



# URBAN DESIGN PLAN

## 4.1 OVERVIEW

### A. CHAPTER ORGANIZATION

Urban Design issues are intertwined with all the other components of the Master Plan. Both discussion of these issues and recommended guidelines to address them appear in this chapter. To provide a frame of reference, the chapter begins with an introduction to an urban design vocabulary. Using this language, the text presents a description of North Bethesda and a set of urban design objectives for realizing the vision for the planning area. The text then contains an analysis and guidelines for each of the following geographic areas: Rockville Pike Corridor as a whole; Twinbrook/Montrose Crossing, White Flint, Grosvenor, and Rock Spring Park. The last section discusses streetscape concepts for a range of proposed street types.

### B. AN URBAN DESIGN LANGUAGE

The central urban design problem of suburbia, especially true of the Rockville Pike area in North Bethesda, is legibility: it is hard to perceive or “read” any distinctive pattern. Decades of unbridled sprawl have slowly produced visual chaos and eroded society’s image of the ideal urban or suburban pattern.

Kevin Lynch’s landmark book “The Image of the City” redefined the patterns and provided a language for reading, analyzing and designing cities. His pattern types are used to structure this Plan’s urban design analysis and recommended guidelines. They are as follows:

- Path:** Any line of movement in any mode.
- Node:** Any concentration of movement or focal point of activity.
- District:** Any area with a common identifying characteristic.
- Edge:** Any barrier to transverse movement or boundary of any district.
- Landmark:** Any visual aid to navigation or any feature that provides symbolic meaning to its surroundings.



These five pattern types create a structure for most of the issues facing urban designers. They apply to all scales of planning; for example, a path can be as large as Rockville Pike or as small as a sidewalk.

### C. DESCRIPTION OF NORTH BETHESDA-GARRETT PARK

North Bethesda-Garrett Park contains attractive residential **districts** and a broad spectrum of commercial uses, but the development pattern promotes a heavy reliance on the automobile at the expense of transit users, pedestrians and bicyclists. The various uses are spread thinly across the planning area. The **edges** of most neighborhoods are bounded by heavily traveled **paths**, and most commercial areas are poorly connected to one another or to the neighborhoods except by car.

There are three major transit stations in North Bethesda, but these transportation **nodes** do not coincide with activity **nodes**. Centers of activity, such as shopping centers and community facilities, are not, for the most part, convenient to transit stops; one of the few exceptions is the Aquatic Center, which is near the White Flint Metro station. Moreover, the **nodes** are hard to find because there are no clear **landmarks** differentiating the node from the surrounding commercial area and helping to give it a unique character. The dispersal of the nodes amid the visually cluttered commercial area along Rockville Pike, and the lack of landmarks make navigation difficult; people must develop their own techniques for finding the **nodes**.

Many of the **districts** in North Bethesda, especially in the sprawling commercial areas along Rockville Pike, also lack a strong identity. They do not provide residents and visitors a sense of place. The **edges** between one **district** and another overlap or are not clearly defined; they fail to reinforce the sense of a cohesive **district**.

There are both commercial and residential **districts**, and **districts** of varying sizes. The **districts** that are the easiest to recognize are those that can be read at an automobile scale; for the pedestrian, there are few legible **districts** within these larger auto-dominated areas. The commercial areas tend not to include residential uses, and the residential areas are characterized by a single housing type: one-family detached, townhouse (one-family attached), garden apartment, or high-rise apartment. Many residential neighborhoods have no central focal point such as a civic or retail space, and the **path** network, auto and pedestrian, is unfocused.

There are several problems with the **path** system (the Metro and MARC transit lines, the streets, the bicycle paths, and the sidewalks). The street system is confusing, even to residents. The most easily recognized **path** in the area is Rockville Pike, but finding a particular business or cross street is a challenge; shopping center signs become more important aids to navigation than street signs. Moreover, the network of streets in non-residential areas is too coarse; there are surprisingly few streets for such a large area. This means that some streets have to carry too much traffic because there are few, if any, alternate routes.

The over-sized blocks result in massive developments that are out of scale with pedestrians, and the heavily traveled **paths** deter walking. Pedestrians, as well as cyclists,

have too few ways to get conveniently and pleasantly to the Metro stops, so transit is under-used. The two largest **paths**, Rockville Pike and the MARC/CSX railroad line, act as barriers to pedestrian movement.

In addition to **paths** for commuters, there is also a need for recreational **paths**. Elements of a bikeway system exist, but there is potential to expand it and to link many of the amenity features of the planning area together so that more people can enjoy them, without using their cars.

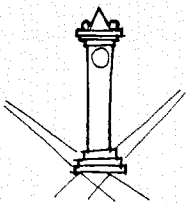
#### **D. URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK FOR NORTH BETHESDA-GARRETT PARK**

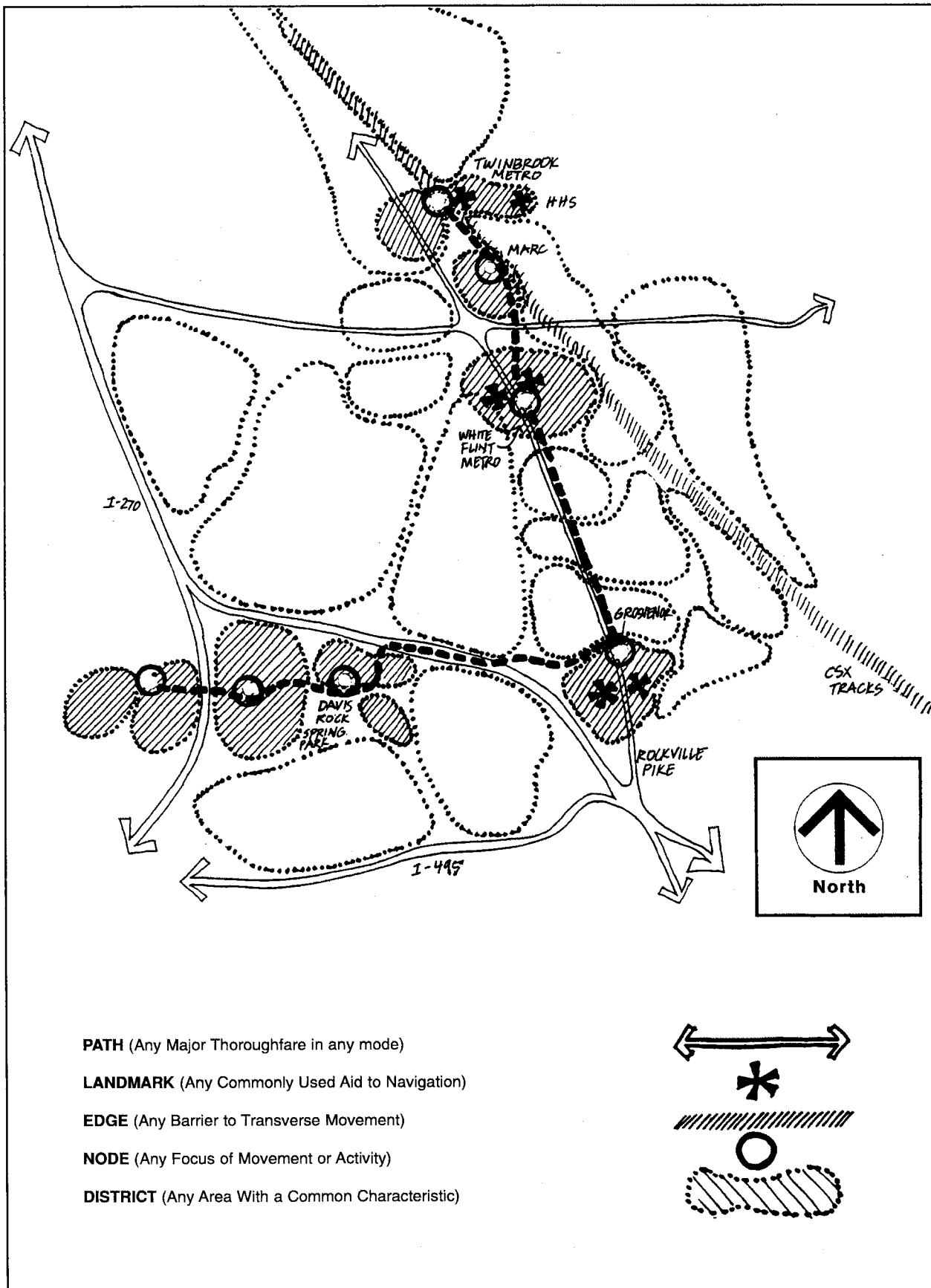
The proposed urban design framework for North Bethesda is illustrated by Figure 32 (Planning Area Concept Diagram). The recommended structure for the planning area will use the existing north-south transit line (Metro) and the proposed east-west transit line (the Grosvenor transitway) to organize the area's structure. The Plan provides for new development within districts focused around transit nodes. The objective of the nodal pattern is to establish a balance between auto and transit access by designing for non-auto movement within walking distance of transit stops. In order to encourage transit use, it is advisable to have people living and working nearby and to make it convenient and pleasant for them to use the transit stop without driving.

The main yardstick for establishing the size of transit-accessible districts is maximum walking distance. Design objectives focus on streetscape and public space improvements. Objectives addressed in more detail in other chapters of the Plan are also critical; for example, land use and zoning recommendations for mixed-use or high density residential use at the transit stops, and transportation recommendations for shuttle buses, bike routes and sidewalks to feed the transit system.

#### **E. URBAN DESIGN OBJECTIVES**

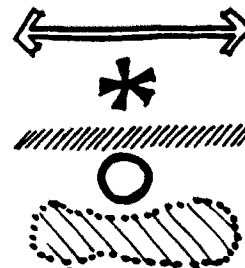
1. Combine activity nodes and transit nodes by locating new development and a variety of activities at or near transit stops.
2. Provide legibility and a unique identity to districts by defining their edges, providing them with landmarks, and developing nodes as a focus for civic, recreational, residential and commercial activity.
3. Use historic and natural features as landmarks to give a sense of place and unique identity to each district.
4. Add local streets to create a more interconnected local street network and reduce the size of blocks in high intensity areas.
5. Greatly improve the pedestrian friendliness of new and existing streets, particularly within walking distance of transit nodes, and increase the number of pedestrian and bicycle routes to transit.
6. Overcome the barrier characteristics of existing edges to facilitate pedestrian movement.





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- PATH** (Any Major Thoroughfare in any mode)
- LANDMARK** (Any Commonly Used Aid to Navigation)
- EDGE** (Any Barrier to Transverse Movement)
- NODE** (Any Focus of Movement or Activity)
- DISTRICT** (Any Area With a Common Characteristic)



7. Create a greenway system linking residential, commercial and employment centers with natural areas, parks, and community and cultural facilities.

## **4.2 ROCKVILLE PIKE CORRIDOR**

### **A. IMAGE**

Main Street for Cars

### **B. DESCRIPTION**

The section of Rockville Pike within the North Bethesda-Garrett Park Planning Area has two distinct parts: the segment south of White Flint Mall and the segment from the Mall north. The latter is an auto-oriented marketplace offering a variety of goods and services and a few enclaves of housing; it is characterized by low buildings and an occasional high-rise scattered across large expanses of parking, generally located adjacent to the Pike. The green character of the southern corridor contrasts markedly with the suburban shopping strip to the north. It contains residential uses and two large campuses with extensive open space, Strathmore Hall and Georgetown Preparatory School.

