



**CRESCENT DISTRICT
MASTER PLAN
October 24, 2024**

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Town of Leesburg, Virginia Crescent District Master Plan Adopted _____

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“I have lived in Leesburg since 1970 and continue to believe it is a great investment of my money, time, and community. Yes, it has grown, yes, it has changed. But who out there has not wanted to reinvent themselves?”

Longtime Leesburg Resident

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CHAPTER ONE: SETTING THE STAGE AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

Small Area Plan Purpose

Planning Process

Crescent District History

The Crescent District Today

Competing Interests

Current Issues

Emerging Trends

Planning Context

Existing Zoning

Photo: Aerial view of Virginia Village (Catoctin Circle and South King Street in 2020)

1. SETTING THE STAGE AND PLANNING BACKGROUND

The actual policy and planning guidance associated with the Crescent District Master Plan begins in Chapter 2. Since planning should be dynamic and responsive to the Town's changing needs, market conditions, and public sentiment, this chapter is intended to document existing conditions at the time the document was written. It provides the planning background, process, goals, and market conditions that were used to develop policies in the document to give the reader a sense of the policy rationale. As these conditions evolve, updates to the document may be appropriate.

Small Area Plan Purpose

The Crescent District Master Plan covers an area of nearly 400 acres adjoining and including part of the Old and Historic District of Leesburg. This Master Plan document is intended to accomplish 5 key objectives for that area.

1. Establish for the long-term redevelopment of the District in an walkable mixed-use pattern and form.
2. Provide community stakeholders a reasonable expectation of the vision for the district and how it will look in the future.
3. Respect the character of Leesburg's historic downtown while providing a transition to more automobile oriented parts of the community.
4. Develop a setting for a true mixture of uses that recognizes Leesburg's role as a major retail, office, and residential

- community in Loudoun County.
5. Provide area specific recommendations to supplement the recommendations in the Town Plan and support realization of its guiding principles.

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 quantity of under utilized land in the Crescent District presents an opportunity for redevelopment that extends the small-town character of the downtown area while providing new housing opportunities, community amenities, and high quality pedestrian spaces.

A key component of the long term vision is making the Crescent District a place for "Live, Work, Play". This means introducing more locations for businesses to locate in Town, creating new shopping and dining to expand and complement downtown in an amenity rich walkable environment, creating new housing alternatives, and large parks that provide respite and fresh air for all ages.

While redevelopment must occur to achieve this vision, not all redevelopment activity should be considered a good thing. Redevelopment that is consistent with the vision means providing opportunities for business and employment uses and creating new open spaces and amenities to serve the community. This redevelopment must provide community services to serve the increasing size and densities. Things like emergency care, alternative transportation infrastructure like Uber, Lyft, taxi, and bus, and a variety of retail spaces to address community needs should all be provided.

The Town must be proactive in focusing on economic development efforts to attract business and employment uses and working

on infrastructure enhancements in the Crescent District.

Competing Interests and Visions for the Future

The Crescent District is mostly comprised of commercial development today but there are different ideas for the future. Some people prefer to see the Crescent District remain unchanged while others envision a large scale redevelopment effort that will transform the Crescent District into a vibrant mixed-use community. Some people expressed a desire to focus development on the pedestrian environment while others felt that future development was better suited for a suburban, automobile dominate form. Furthermore, there are differing ideas for what buildings should look like in the future and how tall they should be.

This plan seeks to find the best possible balance of those ideas for the future and despite these competing interests, this plan has been developed with an emphasis on economic development, identifying ways to expand the tax base, lessening the tax burden for residents, and providing new desired amenities for Town residents. This Plan attempts to create a new development pattern that provides cohesive development with added benefits to Leesburg residents.

Planning Process

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.

Planning History

The Crescent District Master Plan was formally adopted in 2006 after extensive review and revisions. A Town Plan Amendment adopted in 2013 made further revisions. The revisions made over time focused mainly on densities, uses, building heights, and the boundaries of the Crescent District, but the overall vision generally remained the same. The overall vision for the Crescent District as vibrant mixed-use community has not changed.

How Was The Current Planning Policy Developed?

Development of this Crescent District Master Plan document and the policy within is rooted in the vision expressed in past versions of this document and in a reality check of market conditions, and what the community wants. Market conditions are constantly evolving. At the time this document was being adopted, the market for residential development was particularly strong while the market for commercial development, particularly retail and office uses was substantially weaker. To get a better sense of what made sense given market conditions, part of the effort to update the Master Plan included preparation of a development feasibility study which is described below.

The Previous Crescent District Master Plan

As noted above, the first iteration of the Crescent District Master Plan was drafted following the Business Development Strategy which was adopted in concept by the Town Council in 2003.

The Business Development Strategy identified 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 identified the Crescent District as an area where significant public amenity spaces like civic halls, parking, parks, libraries, and multi-purpose spaces can be created to enhance the attraction of downtown for residents, visitors, and investors.

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

Building on these concepts, the first Crescent District Master Plan document was adopted in 2006. That plan presented a vision for the District for policy makers, citizens, investors, and property owners to consider. At the time redevelopment was considered to be inevitable. The parameters set forth for that eventual redevelopment 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 resulting plan endeavored to (1) establish the sensitive long-term redevelopment of the District, (2) create a

development pattern that is respectful of the historic core of Leesburg while providing a transition to the more automobile oriented parts of the community, and (3) develop a setting for a true mixture of uses.

These three concepts are considered to form the overall vision for the Crescent District. Since the first iteration for the Master Plan in 2003, the overall vision for the Crescent District has not changed. As further discussed in Chapter 2, this overarching vision has not changed. Therefore, the Master Plan document from 2003, formed the starting point for this updated document.

Development Feasibility Studies

The development feasibility studies conducted in 2023 were intended to test the economic feasibility of redeveloping land in the Crescent District based on three different density scenarios assuming standard private investment thresholds. These studies revealed that not all forms of development were economically feasible under today’s market conditions and that future decisions regarding the Crescent District would have to be grounded in economic realities. In essence, if the Town wants to see development that provides all of the desired amenities and improvements occur in the foreseeable future, the Town would need to partner with the private sector development community or ensure that such redevelopment opportunities generated sufficient interest for investment from the private sector.

A brief summary of the three development scenarios and results is as follows:

Low Density Scenario



The Lansdowne Town Center which includes a Main Street with office above retail surrounded by Townhouse represents a local example of the "Low Density Scenario."

The Low Density Scenario assumed "by right zoning" under the current Crescent District zoning code, up to 3 story building heights, surface parking and a public park of less than one acre. By right zoning dictated a maximum density of 12 dwelling units per acre for the residential and a requirement for commercial development along Catoctin Circle.

The Low Density Scenario was found not to be a financially attractive opportunity for the private development community due to the following:

- Surface parking office drives little land value
- 12 du/acre townhome development is too low of a density to support current land costs.



Medium Density Scenario



Loudoun Station in Ashburn provides an example of the type of development envisioned by the "Medium Density Scenario."

The medium density scenario required rezoning of the property, allowed up to four story building heights and included a 1-2 acre public park. Parking was accommodated through the use of surface parking and single story parking decks.

The medium density scenario was found to be the most economically feasible scenario due to the following:

- multi-family development drives sufficient land value.
- detached parking decks provided an efficient and cost-effective parking solution.



High Density Scenario



Areas of the Mosaic District in Fairfax County provides an example of the type of development envisioned by the "High Density Scenario."

The high density scenario required rezoning of the property, allowed up to five story building heights and included a 2 acre public park. Parking was accommodated with the use of podium style building typologies with above and below ground parking structures. The high density scenario was found to also be an economically feasible development scenario due to the following:

- multi-family development drives sufficient land value
- attached parking decks (podium parking) carried a premium cost but still provided a feasible parking solution that accommodated greater development density.



Key Findings of the Development Feasibility Studies

It is important to understand that the scenario studies are conceptual in nature. They intentionally studied a simple development program to show key differences between different types of development. Ultimately, the results of the feasibility study demonstrated that the best type of development would incorporate a range of housing products, densities and building heights – like the rest of Leesburg. This plan tries to accommodate that range. The scenarios demonstrated the following key findings:

- The market for townhouses and residential is much stronger than the market for office and retail.
- Office is particularly challenging because of the parking requirements and the cost to provide that parking.
- The economics of development are very sensitive to structured parking cost. This makes the heights and densities under high density development scenario more difficult to achieve.
- The optimal development scenario would provide a mix of product and unit types and would include townhouses, apartments, retail, office and supporting amenities.

Developer Feedback

In addition to the information provided by the development scenarios and feasibility analysis the project team met with local developers who provided the following feedback:

- Office is challenging in the current market and should be encouraged but approached conservatively.
- Retail shopping has shifted from brick and mortar to home delivery softening the need for traditional main street retail or strip shopping centers.

- While the three different development scenarios are simple and conceptual in nature, the ideal scenario would include a range of housing products, densities, and building heights - like the rest of Leesburg.
- New retail along Catoclin Circle in it's current state would be difficult. Catoclin Circle, in its current state is not a walkable environment.
- Value from an economic development perspective is about creating a sense of place with activity, highly amenitized public spaces and centers of activity.

Neighborhood Meetings

Another key component of the Planning Process was neighborhood meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to get a better understanding of community priorities for the Crescent District as it redevelops.

The development feasibility studies were one of several topics pertaining to redevelopment in the Crescent District that were presented and discussed during the neighborhood meeting. Community members were polled on topics that included walkability, building form, parks and amenities, and affordable housing. The neighborhood meetings demonstrated the community's clear desire to see redevelopment that provided:

-  **NEW AMENITIES,**
-  **WALKABILITY AND ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN EXPERIENCES,**
-  **AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**

The one sentiment of overwhelming consensus was that the aesthetics and walkability of the Crescent District needed to be improved. However, community priorities and consensus regarding other aspects of redevelopment were not as apparent. There continue to be differing opinions with regard to heights, densities, and building form, as well as the extent to which the Town should invest in future improvements.



Consultant Expertise

While the community clearly demonstrated that they were interested in seeing redevelopment that enhanced the community, the reality is that the redevelopment visions expressed by some people were not economically feasible. Simply put, redevelopment is not feasible unless it pays for itself. This, coupled with the fact that the Town seeks new amenities for the Crescent District meant that some difficult decisions would need to be made if redevelopment was to occur.

Some people expressed a desire to see building heights that were limited to three stories and there was an expectation that every street could be lined with shops and restaurants. However, the retail market could not support this much retail and the cost of purchasing the land and redeveloping it at such densities would result in a loss for any developer.

The Town's consultant for this Crescent District Master helped the Town to identify priority areas for redevelopment and identify parameters for redevelopment that struck the best balance between community preferences, market realities, and the universal desire to see improvements in the Crescent District. Through case study research and a thorough analysis of best practices the consultant team worked with Town Staff to create the policy recommendations in this document.

Crescent District History

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



East Market Street outside of the Downtown developed under a more typically suburban development pattern dominated by the automobile.

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 Catocin 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.



The Barber & Ross Plant was demolished in 2014, and redeveloped into what is the mixed-use Crescent Place neighborhood. This redevelopment reflects the type of redevelopment into mixed-use neighborhoods envisioned in other parts of the Crescent District.

The Crescent District Today

Today, the climate of the community has changed. When the first iteration of the Master Plan was being developed, Barber & Ross was the largest employer in the District covering a large tract of land off of Harrison Street and Catocin Circle. Barber & Ross 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 site sat vacant until 2014 when demolition, and eventual redevelopment began. Today, the Crescent Place development occupies the site of the former Barber & Ross plan and demonstrates the type of redevelopment that is possible in other parts of the Crescent District.

The core of the Crescent 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 retail along Catocin Circle. The District is also home to some housing, primarily at the Leesburg Mobile Home Park.

Current Issues

This master plan document was developed in the context of several major themes that shape the overall recommendations. It is important to recognize that these current issues exist today, and that this policy document is based, in part, on efforts to address those issues. If sentiment around these issues changes in the future, updates to this master plan document may be appropriate.

Struggling Retail Environment

First, the plan was developed in the post-pandemic era when many restaurants and

retail establishments were struggling to survive and have not yet bounced back. At the same time, the Country as a whole is dealing with the "Amazon effect" where the retail environment was continuing to shift from a traditional brick and mortar presence to a home delivery based model. These factors overall lead to a soft retail environment where developers are hesitant to line streets with retail space in fear that they will remain vacant and hurt the overall viability of a project.



Storefronts in the Crescent Place development are currently vacant as the retail market struggles.

Housing Crisis

At the same time, the Country and the Northern Virginia region are in the midst of a housing crisis as evidenced by data showing rising housing costs, anecdotal stories of families having difficulty finding affordable places to live, and the number of local, state, and federal policy initiatives that are being introduced to address affordable issues. Besides policy initiatives, these issues are leading to pressure to increase the supply of housing in the region.

Pedestrian Improvements

Finally, during the public process for this plan, residents and stakeholders expressed the need for pedestrian and streetscape improvements as a key area of focus for Crescent District planning efforts. These improvements were seen as necessary to

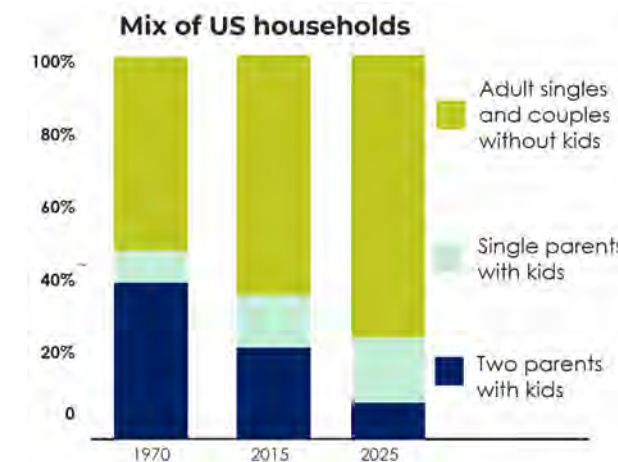
enhance safety, to improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility, and to improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the Crescent District. It is important to note that while stakeholders do not necessarily agree on the future development pattern for the Crescent District, they did overwhelmingly agree on the importance of improving the streetscape.

