

# Interim Development Plan

for the West Sector of the  
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus

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for the West Sector of the  
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus  
Montgomery College

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Interim Development Plan for the West Sector of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus is a plan to help guide the development of that part of the campus. With several projects underway or in the planning and design stages, including the King Street Arts Center and the Cultural Arts Center, the Interim Development Plan describes an overall concept which knits together the various buildings and elements of the West Sector and describes a functional phasing and circulation concept.

The Interim Development Plan provides an organizing framework for the West Sector. Its aim is to propose elements that tie the campus together and give it a sense of identity and place. It suggests ways to strengthen connectivity to the East Sector and surroundings. It looks at how the West Sector responds to the surrounding urban fabric. It builds on and enhances the success of the Silver Spring Arts and Entertainment District. It details a functional development sequence and a circulation and parking system for the site.

The primary elements of the Interim Development Plan are:

- **The King Street Arts Alley:** King Street is envisioned as the organizing spine of the West Sector. The Arts Alley is a place where the performing arts, visual arts and sciences come together at the College and community level. It is a lively street with programmable activities and elements.
- **Alley Framework Elements:** A framework of intermittent structures along King Street serve to tie the buildings and campus elements together. They would be designed to be used by the students to hold art, banners, sound equipment, lighting or other elements, and give the students opportunities for self expression.



- **Drop-Off/Turn Around:** The concept proposes that, at the full build-out of the West Sector, the current small parking area east of the Health Science Building would be turned into a Drop-off and Turn Around serving the West Sector Buildings and the CAC in particular during performances. This area would be enclosed and screened from the HSC service area with special screening elements.

The Interim Development Plan proposes a pedestrian circulation system which strengthens connectivity between the two sides of the campus. Placing clear crosswalks at streets, building entrances and activating uses along sidewalks and pedestrian paths encourages pedestrian activity and promotes safety.

Vehicular access and circulation through the West Sector will continue to take place via King Street and Jesup Blair Drive. Parking is provided at West Sector parking areas and on the East Sector in the existing garage and other parking areas.



## II. INTRODUCTION

### Vision

Montgomery College is growing and transforming as part of its commitment to serving its diverse student population. In 2005, as part of the expansion of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus, the College hired SmithGroup, a nationally renowned Architecture, Engineering, Interiors and Planning firm, to create an Interim Development Plan for the West Sector of the campus.

The Interim Development Plan has been prepared in conjunction with the design of the Cultural Arts Center. It sets up a clear vision for the spirit and overall design of the West Sector of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus. It establishes a framework around which the campus is organized from an urbanistic and placemaking perspective. It illustrates how the College will create a great place and unique campus identity while maintaining connectivity with the East Sector of the campus. It shows how the College will respond to the urban fabric and character of the Silver Spring CBD while keeping a campus sense of place and character.

### History and Development

Montgomery College was founded in 1946, and the Takoma Park (now Takoma Park/Silver Spring) campus was established as its first campus in 1950. The College added the Rockville campus in 1965, and the Germantown campus in 1978. In June 2005, the College Board of Trustees renamed the Takoma Park Campus the “Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus” in recognition of the historical significance of the Campus location and its ties to the City of Takoma Park and in order to acknowledge the evolution of Montgomery College and the expansion into Silver Spring.

Over the years, the College gained a strong reputation within the Metropolitan Washington

community as an institution of learning and opportunity. As a result, the College is experiencing the need for growth and expansion in order to meet the needs of its diverse student population. In 2004, Montgomery College completed an update of its college-wide Facilities Master Plan. This plan establishes a ten-year (2002-2012) development framework for the College based on expected growth of student programs and population.

The larger portion of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus, the East Campus, is located within a residential neighborhood of Takoma Park. The campus had not been able to grow much due to proximity to residential neighborhoods and nearby industrial sites. In 1998, following much consultation with Maryland National Capital Park & Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) and extensive community outreach, the College Board of Trustees adopted an updated Takoma Park Campus Facilities Master Plan that provided the framework for the expansion of the Campus to the west along Georgia Avenue. Academics at the west side of Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus focus mainly on Arts and Sciences. This includes humanities, social sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, applied sciences as well as visual arts, communication arts and performing arts.

The expansion of the Campus places three new buildings geographically in Silver Spring, Maryland. The Health Science Center was completed in 2005, the King Street Arts Center is in the first phase of construction, and the Cultural Arts Center is presently in the design stage. The three new buildings help to enhance and anchor the downtown Silver Spring revitalization efforts and lend both greatly increased visibility and vitality to the Campus. In 2004, the College completed the construction of a new pedestrian bridge spanning across the CSX/Metro tracks. This bridge provides connectivity between the East Campus and the new facilities on the West Campus. A Student Services Center building is also currently under construction on the East Campus.

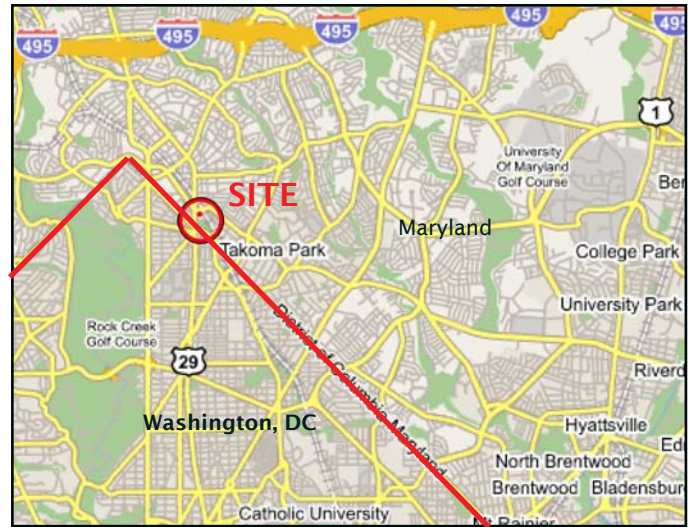
### III. EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

#### Location and Context

The Montgomery College Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus lies just north of the District of Columbia in Montgomery County. The West portion of the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus is located in the Central Business District of Silver Spring, Maryland. The East Sector is located in a residential part of Takoma Park. The campus is bisected by the WMATA/CSX railway lines.

Over the last few years, Silver Spring has been experiencing a rebirth. The Central Business District (CBD) has seen an influx of businesses, residents and visitors. This has led to an increase in density and a revitalization of the area into a vibrant, active downtown. As part

of this rebirth, the Silver Spring CBD has become home to a number of arts venues including the Round House Theater, the American Film Institute and the Silver Spring Stage.



Location Map



Aerial View of Site and Surroundings



**Existing Site and Program Components**

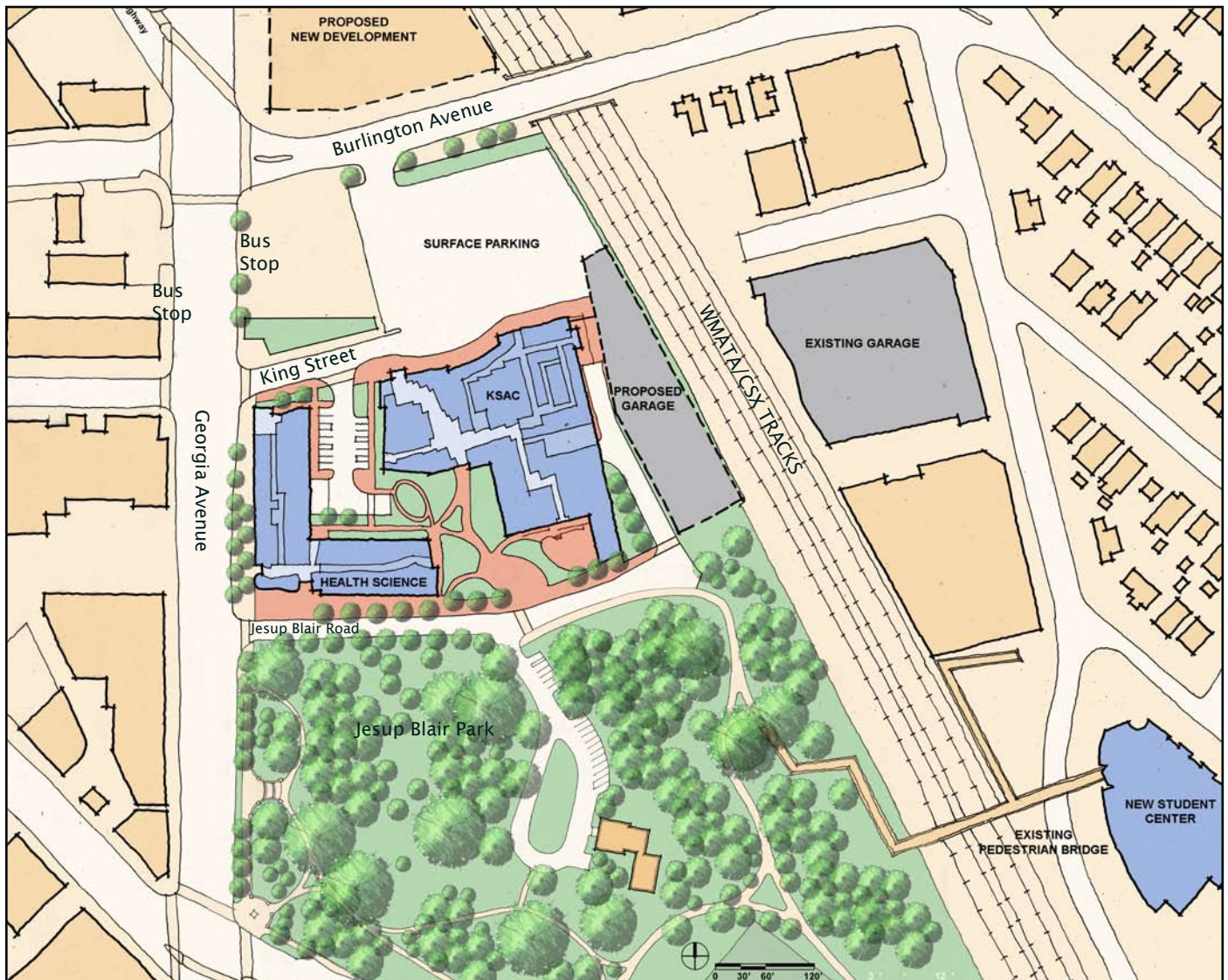
The West Sector is located in the southern end of busy downtown Silver Spring. It is bounded on the north by Burlington Avenue, on the east by the WMATA/CSX railroad tracks, on the south by Jesup Blair Drive and Jesup Blair Park, and on the west by Georgia Avenue. King Street begins at Georgia Avenue, at about the midpoint of the site, and runs east-west approximately to the center of the site.

