

AREA-WIDE ELEMENTS

HOUSING

Within the I-270 Corridor, the *Shady Grove Sector Plan* offers an opportunity to increase the range of housing to meet countywide needs for housing. The Plan's goal is to increase housing choice and affordability options while providing adequate recreation, schools, and community services to create a strong and balanced community. The proposed redevelopment of the County Service Park and Metro station area will provide potentially 4,000 new units. This new residential community reflects County policies to locate housing near transit to increase ridership, and near jobs to decrease commuting time and distance.

Policy Context

A long-standing County policy is to adequately meet the housing needs of the County's diverse workforce.

- The County's 2001 *Housing Policy* reiterates a continuing commitment to provide a variety of housing in sound neighborhoods for all County residents. The policy encourages "innovative design and planning efforts" and "compact residential development in areas served by transit."
- The County Council's 2003 *Transportation Plan* supports increasing housing in the I-270 Corridor and at Metro stations to provide the option of living near work and the potential to decrease commuting times and distances.
- The Planning Board's 2003 *Housing Montgomery* initiative identified both the need for more housing in the County and ways to create it. The report notes that significant housing can be achieved in "mixed use development at transit-oriented locations," specifically in new Metro station zones that encourage housing; the fundamental recommendation of this Plan.
- The County Council's 2003 *Action Plan for Affordable Housing* lists specific and varied actions to increase the supply of affordable housing and techniques to make it more accessible to qualifying households. The *Action Plan* identifies a number of master plan efforts, including new zones and increasing housing density near transportation centers that have been pursued in this Plan.

The provision of affordable housing is another important County policy. As *Affordable Housing in Montgomery County, Status and Inventory* (September 2000) points out, affordable is a relative term. That report identified affordable housing as those units available to households at or below 80 percent of the County's median income. This definition covers subsidized and MPDU units as well as rental and for-sale market rate housing within the income limit. This Plan will use the same definition, consistent with its goal to provide a range of housing types.

Existing Conditions and Needs

Each planning area meets countywide housing objectives by identifying opportunities unique to its area and making specific recommendations. From a demographic review, the Shady Grove planning area is primarily a single-family community and does not offer a significant range of housing options. Given its current stock and proximity to transit, this is a good location for adding new housing types that can create a range of choices, and maximize access to transit.

The majority of residents in the Shady Grove planning area live in single-family detached dwellings and in households that are comparatively large. The planning area's housing mix is 58 percent single-family detached, 32 percent townhouse, and 10 percent multi-family.

Residents in Shady Grove are less likely to rent their housing than households Countywide and the area attracts a high proportion of families with children and working-age parents. The planning area has a small population of persons aged 65 and older. There is no specialized housing for the elderly, such as nursing homes or assisted living facilities, in the planning area.

Objectives

- Create a diverse and balanced community that offers a range of housing choices, including affordable housing, near Metro.
- Redevelop land around the Shady Grove Metro Station with a variety of distinct residential communities, in a pattern that enables pedestrian access to Metro for existing and new residents, at a density that creates a buffer and offers redevelopment incentive, in a mix that accommodates a range of incomes and households.
- Recognize the need for County services and relocate or reconfigure them for continued and more efficient service delivery.

