

Chapter 5: Action Plan

The plan addresses various functional areas within the five elements that frame the vision of the Branch Avenue Corridor sector plan—Land Use and Economic Development, Design and Appearance, Infrastructure to Support the Plan, Quality of Life, and Community Involvement. For each of these five elements this chapter presents **goal statements** of desirable future conditions, **policy statements** of intent upon which individual decisions should be evaluated, and **strategies** for a general course of action on how to achieve the identified goals.

Land Use and Economic Development

The corridor vision of high- and medium-density mixed-use centers, preservation of residential communities, and pedestrian-accessible networks is guided by new land use designations. Without economic development guidelines to provide financial incentives for these land uses, the market will be slow to produce upscale retail, commercial, and office development in the corridor. Existing conditions in the Branch Avenue Corridor sector plan area necessitate measures by the county to stimulate revitalization while it seeks to attract investment and development in the corridor. Corridor residents and the county need to work together to clean up the corridor's appearance, discourage marginal businesses, and transform areas that attract criminal behavior and serve as havens for unsafe activity. Additionally, the encouragement and financial support of Prince George's County will establish a platform on which the areawide vision can reach fruition and be successful.

Land Use

GOAL

Revitalize and redevelop the sector plan area with a dynamic mix of compatible land uses that will help spur job growth and economic development.

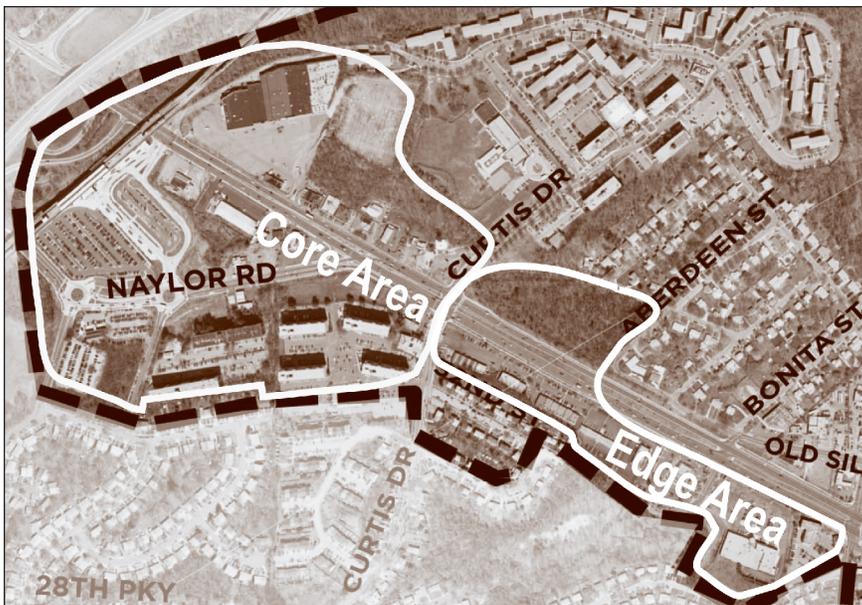
POLICY

Promote development of high-quality residential and nonresidential uses at varying densities and intensities consistent with the land use plan in context with surrounding neighborhoods and capitalizing on the existing infrastructure.

