

# **Report of the Town Center Sub-Committee**

## **Initial Draft for Public Presentation**

**July 27, 2010**

**Reston Master Plan Special Task Force Meeting**

The following Town Center Sub-committee report accompanied the Presentation of Draft Recommendations to the Reston Master Plan Special Task Force Meeting. Find this report and the accompanying presentation at

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/sub-committee\\_town\\_center.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/projects/reston/sub-committee_town_center.htm)

**Report of the Town Center Committee  
For the Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force**

**August \_\_, 2010**

**Committee Members:**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Committee was tasked with making recommendations for the possible redevelopment of the parcels comprising the immediate Reston Parkway Metro Station area. We are pleased to report that there was a good deal of consensus (if not unanimity) among the Committee for the vision and organizing principles for these areas that are embodied in this report.

The Committee without exception believes the essential emphasis should be on incenting the creation of dynamic, mixed used spaces that will make the Reston Town Center Metro Station (and we think that should be its name) a signature destination-origination station. Going forward, this will require a stronger emphasis on more of a 1:1 sq. ft. residential:non-residential balance to achieve true transit-oriented development (TOD) with the incentives needed to achieve these outcomes. More particularly:

**TC Metro North (parcels D3, D4, and D5):** If a vibrant destination-origination station is to be realized here then these parcels, in particular the D4 parcel, hold the key. The Committee feels that the Town Center urban core must be extended south through these parcels and to the Metro station. An idea that generated strong Committee interest is creation of a single or perhaps even multi-level platform at this station with a contemporary urban plaza on the top level. It would be directly accessible from the Metro via an extension of the pedestrian bridge and from new vehicular roadways off Sunset Hills Drive. Most vehicular traffic, however, would be funneled under the platform, where parking would be created. The urban plaza would create opportunities for signature retail, new restaurants and nightlife, possibly a hotel function with convention capability to complement existing and future hotel inventory, potentially a public amenity of some import, and additional office/commercial. Strong north-south connectivity is recommended, though there are some physical challenges with creating these links. Those challenges, combined with the costs of building the platform, locating a healthy balance of residential here, ensuring adequate open space and space potentially for an important public amenity, will require very strong incentives to the developer if this vision is to become a reality. The Committee feels the benefits to greater Reston of extending the urban core and creating this vibrant downtown with true TOD justify the incentives we recommend.

**TC Metro South (parcels E3, E4, and E5):** We think it highly unlikely these parcels will develop into an extended Town Center urban core given the limited north-south connectivity across the Toll Road. This will not change even if the Town Center Parkway extension is realized (and Committee members have heard there are apparently significant engineering challenges associated with that recommendation). Consistent with the overall theme for the Metro Station area, however, we think it is essential that this area be transformed from its current suburban office park paradigm into a more urban, mixed use space consistent with TOD. It is important to emphasize that we are not starting from scratch here. This area was zoned exclusively industrial; there is no existing residential (impermissible under its original zoning) and there are existing and substantial commercial buildings already here. Consequently, to achieve the

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Committee’s vision for a mixed use environment with at least a 1:1 sq. ft. residential:non-residential balance, with new links creating better intra- and inter-parcel connectivity, and essential open space (including a possible central park space, a difficult challenge given that multiple landowners would have to be incented to cooperate on such a project), there will have to be adequate incentives provided. But without these incentives our concern is that this area will remain as essentially an office park for some extended period of time and we think that will not be a good outcome for our community.

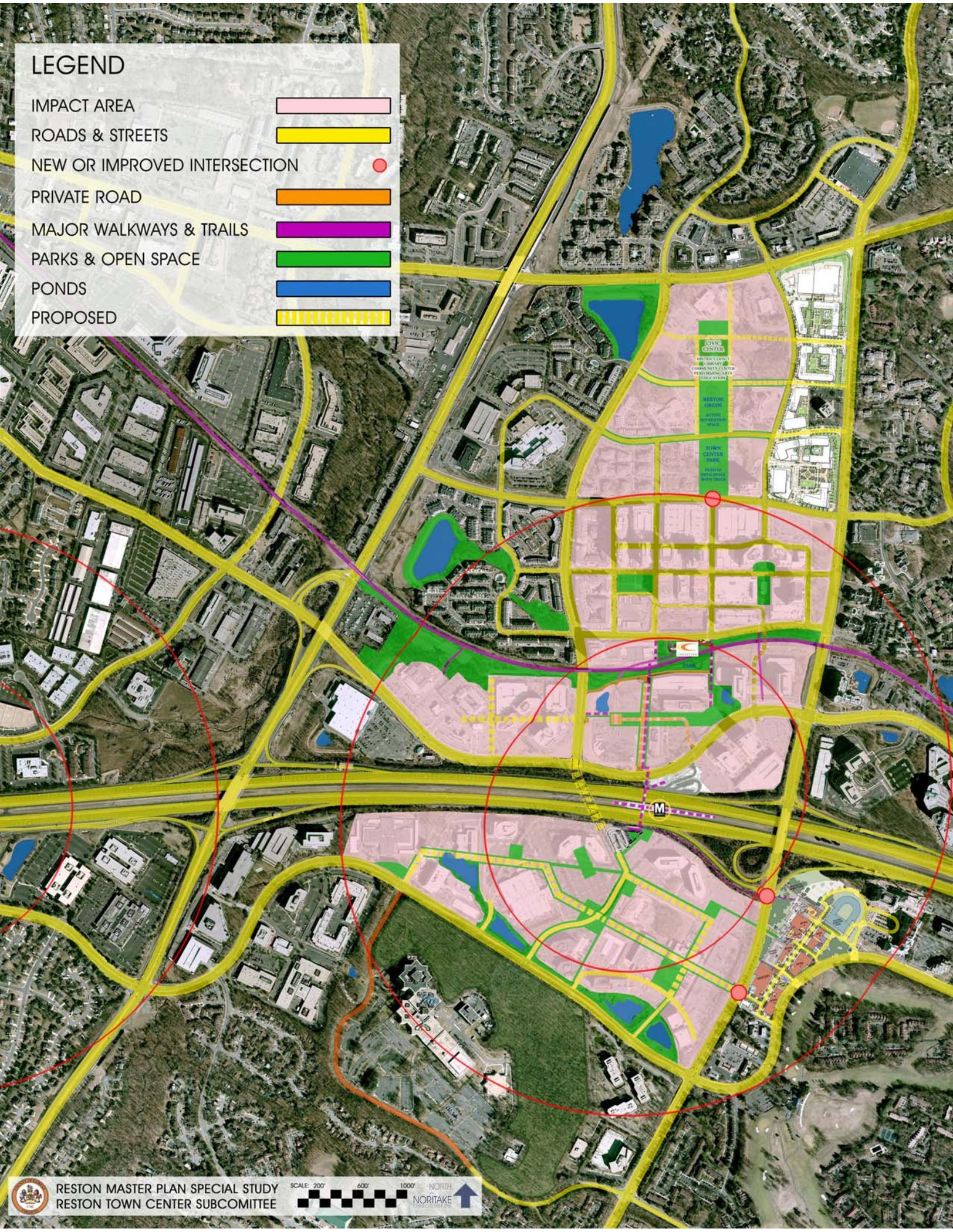
**Town Center North:** We feel this should develop into a more urban, mixed use parcel organized around a strong emphasis on open space – we recommend creation of a meaningful central green space or “town green” – and a consolidated but strong government function. There will be opportunities for supporting retail as well as office/commercial but – consistent with a theme for each of these areas – there must also be a focused commitment to bringing residential to this area. Even though this parcel is beyond the ½ mile radius, a Town Center bus circulator or linear service – something we view as essential to tying this all together and mitigating traffic throughout what would be a larger and even more dynamic downtown – will support the residential opportunity this parcel presents.

