publicly accessible open space amenity.

Cabin John Branch Creek and the City's Cabin John Stream Valley Park run through the planning area. Adjacent to the park is a privately owned stream valley parcel and stormwater management facility. As part of the Tower Oaks Planned Development, the developer intends to transfer ownership of the private stream valley parcel, between Wootton Parkway and Preserve Parkway, to the City, expanding the footprint of the municipal Stream Valley Park. The City should consider the most appropriate way to use this resource to serve the growing residential community as it has the potential to be an attractive and functional amenity as publicly accessible open space.

12

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

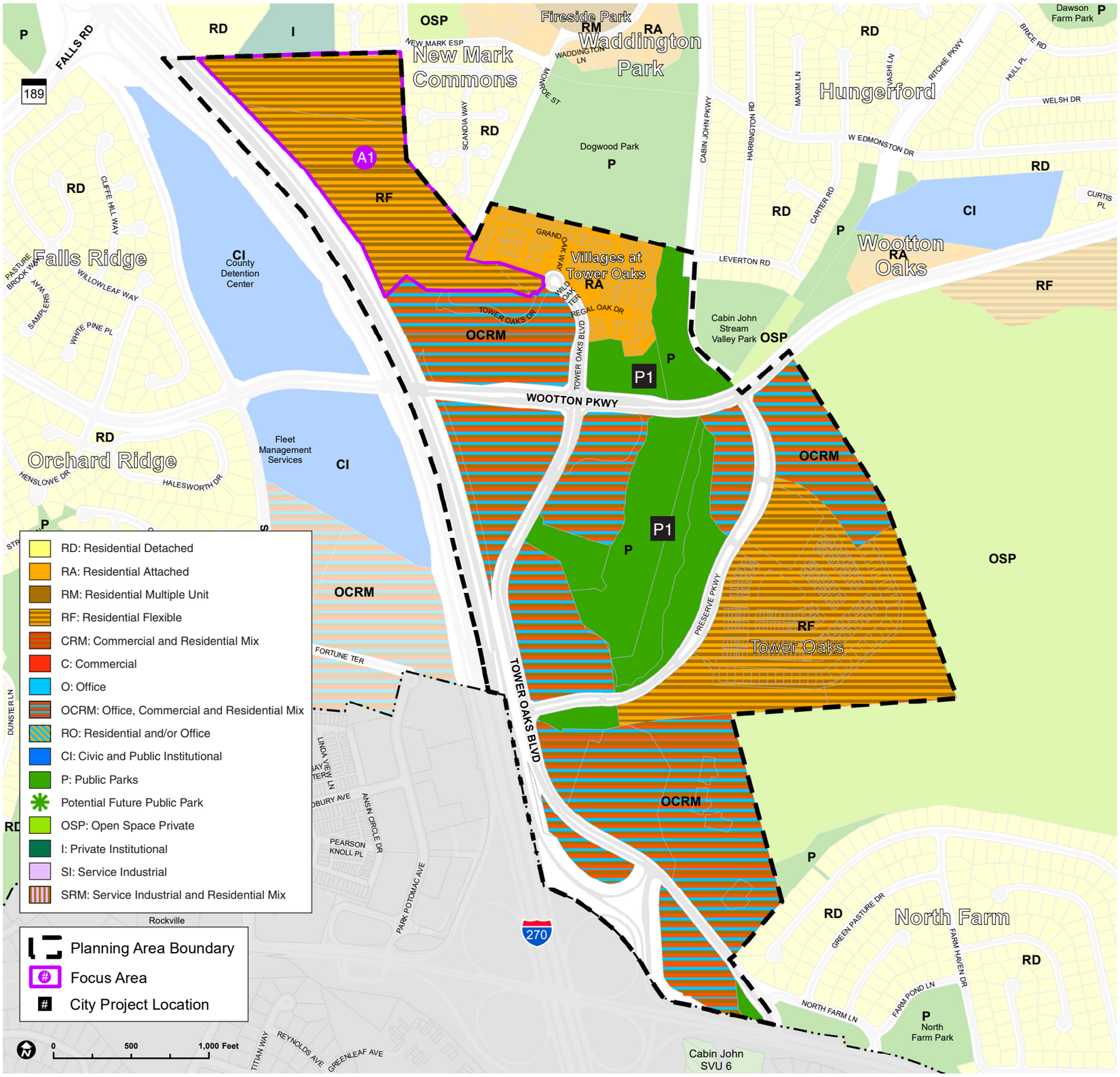
Land Use & Urban Design

1. If the Tower Oaks area continues to evolve away from its 1980s vision of a suburban, highway-oriented office park with hotels, toward more of a residential district, care must be given to seek cohesion among the various projects. Preservation of natural features and new open space, bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and other community amenities and features (including a community center) should be incorporated into new projects, helping to serve the entire area, as was envisioned with the original Comprehensive Planned Development (CPD). Though the CPD and its relevant development agreements remain in force, adjustments may be made to the original plan that would be consistent with an equivalent zone of MXE (Mixed-Use Employment).
2. Any additional proposed conversion of entitled non-residential development under the Tower Oaks Planned Development to residential use must be assessed on the basis of transportation capacity (both vehicular and non-vehicular) that will accommodate a greater number of residents while considering ways to minimize potential adverse environmental impacts.
3. New developments should be designed to protect and enhance existing forest stands and tree canopy to the greatest extent possible. (*See also Action 10.4 of the Environment Element*)
4. Future development projects in the planning area should incorporate community-oriented elements, such as greater transit access, commercial destinations, outdoor open space and amenities, and non-vehicular connections to nearby activity centers, including Park Potomac and Rockville Town Center.

Transportation

5. Consider new bicycle facilities (e.g., protected bike lanes, shared use paths, bike parking) throughout the entire planning area as part of future updates to the *2017 Bikeway Master Plan*.
6. Maintain a safe and comfortable bike and pedestrian crossing of Wootton Parkway at its intersection with Preserve Parkway.
7. Assess and, if warranted, reduce, posted speed limits on Wootton Parkway to ensure safety and mobility for all modes. (*See also Action 19.10 of the Transportation Element*)
8. Monitor Montgomery County government's consideration of renaming Thomas S. Wootton High School due to its namesake's connection to slavery and consider renaming Wootton Parkway in coordination with the County's actions.

Figure 69: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 12





Planning Area 13

POTOMAC WOODS, POTOMAC SPRINGS, FALLS RIDGE AND ORCHARD RIDGE

Planning Area 13 is a collection of single-unit detached neighborhoods in located in southwestern Rockville, including Potomac Woods, Potomac Springs, Falls Ridge, and Orchard Ridge, with several major County facilities and commercial properties along its eastern border with I-270. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 70.

Area Characteristics

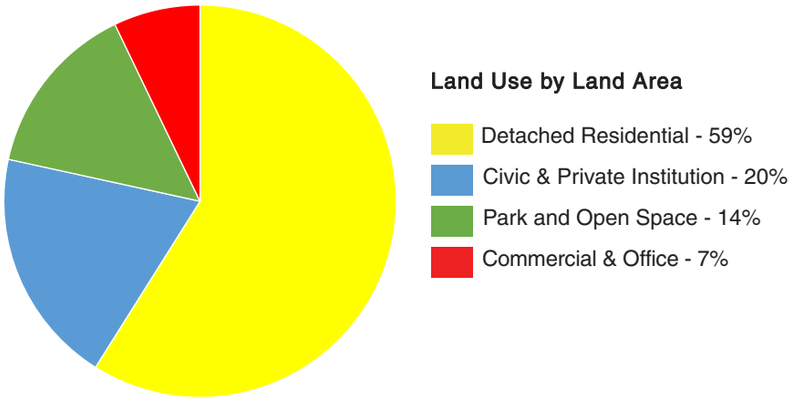
Rockville's residential growth began to move westward from its original town center in the early 1960s, following previous rapid post-war growth east of the Metropolitan Branch railroad tracks. Built during decades of economic growth in the city, many of the subdivisions in Planning Area 13 were developed with bigger houses, sited on larger lots, than those built in Rockville in the earlier decades.

Interstate 70-S (now I-270) was completed in this portion of the county in 1960, making land near its highway interchanges with Montrose Road and Route 28 (Falls Road) highly desirable. Most residential homes in the planning area were built in response to this new highway access, between the 1960s and 1980s. Its residential subdivisions are stable and well-kept and no major changes are expected to their residential character over the coming decades.

The predominant street pattern in the planning area is of curvilinear streets and culs-de-sac. This pattern results in limited vehicle travel options and a concentration of traffic on four-lane arterial roadways. Irregularly-shaped lots at the bulbs of each cul-de-sac reduce the overall density of these subdivisions; the planning area has among the lowest residential densities (dwelling units per acre) in Rockville.

City-owned parks in the planning area include Potomac Woods (42 acres), Orchard Ridge (1.7 acres), as well as the Millennium Trail linear park and shared use path. These public parks offer a variety of recreational and passive leisure opportunities for the area's residents.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 13



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	769
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	32
Total units	**801**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Planning History

In 2018, the City retained a consultant, Eureka Facts, to evaluate the community's level of support for constructing a new community recreation center in Rockville, west of I-270 and south of Hurley Avenue, and if supported, identify the best location and amenities for the new center. The study results indicated moderate community support for a new recreation center and/or improving existing facilities.

There is no neighborhood plan for this planning area and none is recommended.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;



Residential homes in the planning area.

- Absence of indoor City-owned community gathering area for communities in the southwest portion of Rockville;
- Mitigating and managing impacts, such as traffic, noise and visual, from continuing operations of the Montgomery County Detention Center and Montgomery County Department of Transportation Technical Center on Seven Locks Road and remaining up-to-date about any potential future plans for the facility;
- Manage the traffic impacts on adjacent neighborhoods of redevelopment on the commercial properties along Seven Locks Road, Wootton Parkway and Fortune Terrace;
- Addressing traffic congestion on area arterial roads and I-270 interchanges;
- Improving bicycle and pedestrian safety on major thoroughfares.

The Montgomery County Detention Center is located on a 26-acre site between Seven Locks Road and I-270. It currently operates as a booking, intake, and short-term inmate housing facility to support the courthouses in downtown Rockville. A Montgomery County police sub-station is located on the site, as well. A viewshed easement is established along the west side of Seven Locks Road, between the residential neighborhood of Falls Ridge and the Detention Center, to maintain a landscaped, visual buffer between the two uses.

South of Wootton Parkway, Montgomery County Department of Transportation operates the Seven Locks Technical Center, which provides vehicle and highway maintenance support on a 19-acre site. The County District One police station moved from this facility in 2013, however, the County intends to retain both the Detention Center and Technical Center and has indicated an interest in creating a plan for additional social services on the properties.

The planning area's street pattern results in vehicle access to neighborhoods from the key arterials of Seven Locks Road, Falls Road, Wootton Parkway and Montrose Road (outside of the city). Wootton Parkway serves as a major east-west arterial from Glen Mill Road (outside this Planning Area). This limited access restricts 'cut-through' traffic on neighborhood streets, yet increases traffic on primary travel routes, particularly at peak travel times. Residents expressed concerns during the Rockville 2040 effort about pedestrian and bicycle safety on major thoroughfares, given heavy vehicle traffic at peak times and higher speeds at times when there is less congestion. The planning area's street pattern means that automobile use is required for almost all trips outside the immediate neighborhood, though the County's Ride On and WMATA's Metrobus services connect the neighborhoods to Town Center and Metro Stations.

The planning area is home to the large, active Potomac Woods Park, as well as the smaller Orchard Ridge park (currently without parking} and Millennium Trail linear park and shared use path. However, some residential parcels are not within walking distance of an entrance point to a park or recreational facility, defined as one-quarter mile, partly because of the configuration of neighborhood streets.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Seven Locks Plaza (1065 Seven Locks Road), 1201 Seven Locks Road, and 11511 Fortune Terrace.

This focus area includes three commercial properties. The large size and aged developments of these properties make them attractive for future infill development or redevelopment.

Land Use Policy Map

These properties are planned for mixed-use development with OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix), allowing a mix of office, commercial, and residential uses.

Zoning Recommendation

No change in the current zoning of MXCD (Mixed-Use Corridor District) is recommended.

Urban Design Recommendations

Visual and noise buffering along I-270 may be needed, particularly if residential uses are proposed adjacent to the interstate. Redevelopment should also require improvements to Fortune Terrace and/or Seven Locks Road, as applicable, including completion of the sidewalk network. The developer should provide funding for, or construct, such buffering as is deemed necessary.



View looking along Fortune Terrace from Seven Locks Road

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Pursue acquisition of the vacant, wooded property at the end of Locks Pond Court, adjacent to Potomac Woods Park, to expand the existing park.

PROJECT 2 P2

Improve the walking, biking and rolling paths from the Orchard Ridge and Potomac Woods neighborhoods, through City parks and along public streets, to better connect the neighborhoods to Seven Locks Road and the Park Potomac development.

PROJECT 3 P3

Advocate for Montgomery County government to complete a sidewalk in the near-term on the north side of Montrose Road, between Seven Locks Road and Falls Road, and to make a sidewalk connection that links Montrose Road with the City sidewalk network that begins at the city boundary on Stratton Drive.