The West Sector lies between the Silver Spring and Takoma Park Metro stations on the Red

line. A bus stop in each direction is located along Georgia Avenue between Burlington Avenue and King Street.

The West Sector is connected to the East Sector by a pedestrian bridge which is located to the south within Jesup Blair Park. It spans across the railroad tracks to the new Student Services Building.

The next two pages detail the existing buildings and future program components of the Interim Development Plan.



Current Approved Plan



**Health Sciences Center**

The HSC is located at the corner of Georgia Avenue and Jesup Blair Road. This 98,000-square-foot facility provides state-of-the-art classroom, laboratory and other spaces to serve the College’s various health sciences programs. It also includes a new small business training center and a community health clinic operated by Holy Cross Hospital in partnership with the College. It has some adjacent staff and handicapped parking spaces as well as a small service/loading area.



**King Street Arts Center**

Construction will soon begin on the renovation of the old bakery into the King Street Arts Center. This building will house the Art Department and the School of Art and Design including classrooms, office space, spaces for resident artists and gallery space. In addition, the building will house the Network Operations Center, the central computer center for all of Montgomery College’s campuses.



**East Parking Garage**

An existing College parking garage is located across the tracks to the east of the West Campus, north of the East Campus. This garage is mainly used by students and staff.





**Cultural Arts Center**

The CAC will be located on the northwest corner of the site, where Georgia Avenue, Burlington Avenue and East-West Highway intersect. This building will house two performing arts theaters, as well as classroom, studio and office space for Montgomery College’s performing arts programs.



**Future Parking Garage**

The College proposes to locate a future parking garage east of the KSAC, along the edge of the tracks. The garage spans from King Street to Jesup Blair Road.



**Surface Parking Lot/Future Building**

A small surface parking lot on the northeast corner of the site currently serves the HSC. An entrance to the parking lot currently exists along Burlington Avenue. In the future, the parking lot could become the site of another building.



**Jesup Blair Park and Existing Pedestrian Bridge**

The 14.5 acre park lies south of the West Sector. Home to the historic Blair House, the park has recently been renovated with sports fields, picnic areas, and a playground. The pedestrian bridge connecting the two sides of the campus is accessed from the park via a path between the bridge and the West Sector.



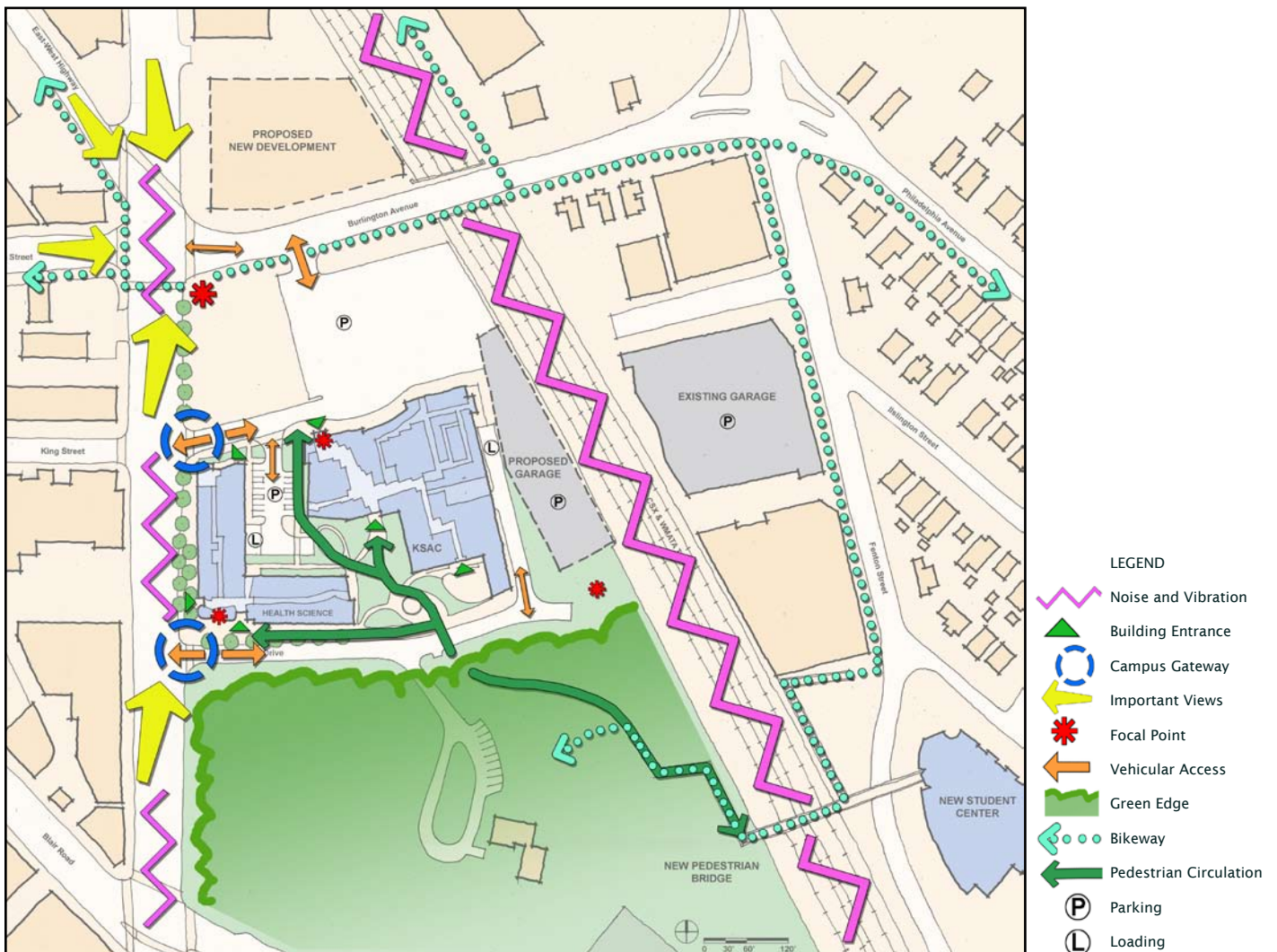
### Site Analysis

The West Sector is located on a prominent corner in the southern part of the Silver Spring CBD. The site as a whole is well viewed from surrounding streets and from the railroad tracks.

There are excellent views of the site from both the north and south along Georgia Avenue, as well as East-West Highway and Burlington Avenue. These views and the prominence of the corner of Georgia Avenue/Burlington Avenue make this an ideal place to locate the Cultural Arts Center despite noise and vibration from traffic and railway. The West Sector has good

vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to surrounding commercial residential, and park areas. The site is served by bus routes along Georgia Avenue and a planned local shared-use bikeway along Burlington Avenue.

