Smart Growth in Arlington

A Brief Overview

Christopher Zimmerman
March 2010

"The average New Yorker annually generates 7.1 tons of greenhouse gases, a lower rate than that of any other American city, and less than 30 percent of the national average."

-- David Owen

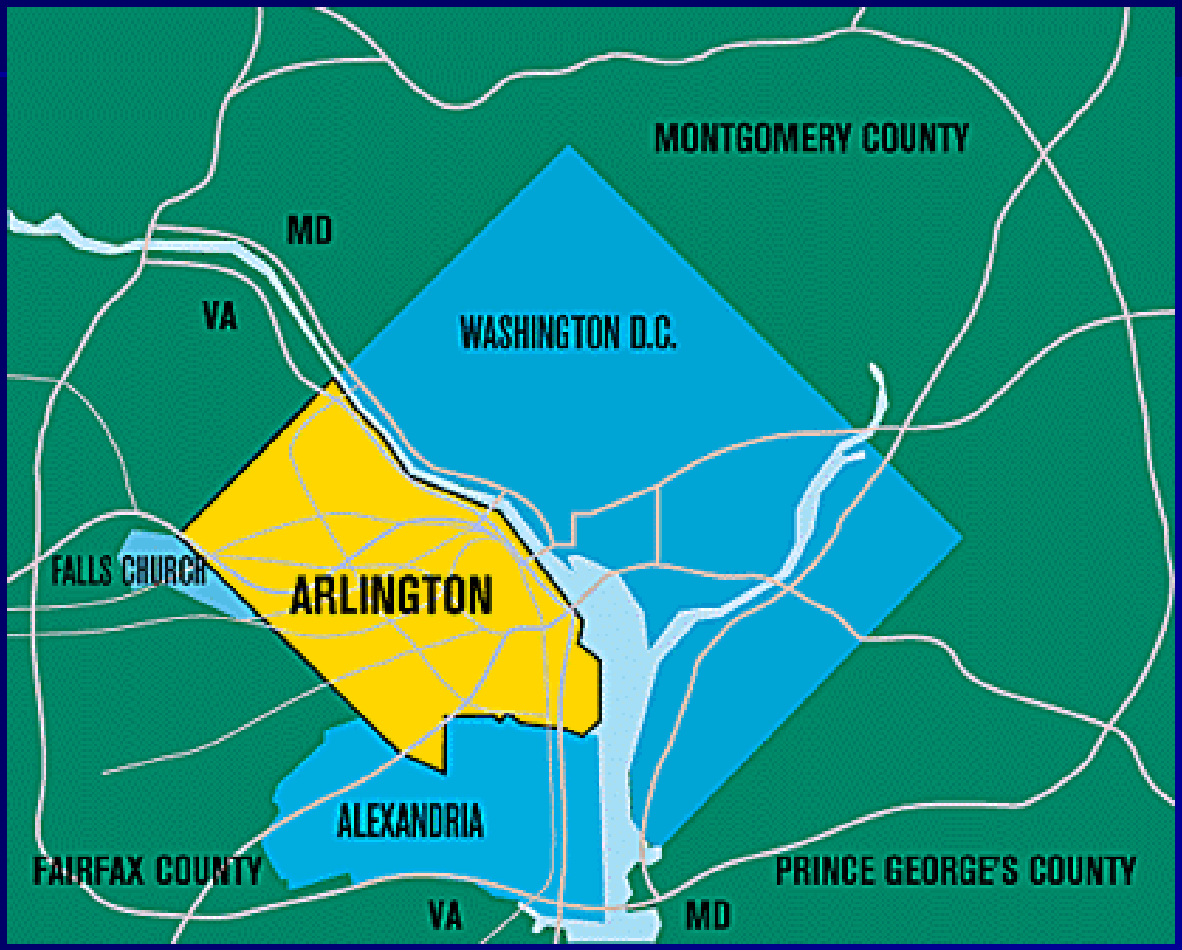
Green Metropolis: Why Living Smaller, Living Closer, and Driving Less Are the Keys to Sustainability

“Curbing emissions from cars depends on a three-legged stool: improved vehicle efficiency, cleaner fuels, and a reduction in driving . . . The research shows that one of the best ways to reduce vehicle travel is to build places where people can accomplish more with less driving.”

-- Reid Ewing

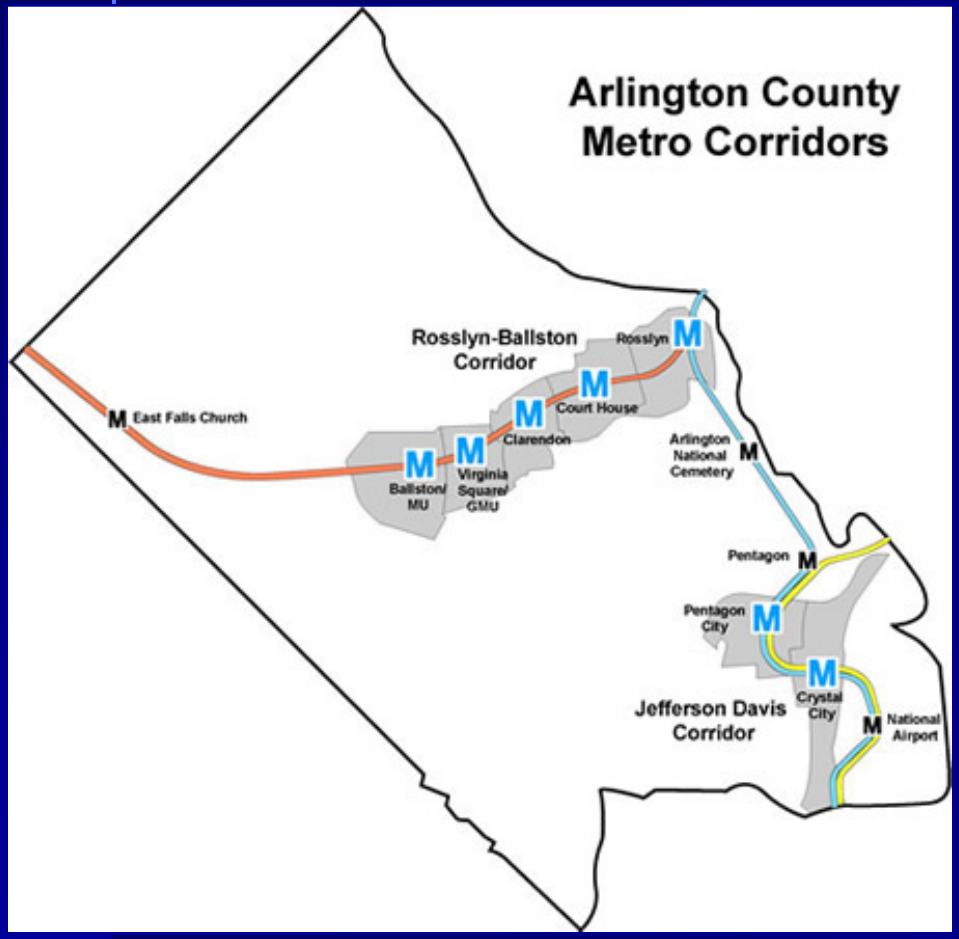
Research Professor,
National Center for Smart Growth,
University of Maryland

