



9: URBAN DESIGN

Urban design is the discipline that guides the physical qualities of Tysons. New urban development and its supporting framework of streets, blocks and open spaces depend upon great design to create quality pedestrian environments. Good urban design impacts places at all scales - the city framework, the district, the neighborhood, and the building. It ties elements within Tysons into cohesive, functional and memorable places.

This chapter provides guidance for urban design in two parts: Urban Design Principles and Urban Design Guidelines. The Urban Design Principles provide the frame for transitioning Tysons from what it is today to what it will become in the future. The Urban Design Guidelines provide more detail and direction about how to implement the principles and the vision to create the urban form. The urban design guidelines are provided at two levels: Urban Framework (applicable throughout Tysons) and Urban Character Zones (applicable to specific areas within Tysons).

Creating a single Urban Framework for all of Tysons will be a difficult task. It will be a place of many districts. At its broadest scale, Tysons will be structured by an overall framework of its TOD areas, the Circulator system, open spaces, and development parcels. Within that structure, urban design will help to create places based on connectivity, walkability, accessibility, and human scale.

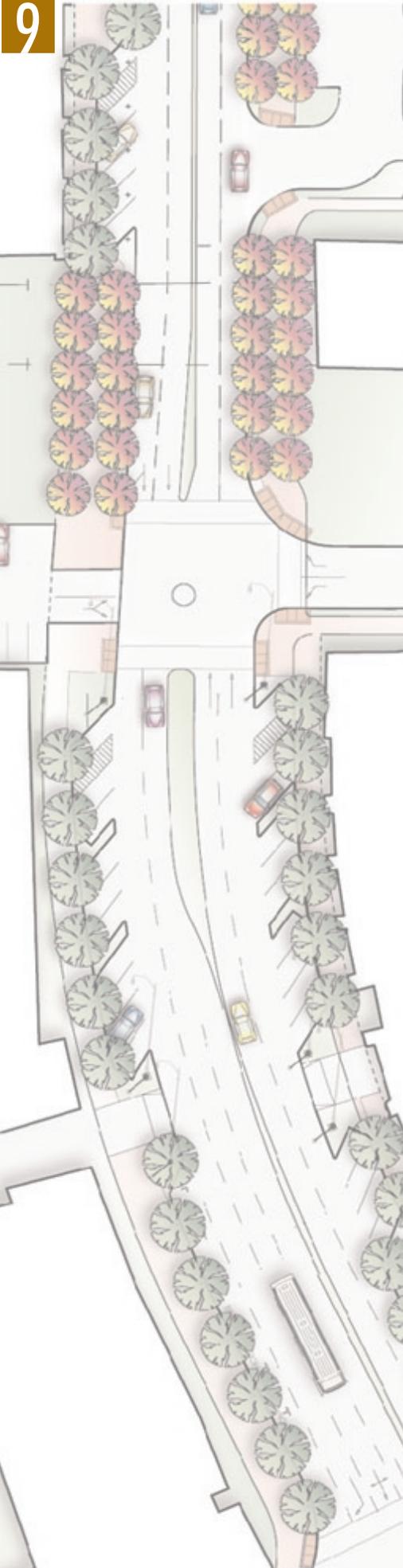
The next level of urban design in Tysons will be defined by three broad Character Zones. Within these Zones, districts, neighborhoods, and activity nodes will eventually develop. The guidelines will prioritize the Character Zones, and recommend that future planning efforts drill down to address the district and neighborhood scales.

Urban design is a tool that should be used to guide the physical manifestation of planning decisions in Tysons.

It highlights the physical connections between land use, transportation, open spaces and buildings that are impacted through design.

It coordinates the relationship between public space and private development and infrastructure.

It calls for the participation of these elements of the city in the creation of well-connected, active, safe and beautiful places with a vibrant public realm around which the rich and complex lives of residents, workers and visitors grow.



These urban design guidelines provide a framework for Tysons from the “10,000 foot level,” and pertain to the way in which the overall vision can be applied throughout Tysons. The recommendations set the direction for future development in Tysons using the Character Zones as organizing elements on which broad guidelines will be structured. They do not apply to specific locations within Tysons’ districts. In the next phase of implementation, district plans will be developed consistent with the overall Tysons plan and urban design guidelines.

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The following 17 urban design principles define the essential characteristics and strong sense of place of all successful TODs. They are based on Task Force consensus and related decisions, principles of good urban design, and TOD planning. Together, the principles form a “constellation” of main guiding points.

Regional Identity

1. Advance Tysons as the vibrant downtown of Fairfax County.
2. Transform Tysons from an auto-oriented, separated land use, suburban activity center into a highly desirable, walkable, transit-oriented, and livable urban environment.

Identifiable Centers & Edges

3. Create unique identifiable, livable districts, neighborhoods, and centers within Tysons at a walkable scale.
4. Concentrate the greatest density at transit stations with transit-oriented land use mixes.

Vibrant Streets & Walkable Block Pattern

5. Balance increasing efficiency of traffic movements to, through, and within Tysons by interconnecting separated areas of Tysons and creating a transit-oriented environment.
6. Create pedestrian and bike friendly environments and connections throughout Tysons.
7. Create a hierarchical, fine grain network/grid of streets and street types that shape an orthogonal, walkable block pattern.

Quality Public Realm & Natural Features

- 8. Encourage sustainable, human-scale, urban building types and architectural design that address and open onto the pedestrian realm.
- 9. Create a diverse, attractive public realm with parks, tree-lined streets, and public gathering places defining the character of each district and neighborhood.
- 10. Restore natural drainage systems, improve water quality, and create a secondary system of non-vehicular paths with continuous open space networks.

Mix of Uses

- 11. To ensure urban character, require mixed-use development where commercial, residential, and civic uses are an integral part of districts, and not isolated single use complexes or in remote locations.
- 12. Attract new residents to Tysons, with creative urban living housing diversity and affordability.

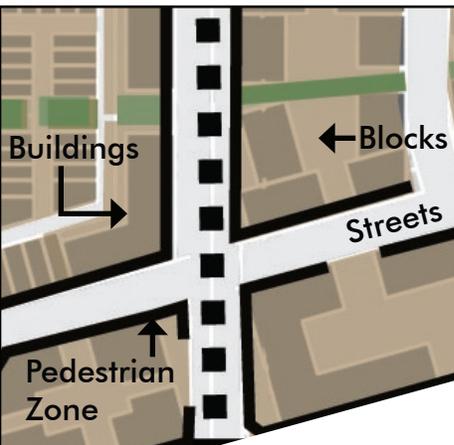
Balance Growth & Community Benefits

- 13. Establish and apply a broad palette of amenities for urban livability.
- 14. Balance the sufficient provision of community benefits, infrastructure, and public facilities with the pace of development.
- 15. Create cooperative planning/development management and permitting processes to ensure high quality urban design.

Edge Areas

- 16. Protect the character and livability of adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- 17. Transition building heights and density to provide greater compatibility with other Tysons districts and adjacent residential neighborhoods.





THE URBAN FRAMEWORK

The Urban Framework highlights the physical connections between the blocks, the street, the sidewalk and the buildings. Regardless of where you are in Tysons, these four elements help define the pedestrian experience. The elements and how they function and interact with the other elements are described in the section that follows. Guidelines to facilitate the desired pedestrian friendly environment are identified. These guidelines should be applicable throughout Tysons. In the section that follows, Character Zones, additional guidelines are identified that vary for the three character zones in Tysons: Station Core, Circulator, and Transition.

Walkable Blocks

Street Grid and Block Pattern

The grid of streets establishes the structure for a walkable Tysons. Its scale and variation supports choices in access and ensures easy access to the various neighborhoods within Tysons. Organized in small blocks, the grid of streets will provide more streets and fewer arterials. Shorter blocks will be walkable, and support and encourage pedestrian activity and the land uses that serve pedestrian activity. For all new development and redevelopment projects within Tysons, the block standards will be:

- The perimeter length of a block ranges between 800 feet to 1,600 feet if within 1/4 mile of the Metro station or 600 of a form-giving circulator and between 800 feet and 2,400 feet if located more than 1/4 mile from the Metro station or 600 feet from a form-giving circulator.
- Any block side longer than 400 feet must be traversed by a public right-of-way allowing, at a minimum, through pedestrian connections.
- The ideal length-to-width ratio for the blocks is no greater than 2:1 if within 1/4 mile of the Metro station or circulator and no greater than 3:1 if located more than 1/4 mile from the Metro station or circulator.

