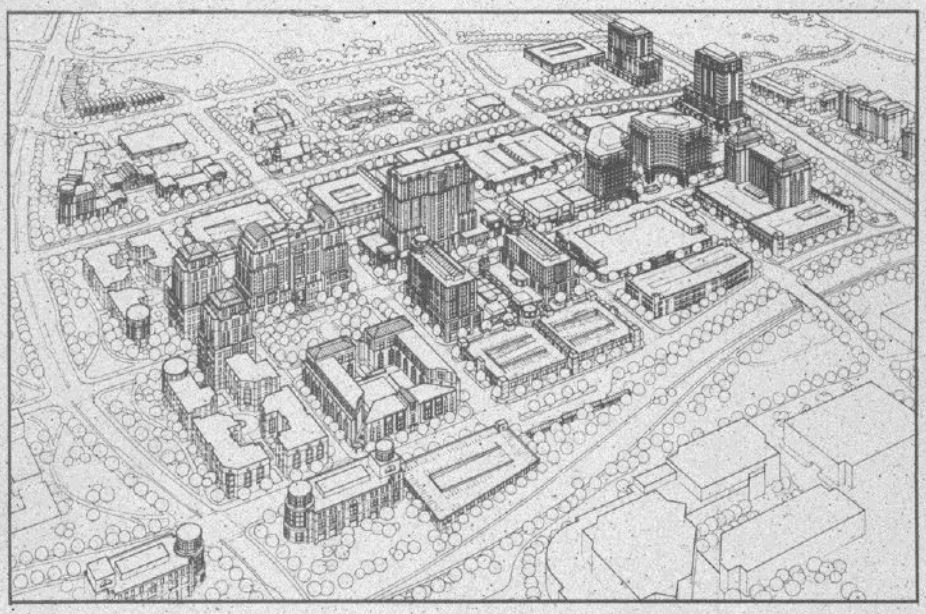
Reston Town Center
Urban Design Principles



for:
Town Center Design Review Board
Reston, Virginia

by:
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Watertown, Massachusetts

February 1991

RESTON TOWN CENTER

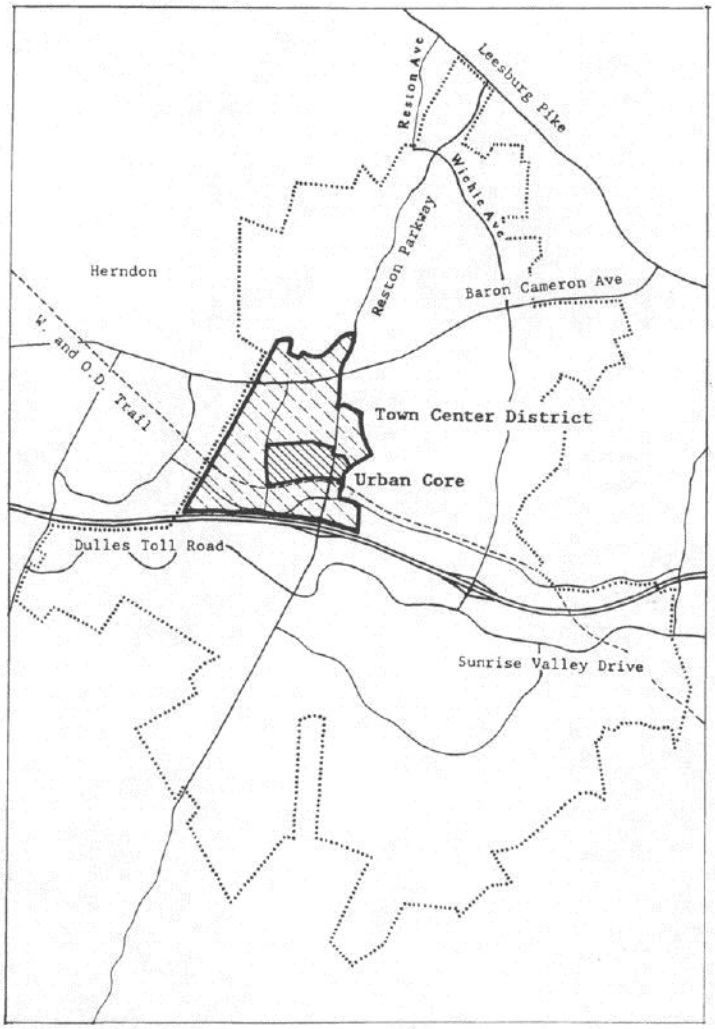
URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

CONTENTS

Urban Design Issues of the Reston Town Center

The Reston Town Center District includes 460 acres, strategically located along the Dulles Toll Road. The focus of the District is the 85-acre Urban Core originally envisioned as the center of Reston in the 1962 Master Plan (see Context Plan).

