

# OLD TOWN MANASSAS SECTOR PLAN

ADOPTED JUNE 16, 2008



**CITY OF MANASSAS, VIRGINIA**

**Rhodeside & Harwell, Incorporated**  
Urban Design and Planning

**Nelson Nygaard Consulting Associates**  
Transportation Planning

**Retail Compass**  
Retail Market Analysis

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# **I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

## **MEMBERS OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*As with many successful Sector Plan processes, meaningful discussion with critical stakeholders in a community is necessary to gaining information about an area and visions for its future. We were fortunate to work with the Citizens Advisory Committee, whose members graciously gave their time and effort in guiding this project. It is with many thanks that we recognize the following stakeholders who shared their visions and ideas for the future of Old Town Manassas.*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>HISTORIC MANASSAS, INC.</b>  | Linda Robertson,<br>Chuck Rector,<br>Bren Compton |
| <b>OLD TOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION</b>                                    | Lou Balboni, Jan Alten                            |
| <b>PLANNING COMMISSION</b>  | John Lassiter, John Ahrens                        |
| <b>ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD</b>                                       | Tom Waters  |
| <b>BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE</b>   | Robyn Williams                                    |
| <b>HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD</b>   | Ulysses X. (Xerk) White                           |
| <b>MANASSAS BUSINESS COUNCIL</b>  | Coleman Rector,<br>Steve Nelson                   |
| <b>PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE</b>                                   | Tom Murphy, Ken Johnson                           |
| <b>CENTER FOR THE ARTS</b>  | Sally Lay   |
| <b>GEORGETOWN SOUTH BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>                              | Hannah Senft,<br>Robert Farrow                    |
| <b>PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY - GREATER MANASSAS<br/>CHAMBER OF COMMERCE</b> | Matt Marshall                                     |
| <b>PRINCE WILLIAM ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS</b>                           | Denise Nebb, Sherry Day,<br>Eugene Hobart         |
| <i>BRENT STREET NEIGHBORHOOD</i>  | Nancy Breeden                                     |
| <i>MAPLE/PRESCOTT STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD</i>                              | Mark & Ann Hempen                                 |
| <i>NORTH OF CHURCH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD</i>                              | Bob Bendell, Jon Wist,<br>Peter Alten             |
| <i>LIBERTY STREET NEIGHBORHOOD</i>                                      | L.P. “Buck” Buchanan                              |

## II. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The City of Manassas, Virginia, has undergone a tremendous amount of growth over the past ten years, becoming over ninety percent developed with diverse business and residential opportunities. To guide and sustain growth in the area, a Comprehensive Plan for the City of Manassas, Virginia, was completed in 2002. The Comprehensive Plan designated six study areas within the City of Manassas, which included Old Town in the Downtown study area. The vision for Old Town Manassas, as provided by the Comprehensive Plan, includes creating a vibrant and robust downtown district that encourages business development, creates new urban residential choices, maintains specialty shops, and preserves the identity of the historic district.

Manassas gained an identity during the Civil War but did not experience growth until after the war, focused primarily around the area of Old Town. Development



*Center Street Today*

of this area included structures for heavy commercial, warehouse and retail land uses. Located on small lots, these land uses were laid out in a grid-street pattern parallel and perpendicular to the railroad tracks and are still used for offices, residences, and commercial purposes.

Revitalization and restoration of Historic Manassas was furthered by the restoration of the railroad depot in 1995. In addition, shopping centers, new residential areas, and small commercial structures evolved around the major corridors of Route 28 and Route 234 during the 1950s and 1960s. Some of these have presented significant competition to the businesses within the Old Town sector.

As the historical center and foundation of the City of Manassas, Old Town is noted for its railroad crossing (Manassas Junction), its courthouse, early 1900s buildings, narrow streets, small retail shops, City Hall, and the museum. New and renovated businesses, as well as residential and municipal buildings, are protected by the National Register of Historic Places Criteria for the Manassas Historic District, which enforces aesthetic design guidelines to create an identity for the area. Private landowners, the Old Town Business Association, Historic Manassas Inc., and Manassas Business Council have reinvested in Old Town over the past fifteen years in hopes of reclaiming the area as a profitable retail corridor. Public investment from the local government has included the construction of the Loy E. Harris Pavilion, restoration of the Hopkins Candy Factory as an arts facility, and a pedestrian walkway along the railroad.

Growth in the area has generated increased interest from the City to establish Old Town as a vital corridor. Old Town's historical significance and accessible location in the center of the City contribute to its appeal as a designated economic

‘hub.’ To gain support for this initiative, the Comprehensive Plan designated elements for economic development in Old Town that included:

- Exploring ways in which the Old Town/Downtown area can be enhanced and linked to both the courthouse and Mathis Avenue area, including pedestrian walkways, additional intensity of development, and incentives to retail and professional office uses with structured parking.
- Encouraging a mix of residential and business uses that will enhance the economic vitality of the Old Town area.
- Using zoning and infrastructure incentives to achieve redevelopment and infill in the Old Town/Downtown area to allow for a wide variety of uses.
- Redefining height restrictions to allow for maximum utilization of air space that will encourage future business development while maintaining the current character and charm of the area.
- Encouraging strategies to address the parking needs of the area as well as encouraging more foot traffic into Old Town.

This sector plan study for Old Town Manassas addresses these issues in ways that will create a system of distinctive in-town residential and mixed use neighborhoods, fully integrated with a revitalized shopping district and a vibrant entertainment zone.

### III. THE PLANNING PROCESS



*Existing home - example of an appropriate structure that might be re-used as a future small hotel, with a great kitchen and outdoor dining on Battle Street*

The Old Town Sector Plan is the product of a planning process that was carried out in close collaboration with the Old Town community and the City's planning staff. Community and stakeholder focus groups, City staff, community planning consultants, specialty consultants, and a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) helped define issues, develop concepts, and evaluate ideas for the Old Town Sector Area. A list of CAC members is included in the Appendix to this report. Members of the CAC included area residents, business owners, property owner representatives, and representatives of the various City commissions. These individuals worked with the project team to analyze existing characteristics of Old Town, identify issues of concern and opportunity, and visualize what they would like Old Town to look like in the future. Members of the CAC also contributed ideas for design guidelines and appropriate land uses to help preserve the historical quality of Old Town. The boundaries for the Old Town Sector Area are shown in Figure 1.

Early in the planning process, the CAC established a list of goals for the Old Town Sector Plan. These included:

- Converting Manassas from a sleepy town to a 21st Century "historic" City
- Protecting the Victorian ideals of the Town
- An ability to live where you work
- Creating a Hub, full of people every day
- Lessening the impact of outskirts development on the Old Town area
- Improving the quality of life within the Old Town community for residents and visitors alike
- Maintaining a respect for history while providing for the future
- Making the area more biker/pedestrian friendly - creating paths, slowing down vehicular traffic, and creating pedestrian-friendly streets and sidewalks

The project team worked with the CAC and area focus groups during various stages of the planning process to ensure that these goals could be met in the Plan. Members of the CAC produced a photographic inventory of the positive and negative characteristics of Old Town. In addition, the group considered images from historic downtowns in other communities, which enabled participants to envision how change would affect the area in the future. Area focus groups, comprised of neighbors and key stakeholders, were asked to identify their concerns and issues with current and future development in the area. These issues included overall concerns, neighborhood preservation issues, opportunities for future development, parks and open space needs, and parking issues.

A transportation charrette was held in July 2006 to identify specific key issues, opportunities, and priorities in relation to access, impacts, and movement within

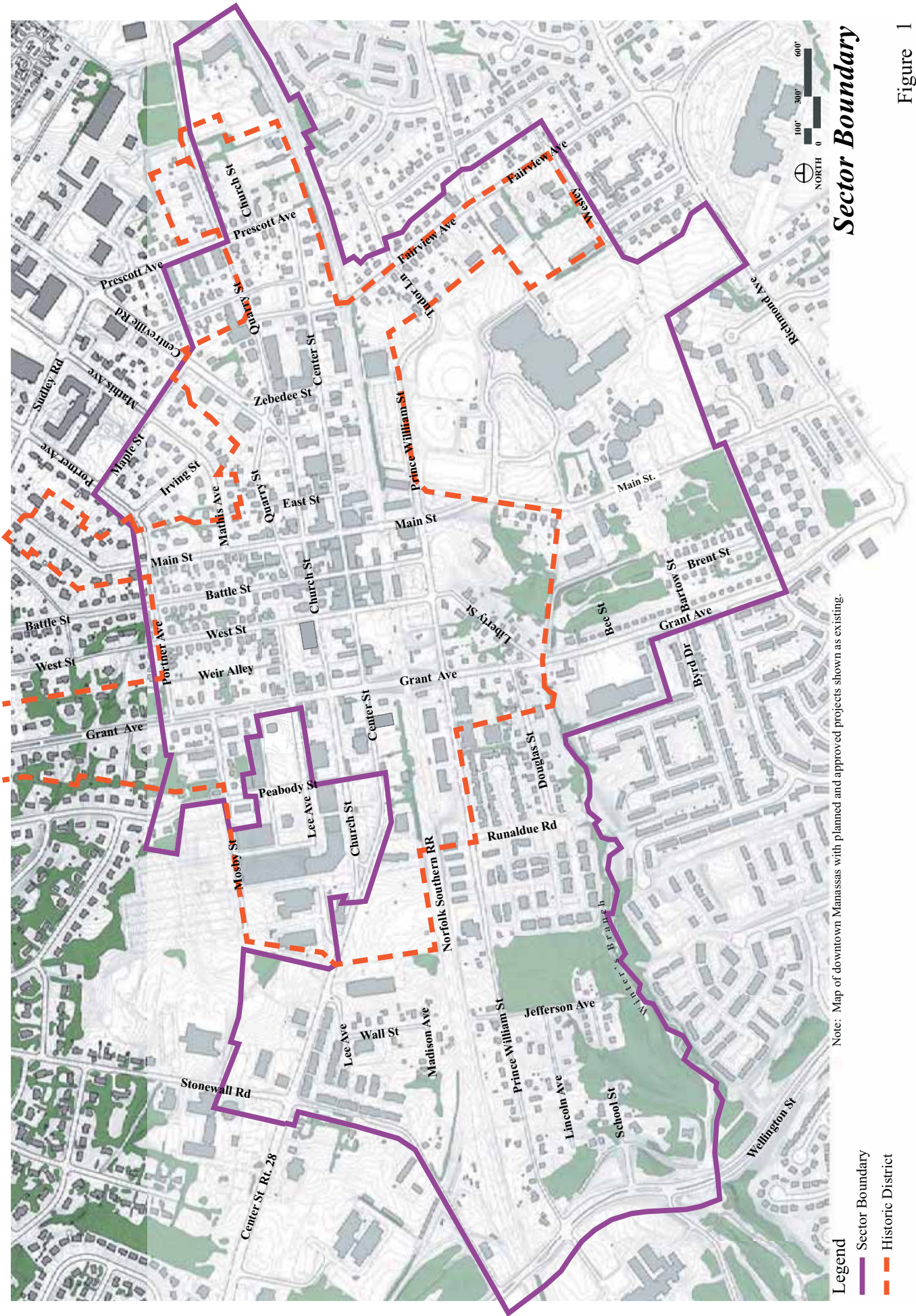



Figure 1



the Sector Area. Participants were asked to identify major goals and objectives with regard to pedestrian access and conflicts, bicycle connections, vehicular circulation, traffic calming, one-way conversion, parking management of existing demand and supply, and location of additional parking facilities. The charrette participants spent several days discussing issues and alternative strategies for improvement and toured the sector area on foot to assess solutions “on the ground.”

In addition, a thorough retail analysis of the Downtown area was conducted. A total of 68 retail establishments and 91 retail-appropriate spaces were surveyed in March 2006. The goal of this survey was to assess current retail conditions in Downtown Manassas and to develop strategies for improving these which could be incorporated into the Sector Plan.

Finally, the physical conditions of the sector area were inventoried and assessed in order to identify opportunities for improvement and constraints to change.



## IV. EXISTING CONDITIONS



*Make a safe place for pedestrians  
along the northern side of the  
Norfolk-Southern Railroad*

### CIRCULATION

Route 28, a major commuter route, runs through the center of Old Town Manassas, along a pair of one-way streets: Center and Church Streets (see Figure 2). The pedestrian environment of Old Town is compromised by this road alignment, the high traffic speeds in the downtown area, a lack of wide sidewalks, and increased levels of noise. Grant Avenue (Route 234), north of the railroad, was built as a tree-lined residential boulevard with a wide, central median. In contrast, Grant Avenue south of the railroad varies in width and does not possess the same pedestrian-friendly character due to its strip-commercial centers, visible parking lots, and poorly maintained properties. This latter portion of Grant Avenue presents an unattractive and inappropriate entrance to the historic Old Town core.

At-grade signaling on the railroad impedes north- and south-bound automobile and pedestrian movement in the station area, but it does not impact access east and west of the station. The proposed bicycle circulation paths and routes outlined in the Comprehensive Plan seem appropriate and adequate for the Old Town Sector Area. These are noted in Figure 2.

In a transportation workshop that was held in July of 2006, public concerns included:

- Not enough parking in the area, especially between the hours of 10 AM and 5 PM
- A noisy Route 28, and one that is so busy that it is difficult for pedestrians to cross the street
- Automotive and truck traffic that exceed the 25 mph speed limit through the Downtown
- Need to improve roads and to install traffic-calming measures
- The need to evaluate whether some of the Downtown streets should be closed to traffic or made one-way
- Too much neighborhood cut-through traffic
- Pedestrian difficulties along Grant Avenue, particularly in crossing the street
- Sidewalks that are not wide enough to provide for comfortable strolling space
- Delivery truck loading and off-loading concerns

### NATURAL FEATURES

Old Town Manassas straddles the top of a significant ridgeline with a drainage divide that follows the railroad and eventually splits into seven drainage basins (Figure 3). The entire Downtown area is located within the Flat Branch watershed.

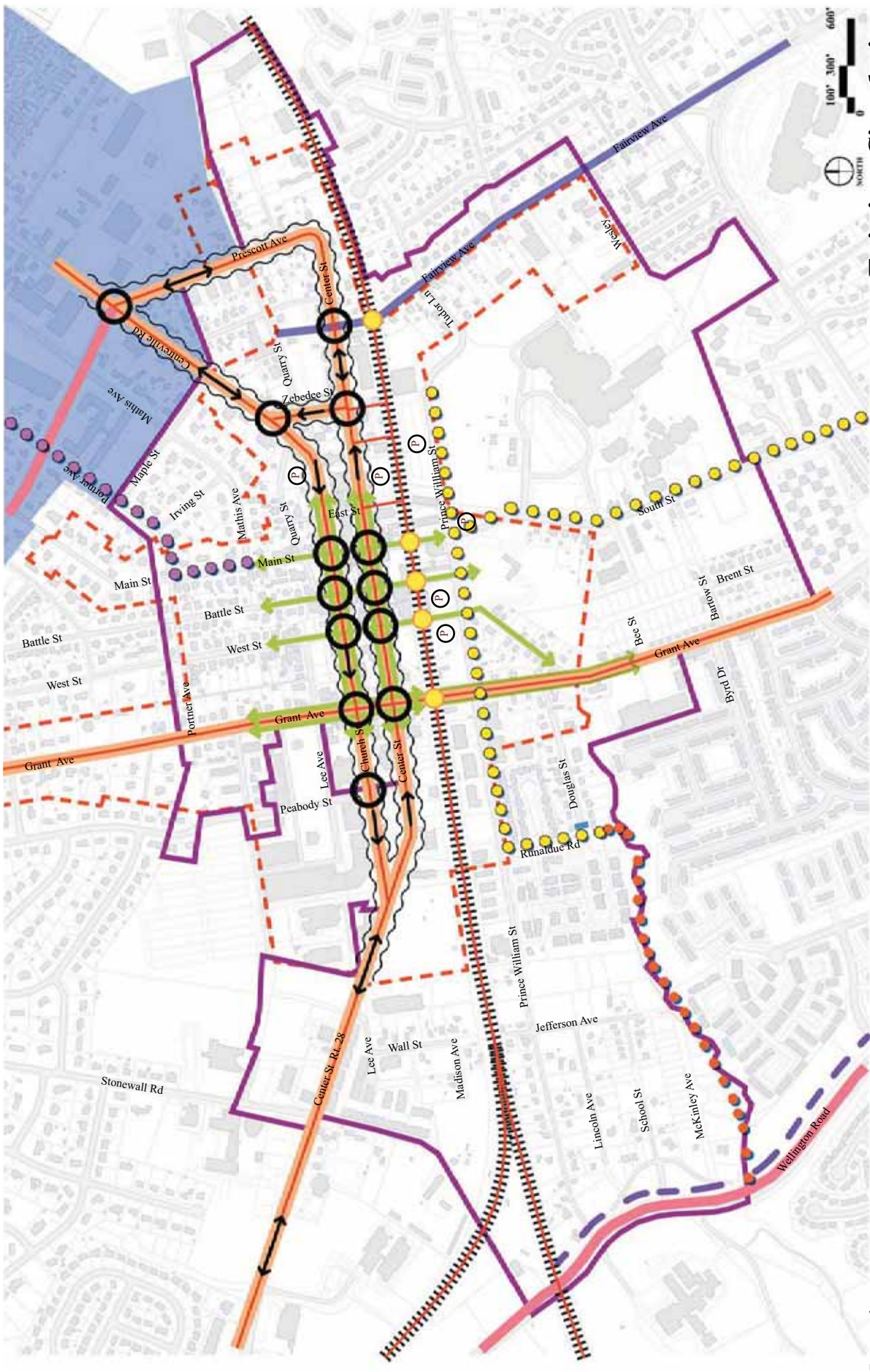


Figure 2

The Manassas Museum, located in Baldwin Park, features prominent trees and significant topography. Baldwin Park spans ten acres and contains playing courts, picnic facilities, and the Museum. Other areas of open space are very limited in the study area and are not easily accessible to residents. A stream, running the distance of Prince William Street, is a prime location for a potential open space corridor. Additionally, the sport fields and open space used for Osbourn High School has significant open space value for the area.

## CIVIC AND HISTORIC FEATURES

Old Town Manassas is the distinctive historical and cultural district in Manassas (Figure 4). The Manassas Museum is located off Main Street in Baldwin Park and contains artifacts of the City's signature Civil War heritage. The Candy Factory, on Battle Street, has been restored as the Center for the Arts and now houses an art center and exhibit space for the community. The Cramer Center, on the western portion of Center Street, is a converted church that now serves as a music store and performance space. The Train Depot, Prince William Street, contains Historic Manassas, Inc., and the City's Visitor Center, as well as an operating station for Amtrak and Virginia Railway Express service. The Jennie Dean Industrial School, just outside the western boundary of the Sector Area off Wellington Street, was founded in the 19th century for African Americans.

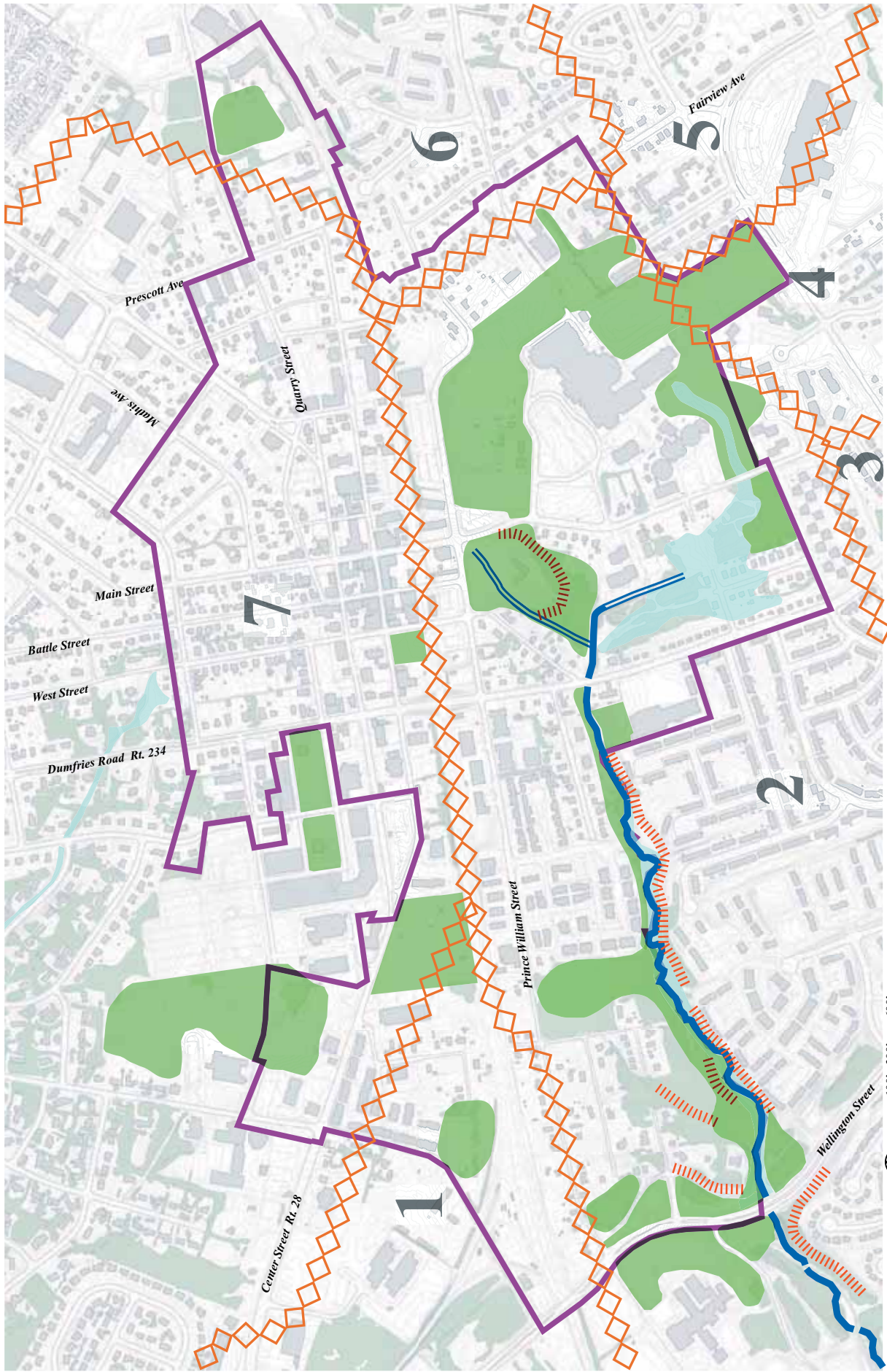


*Hopkins Candy Factory  
restoration for city activities*

The Old Town Sector Area includes the Historic District of the City of Manassas. The boundary for the Historic District is defined on the north by Portner Avenue, Stuart Avenue, and Taylor Street. The District is bounded to the west by Peabody Street, Mosby Street, and Wall Street. The boundary then drops south to Prince William Street, parallels Dumfries Road, then crosses Dumfries Road and extends east down Azure Court and northeast along South Main Street. The boundary continues east along Prince William Street at South Main Street, goes south toward Ellicott Lane, around Richmond Avenue, and then north up Fairview Avenue. Traveling east, the boundary runs along the railroad line, and then heads north to the end of Church Street, and then north to Euclid Avenue, where it extends west to parallel Zebedee Street near Centreville Road, continuing west along the path of Mathis Avenue.