Exhibits A and B provide the detail for these visions.

In addition, a straw man map that reflects the essential themes comprising the Committee recommendations accompanies this report. It must be underscored that the Committee does not think this map could or should become part of the Comprehensive Plan. It is offered to help give a visual context to the themes and ideas contained herein, but this map is but one way to reflect and achieve the goals we’ve set. Other configurations and designs are possible and may be more merit worthy. What results on the ground will be the product of the normal planning and zoning processes as guided by the revisions to the Comprehensive Plan that this report will generate.

# LEGEND

- IMPACT AREA
- ROADS & STREETS
- NEW OR IMPROVED INTERSECTION
- PRIVATE ROAD
- MAJOR WALKWAYS & TRAILS
- PARKS & OPEN SPACE
- PONDS
- PROPOSED



**COMMITTEE METHODOLOGY**

It should be emphasized from the outset that the Committee did not attempt to write Comprehensive Plan language. This is a Committee report; it reflects the Committee's points of consensus on how we think the Town Center Metro Station area should develop and what incentives will be required to achieve that vision. We think a smaller group of individuals with the appropriate expertise will be required to distill from this report, as adopted and/or modified by the Task Force, those items that must then be translated into proposed text for the Comprehensive Plan.

With limited resources and time, the Committee adopted a collaborative model for doing its work. Each meeting included an opportunity for public input on matters before the Committee (and sometimes matters that were not). Individual landowners were invited to participate, and to their credit they (like many members of the public) have faithfully attended the Committee meetings and offered extremely helpful ideas and recommendations. We have also heard from County staff on topics ranging from the RMAG recommendations for Town Center, to the County Parks Authority on open space, to staff on general planning issues and the interdepartmental dialogue that has been ongoing the last couple of years concerning the future development of County uses in Town Center North. The Committee's meeting summaries, a part of the public record here, reflect all of the individuals who appeared before the Committee to offer input.

The Committee wishes to thank each and every person who has so patiently attended our meetings and offered input. To the extent this report is able to make a constructive contribution to the important community dialogue is testament to the incredibly thoughtful input we received from so many.

**ITEMS NOT ADDRESSED**

There are two especially significant items the Committee does not address in this report that will or could significantly impact the feasibility of our recommendations:

**Infrastructure Needs Assessment:** If just this Committee's recommendations are adopted the growth that is called for will unquestionably create additional pressure on Reston's existing infrastructure. When combined with what might be recommended from the Wiehle and Herndon-Monroe Committees the impacts could be very significant. At some point there must be an impact/needs assessment of the Task Force recommendations, something that is clearly beyond the scope of this Committee. That kind of assessment should be done before the kinds of development we are proposing be allowed to move forward.

**Air Rights Development:** The Committee has heard from a number of residents who are especially passionate about moving forward with air rights development at the Town Center Metro Station (and this is the only station among the three the Task Force is studying that MWAA is even considering for possible air rights development). The

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Committee feels that actual air rights development is some years away from economic reality. Consequently, we have deliberately chosen not to devote our scarce resources and time to creating an alternative vision for Town Center that would include air rights development.

The Committee, however, feels strongly that MWAA should be encouraged to embed now the pylons needed to pursue future air rights development – in short, to preserve that future potential. Failing to do so will all but eliminate the ability to change that decision later (an MWAA representative advised the Committee that trying to embed the pylons once the station is constructed will significantly add to the engineering and economic challenges of doing so).

Town Center is – and if our recommendations are adopted will further become -- a unique place along the Northern Virginia rail corridor. Air rights development, in a sense, would be the next stage of Town Center’s evolution following the one we are defining in this report. But we must preserve that opportunity for future growth. Consequently, the Committee urges that MWAA move forward with embedding the pylons now.

### **THE ESSENTIAL FRAMEWORK: DELIVERY OF GRID, GREEN, DISTINCTIVE DESIGN, AND 1:1 RESIDENTIAL:NON-RESIDENTIAL TO QUALIFY FOR HIGHER FARs**

To achieve the Committee’s vision for vibrant, balanced, mixed use, TOD throughout the Town Center Metro Station area, the Committee has identified four minimum criteria that it believes must be satisfied as the conditions precedent for increasing office densities above those permitted under existing zoning. The first three of these generated little concern within the Committee:

- Intra- and inter-parcel connectivity. In some cases an urban-style grid may be appropriate; in others a less elaborate but still essential network of links is needed. In all cases emphasis should be placed on pedestrian and bicycle access and use.
- Adequate open space must be planned from the outset. We heard from the County Parks Authority staff that central greens in larger areas are desirable, and our recommendations include such – augmented by other pockets of open space to meet multiple needs.
- For Town Center to retain its reputation for leading edge design, distinctive architecture must be encouraged.