Two pedestrian and vehicular “gateways” to the campus suggest themselves along King Street (an active gateway) and Jesup Blair Drive (a passive gateway). The Health Science Center has an entrance and streetscaping along Georgia Avenue which allows it to be responsive to the city fabric and creates activity along the street. The CAC site offers a similar opportunity to enhance the street life of Georgia Avenue.

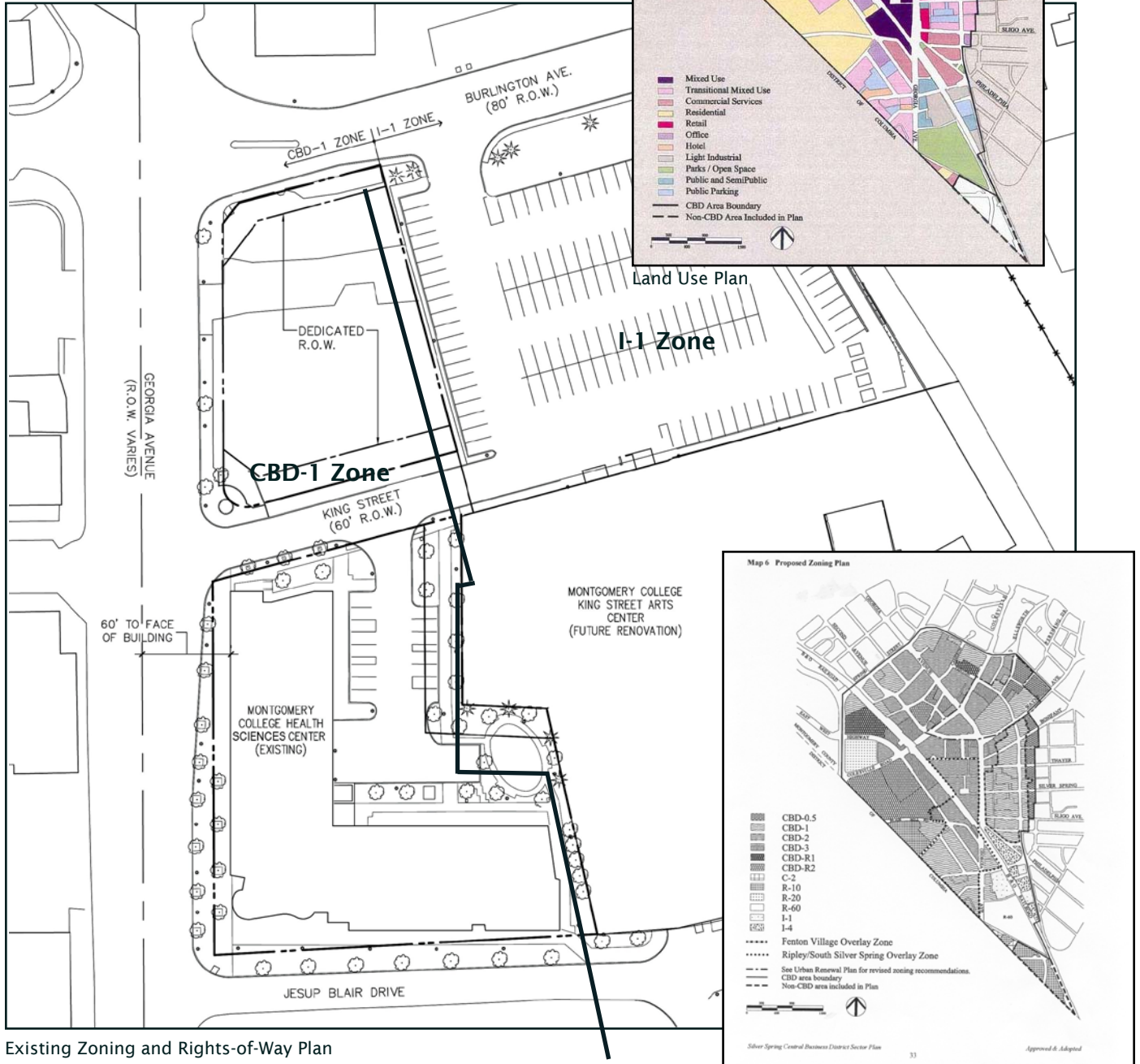


Site Analysis Diagram



### Existing Zoning Information

The West Sector lies within two zones. The western part of the West Sector is zoned CBD-1 (Central Business District), while the eastern part of the West Sector is zoned I-1 (Light Industrial). The Silver Spring CBD Sector Plan also governs development in this area.



General Zoning Information

		<b>CBD-1: Central Business District</b>		<b>Reference Section</b>
<b>Uses</b>	<b>Standard Method</b>	<b>Optional Method</b>	<b>COMCOR, 2003</b>	
Cultural, Entertainment and Recreational: Auditoriums or convention halls	Permitted only in an urban renewal area	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Educational Institutions, Private;	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Offices: banking, financial, business, professional	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Publicly owned or publicly operated uses	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Theaters, legitimate	Permitted only in an urban renewal area	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Dwellings	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Eating and Drinking Establishments	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Laboratories	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
Recreational or Entertainment Establishments, Commercial	Permitted	Permitted	59-C-6.22	
<b>Minimum Lot Area</b>	<b>Standard Method</b>	<b>Optional Method</b>		
	None	22,000 sq. ft.	Section 59-C-6.231	
<b>Max. Building Coverage</b>	<b>Standard Method</b>	<b>Optional Method</b>		
	75% of net net lot area	none	59-C-6.232	
<b>Minimum Public Use Space</b>	<b>Standard Method</b>	<b>Optional Method</b>		
	10 % of net lot area	20 % of net lot area. If special regulations concerning moderately priced dwelling units set forth in section 59-C-6.215(a) are used this may be reduced to 5%	59-C-6.233	
<b>Maximum Density of Development (Max. permitted non-residential FAR)</b>	<b>Standard Method</b>	<b>Optional Method</b>		
	1 (Development that exceeds this FAR is subject to Site Plan Approval (Sect. D-3))	2	59-C-6.234	
<b>Total FAR</b>	2	3		
<b>(i) For projects that are 100 percent residential (dwelling units per acre):</b>	43	125		
<b>Building Height</b>	<b>Standard Method</b>	<b>Optional Method</b>		
	60 feet	60 feet	59-C-6.235	
		up to 90' with site plan approval; or up to 143' with site plan approval and setbacks	59-C-6.235	
<b>Setbacks</b>	0 feet from all Rights of Way (to 30 feet height), plus 1 foot for every 6 feet b which the building or structure exceeds 30 feet		59-C-6.236	
	15 feet from adjoining lot occupied by a non-residential building		59-C-6.236	
		<b>I-1: Light Industrial</b>		<b>Reference Section</b>
<b>Uses</b>				<b>COMCOR, 2003</b>
Cultural, Entertainment and Recreational: Art or Cultural Centers	Not permitted			59-C-5.21
Services: Universities and Colleges providing teaching and research facilities	Permitted in a building existing as of May 25, 1998. Research facilities are not required.			59-C-5.21
Educational Institutions, Private;	Permitted in a building existing before January 3, 2005			59-C-5.21
Dwellings	Special Exception Use			59-C-5.21
Eating and Drinking Establishments	Special Exception Use			59-C-5.21
Trade, Artistic or Technical Schools	Permitted			59-C-5.21
Research, Development and Related Activities	Permitted			59-C-5.21
General offices	Permitted			59-C-5.21
Recreational or Entertainment Establishments, Commercial	Special Exception Use			59-C-5.21
<b>Green Area</b>	Minimum - 10% of gross tract area			59-C.5.32
	5% of net lot area for every story above 3 stories			59-C-5.41
<b>Building Height</b>	Normally, 3 stories; 42 feet			59-C-5.31
	If providing an employment center, 10 stories or 120 feet with site plan approval			59-C-5.41
<b>Setbacks</b>	From any street ROW: 10 feet if ROW line is established on a master plan; 60 feet from center line of street if no master plan showing ROW line			59-C-5.33
	From any other lot line, no setback is required (unless adjoining resid. zone).			59-C-5.33
	If a yard is provided, it shall be no less than 10 feet wide			59-C-5.33



#### IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Interim Development Plan guides the creation of a vibrant urban campus sector for students, staff and visitors. This plan establishes a framework which organizes the campus and allows the College to maximize its investment while maintaining functionality. The overall design goals and objectives for the Interim Development Plan are:

##### Create a Great Place

- To create a spirit, a sense of place and identity for the West Campus;
- To create a sense of arrival at the West Campus;
- To create a series of integrated and inviting public spaces that are welcoming, active and safe for students and staff;
- To make the Cultural Arts Center a focal point for both the College and the community.
- To maximize views and visibility of all West Sector buildings;

