



# Bethesda

## Downtown Plan

community  
identity

equity

habitat +  
health

access +  
mobility

water

energy



Approved and Adopted May 2017

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



## Abstract

This Plan contains the text and supporting maps for a comprehensive amendment to the approved and adopted 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan and the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD. It also amends the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended; the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways within Montgomery County as amended; the Purple Line Functional Plan, as amended; the Bethesda Purple Line Station Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment, as amended; the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, as amended; the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, as amended; the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan, as amended; and the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan.

Each area master plan reflects a vision of future development that responds to the unique character of the local community within the context of a County-wide perspective. Area master plans are intended to convey land use policy for defined geographic areas and should be interpreted together with relevant County-wide functional master plans.

Master plans generally look ahead about 20 years from the date of adoption. As communities evolve, the specifics of a master plan may become less relevant over time. Generally, sketches or drawings in an adopted master plan are for illustrative purposes only; they are intended to convey a general character rather than a specific commitment to a particular detailed design.

Master Plans do not specify all development possibilities for a particular property or area. In order to understand the full range of development options, the reader should be aware of additional land uses and development potential available through allowed conditional uses; variances; transferrable development rights (TDRs); Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs); rezoning by local map amendments; public projects and the mandatory referral process; and municipal annexations.

This Plan makes recommendations for land use, zoning, transportation, ecology, sustainability, urban design, community facilities and parks and open space.

## Sources of Copies

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Online at [montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/](http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/)

# Bethesda Downtown Plan

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Department  
[MontgomeryPlanning.org](http://MontgomeryPlanning.org)



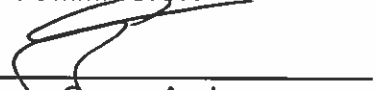
**CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION  
DOWNTOWN BETHESDA SECTOR PLAN**

This Comprehensive Amendment to the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan, the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District, the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended; the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways within Montgomery County, as amended; the Purple Line Functional Plan, as amended; the Bethesda Purple Line Station Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment, as amended; the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, as amended; the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, as amended; and the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan, as amended; and the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan, as amended, has been approved by the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council, by Resolution No. 18-835 on May 25, 2017, and has been adopted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission by Resolution No. 17-020 on June 19, 2017, after duly advertised public hearings pursuant to the Land Use Article – Division II, of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth M. Hewlett

Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Casey Anderson

Vice-Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Joseph Zimmerman  
Secretary-Treasurer



**M-NCPPC No. 17-020**

**MCPB No. 17-038**

## **RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, under the Maryland Land Use Article, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is authorized to make, adopt, amend, extend and add to the *General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District Within Montgomery and Prince George's Counties*; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, under the procedures set forth in the Montgomery County Code, Chapter 33A, held a duly advertised public hearing on Wednesday, June 24, 2015, on the Public Hearing Draft *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*, being also an amendment to the *General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland Washington Regional District in Montgomery County and Prince George's Counties*, as amended; *the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan* as amended; *the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD* as amended; *the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways within Montgomery County* as amended; *the Purple Line Functional Plan*, as amended; *the Bethesda Purple Line Station Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment*, as amended; *the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan*, as amended; *the Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, as amended; *the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan*, as amended; and *The Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan*, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board, after said public hearing and due deliberation and consideration, on July 21, 2016, approved the Planning Board Draft *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*, recommended that it be approved by the District Council, and on September 1, 2016, forwarded it the County Executive for recommendations and analysis; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Executive reviewed and made recommendations on the Planning Board Draft *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* and forwarded those recommendations and analysis to the District Council, and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Council, sitting as the District Council for the portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District lying within Montgomery County, held a public hearing on October 18, 19 and October 20, 2016, wherein testimony was received concerning the Planning Board Draft *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*; and

WHEREAS, the District Council, on May 25, 2017, approved the Planning Board Draft *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* subject to the modifications and revisions set forth in County Council Resolution No. 18-835; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Planning Board, on June 21, 2017, recommended that The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission adopt the *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan* as approved by the District Council.

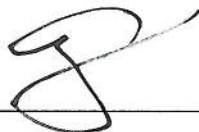
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in accordance with Section 21-103 of the Maryland Land Use Article, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission does hereby adopt said *Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*, together with the *General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland Washington Regional District in Montgomery County and Prince George's Counties*, as amended; the *1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan* as amended; the *2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD* as amended; the *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways within Montgomery County* as amended; the *Purple Line Functional Plan*, as amended; the *Bethesda Purple Line Station Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment*, as amended; the *Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan*, as amended; the *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*, as amended; the *Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan*, as amended; and *The Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan*, as amended; and as approved by the District Council in the attached Resolution No. 18-835; and

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of said Amendment must be certified by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and filed with the Clerk of the Circuit Court of each of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as required by law.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Montgomery County Planning Board of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Dreyfuss, seconded by Vice Chair Wells-Harley, with Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Wells-Harley, and Commissioners Dreyfuss and Fani-González present and voting in favor of the motion, and Commissioner Cichy absent at its regular meeting held on Thursday, June 1, 2017, in Silver Spring, Maryland.



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Casey Anderson, Chair  
Montgomery County Planning Board

Resolution #17-20

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 17-20, adopted by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission on motion of Commissioner Wells-Harley, seconded by Commissioner Geraldo, with Commissioners Hewlett, Anderson, Bailey, Cichy, Doerner, Dreyfuss, and Fani-Gonzalez voting in favor of the motion, and Commissioner Washington being absent from the meeting held on June 21, 2017, in the Montgomery Regional Office in Silver Spring, Maryland.



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Patricia Colihan Barney, Executive Director



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# Chapter 1: Introduction

Bethesda is a thriving urban center located in southern Montgomery County. What began as a crossroads village in 1871 now boasts more than 10,000 residents and is home to the two largest employers in the County. With numerous restaurants, shops, art galleries and entertainment choices, including performing arts, live music and movies, Bethesda is a County arts and entertainment destination and a center of the nightlife economy.

The development of Bethesda has been guided by a series of County Master and Sector Plans. These Plans, each created through a public process, identify general goals, intentions and priorities for development throughout the defined Plan Area (about 450 acres for Downtown Bethesda). They include specific recommendations for individual properties within the Plan Area, for land use and zoning, urban design, transportation, open space, environmental conditions and historic preservation.

Prepared by the Planning Department and Planning Board, and approved by the County Council, these Plans inform the community, Planning Department staff and Board members in their review of proposed projects to ensure that development is consistent with the Plan goals, intentions and recommendations.

This Sector Plan fine-tunes earlier Sector Plans by reevaluating their original goals and resulting environments, rather than radically changing direction. Consistency of County policy helps create a community that is confident in its future and whose citizens are committed to improving that community. This Sector Plan defines the context, purpose, Plan Area and recommendations for Downtown Bethesda, and highlights the direction for the next 20 years.

# 1.1 Bethesda Today

## 1.1.1 Brief History of Downtown Bethesda

The area now known as the Bethesda Central Business District, originally called Darcy's Store, was a small crossroads community surrounded by farms into the post-Civil War era. Most of the early buildings from this period were demolished as Bethesda grew, following the extension of the Tennallytown and Rockville Railroad Company streetcar line along Wisconsin Avenue to Alta Vista in 1890.

In the 1890s, the Chevy Chase Land Company began buying farmland for residential development and by 1912, very little land in the area remained in agricultural production. The B&O Railroad's Georgetown Branch, opened in 1910, further stimulated Bethesda's commercial growth and led to the development of related industries, such as coal yards, lumber yards, a planing mill and an ice plant, in Bethesda.

Bethesda's first real estate boom, from 1922 to 1926, was prompted in part by the increased popularity of automobiles as a means of commuting and led to the subdivision of more farmland and escalating land values. By the late 1920s, Bethesda had three filling stations, a drug store, a hardware store, a variety store, a grocery store, two feed stores, two barber shops and three small lunchrooms, and at the close of the 1930s, 23 auto-related businesses were located in Bethesda. About a dozen early 20th-century buildings remain to reflect Bethesda's transition in the 1920s and 1930s from a rural crossroads to an automobile-oriented, suburban community.

The development of the National Institutes of Health complex in 1938 and Bethesda Naval Hospital in 1940 spurred additional commercial activity in Bethesda during World War II. Following the war, a second wave of homebuilding took place. As Bethesda's residential areas matured, the downtown continued to grow and prosper, with a significant number of commercial buildings being constructed using various mid-century modern architectural expressions. Bethesda experienced another wave of growth in the 1980s, following the arrival of Metrorail, with many new buildings replacing post-World War II and earlier commercial structures. The emphasis of much of this development shifted from smaller commercial activities along Wisconsin Avenue, designed



to serve nearby residential areas, to offices, shops and restaurants that have made Bethesda a significant downtown for the southern part of the County, as well as a regional destination.

## 1.1.2 Strengths and Challenges

### A. Strengths

- Rich with unique history, community character and established residential neighborhoods.
- Home to more than 10,000 residents within the Plan boundary and adjacent to two major federal employers.
- A County arts, entertainment and nightlife destination.
- Regional destination for shopping and entertainment.
- Pedestrian-oriented with good access to public transit.

### B. Challenges

- Highest average rents in the County and a need to preserve and enhance existing affordable housing options.
- Lack of urban parks and green space.
- Competition from other jurisdictions to remain a center of employment, entrepreneurship and innovation.
- High in impervious cover within watersheds exhibiting poor-to-fair water quality.
- High energy demand and carbon generator.



*Bethesda Place public open space*



*Bethesda Metro Center*



*Bethesda Row streetscape*

## 1.2 Bethesda Tomorrow

### 1.2.1 Vision

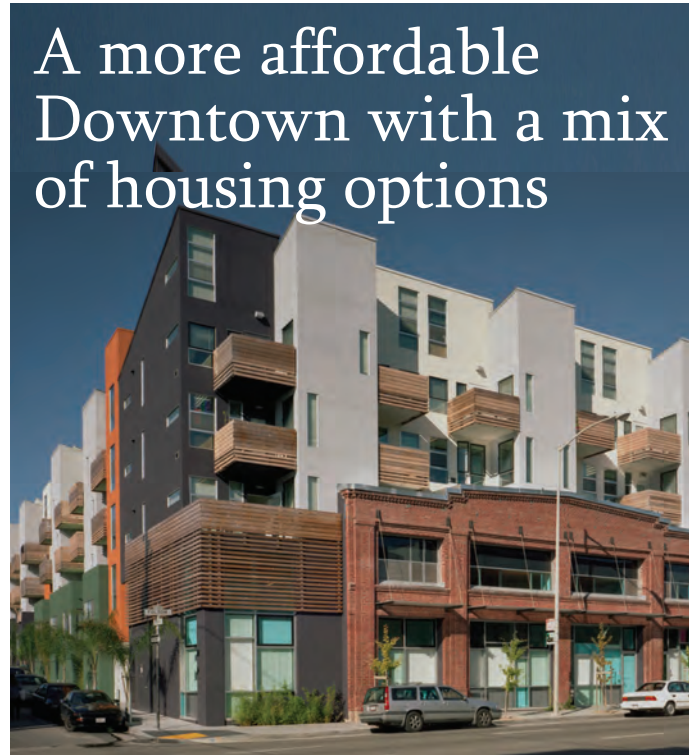
In 2035, Bethesda residents will have a downtown that is a model for sustainability, accessibility, equity and innovation. They will have more affordable choices of housing in close proximity to jobs, shopping and recreation. Residents will safely walk and bike to stores and offices, past new energy-efficient buildings and familiar landmarks. New parks and open spaces will provide green, tranquil places for the residents, their families and friends to gather, socialize and relax. Nearby Metrorail and Purple Line stations will be quickly reached from tree-lined streets and sidewalks to meet the needs of both the residents and visitors to Downtown Bethesda.

This vision stems from the goals and recommendations within this Sector Plan to enhance Downtown Bethesda over the next 20 years. The aim of the Plan is not to radically transform the community but to achieve a truly sustainable downtown through incremental measures addressing its economic, social and environmental future.





A competitive  
Downtown that  
fosters innovation



A more affordable  
Downtown with a mix  
of housing options



A greener and more  
connected Downtown



Sources: Chicago Architecture Foundation, David Baker Architects, Graham Ballantyne, Safer Streets Austin



## 1.2.2 Plan Framework

### A. Overarching Goals

Specifically, this Plan builds on the past successes of Downtown Bethesda to create a truly sustainable downtown by focusing on components that will bolster the elements most in need of enhancement. The recommendations increase:

1. **Parks and open spaces**, including new civic greens at Veteran's Park, Bethesda Farm Women's Cooperative Market, Capital Crescent Trail and new urban parks, pathways and gateways.
2. **Affordable housing**, including the preservation of existing market-rate affordable housing, providing a mix of housing options and the provision of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units in exchange for development incentives.
3. **Environmental innovation**, including more energy-efficient buildings, better stormwater management, improved sidewalks and bicycle routes, and other measures to enhance community health and quality of life.
4. **Economic competitiveness**, based on new development, public amenities and proximity to public transit to attract businesses and visitors from throughout the region, and foster entrepreneurship and innovation.

### B. Strengthened Centers of Activity

Bethesda is distinguished by multiple downtowns within its greater Downtown. Identified in Chapter Three are nine districts, including the established centers of the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor, Bethesda Row and Woodmont Triangle; emerging centers of the Pearl and Arlington South Districts; and residential and edge districts of Battery Lane, Eastern Greenway, South Bethesda and Arlington North. The Plan explores ways to strengthen these centers of activity through the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability.

### C. New Approaches

Montgomery County's Zoning Ordinance, enacted in October 2014, provides valuable tools for developing a mix of residential and non-residential uses within the Commercial Residential (CR) or Commercial Residential Town (CRT) zones, such as those of Downtown

Bethesda. At the same time, these zones allow for public amenities and benefits, including affordable housing, energy conservation, public open space and high quality designs of streetscapes and buildings. The methods of achieving these benefits include:

1. **Bethesda Overlay Zone:** This Plan recommends a new overlay zone to provide a planning and zoning strategy that implements the recommendations outlined in the Plan while providing a comprehensive zoning scheme that does not exceed the densities recommended in the land use vision. The Bethesda Overlay Zone is intended to appropriately allocate density within Downtown Bethesda to protect existing residential neighborhoods, provide additional opportunities for parks and open space, expand the County's affordable housing inventory and ensure high quality design through the use of a Design Advisory Panel. Contributions to a park fund will help implement the Plan's recommendation for new parks.

The Overlay Zone sets a cap on development to ensure that the total density in the Plan area, including existing, approved and new development (including affordable housing) does not exceed 32.4 million square feet of gross floor area. Since heights recommended by this Sector Plan would allow significantly more development than 32.4 million square feet, many properties will be unable to develop to the full amount that may be allowed by their height.

2. **Optional Method Public Benefits in the CR zone:** Public benefits must be provided that enhance or contribute to the objectives of the zone and the goals of this Sector Plan. With the increase in density proposed by this Sector Plan, enhanced public benefits are expected with any new development.
3. **High Performance Area:** This designation aims to raise the level of sustainability by incentivizing the construction of high performing, energy-efficient buildings to save resources, decrease operating and maintenance costs, and help achieve the County's greenhouse gas objectives. The High Performance Area will be implemented through the public benefits in the Commercial Residential (CR) zone.



# What will Bethesda be like in 20 years?

A truly **sustainable** Downtown...

economic  
competitive  
+ innovative

social  
unique +  
affordable

environmental  
greener +  
connected



...with strengthened **Centers of Activity**



... and this is **how** to get there: ...

Great Transit  
+ Walkability

Bethesda  
Overlay Zone

Optional  
Method Public  
Benefits

High  
Performance  
Area

Design  
Excellence

**4. Design Excellence:** Buildings, public spaces and neighborhoods should be designed to the highest quality to reflect Bethesda's community identity and improve economic competitiveness, livability and environmental quality. Fostering design excellence is becoming increasingly important as the amount of available land for development in the County is shrinking and building density is increasing in communities like Bethesda. These challenges present a greater need than in the past to create and enhance neighborhoods that are active, walkable and focused around a high quality public realm of pedestrian-oriented streets and lively public and privately owned spaces, all framed by distinguished buildings and landscapes. To raise the quality of design throughout the County, the Planning Department launched a comprehensive Design Excellence initiative that will affect future Master Plans and their design guidelines.

### 1.2.3 Planning Objectives

Bethesda's diverse, mixed-use and residential districts have each formed a distinct character and an identity that is valued by residents and attractive to visitors and newcomers. Over the past 20 years, Downtown Bethesda has been a center of economic vitality. Building on this success, the Bethesda Downtown Plan aims to continue to promote all the elements that are fundamental to keeping Bethesda unique and competitive in the years to come.

#### A. Economic Growth

The Sector Plan endorses the following economic growth objectives in support of the Plan goals:

- Promote flexibility to allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Incentivize expanded affordability for housing.
- Foster community enrichment by encouraging public and private gathering places.
- Re-imagine under-performing public spaces to revitalize them as community assets.
- Identify new partners and projects (e.g., in the fields of art, entertainment, education, science) that will catalyze economic development in the Downtown.
- Enhance specific aspects of the public realm

that support retail and office development where applicable.

- Take best advantage of existing and planned transit, including Metrorail, Purple Line light rail, bus rapid transit (BRT) and bus.
- Incentivize development that adopts new green technologies to save energy and natural resources while creating an innovative and desirable community for the future.

#### B. Housing

The Sector Plan endorses the following housing objectives in support of the Plan goals:

- Incentivize expanded affordability for housing.
- Preserve existing, market-rate affordable housing where possible.
- Promote a diversified mix of housing options in the Downtown through mixed-use and multi-unit residential zoned development.
- Reach deeper levels of affordability below 65 percent area median income (AMI).
- Preserve and protect existing single-unit residential neighborhoods in and around the Sector Plan area.
- Provide a sufficient supply of housing to serve Bethesda's existing and future job growth.
- Maintain and enhance the quality of housing through County Design Excellence programs.

#### C. Retail

The Sector Plan endorses the following retail objectives in support of the Plan goals:

- Support a consolidated, long-term retail solution for districts with unmet retail demand. These districts include Arlington South, Bethesda Row, Wisconsin Avenue North and Pearl District.
- Encourage redevelopment of underperforming retail spaces in the Wisconsin Avenue Metro Core, Woodmont Triangle and Wisconsin Avenue South Districts, and conversion of less appropriate retail locations to non-retail purposes, such as professional offices, studio spaces and educational uses.

## D. Public Facilities

The Sector Plan endorses the following public facilities objectives in support of the Plan goals:

- Schools – Ensure options for providing adequate student enrollment capacity.
- Mobility – Promote alternative modes of transportation through and around the Sector Plan area, such as walking, bicycling, BRT, etc.
- Community Services – Provide support for public facilities to meet the human service, recreation, security, educational and other needs of the community.

## E. Sustainability

The central theme of this Sector Plan is sustainability. The tenets of sustainable urbanism include a walkable and transit-served community integrated with high-performance buildings and infrastructure. As the economic heart of Montgomery County, Bethesda is already characterized by excellent walkability, access to transit, mix of uses, community-serving retail and restaurants, and a cultural and economic hub with a significant urban identity. These characteristics are strong foundations towards building a lasting and dynamic 21st century urban center. By expanding upon these elements, Bethesda will be well positioned to become a regional and national leader as a sustainable downtown.

A sustainable community includes three overlapping principles for present and future generations: a strong and prosperous economy; social and cultural equity; and environmental responsibility. To pursue sustainability is to create and maintain the conditions under which each principle works in tandem with each other. The objectives and recommendations throughout this Plan intend to improve sustainability by focusing on the most underachieving performance areas or elements of sustainability to ensure long-term economic, social, and environmental success.

## F. Performance Areas

The Sector Plan establishes six interrelated sustainability performance areas with targeted objectives and recommendations for each performance area. Performance areas are the

building blocks to which the three principals of sustainability can be defined and measured. They are indicators for how a community is performing economically, socially, and environmentally. The performance areas are holistic interlinking categories for sustainable planning and when each performance area is addressed the Plan becomes truly sustainable for decades to come. The six performance areas of focus are:



### Community Identity:

Improve neighborhood identity and character; support innovation and design excellence; beautify the city through areawide greening and improved parkland; improve streetscapes.



### Equity:

Increase affordable housing options; retain mix of economies and age diversity; ensure environmental justice; provide growth and development opportunities; encourage flexibility in space and programming to adapt to future needs.



### Access and Mobility:

Increase and improve alternative modes of public transportation; reduce vehicle miles traveled; improve pedestrian mobility; improve circulation systems.



### Habitat and Health:

Improve public health; increase public green and habitat connectivity; improve air quality; increase access and quality of parks and open space.



### Water:

Improve stormwater treatment, water conservation, and stream quality.



### **Energy:**

Incentivize energy efficiencies and conservation to address climate change and improve quality of life.

Many of these performance areas are already well integrated into the fabric of Bethesda's existing urban landscape. Bethesda has a thriving identity, mixed use development, diverse transit options, a walkable street grid, and many other features of a well-planned downtown. On the other hand, improvements can be made to all performance areas. Habitat and health can be improved by providing additional parks, tree plantings, and green cover. Water quality can be improved through the installation of stormwater management features, and reduced impervious cover. Equity can improve by increasing affordable housing, access to transit options, age in place potential, and additional parks and resources. The Plan has identified and made recommendations where performance areas can be improved. The metrics chart *Table 1.01 Sustainability Performance Area Metrics for Bethesda* quantifies the measurable performance areas, indicating where Downtown Bethesda is today and could be in the next 20 years.

### **LEED for Neighborhood Development**

Recognizing that buildings are just one component of sustainability, the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) developed a rigorous audit and rating system to measure the overall sustainability of a community called LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND). The rating system holistically quantifies all the elements that make a neighborhood sustainable. The most sustainable neighborhoods exhibit high levels of walkability, a sense of place, social cohesion and stability amid changing economic and sociopolitical conditions, address climate change, energy efficiencies, public health, affordable housing, and transportation.

To support incorporating holistic sustainability into the land use planning process and to remove barriers to future sustainable development, the US Green Building Council is beta testing the LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) Assessment service for local government plans. This

service supports local governments by assessing a neighborhood-scale land use plan against the best practices identified in LEED ND. The goal of this new offering is to set a strong foundation for future development to more readily incorporate the principles of smart growth, new urbanism and green building embodied in the rating system. The Bethesda Downtown Plan was the first to participate in the LEED ND Assessment beta test.

**Table 1.01: Sustainability Performance Area Metrics for Bethesda**

Performance Indicators	Existing	Potential Additional*	Percent Change
<b>Equity</b>			
Multi-unit rental units	5,124	8,456	165% increase
Market-Rate Rental Affordable Housing Units	1,915	Will depend on market and use of public benefit points	TBD
Income Restricted	892	1269	142% increase
Employment/Jobs	37,700	51,900	138% increase
<b>Habitat/Green Cover</b>			
Tree Canopy Cover in HPA	45.35 acres	62 acres (approx.)	137% increase
Tree Canopy Cover outside the HPA	91.77 acres	TBD	TBD
Area of Green Roofs	0.75 acres	30-36 acres (approx.)	4800% increase
<b>Health</b>			
Number of Parks	6	13 (for a total of 19 parks)	217% increase
Play Areas (per district)	6	TBD through implementation	Proposed Net increase
Area (Acreage) of Parks	10	13 (for a total of 23 acres)	130% increase
<b>Access + Mobility</b>			
Miles of bike lanes	1.19 miles	5.52 miles	464% increase
Resident vehicle miles traveled (VMT)	4.62 miles	3.71 miles	20% decrease
Employee vehicle miles traveled (VMT)	1.90 miles	1.27 miles	33% decrease
Bike share stations	10	TBD through implementation	Proposed Net increase
Commuters using different modes of transportation (NADMS)* (percent)	39.6	50	126% Proposed Net increase
<b>Water</b>			
Green roofs	0.75 acres	30-36 acres (approx.)	4800% increase
Stormwater Management Treatment (Percent of Sector Plan Area)	TBD	All new construction must comply with state and local stormwater management regulations	
<b>Energy</b>			
LEED Certified Buildings	1	TBD	
LEED Silver Buildings	0	TBD	
LEED Gold Buildings	4	TBD	
LEED Platinum Buildings	1	TBD	

\* Estimate of new units indicates maximum possible residential units if there is no commercial development.

### 1.2.4 Concept Framework

The Concept Framework Plan was developed in 2014 through a collaborative effort among residents, businesses, landowners, County agencies and planning staff. At the start of the planning process, the Planning Department understood the value of the previous 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan and the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment, and how they shaped the subsequent development of Bethesda.

Over the past 20 years, the focus of Downtown Bethesda changed from a single center of activity focused around the Metrorail station to a series of activity centers located north and south of the Wisconsin Avenue Metro Core.

One of the primary goals of updating the 1994 Sector Plan is to recognize this shift and build on the successes and lessons learned from the previous plan. The purpose of the new Concept Framework Plan is to identify the basic components of the present-day urban fabric in Downtown Bethesda with respect to the following:

- Existing commercial activity centers.
- Emerging commercial activity centers over the next 20 years.
- Residential neighborhoods.
- Primary pedestrian corridors connecting activity centers and residential neighborhoods.
- Parks and open space network that complements the pedestrian corridors and anchors the community.

All other Sector Plan details are built upon this structure to form a cohesive urban fabric that will evolve over the next 20 years.



Figure 1.01: Concept Framework





## 1.3 Summary of Recommendations



### 1.3.1 Land Use and Zoning

#### A. Land Use Recommendations:

- Explore the potential to achieve the goal of common boundaries by coordinating and aligning the Central Business District (CBD), Urban District (UD) Parking Lot District (PLD) and the Transportation Management District (TMD) boundaries.
- Preserve and enhance the community's existing affordable housing throughout the Sector Plan area by leveraging proximity to transit stations and supporting flexible zoning, density incentives and expanded economic programs.
- Make increasing the provision for moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) from 12.5 percent to 15 percent a requirement for all optional method projects.
- Consolidate retail in appropriate places within the Sector Plan area through designated retail centers or nodes.
- Strengthen the centers of activity through economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainability.
- Encourage mixed-use development to allow development to adapt to market conditions.
- Create new civic gathering spaces in the expanded centers of activity.

#### B. Zoning Recommendations:

- Zone individual properties Commercial Residential (CR) with the currently mapped density limit and recommended heights as documented in this Plan.
- Properties rezoned to a CR or CRT from an R-10, R-60, EOF and PD zone will be translated to an equivalent density specified in the District recommendations that follow.
- Cover all properties within the Sector Plan boundary with the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ).
- For development sites less than 20,000 square feet, encourage a fee-in-lieu of the required public open space as part of the property's public benefits.

- Update the existing streetscape guidelines and allow for improvements and flexibility within the pavement and public right-of-way.

### 1.3.2 Transportation

#### A. Roadway Recommendations:

- Expand the Urban Road Code boundary to be contiguous with the Sector Plan boundary.
- Recommend right-of-way improvements, as discussed in the Appendix.
- Propose the Pearl District Connector, as discussed in Chapter Two.
- Evaluate reconfiguration of the East-West Highway (MD 410)/ Montgomery Lane/ Old Georgetown Road (MD 187)/ Woodmont Avenue one-way pair into a two-way street system.

#### B. Transit Recommendations:

- Implement Purple Line light rail and construct the Bethesda South Station.
- Reconfigure the Bethesda Metrorail Station in connection with redevelopment of the Metrorail Station plaza.
- Extend BRT Corridor 4: MD 355 South from the Bethesda North Station to the Bethesda South Station, and connect to the Purple Line.
- Improve Bethesda South Station bus circulation with additional space for bus bays along Elm Street.
- Expand Bethesda Circulator Bus route.

#### C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Recommendations:

- Confirm Bicycle Pedestrian Priority Area (BPPA), as identified in the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan.
- Design all roads within the Sector Plan area for shared use by motor vehicles and bicycles.
- Recommend specific bikeways, as described in Chapter Two.
- Confirm the recommendation in the 2014 Bethesda Purple Line Station Minor Master Plan Amendment for a full-service bicycle storage facility at the Bethesda Purple Line station.

- Evaluate concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e. a “Barnes Dance”) at the intersection of Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue.

#### D. Transportation Demand Management Recommendations:

- Expand the existing Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) to include residents and increase the average combined NADMS goal to 55 percent.

#### E. Parking Recommendations:

- Continue the Constrained Long-Term Parking Policy.
- Expand the Parking Lot District.
- Consider co-location of public facilities and parking lot district facilities.
- Promote incentives to reduce parking.

### 1.3.3 Urban Ecosystems

#### A. Urban Green Recommendations:

The following recommendations may be achieved through the optional method public benefits in the CR zone and are simply recommendations, not requirements of this Sector Plan.

- Supplement tree planting along streets and public space to achieve a minimum of 50 percent canopy cover.
- On private property, provide a minimum of 35 percent green cover, which may include either singularly or a combination of the following:
  - Intensive green roof (6 inches or deeper) on 35 percent of rooftop.
  - Tree canopy cover on 35 percent of landscape.
  - A combination of tree canopy and intensive green roof for a total green cover of 35 percent or greater\*.

*\* If on-site energy generation requires the use of either the roof or open space, accommodations for these features may alter the 35 percent minimum green cover requirement.*

- Provide soil volumes for canopy trees of no less than 600 cubic feet.
- Install green roofs with at least 6 inches of soil depth, allowing for the growth of native perennials and grasses to improve habitat, food, shelter and other ecological benefits.
- Maximize species diversity along the horizontal and vertical planes of buildings.
- Use appropriate plant species that will thrive in the site conditions and climate. Species should be a combination of native and locally adaptive species, require minimum water demand and provide local biological benefits.
- When practical, incorporate vegetation into stormwater management facilities.
- Prioritize street tree planting along existing and proposed bicycle networks, creating green corridors.
- Bury overhead wires to avoid conflicts with street trees.
- Achieve an overall canopy cover with species diversity where no single genus comprises more than 20 percent of the total population.
- Increase overall tree canopy cover and subcanopy cover by encouraging the planting of trees on public and private land, along rights-of-way, within open space and existing neighborhoods.
- Daylight Bethesda Mainstem Tributary.
- Apply Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) principles to new construction projects.

## **B. Water Quality Recommendations:**

- Integrate stormwater management within the right-of-way.
- Integrate visible environmental site design strategies that provide multiple performance area benefits for water quality, habitat, health and aesthetic improvement. Strategies include:
  - Intensive green roofs (6 inches or greater to maximize water treatment).
  - Stormwater planters.
  - Pervious pavement.
  - Bioswales, biofiltration, bioretention,

bioinfiltration.

- Rainwater harvesting for retention, irrigation and gray water.
- Incorporate multiple stormwater management facilities or treatment train to maximize benefits.
- Reduce impervious cover to maximize infiltration and/or green space.
- Where feasible, use permeable paving for roads, road shoulders, parking lots and parking lanes.
- Utilize environmental site design for parks and open space where it can be interpreted for community education.
- Use street trees for stormwater interception, temperature mitigation and air quality improvement.

## **C. Energy:**

- Reduce heating, cooling and lighting loads through climate-responsive design and conservation practices including:
  - Building massing that maximizes natural ventilation, air flow and access to natural lighting.
  - High-performance building envelopes; select walls, roofs and other assemblies based on long-term insulation, air barrier performance and durability requirements.
  - Energy Star-approved and/or Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP)-designated energy-efficient products that meet or exceed U.S. Department of Energy standards.
- Maximize use of alternative energy systems to supply a portion or all of a building's energy demand. Alternative energy systems may include:
  - Solar power.
  - Geothermal.
  - Co-generation.
  - Biomass and biogas strategies.
  - Purchase electricity generated from renewable sources or low polluting sources.

- Maximize solar orientation and design techniques that take advantage of passive solar heating, cooling and lighting.
- Design buildings to utilize passive means of heating, cooling and ventilation.
- Install green roofs to reduce heating and cooling demand.
- Utilize low albedo surfaces to diffuse reflectivity, reducing heat island effect.
- Consider net zero energy concepts.
- Exceed minimum County requirements for energy efficiency.

### 1.3.4 High Performance Area

The High Performance Area is a designation that aims to raise the level of sustainability through exceeding minimum requirements for high performing, energy-efficient buildings.

- In the High Performance Area, buildings must meet the public benefits category for CR Energy Conservation and Generation 59-4.7.3.F.3. An optional method building over 4 stories must exceed the current ASHRAE 90.1 requirement by at least 15 percent. Should the County approve alternative or additional standards, similar improvements in efficiency should be required.

### 1.3.5 Community Identity and Urban Design

Over the past two decades, Downtown Bethesda has changed from a single center of activity focused around the Metrorail station to multiple downtowns each with its own unique character. This Sector Plan explores ways to strengthen these centers of activity through the following urban design recommendations.

#### A. Public Space Network:

- Provide each center with a gathering space appropriate to the character of the area.
- Link streets, through-block connections, greenways and trails to create a well-connected network.
- Transition to surrounding neighborhoods with green open space amenities and civic buffers.

- Enhance the pedestrian and bike experience connecting from the Metro Core to Woodmont Triangle and Bethesda Row along Wisconsin and Woodmont Avenues.
- Activate Norfolk Avenue as a main street linking the proposed Veteran's Park Civic Green through Battery Lane Park to the North Bethesda Trail.
- Connect the proposed Capital Crescent Central Civic Green along Bethesda Avenue to the reimagined Farm Women's Cooperative Market.

#### B. Urban Form:

- Design signature buildings that integrate design and sustainability innovation to occupy the symbolic center and surround civic gathering spaces.
- Encourage economic vitality in the emerging centers of activity through mixed-use development at increased building heights appropriate to surrounding context.
- Increase building heights to enhance community facilities, prioritize affordable housing opportunities with redevelopment, enhance connectivity to Norwood Local Park and North Bethesda Trail.
- Establish a green connector along the eastern edge of the Plan area to provide open space, pathways, environmental benefits and a transition to adjacent neighborhoods. Allow a range of building heights dependent on the amount of green space dedicated.
- Balance development with transitions to single-unit residential neighborhoods surrounding the Sector Plan area in residential and edge districts, such as Battery Lane, Arlington North, South Bethesda and Eastern Greenway.
- Encourage preservation of low-rise buildings with fine-grain building articulation along Norfolk Avenue.
- Increase all previously "T" designated heights by 20 percent rounded to the nearest 5-foot increment, unless noted on *Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for another recommended maximum height.

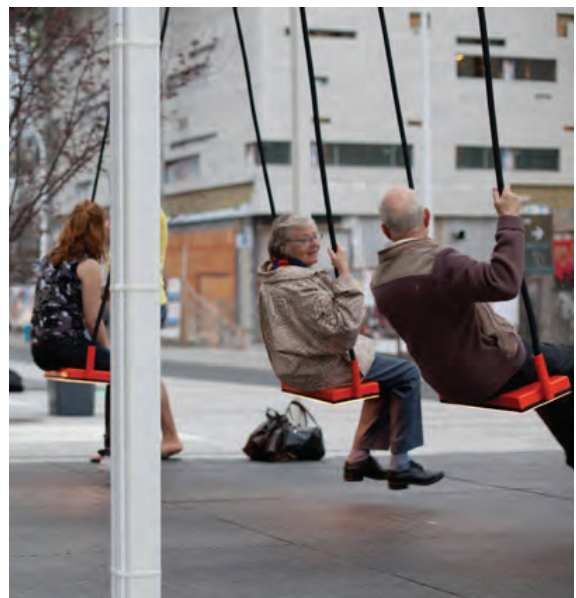
### C. Placemaking:

- Design streets not just for mobility but also as great public spaces for gathering, events and play.
- Activate streets and open spaces with temporary and phased uses that can catalyze future investment and growth.
- Create gateways at transit entrances that integrate elements such as wayfinding, landscape and building form unique to Bethesda.
- Integrate public art throughout the Downtown area and continue to support Bethesda as an arts and culture destination.

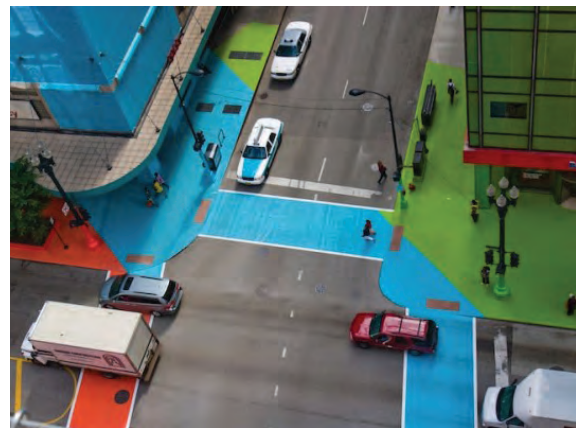
#### 1.3.6 Parks and Open Space

- Support each of the three centers (Woodmont Triangle, Bethesda Row and Wisconsin Avenue corridor) with civic gathering spaces by providing civic greens in each center.
- Provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail systems.
- Create livable communities and appropriate transitions by greening and buffering the edges.
- Create green neighborhood parks.
- Convert county owned surface parking lots to parkland/neighborhood greens to the maximum extent feasible.

While all of the listed recommendations are highly encouraged to achieve the goals of this Sector Plan, the Plan recognizes that certain projects may not be able to achieve all of them.







Sources: Colorado Springs Independent, NACTO, archdaily.com, Water Environment Federation, designartnews.com







# Chapter 2: Areawide Approach

Sustainable development is the central theme of the Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan, providing a lasting foundation for a thriving community. This development must support innovation and economic well-being, community equity and environmental health to be truly sustainable.

Regionally, the projected population growth of Montgomery County over the next 20-30 years is expected to increase by more than 20 percent. With the County having only approximately 19 percent unconstrained land available for development, urban centers such as Bethesda, where infrastructure already supports schools, roads and mass transit, are expected to flourish to accommodate new residents and resulting residential and non-residential uses.

Focusing additional density and new infill development in such compact, transit-oriented areas can reduce suburban sprawl and protect farmland and rural areas within the County's Agricultural Reserve. This Chapter highlights the advantages of Downtown Bethesda in its well-established street grid, walkable and mixed-use districts, Metrorail station and connected system of parks and open space.

All of the six performance areas described in Chapter One reflect the sustainable approaches that guide this Sector Plan. The goals and recommendations for the six performance areas were determined by analysis in the areas of land use and zoning, transportation, ecology, community identity and urban design, parks and open space, and community facilities. The performance areas will be addressed throughout Chapter Two and subsequent portions of the Sector Plan.

## 2.1 Sector Plan Area

Bethesda is located along Wisconsin Avenue between Friendship Heights and the Capital Beltway, centered on the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue, Old Georgetown Road and East-West Highway. These major thoroughfares connect Bethesda to Silver Spring, Rockville, Potomac and Washington, DC.

The Bethesda Downtown Plan retains the Plan Area boundary of the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District (CBD) Sector Plan, including the areas covered by both the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment and the 2014 Bethesda Purple Line Station Minor Master Plan Amendment. The area covers approximately 451 acres and is bounded by the National Institutes of Health campus on the north; Tilbury Street, Sleaford Road, Cheltenham Road, Capital Crescent Trail, 46th Street and West Avenue on the east; Norwood Park and Nottingham Drive on the south; and Arlington Road and Old Georgetown Road on the west.

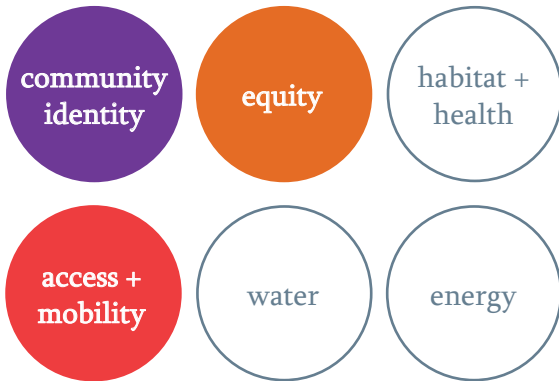
The Sector Plan boundaries are shown in *Figure 2.01: Sector Plan Area*.

Figure 2.01: Sector Plan Area



- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sector Plan Boundary             | Metro Station                   |
| M-NCPPC Park                     | Proposed Metro Station Entrance |
| County DOT Owned Public Space    | Proposed Purple Line            |
| Privately Owned Public Use Space | Proposed BRT                    |
| Trail                            |                                 |

## 2.2 Land Use



The 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan focused on providing additional office/employment land uses to establish Downtown Bethesda as a center for employment growth in Montgomery County. In 2006, the Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan refined this strategy by recommending more housing close to the Bethesda Metrorail Station.

This Sector Plan envisions the continuation of Downtown Bethesda as a thriving urban center with a regional draw for employment, shopping and entertainment. The Plan estimates an additional 14,200 jobs by 2040, a 38 percent increase above existing levels.

This Plan also envisions a continued focus on housing by proposing a diverse mix of residential choices throughout Downtown Bethesda in order to accommodate more workers and reduce commuter traffic congestion. The Plan estimates a maximum of 8,456 additional multi-unit residential units if limited commercial development occurs. *Figure 2.02* shows the existing land use in the 1994 Plan and *Figure 2.04* the existing zoning. The Plan recommends confirming all zoning within the Sector Plan boundary, except where zoning changes are proposed and illustrated on recommended zoning plans. *Figure 2.05* shows recommended zoning.



## 2.2.1 Goals:

### A. General

- Explore the potential to achieve the goal of common boundaries by coordinating and aligning the Central Business District (CBD), Urban District (UD), Parking Lot District (PLD) and the Transportation Management District (TMD) boundaries.
- Support the priorities of the Bethesda Urban Partnership and the Arts and Entertainment District.

### B. Land Use

- Preserve and enhance the community's affordable housing throughout the Sector Plan area by leveraging proximity to transit stations and supporting flexible zoning, density incentives and expanded economic development programs.
- Make increasing the provision for Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) from 12.5 percent to 15 percent a requirement for all optional method projects in Downtown Bethesda.
- Encourage mixed-use development where appropriate.
- Consolidate retail in appropriate places within the Sector Plan area through designated retail nodes.
- Create new civic gathering spaces in the expanded centers of activity.

### C. Zoning

- Provide flexible development opportunities to allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Promote infill development with higher densities and building heights nearest the central core of Downtown Bethesda to accommodate future growth, as projected in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Cooperative Forecast Round 8.3.
- Provide zoning incentives to facilitate arts improvements.

## 2.2.2 Recommendations:

### A. Zoning

- Zone individual properties Commercial Residential (CR) with the currently mapped density limit and recommended heights as documented in this Plan. Properties rezoned to a CR or CRT from an R-10, R-60, EOF and PD zone will be translated to an equivalent density.
- Cover all CR zoned properties within the Sector Plan boundary with the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ).
- For development sites less than 20,000 square feet, encourage a fee-in-lieu of the required public open space as part of the property's public benefits.



