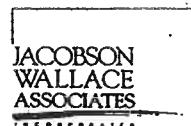


Carroll Creek Park

Master Plan and Implementation Strategy

Prepared for
Carroll Creek Commission - City of Frederick, Maryland

Prepared by



December 1991

Carroll Creek Park
Master Plan and Implementation Strategy
prepared for the
City of Frederick, Maryland

Mayor Paul P. Gordon
and the City of Frederick Board of Aldermen

William O. Lee, Jr.
Frances G. Baker

James S. Grimes

Sally G. Murphy
Jon F. Kreissig

by the
Carroll Creek Commission

Richard Kessler, Chair Francis Acquaviva Bert Anderson
Thomas Carney Pat Moore Betty Rollins
Colleen Remsberg Pat Sanner Rebecca Tran
(The late) Theodore Stephens

December 1991

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Project Approach

On November 7th, 1991 the Board of Aldermen of Frederick, Maryland enthusiastically adopted an exciting new vision for the development of Carroll Creek Park, an urban, pedestrian-oriented green-way meandering through the heart of the historic district. The approval of this new Master Plan, developed and recommended by the Carroll Creek Commission, marks a significant turning point in this City's desire to protect and enhance downtown Frederick as an integral part of the entire community. In too many small towns and cities throughout the country, the essence and personality of their communities is being lost through lack of foresight or planned process to accommodate future economic development. Fortunately for Frederick however, a different story is being told.

Members of the Carroll Creek Commission, primarily Frederick residents, have volunteered time and effort to develop recommendations for future land use and design vision for the park and surrounding neighborhoods. The product of their dedication is contained in the following illustrative plans, sketches and written description of the Master Plan. As their point of beginning, Commission members embraced the following idea to help define the spirit of the final park design and to use as their guide throughout the planning process:

[To create] "...a creekside park through historic Frederick Maryland, providing unique opportunities for commercial, residential, cultural and recreational development, enhancing the quality of life for the entire Frederick community..."

This straightforward mission statement formed the foundation for developing the Carroll Creek Park Master Plan, and provided the basis for establishing the following specific goals to focus action, discussion, public involvement, and implementation strategies.

Attract new development interests while assuring economic vitality and continued growth for the downtown business district.

Integrate Carroll Creek Park into the community to ensure preservation and enhancement of Frederick's historic and natural attributes.

Reinforce Frederick's image as a visually attractive city of human scale and interaction.

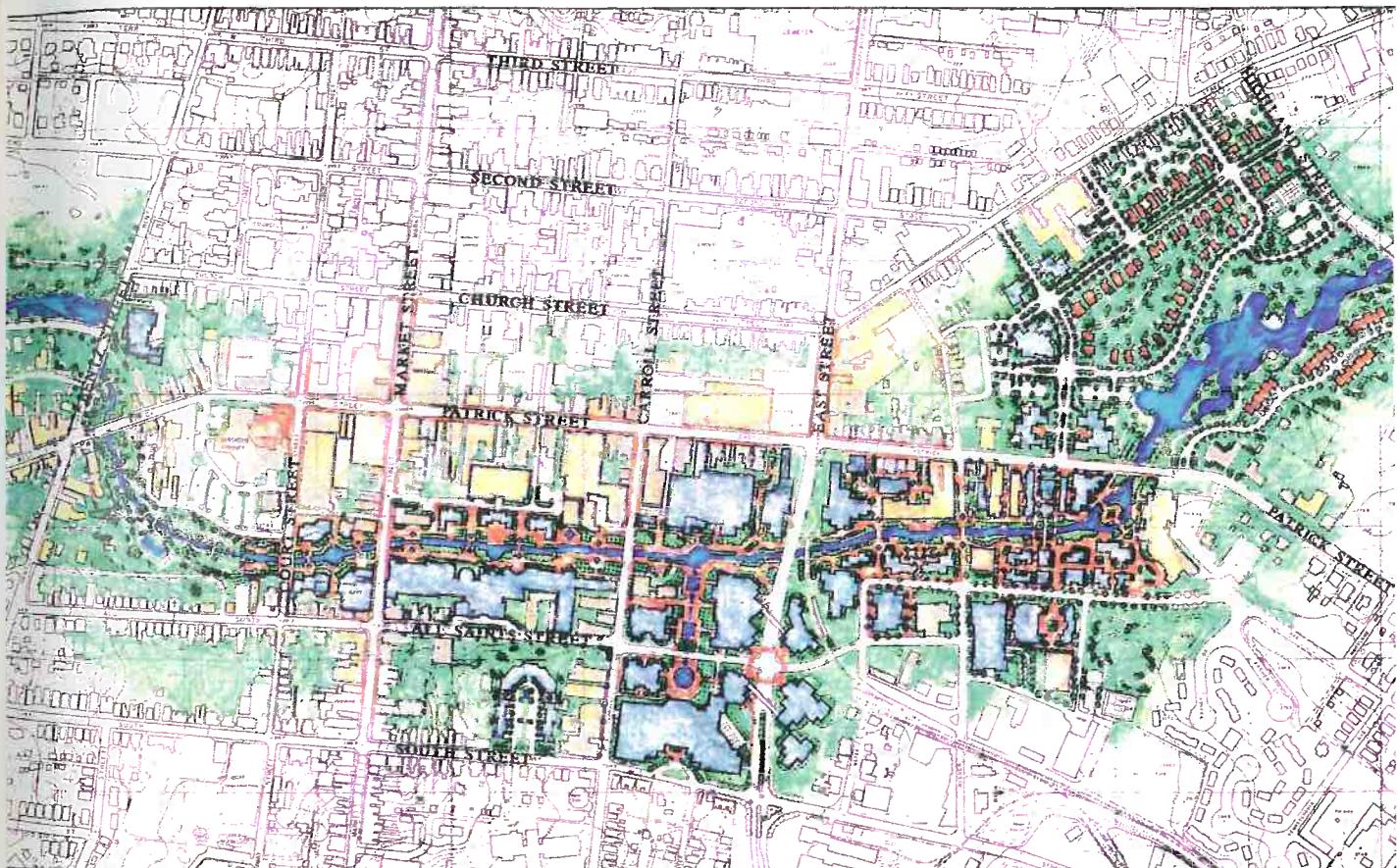
Provide continuing opportunities for community involvement in cultural, social and recreational activities.

Stimulate choices for compatible development of new land uses through suitable park access, visibility, circulation and safety.

Provide clear guidelines for development that protect the intent of the Master Plan but retain flexibility for future adaptation.

Incorporate public participation into project design and maintain throughout implementation of the plan.

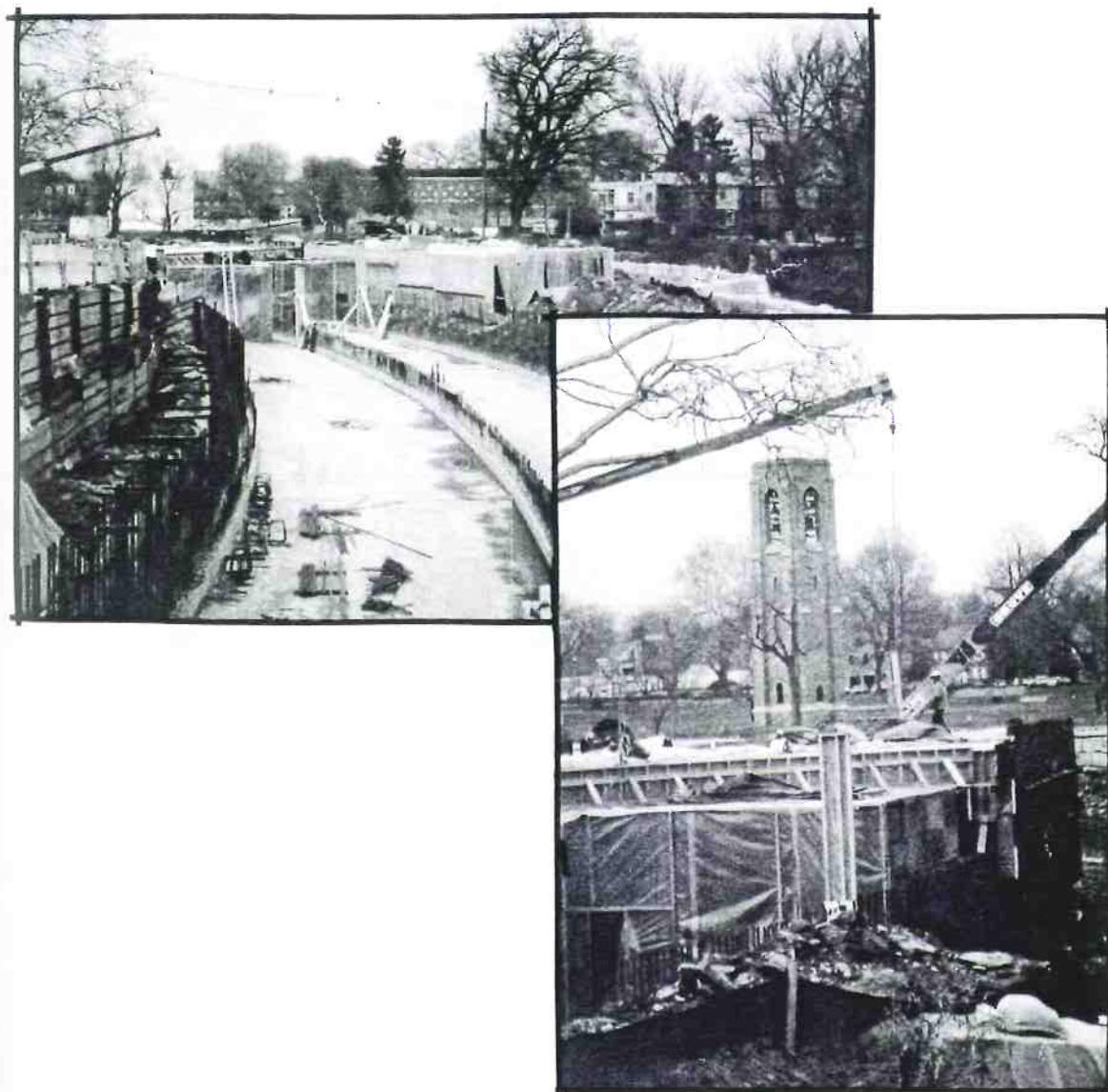
An equally strong commitment from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen to move forward, joined with a proven approach to planning and design, reinforced these goals. Participants in this process found that this solid base of community interest and action yielded a blueprint for Carroll Creek Park that fit the needs of existing and new residents, business and industry, tourism and the economic development future of Frederick.



