

SPRINGHILL LAKE TRANSIT VILLAGE

Residential Neighborhood and Village Center

CONCEPT

Springhill Lake is envisioned as a comprehensively planned and designed “transit village” that provides a balanced and diverse mix of quality housing and home ownership opportunities and strong linkages to the rail station. The community is planned with a neighborhood-scale village center that serves local, daily needs. The village provides safe, convenient pedestrian and bicycle access to all local destinations, such as the transit station, schools and community parks, activity, community and neighborhood centers.

OBJECTIVES

Springhill Lake, within one mile of the Greenbelt station, provides a large housing market within the Sector Plan Area. The following objectives, consistent with the overall sector plan vision and sector-wide recommendations, frame the transit village recommendations and design guidelines and seek to:

- Implement the County’s policy of redeveloping and revitalizing Inner Beltway communities.
- Redevelop the existing rental apartment complex into a transit village with a variety of quality housing types to attract a diverse residential population.
- Provide complementary neighborhood-oriented commercial, civic and open space/recreational amenities.
- Provide suitable linkages to adjacent existing and proposed developments, the transit station and/or open spaces.

EXISTING SITUATION AND ISSUES

Springhill Lake is a rental-based community that is mostly occupied by a transient population of approximately 6,500. It was once regarded as one of the prestigious rental housing complexes in Prince George’s County. Even though it has been moderately maintained, it is an aging community afflicted with crime and other quality of life problems.

Springhill Lake is approximately 36 years old, has constantly remained a rental garden apartment development and is primarily auto-oriented. The community lacks features that would make for a better integration with other nearby destinations such as the Greenbelt station and Beltway Plaza. Streets are typically very wide and large parking lots face them. Sidewalks are correspondingly narrow, and sometimes located directly adjacent to the curb, without the benefit of a median to separate the pedestrian from motorists. Pedestrian lighting is inadequate; lamp wattage and distribution could be improved. Site furnishings such as benches, trash receptacles, signs, bike racks and bus shelters are inadequate.

Although Springhill Lake is close to the Greenbelt station, very few Springhill Lake residents walk to the station. The



1998 aerial photograph of Springhill Lake apartments and vicinity.

path to the station site is not ideal for pedestrians and could be improved to provide more convenient and safe access for residents of the western end of Springhill Lake.¹ The other issue is safe pedestrian crossing of Cherrywood Lane.

The small commercial area is also declining and its orientation, architecture and location could be improved to attract or sustain quality neighborhood-serving businesses.

DESIGN POLICIES

These policies, although not mandatory, guide the Springhill Lake concept, include public-sector actions and frame the Development District Standards contained in the SMA section for development or redevelopment in Springhill Lake.



Typical apartment buildings in Springhill Lake. Doubleloaded parking lots are typical in front of apartment buildings.

¹ Based upon field observations and the analysis of the Greenbelt West Trail Planning Study (M-NCPPC Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities Program - 1996)

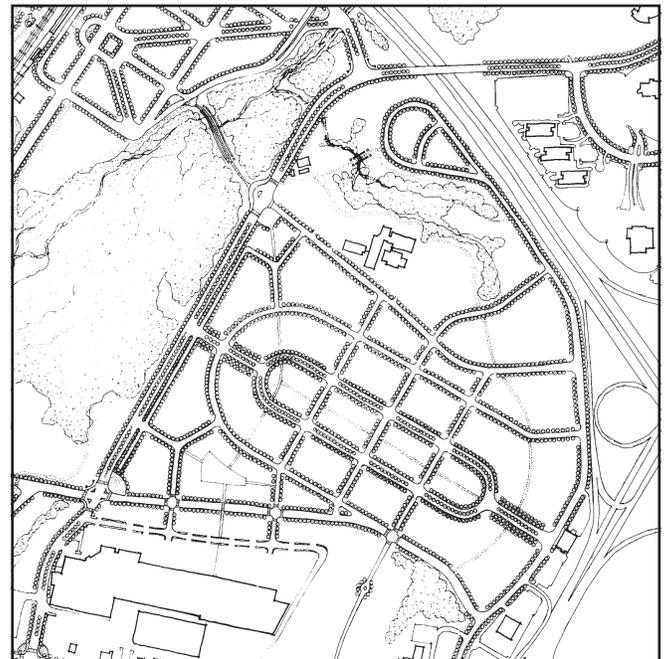


View looking east along Springhill Drive.

1. Redevelop Springhill Lake with primarily mixed residential uses and limited, integrated nonresidential uses provided to serve the dominant residential uses. Spatially and functionally organize Springhill Lake to create a compact form of development with distinct public open spaces and numerous pedestrian and bicycle linkages.
2. Retain the current density for future redevelopment of Springhill Lake. Locate higher density housing within a 1/2-mile walking distance of the station site to promote greater use of public transit.
3. Provide a range of housing types, prices and ownership options. Develop outreach programs to educate current tenants of Springhill Lake about the home purchasing process. Provide homeownership incentives for current residents if they desire to remain in the community.
4. Introduce architectural themes and landscape designs that promote quality development standards and are characteristic of, and sensitive to, the local region.
5. Plan and design an array of public open spaces to provide preferential treatment to pedestrians and bicyclists. Coordinate internal and perimeter open spaces and architectural features to adequately link Beltway Plaza and the station site with Springhill Lake.
6. Construct an interconnected grid or modified grid pattern street network to encourage walking and bicycling, balance traffic flow and reduce the number of optional and nonessential automobile trips.
7. Develop a Bicycle Friendly Areas (BFA) network in the Springhill Lake community.
8. Meet the recreational needs of the community on site in combination with the existing Springhill Lake Community

Center facility and the proposed school-park facility adjacent to the Greenbelt Middle School.