PROJECT 4 P4

Study the potential for a community node at the intersection of Falls Road and Wootton Parkway, should the existing church cease to continue operating. (*See Figure 6 of the Land Use Element*)

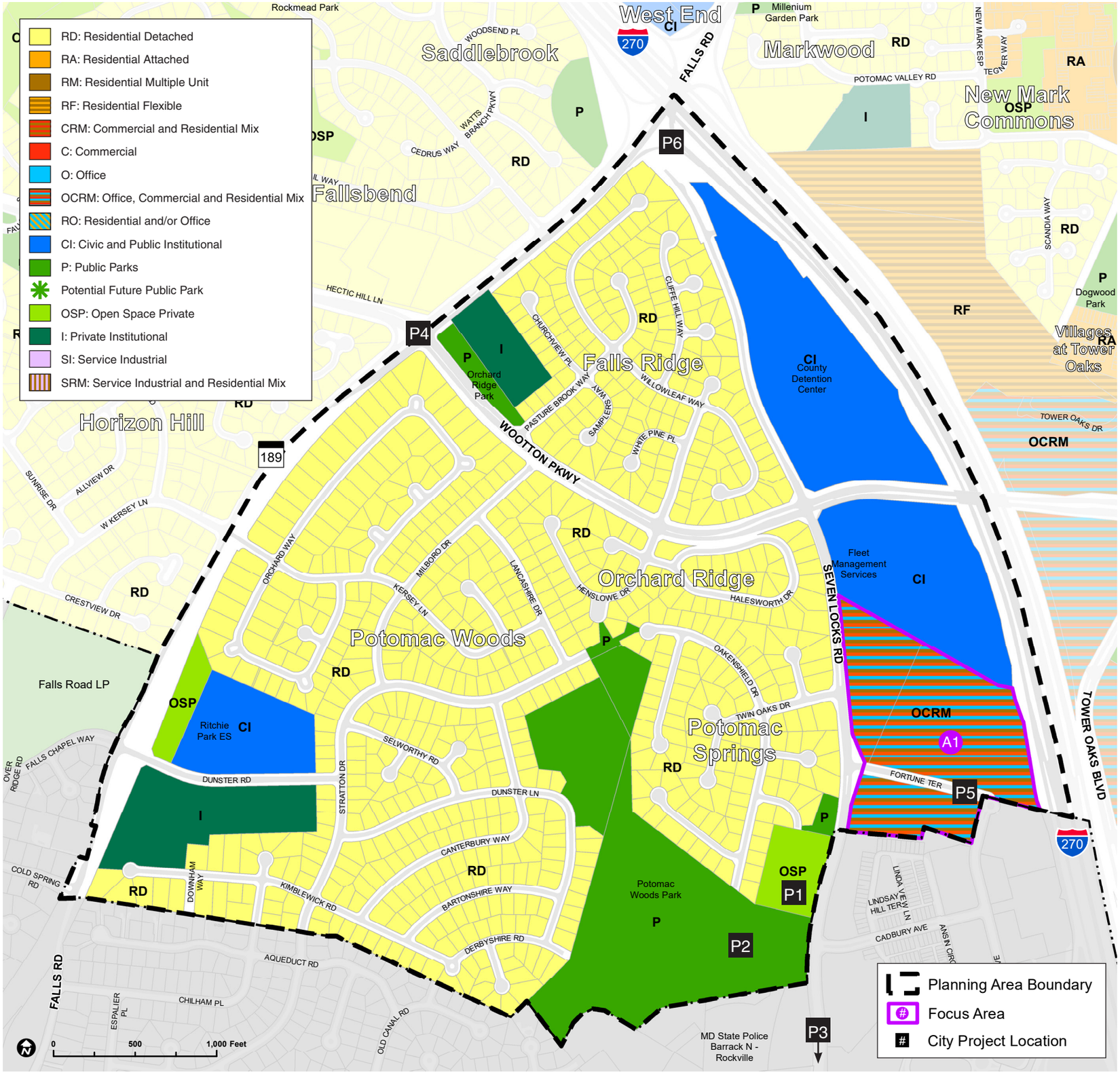
PROJECT 5 P5

Consider changing the street classification of Fortune Terrace from Primary Industrial to either Business District Class I or II if redevelopment with residential and/or commercial uses occurs. Re-construction under a Business District class road would allow for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as landscape buffers, that the Primary Industrial classification does not require.

PROJECT 6 P6

Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential improvements at the I-270 interchange with Falls Road (MD-189) that increase safety, visibility, and mobility for all modes, such as improved visibility at off ramps, safer lane movements, and bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements. (*See also Action 20.3 of the Transportation Element*)

Figure 70: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 13



Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Maintain the residential character of the planning area.
2. Focus on improving factors that enhance quality of life.
3. Work with Montgomery County government to maintain a visual buffer between the Montgomery County Detention Center and the adjacent residential neighborhood, as well as to reduce light pollution, inmate release directly to Seven Locks Road, and other impacts.

Transportation

4. Study potential approaches to relieving congestion on Wootton Parkway, west of I-270, focused on smaller-scale projects instead of increased capacity through road widening. (*See also Action 19.2 of the Transportation Element*)
5. Collaborate with Montgomery County government and MDOT SHA to connect the Carl Henn Millennium Trail with the Montgomery County bicycle network and trail system, south along Falls Road from the city limits, ultimately, as far as the C&O Canal Towpath. (*See also Action 5.6 of the Transportation Element*)



View looking at the intersection of Falls Road and Wootton Parkway from Wootton Parkway

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Planning Area 14

ROCKSHIRE AND FALLSMEAD

Planning Area 14 is a large and diverse area, consisting of neighborhoods, public schools, stream valley parks, and the Lakewood Country Club. Rockshire, with attached and detached homes spread throughout the planning area, is the largest neighborhood in the planning area. Other subdivisions and townhome communities include: Cambridge Heights, Carter Hill, Fallsbend, Fallsmead, Fallswood, Flint Ledge Estates, Glen Hills Club, Glenora Hills, Great Pines, Griffith Oaks, Horizon Hill, Rock Falls, Saddlebrook, and Watts Branch Meadows. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 71.

Area Characteristics

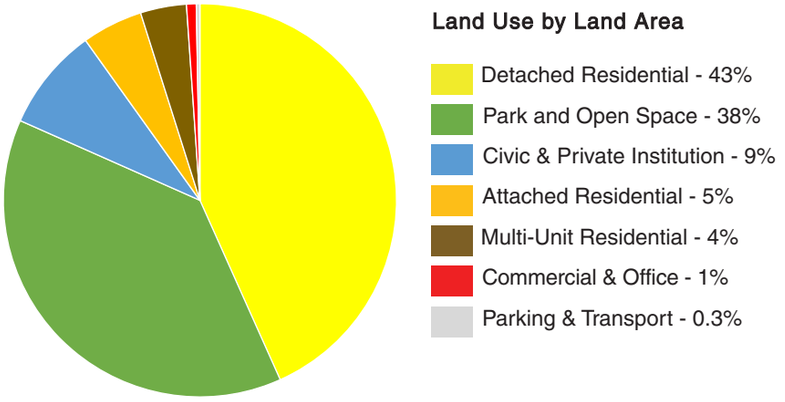
Interstate 70-S (now I-270) was completed in this portion of the county in 1960, making land near its highway interchanges with West Montgomery Avenue (Maryland Route MD-28) and Falls Road (MD-189) highly desirable. Most residential homes in the planning area were built in response to this new highway access, between the 1960s and 1980s. Its residential subdivisions are stable and well-kept and no major changes are expected to their residential character over the coming decades.

The predominant street pattern in the planning area is of curvilinear streets and culs-de-sac. This pattern results in limited vehicle travel options and a concentration of traffic on four-lane arterial roadways. Irregularly shaped lots at the bulbs of each cul-de-sac reduce the overall density of these subdivisions; the planning area has among the lowest residential densities (dwelling units per acre) in Rockville. Wootton Parkway is an arterial road that bisects the planning area, but also provides vehicular access to points north and south of the planning area and the region.

The planning area includes five townhouse communities situated throughout the area and an assisted living community of more than 400 units located just south of the Lakewood Country Club golf course. Four schools (two elementary, one middle, and one high) are located within the planning area and residents have access to several large active and passive recreation parks.

City-owned parks in the planning area include Woottons Mill Park, Rockmead Park, Glenora Park, and Horizon Hill Park. Fallsmead Park is owned and maintained by the Fallsmead Homeowners Association. These public and private parks offer a variety of recreational and passive leisure opportunities for the area's residents. In 2017, the City purchased the five-acre site of the former Karma Academy at 175 Watts Branch Parkway from Montgomery County government, adding it to the acreage of adjoining Woottons Mill Park.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 14



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	1,639
Attached Residential	492
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	666
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	22
Total units	**2,819**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Planning History

The Rockshire neighborhood was developed in the 1970s, with more than 760 single-unit detached homes and townhouses, and is one of the largest planned subdivisions



Historic site of Woottons Mill in Woottons Mill Park.

in Rockville. Rockshire was created through an innovative concept for residential development called a Planned Residential Unit (PRU). Popular in the city starting in the 1960s, a PRU was approved through a special development review process whereby greater-than-usual flexibility was allowed in the layout of the subdivision to achieve other community goals, such as open space and community amenities. The Rockshire PRU, as well as smaller communities in the planning area, including Fallsmead, Fallsbend, Fallswood, Flint Ledge Estates, Barnside Acres, and Carter Hill, continue to be regulated under the terms of their PRU approvals and any departure from their original designs require City-approved amendments.

In 2018, the City retained a consultant, Eureka Facts, to evaluate the community's level of support for constructing a new community recreation center in Rockville, west of I-270 and south of Hurley Avenue, and if supported, identify the best location and amenities for the new center. The study results indicated moderate community support for a new recreation center and/or improving existing facilities.

The property owners of Rockshire Village Shopping Center have so far indicated an interest to pursue residential development on the site. However, this Plan recommends that any new housing development at Rockshire Village should include neighborhood-serving retail space and/or provide a significant gathering space that would be an asset to the broader community beyond the site.

There is no neighborhood plan for this planning area and none is recommended.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Desire to maintain and continue to improve the residential quality of life in the planning area;
- Desire for additional community amenities and programming/events/arts in this portion of the city;
- Concern over how future redevelopment of the Rockshire Village Center may occur;
- Need to improve traffic congestion on arterial roads, especially Wootton Parkway and the I-270 interchanges proximate to the planning area;
- Various items related to Thomas S. Wootton High School, including ADA compliance, evacuation routes, parking for students and staff, and the aging building.

Internally, the subdivisions of the planning area have few connections to each other, resulting in a concentration of traffic onto primary routes, such as Wootton Parkway and Watts Branch Parkway, particularly at peak travel times. Residents expressed concerns during the Rockville 2040 effort about pedestrian and bicycle safety on the major thoroughfares, given heavy traffic at peak times and higher speeds at times when there is less congestion.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

Rockshire Village Center

Rockshire Village Center was a successful indoor retail mall when it opened in 1978 and remained viable for several decades, until recent market conditions in its vicinity changed. The neighborhood shopping center of approximately 52,000 square feet of interior space, all of which is currently vacant, was developed as part of the larger



Front entrance of the former Rockshire Shopping Center

Rockshire planned development and is regulated under the Rockshire Planned Development zone (PD-RS). The site was anchored by a Giant supermarket that closed in 2012.

The shopping center has faced new competition in recent years, particularly with the development of Fallsgrove Village Center and Park Potomac, each about two miles away to the north and south, respectively. Proximity of these two newer shopping centers, each anchored by grocery stores, has divided the customer trade area that once supported the Rockshire Village Center. Today, its low-visibility location on Wootton Parkway, a mile or more from major intersections, is also not ideal since retail tenants make site selection decisions based on passing traffic counts and visibility, among other factors. Nonetheless, there remain significant sources of market demand, including from the residents of nearby neighborhoods and students at Thomas S. Wootton High School.

At Rockville 2040 meetings, and at community meetings held in 2019 regarding the future of this site, residents expressed preference for retaining at least some retail uses and/or a community amenity, and opposition to new development that would be exclusively residential. The PD-RS planned development zone for the Rockshire area allows for a mix of residential and commercial uses, but the approved PRU (Planned Residential Unit) project identifies this site only as a retail center. Any other uses require Mayor and Council approval through an amendment of the PRU and planned development zone. Prior comprehensive master plans, including the 2002 Plan, identified the site as appropriate for retail through the NC (Neighborhood Commercial) designation.

Parking for the Rockshire swimming pool and clubhouse is provided under a license agreement that is binding on the current and future owners of the land, as long as the Rockshire swimming pool and community room exist and are owned and operated by the Rockshire community. Parking for the adjacent church and Wootton High School have been shared through terminable agreements with Giant Food and the property owner. There are no City development-related conditions that require the property owner of the vacant Giant Food site to provide parking for these other properties. The high school's use of the parking spaces was voluntarily provided by the owner to accommodate overflow parking for students, but recently has been terminated. In conjunction with any redevelopment proposal for the site, the property must incorporate the parking for the swimming pool and clubhouse, while the adjacent church and school will need to address their own parking needs in a different way apart from the redevelopment of the property.

Land Use Policy Map

The Rockshire Village Center property is planned for a mix of residential housing types with the potential for small-scale commercial uses under the RF (Residential Flexible) land use designation.

Any new housing development should include neighborhood-serving retail space and/or provide a significant gathering space that would be an asset to the broader community beyond the site.