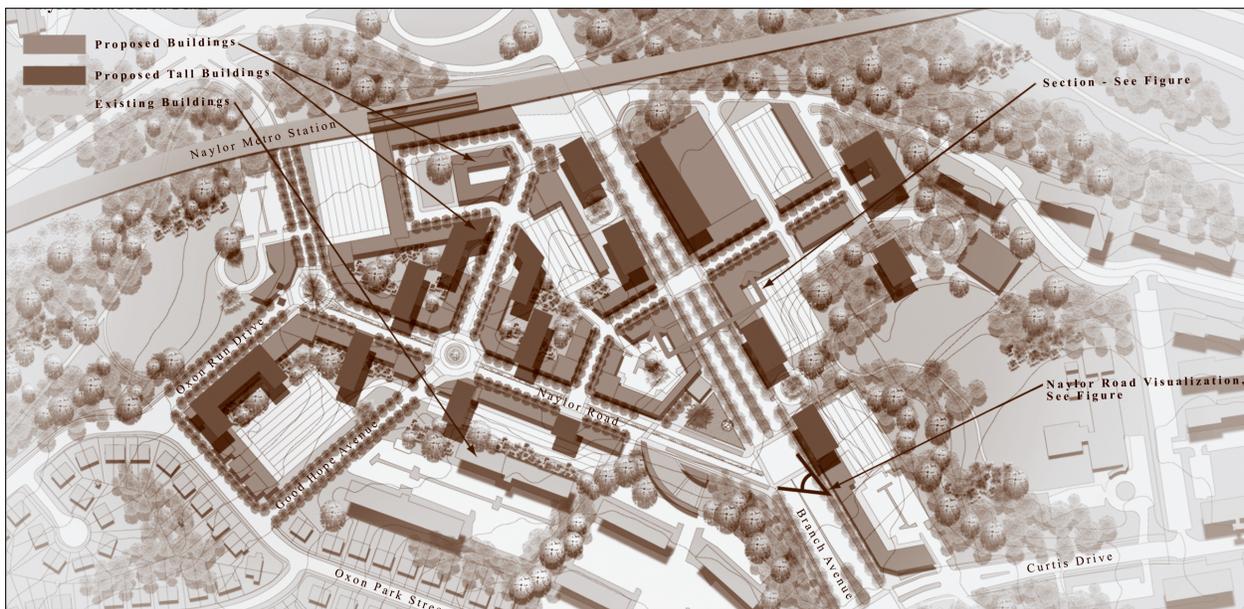
STRATEGIES

1. Amend the General Plan designation for Naylor Road Metro Station from “community center” to “regional center.”
2. Amend the *Prince George’s County Approved General Plan* by designating a node along the Branch Avenue Corridor as the Iverson-Marlow Heights Mixed-Use Center and rename the Suitland-Iverson Area Regional Center to Suitland Metro Area Regional Center.
3. Designate properties within the Naylor Road Metro Station area, existing commercial areas along Branch Avenue (including Iverson Mall, the Marlow Heights Shopping Center), properties on Old Silver Hill Road, property north of the intersection of Branch Avenue and St. Barnabas Road, and properties fronting St. Barnabas Road between 28th Avenue and Holly Tree Road to mixed land use classification.
4. Rezone the area designated for mixed land uses to the Mixed Use-Transportation Oriented (M-X-T) Zone that will implement the vision and goals of the sector plan, and revisit the M-X-T Zone if new mixed-use zoning tools become available to efficiently and effectively implement the mixed-use, pedestrian- and transit-oriented development pattern recommended by this plan.

The core area is where the highest densities and intensities are encouraged. These densities and intensities taper off toward the edge area.



5. Designate the Naylor Road Metro Station Core Area (from Suitland Parkway to Curtis Drive) as a mixed-use, high-density residential/office/retail land use classification to achieve a vertical and horizontal mix of uses in urban form, with emphasis on transit-oriented development, using the following standards and guidelines:
 - 5.1 Provide minimum density for residential development at 42 dwelling units per acre.
 - 5.2 Use a floor area ratio (FAR) range for nonresidential development from 1.0–2.5.



Redevelopment concept for the Naylor Road area, showing possible new building footprints, streets and green spaces for mixed-use development. See page 64 for land use recommendations. This illustration portrays only one of many possible long-range redevelopment scenarios that may result from implementation of the recommended land use concept for this area.

