



Crescent District Master Plan

June 27, 2006

Prepared for the Town of Leesburg

Developed by:





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I. Introduction & Background

The Crescent District Master Plan covers an area of about 225 acres adjoining and including part of the Old and Historic District of Leesburg. The Crescent arc of the Town Branch and the W&OD Trail bisect the District. The core of the District was once the industrial heart of Leesburg. As a result, the current land uses in the Crescent District vary widely from warehousing and industrial clustered near the old W&OD rail bed to successful strip commercial along Catocin Circle. The District is also home to a variety of housing from well-preserved homes along South King Street to a unique grouping of smaller housing in what is known as “Vinegar Hill.” Significant landmarks of the District include Dodona Manor, home of General George C. Marshall; the Market Station complex of shops, offices and restaurants; and the Barber & Ross site which is currently proposed for redevelopment into a mixed-use center.

The concept of “Crescent District” was first proposed and the name coined during the development of the Business Development Strategy for Leesburg that recognized that the traditional downtown, now nearly fully occupied, could be expanded in selected areas along Town Branch and the W&OD trail. The Business Development Strategy was adopted in concept by the Town Council in 2003. In fact, the Crescent District presents a superior opportunity to extend the fine grain pattern of the downtown area while creating a setting for a mixture of uses including a host of housing types. The large quan-

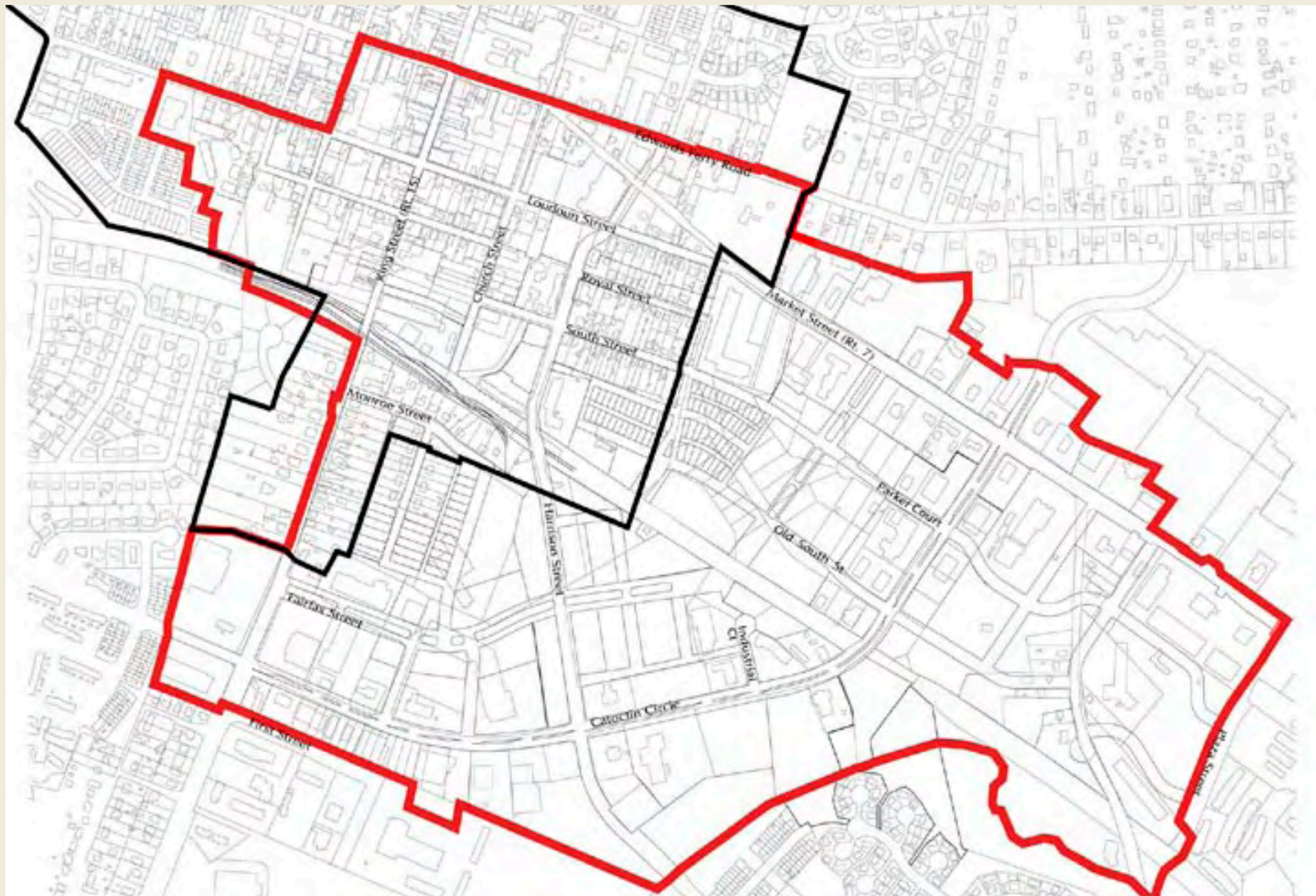
tity of underutilized land in the Crescent District presents an opportunity for redevelopment consistent with the downtown area that will also incorporate greater density into a collection of uses coupled with high quality pedestrian spaces. The Business Development Strategy identifies six strategies for developing the business climate of Leesburg. Among those was “Live, Work, Play” which presented a strategy to introduce more housing options, business location alternatives, and shopping and dining to expand and complement downtown. The plan suggested adding open spaces to encourage outdoor events along Town Branch, additional mixed-use developments, and a new approach to development in Leesburg that would be pro-active toward new investment rather than reactive.

The Business Development Strategy recommendations were being implemented concurrently with engineering studies to alleviate flooding along the Town Branch, which had been plaguing properties in the area for some time. These two efforts, combined with burgeoning interest in properties in the District, presented a significant occasion to create a detailed plan for the future.

The Crescent District Master Plan provides guidance supplementary to the 2005 Town Plan for properties within the Crescent District boundary. The policies and objectives set out in the 2005 Town Plan remain in effect (including those relating to the Downtown land use cate-

gory and the Central Planning Sector); however, the Crescent District Master Plan provides more specific and detailed guidance, such as for land use, building heights, architectural design, and street location and design, within the Crescent District. In addition to the other Guiding Principles outlined in Chapter IV, it is important to note that it is not the Town’s intent to assemble or condemn land in order to implement or facilitate redevelopment in the Crescent District.

The Crescent District Master Plan covers a diverse area. The study area is shown in the red line. The boundaries follow property lines on the outer sides of King Street, Catocin Circle, and Market Street with some additional properties along Sycolin Road included. The H-1 Zoning District and Board of Architectural Review authority remain in effect as currently mapped.



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II. The Crescent District Today

The core of the Crescent District centers on the old W&OD rail line and Town Branch. At its intersection with South King Street, the W&OD had its freight station along with a number of rail-related uses. Town Branch was not the scenic creek that it is today as many of the Town's more disagreeable businesses (such as butcher shops and plants) were located along the creek. Town Branch was fed by a couple of smaller branches that complicated the early building and street network in this low lying area. With the exception of the handsome homes along South King Street, much of the District was industrial well into the 20th Century.

Leesburg remained a small rural community through the middle of the 20th century. It was then that the first wave of growth reached the community as postwar suburban development swept through the entire region. Catoc-



Town Branch adjacent to W&OD



Town Branch near Harrison Street



Historic Plaque along W&OD at Harrison Street



Town Branch & King Street Bridge



South King Street at Town Branch

II. The Crescent District Today

tin Circle was a by-product of this growth and was Leesburg's first suburban style commercial corridor. Catoctin Circle, along with Market Street, became commercial centers that would complement the downtown. In fact, much of the retail character of Catoctin Circle and Market Street remains intact today.

It wasn't until 1982 that major redevelopment in the District was considered in any meaningful way. The Town pursued an Urban Development Action Grant program that called for new housing development and job creation in the area. This early plan led to the creation of the Market Station project and several other investments including the completion of the Harrison Street connection between Catoctin Circle and Loudoun Street and ultimately Raflo Park. At the time, industrial uses were still active in the area and the long-term redevelopment of this part of downtown forecasted continued industrial and warehousing uses particularly along Industrial Court and Parker Court.



Catoctin Circle at Harrison Street



Virginia Village

Today, the climate of the community has changed. Barber & Ross, the largest employer in the District covering a large tract of land off of Harrison Street and Catoctin Circle, announced plans to move to Winchester in 2003. The move signaled a major shift in the future of the District that the Business Development Strategy had anticipated earlier in the year.

The Business Development Strategy identifies the need to “expand downtown to include opportunities for additional retail uses” geared toward the greater Leesburg population. The plan encourages a mixture of housing types to attract interest in downtown living from a variety of market segments including young professionals and empty nesters. The Business Development Strategy also identifies the Crescent District as an area where significant public amenity spaces can be created to enhance the attraction of downtown for residents, visitors, and investors. The Strategy set the stage for the future redevelopment of the District.

The Business Development Strategy findings were not alone: the 2005 Leesburg Town Plan identified the Central Sector (in which the Crescent District lies) as a significant opportunity to “extend the character [of the core] into an enlarged downtown east and south of the current downtown although at a higher transitional



Harrison Street



Market Station

II. The Crescent District Today



Ralfo Park along Harrison Street



South King Street



W&OD Trail at Harrison Street

density.” This character is defined by the “grid street network, and the fine grain, mixed land use pattern.”

This plan presents a vision for the District for policy makers, citizens, investors, and property owners to consider as the inevitable redevelopment of this District occurs. The parameters it sets forth were forged through public input at Town meetings, detailed discussions with property owners and policy makers, and thoughtful analysis of existing conditions and desired outcomes. The plan endeavors to do the following:

- Set the stage for the sensitive long-term redevelopment of the District so that the community stakeholders have a reasonable expectation of how the District will look in the future.
- Create a District that is respectful of the historic core of Leesburg while providing a transition to the more automobile oriented parts of the community.
- Develop a setting for a true mixture of uses that recognizes Leesburg’s role as a center of retail, office, and residential uses for Loudoun County.

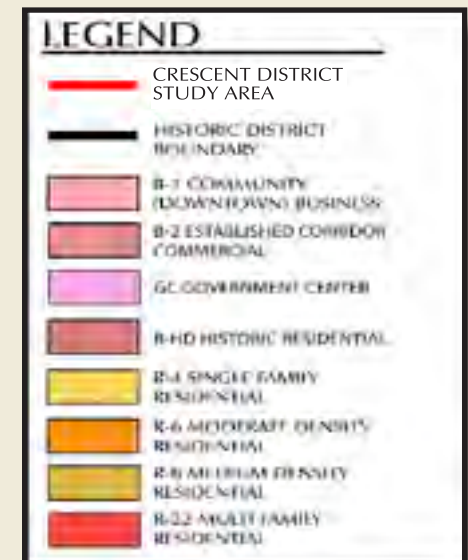
II. The Crescent District Today

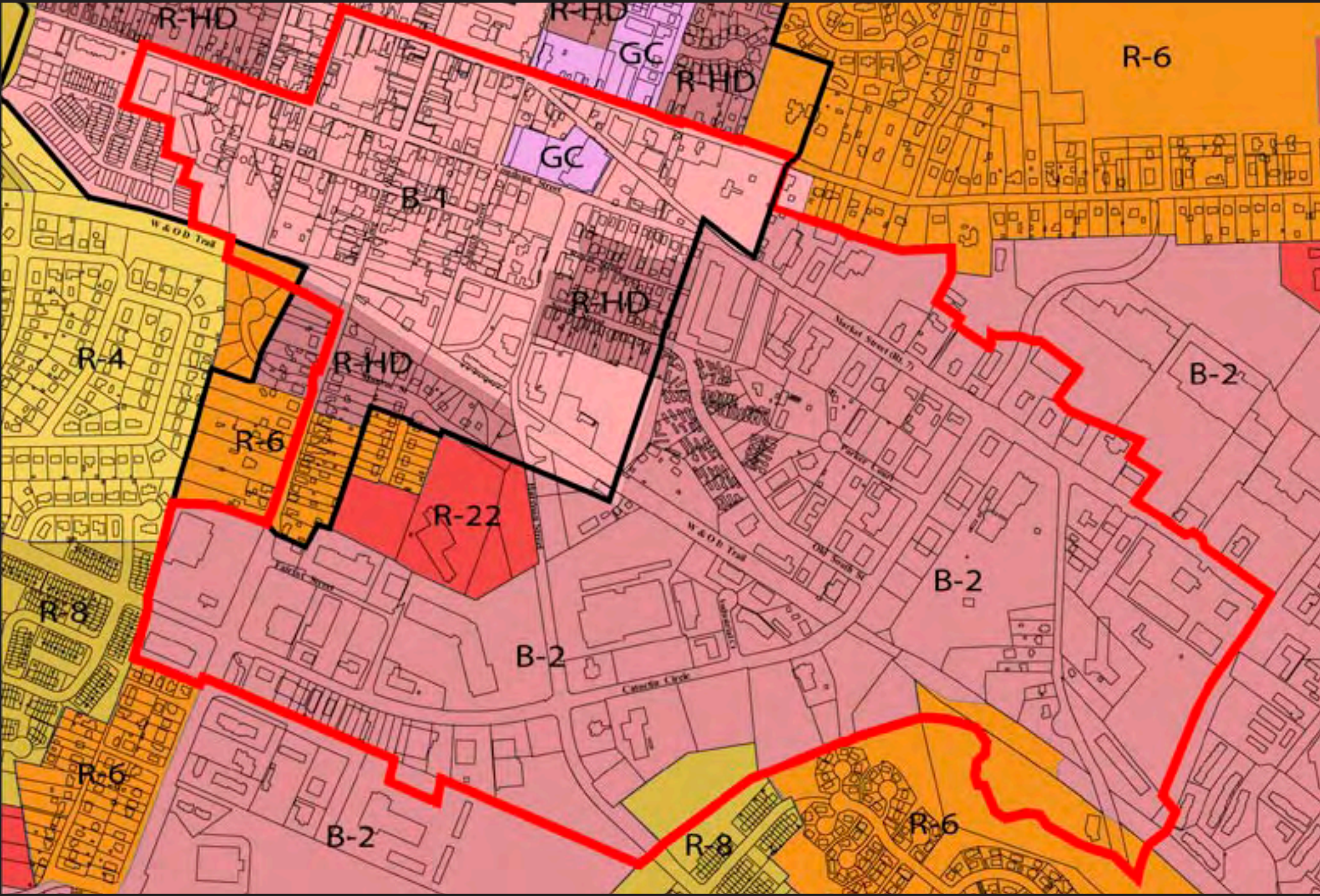
Existing Zoning

Currently the Crescent District falls in several zoning districts. The first is the B-1 mixed-use district that roughly approximates the boundaries of the Old and Historic District of downtown Leesburg. This district allows for a mixture of uses in a fine-grain urban environment. The Old and Historic District is protected with an H-1 historic preservation overlay that ensures that properties developed or redeveloped in the district adhere to the traditional architecture of the community.

The other major district in the plan is the B-2 zoning district. This is the Town's primary commercial zoning classification that allows by right a whole host of traditional highway-oriented commercial development. This would include big-box retailers, auto-related businesses, and similar commercial establishments. Nearly half of the Crescent District planning area falls in the B-2 classification. Market Street and South King Street do have a commercial corridor overlay zone, the H-2 District, that encourages higher quality suburban style commercial development. These provisions, however, do little to encourage traditional style growth similar to that found in the downtown area.

Some smaller areas of R-HD and R-22 are residential zoning classifications that correspond to the existing development within their boundaries. These areas are "islands" of zoning designed to protect the residential character of the neighborhoods they cover.