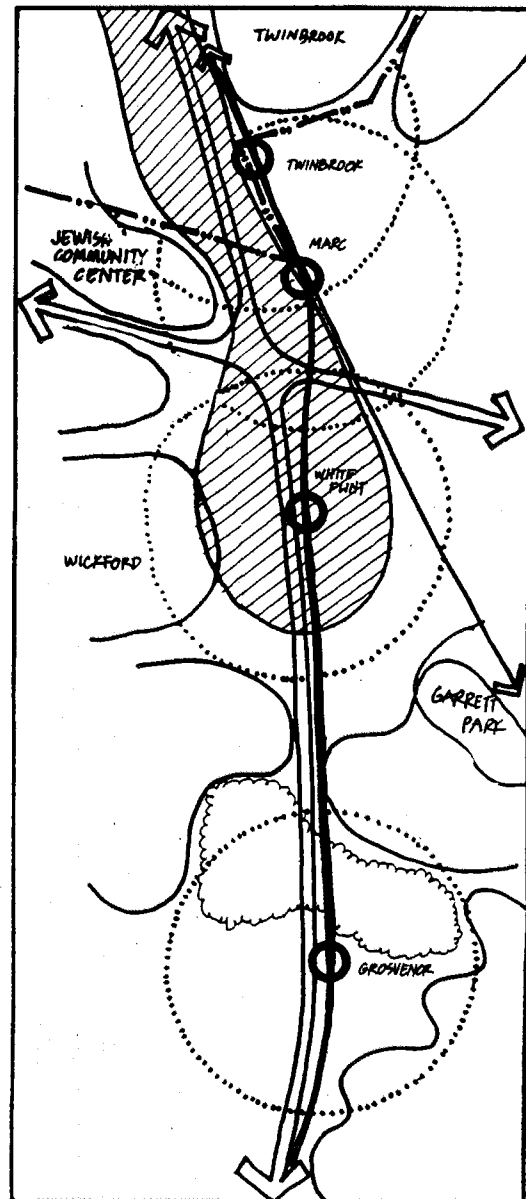
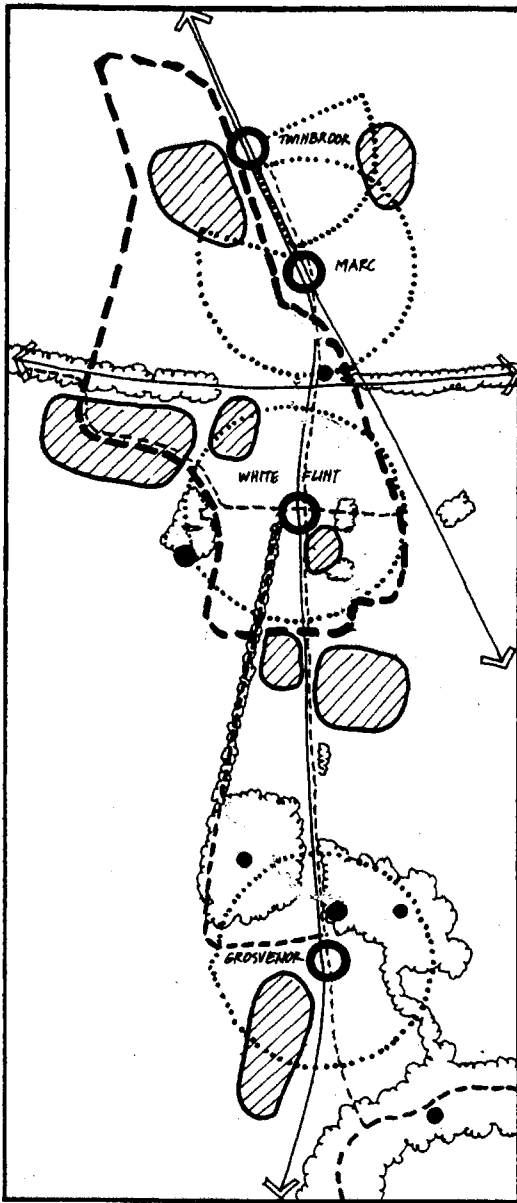
The Pike is dominated by through traffic and traffic resulting from local circulation. The three Metro stops are the focus of transit activity, both bus and rail, but the Pike is a hostile environment for pedestrians trying to reach the Metro stops. In spite of the activity along the Pike and the presence of nearby neighborhoods, there are no focal points for the communities where many activities might converge and discrete neighborhood identities might find expression.

### **C. OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS**

The Rockville Pike corridor as a whole contains several opportunities to achieve one of the main goals of the Master Plan: the creation of attractive transit serviceable neighborhoods, linked to one another, at the three Metro stops and at a proposed new MARC stop. There are also constraints that will affect the realization of this goal. Figure 33 illustrates the main opportunities and constraints in the Rockville Pike corridor.

There are several opportunities of special note. Existing tree stands at White Flint and Grosvenor can be incorporated into urban parks. A greenway system including hiker-biker trails can be developed between Rock Creek Park and the White Flint Metro station, linking the park with many of the existing and proposed cultural and community resources including Strathmore Hall Arts Center, the Georgetown Prep campus, and the Aquatic Center. It can link up, via Executive Boulevard, with the proposed greenway in the Montrose Parkway right-of-way. (See Transportation, Community Facilities, and Environmental chapters.)

There are a number of opportunities for creating gateways to the North Bethesda area and to each of the centers along the Rockville Pike corridor. These include the existing and



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**OPPORTUNITIES**

Pedestrian Open Space System

Cultural or Recreational Resource

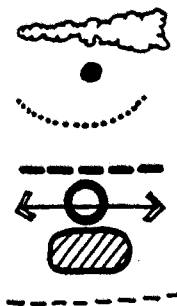
Potential Pedestrian-Friendly Area  
Around Transit Stop

Potential Local Distributor

Transit Line (Existing or Potential) and Stop

Employment, Retail, or Housing Concentration

Pedestrian Route/Greenway



**CONSTRAINTS**

Strong Through Traffic (Barrier to  
Pedestrian)

Maximum Walking Distance to Transit

Existing Neighborhood or Other  
Identifiable District

Transit Stop (Present and Future)

Transit Line (Unbuildable Area)

Rockville City Boundary

Auto Dominated Development



proposed residential towers at Grosvenor, the Twinbrook Parkway approach from Kensington, the proposed Nicholson Lane overpass at Rockville Pike, streetscaping just south of White Flint Mall on the Pike and the grade-separated intersection proposed at Montrose Parkway and Rockville Pike.

Existing elements that can serve as landmarks include the white rock outcrops in the White Flint area, the parkland south of the Grosvenor area, the historic Montrose School on Randolph Road, the campus landscape associated with Georgetown Preparatory School and Strathmore Hall, existing tall buildings along the Pike, and the few remaining tree stands within developed areas.

In addition to these opportunities, there are also many constraints to achieving urban design objectives. The auto-dominated pattern of commercial development in the northern corridor runs counter to the main objective of creating pedestrian-friendly precincts around transit stops. The walking distances are often fairly long between transit stations and existing development. Existing sidewalks are narrow and are located next to lanes of moving traffic. Pedestrians must cross large parking lots to reach building entrances, and must negotiate long crosswalks in conflict with turning vehicles.

A density transition must be provided between the higher density developments proposed near transit stops and existing low-density neighborhoods. Streams and woodlands, while offering opportunities, are also constraints to development. The heavy traffic on Rockville Pike, Montrose/Randolph Road, and the MARC railroad line impede pedestrian movement. Restrictions on building over the Metro line represent a significant constraint to planning the Montrose Crossing area, while the barrier constituted by Rockville Pike between Marinelli Road and Old Georgetown Road severely constrains the unification of the east and west halves of the White Flint node.

Finally, the Rockville municipal boundary is a planning constraint. Although the Twinbrook node functions as one entity, part of it is within the City of Rockville's planning jurisdiction.

An area of special concern on the Pike is the Montrose Road/ Randolph Road and Rockville Pike intersection. This intersection is characterized by parking lots, a disorganized collection of signs, congested traffic patterns and few buildings or trees. It is uninviting to the pedestrian, although people cross regularly to use the shopping centers to the east and south of the intersection. With transportation improvements to the intersection to facilitate east-west traffic flow, this area could become a true no-man's land for those on foot.

As this area redevelops, emphasis should be on creating pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods to the north and south. Those neighborhoods could have excellent pedestrian access to Twinbrook/Montrose Crossing and White Flint. Therefore, the Montrose/Randolph Road intersection could function as a divider between two pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods. The area or edge immediately adjacent to the intersection could be used for future parking garages and auto-oriented uses to keep them out of the pedestrian-intensive transit nodes.