Parallel to Main Street, the boundary goes northeast and then meets its northern boundary at Portner Avenue. Properties within the historic district are subject to specific development and redevelopment controls, as enforced by the City.

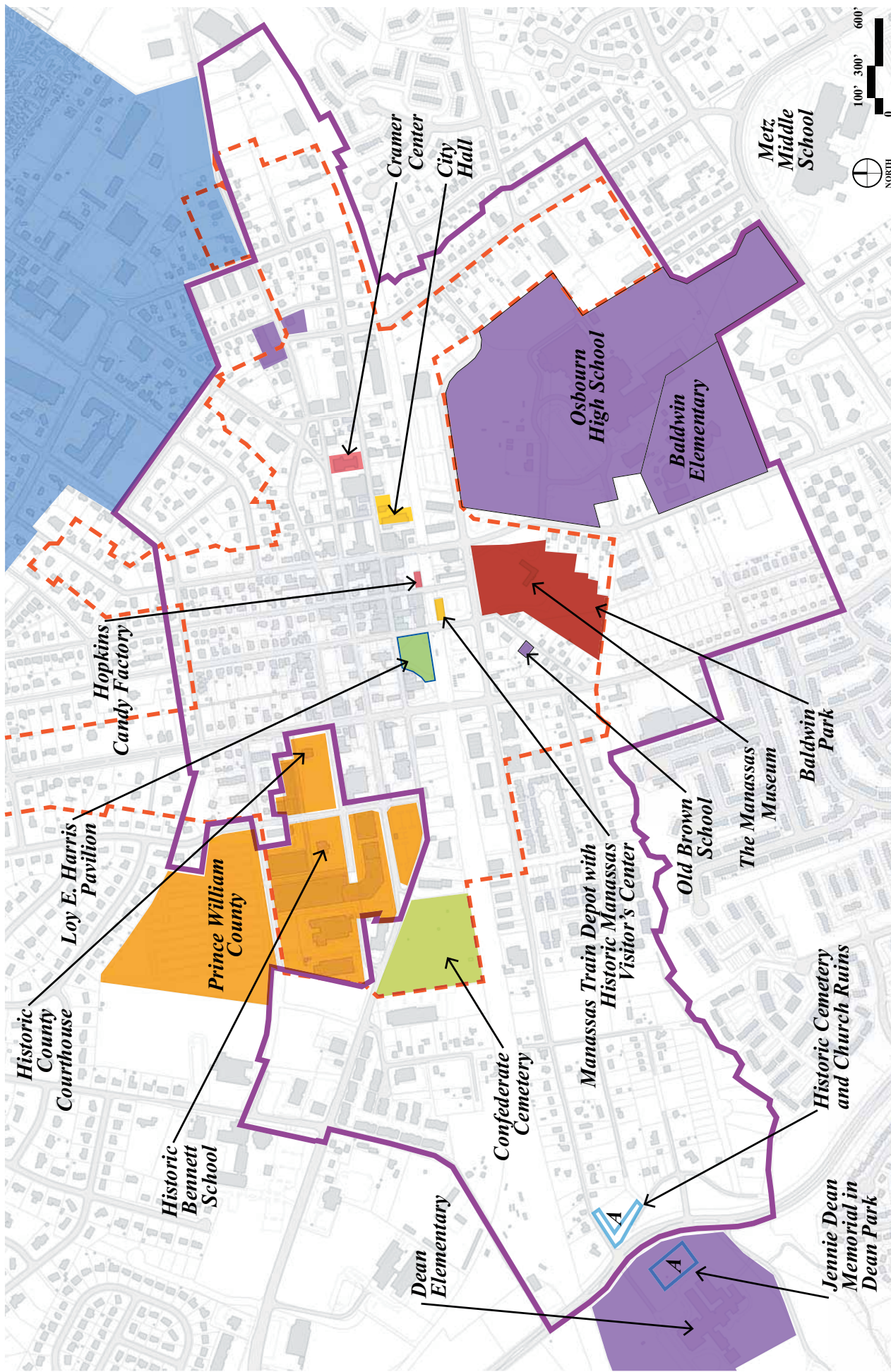
In May 2005, the City awarded a contract to EHT TRACERIES, an architectural history consulting firm located in Washington, D. C., to conduct a full survey of the



**Natural Features**

- LEGEND**
- NORTH
  - 0 100' 300' 600'
  - 100 YEAR FLOOD PLAIN
  - CREEK
  - STEEP SLOPES
  - WOODED AREAS
  - OPEN SPACE
  - SECTOR BOUNDARY
  - DRAINAGE SWALE
  - RIDGELINE / WATERSHED
  - 1 CANNON BRANCH TRIBUTARIES
  - 2 WINTERS BRANCH
  - 3 COCKERSVILLE BRANCH
  - 4 CABIN RUN
  - 5 BUCKHALL BRANCH
  - 6 RUSSIA BRANCH
  - 7 FLAT BRANCH

Figure 3



**Civic & Historic Features**

- Legend**
- Schools Public, Private, or Historic
  - County Offices
  - Museums
  - City Facilities
  - Green Focal Place
  - Cemetery
  - Performance/ Art Venue
  - Mathis Avenue Study Area
  - A Archeological
  - Sector Boundary
  - Historic District

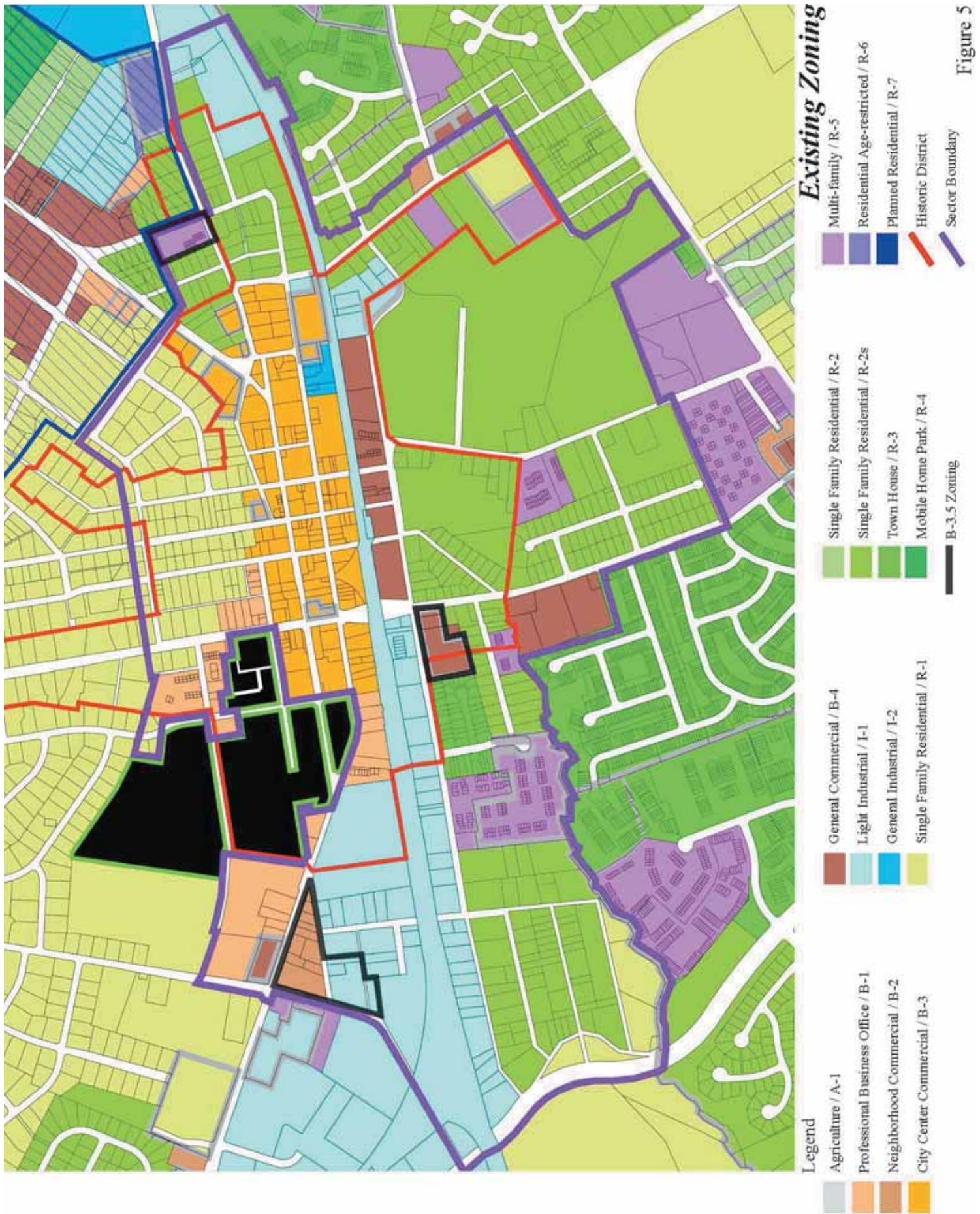
City's Historic District. The survey was conducted in a three phase process: 1) the existing survey files were reviewed, and the written information was updated and enhanced; 2) all properties within the historic district were resurveyed and new photos in digital and black and white format were taken and incorporated with each survey form; and 3) the properties adjacent to the historic district were inventoried and an evaluation of potential areas where the district boundary may be adjusted was conducted. The survey was complete by January 2006. Information provided in the survey includes the address of each building; its original construction date, if known; a description on the architectural details of the structure; a description of its historical significance; and a current photograph of the structure. This survey provides a wealth of information on the City's historic district structures.

### **EXISTING LAND USE**

Land use designations in Old Town are very similar to the zoning designations for the Sector Area. The land use designation of Old Town north of the railroad tracks is City Center Commercial. This designation, as stated in the Comprehensive Plan, identifies the Downtown Study Area and represents the mixture of residential, office, and commercial activities which the downtown contains. This category provides for dense commercial land use that is mainly located along the eight-block section of the historic district. No major undeveloped land lies in this area; however, the current and future business atmosphere is favorable for redevelopment, especially on the fringes of the courthouse areas and south of the railroad. To the far north of the Sector Boundary is a small section of Professional Business land uses, which are areas characterized by office parks and centers with multi-story office buildings. South of the railroad tracks, the Old Town Sector Area contains medium density and low-density residential land uses. Low density housing comprises detached homes on lots of 10,000 square feet or more, and medium density housing includes duplexes and townhouses. The largest medium-density land use area is the Georgetown South subdivision along Grant Avenue. A small pocket of General Commercial land use is designated at the Georgetown South Shopping Center and includes retail and wholesale trade activities.

### **ZONING**

The current zoning for Old Town Manassas is characterized by commercial and single family residential areas, with significant industrial zoning along the railroad tracks through the middle of the area (Figure 5). The primary downtown area contains City Center Commercial (B-3) and Professional Business Office zoning (B-1) north of the tracks, and General Commercial zoning (B-4) south of the tracks. A large grouping of sites zoned General Commercial are grouped west of Grant Avenue, south of the railroad line, at the Georgetown South Shopping Center. Most of the commercial zoning in Old Town is surrounded by single-family residential zoning (R-2 and R-2-S) to the north and south with Light Industrial zoning (I-1) along the railroad line. Areas of multifamily-residential zoning (R-5) form isolated islands in larger areas of single-family residential



zoning (R-2 and R-2-S) on Runaldo Road, Douglas Street, South Main Street, Ellicott Lane, Prescott Avenue, and Fairview Avenue. The Plan will need to reconsider existing zoning in order to achieve the kind of lively and thriving Downtown envisioned by the community during this planning process.

## URBAN FORM

The urban form analysis (Figure 6) helps to define the urban character of the community. The most distinctive feature is the four block “node,” or Downtown Core district, which functions as the heart of town for most communities. The urban district in Old Town is centered on Battle Street, with an axial view of the Manassas Museum. This area lies north of the railroad tracks and is the focal point of Downtown activity. The Old Town Sector Plan should explore ways to enliven the core area and to expand it to adjacent areas and across the railroad tracks.

## RETAIL STATUS

According to an inventory of the existing retail establishments and retail-appropriate spaces in Old Town Manassas in April of 2006, there were sixty eight retail establishments and ninety one retail-appropriate spaces. The total retail-appropriate space in Old Town is estimated to be between 173,375 and 191,625 square feet (the average size for a retail-appropriate space in Old Town is 2,005 square feet). There is about 40,200 square feet (22%) of total retail-appropriate

space currently being used for offices. An additional 8,000 square feet (4.4%) is vacant. Approximately 48,200 square feet of retail-appropriate space in Old Town is not used or owned by retail users, creating an underutilized space rate of 26.41%.

The total amount of space currently occupied by retail establishments is about 134,000 square feet (the average size for retail-occupancy space is 1,975 square feet). About 44% of existing inventory retail space in Old Town is used by food and beverage retailers, which include establishments that serve food and/or alcohol consumed outside the home. About 32% of existing inventory retail space is used

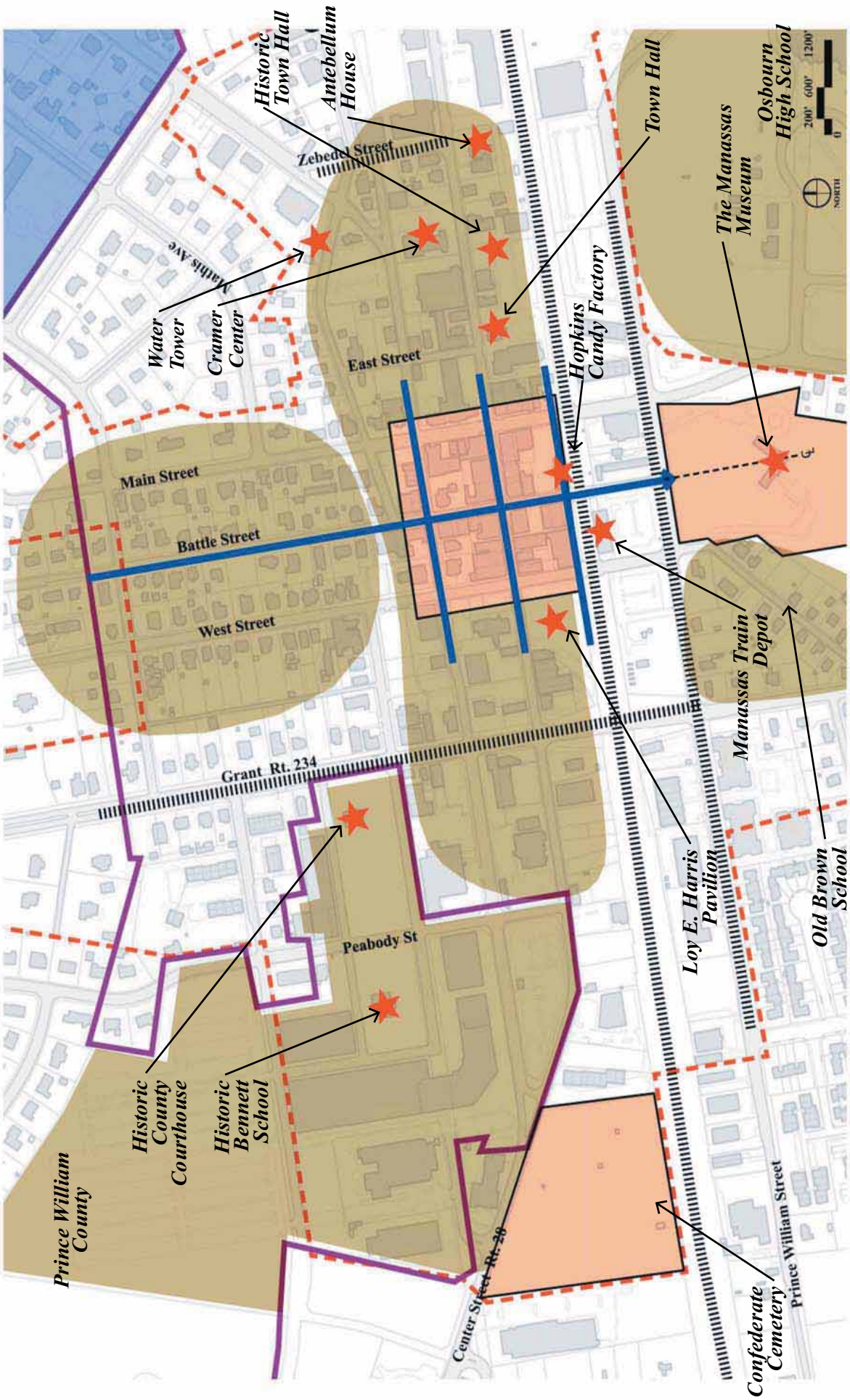
by general merchandise, apparel, furnishings, and other retailers, which include clothing stores, bookstores, gift boutiques, and similar retailers. About 24% of existing inventory retail space is used by neighborhood goods and services, which are establishments that depend on residents and workers, like grocery stores, bakeries, and dry cleaners.

These retail establishments are classified under the categories Class A, Class B, and Class C. Class “A” establishments are located at end-cap sites or are situated among in-line establishments. Class A spaces have floor-to-ceiling clear height



*Existing 'Entertainment Zone' adjacent to the Norfolk Southern Railroad*





# Urban Form

- Legend**
- Node
  - Landmark
  - Path
  - Edge
  - Landmark Axis
  - District
  - Terminating Vista
  - Sector Boundary
  - Historical Boundary
  - Mathis Avenue Study Area

Figure 6

of fourteen feet and higher with a storefront width of twenty feet. The spaces are well-maintained and are clearly visible from primary roadways, are constructed with quality materials, have a properly-lit exterior and display spaces, and clear pedestrian and vehicular access and parking. Class “B” establishments are well-situated among in-line establishments, have a floor to ceiling clear height of approximately twelve feet or more, storefront widths of less than fifteen feet, and diminished representation of any factors listed as Class A space above. Class “C” establishments are located among in-line establishments, have floor to ceiling clear heights of less than twelve feet, storefront width of less than fifteen feet, and diminished representation of any factors listed as Class A or B space. Built-to-Suit establishments have been constructed for a specific tenant in such a manner that conversion to another use or tenant would be difficult or impractical. Below is a table of percentages and types of retailers in the Sector.

|                | <i>Food and Beverage Retailers</i> | <i>General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings and Other Retailers</i> | <i>Neighborhood Goods and Services</i> |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Class A</b> | 30%                                | 70%  | 0%                                     |
| <b>Class B</b> | 57%                                | 27%  | 16%                                    |
| <b>Class C</b> | 40%                                | 25%  | 35%                                    |

Generally, general merchandise, apparel, furnishings, and other retailers have the highest quality space in Old Town; and the food and beverage retailers occupy the least desirable spaces. Streets with the highest concentration of retail in Old Town include Center Street, Main Street, Grant Avenue, Battle Street, and West Street. A complete analysis of this information can be found in the appendix to this report.

### CONSTRAINTS

Physical constraints in the Downtown area include a limited amount of undeveloped land and the lack of pedestrian-oriented businesses (i.e., businesses focused on attracting people as they walk throughout Old Town). The Train Depot for the VRE and Amtrak lines is separated from the retail sector by the railroad track, deterring pedestrian access to businesses on the opposite side. The intersections of Church and Grant Streets and Center and Grant Streets do not offer safe pedestrian crossings that would encourage walking into the heart of Old Town. Parking is a problem for visitors to the area, as many of the available spaces are used by commuters. This will be improved with the pending construction of a recently-approved garage on Prince William and Battle Streets.

The Old Town Historic District has architectural requirements that are enforced through zoning and the Architectural Review Board, but the City offers no incentives to encourage structures outside the district to adhere to the Downtown area’s architectural or aesthetic requirements.



