

Glenmont Sector Plan



Abstract

These guidelines are intended to provide direction in meeting the goals of the Glenmont Sector Plan. They are approved by the Planning Board for staff use in reviewing development proposals. They should be used as well by developers in shaping their projects and by citizens interested in the pattern and character of development in their community.

Source of Copies

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Online at MontgomeryPlanning.org/community/Glenmont

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Glenmont Sector Plan
Design Guidelines

Montgomery County Planning Department
M-NCPPC
MontgomeryPlanning.org

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INTRODUCTION

The Glenmont Sector Plan Design Guidelines represent the County's, and the community's design aspirations for the future of Glenmont. They should be used as a resource by all stakeholders while exploring ways to enhance the quality of urban design in Glenmont.

Urban design is concerned with the physical characteristics of an area, and these Guidelines consider the design implications of planning decisions in the public realm. An urban design strategy should serve as an integrating tool to coordinate how various development proposals will affect the sector plan area physically, with a principal focus on the public realm: the public faces of buildings, spaces for public use, and the streets, sidewalks, parks and plazas that provide the outdoor public venues for everyday activities.

Design Guidelines assist in the implementation of recommendations in approved and adopted master plans or sector plans by encouraging better building design on properties being considered for redevelopment, and by promoting the creation of safe pedestrian environments and attractive gathering places defined by buildings.

The Guidelines are approved by the Planning Board for use by property owners and Planning staff. Their intent is to illustrate how plan recommendations might be met, to inform applicants of design expectations and possible resources to accomplish them, and to provide staff with a framework for project review and a tool for obtaining enhanced design and related amenities. Guidelines do not set architectural styles, are only applicable during discretionary reviews, and will be revised and updated as necessary.



All page references in this document are to the 2013 Approved and Adopted Glenmont Sector Plan.

CONTEXT

Glenmont is envisioned as a predominately residential neighborhood with new transit-oriented, mixed-use development concentrated in and around the Glenmont Shopping Center and Metro Station. Mixed-use redevelopment around the Shopping Center and Metro Station will offer expanded housing choices, and provide a variety of open spaces with some retail and commercial uses in appropriate locations. Single-family residential neighborhoods will be retained through sensitive transitions in the scale of new development.

The Glenmont Sector Plan recommendations are based on guiding principles that provide a context for making planning decisions to realize the Plan's vision. These principles also provide a framework for the overall design concept for future development in Glenmont. The Guidelines are an extension of the principles outlined below.

- Encourage redevelopment that makes best use of public investment in **Metro** and that creates a distinct **community identity** by:

- focusing new residential and commercial growth in a compact building pattern within walking distance of the Metro station.
- locating the highest densities and building heights at the shopping center.
- encouraging convenience retail and services such as supermarkets, restaurants, professional offices, and entertainment uses that primarily serve the needs of the Glenmont community. The area is not suitable for big-box or regional retail.
- preserving historic resources, which convey community identity and character and which are historically or architecturally significant to the County's heritage.



- Maintain and support a wide **choice of housing types** and neighborhoods for people of all incomes, ages, and physical capabilities at appropriate densities by:

- providing appropriate transitions between new development and existing communities by placing taller buildings away from existing residential developments and transitioning down to appropriate heights to reduce impacts on the surrounding residential communities.
- Providing adequate community facilities, such as parks, community spaces, schools, and daycare centers for children and adults.



- Encouraging compact building footprints to allow room for a variety of active and passive open spaces.

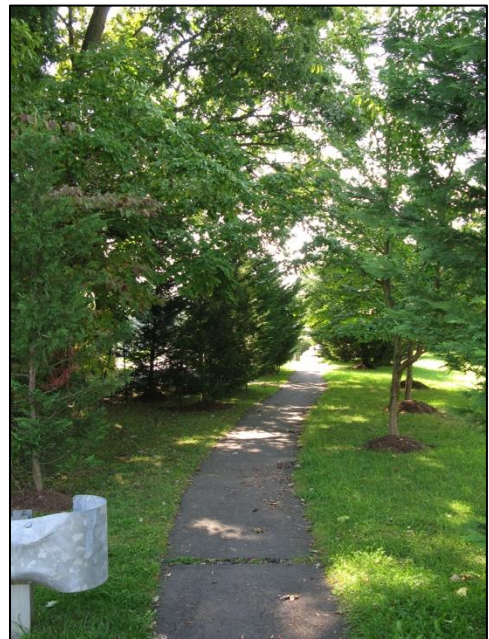
- **Improve connectivity** by:

- creating a complete transportation network (roadways, sidewalks, bikeways, and trails) to ensure that all residents and workers—pedestrians, bicyclists, and wheelchair users—have an appropriate access to Metro, Wheaton Regional Park, schools, gathering places, and other local destinations.
- creating a walkable street grid with short blocks in the core area that are a convenient and attractive environment for pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- balancing the community's desire for creating a place for local residents with the needs of through traffic.



- **Conserve and enhance natural resources** to provide a healthy and green environment by:

- incorporating environmentally sensitive design techniques to make maximum use of existing resources, and conserve and generate energy.
- minimizing the impacts of development activity on natural resources.



Physical Context

The existing shopping center is a typical strip center with several pad sites and a vast parking lot. The majority of the existing buildings are in need of upgrading, and the property lacks public open space. Although the center is near the Metro station, it is predominantly car-oriented. Large surface parking and heavily used roads create conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular movements.

Transforming the suburban character of the area surrounding the Metro station will require the introduction of a street network and block pattern that improve accessibility for all modes to travel. Incremental development of the area should support the long-term vision of a walkable community.

Encouraging a mix of uses will reduce distances between housing, commercial uses, and other amenities. Mixed-use development in the future will provide better pedestrian and bicycle facilities and structured parking. The convenience of the car and the opportunity to walk or use transit can be balanced in an environment providing local access for all the daily needs of the diverse community.



Existing bird's eye view of the Glenmont Shopping Center and vicinity

HOW TO USE THE GUIDELINES

Objective: The statement of intent defines the desired result.

Guidelines: The design guidelines recommend specific actions to fulfill the objective.

Examples illustrate some possible methods that can be used to address the guideline.

Illustrations/Photos. The images are intended to illustrate a possible solution, but should not be seen as the only solution.

