

## NORTH COLLEGE PARK

### Residential Neighborhood and Neighborhood Center

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#### CONCEPT

North College Park is envisioned as an integral transit-supporting residential component of the Sector Plan Area. Pedestrian and bicycle linkages connect this community with surrounding developments, particularly any new development in the Core Area. Residential uses are introduced on former incompatible industrial properties.

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#### OBJECTIVES

The following objectives, consistent with the overall sector plan vision and sector-wide recommendations, frame the North College Park recommendations and design guidelines and seek to:

- Maintain the existing low-density residential character of this community.
- Enhance the community with improved pedestrian and bicycle linkages within the community and to other subareas, especially the Greenbelt station.
- Phase out incompatible industrial land uses in North College Park.
- Infill vacant and industrial areas with compatible residential development.
- Maintain a strong, healthy commercial center to serve nearby residents needs.

#### EXISTING SITUATION AND ISSUES

North College Park, including the neighborhoods of Branchville, Hollywood and Daniels Park, located immediately west of the CSX/Metrorail tracks, is a typical suburban community that contains approximately 1,400 single-family detached houses dating from the 1920s to 1970s, of which, approximately 1,300 houses exist in this Sector Plan Area.<sup>1</sup> Streets in North College Park are laid out in a grid pattern which provide a well-connected network of homes. This residential community is well maintained by its homeowners and has an active civic association, North College Park Citizen Association. However, flooding problems have been experienced due to the high water table in the Hollywood area of North College Park. The plan recommends that a neighborhood project evaluating flooding problems in the Hollywood area be undertaken to control the water surface elevation.

North College Park is divided by Rhode Island Avenue, running north to south, and is further subdivided by secondary roads, such as Narragansett Parkway, Edgewood Drive, Lackawanna Street and 51st Avenue. One connection, an underpass, to the Greenbelt station currently exists at the end of Lackawanna Street. This pathway is heavily used by

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<sup>1</sup> Daniels Park, located west of Rhode Island Avenue, is outside of the official Sector Plan Area boundary. However, this subdivision should be recognized as a part of the North College Park neighborhood and will be affected by any comprehensive planning along Rhode Island Avenue and other Sector Plan Areas.



*Typical residential street in North College Park.*



*This path provides direct access from Lackawanna Street to the Greenbelt Metro/MARC station.*

commuters and provides a convenient alternative method to reach the transit station. Presently, this pathway is gated and is open only during Metro operation hours.

Several public and vacant sites exist in this community, including schools and parks. The private Al Huda School exists in the northern end of North College Park, adjacent to Hollywood Park; both parcels provide a substantial amount of open space, buffering nearby residences from the railroad tracks and station platform. Several vacant parcels zoned R-55 or O-S also exist along the northern and eastern edge of the community. These vacant parcels could be developed with compatible residential development and provide housing options within close proximity to the transit station.

The Hollywood commercial center is located between Rhode Island Avenue and Narragansett Parkway in the northwestern quadrant of the community and contains several retail businesses. Businesses include a recreational equipment store, drug store, restaurants, lock shop, apparel store, beauty salon and general offices. The shopping center was constructed in the 1950s and over time has gone through renovations and additions. Continued revitalization efforts,

including facade and streetscape improvements. Additional infill development with neighborhood retail could further improve the visibility and economic viability of this center within the Rhode Island Avenue corridor.

Industrial uses exist in the southern area of North College Park and include the Branchville Industrial Park. These properties are classified as light industrial uses with office or storage facilities and include a City of College Park Department of Public Works facility, a straw and tubing manufacturing company and several warehouses. Many of the warehouse properties are physically deteriorated and have trash, debris or small-scale machinery stockpiled on site. This type of property maintenance and storage is permitted in the present industrial zoning, however, it presents an incompatible, and sometimes negative, view of the North College Park residential community. Access to the industrial areas occurs along residential streets because direct access to Greenbelt Road or Rhode Island Avenue is not available. Consequently, nonresidential traffic must share 51st Avenue and Branchville Road with residential traffic. Additionally, sidewalks are not provided south of Lackawanna Street in North College Park forcing pedestrians and bicyclists to share roadways with automobiles. Most of these industrial properties are not compatible with the surrounding character of the residential community and have been selectively chosen for reuse on the Land Use Concept.

