

T&E COMMITTEE #4
October 10, 2011

MEMORANDUM

October 6, 2011

TO: Transportation, Infrastructure, Energy and Environment Committee
FROM: ^{GO} Glenn Orlin, Deputy Council Staff Director
SUBJECT: Update—Bethesda CBD Streetscape project

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has requested a briefing to the T&E Committee regarding its planning for the Bethesda CBD Streetscape project. The project would fund the completion of unfinished streetscapes along approximately 5,425 feet of segments along Wisconsin Avenue, Woodmont Avenue, and East-West Highway in downtown Bethesda. As described in the PDF, the streetscaping elements include replacing concrete sidewalks with Bethesda pavers, Bethesda-style lighting and street furniture, street trees, and installing conduit for the future undergrounding of utilities. The estimated cost in the Approved CIP is \$10,049,000. The project description form and map are on ©1-2. Michael Mitchell is DOT's manager for this project.

DOT has completed enough of the design of this project to know that the costs of this project are much higher than earlier anticipated, primarily due to the extensive and complicated utility relocation work that would be entailed. The cost of the project without installing the conduit is now projected to be about \$8 million; installing the conduit and relocating the utility lines underground would roughly triple this amount. The latter estimate does not include the cost of disruption to businesses and any reconnection costs.

DOT is sharing this information with the Committee now, and it is requesting guidance as to whether it should proceed with or without the utility undergrounding in its submission for the FY13-18 CIP. The context for this request is that the Executive is requesting DOT—as he has requested other departments and the outside agencies—to prepare a smaller aggregate funding request for the next CIP.

Background. The Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, adopted in 1994, calls for undergrounding overhead utilities on major streets and pedestrian routes (©3). The Plan's highest priority segments for upgraded streetscape—including undergrounding utilities—are Woodmont Avenue from Old Georgetown Road to Cheltenham Drive, East-West Highway from Waverly to Pearl Streets, and Wisconsin Avenue from Cheltenham Drive to the northern gateway. The Sector Plan's staging element required that these streetscape improvements (along with several other conditions) be implemented before development in the Bethesda CBD could proceed to Stage 2 (©4-5).

Thus, in May 2000 the Council approved the first Bethesda CBD Streetscape project to fund these three segments. The total cost (characterized as an order-of-magnitude cost) was estimated to be \$3,575,000, and the work was programmed for completion in FY05. The programming of this project was one of the predicates cited in the Planning Board's subsequent finding that development in the Bethesda CBD could proceed to its second stage.

Since 2000, the Council has deferred funding for this project several times, as it has been a lower priority than most other projects in the CIP. The deferrals has had the effect of requiring new developments on these three road segments to complete streetscaping along their respective frontage (including undergrounding utilities, in some cases) as conditions of their subdivision approvals, thus reducing the CIP project's scope somewhat. Two years ago, however, the Council decided that the project had been delayed long enough, and it programmed sufficient funds for DOT to conduct enough design work to calculate a more accurate assessment of the cost and impacts of the project, bringing us to this point.

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Bethesda CBD Streetscape -- No. 500102

Category Transportation
 Subcategory Roads
 Administering Agency Transportation
 Planning Area Bethesda-Chevy Chase

Date Last Modified
 Required Adequate Public Facility
 Relocation Impact
 Status

November.23, 2010
 Yes
 None.
 Preliminary Design Stage

EXPENDITURE SCHEDULE (\$000)

Cost Element	Total	Thru FY10	Rem. FY10	Total 6 Years	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	Beyond 6 Years
Planning, Design, and Supervision	2,053	305	0	1,448	408	385	105	150	200	200	300
Land	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Improvements and Utilities	665	0	0	665	0	0	0	0	665	0	0
Construction	7,331	0	0	5,031	0	0	205	1,100	1,726	2,000	2,300
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	10,049	305	0	7,144	408	385	310	1,250	2,591	2,200	2,600

FUNDING SCHEDULE (\$000)

G.O. Bonds	10,049	305	0	7,144	408	385	310	1,250	2,591	2,200	2,600
Total	10,049	305	0	7,144	408	385	310	1,250	2,591	2,200	2,600

DESCRIPTION

This project provides for the design and construction of pedestrian improvements to complete unfinished streetscapes along approximately 5,425 feet of Central Business District (CBD) streets in Bethesda as identified in the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan. This includes; 1,125 feet along Woodmont Avenue between Old Georgetown Road and Cheltenham Drive; 3,550 feet along Wisconsin Avenue between Cheltenham Drive and the northern end of the CBD; and 750 feet along East-West Highway between Waverly Street and Pearl Street. It is intended to fill in the gaps between private development projects which have been constructed or are approved in the CBD. The design elements include the replacement and widening, where possible, of sidewalks, new vehicular and pedestrian lighting, street trees, street furniture, roadway signs and the installation of conduit for the future undergrounding of existing overhead utility lines. The removal of the overhead utility lines and their placement in the underground conduits is not included.