##### Connectivity

- To strengthen connectivity between the East and West Sectors of the campus;
- To create pleasant pedestrian linkages within the West Sector and from the West Sector to surrounding areas;
- To place activating uses along paths in order to encourage student use and interaction, and to promote safety;

##### Rich Urban Experience

- To contrast the residential character of the East Campus by providing an increased density and urban character on the West Campus;
- To reinforce the public side of the College, while maintaining a campus character;
- To help activate Georgia Avenue by placing front doors of buildings on the street;
- To create internal site features which provide a sanctuary for the arts;
- To recommend building orientations, massing and scales that are compatible with surrounding development, appropriate and functional for the College;

##### Functional Circulation and Parking

- To create a legible and functional vehicular circulation, drop-off and parking system;
- To maximize utilization of parking areas including the existing east parking garage;
- To provide adequate, functional and convenient loading and service areas for each building;

##### Maximize College Investment

- To maximize buildable area on the West Sector;
- To recommend appropriate development densities for the site;
- To be judicious in the use of special urban spaces in consideration of limited funding;

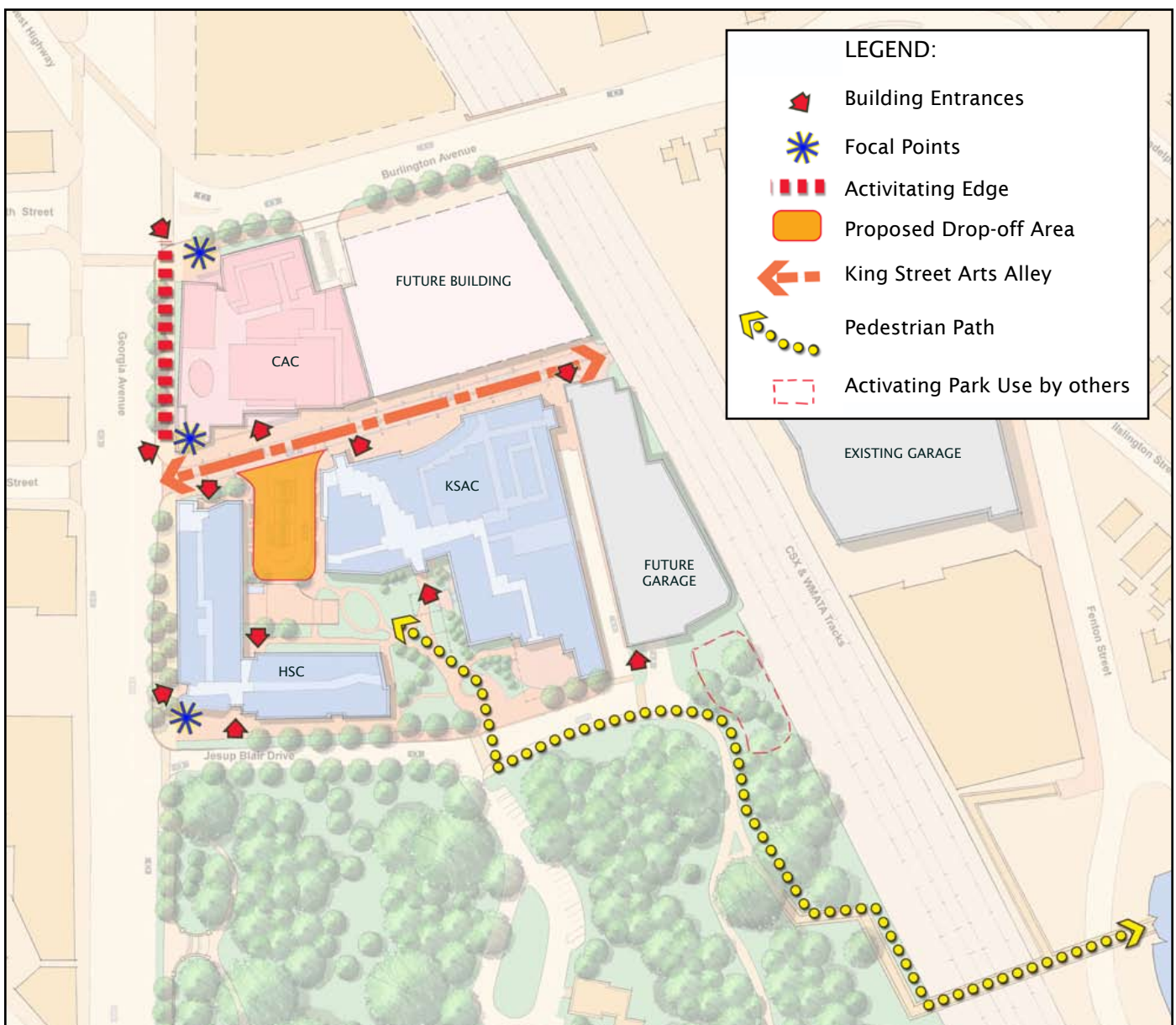
V. CONCEPT PLAN

Design Concept and Elements

The overall urban design concept for the West Sector is to build on downtown Silver Spring’s rebirth into an arts and entertainment district by creating an arts focus along King Street. The West Sector would become the southern anchor of the arts and entertainment district and a southern gateway from Washington, DC

into Silver Spring. It would become a place that serves the College, its students, faculty and visitors, as well as the community at large.

The urban design concept is composed of several conceptual elements, illustrated in the diagram below, the concept plan on the next page, and described with text and photographic images on the following two pages. They are intended to be concept elements and not final designs.

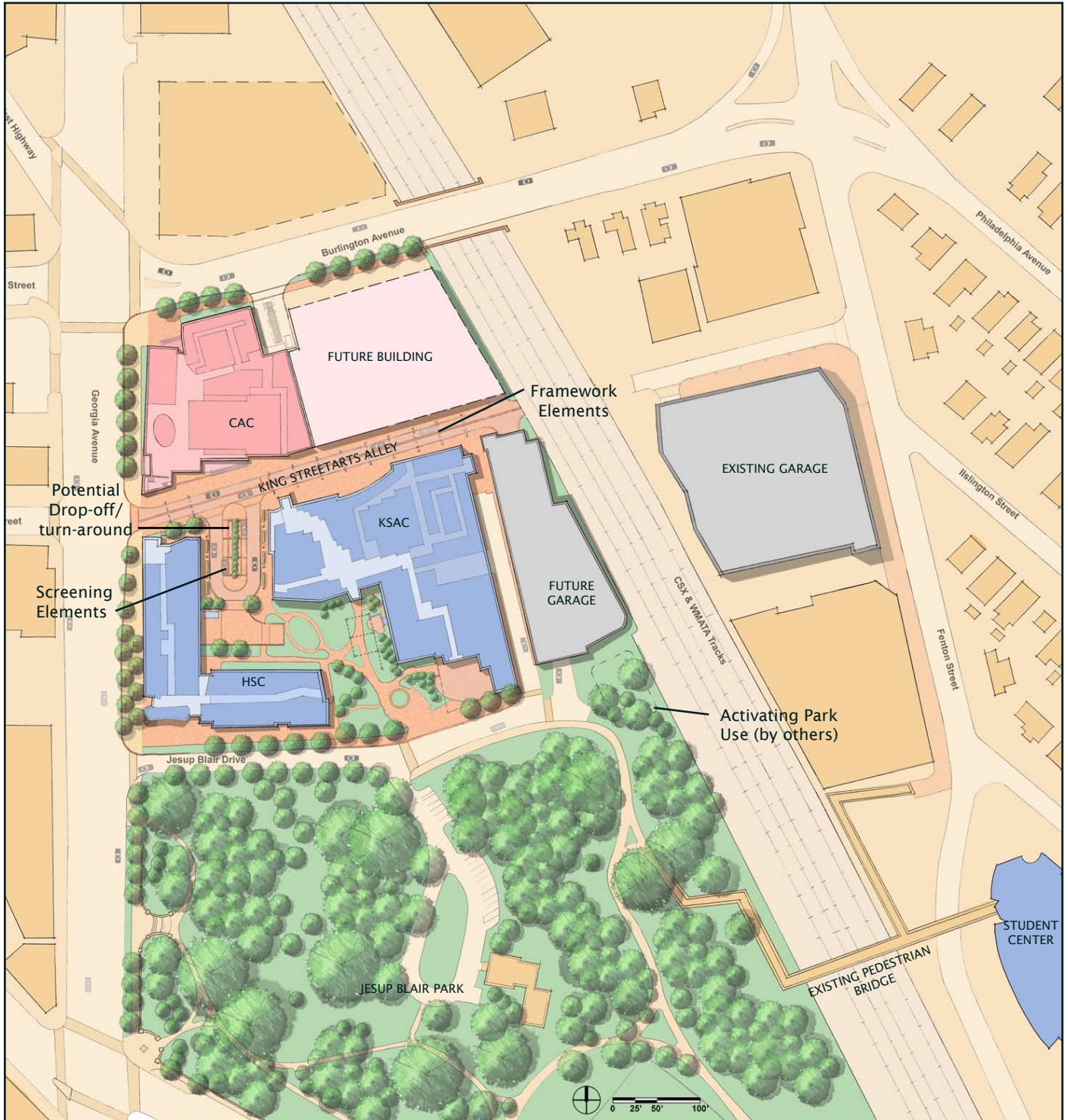


Concept diagram



### Concept Plan

This drawing illustrates the overall concept of the Interim Development Plan and its relationship to the East Sector and surrounding community.



