LAND USE

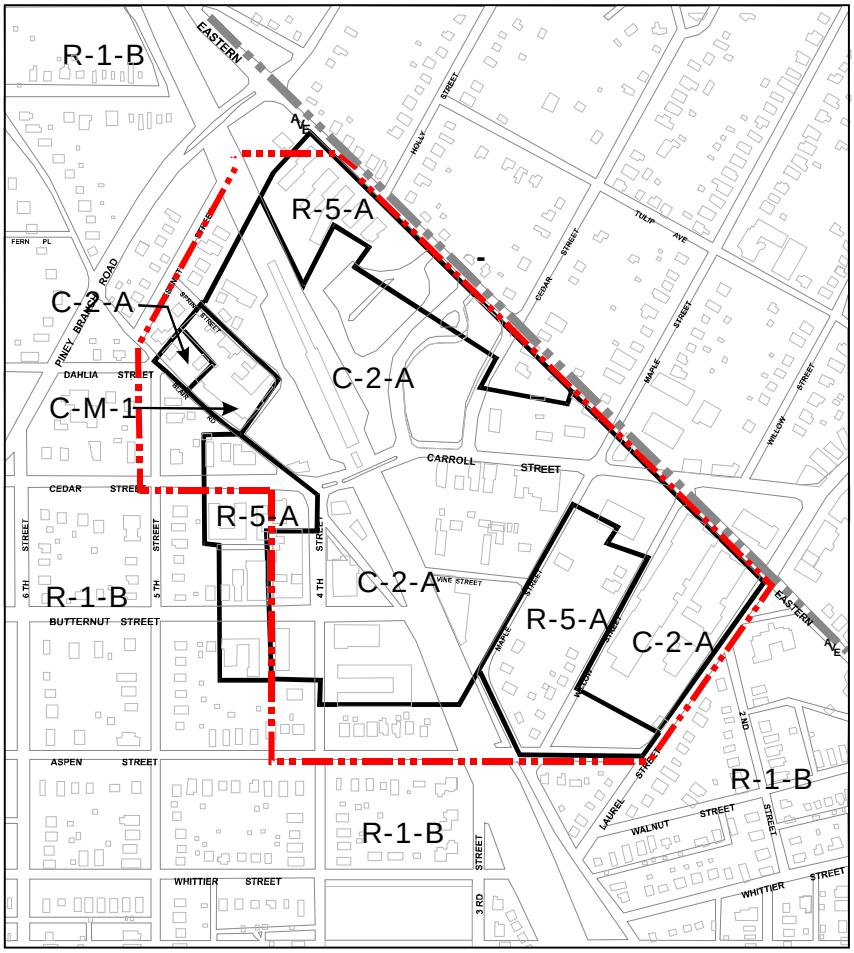
Land Use Concept

To address underutilized parcels and inappropriate uses, and encourage an appropriate mix of preferred land uses, the land use concept for the Takoma Central District recommends targeted land use strategies and specific adjustments to current zoning and land use designations.

Existing Zoning

Existing zoning in the Takoma Central District includes a mix of designations (see Figure E): C-2-A (medium density community business center/medium density residential) in the core area around the Metro station; R-5-A (low-density multi-family) in areas south of Carroll Street, north on Eastern Avenue and west on Cedar Street; C-M-1 (low bulk commercial/light manufacturing) along Blair Road and Spring Street; and R-1-A/R-1-B in adjacent single-family residential neighborhoods.