ESTIMATED SCHEDULE

Survey and utility designation started in the fall of 2009 and is expected to conclude in the summer of 2010. Utility relocation design to commence in the fall of 2010 and to conclude by the summer of 2012. Streetscape design to commence in the summer of 2012 and to conclude by summer 2013. Utility relocations to start the fall of 2013 and to conclude by spring of 2014. Construction of the first of three segments will start in 2013 and each segment will take approximately 12 months to complete.

JUSTIFICATION

Staging of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan recommends implementation of transportation improvements and facilities identified in Stage I prior to moving to Stage II.

Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, approved and adopted July 1994; and Bethesda Streetscape Plan Standards, updated April 1992.

OTHER

Installation of electrical conduit for future use by the electrical power company and installation of conduit will necessitate the relocation of existing underground utilities. PDF will be revisited when relocation design has been completed.

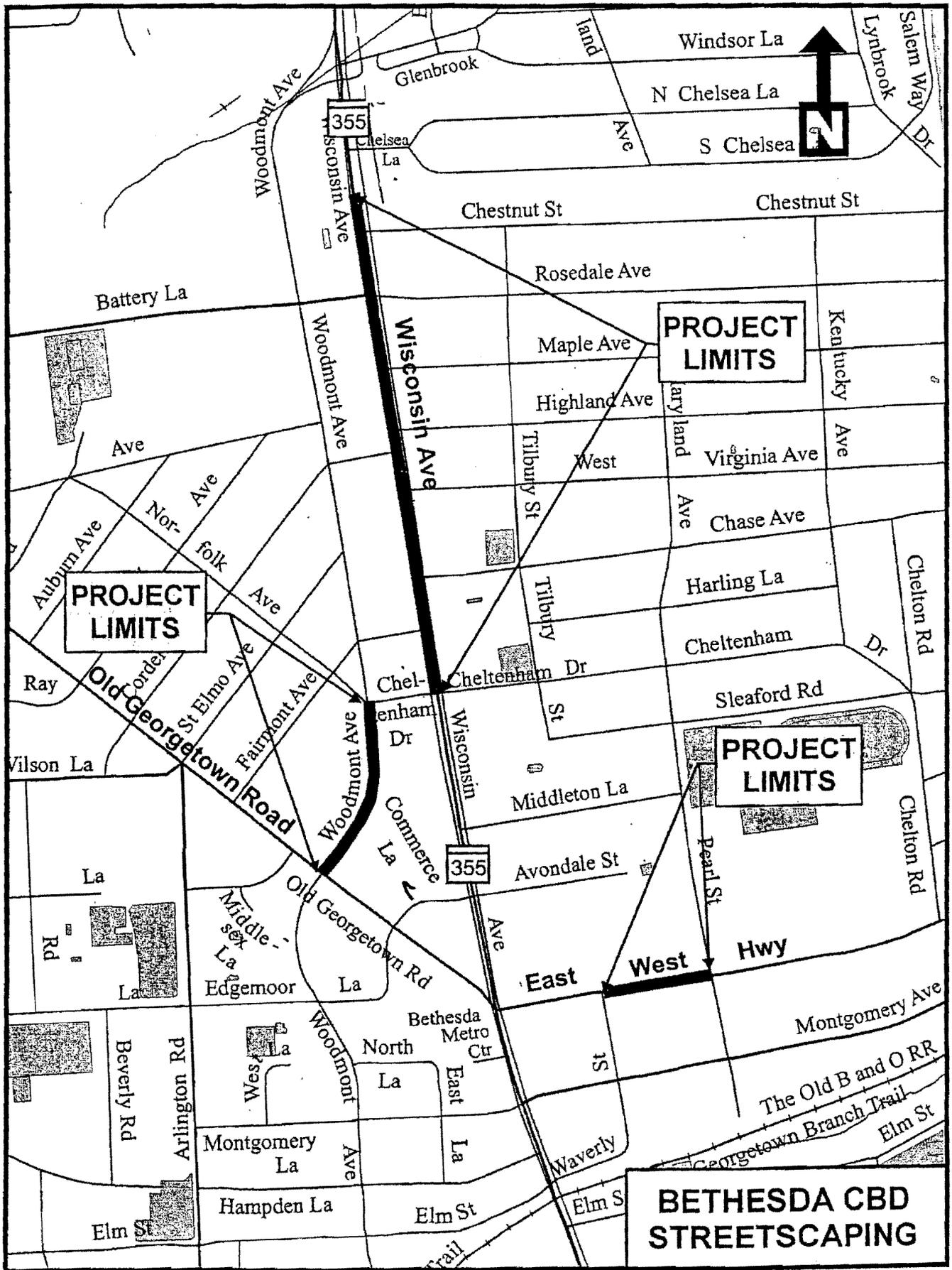
This work will be completed in two stages. Stage 1, expected to be completed in FY14, will provide brick pavers, street trees, benches, and trash receptacles in all segments, and install the underground conduit for the Woodmont Avenue and East-West Highway segments. Stage 2, to commence in FY16 and finish beyond the six-year period, will complete the streetscaping work in these three segments.

