MCPB
Item #
4/24/08

MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

April 9, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Glenn Kreger, Acting Chief GK
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SUBJECT: Draft Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD

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**RECOMMENDATION: Discussion and approval to publish for public review and comment.**

The draft Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring Central Business District (CBD) seeks to identify specific sites in the CBD that could potentially provide one or more large green spaces. Although not part of Staff's formal work program, Staff recognized the pressing need to address this concern since the CBD continues to develop at an unprecedented pace, and consequently, the potential for large green spaces continues to decrease.

This document emerged primarily as a response to two sets of circumstances affecting the Silver Spring CBD:

1. The demand for large green spaces appears to be greater than the supply. The demand for such spaces was evident at the public hearing for the Silver Spring Civic Building when numerous members of the community expressed opposition to a hardscaped Veteran's Plaza and support for a large, centrally located green open space. In South Silver Spring, the community has also expressed concern about the lack of useable green spaces and the difficulty in accessing Jesup Blair Park, the largest public park, on the east side of Georgia Avenue. Over 800 new residential units have been approved in this area of the CBD, which requires planning for green spaces as amenity areas and as relief in the urban fabric.

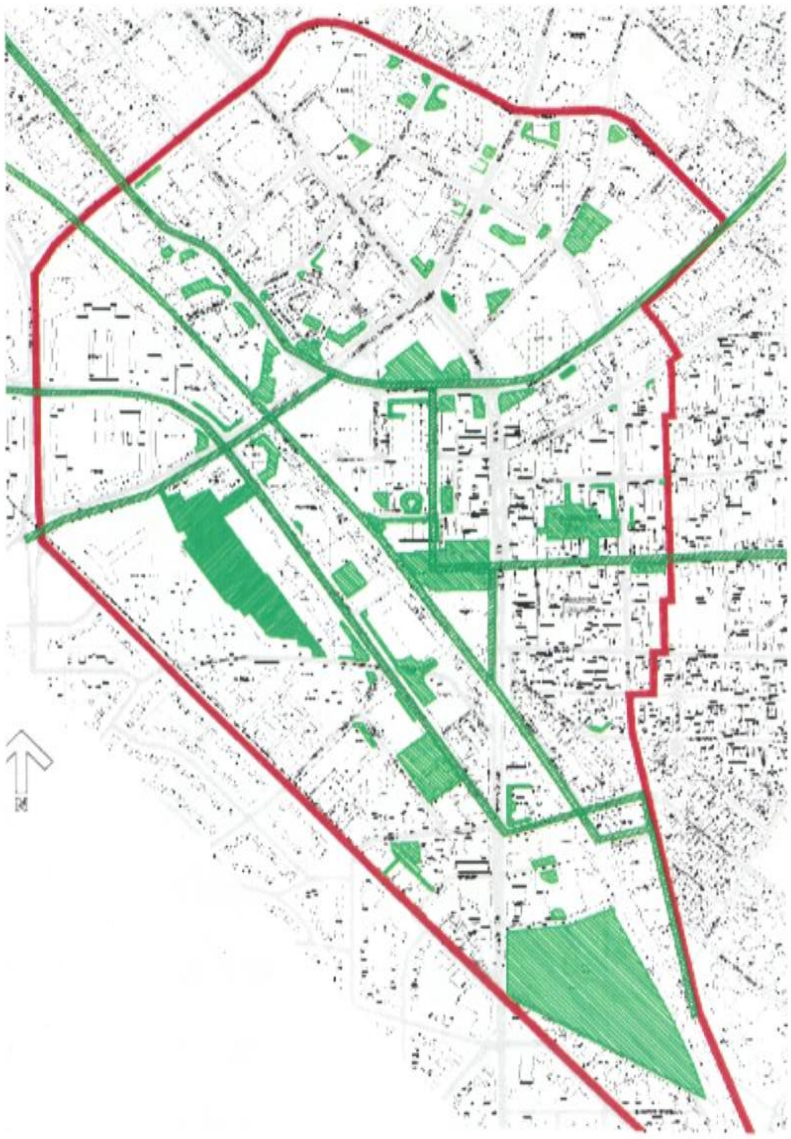
2. This document also responds to a specific urban form that is envisioned for the Silver Spring CBD. The development of optional method projects must be balanced by the provision of significant green spaces at appropriate locations. Pending legislation may allow such spaces to be provided off-site. The desired urban form consists of a hierarchy of green spaces that vary in size, character, and location, and that are linked together by green streets. The resulting green space network provides visual, recreational, and environmental relief from the urban fabric at the same time that it encourages pedestrian activity.

In response to these sets of circumstances, the Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD identifies opportunities for creating green spaces in the CBD, and makes recommendations on specific sites that should be considered for potentially large green spaces. Staff requests the Planning Board's comments on the draft report and approval to circulate it for public review and comment.

SP:JM:ha:

Attachment

# DRAFT GREEN SPACE PLAN FOR THE SILVER SPRING CBD



The Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission
Montgomery County Planning Department
April 2008

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


I. Executive Summary ..... 3

II. Problem Statement ..... 4

III. Purpose of the Green Space Plan ..... 6

IV. Policy Background ..... 7

V. Existing Conditions ..... 13

VI. Opportunities for Future Green Spaces ..... 24

VII. Tools ..... 32

VIII. Recommendations ..... 37

IX. Conclusion and Next Steps ..... 54

X. Bibliography ..... 56

Appendix A ..... 58

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. Public Use Spaces (existing, under construction and approved) in the Silver Spring CBD, March 2008 .....22
2. Potential sites for ½ acre Parks or Larger .....36
3. Open Space System (Existing and Proposed) .....53

## LIST OF TABLES

1. Parks and Private Projects (existing, under construction and approved) with public use space on-site..... 15
2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis) of recommended sites.....47
3. Ranking of the Potential Sites for Large Green Spaces .....50

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring Central Business District (CBD) addresses the following multi-faceted **problem**:

- Implementation of Sector Plan vision not yet achieved
- Too few significant green spaces
- Uneven distribution of green spaces
- Inadequate connectivity between green spaces
- Minimal environmental benefits in existing open spaces

Several policy documents in Montgomery County refer to the importance of green spaces in terms of their social, economic and environmental benefits. These policies form the starting point for this study together with a thorough understanding of the existing open space infrastructure in the Silver Spring CBD. Case studies across the country that focus on urban green spaces serve as a guide to opportunities in the Silver Spring CBD.

This study identifies the following **opportunities** to address the problem in Silver Spring:

- Green spaces over parking facilities,
- Urban stream restoration,
- Green streets, and
- Property assemblage.

Existing mechanisms or tools have helped to create the existing green space infrastructure. These can be further enhanced to help implement larger green spaces in the Silver Spring CBD. The major **tools** are:

- Optional method of development,
- Off-site transfer of Open Space,
- Open Space Amenity Fund,
- Public Projects,
- Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED), and
- Recreation Guidelines.

This study recommends that we pursue the following priority sites for potential green spaces in the Silver Spring CBD: Parking Lot 3; land between Kennett Street and MD 410; land surrounding existing Progress Place in the Ripley District; the Giant Food Parking Lot; Silver Place; and land at the intersection of Fenton Street and MD 410.

# II. PROBLEM STATEMENT

- Implementation of Sector Plan vision not yet achieved
- Too few significant green spaces
- Uneven distribution of green spaces
- Inadequate connectivity between green spaces
- Environmental benefits are minimal in open spaces
- Minimal environmental benefits in existing open spaces

As the largest Central Business District (CBD) in Montgomery County and one with extensive development pressures, Silver Spring is faced with the challenge of balancing intense urban development with green space for recreation, visual amenity, and environmental quality. Together, the two uses have the potential to generate economic growth, account for social well-being, provide for recreational opportunities and a high-quality urban environment. However, both uses compete for land and other resources, and have different returns on investment. Whereas urban development is likely to have easily quantified, short to medium term returns, green space creation is more likely to have medium to long term benefits that are more difficult to quantify.

The vision of the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan highlights the importance of green spaces in the theme 'Green Downtown'. The Plan refers to the economic, environmental, and aesthetic benefits of a green downtown. It calls for linkages with varying emphasis on vehicular or pedestrian circulation, and green open spaces that are diverse in size, character and location, and complement surrounding uses and activities. Green spaces improve air quality by reducing particulate matter and ground level ozone. Water quality is improved by allowing it to infiltrate into the ground, where tree roots absorb it and return it to the air purified. Trees also reduce the heat island effect by shading and cooling the air, which reduces the energy demand associated with building cooling requirements.

The existing open space network in the Silver Spring CBD partly fulfills the Sector Plan's vision. Environmentally friendly green spaces, which are mostly pervious and landscaped areas that contrast with hardscaped plazas, are very limited in number in the CBD. This number is not likely to increase in the near future since no new parks have been identified. One existing park, Fenton Urban Park, is proposed for expansion.

Instead, there is an abundance of smaller, mostly hardscaped public spaces that are developed as part of the public space requirement in optional method projects, in which 20 percent of the net site area is required as on-site public use space. Unfortunately, the provision of 20 percent on-site public use space is often achieved by pulling the building back from the street, creating unnecessary interruptions in the street wall.

Continuous street walls are important because they provide enclosure and a sense of comfort for the person walking on the street, which arises from the human need for safety, orientation and territoriality. People are attracted to places that have clearly delineated edges and limited openings. In other words, outdoor "living rooms", or well defined spaces characterized by street walls that are primarily flat and simple (Duany et al, p.74-75).

In the Silver Spring CBD, when the continuous facades of the street walls are broken up by the too frequent openings required by on-site Public Use Spaces, the enclosing and comfort-giving effect of the street wall is violated. In addition, the Public Use Space often is not designed with a sense of enclosure, but rather is conceived as a foreground or entry way to the building it serves. The net effect is a streetscape that, interrupted by too many side spaces, lacks a clear sense of boundary or definition and fails to provide relief from the dense urban environment.

It follows that the demand for spaces in the CBD that give relief to the dense urban fabric and provide opportunities for enjoyment and relaxation continues to be greater than the supply. On several occasions and in particular at the public hearing for the Silver Spring Civic Building, the community has expressed their desire for large centrally located green spaces in the CBD. As build-out continues on increasingly smaller sites, the gap between opportunities for sites and demand will increase. Thus, the need to provide significant green space becomes ever more pressing.

The existing green spaces are also distributed unevenly. Evenly distributed parks are accessible to more people and create a healthier air and water ecology. The largest park in the CBD, Jesup Blair Park, is at the southernmost end of the CBD, not conveniently located for most residents or patrons of the CBD. Large Optional Method of Development projects provide the potential for large green spaces (e.g. Discovery Garden), but not all large projects have taken advantage of this opportunity (e.g. Downtown Silver Spring). Lastly, there is a lack of continuity and connection between

the existing spaces, which appear isolated and disjointed rather than part of a green open space network. The hierarchy of street types recommended in the Sector Plan is instrumental to serve as linkages between green spaces and public areas.

In the context of the current urban development in the CBD, tremendous opportunities remain to address these issues and improve the urban fabric through the design of streetscapes with well defined street walls and green, healthy, high-quality spaces. The urban form envisioned for the CBD consists of a hierarchy of green spaces that vary in size, character, and location, and that are linked together by green streets. The development of optional method projects, which increases density in the CBD, should be balanced by the provision of significant, well defined green spaces at appropriate locations. Pending legislation will allow such spaces to be provided off-site; currently, this is only allowed within the Silver Spring Overlay zones. The resulting green space network will result in green spaces that provide visual, recreational, and environmental relief at the same time that it encourages pedestrian activities, thereby adding to the vibrancy and success of the CBD.

## III. PURPOSE OF THE GREEN SPACE PLAN

The Green Space Plan for the Silver Spring CBD provides a framework for action to create a green downtown as recommended in the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan. The Green Space Plan makes specific recommendations regarding properties with the potential to provide significant green spaces. The resulting Green Space Plan seeks to provide a network of green spaces of varying sizes, evenly distributed throughout the CBD and well connected via green linkages.

The recommendations in the Green Space Plan reflect Staff analysis and directly respond to community requests for additional green space in the CBD. Community involvement will help to guide the next steps towards implementation.

# IV. POLICY BACKGROUND

A range of existing policy documents provide a starting point for this study in terms of current legislation, guidelines, and efforts related to open spaces, parks, and urban areas throughout Montgomery County. These documents vary in content and scale. Some focus on the entire county and make long-range recommendations, others focus on a particular area of the county and make more site-specific recommendations. Overall, these documents present visionary concepts for the county with comprehensive recommendations; however they often lack implementation measures. This study will suggest ways to implement some of the existing policies on urban areas and green spaces in the Silver Spring CBD.

## A. General Plan Refinement of the Goals and Objectives for Montgomery County (December 1993)

The General Plan is a comprehensive framework for guiding physical development and managing limited resources in Montgomery County. The General Plan Refinement replaces the 1964 General Plan and the 1969 Update and provides a 21st century vision for Montgomery County. While it reaffirms the Wedges and Corridors concept as a framework for development, it builds upon it to define a total of four geographic components in the County: the Urban Ring, the Corridor, the Suburban Communities, and the Wedge, which are defined in terms of appropriate land uses, scale, intensity, and function.