Figure 2.02: Existing Land Use

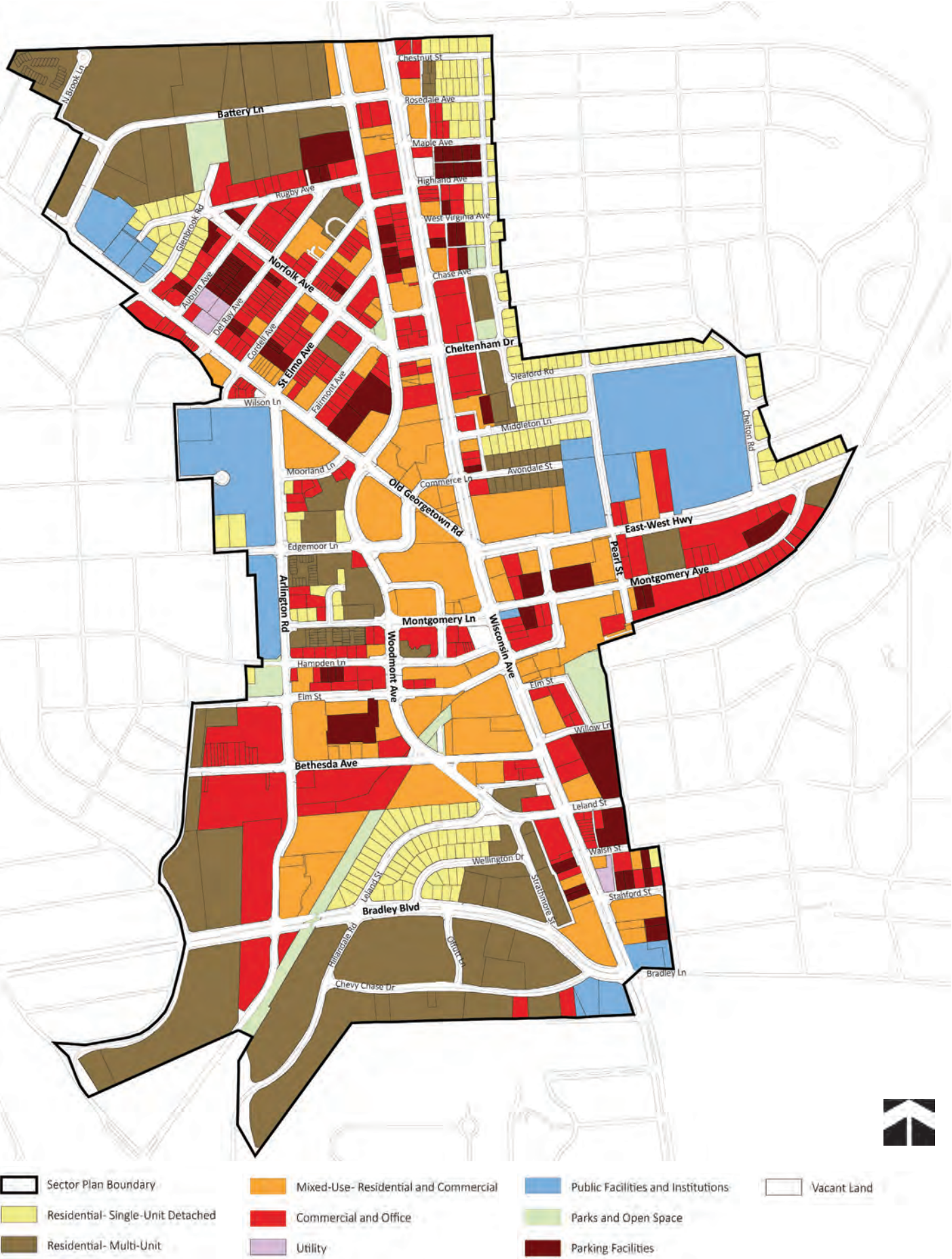




Figure 2.03: Recommended Land Use

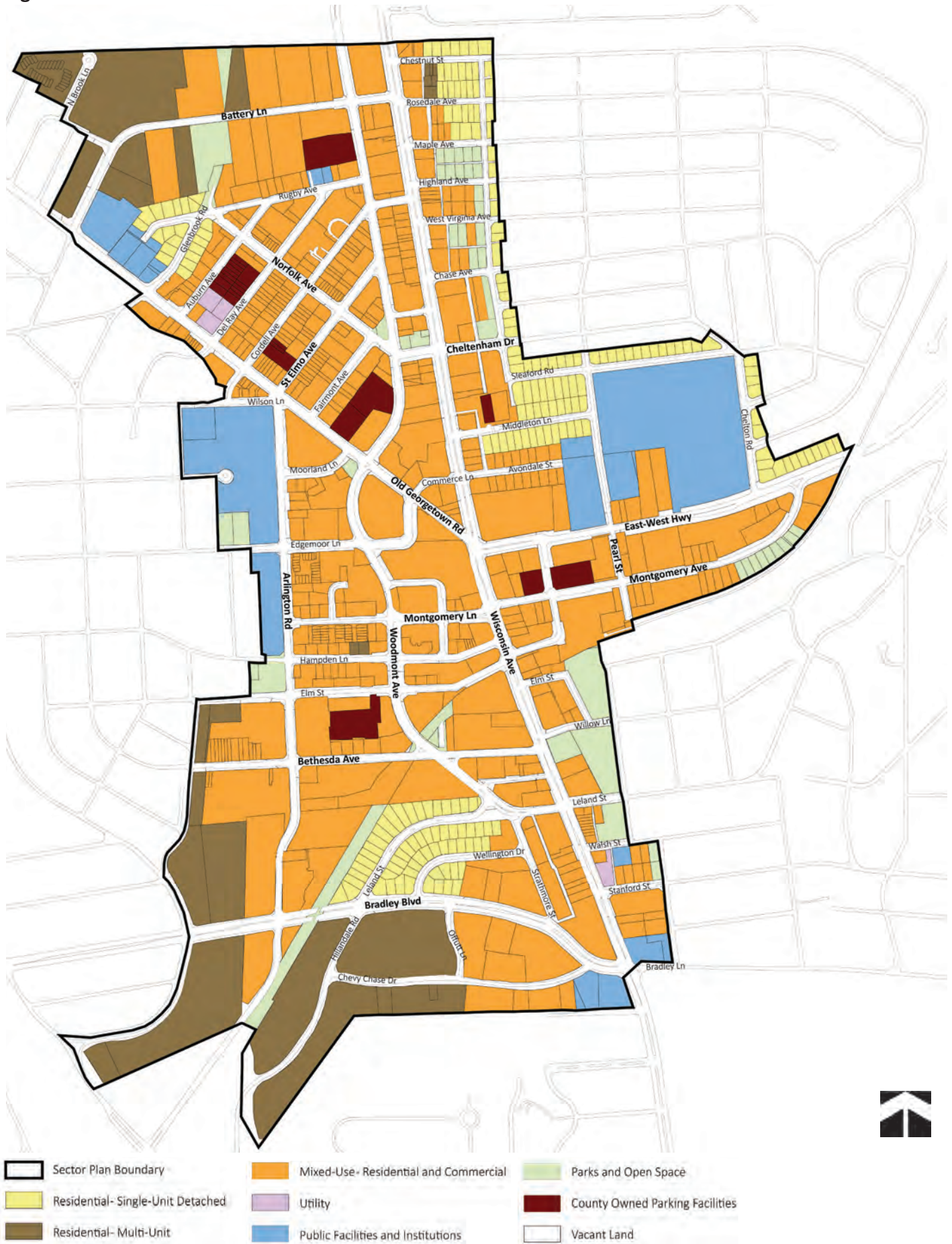




Figure 2.04: Existing Zoning

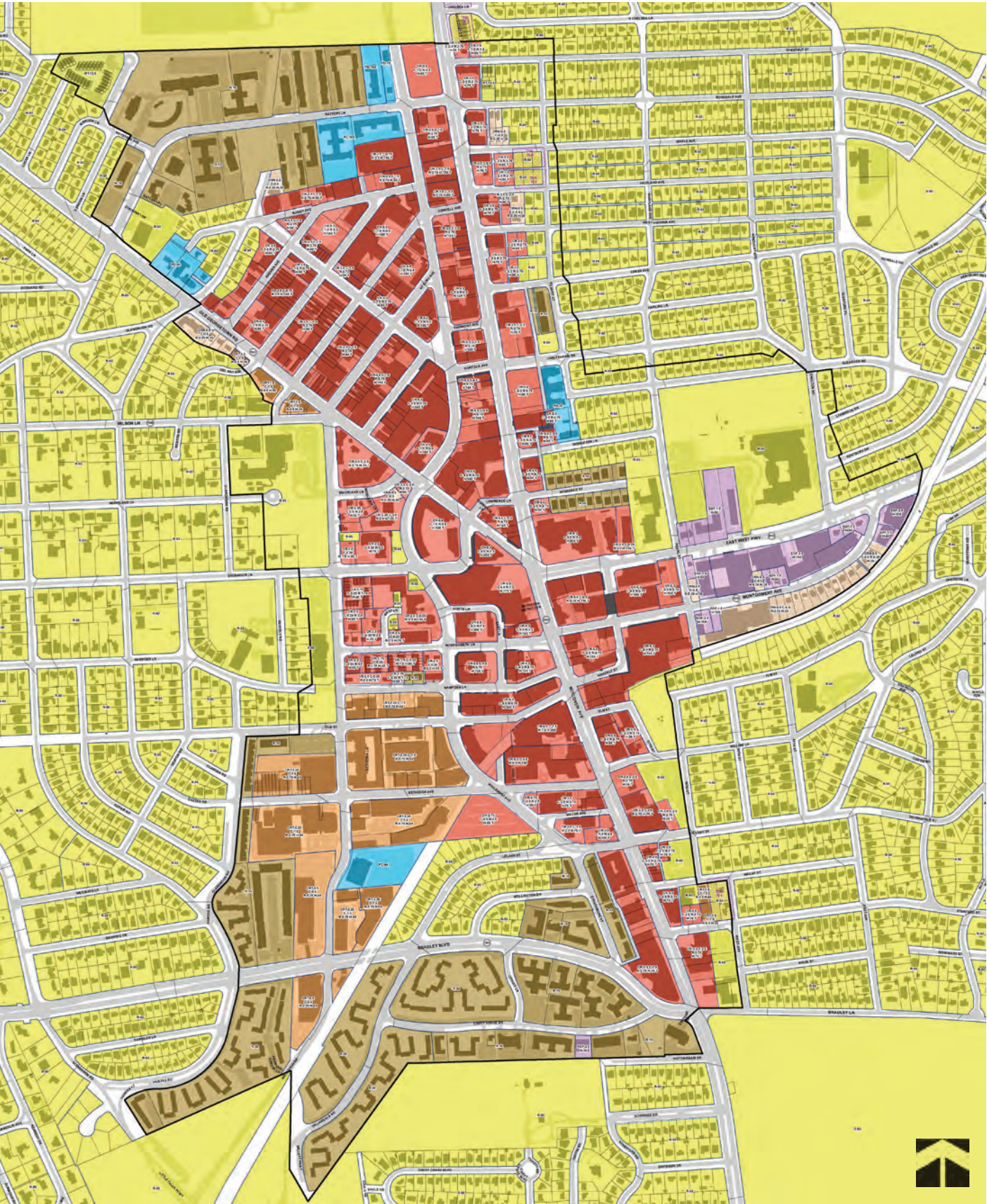




Figure 2.05: Recommended Zoning

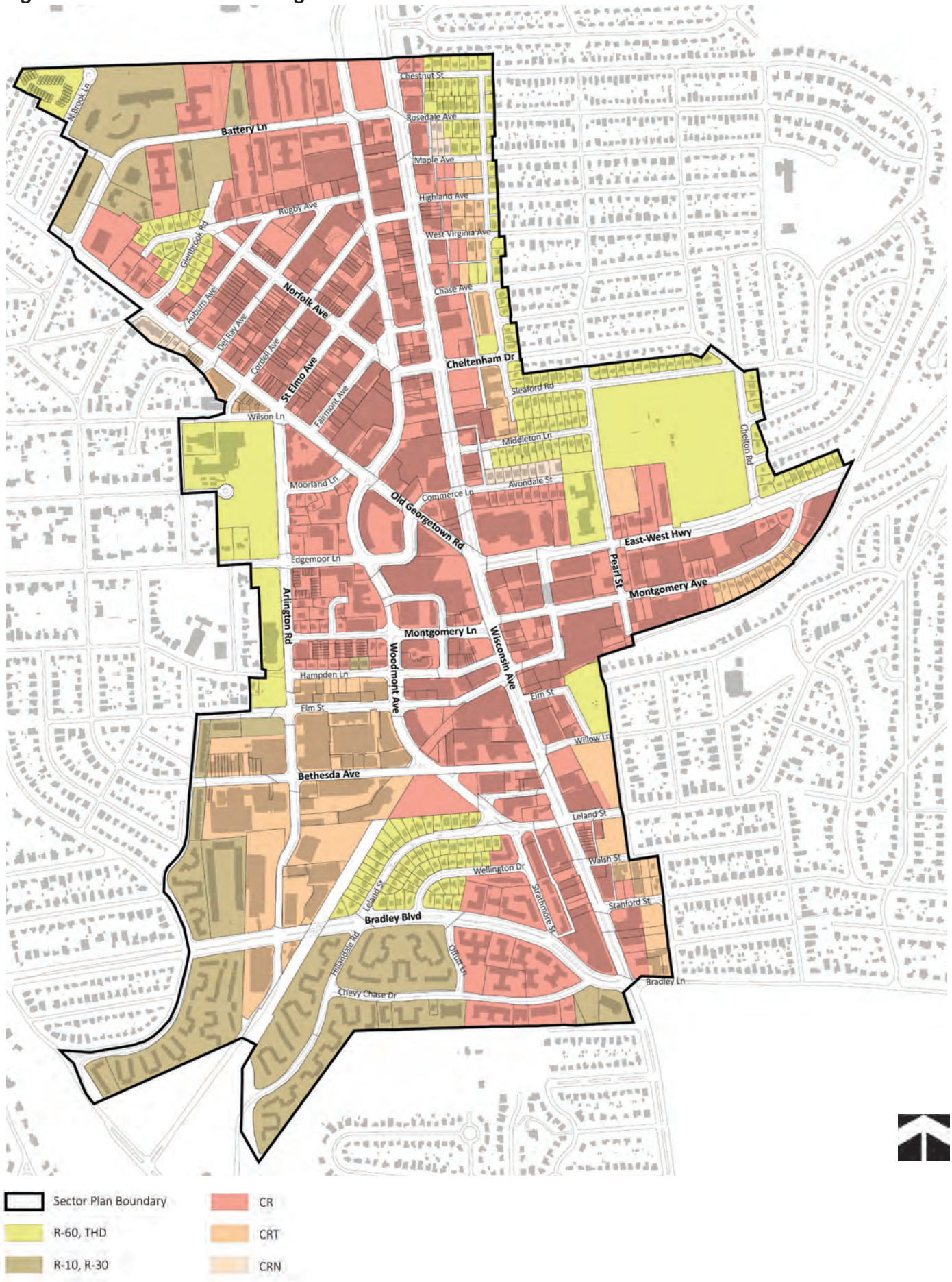
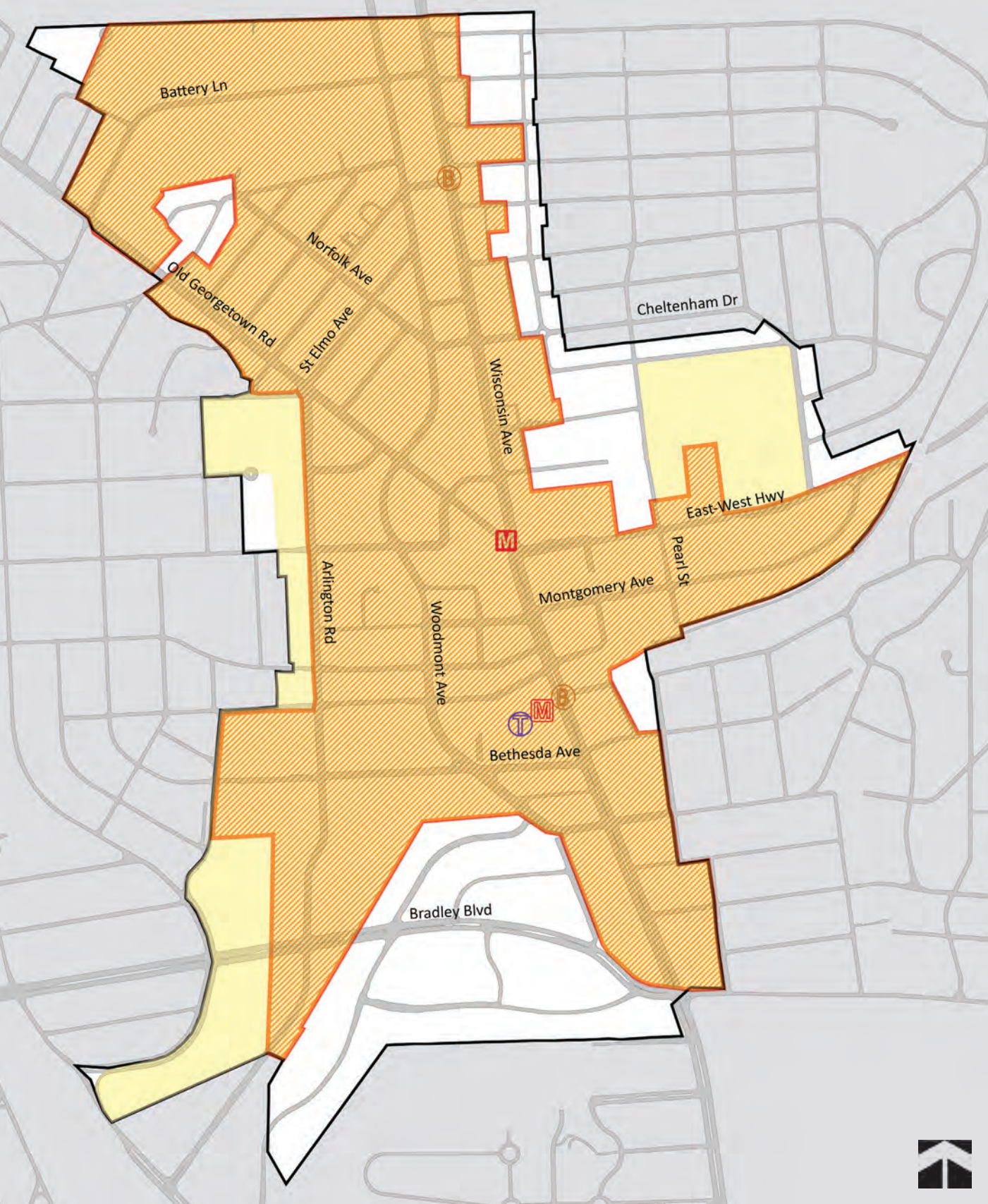




Figure 2.06: Bethesda Boundaries



*This map illustrates one option for aligning the boundaries. Other options may be considered.*

- |                                 |                              |  |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Sector Plan Boundary            | Proposed Purple Line Station | Central Business District/Urban District<br>/Parking Lot District Boundary/Transportation<br>Management District |
| Metro Station                   | Proposed BRT Station         | Transportation Management District   |
| Proposed Metro Station Entrance |                              |  |



### 2.2.3 Housing

The Sector Plan envisions Downtown Bethesda as a place consisting of a well-rounded community of residents and workers who contribute to the health and vitality of the downtown. However, its attractiveness as a place to live, the ambiance of street life, shops, and restaurants, and the proximity to employment and Metro – has resulted in housing costs increasingly out of reach for most residents across Montgomery County.

Over the next 25 years, Downtown Bethesda is anticipated to grow at a faster rate than Montgomery County as a whole, with households projected to increase by 28 percent, population by 24 percent, and employment by 40 percent. As housing demand continues to increase as a result of this growth, Bethesda's high housing costs will become even more cost-prohibitive for most Montgomery County residents to reside there. Monthly homeowner costs in the Bethesda Downtown Plan Area Study area currently average around \$4,660, which is two-thirds higher than the County. The average rent in this area is \$1,916<sup>1</sup>, which is about 20 percent more than the average rent for the County. Furthermore, newly built residential apartments typically rent for \$2,750<sup>2</sup>, which is 30 percent more than in the study area and over 40 percent more than in the County overall.

Along with high housing costs, Downtown Bethesda also continues to have a shortage of committed affordable housing. Of the 5,124 multi-unit rental apartments in the Bethesda Downtown Study Area, only 826 (17.69 percent) are income-restricted as defined by MPDU requirements, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits or public subsidies<sup>3</sup>. The Sector Plan increases the requirement for MPDUs for all new optional method development.

There also exist about 1,915 “market-affordable”<sup>4</sup> rental apartments in Bethesda—apartments with market rents that fall within affordable income levels due to their age or limited amenities. Given Bethesda's high land values and overall desirability, these rents have the potential to increase considerably. This Plan includes new strategies to encourage the preservation of market-rate affordable units by offering public benefit points in exchange for a specified amount of preservation of rent-restricted units in existing and/or replacement units within the Sector Plan area. Figure 2.07 illustrates the current distribution

of affordable market-rate and rent-restricted rental units in Downtown Bethesda. Even with these new strategies, there could still be a shortfall of existing and new units to meet the needs of moderate-to-lower income households that require the services of, or are employed by retail establishments in Bethesda.



*Newly constructed residential developments in Downtown Bethesda*

*Source: SK+I Architecture (above), Stonebridge Carras (below)*

**A. Goal: Preserve existing market-rate affordable housing, provide a diverse mix of housing options, reach deeper levels of affordability below 65 percent AMI and produce new units by increasing the provision of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units.**

**Recommendations:**

- Add more units to the marketplace by requiring a minimum 15 percent MPDUs for optional method residential development within Downtown Bethesda.
- Provide 15 percent MPDUs on-site as a first priority.
- Provide an incentive to encourage 25% or more MPDUs (by allowing an increase in FAR without additional payments to otherwise required for increases in FAR).
- Create a new category of public benefit points related to the retention of existing market-rate affordable housing in existing and/or replacement units within the Sector Plan area using rental agreements with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA).
- In the South Bethesda and Battery Lane Districts, preservation of market-rate affordable housing and/or additional MPDUs beyond 15 percent is the top priority for public benefit points.
- Prioritize two- and three-bedroom units through increased CR public benefit points and through Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) evaluation of area needs through negotiations with developers.
- Reach deeper levels of affordability by providing 10 percent of MPDU units below 65 percent AMI through DHCA negotiations with developers.
- Off-site MPDUs are on a case-by-case basis through negotiations with DHCA, but must remain within the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Boundary.

<sup>2</sup> Based on rents at comparable new apartments in Bethesda

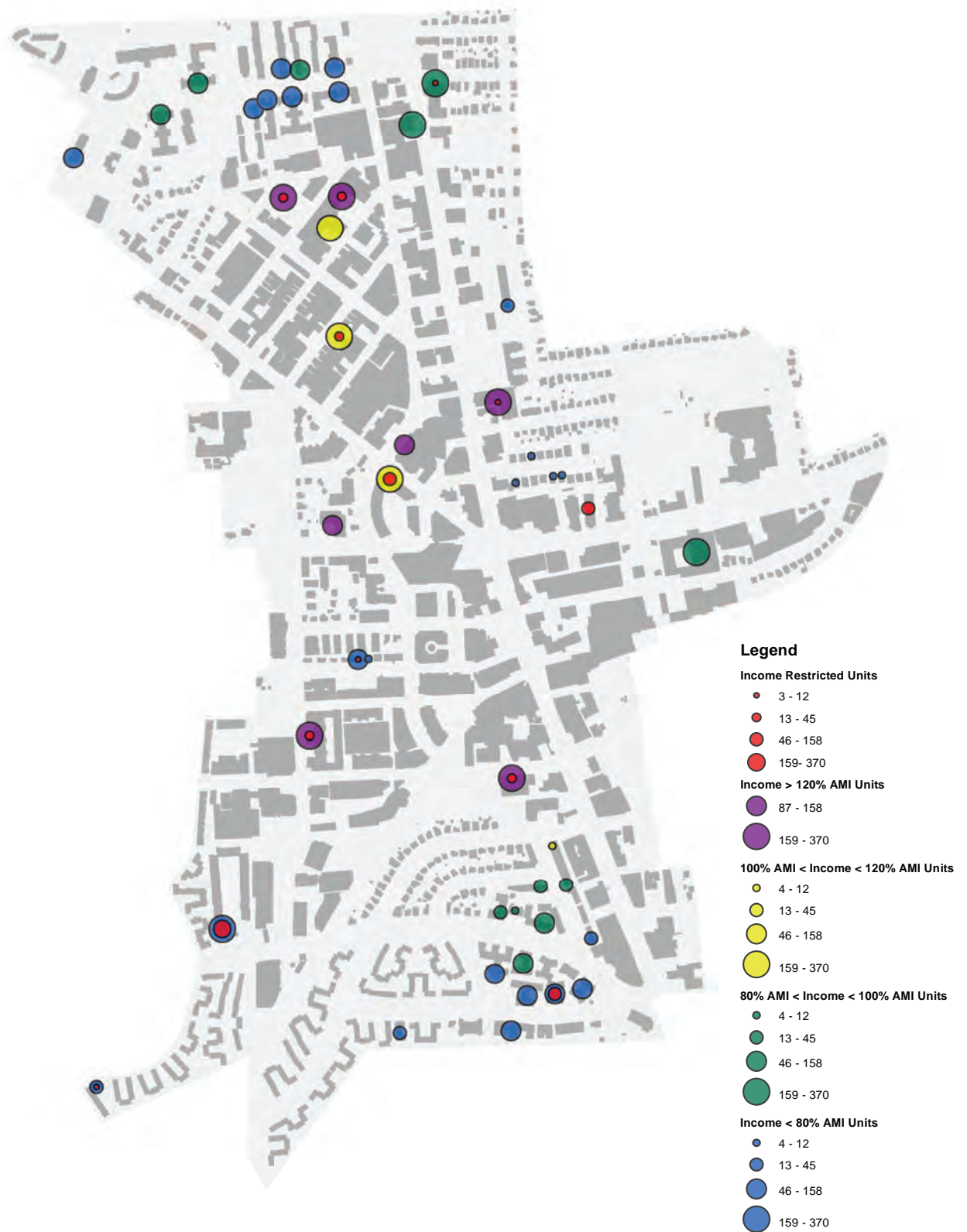
<sup>3</sup> Such units are typically required to be affordable to households with an income below 65 percent of AMI (Area Median Income), or about \$70,000 for a household size of 4.

<sup>4</sup> Market-Rate affordable rental housing is defined as a rental housing unit where the rent plus the expected tenant-paid utility costs must not exceed the median rent for the planning area and is affordable to a household earning 80 percent of area median income, adjusted as MPDUs for household and unit size. There is no income restriction on a household renting a market-rate affordable unit.

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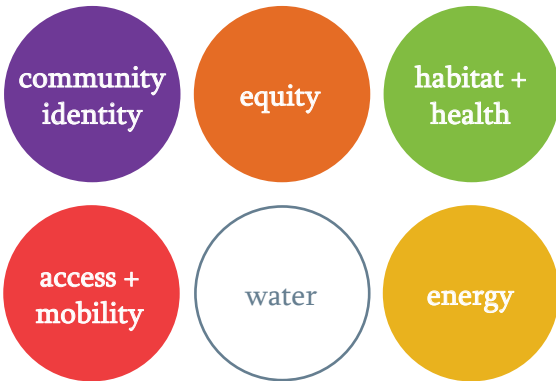
<sup>1</sup> 2012 Rental Housing Survey, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs

Figure 2.07: 2014 Affordable Market-Rate and Rent-Restricted Rental Units



Source: 2014 DHCA Rental Housing Survey

## 2.3 Transportation



Downtown Bethesda is well connected to the surrounding region by a vibrant transportation network incorporating three major highways: Old Georgetown Road (MD 187), Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) and East-West Highway (MD 410). The community is near the Capital Beltway (Interstate-495) and Metrorail Red Line.

In addition to these roadways and commuter rail system, the proposed Purple Line light rail and proposed MD 355 South Bus Rapid Transit Corridor are anticipated to be implemented during the horizon year (2040) of this planning document. A grid of local streets completes the transportation network by promoting safe and efficient travel throughout the community for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

In order to enhance the existing transportation network, this Plan recommends “complete streets” improvements to the roadway network that increase the connectivity, safety and quality for all modes of transportation. Complete streets design principles refer to roadway treatments intended to accommodate multiple modes of transportation, including pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular and transit, within the same right-of-way. Due to the transit-oriented nature of Downtown Bethesda, future transportation improvements within the Sector Plan area should consider complete streets strategies as critical elements of the transportation network.

A high-quality pedestrian network is essential to the success of transit-oriented communities because, unlike most other modes of transportation, pedestrian activity is about experiencing the community between points of origin and destination. Nearly all modes of transportation require that at least a portion of each trip be completed as a pedestrian; therefore, the quality of the pedestrian network is an important issue for most residents and commuters in Downtown Bethesda.

In addition to physical elements of the transportation network, such as the roadway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian strategies described above, this Sector Plan recommends two transportation programs to improve mobility and manage congestion within the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area. These programs are transportation demand management and constrained parking.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs increase efficiency within the transportation network



by reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles during the most congested periods. TDM strategies will become increasingly important through the horizon year of this Plan and will both manage traffic congestion and reinforce the Sector Plan area as a transit-oriented area. All optional method projects should participate in the Bethesda Transportation Management Organization.

This Plan recommends continuing the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan's recommendation of maintaining a constrained long-term parking supply strategy, which has been in effect since the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan. A constrained parking strategy helps to mitigate traffic congestion by encouraging other modes of transportation and discouraging single-occupancy vehicle trips. All optional method projects should participate in the constrained parking policy.

In addition, this Plan recommends that public-private partnerships and co-location of public facilities be considered as part of future parking facility development. These strategies have been implemented with success in recent years within the Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton Parking Lot Districts.

### 2.3.1 Goals

- Enhance roadway accommodation of all users.
- Increase the use of non-auto driver travel.
- Implement new transit alternatives.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Expand the constrained parking policy.



*Crosswalk at Bethesda Avenue and Woodmont Avenue*



*Capital Crescent Trail*



*View of Old Georgetown Road*

## 2.3.2 Roadways

### A. Pearl District Connector (B-1)

60-foot right-of-way; intersection of Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School Driveway/East-West Highway to Montgomery Avenue:

This street would improve local connectivity and would contribute to extending the street grid within the Pearl District. The intent of this recommendation is to guide the development pattern within the Pearl District toward short blocks and pedestrian-friendly street crossings.

Any street improvements associated with this recommendation should align opposite intersections and consolidate adjacent driveways to the extent practicable at the time of implementation.

Implementation of the Pearl Street Connector should only be considered if 4350 East-West Highway is redeveloped.

### B. Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue Intersection Improvements

Reconfigure the intersection of Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue to shorten or otherwise improve the pedestrian crossing distance and expand the plaza located on the northwest side of the intersection. Future evaluation of this intersection should specifically evaluate a concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e. a pedestrian scramble or Barnes Dance) for all crossings during periods of peak pedestrian demand. This intersection is an important crossing for pedestrians on Woodmont Avenue, Bethesda Avenue and the Capital Crescent Trail. Additional demand is anticipated in the future with the implementation of the Bethesda South Station and future park on the east side of Woodmont Avenue. Further analysis is necessary to determine the extent to which this reconfiguration can occur, given the angle of intersection between Woodmont Avenue and Bethesda Avenue.

### C. Further Evaluation

Consider reconfiguration of the East-West Highway (MD 410)/Montgomery Lane/Old Georgetown

Road (MD 187)/Woodmont Avenue one-way pair into a two-way street system. Conversion of these one-way streets to two-way operation would slow vehicular traffic, improve bicycle accommodation (by virtue of slower vehicular traffic) and enliven the street for pedestrians. This operational change would also increase visibility to commercial establishments along the one-way segment and provide new opportunities for placemaking. From a traffic operation perspective, this change would also make car travel less confusing and more easily navigable.

Alternatively: Reconfigure the East-West Highway (MD 410)/Montgomery Lane/Old Georgetown Road (MD 187)/Woodmont Avenue one-way pair using a “road diet” approach. A road diet is a technique by which an existing roadway is reconfigured to accommodate bicycle facilities, wider sidewalks, etc. by repurposing a travel lane. The future configuration should include two travel lanes, an on-street parking lane and a bike lane. Consideration should be given to the provision of a two-way bike lane.

### D. Capacity

#### Roadway Network Adequacy Test

In support of the 2016 Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP), key intersections were evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology, which estimates seconds of delay per vehicle during the morning and evening peak periods. Intersections within the Sector Plan limits were tested against a policy area standard of 120 seconds/vehicle delay while intersections outside the Sector Plan limits were tested against a policy area standard of 80 seconds/vehicle delay. As a result of this analysis, all intersections within the Sector Plan limits were found to be within the policy area standard, however, three intersections outside the Sector Plan limits are estimated to exceed the policy area standard.

Those intersections are:

- East-West Highway and Connecticut Avenue
- Connecticut Avenue and Bradley Lane
- Rockville Pike and Jones Bridge Road

The Council will consider capacity improvements to resolve or mitigate future congestion at these intersections to be included in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan's Unified Mobility Program (BUMP) and in subsequent revisions to the BUMP. For the intersection improvement at Connecticut Avenue and Bradley Lane, the Council will also consider historic preservation, environmental, and other community impacts.

### **Methodology**

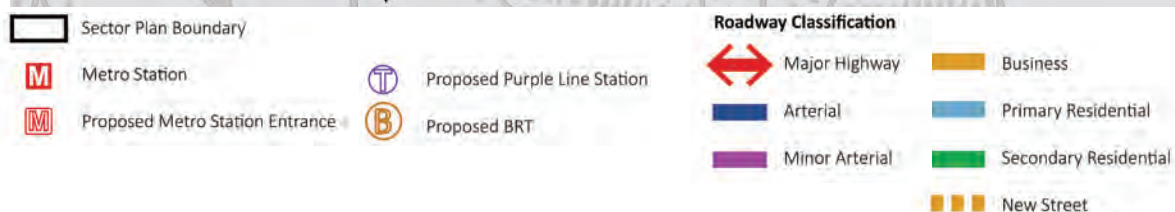
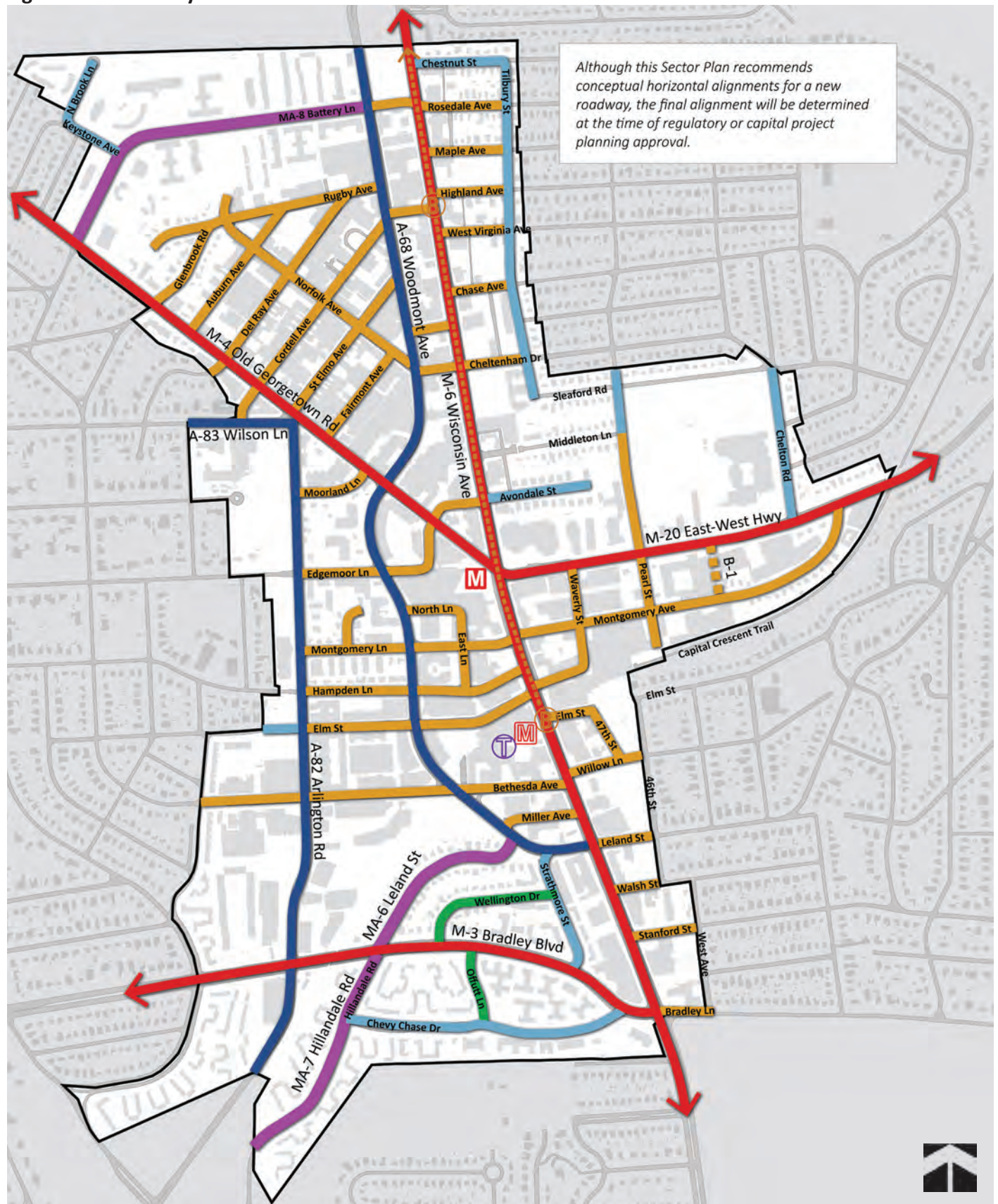
Plan Vision with Existing Street Network Scenario: Traffic analysis of the Plan Vision 2040 land use determined that all intersections within the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area are projected to operate within the current 120 seconds/vehicle delay threshold. That analysis assumed maintenance of the existing street network, including funded improvements, and traffic flow pattern (without reconfiguration of any one-way streets).

Plan Vision with Two-Way Street Conversion Scenario: When considering the recommended two-way street conversion scenario, the traffic analysis indicates that the Sector Plan intersections would approach, but remain within, the congestion standard.

This analysis suggests that the conversion of one-way streets in Bethesda may not significantly impact traffic circulation within the Sector Plan area; however, the introduction of a two-way street pattern should be subject to a more detailed examination following adoption of this Sector Plan.



Figure 2.08: Roadway Classification



**Table 2.01: Street Classification and Right-of-Way Recommendations<sup>1</sup>**

Designation	Roadway	Limits	Minimum Right-of-Way	Lanes <sup>2</sup>
Major Highway				
M-3	Bradley Boulevard (MD 191)	W. Sector Plan Boundary to Wisconsin Avenue	120'	4
M-4	Old Georgetown Road (MD 187)	N. Sector Plan Boundary to Wisconsin Avenue		
		N. Sector Plan Boundary – Cordell Avenue	100'	4
		Cordell Avenue – Wilson Lane	86'	4
		Wilson Lane – Moorland Lane	82'	4
		Moorland Lane – Wisconsin Avenue	80'	4
M-6	Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355)	N. Sector Plan Boundary to Bradley Boulevard		
		N. Sector Plan Boundary – Chestnut St	120'	6
		Chestnut St – Elm Street	122'	6
		Elm Street – Woodmont Avenue	114'	6
		Woodmont Avenue – Bradley Boulevard	120'	6
M-20	East-West Highway (MD 410)	Wisconsin Avenue to E. Sector Plan Boundary		
		Wisconsin Avenue – Waverly Street	110'	4
		Waverly Street – Pearl Street	80'	4
		Pearl Street – E. Sector Plan Boundary	120'	4
Arterial				
A-68	Woodmont Avenue	N. Sector Plan Boundary to Leland Street	80'	2
A-82	Arlington Road	Old Georgetown Road to S. Sector Plan Boundary	80'	2
A-83	Wilson Lane (MD 188)	W. Sector Plan Boundary to Old Georgetown Road	80'	2
Minor Arterial				
MA-3	Leland Street	Bradley Boulevard to Woodmont Avenue	80'	2
	Hillandale Road	Bradley Boulevard to S. Sector Plan Boundary	80'	2
	Battery Lane	Old Georgetown Road and Wisconsin Avenue	70'	
Business District				
	47th Street	Elm Street to Willow Lane	60'	
	Auburn Avenue	Old Georgetown Road to Rugby Avenue	60'	
	Bethesda Avenue	Clarendon Road to Wisconsin Avenue	60'	
	Chase Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	60'	
	Cheltenham Drive	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	80'	
	Commerce Lane	Old Georgetown Road to Wisconsin Avenue	50'	
	Cordell Avenue			
		Old Georgetown Road to Woodmont Avenue	60'	
		Woodmont Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue	65'	
	Del Ray Avenue	Old Georgetown Road to Rugby Avenue	60'	
	East Lane	North Lane to Hampden Lane	50'	
	Edgemoor Lane	Arlington Road to Old Georgetown Road	80'	
	Elm Street			
		Arlington Road to Wisconsin Avenue	60'	
		Wisconsin Avenue to 47th Street	60'	
	Fairmont Avenue			
		Old Georgetown Road to Norfolk Avenue	60'	
		Woodmont Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue	60'	
	Hampden Lane <sup>4</sup>	Arlington Road to Wisconsin Avenue	60'	

**Table 2.01: Street Classification and Right-of-Way Recommendations<sup>1</sup>**

Designation	Roadway	Limits	Minimum Right-of-Way	Lanes <sup>2</sup>
	Highland Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	60'	
	Leland Street	Wisconsin Avenue to 46th Street	60'	
	Maple Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	60'	
	Middleton Lane	Wisconsin Avenue to Through-block Closure	60'	
	Miller Avenue	Woodmont Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue	50'	
	Montgomery Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to East-West Highway	80'	
	Montgomery Lane			
		Woodmont Avenue to East Lane	80'	
		East Lane to Wisconsin Avenue	70'	
	Moorland Lane	Arlington Road to Old Georgetown Road	70'	
	Norfolk Avenue	Rugby Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue	80'	
	North Lane	Woodmont Avenue to East Lane	50'	
	Pearl Street <sup>3</sup>	Middleton Lane to S. Sector Plan Boundary	60'	
<b>B-1</b>	Pearl District Connector	East-West Highway to Montgomery Avenue	60'	
	Rugby Avenue			
		Norfolk Avenue to Auburn Avenue	50'	
		Auburn Avenue to Woodmont Avenue	60'	
	St Elmo Avenue	Old Georgetown Road to Rugby Avenue	70'	
	Stanford Street	Wisconsin Avenue to West Avenue	60'	
	Walsh Street	Wisconsin Avenue to 46th Street	60'	
	Waverly Street	East-West Highway to Wisconsin Avenue	60'	
	West Virginia Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	60'	
	Willow Lane	Wisconsin Avenue to 47th Street	70'	
Residential				
	Avondale Street	Wisconsin Avenue to End	60'	
	Chelton Road	East West Highway to Sleaford Road	60'	
	Chestnut Street	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	60'	
	Chevy Chase Drive	Hillandale Road to Bradley Boulevard	60'	
	Keystone Avenue	Battery Lane to North Brook Lane	60'	
	North Brook Lane	Keystone Avenue to northern terminus	60'	
	Pearl Street	Middleton Lane to Sleaford Road	60'	
	Strathmore Street	Woodmont Avenue to Bradley Boulevard	60'	
	Tilbury Street	Chestnut Street to Sleaford Road	60'	

Other streets that front on or lead into single-unit detached residential areas, extending from the Downtown area or from commercially zoned areas, are Residential Streets. All remaining streets in the Downtown area are Business District Streets.

<sup>1</sup> All streets within the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan have a target speed no greater than 25 mph.

<sup>2</sup> Lane allocation may change based on facility planning studies associated with the 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. The number of planned through lanes for each segment, not including lanes for turning, parking, acceleration, deceleration, or other purposes auxiliary to through travel.

<sup>3</sup> This Plan anticipates future abandonment of Pearl Street between Montgomery Avenue and the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT), as long as there is sufficient width for pedestrian/bicycle access between the CCT and Montgomery Avenue and that access for the abutting private properties is provided.

<sup>4</sup> The County should consider a proposed abandonment of street right-of-way for a development that uses the abandoned right-of-way to provide a significant public benefit.



### 2.3.3 Transit

#### A. Bethesda Circulator Expansion

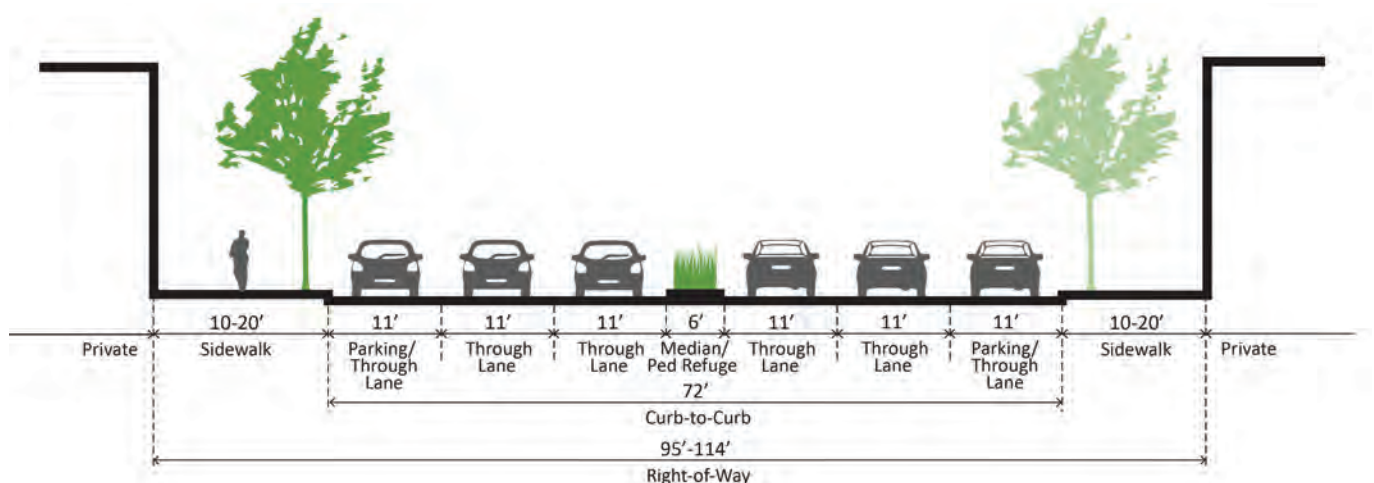
A more robust Circulator Bus route should be considered to serve an expanded Downtown Bethesda. That route should include service to the new Bethesda South Metrorail station/ Purple Line station on Elm Street, the Pearl District, and Medical Center Metrorail station.

#### B. Further Evaluation

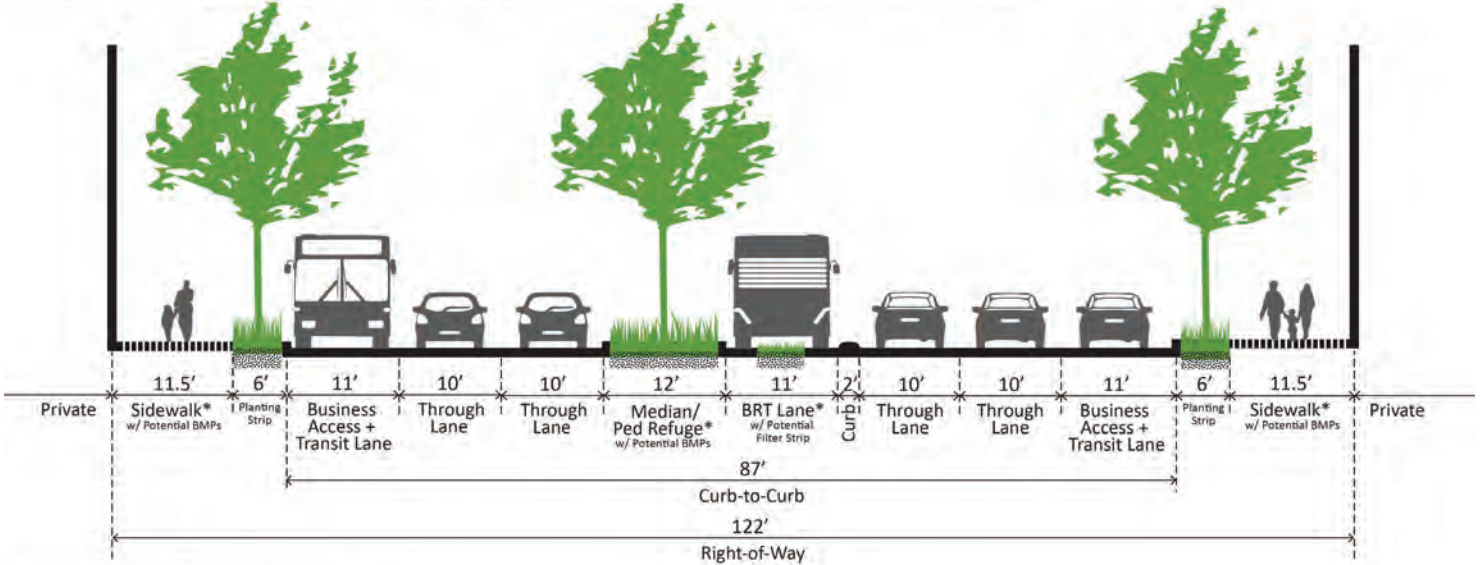
Consider extending the proposed MD 355 South BRT Corridor to the intersection of Elm Street and Wisconsin Avenue to provide a direct connection to the future Purple Line light rail station. This extension would directly link three major transportation systems and would enhance the transportation oriented downtown. Further evaluation is necessary due to the limited right-of-way on Elm Street and on-going design of both the BRT and Purple Line.

**Figure 2.09: Wisconsin Avenue Existing and Proposed BRT Street Sections**

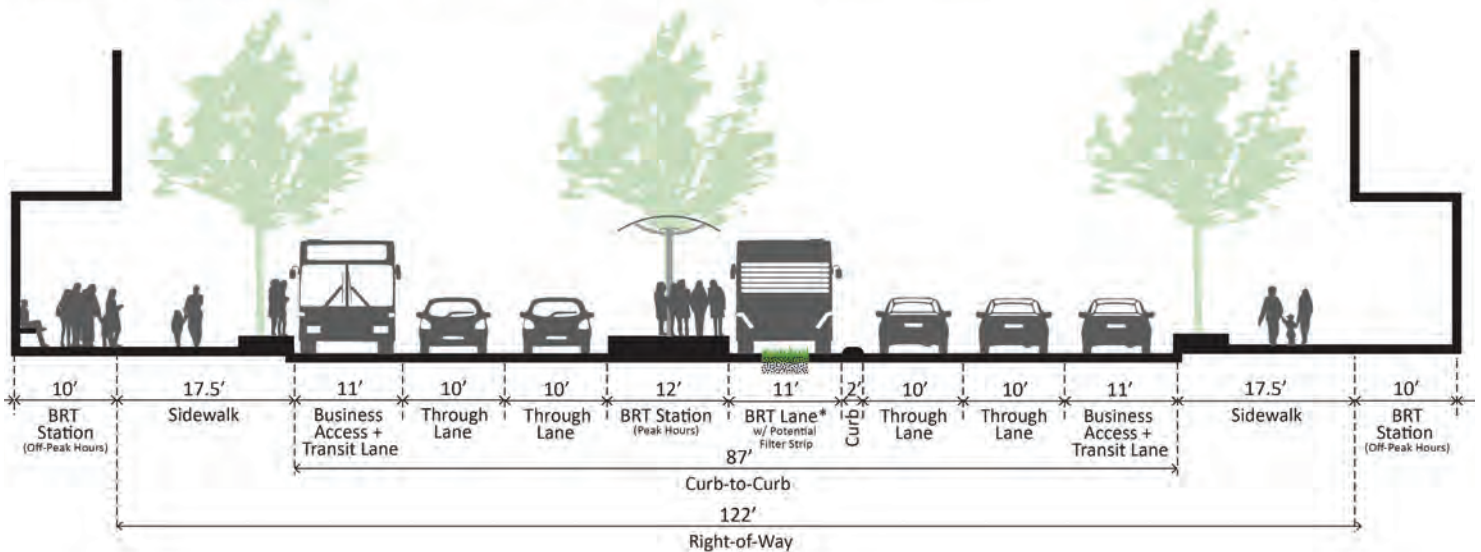
**Wisconsin Ave** (Chesnut Street to Elm Street, Looking North)  
Existing Section



**Wisconsin Ave (Chesnut Street to Elm Street, Looking North)**  
Proposed Section Option 1a: Reversible One-Lane Median Busway



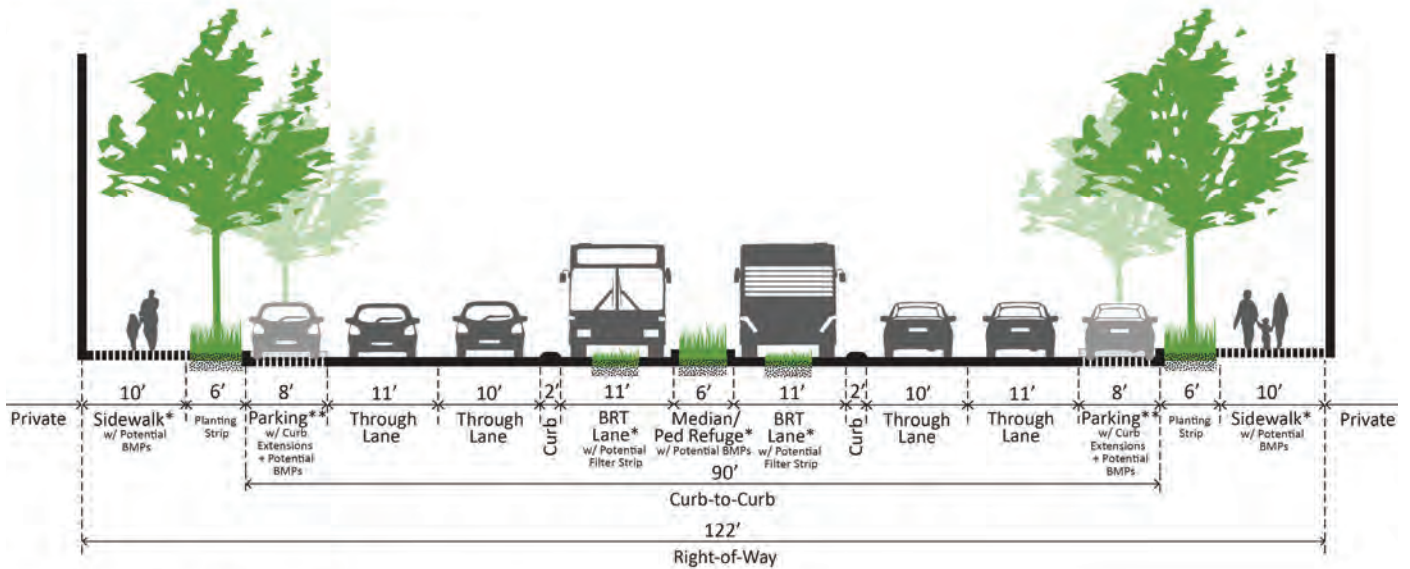
**Wisconsin Ave (@ Cordell Ave, Looking North)**  
Proposed Section Option 1b: Reversible One-Lane Median Busway @ BRT Station \*\*



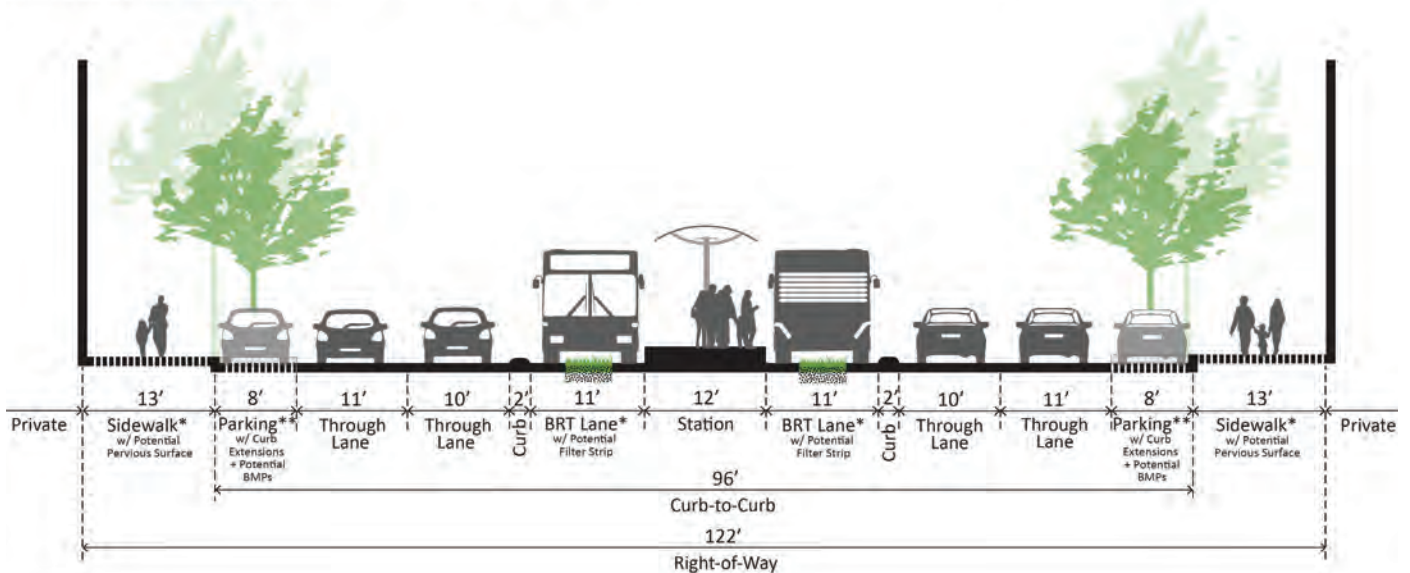
\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs).