- 5.3 Require a minimum of two uses on individual parcels or multiple parcels under a single site plan from the following use categories:
 - Residential
 - Office
 - Retail/commercial
 Permitted land uses outside of these categories may be developed but do not count toward the two use categories required.
- 5.4 Require vertical mix of uses along and fronting both sides of Branch Avenue and Naylor Road and require ground floor retail and residential or office above, and encourage retail on the first floor of buildings fronting on other new streets in the core area.
- 5.5 Require a minimum of 60 percent total square footage of office/employment use on WMATA property and immediate vicinity within the area bounded by Branch Avenue, Naylor Road, and the Metro tracks.
- 5.6 Development on the east of Branch Avenue is permitted to be predominantly residential; office development is encouraged above the first floor retail as part of the vertical mix along Branch Avenue.
- 5.7 Development west of Naylor Road is permitted to be predominantly residential; office development is encouraged above the first floor retail as part of the vertical mix along Naylor Road.
- 5.8 Big box retail is not allowed within the core area.
- 5.9 Provide plaza space with pedestrian amenities that encourage gathering and socialization at the Branch Avenue–Naylor Road intersection and at appropriate locations east of Branch Avenue, west of Naylor Road and at the WMATA site.
- 5.10 Facilitate a joint partnership between the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and a private developer to redevelop Naylor Road Metro Station property with the recommended mix of uses at the density and intensity recommended by this plan.

6. Designate the Naylor Road Metro Station Edge Area (from Curtis Drive to Colebrooke Drive and east of Branch Avenue from Curtis Drive to Aberdeen Street west of Scottish Avenue) as a mixed-use, high-density residential/office/retail land use classification to achieve a mix of uses with emphasis on transit-oriented development, using the following standards and guidelines:
 - 6.1 Focus primarily on residential development that offers the community a diverse mix of market rate and workforce housing options.
 - 6.2 Provide a density range for residential development from 35–45 dwelling units per acre.
 - 6.3 Use a floor area ratio (FAR) range for nonresidential development from 0.5–1.0.
 - 6.4 Require a minimum of two uses on individual parcels or multiple parcels under a single site plan from the following use categories:
 - Residential
 - Office
 - Retail/commercial
 Permitted land uses outside of these categories may be developed but do not count toward the two use categories required.
 - 6.5 Encourage vertical mix of uses with ground floor retail along street frontage especially at the corners of major intersections such as at Branch Avenue and Curtis Drive and Branch Avenue and Colebrooke Drive.
 - 6.6 Ensure that the width of the linear park does not exceed 30 feet.

Redevelopment concept for the edge area and vicinity, showing possible new building footprints, streets and green spaces for mixed-use development. See page 68 for land use recommendations. This illustration portrays only one of many possible long-range redevelopment scenarios that may result from implementation of the recommended land use concept for this area.