As the County's longest-range and most visionary document, the General Plan Refinement establishes seven goals: Land Use, Housing, Employment/Economic Activity, Transportation, Environment, Community Identity and Design, and Regionalism, and associated objectives and strategies. Of special relevance to the present study are the following:

- Land Use Goal
  - Objective 8 "Provide a coordinated and comprehensive system of parks, recreation, and open space"
- Environment Goal
  - Objective 2 "Preserve natural areas and features that are ecologically unusual, environmentally sensitive, or possess outstanding natural beauty"

- Objective 3 'Protect and improve water quality"
- Objective 7 'Protect and improve air quality',
- Objective 13 'Promote the efficient use of energy and plan for the County's long-term energy needs'.

**B. Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan** (2005)

The PROS Plan looks at park and open space needs for the county as a whole and for planning and community based team areas. It includes projected Population Changes by Planning Areas and provides relevant trends information, which show a projected 38 percent increase in the Silver Spring Planning Area population by 2020. The Silver Spring Planning Area encompasses the Silver Spring CBD, Takoma Park, Four Corners, North, East and West Silver Spring. In Silver Spring, age groups with an increase over 50 percent include youth ages 0 to 14, and 15-19. However, the increase in the population over 65 is nearly 75 percent. The Plan indicates that the County is a major migration gateway into Maryland. It mentions that for the community at large, recreation facilities (and parks) provide opportunities to gather for social experiences, to build a sense of community and civic pride, to build ethnic and cultural understanding, opportunities for individuals and groups to interact with nature within an urban setting, and a place for families to grow and connect with each other.

**C. Countywide Park Trails Plan** (July 1998)

The Countywide Park Trails Plan proposes a 250-mile interconnected system of hard surface and natural surface trails of countywide significance. Although the Plan focuses on trails within the more than 25,000 acres of parkland owned by M-NCPPC, some trails in parkland owned by Federal, State, and municipal agencies have also been included. The Plan addresses the importance of facilities such as bike paths that are located outside of parkland but provide safe, attractive access to park trails.

This Plan provides an integrated, countywide vision for park trails. The guiding principles in the preparation of this document were: maintain a countywide perspective; emphasize connectivity; provide variety; establish guidelines to aid decisions at the local planning level; seek balance among recreation, transportation, and environmental concerns; establish the priority of key components of the Countywide network; designate a network which is responsive to population centers, both existing

and planned; and recommend implementation strategies. The Plan recommends and sets priorities for routes that should be acquired, developed and open for public use in the next ten years.

D. **The Approved and Adopted Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan,** February 2000, provides the policy framework for the Silver Spring CBD.

*Green Downtown:* The Sector Plan establishes six themes that articulate the goals and vision for the CBD. The *Green Downtown* theme calls for a network of green urban parks connected by tree-lined streets and boulevards. This vision is to be achieved by applying seven different elements, which are: **urban boulevards, promenade streets, mixed streets, green streets, green parks, landscaped plazas and green parking lots**. The last four elements directly support and encourage green open space in the Silver Spring CBD. These elements envision spaces that "create visual and physical respite" and offer "formal and informal gathering spaces to complement street and building design" (p.22). They are seen as grassy, shaded places that "offer visual, physical, and recreational alternatives to the hard-edged urban environment" (p.23).

*Community Facilities:* The Sector Plan provides recommendations for existing and proposed Community Facilities in the CBD. Among them are specific parks and open spaces that could be built or renovated to improve the green space network in the Silver Spring CBD, such as:

1. Gateway Plaza (at Downtown Silver Spring)
2. Civic Plaza
3. Silver Triangle (i.e. Discovery Garden)
4. Silver Circle
5. Fidler Lane Promenade
6. Fenton Urban Park
7. Jesup Blair Park
8. Acorn Park
9. Hanson Park

Since the adoption of the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan, only the expansion of Fenton Urban Park site remains to be implemented, the others have been either built or approved. However, most of the new facilities are hardscaped plazas rather than green parks. In addition, some like the formal garden next to Discovery Headquarters, are not

perceived as public space because of physical elements that separate it from the public streetscape.

*Urban Recreation Facilities:* The Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan also recommends the development of Urban Recreation Facilities, such as, a skateboard park, rock climbing wall, fitness facilities, sculpture playground, water fountain, ice rink, skate parks, and in-line hockey rinks, which are characteristic of urban environments in terms of scale, recreational structures, and activities. The Sector Plan lists the following as potential urban recreation sites:

1. Montgomery Regional Office (MRO) Building Garage site
2. Cameron/Second Street Garage
3. Ripley Parking Lot
4. Canada Dry site
5. Fenton Village Garage (Garage 4)
6. M-NCPPC Parking Lot
7. Fairview Park (Outside the CBD)
8. Jesup Blair Park
9. South Fenton Urban Park
10. Civic Center site

The Canada Dry site has been developed and the Civic Center site has been approved for development, respectively. The renovation of Jesup Blair Park has also been accomplished.

**E. Recreation Guidelines** (1992)

The Recreation Guidelines, approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board in 1992, provide a method for evaluating whether the recreation facilities for a particular residential community will be adequate, and give guidelines for the design and development of those facilities. The method involves calculating the demand points for each population category in each housing type, and then comparing these values to the supply points provided by each recreational facility for each population category. This quantitative method allows for objectively determining the adequacy of the recreational facilities for every residential development. Furthermore, the specific guidelines provided for the design of each facility, such as: area, setbacks, possible activities, and screening/landscaping, establish a platform for safety and design excellence that is

consistent throughout the county. However, it is essential that these Guidelines be updated as soon as possible as they do not relate to new developments in heavily urbanized areas.

### F. **Parks for Tomorrow** (1998)

Parks for Tomorrow is a supplemental Staff document to the 1998 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan. The goal of this plan is to provide a system of urban parks and open spaces that serve the needs of our diverse communities and are attractive, safe and accessible. It addresses the increasingly urbanized areas of Montgomery County – areas that are experiencing the most rapid changes in the physical landscape, in society and in the economy. The vision in this plan for urban open spaces in Montgomery County is characterized by the following:

- Urban parks and open spaces that serve as community gathering places.
- Aesthetic open spaces that attract businesses and residents and contribute to urban revitalization.
- Recreation spaces for residents and employees.
- Attractive tree-lined streets that link the community to parks, businesses, shopping and public facilities.

### G. **Legacy Open Space (LOS) Functional Master Plan** (2001)

The LOS Plan was created to preserve the best remaining open space of varying kinds throughout Montgomery County. One of the six categories within this plan is Urban Open Spaces. The goal of the LOS Plan is to identify urban open space opportunities within existing neighborhoods and pursue transfer or purchase of selected sites. The functional master plan identifies specific open space sites and provides criteria for selection of additional sites for the program. Criteria for urban open spaces include key open space along major highways, land within existing urban areas, and important urban natural areas. Any Urban Open Space sites that are added to the LOS plan may be protected through a variety of tools including transfer of other public land to Parks, dedication of land through development, and outright acquisition for parkland.

**H. Future Countywide Urban Park Plan** (under development by the Department of Parks)

This future Plan will amend the Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan for Montgomery County to better reflect the important role urban parks play in community life. The Plan will examine how the pattern of urban parks relate to existing and proposed urban growth areas and will propose the types of activities and amenities that are best suited for urban parks. Key aspects that include finance, management and ownership of urban open spaces will also be explored in order to find innovative, cost-effective and efficient strategies to sustain urban parks.

# V. EXISTING CONDITIONS

## A. Inventory

The Silver Spring CBD has a number of public spaces that provide relief to the urban fabric. These spaces vary greatly in size, character, location and features or amenities provided. In order to gain a thorough understanding of the public use spaces currently offered or recently approved in the CBD, an inventory of existing conditions was generated that describes each space in terms of key quantitative and qualitative data (Table 1).

Figure 1 identifies the geographic location for each of these spaces. The map differentiates between public and privately developed open spaces. Public owned land in the CBD is limited and has been acquired over the years. Presently, the cost of urban land is the biggest challenge in public land acquisition. In contrast, privately developed open spaces are more abundant. These are often created as part of the Optional Method of Development in which developers are given density bonuses in exchange for greater public amenities, such as larger public use spaces. These spaces are intended for public use even though they are typically privately owned and maintained.

While this study does not intend to provide an environmental quality assessment of each space, it is key for this study to illustrate the amount of hardscape (or impervious surface) versus green space (or pervious surface) in each site. This study clearly establishes a difference between the terms 'open space/public use space' and 'green space', which might have been used interchangeably in the past, but are now differentiated based on the amount of pervious/impervious surfaces. It is now understood that not all open spaces are necessarily green spaces.

In this study, if the majority of the space is hardscape (more than 50 percent), it is designated as an **urban plaza,** which is mostly urban in character and small in size. In the Silver Spring CBD, examples of urban plazas include the Discovery Headquarters Plaza (No. 9 on Figure 1), Silver Plaza (No. 24b on Figure 1), and Silver Spring Metro Plaza (No. 7 on Figure 1). Some designated parks, such as the Philadelphia Avenue Urban Park (No. 51 on Figure 1) and the Metro Urban Park (No. 50 on Figure 1), also fall into this category where the space is more than 50 percent hardscaped.

The category identified as **green spaces**, refers to public use areas that are mostly (greater than 50 percent) landscaped, lawn, and pervious. In general, these spaces serve different uses than the urban plazas described above. Depending on their size, they are likely to host active recreational activities, and they provide greater environmental relief from the urban fabric. In the CBD, significant green spaces that are larger than 0.5 acres are very limited in number. The most significant green space is Jesup Blair Park (No. 53 on Figure 1), located at the southern tip of the CBD. The remaining green spaces are fairly small in size, and serve mostly a decorative or cosmetic function rather than providing opportunities for active recreation.

In order to better characterize the two groups of public use space, a **set of criteria** was developed that included quantitative and qualitative aspects. This method created a consistent and systematic approach to describing each space. Key quantitative data was retrieved from approved projects and included the total acreage of on-site public use space (PUS) provided as well as the percentage of PUS in relation to the net lot area. In addition, the types of amenities, such as benches, chairs, tables, water features, umbrellas, and playground equipment, provided in each site were documented in order to have a better sense of potential activities. Similarly, art work was also noted since it is has direct implications on the character and uses of a space.

Each space was described qualitatively in terms of distinguishing feature or characteristic, which helped to identify the most likely uses and character of the space. For instance, the dominant feature in Silver Plaza (No. 24b on Figure 1) is the water jet and fountain in the middle of the plaza. All other activities revolve around this feature where children often play and run, and caregivers sit and supervise. This space, in part, is activated by concerts, markets and festivals which add to its significance. Other spaces promote more contemplative and passive activities. These include the Crescent (No. 13 on Figure 1) or the wave pool at the NOAA Building (No. 17a on Figure 1) where the dominant feature is a sculpture piece or water feature,. These spaces are also designed to engage with the Arts and Entertainment theme of downtown Silver Spring. A distinguishing characteristic of green spaces relate to the use or purpose of the lawn and landscape areas. For instance, some served obvious recreational purposes while others reflect more decorative purposes. It is a concern that the number of green spaces serving recreational purposes is limited.

