

GEOGRAPHIC COMPONENTS OF THE GENERAL PLAN REFINEMENT

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The General Plan Refinement divides Montgomery County into four geographic components: the Urban Ring, the Corridors, the Suburban Communities, and the Wedge. With the exception of the Wedge, the borders between these areas are gentle transitions, not stark interruptions of an otherwise continuous pattern. Each area is defined in terms of appropriate land uses, scale, intensity, and function. The geographic components are illustrated in Figure 7, page 22.

The geographic components envisioned in this Refinement effort have their genesis in the 1964 General Plan. The Plan recognized and encouraged growth in the Urban Ring surrounding Washington, D.C., while identifying the desirability of concentrated Corridor City development along the I-270 Corridor. The Wedge was envisioned as a "green lung" characterized by two different, yet complementary land use areas. One area was suggested for low-density residential development to provide additional housing and recreational opportunities while helping to shape the Corridor. The second area within the Wedge was envisioned as a more rural environment conducive to farming activities, rural open space, and conservation of natural resources.

The geographic components provide a vision for the future while acknowledging the modifications to the Wedges and Corridors concept that have evolved during the past two decades. In particular, they confirm two distinct sub-areas of the Wedge - an Agricultural Wedge and a Residential Wedge. They also recognize the transitional areas of generally moderate density and suburban character that have evolved between the Wedge, Corridor, and Urban Ring as Suburban Communities. Emphasis remains on intensification of the Corridor, particularly along the main stem.

However, the Refinement expands the 1964 General Plan concept of centers from an emphasis on Corridor Cities to

COMPONENTS

include the role of centers in all four geographic areas. Centers are hubs of community activity, typically including retail uses. Other uses are located in centers to the degree appropriate to the center's scale and location. Centers are generally more intensive than surrounding land uses but compatible with those uses. They range in size and type from central business districts and Corridor Cities to neighborhood retail centers in the Suburban Communities to rural village centers in the Wedge.

Many of the goals and objectives in this Refinement will direct new growth to compact centers within the Urban Ring and I-270 Corridor. Generally, the central business districts in the Urban Ring will be developed at higher average densities than the centers in the I-270 Corridor, including the original Corridor Cities of Rockville, Gaithersburg, and Germantown. Centers in both these components may well have considerable regional name recognition and power to attract business from a wide area. The centers in the Suburban Communities and the Wedge are envisioned as primarily serving the local community.

The 1964 General Plan was quite specific in its description of Corridor Cities. They were to be spaced four miles apart, with tall buildings identifiable from several miles away. The tall buildings were to be interspersed with plazas and walkways, "...highly accessible, uncluttered and inspiring." The street and highway pattern within each city was to repeat the radial and circumferential system of the region with a clearly defined core, including a rapid transit station under a pedestrian plaza. This Refinement leaves such details to the area master plans and sector plans.

Relatively dense, compact centers are essential for Montgomery County's future. The major centers especially will conserve energy, reduce vehicle trips, and minimize the amount of land that experiences the impacts of development. They will also provide the County with additional urban places that, like the existing central business districts, promote public life and bring together all the ethnic and social groups which make the County a community. This vision cannot be realized without the infrastructure needed to support the density.

Major centers provide the best opportunity for growth with the least impact on land, water, air, and fiscal resources. For example, the County's high-rise housing is often built at a density of 40 housing units on each acre of land. The same number of units, built as single-family detached houses on two-acre lots, will consume 80 acres of land and would be costly and difficult to serve by public facilities and transit.

The County's major centers should "grow up" rather than "grow out." Well-defined boundaries of centers, established in small area plans, will give surrounding neighborhoods assurance that the center next door will not overwhelm their community. "Compact" means that the centers themselves can be pedestrian friendly and transit serviceable. The ability to walk to many activities such as work, day care, and shopping will limit the need for longer distance travel for residents and workers in centers.