Reston Town Center will be built incrementally over time; therefore, the design of individual buildings and sites within the District is important. Each building and site has a role to play, as part of the general district plan or as a distinctive focal point. Each new building and site should respond appropriately to its environs. New projects in the district typically involve buildings, sites, streets, and sidewalks which should be coordinated and consistent with an overall urban design vision for Reston Town Center.



Context Plan Showing Reston, Reston Town Center District and Urban Core

In order to guide developers, architects, landscape architects, public officials, and the Design Review Board, a number of urban design principles are described in this report. They are intended to establish an organizing framework for the District and an overall level of coherence within the town center. Urban design at this scale is challenging because the objective of establishing some coherence must be tempered by a flexibility that will accommodate change over time. These principles are therefore general and meant to establish a framework within which individual designers should consider their project as a component piece that is part of a larger District plan.

Land Use

The overall 460-acre Reston Town Center District plan is for a highly varied mixed-use environment focused on the Urban Core. Surrounding the Core are office and residential uses as well as a concentration of community facilities (see Land Use Plan). "By the year 2000, it is anticipated that the entire District will include 1200 luxury hotel rooms, more than 350,000 square feet of retail space, and 7 million square feet of first-class office space. It will include 1400 residential units (600 within the Urban Core itself) and ten acres of community use space including child care centers, parks, and churches."*

Office - Key sites for new office development outside the Core are the large undeveloped parcels along the Dulles Toll Road and Reston Parkway where there is excellent visibility and access. Other parcels suitable for office development are located north of the Core along Reston Parkway and where Baron Cameron Avenue meets Fairfax Parkway (see Land Use Plan). Three options for office and retail development ranging from 5.5 to 7.1 million square feet are described in the development program.

Residential - Residential uses are an integral part of the vision for Reston Town Center, essential to making a vital urban environment that is designed for working, shopping, and living. Large parcels for residential development where new neighborhoods can be created are located north and west of the Core (see Land Use Plan). The mixed use Core is bracketed by residential uses at the east and west ends. The character of the housing should be distinctly urban compared to Reston's surrounding neighborhoods which tend to be developed at a lower density blended into well preserved woodland settings. Housing types envisioned for Town Center include the garden apartments currently in place in Section 81, townhouse and midrise housing in Section 85, and townhouses, midrise, and possibly highrise housing in the western blocks of the Urban Core. Town Center housing will be advantageously located within walking distance to the retail, entertainment, and cultural uses of the Core. It will, of course, benefit the Core as well. This sizable residential population near the center of the District should be connected to the Core with sidewalks and pathways. Community facilities such as a church, day care center, and community center can be located immediately north of the Core to complement the exiting regional library, hospital, county government center, police substation, shelter for the homeless, and an elderly housing center.

*From Reston Market Profile, Reston Land Corporation 1989.