Arlington



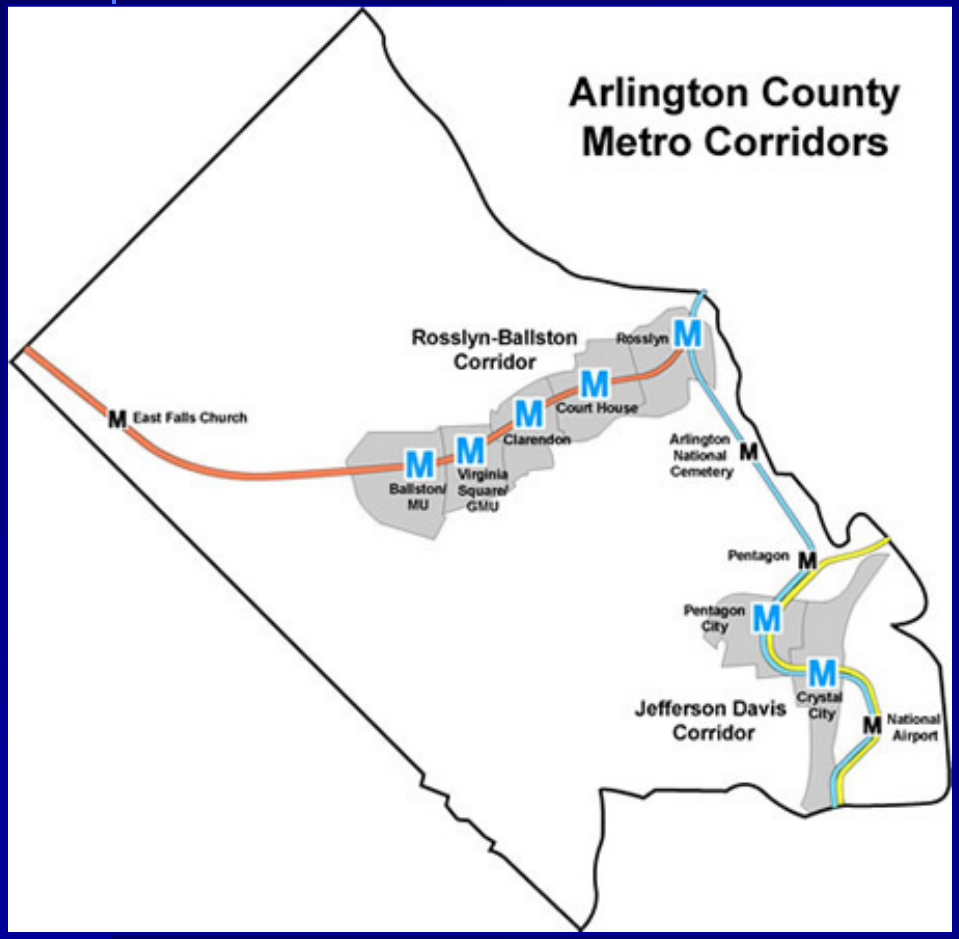
~ 26 sq. miles

Arlington



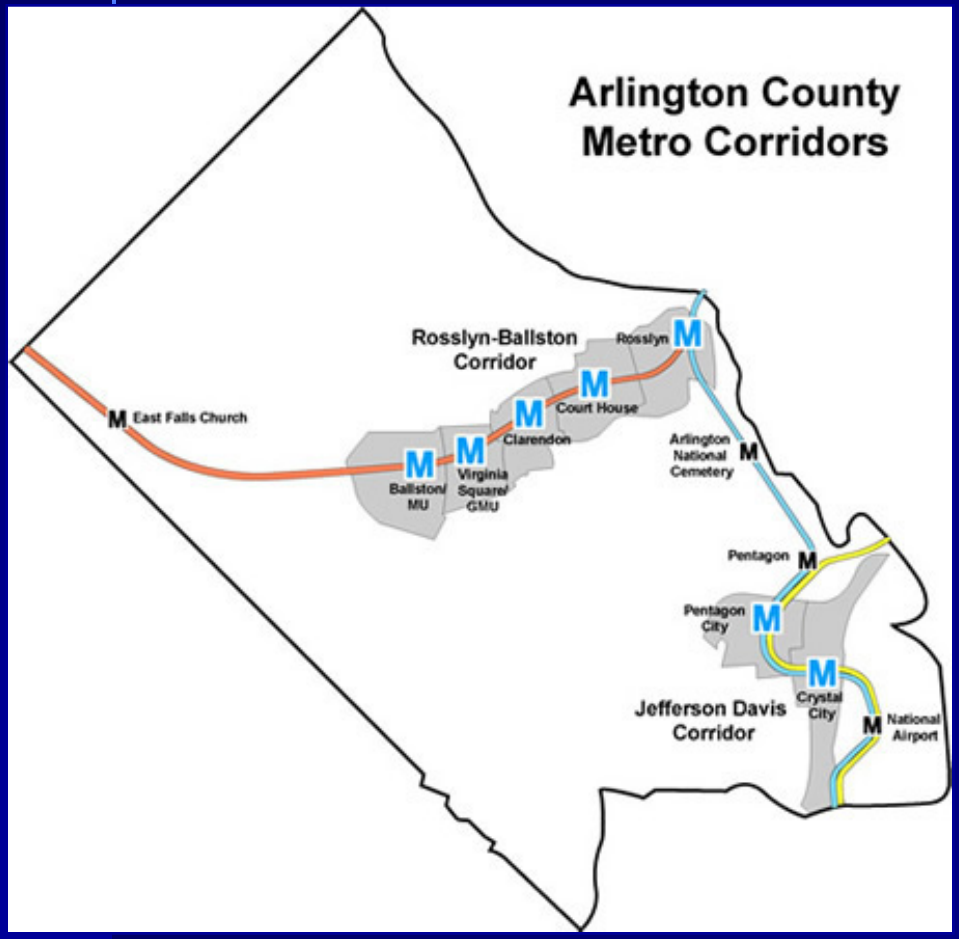
- **Population**
  ~ 210,000
- **Jobs**
  ~ 200,000
- **Housing units**
  ~ 103,000

Arlington



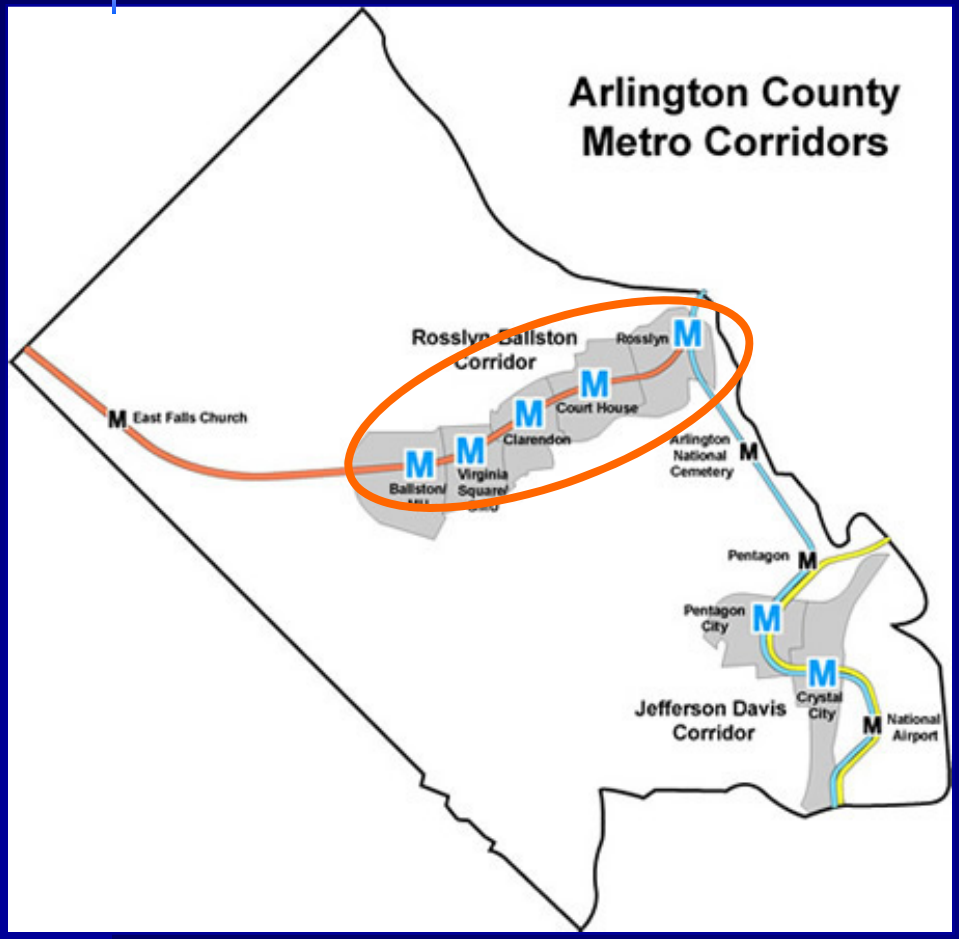
- Daytime population ~ 280,000
- ~ 40 million sq. ft. of private office space

Arlington



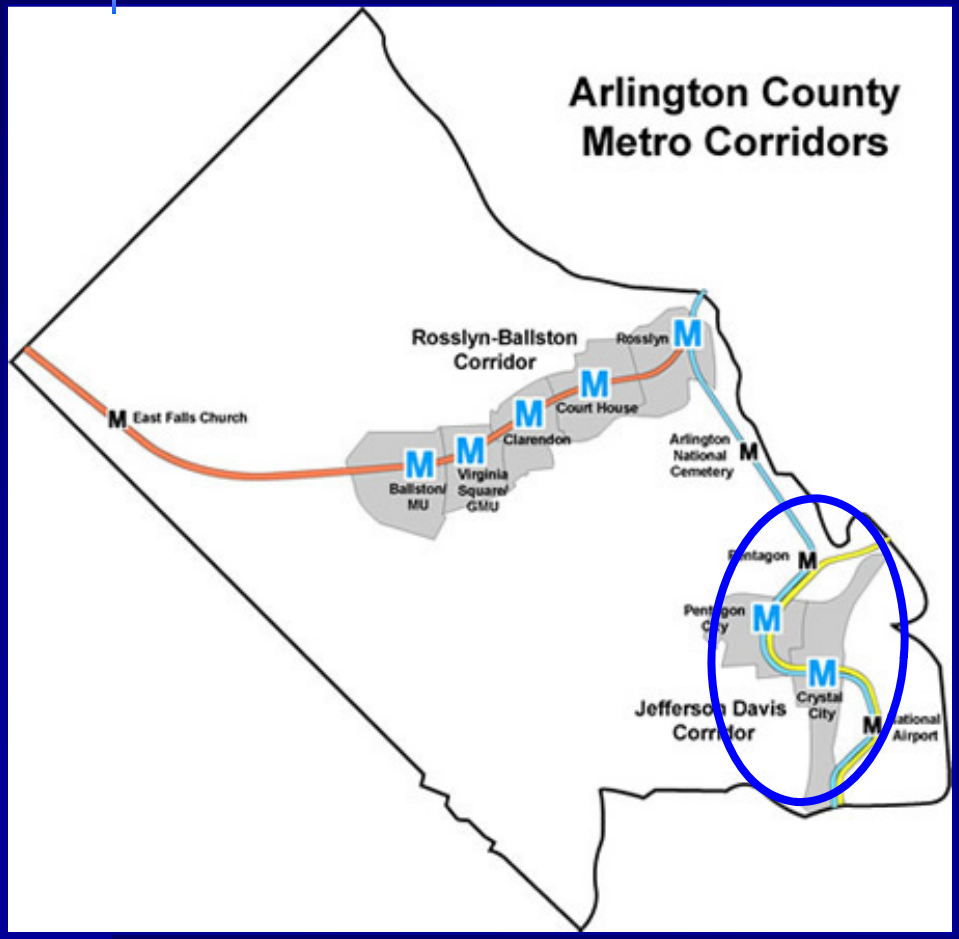
- All based on transit
- Development of two Metro corridors
- About 10 % of the County's land area

The R-B Corridor
(Orange line)



- 5 stations
- 22 million sq. ft. of office space -- *over 15 since 1980*
- 28,600 housing units -- *4 times as many as in 1980*

The J-D Corridor
(Blue and Yellow lines)