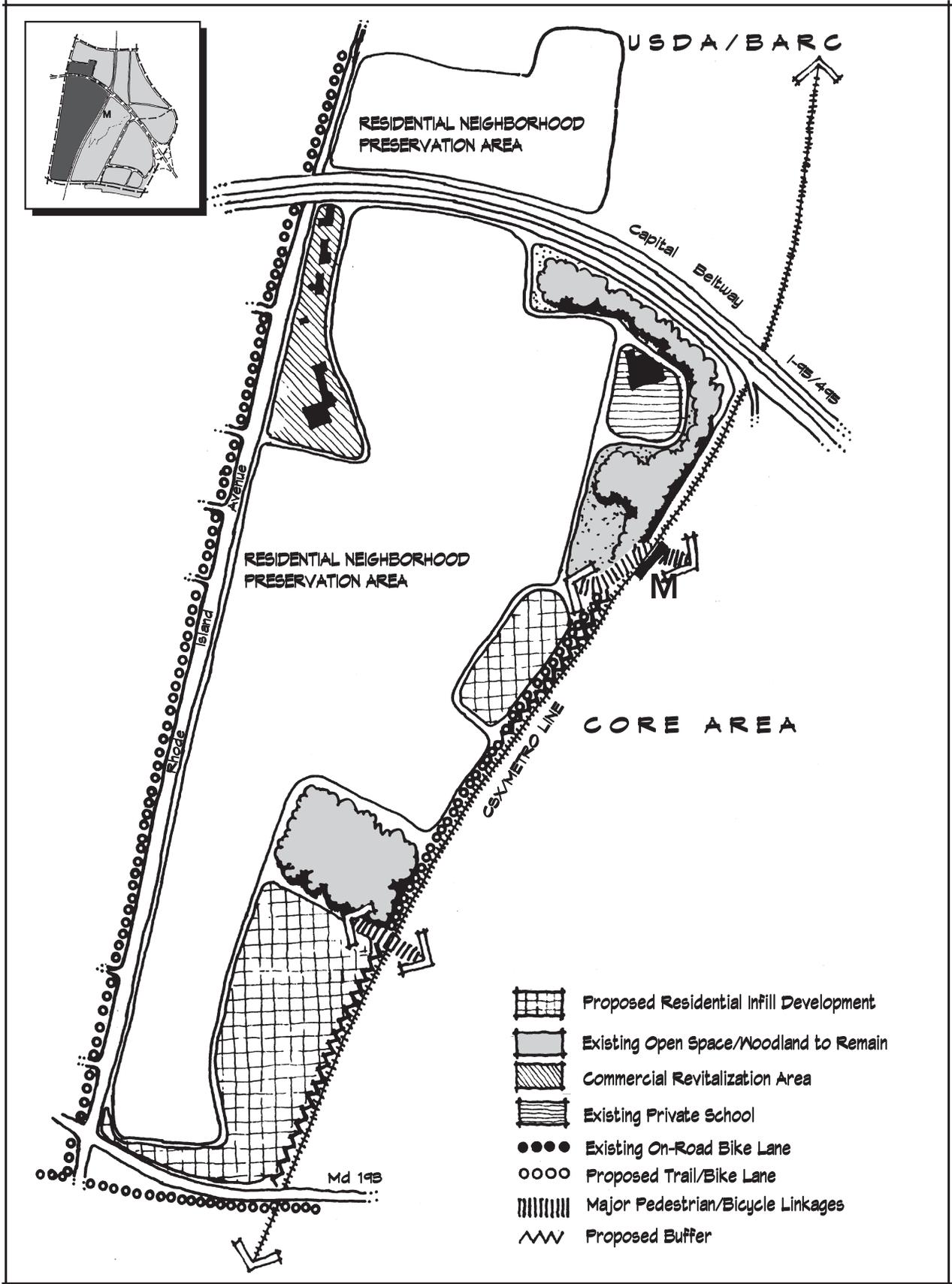
9. Consider Low-impact development (LID) techniques for future development to improve stormwater runoff. Consider Maryland Department of Planning and Maryland Department of Natural Resources Green Building program guidelines for environmentally sensitive design in growth areas.
10. Analyze Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) techniques when developing all site and landscape plans, including parking areas, and identify relevant techniques to be employed in the proposed development at the time of Conceptual Site Plan review.
11. Utilize native, drought-tolerant and low-maintenance plant material, when possible, to remain consistent with the region's landscape, limit the introduction of exotic plant material, and potentially reduce maintenance levels for landscaped areas.
12. Provide noise mitigation devices, such as sound walls, on the northern edge of Springhill Lake to reduce and buffer highway noise from the Capital Beltway. Evergreen and shade trees should be planted on the inside edge to screen the wall from any land uses located in this northern portion. These devices should be considered for inclusion in the State CIP and should be coordinated with the Federal and State Highway Administrations.



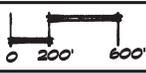
Illustrated street pattern for transit village in Springhill Lake.

13. Provide short-term improvements to maintain a viable residential establishment with amenities for existing tenants. The City of Greenbelt and Springhill Lake owners should consider aesthetic and functional improvements to the existing commercial center and the residential units. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) should be analyzed during any future design services to ensure an aesthetically pleasing and safe environment for all residents and visitors of the community. Also, traffic-calming initiatives should continue to be analyzed for Springhill Lake's roadways to provide a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly community.

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-  Proposed Residential Infill Development
-  Existing Open Space/Woodland to Remain
-  Commercial Revitalization Area
-  Existing Private School
-  Existing On-Road Bike Lane
-  Proposed Trail/Bike Lane
-  Major Pedestrian/Bicycle Linkages
-  Proposed Buffer



North College Park Concept

Map 21