\*\* The final BRT station location will be determined through the MD SHA/ MCDOT facility Planning Process.

**Wisconsin Ave (Chesnut Street to Elm Street, Looking North)**  
**Proposed Section Option 2a: Two-Lane Median Busway**



**Wisconsin Ave (@ Cordell Ave, Looking North)**  
**Proposed Section Option 2b: Two-Lane Median Busway @ BRT Station**

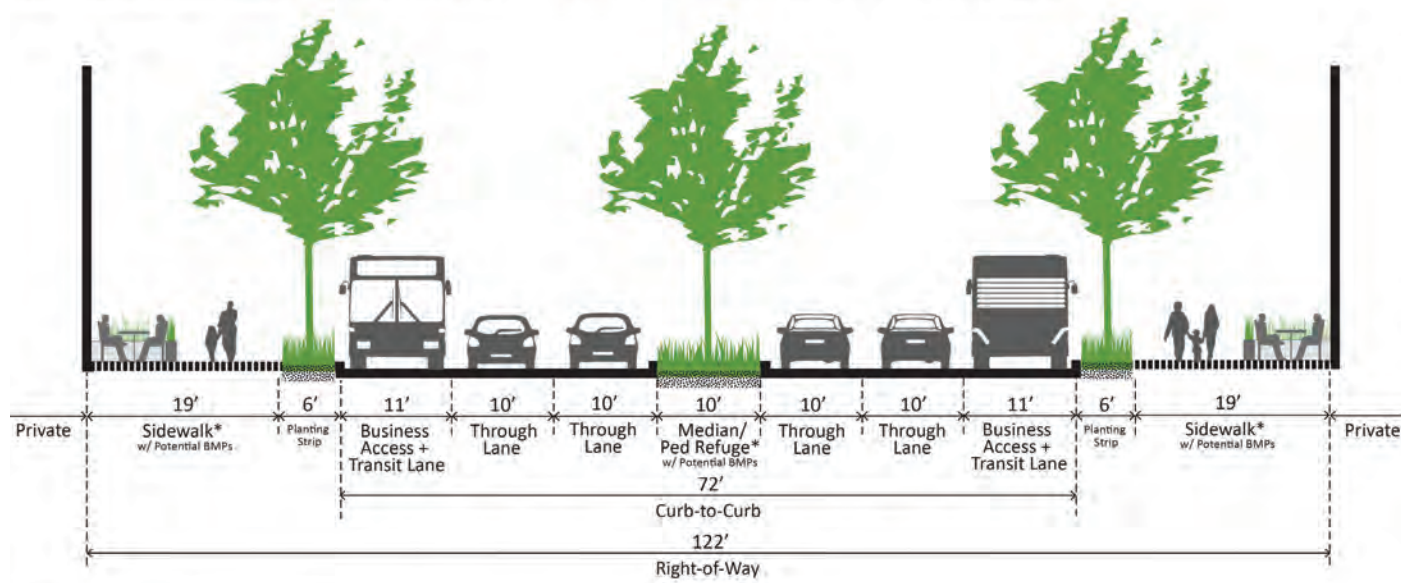


\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs).

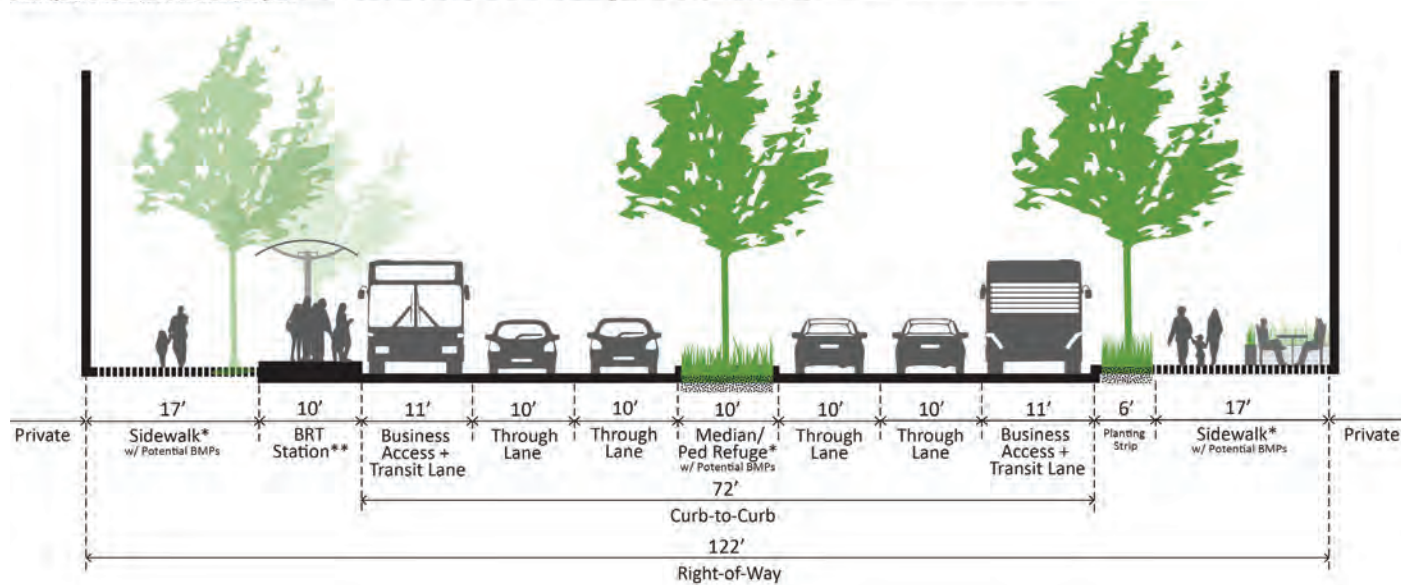
\*\* Parking lane to be removed in constrained segments with limited right-of-way.



**Wisconsin Ave (Chesnut Street to Elm Street, Looking North)**  
**Proposed Section Option 3a: Curb Lane Busway**



**Wisconsin Ave (@ Cordell Ave, Looking North)**  
**Proposed Section Option 3b: Curb Lane Busway @ BRT Station**



\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs).  
 \*\* Curbside station alternative design is to incorporate into building storefront.

## 2.3.4 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

### A. New Bikeway Recommendations

Any section of bikeway recommended in this plan that requires a road diet will require a more detailed interagency operational analysis before it is implemented.

#### 1. Woodmont Avenue (CT-4)

Separated Bike Lanes (ultimate); Bike Lanes (interim); N. Sector Plan Boundary to Wisconsin Avenue.

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity within the Sector Plan area and would serve as the primary alternative to Wisconsin Avenue for bicyclists. Due to potential parking and operational impacts resulting from lane reallocation required as part of this recommendation, the following alternatives have been identified for further analysis and the implemented bikeway may contain a combination of configurations; however, there is a strong preference for separated bike lanes along Woodmont Avenue (see also *Table 2.02: Bicycle Network Recommendations*):

- a. Separated Bike Lanes (One-way):* Due to Woodmont Avenue's importance to the bicycling network in Bethesda, this is the preferred bicycle facility for Woodmont Avenue. However, given the space required for one-way separated bike lanes, implementation of this option would require elimination of both the two-way-left-turn lane and on-street parking lanes, and must be considered in combination with the impact on the business community. With the implementation of a network of low-stress bicycling and bike parking in and around Downtown Bethesda, this facility type will generate substantial bicycle volumes and has the potential to offset the loss of on-street parking over time.
- b. Conventional Bike Lanes:* Recommended in the 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan (CBFMP), this option would require elimination of the two-way-left-turn lane. This configuration may be the only viable option south of Hampden Lane due to the anticipated need for on-street parking in that area.

- c. Separated Bike Lanes (Two-way):* Many jurisdictions are implementing two-way separated bike lanes because they require the same amount of space as conventional bike lanes. A drawback of this option is that the bike lane closest to traffic lanes travels in the opposite direction of traffic, creating conflicts that motorists may not expect. But there are ways to manage these conflicts, including traffic signals and access restrictions. Given the space required for two-way separated bike lanes, implementation of this option would require elimination of the two-way-left-turn lane.

#### 2. Bradley Boulevard (CT-5)

Separated Bike Lanes; West Sector Plan Boundary to East Sector Plan Boundary

This bikeway would improve east-west connectivity within the Sector Plan area and would bridge an area that is currently inaccessible to most bicyclists. It was previously recommended for a dual bikeway with both a shared use path and a signed shared roadway in the 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan. However, from Wilson Lane to Glenbrook Road, the bikeway is being designed by the Department of Transportation as a shared use path and bike lanes.

#### 3. Norfolk Avenue (BL-44)

Bike Lanes/Shared Street; Battery Lane Urban Park to Tilbury Street

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity within the Sector Plan area and would serve as the primary alternative to Old Georgetown Road for bicyclists. Due to the recommendation that a portion of Norfolk Avenue be reconfigured as a shared street, the following alternatives have been identified for further analysis:

- a. Bike Lanes Alternative:* This alternative is recommended for the near-term, prior to any implementation of the shared street concept. The primary advantage to this alternative is the relative ease with which it can be implemented. Norfolk Avenue is currently 48 feet wide with two travel (16 feet wide) lanes and two on-street parking lanes. As a result, two 6-foot wide bike lanes and two 10-foot wide travel lanes can be implemented without any

additional reallocation of the existing roadway or loss of parking.

- b. Shared Street Alternative:** This alternative reflects the Sector Plan recommendation that a portion of Norfolk Avenue, within Woodmont Triangle, be improved as a shared street with alternative paving materials and flush curbs. Once implemented, the shared street concept is anticipated to have a traffic calming effect and will support relatively low-speed mixed traffic. Under such a scenario, separated bike lanes are unnecessary for bicyclists' comfort.

#### **4. Arlington Road (LB-2)**

Separated Bike Lanes; Old Georgetown Road to Bradley Boulevard

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity on the west side of the Sector Plan area and would provide a direct connection between the Woodmont Triangle and recommended Bradley Boulevard bikeway via Bethesda Row.

This configuration would require a road diet that converts Arlington Road from a four-lane road to a three-lane road, including a center-turn lane.

#### **5. Commerce Lane/Avondale Street (SR-8)**

Shared Roadway; Edgemoor Lane to Avondale Street

This bikeway would improve east-west connectivity across both Old Georgetown Road and Wisconsin Avenue, by directing bicyclists to cross at an existing traffic signal on Old Georgetown Road and a marked crosswalk on Wisconsin Avenue. Ultimately, this bikeway should be extended to Pearl Street if Avondale Street is extended through redevelopment. This bikeway should have clear wayfinding signs and markings to encourage its use as an important connection within Downtown Bethesda.

#### **6. Rosedale Avenue (LB-1)**

Shared Roadway; Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street

This bikeway would improve east-west connectivity across Wisconsin Avenue, between the single-unit residential neighborhoods located to the west

and east of the Sector Plan area. This bikeway should have clear wayfinding signs and markings to encourage its use as an important connection within Downtown Bethesda.

#### **7. Tilbury Street/Sleaford Road (LB-5)**

Shared Roadway; Rosedale Avenue to Capital Crescent Trail

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity on the east side of the Sector Plan area and would provide an alternative to Wisconsin Avenue for bicyclists. This bikeway corresponds to the Sector Plan's recommendation that Tilbury Street serve as the "eastern greenway," or an area of transition between the high land-use density of Downtown Bethesda and its surrounding neighborhoods. Since this bikeway is recommended as a shared roadway, it is not anticipated to conflict with any of the open space or storm water management recommendations associated with the greenway. This bikeway should have clear wayfinding signs and markings to encourage its use as an important connection within Downtown Bethesda.

#### **8. Pearl Street (LB-3)**

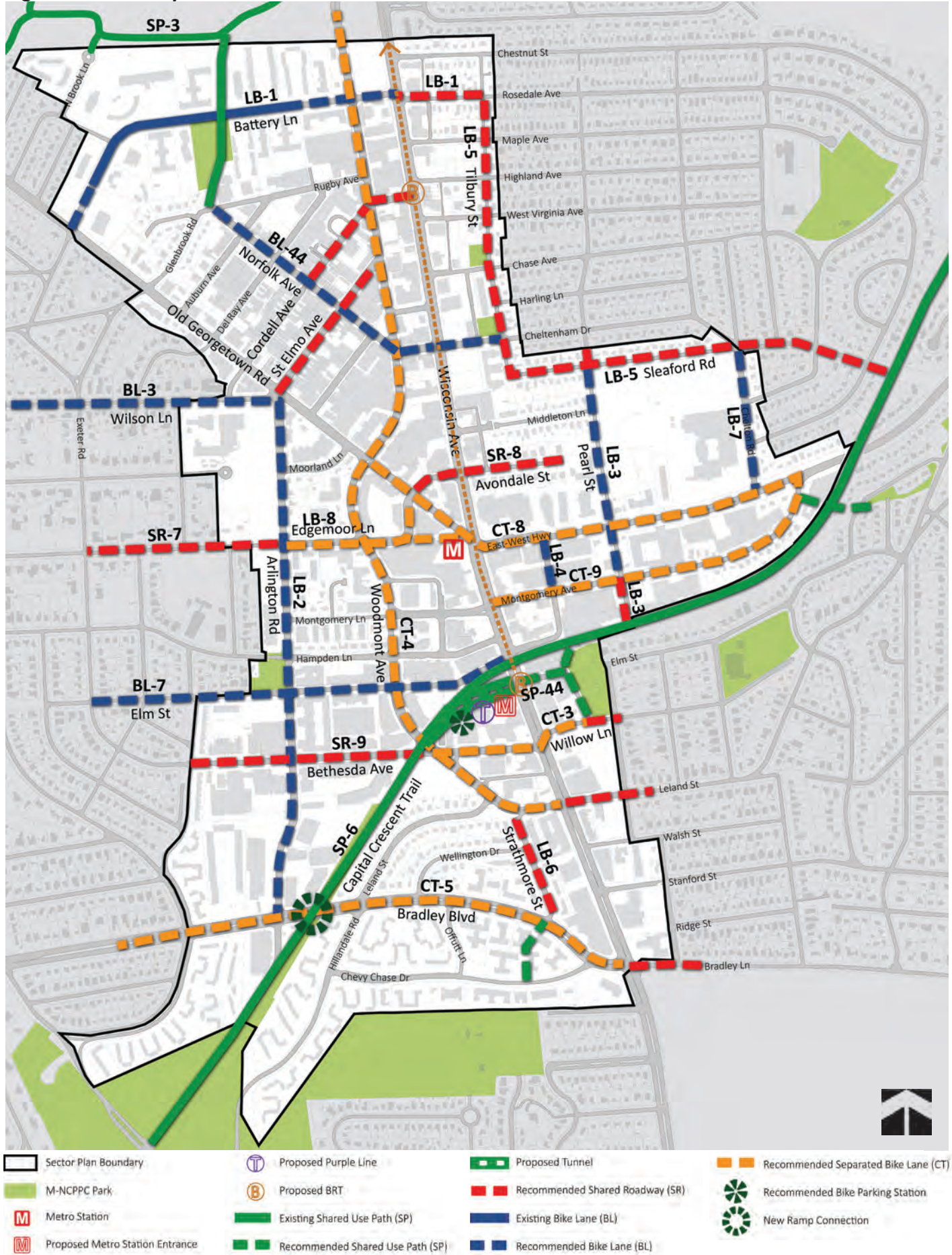
Bike Lane; Montgomery Avenue to Sleaford Road

Shared Roadway; North of Sleaford Road to Sector Plan Boundary and South of Montgomery Avenue

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity on the east side of the Sector Plan and would provide a direct connection between the emerging Pearl District and single-unit residential neighborhood to the north and east of the Sector Plan area. This Plan recommends bike lanes on the block between Sleaford Road and Montgomery Avenue, given the anticipated level of activity in that area of the Pearl District. North of Sleaford Road and South of Montgomery Avenue, this bikeway should be implemented as a shared roadway. This bikeway should have clear wayfinding signs and markings to encourage its use as an important connection within Downtown Bethesda.



Figure 2.10: Bikeway Classification



**Table 2.02: Bicycle Network Recommendations**

Designation	Roadway/ Route	Limits	Status
<b>Separated Bike Lane</b>			
CT-4	Woodmont Avenue <sup>1</sup>	N. Sector Plan Boundary to Wisconsin Avenue	New Recommendation
CT-5	Bradley Boulevard	W. Sector Plan Boundary to E. Sector Plan Boundary	New Recommendation
CT-3	Capital Crescent Trail (Surface Route: Bethesda Ave/ Willow Ln)	47th Street to Woodmont Avenue	Recommended
CT-8	Old Georgetown Road	Woodmont Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue	New Recommendation
	East West Highway	Wisconsin Avenue to Montgomery Avenue	
CT-9	Montgomery Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to East-West Highway	New Recommendation
LB-2 <sup>3</sup>	Arlington Road	Old Georgetown Road to Bradley Boulevard	New Recommendation
<b>Bike Lane</b>			
BL-3	Wilson Lane (MD 188)	Aberdeen Road to Old Georgetown Road	Recommended
BL-7	Elm Street	Exeter Road to Wisconsin Avenue	Recommended
LB-1	Battery Lane	Old Georgetown Road to Wisconsin Avenue	Recommended
BL-44	Norfolk Avenue/Cheltenham Drive	Battery Lane Urban Park to Tilbury Street	New Recommendation
LB-3	Pearl Street	Sleaford Road to Montgomery Avenue	New Recommendation
LB-4	Waverly Street	East-West Highway to Montgomery Avenue	New Recommendation
LB-7	Chelton Road	Sleaford Road to East-West Highway	New Recommendation
LB-8	Edgemoor Lane	Arlington Road to Metro Station	New Recommendation
<b>Shared Roadway<sup>2</sup></b>			
SR-7	Edgemoor Lane	Exeter Road to Arlington Road	New Recommendation
SR-8	Commerce Ln/ Avondale St	Edgemoor Lane to Avondale Street	New Recommendation
SR-9	Bethesda Avenue	Clarendon Road to Woodmont Avenue	Recommended
LB-1	Rosedale Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street	New Recommendation
LB-5	Tilbury Street/ Sleaford Road	Rosedale Avenue to CCT	New Recommendation
LB-6	Strathmore Street	Woodmont Avenue to Bradley Boulevard	Recommended
LB-3	Pearl Street <sup>4</sup>	Montgomery Avenue to S. Sector Plan Boundary	New Recommendation
<b>Shared Use Path</b>			
SP-3	North Bethesda Trail	N. Sector Plan Boundary to Rugby Avenue	Existing
SP-6	Capital Crescent Trail	S. Sector Plan Boundary to E. Sector Plan Boundary	Existing
SP-44	Capital Crescent Trail (Surface Route)	Elm Street to Willow Lane via 47th Street	Recommended
SP-62	Wisconsin-Woodmont Trail	N. Sector Plan Boundary to Battery Lane	Existing
LB-6	Strathmore Street Extended	South of Bradley Boulevard to Chevy Chase Drive	New Proposal

<sup>1</sup> Woodmont Avenue may be improved with either bike lanes or separated bike lanes, depending on the future one-way/two-way operation of the street. If the street remains one-way southbound in its ultimate condition, two-way separated bike lanes are necessary to facilitate safe, adequate and efficient bicycle circulation. Design and operation to be determined by MCDOT at the time of facility planning.

<sup>2</sup> All roads in the Sector Plan area should be designed for shared use by motor vehicles and bicycles and are designated as shared roadways unless another higher quality bicycle facility is provided (e.g. bike lanes). These shared roadways are called out for wayfinding purposes. This sector plan recommends amending the practice of implementing shared roadways on wide travel lanes; Bicycles should operate on-road as vehicles where the prevailing roadway operation is characterized by low vehicular speed and volume.

<sup>3</sup> The "LB" designation is a "Local Bikeway" that is not included in the Countywide Bikeway Master Plan due to its limited importance to the County as a whole. LB bikeways can be implemented as any facility designation.

<sup>4</sup> The LB-3 Bikeway, South of Montgomery Avenue, may be implemented as a shared use path if the County Council abandons that section of Pearl Street.



## **B. New Trail Connections**

### **1. Bradley Boulevard/Capital Crescent Trail Connector**

Bicycle Ramp; Northwest side of the Bradley Boulevard/Capital Crescent Trail Bridge

A staircase currently exists in this location and this Plan recommends that a new bicycle ramp be considered to better facilitate the connection between an existing regional bikeway (the Capital Crescent Trail) and a recommended regional bikeway (the Bradley Boulevard Separated Bikeway). This ramp would extend from Bradley Boulevard to the Capital Crescent Trail, to achieve an ADA-compliant longitudinal grade. This improvement should be considered at the time the adjacent property is redeveloped. Alternative ramp locations may be considered at the time of regulatory approval.

### **2. Pearl Street/Capital Crescent Trail Connector (LB-3)**

Bicycle Ramp; South side of the Pearl Street terminus

The current connection at this location is sub-standard. Therefore, this Sector Plan recommends a new shared use path be considered in this location to better facilitate the connection between a recommended local bikeway (the Pearl Street Shared Roadway) and an existing regional bikeway (the Capital Crescent Trail). This trail connector improvement is identified as part of the proposed Purple Line light rail project and is funded through Montgomery County's Capital Improvements Program in the event the Purple Line project is delayed. Given this Plan's recommendation that the segment of Pearl Street south of Montgomery Avenue be improved as a shared street, the enhanced connection to the trail should be considered an opportunity for a high-quality open space/plaza that connects the Pearl District with the Capital Crescent Trail.

### **3. North Bethesda Trail (SP-3)**

The North Bethesda Trail provides a critical regional trail connection between Downtown Bethesda and Rockville via White Flint. This trail currently features a substandard width for a shared

use path, resulting in a lower quality experience for those who use the trail. This Sector Plan recommends that the trail be widened to a width of 12 feet with 1-foot-wide shoulders on either side between Rugby Avenue and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus. Additionally, the trail should be improved with pedestrian-scaled lighting to reflect its importance as a regional connection.

## **4. Intersection Improvements**

When compared to linear bikeway projects, intersection improvements for bicycle accommodation have a disproportionate impact on the quality, enjoyment and safety of each bicycle trip. At the same time, however, many improvements are highly technical in nature and beyond the Sector Plan scope. This Plan recommends that all bikeway improvements be completed to the nearest intersection with appropriate transitions across major barriers.

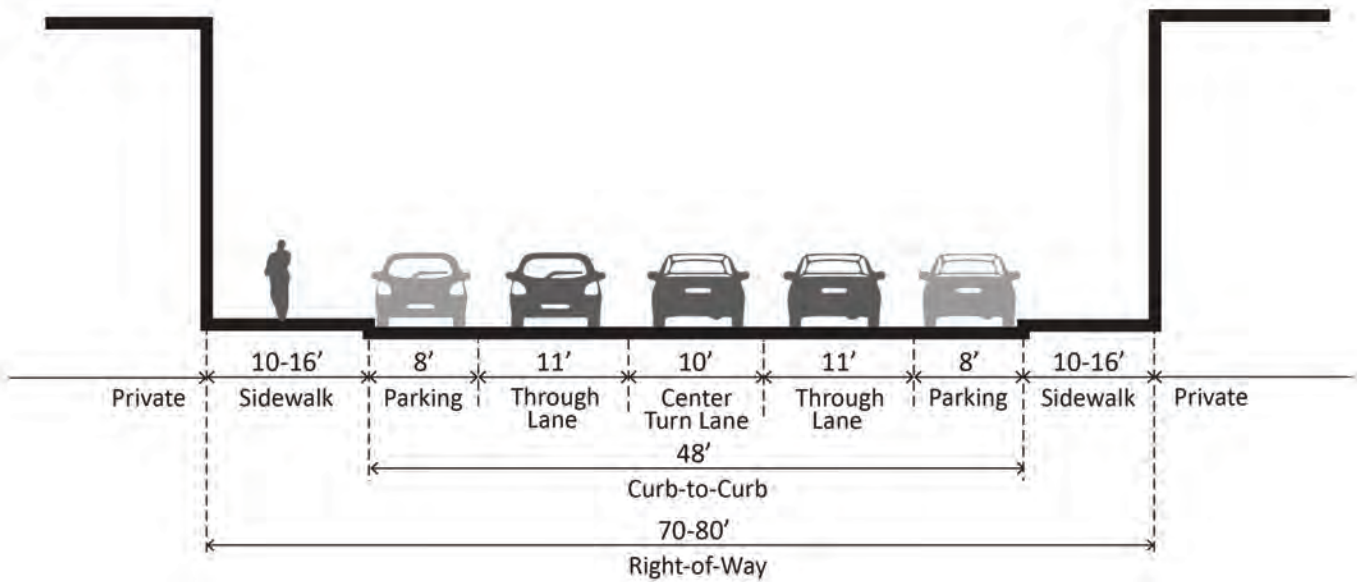
- A specific example of this approach can be illustrated with regard to the existing Battery Lane Bike Lane. This Plan recommends that the Battery Lane bike lanes be extended to terminate at the intersections of Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road, rather than the current mid-block terminus.
- At the time of implementation, intersection improvements should be based on the best practices available from the transportation planning field nationwide, including the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) and American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHTO).
- Future evaluation should specifically evaluate a concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e. a pedestrian scramble or Barnes Dance) for all crossings of the Woodmont Avenue/ Bethesda Avenue intersection during periods of peak pedestrian demand, especially weekends when traffic congestion is less of a concern.

Much like Wisconsin Avenue, Old Georgetown Road is a major barrier to bicyclists due to the speed and volume of its vehicular traffic. The constrained right-of-way cannot accommodate

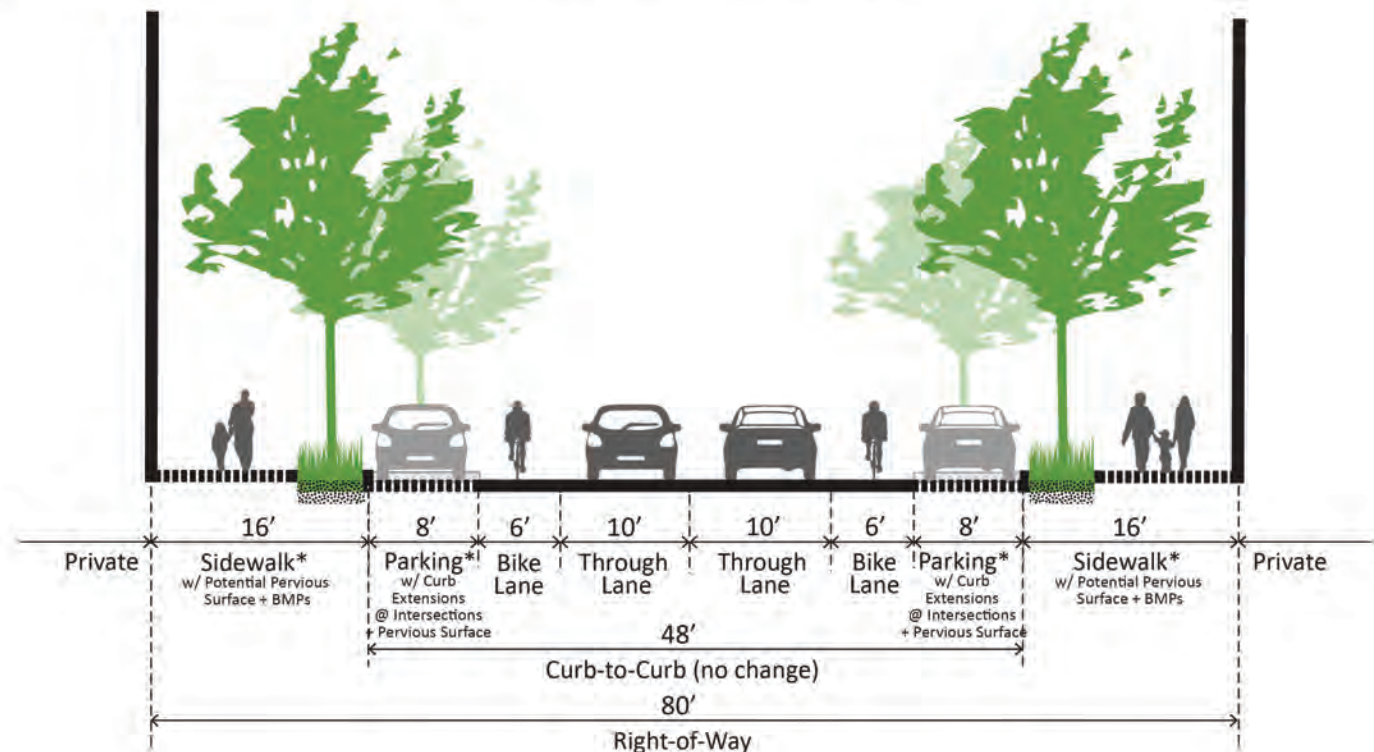


**Figure 2.11: Woodmont Avenue Existing and Proposed Street Sections**

**Woodmont Ave** (Battery Ln to Old Georgetown Rd, Looking North)  
Existing Section

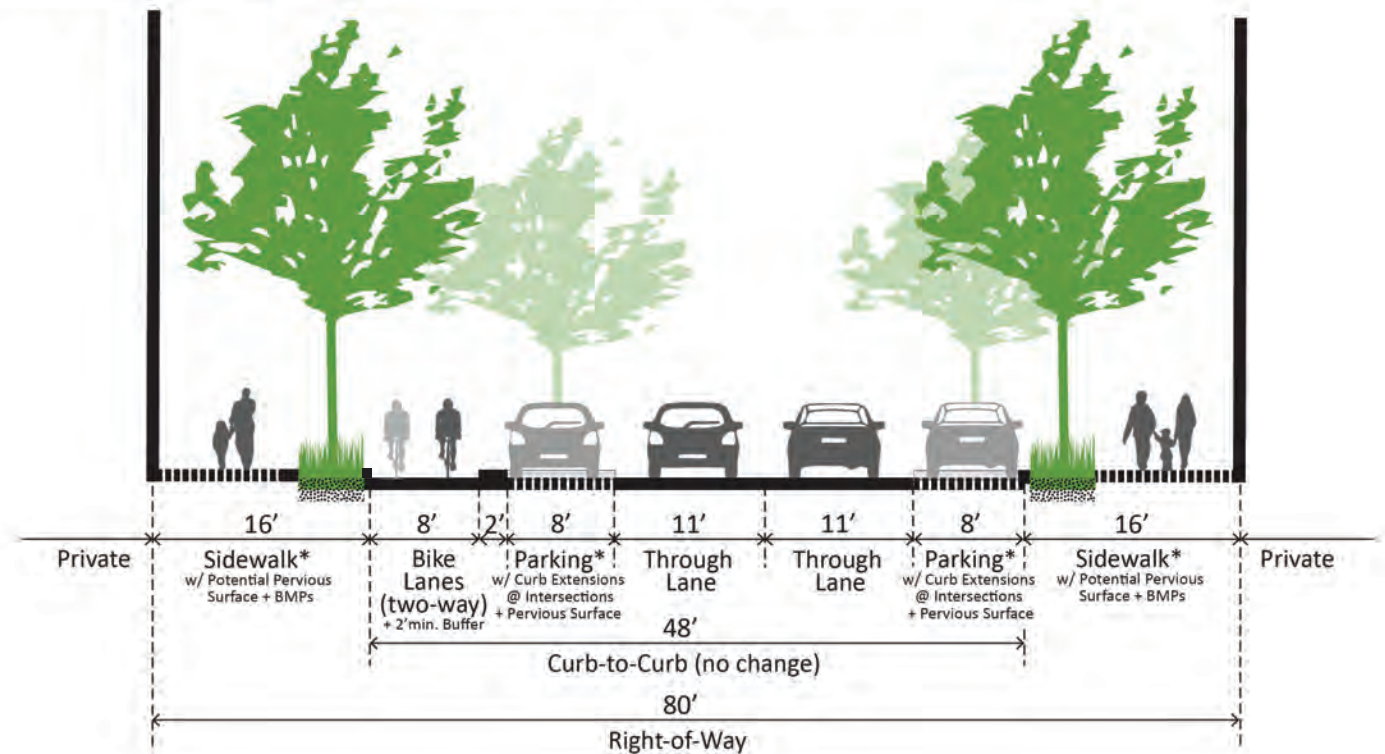


**Woodmont Ave** (Battery Ln to Old Georgetown Rd, Looking North)  
Proposed Section Opt. 1: Bike Lanes

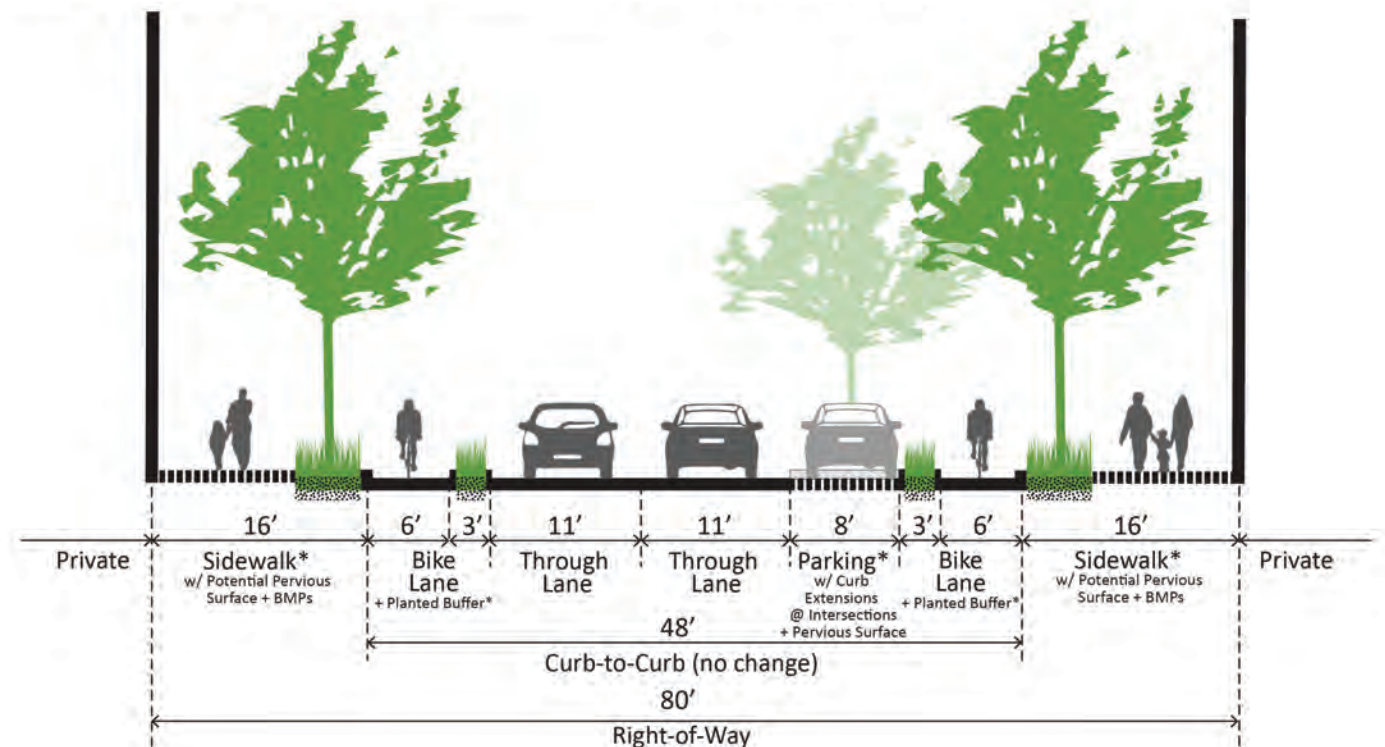


\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs)

**Woodmont Ave** (Battery Ln to Old Georgetown Rd, Looking North)  
Proposed Section Opt. 2: Separated Bike Lanes (two-way)



**Woodmont Ave** (Battery Ln to Old Georgetown Rd, Looking North)  
Proposed Section Opt. 3: Separated Bike Lanes (one-way)

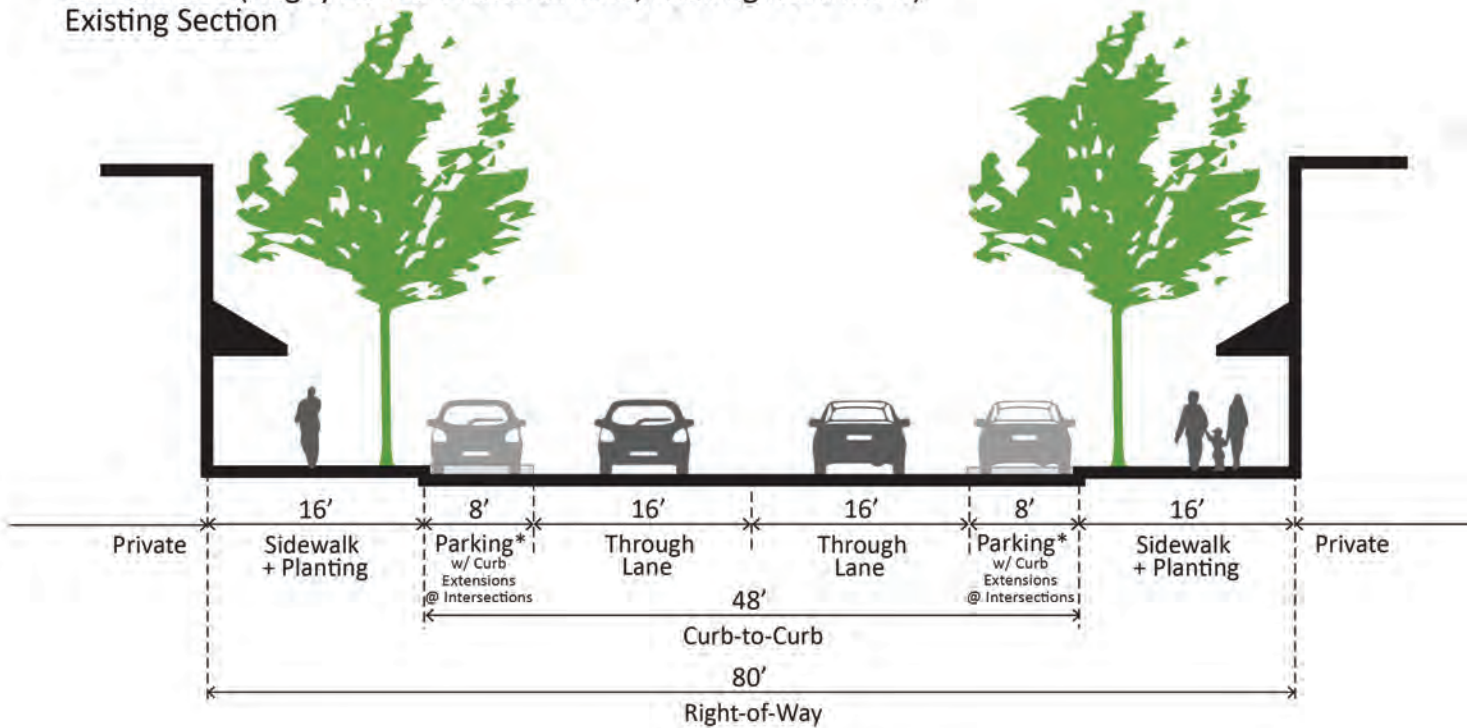


\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs)

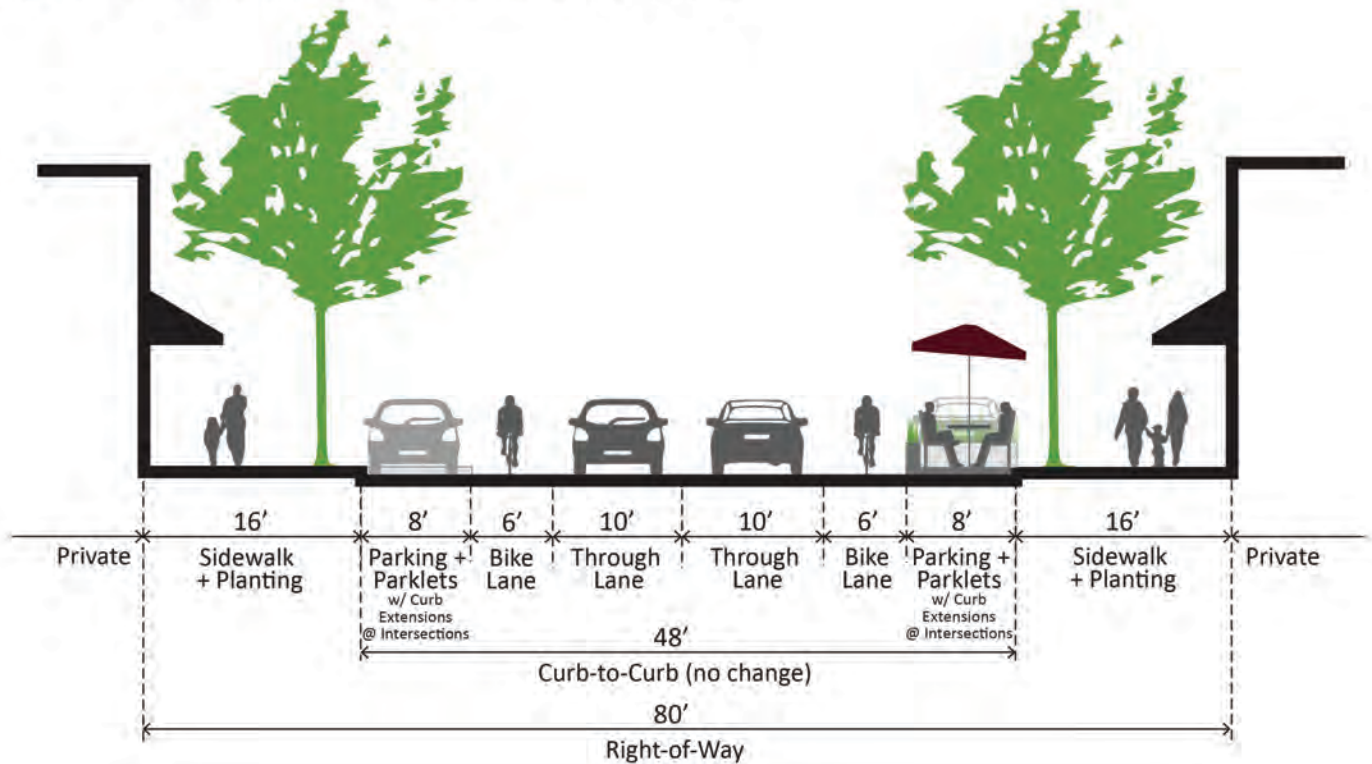


**Figure 2.12: Norfolk Avenue Existing and Proposed Street Sections**

**Norfolk Ave** (Rugby Ave to Wisconsin Ave, Looking Northwest)  
Existing Section

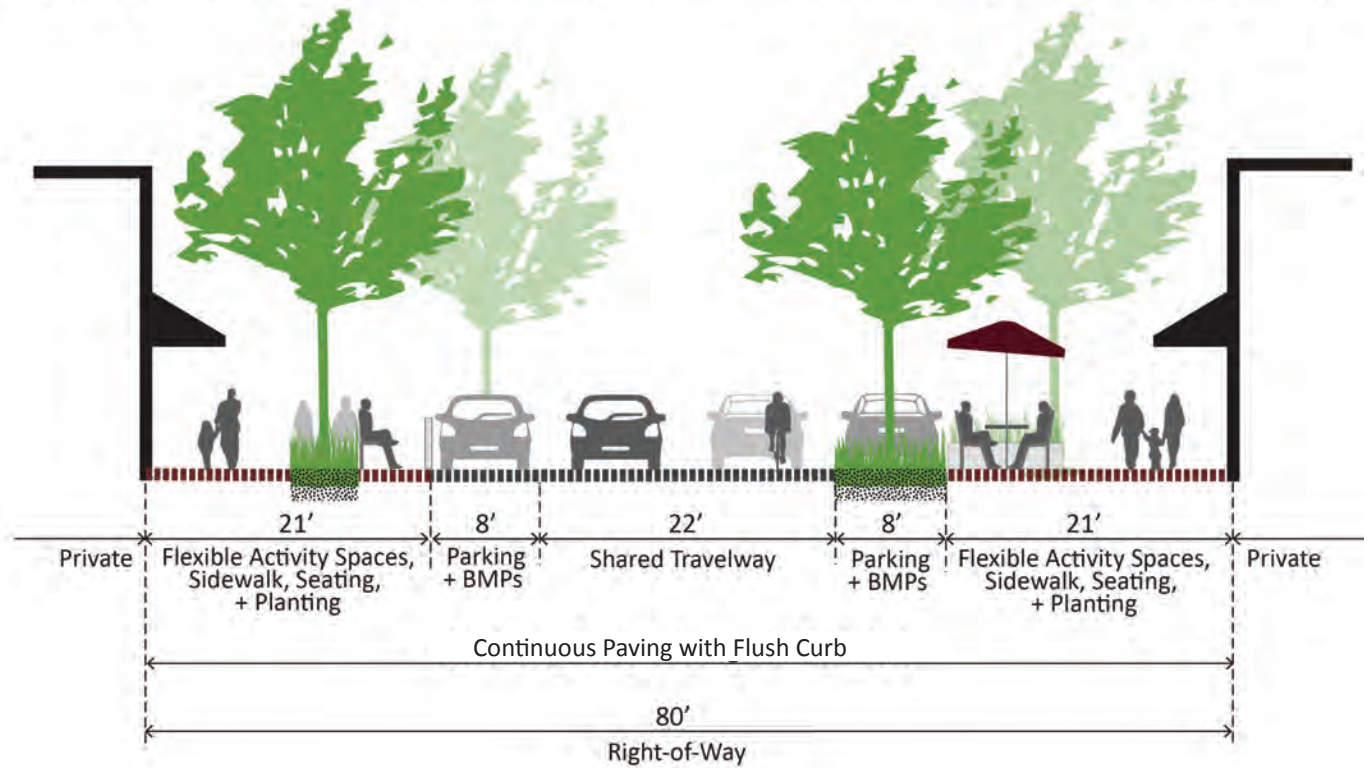


**Norfolk Ave** (Rugby Ave to Wisconsin Ave, Looking Northwest)  
Proposed Section Short Term: Bike Lanes and Parklets





**Norfolk Ave** (Rugby Ave to Wisconsin Ave, Looking Northwest)  
Proposed Section Long Term: Shared Street with Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)\*



\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs)

the level of lane allocation necessary to support a separated bikeway. As a result, staff has identified Norfolk Avenue as a “low-stress” alternative to Old Georgetown Road. It is worth noting that this Plan supports Old Georgetown Road as a shared roadway for more experienced bicyclists.