*VRE station platform with Candy Factory beyond*



*Example of a house built with sandstone; a locally quarried material used in building many of the City’s older structures.*

## V. OPPORTUNITIES

*The Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and residents from the Old Town neighborhoods played a key role in defining a vision for the Manassas Old Town Sector and in identifying opportunities for improvement of this area. This input is described in detail below.*

### AN OLD TOWN VISION

Early on in the planning process, members of the CAC were asked to envision the Old Town that they would like to see in a twenty-year timeframe. This vision included the following:



*Image provided by the CAC*



*Image provided by the CAC*

- A pedestrian-oriented Old Town, with walkable streets that would include wider, tree-lined and planter-lined sidewalks, calmed traffic, additional pathways and pedestrian bridges, underground utilities and pedestrian-scaled lighting, as well as beautiful gateways. It is a place where workers from the County and Courthouse area will want to visit Old Town for lunch and dinner.
- A vibrant and active Old Town area with additional retail and sufficient parking throughout the area – a place that is filled with “children and flowers”.
- A place with an “urban feel” that is real and not “Disney-like”.
- A shuttle bus service from the major corporate businesses in the area to the Downtown core.
- The elimination of industrial zoning within the Old Town sector, and the replacement of industrial land uses with residential or mixed uses – “people living in nice homes over shops”.
- The continued and rigorous protection of historic structures within the Old Town historic district and beyond.
- Increased open space and recreational opportunities within the Old Town area to accommodate current and future population needs.
- Encouragement for the accommodation of a diverse population in the Old Town sector.
- An improved Georgetown South Shopping Center, with better development and a higher aesthetic quality.
- The protection and enhancement of the existing Old Town neighborhoods.
- The designation of Old Town as an Arts and Tourism district that will provide a cultural connection to the new George Mason Performing Arts Center.
- A place that offers retail and arts opportunities.

- A sector that provides an environmentally responsive model for future growth and development.

## OLD TOWN ISSUES

Many members of both the CAC and representatives from the surrounding neighborhoods felt that there were a number of issues that needed to be addressed in order to achieve the vision described above. The most frequently mentioned issues included:

- **Trees:** It was felt that there were not enough trees in the Old Town sector, that preserving trees was not a high priority, and that the presence of trees would improve the quality of life in the area in terms of attractiveness and walkability.
- **Gateways:** Participants felt that the major entrances to Old Town were “ugly” and did not provide the sense that one was entering into an important, historic Downtown area of the City.
- **Pedestrian Access:** This was felt to be a critical issue and included the need for wider sidewalks, trail development, and better access through the redesign of crosswalks and the addition of pedestrian bridges where needed. Grant Avenue was cited as an example of a thoroughfare that needed to be made more walkable and more attractive.
- **Land Uses and Zoning:** Issues cited ranged from the need to rezone Prince William Street in order to eliminate its light industrial designation; to eliminate other light industrial areas in the Old Town sector; to replace the existing motel in the heart of Old Town with a new, attractive and appropriately-scaled hotel; to provide more open space within the downtown core; and to provide a better transition between the Old Town neighborhoods and the downtown core.
- **Traffic Impacts:** Participants emphasized the need to calm traffic in Old Town through better signalization, streetscape improvements, and the improved enforcement of current traffic laws.
- **Parking:** The lack of parking was a critical concern for many participants and particularly for business owners in the downtown core. Participants noted that there was a lack of available parking spaces, that 2-hour time limits were not sufficient for those coming to spend the day in Old Town, and that visitors were often discouraged about coming to Old Town Manassas due to the perceived shortage of parking there.



*Image provided by the CAC*



*Image provided by the CAC*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Participants were asked to develop a set of guiding principles for new development within the Old Town Sector area. Those cited by the CAC include:

- Enforcing building height restrictions while maintaining the historic Old Town tradition of matching build-to line conditions for each street.

- Establishing realistic parking solutions that meet the parking demand and can accommodate growth in the Old Town area.
- Ensuring architectural compatibility with the surrounding historic structures without copying them.
- Providing incentives for ground floor, Class A retail (see the Retail report in the Appendix for a definition of Class A space).
- Creating a pedestrian-friendly downtown area.
- The Opportunities Map (Figure 7) illustrates potential linkages, connections, and districts that should be considered as part of the Sector Plan development process. This map provides the identification of areas where change could occur and where change might be encouraged.

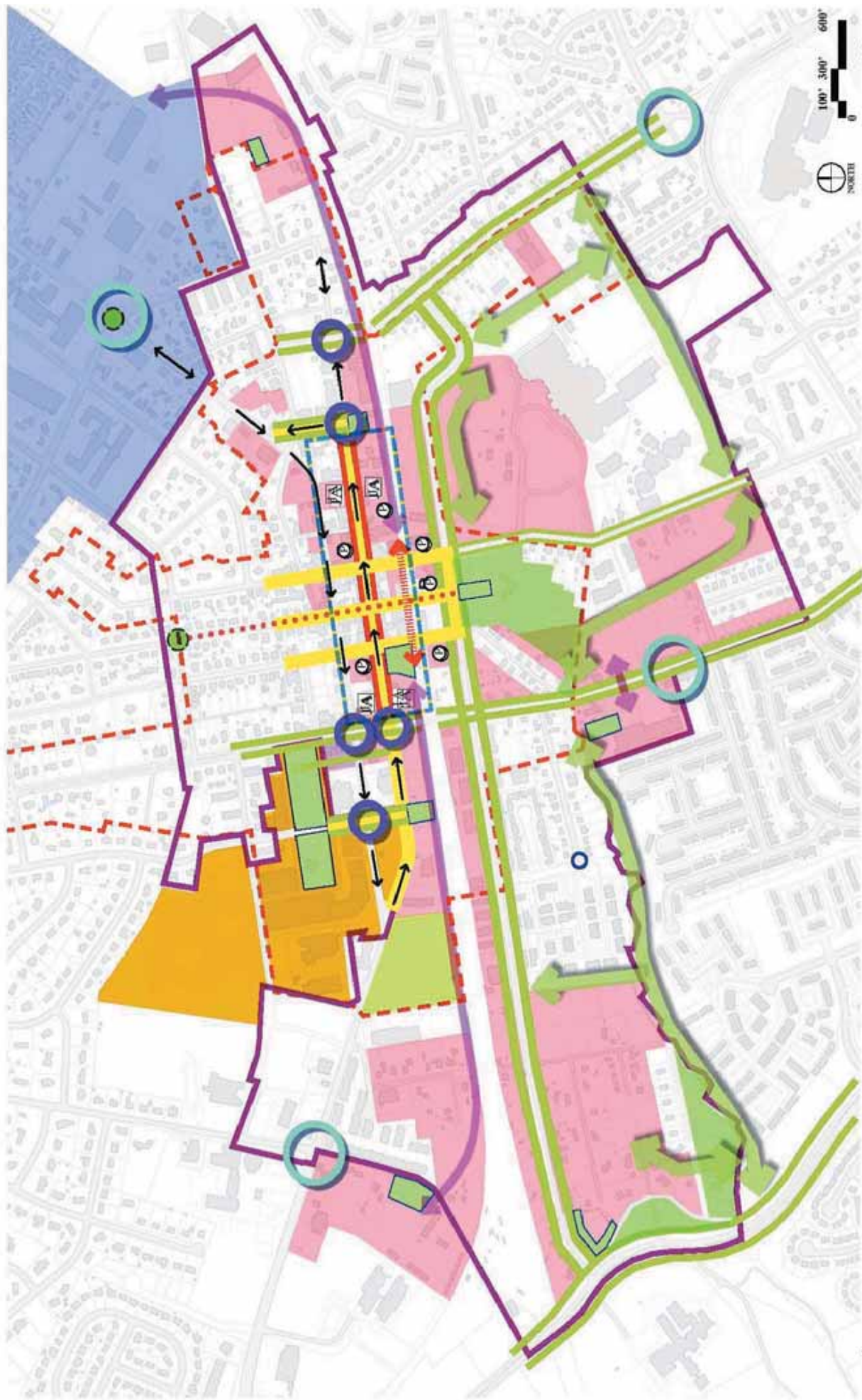
#### RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES

The analysis of retail in Old Town Manassas concluded with several recommendations regarding opportunities to improve the retail environment in the sector area. Many of these recommendations echo the issues and visions expressed by the community, and include the following:

- Take care to retain the historic character of the district since this is the key to identifying a market niche that cannot be filled by the accessibility or convenience of the stores on either Sudley Road or Liberia Avenue. “Old Town’s history is its ‘brand’ and means to a thriving retail environment.”
- Consider the redevelopment of both the Olde Town Hotel site and Georgetown South Shopping Center, which are the only large parcels under single ownership that are appropriate for new, consolidated retail development with sufficient, associated parking.
- Identify a concentrated retail district within Old Town, permitting professional office to occupy retail-appropriate spaces outside this designated area.
- Allow the redevelopment of non-historic space outside of the concentrated retail core from retail uses to non-retail uses as determined by market conditions.
- Investigate changes to Old Town traffic patterns that allow more balanced prioritization between vehicles and pedestrians.
- Create or supplement design guidelines to encourage or regulate the construction of Class A ground-floor retail space. Essential requirements include mandating floor-to-ceiling clear heights of at least 14 feet (and preferably 16 feet or more); retail space between 40 and 90 feet deep; and column grids spaces at least 20 feet on center (and preferably 30 feet on center).
- Establish a recognizable “brand” for Old Town’s retail district that can



*Olde Towne Inn*



### Legend

- Restaurant Walk
- Opportunity Areas
- Pedestrian Priority Areas
- Retail Edge
- Streetscape Connections
- Open Space
- Open Space Connections
- Cemetery
- Green Focal Places
- Gateway Improvements
- Stairway Connection
- Traffic Flow
- Traffic Circle
- Linkages
- Junior-anchor
- Pedestrian Crossing / Traffic Calm
- Public Parking
- Entertainment District
- Sector Boundary
- Historical Boundary

### Opportunities

- Mathis Avenue Study Area
- County Master Plan
- Special Amenity Street

Figure 7

be communicated to existing and potential retail tenants as well as to the retail brokerage community.

- Recruit tenants in the Neighborhood Goods and Services category, especially retailers that serve the office workers and residents in the primary trade area. A particular emphasis should be placed on specialty-service tenants. Efforts should also be focused on Food and Beverage retailers that appeal to daytime and nighttime customers, such as prepared foods and “quick bite” restaurants.
- Focus on specialty stores, but do not eliminate national retailers if they are interested.

*Possible Catalysts for Future Retail Demand*

| <b>POSSIBLE RETAIL CATALYSTS</b>   | <b>POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL RETAIL DEMAND</b>                               |
|--|---|
| Each additional Old Town residential unit                                | Approximately 8 additional square feet of retail space within Old Town  |
| Each additional 1,000 square feet of commercial office space in Old Town | Approximately 12 additional square feet of retail space within Old Town |
| Each additional 100 tourism visitors to Old Town                         | Approximately 5 additional square feet of retail space within Old Town  |

**ARTS OPPORTUNITIES**

Old Town Manassas currently contains several cultural facilities that provide a jumping-off point from which to define Old Town as a regional arts center. These opportunities include:

- Creating physical programmatic and perceptual connections to the new George Mason Performing Arts Center.
- Providing space within the Old Town sector for arts, performances, and rehearsals. Larger venues such as movie theaters might best be located in the Mathis Avenue sector, while Old Town accommodates smaller and live performance-based venues.
- Provide multiple built and open space venues for the visual arts, performance arts, and other cultural uses.

**ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES**

The plan for Old Town Manassas provides elements that will establish an on-going model of environmentally-responsive planning and design for the City. Elements include:

- Compact, mixed-use development
- A community that encourages walking
- The use of environmentally-sustainable principles to address issues such as run-off, stormwater management, and green infrastructure
- Maximization of open space areas, including stream corridors, and other passive and active spaces.

*These issues, principles, and opportunities provide the framework from which the Sector Plan was developed. The elements of the Plan are presented in the next several chapters.*

## VI. THE OLD TOWN SECTOR PLAN



Old Town Manassas Historic Town  
Hall

### PLAN FRAMEWORK

Building on strengths of the current conditions of Old Town, specific physical characteristics can be enhanced through the application of design standards and concepts. Old Town’s historic layout should be restored to create a more livable and viable downtown surrounded by neighborhoods that are easily accessible to a blossoming community center. The strongest characteristics of Old Town include the neighborhoods that surround the Downtown core and the Downtown Core itself at the heart of historic Old Town. The framework for future development within the Old Town Sector should enhance these zones and, in general, new development within the Old Town Sector should be comprised of four major elements: a residential component, a downtown core component, an open space component, and an aesthetic component.

- The **residential component** will preserve existing neighborhoods while allowing for continued residential growth within the sector area. New residential development should intersect gracefully with the downtown core area, should strengthen and support existing neighborhoods, and should incorporate “traditional” development patterns that are compatible with surrounding Old Town setbacks but could include public front yards and private back alleyways (with garages) as appropriate. The new neighborhood development also should be connected to and integrated with the Old Town retail core to the extent that this is feasible.
- A **downtown core component** that will encourage development that fosters an active retail environment and will create venues for entertainment and eating in order to encourage 24/7 activity with significant new residential opportunities. In addition, the downtown core area should provide an environment that is pleasant for pedestrians, incorporates a mix of land uses within existing buildings, and conserves space in the downtown area. Finally, new downtown development should maintain a “civic” presence in the area through the inclusion of parks and public art to the maximum extent possible.
- The **open space component** will actively seek out opportunities for open space within the Old Town Sector area through the inclusion of green “centers” or small gathering places for neighborhoods (pocket parks), additional civic open spaces, and the provision of additional access to spaces that accommodate passive and active recreational amenities in order to accommodate the anticipated increase in the downtown residential population.
- The **aesthetic component** addresses the way that the Old Town sector presents itself to the world. Comments from the community indicate that this is a key concern in the sector area. General framework elements that will support this component include the use of historic Manassas materials (brick, sandstone, metal and wood) and architectural styles when a new development or additions to existing



buildings occur, as well as the provision of consistent streetscape treatments within the area that include extensive pedestrian amenities. All new development should also respect the unique character of each of the Old Town neighborhoods and districts in order to establish a consistent and appropriate Old Town identity and setting.

## **PLAN DESCRIPTION**

### **THE NEIGHBORHOODS**

Based on the framework established above, the Plan for the Old Town Sector has been structured by its neighborhood and core areas, with connections provided through a public infrastructure overlay (see section VII of this document) that includes pedestrian and transportation linkages, parking, and open space areas. (Figures 8 & 9)

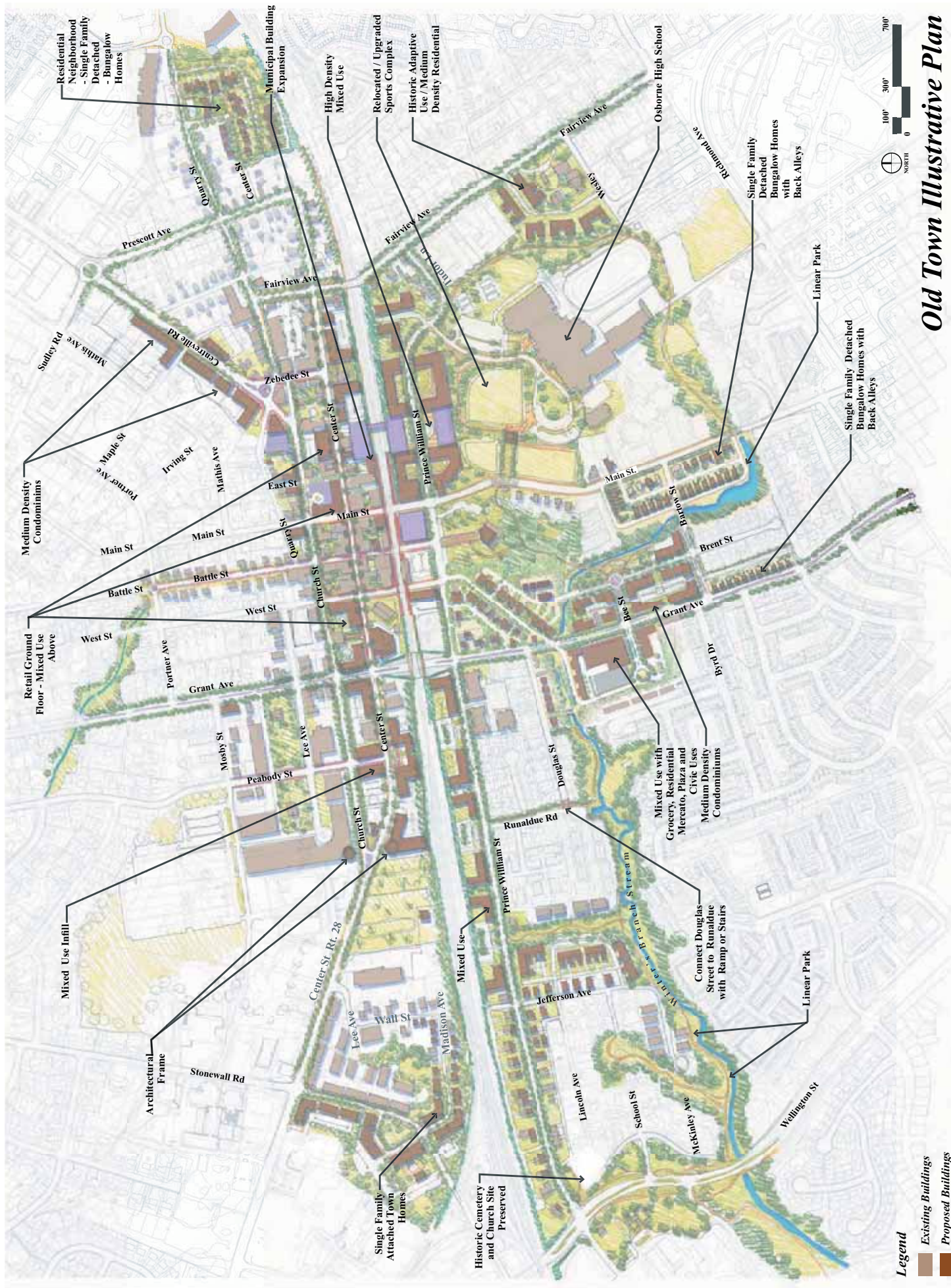
#### *Jefferson and School Streets and Neighborhood*

The plan reinforces the residential character of the Jefferson Street Neighborhood, builds on its connected street grid, and closely integrates it into the fabric of the downtown through streetscape and open space improvements. Specific plan elements for this neighborhood include:

- a. Protecting the church ruins, and incorporating them into an open space system, and creating neighborhood gateways
- b. Re-establishing residential land use on Prince William Street from Wellington Road to Jefferson Street
- c. Allowing opportunities for developing accessory units behind properties facing Prince William Street, if a shared alleyway or easement can be negotiated to allow access to private parking
- d. Establishing better circulation patterns
- e. Providing opportunities for infill development of single-family units facing Jefferson Street on the east side
- f. Providing opportunities for developing single-family attached units and open space connections on the undeveloped lot facing the Winter's Branch Stream
- g. Creating a linear park in conjunction with the Prince William Street streetscape enhancements
- h. Incorporating the Winter's Branch Stream edges into an open space link with a multi-use trail

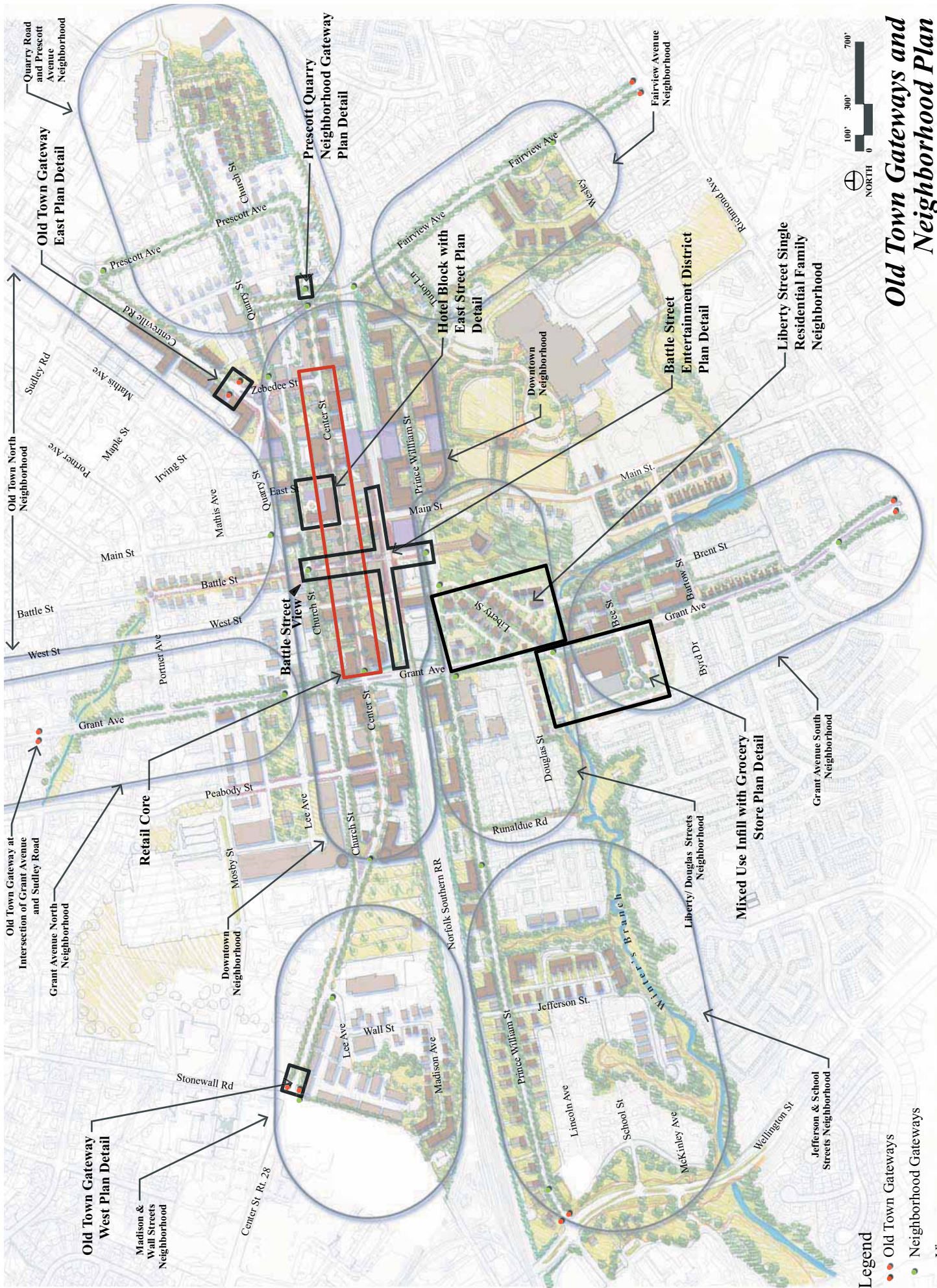
#### *Liberty/Douglas Street Neighborhood*