GUIDELINES

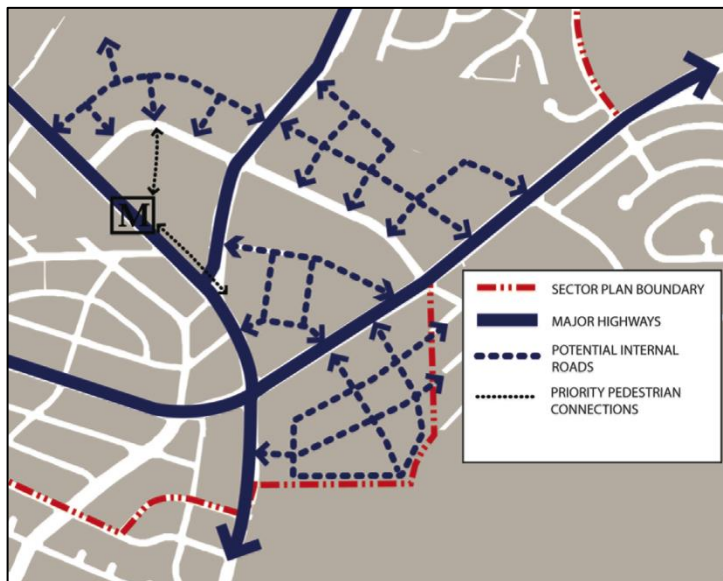
Areawide

These areawide guidelines apply to all properties in the Glenmont Core with final location, size and architecture of the buildings to be determined through regulatory review.

Objective: Create a high-quality pedestrian network

Guideline: Provide an internal street pattern that promotes interconnectivity and minimizes walking distances.

- Avoid excessively long blocks; shorter blocks are better for pedestrian access.
- Extend the existing grid pattern by aligning new roads with existing ones, where appropriate.
- Where a vehicular street is not appropriate, consider providing a mid-block connection for bicycle and pedestrian movement.



Street network concept for Glenmont Core



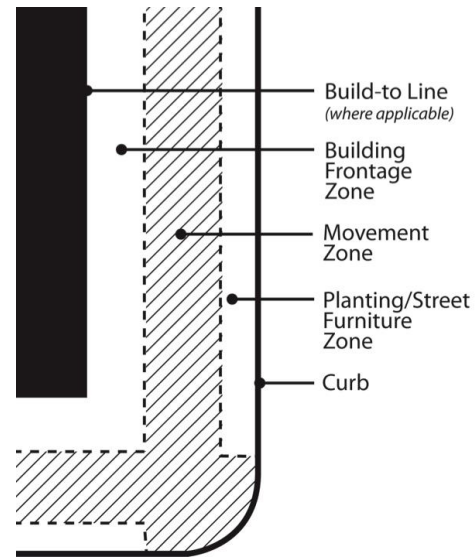
Although closed to vehicular traffic, this mid-block connection provides a vibrant space for pedestrian movement

Guideline: Provide direct and safe routes for pedestrian movement with defined sidewalk zones.

- Develop defined sidewalk zones: building frontage zone, movement zone, planting/street furniture zone, and curb.
- Provide hardscape or landscape treatment on private property between the vehicular zone and the abutting public right-of-way.



Pedestrian movement zone should be free of street furniture and obstructions such as utility poles and building mechanical equipment.



Defined sidewalk zones ensure direct and safe pedestrian travel

Guideline: Use trees and plants to balance hardscapes of streets, sidewalks and buildings.

- Develop the east side of Georgia Avenue with an enhanced streetscape.
- Increase tree canopy along streets and within medians.



Glenmont Metrocenter redevelopment proposes a double row of trees along Georgia Avenue



Existing Condition: Randolph Road has significant tree canopy coverage; redevelopment should enhance this existing character

Objective: Enhance the pedestrian experience through pedestrian-oriented developments

Guideline: Orient buildings to define the street and the sidewalk.

- Place buildings along, or close to, the sidewalk. Avoid excessive setbacks.
- Provide building entrances directly from the street.
- Projections such as awnings and canopies are encouraged. They provide weather protection for pedestrians, create variety, and strengthen the image of individual businesses.
- Avoid creating blank walls. They create an unattractive pedestrian environment.



Modest setbacks can be used to accommodate additional sidewalk space for café seating or a small gathering space



Variations in facade articulations such as awnings, materials, and door and window fenestration enhance the pedestrian experience



Multifamily residential projects are encouraged to provide units with direct access to the sidewalk to foster pedestrian activity



Well-articulated building facades provide a visually interesting backdrop to streetscape and a sense of enclosure along the street

Guideline: For large developments, vary building massing along the sidewalk for visual interest.

- Use a variety of building materials to create variety and interest.
- Consider a building entry, transparency or chamfered corners, additional or varied building massing, or distinctive architectural elements at corners.
- Consider the use of horizontal architectural elements to separate ground floor and upper stories.



For scale and visual interest, break down building mass into distinct volumes



Anchor key block corners with architectural articulation

Guideline: Reduce visual impact of parking structures.

- Structured parking (below-grade or above ground) is preferred over surface parking lots.
- Locate parking facilities in the interior of blocks with vehicular access from side streets.
- Parking structures with frontage along the street should have active ground level uses with pedestrian-oriented details. Upper floors should be articulated through coordinated material and facade detail to look like occupied floors.



When a vehicular zone is abutting the public right-of-way, provide adequate buffer to reduce the impact to the pedestrian realm



Access to interior parking facilities can be provided with minimum disturbance to pedestrian movement

Objective: Provide active and passive open spaces

A network of accessible open spaces should provide comfortable and attractive spaces that offer a range of experiences. They should also incorporate features that engage all age groups from young children to the elderly.

Redevelopment should enhance the existing open space character of Glenmont Metrocenter (and Winexburg Manor and Glenmont Forest, if rezoned for redevelopment in the future) while meeting the demand for passive and active recreation facilities. The following guidelines provide recommendations for achieving that goal.

Guideline: Provide centrally located open spaces.

- Locate open spaces in highly visible locations for casual monitoring.
- Locate open spaces in locations that are animated by adjacent uses, such as retail or recreation/community room.
- Provide a network of sidewalks, paths and trails to connect to open spaces.



Create usable spaces for active and passive recreation



Open spaces of a variety of sizes are encouraged

Guideline: Strive to maintain the existing open space character.