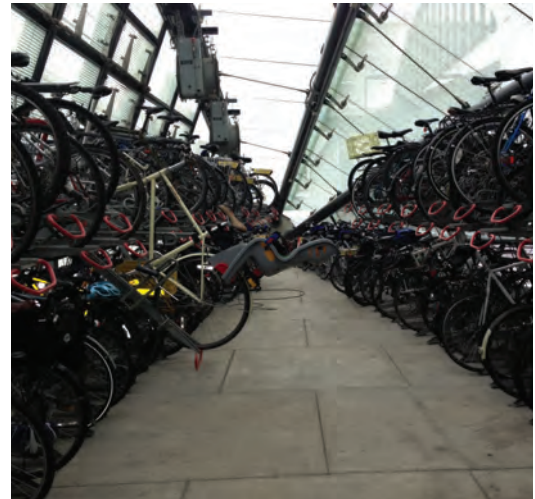
## 5. Bike Parking Station

This Sector Plan confirms the recommendation in the 2014 Bethesda Purple Line Station Minor Master Plan Amendment for a bicycle storage facility at the Bethesda South Station.

## 6. Bike Share

Since bike share expanded into Montgomery County in 2013, it has grown in popularity within Downtown Bethesda. One way to build on this popularity and increase access to the system is to provide additional bike share stations within close proximity to existing stations. Such an expansion should be directly tied to new development; however, stations outside the Sector Plan area could also be considered for implementation as part of the County’s Capital Improvement Program, as funding permits. Bike share stations should also be timed to open with bikeway recommendations identified in this Sector Plan.

New bike share stations should be sited in proximity to existing bike share stations, high density development and transit to optimize use of the system. To the extent possible, bike share station sites should be located near existing and master planned bicycle infrastructure. Specific bike share station sites for development projects will be selected in concert with M-NCPPC and the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to ensure consistency with bike share system objectives and siting requirements.



*Bicycle parking station in Washington, DC*  
Source: wny.org



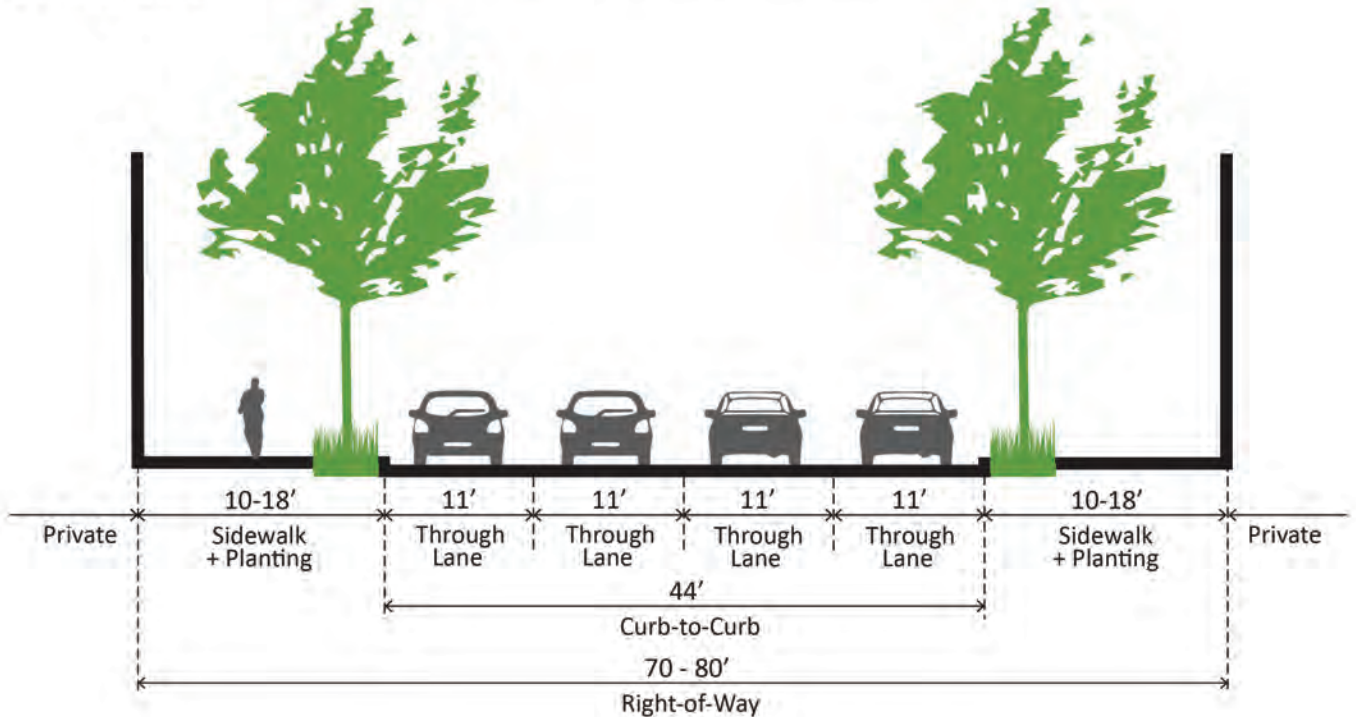
*Bicycle parking station in Berkeley, CA*  
Source: bikehub.com



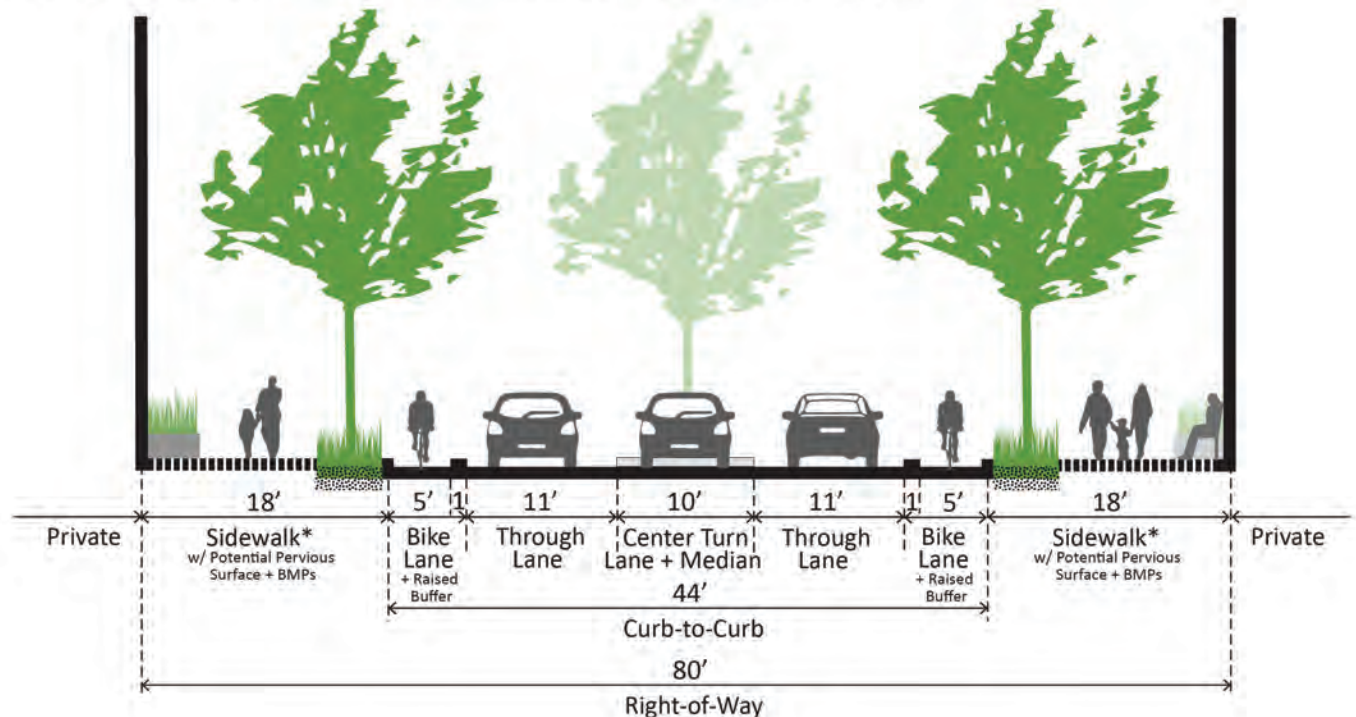
*Intersection improvement with bike boxes*  
Source: City of Portland

**Figure 2.13: Arlington Road Existing and Proposed Street Sections**

**Arlington Rd (Old Georgetown Road to Bradley Boulevard, Looking North)**  
Existing Section



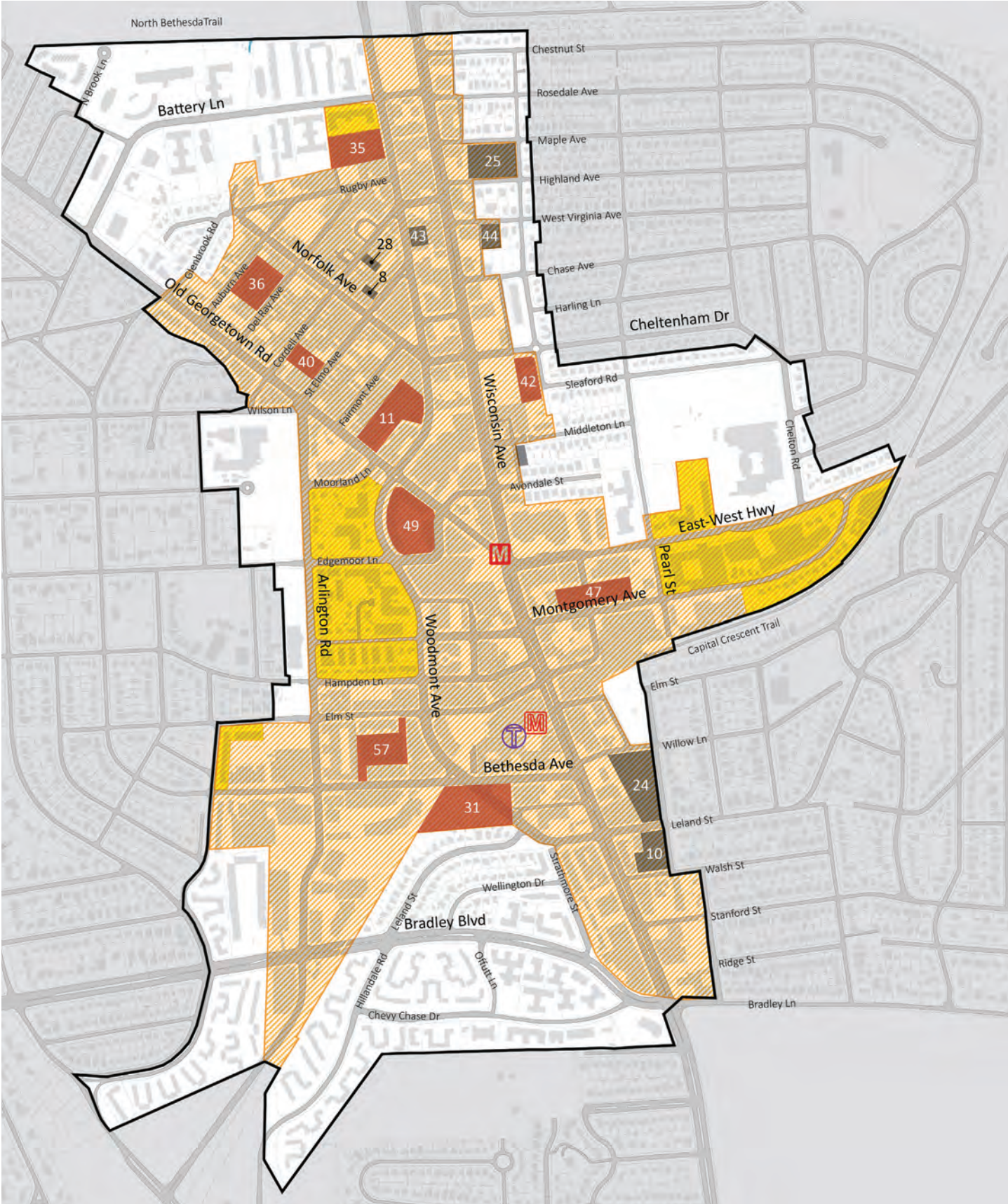
**Arlington Rd (Old Georgetown Road to Bradley Boulevard, Looking North)**  
Proposed Section: Separated Bike Lanes (one-way)



\* To be further studied: Potential stormwater best management practices (BMPs)



Figure 2.14: Parking Lot District (PLD) Expansion



- Sector Plan Boundary
- Parking Lot District Boundary
- Metro Station
- Potential PLD Expansion
- Proposed Metro Station Entrance
- Public Garage
- Proposed Purple Line Station
- Public Lot



### 2.3.5 Transportation Demand Management

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) represents programmatic elements designed to encourage the use of travel modes other than single occupancy vehicles, including walking, bicycling, transit, and telework. TDM programs are context-sensitive and are designed based on the transportation infrastructure available to those living and working within a defined area. In Bethesda, that area is referred to as a Transportation Management District (TMD) and is managed by a transportation management organization. Transportation Demand Management is an important strategy in managing intersection congestion within the Downtown area and should be continued through the horizon year of this Sector Plan.

Success in implementing TDM strategies is determined by establishing and monitoring Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS). The current NADMS in Bethesda indicates that approximately 42 percent of commuters arrive at work by means other than single occupancy vehicles. This Sector Plan recommends that the NADMS goal be expanded to apply to both commuters and residents and increased to a combined average of 55 percent for both groups.

The Transportation Management District and Urban District responsibilities should be expanded to include parking management efforts. Parking management offers many benefits to downtown areas, not least of which is a positive impact on the public realm and streetscape appearance.

### 2.3.6 Parking

This Plan recommends a continuation of the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan's recommendation of maintaining a constrained long-term parking supply, an approach that supports TDM strategies within the downtown area. This Plan adds a recommendation that opportunities for public-private partnerships and co-location of public facilities should be considered for future parking facility development. It should be noted that public-private partnerships and co-location are not new concepts for the Montgomery County Parking Lot District, as that entity has implemented those strategies with success in recent years within the Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton Parking Lot Districts. This Sector Plan recommends a continuation of that practice.

Since the Parking Lot District boundary is inconsistent with the Sector Plan boundary, the Sector Plan area was evaluated to determine the potential catchment area of existing public parking facilities. That evaluation identified properties within a quarter mile (5-minute walk) of existing parking garages and lots, and determined that nearly all of Bethesda is within a 5-minute walk of public parking (see *Figure 2.14: Parking Lot District (PLD) Expansion*).

Staff refined this initial evaluation by limiting the area of recommended expansion to coincide with the recommended Commercial Residential zoning, centers of emerging activity and the neighborhood adjacent to the Bethesda Metrorail Station. Expanding the Parking Lot District boundary in this manner is consistent with its original intent, which focused on the Central Business District (CBD) zones.

In the future, MCDOT should evaluate the potential benefits of integrating parking management with existing TDM and urban district activities. Parking management has a direct positive effect on both aesthetic and operational elements of the transportation network.

#### A. Parking Recommendations

- Promote a constrained parking policy that supports a transit-oriented downtown.
- Expand the Parking Lot District to include newly proposed Commercial Residential zoning, centers of emerging activity and the neighborhood adjacent to the Metrorail station.
- Explore opportunities for co-location of public facilities on Parking Lot District properties and facilities. Co-location should be considered as existing facilities are evaluated for replacement and as the market allows for new mixed-use development.

## 2.4 Urban Ecosystem



The overall vision for Downtown Bethesda aims to improve all three interconnecting principles of sustainability: economic, equity (social) and environmental stability. This section focuses on the principle of environmental sustainability, one-third of the sustainability puzzle.

Environmental sustainability means maintaining clean air, fresh and clean water, protecting natural resources, reducing consumption of nonrenewable resources, and maintaining or enhancing biodiversity (plants and animals) thereby helping future generations meet their own needs.

Bethesda, the County's most populated urban core, is a compact, walkable, mixed-use downtown and the economic heart of Montgomery County. It's a place where people can live, work, shop and play without the need for an automobile. When transportation is needed, there are a variety of safe and accessible options, such as public transit (Metro, bus, the Circulator), a well-connected bicycle network and extensive sidewalks and trails. This profoundly saves fossil fuels by reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), resulting in decreased carbon emissions, air pollution, improved health, reduced obesity and improved air quality. Data shows that on average there is a 39 percent reduction of single occupancy trips made on weekdays in urban areas.

Bethesda's centralized growth also helps reduce sprawl, protecting sensitive land and natural resources while reducing the costs and demand for infrastructure over a wide geographic area. In addition, mixed-use development generally reduces per-unit energy consumption by approximately 40-50 percent due to smaller dwelling units, centralized heating and cooling systems, shared walls and fewer windows.

Presently, the majority of downtown Bethesda has no stormwater management. Consequently, receiving waterways are impaired and water quality is degraded. All redevelopment will be subject to the County's strict stormwater management regulations designed to mitigate the effects of development and improve water quality. Innovative stormwater management called Environmental Site Design (ESD), such as green roofs, underground storage, bioretention and tree planting will have numerous benefits. Not only will ESD improve water quality and reduce impacts on the stream banks, but it



can simultaneously provide much needed green space in the urban landscape. This practice increases biodiversity and improves the quality of place and health of those who live in Bethesda.

**Table 2.03: Estimated Reduction in Pollutants with Stormwater Management per Acre**

	Nitrogen	Phosphorus	Total Suspended Solids
Stormwater	lbs/ac/yr	lbs/ac/yr	lbs/ac/yr
Proportion	45- 65%	52- 76%	56- 82% land use loading rate
Quantity	6.8- 9.8 lbs/yr	0.85- 1.24 lbs/yr	975 – 1418 total sediment reduction (based on site and stream bank reduction)

Source: Data provided by the Center for Watershed Protection, 2016

These environmental benefits are significant and make Bethesda a sought-after community to live and work. These benefits enhance the urban ecosystem which is described as the relationship between humans, the built environment and the natural environment. They are dynamic and interdependent systems that affect the health and well-being of a community.

Further improvements to the urban ecosystem beyond the successes of those mentioned above include greener open space, high performance buildings to lower energy demand and operational costs; stormwater management that mimics nature to improve groundwater recharge and stream quality; and stratified vegetative plantings to improve habitat, purify air and water, and cool the urban landscape. When implemented comprehensively and on a site-by-site basis, these performance-based recommendations can be quantified and measured to improve and sustain a healthier, greener and more prosperous community.

#### Comprehensive Planning for Urban Habitat:



Buildings



Streets

Source: Mithun



Community

Source: ArchiNaija

### 2.4.1 Urban Green

Urban green spaces, such as parks, street trees, tree clusters, green roofs, planted areas, including stormwater management systems, streams and community gardens, provide critical ecosystem services and biophilic elements of a city. Green space also promotes physical activity, psychological well-being, improved public health and draws in businesses and residents. Urban green creates great cities where the built and natural environments are interwoven, making them more livable for humans and all living biota.

The following recommendations aim to reestablish and link green spaces to create green corridors that connect new and existing green elements to parks, trails, stream buffers and the denser forest networks beyond the Bethesda boundaries. Through streetscape and private property improvements, stratified vegetative plantings, park acquisition and construction of green roofs, Bethesda's green corridors and infrastructure will significantly improve human health and biological diversity; provide food and shelter for local wildlife species; increase ecological resilience; reduce water and energy demand; provide greater carbon sequestration capacity; and significantly enhance quality of place and desirability.

#### A. Goals:

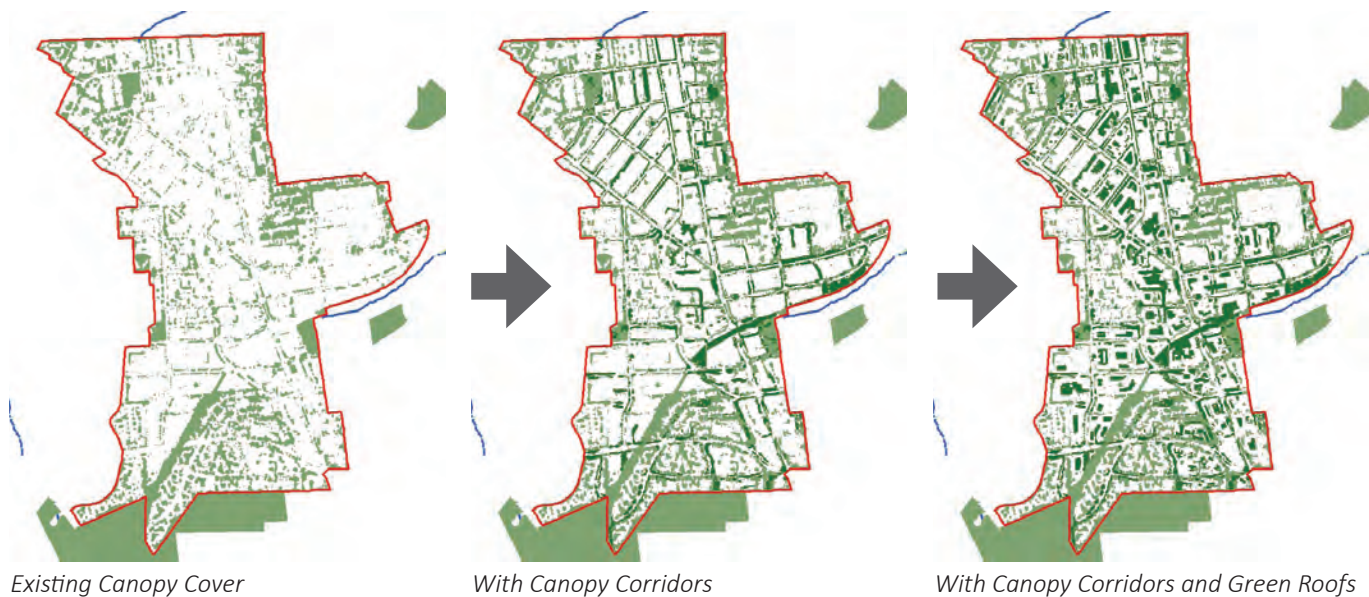
- Increase overall tree canopy cover.
- Expand green corridors by linking green streets, green space and green roofs.
- Reduce heat island effect.
- Improve air quality and carbon sequestration capacity.
- Improve ecological biodiversity.

#### B. Recommendations:

The following recommendations are important to achieving the urban green goals of this Sector Plan:

- Supplement tree planting along streets and public space to achieve a minimum of 50 percent overall canopy cover.
- On private property, provide a minimum of 35 percent green cover, which may include singularly or a combination of the following:
  - Intensive green roof (6 inches or deeper) on 35 percent of rooftop.
  - Tree canopy cover on 35 percent of landscape.
  - A combination of tree canopy and intensive green roof for a total green cover of 35 percent or greater\*.

**Figure 2.15: Potential Green Cover with Canopy Corridors and Green Roofs**



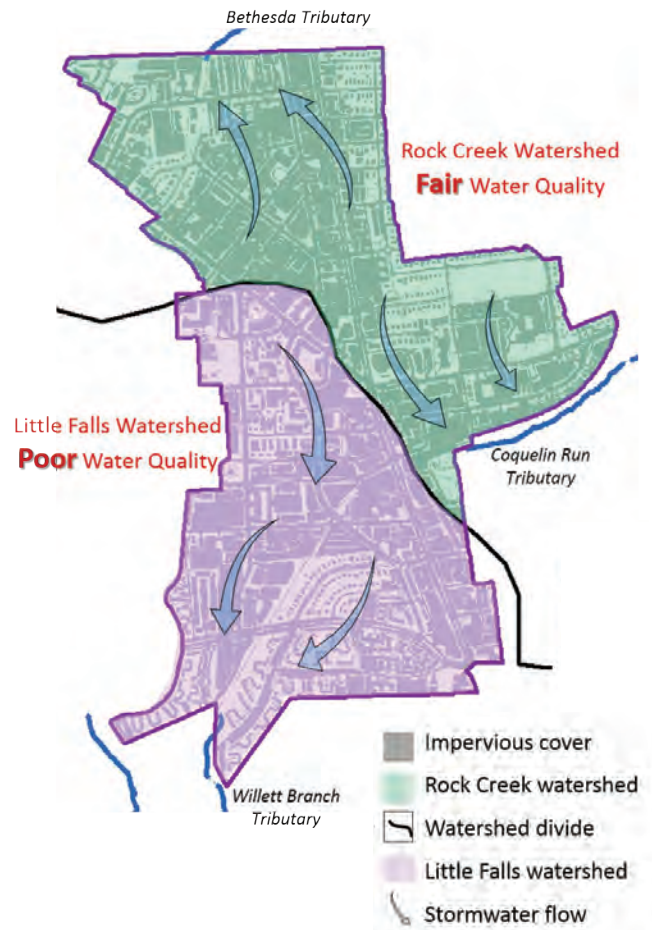
*\* If onsite energy generation requires the use of either the roof or open space, accommodations for these features may alter the 35 percent minimum green cover requirement.*

- Install green roofs with at least 6 inches of soil depth allowing for greater stormwater treatment, possible urban agriculture and growth of native perennials and grasses to improve habitat, food, shelter and other ecological benefits.
- Use appropriate plant species that will thrive in various site conditions and climate. Species should be a combination of native and locally adaptive species lessening water demand while providing biological benefits.
- Provide soil volumes for canopy trees of no less than 600 cubic feet.

The following recommendations should be incorporated into development projects wherever possible:

- Prioritize street tree planting along existing and proposed bicycle networks to expand linear green corridors.
- Increase overall tree canopy cover and subcanopy cover by encouraging the planting of trees on public and private land, along right-of-ways, within open space and existing neighborhoods.
- Consider daylighting Bethesda Mainstem Tributary if purchased as public green space.
- When practical, incorporate vegetation into stormwater management facilities.
- Bury overhead wires underground to avoid conflict with street trees.
- Achieve an overall canopy cover with species diversity where no single genus comprises more than 20 percent of the total population of trees.
- Apply Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) principles on new construction projects.
- Maximize species diversity along the horizontal and vertical planting planes.

**Figure 2.16: Watersheds and Water Quality**



## 2.4.2 Water Quality

Located in Bethesda are the Rock Creek and Little Falls watersheds and three receiving tributaries: Coquelin Run, Bethesda Mainstem and Willett Branch. Water quality is poor due to a high impervious cover of more than 65 percent and lack of stormwater treatments. Impervious surfaces curtail groundwater recharge, eliminating the capacity for pollution reduction via soil saturation and filtration. They prohibit the release of filtered water from saturated soils into water bodies. When stormwater flows across impervious surfaces, pollutants are carried into drain inlets and discharge directly into the receiving tributaries causing water surges, stream bank erosion, algae blooms, reduced aquatic life and poor water quality.

Improving water quality in the three receiving tributaries is an important goal that will take many years to achieve. With each new development and streetscape design, the construction of integrated



stormwater management treatments will begin to reduce the quantity and improve the quality of stormwater runoff and water in the receiving streams.

#### **A. Goals:**

- Reduce untreated stormwater runoff to improve stream quality.
- Reduce water consumption through conservation measures.

#### **B. Recommendations:**

- Integrate stormwater management within the right-of-way where feasible. Stormwater management facilities should not compromise bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and networks.
- Integrate environmental site design strategies that provide multiple performance area benefits for water quality, habitat, health and aesthetic improvement. Some strategies include:
  - Intensive green roofs (6 inches or greater to maximize water treatment).
  - Stormwater planters.
  - Pervious pavement.
  - Bioswales/biofiltration/bioretention/bioinfiltration.
  - Rainwater harvesting for retention, irrigation and gray water.
- Incorporate multiple stormwater management facilities or treatment train where feasible to maximize benefits.
- Reduce impervious cover to maximize stormwater infiltration and/or green space.
- Where feasible, use permeable paving for sidewalks, driveways, roads, road shoulders, parking lots and parking lanes.
- Utilize environmental site design for parks and open spaces where it can be interpreted for community education.
- When feasible, exceed the County's minimum stormwater treatment requirement.
- Use street trees for stormwater interception, temperature mitigation and air quality improvement.

### **2.4.3 Energy**

In Montgomery County, three sectors contribute to greenhouse gas emissions: transportation (34 percent), buildings (65 percent) and solid waste management (1 percent). Sixty percent of the energy used in Montgomery County's buildings are heated and cooled by coal and other fossil fuels where the combustion byproduct is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the leading source of climate change.

In an effort to reduce carbon dioxide and other harmful emissions (nitrogen oxide, particulate matter, heavy metals, etc.), long-range planning must include strategies to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the two leading energy consumer categories: transportation and buildings.

A holistic sustainable Sector Plan must include strategies for reducing energy demand and carbon output. In the County Bill 34-07, Planning Procedures-Greenhouse Gas Emissions, enacted in 2008, the County states that it is incumbent upon the Montgomery County Planning Board to recommend ways to reduce carbon emissions through transportation and buildings.

The compact, walkable, sustainable community envisioned by the Sector Plan will result in reduced vehicle miles traveled. The carbon footprint analysis contained in the Appendix to this Plan indicate a 36 percent drop in carbon dioxide emissions per capita. The analysis does not take into consideration improvements to buildings, future vehicle technology, or behavioral changes and therefore the true carbon reductions per capita may be even higher than the results indicate.

The transportation recommendations can be found in Chapter Two of this document (Section 2.3). Recommendations pertaining to buildings are identified below and in Section 2.5 High Performance Area of this Sector Plan.

#### **A. Goals**

- Improve building energy efficiency and reduce energy demand.
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled.

#### **B. Recommendations:**

- In the High Performance Area, buildings must meet the public benefits category for CR

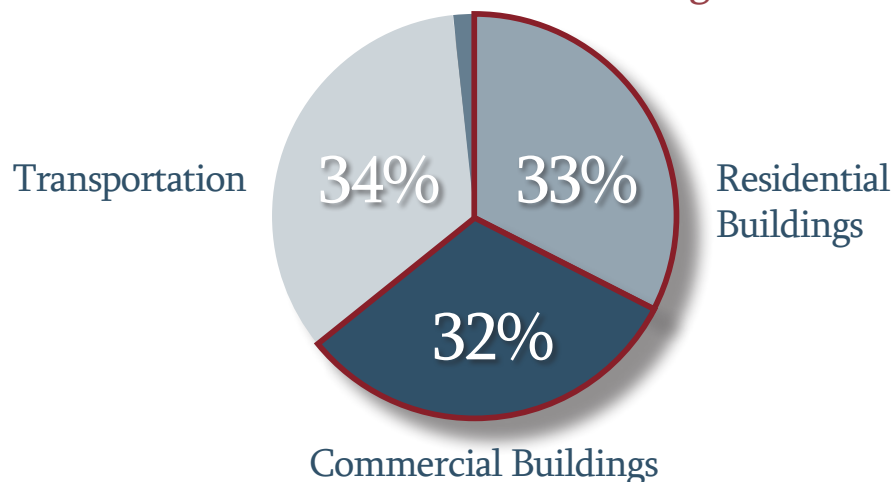
Energy Conservation and Generation 59-C-15.856 (b). An optional method building over 4 stories must exceed the current ASHRAE 90.1 requirement by at least 15 percent. Should the County approve alternative or additional standards, similar improvements in efficiency should be required.

- Utilize “whole building design” approach to new construction, considering the interactions of all building components, building envelope and systems to create a more comfortable building that saves energy and reduces environmental impacts.
- Reduce heating, cooling and lighting loads through climate-responsive design and conservation practices.
  - Design building massing that maximizes natural ventilation, air flow and access to natural lighting.
  - Use high-performance building envelopes; select walls, roofs and other assemblies based on long-term insulation, air barrier performance and durability requirements.
  - Use Energy Star-approved and/or Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) designated energy-efficient products that meet or exceed U.S. Department of Energy Standards.

- Maximize use of alternative energy systems to supply a portion or all of a building’s energy demand. Some alternative energy systems may include:
  - Solar power.
  - Geothermal.
  - Co-generation.
  - Biomass and biogas strategies.
  - Purchase electricity generated from renewable sources or low polluting sources.
- Maximize solar orientation and design techniques that take advantage of passive solar heating, cooling and lighting.
- Design buildings to utilize passive means of heating, cooling and ventilation.
- Utilize green roofs to reduce heating and cooling demand.
- Utilize low albedo surfaces to diffuse reflectivity, reducing heat island effect.
- Consider net zero energy concepts.

## Montgomery County Sources of Greenhouse Gases

65% of GHG from Buildings



Source: Montgomery Climate Protection Plan

## 2.5 High Performance Area



The High Performance Area (HPA) is an instrument to create a sustainable neighborhood and city by including buildings as major landscape elements on the path to planning for long-term sustainability. The High Performance Area aims to incentivize development that will help meet the County's climate objectives for reducing carbon emission, greenhouse gases and energy demand. It will make transit-oriented development even smarter, by providing greater density with the lowest ecological impact.

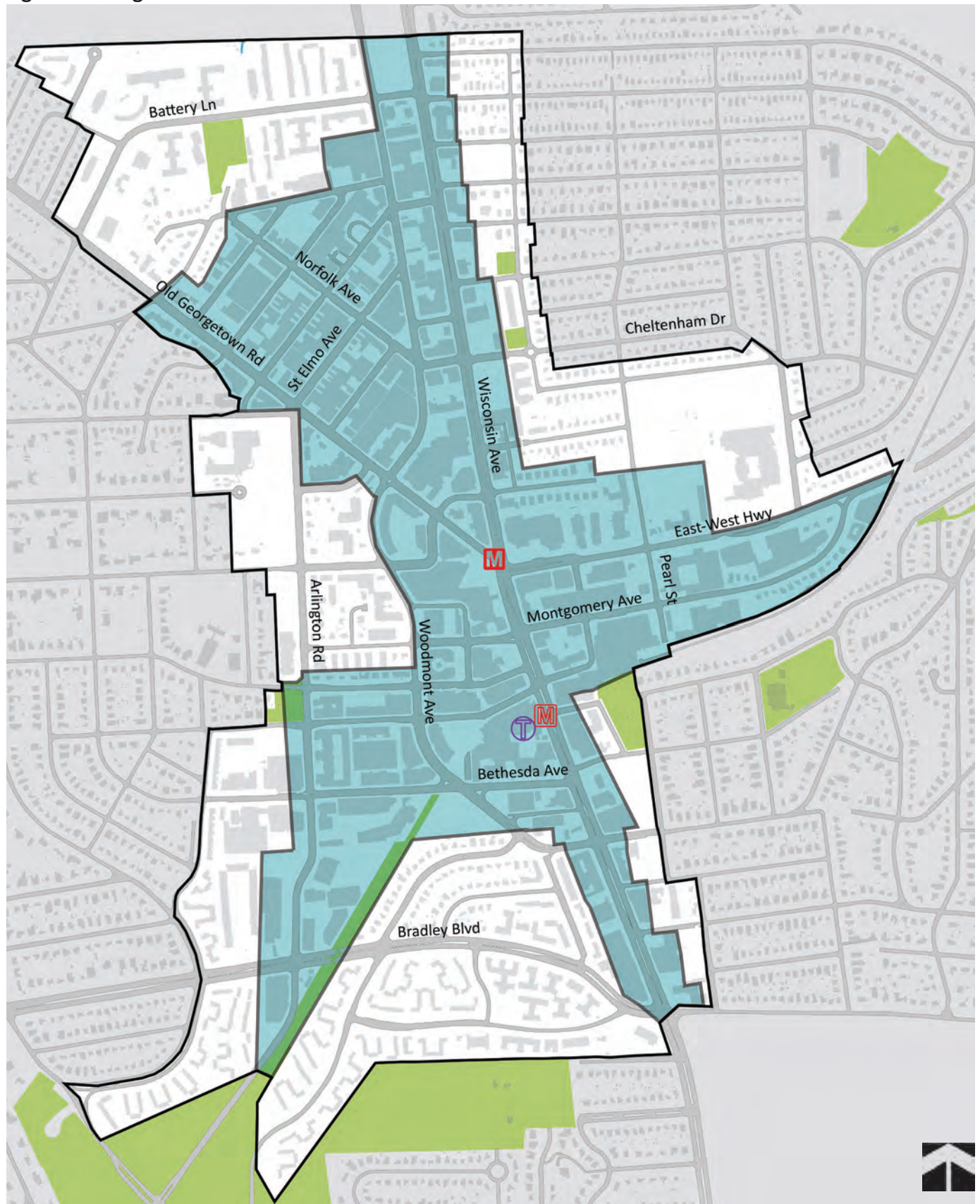
The High Performance Area will be a model to accelerate sustainability in the performance area of Energy. By addressing this performance area, the Sector Plan advances comprehensive and holistic sustainable planning in the urban landscape. The High Performance Area will be implemented through the public benefits in the CR zone for optional method development (see 4.1.5 Public Benefits in the CR Zone).

The development of the High Performance Area is a response to community feedback, the County's greenhouse gas reduction initiative, national and international planning initiatives, and growing market demand for sustainable living that includes healthy places to live, work and play. In addition to providing community benefits and reducing carbon, building sustainably has proven to be economically profitable by decreasing operation and maintenance costs; improving building longevity and occupancy rates; reducing tax rates and increasing subsidies; improving public relations; saving energy and utility costs; promoting resource conservation; and creating healthier and more productive living and working environments.

Today, Montgomery County requires all buildings exceeding 10,000 square feet to achieve a LEED-Silver certified rating or equivalent. However, this standard does not ensure the construction of high performing, energy-efficient buildings. Consequently, many new buildings consume significant amounts of energy contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, infrastructure taxes and consumption of non-renewable resources. As a result,



Figure 2.17: High Performance Area



- Sector Plan Boundary
- M Metro Station
- M Proposed Metro Station Entrance
- T Proposed Purple Line Station
- High Performance Area Boundary

the County is considering changes to achieve higher efficiencies by passing the International Green Construction Code (IgCC). The IgCC requires stricter building codes for energy efficiency and sustainability. If approved, this progressive County effort is notable, but existing technology, economic returns and regional competition allow for even greater building efficiencies. The High Performance Area incentivizes the construction of buildings that slightly exceed existing American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) standards or the proposed IgCC energy standards.

### 2.5.1 Goal

Incentivize development that exceeds County minimum requirements for energy-efficient buildings.

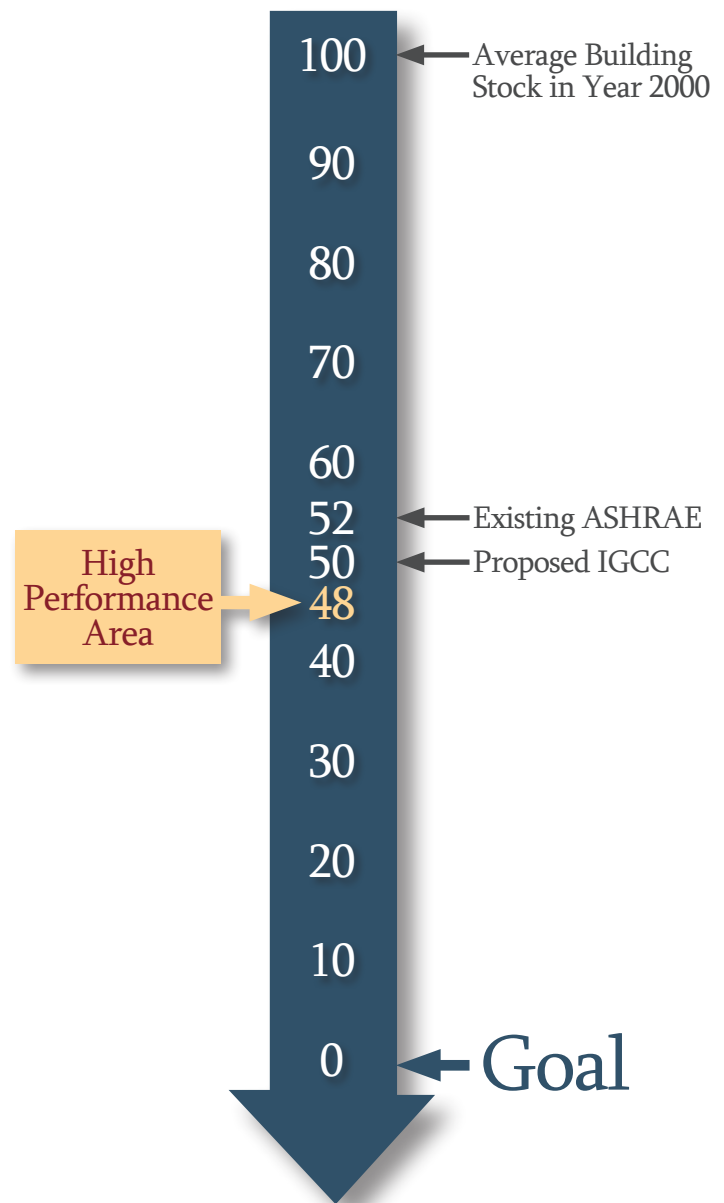
### 2.5.2 Recommendation

#### A. Energy

Today's technologies maximize the use of renewable resources. More energy-efficient buildings will be accomplished through the optional method of development that allows higher density as an incentive to providing significant public benefits. This practice prioritizes the benefit points for energy conservation and generation.

- An optional method project in the High Performance Area should be approved only if it achieves the maximum amount of public benefit points allowed for constructing buildings that exceed energy-efficiency standards for the building type. In order to qualify for the maximum available points, any building that is located in whole or in part within the boundary of the High Performance Area would be required to exceed the current ASHRAE 90.1 standard by 15 percent. If the County adopts a building code with a different efficiency standard, a building in the High Performance Area should similarly exceed the minimum standard.

## Buildings Energy Consumption Moving Toward Net Zero (zEPI rating)

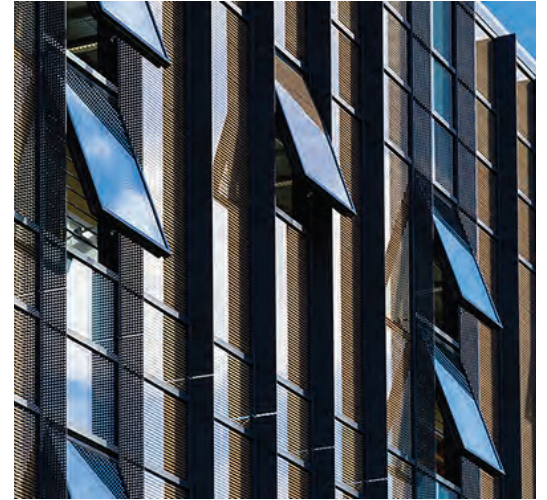


*Based on research: Montgomery County DEP's Energy Planner, Metropolitan COG, Institute for Market Transformation, local USGBC chapter, Bethesda Green, the New Buildings Institute and the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy.*





*Passive solar design*  
Source: Rossetti Architects



*Natural ventilation*



*Urban green wall*  
Source: Kono Designs



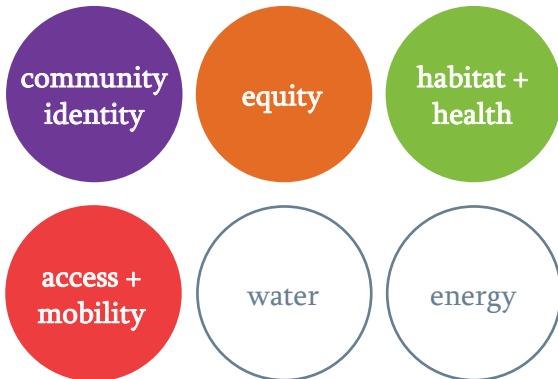
*Solar power on the building roof*  
Source: ARUP



*LEED Platinum certified building*  
Source: nwpr.org, Michael Werner



## 2.6 Urban Design



The Concept Framework outlined in Chapter One identifies the centers of activity, primary gathering spaces and network of streets and open spaces that help achieve the community vision for Downtown Bethesda. This framework serves as an overarching guide for the following areawide urban design approach as well as the district-specific concepts and recommendations in the next chapter. These urban design recommendations are further detailed in the Urban Design Guidelines and Streetscape Standards for the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area.

### 2.6.1 Public Space Network

Great public spaces serve to define a downtown by enhancing quality of life, improving social interaction and bolstering economic opportunities. A well-connected public space network with a range of inviting streets, parks and plazas is crucial to fostering a walkable, bikeable and livable downtown environment. Downtown Bethesda has many opportunities to fill in the gaps in areas lacking specific types of public spaces and quality connections.

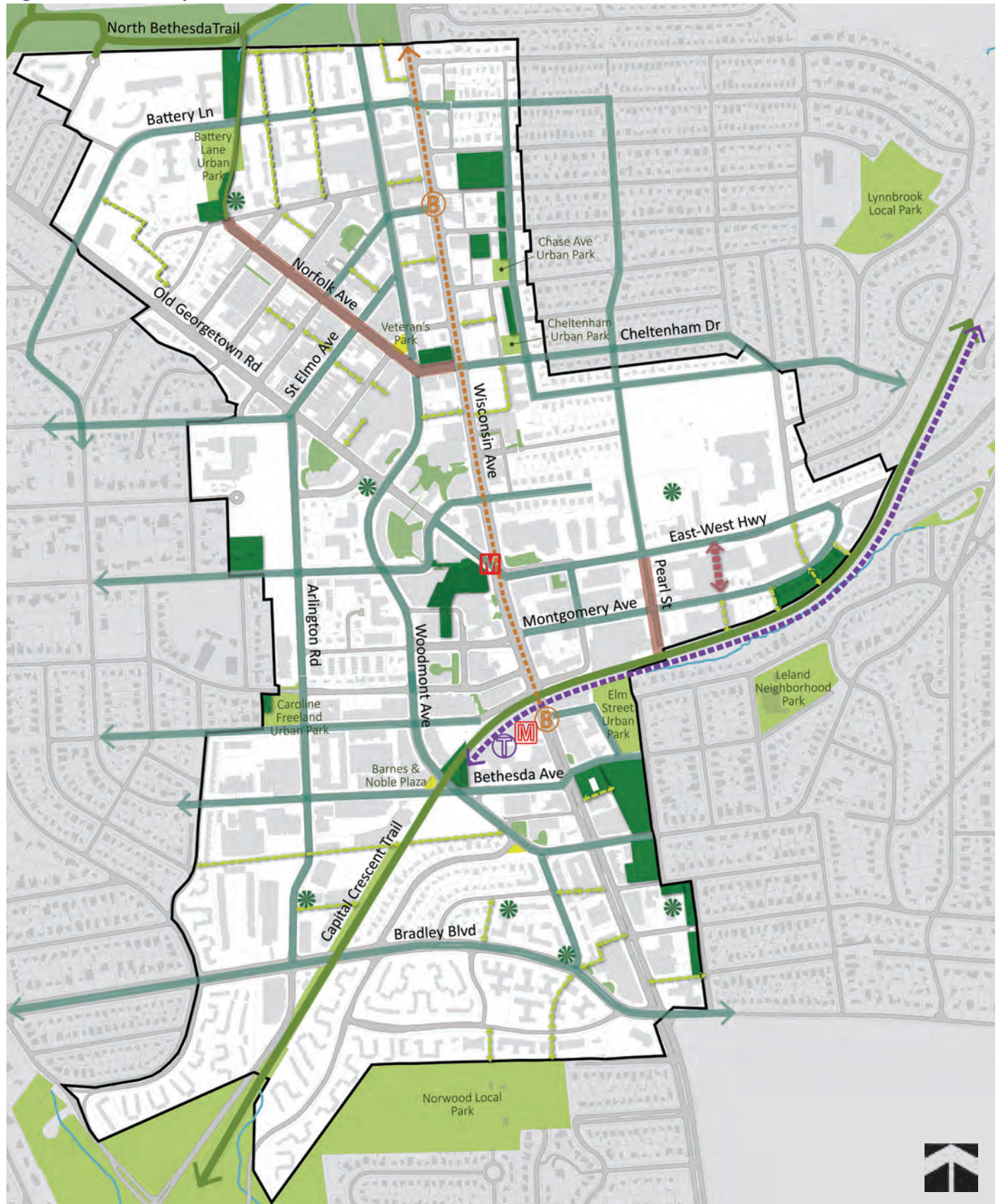
#### A. Goal: Improve access to a variety of quality public spaces throughout Downtown Bethesda and links to adjacent areas.

##### Recommendations:

- **Gathering Spaces:** Provide each center with a gathering space appropriate to the character of the area.
- **Connections:** Link streets, through-block connections, greenways and trails to create a well-connected network.
- **Edges:** Transition to surrounding neighborhoods with green open space amenities and civic buffers.

