

# **A VISION FOR THE RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD AREA**

**BETHESDA, MARYLAND**

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**2008**









## **A VISION FOR THE RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD AREA**

**BETHESDA, MARYLAND**

URBAN INSTITUTE STUDIO  
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING  
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

In cooperation with the JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE WESTBARD PLAN,  
a Bethesda Neighborhood Subcommittee of  
Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH)

2008







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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A VISION FOR THE RIVER ROAD-WESTBARD AREA, BETHESDA, MD focuses on the Bethesda community just beyond the northwest Washington, DC boundary. A small area plan, proposed herein, was developed for this community by CUA Urban Institute Studio (UIS), fourth year students and their professor. The urban design concept for this suburban neighborhood evolved through a collaborative process comprising CUA UIS and community residents and stakeholders, as well as local design and planning professionals from the public and private sectors.

Design schemes and strategy proposals were considered and tested during discussions that included weekly meetings in the Bethesda neighborhood and at Catholic University, School of Architecture and Planning. Physical characteristics of the neighborhood and precedents from other communities, design concepts, social, economic, political, and aesthetic issues were debated. Centered along River Road in the east-west direction and the Capital Crescent Trail in the north-south direction, this Bethesda Westbard community is bounded to the south by Massachusetts Avenue and to the east by Little Falls Parkway. Although a number of solutions might be applicable to the issues

at hand, the ideas advanced herein are the result of a responsible process that adheres to community goals and desires and anticipates outcomes that might be accomplished and premiated.

We wish to thank the many people who contributed to this process, sharing their time, knowledge and insights. We especially wish to thank Dean Randy Ott for his support of our CUA community outreach and pedagogical endeavor. We also want to thank members of the Bethesda community, Citizens Coordinating Committee of Friendship Heights and the Joint Committee on the River Road-Westbard Plan, and consultant George Oberlander who had the fortitude and confidence in the outcome.

Iris Miller, ASLA  
Director, Landscape Studies, and  
Director, Urban Institute Studio  
School of Architecture and Planning  
The Catholic University of America (CUA)  
Washington, DC 20064

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and Planning.

## CREDITS

### CUA PARTICIPANTS & URBAN DESIGNERS:

- Students:  
David Hathcock (River Road and Vicinity)  
Paola Moya (Westbard Avenue & Westwood Village)  
Constance Stubbs (Capital Crescent Trail)  
Robert Kocher (Research & Documentation)  
Emmanuel Bates (Hand Rendered Images)

- Faculty:  
Adjunct Professor Iris Miller, ASLA – Director,  
Landscape Studies, and Urban Institute Studio  
Dean, Randall Ott, AIA

---

### BOOK PRODUCTION:

- Authors:  
Iris Miller, ASLA  
David Hathcock  
Paola Moya

- Editors:  
Iris Miller, ASLA, and William H. Freund

- Graphics:  
- Design: Paola Moya  
- Page Layout: Paola Moya, & David Hathcock



COMMUNITY CONSULTANT:

- George Oberlander, AICP

---

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS:

This publication is based on survey results submitted by 1,588 households from the fifteen citizens associations listed herein:

Brookdale  
Chevy Chase West  
Green Acres-Glen Cove  
Kenwood  
Kenwood Condos  
Kenwood House  
Kenwood Place Condo  
Springfield  
Sumner  
Town of Somerset  
Village of Drummond  
Westbard Mews  
Westmoreland  
Westwood Mews Condo  
Wood Acres

GOVERNMENT and QUASI-GOVERNMENT  
CONSULTANTS:

- Stephanie Yanovitz, State of Maryland Highway  
Administration  
- Marian Elsasser, Montgomery County, MD Park and  
Planning  
- Scott Peterson, WMATA

---

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AREA OF WESTBARD:

- Owners and employees of various businesses were  
interviewed and attended a community meeting

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PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANTS:  
(Architects, Landscape Architects, Planners,  
Transportation Engineers)

- Gorove Slade: Lou Slade, Stephen Pinkus  
- Wilmott Sands: Kim Johnson Kavanaugh  
- Cultural Landscape Foundation: Nancy Slade  
- Capital Crescent Trail Coalition: Peter Gray



Not unlike most educational programs at The Catholic University of America (CUA), the School of Architecture and Planning has a defined mission and set of goals. Recently, our faculty chose “Building Stewardship” to represent our community-oriented focus. Our school has a special obligation to be a leader in community outreach, in programs whether initiated by us or in response to a community request. Along with offering situations for enriching learning experiences, professional and educational benefits accrue to effect enduring and profound consequences for these students and their commitment to community service.

Our School of Architecture and Planning recently added two new master degree programs to underscore our responsibility: first, Master of Science in Sustainable Design, and second, Master of City and Regional Planning. The CUA “River Road - Westbard” project in Bethesda addressed each of these goals, in addition to our programs in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, and real estate development. During the summer of 2007, students in Urban Institute Studio, under the direction of Professor Iris Miller, ASLA, worked closely with Bethesda representatives of The Joint Committee on the Westbard Plan, a subcommittee of the Citizens

Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCCFH), and their consultant, George Oberlander (formerly with U.S. National Capital Planning Commission and a visiting CUA professor), to develop an urban design concept and policy proposals. The project culminates with the production of this book/document detailing the community vision for this area that is slated for re-development.

As the reader will note in the pages that follow, the studio considered current issues and applicable precedents. Working at both large and small scale, students expanded their learning, integrating spatial concepts and technical details. Numerous meetings and critiques took place both at CUA and in the neighborhood, along with walking tours of the study area. In addition to regular sessions with community members, students met with government and quasi-public officials, and design and transportation planners from leading area firms. Meetings took place primarily in small groups in addition to two large community presentations. Previous study-travel with Miller to Paris, India and Chicago was supplemented with visits to communities close to home to investigate best practices, and those that were less successful. Sensitivity to neighborhood desires resulted in project modifications during the design process.

The purpose of this project was to develop a low density small area plan for the River Road-Westbard Area on behalf of the community to present to Montgomery County and Maryland State government officials. This plan, in contrast to a high density plan conceived by the current developer/property owner, represents the neighborhood desires for any re-development at village scale consistent with the existing situation. Its comprehensive scope reflects an extraordinary instructional workplace environment, and firsthand experience.

The project focus is threefold: (1) River Road (MD Highway 190) - redesign of heavily trafficked roadway into an attractive “main street” boulevard with center island, shared-use bike path; (2) Westbard Avenue and Westwood Shopping Center - re-design of an existing shopping center with a large open parking lot to create “Westwood Village” master plan with parks, food market, community center, retail, restaurants and cafes, various types of residential living and parking, statistical information, traffic/transportation planning and sustainable aspects; and (3) Capital Crescent Trail - parks (3), improved access to local industrial zone, safety (pedestrian, bike, vehicle), and stream remediation. Sustainability of our ecosystem, storm water runoff and drainage management, green roofs, and ecological best practices are integral to the design concept.



With advances in computer and satellite technology, students were also able to research and “see views” of actual places relevant to this project, locally and in other parts of our country and abroad. Advanced computer and photographic technology enabled production and modification of design concepts. Books, documents, and maps also were often consulted. Urban Institute Studio replicates and functions as an office setting, with a “togetherness” spirit of camaraderie. All members share and critique each other’s design ideas and methods of production, viewing their roles as professionals with responsibility to their clients in the private and public sectors. Creative thinking “outside the box,” an approach that simulates tried and true principles of urbanism, and stewardship of our environment are emblematic aspects of the students’ work as a unified coherent strategy.

Randall Ott, AIA  
Dean  
School of Architecture and Planning  
The Catholic University of America  
Washington, DC 20064



One of the region's most livable communities is the River Road-Westbard area of Bethesda in Montgomery County, Maryland. Attractive residential enclaves of mostly single family homes surround a successful small scale neighborhood commercial center offering a range of amenities and conveniences. Here, a handful of townhouses and apartment or condominium buildings can be found near the commercial center, co-existing with several institutional and light industrial uses. River Road-Westbard is located in close proximity to the regional centers of Friendship Heights and downtown Bethesda, as well as the District of Columbia, although it remains a small neighborhood center. A stone's throw away from the natural woodlands along the Potomac River and C&O Canal, this community contains bike trails, streams and linear parkland. The popular Capital Crescent Trail crosses the community in a north-south direction. In order to preserve the scale and livability of the area, the citizens chose to present their own vision of an animated public realm as a catalyst for likely new development in the commercial center.

This small area plan - a design and development policy proposal for the Bethesda-Westbard Sector - of approximately eleven (11) acres, was formulated by CUA's Urban Institute Studio (UIS), School of Architecture and Planning in cooperation with the Joint Committee on the

Westbard Plan, a subcommittee of Citizens Coordinating Committee of Friendship Heights (CCCCFH). CUA faculty and students working together in close cooperation with neighborhood citizens, and government and private consultants, conducted a successful intensive participatory process that led to an attractive, creative and responsible design concept – a concept based upon environmental sustainability, safety, and economic viability. This proposal sets forth guidelines and a vision for future growth, enhancements and land use for this Bethesda community.

Inherent in the schemes, proposed are environmentally sustainable design and construction, protection and rejuvenation of streams and watersheds, stormwater drainage and management, protection of view sheds and building height restrictions in keeping with current low-scale conditions. Streetscapes beautification are designed to encourage increased pedestrian activity, linking promenades for pleasure and access. Replete with benches for comfort, pervious paving and shade trees, shrubs, and perennial plantings to establish cooling summer microclimates, the concept integrates walkability and visual interest with a strong "sense of place." Following accepted urban forestry guidelines to facilitate the health, growth and long life of trees, tree pits will be linked underground to result in a green mantle of mature trees.

The plan proposes superior transportation safety standards for pedestrians, bicycles, and other modes of traffic. It reflects citizen concern for reducing vehicular speed, cut-through traffic and congestion. Sufficient parking – on street, open and structured - aims to meet needs of residents, visitors, shoppers, bicyclists and delivery people. Infrastructure considerations reflect energy conservation goals, while still including an ample night lighting network to create a safe environment. Maintenance of streets, sidewalks, parks and open space is critical to the success of the project and impression of livability. It is, therefore, recommended that guidelines and requirements for initial high-level construction and subsequent maintenance be implemented for both privately and publically owned buildings and spaces.

Optimizing accessibility to parks and open space on a variety of scales, the plan envisions a cluster of pocket parks and plazas, restoration of waterways and parkland along streams with walking and biking trails, and attractive streetscapes and boulevards with flowering trees, low-maintenance plantings and charming places to sit. In addition to protecting neighborhoods, parks must be protected. It is urged that the linear park along Little Falls Parkway be upgraded to enable pedestrians and bicyclists to circulate



more safely. Commercial viability underscores the design and development strategy: building upon current resources, businesses and services and incorporating a dynamic mix of new shops, restaurants, cafes and a community center to provide the vitality.

New residential choices – condominiums, apartments, townhouses, live-work – will offer a compact low-scale urban village fabric combining urban conveniences with suburban comfort and lifestyle. New townhouses will serve as a buffer between retail development at Westwood Village and existing residential Kenwood Place. A village green style park will be the heart of the community on Westbard Avenue at Westwood Village, adjacent to a new community center and cafes. The distinctive design plan imagines special outdoor events, displays and markets. This will be a place where people of all ages will meet and stroll – in a harmonious memorable neighborhood.

Building design guidelines and recommendations include drop-off space at entrances, variations in facades (materials, balconies, setbacks), “green” roof and building construction, and maximum and minimum height limits. Streets and sidewalks, both new and existing, should

provide aesthetic enhancements, attractive paving patterns and high quality sustainable substructure, improving substandard streets where called for. Similar to the experience at Bethesda Row, shops and restaurants along Westbard Avenue should be aligned to “hug” the street on both sides to reinforce street activity. If possible, the bowling alley should be retained as is, or perhaps with a fitness center or other live-work uses above.

An exciting desirable place to live, shop, dine and work, this “Vision for the River Road-Westbard” neighborhood highlights preservation of its quality of life. The ideas and designs offered herein build upon past and present community, County and State studies and surveys, recent regularly scheduled weekly meetings and walking tours over the course of a year, and a general consensus among all participants. This document/book reflects clearly stated community values, a desire for a beautiful mixed-use, low density neighborhood that includes the services provided in the light industrial zone, environmental mitigation of damaged areas and a reconstituted stream valley. It proposes a framework to unify and guide development.

Iris Miller, ASLA  
2008



LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY



The Bethesda River Road-Westbard area grew “along a major transportation corridor” initially as an industrial center adjacent to the B&O Railroad, Georgetown Branch (Metro Southern Branch), crossing at River Road to bisect the area. In Maryland, the railroad line covered seven miles, from Silver Spring through Chevy Chase and Bethesda to the DC line and on to Georgetown. The line was built from 1882-1910 with the goal to develop suburban settlements, although it only carried freight, never passengers. Eventually B&O abandoned the rail route, and it became the Capital Crescent Trail. In the 1920s, suburban residential development began with the building of Kenwood Country Club by Kennedy-Chamberlin Development Company and contiguous high end single-family housing. During the 1930-1940, residential development carried on and persisted after WW2. From the 1960s onward, a building boom saw the addition of garden apartments, townhouses, and a few high rise condos. Now the site of well-established surrounding neighborhoods, today zoning regulations no longer permit high rise buildings in the area. The remaining light-industry in large part serves the community.

Located in southwestern Montgomery County, River Road-Westbard area is one mile from the DC line, and about two miles from the mixed-use commercial centers and Metro stations at

Friendship Heights and downtown Bethesda, and not far from Little Falls Mall in the County. Via River Road, it is also close to the Capital Beltway Route 495 and Interstate 270. Land uses in the immediate area include retail-commercial, industrial uses, and some residential, including one senior group home facility. Public, semi-public and religious uses include Little Falls Library, Westland Intermediate School, Little Falls Park, Little Flower Church and School, and ? Episcopal Church School. However, the surrounding area is predominantly low scale single-family residential, forming a series of cohesive neighborhoods. Because of changes in the zoning map and regulations, this area has a number of non-conforming uses structures remaining.

In size, the area is about 153 acres, not including street rights-of-way and the Capital Crescent Trail (formerly B&O Railroad). Northeast of River Road are about 31 acres while the area between River Road and Massachusetts Avenue includes about 122 acres. In 1982, the residential population was about 1,048, and since has increased slightly. South of River Road, extensive quarrying has resulted in “irregular topography” and “steep-sided declivity” and “odd shaped parcels” of land. Willett Branch that flows through Kenwood Subdivision, under River Road and into Little Falls Branch is partially enclosed and largely channelized. The uneven topography, combined with poor

internal circulation, results in a lack of sufficient access throughout the site. Streets connecting to River Road are substandard, typically deadend roads that need to be upgraded. (1982 Westbard Sector Plan pp. 10-12)

The area is served by two bus lines. WMATA (Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority) serves River Road and Ride-On, a Montgomery County transit system connects the area with Friendship Heights. It is recommended that it also extend its service to connect with downtown Bethesda which has become a major mixed-use retail and commercial center. Because no Metro line passes through River Road-Westbard, connecting bus service is an important transportation need for this community. Further, neighborhood residents desire that their community remains a low scale, pedestrian-oriented village neighborhood, served only by bus public transportation.

Iris Miller, ASLA







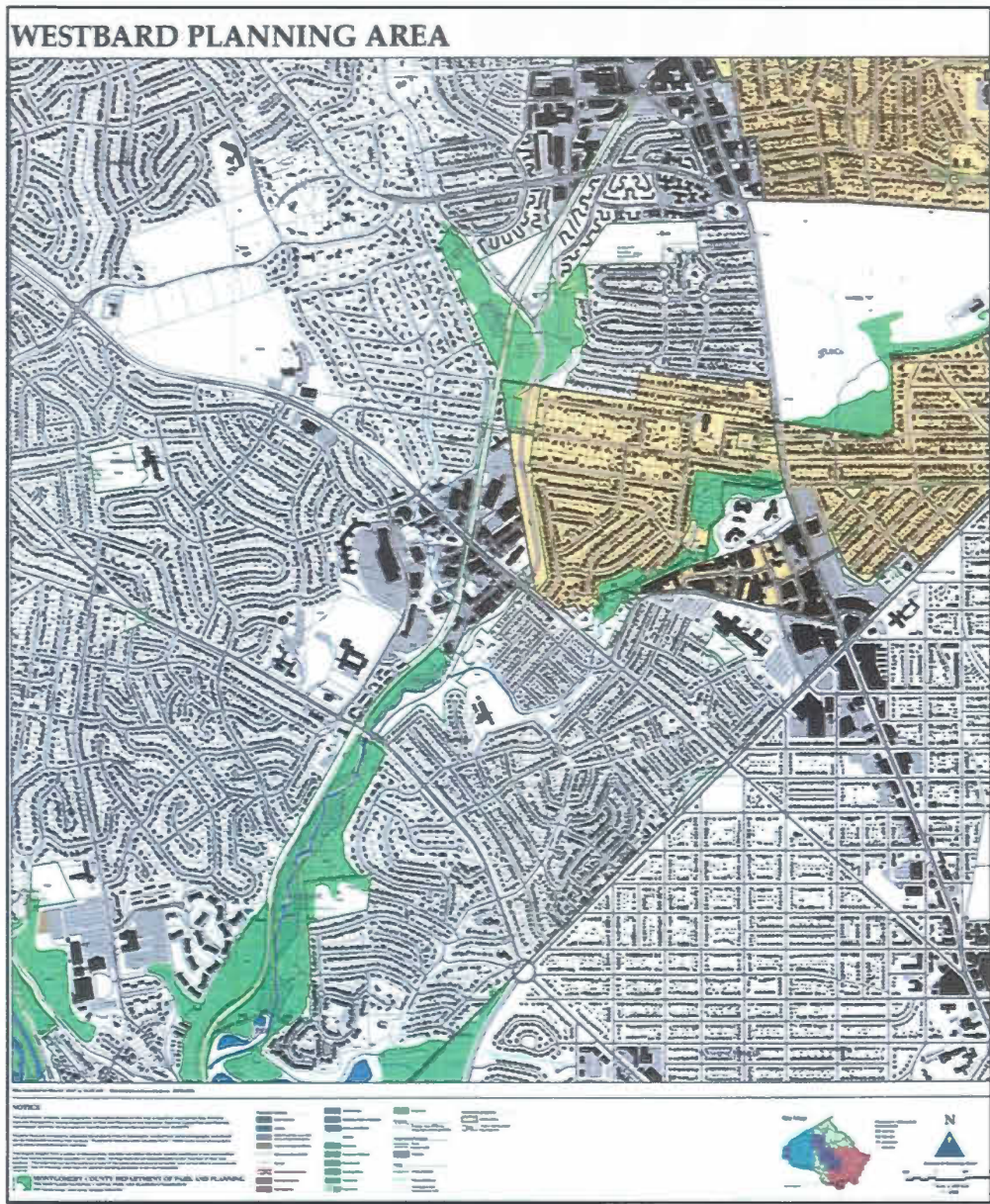
## **MAPS / FIGURE GROUND AND SELECTED PLANS:**

- **EXISTING CONDITIONS**
- **OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ENHANCEMENTS**



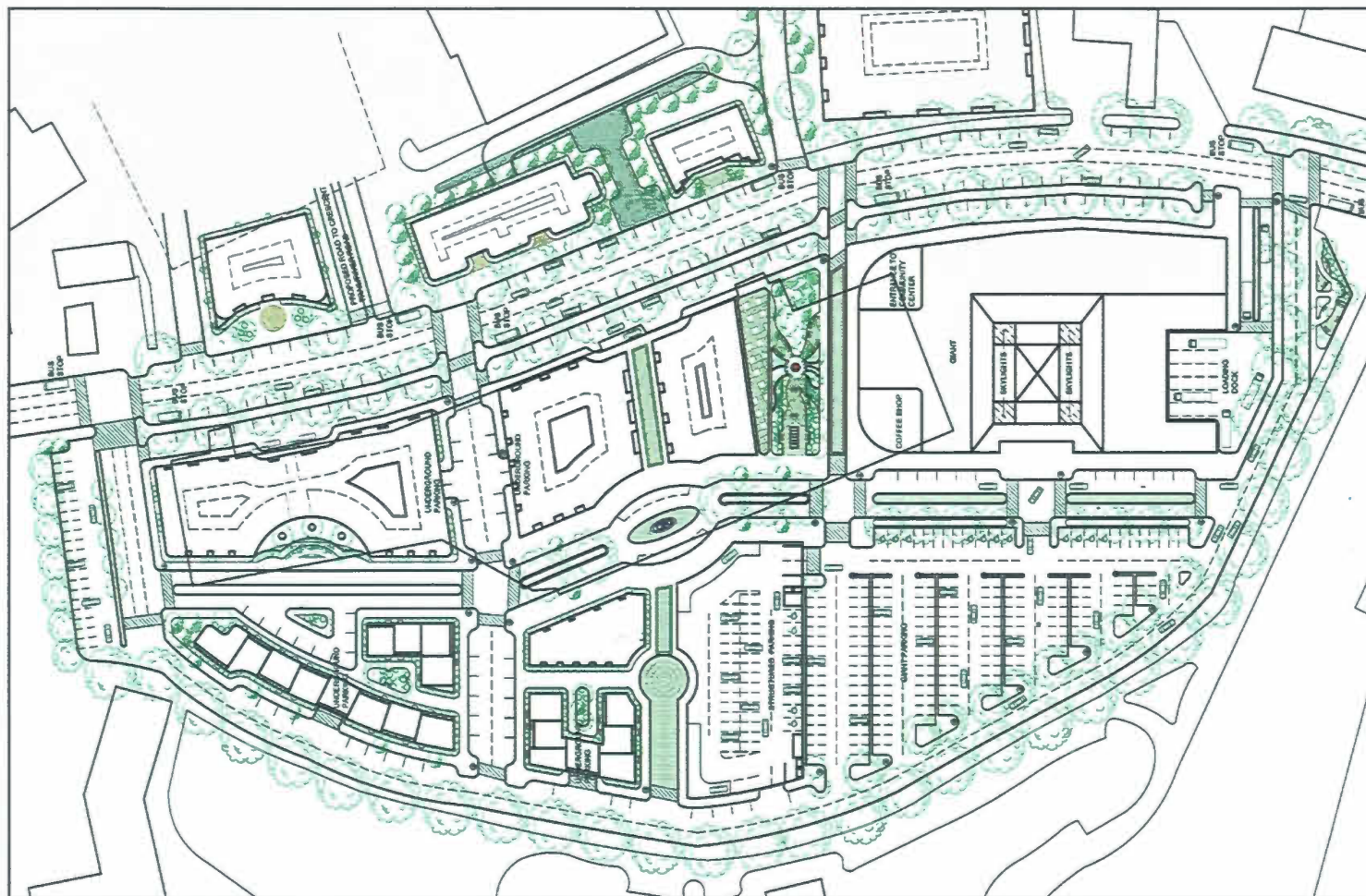




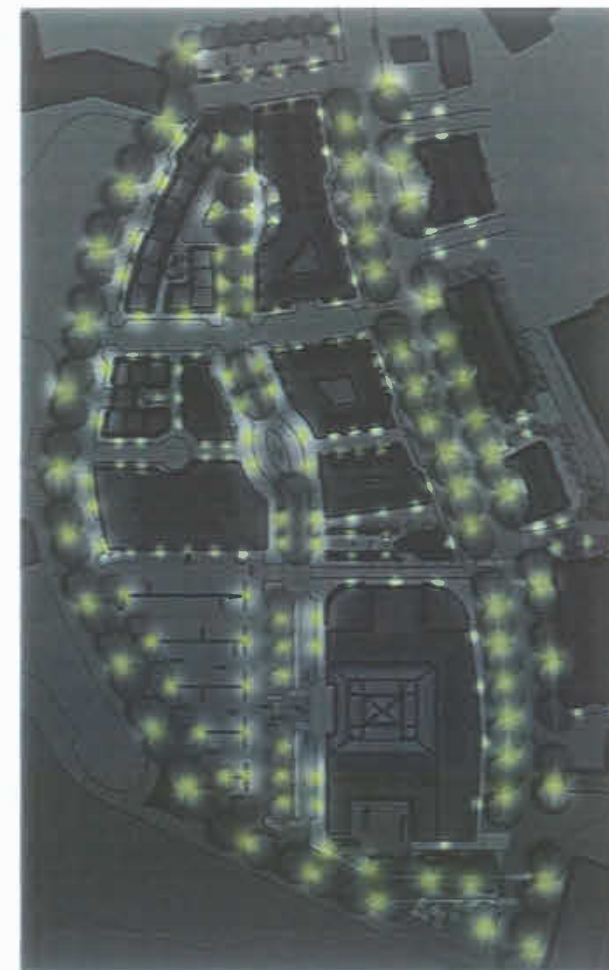




PLANS: OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ENHANCEMENTS -  
WESTBARD AVENUE / WESTWOOD VILLAGE



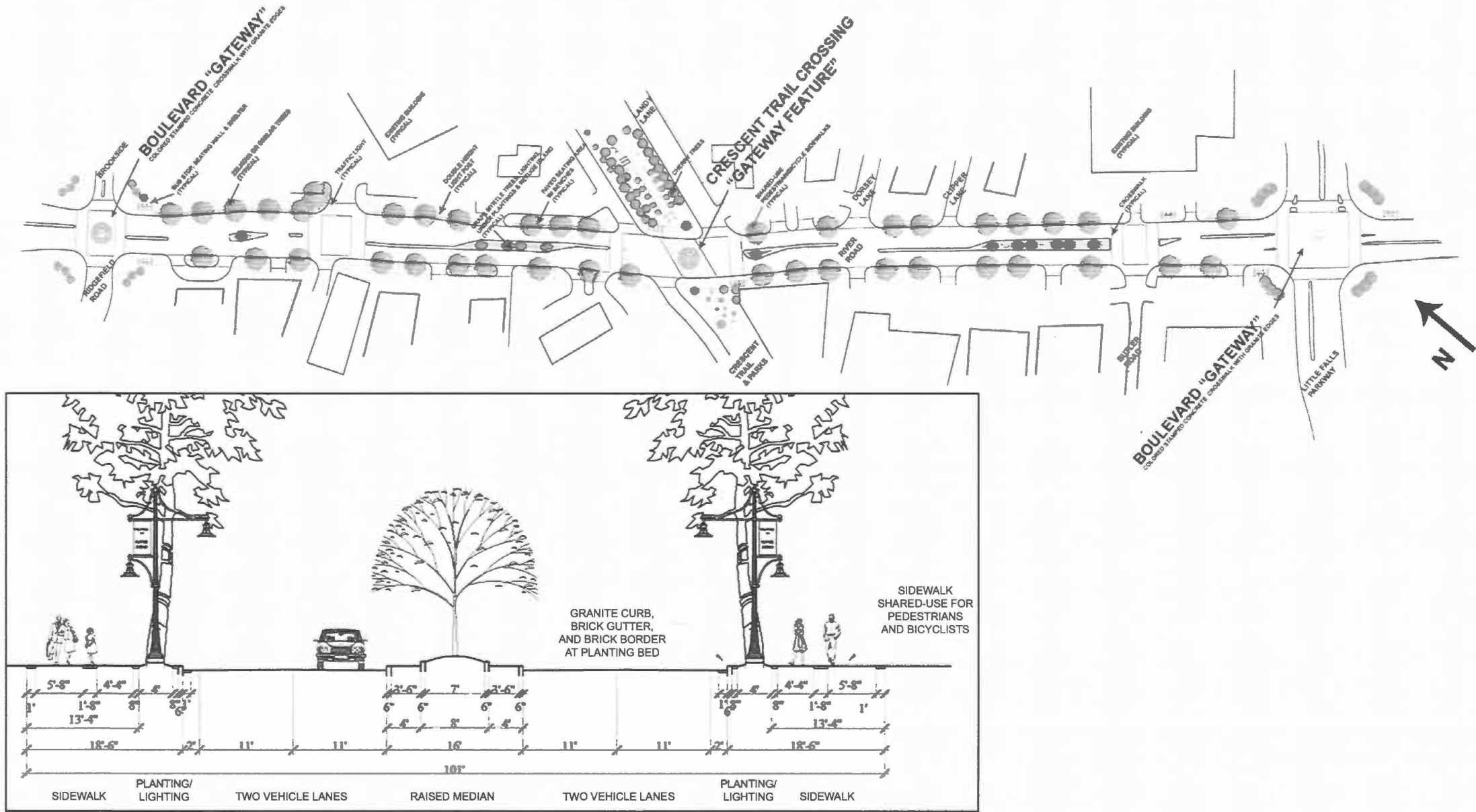
WESTWOOD VILLAGE OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PLAN



NIGHT LIGHTING PLAN

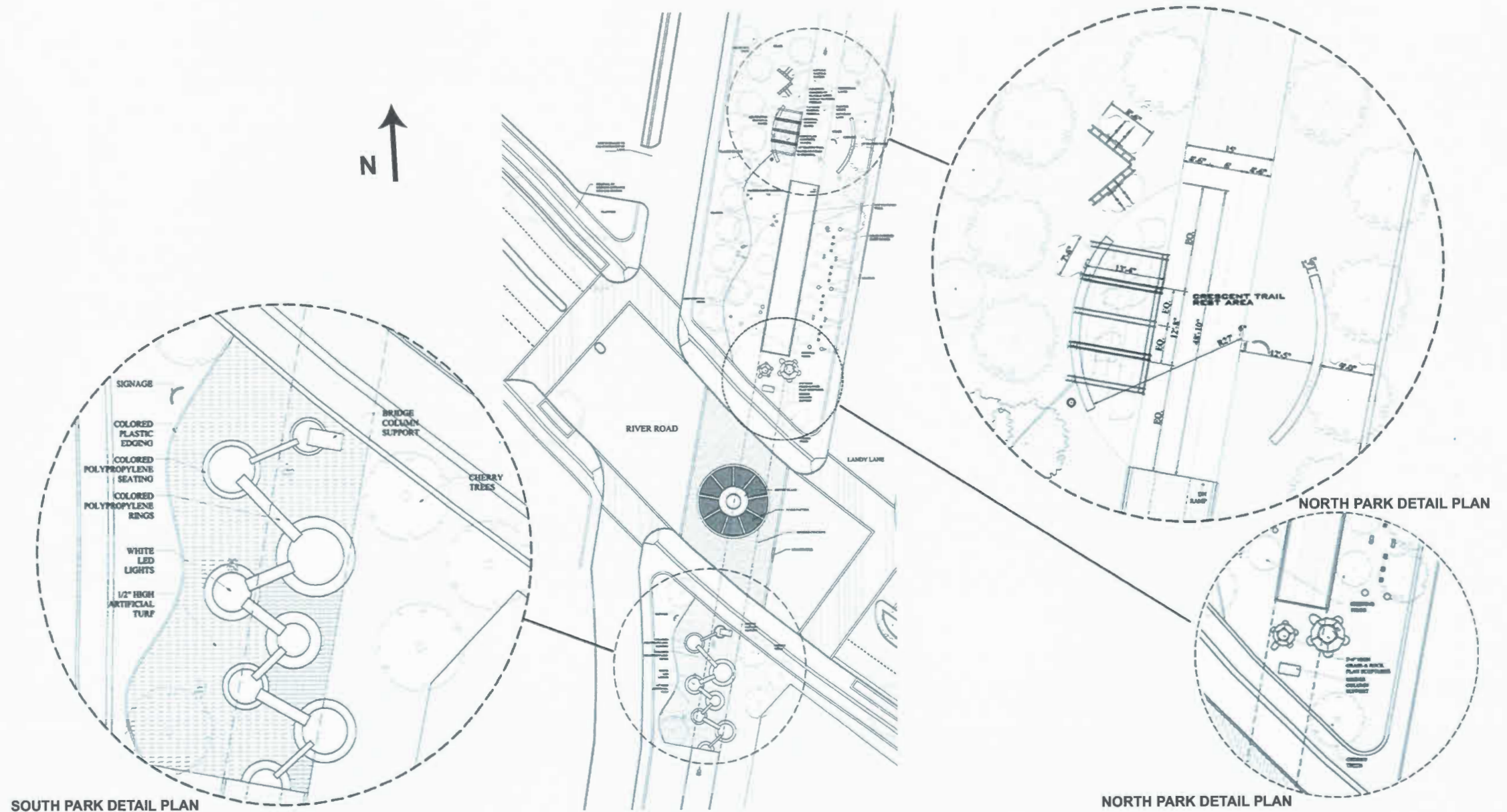


PLANS: OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ENHANCEMENTS -  
RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD





PLANS: OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ENHANCEMENTS -  
CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



# **DETAILED DESIGN PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

- **WESTBARD AVENUE - WESTWOOD VILLAGE: MASTER PLAN, STREETScape, PARKS - 14**
- **RIVER ROAD: “MAIN STREET” BOULEVARD PLAN, SMALL INTERSECTING ROADS - 35**
- **CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL: PARKS - 52**







# WESTBARD AVENUE WESTWOOD VILLAGE

PAOLA MOYA

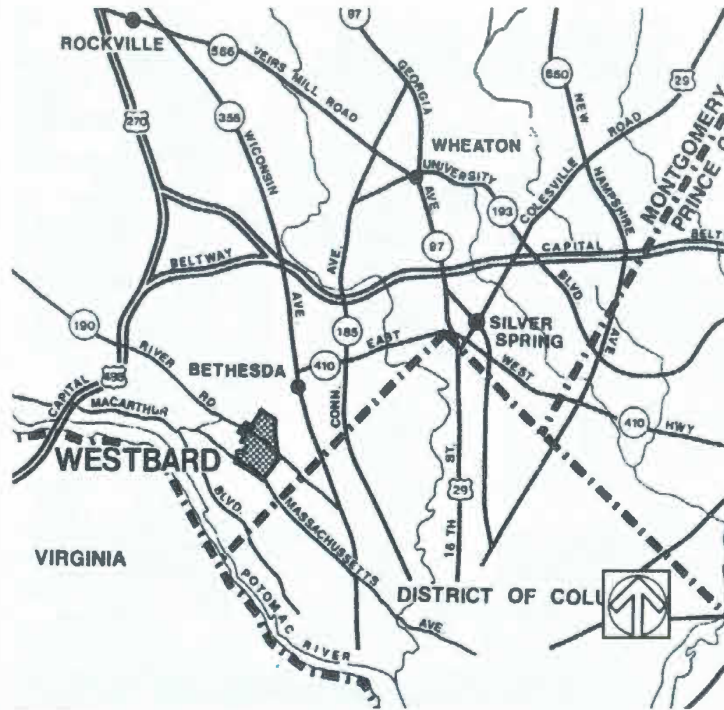


A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



## PROJECT INTRODUCTION - WESTBARD



WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN - REGIONAL MAP, 1982

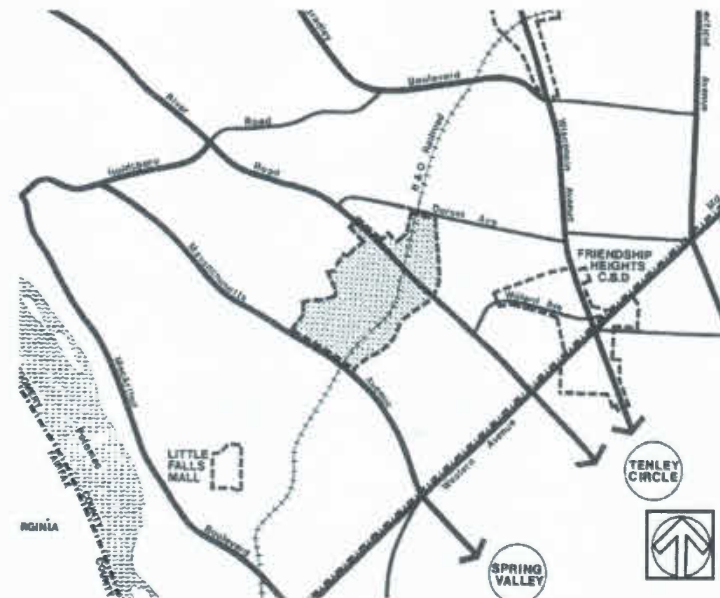
The Westwood Village and Westbard Avenue project areas represent a vision for a small-scale mixed-use neighborhood district.

The design, by CUA's Urban Institute Studio, is based on a community participation process and critical response to a community questionnaire, along with input from consultants from Montgomery

County and Maryland State governments, WMATA, and the private sector.

With a focus on low density and compatibility with the surrounding Bethesda neighborhoods, the project envisions an enhanced setting for shopping, circulation and open space, in a sustainable ecologically protective environment.

This planning project intends to offer a high quality of life - a place where residential, retail, commercial business and "green" zones intertwine within an exceptional fabric of suburban living without substantially increasing its density.



WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN - VICINITY MAP, 1982



WESTBARD EXISTING TOPO PLAN



Westbard Avenue borders the Westbard-River Road Area to the northwest between Massachusetts Avenue and Ridgefield Road near River Road and Little Falls Parkway. The sidewalks along the residential segment closer to Massachusetts Avenue are tree-lined with tall oaks. Along the sidewalk closer to Ridgefield in the commercial segment, new oak trees should replace those that have died to form a cohesive tree-lined street. On the northeast side of Westbard Avenue, one finds a mixture of different height buildings and open space: a low scale building with a variety of shops and parking at Ridgefield, several gas stations, a bowling alley, open parking lots, and two high-rise apartment/condo buildings (one of which is set back from the road) that were built before current zoning height limits. \*Following the model of Bethesda Row along Woodmont and Elm Streets, it is proposed that

low scale three (3) to four (4) or four (4) story retail and retail and live/work buildings be built close to the street to create a significant mass of retail on both sides of the street along Westbard Avenue.