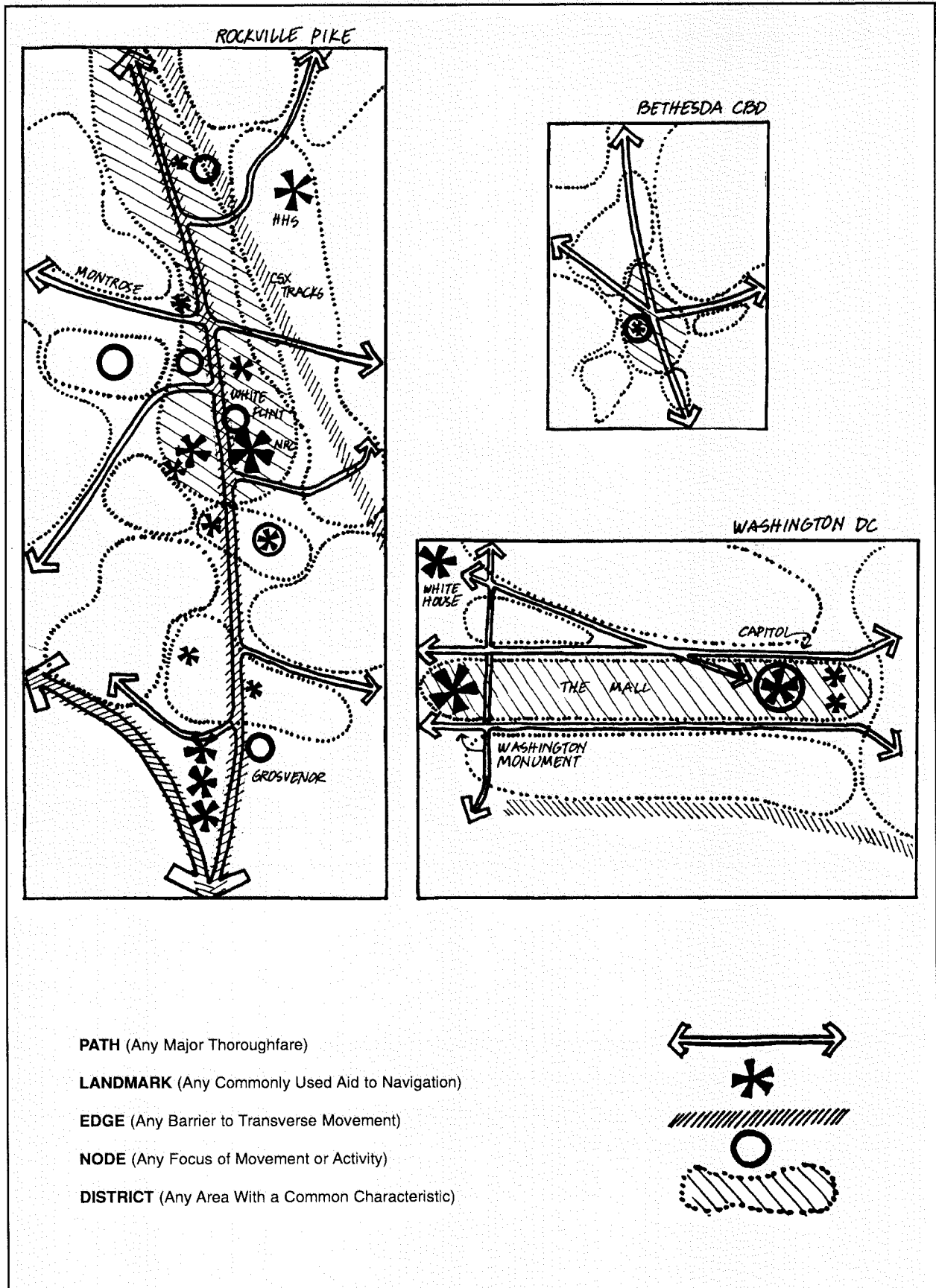


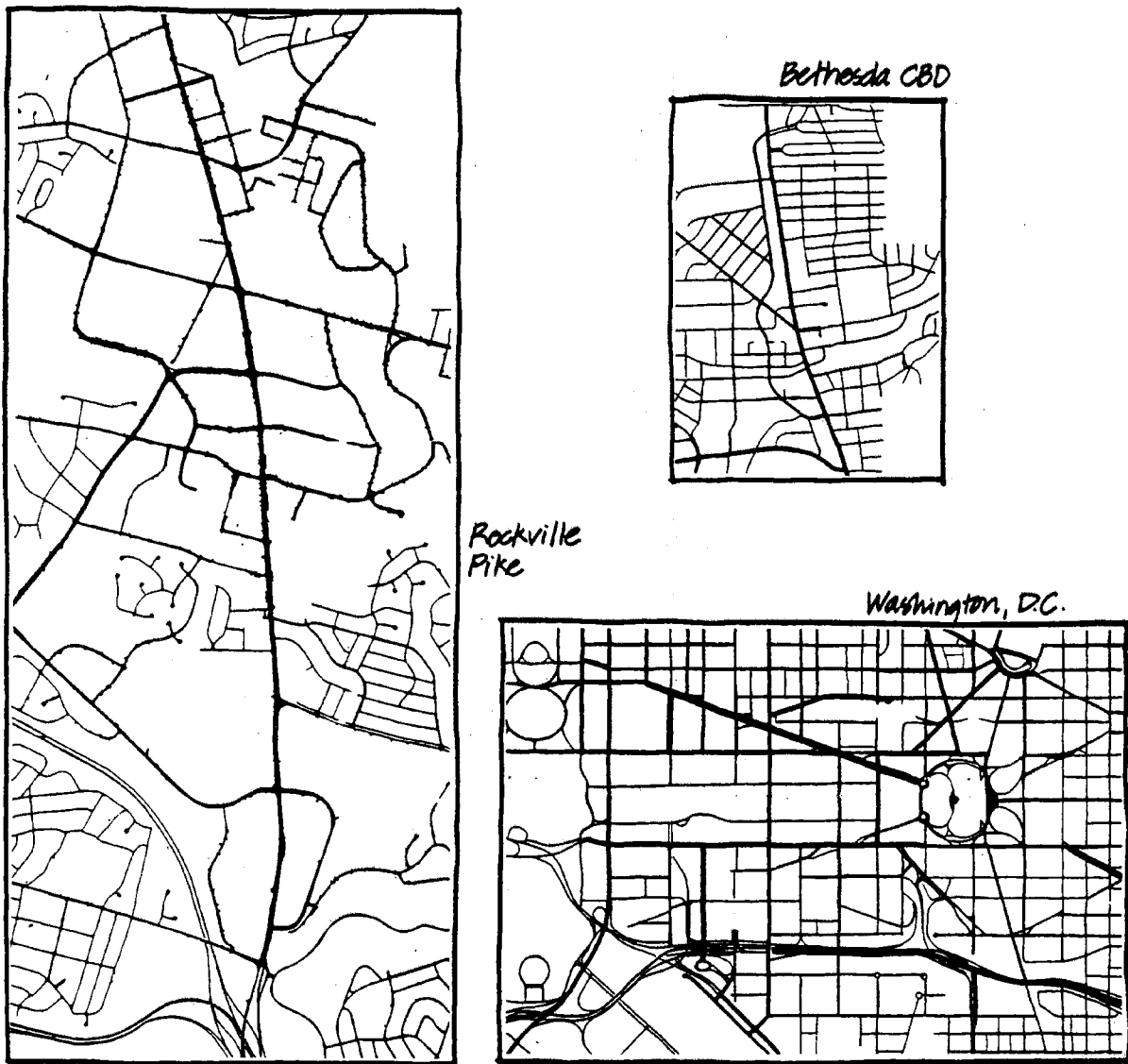
#### **D. A COMPARISON OF SELECTED URBAN PATTERNS ON ROCKVILLE PIKE WITH BETHESDA CBD AND WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Comparing Rockville Pike with the Bethesda Central Business District and Washington, D.C. highlights the disorganization of the Pike area. Figure 34 compares the urban design elements of paths, nodes, districts, edges, and landmarks in the three areas. Distinctively urban in character and higher in density, Bethesda CBD and Washington, D.C., have a composition of patterns that produce legible and cohesive urban designs and a strong sense of place. In contrast, the uncoordinated urban design patterns in the Rockville Pike area do not combine to create a coherent, legible image.

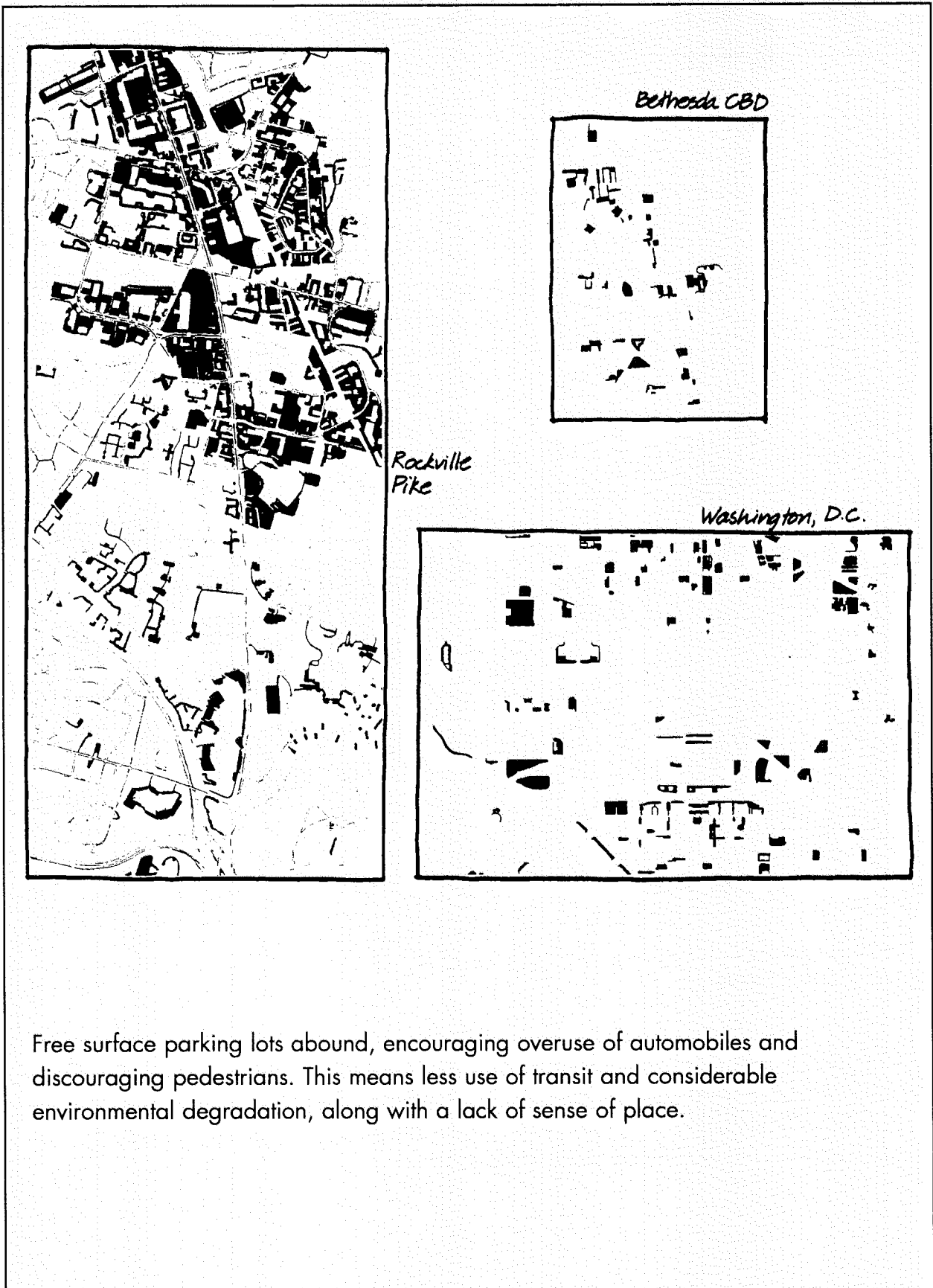
- **Street Network:** The Street Network Comparison (Figure 35) contrasts the coarse network of the Rockville Pike area with the finer grids of the Bethesda CBD and Washington, D.C. A finer network allows for easy pedestrian use of the sidewalk system for movement throughout the area. It allows for many route options for vehicles and, therefore, more dispersed traffic and fewer turning movements at each intersection to interfere with pedestrian crossing. It provides more street frontage, precluding the need for interior-block pedestrian paths.
- **Parking:** The function and appearance of the Rockville Pike area is a dramatic reflection of the dominance of the car. Surface parking lots abound. The expanse and location of pavement discourages people from walking from place to place, while the prevalence of free surface parking further discourages use of transit. The Parking Comparison in Figure 36 highlights the contrast between the Pike and the more urban, pedestrian-friendly areas where much less area is devoted to free surface parking.
- **Building Height:** Building heights along the Pike reflect an intensity of use that is much too low to take full advantage of transit and too random to help create visual order. On Figure 37, the disorder of the Rockville Pike area is apparent when compared to the Bethesda CBD and Washington, D.C., where taller buildings are placed to form clusters or focal points. A more intense development pattern of taller buildings, closer to the street would express an urban fabric and establish visual order, while ensuring an efficient use of transit infrastructure and a humane pedestrian environment.
- **Main Street:** Rockville Pike is not a traditional main street in spite of the presence of housing, supermarkets, restaurants and a host of other uses that are main street ingredients. Although it carries a flood of traffic and provides access to an economically healthy mix of regional uses, Rockville Pike falls far short of the intensity of use that brings life to a traditional main street. The excessive distance between buildings fronting the Pike is clearly illustrated in the Main Street Comparison in Figure 38, where Rockville Pike is compared to several successful “main streets” of comparable length and width which are known for their vitality: the Champs Elysees in Paris, Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. and Michigan Avenue in Chicago. Because of the Pike’s