**Table 1 - List of Private Projects (existing, under-construction and approved) with respective onsite PUS and Public Parks in the Silver Spring CBD.**

| Key | Project Name | Location | On-Site Public Use Area (% Net Lot) | Description of On-Site Public Use Space (PUS) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| List of existing private projects in the Silver Spring CBD and their respective onsite PUS | | | | |
| 1. | Lee Plaza | North of the intersection of Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue | 7,473 SF (30.0%) | A) Indoor winter garden including landscaping, food service, newsstand, resource center displays and seating. B) Resource center with artifacts, letters and photographs of the development history of Eastern Montgomery County. C) Outdoor plaza. |
| 2. | Silver Spring Business Center | Southeast quadrant of the intersection of Colesville Road and Spring Street | 9,675 SF | A) Streetscape along Colesville with a sculpture and seating areas; B) Roeder Road amenity space with seating area, garden setting and stairs to second level restaurant terrace; C) Pedestrian arcade connecting Colesville Road and Roeder Road. |
| 3. | The Alexander House | Interior of building and at NE corner of Apple and 2nd Avenues | 13,250 SF (24.0%) | A) Hardscaped plaza with art elements, benches, tables. B) Public Garden |
| 4. | Silver Spring District Courthouse | Southwestern quadrant of Apple and 2nd Avenues | 13,919 SF (21.0%) | Plaza in front of building |
| 5. | Cameron Hill at Silver Spring | Corners of Cameron Street and 2nd Avenue and Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue | 2,670 SF (2.81%) | Pocket parks and related pathways |
| 6. | Tastee Diner | Northeast quadrant of the intersection of Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue | 1,660 SF (11.4%) | Small hardscaped area with bench |
| 7. | Silver Spring Metro Plaza | West of the intersection of Colesville Road and 2nd Avenue (adjacent to the Metro northern entryway) | 22,780 SF (22.78%) | Hardscape pedestrian connection; fountain, paving and trees in planters. Space is between two highrise office buildings. |
| 8. | Silver Spring Center | 8455 Colesville Road, Southwest quadrant of the intersection of Colesville Road and Ramsey Avenue | 10,894 SF (29.5%) | A) Shopping arcade along Colesville Road; B) Mini park with water feature, landscaping and seating; C) Pedestrian connection along Fidler Lane. |
| 9. | Discovery Communications | South of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and | 85,295 SF (56.9%) | A) Hardscaped plaza; B) Discovery Garden, green space with seating, |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Headquarters | Colesville Road | | tables and lighting, and enclosed by a fence); C) Art Wall along Colesville Road. |
| 10. | 1100 Wayne Avenue | Southwest quadrant of the intersection of Wayne Avenue and Dixon Avenue | 7,201 SF (32.0%) | A) Major pedestrian arcade along Wayne Avenue; B) Mini park with a pedestrian connection to Garage 5. |
| 11. | 1010 Wayne Avenue | Southeast quadrant of the intersection of Dixon Avenue and Wayne Avenue | 7,190 SF (28.34 %) | A) Public plaza featuring a garden theme including landscaping, seating areas, and sculpture. B) Covered pedestrian arcade along Wayne and Dixon Avenues. |
| 12. | 8484 Georgia Avenue | Southwest of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Wayne Avenue | 7,000 SF (28.0%) | A) Public garden featuring pedestrian walkways, seating areas, trees, and other landscape features. B) Setback and arcade along Wayne Avenue. |
| 13. | The Crescent | 930 Wayne Avenue | 4,999 SF (24.0%) | A) Hardscaped plaza with art element, benches, and landscaped planters. B) Expansion of Wayne Avenue streetscape. |
| 14. | Lofts 24/ Silver Spring Park | Southwest quadrant of the intersection of Fenton Street and Bonifant Street | 1,665 SF (10.1%) | Hardscaped plaza |
| 15. | Draper Lane Residential Triangle (Lenox Park) | Northwest corner of Colesville Road and East West Highway | 5,400 SF (5.87%) | A) Draper Lane Park (benches and other garden furniture, quality paving material, light fixtures and existing trees retained); B) East-West/Colesville corner plaza (public art work, landscaping, water fountain, amphitheater, pergola and quality paving materials) in front of retail establishment. |
| 16. | Silver Spring Metro Center (NOAA Plaza) | Northeast of the intersection of Colesville Road and East-West Highway | 17,460 SF | A) Hardscaped pedestrian connection between East-West Highway and Colesville Road that also serves as a connection to the southern Silver Spring Metro entrance; B) Interior public amenity space for rotating art exhibit. |
| 17. | Silver Spring Metro Center, III, IV, V (NOAA) | East-West Highway | 80,244 SF (41.4%) | A) NOAA Sculpture Entry: hardscaped semi-circular entry court that serves as a base for metal sculpture (1,040 SF); B) NOAA Wave Pool and Garden: a ½ acre (22,850 SF) garden that includes a large wave pool, hardscaped paths, masonry seat wall and small lawn areas; C) Indoor space (science & |

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | history center & day care, auditorium). |
| 18. | 8215 Fenton Street | 275 feet south of the intersection of Thayer Avenue and Fenton Street (to the south of mid-block alley) | 600 SF (10%) | A small brick extension of sidewalk with a small tree and bench |
| 19. | 8045 Newell Street | South of the intersection of Newell Street and Kennett Street | 12,640 SF (21.3%) | A hardscape plaza with art work. The plaza extends under the building along Kennett and also accommodates artwork. |
| 20. | Discovery Creative Technology Center | Southeast quadrant of the intersection of East-West Highway and Newell Street | 18,880 SF (24.8%) | A) Refurbishment of the Acorn Park with plantings, the Saratoga Post lamp, the Silver Spring bench, bike rack and special paving. B) Street tree plantings and pavers. C) Memory wall panels on the northwest façade of the Caldor building facing the Acorn Park containing representational images of the history of Silver Spring. |
| 21. | Jesus House | Philadelphia Avenue, 150 feet west of Fenton Street | 2,220 SF (17.0%) | Hardscaped plaza. |
| 22. | City Place | Southwest quadrant of the intersection of Colesville Road and Fenton Street | 20,216 SF * (22.5%) | A) Hardscaped plaza at the corner of Colesville Road and Fenton Street; B) Streetscape within the property boundary; C) Interior atrium space; D) Pedestrian bridge to the public parking garage. * Augmented PUS through contribution toward offsite amenity. |
| 23. | The Silverton (former Canada Dry Bottling Plant) | East-West Highway at Blair Mill Road | 16,001 SF (12.6%) | Public plaza with lawn panel and bosque of trees. |
| 24. | The Downtown Silver Spring Urban Renewal Project | Eastern quadrant of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road | 273,558 SF (29.3%) | Multiple projects (see below) |
| | a. Green Lawn and Signage (Gateway Plaza) | Eastern quadrant of the intersection of Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue, in front of historic art deco style Silver Spring Shopping Center | 5,650 SF | Triangular hardscaped plaza with public fountain |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | b. Silver Plaza | Mid-block on Ellsworth Avenue between Fenton Street and Georgia Avenue | 11,900 SF (29.9%) | Fountain, art work. |

List of private projects <u>under construction</u> in the Silver Spring CBD and their respective onsite PUS

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25. | United Therapeutics | SE and SW quadrant of the intersection of Cameron and Spring Streets | 14,832 SF (24.3%) | Outdoor plaza areas centered between the two buildings, and additional public use space adjacent to the retail. The plazas will contain public art elements, a special paving treatment to accentuate the street and building, and specialty landscaping. |
| 26. | Cameron House | 8710 Cameron Street, approximately 100 feet southwest of the intersection of Cameron Street and Spring Street | 16,334 SF (23.2%) | A) Plaza comprised of pavers, lawn area with metal sculpture, and accent planting. B) Extension of the Cameron Street streetscape and incorporating public art. |
| 27. | Colesville Road Hilton/ Hampton | On Colesville Road, 210 feet north of Fenton Street | (36.2%) | Drop-off area with special paving, plantings, and art element. |
| 28. | Easter Seals | East of the intersection of Spring Street and 2nd Avenue | 3,303 SF (11.6%) | Seating areas with specialty paving and landscaping. |
| 29. | The Portico | On Fidler Lane, 100 feet Southwest of Ramsey Avenue | 5,674 SF (26.3%) | Plaza with public art at the south end of the site contiguous to the public park located at the end of Fidler Lane. |
| 30. | 1200 East-West Highway | Northwest quadrant of the intersection of Blair Mill Road and East-West Highway | 7,658 SF (24.1%) | Integrated outdoor spaces with a public plaza as a foreground to the building. Plaza featuring specialty paving, planters, sculpture and seating areas in front of retail space. The sculpture incorporates light and glass technology. |
| 31. | 1200 Blair Mill Road | Southwest quadrant of the intersection of Blair Mill Road and Newell Street | 4,460 SF (25.1%) | Plaza featuring specialty paving, artwork (eight stainless steel lotus-like columns), seating areas in front of retail space, and a lawn area for the public interaction. |
| 32. | Silver Spring Gateway | Southeast of the intersection of Blair Mill Road and East-West Highway | 24,506 SF (22.0%) | Central Plaza, a Terraced Lawn in front of the retail space, the West Park, and a small pocket park to serve the private outdoor area. |
| 33. | Montgomery College Takoma Park/ Silver Spring campus expansion | Southeastern quadrant of intersection of Georgia Avenue and Burlington Avenue | 42,602 SF (55.7%) | A) Plaza serving the users of the King Street Arts Center characterized by a 50/50 mix of green vs. hardscape with low seatwalls, walkways and spaces to |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | display student art; B) Pedestrian bridge. |

List of approved (not built yet) private projects in the Silver Spring CBD and their respective onsite PUS

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 34. | The Downtown Silver Spring Urban Renewal Project | Eastern quadrant of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road | | Multiple projects (see below) |
| | a. Silver Spring Civic Building | Southeastern quadrant of the intersection of Fenton Street and Ellsworth Drive (fronting new Civic Building) | 66,288 SF | Plaza (approximately 0.75 acres) includes landscaping, public art, seating, special lighting, and seasonal ice rink with pavilion. |
| | b. Downtown Silver Spring, Block E | Bounded by Cedar Street to the north, Ellsworth Drive to the west, Pershing Drive to the east and the future Veteran's Place to the south | 6,955 SF (8.03%) | A) Landscaped plaza with seating and ornamental planting; B) Expansion of streetscapes with foundation plantings. |
| 35. | 8711 Georgia Avenue | East side of Georgia Avenue, approximately 130 feet north of Cameron Street | 8,275 SF (26,6%) | Plaza behind the building with landscaping, public art, benches, and special lighting |
| 36. | 836 Bonifant Street | On Bonifant Street, 200 feet East of Fenton Street | 866 SF (17.0%) | A) Plaza featuring special paving, perimeter ground planting, ornamental trees, and two benches. B) Expansion of the Bonifant Street streetscape. |
| 37. | 1050 Ripley Street | Southwestern quadrant of the intersection of Ripley Street and Colonial Lane immediately adjacent to the CSX/ Metro Right of Way | 14,302 SF* (37%) | A hardscaped circular plaza intended as a rest stop for the future extension of the Metropolitan Branch Trail that includes a water fountain, an informational kiosk, and a shaded seating area. * Augmented PUS through contribution toward offsite amenity. |
| 38. | Midtown Silver Spring (KSI) | On Ripley Street, 500 feet West of Georgia Avenue | 23,300 SF (39.2%) | A) hardscaped plaza (5,200 SF) at west end of proposed high rise residence between building and Ripley Street extension. B) A hardscaped plaza (9,000 SF) at east side of the Dixon Avenue extension through the parking garage. Proposed plaza that will include hardscape, plantings and shade structures. |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 39. | The Adele | 8222-8224 Fenton Street, located in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Fenton Street and Thayer Avenue | 5,705 SF* (20.0%) | A) Plaza with public art, benches, amenity landscaping, lighting and ornamental paving. B) Extension of the Thayer Avenue streetscape with planters and public art. * Augmented PUS through contribution toward offsite amenity. |
| 40. | 814 Thayer | 814 Thayer Avenue, approximately 150 feet east of Fenton Street | 4,620 SF (22.0%) | Public plaza between the residential building and Thayer Avenue; two public artworks within the plaza; landscaping, lighting and seating areas with game tables. |
| 41. | R. Holt Easley's Subdivsion | On Fenton Street, 200 feet south of Thayer Avenue | 777 SF (12.6%) | A) Hardscaped plaza with a bench; B) Expansion of Fenton Street streetscape. |
| 42. | The Moda Vista Residences | Southeast quadrant of the intersection of Silver Spring Avenue and Fenton Street | 8,239 SF (20%) | A plaza that becomes more green as it extends down Silver Spring Street. |
| 43. | 8021 Georgia Avenue | Northeast quadrant of the intersection of Georgia Avenue (MD 97) with Burlington Avenue | 10,227 SF* (20.0%) | A) Expansion of the streetscape on Burlington and Georgia Avenues along the property boundaries. B) Seating areas in front of the existing and proposed building to highlight the preservation of the historic structures. *Augmented PUS through contribution toward offsite amenity. |
| 44. | The Galaxy | The space serves as a connection between 13th Street, Eastern Avenue and King Street | 23,468 SF (27.0%) | A plaza nestled between two buildings that is composed of hardscaped plaza and seating area, a small green space with play equipment, and bordered by planters with seat walls |

List of existing public parks in the Silver Spring CBD

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 45. | Fidler Lane Park | Northwestern quadrant of the intersection of 2nd Avenue and Colesville Road | 10,750 SF | Brick paved walks and steps connect 2nd Avenue with the end of Fidler's Lane. Accented by trees, shrubs and annual color |
| 46. | Plaza at Southeast corner of Wayne Avenue and Georgia Avenue | In front of Silver Spring Regional Center | 13,200 | Hardscaped plaza with fountain and sculpture (ROW, not parkland) |
| 47. | Acorn Urban Park | 8060 Newell Street | 5,432 SF (0.13 acres) | Historical park with Acorn Gazebo and mature shade trees. |
| 48. | Fenton Street Urban Park | 7904 Fenton Street, northwestern quadrant of intersection of Philadelphia Avenue and Fenton Street | 15,881 SF (0.365 acres) | Small public gathering space |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 49. | Kramer Urban Park | 8580 Second Avenue (southwestern quadrant of the intersection of Second Avenue and Fenwick Lane) | 3,939 SF (0.09 acres) | Small public gathering space for residents and workers |
| 50. | Metro Urban Park | 1171 Bonifant Street (terminus of Bonifant Street, adjacent to Metro tracks) | 35,735 SF (0.82 acres) | Small public gathering space |
| 51. | Philadelphia Avenue Urban Park | Southeast quadrant of intersection of Philadelphia Avenue and Georgia Avenue | 8,361 SF (0.192 Acres) | Small landscaped area screening parking lot from road |
| 52. | Royce Hanson Urban Park | 8787 Georgia Avenue, southeast quadrant of the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Spring Street | 10,206 SF (0.234 Acres) | Park featuring picnic tables, mature trees, and flower beds. |
| 53. | Jesup Blair LP | 900 Jesup Blair Drive | 615,964 SF (14.14 Acres) | Local Park featuring a football/soccer field, tennis courts, basketball court, picnic area, and a playground, and the Blair House. |
| 54. | Juniper-Blair | Corner of Juniper and Blair Avenue | 29,540 SF (0.678 Acres) | Neighborhood Park featuring playground, tennis courts and a basketball court |