III. Plan Process and Input Summary

The Leesburg Crescent District Master Plan is the result of a thorough process involving leadership interviews with property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders, small group sessions with the Planning Commission, the Economic Development Commission, and Board of Architectural Review representatives, and a Town Hall meeting. The effort was led by the Leesburg Planning Commission which served as the steering committee for the effort. The team met with the Planning Commission on five occasions from February through July 2005. These meetings were complemented by the public input sessions which were conducted during the months of March and April 2005. The interviews and document review focused on the needs and components for a Master Plan for the Crescent District in Leesburg, Virginia.

The interview process asked the participants about various themes that needed to be addressed in the master plan process. They included:

- 1: *Assets and Opportunities*
- 2: *Challenges and Obstacles*
- 3: *Attitudes and Needs*
- 4: *Projects and Progress*
- 5: *Community Involvement*

In addition to the physical observations of the District, the public was asked to identify what they would like to see as the District develops. The following were some of the comments they shared:

- *Gathering space such as an open market that is people/pedestrian oriented*
- *Walkability- ties to other areas such as the Historic District*
- *Want the area to look like the rest of Leesburg*
- *More people living in Downtown with residential infill*
- *Workforce housing that can affordably accommodate professionals in the community like teachers and police officers.*
- *Public Art Program with “placeholders” for public art*
- *Have an 8-10 screen theater in the Crescent District*
- *Performing and visual arts facility possibly with meeting place for community groups*
- *An additional elementary school*
- *An extension of the character and beauty of Downtown*

- *Street trees*
- *Want the area to work together with the Historic District*
- *Want the area to be both a destination and an extension of the historic Downtown.*
- *Want to define and maintain an individual “brand” for Leesburg*
- *Appropriate environment that is friendly and light*
- *Would like to see Shenandoah University have a presence downtown.*
- *A downtown hotel/inn*
- *Ice skating*
- *Fountains/ water*
- *Bring in tourists from outlet mall*
- *Park and playground*
- *Dog park*
- *More restaurants especially with outdoor seating*
- *Boutique type shops*
- *Need for more entertainment opportunities in the downtown and the District*
- *River/Canal Walk*
- *Want overhead utility lines moved below ground in the Crescent District.*

This is just a sampling of what people had to say about the Crescent District. In the Strategic Assessment Report, this input is compiled alongside the information from property owners, stakeholders, and others. From these comments, many critical issues emerged in the discussions that warrant inclusion in this part of the report:

Development Timing

Development timing was one of the most frequently discussed items in the interviews with property owners. It is the Town’s intent to allow and encourage redevelopment and infill by landowners on their desired timeline. It is not the intent of the Town to condemn land or assemble land or serve as a developer in this area. As such, the development timing could range from short-term projects, developed under the Town’s existing processes, to longer-term projects, developed after process changes proposed in the Master Plan to facilitate development in the District have been implemented. The overall goal of the plan is to place the developments over a fifteen year time frame allowing for deliberate, “organic”, redevelopment of the District.

III. Plan Process and Input Summary

Streets and Traffic

Streets and traffic issues emerged as one of the major discussion points among the interviewees. They recognized that a significant change would need to take place to enable the District to develop in a manner consistent with the traditional patterns of the Town. Congestion along major arteries such as Catoctin Circle and Market Street have created a hierarchy of neighborhood streets and major roads with no “in-between” connectors.

Pedestrian Connections

While road connections are critical, equally important are the pedestrian connections through the District. The pedestrian connections, gathering places for people, and the opportunity to create a unique environment as an extension of a successful downtown was of paramount concern to citizens and stakeholders. Many agreed that a variety of outdoor spaces should be created to be used for active or passive entertainment and recreation activities. These areas are likely to center on the Town Branch close to King Street and should be closely related to private sector development.

Arts, Entertainment, and Higher Education

The arts and higher education have emerged as priorities to consider for the District in citizen meetings and with stakeholders. The Crescent District could be the home of a significant arts and higher education facility. Our preliminary observations are that the capital costs of a facility should be explored through public/private funding and that an operating agreement with an institution of higher learning would ensure that the long term maintenance and operating costs do not fall solely on the shoulders of Town Government. Even more creative partnerships involving private sector development might also be a way to achieve some of these goals. On a smaller level, the Crescent District could incorporate public art in the design of the streetscapes and public spaces.

Housing and Density

Additional residential uses will be imperative to the success of the District. The existing residential in the District is concentrated on Royal and South Streets (through the mobile home park) and on South King and Monroe Streets on the south side of Town Branch. The future residential complexion of the District should maintain a variety of housing types from denser development along Catoctin Circle including the Barber and Ross site to a sensitive incorporation of residential development above retail and office uses adjacent to Town Branch near King Street. Respect for the “fine grain” of smaller workforce oriented housing on South and Royal Streets

can include additional residential units such as two story stacked flats with “in-law suites” over alley garages. The question of density remained contentious through the interview process. Some people supported increased density while others were extremely skeptical about higher density development.

Retail

Creating a limited amount of specialty oriented new retail development will be an essential component of the vibrancy along Town Branch near South King Street as well as the connection from Harrison Street to the traditional downtown core. The specialty retail in the District should take advantage of the outdoor amenities in the area, by incorporating outdoor dining options and gathering places for entertainment. The new retail areas should be a continuation of the success of downtown and not in competition with it. Ultimately, the visitor should feel a seamless transition between the Historic District and the Crescent District.

III. Plan Process and Input Summary

Office Development

Office uses will also play a key role in the District as a vibrant live-work-play district as outlined in the Business Development Strategy. These offices should incorporate a variety of spaces that can accommodate small entrepreneurial businesses up to larger uses without compromising the historic integrity of the downtown. Of particular interest would be the chance to incorporate the growing executive suites and shared office spaces that allow home-based businesses to transfer to an office-based environment or even live-work spaces that allow business owners to have an adjacent residential use.

Civic/Institutional Uses

Several major institutional needs have been identified that might be included in the District. A significant long-term opportunity exists to keep Loudoun County and school functions inside the District without continuing to consume privately held property. The historic Douglass School and the school District properties nearby could accommodate civic or institutional uses.

Design Compatibility

The design of the District will be a key issue in its development. Closer to the traditional downtown and within the Historic District, the design should be highly complementary of the traditional architectural styles. As the development approaches Catocin Circle, there may be a chance to incorporate a greater variety, creativity, and density in architectural styles while maintaining traditional design standards.

IV. Guiding Principles for Future Development

As a result of the findings, public input and analysis the following guiding principles and project goals were established:

This is to be a private sector implemented plan: The plan is designed to create a vision for the District so that the private sector investment will be consistent with the character of the community. It is designed to be proactive about investment and set a vision for the future so the community will not have to consistently react to various proposals for what will be the inevitable development in the area. It is not the Town's intent to assemble or condemn land in order to implement or facilitate redevelopment.

Public and private infrastructure will be coordinated: While the plan will be led by the private sector, some public infrastructure improvements should take place. These will be coordinated through a thorough and thoughtful process involving commitments from private developers and public commitments for infrastructure improvements where necessary. This will be particularly important along Town Branch and in certain long-term improvements where roads will need to be connected.

The plan makes every effort to keep public uses on public land: The plan recognizes that public uses will be a component of this District since Leesburg is the county seat. Major public resources whether they are infrastructure, parks, offices, or cultural amenities are designed to be located on land already held by the public. Only in extraordinary cases would the public infrastructure improvements necessary to complete the plan occur on private property.

This plan is incremental: It will take place in steps. The plan is designed to be implemented in phases over years. In some cases, certain components of the plan will take more than a decade to implement.

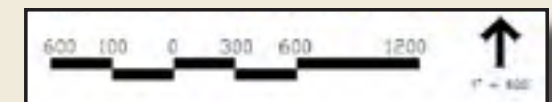
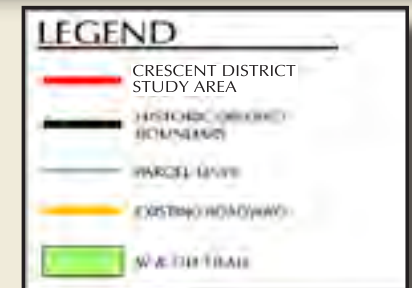
Reinforce and extend the character of the Town: The historic character of the community is one of grid street networks, a fine grain of uses and building types, public amenities and sidewalks, and a small town "urban" character. The design of the plan hopes to extend this character to a district adjacent to downtown bringing the small town character into a broader area rather than the quick transition to "suburban style" land patterns as evidenced today. The H-1 Zoning District and Board of Architectural Review authority remain in effect as currently mapped.

Existing Streets

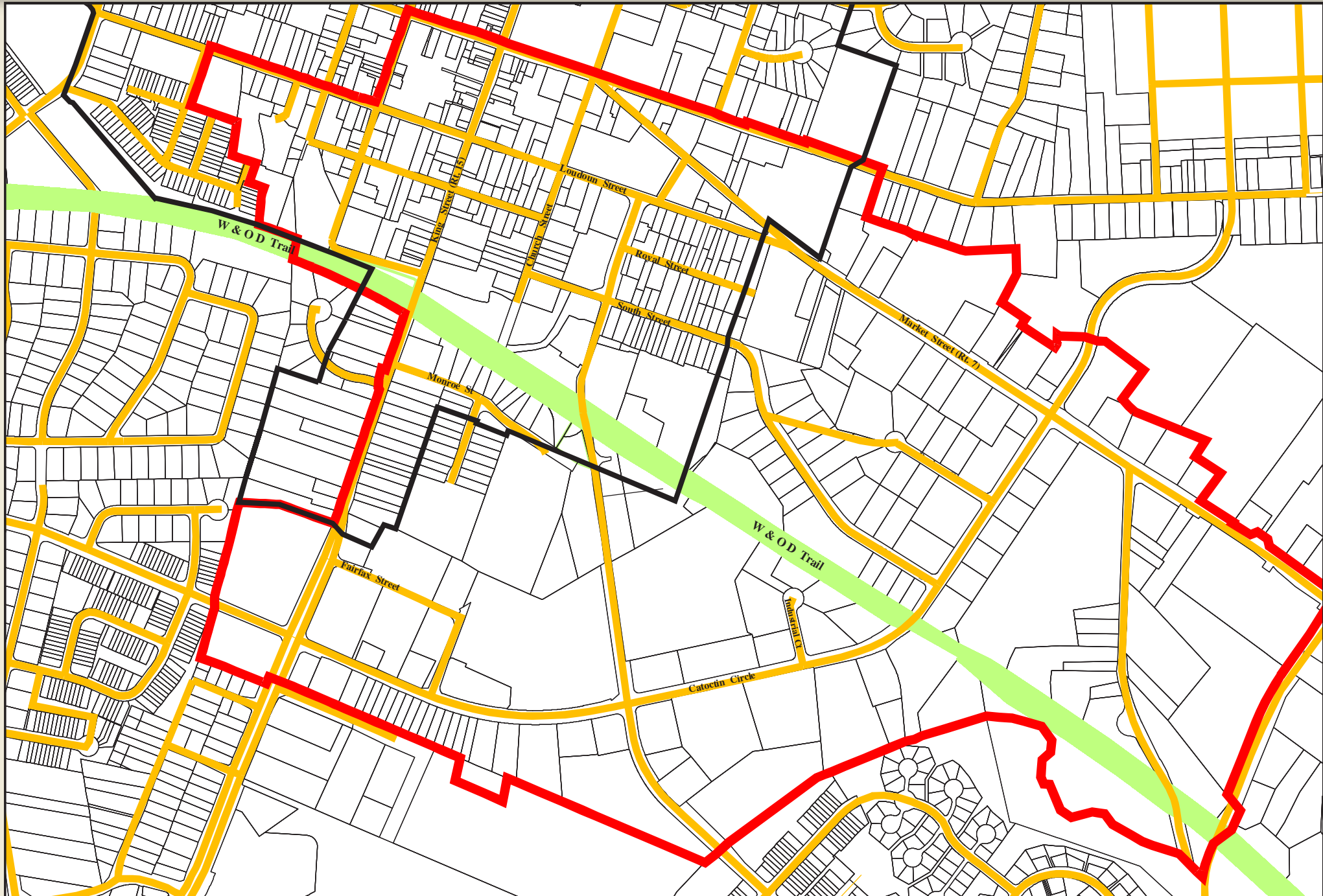
One of the fundamental elements of any future large-scale plan is the transportation network. For the Crescent District, this includes both the streets and the pedestrian connections.

The Crescent District is on the pivot-point between the historic core of Leesburg and the more suburban development that occurred in subsequent years. As a result, the street network is a mixture of both historic narrow in-town streets such as South and Church Streets and newer corridors such as Catocin Circle, Harrison Street, Market Street, and parts of King Street.

The street network is further complicated by both the Town Branch and the W&OD Trail that interrupt the gridiron layout of the core of the community resulting in a number of cul-de-sacs and dead-end streets. These include Monroe, Parker, Industrial and Royal.



V. Street Network and Block Structure



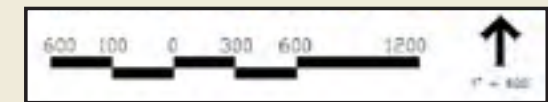
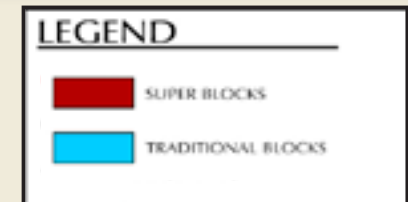
Existing Blocks

As the street network moves away from the downtown core, the block structure changes significantly. Traditionally, Leesburg had a walkable, pedestrian-oriented block network that consisted of three sizes of blocks as shown by the blue colored blocks on the map. As the community developed to the southeast toward Town Branch and the W&OD Railroad, the blocks became much larger. These blocks, shown in red on the accompanying map, are much larger than the entire core of downtown.

These large blocks have done the following:

- Forced traffic to large intersections such as Market and Catocin, South King and Catocin, and Harrison and Catocin.
- Provided limited options to traverse the District in automobiles and even more limited access for pedestrian connections. Pedestrians do not tend to walk on long auto-oriented blocks.
- Forced a development pattern that rapidly transitions from historic street-oriented development to large lot suburban style development facing parking lots rather than streets.
- Created a land use pattern that segregates uses in large clusters rather than allow for a “fine grain” of mixed-uses similar to that found in the Historic District.

The illustration shows how dramatically different the newer block structures are when compared with that of the historic downtown.



Future Streets

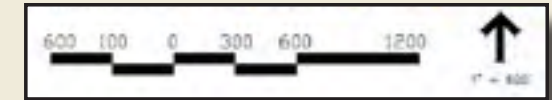
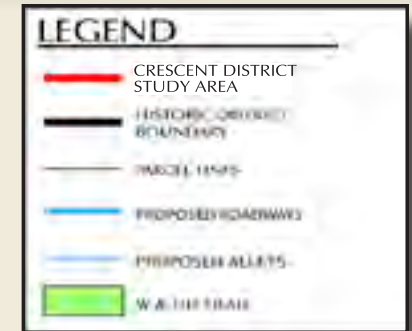
The map on this page shows the major recommendations for street improvements in the Crescent District Master Plan. These streets should be implemented part and parcel with private development that will occur in the District. The Town of Leesburg should work with the private sector to ensure that the street connections between new developments become part of the construction process. Among the major recommendations are:

1. The South Street Connector: As development occurs, the South Street connector is one of the major recommendations of the plan. It would extend from Wirt Street east of King Street, realigns South Street along the Town Branch and then crosses King Street to provide a block connection to the existing South Street slightly off of the old streets' intersection with Church Street. The new alignment of South Street would then continue to align with the Parker Street cul-de-sac and cross Catocin Circle. From there, South Street would continue to meet with both Sycolin Road and Plaza Street. While providing another connection through the District, South Street is designed as a local street serving the residents and limited businesses for its length and is not expected to be a major thoroughfare through the District. In the future, certain traffic calming measures may need to take place in the strictly residential portion of the street between Harrison Street and Catocin Circle.

