

Appendix 6. Existing Plans Summary

Appendix 6.1. Introduction

The following paragraphs provide a context for this Pedestrian Plan in terms of other previous plans and documents prepared for the Town which have contained related pedestrian elements. This section provides a synopsis of the documents in the sequence in which they were adopted by the Town of Cary, in order for recommendations in this Plan to build upon the work of previous plans.

6.1.1. January 2001 Comprehensive Transportation Plan - Pedestrian Element

The Cary Comprehensive Transportation Plan is an all-inclusive plan for all modes of travel in the Cary area: auto, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle. Chapter 3 of the Plan deals with pedestrian travel and includes an assessment of pedestrian accident history and deficiencies in the sidewalk system. Chapter 3 also provides goals and policies that relate back to an overall vision statement for the Town's transportation system, as well as recommendations for future pedestrian-related activities in Cary. The pedestrian focus of this collective set of goals is threefold:

- ◆ To consider and take advantage of opportunities to improve pedestrian facilities and access in concert with or at the same time as thoroughfare improvements
- ◆ To minimize conflict points between pedestrians and vehicles
- ◆ To implement the "four E's" to promote walkability [adapted from a Cary resident transportation website] including encouragement, education, engineering, and enforcement

6.1.2. August 2001 Town Center Area Plan

The Town Center Area Plan is a detailed master plan for Cary's downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. It articulates the Town's vision for the type of environment desired in the Town Center Area, including its physical form and appearance. It provides long-range land use; transportation; parking; housing; and, parks and greenways recommendations. This Plan is intended to provide policy and design guidance for the construction of public projects as well as private development proposals. It divides the downtown into five planning sub-areas and contains text along with four maps and five background papers. One of the Plan's six elements or chapters focuses on the transportation network and discusses the pedestrian circulation system specifically. One of the plan maps includes existing and proposed locations for greenways, sidewalks (both budgeted and proposed), and bicycle facilities. Four greenways are proposed with three at the periphery of the downtown and one traversing the downtown along a

former rail corridor. The Town Center Area Plan was adopted as an amendment to the 1998 Land Use Plan.

6.1.3. August 2001 Design Guidelines Manual

The Design Guidelines Manual is an outgrowth of the Cary Land Use Plan (November, 1996) which established a comprehensive approach to changing the pattern of new development in Cary. That Plan called for the development of a design guidelines manual to put its planning concepts into action. The Design Guidelines Manual presents general design priorities and core design principles that can be adapted to individual circumstances of site and subdivision layout. The Manual is organized into a set of seven design principles correlated to a set of desired development forms or types, and provides a tool kit of graphics and text that illustrate what development would include or look like when the design guidelines are applied. Subsection 6 of the chapter on design principles calls for development to include plans for pedestrian, bicyclist, and transit user access. The Manual also provides a checklist for meeting the seven over-riding design principles that includes pertinent items for pedestrian circulation. Finally, the tool kit portion of the Manual lays out guidelines for pedestrian routes, intersection and mid-block street crossings, sidewalk widths, and tips for design to recognize pedestrian comfort needs, reduce street crossing distances and enhance safety.

6.1.4. September 2002 Northwest Area Plan

This Plan was developed in a format that complements and is consistent with that used for the Town Center Plan. It covers an area of about 8,000 acres in the northwest corner of Cary including the Research Triangle Park (RTP), a large scale bio-technology and research campus. The Northwest Area Plan was also adopted as an amendment to the 1996 Cary Land Use Plan. It includes text, three maps, and four background papers. Chapter 3 focuses on the transportation system, including pedestrian facilities, while Chapter 4 focuses on parks and open space and discusses greenways. The land use vision for the area is organized around a system of open space corridors and an interconnected multi-use path network intended to provide for pedestrian and bicycle commutes into RTP, as well as to other activity centers within the area.

6.1.5. December 2003 Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Facilities Master Plan

The Cary Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources Master Plan takes a comprehensive look at the need for recreation and cultural opportunities in Cary. The Parks Plan is driven by a set of eight goals, one of which calls for providing a “comprehensive greenway system that provides residents safe and convenient access to park, recreation and

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cultural arts facilities and allows alternative transportation opportunities". Chapter 3 of the Parks Plan is an analysis of existing conditions and future demand for a broad range of facilities including walking trails. It provides an in-depth assessment of demand through a citizen preference survey and Level-of-Service analysis.

6.1.6. August 2004 Southwest Area Plan

This Plan follows the same format as the Northwest Cary Area Plan. It covers about 5,000 acres in a rural area of Cary. The Plan includes a vision for a system of preserved open spaces and greenways providing connections to the American Tobacco Trail. The Plan is guided by six principles, one of which is to provide an adequate transportation system. An important component of the transportation system principle is the use of greenways adjoining roads in the area. Chapter 3 of the Plan focuses on such greenways as opposed to sidewalks to meet Town-wide objectives for pedestrian circulation system connectivity.

6.1.7. Land Development Ordinance (LDO)

The Land Development Ordinance (LDO), as updated in July 2003, is Cary's zoning regulations package and includes the basis for the Town's policies relating to the pedestrian network. The LDO discusses the relationship of the ordinance to the Cary Land Use Plan and Growth Management Plan as well as other policy plans, thus establishing the legal link between policies in these plans and the requirements established in the regulations. The LDO not only articulates what is required for addressing pedestrian access in proposed developments, but also strongly ties the quality of development proposals to meeting the policies described in each of Cary's policy plans.

Chapter 4 of the ordinance describes each of the use districts including conditional use districts and overlay zones. Some of the more specialized zones include requirements for pedestrian access and system connectivity (with varying degrees of detail on design) as part of the site design requirements. Chapter 7 of the ordinance contains minimum requirements related to site design and layout, appearance, landscaping, and building design. This chapter is to be used in conjunction with other related documents including, but not limited to, the Community Appearance Manual, General Design Guidelines, Downtown Design Guidelines, Standard Specifications and Details, Small Area Plans, and the Transportation Plan. There is one Section devoted to connectivity. Subsection 7.10.4 of this section establishes standards for pedestrian facilities, including sidewalks and paths. Finally, Chapter 8 has standards for subdivisions and uses requiring site plans. This includes requirements for set aside of land for greenways.