Figure E
Existing Zoning



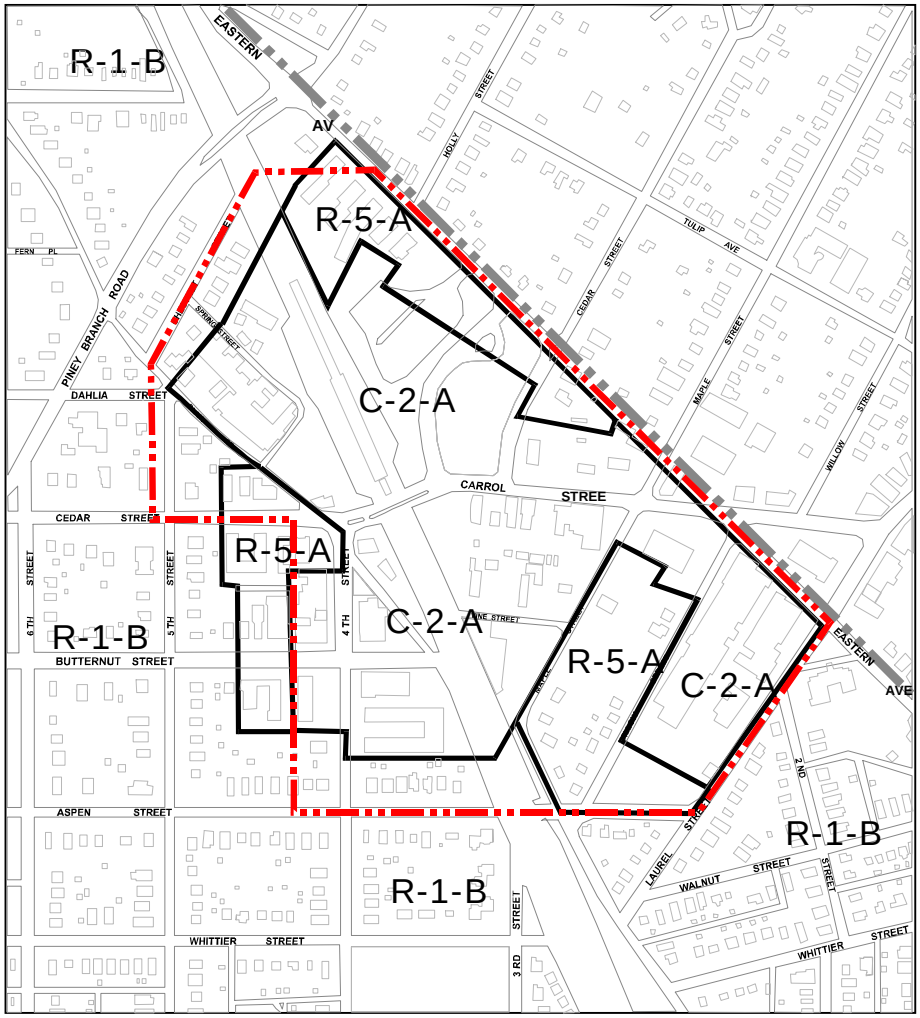
Community Business Center/Medium Density	C-2-A
Low Bulk Commercial/Light Manufacturing	C-M-1
Low-Density Apartment House	R-5-A
One Family Detached Dwelling	R-1-B
Plan Area Boundary	

Current zoning designations effective May 12, 1958, with amendments through April 1, 1996.

Preferred Zoning Concept

Proposed revisions to the Central District's zoning map are shown in Figure F. The proposed zoning concept reaffirms the basic, current zoning designation of C-2-A as an appropriate classification for the Central District's core area. C-2-A supports development of a mixed-use neighborhood, including apartments, townhouses and retail and office uses. However, the concentration of retail activities along Carroll Street and 4th Street should be enhanced by also establishing a zoning overlay district along these corridors to encourage retention and establishment of viable ground floor retail uses. The current C-M-1 light manufacturing district along Blair Road and Spring Street should be incorporated into the core revitalization area by rezoning these parcels to C-2-A. Additional housing development should be encouraged on these properties as a more appropriate, long-term use of land located adjacent to a transit facility, as well as to phase out existing incompatible uses in this area.

Figure F
Preferred Zoning Concept



Community Business Center/Medium Density	C-2-A
Low-Density Apartment House	R-5-A
One Family Detached Dwelling	R-1-B
Plan Area Boundary	

Preferred Land Use Concept

With few vacant, unconstrained and assembled sites in the Takoma Central District, the refined land use concept proposes strategies that maximize market potential at key opportunity sites. The intent of the land use concept is to strengthen existing commercial corridors and expand residential uses of an appropriate scale and character onto these key sites. Summary approaches for each type of land use are presented below, followed by a preferred land use concept map (see Figure C).