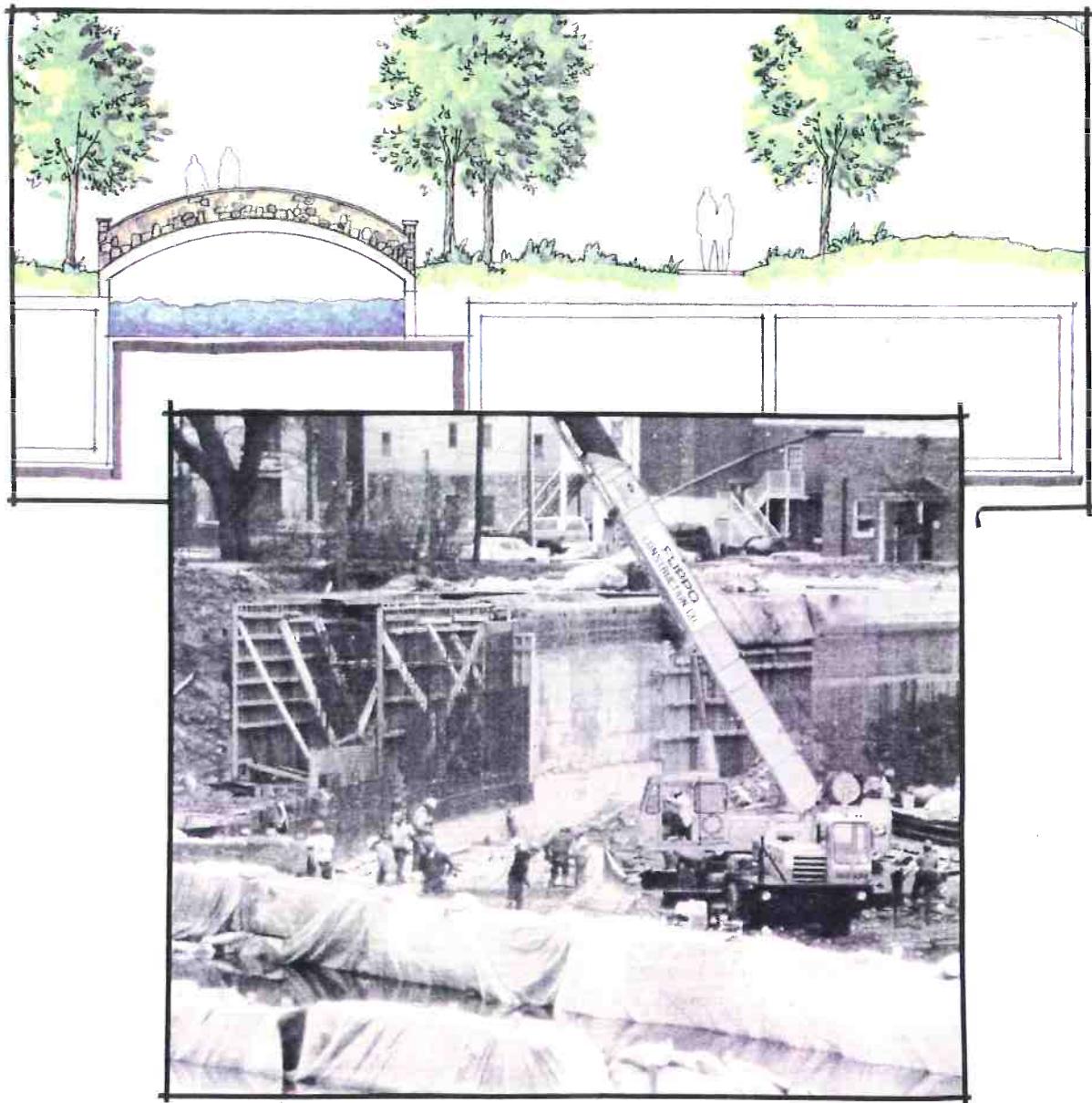
Illustrative Master Plan

Context

Following the disastrous floods of 1972 and 1976, the City of Frederick undertook extensive studies of the Carroll Creek watershed to determine how to prevent future flooding in the downtown area. Through the commitment of time and resources by the City offices, Frederick County, and the State of Maryland these studies were completed and the construction of the Carroll Creek flood control project began. The combination of flood control and future creekside park improvements will protect and enhance the character of one of Maryland's most beautiful cities for years to come.

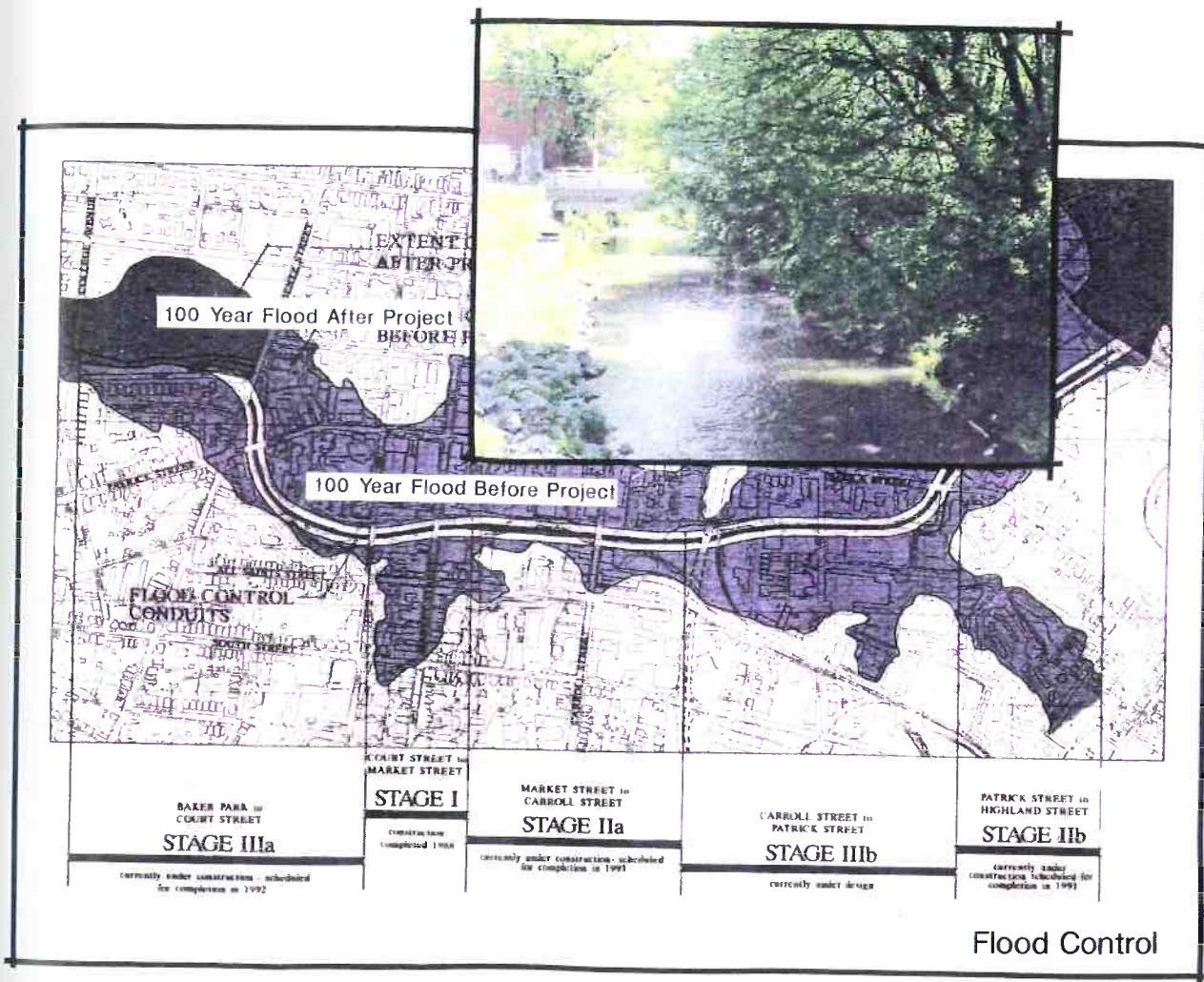


The flood control project consists of an underground system of rectangular concrete conduits intended to convey stormwater safely through downtown Frederick. These conduits or pipes are designed to carry water generated during storm events throughout the Carroll Creek watershed from Baker Park to Husky Park and to accommodate backwater floods from the Monocacy River.