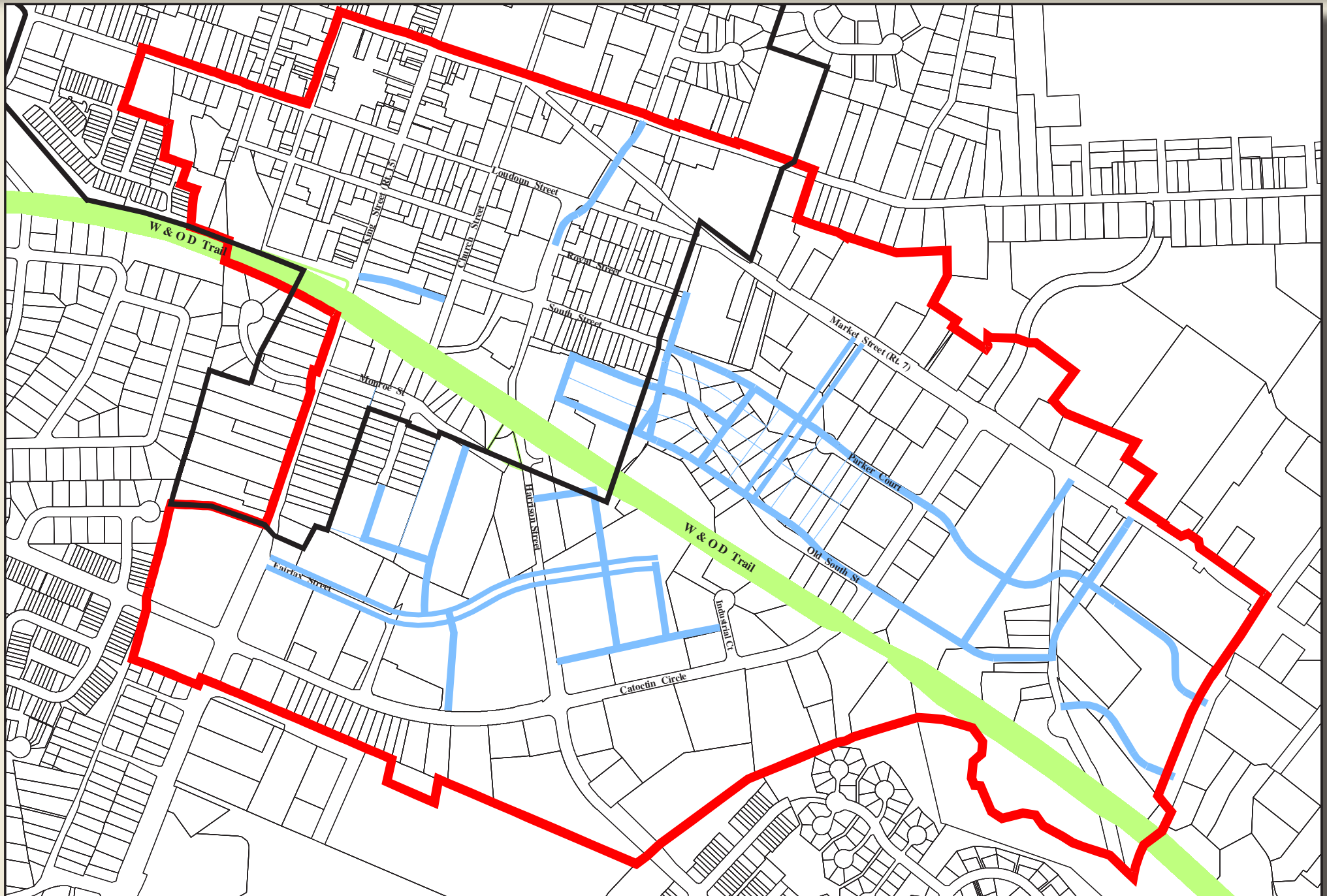
2. The “Boulevard”: The Boulevard is a new vehicular and pedestrian boulevard that would extend from Market Street to South King Street. The road would have a large grass “park” median in the middle and would not have vehicular traffic where it crosses the W&OD Trail (and potentially only pedestrian traffic at its crossing of the Town Branch). This would be a new internal street that would organize the Crescent District around a central road spine.

3. Connector Streets: The Crescent District Master Plan is showing fourteen connector streets that will create a block network in the District. These are illustrated on the Street Network Map.

4. Alleys: The Crescent District Master Plan also encourages alleys to be developed in areas where residential and commercial development warrants their use. Examples of these alleys are shown on the map in areas between Market Street and the W&OD Trail but could be replicated in other sites throughout the District.

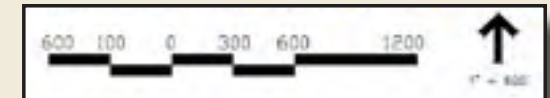


V. Street Network and Block Structure

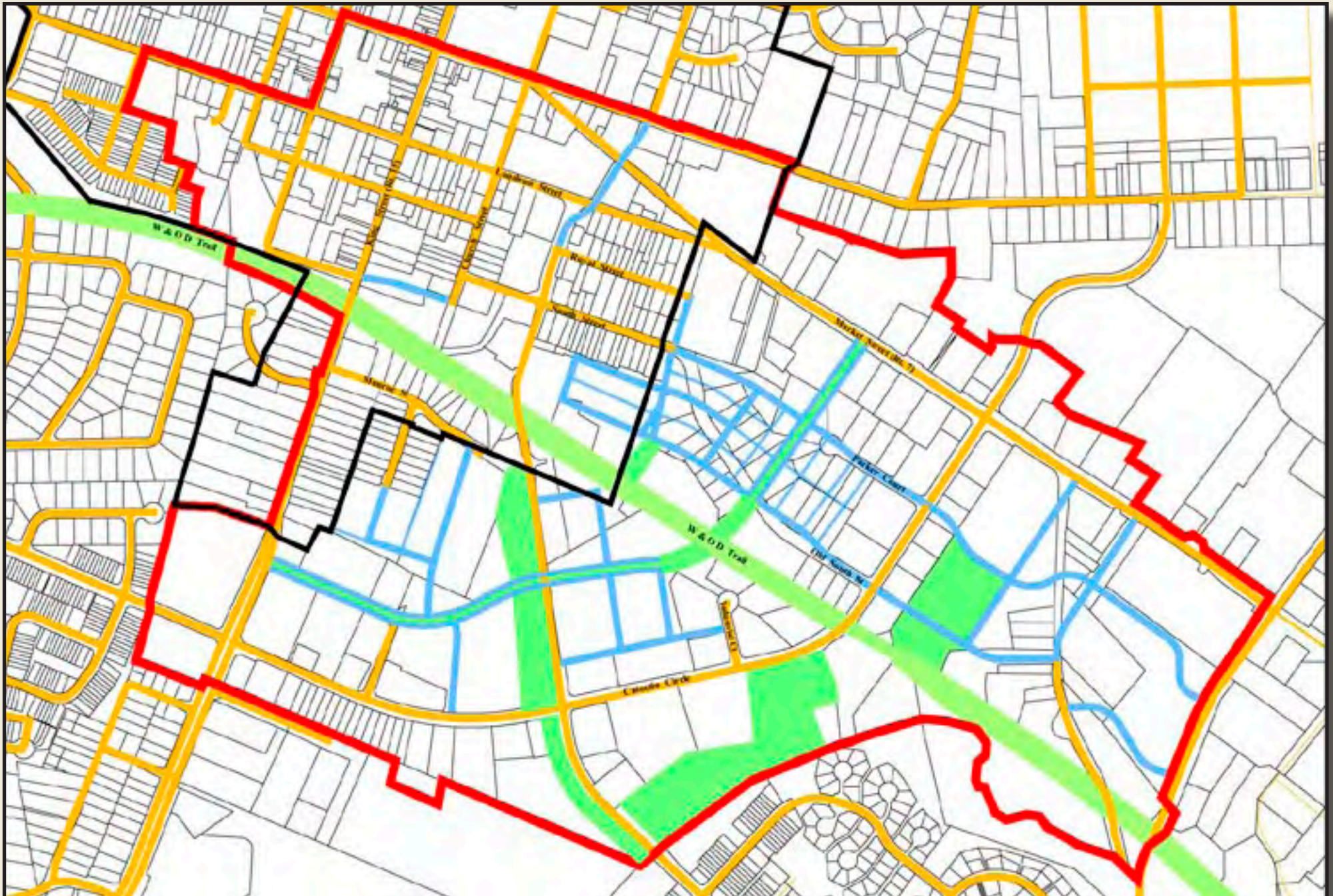


Future Blocks

The result of the additional streets is a new street network for the Crescent District that begins to resemble that of the traditional core of Leesburg. The five superblocks convert over time into thirty-five smaller blocks with additional alleyways for service on certain blocks. The Crescent District Master Plan extends the traditional street network through the District creating new options for travelers to navigate in and around the District, providing options for new development opportunities throughout the area, and developing a pedestrian-oriented network that will enable residents, shoppers, and visitors the chance to explore the new District as a seamless transition from the historic core.



V. Street Network and Block Structure

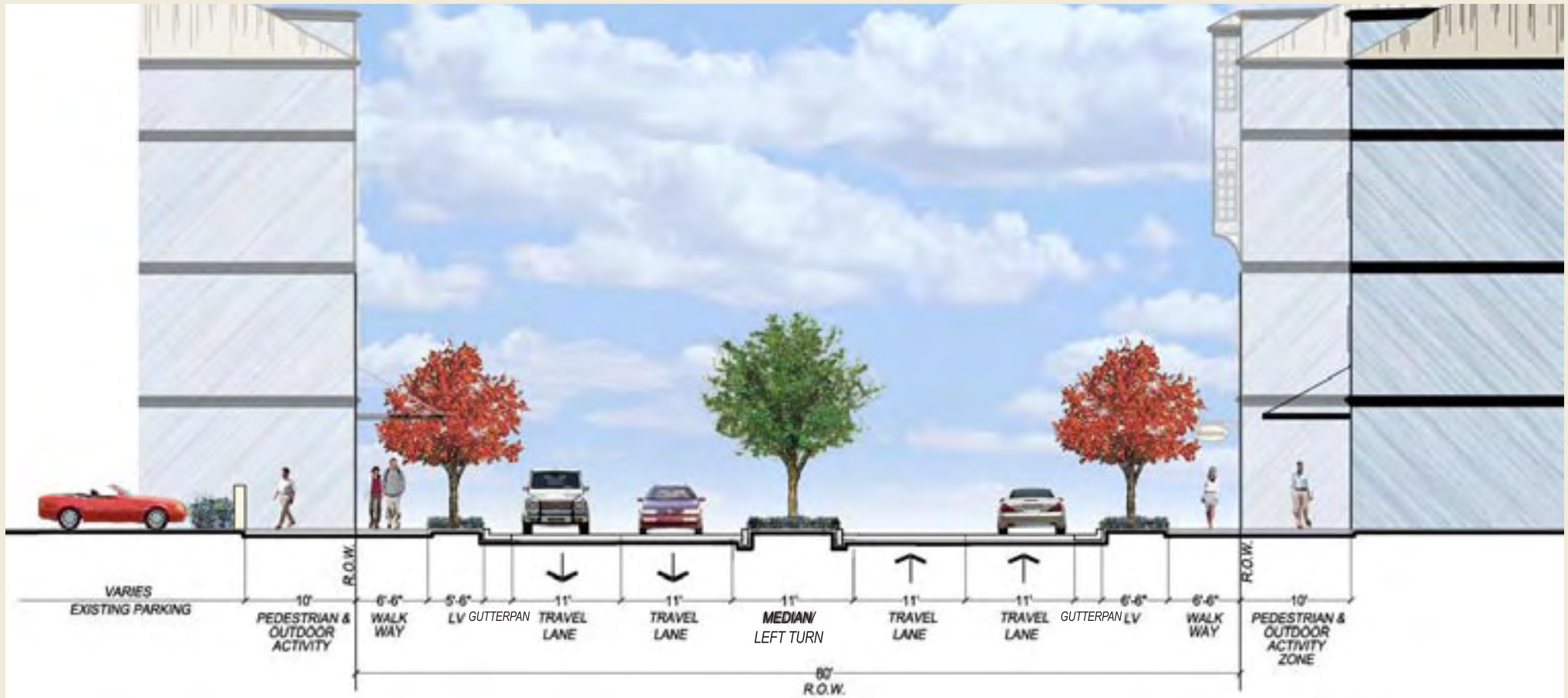


VI. Street Typologies

Just as important as the layout of the streets is the way the streets are constructed. The traditional streets in Leesburg are more compact and are oriented for the pedestrian as well as the automobile. While some streets in the District

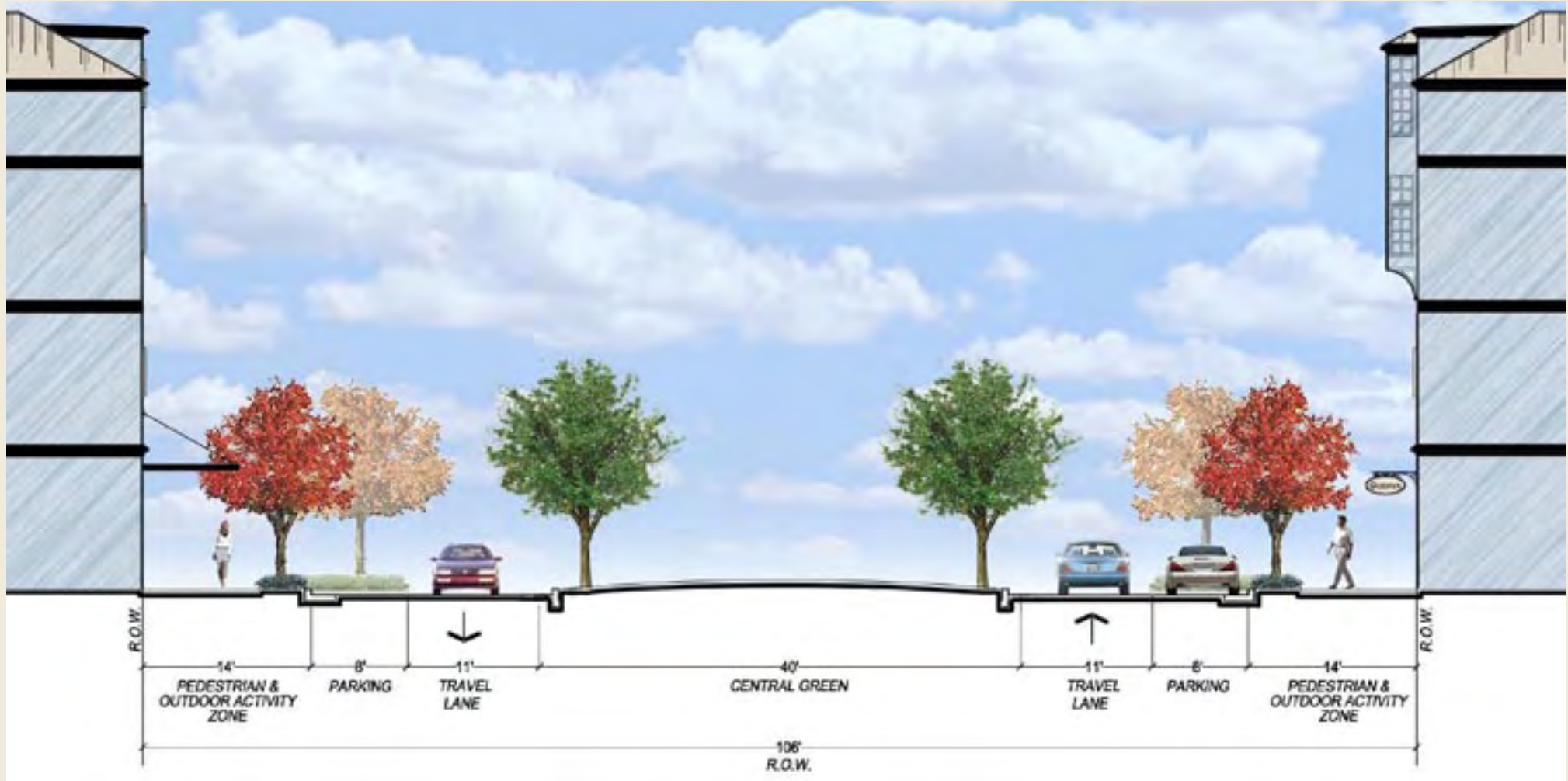
will still need to be oriented primarily to the car, all of the streets should comfortably accommodate pedestrians and should include street trees. Each of the following typologies shows how the dimensions of the street can work with future

development to create an environment suitable for walking, while accommodating a “calmer” mode of vehicular travel.