The fourth of the proposed conditions – creating a healthy residential:non-residential mix – generated the most discussion amongst the Committee. Research suggests that achieving higher residential densities at TOD sites where there already is a strong commercial component is perhaps the primary challenge facing a community. (*See Station Area Planning -- How to Make Great Transit-Oriented Places*, Report of the Non-Profit Reconnecting America and the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, at p. 8 (link at <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/show/tod202>)). This is

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precisely the situation that confronts us in the Town Center Metro Station area (both the result of organic development patterns and that in the RCIG residential was not permitted).

The key questions for the Committee were: 1) what is considered a “healthy” mix of residential:commercial, and 2) what if anything should we say about encouraging that mix? There is no easy answer to either of these questions.

In answer to the first, George Mason University demographers provided the Task Force with existing and projected jobs:households data throughout the Northern Virginia Metro corridor. The numbers vary significantly. But when asked which existing station provides the most desirable mix (i.e., one that creates healthy mixed use and also mitigates traffic impacts), GMU’s demographers cited Ballston’s 4:1 jobs: household ratio as the best example (noting that in the Ballston area traffic along Wilson Boulevard has actually decreased in volume in recent years). Ballston is not Town Center, but many on the Committee see a helpful analog there.

If one assumes 4 workers per @ 1200 sq. ft. of commercial space and 1200 sq. ft. per dwelling unit in an urban area like that conceived for Town Center,<sup>1</sup> a 4:1 jobs: household standard converts to approximately 1:1 sq. ft. residential:commercial (which we define as office and industrial space; it would exclude hotel [still TBD: and retail[ [also still TBD: exclude hotel but not convention space at hotel]. It is this standard the Committee has adopted as an appropriate minimum guideline for future development within the Town Center Metro Station area. With the Station Area currently at 15:1 jobs:households according to GMU, a 1:1 SF ratio will significantly bend the curve to create a balance much more akin to Ballston (which is essentially 1:1 residential:office, with hotel and office excluded) and what we see as a more desirable residential:non-residential mix.

To implement that standard, the Committee then adopted several important qualifications:

- In a perfect world, residential and commercial would develop simultaneously or nearly so. The markets for the two, however, rarely track one another. Further,

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<sup>1</sup> John Carter provided the Committee with the following benchmarks:

Office = one job per 250 square feet  
Retail = one job per 400 square feet  
Industrial = one job per 450 square feet  
Other = one job per 500 square feet

Each dwelling unit equals 1,250 square feet including lobbies, corridors and mechanical space (which compares to an 1100 sf figure many Committee members have used as a benchmark in development). If one exempts hotel and retail from the calculation and assumes more office than industrial in and around Town Center, we have taken an average of +/- 300 sf of non-residential and +/- 1200 sf per dwelling unit to get to the 1:1. The Committee is considering exempting retail and hotel from the 1:1 for two reasons: 1) we think encouraging retail will be good for the dynamic mix we contemplate (contrast Rosslyn, for example, which arguably lacks high-quality street-level retail, changing the character of the space), and 2) hotel typically does not generate the kind of peak-period traffic impacts that are of a key driver for requiring a healthy residential:non-residential mix. [As of this draft, that discussion is continuing.]

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- the typically more profitable commercial development must often precede the residential to provide sufficient returns on investment to permit the residential building. Finally, requiring at least some minimal amount of residential be built before commercial may proceed can require physical challenges (requiring residential buildings to be torn down once the market allows the more fulsome development, a very expensive proposition). Weighing these challenges, the Committee has recommended that zoning applications that seek FARs higher than those for which the land unit is currently zoned must include at least the 1:1 ratio, but residential need not be built at the same time. It can await market conditions that permit that building. This ensures the creation of residential land banks that must be used for that purpose so that, over time, the development will get to at least the 1:1 ratio.
- In addition, requiring a 1:1 on especially smaller land units that are already fully or nearly fully built out commercial may well prevent the future redevelopment of those land units. That is not a desirable outcome. The Committee, therefore, is recommending that “any property” within the Metro North and South that is the subject of a zoning application – whether a single or joint/collaborative application – will be subject to the 1:1 standard. This will allow developers the flexibility to work amongst themselves in apportioning the residential and commercial mixes so long as the Metro Station area overall gets to at least a 1:1 ratio.
  - [This para still TBD:] Finally, the Committee believes that hotel [and retail??] should be exempted from the 1:1 formula. [Street level retail especially needs to be encouraged to create a dynamic sense of place. Although it creates traffic, some believe it will not impact peak-period traffic in the same way as office/commercial (peak periods being our prime area of concern).] Hotel space likewise does not typically create traffic loads in peak periods. It will have some, but in many ways it operates more akin to residential (without creating some of the infrastructure burdens, schools e.g.). While we have not added hotel to the residential side of the equation, we have exempted it from the formula. So when we talk about non-residential we mean office and commercial outside of [retail and] hotel. [Do we include hotel convention space?]

The Committee notes that a Committee member has advanced a recommendation for an even stronger 4:1 SF minimum threshold. This standard would be designed to ultimately get the *jobs:workers* ratio in balance throughout the Town Center Metro Station area. We also received public input suggesting a 2.5:1 ratio, which argues for at least a 1:1 jobs:workers balance for new development going forward. The Committee is unaware of any established authority on TOD who suggests that a 1:1 jobs:workers ratio is the desirable standard. We are also concerned that *requiring* a 2.5 or 4:1 ratio will inhibit the kind of dynamic space we envision for Town Center, which will require equally strong non-residential uses.

We emphasize two things. First, the 1:1 threshold we are recommending is a *minimum*; nothing but the market prevents more residential from being built and we do not seek to discourage that in the Committee report. Second, we are talking only about

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Town Center. What happens in other parts of Reston and the RCIG may well be informed by what the Task Force decides with respect to Town Center.

**EXHIBIT A**

**Town Center Metro North and South**

**Executive Summary**

The Committee believes that new development at or near the Reston Town Center Metro Station (and we think that should be the name for the station; it should reflect the signature destination that Town Center already is and will further become) represents an important opportunity upon which the community should be eager to capitalize. Given time constraints, the Committee gave greatest focus to those parcels closest to the Station: parcels D3, 4, and 5 north of the Toll Road (or what we refer to collectively as “TC Metro North”) and south of the Toll Road parcels E3, 4, and 5 all currently zoned I4 (or what we refer to collectively as “TC Metro South”).