The attractiveness of the County's major centers should be so compelling that these centers become the first choice for new County residents and businesses. The County needs bustling central business districts where people can work and enjoy life. Centers should be places where residents can watch a play or visit an artist's studio, eat at an ethnic restaurant or sit at an outdoor cafe, meet friends while shopping on the main street or farmers' market, listen to a band concert in the summer or ice skate in the winter in the center of town, relax with a good book on their balcony or in the public library. Centers should be places where residents can walk to work on sidewalks under leafy trees or catch the Metro to the nation's capital. They should be places where office workers can walk to the stationery store, walk to the accountant, and walk to lunch to meet with

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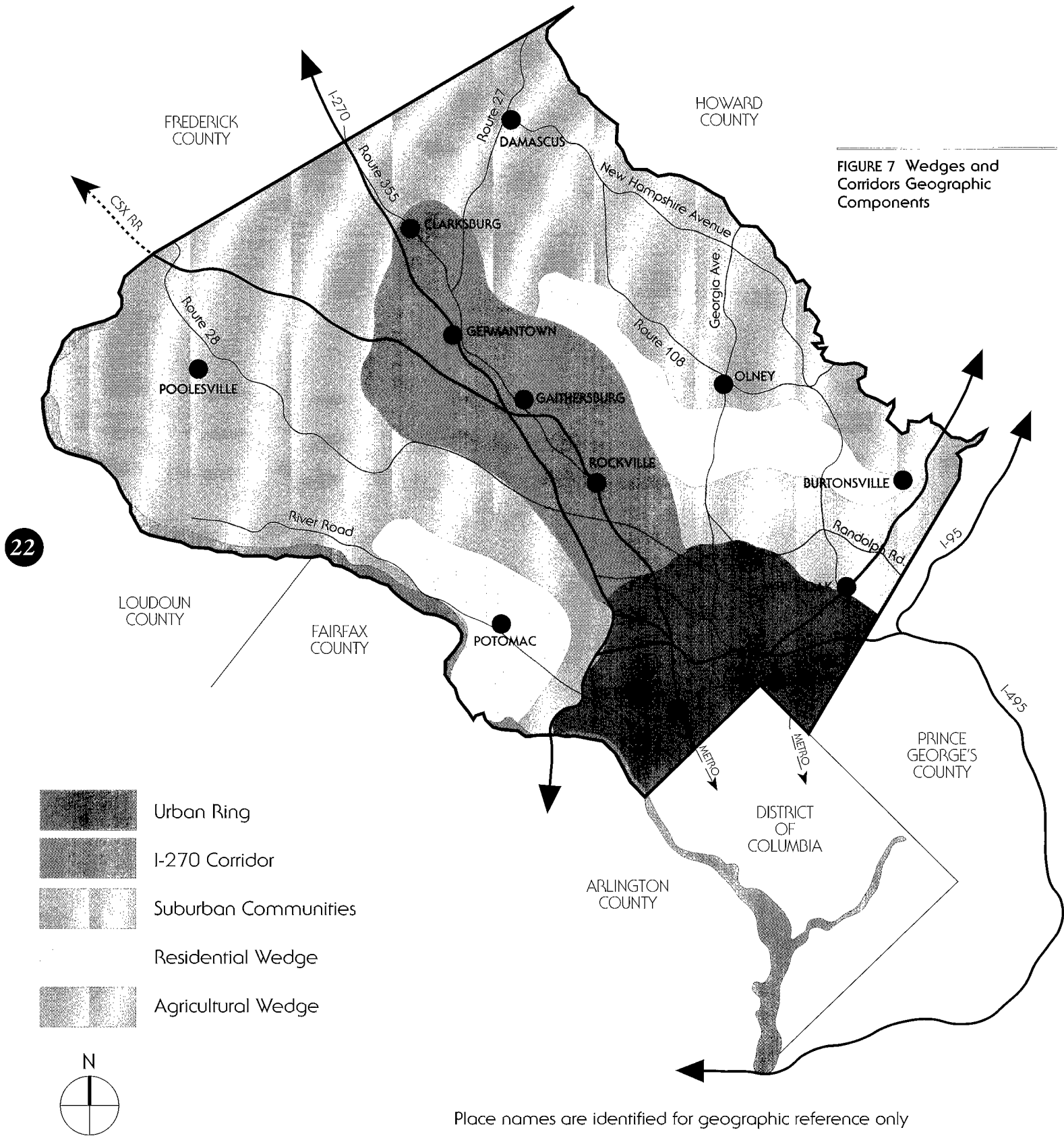