- Provide compact building footprints and structured parking to maximize preservation of existing trees and open space.
- Avoid clearance of forest, where possible.
- Consider developing existing streams as an amenity with a path to or along them for passive recreation.

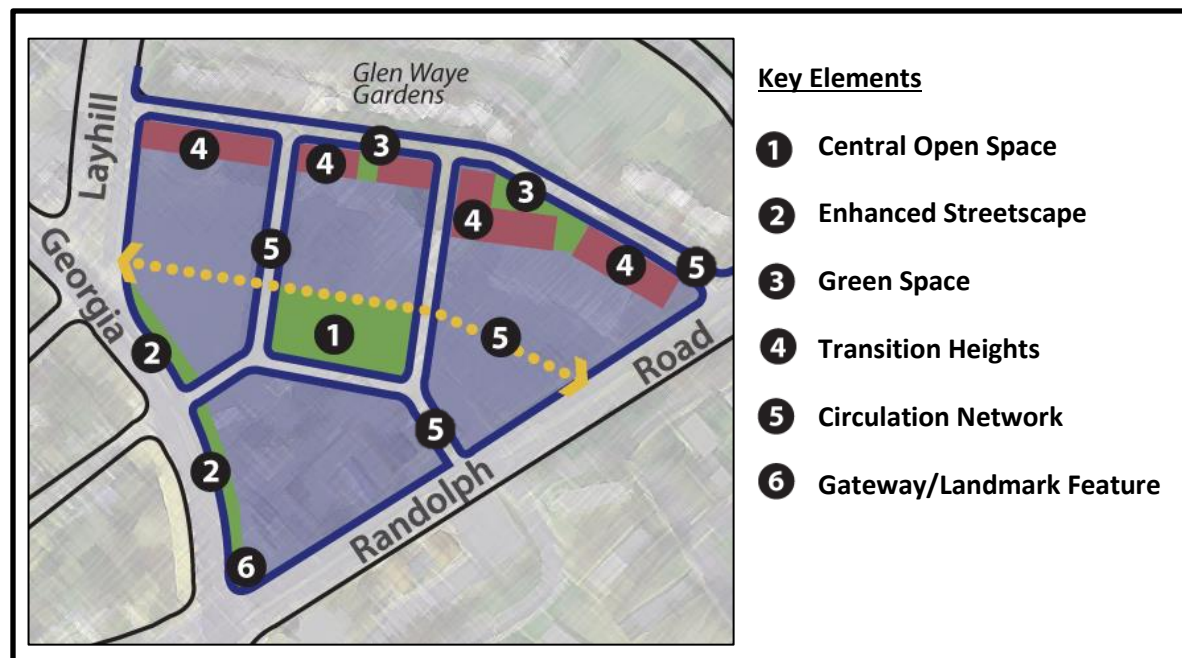
Specific Properties

There are specific objectives and guidelines that should be considered for specific properties in addition to the areawide guidance. These properties, in and near the Glenmont Core, have the potential to increase residential density within a convenient walking distance from the Metro. Each development project should comply with the areawide guidance, as well as the applicable specific design guidelines. Key Elements highlighted for each Specific Property illustrate important design elements that should be considered with redevelopment.



Glenmont Shopping Center

“The Glenmont Shopping Center is an appropriate location for a mixed-use town center with urban amenities such as a central open space, restaurants, and professional offices.” (Plan, page 21)



1 Central Open Space

“A centrally located public open space is envisioned for this site.” (Plan, page 24)

- Minimum ½ acre.
- Provide at least two retail frontages and an additional frontage along the new internal street.
- Provide trees and landscaping for shade and natural complement to hard surfaces.
- Accommodate a variety of community activities in the site design.
- Incorporate seating in choice locations: near building entrances, in shade, in sun, toward street, near activities and amenities. Provide a variety of seating types: single, couple, groups, fixed and moveable.



Open spaces surrounded by retail and street frontages are easily activated with shoppers and pedestrians

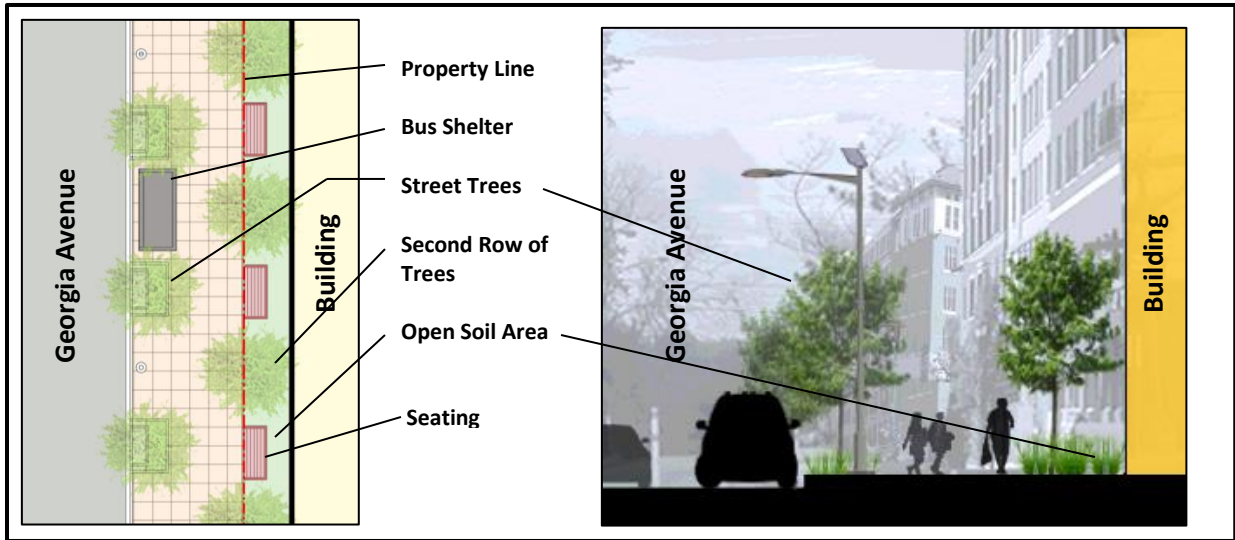


A central open space can provide distinct areas for a variety of activities to accommodate a range of users

2 Enhanced Streetscape

“Provide enhanced streetscape along the Georgia Avenue frontage...” (Plan, page 25)

- Incorporate pedestrian-scaled lighting, seating, and bus shelters.
- Provide additional plantings with a double row of trees, possibly outside of the public right-of-way.
- Provide adequate soil volume to support growth of mature, healthy trees.