Emerging Trends

While every decade brings change, the next two decades promise a period of unprecedented, and accelerating demographic, economic, technological and environmental change that, if well-managed, can unlock significant benefits for Leesburg.

Demographics are destiny

Demographic growth has shifted dramatically toward one and two-person households (without children). These smaller households will dominate household growth, and housing markets, in Leesburg as well as across the North America for the next two decades. Managed well, growth driven by these smaller households offers the opportunities to attract residents and new small business to Leesburg, redevelop areas like the Crescent. Shrinking households are closely tied to an aging population, and suburbs are aging faster than cities.

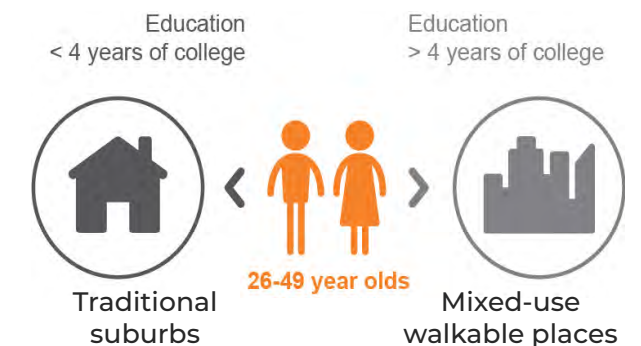


Fixed Incomes

As growing numbers of homeowners shift to fixed-incomes, they become resistant to increasing property taxes. Finding alternative sources of real estate value—for example new walkable, mixed-use Main Streets—becomes increasingly important. Similarly, preserving the value of predominantly single-family detached neighborhoods—for example by increasing access to nearby green space and new walkable Main Streets—may become a higher priority.

The knowledge economy drives growth

Smaller households and an aging population are slowing workforce growth just as the dramatic growth in knowledge industries has dramatically increased the share of jobs in every region that require higher education. The resulting shortage of educated



workers—often termed “talent”—has produced growing competition to attract and retain talent. Jobs and investment now flow to places where this talent wants to live and work. Mixed-use neighborhoods and urban districts with walkable Main Streets top their list.

Retail is changing rapidly

The rise of online retail, together with the decline in the share of US income earned by the core markets for mass market retailers, is taking a toll on auto-oriented retail. Malls like Leesburg Corner Premium Outlets and strip centers like Shenandoah Square have emerged as the new frontiers for redevelopment. In turn, a new era of smaller, unique, “Main Street” retail—largely supported by nearby housing—is taking root in communities and mixed-use centers emerging in areas like the Crescent District. Food and drink—from coffee to beer—have taken center stage in this Main Street revival. Roughly 50% of all new retail leases in 2019 were for restaurants and related eateries. While many of these businesses are locally owned, a new generation of national retailers are emulating brands like Starbucks and Mellow Mushroom pizza parlors are also capitalizing on this trend. The Main Street retail renaissance has in turn helped attract new residents and jobs to the growing number of emerging walkable, mixed-use—and, where dictated by public policy, mixed-income—suburban districts.

Mobility innovations will change how we move around...and transform many development practices

Today we are on the cusp of two decades of even more transformative mobility innovations that will strongly favor downtowns and closer-in urban neighborhoods. The first waves of change have been focused on mobility-on-demand (for example Lyft and Uber and ever-evolving micro-mobility technologies deploying e-scooters and bike sharing). Mobility on demand is already steadily increasing the convenience and decreasing the cost of living and working in suburban downtowns and mixed-use centers that offer the density

to support a high level of convenience. Next up, will be the rise of connected vehicles, which will be prevalent by 2030. While these vehicles won’t drive themselves, they will self-park far more efficiently than we park them today (note Hyundai’s 2020 Super Bowl ad). Within a decade the capacity of every parking facility in Leesburg will begin to rapidly increase—adding first 20% and then 30% more spaces as self-parking capabilities improve—enabling new development Downtown and in emerging mixed-use centers to share parking with existing projects and spelling the end of additional parking facilities as a prerequisite—and significant cost—for these projects. By 2040 autonomous vehicles will be the norm.



Planning Context

Regardless of differing opinions about the Crescent District, it is important to note that Leesburg is almost entirely built out and there are very few areas of land that remain undeveloped. This means that future efforts to enhance the Town and bring in desired uses and amenities as expressed in Legacy Leesburg will need to rely on redevelopment efforts. A key way to enhance the character of Leesburg is to take the vitality found in the downtown area and to expand it to other areas of the Town, particularly through strategic redevelopment efforts. This concept perfectly positions the Crescent District as

the prime area where redevelopment efforts should be focussed.

The Crescent District will be one of three distinct planning districts in the Town that are based on Leesburg’s long history and the areas of unique character that developed over time.

The Old and Historic District comprises some of the oldest development in the Town that attracts people for its unique charm and sense of place. In fact, this area was recognized as Leesburg’s greatest strength

during the outreach efforts.

Surrounding the Old and historic district, lies more recent development that occurred beginning in the 1960’s including areas along East Market Street and Catocin Circle that is now encompassed in the Crescent District. As per Legacy Leesburg, The Crescent District offers opportunities to replace outmoded, auto-oriented development with new walkable, mixed-use centers that take advantage of changing demographic and economic development dynamics to introduce new opportunities

The Crescent District Master Plan covers an area shown in dark blue. The boundaries generally follow property lines on the outer sides of King Street, Catocin Circle, and Market Street with some additional properties along Sycolin Road included. The Old & Historic District and Eastern Gateway District provide specific parameters for development along East Market Street on either side of the Crescent District.



to live, work, play, gather and innovate in Leesburg's core.

Finally, the Eastern Gateway Districts offers some of the few remaining tracts of vacant land in Town where new development is envisioned.

Existing Zoning

The Crescent District was previously rezoned in 2013 to implement the original Crescent District Master Plan approved in 2006. This rezoning led to nine specific Crescent Design District sub-districts for various parts of the Crescent Districts. Existing Districts include:

1. CD-RM, Crescent Design – Residential Medium Density
2. CD-RH, Crescent Design – Residential High Density
3. CD-MUR, Crescent Design – Mixed Use Residential
4. CD-C, Crescent Design – Commercial
5. CD-MUO, Crescent Design Mixed Use Optional
6. CD-I, Crescent Design – Institutional
7. CD-OS, Crescent Design – Open Space
8. CD-OSO, Open Space/CD-C Option
9. CD-CC, Crescent Design – Commercial Corridor

These zoning districts were the subject of some of the critiques received during public input for the development of this Crescent District Master Plan update. Some participants argued that the lines drawn for these zoning districts were too arbitrary and that the specificity prescribed by these districts was not realistic given ownership patterns and site constraints. One key objective of this Master Plan update is to simplify the overall vision for the Crescent District and create fewer unique designations.

Another critique of the current zoning districts that was received is that the development patterns prescribed by

the zoning does not match the land use vision expressed by the Master Plan. For example, the first iteration of the Master Plan envisioned a "Small Town Urban Character" and walkability whereas the CD-RM district prescribes densities by-right densities of 8 dwelling units per acre which is more typical of an auto-oriented suburban townhouse development pattern.



CHAPTER TWO: PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The Crescent District Vision
Goal

Guiding Principles

Opportunities and Constraints

Crescent District Organizational Framework

Photo: Virginia Village Shopping Center in 2022

THE CRESCENT DISTRICT VISION

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:

1. Establish 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.



Photo: East Market Street at Catocin Circle

Goal

The Crescent District Master Plan seeks to continue to position the Town for well-managed growth and redevelopment. While every decade brings change, the next two decades promise a period of unprecedented, and accelerating demographic, economic, technological and environmental change. If this change is well-managed through thoughtful redevelopment efforts, it can unlock significant benefits for Leesburg.

This redevelopment will all occur while extending and respecting the character of the Old and Historic District. Achieving the characteristics of the Old and Historic District in an area of Town that has been traditionally auto oriented with relatively isolated land uses, requires an organizational land use and urban design framework that provides guidance related to mobility, open space, and land use.

This land use framework introduces a pattern of development organized around two new walkable districts, or activity centers, that will serve as mixed-use neighborhoods. One activity center will be located northeast of the intersection of Market Street and

Catoctin Circle and the other will be located northeast of the intersection of King Street and Catoctin Circle. The key corridors of East Market Street and Catoctin Circle will also be transformed to become more pedestrian friendly. The details related to the land use and urban design framework can be found in Chapter 4. At a higher level, all new development should consider the following guiding principles for the Crescent District.

Guiding Principles

1. Put People First

Planning places for people is the first underlying principle which every other decision should be based. Pedestrians and cyclists, residents, visitors, business owners and their patrons should be prioritized over moving vehicles. To achieve the Crescent District master plan vision, people must be put first. 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 must be a key component of future redevelopment efforts.



Creating places that emphasize people through pedestrian improvements and new open spaces that allow people to gather and celebrate community should be at the forefront of any redevelopment plans.

Considering land uses that bring people to the Crescent District is also important. Redevelopment efforts should accommodate uses like hotels, civic centers, and public spaces for a farmers market and similar events.

2. Create New Walkable and Vibrant Places

Future redevelopment efforts in the Crescent District will extend the qualities that define the Old and Historic District by providing additional walkable, mixed-use areas that are connected to local amenities (i.e., the W&OD Trail), and introduce additional multifamily housing options, including affordable housing, and open space amenities. Expanding residential and commercial development opportunities in proximity to the Old & Historic District will

help generate the critical mass of people and vibrant retail activity that will enrich quality of life, expand economic and life-path opportunities, and create opportunities to celebrate shared community for the Crescent District and the entire Town. A common rule of thumb is that it takes 1,000 to 2,000 housing units to support one block of "main street retail. Ideally, these units would be within a 5-minute walk but some people from surrounding areas might also drive to this Main Street Area.

3. Encourage Incremental Changes:

Full implementation of this plan will take decades. The Town will encourage both large and small scale redevelopment efforts that help to implement the vision of the Crescent District with an emphasis of walkability. At



The Crescent Place Neighborhood is the result of the redevelopment of the old Barber & Ross window factory. This redevelopment is one of the first examples of how existing areas can be redeveloped into walkable and vibrant places.

the same time, the Town will actively work to implement streetscape improvement projects that catalyze these redevelopment efforts.

4. Maintain the Viability of Commercial Corridors

Catoctin Circle and East Market Street serve as the home to numerous commercial enterprises that serve the citizens of Leesburg. The land use framework identifies and acknowledges the areas of existing commercial development that will redevelop over time. These areas (generally along Market Street and Catoctin Circle) are identified in the land use framework as commercial corridors where redevelopment efforts will be more incremental.



Recent facade improvements and changes in land use transformed the old Loudoun Motor Sports Dealership into a jewelry store, salon and restaurant and demonstrate how incremental changes can help transform commercial corridors into more walkable areas that serve nearby residents and draw character from the Old and Historic District.

5. Create new activity centers that extend the Downtown Character

The land use framework identifies two areas of the Crescent District for the development of activity centers. These areas are characterized by a higher density

of development (3-5 stories), increased residential units, active ground floors, public open space elements, and a fine grain of walkable streets. To attain this type of development, including a walkable street network, larger areas of land are required. These areas were identified because of their strategic location at major intersections and because larger land areas to accommodate the activity centers can be more easily be assembled.

6. Address affordable housing

Future mixed-use development in the Crescent District will provide an opportunity to extend and build upon the range of housing types that exist in surrounding neighborhoods and provide additional multifamily housing in the Crescent District that will allow the Town to address and integrate affordable housing in an area that is connected to a range of neighborhood amenities. Applicants should consider a range of affordable housing options that address zoning ordinance requirements and other possibilities.

7. Celebrate/Create opportunities for improved mobility

Mobility today looks much different than it did ten years ago, new modes and technologies for personal and shared mobility including bike share programs, car-share services, electric car charging, car-share services, and autonomous vehicles.

8. Maintain viability of roadway network for cars

Streets and traffic issues are a major consideration for Leesburg residents and the Crescent District. Change will need to take place to enable the District to develop in a manner consistent with the traditional



Places that are good at moving cars a lot of cars or moving a lot of cars quickly are usually not very good at making pedestrians feel safe and comfortable. While efforts to maintain the viability of the roadway for cars must continue, focus should shift to people.

patterns of the Town that emphasize pedestrian connectivity. Automobiles are still welcome to travel the streets in the Crescent District but more focus will be placed on creating an environment that is safe and appealing to pedestrians and cyclists rather than on moving cars quickly. Ensuring adequate and well located parking to allow residents and visitors to park once is also important.

9. Encourage timely redevelopment

Development timing is something that has received notable attention since the District was first created. It is the Town's intent to allow and encourage redevelopment and infill by landowners. To encourage this redevelopment, the Town will invest in parking, civic spaces, parks, and streetscape improvements. The Town has already committed resources to further study desired streetscape improvements. The intended goal is to have these improvements catalyze redevelopment efforts from the private sector. The Town will also explore other opportunities that arise and consider incentives to encourage redevelopment efforts consistent with the vision of this plan.