Housing

To leverage the strong market demand for housing, facilitate increased transit ridership and promote Takoma's traditional residential character, increased housing is encouraged within the Takoma Central District. New housing areas are proposed on both sides of the Metro station at densities that are compatible with the surrounding mix of residential types. Recommended building heights are generally 3-4 story garden style apartments and townhomes. Green space and other amenities to support additional housing should be provided within new projects, along with enhancements to existing open space in the area.

Retail

Since the market assessment suggests only a moderate absorption of new retail space within the district (minimum 24,000 sq. ft. in existing vacant space and maximum 30,000 sq. ft. in new space), retail development is targeted in key areas to help strengthen and extend retail activity along Carroll Street and 4th Street.

Office

The relatively small demand for office space should be primarily accommodated east of the Metro station in smaller, mixed-use infill redevelopment projects along Carroll Street. Additional areas suitable for some office and small service businesses include areas just south of Carroll Street near the existing concentration of office use.

Industrial use (B&B Catering) along Blair Road

Industrial

No new demand for industrial uses is anticipated. Since current light-industrial businesses present some of the area's most unattractive and incompatible properties, existing light industrial uses should be significantly enhanced or phased out of the Takoma Central District.

Institutional/Cultural

With the arrival of the Washington Opera practice facility in Takoma, DC's only major existing office/commercial building at Carroll and Willow Streets, it is likely that this area could attract related uses. Co-location of such uses within existing and new mixed-use buildings in the Carroll Street/Willow Street area is therefore encouraged.

Open Space

As described in the plan's Urban Design section, a public open space at the Metro site is proposed as a Village Green for the Takoma community. This open space will enhance the gateway function of the station and establish a "town center" as a focal point for the area. Given the density of surrounding areas, this space should be approximately 0.8-1.2 acres in size, facilitate both pedestrian and vehicular circulation along its edges and be framed by buildings of no more than 3-4 stories in height.