Above the flood control project lies a wide corridor of open surface linking historic Baker Park at the west end of downtown to Highland Street near the Frederick County Fairgrounds to the east. This surface is the top or roof over the flood control conduits and will form the floor of Carroll Creek Park. A stream channel, following the path of the original Carroll Creek has been designed and is being constructed as part of the conduit system. In some parts of town, this construction is complete and water is already flowing in the channel.

In addition to the long term goals and objectives already described, a number of immediate benefits will be realized when the flood control project is completed in the mid 1990's. Large areas of downtown Frederick currently cannot be developed, or buildings occupied, under existing waterway and flood plain protection ordinances. With the threat of flooding removed, substantial acreage of underutilized and vacant land will become available for development. One important aspect of this new growth potential is that it will be accommodated within the existing downtown character without destruction of significant or historic structures.



The planning and design of Carroll Creek Park obviously will respond to the recreational needs of this community, but it also takes advantage of the existing urban neighborhood fabric it bisects. The interaction of park elements with future commercial, residential and business development along each edge is key to attracting park users.

Process

In order to describe a long term vision for the design of Carroll Creek Park, it was essential to include input from many different sources and to directly involve a variety of public and private interest groups. Identification of key plan components began with the:

Development of a land use and design program based on detailed analysis of physical, social and economic factors; giving direction for a...

Concept plan for future land use designations within the study area; in turn yielding a...

Design vision for Carroll Creek Park itself; and finally, outlining the steps required for...

Implementation Strategies to help create the completed park.

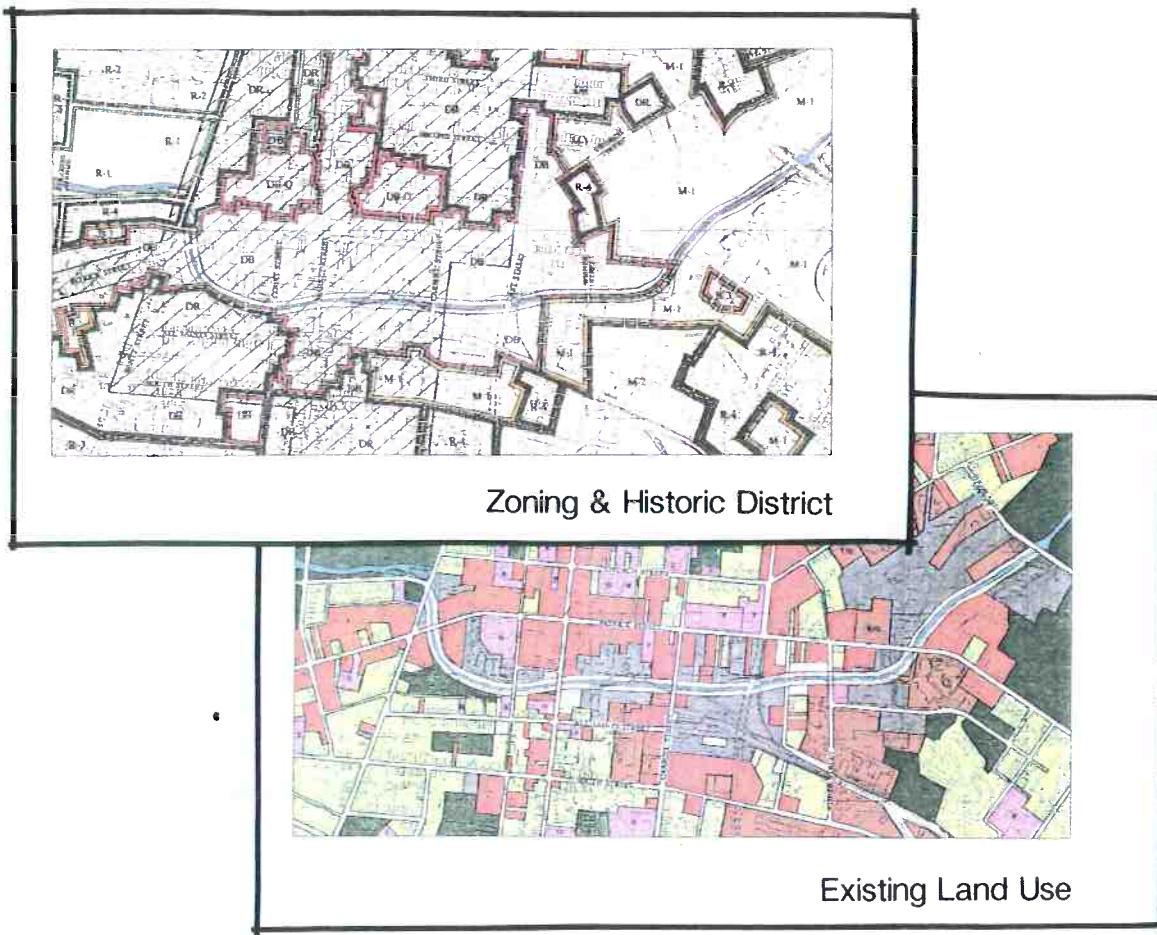
The following sections provide an overview of the factors that have played a role in creating the Master Plan, the key components of the design, and the continuing efforts of the Carroll Creek Commission and the City of Frederick to promote and facilitate the planning and implementation process.

A plan of this magnitude can only be realized by adopting and adhering to a proven planning methodology. This includes a solid core of inventory and analysis, a sensitive response to physical site constraints and opportunities, and a clear understanding of market and economic needs for future Frederick. Specifically, for the Carroll Creek Park study area there were three major areas of information gathering that began this planning process; the inventory, analysis and evaluation of:

- **Physical factors;**
- **Social factors; and**
- **Economic factors**

Situation analysis - *Physical Factors*

An overview of existing conditions and their significance to the design of Carroll Creek Park are described below. These maps represent traditional analysis and planning tools used to catalogue site information.



existing zoning and historic district boundaries - were investigated to determine existing development and building requirements and potential conflicts;

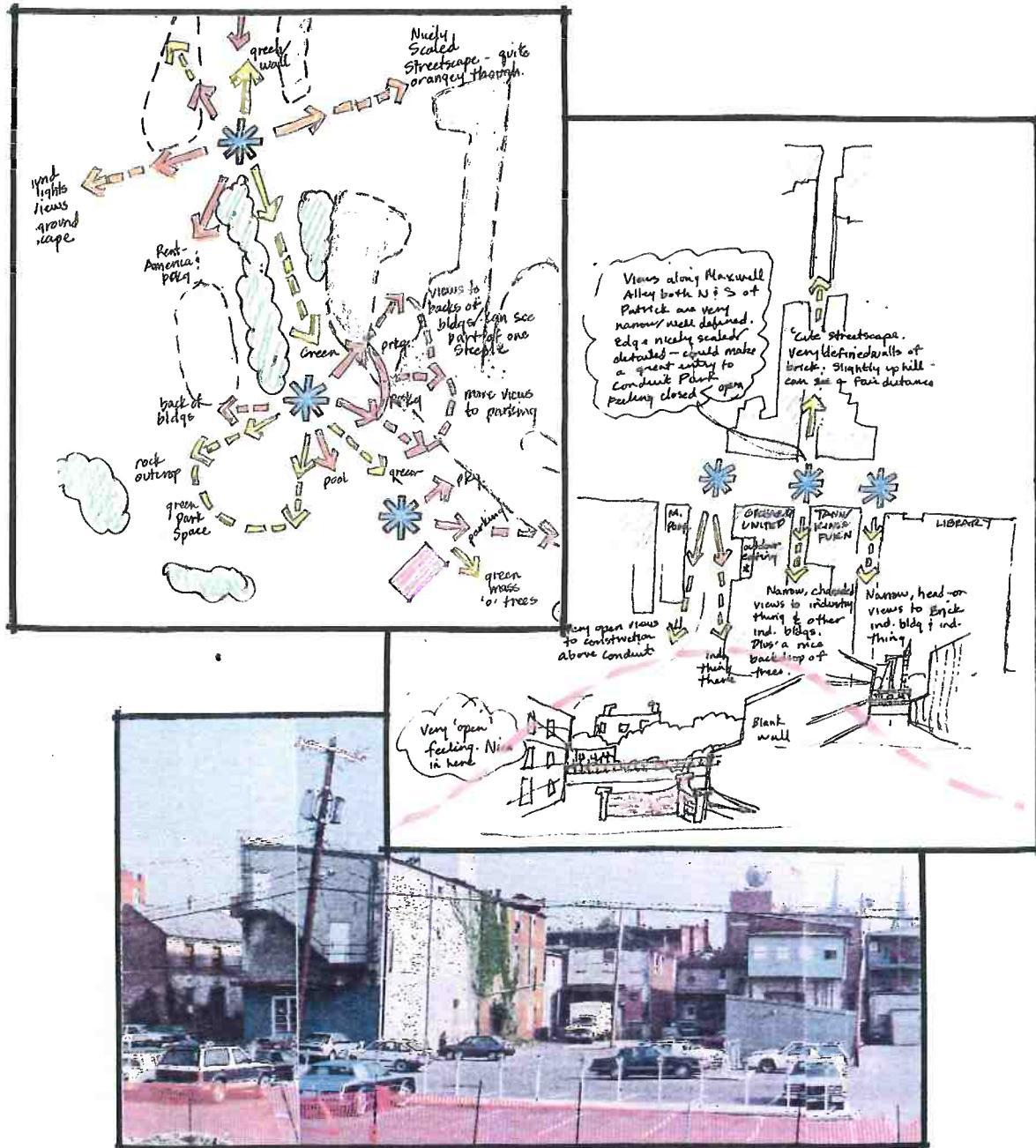
existing and proposed land uses - were mapped to determine patterns of use and habitation in the downtown area;