10. Celebrate the Arts, Entertainment, and Higher Education

Since the Crescent District was first adopted, the arts and higher education emerged as



Public art in the Crescent District will be embraced as means of giving the community a unique and special identity.

The Crescent District Master Plan Organizational Framework provides guidance for how and where development occurs throughout the District, including activity centers, open space, pedestrian and bicycling amenities, and land use improvements. The framework provides recommendations for the critical mass of housing and activity required to realize the vision for the Crescent District. Although it is difficult to predict how the Crescent District will evolve over time, the framework provides overarching land use and urban design guidance that lays the foundation for the holistic development of the District.

The following elements are identified in the Crescent District Master Plan Organizational Framework:

CRESCENT DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Activity Centers

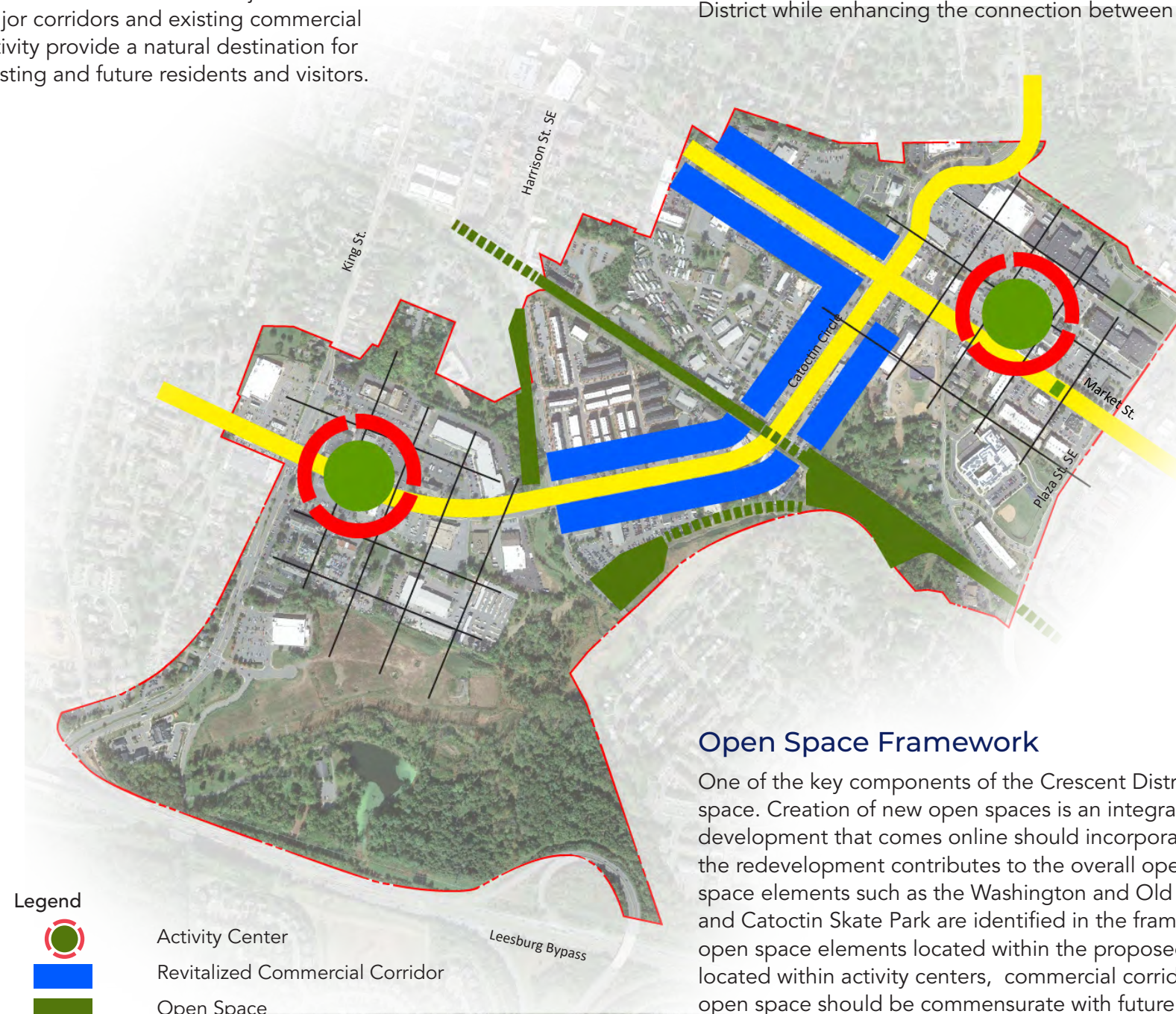
The framework identifies two areas of the Crescent District for the development of activity centers. These areas are characterized by a higher density of development (3-5 stories), additional multifamily residential units, an pedestrian-friendly public realm with active commercial frontages, enhancements to the public open space network, and a further developed grid of walkable streets. In general, the maximum building height will be 5 stories with 3 to 4 stories being the prevailing building height. Densities will vary with unit type, but maximum densities are expected to be 40 to 100 dwelling units per acres.

To attain this type of development, including a walkable street network, larger areas of

land in improvements to transportation infrastructure like wider sidewalks and transit infrastructure are required. These areas were identified, in part, due to the compilation of larger land parcels that can be assembled more easily for redevelopment. Additionally, their location in the Town adjacent to two major corridors and existing commercial activity provide a natural destination for existing and future residents and visitors.

Revitalized Commercial Corridors

The framework identifies and acknowledges areas of existing commercial development that will redevelop over time. These areas (generally along Market Street and Catoctin Circle) are identified in the framework areas as areas of commercial development that will increase in density (3 stories) over time. Future improvements along Market Street and Catoctin Circle will lead the transformation of the public realm throughout the District, creating a welcoming extension of the Old and Historic District while enhancing the connection between the two activity centers.



- Legend**
- Activity Center
 - Revitalized Commercial Corridor
 - Open Space
 - Pedestrian Improvements
 - Crescent District Boundary

Note: A larger version of this map can be found in the back of this document.

Open Space Framework

One of the key components of the Crescent District Master Plan is the inclusion of open space. Creation of new open spaces is an integral part of redevelopment efforts. Any new development that comes online should incorporate new open spaces or demonstrate how the redevelopment contributes to the overall open space network in the Town. Existing open space elements such as the Washington and Old Dominion Trail, Raflo Park, Brandon Park, and Catoctin Skate Park are identified in the framework and enhanced with additional public open space elements located within the proposed activity centers. Open spaces can also be located within activity centers, commercial corridors, and mixed-use residential areas. This new open space should be commensurate with future growth. As part of the public realm network, existing and future public open space amenities will enhance the quality of life for residents of the District while advancing environmental sustainability goals of the Town.

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 implementation of the desired streetscape within the Crescent District will help to facilitate this vision. 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.

Pedestrian (Mobility) Network

Improvements to the existing pedestrian facilities along Catoctin Circle and Market Street are identified in addition to new pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Most importantly, a safe and comfortable grid of walkable streets and blocks is identified within the activity centers, facilitating walkability throughout the District. This grid of streets will help facilitate strong pedestrian connectivity within the activity centers which are generally sized based on the concept of a 5 minute walking shed. This concept is based on the premise that most people are willing to walk 5 minutes before opting to drive instead. It is typically represented by a 1/4-mile radius Pedestrian connections between these activity centers will also be enhanced. This 5-minute walking shed is typically centered around a community focal point or community core.

Another important element of the pedestrian network that needs to be considered is

pedestrian amenities. New development should provide amenities like benches, trash cans, street trees, fountains, shade structures and places to rest to improve the overall pedestrian experience. The Town should provide these amenities in any Town projects while developers should provide them on private roads.

5 Minute Walking Sheds



Opportunities and Constraints

It is important to note that the overarching guidance contained in the organizational framework is based on careful consideration of urban design best practices as well as an evaluation of opportunities and constraints. These opportunities and constraints were evaluated using the original Crescent District Boundaries which extended beyond Plaza Street.



Auto Oriented Corridor

As major arterial corridors, Market Street and Catoclin Circle carry high volumes of traffic and in their current condition represent an obstacle to connect nearby amenities and promote pedestrian and bicycling mobility.

Lack of Community Open Space.

There is a lack of community open space in the Crescent District which can accommodate community gatherings, farmers markets and other outdoor opportunities. Passive open spaces areas exist but they do not have the amenities for community gatherings and events.



Virginia Village & Market Street Activity Centers.

The existing shopping centers and previously approved mixed-use development in and around these sites comprise opportunities for pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development with structured parking and public open space. Phased redevelopment efforts can allow some retail uses to remain in operation while redevelopment occurs and existing parking can satisfy temporary needs during that redevelopment.

New Public Facilities and Civic Spaces.

The Crescent District provides large parcels in close proximity to the Downtown that may be appropriate for new public and civic spaces as the Town continues to grow.



Adjacent Single-Family Neighborhoods.

While an asset and defining feature of the Crescent District, the adjacent single-family development guides the height and density of future adjacent development.



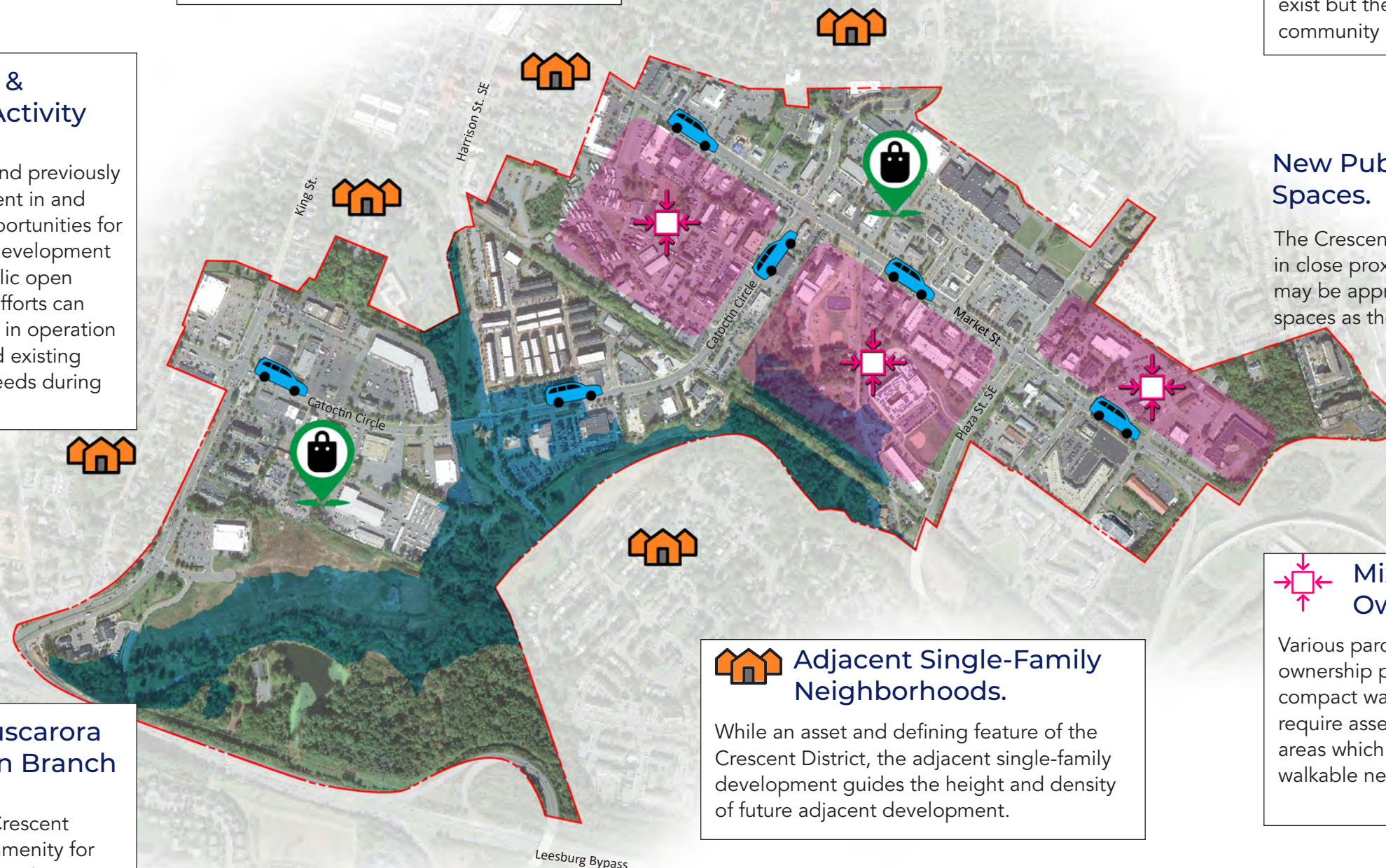
Mixed Parcel Sizes and Ownership.

Various parcels sizes, configurations and ownership present a challenge in developing compact walkable activity centers which require assembling parcels into larger areas which can then be redeveloped with walkable new streets and blocks structures.



Flood Plain - Tuscarora Creek and Town Branch Waterways

The water bodies found in the Crescent District present an open space amenity for residents but also present a constraint to future development.





CHAPTER THREE: Transportation Policy

Crescent District Transportation

Existing Streets

Existing Blocks

Future Street

Future Blocks

Street Design

Crescent District Street Design Process

Street Design Recommendations

Key Improvement and Recommendations

Catoctin Circle Section A

Catoctin Circle Section B

East Market Street

Trails and Pedestrian Pathways

Parking

Transit

CRESCENT DISTRICT TRANSPORTATION

The roadway network throughout the Crescent District is largely established and will continue to evolve over time as properties redevelop and new land uses are introduced. As the network evolves a finer more walkable, better-connected pattern of streets is desired. Some areas of the Crescent District such as the identified activity centers are better positioned for a walkable grid of streets due to the ability to consolidate existing development parcels into larger developments allowing new streets and blocks to be delineated. Other areas of the Crescent district won't have this opportunity and will need to focus on improving or adding new connections to destinations within and beyond the Crescent District where possible. These connections should focus on adjacent neighborhoods, open spaces, existing pedestrian connections and other activity centers within and beyond the Crescent District.