Concept

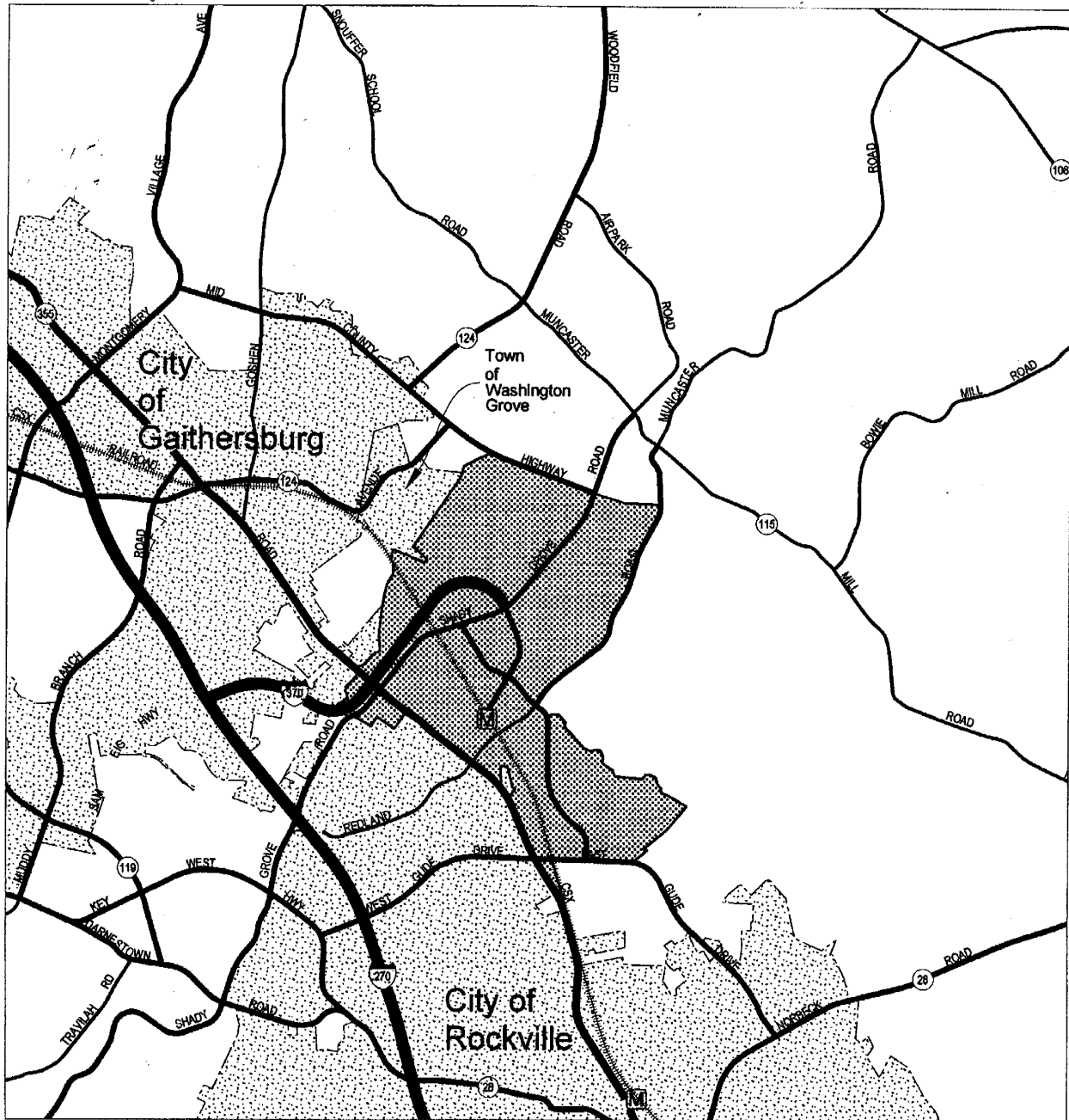
This Plan recommends a significant increase in housing around the Metro station area that will create a balanced community and offers a range of housing choices. The mix of unit types and affordability will serve the County's diverse population with a range of housing types and sizes. This housing will be built in five new neighborhoods, each with a provision of recreation facilities, open space, and community-serving retail integrated into the new communities. Land assembly is encouraged to create the desired residential block pattern.







Recommendations

- Rezone land west of Metro, between MD 355 and the station, for high-density residential development, primarily a range of multi-family units.
- Rezone the land east of the Metro Station for residential development and do not exceed a maximum of 75 percent multi-family units and a minimum of 25 percent single-family attached units.
- Provide a range of unit sizes within each housing type. Multi-family and townhouse units should provide a range of unit sizes. Back-to-back townhouse units are to be avoided.
- Ensure that Metro Neighborhood communities have a component of affordable housing, provided by the public sector, non-profit groups, or through a partnership.
- Design residential areas to create attractive communities with defensible public and private space, in a defined neighborhood unit.
- Require MPDUs to be constructed in stages with the market, rather than at one time.
- Enforce the requirement that MPDUs be distributed throughout the five neighborhoods, rather than clustered in one location.
- Provide senior housing developments within the planning area. Appropriate sites include The Grove shopping center site, the VEIP property, and WMATA's property on the station's east side.
- Ensure that land exchange agreements meet the County's functional needs.
- Support the provision of accessory apartment units into existing neighborhoods through the existing development process.