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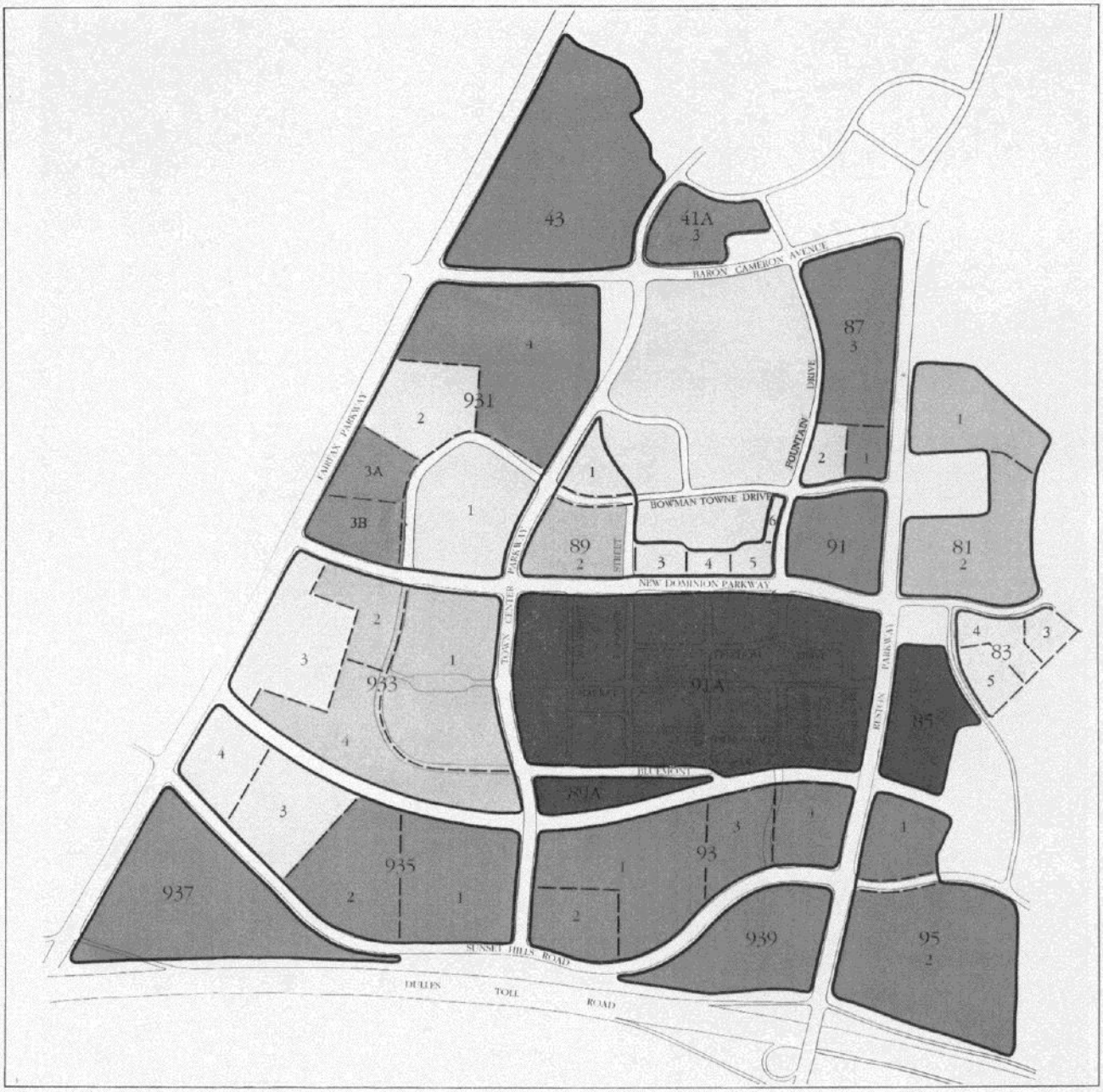
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN
TOWN CENTER DISTRICT PLAN

RESTON LAND CORPORATION

SASAKI ASSOCIATES, INC.