Westwood Village, on the northwest side of Westbard Avenue, is a popular shopping magnet for residents and employees in nearby Bethesda and the District of Columbia. Its popularity largely stems from its convenient location, its



A - VIEW OF KENWOOD PLACE



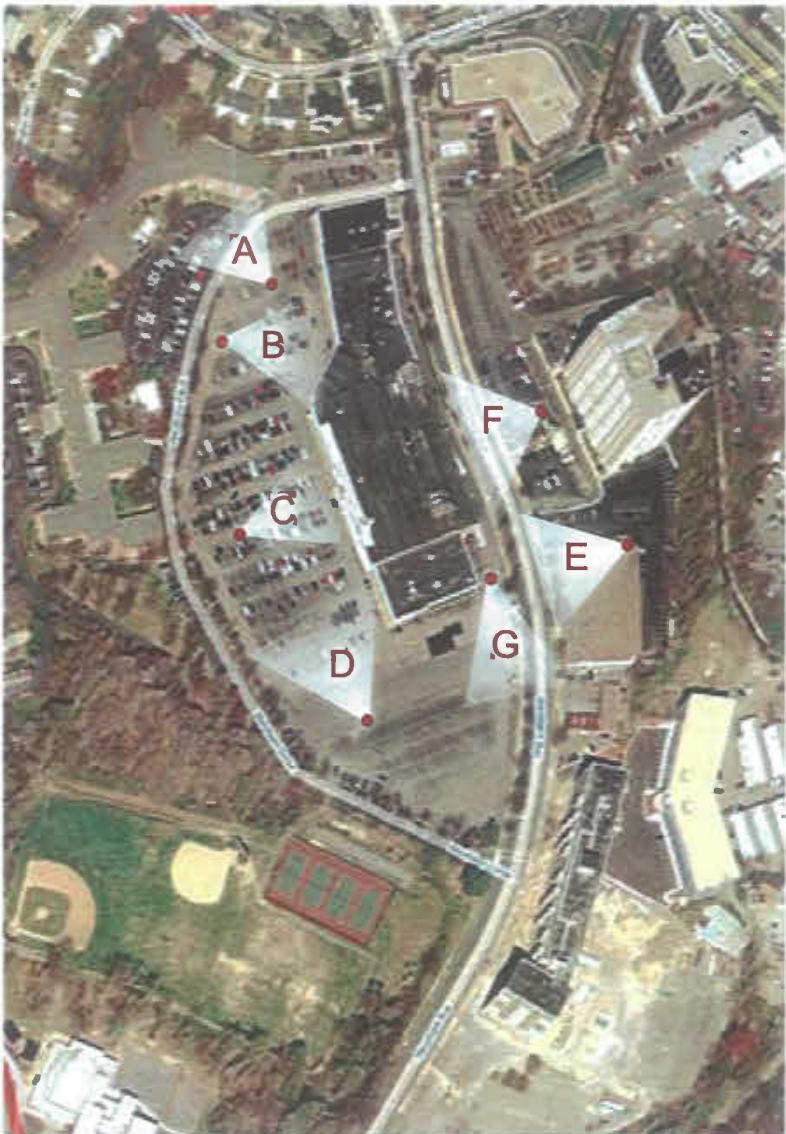
B - WESTWOOD STORES



C - GIANT ENTRANCE



D - GIANT FOOD STORE AND PARKING LOT  
(Kenwood Place Beyond)



EXISTING SITE - AERIAL VIEW  
(Directional Views A-G)



## EXISTING CONDITIONS - WESTBARD



**E** - WESTBARD AV. TOWARD A SHOPPING CENTER ENTRANCE

type of shops, and an abundance of parking easily accessible in a huge open parking lot. Particularly important to its patrons is its small neighborhood scale. Also advantageous is its location several blocks away from a variety of other shops, gas stations and fast food places on River Road. Although pedestrians who live in nearby townhouses and condos and students in adjacent schools can walk to Westwood Village, public transportation is minimal, and most people arrive by car. Only limited bus service is provided by WMATA and Ride-On. A new development plan might include a circulator bus with more frequent stops that connects to metro stations at Friendship Heights and downtown Bethesda. Further, the area streets and sidewalks are not yet bicycle-friendly.



**F** - WESTBARD AVENUE TOWARD LOADING/SERVICE LANE

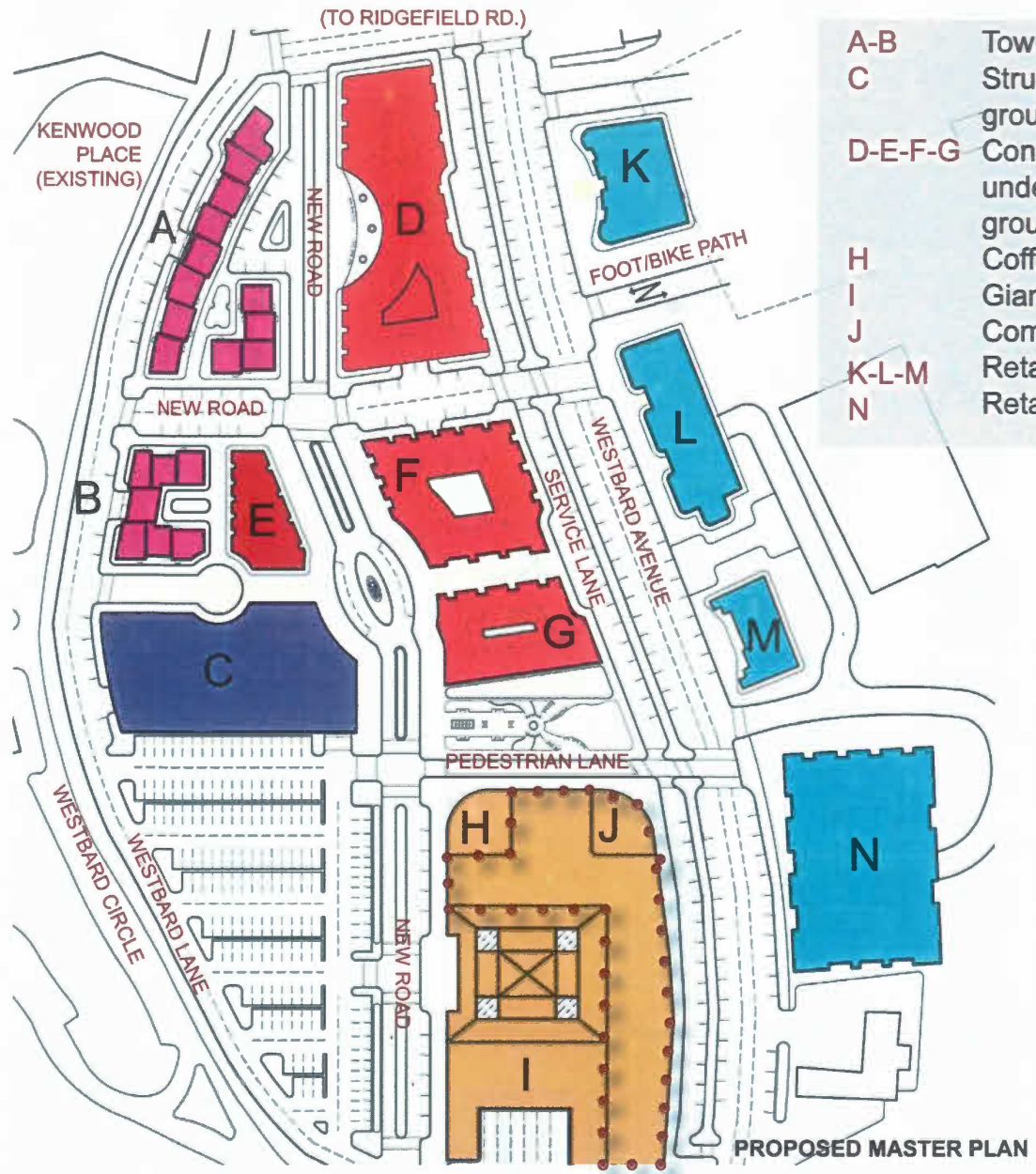


**G** - WESTBARD AVENUE AND WESTWOOD PARKING LOT

In general, the appearance is unsightly along the commercial blocks of Westbard Avenue and at the immense parking lot of this single-storey strip shopping center. The shopping center turns its back on the street, with store entrances from the interior parking lot. The back façade of the buildings face Westbard Avenue along a parallel service road. Delivery service and loading is handled by this service road. A low wall between the sidewalk and this service road does not mask the visual blight.

The range of essential-need stores, plus some specialty shops, include big box grocery (Giant), pharmacy/drug store (Rite Aid), banks, shoe repair, pet shop, coffee shop (Starbucks), children's clothing store, liquor store, technical equipment (Radio Shack), cleaner, etc. Safety - both for parking and pedestrians - has been a concern, and measures were taken to moderately ameliorate the problem by painting white driving lanes and crosswalks on the asphalt. During weekdays, much of the parking lot is typically empty, although on weekends and holidays it is often full.





- A-B Townhouses 3-4 stories
- C Structured Parking 3-4 stories above ground and one below grade.
- D-E-F-G Condominiums 3-4 stories underground parking (1 level) plus ground floor retail.
- H Coffee Shop
- I Giant relocation
- J Community Center on second floor
- K-L-M Retail / live-work 2-3 stories
- N Retail / live-work 3-4 stories



NIGHT LIGHTING

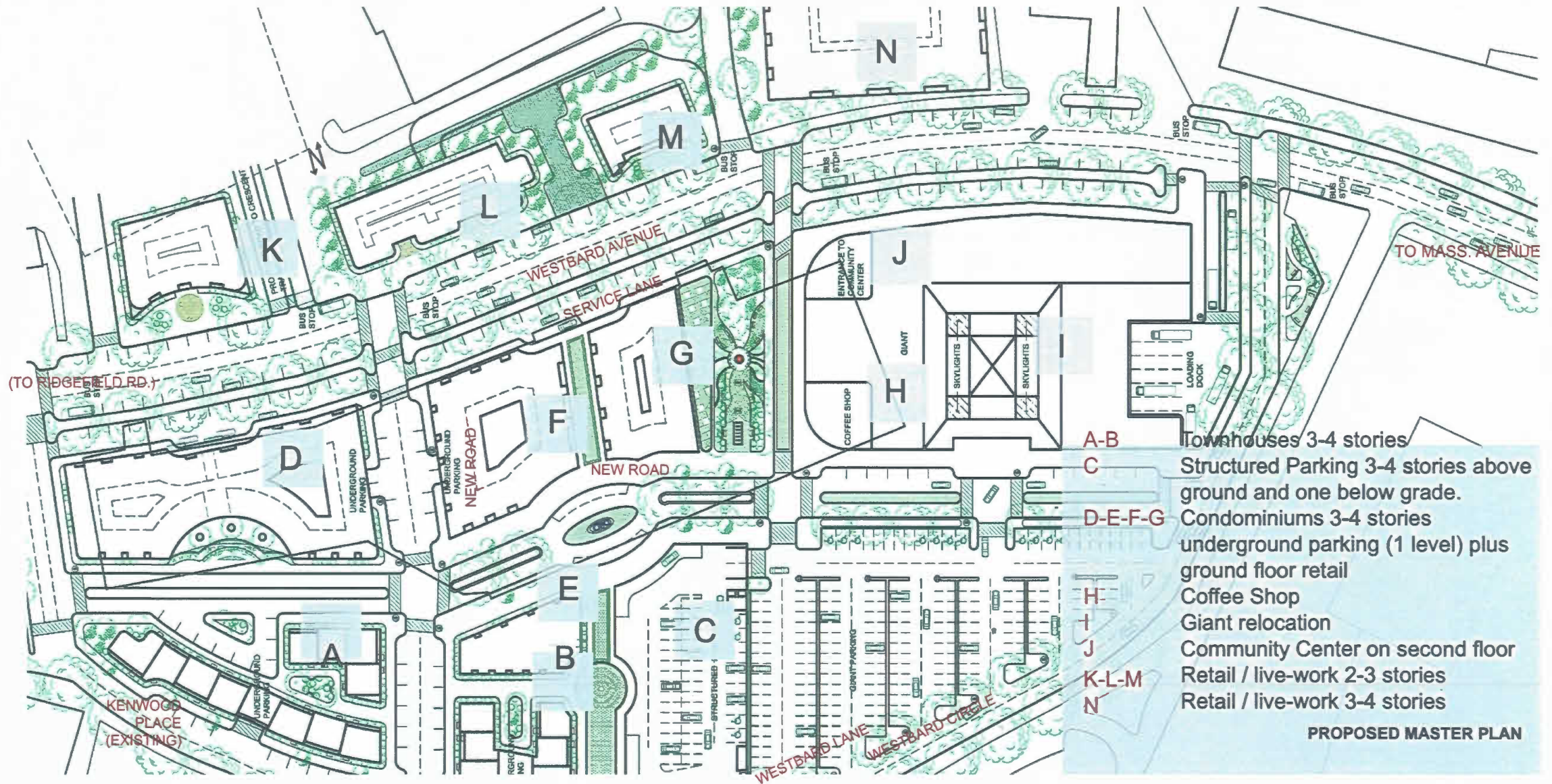
Westwood Village and Westbard Avenue comprise a comprehensive mixed-use development area.

The project plan addresses vehicular and pedestrian transportation issues such as new roads and boulevards, streetscapes with plantings and seating, attractive night street lighting, traffic signals and signs, pedestrian crossing and walking zones, pleasant bus stops (often sheltered), planting throughout with special green zones and parks, parking on streets and at ground level lots with trees and shrubs to beautify and capture water runoff, as well as structured and below grade parking.

The project suggests the relocation of existing businesses such as Giant Foods Market, Starbucks, and others, plus space for new businesses, including restaurants, cafes, bakeries and retail stores, post office, etc. The project includes residential buildings such as condos or rental units and townhouses.

Except for the townhouses, that would have sloping roofs, green roofs and sustainable materials are proposed for all other residential buildings.







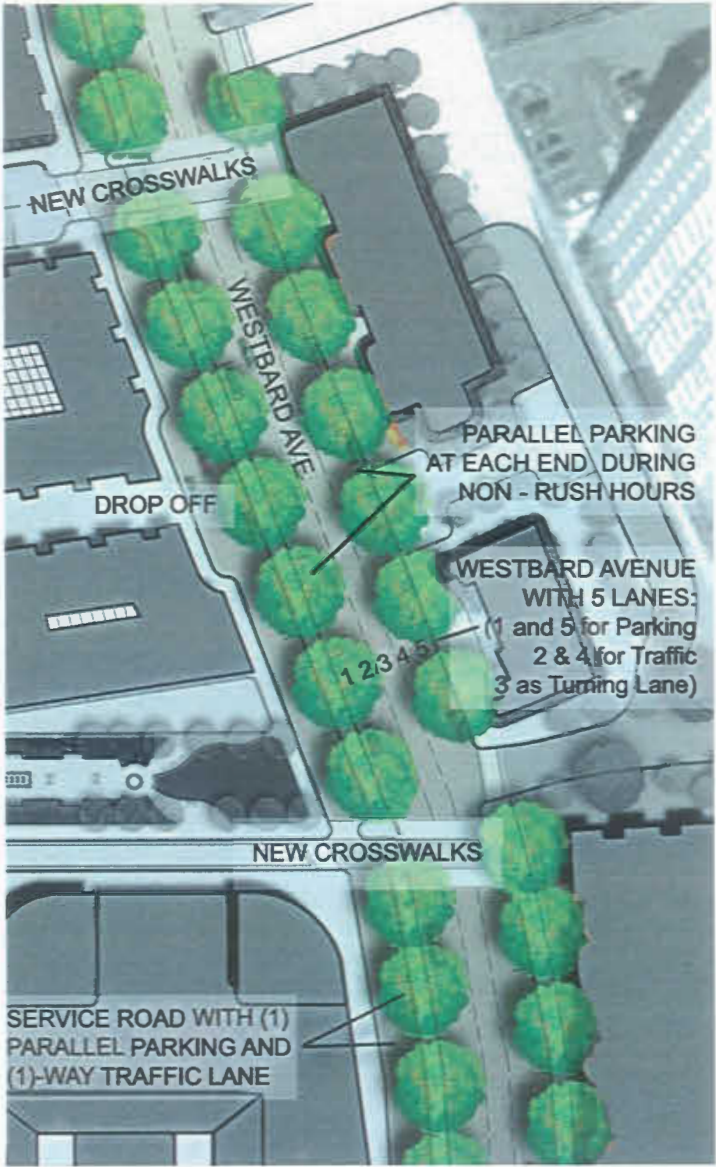


WESTBARD AVENUE - OVERALL VIEW

Currently Westbard Avenue supports four (4) lanes of traffic - two (2) lanes in each direction. Public transportation includes both WMATA and Ride-On buses which have few stops on this road or in the area.

A moderate amount of pedestrian traffic is mainly residents living in nearby townhouses and apartments. Several factors and needs prompted the new proposal: vehicular traffic, pedestrian traffic, public transportation, public parking and street enhancements. Vehicular traffic on Westbard Avenue in the commercial area will be reduced from four (4) to a total of two (2) lanes during non-rush hours to allow parallel parking by patrons of the commercial establishments. A one-way, two-lane service road will also serve retail establishments within Westwood Village Property adjacent to Westbard Avenue; one for through traffic; and the other lane for parallel parking and drop off space.

Several new crosswalks and traffic lights will offer pedestrian traffic safety features. At Ridgefield Road and Westbard Avenue, existing traffic lights and pedestrian crosswalks are retained. The short distance between Ridgefield Road and the entrance road to Westwood Village will continue to have four traffic lanes to handle vehicular traffic at the intersection. Sidewalk is shifted at Westwood Village to accommodate (5) traffic lanes.



WESTBARD AVENUE - TRAFFIC LANES



## PROPOSAL - WESTBARD AVENUE



WESTBARD AVENUE - TRAFFIC LANES

Westbard Avenue, fronting Westwood Village, will have four (4) designated crosswalks, three (3) of which accommodate vehicles turning into Westwood Village. Two of these will have traffic lights to connect with an upgraded loop road around the site, ("Westwood Lane"). Another intersection between these two (with traffic lights) will connect pedestrians and cyclists to a new path from the Crescent Trail and River Road to the new development.

The other intersection, at a new park within Westwood Village, combines a lane exclusively for pedestrians. At this intersection, only stop signs are included on Westbard Avenue.

Pedestrian improvements proposed along Westbard Avenue include:

- Rows of tall deciduous oak trees to match existing trees
- Open space and public parks of various sizes
- Shaded places and full sunlit areas
- Improved pervious paved sidewalks
- Outdoor seating
- Crosswalks (Zebra striped)
- Parallel street and service road parking
- Parking meters
- Drop-off curb cuts
- Bus stops with seating, signage, and some shelter

- Stop signs and traffic signals
- Street lighting lampposts



WESTBARD AVENUE - STREET VIEW



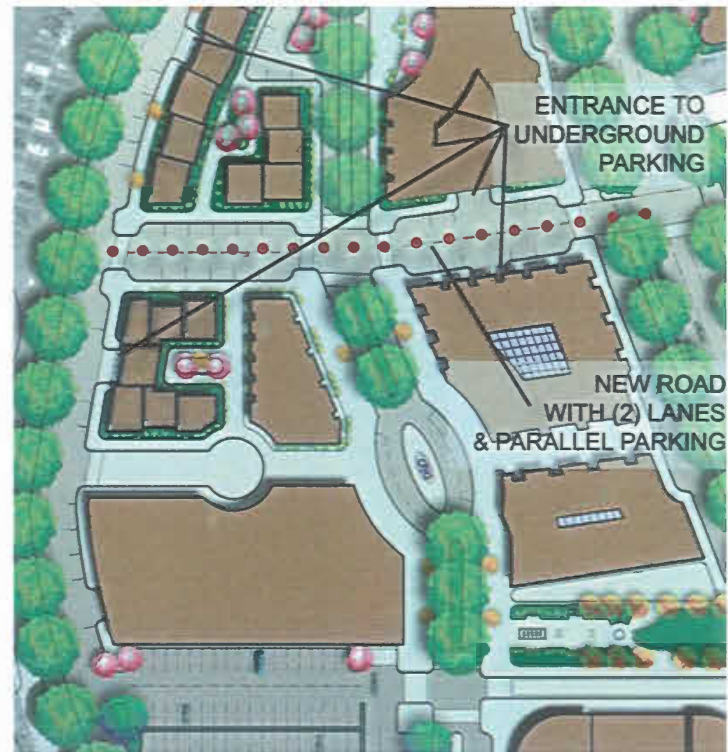
STREET VIEW - PEDESTRIAN LANE  
by ALLAN B. JACOBS in *GREAT STREETS*





NEW ROADS AT WESTWOOD VILLAGE

An improved two (2) lane road, (proposed as "Westwood Lane") will loop around the periphery of Westwood Village and will connect to other roads within the shopping area, and to Westbard Avenue. This edge lane is enclosed by a fence with gates (requested by Kenwood Place residents) and rows of trees, separating new development in Westwood Village from existing adjacent development (Kenwood Place).



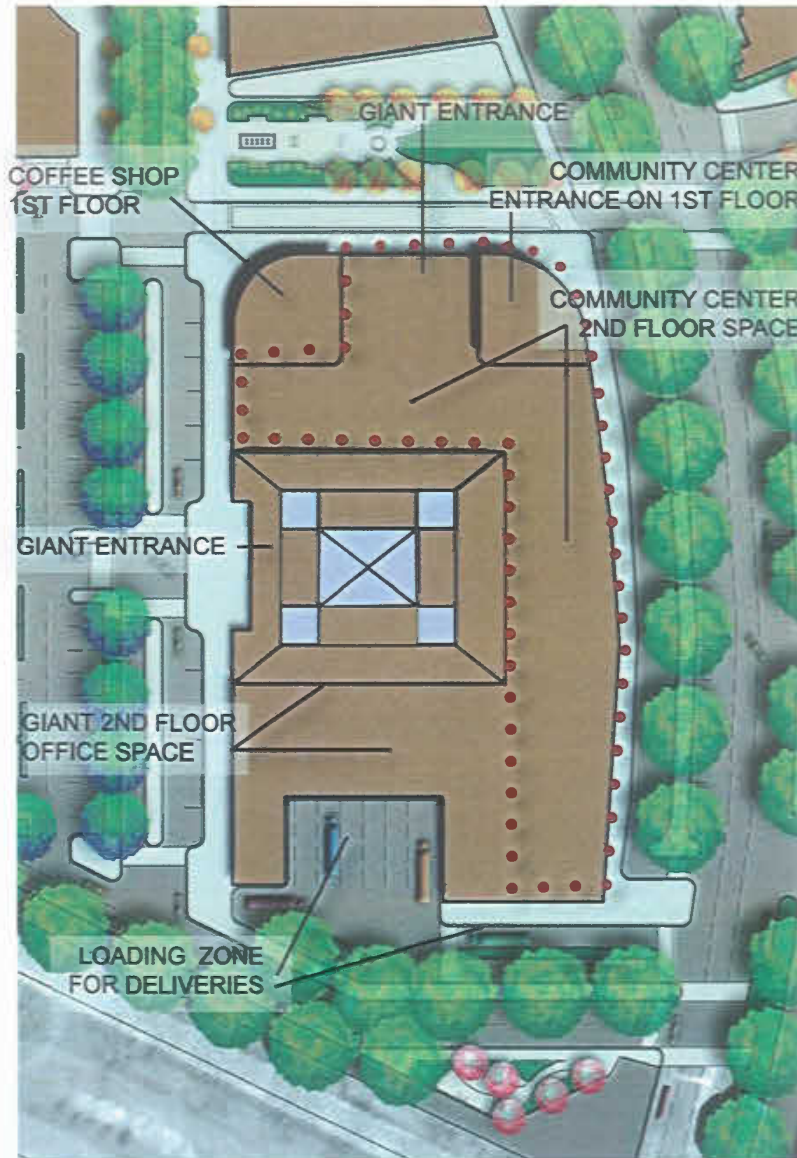
NEW INTERIOR SECONDARY LANES

A new primary road traverses North-South through the center of Westwood Village parallel to Westbard Avenue. With wide sidewalks and an oval central plaza and fountain, this road is enhanced by trees and slightly raised special paving in the two (2) central blocks. If desired, these blocks can be closed to vehicular traffic for special events. This road becomes an inviting amenity and extension of the new park. Devices to insure that vehicles maintain low speed limit in this zone include:

- Stop signs
- Special paving design (pervious treatment)
- Speed bumps or raised ground surface
- Wide pedestrian crosswalks
- Speed limit signs
- Flowering trees
- Awnings on restaurants opening to this lane
- Street lighting: lampposts + lights on buildings
- Curved road at central oval fountain

Perpendicular to Westbard Avenue in the residential area, a new road provides an additional vehicular connection for commuters to their residences. This road is two (2) lanes, for travel in each direction, with parallel parking at each side, and direct traffic access to the underground parking for the proposed condominiums.





RELOCATED GIANT, NEW COMMUNITY CENTER AND COFFEE SHOP

Giant, the largest existing “big box” store, is relocated, at the site’s southern edge that is currently an empty parking lot. The building has a large sky-lighted center atrium.

From Westbard Avenue, a dedicated driveway for truck loading and shipments also leads to a small green park with bike racks. Ground level parking spaces (114) are provided adjacent to the new Giant to the rear of Westwood Village. Structured parking space (environmentally friendly) also accommodates Giant shoppers and other patrons of the Village.

A covered arcade surrounds the Giant building on two (2) sides where patrons enter from wide sidewalks. Facing north, Giant patrons will enjoy a new community park with a fountain and hardscape terrace and softscape green areas. A coffee shop with interior and exterior seating looking toward the park, is located at the interior street corner farthest from Westbard Avenue. Also on this north façade at the Westbard Avenue corner is an entrance lobby to a new community center with elevator and stair access to offices, classes, community services and activities on the second floor.

The community center, located on the second floor of Giant, will face Westbard Avenue.

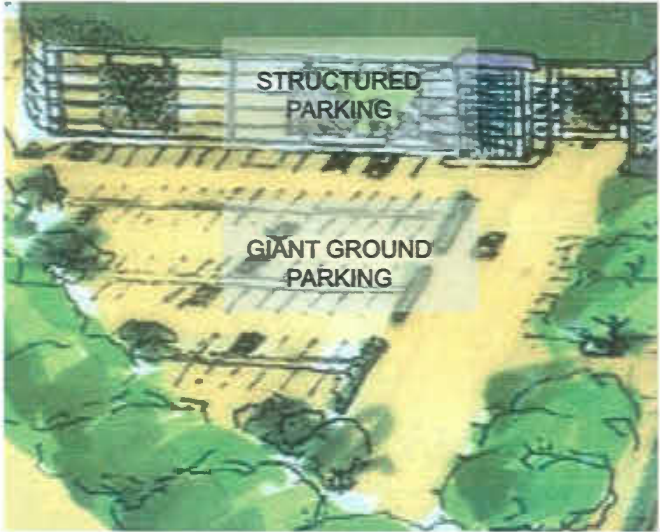


SOUTH - AERIAL VIEW OF GIANT AND GRADE PARKING



WEST STREET VIEW OF GIANT  
SHOWING COFFEE SHOP ENTRANCE ON FIRST FLOOR





AERIAL VIEW OF GROUND AND STRUCTURED PARKING

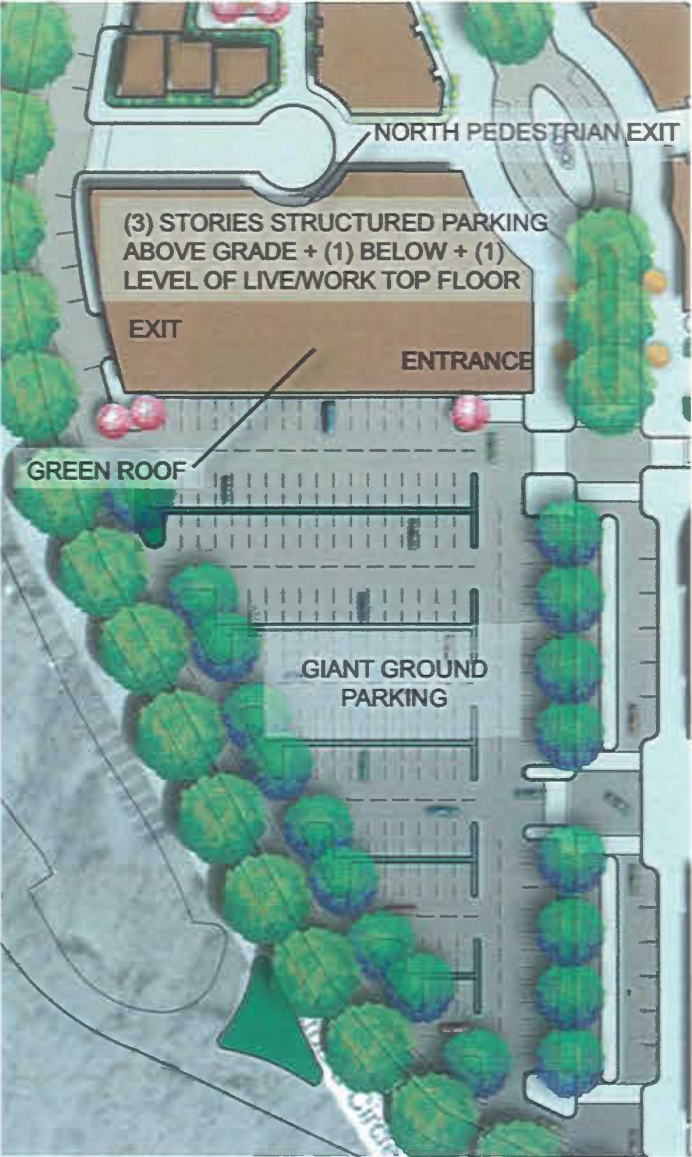
A maximum four (4) story parking structure , (3) above grade and (1) below, plus (1) mixed-use with business and/or live-work residential on the top floor is provided for Westwood Village. The parking entrance is adjacent to the Giant on-grade parking where double elevators will accommodate patrons. The exit is on the west at the loop road. Because one level of parking is below grade, the building could accommodate residential or mix-use at the upper level and still maintain the desired low height. A pedestrian exit is located on the north side. Parking areas have ample lighting, including spaced at 30' to 35' feet on streets, and at intervals on ground level parking medians.



STREET PARKING + RETAIL SAMPLE



PARKING LOT ELEVATION SAMPLE (SARASOTA)



STRUCTURED AND GROUND PARKING PLAN VIEW

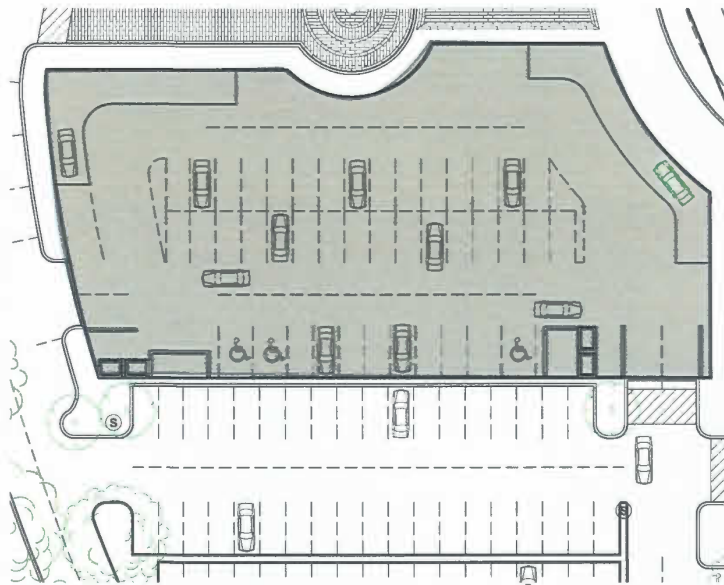
A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



## PROPOSAL - PARKING

Parking is provided on several streets in Westwood Village in addition to that on Westbard Avenue and its service road. Most on-street parking will be meter. On Westbard Avenue, parking will not be permitted during rush hours. Condominiums and townhouses have below-grade parking. Giant will have its own delivery driveway for truck parking. Other retail and restaurant establishments will have special hours for delivery and designated parking places on the service road.



STRUCTURED PARKING INTERIOR LAYOUT



WESTBARD VILLAGE SHOWING PARKING PLAN





WESTWOOD VILLAGE SHOWING BUSINESS



STREET VIEW OF RESTAURANTS AT WESTBARD AVENUE



STREET VIEW OF NEW COMMERCIAL BUSINESS

New retail and restaurant space will be designed on the first floor of most residential buildings facing Westbard Avenue and the primary interior parallel road. The community expects that current, privately-owned businesses will be part of the new commercial mix." Townhouses are a more private enclave with a central green space, and will not feature retail shops.



## PROPOSAL - STREETSCAPES

Restaurants and cafes with outdoor seating, pedestrian-oriented roads, benches and low walls for outdoor seating, parks and water fountains located in the heart of Westwood Village will create vitality for residents and pedestrian patrons. Awnings, café tables, attractive lighting, special paving and planting, beautiful streetscape and parks will enhance the project area, with elements such as trees, brick sidewalks, decorative paved intersections, new street lighting, and landscaped medians. Walkways and crosswalks will have pervious pavers, as will some roads. Drainage and storm water runoff will be managed in an attractive and sustainable manner.

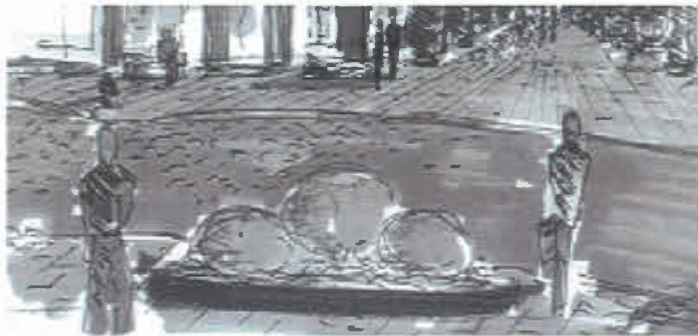
The central median will be the focal point consisting of a contemporary fountain with silver bollards of different sizes, inspired by water sculpture at Palais Royal, Paris. The water that spills softly over the bollards is intended to create a tranquil and soothing experience for both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. A low masonry curved wall will wrap the fountain allowing for public seating.

The purpose of this water feature aside from being a street embellishment feature, is intended to slow down the traffic. Due to its oval shape, vehicles will be able to slowly loop around and stop for pedestrians.

SCULPTURE FOUNTAIN AT PALAIS ROYAL, PARIS FRANCE



NEW ARCADE BETWEEN APARTMENT BUILDINGS



STREET VIEW OF SCULPTURE FOUNTAIN



PLAN VIEW OF FOUNTAINS AND INTERIOR ROAD





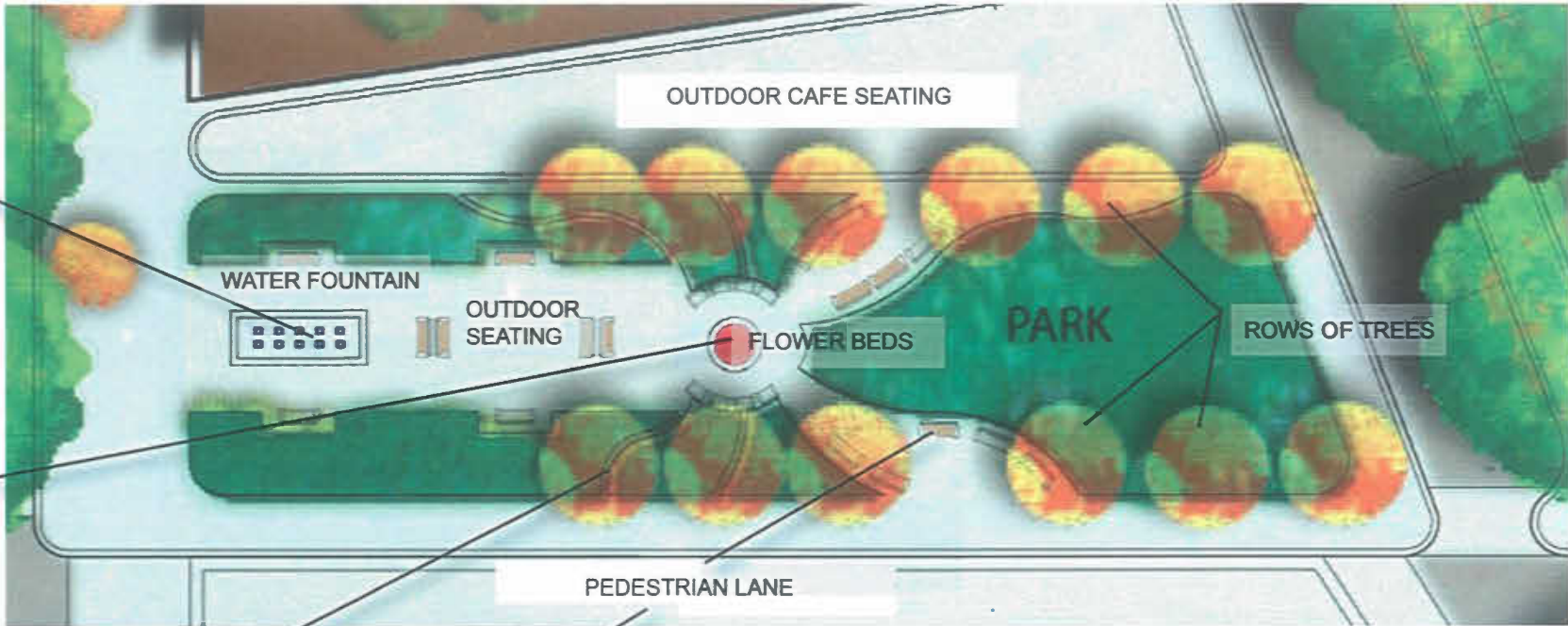
DANCING WATER FOUNTAIN



FLOWER BEDS



ROWS OF TREES



PLAN VIEW OF PARK



OUTDOOR SEATING

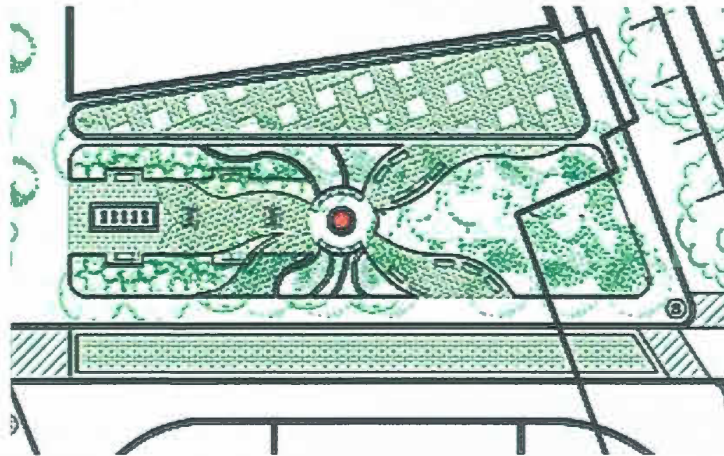
Across from Giant a wedge shape park will offer a special community amenity combining both greenscape and hardscape. To the north, next to the residential building, will be restaurants with outdoor seating. This plaza will allow for outdoor gatherings and trees from the park will provide a sense of enclosure. The open space will offer outdoor seating, pocket gardens and water fountains. From Westbard Avenue the circulation sequence to the park begins with green space then links through small paved paths into a more private garden space with outdoor seating. A fountain is the center piece with water that falls in place in a recycling drain (water can be shut off).



