

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Germantown Town Center Design Study proposes a detailed design framework with special emphasis on the elements that will serve to integrate both existing and planned development into a cohesive, imageable, and identifiable Town Center.

TOWN CENTER VISION

The vision perceived for the Germantown Town Center is that of a **traditional** downtown. The design of the Town Center proposes to reflect the traditional organization and architecture of historic communities in the mid-Atlantic region. These communities provide a model for the Town Center that most closely resembles the attributes sought by the community and the Master Plan, one that appears to address the common theme and architectural character desired.

ATTRIBUTES

Attributes identified for incorporation into the Town Center include:

- village center
- main street
- unifying central space
- a sense of community
- overall sense of place
- intimate feel
- pedestrian orientation
- visual focus
- consistent streetscape
- architectural character

DESIGN CHARACTERISTICS

Collectively, the vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems, the parkland and open space systems, and the provision of community facilities constitute the major components defining the Town Center-wide Design Framework. This framework is significant in the integration of the different Analysis Areas and existing Town Center development into a cohesive Town Center. The specific application of the components of this framework to proposed future development, as represented by the Analysis Areas, together with the related design of the streetscapes, will help establish the overall design character of the Town Center.

A summary of the proposed elements that constitute the recommended overall design character for the Germantown Town Center include:

- an urban character with buildings facing on streets
- parking lots behind buildings (in courtyards; not between the building and street); parallel parking on secondary streets
- building heights to a maximum of seven stories (excepting the hotel and high-rise residential towers)
- a pedestrian-oriented Main Street to be a mixed use street of specialty retail and entertainment, offices, and residential
- commercial office and/or multi-family residential uses on MD-118
- multi-family residential uses adjoining the existing residential development to the north (of both TC-1 and TC-5)

- the development program proposed in the Master Plan
- distinctive and identifiable **gateways** at the major entrances to the Town Center and the entrances to the Town Center Core (TC-1) and the TC-5 retail center
- the establishment of a hierarchy of streetscape treatments
- MD-118 developed as a **boulevard**; Father Hurley, Middlebrook and Crystal Rock also to receive special streetscape treatments
- Lacbury Drive-Waters Road and Old MD-118/Walter Johnson Drive designed as **special streets**, to be pedestrian-oriented and include a hiker/biker trail
- sidewalks and trees on both sides of all streets
- a grid street system in TC-1; an interconnected street system in TC-5
- Waters Road to be upgraded in its current location through TC-5
- an intersection at Waters Road and MD-118, through to Old MD-118
- reinforcement and expansion of the Town Center-wide vehicular and pedestrian circulation linkage as a continuation of Main Street through the existing shopping centers (Middlebrook to Wisteria) to TC-5
- an internal transit system that utilizes Main Street extended
- hiker/biker trails within the Town Center linking the three major adjacent committed open space systems
- a major public park in TC-1 that is recommended to accommodate an outdoor assembly area (amphitheater) and related recreational facilities
- **Town Center Commons** centrally located in the Town Center Core (TC-1) at the intersection of the north-south entrance boulevard and the east-west Main Street; location of the Cultural Arts Center on the Commons
- development of an indoor pool and the possible inclusion of the indoor building component of the Germantown Recreation Center on TC-5.

IMPLEMENTATION

This document proposes that the following actions be taken to implement the spirit and intent of the Master Plan and the detailed recommendations of the Design Study:

- Amendments to the Germantown Master Plan to designate the major streets as Master Plan roads and to provide for the dedication of public parks and recreational and cultural facility sites.
- Establishment of a special tax area or Town Center Maintenance District.
- Development of a funding strategy to ensure funding for the capital cost of the various features recommended.