In order to implement the grid of streets and small block pattern, all proposals for new or re-development of parcels longer than 400 feet on any side should incorporate and/or dedicate right-of-way for planned road improvements that follow the grid of streets and street types discussed in Chapter 6. The grid of streets and street types are also illustrated in the urban block pattern diagram.



Tysons Area: Streets and Blocks



▲ **CONCEPTUAL MAP 8 - Tysons Area Urban Block Pattern**

The development team should make the best possible attempt to create a street and block network that follows the proposed grid of streets. In cases where this may not be feasible, the development team should work with staff to develop an alternative site planning response that achieves a similar level of connectivity as in the proposed street network.

Conceptual Block Patterns



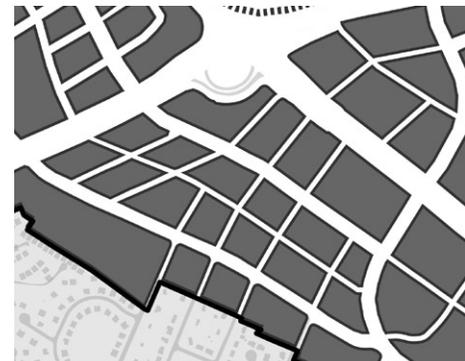
Tysons Central 7 Station Core Zone



East Side Transition Zone



North Central Circulator Zone



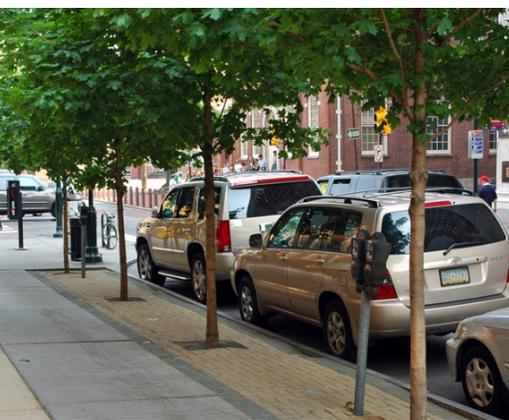
Old Courthouse South Transition Zone



“Holding the corner” is a way to emphasize important locations and destinations in the urban landscape



Underground parking allows more intense use of street-level and above-grade areas



On-street parking provides convenience and separation between pedestrians and moving traffic

Parking

Parking guidelines to be applied throughout Tysons include:

- Use below grade and/or podium parking wherever feasible.
- Above grade parking structures should be “wrapped” with active uses on all sides.
- Wrapped structures should not extend beyond the height of the uppermost level of the surrounding use.
- In some locations, exposed parking may be unavoidable. If this occurs, then careful architectural detailing, lighting and landscape should be designed along the frontage to activate the facade and to mitigate the negative impacts of blank facades. Efforts should be taken to place these structures facing side streets or alleys.
- Parking access should always be designed in such a manner as to reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

Interconnected Streets

The street generally describes the public realm within the fabric of the transformed Tysons. While not every street may be publicly owned, they all will generally accomplish several important things within the urban framework:

- provide circulation within and through districts and neighborhoods;
- provide routes for vehicular traffic and non-vehicular traffic including pedestrians and bicycles;
- provide access to individual sites and buildings;
- direct and manage traffic flow through Tysons with their varying capacities;
- provide rights-of-ways within which civil and communications utilities may reside;
- subdivide land and describe its general “block-pattern”; and
- significantly contribute to the overall visual character of the place.

In the vision for Tysons’ future, streets will be designed to respond not only to the need to carry vehicular traffic, but will also provide the basic structure necessary for an interconnected, vibrant, walkable community. In Chapter 6, the Circulation System and Street Types have been analyzed on three levels: Street Types; the Streetscape, and the Pedestrian Realm.

1. Street Types describe the street as an element of the comprehensive framework of Tysons. Street types respond to the types and needs of traffic and are configured in alternative sections to balance vehicular traffic needs with the needs of bicycles and pedestrian traffic as well. An array of street types in Tysons has been identified, and Chapter 6 provides a conceptual overview of each type’s functionality, cross-section, scale, modal mix, and character.
2. The Streetscape focuses on the general design of the whole street within its right-of-way (ROW). This includes the overall ROW width, the number of travel lanes from curb-to-curb, the primary mode use of travel lanes, the presence and location of medians and sidewalks and their widths. The statistics provided for each street type are broad and usually consist of a range in order to allow for flexibility in future implementation. The streetscape also broadly describes the location of transit lanes, parking lanes, pedestrian crossings and locations for trees and landscaping. The general elements of the streetscape are addressed in Chapter 6.
3. The Pedestrian Realm occurs between the curb and outer right-way-line of the street. This area generally describes the area where the pedestrian will walk and its components, and in some cases it also accounts for the area between the right-of-way line and the setback line. This guidelines related to the pedestrian realm are described further in this section under “The Pedestrian Realm.”

The Pedestrian Zone

The Pedestrian Realm occupies the area between the face of the building and the sidewalk curb. This realm includes the sidewalk and connects pedestrians to the interior of adjoining buildings. This realm contains the activity associated with a “vibrant, pedestrian-focused” place. It can be adjacent to residential or commercial uses, and can have an urban commercial or neighborhood residential character. The Pedestrian Realm of streets will also act as a linear link within the overall open space network in Tysons.

There are primarily three elements of the Pedestrian Realm for every street type:

1. **Landscape and Street Furniture:** This is a portion of the sidewalk adjacent to the vehicular travel or on-street parking lanes and includes elements like trees, planters, street lights, news stands, bike racks, etc.
2. **Walkway:** The Walkway is an unobstructed area that provides accessible circulation for pedestrians along the length of the sidewalk. The width of this area may vary, but it must meet minimum accessibility requirements. Areas of more intensive pedestrian activity should generally include a wider Walkway.



“Streets are attractive, balanced, and colorful; feature sidewalks, planter strips, and medians (when appropriate); and handle a diversity of needs. Many streets feature on-street parking, and larger-volume streets have bike lanes. Homes and buildings are brought forward, relating to the street. There is little or no off-street parking. Sidewalks are centered and surrounded with attractive edges, a planter strip to the street side, and an edge or attractive transition to the private property.”

Dan Burden, Executive Director of Walkable Communities, Inc.

3. **Street Façade:** This is the narrow area between the back of the public sidewalk and the building facades where building entrances, storefronts and other interactive façade elements are located. This area offers shelter from sun and rain, space for seating and/or commercial displays, and landscaped setbacks. Color, texture, signage, and variations in activity provide visual interest for both pedestrians and motorists.

For the purposes of these guidelines, the Pedestrian Realm is the portion of the street experienced by people on foot. The goal is to ensure that the design and configuration of the streetscape within this area is compatible with adjacent land uses. The following Pedestrian Realm guidelines should apply within all areas of Tysons.

Build-to Lines

Creation of a rich and lively pedestrian environment will be highly dependent on the relationship of the building to the Pedestrian Realm, its design, scale and modulation, and the activities taking place within. The build-to lines are invisible lines located adjacent to the sidewalk. They are the boundary to which a percentage of the building’s facade must align, and will be formally identified when either public street improvements or private redevelopment projects are proposed within Tysons.

The location of the build-to lines will relate to the Sidewalk Zone and proposed streets, and should be located based on the intensity and activity of adjacent land uses and the desired relationship of pedestrians to these uses. As the nature of land use along the streets transition, the build-to line will adjust and/or the percentage of building frontage along the build-to line may decrease.