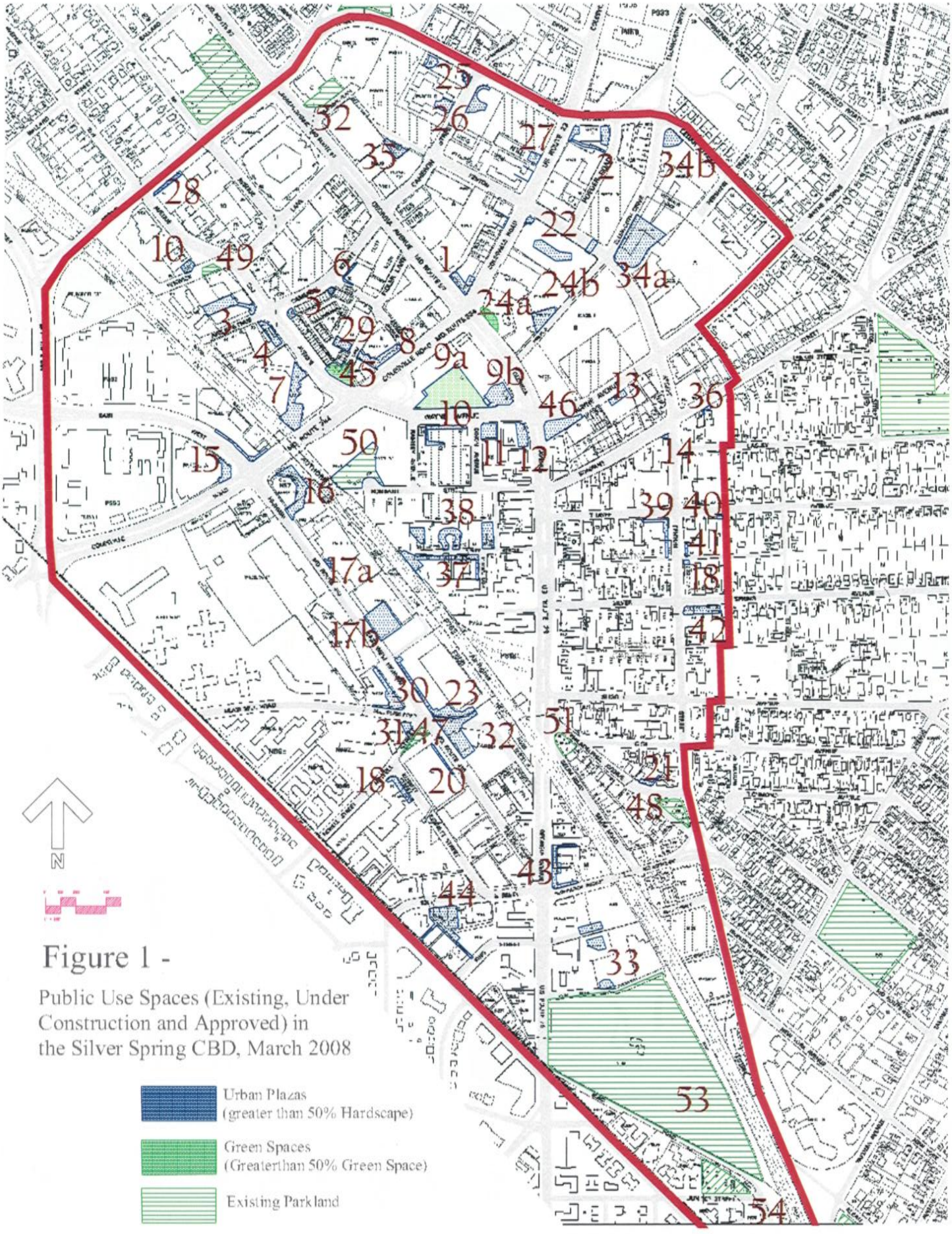



Figure 1 -

Public Use Spaces (Existing, Under Construction and Approved) in the Silver Spring CBD, March 2008

Urban Plazas
(greater than 50% Hardscape)

Green Spaces
(Greaterthan 50% Green Space)

Existing Parkland

## B. Analysis

Based on the inventory and mapping of public and privately-owned public spaces (existing, under-construction, and approved) in the Silver Spring CBD, several trends can be observed.

Number and Size

- Total of 53 PUS.
- Total of 38.72 acres (1,686,764 square feet) of PUS.
- The average PUS size is 0.73 acres (31,825 square feet).
- The average PUS size for private projects is 0.5 acres (21,808 square feet), whereas for public owned projects is 1.72 acres (74,900 square feet).

Urban Plazas (hardscape) versus Green Spaces

- The majority of PUS is hardscaped rather than green (43 versus 10).
- The largest consolidated area of green space is Jesup Blair Park with 14 acres.
- The largest consolidated area of private greenspace is Discovery Garden with approximately 48,750 SF.

Location / Distribution

- The majority of the PUS is west of Georgia Avenue and in the core area.
- Lack of PUS in the Fenton Village area.
- The largest consolidated area of green open space is located at the southern tip.

Private versus Public Sector

- The private sector provides the greatest number of public spaces (existing, under-construction, and approved): 43 PUS by the private sector versus 10 PUS by the public sector.
- The private sector takes the lead in the total amount of PUS (existing, under-construction, and approved): 21.52 acres (937,756 square feet) by the private sector versus 17.19 acres (749,008 square feet) by the public sector.
- The private sector has created mostly hardscaped PUS that is inter-dispersed throughout the CBD.
- The public sector has the single largest consolidated area of green space: Jesup Blair Park.

# VI. OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE GREEN SPACES

This section explores opportunities for future green spaces in highly developed urban areas. It considers nationwide examples of successful urban re-development that incorporate significant green spaces as key components. The opportunities explored reflect the need to maximize the use of urban land to achieve the greatest social, economic, and environmental benefits. The value of urban land does not allow areas to be neglected or under-used, such as with surface parking lots. It calls for innovative approaches to deal with the diminishing supply of developable property and the need to accommodate a multitude of uses.

## A. Green Space at Existing Parking Lots and Garages

Parking facilities can take up a considerable amount of urban land, while failing to accommodate a variety of different uses. In most instances, they only accommodate the need for parking. The re-development of these parking facilities presents an excellent opportunity for creating green urban spaces. This is a trend that has become popular nationwide as municipalities and jurisdictions seek to improve the quality of their downtown urban experience while addressing parking needs. Placing public parking facilities underground and building at-grade public spaces above the facility as rooftop gardens accomplishes the goal of freeing up valuable urban land for the creation of public facilities and amenities that enrich the urban environment. The public amenities can also provide opportunities for additional urban development and higher densities.

Four well known examples of this popular trend are Post Office Square in Boston, Massachusetts; the city hall park in Alexandria, Virginia; Union Square in San Francisco, California; and Rotunda Square in Baltimore, Maryland. In Montgomery County, private projects have also placed public spaces over parking facilities. For example, the Discovery Gardens and the NOAA wave pool (and surrounding seating area) both sit on top of parking facilities.

*Post Office Square in Boston, Massachusetts*

Post Office Square, located in the Boston Financial District, replaced an unsightly three story parking garage with an open green space built over an underground 1,500-space parking garage. Built in 1992, the 1.7-acre park contains an extensive lawn, large shade

trees, shrubs and flowers that edge the sidewalks. There is a long, vine-covered pergola, bench seating, public art and fountains. A local restaurant operates a 100-seat all-season "outpost" that serves lunchtime fare. Post Office Square is a public-private partnership that was financed by a non-profit consortium of local businesses called "Friends of Post Office Square." Maintenance is paid for by rental fees charged by the consortium to the restaurant that operate the outpost in the park. These fees also help pay for security and a private park ranger during the summer months. The successful redevelopment of this site marked a shift in the perceptions of the downtown. Post Office Square is a destination for residents, workers and visitors, and its popularity can be measured by the difficulty finding a place to sit during the spring lunch hour.

**Post Office Square, Boston, MA (Source: Garvin, 1997 (left photo)& www.pps.org (right photo))**

*Market Square in Old Town Alexandria, Virginia*

Market Square in Old Town Alexandria is a large town square at the city hall built over a parking garage. Since the city's founding in 1749, this square has been the site of a continuously operating farmers market. In the mid 1960's, city leadership cleared the block of existing buildings, except for the city hall, and excavated the site for a parking garage topped by a park or town square. The square, characterized by large tree filled planters, paving and a large pool and fountain, is a very popular space located in a dense urban environment. It is activated by civic, residential and retail uses located on all four sides. This project is a 1960's example of how a pleasant urban green space can be created while meeting the practical demand for parking in an urban environment.


**Market Square, Alexandria, VA (Source: http://www.pps.org)**

*Union Square Park in San Francisco, California*

Union Square Park is a mostly hardscaped plaza in the heart of San Francisco's shopping, hotel and theatre district. The square dates back to the original grid iron layout of the city, by Jasper O'Farrell in 1847, who chose it as one of two public squares. It was named Union Square during the civil war because it hosted many rallies in support of the Union, and became the nexus of a fashionable residential district in the 1880's. After the great earthquake of 1906 destroyed most of the buildings around the square, hotels and shops were built, giving it the character that it retains today. In the 1930's with the increase in population and accompanying automobile use, it became difficult for shoppers to find adequate parking, leading to a concern among local business owners that those shoppers would take their business elsewhere. This led to the construction, in 1941, of the underground parking garage with a green, renaissance style urban park above. In 2002, the park was renovated as a mostly hardscaped plaza that featured an outdoor café with movable seating, a symphony-sized stage for concerts and off-Broadway, and single act performances.

**Union Square Park, San Francisco, California (Source: photos by Rollin Stanley and www.sftravel.com)**

*Rotunda Square in Baltimore, Maryland*

Rotunda Square, an approved project in Baltimore, will replace an existing, under-performing suburban style retail center with a large surface parking lot with a mixed-use development including a large urban green space over structured parking. The development, scheduled for construction in Spring 2008, will have three levels of parking (two private and one public) under a green town square that is activated by a dense mix of office, restaurant, retail and residential uses. The town square is also intended to host a farmers market on weekends. On the first level below the town square, a Giant food store will open to the street on one side by taking advantage of the slope. This is a private project with financing predicated on the pent-up demand for an urban experience provided by residential, office, retail and entertainment venues built around a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented town square.


**Rotunda Square, Baltimore, MD (Source: Design Collective, Inc.)**

The trend of undergrounding parking facilities in favor of creating public amenities, like public parks, is observed throughout the country. The examples described above have proved to be a success in terms of creating vibrant, dynamic and pleasant urban environments; generating activity that will ultimately patronize local businesses; and creating civic pride through the activities hosted in these spaces. Critical to the success of the public spaces discussed is that they are easily accessible and visible; they are associated with other uses, especially retail, that help to activate them; and they have the ability to host a variety of simultaneous activities and uses.

## B. Urban Stream Restoration

Occasionally, remnants of natural stream valleys within urban environments can be preserved and restored. The restoration of existing streams involves a multi-disciplinary approach that includes knowledge of natural systems, and with long-term results. The process consists of repairing the stream floors through re-grading, the installation of rock weirs to repair erosion, the removal of invasive plants, and the installation of native riparian vegetation. An important goal is to control storm water into existing stream valleys in order to minimize erosion. Successful examples of urban stream restoration include Four Mile Run in Alexandria, VA, and Cole Brook Stream Restoration, Hackensack, New Jersey.

*Four Mile Run in Alexandria, Virginia*

Four Mile Run and its watershed is a heavily urbanized drainage basin that was channelized in the late 1970's and early 1980's in an effort to control endemic flooding. The project was a success, but the result was an engineered channel cut off from the surrounding neighborhoods by high walls and steep embankments and the elimination of most of the natural features found in the stream valley. The Four Mile Run

Restoration Plan is an effort to restore the creek to a more natural state while opening up the river to public access through pedestrian paths, bridges, and overlooks.

Existing

Proposed

**(Source: Four Mile Run Restoration Master Plan, Rhodeside & Harwell, Inc.)**

*Cole Brook Stream Restoration, Hackensack, New Jersey*

This project is restoring a stream very similar in scale and condition to the stream at the Falklands Chase Apartment complex located between East-West Highway and Colesville Road. In Hackensack, the stream restored has suffered from streambed erosion and destruction of native vegetation caused by excessive runoff from impervious surfaces. In response to these conditions, 750 feet of stream bank will be restored and a wide riparian buffer of native plant material will be installed, while impervious runoff upstream of its watershed will be mitigated with vegetated swales, and installation of pervious paving.