#### B. Goal: Enhance the primary links between Bethesda's established centers of activity and major transit nodes. Anchor these links with great urban green spaces.

Figure 2.18: Public Space Network



- |                                  |                                 |  |                                     |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Sector Plan Boundary             | Metro Station                   | Recommended Bike Priority Street + Canopy Corridor | Recommended/Enhanced Open Space     |
| M-NCPPC Park                     | Proposed Metro Station Entrance | Recommended Public Connection                      | Potential Open Space (Location TBD) |
| County DOT Owned Public Space    | Proposed Purple Line            | Recommended New Street                             |                                     |
| Privately Owned Public Use Space | Proposed BRT                    | Recommended Shared Street                          |                                     |
| Trail                            |                                 |  |                                     |



### Recommendations:

- Enhance the pedestrian and bike experience connecting Metro Core to Woodmont Triangle and Bethesda Row along Wisconsin and Woodmont Avenues.
- Activate Norfolk Avenue as a main street linking the recommended Veteran’s Park Civic Green through Battery Lane Park to the North Bethesda Trail.
- Connect the recommended Capital Crescent Central Civic Green along Bethesda Avenue to the reimagined Farm Women’s Cooperative Market.

### C. Goal: Activate privately-owned public use spaces that are often underutilized.

#### Recommendations:

- Improve visibility and connections to the street.
- Consider integrating new buildings with active ground-floor uses.
- Use creative wayfinding and public art as beacons.
- Unclutter plaza spaces by smoothing grade and limiting large permanent furniture.
- Integrate stormwater management practices into flexible lawn spaces and plantings.
- Encourage more temporary programming, such as events kiosks and educational opportunities.

## 2.6.2 Urban Form

As an established downtown, much of Bethesda’s urban fabric has been set and the majority of changes will be infill development. In this context, increased building heights should be supported in targeted areas, while also ensuring new development relates to the character of existing streets, districts and neighborhoods.

### A. Goal: Accommodate future growth in Downtown Bethesda by targeting building height increases in specific areas that support the Plan Vision and Concept Framework.

### Recommendations:

- **Symbolic Center and Civic Gathering Spaces:** Design signature buildings that integrate design and sustainability innovation to occupy the symbolic center and surround civic gathering spaces.
- **Expanded/Emerging Centers of Activity:** Encourage economic vitality in the Emerging Centers of Activity through mixed-use development and increased building heights appropriate to surrounding context.
- **Affordable Housing, Park Connectivity and Community Facilities:** Increase height to enhance community facilities, prioritize affordable housing opportunities with redevelopment and enhance connectivity to Norwood Local Park and North Bethesda Trail.
- Increase all previously “T” designated heights by 20 percent rounded to the nearest 5-foot increment, unless noted on *Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for another recommended maximum height (see *Table 2.04: Previously “T” Designated Height Translation*).

**Table 2.04: Previously “T” Designated Height Translation**

Existing Zoning Maximum Height (in feet)	Translated Zoning Maximum Height (in feet)
35T	40
40T	50
45T	55
50T	60
55T	65
60T	70
70T	85
75T	90
90T	110
120T	145
125T	150
130T	155
145T	175
175T	210
200T	240



This is a detailed plat map of a residential neighborhood in Montgomery County, Maryland. The map shows numerous lots with their dimensions and street names including Battery Ln, Norfolk Ave, St Elmo Ave, Cheltenham Dr, Montgomery Ln, Woodmont Ave, Bethesda Ave, Bradley Blvd, and others. A north arrow is located in the bottom right corner.



*Building steps back on upper floors to protect sunlight and sky view in a public park*  
 Source: oregonlive.com



*Highrise building with a base designed to relate to street and human scale*  
 Source: Architects Alliance

**B. Goal: Preserve scale and character of designated areas and ensure compatibility of new development with surrounding neighborhoods.**

**Recommendations:**

- Balance development with transitions to single-unit residential neighborhoods surrounding the Plan area in residential and edge districts, such as Battery Lane, Arlington North, South Bethesda and Eastern Greenway.
- Establish a green connector along the eastern edge of the Plan area to provide open space, pathways, environmental benefits and a transition to adjacent neighborhoods. Allow a range of building heights dependent on the amount of green space dedicated.
- Encourage preservation of low-rise buildings with fine-grain building articulation along Norfolk Avenue.

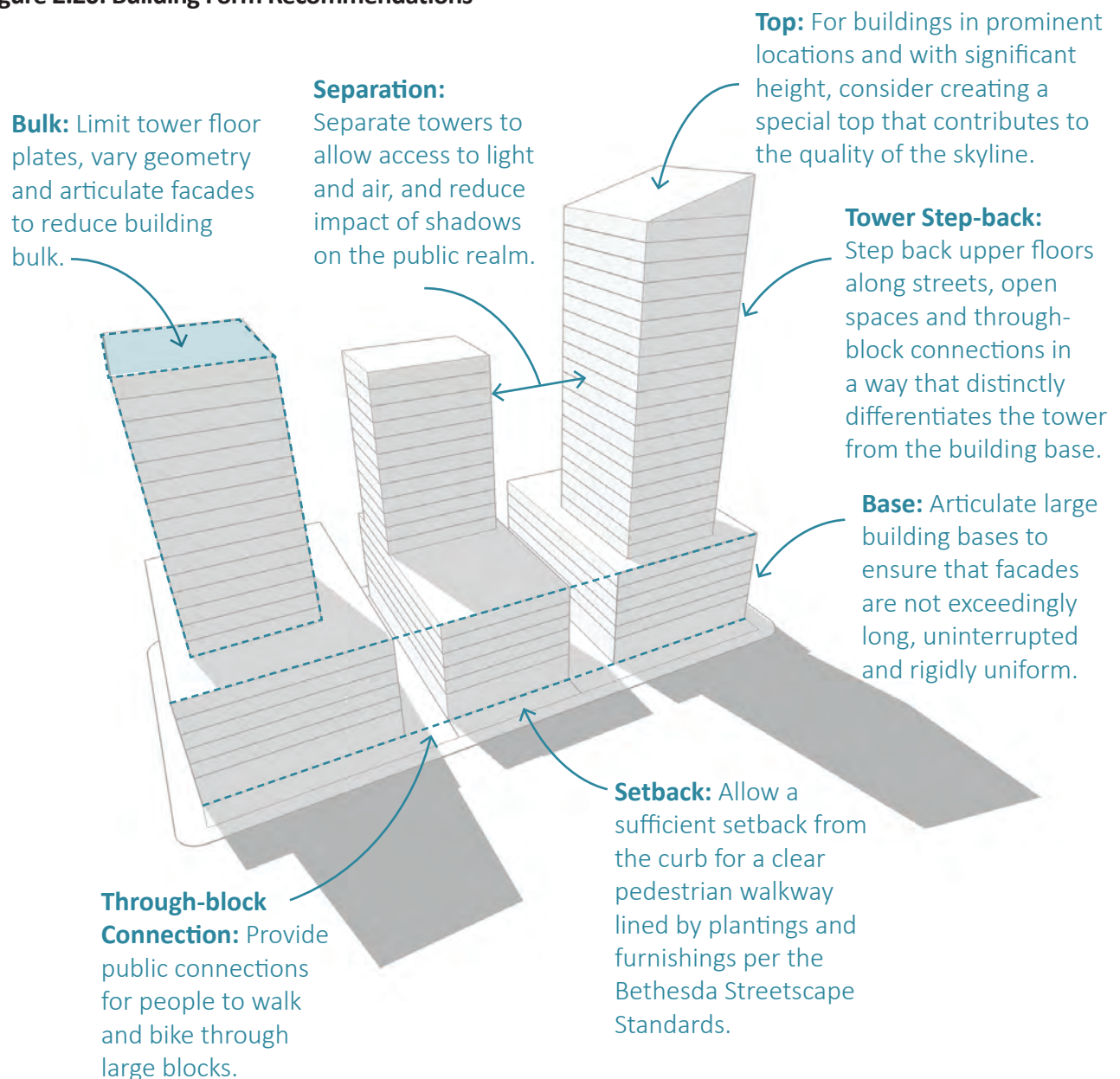
**C. Goal: Create a walkable environment where buildings frame a vibrant public realm and relate to the human scale. Limit the impacts of imposing building massing and bulk, particularly in the design of tall buildings, by designing with sensitivity for their effect on access to sunlight and air, shadows and how they contribute to the character and visual identity of Downtown Bethesda.**

**Recommendations:**

- See Figure 2.20: Building Form Recommendations
- **Innovation:** Encourage innovative building form and allow flexibility for design that meets the intent of the recommendations.
- **Variation:** Vary tower heights, setbacks, orientation and building materials.



**Figure 2.20: Building Form Recommendations**



### **Intent:**

With the increases to allowable building heights recommended for Downtown Bethesda and the flexibility to transfer and allocate additional density in the overlay zone, building form recommendations are critical to create clear expectations to guide the development review process. Design Guidelines will be developed with specific recommendations to achieve these objectives and elaborate on the general guidance and illustrative diagrams presented on this page.

Tall buildings should not be designed to appear as massive walls extruded directly from the property lines with subtle variation. Instead, they should have a clearly differentiated base that relates to the pedestrian scale, with substantial variation in the building massing, façade and materials to achieve the urban design goals of the Sector Plan.



### 2.6.3 Placemaking

Fostering a sense of place is central to enhancing Bethesda's community character and identity. Placemaking involves creating great streets, open spaces and buildings that represent Downtown Bethesda, making it recognizable and special to both residents and visitors alike.

#### A. Goal: Encourage and accommodate opportunities for creative placemaking to activate Bethesda's streets and open spaces.

##### Recommendations:

- Design streets not just for mobility, but also as great public spaces for gathering, events and play.
- Activate streets and open spaces with temporary and phased uses that can catalyze future investment and growth.
- Create gateways at transit entrances that integrate elements such as wayfinding, landscape and building form unique to Bethesda.
- Integrate public art throughout the Downtown area and continue to support Bethesda as an art and cultural destination.



*A pop-up park with hammocks, lighting, food and performances enlivens this space during the summer months*

*Source: delawareriverwaterfront.com*





*Wide sidewalk connection allows for clear pedestrian travel, planting buffers and space for outdoor dining and activity area*



*Informal community gathering space with movable furniture*



*Digital public art designed to draw people into through-block connection and plaza*

## 2.7 Parks and Open Space



### 2.7.1 Why Parks are Needed in Bethesda

In Bethesda, as in all of Montgomery County's urban areas, residents, employees and visitors need an attractive and convenient system of parks, trails and open spaces accessible by walking and transit. Bethesda is already one of the highest density areas of the County. Adding more density to an already densely built environment requires more parks, trails and open space located in the right places to make sure Bethesda remains a place where people want to live, work and play.

The positive effects of parks on people cannot be overstated, particularly in urban areas. Urban living can result in a disengagement of people from their natural environment and be detrimental to health and well-being. Parks can be the vital link to nature that people need to be healthy. They offer space for leisure and sport, and their natural green settings help reduce stress. Parks help create community cohesion and identity by providing spaces for gatherings and events, with opportunities for people to meet each other, socialize and bond with neighbors.



Figure 2.21: Bethesda Existing and Pending Parks and Public Use Spaces







## A HIERARCHY

Each area master plan should include a system of open spaces based on the roles of each type of open space. The amount and size of open spaces may vary from plan to plan and should be directly proportional to the projected density, and adjusted to the pattern of existing open space and other factors such as community-specific needs.

**The following hierarchy should be applied to any new urbanizing area:**

### FOR THE SECTOR PLAN AREA:

-  • Active recreation destinations located within or near the plan area, including courts, playgrounds, and lawn areas large enough for pick up soccer, festivals or events, etc.
-  • One or more central “civic green” urban parks (Chapter 3), ranging in size from ½ to 2 acres, depending on projected densities, located in close proximity to a public transit hub, next to activating uses, with a mixture of hard and soft surfaces including a central lawn area for events.
-  • An interconnected system of sidewalks and trails to connect parks and open spaces.
-  • Wooded areas that will provide a sense of contact with nature.



**FOR EACH URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD:** A neighborhood green or community use recreational park.



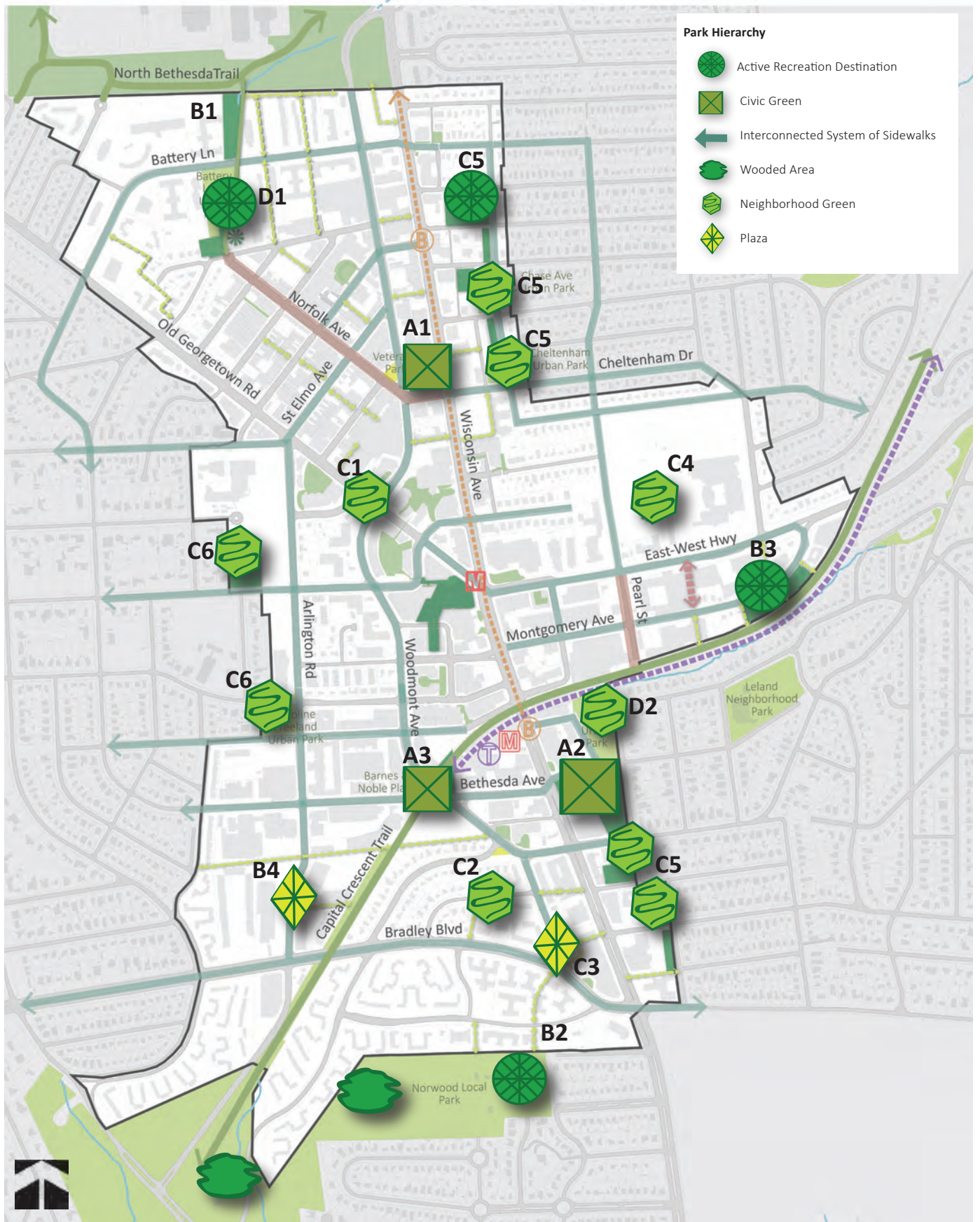
**FOR EACH BLOCK:** An urban square, plaza, or green area.

**FOR EACH BUILDING:** An outdoor recreation space.

**FOR EACH RESIDENCE:** A private outdoor space.



Figure 2.22: Urban Parks Hierarchy





## 2.7.2 Parks, Trails, and Open Space Goals

Policy guidance from previous plans and the 2012 Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, along with community input during the planning process, led to the development of opportunities for areawide and neighborhood focal spaces, gateways, connections and green transitions with the following goals:

- Support the centers with civic gathering spaces.
- Provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail systems.
- Create livable communities and appropriate transitions by greening and buffering the edges.
- Create green neighborhood parks.
- Add to the existing park, trail and open space system.

## 2.7.3 Recommendations

### A. Support centers of activity with civic gathering spaces by providing civic greens.

The Concept Framework Plan identifies multiple centers of activity in areas of highest density, mixed-use development, with central gathering spaces at each. The 2012 PROS Plan identifies new urban park types, including one called a “civic green,” which is described as follows:

Formally planned, flexible, programmable open space that serves as a place for informal gathering, quiet contemplation or large special event gatherings. Depending on its size, a civic green may support open air markets, concerts, festivals and special events, but is not often used for programmed recreational purposes. A central lawn is often the main focus with adjacent spaces providing complementary uses. The green may include gardens, water features and shade structures. The minimum size is 0.5 acre.

During the planning process, public input during meetings with surrounding communities indicated that there is a desire for more green spaces overall, with particular mention of green open space for a variety of functions and amenities in central locations.

### Civic greens should have the following characteristics:

- Located on or within direct view of main streets and adjacent to the highest concentration of commercial and civic land uses.
- Green lawn area for flexible use (events, ceremonies, celebrations, informal seating).
- Shaded areas with seating; shade provided by trees and shade structures.
- Designed to welcome public use; integrated into the public realm.
- Inclusive design serving all age groups.
- Attractive landscaping.
- Located near restaurants for takeaway outdoor dining opportunities.
- Flexible space for multiple types of activities.
- Flexible seating to accommodate multiple sized groups or individuals.

### The following amenities are appropriate for civic greens to maximize usage by all ages:

- Event lawns to host various sizes of community events and festivals.
- Multiple seating options, from benches to seating walls to lounging chairs, to accommodate all styles of relaxation.
- Places for picnicking with tables as one option.
- A variety of food and drink options that can be enjoyed in the park.
- Comfort amenities, such as restrooms and drinking fountains.
- Interesting lighting for nighttime use.
- Multiple ways for children to play, such as in water features, traditional playgrounds, nature play areas.
- Amenities that allow for physical fitness to be improved.
- Multi-seasonal amenities, such as ice-rinks, community gardens, water play features, holiday lighting, lawn games and volleyball courts.
- Tents and movable shade structures.
- Trails and walkways that connect to public

gathering spots or attractions.

- Places where dogs can play and their owners can socialize.
- Gardens and attractive, multi-seasonal landscaping.

**The following new civic greens are recommended in Bethesda:**

**1. Veteran's Park Civic Green**

**Vision:** Veteran's Park Civic Green is envisioned as a green extension of the existing successful public open space called Veteran's Park at the intersections of Woodmont Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue and Norfolk Avenue. This new park would expand the existing limited public space across the street and could serve as a linkage between the established center of the Woodmont Triangle District and Wisconsin Avenue Corridor District.

Figure 2.22 on page 79 and Figure 3.02 on page 105 depict the general location for the expansion of Veteran's Park as a community benefit under the CR zone. Other potential locations may also be explored through the development process.

**Recommended size:** 0.5 acres

**Purpose:** This new civic green would complement the hardscape of Veteran's Park with flexible, green, community open space. This green open space would allow for more formal community events and programming, but also casual informal lunchtime or dinnertime picnicking, reading and sunbathing.



*Outdoor space at the Weaver Street Market in Carrboro, NC is the inspiration for the proposed open space at a revitalized Farm Women's Cooperative Market in Bethesda*

**2. The Farm Women's Market Civic Green**

**Vision:** This Civic Green is envisioned as a green open space next to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market, which is a longstanding community institution in the historic heart of Bethesda. This space would act as both a destination and a local gathering spot, providing a space for market customers to eat and relax. It serves as an extension of Elm Street Park and the recommended Eastern Greenway. To create a prominent civic space, it is recommended that this new civic green be integrated with the potential new park on Lot 24. The open space at the famous Weaver Street Market in Carrboro, North Carolina, serves as an example of the type of space envisioned here.

**Recommended size:** : 1.6 acres (including market building and the recommended park for Lot 24).

**Purpose:** This civic green will maintain the historic building as a functioning market and a central activating feature for a green civic space that connects to the proposed Eastern Greenway and Elm Street Park.

**3. The Capital Crescent Civic Green**

**Vision:** This space is envisioned as the civic green for the Bethesda Row District and the western gateway of the Capital Crescent Trail. It will build on the success of the existing small plaza at the Barnes and Noble store and act as an outdoor civic center for the Bethesda Row District.

**Recommended size:** 0.5 acres





**Purpose:** The Capital Crescent Trail Civic Green would provide an open space with a large lawn. This green would accommodate community events and programming, a meeting spot for moviegoers, cyclists and restaurant patrons, and space for casual picnicking, reading and sunbathing.

## B. Provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail systems.

The North Bethesda Trail and the Capital Crescent Trail are two major corridors that run directly into the heart of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan. These heavily used trails for walking and biking lack sufficient space for the volume of pedestrian and cyclist traffic at trailheads and linkages.

Use of hard and natural surface trails is the County's most popular recreation activity, according to the Vision 2030 statistically valid survey. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents surveyed in Vision 2030 reported using both types of trails and nearly 75 percent considered them very important to their households. In addition, trails ranked as the highest outdoor facility on the survey as to the overall importance of adding, expanding or improving.

The 2012 PROS Plan and community input from public outreach identified the need for additional community open space, which is defined in the PROS Plan as "an open, level, grassy area for a variety of informal recreational activities" and is a minimum of 10,000 square feet, with 60-foot width (PROS Plan, page 53).

The following park spaces are recommended to provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail system through the development of additional community open spaces:

### 1. North Bethesda Trail Urban Greenway

**Vision:** The North Bethesda Trail is a major bicycle and pedestrian link between Bethesda and White Flint. The North Bethesda Trail Gateway Park is envisioned as a green and active linear park connection between the National Institutes of Health and Woodmont Triangle.

**Recommended size:** 0.9 acres

**Purpose:** The North Bethesda Trail Gateway Park would provide a bicycle and pedestrian trail through the enhanced Battery Lane Park. This trail would be wide enough for stream improvements, environmental interpretation and play elements.



*An example of community open space in Corktown Common, a new park in Toronto, Canada  
Source: Architects Newspaper*



## 2. Gateway into Norwood Local Park

**Vision:** This gateway is envisioned as a welcoming, green entrance into Norwood Local Park from the north that improves connectivity to the area north of the park.

**Recommended size:** A 15-foot width minimum from Chevy Chase Drive to the park property line.

**Purpose:** Norwood Local Park is a 17-acre local park and among the most popular and highly utilized of all local parks in Montgomery County. It sits on the edge of the Bethesda Central Business District and is surrounded on all sides by residential neighborhoods. The park is the largest local park in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area and contains the only rectangular and diamond fields available for permitting in the immediate downtown area. Currently, the official entrance is off Norwood Drive. Woodmont Avenue and Strathmore Avenue are identified as bicycle priority routes in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and this proposed north entrance to Norwood Local Park will improve connections to those routes.

## 3. Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway

**Vision:** The Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway is envisioned as an active gateway park along the Capital Crescent Trail.

**Recommended size:** 1.89 acres

**Purpose:** The Eastern Capital Crescent Gateway Park would provide active recreational areas along the trail and serve as a green gateway into the Bethesda Central Business District. Facilities here could include adult fitness equipment, a dog park, skate boarding, courts and a playground.

## 4. Arlington South Gateway Plaza

**Vision:** This community gathering space will be a link between the Arlington South District and the Capital Crescent Trail.

**Recommended size:** The size of this space is to be determined at the time of regulatory plan review. A linear pedestrian/bike connection should be provided from Arlington Road through community gathering area(s) leading to the Capital Crescent Trail. This Plan recommends a minimum width of 12 feet in between the existing buildings adjacent

to the Capital Crescent Trail. The plaza could open up to a community gathering space and potential café seating to the west. Beyond the community gathering space, sidewalks are provided adjacent to vehicular traffic to convey pedestrians and cyclists to Arlington Road.

**Purpose:** This linear park will connect the Capital Crescent Trail to the proposed through-block crossing of Arlington Boulevard at Bradley Shopping Center. This space would include a wide walkway, shade trees or shade structures, and a focal feature that visually draws people to the park and communicates that it is a linkage to the trail. This space should accommodate people on foot and on bikes.

## C. Create green neighborhood parks

Neighborhoods need centrally located parks for meeting neighbors and friends, exercising in a convenient location and being in touch with open green space.

The PROS Plan describes Neighborhood Green Urban Parks as parks that serve residents and workers from the surrounding neighborhood or district, but may be designed for more activity than an urban buffer park. These flexible open spaces serve as places for informal gathering, lunchtime relaxation or small special event gatherings.

### 1. Old Georgetown Road Neighborhood Green

**Vision:** This park is envisioned as a heavily landscaped, shady, green living room. This park will be a signature moment in the Bethesda landscape and act a wayfinding and placemaking space.

**Recommended size:** 0.3 acres. The recommended site consists of the current Shell gas station at Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road, and the adjacent single-unit homes to the southwest.

**Purpose:** This site, one of the most visible intersections in Bethesda, is a transition between the Woodmont Triangle District and the Metro Core. This park will provide a green respite for residents, a lunch space for employees and a destination for visitors. This park would act as a formal, passive green space featuring trees, bushes and elegant fencing and paving. Straus Park in New York City is an example of the type of park envisioned here.

## 2. Wellington Drive Neighborhood Green

**Vision:** Wellington Drive Neighborhood Green Urban Park is a neighborhood park that will provide in-demand, walk-to amenities, such as community open space, trees and an art or nature-based play area for the residents immediately surrounding this park.

**Recommended size:** 0.5 acres

**Purpose:** This park will act as a buffer between the Sacks subdivision and potential redevelopment of the multi-unit housing located along Bradley Boulevard and Strathmore Street.

## 3. South Bethesda Public Plaza

**Vision:** South Bethesda Public Plaza will be a small public open space at the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Strathmore Street.

**Recommended size:** 0.15 acre

**Purpose:** This space will provide shaded open space for the area of denser residential development allowed along Bradley Boulevard just west of Wisconsin Avenue.

## 4. Bethesda-Chevy Chase East Neighborhood Green

**Vision:** A neighborhood green urban park that serves new development in the area between Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and the Pearl Street and East-West Highway intersection.

**Recommended size:** 0.3 acres

**Purpose:** This park will provide community open space, seating areas, trees and an art or nature-based play area.

## 5. Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens

Convert county owned surface parking lots 25, 44, 24 and 10 to parkland/neighborhood greens to the maximum extent feasible. The conversion of Lot 24 (adjacent to the Farm Women's Market) to parkland could help create a larger civic green and regional park. The parking needs of neighborhood businesses that rely on these lots should be addressed and parking replaced where necessary.

### *a. North End:*

**Vision:** The Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Green Urban Parks at the north end will be pockets of parkland along the Eastern Greenway and allow

for additional recreational amenities and green buffers for the community.

**Recommended size:** 0.5 acres each, including the greenway, to accommodate walk-to facilities.

**Purpose:** These two buffer parks will provide spaces for in-demand, walk-to facilities and continue the pattern of the Chase Avenue and Cheltenham Drive neighborhood green (formerly classified as Urban Parks). A new park near Highland Avenue could provide a dog park at a minimum of 10,000 square feet.

### *b. South End:*

**Vision:** These parks are envisioned as destinations and pockets of larger green space along the eastern edge of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan boundary and provide buffers to the Town of Chevy Chase.

**Recommended size:** In addition to the historic building and green space at the Farm Women's Cooperative Market, there will be three additional acres of green space.

**Purpose:** These parks will provide small-scale neighborhood recreational opportunities and act as green buffers for the community on the eastern side of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan boundary. They will decrease existing impervious surfaces, while increasing tree canopy cover.

## 6. Western Edge Neighborhood Greens

The Western Greenway Neighborhood Green Urban Parks would consist of two additions to existing public property: one at the southwest corner of Bethesda Elementary School and the other at Caroline Freeland Urban Park.

**Vision:** These parks are envisioned as pockets of larger green space along the western edge of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan boundary.

**Recommended size:** The addition to Caroline Freeland Urban Park is 0.15 acres and the addition to Bethesda Elementary School is 1.0 acres.

**Purpose:** These parks will provide small-scale neighborhood recreational opportunities and act as green buffers for the community on the western side of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan boundary.



*Fitler Square in Philadelphia, PA serves as a model for the Old Georgetown Road Neighborhood Green Urban Park*

## D. Add to existing Parks, Open Spaces and Trails

Existing parks in the Bethesda Downtown Plan currently serve as critical open spaces for residents and visitors alike, and can serve those needs even better with additional space and facility improvements. Three such parks with opportunities for additional land and/or improved facilities are identified here.

### 1. Battery Lane Neighborhood Green Expansion

**Vision:** An expanded Battery Lane Neighborhood Green (formerly categorized as an Urban Park) will build on the success of the existing site as a buffer park that provides needed recreational amenities for visitors and residents.

**Recommended size:** 2.65 acres

**Purpose:** Battery Lane Urban Park is an existing park that provides open space and recreational amenities to the Battery Lane and Woodmont Triangle Districts and surrounding neighborhoods. Additional land at Battery Lane Urban Park will allow for needed walk-to facilities, such as community open space, dog park, skate park or community garden.

### 2. Elm Street Neighborhood Green Improvements

**Vision:** Elm Street Park (formerly classified as an Urban Park) currently serves as a key green open space very near the center of Bethesda. The southern portion of the park was upgraded about 10 years ago and the northern portion is currently in design for facility improvements. Current funding

will support the design phase, but the construction phase is not fully funded.

**Recommended size:** No additional land recommended for this park. Current park size: 2.08 acres

**Purpose:** Redevelopment of this key park will add new and improved recreational opportunities, and provide better access to the Capital Crescent Trail from the Bethesda Downtown Plan area and the surrounding residential communities.



## 2.8 Community

### Facilities



Public facilities and services are the building blocks of community. Fire and rescue services ensure safety and public schools, day care and elderly services address the needs of all generations. Libraries, post offices and recreation centers help build a community among people with shared needs, interests and values.

Downtown Bethesda provides its residents with a variety of services. As a growth center and a commercial focus for Bethesda-Chevy Chase and southern Montgomery County, Downtown Bethesda reaches a population beyond the Sector Plan boundary through its services and facilities. This chapter describes existing services and makes recommendations for additions to facilities that can respond to future commercial and residential growth.

#### 2.8.1 Plan Objectives

- Provide public facilities to meet the human service, recreation, security, educational and other needs of the community.
- Encourage flexibility in space and programming to adapt to future needs.

#### 2.8.2 Human Services

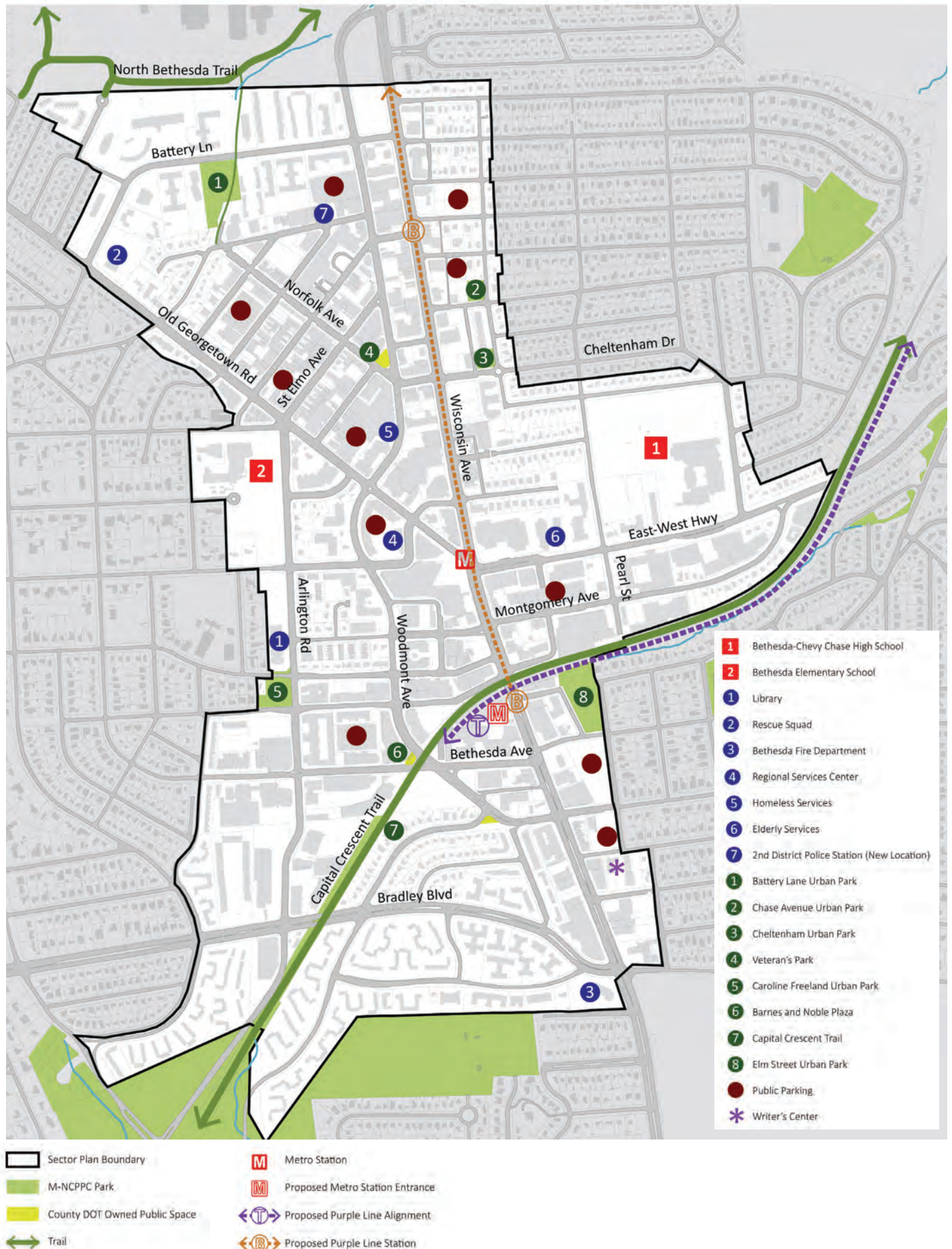
##### A. Child Care Services

Downtown Bethesda's role as an urban and transportation center makes it an appropriate location for child care services for both employees and nearby residents. Downtown Bethesda currently has a number of privately-run child care facilities, located in churches, community centers and office buildings that serve the large existing and recommended residential areas of Downtown Bethesda.

The Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan will have an effect on the life of young children in Downtown Bethesda in other ways. One influence centers on child-friendly environments with parks, wide sidewalks and safe street crossings. These issues are addressed elsewhere in the Plan.

Another positive effect of the Sector Plan is encouraging private developers to provide subsidized child care

Figure 2.23: Community Facilities





facilities in appropriate locations. Proximity to parks and open space, and location of play spaces away from busy roads are important criteria when reviewing sites. The high land value of property in Downtown Bethesda often prices child care services out of the market and limits the provision of outdoor play space for children.

### **Recommendation**

Encourage child care facilities in key locations throughout the Downtown Bethesda area.

## **B. Facilities for the Elderly**

While Downtown Bethesda generally attracts younger residents, its nature as an established and compact community with concentrated services and Metrorail access also makes it attractive to elderly residents who are uncomfortable driving.

Most of Bethesda's seniors have relatively high incomes and home equity, enabling them to turn to the private sector for the services they need. As the population ages, the market has responded with housing, entertainment and services geared to an affluent elderly population. However, elderly people between the ages of 75 and 80 often begin to lose the ability to care for themselves and their homes. The in-home care they need is not always readily available because of an inadequate supply of housing in the Downtown Bethesda for such service workers.

The growing elderly population in Downtown Bethesda and the surrounding area also includes less affluent residents who need the option to "age in place" or in a familiar environment near their former homes. The Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County (HOC) currently operates Waverly House, a senior citizen development of 158 apartments on East-West Highway that partially addresses this need.

### **Recommendation**

Although policies beyond the scope of this Plan have a primary impact on the lives of the elderly, some local measures can add to their quality of life. The land use recommendations are designed to create an environment that is concentrated and walkable, affording elderly people increased mobility and independence.

Private and public housing options should meet the needs of a range of people, including hired caregivers who cannot afford market-rate housing in Downtown Bethesda, family caregivers who need the space and

special design features to take care of older relatives at home, and the elderly residents themselves.

Improved transportation can provide better access to groceries and services. The proposed circulator bus or a special bus service that could possibly extend to the Friendship Heights elderly community would provide increased mobility and independence. The financing of such a service must be explored further.

Other services, like nutrition and recreation programs, and adult day care, are currently available in Downtown Bethesda, including those provided at Waverly House and the Leland Community Recreation Center.

## **C. Facilities for the Homeless**

Despite its status as an employment center and the high educational and income levels of its residents, Downtown Bethesda has a homeless population. The amount of homelessness varies with the strength of the economy and with community responses to the problem. Among the homeless population are veterans, families and the mentally ill, all with different needs requiring different responses.

The Bethesda community has responded with Bethesda Cares, a community outreach program for the homeless, founded in 1988 by a group of local religious congregations. Greater urbanization and other factors may increase the homeless population. The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) estimates that there are at least 400 homeless people on the streets of Montgomery County on any given night. The current day and night shelter capacity in the County is approximately 200 beds.

### **Recommendation**

Although the increase in jobs and housing in Downtown Bethesda may offer opportunities to some segments of the homeless community, many more will probably not be served by the market. Since many of the service jobs that will be created will likely not pay enough to meet current housing costs, new housing options should be considered, such as personal living quarters (PLQs), perhaps reusing small hotels within the Central Business District.



## 2.8.3 Public Security

### A. Police Station

The 2nd District Police Station located at 7359 Wisconsin Avenue is currently under the design and construction phase of a replacement district station.

The existing, 21,707-square-foot Bethesda Police Station was constructed in 1961. The station site is constrained with limited staff parking and no public parking. The station has experienced considerable deferred maintenance and requires major building repairs.

The new project provides for the replacement district station to serve the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area and portions of Potomac and Silver Spring included in the 2nd Police District. A District Police Station like this one serves as the center for police services for each district. It provides the base of support facilities for all District beat teams and serves as the parent facility for all satellite facilities. District Police Stations operate 24 hours a day, 7-days a week, on a continuous basis with three shifts.

The new 2nd District Police Station will be built at 4823 Rugby Avenue on a vacant lot that backs up to Public Parking Garage 35. The new facility will be a four-story, above grade, 28,480 square-foot structure that utilizes part of the public garage for police parking. The facility will be designed to conform to Montgomery County standards for public buildings.

#### Recommendations

Should the police station relocate, leaving the existing 21,707-square-foot building vacant, this Plan recommends the following criteria for reuse of the site and/or building:

- The use should advance the goals of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan.
- The use should not exceed the density or height limits set by the Sector Plan.
- The use should be compatible with adjacent land uses.

### B. Fire and Rescue Stations

Downtown Bethesda has two fire and rescue facilities. Fire Station 6 is located at 6600 Wisconsin Avenue at the southwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and

Bradley Boulevard. The property consists of two lots totaling 79,765 square feet.

The property is owned by Bethesda Fire Department, Inc. (BFD), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is managed by a volunteer community-based board of directors. Most board members represent residential constituent communities of Bethesda and Chevy Chase, and the business community through the active participation of representatives from the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce.

The Bethesda Fire Department believes that the current strategic location of Fire Station 6 is essential to the continued well-being of the community and is considering how best to provide operational and technological improvements to the physical asset.

Fire Station 6 was built in 1969 and has aged considerably. The fire department is determining the best way to provide a modernized fire station that will meet the constantly increasing community needs for the next 40-50 years.

The rescue squad is located at the northern end of the Sector Plan area at 5020 Battery Lane. The 90,569 square-foot parcel is located minutes from Downtown Bethesda. The land use is currently for a rescue station and parking lot.

The rescue squad is looking into redevelopment options to provide a new, more modern facility on the site as well as possibly adding additional uses on the parcel, such as a multi-story residential and commercial building complex. Any new redevelopment would be phased construction that will allow the rescue squad facility to remain operational during construction.

Currently, the property is zoned for single-unit residential or Residential-60. Any future redevelopment of the site, including commercial and multi-story residential, would require a change to the current zoning of the property.

#### Recommendations

This Plan recommends that the rescue squad site located at the intersection of Battery Lane and Old Georgetown Road change from its current R-60 zone to a Commercial Residential (CR) zone and the Fire Station 6 site at the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue retain its R-10 base zone. The new rescue squad building and any residential development

should be located to optimize functionality of the rescue squad building and maximize compatibility with the surrounding residential community (see Figure 2.05 and 3.11: *Recommended Zoning*).

## 2.8.4 Educational Facilities

### A. Library

The Bethesda Regional Library, located at 7400 Arlington Road, serves Downtown Bethesda. Along with its regular collection, it features an extensive reference collection and meeting rooms, all of which are well used. The Bethesda Library is an active community gathering place. It is one of the busiest libraries in the County, attracting both business and residential users.

The County has no immediate plans to expand or renovate the Bethesda Library at this time.

#### Recommendations

Rather than investing in large capital expenditures, like a building addition, the library prefers to expand into the community with small facilities and through electronic connections to homes and businesses. Staffed “mini-libraries” or unstaffed information kiosks at Metrorail stations can provide services, such as electronic access to community and collection information, reserve book pickup and a small selection of lending paperbacks.

The Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan recommends creating and encouraging opportunities for the library to provide expanded services to the community at appropriate locations within the Central Business District. The Plan supports locating a kiosk or other mobile information system at the Bethesda Metrorail Station.

### B. Public Schools

The Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan is within the service areas of Bethesda Elementary School, Westland Middle School and Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. Enrollment increases have been occurring at all these schools and a variety of strategies will be considered to accommodate additional students resulting from the Sector Plan. The Plan includes designation of the former Lynnbrook Elementary School as a future operating elementary school.

In addition, the Sector Plan provides for up to 8,456

new multi-unit high-rise housing units (assuming limited commercial development). Based on student generation for this area of the County, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) estimates at full build-out, the new housing would result in approximately 430 elementary school students, 177 middle school students and 236 high school students. Build-out of the Sector Plan requires redevelopment of many properties and is estimated to take 20 to 30 years. Some properties identified for more housing units may not redevelop at all during the life of the Plan.

Because the full impact of the Sector Plan on school enrollments will not be realized for many years, it is impossible to precisely gauge the impact on public schools. School enrollments in the area will change over the 20 to 30-year time-frame of the Plan. In addition, MCPS enrollment forecasts and associated facility plans and capital projects focus on a six-year time-frame—not a 20 to 30-year period.

Therefore, the following options to accommodate additional students in the Plan describe current enrollment projections and capital projects. Following these comments, typical approaches that MCPS employs to address enrollment increases are provided. All approaches require County Board of Education approval.

At the elementary school level, Bethesda Elementary School completed a building addition in August 2015 to address increased enrollment. The new addition will increase the school’s capacity from the current 384 students to 568 students. Site constraints indicate that no additional capacity can be built at the school. Current projections indicate that for the next six years there will be little space available at the school, even with the addition. If there continues to be no surplus capacity at Bethesda Elementary School by the time new housing occupancies occur in the Plan area, then MCPS would explore the following range of options to serve additional elementary school students:

- Determine if space is available at nearby elementary schools in the area and reassign students to a school(s) with space available.
- Build an addition, or additions, at nearby school(s) and reassign students to the school(s) with increased capacity.
- If the capacity of existing elementary schools, even with additions built, is insufficient to address increased enrollment, then the

opening of a new elementary school would be considered. A new elementary school could be provided in one of two ways:

- Reopen a former elementary school in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) cluster. There are two former operating elementary schools in the cluster that could be considered, including the former Rollingwood and Lynnbrook Elementary Schools. Lynnbrook Elementary School is located adjacent to the Sector Plan area and is identified in the Plan as the location for an elementary school.
- Construct a new elementary school. There are currently no future elementary school sites identified in the B-CC cluster. A site selection process would be conducted for a new elementary school and co-location and/or purchase may be required.

At the middle school level, Westland Middle School is projected to be over capacity by more than 800 students in the coming years. A second middle school for the B-CC cluster is scheduled to open in August 2017, called Silver Creek Middle School.

However, it is anticipated that there will be some space available at both middle schools once the new middle school opens. If there is insufficient capacity available at the two B-CC cluster middle schools by the time new housing occupancies occur in the Plan area, then MCPS would explore a range of options to serve additional middle school students as follows:

- Determine if space is available in an adjacent middle school and reassign students to a school with space available.
- Build an addition at Bethesda-Chevy Chase Middle School #2 or Westland Middle School.
- Build an addition at an adjacent middle school and reassign students to the school.
- Construct a new middle school. There are currently no future middle school sites identified in the B-CC cluster or adjacent clusters. A site selection process would be conducted for a new middle school in the region and collocation and/or purchase may be required.



*Bethesda Library*



*Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School*



*Bethesda Rescue Squad*



At the high school level, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School serves the Sector Plan area. This school is projected to be over capacity by more than 700 students and to enroll up to 2,500 students in the coming years. An addition to the school that will increase the capacity to 2,400 is scheduled for completion in August 2017.

Current projections indicate that for the next six years there will be little space available at the school, even with construction of the addition. Also, the school will be at the high end of the desired enrollment size for high schools. If there continues to be no surplus capacity at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School by the time new housing occupancies occur in the Plan area, then MCPS would explore the following range of options to serve additional high school students:

- Explore options for expansion of the B-CC High School and/or its fields, including the possibility of acquiring parcels directly adjacent to the school.
- Determine if space is available in an adjacent high school and reassign students to a school with space available.
- Build an addition at an adjacent high school and reassign students to the school.
- Reopen a former high school in the vicinity. A former high school, known as Woodward High School, is located on Old Georgetown Road in Bethesda. This is the only former high school in the MCPS inventory. The facility currently houses Tilden Middle School. However, Tilden Middle School will be relocated to its original Tilden Lane location when its revitalization/ expansion is completed in August 2019. The Woodward facility will then become a holding center for middle schools undergoing revitalization and/or expansion. Long term, another holding center for middle schools undergoing revitalization and/or expansion is planned at the former Broome Jr. High School in Rockville.
- Construct a new high school. There are currently no future high school sites identified in this area of the County. A site selection process would be conducted for a new high school in the region and colocation and/or purchase may be required.

## Recommendations

Ensure options for providing adequate student enrollment capacity, as described above.

### 2.8.5 Other Public Facilities

#### A. Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center is one of four regional services centers in the County that function as local town halls, offering problem-solving and information, and referral services to residents. The Center offers many ways to get involved in local government, including committees, volunteer opportunities, educational opportunities, public meetings, open houses and more. The Director of the Regional Services Center is a member of the County's senior management team with direct access to the County Executive and department heads. Along with this liaison function, the Center also:

- Identifies regional priorities and future service needs.
- Coordinates local initiatives and community problem-solving.
- Maintains a library of County literature, including the Recreation Guide, Master Plans and Guide to Senior Resources.
- Maintains meeting rooms for public use.
- Distributes welcome packets to new residents.
- Oversees County promotional and maintenance services in Downtown Bethesda performed under contract by the Bethesda Urban Partnership.
- Manages the site selection process for County facilities.

The Center has been located in Bethesda since 1979. When the Center first opened its doors, it was housed in the reference room at the Bethesda Regional Library on Arlington Road. In the early 1980s, both the Library and the Center needed additional space and the Center moved to Woodmont Avenue. In December 1996, the Center moved to a brand new County office building located in the heart of Downtown Bethesda, near the Bethesda Metrorail Station and above the County's Bethesda Center parking garage. The Center

is located on the plaza level of the Metropolitan apartment complex on Edgemoor Lane that includes a 308-unit, mixed-income project owned by the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County.

### **Recommendation**

Support the priorities of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center and rezone the property to allow potential redevelopment with an improved center, additional civic uses and possibly a recreation center.

## **B. Writers Center**

The Writers Center is a County-owned building formerly operated as a community center. This publicly owned property presents a valuable opportunity in an urban area with high land costs to accommodate a variety of uses over the next 20 years.

The County has decided to retain ownership and has leased the building on a long-term basis to the Writers Center. By retaining title, the County will have the flexibility to change tenants, depending on local demand and interests.

### **Recommendation**

The Plan recommends continued County ownership of the building to advance the goals of establishing the cultural district in Downtown Bethesda or other community objectives.

## **C. Arts and Entertainment District**

This Sector Plan supports public and private sector arts and entertainment forums and venues within the Arts and Entertainment District to appeal to diverse audiences and help stimulate economic development.