## DESIGN POLICIES

- Preserve the residential neighborhood. Enhance the community through minor upgrades such as the addition of sidewalks, designated bike routes and improvements to the retail center.
- Phase out incompatible industrial uses in Branchville and infill with more compatible residential uses as a long-range redevelopment recommendation.



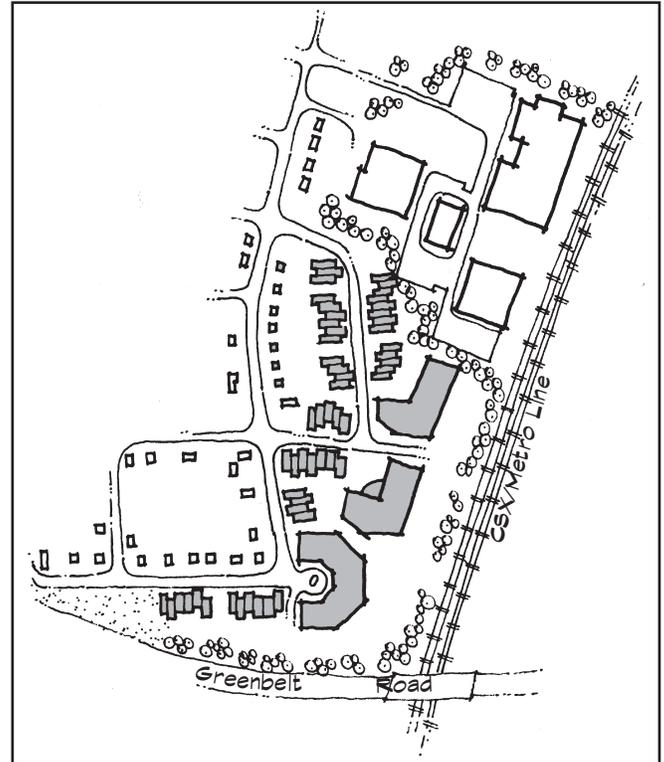
*The Branchville Industrial Park is a collection of warehouse buildings, parking lots, typically surrounded with chain-link fencing.*

- Continue to revitalize the neighborhood commercial center in the northern end of the community.
- Develop the vacant Endelmann tract, bordered by the CSX/Metrorail tracks, Lackawanna Street, 53rd Avenue, 52nd Avenue and Kenesaw Street, with single-family detached housing.
- Maintain the open space, at the convergence of Indian Lane and Delaware Street and bordered by 51st Avenue, Huron Street and the CSX/Metro tracks, as open space until such time as the planned middle school is built.
- Improve pedestrian mobility within the community by maintaining existing sidewalks, providing new sidewalks on both sides of streets south of Lackawanna Street, providing crosswalks with special paving at major intersections, and installing or maintaining pedestrian-scaled lighting.
- Maintain the existing pedestrian linkage in the northern end of Hollywood that connects to the Metrorail station. Request that WMATA permit access along this walkway during all hours once a 24-hour environment is established in the North Core Area.
- Evaluate the feasibility, location and number of additional pedestrian and bicycle connections to integrate North College Park with the proposed development in the Core Area and other surrounding areas, such as Lake Artemesia and Beltway Plaza. Two possible locations for pedestrian crossings over the CSX/Metro tracks include: near the open space at Indian Lane and Delaware Street; and at Narragansett Road extended.

## DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

### Community Framework

- a. North College Park should be preserved as a low-density residential community supporting the Greenbelt station transit neighborhood.
- b. The vacant Endelmann property should be developed into low-density housing compatible with surrounding properties.
- c. Incompatible industrial uses in the southern portion of North College Park (Branchville) should be phased out and the land should be redeveloped with appropriate residential uses. Housing development plans submitted should be evaluated and reviewed for compatibility, appropriateness at a given location and the need for the type of housing.