Georgia Avenue Typical Streetscape Plan (left) and Street Section Detail (right)

3 Green Space

“Use a compact building footprint to allow for landscape buffers, larger setback areas, and courtyards that create a green development with opportunities to achieve greater tree canopy and green space.” (Plan, page 25)

- Consider interactive public art as a tool to activate small spaces.
- Avoid creating small, uninhabitable green spaces; consider consolidation of small spaces to create larger, usable space.
- Paved surfaces may be appropriate, depending on the confronting uses.
- Space should be highly visible from sidewalks, streets, and buildings.



Small open spaces surrounded by operable doors are easily activated



Open grassy areas support the growth of mature, healthy trees

4 Transition Heights

“Place taller buildings in the property’s interior and transition down to a maximum 45-foot building height along the Glen Way Gardens community to the northeast.” (Plan, page 25)



5 Circulation Network

“Provide two internal east-west roads through the site.” (Plan, page 25)

- Create short blocks to expand pedestrian access and minimize long building facades.
- Create through-block connection with activating uses, where possible.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections should be in highly visible locations for casual monitoring and be animated by adjacent land uses.

6 Gateway/Landmark Feature

- Use a prominent architectural element or building component.
- Consider the use of a unique material or innovative feature.
- Consider introducing identifying elements such as water features, public art, or monumental signage.



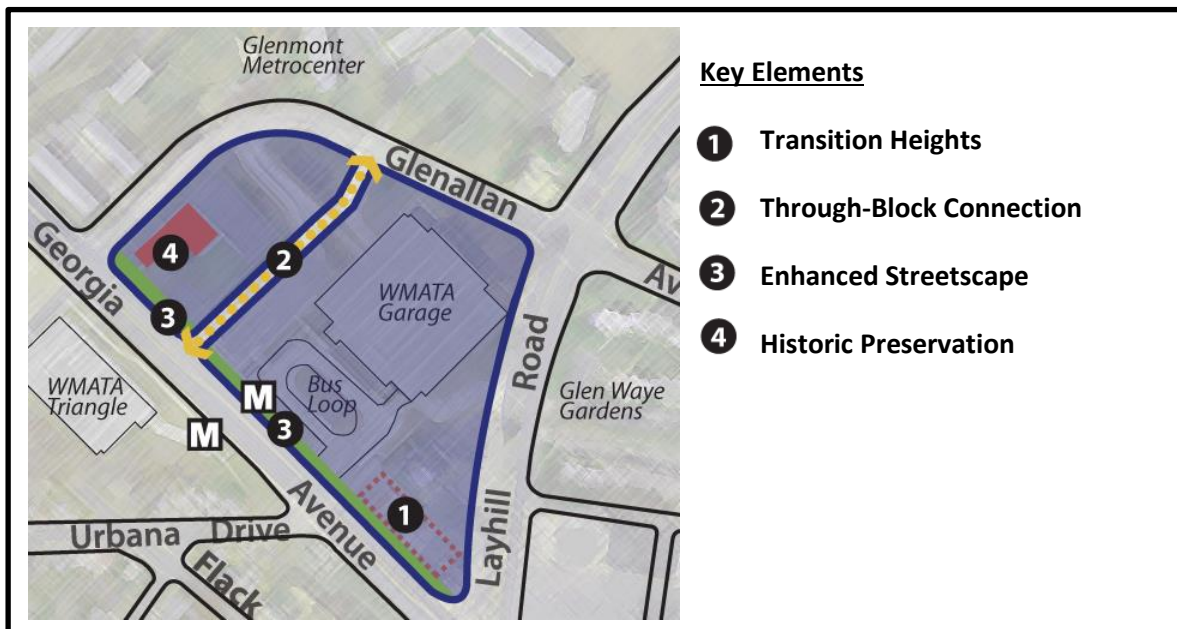
The building’s corner is visually reinforced by introducing a separate and distinct element



Well-placed public art can also highlight significant locations

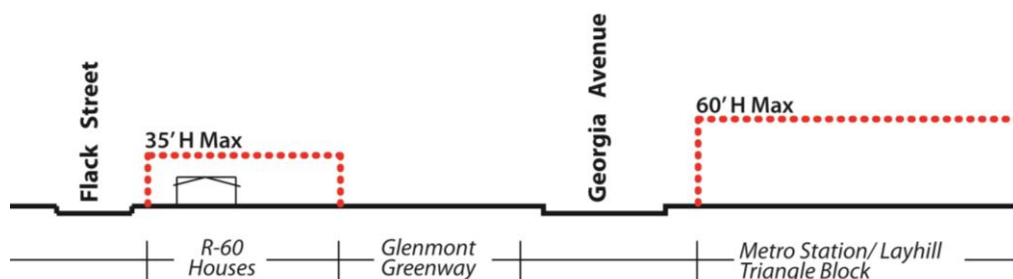
Metro Station/Layhill Triangle Block

“The WMATA portion of the block has significant long-term redevelopment potential. It could use some of the development potential on the adjoining Georgia Avenue Baptist Church property at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Glenallan Avenue through a combined Optional Method development process, even though the church is designated historic..” (Plan, page 26)



1 Transition Heights

“Place taller buildings toward Glenallan Avenue or across Georgia Avenue from the confronting Metro garage. Sensitive transition of heights should be provided for any development on this block located across from single-family houses on the west side of Georgia Avenue.” (Plan, page 26)



2 Through-Block Connection

“Provide, as a priority, the CR Zone public benefits . . . Through-Block Connection from Glenmont Metrocenter to the Metro entrance on this block.” (Plan, page 26)

- Provide direct connections to transit facilities including the Metro Station and bus drop-off.
- Provide a through-block connection in a highly visible location for casual monitoring and animated by adjacent land uses.



This connection is activated by entrances to abutting businesses



The landscape feature in this connection provides added interest to the space

3 Enhanced Streetscape

“Provide enhanced streetscape along the Georgia Avenue frontage...” (Plan, page 26)

- See Page 15 for details.