TOWN CENTER URBAN CORE

OFFICE

RESIDENTIAL

COMMUNITY/PUBLIC SERVICE

LAND USE PLAN
TOWN CENTER DISTRICT PLAN

TOWN CENTER DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

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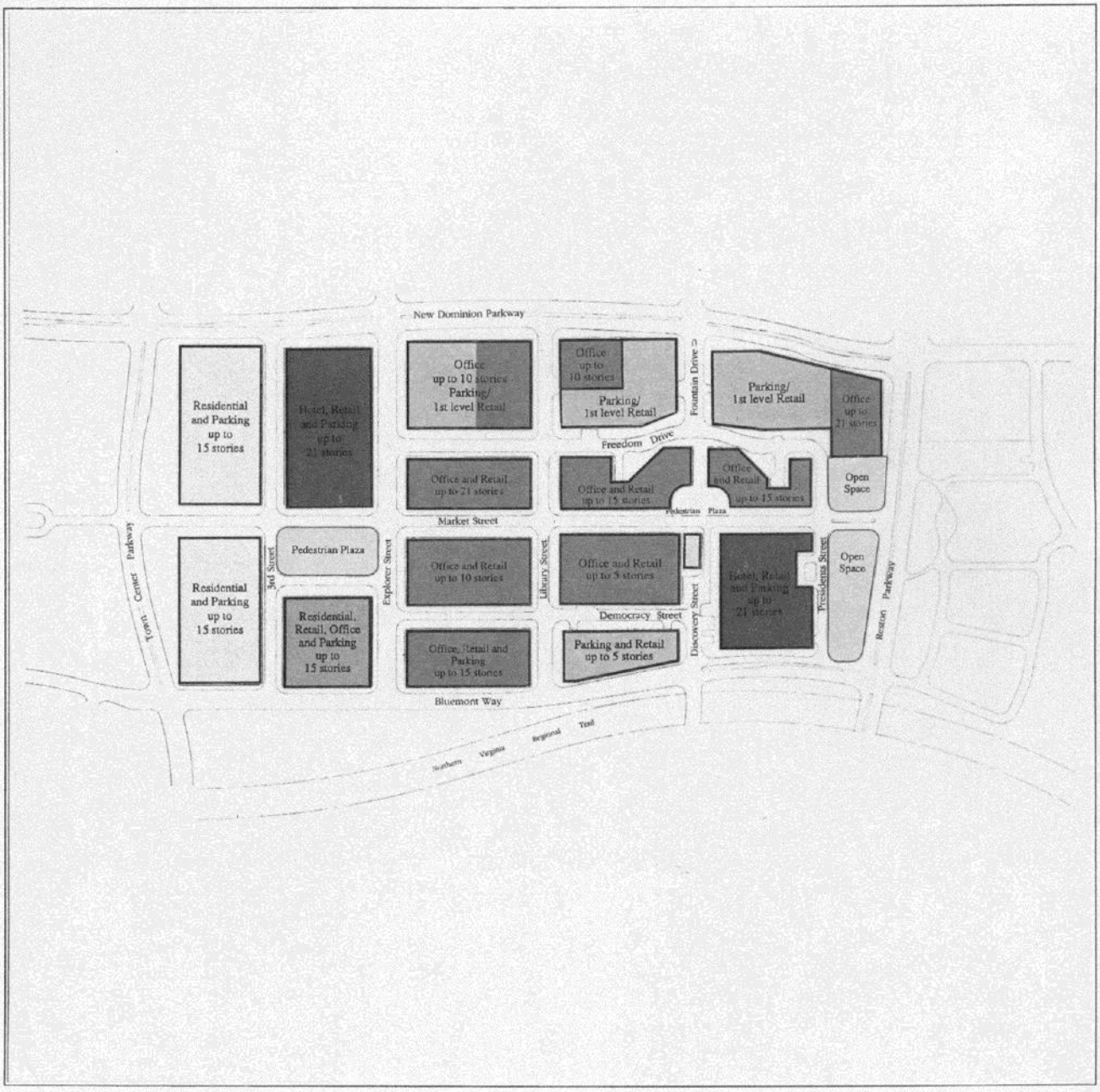

OFFICE / RETAIL
HOTEL / RETAIL
PARKING / RETAIL
RESIDENTIAL / RETAIL / OFFICE
RESIDENTIAL
OPEN SPACE

NOTE: Parking is typically located in mixed use blocks, except those which are Office/Retail on Market Street

URBAN CORE LAND USE PLAN

TOWN CENTER DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

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DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The development program summarizes existing and future development in the overall 460 acre Town Center District by Section and Block. Three options are identified for office and retail development ranging from 5.5 to 7.1 million square feet. Identified for each section with potential office development is a baseline program of uses which totals 5.5 million square feet of office and retail for overall Town Center. There are options to develop between 5.5 and 7.1 million square feet of office. The number of buildings and building heights identified are derived from studies to test the alternative programs on the sites. These configurations and heights are not limitations, but are suggested numbers of buildings and heights to achieve program options. Current county parking requirements for office uses are:

- 3.6 spaces per 1,000 sf (GFA) for buildings < 50,000 sf
- 3.0 spaces per 1,000 sf (GFA) for buildings 50,000 sf - 125,000 sf
- 2.6 spaces per 1,000 sf (GFA) for buildings > 125,000 sf

Existing or previously approved office developments are typically 3.6 spaces per 1,000 square feet (GFA). The allocation of parking to surface, garage, or below buildings is suggested as possible alternatives to accommodate parking requirements. Program summary information is approximate as of the date of this publication, and may be subject to periodic revision and refinement.