Existing Streets

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 Loudoun, King, and Market Streets, and newer corridors such as Catoclin Circle, Harrison Street, and Market Street outside outside of the old and Historic District.

The street network is further complicated by both the Town Branch and the W&OD Trail that interrupt the grid like 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. Conceptual future roadway alignments and

connections are illustrated in the diagram below. Additionally, building nodes are noted on the plan. These nodes will serve as gateways to the Crescent District and reinforce the pedestrian character. Improved intersections with pedestrian calming features and pedestrian amenities are expected to be introduced in these areas over time as the district develops.

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 that were relatively small. As the community developed to the southeast toward Town Branch and the W&OD Railroad, the blocks became much larger.

These large blocks have done the following:

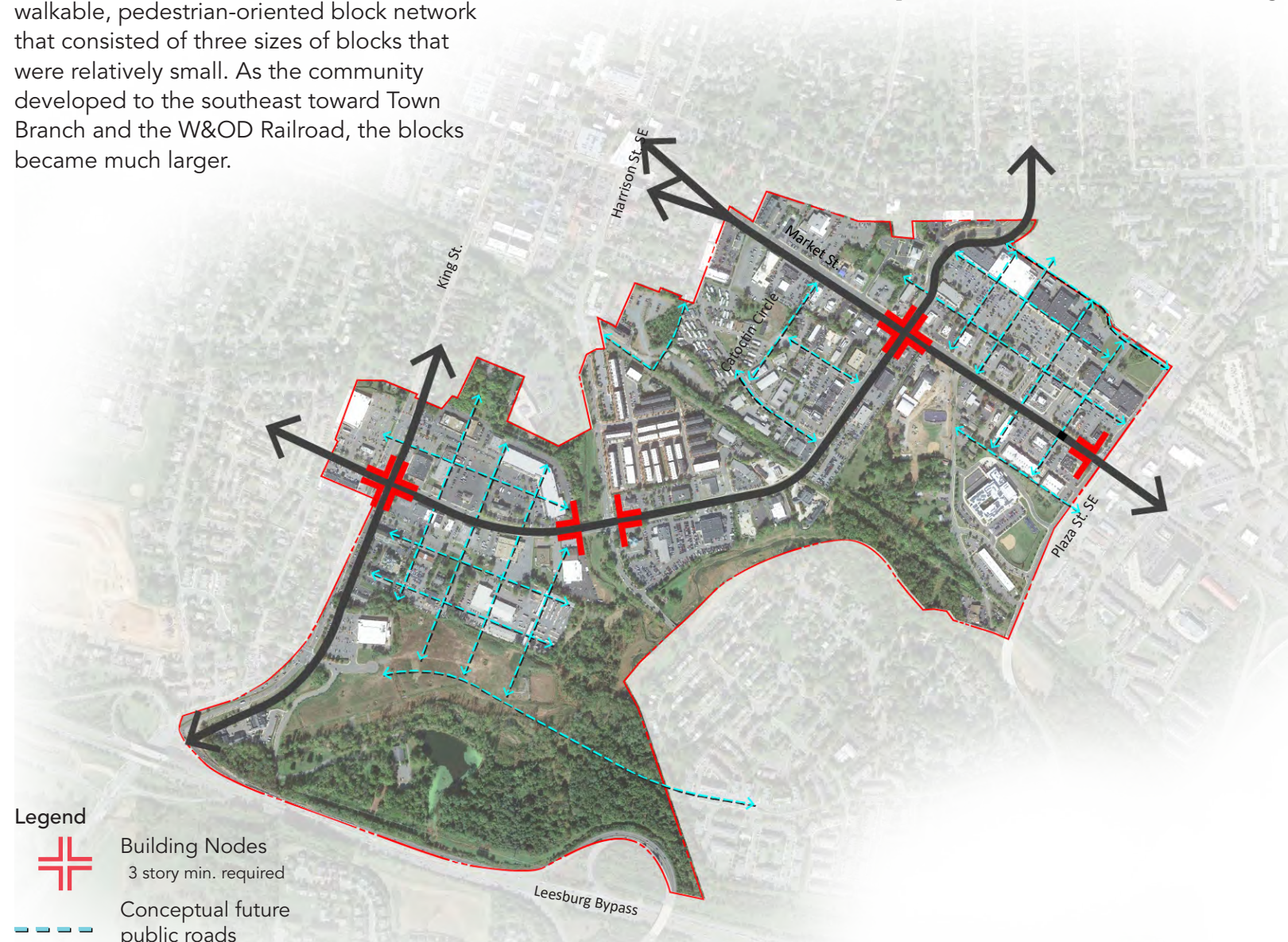
- Forced traffic to large intersections such as Market and Catoclin, South King and Catoclin, and Harrison and Catoclin.
- Provided limited options to traverse the District in automobiles and even more limited access for pedestrian connections. Pedestrians are less comfortable walking on long auto-oriented 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.

Conceptual Future Roadway Network

Future Streets

The map on this page shows the major recommendations for street improvements in the Crescent District Master Plan. The two major corridors, Catoclin Circle and East Market Street are envisioned to be improved as described below. The overall future roadway network is also envisioned to provide for a new grid of streets as indicated through the blue lines identified as "Conceptual Future Public Roads." These roadway alignments are intended to depict the general grid roadway pattern and new connections. They should not be considered final alignments should engineering constraints and other issues may affect their viability. The overall concept of the grid is what is most important.

To the extent these connections can be developed, they 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:



- Legend**
- Building Nodes
3 story min. required
 - Conceptual future public roads

Note: A larger version of this map can be found in the back of this document.

1. Connector Streets:

- Gateway Drive SE - as development occurs, the existing Gateway Drive should continue west from its current alignment west and connect with Davis Ave SW.
 - South Street/Market St. Connector - a new street connects E. Market St. to South St. SE providing additional connections to the Activity Center Block
- Pattern Streets: The Crescent District Framework Plan is connector streets that will create a block network in the areas of the plan identified as Activity Centers.

2. Alleys:

The Crescent District Master Plan also encourages alleys to be developed in areas where residential and commercial development warrants their use.

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 as found in the Old & Historic District. 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 give residents, shoppers, and visitors the chance to explore the new District with a more seamless transition from the historic core.

Street Design

The streets throughout the Crescent District (and Leesburg for that matter) have traditionally been designed based on

Functional Classifications, a set of standards which tend to emphasize motor vehicle connections to destinations over other street users. These types of roadways, typically referred to as 'roads', are designed to simply link moving vehicles from Point A to Point B as efficiently as possible. However, when considering the broader goals of the Crescent District Master Plan which include additional modes of transportation for which streets are used (i.e. walking, cycling), competing demands arise for the limited space available to other users.

Several challenges arise when designing a street as a multi-modal facility including competing demands and limited space. The Crescent District Master Plan seeks to address these challenges by presenting a context-sensitive design philosophy that steers away from vehicle-focused roadway standards and provides a new direction for the planning, design, and construction of quality streets for all users.

The street sections and street design process presented in this document aim to create, in time, an updated transportation system for the Crescent District that would enhance the safety, comfort, and efficient movement of all users. To achieve this, certain trade-offs and evaluations will need to be made, depending on context and priorities. Some streets prioritize certain modes over others, based on their primary use, function, and surrounding land uses.

Complete Streets

The implementation of a complete street network in the Crescent District will accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles, and dramatically improve a streetscape environment currently defined by narrow sidewalks, unsafe intersections, and inadequate space for outdoor dining. Supporting the needs of various users will

Crescent District Street Design Process

As the Crescent District develops over time there will be a need for context-sensitive and functional design requiring an understanding of the role of each street within the broader transportation network. It should also take into consideration the existing limitations and challenges which arise from space constraints on existing or future streets. For this reason, the Master Plan establishes a design process for future streets and recommends initial streetscape sections for Market Street and Catocin Circle. It's recommended the design/redesign of streets follow the process outlined below.

Step 1: Establish Project Goals - Define the project goals taking into consideration the street and adjacent lands both today and in the future.

Step 2: Identify the Modal Priorities – The modal priorities for the street should be determined by ranking the priority for walking, cycling, transit, driving, and delivering goods and services.

Step 3: Select Street Design Elements – Design elements include lane widths, parking requirements, bicycle lanes and type, planting strips, sidewalk widths, amenities, and utilities.

Step 4: Make Trade-offs – Trade-off considerations (i.e., prioritizing competing demands for street space within limited right-of-way) should occur throughout the process. Considerations should include modal priority and determination of appropriate street design elements and corresponding design values.

Step 5: Evaluate and Confirm Design – As a final step the design team should re-examine whether the design meets the goals and objectives established at the beginning of the design process.



allow more activity within and greater multi-modal access to and from the Crescent District. Users should be able to travel safely—particularly those that are walking and cycling.

Street section recommendations provide guidance for the configuration of existing and future streets that will help develop the desired character for the Crescent District as a walkable, pedestrian and bicycling friendly neighborhood. Most importantly, are the improvements envisioned along Catoctin Circle and Market Street.

Complete streets also rely on street trees to improve shade, habitat, and stormwater management, and beauty. The Crescent District lacks a cohesive urban tree canopy along its streetscapes that should be prioritized as redevelopment occurs.

STREET DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Multi-Modal Transportation

The future transportation network should provide for a variety of different modes of transportation. While there is an overall goal of providing mode choice and introducing new modes of transportation, some people will still have to drive. The road network should accommodate cars as well as alternative modes. Since cars are the dominant mode of transportation today, we must continue to accommodate them until infrastructure for alternative modes is available. Alternative modes include everything from bikes to scooters to golf carts and transit. Accommodations for this infrastructure should be made by the Town and developers.

Catoctin Circle Vision

Catoctin Circle takes on an important role in the Crescent District, it is the main east/west connector of the Crescent District, connecting the proposed activity centers and commercial development that between the activity centers. Catoctin Circle (within the Crescent District) will be lively both day and night. Trees will line the edges of the street and a landscape median will add to the lush quality of the area. Cyclist safely enjoy the cycle tracks and improved access to the W&OD while pedestrians stroll along wide sidewalks in front of a variety of shops, restaurants, and commercial businesses. As opposed to current conditions where walking is an inconvenience, the future condition is one where people will want to walk along Catoctin Circle.

Two potential street sections have been proposed in response to the available right-of-way (ROW) within the corridor, the typical ROW throughout the corridor is 70'. The available right-of-way is the biggest constraint and a challenge to implementing complete streets along Catoctin Circle. To respond to this, two street sections are proposed which respond to the Crescent District vision, adjacent land uses, and best practices. In activity centers a wider street section including on-street parking and

generous sidewalks is proposed. A narrower section without on-street parking is proposed outside of the activity centers.