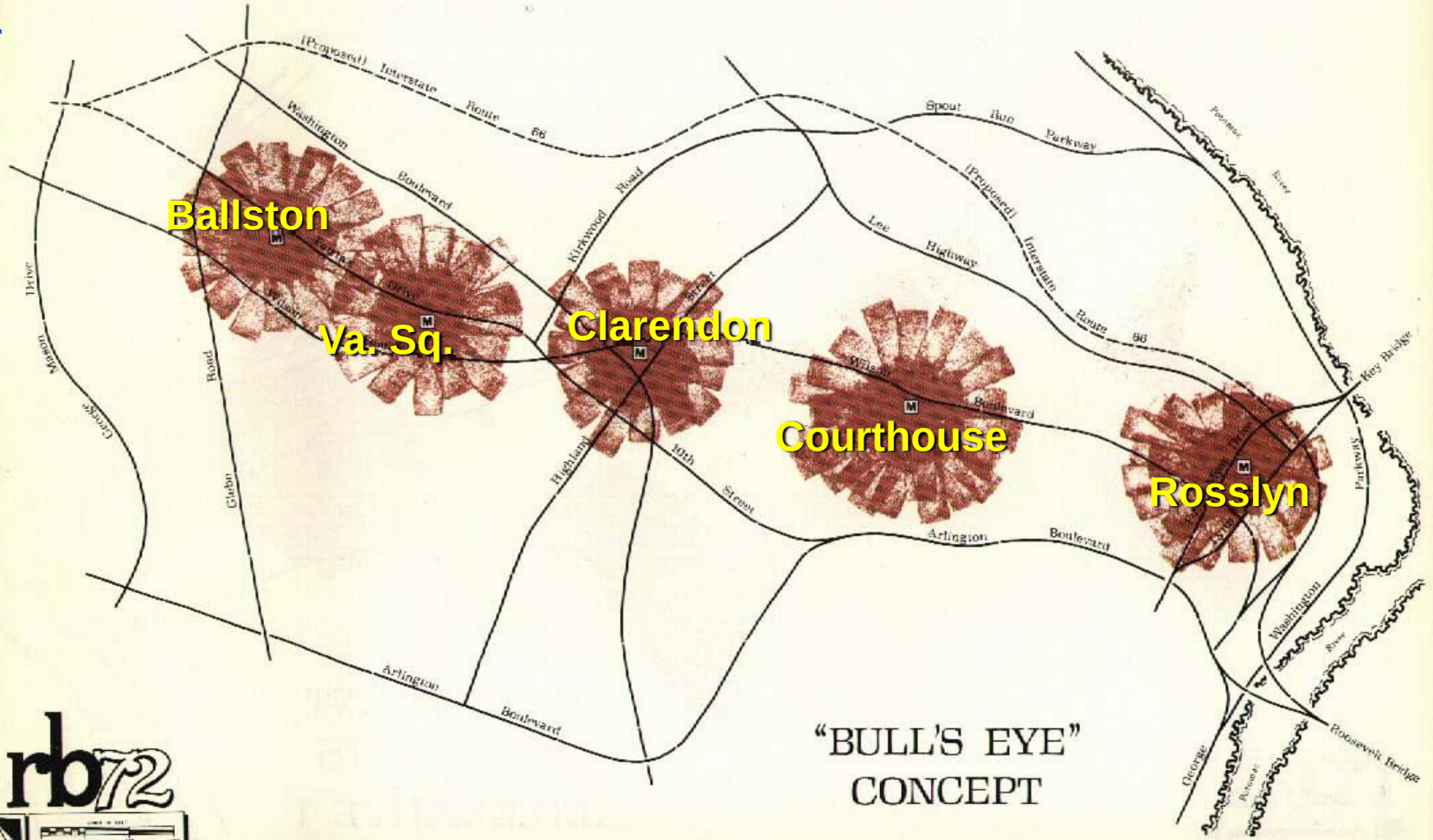
- 2 stations (Pentagon City, Crystal City)
- 12.4 million sq. ft. of Office space
- 12,500 housing units

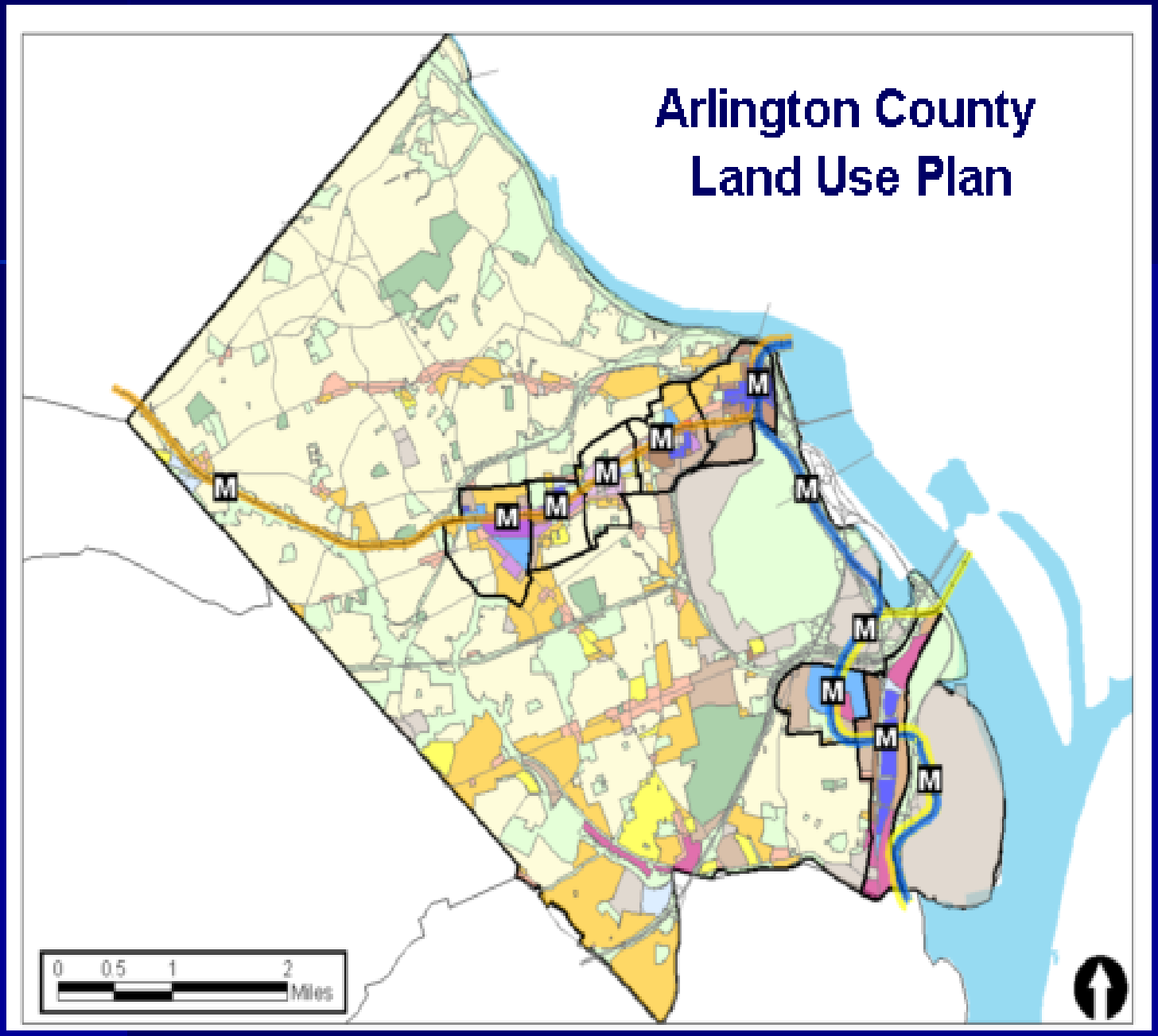
“Smart growth”

Density confined largely to R-B and JD corridors

- Total commercial office ~ 40 million sq. ft.
- 92 % is in the two corridors
- Outside the two corridors, maintained low-density neighborhoods, preserved green space

As these areas are delineated the "Bull's Eye" concept develops.




Arlington County
Land Use Plan
M
M
M
M
M
M
M
M
M
M
M
0 0.5 1 2
Miles


Rosslyn
Courthouse
Clarendon
Virginia Square
Ballston


Lower density
Lower density

Benefits of TOD

- Getting to work – transit use
  - National avg: 4.7 %
  - Fairfax County: 7.3 %
  - Arlington: 23.3%

And, those who walk to work are double the national avg, 5 times Fairfax

Benefits of TOD

- Car ownership (*vehicles per household*)
  - Nationally, almost 90% have a car; 55% have 2 or more
  - In Fairfax, 96% have at least one; two-thirds have 2 or more
  - Arlington: 12% have zero cars; less than 40% have 2 or more

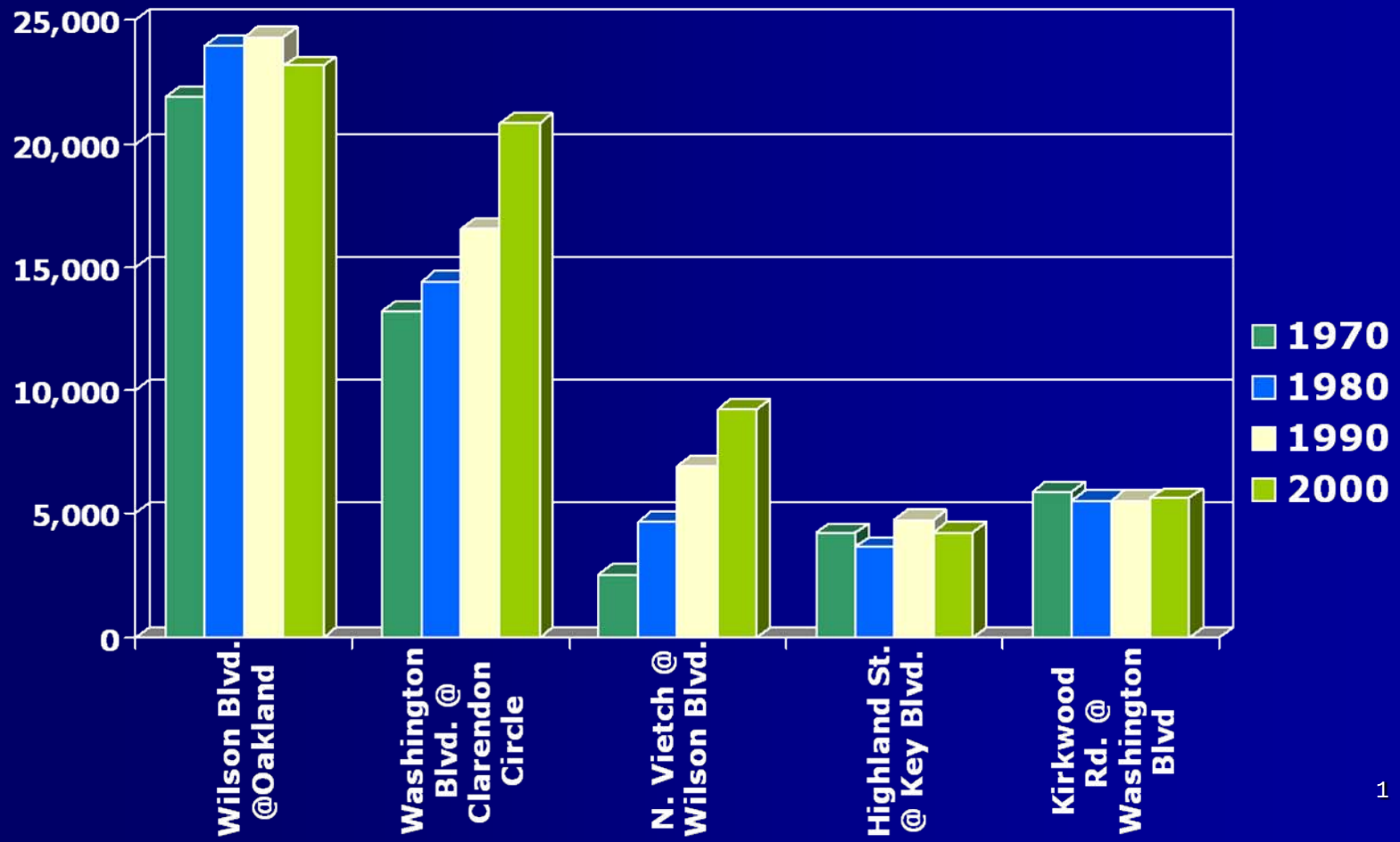
Benefits of TOD

- Numbers are more dramatic in Arlington's Metro corridors
  - Car ownership: 17.9% have zero cars, while less than 25% have 2 or more
  - Getting to work: Less than half drive
    - 39.3% use transit
    - 10.5% walk or bike
    - 2.3 work at home