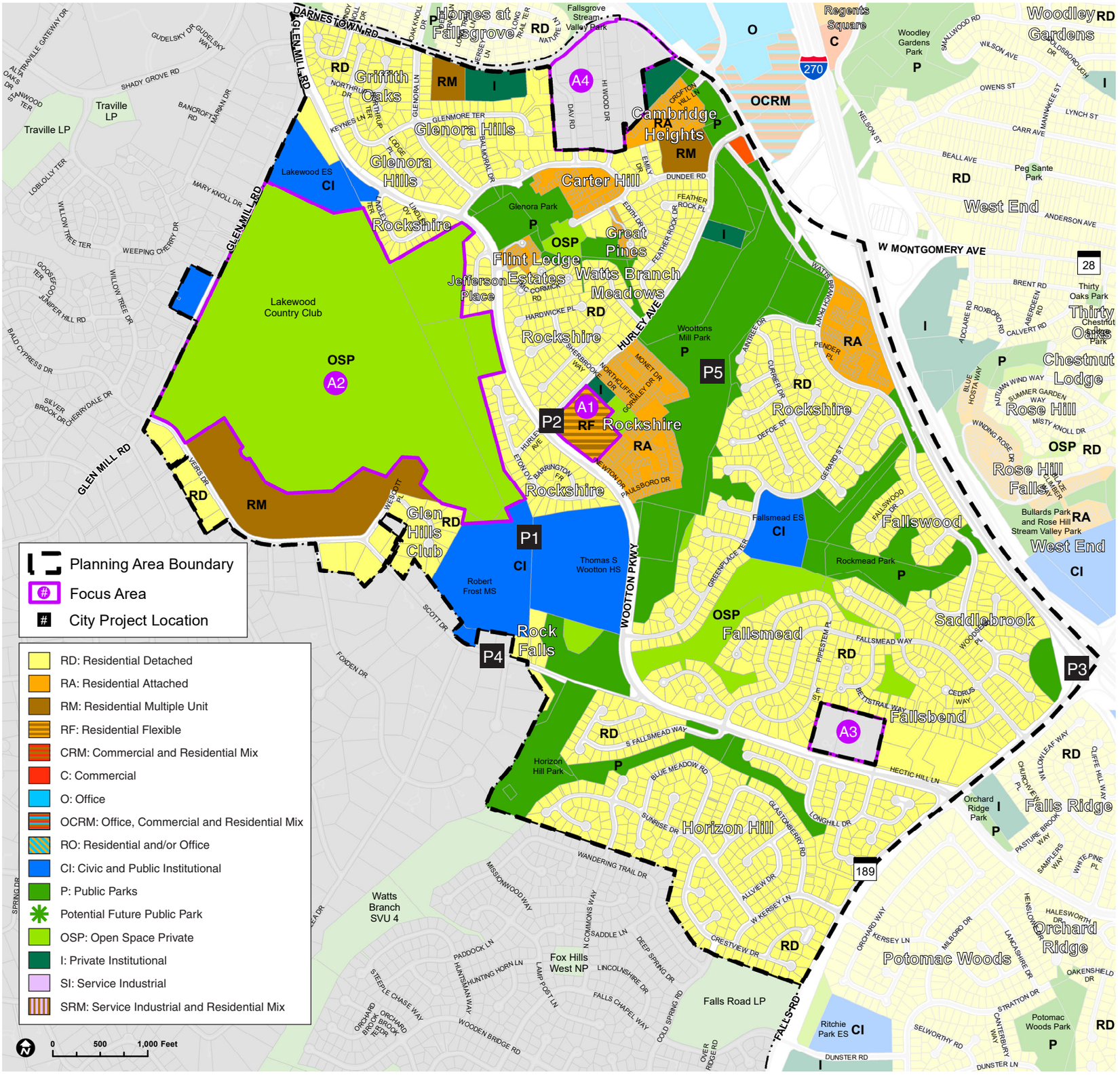
Zoning Recommendation

Amend the approved planned development for the property to allow residential uses (preferably single-unit detached homes or attached townhouses/row houses) if the proposed residential development includes neighborhood-serving retail and/or community gathering space.

Urban Design Recommendations

Any new development at the Rockshire Village Center site should blend well with adjacent housing in terms of scale, massing, and height. Building heights adjacent and close to existing housing should complement existing conditions.

Figure 71: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 14



Building heights may be slightly taller along Wootton Parkway, along the perimeter shared with the church, and within the interior of the site. Retail uses should have good visibility and/or visible signage from Wootton Parkway. Parking for the Rockshire HOA swimming pool must be provided in close proximity to the path connecting the site with the pool.

AREA 2 A2

Lakewood Country Club

This private membership club, with an 18-hole golf course, encompasses nearly 200 acres of the planning area, between Glen Mill Road and Wootton Parkway. It is bordered to the south by The Villages at Rockville, a senior living community, and to the north and east by a public elementary school and residential homes, respectively. This plan maintains an OSP (Open Space Private) land use designation for the property and recommends retaining the existing low-density residential zoning of R-400 (Residential Estate).

Lakewood Country Club is one of the largest properties in the city. Should the Club seek to redevelop all or a portion of the site in the future, it should be considered a unique opportunity for both development and natural resource protection that might take advantage of the scale of the site.

If any substantially scaled portion of the country club property, or its entirety, is proposed for development as anything other than its current use, a conceptual master plan is recommended that considers the relationship of the proposed development with any potential future phases. Such a plan could be conducted in the context of a planned development and would need to include direct community engagement as part of the process. Significant transportation and other infrastructure improvements would likely be necessary to accommodate any large-scale institutional or corporate use. (*See also Policy 21 of the Land Use Element*)

AREA 3 A3

Hectic Hill Lane

This residential street is a private road accessed from Wootton Parkway with seven large residential lots. As such, they are, together, considered an “enclave.” Legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 1983 provided municipalities the opportunity to annex unincorporated enclaves that met certain criteria without the consent of the property owners. The City pursued annexation of several enclaves throughout the city under this provision at the time, including parcels on Hectic Hill. All Hectic Hill properties were annexed into Rockville except for two, whose owners were opposed to their annexation at the time.

Because of the owners’ opposition, the Mayor and Council decided to defer annexation under certain terms. In 1984, annexation agreements were entered into by and between the owners of the two properties and the Mayor and Council. The owners are subject to annexation if they either: 1) file an application to re-zone or subdivide the property, or 2) if they construct improvements to the property that result in an increase of more than a certain amount of the existing floor area of any of the buildings on the property or change in use. These annexation agreements were recorded in the land records of Montgomery County.

This plan recommends that the City continue to monitor the annexation agreements of properties on Hectic Hill Lane that are not in the city and proceed with annexation if warranted by the terms of the agreements. Areas not within the city that should be further evaluated for inclusion in Rockville’s Maximum Expansion Limits and/or annexed into the city are fully described in the Municipal Growth Element (MGE) of this Comprehensive Plan.

AREA 4 A4

Dav Road and Hi Wood Drive area

The majority of properties on Dav Road and Hi Wood Drive are located outside of the city limits. Their primary vehicular access is via Darnestown Road (Rt. 28), but the roads also connect to Dundee Road, within the City of Rockville. The Dav/Hi Wood properties are on well and septic systems; connection to the City’s sewer and water systems, as well as curb and gutter improvements, would be required as a condition of any large-scale annexation of properties.

This plan recommends that the City evaluate the fiscal impact and other advantages and disadvantages of annexation of properties on Dav Road and Hi Wood Drive if, or when, property owners seek annexation into the city. The Municipal Growth Element recommends a proactive strategy toward the annexation of enclaves if they are likely to result in net benefits to the City.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Create a safe pathway to Frost Middle School from the neighborhoods on the east side of Wootton Parkway. The pathway should not require walking unprotected through Wootton High School parking lots.

PROJECT 2 P2

Study the potential for a community node at the intersection of Wootton Parkway and Hurley Avenue. (*See Figure 6 of the Land Use Element*)

PROJECT 3 P3

Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential improvements at the I-270 interchange with Falls Road (MD-189) that increase safety, visibility, and mobility for all modes, such as improved visibility at off ramps, safer lane movements, and bicycle and pedestrian safety enhancements. (*See also Action 20.3 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 4 P4

Coordinate with Montgomery County Department of Transportation to design and upgrade to current standards the sidewalk on Scott Drive, between Wootton Parkway and Veirs Drive.

PROJECT 5 P5

Work with the Rockville community to determine what enhancements might be needed for Woottons Mill Park, such as stormwater management, stream bank restoration, trail improvements, and upgraded recreation facilities.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Maintain the residential character of the planning area.
2. Focus on improving factors that enhance quality of life.



Wootton Parkway roadway and Millennium Trail

3. Work with the Rockville community to develop a program of events and activities for the historic Old Veirs Home/Karma Academy property at 175 Watts Branch Parkway.

Public Schools

4. Support the modernization of Robert Frost Middle School and Thomas S. Wootton High School with consideration given to impacts of future expansion of the high school on the surrounding neighborhoods and natural environment.
5. Advocate for Montgomery County Public Schools to provide sufficient parking on-site for staff, faculty, students and visitors, especially at Wootton High School where a large portion of the students drive to school.
6. Advocate for schools in the planning area, and their grounds, to be fully compliant with the American for Disabilities Act (ADA), either in the context of a modernization project or otherwise. (*See also Action 6.8 of the Community Facilities Element*)

Historic Preservation

7. Evaluate 1401 Aintree Drive (within the Rockshire Village townhouse development, a.k.a. “Two Brothers”) and 2610 Northrup Drive (a.k.a. “Old Veirs House”) for historic and architectural significance

and determine if either retains sufficient architectural integrity to be eligible for local historic designation.

Transportation

8. Study potential approaches to relieving congestion on Wootton Parkway, west of I-270, focused on smaller-scale projects instead of increased capacity through road widening and without encouraging cut-through traffic.

   The City should investigate targeted solutions that would mitigate traffic congestion on Wootton Parkway at the most congested times of the day, without widening the entire roadway. Potential solutions may include adding left turn lanes and expanding the right-of-way immediately in front of the high school, so that turning school buses do not block traffic. (*See also Action 19.2 of the Transportation Element*)

9. Work with MCPS and other partners to ensure that there are sufficient evacuation routes from school buildings and sites.

Community Partnerships

10. Work with the community, including with churches and other institutions, to offer programming and events, within parks and other sites, in this planning area and others west of I-270.

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Planning Area 15

FALLSGROVE AND RESEARCH BOULEVARD

Planning Area 15 contains two distinct areas within the city, the Research Boulevard corridor, with offices, laboratories and research & development firms, and the master planned community of Fallsgrove, consisting of attached and detached homes and apartment and condominium communities. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 72.

Area Characteristics

Research Boulevard

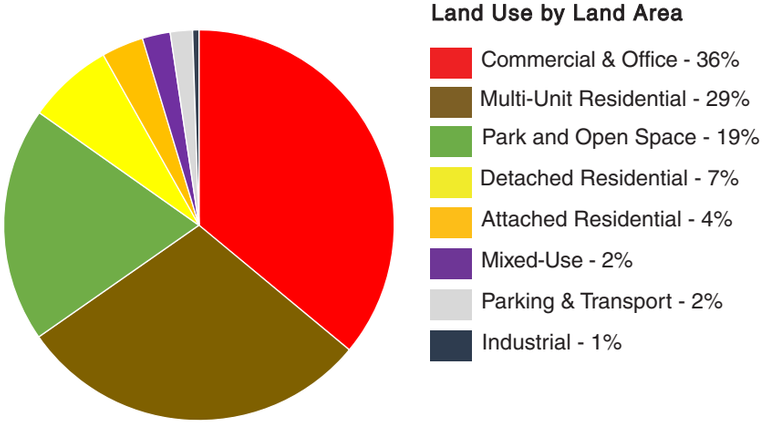
The Research Boulevard corridor is part of the I-270 High Technology Corridor, with visibility and accessibility to I-270 via its interchanges with Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue. It is also accessible to I-370 and the ICC (Inter-County Connector) via Shady Grove Road and MD-355.

Research Boulevard is a key employment center in Rockville, with some of the city's most prominent businesses and approximately 9,000 employees. The development pattern along Research Boulevard is of office, laboratory, and medical research buildings on large lots. Some employers, such as Westat, have owned and occupied their buildings for decades and are expected to remain into the foreseeable future. Westat is the largest private employer in the city and a key office anchor for the corridor. Other buildings contain one or more leased tenants. Two hotels and a new retail area are also in this corridor.

Fallsgrove

The Fallsgrove neighborhood consists of 254 acres of the former Thomas Farm property that was annexed into the city in 1993 and developed according to a Comprehensive Planned Development (CPD) that was approved by Rockville's Mayor and Council in 2000 and later amended. The amended Fallsgrove CPD authorized mixed-use development that included: 1,530 residential units; 150,000 square feet of commercial space; 950,000 square feet of office and R&D space; and 87 acres of open space, including sites for a community center and an elementary school. More

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 15



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	227
Attached Residential	437
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	748
Total units	**1,412**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.



Residential townhouses in Fallsgrove

15



Thomas Farm Community Center

than half of the residential units within the Fallsgrove planned development are multi-unit condominiums and apartments, including the Camden Fallsgrove, Fallsgrove Condos, and Post at Fallsgrove. The neighborhood also includes attached townhouses and row houses, and single-unit detached homes.

As a planned development, Fallsgrove was built to incorporate major design features, including:

- Extensive environmental protection areas;
- A network of well-designed and interconnected streets;
- A major public open space component;
- An integrated mix of uses;
- Higher standards for planning and site design than would be required under traditional zoning;
- Design and use features to accommodate alternative forms of transportation.

Thomas Farm Community Center opened in Fallsgrove in 2009 and is the city's first and only community center west of I-270. City parkland surrounding the Center includes a reserved elementary school site, forested walking paths, and a large stormwater pond and wildlife habitat. The elementary school has yet to be built.

Planning History

Research Boulevard

The 1960 and 1970 City master plans laid out a vision for development of the farmland on both sides of the new highway 70-S, now I-270, as a high-tech office district. The district was envisioned as a series of campus-like research and development office parks, developed with minimum five-acre lots under the I-3 (Industrial Park) zone. This vision continued through the 2002 CMP. An updated Zoning Ordinance in 2009 applied the MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) zone to allow development of medium-density office and light industrial uses, adding commercial and residential land uses as allowed uses.

In March of 2017, a panel of the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Washington Chapter members convened at the request of the City to consider solutions for the Research Boulevard corridor. The ULI Technical Assistance Panel, or TAP, was jointly sponsored by the City of Rockville and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The panel's expertise was sought to address topics of much discussion in the planning and real estate professions: (1) What is the future of first-generation suburban office parks like those along Research Boulevard; and (2) How should the City of Rockville's planning efforts respond to changing market conditions and work cultures?

