

NEXT STEPS

Public and private sector commitment and investment are necessary to make this Plan's recommendations a reality.

Achieving the Silver Spring Sector Plan recommendations will require the coordinated efforts of a variety of participants. In urban revitalization efforts, there are usually five groups that play key roles in turning an area into a thriving center: land owners, developers, and investors; local business owners; residential communities; local, state and federal governments; and non-governmental organizations. Each of these groups affects various aspects of the revitalization effort.

Land owners, developers, and investors are key players in revitalization and they must be willing and able to redevelop their properties, as well as actively maintain and update them. They need to work in a stable development environment created by policy and financing assurances to create projects that garner community support.

Local business owners must be alert to changes in national, regional, and local markets, and must be active in promoting their services and products to existing and new customers. At the same time adjacent residential communities must support local businesses, as well as creating and supporting community events, and participating in creating a community vision.

Local, state, and federal government policies and funding decisions will also impact revitalization. In Silver Spring, the State's Smart Growth initiative directs funds and efforts to existing downtowns and their considerable infrastructure. Local zoning decisions also effect opportunity to redevelop.

Non-governmental organizations, such as not-for-profit groups reflect the community's desires and priorities, giving a community its unique character. By creating arts opportunities, meeting human service needs, or promoting local businesses, these organizations can focus on specific needs quickly and efficiently.

Each group must understand the strategic links needed to implement revitalization, organize, set goals, and implement plans in areas where that group can be most effective. Additionally, all stakeholders must find a way to coordinate their actions into complementary efforts and work toward the common goal of revitalization.

Some forces in revitalization are beyond local control—national and local economies, market competition, politics, and demographic changes. These factors can either positively or negatively impact the success of revitalization. The stakeholders playing key roles can't control these forces, but can't ignore them, either. Revitalization strategies in Silver Spring must reflect the reality of these factors and must be flexible enough to accommodate changes in the marketplace. As market forces change, it will be important to re-evaluate periodically the Plan's proposed development, land uses, zoning and plan approval processes.

Working together, the stakeholders can spearhead Silver Spring's revitalization, each working toward their strengths, and strengthening the entire community in the process. The private sector will be a primary player in revitalization through development and redevelopment projects. However, the public sector also plays a development role with its own investment in public facilities, and through its development review processes.

The new master plan process commits staff to continued involvement in implementing the Plan's recommendations. (See the list of proposed development projects below.) The Framework for Action summarizes the steps that must be undertaken to implement the Plan's recommendations, identifying the anticipated time frames for implementation, and the public and private sector groups that will be responsible for implementation. In some cases, joint public/private funding will be appropriate. Coordination and cooperation between public and private sectors on projects within the CBD and on both sides of the Maryland/District of Columbia line are important to revitalizing the downtown and implementing some of the Plan's recommendations.

Following the new master plan process described earlier in this Plan, the Department of Park and Planning will facilitate the Plan's implementation where possible and will report their progress to the Council every two years. As an important provider of community facilities and as a regulatory body, the M-NCPPC will also be responsible for implementing a number of key Plan recommendations.

Zoning recommendations in this Plan will be implemented through the Sectional Map Amendment process. The mandatory referral process will involve Executive and Park and Planning staff in site selection and development plan review for the proposed Montgomery College expansion, Transit Center, library, fire station, and courthouse. The Commission's development review process will involve staff in the development of the Silver Triangle site and other private development projects in the Silver Spring CBD.

A coordination mechanism should be created to support and promote the revitalization of South Silver Spring. This multi-jurisdictional committee will include representatives from: the District of Columbia, the County's Department of Housing and Community Development, the Silver Spring Regional Center, the Gateway Georgia Avenue Revitalization Corporation, and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Additional implementation activities will be initiated by Department of Park and Planning staff as needed.

The following sections summarize the proposed development plans and revitalization actions in the Silver Spring CBD.

CBD - W I D E

Foster a development pattern that will revitalize the CBD and focus the most intense development in the Core.