- Build-to lines should be established for all locations in Tysons.
- Generally in urban areas, the build-to line should be located no more than 5 feet from the back of the sidewalk. In the most urban locations, the build-to line should align directly with the back of the sidewalk.
- If new projects occur along existing streets or streets that do not have a defined build-to line, they should be reviewed on a per-project basis to establish the best location.
- Urban design best practice should be used to create and support a pedestrian accessible and focused environment.

Streetwall

The Streetwall is the portion of the building that serves to define and enclose the Pedestrian Realm. It aligns with the build-to line, and will define the visual focus for pedestrians and autos as they pass by. The streetwall height will vary depending on location. In some locations, additional floors of a building may extend above the streetwall, and there may or may not be a step-back from the height of the streetwall. In combination on each side of a street, the streetwall will define the horizontal width of the entire streetscape.

- Streetwall standards should be established within future development regulations and design guidelines for Tysons’ districts to ensure the consistency of the public realm over time.
- Buildings should establish a consistent streetwall height based on the development’s relationship to the Street Type and its Pedestrian Realm.

Facade Lighting & Signage

Facade Lighting and Signage guidelines to be applied throughout Tysons include:

- Lighting and Signage will be elements that contribute to the vibrancy and visual complexity of the urban fabric. Building facades should include a lighting and signage design that complements its architecture and the surrounding area and adjacent uses.
- In some neighborhoods a comprehensive lighting and signage program may be considered and designed to establish memorable unique visual cues that identify a special place.

The Building

The buildings themselves complete the urban fabric. Their formal qualities (scale, form, bulk, massing and relationship to the Pedestrian Realm) provide the visual cues that help determine the activities and meaning of the structure. Whether Civic, Commercial, Retail or Residential uses, the buildings’ architectural designs should help to tell this story. The buildings will vary by use, location and intensity. The architecture should reflect and celebrate these differences, but new development should also work together to link otherwise disjointed uses.

The building guidelines provide fundamental direction for all development throughout Tysons. However, each district in Tysons deserves a closer analysis, plan and guidelines for its unique conditions and urban design vision.



Taller buildings extend above the streetwall without impeding the pedestrian scale it defines.



Along residential streets, the build-to-line may be setback from the sidewalk to create a separation between the public and private space



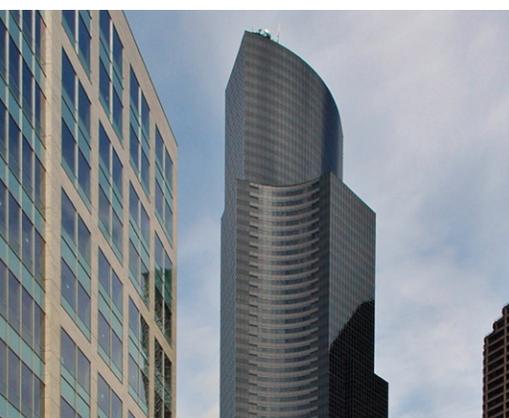
A building’s form and massing contribute to its identity and helps shape the skyline



Design variation at the tower top helps to distinguish buildings from one another along the skyline



Step backs at the tower top reduce bulk, improve views and provide opportunities for private open spaces and "tower-top" living



The design and architectural features of towers could create landmarks for Tysons

Building Height, Massing & Bulk

Building heights in Tysons will be reflective of the proposed intensity pattern. The tallest built forms will be located within the station areas, with gradual stepping down of height as intensities decrease further away. Taller built form will also reflect higher intensity along the circulator corridors. However, building heights are not the only method available to achieve desired intensity goals. The most sensitive height zone will occur in locations where development is adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods, particularly those neighborhoods outside of Tysons. Careful design will protect view corridors and maintain access to sunlight at these sensitive locations.

The massing and height framework in Tysons will support the creation of a memorable skyline, and a carefully scaled public realm within Tysons' districts and neighborhoods. The following broad guidelines will apply to the Tysons Urban Design Framework.

- Organize buildings by height in a manner that will take advantage of the ability to create a recognizable and memorable skyline.
- The relationship of building height to floor area should be considered when creating regulations for or designing new towers. To maintain slender towers as the tower height increases, the maximum floor plate area should generally decrease.
- Distinctively designed building tops will serve as identifying features and contribute to the quality of the city skyline.
- Building heights must be lowest on the edges of Tysons to protect the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Step-backs

Step-backs are architectural massing tools that serve to decrease the amount of building facade that aligns with the streetwall as height increases. They will be used to reduce impacts of shadows and increase the access of sunlight to the pedestrian realm. They can also be used to reduce what is sometimes referred to as the "tunnel" effect along streets that are lined with taller buildings. However, step-backs may not always be necessary, and in some cases - especially residential towers - they can create challenges in maintaining a consistent floorplate distance from a building's circulation core.

- Step-backs occur above the streetwall height which will vary by location and context.
- Above the height of the streetwall, the building may step back from the lower face of the building by five to ten feet.
- Step-backs should be employed to conform to locations where existing development has established this condition above the streetwall.
- Care should be taken to avoid "gimmicky" or "wedding-cake" architecture of some step-back designs.

- Step-backs will be appropriate in some areas of Tysons. They can be used to add depth and complexity to the bulk of buildings, and can also be used to ensure access to sunlight.
- Step-backs should not be required in all locations throughout Tysons, especially if it conflicts with the floorplate and core efficiencies of the building. The requirement of step-backs in certain locations within Tysons should be evaluated during the preparation of the district plans, standards, and guidelines.
- Step-backs may be necessary to ensure sunlight in certain locations, particularly as related to public open spaces. This should be reviewed on a per-project basis.
- When step-backs are not employed, the streetwall height should be marked by cornice articulation, material and/or color changes or other architectural devices.
- Step-backs may be necessary to ensure sunlight in certain locations, particularly as related to public open spaces. This should be reviewed on a per-project and/or per-location basis.
- When step-backs are not employed and buildings include additional stories, the streetwall height should be marked by cornice articulation, material and/or color changes or other architectural devices.

Tower Spacing & Tower Articulation

In many locations, buildings in Tysons will be urban in nature and intensive in use and scale. These locations should be designed with care to achieve the desired density goals, while remaining sensitive to their impact on the surrounding context.

- In densely developed areas in Tysons, controlling the separation and height variation between towers will serve to protect access to light, views and privacy.
- Towers should be sited and spaced from one another in a manner that allows for light at the street level and minimizes long periods of shadow.
- The massing of tall buildings should incorporate the use of step-backs above the streetwall, floor plate area reductions at the upper stories, and tower top articulation.
- Sunlight studies should be required.





Architectural design, transparency, signage and lighting, sidewalk paving, and outdoor seating combine to add character and life to the Pedestrian Zone within the Station Core Zone



A well lit and attractively designed streetwall makes a memorable place and invites people to use it throughout the day and evening

Building Articulation

Building Articulation guidelines to be applied throughout Tysons include:

- Articulations should occur in the forms of bays, facade plane and material changes, window systems, entries, balconies or stoops. They should also include cornice and roof forms, parapet modulation and color changes.
- Vertical articulations through material, color and texture should express the streetwall “base” of the building, the shaft or mid-rise section of the building, and the tower top where applicable.
- Articulation along the commercial streetwall should occur at approximately 25’ on-center.
- Articulation along residential frontages should occur at approximately 20’ on-center. Entries serving every ground floor unit are ideal, and serve to strengthen the identity of the residential streetscape.
- Blank walls will never be appropriate on any public street-facing façade. If blank facades cannot be avoided, strategies should be employed to mitigate the condition, and space for commercial uses should be provided facing the Pedestrian Realm.

Fenestration & Transparency

Fenestration and Transparency guidelines to be applied throughout Tysons include:

- Where ground floor retail, commercial, community or other non-residential uses occur, the facade above bulkhead and below the finish elevation of the 1st floor ceiling should be between 60 percent and 75 percent transparent.
- Opaque, mirrored and translucent glass should be avoided and should not be considered “transparent.”