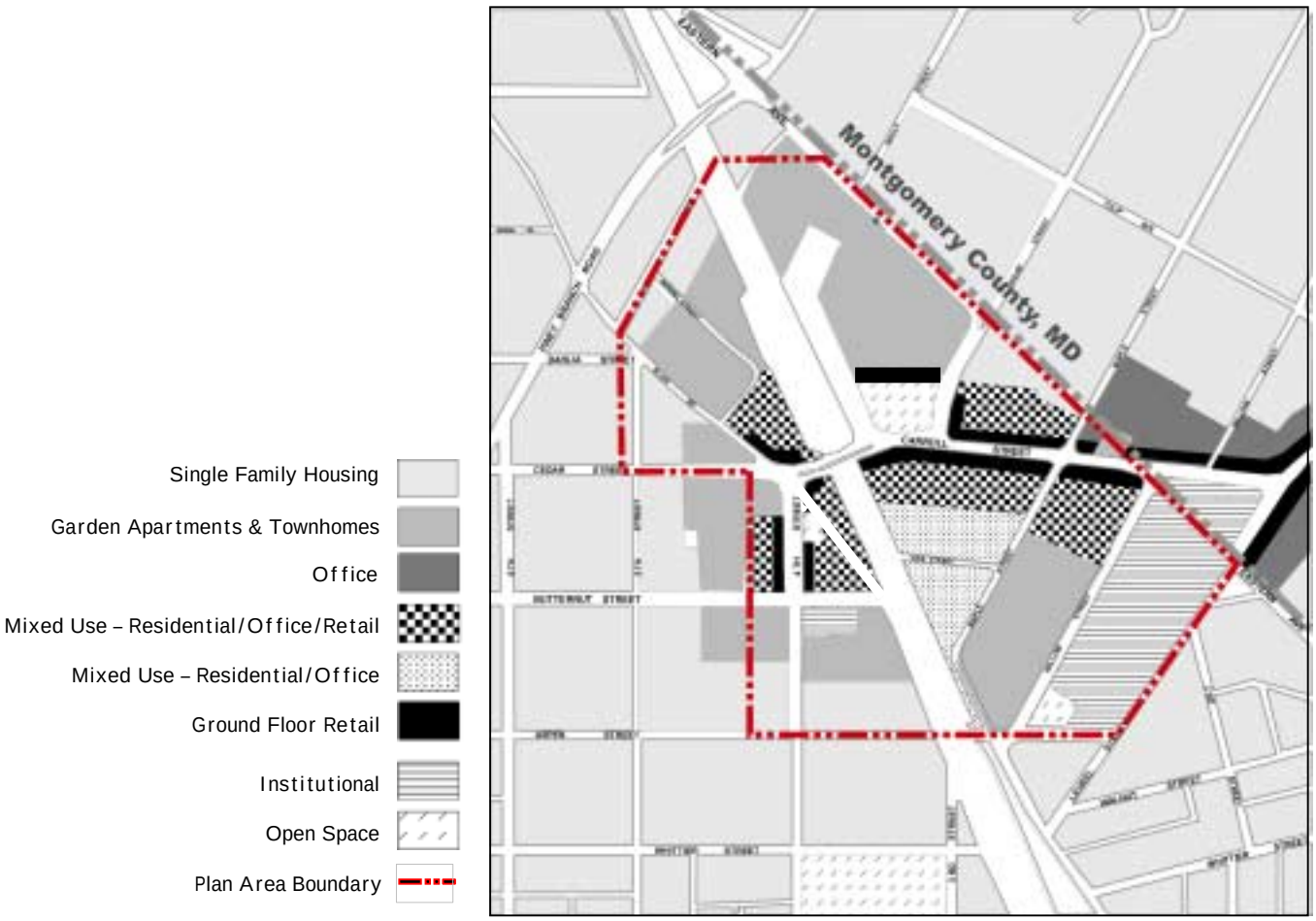
Transit

The Metro station represents a significant public investment, and the site's ability to enhance transit use and promote private investment should be leveraged for the community's benefit. As the major public asset in the Central District, the station can help create an integrated, transit-oriented residential and commercial hub, encouraging pedestrian activity and reducing vehicle trips. The station should also be enhanced with amenities and access improvements, including multiple station entries to better serve transit users and nearby development sites.

Takoma Metro station entrance

Figure G

Preferred Land Use Concept



Land Use Revitalization Strategies

There are numerous vacant parcels, underutilized lots and deteriorated areas within the Takoma Central District, many of which have potential for redevelopment with housing, retail and office projects. To ensure that available property is used effectively to support the Central District's revitalization goals, specific land use strategies are recommended for these targeted opportunity sites and areas. The following review of these sites and areas presents strategies for their revitalization, including a summary of five Priority Redevelopment Sites where initial near-term actions should focus.

1. **Accommodate near-term housing demand at key opportunity sites that are most appropriate for residential and mixed use development (see Figure H).**

Opportunity Site A

- Opportunity Site A: Encourage new housing as a primary element of Metro site redevelopment, ensuring that new development supports community revitalization goals and includes appropriate green space. The proposed redevelopment concept maintains green space as a 0.8-1.2 acre "Village Green", similar in size to the existing open space, and proposes a density of approximately 22-32 dwelling units per acre (DUA), or 65-95 total residential units on three acres of the site. Limited retail/service uses are incorporated into this development along the proposed Village Green, possibly in live/work units. Specific site development guidelines and transportation issues related to this site are described in the plan's Urban Design and Transportation sections. The proposed Eakin Youngentob townhome and live/work project is consistent with this land use strategy.

Opportunity Site B

- Opportunity Site B: Encourage new mixed use retail/residential development at the northeast corner of Cedar Street and Blair Road to offer housing choices adjacent to the Metro station, and as a first step in support of future development of housing opportunities to the north along Blair Road and Spring Street. Retail space on this site will also help provide continuous active ground floor uses along Carroll/Cedar Streets to Blair Road/4th Street. No zoning changes are recommended for these properties since current zoning allows approximately 72,000 sq. ft. of development, including approximately 50 residential units. The proposed Eichner/New Legacy Partners mixed use retail and residential project is consistent with this land use strategy.

- Opportunity Site C: Encourage redevelopment of this site with mixed retail/residential uses to help provide continuous active

ground floor uses along Carroll/Cedar Streets to Blair Road/4th Street and offer new housing choices in close proximity to the Metro station. The proposed Katz mixed use retail/residential project is consistent with this land use strategy.