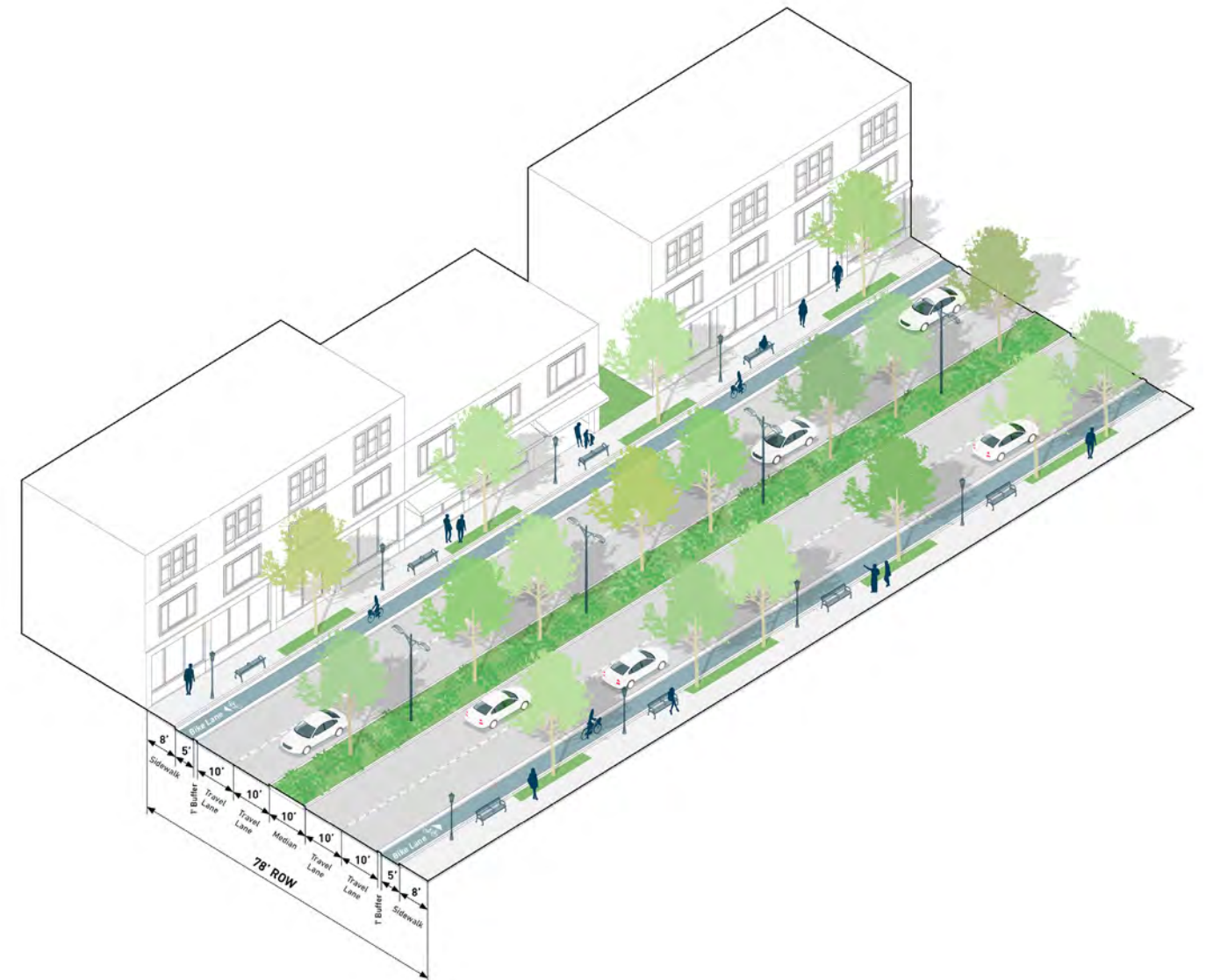
Crescent District Streetscape Sections





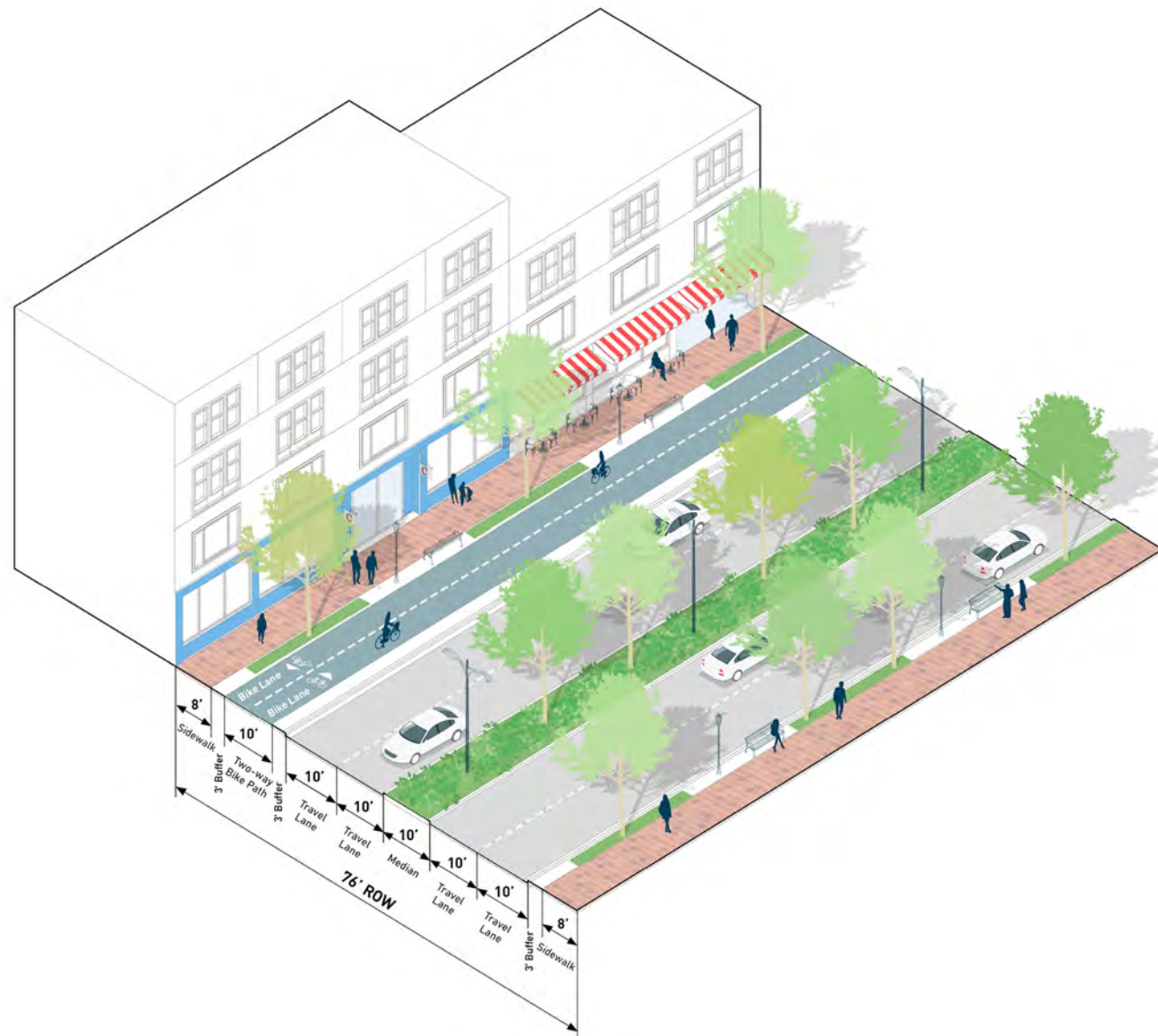
Key Improvements and Recommendations for Catoctin Circle Section A

1. Increase sidewalk widths to allow multiple pedestrians to walk side by side, street trees and accommodate café seating
2. Landscape median
3. On-street parking to support local businesses and visitors
4. Reduced travel lane widths
5. Underground utilities
6. Pedestrian/cyclist amenities including decorative lighting, street furnishings, street trees
7. Bike Lanes: include directional, parking protected bike lanes to expand safe cycling alternatives;
8. Connect the WO&D Trail: build an improved crossing including a small plaza and amenity area for pedestrians and cyclists on both sides of Catoctin



Key Improvements and Recommendations for Catoctin Circle Section B

1. Increase sidewalk widths to allow multiple pedestrians to walk side by side and street trees
2. Landscape median
3. Reduced travel lane widths
4. Underground utilities
5. Pedestrian/cyclist amenities including decorative lighting, street furnishings, street trees
6. Bike Lanes: include directional, protected bike lanes to expand safe cycling alternatives;
7. Connect the WO&D Trail: build an improved crossing including a small plaza and amenity area for pedestrians and cyclists on both sides of Catoctin



Key Improvements and Recommendations for East Market St.

1. Increase sidewalk widths to allow multiple pedestrians to walk side by side, street trees and accommodate café seating
2. Landscape median
3. Underground utilities
4. Pedestrian/cyclist amenities including decorative lighting, street furnishings, street trees
5. Bike Lanes: protected bike lanes to expand safe cycling alternatives

East Market Street Vision

East Market Street will evolve from its current function of moving cars in and out of Leesburg quickly to much more of a neighborhood friendly corridor. The East Market Street of the future will be a beautiful street lined with canopy trees, wide sidewalks, with frequent crosswalks and protected bicycle lanes. When not walking, residents and visitors will use the bike lanes to traverse the Crescent District and connect to the adjacent neighborhoods including downtown Leesburg. The sidewalks will be alive with activity and will accommodate various users including pedestrians, joggers and café seating.

TRAILS AND PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS

Celebrate the W&OD Trail

As an anchor and principal public space in the Crescent District, and by far it's most well used alternate mobility corridor, the W&OD trail should be integrated into existing and future development. 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

The W&OD trail is a key amenity that bisects the Crescent District. Efforts to enhance connectivity to the trail should be prioritized when considering streetscape improvements and redevelopment efforts.



adjacent to the rail line. The Crescent District plan honors that heritage by again placing uses with views along the former rail line.

Properties along the W&OD trail should provide pedestrian and bicycle amenities consistent with other street frontages such as simple movable seating bike racks, and landscaping as well as to provide public spaces like plaza and small gathering spaces. To the extent possible, new development should provide physical and visual connections to the trail.



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.

While recent trends suggest that overall parking ratios should be considered for reduction, the Town is still heavily reliant on private automobiles given the lack of robust transit infrastructure and alternatives to

private cars. The Town will take the following specific steps with respect to parking in the Crescent District:

1. Regularly study appropriate parking ratios to ensure that parking requirements are aligned with market demand and utilization trends.
2. Ensure that each Activity Center provides at least one centrally located structured parking facility to serve new development.
3. Ensure that adequate parking is provided to serve all new residential development in the Crescent District and that impacts to existing neighborhoods are avoided.
4. The Town will explore sites for new public parking facilities to serve both the Crescent District and Downtown Area. One potential site to consider for a parking garage is the existing 0.85 acre gravel lot in the vicinity of Church and South Streets (see figure below).
5. Each Activity Center is expected to provide some parking spaces sized to accommodate take-home work vehicles and trailers.



Privately-owned Gravel Lot (close to Downtown & Crescent District)

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 currently considered in the zoning ordinance.

Payment in lieu of parking provision

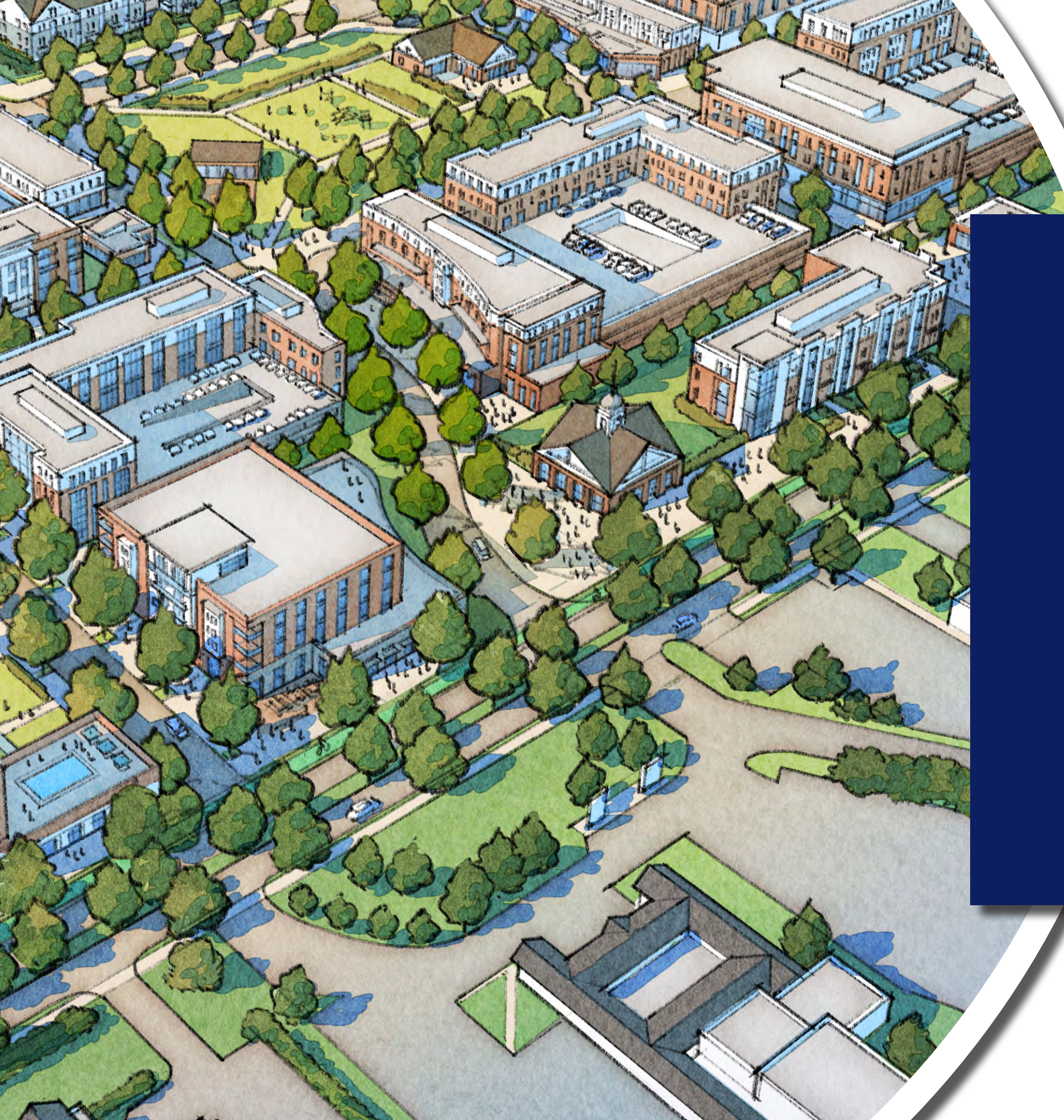
In certain very limited circumstances, payment in lieu of parking might occur in the District. This technique is used in the Old and Historic District and could be extended to development sites within the Crescent District as appropriate.

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.

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 transit goals.



CHAPTER FOUR: Land Use Policy

Crescent District Land Use
Activity Center Place Type
Commercial Corridor Place Type
Mixed Density Residential Place Type

Photo: Rendering of potential future redevelopment of the Leesburg Plaza Shopping Center

CRESCENT DISTRICT LAND USE

The land uses that are developed as the Crescent District continues to transform will go a long way in determining the overall character of the district. The overall desired character is described in the Town Plan. However, to achieve the desired character envisioned specific to the Crescent District Master Plan, additional elements must be considered in concert with land use. The "Place Types" described below provide recommendations for the activity centers and commercial corridors previously described that go beyond the character vision for the Crescent District and define more specific land use elements that detail the building form.

As the most intense areas of development in the District, the activity centers are located at South King Street and Catoctin Circle and along East Market Street between Catoctin Circle and Plaza Street. The place types provide guidance for land use mix, building heights and massing, density, building and block disposition, and parking approach, to provide a general snapshot of the parameters guiding future development.