FIGURE 7 Wedges and Corridors Geographic Components

Place names are identified for geographic reference only

vision for the future

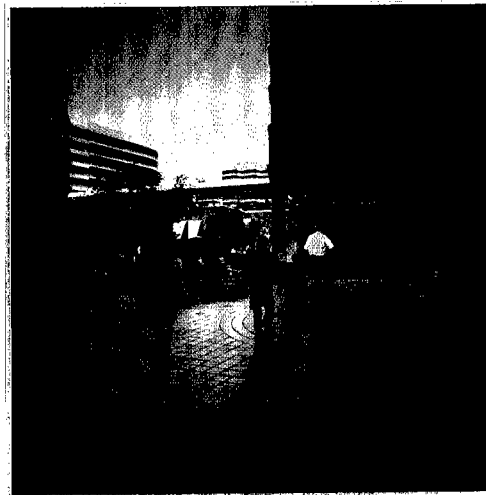
a customer. Centers should also be places where the pressures of business will be eased by a stroll to the nearby ice cream parlors and an evening in the neighborhood movie theater. Urban amenities can more than outweigh the possible inconveniences of density.

The County's success in enhancing its existing central business districts and Metro station areas with additional planned development should be a cause for celebration as an environmentally sound means of accommodating new development. The added activity in the buildings and parks which replace the surface parking lots between existing buildings can transform centers into a more inviting place to walk between destinations.

Even in suburban locations, the isolated supermarket or the enclosed regional shopping mall surrounded by a sea of parking should be the exception rather than the rule. Walking and biking as well as transit use within and between centers should become an inviting alternative to driving and parking. This will only happen when activities are closer together and the activities are connected by pleasant sidewalks and pathways.

The County cannot afford to allow any deterioration in its centers. Each center is important to the County's overall economic well being. Run down or vandalized, vacant buildings are cancers in an urban fabric which, if left unchecked, will quickly spread to the more healthy areas. The County must be aggressive and proactive in preserving and enhancing the competitive advantages of these precious areas.

The single-family detached house, with its large private yard and driveway, is an important part of the American Dream; however, that dream has a price in terms of the land that it requires and the range of infrastructure needed to support it, including roads, schools, parks, and other facilities. There are costs to the environment and costs to the public purse associated with single-family detached housing. Even if single-family housing were environmentally and



fiscally desirable, there is a limit to the number of new single-family detached houses that can be built in the County. The supply of land 10 or 15 miles from the nation's capital is a fixed commodity. To continue to grow, and accommodate the jobs and residents attracted to Montgomery County, the County's major centers should be so safe, appealing, and convenient that they become an alternative American Dream.

The designation of geographic components responds particularly to the seven visions of the Maryland Planning Act. As a total package, the geographic components of the General Plan Refinement uphold the stewardship of land as a universal ethic (Vision 4). The Urban Ring and Corridor concentrate development into suitable areas (Vision 1) by supporting the planned development of dense, mixed-use centers in locations convenient to transit. This land use pattern also conserves scarce resources (Vision 5) by reducing transportation demands and reducing the total land area needed to accommodate new growth. Economic growth is encouraged (Vision 6) by permitting the densest development in the County in the Urban Ring and Corridor. The Suburban Communities will have more moderate densities but still guide development into appropriate centers. Their lower densities will permit greater protection of the natural environment (Vision 2). Sensitive areas are protected (Vision 2) through the designation of a low density residential transition area and an agricultural preservation wedge area which prohibits incompatible uses, pre-

serves farmland, forested open space, and other sensitive areas. The proposed clustering of future development in rural enclaves is responsive to concentrating development in suitable areas (Vision 1) and directing growth in rural areas to existing population centers (Vision 3).

Each of the four geographic areas has a unique past, present, and future which is described in the following sections.

Silver Spring Central Business District.

THE URBAN RING

A vision for the Urban Ring is generally characterized by:

- well-established, lively centers with job and housing opportunities;
- strong residential neighborhoods;
- varied transportation options;
- relatively dense development;
- active public and private reinvestment; and
- commercial revitalization.

Location

The Urban Ring is the relatively intensively developed area of Montgomery County nearest Washington, D.C. The Urban Ring follows the boundaries described in the 1969 General Plan Update. It includes the legislatively defined planning areas of Bethesda-Chevy Chase, North Bethesda/Garrett Park, Kensington/Wheaton, Kemp Mill-Four Corners, Silver Spring, Takoma Park, and part of White Oak. (See Figure 8, page 24.)

