URBAN DESIGN

Urban design is the discipline that guides the appearance, arrangement, and functional elements of the physical environment, with a particular emphasis on public spaces. An urban environment is comprised of many elements; including streets, blocks, open spaces, pedestrian areas, and buildings. These recommendations provide guidance for each of these elements, with a particular emphasis on creating a high-quality urban environment that is walkable and pedestrian-friendly. The goal of these recommendations is to support the transition of Tysons from an auto-oriented suburban place into a cohesive, functional, pedestrian-oriented and memorable urban destination.

Comment [A1]: Staff note: No changes are proposed to the September 2013 draft of the Urban Design section.

While this section of the Plan contains general guidance on principles of and recommendations for urban design in Tysons, ~~Detailed urban design guidelines and standards~~~~T~~the Tysons Corner Urban Design Guidelines ("TUDGs"), ~~will be~~ were developed ~~for districts or sub-districts to~~ to provide more definitive guidance in implementing the Plan. These guidelines were endorsed by the Board of Supervisors on January 24, 2012. The guidelines ~~will~~ address issues such as building materials, street furniture, signage, and interim conditions, and they provide more specific guidance on built forms. They ~~will~~ help define distinct identities and characteristics for the various neighborhoods within Tysons. The guidelines ~~will~~ are intended to supplement the Areawide and District Recommendations in the Plan ~~in providing guidance for development~~.

Comment [A2]: Edited to reflect that TUDGs have been developed

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Development in Tysons should be guided by the following urban design principles, which provide a framework for the urban design guidelines.

Enhance Regional Identity

- Advance Tysons as the vibrant downtown of Fairfax County.

- Transform Tysons into a highly desirable, walkable, transit-oriented, mixed use urban environment.

Establish a Sense of Place

- Create unique and walkable districts, neighborhoods, and centers within Tysons.
- Encourage design elements that highlight the distinct character of each district, as well as common elements that unify Tysons as an urban center.
- Encourage each district to include tree-lined streets, a range of urban parks, and public gathering places.

Improve Connectivity

- Increase the efficiency of vehicular and pedestrian movements within Tysons through well-designed transit and a walkable grid of streets and open spaces.
- Create pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environments and connections throughout Tysons that are safe, pleasant, and convenient.
- Maximize benefits of rail in Tysons by improving connectivity to adjacent communities and to regional activity centers.

Design Sustainable Environments

- Encourage sustainable buildings, site design~~s~~, and infrastructure.
- Incorporate innovative and environmentally sensitive stormwater design into all new development and redevelopment, and restore and stabilize existing streams.

Respect Surrounding Neighborhoods

- Maintain the character and livability of residential neighborhoods adjacent to and at the edges of Tysons.
- Concentrate the tallest buildings and highest land use intensities near Metro stations.
- Transition building heights to be compatible with lower density neighborhoods adjacent to and within Tysons.

Create a New Destination for the Arts and Design

- Include venues for performing arts and public art in a variety of spaces throughout Tysons.
- Encourage developers to work with artists and arts organizations early in the design process to successfully integrate the arts into their projects.
- Ensure the provision of public art in Tysons by considering a dedicated funding source.
- Maintain high standards for innovative architecture and design which will create a unique identity for each district and Tysons as a whole.

URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The urban design recommendations expand upon these principles and provide direction for creating urban places within Tysons. They are organized into two sections, the Pedestrian Realm Recommendations and the Building and Site Design Recommendations.

Pedestrian Realm Recommendations

The pedestrian realm consists of publicly accessible places where people circulate on foot. Sidewalks connect pedestrians to their homes, places of employment, retail establishments, restaurants, parks, plazas, trails, and other public places. The pedestrian realm is the most visible space within the urban environment. It should be continuous but can vary in its character depending upon adjacent uses and the scale of the street.

The pedestrian realm also includes building facades, as well as the space adjacent to buildings ~~areas~~ that can offer shelter from sun and rain through canopies and awnings, outdoor seating areas, commercial displays, and planted areas. Color, texture, signage, and variations in activity can provide visual interest for both pedestrians and motorists. Other elements that enhance the aesthetics and functionality of the pedestrian realm include bicycle racks, benches, bus shelters, and lighting. The design of the pedestrian realm should create a safe and high-quality pedestrian experience for all users.

Comment [A3]: Edits that are not directly annotated are either editorial revisions or are intended to clarify language.

The pedestrian realm also links to the larger open space network, which includes urban parks, civic plazas and common greens. These open spaces provide a break in the dense urban fabric, allow opportunities for social interaction and help to define a district's identity.

The design of the pedestrian realm should be integrated with and complimentary to adjacent land uses. The following recommendations address the Street Grid and Block Pattern and Streetscape Design.

Street Grid and Block Pattern

The street grid will be the primary organizing element of the new urban Tysons. In contrast to the existing pattern of large, suburban blocks, new development should create smaller blocks through an interconnected system of streets. This street system will be more walkable, provide travel choices for pedestrians and motorists, and have breaks in building massing to help create a built environment that is appropriately scaled for pedestrian activity.

In order to implement the grid of streets and an urban block pattern, all proposals should provide for planned road improvements that ~~follow~~ conform to the grid of streets and street types contained in the Transportation section of this Plan, as amended by additional studies conducted by the Fairfax County Department of Transportation and in conjunction with approved zoning applications and those under review.

Comment [A4]: This edit reflects that fact that, with the consolidated traffic impact analyses done by the County and the submitted rezoning applications, the conceptual grid for Tysons has already been refined. While the conceptual grid in the Comp Plan will be updated in the upcoming transportation amendment, it is expected that the grid will continually be refined, and that new proposals should seek to conform to the most recent work that has been done.

~~In areas where preliminary design studies have identified the layout of new streets on an official street map, redevelopment plans should create a street and block network in accordance with the map.~~ In cases where this is not feasible, the development team should work with staff to ~~develop a response~~provide an alternative network that achieves a level of connectivity that meets plan goals. In areas where such design studies have not been completed, the street and block network should follow the recommendations in the Transportation section and the following block size recommendations:

Comment [A5]: Refined work has been done (and should be addressed) as noted in the previous comment

- Blocks should have a maximum perimeter of 2,000 feet, measured at the curb.
- Any block side longer than 600 feet should have a mid-block pedestrian connection~~.~~
- , such as ~~Examples include~~ a pedestrian walkway, a service street with a sidewalk, or a publicly-accessible walkway through a building.

- The ratio of the longest side of a block to the shortest side ~~is~~ should ideally be less than 2:1 and should not be ~~no~~ greater than 3:1.
- It is recognized that ~~D~~due to topography and other existing conditions, some blocks may not be rectangular.

Pedestrian Hierarchy

Comment [A6]: This new section was added to reflect the idea of the Pedestrian Hierarchy, which was introduced in the TUDGs subsequent to Plan adoption

Understanding how pedestrians will use the street network is an important component to consider in the development of Tysons. The pedestrian network, or hierarchy, can reinforce an integrated, connected network that provides a safe, functional, and enjoyable pedestrian environment and helps further the transit-oriented character of Tysons. While the street grid will provide a framework for the layout of development in Tysons, the streets themselves will perform many different functions. The functional classification of the streets do not necessarily relate to how pedestrians will use them. For example, pedestrians might avoid walking along ~~a~~ noisy, high-traffic boulevards and instead concentrate on smaller, local streets that provide more opportunity for interaction. A pedestrian hierarchy plan should be developed and utilized that considers not only the design of streets, but also the location of amenities such as civic and retail uses.

The pedestrian hierarchy plan should first identify how pedestrians will likely move within and through the development. This hierarchy plan will use the street grid as a basis, but it may not necessarily relate to the underlying functional street designations. It will recognize that some corridors may be used primarily for movement, while others may be used more for social interaction, shopping and dining. The intent is to first identify where pedestrians will be and what they are doing, and then to orient the public realm around that framework to the extent possible. Streetscape design, proposed uses, and building design should all be informed by the pedestrian hierarchy. Additional guidance on pedestrian hierarchy plans may be found in the Pedestrian Hierarchy section of the TUDGs.

Streetscape Design

Attractive streetscapes include a well-designed road edge that contributes to area identity and provides a safe, high-quality pedestrian experience. The streetscape design should vary by the type of street and the adjacent land use, and should create a unifying theme along each of the roads to visually and physically link the various districts and sub-districts of Tysons.

Elements of streetscapes include sidewalks, street furniture, streetlights, trees and other plantings, paving, crosswalks, bus shelters, bicycle racks, public art, and seating areas. The purpose of these elements is to enhance the quality of the pedestrian environment. The integration of the Metro station entrances into the ~~streetscape~~ public realm is especially important to the success of the urban environment. The public realm at the station entrances should be attractive, highly visible, and able to safely accommodate high amounts of pedestrian activity.