*Branchville industrial area redevelopment concept includes phasing out industrial uses and redeveloping with compatible single- and multifamily dwellings.*

- d. Visual buffers and noise barriers should be provided along the eastern edge of the community to effectively screen the railroad tracks.
- e. The Hollywood commercial center should be stabilized through revitalization efforts such as improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation, comprehensive sign programs, tree plantings and general maintenance. Although Rhode Island Avenue designates the boundary of the Sector Plan Area, a comprehensive planning and design approach should be undertaken for the Hollywood commercial center to ensure compatibility along both sides of this roadway. A business association should implement the revitalization strategies to retain current tenants and attract new business owners.

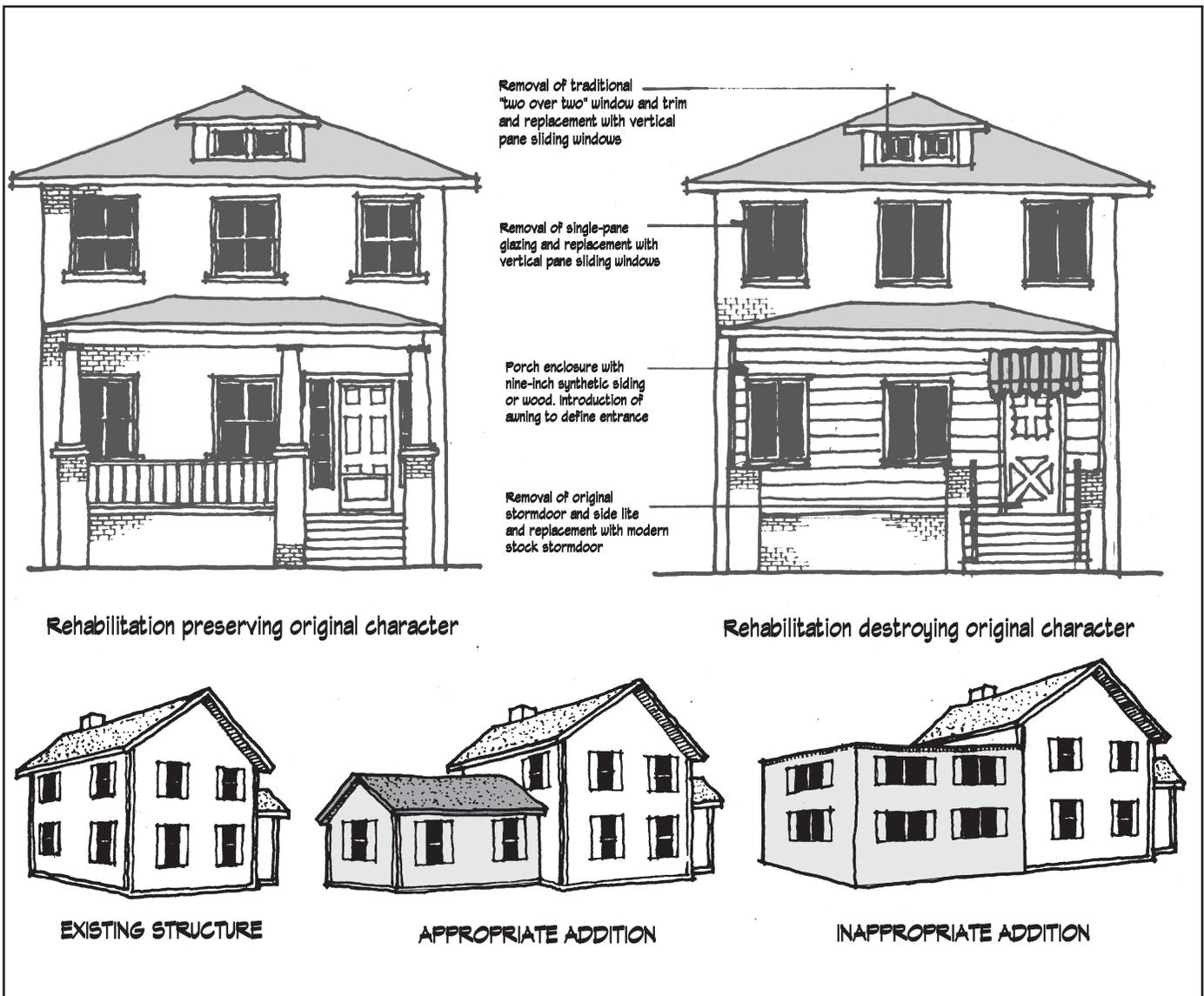
### Neighborhood Preservation

- a. The residential character and architectural integrity of the existing residential community should be maintained, especially when planning and developing vacant parcels and the adjacent transit station site.



Hollywood commercial center.

- b. Existing residences and landscapes should be well kept, maintained and, if necessary, renovated. Damaged or deteriorated elements should be replaced or repaired with materials that closely match the original structure. The original design, scale and character of the structure should be retained.
- c. Front porches should not be drastically altered from their original design or scale, nor should they be enclosed.
- d. Additions to existing dwellings should be carefully designed with a scale and characteristics compatible to the existing buildings. Additions should preferably be located on side or rear facades to maintain consistency of front facades along the street.