## PROPOSAL - STREETSCAPES

While the garden appears to be symmetrical, bisected by the paved terrace and fountain, in reality the north side grass is at ground level near the cafes and rises to an 18" seating wall at the park's interior connected by a meandering path. On the south side the grass is raised and surrounded by an 18" seating wall and provides additional seating for patrons from the coffee shop.

The green lawn closest to Westbard Avenue is bermed in waves surrounded by an 18" seating wall and an alley of trees aligning the park towards the street.



PLAN VIEW



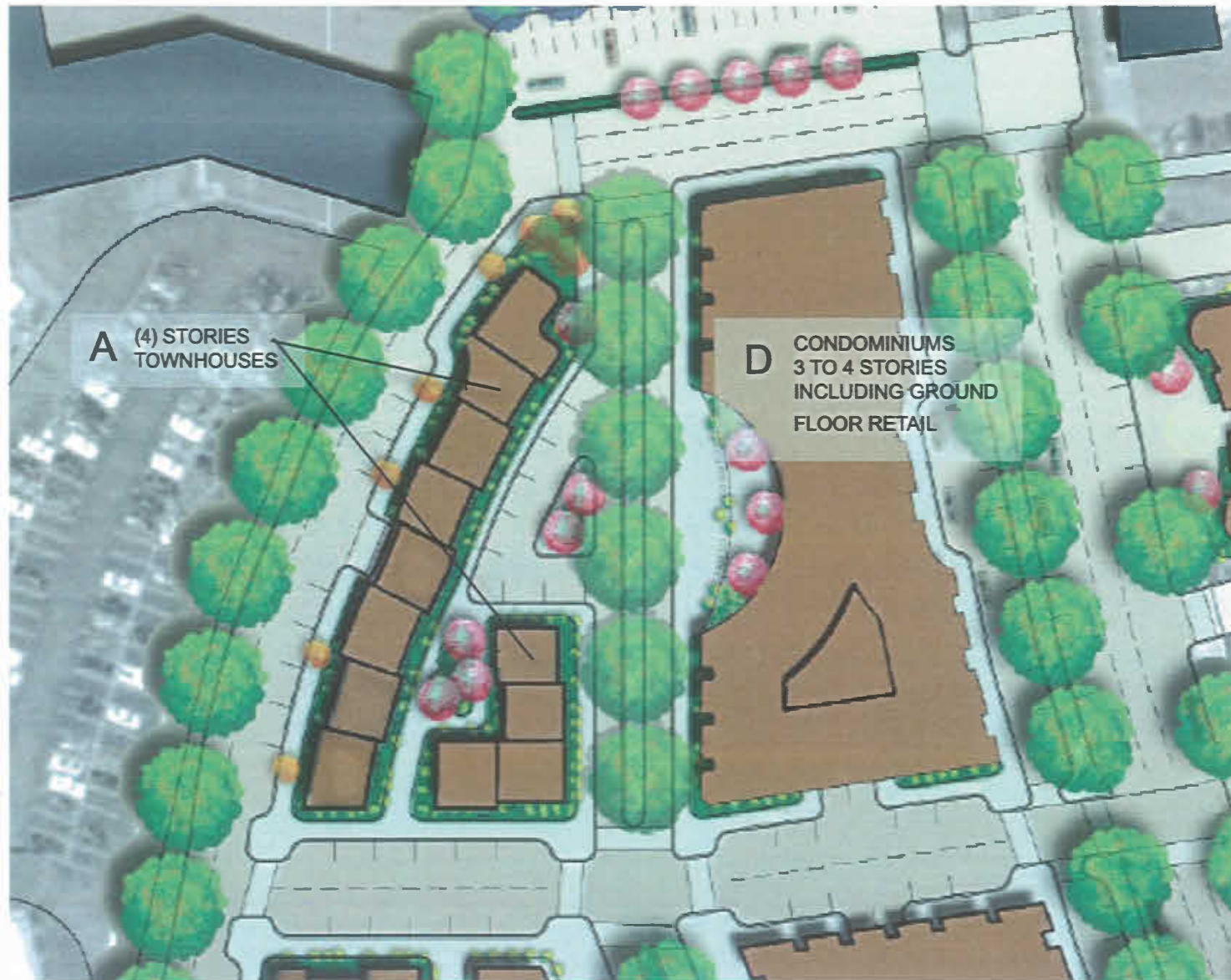
AERIAL VIEW OF PARK





PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF PARK





The northernmost new residential building was intentionally designed to embrace the townhouse community located directly across the street.

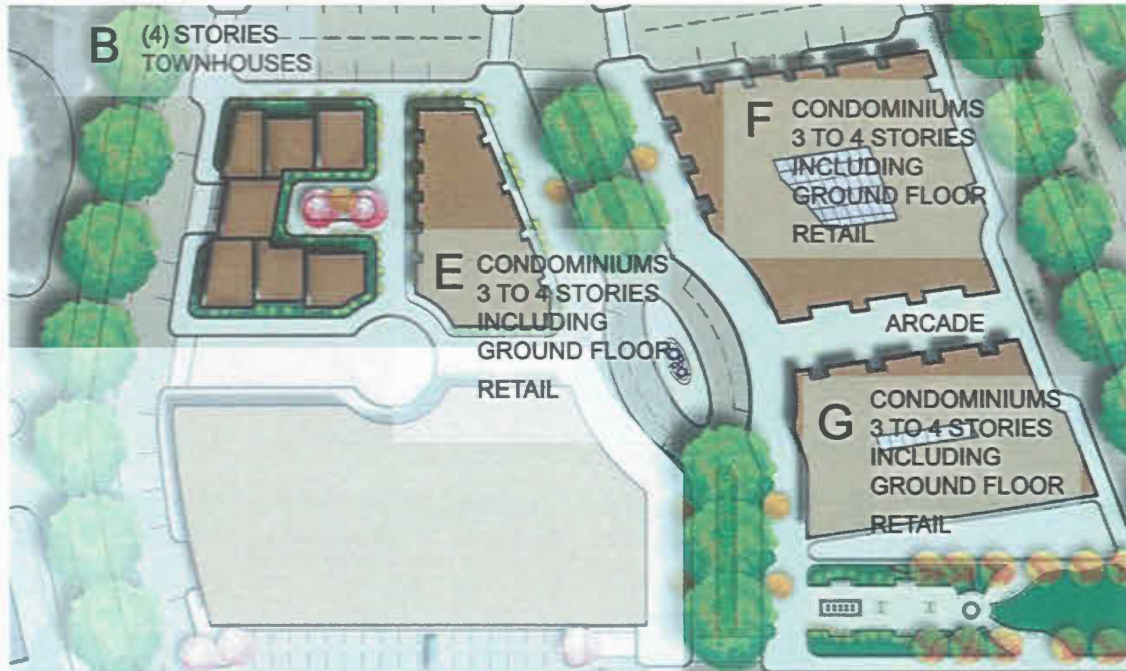
This condominium will enjoy a ground floor curved grill-work fenced-in private court visible to the street with a public plaza with seating outside the fence and a small park and lush landscaping across the street.

On the top floor, this building will provide a “sustainable” roof garden with views overlooking the townhouses and Westbard area. A small enclosed pavilion will provide elevator and stair access, and indoor seating. Parking will be provided below grade.

The townhouses will also enjoy several pocket gardens for the residents that will be spread throughout the townhouse complex.

At the main entrance of the townhouse development, there will be a small triangular park with trees, new planting and outdoor seating. Parking will be provided below grade.





PLAN VIEW OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

The new service road and primary north-south interior road parallel to Westbard Avenue will be adjacent to restaurants with outdoor seating. Retail establishments will be located on the ground level of mix-used residential buildings. Green and public spaces are enhanced by double rows of trees both throughout Westbard Avenue as well as in the new Westwood Village.



RETAIL PROPOSED ON GROUND FLOOR OF RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

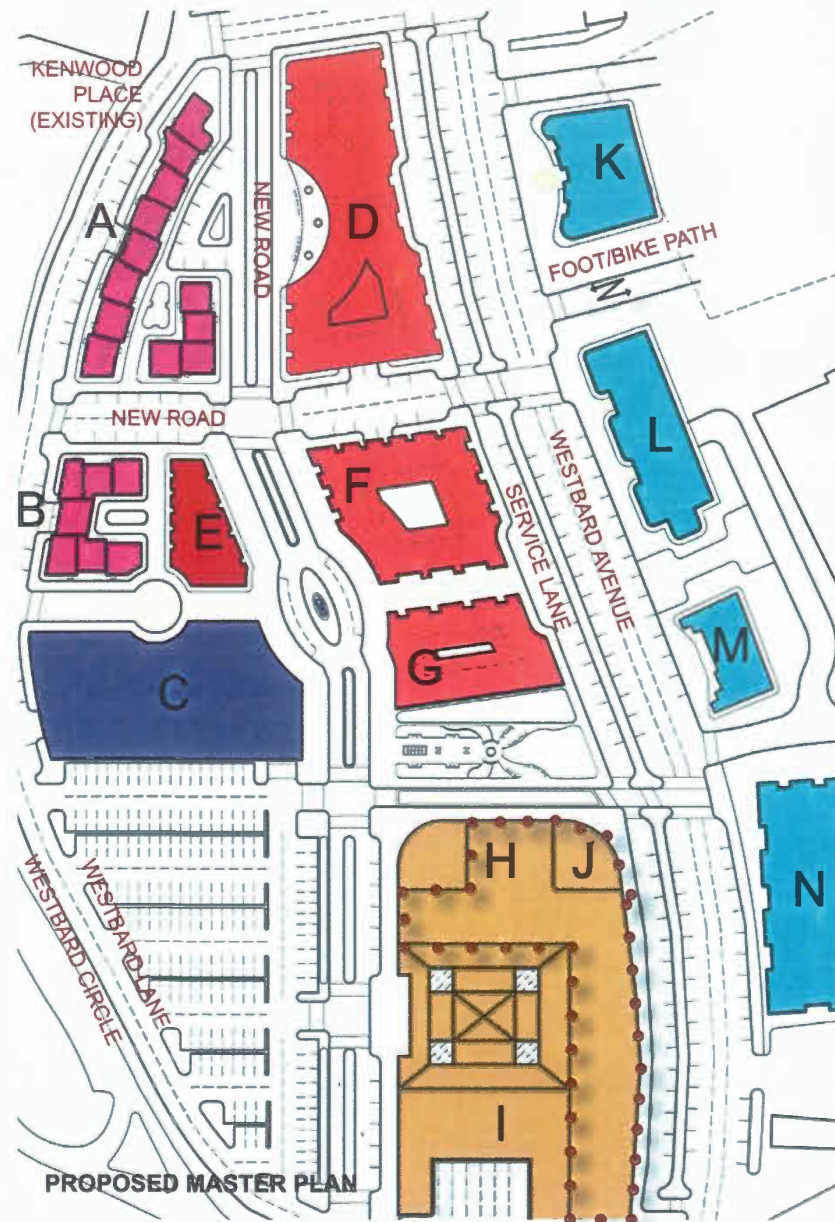
To the south of the condo, the master plan shows two buildings on Westbard Avenue that are proposed for residential use and will be linked on the ground floor by a paved pedestrian way with a two storey free-standing covered arcade. This arcade will have a transparent finish, ample street lighting, outdoor seating and potted plants where residents and visitors will enjoy retail, cafes and restaurants, meeting and strolling. These buildings will also be linked by parking below grade.



STREET VIEW OF PUBLIC ARCADES AND OUTDOOR SEATING



## ANALYSIS - WESTBARD



### ANALYSIS OF EXISTING RETAIL IN WESTWOOD CENTER

- Existing retail space: **110,379 SF**

### ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED RETAIL IN WESTWOOD VILLAGE

- Building D = 1,200 SF\*

\*Retail proposed only by Westbard Avenue.

- Building E = 5,000 SF\*

\*Retail proposed on ground floor level.

- Building F = 13,200 SF\*

\*Retail proposed on ground floor level.

- Building G = 10,000 SF\*

\*Retail proposed on ground floor level.

- Building H = 1,600 SF\*

\*Coffee Shop with mezzanine space.

- Building I = 69,000 SF\*

\*Relocated Giant including office area provided on second floor.

- Building J = 38,000 SF\*

\*Proposed Community Center located on second floor.

### TOTAL RETAIL AREA AT WESTWOOD VILLAGE

- Proposed retail space: **138,000 SF**

### ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED RETAIL ACROSS FROM WESTWOOD VILLAGE

- Building K = 7,200 SF\*

- Building L = 6,400 SF\*

- Building M = 3,000 SF\*

- Building N = 19,200 SF\*

\*Retail proposed on ground floor level.

### TOTAL RETAIL AREA ACROSS FROM WESTWOOD VILLAGE

- Proposed retail space: **35,800 SF**

### ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL IN WESTWOOD VILLAGE

- Townhouses A = 40,400 SF

- Total Units: 22\*

- Area per unit: 1,835 SF

\*(2) Stories "piggyback townhouses"

- Townhouses B = 21,200 SF

- Total Units: 12\*

- Area per unit: 1,760 SF

\*(2) Stories "piggyback townhouses"

### TOTAL TOWNHOUSE UNITS: 34

- Building D = 47,400 SF\*

- Total 1 Bed, 1 Bath units (750sf): 8\*

- Total 1 Bed + Den, 1 Bath units (850sf): 4\*

- Total 2 Beds, 1 Bath units (1,000sf): 3\*

- Total 2 Beds, 2 Baths units (1,150sf): 3\*

\*Calculation using (3) stories ratio.

Total Units Building D: Aprox. 54

- Building E = 15,000 SF\*

- Total 1 Bed, 1 Bath units (750sf): 2\*

- Total 1 Bed + Den, 1 Bath units (850sf): 1\*

- Total 2 Beds, 1 Bath units (1,000sf): 1\*

- Total 2 Beds, 2 Baths units (1,150sf): 1\*

\*Calculation using (3) stories ratio.

Total Units Building D: Aprox. 15

- Building F = 13,200 SF\*

- Total 1 Bed, 1 Bath units (750sf): 6\*

- Total 1 Bed + Den, 1 Bath units (850sf): 4\*

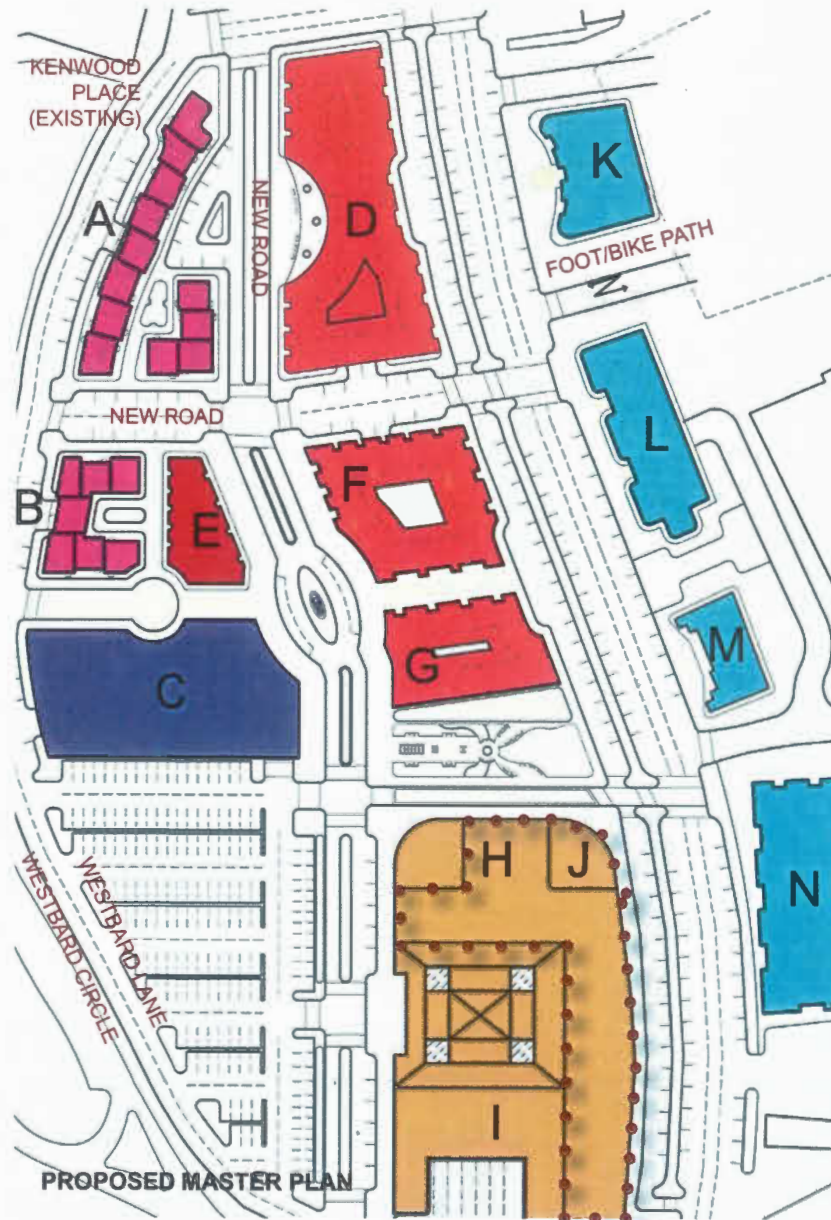
- Total 2 Beds, 1 Bath units (1,000sf): 3\*

- Total 2 Beds, 2 Baths units (1,150sf): 2\*

\*Calculation using (3) stories ratio.

Total Units Building D: Aprox. 45





- Building G = 10,000 SF\*
    - Total 1 Bed, 1 Bath units (750sf): 4\*
    - Total 1 Bed + Den, 1 Bath units (850sf): 2\*
    - Total 2 Beds, 1 Bath units (1,000sf): 3\*
    - Total 2 Beds, 2 Baths units (1,150sf): 2\*
- \*Calculation using (3) stories ratio.

Total Units Building D: Aprox. 33

TOTAL CONDOMINIUM UNITS: 147

#### ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED LIVE/WORK SPACE ACROSS FROM WESTWOOD VILLAGE

- Building K = 14,400 SF\*
- Building L = 12,800 SF\*
- Building M = 6,000 SF\*
- Building N = 38,400 SF\*\*

\*Calculation using (2) stories ratio.

\*\*Calculation using (3) stories ratio.

#### PUBLIC PARKING ANALYSIS

- Giant Ground Parking: 152 Parking Spaces
- Off street parking: 210 Parking Spaces
- Structured parking: 168 Parking Spaces\*

\*Calculation using (3) stories above ground and (1) below ground.

TOTAL PARKING SPACES: 530







# RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD

DAVID HATHCOCK



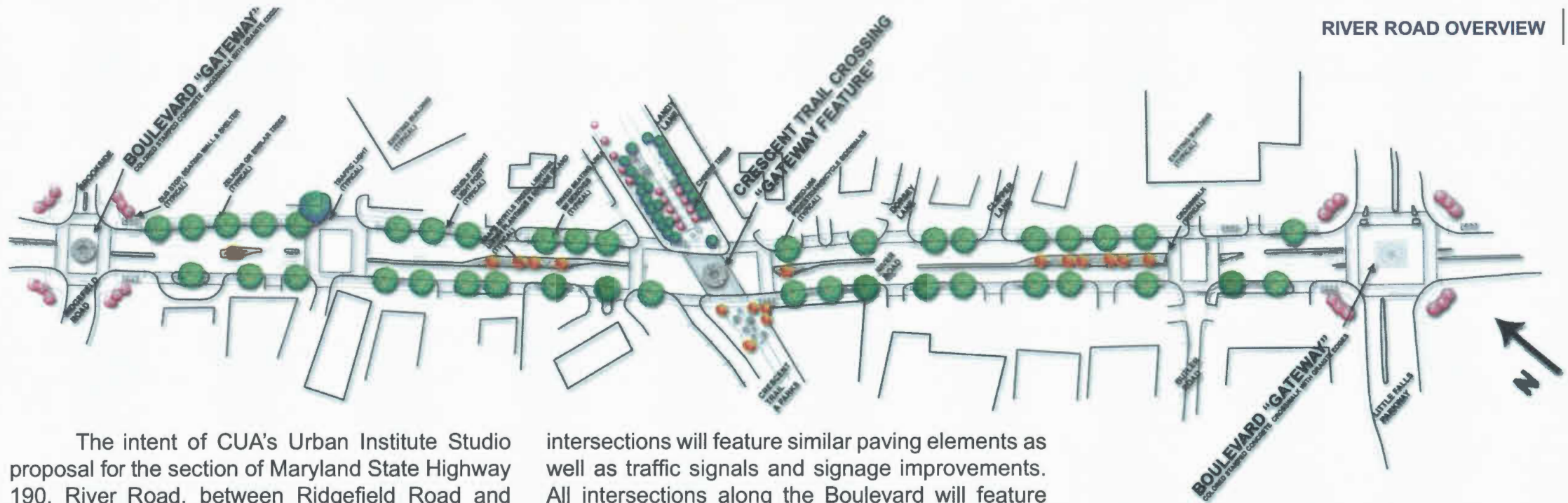
A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND









The intent of CUA's Urban Institute Studio proposal for the section of Maryland State Highway 190, River Road, between Ridgefield Road and Little Falls Parkway is that it be designated the River Road Boulevard, and that it becomes a beautiful centerpiece of pedestrian-oriented, community activity for the surrounding neighborhoods.

River Road Boulevard will be a beautiful "Main Street," designed according to Maryland State Highway route guidelines befitting the surrounding neighborhoods within Montgomery County and nearby District of Columbia. The extent of the Boulevard will comprise three (3) special intersections – two (2) gateways at each end (Ridgefield Road and Little Falls Parkway), as well as a new large central intersection at the bridge/overpass of Crescent Trail. These three (3)

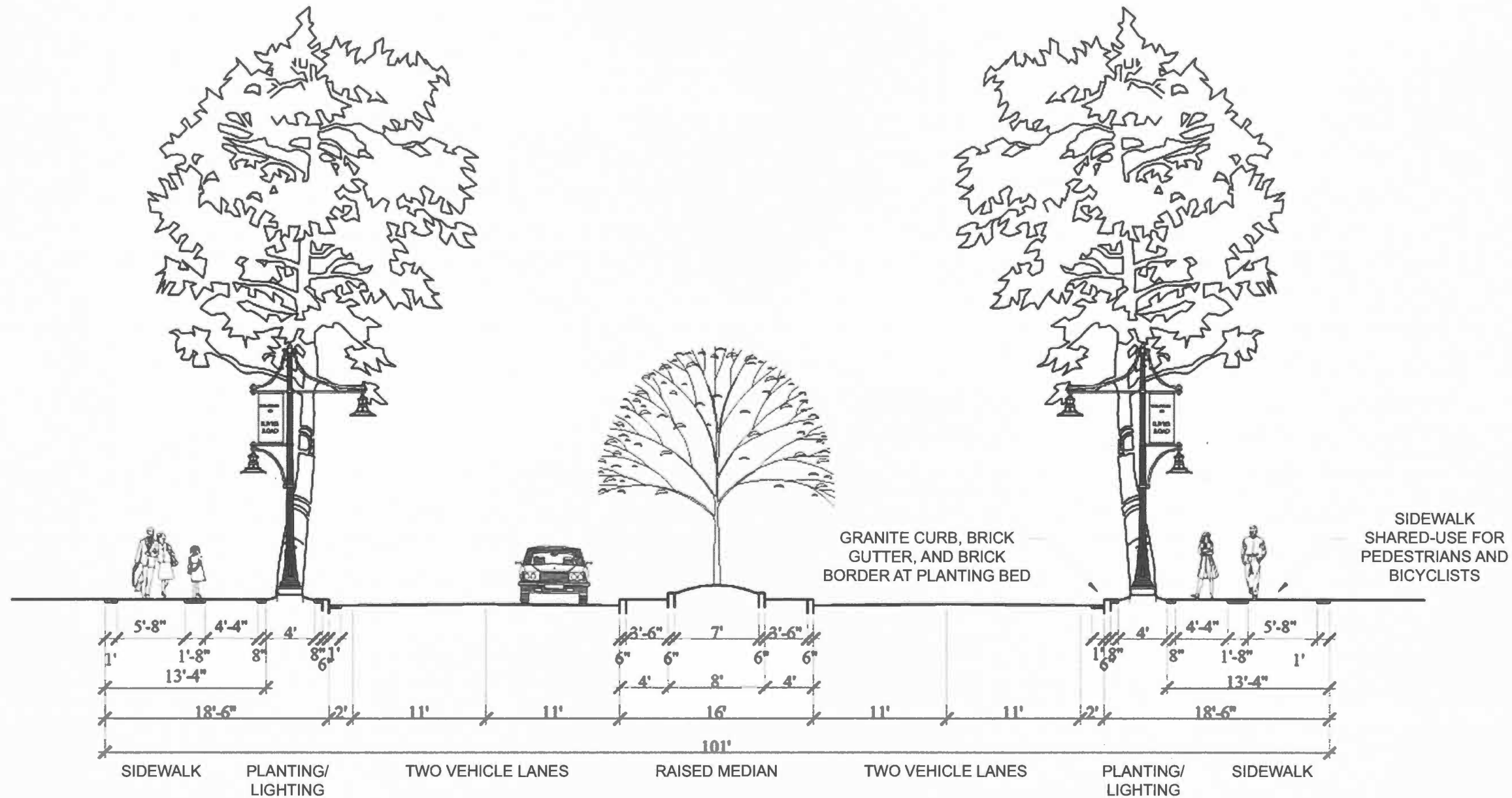
intersections will feature similar paving elements as well as traffic signals and signage improvements. All intersections along the Boulevard will feature wide crosswalks with special pavement in a zebra-stripe pattern. This safety element is inspired by such precedents as Sarasota, Florida, as well as Baltimore and Annapolis, Maryland (see Appendix A). A new, landscaped median strip with designated turning areas will help to prevent accidents in what is currently termed the existing "suicide lane".

In addition to the three (3) existing traffic signals along this portion of River Road, two (2) new traffic signals are proposed; the first at Crescent Trail North/Landy Lane-Crescent Trail South (access road to the light industrial area), and the second at Butler Road. The overall aesthetic of the Boulevard will be improved by elements such

as plantings, both in the median green strip as well as in the green strip incorporated into the sidewalks; decorative lighting, providing ample night illumination for increased vehicular visibility and pedestrian safety; improved and additional signage; and the addition of bench seating with a shelter canopy at bus stop locations as well as decorative bench seating arrangements for pedestrians placed intermittently along the Boulevard. Thus, the Boulevard is designed to follow Maryland's award-winning "Main Street" initiative, which blends "function, beauty, and identity" befitting the surrounding areas.



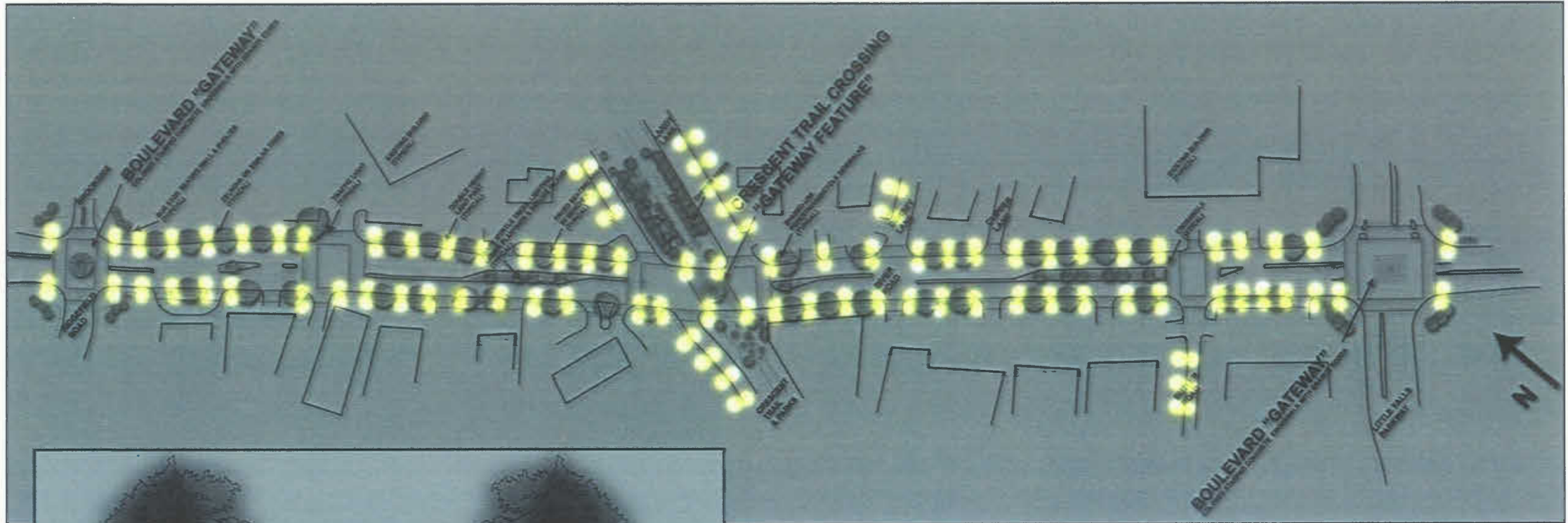
# CROSS SECTION OF PROPOSED STREETScape FOR RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD



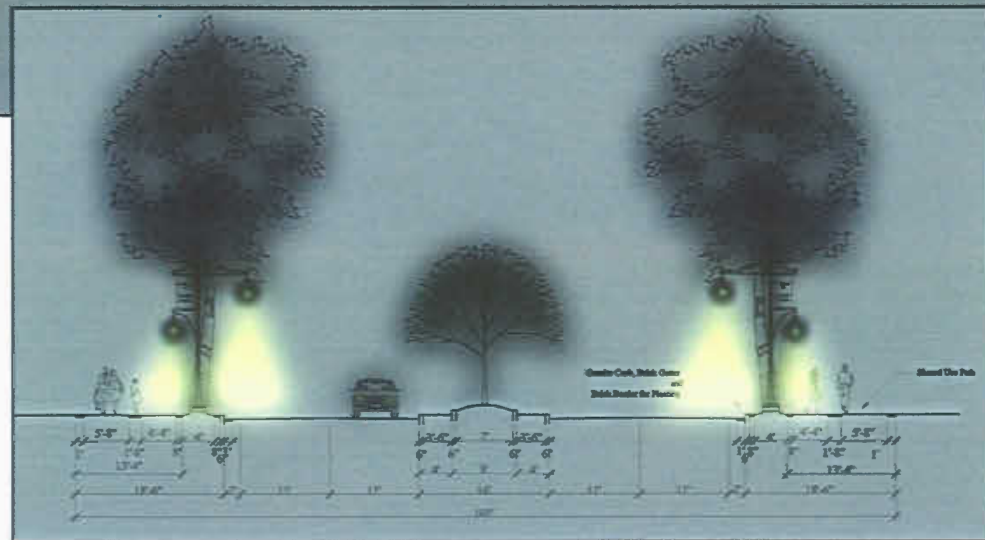
A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND





**RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD OVERVIEW SHOWING NIGHT LIGHTING**



**RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD SECTION SHOWING NIGHT LIGHTING**



GOOGLE EARTH IMAGE SHOWING  
EXISTING CONDITIONS ALONG MD STATE HIGHWAY 190



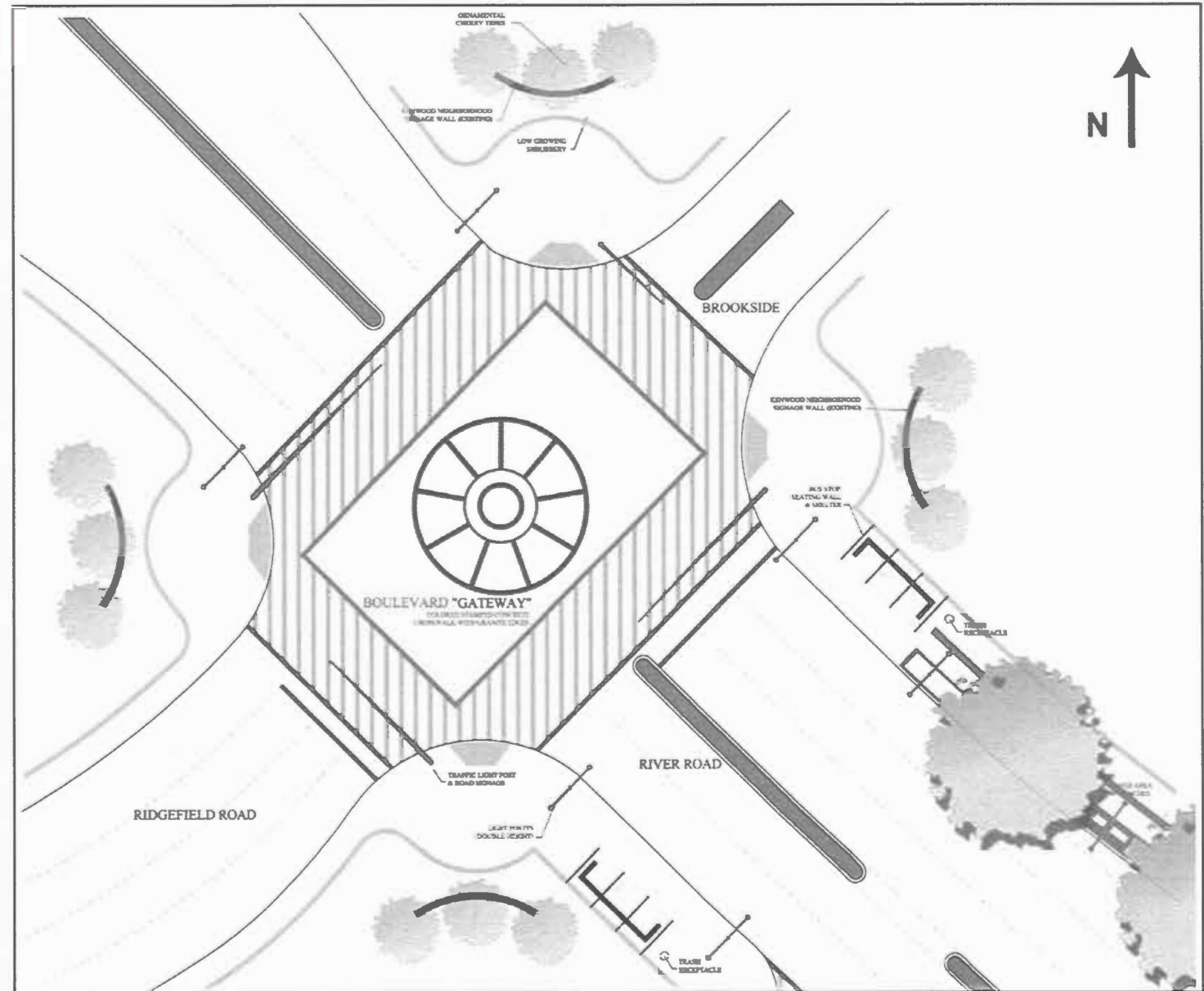


## RIVER ROAD AND RIDGEFIELD ROAD INTERSECTION



The existing intersections of River Road and Ridgefield Road, as well as River Road and Little Falls Parkway, will become the 'gateways' to the boulevard, with visual and material aspects to warn drivers that they are entering a special speed zone. As the vehicular traffic approaches River Road Boulevard from the Beltway, it will encounter the welcoming redesign space at Ridgefield Road intersection. Design elements that signify gateway, caution drivers to slow down at an important impending pedestrian zone include:

- Low curved signage walls constructed of brick, in the green space at each of the intersection's four corners to consistently mimic the existing signage wall at the entrance to the Kenwood community.
- Signage walls surrounded by landscaping to include: ornamental cherry trees, planted behind the walls, to complement Kenwood's existing cherry tree-lined streets; and low-growing, low-maintenance shrubbery in front of the walls.



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



## RIVER ROAD AND RIDGEFIELD ROAD INTERSECTION

- Wide, zebra-striped paved crosswalks, connecting all four (4) corners, to emphasize the importance and safety of pedestrian movement in and around the intersection.

- Decorative paving pattern to be located in the center of the intersection as this gateway's focal point.