Below are general recommendations for all streetscapes, which are followed by design recommendations for streetscapes along each ~~individual streetscape~~ roadway type (Boulevards, Avenues, Collectors, and Local Streets). ~~With the exception of International Drive, this~~The hierarchy of streetscape types is consistent with the hierarchy of street types shown on Map 7 and Table 3 in the Transportation section~~.~~, except that International Drive (identified as an Avenue for transportation classification) should ~~be considered~~utilize a Boulevard streetscape ~~type~~.

As a companion to the recommendations found in the Plan and the more detailed information of the TUDGs, Transportation Design Standards for Tysons Corner Urban Center (Tysons Transportation Standards) were developed jointly between the Virginia Department of Transportation and Fairfax County. These urban street standards were adopted on September 13, 2011.

Comment [A7]: This section was added to reflect the adoption of the Transportation Design Standards, which were adopted subsequent to the Plan

In addition to roadway geometrics, the Tysons Transportation Standards include detailed recommendations by roadway type that relate to and are coordinated with the recommendations of this Plan. These include guidance on the provision of and geometrics of on-street parking, medians, turn lanes, bike lanes, and pedestrian elements including building zones, sidewalks and landscape amenity panels. Also covered are utility placement and coordination of street trees or plantings and sight distance requirements,

General Streetscape Recommendations

Definition of Streetscape Zones: The streetscape is composed of three zones (see illustrated streetscape cross-sections). The *landscape amenity panel* is located next to the curb and includes trees, lighting, bus stops, bicycle racks, parking meters, traffic signs, pedestrian refuge strips, and other urban ~~living~~ infrastructure. The *sidewalk* is reserved for pedestrian movement and should not contain any street furniture or other elements that might impact pedestrian movement. The *building zone* is located between the sidewalk and the building ~~facade~~façade; this space is intended to accommodate outdoor dining, planters, door swing, displays, and building ~~-~~awnings. The character of the building zone is determined by the adjacent land use.

Underground Utilities and Stormwater Infrastructure: Utilities and stormwater infrastructure should be placed underground and should be coordinated with future roadway improvements and sidewalks to foster a pedestrian-friendly environment. ~~Such~~ To the extent possible, such infrastructure should be located under sidewalks, parking lanes, or the building zone; it should not be located under street trees. Access panels should be placed so that pedestrian movement is not encumbered, preferably outside of the sidewalk area. To achieve this goal, detailed site analysis should take place early in the development process to avoid conflicts between utilities and proposed street tree locations and between access panels and the sidewalk. New development should provide underground utility conduits or provide commitments to facilitate future improvements. Utility boxes for phone, cable, electricity, natural gas, information systems and/or other services should be located to the rear or side of the development, along service alleys, within buildings, or placed in sub-grade vaults.

Comment [A8]: Language added to clarify that the basic issue is not impeding the pedestrian

Street Lighting: Street lighting should maintain the overall character and quality of the area, provide adequate lighting levels that ensure public safety without creating glare or light spillage, ~~and~~ conform to County ordinances, and adhere to LEED light pollution requirements ~~and County ordinances~~. Light fixtures should be full cutoff and use energy-saving technology. Street lights should be located so as to not conflict with street trees at their projected maturity.

Design Alternatives: Where pre-existing site constraints might limit the ability of a development to satisfy all streetscape recommendations, some limited variation may be permitted if the proposed alternative meets or exceeds the standards established by this P~~p~~lan. Where flexibility is granted, the streetscape should include acceptable sidewalk widths, and an acceptable amount and location of street trees~~.~~.

Streetscape Dimensions: In general, areas with higher pedestrian activity, such as major retail streets and the areas surrounding Metro stations should have wider sidewalks to accommodate

increased pedestrian activity. Above all, consistent dimensions within each block should be promoted to avoid shifting pedestrian features or building frontages.

Public Safety: When locating street trees, other plantings, and amenities in proximity to roadways or within medians, safety and sight distance should be taken into consideration.

Streetscape Maintenance: Streetscape improvements may be provided on a combination of publicly owned right-of-way and private property. When the public right-of-way is utilized to provide streetscape improvements, commitments should be made by the property owner to maintain the entire streetscape area. In addition, when the streetscape is not entirely within the right-of-way, additional right-of-way or a public access easement may need to be provided for the portion of the streetscape located on private property.

Pedestrian Crossings: ~~At p~~Pedestrian crossings~~, special pavement~~ should be ~~designed to create a~~ well-delineated, ADA accessible and ~~safe area for pedestrians to cross the street~~located in desirable crossing locations, including on all legs of an intersection whenever possible. Crossings at major streets should be highly visible and timed with signalized crossing systems. When medians are provided, they should be designed to create a safety island for pedestrians waiting to finish crossing the street.

Comment [A9]: Edited to reflect that special pavement was not a recommendation of the TUDGs, and to add additional recommendations on location

Median Landscape Strip: New streets in Tysons are not expected to include medians except where they would facilitate pedestrian crossings. Where medians are provided, they should be planted with attractive landscaping. Consideration should be given to the use of attractive Low Impact Development techniques for stormwater remediation in this area.

On-Street Parking: Streetscapes with on-street parallel parking should have a small paved area adjacent to the curb known as a pedestrian refuge strip. The pedestrian refuge strip will allow passengers to exit parked cars without having to step into planted areas. Trees should be spaced appropriately to allow car doors to swing open without obstruction.

Planting in the Pedestrian Realm: Street trees should be planted in an environment that promotes healthy root growth and should be spaced no more than 50 feet apart. Only those varieties that require little maintenance, are resistant to disease, and are adapted to extreme urban conditions ~~such as pollution~~ should be used. ~~-~~In addition to trees, vegetation within planting strips should include supplemental plantings, such as ornamental shrubs, ground cover, flowering plants, and grasses. Consideration should be given to the use of a broad palette of native and drought tolerant species. Supplemental plantings should occur in areas that are clear of vehicles parked on the street, and they should incorporate hardscaped pedestrian access points. Where appropriate, special pavement treatments or hardscape elements may be considered to achieve both root-friendly design and pedestrian walkability within the streetscape. Irrigation should be provided.

Low Impact Development Techniques: Streetscape design should include innovative stormwater remediation design elements such as bioretention, permeable pavements, and incorporation of water collection and storage.

Street Furniture and Other Elements: Street furniture selections, such as benches, ~~water fountains~~trash and recycling receptacles, and bike racks, should be consistent within each district. ~~This may include the model, size, and finish.~~ Fixed ~~elements~~streetscape elements~~, such as light poles and parking meters, should be aligned within~~ should be located ~~the~~within the landscape amenity panel so as to minimize the disruption of pedestrian flow. Additional

guidance on the specific design and character of street furniture and other elements may be found in the TUDGs.

Fire Access Coordination: Because of the urban character expected in Tysons, with buildings located closer to the road and often utilizing the entire block area, fire access needs to be co-located with the streetscape. In order to ensure that both goals can be met, detailed site analysis should take place early in the development process to avoid conflicts between proposed streetscape features and fire access regulations. Development plans should demonstrate how the proposed streetscape and other site features can be provided while meeting fire access requirements.

Comment [A10]: New paragraph added to address issues that have arisen during zoning case review

Boulevard Streetscapes

The boulevard streetscape applies to Route 7, Route 123 and International Drive. These streets will carry the largest volume of automobile traffic and will also accommodate Metrorail, buses, bicycles and pedestrians. See Figures 9a, 9b, 10a, and 10b.

The streetscape concept for boulevards features wide sidewalks, street trees evenly spaced, and medians with plantings of flowering trees, shrubs, and flowers. Street lighting style should be distinctive, and designed for both pedestrian and vehicular use. The following recommendations are provided for achieving the boulevard streetscape character:

Landscape amenity panel: This zone should be a minimum of 8 feet wide; however, a 10-foot wide panel is encouraged. In addition to vegetation, this area should include amenities such as bicycle racks and bus shelters.

Sidewalk: A minimum 10-foot wide sidewalk that allows for uninterrupted pedestrian movement should be provided.

Building Zone: A minimum 15 foot wide multi-use zone that accommodates a second row of trees and possibly additional plantings should be provided. ~~Major s~~Shade trees should be planted in a manner to ensure that they have building clearance at their mature size. The trees within the building zone should be planted to achieve a staggered affect with those planted in the landscape amenity panel. When ground level retail is provided in a building, a portion of the building zone should be used for retail browsing or outdoor dining.