Diverse Housing Types

Roadway Network



-  Municipalities (City of Gaithersburg, City of Rockville, Town of Washington Grove)
-  Shady Grove Sector Plan Boundary
-  Freeways
-  Major Roads
-  Arterial Roads/Commercial Business Streets
-  Primary Roads



AREA-WIDE ELEMENTS

TRANSPORTATION

Shady Grove is a transportation hub with major highways, rail lines, and an end-of-the-line Metro station. Access to the Shady Grove Metro Station, provision of the future Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT) and countywide traffic all contribute to a complex transportation context. This Plan seeks to provide a safe, functional, and attractive multi-modal transportation system to serve the current and recommended land uses.

This Plan views transportation facilities as an integral element of the community, accommodating not only traffic but also building community character. The network of major highways and arterials are designed to serve both cross-County commuters and local access. With the Shady Grove Metro station at its center, this Plan places a major emphasis upon transit service as a means to reduce future traffic congestion. A variety of means are recommended to increase transit ridership, ranging from a Transportation Management District to improving pedestrian access. Roadway character is addressed with streetscape recommendations designed to improve the visual character of all the area roadways.

Objectives

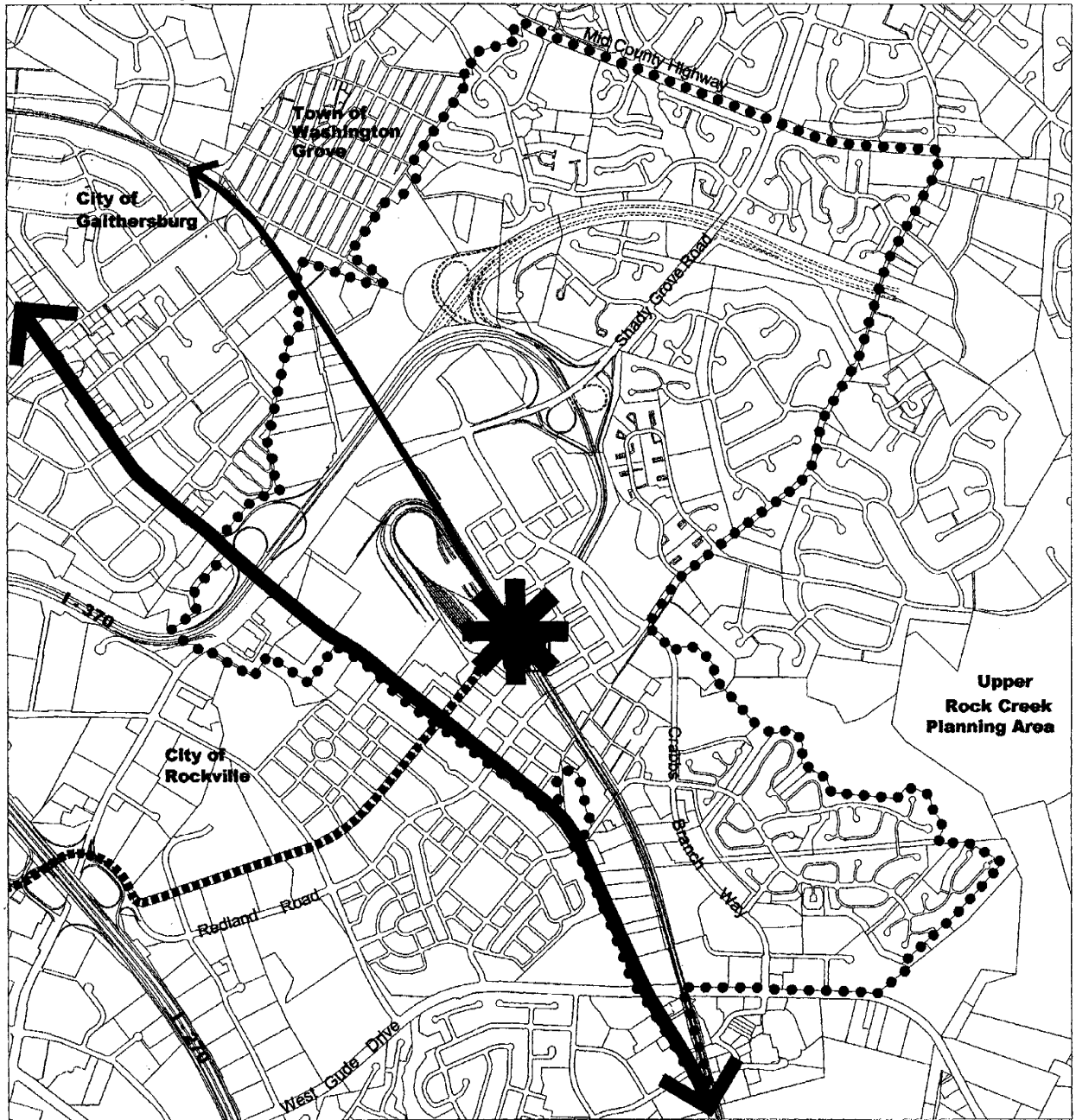
- Improve mobility, local access, and safety.
- Address traffic congestion with a variety of measures that emphasize increasing transit ridership and increasing road capacity where appropriate.
- Increase transit ridership with changes in land use and increased transit service.
- Create a network of local streets to serve the new Metro Neighborhoods.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the planning area and to the Metro station.
- Designate roadway classifications that serve not only through movement traffic but also provide local access to adjacent land uses.
- Design all roadways and intersections with pedestrian-friendly characteristics and improved signage.
- Incorporate the Corridor Cities Transitway into the Metro station to provide convenience for transit riders.
- Improve the streetscape and pedestrian character of all roadways to encourage transit use, enhance residential communities, and create an attractive setting for businesses.