Landmarks, Gateways & Public Art

Landmarks, gateways and public art guidelines to be applied throughout Tysons include:

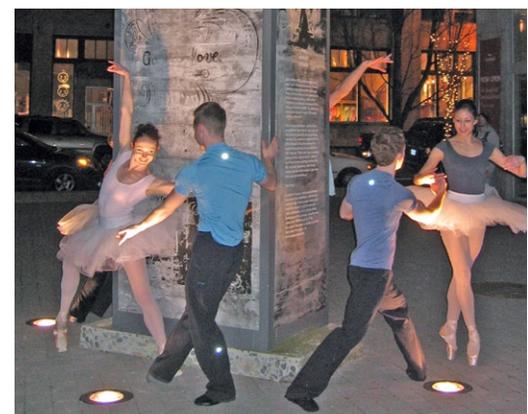
- In accordance with the recommendations advanced by the Commission on the Future of the Arts, public art should mark landmarks and gateways and serve useful functions such as bike racks. Planning for public art will be conducted with guidance from a task force of the Arts Council of Fairfax County.³
- Gateways are real or perceived locations through which one passes from one place of a certain nature into a different place of a different nature. They may be marked by a physical element such as signage, columns, planters or public art.
- Gateways could occur at major transportation corridors where initial views into Tysons are provided, they could be monuments or posts of a formal nature that demarcate a new location, or they can be incorporated into and enforced by building design.
- Gateways should be used thoughtfully and with intention. They need not occur at every transition point in the urban landscape. They should be used to celebrate a truly significant passage into important places in Tysons.
- Major commercial projects should include works of public art incorporated into the design of the project.
- Developers of new projects should work with artists from the start of planning on to create a plan that integrates art into the project.



Public art should be incorporated into private development projects.



Art itself can become a landmark and focal point to generate community interaction

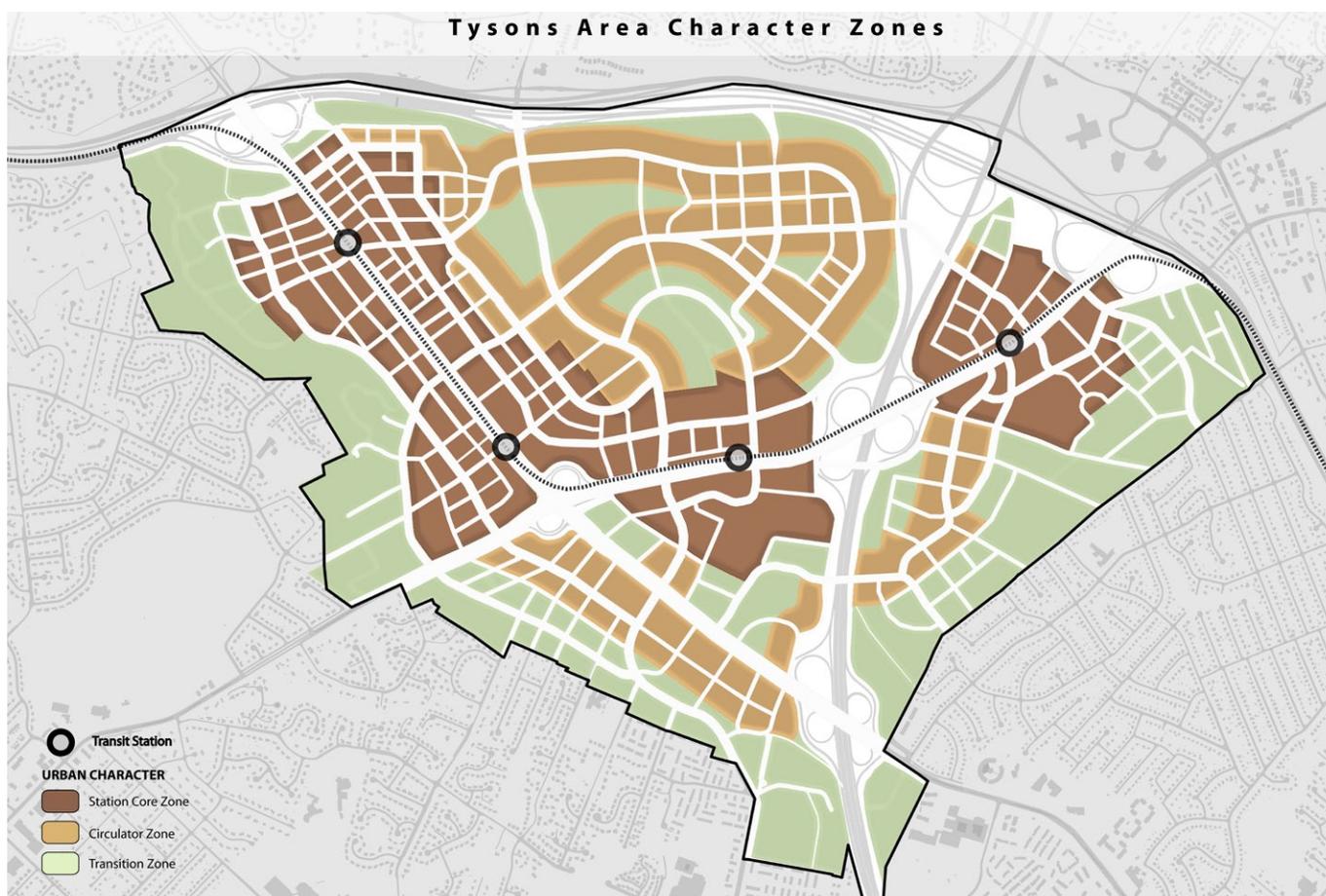


Public space provides a place for unexpected artistic expression

CHARACTER ZONES

The purpose of the urban design framework is to support the vision and urban design principles, and to provide a basis for creating specific urban design plans for each of the eight districts. The urban design framework is organized according to three Character Zones:

1. **The Station Core Zone:** Organized along the new Metrorail line, the Station Core Zone will have the greatest intensity, mix of uses, activity and walkability in all of Tysons. The Station Core Zone will be highly pedestrian-oriented, with the focus on compact development and redevelopment within 1/4 to 1/2 mile from the Metrorail stations. Within the Station Core Zone, retail and office uses will be within closer proximity to the Metrorail stations than residential uses. Station Core Zones will be 18-hour places.
2. **The Circulator Zone:** Following the routes for the Circulators, this zone will enhance transit accessibility in Tysons. Though less intense than the developments focused in the Station Core, new and re-development in the Circulator zone will balance access modes and will afford opportunities for reduced automobile use and enhanced pedestrian activity.
3. **The Transition Zone:** The Transition zone will be identified in areas that require special consideration due to unique adjacencies. Within this zone, guidelines will be provided that are geared to respond to these particular adjacencies. Separate guidelines will be provided for Residential Transition Zones and for Corridor Transition Zones.



▲ Conceptual Map showing Character Zones

Station Core Zone

The Station Core zone will have the greatest intensity, mix of uses and pedestrian activity in Tysons. This land falls within a five or ten minute walk of the Metrorail stations. It will be highly pedestrian-oriented, with a focus on compact development and redevelopment. Within the Station Core, retail and office uses will be within closer proximity to the Metrorail stations, while residential uses will be farther away though still within walking distance of the station.

Active, multi-modal streets will support all modes of traffic and will carry a high volume of pedestrian activity. These streets will act as a kind of “connective tissue” within the Station Core zone. Their varied and mixed land uses and ground floor destinations will maintain an interesting and visually engaging pedestrian realm that supports and encourages walking. Station Core Zone districts and neighborhoods will be 18-hour places.

The public realm in the Station Core zone will be enhanced by quality open spaces. They will be scattered throughout the Station Core zone, and will occur in the form of city parks, formal commercial plazas and small neighborhood parks. A number of major public parks will fall within the Station Core zone. These open spaces will provide a pause in the dense urban fabric, create opportunities for impromptu social interaction, become homes for public art, and become a place around which a neighborhood’s identity develops.