Avenue, Collector, and Local Street Streetscapes

While avenues, collectors, and local streets serve different functions from a traffic perspective, their streetscapes are similar. The character of the streetscapes should generally be determined by the pedestrian activities generated by the adjacent land uses rather than the classification of the street. See Figures 11a, 11b and 12a and 12b.

For local streets, traffic calming measures such as raised mid-block pedestrian crossings, small traffic rotaries, and curb and sidewalk "bulb outs" at intersections may be appropriate.

The following recommendations are provided for achieving the streetscape character for avenues, collectors, and local streets:

Landscape amenity panel: This zone should be a minimum of 8 feet wide along avenues and collectors and a minimum of 6 feet wide along local streets. Street trees should be evenly spaced,

and ~~in ordered plantings.~~ v~~V~~egetation may also include shrubs and ground cover. Amenities such as bicycle racks and bus shelters should be provided as needed to serve the adjacent land uses.

Sidewalk: Sidewalks along avenues and collectors should be a minimum of 8 feet wide. Sidewalks along local streets should be a minimum of 6 feet wide.

Building Zone: This width of this zone should range from 4 to 12 feet. When ground-level retail is provided in a building, a portion of this building zone should be used for retail browsing or outdoor dining. Supplemental plantings (to include shade and flowering trees, shrubs, flowering plants, ground cover, and grasses) may be provided for buildings without retail uses.

Figure 9a
Boulevard Streetscape, Section

Comment [A11]: All graphics updated as necessary to reflect light fixtures as recommended in the TUDGs and to clarify that features such as awnings and cafe tables are not expected to extend beyond the building zone