The Crescent District Master Plan establishes five place types. Three of these place types reflect character designations found Legacy Leesburg; Parks/Open Space/Natural Areas, Mixed Residential Neighborhood, and Special Use. The two remaining place types in the Master Plan Area are Activity Center and Commercial Corridor.

There are two activity centers proposed in the Master Plan area. The first activity center is located at Catoctin Circle and South King Street. This activity center incorporates the previously approved Virginia Village rezoning

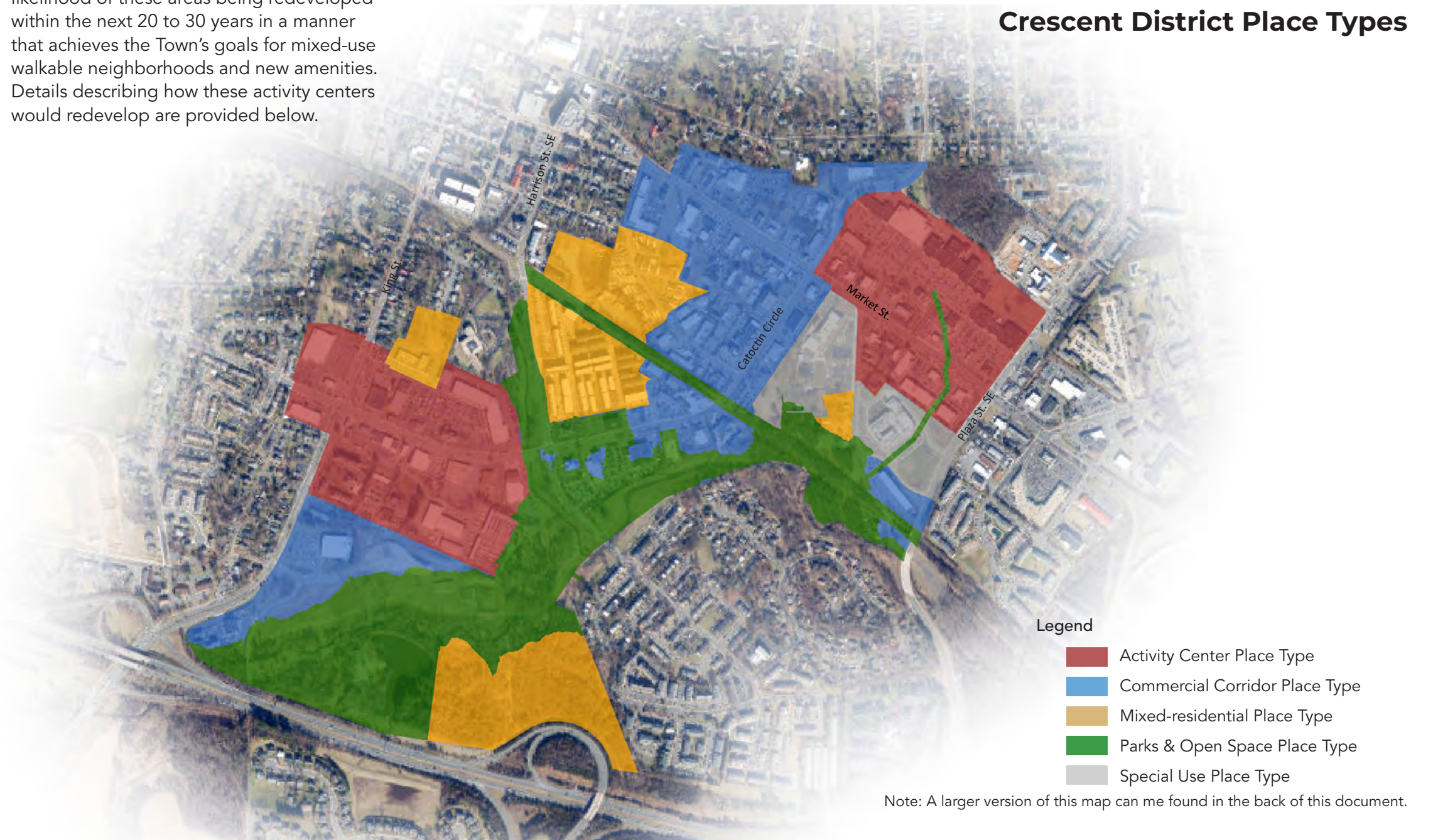
application as well as areas on the south side of Catoctin Circle that can also redevelop in a manor similar to Virginia Village. The second activity center is focused around Leesburg Plaza where the existing Giant shopping center is located. The primary reasons for locating the activity centers in these areas is based on their proximity to and access from other portions of the Crescent District and Town as well as their size and the likelihood of these areas being redeveloped within the next 20 to 30 years in a manner that achieves the Town's goals for mixed-use walkable neighborhoods and new amenities. Details describing how these activity centers would redevelop are provided below.

The remaining areas in the Crescent district not covered by Parks/Open Space/Natural Areas or existing special uses are designated as Mixed Residential Neighborhoods or Commercial Corridors.

The commercial corridor designation reflects areas with existing commercial development where future redevelopment activity would be limited by several factors. This

designation also allows the town to retain areas important for non-residential uses. There are several major factors preventing widespread redevelopment of the areas designated as Commercial Corridor at heights greater than one or two stories.

First, many of the properties that can be Commercial Corridors are actually located



within the floodplain and mapped as open space accordingly, consistent with Legacy Leesburg. Within previously developed floodplain areas in the Crescent District, it is the Town's intent to allow reasonable continued use of existing properties for commercial uses subject to applicable zoning and FEMA regulations.

Developing within areas of floodplain would generally require floodplain modifications that necessitate extensive engineering solutions that would also be costly. In general, FEMA regulations would severely limit the potential for future residential development within floodplain areas. While commercial redevelopment is possible, costly flood proofing measures would still be required. Local zoning code restrictions place further limitations on development within the floodplain.

Second, many of the properties, particularly those along Catocin Circle, have a relatively small lot depth of approximately 200 feet. This lot depth would make it difficult to construct a taller buildings along the road because there would be little room behind the building for the necessary parking.

Finally, many of the properties designated Commercial Corridor are relatively small with sizes of 1 acre or less and with fragmented ownership. This makes large scale redevelopment difficult as it requires several willing property owners to sell their

properties to create an assemblage of land at a cost that would still be profitable to redevelop.

Based on these and potentially other factors, this Master Plan anticipates minimal large scale redevelopment within the Commercial Corridors. Instead, these areas are expected to see smaller scale redevelopment with expansions of existing buildings, façade improvements, and limited demolition and reconstruction.

However, if the owners of properties designated as Commercial Corridor are able to overcome the identified challenges and wish to redevelop their properties to the maximum allowable densities and with residential development, they will be expected to provide commensurate open space and/or other public amenities. In general, future growth in this area is expected to be limited and incremental with many properties seeing little to no redevelopment for the next 20 to 30 years, while some properties see limited enhancements.

Activity Center Place Type

Intent/Character

The Activity Center place type serves to reinforce the vision of the Town Plan, fostering a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood within easy walking distance to nearby residential neighborhoods. In addition to offering a range of development including retail, new residential options, office, and civic uses, the activity centers provide locations for people to shop, eat, socialize, relax, and take care of daily activities. The activity centers are anticipated to redevelop as medium density walkable developments that encourage social connections, mix of uses, structured parking, and integrated open spaces. Parking can serve both the immediate development and neighborhood with proper arrangements. The incorporation of public open space will allow for a neighborhood park, that is surrounded by a mix of complementary uses, for residents and visitors to the activity centers. New compact road networks within the activity centers will accommodate pedestrian movement and create opportunities for vibrant streetscapes.

In general, new development in Activity Centers should provide new opportunities for public spaces, civic uses, recreational facilities, and other government uses to accommodate future growth in the Town. Developers are encouraged to work with the Town to identify needs and strategies to accommodate such facilities.



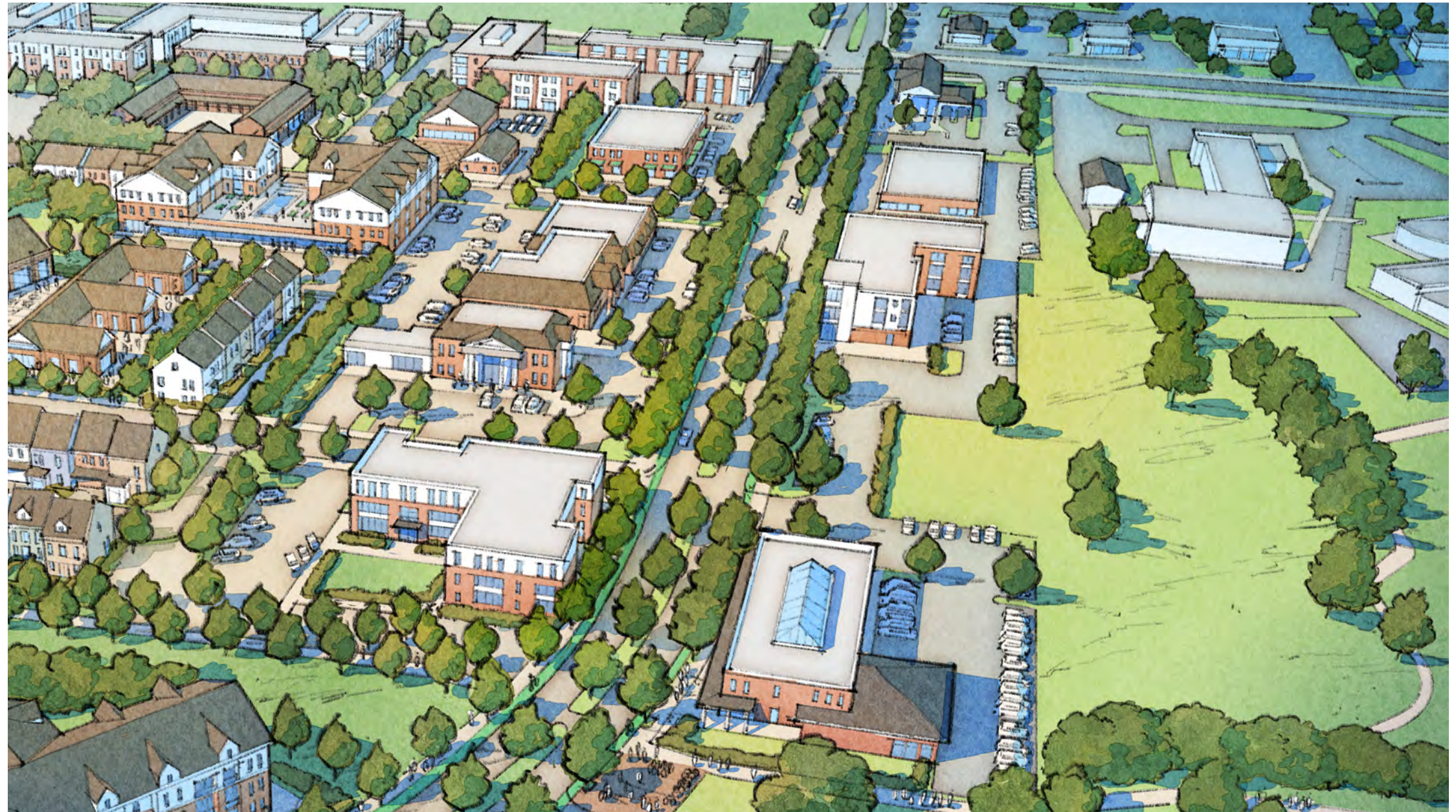
Uses	Land Use Intensity	Phasing	Parking	Mobility	Site Design
<p>Primary Uses: Mixed Uses, multi-family residential, employment, retail, office, civic, recreation, hotel, grocery store, medical facilities.</p>	<p>Floor Area Ratio: Up to 2.0 FAR maximum</p>	<p>Development will occur over time, with the densest portions of the activity centers more quickly providing the critical mass to support additional public realm and commercial amenities. Infrastructure investments should favor the areas with the greatest ability to jump-start transformation.</p>	<p>Parking will primarily be comprised of above ground structures that are lined with commercial and residential uses with on-street parking dispersed throughout. Occasionally, parking will be in small surface lots located at the rear or to the side of buildings.</p>	<p>The transportation networks is highly accessible to all modes of transport including walking, driving, and automobiles. Transit stops, pick up drop off areas, micro mobility options, bike parking and bike share amenities are provided throughout this place type.</p>	<p>Site design in the activity centers will create a holistic public realm comprised of pedestrian-friendly streets, parks, and plazas that are supported by a broad mix of uses and connected to by a range of mobility options. Primary densities should be located close to a signature public space located in each activity center. The public space should be of an adequate size (0.5-1.0 acre minimum) and designed and programmed to attract residents and visitors.</p>
<p>Complimentary Uses Single-family attached housing, schools and similar community facilities,</p>	<p>Density: 40 to 100 DU/Acre depending on unit sizes</p>				
<p>Uses that should be avoided: Industrial uses with negative impacts on residents, detached housing, commercial drive-throughs, uses that are auto oriented</p>	<p>Building Height: Prevailing height: 3-4 stories Maximum heights - 5 stories</p>				

Commercial Corridor Place Type

The Commercial Corridor place type provides a balance of office, retail, and residential uses with a primary goal of maintaining, and allowing for the expansion of, commercial activity along Market Street and Catoctin Circle. Elements of new development should be compatible with existing patterns in terms of character and scale while accommodating the commercial needs that are more in-line with the goals of the Town Plan, which calls for a better balance between pedestrian, bicyclist, and automobile traffic. The Commercial Corridor place type includes a range of uses that build on existing commercial, office and residential uses, offering a scale development that is complementary to the activity centers, but at lower densities and with more opportunities for auto oriented uses.