The Urban Ring Yesterday

The 1964 General Plan established the concept of the Urban Ring. The 1969 Update decried the “lack of a firm policy to guide development” in the Urban Ring. To provide a “determinate form,” the plan called for the transformation of the existing regional, primarily retail, activity centers into compact, multi-purpose centers, much like the centers of the Corridor City concept. To aid the conversion from a suburban to an urban form, scattered vacant parcels of land were recommended for urban development. Transit service was considered important to meet growing transportation demands.

The Urban Ring Today

The Urban Ring is an older, well-established, and densely developed area characterized by diversity in income, ethnicity, and racial composition. Within the Urban Ring there is great variety in density and character among areas. Communities in the Urban Ring are generally well maintained and many feature landmarks that identify them as distinct neighborhoods. A strong sense of community pride exists among residents in

FIGURE 8 The Urban Ring



these neighborhoods of tree-lined, well-connected streets. The Urban Ring is an area in which suburban lifestyles exist, if not side by side, then very close to an urban environment. The Urban Ring is expected to remain as the County's most densely developed area.

The stream valley parks are an important natural feature of some areas within the Urban Ring. These linear ribbons of green serve to buffer major streams from development and provide a defining feature for neighborhoods. They also offer the opportunity for many leisure-time pursuits.

Some areas of the Urban Ring provide a substantial number of jobs and an unusual variety of retail opportunities. Centers in the Urban Ring are generally intensively developed, with structured parking available at regional malls and in the Central Business Districts. These centers range from regional shopping malls, such as White Flint and Wheaton Plaza, to neighborhood stores, such as those found at Chevy Chase Lake. They include compact neighborhood shopping centers, "town" centers, such as Kensington, and linear business districts, such as those along Rockville Pike in North Bethesda. Much of the County's high-rise housing is located in centers throughout the Urban Ring.

The maturing of the Central Business Districts of Silver Spring, Bethesda, and Friendship Heights as high-density employment and residential centers is especially notable. With their dense development focused around transit stations, they more closely resemble the Corridor Cities envisioned in the 1964 General Plan than the Corridor Cities themselves. The Wheaton Central Business District is envisioned to retain a lower-density profile. Other transit station areas, further away from the County's border with the District of Columbia, are less intensively developed and more single-purpose in use.

The Urban Ring Tomorrow

The future of the Urban Ring contains both new and continuing challenges. Some of the most important of these include:

- accommodating selective additional development

- and redevelopment in a sensitive manner;
- emphasizing development, including housing, in appropriate transit station areas;
- expanding transportation options, while accommodating pedestrian needs;
- preserving existing neighborhoods;
- maintaining and enhancing public facilities;
- enhancing park and recreation linkages; and
- protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

The General Plan Refinement foresees continued growth and intensification where appropriate in centers in the Urban Ring. The Refinement does not recommend uniform high density throughout the Urban Ring. Suburban densities will be found within many areas of the Urban Ring outside centers. Since growth will include both infill and redevelopment, the Refinement stresses the special need for compatibility with existing communities. The Refinement also expects Montgomery County to avoid the creation or perpetuation of abandoned or blighted areas, through appropriate zoning, designation of transition areas, and public investment. It designates the Urban Ring as a high priority location for new infrastructure to accommodate new growth and redevelopment and to support existing development.

The Refinement emphasizes the continued desirability of development and redevelopment in the Metrorail station areas and generally encourages mixed uses in these areas. Recognizing that market conditions favor office and commercial development around centers, the County will nonetheless promote housing, especially affordable housing, whenever possible. Small scale and specialty retail development, an integral part of many centers, will continue to be supported, as will facilities for cultural activities. Special financial incentives may be required to achieve the small scale retail in appropriate residential areas desired by many citizens.

Transportation issues are particularly important in the densely developed Urban Ring. Pedestrian-scale development is encouraged, with emphasis on urban design features and traffic management to create an inviting, safe, and pleasing atmosphere. The Urban Ring is also expect-

ed to offer a rich selection of transportation modes.

While encouraging continued growth in the Urban Ring, the General Plan Refinement seeks to preserve the flourishing neighborhoods already located there. The Refinement encourages the County to protect these areas from the encroachment of non-conforming land uses, through traffic, and excessive noise. It seeks to maintain and reinforce the many desirable community features that are common in the Urban Ring.