Existing Conditions

The planning area is served by a network of roadways, the CSX rail line that continues through the Sector Plan, and by Metro's red line that ends at the Shady Grove Metro Station. Traffic is heavily congested along the major roadways such as MD 355 and Shady Grove Road. In addition, the Metro station is a magnet for traffic. The limited street crossings of the CSX tracks constrain internal local access. Local access mingles with through traffic along MD 355. A major challenge for this Plan is to identify measures that address traffic congestion, increase transit use, and minimize additional traffic.

Pedestrian activity is increasing within the planning area as a result of the recently built King Farm, across MD 355 from the Metro station. Pedestrian access to the station from the east is less active due to lack of sidewalks and path connections within the existing communities. The existing major highways also create barriers to pedestrian access between communities.

Transit Improvements



-  Transit Center/Metro Station
-  Corridor Cities Transitway
-  Expanded Transit Service
-  Expanded Transit Improvements
-  Shady Grove Sector Plan Boundary

Note: Plan supports increasing transit service throughout the planning area.



Concept

This Plan views transportation improvements as serving a combination of traffic, transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, and community building objectives. It places a special emphasis on transit service and traffic management techniques rather than road widening. The Plan's transit centerpiece is the Metro station with its opportunities for land use changes and increased ridership. This Plan recommends the Metro station be redeveloped as an efficient and attractive transit center, offering a range of multi-modal travel options and featuring a "transit store" to promote and coordinate different transit options. The creation of walkable communities, improved pedestrian and bicycle access, and increased transit service to reduce future traffic congestion are key components of the Plan. The Plan also makes recommendations for the regional roadway network that are designed to reduce future traffic congestion.

Transit System

Increased transit ridership is a major transportation goal of this Plan. As the County continues to grow within established areas such as Shady Grove, easing traffic congestion by encouraging people to travel by transit rather than single occupancy cars is imperative. Reducing car usage within the Metro Neighborhoods can be achieved by various measures. The following recommendations are designed to achieve a goal of 35 percent transit ridership for new residential development.

Shady Grove Metro Station Access

- Limit the number of long-term park-and-ride spaces for Metro to 6,000 to discourage more traffic driving into the planning area and to provide development area for the mixed-use residential community.
- Maintain bus priority treatments, including consideration of an exclusive bus lane along the Metro access road (M-94, see Proposed Roadway Network).
- Consider providing a rental car program for residents of the Metro Neighborhoods as a convenience and to reduce the need to own a car. Other measures may include partnering with WMATA's ZIP Car Program that offers convenient rental cars to transit riders.
- Support countywide efforts to increase park-n-ride lots at appropriate locations to encourage Metro access via transit rather than via single-occupancy vehicles.

Corridor Cities Transitway (CCT)

- Implement the CCT as a light-rail facility (pending confirmation of mode preference by County Council) with a cross-platform connection to Metro that minimizes travel time delays and increases convenience.
- Support locating the CCT maintenance yard and shop outside the Shady Grove planning area at a location to be determined.
- Construct a grade-separated route to carry the CCT across MD 355 and incorporate a safe, at-grade pedestrian crossing.

