

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE GENERAL PLAN REFINEMENT

**T**hroughout the development of the General Plan Refinement, a number of themes recurred; many of them were also basic to the 1964 General Plan and the 1969 General Plan Update. These themes shape the direction of the goals and objectives and constitute the philosophical underpinnings of the General Plan Refinement. As such, they are designated as Guiding Principles. The Guiding Principles are not intended as a means to rank priorities among competing goals; instead, they establish a basis for future decision making.

## **Wedges and Corridors Concept**

The implementation of the Wedges and Corridors concept is fundamental to the General Plan Refinement. Montgomery County's land use pattern is expected to conform to this concept, which contains the geographic vision for the future arrangement of land uses.

## **Master and Sector Plans**

These plans have guided the modifications of the General Plan since 1970. In the future, the spirit and intent of the General Plan Refinement will be embodied and embellished by these plans. In particular, future master and sector plans will discuss the manner in which the plan conforms to, or departs from, the guidance of the General Plan Refinement.

## **Physically Concentrated Centers**

The General Plan Refinement supports appropriately sized centers of activity whose edges complement the scale of the area in which they are located. It encourages an efficient land use

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pattern of jobs, housing, and other uses within centers. The Refinement promotes mixed-use development and sensitive increases in intensity within appropriate boundaries in centers to control sprawl, to reduce energy consumption and pollution, to contain infrastructure needs, and to reduce development pressure on rural open space areas and farmland.

### **Community Identity**

The General Plan Refinement recognizes the human need for social interaction and for communities that create a sense of pride, a sense of place, and a hometown atmosphere. It encourages public and private development whose architecture and design address these needs by incorporating individuality, civic features, and the opportunity for social interaction.

### **Transit Serviceability**

The General Plan Refinement encourages land use patterns that can be served effectively by the County's integrated multi-modal transportation system. It emphasizes increased opportunities for alternatives to single-occupant auto travel and attention to the needs of pedestrians. A key aspect of making the County more accessible by transit and walking is that it can reduce travel by car. Favoring transit can make more efficient use of the existing roadway network and can reduce air pollution.

### **Compatibility**

The General Plan Refinement encourages new development that will harmonize with the existing built environment and the natural environment. In some cases, this is a matter of scale and intensity. In other cases, compatibility is a question of location, function, or style. This principle is especially important as redevelopment of land becomes an increasing feature of growth.

### **Variety and Choice in Housing, Jobs, and Transportation**

The General Plan Refinement supports the concepts of variety and choice to promote a strong and diverse economy, to meet the housing and employment needs of current and future Montgomery County citizens, and to encourage effective and efficient transportation options.

### **Resource Management**

The General Plan Refinement seeks to attain the most efficient and socially beneficial management of all Montgomery County resources, ranging from the natural environment to public and private finances, to the land itself.

### **Environmental Protection**

The General Plan Refinement recognizes the importance of stewardship of the natural environment. Montgomery County's land, water, and air are finite assets which must not be wasted. The General Plan Refinement calls on development to mitigate potential negative impacts in order to balance the human need for places to live, work, and play with the need to protect the environment.

### **Public Investment**

The General Plan Refinement recognizes the importance of public investment to implement the Wedge and Corridor concepts of the Refinement, including the goals, objectives, and strategies.