Opportunity Site D

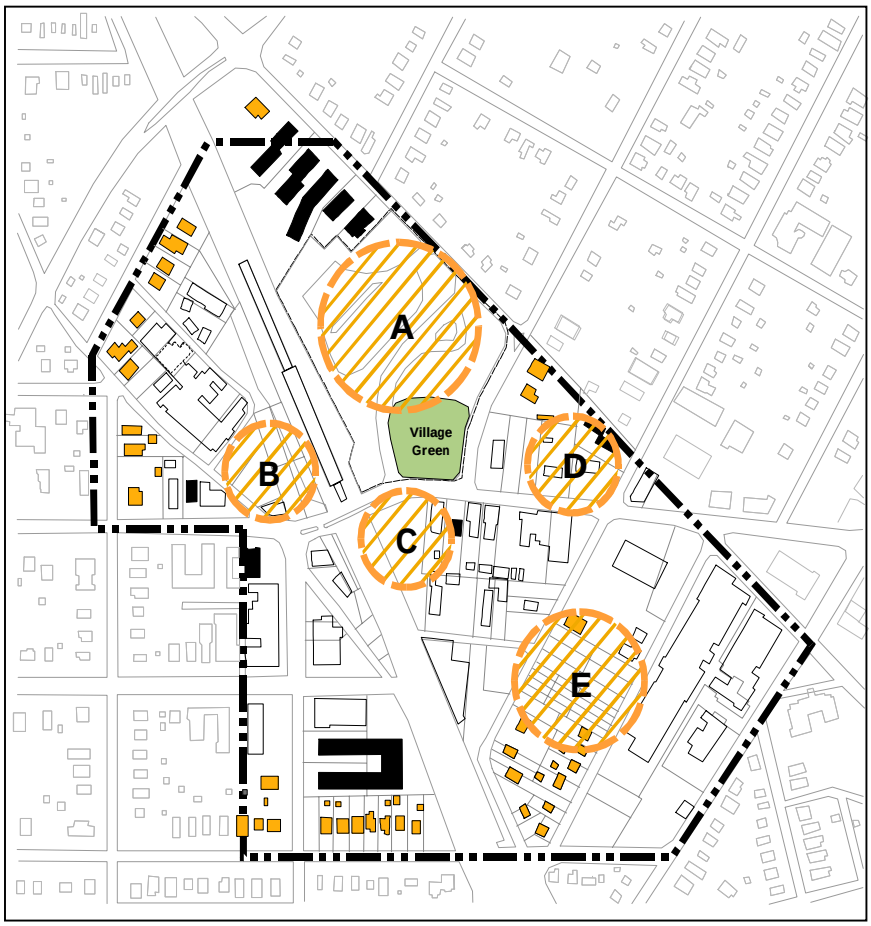
- Opportunity Site D: Encourage redevelopment of this auto service site on the corner of Carroll and Maple Streets as a mixed-use development accommodating approximately 30 residential units above two floors of retail/office space. This type of new development would help provide continuous active ground floor activity along Carroll Street and offer new housing choices in close proximity to the Metro station. .

Opportunity Site E

- Opportunity Site E: The area's largest privately owned development site should remain designated for residential development to help accommodate additional housing choices in the Takoma Central District. At current zoning (R-5-A), this site could yield approximately 80 residential units in 3-4 story garden style apartments at 36-40 DUA. At 24-36 DUA this site could yield approximately 50 townhouse units.