CSX Corridor Transit Services

- Support expanded frequency for MARC rail service.
- Retain the 50-foot transit easement on the west side of the CSX right-of-way, north of the Metro station. Conduct further study of an additional mode (such as expanded Metro service or monorail) after the first phase of the CCT has been in operation for at least two years.

Transportation Management District (TMD)

A Transportation Management District is a public/private partnership organized to reduce single-occupancy driving by various means including carpooling, subsidizing transit costs, and improving transit service. This Plan recommends:

- Creating a TMD before new development can be approved. (See Implementation section for further discussion.) The TMD should include all businesses and residents in the Shady Grove Policy Area including; if feasible, a larger area such as the Life Sciences Center and the municipalities.
- Reducing peak period vehicle trips in the Shady Grove Policy Area in accordance with AGP Alternative Review Procedures. Strive for a transit ridership goal of 35 percent for residents and employees of new development traveling to work.
- Establishing a “transit store” in a central storefront location to dispense route and schedule information, sell fare media, promote transit use, and provide meeting space for coordinating TMD activities.
- Using minimum parking standards as the maximum allowable parking for development in proximity to Metro to support transit use, to lower development costs, and to constrain the amount of new traffic in the planning area.
- Increasing opportunities for shared vehicle parking, employee and residential incentives, and bicycle parking.

Bus Service

- Improve pedestrian access from neighborhoods to bus stops.
- Improve all bus stops with shelters, seating, and route information.
- Support shifting the MD 355 bus stop located just north of Shady Grove Road farther north, past the I-370 on-ramp, to avoid intersection back-ups.
- Support increased Ride-On bus service within a five-mile radius of the Metro station to increase transit convenience and ridership, especially to community destinations such as local shopping and schools, and particularly Magruder High School. Consider private/public shuttle bus service to meet local access needs.
- Explore the feasibility of MD 355 transit improvements to connect activity centers with development and to better serve transit needs.

Transit Center at the Metro Station

The number of different travel modes serving the Metro station, and the addition of a substantial number of new residents and businesses, warrants the creation of a well-coordinated, multi-modal transit center. The mix of uses and transportation functions are complex and will require on-going management and maintenance to benefit all users.

Within the transit center, a “transit store” should be provided with meeting space to support efficient coordination between transit services and the TMD programs. The “transit store” should also distribute transit information and actively promote transit ridership. Coordinating transit functions, managing transit programs, and promoting transit use would be primary activities at the “transit store.” Size and program needs should be determined through County facility planning. The “transit store’s” location should be integrated with proposed retail shops on the Metro station’s east side.

The existing Metro Station Bus, Kiss-n-Ride, and Parking Facilities will need to be redeveloped in conjunction with the creation of a mixed-use residential community. The following recommendations are transportation related. Urban design recommendations are provided in the Land Use section.

- Increase the number of bus bays serving the Metro station in coordination with WMATA’s required program needs.
- Redesign access to bus facilities to minimize walking distances, ensure pedestrian safety, and minimize traffic and pedestrian conflicts.
- Provide kiss-n-ride facilities on the east side of the station in garages to provide shelter and avoid conflicts with the bus facilities.
- Expand and improve the pedestrian connection between the east and west side of the station.