Some of the major recommendations from the ULI TAP report, *Research Boulevard – It's Not an Office Park!*, are included in this plan where they relate to the City's comprehensive planning policies. Other recommendations and background information can be found in the full report.

Fallsgrove

The origin and make-up of the master planned Fallsgrove community is described in the Area Characteristics, above. Except for a few remaining undeveloped parcels, build-out of the neighborhood is generally complete. The approved Comprehensive Planned Development for Fallsgrove remains in effect today and any changes to the approved plan, and its subsequent amendments, require approval by the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council.

There is no neighborhood plan for this planning area and none is recommended.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Consider the future of the Research Boulevard

corridor as a cluster for research and development, laboratory and office uses;

- Interest in improving bicycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility in the Research Boulevard corridor;
- Need to improve vehicle access and reduce congestion at the Fallsgrove Village Center shopping center.

Research Boulevard

In general, office buildings are classified into one of three categories: Class A, representing the newest and highest quality buildings in their market; Class B, generally a little older, but with good quality management and tenants; and Class C, which are typically older buildings that may be located on less desirable sites, from a market perspective, and are often in need of extensive renovation.

Primarily due to age, fewer than half of the buildings in the Research Boulevard corridor are classified as Class A. Overall office vacancy has been high, though most of the vacant space is concentrated in a few buildings. The majority of buildings have stable tenancy, but this could change given the weak regional office market, especially for offices in the suburban office-park setting, and the amount of Class B and C office space. Alternative uses, such as storage facilities, have begun to occupy some of the former office space. Older buildings that do not have amenities are difficult to lease and are the most likely to be demolished, but Class A buildings with good and modern amenities will likely continue to find strong tenants. There is demand for commercial laboratory space in the region and private development of such space has been increasing.

The Research Boulevard corridor was developed with a focus on automobile access. Although there are sidewalks on both sides of Research Boulevard, the existing infrastructure is not inviting to pedestrians. Sidewalks are narrow and lacking in streetscape features. Buildings are not located in a consistent manner, with some having deep setbacks and others being close to the street. The Fallsgrove Stream Valley Park is adjacent to office buildings south and north of West Gude Drive, but the park is underutilized and connections to Research Boulevard are lacking.

Within the Research Boulevard corridor, there are few food and beverage establishments or retail shops within walking distance of offices, although there are many within a ten-minute drive. A new shopping center has been developed at the southern end of the planning area, providing a new dining and services destination for the area.

There is no direct proximity to Metrorail, yet bus routes connect the area to the Shady Grove and Rockville Transit Stations. The corridor is bracketed by two major intersections (Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue) that have direct access to I-270, which is an important marketing advantage for property owners. However, though buildings in the corridor are visible from I-270, their positioning away from the highway make them difficult to identify and locate.

Fallsgrove

Vehicular access to the Fallsgrove Village Shopping Center parking lot is primarily from Fallsgrove Boulevard and, less directly, Fallsgrove Drive. Patrons of the center complain about the limited access points, poor vehicular circulation, and insufficient parking capacity during peak hours.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREAS 1-3 A1 A2 A3

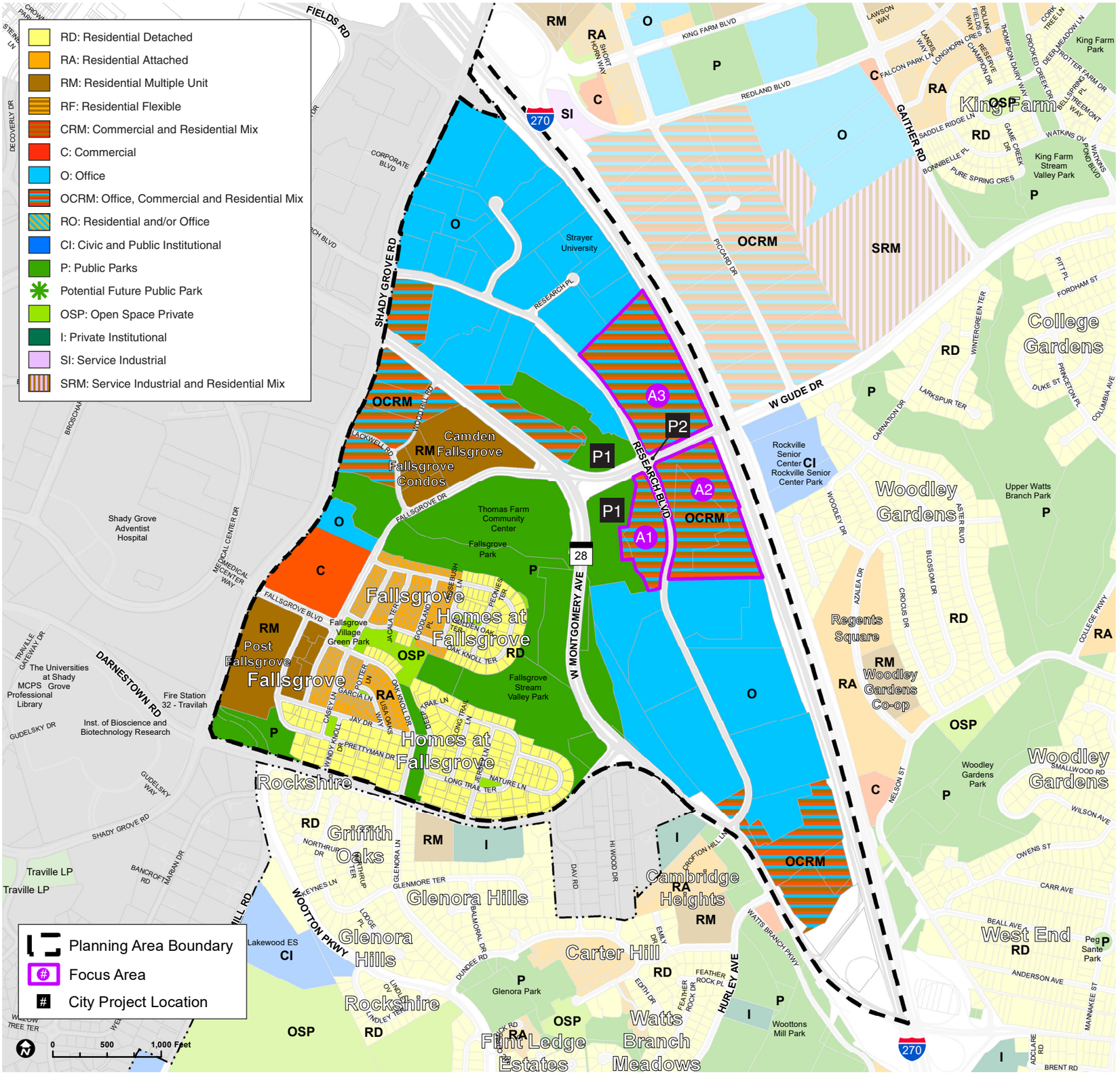
Intersection of West Gude Drive and Research Boulevard

Area 1 is one of the last undeveloped parcels of the Fallsgrove Planned Development. The parcel is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Research Boulevard and West Gude Drive. Areas 2 and 3 are developed with a bank and office buildings.



The intersection of West Gude Drive and Research Boulevard

Figure 72: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 15



Land Use Policy Map

Areas 1 through 3 are planned for mixed-use development through the OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix) designation, encouraging a mix of office, commercial, and/or residential uses. (*See also Action 16.4 of the Land Use Element*)

Zoning Recommendation

Area 1 is zoned PD-FG (Planned Development - Fallsgrove), which is regulated in accordance with the concept plan as approved by the Mayor and Council. The area was planned for "Office / Research & Development" in the concept plan. It remains an undeveloped site but, as of this plan's adoption, is planned for residential development. The MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) zone is the equivalent zone for this area within the Fallsgrove Planned Development and is not recommended to be changed. Similarly, areas 2 and 3 are zoned MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) and are not recommended to change.

Urban Design Recommendations

The intersection of West Gude Drive and Research Boulevard is identified as a potential community node in the Land Use Element (*see Figure 6 of the Land Use Element*). The concept for these nodes is that they will encourage non-vehicular trips to local shops, restaurants, or service businesses, and act as neighborhood anchors for social interaction as well as transit access. Any commercial uses should be as close to the corners of the West Gude Drive intersection as possible. Significant public open space, such as a plaza, urban park, or other amenity should also be encouraged as part of this node.

Redevelopment of property in this area should contribute toward a pedestrian-oriented, urban-scale streetscape. New developments should orient primary building facades and front doors toward a street or public open space to frame the edges of streets, parks, and open spaces, and to foster activated pedestrian areas. Building frontages should include ground-floor uses that attract customers or regular visitors, enhanced pedestrian areas and amenities, attractive landscaping, and bicycle infrastructure.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Enhance Fallsgrove Stream Valley Park between MD-28 (West Montgomery Avenue) and Research Boulevard to provide an accessible natural and open space amenity to this key employment area of the city.

PROJECT 2 P2

Study the potential for a community node at the intersection of West Gude Drive and Research Boulevard. (*See Figure 6 of the Land Use Element*)

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. The Research Boulevard corridor should remain focused on employment-generating office and commercial development, with some flexibility:
   - To provide amenities and uses that would support and complement office and commercial uses in the area; and
   - For properties facing Shady Grove Road that are appropriate for mixed-use development, including office, residential and commercial uses. (*See also Action 2.4 of the Economic Development Element*)
2. Implement key recommendations from the 2017 ULI TAP report, *Research Boulevard – It's Not an Office Park!*, including the following:

   Form Business Partnerships. Facilitate communication and organization among property owners in the corridor, possibly through the establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) with the intent to improve the streetscape, provide a common shuttle to employees, and/or invest in common amenities.

   Program Area-wide Improvements. Enhance the identity of Research Boulevard and improve walkability in the area by assembling a program of

area-wide improvements.

3. Work with local businesses and Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI) to market the Research Boulevard corridor as a great place for a wide variety of businesses, including life sciences laboratories and offices.

Transportation

4. Improve bicycle and pedestrian access and safety within the Research Boulevard corridor through the completion of a transportation study and facility improvements.
5. Advocate for MDOT SHA to study potential approaches to peak-hour congestion and safety on MD-28 (West Montgomery Avenue) from Hurley Avenue to I-270. Support the State's recommendations for sight distance enhancements and improved pavement markings and signage from previous MDOT SHA studies (*See also Action 19.1 of the Transportation Element*)

Public Schools

6. Work with MCPS to determine the future plans for the reserved school site in the Fallsgrove neighborhood at Fallsgrove Park. If not used for a school, alternative school sites should be identified and the land retained as City parkland. (*See also Action 15.1 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)

Community Partnerships

7. Work with the community, including with churches and other institutions, to offer programming and events, within parks and other sites, in this planning area and others west of I-270.

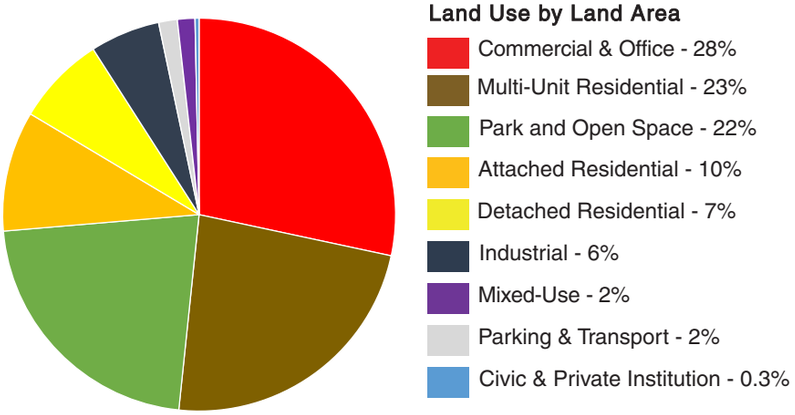


Planning Area 16

KING FARM AND SHADY GROVE

Planning Area 16 consists largely of the King Farm master planned community, with the remainder developed as suburban-style office buildings along Gaither Road, Piccard Drive, and Shady Grove Road; the Upper Rock apartments and retail stores; and a PEPCO Service Center. Residential communities located in the planning area include the attached and detached homes of the King Farm neighborhood, the Huntington at King Farm, Residences at King Farm, Bainbridge at Shady Grove, the The Flats at Shady Grove. Ingleside at King Farm is an independent living and assisted living facility located in the area. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 73.

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 16



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	394
Attached Residential	972
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	2,850
Assisted Living/Nursing Home	650
Total units	**4,866**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.

Area Characteristics

King Farm

The King Farm neighborhood contains single-unit detached homes, townhouses, apartments, a shopping center, and stand-alone office buildings all on a former 440-acre farm. The City annexed the farm property in 1995, approving its redevelopment as a neo-traditional neighborhood with a grid street pattern and a mixture of land uses and housing types. Construction began in early 2000 and parts of the original plan are still coming to fruition. King Farm was designed to accommodate multi-modal transportation with extensive sidewalks, bikeways, and a regional transit line (the Corridor Cities Transitway), all with connections to the Shady Grove Metro Station.

Preserved from the former King family farm, or “Irvington Farm,” the farmstead, and its associated two dairy barns, two tenant houses, and other ancillary buildings, are situated on property owned by the City that is designated as a local historic district and a City park. The City, with a priority for preservation, has stabilized or rebuilt several buildings on the site, though the long-term maintenance and use of the property remains in question. In August 2016, the Mayor and Council convened a community task force to determine the best possible future use for the site, though no final decisions had been made on the task force’s recommendations as of the date of this writing.