Broad land use guidelines for the Station Core Zone include:

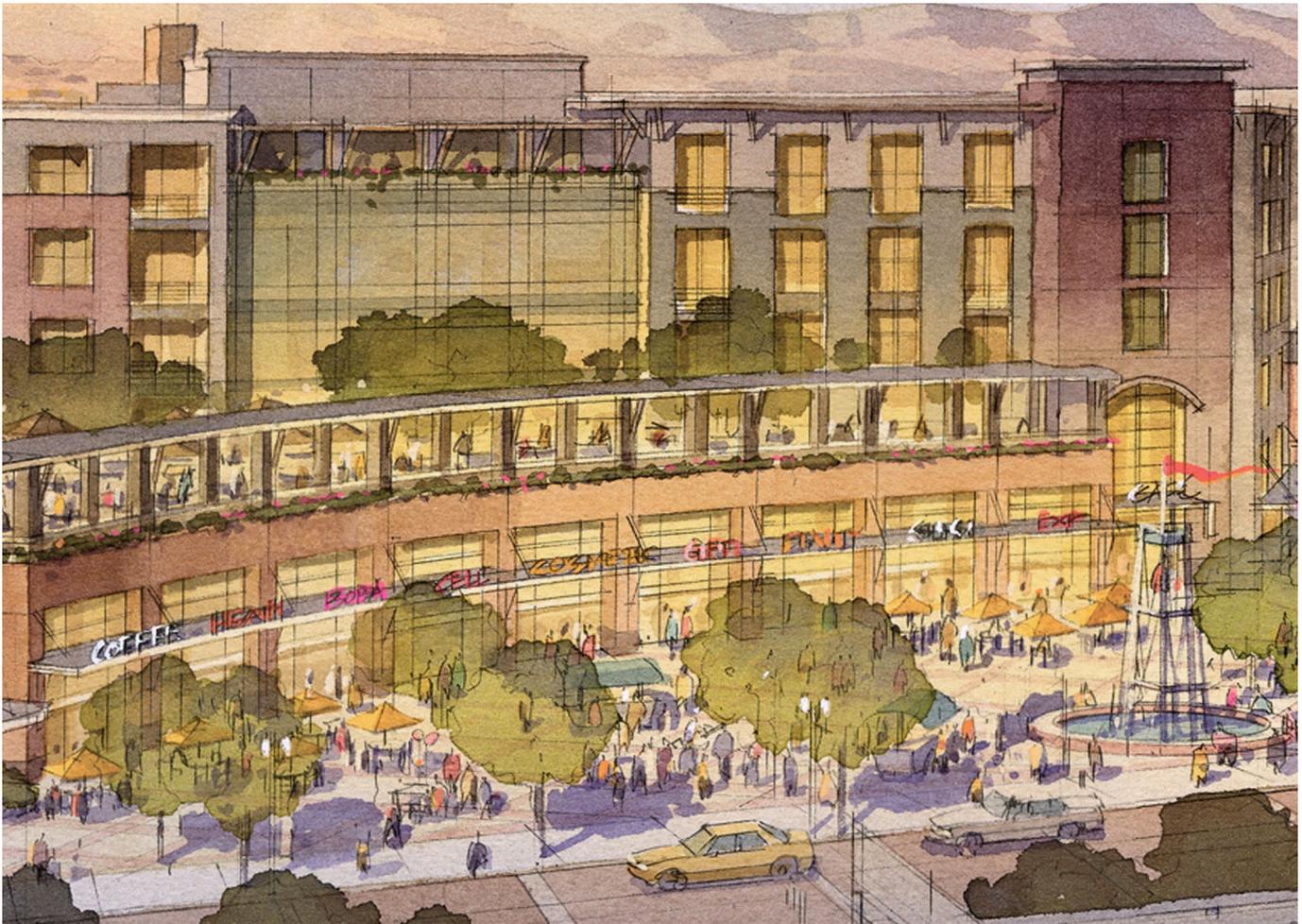
- Provide the most intensive mix of land uses in the Station Core zone.
- Focus the most intense employment and commercial uses closest to Metrorail stations.
- To encourage pedestrian access from outer-lying areas in the Station Core zone and beyond, the streets identified as the main pedestrian routes should be activated by ground-floor retail uses.
- As residential uses transition from the immediate station area to the outer edges of the Station Core zone, the intensity of their mix of uses should decrease.



In the Station Core Zone, four new stations in Tysons will become the key urban feature around which its immediate area will be characterized.

- Design standards for streetscape elements including streetlights, trees, paving, bus shelters, newsstands, newspaper boxes, etc. should be created and codified to reduce visual and physical clutter and elevate the quality of the pedestrian environment. This will help to create individual identity at the different stations and will enable a “mental map” of transit through Tysons to emerge.
- Pedestrian activity zones should be clearly identified, visible and safe around all stations. If crossings at major streets are necessary, they should be highly visible and timed with signalized crossing systems.
- Medians and intersection crossings in the area of the stations should include urban design features that are coordinated with the streetscape and design character of the related Metrorail station.
- A public realm urban design program should clarify and balance access between transportation modes at stations and transfers.

In addition to the general guidelines listed under “Urban Framework”, which are applicable to all locations within Tysons, the following guidelines are applicable in the Station Core Zone.



Walkable Blocks

Block Size within Station Core Zone

As stated in the Urban Framework section, all new development and redevelopment projects within the station areas approximately ¼ mile from the station should develop a street and block network pattern where:

- a. The perimeter length of the blocks range between 800 feet to 1600 feet.
- b. Any block side longer than 400 feet has an intervening public right-of-way allowing, at a minimum, through pedestrian connections.
- c. Ideal length-width ratio for the blocks is no greater than 2:1.

Potential block size examples applicable to the Station Core Zone include:

- 1) Block size of 200 ft x 200 ft will have a total perimeter length of 800 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1
- 2) Block size of 300 ft x 300 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1200 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1
- 3) Block size of 500 ft x 250 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1500 ft and length-width ratio of 2:1
- 4) Block size of 500 ft x 300 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1600 ft and length-width ratio of 1.67:1
- 5) Block size of 400 ft x 400 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1600 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1

Parking within Station Core Zone

- Parking access should be limited to side streets or alleys when feasible.
- Certain uses, such as civic or entertainment, may require highly visible parking. In these cases, the design of the parking and its access should be reflective of the activity that will occur within the building.



Transparency can focus attention along the streetwall



Signage should provide memorable visual queues to identify a special place





The streetwall should be emphasized through scale, materials and color variation



Buildings should have a consistent streetwall height in relationship to the street type and Pedestrian Zone

The Pedestrian Realm

Build-to Lines within Station Core Zone

As a general rule, all street types, with the exception of alleys, within the Station Core Zone should have their build-to lines located close to the back of the sidewalk or property line, and the buildings should have a majority percentage of their facades align to the build-to line.

- Establish the build-to line within zero to five feet of the property line or the back-of-sidewalk to ensure strong definition of the Pedestrian Realm. In the main commercial areas in the Station Core Zone, 85 percent to 95 percent of the building facade should align with the build-to line.
- Along mixed-use residential and retail streets, 75 percent of the building facade should align with the build-to line.

The Streetwall within Station Core Zone

- Build-To lines should be established to define the minimum percentages of the front building elevation that must be located at the required setback line (the "streetwall").
- Urban design best practices suggest a streetwall in the range of 60' to 85' in the station core zone.
- Mixed-use residential uses should establish a streetwall that is consistent within their immediate neighborhood. A typical range is from 60' to 85' high.
- Exceptions to build-to requirements can be given for the provision of public improvements, including plazas or public art.
- Enhancing the streetwall is a method that emphasizes the pedestrian sidewalk realm and provides a visual separation between streetwall and tower heights.

5 Commission On The Future Of The Arts In Fairfax County Final Report To The Board Of Supervisors. July 2008

The Building

Bulk & Massing within Station Core Zone

- Tall commercial buildings should reflect an intense urban, downtown character.

Building Articulation within Station Core Zone

- Blank walls should not be permitted along any public street-facing façade in the Station Core Zone.

Fenestration & Transparency within Station Core Zone

- Windows should be of high quality materials and recessed.
- Dark frames will be preferred in urban settings and commercial buildings, and white frames should be avoided.