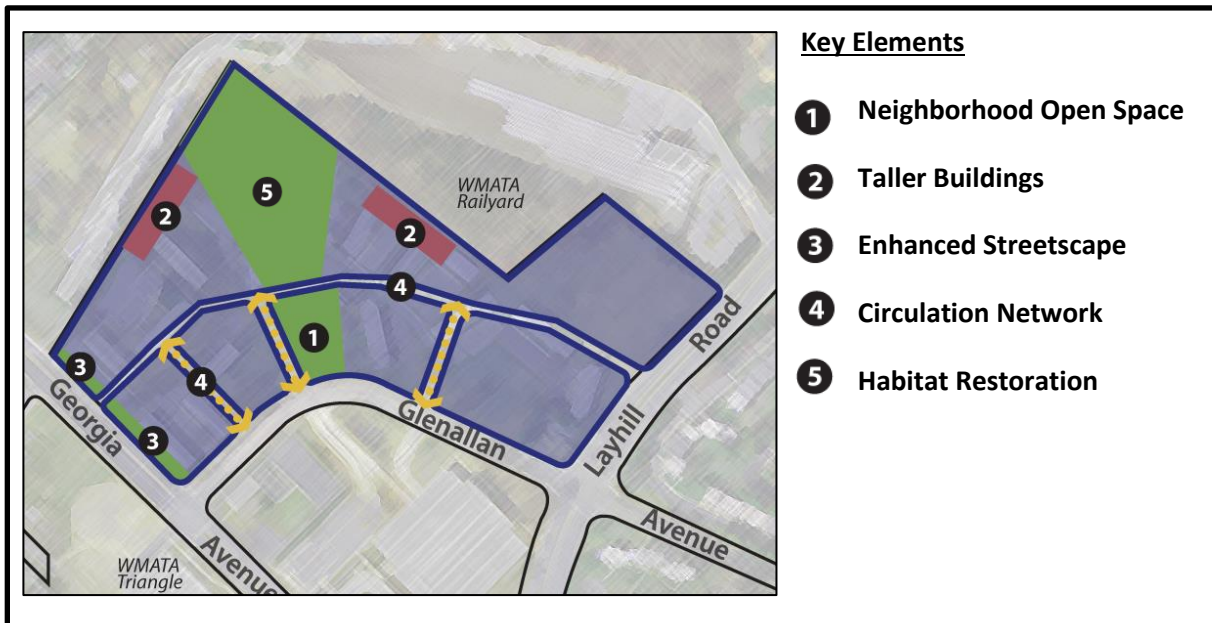
4 Historic Preservation

“Georgia Avenue Baptist Church is a noteworthy example of mid-century modern religious architecture.” (Plan, page 47)

- Redevelopment should not obscure any significant features of the historic building.
- Distinguish new development from historic resource. Avoid imitating historic elements as it may diminish the singularity of the historic original.



“This Plan continues to support a mixed-use redevelopment of the property.” (Plan, page 27)



① Neighborhood Open Space

- Provide a large, central open space to attract pedestrian activity with passive recreation opportunities.
- The location should reduce extended periods of shadow coverage.
- The location should be highly visible for casual monitoring and animated by adjacent uses.



Illustration of central, neighborhood open space as envisioned by Glenmont Layhill Associates, LLC.

2 Taller Buildings

“The 120-foot maximum building height also reflects the 1997 Plan’s design guidelines of up to two buildings of ten stories located at the rear of the site along the adjoining WMATA rail yards.” (Plan, page 27)

3 Enhanced Streetscape

“Provide an east-west road through the property...” (Plan, page 27)

- See Page 15 for details.

4 Circulation Network

“Provide an east-west road through the property...” (Plan, page 27)

- Create short blocks to expand pedestrian access and minimize long building facades.
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections should be in highly visible locations for casual monitoring and animated by adjacent land uses.



New internal roads may be implemented as private streets (Plan, page 35)



Pedestrian and bicycle connections encourage alternate modes of traveling

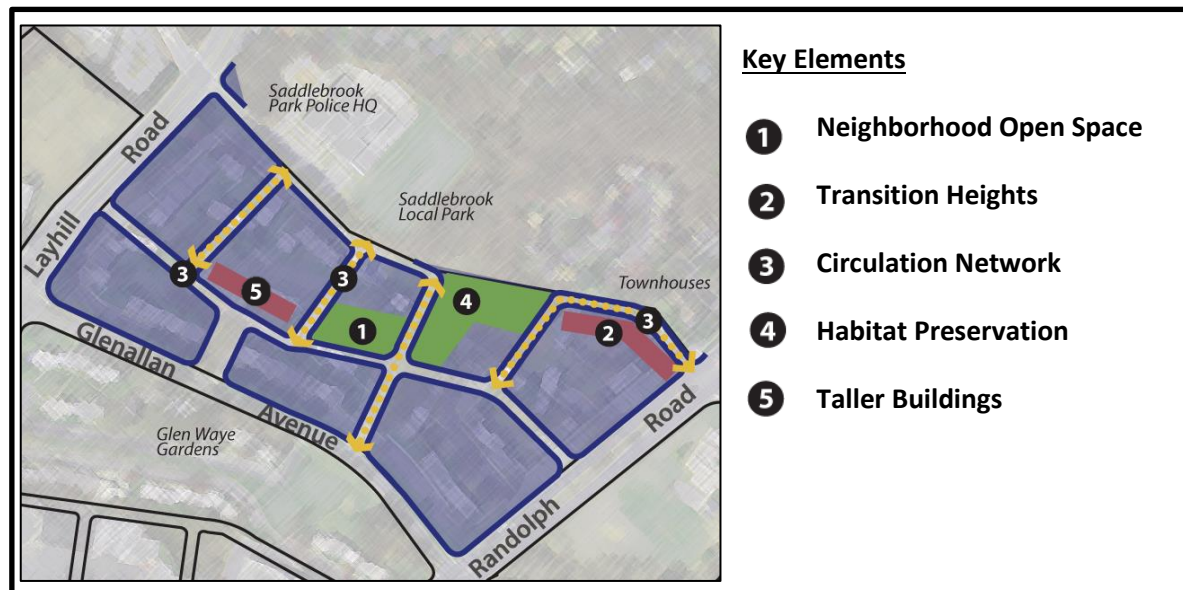
5 Habitat Preservation and Restoration

“This Plan also supports the 1997 Plan’s recommendation of preserving and restoring the environmental buffer onsite...” (Plan, page 27)

- Provide opportunities for natural resource-based passive recreation, where possible.