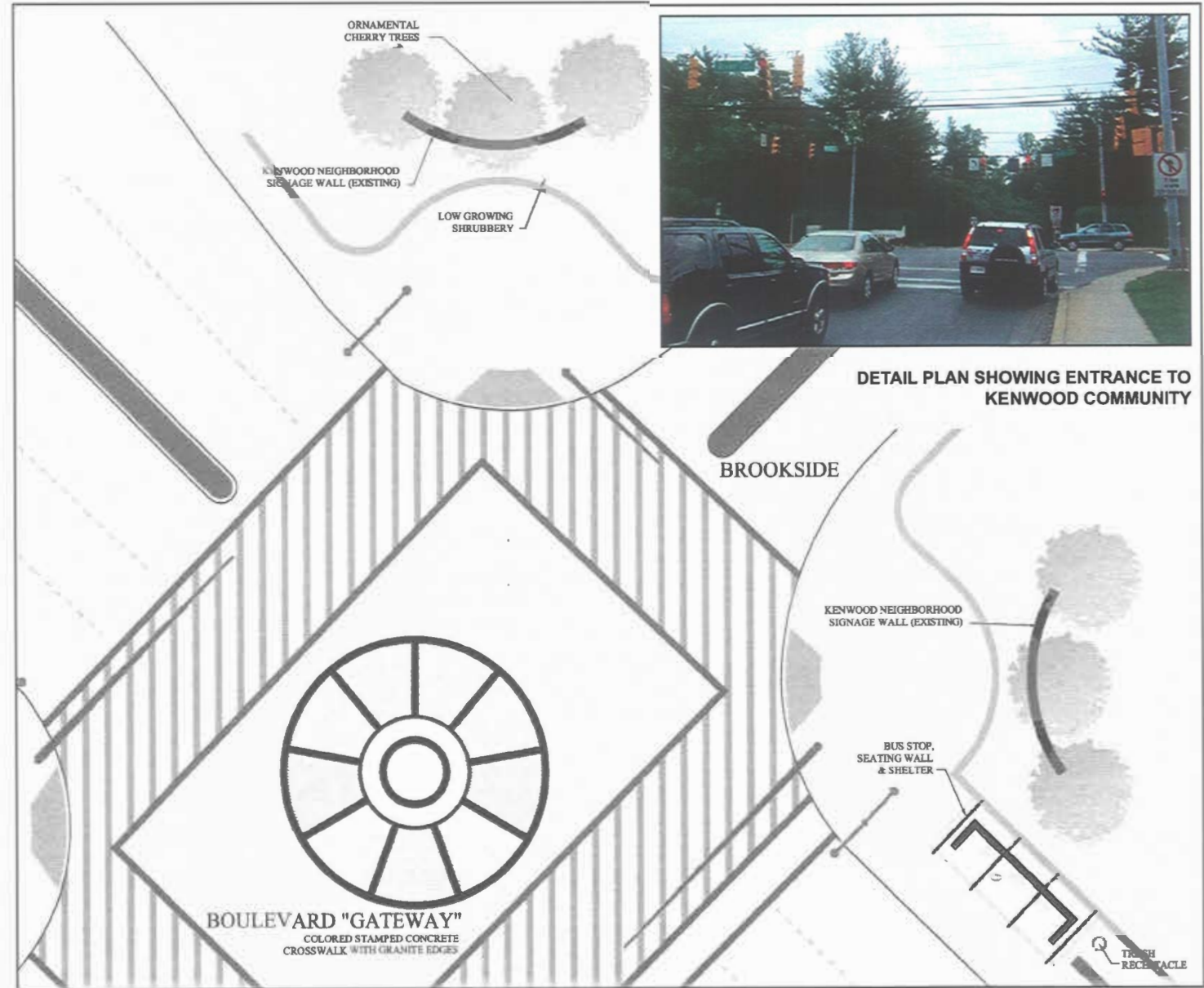
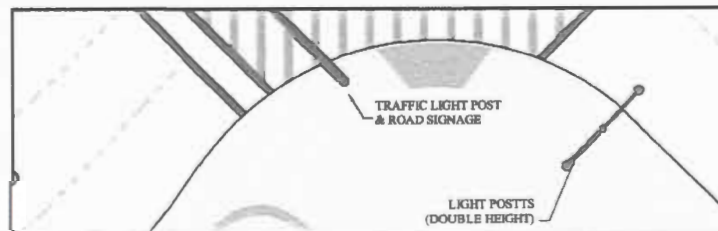
- A generously sized central circular pattern of concrete pavers resembling brick (slightly ramping up toward the center), will act as aesthetic enhancement for the intersection, but more importantly, serve as a texture, which, when driven over, will indicate to the driver that caution must be taken and a slower speed must be maintained while on the boulevard.

- Decorative traffic signal poles installed with:

- Crossing time indicators and signage, to alert drivers that they are entering a pedestrian zone, and

- Decorative lighting fixtures.

- It is recommended that the wide crosswalks, and if possible the entire intersection be slightly raised to call attention to the need for reduced speed and pedestrian safety.

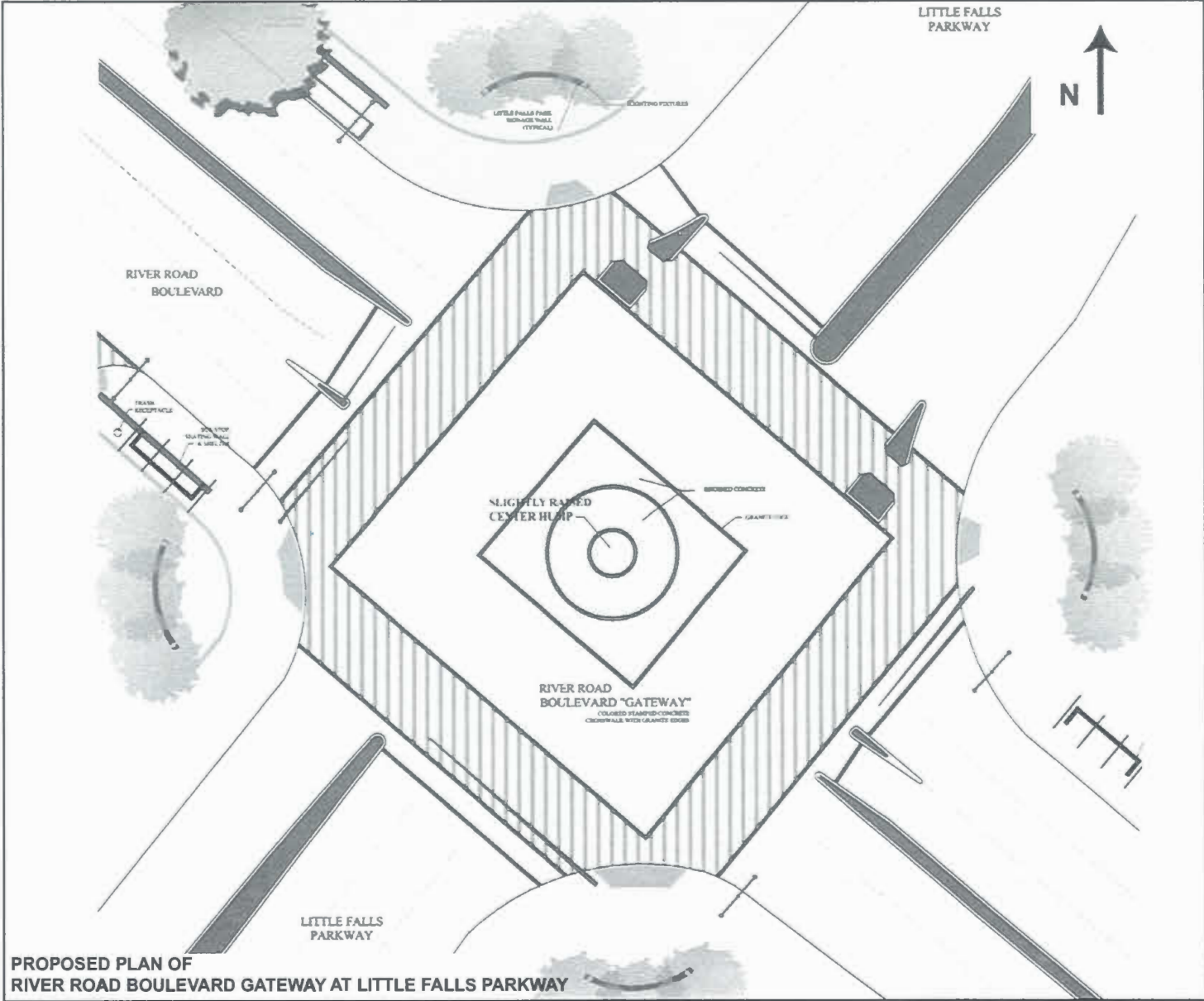




Traveling along River Road Boulevard in the northwest direction away from the District, vehicles will enter the boulevard at the Little Falls Parkway 'gateway'. The intersection of Little Falls Parkway and River Road Boulevard will be an attractive, pedestrian-friendly place with a traffic-calming aspect. It is especially imperative that this intersection be a pedestrian safe traffic-calming area, due to the high level of vehicular movement from all directions, as well as the fact that a large number of pedestrians and cyclists traverse through here daily.



GOOGLE EARTH IMAGE SHOWING EXISTING CONDITIONS AT RIVER ROAD AND LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY

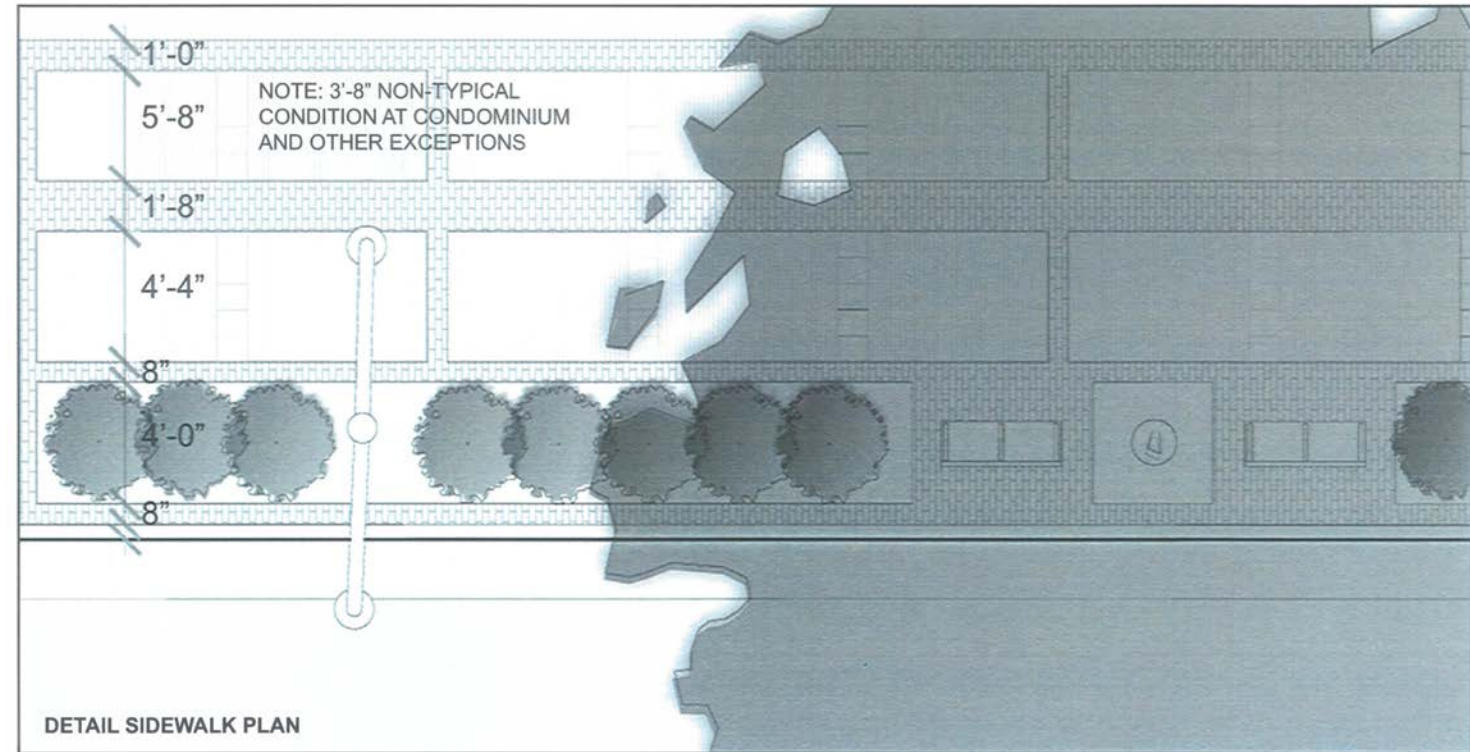




## RIVER ROAD AND LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY INTERSECTION

The design elements of the River Road Boulevard gateway at Little Falls Parkway will include:

- Low signage walls in the green spaces at each corner of the intersection to generally match the walls at River Road Boulevard and Ridgefield Road intersection.
  - o The walls will be constructed of field stone to coordinate with a natural aesthetic commonly found along parkway routes.
  - o The walls will incorporate post-style lanterns, placed atop each edge of the walls. This lighting will provide additional pedestrian safety as well as enhanced nighttime aesthetics.
- Stone signage walls surrounded by landscaping to include: ornamental cherry trees and/or crepe myrtles planted behind the walls; and low-growing, low-maintenance shrubbery planted in front of the walls.
- Wide, zebra-stripe crosswalks, connecting all four (4) corners, to emphasize the importance of pedestrian safety and movement in and around the intersection.
- The main design feature of this intersection, a central paving pattern, similar to that at Ridgefield Road intersection, to produce a unified image for the Boulevard.
  - o A generously sized circular pattern of concrete pavers resembling natural field stone color will act as aesthetic enhancement for the



intersection, and coordinate with the natural parkway aesthetic.

- o The pattern will be a slightly raised, easily traversed rough texture hump, which, when driven over, will give notice to reduce speed. This will indicate to the driver that caution must be taken and a slower speed must be maintained while in the boulevard.

- Decorative traffic signals incorporating signage to indicate to vehicular traffic the entrance to a pedestrian zone with increased ticket penalties.

- Enlarged and reconfigured left-turn lanes at all four sides of the intersection to encourage ease of movement as well as increased directional visibility for the drivers.

- Turning radii at corners to conform to best practices.

- It is recommended that the wide crosswalks, and if possible the entire intersection be slightly raised to call attention to reduced speed and pedestrian safety.







## CRESCENT TRAIL CROSSING



VIEW FACING NORTH UNDERNEATH  
CRESCENT TRAIL BRIDGE



EXISTING CONDITIONS OF SOUTHERN SIDE  
OF CRESCENT TRAIL CROSSING



EXISTING CONDITIONS OF NORTHERN SIDE OF CRESCENT TRAIL CROSSING

The Crescent Trail Crossing is the largest intersection of River Road Boulevard and is designed for a multitude of purposes. For example, Washington Episcopal School parents use it to drop off their children for school. After school, children often cross here to get to retail and food establishments. Bikers and walkers use it to gain access to the trail itself and to avoid backtracking over the bridge. WMATA and Ride On have bus stops there and employees walk across River Road to get to local businesses on both the north and south sides. Vehicular traffic from the south side (local businesses and patrons of the Volvo Service Center and light industrial area) constantly use it, especially during the rush hours. With the planned development of an eight story senior housing facility on the Washington Episcopal School campus, such pedestrian and vehicular traffic will only increase. These demands make this intersection a potentially dangerous place, especially during rush hours.



Therefore, this intersection was redesigned with wide, visible crosswalks and new traffic lights, as well as a refuge island to promote and ensure pedestrian, bicyclist, and vehicular safety.

As such, the design elements proposed will clearly define this spatial node as a unified intersection; clarify the need for stopping for each point of vehicular entry into the intersection; and create visually discernable boundaries between the vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle traffic paths. The intersection will be further enhanced aesthetically by a linear park designed around the base of the

Crescent Trail Bridge, both on the northern and southern side of River Road Boulevard. As a focal point along the new “Main Street,” it will unite the two ends of the boulevard. Further, it will offer a visual respite for some just passing through, while becoming a destination for many.

The design elements of the Crescent Trail Crossing intersection will include:

- Wide, zebra-stripe, paved crosswalks to define the perimeter of the intersection
- Central, circular paving pattern, surrounding a raised, circular pedestrian refuge island

o Central paving pattern set within a brushed concrete area to signify a connection between the northern and southern portion of the Crescent Trail Crossing Park, creating a unified linear park.

- Access road to light industry south of the Boulevard, west of the Crescent Trail to be relocated slightly to the west (towards McDonald’s) to reclaim Crescent Trail right-of-way for park space

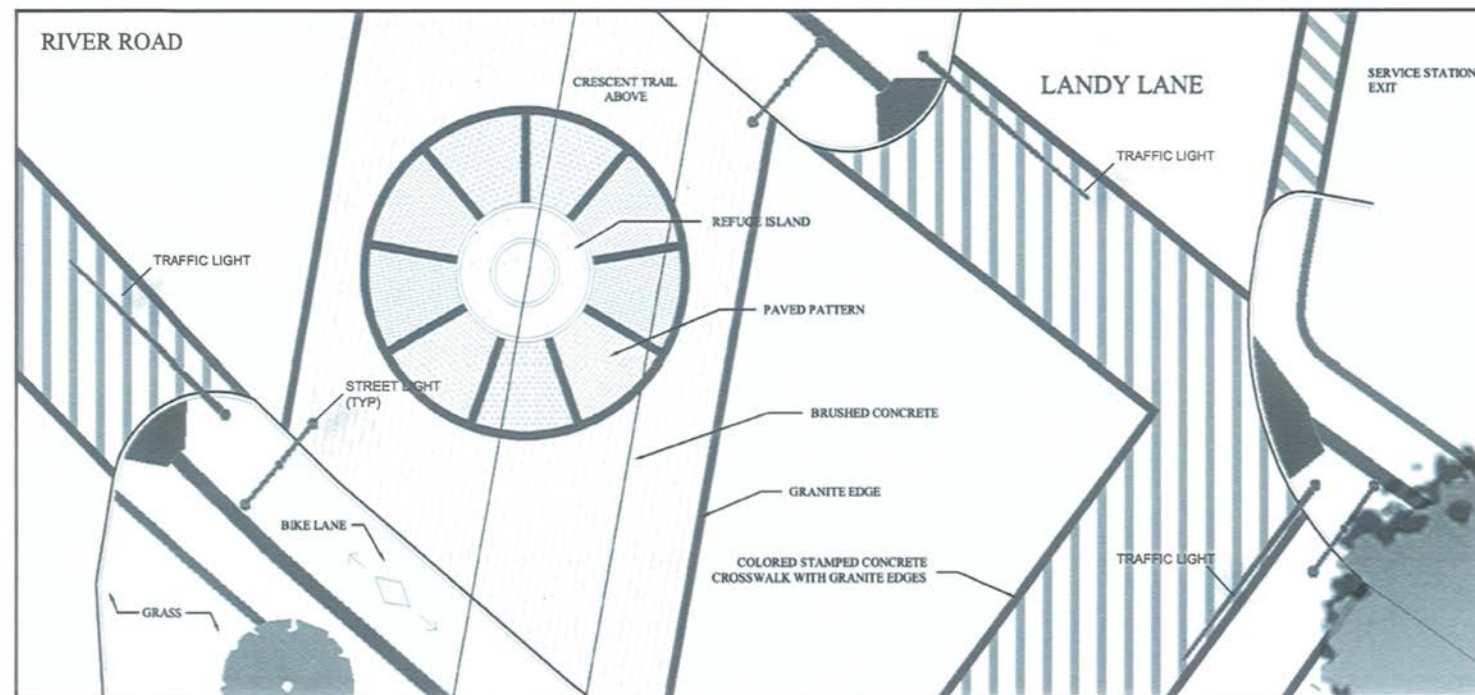
- Decorative traffic signals incorporating signage to indicate to vehicular traffic the presence of a heavily used pedestrian-crossing-zone with increased ticket penalties

- Bench seating attached to a low, seating wall with a shelter canopy at the bus stops located at the south-east and north-west corners of the intersection

- A roadbed slightly sloped toward the curb edge for drainage and stormwater runoff.

- Consideration might be given to installing art/sculpture on the bridge in the future.

- It is recommended that the wide crosswalks, and if possible the entire intersection be slightly raised to call attention to reduced speed and pedestrian safety.



DETAIL PLAN OF CRESCENT TRAIL CROSSING SHOWING PAVING DESIGN



## RIVER ROAD AND AMERICAN PLANT FOOD/ WHOLE FOODS INTERSECTION

Secondary crossing points along River Road Boulevard include one (1) existing, traffic light controlled intersection at American Plant Food/ Whole Foods Shopping Center; one (1) proposed traffic light, and reconfigured existing intersection at Butler Road; and one (1) reconfigured left turn lane, non traffic light controlled existing crossing at Dorsey Lane.

The intersection of River Road Boulevard and American Plant Food Company/ Whole Foods Shopping Center with existing traffic light will have the following design elements:

- Wide, zebra-stripe, paved crosswalks, as per the three (3) main gateway intersections, to clearly define the perimeter of the intersection
- Reconfigured entrance to the Whole Foods Shopping Center
  - o Pedestrian sidewalk portion of the proposed shared-use path for the Boulevard will extend along the entrance route to the shopping center to give ease of mobility to pedestrians
- Decorative traffic signals incorporating signage as per the three (3) main gateway intersections
  - It is recommended that the wide crosswalks, and if possible the entire intersection be slightly raised to call attention to reduced speed and

pedestrian safety

The stretch of River Road Boulevard between the American Plant Food Company/ Whole Foods Shopping Center intersection and the Ridgefield Road intersection will consist of a series of cuts through the median to provide access to the bank and office building along the south side of the Boulevard.

GOOGLE EARTH IMAGE AND PEDESTRIAN-VIEW IMAGE SHOWING  
EXISTING CONDITIONS





## RIVER ROAD AND BUTLER ROAD INTERSECTION

The intersection of River Road Boulevard and Butler Road is located across the road from the exit of the Kenwood Condominium building. The intersection will consist of a proposed traffic signal as a blinking yellow light that will be fully activated at morning and evening rush hours, or by a pedestrian-activated button (see below, other options). Slightly reconfigured existing conditions of intersections at Butler Road and the exit from the Kenwood Condominium building should be considered.

The intersection at River Road and Butler Road is located within close proximity to the Boulevard Gateway intersection of River Road and Little Falls Parkway, at the minimum required stacking distance for the turning lanes between the two intersections. The traffic signals will be timed in coordination with each other. The River Road/ Butler Road intersection will remain green for east-west travel along River Road and will not cycle through unless a car prompts the light to do so, either from the Kenwood Condominium exit or from Butler Road.

The Kenwood Condominium building exit generally aligns with the proposed traffic signal at River Road and Butler Road.

The entrance to the Kenwood Condominium building (at a separate location) will not be controlled by the proposed traffic signal, but rather will have a

curb-cut through the central median to allow left-turn access for east-bound vehicular traffic.

The intersection of River Road Boulevard and Butler Road with proposed traffic light will have the following design elements:

- Decorative traffic signals incorporating signage (typical)
  - Signal to remain blinking yellow with pedestrian hand operation control during non-rush hour periods
- Bench seating attached to a low, seating wall with a shelter canopy at the bus stop located between the entrance and exit of the condominium
- Pedestrian sidewalk portion of the proposed shared-use path for the Boulevard will extend along both sides of Butler Road
  - Butler Road will have lighting and trees, as per those specified for the streetscape of the Boulevard spaced at a distance of thirty-five (35) +/- feet along a new sidewalk on the northwest side of the road
- It is recommended that the wide crosswalks, and if possible the entire intersection be slightly raised to call attention to reduced speed and pedestrian safety

The intersection of River Road Boulevard and Dorsey Lane will not be controlled by a traffic light and will incorporate the following design elements:

- Reconfigured left turn lanes
- Wide, zebra-stripe, paved crosswalks (typical) at the entrance to the Lane only, not crossing the Boulevard.



IMAGES SHOWING EXISTING CONDITIONS OF BUTLER ROAD



## RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD CROSS-SECTION

The above mentioned proposed new signals along River Road Boulevard, Maryland State Highway 190, will allow traffic to function as a “Main Street” (as defined by Maryland State Highway Administration) while it will also ensure greater pedestrian safety. Washington Street, in Alexandria, is a Virginia state highway with short blocks, each block having traffic signals. It is an excellent precedent and example of how traffic may easily proceed on a state highway within a “Main Street” setting.

River Road Boulevard will consist of four vehicular travel lanes divided by a central planted and paved ‘green-strip’ lane to serve as a pedestrian refuge median. The location of the boulevard serving the River Road-Westbard neighborhoods makes it the centerpiece of everyday community life. Small businesses, retail shops, local grocery stores, light industry and even the local McDonald’s are but a sampling of the daily uses located along the section of River Road comprising the boulevard. Due to this fact, as well as the high level of vehicular traffic that traverses the area en route to and from the District and the Beltway and Maryland suburbs, a major shortage of parking often exists. It is, therefore, all the more imperative that the surrounding communities have pedestrian as well as bicycle access in and around the boulevard. To accomplish this, the boulevard will be bordered along both sides with wide landscaped shared-

use pedestrian and bicycle path sidewalks, nearly eighteen feet in width.

River Road reconfigured as a boulevard may be described by its cross-section consisting of the following design elements and dimensions:

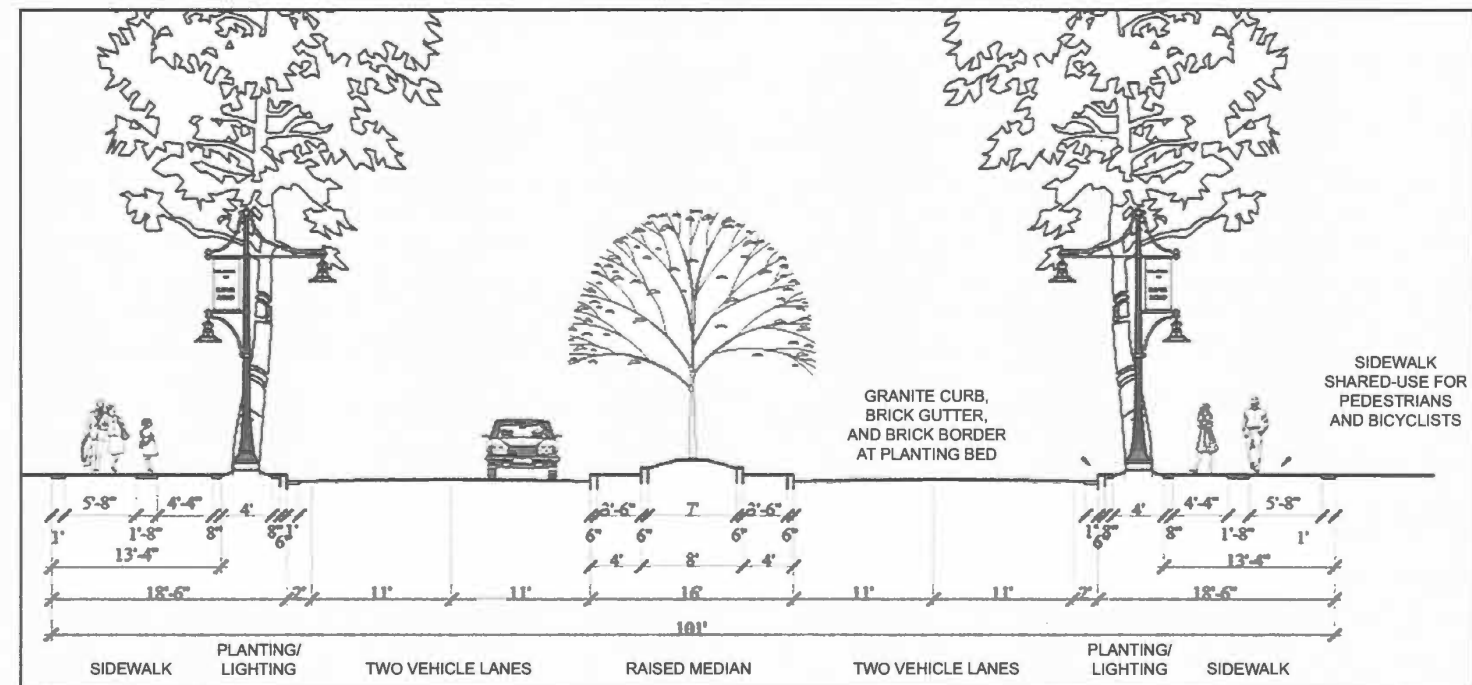
- Five (5) lane divided highway
  - o Four (4) traffic lanes at eleven (11) feet
  - o A sixteen (16) foot wide central median
- Central Median consists of turning lanes and two (2) linear elements
  - o Eight (8) foot wide vegetation strip

surrounded by four (4) foot wide paved pedestrian refuge strip

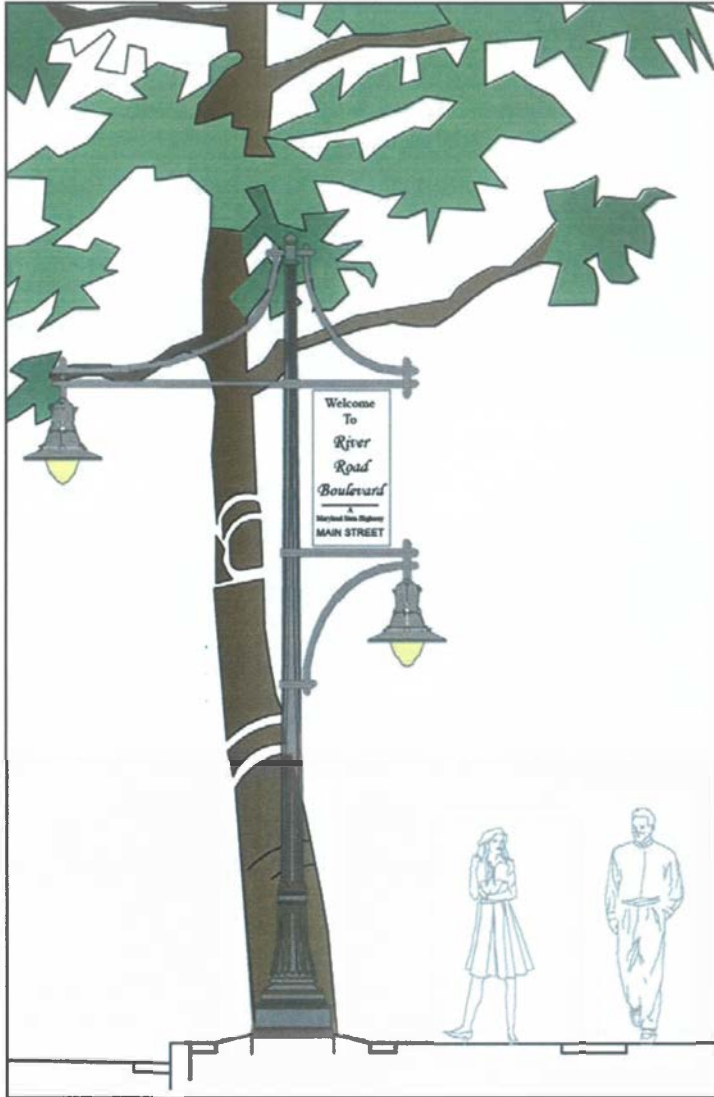
o Median vegetation strip to include crape myrtle trees, low-growing shrubs, perennials and ground cover

o Street lampposts (attractive by day, providing ample light by night)

• A two (2) foot wide shoulder separates the vehicular travel lanes from the curb and sidewalk.

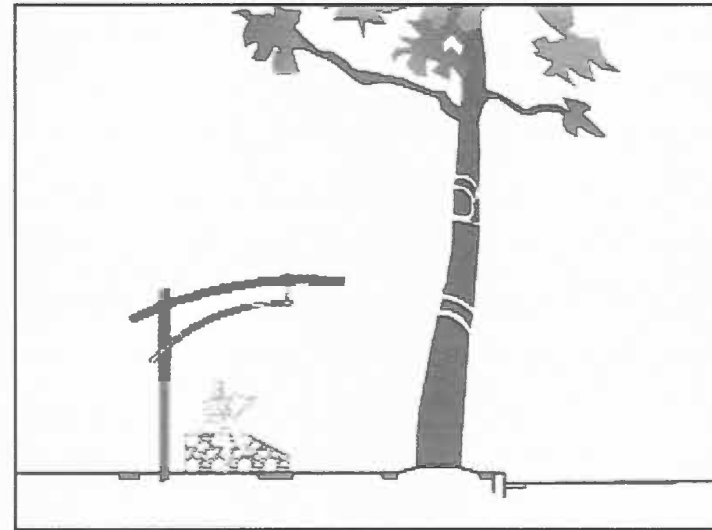






DETAIL SECTION SHOWING SHARED-USE PATH WITH DECORATIVE STREET/SIDEWALK LIGHTING AND MATURE TREES

- The sidewalk is buffered from the street by a linear vegetation strip designed to follow urban forestry principles
  - o Six (6) feet is the optimum width and four (4) feet is the minimal width for a tree pit according to urban forestry design principles
  - o The River Road Boulevard tree/shrubbery pits will be four (4) feet in width, surrounded by a one (1) foot wide brick border
  - o The vegetation strip of trees, shrubs and ground cover, having been designed within a continuous linear strip of planting area follows the urban forestry design principle of having the maximum amount of soil volume to allow optimal



DETAIL SECTION SHOWING BUS SHELTER AND SEATING

tree root growth, thereby encouraging the health of the trees.

- The remainder of the sidewalk consists of a thirteen (13) foot wide shared-use pedestrian and bike path, also separated by a linear brick strip

- o Roughly seven (7) feet six (6) inch wide linear path dedicated to pedestrian use

- o Roughly six (6) feet wide linear path dedicated largely to bicycle traffic

- o Sidewalk paving to be brushed concrete for ease of walking with lanes divided by a functional and decorative brick strip

- Storm drain inlets located at two hundred (200) feet on center linearly along the Boulevard, unless otherwise specified by a civil engineer

- Reduced curb radii at the intersections of River Road Boulevard with all side streets as well as the entrances to parking lots to induce turning vehicles to: 1) slower speed, 2) precision of maneuvering and 3) greater awareness of pedestrian activity

- Curb radii modifications were made at the Boulevard "Gateway" intersections following consultation with traffic planners and engineers.



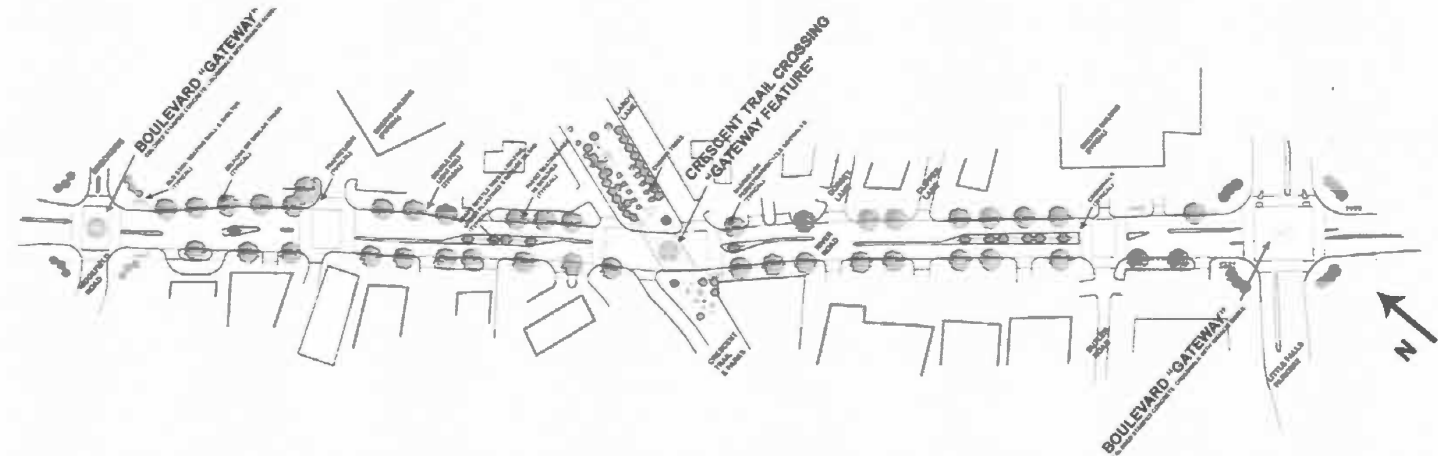
## RIVER ROAD BOULEVARD CONCLUSION

Sustainability and sound principles of environmental ecology should be given highest priority along the redesigned River Road Boulevard and adjacent roads and areas throughout the River Road-Westbard study sector. It has been twenty-six (26) years since the 1982 Westbard Sector Plan was “Approved and Adopted” that recommended an “Urban Boulevard and Gateways Concept” (pp. 24) of three (3) remarkably attractive nodes at the major intersections with a raised center median (pp. 25).

The streetscape design elements, human scale, and building proportions feature within the proposal for River Road Boulevard have relevance in the precedents of 1) Bethesda Row and 2) Massachusetts Avenue at Spring Valley. At Bethesda Row the vehicular lane width, ample sidewalk width and vegetation/lighting/bench seating/paving strip were all influential to our design. The neighborhood building scale of the shopping center and the mature vegetation strip of trees and shrubbery, as well as the raised central median of Massachusetts Avenue at Spring Valley were also influential design elements (see Appendix A).