Landmarks, Gateways & Public Art within Station Core Zone

- The skyline of Tysons should include distinct features that become landmarks in the region.
- Several significant plazas, major nodes, Metro stations, and/or parks should be identified as locations for large-scale public art elements in Tysons. These features can become icons that represent and reflect their surrounding communities.
- All effort should be made to ensure that the four Metrorail stations will be designed in a way that integrates with the overall vision for Tysons.



The use of a step-back highlights the four-story streetwall in a Clarendon mixed-use project.



Circulator Zone

The form-giving circulators will be the means by which the intensity and transit accessibility established in the Station Core can be expanded into farther reaching areas of Tysons – areas not within immediate walking distance of the Metrorail stations. Three circulator routes have been proposed to connect most of Tysons, specifically the North Central, East Side and Old Courthouse South districts, with the four Metrorail stations and other districts in Tysons.

The “ribbon” of land within 600 feet on either side of a circulator route is called the Circulator Zone. In this spirit, the Circulator Zone functions as a “linear” TOD area, supportive of mixed residential and employment uses that are significantly less intense than uses in the Station Core Zone. The land uses and street network are also pedestrian-oriented here to support mobility between neighborhoods and transit. Service and retail uses support neighborhoods in the Circulator Zone, and nodes or neighborhood centers can function as busy 18-hour places serving business and residents in the Circulator Zones.

The Circulator Zone contains many varied land uses and many existing land uses. Many of these uses, such as regional shopping destinations, are major contributors to Tysons’ strong economy. Some of these uses also do not tend to fall into the same category of “pedestrian accessibility” that guides these design guidelines. At these locations, it is especially important to focus on the comprehensive pedestrian framework in the Circulator Zone. Emphasis should be placed on creating a balance between modes that supports necessary vehicular access while providing opportunities to share modes in these areas.

New uses in the Circulator Zone are envisioned to provide areas of walkable “infill” development, including more walkable neighborhoods that link together and support the larger, less pedestrian-focused land uses in the Circulator Zone. These new neighborhoods will be structured by the framework established by the Street Grid & Block Pattern in Chapter 6 to provide a more walkable and interconnected urban pattern for new and re-development.

- Balance auto-focused development areas with pedestrian linkages that act as “connective tissue” in the framework of the Circulator Zone.
- Transitions between major commercial or retail nodes and neighborhoods should be carefully designed to provide an accessible and safe balance of modes, to provide buffers where appropriate, and to ensure visual consistency in land use transitions.
- Neighborhood commercial areas should be distinct from one another and should help to provide the basis for surrounding neighborhoods’ identities.
- New commercial main streets should create destinations for daytime Tysons employees, as well as provide services and retail uses to serve new neighborhoods.

- Height limitations shall apply in the Corridor Zone near the edges of Tysons.

In addition to the general guidelines listed under "Urban Framework" that are applicable to all locations within Tysons, the following guidelines are applicable in the Circulator Zone.

Walkable Blocks

Block Size within Circulator Zone

As stated in the Urban Framework section, all new development and redevelopment projects within the station areas approximately 600 feet from a form-giving circulator route should develop a street and block network pattern where:

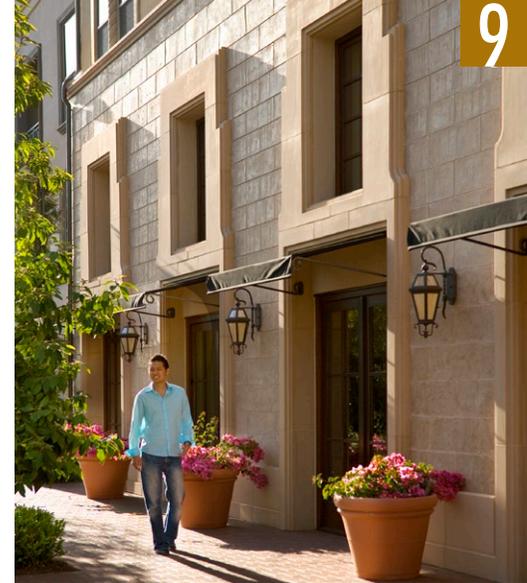
- a. The perimeter length of the blocks range between 800 feet to 1600 feet.
- b. Any block side longer than 400 feet should have an intervening public right-of-way allowing, at a minimum, through pedestrian connections.
- c. Ideal length-width ratio for the blocks no greater than 2:1.

Potential block size examples applicable to Tysons include:

- 1) Block size of 200 ft x 200 ft will have a total perimeter length of 800 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1
- 2) Block size of 300 ft x 300 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1200 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1
- 3) Block size of 500 ft x 250 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1500 ft and length-width ratio of 2:1
- 4) Block size of 500 ft x 300 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1600 ft and length-width ratio of 1.67:1
- 5) Block size of 400 ft x 400 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1600 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1

Parking within Circulator Zone

- Some areas in the Circulator Zone include developments such as malls or hotels that incorporate parking in less urban configurations as related to the street. Build-to lines for new developments that fall within this context should be evaluated and determined on a project basis, and their location should be determined so as to minimize negative impacts to the Pedestrian Realm.
- Parking access should be limited to side streets or alleys when feasible.
- Exposed parking garage frontages should be designed to mimic surrounding context, scale, modulation and articulation.



Store frontages along the build-to line activate the street and facilitate pedestrian access



Storefronts opening up to the sidewalk create vibrancy



Above grade parking structures should be "wrapped" by residential or mixed-use frontages to create active uses at the ground level



Step-backs along a residential street create locations for rooftop open spaces while maintaining a more urban architectural emphasis at the street level



Color, material and texture variations ensure visual interest



Careful attention paid to the architectural detailing results in an engaging pedestrian experience

The Pedestrian Realm

Build-to Lines within Circulator Zone

- Build-to lines at arterial and boulevard streets should vary along the corridor to respond to existing context and current or planned development. Typically the location of the build-to at these streets should be between 0' and 10' of the back of the sidewalk with 70 percent minimum required frontage.
- In other areas where buildings line and face the street, the build-to should generally align with the right-of-way at the back of the sidewalk.
- Along other streets in the Circulator Zone, the intent to create an interconnected pedestrian network suggests that the build-to should also be close to the back of the sidewalk - within zero to ten feet, with a 75 percent build-to requirement. The final location should be consistent with the urban condition and sidewalk width.
- The build-to line along neighborhood commercial and main streets should generally fall at the back of the sidewalk to maintain a well-defined Pedestrian Realm.
- Along neighborhood commercial streets in the Circulator Zone, 85 percent to 95 percent of the building facade should align with the build-to line
- Along other streets, 75 percent of the building facade should align with the build-to line, with exceptions permitted for public improvements, including plazas or public art.

The Streetwall within Circulator Zone

- With a number of large scale existing buildings in the Circulator Zone, the Streetwall throughout this zone should be envisioned in multiple roles in order to respond to given conditions when necessary.
- Urban design best practices suggest a streetwall in the range of 60' to 85'.
- Mixed-use residential uses should establish a streetwall that is consistent within their immediate neighborhood. A typical range is between 60' to 85' high.
- Existing uses and buildings that do not contribute to the definition of a streetwall along streets with new, more pedestrian-focused development should investigate opportunities to create visual and physical linkages that address the Pedestrian Realm.
- Explore methods of artfully transitioning from less urban conditions to an urban framework with a tightly defined streetwall.
- Employing the pedestrian plane can create opportunities to "join" adjacent uses that do not have a strong physical relationship to one another.

The Building

Building Articulation within Circulator Zone

- In some locations in the Circulator Zone, buildings may not front and define the Pedestrian Realm. When this occurs, walls or other architectural features, as well as landscaping, should be included to align with other buildings at the build-to line. Articulation along these walls can result in sculptural elements and maintain visual interest along the sidewalk.