- Implement the Plan's rezoning recommendations.
- Locate and build a new courthouse, library, and fire station.
- Re-establish the farmers market.
- Relocate the skateboard park.
- Design and build the Capital Crescent/Metropolitan Branch Trail.
- Design and build local trails and bikeways.
- Revise the Silver Spring Streetscaping Plan.
- Implement the Georgetown Branch connection to Bethesda.

- Improve the physical character of the Georgia Avenue and Colesville Road corridors.

THE CORE

Recreate the Core as the active center of downtown Silver Spring.

- Develop the Silver Triangle site and public open space.
- Implement the approved plans for the Downtown Silver Spring project.
 - Construct a new civic center building and plaza, and veterans memorial in the Urban Renewal Area.
 - Renovate the Silver Theatre.
- Design and build the new Transit Center.
- Build the Silver Spring Green Trail.
- Relocate the Tastee Diner.

RIPLEY DISTRICT

Encourage mixed-use development near the Transit Center by facilitating market feasible development and upgrading the physical environment.

- Renovate the Silver Spring Train Station.
- Build Dixon Avenue.
- Assess development options for the Ripley District.
- Build pedestrian bridge to NOAA.

SOUTH SILVER SPRING

Encourage new economic activity in South Silver Spring, including expansion of Montgomery College and other redevelopment.

- Renovate and update the facilities at Jesup Blair Park in coordination with the College renovation.
- Support Montgomery College's expansion and relocation.
- Support the creation of landscape, building, or other design feature that defines this area as a gateway to the County and CBD.
- Incorporate a way-finding plan to enhance the image and function of the CBD.

- Design and construct a street pattern and streetscape that breaks up large blocks and improves visibility and access for developable parcels.
- Provide incentive programs to support private sector investment in business development and building construction, refurbishing, or reconstruction, including:
 - supporting locally targeted streetscape and facade easement programs, financing assistance, tax credits, the Enterprise Zone, green tape permitting process, and urban district activities
 - supporting a constructive demolition program that will help subsidize the cost of demolition to encourage new construction and will allow the owner to retain existing FAR.
- Support educational opportunities for small businesses on marketing, promotion, customer retention, etc. Expand business administration and retail training efforts.
- Encourage housing development through incentive programs, such as the State legislation enacted for the Downtown Management District in Baltimore that provides tax assistance for conversion of commercial space to market-rate housing.
- Support the Gateway-Georgia Avenue Revitalization Corporation's efforts.
- Assess development options, including options for vacant buildings.

FENTON VILLAGE

Revitalize Fenton Village by positioning it to benefit from redevelopment on the Urban Renewal site and facilitating housing development.

- Renovate and expand the Fenton Gateway Park.
- Encourage establishment of an active merchants and property owners group.
- Assess development options with regard to parking needs, potential for housing, and other infill development.
- Work with the public and private sectors to attract new businesses and strengthen existing businesses through recruitment, marketing, promotion, physical improvements, and maintenance.
- Encourage redevelopment efforts that include a marketing and promotion campaign, identifying, developing, promoting, and recruiting for niche markets, an Adopt-a-Block initiative on Bonifant Street, education opportunities for small businesses, reviewing existing economic development programs, and a way-finding plan.

Explore incentive programs to develop vacant properties and redevelop under-used properties, including:

- financial incentives to prevent existing businesses from moving elsewhere and future businesses from choosing another location
- encouraging owner-occupancy of businesses through low-interest or no-interest loans
- continuing existing programs such as the 50/50 Facade Easement Program, Green Tape Zone, Incubator Without Walls program, the streetscaping project for Fenton Street, code enforcement, and the Silver Spring Enterprise Zone.

OTHER CBD AREAS

Encourage infill development that contributes to the CBD's urban environment and is sensitive to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

- Develop low-rise housing on Parking Lot # 2 behind M-NCPPC offices.
- Encourage housing on Lot #21 at Cameron and Spring Street.