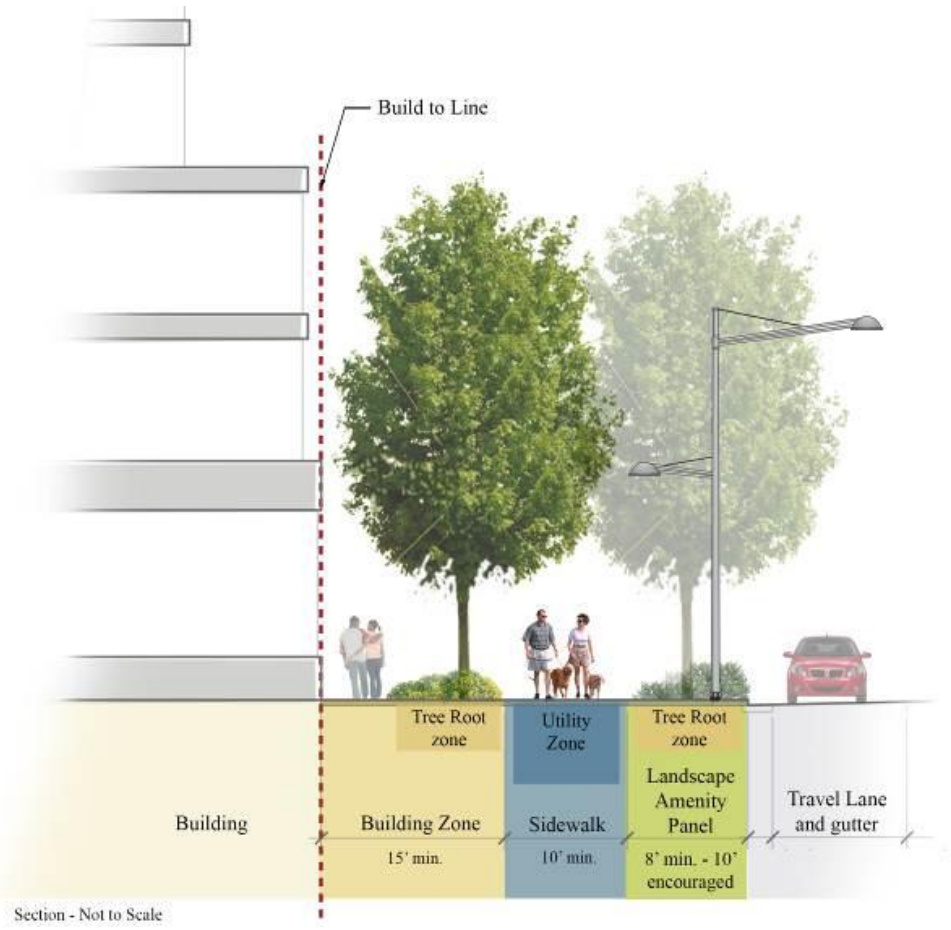


Figure 9b
Boulevard Streetscape, Plan

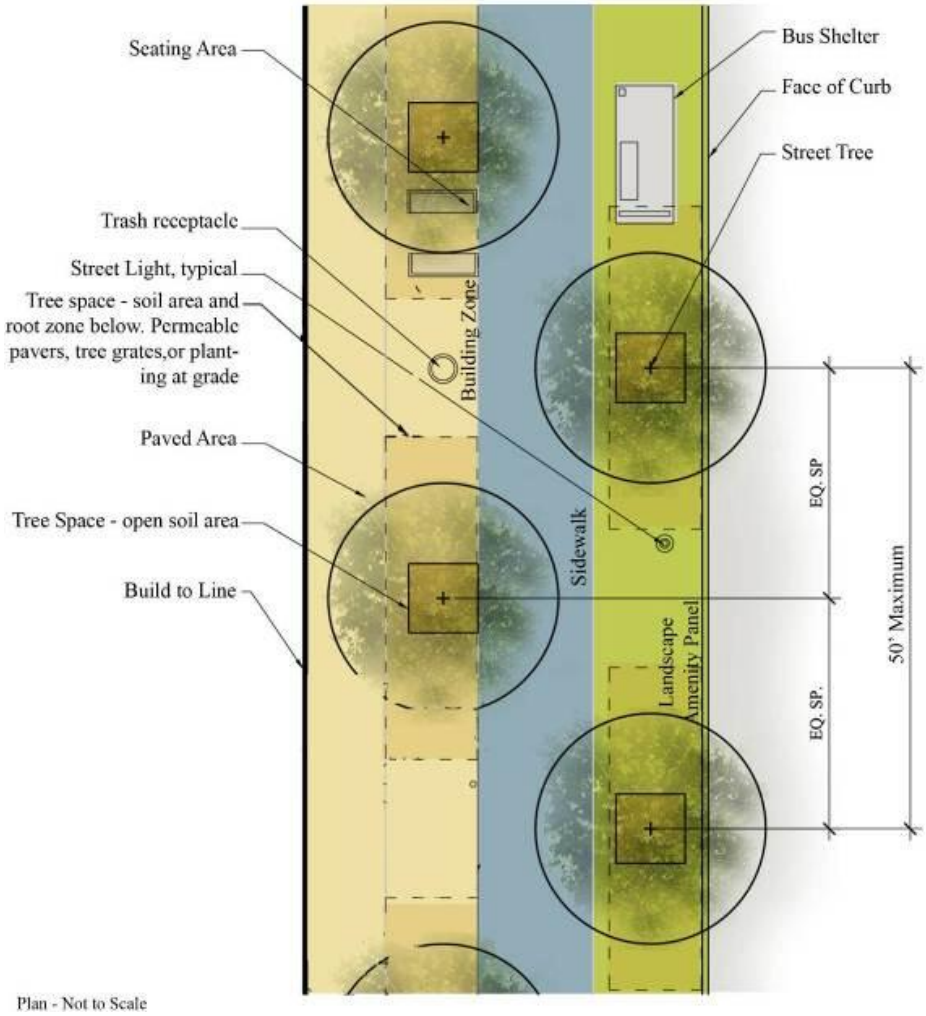


Figure 10a
Boulevard Streetscape with Outdoor Dining, Section

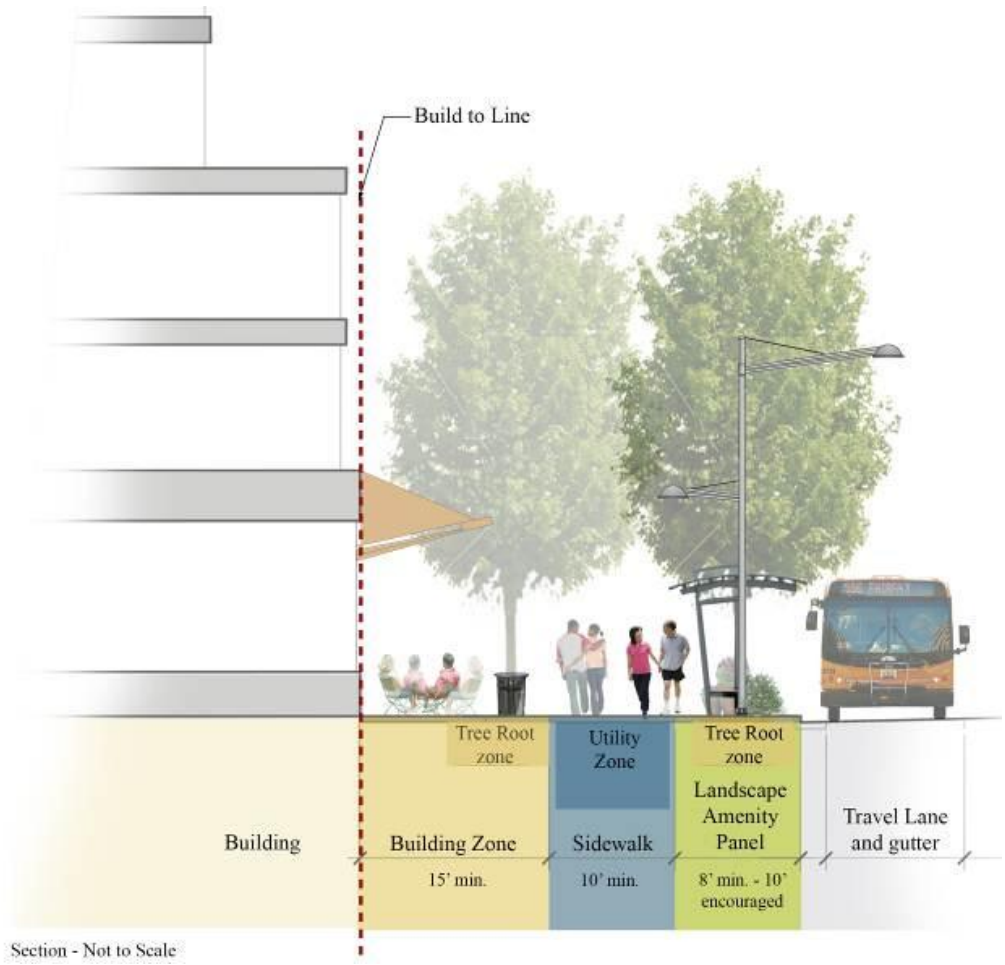
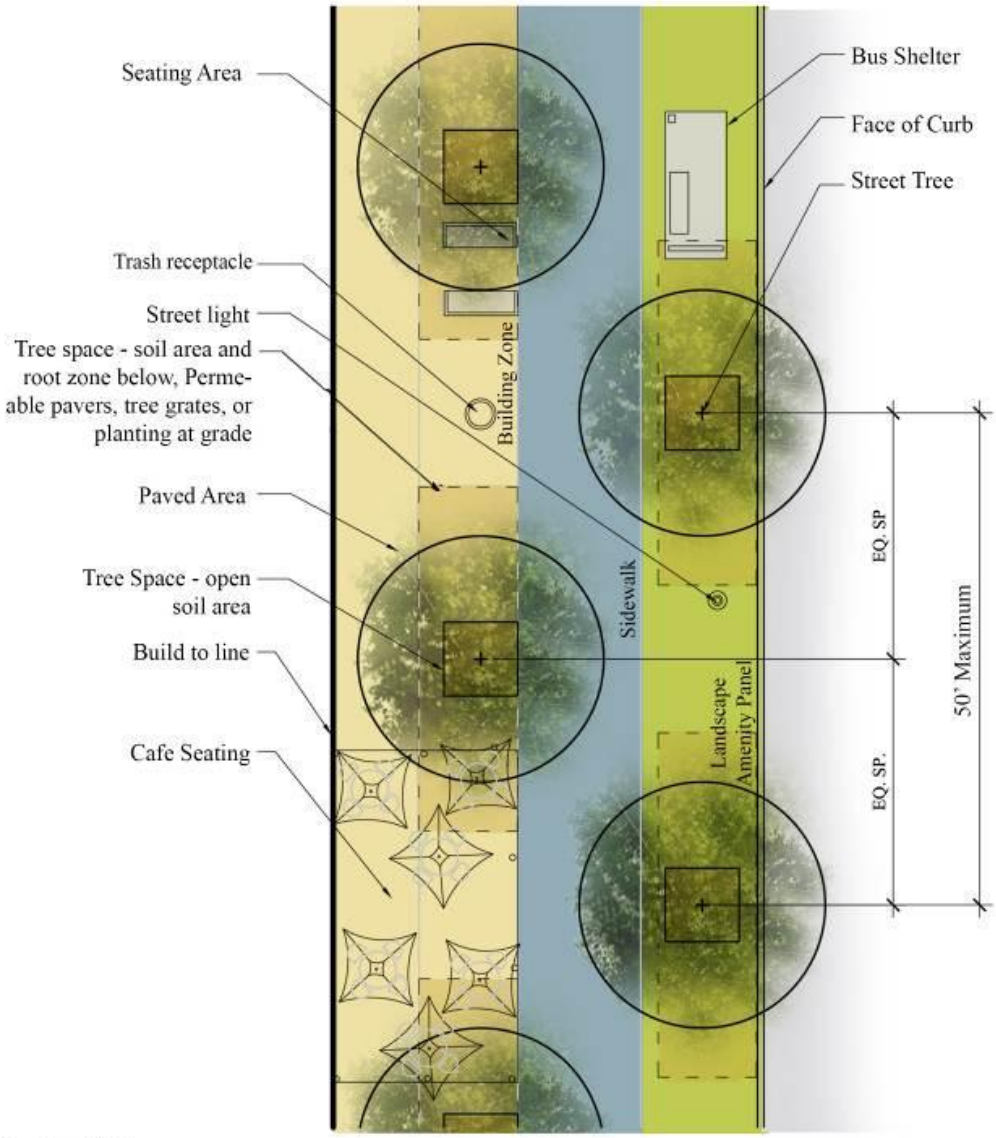


Figure 10b
Boulevard Streetscape with Outdoor Dining, Plan



Plan - Not to Scale

Figure 11a
Avenue/Collector/Local Street Streetscape with Residential Building, Section

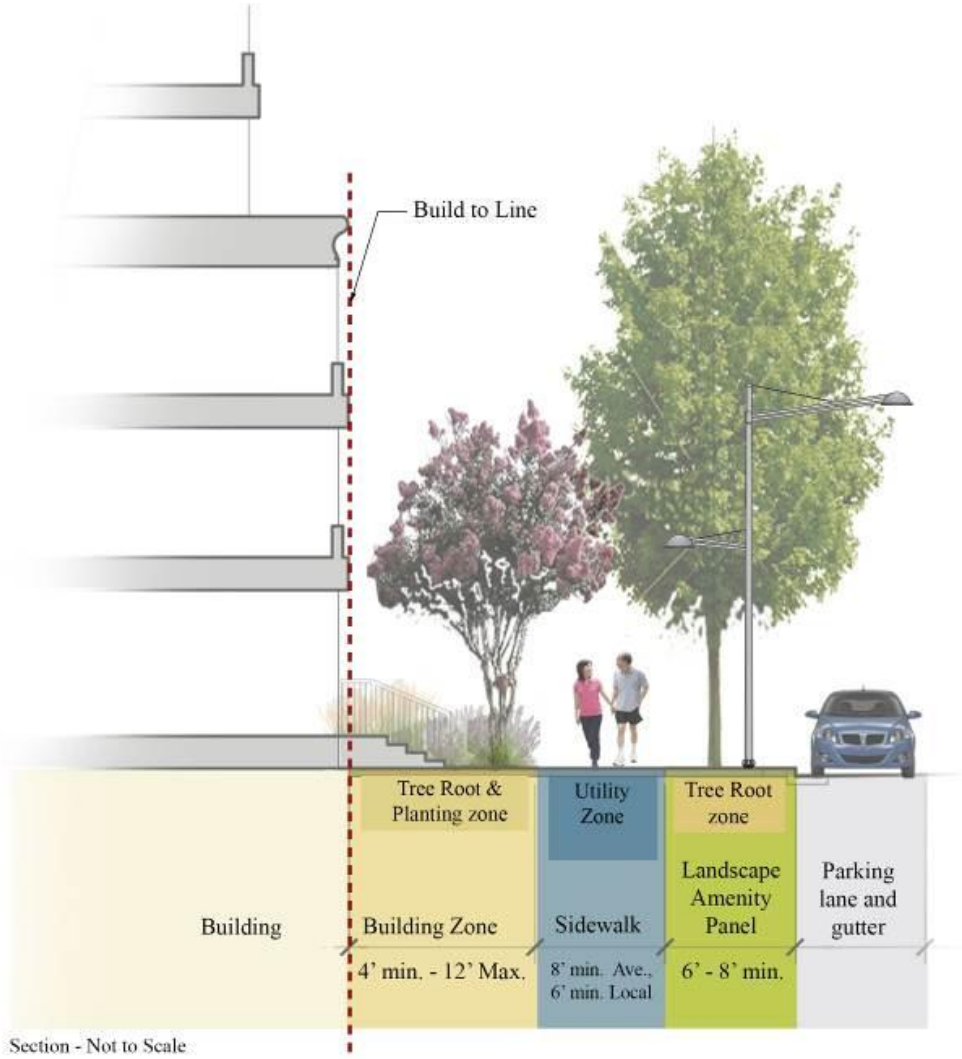


Figure 11b
Avenue/Collector/Local Street Streetscape with Residential Building, Plan