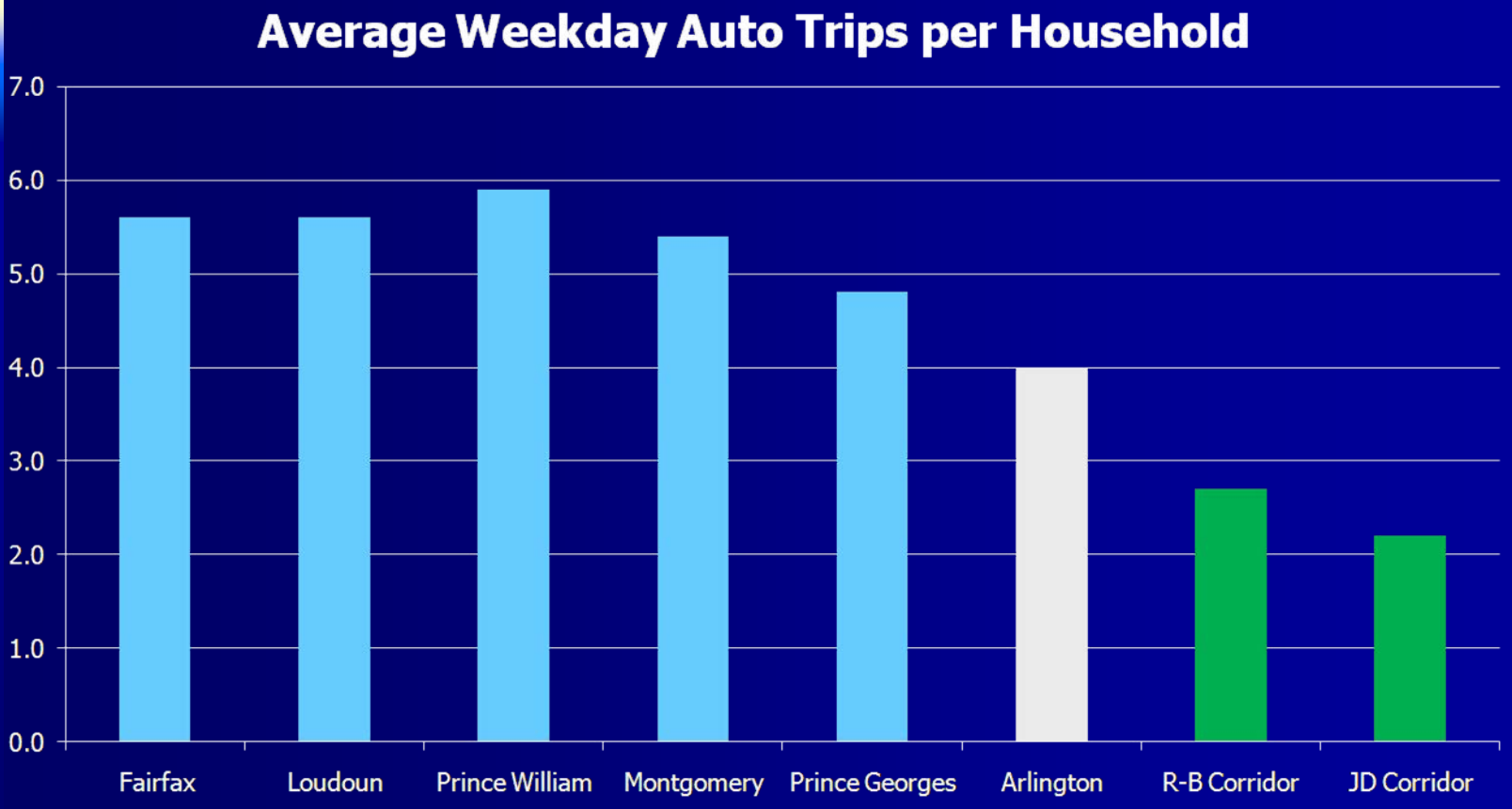
Transportation System Performance

- Despite growth in corridors, and throughout region, traffic growth in corridors has been modest
- Major increases on the interstates (I-66 and I-395), but,
- Stable to modest increases of traffic on most arterial streets
- Stable to modest increases in traffic on residential streets

