

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 interest. 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 use of bike racks, bike lockers, and other facilities at residential, retail, and commercial areas – should be a priority.

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- 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 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

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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: We are mindful of the County’s urban parkland standard (1.5 acres per 1,000 residents and 1.0 acre per 10,000 employees) which, given the levels of redevelopment contemplated in this report, could generate the need for +/- 10 acres of parkland/open space within TCN. The Committee’s further sense, therefore, is that consideration should be given to augmenting this larger open space area with other pockets of open space. 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 lot 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.

- [What if anything can/should we say about incenting or requiring the County to do the things we think will make this such a dynamic space?]

- **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.