property ownership patterns - were catalogued to identify publicly held land and large private holdings that will play a significant role in future downtown land use development;

circulation patterns - were analyzed and projected to verify that pedestrian, vehicular and specialty modes of transport could be accommodated as efficiently as possible.

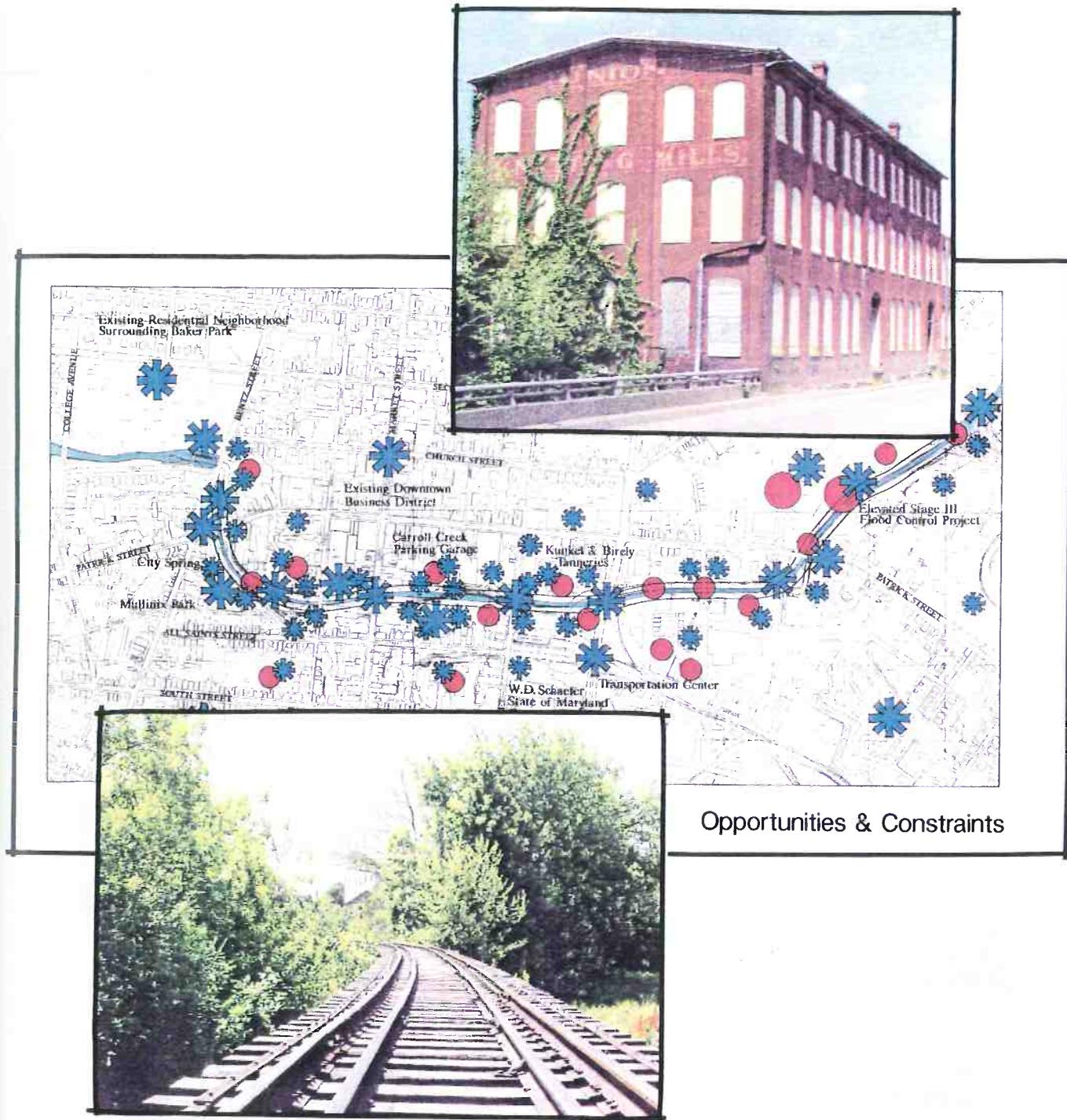
In addition, an extensive

visual analysis - of adjacent neighborhoods was evaluated to determine significant views into and out of the study area.



The combination of these physical factors with additional archival data relating to historic sites and significant architecture form the basis for planning and design decisions that will shape the Final Master Plan for Carroll Creek Park.

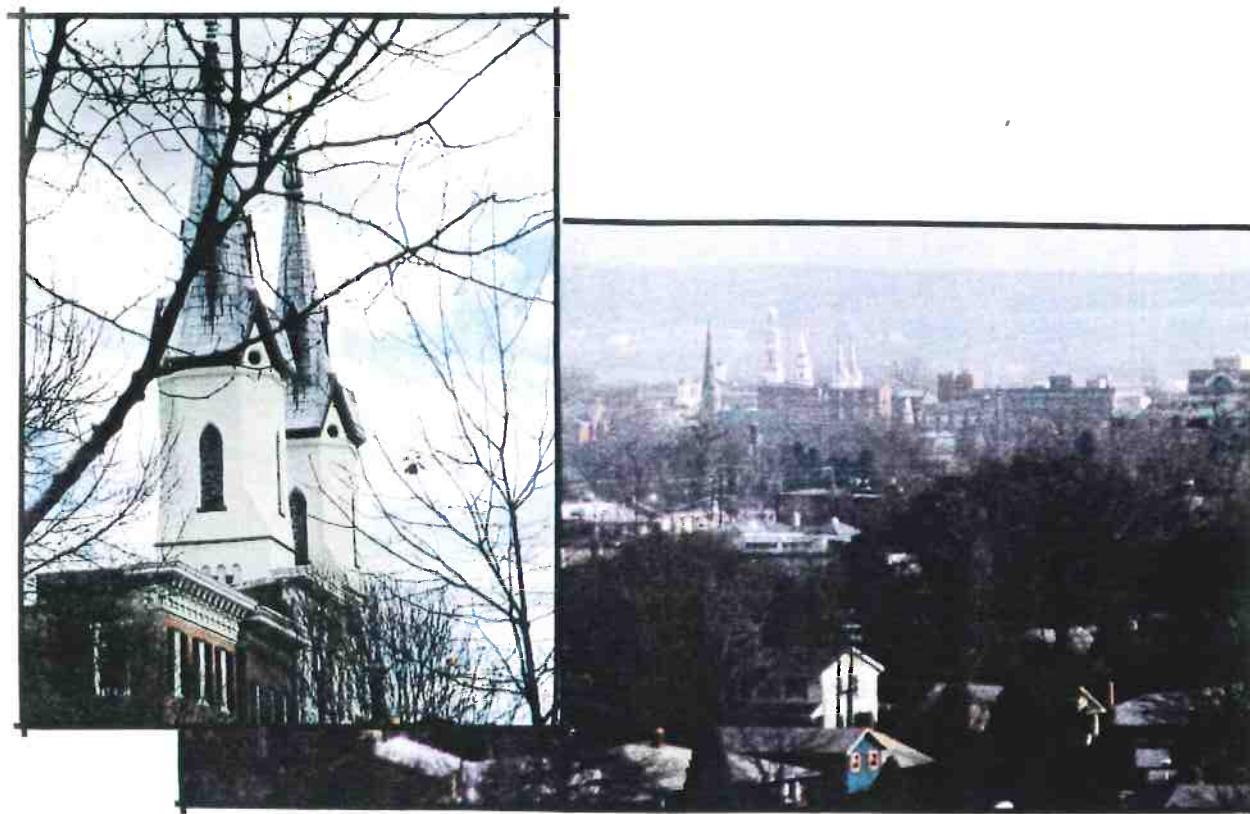
Each of these were further defined as either **opportunities** - conditions to capitalize on - or **constraints** - conditions to work within.