King Farm Village Center is the primary retail center for the neighborhood, with 120,000 square feet of commercial space, including a major grocery store. Approximately 760,000 square feet of office space and a hotel are located west of the main residential community near I-270. King Farm was originally planned for more than 3 million square feet of Class A office space in the Irvington Center section west of Gaither Road. However, some of the allocated office capacity has been converted to residential townhouses and senior housing (i.e., Ingleside’s senior living, assisted living, long-term care and rehabilitation services) due to changing market demand.

King Farm also contains active recreation parks and



Retail shops at King Farm Village Center

protected stream valleys, accessible to neighborhood residents and the community-at-large. Two of these parks, King Farm Park and Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park, are reservation sites for a future elementary school and a middle school, respectively, though neither are identified by Montgomery County Public Schools for construction in the near-term. Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park also includes the City's only official dog park.

Piccard Drive

The Piccard Drive office district is part of the I-270 High Technology Corridor, with visibility and accessibility to I-270 via the Shady Grove Road and West Montgomery Avenue interchanges. It is also accessible to I-370 and the ICC (Inter-County Connector) via Shady Grove Road and MD-355. The district was envisioned as a campus-like research and development office park, developed with minimum five-acre lots under the I-3 (Industrial Park) zone during the 1960s and 1970s. An updated Zoning Ordinance in 2009 applied the MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) zone to allow development of medium-density office and light industrial uses with a mix of commercial and residential land uses.

Other Areas

East of the offices fronting Piccard Drive, across a forested stream valley, are the office buildings of the Redland Technology Center, a gas station at Redland Boulevard and Gaither Road, and the PEPCO Service Center. The Redland Technology Center was built more recently than the offices of Piccard Drive, first opening in 2009 with minor renovations in 2017, making it among the newest 'Class A' office space in the city.

In the northwest corner of Planning Area 16, along Shady Grove Road and the city's northern corporate limits, is Upper Rock, a mixed-use planned development with residential apartments, retail shops, and structured parking complementing existing offices. The development replaced a former research and development office park that had experienced declining occupancy and aging buildings. Another office park cluster adjacent to Upper Rock, is approved for mixed-use development, currently occupied by over 400,000 square feet of office space among seven buildings. Farther east on Shady Grove Road are two office buildings and a hotel.

Finally, the Rockville Corporate Center, at the northwest corner of MD-355 and West Gude Drive, includes two office buildings with a combined total of approximately 233,500 square feet. The Center is isolated from the rest of the planning area, with vehicle access from West Gude Drive and MD-355.

Transportation Infrastructure

The planning area is situated within a busy network of streets and highways. Congestion levels are high at the intersections of Shady Grove Road and MD-355, and of Gude Drive and MD-355, especially during the morning and evening rush hours. The intersection of Choke Cherry Road and Shady Grove Road is regularly listed as one of the top ten congested intersections in the county on Montgomery County government's Mobility Assessment Report.

In general, pedestrian and vehicular connections are well defined within the King Farm residential community, but are poor in other sections of the planning area. For instance, there are no good travel connections between Rockville Corporate Center and King Farm, and from West Gude Drive to and the Woodley Gardens and College Gardens neighborhoods. MD-355 is unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists in this area. The lack of a grade-separated crossing of MD-355 to walk or cycle between King Farm and the Shady Grove Metro Station also inhibits safe and comfortable non-auto access to this regional rail station.

Planning History

The origin and make-up of the master planned King Farm community is described in the Area Characteristics, above. Except for a few remaining undeveloped parcels, build-out of the neighborhood is generally complete. The approved Comprehensive Planned Development for King Farm remains in effect today and any changes to the approved plan, and its subsequent amendments, require approval by the Planning Commission and Mayor and Council.

There is no neighborhood plan for this planning area and none is recommended.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Need for better pedestrian connections to the Shady Grove Metro Station;
- Interest in the future use of the King Farm farmstead property;
- Reduction of traffic congestion on area arterials;
- Mitigation of alignment impacts from the future Corridor Cities Transitway;
- Concern by Piccard Drive business owners regarding the future of the regional suburban office market;
- Concern about the success of King Farm Village Center under pressure from retail competition in the surrounding area;
- The uncertain future of portions of Mattie J.T. Stepanek and King Farm parks that are reserved for new schools;
- Concern about current school overcrowding in the Gaithersburg and Richard Montgomery high school clusters and projected additional overcrowding due to new growth and development in each cluster;
- Desire to consolidate the King Farm neighborhood into the same high school cluster.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

1300 to 1396 Piccard Drive and Curie Court

This focus area primarily contains office buildings on 5-acre parcels, surrounded by dedicated parking lots with few amenities or open spaces.

Land Use Policy Map

The land use designation of OCRM (Office Commercial Residential Mix) anticipates a gradual redevelopment of existing office developments in order to reinvent Piccard Drive as a place to live, work, and play through improved walkability and neighborhood amenities.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone these properties from MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) to MXCD (Mixed-Use Corridor District) to allow for a greater mix of land uses and community destinations.

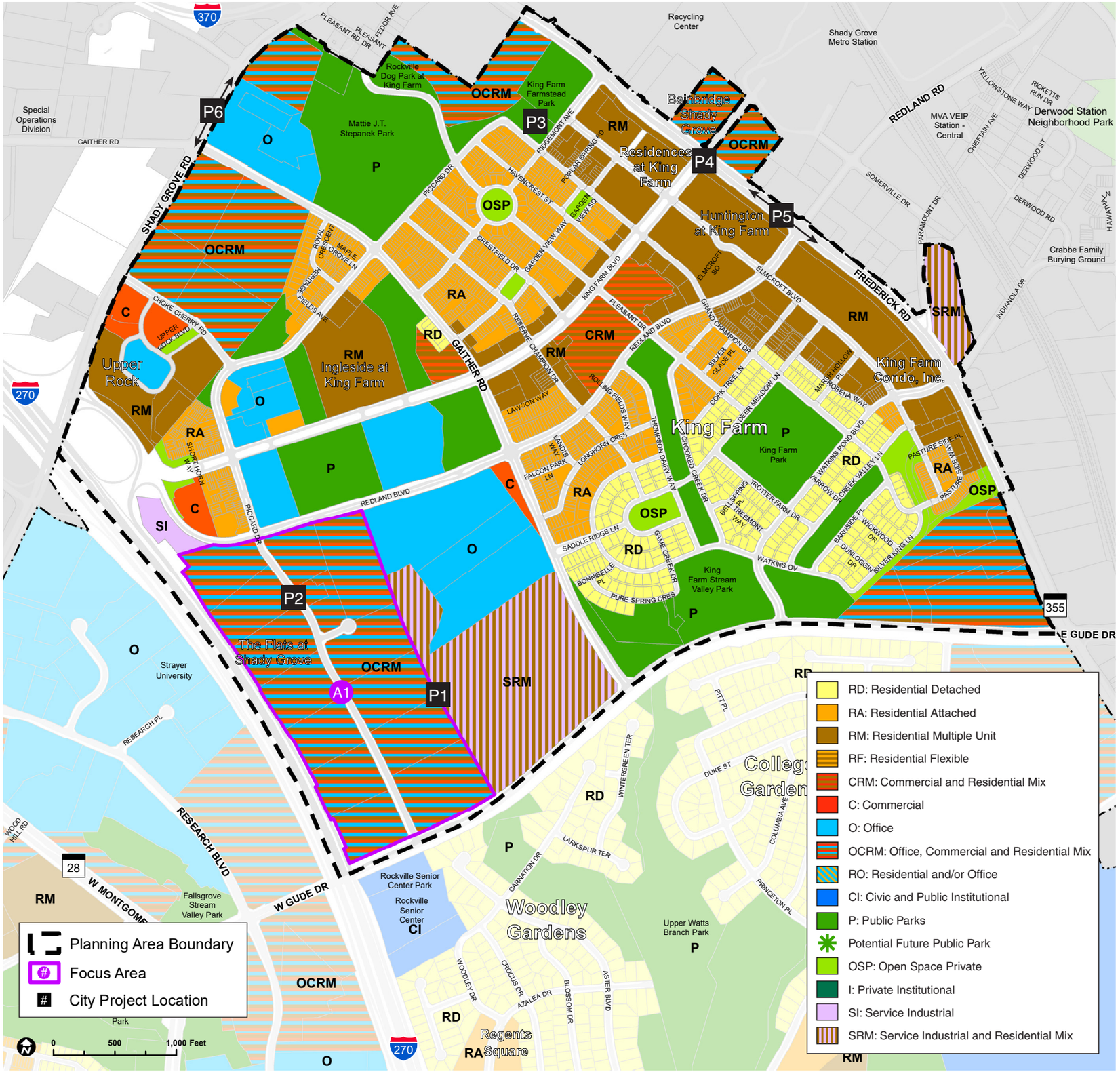
Urban Design Recommendations

Redevelopment projects in this area should incorporate street improvements, pedestrian connections, bus routes, and public spaces into their designs.



View looking north along Piccard Drive

Figure 73: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 16



Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

PROJECT 1 P1

Seek opportunities to acquire land within the privately owned forested stream valley between Piccard Drive and Gaither Road, to incorporate into the City's park system and connect to Upper Watts Branch Park to the south.

Expanding the network of open space to improve transportation connectivity for active non-vehicular travel modes (e.g., walking, biking, scooting, roller skating, etc.) is an important priority of this Plan. The plan also seeks to retain wooded areas and preserve and make accessible existing open space natural areas to serve as amenity space for existing and new communities.

PROJECT 2 P2

Improve the street character along Piccard Drive by incorporating complete streets principles as outlined in the Transportation Element.

PROJECT 3 P3

Find suitable uses for the King Farm Farmstead historic property and buildings while retaining its original character and historic significance.



Pedestrian crossing of MD-355 (Frederick Road) at King Farm Boulevard

PROJECT 4 P4

Work with Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to improve pedestrian and bicycle access between the Shady Grove Metro Station and the King Farm neighborhood, through at-grade improvements as well as a potential bridge or tunnel across Frederick Road (MD-355) at its intersection with King Farm Boulevard. (*See also Action 4.8 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 5 P5

Work with Montgomery County Department of Transportation and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration to conduct a special corridor study along MD-355 to determine congestion levels, recommend significant improvements to street design, increase non-auto driver mode share, and incorporate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). (*See also Action 19.7 of the Transportation Element*)

PROJECT 6 P6

Initiate a study of the Shady Grove Road corridor, in coordination with Montgomery County government and the City of Gaithersburg, through an agreement such as a Memorandum of Understanding and/or cost-sharing agreement. The study should explore coordination of future development, mitigation of traffic congestion, improved placemaking, and enhanced safety and comfort for walking and rolling modes.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

<u>Land Use & Urban Design</u>

1. Seek opportunities for annexation of properties at and near the Shady Grove Metro Station, and at the corner of Shady Grove Road and MD-355. Offering increased development opportunities, as compared to Montgomery County government regulations, may

be appropriate. (*See also Action 4.3 of the Municipal Growth Element*)

- Support the annexation agreement and proposed residential development for the former King Buick properties on MD-355. New residential development in this area would be support to the King Farm Village Center.
- Reference the Shady Grove Sector Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment, adopted by the County in April 2021, which includes recommendations for this area.

Transportation

2. Support the implementation of the Corridor Cities Transitway, on Shady Grove Road. (*See also Action 9.3 of the Transportation Element*)
3. Support a bus rapid transit (BRT) route along MD-355 (Frederick Road) with stations at Shady Grove Metro Station and near the intersection of Gude Drive and MD-355. (*See also Action 9.2 of the Transportation Element*)
4. Enhance the streetscape for people walking, rolling and biking along major roads in and around the planning area, with critical focus on improving safety along MD-355, to incorporate the principles of complete streets, as outlined in the Transportation Element, including wider sidewalks, bikeway facilities, such greenway features as linear parks, benches, and landscaping, and other active transportation amenities.
5. Explore participation in Montgomery County government's Shady Grove Transportation Demand Management (TDM) district, which would set a Non-Automotive Driver Mode Share (NADMS) goal for the King Farm and Shady Grove planning area.
6. Advocate for Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT SHA) and Montgomery County government to improve capacity, safety, and comfort for all modes at the intersection of MD-355 (Frederick Road) and Gude Drive, while accommodating a future bus rapid transit station. (*See also Action 20.2 of the Transportation Element*)
7. Advocate for MDOT SHA to investigate allowing a left-turn lane from westbound Redland Boulevard onto northbound MD-355 that ensures safe, comfortable, and efficient travel for all modes, including the potential for an all-stop red-phase or an exclusive left turn signal. (*See also Action 20.8 of the Transportation Element*)
8. Advocate for MDOT SHA to study intersection improvements at Choke Cherry Road and Shady Grove Road to reduce traffic congestion.
9. Explore opportunities to expand the King Farm Shuttle to the entire planning area in order to support existing and proposed residential and employment development.



King Farm Park, a public park and a potential future public elementary school

Recreation and Parks

10. Ensure that any new development or redevelopment provides park space to meet the needs of existing and new residents, in accordance with the City's park proximity standard.

Public Schools

11. Advocate for and work with MCPS to determine the future plans for the two reserved school sites in the King Farm neighborhood at Mattie J.T. Stepanek Park and King Farm Park. If not used for a school, alternative school sites should be identified and the land retained as City parkland. (*See also Action 15.1 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)
12. Advocate for and work with MCPS to study adjusting high school cluster boundaries, including the future Crown Farm High School, to consolidate the entire King Farm community into a single high school cluster.