*TC Metro North should become an extension of the TC urban core* – rich with nightlife, signature restaurants and retail, perhaps a hotel with convention capability, an augmented office presence, a strong residential component consistent with TOD, and potentially at least one prominent civic use. In combination, these additions to the Town Center will make it a rich and balanced destination-origination station that will be a unique asset to Reston.

*TC Metro South should fundamentally change from an essentially suburban office park to a more dynamic urban space* – separate and different from Town Center (given the limited north-south crossings over the Toll Road) with its own identity. In addition to more urban office space, we envision a strong residential presence. Supporting retail, hotel, restaurant, and at least one grocer should also mark the space.

Both places should have strong interparcel connectivity and, where appropriate, a more urban grid. All roadways should be complete streets (capable of comfortably handling pedestrian, bicycle, transit-oriented (including bus), and vehicular travel). Distinctive and robust open spaces (consistent with the then-current and applicable County guidelines for more urban spaces) will improve the quality of life and the working experience and are essential.

Amongst the three stations that are the subject of the Task Force’s consideration, this is the only one without planned subsidized parking for rail access and it is the only one being considered for possible air rights development. It should and we think will develop- in a much more robust way in comparison to the other two stations and the community should be specially focused on making it a world-class success. Doing so will in our view be decidedly in the community’s best interests.

## Vision

The Committee recommends that the TC Metro Station be viewed as a destination-origination station. This will be realized by ensuring that its immediate neighborhoods, both north and south, evolve to a more urban, mixed use character with attractive reasons for people to take the Metro to and from this center. The focus first and foremost should be on successfully extending the urban core south to the Metro station. Good things will follow from that.

## Organizing Principles

We will discuss separately the individual components of Metro North and South. But the following four organizing principles apply to both:

- **An Urban (not suburban) Character with Intra- and Inter-parcel Connectivity and/or Grid:** Metro North should continue to develop, and Metro South must develop, as an urban, mixed-use space. The zoning designations for the Metro North and South should be changed as needed to accomplish this objective. A fundamental building block for both will be creating interparcel connectivity and, in certain cases, a grid of complete streets. In the case of Metro North, the connections must tie into the existing urban core (with at least ped/bike friendly connectors to Explorer and Library Streets and ultimately realization of the planned “Discovery Street”). For Metro South, that means creation of connections to the planned Kiss and Ride and strong north-south and east-west connectivity at an urban scale. For certain land units (particularly those in E4 and 5) an urban grid with typical urban-sized blocks would seem to make sense. Linking that grid in a way that also enhances east-west connectivity across Reston Parkway would be a plus.
- **1:1 (sq. ft.) Residential:Non-Residential:** [Note: subject to change based on outcome of hotel/retail exemption discussion] The Task Force has heard that the best TOD in the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor (that which creates a healthy mix of uses and best mitigates the traffic/congestion impacts) is essentially 1:1 sq. ft. residential:non-residential. We think that ratio is an appropriate target for development on any land unit within both Metro North and South that seeks FARs above those currently permitted under the Comprehensive Plan. We note that Town Center as currently built is significantly weighted to commercial over residential. Residential development that any developer proposes above this target (so that Town Center overall can get closer to a 1:1 ratio) should be encouraged if not incented.
- **Robust and Diverse Open Space:** Open space is at a premium in Town Center. What we are recommending for Town Center North, if adopted, will help. But the residential and commercial populations will significantly grow if our recommendations for the TC Metro Station area are adopted. That will require a strong commitment to active and passive open space in both Metro North and South to ensure a high quality of life. Innovative solutions in these urban environments will be needed.
- **A Commitment to Distinctive Design:** Communities around the world look to Town Center as a model of planned development. All of its architecture should reflect

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this exalted status and embody the theme of Town Center's ongoing 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration: distinctive and defining.

To achieve these important outcomes our partners in the development community must be properly incented. Development within Metro North and South that meets these four criteria – gird, green, balanced residential:non-residential, and distinctive design – should be allowed the flexibility to go as high as a 5.0 FAR with building heights up to 350 feet. Zoning should be amended accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

### Individual Components

The Committee heard interesting presentations about how Metro North and South might develop:

**Metro North:** The key to realizing a vision of an extended urban core will be the development of D4. Ideas included a possible multi-level platform with parking below and mixed use above, which generated keen interest. There was talk of potentially bisecting the upper level of the platform with an east-west urban plaza with signature retail on either side. There might be some street parking along that plaza to allow for deliveries and short stops, but traffic would otherwise be funneled to the parking below and then out to Town Center Parkway.

**Metro South:** There were a number of ideas heard for Metro South as well, but these are even less advanced since this area has heretofore been unable to develop residential. There was, however, wide agreement on the concepts of a more urban, mixed use space and one that creates better interparcel connectivity. Where appropriate (e.g., in the E5 and perhaps E4 parcels) an urban gird of streets should be considered. In all events, strong east-west and north-south connectivity will be essential.

The attached straw man map is illustrative but not prescriptive of certain of these themes. How any of this evolves will be a matter between the developers and County with appropriate community input, as market conditions allow. We do see, however, the following individual components as important to whatever final plans develop.

- **Transportation Infrastructure**

- Metro North:

- *Interior and Interparcel Network of Streets/Connections:* A classic urban grid may not make sense in D4. There are a series of roads or connections, however, that the Committee feels should be incorporated into future development thinking:

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<sup>2</sup> Our recommendations for Metro North and South may or may not be appropriate for the extended Reston Parkway Special Study Area. The Committee suggests that those areas be given additional scrutiny in Phase II of the Committee's work.