Opportunities and constraints mapping began the transition from inventory and analysis into evaluation and conceptual design phases of the planning process. Downtown Frederick provides a richness of opportunity with very few physical constraints on the future development of the park.

Situation analysis - Social Factors - Community Interviews

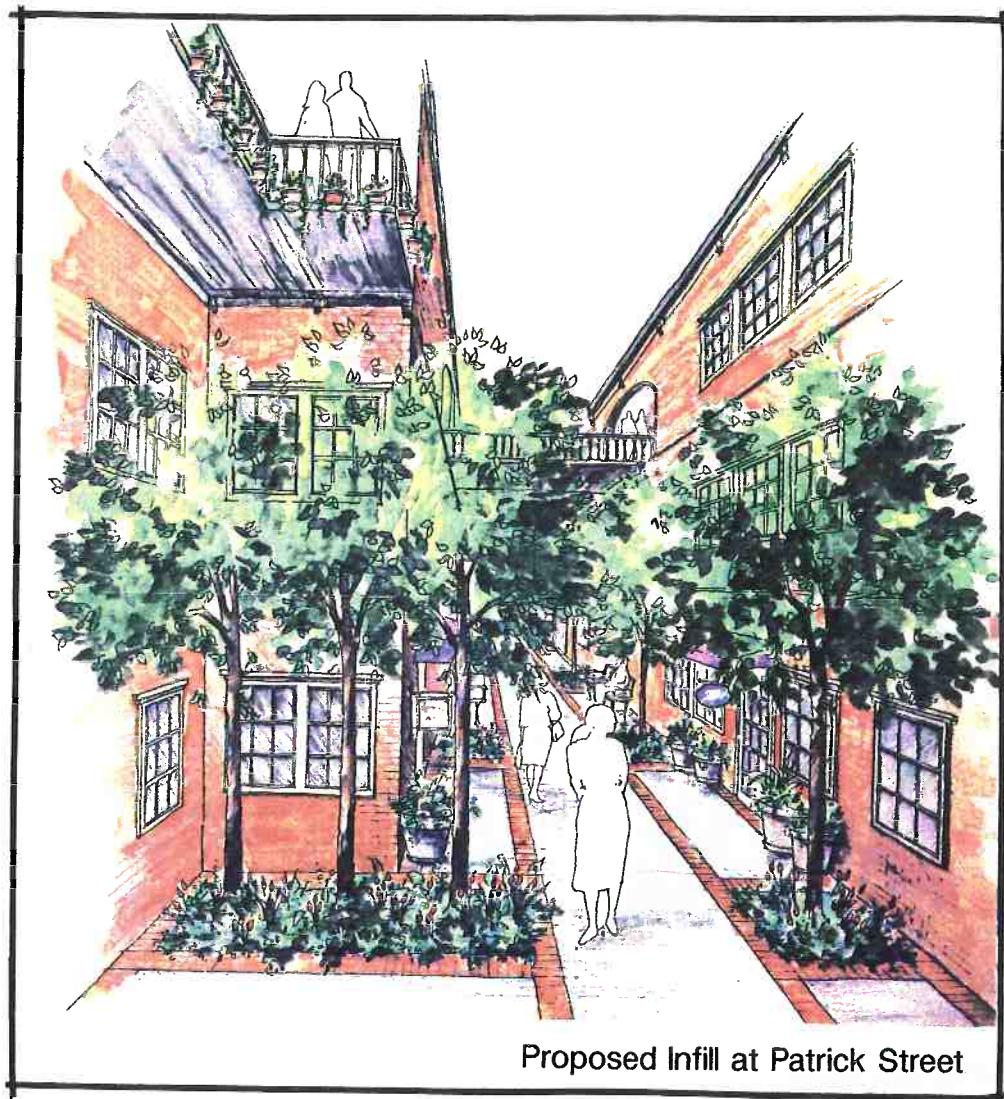
Public involvement and consensus building were integral parts of the success of the planning process. Interviews with many individuals and groups defined community input relating to existing and proposed land uses, business development and neighborhood relationships. Each interview was organized to help groups and individuals identify specific interests, primary concerns, desired/undesired land uses, and unique Frederick images they felt should be included in the development of the park. For example, positive images of Frederick as an interactive, family oriented community, a town of historic character and a weekend destination for historical interest, shopping and dining should be enhanced. Negative images, such as, artificial treatments associated with theme parks, strip malls, or "stand alone" development should be discouraged.



Also listed were features that should be preserved or incorporated into the final park design. These included architectural elements responsive to existing buildings, preserving views of historic structures and spires, using materials consistent with existing downtown paving, masonry, greenery and maintaining the human scale of existing street fronts. Features that should be avoided included large open spaces that discourage interaction, monotonous repetition of design elements, and high maintenance or hazardous features.

In summary, several "keys" to a successful project were identified during these interviews. Community residents felt that it was imperative that the project incorporate:

- Planning* - allow park development to evolve over time and accommodate the coordinated phasing of improvements;
- Accessibility* - provide adequate parking for cars, tour buses - workers and visitors alike, as well as ample pedestrian circulation, clear directions for vehicular circulation, and handicapped accessibility;
- Diversity* - promote activities, uses and development that will appeal to the full range of age groups providing for year round utility; and
- Integration* - assure that park improvements fit into the community and that new visual components blend with the existing historic structures.



Proposed Infill at Patrick Street

Situation analysis - Economic Factors

A preliminary analysis of current demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the study area concluded that few if any of the large scale development scenarios proposed in the past for downtown Frederick are viable at present. Convention centers, hotels, and destination type developments all require a more consistent and substantial flow of people than currently exists. In the future, favorable conditions will occur as development pressures continue to be exerted by nearby metropolitan areas. Development along Carroll Creek Park must be encouraged in a rational and timely manner as new opportunities present themselves.

Promotion of several key components for immediate development included a central transportation facility to serve as a magnet drawing people back to the downtown area. It was concluded under this scenario that areas within, and adjacent to Carroll Creek Park should accommodate new residential neighborhoods and that a viable downtown core could be augmented with infill construction, including residential and office/commercial uses (meeting architectural guidelines) that would enhance the tax base and contribute to an expanded retail and service district.



Proposed Infill at Market Street

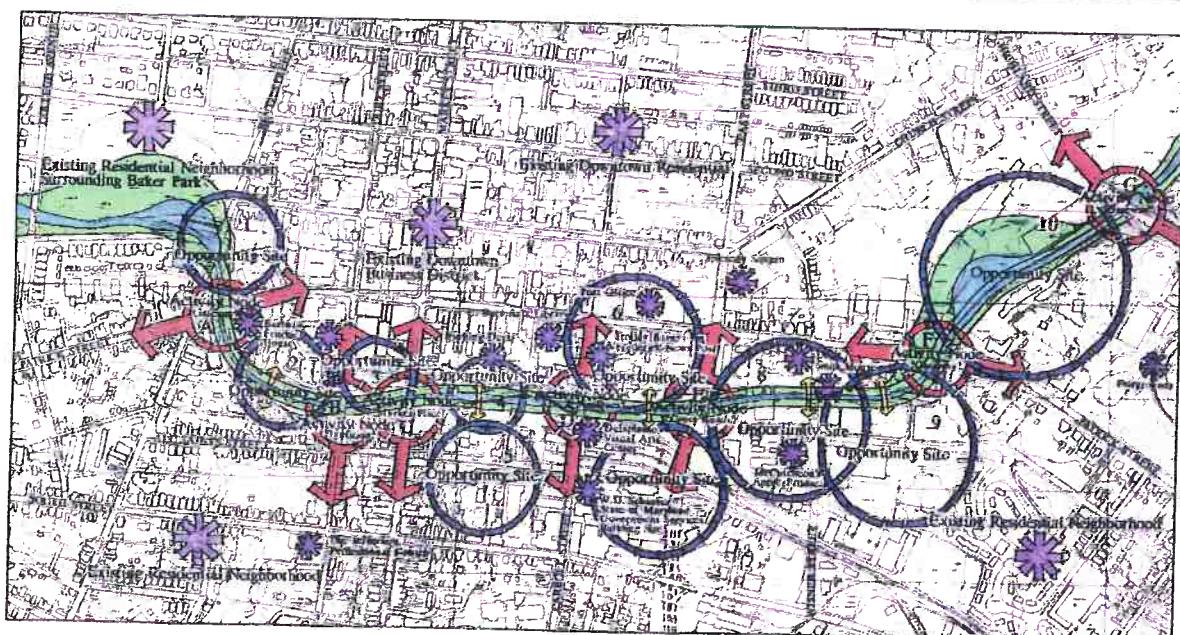
Concept For A Future Frederick

As the planning process continued through each phase of analysis, evaluation, public input and market research a pattern for the future economic development of Frederick began to emerge. Enhancement and stabilization of the existing downtown business community and residential neighborhood must be incorporated in the final design for the Park. This would be facilitated by establishing the following design criteria as part of the plan.

increased employment base in the downtown to, among other things, keep support and service related businesses viable;

improved transportation links to nearby urban employment and residential centers via Interstate highways, rail service, regional bus lines; and

increased residential component to the downtown area that offers a full range of unit types from affordable multifamily to up-scale detached and attached housing.