Maryland’s award-winning “Main Street” initiative supports the concept of encouraging neighborhood identity through emphasis on people, neighborhoods, businesses, and the transportation network that serves them. Its goal is to ensure the functionality of existing communities as vibrant,

appealing places to live and work, balancing an accessible “community-friendly approach” with safety features. Fundamental to main street design are considerations of aesthetics and scenic streetscapes, mitigation of environmental issues, roadside vegetation management, traffic regulation, and creation of welcoming places. This proposal for upgrading River Road to a boulevard following the “Main Street” concept is consistent with the State of Maryland highway goals of “blending function, beauty, and identity”.





# CRESCENT TRAIL CROSSING

CONSTANCE STUBBS



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



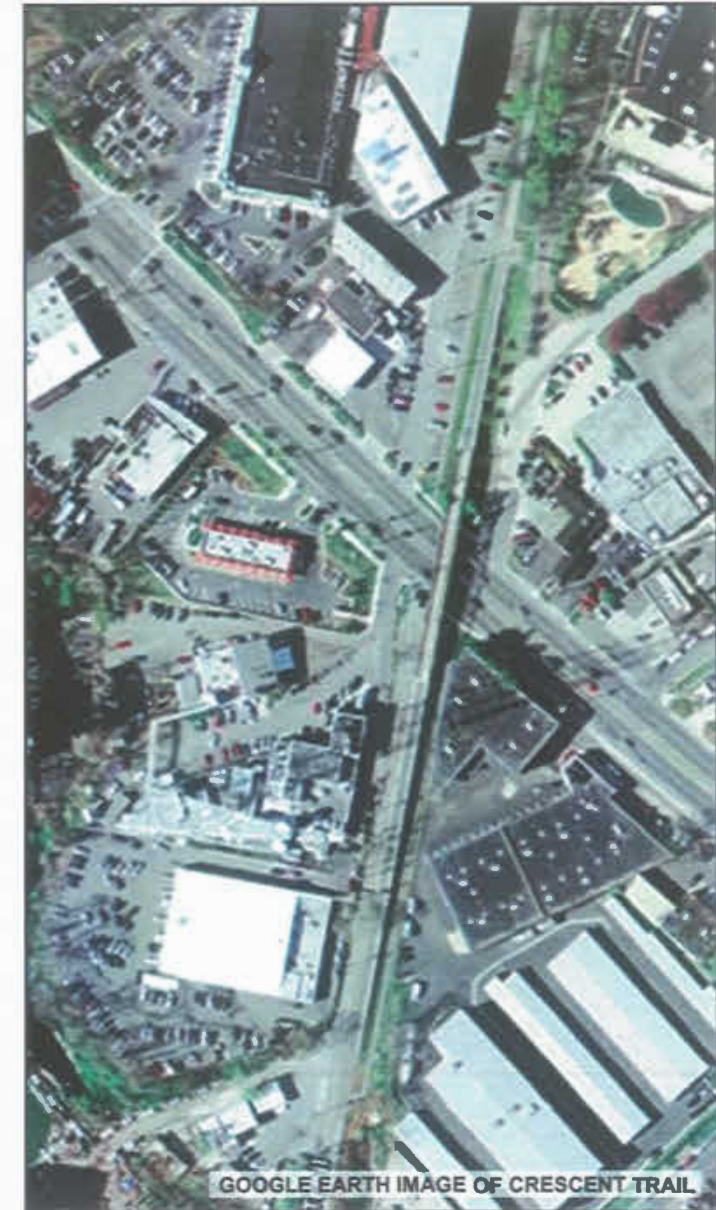




The Capital Crescent Trail, formerly the B&O Railroad (Georgetown Branch) right-of-way track bed and adjacent land, is now owned by Montgomery County, and is now a popular linear park. Managed by Montgomery County Department of Parks, and supported by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail, the Capital Crescent Trail covers an extensive amount of territory in the Washington, DC region. The Trail begins in Silver Spring, Maryland, passes through Bethesda, Maryland and Northwest Washington, DC, proceeds adjacent to C&O Canal National Park, and connects to the inner city in Georgetown where it ends at Water Street. It joins a network of trails along the Potomac River and Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway, until it finally links across the Potomac River to a Northern Virginia trail ending at Mount Vernon. Increasingly, it is heavily used by people of all ages and their dogs - pedestrians, joggers, bicyclists, skate-boarders, roller bladders, and people in wheelchairs.

Along the Trail are a series of resting points at regular intervals. One such point is where the Trail crosses River Road, a Maryland State Highway. The designated Trail crossing at River Road is by means of a pedestrian bridge overpass with long lead-in ramps, structurally supported by enclosed walls, on each side of the roadway. While this bridge is well-used, some people prefer to cross at street level for a variety of reasons: to avoid the steep ramp, to avoid speeding bicyclists, to patronize a

EXISTING CONDITIONS AT RIVER ROAD



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD



## CRESCENT TRAIL CROSSING

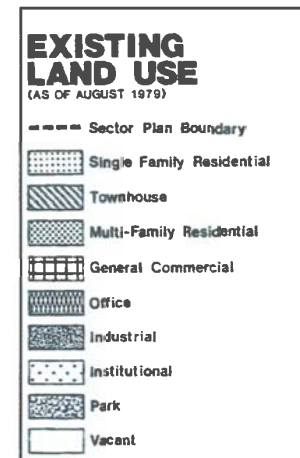
shop in this commercial district, or to avoid walking back a long distance to the ramp.

Space for a small plaza/park is allotted both north and south of River Road. CUA's Urban Institute Studio, in the School of Architecture and Planning, designed these parks to emphasize the concept of "gateway" while also signaling a special gathering place – a type of "pocket park" in which to relax before continuing on. A third potential park space along the Trail a short distance south of River Road in the light industrial area was also addressed by CUA's Urban Institute Studio. In each of the designs, high priority was given to sound environmental practices and concepts of storm water management, drainage, and "green" sustainable solutions to existing conditions.

The park north of River Road was given first priority for construction of a plaza by the Coalition for the Capital Crescent Trail. This park segment is divided into four sections: two linear sections along each side of the bridge, a third open space near River Road partially under the bridge, and the fourth as the primary focus where the bridge ramp ends and the Trail continues northward at grade through the proposed plaza, and then through woodland toward Bethesda Row. The south park is currently used as a parking lot under the bridge. Here, a road leads to the light industrial section traversing on Trail land parallel to the bridge. At the industrial section,

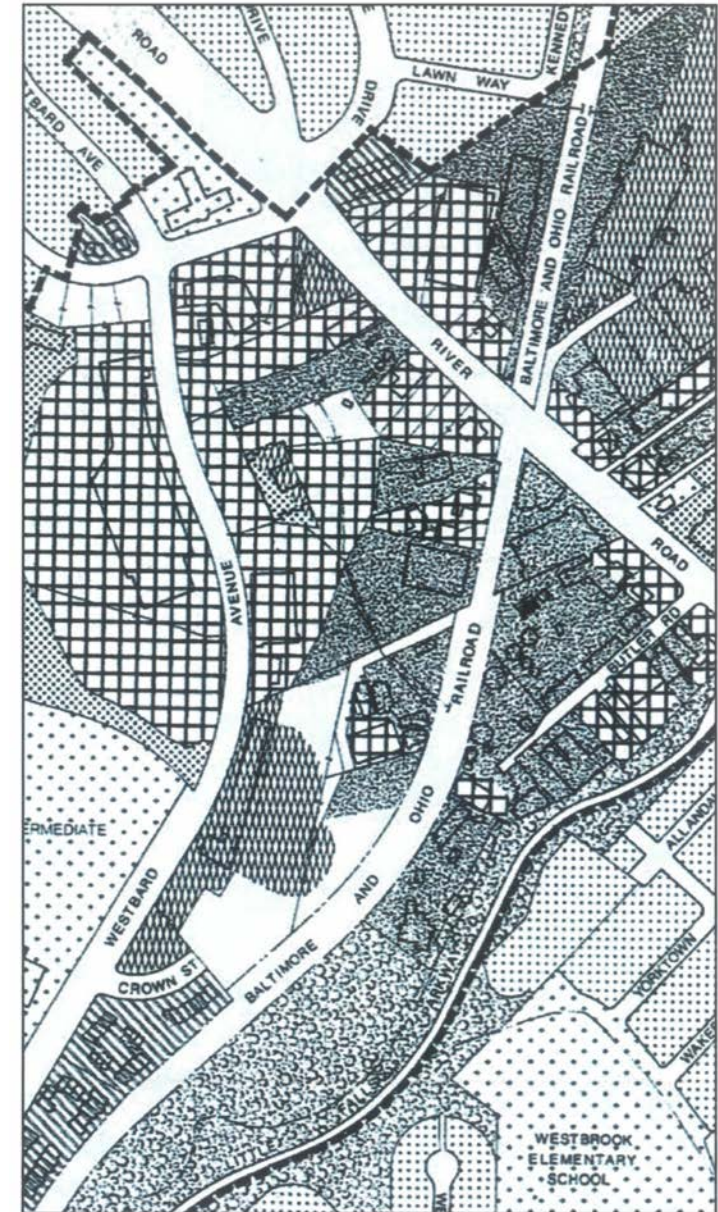
where Willett Branch stream flows into a culvert under the asphalt road and Trail, an enlarged open space creates an opportunity for a small woodland park to the west of the Trail. Whereas, on the east side, the land falls steeply, presenting a possibility to expand the Trail with a linear bridge. The narrow asphalt Trail (about 10 feet wide) then continues southward through woodland.

NOTE: Trail width varies within project area.



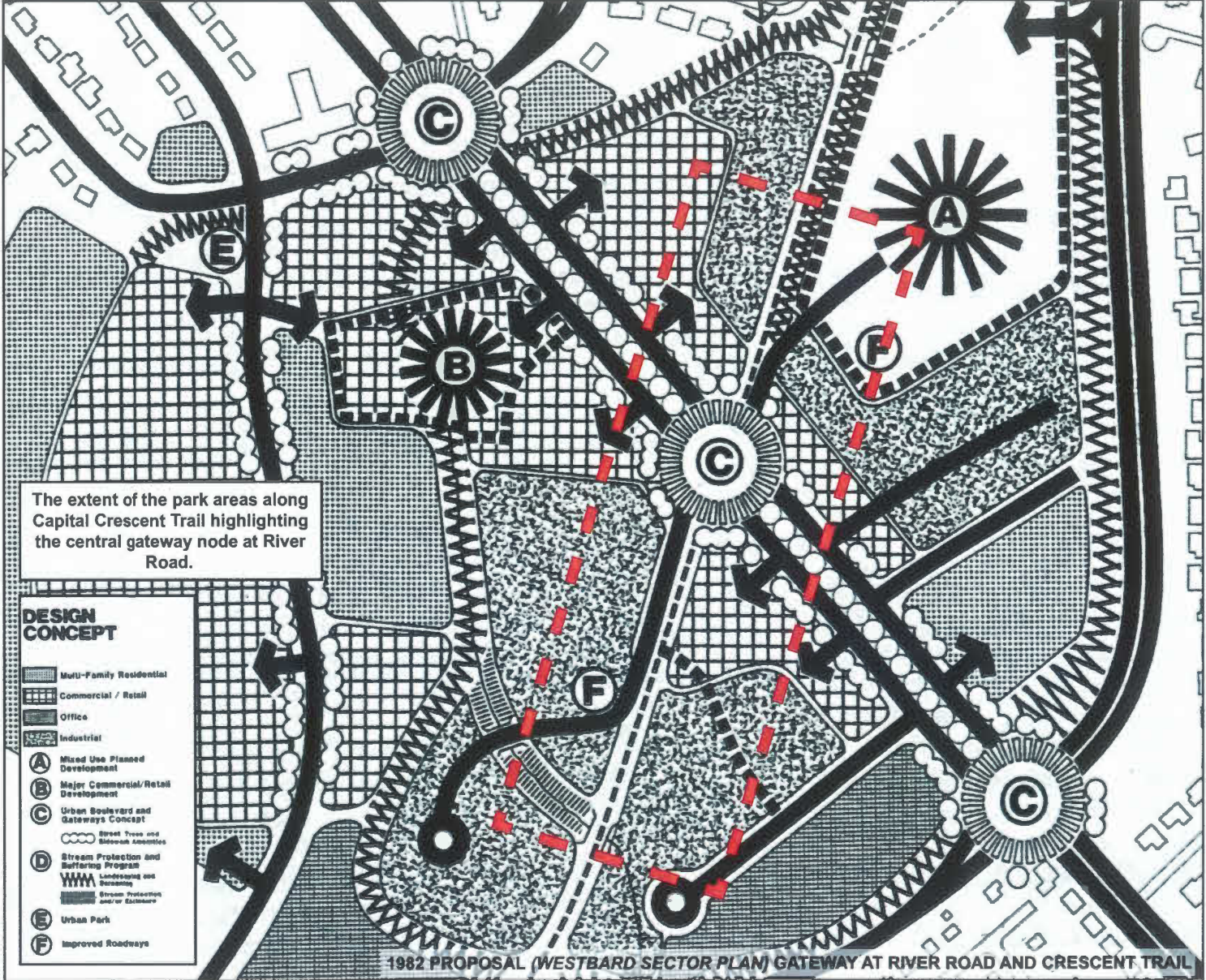
Capital Crescent Trail occupies the right-of-way formerly owned by Baltimore and Ohio Railroad.

The Trail right-of-way varies in width along the project area.



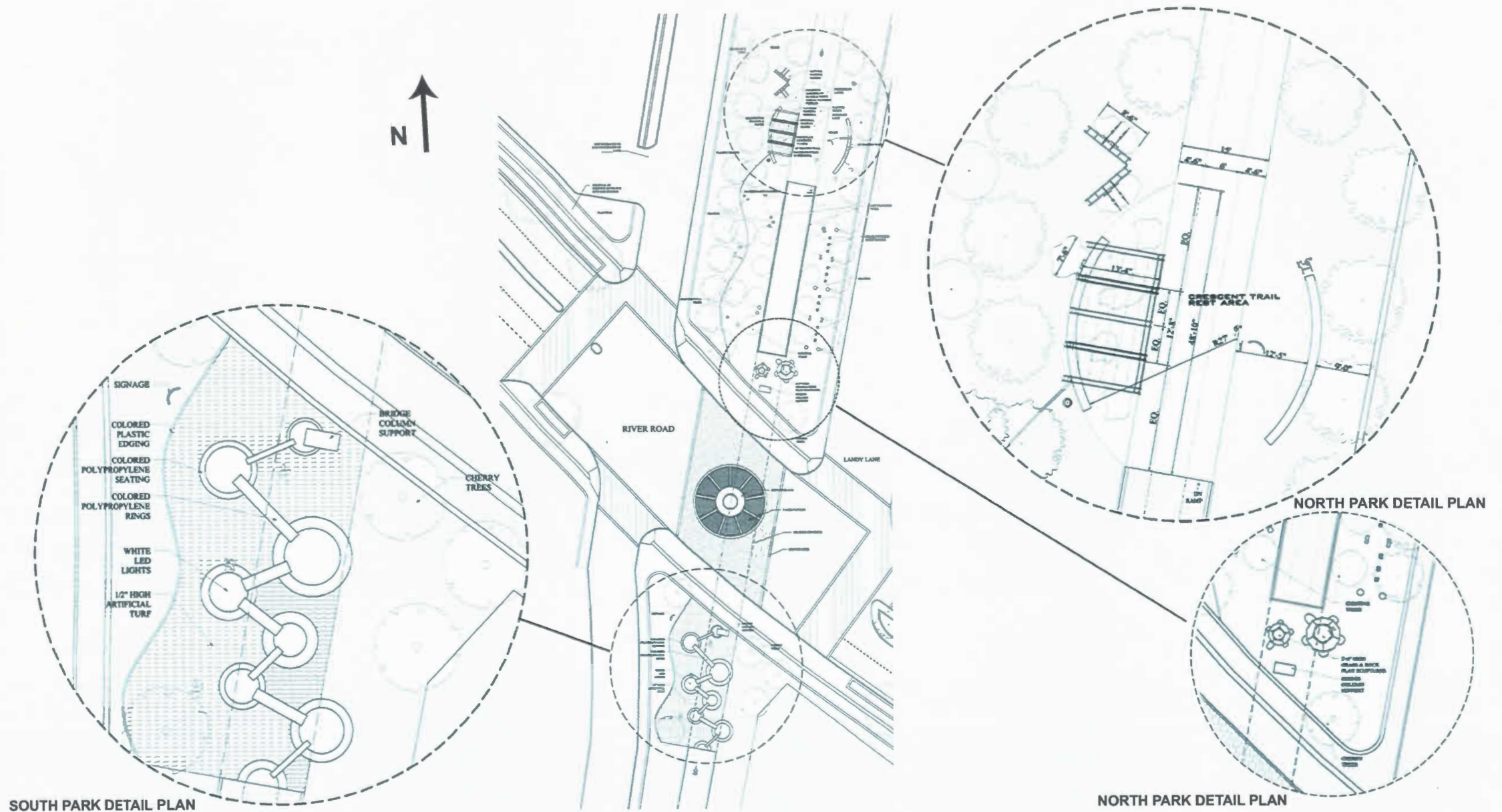


EXISTING CONDITIONS AT RIVER ROAD



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

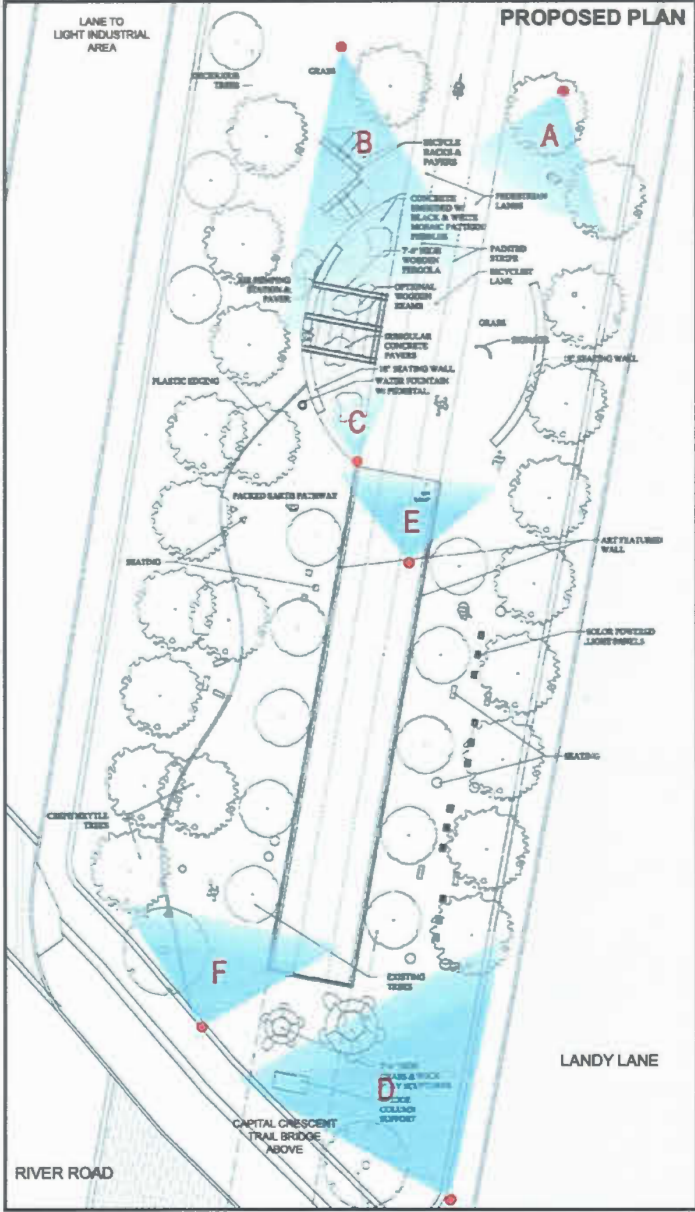






The park's symmetrical ordering system is playfully manipulated through use of color, materials, and vertical elements balanced in harmony with the horizontal ground plane in this design proposal. Most significant is a plaza - a seating area denoting gateway - near the bottom of the bridge ramp. Two curved stone seating walls face each other, almost forming a circle, with the Trail proceeding between them. A simple wood pergola structure over a paved plaza (only at the west side) curves around the seating wall. A stepping stone path meanders through grass on the opposite side.

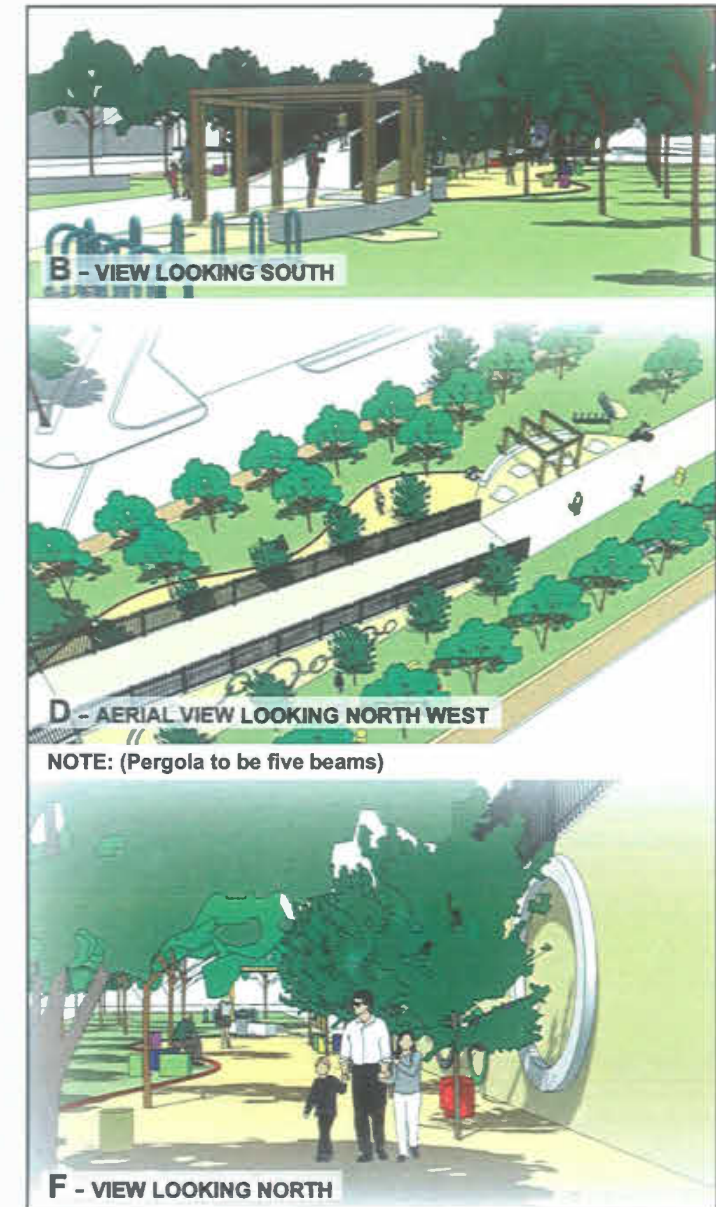
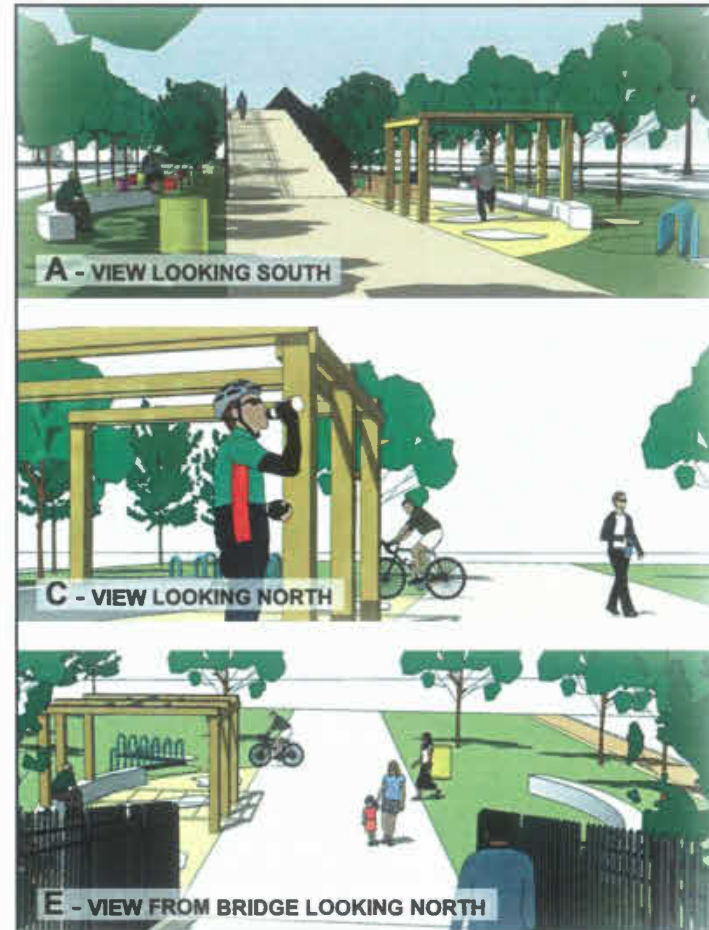
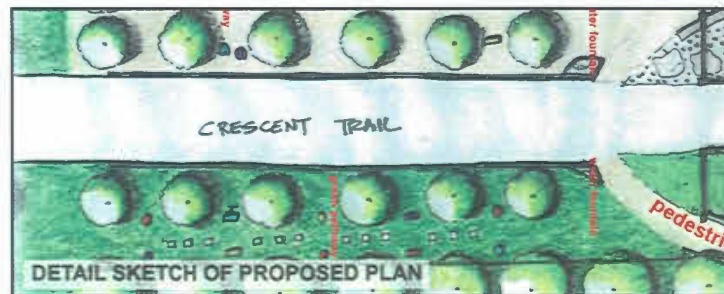
A solid wall supporting the bridge ramp cuts the linear park in two parts between River Road and the proposed plaza. An existing row of trees close to each side of the bridge will remain. A parallel row of trees along the park's two outer edges is proposed - white Natchez crepe myrtle trees - to match those along the Trail at Bethesda Row. This "allee" of trees will provide shade for benches clustered at each side. Ample lighting, possibly LED lighting, is especially necessary in winter months when sun sets early. On the east side, a stepping stone path will wind through the grass, extending from the plaza. In contrast, a serpentine configuration will divide the west linear path in two parts - grass at the outer edge near the road, and pervious paving or mixture of pebbles and sand (similar to that of The National Mall) near the bridge.





## CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL - NORTH

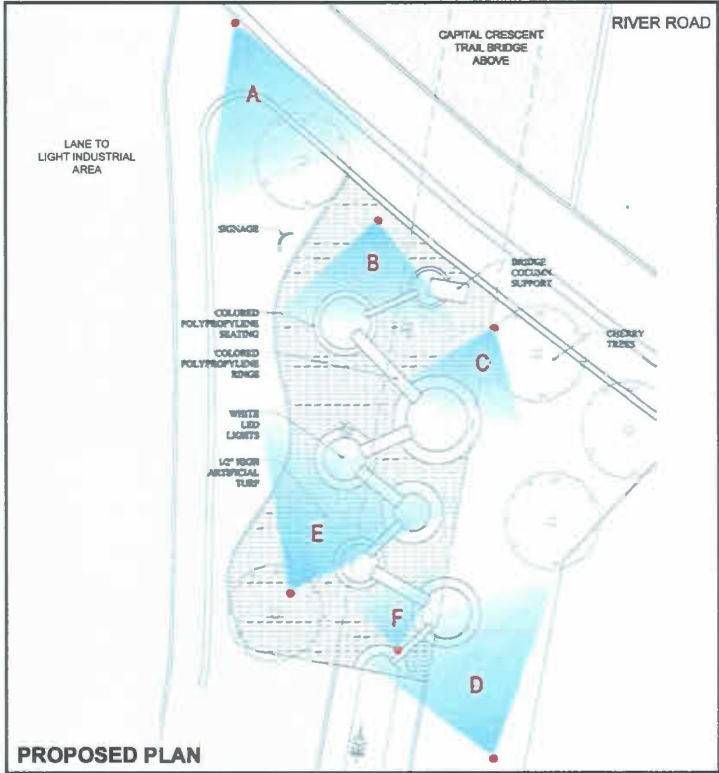
At River Road, a new stand of cherry trees will recall those in Kenwood nearby. Witty, playful turtle sculptures (fig. D) on the lawn will be an amusing addition to the composition. As a metaphor for parent and child, two “turtle grass mounds,” will be surrounded by large rocks to denote the head and feet. Turtles symbolize steadiness and call to mind wild life that existed in nearby streams. Currently, the north Crescent Trail is a narrow linear space bound by two asphalt lanes at each side – Landy Lane on the east leads to Washington Episcopal School, commercial buildings, and a proposed eight storey residential building; the road on the west (leading to a gas station entrance and storage buildings behind) has previously encroached on part of the Trail for parking.



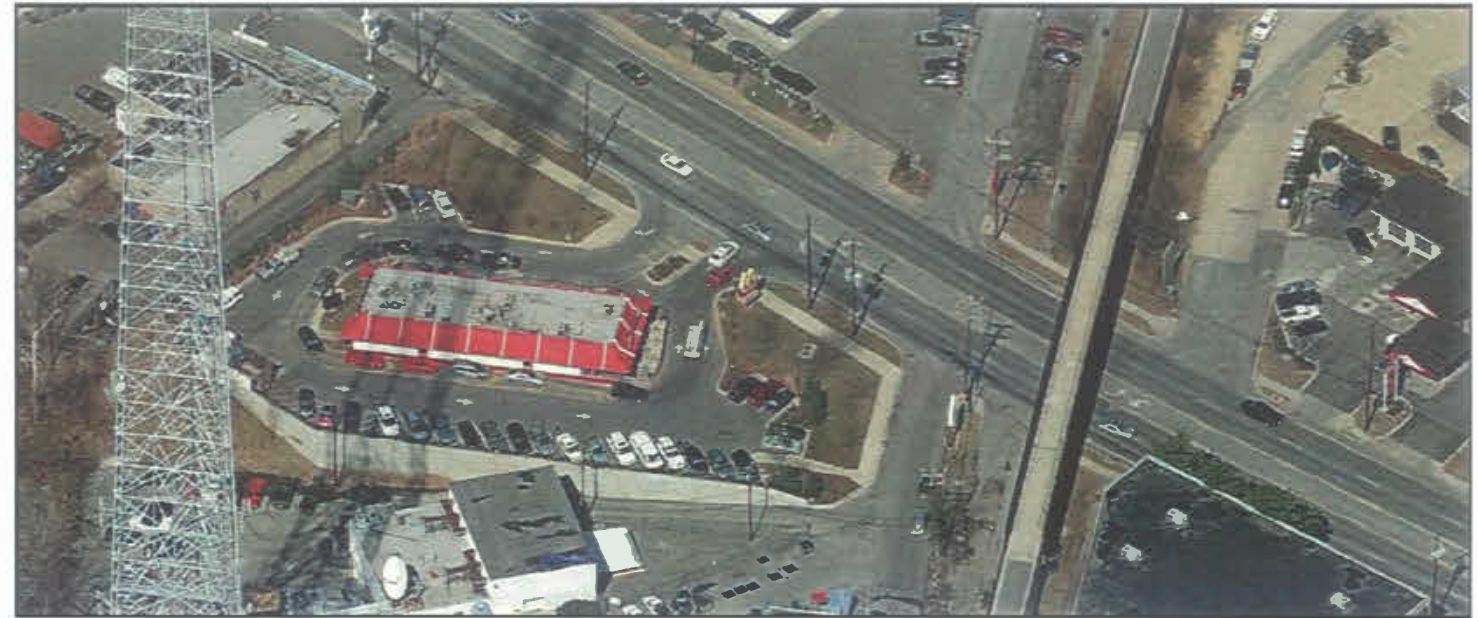


A small space south of River Road is designated for a possible future park and rest area. Today, one can frequently find vehicles illegally parked under the bridge on Trail property. An asphalt road, also on Trail property, runs along the west side of the Trail bridge. This road connects to a light industrial zone tucked behind River Road's commercial buildings. On the bridge's east side, a narrow Trail path leads to its south ramp and the Trail heading southward.

CUA's Urban Institute Studio, in the School of Architecture and Planning, designed a park with colorful sculptural circles of various sizes (vertical and horizontal). These imaginative sculptures, resembling huge vehicle tires, are configured to provide seating and to prevent vehicular parking. Pervious paving will be used under the bridge and will require minimal maintenance. A traffic signal and crosswalks are needed at this location for safety and to establish a strong connection between the north and south parks of Capital Crescent Trail (see section on River Road). This light will allow Crescent Trail users, school children, shoppers and people working in the area to cross River Road at grade level, rather than use the bridge.



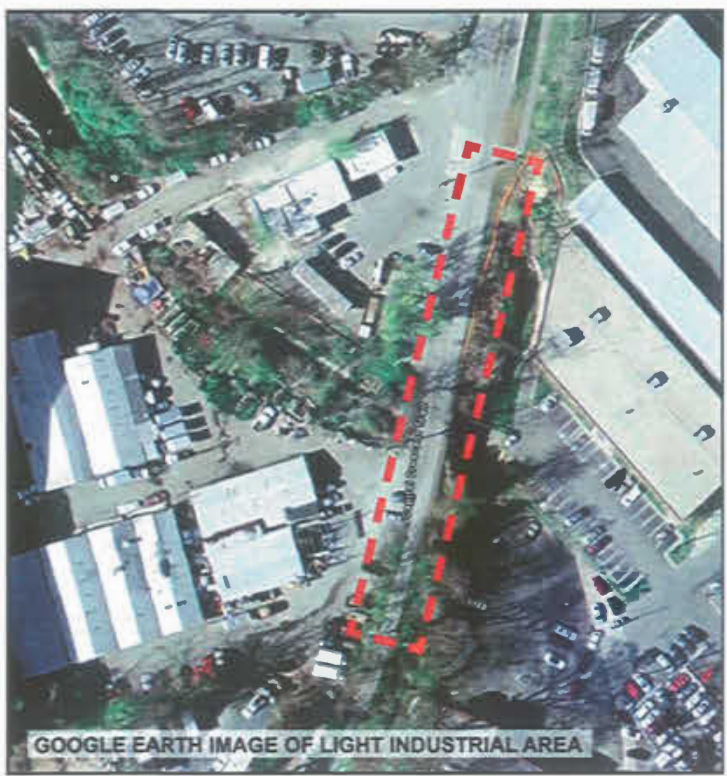




NOTE: Existing conditions south of River Road at the Capital Crescent Trail are a complicated, unattractive and unsafe mix: two (2) parallel roads leading to the industrial zone; an open space of Trail property partly under the bridge, used as a parking lot; and a paved path, perpendicular to the Trail and roads, behind the McDonald's parking lot. The proposal will simplify, unify and beautify this area as follows: create a small park under the Trail bridge and eliminate parking; combine the two (2) parallel roads into a single entrance road to the industrial zone; and upgrade the paved path behind the McDonald's as a connector to the proposed Westbard Village Development.



Two narrow loop roads through the industrial zone converge at an open woodland space adjacent to the Trail, where the road ends that connects to River Road. To make this an attractive park space and special resting place along the Trail, a strategy was developed to provide appealing amenities and to remedy several safety problems at this location. First, the design concept - a plaza with pervious paved stamped patterned asphalt, bordered by cobbles or pavers, with ample lighting and an environmentally friendly place addressing water retention and



GOOGLE EARTH IMAGE OF LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AREA



PRECEDENT IMAGE - BOARDWALK



EXISTING CONDITIONS IMAGES



drainage - will warn commercial vehicles that Trail users might be present west of the Trail. Seating will be provided along with signage to nearby shops. Second, the idea is to provide alternate paths so that pedestrians and joggers can avoid collisions with speeding bicyclists, trucks and automobiles. East of the Trail, where the ground falls off steeply (still Trail property), a wooden bridge parallel to the Trail will extend in width over the hill, enabling users to find refuge from bikers speeding down the Trail ramp. Restoration of the stream and surrounding environs will convert this area into an inviting park, a place to enjoy and explore the natural environment and a place for adventure and discovery.