Compatible and quality rehabilitation or renovation practices are instrumental to preserve neighborhood character. Inappropriate modifications to existing structures severely alter the community character and create an incompatible mix of residential structures.

- e. Architectural elements, materials and openings on building additions should be proportionately compatible to the original structure and appear as a cohesive design.
- f. Infill single-family detached housing on vacant property should relate to the neighborhood's character and existing structures' style, setback, roof type, height, scale and proportion.
- g. Industrial properties redeveloped to residential uses, other than single-family detached, should be compatible and contribute positively to the integrity and character of the North College Park neighborhood.
- h. The open space at Indian Lane and Delaware Street should remain as community open space.

### Circulation

- a. Signalization and/or design studies should be conducted at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and Edgewood Road to analyze and alleviate inadequate or unsafe access for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.
- b. Sidewalks should be installed on both sides of streets in Branchville, south of Lackawanna Street, and should be separated from the roadway by a landscaped median no less than four feet wide.
- c. Sidewalks should be generally six feet wide to accommodate a variety of users and should connect with hiker-biker trails to link activity, neighborhood and commercial centers within and surrounding the community, including the Trolley Line Trail along Rhode Island Avenue.
- d. Sidewalks should be clear and free of any obstructions.
- e. Crosswalks should be provided at all street crossings. Crosswalks should be painted or delineated with a change in paving material, such as brick pavers.