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- The existing curb cut and traffic signal along Sunset Hills should be utilized for vehicular ingress/egress. This might also become an east-west boulevard through the site potentially leading to parking below (if the platform idea is pursued). Indeed, keeping parking free from the urban plaza that almost certainly will have to develop strikes us as essential.
- Potentially adding a second ingress/egress off Sunset Hills about one block to the west of the existing curb cut would allow for creation of a north-south spine for the site.
- The already proffered extension of “Discovery Street” should be completed.
- The Committee also feels there must be additional north-south connectivity to the existing urban core. Extending vehicular roadways presents serious logistical challenges. At a minimum, however, we think there must be ped/bike connectors that essentially extend Explorer and Library Streets into and connect with whatever street network is created for D4.
  - We say “essentially extend” because at least in the near term each may require a slight jog around existing structures (the Sallie Mae parking structure in the case of the Explorer extension and parking along the western edge of Discovery Square with respect to the Library Street extension).
  - In addition, we recognize that each will require an overpass over the W&OD Trail. Depressing the trail at the appropriate locations so these new crossings can be essentially at grade is an outcome the Committee feels deserves special consideration. The cooperation of the Northern Virginia Regional Parks Authority will be needed to achieve these outcomes. We highlight these needs in this report so they may be given the priority we think they require.
  - Effective ped/bike crossings across Bluemont Way will also be required to make these connections work.
- In terms of interparcel connectivity, the Committee believes it may be desirable to provide a functioning east-west connection between D4 and D3 across Town Center Parkway (one that might allow access from the west to the D4 extension of the urban core).
- The Discovery Square and Overlook portions of these lots are not likely to redevelop in the near future. If and as they do the same principles apply – creating a network of

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connections that ties in with the existing and extended urban core and TC Metro Station.

- Thinking about this extended urban core more broadly, future planning must accommodate better ped/bike crossings across the four major boulevards that frame or bisect the extended urban core: Reston Parkway, Bluemont Way, Town Center Parkway, and New Dominion Parkway.
- *Bus Circulator:* The Committee *strongly* recommends a bus circulator or linear connector service from the TC Metro Station through the Town Center District and Town Center North. We see that as an *essential* priority to help minimize vehicular traffic in and through the Town Center District.
- *Metro South:*
  - *Interior and Interparcel Network of Streets/Connections:* The attached straw man represents some base line thinking about the kinds of connections we see as important throughout Metro South as it evolves from more of a suburban office park to an urban, mixed use area:
    - North-south and east-west spines are critical to the parcels' redevelopment. Edmund Halley should be extended to link with the Kiss and Ride (and, if it is ever built, the Town Center Parkway extension). An east-west spine should be built using the existing right in-right out off Reston Parkway into parcel E5. That should connect with Edmund Halley with consideration being given ultimately to extending it or a parallel road farther west (tying ultimately with South Lakes Road).
    - A more urban grid linking E4 and E5 should also be pursued. Block size in E5 should reflect typical urban dimensions.
    - The existing ingress/egress points into E5 along Sunrise Valley Drive also present ready opportunities to create north-south roads to further develop the E5 grid.
    - The near- and even long-term expectation is that much of E2 will remain a Federal government campus for the USGS (if not others). We think extending Edmund Halley directly from the Kiss and Ride into that parcel would provide a more efficient connection with the Metro and help keep additional traffic off the main collector roads (assuming some kind of shuttle service to the Metro).
  - *Signalized Intersection on Reston Parkway:* JBG and Brookfield have urged that we recommend a signalized, four-way intersection

at Reston Parkway utilizing the existing right in-right out into parcel E5. This would provide important east-west vehicular and ped/bike connectivity across Reston Parkway with parcel F1. Although the Committee has not heard from any transportation experts on the subject, both developers have researched the issue and feel strongly that addition of this intersection would help alleviate some of the congestion that occurs at the Reston Parkway/Sunrise Valley intersection (identified as one of the worst congestion points during peak periods in Fairfax County). We recognize this would create a signalized intersection closer to the Toll Road ramp than VDOT might ordinarily allow. We would urge that VDOT be open to this idea as this area becomes more urban in character. We think the benefits in providing important east-west connectivity and potentially mitigating existing traffic congestion at the Reston Parkway/Sunrise Valley intersection could be significant.

- *Other Transportation Infrastructure Improvements Applicable to both Metro North and South:*
  - *Complete Streets:* All streets within Metro North and South should reflect an emphasis on “complete streets” that will be designed to enable safe access and use for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders (including along planned bus routes).
  - *Bicycle Facilities:* Bicycle lanes and facilities – that will enable residents and workers to travel by bicycle on dedicated on-road facilities and make use of bike racks, bike lockers, and other facilities at residential, retail, and commercial areas – should be a priority throughout Metro North and South. Bike sharing should also be given consideration (at least in Metro North).
  - *Pedestrian Connectivity from the Metro Station:* The pedestrian bridge and crossing over the Toll Road envisioned for the TC Metro Station must be accessible 24/7 (with the Metro access area capable of being separately locked off so it does not interfere with this 24/7 access). This will allow at least one important north-south pedestrian link between Metro North and South. Further, this connection must be extended directly into the D4 and E4 lots to allow those using the train a direct connection into the extended urban core to the north and the mixed use development to the south.
    - MWAA has advised the Committee that WMATA has legal concerns with keeping these bridges open 24/7. We think there are ways to overcome those concerns (perhaps leasing the public right of way on the bridge to a public entity that has governmental immunity as but one example). We urge the community leadership to pursue that dialogue with vigor and design a solution that will allow this key access.

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- *Additional Pedestrian Access To/From the Eastern End:* JBG has asked that the Committee recommend an additional pedestrian connector from the eastern end of the station to Reston Parkway, ending with a crosswalk leading into the F1 lot. [TBD: Not everyone on the Committee is convinced of the public utility or practicality of such a connection and/or have concerns about traffic impacts of a pedestrian crossing at that location (especially given that we are urging consideration of a new signalized intersection essentially two blocks to the south to improve east-west connectivity across Reston Parkway). Nonetheless, if VDOT is comfortable with this connector and it is privately funded, the Committee does not object to its construction.]
- In addition to the transportation infrastructure improvements recommended here, the RMAG recommendations should be made part of the Comprehensive Plan and aggressively pursued in Town Center and Metro South.
- *Traffic Analyses:* Future development applications should include detailed traffic, bike, and pedestrian impact analyses that address the transportation impacts of, and possible mitigation measures for, the project.
  - Overall the goal should be to create a much more pedestrian and bicycle friendly experience through Metro North and South. Coupled with a bus circulator or linear connector in Metro North, and the interparcel network of connections we advocate, this will help ensure that the immediate TC Metro Station area becomes a more people- and less vehicular-oriented space.
- **Open Space**
  - *Open Space as Centerpiece:*
    - *Metro North:* A signature urban plaza as centerpiece of the D4 development makes good sense. This is the touchdown point in Metro North for those exiting the Metro and should evoke a special sense of place.
      - The plaza, however, cannot be the only open space on this lot (especially if D4 and D5 will ultimately be more tightly knitted together as would seem inevitable as the core grows).
      - One possible asset that the Committee identified is the storm water pond on the Discovery Square lot. Taking advantage of this space and creating a water-oriented open space would provide a different and very interesting type of open space within the core (perhaps analogous to the swan boat experience in Boston's Public Garden).
    - *Metro South:* [This para needs more attention. If we are going to advocate for some kind of central space I Metro South, something has to give. How could we incent that, especially if we don't want