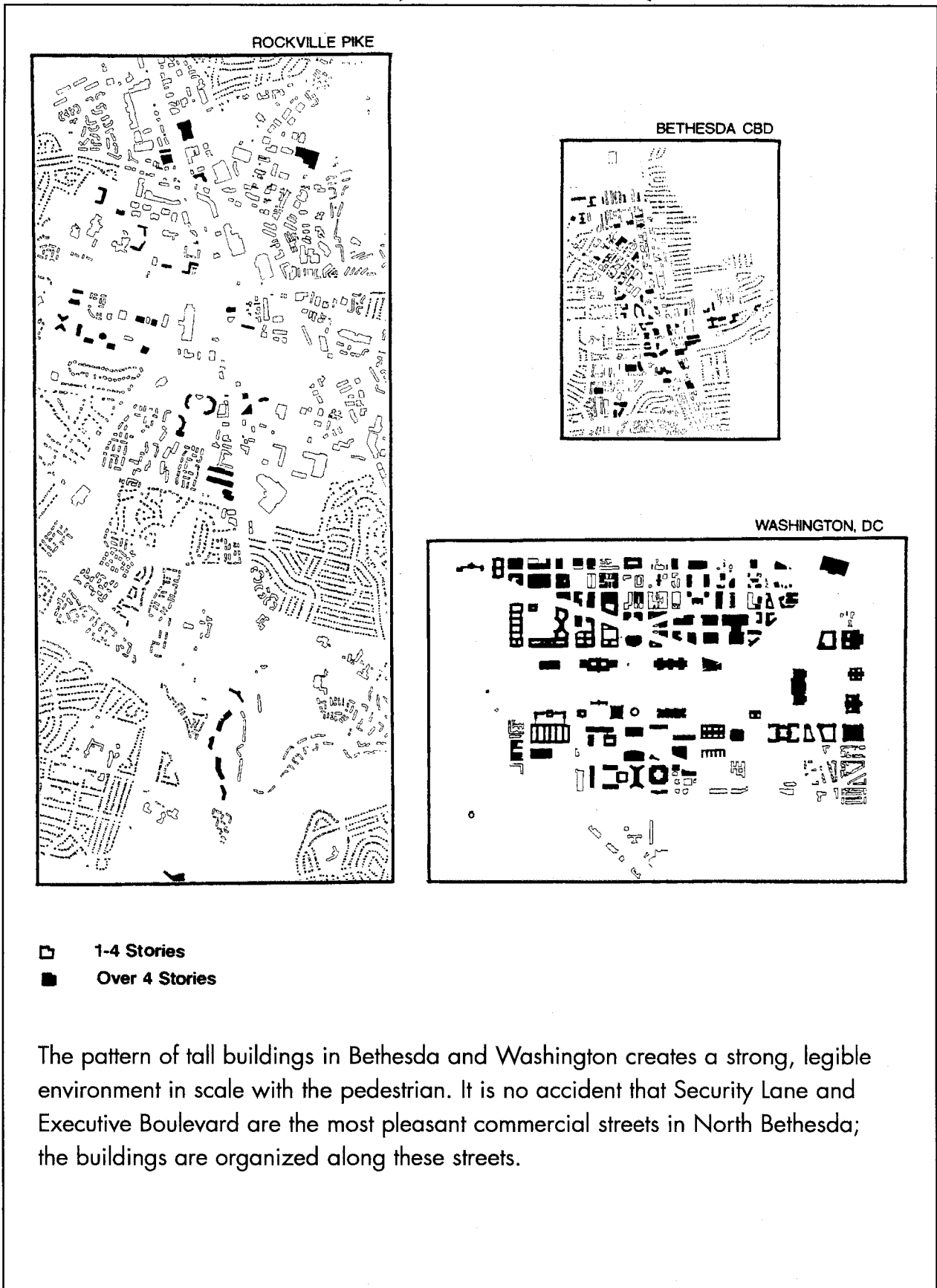




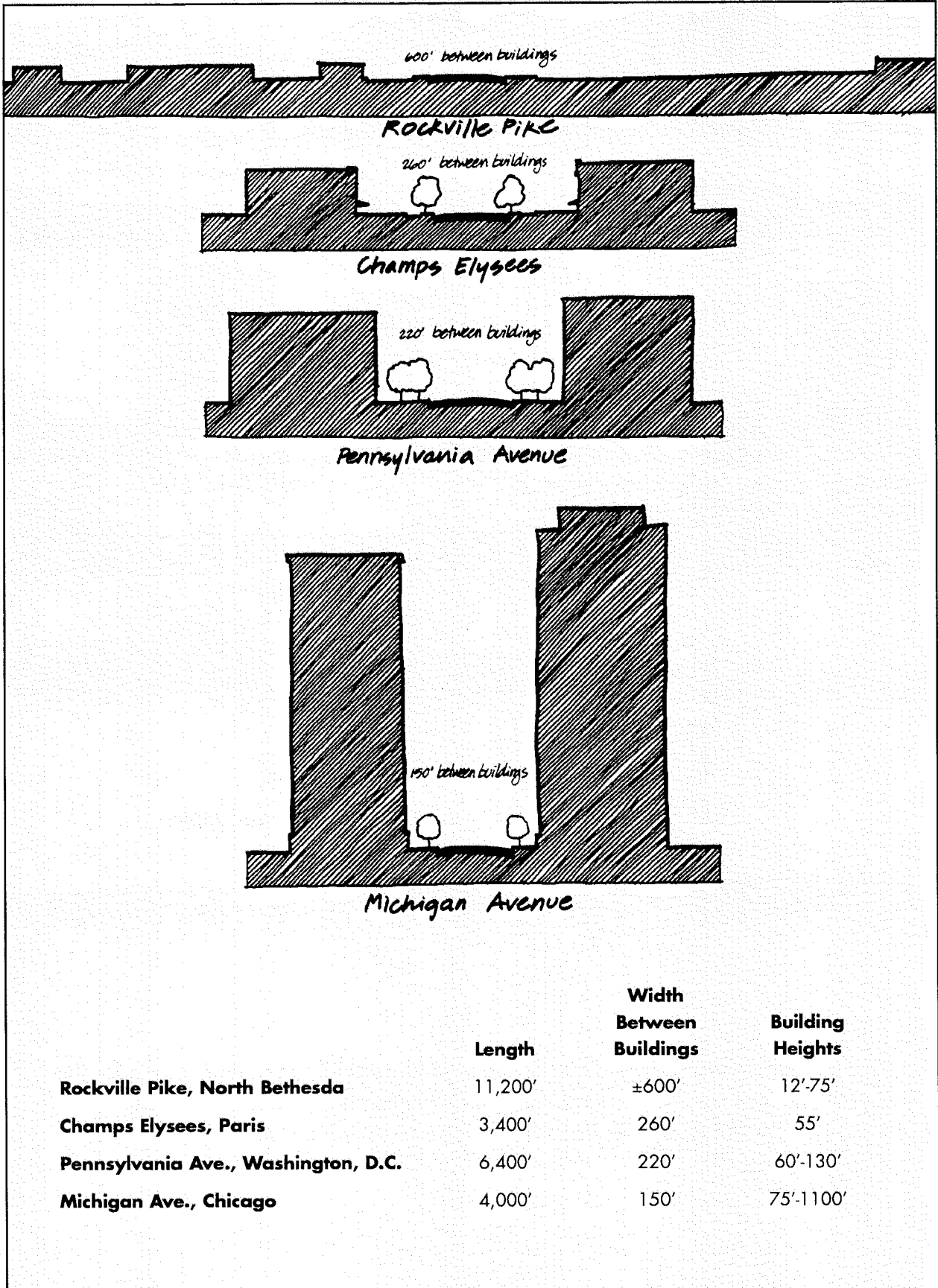
The finer networks of Bethesda and Washington allow for comfortable pedestrian use and many route options for vehicles. This pattern means more dispersed traffic and fewer turning movements at each intersection to conflict with pedestrians in the crosswalks.



Free surface parking lots abound, encouraging overuse of automobiles and discouraging pedestrians. This means less use of transit and considerable environmental degradation, along with a lack of sense of place.



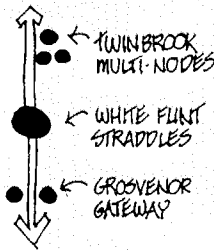
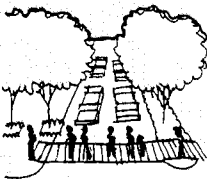
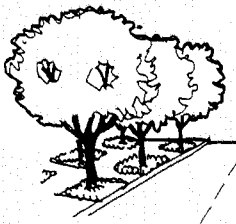
The pattern of tall buildings in Bethesda and Washington creates a strong, legible environment in scale with the pedestrian. It is no accident that Security Lane and Executive Boulevard are the most pleasant commercial streets in North Bethesda; the buildings are organized along these streets.





length, the distance between facades and its lack of intensity, the urban characteristics of the other main streets cannot be achieved on the Pike unless the available density is concentrated into centers of activity, as proposed in this Plan. The Rockville Pike Street Sections (Figure 39), taken at various points, further illustrate the difference between the Pike and other main streets.

## E. GUIDELINES



### Paths:

- Enhance the streetscape along the length of the Pike, with street trees, plants or berms to screen parking, undergrounding of utility lines, control of signs, and attractive street furniture supporting transit use.
- Design the streetscape both to express the emerging differences between the various areas and to unify the corridor's image.
- Improve crossings for pedestrians by improving signaling and crosswalks and by providing alternate routes for north-south traffic on the Pike.
- Provide alternate north-south pedestrian routes across Montrose/Randolph, parallel to Rockville Pike.

### Nodes:

- Intensify development near the transit nodes along the Pike. Retain low-intensity auto dependent uses between these nodes.
- Develop Twinbrook and Montrose Crossing with three related nodes and auto uses including housing.
- Develop White Flint as the visual focus of North Bethesda, and a single node straddling the Pike with a mix of employment and housing.
- Develop Grosvenor as the gateway to North Bethesda and as a predominantly residential area.

### Districts:

- Increase the legibility of the Pike by creating a pattern of separate districts with distinct images. Develop nodes within the districts (see above) which express the image and provide a community focus for adjacent neighborhoods.



- Create distinct pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods to the north and south of Montrose/Randolph Road with the east-west routes serving as a divider.

#### **Edges:**

- Modify Rockville Pike to make it easier and safer for people to cross on foot, particularly at Montrose Crossing and White Flint.
- Improve the parking areas flanking Rockville Pike to mitigate the barrier image created by the auto-dominated corridor.

#### **Landmarks:**

- Develop landmarks to enhance the identity of each node and its district, to facilitate navigation and to mark special places.

## **4.3 TWINBROOK/MONTROSE CROSSING**

### **A. IMAGE**

**The Triangle:** a fine-grained, mixed-use area focused on the Twinbrook Metro station, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS-Parklawn) building and a new MARC station.

### **B. DESCRIPTION**

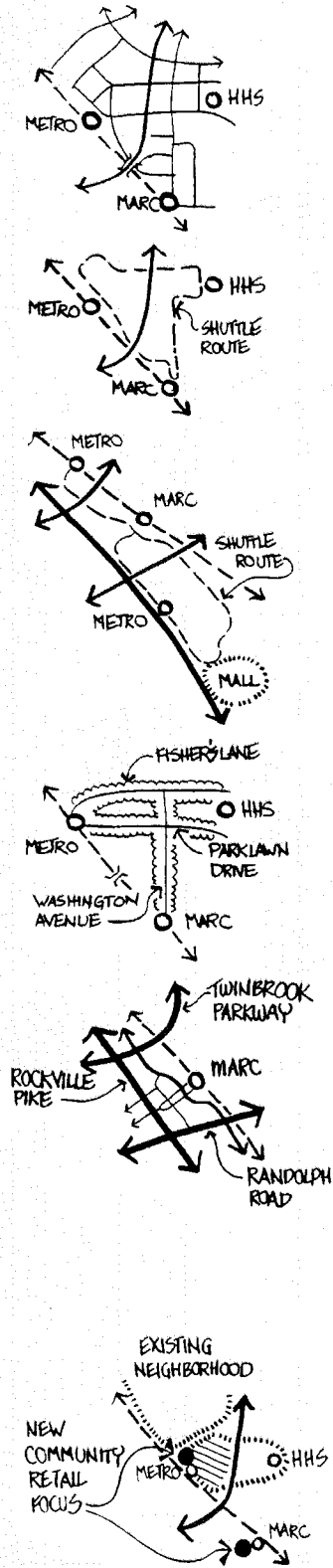
The district is bisected by the MARC railroad tracks. The eastern portion, the Twinbrook Sector Plan area, is visually chaotic; it has many ill-defined streets, a wide range of quality in construction and land use, and a path network characterized by discontinuity. The bulk and traffic of the DHHS building dominate the area visually and functionally.

The western area, including Montrose Crossing, contains strip retail stores, parking lots and vacant land; it is traversed diagonally by the Metro tunnel. This area has well defined edges: Rockville Pike on the west, Randolph Road on the south, and the MARC tracks on the east.

The MARC tracks represent both opportunities and constraints for urban design. They obviously create a barrier, but a new station in the northwest corner of the Montrose Crossing parcel could link the east and west halves of the area for pedestrians. The station could provide commuters access to the DHHS area and to future development at Montrose Crossing. In addition, it could add a third focal point to the area, complementing Twinbrook Metro and servicing HHS. The three nodes are within walking distance of each other. If a small-block network is created, this could become a highly pedestrianized area, with the potential for efficient shuttle service to nearby housing and employment (Figures 40-41).