The Plan recommends the following priorities for the Arts and Entertainment District:

- Provide flexible community theater/stage space (known as a “black box”) of approximately 5,000 square feet with potential seating capacity of 200-250 seats. Identify this space as a major public facility resource for a CR zone if it is a nonprofit and/or public owned/managed facility.
- For CR Optional Method project amendments to existing developments, encourage and support revitalization, replacement and/or relocation of existing public art and/or

support a payment accepted by the Arts and Entertainment District for a public arts and entertainment initiative that is recommended in a master plan or by the Arts and Entertainment Board as a priority project.

- Exclude any on-site public arts facility or space in the Arts and Entertainment District from the calculation of development impact taxes, transportation management district fees or similar taxes and fees.

## **D. New Recreation Center**

To support the additional growth in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase regional area, downtown Bethesda will need to accommodate recreational services and facilities for all ages and abilities. The Sector Plan calls for the study and implementation of a new County Recreation Center in Downtown Bethesda.

### **Recommendation**

Explore the viability of providing a new County recreation facility in Downtown Bethesda, taking advantage of under-utilized sites near the Metro Station and/or colocation with the existing B-CC Regional Services Center at 4805 Edgemoor Lane. Other viable sites should also be explored as part of this study.



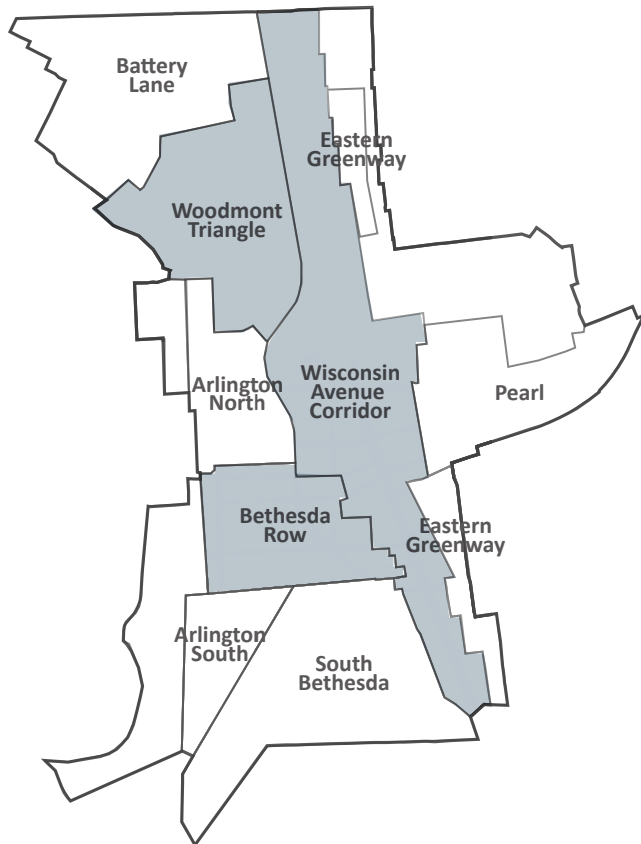




# Chapter 3: Districts

Based on community feedback and the Concept Framework Plan, this Sector Plan divides Downtown Bethesda into nine districts for the development of specific goals and recommendations. These areas comprise Wisconsin Avenue and the established centers of Bethesda Row and Woodmont Triangle; the emerging centers of the Pearl and Arlington South Districts; and the residential and edge districts of Battery Lane, Eastern Greenway, South Bethesda and Arlington North.

## 3.1 Wisconsin Avenue and Established Centers



### 3.1.1 Wisconsin Avenue Corridor

The Wisconsin Avenue Corridor is the main artery through the center of Downtown Bethesda. It extends from the Sector Plan Boundary/National Institutes of Health (NIH) on the north to Bradley Boulevard on the south, and from Woodmont Avenue on the west to Waverly Street on the east. With the existing Bethesda Metrorail Station, future Purple Line and bus rapid transit (BRT) options, Wisconsin Avenue is a critical focus area for improved access, mobility and pedestrian safety. The corridor is envisioned as a symbolic downtown center that reflects the character of adjacent neighborhoods and overall identity of Bethesda through innovative building designs and active public spaces.

The Wisconsin Avenue Corridor is primarily a commercial area, containing both retail and office uses. Among its numerous large office buildings are older ones predating the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan, such as the Air Rights Building; 1980s structures; and buildings at the Bethesda Metrorail Station. The northern part of Wisconsin Avenue comprises several hotels, stores, restaurants and offices, but currently has no clear identity.

The area's retail potential is compromised by its location on either side of Wisconsin Avenue. As a major commuter arterial, this street has heavy traffic volumes that eliminate the potential for "cross-shopping" and a lack of visibility for retail establishments. However, Wisconsin North anticipates increased development activity with five planned projects, including the Harris Teeter site at 8300 Wisconsin Avenue. These projects will increase the employee, visitor and residential customer base within the district.

The Metro Core of Wisconsin Avenue struggles with the same condition caused by the barrier of Wisconsin Avenue's width as well as its vehicular traffic volume and



*View of Wisconsin Avenue at the Metrorail station*

speed. Similar to northern Wisconsin Avenue, the area includes hotels, but is most noted for the density of office buildings that surround its Metrorail station and accessible roadways. Consequently, most of the existing retail offerings in the Metro Core are oriented to the Monday through Friday, 9-to-5 customer. As Bethesda Row and Woodmont Triangle have become increasingly more attractive as locations for new and/or expanding retailers, these areas draw more and more customers away from the Metro Core's shops, restaurants and services.

The southern portion of Wisconsin Avenue is located at the second most visible retail intersection in Downtown Bethesda – Wisconsin Avenue and Bradley Boulevard. Like its companion area to the north, south Wisconsin Avenue is bifurcated. This condition is reinforced by existing retail locations in the area, including the Shops of Wisconsin to the east and the CVS, Staples and PetSmart stores. One of this area's most significant obstacles to future growth and change is its rigid building designs and layouts that are difficult to adapt to more retail-appropriate spaces and, therefore, more flexible tenanting.

The Wisconsin Avenue Corridor, consistent with adopted planning principles, has the tallest buildings in Downtown Bethesda. Building heights step down from the 200-foot Clark Building to the surrounding 143-foot heights allowed in the Commercial Residential zone (former Central Business District-2 zone in the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan). Buildings at Bethesda and Wisconsin Avenues provide a gateway open space at the corner of this intersection. A number of potentially high-density sites remain to be developed in the area.

## **A. Land Use and Zoning**

### **1. Goals:**

- Encourage infill and reinvestment on underutilized commercial sites and private surface parking lots.
- Encourage mixed-income/affordable housing near transit stations.
- Provide zoning recommendations that allow signature tall buildings at major civic spaces in the established centers.
- Develop compact nodes that place the highest intensity in those centers, provide distinctive infill buildings and step down to lower densities and heights near the edges.
- Improve and enhance underutilized privately owned public use spaces.
- Provide new civic gathering spaces.
- Encourage high-performance buildings and sites nearest the established centers.
- Improve the pedestrian environment with upgraded streetscapes.

### **2. Recommendations:**

#### **a. Land Use:**

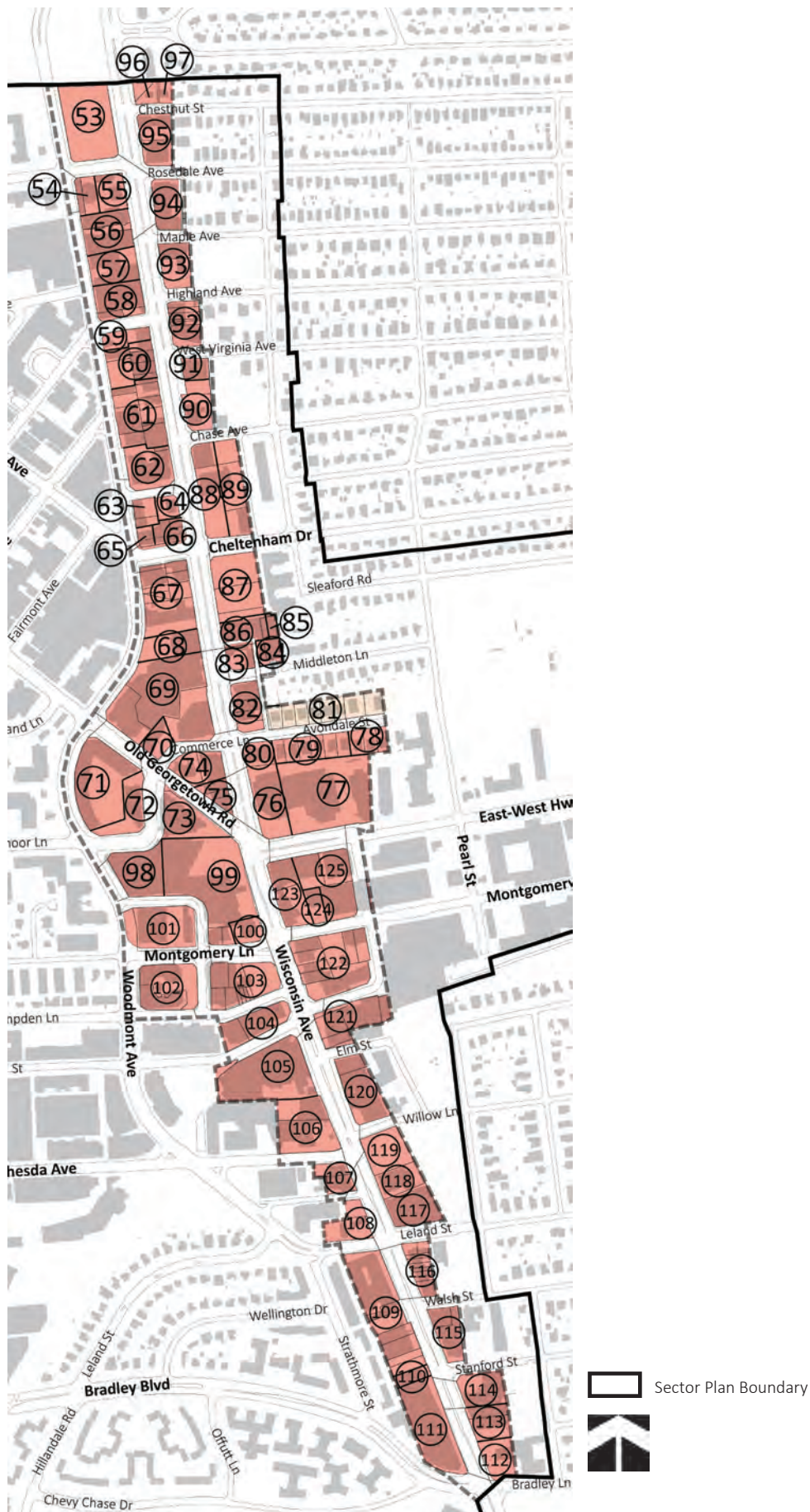
- Create two new civic gathering spaces in the form of civic green space/parks at the Farm Women's Cooperative Market site and Veteran's Park Civic Green.
- Emphasize mixed land uses focused on employment and high density residential.



### b. Zoning

- See *Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the Wisconsin Avenue District and *Figure 3.01 Wisconsin Avenue District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Rezone Map #53 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #54 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 120 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #55 and #59 from their current zones to increase the commercial FAR from 1.0 to 3.0 and increase the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet.
- Rezone Map #56 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #57 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 145 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #58 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #60 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #61 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #62 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowed building height from 145T to 200 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #63 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 120T feet to 290 feet if the project includes 25 percent MPDUs. If only 15 percent MPDUs are included in the project, then the height is reduced to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #64 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 120T feet to 290 feet if the project includes 25 percent MPDUs. If only 15 percent MPDUs are included in the project, then the height is limited to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #65 and #66 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from a 1.0 FAR to a 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and increase the maximum allowable building height from 120T to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #67 from its current zone to increase maximum allowable building height from 145T to 300 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #68 from its current zone to increase maximum allowable building height from 145T to 165 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future

Figure 3.01: Wisconsin Avenue District Recommended Zoning



development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #69 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 175 feet.
- Rezone Map #70 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #71 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #72 to increase the commercial density from a 1.0 FAR to a 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 225 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #73 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #74 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #75 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0

FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #76 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #77 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 240 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #78 and #79 from its current R-10 zone to a CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to provide flexible development opportunities near the core of Downtown Bethesda and still maintain compatibility with its surrounding neighborhood.
- Rezone Map #80, #82, #83 and #86 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 90T to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #81 from its current zone of R-10 to a CRN zone to reflect the existing development and ensure compatibility with adjacent single residential detached units. Rezone to CRN 0.75, C-0, R-0.75, H-45.
- Rezone Map #84 and #85 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #87 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 90T to 145 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and to address the proximity to both the commercial core on Wisconsin



Avenue and the adjacent single residential unit neighborhood of East Bethesda.

- Rezone Map #88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, to increase the maximum allowable building heights to 90 feet to provide for an appropriate transition to the adjacent single family unit neighborhoods of East Bethesda. Increase the commercial FAR on Map #90, #91, and #92 from 2.0 to 3.0 and the residential FAR on Map #91 from 2.75 FAR to 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #96 to reduce the maximum allowable building height to 70 feet to provide for an appropriate transition to the adjacent single residential unit neighborhoods of East Bethesda and Glenbrook Village.
- Rezone Map #97 to increase the maximum allowable building heights to 70 feet to provide for an appropriate transition to the adjacent single residential unit neighborhoods of East Bethesda.
- Rezone Map #98 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 175T to 210 to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #99 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 175T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #100 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR, increase residential FAR from 7.5 to 7.75 and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 290 to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #101 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR, increase residential FAR from 7.5 to 7.75 and increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 250 to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #102 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 200 feet on the east side of the property closest to the Bethesda Metro tapering down to a compatible building height as it gets closer to Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #103, #104 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #105 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #106 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #107 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 200 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions. Allow an increase in the maximum allowable building height to 225 feet if the property redevelops in a manner that benefits the Farm Women's Cooperative Market to the east.
- Rezone Map #108 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0

FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #109 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 120 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development, including a movie theater. If the project does not include a movie theater, the height should be limited to 110 feet.
- Rezone Map #110 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 90 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #111 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to be compatible with the surrounding single residential neighborhoods to the east and the low to mid-rise commercial along Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #112 from its current zone to a uniform zone of CR 2.25, C-2.25, R-2.25, H-90 across the entire property from Wisconsin Avenue to West Avenue and increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to be compatible with the surrounding single residential neighborhoods to the east and the low to mid-rise commercial along Wisconsin Avenue. If neighboring properties redevelop, consider compatibility with St. John's Episcopal Church property, and specifically the unique use made of the northern edge of that property as a columbarium, through the site design process.
- Rezone Map #113 and #114 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to be compatible

with the surrounding single residential neighborhoods to the east and the low to mid-rise commercial along Wisconsin Avenue.

- Rezone Map #115 and Map #116 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 90 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Revise Map #117 to increase the commercial FAR from 2.0 to 3.0 and correct the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 145 feet to prevent the building from becoming non-conforming.
- Rezone Map #118 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 150 feet and allow an increase in the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet if the property redevelops as a joint development with the Farm Women's Cooperative Market to the north.
- Rezone Map #119 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #120 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #121, #122 and #124 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #123 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0

FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #125 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

## **B. Urban Design**

### **1. Public Realm**

- a. Goal: Create green, active and walkable sidewalks that are designed to balance pedestrian and retail activity with vehicular and BRT traffic along this major corridor.*

*Recommendations:*

- Provide a planting and furnishing buffer between sidewalks and street traffic.
- Ensure a clear pedestrian pathway.
- Allow space for various activities, such as outdoor dining in retail focus areas, and provide planting and seating along remaining sections of the street.

- b. Goal: Create major civic gathering spaces as the hinge between Wisconsin Avenue, Norfolk Avenue and Bethesda Avenue.*

*Recommendations:*

- Expand Veteran's Park through a new civic green bordered by a shared street that connects Wisconsin Avenue to Norfolk Avenue and Woodmont Triangle.
- Enhance the Farm Women's Cooperative Market as both a market and a public space connected to Bethesda Avenue and the Bethesda Row district.

- c. Goal: Retain a significant private open space at Metro Center.*

*Recommendations:*

- In conjunction with construction of one or more new buildings at Metro Center, redesign and reconfigure the existing open space to make it more usable, more programmable and more inviting.
- Accommodate new plaza-level retail to further activate the open space.
- Provide a welcoming and accessible central gathering space area, with appropriate surface and design features to accommodate the broader community as well as adjacent employees and residents.





High-rise buildings stepped back with low-rise building base  
Source: David Reamer

- Improve the connections between the below-grade Metro bus area and the plaza to encourage Metro riders to use the open space and visit the retail.
- Improve the Metro bus area with lighting, art and other features to make it a more inviting area.

## 2. Building Form

- a. Goal: Design tall buildings along Wisconsin Avenue to have a human-scaled presence on the street, reduced uniformity and compatibility with edge neighborhoods.*

### *Recommendations:*

- Provide building articulation such as step backs, glazing and material changes.
- Provide building separation to ensure the design allows for light and air, and reduces shadows cast onto public spaces.

- b. Goal: Provide visual interest along the corridor by highlighting significant points with increased height.*

### *Recommendations:*

- Provide increased height at the transit gateways to the Metrorail and Purple Line stations.
- Mark the Veteran's Park Civic Green as a major civic gathering space through signature buildings at this location.

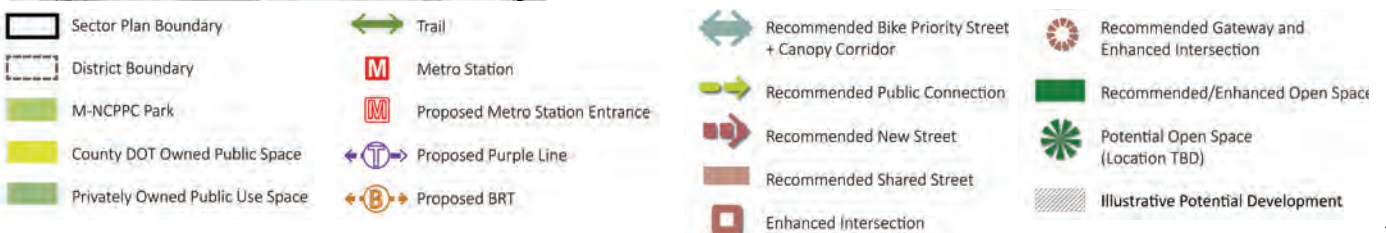
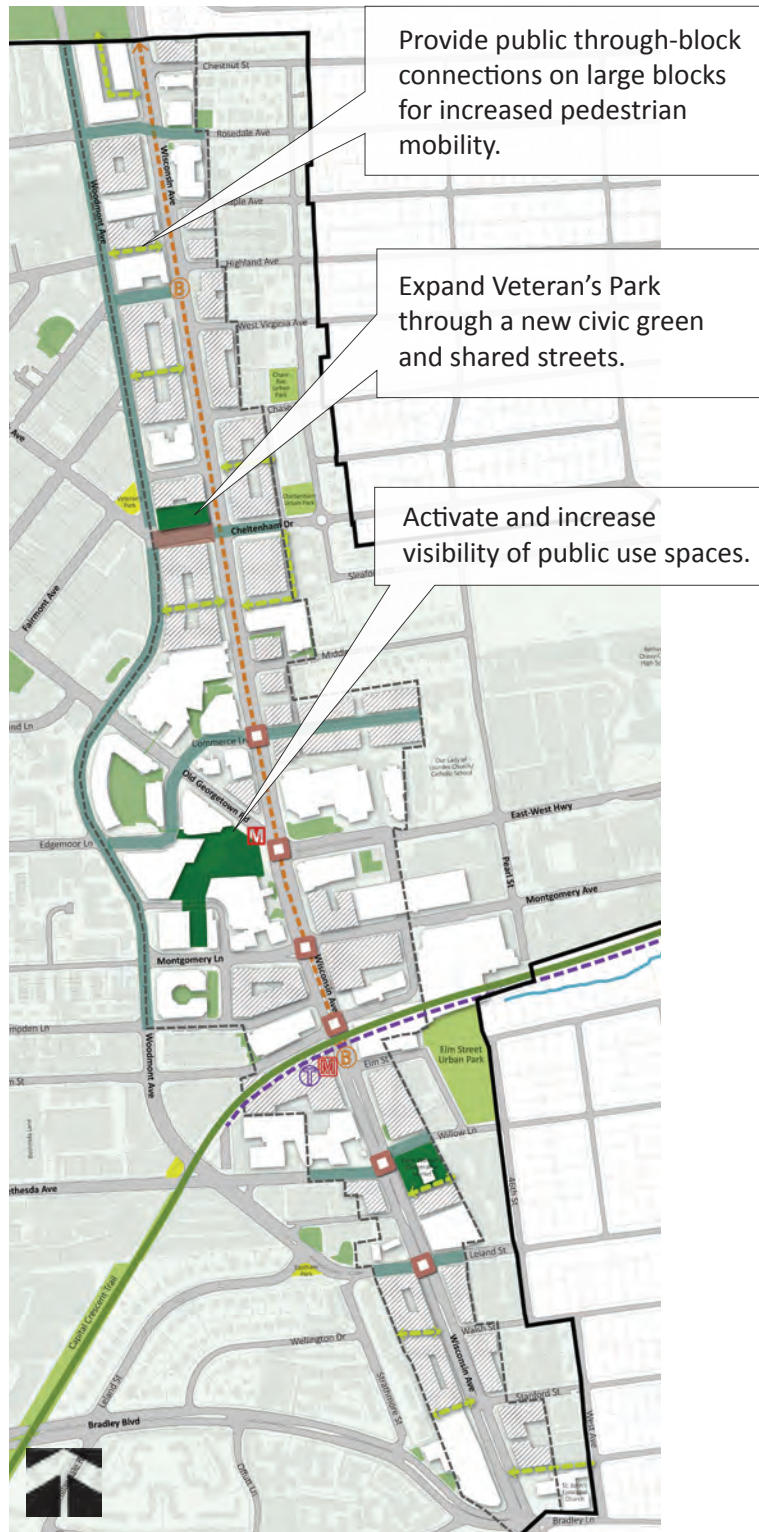
- c. Goal: Incentivize the provision of green space and affordable housing through increased height along Wisconsin Avenue.*

### *Recommendations:*

- Allow a maximum height of up to 225 feet at the northwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Norfolk Avenue on Map #65 and #66.
- Allow a maximum height of up to 290 feet at the southwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Fairmont Avenue on Map #63 and #64 if 25 percent MPDUs are provided. If the affordable housing is not provided, limit building height to 225 feet.



**Figure 3.02: Wisconsin Avenue Corridor District Public Realm Improvements**



*Inviting through-block connection and public plaza*

Source: [buildpublic.org](http://buildpublic.org)



*Streetscape design with planting buffer and outdoor dining space*



### 3.1.2 Bethesda Row District

The Bethesda Row District is bounded by lots on the north side of Hampden Lane, Woodmont Avenue on the east, the southern edge of Lot #31 and Capital Crescent Trail on the south and southeast, and Giant supermarket and Euro Motor Cars to the west.

This district serves as the heart of Downtown Bethesda and is a regional destination and model for placemaking with thriving retail, human-scaled design and an active streetscape environment. The recommended land use and urban design recommendations aim to build on this success and better connect this established center of activity with the Capital Crescent Trail, proposed Purple Line station and new Bethesda Metrorail Station entrance, as well as other Downtown Bethesda districts.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

- Preserve the human-scale and mixed-use character of the neighborhood.
- Continue the main street shopping character along Bethesda Avenue consistent with recent development.
- Provide a civic gathering space as an extension of the plaza at the intersection of Bethesda Avenue and Woodmont Avenue.

- Improve bike facilities and connectivity throughout the district.
- Improve the street intersection at Bethesda Avenue and Woodmont Avenue.

##### 2. Recommendations:

###### a. Land Use

- Create a new civic gathering space in the form of a civic green across from the plaza at the intersection of Bethesda Avenue and Woodmont Avenue.

###### b. Zoning

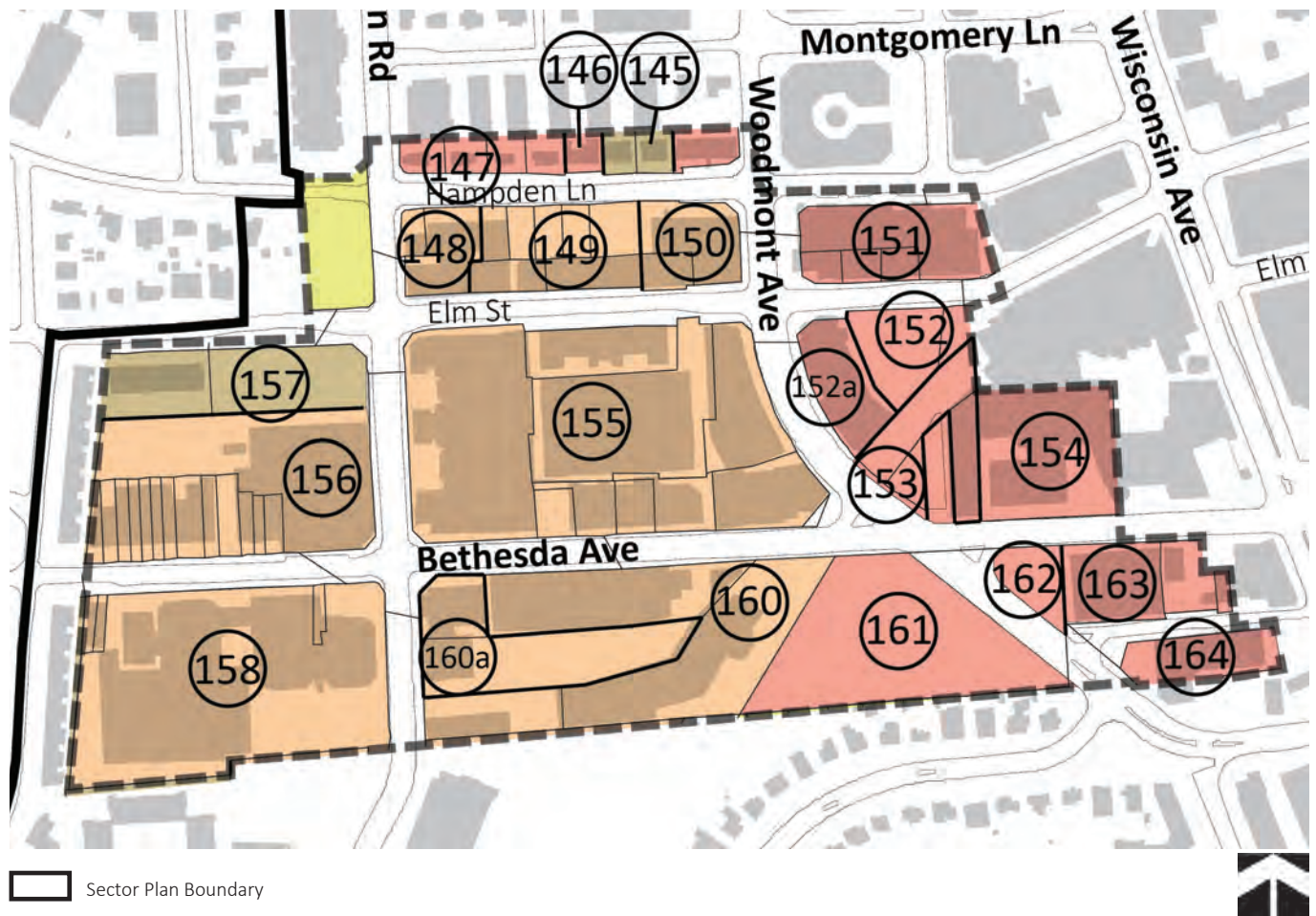
- See *Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the Bethesda Row District and *Figure 3.03 Bethesda Row District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Rezone Map #146 to increase maximum allowable building height to 60 feet, as all previously designated “T” heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities, and increase the FAR from 1.75 to 2.75 so that the existing building does not become non-conforming. Rezone the property to CR 2.75, C-0.25, R-2.75, H-60.



Barnes and Noble Plaza at Bethesda Avenue and Woodmont Avenue



**Figure 3.03: Bethesda Row District Recommended Zoning**



- Rezone Map #147 to increase maximum allowable building height to 90 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map # 149 to increase maximum allowable building height to 70 feet to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map # 151 to increase maximum allowable building height to 175 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #152 to increase maximum allowable building height to 250 feet closest to the Purple Line Station and retain maximum allowable building height of 145 feet along Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map # 154 to increase maximum allowable building height to 170 feet to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #155 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.5 FAR to 2.25 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 90 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #156 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.5 FAR to 2.25 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Modify Map # 160 to include Map # 160a to allow maximum allowable building heights of 90 feet at the corner of Bethesda and Arlington Road and on the interior of the

block to accommodate potential housing behind the existing retail, transitioning to a maximum height of 70 feet along Bethesda Avenue, and increase the commercial and residential FAR to 2.25.

- Rezone Map # 161 to increase maximum allowable building height to 65 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map # 162 to increase maximum allowable building height to 110 feet as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #163 from its current zone to increase the commercial FAR from 2.0 to 3.0 FAR and increase maximum allowable building height to 200 feet, to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #164 to increase maximum allowable building height to 90 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.

## B. Urban Design

### 1. Public Realm

- Goal: Create a major central gathering space that can be the hub of activity and connect Bethesda Row to regional transit, trails and surrounding districts.*

#### *Recommendations:*

- Create the Capital Crescent Central Civic Green at the entrance to the Capital Crescent Trail and future Purple Line station.
- Reconfigure the intersection of Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue to shorten or otherwise improve the pedestrian crossing distance and expand the plaza located on the northwest side of the intersection. Future evaluation of this intersection should specifically evaluate a concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e. pedestrian scramble



*Enhanced Intersection with special paving*

Source: [planning.org](http://planning.org)



*Conversion of pavement to expanded public plaza*

or Barnes Dance) for all crossings during periods of peak pedestrian demand.

- Enhance the streetscape design of the segment of Woodmont Avenue from Elm Street to Bethesda Avenue with elements such as special paving to indicate this area as the heart of the district.

### 2. Building Form

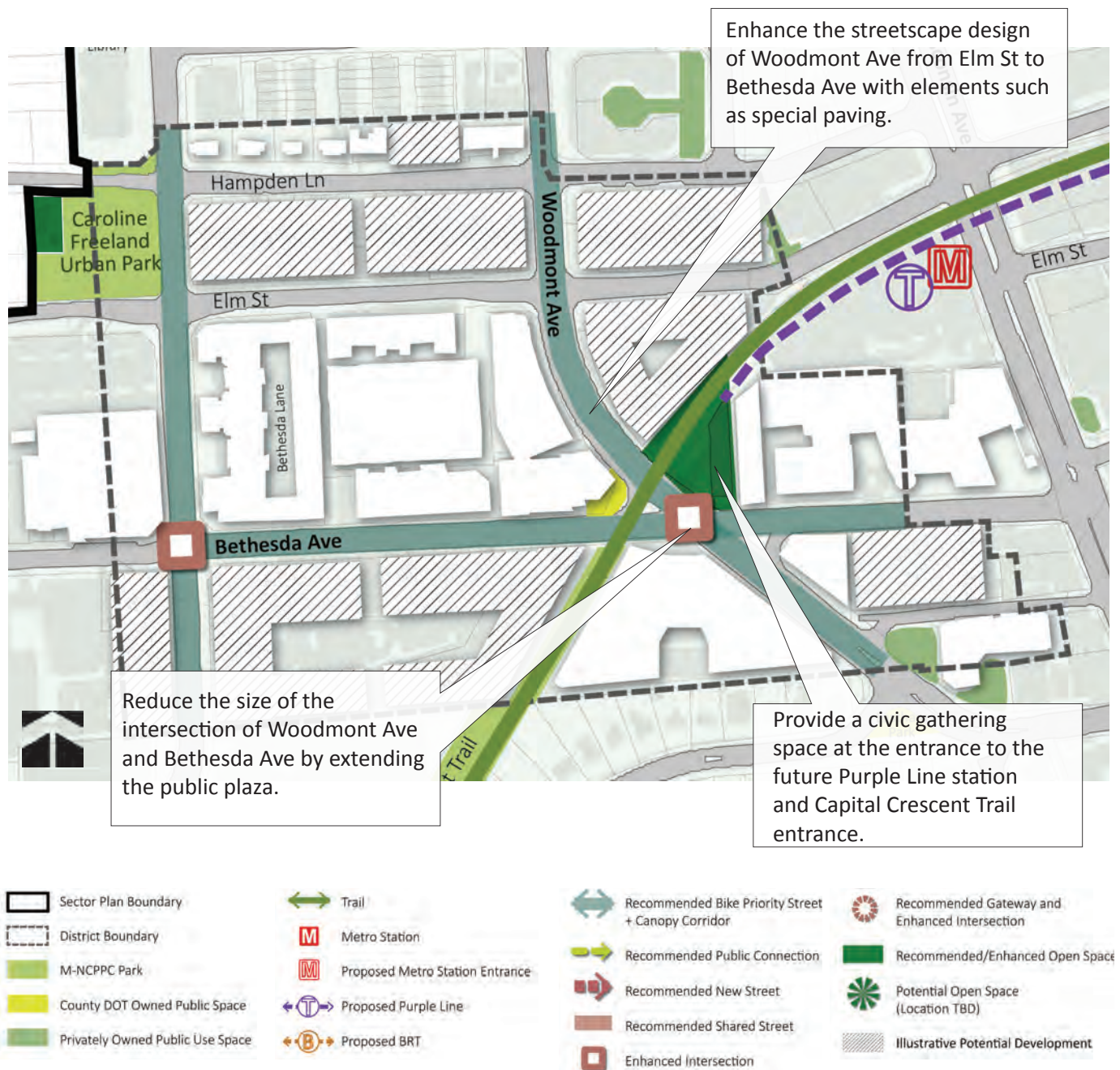
- Goal: Maintain the district’s human-scaled design and character in new developments.*

#### *Recommendations:*

- Design new buildings to reflect the successful approaches to building articulation, material and street frontage seen throughout Bethesda Row.
- Design buildings fronting the Capital Crescent Central Civic Green so they relate to the public open space through elements such as transparent, ground-floor storefronts and outdoor plazas.



**Figure 3.04: Bethesda Row District Public Realm Improvements**





### 3.1.3 Woodmont Triangle District

The Woodmont Triangle District is located roughly between Old Georgetown Road and Wisconsin Avenue, south of the Battery Lane District.

Woodmont Triangle is an eclectic, mixed-use district that balances high-rise residential development with small-scale retail and arts amenities. This district serves as an office and retail center during the day, and as a restaurant district during the evenings and weekends.

Woodmont Triangle is primarily a commercial area, containing both retail and office uses. Offices occupy low-scale buildings and second-floor space, as well as a few high-rise buildings. Residential uses were once limited, but since the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment, additional apartments and condominiums have been developed in the district. These newer structures include Lionsgate on the corner of Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road; Gallery Bethesda Apartments on Auburn Avenue; Palisades Apartments on Cordell Avenue; as well as the Bainbridge Bethesda on St. Elmo Avenue. A community of single-unit homes remains on Rugby Avenue and Glenbrook Parkway.

The predominance of low buildings on small parcels in Woodmont Triangle creates a strong contrast with the higher density residential blocks that have recently developed in the district as well as in the Metro Core. Parking lots and decks, both public and private, occupy the limited number of otherwise vacant properties. The area has little open space and few visually distinctive buildings. Lack of distinguishing characteristics among the streets creates orientation problems for visitors.

Despite its lack of visual quality, the district's diverse business activity, low-scale buildings and low-speed street pattern contribute to the area's appeal. Woodmont Triangle has established a wide customer base, although not as well-established or regionally attractive as Bethesda Row's. Due in part to its angled roadway system that creates triangles within the Triangle, this district features oddly configured and dispersed retail spaces, and difficult accessibility and visibility from major roadways. However, these conditions have allowed a more diverse and local boutique retail environment to flourish. In general, start-up retailers are more likely to set up shop in

Woodmont Triangle than in Bethesda Row.

This Sector Plan reaffirms the urban design approach outlined in the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment and suggests further enhancements to Norfolk Avenue and a connection to Battery Lane Urban Park to activate Woodmont's urban spine.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

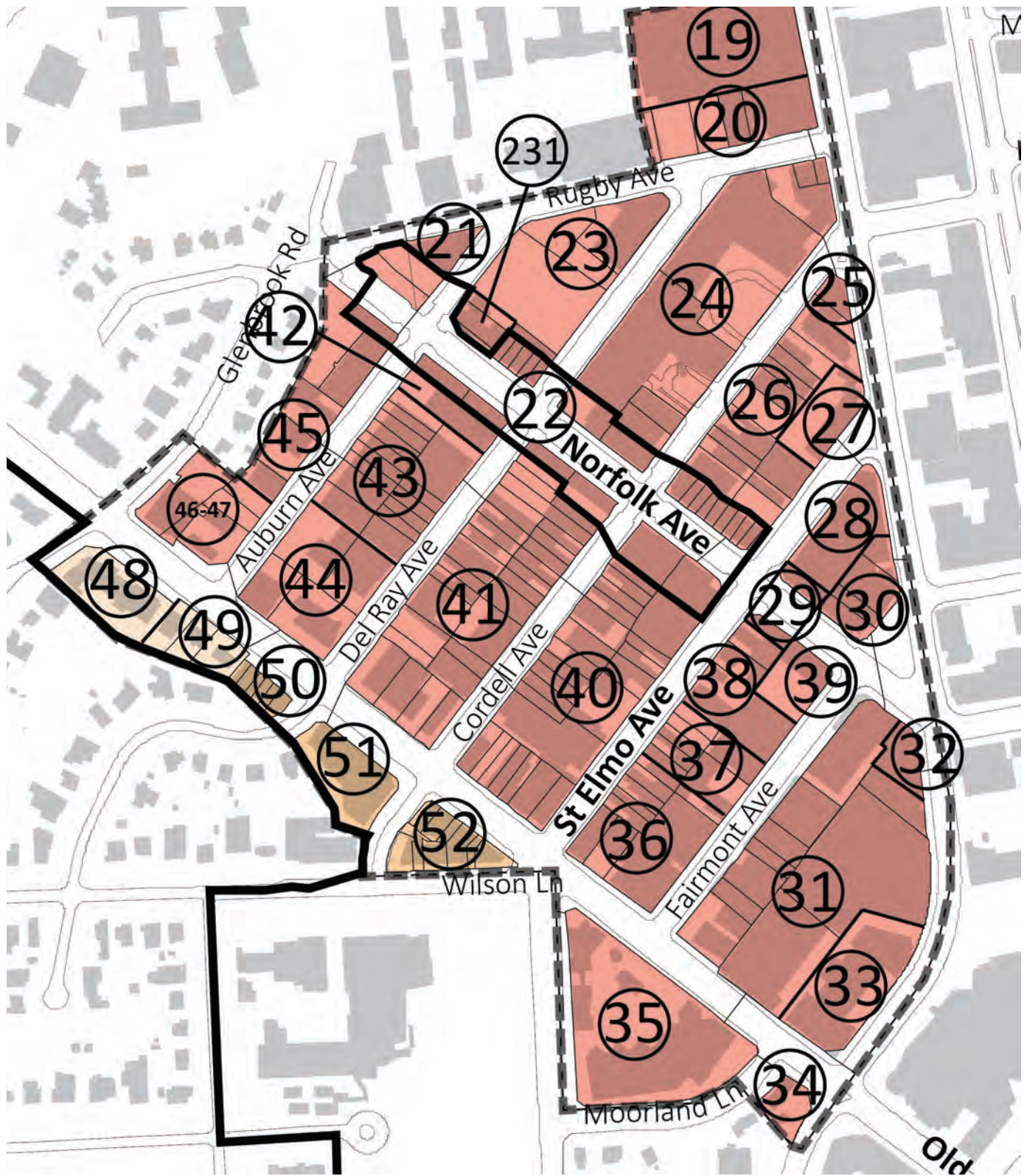
- Preserve low density, pedestrian scale character along Norfolk Avenue.
- Enhance existing commercial/retail businesses with improved accessibility, visibility and upgraded streetscapes guidelines.
- Promote opportunities for more diverse, mixed-income residential development.
- Improve connectivity throughout the neighborhood by providing public through-block pedestrian connections enhancing walkability.
- Balance all modes of transportation and allow for more flexible public space.
- Enhance bike connectivity.
- Improve intersections and environment for pedestrians and bikes through lighting and safety measures.
- Enhance Norfolk Avenue as a main street connecting the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor with Battery Lane area.

##### 2. Recommendations:

###### a. Zoning

- See Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights in the Woodmont Triangle District and Figure 3.05: Woodmont Triangle District Recommended Zoning for the following recommendations.
- Recommend small-scale standard method infill development along Norfolk Avenue and the southern portion of the Triangle through step back regulations.
- Make existing buildings more useful and attractive with very small additions.

Figure 3.05: Woodmont Triangle District Recommended Zoning



 Sector Plan Boundary





- Eliminate the Woodmont Triangle Density Transfer Area to facilitate the CR zone density averaging initiatives.
- Eliminate the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment FAR 1.0 limit on nonresidential development.
- Rezone Map #19 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 0.75 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #20 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 120 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #21 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #22 from its current zone to increase the commercial FAR from 1.0 to 3.0 and increase the residential FAR from 2.75 to 3.0 FAR.
- Rezone Map #23, #24, #25, #26, and #27 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #28 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and reduce the residential density from 5.0 FAR to a 4.75 FAR to allow for some ground floor retail uses, and increase height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #29 from its current zone to reduce the residential density from 5.0 FAR to 4.75 FAR to allow for some ground floor retail uses and increase commercial FAR from 1.0 to 5.0 to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #30 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #31 and #33 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #32 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the residential density from 4.75 to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #34 and #35 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #36 and #38 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #37 from its current zone to



increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and the residential density from 4.75 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 225 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #39 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #40, #41 and #42 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #43 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 0.75 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #44, #45, #46 and #47 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #48 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential density from 0.5 FAR to 1.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 50 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

## B. Urban Design

### 1. Public Realm

- a. Goal: Enhance Norfolk Avenue as the Main Street for the district, building on what works well and creates the unique character in Woodmont Triangle.*

*Recommendations:*

- Enhance Norfolk Avenue as an active street for retail, arts and community events.
- Short Term: Provide opportunity for parklets in a few parking spaces to expand public space and activate the street. Parklets are temporary or permanent extensions of the sidewalk installed in the parking lane that can accommodate programming, such as outdoor dining, public and performance art, children's play areas and seating areas.
- Long Term: Create a shared street as a connection between Battery Lane Urban Park and Veteran's Park along all or a portion of Norfolk Avenue. Shared streets balance all modes of transportation and allow for more flexible public space.

- b. Goal: Provide improved connectivity within the district and to an expanded Battery Lane Urban Park.*

*Recommendations:*

- Enhance and widen the pedestrian and bicycle only trail connection through Battery Lane Urban Park to make the park more visible from Woodmont Triangle and improve connectivity between the districts.
- Provide public through-block connections throughout the district to enhance walkability and bikeability between long blocks. Install bumpouts to facilitate pedestrian crossings at all proposed public through-block connections – subject to verification of adequate sight distances.

- c. Goal: Create opportunities for public spaces to balance high intensity new development.*

*Recommendations:*

- Consider creating a new pocket park or a plaza at the intersection of Old Georgetown Road, Moreland Lane and Woodmont Avenue as a small gathering space between districts and a stop along the recommended Woodmont Avenue bikeway.
- Encourage design of through-block connections to include seating, public art, tree canopy and landscaping as places for respite.

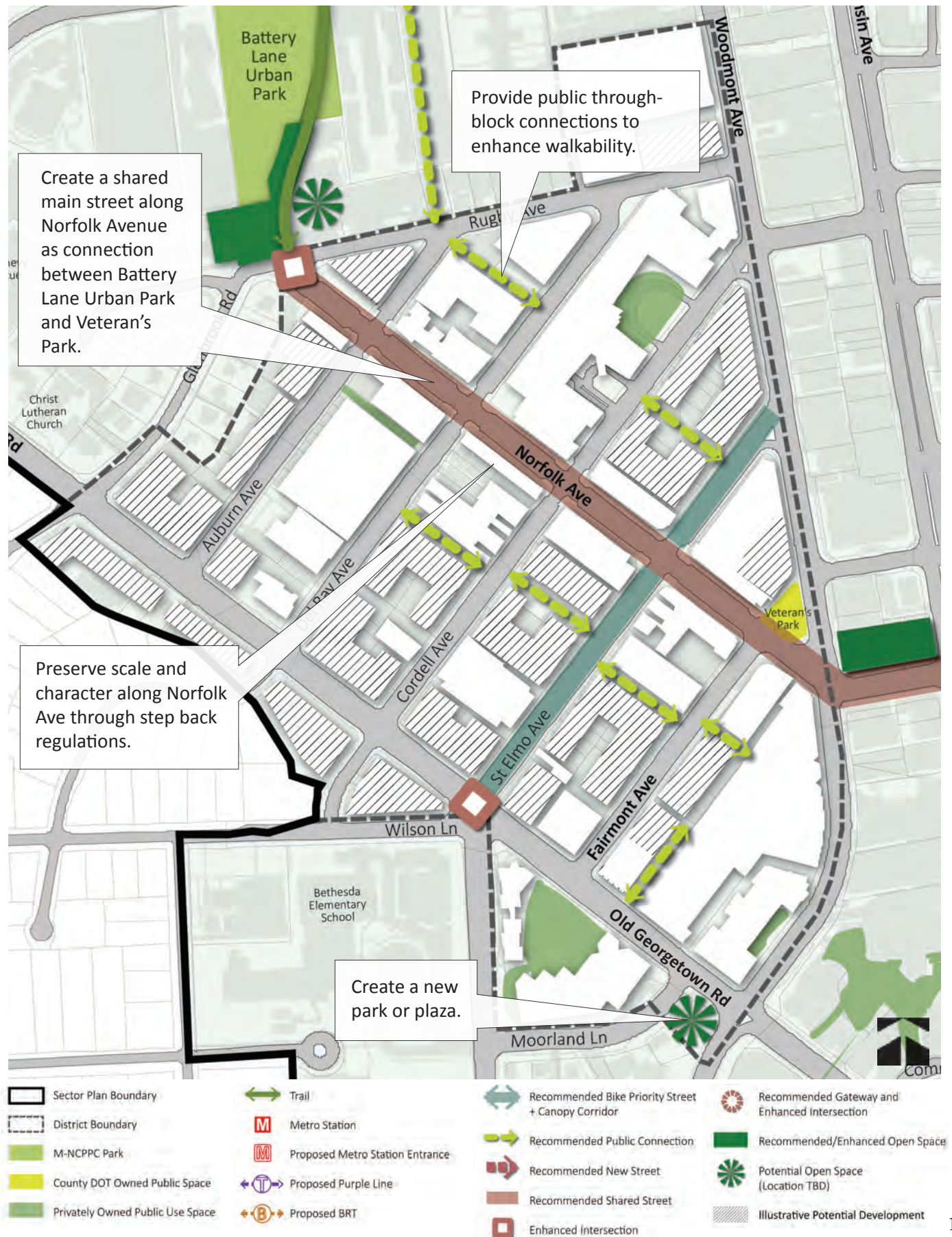
### 2. Building Form

- a. Goal: Maintain scale and character of Norfolk Avenue and provide a transition to Wisconsin Avenue Corridor.*

*Recommendations:*

- Consider the effects of sunlight and shadow on Norfolk Avenue and its small retail character by designing new development to step back from Norfolk Avenue. For new development or redevelopment, the recommended step-back is a minimum of 15 feet above a low to mid-rise base of no higher than 50 feet. The upper floor step-back should be retained across at least 70 percent of the building facade.
- Allow increased heights to punctuate the presence of Veteran's Park and a new civic green.