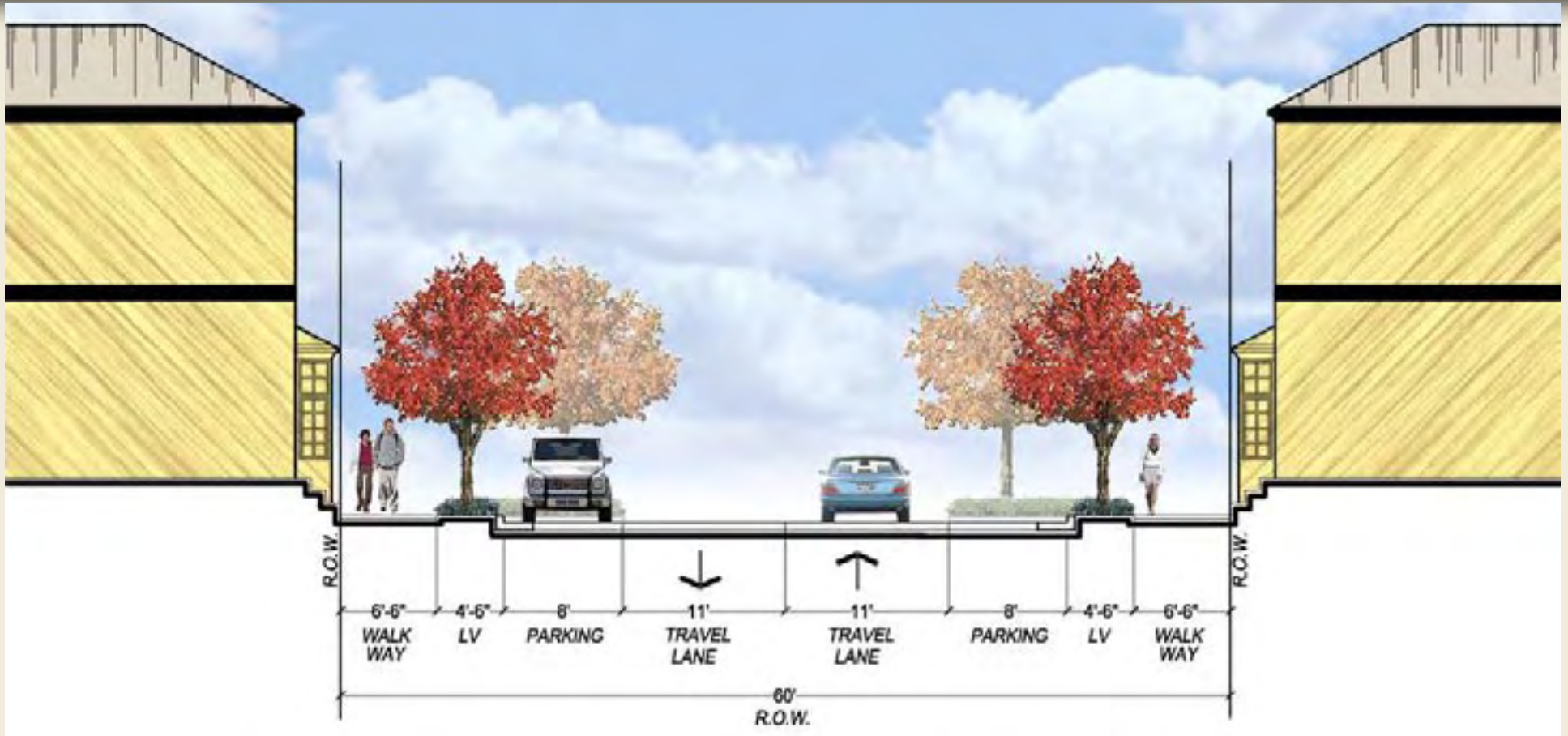
Market and Catoclin: These streets, currently heavily traveled arteries, are planned eventually to be urban boulevards. The existing paved continuous turning lane with unlimited turning access would be replaced with an eleven foot center planted median at selected locations, travel lanes would be reduced to eleven feet to calm traffic, turning lanes would exist where appropriate, and the streets would be lined with 6 ½ to 7 ½ foot planting strips with sidewalks that are a minimum width of six and a half feet.

VI. Street Typologies



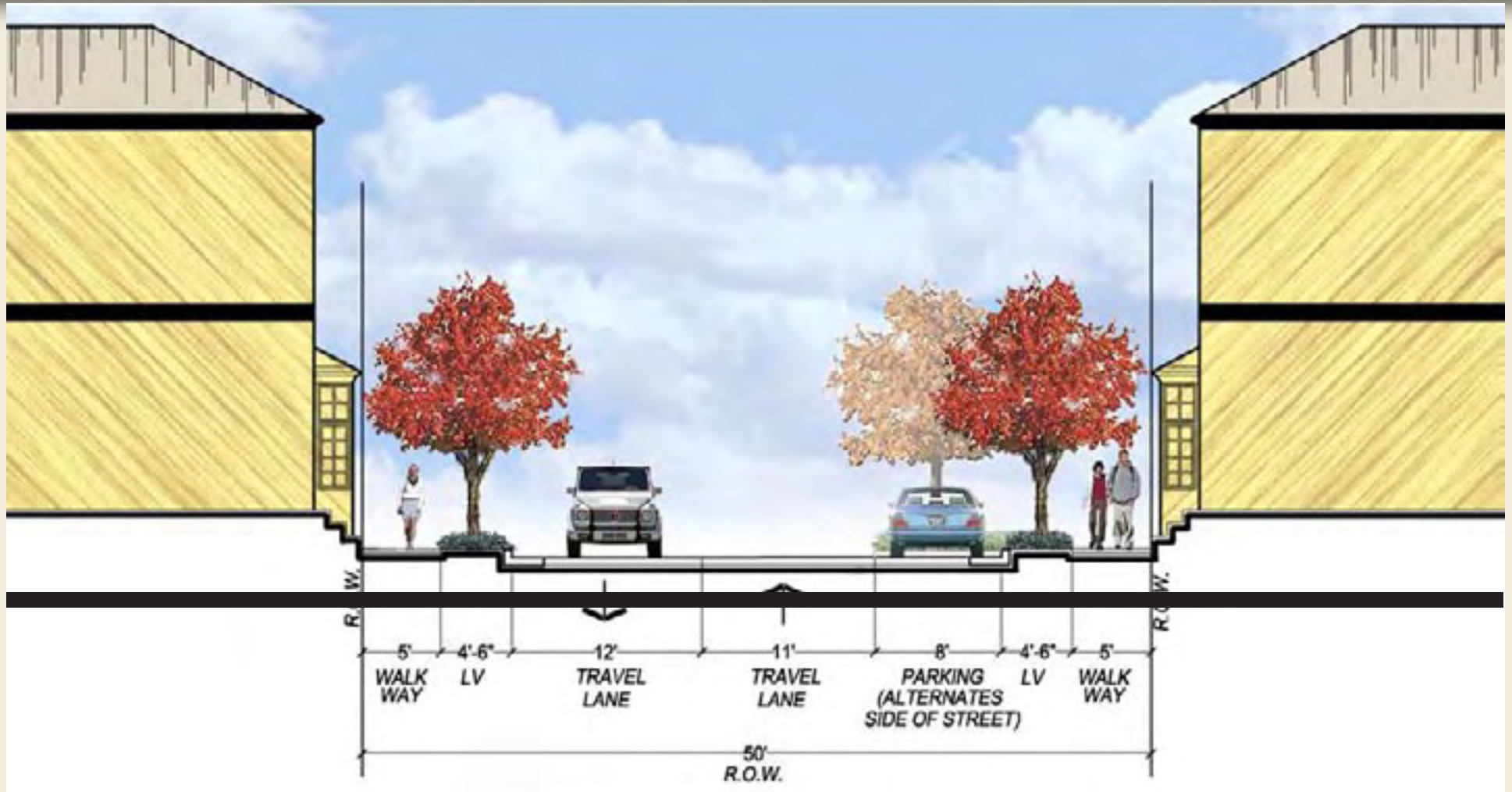
The Boulevard: The Boulevard is a very special street that bisects the Crescent District Master Plan from King Street to Market Street, with a pedestrian-only crossing at the W&OD Trail. It contains a large central parkway of about forty feet that can accommodate large shade trees and open space, spacious fourteen foot sidewalks that can accommodate outdoor dining tables, street trees, parallel parking, and one eleven foot travel lane in each direction.

VI. Street Typologies

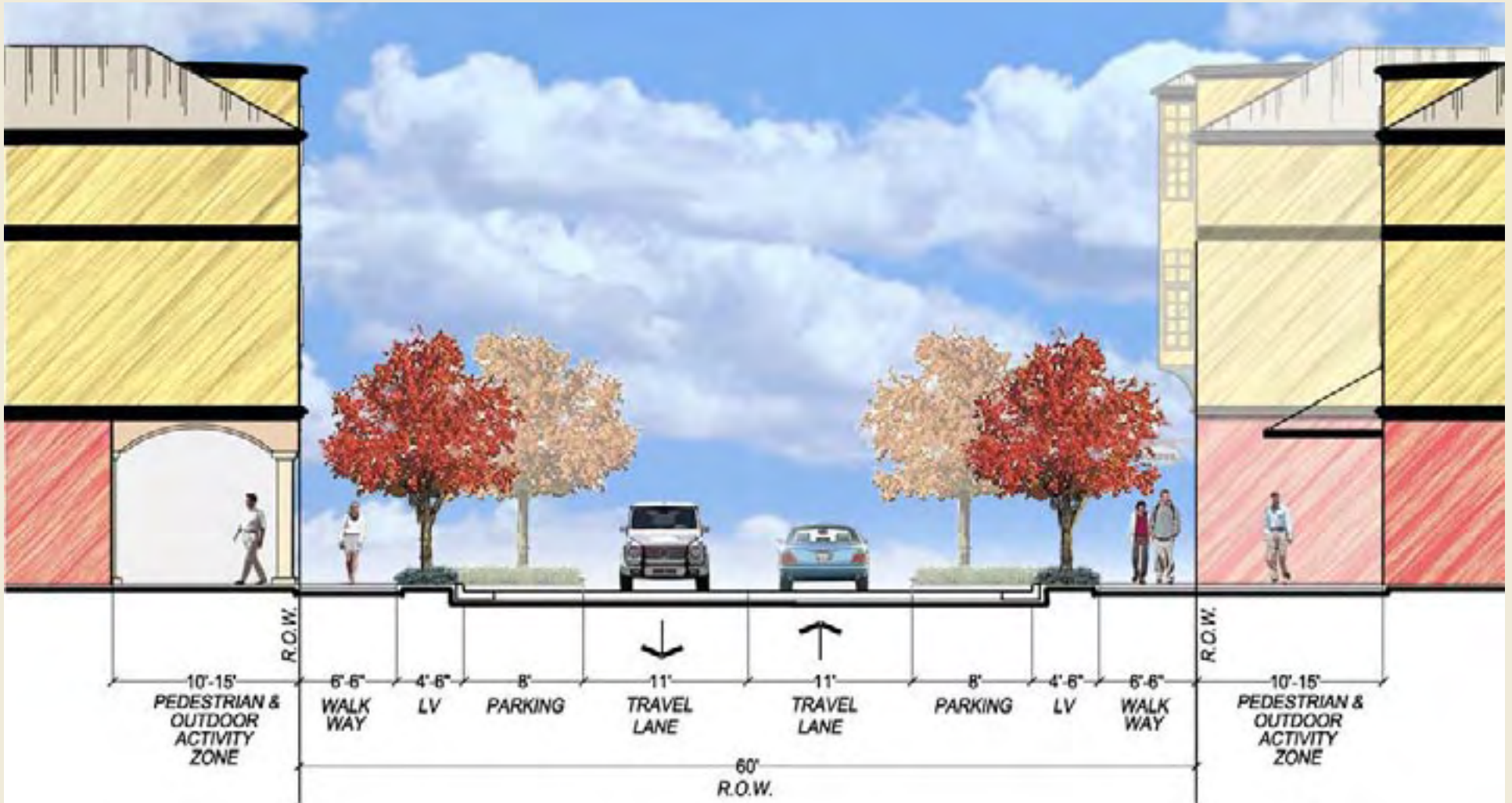


Church, Royal, and South: These streets are the modern equivalent of the traditional, narrower residentially scaled streets that exist throughout the old part of Leesburg. Recognizing that existing streets are not likely to change, the new streets should accommodate street trees, parallel parking on both sides of the street where appropriate, and alternating parallel parking on narrower streets. The lanes of these streets have been narrowed to a more residentially scaled eleven feet.