Fenestration & Transparency within Circulator Zone

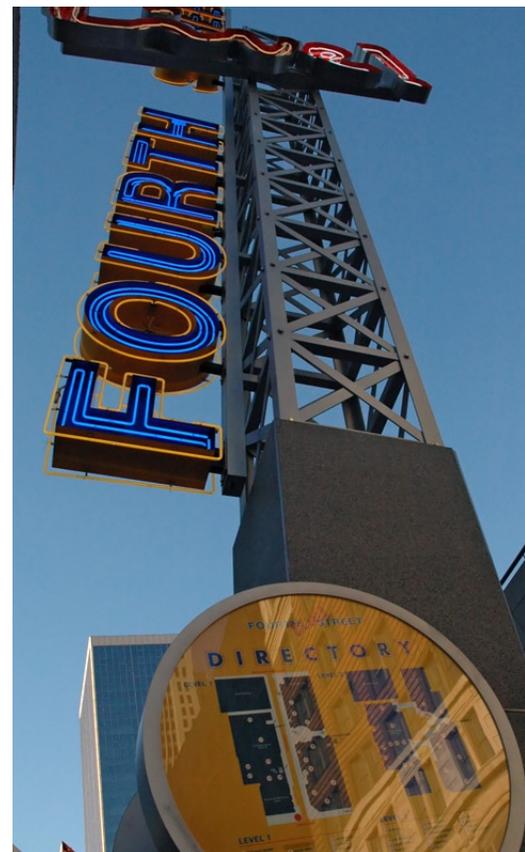
- In residential buildings, the level of ground floor transparency may decrease for private uses. Main residential lobbies and/common spaces should exhibit transparency and contribute to the Pedestrian Realm.

Landmarks, Gateways & Public Art within Circulator Zone

- Commercial plazas, nodes and/or parks should be identified as locations for large-scale public art elements in Tysons. These features can become icons that represent and reflect their surrounding communities.
- Tall building height shall not be used as a gateway element in the Corridor Zone near the edges of Tysons.



Public art can add color and action to an otherwise empty space



Creative signage can become a landmark or a gateway



Transition Zone

The Transition Zone in Tysons includes the areas that manage and ease the “stepping down” of intensity between the urban center of Tysons and its outlying and adjacent neighborhoods, as well locations that mark a distinct adjacency along the Dulles Access Road. Within the Transition Zone, these broad place distinctions - the Residential Transition Zone and the Corridor Transition Zone - establish a framework upon which a series of guidelines can be provided.



The Residential Transition Zone occurs within existing Tysons neighborhoods and in locations with neighborhoods that are adjacent to, but not within Tysons. This zone may have some commercial and retail uses, but has a stronger residential and neighborhood focus. Narrower tree-lined residential streets will be more pedestrian and bicycle-oriented than exists today. Community amenities will help to establish an identity and provide a sense of place for those living and working in these areas. Parks and open spaces provide buffers between existing and new uses and intensities, and in some locations can provide natural connections for pedestrian movement between Tysons and its outlying neighbors - acting as a buffer and bridge at the same time.

The Corridor Transition Zone lies in areas adjacent to the Dulles Toll Road. The Transition zone will have a lower density focus consistent with its location next to a major regional transportation route. Development in the Corridor Transition Zone will have a commercial and employment focus, and while much of this zone lies beyond pedestrian access to transit, it will be planned to support an internal network of walkable, multi-modal streets.

- Building heights must be low in the Transition Zones on the edges of Tysons to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Residential Transition Zone

- Land uses remain mixed in the Residential Transition zone. Design should provide for relationships and transitions between commercial uses and residential uses.
- Small, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood commercial main streets can provide appropriate transitions between neighborhoods.
- These streets should act as a linkage between Transition Zone neighborhoods and more intensely developed areas in Tysons.
- Semi-public plazas can create gathering nodes for neighbors and create opportunity for spontaneous social interaction.
- Small parks will provide green space and recreational opportunities, and tree-lined streets will act as buffers and open space linkages.



Walkable linkages are provided by neighborhood commercial streets



In-set areas create suitable locations for small commercial plazas



Neighborhood commercial areas are smaller in scale in the Transition Zone



Corridor Transition Zone

- Auto-focused uses will occur in the Corridor Transition Zone in order to facilitate direct access to and from surrounding highways and arterials.
- Balance auto-focused development areas with the street grid for surrounding uses to act as “connective tissue” in the pedestrian framework of the Circulator Zone.
- Neighborhood commercial areas should create destinations for daytime Tysons employees, as well as provide services and retail uses to serve new neighborhoods.
- Transitions between major commercial or retail nodes and neighborhoods should be carefully designed to provide an accessible and safe balance of modes, to provide buffers where appropriate, and to ensure visual consistency in land use transitions.
- With a high level of visibility from outside of Tysons, the Corridor Transition Zone should include high quality and well-designed developments.

In addition to the general guidelines listed under “Urban Framework”, that are applicable to all locations within Tysons, the following guidelines are applicable in the Transition Zone.



Walkable Blocks

Block Size within Transition Zones

As stated in the Urban Framework section, all new development and redevelopment projects outside the ¼ mile station areas and 600 feet circulator zones should develop a street and block network where:

- a. The perimeter length of new blocks range between 800 feet to 2400 feet.
- b. Any block side longer than 400 feet should have an intervening public right-of-way allowing, at a minimum, through pedestrian connections.
- c. Ideal length-width ratio for the city blocks no greater than 3:1.

In addition to all the blocks listed in the section above, potential block size examples applicable to Tysons include:

- 1) Block size of 600 ft x 300 ft will have a total perimeter length of 1800 ft and length-width ratio of 2:1
- 2) Block size of 600 ft x 600 ft will have a total perimeter length of 2400 ft and length-width ratio of 1:1
- 3) Block size of 900 ft x 300 ft will have a total perimeter length of 2400 ft and length-width ratio of 3:1. The long side should be divided by a pedestrian connection.
- 4) Block size of 800 ft x 400 ft will have a total perimeter length of 2400 ft and length-width ratio of 2:1. The long side should be divided by a pedestrian connection.



Multi-family mixed use developments provide a transition between higher intensity commercial uses and residential neighborhoods



Creative articulation of entrances makes a statement



Well-lit, evening gathering spaces activate commercial areas and create safe streets



The addition of bicycle parking supports this alternative mode of transportation



On-street parking helps to create a more neighborhood scaled zone along the sidewalk and building face



Parking areas should manage stormwater run-off

Parking within Transition Zones

Residential Transition Zone

- Stand-alone above grade parking structures should be discouraged and/or not permitted in the Residential Transition Zone.
- On-street parking creates safer sidewalks, and can provide for large amounts of necessary residential parking.
- Multi-family developments should strive to avoid large fields of surface parking. Podium or tuck-under parking allows for a more walkable, urban neighborhood.
- Access to residential garages should be limited to side or rear streets or alleys.

Corridor Transition Zone

- Exposed parking structures adjacent to the Dulles Toll Road shall not be visible to the residential neighborhoods north of the Toll Road.
- Parking access should always be designed to be attractive and coordinated with the site plan and architecture.
- Parking above ground floor retail uses is a creative and attractive way to address parking need and to use buildings to support a neighborhood's scale and character.

Surface Parking in the Transition Zone

Throughout the Transition Zone, it is likely that certain locations will require surface parking. In this case, the parking should:

- be located to the side or rear of the primary use with pedestrian connections that lead to the front door;
- be attractively and heavily landscaped, well lighted and visible for safety;
- provide low walls or fences at the back of the sidewalk or parallel to the adjacent build-to line to enclose and define the Pedestrian Realm; and
- be designed to contribute to site stormwater management using elements, such as planter areas and permeable paving in the parking stall area.

The Pedestrian Realm

Build-to Lines within Transition Zones

Throughout the Transition Zone, the location of build-to lines or the depth of the front yard will vary depending on use, context and adjacencies. Final build-to locations should occur within a defined district plan and in relationship to the anticipated uses adjacent to properties. Locations adjacent to natural open space features throughout the Transition Zone should be evaluated to determine a relationship between buildings and open spaces to be well defined, and in some cases, to allow for public access. In the Transition Zone the need for and final location of the build-to line should be determined within district or neighborhood master plans, and should relate to both existing and planned development and public improvement conditions.

Residential Transition Zone

- Along multi-family streets, the build-to line should be between 10' and 15', with a minimum of 60 percent of the building's frontage adjacent to the line. Variation along the build-to line should allow for entries, stoops, patios, yards or gardens.
- Along neighborhood commercial streets in the Residential Transition Zone, the build to should be between 0' and 10', with 70 percent to 80 percent of the building facade aligning with the build-to line.