**Restored Stream (Source: www.hackensackriverkeeper.org)**

### C. Green Streets

The Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan identifies the theme **Green Downtown,** as a vision of "shaded, tree-lined streets and well placed green parks and plazas, creating a comprehensive system of open spaces that provide economic, environmental, and aesthetic benefits throughout downtown" (p.22). The elements identified to implement this theme include the installation of street trees and other elements, such as, lighting, benches and trash cans.

The Road Code, Road Standards, and the 1992 Silver Spring Streetscape Guidelines are in the process of being updated. New concepts will be included that upgrade streetscape treatments currently required as a part of site plan approval. While healthy street trees are an excellent first step to creating green streets, there is much more that can be done to create a continuous green network that will link the green open spaces within the CBD. For example, designers in many communities in the United States have implemented continuous green panels along the curb and between the street trees. A variety of evergreen and deciduous shrubs and groundcovers are planted in these panels. The panels can also be designed to absorb rainwater runoff and bring nature into the heart of a dense urban environment. The Road Code recently approved in Montgomery County, requires a specific amount of rainwater to be captured in green infiltration cells along the curbs. Although most of the streets in Silver Spring have already been constructed, future streets and improvements will provide these green connections between green open spaces. The Silver Spring Streetscape Guidelines will be updated to reflect this change.

### D. Assemblage of Small Properties into one Large Park Site (Private or Public)

A few large, uncommitted properties still remain in the CBD. However, another way of creating significant green spaces in the CBD is by assembling small properties into a large site according to a comprehensive plan. For example, a public and private partnership or a redevelopment authority could purchase a number of private properties in an area zoned for high density development in order to construct a mixed-use development with a large green park that would serve the needs of future residents and workers.

This approach has considerable advantages over converting surface or structured parking into green space. It often does not include facilities that need to be replaced and uses that need to be maintained. However, a key challenge is land acquisition at market value. Market conditions can limit this approach to periods of slow economic growth during which the escalation of land prices slows.

# VII. TOOLS

## A. Optional Method of Development

The Optional Method of Development (OMD) has been the most significant tool in the creation of the existing Public Use Space (PUS) in the Silver Spring CBD. Essentially, developers are offered density bonuses in terms of FAR, building height and number of dwelling units, in exchange for increased PUS and amenities. Whereas the minimum requirement for standard method projects is 10 percent, the minimum on-site PUS for OMD projects is 20 percent of the net lot area. In addition, the applicant is also required to provide an additional amount of off-site amenity space, usually in the form of streetscape improvements.

Since June 1981, the total on- and off-site public space provided in the CBD through the OMD has averaged about 42 percent of the net lot area. While this method will continue to be a valuable tool for creating PUS, it needs to be used in concert with other proposed tools in order to create large open green spaces in the Silver Spring CBD.

## B. Off-Site Transfer of Open Space

The off-site transfer of open space allows open space required through the OMD and standard method to be transferred to another site in the CBD. This method is a key tool for grouping several small open spaces into one large green open space. Furthermore, it would encourage small sites to develop using the optional method without necessarily having to dedicate a minimum of 20 percent of the net site to PUS. Sometimes, small sites refrain from using the optional method due to the amount of PUS required, and instead apply the standard method resulting in minimal PUS that (in the least creative cases) results in a widening of the sidewalk and a greater building setback from the street. Currently, off-site transfer of PUS is allowed only within Silver Spring's overlay districts, but ZTA 07-10 would permit such transfers anywhere in the CBD. The challenge of this tool is to locate and work out the logistics of potential receiving sites, which are not owned by M-NCPPC and often have multiple ownerships.

### C. Open Space Amenity Fund

This tool is similar to the Off-Site Transfer of Open Space as it allows projects using the Standard or Optional Method of Development to dedicate the entire net lot area of a development site to the proposed building envelope without having any PUS on-site. However, instead of transferring the required PUS to another site within the CBD, the applicant would pay a fee-in-lieu into an Amenity Fund. This Fund would be a means to finance land acquisition and green space creation. It is also proposed in the pending ZTA 07-10.

### D. Public Projects

Pubic projects in the Silver Spring CBD, such as the County Library or Silver Place, offer the opportunity to incorporate green space into the design and uses of these facilities. Public projects, such as libraries, draw a large number of people on a daily basis, providing a critical mass to fill and activate a potential green space, as well as, support retail uses that could be built in conjunction with the public project. It is critical to set high standards and expectations for public projects that can be then followed by others in the industry. Examples include the new library in Rockville Town Center.

**Green Space at a Public Library (Source: www. Rockvillemd.gov)**

## E. LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design)

LEED can encourage the provision of green spaces through the requirement to certify new developments. This tool should be used in conjunction with the above mentioned tools to support and reward the incorporation of such spaces into a proposed project.

## F. Recreation Guidelines

The 1992 Recreation Guidelines provide a method for evaluating whether the recreation facilities for a particular residential community will be adequate. The method involves calculating the demand points for each population category in each housing type, and then comparing these values to the supply points provided by each recreational facility for each population category. If they are within 10 percent for each population category, the proposed facilities are considered adequate.

The Guidelines encourage a range of recreational facilities that accommodate both active and passive activities and often incorporate a green space component. This document establishes a framework for consistent and safe development of these facilities through design guidelines, which address area, setbacks, possible activities, screening/landscaping, and design specifications.

Because the current Recreation Guidelines are more tailored for suburban residential development, they need to be updated as soon as possible to better address the needs for urban facilities; revise the criteria, such as distance, for credit of off-site facilities; and address maintenance costs for use of adjacent M-NCPPC parks. Currently, however, the guidelines are also being applied in urban settings. The Recreation Guidelines can be seen as a tool for increasing the amount of green space in the Silver Spring CBD because they provide a consistent methodology for determining the adequacy of recreational facilities, and the guidelines require turf and lawn open space for some of the facilities. Additional incentives should be provided for residential developments in the CBD to fulfill their recreation requirements through facilities like open play areas, which are defined as open, level grass areas with a minimum of 10,000 square feet to accommodate several play activities. This type of facility provides supply points to all age groups, at the same time that it provides a large green space for the CBD. Other

facilities that require 'green areas', turf or lawn areas include trails through natural areas, natural areas, and community gardens.

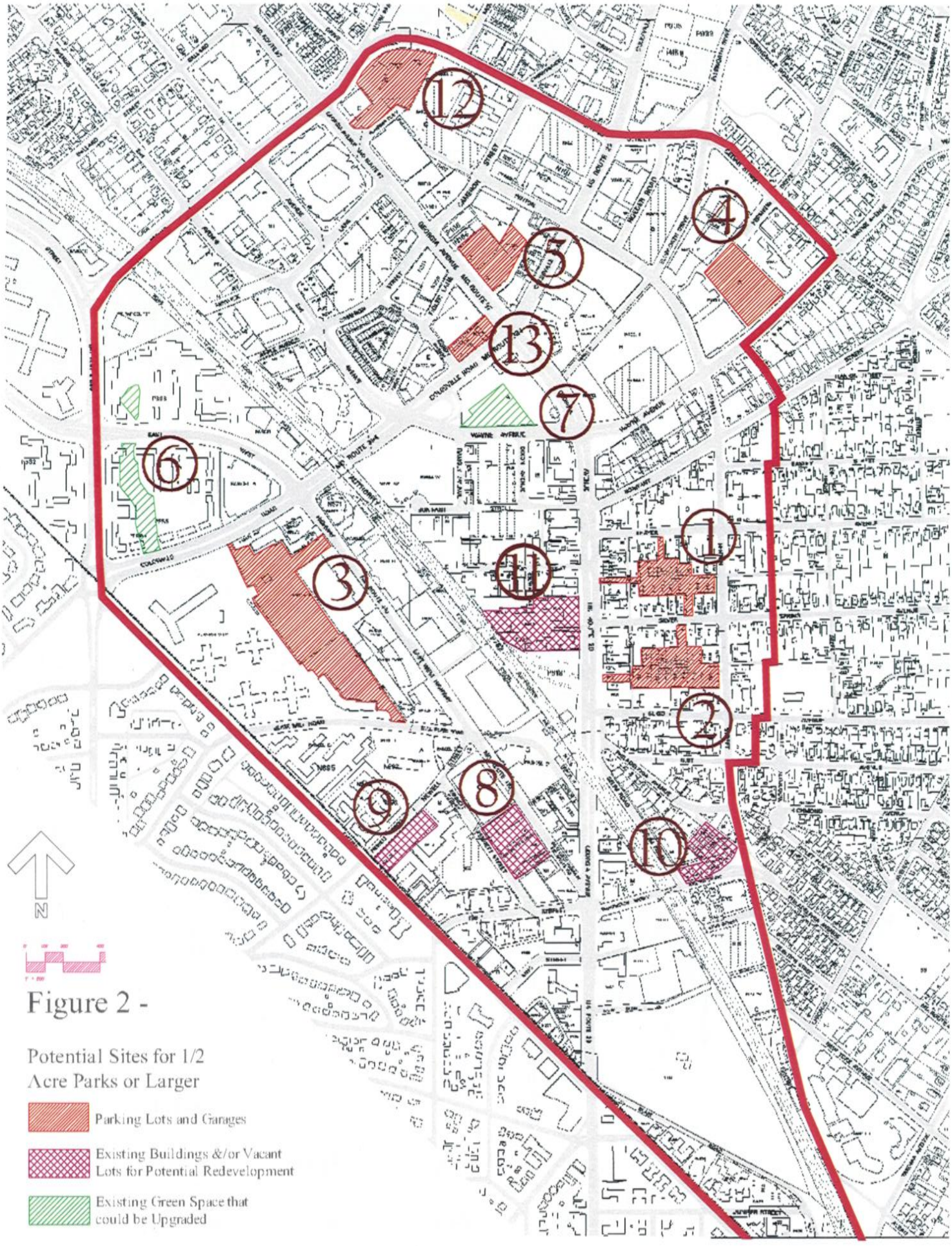



Figure 2 -

Potential Sites for 1/2 Acre Parks or Larger

Parking Lots and Garages

Existing Buildings &/or Vacant Lots for Potential Redevelopment

Existing Green Space that could be Upgraded

# VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the study is focused on potential sites that are sizeable enough to accommodate large green spaces, since these are the most scarce in the Silver Spring CBD and difficult to implement. Currently, the CBD does not have any large green spaces, except for Jesup Blair Park at the southern tip of the CBD and the Discovery Garden, which is enclosed by a fence. The spaces proposed in this report will help achieve the desired urban form for the Silver Spring CBD with a hierarchy of green spaces that are linked by green streets. They will complement the existing public use spaces, which are mostly small to medium sized, and add variety to the predominantly hardscaped plazas in the CBD.

The sites recommended for potential large green spaces are at least 0.5 acres. This number relates to the size of the existing artificial turf site at the intersection of Fenton Street and Ellsworth Drive, where the future Civic Building will be located. Besides its key location at the core of downtown urban area, the tremendous and unintentional success of this space lies in its physical attributes, including size and materials. It allows for recreational uses not found in many other spaces within the CBD. Because of the popularity of this artificial turf field, which will soon be developed, Staff has explored other sites in the CBD to address this demand and accommodate similar uses.

The sizes of green urban spaces throughout the country that have achieved considerable levels of success were also explored [Appendix A]. The numbers vary immensely from 1.90 acres at Mount Vernon Square, Baltimore, MD to 7.85 acres in Washington Square, New York, NY. It is evident that there is no single size required for a successful green space; rather that success emerges from a combination of different variables of which size is only one, and perhaps not the most critical factor. Other variables, such as location, adjacent uses, surrounding density, visibility and access, are equally important. This study uses some of these variables as criteria to prioritize the recommended sites.