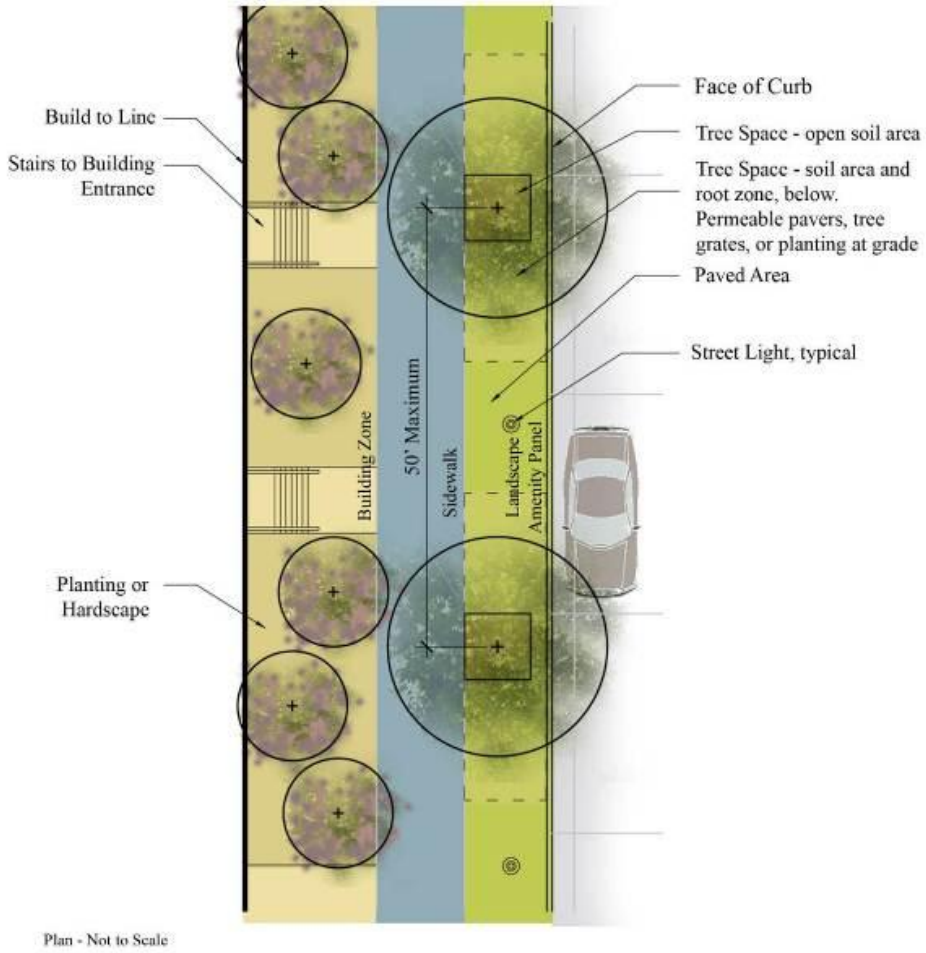


Figure 12a
Avenue/Collector/Local Street Streetscape with Commercial Building, Section

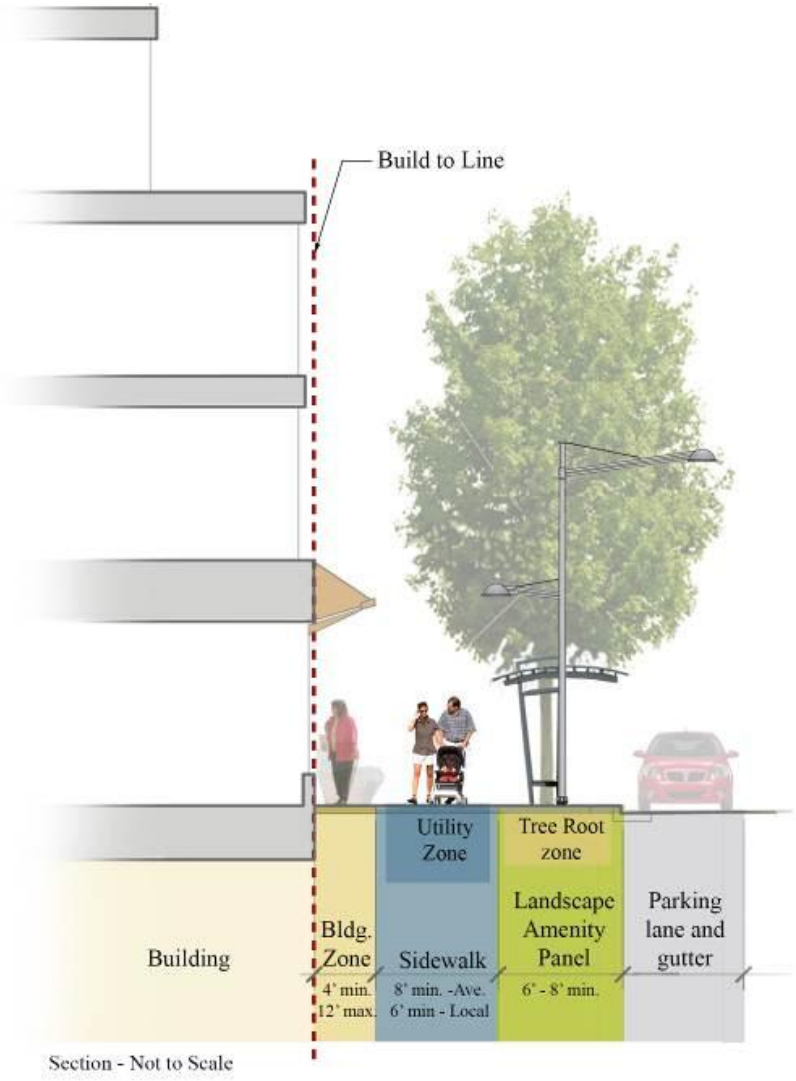
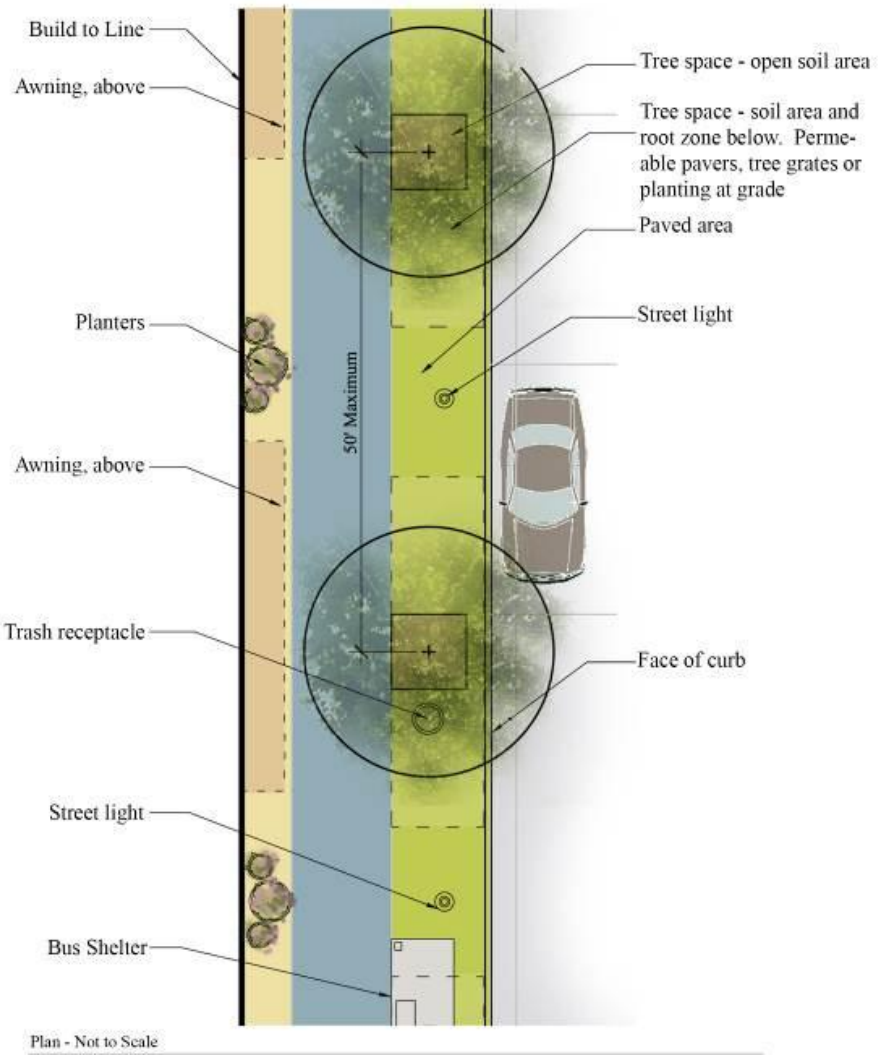