Corridor Transition Zone

- Corridor Transition Zone uses should be carefully sited to separate pedestrian and vehicular activities.
- Plazas that are permitted by the required build-to can help to create clear and direct linkages from less urban areas into neighborhoods with a more defined urban commercial or mixed-use character.
- As uses in the Corridor Transition Zone move closer into the center of Tysons, buildings should adopt a build-to condition to mimic other uses that are adjacent or across the street.

The Streetwall within Transition Zones

- In many locations in the Transition Zone, especially in lower density residential neighborhoods and in commercial centers near the Dulles Toll Road, the streetwall may not be a necessary or appropriate urban architectural feature.



Variations along the build-to line should allow for entries, stoops and landscaped areas to separate public and private spaces



Small-lot single family residential homes provide a diversity of housing types in the Residential Transition Zone



Design of office and retail buildings should respond to the location, adjacent land use and street types in the Corridor Transition Zone



Step-backs along a residential street create locations for rooftop open spaces while maintaining a more urban architectural emphasis at the street level



Color, material and texture variations ensure visual interest



Careful attention paid to the architectural detailing results in an engaging pedestrian experience

The Building

Bulk & Massing within Transition Zones

In the Residential Transition Zone:

- In areas where multi-family residential uses are focused, building massing should serve to define adjacent streets. Front yards should be shallow to encourage a more direct relationship between the building and the Pedestrian Realm.
- Neighborhood commercial areas should connect to and transition from more dense residential streets. The bulk and massing of buildings in these areas should be appropriate for their intensity and use and should be scaled for the pedestrian and articulated along the streetwall.
- Multi-family buildings provide opportunities for various intensities. Along a neighborhood main street, units may sit above street level retail, and at the sides and rear, the units may step down to a less intense, more residential building scale.
- Townhomes, apartments and condominiums should include massing variations that support the smooth transition between higher intensity areas and less intense neighborhoods and Tysons' adjacent neighbors.
- In less intense residential neighborhoods, yard dimensions (setbacks and build-to lines) could vary, and site coverage provisions should be determined based on building type. A provision for encroachment of features such as stoops, bays, stairs or porches should be established to contribute to the relationship between private residential developments and the Pedestrian Realm.
- Residential uses should establish the finish floor height at ground level between two and four feet above the finish sidewalk grade. This creates the opportunity for porches and entries that establish a distinct transition between private residential developments and the Pedestrian Realm.

In the Corridor Transition Zone:

- Building heights and massing should respond to context, intended uses, and vision for specific locations.
- Developments close to highways or major corridors will likely include intensive commercial uses. Their massing and design should reflect the activities they contain.
- Developments that approach or are adjacent to the circulator corridors should respond similarly and should take care to modulate their scale in a manner that results in a consistent visual character along shared and adjacent frontages.
- Buildings in the Corridor Transition Zone may be oriented to maximize their view potential, but should not be in direct conflict with uses in the immediate context, nor block the views to or from adjacent and surrounding buildings.

Building Articulation within Transition Zones

- When buildings do not front and define the Pedestrian Realm, low walls, fences, architectural features, and landscaping should be included to hold the frontage with other buildings along the Pedestrian Realm.

Fenestration & Transparency within Transition Zones

- Fenestration should be used in residential areas to ensure good levels of light and transparency, but care should be taken to ensure adequate privacy. One way to do this is to place the sill of ground floor windows above the eye level of passers-by on adjacent sidewalks.

Landmarks, Gateways & Public Art within Transition Zones

- Tall buildings shall not be used as a gateway element in the Transition Zones, in order to protect adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Streetwall standards should be established within future development regulations and design guidelines for Tysons’ districts to ensure the consistency of the public realm over time.

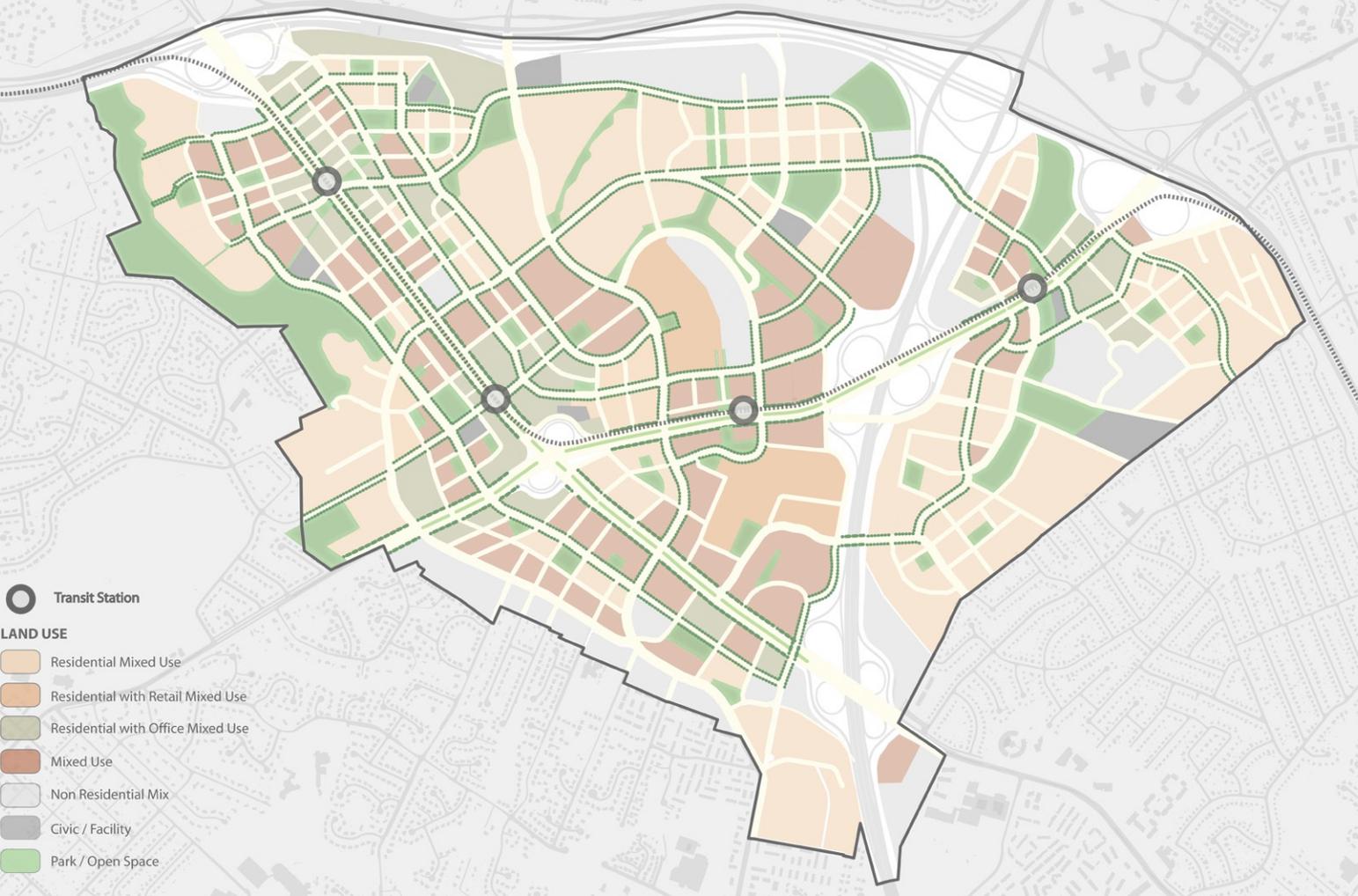


Unimposing public art can enrich the environment



The vertical nature of this art piece makes it a landmark noticed from a distance

Tysons Area: Residential Use



- Transit Station
- LAND USE**
- Residential Mixed Use
- Residential with Retail Mixed Use
- Residential with Office Mixed Use
- Mixed Use
- Non Residential Mix
- Civic / Facility
- Park / Open Space



TYSONS CORNER PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