Concept Plan



### King Street Arts Alley

The design concept envisions a vibrant arts alley along King Street featuring interior and exterior venues for the performing and fine arts for the College and community. The alley is a lively and active place with uses at street level. The alley could be programmed with activities such as a Biennale, art shows, performances and competitions. The alley functions as a spine or armature along which buildings and events are organized. The alley is paved from building face to building face with no curb. Colored and textured paving would differentiate pedestrian from vehicular zones.



### Alley Framework Elements

Along the King Street Arts Alley are a series of intermittent framework structures. These could be designed as poles on either side of the alley with theater rigging spanning between them. These structures act as organizing elements for the alley. They can be used for placing banners advertising shows, art and campus events, lighting, speakers or art produced by the students. They become an opportunity for self-expression by the students and staff of the College.



### Drop-off/Turn-Around and Screening Elements

The design concept proposes a drop-off/turn around for the buildings on the West Sector located in place of the current small parking lot east of the HSC. The new design creates an arrival point for the CAC and KSAC, allowing drivers to drop off visitors before parking. The design incorporates some of the handicapped spaces into the center island.



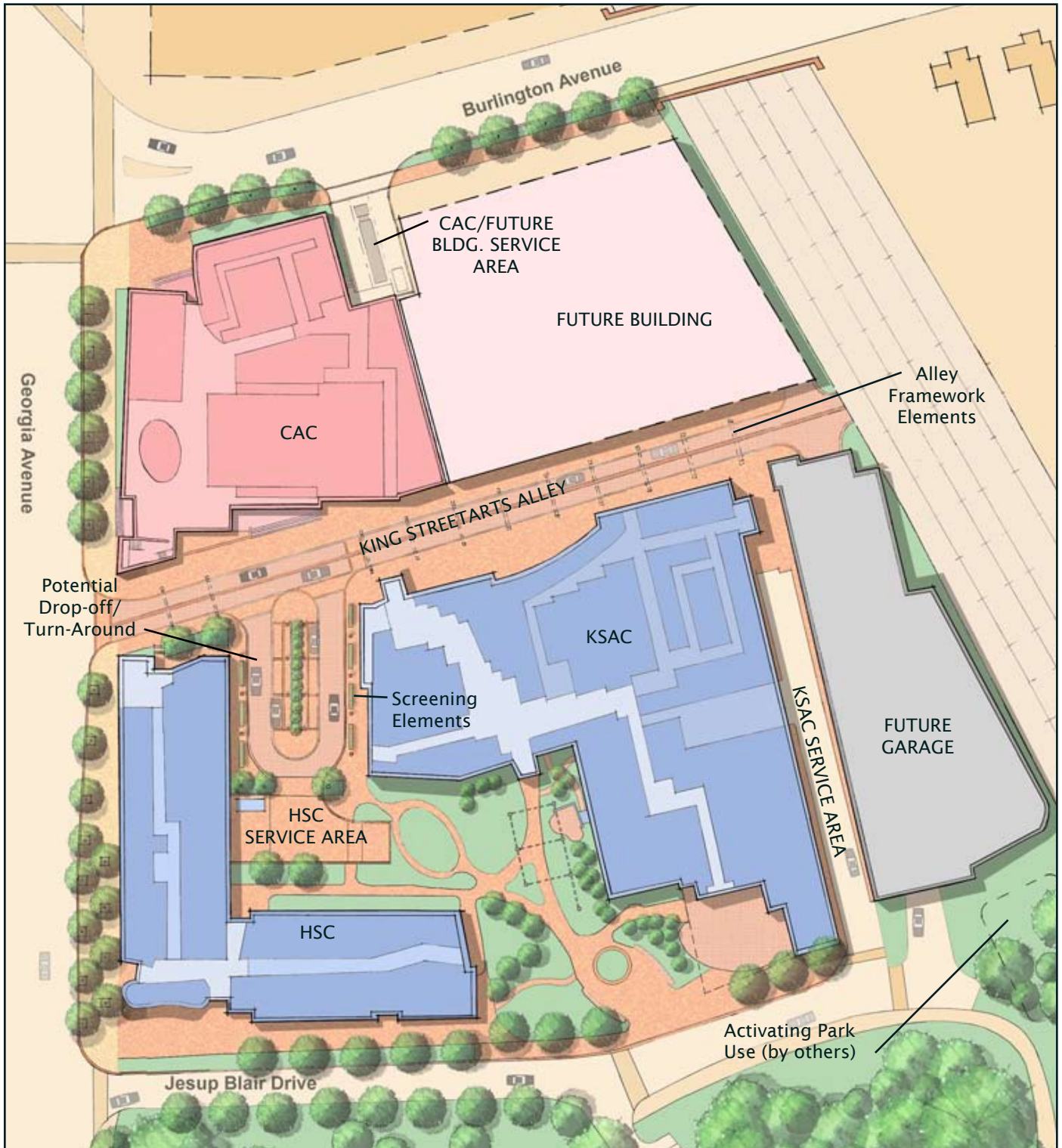
Along the edges of the new drop-off turn around are a set of proposed screening elements. These structures could be trellises with plants or vines growing on them, or they could be large banners or arbors. They are intended to frame and enclose the drop-off/turn around area and gently screen the view of the HSC service areas.





Concept Plan Detail

This plan illustrates in greater detail, the main elements of the concept plan.