The Liberty and Douglas Streets Neighborhood (Figure 10) should be preserved



Old Town Illustrative Plan

Figure 8



# Old Town Gateways and Neighborhood Plan

Figure 9

**Liberty Street  
Attached Single Family with  
Accessory Additions**

- Neighborhood Entry Feature
- New Structures with Front Porches
- Old Brown School
- Section 'F'
- Grant Avenue Boulevard Treatment Extension
- Small Lot Single Family Infill
- New Structures with Front Porches
- Bridge



**Section F  
Rear Yard Accessory  
Unit Pedestrian  
Entrances**

Entrance Porch Set Back  
Into Rear Facade And  
Raised 3 Steps Minimum



24 Feet Maximum  
To Eave

24 Feet Minimum  
Common Walkway

***Liberty Street Plan  
with Accessory Units***

*Legend*

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings

Figure 10

as an important historic Old Town neighborhood. The plan supports this area to stay residential, while allowing the area to be attractive to modern families, while respecting its historical context. The historic character of Liberty Street neighborhood should be maintained and reinforced with revisions to existing zoning and new urban design guidelines as follows:

- a. Maintaining single-family uses in the Liberty and Douglas Streets neighborhoods
- b. Encouraging traditional neighborhood design with front porches and rear-lot access for all new residential development
- c. Maintaining the existing setback of historic homes as part of any future renovations or additions
- d. Allowing for additions and enclosed garages only on rear-access easements or alleyways that have been negotiated between owners (if property owners wish to expand with a garage, the garages can only be located in the rear)
- e. Incorporating the Winter's Branch Stream edges into an open space link to a multi-use trail and to the Grant Avenue South streetscape

#### *Grant Avenue South Neighborhood*

The Grant Avenue South Neighborhood (Figure 11 & 12) should become a high-value residential mixed-use neighborhood that will experience a significant increase in population and include a rich variety of housing types from small-lot, single-family, to 5-story residential condominiums. Grant Avenue South presents one of the few places for the location of a new grocery store within the downtown area. This grocery store should be developed as part of a fully integrated mixed-use complex with structured parking. A significant law enforcement facility is also recommended for this neighborhood. Recommendations include:

- a. Encouraging a mix of uses that includes commercial, civic, or public uses, and a range of housing options from small-lot, single-family, to high-density, five-story condominium apartments
- b. Extending Bee Street both east and west of Grant Avenue for access to higher-density and commercial portions of the neighborhood
- c. Extending Brent Street north and across the Winter's Branch Stream into a new single-family residential neighborhood south of Liberty Street
- d. Extending the Winter's Branch Stream corridor east and south across Main Street into the Baldwin Elementary School grounds to complete a south-side open space system

**Mixed Use Infill  
With Grocery Store**

- New Pedestrian Bridge
- Stream Corridor Used as Linear Park and Development Amenity.
- Residential Condominiums
- Service Area
- Free Standing Parking Structure
- 50,000 Square Foot Grocery Store
- Mercato + Plaza along Grant Avenue
- Section - see figure 12
- Grant Avenue Developed with Planted Median and Street Trees
- Grocery Store Entrance
- Public Use
- Surface Parking



*Legend*

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings
- Parking Structures
- Grocery Store
- Condominiums
- Public Use
- Mercato + Plaza

***South Grant  
Mixed Use Area***

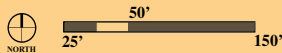
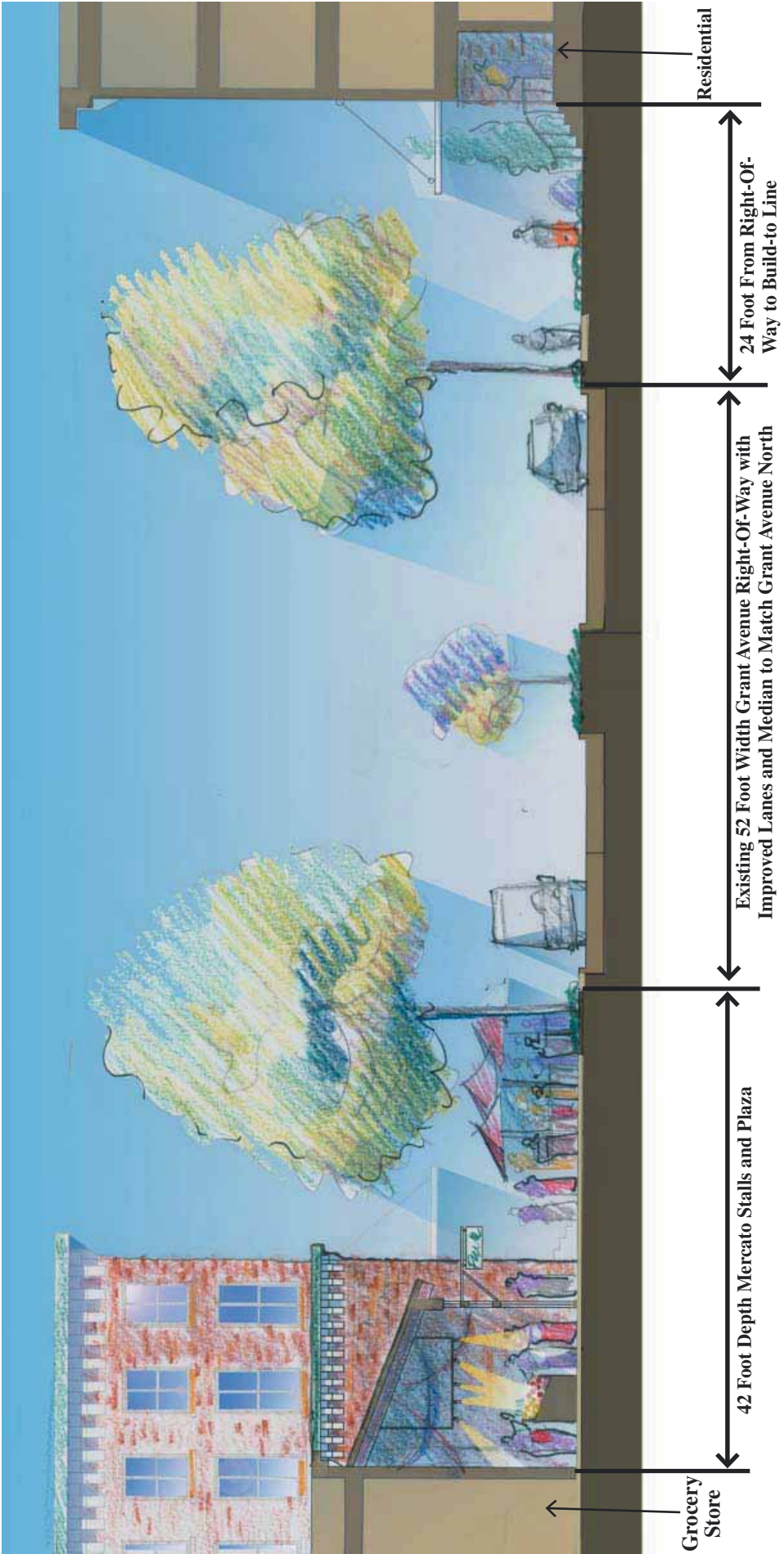


Figure 11



*Mercato Plaza at South Grant Avenue*

Figure 12

### *Fairview Avenue Neighborhood*

The Fairview Avenue Neighborhood should maintain and protect its historic residential character. The Head Trauma Center site should be redeveloped into small-lot, single family residential that protects the existing historic structures, scales down to the single-family character of its neighbors, and allows for open space connections on its western edge.

Specific recommendations include:

- a. Linking the Winter’s Branch Stream corridor to both the Baldwin Elementary School and Osbourn High School in line with the Wesley Street centerline, then north through the western edge of the Head Trauma Center site, and then Downtown along Prince William Street
- b. Redeveloping the Head Trauma Center site into a medium-density residential area that faces an open space link, but upscale lodging may be appropriate here as well
- c. Preserving the historic structures within the residential area, especially through protection of the historic character of the Fairview Avenue housing, as an asset for this neighborhood.
- d. Relocating the Police Headquarters to the mixed-use area west of Grant Avenue

### *Quarry Street and Prescott Avenue Neighborhood*

The Quarry Street and Prescott Avenue Neighborhood should maintain and protect its single-family and historic character while allowing for additional medium-density residential development to occur as part of a unified plan for areas south of Quarry along an extension of Church Street at its eastern end. This medium-density residential area should focus on a new public green. Housing types should range from small-lot homes, where adjacent to existing single-family housing, up to attached single-family units at its eastern edge. An open space link should connect this neighborhood into the planned Mathis Avenue sector to the north and to the Downtown Core along the northern edge of the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

- a. Maintain the historic character and scale of this neighborhood
- b. Develop small-lot attached and detached residential infill along an extension of Church Street, south of Quarry Street, and west of the water tower
- c. Extend the open space link recommended in the Mathis Avenue Sector Plan south to the Norfolk Southern Railroad and link it to the railroad in Downtown
- d. Provide a central focal green, bounded on at least one side by Church Street, and extend it as a focal place for the neighborhood.



### *Old Town North Neighborhood*

The Old Town North Neighborhood should be preserved and protected from non-residential uses migrating into existing residential structures. A Residential Mixed-Use zone is proposed for neighborhood edges where office uses have occurred in order to encourage residential infill with small offices permitted. This infill should use materials similar to those of its residential neighbors and should gradually step up in scale in order to maintain compatibility with its residential neighbors. Specific recommendations include:



*Local historic sandstone*

- a. Maintaining the scale and character of this historic neighborhood
- b. Encouraging medium- to high-density residential infill in neighborhood transition areas along Church Street to the south, Centreville Road to the east, and Grant Avenue to the west
- c. Discouraging office and commercial uses within these transition areas and especially within existing residential areas
- d. Stepping down infill development to match existing residential building heights
- e. Matching the materials and character of historic housing in these transition zones, as applied to larger scale development, as appropriate
- f. Not allowing retail uses in these areas

### *Madison Avenue and Wall Street Residential Neighborhoods*

The Madison and Wall Street Neighborhoods have the potential to become high quality in-town residential areas. This neighborhood should respect and build within the character of the existing and possibly historic housing on Wall Street and Madison Avenue. The housing types should range from small lot single-family housing adjacent to the existing housing up to single-family attached housing. A new public open space should be created on Stonewall Road in conjunction with providing a connection from Madison Avenue through to Stonewall Road. Recommendations include:



*Old Town materials: wood, stone and brick*

- a. Creating a distinctive residential neighborhood centered on Stonewall Road, south of Church Street
- b. Connecting Madison Street through to Stonewall Road
- c. Providing a mix of residential densities from single-family detached to single-family attached homes
- d. Using construction materials for new homes that are similar in nature to the construction materials used on Wall Street
- e. Creating a public space or focal green facing west of Stonewall Road, bounded by new streets and large trees
- f. Connecting the new public space to continuous open space links along the Norfolk Southern Railroad east to the Prescott Road/Quarry

Road Public Green and the open space system defined in the Mathis Avenue Sector Plan.

### *Downtown Neighborhood*

The Downtown Neighborhood has the potential to become a premier place to work and live, incorporating a highly desirable close-in residential neighborhood with a mix of residential scales and limited ground floor retail for local residential uses. Its potential is seen by the high quality new infill that has already occurred here. Its proximity to the county complex makes this neighborhood a logical location for Class A office space. Its proximity to downtown amenities and its new open space system would create eventual demand for new residential condominiums. More specifically, the plan calls for the following:

- a. Allowing for a mix of high-density housing and office uses
- b. Providing for a public focal green, south of Center Street, at the intersection with Lee Street
- c. Limiting ground floor retail to small neighborhood services that are adjacent to the focal green
- d. Creating a high density mixed-use residential neighborhood facing Center Street between the Prescott Avenue/Quarry Street Neighborhood and the Downtown
- e. Allowing limited neighborhood-oriented retail on ground floors
- f. Creating a neighborhood focal green at the end of Zebedee Street that incorporates historic buildings with retail or civic uses

### **THE DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE CORE**

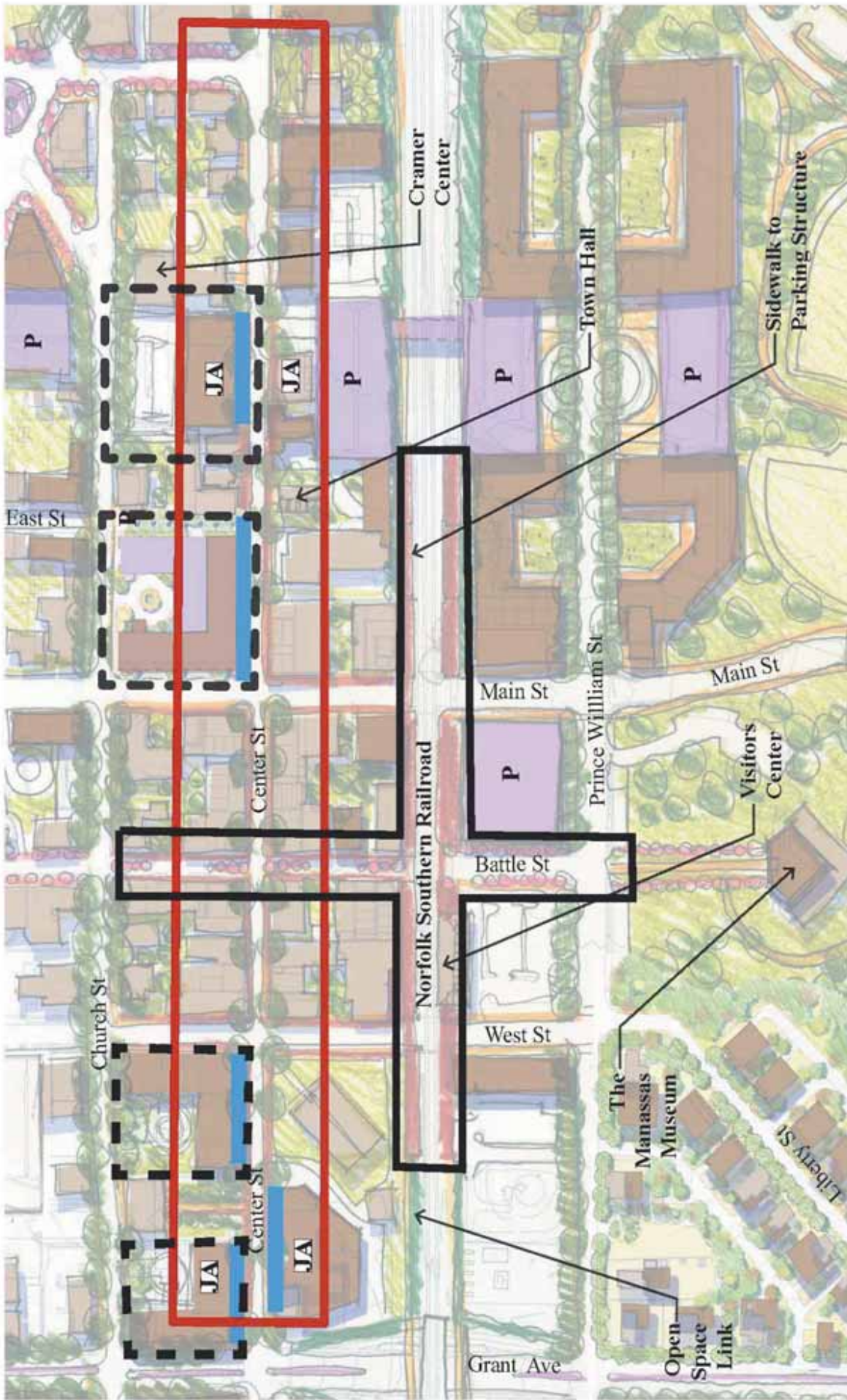
Recommendations for the Downtown Mixed-Use Core (Figure 13) include two ground floor districts and general recommendations for upper floor uses. A new addition to the downtown is the Downtown ‘addition’ mixed-use district, which straddles Prince William Street, east of Main Street and south of the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

### *Ground Floor Primary Retail District*

- a. Create a continuous Class A retail edge that faces both sides of Center Street, from Grant Avenue west to the Cramer Center, and encourage only retail ground floor uses (see Retail Analysis in the Appendix for a definition of Class A space)
- b. Limit interruptions to the continuous shopping edge
- c. Create lobbies for access to upper floors on side streets, where possible
- d. Locate junior anchors (i.e., larger floor plate destination retail of



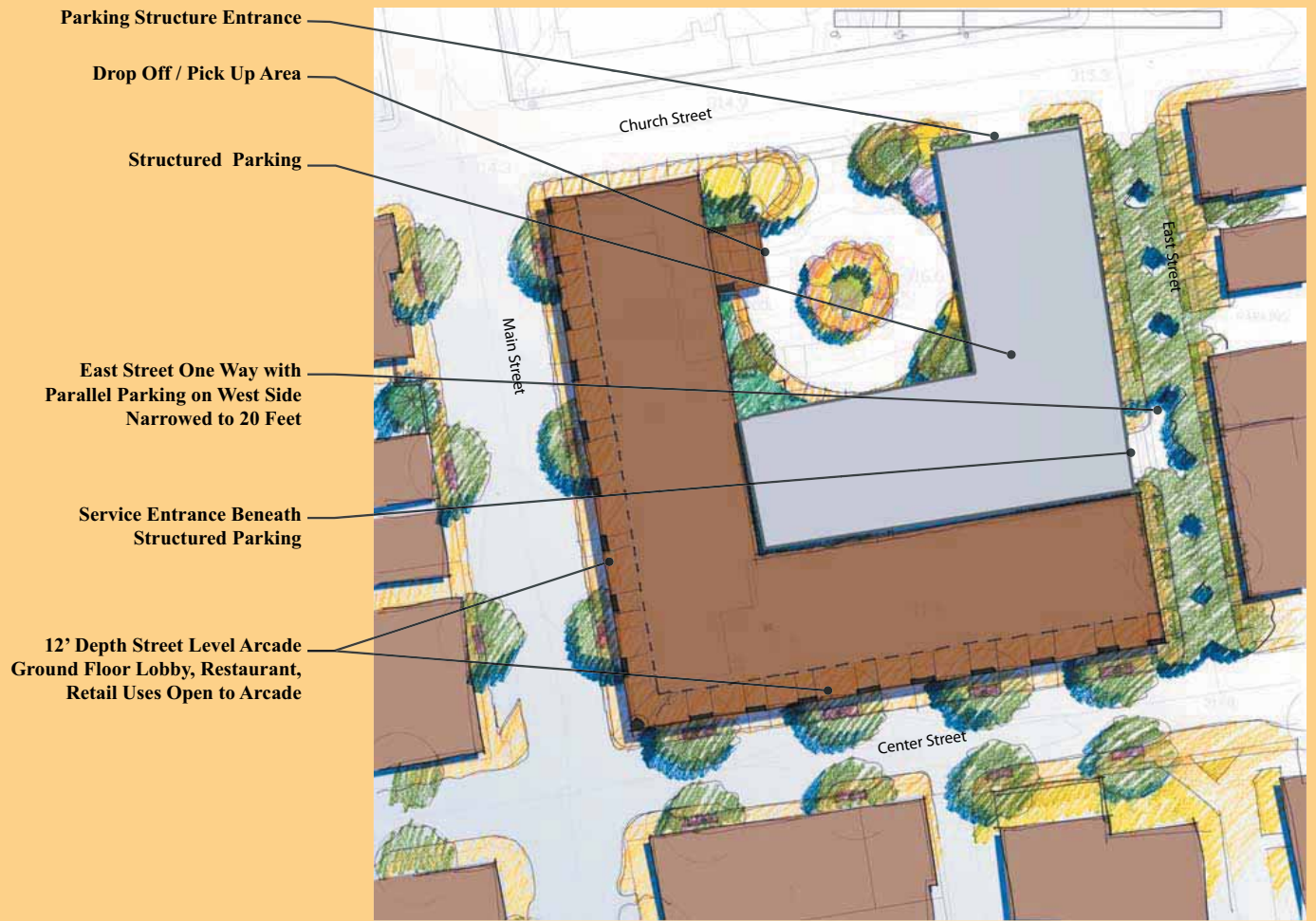
*Create convenient access to upper floors with high quality residential or office uses below*



**Legend**

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings
- Retail Core
- Entertainment Zone
- Arcade
- Major Potential Infill Sites
- JA Junior Anchor
- P Proposed Parking Structures

*Retail District*



## *Hotel Block Plan*

### *Legend*

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings



Figure 14

approximately 10,000 to 20,000 GSF) at each end of the Center Street retail corridor

- e. Create a continuous ground floor edge along Center Street at the hotel block (Figure 14)
- f. Create a ground floor arcade along Center Street on the hotel block in order to provide additional public sidewalk depth
- g. Create a ground floor arcade along Center Street for proposed mixed-use retail infill on the BB&T site in order to provide additional sidewalk depth
- h. Study ways to bridge the street frontage retail gap created by the existing municipal building along Center Street