Figure 12b
Avenue/Collector/Local Street Streetscape with Commercial Building, Plan

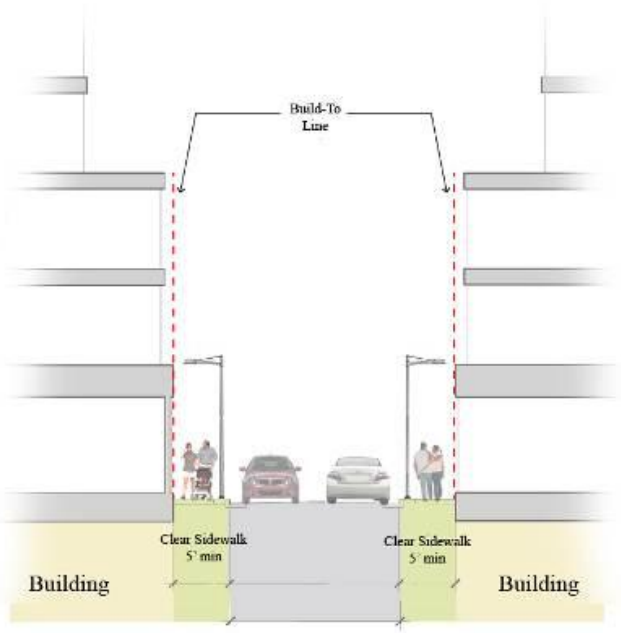


Service Street Streetscapes

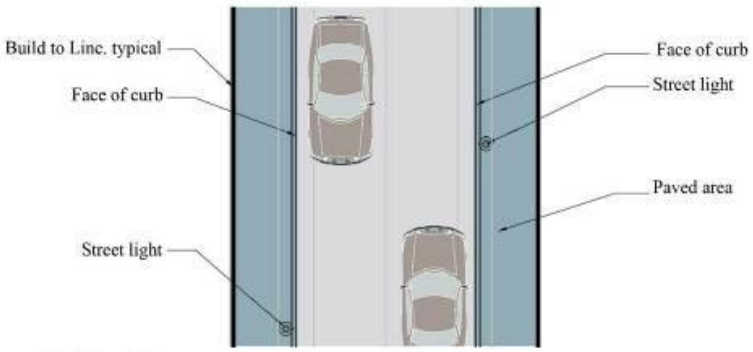
Service streets are expected to provide access to parking, loading docks, waste management, utilities, and other back-of-house operations. While they do not primarily serve pedestrians, they should provide a minimum level of accessibility and safety for pedestrians where applicable. See Figure 13.

Sidewalk: A minimum 5-foot wide clear sidewalk should be provided adjacent to buildings. No poles, utilities, or other appurtenances should be located in the clear sidewalk ~~clear~~ area. Attractive street lighting should be provided to illuminate both the street and the sidewalk. In lieu of pole lights, attractive safety and wayfinding lighting may also be attached to the building face.

Figure 13
Service Street Streetscape, Section and Plan



Section - Not To Scale



Plan - Not to Scale

Building and Site Design

Building and site design must support the pedestrian realm to create a vibrant urban environment. The location of a building on a site should not create a barrier to pedestrians by interrupting the pedestrian circulation system. Typically, buildings should be located close to the sidewalk to allow for active storefronts and other uses that engage pedestrians. Non-active uses like loading docks, mechanical rooms, utility vaults, and exposed parking decks, should be oriented away from boulevards, avenues, and local streets. These uses, which detract from the pedestrian experience, should be located facing service streets or placed internally to the building envelope to minimize their negative impacts. Where garage and loading access must be provided on a non-service street, the width should be minimized and architectural treatments should be provided. If utility vaults or mechanical rooms must be placed along non-service streets, they should be treated so that they do not negatively impact the activation of the pedestrian space. Access panels should conform to the recommendations of the TUDGs. (See TUDGs section on Streetscape Types and Zones.)

The scale of buildings in relationship to the street and sidewalk should also be considered. Tall, continuous buildings create canyon-like conditions which significantly detract from the pedestrian experience. Proposed developments should create building facades and frontages which are appropriate to pedestrians in scale and level of detail. In the same manner that excessive height along the sidewalk can feel uncomfortable to pedestrians, long expanses of blank walls or uniform materials can detract from the pedestrian experience and ~~deter~~ discourage pedestrian movement through the space.

If designed well, the combination of public and private spaces creates attractive and functional places to live, work, and shop. High standards for innovative architecture and landscape architecture will create a unique aesthetic and identity for the urban form within Tysons.

The following recommendations address Build-to Lines and Building Frontages; Bulk and Massing; Step-Backs; Building Articulation; Fenestration and Transparency; Parking Design; and Building Height.

Build-to Lines and Building Frontages

The build-to line is a theoretical line on the ground indicating where the facades of buildings should be located. It is located at the back of the building zone. The build-to line ensures that the ground floors of all buildings on a block ~~are in line~~generally align with each other at the edge of the streetscape~~;, it provides~~providing a frame for the public realm but ~~also allows~~allowing architectural variation and interest.~~. Exceptions~~ Limited exceptions to the build-to line may occur where plazas, pocket parks, or spaces for public art are located. The build-to line generally applies to the ~~podium (or~~ base~~)~~ of the building structure and excludes building towers, which may be set back further to allow for light and air to reach the street.

The building frontage is the portion of the building that serves to define and enclose the pedestrian realm. It aligns with the build-to line, and generally serves as a physical and visual boundary to the pedestrian realm. The building frontage typically separates exterior public space from interior semi-public or private space. The building frontage only applies to the floors of the building ~~podium~~base.

Proposed developments in Tysons should adhere to a consistently established build-to line for each block. The location of the build-to lines will relate to the streetscape guidance, the

Comment [A12]: Here and elsewhere, the specific language referring to building "podiums" has been changed to "base". "Podium" has a specific connotation, most often referring to a parking podium, and in most of the discussion on massing and stepbacks the intent is to refer to the building base, regardless of if it is occupied space or parking.

intensity and activity of the land uses, and the desired relationship of pedestrians to these uses. The location of the build-to line may vary depending on the character of the street and any specific urban design guidelines for the District~~-~~.~~and the district, and will be indicated in the specific urban design guidelines developed for each area~~.

Existing uses and buildings that do not conform to the build-to line established by new development (especially those that are a part of phased redevelopment plans) should investigate opportunities to create visual and physical linkages to conforming new buildings that address the pedestrian realm. These buildings may use walls, landscaping, or other architectural features 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.

Bulk and Massing

Redevelopment in Tysons will be urban in ~~nature~~character, and new buildings will generally occupy a majority of the block and be multiple stories in height. Sites should be designed with care to achieve the desired density goals, while remaining sensitive to the impact of development on the surrounding areas~~context~~. Guidance regarding building massing includes:

- Towers should be designed with height variations to protect access to light and views and to allow for 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 on the street, adjacent buildings, or public open space.
- Generally, towers should be located towards the wider rights-of-way, where the street section can absorb the additional building height better than narrower streets.
- Buildings should be at least two stories tall along the street, and should step-back above the ~~podium~~ base as a transition to the building tower. Floor plate area reductions at the upper stories, and tower articulation should also be considered.
- Where towers are set back from the edge of a building base, base heights should be varied between buildings along the street block to provide architectural interest.

In general, ground-floor commercial uses should be accessed directly from the adjacent public sidewalk or building zone. Therefore, in the absence of significant existing elevation changes, storefronts should be at the same grade as the sidewalk and building zone.

Ground-floor residential uses, however, should be grade-separated from the public sidewalk to distinguish the units and to provide some privacy. This creates the opportunity for stoops, bays, porches or entries that establish a distinct transition between private residential developments and the pedestrian realm.

If accessed directly from the public sidewalk, stairs should not impinge upon the pedestrian realm; they should be located wholly on private property so as to not effect pedestrian movement. In lower density areas, front yards should be shallow and characterized by entry gardens and terraces that encourage a direct relationship between the building and the pedestrian realm.