The following recommendations for potential sites for large green spaces are divided into the opportunity categories previously discussed and keyed to the map identified as Figure 2 and Tables 2 and 3. Some recommendations are accompanied by illustrations that present a visionary concept for the space. These illustrations are presented to

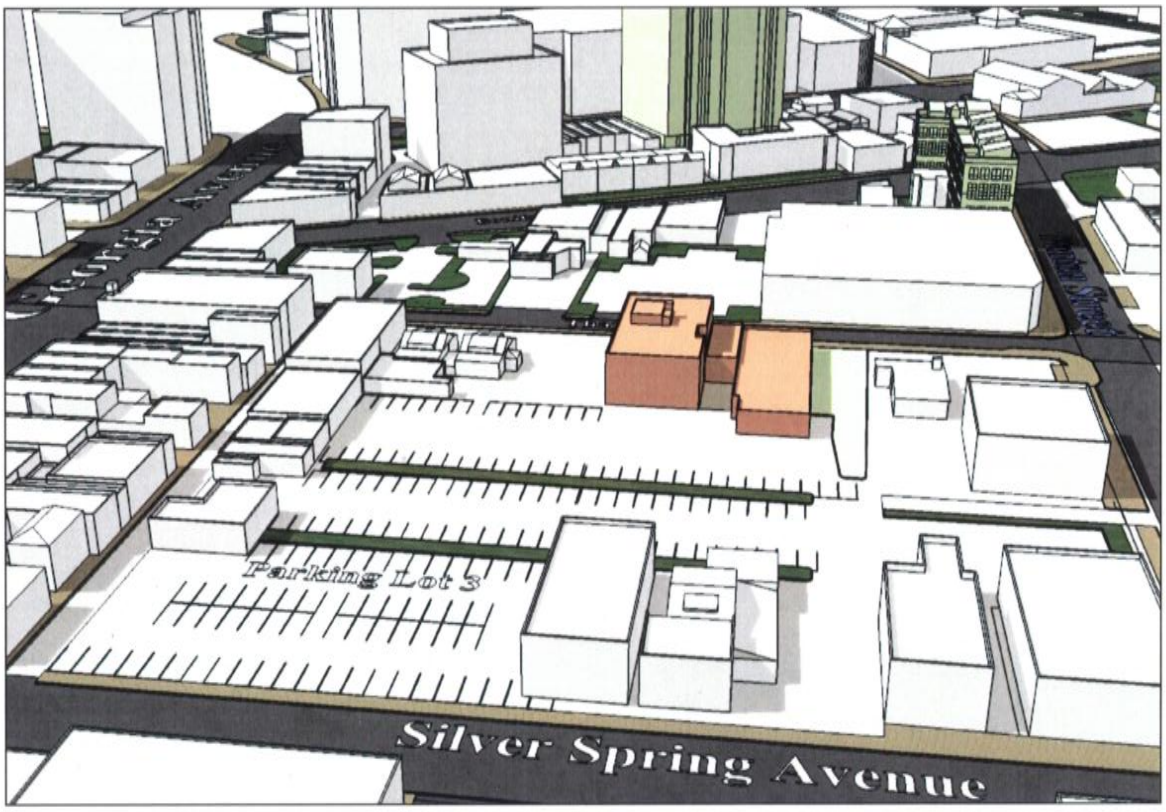
visualize potential layouts; they will be further developed during the next phase of this study when specific sites will be explored in greater detail. The final part of this section compares the various recommendations in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT Analysis) in order to prioritize specific sites.

### A. Provide Green Space at Existing Parking Lots and Garages

*Parking Lot 3 (No. 1 on Figure 2)*

An Optional Method Development project could redevelop Montgomery County Parking Lot 3, between Thayer Avenue and Silver Spring Avenues, in the Fenton Village, into a mixed-use development with retail, office and residential surrounding a community green with a mid-block street.

This set of conditions is ideal for a public-private partnership where developers gain access to publicly-owned land in exchange for creating a significant public amenity that is integral to the proposed development. All public and private parking could be placed below the town green with a percentage of the town green converted to pervious surface. A midblock street is consistent with the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan recommendation for a Pedestrian/Bike Link through the block (p.65); however, it expands this idea to include vehicular access, which ensures the viability of the proposed retail around these midblock green spaces. The Sector Plan also recommends that a midblock connection be carried through the next 2 blocks north to Wayne Avenue. This report supports that recommendation, but suggests that the midblock connection end at Bonifant Street instead in order to eliminate a potential conflict with the proposed Purple Line alignment on Bonifant Street.




**Montgomery County Parking Lot 3 - Existing**


**Montgomery County Parking Lot 3 – Potential layout**

*Parking Garage 4 (No. 2 on Figure 2)*

Montgomery County Parking Garage 4, also in Fenton Village, could be potentially re-developed with a park that in part has a public parking below ground. Ideally, this would involve a public-private partnership.

*Giant Food Parking Lot at the Blairs (No. 3 on Figure 2)*

A site on East-West Highway, very close to the Silver Spring Transit Center, is occupied by a suburban style strip mall that is anchored by a Giant Food Store. A large, under-used parking lot on the site is shared by two nearby high rise apartment buildings. The potential exists to develop this land into a dense, transit-oriented, mixed-use development with pedestrian-oriented retail and green space on the ground level with office and residential units above. The existing CBD-R2 zone allows 1 FAR of commercial development, up to a maximum of 450,000 square feet for sites exceeding 10 acres like the Blairs. Structured parking should be below ground; however, if above ground, it should be hidden or "wrapped" by residential and/or retail space. Critical elements of this proposal include 1) a large new green space available for use by the people in Silver Spring, and 2) a new "grid" of streets that would divide this super block into a human scale, walkable environment that will draw pedestrians into the site and encourage them to get out of their cars. The 2000 Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan recommended a new street through this very large block (Draper extended) in order to break it up. Under this proposal, the Giant Food Store would be retained on the ground floor in its present location. One of the many challenges associated with this site is satisfying the lease agreements of all the tenants presently on the site.


**Giant Food Store Parking Lot– Existing**


Giant Food Store Parking lot – Potential layout

Potential layout – Giant Food Store at existing location with green in the foreground.

*Whole Food Market Parking Lot (No. 4 on Figure 2)*

The parking lot between The Whole Foods Market and St. Michaels Catholic Church could provide a green open space to replace the large nearby artificial turf area being developed into the hardscape Veteran's Plaza. It could serve users of the adjacent St. Michaels Catholic Church as well as the pedestrians that shop at the adjacent Whole Foods store and other nearby restaurants in Downtown Silver Spring.

*Parking Lot on the Lee and Cohen Properties (No. 5 on Figure 2)*

This site, which is under consideration for new development, is in a potential location for a green open space that would serve the heart of the Silver Spring CBD. There are no large green open spaces open to the public within a several block radius, nor are there other potential sites that could fill this need. Several retail establishments on Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue would serve to activate the site, not to mention any new retail that would result from the adjacent Live Nation project being planned. The cost of acquiring this CBD-2 property and removing it from the tax rolls are significant disadvantages, although a green space could be incorporated into the redevelopment of these two parcels (independently or together).

## B. Urban Stream Restoration and Existing Green Space Upgrade

*Falklands Chase Stream Restoration (No. 6 on Figure 2)*

A natural stream valley exists within the Falklands Chase garden apartment complex, which was designed and built in the 1930's. This project was designed according to the principles of the Garden City Movement that were in vogue at the time. The designers made an effort to respond to the character of the land by preserving the existing stream valley while fitting the apartment buildings around the existing topography with minimal disturbance.

The stream valley still exists today and is the last vestige of the natural environment that once existed throughout the area. It is important that such a valuable natural asset in the CBD not only be preserved but be restored, as the stream bed has become degraded over the years from deep scouring by excessive storm water runoff. Stormwater management upstream should be reviewed when this is planned. This asset would be a jewel in the future Silver Spring green space network.


**Falklands Chase - Site of Proposed Stream Restoration**

*Discovery Garden (No. 7 on Figure 2)*

The existing Discovery Garden could be upgraded in order to be more inviting and truly perceived as a public space. The fence and gates enclosing the Discovery Garden (along Wayne Avenue and the drop off area) should be removed in order to make this garden more accessible and open to the public. In addition, the area between the northern sidewalk of Wayne Avenue and the fence enclosure of the Discovery Garden should be converted into a useable public space by creating a series of terraced steps, which include a combination of level grass terraces with concrete edges that function as seating and regular steps, from the Discovery Garden to the street. This is a similar concept as Union Square in San Francisco.

**Edge treatment of existing Discovery Garden, Silver Spring, MD (left) versus existing Union Square, San Francisco, CA (right)**

## C. Implement Green Streets

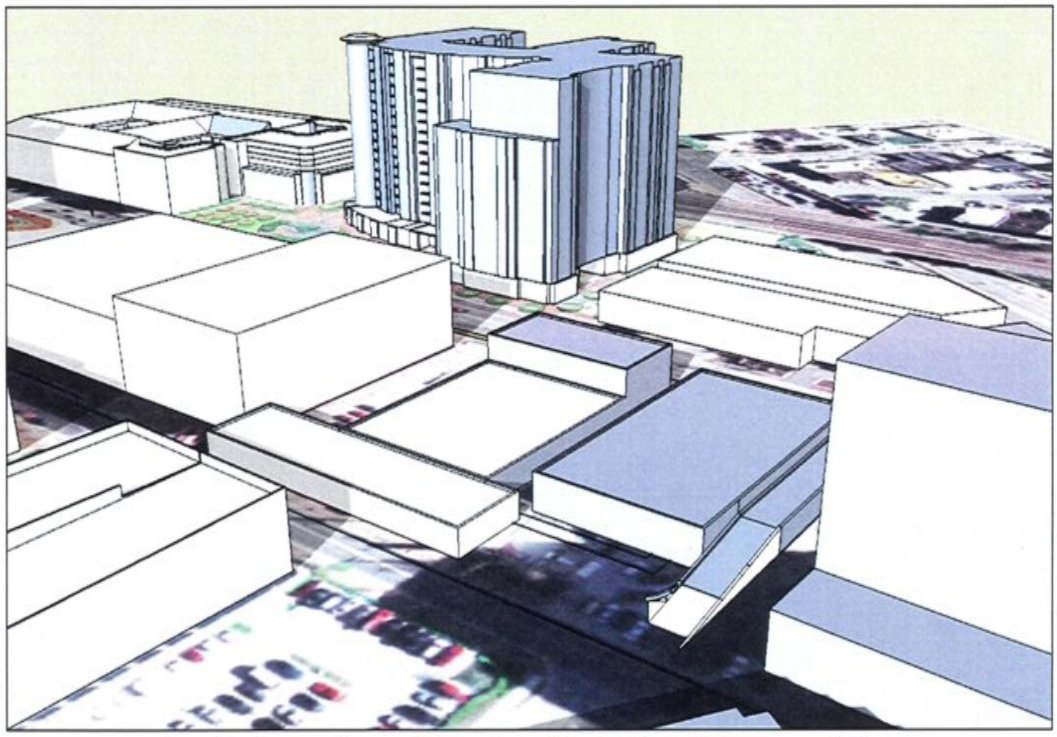
The 1992 Silver Spring Streetscape Guidelines are being reviewed with regard to ways of maximizing opportunities to integrate green and environmental function into streetscape renovations. Future green streets could be unimproved streets or streets that have streetscape treatments in need of repair and update. The newly formed Road Code and Road Standards will guide the new standards.

## D. Development of Large Sites (Private or Public)

*Land between Kennett Street and East-West Highway (No. 8 on Figure 2)*

Three properties located between East-West Highway (MD 410) and Kennett Street could be assembled into a total of approximately 1.75 Acres. The southern-most parcel has already been acquired by DHCA for a future pedestrian street with possible vehicular access subject to SHA approval of the connection to MD 410. The site is large enough to provide a significant open lawn area that will serve the unprogrammed activities that such spaces engender. Residential projects currently under construction will add well over 800 new residential units to South Silver Spring. Over 300 additional dwelling units are in projects that are approved, but not yet under construction. Such a park will be a vital amenity to the new residents of this part of the CBD. In addition, proposed street level retail in the new residential projects in the immediate neighborhood of the proposed park site will attract park users. Across East-West Highway from the proposed park is the arts alley, which contains interesting art

galleries as well as a restaurant and coffee shop. Also across the street are retail uses in the Silver Spring Gateway project that is presently under construction.



**Land between Kennett Street and East-West Highway - existing**

**Land between Kennett Street and East-West Highway – potential layout**

Other sites with existing buildings in the CBD that could potentially be developed into green parks are the following:

*Self-storage Facility on Newell Street (No. 9 on Figure 2)*
The existing self-storage facility on Newell Street in South Silver Spring is surrounded by new and proposed residential units. A green space here would be an alternative to the proposed green space between Kennett Street and East-West Highway. This site is adjacent to the District and would tend to serve residents outside of the Silver Spring CBD as well as residents of Silver Spring.

*Land at the Intersection of East-West Highway and Fenton Street (No. 10 on Figure 2)*
Land at the intersection of East-West Highway (MD 410) and Fenton Street in Fenton Village is partly owned by M-NCPPC: Fenton Urban Park, and a small lot on Burlington Avenue. The surrounding lots and the ROW in front of them, could be assembled to form a much larger park. (These lots are currently on the market). All or some of this assemblage could serve as a "green" gateway to Fenton Village and the Silver Spring CBD for those coming from East Silver Spring and the Takoma Park area. In addition, this site could function as a rest stop for those on the future Metropolitan Branch Trail, which will pass adjacent to it. A challenge at this location is the lack of nearby pedestrian oriented retail, such as restaurants, cafes and coffee shops, or other uses that could help activate the space. Therefore, the vision for this site should not rely so much on surrounding uses for activation of the space, but rather in creating a destination with opportunities for urban recreation.

*Land Surrounding the Existing Progress Place (No. 11 on Figure 2)*
This site is a potential location for a mixed-use development with a large green open space. The Sector Plan calls for an open space in the Ripley District, which currently has none. Two large mixed-use residential projects totaling over 600 dwelling units have been approved on Ripley Street just to the north. A park would serve this immediate residential population as well as workers in the Ripley District.