Winexburg Manor

“This property may be suitable for future rezoning through a Local Map Amendment to the CR Zone to encourage mixed-use development of multifamily units in four- to six-story buildings with structured parking and allow a small amount of retail.” (Plan, page 28)



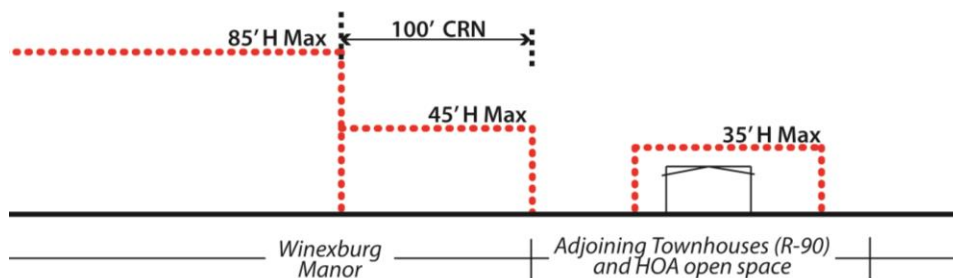
① Neighborhood Open Space

Redevelopment should “offer space for outdoor public recreation” (Plan, page 28)

- See Page 19 for details.

② Transition Heights

“... a transition zone of CRN would be appropriate as a buffer along the property line abutting townhouses to the north.” (Plan, page 28)



3 Circulation Network

“Provide an east-west road through the property connecting Layhill and Randolph Roads parallel to Glenallan Avenue.” (Plan, page 28)

4 Habitat Preservation

“Protect areas of contiguous forest in combination with forest on adjacent park property.” (Plan, page 28)

- Provide opportunities for natural resource-based passive recreation, where possible.

5 Taller Buildings

“... maintain the current spatial relationship with taller structures in the interior of the site;” (Plan, page 28)



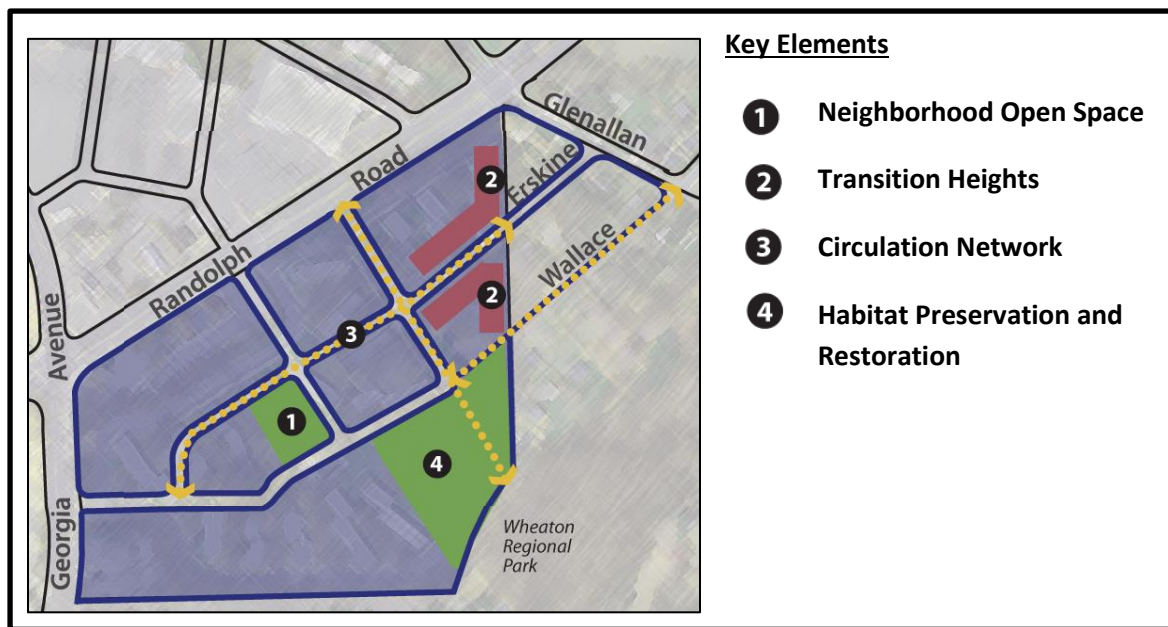
The existing nine-story building is located in the interior of the site.



The location of the structure reduces the impact on adjacent and confronting properties.

Glenmont Forest Apartments

“Because of the property’s location within easy walking distance of the Metro, its proximity to the Glenmont Shopping Center, its single ownership, and its size, it may be suitable for future rezoning through a Local Map Amendment to CR Zone or an equivalent zone to encourage a multifamily redevelopment of four- to six-story buildings.” (Plan, page 29)



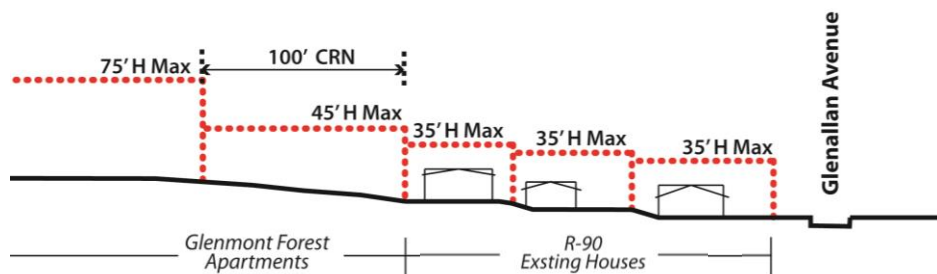
1 Neighborhood Open Space

Redevelopment should “offer space for outdoor public recreation” (Plan, page 28)

- See Page 19 for details.