Step-Backs

The pedestrian experience is greatly influenced by the height of the building along the sidewalk. As a result, great care must be taken to preserve the proportion and scale of the street

section so that it does not result in an overwhelming, dark, and windy pedestrian corridor. Step-backs are one tool that can be used to create an appropriate proportion of street width to building height.

Step-backs result in building towers which are set back from the building ~~frontage~~base. As a result, pedestrians only perceive the first few floors of the building ~~podium~~base, and not the full height of the tower. Step-backs can be used to reduce the impacts of shadows and increase the access of sunlight to the pedestrian realm. They can also reduce the "tunnel" effect that sometimes occurs along streets that are lined with taller buildings.

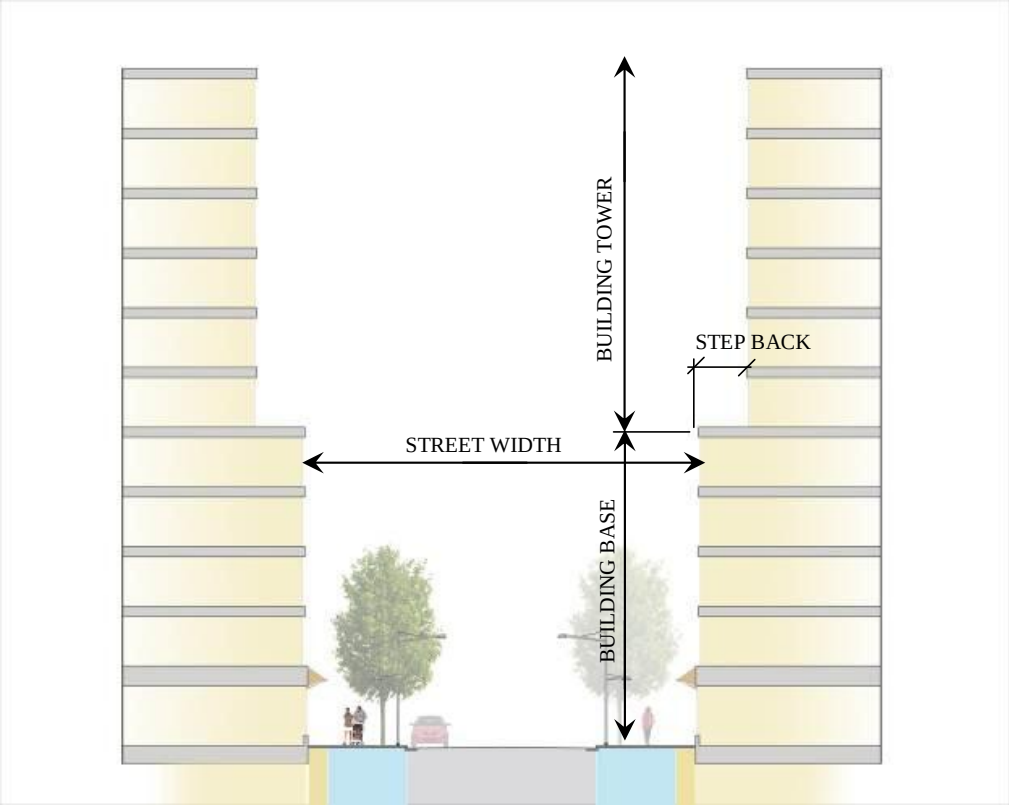
Step-backs occur above the building ~~podium~~ base and can vary by location and context. They can be used to add a measure of depth and complexity to the bulk of buildings. Step-backs may be necessary to ensure sunlight in certain locations, particularly as related to public open spaces. Solar shading analyses (also called sunlight or shadow studies) may be necessary to ensure that adjacent buildings will have adequate light and air.

In higher density areas, building bases will tend to be taller, and thus, the step-back may be located anywhere from four to eight stories above sidewalk level. In lower density areas, the step-back may occur from two to four stories above sidewalk level. Step-backs should be reviewed in proposed developments to confirm the scale and proportion of the street section and their relationship to adjacent building heights and scale. Additional guidance on step-back ratios may be found in the Building Massing section of the TUDGs. ~~In general, the goal is to create a street width to podium height ratio anywhere from 1:1 to 1:2.~~

~~The use of the step-back technique, as illustrated in Figure 14, can help avoid the "wedding cake" architecture which can result from excessive building setbacks.~~

Comment [A13]: The specific ratio recommendation was deleted here because the TUDGs have been completed, and the specific recommendations are included in that document

Figure 14
Step-back Illustration



Note: An appropriate ratio of street width to building base height should be preserved throughout the introduction of a step-back above the building base or podium. ~~The recommended street width to building base ratio is between 1:1 and 1:2.~~

Comment [A14]: The specific ratio recommendation was deleted here because the TUDGs have been completed, and the specific recommendations are included in that document

Building Articulation

In addition to building massing and setbacks, the treatment of building facades contributes to the quality and character of the pedestrian realm. Building articulation, in the form of rhythmic bays, planar breaks, material changes, window systems, entries, balconies or stoops, can be used to break down the scale of building facades and avoid long, monotonous lengths of building elevation.

Building articulation should also include changes across the height of the building. This can include material, color, and textures which express the ground floor, building ~~podium~~base, and building tower. Articulation may also include cornices, different roof forms, and parapet modulation to provide visual interest.

Articulation provides the details which make buildings interesting and engaging. Further, many articulation elements serve a dual purpose when they provide shade, demarcate entries, or act as gateway features.

Blank walls are solid walls without fenestration, entries or portals. When located at the ground floor, they are detrimental to the pedestrian experience~~ and may disrupt pedestrian flow~~. Such conditions should not be permitted on any public street-facing facade. Active uses should be provided at the ground floor as much as possible. If blank facades cannot be avoided, strategies should be employed to mitigate their impacts. These may include the provision of applied architectural elements, material changes, or other similar features to provide additional building detail and visual interest.

Fenestration and Transparency

Where ground floor retail, commercial, community or other non-residential uses occur, the facade above bulkhead and below the finished elevation of the first floor ceiling should ~~be at least 60 percent transparent~~provide for adequate transparency. As laid out in the TUDGs, the pedestrian hierarchy will guide the appropriate level of transparency (See TUDGs Pedestrian Hierarchy Plan Designations found in the Pedestrian Hierarchy section.). ~~This~~ Transparency is measured by comparing the total glazed area for each building frontage to the total elevation area. Transparency should permit visibility from the sidewalk into a building and its active uses. Opaque, mirrored and translucent glass should be avoided and should not be considered "transparent."

Comment [A15]: Edited to be in conformance with the TUDGs

In residential buildings, the level of ground floor transparency may be lower for private uses, such as living areas. Residential lobbies and other common spaces should exhibit higher transparency and should provide a visual connection to the pedestrian realm. To ensure adequate privacy in residential buildings, the sill of ground floor windows should be placed above the eye level of passers-by on adjacent sidewalks. This ~~will~~ could be partially achieved through raising the finished grade of the ground floor residential units.

Parking Design

General Parking Design Recommendations

The following parking design recommendations are applicable to all areas of Tysons:

- Parking access should always be designed in such a manner as to minimize conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians and to take into account pedestrian safety. This may

include reducing the number of parking access points and minimizing the widths of ramps and curb cuts where they intersect with the sidewalk.

- Vehicular access to parking lots and parking garages should be limited to local streets or service streets when feasible.
- Parking access should always be designed to be attractive and coordinated with the site plan and architecture.
- Certain uses, such as retail, 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.
- Exterior and Interior parking structure lighting design should provide adequate lighting levels that ensure public safety without creating glare and light spillage into adjacent structures, roads, and the pedestrian realm. All parking lot lighting should confirm to current LEED light pollution requirements and County ordinances.

Figure 15
Example of ~~Below Ground/Podium~~ Structured Parking Wrapped with Active Uses

Comment [A16]: Re-labeled to provide a better description of what this image is showing

Structured Parking

Underground parking is the least intrusive form of parking on the built environment and is the preferred method for providing parking in Tysons. Above-grade structured parking, or podium parking, may also be appropriate under some circumstances. When it occurs, it should be located within the building mass and be hidden from view from the pedestrian realm

The preferred alternative for "hiding" above-grade parking structures from the pedestrian realm is to locate the parking interior to the building and "wrap" a layer of active uses around the parking, as shown at ground level in the illustration in Figure 15. ~~Above-grade parking structures should be "wrapped" with active uses on all sides except along a service street. See Figure 15.~~

Comment [A17]: Edited to clarify recommendations relating to parking podiums, active uses, and architectural treatments on building facades

If a parking level is not wrapped with an active use, the façade should be designed so that it appears as an active use. This is especially recommended if the façade of the building tower is at the same plane as the façade of the building base, so that the building appears to be occupied space all the way to the ground floor.