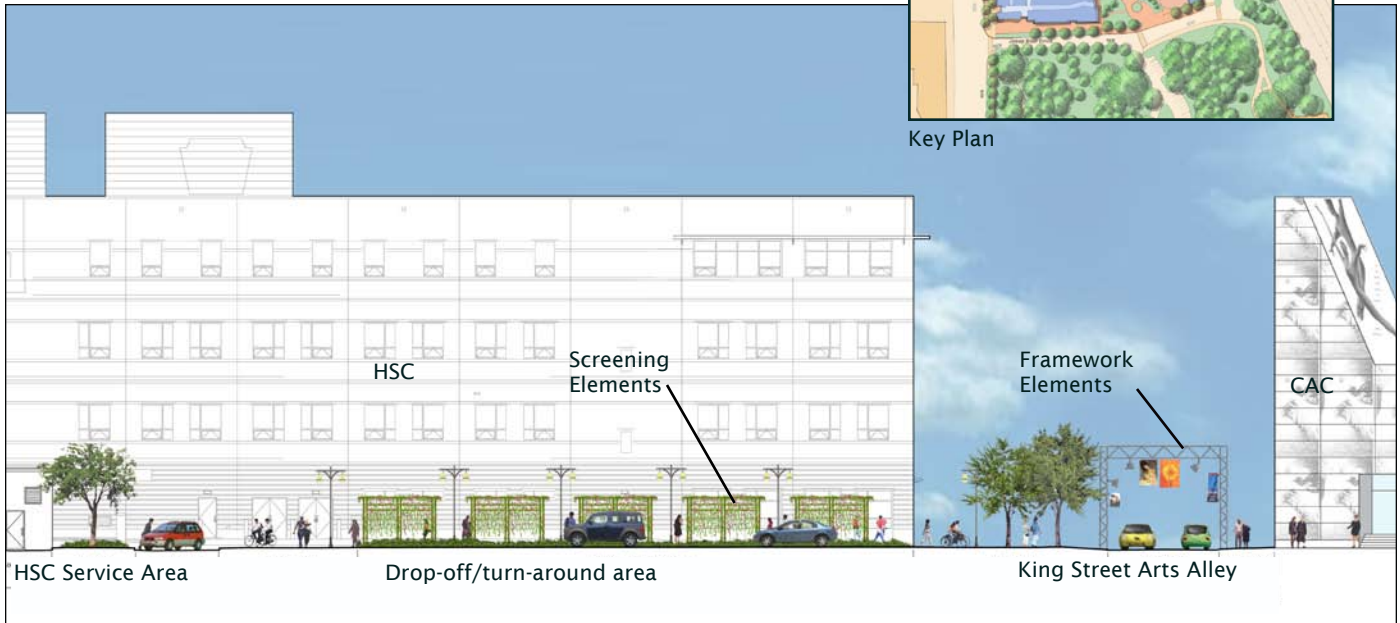
Concept Plan Detail

**Site Sections**

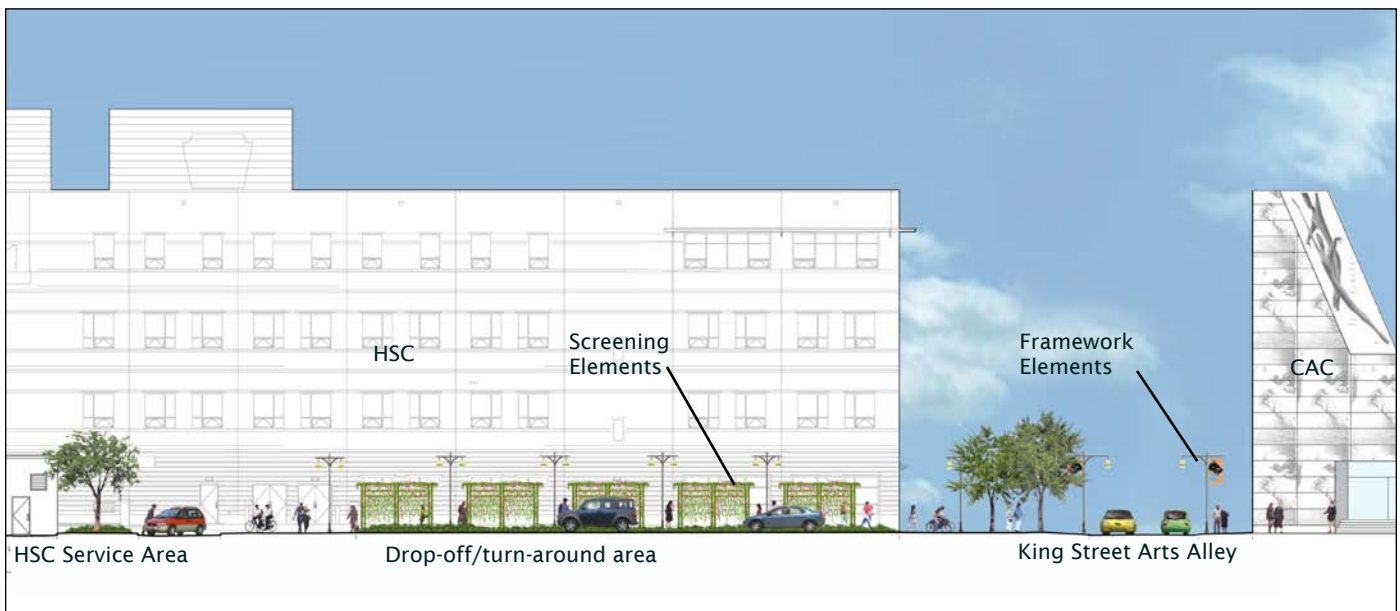
The Site Sections below illustrate two different options of how the King Street Arts Alley framework elements could be designed. The sections also show how the screening elements in the drop-off/turn-around area could be designed.



Key Plan



Section A-A through King Street looking west - Option 1

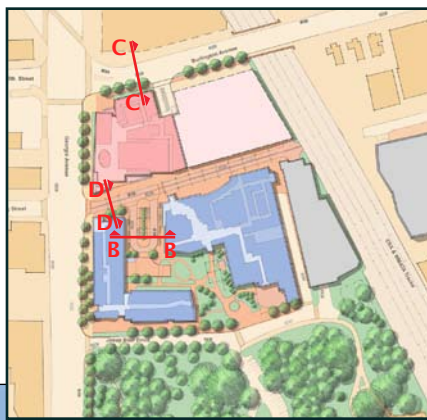


Section A-A through King Street looking west - Option 2

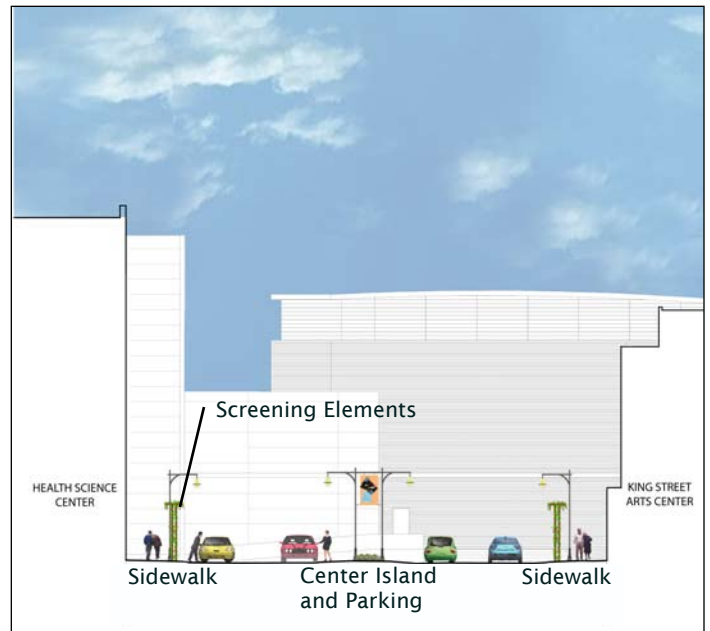


**Site Sections**

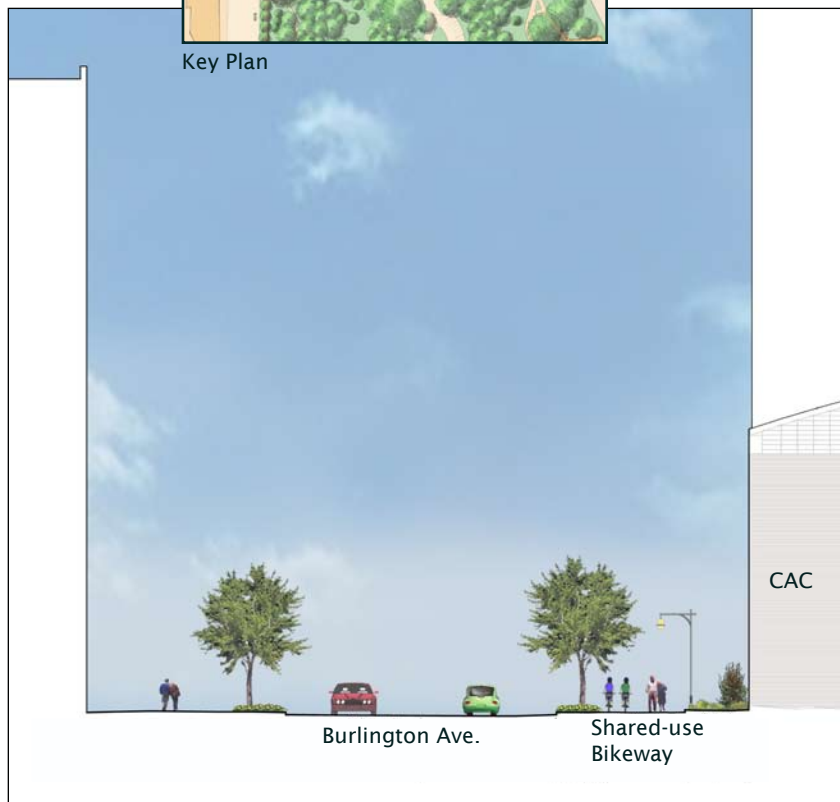
Section B-B illustrates the drop-off/turnaround area and screening elements proposed for the current small parking area east of the HSC. Section C-C shows the relationship of the shared-use bikeway to Burlington Avenue and the CAC. Section D-D shows the King Street Arts Alley with an example of framework elements illustrated.