PROGRAM SUMMARY *February 1991*

Section	Blocks	Acre	Program	Building Height	Parking Type / Quantity
41A Baseline	3	6.17	43,000 sf Retail/Professional Office/Gas Station 160 cars	All one story	All Surface 160 cars
43 Baseline *Option*		35.32	360,000 sf Office 936 cars *375 DU's* *750 cars*	(7) 2-3 story buildings *(1) 10 story* *(5) 5 story* *(4) 3 story*	All Surface *115 below buildings* *635 Surface*
81	1-2	20.03	418 Existing DU's 836 cars	2-4 story buildings	Surface and Carport
83 Baseline	3 4 5	1.84 3.15 2.67	Reston Association Park 10,000 sf Day Care Center 10,000 sf Day Care Center		
85 Baseline		9.42	475 DU's 950 cars	Varies	Below building Garage

Section	Blocks	Acre	Program	Building Height	Parking Type / Quantity
87					
Baseline	1	2.4	50,000 sf Existing Building	(1) 3 story	Surface
	2	2.6	10,000 sf Day Care Center	(1) 1 story	Surface
			20 cars		Surface
Baseline	3	17.61	339 DU's	(5) 5 story buildings and	463 below building Garage
			678 cars	(5) 3 story buildings	215 Surface
Option	*3*		*380,000 sf Office*	*(3) 5-6 story*	*Surface, Garage, or Deck*
			988 cars		
89					
Baseline	1	2.9	30 DU's Existing Townhouses	All 2 story	Surface
	2	6.9	185 DU's	(4) 5-8 story buildings	322 Garage, 2 level Deck
			370 cars		or below building Garage
					48 Surface
	3	1.6	6,000 sf Day Care Center,	(1) 2 story building	36 cars , Surface (assume
			Church, or Community		shared parking with core)
	4	0.8	Open space		
	5	1.3	25,000 sf Community Offices	(1) 2 story building	90 Surface
			Day Care, or Church	(1) 1 story Day Care	
			90 cars		
	6	0.6	Open Space/Parking		Surface
89A					
Baseline		4.8	176,000 sf Office	(1) 7 story building	Garage
			457 cars		
			Transit Facility (Alternate)		
91					
Baseline		8.7	190,000 sf Office	(1) 8 story Office	494 Garage and/or Deck
			494 cars		20 Surface
			5,000 sf Bank		
			20 cars		
91A					
Baseline	1-10	70	250,000 sf Retail/Restaurant	Varies	Shared Garage
	(Phase I)		427,000 sf Hotel		
			11,000 sf Cultural Center		
			800,000 sf Office		
	11-19		753,000 sf Office	Varies	Shared Deck and below
	(West		118,000 sf Retail / Restaurant		building Garage
	Core)		561,000 sf Hotel		
			825 DU's		
93					
Baseline	1	17.09	268,000 sf Existing Office	(2) 3 story buildings	Surface
			1,024 cars		
	2	5.72	172,000 sf Office	(1) 4 story building	Surface & Garage
			710 cars		
	3	4.89	212,800 sf Office	(2) 3-8 story buildings	Surface, Garage, and below
			550 cars		buildings
			Transit Facility (Alternate)		
	4	6.2	189,000 sf Office	(2) 3-8 story buildings	Surface and Garage
			490 cars		
			Transit Facility (Alternate)		

Section	Blocks	Acre	Program	Building Height	Parking Type / Quantity
95					
Baseline	1	5.93	162 DU's 324 cars	(3) 5 story buildings	324 below building Garage
Option	*1*		*190,000 sf Office*	*(1) 7-9 story building*	*494 Surface and Garage*
95					
Baseline	2	23.9	730,000 sf Office 1,898 cars	(4) 4-13 story buildings	240 Surface 1,658 Garage, 5 levels
931					
Baseline	1	14.9	75,000 sf Exist. Hospital & Off.	(1) 4 story building	Surface
	2	8.4	124,763 sf Existing Office 575 cars	(2) 4 story buildings	Surface
	3A	5.2	Parking - 444 cars		Surface for Hospital expansion on Block 1
	3B	4.3	86,000 sf Office 270 cars	(1) 4-5 story building	Surface and Garage
	4	23.87	355 DU's 710 cars	Varies (8) 5 story buildings	Mostly Surface 275 below building Garage 435 Surface
Option	*4*		*370,000 sf Office* *962 cars*	*(3) 5 story buildings*	*347 Garage, 3 levels* *615 Surface*
933					
Baseline	1-4	49.42	1,050 DU's 2,100 cars	Varies	Surface, below building Garage and Decks
			50,000 sf Neighborhood Retail	(2) 1 story buildings	Surface
Option			*125,000 sf Office* *325 cars*	*(1) 5 story Building*	*375 Garage, 3 levels*
935					
Baseline	1	13.77	420,000 sf Existing Office 1,642 cars	(3) 6 story buildings	Surface and Garage
	2	10.2	250,000 sf Office 650 cars	(2) 4-8 story buildings	Surface and Garage
	3	9	Open space		
	4	6.1	Reston Homeowners Assoc. Exist. Maintenance Facility		
937					
Baseline		19.06	581,000 sf Office 1,510 cars	(2) 7-8 story buildings possible atrium connection	480 Surface 1,030 Garage
939					
Baseline		14.98	456,800 sf Office 1,188 cars Transit Facility (Alternate)	(3) 5-7 story buildings	(1) 4 level Garage, 1 level below building Garage