#### *Ground Floor Entertainment District*

- a. Create an exciting destination of restaurants and small entertainment avenues along Battle Street, between Church Street and the Norfolk Southern Railroad, facing the Norfolk Southern Railroad on its north face, between West and Main Streets
- b. Rebuild the Battle Street portion of the Entertainment Zone with wide sidewalks for outdoor dining, street trees, and special night lighting
- c. Extend the existing railroad-side development east past the Candy Factory and east of Main Street to enhance the Entertainment Zone
- d. Connect the open space link from the Prescott/Quarry Neighborhood to the west, through the Norfolk Southern portion of the Entertainment Zone, over Grant Avenue (with a new pedestrian bridge), to the Madison Avenue and Wall Streets Neighborhood focal green
- e. Install fountains at the intersection of the Entertainment District and the Center Street Retail District -- at the intersection of Battle and Center Streets -- to mask traffic and noise, and to celebrate the history of clean water as a part of Manassas' legacy
- f. Move the Farmers' Market back to the pavilion to reinforce the commercial activity of the Retail and Entertainment Districts

#### *Downtown Upper Floors*

- a. Upper floor in existing structures and in new infill should include Class A office or high quality residential condominiums
- b. Lobby space should not take up large potential areas of Center Street ground floor retail
- c. Drop-off areas should be developed at the rear of buildings facing Center Street to facilitate high quality downtown residential and office uses



*BB&T Bank creates a very big gap in what should be a continuous shopping environment*



*VRE/AMTRAK Train Station*

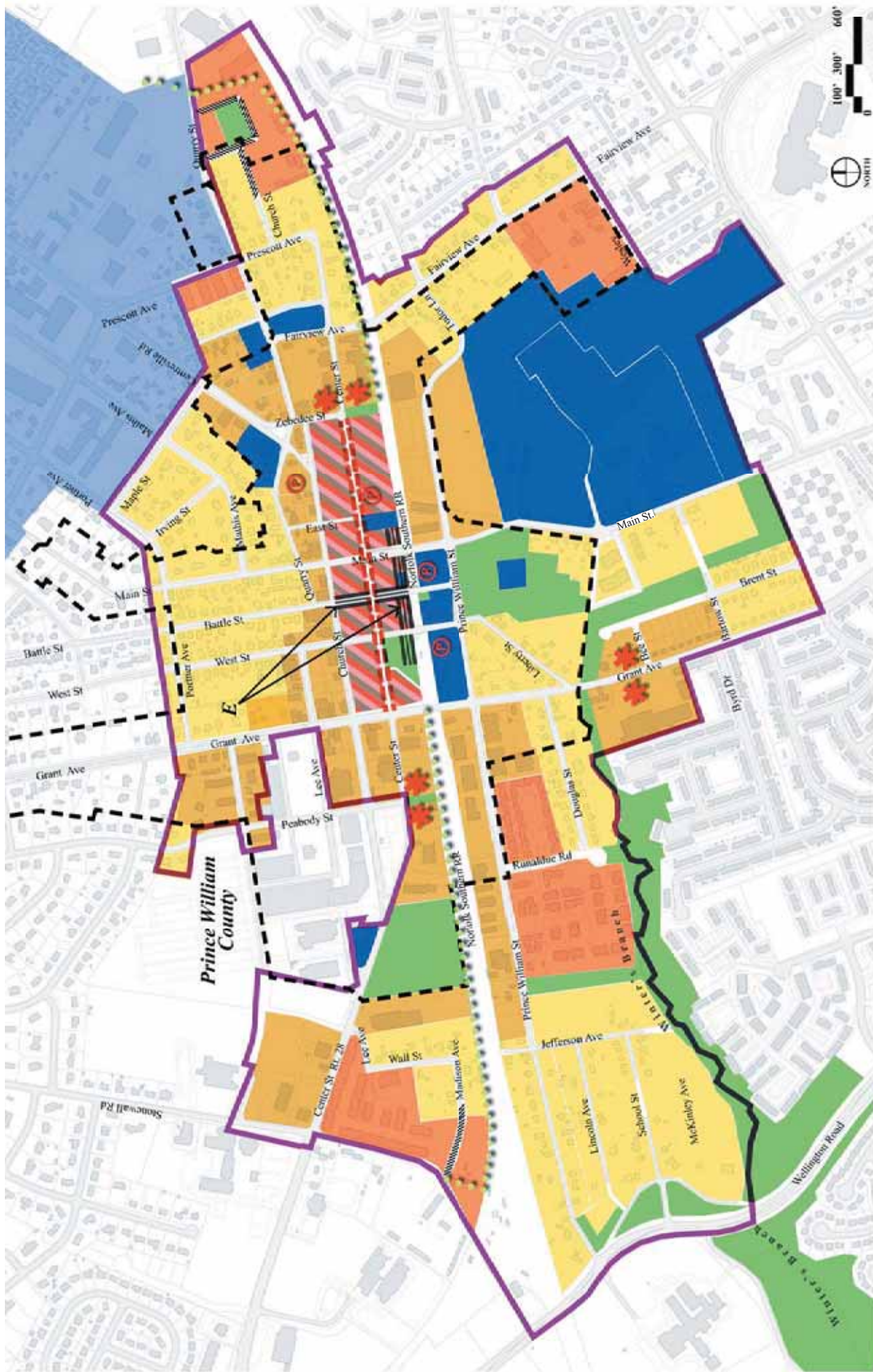


Figure 15

### *Downtown 'Addition' Neighborhood*

The Downtown 'Addition' Neighborhood would be a new mixed-use area in which high-quality office and residential uses could be located. This is an important area with its access to the VRE/AMTRAK station, Downtown shopping and entertainment, and new close-by open spaces and recreational amenities.

- a. The 'addition' to Downtown will be a mixed-use district that showcases Prince William Street with high-density office and retail uses and small neighborhood-oriented retail uses. This neighborhood will help add necessary space for larger floorplate office/retail space and significant residential opportunities on parcels of regional importance
- b. Relocate Osbourn High School recreation facilities and parking southward to allow for development of this parcel
- c. Maintain and upgrade all recreation facilities
- d. Improve the recreation complex directly adjacent to the downtown to serve as an excellent amenity for new downtown residents
- e. Maintain school-related parking through developer-paid-for consolidation of access roads

### **PROPOSED LAND USE**

The following land uses (Figure 15) are proposed for the Old Town Sector Area. These land uses would update the current Land Use Plan for this area.

#### *Civic/Government/Institutional*

The recommended Land Use Plan calls for one significant change to this land use category in order to accommodate a site for consolidating Police and other Government offices not currently housed in the municipal building at the west corner of South Grant Avenue and Bee Street. This new area will provide much needed additional space for the Police Facility and will free up the Head Trauma Center site for recommended residential and open space uses. Additional space for government offices out of the Downtown core will also free up important space for new residential and retail centers.

#### *Residential*

- Small lot single-family should be defined as 45' X 100' with rear yard access to minimum 24' width alleys. Side yards should not be less than 5' on each side. Front walls should be built to a predetermined build-to line. Front porches or stoops are required and can extend up to 8 feet in front of the build-to line.
- Medium-density residential areas should encourage row house development, 22' wide by 55' deep, with front stoops that face public

streets or promenades and automobile garage access off 24' wide rear lot alleyways.

### *Mixed-Use*

Two types of mixed-use areas are recommended for the Old Town Sector area. These include:

- Mixed Use Areas will encourage a Retail Core with a mixed use zone that will contain Class A ground floor retail space facing Center Street and 55' high buildings with residential office use above. Residential lobbies, office lobbies, and office uses should not front Center Street in this area. Elsewhere, upper-floor residential should be encouraged.



*Existing part of the proposed  
'entertainment district'*



## VII. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

*The Old Town Sector Plan requires a carefully thought-out level of infrastructure support that can tie together the Downtown neighborhoods and core area in a way that will allow for meaningful linkages between these zones and to give the Old Town Sector a positive and well-functioning identity. This infrastructure link includes open space elements, circulation, streetscapes, gateways, and parking facilities.*

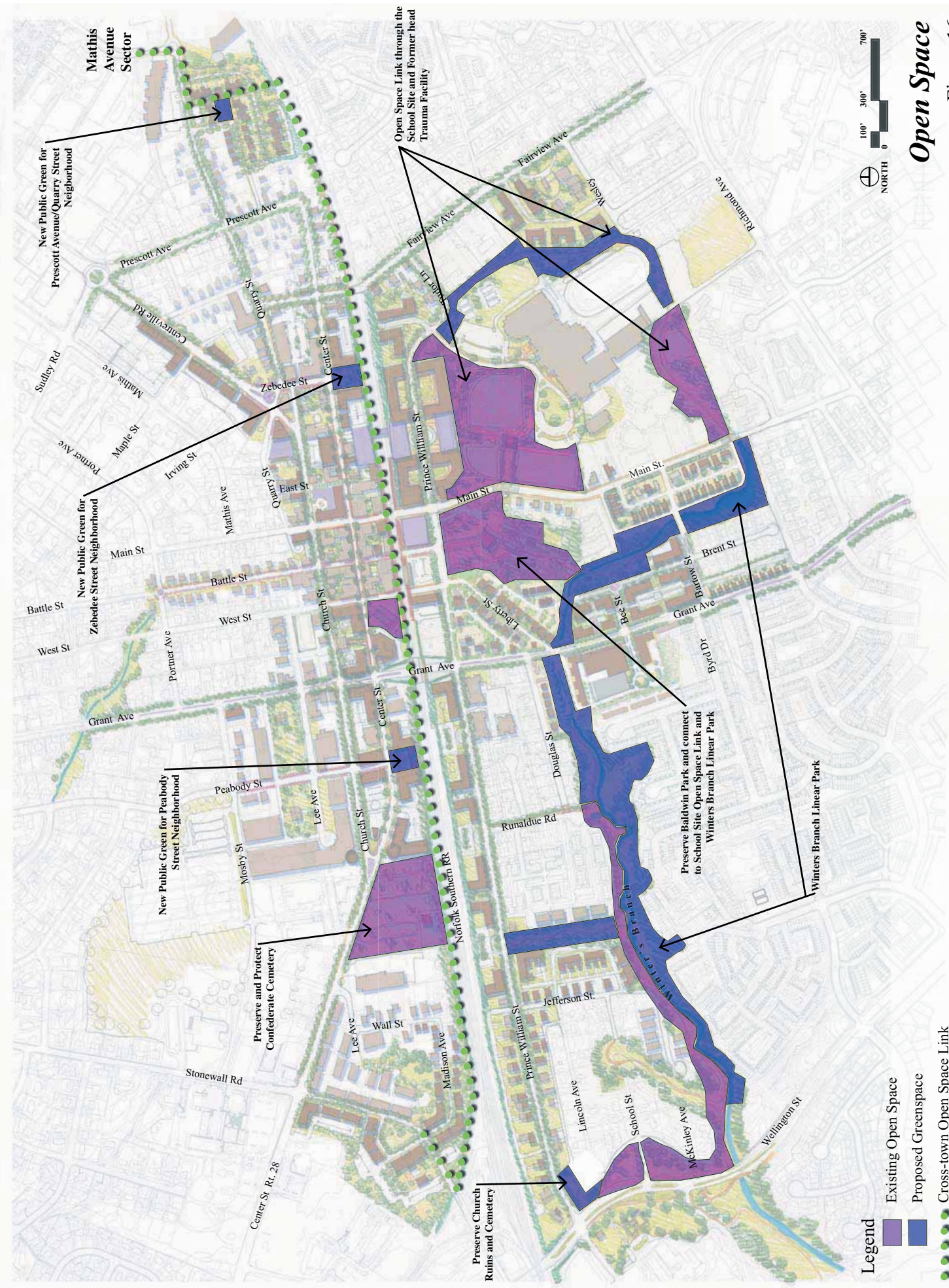
### OPEN SPACE

Old Town will need a significant increase in active and passive open space (Figure 16) given the anticipated increase in the downtown residential, commercial, and visitor populations. Open space recommendations are as follows:

- Use the Jefferson Street School site for passive/interpretive park space to service the revitalized Jefferson Avenue neighborhood
- Establish the Winter's Branch open linear park to provide access to Prince William Street, Jefferson Street, Grant Avenue South, Brent Street, Barlow Street, and Main Street
- Create a Baldwin Elementary and Osbourn High School open space link and relocate/upgrade the playfields, which will connect to the open space link through the Head Trauma Center site and attach to the Winter's Branch linear park
- Preserve and connect Baldwin Park at the Manassas Museum to the Winter's Branch Stream and school site in the open space loop system
- Relocate the Old Town Farmers' Market to the Loy E. Harris Pavilion
- Establish a focal green at the intersection of Peabody Street and Center Street that serves the Lee Avenue neighborhood
- Establish a focal green at the intersection of Zebedee Street and Center Street to serve the Zebedee neighborhood
- Create two public greens at the centers of the Madison Avenue/Wall Street neighborhood and the Prescott Road neighborhood with each having the potential to include band stands, play areas, and community gardens
- Provide continuous east/west open space links that will serve pedestrians between the two aforementioned neighborhood greens, the urban focal places, the Loy E. Harris Pavilion, the entertainment district, and the City Hall along the north edge of the Norfolk Southern Railroad line



*Loy E. Harris Pavilion*



# Open Space

Figure 16



- Legend**
- Existing Open Space
  - Proposed Greenspace
  - Cross-town Open Space Link

## CIRCULATION

Circulation in Old Town will stay the same with changes to make the pedestrian environment safer and more conducive to extend shopping (Figure 17).



*Church Street at West Street*



*East Street*



*Battle Street at Church Street*

- Maintain Church Street as a one-way, west-bound street with wider sidewalks and a traffic signal at West Street.
- Maintain Center Street as a one-way, east-bound street with wider sidewalks and a traffic signal at West Street.
- Convert East Street between Church and Center Streets to a one-way street southbound, with street trees and wider sidewalks. Striped parallel on-street parking should be established along the western curb.
- Maintain Main Street between Church and Prince William Streets as a two-way street. Convert angled parking to striped parallel parking at both curb lanes. Retain police presence on the street and consider implementing a left turn onto Center Street from Main Street, going south.
- Convert Battle Street to a one-way street southbound between Center Street and the railroad tracks. Provide for a one-way through traffic lane with parallel parking on both sides of the street confined to the central portion of the block, and provide designated loading zones along the street.
- The balance of the Battle Street space should be dedicated to widened sidewalks and street trees.
- Close Battle Street between Church Street and Prince William Street for occasional special events, e.g. festivals and parades.
- Maintain West Street between Church and Prince William Streets as a two-way street. Maintain striped parallel parking on both sides of the street.
- Install refuge islands along Grant Avenue at each intersection, similar to those found on the northern end of Grant Avenue.
- Extend boulevard streetscape treatments on Grant Avenue similar to those found on the northern end of Grant Avenue.
- Maintain the pedestrian connectivity between Grant Avenue and Main Street and install bike lanes.
- Widen all downtown sidewalks where possible; enhance streetscapes; consider building-mounted, hanging street lights to provide more space on sidewalks for trees, planters, and pedestrians.
- Install curb extensions at all corners with on-street parking. Extend curbs on Battle Street as illustrated in the visualization in order to allow for sidewalk cafes, and align crosswalks with sidewalks for pedestrian safety.

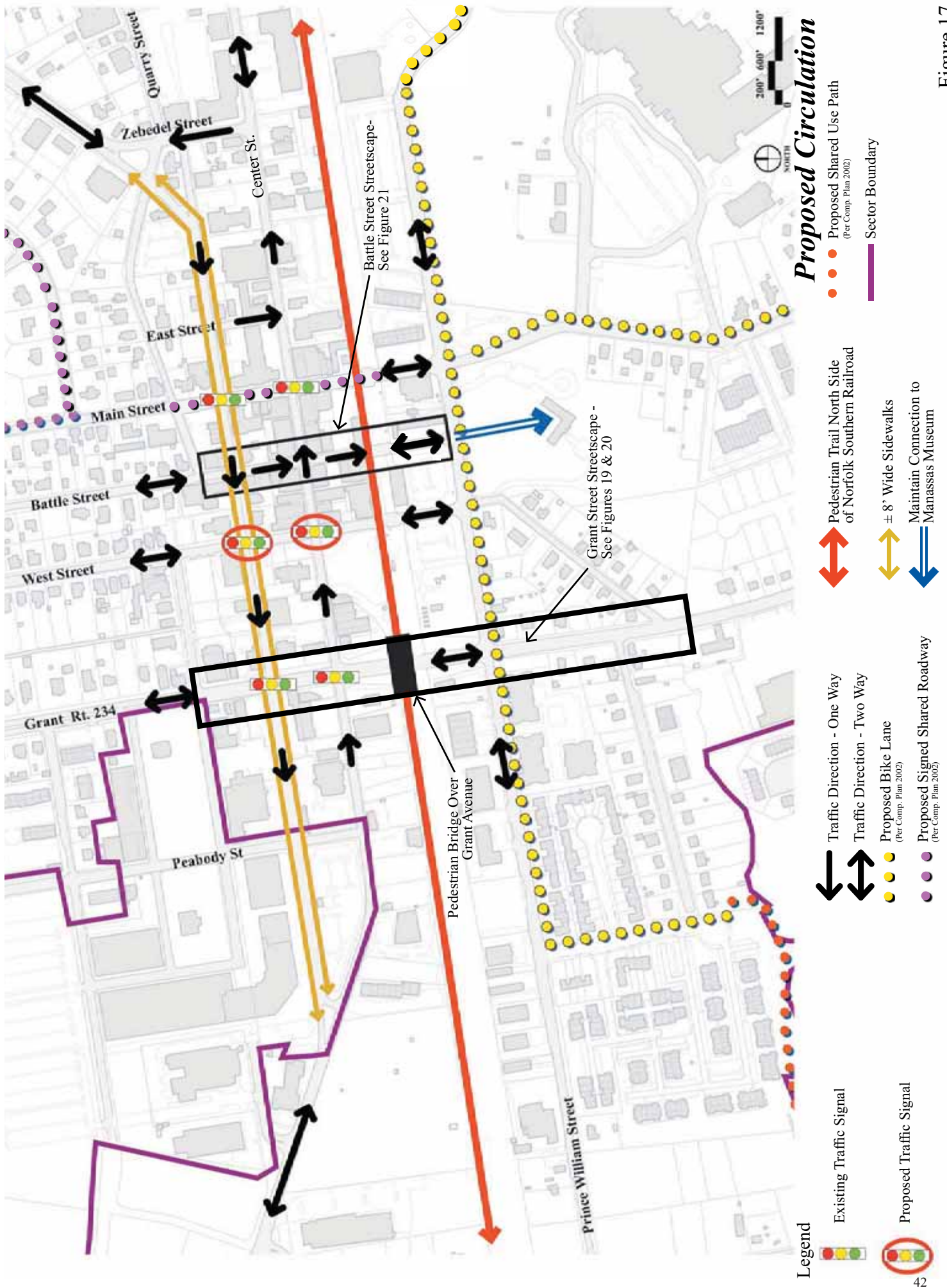


Figure 17

- Install pedestrian signals that are timed for the advantage of pedestrians rather than vehicles, especially along Grant Avenue and Center Street.
- Extend pedestrian paths along the north side of the Norfolk Southern Railroad line.
- Continue to pursue another regional transit system that will connect Old Town to other parts of the city.
- Concentrate efforts on alleviating the cut-through traffic on Prescott Avenue and Cherry Street.
- Create more planted medians and streetscape features, especially on Prescott Avenue and Grant Avenue.
- Develop strategies with the city’s engineers to reduce traffic impacts along Maple Street.
- Install continuous system of 5’ minimum pedestrian sidewalks through all pedestrian neighborhoods and connected to the downtown streetscapes.

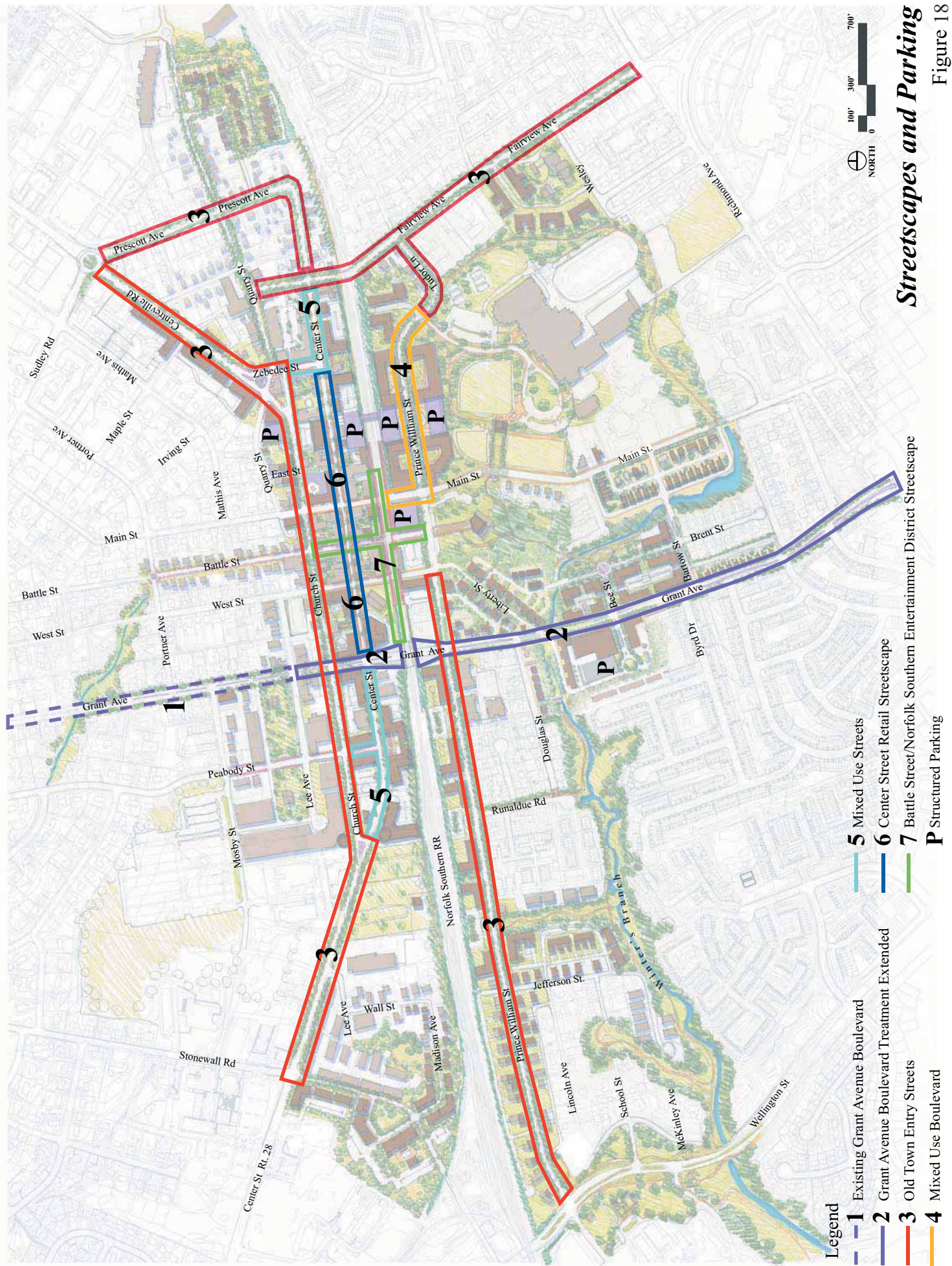
## STREETSCAPES

A system of well-designed streetscapes (Figures 18-23) will become an important component of Old Town’s open space system as well as making key linkages to the proposed parking facilities.