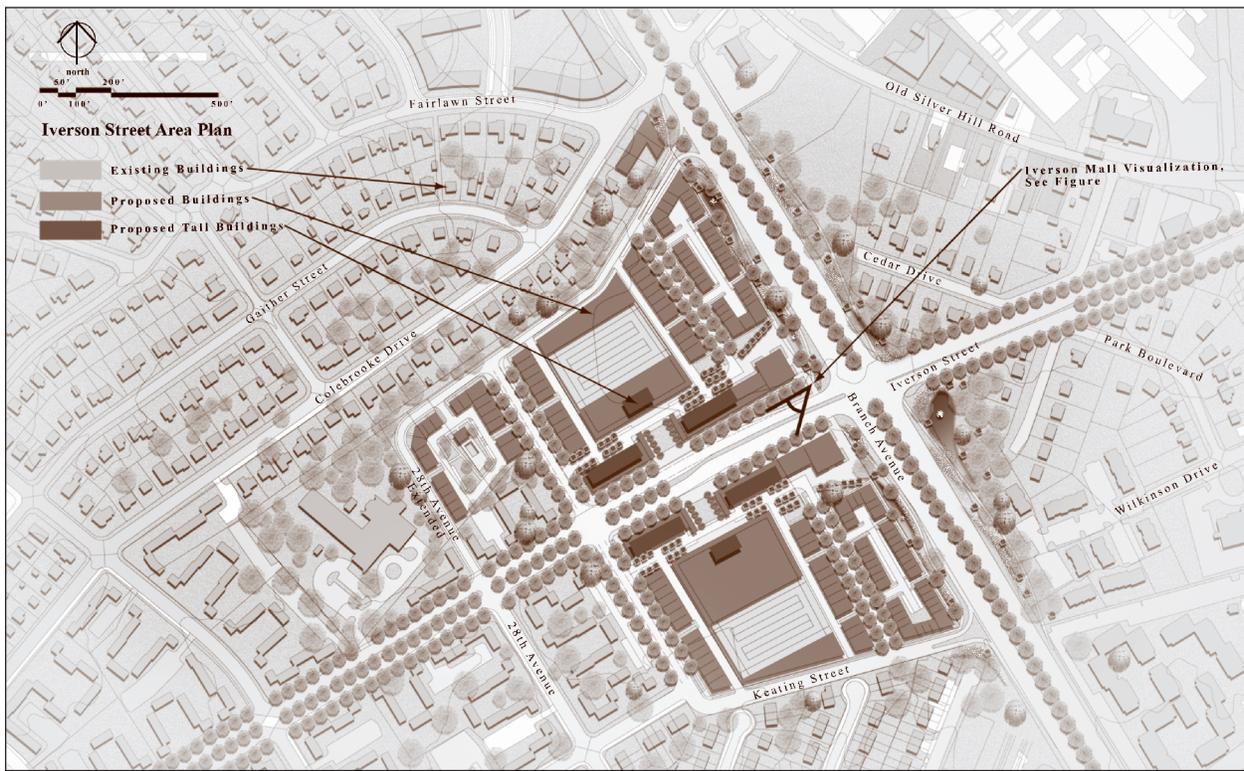


A development concept for the Marlow Heights Shopping Center, showing possible new building footprints, streets and green spaces for mixed-use development. See page 67 for land use recommendations. This illustration portrays only one of many possible long-range redevelopment scenarios that may result from implementation of the recommended land use concept for this area.

7. Designate the Iverson-Marlow Heights Mixed-Use Center as a mixed-use, medium-density residential/office/retail land use classification, to achieve a vertical and horizontal mix emphasizing retail- and pedestrian-oriented development, using the following standards and guidelines:

- 7.1 Provide a density range for residential development from 30–40 dwelling units per acre.
- 7.2 Require a FAR range for nonresidential development from 0.5 to 1.5.
- 7.3 Establish the following targeted land use mixes for the entire Iverson Mall area and Marlow Heights Shopping Center:

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Residential | 10–40 percent |
| Retail and services | 40–70 percent |
| Office | 10–30 percent |
- 7.4 Provide vertical mixed-use on both sides of Iverson Street or along any “main street” within any alternative redevelopment concept.
- 7.5 Provide vertical mixed-use on both sides of the recommended Marlow Heights “main street” and encourage vertical mix at the intersections of interior streets as appropriate.
- 7.6 Provide plaza spaces with pedestrian amenities that encourage public gathering and social interactions and that unify land uses.



Development concept for Iverson Mall, showing possible new building footprints, streets and green spaces for mixed-use development.