### Landscape Plantings

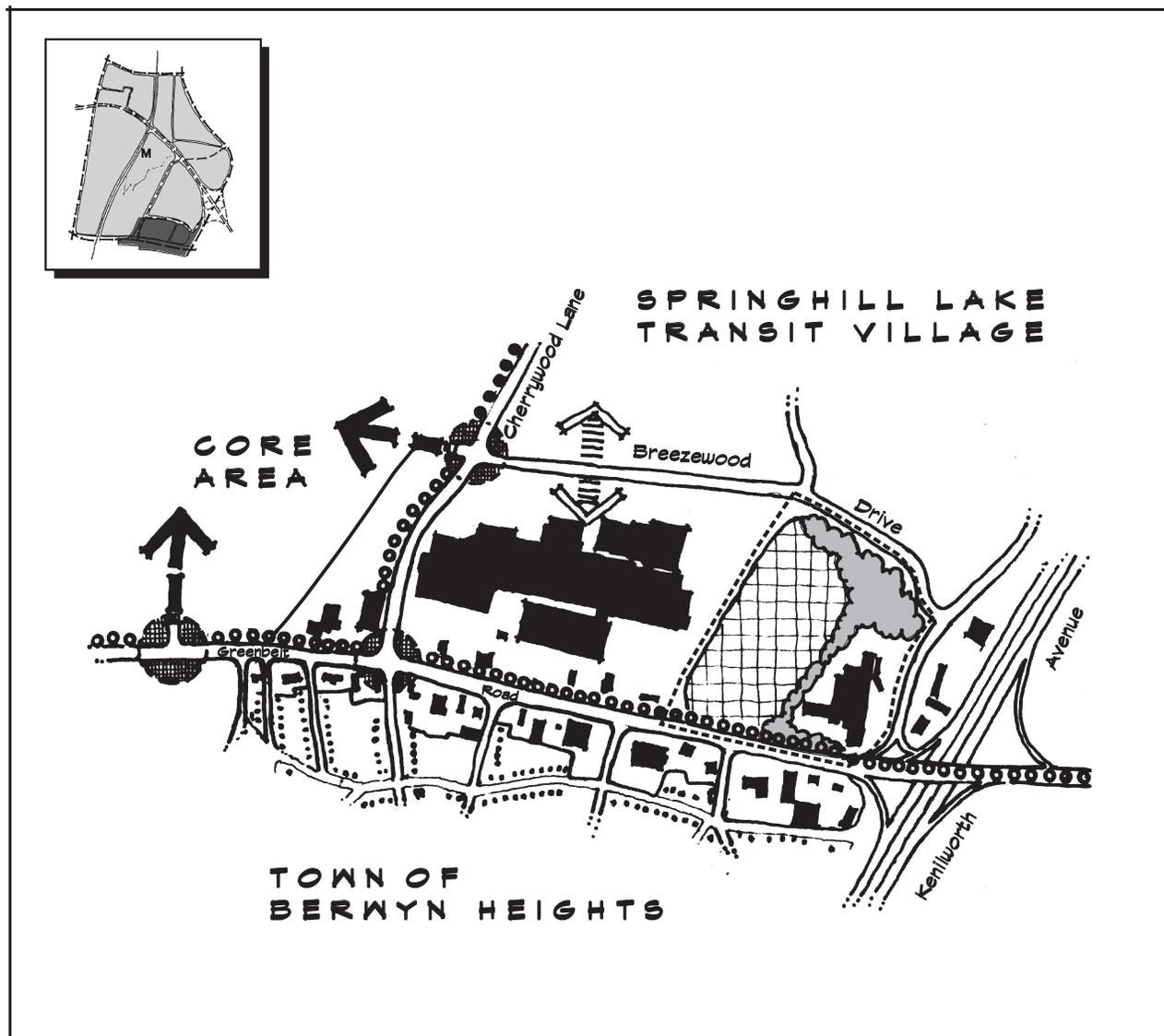
- a. A street tree program should be organized and implemented by the City of College Park and the North College Park Citizens Association throughout the entire residential neighborhood to provide shade and improve the overall beauty of the neighborhood with a consistent, vegetated street edge. Strategies to fund a street tree planting program, such as donations, grants and taxing, should be explored with the civic association and city representatives.
- b. Tree spacing shall be consistent on each individual street with some allowance for conflicts with drive entrances, alleys and underground services. Street trees should be

planted, an average of 30 feet on center, on all streets in accordance with Prince George's County DPW&T and Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) standards and the Prince George's County *Landscape Manual*.

- c. A tree planting effort should be implemented in North College Park along the northwestern edge adjacent to the station platform. Ideally, this tree planting effort should be initiated prior to construction at the station site to effectively screen any development occurring in the North Core Area. A mix of deciduous and evergreen trees should be planted to buffer the neighborhood and contextually fit with the existing neighborhood character.



*View from Greenbelt Metro Station platform toward North College Park. This area may require a tree planting effort prior to construction at the station site to effectively buffer the low-rise residential community.*



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|---|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | Proposed Park-School Facility |  | Environmental Envelope/Open Space |
|  | Existing Buildings            |  | Major Pedestrian/Bicycle Linkages |
|  | Historic District             |  | Proposed Road                     |
|  | Existing On-Road Bike Lane    |  | Primary Gateways and Focal Points |
|  | Proposed Trail/Bike Lane      |   |                                   |