Density in this district steps down as it transitions to adjacent neighborhoods and includes safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access for nearby residents to and from the activity centers and the Old and Historic District.

Due to constraints described above, few applications are expected to seek maximum building heights. Those that do will need to demonstrate irrefutable compatibility with surrounding areas, provision of high quality amenities, and strict adherence to the guidelines in this document.



Uses	Land Use Intensity	Phasing	Parking	Mobility	Site Design
<p>Primary Uses: Neighborhood Commercial Uses, Office, Retail, Employment.</p>	<p>Floor Area Ratio: Up to 1.5 FAR maximum</p>	<p>Commercial corridors are expected to redevelop more slowly with many lots remaining unchanged while other individual lots are redeveloped or improved on an individual basis. Infrastructure improvements are encouraged but may require a coordinated planning effort.</p>	<p>Parking will primarily be provided on surface lots (behind or at the side of buildings) and structured parking where the uses or density supports it. On-street parking is dispersed throughout the district.</p>	<p>Uses and sites are generally auto-oriented, streets are designed to accommodate all modes of transportation.</p>	<p>Site design in the commercial corridors will vary depending on site constraints and context. The commercial corridor maintains the overall goal of pedestrian-friendly streets, parks, and plazas that are supported by a broad mix of uses but also recognizes that large scale improvements to achieve this will not be possible on smaller sites. Development should carefully consider the context of individual sites and provide open spaces, pedestrian improvements, streetscape improvements, and site design improvements that contribute to pedestrian safety and mobility where possible.</p>
<p>Complimentary Uses Mixed-Density Residential Uses, schools and similar community facilities</p>	<p>Density: 30 to 70 DU/Acre depending on unit sizes</p>				
<p>Uses that should be avoided: Uses that should be avoided: Detached housing, Industrial uses with negative impacts on residents, commercial drive-throughs</p>	<p>Building Height: Prevailing height - 1-3 stories Maximum heights - 4 stories</p>				

Mixed Residential Neighborhood

The Mixed Residential Neighborhoods generally reflect areas of existing or approved development focused on residential uses or areas where the residential development would be separated from redevelopment areas by physical barriers, natural barriers, or other uses. Most notably, these barriers include streams and the W&OD trail.

Mixed-density residential neighborhoods provide a range of residential densities and housing types in the same neighborhood. Smaller open spaces, like parks and community gardens, are distributed throughout the neighborhood within a short walk of homes. The highest density within the neighborhoods should be adjacent to the central gathering place to help promote a vibrant and active community. The size of any such parks and gathering spaces should be proportionate to the amount of residential development.



Uses	Land Use Intensity	Phasing	Parking	Mobility	Site Design
Primary Uses: Multi-Family Residential Use, Attached Townhouses	Floor Area Ratio: Up to 1.5 FAR maximum	Mixed Residential Neighborhoods generally reflect portions of the Crescent District where residential development was previously approved or is already built. These areas will be built out according to any applicable phasing plans that were part an approved rezoning.	Parking will primarily be provided on surface lots and structured parking where the uses or density supports it. On-street parking will also be dispersed throughout the district.	Uses and sites are generally auto-oriented, but streets are designed to accommodate all modes of transportation and place a strong emphasis on the pedestrian environment.	Mixed Residential Neighborhoods provide an effective transition between existing neighborhoods and areas of greater intensity. Small blocks and a connected grid of streets support a well-connected, cohesive community. Mixed residential neighborhoods include and contribute to a comprehensive and connected network of open spaces that provide gathering space, preserve large tree stands, and provide environmental benefits such as an expanded tree canopy and the management of stormwater run-off. Park and open spaces area (typically 0.5 – 1.0 acres) should be an integral park of any such neighborhood.
Complimentary Uses Neighborhood commercial uses or offices occupying the ground floor of residential	Density: 18-30 DU/Acre depending on unit sizes				
Uses that should be avoided: Industrial, Detached Housing, commercial drive-throughs	Building Height: Prevailing height - 1-3 stories Maximum height - 4 stories				



CHAPTER FIVE: Implementation

Zoning Recommendations
Architectural Guidelines
Next Steps
Financing Recommendations

Photo: Rendering of the King Street Station development located at South King Street and the W&OD Trail

Zoning Recommendations

As of the time this document was being drafted, the Town of Leesburg Zoning Ordinance included zoning districts specific to the Crescent District to implement the previous version of this Master Plan. However, a zoning ordinance rewrite was in progress. One important thing to note is that the current baseline or by-right zoning was demonstrated to be unrealistic during the development process. The development feasibility study in particular showed by-right residential densities were too low and the expectations for retail and office were too high. The current zoning structure essentially necessitates a rezoning application and several modifications to establish a realistic and economically viable development plan. As such, this plan anticipates the eventual development of new zoning to implement this plan.

New Zoning Framework

One possibility that was discussed during development of this plan was remapping areas of the Crescent District so that the envisioned development in the activity centers can occur by-right and without a legislative application review. This can be accomplished through development of a true form based code. While by-right form-based code is the preferred zoning strategy for Activity Centers, the Town recognizes this approach has not been tested and other traditional zoning strategies such as legislative rezonings may be the ultimate implementation method.

While it is acknowledged that legislative applications add time money and complexity to redevelopment projects, these legislative applications also give the development community the flexibility that is desired to account for site specific conditions. At the same time legislative applications provide

the community with the opportunity to weigh in on projects and work with the Town and applicants to ensure that redevelopment is beneficial to the neighborhood.

A form based code can iron out these details of what buildings and development should like at the beginning of the process rather than waiting for a developer to submit a rezoning application. While this master plan document establishes the vision for the Crescent District, details for individual buildings and blocks will need to be ironed out through the development of new zoning or through rezoning applications.

It is important to note that a form based code is intended to be prescriptive, not proscriptive. It places attention to detail on the form of the building and how it relates to the pedestrian environment and streetscape and places less emphasis on the buildings that occupy those uses. With the Crescent District, this would be especially true of the activity centers and commercial corridors. A mix of zoning approaches can be possible with a more conventional approach to zoning outside the activity centers and main commercial corridors.

New Zoning Requirements

Another factor to consider is the extent to which neighborhood and community amenities are required by the zoning ordinance. This master plan document is based on the assumption that new development will be beneficial and create new amenities for Leesburg as a whole. What we don't want to see is for individual applications to come in with small amounts of residential development that ultimately chip away at the Crescent District and lead to major development of residential uses without realizing the open space and other amenities that are envisioned.

A prerequisite of any future by-right zoning structure or redevelopment application should be a detailed set of zoning parameters or proposals that result in provision of all of the amenities envisioned by this plan. Since small projects cannot always provide these amenities it may be necessary to have minimum project sizes that consider a comprehensive redevelopment which provides everything the town envisions in the context of a particular location.

Compatibility of new development with the surrounding neighborhood is also key. Any zoning regulations to implement the plan would need to be comprehensive and fully consider all aspects of how proposed future development integrates within the fabric of Leesburg.

Another thing that must be considered is proffers. The Town has traditionally received proffers for all new development during rezoning applications to offset the cost associated with that development. Examples of such proffers include transportation infrastructure upgrades, regional road contributions, recreational contributions, and school contributions. New development that does not receive such proffer contributions could potentially place burdens on the Town to mitigate the impacts of new development. Accordingly identifying ways for applications with residential development to help offset these costs may still be appropriate.

Given all these factors, establishing by-right zoning will not come without challenges. However, by-right zoning also comes with benefits of seeing redevelopment occur more quickly and ultimately helping the Town realize its vision.

Streetscape Improvements

As emphasized throughout this document, this master plan document emphasizes streetscape improvements to catalyze redevelopment and realization of the Plan vision.

In the spirit of Legacy Leesburg, the Town should be proactive in making the streetscape improvements come to fruition. This is a shift from the previous version of the Master Plan which explicitly stated that public funds should not be used.

As of the writing is this master plan document the Town Council has added funding to the 6 year CIP for preliminary studies including planning and survey work to implement the Streetscape vision. This Master Plan document should play a significant role in influencing how future capital projects are implemented.

However, if redevelopment is proposed before the Town fully mobilizes on streetscape improvements, any large scale applications that come forward should accommodate the planned streetscape improvements.

Financing Recommendations

Implementing the Crescent District Master Plan will likely require a number of public projects. One of the most significant projects will be implementation of streetscape improvements. While this plan provides conceptual street sections, more detailed engineering studies will be necessary.

Developing funding strategies is critical to in achieving the Crescent District Master Plan vision and goals. Potential funding programs/sources which may be appropriate for the Crescent District include but are not limited to the following:

Alternative public financing tools such as business improvement districts, Community Development Authority (CDA), and Tax Increment Financing (TIF), would allow the Town to direct proceeds from current and future development projects back into the Crescent District.

Tax increment financing is authorized by Virginia and is a technique designed to create investment in a district where there is not prior record of significant private sector interest. Tax increment financing doesn't 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.

Architectural Guidelines

Since the first Crescent District Master Plan and throughout the process of developing this revision, architectural design has been an emphasized a critical component of the Crescent District Vision. As noted in Legacy Leesburg, the Old and Historic District is at the heart of Leesburg's character and the Town will seek appropriately scaled and designed redevelopment that builds on the Old and Historic District's character.

Building designs should emphasize compatibility with Leesburg's historic character. While redevelopment efforts in the Crescent District are not expected to replicate the design of the Old and Historic District, they should draw design inspiration from it.

1. All building architecture should draw inspiration from the Old and Historic District. 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.
2. In recognition of the pedestrian focus on the Crescent District, buildings should be constructed and designed at a pedestrian scale.
3. Traditional building designs and materials including brick, stone, lap siding, and standing seam metal roofs are favored.
4. All new primary building facades should use a traditional 3-part architectural approach that includes a foundation treatment (bottom), storefront or midsection, and entablature (top).
5. Building forms should provide traditional fenestration including a balanced, ratio of solids to voids and smaller windows on upper stories.
6. All buildings should make use of 4-sided architecture with special attention paid to any facades that are visible from any public areas subject to high traffic

7. Corporate designs and trademark architecture should be avoided or adapted to Leesburg's Character.
8. As the size of a building increases, the complexity of its massing should also increase to provide suitable visual interest and maintain a comfortable human scale.
9. Projects containing many buildings, or accommodating a variety of different functions, should provide variety in building size and massing.
10. Development of a single large building mass is less desirable than an arrangement of several smaller buildings which would add visual interest, spatial variety, and more human scale to the site.
11. To avoid a monolithic appearance of a large structure, consider using various techniques to minimize the perceived mass including:
 - Varying wall surfaces
 - Varying heights and sizes of bays
 - Varying roof lines
 - Articulated ground floors/bases of buildings;
 - Water tables,
 - Cornice details
 - Changes in material, texture, or pattern
 - Using a ratio of solids (walls) to voids (windows and doors) consistent with traditional design principles.
12. Building heights within a single development should be varied add visual interest within the site and along streetscapes.
13. Buildings should use common roof forms found in Leesburg which include shed, gable, hipped, flat with parapet roof, gambrel and mansard.

Architectural elements to avoid

1. Excessive use of windows and glazing with non-traditional placement of windows
2. Contemporary designs that lack a relationship to Leesburg's historic character
3. Contemporary materials (EFIS, metal, concrete, and glass)
4. Flat building facades that lack articulation and fenestration
5. Blank walls
6. Contemporary color palettes
7. Repetitious design over large façade expanse

Site Design Guidelines

Since the first Crescent District Master Plan and throughout the process of developing this revision, architectural design has been an emphasized a critical component of the Crescent District Vision. As noted in Legacy Leesburg, the Old and Historic District is at the heart of Leesburg's character and the Town will seek appropriately scaled and designed redevelopment that builds on the Old and Historic District's character.

Building designs should emphasize compatibility with Leesburg's historic character. While redevelopment efforts in the Crescent District are not expected to replicate the design of the Old and Historic District, the should draw design inspiration from it.

1. All building architecture should draw inspiration from the of the Old and Historic District. 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.
2. Buildings should relate to the street or open space to which they abut. Entrances should be provided to ensure convenient access to public roads, sidewalks, and adjacent parking and buildings.
3. Drive-through uses should not be considered in activity centers. Buildings in commercial corridors and buildings being retrofitted should minimize the impact of the drive-through on the pedestrian environment to the extent practicable.
4. All rooftop HVAC and mechanical equipment should be screened from view from all abutting streets and public or private open space.
5. Ground mounted mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
6. Sidewalks throughout the Crescent District should be a minimum of 6 feet. Wider sidewalks should be provided for major road and commercial street frontages.
7. New development and redevelopment efforts should maximize street trees.
8. Street trees, benches, planting areas, sidewalk seating, bus stops, and street furniture should be incorporated where appropriate throughout the Crescent District.
9. New development should provide parks and open spaces that are centrally located such that all new residents will have parks and open spaces within easy walking distance.
10. Typical block lengths should generally range between 250 and 500 feet in length. Larger blocks can be considered where necessary to accommodate engineering constraints or a specific use if connectivity and pedestrian objectives are not compromised.
11. The majority of major roads in the Crescent District should provide on-street parking where practical.
12. Parking other than on-street parking should be provided at the rear or sides of buildings where feasible.
13. New Development should be designed to relate to and include neighboring properties.



Building Retrofit Guidelines

In some instances, full-scale redevelopment of a buildings in the Crescent District may not be practical or feasible. However, the buildings should still be architecturally enhanced to complement the Crescent District until such time that a full-scale redevelopment is proposed. This might include additions to existing buildings or facade improvements. The following design guidelines should be considered.