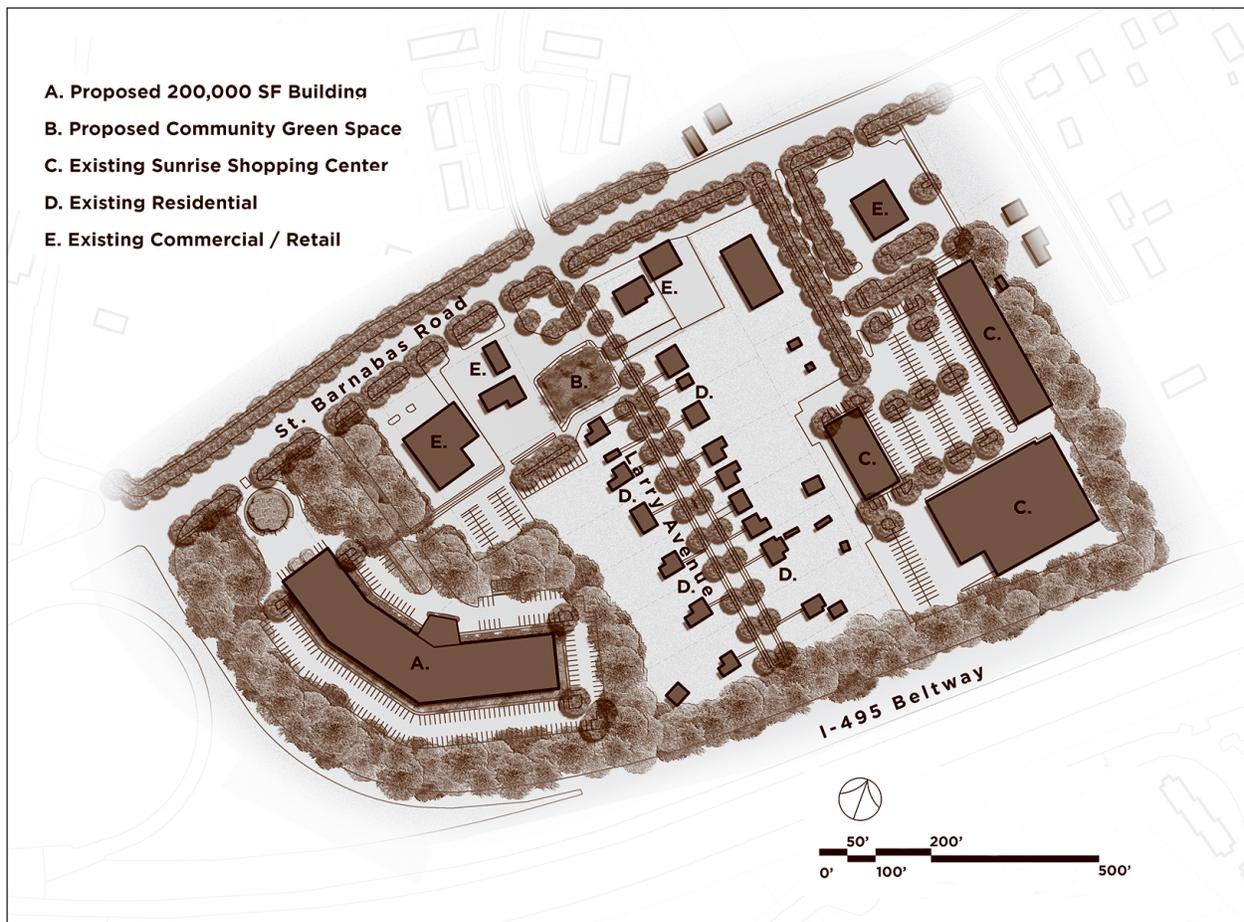
See page 66 for land use recommendations.

This illustration portrays only one of many possible long-range redevelopment scenarios that may result from implementation of the recommended land use concept for this area.

8. Designate the mixed-use areas between Old Silver Hill Road and Branch Avenue, and on St. Barnabas Road, as mixed-use, medium-density residential/office/retail, emphasizing low-scale neighborhood- and pedestrian-oriented development using the following standards and guidelines:
 - 8.1 Explore senior housing development opportunities as part of the mix to capture the growing retirement market that values access to urban services.
 - 8.2 Require a density range for residential development from 15–25 dwelling units per acre.
 - 8.3 Require a FAR range for nonresidential development from 0.3 to 0.7.
 - 8.4 Design small-scale, mixed-use development (neighborhood retail, second-story office or residential and mid-rise multifamily housing) within mixed-use areas along St. Barnabas Road.
 - 8.5 Require a minimum of two uses on individual parcels or multiple parcels under a single site plan from the following use categories:
 - Residential
 - Office
 - Retail/commercial
 Permitted land uses outside of these categories may be developed but do not count toward the two use categories required.
 - 8.6 Encourage vertical mixed-use along street frontage especially at the corners of major intersections.

9. Designate the Branch Avenue Corridor sector area as a “Revitalization Overlay Area” as a means to revive the physical, social, and economic vitality of the area through revitalization assistance.
10. Amend the existing M-X-T Zone provisions within the proposed Revitalization Overlay Area to encourage place-making by establishing a strong relationship between the zone and the recommendations of the sector plan. Require development proposals during conceptual and detailed site plans demonstrating compliance with the sector plan guidelines.
11. Amend the Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C) Zone within the proposed Revitalization Overlay Area to restrict certain uses, or control the location of certain uses in the C-S-C Zone when the concentration of these uses—such as liquor stores and used car dealers on small lots—is detrimental to implementation of the approved vision and land use policies for the area.
12. Rezone residential properties south of the intersection of Silver Hill Road and Suitland Parkway from the Multifamily Medium Density Residential (R-18) Zone to the Multifamily High Density Residential (R-10) Zone. These properties are located within walking distance of the Suitland Metro Station, where high densities and intensities are recommended by the plan and are proposed for high density residential land use in accordance with the recommendations for core areas for centers specified in the General Plan.