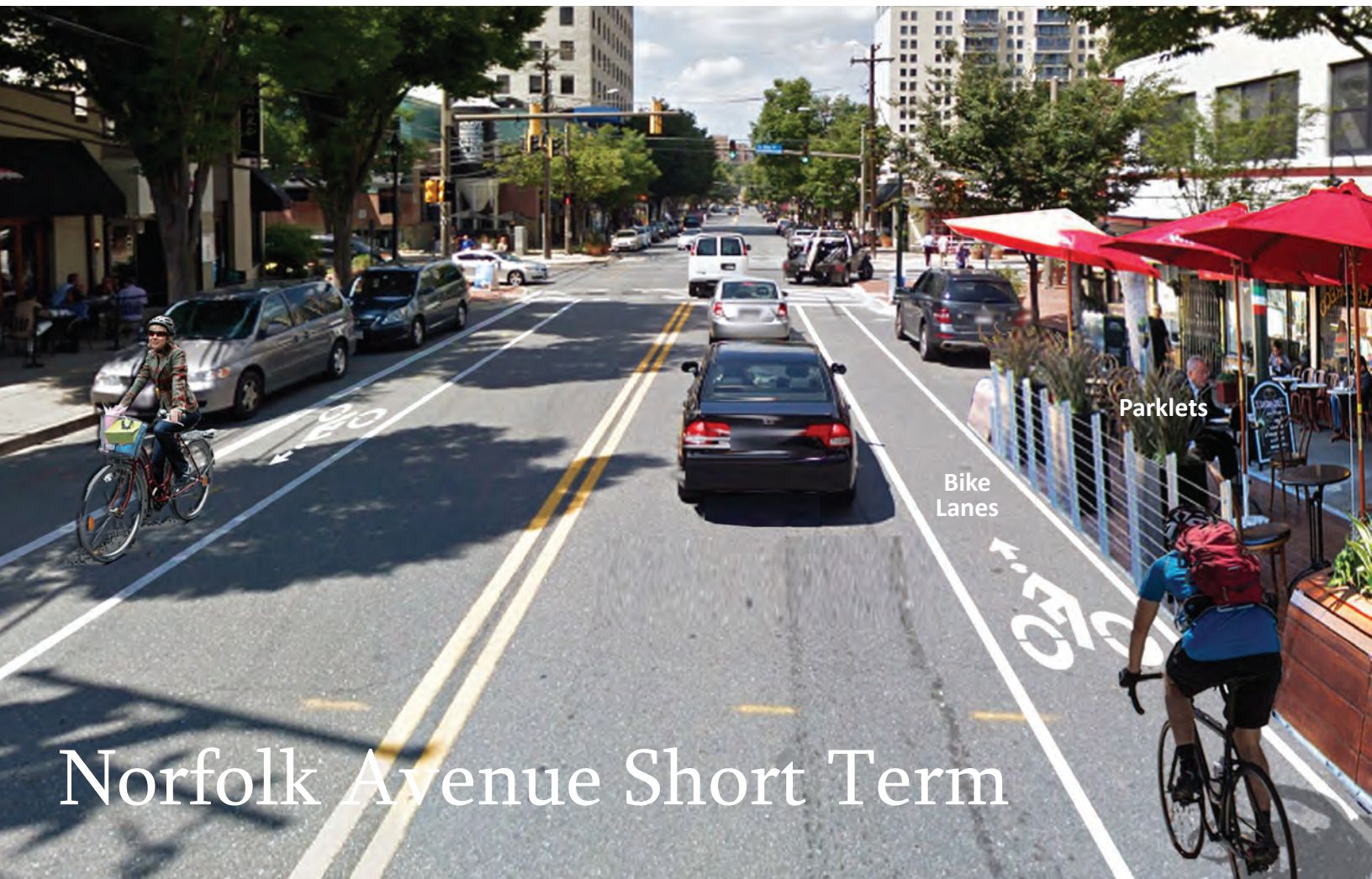
**Figure 3.06: Woodmont Triangle District Public Realm Improvements**







Norfolk Avenue Today



Norfolk Avenue Short Term



# Norfolk Avenue Shared Street



Preserved  
Building Scale +  
Character

Energy  
Efficient  
Lighting

Increased  
Tree Canopy

Seating

More Public  
Activity Space

Pervious  
Paving

Shared Space for  
All Users

Stormwater  
Planters

community  
identity

energy

habitat +  
health

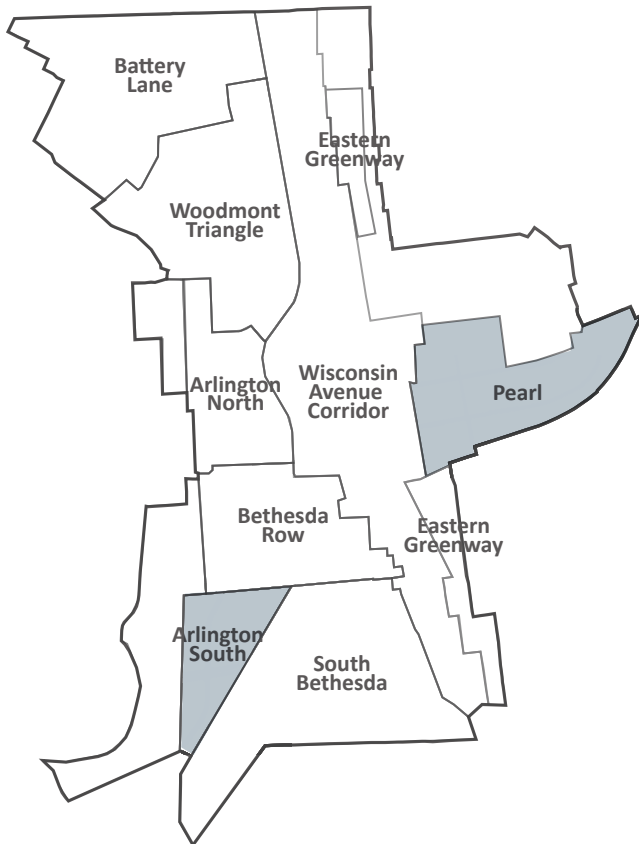
access +  
mobility

water

equity



## 3.2 Emerging Centers



### 3.2.1 Pearl District

As the eastern gateway to the Sector Plan area, the Pearl District is an emerging center of activity with potential for concentrated retail growth along Pearl Street between East-West Highway and Montgomery Avenue. Current buildings range from small-scale commercial uses in single-unit homes to high-rise commercial and residential buildings with poor street presence.

The Pearl District contains a mix of office and residential uses, many constructed prior to the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan. High-rise buildings facing East-West Highway include two apartment buildings and an office complex. Other uses in the area include Our Lady of Lourdes Church, the front section of Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School and a sports club. Numerous single-unit houses and small office buildings are scattered throughout the area.

The character of each street in the district varies. East-West Highway is primarily high-rise and urban on the south, but its character on the north is less clearly defined. Montgomery Avenue contains the rear service entrances to high-rises on the north and a variety of offices in single-unit houses on the south. The small offices were viewed in the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan as a transition to the community of single-unit houses located south of the Capital Crescent Trail. The attractiveness of this district would be improved by additional streetscaping and redevelopment of lower density parcels. The recommended concept for this district is to promote open space and street activity through a mixed-use environment with improved pedestrian connectivity and new public space opportunities.





*Single-unit houses with commercial uses and high-rise buildings*

## A. Land Use and Zoning

### 1. Goals:

- Create a gateway to Bethesda along East-West Highway and a gateway to the Metro Core District at Pearl Street through public art, landscaping and architecture.
- Improve the visual quality of buildings and streetscapes along Montgomery Lane to enhance the public realm for pedestrians and incentive economic investment.
- Promote more mix of land uses to enhance 24-hour activity in the district.
- Encourage attractive, compatible redevelopment and infill development on properties with low densities.
- Protect the adjacent single-unit residential neighborhoods from the negative effects of redevelopment by establishing design guidelines for the district.
- Enhance pedestrian connectivity throughout the district.
- Expand the network of public open spaces.
- Promote Pearl Street as a new main street with local neighborhood serving retail.
- Consider opportunities to expand B-CC High School

## 2. Recommendations:

### a. Land Use

- The Pearl District will become an asset to the office tenants and residents of the immediate area. The amount and mix of its retail should be focused to meet the area's unmet demand for local, neighborhood serving retail uses.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) should evaluate the need to expand Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) High School through the expansion or acquisition of neighboring properties.

### b. Zoning

- See *Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the Pearl District and *Figure 3.07 Pearl District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Encourage infill development on the remaining sites in this district. In some locations, existing structures in scale with adjacent residential neighborhoods would be retained.
- Rezone all Employment Office (EOF) properties in the Pearl District to a comparable Commercial Residential (CR)

zone to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.

- Redevelop office uses to mixed uses with activating ground floor retail at properties along Pearl Street based on the Retail Planning Strategy guidelines and recommendations (*see Technical Appendix*).
- Confirm the existing R-60 zoning on the properties along East-West Highway at Chelton Road. The Sector Plan endorses efforts to protect and enhance residential uses.
- Since the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan, the houses along the south side of Montgomery Avenue have been converted to commercial uses. This Sector Plan recommends redevelopment of Map #202 CRN zoned lots to an equivalent CRT zone to allow for a new recreational park in the future that connects to the Capital Crescent Trail and expands the network of public open spaces in this district.
- Rezone Map #203 from its current CRN zone to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-120, reflective of the surrounding density east of Pearl Street and to provide flexible development opportunities in the future.
- Rezone Map #189 to increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #190 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #191 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 100T to 125 feet to provide compatibility with the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #192 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential density from 3.0 FAR to 4.0 FAR and height from 145T to 175 feet to make sure the existing development is not made non-conforming.
- Rezone Map #194 from its current zone to CRT 0.25, C-0.25, R-0.25, H-50 to provide opportunities for shared parking and/or potential open space.
- Rezone Map #195 from its current zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-100, increasing the maximum allowable building height from 50 feet to 100 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #196 from its current EOF zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-145, increasing the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Revise Map #197 into three separate zoned areas designated as Map #197, Map #197a and Map #197b so that existing structures do not become non-conforming as follows: Map #197 (East West Towers)- CR 6.25, C-6.25, R-6.25, H-145, Map #197a (Topaz House)- CR 5.25, C-5.25, R-5.25, H-120 and Map #197b (East West Garage)- CR 3.0, C-3.0, R- 3.0, H-120.
- Rezone Map #198 and #199 from their current EOF zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-120, increasing the maximum allowable building height to 120 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #200 from its current zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density and building height (CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-100) to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #201 from its current EOF zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density and building height (CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-60) to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #204 from its current EOF zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density (CR-1.5) and increase the maximum

Figure 3.07: Pearl District Recommended Zoning





allowable building height to 145 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.

- Rezone Map #205 from its current EOF zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density (CR 3.0) and increase the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.

## **B. Urban Design**

### **1. Public Realm**

- a. Goal: Enhance street activity on the emerging retail block along Pearl Street.*

*Recommendations:*

- Short Term: Consider interim street activation through uses such as food trucks before retail development is complete.
- Long Term: Create a shared street along Pearl Street with integrated stormwater management.

- b. Goal: Improve connectivity throughout the district.*

*Recommendations:*

- Create new streets and public through-block connections to reconnect the street grid.
- Provide a prominent connection to the Capital Crescent Trail at Pearl Street and provide connections to the trail at several points between Pearl Street and East-West Highway.

- c. Goal: Provide new public open space opportunities to fill gaps in the public space network.*

*Recommendations:*

- Create a new recreational park that connects to the Capital Crescent Trail, provides opportunities for stormwater management and brings activity to this segment of Montgomery Avenue.
- Consider providing a new informal public open space with the redevelopment of

properties on the northeast block of Pearl Street and East-West Highway that serves the B-CC High School and Our Lady of Lourdes Church and Catholic School, and also connects to Pearl Street.

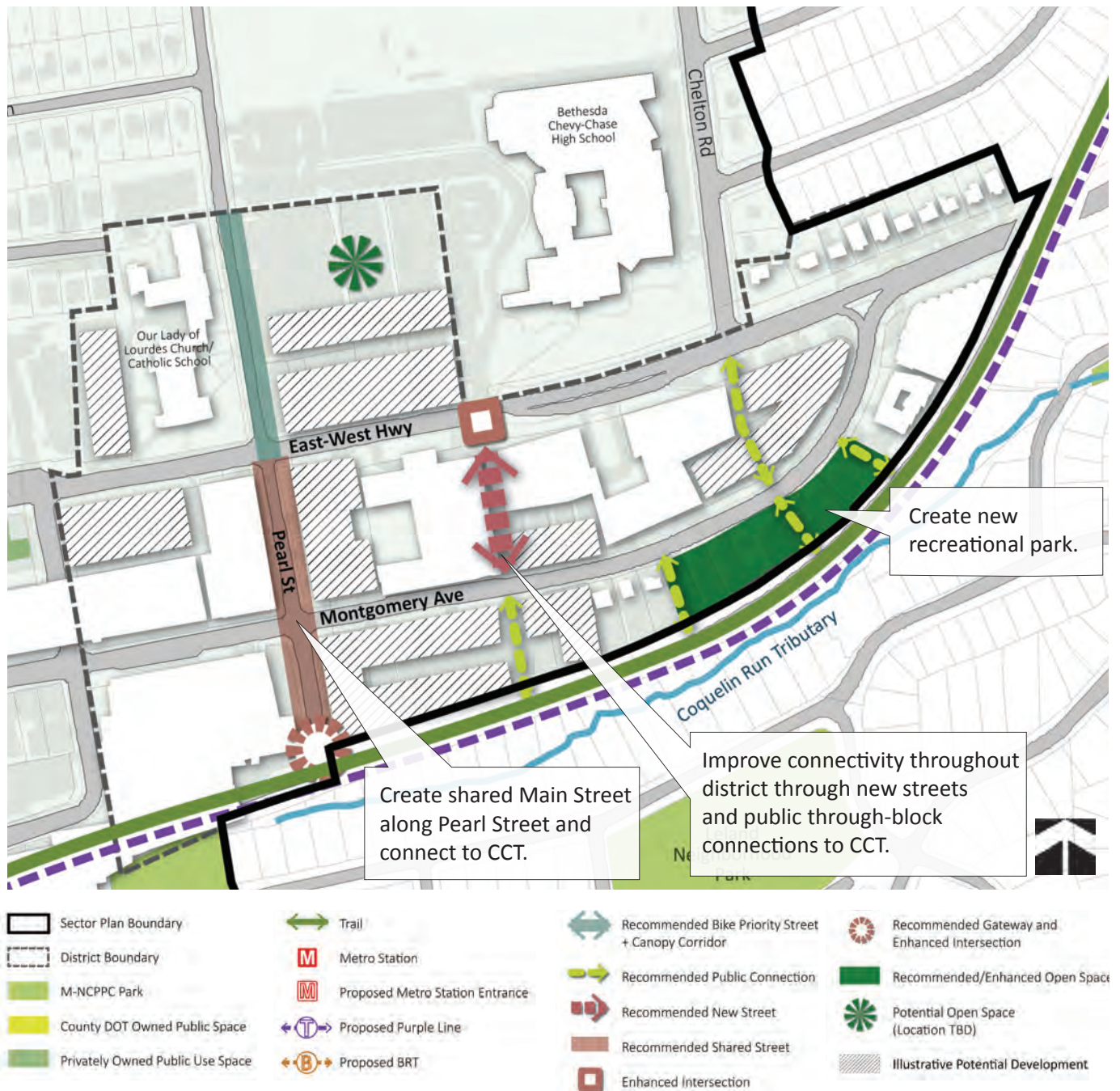
### **2. Building Form**

- a. Goal: Encourage growth in this emerging district and gateway, while also ensuring compatibility with surrounding areas.*

*Recommendation:*

- Increase building heights to provide opportunities for new mixed-use development.
- Step down development to the west of B-CC High School on parcel P224 and 280 from 100 feet along East-West Highway to 50 feet at the rear of the lots.
- Development along the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) should enhance the trail experience for users and minimize negative impacts. The facade of new development along the CCT should orient towards the trail with ground floor activating uses or provide an appropriate transition with setback and landscape buffer.

Figure 3.08: Pearl District Public Realm Improvements



### 3.2.2 Arlington South District

The district is bounded by the old post office and Euro Motor Cars sites on the north, Capital Crescent Trail on the east, multi-unit apartments west of Arlington Road and Bradley Shopping Center and Safeway grocery store on the south along Arlington Road. Arlington South is an outlier among the downtown districts and one of the gateways into the area.

This district provides neighborhood-serving retail for the district and adjacent neighborhoods. It is characterized by a strip shopping center along Arlington Road. The predominant land use is retail characterized by low-rise structures. Along Arlington Road, the shopping center and auto sales on the west side are one story, with a five-story office retail complex on the east side. The old post office site is currently being redeveloped as a mixed-use residential project with ground-floor retail.

Arlington South is an emerging center of activity with potential for commercial and residential redevelopment. As an automobile-oriented retail district, convenience and abundance of parking will be critical for this district as redevelopment occurs. By urbanizing the development pattern, building to the sidewalk with parking in the rear or underneath the buildings, the site can support the depth required for junior anchors while balancing the Sector Plan goals for creating a pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

- Enhance opportunities for local serving retail and junior anchor-scale retail.
- Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity, and intersection safety along Bradley Boulevard and Arlington Road.
- Provide enhanced pedestrian connections through the district.
- Promote mixed-use redevelopment along Arlington Road.
- Create enhanced access and connections for pedestrians and cyclists to Capital Crescent Trail.

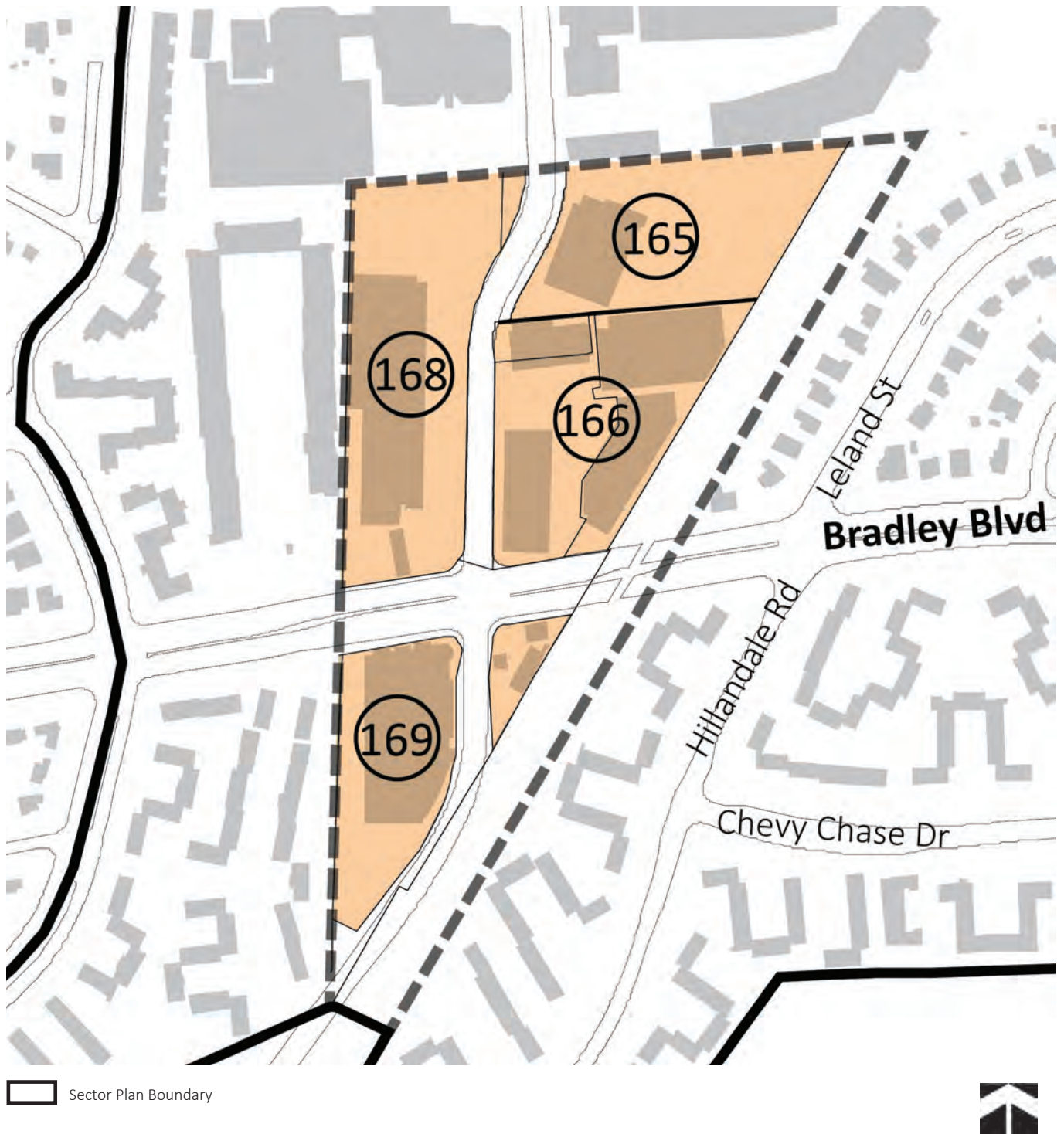
## 2. Recommendations:

### a. Zoning

- The Sector Plan recommends rezoning Map #165, which is currently a Planned Unit Development (PD)-44 zone. The site has been recently redeveloped as a mixed-use residential project. Rezoning the property as Commercial Residential Town (CRT) zone, CRT 1.75, C-0.5, R-1.75, H-70, would reflect the current redevelopment project, while promoting a mixed-use redevelopment compatible with the land uses in the area and character of Arlington South. The addition of the residential use will provide a transition from commercial uses to the Sacks subdivision of single-unit houses to the east, helping to maintain the vitality of the neighborhood (*See Figure 3.09 Arlington South District Recommended Zoning and Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights*).
- Eliminate the Chevy Chase Neighborhood Retail (CCNR) Overlay Zone.
- Rezone Map #166 and #167 from their current zones to increase the commercial and residential FAR to 2.25 and increase the maximum allowable building height to 90 feet to provide compatibility with the surrounding area (*See Figure 3.09 Arlington South District Recommended Zoning and Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights*).



Figure 3.09: Arlington South District Recommended Zoning



## **B. Urban Design**

### **1. Public Realm**

- a. Goal: Improve connectivity to the Capital Crescent Trail and provide a central open space for the district.*

*Recommendations:*

- Create a public through-block connection to the Capital Crescent Trail, allowing for improved walkability through large blocks.
- Create new public open spaces for the district that align with the Capital Crescent Trail connection and provide places for gathering, dining and rest for area shoppers and residents.

### **2. Building Form**

- a. Goal: Define the southern entrance to Downtown Bethesda and ensure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods.*

*Recommendations:*

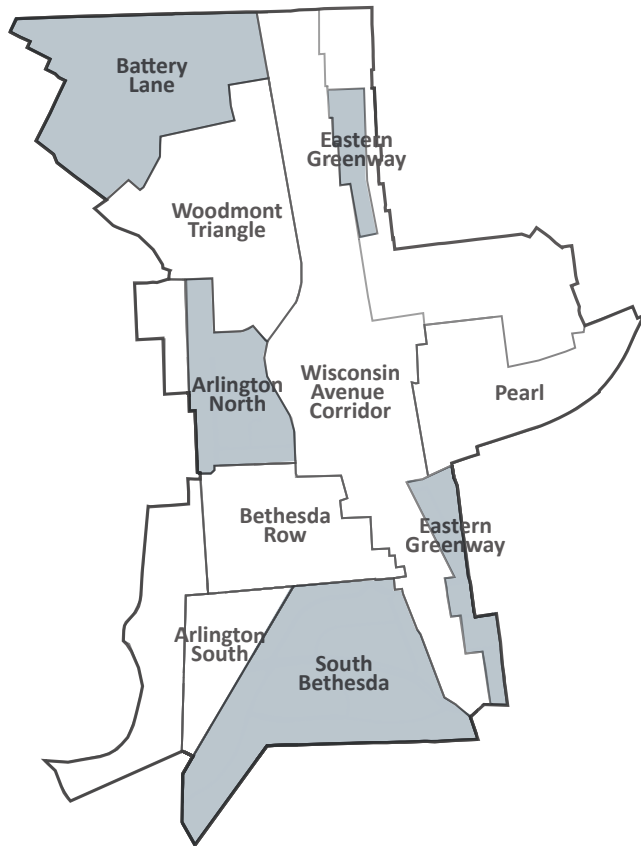
- Improve the intersection of Arlington Road and Bradley Boulevard, and provide an architectural gateway at the southern entrance to the Downtown area through elements such as building corner treatments and material changes.
- Allow increased heights on the east side of Arlington Road to encourage retail and mixed-use redevelopment.
- Transition heights beyond the Arlington South district down to current allowable zoning to provide compatibility with single-unit residential neighborhoods to the east of the Sector Plan area.
- Step down heights on the property along Bradley Boulevard between Arlington Road and the Capital Crescent Trail from 90 feet along Arlington Road to 70 feet on parcel P881 along the Capital Crescent Trail.

**Figure 3.10: Arlington South District Public Realm Improvements**





## 3.3 Residential and Edge Districts



### 3.3.1 Battery Lane District

The Battery Lane District consists primarily of garden and mid-rise apartments along Battery Lane between Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road, directly south of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus. The Battery Lane district has the well-used Battery Lane Urban Park and North Bethesda Trail at its center, and a range of housing types, including single-unit homes and low- to high-rise buildings. Planted setbacks provide an inviting green streetscape along Battery Lane. However, wider buffered sidewalks and connections through long blocks are needed to make this neighborhood a truly walkable area.

The Bethesda Rescue Squad occupies a site on the corner of Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane on the southwestern edge of the district.

Within the Battery Lane District, 1,044 dwelling units in 16 building complexes provide one of the major sources of market-rate affordable housing in Bethesda. Most of these apartment houses were built in the 1950s and 1960s. Many lack air conditioning, but they are well maintained, rents are reasonable and vacancy rates are relatively low. Tenants are mostly employed in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area, including at NIH, or in the District of Columbia. They are predominantly young and single, although there are some families and older people, and a high-rise apartment building, built in 1988, is designed for the elderly.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

- Preserve existing market-rate affordable housing.
- Promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- Expand neighborhood green at Battery Lane Park.
- Improve pedestrian and bike connectivity through the district and along the park.



View of Battery Lane looking east



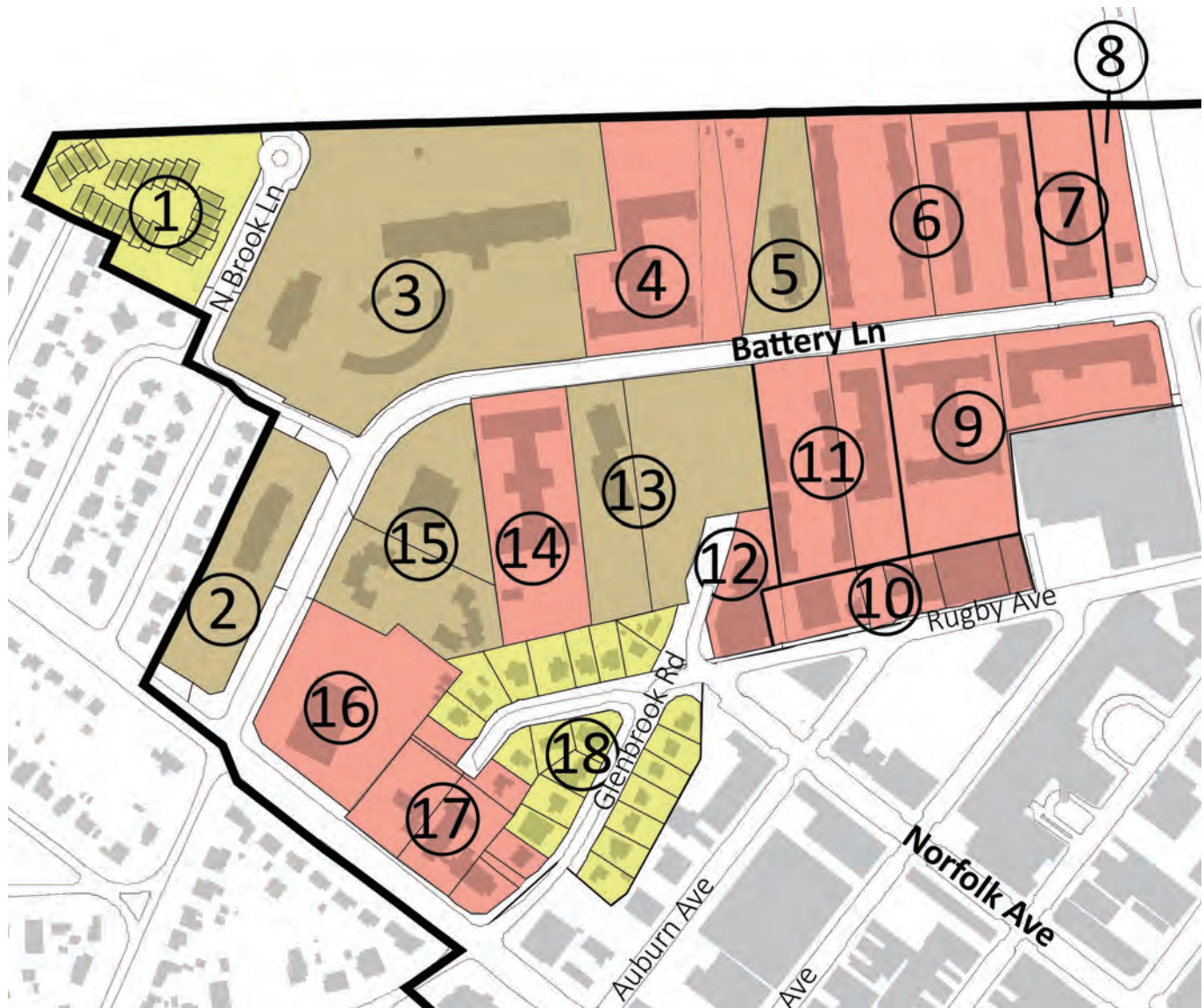
Battery Lane Urban Park

## 2. Recommendations:

### a. Zoning

- See Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for the maximum building heights in the Battery Lane District and Figure 3.11: Battery Lane District Recommended Zoning for the following recommendations.
- Rezone all PD-zoned properties in the Battery Lane District (Map #7, #8, #9, and #17) to a comparable Commercial Residential (CR) zone to promote infill redevelopment with high density residential.
- Most of the existing market-rate affordable housing in the district should be retained to ensure a variety of housing types and allow retention of lower-cost housing. The Sector Plan recommends that the retention of market-rate affordable housing in existing or replacement units in the Sector Plan area be the highest priority for public benefit points and endorses application of County programs to ensure that housing remains affordable.
- Facilitate several possible scenarios for Map #12 located at 8101 Glenbrook Road, which is identified as an expansion area for Battery Lane Urban Park in Chapter 2.7 of this Plan, including park acquisition, partial redevelopment combined with park dedication, or redevelopment. Rezone Map #12 from its current CR and CRN split zoning to CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-120. Any redevelopment should be accessed from Rugby Avenue in order to facilitate park expansion with land from both the lot and the Glenbrook Road right of way and maximize visibility of the park from Woodmont Triangle.
- Rezone Map #1 on North Brook Lane from its current RT-12.5 zone to the Townhouse High Density (THD) zone. With the adoption of the new County Zoning Ordinance in October 2014, RT zones are being phased out and the new townhouse zones implemented through the master planning process.
- Rezone Map #16, the Chevy Chase Rescue Squad site located at Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane currently zoned R-60 to CR 2.5, C-2.5, R-2.5, H-90 to provide flexible redevelopment opportunities for the rescue squad that would preserve its ability to provide services while also allowing for some residential development.
- Rezone Map #4 and #6 from their current zones to CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120 to promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- Rezone Map #10 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height to 120 feet to promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- Rezone Map #11 and #14 from their current zones to CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120 to promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.

Figure 3.11: Battery Lane District Recommended Zoning



 Sector Plan Boundary





## B. Urban Design

### 1. Public Realm

- a. *Goal: Improve and activate connections throughout the district to enhance neighborhood livability.*

*Recommendations:*

- Enhance Battery Lane Urban Park by expanding it north of Battery Lane as a gateway park to connect to NIH and improve the North Bethesda Trail. Also expand the park to the south towards Rugby Avenue and widen the pedestrian and bicycle only trail connection to make the park more visible from Woodmont Triangle and improve connectivity between the districts.
- Create public through-block connections to continue pedestrian grid from Woodmont Triangle. Install bumpouts to facilitate pedestrian crossings at all recommended public through-block connections – subject to verification of adequate sight distances.

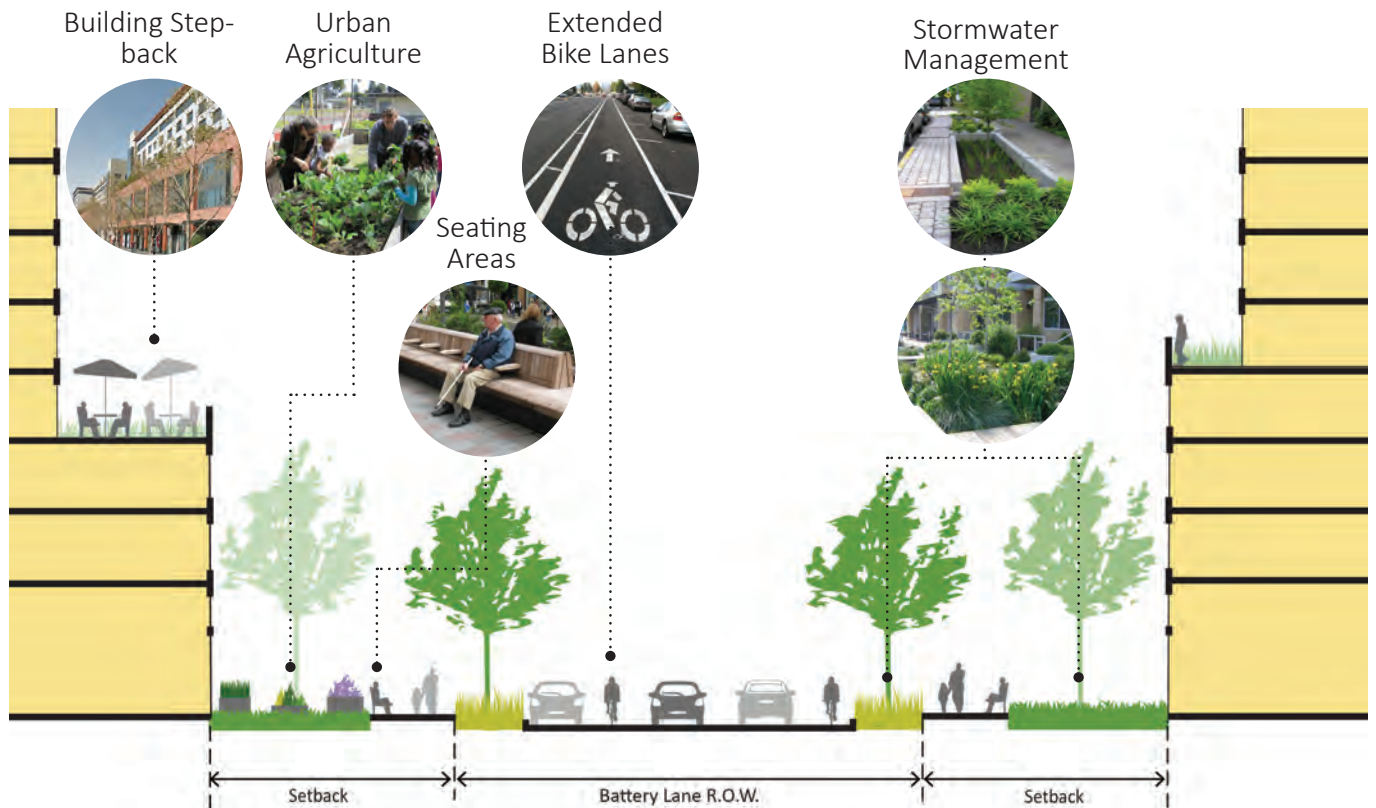
### 2. Building Form

- a. *Goal: Encourage some redevelopment of aging housing into mixed-income housing opportunities.*

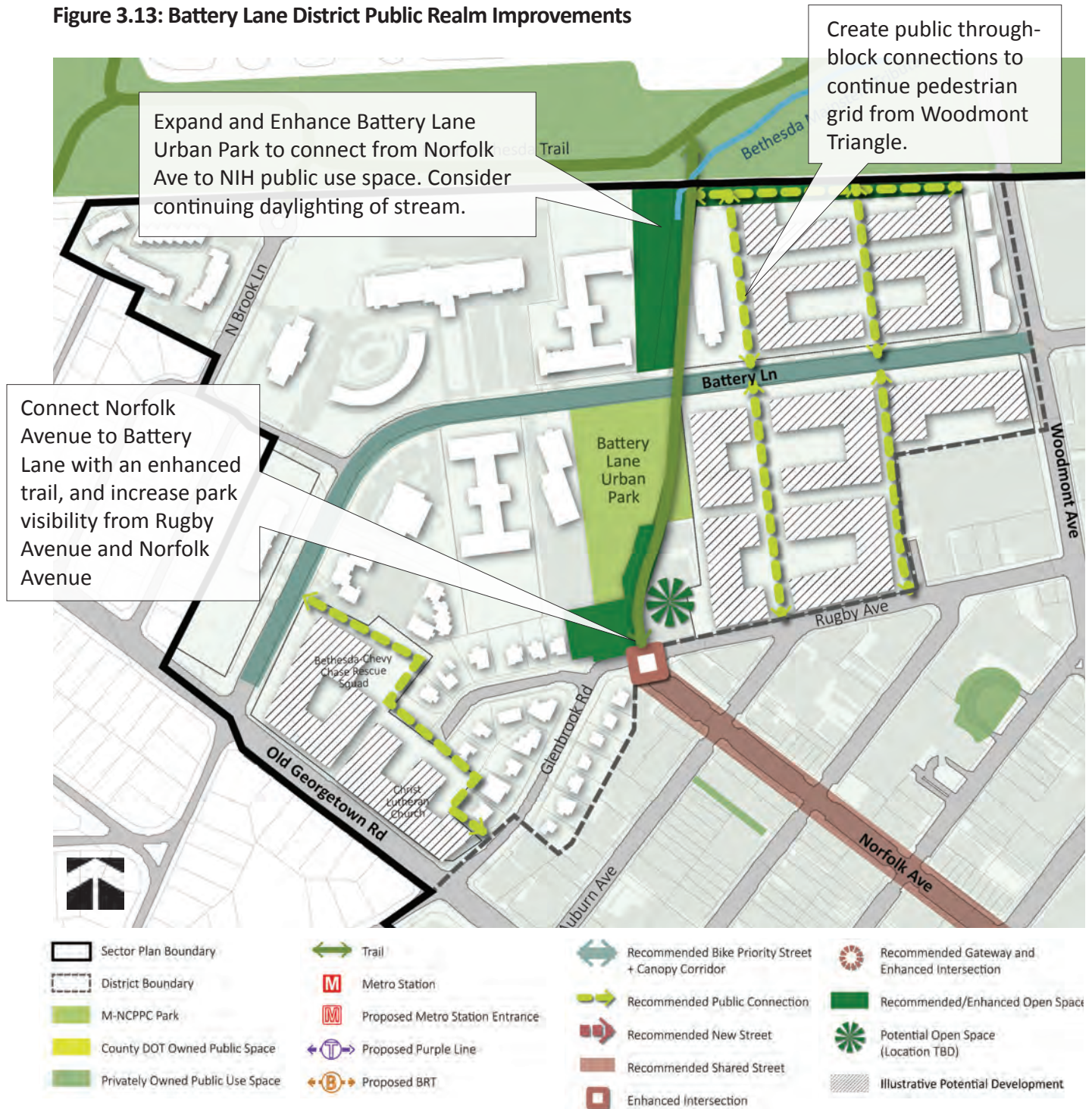
*Recommendations:*

- Allow increased heights between Battery Lane Urban Park and Woodmont Avenue to encourage a mix of housing types and affordability.

**Figure 3.12: Battery Lane Streetscape Improvements**



**Figure 3.13: Battery Lane District Public Realm Improvements**



### 3.3.2 Eastern Greenway Districts

**North of East West Highway:** This area forms a transitional area between the single-unit houses of East Bethesda and commercial structures of the Central Business District (CBD). It is characterized by low-density, primarily residential development, green open spaces and paved parking lots screened with landscaping. The western edge of the transition area is the CBD line. The existing Sector Plan boundary currently defines the district on the north and east. Along the southern edge, the area includes the playing fields and most of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School buildings.

From Maple Avenue to Cheltenham Drive, the transitional area comprises single-unit houses as well as multi-unit residential in the form of 30 garden apartments, two small public parks, Public Parking Lot 25 and a privately owned vacant lot used for commercial parking. The garden apartments on Tilbury Street predated the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan and the two parks, recommended by the 1976 Plan, are stable, transitional land uses.

The area is located only half a block from the commercial uses within the Downtown Bethesda area on Wisconsin Avenue, and redevelopment of Wisconsin Avenue North sites will have an impact on the transitional area and the East Bethesda neighborhood.

**South of East West Highway:** This area functions as a transitional area between the single-unit residential Town of Chevy Chase and commercial Downtown Bethesda. It is characterized by green public open spaces, several parking lots and a single block of residential and commercial uses, including a County-owned structure. The boundary of the area is the CBD line on the west and 46th Street and West Avenue on the east.

Primary land uses include the two-acre Elm Street Park at the northern end, between Elm Street and Willow Lane, and Public Parking Lots 24 and 10. Elm Street Park serves as a stable, transitional use, enjoyed by both Town of Chevy Chase residents and CBD employees.

The Eastern Greenway Districts are intended as both transitional areas and amenities between the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor and adjacent single-unit neighborhoods. The aim is to make the best use of

land near the Bethesda Metrorail Station and reduce the impervious surfaces of existing parking lots with a balance of new development and a connected network of parks and open spaces.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

- Ensure the stability of the land uses in the transitional area to preserve East Bethesda and the Town of Chevy Chase as single-unit residential neighborhoods.
- Prevent overflow parking and cut-through traffic from having an undesirable impact on the East Bethesda neighborhood and Town of Chevy Chase.
- Make the best use of land near the Bethesda Metrorail Station and future Purple Line station by promoting redevelopment of under-utilized properties and private surface parking lots. Parking Lot District (PLD) lots 10, 24, 25 and 44 should be converted to parks to the maximum extent feasible. The parking needs of neighborhood businesses that rely on these lots should be addressed and parking replaced where necessary.
- Provide a compatible transition between higher density development along Wisconsin Avenue and the East Bethesda and Town of Chevy Chase neighborhoods.
- Provide a green connector and a transition along the eastern edge of the Sector Plan area.

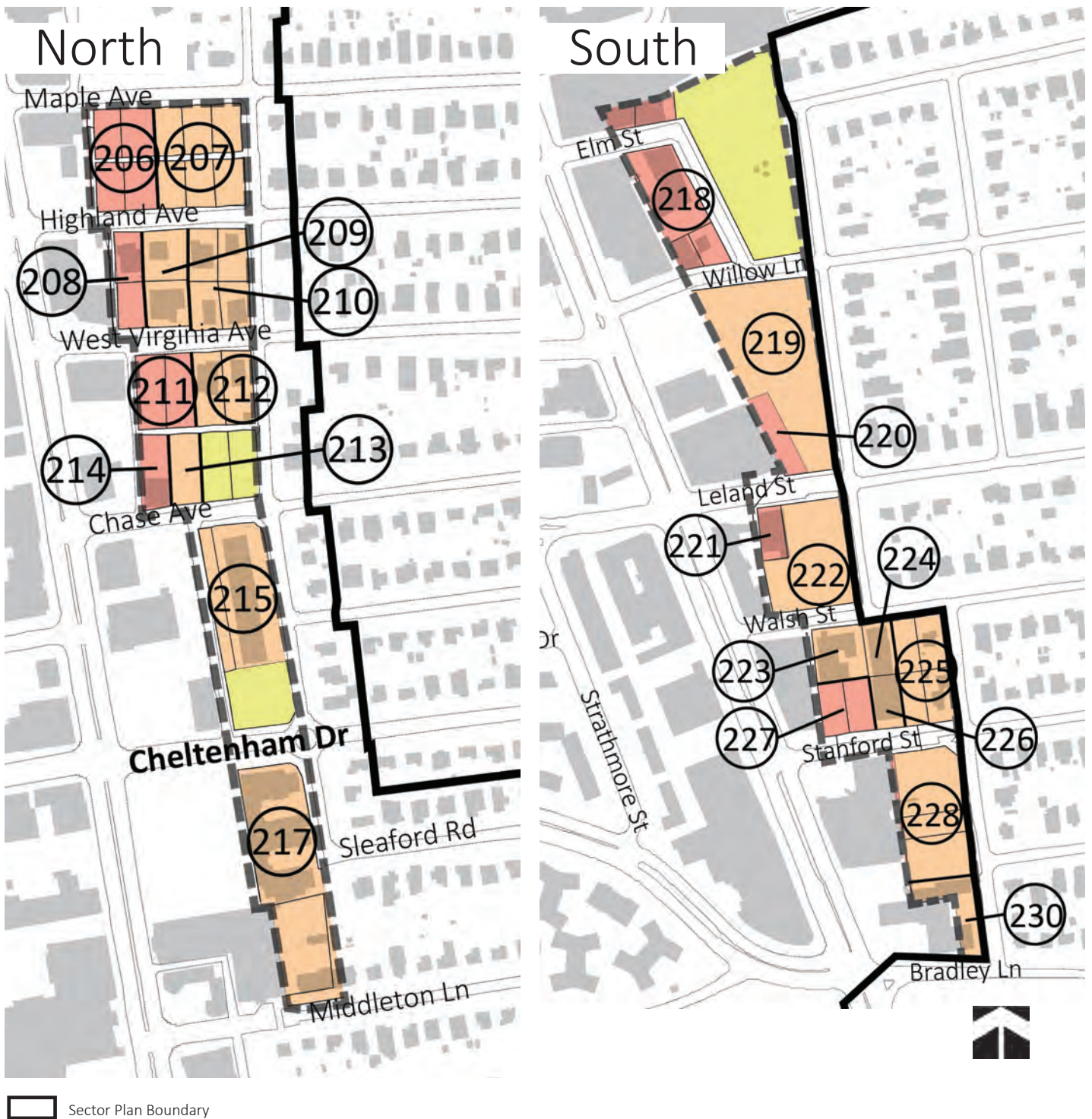
##### 2. Recommendations:

###### a. Zoning

- See *Figure 3.14 Eastern Greenway Districts Recommended Zoning* and *Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for the following recommendations.
- Rezone the current townhouse development between Chestnut Street and Rosedale Avenue zoned RT-12.5 to a THD zone. With the adoption of the new County Zoning Ordinance in October 2014, RT zones are being phased out and the new townhouse zones implemented through the master planning process.



**Figure 3.14: Eastern Greenway Districts Recommended Zoning**



- Eliminate the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) designation.
- Rezone Map #206 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #207 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60 feet to 70 feet with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #208 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 90 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from the properties along Tilbury Street to Wisconsin Avenue and to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #209 from its current zone to CR 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.5, H-70 to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and to provide an appropriate step up transition from the properties along Tilbury Street to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #210 from its current zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern green way if the property redevelops.
- Rezone Map #211 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #212 from its current zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway if the property redevelops.
- Rezone Map #213, the portion that is not parkland, from its current zone of R-60 to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #214 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from the properties along Tilbury Street to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #215 from its current zone R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70, to facilitate the greenway if the property redevelops in the future.
- Rezone Map #217 from its current zone (PD-35) to a comparable CRT 1.25, C-0.25, R- 1.25, H-35 zone to promote infill redevelopment.
- Rezone Map #218 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from Elm Street Park to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #219 (PLD Lot 24) from its current R-60 zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H- 70 to facilitate the eastern greenway and additional parkland.
- Rezone Map #220 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 90 feet to provide flexibility with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #221 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from 46th Street to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #222 (PLD Lot 10) from its current R-60 zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H- 70 to facilitate the eastern greenway and additional parkland.
- Rezone Map #223 from its current R-60 zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-0.5, H-70 to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions. This is currently a County owned property and is being used as the Writer's Center for the downtown Bethesda area.
- Rezone Map #224 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 45 feet to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from West Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #225 from its current R-60 zone

to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway if the property redevelops in the future.

- Rezone Map #226 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35 feet to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from West Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #227 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from West Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #228 and #229 from their current R-60 zone to CRT 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway if the property redevelops in the future.
- Rezone Map #230 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35 feet to 45 feet to provide compatibility with the surrounding single family unit neighborhood.

no less than 20 feet, with a maximum height of 35 feet if the proposed development otherwise achieves the Eastern Greenway District vision and is compatible with the surrounding community.

- Activate ground floors of buildings facing onto the greenway, provide entries, articulate/step back upper floors and encourage balconies to ensure that the greenway facing facade is compatible with adjacent neighborhoods and is not designed as the back of the building.
- Encourage a larger destination park adjacent to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market on Parking Lot 24 to provide green space and programming within a short walk of the future Metrorail station entrance and Purple Line station.
- Allow structured parking to be built underneath the greenway or neighborhood green with sufficient soil depth for tree planting.