OTHER DISCLOSURES

- A pedestrian impact analysis has been completed for this project.

APPROPRIATION AND EXPENDITURE DATA	COORDINATION	MAP																																																
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>Data First Appropriation</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY01</td> <td style="text-align: right;">(\$000)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>First Cost Estimate</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Current Scope</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY09</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10,049</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Last FY's Cost Estimate</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">10,049</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Appropriation Request</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY12</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Supplemental Appropriation Request</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Transfer</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cumulative Appropriation</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">1,098</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditures / Encumbrances</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">520</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unencumbered Balance</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">578</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="3"> </td> </tr> <tr> <td>Partial Closeout Thru</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY09</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New Partial Closeout</td> <td style="text-align: center;">FY10</td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Partial Closeout</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: right;">0</td> </tr> </table>	Data First Appropriation	FY01	(\$000)	First Cost Estimate			Current Scope	FY09	10,049	Last FY's Cost Estimate		10,049				Appropriation Request	FY12	0	Supplemental Appropriation Request		0	Transfer		0				Cumulative Appropriation		1,098	Expenditures / Encumbrances		520	Unencumbered Balance		578				Partial Closeout Thru	FY09	0	New Partial Closeout	FY10	0	Total Partial Closeout		0	<p>COORDINATION Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Montgomery County Public Schools Department of Permitting Services Maryland State Highway Administration Utility Companies Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center</p>	<p>See Map on Next Page</p>
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**BETHESDA CBD
STREETSCAPING**

The Sector Plan recognizes the following hierarchy of streets within the CBD, each with its own special character: Urban Boulevards, Main Streets, Local Streets, and Mixed Streets. (See Figure 6.2, Street Types.)

- **Urban Boulevards** are typically six-lane divided highways that carry a significant amount of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Wisconsin Avenue, East-West Highway, and Old Georgetown Road are Urban Boulevards.
- **Main Streets** are local streets that serve to collect and distribute local traffic and experience a significant level of pedestrian activity due to land uses such as retail stores or restaurants. Norfolk, Woodmont, and Bethesda Avenues are examples of Main Streets.
- **Local Streets** are internal CBD streets that provide general access for vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- **Mixed Streets** emphasize pedestrian circulation while allowing limited, slow vehicular traffic. These streets should be developed with streetscape elements, including trees, plantings, special paving, and furniture. Bollards may be used rather than curbs to emphasize the pedestrian character of the street. Mixed street designs will require interagency review prior to implementation. Currently, Bethesda has only one Mixed Street, a private driveway serving the office development behind CVS Pharmacy on Arlington Road.

A central feature of the Sector Plan is to give each district its own distinguishing characteristics while creating a unified image for the entire CBD. To achieve a unified character, the "garden" design theme developed in the 1984 *Bethesda Streetscape Plan* for the Core District should be used within other areas. The Streetscape Plan recommends a range of treatments for each district. These recommendations include high, medium, and low levels of improvements, which respond to the existing hierarchy of streets and take into account fiscal implications. Five levels of streetscape improvement are described in Section 10.4C. (See Figure 6.1 for an illustration of the Streetscape Plan and identification of street types within the CBD.)