### C. GUIDELINES

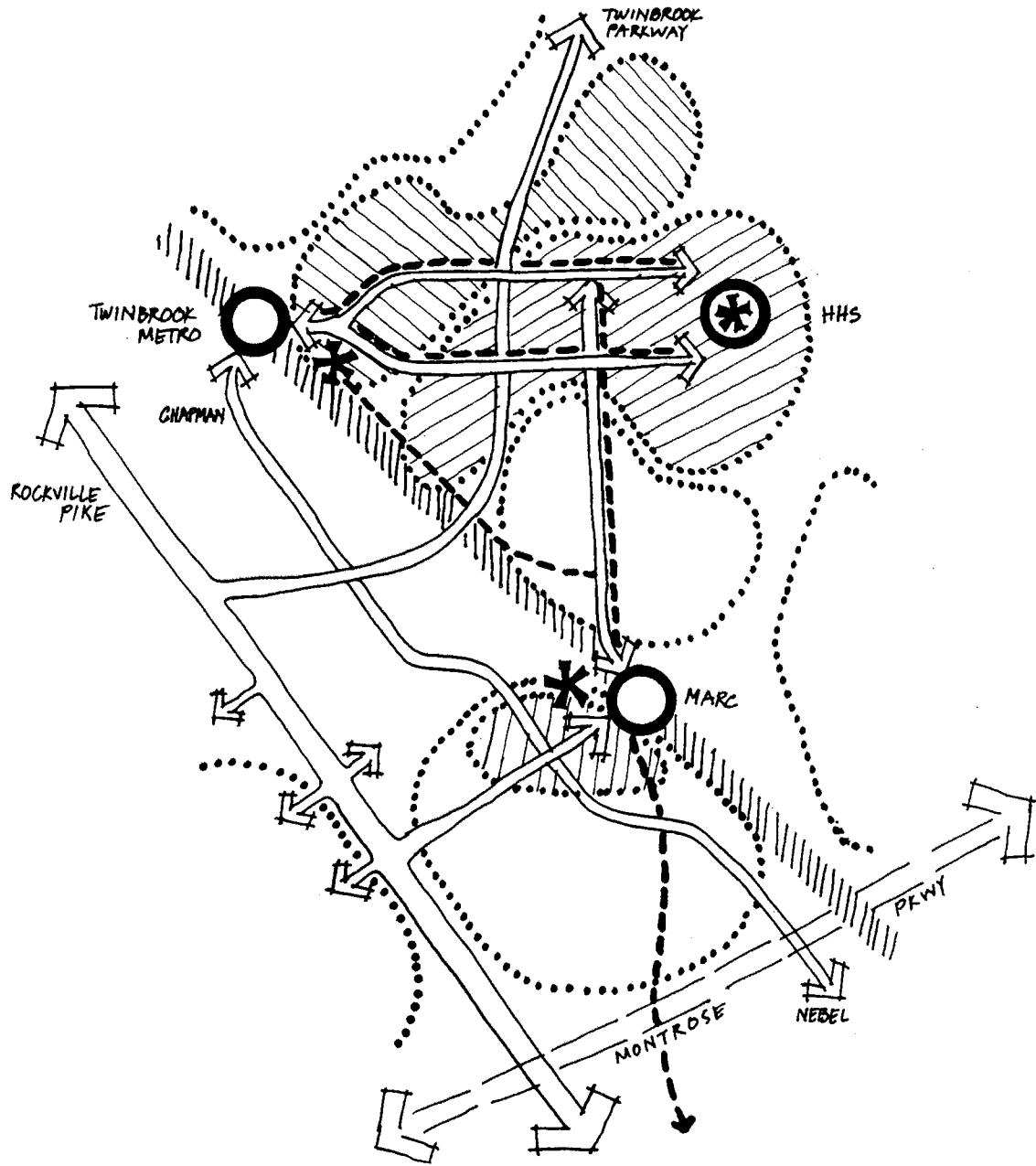


#### Paths:

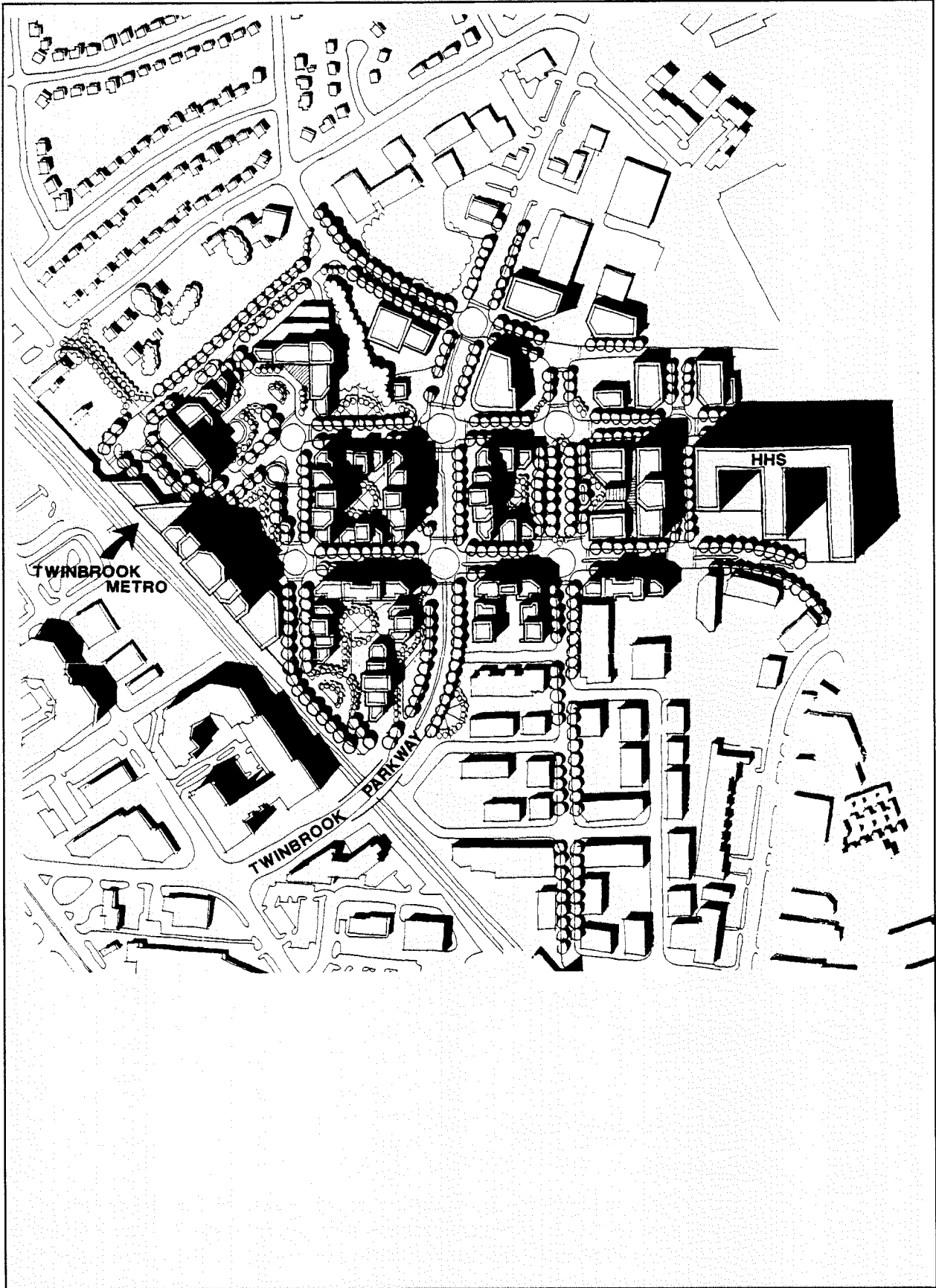
- Develop pedestrian and vehicular patterns to connect existing and proposed neighborhoods and to feed the existing Metro stop and proposed MARC stop.
- Complete and refine the small-block network east of the MARC/Metro tracks.
- Develop shuttle routes connecting HHS, and the Twinbrook Metro and MARC stations.
- Develop an interconnected path network to allow for the possibility of a shuttle bus route between White Flint Mall, the Twinbrook Metro and MARC stations, and White Flint Metro.
- Provide an east-west connection with greatly enhanced streetscape from Rockville Pike to the new MARC station.
- Develop Fisher's Lane and Parklawn Drive between the HHS building and the Twinbrook Metro station to serve as major pedestrian routes.
- Enhance the streetscape of Washington Avenue between the HHS building and the MARC station to serve as a major pedestrian route.
- Provide a network of new streets at Montrose Crossing. Interconnect the grid south to the White Flint district's grid, and west across Rockville Pike. Locate the streets to accommodate a gradual transition of existing businesses to new, mixed-use patterns in the vicinity of the proposed MARC station.

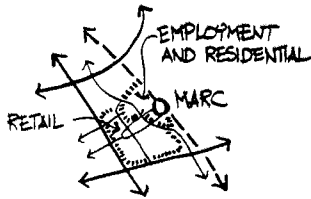
#### Nodes:

- Focus urban-density development in the northeast corner of Montrose Crossing, near the proposed MARC station and within walking distance of Twinbrook Metro.
- Provide an urban open space and a convenience retail focus near the Twinbrook Metro station for the existing neighborhood to the north and the future transit-oriented residential units to the east.
- Provide an urban open space and a community/retail focus at Montrose Crossing for the existing neighborhood to the west and future residential development.



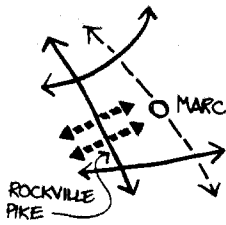
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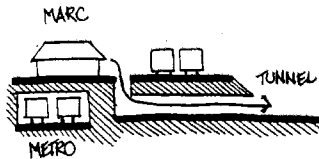
**Districts:**

- Develop the Fisher's Lane/Parklawn Drive corridor as an urban-density mixed-use district with a high quality, pedestrian streetscape to encourage transit use.
- Develop the Montrose Crossing property as a retail based mixed-use district, with employment and housing focused near the proposed MARC station.
- Provide the highest density and pedestrian quality in the northeast corner of Montrose Crossing for transit accessibility.



**Edges:**

- Create a strong east-west pedestrian connection to destinations on both sides of the Pike by providing crosswalks, and by providing landscaping that enhances, protects, and emphasizes the pedestrian routes. Develop a north-south pedestrian connection across Montrose Parkway/Randolph Road by similar treatment.
- Connect the proposed MARC station to the mixed-use activity center east of the MARC tracks via a pedestrian tunnel under the MARC tracks.



**Landmarks:**

- Develop landmark structures southeast of Twinbrook Metro to mark the center of the node.
- Preserve existing tree stands along Twinbrook Parkway to make the street more attractive and distinctive while providing needed open space.

**4.4 WHITE FLINT**

**A. IMAGE**

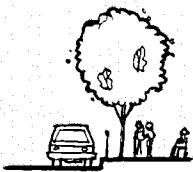
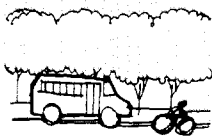
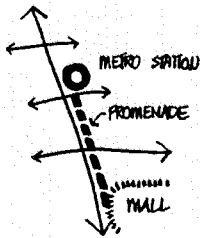
North Bethesda's Urban Center

**B. DESCRIPTION**

This area is topographically prominent and is therefore easy to see from many vantage points along the Pike. New buildings in the area have begun to establish a new vertical scale; however, the horizontal scale is vast. Blocks are too long and large for efficient pedestrian circulation. The volume of traffic inhibits comfortable pedestrian access to the

Metro. A new, more urban scale, with tamed vehicular movement, enhanced streetscape, a fine-grained street grid, urban parks and high intensity mixed-uses would improve the area for pedestrians, and thereby strongly support Metro. (Figures 42-44.)

### C. GUIDELINES



#### Paths:

- Provide a grid with small blocks and pedestrian-friendly streets within walking distance of Metro.
- Continue the NRC promenade on the east side of the Pike from the Metro station southward to White Flint Mall, at ground level over the Metro tunnel.
- Establish a shuttle and a bicycle route connecting White Flint Mall to White Flint and Twinbrook Metro stations, utilizing the Metro tunnel easement wherever possible.
- Develop a shuttle bus hub at Metro.
- Establish a special east-west street between Marinelli and Old Georgetown Road as a main, pedestrian-friendly avenue for the district. It should link a series of civic and open spaces, beginning with the Aquatic Center, intersecting with Rockville Pike, and extending to Nebel Street. A signal to provide for pedestrian crossing of Rockville Pike would be desirable. This would require a detailed operational analysis.
- Provide on-street parking to buffer pedestrians, to slow traffic and to provide more human-scaled local streets.

#### Nodes:

- Intensify development around the Metro station, in a mixed-use pattern, with employment dominant east of the Pike and housing dominant west of the Pike.
- Develop the image of a single node straddling the Pike by locating the tallest buildings along the Pike and stepping down in height to the east and west.
- Redevelop the existing Metro parking lot as an air-rights joint development, converting the surface lot to garage parking.



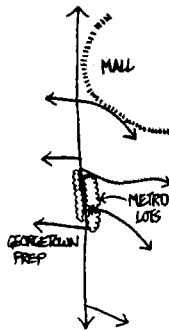
- Develop a community facility and park north of the Aquatic Center, as the western end of the east-west avenue and open space system. This is one of two possible sites for a community recreation center. It could provide a community focus for the existing neighborhoods to the west and southwest as well as for the new TS-R Zone neighborhood.
- Develop an urban open space east of the Metro station to include part of the existing tree stand and the white rock outcropping representing 'White Flint.' Expand the public space east and west of the tree stand to form a series of linked green spaces along the east-west special street.

**Districts:**

- Use equivalent streetscape treatments, block sizes, and building scale to visually link the east and west halves of the district. Apply these patterns throughout the area within walking distance of the METRO stop.
- Use the local white boulders in landscape plans to symbolize the 'white flint' image, as was done at White Flint Mall.
- Establish white stone as a theme element for all new architecture in the White Flint district, to provide a district identity.

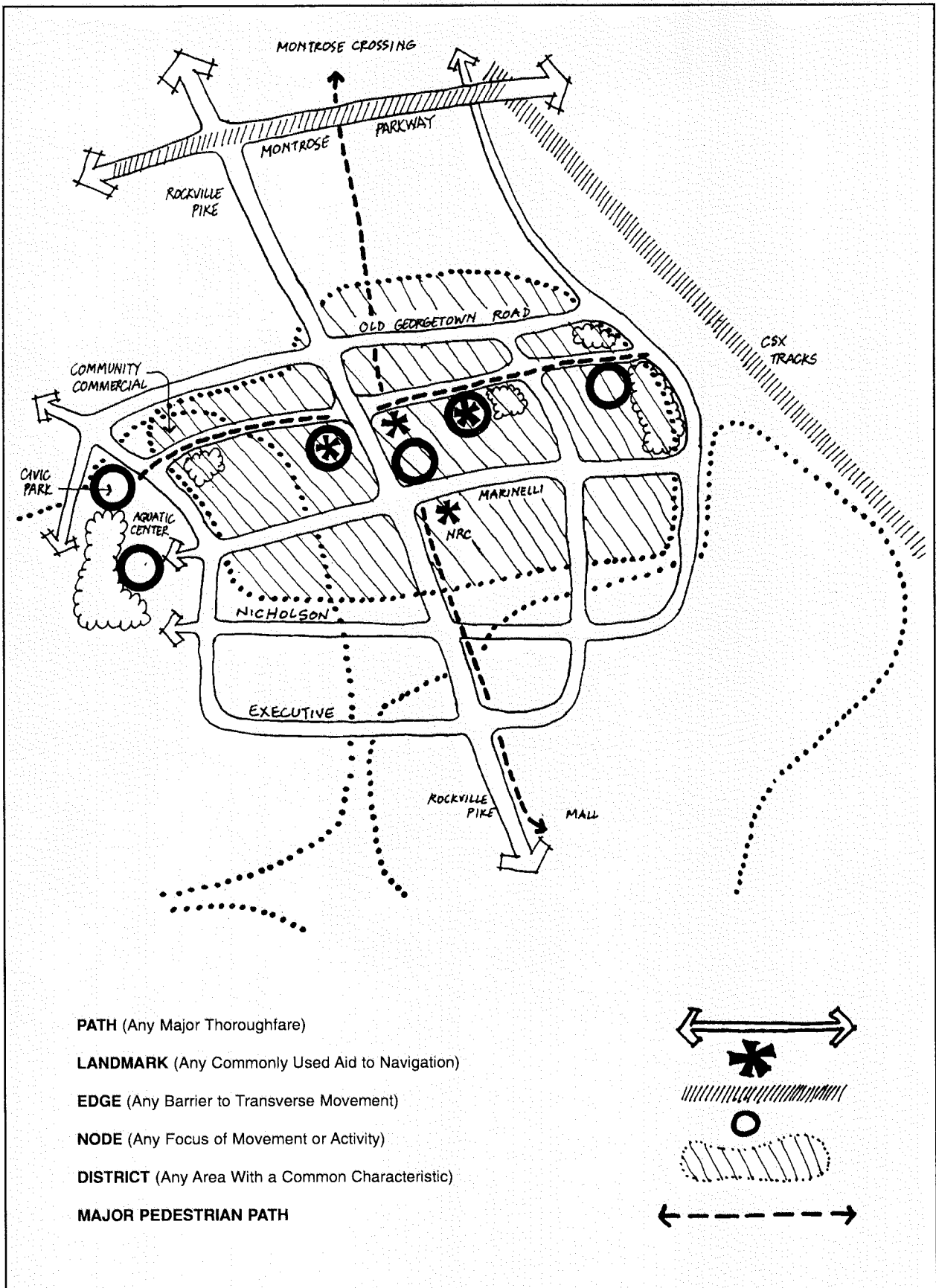
**Edges:**

- Make every effort to overcome barriers to pedestrian movement across Rockville Pike, between Old Georgetown Road and Nicholson Lane, in order that the two halves of the node function efficiently as one.
- Develop the small WMATA-owned lots south of White Flint Mall on the Pike as a landscaped amenity open space which would, in conjunction with existing trees on the Pike's west side, clearly define the edge between the White Flint and Grosvenor districts.