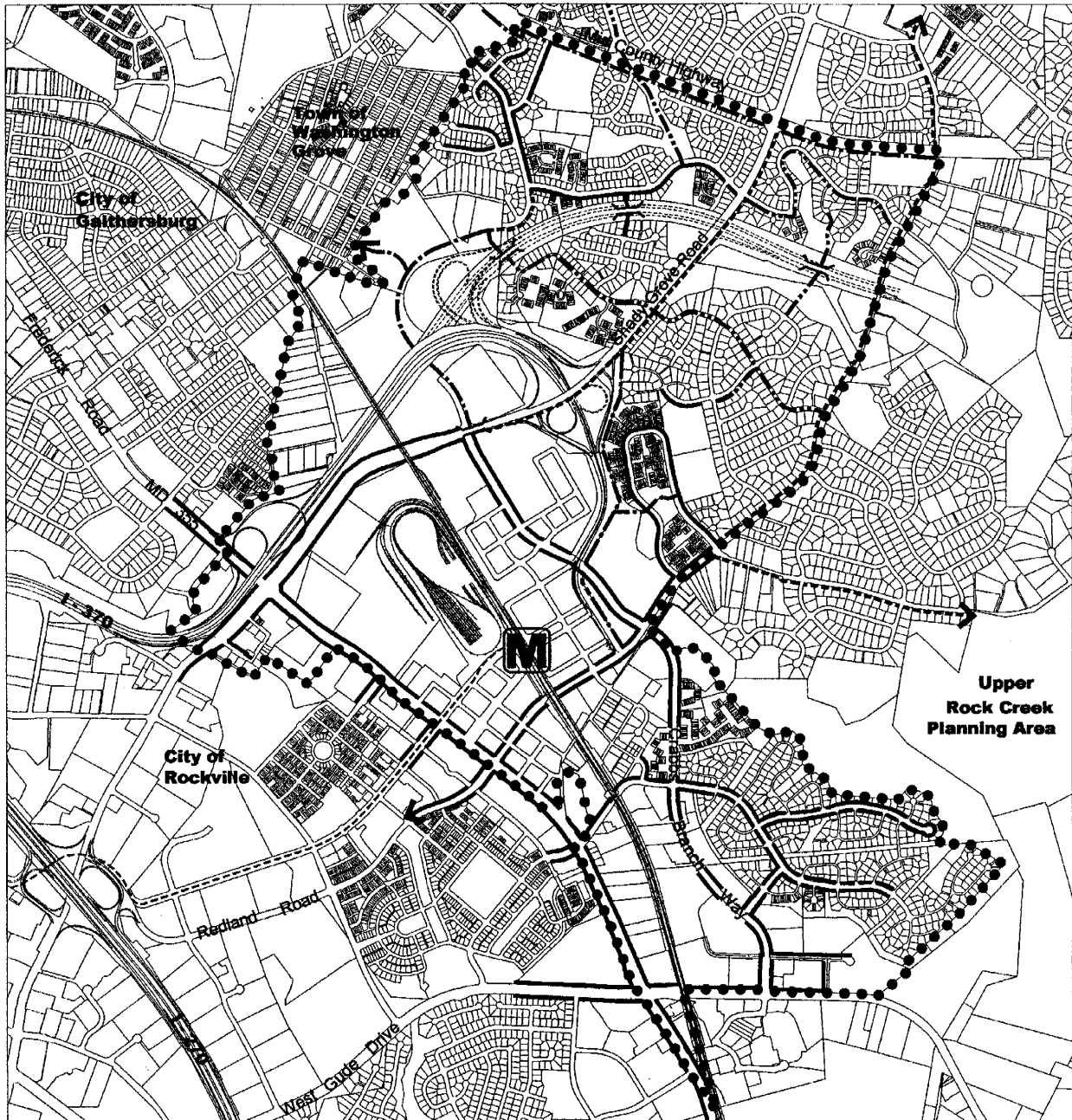
- Replace Metro surface parking with new multi-level parking garages in locations that minimize walking distance to Metro and mitigate rail noise. New garage locations on the station's west side may be located adjacent to the existing entry road to the maintenance yard and partially on County-owned land behind the Solid Waste Transfer Station. On the east side, new garage sites may be located parallel to the rail lines to achieve adequate area for residential development.

Bikeway and Pedestrian System (See Pedestrian Network, Existing and Proposed Bikeways, and Table of Bikeway Classifications)

Bike and pedestrian routes support the goal of increased transit use by providing convenient connections and encouraging walking. The Bikeway Classifications table lists the recommended bikeway and sidewalk connections needed to create an interconnected system. Sidewalk and bikeway connections should also meet the following recommendations.

- Place sidewalks back sufficiently from curbs and travel lanes to separate pedestrians from moving traffic.
- Provide four-way crosswalks at all intersections.
- Provide sidewalks on both sides of public streets in the Metro Neighborhoods.
- Provide special crosswalk treatments in the Metro Neighborhoods such as raised crosswalks to emphasize pedestrian movements.
- Include grade-separated pedestrian and bicycle crossings under the ICC to connect Mill Creek to Redland Station and Founder's Mill to Parkside Estates. Specific locations will be determined during ICC project planning.
- Construct a shared use path, Class I underpass at Crabbs Branch Way and Shady Grove Road to ensure a safe and convenient pedestrian and bike path connection to Metro, the future local park, and north to The Grove shopping center.