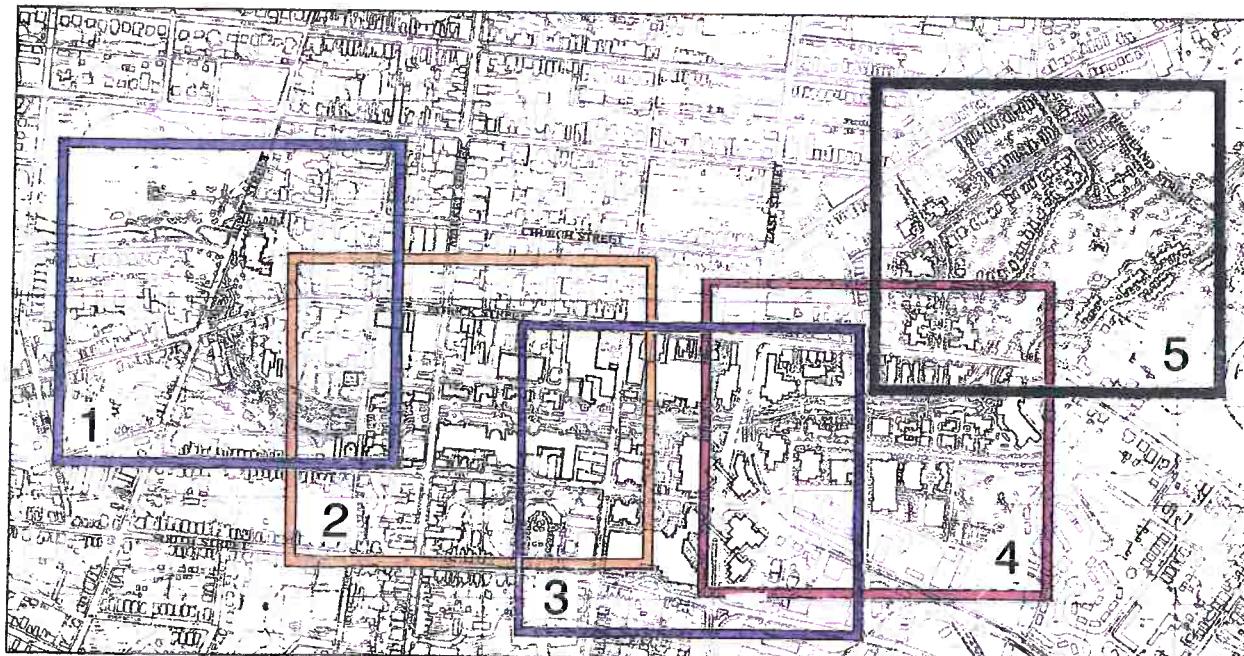


Concept Plan for a Future Frederick

This concept plan for future land use in the downtown area, as represented here, was part of the Master Plan adopted by the Carroll Creek Commission and the Mayor and Board of Aldermen which served as the basis for development of the design vision for Carroll Creek Park.

Visions

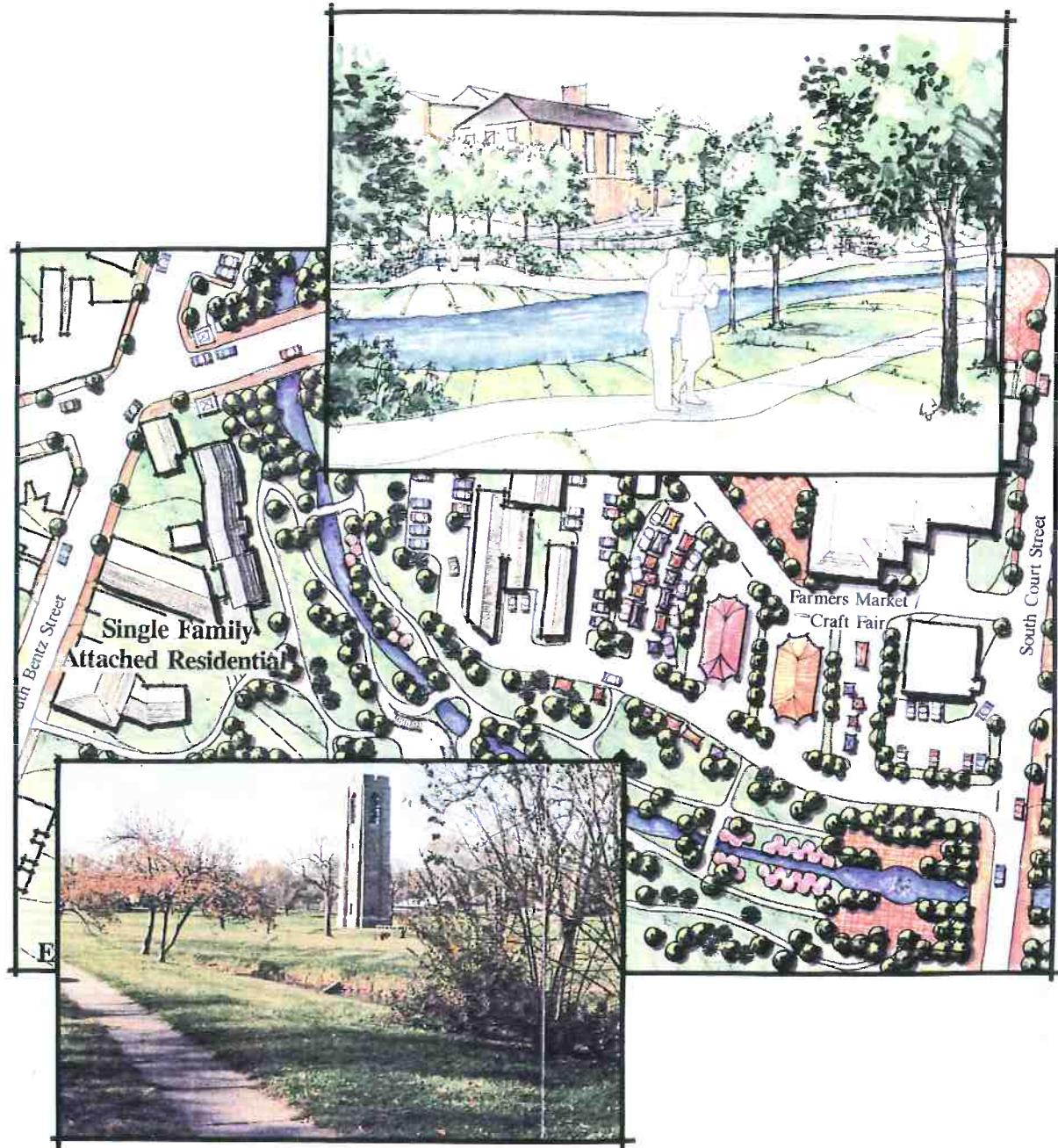
The Master Plan for Carroll Creek Park is represented as a series of illustrative plans and sketches. These plans focus on five general areas or districts of the park, each district promoting a unique character or land use mix.