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The recommended improvements provide sufficient information to guide future development regarding lighting, paving, and street trees. It is necessary, at a minimum, to identify specific materials for different areas of the CBD to achieve a cohesive, unified streetscape as individual parcels are developed.

The Sector Plan recommends that all streets within the CBD have underground utilities to reduce visual clutter in an intensely developed area. However, because of the cost of undergrounding utilities, the Plan recommends that such a program follow the proposed priority list and proceed as resources allow. Both optional and standard method private sector development should participate in implementing the streetscape recommendations. Where feasible, relocation of overhead utilities to rear alleys should be considered in lieu of costly undergrounding.

Special attention should be given to gateways along major corridors leading into Bethesda, where landscape treatment should visually signal the transition into the CBD from surrounding areas. To express the "garden" design theme of Bethesda's streetscape, groves of flowering trees and ground

Table 10.2

**STAGING OF SECTOR PLAN DEVELOPMENT
IN THE BETHESDA CBD**

STAGE	POLICIES AND PROGRAMS	RECOMMENDED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES EACH STAGE
STAGE I (SHORT-TERM)	<p>BEGIN WHEN:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sector Plan is adopted 2. AGP approves a target level job ceiling of approximately 5,000 jobs and approximately 2,150 housing units in the Bethesda CBD over the 1993 base. <p>POLICIES AND PROGRAMS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish Transportation Management Organization (TMO) 2. Maintain a constrained long-term parking policy. 3. Increase non-auto-driver mode share for employees to 32 percent (now at 27 percent). 	<p>PROVIDE IN STAGE I (SHORT TERM)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bicycle network Route A2 along Bethesda Avenue, Willow Lane, and Elm Street Park, including pedestrian improvements at Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues. 2. Bicycle network Route C along Woodmont Avenue, Hampden Lane, and East Lane. 3. Pedestrian system improvements at several intersections, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Woodmont Avenue and Montgomery Lane; b. Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway; c. Wisconsin Avenue and Middleton Lane; and d. Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont Avenue. 4. Streetscape improvements in the Metro Core District, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Woodmont Avenue, from Old Georgetown Road to Cheltenham Drive; and b. East-West Highway, from Waverly to Pearl Streets. 5. Bicycle network Route H along Wilson Lane, Clarendon Road, and Edgemoor Lane. 6. Streetscape improvements along northern Wisconsin Avenue from Cheltenham Drive to the northern gateway. 7. Other bicycle network routes, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Route I from Woodmont Avenue to Maryland Avenue/Pearl Street; b. Biker Friendly Area and improvements in the Woodmont Triangle; and c. Route D crossing of Battery Lane.

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Table 10.2 (Cont'd.)

STAGE	POLICIES AND PROGRAMS	RECOMMENDED TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES EACH STAGE
STAGE II (MID-TERM)	<p>BEGIN WHEN:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A Transportation Management Organization is in operation and other improvements needed to support Stage I have been programmed. 2. An analysis of traffic congestion and transportation management program effectiveness is completed. The new area-wide transportation level of service must meet an acceptable AGP standard. 3. Bethesda CBD Stage I ceiling capacity has been reached. As new facilities are provided, the AGP ceiling capacity may be increased several times during Stage II. <p>POLICIES AND PROGRAMS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the effectiveness of transportation demand management programs. 2. Maintain a constrained long-term parking policy. 3. Increase non-auto-driver mode share for employees to 37 percent. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Intersection improvement at Connecticut Avenue and East-West Highway. 9. If significant growth occurs at NIH, then provide intersection improvements at Cedar Lane and Jones Bridge Road on Rockville Pike. <hr/> <p>PROVIDE IN STAGE II (MID-TERM)</p> <p>The facilities required during Stage II will be defined as a result of the transportation analysis that precedes AGP approval of increased ceiling capacity. Possible improvements could include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Additions to the bicycle network and pedestrian improvements. 2. Programming of the Silver Spring-Bethesda Trolley. 3. Increased transit service. 4. Intersection and roadway improvements inside and outside the CBD. 5. Improvements to Arlington Road. If redevelopment occurs on the Euro Motorcars site.

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