EXISTING CONDITIONS IMAGE AT WILLETT BRANCH





GOOGLE EARTH IMAGE OF LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AREA

PRECEDENT IMAGES



SEATING AT PLAZA



BOARDWALK WITH SEATING



EXISTING CONDITIONS IMAGES



NORTH VIEW



EAST VIEW



SOUTH VIEW



NORTH VIEW - TRAIL RAMP

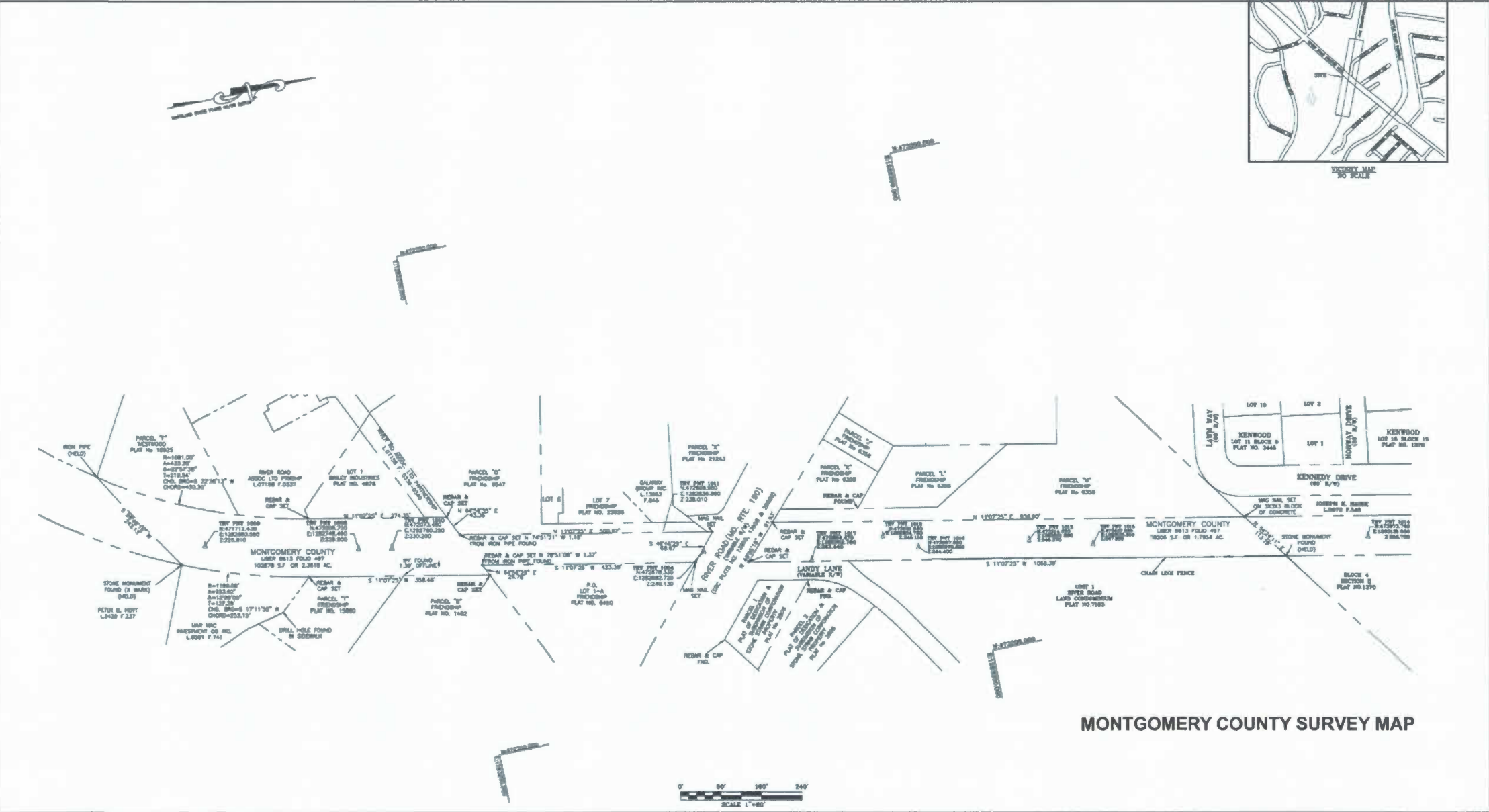


WEST VIEW - WILLETT BRANCH



SOUTH VIEW





A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS







Preservation of our environment and sustainability are among the most prominent issues of communities today. “Going Green” is a popular hyped aspect of new development for the twenty-first century. Since publication of the 1982 Westbard Sector Plan, many problems that were highlighted in that document still remain in 2008. In the River Road-Westbard area of Bethesda, Maryland, the natural systems have been significantly changed by several factors: land development, large open parking areas, stream pollution and alteration of the course of streams. These, in addition to noise pollution, are among environmental problems discussed in the 1982 Sector Plan that are summarized herein along with recommendations to improve the quality of life and ecological conditions.

Natural System Degradation – Both land and water comprise natural systems. “Encroachment on the stream valley ecosystem and inappropriate” land uses, including large open parking areas with little or no vegetation, caused natural systems degradation. Two polluted streams that flow through the neighborhood, Little Falls and Willett Branch, do not meet Maryland State standards for recreation and aquatic life. Although they traverse potentially beautiful parkland, no attention has been given to conservation of the natural environment. Some remediation has since been undertaken on a short stretch of Little Falls south of Massachusetts Avenue, but a huge comprehensive endeavor is

necessary to remedy this difficult problem. Much has been learned from work on Sligo Creek and the segment south of Massachusetts Avenue that should be adapted to Willett Branch and Little Falls near the Crescent Trail. (Just beyond this point, they combined at Little Falls Parkway, and Little Falls flows southward toward the Potomac River.) Entrepreneurs in the light industrial area and community members alike recognize the potential to establish parkland of great natural beauty.

New channelization forms that allow improved water flow and offer better flood controls can be installed, when necessary, in sections where streams are close to dwellings. In this project area, 68% of the streams have been enclosed or channelized in trapezoidal concrete channels. These channels allow typically only one inch of stream water. They are subject to swift thermal fluctuation, and provide no aquatic life habitat. Negative effects could be minimized with a “v-shaped” channel cross-section that contains greater water depth.

“The depth to bedrock throughout most of Westbard is less than 20 feet.” Much of the soil in the western two-thirds of the area, especially where there are steep slopes, is “not well-suited for development due to a high erosion potential... (Soils are) poorly drained creating construction problems... (and are) susceptible to frost action, seasonal high water table, and flooding...” Soils

in some portions of the site, however, are suited to urbanization. (p.104) Intensive urbanization and a high proportion of impervious surfaces caused hydrologic problems, such as reduced groundwater from reduced base water flow and fast runoff and drainage during storms that resulted from channelization. In turn, streams cannot dilute pollutants (i.e., self-cleansing) nor supply water and aquatic life. Further, the floodplain has been extended because of poor storm water management in the area and an undersized culvert at River Road.

This document for the River Road-Westbard area concurs with the recommendations of the 1982 Westbard Sector Plan, many of which are included in this proposal. Important concepts include use of drainage swales and berms, grass-lined ditches, stabilization of disturbed areas via vegetation, retention of natural open space as buffer zones along streams, elimination of treeless parking lots, addition of vegetation islands and underground water storage, minimizing impervious areas, and multi-level structured parking facilities. (p. 107)

Stream Pollution – Notably during the 1960s-’70s, stream pollution resulted from aggressive development and questionable flood control practices. Over the years the two streams have further suffered from deteriorating

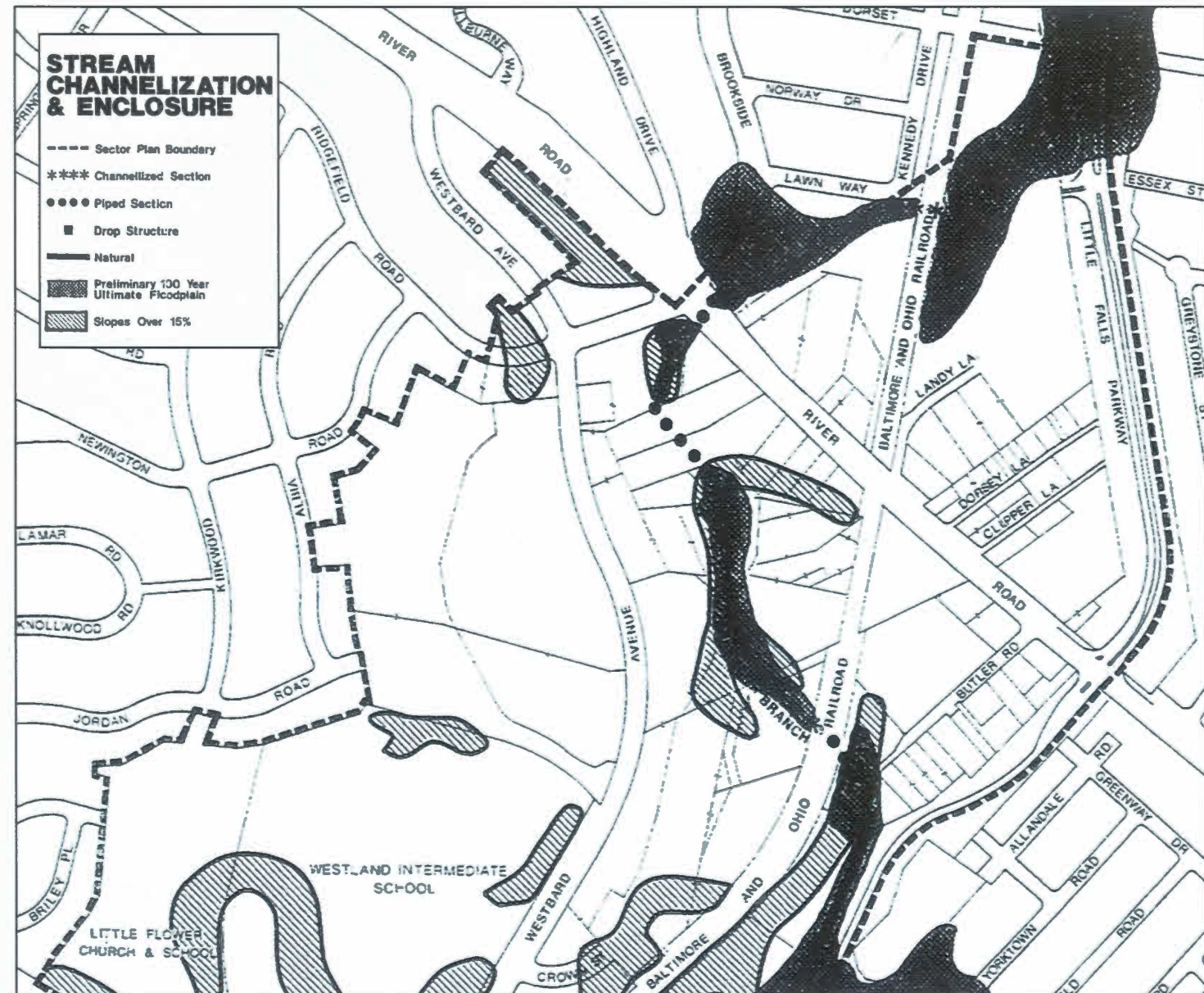


## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

water quality. In addition, stream pollution has been generated by sewage and septic leakages and illegal discharges resulting from careless and intensive new development in the study area. This River Road-Westbard document advocates adopting measures to improve the quality of area streams and to improve existing and future construction environmental systems and management consistent with the 1982 Westbard Sector Plan that lists the problems in greater detail and suggests some remedies. (p.105-106)

Noise Pollution – Disturbance has resulted from heavy traffic volume, particularly on River Road, including commercial and industrial operations and their trucks and trash trucks. Additional noise, although to a lesser extent, has been felt from traffic along Massachusetts Avenue which has fewer heavy trucks. Further, annoyance from noise arises near the commercial/shopping zone of Westbard Avenue and Ridgefield Roads.

This document contains proposals that serve to abate the level of noise along these major roadways and in the industrial zones. The combination of tree-lined roads with pedestrian-oriented activity along the sidewalks, added refuge islands, an increased number of traffic signals at closer intervals and special paving and crosswalks at intersections will function as traffic calming devices. Enhanced roadway aesthetics with





retail/commercial activities will cause vehicles to decrease speed and will increase the perception of a “people place.” Re-working the roads in the industrial area south of River Road and creating a plaza and park near the Crescent Trail and Willett Branch will help reduce noise and increase safety. These proposals also benefit the environment and support the concept of “Going Green.”

Proposals in this River Road-Westbard document are based upon research conducted by the CUA design team and feedback from the community and other professional consultants. Along River Road, implementation of a “main street” type boulevard will decrease the noise and safety problems by slowing the speed of traffic. Water runoff reduction and an improved microclimate will result from installation of shade trees and the creation of linear pervious green spaces and paving details in the central boulevard and along the sidewalks, and islands of green spaces throughout the area. Reduction of impervious surfaces will be complimented by improved storm drains and sewage systems in the River Road and Westbard Avenue and Westwood Village areas, the latter of which will have comparable treatment with high quality sewage and drainage systems. Its new proposed service road will function environmentally like a boulevard. Safe convenient bicycle and pedestrian paths will encourage a reduction in pollution with the use of fewer cars.

The many large and small parks and “greened” surface parking lots and tree-lined streets, proposed green buildings with green roofs, water runoff and sewer management systems are directed toward advancing a beneficial ecological environment and improved air quality in the River Road-Westbard project area.

Iris Miller, ASLA



PRECEDENT IMAGE SHOWING STAMPED PERVIOUS CONCRETE PAVING



PRECEDENT IMAGE SHOWING STAMPED ASPHALT PAVING







“Bi-County Transitway / Bethesda Station Access Demand Analysis:” Prepared For Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority; Office of Planning and Project Development. Prepared by Parsons and Gallop Corporation. May 2005: 1-65.

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“Westbard Sector Plan:” Land Use, Transportation and Implementation Proposals for the Westbard Study Area. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. September 1982: 1-136.

“WHEN MAIN STREET IS A HIGHWAY:” Blending Function, Beauty and Identity. A Handbook for Communities and Designers. SHA, State Highway Administration.







## APPENDIX

- **A - Precedents and Inspirations: Selected Sites Studied and Evaluated - 70**
- **B - Aerial Views of Site and Photographs of Existing Conditions - 80**
- **C - Maryland State Highway and Montgomery County, MD Maps - 87**
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- **E - Community Goals and Objectives - 102**
  - Community Survey: “A Vision for the River Road / Westbard Area, Bethesda, MD” - 103**
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**PRECEDENTS AND INSPIRATIONS: SELECTED SITES  
STUDIED AND EVALUATED  
(APPLICABLE AND NON-APPLICABLE)**

1. BETHESDA ROW
2. MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE AT SPRING VALLEY
3. CLEVELAND PARK ALONG CONNECTICUT AVENUE
4. SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND
5. SHIRLINGTON, VIRGINIA
6. POTOMAC, MARYLAND
7. RESTON, VIRGINIA





## APPENDIX A - PRECEDENT 1 - BETHESDA ROW

Bethesda Row is an excellent precedent of responsible, planned urban redevelopment. Located in Bethesda, Maryland, at the convergence of Bethesda Avenue with Woodmont Avenue and Elm Street, Bethesda Row is a comprehensively planned mixed use urban redevelopment project. The Row shows how to attractively maintain and encourage urban density where it is appropriate to do so; in an existing urban setting.

### NOTE:

(a) The sidewalk has linear zones: a store/restaurant front, a paving patterned pedestrian zone with occasional bench groupings, and a curb. Parking is at the curb with a bike lane between the parking and moving vehicles.

(b) The sidewalk enlarges to accommodate two(2) paths- a raised pedestrian and a ramp (ADA accessible). Facade materials vary, undulating and stepping back to reduce perception of bulk and height.



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



Bethesda Row accomplishes in downtown Bethesda what a shopping mall would further out into the suburbs. Retail shops, restaurants, cafes and a movie cinema are all beautifully arranged in a convenient, compact manner. In the case of the Row, these amenities are all arranged around a pedestrian-friendly designed streetscape. Both attractive and safe for pedestrian use, the streetscape of Bethesda Row incorporates many design elements pertinent for study in the design of River Road Boulevard. (Note: Bike lane is on street rather than safer location on sidewalk as a shared-use path.)

The streetscape design elements of Bethesda Row include the following:

- Neighborhood convenience as well as regional use
- Four lane road with two bicycle lanes and two lanes of parallel parking
- No median lane
- Minimum ample sidewalk width with decorative paving to accommodate:
  - Generous pedestrian traffic area
  - Decorative benches in grouped arrangements
  - Café seating
  - Planting buffer of a tree allee and shrubbery between the sidewalk and roadway

- Plaza with fountain at the corner of Bethesda and Woodmont Avenues to promote pedestrian traffic and create an area of repose in close proximity to the retail establishments
- Kiosks for small-scale merchants
- Attractive, creative street furniture





**APPENDIX A -  
PRECEDENT 2 - MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE AT SPRING VALLEY**

Massachusetts Avenue at Spring Valley is an excellent example of a low scale, neighborhood convenience center. Located along a major traffic corridor, the shopping centers on both the north and south sides of Massachusetts Avenue in the Spring Valley neighborhood have been maintained beautifully and have remained successful as low-scale retail establishments, aimed at servicing the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Convenience retail shops, specialty grocery stores, cafés, banks, and various other retail establishments are all presented here in attractive, traditionally inspired, brick construction. The shopping center on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue is one (1) level, with a pitched roof of slate, covering a wide, pedestrian-friendly colonnade abutting the entrances to the shops, which creates a welcoming, residential neighborhood atmosphere. The covered walkway, sheltering the pedestrian from the elements, and located with direct access to the moderately sized open parking lot, with four rows of cars, creates ease of access to this attractive community shopping center.

The shopping center south of Massachusetts Avenue, likewise, features attractive, brick construction with traditional stone accent and slate roof. Here, two (2) levels are found at the Crate & Barrel store, with other buildings within close proximity being one (1) level. An open parking lot

of similar size is partially hidden behind buildings and hedge plantings. A service road parallel to Massachusetts Avenue has three (3) vehicle lanes: two (2) for parallel parking with a center through traffic lane. This configuration is less safe than a two (2) lane service road plan.

The shopping centers found along both the north and south sides of this portion of Massachusetts Avenue are attractively sited behind mature plantings of the wide green strip of the streetscape.





The streetscape design elements of Massachusetts Avenue at Spring Valley include the following:

- Wide green strip along the north side of Massachusetts Avenue include:
  - Mature oak trees, reaching 65 + feet high
  - A second row of smaller mixed trees
  - Various low-growing shrubbery and flowers arranged into planting beds
  - Manicured grass areas
  - Concrete sidewalk, set back from roadway behind the trees on each side of the street
- Four (4) lanes of traffic, two (2) in each

direction, divided by a narrow, raised concrete median

- The south side of Massachusetts Avenue incorporates:
  - Green strip of mixed height trees and grass
  - Service road of three (3) lanes: one (1) travel lane and two (2) parallel parking lanes.

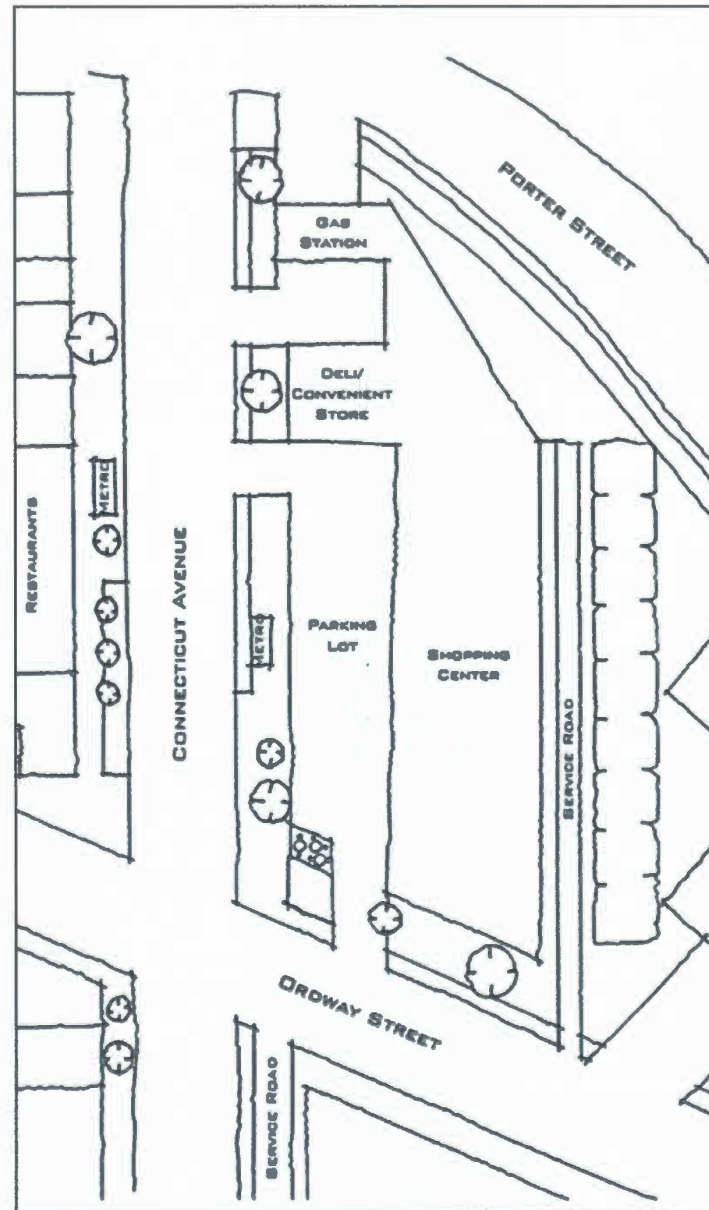
NOTE: A three (3) lane service road is less safe for pedestrians and vehicles than a two (2) lane service road. Parking disability and maneuvering can be difficult.



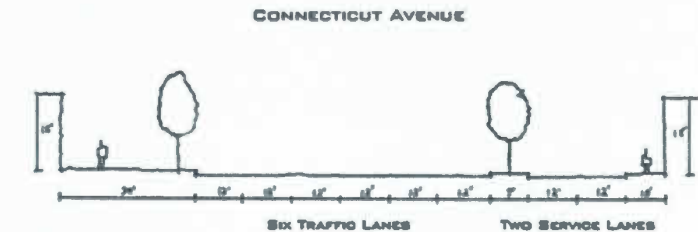


## APPENDIX A -

The retail section of Cleveland Park along Connecticut Avenue, NW, DC between Macomb and Porter Streets, suggests some important design strategies. Although the sidewalks are not extremely wide, they provide comfortable 2-way walking space. The low scale retail buildings with tree-lined sidewalks, providing shade and a buffer to Connecticut Avenue traffic, create a human scale that is applicable to the goals for Westbard. A full mix of various types of restaurants, cafes and service-oriented businesses lining the street with ample parking attracts a vibrant cross-section of users. On the northeast side, one block has a small on-site asphalt strip parking lot (pay-by-the-hour) in front of the buildings. Especially relevant to Westbard is a 1-way service road with one parking lane fronting the other block. Here, a narrow linear brick refuge island separates another row of parallel parking along the main roadway, which restricts parking during rush hour. Parking time here is controlled by parking meters. On the northwest side, a wide sidewalk fronts the buildings and some parking is provided behind. The 6-lane roadway with parking at each side, except during rush hour, has crosswalks (unfortunately, not zebra-striped)



and traffic signals at each corner. However, no provision is made for people who occasionally do cross mid-block.





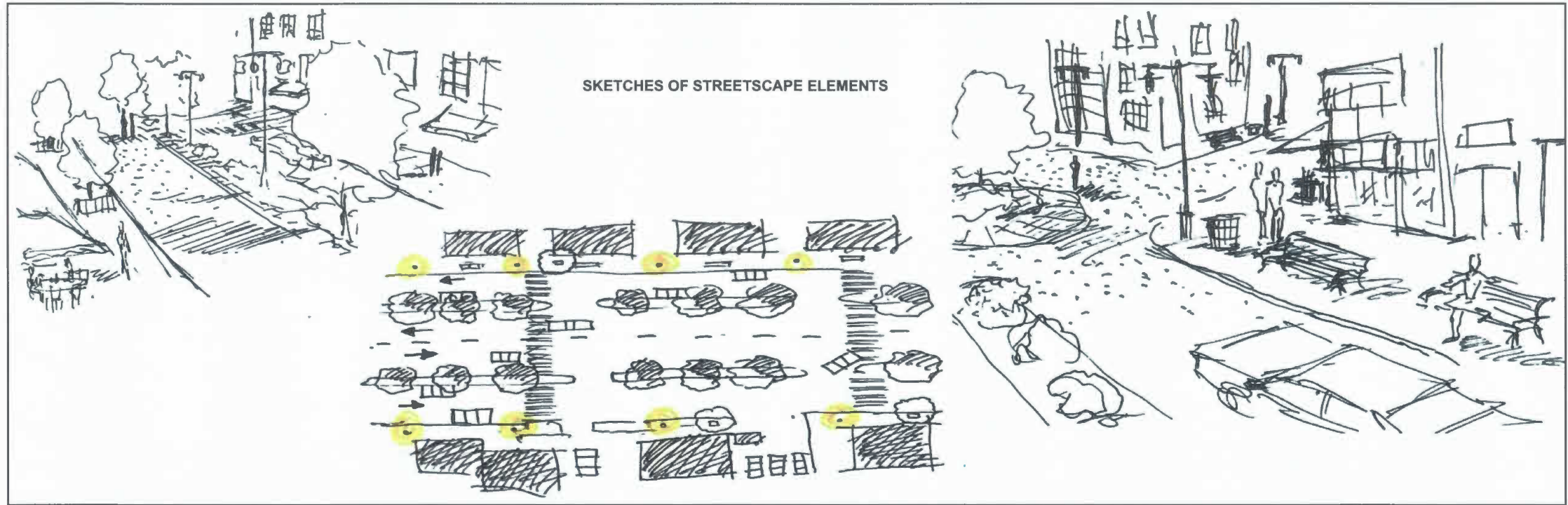
Although some sites that were studies offered many ideas that were applicable to River Road-Westbard project, Silver Spring is a large regional center rather than a neighborhood scaled-village that typifies Bethesda's Westbard area. Nevertheless, it is relevant in only a few particular features. Whole Foods supermarket is an anchor situated near both open on-grade and structured parking (to serve over-flow traffic) with attractive entrances/exits on two facades, thereby facilitating easy circulation. The high ceiling and bright lighting, along with its colorful flower mart near an entrance (similar to that of Sarasota, Florida), created an inviting atmosphere and sequence of spaces. The coffee shop enables people to take a relaxing break from shopping and as in Sarasota, shoppers can sit outside to have a snack or quick meal. Additional cafes in the area that spill out onto the sidewalk in nice weather attract large numbers of people.

The site plan includes two primary tree-lined streets crossing to form a central axis with open plazas that encourage pedestrian use. A segment of one street can be closed and converted to a pedestrian way. Special paving on wide sidewalks and ample attractive lighting are other elements that add to the comfort and appeal. As a mixed-use development with housing, retail, and provision for parking, it is well-maintained and offers a safe environment.





APPENDIX A -  
PRECEDENT 5 - SHIRLINGTON, VIRGINIA



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND







APPENDIX A -  
PRECEDENT 7 - RESTON, VIRGINIA



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



## AERIAL VIEWS OF SITE AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

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1. EXISTING CONDITIONS AND BUSINESSES
2. AERIAL VIEW FROM THE NORTH
3. AERIAL VIEW FROM THE SOUTH
4. AERIAL VIEW FROM THE EAST
5. AERIAL VIEW FROM THE WEST
6. SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



APPENDIX B -  
AERIAL VIEW 1 - EXISTING CONDITIONS AND BUSINESSES



- I
- 1 POOLS AND TOYS
  - 2 RADIOSHACK
  - 3 SUNTRUST BANK
  - 4 FASHION CRAFT CLEANERS
  - 5 FRAME WORLD
  - 6 BEYDA'S
  - 7 VOOTRUS OPTICIAN'S
  - 8 AURELIO ANTONIO COSTURES
  - 9 STARBUCKS COFFEE
  - 10 CHINESE GOURMET
  - 11 GENERAL NUTRITION CENTER
  - 12 WINE AND LIQUOR
  - 13 WESTWOOD BARBER
  - 14 WESTWOOD PET CENTER
  - 15 GANT
  - 16 RITE-AID PHARMACY
  - 17 CHEVY CHASE BANK
  - 18 WESTWOOD VALET
  - 19 WASHINGTON MEDICAL GROUP, P.C.
  - 20 WEST RIVER DELI
  - 21 RIVER ROAD SURGERY CENTER
  - 22 YARNS INTERNATIONAL
  - 23 SUNSHINE HAIR STUDIO
  - 24 LES ENFANTS
  - 25 JEANNE'S SHOES
  - 26 KENWOOD JEWELERS
  - 27 PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO
  - 28 KENWOOD CUSTOM TAILORS
  - 29 VAN NISS COMPUTERS
  - 30 INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MUSIC, LLC
  - 31 WEIGHT WATCHERS
  - 32 REPUBLIC FOODS, INC.
  - 33 CARL M. OPPENHEIM REAL ESTATE
  - 34 WESTWOOD MANAGEMENT, LLC
  - 35 CARLISLE AND PER SE SHOWROOM
  - 36 HOMETECH INFORMATION SYSTEMS, INC.
  - 37 DYNASTY CONSTRUCTION
  - 38 NATIONAL ENGINEERING PRODUCTS
  - 39 THE L.M. TAUBER FAMILY FOUNDATION, INC.
  - 40 CITGO
  - 41 UNITED BANK
  - 42 KENWOOD OFFICE SPACE
  - 43 AMERICAN PLANT FOOD
  - 44 THE ROOF CENTER
  - 45 VALLEY CLEANERS
  - 46 TALBERT'S ICE AND BEVERAGE SERVICE
  - 47 MCDONALD'S
  - 48 WESTWOOD TOWER APARTMENTS
  - 49 BETHESDA COLLISION REPAIR CENTER
  - 50 ENTERPRISE
  - 51 VOLVO
  - 52 STRIKE BETHESDA
  - 53 CITGO
  - 54 PARK BETHESDA
- II
- III
- IV
- V
- 38 EZ STORAGE
  - 39 ERNE'S AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE
  - 40 LIFE/CRAFT GENERAL CONTRACTING
  - 41 SCHNABEL FOUNDATION CENTER
  - 42
  - 43 BETHESDA FOREIGN CAR CLINIC
  - 44 WEAT BROTHERS LANDSCAPE
  - 45 BETHESDA CHEVY CHASE AUTO BODY
  - 1 WHOLE FOODS
  - 2 PARCEL PLUS
  - 3 MUMAH CHICKEN
  - 4 ONE HOUR MOTOPHOTO
  - 5 LEDO PIZZA
  - 6 WOW COW ICE CREAM
  - 7 SANDO HAIR SALON
  - 8 DRY CLEAN PLUS
  - 9 OSA BANK
  - 10 THE GEORGETOWN BAGELRY
  - 11 SECURITY PUBLIC STORAGE
  - 12 SONOCO
  - 1 KENWOOD HOUSE
  - 2 WOODINGS CORP.
  - 3 RALPH GRAVES PRODUCTIONS, LLC
  - 4 EASTERN METALLIZING, INC.
  - 5 MARK IV BUILDERS, INC.
  - 6 ENA, WASHINGTON, D.C.
  - 7 WASHINGTON EPISCOPAL SCHOOL
  - 8 THOMSON FINANCIAL
  - 9 THE BALLROOM
  - 10 GETTY AUTOCARE
  - 11 WASHINGTON CONVENIENT STORE
  - 12 AUTOSAHN MOTORWORKS
  - 13 RIDGEMILL'S CATERERS
  - 14 BETHESDA SHEET METAL CO.
  - 15 BANK OF AMERICA
  - 16 MADEIRA BAPTIST CHURCH
  - 17 THE KENWOOD
  - 1 EXTRA SPACE STORAGE
  - 2 7-11
  - 3 SHELL
  - 4 THE NEXT LEVEL ATHLETIC CENTER
  - 5 EURO MOTORCARS
  - 6 BETCO BLOCK AND PRODUCTS, INC.
  - 7 MARTENS
  - 8 PS PUBLIC STORAGE
  - 9 LAWN AND POWER EQUIPMENT
  - 10 BETHESDA IMPORT SPECIALIST
  - 11 BOARDSING
  - 12 KENWOOD DOGGY DAYCARE
  - 13 KENWOOD ANIMAL HOSPITAL
  - 14 AUTOSBODY DIMENSIONS
  - 15 TERMITE AND PEST CONTROL, INC.
  - 16 CITGO
  - 17 JUICE CLEANERS