Figure H

Near-Term Housing Opportunity Sites



Existing Single-family Housing

Existing Apartment/Townhouse

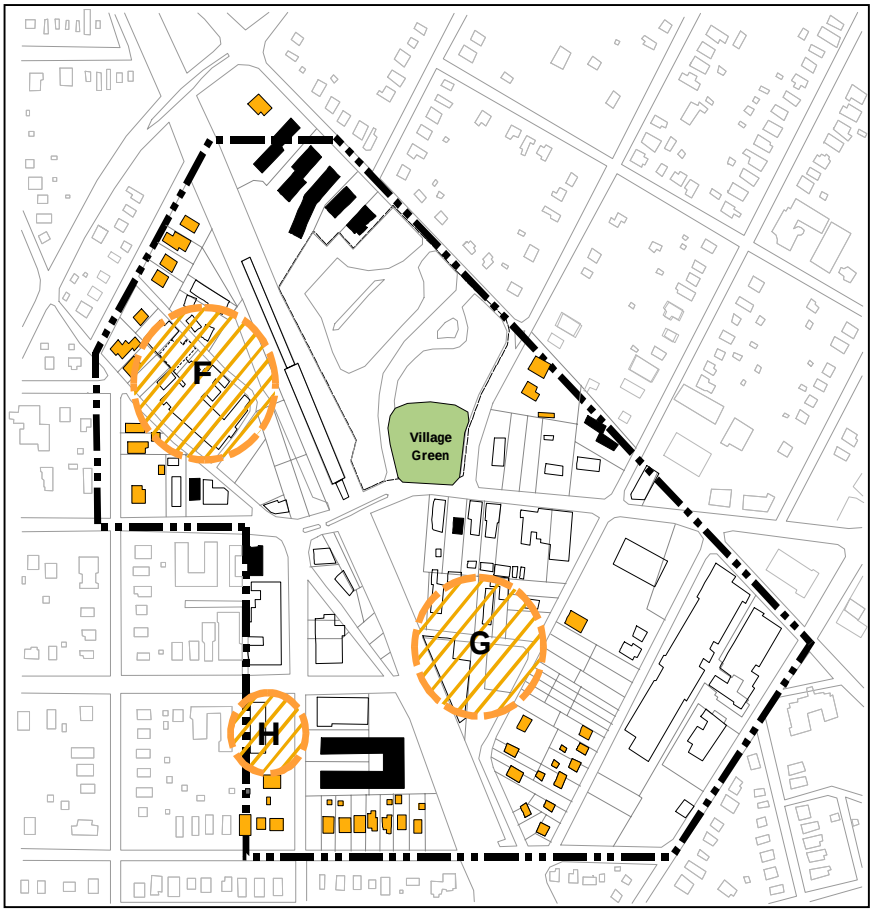
2. **Encourage redevelopment of light industrial areas and key vacant sites to accommodate additional longer-term housing development.** Three sites present longer-term revitalization opportunities for additional housing (see Figure I):

   - Opportunity Site F: Areas currently designated C-M-1 (light manufacturing) and adjacent commercial areas along Blair Road and Spring Street should be redeveloped with housing.

   - Opportunity Site G: Areas north and south of Vine Street should be redeveloped with housing or mixed-uses.

   - Opportunity Site H: The corner parking lot at Butternut and 4th Streets should be redeveloped with housing or mixed use.