Improvement-plan concept for the Sunrise Shopping Center area. This illustration portrays only one of many possible long-range redevelopment scenarios that may result from implementation of the recommended land use concept for this area.



13. Rezone commercial properties in the area of the Silver Hill Road and St. Barnabas Road intersection—where neighborhood-oriented businesses are envisioned—from the Commercial Miscellaneous (C-M) Zone to the Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C) Zone. This zoning change will limit uses that are inconsistent with the neighborhood commercial businesses envisioned by this plan
14. Retain the existing commercial and residential land use designations on properties along St. Barnabas Road from Beech Drive to the Capital Beltway. Rezone commercial properties identified as “Change 2” in the Proposed Rezoning section of the Sectional Map Amendment chapter from the Commercial Miscellaneous (C-M) Zone to the Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C) Zone to discourage future development of these properties with automobile-oriented uses that do not contribute to the positive image of the area or promote the vision of the plan. Rezone the vacant property on St. Barnabas Road and the Beltway ramp within the Sunrise Shopping Center from the C-M Zone to the C-S-C Zone to ensure future development that will be consistent with the vision of this plan.
15. Conduct a study of the industrial land uses adjacent to the St. Barnabas Road commercial corridor for impacts on the commercial and residential uses within the area, and develop an action plan to mitigate the impact. Target the area for extensive, systematic code inspection and enforcement to eliminate code violations, discourage repeat offenses, promote better property maintenance, and improve environmental quality in the industrial zone.

Economic Development

GOAL

Encourage quality commercial and mixed-use development within the Branch Avenue Corridor sector plan area to increase employment opportunities, residents’ income, and the county’s tax base.

POLICY 1

Prioritize activities that improve the image and perception of the area to attract quality businesses and employers.

STRATEGIES

1. Use the recommended designation of Revitalization Overlay Area to develop a partnership with the county’s Redevelopment Authority and its Economic Development Corporation to commit financial, personnel, and other assistance to support the implementation of the economic, revitalization, and redevelopment recommendations of this plan.
2. Vigorously enforce all applicable county codes—particularly property maintenance and zoning codes for dilapidated areas and structures—through new code enforcement strategies that include education, penalties, and recognition for better compliance.

3. Identify and work with owners of substandard properties along Branch Avenue and St. Barnabas Road to improve the appearance and function of these sites through the provision of financial assistance (grants or loans).
4. Encourage PEPCO, Verizon, Comcast, and other electrical and technological infrastructure service providers to update their services, thus providing the opportunity for a wide range of residents, employers, and businesses to locate in the area.
5. Limit conglomeration of businesses such as liquor stores and beauty shops within the designated Revitalization Overlay Area.
6. Establish a multidimensional branding campaign that brings clear identity to the area, promotes the area's strengths, and alerts private investors to its readiness for business.
7. Intensively market the area, develop a tenant recruitment program, and create tax incentives for businesses to locate to the area.
8. The Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation should promote use of the Focus Enterprise Zone for state income, real property, and business personal property tax credits in the corridor to assist property owners with redevelopment and development proposals which implement the plan vision and recommendations.

POLICY 2

Utilize existing county, state and federal government assistance programs to revitalize and redevelop the area.