VI. Street Typologies

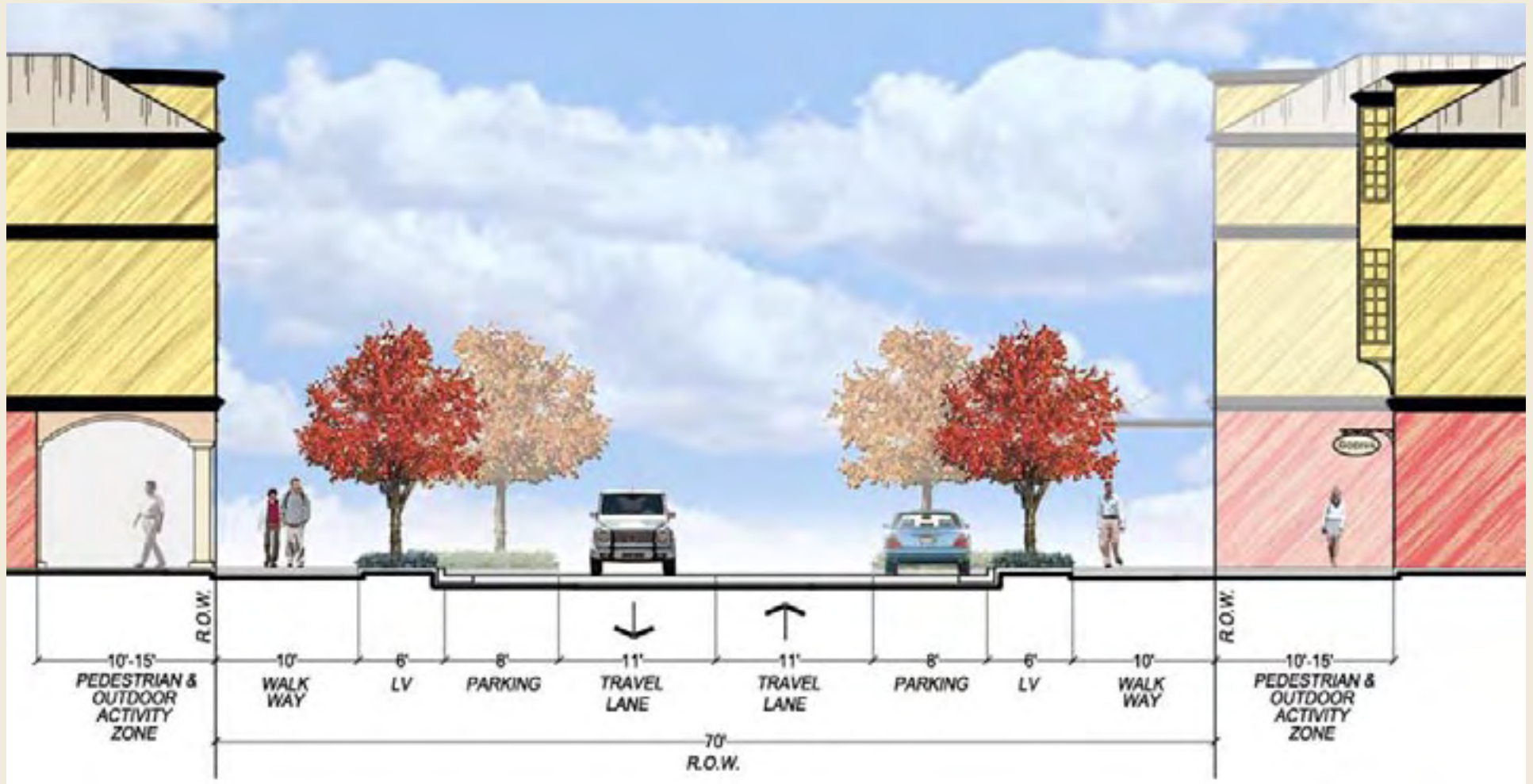


VI. Street Typologies



King and Harrison: These streets are key connectors through the District. Only portions of each street will allow for significant changes but where possible, the plan is recommending eleven foot travel lanes (as opposed to the normal twelve), street trees planted in strips between four and six feet which are currently not required, parallel parking in eight foot lanes where appropriate, and ample sidewalks of between six and ten feet where appropriate.

VI. Street Typologies



VII. Parking

As the Crescent District develops, new development will create additional parking demand. The private sector is expected to provide adequate parking to serve developments within the District in accordance with the provisions of the Leesburg Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, developers should consider creative techniques to provide parking within the District such as the following:

Off-site parking – Parking facilities for a particular development do not necessarily have to occur on the site on which the development takes place. The existing zoning ordinance allows for this type of off-site use. An off-site parking resource could be utilized in certain instances in the District.

Shared parking (joint use) – A preferable approach is to use shared parking resources. In some instances, these shared resources may in fact result in a net reduction of required parking spaces and could allow for creative development techniques in the District. The reduction of required spaces is allowed currently in the existing zoning ordinance at the Planning Commission's discretion.

Payment in lieu of parking provision – In certain very limited circumstances, payment in lieu of parking might occur in the District. This technique is used in the Old and Historic District and could be extended to development sites

within the Crescent District that may abut or include properties within the Old and Historic District.

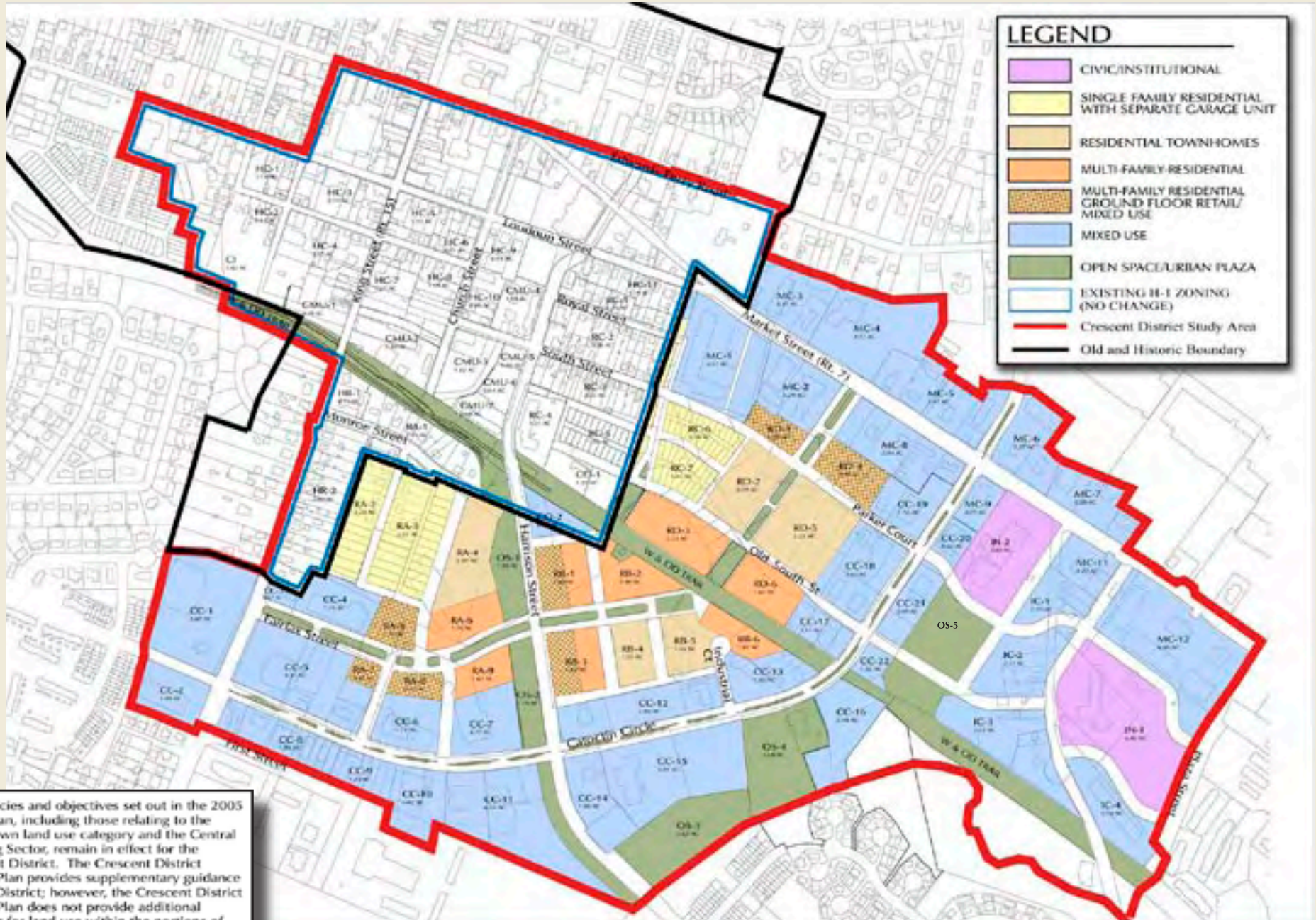
Transit – As a result of the district's convenient location and mixture of uses, the Town desires additional transit services and connections. This will also increase walkability and decrease parking demand. New development shall incorporate transit amenities and service enhancements where needed in coordination with County and VRTA transit goals.

Design – Structured parking is encouraged in the Crescent District and should be designed so that it maintains a walkable street frontage and adds architectural detail to blend with the surrounding uses.

The Crescent District is an ideal location and opportunity for the Town to create and expand the walkable community features that are so beloved in the Historic District. The proximity to Downtown, the small platted lots, multiple open spaces and existing mix of uses provide a palette on which to build a very walkable neighborhood. The master plan calls for additional features such as streetscape, greenspace linkages, transit coordination, architectural design details and additional uses such as schools, grocery stores and other daily needs that will contribute to the accessibility of the District.

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VIII. Land Use Plan



The policies and objectives set out in the 2005 Town Plan, including those relating to the Downtown land use category and the Central Planning Sector, remain in effect for the Crescent District. The Crescent District Master Plan provides supplementary guidance for the District; however, the Crescent District Master Plan does not provide additional planning for land use within the portions of the Crescent District that are not colored on this map.

As mentioned in the beginning of the plan, the B-2 zoning district that covers much of the Crescent District is not conducive to the fine grain of mixed uses and pedestrian-oriented environment envisioned for this part of Leesburg. The B-2 zoning districts allows many auto-oriented uses by right and drive-through services, outdoor lumber storage, and similar uses by Special Exception. The standards for the district are suburban in that they mandate setbacks, buffers between uses, and do little to encourage pedestrian connectivity.

The vision of the Town of Leesburg is that the Crescent District will develop with a mixture of uses in an urban form similar to that of Downtown: pedestrian orientation, urban setbacks, and traditional design elements. The plan is intended to outline the types of uses desired and the appropriate location for such uses so they are both compatible with the Old and Historic District and with the surrounding neighborhoods. The Crescent District Master Plan provides guidance supplementary to the 2005 Town Plan for properties within the Crescent District boundary. The policies and objectives set out in the 2005 Town Plan remain in effect, including those relating to the Downtown land use category and the Central Planning Sector. However, the Crescent District Master Plan provides more specific and detailed guidance, such as land use, building heights, architectural design, and street location and design, within the Crescent District.

Note: All references to the number of floors or stories (in height) in this chapter are conceptual in nature. Heights are controlled by the map “Building Heights” on page 36.

The Crescent District Master Plan calls for a mixture of uses that would occur through much of the District. The attached map detail these uses block by block. In many cases these uses are specified as “mixed-use”. For purposes of this plan, mixed-use means a mixture of residential, commercial, and office uses. The paragraphs below detail the likely mixture of uses that will occur in each of the areas. All blocks within the Old and Historic District (H1) will continue to be subject to the H1 design guidelines and current zoning regulations and are not color coded in the Land Use Plan map. The following are the basic tenets of the plan:

Historic Commercial (HC) Blocks: The HC blocks are at the historic core of the community and fall within the Old and Historic District of Leesburg. These blocks contain the “fine grain” mix of uses that the Crescent District Master Plan endeavors to extend through the entire District. The future uses in this District should maintain the historic fabric of the community and adhere to the guidelines of the H-1 Design Guidelines and current zoning regulations already in place. The future land use is proposed to remain a mixture of ground floor retail with some office space interspersed, upper floor office space, and upper floor residential. Where appropriate or compatible, retail uses should be encouraged on the ground floors of properties in the HC blocks.

Old and Historic District

The Crescent District Master Plan does not contain land use policies for the portion of the Crescent District within the Old and Historic District. In this area, development will be guided by the policies and objectives of the Downtown land use category and Central Planning Sector of the 2005 Town Plan, as well as the continued applicability of the existing zoning district regulations, the H-1 Old and Historic District overlay and the H-1 Design Guidelines. The Land Use Plan Map on page 32 identifies this area as the following blocks:

- Blocks HC-1 through HC-11 (Historic Commercial)
- Block CI (Civic)
- Blocks CMU-1 through CMU-7 (Core Mixed-use)
- Blocks HR-1 and HR-2 (Historic Residential)
- Block RA-1 (Residential A)
- Blocks RC-1 through RC-5 (Residential C)
- Block CO-1 (Core Commercial)

However, some blocks straddle the H-1 boundary. Parcels currently zoned H-1 will remain as such.

VIII. Land Use Plan

Civic (CI) Block: The CI block is indicated roughly on the Liberty Street Parking lot owned by the Town of Leesburg. This block is a possible site for a future visual and/or performing arts facility requested by stakeholders and a joint use parking structure. This facility could be a phased project over many years or could involve public/private financing. The CI block will be subject to the H1 Historic District Guidelines and current zoning regulations. For more information on this, see Selected Opportunity Sites on page 48.

Core Mixed-use (CMU) Blocks: The CMU blocks are a transition between the existing historic core and the outlying areas of the Crescent District. Consequently, they each have unique proposed uses in the future. The CMU-1, CMU-2, and CMU-3 blocks are envisioned as an extension of the Downtown core linking it with Town Branch and the W&OD Trail. The CMU-1 block (east of King Street) contains a proposed structured parking deck that would be “wrapped” in ground floor retail space such as outdoor cafés, small retail shops, and similar uses. The pattern would continue across South King Street to the CMU-2 and CMU-3 blocks. These buildings would be mixed-use structures with ground floor retail focusing on outdoor dining and entertainment fronting on a plaza along the Town Branch as well as upper floor office and residential space. The ultimate goal of these blocks is to create a true mixed-use dining and entertainment district that would be a complement to the core retail of Downtown and serve the residents and office workers in the overall area.

The CMU-4, 5, 6, and 7 blocks are existing uses such as Market Station that would be preserved in the future and allow supporting infill. All of the CMU blocks will be subject to the H1 Historic District Guidelines and current zoning regulations.

Historic Residential (HR) Blocks: These blocks are along South King Street and contain some of Leesburg’s most historic homes. They are to be preserved in the future. The HR blocks will be subject to the H1 Historic District Guidelines and current zoning regulations.

Residential A (RA) Blocks: RA-1, 2, 3 and 4 blocks occur in the Monroe Manor subdivision and adjacent to South King Street and Town Branch. The future land use for these areas will continue to be all residential of between two and three floors except for RA-4 which may be up to four floors. RA-5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 will also be residential with the potential of some limited ground floor retail or “live/work units” in certain blocks along the “Boulevard Road.” The redevelopment of these blocks is likely to be a long-term redevelopment.

Residential B (RB) Blocks: The RB blocks all occur in the proposed “Harrison Park” development on the old Barber and Ross site. The plan suggests that the blocks facing Harrison Street and slightly up the “Boulevard” have ground floor retail while the other blocks be a combination of four floor stacked flats and two-over-two stacked townhouses.

Residential C (RC) Blocks: The RC blocks cover existing single family residential along Royal and South Streets that is expected to remain intact with compatible infill development (blocks RC-1, 2, and 3). RC-4 is a block of existing senior oriented housing. Blocks RC-5, 6, and 7 are expected to mirror the development pattern along Royal and South Streets with the addition of garage apartments to the rear of the single-family units.

Residential D (RD) Blocks: The RD blocks are designed to begin to transition from the traditional single family along South and Royal Streets to a more dense development pattern approaching Catoctin Circle and Market Street. These blocks are envisioned to include multi-family, townhomes and mixed use as shown on the Land Use Plan map on Page 32.

Core Commercial (CO) Blocks: The Core Commercial blocks flank the W&OD Trail. The northern block CO-1 is existing office with the potential for a companion office building. The southern block CO-2 could have a signature office building facing Harrison Street and the W&OD Trail. These blocks are envisioned to include multi-family, townhomes, and mixed use, as shown on the Land Use Plan on page 32.

Catoctin Commercial (CC) Blocks: Blocks CC-1 through CC-22 are designated for a mixture of uses ranging from commercial to office to selected upper floor residential. It is likely that these blocks will slowly redevelop over time. The key for these blocks is how the development will ultimately face Catoctin Circle with parking to the sides and rear. Development of blocks CC-1 and CC-3-5 would not exceed three floors in height. Development in blocks CC-2 and CC-8 would not exceed four floors in height. Development in blocks CC-6, CC-7, and CC-9-22 would not exceed five floors in height. These sites currently contain grocery store, drug store, and other basic retail uses that provide valuable services to residents nearby. As the blocks redevelop, these uses should continue to exist, though configured in a way that would also incorporate upper floor residential or office uses and a more pedestrian friendly orientation.

Market Commercial (MC) Blocks: Similar to the CC blocks, the MC blocks will redevelop over time but with varying heights from up to three floors close to the core of the community to up to five floors past Catoctin Circle's intersection with Market Street. It is likely that most of this development would have ground floor retail and office with upper floor office space.