**Landmarks:**

- Create a landmark of art and landscaping at the WMATA-owned lots south of White Flint Mall to help create a gateway between adjacent districts.
- Place the tallest buildings next to the Pike, on "top of the hill" to serve as landmarks.
- Use grade separations at Nicholson Lane and Montrose Parkway to create gateways into the White Flint district.





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## 4.5 GROSVENOR

### A. IMAGE

The Gateway to North Bethesda

### B. DESCRIPTION

Grosvenor marks the entrance to North Bethesda for those traveling north on Wisconsin Avenue. It is a residential island, nearly surrounded by open space, including the preserved woodland of Rock Creek Park and the campuses of Georgetown Preparatory School and Strathmore Hall. The existing residential towers will continue to function as landmarks and, together with the proposed high-rise residences east of the Pike, will form a gateway to North Bethesda. (Figures 45-46.)

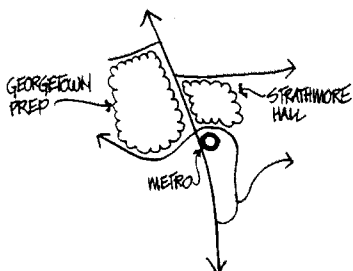
### C. GUIDELINES

#### Paths:

- Introduce the Grosvenor Transitway, connecting Metro to Rock Spring Park and Montgomery Mall. If possible, develop a single station for both Metro and the transitway.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between Metro and the nearby communities.
- Provide a greenway connection to the northwest along the periphery of the Georgetown Prep site (or as otherwise designed in a P-D application) to the old trolley right-of-way bike path. Provide a connection to the northeast through the Strathmore Hall site and the Garrett Park Estate neighborhood.

#### Nodes:

- Develop Grosvenor as an air-rights, joint development housing site south and east of Metro.
- Include convenience retail and services in the shared Metro-Transitway station, to serve existing and new residents and commuters.
- Provide open space within the new development, preserving existing tree stands to the maximum possible extent.

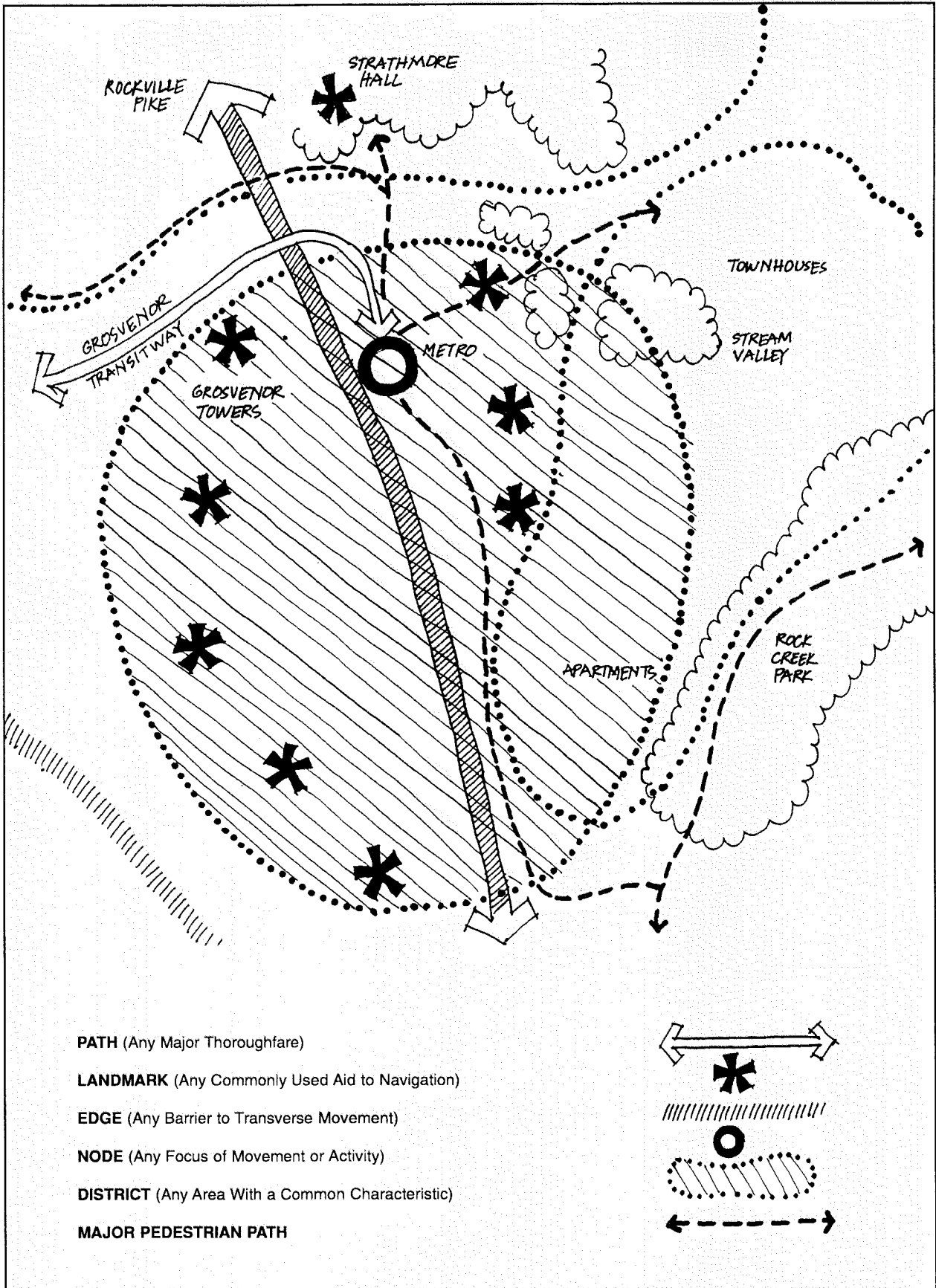


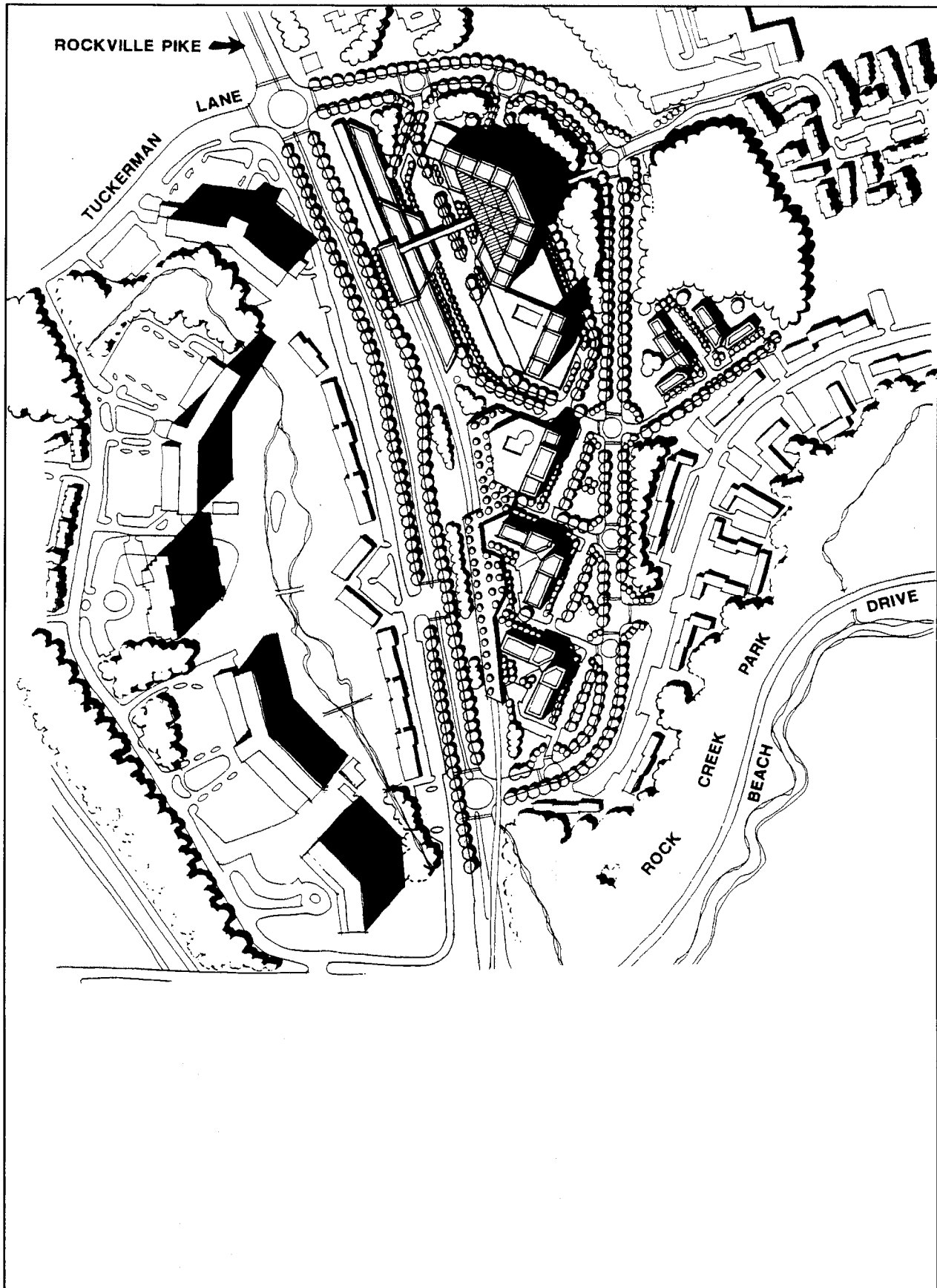
#### Districts:

- Continue the residential character of the Grosvenor district.
- Preserve the open space at Strathmore Hall and Georgetown Prep School. (See Land Use and Zoning: Grosvenor).

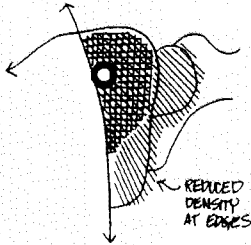
**GROSVENOR CONCEPT DIAGRAM**

**FIGURE 45**





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### Edges:

- Step development intensity down at the east and south edges of the future housing site for compatibility with existing neighborhoods.
- Design pedestrian routes from the existing tunnel under the Pike, through the new development to the Metro stop, to overcome the barrier to pedestrians caused by Pike traffic.

### Landmarks:

- Protect and enhance the distinctive greenspace character of Georgetown Prep and Strathmore Hall by allowing residential development only on the southeast corner of the Georgetown Prep site and by providing for a cultural center at Strathmore Hall that would retain the green space along the Pike. (See Land Use and Zoning: Grosvenor.)
- Reinforce the gateway and landmark functions of the towers flanking the Pike.