The General Plan Refinement encourages protection of environmentally sensitive areas throughout the County. In the Urban Ring, environmental protection frequently means rehabilitation or retrofitting. As knowledge about the importance of enhancing and maintaining air quality, water quality, and other natural resources increases and as new technologies become available for this purpose, public and private efforts to better care for the resources in the Urban Ring are essential. Cleaning up streams, managing storm water run-off, modernizing parking lots, and planting street trees are a few of the activities that can offer great rewards.

THE CORRIDOR

A vision for the Corridor is generally characterized by . . .

- mixed intensity, mixed-use, transit-serviceable land uses;
- greatest intensity in centers along the main stem, decreasing densities toward the outer edges;
- flexible design standards in residential areas;
- relatively intense development;
- varied transportation options;
- active public and private investment; and
- commercial revitalization.

Location

Montgomery County contains the entire I-270 Corridor (hereinafter referred to as the "Corridor"). The I-270 Corridor consists of the incorporated cities of Rockville and Gaithersburg and the areas surrounding

the existing and planned centers of Shady Grove, Germantown, and Clarksburg. It extends northwest through the County generally from the Montrose Road area to the northern edge of the Clarksburg Planning Area. Immediately to the east of Montgomery County is the I-95 Corridor. Although I-95 and its surrounding land uses affect Eastern Montgomery County, the area east of US 29 is in the Suburban Ring.

The Corridor Yesterday

The Corridor was a primary feature of the 1964 General Plan and the 1969 General Plan Update. It was viewed as the means to avoid sprawl and, instead, achieve an efficient, orderly, and attractive pattern of development. It was expected to offer convenience, especially in transportation, and to allow the efficient delivery of public services. The Corridor Cities were perceived as an opportunity for up-to-date community planning, a chance to "start fresh." The 1964 General Plan also anticipated circumferential connections between the I-270 Corridor in Montgomery County and the I-95 Corridor in Prince George's County.

The 1969 General Plan Update acknowledged both the development opportunities of the I-270 and I-95 corridors and the fiscal problems of providing the necessary infrastructure.

The 1964 General Plan gave guidance to subsequent master plans to tailor each Corridor City to avoid the appearance that they were "stamped out of the same mold." One area where this guidance has been most debated is the transitions between the Corridor Cities. The 1964 General Plan envisioned that the edges of the Cities would contain parks and campus-style industrial areas. The Plan also acknowledged that "the corridor pattern retains the advantages of concentrated and well-organized urbanization without trying to retain large open spaces along the corridor axis between centers of population." The 1964 Plan did not consistently show a "greenbelt" between each Corridor City. The transitions that developed between the Corridor Cities along I-270 display some of the characteristics envisioned by the 1964 General Plan.

The Corridor Today

The I-270 Corridor is the County's major radial transportation spine, along which much of Montgomery County's housing and employment growth has occurred during the past two decades. This Corridor is a significant employment resource for the County and region, representing both the County's and state's economic future. Knowledge- and information-based businesses have increasingly outpaced the manufacturing anticipated in the 1964 General Plan. The I-270 Corridor is served by a complement of transportation options, including commuter rail, Metrorail, expanded I-270 capacity, and numerous major highways.

The I-270 Corridor has not yet fully evolved. In developmental terms, it is an adolescent. Its present achievements in fulfilling the 1964 General Plan and 1969 General Plan Update visions have been modest. The Corridor is plagued by congestion and poor pedestrian amenities. It is characterized by surface parking lots, strip-retail, and sprawling development, instead of densely developed identifiable centers. In addition, a full range of community services is available only in the more developed portions of the Corridor.