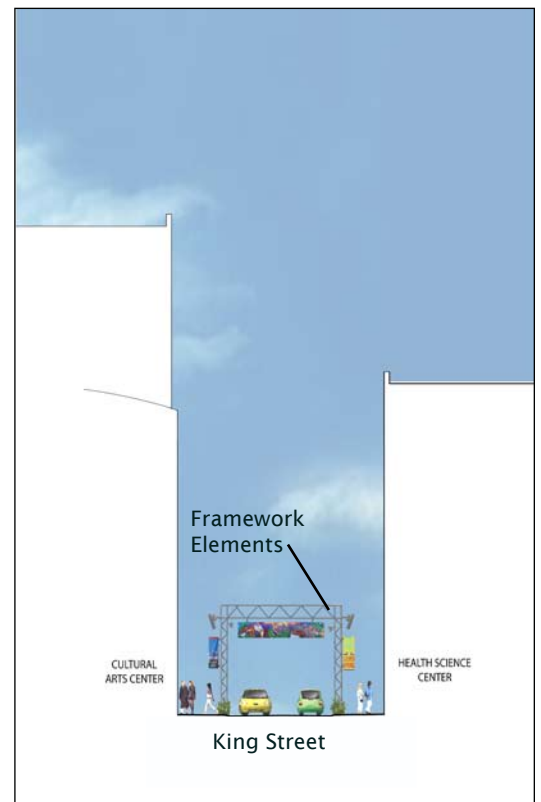
Key Plan



Section B-B through Drop-off/Turn-Around looking north



Section C-C through Burlington Avenue looking east

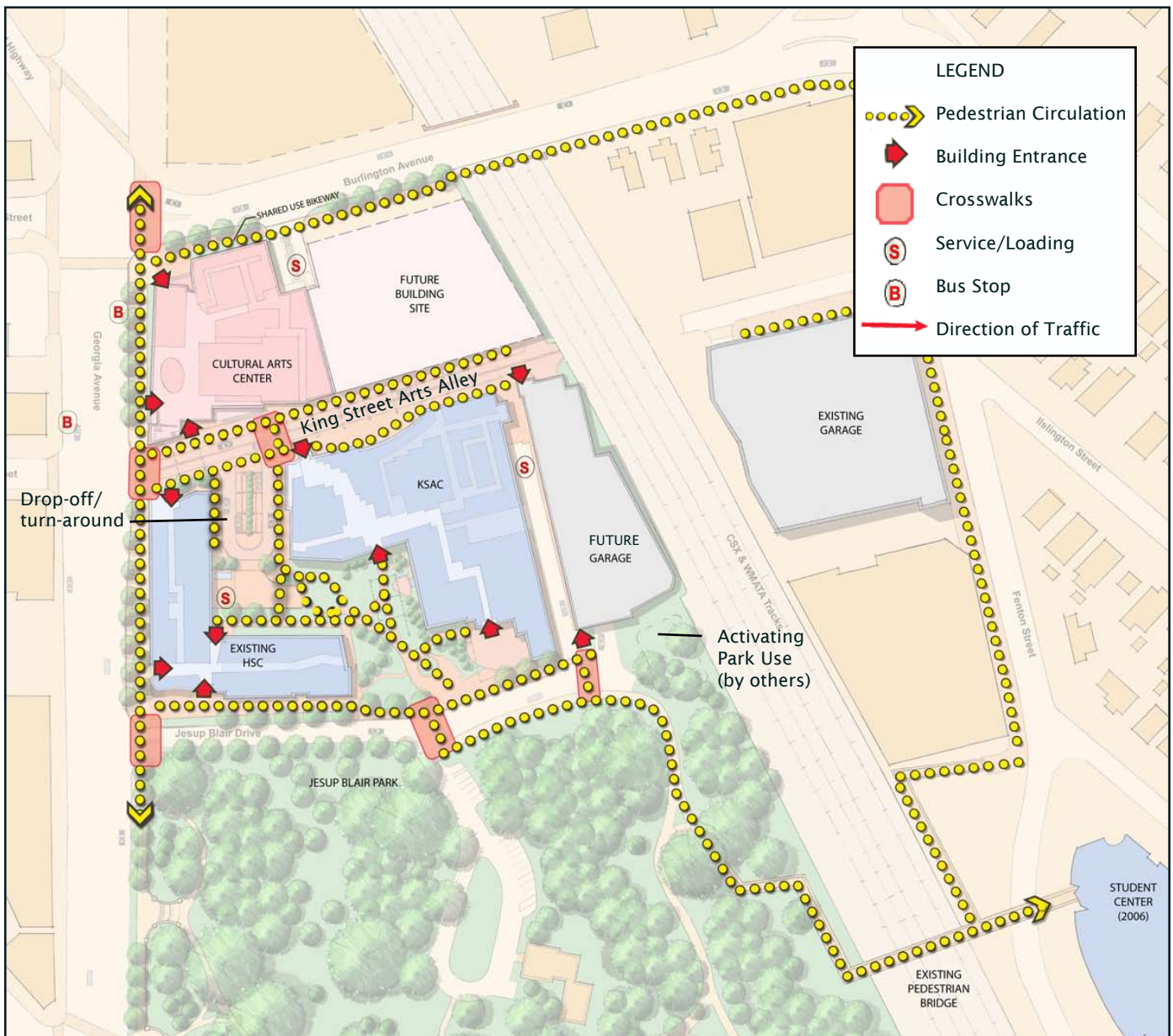


Section D-D through King Street looking east

### Pedestrian Circulation Concept

Pedestrian access to the Takoma Park/Silver Spring West Sector is provided via an existing sidewalk system along Georgia Avenue and Burlington Avenue. The design concept proposes a network of clearly marked crosswalks within the West Sector at all major intersections within and surrounding the West Sector to facilitate safe pedestrian access around the campus, between buildings, drop-off and parking locations.

The existing pedestrian bridge within Jesup Blair park connects the new Student Center on the East Sector to the Park. A path system continues from the pedestrian bridge through the park into the West Sector. Crosswalks will be placed across Jesup Blair Drive from Jesup Blair Park, to the path system on the West Sector, and to the proposed future garage.





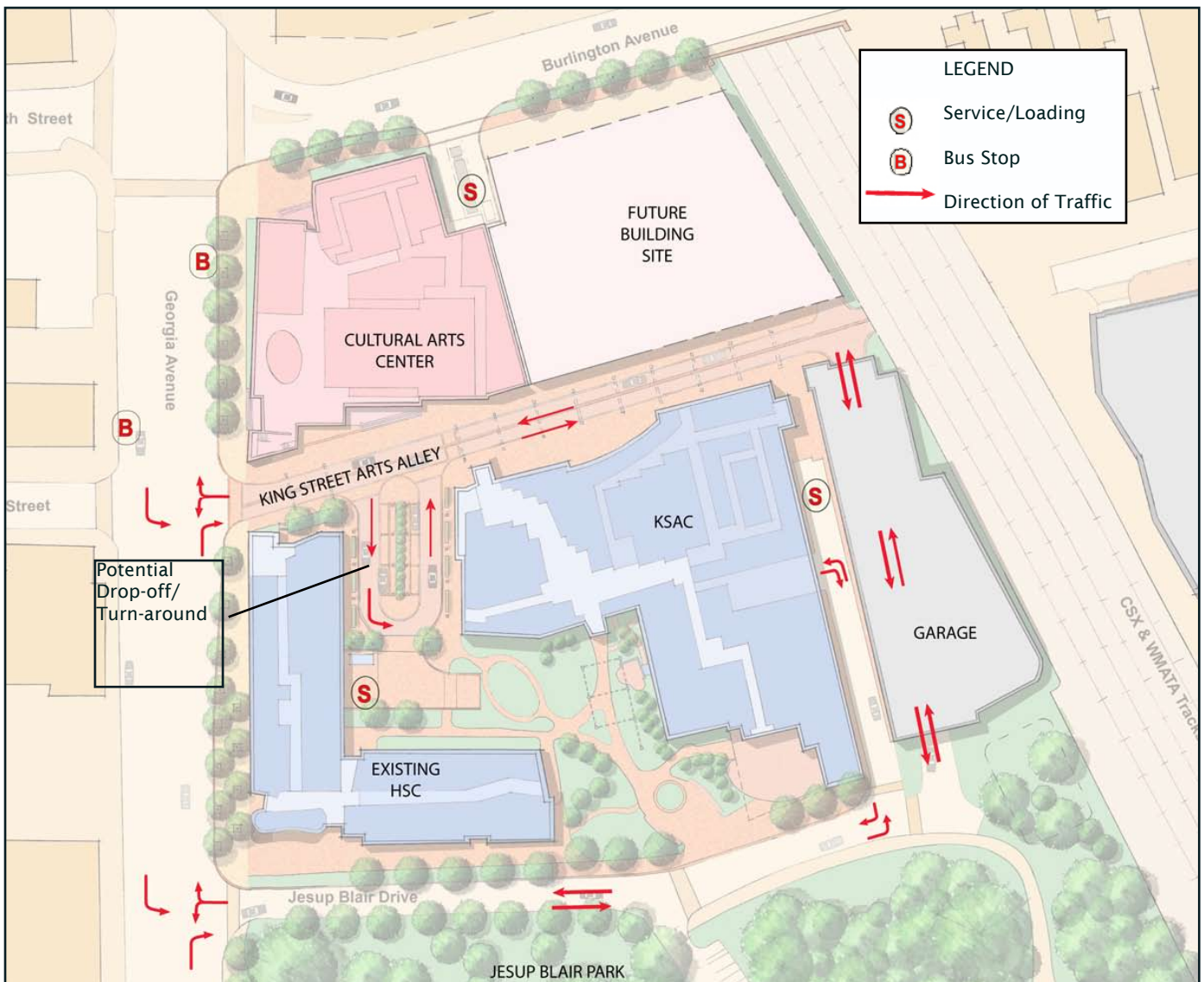
### Vehicular Circulation Concept

Vehicular access to the West Sector is currently provided via King Street from a parking lot driveway entrance on Burlington Avenue, and from Jesup Blair Drive. Bus stops exist along Georgia Avenue between King Street and Burlington Avenue.