## 4.6 ROCK SPRING PARK

### A. IMAGE

Large, high quality, mixed-use Urban Village or planned residential development

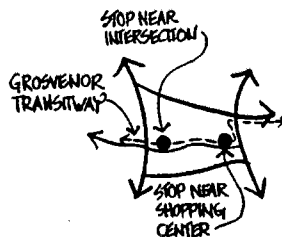
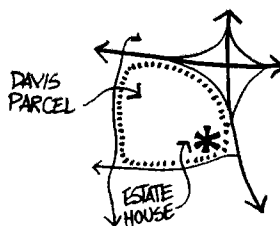
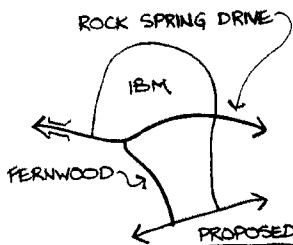
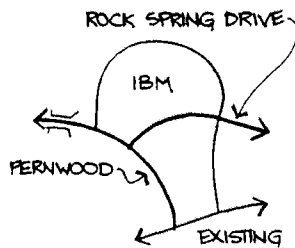
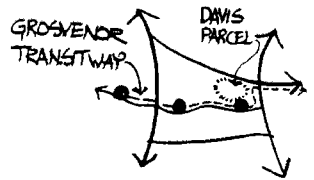
### B. DESCRIPTION

The district has well defined edges: I-270, Democracy Boulevard, and Old Georgetown Road. It contains one of the East Coast's premier office parks, characterized by typically undistinguished office towers set into green lawns with well hidden parking. The shopping center along the west side of Old Georgetown Road functions as part of the district, even though it is partially separated. To the west, Montgomery Mall is effectively separated from the district by the I-270 south spur. The district is characterized functionally by an auto-dominated movement system and horizontally separated land uses, even though most of these uses are within walking distance of each other.

Visually, the area lacks any order other than that represented by the pure separation of land uses and homogeneity of form within those separate areas. There are no major concentrations of any one activity and very few landmarks to provide legibility or singular identity.



### C. GUIDELINES

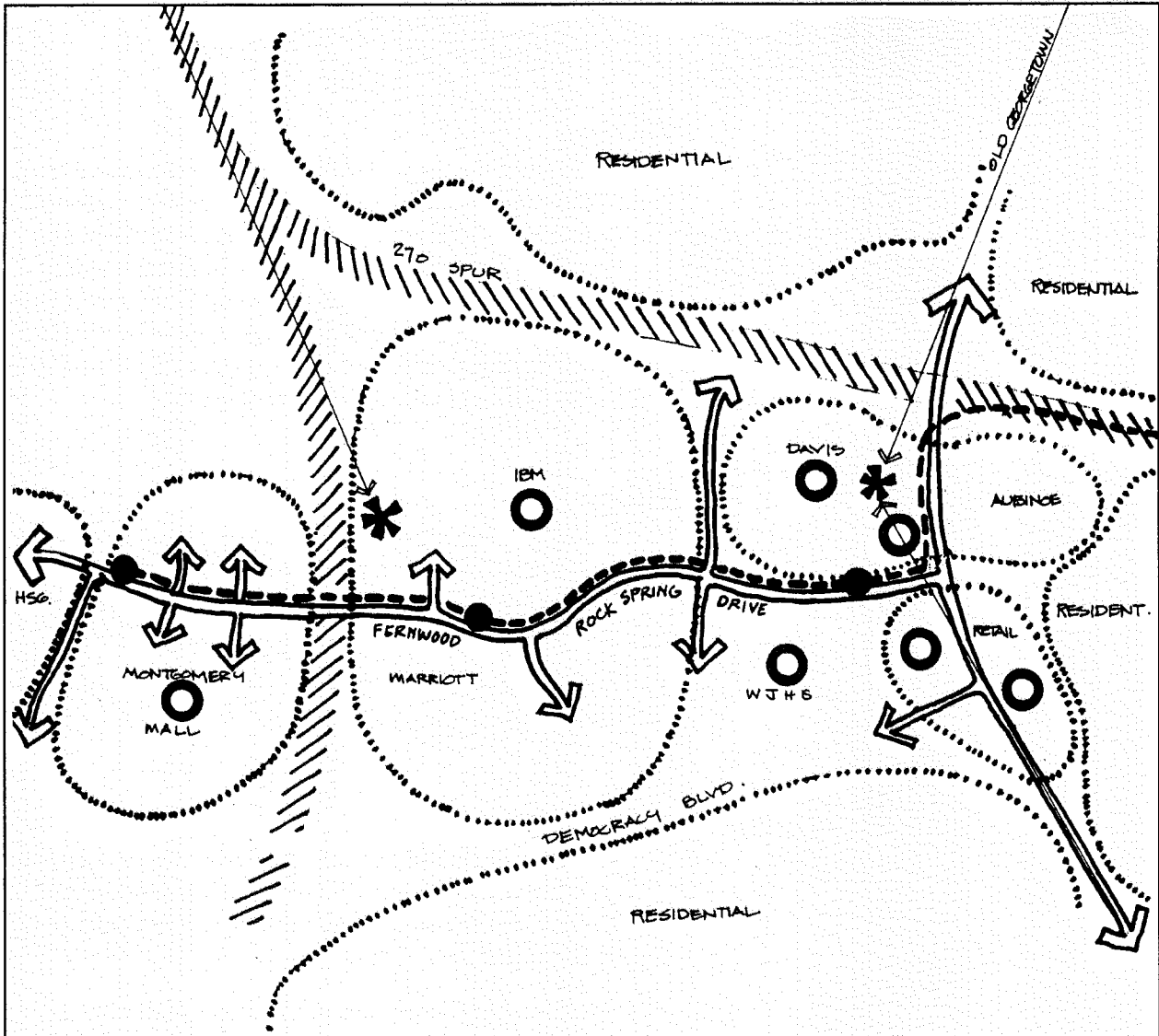


### Paths:

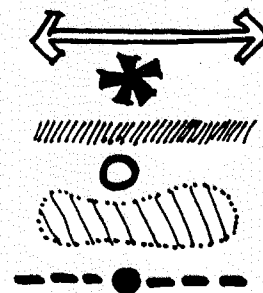
- Introduce the Grosvenor Transitway system along the Rock Spring Drive/Fernwood axis, connecting Grosvenor Metro with Montgomery Mall. The alignment of the system should be along the north right-of-way line of Fernwood and Rock Spring Drives, and along the west side of Old Georgetown to I-270.
- Redesign the Rock Spring Drive axis as the main visual organizing element, with improved sidewalks, street trees, the transitway, station stops, and a bikeway.
- Reconfigure the Fernwood/Rock Spring Drive intersection to allow through movement east-west across the south corner of the IBM site. Tee the south part of Fernwood into this realigned east-west spine.
- Develop a fine-grained, small-block grid of public streets on the Davis parcel.
- Provide a pedestrian/bicycle link from the Luxmanor neighborhood south through the open space system on the Davis parcel to the existing shopping center, high school and library.

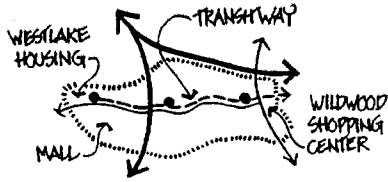
### Nodes:

- Provide community retail uses on the Davis parcel, to serve residents of new and existing neighborhoods and Rock Spring Park employees. Locate these uses along the south side of the Davis parcel.
- The Davis parcel is the preferred location for a community recreation center. Locate the community center either in the vicinity of the estate house or on the south side of the central park.
- Locate transitway stops 1) near the Rock Spring Drive/Fernwood intersection and 2) north of the Georgetown Square Shopping Center.



- PATH** (Any Major Thoroughfare)
- LANDMARK** (Any Commonly Used Aid to Navigation)
- EDGE** (Any Barrier to Transverse Movement)
- NODE** (Any Focus of Movement or Activity)
- DISTRICT** (Any Area With a Common Characteristic)
- TRANSIT PATH**



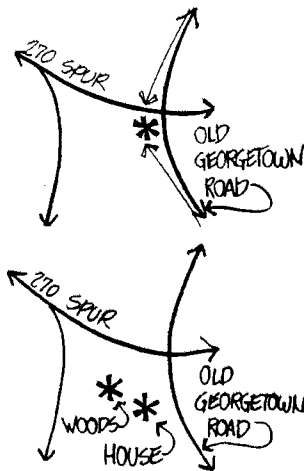


**Districts:**

- Encourage the gradual evolution of the entire area from Wildwood Shopping Center to the Westlake housing area into a single district. The enhanced accessibility provided by the transitway and the unifying visual influence of the redesigned Fernwood/Rock Spring Drive axis can reduce the horizontal separation of the various parts and overcome the barriers imposed by the I-270 south spur and Old Georgetown Road.

**Edges:**

- Partially mitigate the barrier between Montgomery Mall and Rock Spring Park presented by the I-270 south spur by the linking effect of the transitway and the enhanced Fernwood/Rock Spring Drive streetscape.
- Retain the wooded buffers along the I-270 spurs to the maximum extent possible.



**Landmarks:**

- Locate a tall, landmark building where the view axes of north and southbound Old Georgetown Road intersect. A landmark here would mark the symbolic center of the Rock Spring Park district.
- Preserve the wooded area in the center of the Davis parcel and the estate house as landmarks.

**4.7 STREETScape**

Most of the existing and proposed streets in the planning area will require careful attention to detailed design to encourage pedestrian usage, particularly within walking distance of transit nodes. This Master Plan addresses the character of these streets with general streetscape concepts and guidelines.

**A. EXISTING STREETS**

**Description**

Many of the existing streets in the commercial area do not foster pedestrian comfort. All sidewalks have been built next to the curb and almost all streets lack street trees, creating an exposed, unpleasant environment. In most cases the pedestrians on the sidewalk are adjacent to moving traffic lanes rather than buffered by curbside parking. Multiple turn



lanes and the absence of crosswalks reduce pedestrian safety. The overall effect of these conditions, combined with land use patterns that require longer walking distance, discourages people from walking.

### **General Guidelines**

To improve conditions on existing streets, street trees should be added to all existing streets that are within 1/4 mile of a rapid transit stop. Because street trees should be located three feet from the curb to buffer pedestrians from moving traffic, the sidewalks should be widened as necessary to allow cut-outs for tree pits. Retrofits should be designed on a block-by-block basis and some existing streets should receive additional special design treatment.

## **B. NEW STREETS**

### **General Guidelines**

Proposed streets would be designed to either existing Road Code approved cross sections (pedestrianized where necessary), or according to proposed additions to the Road Code. Some of the alignments of streets depicted in the Transportation Chapter are specifically located wherever possible, while the alignments of those additional streets shown on these concept diagrams will be determined during development review. All streets shown are to be public. All new streets are to contain street trees between curb and sidewalk and, wherever possible, on-street parking.

### **Urban Tertiary Street**

This Plan proposes introduction of a new Urban Tertiary street, to be used in fine-grained, residential local applications and as a one-way pair in low-intensity employment areas. It could be one-way with parking on one or both sides or two-way with parking on one side (Figure 48). The proposed Urban Tertiary streets are indicated in the streetscape diagrams.

### **Business Street**

The business street accommodates two-way traffic in two lanes with two parking lanes, three moving lanes with one parking lane, or four moving lanes. Tree planting beds should be located between the curb and sidewalk in grass strips or, in more pedestrian intense areas, in pits cut out of the sidewalk (Figure 49). The proposed business streets are indicated in the streetscape diagrams.

### **Other Significant Streets**

The Plan also proposes special treatment of several existing or proposed significant streets. The streets are listed in Table 9 and, because of their particular function or context, will require detailed planning, possibly as part of the subsequent Townscape Plan. For proposed streets, the pavement widths are subject to more detailed review. The significant or special streets are indicated in the streetscape diagrams.