*Washington Street in Alexandria, Virginia with wide sidewalks, planted center median, continuous building edge and heavy rush-hour traffic is a good model for Grant Avenue between Lee Avenue and Center Street*

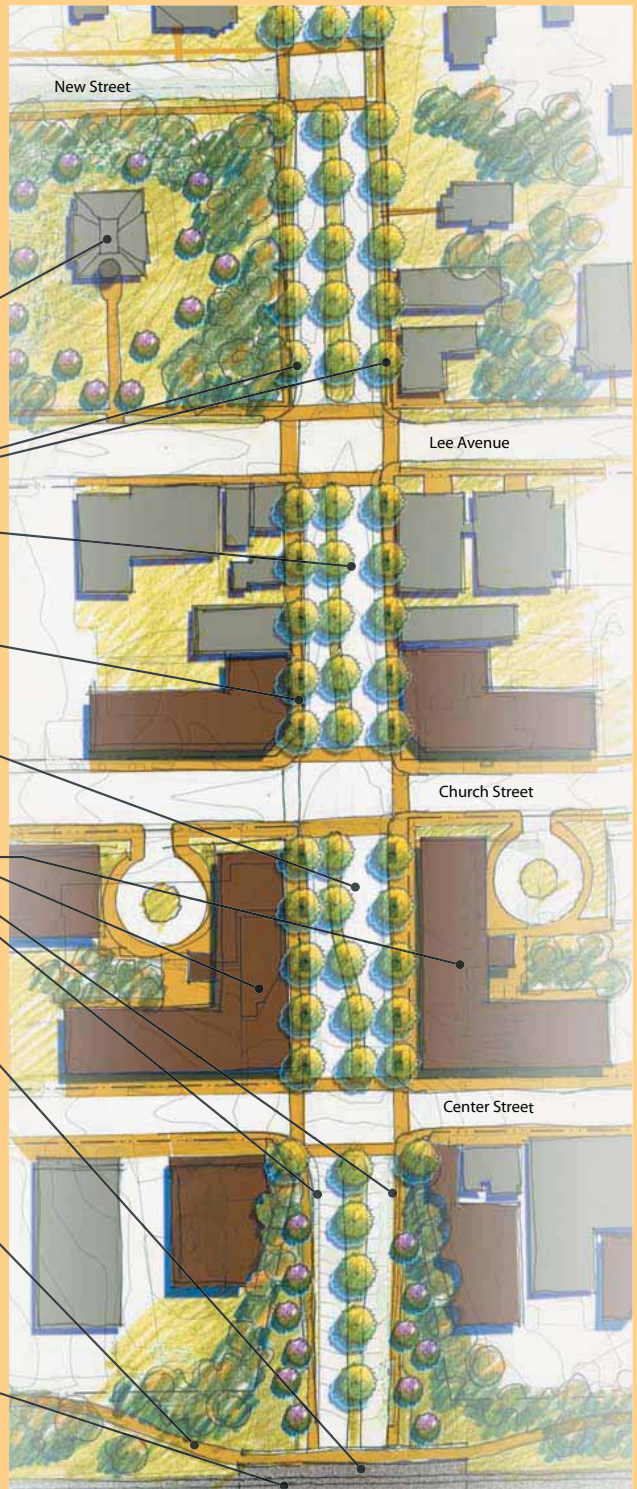
- Redesign Grant Avenue from Lee Avenue to Wellington Road to create a new boulevard that will match the character and quality of Grant Avenue north of Lee Avenue.
  - a. Grant Avenue between Lee Avenue and Center Street should feature wide sidewalks with tree boxes and a planted center median. No curb cuts should interrupt the pedestrian continuity along this section of Grant Avenue.
  - b. A series of low stone clad retaining walls might be needed along Grant Avenue, between Prince William and Liberty Streets, to protect the existing homes and significant existing trees. These retaining walls should be visual amenities with adjacent sidewalks along Grant Avenue and steps up to the residential front stoops and porches.
- Upgrade the major streets entering Old Town and include entry elements, curbs, 6’ minimum sidewalks, and street trees to bring residents and visitors gracefully into the historic district along tree-lined streets. The streets recommended for such upgrades include:
  - a. Prince William Street from Wellington Road to Liberty Street



- Legend**
- 1 Existing Grant Avenue Boulevard
  - 2 Grant Avenue Boulevard Treatment Extended
  - 3 Old Town Entry Streets
  - 4 Mixed Use Boulevard
  - 5 Mixed Use Streets
  - 6 Center Street Retail Streetscape
  - 7 Battle Street/Norfolk Southern Entertainment District Streetscape
  - P Structured Parking

# Streetscapes and Parking

Figure 18



Historic County Courthouse with Restored Landscape Grounds (as proposed by Prince William County)

Taper curbs out on both sides to allow for construction of 10' planted median south of Lee Avenue

Maintain left turn lane

Continuous sidewalk with street trees in tree boxes and no curbs on either side of Grant Avenue between Lee Avenue and Center Street

Maintain left turn lane

Proposed mixed-use infill

Taper curbs out on both sides allow for construction of 10' planted median south of Lee Avenue

Proposed pedestrian bridge over Grant Avenue

Proposed multi-use trail north of the railroad

Existing railroad bridge

**Grant Streetscape**

***Grant Avenue  
North of the  
Railroad Bridge***

*Legend*

- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings

Figure 19

Existing Railroad Bridge

Neighborhood Gateway

Low Stoneclad Retaining Walls to allow road widening and protect homes and trees between Prince William Street and Liberty Street



Grant Streetscape

**Grant Avenue**  
 South of the  
 Railroad Bridge

Legend




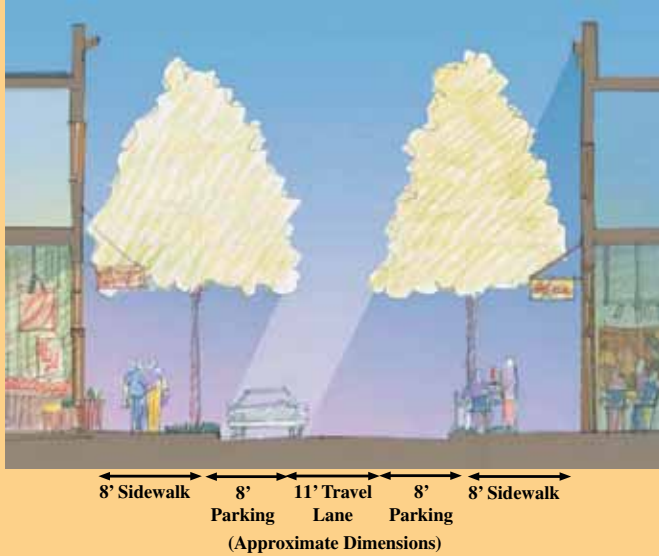
-  Existing Buildings
-  Proposed Buildings
-  Retaining Wall

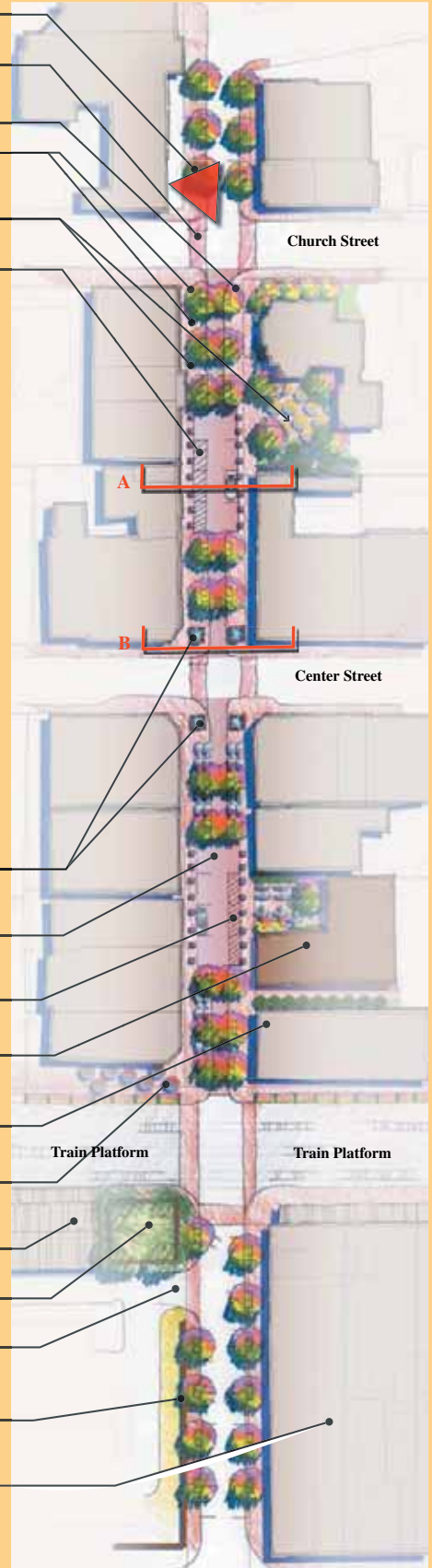
Figure 20



**Battle Street Proposed Section/Elevation A**



- Before & After: Location of Visualization No. 1
- Crosswalks
- Neighborhood Signage Columns
- Brick Sidewalks, Both Sides
- Streetside and Courtyard Outdoor Dining
- Loading Zone



- Fountains at Intersection
- Central Parking Zone
- Loading Zone
- Proposed Building Infill
- Candy Factory
- Train Platform
- Existing Outdoor Dining
- VRE/Amtrak Station
- Raised Lawn and Trees with Sandstone Seatwall
- Straighten Entry To Allow Lawn
- Sandstone Wall
- Parking Structure

**Battle Street Entertainment District**

- Legend**
- Existing Buildings
  - Proposed Buildings
  - Loading Zones

**Battle Street Streetscape Concept 1  
27 Parking Spaces**

Existing View



Proposed View



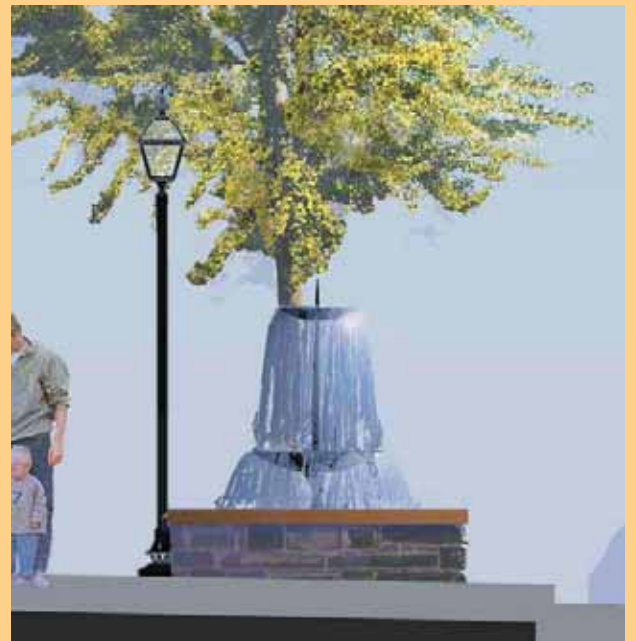
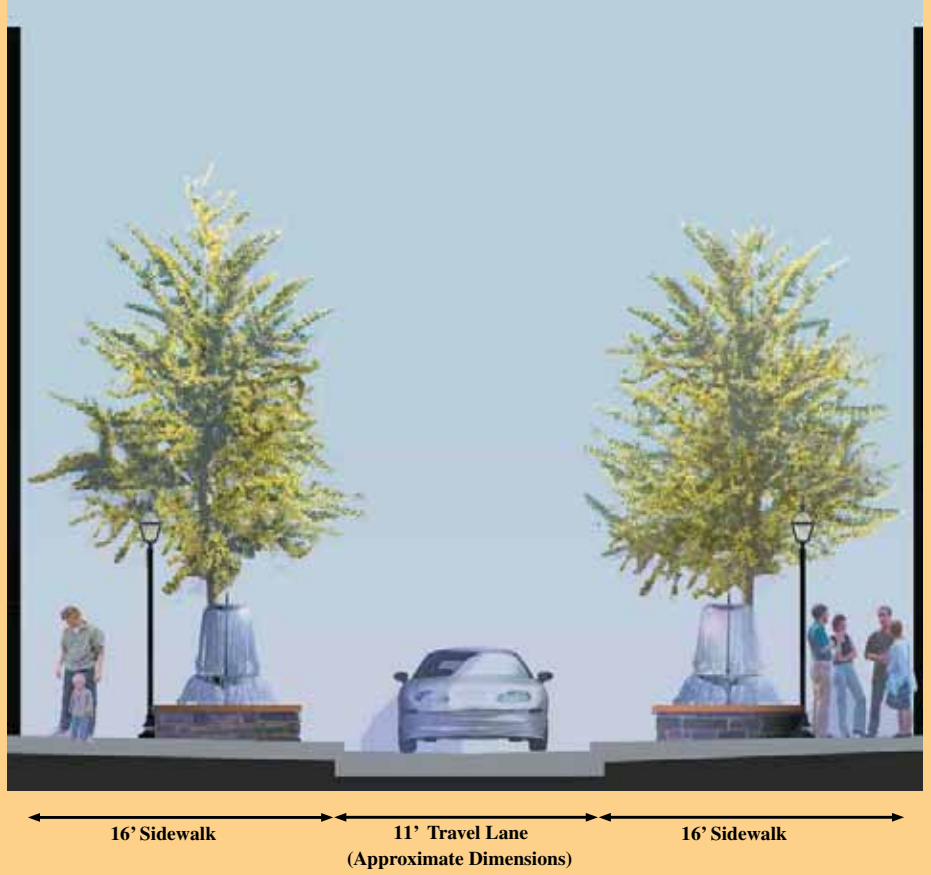
View Detail



*Battle Steet Before and After Visualizations*

Figure 22

**Battle Street Fountains  
Section/Elevation B**



**Fountain Detail Illustrating Historic Sandstone Base and Metal Fountain Element**

***Battle Street Character***

Figure 23



*A hot summer day on Center Street could use a large, high tree canopy*

- b. Fairview Avenue from Richmond Avenue to Quarry Street and Prince William Street to Fairview to the Mixed-Use District
- c. Prescott Avenue from Sudley Road to Fairview Avenue
- d. Center Street from Stonewall Road to Grant Avenue
- e. Centreville Road and Church Street through Old Town
- f. Church Street between Grant Avenue and Center Street

- Establish a Mixed-Use Neighborhood Boulevard to establish Prince William Street, east of Liberty Street, as an urban street with 15' wide sidewalks, 6' wide tree boxes, and street furnishings to complement this high-density residential and office addition to Downtown.
- Create Entertainment Streets (Figures 21, 22 & 23) to establish the Battle Street/Norfolk Southern Entertainment District Streetscape, providing the highest level of architectural interest and human scale. Sidewalks, driving surfaces, and parking areas should be paved with brick and other unit pavers. Sandstone, to match the local historic sandstone, should be used to build low walls, planters, single columns, and fountain bases. A festive and detailed system of night lighting should be used to attract outdoor diners and create a warm, inviting atmosphere. Tall, columnar trees, such as the Ginkgos used in the visualization, will create a sense of intimacy and provide necessary shade. Fountains, as illustrated, should be located within the widened sidewalks at the intersection of Center and Battle Streets to help mask traffic noise for diners and mark this critical corner.
- Establish Retail Core Streetscapes that incorporate streetscape improvements for Center Street and include upgraded paving materials on a larger scale than the small unit pavers of the Entertainment Zone as well as large shade trees, installed with minimum 14' clear height to the first lower limb in order to create an immediate sense of enclosure but still allow pedestrians to visually scan the space. This height will also accommodate truck traffic. These large trees should be placed farther apart than the Columnar trees on Battle Street. New lighting and large plant containers should be placed as close to the curb line as possible in order to visually constrict the space which will help slow traffic. New construction along Center Street should include 12' minimum arcades to increase pedestrian space on this major street.
- Develop Pedestrian Mixed-Use Streetscapes in these in-town mixed-use residential neighborhoods:
  - a. Center Street between Prescott Avenue and the retail core streetscape
  - b. Zebedee Street from Center Street to Centreville Road
  - c. Center Street between Grant Avenue and Church Street
  - d. Peabody Street between Center and Church Streets

These streetscapes should exhibit a variety of sidewalk and street widths, with street furnishing types varying with the nature of the ground floor uses. Residential areas with limited building entries could be characterized by 6' wide sidewalks with a 6' street tree/planting zone. Commercial areas should have the full 15' paved sidewalk with a more extensive family of street furnishings such as benches, bike racks, and trash receptacles. All pedestrian mixed-use streetscapes would include curb and gutter as well as pedestrian-scaled sidewalk lighting that complements the street lighting.


## **PARKING**

Four locations for potential parking facilities have been identified. Two are south of the Norfolk Southern Railroad straddling Prince William Street, and two are north of the railroad: one at the Municipal Building surface parking lot and one at the surface parking lot at the intersection of Centreville Road and Quarry Street.

- Study additional structured parking at sites recommended along Prince William Street at the Municipal Parking Lot and west at the intersection of Centreville Road and Quarry Street. These facilities should be studied as projects for partnering with private developers to add public parking to private construction projects.
- Encourage VRE commuter parking relocation to the Manassas Airport and implement a Residential Parking Permit Program in neighborhoods adjacent to the Downtown.
- Establish a realistic price structure for Downtown commuter parking that will encourage public transit options.
- Create a shuttle service for Manassas residents to the VRE.
- Conduct a new parking study to assess parking needs in Old Town once the additional parking garage south of the railroad tracks is completed.
- Update the City's recently completed parking study to accommodate the recommendations contained in this sector plan in addition to changes brought about with the new parking garage.
- At the time the City decides to build a second parking garage, the garage should be located north of the railroad tracks. When this decision is made, a new circulation study should be carried out to understand the potential impacts of the parking garage on traffic patterns in Old Town.

## **GATEWAYS**

The Old Town Sector Area's diverse neighborhoods will be marked with a two-tiered system of gateways (Figures 24 & 25). The larger of these gateway elements will mark the entry into Old Town itself and should be located on the major roads and streets entering Old Town. These areas would include gateways at Grant Avenue, Center Street to Stonewall Road, Wellington Road, and Prince William Street.



The second tier of Gateway elements will mark the entrance into each of the small neighborhoods that surround the Old Town core. Gateway elements should be incorporated into traffic calming features such as neck-downs and medians to slow traffic entering both the Old Town core and the residential neighborhoods. Planting should be incorporated into these entry points to help demarcate these entrances.