Infill Commercial (IC) Blocks: The IC blocks off of Sycolin Road would have mixed-use development of up to five floors. While commercial and residential would be permitted in buildings in the IC blocks, office uses are more likely to occur in this area.

Miscellaneous Properties: Additionally, for several properties within the Crescent District south of the W&OD Trail near Sycolin Road (PIN # 23404981000, 189452225000 and 189456806000), development will be guided by the policies and objectives of the Downtown land use category and Central Planning Sector of the 2005 Town Plan, without additional planning for land use provided in the Crescent District Master Plan.

Open Space (OS) Blocks: These blocks include existing park space in Raflo Park, future park and open space adjacent to Catoctin Circle, and a revamped Douglass Field.

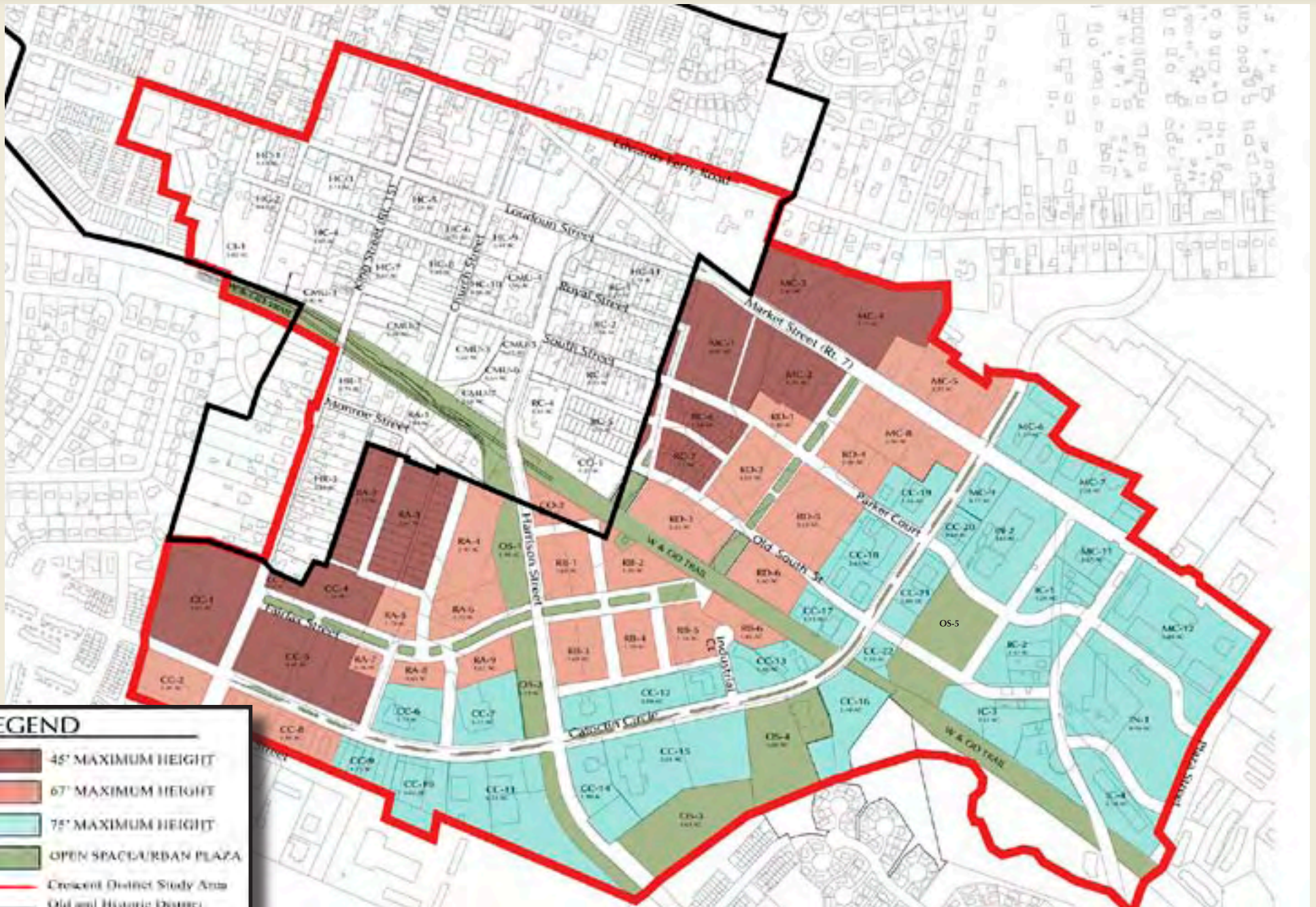
Institutional (IN) Block: The IN blocks are on the sites of existing and former schools. The plan suggests that these remain a civic use.

Workforce Housing Options

The Crescent District currently contains a diverse range of housing types. The Crescent District Master Plan seeks to continue a wide range of housing types and costs, including single-family detached homes with garage suites, townhouses, and stacked flat units that may either be for sale or rent. The Town of Leesburg is pursuing additional options to encourage workforce housing as part of a town-wide strategy to ensure that housing is available for a broad cross section of the population. A number of techniques will be included. These will range from density bonuses to mandatory requirements for a percentage of housing to be dedicated to certain income levels. Additionally, the Town may want to recruit developers with experience using low income housing tax credits for for-rent projects that could include mixed income units. Those redevelopment projects that are displacing low and moderate residents are strongly encouraged to ameliorate their impacts.

Note: All references to the number of floors or stories (in height) in this chapter are conceptual in nature. Heights are controlled by the map "Building Heights" on page 36.

IX. Building Heights



LEGEND

- 45' MAXIMUM HEIGHT
- 67' MAXIMUM HEIGHT
- 75' MAXIMUM HEIGHT
- OPEN SPACE/URBAN PLAZA
- Crescent District Study Area
- Old and Historic District Boundary

Building heights in the Crescent District Master Plan are presented as maximums occurring in three tiers that correspond with both the topography of the District and the proximity to the Old and Historic District. The implementation strategy of the CDMP will further address height issues. In addition, design guidelines will be developed to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses and buildings, proximity to the Historic District, and other desirable features.

A common architectural concept concludes that wider streets such as Catoctin Circle can accommodate taller buildings than the narrow streets that are within the Historic District (i.e. Loudoun or Market Streets that are only 40-50 ft wide). Therefore, a well-designed 50-60 ft tall building on an 80 ft wide street may have an impact similar to a 40 ft building on a 50 ft wide street.

As shown on the map on the preceding page, the first tier is a height not to exceed 45 feet. The second tier is a maximum height of 55 feet with the ability to pursue a special exception for heights not to exceed 67 feet. This tier of development occurs in areas near the new “Boulevard” which provides the width to accommodate such heights.

Finally, the third tier occurs along Catoctin Circle where the road widths are currently 80 feet and the ground elevations are at least 40 feet lower than the highest point Downtown. This tier would allow 55 feet maximum height with the potential to request a special exception for a height not to exceed 75 feet provided the conditions outlined below are met.

Finally the development of the building streetscape is intended to continue the existing pattern of differing building heights and mass. Projects with multiple buildings will be required to complement the fine grain character of the district through varying heights of building elements and fenestration of facades. Some examples of these conditions could be:

- Additional height adds desirable architectural detail to the structure that would otherwise be unable to be accommodated.
- Additional height on the structure is tiered adjacent to existing development.
- Architectural design of the building has massing, scale, and design that is sensitive to the surrounding context and does not create a monolithic appearance along the streetscape.

X. Architecture

Introduction

The Leesburg Board of Architectural Review has examined the Crescent District Master Plan and made a series of preliminary recommendations regarding the implementation of the architectural components of the plan. These will be used as an interim guide and then converted into zoning regulations and design guidelines following adoption of this plan.

General Policy Statement

The existing H1 Design Guidelines will take precedence over development that falls within the existing Old and Historic District. Design Guidelines for the Crescent District outside of the H1 District are intended to make new construction in the areas of the Crescent District lying outside the boundaries of the Old and Historic District compatible with the historic architectural character of the Old and Historic District.

Height, Scale, Massing, and Setbacks

- The closer a project is to the Old and Historic District, the more the project should respect the height, scale, and massing of the historic buildings in the Old and Historic District.

- The farther away a project is from the Old and Historic District, the more flexibility will be allowed in the design of the project's height, scale, and massing. However, in all cases, the height, scale and massing shall be compatible with the abutting street width, with consideration given to the neighborhood context.

- When not in close proximity to the Old and Historic District, structures may be as tall as fifty-five (55) feet, and in rare cases up to seventy five (75) feet with a special exception. Refer to the Height Section on page 36 for more details

- Generally speaking, the building placement should be located closer to the street with parking in the rear as reflected in the Old and Historic District

Architectural Character and Design

- The closer a project is to the Old and Historic District, the more closely the proposed buildings should reflect the historic architectural character and design of the Old and Historic District.

- The farther away a project is from the Old and Historic District, the more flexibility will be allowed in architectural character and design.



The corner of Loudoun Street SW and Wirt Street showing building setbacks, sidewalks, and massing and scale of an historic building in the core of the Historic District.



Early 19th century brick building with new construction (the stone buildings) adjacent.



A view northwest along Loudoun St. SW showing a variety of residential styles extending from downtown.



This is a southwest view of S. King St. from Monroe St. showing the residential character of this street.



A view southwest along Loudoun St. SE showing the houses of "Vinegar Hill," some of which have been converted to businesses.

Materials

- Generally, the closer a project is to the Old and Historic District, the more important it is for that project to make use of traditional building materials in traditional applications; the farther away a project is from the Old and Historic District, the greater opportunity there is to use alternative materials.
- All materials should relate directly to the design of the project and should be dimensioned and installed appropriately.
- All materials, including any materials not listed in the chart on page 40, should be appropriately combined and their application should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.



Image courtesy of Architecture, Inc., © 2005.

Leesburg Central, a proposed infill project, to be constructed inside the Historic District at the intersection of Loudoun Street SE and Harrison Street.



The Joshua Chamberlain Building at 310 Wirt Street is sensitive new office construction inside the Old and Historic District.



This is an addition to 17 Royal Street SW showing how new construction directly adjacent to an historic building can be sensitive.



New construction on Wirt Street.

X. Architecture

Table of Traditional and Possible Alternative Materials

*See note below	Traditional Materials	Possible Alternative Materials	Prohibited Materials
Foundations	Molded brick, stone, parged with concrete	Ground-faced concrete block, manufactured stone	
Walls	Wood, molded brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco	Fibercement board, pre-cast concrete, glass, manufactured stone, simulated slate, ground-faced concrete block	Exterior insulation and finish systems (EIFS), vinyl siding, corrugated metal paneling, fiberglass sheeting
Roofs	Wood shingles, slate, seamed metal, metal shingles, clay tile	Simulated slate, asphalt shingles, glass	Corrugated metal paneling, fiberglass sheeting
Doors	Wood, wood and glass, cast metal	Aluminum-clad wood, vinyl-clad wood, aluminum and glass, glass, aluminum	Vinyl
Windows	Wood, glass	Aluminum-clad wood, vinyl-clad wood, aluminum	Vinyl
Window muntins	True-divided-light (TDL), single-light (undivided)	Simulated-divided-light (SDL) with exterior muntin grills	Simulated-divided-light (SDL) with only muntin grills between the glass panes, Simulated-divided-light (SDL) with only muntin grills on the interior face
Trim	Wood, molded brick, stone, terra cotta, stucco	Manufactured stone, fibercement board, pre-cast concrete, cellular PVC, aluminum, pre-cast concrete, fiberglass, exterior-insulated finish systems (EIFS)	Vinyl

*This chart is meant to be a guide only.

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XI. Open Space

One of the key components of the Crescent District Master Plan is the inclusion of open space. The most important open space provision in the plan is the creation of a whole network of pedestrian-oriented streets where residents and visitors to the Crescent District can walk from place to place.

The premier pedestrian space of the District will be the **Boulevard**, a new broad parkway that bisects the District from Market Street to South King Street. The greenspace here is a forty foot wide tree lined area that can be used for passive recreation. The Boulevard will link a variety of pedestrian spaces throughout the District. It will also allow for future road and pedestrian connections such as potential links to Industrial Court, should redevelopment in this area occur.

The **W&OD Trail** bisects the Crescent District. This linear park is one of the key amenities to the Town and a major regional recreational resource. It was the W&OD Rail Line that created many of the original uses in the Crescent District as rail oriented and industrial businesses located adjacent to the rail line. The Crescent District plan honors that heritage by again placing uses with views along the former rail line. The plan adds no new vehicular crossings to the W&OD Trail and limits the number of new pedestrian intersections to one: the Boulevard's pedestrian connection across the trail.

Chuck and Karen Jones Plaza is envisioned as a lively open space fronting Town Branch at the foot of King Street. This space could accommodate outdoor café space, live performances, and passive recreation like strolling along the newly created water feature of Town Branch.

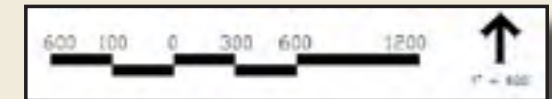
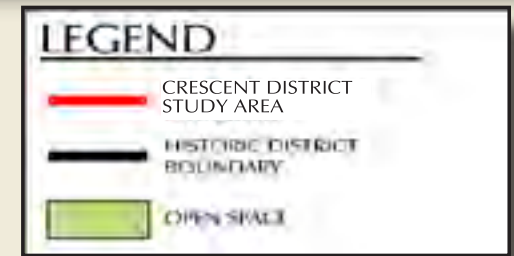
The proposed Jones Plaza adjoins an extended **Raflo Park** that will stretch from Catoctin Circle to

the plaza. It will remain a passive recreation area for residents and visitors to the Crescent District.

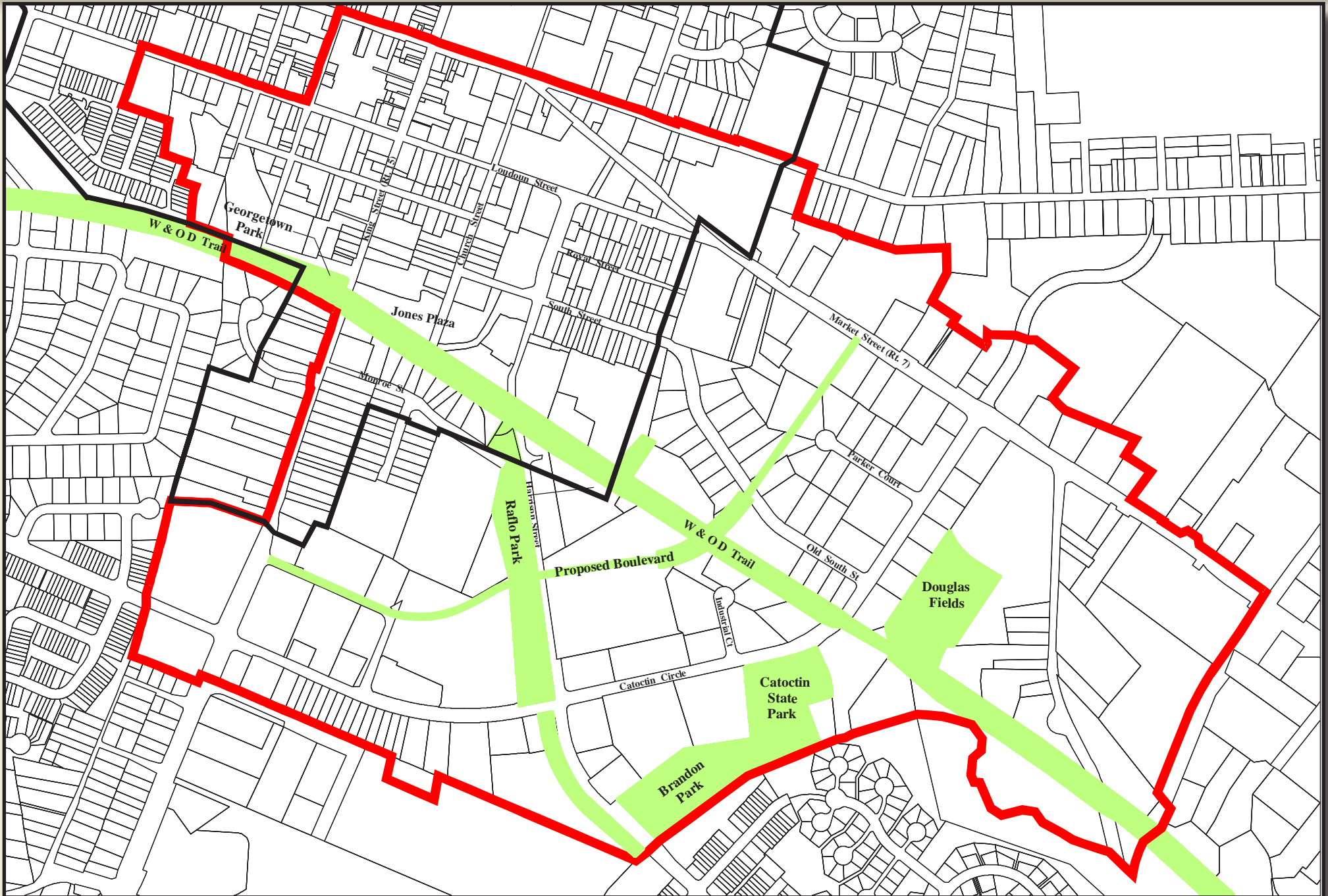
Brandon Park is currently a passive park with very little by way of active amenities. A more detailed plan for this park could provide insight into the specific uses that might be included here in the future.