to give on the 1:1? Tax incentives? Would/could they even be adequate?]) Some kind of prominent square or park would seem to make sense for the South given the new emphasis on residential (and the County Parks Authority staff commented on this as a describable outcome for the area). Two ideas, both reflected on the straw man (again for illustrative purposes only), piqued some interest among the Committee:

- One would be creating a central park utilizing space in E4 and 5. We know the County is in need of rectangular ball fields, but we don't think that purpose would be served here. If there is going to be increased density here to create healthy TOD then we don't think taking scarce TOD space for a rectangular field is appropriate. Other areas of Reston that will not grow to this kind of density should be looked to for additional ball fields (including, for example, roof space at the other two Metro stations which we would assume are not going to develop to the same kind of densities or building heights envisioned here).
- A second idea (and parts of the two could be combined) would be using the four storm water ponds along the southern edge of Metro South to create an interconnected series of parks. The point is there are interesting options for prominent open space in Metro South.
- Finally, the forested area that is part of E2 affords different and interesting options for open space. The Committee feels that lines of communication should be open with the Federal Government to explore preserving this area in some way. It may present the possibility of a win-win – augmenting open space in Metro South while still preserving some kind of natural buffer for the Federal property.
  - A ped-bike connection to the Station through the eastern side of this open space would also be desirable to improve access to the Station from residential areas to the south
- *Additional Open Space in Both Areas:* In addition to a signature piece(s) of open space, both Metro North and South would benefit from the kinds of additional open space we identified as possibilities for TCN:
  - Traffic calming measures as open space features;
  - Green pedestrian pathways through blocks;
  - Buffers along individual land units within parcels as appropriate to the unit's function/use; and.
  - Innovative uses of building rooftops for this purpose to increase both the amount and diversity of open space (admittedly perhaps a more difficult thing to accomplish

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with the kind of building heights that may be necessary here to achieve the development goals we have set out).

- Public Art: The incorporation of public art, especially in an urban plaza or central park and the denser ped/bike linkages, as well as at other major public spaces, should be considered in any future development plan for these areas.

- **Civic Uses/Facilities**

- Metro North: The Committee feels that additional of a prominent public amenity on the D4 parcel would materially add to the potential for creating this as a true destination station.
  - There has been some preliminary discussion of a possible world-class performing arts center. Another possibility that some on the Committee find especially interesting is a children's science center (there is not one now in Northern Virginia, and having that within walking distance from the Metro station would seem inherently desirable given the demographic it would serve).
  - The Committee is in no position to define what would best meet the goal of creating a destination station and satisfy community need; that should be defined through a collaborative community-County process. But we mention the examples above as illustrative of the kind of significant scale we think is needed for the civic component here.
  - In all events, future planning for this parcel should take this notion of a prominent public amenity into consideration.
- Metro South: A similar kind of facility on the south side of the Toll Road, within walking distance of the Metro Station, might well help in developing the new identity for Metro South. We don't see this as an area that will have a heavy civic presence, but a signature public facility might help draw attention, foster residential growth, and attract visitors.

- **Intensity/Density of Development**

- Residential:Non-residential Intensity: GMU reports that the current jobs:household ratio in the Reston Parkway Special Study Area is approximately 15:1. This roughly converts to a 4:1 sq. ft. ratio (non-residential:residential). As suggested in the lead-in paragraphs in this report, our sense is that a minimum 1:1 sq. ft. ratio maximizes the chances for successful TOD – creating a rich mix of uses that will mitigate traffic impacts. The Committee feels that going forward new development in Metro North must be guided by this 1:1 target.
- Planning Mechanism: The Committee proposes that any Metro North or South property that is the subject of a zoning application to achieve higher FARs than are currently allowed under existing zoning must meet the four organizing principles identified above, including being balanced at least 1:1 sq. ft. residential:non-residential (it could be more heavily residential

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if the developer feels the market will bear it, but it must be at least equal to this target ratio).

- The application may be that of one or any number of landowners acting jointly or collaboratively within Metro North, Metro South, or some combination from both. In either case (a single or joint application) the organizing principles must be satisfied for the property that is the subject of the application to qualify for the higher densities we recommend.
  - In addition, the residential and non-residential development that is the subject of an approved application need not be built at the same time. By including residential in the approved plans this will essentially create a “residential land bank” that will ensure the residential development gets built once the market allows (if that is not simultaneous with the non-residential components).
  - We recognize that this could allow for a lag between commercial and residential development (if the former develops first). The Committee does not yet have a solution that could reasonably prevent that outcome. We do feel, however, that interim uses for residential land banks that would create community benefit (not parking, but additional open space would be the most prominent example) should be encouraged. That will come with a price – when it is time to develop the residential units there will be a public uproar over the loss of the interim use. The Committee recognizes this is not easy, but our instinct is that interim uses should be encouraged as opposed to leaving the land fallow. [Tax incentives for that?? Liability exemptions or limitations??]
  - Further, [Consider further incentives for residential, or perhaps to encourage more above the target ratio: e.g., relief from parking requirement and let market decide?; allowing some number of units above the target to be free of the workforce housing requirement?; other ideas??]
- *FAR and Building Heights:* Any Metro North or South zoning application that meets the above criteria (and any other applicable County requirements) should be entitled to a FAR of [still being discussed: up to 5.0 the primary discussion point; critical is the Committee does not want a FAR limit that will inhibit realization of the vision for TC that we are laying out] including all uses and a building height not to exceed 350’ [also still TBD, but some limit again significantly above the current 275’ that allows developers the flexibility to meet the vision we are defining; FARs and building heights should not be the drivers but realization of the vision should]. Such developments will be consistent with what we view as sound TOD and urban design and should be incented accordingly.