1. Use traditional materials like brick, stone, or wood. Alternative materials which are compatible with the character of Historic Leesburg may be determined to be appropriate.
2. Use traditional fenestration (placement of windows and doors) with balanced rhythms of openings.
3. Traditional roof forms and materials should be used. The most common roof forms in Leesburg are gable, hipped, and flat roofs with parapet walls
4. Break up otherwise unarticulated buildings with traditional details including, but not limited to: emphasizing entrances, adding doors or windows, increasing window trim, decorative brick courses, cornices, changes in color and material, or awnings.
5. When altering an existing structure, employ design principles that are compatible with its architectural context elements to include:
 - Mixing traditional materials (brick, metal, wood, or other acceptable materials) on the facade;
 - Creating patterns in masonry using varying brick colors or bonding patterns;
 - Mixing window configurations. While double-hung windows are the most common in the OHD, alternative styles

- are appropriate on more contemporary construction;
- Break up blank walls or small, disproportionate windows to more traditional larger windows.
- Consider the use of glass as an accent building material or windows and doors with large amounts of glazing (example: Roll-up garage style glass doors on industrial buildings)
- Simplify architectural details on railings, awnings, and trim to reflect the building's simple character. Avoid using overly detailed "faux" historic details on contemporary building facades.



These images show a before and after of a building on S. King Street that underwent facade improvements to bring its architectural character more in line with other portions of the Old and Historic District. Similar improvements can be considered for various buildings in the Crescent District that are not being entirely redeveloped.

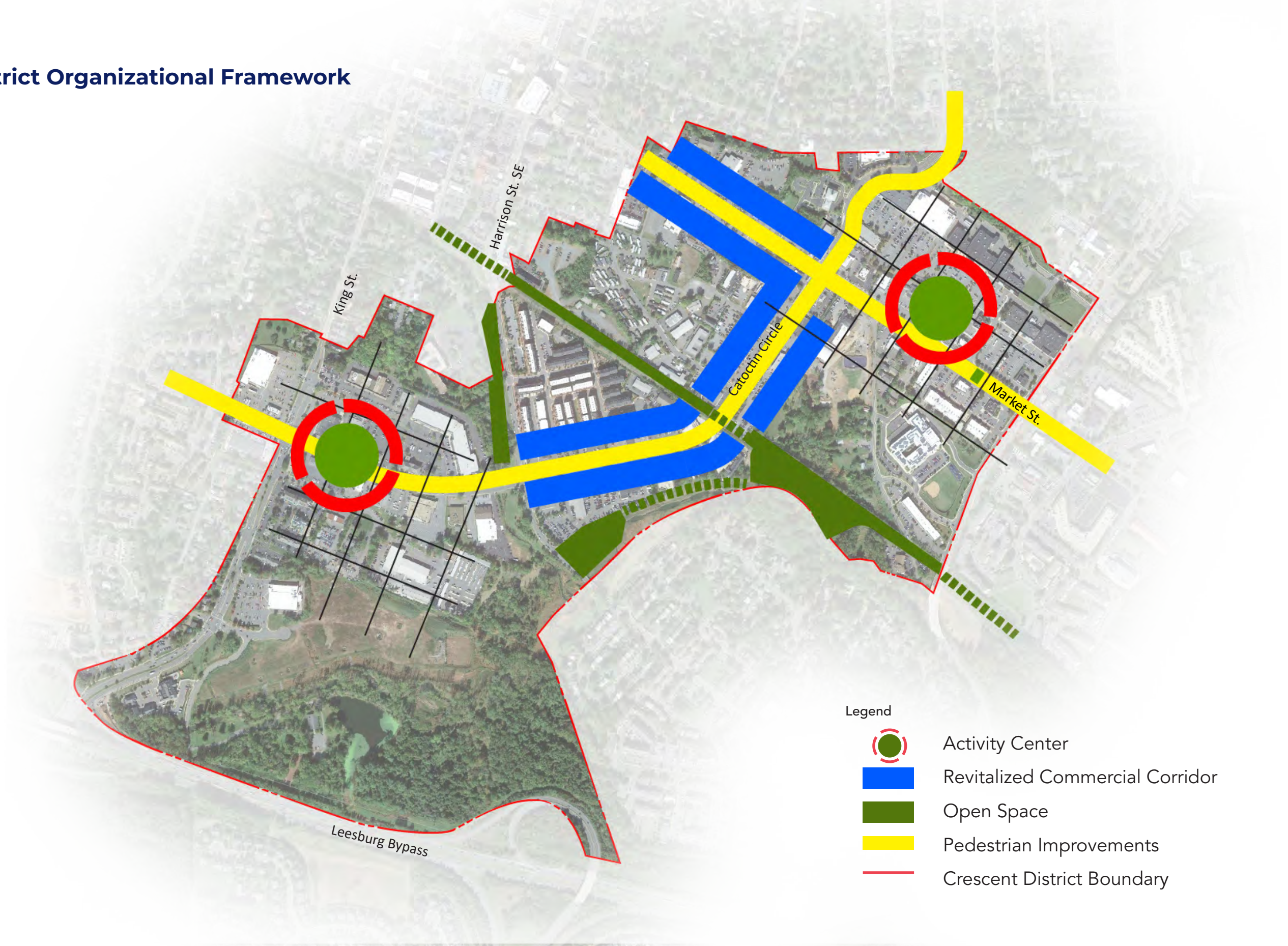
6. A three-part facade organization is preferred. For single Story Buildings - establish a storefront and accentuate openings with traditional details such as awnings, sign bands, and roofline cornices.








7. For Multi-Story buildings - establish a ground floor level which relates to pedestrians. Upper stories should feature balanced windows. Consider a roofline cornice.

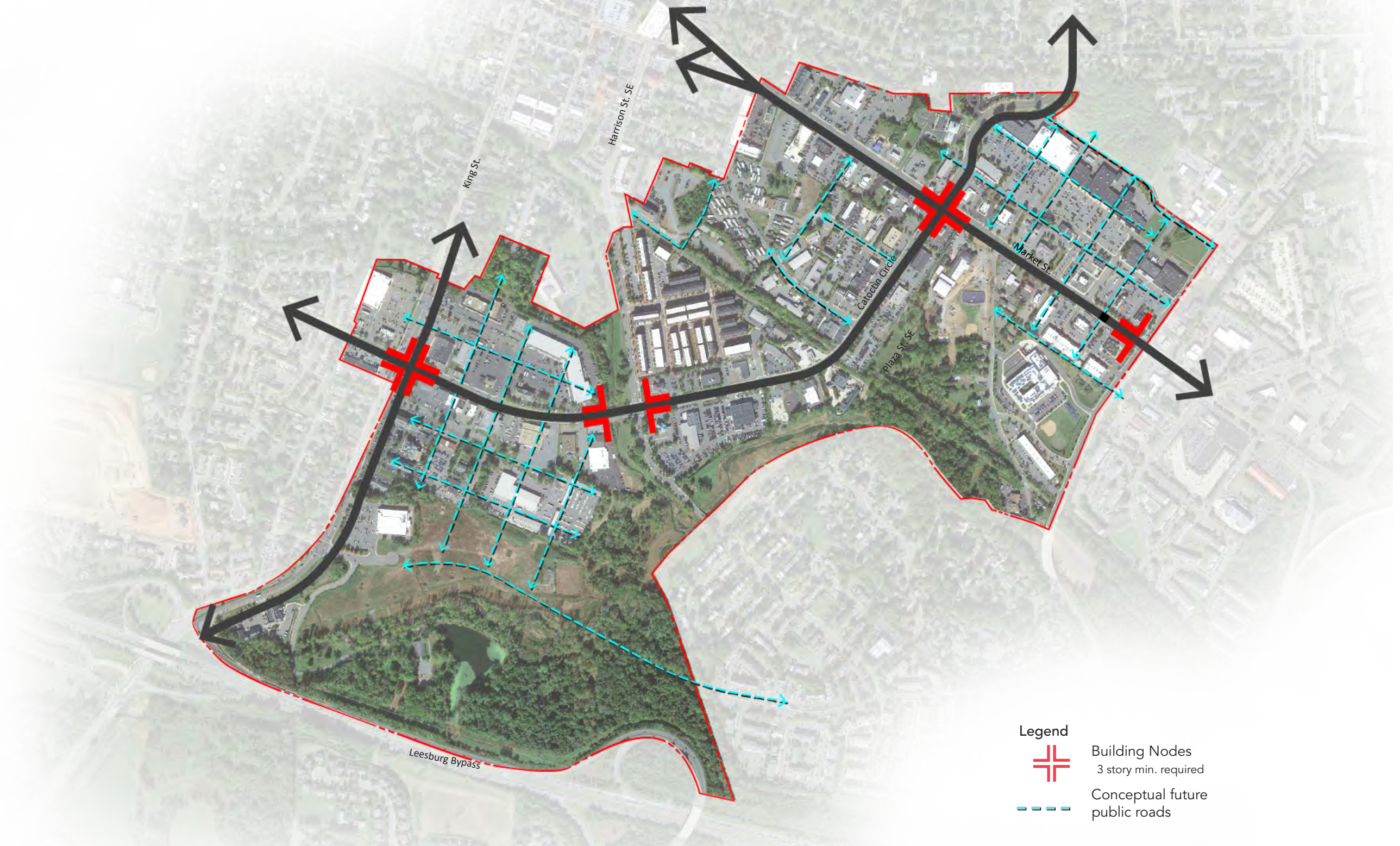


Map 1: Crescent District Organizational Framework

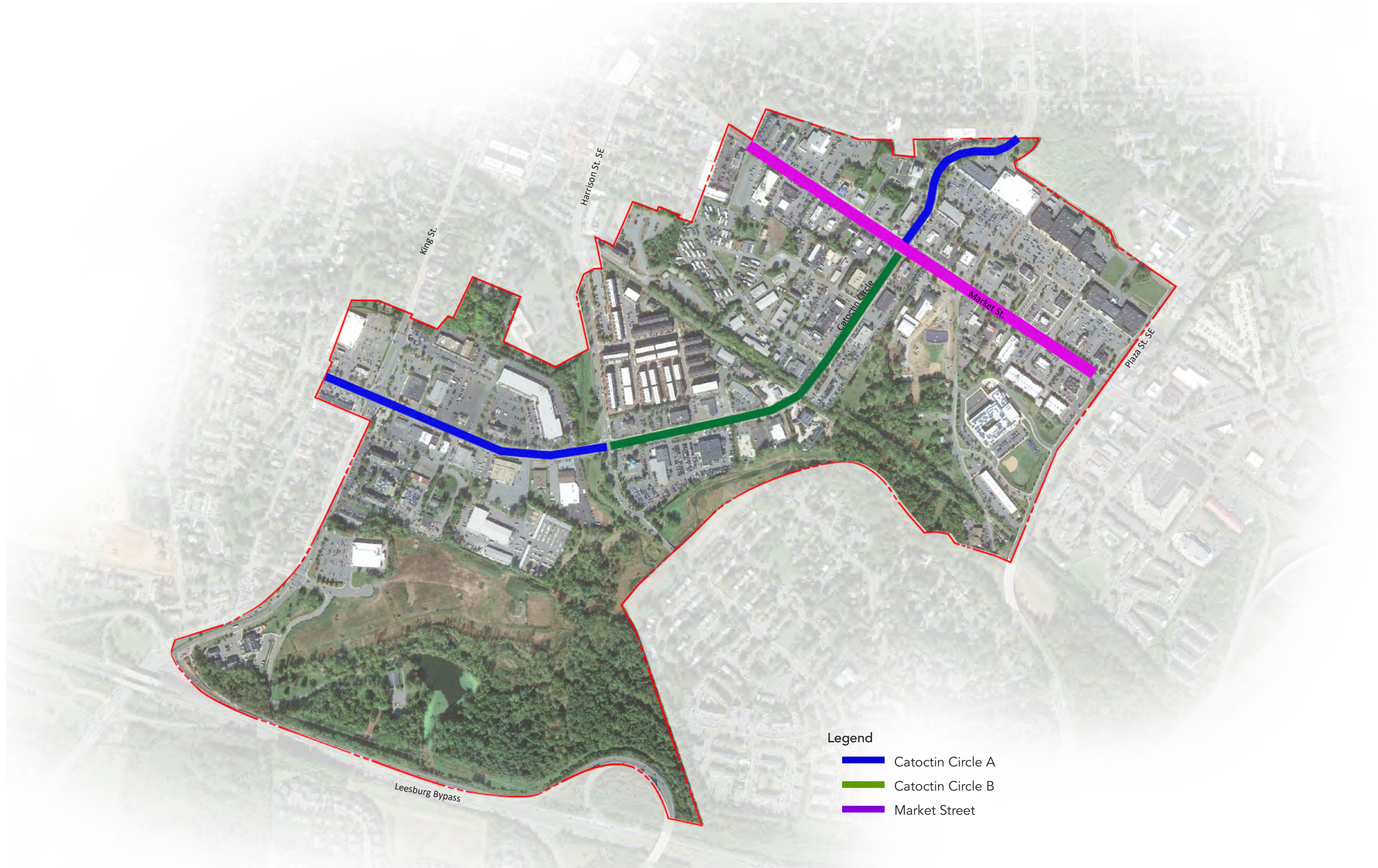


- Legend
-  Activity Center
 -  Revitalized Commercial Corridor
 -  Open Space
 -  Pedestrian Improvements
 -  Crescent District Boundary

Map 2: Conceptual Future Roadway Network



Map 3: Crescent District Streetscape Sections



Map 4: Crescent District Place Types