## Old Town Gateway Detail

Cast Stone Cap with Inset Lettering

Sternberg Mediterra Lantern on Custom Metal Armature

Event Banner

Sandstone Column to Match Historic Stone



Cast Stone Cap

Metal Spotlight

Raised Lettering

Metal Panel

Sandstone Column



## Gateway Elements

Neighborhood Gateway Detail

Figure 24

**Old Town and  
Neighborhood Gateways**



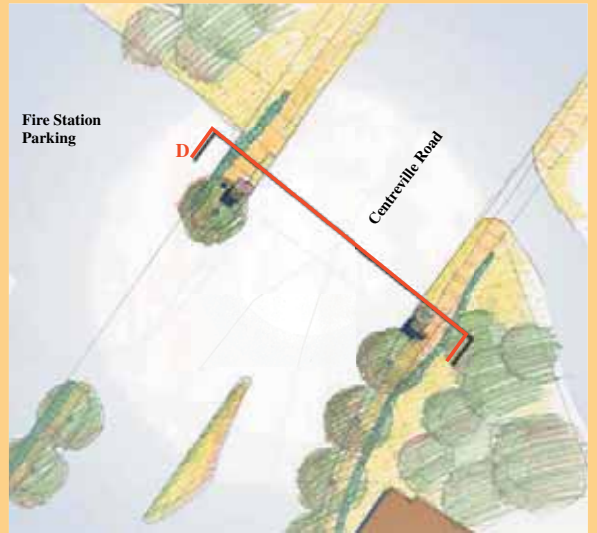
**Old Town Gateway West at  
Center Street - Section C**



**Plan**



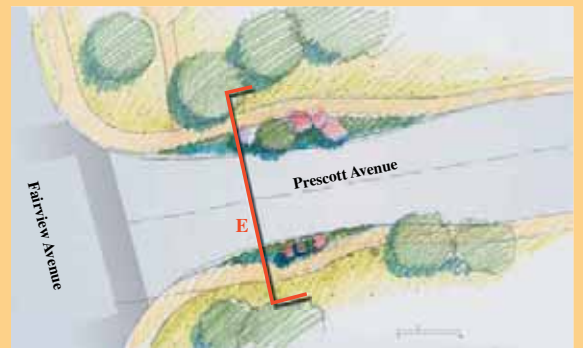
**Old Town Gateway East at  
Centerville Road - Section D**



**Plan**



**Neighborhood Gateway at  
Prescott Road - Section E**



**Plan**

***Gateway Plans***



## VIII. IMPLEMENTATION

**GOAL 1:** *Increase the activities and services for residents, guests, and tourists; support artist's galleries, studios, upper floor living spaces, retail, hotel, and entertainment.*

### STRATEGY 1

Designate Downtown as an Arts and Tourism District and offer incentives to “for-profit” businesses in a broad range of related arts and entertainment sectors that are new to the City and/or expand an existing business. Targeted sectors should increase activities and services for residents, guests, and tourists. The incentives could include:

- Reduction of any type of gross receipts tax for targeted sectors
- Exemption of real estate taxes for certain rehabilitated, renovated, or replacement commercial, hotel, or mixed-use structures; larger exemption for structures meeting specific criteria
- Fast Track Permitting
- Economic Opportunity Fund Grant for Fee Waivers

**GOAL 2:** *Define and strengthen the retail core of Downtown to attract and serve both residential and visitor populations.*

### STRATEGY 1

Create development standards for Class A retail space and determine incentives or requirements for the first floor of new buildings in the retail core to be built for retail as follows:

- Require first floor ceiling heights of 14-16 feet in the retail core with at least 60 to 70% of the ground floor to be transparent facing the sidewalk and a storefront width of at least 20 feet; potentially provide extra floor of leasable office or residential space in return.

### STRATEGY 2

Identify a multi-phased capital improvement program specifically for Downtown as a part of the City-wide CIP to include such projects as:

- Battle Street sidewalks and landscaping
- Grant Avenue medians and landscaping
- Railroad walkway from City Hall to Harris Pavilion
- Additional parking structure(s)
- Expansion of the decorative lighting beyond the historic district to all of the study area identified as Downtown.

### STRATEGY 3

Consider a special taxing district such as a Business Improvement District (BID) or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District that would serve as a mechanism to finance such public improvements as those listed above.

**GOAL 3:** *Redefine “transportation” in the Downtown as “circulation” and provide more emphasis on pedestrian needs, parking, and accessibility to transit options.*

#### STRATEGY 1

Provide for a traffic signal at West Street and Center Street to further slow traffic down and enhance pedestrian safety at the Harris Pavilion.

#### STRATEGY 2

Convert Battle Street to one-way traffic traveling south from Church Street to the railroad tracks to allow for reconstruction of Battle Street as an entertainment area and enhance pedestrian safety. Maintain on-street parking on Battle Street for access to retailers and restaurants.

#### STRATEGY 3

Maintain and install pedestrian signals that are timed for the advantage of pedestrians rather than vehicles, especially along Grant Avenue and Center Street, for enhanced pedestrian safety.

#### STRATEGY 4

Install refuge islands along Grant Avenue at each intersection, similar to those found on the northern end of Grant Avenue.

#### STRATEGY 5

Require all new developments in the study area to install minimum 8-foot wide sidewalks and provide for enhanced streetscapes.

#### STRATEGY 6

Provide for traffic-calming measures at the entrances to neighborhoods with proposed neighborhood signage.

#### STRATEGY 7

Extend pedestrian paths along the north side of the Norfolk Southern Railroad Line.

**GOAL 4:** *Encourage “an Old Town with a new attitude” to create a more up-to-date, lively, arts-related Old Town; assist in the branding and marketing of downtown Manassas and increase awareness and support for the arts.*

#### STRATEGY 1

Encourage the installation of both Public and Private Art throughout the downtown public realm.

#### STRATEGY 2

Review and Update the Historic Overlay District Design Guidelines; encourage context-sensitive design.

#### STRATEGY 3

Review and Update the Zoning Ordinance to:

- Encourage residential conversions on upper floors

- Encourage implementation of sidewalk dining or other outside activities

#### STRATEGY 4

Sustain and support the efforts of Historic Manassas, Inc., and the Old Town Business Association to create a lively Downtown with particular attention paid to such outdoor activities as:

- Sidewalk Cafes
- Festivals
- Special promotions and events
- Markets

**GOAL 5:** *Encourage historic patterns of development to retain the historic character of Manassas.*

#### STRATEGY 1

Amend the City's Zoning Ordinance to follow more "historic" setbacks in the historic district regardless of the underlying zoning.

#### STRATEGY 2

Require new development to follow "historic" setbacks with parking in the rear of buildings or in parking structures.

#### STRATEGY 3

Review the recommendations of the 2006 historic district survey and implement those recommendations that only enhance the implementation of this plan.

#### STRATEGY 4

Preserve the character of Historic Neighborhoods that surround the Downtown

#### STRATEGY 5

Introduce signs and gateway elements that will reinforce the historic context of the Downtown but that also reflect the "New Attitude" of Downtown

**GOAL 6:** *Maximize urban amenities including plaza's, green spaces, and recreation opportunities in the Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods; provide for year-round visual interest with enhanced streetscapes, street furniture, and public art installations.*

#### STRATEGY 1

Require new developments to provide for useable public urban spaces and green spaces.

#### STRATEGY 2

Encourage shared use of existing and future green space.

#### STRATEGY 3

As structured parking is constructed, identify opportunities to transform existing surface parking lots into urban plazas with green space, landscaping, etc.

STRATEGY 4

Extend streetscape treatments along Grant Avenue between Lee Avenue and Wellington Road similar to the boulevard treatment on the north side of the Downtown.

**GOAL 7:** *Preserve, protect and enhance the residential neighborhoods within and around the commercial core of the Downtown.*

STRATEGY 1

Add brick crosswalks and gateway signage at the entrances and exits of the neighborhoods identified in the Old Town Manassas Sector Plan.

STRATEGY 2

Explore financial options for enhancing the streetscape in adjacent neighborhoods, such as increased landscaping, underground utilities, and use of the Sternberg light standards.

STRATEGY 3

Provide traffic-calming measures at the entrances to neighborhoods similar to those installed by the City of Manassas at Richmond Avenue and Oakenshaw Road.

STRATEGY 4

Identify infrastructure improvements such as undergrounding utilities and resolving drainage issues that can be combined with enhancement projects.

**GOAL 8:** *Work with Prince William County to implement the Judicial Center Master Plan and provide enhanced pedestrian connections from the proposed Lee Avenue pedestrian mall to the historic core of Downtown.*

STRATEGY 1

Add brick crosswalks and enhanced median landscaping at Grant Avenue and the new pedestrian connection proposed between Grant Avenue and Mosby Street.

STRATEGY 2

Explore opportunities for shared parking structures that can be utilized by the Downtown on the evenings and weekends when not in use for Judicial Center functions and daily activities.

**APPENDIX**

**OLD TOWN MANASSAS  
RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS**

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

Old Town Manassas is an historic retail environment surrounded by the simplicity, convenience and predictability of modern shopping centers. For this reason, the district has struggled to capture the region's prosperity and to find successful avenues to distinguish itself from the nearby, traditional format, suburban retail condition.

Additionally, the retail marketplace is not certain how to regard Old Town. Just outside the Capital Beltway, Manassas is considered a city on the fringe between urban/suburban and rural communities. Retail highways, surface parking, and single-use/single-ownership developments are ideal for present-day tenants. Often, historic storefronts and non-assigned public parking lots are not.

As Old Town looked to bolster its identity and find its place in a changing Manassas marketplace, the City of Manassas Department of Community Development commissioned Retail Compass LLC to conduct a retail study. The purpose of this analysis was to:

- Inventory existing retail establishments to assess current retail supply within the community.
- Catalog and evaluate the impacts of nearby existing, under construction or planned retail establishments on Old Town's retail development potential.
- Analyze consumer expenditures by residents, employees, commuters and visitors within Old Town's customer trade areas.
- Estimate the potential for new retail development in Old Town as it exists currently and projected for the next five years.
- Identify underserved retail categories that could be market-supported in Old Town.
- Recommend an initial strategy for Old Town retail policy.

Old Town's status as the historic center of commerce for Manassas must be recognized. However, over the last century, as changes in shopping patterns and suburbia altered how retail grows and thrives, Old Town's position must shift and adapt to this marketplace without compromising its intrinsic character and value.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the Old Town Manassas Existing Retail Inventory, 68 retail establishments and 91 retail-appropriate spaces were surveyed and recorded in March, 2006.

The total amount of retail-appropriate space in Old Town Manassas is estimated to range between 173,375 and 191,625 square feet. This total includes retail-occupied space, vacant space, and space that is appropriate for retail, but occupied by office users.

Of the total amount of retail-appropriate space, approximately 43,150 square feet (23%) are currently occupied by office users. An additional estimated 8,000 square feet (4.3%) are vacant. Combined, these two figures constitute an “underutilized space rate” of 27.58% percent. More precisely, approximately 51,150 square feet of retail-appropriate space in Old Town Manassas is not leased or owned by retail users.

The total amount of space currently occupied by retail establishments is approximately 134,300 square feet.

An evaluation of the quality of retail space has determined that Old Town Manassas needs a larger supply of higher quality retail space to accommodate new retail development potential. Of the existing 134,300 square feet currently occupied by retail establishments, approximately 51,000 square feet is anticipated to be converted into a non-retail use or redeveloped as the local market improves.

Retail competition from Sudley Road/Route 234 and Liberia Avenue retail corridors significantly impact potential retail demand for Old Town Manassas establishments.

Old Town Manassas' primary customer trade area includes 11,134 people residing in 3,313 households with a median household income of \$63,470. Within the secondary trade area, an estimated 38,442 people reside in 13,307 households with a median household income of \$70,108. An estimated 69,580 people reside in 23,804 households throughout the tertiary trade area. Their median household income is \$73,383.

Non-resident customers also impact Old Town's retail development potential. The office population (8,662 employees within the primary trade area), commuter population (385 VRE commuters daily),

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

and visitor population (an estimated 35,500 tourists annually) contribute nearly one-third of Old Town's retail demand.

Currently, the total market-supportable retail redevelopment potential for Old Town Manassas is approximately 50,300 square feet. The demand is strongest in the Food and Beverage category, although comparable demand exists for Neighborhood Goods & Services and General Merchandise.

Standard population projections and planned Old Town construction projects will increase Old Town's retail redevelopment potential to an estimated 54,300 square feet by 2011. This figure includes the impact of the addition of approximately 24,500 square feet of new retail at the Van Metre at Old Town Manassas development.

### INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING RETAIL SUPPLY

In May, 2006, an inventory of existing spaces in Old Town Manassas currently occupied by or appropriate for a retail use was conducted by Retail Compass, LLC. This survey involved cataloguing tenant names and addresses of each applicable establishment. Field visits to each establishment were undertaken to determine and record the real estate class (A, B or C) and approximate size of each space.

### DEFINITIONS

#### **Retail and Entertainment Categories**

*Food and Beverage (F&B)*: This category includes establishments that serve food and/or alcohol consumed outside the home. Tenant types in the F&B category include sit-down restaurants, cafes, bars, coffee shops, sandwich shops, ice cream shops, "quick-bite" establishments, fast-food restaurants, and similar.

*General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings and Other (GAFO)*: This category includes establishments such as clothing stores, furniture stores, bookstores, jewelry stores, stationery stores, gift boutiques, pet stores, sporting goods stores, home goods stores, craft stores, music stores, antique shops, camera stores, electronics stores, auto parts stores, and similar.



*Neighborhood Goods and Services (NG&S)*: This category includes establishments that depend upon the patronage of local residents and workers. Examples of these types of tenants include grocery stores, drugstores, florists, bakeries, specialty food stores, delicatessens, butchers, dry cleaners, tailors, laundromats, hair salons, nail salons, day spas, printers, pet salons, machine repair shops, shoe repair and shine shops, hardware stores, gyms, and similar.

**Size of Space**

Sizes of spaces were determined through one of four approaches: (1) information derived from leasing plans, (2) information derived from GIS/CAD drawings, (3) estimation by the survey team, and (4) measurement of space by a measured increment (i.e. ceiling tile, floor tile, window bay, etc.). Because exact measurements could not be assured in all circumstances, sums related to total areas are expressed as “approximate” or within a reasonable margin of error for the purposes of this report.

**Class of Space**

*Class A*: Space that meets the requirement for a Class A rating typically has the following attributes: located at an end-cap or prominently situated among in-line establishments, floor-to-ceiling clear height of 14 feet or higher, storefront width of 20 feet or more, well-maintained, clearly visible from primary roadways, constructed with quality materials, properly lit exterior and display spaces, and clear pedestrian and vehicular access and parking.

*Class B*: Space that meets the requirements for a Class B rating typically has the following attributes: well-situated among in-line establishments, floor-to ceiling clear height of approximately 12 feet or higher, storefront width of 15 feet or more, well-maintained, and diminished representation of any factors listed for Class A space.

*Class C*: Space that meets the requirements for a Class C rating typically has the following attributes: located among in-line establishments, floor-to-ceiling clear heights of less than 12 feet, storefront width of less than 15 feet, and diminished representation of any factors listed for Class A or B space.

*Build-to-Suit (BTS)*: Space that is listed as BTS has been constructed for a specific tenant in such a manner that conversion to another use or tenant will be difficult or impractical.

FINDINGS

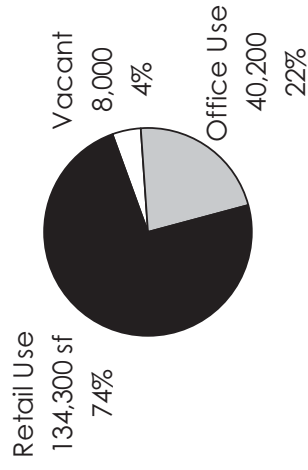
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Of the total amount of retail-appropriate space, approximately 43,150 square feet (23%) are currently occupied by office users. An additional estimated 8,000 square feet (4.3%) are vacant. Combined, these two figures constitute an "underutilized space rate" of 27.58% percent. More precisely, approximately 51,150 square feet of retail-appropriate space in Old Town Manassas is not leased or owned by retail users.

The total amount of space currently occupied by retail establishments is approximately 134,300 square feet. The average size for a retail-occupied space is 1,975 square feet.

Graph 1. Distribution of Retail-Appropriate Space



Source: Old Town Manassas Retail Inventory, Retail Compass LLC (March 2006)

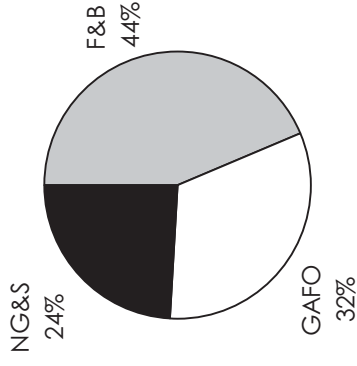
## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

Of the 68 retail-occupied spaces, 22 establishments are included in the F&B category. Contributing approximately 58,500 square feet, F&B retailers constitute 44% of the existing inventoried retail space.

In the GAFO category, 25 establishments were identified. Accounting for approximately 43,400 square feet, GAFO retailers occupy 32% of existing inventoried retail space.

The fewest number of retail establishments occupying the smallest percentage of space are included in the NG&S category. The 21 NG&S retailers total approximately 32,400 square feet or 24% of existing inventoried retail space.

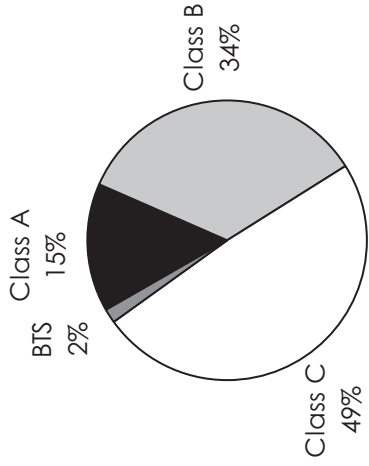
Graph 2. Distribution of Retail Space by Retail Category.



Source: Old Town Manassas Retail Inventory, Retail Compass LLC (March 2006)

Of the 68 retail-occupied spaces, 7 locations are rated Class A, 18 are rated Class B, and 42 are rated Class C. One space (7-Eleven at 9407 Grant Avenue) is rated "Build-to-Suit." As a percentage of total space, the ratings are distributed as follows: Class A (15%), Class B (34%), Class C (49%), and Build-to-Suit (2%).

Graph 3. *Distribution of Retail Space by Class of Space*



Source: Old Town Manassas Retail Inventory, Retail Compass LLC (March 2006)

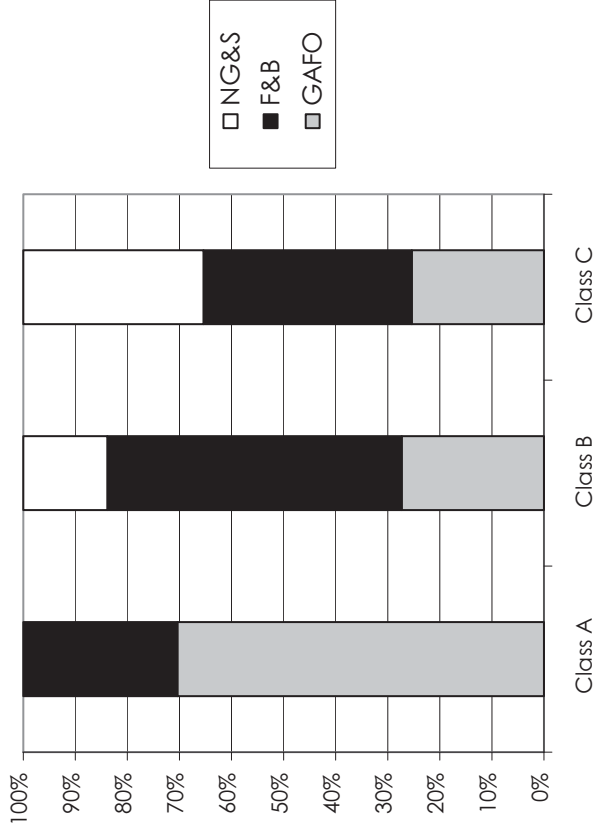
GAFO retailers occupy 70% of Class A space, with F&B retailers occupying 30% and NG&S retailers occupying no Class A locations.

F&B retailers occupy 57% of Class B space, with GAFO retailers occupying 27% and NG&S retailers occupying 16%.

F&B retailers occupy 40% of Class C space, with NG&S retailers occupying 35% and GAFO retailers occupying 25%.

In general, GAFO retailers control the highest quality space in Old Town Manassas, whereas F&B retailers are claiming the last desirable spaces.

Graph 4. Distribution of Retail Space by Class and Category.



Source: Old Town Manassas Retail Inventory, Retail Compass LLC (March 2006)

The following five streets were determined to have the highest concentrations of retail in Old Town Manassas, in accordance with the measuring standards listed. These findings are subject to change based on additional information obtained through exact measurements:

1. Center Street (approx. 56,200 sf)
2. Main Street (approx. 28,900 sf)
3. Grant Avenue, including Georgetown South (approx. 28,800 sf)
4. Battle Street (approx. 8,500 sf)
5. West Street (approx. 5,600 sf)

Collectively, these streets constitute a “retail district” for Old Town Manassas. From the estimated 134,300 square feet in the project area, retailers on these five streets occupy approximately 95% of Old Town’s total retail space.

THE MODIFIED INVENTORY OF RETAIL SUPPLY

The total amount of existing retail space currently in supply does not provide the most accurate depiction of the current retail supply. In districts such as Old Town Manassas, retail establishments are able to maintain operations in substandard spaces and locations due to a lack of available alternatives or because of limited competition in specific retail categories. As new, better quality space is constructed, the substandard space is often replaced or converted to a non-retail use, such as professional office.

It is assumed that a proportion of the existing space in the current inventory will become obsolete as a retail use as the local market improves and builds better quality space. To determine this amount, a percentage is assigned to each class of retail space. This percentage assumes the likelihood that retail space currently in the existing supply will remain.

The estimated “modified inventory” for the retail supply in Old Town Manassas is approximately 98,385 square feet. This figure was determined by assigning a probability percentage of 90% for Class A space, 75% for Class B space, 60% for Class C space and 25% for Build-to-Suit space.

Table 1. Modified Inventory Supply Calculation.

| Class of Space | Total Amount (SF) | Efficiency | True Inventory (SF) |
|----------------|-------------------|------------|---------------------|
| A              | 20,200            | 85%        | 17,170              |
| B              | 51,900            | 70%        | 36,330              |
| C              | 67,800            | 50%        | 33,900              |
| Build-to-Suit  | 2,400             | 25%        | 600                 |
| TOTAL:         | 142,300           |            | 88,000              |

Source: Old Town Manassas Existing Retail Database, Retail Compass LLC (May 2006)

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

### CALCULATING DEMAND FOR OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL

Retail demand is quantified by evaluating three distinct factors that impact customers' habits and capacity to patronize retailers.

- Competition from nearby retail centers and businesses
- Established local and regional shopping patterns
- Existing and projected expenditures by local households

From the analysis of these conditions, the total amount of expenditures anticipated to be captured in a healthy retail environment can be estimated. This calculation determines the basis for the total amount of supportable retail space within the Old Town market.