SECTION and BLOCK PLAN
TOWN CENTER DISTRICT PLAN
TOWN CENTER DESIGN REVIEW BOARD
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February 1991

Building Issues

The Reston Town Center District plan illustrates two contrasting patterns of development. In the Urban Core, the grid provides a rectangular matrix of city streets and developed blocks. Outside the Core is a less rigid pattern of streets in response to irregular topography and other conditions.

The grid of the Urban Core is a framework at the center of a vital mixed-use environment with all the energy and diversity of traditional downtowns. Urban design tactics such as height controls and building massing should be used to strengthen the Urban Core as the central focus of Reston Town Center.

Height

Building height should be controlled to express the prominence of the Urban Core. Maximum building heights are established through the identification of height limitation districts. See Building Issues Diagram for locations.

- The intent of the maximum height district of 275' as proffered is to preserve the Core area for the highest buildings, therefore expressing the energy and vitality of the Urban Core three-dimensionally.

- The intent of the maximum height district of 175' is to establish a zone which steps down in height from the Urban Core. This district occurs adjacent to the Dulles Toll Road and Fairfax Parkway, allowing regional travelers at a distance to view the tallest buildings of the Urban Core. This eliminates visual competition and communicates where the focus of Town Center activity occurs.

- The intent of the maximum height district of 125' is to establish a lower zone to the north toward the residential communities of Reston.

Massing

The massing of buildings refers to the general size and form of buildings as well as their location and orientation on a site. It also involves the way buildings relate to each other. The massing of buildings is especially important in the Urban Core where the continuity of urban walls facing the streets and open spaces should be used to reinforce the Core as a compact, walkable urban environment.

In the Core, building facades should be aligned along streets and parkways to relate individual buildings to the whole. Large gaps or unnecessary setbacks should be avoided. While heights of buildings in the Core may vary, a consistent base of at least two stories should be maintained to define and enclose streets and open spaces. There also should be similarities and relationships drawn between facades that align. These relationships could be expressed in a consistent height of a base or setbacks at upper levels. The principle of paired buildings begun in Phase One could be extended in the future development of the Core. Finally, there is the opportunity to create in the skyline a landmark tower that locates the Core from a great distance. This should occur in the center of the Core on the north side of Market Street. See the Building Issues Diagram.

It is the massing that for the most part defines the Urban Core as a special place. At the edges of the core and beyond, there are opportunities to extend the continuity and consistent alignment of buildings along streets. Buildings along Reston Parkway should have a consistent setback of 75', thus creating the opportunity for a repetition of facades and the preservation of existing trees. The continuity of Market Street defined by buildings should be extended westward to Section 933. Other opportunities to extend the fabric of the Core are present in Section 93 where the spatial corridors that are an extension of Explorer and Library Streets could be brought through the site.

Other sites in the District could be organized with a less formal relationship to surrounding streets. Buildings should be sited considering topography as well as the relationship to adjacent buildings. Planting setbacks are appropriate on streets and parkways outside the Core. Multiple buildings on large sites should relate to each other. Compositions of buildings can be created around courtyards or other green spaces.

There are several other opportunities for landmark buildings at prominent locations within the District. A building may be considered a "landmark" building because of height or architectural character. Locations that mark the edge of the District such as Section 937 at the intersection of Fairfax Parkway and the Dulles Toll Road are appropriate for landmark buildings. Because of the curve of the Toll Road, this is an especially visible site. Section 95 is high ground adjacent to Reston Parkway at the entrance to the District. Once again, the curve of the Toll Road makes this site prominent from the east and west. Other sites for landmark buildings are identified on the Building Issues Diagram.

Gateway locations shown on the diagram are opportunities for buildings and landscapes to frame and define at a vehicular scale entries to the overall Town Center District.