Transportation System Performance

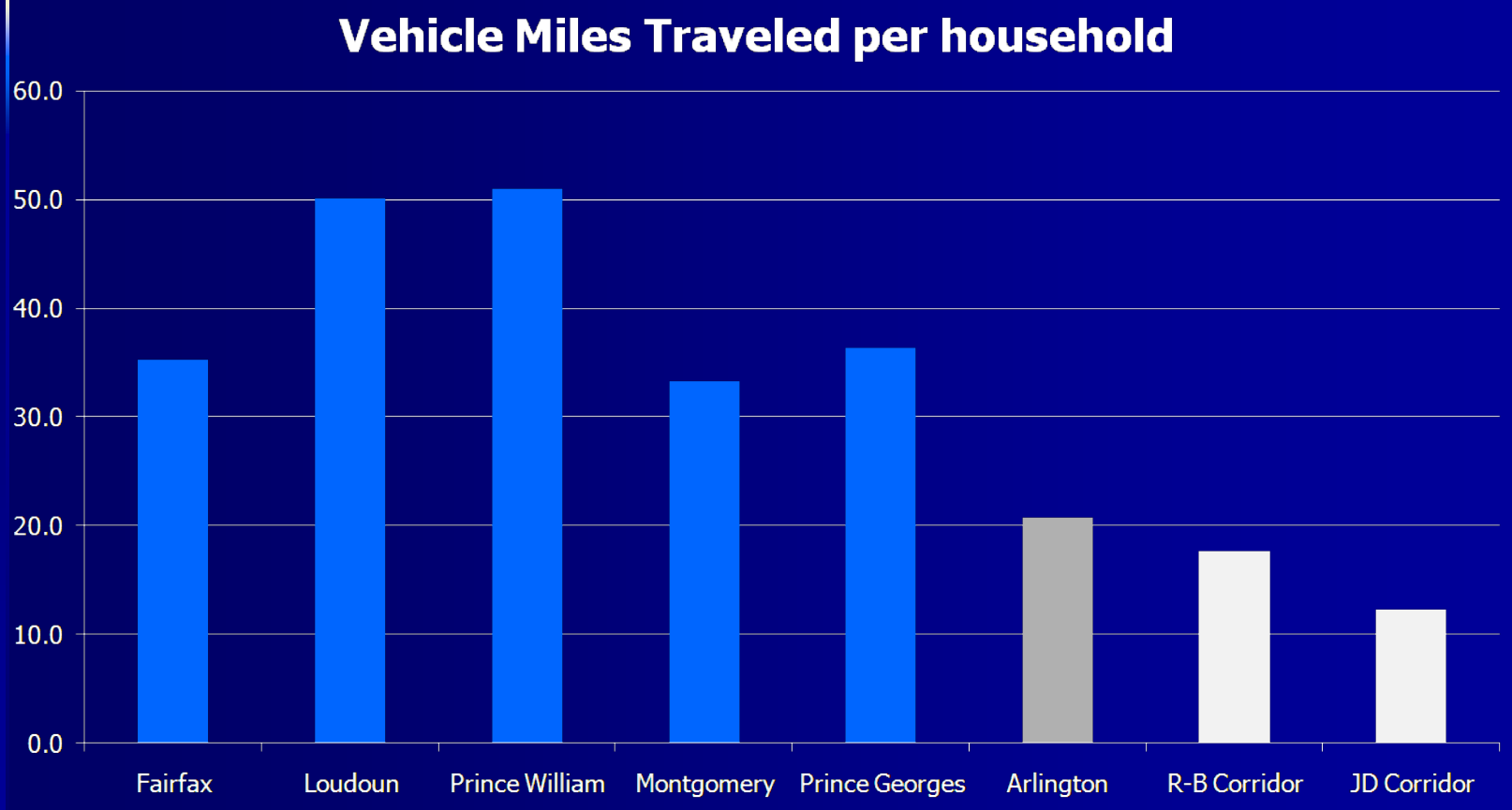


Transportation System Performance



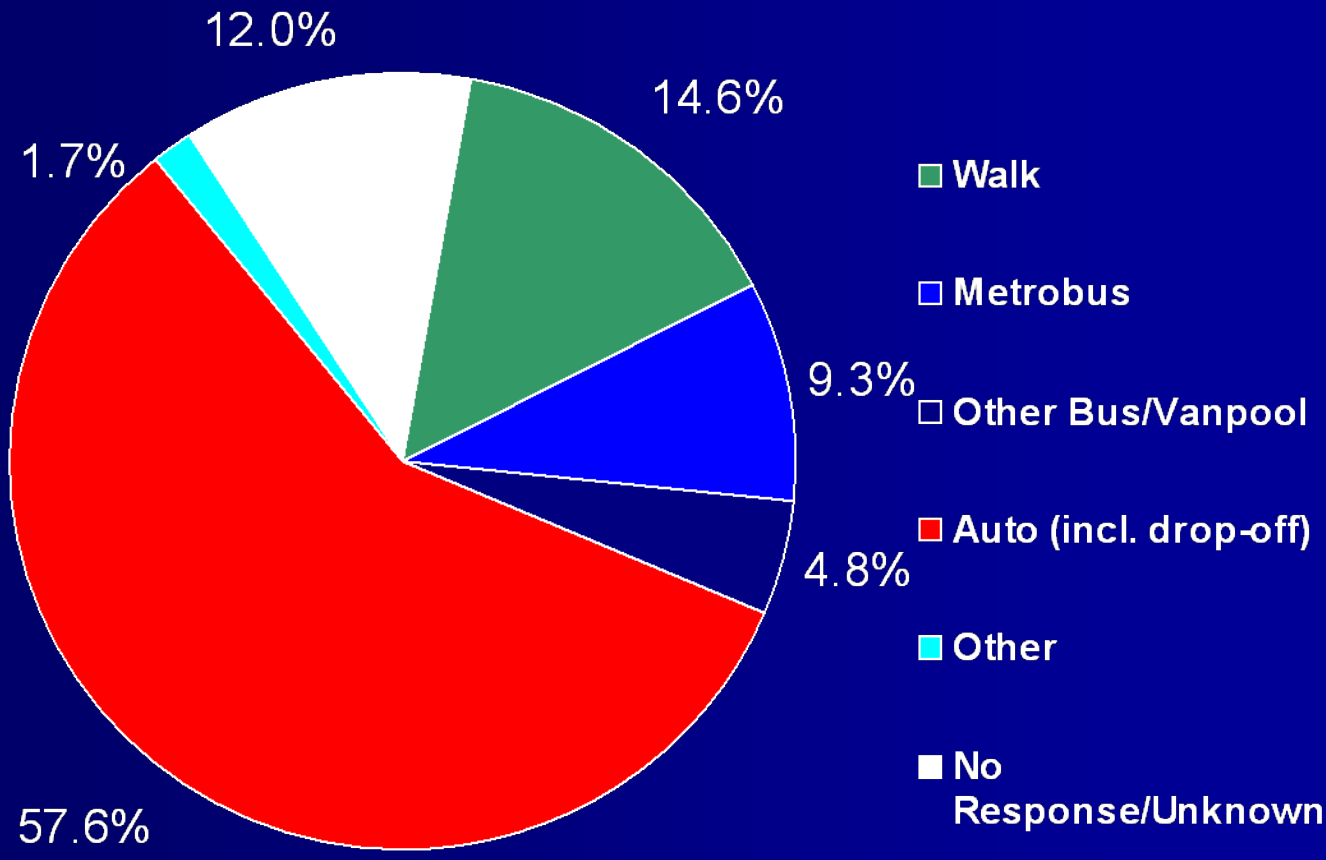
From Greater Washington Met. Region Household Transportation Survey (2007/8)

Transportation System Performance



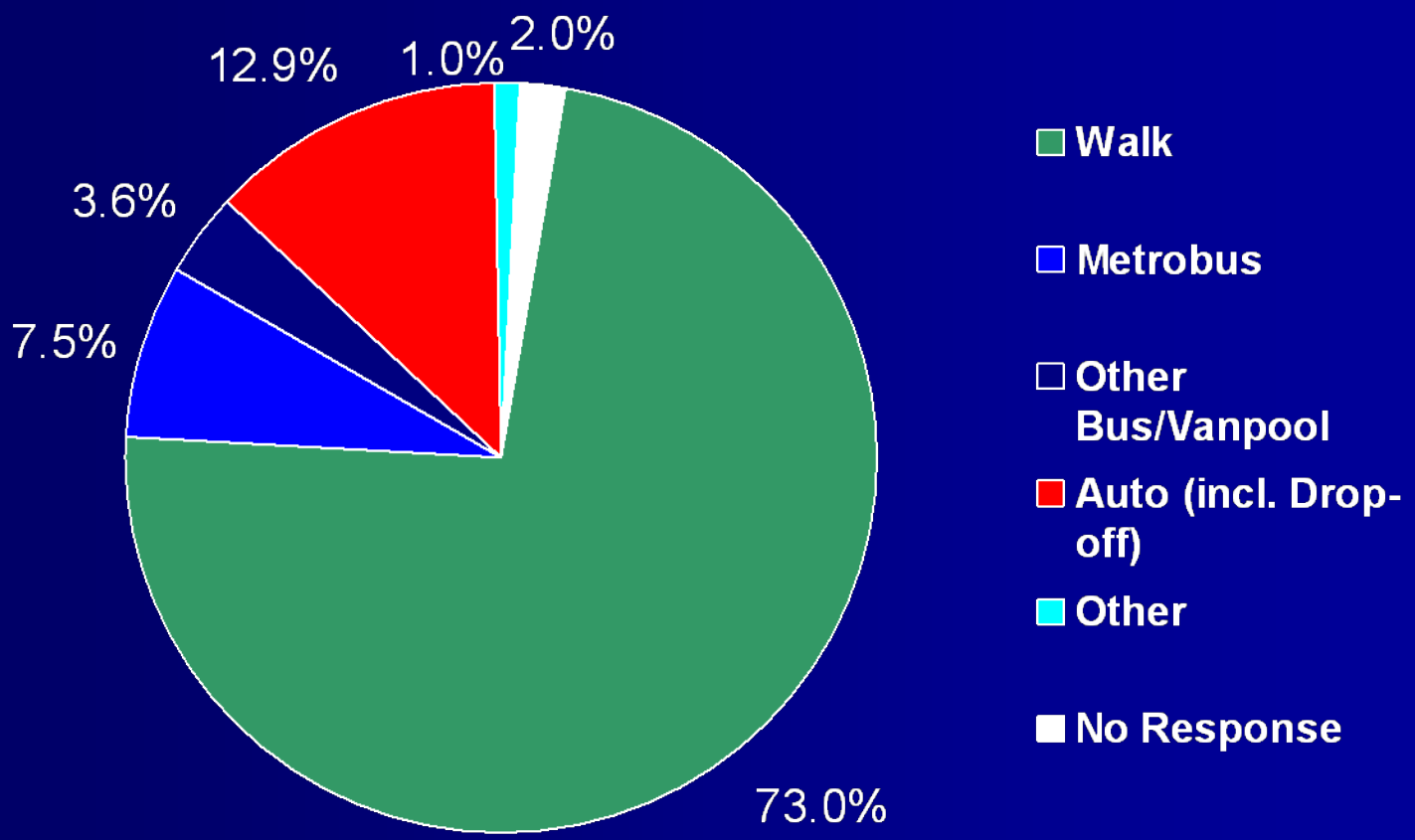
From Greater Washington Met. Region Household Transportation Survey (2007/8)

Metrorail Access at 4 Suburban Orange Line Stations



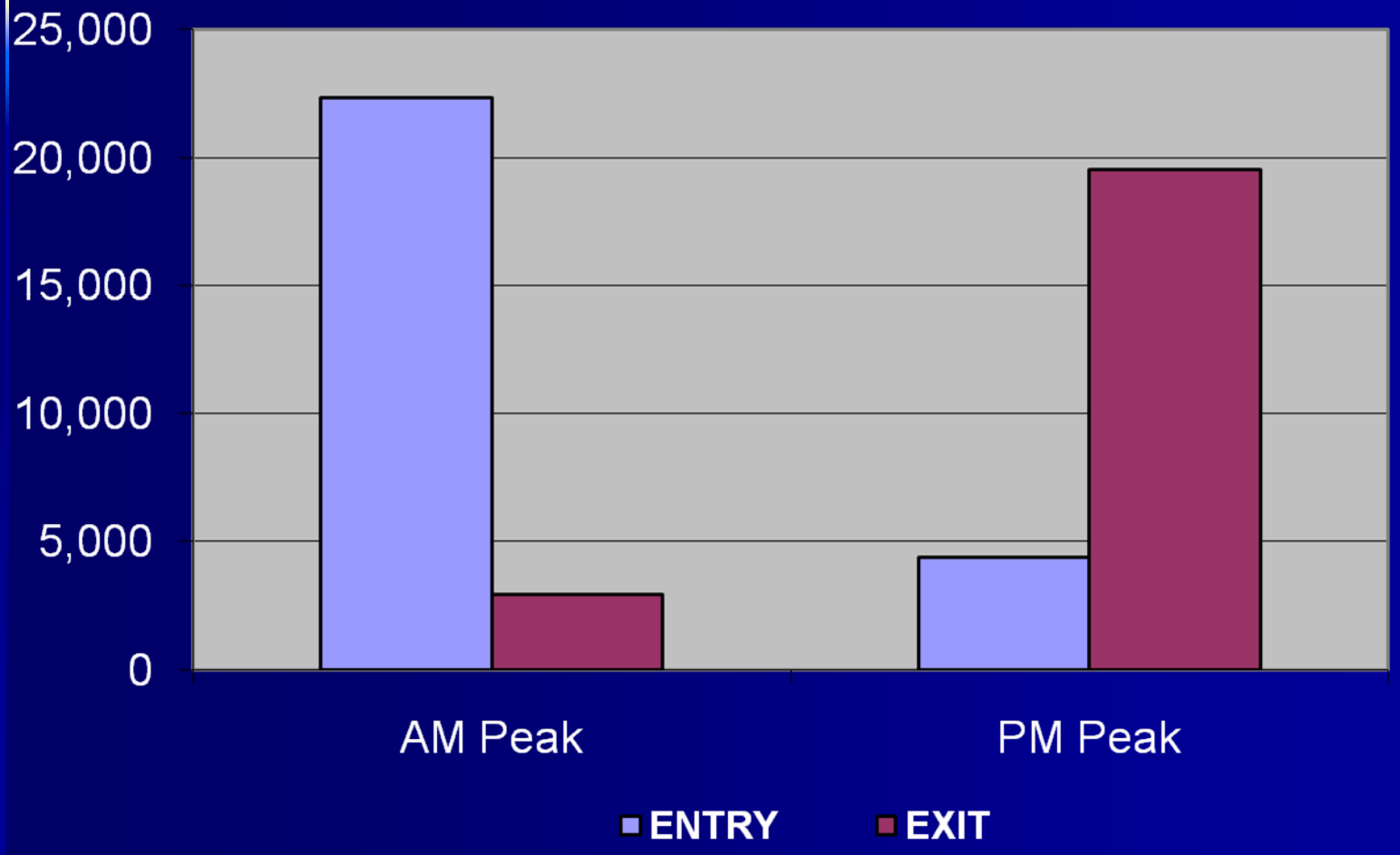
(Courtesy of Dennis Leach)