Key Map for Park Districts

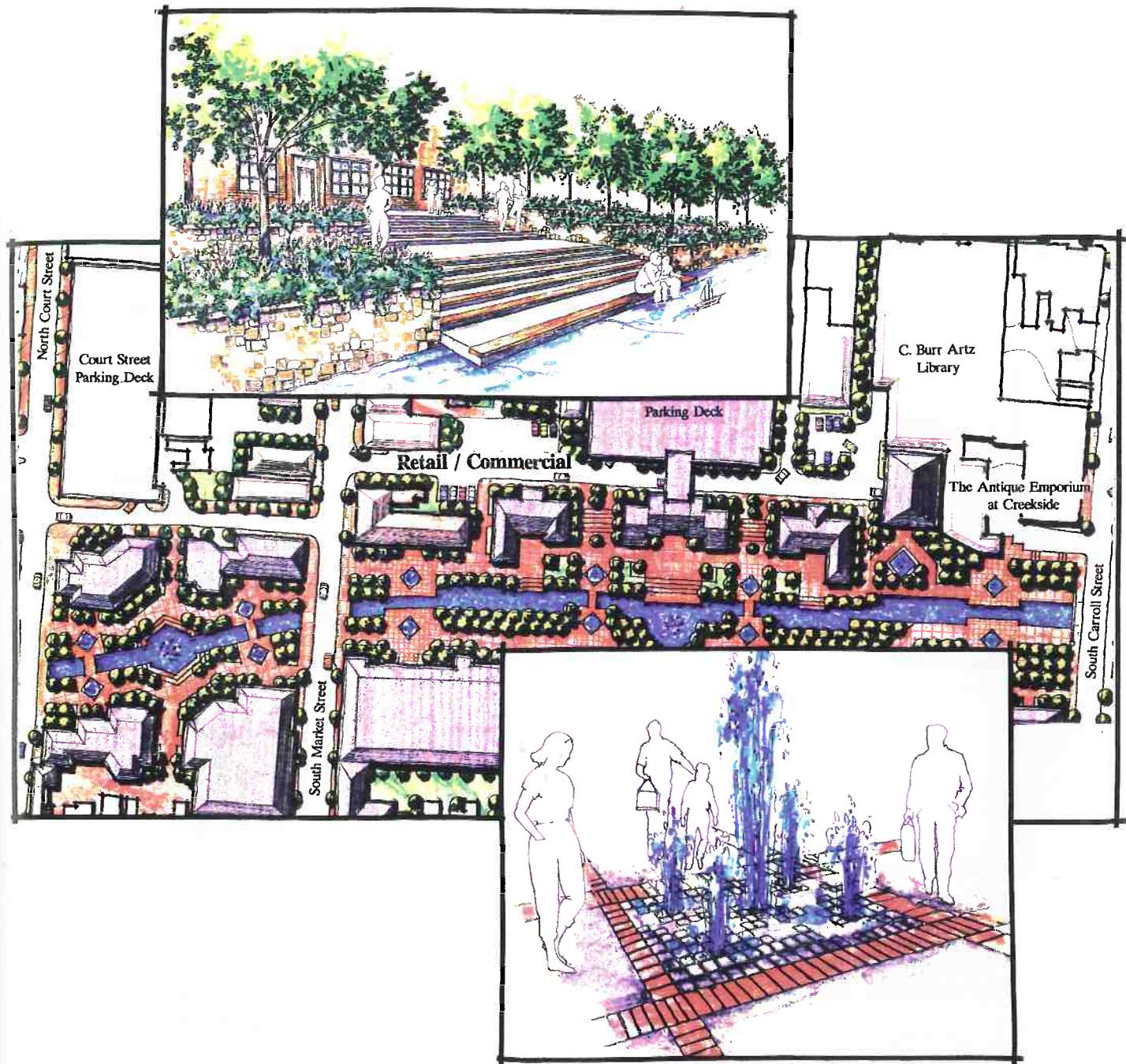
1. Baker Park to Court Street
2. Court Street to Carroll Street
3. Carroll Street to East Street
4. East Street to East Patrick Street
5. East Patrick Street to Highland Street

Baker Park to Court Street - forms a green-way connection and transition between the open expanse of Baker Park and downtown Frederick. Characterized by meandering trails paralleling the creek within a traditional city park atmosphere of overstory trees, ornamental shrubs and planting beds, fanciful fountains and intimate seating areas this district will strengthen the connection of residential neighborhoods to the downtown.

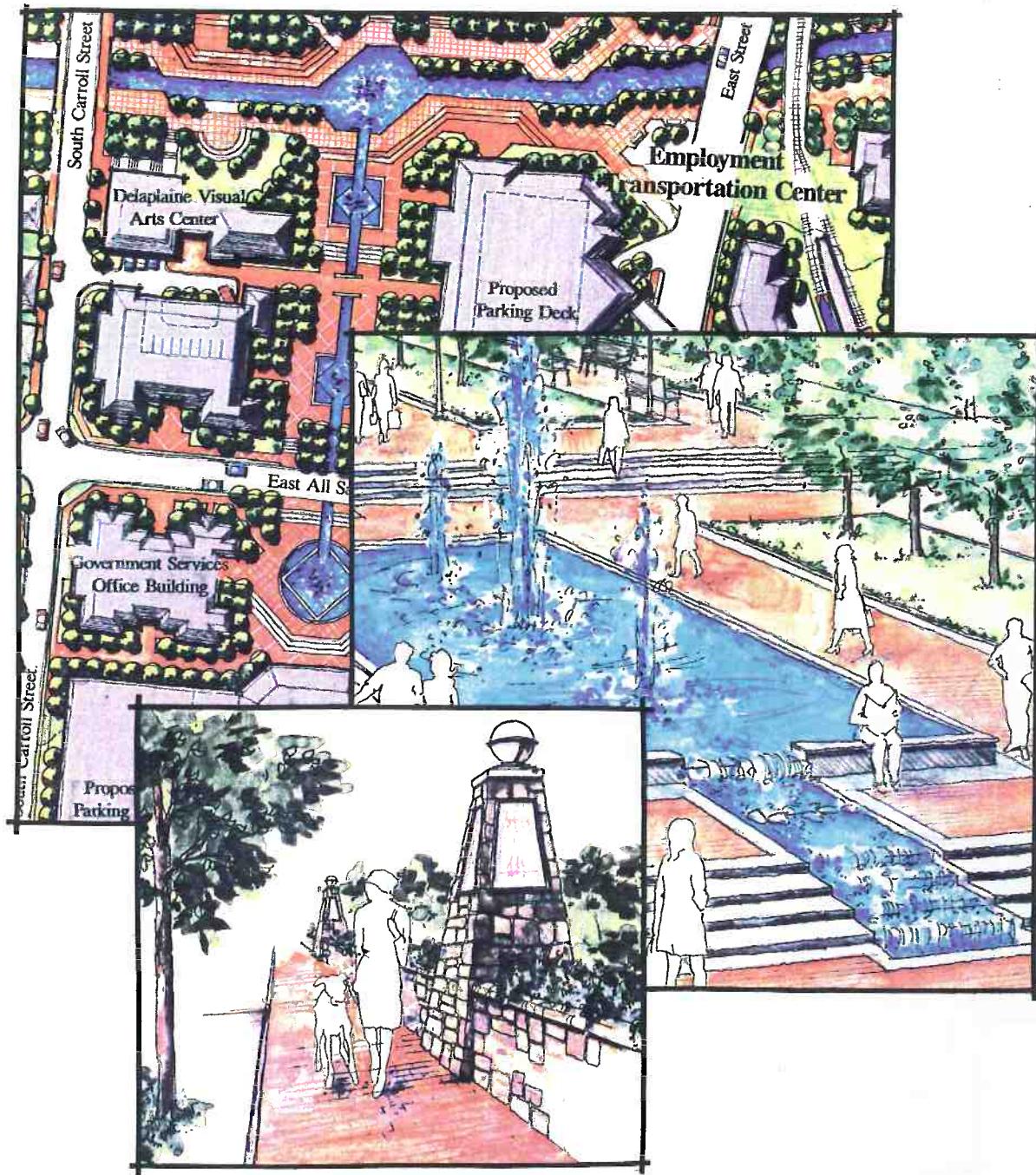


Opportunities exist for additional residential in-fill development along the park perimeter. Special uses, such as farmer's markets and craft fairs, can also be accommodated in adjacent public spaces.

Court Street to Carroll Street - is seen as an extension of the existing downtown retail and commercial center both in terms of land use and scale of park improvements. The park design responds to surrounding uses by creating a series of "human" scale plazas and passage ways similar in dimension and feeling to the Market and Patrick Street landscapes. Throughout this district, as in the entire park, water is emphasized with a variety of fountains and access to the waters edge. Pedestrian movement into and within the park is a priority in all districts.