IMAGE COURTESY OF MAPS.LIVE.COM



RIVER ROAD AND LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY



RIVER ROAD AND CRESCENT TRAIL/LANDY LANE



RIVER ROAD AND RIDGEFIELD ROAD



APPENDIX B -  
AERIAL VIEW 3 - VIEW FROM THE SOUTH

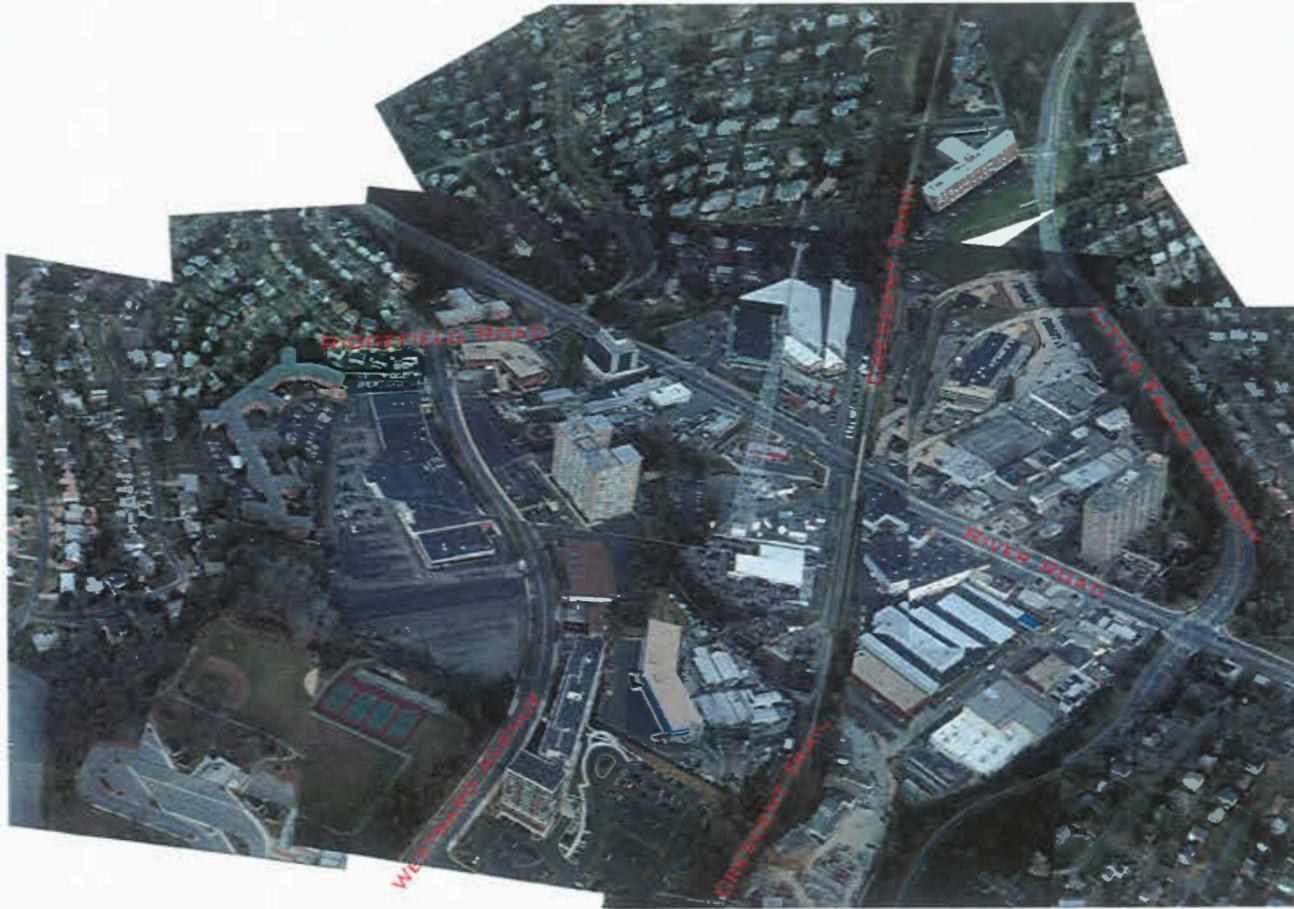


IMAGE COURTESY OF MAPS.LIVE.COM



RIVER ROAD AND RIDGEFIELD ROAD



RIVER ROAD AND CRESCENT TRAIL/LANDY LANE



RIVER ROAD AND LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY



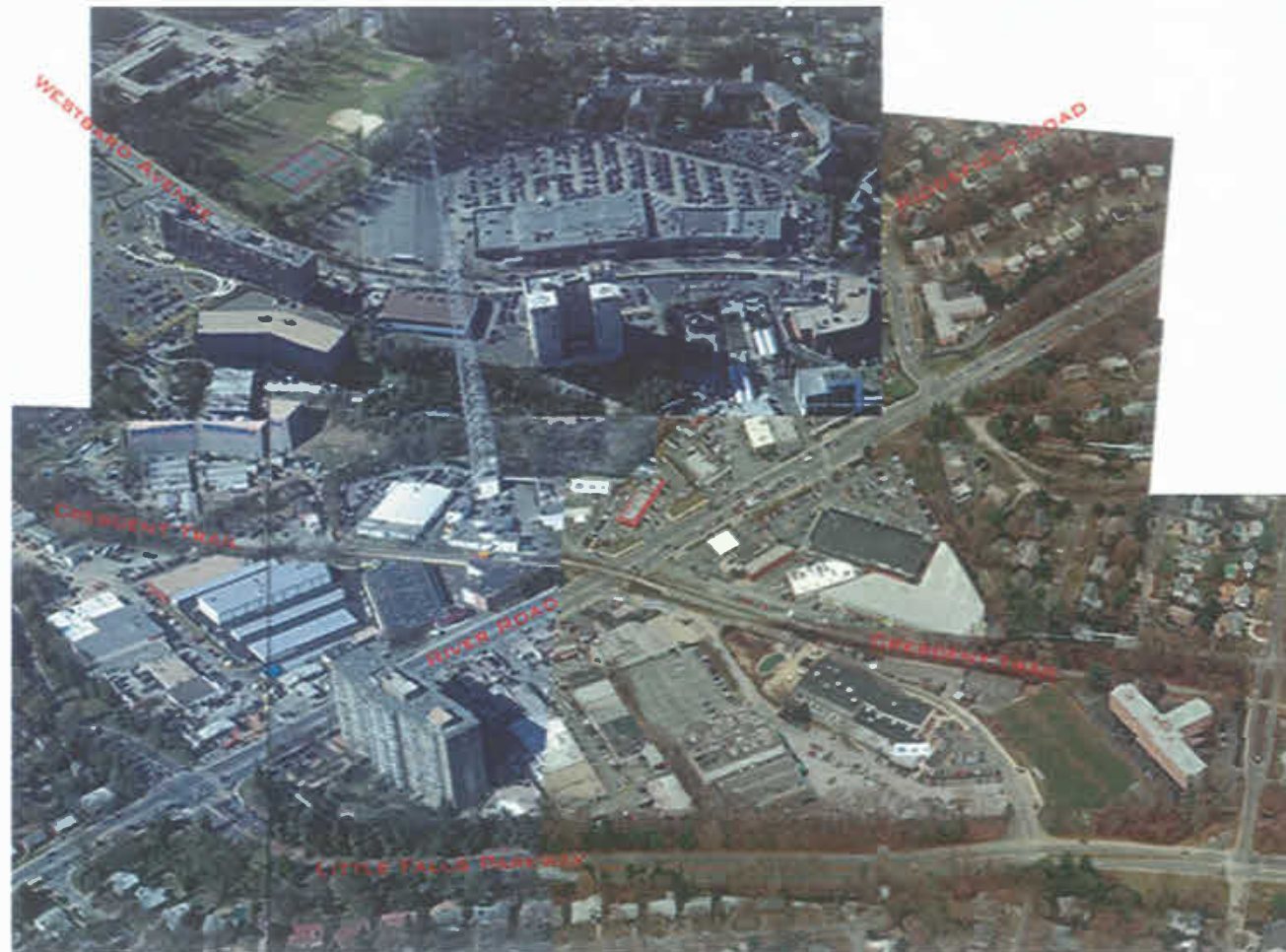


IMAGE COURTESY OF MAPS.LIVE.COM



RIVER ROAD AND RIDGEFIELD ROAD



RIVER ROAD AND CRESCENT TRAIL/LANDY LANE



RIVER ROAD AND LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY

A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND



APPENDIX B -  
AERIAL VIEW 5 - VIEW FROM THE WEST



IMAGE COURTESY OF MAPS.LIVE.COM



RIVER ROAD AND LITTLE FALLS PARKWAY



RIVER ROAD AND CRESCENT TRAIL/LANDOY LANE



RIVER ROAD AND RIDGEFIELD ROAD

A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND





EXISTING CONDITIONS ALONG WESTBARD AVENUE & AT WESTWOOD SHOPPING CENTER



EXISTING CONDITIONS ALONG RIVER ROAD





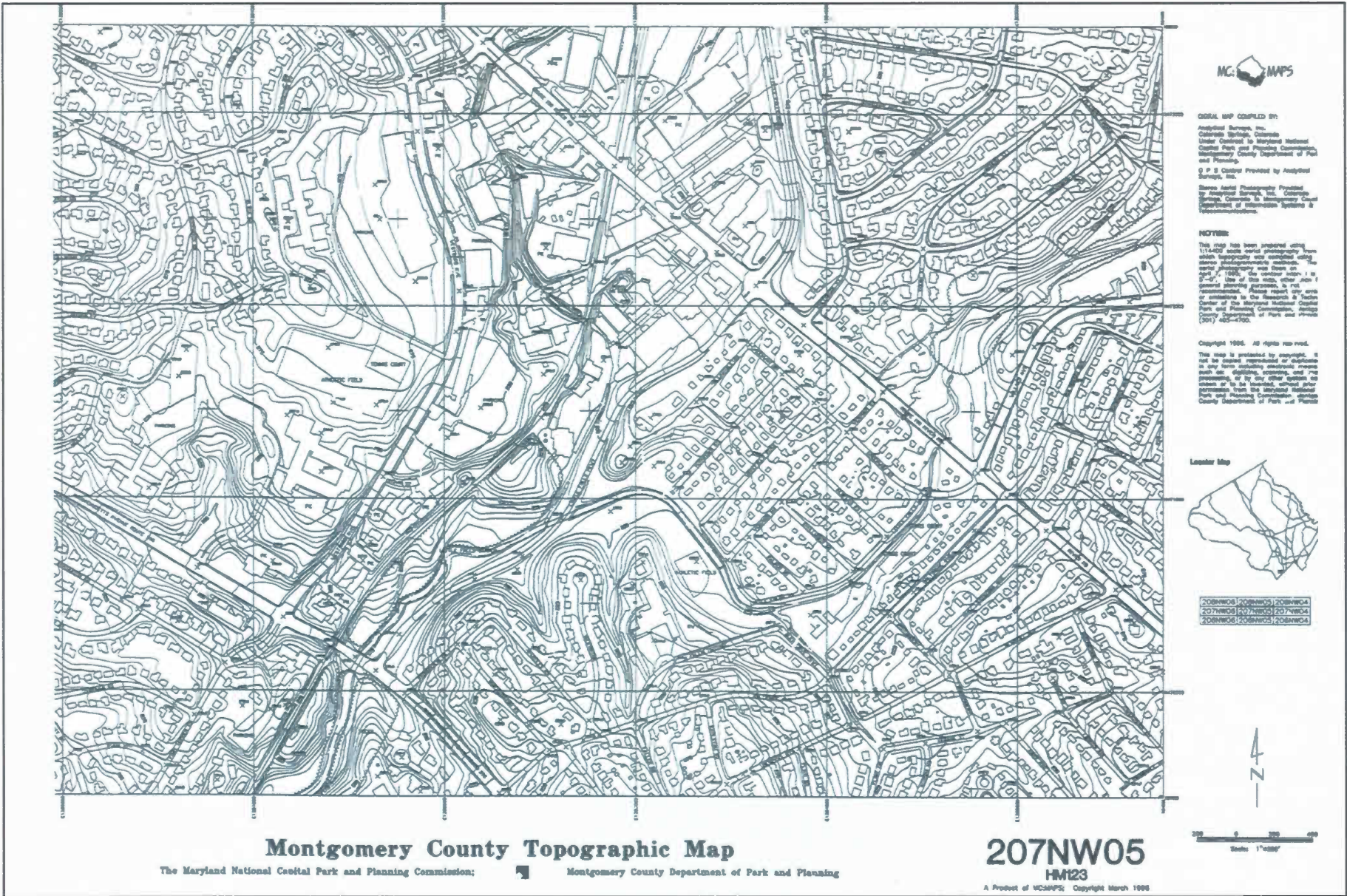


MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD MAPS

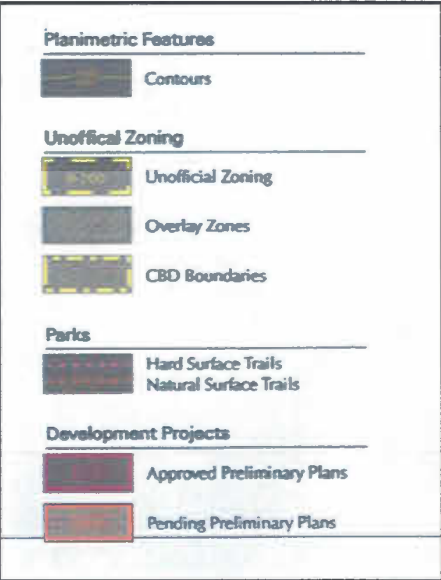
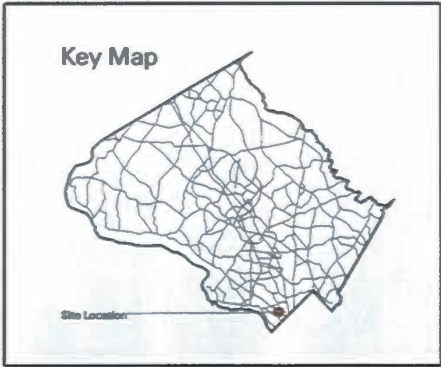
- 1. MONTGOMERY COUNTY TOPOGRAPHIC MAP, 207NW06 - HM123 scale 1" = 200'  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission; Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning  
A product of MC-Maps; Copyright March 1996
- 2. WESTWOOD SHOPPING CENTER, Site located on Base Sheet 207NW05 scale 1" = 100'  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission; Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning  
Licensed from Vargis LLC; Compiled and Orthophoto April 2004
- 3. WESTBARD PLANNING AREA, Site located on Base Sheet 207NW05 scale 1" = 200'  
The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission; Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning  
Compiled May 2007
- 4. Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration, scale 1" = 8333.33'; and 1" = 50'  
PLANS OF PROPOSED HIGHWAY; S.H.A. Contract No. M651-501-377  
MD 190 (River Road) from D.C. Line to I-495; 8-16-91 (as built)



APPENDIX C -  
 MAP 1 - MONTGOMERY COUNTY TOPOGRAPHIC MAP

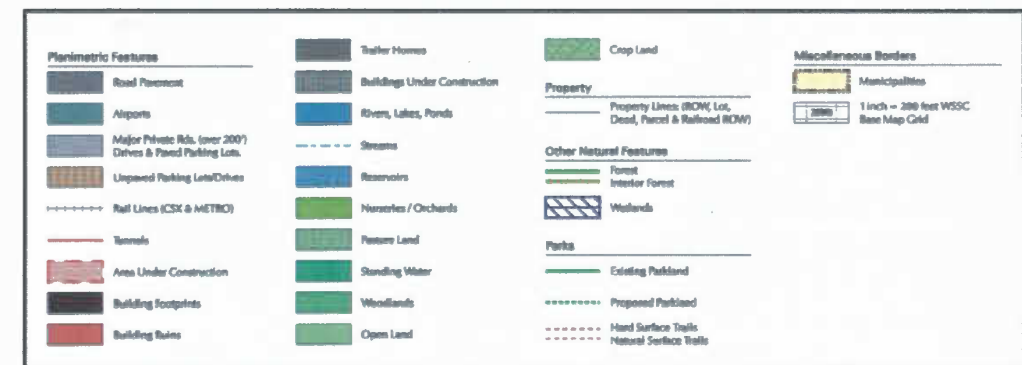
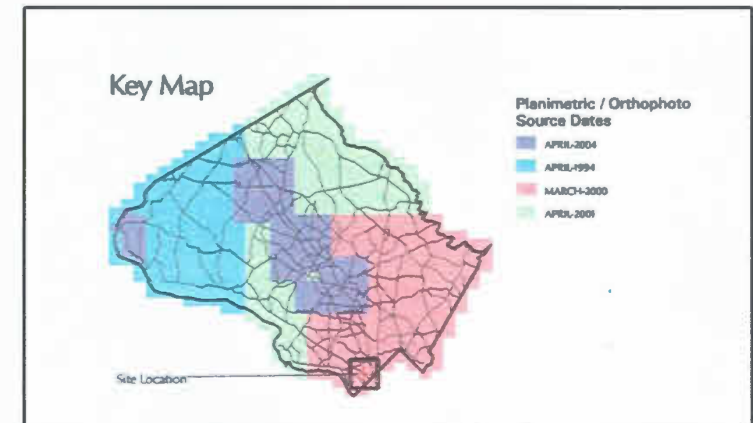
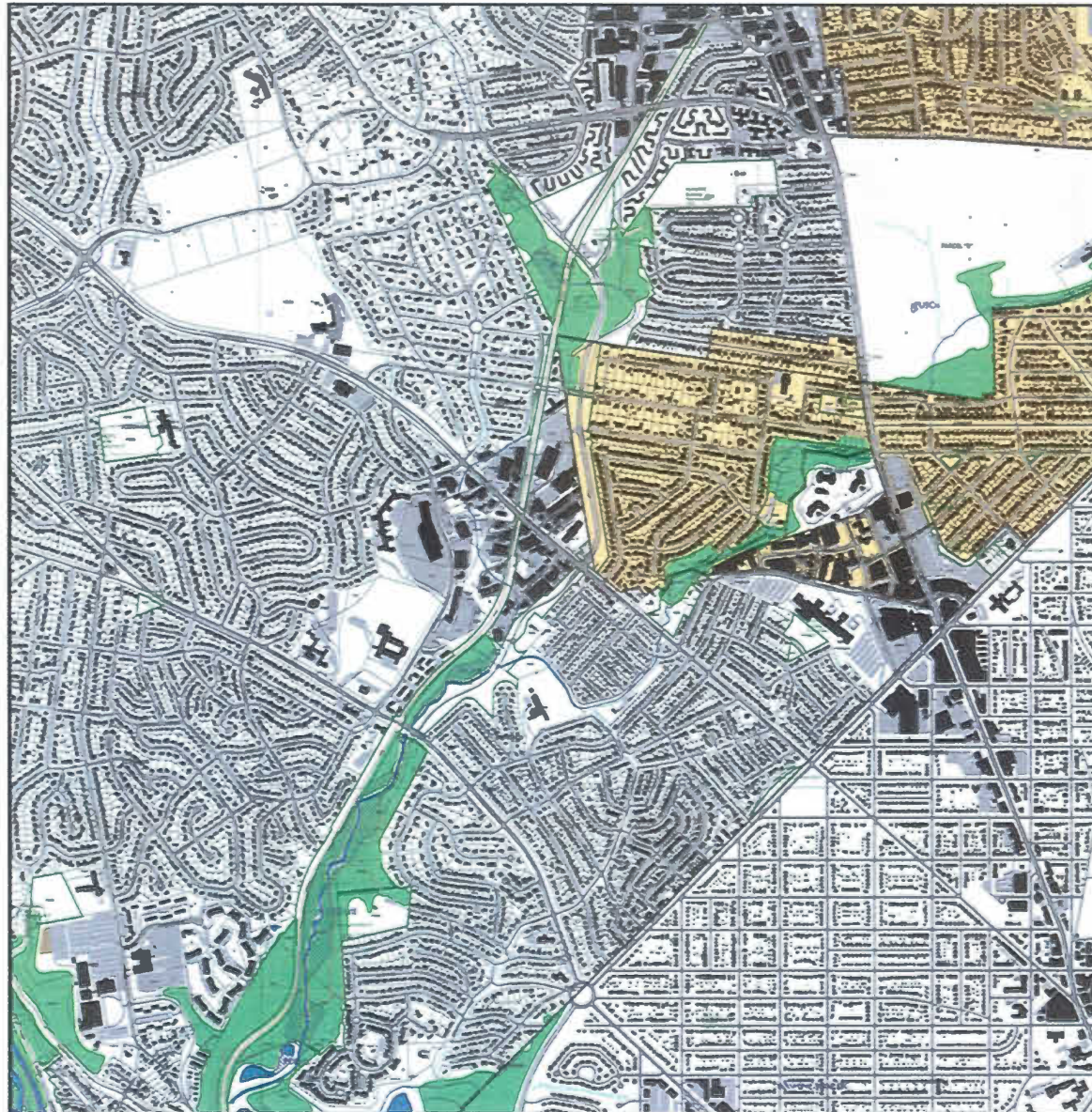








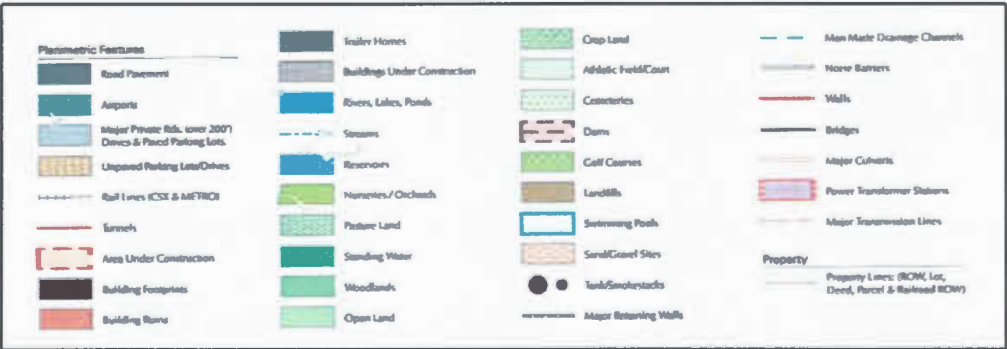
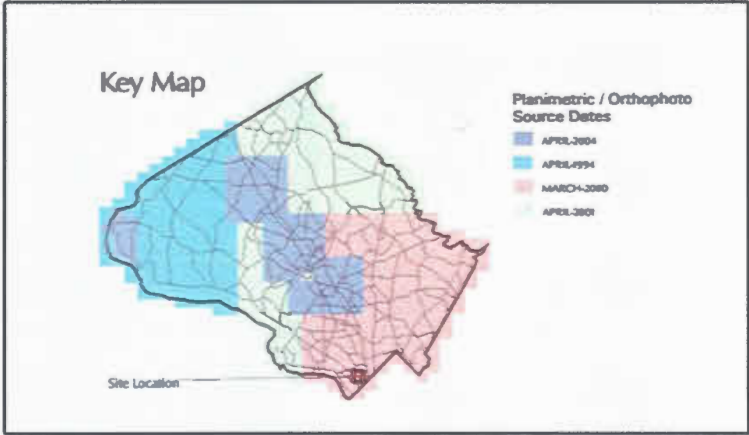
APPENDIX C -  
MAP 3 - WESTBARD PLANNING AREA



A VISION FOR RIVER ROAD - WESTBARD

BETHESDA, MARYLAND









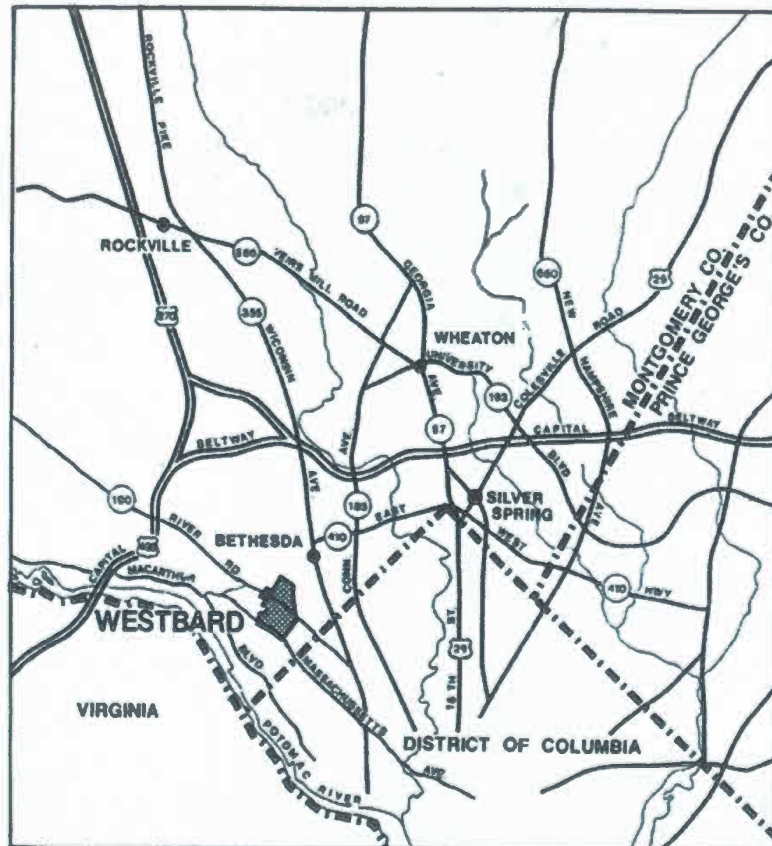


SELECTED STUDIES AND MAPS AS REFERENCE: 1982 WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN

SECTOR PLAN PAGE		TITLE
1.	3	REGIONAL LOCATION
	4	VICINITY MAP
2.	7	MAIN PLANNING PROPOSALS
	15	MAJOR ISSUES
3.	24	DESIGN CONCEPT
	33	EXISTING LAND USE
4.	37	LAND USE ANALYSIS AREAS
	38	PROPERTY OWNERSHIP
5.	65	TABLE - ZONING DISTRICTS IN WESTBARD
6.	72	TRAFFIC VOLUMES (AM - PEAK)
	73	TRAFFIC VOLUMES (PM - PEAK)
7.	76	RECOMMENDED ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS
	82	ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR RIVER ROAD
8.	85	STREET AND HIGHWAY PLAN
	89	RECOMMENDED WESTWOOD SHOPPING CENTER PEDESTRIAN PROTECTION
9.	95	TABLE - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (1982-1987)
	103	STREAM CHANNELIZATION & ENCLOSURE

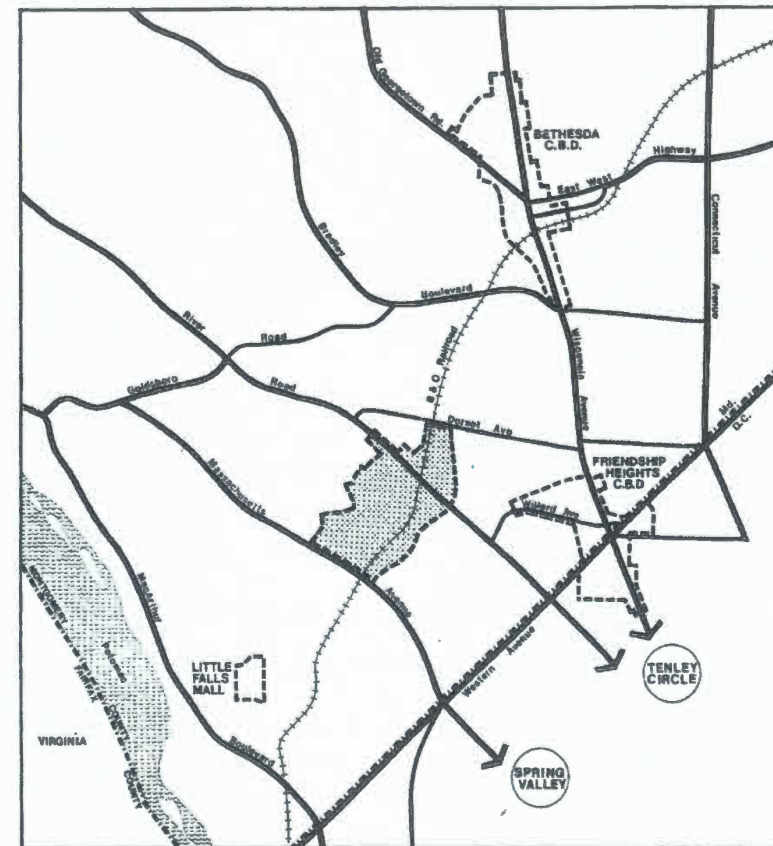


APPENDIX D  
REGIONAL LOCATION AND VICINITY MAP



REGIONAL  
LOCATION

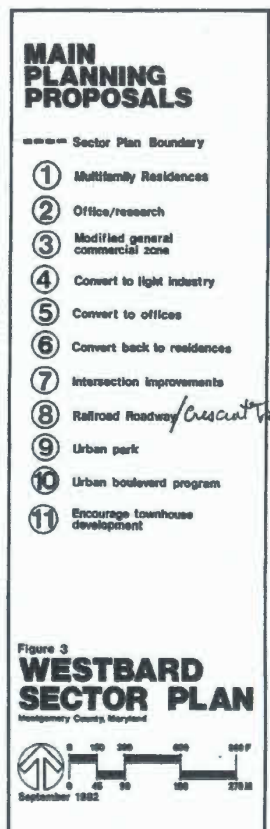
Figure 1  
**WESTBARD  
SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
September 1982



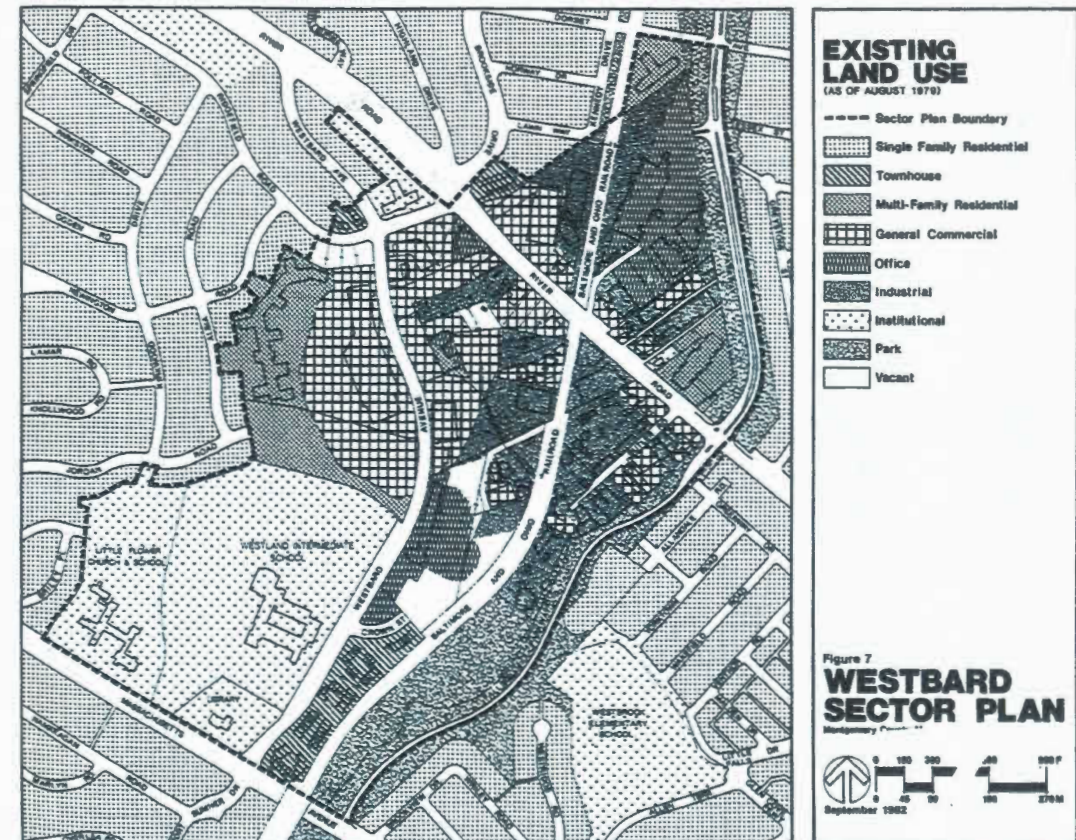
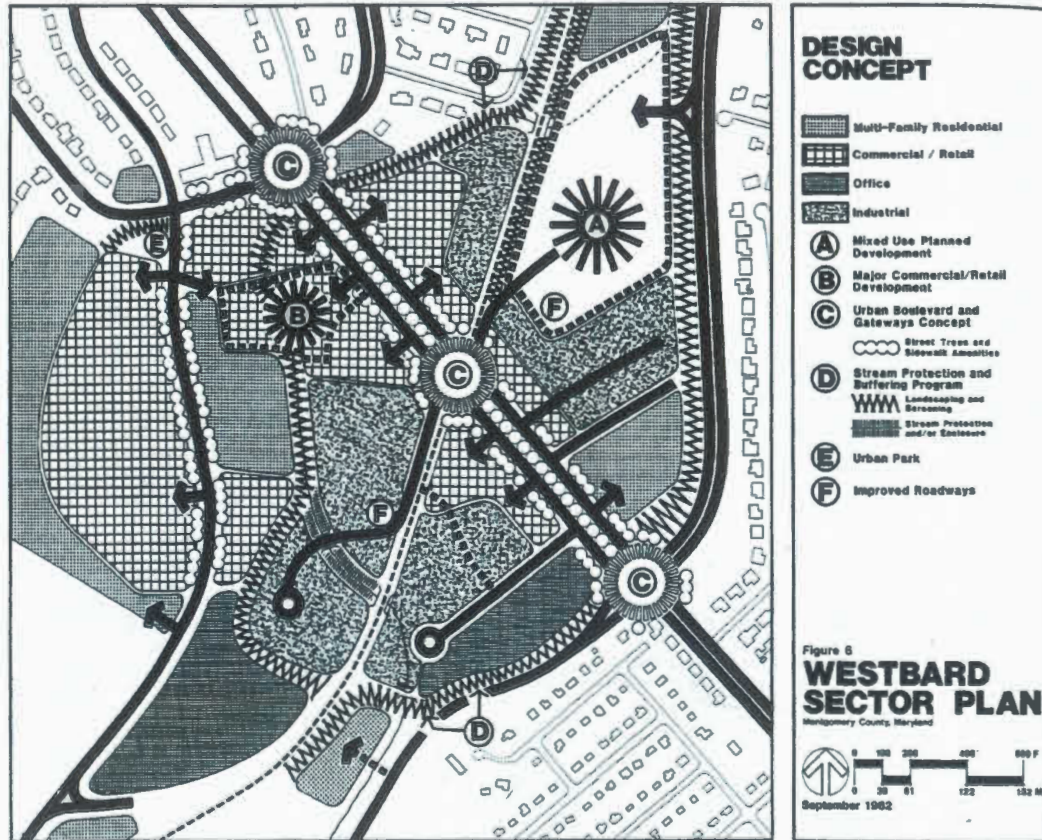
VICINITY MAP

Figure 2  
**WESTBARD  
SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
September 1982

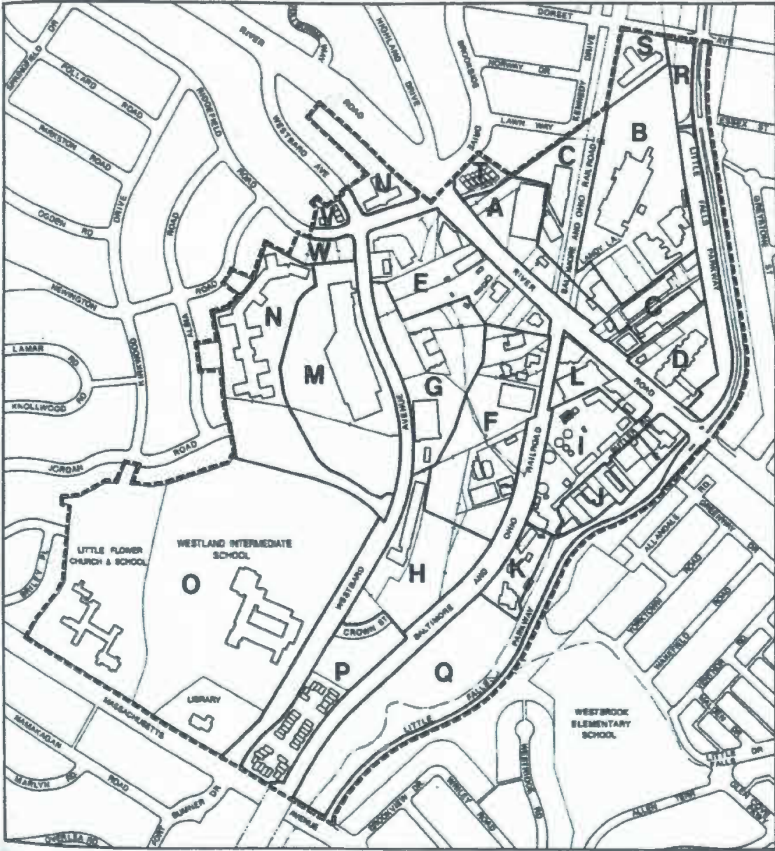








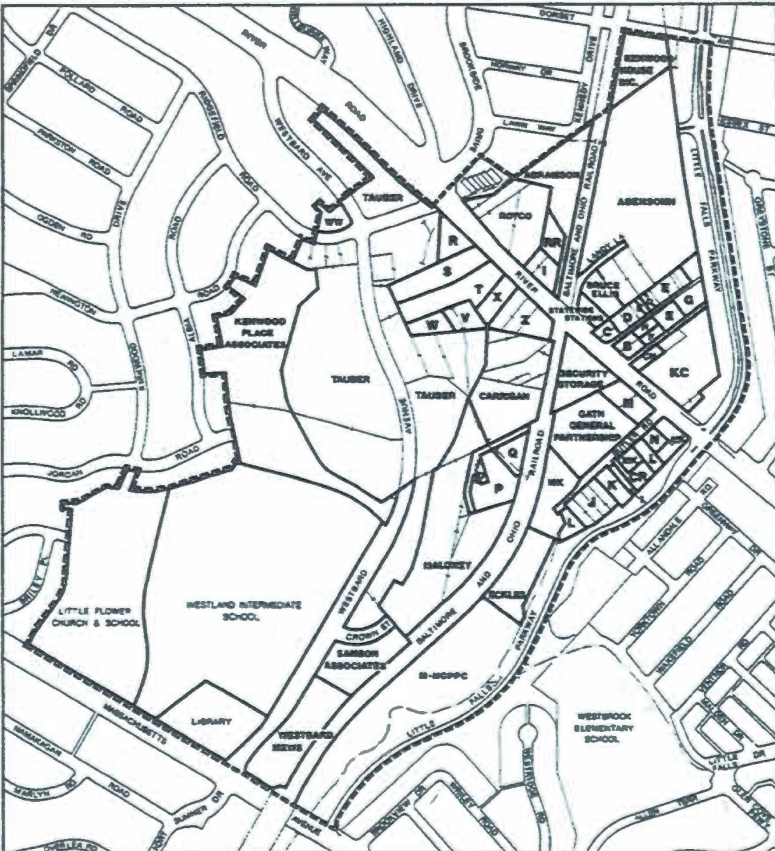




**LAND USE ANALYSIS AREAS**  
----- Sector Plan Boundary

Figure 9  
**WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland

0 150 300 450 600 750 F  
0 45 90 135 180 225 M  
September 1982



**PROPERTY OWNERSHIP**

- Sector Plan Boundary
- MK Mo Carthy / Kelly
- KC Kanwood Condominium
- S Bulman
- C Soper
- CH Macedonian Baptist Church
- D Voight Investment
- E Davison
- F Ridgewell Inc.
- G Miller
- H Kogok
- I Lightbody
- RR River Road Partnership
- J Pickett-Reedy Partnership
- K Flood Pontiac
- L Skinner
- M Strine
- N Hollow
- CR Crocker
- O Morris
- P Jewel
- Q Schnable Foundation
- R Kanwood Professional Building Ltd. Ptn.
- S Shorb Land & Development Co.
- T Warfield (Lovers Meeting)
- V Soc. of Cath. Medical Missionaries
- W International Eye Foundation
- WW Tigani
- X Frank
- Z Hogenlogier (Hay Road)

Figure 10  
**WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland

0 150 300 450 600 750 F  
0 45 90 135 180 225 M  
September 1982



TABLE II  
ZONING DISTRICTS IN WESTBARD

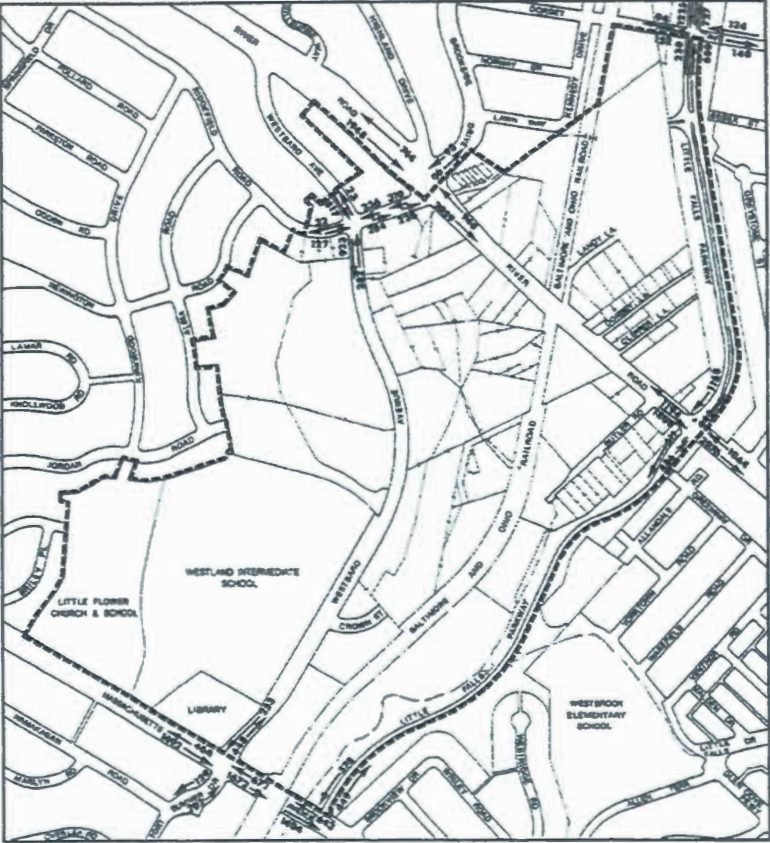
Zone	Minimum Lot Size	Height Limit	Density*
R-60 Single-family	6,000 sq.ft.	25 feet	4.2 DU/Acre
R-90 Single-family	9,000 sq.ft.	25 feet	2.9 DU/Acre
R-T Townhouse	20,000 sq.ft.	35 feet	12.5 DU/Acre
R-30 Multiple-family, Low-density	12,000 sq.ft.	35 feet	14.5 DU/Acre
R-20 Multiple-family, Medium-density	16,000 sq.ft.	30 feet (80' if 5 acres)	
R-10 Multiple-family, High-density	20,000 sq.ft.	**	43.5 DU/Acre
C-O Commercial office building	None	3 stories or 42 feet.	1.5 FAR
C-1 Convenience-commercial	None (15 acres maximum)	30 feet average	
C-2 General-commercial	None	42 (60 feet to expand existing use)	1.5 FAR
C-4 Limited commercial	None (2 acres for optional development)	3 stories or 40 feet	0.25 FAR (up to 0.75 FAR under optional method)
C-T Commercial, Transitional	None	***	1.0 FAR
O-M Office Building, Moderate Intensity	None	60 feet (72 feet with conditions)	1.5 FAR
I-1 Light industrial	None	42 feet	
I-2 Heavy industrial	None	70 feet	

\* This does not include possible 20 percent maximum density bonus for the provision of moderately priced dwelling units (MPDU's) in residential zones for any development having 50 or more units.

\*\* No height limit but setbacks must be increased one-half foot for every additional foot in height above 30 feet.

\*\*\* Two stories or 24 feet for lots under 12,000 square feet; three stories or 40 feet for lots over 12,000 square feet; four stories or 40 feet for lots over 18,000 square feet.