Metrorail Access at 5 R-B Corridor Stations

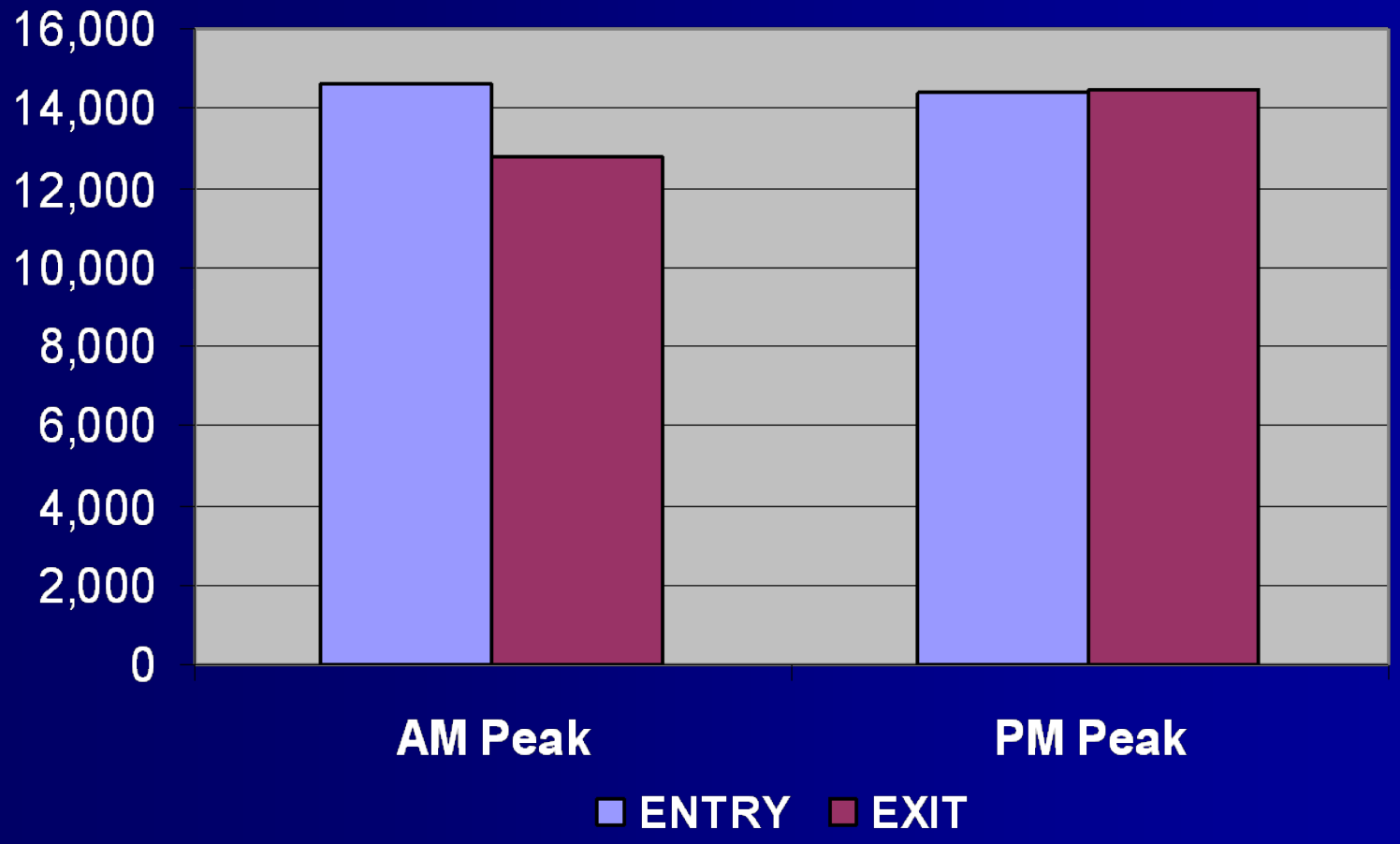


(Courtesy of Dennis Leach)