STRATEGIES

1. Promote financial assistance programs available through the Redevelopment Authority, the Economic Development Corporation, the Prince George's Financial Services Corporation, the State of Maryland, and the federal government for existing businesses, business start-ups, facility expansions, job creation, and equipment purchases.
2. Encourage the owners of vacant or underutilized commercial properties on Silver Hill Road, Old Silver Hill Road, and St. Barnabas Road to participate in the county's Commercial Building Loan Fund (CBLF)—a multifaceted program administered by the Redevelopment Authority to increase employment and business opportunities for the county's low- and moderate-income residents and communities.
3. Explore the opportunity of forming a business improvement district (BID) to fund special operating services and enhanced capital improvements to augment standard government services for maintenance and security of the area.
4. Explore financial and regulatory incentives for small property owners to assemble land suitable for mixed-use development within the designated mixed-use areas.

Design and Appearance

Creating a corridor that is attractive and appealing for new development requires new standards and design guidelines to promote and create a sense of place. Urban design guidelines for new development in the corridor define a consistent framework for site design, building design, height restrictions, mixed-use densities, parking requirements, and allowances for open space. The design and appearance element provides methods for establishing a corridor that is vibrant, clean, and safe, so that investors and developers can visualize the potential of the area and be inspired to create an attractive setting that draws newcomers and visitors from around the region.

GOAL 1

Provide a safe environment that attracts new residents, quality business, and jobs.

POLICY

Incorporate crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles and guidelines into existing and new development to ensure increased safety in the sector plan area.

STRATEGIES

1. Encourage low walls, fences, visually permeable screening methods, and elevated ground floors of residential dwellings to establish a clear delineation between public and private space and to foster a sense of ownership and territoriality.
2. Design buildings to maximize visibility and enhance natural surveillance by keeping potential intruders under observation. Provide windows, storefronts, clearly visible entrances, balconies, porches, outdoor activity areas, and benches. Ensure that windows, especially storefront windows, are not obscured and allow people to see and be seen.



ABOVE: Vertical mixed-use building: Balconies provide an area for relaxation and surveillance.
RIGHT: A low wall establishes the boundary.



3. Enforce clear sightlines along sidewalks.
4. Provide uniform low-level lighting along sidewalks, pathways, service entrances/areas, parking lots, and alleys.
5. Incorporate special programming, such as arts festivals, block parties, farmers' markets, and clean-up days to encourage people in the corridor to get to know each other and consistently provide a lively street environment.
6. Locate open spaces, recreation facilities and amenities, and gathering areas in central locations that allow for natural surveillance and access control. Encourage natural activity programming by arranging uses and amenities so that people using areas in legitimate ways protect public space.



7. Utilize well-designed sidewalk pathways, special materials and landscaping, attractive gates, and distinctive architectural elements to clearly guide people to and from building entrances. Provide attractive, high-quality gates, fences, and walls integrated with the design of new development to contribute to natural access control. Minimize use of unattractive materials such as chain-link fencing, concrete or cinder block walls, and barbed wire as access-control methods in favor of durable, attractive materials.

Public gathering spaces provide amenities that encourage safety, relaxation and comfort.

8. Install traffic-calming techniques that limit streets as fast getaway routes and reduce on-street criminal activity.
9. Utilize code enforcement methods, regular street sweeping, and community cleanups to maintain litter-free private and public properties with quality landscaped public spaces to discourage illegitimate behavior and activities.

GOAL 2

Provide high quality design and architecture in all development and redevelopment projects in order to attract top quality economic development interest.

POLICY 1

Use design guidelines and demonstrate compliance during all site-plan applications in redevelopment projects to ensure top-quality and sustainable products that contribute to its place-making.



ABOVE: A streetwall defines the streetscape and helps distinguish the public from the private realm.

RIGHT: A building on a corner lot should address both streets on which it fronts.

BOTTOM: The screening of a parking lot softens the view of automobiles and asphalt paving.

STRATEGIES

1. Site Design

- 1.1 Orient building frontages to face the street, courtyard, or plaza. The street-facing buildings should establish a street wall deep enough from the street curb to provide on-street parking and wide pedestrian walkways in front of the buildings. This will create and define public spaces and encourage an active street environment.
- 1.2 Design and treat buildings at corner lots as having street frontage on both sides governed by the relevant street guidelines.