2 Transition Heights

“A transition zone of CRN would be appropriate as a buffer between redevelopment and the adjacent single-family detached houses.” (Plan, page 29)



3 Circulation Network

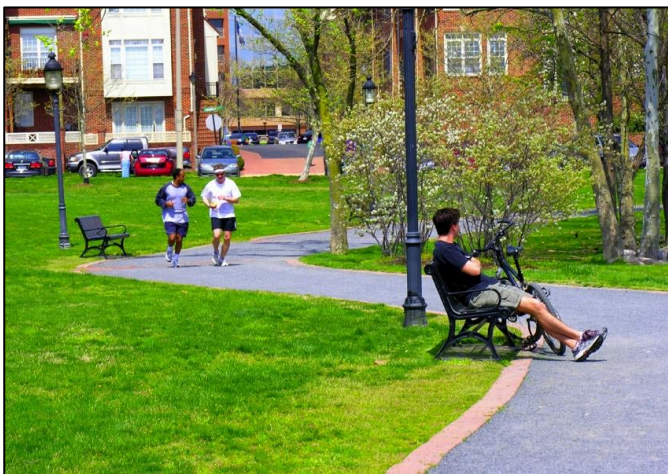
“Connect new internal streets with Erskine and/or Wallace Avenues.” (Plan, page 30)

- Construct a hiker/biker path between Randolph Road and the existing Wheaton Regional Park’s hard surface trail network. Coordinate with the Department of Parks.
- Create short blocks to expand pedestrian access and minimize long building facades.
- Implement pedestrian and bicycle connections in highly visible locations for casual monitoring and animated by adjacent land uses.

4 Habitat Preservation and Restoration

“Protect and restore areas of environmental buffer and investigate options for stream restoration with redevelopment. Preserve as much existing tree canopy as possible.” (Plan, page 30)

- Provide opportunities for natural resource-based passive recreation



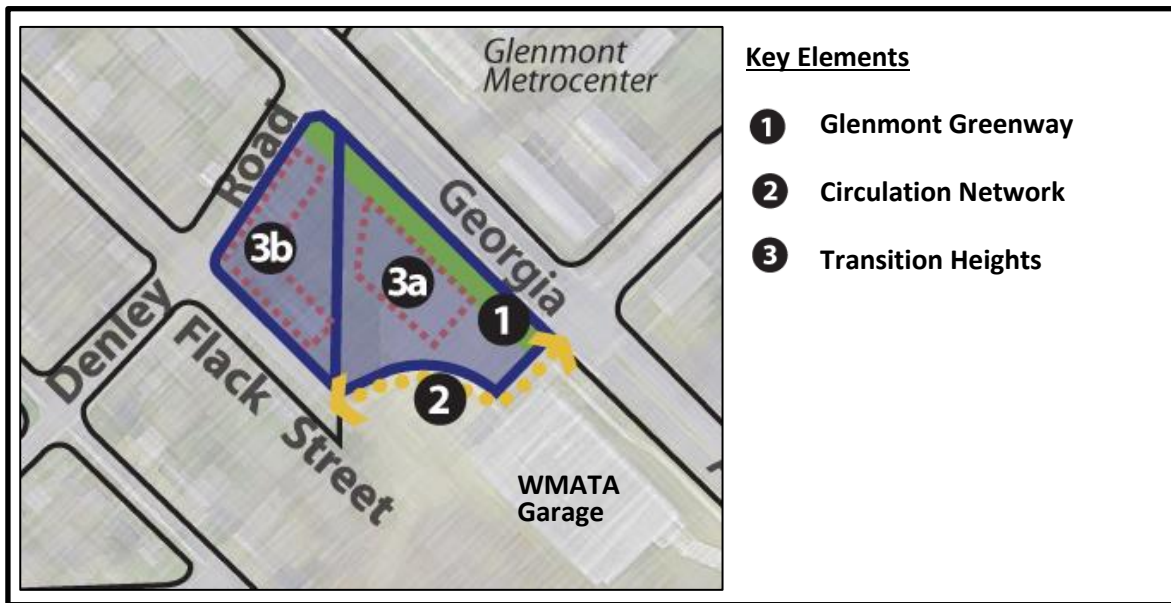
The recommended hiker/biker connection to Wheaton Regional Park should be incorporated in the design of the open space



Providing opportunities for passive recreation will encourage the activation of isolated spaces

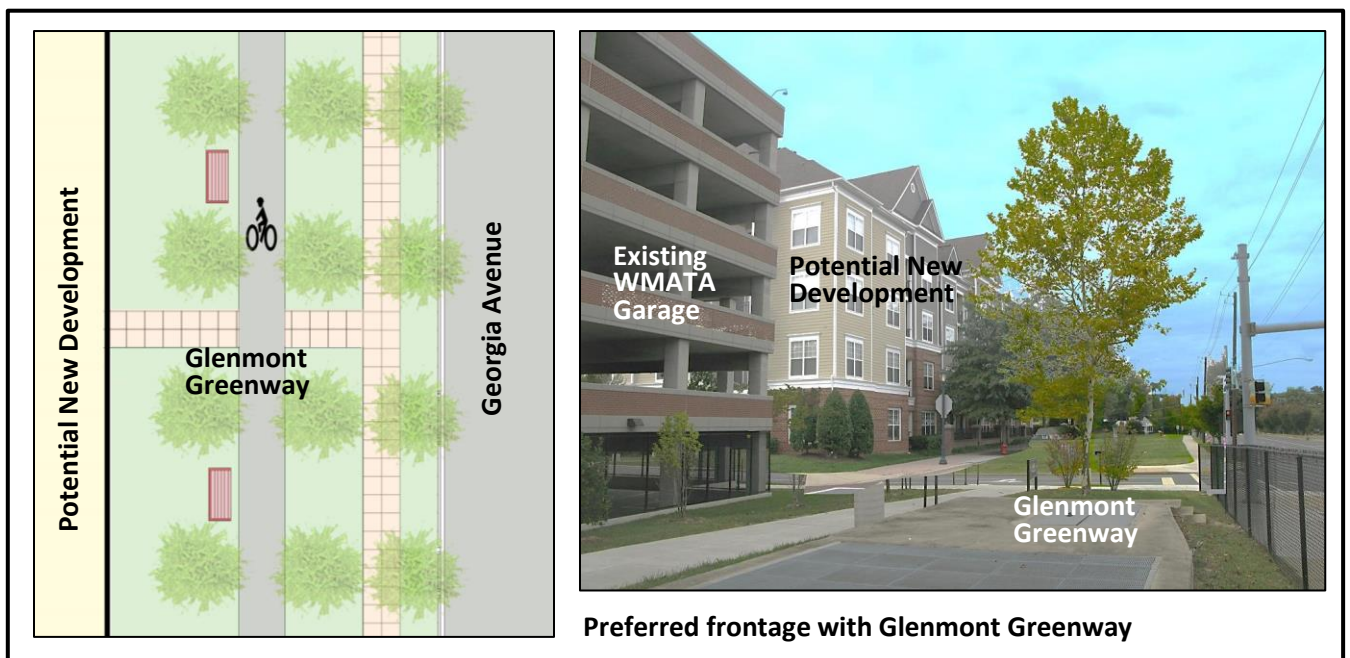
Georgia Avenue West

“The Plan also encourages assembling this piece of land [the vacant portion of WMATA Triangle] with the privately-owned single-family parcels along the block’s northern edge at the corner of Denley Road and Flack Street. The assembled site of approximately three acres would provide an opportunity to develop housing less than 1000 feet from the Metro entrance.” (Plan, page 30)