The existing **Douglass Park** ball fields and open space would continue to exist and be modified to include road connections between Cactocin Circle and Sycolin Road. Similar to Brandon Park, a more detailed plan for this park could provide insight into the specific uses that might be included here in the future.

The Crescent District Master Plan provides for the introduction of one new linear park space, a new public plaza, and the enhancement of three existing park spaces in the District: Raflo Park, Brandon Park, and the Douglass fields. Additionally, the implementation zoning guidelines should strongly encourage the private sector to use the open space provisions of the Leesburg Zoning Ordinance to create small open spaces such as plazas, alleys, and greens as part of private development in the area similar to those that exist in the current Downtown area.

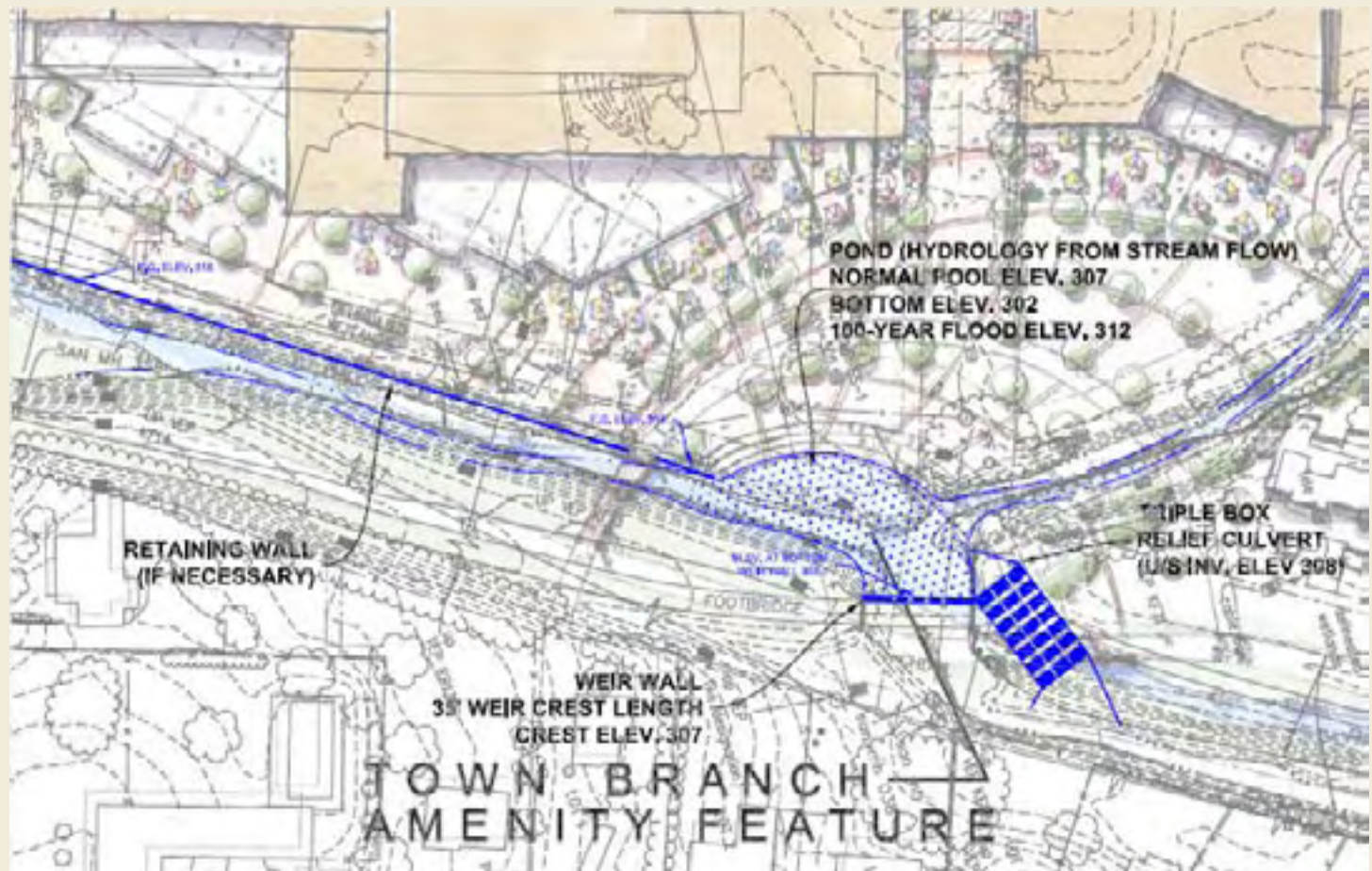


XI. Open Space



XII. Town Branch Capital Improvements

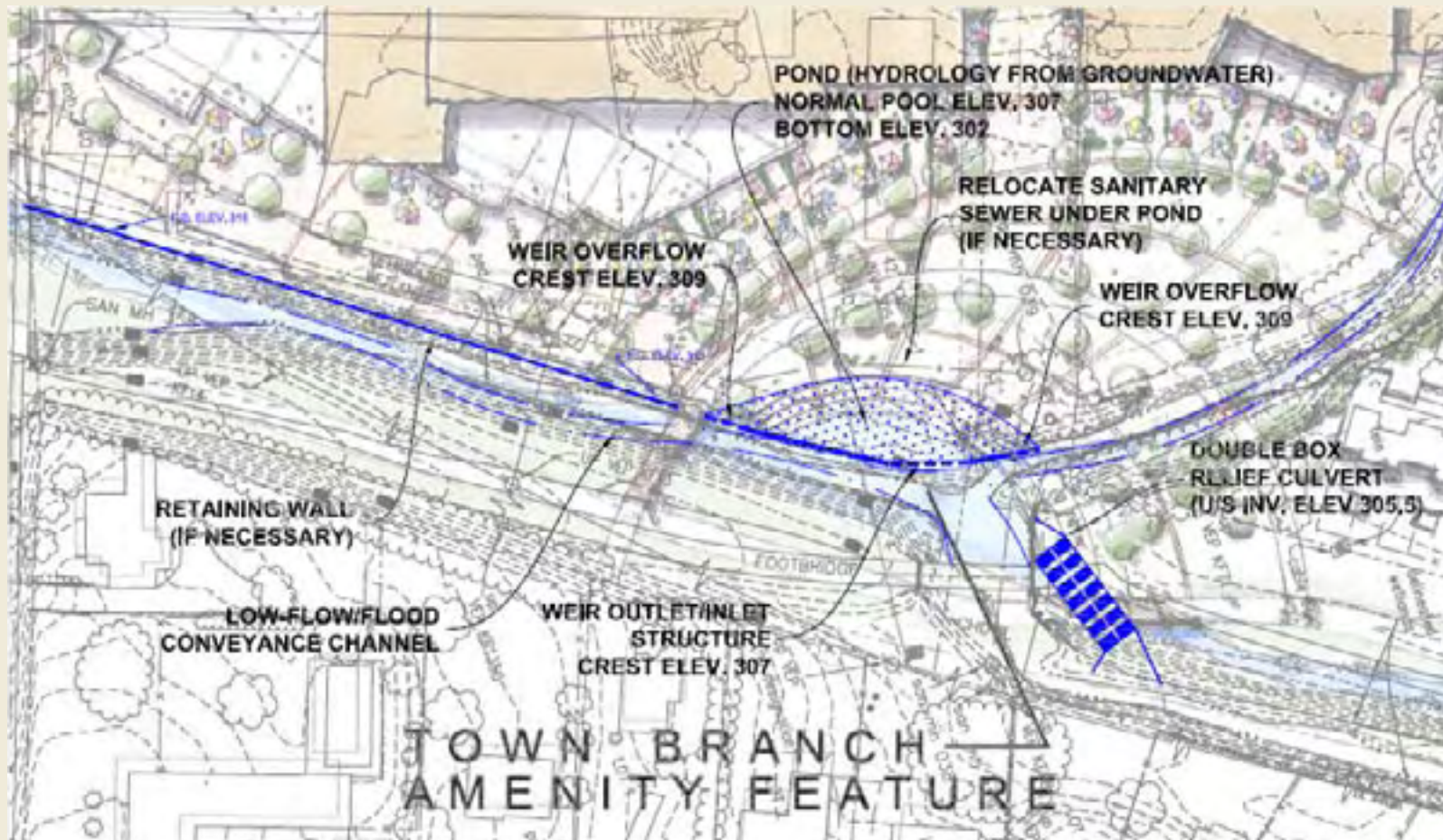
Below is a summary of the optional design schemes for improvements to Town Branch just downstream of South King Street associated with the Crescent District Master Plan. Whichever option is selected, the design will proceed through the Town's normal capital project design and review procedures which will include BAR review since the project is located within the Old and Historic District. The plan includes the creation of a water feature, Karen and Chuck Jones Plaza, just upstream of the confluence of Town Branch and North Town Branch. Three design options were considered. The first option is an in-line design and the second and third options establish a water feature offline from the Town Branch stream channel. Final engineering and design of the selected option shall consider the Town's flood mitigation objectives upstream and downstream of the water feature. The development of each scheme is based on qualitative assessments only. Although no detailed engineering calculations or analyses were performed in the development of each option, these concepts were researched and prepared by the Town's engineering consultant for the



Option 1

- **Option 1** – A water feature in-line with the main channel will be the primary conveyance path for Town Branch. A weir wall obstruction would be placed in the stream channel just upstream of the existing W&OD trail bridge crossing. This will cause a dramatic reduction in velocity as flow moves through the system. As such, debris, bed-material particles, and some suspended particles being transported from upstream will be deposited and accumulate in the water feature. As sediment is deposited in the pond, a sediment imbalance will be created immediately downstream. The stream's response will be to erode the channel downstream in an attempt to re-establish sediment transport equilibrium. Some level of maintenance of any type of water feature will be inevitable but an in-line water feature will involve a more frequent interval of sediment removal and require re-stabilization downstream. An in-line system would promote regular flushing of the water feature thus reducing stagnation and build-up of algae. Refer to the Option 1 sketch above for a layout of this design option and the table on page 47 for its pros and cons.

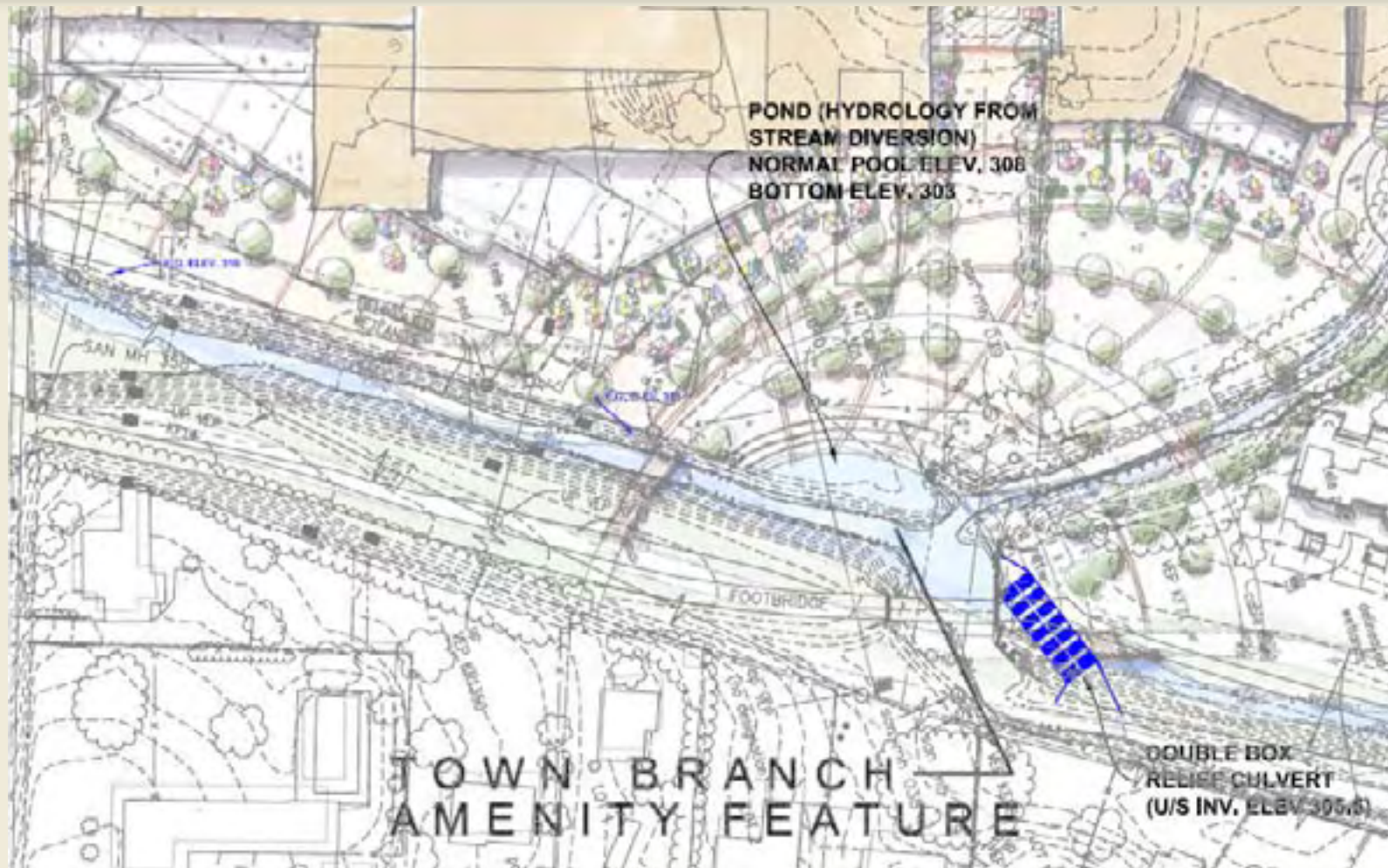
XII. Town Branch Capital Improvements



Option 2

- **Option 2** – If space allows, the Town may opt to construct the water feature in the over-bank area of Town Branch, allowing the base flow and up to the bank-full discharge (approximately 700 cfs) to by-pass the pond, thus reducing the sediment accumulation rate in the pond. This design scenario assumes that a permanent water pool can be maintained from groundwater seepage. Monitoring wells should be installed to measure groundwater depths over a period of time prior to designing this system. A side-channel weir along Town Branch would be constructed to allow higher flows, up to the 100-year flow of approximately 2200 cfs, to flow through the pond and provide flood relief in Town Branch. The weir would also provide an outlet for local runoff flowing directly into the pond. This off-line pond would only be naturally flushed when Town Branch overflows unless a water fountain is installed to prevent stagnation and accumulation of algae. Refer to the Option 2 sketch above for a layout of this design option and the table on page 47 for its pros and cons.