Most of the corridor cities did not develop as envisioned. Rather, high-density development has occurred

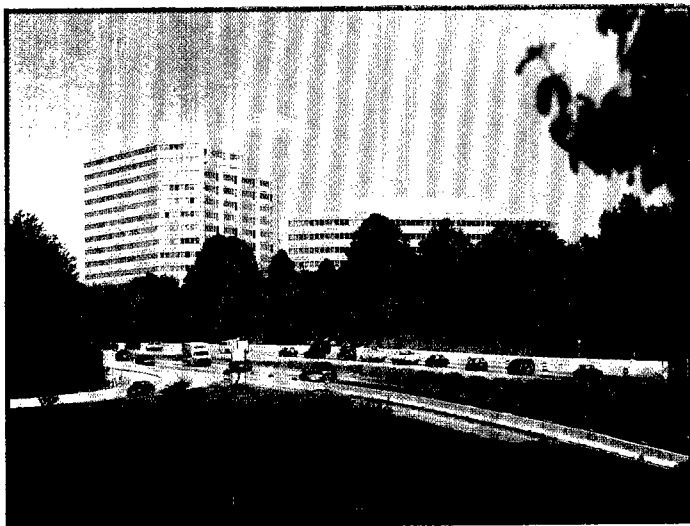
along a line (MD 355 and I-270) in the center of the Corridor. The majority of the commercial/industrial development and high-density residential development occurred along this line. Development radiating out from the center line lessens in density as the distance increases. Demand to develop the I-270 Corridor came well in advance of the transit stations envisioned in the 1964 General Plan. Consequently, early development was characterized by low-density office parks loosely strung along I-270, with housing located away from the main arteries of travel. Higher density development has begun to appear around the Corridor's Metrorail stations and other key locations. East-west transportation movement remains a problem.

Much of the residential development in the Corridor is relatively new and built to popular suburban standards. Curved, cul-de-sac streets in strictly residential areas lend an air of privacy while reducing the intrusion of through traffic. On the other hand, they tend to reduce mobility and inhibit community interaction beyond the immediate neighborhood.

The I-95 Corridor in Prince George's County steps down to a suburban character in Montgomery County. The Montgomery County portion of this area was envisioned as predominantly residential in the 1969 General Plan Update. The office and industrial uses that developed have done so in accordance with subsequently adopted master plans. The area east of US 29 is characterized by single-family detached housing, relatively dense townhouse communities, apartment complexes, and suburban office parks, with scattered public services.

The proposed Konterra development in Prince George's County, which will straddle I-95 in one of the original Corridor City sites, will have major impacts on development and traffic patterns in both counties. If development continues to the north in Howard County and to the east in Prince George's County, the substantial transportation challenges in the area are likely to grow in Montgomery County. The 1964 and 1969 Plans recognized the need for a transportation link between the I-270 and the I-95 Corridors. This need is still recognized by this General Plan Refinement.

I-270 Corridor.



The Corridor Tomorrow

The Corridor concept remains sound. At the same time, its future holds a number of challenges. These include:

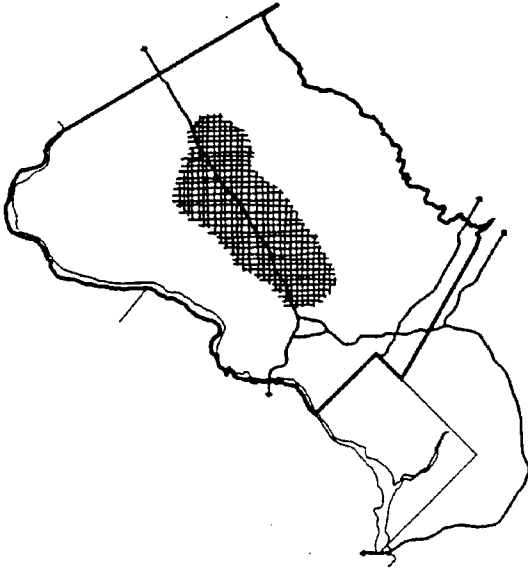
- developing compact, mixed-use, transit-serviceable centers;
- achieving better access for public and private services in residential areas;
- encouraging a sense of community identity;
- providing connections between Corridors;
- enhancing park and recreation linkages; and
- protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

The General Plan Refinement encourages the concentration of development in key centers, such as transit station areas in the I-270 Corridor. It calls for compact, mixed-use, transit-serviceable development in these centers. Such centers bring housing, employment, and retail opportunities closer together, offering a convenient, lively place to live and work. A sense of community identity can be achieved more easily in strong, identifiable centers. In addition, opportunities to facilitate access to transit, including high-occupancy-vehicle lanes, become more feasible.

Residential neighborhoods present special challenges along the I-270 Corridor. The General Plan Refinement calls for more flexibility in the design of subdivisions. Innovative design can permit the safety and privacy desired by residents. It can also bring small neighborhood-oriented services and transit closer to individual subdivisions and forge connections to neighboring areas to foster a sense of community identity.