Outer Orange Line Stations: Ridership by Time Period

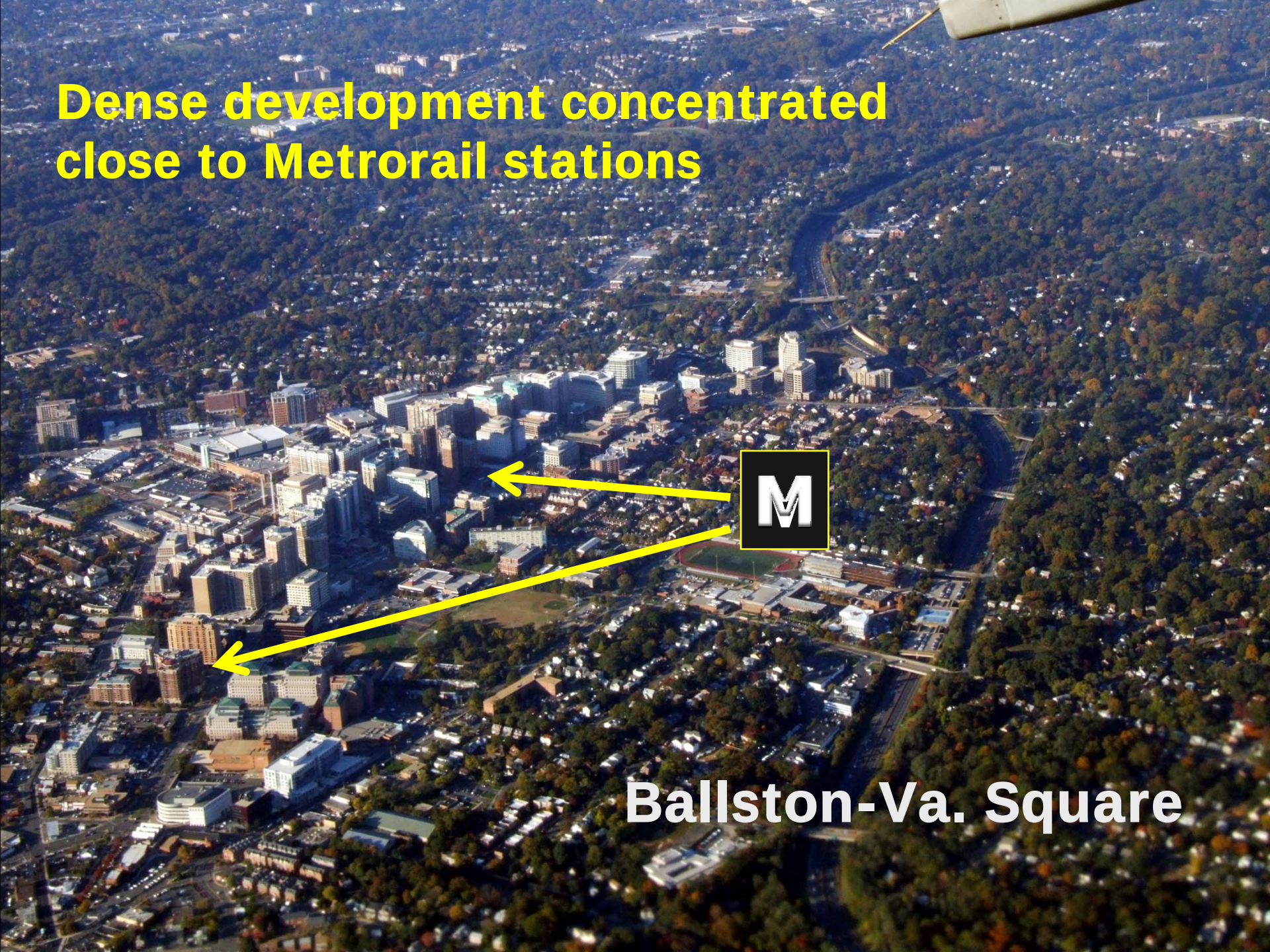


R-B Corridor Stations: Ridership by Time Period

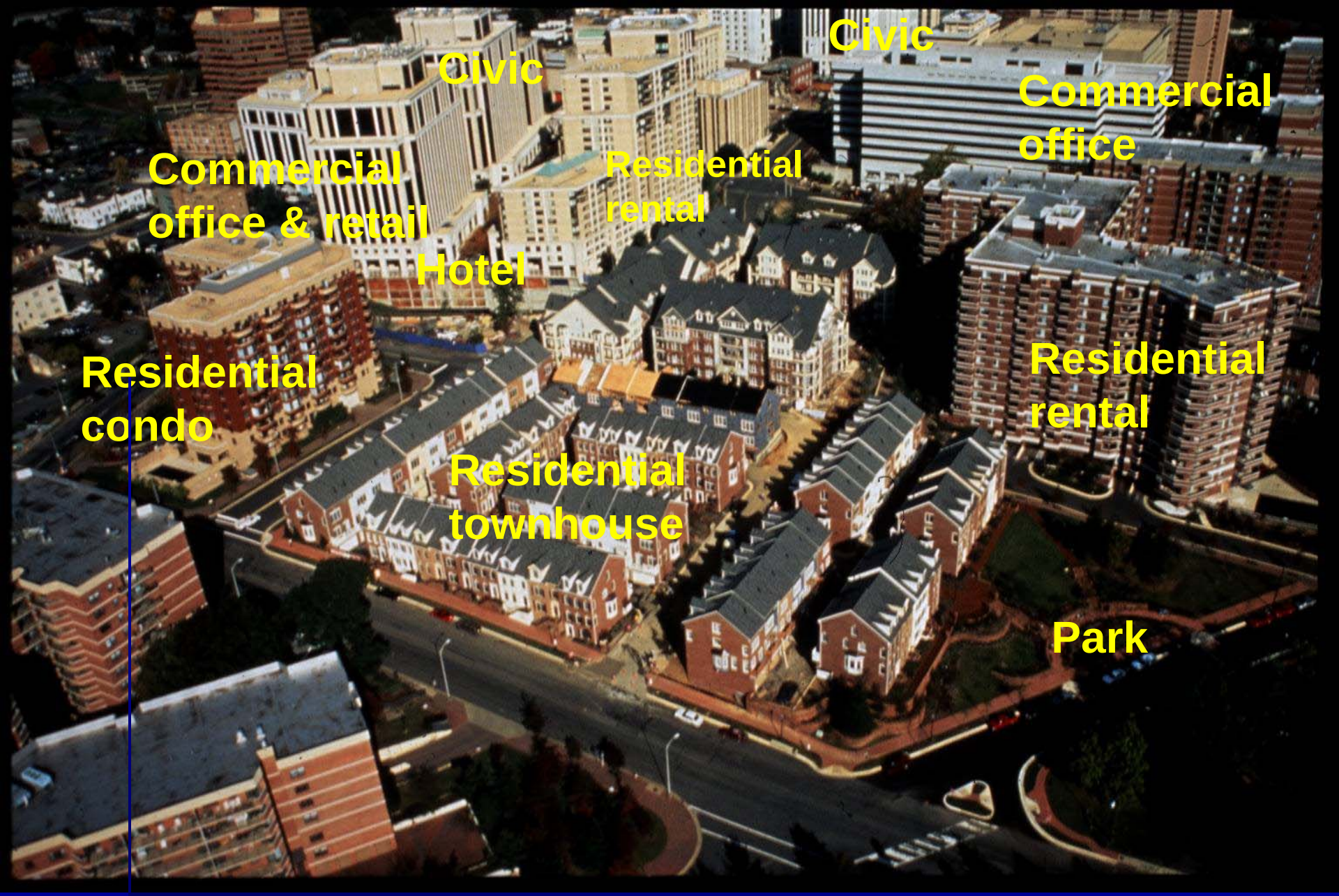


Metro Sector Development

Key Features


Dense development concentrated close to Metrorail stations
M
Ballston-Va. Square

Mixed-use design



Mixed-use design

From car-dominant . . .

Clarendon


. . . to pedestrian-friendly
CHICO's
Clarendon


With good transitions . . .
Clarendon

Density taper

Smart Growth outside the Corridors

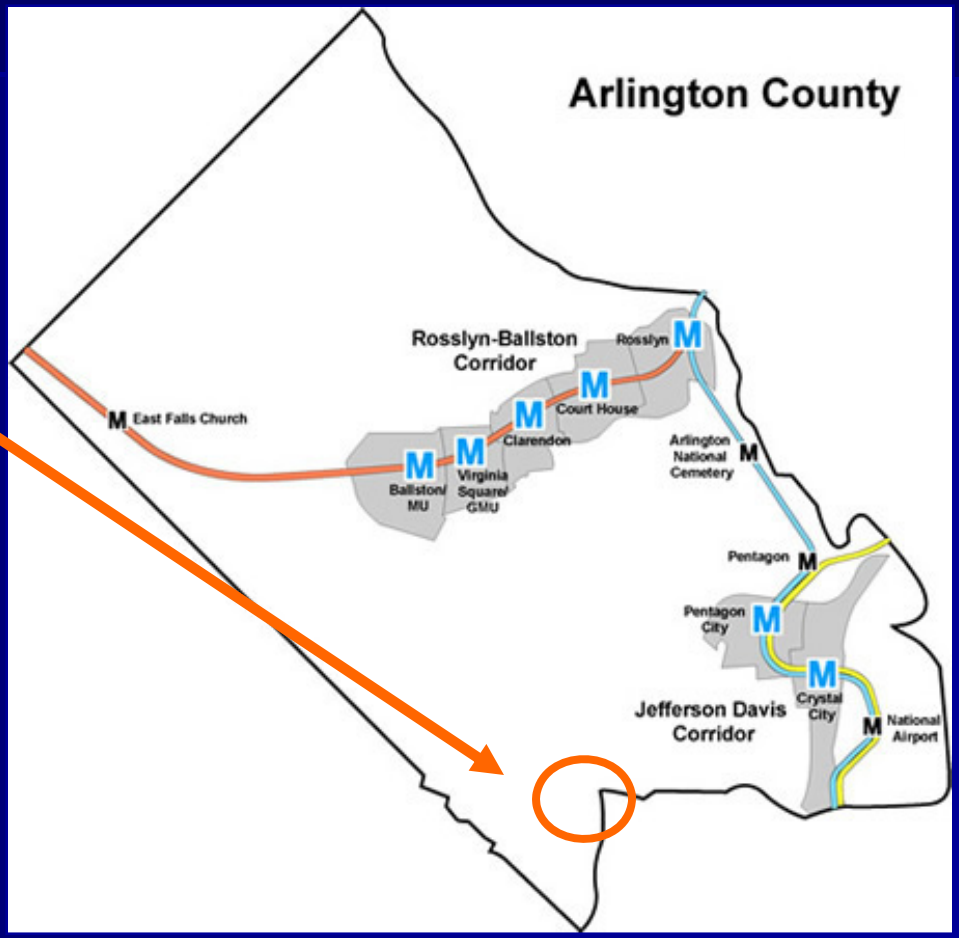
- Compact development, less density
- Walkability
- Transit

Shirlington

Converting a one-block shopping center to a mixed-use development

Shirlington

- South end of County
- Adjacent to major highway (I-395)
- Outside Metro Corridors
- No rail, but good bus access



Shirlington

- Extension of street through former department store parking lot
- New development with retail, residential, office, public library and theater

Shirlington

- Adjacent to major highway (I-395)
- No rail, but good bus (new transit center opens this spring)
- Total site area ~ 25 acres

Shirlington

One-block shopping center, originally built in 1940s

Shirlington

Popular restaurants, movie theater


Deli Café

Shirlington – 1989

Shirlington

- Structured parking in 5 garages, tucked behind buildings
- Use of liner retail along old theater
- Civic presence (library/theater bldg.)
- County land swap

Active sidewalks – seating, permeable facades

Residential units over retail


“Liner” retail

Shirlington

- Apartments (rental & condo) over street-level retail
- Including a 2-story grocery
- Final phase just completed, with opening of hotel (winter 2010)

Shirlington

- 1,000 residential units
- 300,000 sq ft retail
- 580,000 sq ft office
- 56,000 sq ft library & theatre
- 106 hotel rooms

All in about 2 blocks, next to a highway

Shirlington

Transit center serves 400 buses, 2,000 passengers per day

Columbia Pike

Transforming an auto-oriented strip into a walkable main street

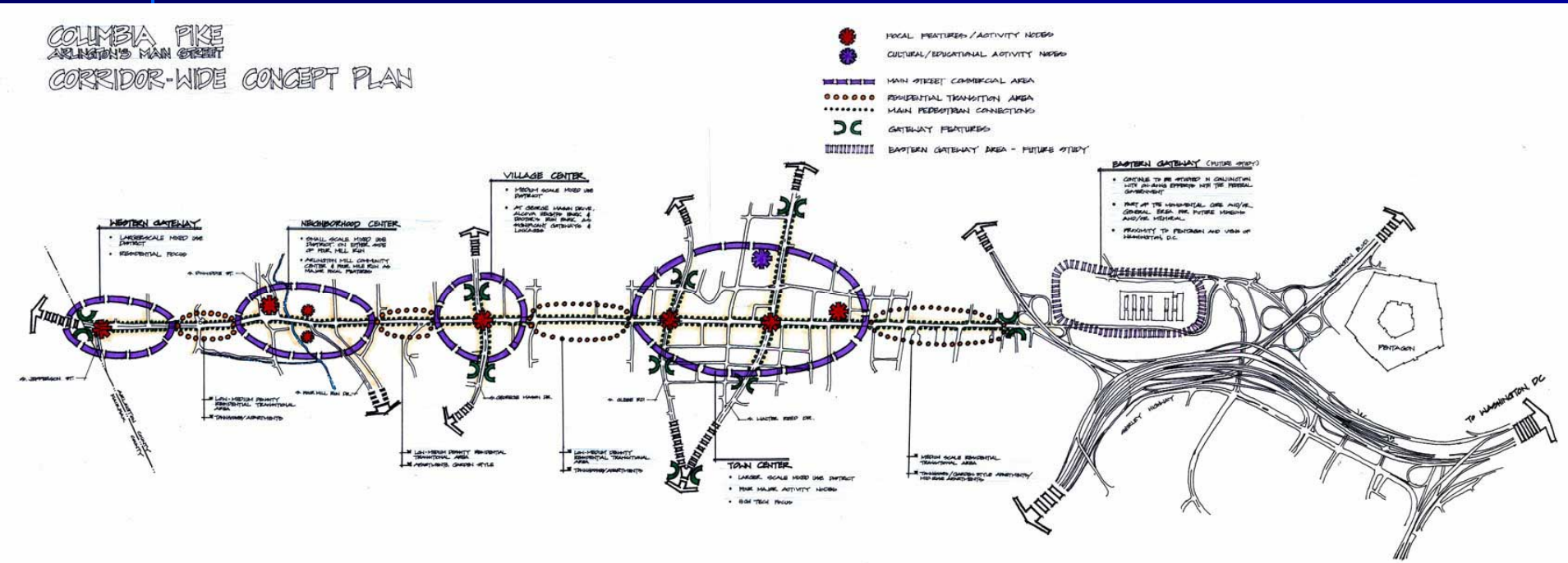
Columbia Pike

Columbia Pike Initiative

Columbia Pike Initiative

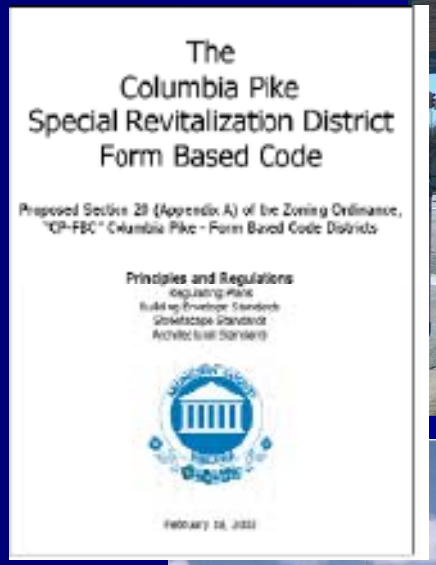
- Create a vibrant, walkable community
- Use new tools, zoning concept
- Emphasize transit (Good bus service now– Streetcar coming)