Planning Area 17

SOUTHLAWN AND REDGATE

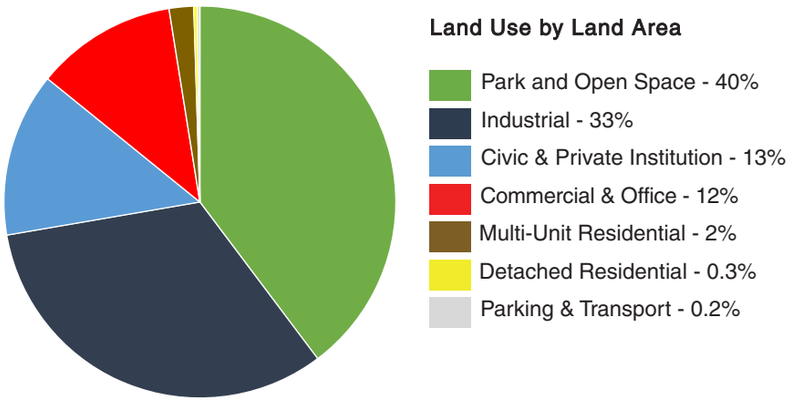
Planning Area 17 is unique in Rockville for its mix of land uses. It consists of light industry, the David Scull Courts residential community, retail shops, office parks, RedGate Park, and public property owned by the City of Rockville and Montgomery County government. The planning area is shown in detail on Figure 74.

Area Characteristics

Much of the planning area was annexed into Rockville in the 1960s and 1970s, as early iterations of the Southlawn light industrial area and RedGate Industrial Park took shape out of forests and farmland. As Gude Drive east of Maryland Route 355 opened in sections through the early 1970s, more commercial and industrial buildings were built and now dominate the Gude Drive corridor today.

The Southlawn light industrial district is now a major light industrial cluster and a critically important portion of one

Existing Land Uses in Planning Area 17



Residential Dwelling Units	
Detached Residential	2
Multi-unit Residential (apartment/condo)	76
Total units	**78**

Source: City of Rockville land records and GIS, 2019.



Light industrial buildings on Southlawn Lane

of Montgomery County's few industrial districts. Southlawn area businesses include automotive repair and servicing, wholesale supply, assembly and processing, warehousing, and small-scale alcoholic beverage production. Nestled within the Southlawn light industrial area is the 76-unit public housing community David Scull Courts apartments, built in 1968 by the Rockville Housing Authority.

The RedGate Industrial Park is located across East Gude Drive from the Southlawn light industrial area and home to a range of office and light industrial uses, including: general, medical, and professional offices; research laboratories; restaurants; commercial recreation facilities; and some retail and wholesale businesses. In 2019, the City of Rockville purchased the property and three-story office building at 6 Taft Court in this area. The building will be used for City and other related functions, including expected construction of an emergency operations center and to address current and future staffing needs. (*See also the Community Facilities Element*)

Next to the RedGate Industrial Park is the City's Public Works and Parks Maintenance Complex and RedGate Park (the site of a former municipal golf course). The remainder of the planning area consists of two large indoor recreation

17

facilities (the Sportsplex at Rockville and Rockville Ice Arena), public parkland, open space, schools, and other institutions.

East Gude Drive is a key feature of the planning area, providing connections to all areas of the city and Montgomery County. The hiker-biker Carl Henn Millennium Trail is part of the East Gude Drive right-of-way in this area.

Planning History

There is no adopted neighborhood plan for this planning area, yet the area has been the subject of various studies through the years to assess its industrial land uses and their impact on adjacent neighborhoods.

In 1999, a study of the industrial area along East Gude Drive and Southlawn Lane was conducted by the City and County to establish a policy for determining which properties in the area were appropriate for reclassification from the County's I-2 (heavy industrial) zone to the City's I-1 (light industrial) zone after annexation into the city. Following the study, the Montgomery County Council adopted a resolution stating that properties north of East Gude Drive, largely along Southlawn Lane, are not appropriate for reclassification to the City's I-1 zone and properties generally south of East Gude Drive, including those on Southlawn Lane, Dover Road, Lofstrand Lane, and Taft Street, are consistent with the City's I-1 zone and are appropriate for reclassification. The City has generally followed this direction, though few properties have so far annexed into the city north of East Gude Drive.

In 2015, the City conducted a study of the Southlawn light industrial area to assess the feasibility of allowing non-industrial uses and to identify possible land use and traffic solutions to minimize impacts to the abutting neighborhoods of East Rockville and Lincoln Park. The *Southlawn Industrial Area Feasibility Study* reviewed recommendations from the East Rockville and Lincoln Park neighborhood plans, as well as the *2002 Comprehensive Master Plan*, yet the study was also a response to specific concerns of residents at the time.

Recommendations from the study's final report offered short- and long-term solutions to the area's transportation infrastructure, zoning regulations, streetscape improvements, and economic development measures. Major redevelopment and street re-alignment options were explored by the study consultants, but the City chose not to pursue them at the time. While some of the short-term recommendations are now accomplished, some long-term policy recommendations from the Feasibility Study are incorporated below.

Key Issues

The following issues were identified during the Rockville 2040 Comprehensive Plan effort:

- Interest in the future use and design of RedGate Park (a former municipal golf course);
- Difficulty in mitigating impacts of heavy industrial uses in the county that are adjacent to the city;
- Need for safety and aesthetic improvements to the public streetscape of the light industrial areas;
- Desire to reduce in truck traffic impacts in the planning area and in nearby neighborhoods;
- Concerns for the safety and health of the residents of David Scull Courts, especially the need to increase access to neighborhood services and amenities, such as groceries;
- If redevelopment of David Scull Courts were to take place, protection of the right of David Scull Courts residents to be housed in the new development;
- Desire to improve sidewalks, bike paths, and connections to the City's nearby RedGate Park and Civic Center Park, and to Rock Creek Park;
- Concerns regarding the impacts of industrial activities on the residential areas of David Scull Courts, East Rockville, and Lincoln Park.

Opportunities in this planning area include the following:

- The future of RedGate Park, a former municipal golf course, is an active planning project as of the date of this plan's adoption. In 2019, the Mayor and Council voted to end the property's use as a golf course and dedicate the entire property to some sort of active or passive recreation use. A community planning initiative is ongoing that will gather public input to inform possible uses and improvements in the new park.
- A new initiative to designate the East Gude Drive

corridor as the Rock East District presents a framework for projecting a positive and marketable image, to encourage creative “maker” industries and uses.

- Piecemeal annexation of properties within the Southlawn light industrial area has resulted in a patchwork of property that is divided between City and County jurisdictions. Expanding the city limits to encompass more of the adjacent light industrial property in the county would facilitate a more orderly approach to property maintenance, roadway standards, coordinated development, and marketing.

Focus Area Recommendations

These land use policies and zoning and urban design recommendations apply to specific sites in the Planning Area.

AREA 1 A1

1301 First Street (David Scull Apartments) and property along First Street to the south

This area includes the community of David Scull Courts apartments and the light industrial and commercial properties between the apartments and the neighborhoods of Burgundy Knolls and East Rockville. The land use and zoning policies of the area serve to create the potential for a more compatible land use transition that better links the existing residential communities.



The intersection of Taft Street and First Street

Land Use Policy Map

This area is planned for transitional land uses between the David Scull Courts apartment community and the residential neighborhood of East Rockville through the SRM (Service Industrial and Residential Mix) land use designation.

Zoning Recommendation

Rezone the properties from IL (Light Industrial) to MXE (Mixed-Use Employment) to allow continuation of existing light industrial uses while permitting a mix of office, and residential uses, including live/work units. Commercial and non-profit uses that provide services and amenities to the nearby residents are also encouraged.

Urban Design Recommendations

As a gateway into the Southlawn light industrial area and the East Rockville neighborhood from East Gude Drive, any redevelopment of properties within this focus area should improve the streetscape and building facades along Taft Street and First Street. Building frontages should be oriented toward the street so as to create a safe and activated pedestrian corridor, especially for residents of David Scull Courts apartments and workers who may use transit to reach their places of employment or walk to school at Maryvale Elementary School.

Any redevelopment of David Scull Courts should ensure that residents have the opportunity to be housed in the new development or, if they choose, to be assisted in moving to a new location.

Recommended City Projects

These projects or studies are recommended to be undertaken by the City in specific locations within the Planning Area.

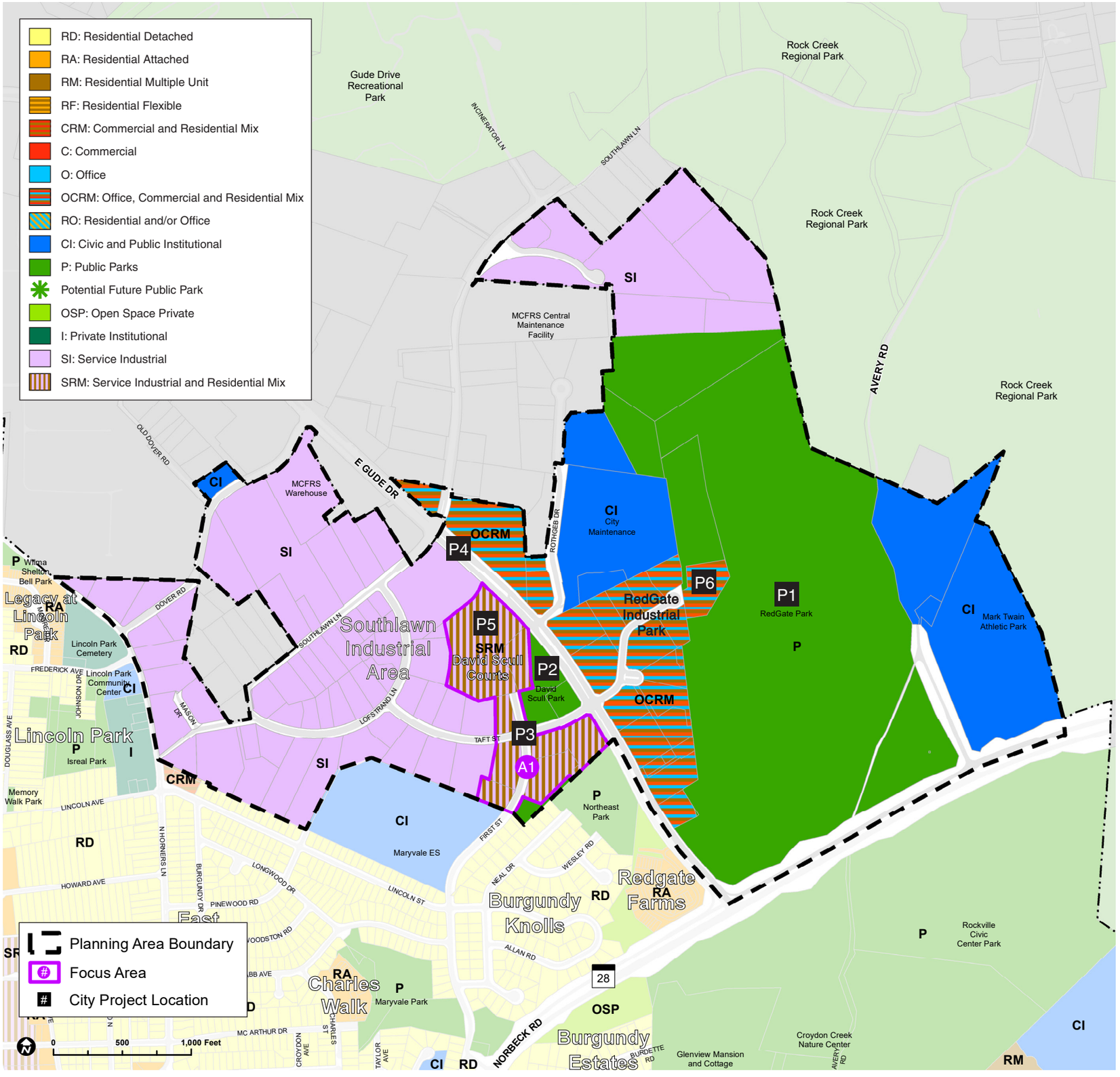
PROJECT 1 P1

Conduct a community planning process to determine the future recreational uses of RedGate Park. (*See also Action 25.1 of the Land Use Element and Action 3.3 of the Recreation and Parks Element*)

PROJECT 2 P2

Upgrade and improve David Scull Park, including program improvements that improve safety (e.g., stormwater facilities,

Figure 74: Land Use Policy Map of Planning Area 17



street traffic), upgrade equipment and structures, and improve the park border along East Gude Drive, Taft Street, and First Street.

PROJECT 3 P3

Explore the installation of a gateway monument or pylon at the intersection of First Street and Taft Street to demarcate the entrance to the Southlawn light industrial area and East Rockville neighborhood. Improvements should be coordinated between the City's Traffic and Transportation Division of the Public Works Department and the Recreation and Parks Department.

PROJECT 4 P4

Install directional wayfinding road signage to divert thru-traffic away from North Horners Lane. Signage should encourage through-traffic to use Maryland Route 28 or other major arterials as deemed appropriate by the City's Traffic and Transportation Division staff. Installation of signage on County or State road rights-of-way will require coordination with Montgomery County Department of Transportation and/or Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration.

PROJECT 5 P5

Continuously review and upgrade infrastructure and services in the vicinity of the David Scull Courts to improve their connectivity, amenities, placemaking, and accessibility with the broader Rockville community. Seek opportunities for fresh food and other goods and services for residents of David Scull Courts and other nearby residents and workers.

PROJECT 6 P6

Renovate the City-owned 6 Taft Court building to reflect the high value that the City places on green building, emergency preparedness, and serving as a new facility for City staff and customers over the next 20 years. Modernize the facility for the 21st century for staff in the departments of Public Works, Recreation and Parks, and Planning and Development Services. Incorporate the best practices of emergency preparedness as part of building renovations and establish an Emergency Operations Center on the site. (*See also Policy 2 of the Community Facilities Element*)



Aerial view of RedGate Park as the former golf course is reclaimed by natural vegetation.

Other Policy Recommendations

The following additional items are recommended to address key issues and opportunities in the Planning Area.