*Silver Place (No. 12 on Figure 2)*
M-NCPPC is presently planning a mixed-use development that would incorporate M-NCPPC offices, retail and housing surrounding a large public green space. The green space would be the same size, if not larger, than the existing Hanson Park, which would

be replaced. Parking will be located underground or in an above ground structure wrapped by mixed-use development including office, retail and residential. A park located here would serve the employees of M-NCPPC, and residents of the surrounding areas, which already encompasses two parks (Woodside and Fairview). A park in this location would also serve as a northern "green" terminus to Fenton Street.

*Land on Northwest Quadrant of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road (No. 13 on Figure 2)*
A Texaco Gas Station and a retail vacant building (currently being renovated after a fire) currently occupy this site. Located at a major intersection within the Silver Spring CBD, this space could function as a focal point area. The site typically gets a lot of sun but it is located on the side of Colesville Road less traveled by pedestrians. An active building edge would probably be preferable here.

**Table 2 – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT Analysis) of recommended sites.**

| Key | Site Description | Potential Users | Strengths | Weaknesses | Opportunities | Threats (Challenges) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Parking Lot 3, between Thayer Ave and Silver Spring Ave | Fenton Village residents, employees, and visitors | Large consolidated area; County ownership; core of Fenton Village | Creating a public-private partnership may be difficult. Lack of density to make project feasible. Locating successful retail on interior street. | Mixed-use development around a large green space with underground parking; **retail fronting the green space**; public-private partnership. | Parking needs during construction of parking facility; financial investment required; economy not conducive to large developments at this time. |
| 2. | Parking Garage 4, between Silver Spring Avenue and Sligo Avenue | Fenton Village residents, employees, and visitors | Large consolidated area; County ownership; core of Fenton Village; County is seeking a partnership to redevelop large dilapidated parking structure. | Creating a public-private partnership may be difficult. Existing parking structure that would need to be demolished to create green space. | Mixed-use development around a large green space with underground parking; **retail fronting the green space**; public-private partnership. | Parking needs during construction; financial investment required; economy may not be conducive to large developments at this time. |
| 3. | Parking lot at the Giant Food Store on East-West Highway | Residents, employees, and Metro users | Large consolidated area; surface parking – no structures to demolish; surrounded by large numbers of existing residential units; a block from the Silver Spring Metro. | Underutilized land in prime location; limited street access/ visibility; no existing street frontage, though new streets will provide both visibility and street frontage. | Dense, transit-oriented, mixed-use development – central green space framed by buildings with ground floor **retail** and residential/office above; underground parking or aboveground structured parking. | Parking needs of Giant Food Store (and others) during construction of parking facility; Financial investment; land assembly. Giant Food Store recently renewed 30-year lease. |
| 4. | Parking Lot between The Whole Foods Market and St. Michaels Catholic Church | Residents, employees, and visitors of the CBD core area | Surface parking – no structures to demolish; large consolidated area in the Downtown Urban Renewal Area (Core Area of CBD); | No street frontage except for Wayne Avenue; Additional street access will have to be incorporated into design. | Underground parking structure and above-ground greenspace; complementary to recreational uses of adjacent Civic Building and Town Square; | Parking needs during construction of parking facility; financial investment required |

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| | | | adjacent to Civic Building | | transition between residential neighborhoods and CBD; **retail fronting the green space**. | |
| 5. | Parking Lot on Lee & Cohen properties (Georgia Ave) | Employees, Metro users | Located a block away from the Downtown Urban Renewal Area (Core Area of CBD); aligned with Fidler Lane; access points to Fenton Street and Georgia Avenue | Cost of land may prohibit acquisition of site; parcels under separate ownerships. | Mid-block green connector that aligns with Fidler Lane; pedestrian connection to Metro; **retail fronting the green space**. | Parking needs during construction of parking facility; financial investment required |
| 6. | Existing stream valley at the Falklands, between Colesville Road and East-West Hwy, and north of East-West Hwy | Residents at CBD, DC, and adjacent communities | Natural stream valley; last vestige of natural environment in the CBD, would be a "jewel" in the Silver Spring open space network. | Streambed erosion due to stormwater runoff must be mitigated and stormwater from existing impervious surfaces must be reduced. Enclosed by existing garden apartments will create perception of a private park. | Stream valley restoration and preservation. A truly natural park in a dense urban environment. | Creation and maintenance of a public park on what is presently private land; historic site designation may prevent redevelopment. |
| 7. | Existing Discovery Garden | Residents, employees, and Metro users | Large public green space; located at the core of the CBD; a block from the Silver Spring Metro; southern exposure | Enclosed by a fence with gates; no activating uses; not perceived as public | Edge treatment to better activate street and make it more perceived as public (terraced steps); removal of fence enclosure to make Garden open to the public | Owner has serious concerns over safety and maintenance of the garden if fence is removed. |
| 8. | Land between Kennett Street and East West Hwy (MD 410) | South Silver Spring residents, Discovery employees, and visitors | Total site is 1.75 acres; 1 parcel owned by DHCA to build a pedestrian street with possible vehicular access. Over 800 new residential units in immediate vicinity | Multiple ownerships | A green park could be incorporated with a mixed street as an amenity for South Silver Spring; **retail fronting the green space**. | M-NCPPC will have to negotiate and purchase land from multiple owners. |
| 9. | Existing self-storage facility on Newell Street | Residents of South Silver Spring, and D.C. | Adjacent to D.C. boundary line; single ownership; good street frontage, access and visibility; | Periphery of the CBD; existing structures that need to be demolished, and business activity that needs to be relocated; | Gateway to the South Silver Spring Area of the CBD; gathering area for communities of D.C. and CBD; | Business relocation; availability of compatible space; |
| 10. | Land at the intersection of East-West Highway and Fenton Street | Residents of Fenton Village and adjacent residential community | Located at the convergence of MD 410 and Philadelphia Avenue; edge of the CBD; across from Fenton Urban Park (owned by M-NCPPC) | Multiple-ownerships; existing structures that need to be demolished; | Gateway to the CBD and Fenton Village; complementary to the existing Fenton Urban Park; surrounding lots can be assembled to form large park; transition to the adjacent residential communities; | Multiple-ownerships and land assembly. |
| 11. | Land surrounding existing Progress Place | Future residents of the Ripley District, and employees/ | Direct access and frontage off Georgia Avenue, centrally located in the CBD; | Existing structures that need to be demolished; single access point from | Destination at the core of the Ripley District; potential site for a large mixed-use development; | Large site with single access from Georgia Ave may compound traffic & congestion on |

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| | | patrons of surrounding retail. | M-NCPPC and private ownership | Georgia Avenue otherwise bound by railroad tracks and buildings; noise from railroad tracks; | **retail fronting the green space**. | Georgia Avenue. Relocation of Progress Place. |
| 12. | Silver Place | Residents of adjacent communities, M-NCPPC employees | Site mostly owned by M-NCPPC; located at the northern edge of the CBD. | Existing structures that need to be demolished; business activity that needs to be accommodated during construction; peripheral location in the CBD; proximity of two existing parks (Fairview Park and Woodside Park). | Underground parking structure and above-ground green space as the central element of a mixed-use development with office, **retail**, and residential; LEED certified state-of-the-art facility; setting the standard for new development in the county; Public-private partnership; northern gateway to CBD | Financial investment, Community resistance to a large mixed-use project on the edge of the CBD and adjacent to residential neighborhoods. |
| 13. | Texaco Gas Station and a retail building on NW quadrant of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road | Employees, Metro users | Located in heart of CBD on a the major intersection in Silver Spring; would provide a public focal point to Downtown Silver Spring | Cost of land environment cleanup of gas station, as well as acquiring land may be prohibitive. | This corner lot would provide an excellent opportunity for a signature art or water feature that could help form the image of Silver Spring. | A lack of existing adjacent retail will make activation a challenge without including this use in the design. |

A set of criteria was developed in order to help prioritize the twelve recommended sites. The criteria included a) number of residential units within 800 feet of the site, b) proximity to another park, c) ease of access and connectivity, and d) ease of implementation. Each site was ranked from 1 to 5 on each category, with 1 fulfilling the category to the least extent and 5 to the greatest. For example, a ranking of 1 on the category ease of access and connectivity meant that the site had poor access & connectivity. The sites with the highest total points are designated the top priorities.

Several assumptions are established with this ranking system. It is assumed that the higher the number of residential units within 800 feet of the site (less than a 5-minute walk), the greater the demand and need for a green space, hence the ranking would be 5. Proximity to another park is ranked 1, since the desired urban form calls for evenly distributed green spaces in the CBD, and besides two green spaces close to each other might compete. Ease of implementation takes into account factors like ownership, current uses, and estimated financial costs.

**Table 3 – Ranking of the potential sites for large green spaces.**

| Key | Green Space/District | # Residential Units within 800 Feet (Ex. & Approved) | Ex. Parks within 800 Feet | Ex. & Potential Connections | Liklihood/Ease of Implementation | Total Score |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Parking Lot 3**<br>Fenton Village Overlay District | 1626 Units<br>4 | **No**<br>5 | 5 | 5 | ***19*** |
| 2 | **Parking Garage 4**<br>Fenton Village Overlay District | 867 Units<br>2 | **Yes**<br>1 | 5 | 2 | ***10*** |
| 3 | **Giant Food/The Blairs Parking Lot**<br>South Silver Spring | 2150 Units<br>5 | **No**<br>5 | 5 | 1 | ***16*** |
| 4 | **Parking Lot Between St. Michaels Church and Whole Foods**<br>Downtown Silver Spring | 835 Units<br>2 | **Yes**<br>1 | 5 | 2 | ***10*** |
| 5 | **Parking Lot on the Lee and Cohen Properties (Georgia Avenue)**<br>Downtown Silver Spring | 1834 Units<br>4 | **Yes**<br>1 | 5 | 2 | ***12*** |
| 6 | **Stream Valley at the Falklands**<br>West Silver Spring | 1382 existing units<br>3 | **No**<br>5 | 3 | 2 | ***13*** |
| 7 | **Discovery Gardens**<br>Downtown Silver Spring | 351 existing units<br>1 | **Yes**<br>1 | 5 | 2 | ***9*** |
| 8 | **Lots between Kennett Street and MD 410**<br>South Silver Spring | 1776 Units<br>4 | **No**<br>5 | 5 | 2 | ***16*** |
| 9 | **Self-Storage Facility on Newell Street**<br>South Silver Spring | 1776 Units<br>4 | **No**<br>5 | 3 | 1 | ***13*** |
| 10 | **Land at the intersection of East-West Highway and Fenton Streets**<br>Fenton Village Overlay District | 550 Units<br>2 | **Yes**<br>1 | 4 | 3 | ***10*** |
| 11 | **Progress Place and parking lot**<br>Ripley District | 716 Units<br>2 | **No**<br>5 | 3 | 4 | ***14*** |
| 12 | **Silver Place**<br>North CBD | 1605 Units<br>4 | **Yes**<br>1 | 4 | 4 | ***13*** |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | **Gas Station and Vacant Building at Corner of Georgia and Colesville Road**<br>Downtown Silver Spring | 1345 Units<br>3 | **No**<br>5 | 4 | 1 | ***13*** |

According to this ranking, the top priority sites are Parking Lot 3 (No. 1 on Figure 2) in Fenton Village; Giant Food Store parking Lot (No. 3 on Figure 2); Land between Kennett Street and MD 410 (No. 8 on Figure 2) in South Silver Spring, and Land surrounding existing Progress Place (No. 11 on Figure 2) in the Ripley District. These sites could potentially address the demand for a large green space in each of these CBD areas, which currently have none.

The lowest priority sites are Parking Garage 4 (No. 2 on Figure 2) in Fenton Village due to the proximity of Parking Lot 3 and the difficulty of implementation in comparison to Parking Lot 3 because of the existing structure; the Whole Foods Market parking lot (No. 4 on Figure 2), located at the periphery of the CBD and with several implementation constraints, such as, minimal incentives for private re-development and the need to maintain parking during construction. The Discovery Gardens (No. 7 on Figure 2) scored low due to the low number of residential dwelling units within 800 feet and implementation challenges. Similarly, Fenton Village Gateway Park (No. 10 on Figure 2) also has a low number of residential units in the immediate vicinity.

The remaining sites fall in an intermediate priority level. The Falklands stream valley (No. 6 on Figure 2) has significant re-development constraints associated with the designation of a historical site. The Parking Lot for the Lee & Cohen properties (No. 5 on Figure 2) is not considered a top priority because of its proximity to the major intersection of the CBD (Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road), where other more intense uses are more appropriate, and its proximity to two existing parks (Fairview Park and Woodside Park) abutting the northern CBD edge. The existing self-storage facility (No. 9 on Figure 2) is located in the periphery of the CBD and not as centrally located in the South Silver Spring area as site no. 7. The Texaco Gas Station & retail building (No. 12 on Figure 2) is at a prime location in the CBD, at the intersection of Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road, where other commercial uses might be more appropriate.

The priority sites as identified through this ranking system were mapped on Figure 3, which also shows the existing open spaces in the Silver Spring CBD. The resulting open space system starts to identify a hierarchy of well-distributed spaces that are linked by existing and proposed bike trails.