A decade of planning



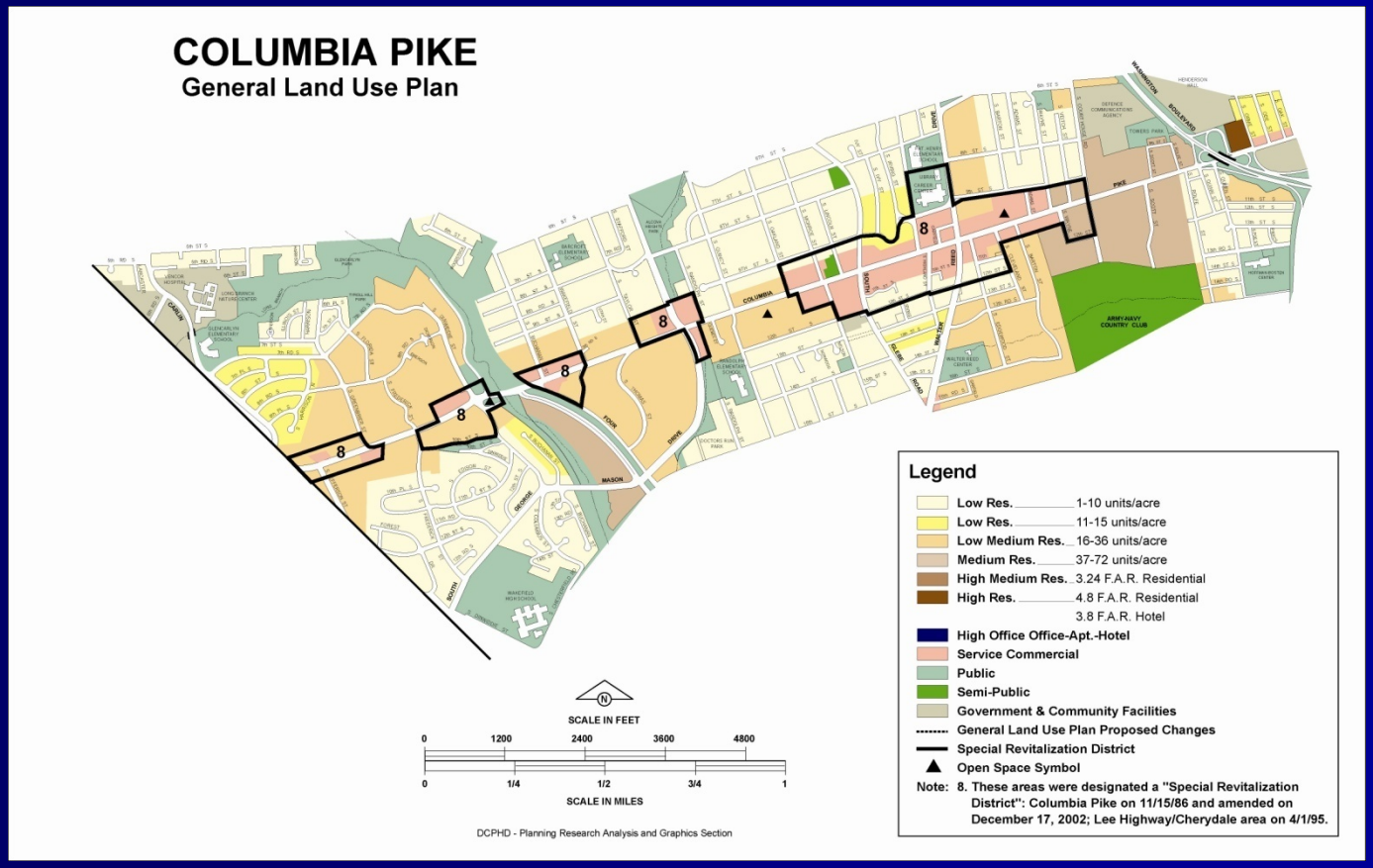
Columbia Pike

- Medium density development
- Pedestrian and transit oriented
- Anticipates higher capacity transit
- Form-Based Code overlay district


The
Columbia Pike
Special Revitalization District
Form Based Code

Principles and Regulations

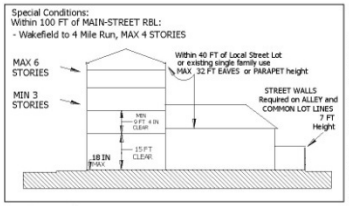
Columbia Pike Revitalization District



Form-based Code

Initial Projects Underway

B. Building Envelope Standards: Main Street Sites



Height Specifications

Height Specifications

Building Height

1. Principal building height is measured in stories. These parameters preserve appropriate street-space and allow for greater variety in building height.

2. Each building shall be between 3 and 6 stories in height, except where otherwise noted here or in the Regulating Plan.

Parking Structure Height

No parking structure within the block shall exceed the eave height of any building (built after 2002) within 40 feet of the parking structure.

Ground Story Height

1. The ground story floor elevation shall be between 6 inches below and 24 inches above the sidewalk elevation at the front of the building. The maximum floor-to-floor story height limit for the ground floor is 24 feet

2. The ground floor shall have at least 15 feet clear (floor to ceiling) height for at least 1/3 of its area contiguous to RBL frontage.

Upper Stories Height

1. The maximum floor-to-floor story height limit for Stories other than the Ground Story is 14 feet.

2. At least 80 percent of the upper stories shall each have at least 9 feet 4 inches clear (floor to ceiling) height.

Mezzanines and Podiums

Mezzanines and podiums greater than 2/3 of the floor area footprint shall be counted as full stories.

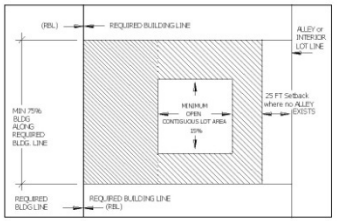
Street Wall Height

1. Any unbuilt alley and/or common lot line frontage shall have a street wall built along it, 7 feet in height.

2. Street wall heights are measured relative to the adjacent sidewalk or to the ground elevation when not fronting a sidewalk.

Other

Where a Main-street site is within 40 feet of a Local Site, Neighborhood Site or a single-family home, the maximum height for that portion is 32 feet to the eaves or parapet



Siting Specifications

Siting Specifications

Street Façade

1. The Street façade shall be built to not less than 75 percent of the overall RBL. However, the ground floor portions of the Street façade within 7 feet of a Block Corner are exempt from this requirement in order to allow special corner treatments in these areas.

2. The Street façade shall be composed as a simple plane (limited jogs less than 24 inches are considered a simple plane within this requirement) interrupted only by porches, stoops, bay windows, shopfronts, and balconies.

Buildable Area

Buildings shall occupy only the area of the lot specified in the siting specifications of the building envelope standards as buildable area. No part of any building excepting overhanging eaves and BES permitted balconies, bay windows, stoops, and shopfronts shall encroach into the street beyond the RBL. No part of any building (excepting overhanging eaves, balconies, stoops, and small and unroofed garden structures) shall occupy the remaining lot area. The minimum open contiguous area shall comprise at least 15% of the total Buildable Area and can be located anywhere within the Buildable Area of the site.

Side Lot Line

There are no required side lot line setbacks unless shared with an existing single family house where an 8-foot setback is required.

Garage and Parking Entrances

1. Garage/parking entrances shall be no closer than 50 feet from any building corner or 100 feet from any block corner (except where otherwise designated on the Regulating Plan).

2. Designated garage entrees and alleys shall be the sole means of automobile access to a site.

3. Garage doors shall not face (be at an angle of less than 90 degrees from the RBL or right of way) the RBL. Vehicle parking areas (except where a street wall exists or parking is enclosed within an ancillary building) on private property shall not be located within 25 feet of the RBL. These requirements are not applicable to on-street parallel parking.

Alleys

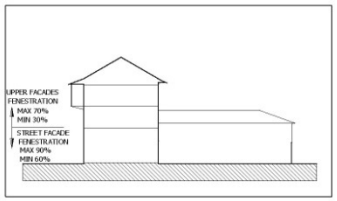
On sites with no alley access, there shall be a 25-foot setback from the rear lot line.

Corner Lots

Corner lots shall be treated as having street frontage on both the front and side streets (or RBLs).

Unbuilt RBL and Common Lot Line Treatment

Any unbuilt RBL shall have a street wall along it, between 6 feet and 10 feet in height. Street walls may also be constructed along any unbuilt common lot line.



Elements Specifications

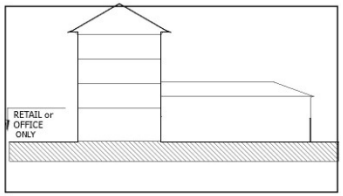
Elements Specifications

Ground Story–Fenestration

The ground story façade shall have between 60 percent and 90 percent fenestration (measured as a percentage of the façade that is between 2 and 10 feet above the fronting sidewalk). Awnings and overhangs are encouraged (except where otherwise designated on the Regulating Plan).

Upper Stories–Fenestration

Upper story facades shall have between 30 percent and 70 percent fenestration (measured for each story as a percentage of the façade that is between 3 and 9 feet above the finished floor).



Use Specifications

Use Specifications

Ground Story

1. The ground story shall house retail uses as defined on page 17-18 as well as lobby and access for upper story uses.

2. There shall be functioning entry door(s) along the street façade at intervals not greater than 60 feet within any site.

Upper Stories

Retail uses are not permitted on the upper stories (except those of less than 900 square feet and/or second stories as an extension of the ground story use and with direct Columbia Pike frontage). Second story restaurants do not violate this rule. Business and professional offices including medical, legal, insurance, philanthropic, real estate, banking, and other offices which in the judgement of the Zoning Administrator with a recommendation from the Administrative Review Team are of the same general character as those listed above max be located on all floors of Main Street sites.

Arlington Hardware Site (“The Halstead”)

Arlington Hardware Site ("The Halstead")

5500 Columbia Pike (west end)

Small strip commercial building with surface parking lot, circa 2002

“5500” – Residential with retail

The just-completed project, winter 2010

Columbia Pike Safeway

“Siena Park”

Penrose Square

Approved Fall 2006 – under construction:

- **New 61,000 sq. ft. grocery store**
- **36,000 sq. ft. additional retail**
- **299 apartments**

Penrose Square

- Financing approved February 2009
- Currently under construction

Other projects recently approved

Thank you

Christopher Zimmerman
Vice Chairman,
Arlington County Board
czimmerman@arlingtonva.us