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- Similar to what we recommend for TCN, variegated building heights to create a diverse topographical palate should be required.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> We have talked very little about parcels F1 and 2, both of which are within the ½ mile radius of the TC Metro Station. F2 of course was only recently developed, and there is a pending APR nomination for F1. We are reluctant to say without further study that F1 should be subject to the same criteria and benefits we have outlined for Metro North and South. We note, however, that JBG (owner of the land units within these parcels) reported to us that its pending APR for F1 is 1.18:1 residential:non-residential and a mix of uses is proposed. If the nomination also meets the criteria for open space and distinctive architectural design then it may satisfy the organizing principles set forth in this report. (Worth noting also is that F2 has been built out at 1.34:1 residential:non-residential, excluding the hotel space.) We think these parcels should be revisited along with the other parcels that are part of the Reston Parkway Special Study Area for which we have not given guidance.

**EXHIBIT B**

**Town Center North (TCN)**

**(TCN means the 41-acre parcel essentially bounded to the north by Baron Cameron, to the east by Fountain Drive, to the south by Bowman Towne Drive, and to the west by Town Center Parkway)**

**Organizing Principles**

- The Committee believes TCN should develop into a more urban (not suburban) space with a mix of uses. Although advocating a more urban character the Committee does not believe TCN should become an extension of the Town Center urban core. It should be comparatively less intense.
- Special emphasis should be placed on creating a dynamic open space as the centerpiece of the area and on preserving and expanding civic uses that will support Town Center and more broadly the Greater Reston community.
- The attached concept map reflects this sense of the parcel’s future -- an urban-like street grid (with strong “complete streets” that will ensure pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and connectivity) oriented around a large open space or “town green.” The addition of a civic center or community hall that might crown the open space received strong Committee support. Other configurations to similar effect are possible (and public planning with the landowners will determine the final configuration), but this “straw man” is indicative of the Committee’s major themes.
- New commercial (i.e., private residential, office, hotel, and institutional uses) with street-level retail in targeted areas would be focused primarily on the eastern portion of the lot with existing and new civic uses more likely concentrated on the western portion.
- The Committee envisions a strong residential component to any redevelopment of TCN in an effort to achieve greater balance among residential and non-residential uses within the Town Center District.

**Individual Components**

- **Transportation Infrastructure**
  - **Grid of Streets:** We propose an urban-style grid of east-west and north-south through streets that will provide access throughout the parcel. On-street parking and shared parking areas among nearby uses should be encouraged.
    - The grid should reflect an emphasis on “complete streets” that will be designed to enable safe access and use for all users: pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders.
    - Block size should reflect typical urban dimensions.
    - Traffic calming measures are essential to ensure this is a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly space.
  - **Bicycle Facilities:** Bicycle lanes and facilities – that will enable residents and workers to travel by bicycle on dedicated on-road facilities and make

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use of bike racks, bike lockers, and other facilities at residential, retail, and commercial areas – should be a priority. Bike sharing should also be given consideration.

- Bus Circulator: Future land development could benefit from a bus circulator or linear connector service to improve access to the Town Center Metro Station.
- New Dominion Parkway: New Dominion provides an important collector function connecting the Fairfax County, Reston, and Town Center Parkways. However:
  - Future development applications should evaluate and contribute to measures to improve the at-grade pedestrian/bicycle crossings along New Dominion Parkway.
  - Special focus should be given to the segment between Fountain Drive and Explorer Street, especially if/as the “town green” is incorporated into the space immediately to the north.
    - A “road diet” along that segment, as recommended in the RMAG report, should be pursued (for instance, a narrowing of the street in this section to single lanes east-west with appropriate traffic calming).
    - Creating a strong pedestrian/bicycle crossing at the end of Library Street is essential to provide safe and easy access to the envisioned “town green” space and help complete the north-south connectivity all the way to the Metro Station that the Committee envisions.
- Traffic Analyses: Future development applications should include detailed traffic, bike, and pedestrian impact analyses that address the transportation impacts of, and possible mitigation measures for, the project.
  - In addition to the “road diet” suggested for New Dominion Parkway, we think similar changes should be evaluated along Fountain Drive.
  - Overall the goal should be to create a much more pedestrian and bicycle friendly experience north-south from the Metro station all the way to Baron Cameron Drive, thus connecting the constituent elements of the Town Center District. Coupled with a bus circulator or linear connector this will help ensure that the District becomes a more people- and less vehicular-oriented space.
- **Open Space**
  - The “Town Green” as Centerpiece: Open space within Town Center is at a premium. TCN presents an opportunity to help address that issue and this should be an important goal.
    - The Committee believes it makes sense to replace part or all of the current FCPA 5-acre park abutting Fountain Drive (a somewhat rocky and steeply sloped parcel) for open space that is flatter and is

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both more centrally located within the overall parcel and closer to the Town Center urban core. This would serve multiple goals:

- Allows greater flexibility to meet whatever the FCPA and community ultimately decide are the best utilizations of open space in TCN (its flatter character and size could accommodate both some active and passive uses; the ultimate uses, of course, will be defined through the normal collaboration among the County, Reston’s recreational entities, developers, and the residential community). At a minimum, some kind of tot lot-like facility should be located within TCN;
- Provides a centerpiece around which the rest of the parcel may be oriented and creates the potential of a powerful north-south visual and physical connection from the Town Center Metro Station (using Library Street as an important north-south connector); and
- Enhances the possibility of street-level retail at intersections along Fountain Drive to complement the approved Spectrum concept plan.
  - A north-south orientation of this open space (along the lines envisioned in the attached concept map) would maximize southern sun exposure, an important consideration. This consideration should help in guiding building height decisions especially on the south and west edges of this open space.
- Additional Open Space: The Committee’s further sense is that consideration should be given to augmenting this larger open space area with other pockets of open space that are pedestrian accessible. Examples include:
  - Traffic calming measures as open space features;
  - Softening of the edges along east-west through streets;
  - Green pedestrian pathways through blocks;
  - Buffers along individual lots as appropriate to the lot’s function/use; and.
  - Innovative uses of building rooftops for this purpose to increase both the amount and diversity of open space.
- Public Art: The incorporation of public art within the “town green” (if not elsewhere) should be considered in any future development plan for this area.
- **TCN as an Important Center for Civic Uses/Facilities**
  - Government Services: The existing County offices and services (Supervisor’s office, other North County government, the Regional Library, and Health and Human Services) should remain in TCN. Consolidation of these government functions should be encouraged both for convenience and to maximize the TCN footprint.