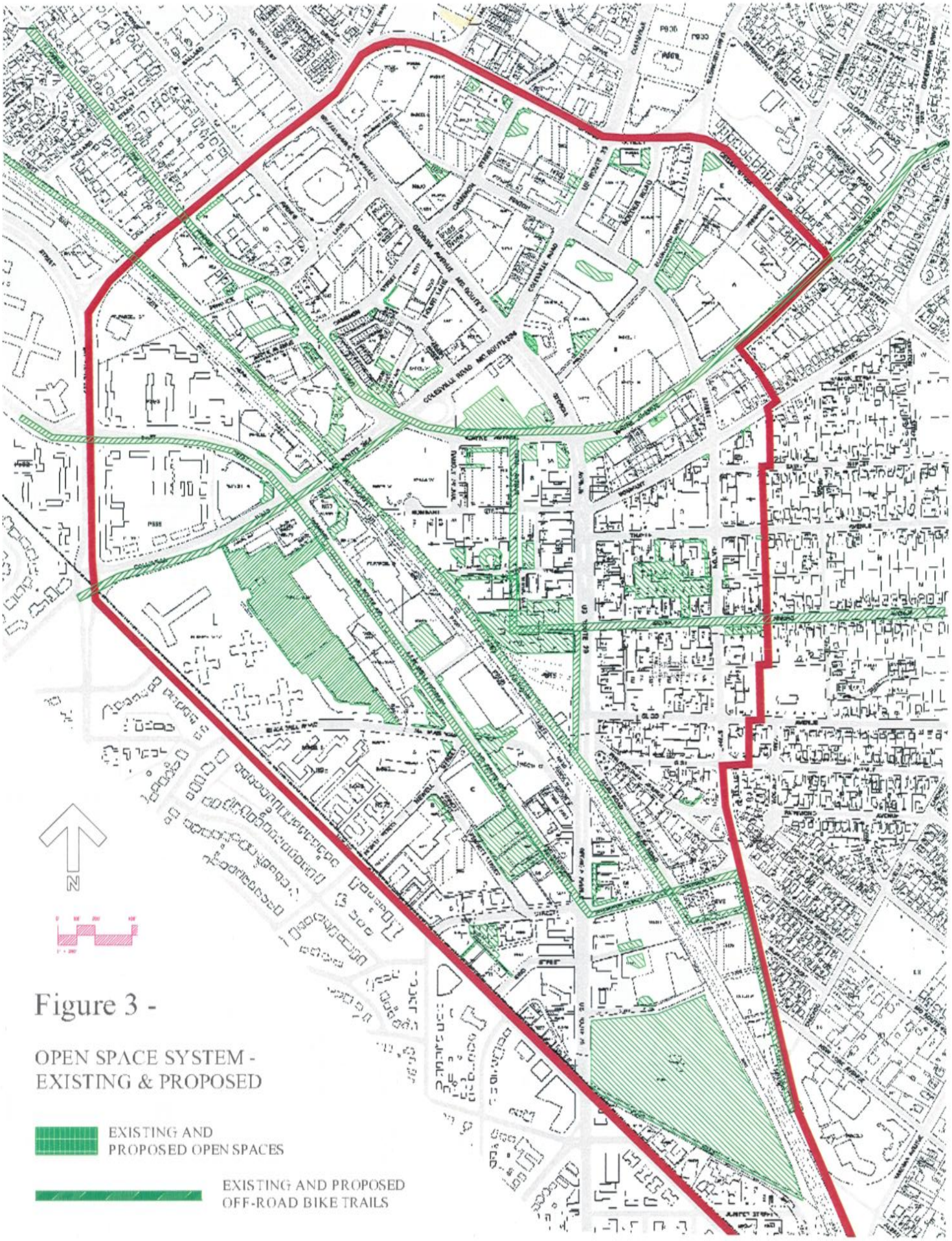


Figure 3 -

OPEN SPACE SYSTEM -
EXISTING & PROPOSED

# IX. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

This study has addressed two specific set of circumstances affecting the Silver Spring CBD:

1. The demand for one or more large green spaces is appears to be greater than the supply; and
2. The urban form envisioned for the Silver Spring CBD has not yet been achieved.

The various sites recommended for potential large green spaces address the community's requests expressed at various times, particularly during the public hearing for the Silver Spring Civic Building and Veteran's Plaza. The recommendations take into account the size of the existing artificial turf field, which will be replaced by the future Civic Building and hardscape plaza, as the minimum area required for a large green space. In addition, the various sites recommended in this report target different districts of the CBD, where there is a high number of existing and proposed dwelling units.

The recommendations also help to achieve the urban from envisioned for the Silver Spring CBD. Currently, an admirable number of small/medium public spaces have been developed in the CBD, mainly through the optional method of development, however large green spaces are not common. This study addresses this issue by making recommendations for specific sites that will help achieve the hierarchy and variety of spaces envisioned for the CBD. Linkages are also key to the implementation of this green space plan. Even though this study does not make specific recommendations, efforts should be coordinated with the Road Code, Road Standards, and the 1992 Silver Spring Streetscape Guidelines.

An important study to follow-up should include the development of design guidelines for public use spaces with the overall goal of enhancing the quality of spaces provided in the CBD. Currently, a significant number of public spaces in the CBD do not meet standards of design excellence and environmental goals. It is important to create a set of criteria to guide their design and implementation. It would also be useful to overlay these criteria on existing spaces and suggest re-development when needed. The result

would be better designed spaces that translate into a higher quality urban environment for the Silver Spring CBD.

Staff specifically recommends the measures described below to follow the Planning Board's discussion of this draft report.

**A. Program of Requirements (POR) and Costs for Selected Sites**

After receiving feedback from the Planning Board on the recommendations set forth in this study, Staff will focus on those sites that received support from the Planning Board as potential significant green spaces for downtown Silver Spring. The next stage will involve developing a vision and a conceptual POR for each site that best suits the location, existing conditions, and user groups. Site-specific recommendations will be developed that are informed by a comprehensive understanding of the CBD and the surrounding areas. Based on these recommendations, a cost proposal can be developed for each site, which will further aid in prioritizing the recommendations. Site visits with Staff to each site should kick-off the conceptual POR.

**B. Community Outreach**

Community involvement is critical and it will be requested for the development of the site-specific recommendations, including the vision and POR for each site. Several community groups and individual members of the local community will be contacted and invited to participate in this effort. These include the South Silver Spring Neighborhood Association; The East Silver Spring Civic Association (ESSCA), Silver Spring Urban District Advisory Committee; Silver Spring Citizens Advisory Board; and The Greater Silver Spring Chamber of Commerce. Community associations north of the CBD are also being contacted separately as part of the outreach for Silver Place. The community will be encouraged to provide feedback, react to the proposals presented, and make suggestions.

**C. Update Sector Plan**

The final stage of this process may be to update the Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan with the new green spaces proposed. Along with "green streets," these are the missing links that will enable a full implementation of the sector plan vision.

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# APPENDIX A

| Green Space/City<br>Square Feet/Acres | Activities/Uses | Activation/Context |
|---|---|---|
| **Bryant Park, New York, NY**<br>183,823 s.f./4.22 Acres | Large green lawn surrounded by shade trees,Bocce ball courts, 1 large fountain, perennial gardens maintained by a garden club, food kiosks at corners, library with seating terrace at one end. Park filled with movable seating. | Park surrounded by dense city life on all four sides, including retail, office and residential. Also much pedestrian tourist traffic |
| **Farragut Square, Wash. D.C.**<br>56,160 s.f./1.95 Acres | Large green, tree shaded open space with a large statue marking middle of space. Popular as a meeting place and a place to have lunch on warm spring and fall days. | Park surrounded by mostly office uses, with retail such as banks, restaurants and hotels on the ground floors. Square serves as meeting place for tour groups visiting White House, Smithsonian |
| **Jackson Square, New Orleans, LA**<br>82,500 s.f./1.90 Acres | Formal, tree shaded square in the French quarter. St. Louis Cathedral on one side and Mississippi on other. Square has ample lawn areas and brick walks for strolling. | Square surrounded by sidewalk cafes, restaurants and coffee shops a that provide a rich street life around the square. Its location in the heart of the French quarter also provides character and ambience. |
| **Market Square, Alexandria, VA**<br>50,965 s.f./1.17 Acres | Large, hardscape plaza with landscape planters filled with mature trees. A parking garage is located directly beneath. This square has served as a farmers market since the 18th century. This square has a large fountain in the center and is fronted on the north by the city hall and on the south by King Street. | The square is surrounded by hotels, restaurants, offices and residences; a truly mixed use area. |
| **Post Office Square, Boston, MA**<br>74,052 s.f./1.70 Acres | A park built over a parking garage, it is 53% green and 47% hardscape. It features a 143' long vine covered pergola, two gazebo structures to house an all-season café and the parking garage escalators. There is an interactive fountain, plenting of seating on benches or seatwalls, shady areas out of the way and areas for people watching. Shade provided by mature deciduous trees and lawn areas is raised above surrounding walks by a granite curb. | Serves as the focal point for the city's financial district provides a green oasis that juxtaposes the hard concrete and stone enviroment of downtown Boston. It creates a center that acts as a reference point for this part of the city. The parking lot serves 2000 people a day, many of whom use the park. School age children as well as office workers visit the park. interestly, context is made up largely of single use office space. |

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| **Mount Vernon Square, Baltimore, MD**<br><br>82,770 s.f./1.90 Acres | Composed of 4 smaller squares between .33 and .64 acres each, in the form of a Greek cross. The park is graced by several sculptures and a large fountain | A quiet, tree shaded park surrounded by swank townhouses, churches and several cultural institutions. |
| **Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA**<br><br>225,625 s.f./5.18 Acres | A green oasis in the middle of Philadelphia, provides a gathering place for local residents to meet, hangout and play. Park contains sculpture, fountains, plenty park benches, Gazebos and hosts a farmers market. | Surrounded by a mix of commercial and residential uses. Architecturallly notable buildings line the park and there a nearby upscale shops and restaurants. |
| **Union Square, San Francisco, CA**<br><br>96,900 s.f./2.22 Acres | A mostly hardscaped plaza that features an outdoor café, a symphony sized stage for concerts and off broadway productions and well as terraced lawn seating facing the street for "people watching" | Located in the heart of San Francisco's shopping, hotel and theatre district, the square is surrounded by upscale restaurants and fashionable boutiques and shops. |
| **Santa Fe Plaza, Santa Fe, NM**<br><br>31,775 s.f./0.73 Acres | A formal, tree-lined grassy square it has paths, benches and a central monument. | Located in the heart of Santa Fe, NM, Surrounded on four sides by historic structures, it is activated by restaurants, markets and public ceremonies and festivals. |
| **Washington Square, New York, NY**<br><br>342,000 s.f./7.85 Acres | A large formal square, characterized by mature shade trees, extensive paving, a large formal, interactive fountain an arch and commemorative statues. There are ample benches and lots of chess playing tables, a playground and a dog run. | Located in the heart of Greenwich Village, serves as a neighborhood gathering place and informal spot for musical performances. It is close to NY University, residential neighborhoods and the stores and clubs of Greenwich Village. |
| **Squares of Savannah, Savannah, Georgia**<br><br>20,000 .s.f to 60,000 s.f./.46 Acres to 1.3 Acres | 22 18th and 19th Century Squares that vary in size from .46 to 1.3 Acres form a series of wooded and "garden" squares within the Grid System of this southern city, hailed by critics as one of the most intelligent city grid system in the world. All the squares have seating, gazebos, mature Live Oaks for shade and ample green space including, flowering shrubs, and lawn areas. Some have monuments, fountains and public art. | Each square is easily accessible on foot and via automobile. Most of the squares are surrounded by mixed use such as residential, office, institutional, commercial and retail. Many churches and squares also front onto the squares, in mostly beautiful architectural structures. |
| **Campus Martius, Detroit, MI** | The space is characterized by lawns, fountains, an ice rink, shaded dining areas, a band stand as well as | A main intersection of downtown Detroit has been transformed into a green public square. |

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| 61,900 s.f./ 1.4 Acres | small restaurant. A great spot read under a shady tree in the summer or skate and meet people in the winter. People visit this space in Downtown Detroit to listen to concerts and watch outdoor movies. | Surrounded by retail and office use such as the Hard Rock Café, and corporate headquarters. There are also residential units nearby. |
| **St. Louis Square, Montreal, Canada**<br><br>141,750 s.f./ 3.25 Acres | A Victorian style fountain within a shallow pool is centrally located in the park. There is a Gazebo at one end of the park that sells snack. Seating is provided by plenty of park benches. The Park is characterized by mature shade trees and extensive lawns, being approximately 85% greenscape. | A European style square in the Latin Quarter of Montreal. The context is small townhouses and a nearby university. On sunny days the park is filled with neighborhood people, making this space a true town square. Rue St. Denis on the north border of the square sports several restaurants or pubs, as well as 3 hotels within a 4-5 minute walk. |