Figure I
Longer-Term Housing Opportunity Sites

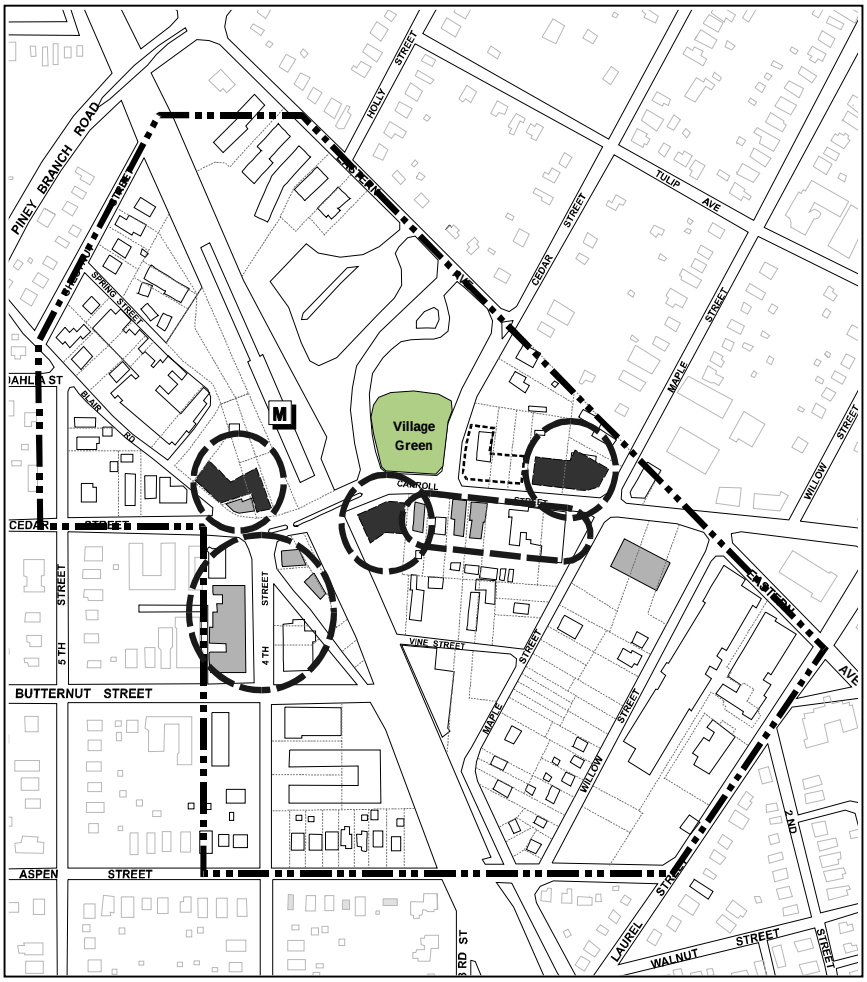


3. **Enhance the Metro station site with a signature open space as a focal point for the Takoma Central District.** The plan for a revitalized Central District focuses on an enhanced "Village Green" at the Metro site, which is discussed in more detail in the plan's

Urban Design Section. This new green space will provide a strong identity for the district, visual relief and buffering from Metro uses, a gathering place for residents and visitors and a focal point of civic life for the surrounding mixed use community.

4. **Concentrate retail activities in key opportunity sites and areas along Carroll Street and 4th Street by establishing a zoning overlay district along these corridors to require retention and establishment of ground floor retail uses.** Since the market assessment suggests that a moderate amount of new retail uses are viable within the district, these uses should be sited to strengthen Carroll Street and 4th Street as the two major retail corridors within the Takoma Central District (see Figure J). Active ground floor retail frontage, at or near the property line with few gaps, curb cuts or blank walls, should be encouraged in these areas.

Figure J
Retail Opportunity Sites & Areas



Retail Opportunity Site

Existing Retail Activity

Retail Opportunity Area

5. **Retain and strengthen the Takoma Central District as a mixed-use neighborhood.** The prevailing C-2-A zoning designation is intended for mixed-use development, allowing both residential uses with a 2.5 floor area ratio (FAR) and commercial uses (including retail) with a 1.5 FAR. Presently, market demand for housing is high and demand for office space is relatively low. However, mixed-use development with housing and/or office above one floor of retail may be appropriate in specific areas (see Figure K).

Figure K
Mixed Use Office/Residential Opportunity Areas

Existing Office/ Commercial Use

Office /Mixed Use Opportunity Area

6. **Focus initial near-term actions on five priority redevelopment sites.** Among the Takoma Central District's key opportunity sites and areas identified above, five sites are relatively unconstrained and are owned or controlled by a single landowner or developer. These parcels have been identified as Priority Redevelopment Sites (see Figure L) and should be the primary focus of initial efforts to attract new near-term investment to the Central District. The proposed development mix for these priority sites is reviewed to the left of Figure L. The proposed mix is based on existing zoning, currently proposed projects, and preferred scale and intensity per

plan recommendations. As shown, these sites are could yield up to 305 new housing units and 45,000 sq. ft. of new retail/office space.