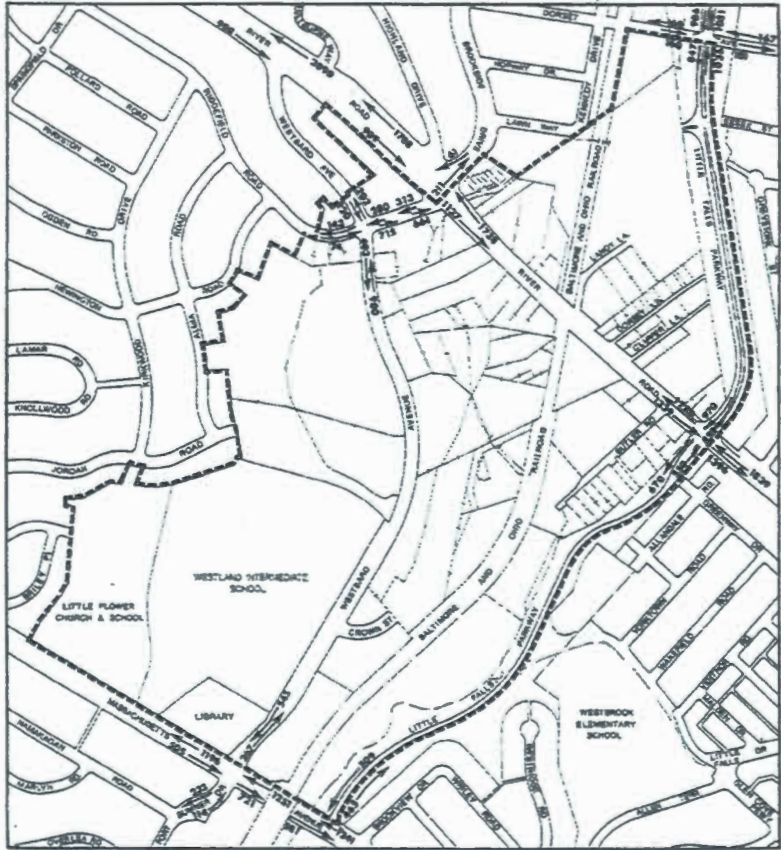


**TRAFFIC VOLUMES**  
**AM PEAK (8:am-9am)**  
(AS OF YEAR 1978)

----- Sector Plan Boundary  
700 Number of Vehicles and Direction of Movement

Source: Mont. County Dept. of Transportation

Figure 13  
**WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
September 1982



**TRAFFIC VOLUMES**  
**PM PEAK -**  
**River Road (4:30-5:30 pm)**  
**Massachusetts (5:pm-6:pm)**  
(AS OF YEAR 1978)

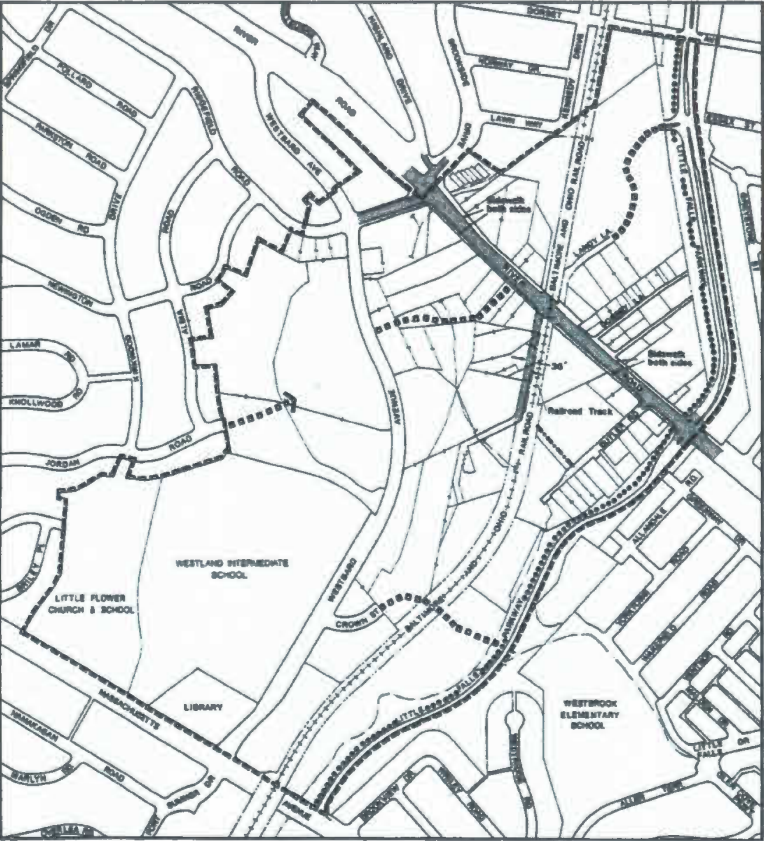
----- Sector Plan Boundary  
715 Number of Vehicles and Direction of Movement

Source: Mont. County Dept. of Transportation

Figure 14  
**WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland  
September 1982



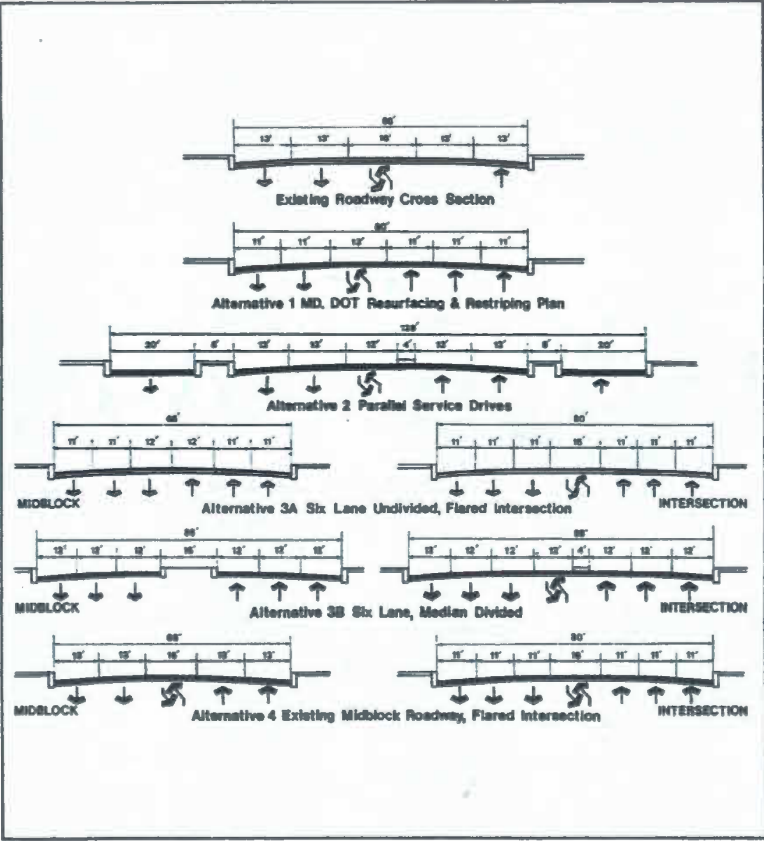
APPENDIX D  
RECOMMENDED ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND ALTERNATIVE PROPOSALS FOR RIVER ROAD



**RECOMMENDED  
ROADWAY  
IMPROVEMENTS**

- Sector Plan Boundary
- - - - - Desired Roadway Connection
- Proposed Pedestrian Pathway
- Proposed Paving Width
- Existing Bikeway

Figure 16  
**WESTBARD  
SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland



**ALTERNATIVE  
PROPOSALS FOR  
RIVER ROAD**

Figure 17  
**WESTBARD  
SECTOR PLAN**  
Montgomery County, Maryland

September 1982







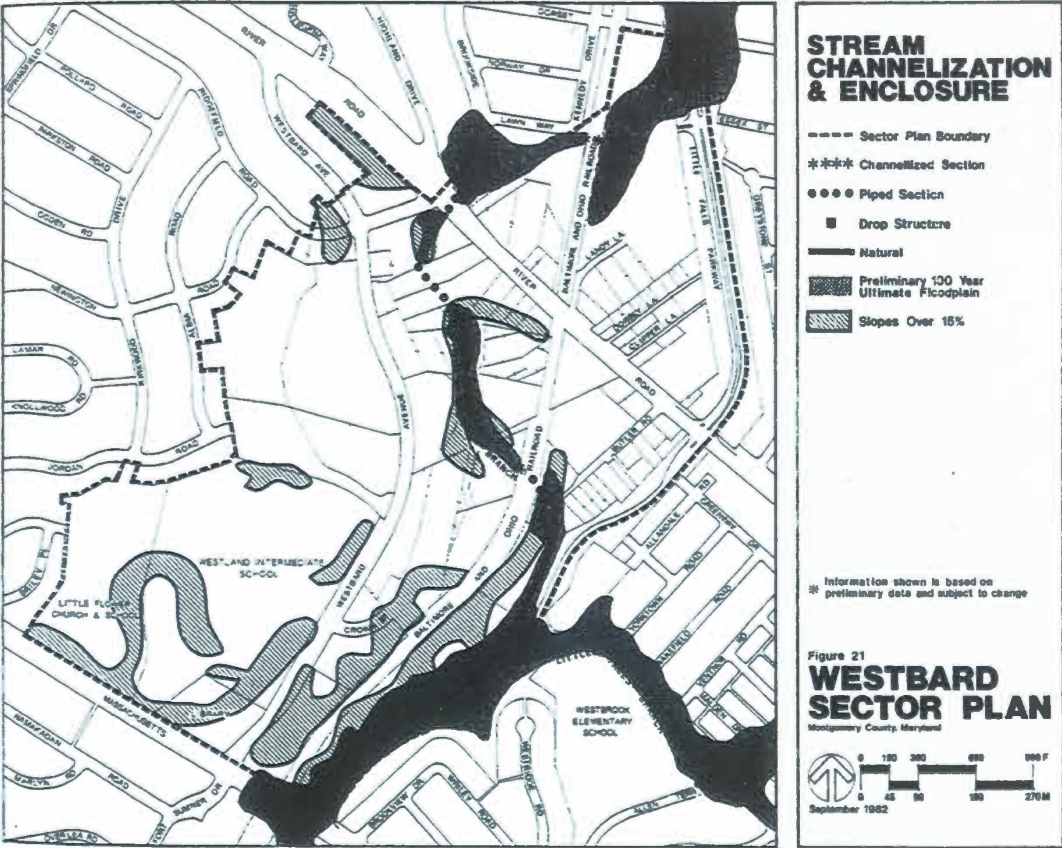
APPENDIX D  
TABLE - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND STREAM CHANNELIZATION & ENCLOSURE

TABLE VI  
WESTBARD SECTOR PLAN  
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM - FY 1982-1987

Projects	Funded By	Amount (\$000)	Completion by FY
<b>AUTHORIZED</b>			
River Road Sidewalks	County	80	1983
Little Falls Library Improvement	County	301	1982
Willard Avenue Local Park	M-NCPPC/State	815	1986
Little Falls Parkway Reconstruction	M-NCPPC	188	1980
Ridgefield/River Road/Westbard Intersection Improvement	County/State	50	1982
Bethesda Ride-On Buses	County	1,900	1984
<b>COMPLETED</b>			
Willard Branch Replacement Sewer	WSSC	5,525	1981
Little Falls Replacement Sewer	WSSC/State/US	997	1981
<b>PROPOSED</b>			
River/Ridgefield/Brookeaside Intersection	State	*	*
Little Falls Parkway/River Road Intersection	M-NCPPC	*	*
River Road Streetscaping	County/State/US	*	*
Springfield Urban Park	M-NCPPC	*	*
Railroad Street	County	*	**
Stormwater Facilities	County	*	*

\* Indeterminate at this time.

\*\* See Figure 16.





COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

“VisionforRiverRoad-Westbard,”2007-2008, a proposal prepared together by Urban Institute Studio, at the School of Architecture and Planning of the Catholic University of America, and the Joint Committee on Westbard, sets forth a concept for the direction of new development and for enhancement of outdoor public space in the area. In drawings and text, the visual and written descriptive material and with policy guidelines, reflect a general consensus about the future that evolved through numerous working meetings and site walk-throughs.

Consistent with this proposal, over twenty five years ago, the Montgomery County Council approved the Westbard Sector Plan initially developed by a committee of business and property owners, lawyers, and neighborhood citizens. The most important recommendation then was to “reaffirm and strengthen the residential character of the neighborhoods surrounding Westbard.” The single-family residential developments were to be enhanced by appropriate buffers and traffic controls. That meant “local commercial services in Westbard should be preserved and improved to increase their attractiveness as well as their convenience and accessibility to the public.” Traffic operations along River Road were to be improved. Another recommendation was to initiate an urban boulevard and gateway improvement project along River Road

that also included sidewalks, better landscaping, and improved pedestrian movements. High density development was not suggested; nor was any expansion or linkage with other commercial areas.

The major recommendations of the 1982 Sector plan were strongly reaffirmed by a 2006 survey questionnaire returned by nearly 1,600 households who are members of fifteen citizen associations that surround the Westbard area. Briefly, the results included the following:

- The Westbard Sector ought to remain a neighborhood shopping area;
- A revised retail business mix seems appropriate;
- High density residential development is not desired but some lower density development is acceptable;
- Despite public transportation options, a car is the overwhelming mode of transportation; and
- River Road is considered a major choke point for traffic, even on weekends.

Thus, current residents want to retain the 1982 vision of the residential character of the area, emphasizing that significant increases in density remain unacceptable, and reaffirming the 2007-2008 vision presented herein. This vision,

including Westbard Avenue and Westwood Village (Center), River Road, and Capital Crescent Trail, stresses human scale, low height buildings, restaurants and retail services responding to community needs and desires, pedestrian and bicyclist amenities, traffic safety, environmentally sustainable policies, and an inviting public realm.

William H. Freund, *Author*



COMMUNITY SURVEY SUMMARY:  
“A VISION FOR THE RIVER ROAD / WESTBARD AREA, BETHESDA, MD”

Introduction

Prior to 1982, a Joint Committee on the Westbard Plan was established to advise the Montgomery County Planning Board on the problems, needs and views of the Committee’s members with regard to a new River Road/Westbard Sector Plan. The Committee had a diverse membership composed of business owners, lawyers, property owners and neighborhood citizens of the area. The group provided input for the important decisions the Planning Board made with respect to the Sector Plan that was approved in 1982 by the County Council. Perhaps the most important decision was adopting a vision that the commercial area should be zoned to operate as a local convenience shopping area. For years this vision remained intact but in 2004 the property along Westbard Avenue was sold to Capital Properties Associates, LP. This purchase by a developer, coupled with the County’s population and economic growth, and limited developable land is putting pressure on down county areas to increase density and develop mixed commercial/residential properties.

Under the auspices of the Citizens Coordinating Committee on Friendship Heights (CCCFH), the Joint Committee has been reformed with representatives from neighboring civic associations to monitor any changes to the zoning and land uses for the River Road/Westbard sector. Another Committee responsibility is to speak actively on behalf of our communities.

The group disseminated a survey to over 4,600 households surrounding the sector to discern citizen perspectives for the Westbard area. This report presents selected findings from the 1,588 survey responses and includes appendices containing the questionnaire and responses to all questions.

A Shared Vision

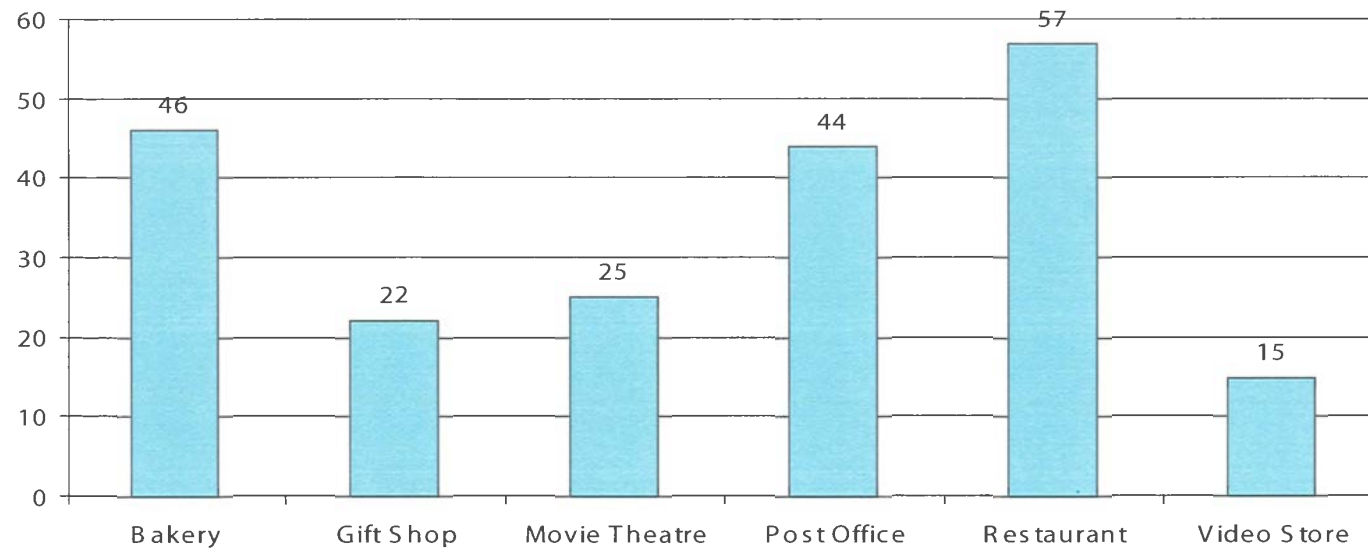
Over 90 percent of the 1,428 respondents agree that local commercial areas should provide neighborhood support (table 1). Also, about 74 percent didn’t want substantial changes to the area while 13 percent were amenable to major changes.

However, while area residents want to maintain the original vision, that doesn’t preclude changing the composition of the commercial sector. For example, survey respondents felt that more shopping options were needed along both River Road and Westbard Avenue.

Table 1.-- Responses to Survey Question 54.			
Do you agree or disagree with these statements:	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
The vision should remain that this be a neighborhood shopping area.	92%	5%	3%
The River Road/Westbard area should be changed in a substantial way.	13%	13%	74%
Total Respondents for this question: 1,428			



Chart 1. - Six most desired additions to the commercial mix on River Road (Respondents = 1,456)



The types of new shopping desired were similar for both River Road and Westbard Avenue. For example, 57, 46, and 44 percent of the 1,456 respondents who answered the question on desired additions) wanted a sit-down restaurant, bakery and post office along River Road (Chart 1). The comparable figures for locating such establishments on Westbard Avenue were 58, 52 and 49 percent respectively. These results are consistent with the vision of maintaining the neighborhood shopping area.

### Zoning and Land Use

The zoning for the sector covers eight different types of land use ranging from multi-family, high density (R-10) to light industrial (I-1) and everything in between. Planners will be considering a number of zoning alternatives for the sector, including how much housing will be added, the amount of retail or office space to include and how it would all look. One of the survey's key questions posed a series of developmental scenarios and

asked for respondents views. Four things can be gleaned from the data. First, regardless of proposed building heights, buildings without retail space were looked upon with the least favorable ratings. This is consistent with other survey results. Secondly, despite the fact that several tall buildings already exist along Westbard Avenue, survey respondents were consistently against 10 story (90+feet) buildings with or without ground floor retail space on either side of the avenue. The unfavorable percentages ranged from 82 to 90 percent and virtually everyone had an opinion (Table 2). Third, reactions were decidedly more mixed when asked about smaller residential buildings of 4 to 6 stories (40-60 feet) and with ground floor retail. For example, over half the respondents had either favorable or no opinions for 4 – 6 story residential buildings provided retail space was available. Lastly, additional housing options in the form of condos, townhouses, etc. plus senior citizen housing received higher favorable ratings than other options. Fifty four percent were for additional senior citizen housing within the community.



Table 2.--Possible developmental changes along Westbard Avenue and citizen reactions				
#	Developmental scenarios	Favorable	No Opinion	Unfavorable
		Pct.	Pct.	Pct.
1	Residential buildings exceeding 10 stories (90+ feet) with ground floor retail on both sides of Westbard Ave	9	6	85
2	Residential buildings exceeding 10 stories (90+ feet) with NO ground floor retail on both sides of Westbard Ave	4	6	90
3	Residential buildings exceeding 10 stories (90+ feet) with ground floor retail on the west side (Giant side) of Westbard only	9	8	83
4	Residential buildings exceeding 10 stories (90+ feet) with ground floor retail on the east side (bowling alley side) of Westbard only	8	10	82
5	Residential buildings of 4 - 6 stories (40-60 feet) with ground floor retail on both sides of Westbard Ave	36	14	50
6	Residential buildings of 4 - 6 stories (40-60 feet) with NO ground floor retail on both sides of Westbard Ave	19	20	61
7	Residential buildings of 4 - 6 stories (40-60 feet) with ground floor retail on the west side (Giant side) of Westbard Ave only	39	19	42
9	Residential buildings of 4 - 6 stories (40-60 feet) with ground floor retail on the east side (bowling alley side) of Westbard Ave only	34	21	45
9	Additional multiuse space (such as retail, townhouses, condos) in the area that is now Westbard Shopping Center	39	20	40
10	Additional senior citizen housing for the community	53	30	17
Total Respondents = 1,489				
Shape of the question				

While a similar question was not asked for the stretch of River Road from Ridgefield Drive to Little Falls Parkway, survey respondents were questioned (# 21) about whether the two story height limitation along that stretch of road should be retained. The answer was decidedly yes by 79 to 21 percent margin.

Transportation issues

As mentioned above, the Westbard sector includes buildings of 10 or more stories along Westbard Avenue and River Road has a seven story office building and a 10 story plus residential building. The respondent reluctance to react favorably to additional high density development may be due to infrastructure issues such as transportation. A series of nine questions were asked on transportation issues.

Public transportation is readily available to residents surrounding the Westbard sector. Specifically, two Ride-On routes (23 and 29) bisect the area and take passengers to the Friendship Heights Metro Station. So does the T-2 bus from Rockville via River Road to Friendship Heights.

Respondents were asked to indicate all the modes of transportation they used to get to work (question11). Ninety percent of the 1,556



respondents use a car as part of his or her trip. For some, that may mean a trip to Friendship Heights and for others, a drive to the office. Public transportation was used by 39 percent of the respondents with biking and walking indicated by 13 and 14 percent respectively (Chart 2).

The predominant use of a private auto when public transportation is available is unquestioned. For example, 53 percent of the respondents to question 15 use a car to get to Metro (unpublished data) and this situation may be difficult to change. As a result, the issue of traffic congestion under current densities plus any proposed development must be considered.

Some rush hour congestion is to be expected and respondent perceptions confirm this. For instance, all three major arteries in the Westbard sector (River Road, Massachusetts Avenue, and Little Falls Parkway) were deemed "congested" by respondents with River Road, at 70 percent, considered the most packed (Table 3). In fact, only 15 percent felt that River Road traffic conditions were even adequate. In contrast, Westbard Avenue was not considered to be a bottleneck. Congestion was not a problem during the weekends on Massachusetts and Westbard Avenues or Little Falls Parkway. However, an interesting finding is that 35 percent of the respondents considered River Road to be congested even on weekends.

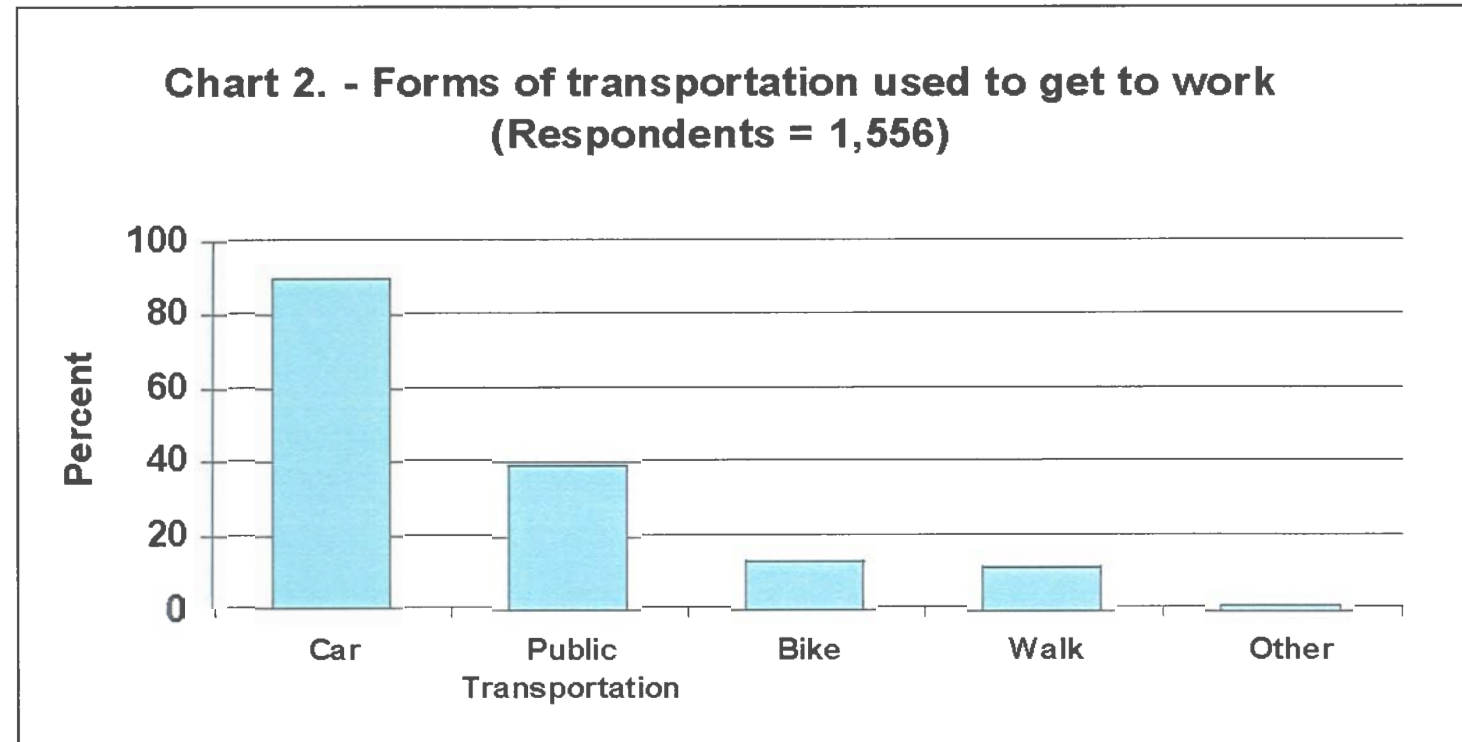
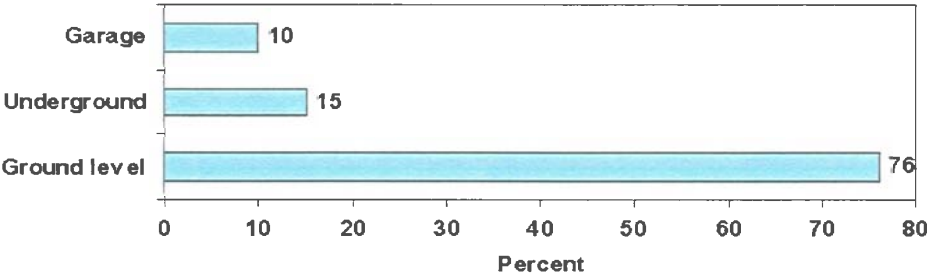




Table 3. -- Perceptions of traffic conditions on selected Westbard Sector streets				
Time of day	Free- Flowing	Adequate	Congested	Gridlock
<b>AM/PM rush hours</b>				
...on River Road during am/pm rush?	1	14	70	15
...Westbard Ave. during am/pm rush?	17	51	30	2
...on Mass Ave. during am/pm rush?	3	24	61	12
...on Little Falls Parkway during am/pm rush?	5	27	57	11
<b>Weekends</b>				
...on River Road on weekends?	17	46	35	1
...Westbard Ave. on weekends?	37	47	15	1
...on Mass Ave. on weekends?	29	57	14	*
...on Little Falls Parkway on weekends?	30	54	15	1
* - Less than .5%				
<b>Total Respondents = 1520</b>				
<b>(skipped this question) = 37</b>				

Chart 3. --Preferred parking options at Westbard Avenue  
(Respondents - 1,440)



Shopping

Unpublished data from survey questions 24, 29, and 30 (see appendix 2) may provide some insight to the traffic situation. For example, survey respondents visit both the Giant and Whole Foods for groceries (91 and 81 percent respectively). In fact, respondents visit Westbard area stores one to four times a week (61 percent) and 25 percent say they visit these stores 5 to 7 times a week. Ninety six percent say they use a car to get to the these stores so weekend congestion on River Road should come as no surprise and even a much appreciated police presence can't totally control the congestion.

One developmental issue for Westbard Avenue will be the nature of available parking. As might be expected, ground parking was preferred by 76 percent of the respondents. The other twenty four percent wanted either underground or garage parking (chart 3). More critically, unpublished data (survey question 37) show that a little over half of the respondents might go elsewhere if only underground parking was available. If a charge for parking was implemented, 90 percent indicated they would go elsewhere.



Parks and recreation

A number of questions were posed to survey recipients on parks and recreation facilities within the Westbard sector. Unpublished data (survey question 40) indicate that about 57 percent of survey respondents use park facilities at least once a week. Results regarding the Capital Crescent Trail may be informative. Almost 50 percent of the respondents indicated they use the Trail at least once a week and almost all (82 percent) use it at least once a month. Walking, biking and jogging are the most popular uses (unpublished data). As such, the Trail is considered a valuable green space for the community.

Conclusions

These preliminary findings may change somewhat once the remaining survey forms are entered into the system. However, the results reported above do indicate general community consensus regarding zoning considerations in the Westbard Sector. These include:

- The Westbard Sector ought to remain a neighborhood shopping area;
- A revised retail business mix seems appropriate;
- High density residential development is not desired but some lower density development appears more acceptable;

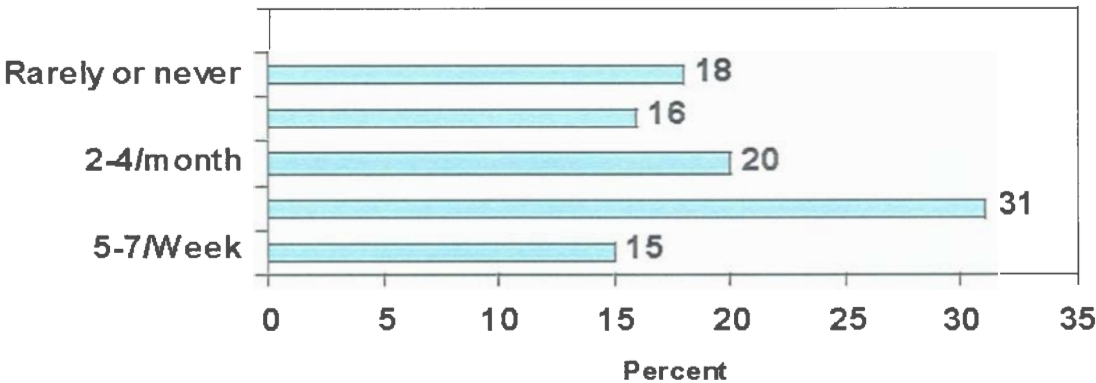
- Despite public transportation options, a car is the overwhelming mode of transportation; and
- River Road is considered a major choke point for traffic, even on weekends.

Surveyed Communities:

Brookdale  
Chevy Chase West  
Green Acres-Glen Cove  
Kenwood  
Kenwood Condos  
Kenwood House  
Kenwood Place Condo  
Springfield  
Sumner  
Town of Somerset  
Village of Drummond  
Westbard Mews  
Westmoreland  
Westwood Mews Condo  
Wood Acres

William H. Freund, *Author*

Chart 4. -- Usage of the Capital Crescent Trail  
(Respondents = 1,447)





## LITTLE FALLS WATERSHED - ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Montgomery County has listed the whole Little Falls Creek watershed (the Upper Mainstem and the Willett Branch) as having poor water quality, the worst category possible.

Willett Branch has two stems, one stem that appears to start at Kenwood Country Club, flowing through Kenwood and under River Road at Westbard Avenue and then continuing south of River Road. The second stem appears to start north of Bradley Boulevard at Glenwood Road and flows along Little Falls Parkway, through Kenwood to the tunnel at River Road where the two stems of Willett Branch meet.

The Upper Mainstem appears to start at Chevy Chase Country Club, flowing underground near Wisconsin just north of the Saks, and emerging above ground again at Wisconsin Avenue in Somerset behind the Somerset House apartment complex. It crosses River Road at Willard Avenue, then flows through Green Acres as a channelized section to Little Falls Parkway. The two branches meet along Little Falls Parkway where the Upper Mainstem flows under Little Falls Parkway.

A visit to the park shows the effects of uncontrolled stormwater runoff and the County's efforts to mitigate and control the problems. Viewing

the stream from the south side of Massachusetts Avenue, we could see that the erosion has reached as high as 30 feet up the embankment, coming closer and closer to the Capital Crescent Trail above. The rapid water flows during storm events had scoured the stream banks, causing erosion and widening the stream, so much so that without remedial action the stream would eventually undermine the underpinnings of the Trail. The erosion has also exposed sewer pipes which were originally buried underground, creating the hazard of an accident with a severe public health impact. A strong odor of sewage occurs around the gas outlets for the sewer system.

Stormwater flow has been a major problem in the watershed for several reasons. The large volume of uncontrolled stormwater, in large part because of development in the watershed with large areas of impervious surfaces – parking lots, streets, and building roofs – all contribute to a large volume of fast-flowing water. The large volume of uncontrolled rain-water runoff also increases the possibility of floods, as much of the water simply flows into the stream rather than being absorbed by the ground. This contributed to the decision to pave ("channelize") the stream to avoid flooding. Paving, in addition to causing the stream to look like an open sewer, increases the speed of the

flowing water, creating danger for children playing near the stream during times of high flow, causing damage to the stream bed and making aquatic life impossible.

The stormwater also becomes contaminated from whatever it comes into contact with – such as oil, fertilizer, pesticides, and whatever else is on the ground -- before it flows into the stream. The speed of the water flow then prevents, or minimizes, the ability of natural processes (as found in wetlands) to filter, aerate, and otherwise clean the water before it flows into the Potomac River, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay.

The County installed experimental works to control storm run-off flooding, slow the water flow and direct it so as not to be so destructive along the stream south of Massachusetts Avenue. This project includes placement of inter-laced timbers and large rocks along the stream bank, as well as designed V-cuts away from the bank, and placement of rocks across the stream creating small waterfalls, to slow and divert the rushing water. Whether these attempts will work is yet to be seen. One problem is that this work is on the lower part of the stream, not upstream where water management strategies might have more effect.



The County must be encouraged to do more, especially in our area which has significant problems with excessive stormwater run-off, due to development. The County has started a new program called Rainscapes which advises homeowners with small stormwater capture projects (e.g. rain barrels, rain gardens) on their own property.

Walking upstream, along Little Falls Parkway, one can see that natural barriers, mostly rock outcroppings, have created pools, little cascades, and have limited the ability of the stream to leave the stream bed – the banks were mostly of rock, not soil. Some beautiful areas exist along this stretch of the stream. A picnic table even appears to have been placed there by the County, as it is well located and undamaged. However, underbrush is beginning to take over and soon the table will be fully hidden by new growth. Poison ivy is nearly everywhere. Foam floats on the surface of the water. Trash is seen that had been deposited along the banks and in brush and trees and where the water pooled. All along are little bits of paper and plastic deposited by the stream over time. Many neighbors have seen large trash items, especially during spring cleanup efforts.

By crossing Little Falls Parkway, one can see upstream and in the other direction where it crosses under the Parkway. At this point, looking toward River Road on the east side of the Parkway, the

County currently is not maintaining the large open area – formerly it was mowed and had colorful wild flowers, but it is now overgrown. The stream (from River Road until it reaches and crosses under Little Falls Parkway) is mostly paved to allow rapid flow of water to prevent flooding further upstream. It is also channelized upstream through to Green Acres neighborhood.

In the past, the County proposed building a water holding project/pond on the southeast side of Little Falls Parkway (adjoining the cement-covered channelized stream). The area would have to be designed carefully and in concert with the community – any wetland would have to be designed with safety in mind, allowing for safe passage to and from school and the neighborhood to Little Falls Parkway. Clearly, with proper design a shallow pond and wetland would improve water quality, while also making a visually attractive little wetland that could become a landscape amenity for the neighborhood. Strategies are needed to improve the appearance and improve water quality in the stream’s channelized portions, such as terracing and planting at the sides.

Stormwater control/water quality management has been built near NIH, near the corner of Battery Lane and Woodmont Avenue at Wisconsin Avenue. It is both a method to improve water quality and a visually attractive neighborhood

landscape feature. Further, it helps to filter pollutants from the water and to manage stormwater flow. It would provide an attractive alternative to the current overgrown field and would begin to eliminate the “open sewer” appearance as it flows through the neighborhood while preserving the necessary flood control measures that originally led to paving the stream 50+ years ago.

Between Little Falls Parkway and River Road at Ridgefield Road, the stream flows through the light industrial zone, alternately through tunnels or channelized areas, and in some places intermittently as an open stream above ground. A walkway behind the McDonalds leads to a bridge over Willet Branch (after it emerges from the tunnel) that could provide a walking/bicycle path from Capital Crescent Trail to Westbard Avenue and Westwood Center and Giant food parking lot.

Suggestions for improving the watershed in the Westbard area include expanding the parkland that adjoins the stream through land purchases, and introducing sunlight to that portion of the stream which is underground by removing all underground pipes and constructing exposed stream beds.





LITTLE FALLS STREAM - EAST OF PARKWAY



LITTLE FALLS STREAM - WEST OF PARKWAY