- 1.3 Place parking at the rear or side of all buildings; avoid a direct view of parking lots from the street. Provide parking islands with landscaping to soften the view of asphalt pavement and to avoid the prospect of a sea of parked cars.
- 1.4 Provide low screen walls or hedges, or both, at those places where surface parking can be viewed from the street.



- 1.5 As a pedestrian safety and beautification measure, provide a minimum five-foot-wide landscape strip—with street trees where possible—between the curb and sidewalk along Silver Hill Road and St. Barnabas Road.
- 1.6 Incorporate wide landscape strips with trees and sidewalks—referred to as a linear park—on both sides of Branch Avenue. This provides a park-like setting that serves as an open space with pedestrian amenities, as an environmental asset that captures and filters run-off, and as a barrier between through traffic and commercial, as well as residential, activities.
- 1.7 Use landscaping to beautify the street and public spaces, to buffer incompatible uses, and to screen unsightly views. Locate loading areas away from public views. Where this is not feasible, these areas should be properly screened. If surface parking is needed, it should be screened with a low wall of the same material as the building it serves, accented with plants and flowers.
- 1.8 Provide structured parking within the mixed-use area where appropriate, especially at the Naylor Road Metro Station and the Iverson-Marlow Heights Mixed-Use Center, using the following reduced parking (**Table 7**) ratios to encourage transit ridership and less dependence on automobiles:

| Land Use Character | Within ¼ Mile of Naylor Road Metro Station Platform | More Than ¼ Mile from Naylor Road Metro Station Platform |
|---|--|---|
| Retail/Commercial | 2.0 spaces/1000 sq. ft. | 2.75 spaces/1000 sq. ft. |
| Office | 1.6 spaces/1000 sq. ft. | 2.25 spaces/1000 sq. ft. |
| Mixed/Ground Fl. Retail—Office Above | 1.6 spaces/1000 sq. ft. | 2.25 spaces/1000 sq. ft. |
| Mixed/Ground Fl. Retail—Residential Above | 1.6 spaces/1000 sq. ft. 1.6 spaces/residential unit | 2.25 spaces/1000 sq. ft. 1.6 spaces/residential unit |
| Residential Condominium/Apartment | 1.5 spaces/residential unit | 2.0 spaces/residential unit |
| Hotel/Conference | 0.5 spaces/room 10 spaces/1000 sq. ft | 0.75 spaces/room 15 spaces/1000 sq. ft |

2. Circulation

- 2.1 Design all new streets on a grid or curvilinear street pattern to increase connectivity and accessibility.
- 2.2 Seek opportunities to consolidate vehicular entryways along Branch Avenue and St. Barnabas Road to encourage shared driveways and to minimize curb cuts. This will promote pedestrian safety and improve flow of vehicular traffic.
- 2.3 Provide a minimum six-foot wide sidewalk with decorative pavers along all commercial streets.

- 2.4 Provide human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented frontages with retail and/or office spaces at the ground-floor level in designated areas.
- 2.5 Provide wide storefront walkways along retail frontages, with pedestrian amenities such as benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, and bus shelters to encourage window shopping and outdoor cafés. Encourage on-street parking where appropriate on Branch Avenue, Old Silver Hill Road, and on interior streets within the Naylor Road Metro Station core area and the Iverson-Marlow Heights mixed-use center. This on-street parking will act as a safety barrier between storefront walkways or sidewalks and through streets.



Wide sidewalks allow for pedestrian amenities, such as outdoor cafés and street furniture, that provide the key to a lively, vibrant streetscape experience.

3. *Building Design*

- 3.1 Design all buildings with high-quality materials and treatments. Exterior building walls should be constructed with brick, stone, precast concrete, and other high-quality compatible materials. Reflective and tinted glass should not be used on the ground floor of any buildings, and ribbons or bands of glass should not be used for windows.
- 3.2 Provide architectural elements and proportion that relate to a pedestrian scale in building façades. Large expanses of identical building walls should be avoided. Façades that provide a regular and frequent pattern of architectural variety through modulation of wall plane, detailing, color, texture, material, and the incorporation of art and ornament are encouraged. Ground floors facing streets or public squares should be built with 10- to 15-foot ceiling heights to accommodate retail uses.