In some locations, exposed parking structures ~~that are not wrapped with other uses~~ may be unavoidable. In such cases, careful architectural detailing, lighting, and landscaping should be employed along the building frontage to mitigate the negative impacts of exposed parking levels. Generally, architecturally-treated garages should be designed consistent with surrounding buildings. Efforts should be taken to place these structures facing service streets. Stand-alone above-grade parking structures are discouraged.

Surface Parking

Surface parking should be avoided. The exception to this guideline occurs in portions of the Non-TOD Districts near the edge of Tysons, where structured parking may not be economically feasible. Surface parking may be considered for short term parking or for passenger drop-off and pick-up areas. When provided, surface parking lots should be located to the side or rear of the primary use and should contain pedestrian connections that lead to the front door of the associated building. They should be intensively landscaped, be well-li~~ght~~ted~~ed~~, and publicly visible for greater safety. Surface parking lots should 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. They also should be designed to contribute to site stormwater management by using elements such as planter areas and permeable paving in the parking stall area.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking makes sidewalks safer and provides necessary and sometimes more accessible short-term residential and retail parking. All avenues, collectors, and local streets within Tysons should provide on-street parking (see Transportation section for additional guidance). Where on-street parking is provided, curb cuts for vehicular access should be minimized in order to increase pedestrian safety and maximize the number of on-street parking spaces.

Building Height

Building heights in Tysons will reflect the proposed intensity pattern. The tallest buildings will be located within 1/8 mile of the Metro stations, with heights stepping down gradually as the distance from the stations increases. Building heights will be lowest in locations adjacent to existing single-family residential neighborhoods outside of Tysons. Careful design will protect view corridors and maintain access to sunlight at these sensitive locations. The concept for building heights in Tysons is shown in Map 10. Table 9 provides a range of maximum heights for each tier. Detailed guidance on maximum heights can be found in the District Recommendations.

The following are general recommendations regarding building height:

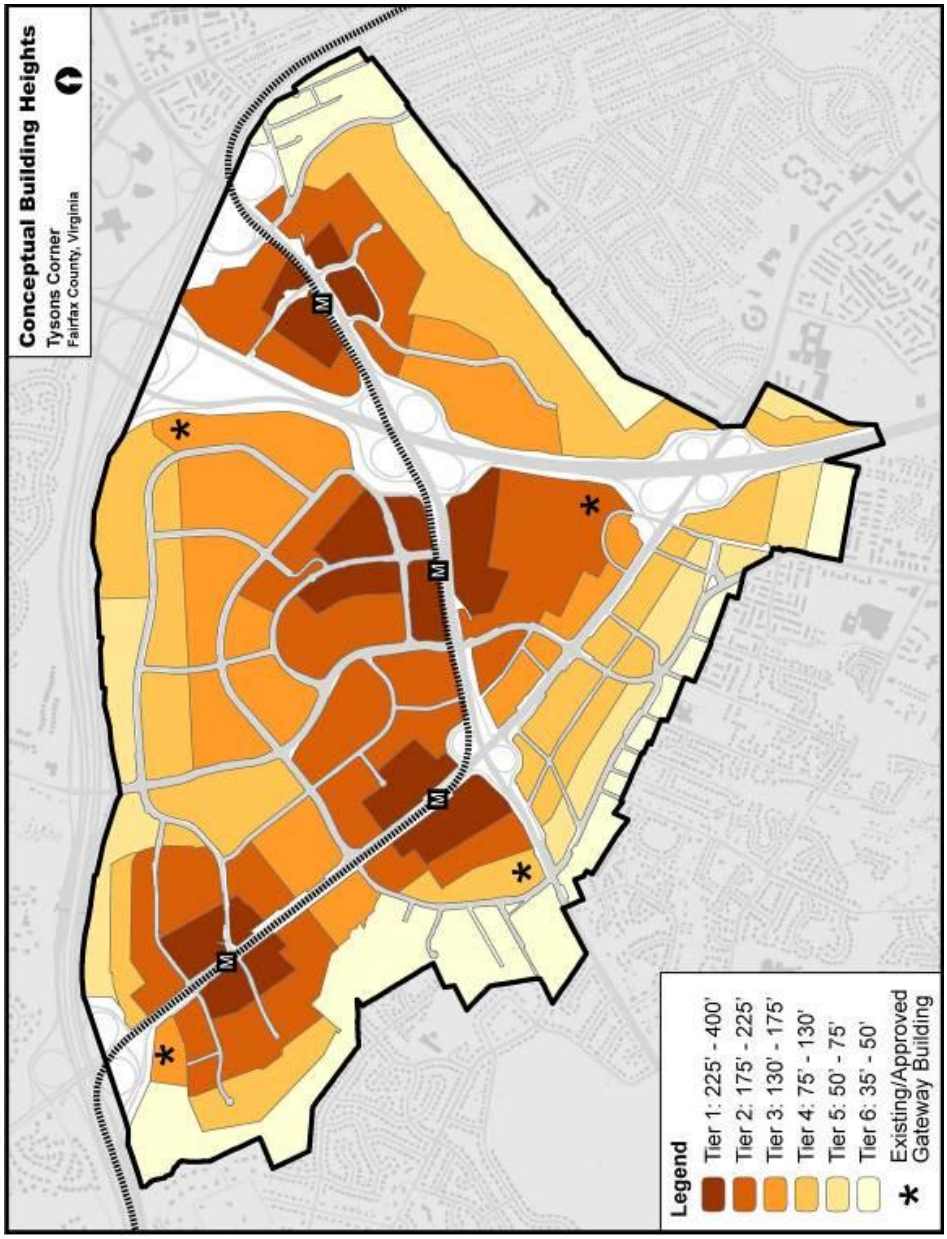
- Maximum building height includes any above grade parking structures.
- The tallest buildings of any development, particularly those that incorporate a tower feature, should be located ~~internal to the site and~~ along wider streets where they will be less likely to overwhelm the pedestrian realm.

- Parcels that are split by two height designations should have the flexibility to utilize the range of heights permitted by the taller designation when development proposals provide height transitions similar to those on the Building Height Concept Map and provide a site design that is supportive of other urban design objectives.
- Building heights and massing should respond to context, proximity to Metro or other neighborhood features, intended uses, and the Plan's vision for specific locations. Buildings may be oriented to maximize their view potential, but their location and orientation should take into consideration uses in the immediate vicinity.
- The tallest buildings (Tiers 1 and 2) should be iconic in design and serve as identifying features that contribute to the quality of the skyline. Iconic architecture can be defined as buildings that are well-crafted, unique, distinguishable within their context, and complementary to the urban fabric. Iconic architecture should also advance the overall quality of design within the district.
- Height limits do not include mechanical penthouses, architectural features, or elements affixed to buildings which are part of innovative energy technology such as wind turbines or solar panels. However, these features should not excessively increase the building height.
- Height flexibility will be provided to facilitate the provision of affordable/workforce housing, as well as public and quasi-public uses such as a conference center or arts center.
- During the development review process, solar shading analyses (also called shadow studies) for all buildings should be provided to ensure that adjacent buildings and public spaces will have adequate access to light and air.

Table 9
Building Height Tiers

Tier	Building Height
1	225 to 400 ft
2	175 to 225 ft
3	130 to 175 ft

Tier	Building Height
4	75 to 130 ft
5	50 to 75 ft
6	35 to 50 ft


Conceptual Building Heights
Tysons Corner
Fairfax County, Virginia
Legend
Tier 1: 225' - 400'
Tier 2: 175' - 225'
Tier 3: 130' - 175'
Tier 4: 75' - 130'
Tier 5: 50' - 75'
Tier 6: 35' - 50'
Existing/Approved Gateway Building

MAP 10

Interim Conditions

In many cases developments will be phased over time. In addition to demonstrating how projects will ultimately adhere to the Urban Design Principles contained in the Plan and the ~~Urban Design Guidelines~~TUDGs, phased developments should prepare plans and supporting graphics that demonstrate how all interim conditions will meet Plan objectives, including those related to urban design. Among other design considerations, these plans should:

- Provide Pedestrian circulation that meets the connectivity goals of the Plan.
- Show how any interim parking facilities will adhere to parking design and phasing goals.
- Show how landscape and sustainable hardscape improvements will improve the aesthetic character of any existing or proposed interim uses.
- Show how interim stormwater facilities can be creatively incorporated into a high quality landscape design.
- Provide streetscape improvements that conform to Plan guidelines and that result in enhanced continuity of the streetscape design.
- Show how proposed public amenities such as open spaces and Urban Parks will be integrated into the site.