Market forces will continue to push the spread of the I-270 Corridor and the I-95 Corridor toward the Wedge and the Suburban Communities. The General Plan Refinement places great importance on containing Corridor and center development within existing and planned limits; continued dispersion will put further strains on the environment, transportation system, and the Wedges and Corridors concept itself.

FIGURE 9 The Corridor



THE SUBURBAN COMMUNITIES

A vision for the Suburban Communities is generally characterized by...

- moderate density land uses which are transit serviceable along major arteries;
- increasing transportation options;
- suburban residential neighborhoods;
- distinct centers; and
- appropriate public and private investment.

Location

The Suburban Communities are located in two areas of the County. The western portion lies between the Corridor and the Residential Wedge. The eastern portion is between the Urban Ring, Corridors, Agricultural Wedge, and Residential Wedge. The Suburban Communities comprise all of the Aspen Hill Planning Area and parts of the Potomac, Travilah, Darnestown, Cloverly, White Oak, and Fairland Planning Areas. (See Figure 10, page 30.)

The Suburban Communities Yesterday

The 1964 General Plan and the 1969 General Plan Update made no real distinction between suburban and urban land use patterns. Instead, the Suburban Communities were part of the broad brush transition between the Urban Ring, Corridors, and the Wedge. As a result, there was no separate vision or individually planned character for them. At that time, parts of the Suburban Communities were developing as residential portions of the “urbanized area;” other sections were as yet undeveloped and were zoned for half-acre lots, as was most of Montgomery County.

The Suburban Communities Today

Suburban Communities are largely a collection of single-family subdivisions built on quarter- and half-acre lots. Townhouse and garden apartment developments are scattered throughout. Much of the area in the Suburban

Communities has been developed during the past 20 years. As a result of the 1974 Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) Program, the Suburban Communities are important locations of affordable housing. The MPDU program permits townhouses in zones essentially designated for single-family detached units. The presence of MPDUs has meant that subdivisions in the Suburban Communities are somewhat more varied in terms of housing types and residents’ incomes than areas that developed before 1974.

The Suburban Communities contain few employment opportunities today and few are envisioned in the future. However, many services are generally available within a reasonable driving distance. Centers in these areas are typically neighborhood-serving, such as shopping centers anchored by grocery stores. The automobile is the primary means of transportation.

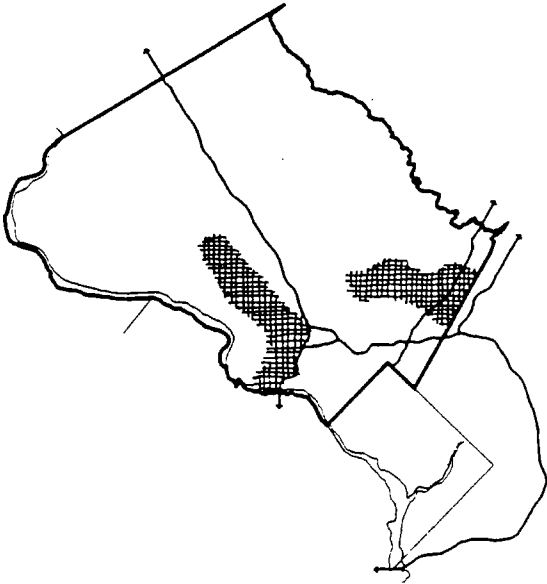
The Suburban Communities Tomorrow

By defining Suburban Communities as a separate geographic component, the General Plan Refinement offers an enhanced opportunity to identify and address the special needs of these areas. Some of the challenges for the future include:

- providing a sense of community;
- maintaining the quality of life while providing east-west traffic connections;
- enhancing park and recreation linkages;
- increasing transportation options and efficiency;
- retaining a suburban residential character;
- providing compact, geographically contained centers;
- increasing housing opportunities at appropriate neighborhood centers; and
- protecting environmentally sensitive areas.