Priority Redevelopment Site 1
(C-2-A)
Preferred use: Residential & Retail/Service
Total lot area: +/-6.8ac
Metro Facilities: +/-2.3ac
Village Green/Buffer: +/- 1.5 ac
Developable Area: +/- 3.0 ac
Proposed Mix: +/-65-95 townhomes @ 22-32 units/acre with +/-10,000sf ground floor retail/service space fronting upon Village Green

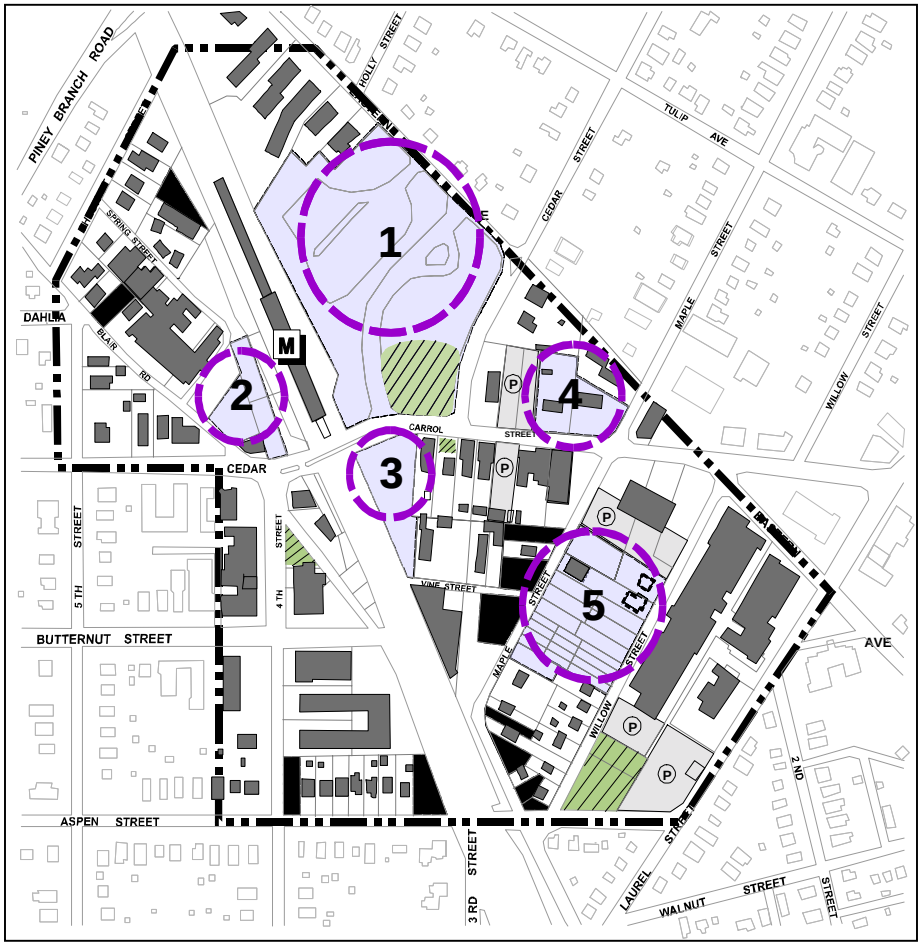
Priority Redevelopment Site 2
(C-2-A)
Preferred use: Residential/Retail
Total lot area: +/-0.7ac
Proposed Mix: +/-50 apartments with +/10,000sf ground floor retail

Priority Redevelopment Site 3
(C-2-A)
Preferred use: Residential/Retail
Total lot area: +/-0.8ac
Proposed Mix: +/- 50 apartments with +/5000sf ground floor retail

Priority Redevelopment Site 4
(C-2-A)
Preferred use: Residential & Retail/Office
Total lot area: +/-0.8ac
Proposed Mix: +/-30 units above 2 floors of retail/office with +/10,000sf each)

Priority Redevelopment Site 5
(R-5-A)
Preferred use: Residential
Total lot area: +/-2.2ac
Proposed Mix: +/-80 garden apartments @ 36 units/acre or +/-50 townhomes @ 22 units/acre

Figure L
Priority Redevelopment Sites



7. **Limit negative activities and inappropriate uses through targeted rezoning, a zoning overlay district, and coordination with DC's Neighborhood Services Initiative.** Inappropriate uses include: storage yards; auto sales, repair and storage; warehouses; parking lots (except behind buildings); truck/trailer rentals; and car washes.

8. **Encourage development of shared parking with Metro and other key landowners in locations that can better support the overall commercial district.** The proposed Metro site parking structure should be located to better serve both transit and business customers.