The Interim Development Plan proposes that access to the campus continue to be provided from King Street, along the Arts Alley, and from Jesup Blair Drive. The future drop-off/turn-around area will serve all the West Sector

building, especially the CAC during performances. Parking is provided in the parking areas on the West Sector as well as the existing parking garage and other parking areas on the East Sector.

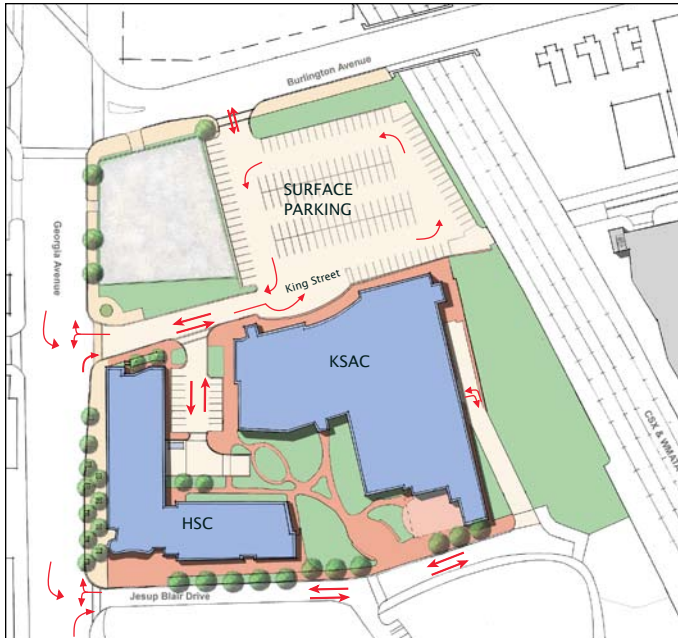
Loading spaces are provided for service vehicles with direct access to Burlington Avenue for the buildings north of King Street. Access to the KSAC's loading space and underground parking is provided via Jesup Blair Drive.



Vehicular Circulation Diagram

**Site Phasing and Circulation Concept**

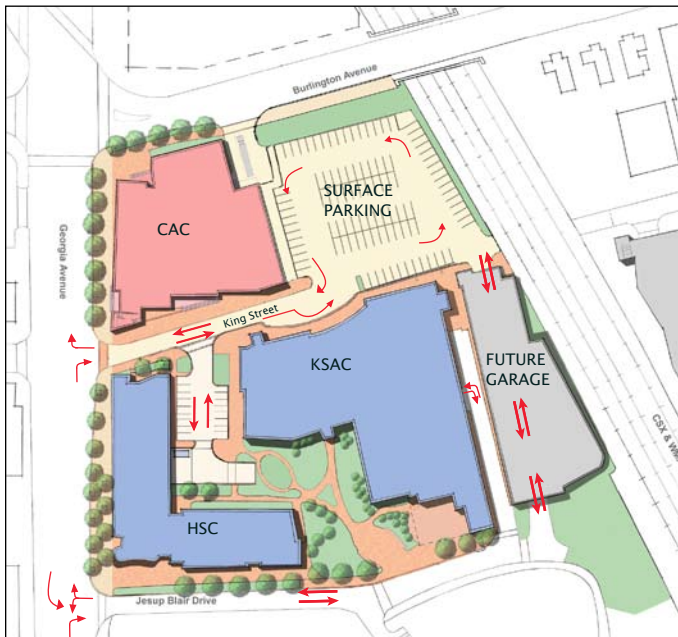
The following diagrams illustrate likely construction phasing of the site, and associated vehicular circulation.



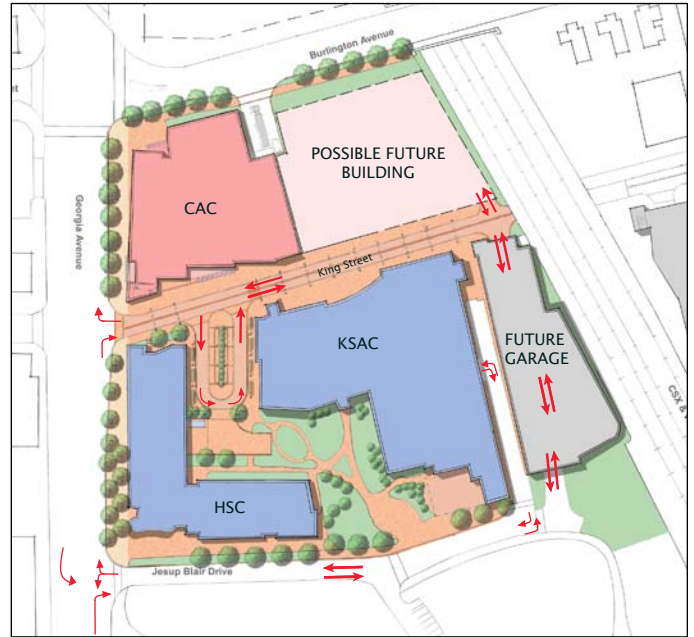
**Phase 1**  
KSAC is built.



**Phase 2**  
CAC is built; surface parking area is restriped.



**Phase 3**  
Future Garage is built.



**Phase 4**  
Future Building is built; King Street Arts Alley is paved; Turn around/drop-off area is built.



## Parking

### V. PARKING

The Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus is currently served by 885 parking spaces located in five surface parking lots and one garage. Of the 885 parking spaces, 199 spaces are reserved for faculty and staff members, handicapped individuals, and motorcycles.

Montgomery College conducted counts of the number of spaces occupied in each parking area at hourly intervals between 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM Monday through Friday, the 13th to the 17th of September 2004. The parking occupancy counts indicated that the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus maximum parking demand was 756 spaces during the peak occupancy period that occurred at 11:00AM during weekdays. The existing parking supply exceeds the parking demand by 129 spaces during the peak occupancy hour, for a parking occupancy rate of 85%. The existing student population is 4,917 students. Based on this population, the maximum parking rate per student is 0.154 spaces per student. It should be noted that the student section of the Health Sciences parking lot was 100 percent occupied during several hours of the day. Shortages in parking were generally observed during the core hours of 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon. In 2006 and 2008, an additional 51 spaces will be added for the KSAC, for a total of 936 parking spaces.

The proposed parking garage between the KSAC and railroad tracks will provide an additional 340 spaces for a total of 1,276 parking spaces. If the existing surface parking lot on King the 109 surface parking lot spaces are eliminated, it is recommended that the 109 parking spaces be retained/replaced within the development plan of this lot.

## Streetscape

Streetscape elements are important in setting the overall character of a place. The character of elements in the King Street Arts Alley and throughout the West Sector should help reinforce the urban arts and sciences character of this part of the campus.

The following are streetscape elements that should be considered in future streetscape design of the West Sector. These are intended as guidelines and suggestions and not as final designs.

### Signage

Signage for the West Sector should help announce and celebrate this unique urban part of the campus. Signage should be an integral part of the architecture and not simply additions to the campus. It should be sited to take the greatest advantage of views of the campus from Georgia Avenue, East-West Highway and the WMATA/CSX tracks.

The College is currently developing a comprehensive College-wide exterior and interior signage program. A more detailed signage concept will take place as part of that effort.

### Public Art

With the Arts and Sciences focus of the West Sector, there will be many opportunities for public art. Public Art should be located in three main areas: the King Street Arts Alley, taking full advantage of the alley itself and the proposed Arts Alley framework system; in the landscaped area west of KSAC, and as activating elements along the path to the pedestrian bridge.

### Seating

Seating should be provided where space allows for a clear pedestrian walking zone and separate seating areas. Seating invites people to enjoy a space for a while and promotes gather-

ing and activity. Seating may be provided by benches, planter walls, edges, steps or movable chairs.

### Trash Receptacles

Trash receptacles should be placed to be easily accessible for pedestrians and trash collection. They must be placed to be unobtrusive, effective, and easily maintained. Trash receptacles should be placed near nodes of activity. Their design should relate to other site furnishings.

### Pedestrian Lighting

Locate lights as part of the overall framework system that organizes street elements. Select lighting styles to integrate with the character of the architecture and design of the framework elements of the Arts Alley. Special effects lighting and uplighting of important elements should also be considered.

### Bicycle Racks

Permanently mounted bicycle racks should be placed intermittently in the West Sector in order to encourage bicycle use. They should be placed on sidewalks or at convenient locations such as gathering spaces or near entrances.