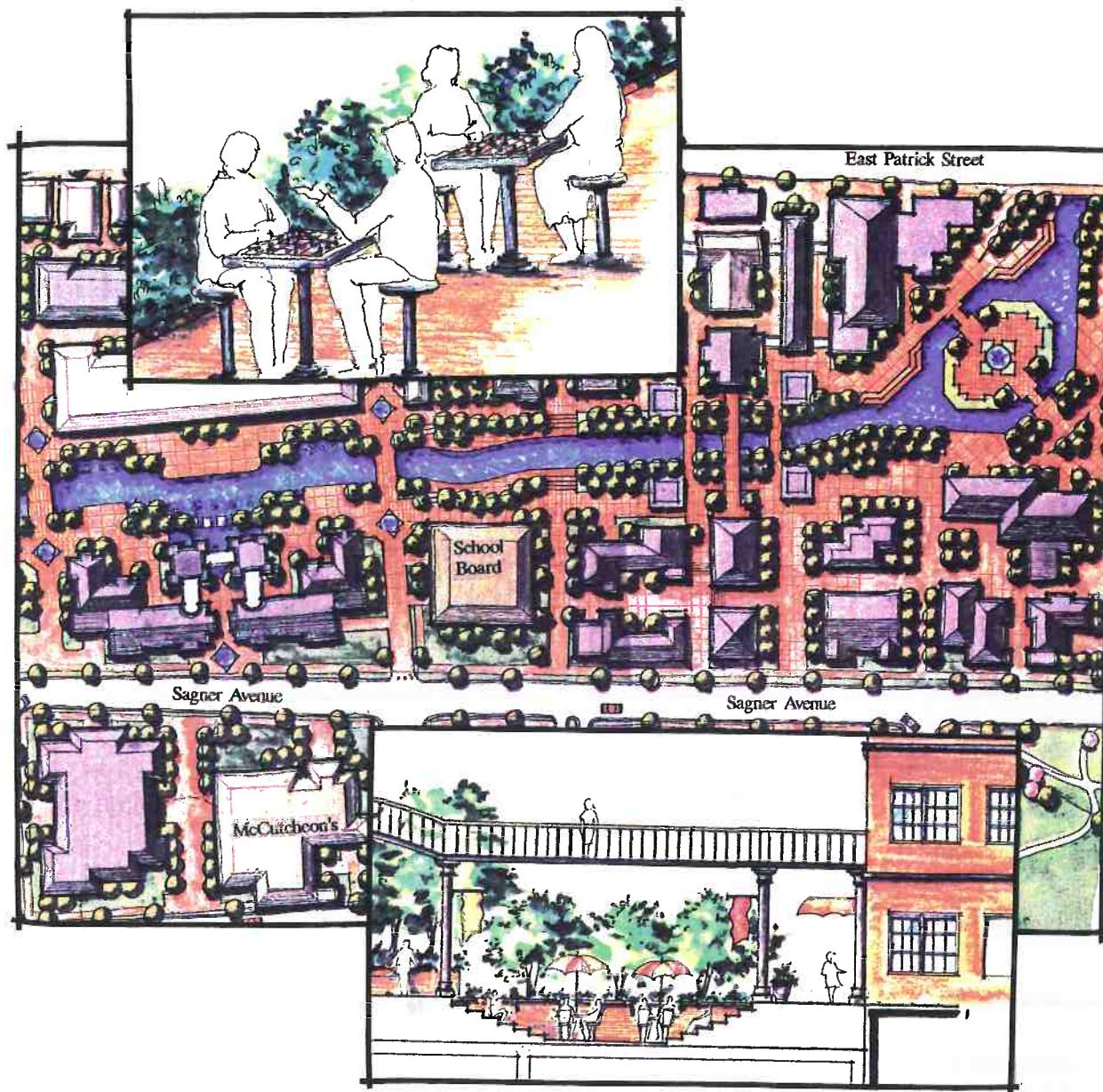


Carroll Street to East Street - will be more intensively developed and more urban in character than any other district along the park.



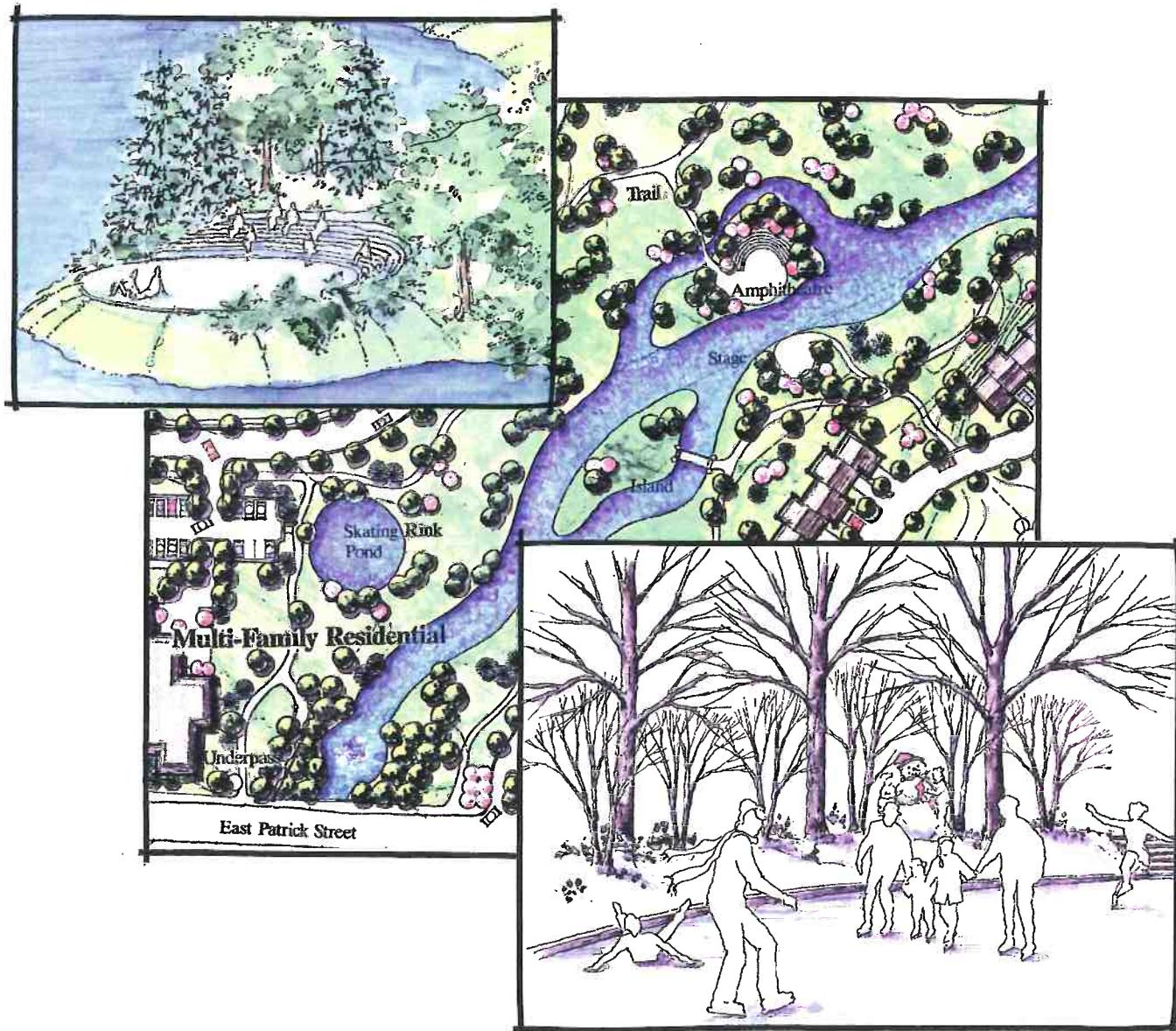
With great potential to promote two of the major land use program items -- employment enhancement and centralized transportation -- the park in this area is designed to accommodate more substantial architectural and circulation needs. An important feature of the design for this district emphasizes strong connections between the park and adjacent properties to avoid development patterns set apart from the downtown.

East Street to East Patrick Street - will be characterized by a series of small plazas, seating areas, formal planting beds and water features. Development of land along this section of the park will occur primarily in response to the successful completion of proposed transportation and employment centers in adjacent districts.



The character of this district will be similar in scale and intensity to development near Market Street, but with less retail and more emphasis toward service and support commercial activities. Adaptive reuse of significant structures in this district should be encouraged to contribute to preservation of existing architecture. Opportunity for in-fill residential development interspersed throughout this area is also seen as an important component of the plan.

East Patrick Street to Highland Street - provides a great opportunity for increased housing adjacent to the downtown area. Containing some of the largest and least utilized properties along the park, the development of this district will require innovative and creative planning techniques to realize Master Plan goals.



The establishment of a residential and open space anchor at this end of the park, mirroring the Baker Park neighborhood on the west, will introduce a more stable and coherent development pattern than existing land uses in this district. The Carroll Creek Park Master Plan does not promote the removal or relocation of existing businesses, employers or residents in areas otherwise described by the plan. However, as these properties become available for re-use as new development is proposed, the plan will act as the guide for final land use designations.

Implementation Strategies - Coming attractions

In review, the preceding pages have described the evolution of a design vision for the Carroll Creek Park Master Plan. This plan represents the first step in realizing long term goals for growth and development of downtown Frederick. In addition, the following outline begins to describe recommendations for a strategy to implement the design.

1. *Test the plan* - to determine infrastructure needs to support growth of the downtown in the direction indicated by the Master Plan and baseline demographic conditions against which development proposals can be judged.
2. *Develop strategies for opportunity sites* - identifying people and conditions involved in realizing the land use components of the Master Plan. In many cases this may mean the City and Carroll Creek Commission need to act as a catalyst to form alliances between land owners, land developers and the City. In addition, the development of a promotional program for enticing and handling potential development groups is being initiated by the Carroll Creek Commission.
3. *Develop tools* - that will ensure the vision is attained through the life of the project in an easily understood manner. At the core of this idea is the establishment of enhanced design and planning review processes for the adopted plan including, clear policy statements, design guidelines and readily accessible information for prospective developers.
4. *Put the tools in place* - by establishing roles for the various commissions and boards settling issues of jurisdiction about the topics of
 - Land use compatibility
 - Design compatibility
 - Market/Demographic compatibility
 - Developer compatibility
5. *Pursue opportunities* - for funding and to develop a phasing program for park improvements that responds to proposed development and project budget cycles.

Summary

Carroll Creek and the adjacent properties that line its banks provide a unique centerpiece for the continued growth and enjoyment of downtown Frederick. The Park Master Plan will provide significant outdoor pedestrian spaces for recreation, gathering and special events within this existing environment.

Public and private participation throughout the development of the Master Plan was a significant contribution to the design process. A series of interviews with more than 20 concerned groups, involving more than 200 individuals culminated in the adoption of the plan by the City of Frederick Mayor and Board of Aldermen in November of 1991.

Initial public sentiment within the Frederick community exhibited little faith in the design process, no consensus on significant project goals and objectives, and the overall belief that the Master Plan and, therefore, the economic development program for Frederick's future were very much in doubt. Balancing the needs of the new development and growth against fears of displacement or rapid change will be the true test of the Master Plan.

Largely through the efforts of the Carroll Creek Commission and the City of Frederick these negative views were overcome. The Frederick community has now begun to rally behind the Master Plan which incorporates long term land use recommendations with detailed parks design and implementation strategies.