Land Use & Urban Design

1. Preserve industrial land as a valuable freight and economic development resource while mitigating impacts on surrounding communities. *(See also Action 17.1 of the Land Use Element)*
2. Encourage unique light industrial businesses to locate in the Southlawn light industrial area and areas of the city within the Rock East District (RED), including 'maker'/creative/artisan uses that are compatible with the light industrial district and can also provide services and destinations for local area residents. (*See also Action 11.5 of the Economic Development Element, Action 16.6 of the Land Use Element, and Action 3.4 of the Municipal Growth Element*)
3. Seek opportunities to upgrade and improve the light industrial areas through property maintenance enforcement, streetscape improvements, and approval of high-quality development projects. (*See also Action 10.3 of the Housing Element*)
4. Pursue annexation of industrial properties adjacent to

the Southlawn light industrial area. (*See also Action 4.1 of the Municipal Growth Element*)

5. Update the facilities plan for the Public Works and Parks Maintenance Complex on Rothgeb Drive. (*See also Action 2.6 of the Community Facilities Element*)

Transportation

6. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow some portion of on-street parking spaces in the IL (Light Industrial) zone to count toward the minimum parking requirements of uses in the zone. This change is intended to provide some flexibility to meet the parking requirements of uses compatible in the light industrial district, such as gyms, restaurants, breweries, or other assembly uses, that have higher parking requirements than light industrial uses.
7. Complete missing sidewalks in the city's portion of the Southlawn light industrial area streets, and advocate for Montgomery County government to complete missing sidewalks on its portion of area streets.
8. Coordinate with MDOT SHA to establish a pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting Rockville Civic Center Park and RedGate Park, across Norbeck Road (MD-28). (*See also Action 5.14 of the Transportation Element*)
9. Collaborate with Montgomery County government to connect the Carl Henn Millennium Trail with Rock Creek Trail through a bicycle and pedestrian shared use path. (*See also Action 5.6 of the Transportation Element*)

GLOSSARY

This Glossary of Terms describes certain words and phrases that may not be familiar to all readers and are defined or explained here for greater understanding. The Glossary is not a formally adopted part of the Comprehensive Plan and is intended for general guidance only. In the event of a conflict between these definitions and a formal, legal definition established by a City ordinance such as the Zoning Ordinance Regulations, the legal definition shall prevail.

Definitions in this section are drawn from many different sources, including City of Rockville staff and its consultants, the Comprehensive Plan itself, other city plans and planning documents, the Institute for Local Government, the American Planning Association's Planners Dictionary, Random House Dictionary, and websites such as planning.org, wikipedia.com, and dictionary.com. Definitions found in these secondary sources have been modified and adapted based on the use of each term in the Comprehensive Plan.

List of Agency Abbreviations

CSX	CSX Transportation (railroad company)
DNR	(Maryland) Department of Natural Resources
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
GSA	General Services Administration (U.S.)
HDC	(Rockville) Historic District Commission
MCDOT	Montgomery County Department of Transportation
MDOT SHA	Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration
MCFRS	Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service
MCPL	Montgomery County Public Library
MCPS	Montgomery County Public Schools
MDOT MTA	Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration
MWCOG	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
REDI	Rockville Economic Development, Inc.
RHE	Rockville Housing Enterprises
WMATA	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
WSSC/D	Washington Suburban Sanitation Commission / District

List of Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ACS	American Community Survey
ADU	Accessory Dwelling Unit
ADV	Average Daily Vehicles
APFO/S	Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance / Standards
BRT	Bus Rapid Transit
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CTR	Comprehensive Transportation Review
ESD	Environmental Site Design
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HOA	Homeowners Association
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LOS	Level of Service
LIHTC	Low-Income Housing Tax Credit
MEL	Maximum Expansion Limits
MGE	Municipal Growth Element
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPDU	Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit
NPDES	National Pollution Discharge Elimination System
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
TIF	Tax Increment Financing
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled

Comprehensive Plan Terms

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): A dwelling unit located within an accessory building located on the same lot as a single unit detached dwelling. An accessory dwelling unit must be subordinate to the primary residential dwelling on the lot. (Source: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance)

Adaptive Re-Use: The renovation and reuse of preexisting structures for new purposes. (Source: Merriam-Webster)

Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance/Standards: A City ordinance and accompanying standards that require development applications to perform studies to determine if the capacity of certain public facilities could accommodate the development and, if deemed appropriate, require that their impacts be mitigated prior to approval. (Source: City of Rockville)

Affordable Housing: Housing capable of being purchased or rented by persons whose income level is categorized as very low, low, or moderate within standards set by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Aging in Place: A term used to describe the ability for a person to live in the residence or neighborhood of their choice, for as long as they are able, as they age. This includes being able to have services (or other support) they might need over time as their needs change. (Source: ageinplace.com)

American Community Survey (ACS): An ongoing survey by the U.S. Census Bureau that regularly gathers information previously contained only in the long form of the decennial census. The ACS estimates data for the total population of a geographic area from a sample of its population each year. (Source: Census.gov)

Average Daily Traffic (ADT): A commonly used measure of traffic flow that reflects the total volume of vehicular traffic passing a given point during a typical 24-hour period. (Source: City of Rockville)

Barrier-Free Design: (see Universal Design)

Best Management Practices: A practice, or combination of practices, that is determined to be an effective and practicable (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by non-point sources to a level compatible with water quality goals. (Source: North Carolina Forest Service)

Biophilic: A design approach that seeks to connect people more closely to nature and triggers a strong positive impact on human health and well-being. (Source: www.bdcnetwork.com)

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A transit system using buses that provide faster service than traditional bus routes, through improvements in infrastructure, vehicles, and scheduling. Examples include dedicated busways, priority bus lanes, limited stop service, and signal preemption. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Capital Improvements Program (CIP): The CIP maps the City's capital investment plan over a five-year period. The CIP is both a fiscal and planning device that allows the City to inventory and monitor all capital project costs, funding sources, departmental responsibilities, and project schedules. Each year, the CIP is reviewed within the context of ongoing City, County, State, and federal planning programs and policies, as well as the City's Master Plan. (Source: Rockville Budget, FY2020)

Civilian Labor Force: A statistical classification that consists of people classified as employed (according to Census definitions for "Employed") or unemployed. Excluded from the employed are people whose only activity consisted of work around the house or unpaid volunteer work for religious, charitable, and similar organizations; also excluded are all institutionalized people and people on active duty in the United States Armed Forces. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Climate Change: Any significant change in measures of climate, such as temperature, precipitation, or wind, lasting for an extended period (i.e., decades or longer). Climate change may result from: natural factors, such as changes in the sun's intensity or slow changes in the earth's orbit around the sun; natural processes within the climate system, such as changes in ocean circulation; and human activities that change the atmosphere's composition, such as burning

fossil fuels, and the land surface, such as deforestation, reforestation, urbanization or desertification. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Community: A unified body of individuals, such as the people with common interests living in a particular area. For the purposes of this Plan, the Rockville community refers to individuals living, working, visiting, traveling, owning property, or having some interest in the City of Rockville. (Source: Merriam-Webster)

Complete Streets: Streets that include features that create a multi-modal-friendly environment that accommodates all road users to the extent appropriate for the land use or the context of the street. (Source: City of Rockville Complete Streets Policy)

Comprehensive Transportation Review (CTR): Rockville's CTR describes the transportation subset of the development review process. Principles and methodologies explained in the CTR guide the City in evaluating the transportation impacts of development applications on site access and circulation, non-auto multi-modal facilities, and automobile traffic. The CTR also addresses mitigation measures to alleviate negative impacts. (Source: City of Rockville)

Contributing Resource: A site, structure, or feature which adds to the historic association or quality of an area because it was present during the period of significance, relates to the documented significance of the property, possess historic integrity, or is capable or yielding important information about the period, or independently meets National Register criteria. (Source: District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan)

Critical Environmental Resources: [need to replace this with Sensitive Environmental Areas throughout the Plan]

Critical Infrastructure / Facilities: Facilities serving many people, that are necessary in the event of an earthquake or flood, like hospitals, fire, police, and emergency service facilities, utility "lifeline" facilities, like water, electricity, and gas supply, sewage disposal, and communications and transportation facilities. (Sources: Institute for Local Government)

Demolition by Neglect: Failure to maintain property or any component, thereof, located within a designated Historic District (HD) Zone to jeopardize the historic integrity of the property. (Sources: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance)

Density: The amount of development in a specified area that is permitted or already built on a parcel under the applicable zoning regulations. Common measures of density include population per acre or square mile, residential dwelling units per acre, or commercial floor-to-area ratio. Gross density includes the area necessary for streets, schools and parks. Net density does not include land area for public facilities. (Source: Institute for Local Government) 'Intensity' is a synonym for density that describes more of the relative density to surrounding land uses or streetscapes.

Design Guidelines: Documents or standards that provide guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice often produced by a local authority with a view to retaining local distinctiveness. (Source: www.planningportal.co.uk)

District Energy Systems: An energy distribution system that produces hot water, steam or chilled water at a central plant and then distributes the energy to buildings connected to the system. Individual buildings in the system do not need boilers, chillers or cooling towers. (Source: Cornell University)

Easement: A recorded grant or reservation by the owner of land for the use of all or a portion of such property to the public or others, for a specific purpose. (Source: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance)

Environment Site Design (ESD): A comprehensive design strategy for maintaining predevelopment runoff characteristics and protecting natural resources. This strategy relies on integrating site design, natural hydrology, and smaller controls to capture and treat runoff. (Source: Maryland Department of the Environment)

Environmental Setting: The area associated with a site within a designated Historic District Zone, including buildings and grounds. (Source: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance).

Fee-in-Lieu: Cash payments that may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for a dedication of land or construction of affordable housing units. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Floating Zone: A zoning district that can be applied to a property in addition or replacement to a traditional zone, where certain conditions must be met for its application and various zoning standards may be modified from a traditional zone. Rather than being placed on the zoning map as a traditional zone, the floating zone is written as an amendment in the zoning ordinance and used on an as needed basis. (Source: City of Rockville)

Gentrification: A process in which a poor area (as of a city) experiences an influx of middle-class or wealthy people who renovate and rebuild homes and businesses and which often results in an increase in property values and the displacement of earlier, usually poorer residents. (Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

Green Building: The practice of creating structures and using processes that are environmentally responsible and resource-efficient throughout a building's life-cycle from siting to design, construction, operation, maintenance, renovation and deconstruction. This practice expands and complements the classical building design concerns of economy, utility, durability, and comfort. Green building is also known as a sustainable or high-performance building. (Source: U.S. EPA)

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions: Any production of a gas that absorbs infrared radiation in the atmosphere. Types of greenhouse gases include water vapor, carbon dioxide (CO2), methane (CH4), nitrous oxide (N2O), chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), ozone (O3), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), and sulfur hexafluoride (SF6). (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Green Purchasing / Procurement: The procurement of products and services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. (Source: University of Louisville)

Housing Affordability: (see Affordable Housing)

Impervious Surface: An area that prevents or severely restricts water from reaching the sub-surface and re-charging groundwater. This condition can be caused by a structure, paving, compacted soil or gravel or other feature that forms a barrier between precipitation and the earth's surface. Impervious surface also includes elevated structures, such as a bridge or deck regardless of whether the land surface beneath it itself is pervious or impervious. (Source: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance)

Inclusionary Zoning: A locally adopted regulatory program requiring that a specific percentage of housing units in a project or development remain affordable for households with incomes that are defined as moderate, low and/or very low. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Infill development: Development of vacant or underutilized land (usually individual lots or leftover properties) within areas that are already largely developed. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Inflow and Infiltration (I&I): Describes the ways that groundwater and stormwater enter the sanitary sewer system. Inflow is water that is dumped into the sewer system through improper connections, such as downspouts and groundwater sump pumps. Infiltration is groundwater that enters the sewer system through leaks in the pipe. (Source: Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District)

Infrastructure: Public services and facilities like sewage-disposal systems, water-supply systems, other utility systems, schools, roads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and transit systems. (Source: Institute for Local Government) (see also Critical Infrastructure)

Institutional Racism: The policies and practices within and across institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor one racial group and/or put a racial group at a disadvantage. (Source: International City/ County Management Association (ICMA))

Interpretive Signage: Signage that helps to create a narrative that acts to generate a positive user experience. (Source: www.travelwayfinding.com)

Level of Service (LOS): A scale that measures the amount of vehicle traffic that a roadway or intersection can accommodate, based on such factors as maneuverability, driver dissatisfaction, and delay. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Life-Cycle Impacts: A technique intended to quantify the total impact of a product during its production, distribution, use and recycling, treatment or disposal. (Source: www.planningportal.co.uk)

Market-Rate Housing: Housing that is offered for rent or sale at fair market value without any consideration of standards for determining affordability. (Source: District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan)

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): A type of agreement between two or more parties that expresses a convergence of will between the parties, indicating an intended common line of action. It is often used either in cases where parties do not imply a legal commitment or in situations where the parties cannot create a legally enforceable agreement. (Source: Wikipedia)

Microgrid: A group of interconnected loads and distributed energy resources within clearly defined electrical boundaries that acts as a single controllable entity with respect to the grid. A microgrid can connect and disconnect from the grid to enable it to operate in both grid-connected or 'island'-mode. (Source: U.S. Department of Energy)

Missing Middle Housing: An approach to house-scale residential density that promotes diverse housing options, such as duplexes, fourplexes, multiplexes, and bungalow courts, that fit seamlessly into low-rise, walkable neighborhoods and support walkability, locally-serving commercial, and public transportation options. They provide solutions along a spectrum of affordability to address the mismatch between the available U.S. housing stock and shifting demographics combined with the growing demand for walkability. (Source: Opticos Design and www.missingmiddlehousing.com)

Mixed-Use Development: A development project containing any combination of office, commercial, and residential uses integrated vertically or horizontally. (Source: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance)

Mode: A method of travel, such as walking, biking, or driving. See also Pedestrian and Rolling. (Source: City of Rockville)

Multi-Modal Transportation: Refers to the availability or accommodation of various modes (walking, cycling, automobile, public transit, etc.) and connections among modes. (Source: Victoria Transport Policy Institute)

Multiplex: A residential structure that consists of five to 10 side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry or individual entries along the front. A multiplex is generally occupied as rental apartments on a single ownership lot in contrast to attached townhouses on individual ownership lots. (Source: Opticos Design and City of Rockville)

Multi-Use Path: A form of infrastructure that supports multiple recreation and transportation opportunities, such as walking, bicycling, people in wheelchairs, and other non-vehicular rolling modes. Motorcycles and mopeds are normally prohibited. Also called a Shared Use Path. (Source: Wikipedia)

No-Net-Loss: A policy which requires that any reduction in acreage of a particular use (such as parks, tree canopy, or wetlands) be accompanied "in kind" by the creation of new acreage of that use that is equivalent or greater in value. (Source: District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan)

Optional Method (of development): A zoning procedure that encourages land assembly and mixed-use development in some zones that allows development incentives or zoning relief (e.g., additional height, higher density, lower minimum parking, etc.) in exchange for significant public amenities and facilities of importance to the community (e.g., affordable housing, publicly accessible open space, etc.).