Many neighborhoods in the Suburban Communities require additional focus and identity. To some degree, sense of community tends to grow over time as individual touches are added to standard housing and neighborhood designs. Even then, identity is a challenge for suburban subdivisions. The General Plan Refinement

FIGURE 10 The Suburban Communities



offers strategies to begin to address the problem of community identity. In the absence of traditional town centers, facilities such as small parks and sidewalks can help by providing opportunities for children to play and neighbors to meet. Community events that call for participation and coordination can sow the seeds for a sense of identity, even if a focal point is lacking. Locally significant names for communities and public facilities can also help create individuality, as can careful siting of any new centers.

Another common feature of the Suburban Communities is their separation from other neighborhoods, from transit, and from needed services. This is particularly true of those subdivisions with curvilinear streets, culs-de-sac, and few physical connections to the larger community. A more highly interconnected system of roads will be part of any effort to create linkages with the rest of the County. Provision of additional means of transportation, within the bounds of fiscal prudence, will also be important. Increased facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially sidewalks and bike paths, are particularly desirable.

The General Plan Refinement encourages linking stream valley parks and other “green areas.” Connecting these green ribbons passing through the Suburban Communities will add valuable markers of community identity, protection for the environment, and recreation opportunities. Trails for hiking and biking will be especially welcome for pleasure and as another transportation choice.

THE WEDGE

A vision for the Agricultural and Residential Wedge is generally characterized by...

- agricultural use;
- low density residential development;
- large areas for open space;
- small rural centers; and
- targeted public and private investment.

Location

The Wedge is divided into two distinct parts. The Agricultural Wedge consists of approximately 91,000 acres of land delineated

as the Agricultural Reserve in the 1980 Functional Master Plan for the Preservation of Agriculture and Rural Open Space. The Residential Wedge is defined as all Wedge areas outside the Agricultural Reserve. The Agricultural Wedge and the Residential Wedge together constitute approximately two-thirds of Montgomery County's entire land area. The Wedge areas are bounded by the County's two major water resources: to the west by the Potomac River and to the east by the Patuxent River. Within the County, the Wedge areas are defined by the outer edges of the I-270 Corridor and by the Suburban Communities to the east and west of the Corridor. (See Figure 11, page 32.)

The Residential Wedge Yesterday

The 1964 General Plan recognized the importance of low density residential development in selected locations within the Wedge. The 1969 General Plan Update confirmed the 1964 General Plan recommendation. It called for the reservation of some land in the Wedge "to absorb future growth only when and if development needs exceed those projected by the General Plan." In 1969, the expectation was that development pressures would not exceed those projected by the General Plan until generations in the future. During the past two decades, however, development pressure has intensified beyond the expectations of the 1969 General Plan Update. This Refinement seeks to alleviate this pressure through a tighter definition of the Residential Wedge, its purposes and acceptable land uses.

The Residential Wedge Today

The existing Residential Wedge is characterized by predominantly one- and two-acre residential development and the occasional small-scale commercial use serving the local community. The Residential Wedge provides many park and recreational opportunities for its own residents and for residents throughout the County. This area buffers the Agricultural Wedge from the more intense development of the Corridor and Urban Ring.

Within the Residential Wedge, opportunities for transit, large commercial development, and community amenities are limited when compared with the Urban Ring and the I-270 Corridor. The Residential Wedge contains a variety of centers ranging from Olney to the village of Potomac.

The Residential Wedge Tomorrow

The future of the Residential Wedge contains many challenges. Some of the most important are:

- maintaining a low-density residential character;
- permitting and limiting rural centers;
- protecting environmentally sensitive areas; and
- enhancing park and recreation linkages.

The Residential Wedge will come under pressure to develop more intensively in the future. To ensure that this area remains a low-density Residential Wedge and buffer for the even less intense Agricultural Wedge, steps must be taken to protect its character. Determining the proper scale of public services for a low-density but growing population will be a major challenge. Water, sewer, and transportation investments in the Residential Wedge will be limited. Within the Residential Wedge, public resources should be used to reinforce the centers.

In a limited number of areas, clustering large-lot housing into small distinct centers could be permitted by master plans. Such centers should be in logical places for community retail and service centers. This pattern will increase community identity, sociability, and pedestrian opportunities, preserve large amounts of open space, and reduce environmental impacts caused by scattered development. Clustering residential development will allow the Residential Wedge to develop a greater range of housing types and a better utilization of land resources.

The Agricultural Wedge Yesterday

The 1964 General Plan recognized an area within the Wedge appropriate for rural activities that would a) pro-