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- In that vein, the idea of a civic center or community hall that crowns the large open space is an idea that has meaningful support among the Committee.
  - The Committee sees a strong opportunity to augment these existing facilities/services with an expanded library (more appropriate to the population it serves), a recreational center, and perhaps a performing arts center. Again, consolidation of more than one of these uses should be encouraged.
  - As part of a library expansion strong consideration should be given to relocating it to allow for the creation of the larger open space or “town green” that the Committee envisions.
  - Community input was received about the possible need for an urban elementary/middle school within TCN. Recognizing that TCN cannot accommodate all civic functions needed to serve the area, the Committee nonetheless believes that TCN would be one possible and appropriate location for that kind of use if and as demand warrants.
- Embry Rucker Community Shelter: The Shelter is an important part of the Town Center fabric. Whatever redevelopment occurs should accommodate the Shelter’s continued location within TCN.
  - The Police Station and Fuel Depot: The Committee vision accommodates what it heard to be the culmination of a two-year internal County dialogue about expanding and relocating the current police station as part of the land unit Inova partially owns immediately north of the conceived Cameron Glen Drive (unlike the internal County plan the Committee feels strongly this must be a through street, like the rest of the essential grid). This move may have to be phased over time (with parking remaining on the existing lot until the Cameron Glen health facility can be relocated within the overall parcel).
    - The Committee is alert and sensitive to the security concerns that are driving the County’s current vision of a stand-alone, no-more-than two-story building with adequate buffering. The Committee, however, has genuine concerns that this is inconsistent with a more urban vision for TCN. Building a police station within a more urban paradigm is not unique to Reston. So while our draft concept plan accommodates the County’s current vision *it is the Committee’s hope that a solution more consistent with an urban remaking of TCN would be pursued.*
    - We note also that a phased solution here is also possible under the Committee’s approach. It may be that TCN’s build out to the full vision suggested here will take 20 or more years. Accommodating the police near term according to the current County dialogue may not be the preferred solution but it does not preclude a more urban solution in the future as TCN becomes more fully developed.
    - Regardless of what happens with the police station, the Committee does not believe that a fuel depot – as currently configured and

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serving a broad array of County uses – should remain in TCN. It is incompatible with the development goals we have outlined in this report. If it is necessary then it should be incorporated into another building on site in a much more urban configuration.

- Land use decisions the County makes for its property in TCN should be preceded by an opportunity for adequate and timely community input.
- **Private development in TCN should serve the goals of: (a) creating a well-balanced mix of residential and non-residential uses; (b) adding commercial/office space and targeted retail shopping support for those living and working in and around Town Center; and (c) augmenting the existing housing stock in ways that creates well-designed living spaces that can accommodate a diverse demographic.**
  - *Commercial:* Commercial (i.e., private residential, office, hotel, and institutional) should be focused primarily on the eastern portion of TCN.
  - *Retail:* We see an opportunity for targeted street-level retail to help animate the intersections along Fountain Drive and thus complement the approved concept plan for the Spectrum lot, as well as along edges of the conceived “town green.”
  - *Residential:* The Committee’s broader vision for Town Center – extending the Urban Core to the Town Center Metro Station to the south, thus ensuring that this Metro station is a true “destination station” – is an important factor here. There must be a healthy mix of uses, including a strong residential component, in and around the extended urban core to make that vision viable.
    - Within TCN, we feel the residential component should seek to serve a diverse demographic, consistent with current County guidelines (including workforce and affordable housing).
    - The Committee believes that some emphasis should be given to locating housing for our seniors in this space – given its walking-distance proximity to important health, government, and retail resources. For that and other reasons new housing should emphasize accessibility/visitability.
- **Intensity/Density of Development**
  - *Vision:* The Committee does not believe TCN can or should be conceived as an extension of the density/intensity of the Town Center urban core. It should be more of a transition space that while becoming more urban in character remains less intensely developed (as compared to the Town Center urban core).
  - *Non-residential:Residential Intensity:* TCN currently is planned for a mix of uses (including governmental, institutional, residential, office and retail) at up to the equivalent of 0.7 non-residential FAR and 50 dwelling units per acre. This would result in approximately 1.25 million square feet of non-residential uses and 2,000 dwelling units. This intensity/density is generally consistent also with the approved Concept Plan for the adjacent Spectrum property.

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- The Committee feels that development up to that level of intensity/density should provide logical parcel consolidation that will allow for (and not preclude) the phased implementation of the vision for a transportation infrastructure (urban grid of complete streets) and connected open spaces set forth in this report.
- The Committee further believes that non-residential intensity within TCN may be increased up to 0.9 FAR **provided that** in addition to the transportation and infrastructure pieces identified above there is a minimum of 1,000 dwelling units required as part of the overall development plan. Such a provision will ensure that a mix of uses with a substantial residential component is provided.
- We feel this tiered approach will realize the vision of a mixed use space that has the necessary infrastructure (transportation and open space) to support that intensity while at the same time achieving the kind of non-residential:residential balance that we think is important to realize the goal of transit-oriented development in and around what will be the Town Center Metro Station.
- **Building Heights:** Current zoning generally permits building heights of up to 185' for TCN and 275' for the urban core (or a 2/3 ratio).
  - Continuing an upper limit on building heights was an issue that generated meaningful differences among the Committee. Nonetheless, and consistent with our view that TCN should be a transitional space (not an extension of the Town Center urban core), a consensus emerged that building heights across TCN should not be permitted to exceed 200' above grade.
  - The Committee also feels there should not be uniformity of building heights across the space, thus creating a more variegated look and feel. We think this will get addressed organically (the product of market conditions, different uses, and the slope of the parcel). Still, ensuring a variegated look and feel with respect to the overall parcel is an issue that should be taken into account in approving future development plans.