XII. Town Branch Capital Improvements



Option 3

- **Option 3** – If groundwater seepage is determined to not be a reliable source of hydrology for the water feature, control structures could be placed in Town Branch to allow water to backup into the water feature but it would still be beneficial to have the water feature separated from the main channel for the reasons outlined above. In such a scenario, an inverted weir and an underwater embankment could be constructed at the entrance to the pond to trap debris and sediment. Refer to the Option 3 sketch above for a layout of this design option and the table on page 47 for its pros and cons.

XII. Town Branch Capital Improvements

It may still be necessary to construct downstream flood control improvements, including channel widening and a relief culvert at the W&OD Trail Bridge crossing, as shown in the Town Branch Flood Control Design Plans. This would reduce backwater elevations, even if flood mitigation downstream of the water feature becomes unnecessary with land use changes to adjacent properties.

Floodwaters that break out of the Town Branch stream channel upstream of South King Street would need to be contained. Otherwise, flood-

waters will flow over South King Street just northeast of its crossing with Town Branch and flood the developed area from the back side. Also, an additional pedestrian bridge is planned just upstream of the water feature. This bridge should be protected from damage due to scour and should not significantly increase backwater flood elevations.

Studies by the Town's engineering consultant show that blocking the channel would not create an increase in flooding. It acknowledges dredging would be an increased cost for maintenance

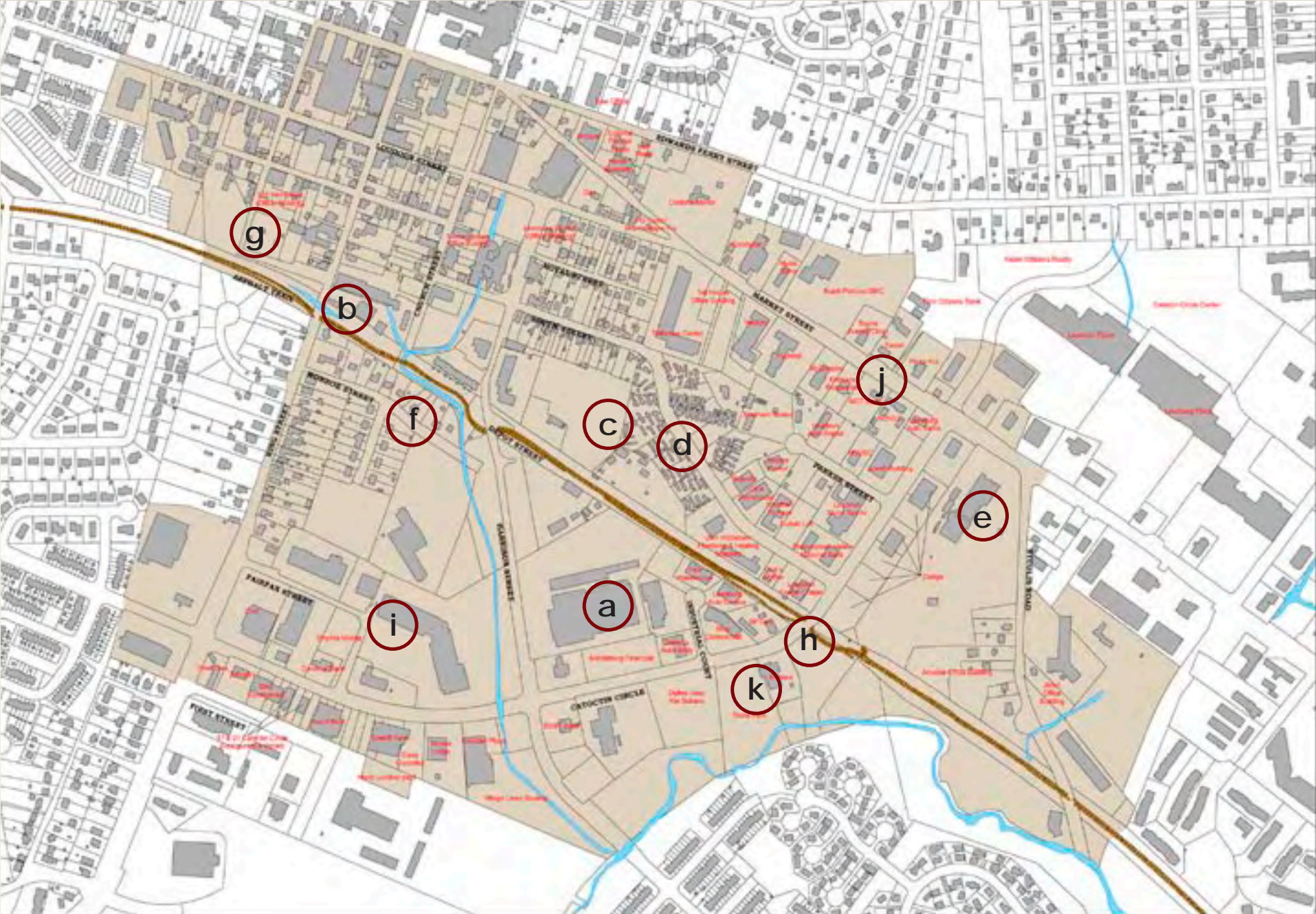
but well worth the cost since the area and project would serve three purposes. The same project can provide a stormwater solution, a park site and better aesthetics for residents and tourists alike. The increased maintenance cost will likely be recouped from the increased property taxes generated from the improved development potential of the surrounding real estate.

Each option has its pros and cons which are summarized below.

NOTE: Construction costs for each option are estimated to be between \$1 million and \$1.2 million

ALTERNATIVE		Construction Cost	Maintenance Requirements	Rate of Sediment Accumulation in Pond	Natural Circulation (prevent stagnation)	Reliability of Hydrology	Aesthetics
1	In-line w/ control at W&OD Trail Bridge	Moderate	High	High	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
2	Off-line w/ groundwater hydrology to pond	Moderate	Low	Low	Poor	Fair	Fair
3	Off-line w/ stream diversion to pond	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Good	Good	Fair
	Pro					Con	

XIII. Selected Opportunity Sites



XIII. Selected Opportunity Sites

Opportunity sites represent some preliminary examination of significant areas where development is likely to take place in the coming years. As mentioned before, any observation of development opportunities is subject to the guiding principles of the plan as outlined on page 14.

1. Properties that undergo redevelopment will do so subject to the desires of the property owners. Some of these properties may not redevelop at all if the owners do not wish to do so.
2. This list is not exhaustive. Other properties may be considered by the private sector for redevelopment and properties may be assembled for larger developments.
3. The H-1 Zoning District and Board of Architectural Review authority remain in effect as currently mapped.

Unlike many “in-town” plans where site assembly has been one of the most problematic aspects of redevelopment, Leesburg benefits from a number of large sites that could redevelop over the coming years without significant assembly efforts. Nevertheless, a plan of this nature is designed as a guide for development over time and not for a specific project.

- a. **Barber & Ross Site:** The industrial use here has vacated the property, placing it “in play” as a key transitional site.
- b. **S. King Street and Town Branch:** Characterized by a number of smaller parcels, some of which are underutilized but contain historically significant structures; this area’s immediate adjacency to Downtown and the Town Branch provide a challenging oppor-

tunity for infill. One idea is a new private mixed-use development flanking King Street that would have elevations not to exceed two stories facing King Street with tiered heights not exceeding five stories off of the street frontage. The effect would not visually interfere with the traditional views of the historic downtown. A new plaza and water feature, the “Chuck and Karen Jones Plaza,” named in memory of the community leader who was one of the principal visionaries responsible for the Crescent District plan. The Chuck and Karen Jones Plaza would include outdoor performance space, an impounded Town Branch to create a larger water feature, and public art.

- c. **Auto Recyclers Site:** Industrial uses such as this are likely to become obsolete as redevelopment with higher and better uses occur in the area.

- d. **Leesburg Mobile Home Park:** Manufactured housing of this type, long grandfathered in as a use in Leesburg, coupled with a location in the middle of surrounding redevelopment is likely to increase development interest in this parcel.

- e. **Douglass Support Center/Sycolin Road area:** This area is owned by Loudoun County Schools and presents an opportunity for additional government/school/public uses on properties already in the public domain if designed to look more traditional and use land more efficiently.

- f. **Monroe Manor Residential:** Many of these units are investor-owned rental units that might be redeveloped for owner occupied housing.

- g. **Liberty Street Parking:** This property, owned by the Town of Leesburg, is likely to be redeveloped in conjunction with private sector development in the

area. One idea considered is a new “Loudoun Center for the Arts.” This project could take on many different facets. In some communities these have begun with small art gallery and studio space; in others they have included small performing arts venues. Still others have partnered with private sector or institutional partners to construct full scale performing arts facilities. In any case this would be a phased project that could occur over time.

- h. **Catoctin Circle Properties:** Currently stable retail and offices uses, this area is not likely to redevelop until mixed-uses with higher densities than the existing suburban style become viable.

- i. **Virginia Village Area:** Currently at nearly 100% occupancy, this area is likely to remain in its current use for the next decade.

- j. **Market Street Properties:** These properties, similar to those on Catoctin Circle, are likely to redevelop in a manner more consistent with the nature of Downtown rather than their existing suburban model.

- k. **Catoctin Skate Park:** This site is currently used as a skate park. If the Town were to consider moving the skate park to another location, this parcel is ideally situated for significant private sector redevelopment. Such a redevelopment would complement other mixed-use development opportunities along Catoctin Circle, further the conversion of Catoctin Circle into the urban boulevard it is envisioned to become, and put marketable public land back on the tax rolls. However, should such a redevelopment occur, it is strongly recommended that the loss of the open space be mitigated with new open space elsewhere in the District.

XIV. Implementation Recommendations

The purpose of this section is to begin to make some general recommendations for modifications to Town policy with regard to land development within the Crescent District. The ultimate goal for the Town is to facilitate development within the District so that development proposals consistent with the Crescent District Master Plan proceed through the development process with maximum ease.

This section is not designed to delve into detailed changes to the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, or other development standards but rather to point out general recommendations in order to have the Crescent District develop in a way concordant with the master plan.

Zoning

The Crescent District is zoned almost entirely B-1 and B-2. While the B-1, B-4, and PD Districts allow a mixture of uses, none of the zoning categories fit the overall goals of the Crescent District Master Plan of creating vibrant infill development.

Recommendation: Implement a three tiered Mixed-use Transition District for the entire Crescent District that would allow the wide mixture of pedestrian-oriented retail uses, offices, residential multi-family, and residential single-family development. The uses allowable within the District would be contingent on the roadway frontage as specified in the master plan. Narrower roads would handle only residential traffic and major roads more dense development.

The CD-1 District would cover properties adjacent the Old and Historic District of Leesburg and would

provide the most guidance for design review and compatibility with the adjacent District.

The CD-2 District would be the transition District that would cover the areas that are primarily residential in character between the historic core and the commercial corridors.

The CD-3 District would be the Districts along Ca-toctin Circle, Market St, and Sycolin Rd. and would allow for the maximum diversity of uses, intensity and some design flexibility.

Design Review

Only portions of the Crescent District currently fall within a design review district. The H-1 District governs parcels along South King Street and several adjacent blocks. The H-2 District governs only parcels with frontage on Market Street and King Street, outside the H-1 District. Quality design will be of paramount concern as new development occurs with increased densities.

Recommendation: Obtain a Town Charter Amendment or special legislation from the General Assembly to allow for design review in areas covered by the CD Zoning Districts. In the amendment, consider seeking provisions in either administrative review for the CD-3 District or a form-based code. If design and development parameters are outlined proactively, most developers will adhere to them. This puts the Town in a position to proactively outline desired quality but gives developers the ability to budget for that higher level of quality and provides a processing incentive for them to follow the prescrip-

tive guidelines. The BAR or a similar design review board can be utilized for projects in the CD-1 and CD-2 Districts and for projects in the CD-3 District when developers choose options not eligible for administrative review or not in compliance with the form-based code.

Financing Recommendations

While the private development community should be responsible for the vast majority of the infrastructure necessary to implement this plan, a number of public projects will be necessary to complete the plan. These include, but may not be limited to, the Town Branch improvements, portions of the Chuck and Karen Jones Plaza, and certain road improvements. A variety of financing options should be explored to fund these public improvements. The Crescent District Master Plan does explicitly recommend that development in the District should “pay its own way” for public sector improvements needed and that no additional taxes should be used to finance these improvements. The Economic Development Commission along with Town staff may assist in exploring a variety of financing options for certain improvements in the District in the future. These may include but certainly are not limited to the following techniques:

XIV. Implementation Recommendations

Recommendation A: Explore a Tax Increment Financing District for the Crescent District. Tax Increment Financing is a time-tested technique specifically designed to create investment in a district where there is no prior record of significant private sector interest. It is authorized in Virginia under the following section of the Virginia State Code:

§ 58.1-3245.2. Tax increment financing.

The governing body of any county, city or town may adopt tax increment financing by passing an ordinance designating a development project area and providing that real estate taxes in the development project area shall be assessed, collected and allocated in the following manner for so long as any obligations or development project cost commitments secured by the Tax Increment Financing Fund, hereinafter authorized, are outstanding and unpaid.

Tax Increment Financing does not raise taxes in a district. Instead, it uses the natural appreciation of a district's tax value to create a bonding mechanism for public sector improvements in that district. The base line value of the district is "frozen" once the district is created and the subsequent increase in value as a result of investment in the district is dedicated to debt service on a revenue bond issued to fund public sector improvements.

Recommendation B: Explore a Community Development Authority (CDA) to implement portions of the plan. CDA's are authorized for use by towns in the Commonwealth of Virginia after the town has completed a public hearing and elects to participate by ordinance. A CDA is a true public-private partnership that would involve the following:

- Fifty-one percent of the property owners within a district must approve a petition to become part of a CDA.
- A town-appointed board that could include majority control by private development interests in the district.
- CDA's are able to levy a special assessment on a district to finance bonds for improvements within the district.
- CDA's may capture other revenues such as parking rent, admission taxes, and hotel taxes within the district to finance debt for public improvements.
- CDA's are not subject to Virginia procurement regulations.
- The General Obligations of the Town are not allowed as components of the financing of bonds in the district protecting the Town from liability if the district fails to cover debt service on the bonds.

CDA's have successfully been used on a number of projects in the Commonwealth and, similar to Tax Increment Financing, allow for a district to "pay its way" for public improvements.

Conclusion

This plan recognizes that redevelopment of this part of the community is inevitable. Rapid growth in Leesburg will mandate that properties that heretofore have been underutilized will become valuable for higher and better uses. The community has two choices. The first is to react to each redevelopment proposal on a case-by-case basis and hope that each coordinates with the other. The second is to plan for the future in a thorough way. This plan attempts to do just that in a conceptual way.

The next phase of the plan is to develop detailed implementation tools including zoning, design review, financing, and marketing strategies for the District.

**TOWN OF LEESBURG
CRESCENT DISTRICT MASTER PLAN**

adopted June 27, 2006
through the efforts of

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and in memory of Charles G. “Chuck” Jones