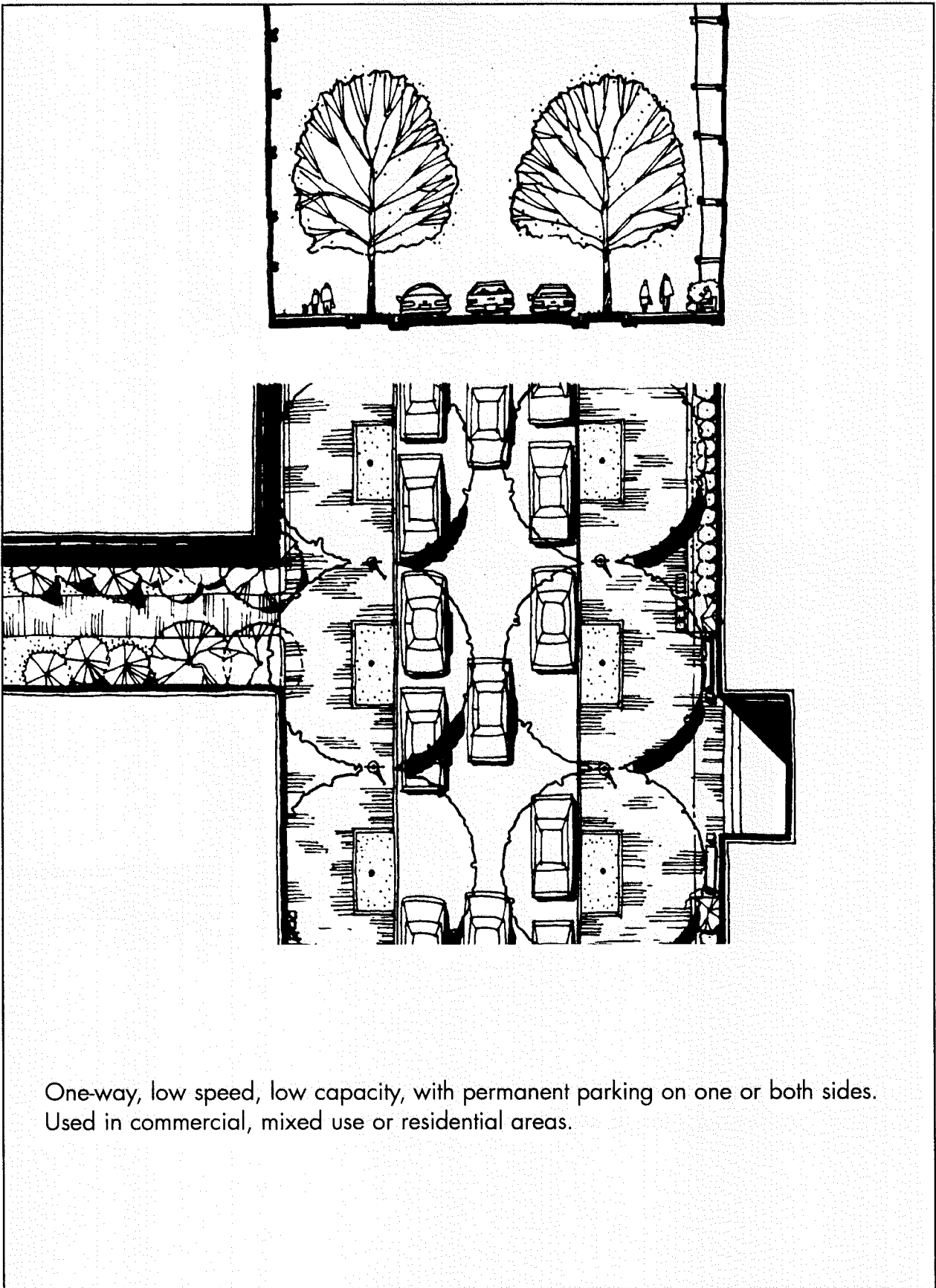


**TABLE 9**

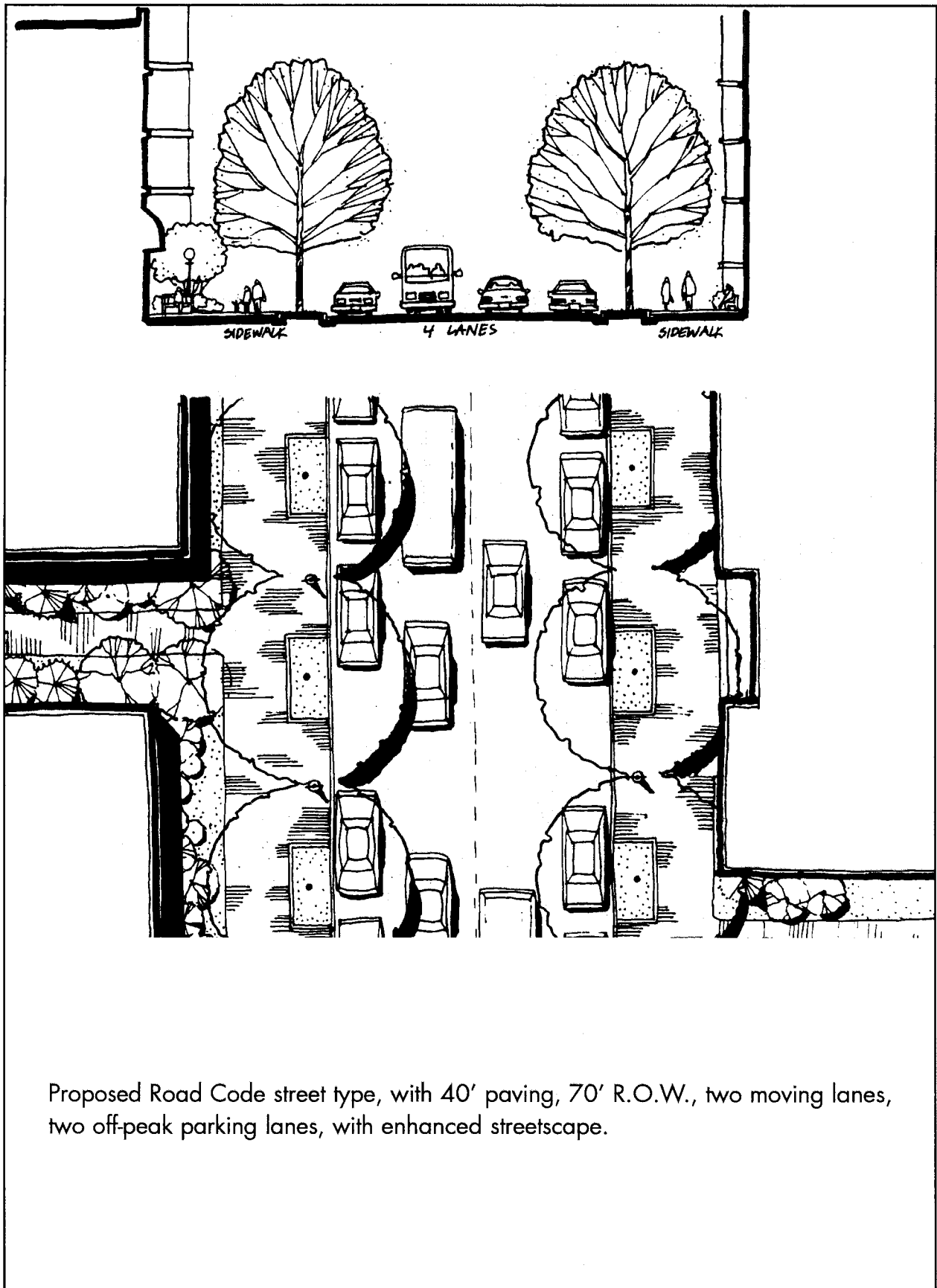
**STREETS REQUIRING SPECIAL DESIGN TREATMENT**

Public Street	Road Code Type	Existing/ Proposed	Alignment Pavement/ R-O-W	Fixed/ Flexible
Rockville Pike (several variations of one prototype are needed for different areas)	Major Road	Existing	66/120	Fixed to 100/150
White Flint Sector East/West "Main Street" (Figure 55)	Business Street	Proposed	50/80	Fixed & Flexible
Montrose Crossing Entry Boulevard	New Urban Tertiary*	Proposed	27/50	Flexible
Fishers Lane/ Parklawn Drive, between HHS & Metro	Business Street	Existing & Proposed	50/80	Fixed
Washington Street, between HHS & Proposed MARC	New Urban Tertiary*	Existing	Varies/ Varies	Fixed
Rock Spring Drive/ Fernwood Axis, including Grosvenor transitway	Arterial	Existing & Proposed	50/80 Plus Transitway	Fixed
Davis Parcel Street Surrounding Central Park	Business Street	Proposed	40/70	Flexible
Montrose Parkway	Special	Proposed	50/300	Flexible w/in R-O-W

\* Proposed addition to the road code.



One-way, low speed, low capacity, with permanent parking on one or both sides. Used in commercial, mixed use or residential areas.

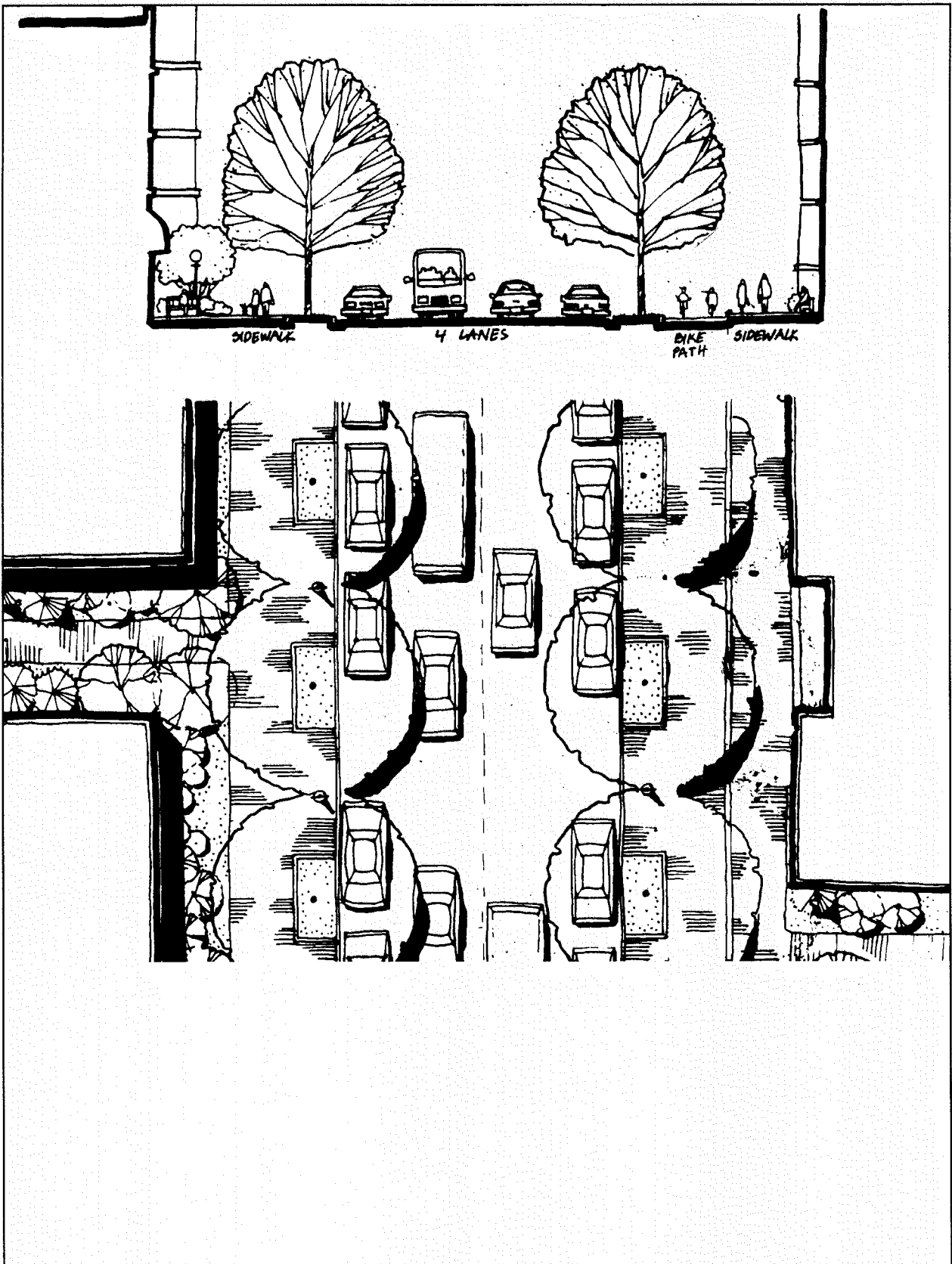


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Proposed Road Code street type, with 40' paving, 70' R.O.W., two moving lanes, two off-peak parking lanes, with enhanced streetscape.

**STREETScape CONCEPT - EAST-WEST "MAIN STREET"  
(WHITE FLINT)**

**FIGURE 50**





## C. ROCKVILLE PIKE

### Description

For most of its length through North Bethesda, Rockville Pike is a roadway devoid of trees and safe pedestrian routes. It consists of between six and nine 11-foot lanes in a right-of-way of 120-150 feet. In the few locations where there are only six lanes (no turn lanes or acceleration/deceleration lanes) the right-of-way accommodates a 12-foot median and 20 feet between the curb and the edge of the right-of-way. However, much of the Pike has a five-foot concrete median and only eight feet from the curb to the edge of the right-of-way, because of the turn lanes and acceleration/deceleration lanes. These conditions allow only a three-foot grass strip between the curb and a five-foot sidewalk. In several locations, a five-foot sidewalk abuts the curb, leaving no space for street trees. These conditions are inimical to pedestrian comfort.

The Rockville Pike streetscape should, in most areas, accommodate pedestrians and cyclists, and provide enhancement of desirable views and screening of undesirable views. An overall greening of the roadway environment is needed. The streetscape should unify the fragmented sections of the Pike while reinforcing a unique character for each sector or significant area.

### Guidelines for Rockville Pike Prototype

The *standard* prototype recommended for the Pike includes a double row of street trees and sidewalks on both sides of the road (Figure 51). *Variations* of the prototype will be recommended where necessary to fit within physical constraints or where desired to provide a unique character. For example, each district might have a different species of street tree within an overall continuous pattern of tree placement, in order to provide both individual identity for the district and continuity along the Pike.

- Widen the right-of-way as necessary to allow two rows of street trees with a six-foot sidewalk between rows of trees.
- Plant median trees wherever the median is eight feet or more in width.
- In areas within walking distance of transit stops, establish a build-to line ten feet beyond the right-of-way line.