Pedestrian Network

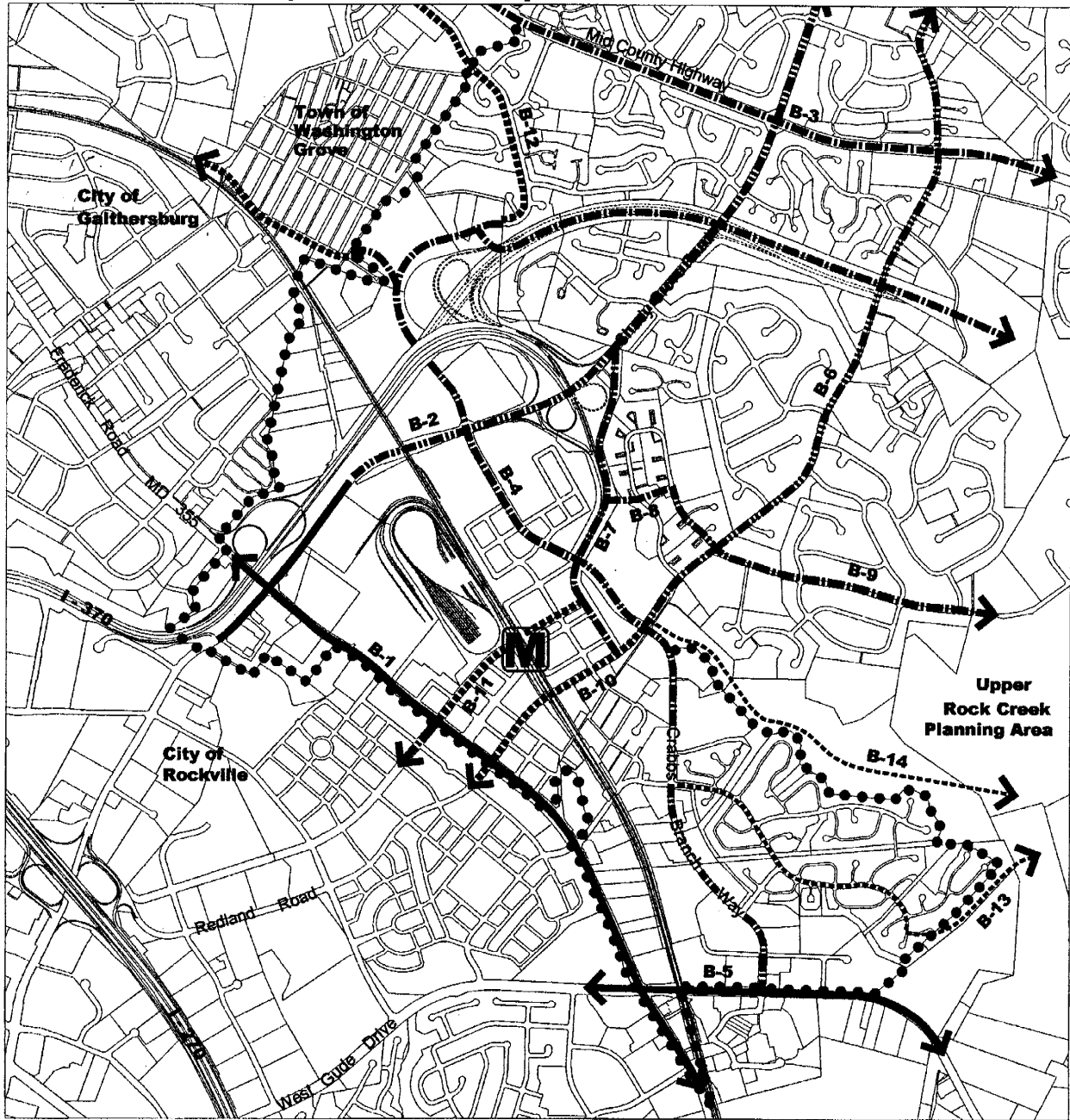


- Existing Sidewalks
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Proposed Shared-Use Paths (Class I)
- Proposed Asphalt Paths (open section)
- Proposed Underpass
- Shady Grove Sector Plan Boundary
- Corridor Cities Transitway

Note: All Intersections to be designed with pedestrian friendly characteristics. All Metro Neighborhoods streets to have sidewalks on both sides.



Existing and Proposed Bikeways



- Existing Shared-Use Paths (Class I)
- Proposed Shared-Use Paths (Class I)
- Proposed Bike Lanes (Class II)
- Proposed Shared-Use Roadways (Class III)
- Potential Bikeways (to be determined)
- Shady Grove Sector Plan Boundary

Note: shared-use paths, Class I, are also shown on Pedestrian Network.