Oral History: The collection and study of historical information using sound recordings of interviews with people having personal knowledge of past events. (Source: Dictionary.com)

Pedestrian: A general term used for any type of travel mode that involves a person traveling by foot, whether walking or running, and may include use of a white stick, audio-assistance device, or other physical assistance. May also be referred to in general as "walking" in the plan. (Source: City of Rockville)

Placemaking: Placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of

every community. Strengthening the connection between people and the places they share, placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm in order to maximize shared value. More than just promoting better urban design, placemaking facilitates creative patterns of use, paying particular attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. (Source: Project for Public Spaces)

Planning Area: A smaller area of the city that provides the opportunity for targeted policy recommendations and actions that is generally of a consistent land use or natural character. (Source: City of Rockville)

Pollution Hotspots: Locations where emissions from specific sources such as water or air pollution may expose local populations to elevated health risks, such as cancer. (Source: Wikipedia)

Potential Future Public Park: A green asterisk placed on the Land Use Policy Map in the general area where a public park is needed, but the specific location is yet to be determined. (Source: City of Rockville)

Poverty Rate: The percentage of families and unrelated individuals that are classified as being below the poverty level, based on a poverty index. The index provides a range of income cutoffs or "poverty thresholds" varying by size of family, number of children, and age of householder. The income cutoffs are updated each year to reflect the change in the Consumer Price Index. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)

Public-Private Partnership: A cooperative arrangement between two or more public and private sectors, typically of a long-term nature that is primarily used for infrastructure provision, such as the building and equipping of schools, hospitals, transport systems, water and sewerage systems. (Source: Wikipedia)

Racial Equity: An approach that brings about clear, simple, direct remedies for historic and present-day structural and policy barriers producing racial disparities and disparate impacts. It is not merely a value; equity is a systemic shift. Race equity is actualized fairness and justice; and is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. (Source: International City/County Management Association (ICMA))

Racial Inequity: A circumstance when two or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing, such as the percentages of each ethnic group in terms of dropout rates, single family home ownership, access to healthcare, educational opportunities, career mobility, etc. (Source: International City/County Management Association (ICMA))

Recent Past: For the purposes of historic preservation, the "recent past" most commonly refers to historic places less than 50 years old. They are places and cultural resources that are among the most under-appreciated and vulnerable aspects of the country's heritage. (Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation)

Rolling: A general term for travel by many types of non-vehicular transportation modes (also known as 'micro-mobility'), including bicycles, scooters, skateboards, one-wheel boards, roller blades, wheelchairs, etc. May also be referred to in general as "bicycling" in this plan (Source: City of Rockville)

Row house: See Townhouse/Townhome.

Sensitive Environmental Areas: Natural areas that are sensitive to disruption or disturbance and require special protection, such as streams, stream buffers, 100-year floodplains, habitats of threatened and endangered species, steep slopes, wildlife corridors, springs and seeps, vernal pools, bogs, and non-tidal wetlands. (Source: Maryland Department of Planning)

Short-Term Rental: Describes furnished, self-contained apartments that are rented for short periods of time, usually by the month as opposed to annual rentals in the unfurnished apartment rental market. They are seen as an alternative to hotels. (Source: Wikipedia)

Single-Unit Attached Dwelling: One of a group of three or more single dwelling units sharing common party walls or floors. As opposed to a multiplex, each attached dwelling unit has one direct entrance from the outside. (Source: City of Rockville)

Single-Unit Detached Dwelling: Also known as single-family dwelling, the term 'single-unit' is used in this Plan to indicate that these dwellings are not always occupied by individuals in a single family. This housing type is defined as a building designed and intended for use as a single dwelling and entirely separated from any other building or structure on all sides. (Source: City of Rockville)

Skinny Houses: Houses with a narrow footprint that satisfy the development standards of buildable lots narrower than typical lot widths in a neighborhood. (Source: City of Rockville)

Smart Growth: An urban planning and transportation theory that concentrates growth in compact walkable urban centers to avoid sprawl. (Source: Smart Growth America)

Streetscape: Physical enhancements that affect the appearance or view of a street. Streetscaping can include changes to the road cross section, traffic management, sidewalk conditions, landscaping, street furniture (such as utility poles, benches, or garbage cans), building fronts and materials, signage, and other amenities. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Structural/Systemic Racism: A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. (Source: International City/ County Management Association (ICMA))

Sustainable Communities: A program administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development that encourages interagency and cross-governmental collaboration by providing designated Sustainable Communities areas with access to a toolbox of State-sponsored financing programs and tax credit incentives, including the Community Legacy Program, Strategic Demolition Fund, Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program, Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing Authority, Job Creation Tax Credit, and Sustainable Maryland Certified. (Source: City of Rockville)

Sustainable Design: A design technique that seeks to reduce negative impacts on the environment, and the health and comfort of building occupants, thereby improving building performance. (Source: U.S. General Service Administration)

Tax increment financing (TIF): A tax incentive designed to attract business investment by dedicating to the project area the new property tax revenues generated by redevelopment. The increase in revenues (increment) is used to finance development-related costs in that district. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Townhouse/Townhome: One of a group of three or more single-unit dwellings separated from each other by a party wall extending from the basement floor to the highest point of the roof with no openings. Each dwelling unit must have two separate entrances from the outside. Also referred to as row house, especially where facades and street frontages are consistent for all attached units. (Source: City of Rockville Zoning Ordinance)

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD): Moderate- to higher-density development, located within easy walk of a major transit stop, generally with a mix of residential, employment, and shopping opportunities designed for pedestrians without excluding the automobile. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Under-Utilized Parcel / Land: A parcel or land area that is not developed to its full zoning potential, such as by land use type, height, and density. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Universal Design: The design of buildings, products and environments that are usable and effective for everyone, not just people with disabilities. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Vehicle Miles Traveled: One vehicle traveling the distance of one mile. Total vehicle miles is the aggregate mileage traveled by all vehicles. VMT is a key measure of overall street and highway use. Reducing VMT is often a major objective in efforts to reduce vehicular congestion and achieve air quality goals. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Viewshed: The area within view from a defined observation point. (Source: Institute for Local Government). The Carver High School Viewshed boundaries are coincident with the Carver High School Historic District.

Vision Zero: A collaborative international movement to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries through a series of practices that put the safety and health of human beings as the primary interest of a road network (Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan, p. 4-19). Vision Zero is a strategy to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries, while increasing safe, healthy, equitable mobility for all. (Source: Visionzeronetwork.org)

Vulnerable Populations: Groups of individuals who are racial or ethnic minorities, children, elderly, socioeconomically disadvantaged, under-insured or those with certain medical conditions. (Source: U.S. National Library of Medicine)

Walkable Neighborhood: A neighborhood where goods (such as housing, offices, and retail) and services (such as transportation, schools, and libraries) that a community resident or employee needs on a regular basis are located within an easy and safe walk. Walkable communities facilitate pedestrian activity, expanding transportation options, and creating a streetscape that better serves a range of users -- pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and automobiles. To foster walkability, communities typically mix land uses and build compactly, and ensure safe and inviting pedestrian corridors. (Source: Institute for Local Government)

Wayfinding: Information systems that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space. (Source: Society for Experiential Graphic Design)

Workforce Housing: Housing that is affordable to persons who are gainfully employed in professions that do not pay a sufficient wage to afford market-rate housing, but whose income may not qualify for affordable housing programs, including teachers, fire-fighters, day care workers, nurses, etc. (Source: District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan)

Zoning: Zoning ordinance regulations serve to create and maintain the character of the city by regulating the allowable uses and development standards for each piece of land in the city, including the types of land uses that can be located in different areas of the city; the allowable density of development; the size and height of the buildings; parking and landscape requirements; and the layout of buildings and the site. (Source: City of Rockville)

City of Rockville Zoning Map Definitions
(as of August 2021)

ZONING DISTRICTS

R-400 - Residential Estate: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 40,000 square feet.

R-200 - Suburban Residential: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet.

R-150 - Low Density Residential: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 15,000 square feet.

R-90 - Single Unit Detached Dwelling, Restricted Residential: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 9,000 square feet.

R-75 - Single Unit Detached Dwelling, Residential: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet.

R-60 - Single Unit Detached Dwelling, Residential: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 6,000 (or 5,000) square feet.

R-40 - Single Unit Semi-detached Dwelling, Residential: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings (detached and semi-detached) with a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet.

RMD-10 - Residential Medium Density: Zoned for residential single unit dwellings with a minimum tract area of 20,000 square feet. Allows single-unit detached, semi-detached, and townhouses up to 10 dwelling units per acre.

RMD-15 - Residential Medium Density: Zoned for residential single unit and multiple unit dwellings with a minimum tract area of 1 acre. Allows detached, attached, and multi-unit residential dwellings up to 15 dwelling units per acre.

RMD-25 - Residential Medium Density: Zoned for residential single unit and multiple unit dwellings with a minimum tract area of 2 acres. Allows detached, attached, and multi-unit residential dwellings up to 25 dwelling units per acre.

MXB - Mixed-Use Business: Intended for areas that are either currently developed or recommended for development primarily for retail sales, neighborhood services, home improvement services, and compatible residential development in areas convenient to both higher-density commercial zones and single-unit detached residential uses. This zone allows for a range of densities as determined by the applicable master plan and permits retail, service, office, and residential uses.

MXC - Mixed-Use Commercial: Intended for sites that are either currently developed or recommended for development primarily for local retail and service uses in areas either within or in close proximity to single-unit detached residential uses. This zone allows for low density development of retail, service, office, and residential uses. This zone is not intended to provide for major employment, so office uses are limited.

MXCT - Mixed-Use Corridor Transition: Intended for areas that are located between areas currently developed or recommended for development as medium to high-intensity development and areas developed or recommended for residential development or parks within residentially zoned areas. This zone allows for medium density development of residential and office uses, as well as neighborhood-serving retail and service uses.

MXCD - Mixed-Use Corridor District: Intended for areas along major highway corridors outside of the MXTD Zone areas, it allows for medium density development of retail, office, and residential uses. Because of the nature of highway corridor areas, the zone provides flexibility in the siting of buildings relative to major roadways and other site requirements to accommodate service drives and required parking.

MXE - Mixed-Use Employment: Intended for areas that are either currently developed or are recommended for development primarily for office, light industrial, industrial park and similar employment-generating uses, this zone also allows for medium to high density development of office, retail, and residential uses. A mix of office and residential uses, including live/work units, is encouraged.

MXNC - Mixed-Use Neighborhood Commercial: Intended for sites that are either currently developed or recommended for development primarily for local retail and service uses in areas either within or in close proximity to single unit detached residential uses. This zone allows for low to moderate density development of retail, service, office, and residential uses. This zone is not intended to provide for major employment, so office uses are limited.

MXT - Mixed-Use Transition: Intended for areas that are located between moderate or high-density development and single-unit detached residential neighborhoods. This zone allows for development of low density multi-unit, attached and townhouse residential development, and may include other neighborhood-serving uses.

MXTD - Mixed-Use Transit District: Intended for use in areas near Metro stations, it allows for high-density development of retail, office, and residential uses consistent with the recommendations of the Plan.

IH - Heavy Industrial: Higher impact industrial zone.

IL - Light Industrial: Lower impact industrial zone allowing live-work units.

PARK - Park Zone: A zone placed on all City parks and recreation areas to provide for open space, recreational, and other compatible uses.

PD - Planned Development Zone: Prior to March 16, 2009, a zone approved for developments with special provisions for development standards and types of uses through special development procedures.

ZONING MAP OVERLAYS

Cluster Development: An overlay zone for approved developments of single-unit detached dwellings with varying individual lot areas, lot widths, and setbacks, some of which are less than would otherwise be required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Historic District Zone: An overlay zone for properties located within a Local Historic District designated by the City.

Lincoln Park Neighborhood Conservation District: An overlay zone for properties within the Lincoln Park neighborhood that are subject to special development standards.

Rockville Pike Core Area: An overlay zone identified as the Core area in the Rockville Pike Neighborhood Plan.

South Pike Area: An overlay zone covering that portion of the City contained within the Twinbrook Metro Performance District including the area within the PD-TC (Planned Development - Twinbrook Commons) Zone as shown on the adopted Zoning Map.

Town Center Performance District: An overlay zone encompassing properties in downtown Rockville, west of the Rockville Metro Station, as shown on the adopted Zoning Map, in which properties are subject to special development standards and review procedures.

Twinbrook Metro Performance District: An overlay zone encompassing properties west of the Twinbrook Metro Station, as shown on the adopted Zoning Map, in which properties are subject to special development standards and review procedures.