1 Glenmont Greenway

“If frontage along Georgia Avenue is not needed for construction of a senior housing development, the Glenmont Greenway should be extended to Denley Road.” (Plan, page 31)



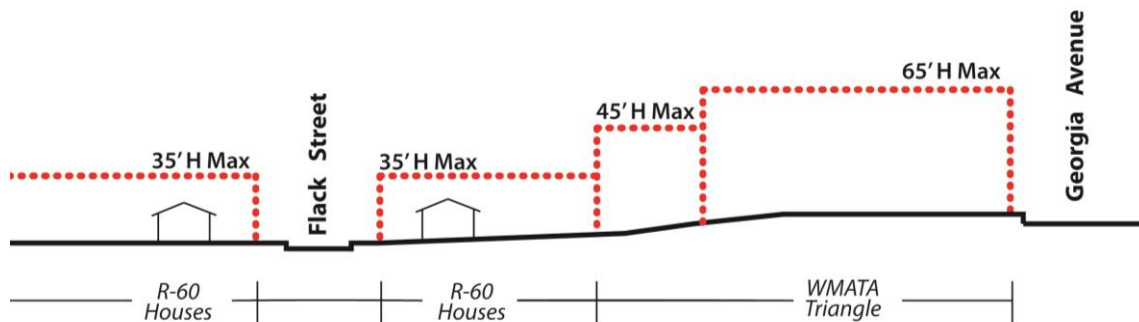
2 Circulation Network

"Pedestrian and bicycle access from Flack Street to Georgia Avenue should be maintained." (Plan, page 31)

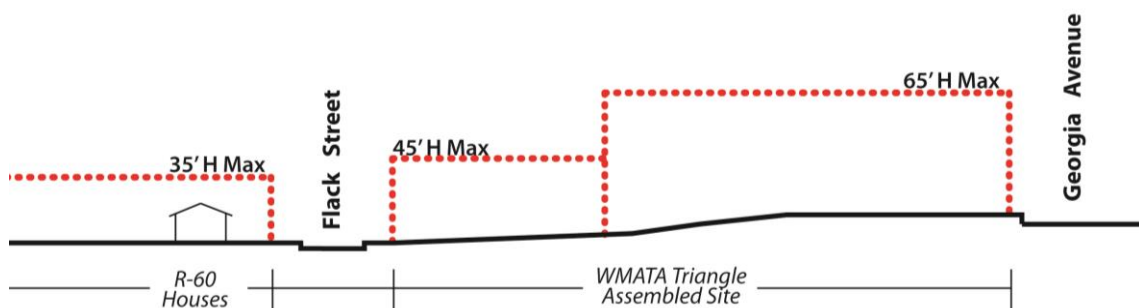
3 Transition Heights

"A mid-rise structure on this site should provide a transition of building heights along Georgia Avenue from the 25-foot high townhouses north of Denley Road to the approximately 82-foot high parking structure to the southeast" (Plan, page 31)

- 3a "If the WMATA Triangle portion is developed alone as an affordable senior housing project, it should provide adequate transition to single-family houses along Denley Road and Flack Street." (Plan, page 31)



- 3b "Development on the assembled site should have a maximum building height of 45 feet along Denley Road and Flack Street or an open space buffer to provide an appropriate transition to the single-family houses across Denley Road and Flack Street." (Plan, page 31)



RESOURCES

The following list is provided as a reference tool, for informational purposes only; it is not intended to be exhaustive.

Montgomery County

Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance

Chapter 59 http://www.amlegal.com/montgomery_county_md/

Montgomery County Code

http://www.amlegal.com/montgomery_county_md/

Chapter 19 Erosions, Sediment Control and Stormwater Management

Chapter 22A Forest Conservation-Trees

Chapter 24A Historic Preservation Ordinance

Chapter 47 Vendors

Chapter 49 Streets and Roads

Chapter 50 Subdivision

Department of Permitting Services Outdoor Café Seating Guide

<http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov/permitting/pdf/OutdoorCafeSeating.pdf>

Department of Permitting Services Sidewalk Vendor Operation and License

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/council/pdf/SCANNED_DOCS/20070227_16-61.pdf

Department of Permitting Services Building Construction – Building Codes & Standards

<http://permittingservices.montgomerycountymd.gov/dpstmpl.asp?url=/permitting/bc/nfbldc.asp>

Department of Transportation Pedestrian Safety

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dottmpl.asp?url=/Content/dot/dir/pedsafety/index.asp>

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

M-NCPPC Glenmont Sector Plan

<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/community/glenmont/>

M-NCPPC County Bikeways Functional Master Plan

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/transportation/bikeways/A_A/contents.shtm

M-NCPPC Development Manual

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/development/development_manual/index.shtm

M-NCPPC Commercial Residential Zone Overview

http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/development/com_res_zones.shtm

M-NCPPC Historic Preservation Office
<http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/historic/>

M-NCPPC Trees Technical Manual
http://www.montgomeryplanning.org/environment/forest/trees/toc_trees.shtm

M-NCPPC Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan (PROS)
http://www.montgomeryparks.org/PPSD/ParkPlanning/Projects/pros_2012/pros_2012.shtm

Others

Disability Rights Legislation and Accessibility Guidelines and Standards in the United States
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sidewalks/contents.htm>

Chapter 2: Characteristics of Pedestrians
Chapter 4: Sidewalk Design Guidelines and Existing Practices

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
http://www.cptedsecurity.com/cpted_design_guidelines.htm

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties
<http://www.nps.gov/hps/tps/standguide/>

Tree Space Design: Growing the Tree Out of the Box. Casey Trees, Washington D.C.
<http://caseytrees.org/resources/publications/treespacedesign/>

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