### THE IMPACT OF NEARBY RETAIL CENTERS ON THE OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET

The ability of retail establishments in Old Town Manassas to draw customer expenditures from its own residents and from outside its borders is heavily influenced by existing competition. Shoppers make decisions to patronize retailers for many reasons, including convenience, atmosphere and safety, parking, variety of goods offered, familiarity with the store and product, among others. A considerable amount ("critical mass") and selection of retail options are available to Old Town's potential customer base. This competition greatly impacts Old Town's position in the Manassas retail marketplace.

#### **Retail Competition: West**

Over three million square feet of retail are located along Sudley Road/Route 234. Along this critical access route between Old Town Manassas and Route 66, residents throughout greater Manassas are exposed to a significant number of retailers offering a wide diversity of choice in merchandise, style, quality, and price. For most residents in the northern and western neighborhoods of Greater Manassas, Sudley Road is the backbone of their established shopping patterns.

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

Rather than evaluate the impact of each Sudley Road shopping center on Old Town Manassas' retail potential, the cumulative effect of this commercial area is addressed after the descriptions of major centers.

**Manassas Mall:** One of the most recognizable shopping centers along Sudley Road, Manassas Mall has undergone many transformations since its 1972 grand opening. Today, Manassas Mall's 989,274 square feet are occupied by approximately 135 tenants. Anchor tenants include Target, Hecht's (Macy's), JCPenney, and Sears. (8300 Sudley Road)

**Bull Run Plaza:** This 417,000 square foot hybrid center mixes lifestyle tenants with neighborhood goods and services retailers. The result of this blend is a place that provides daily exposure to its specialty tenants by ensuring the consistent shopping trips associated with a grocery store. Bull Run Plaza's anchor tenants include Shopper's Food Warehouse, Office Depot, Dick's Sporting Goods, PetSmart, and Michaels. (10630 Sudley Manor Drive)

**Parkridge Center:** Boasting some of Sudley Road's most notable tenants, Parkridge Center has a regional impact on retail trade. Located near Route 66, the center's 310,000 square feet are anchored by a Hoyt's Cinema; Bed, Bath & Beyond; Border's Books, Modell's; Kohl's; and Old Navy.

**Promenade at Manassas:** Anchored by two large-format retailers, Home Depot and Wal-Mart, the Promenade also includes a variety of Neighborhood Goods & Services retailers. The total area of this center is approximately 303,000 square feet. (7412 Stream Walk Lane)

**Manaport Plaza:** Across from Manassas Mall, Manaport Plaza's approximately 250,000 square feet of retail space is anchored by Food Lion, Galaxy Furniture and Marshalls. (8313 Sudley Road)

**Sudley Manor Square:** Anchored by a Big Kmart, this 170,000 square foot center is one of the oldest along Sudley Road. (7807 Sudley Road)

**Westgate Plaza:** Similar to Bull Run Plaza, Westgate Plaza combines elements of a retail lifestyle center with a more traditional neighborhood shopping center. Anchored by Barnes & Noble and Giant Food, Westgate Plaza contributes approximately 163,000 square feet of retail to Sudley Road's offerings. (8025 Sudley Road)



## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

Sudley Towne Plaza: Burlington Coat Factory anchors Sudley Towne Plaza's approximately 110,000 square feet of predominately neighborhood goods and services retailers. (7700 Sudley Road)

Manassas Junction: As one of the most dominant retail centers along one of the communities most heavily traveled roadways, Manassas Junction's 80,000 square feet of retail include a Giant Food and one of the area's few Starbucks locations. (8819 Centreville Road)

Intersection of Sudley and Centreville Roads: At this eastern entrance to Old Town, approximately 400,000 square feet of retail is clustered. Lead tenants in these centers include Hollywood Video, IGA, Peebles, Food Lion and the stand-alone CVS and Rite Aid.

*Impact of Sudley Road/Route 234 Retail on Old Town Manassas: Significant.*

The cumulative impact of over three million square feet of concentrated retail places in Old Town Manassas in a difficult market position. As a retail corridor, Sudley Road offers tenants visibility, associations with large anchor tenants, accessibility and free, convenient parking. Customers, many of whom travel Sudley Road as part of their daily commutes, are familiar with the retail offerings along this corridor and have incorporated these establishments into their regular shopping patterns.

The number and variety of discount retailers along this route also impact Old Town Manassas. Customers who comparison shop will find seek discount opportunities at Target, Big Kmart, Barnes & Noble and Burlington Coat Factory (to name a few) over boutique or brand offerings in Old Town.

### **Retail Competition: East**

The expanded amount of retail space along Liberia Avenue, current and planned, affects the local Manassas retail market. Over the past several years, shopping patterns have altered because of the enhanced offerings provided along this route. Customers south of Old Town no longer needed to travel Sudley Road for the variety and types of retail offered there. Additionally, shoppers who patronized Old Town now enjoyed increased retail selections in close proximity.

Similar to the previous section, the cumulative impact of existing retail competition along Liberia Avenue and Prince William Parkway on Old Town Manassas will be addressed after an overview of major centers in this area.

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

**Davis Ford Crossing:** This 153,000 square foot neighborhood shopping center is in a state of transition caused by a vacant anchor location (former Weis Market location) and the rapid growth of retail opportunities along Liberia Avenue. Previously isolated south of Old Town, Davis Ford Crossing is now centrally located within approximately 500,000 square feet of retail expansion. The anchor vacancy is reported to be filled shortly with another grocer.

**Signal Hill Shopping Center:** Directly east of Old Town, Signal Hill Shopping Center is one of the most recent additions to the Liberia Avenue commercial corridor. This approximately 109,000 square foot shopping center is anchored by Shopper's Food Warehouse with Panera Bread and Chik-Fil-A as Food & Beverage establishments.

**Wellington Station:** Anchored by a Giant Food grocery store, Wellington Station's 93,000 square feet of retail are located at high-trafficked intersection of Dumfries and Wellington Roads. Additional tenants include Blockbuster, Baskin-Robbins, and Hair Cuttery.

**Wal-Mart Center:** This large-format retailer occupies this site along the eastern side of Liberia. Pad site locations nearby currently boast Applebee's and Chipotle Mexican Grill.

**Woodbine Station:** This neighborhood shopping center further contributes to the grocery-anchored options available to the Greater Manassas market. Woodbine Station's Food Lion store is one of the stores that could be possibly converted to a Bloom or Bottom Dollar with the chain's planned renovations. (13490 Dumfries Road)

**Hastings Marketplace:** At the intersection of Wellington Road and Prince William Parkway, Hastings Marketplace is proposed as approximately 125,000 square feet of retail, anchored by a 56,000 square foot grocery store.

**The Shops of Signal Hill:** With an expected completion date of Fall 2006, The Shops at Signal Hill will be adjacent to Signal Hill Center and consist of 94,000 square feet of new retail space. Anchor tenants are anticipated to include a pharmacy, Longhorn Steakhouse and Commerce Bank.

**Wellington Square:** This proposed retail development is located behind the Wellington Road Exxon Station with access off Grant Avenue. Approximately 14,500 square feet of retail or commercial office space, Wellington Square is expected completion date is Spring 2007.

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

Fairview Square Shopping Center: Located between Signal Hill and Davis Ford Shopping Centers, Fairview Shopping Center will contribute an additional 32,000 square feet of retail space to the Liberia Avenue commercial corridor.

### **The Wellington Center Wellington & Dumfries Road, 318,000 sf**

Impact of Manassas South and East Retail on Old Town: Significant. Manassas South and East retail directly competes with Old Town's Neighborhood Goods & Services and Food & Beverage retail categories, where as Sudley Road's greatest impact corresponds to General Merchandise (GAFO) competition. Within the shopping centers listed above, residents and workers enjoy easy access with limited traffic concerns, as well as abundant surface parking. These two characteristics are essential for retail success, especially for Neighborhood Goods & Service and Food & Beverage establishments in non-urban environments.

The retail offerings along Liberia Avenue, Prince William Parkway and Wellington Road provide alternative shopping opportunities to Old Town Manassas. For this reason, the ability of Old Town to attract customers from the south and east, especially in the Neighborhood Goods & Services and Food & Beverage categories, is restricted by the competition offered in the centers listed above.

THE IMPACT OF EXPENDITURES BY LOCAL AND REGIONAL HOUSEHOLDS

Retail trade areas provide information that ensures a level of predictability for retail potential (sales). Typically, the data obtained from these identified trade areas allows retailers to determine if their establishment has a high probability of success in a new market. For the purposes of this analysis of Old Town's retail existing condition and future, retail trade area statistics are evaluated to determine the total retail demand, measured a product of total household expenditures.

Boundaries of trade areas are determined primarily by proximity of existing retail competition, but are also influenced by drive-times as well as geographical and psychological barriers.

**Primary Trade Area**

The primary trade area for Old Town Manassas identifies the neighborhoods from which Old Town retail establishments are likely to draw a majority of their regular sales. For this reason, the percentage of household expenditures procured by Old Town retailers is expected to be highest in the primary trade area. This percentage is commonly referred to as a "capture rate."

For Old Town Manassas, the primary trade area is bound by Sudley Road to the east, Richmond Avenue to the south, Wellington Road to the west and Nokesville Road/Peabody Street to the north.

Population in the primary trade area has grown rapidly over the past five years, with an 8.79% increase since 2000. The U.S. Census Bureau and Claritas, Inc. estimate that currently, 11,134 people reside in 3,313 households within the primary trade area. The median household income is \$63,470.

Sixty-three percent (63%) of homes are owner-occupied with an estimated median value of \$193,310. Almost 20% of primary trade area residents over 25 years of age have attained a bachelor's degree or higher educational distinction.

The estimated average commuting time for residents within this area is 36 minutes.

**Secondary Trade Area**

The secondary trade area is identified by neighborhoods with direct access to Old Town Manassas, yet with a variety of competitive shopping alternatives that weaken the potential capture rate for their residents' expenditures.

The boundaries of secondary trade area (exclusive of the primary trade area) extends east and south to Liberia Avenue, west to Prince William Parkway (Route 234) and north from the intersection of Prince William Parkway and Wellington Road to the intersection of Sudley Road and Lomond Drive.

Within the secondary trade area, an estimated 38,442 people reside in 13,307 households. The median household income in this area is \$70,108.

Similar to the local trade area, almost 65% of households in the secondary trade area are owner-occupied. However, the estimated median value of these residences is significantly higher at \$289,823. Approximately 30% of residents over the age of 25 have earned advanced degrees (bachelor's degree or higher).

By 2011, the secondary trade area is anticipated to include 42,525 people in 14,621 households.

**Tertiary Trade Area**

The tertiary trade area is bound by Route 66 to the north, Bull Run and Fountainhead Regional Parks to the east, Occoquan Reservoir and Lake Jackson to the south, and Route 619 to the west. This area does not include the neighborhoods represented in the primary or secondary trade areas.

An estimated 69,580 people reside in 23,804 households throughout the tertiary trade area. The median household income for this area is \$73,383.

## RETAIL DEMAND BY RETAIL CATEGORY

Each of the three major retail categories has distinctive characteristics that impact tenant location decisions and shopping patterns. These factors, which are addressed in the introduction of the following three sections, significantly impact the capture rate for customer expenditures. Following this explanation, the existing “modified inventory” for each retail category in Old Town will be identified. At the conclusion of each section, the estimated retail demand for each retail category is provided.

“Capture rates” is a term indicating the estimated percentage of expenditures that can be attracted to a given location. The potential capture rates for Old Town Manassas are based on typical performance by establishments in each retail category and the strength of the competition posed in each retail category.

**Neighborhood Goods** (includes establishments such as grocery stores, drugstores, florists, specialty food stores, bakeries, delicatessens, and similar)

Neighborhood goods are usually perishable, regularly consumed, and purchased frequently. These products, such as groceries, flowers, baked goods, and over-the-counter medicine, are universally purchased regardless of income level. For this reason, they are regarded as “essential purchases.” In urban and most suburban areas, establishments that sell neighborhood goods serve small trade areas and rely heavily on dense, nearby communities that depend upon their stores almost exclusively.

Because proximity and convenience defines the trade area for neighborhood goods, the capture potential for these retailers diminishes as the distance between the store and the customer increases. Potential capture rates will be highest in the local trade area as these customers will patronize neighborhood establishments that they regard as “their own.”

Neighborhood shopping centers along Sudley Road and Liberia Avenue have essentially “cut off” a significant portion of the customer trade areas. In an urban/suburban market such as Manassas, expectations of convenience and abundant parking create an advantage for outlying areas that makes competition difficult for Old Town. The grocery-anchored centers, in particular, create an opportunity for “one-stop shopping” for all retail associated with Saturday errands.

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

**Neighborhood Services** (includes establishments such as dry cleaners, tailors, nail salons, hair salons, day spas and similar)

Neighborhood services retailers function in the same way as neighborhood goods establishments with one notable exception. Specialty dry cleaners, tailors, salons and day spas have the ability to draw from a larger trade area if they offer a unique service. For spas and salons, an exceptional environment can also attract more customers from a larger area. Typical neighborhood services pull customers from nearby residential areas and rely on frequent, repeat business.

**Existing Supply of NG&S in Old Town Manassas: 17,080 square feet**

The total existing square footage of neighborhood goods and services establishments in Old Town is approximately 32,400 square feet. Class C quality space accounts for almost one-third of all neighborhood goods and services locations. A modified inventory calculation for neighborhood goods and services retail concludes that approximately 17,080 square feet of this space should be measured as the current market's stable supply.

**Estimated Demand for NG&S in Old Town Manassas: 31,358 square feet**

Please refer to the appendix for more detailed information about capture rates, expenditures, and total square feet of demand generated by residents, office workers, commuters and visitors.

**Estimated Retail Development Potential for NG&S: 14,278 square feet**

**Food and Beverages** (includes establishments that serve food and alcohol served and consumed outside the home, such as sit-down restaurants, cafes, bars, coffee shops, sandwich shops, “quick-bite” establishments and similar)

The trade area for food and beverage establishments depends upon customer density, customer spending levels, existing food and beverage competition, the quality of the environment, and the number/character of other restaurants within that environment. An excellent, stand-alone restaurant can have strong customer draw from a local trade area. However, a single establishment in an urban area will rarely capture a significant amount of expenditures from beyond two miles away, as competition for dining expenditures at this distance is often too great. A concentration of restaurants in a desirable environment can draw patrons from a wider trade area. People will travel to a cluster or restaurants without a specific destination, but rather to find a place to dine out of a range of options.

Alternatives for Manassas’ F&B expenditures have been long been available on the Sudley Road corridor, however, recent additions along Liberia Avenue (Applebee’s, Chik-Fil-A, Panera Bread, and Chipotle) have increased the competitive pressure on Old Town’s eateries from outlying retail corridors.

**Existing Supply of F&B in Old Town Manassas: 36,590 square feet**

The total existing square footage of food and beverage establishments in Old Town is approximately 58,500 square feet. Almost the entire inventory is evenly split between Class B and C quality space. A modified inventory calculation for food and beverage establishments concludes that approximately 36,590 square feet of this space should be measured as the current market’s stable supply.

**Estimated Demand for F&B in Old Town Manassas: 55,672 square feet**

Please refer to the appendix for more detailed information about capture rates, expenditures, and total square feet of demand generated by residents, office workers, commuters and visitors.

**Estimated Retail Development Potential for F&B: 19,082 square feet**



## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

**GAFO** (General Merchandise, Apparel, Furnishings and Other – includes establishments such as clothing stores, furniture stores, bookstores, jewelry stores, stationery stores, gift boutiques, sporting goods stores, and similar)

Shopping patterns for GAFO retailers are the most difficult to quantify. Unlike neighborhood goods and services or food and beverages, GAFO retail success is closely tied to the luxury spending potential of any given trade area.

With high traffic counts, available space for convenient parking fields, and growing critical mass of surrounding retailers, Sudley Road has established itself as the address for new general merchandise establishments in the Manassas area. In fact, few mainstream national retailers are missing from the roster of options along this corridor. In the past few years, Liberia Avenue has started to offer an eastern/southern option to Sudley Road for consumer goods.

The accessibility, convenience and clustering of these options places Old Town at a competitive disadvantage. The opportunities for specialty merchandise and superior customer service that can be provided in an Old Town atmosphere were considered when potential capture rates were assigned for GAFO retail potential.

### **Existing Supply of GAFO in Old Town Manassas: 29,210 square feet**

The total existing square footage of GAFO establishments in Old Town is approximately 43,400 square feet. Although space is evenly distributed among Class A, B and C space, GAFO retailers occupy the majority of Old Town's Class A space. A modified inventory calculation for GAFO establishments concludes that approximately 29,210 square feet of this space should be measured as the current market's stable supply.

### **Estimated Demand for GAFO in Old Town Manassas: 46,166 square feet**

Please refer to the appendix for more detailed information about capture rates, expenditures, and total square feet of demand generated by residents, office workers, commuters and visitors.

### **Estimated Retail Development Potential for GAFO: 16,956 square feet**

INTERPRETING 2006 RETAIL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The gap between the existing supply for retail goods and services and the estimated demand equals the retail development potential (or unmet retail demand) for Old Town Manassas. Retail development potential is present in each of the three primary retail categories.

|                                |                            |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Neighborhood Goods & Services: | approx. 14,278 square feet |
| Food & Beverages:              | approx. 19,082 square feet |
| General Merchandise:           | approx. 16,956 square feet |
| Total Development Potential:   | approx. 50,316 square feet |

It is necessary to note that the 50,316 square feet of retail development potential assumes that a percentage of existing space inappropriate for modern retail requirements will be redeveloped or converted to a non-retail use. In Old Town Manassas, the delta between the existing supply of *occupied* retail space (134,300 square feet) and the modified retail inventory (82,880 square feet) is 51,420 square feet. Therefore, if none of the existing retail supply is redeveloped or converted to a non-retail use, limited new retail demand currently exists.

LOOKING AHEAD

Projects planned or under construction will have a significant impact on the composition of Old Town's real estate markets over the next few years. Approximately 460 residential units and 43,600 square feet of commercial office space will be added.<sup>1</sup>

The Van Metre at Old Town Manassas development will introduce 24,500 square feet of retail-appropriate space to the existing supply.

**Godwin Plaza (PLEASE CONFIRM CURRENT NAMES OF PROJECTS)**

During the next five years, retail demand will also increase with new development and population growth. By 2010, total retail demand will equal an estimated 161,737 square feet. The following

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<sup>1</sup> These figures include the development programs for the Courts at Historic Manassas (94 units), Prescott Arms (40 units), Lee Square (140 units), Van Metre at Old Town Manassas (182 units), Godwin Plaza (26,000 office square feet), and the Logan Building (17,600 office square feet).

**OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06**

table provides supply, demand and retail potential figures for 2006 and 2011 projections (please refer to the appendix for detailed information on 2011 retail demand calculations).

**Old Town Manassas Retail Market 2006**

Modified Supply 82,880 square feet  
 Existing Demand 133,196 square feet  
 Retail Development Potential 50,316 square feet

**Old Town Manassas Retail Market 2011**

Projected Supply 107,380 square feet  
 Projected Demand 161,737 square feet  
 Projected Retail Potential 54,357 square feet

**Possible Catalysts for Future Retail Demand**

Changes in the local market caused by increased population, additions to the local workforce, and certain categories of new construction can trigger additional retail demand.

| <b>Possible Retail Catalysts</b>   | <b>Potential Add'l Retail Demand</b>                              |
|--|---|
| Each additional Old Town residential unit                                | Approx. 8 additional square feet of retail space within Old Town  |
| Each additional 1,000 square feet of commercial office space in Old Town | Approx. 12 additional square feet of retail space within Old Town |
| Each additional 100 tourism visitors to Old Town                         | Approx. 5 additional square feet of retail space within Old Town  |

**Conclusion**

Due to Old Town Manassas' status as an historic area, great care must be taken when alternations are suggested. In fact, the historic character of the district is the key to finding a market niche that cannot be filled by the accessibility or convenience of Sudley Road or Liberia Avenue. Old Town's history is its "brand" and means to a thriving retail environment.

The following initial recommendations are intended to guide the planning and design efforts of the Manassas Old Town Sector Plan with the understanding that other objectives may take priority over retail issues.

- Consider the redevelopment of the Olde Towne Hotel site and Georgetown South Shopping Center as the only large parcels under single ownership that are appropriate for new, consolidated retail development with sufficient, associated retail parking.
- Identify a concentrated retail district within Old Town, permitting professional office to occupy retail-appropriate spaces outside of this designated area.
- Allow the redevelopment of non-historic space outside of the concentrated retail district from retail uses to non-retail uses as determined by market conditions and the development community.
- Investigate changes to Old Town traffic patterns that allow more balanced prioritization between vehicles and pedestrians.
- Create or supplement design guidelines to encourage or regulate the construction of Class A quality ground-floor retail space. Essential requirements would mandate floor-to-ceiling clear heights of at least 14 feet (preferably 16 feet or higher); retail space between 40 and 90 feet deep; and column grids spaced at least 20 feet on center (preferably 30 feet on center).

In addition to these planning and design strategies, the following policy recommendations address preliminary steps toward creating a suitable merchandising mix and an approach to retail recruitment.

## OLD TOWN MANASSAS RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS 6/1/06

- Establish a recognizable brand for Old Town's concentrated retail district that can be communicated to existing and potential retail tenants, as well as the retail brokerage community.
- Recruit tenants in the Neighborhood Goods & Services category, especially retailers that serve the office workers and residents in the primary trade area. A particular emphasis should be placed on specialty service tenants. Efforts should also be focused on Food & Beverage retailers that appeal to daytime and nighttime customers, such as prepared foods and "quick bite" restaurants.
- Focus on specialty stores, but do not eschew national retailers (if they are interested).

These recommendations will be addressed in further detail during later phases of the sector plan work effort.