## **B. Urban Design**

### **1. Public Realm and Building Form**

*a. Goal: Height limits and greenways will ensure compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods, provide public open space, improve connections and enhance environmental benefits.*

#### *Recommendations:*

- The greenway should be designed to accommodate elements such as tree canopy and vegetation; wide pathways; seating; stormwater management; and activity space, such as small play areas, exercise stations and community gardens.
- To enhance compatibility with the adjacent residential neighborhood, the required greenway width is equal to the amount of building height proposed. For example, a building proposed to have a maximum height of 50 feet must provide a minimum 50-foot greenway width from the existing curb. All sites should provide at minimum a 35-foot greenway. If this is not feasible because of site constraints, the Planning Board may approve a reduced greenway of

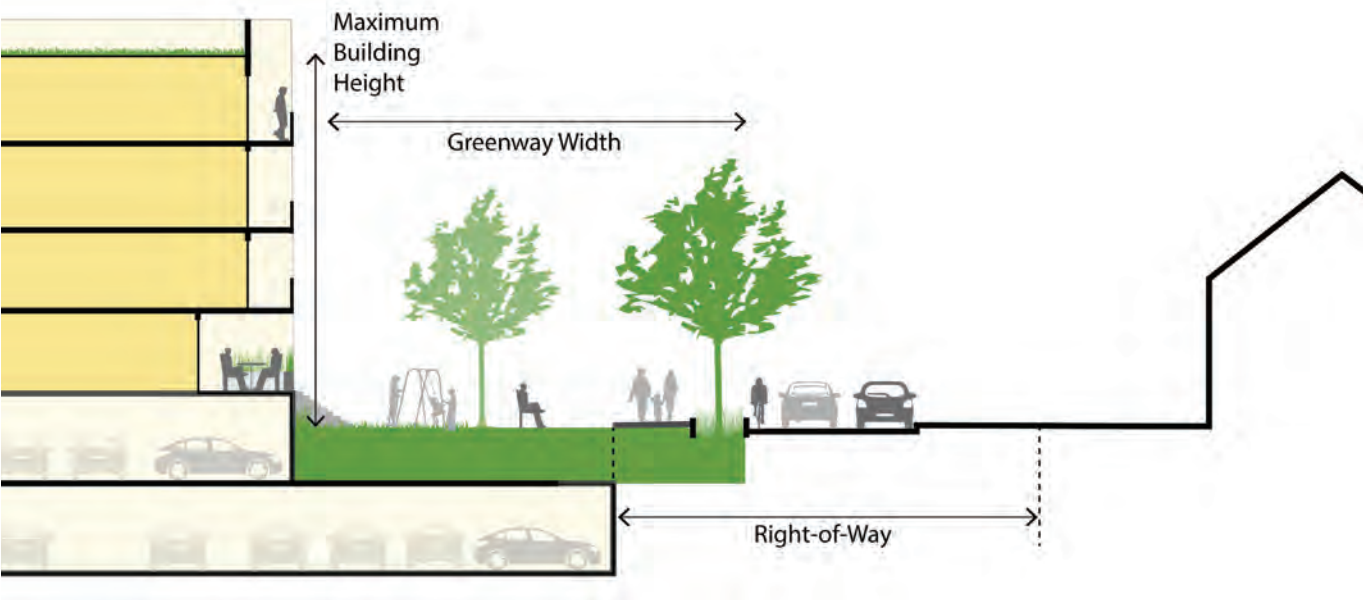


**Figure 3.15: Eastern Greenway Districts Public Realm Improvements**





Figure 3.16: Eastern Greenway Districts Allowable Heights



*Neighborhood green provides a place for informal gatherings*

### 3.3.3 South Bethesda District

South Bethesda is an established residential neighborhood situated north of Norwood Local Park, a major area amenity. The district has a garden character with tree-lined streetscapes and planted setbacks, and offers several opportunities to create better connections for pedestrians and bikes within the district and to surrounding destinations.

The residential community is composed predominately of garden apartments and townhouses, except for a neighborhood of single-unit houses in the north-west section. There are 650 rental garden apartments built primarily in the 1950s along Strathmore Street, Bradley Boulevard and Chevy Chase Drive. Within the existing Sector Plan area, about 170 townhouses are situated along Bradley Boulevard, Offutt Lane, Hillandale Road and Chevy Chase Drive, many substantially renovated in the 1970s.

In the Sacks subdivision on Leland Street and Wellington Drive, zoned R-60, there are 60 single-unit houses occupied by both long-time residents and more recent homeowners. Plan preparation included numerous discussions with the residents of the Sacks neighborhood about the viability of this subdivision as a single-unit neighborhood so close to Downtown Bethesda and the recent development of Lot 31.

Approximately half of the homeowners in the Sacks Neighborhood would like their properties to be rezoned to a higher density to allow for more redevelopment opportunities, according to letters received by the Planning staff. The other 50 percent of the homeowners believe that the neighborhood is desirable for close-in urban living and seek County support to deter cut-through traffic.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

- Retain the existing market-rate affordable multi-unit housing.
- Promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- For properties recommended to retain their R-10 and R-30 zoning, confirm the 35-foot height limit from the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan.
- Enhance pedestrian connectivity to Norwood Local Park.
- Improve pedestrian and bike safety along Bradley Boulevard.

##### 2. Recommendations:

###### a. Land Use

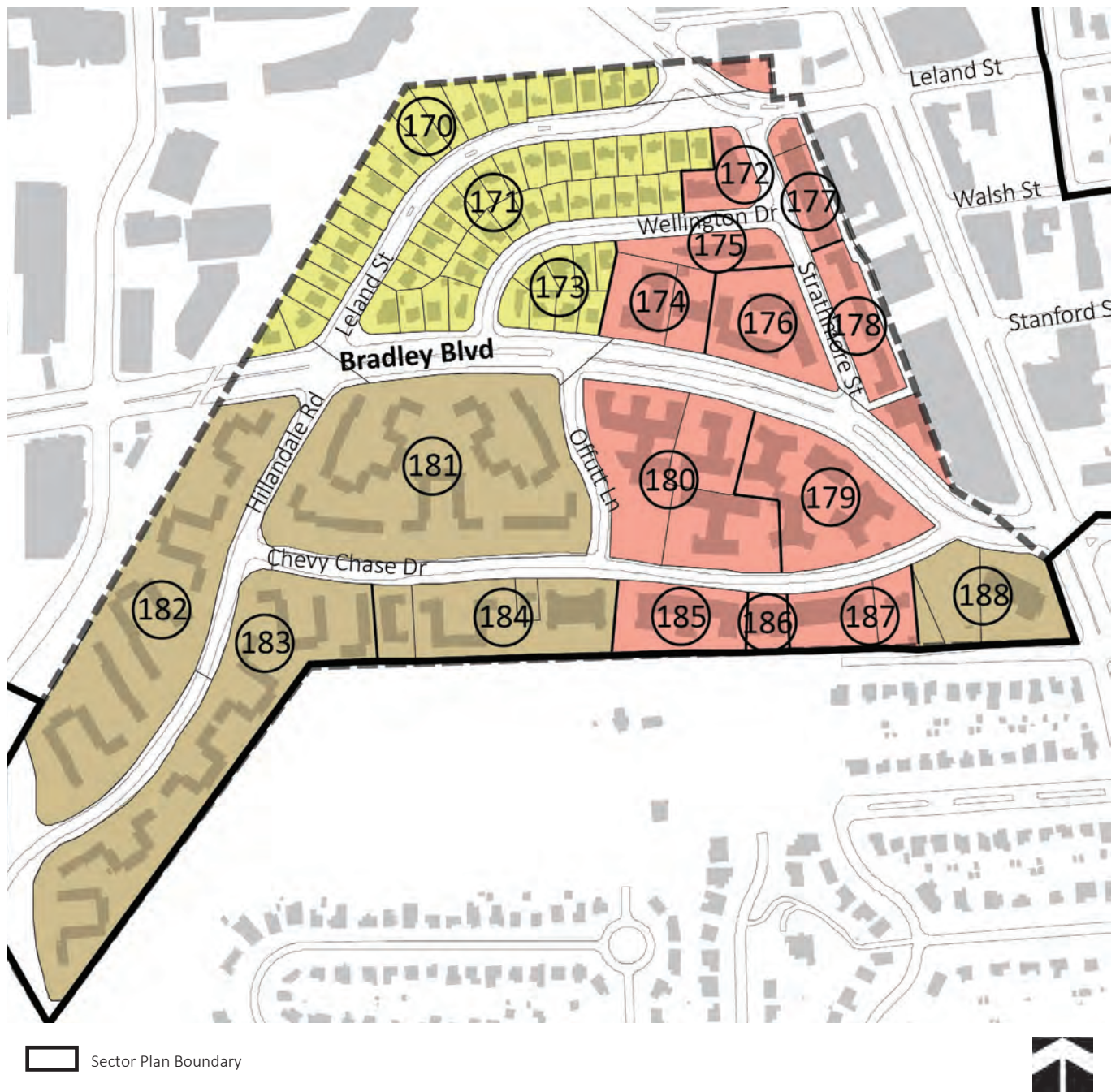
- Provide urban design and streetscape guidelines to improve pedestrian safety along Bradley Boulevard.
- Continue the application of County programs to ensure that existing market-rate housing remains affordable.
- Preserve existing apartments and townhouses in South Bethesda to ensure a variety of housing types and retain a major source of moderately priced housing.

###### b. Zoning

- See *Figure 2.19: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the South Bethesda District and *Figure 3.17 South Bethesda District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Confirm the existing R-60 zoning in the Sacks subdivision to retain the single-unit detached houses along Leland Street and Wellington Drive. The Plan also recommends a Residential Floating Zone to allow for residential development at higher densities in appropriate circumstances. Whether a Townhouse or Apartment Floating Zone is appropriate, the maximum allowable height and density should be based on the size of tract and whether only a limited portion of the neighborhood requests rezoning or the entire neighborhood is rezoned. Should only part of the neighborhood be rezoned, then the compatibility of new development with the remaining single family homes will be important.
- Rezone all Employment Office (EOF) properties in the South Bethesda District to a comparable Commercial Residential (CR) zone to promote infill redevelopment.



**Figure 3.17: South Bethesda District Recommended Zoning**



- Extend a pedestrian pathway along the east edge of the Cokinos property, Map #186, to allow for a more formalized public access to Norwood Local Park from Downtown Bethesda.
- Confirm the R-10 zoning for the Bethesda Fire Station 6.
- Rezone Map #172 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to allow the Condominium ownership the ability to redevelop in the future. Any redevelopment should be compatible with the surrounding Sacks Neighborhood and heights may be limited to less than 70 feet to ensure compatibility.
- Rezone Map #174 and #175 from their current zones of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #176 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-90 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #177 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #178 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-90 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #179 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #180 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.75, C-0.25, R-1.75, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #185 and #187 from their current zones of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.



**Figure 3.18: South Bethesda District Public Realm Improvements**





## **B. Urban Design**

### **1. Public Realm**

- a. Goal: Improve connectivity throughout the district and between Downtown Bethesda and Norwood Local Park.*

*Recommendations:*

- Create through-block connections through long blocks to improve walkability and connections to other districts. Install bumpouts to facilitate pedestrian crossings at all recommended public through-block connections – subject to verification of adequate sight distances.
- Improve visibility and connectivity to Norwood Local Park, especially in locations where people’s choice trails currently connect Chevy Chase Drive to the north side of the park.

- b. Goal: Provide opportunities for small neighborhood-oriented open spaces within this residential area.*

*Recommendations:*

- Consider creating a plaza at Bradley Boulevard and Strathmore Street as a central gathering place for the district.
- Consider creating a neighborhood green near the Sacks neighborhood to serve as a gathering and play area.

### **2. Building Form**

- a. Goal: Encourage some redevelopment of aging housing into mixed-income housing opportunities.*

*Recommendation:*

- Allow increased heights on properties along Bradley Boulevard and Chevy Chase Drive east of Offutt Lane, including the Bethesda Fire Department. Redevelopment would allow for low to mid-rise buildings compatible with existing housing types in the immediate area.

### 3.3.4 Arlington North District

The Arlington North District is a transitional zone between the urban core and single-unit neighborhoods to the west of the Sector Plan area. Houses used as offices are located along both Montgomery Lane and Arlington Road. The district is located between Woodmont Avenue and Arlington Road, and extends from Hampden Lane to Moorland Lane. The form of new development has been mid- to high-rise apartments.

Most houses along Arlington Road have been converted to offices, with their use limited to a few professional office categories. Some properties along Montgomery Lane are also in office use.

There are opportunities for both open space and connectivity improvements to enhance this area for residents. West of Arlington Road, the institutional buildings and park spaces provide a buffer to the single-unit homes. East of Arlington Road, heights should continue to step up as the buildings approach Woodmont Avenue.

#### A. Land Use and Zoning

##### 1. Goals:

- Retain residential scale along Arlington Road as a transition between the urban core and suburban neighborhoods.
- Improve access, mobility and pedestrian safety along Arlington Road.
- Promote redevelopment opportunities for under-utilized sites such as single-unit homes.
- Limit commercial and retail uses to preserve residential urban village character.
- Create a new neighborhood park adjacent to Bethesda Elementary School.

##### 2. Recommendations:

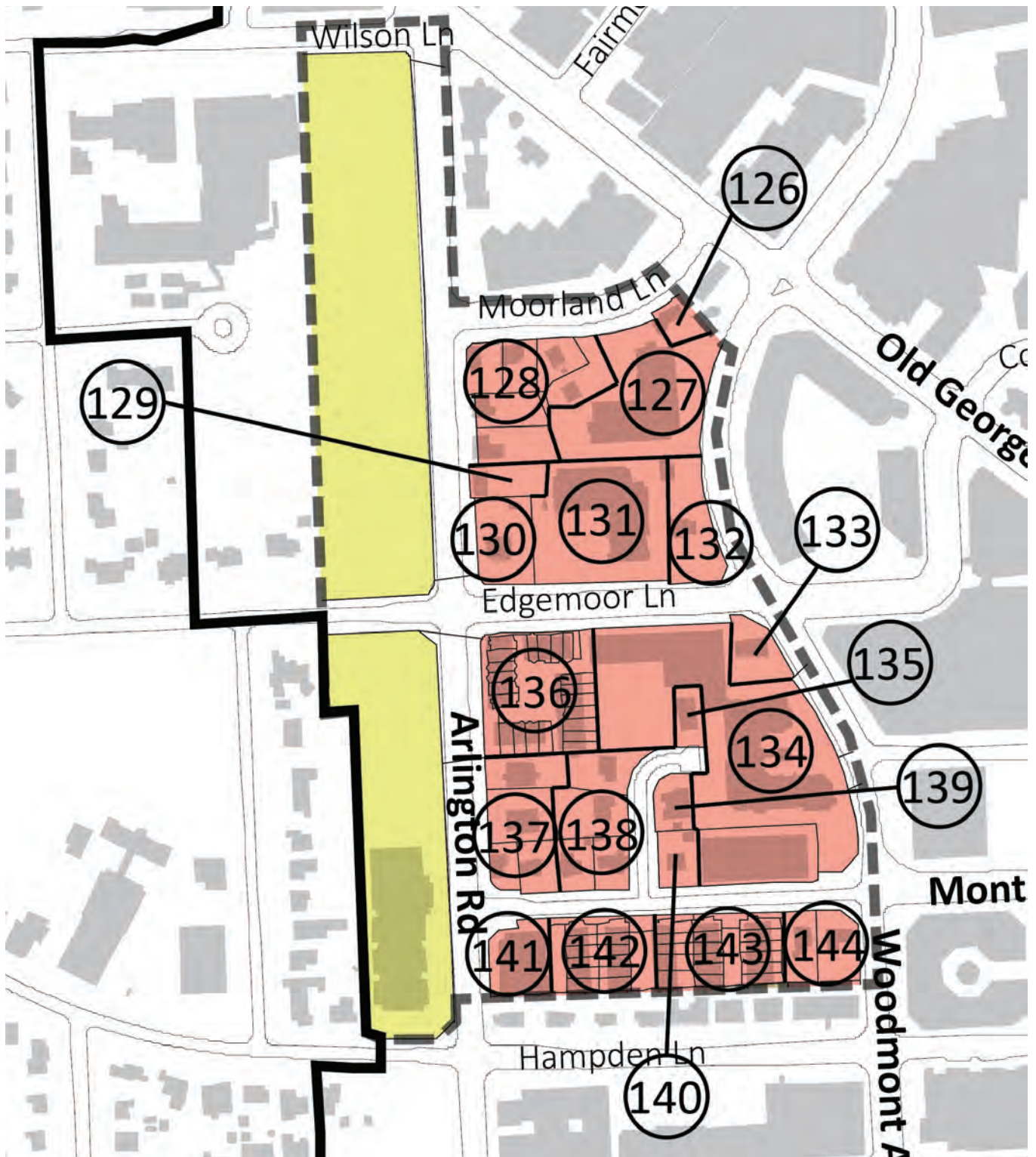
###### a. Land Use

- Limit commercial and retail uses to Woodmont Avenue on the ground floor.
- Create a neighborhood park adjacent to the Bethesda Elementary School. The site currently includes play courts and a playground (see Section 2.6, *Parks and Open Space*).

###### b. Zoning

- See *Figure 3.19 Arlington North District Recommended Zoning* and *Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for the following recommendations.
- Rezone Map #126 on Moorland Lane currently zoned CRN 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.25, H-35 to a CR zone with an increased maximum allowable building height of 120 feet reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Limit height of new development along Arlington Road to a maximum of 60 feet.
- Rezone Map #127 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 125T to 150 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #128 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #129 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.0, C-0.25, R-2.0, H-60, reflective of the density and building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #130 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 40T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #131 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #132 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.5, R-2.5, H-150, reflective of the density and building heights near the core of downtown along Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #133 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.5, R-2.5, H-120, reflective of the density and building heights near the core of downtown along Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #134 to increase the maximum allowable building height to 155 feet, reflective of the building heights along Woodmont Avenue.

Figure 3.19: Arlington North District Recommended Zoning

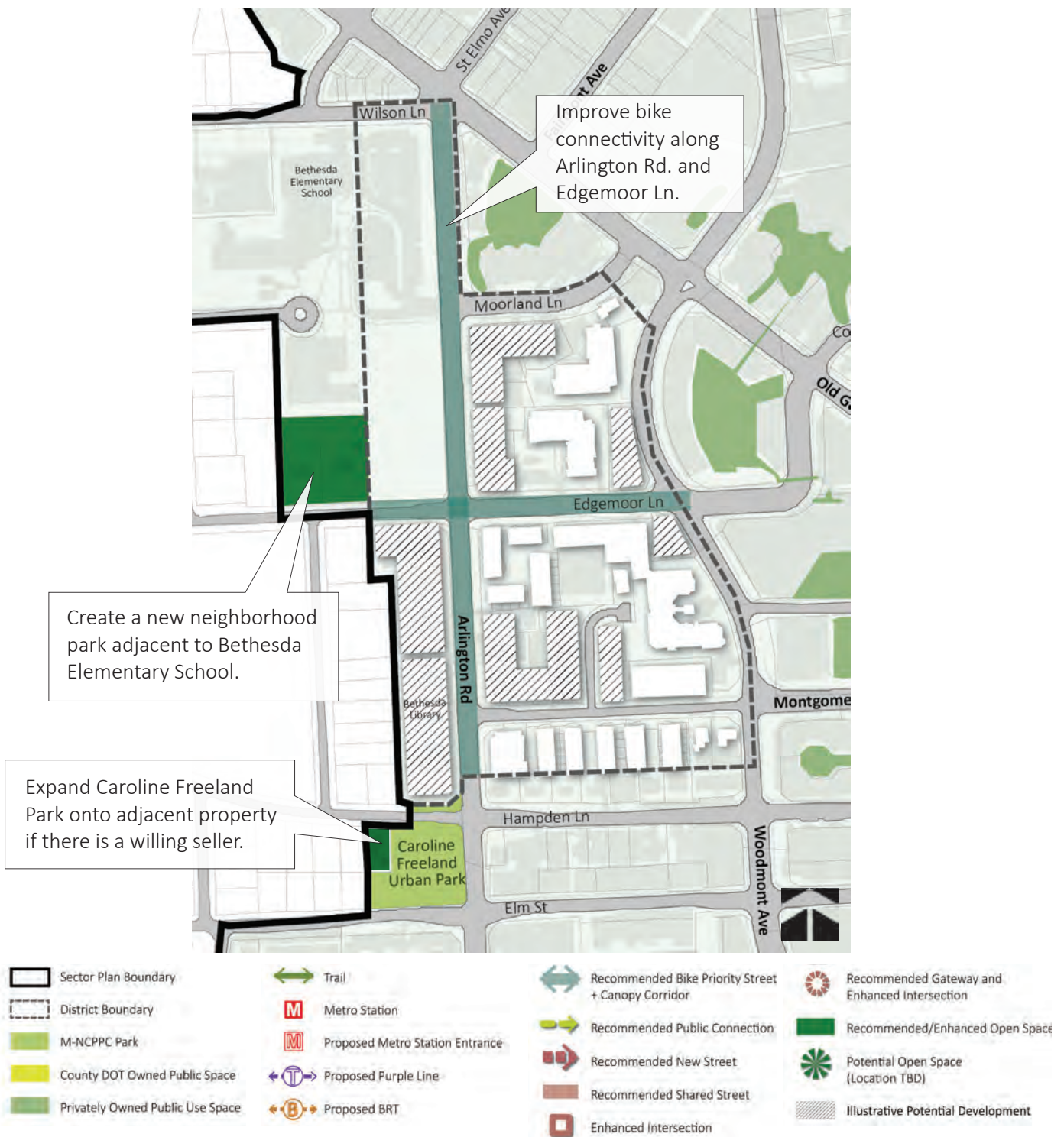


 Sector Plan Boundary





**Figure 3.20: Arlington North District Public Realm Improvements**



- Rezone Map #135 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.25, R-2.5, H-70, reflective of the density and building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #136 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 40T to 50 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #137 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 50T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #138 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 70T to 85 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #139 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.25, R-2.5, H-70, reflective of the density and building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #140 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 70T to 85 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #141 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 50T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #142 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 45T to 55 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #143 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 40T to 50 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #144 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.

## B. Urban Design

### 1. Public Realm

- a. Goal: Provide additional open space to serve the Arlington North District and surrounding neighborhoods and enhance bike connectivity.*

*Recommendations:*

- Provide a public open space and a recreation space connected to the Bethesda Elementary School north of Edgemoor Lane to serve both the school and surrounding residents.
- Improve bike connectivity along Arlington Road and Edgemoor Lane.
- Improve the green buffer at Caroline Freeland Urban Park by adding an additional parcel of property.

### 2. Building Form

- a. Goal: Transition Heights from Woodmont Avenue west to single-unit residential neighborhoods.*

*Recommendation:*

- Maintain the majority of heights as currently allowed, except the intermittent R-60 properties with a 35-foot maximum height. These R-60 properties should align with surrounding allowable heights and transition from high-rise buildings along Woodmont Avenue to low- to mid-rise buildings along Arlington Road.





CIRCULATOR



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# Chapter 4: Implementation

The Downtown Bethesda Plan will be implemented through incremental redevelopment over time consistent with the County's current subdivision staging policies. Recognizing that Bethesda is a mixed-use area, most of the Downtown is recommended for continued Commercial Residential (CR) or Commercial Residential Town (CRT) zoning, with significant flexibility to develop a mix of residential and non-residential uses. At the same time, there are certain public amenities and benefits that are critical to the economic, sustainability and quality-of-life goals of this Sector Plan.

## 4.1 Zoning

### 4.1.1 Commercial Residential (CR) and Commercial Residential Town (CRT) Zoning

The CR and CRT zones in Downtown Bethesda allow higher density under the County's optional method of development, but require public amenities to support the additional density. Ensuring the right mix of public benefits in connection with future development in Bethesda is crucial for realizing this Sector Plan's vision for a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented urban center.

Therefore, one of the key implementation strategies of this Plan is to clearly identify those public benefits. This Plan identifies certain public benefits as a top priority, meaning that an optional method development should be approved only if it provides the recommended benefit.

### 4.1.2 Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ)

In general, an overlay zone is a mapped district placed over the standard, underlying zone that modifies the uses or development requirements of the zone. An overlay zone imposes requirements or restrictions in addition to, or in place of, those of the underlying zoning classification. An overlay zone can be either more restrictive or less restrictive than the standards and requirements of the underlying zoning classification.

Overlay zones are appropriate where there is a special public policy interest that cannot be met by either the standards of the underlying zone or by rezoning to a different zone. Overlay zones are created in areas of critical public interest and provide uniform, comprehensive development regulations for an area. An overlay zone can only be applied when it has been recommended by a Master Plan and must be implemented by a Sectional Map Amendment.

The CR family of zones provides significant flexibility to tailor zoning to specific planning goals. This Sector Plan relies as much as possible on this flexibility and other related existing tools to implement its vision. However, certain planning goals for Downtown Bethesda require modifications to the existing zoning.

This Plan recommends the adoption of a Bethesda Overlay Zone as an important part of a comprehensive zoning scheme that allows development consistent

with the land use vision of this Sector Plan without exceeding the amount of density that the planning area can support.

The Bethesda Overlay Zone is also intended to implement the recommendations of the Bethesda Downtown Plan as it relates to density, building heights, affordable housing goals, parks and open space and design.

In order to accomplish these objectives, this Plan recommends zoning individual properties CR with the currently mapped density limit and the building heights recommended in this Sector Plan along with the Bethesda Overlay Zone.

More specifically, the Bethesda Overlay Zone will:

- Cover all properties within the Sector Plan boundary.
- Set a cap on development to ensure that total density in the Plan Area, including existing, approved and new development (including affordable housing), does not exceed 32.4 million square feet of gross floor area.
- Allow development to exceed the mapped CR density limit on a property under certain circumstances.
- Establish the requirements for additional density received through the Bethesda Overlay Zone, including a requirement to provide for park needs.
- Increase the minimum MPDU requirement from 12.5% to 15% MPDUs for all residential optional method projects and remove height and density bonus for providing up to 15% MPDUs. The Overlay zone should determine whether there are circumstances under which additional height should be allowed for properties that provide more than 15% MPDUs.
- Establish the ability for projects that provide 25% MPDUs to exceed the CR density limit on such properties without additional payments or proportionate costs.
- Establish a process for obtaining approval of a development so that building design is given enhanced consideration, the provision of market rate affordable housing is rewarded, and unused density is not hoarded.
- Modify the density averaging rules.

### 4.1.3 Annual Monitoring and Reporting

The Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan is comprised of many complex elements, each of which depends upon the success of other Plan elements. In recognition of this complexity, this Sector Plan recommends annual monitoring of schools, parks, and transportation. The annual report will be presented to the Planning Board each year and transmitted to the County Council for review. If any of the elements included in the annual report demonstrate issues, staff will specifically identify issues and potential solutions for discussion during the annual presentation to the Board.

Once total development-including approvals reaches 30.4 million square feet, the County Council may require certain actions before additional development is permitted. Depending on the Planning Board's recommendations, such actions would address needed infrastructure and/or achieving of certain NADMS goals as outlined in 2.3.5 Transportation Demand Management and progress toward the acquisition of half of the recommended new urban parks as discussed in 2.7 Parks and Open Space. This would not apply to projects providing or preserving at least 25 percent MPDUs.

### 4.1.4 Public Amenities and Benefits

In the Bethesda Downtown, the following projects qualify for a fee-in-lieu payment under Section 6.3.6.C.2 of the County Zoning Ordinance:

#### A. Woodmont Triangle:

- Streetscape improvements, especially on Norfolk Avenue.
- Battery Lane Urban Park improvements.

#### B. Wisconsin Avenue Corridor:

- Streetscape improvements.
- Gateways from the north and south.

#### C. Pearl District:

- Streetscape improvements.
- Connection to Capital Crescent Trail.
- Pedestrian and bicycle improvements.



#### **D. Eastern Greenway:**

- Park improvements.
- Streetscape improvements for pedestrians.

#### **E. Battery Lane:**

- Streetscape improvements.
- Gateway Park connection to North Bethesda Trail.

#### **F. South Bethesda:**

- Connections to Norwood Local Park.

### **4.1.5 Public Benefits in the CR Zone**

This Sector Plan recommends modifying the public benefits points allowed in Bethesda via the Bethesda Overlay Zone. Potential changes include eliminating points for transit proximity and points for formerly optional actions that are otherwise required by the Overlay Zone (e.g., 15 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)).

#### **A. Top Priority Benefits**

The following public benefits are of highest priority in all optional method projects:

##### **1. Affordable Housing**

Since the Overlay Zone requires that all optional method projects provide 15 percent MPDUs, public benefit points should not be provided for projects that comply with the required 15 percent, but should be allowed for projects providing more than 15 percent MPDUs. See Bethesda Overlay Zone for specific requirements and building heights restrictions.

- Create a new category of public benefit points related to the retention of existing market-rate affordable housing in existing and/or replacement units within the Sector Plan using rental agreements with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA).
- In the South Bethesda and Battery Lane Districts, preservation of market-rate affordable housing and/or additional MPDUs beyond 15 percent is the top priority for public benefit points.

##### **2. Public Open Space**

Optional method development within this Sector Plan should be allowed only if public open space is provided, or making a payment for open space, in excess of the minimum open space requirement of the zone as outlined in the criteria in the Commercial/Residential and Employment Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines.

##### **3. Public benefits in High Performance Area and Enhanced Vegetated Roofs to Increase Green Cover**

This Plan delineates a High Performance Area, which is targeted for properties within the Commercial Residential (CR) zone in the Central Business District, where the greatest densities of development and the tallest building heights are anticipated. This Plan recommends that optional method development in a High Performance Area should be allowed only if the development delivers certain energy-efficiency benefits.

An optional method project in a High Performance Area should be approved only if it achieves the maximum amount of public benefit points allowed for constructing buildings that exceed energy-efficiency standards for the building type. In order to qualify for the maximum available points, any building over 4 stories that is located in whole or in part within the boundary of the High Performance Area would be required to exceed the current existing ASHRAE standard 90.1 by 15 percent. If the County adopts a building code with a different efficiency standard, a building in the High Performance Area should similarly exceed the minimum standard.

In order to achieve ecological and energy efficiency goals for Downtown Bethesda, this Sector Plan recommends the wide use of vegetated roofs. Given Bethesda's density, the objectives for linking green spaces to create corridors, and the desire to reduce the heat island effect, this Plan recommends increased soil depth for vegetated roofs to allow for the growth of more locally adapted plants, and greater stormwater treatment. Public benefit points for a vegetated roof should be approved only if the soil depth is at least six inches.

#### **4. Exceptional Design**

As an overarching goal of this Plan, optional method development within the Sector Plan area should only be allowed if it achieves the maximum amount of public benefit points for exceptional design, as outlined in the criteria in the Commercial/Residential and Employment Zone Incentive Density Implementation Guidelines.

#### **5. Minimum Parking**

This Plan makes certain parking recommendations to achieve the Plan goal of promoting a transit-oriented downtown and encouraging the use of travel models other than single occupancy vehicles. As a result, this Plan recommends that optional method development should only be allowed if it achieves the maximum amount of public benefit points for providing fewer than the maximum allowed number of parking spaces, where a maximum is applicable as outlined in the criteria in the Commercial/Residential and Employment Zone Incentive Density Guidelines.

## 4.2 Density Averaging

Transfers of density between properties have occurred in Bethesda under existing provisions in the Zoning Ordinance and were an important recommendation in the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan as a means of preserving the existing small businesses in the area, to provide more opportunities for multi-unit residential development and to retain the eclectic character of the neighborhood that was unique to Woodmont Triangle.

In the past, there has been no limit on the ability of a future master plan to increase density, regardless of whether a transfer occurred in the past.

This Sector Plan recommends providing additional clarity regarding the policy on density averaging in Downtown Bethesda.

***Recommendation:***

A new master plan can increase height and/or density on a site that has transferred density (particularly for properties near transit); however, the transferred density should be deducted from the new allowable total development.



## 4.3 Legacy Open Space Designations

The Legacy Open Space (LOS) program has evaluated all the proposed parks in the Bethesda Downtown plan to determine if any sites merit designation as LOS Urban Open Spaces under the auspices of the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (2001). After analysis and review with the LOS Advisory Group and staff from the County Department of Parks and Planning Department, this Plan identifies two sites of countywide significance that are hereby designated as LOS Urban Open Spaces: the **Capital Crescent Civic Green** and the **Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway**. These recommended sites in Bethesda complement two LOS sites recently designated in the Approved and Adopted 2016 Westbard Sector Plan.

The unifying theme for these four Urban Open Spaces in Bethesda and Westbard is that they provide for a variety of types of green and recreational spaces along the County's most heavily used trail: The Capital Crescent Trail. The four sites include two Urban Greenways, one Countywide Urban Recreational Park and one Central Civic Green. These sites all meet the LOS criteria to increase access to open space and recreation in dense urban communities, promote interconnectivity of the urban green infrastructure, and provide community open space for casual use and large community gatherings. These park spaces adjacent to the Capital Crescent Trail clearly rise to the level of being "best of the best" open spaces in the entire County that deserve designation in LOS and active efforts to implement as public parkland.

The **Capital Crescent Civic Green** meets the criteria to be designated as an Urban Open Space of countywide importance within the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (2001). This critical civic green will create one of the primary green spaces in the center of Bethesda. It will provide key community open space for recreation and casual use by the large population center in this community, as well as support trail usage and special events to serve the entire County.

The **Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway** meets the criteria to be designated as an Urban Open Space within the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (2001). This new Urban Greenway will increase access between one of the most important trail corridors in the County and the center of Bethesda and will provide key additional recreational open space to a community with high population density.

Designation of these two sites in the LOS Functional Master Plan via this Plan provides additional tools, including access to LOS funding, to make the implementation of these two parks a reality as Bethesda moves forward as an urban destination to live, work and play.

## 4.4 On-Site Public Open Space

Adequate public open space is critical to meeting this Sector Plan's goal of making Downtown Bethesda a better place to live, work and play. Downtown Bethesda has a considerable amount of open space, but more important to its future is the right quality of space that serves the goal of enhancing the public realm. Too often in the past, the goal of obtaining public open space has resulted in site layouts that provide the required amount of space, but in a way that fails to enhance the public realm. In some instances, buildings are set back from the street to make room for a public open space and, in the process; the activating benefit of positioning the building closer to the street is lost. In other instances, a public use space may be located on the interior of a block, so that it cannot be experienced from any public thoroughfare. In other instances, public use space is simply too small to perform a meaningful function.

In order to ensure the right amount and quality of public open space, this Sector Plan recommends off-site improvements or contributions, instead of public open space that is too small, fails to enhance the public realm and prevents a building from activating the street.

This Plan further recommends that any project whose public open space requirement under the County Zoning Ordinance is less than 10 percent be required to make an improvement or contribution to off-site public open space under Section 6.3.6.C of the County Zoning Ordinance and that the Bethesda Overlay Zone reflect this requirement.

## 4.5 Greenway

In order to provide a buffer between the Wisconsin Avenue corridor and existing residential neighborhoods, and enhance connectivity, the Sector Plan calls for greenways in certain areas. The maximum heights will be established through the County's Sectional Map Amendment (SMA).

On a site identified as a greenway, this Plan recommends that building heights be reduced below the maximum height allowed in the applicable zone based on the setback from the street and the land be dedicated for the greenway. This reduction in height applies to the entire portion of the property zoned 70 feet (35 feet) in the Eastern Greenway Districts, as shown in Figure 2.19 Recommended Maximum Building Heights.

In order to enhance compatibility with the adjacent residential neighborhood, the required greenway width is equal to the amount of building height proposed. For example, a building proposed to have a maximum height of 50 feet must provide a minimum 50-foot greenway width from the existing curb. All sites should provide at minimum a 35-foot greenway. If this is not feasible because of site constraints; the Planning Board may approve a reduced greenway of no less than 20 feet with a maximum height of 35 feet if the proposed development otherwise achieves the Eastern Greenway District vision and is compatible with the surrounding community.

Similar to compatibility requirements in the zoning code, the maximum building height measurement is taken from the average grade along the building facing the greenway.

This Plan further recommends that buildings with land dedicated to the greenway should be allowed to incorporate below-grade parking under the dedicated area. This underground parking would be the private responsibility of the developer. The County would not take on the building of parking underground as part of any recommended improvement projects for open space, greenway or private development.



## 4.6 Capital Improvements Program and New Financing Mechanisms

### 4.6.1 Capital Improvements Program

The following infrastructure projects will enable Downtown Bethesda to evolve into a mixed-use, transit-oriented community and should be funded through the County Capital Improvements Program.

Some projects may be completed using the Amenity Fund and with private sector participation.

### 4.6.2 New Financing Mechanisms

One of the four overarching goals of the Sector Plan is to increase parks and open space in Bethesda. The Sector Plan identifies several projects in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to achieve this goal, but the capacity of the current CIP to fund these projects is limited and the cost of acquiring and developing new parks in a developed area will be significant. This Plan recommends the exploration of new financing mechanisms that could help pay for new parks. This includes the park impact payment recommended for the Overlay zone, as well as other potential alternative financing mechanisms (such as a special taxing district) that could provide a more stable source of funding not linked to new development and therefore available in the near term.

**Table 4.01: Capital Improvements Program**

Project Name	Category	Lead Agency	Coordinating Agencies
Redesign Wisconsin Avenue as an urban boulevard	Transportation	SHA	M-NCPPC/MCDOT
Redesign Old Georgetown Road as an urban boulevard	Transportation	SHA	M-NCPPC/MCDOT
Redesign East-West Hwy as an urban boulevard	Transportation	SHA	M-NCPPC/MCDOT
Redesign Norfolk Avenue as a shared street	Transportation	MCDOT	M-NCPPC
Redesign Pearl Street as a shared street	Transportation	MCDOT	M-NCPPC
Pearl Street Connector	Transportation	M-NCPPC/MCDOT	M-NCPPC/MCDOT
Capital Crescent Trail tunnel/surface route beneath Wisconsin Avenue and Elm Street, via Elm Street Park	Transportation	MCDOT	SHA, M-NCPPC, Town of Chevy Chase
Reconfigure East-West Hwy, Montgomery Lane, Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont Avenue with separated bike lanes	Transportation	SHA	M-NCPPC/MCDOT
Purple Line/Station Construction	Transportation	MTA	WMATA/MCDOT/M-NCPPC
Extend BRT Corridor 4: MD 355 South from the Bethesda North Station to the Bethesda South Station to connect the Purple Line	Transportation	MTA	WMATA/MCDOT/M-NCPPC
Bethesda South Bus Circulation	Transportation	MCDOT	SHA, BUP
Bethesda Circulator Bus Expansion	Transportation	MCDOT	SHA, BUP
Full-service bicycle storage facility located adjacent to the CCT tunnel route	Transportation	MCDOT	M-NCPPC
New separated bikeway lanes on Woodmont Avenue, Bradley Boulevard, Arlington Road and Bethesda Avenue/Willow Lane between Woodmont Avenue and 47th Street	Transportation	MCDOT	SHA, M-NCPPC
Shared Roadway on Commerce Lane, Avondale Street, Rosedale Avenue, Tilbury Street, St. Elmo, Cordell Avenue and Bethesda Avenue	Transportation	MCDOT	M-NCPPC
New trail connection at Bradley Boulevard and Capital Crescent Trail, and Pearl Street and the CCT.	Transportation	MCDOT	M-NCPPC
North Bethesda Trail- widening	Transportation	M-NCPPC	MCDOT
Bike Share Stations	Transportation	MCDOT	M-NCPPC
Undergrounding of public utilities	Transportation	MCDOT	SHA, M-NCPPC
New bike lanes on Chelton Road, Pearl Street, Norfolk Avenue, Cheltenham Drive, Elm Street, Battery Lane and Wilson Lane	Transportation	MCDOT, SHA	M-NCPPC
Veteran's Park Civic Green	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
The Farm Women's Market Civic Green	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Capital Crescent Civic Green	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	MCDOT
Bethesda Trolley Trail Gateway Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Gateway to Norwood Local Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	Private

**Table 4.01: Capital Improvements Program**

Project Name	Category	Lead Agency	Coordinating Agencies
Eastern Capital Crescent Gateway Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Arlington South Gateway Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	Private
Battery Lane Urban Park Expansion	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Green Urban Parks	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	Town of Chevy Chase, PLD
Western Greenway Neighborhood Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Old Georgetown Road Neighborhood Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Bethesda-Chevy Chase East Neighborhood Green Urban Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Wellington Drive Neighborhood Green Urban Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	
Battery Lane Urban Park existing	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	Private developer contribution to complete final design and construction
Elm Street Urban Park existing	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	Private developer contribution to complete final design and construction
Fire Station 6 Urban Buffer Park	Parks and Open Space	M-NCPPC	Private developer contribution to complete final design and construction



## 4.7 Partnerships

The Sector Plan supports continued cooperation between the public and private sectors to administer and coordinate enhanced public services and private initiatives in Downtown Bethesda.

Montgomery County passed legislation in 1987 to create the Bethesda Urban District, a special assessment district covering much of the Sector Plan area. Legislation passed in 1993 authorized the creation of urban district corporations to provide certain services in each urban district. These functions include maintaining and enhancing the streetscape; streetscape amenities; promotion, organization and support of cultural and business activities; specialized transportation and similar activities.

This Plan supports the priorities of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Arts and Entertainment District, Regional Services Center, Parking Lot District, Woodmont Triangle Action Group, and Bethesda Green in their common mission to provide enhanced public services to the residents and business community of Downtown Bethesda.

### 4.7.1 Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP)

Bethesda is home to numerous retailers, arts organizations, a thriving restaurant community and an expansive downtown workforce. Established by Montgomery County in 1994, Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) fulfills the landscaping and maintenance needs, and manages cultural events and exciting festivals for the community. Over its 19 years of operation, BUP created Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) in 2000, established the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District in 2002 and has grown from two full-time staff members to more than 35 employees working in maintenance, marketing, transportation and administration.

The organization is an important instrument for implementing key objectives of the Sector Plan, including retail enhancement, cultural district and streetscape objectives.

### 4.7.2 Arts and Entertainment District

The State of Maryland designated Downtown Bethesda as an Arts and Entertainment District effective July 1, 2002. The 501(c)(3) non-profit organization comprises a 12-member board of directors as well as an advisory committee of local artists and arts businesses representatives.

The mission of the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District is to create and implement arts and entertainment projects that contribute to the artistic, cultural and economic growth of Downtown Bethesda. Special tax incentives are in place that benefit artists, arts enterprises and developers of projects located within the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District.

The District produces the Bethesda Fine Arts Festival, The Trawick Prize: Bethesda Contemporary Art Awards, Bethesda Painting Awards, Bethesda Art Walk, Dance Bethesda and Play in a Day, and manages Gallery B and Studio B.

This Sector Plan supports the priorities of the Arts and Entertainment District as evidenced by recommendations identified throughout this document.

### 4.7.3 Parking Lot District (PLD)

Montgomery County Department of Transportation administers, operates and maintains and enforces the Downtown Bethesda Parking Lot District (PLD). The PLD is an independent taxing district with obligations to bond holders who finance PLD facilities. Downtown Bethesda has 16 public parking garages and surface lots that put residents and visitors within short walking distance of Downtown Bethesda destinations.

This Sector Plan supports the redevelopment of County parking facilities along with replacement of parking, and supports the priorities of the PLD and the recommendations as outlined in Section 2.3 Transportation.

### 4.7.4 Woodmont Triangle Action Group (WTAG)

Creation of the Woodmont Triangle Action Group (WTAG) was a recommendation of the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the 1994 Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD. The purpose of this group is to coordinate and monitor the progress

of development and retail revitalization, and the provision of amenities and facilities in the Woodmont Triangle district of Downtown Bethesda.

Membership includes representatives from the M-NCPPC, Bethesda Urban Partnership, Civic Associations, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board and other appropriate groups.

Unlike the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan's focus is Bethesda-wide. The Woodmont Triangle Action Group in its current form would not be worth retaining; however, some type of advisory group should be created to support the implementation of the Sector Plan.

This Sector Plan supports the creation of a standing committee or an advisory group to address implementation of this Sector Plan. The formation of any new standing committee or advisory group should be staffed by the Planning Department in close coordination with the Board of the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

This advisory group would work in coordination with the Bethesda Urban Partnership and Bethesda Chevy-Chase Regional Services Center by providing specific community and redevelopment expertise that would also serve as an interface between developers and County agencies in implementing the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan recommendations. This new group should reflect the current makeup of the WTAG in that it will be structured to include representatives from the various constituencies interested in successful implementation of the plan.

### 4.7.5 Bethesda Green

Bethesda Green is a public-private partnership that promotes sustainable growth and sustainable living practices in Downtown Bethesda. Bethesda Green brings together businesses, government agencies and community residents to create a dynamic model of sustainable living. Bethesda Green created the first green business incubator in Montgomery County and assists individuals in leading greener lives.

Bethesda Green achieves its mission by focusing on three strategic areas:

1. Incubate green businesses: Stimulate the next generation of sustainable businesses.
2. Educate the community about sustainability: Raise awareness and inspire action through programs, online communications and education center.
3. Facilitate the implementation of green solutions: Advocate for physical infrastructure and programs that make Bethesda a more sustainable community.

This Sector Plan supports the mission and priorities of Bethesda Green, as economic, social and environmental sustainability are hallmarks of the Downtown Bethesda Sector Plan, as defined in Section 1.2 of this document. Bethesda Green's mission and priorities are critical to achieving the goals of this Plan.

#### 4.7.6 Public Sector Partnerships within the Bethesda Community

The Sector Plan supports continued cooperation between the public sectors to administer and coordinate enhanced public services and private initiatives in Downtown Bethesda.

This Sector Plan supports the priorities of enhancing the park and open space realm as evidenced by recommendations identified throughout this document.

To this end, the Sector Plan continues to support and encourage the following partnerships:

##### **Public Sector Partnerships**

**Example:** Partnering with M-NCPPC to provide Friends of Parks groups, to donate amenities to the parks, to help community members earn student service hours and to earn volunteer hours.

There are several community organizations that have made a significant commitment to parks over many years. Each started by organizing an initial project and continuing the effort. While the Department of Parks does not have a formal Adopt-A-Park program, the plan encourages the development of long term partners that are committed to helping meet the park and open space needs outlined in this Sector Plan.



*Clerk's note: Technical corrections: on page 1, #3, the date of the third night of the public hearing was October 20, 2016 (not October 2, as previously recorded); and on the first line of page 26, the words "and the block is assembled" are bracketed to correctly reflect the Council's action.*

**CORRECTED PAGE**

Resolution No.:	<u>18-835</u>
Introduced:	<u>May 25, 2017</u>
Adopted:	<u>May 25, 2017</u>

**COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND  
SITTING AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THAT PORTION  
OF THE MARYLAND-WASHINGTON REGIONAL DISTRICT  
WITHIN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

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By: County Council

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**SUBJECT:** Approval of July 2016 Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan

1. On September 1, 2016, the Montgomery County Planning Board transmitted to the County Executive and the County Council the July 2016 Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan.
2. The July 2016 Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan contains the text and supporting maps for a comprehensive amendment to the approved and adopted 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan and the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD. It also amends the General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, as amended; the Master Plan of Highways and Transitways within Montgomery County as amended; the Purple Line Functional Plan, as amended; the Bethesda Purple Line Station Plan Minor Master Plan Amendment, as amended; the Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, as amended; the Master Plan for Historic Preservation, as amended; and the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan.
3. On October 18, 19 and 20, 2016, the County Council held a public hearing on the July 2016 Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan. The Sector Plan was referred to the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee for review and recommendation.
4. On December 9, 2016, the Director of the Montgomery County Office of Management and Budget transmitted to the County Council the Fiscal Impact Statement for the July 2016 Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan.
5. On January 23, February 6, 13, 27, March 2, 13, 20 and 27, 2017, the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee held worksessions to review the issues raised in connection with the July 2016 Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan.

6. On April 18 and April 25, 2017, the County Council reviewed the Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and the recommendations of the Planning, Housing, and Economic Development Committee.

### Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, sitting as the District Council for that portion of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following resolution:

The Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, dated July 2016, is approved with revisions. County Council revisions to the Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan are identified below. Deletions to the text of the Plan are indicated by [brackets], additions by underscoring. All page references are to the July 2016 Planning Board Draft Plan.

Page 6: Modify language for C. New Approaches, 1. Bethesda Overlay Zone as follows:

1. Bethesda Overlay Zone: This Plan recommends a new overlay zone to provide a planning and zoning strategy that implements the recommendations outlined in the Plan while providing a comprehensive zoning scheme that does not exceed the densities recommended in the land use vision. The Bethesda Overlay Zone is intended to [establish a funding mechanism for] appropriately allocate density within Downtown Bethesda that will protect existing residential neighborhoods, provide additional opportunities for parks and open space, expand the County's affordable housing inventory and ensure high quality design through the use of a Design Review Advisory Panel. Contributions to a park impact fund will help implement the Plan's recommendation for new parks.

[The overlay zone will modify the density averaging rules for certain priority sites in the Plan area. The Sector Plan designates Open Space Priority Sending Sites, Historic/Community Resources Priority Sending Sites and Affordable Housing Sending Sites. Density transfers from these sites are encouraged to facilitate, respectively, the creation or enlargement of urban parks, protection of significant landmarks and retention of affordable housing.]

The Overlay Zone sets a cap on development to ensure that total density in the Plan Area, including existing, [mapped CR density] approved, and new development (including affordable housing), does not exceed 32.4 million square feet of gross floor area. Since heights recommended by this Sector Plan would allow significantly more development than 32.4 million square feet, many properties will be unable to develop to the full amount that may have been allowed by their height.

Page 11: Modify Table 1.01: Sustainability Performance Area Metrics for Bethesda to include the following updated information and corrections:

	Existing	[Proposed] <u>Potential Additional*</u>	Percent Change
Multi-Unit Rental Units	<u>5,124</u>	8,456	[81] <u>165%</u> increase
Market-Rate Rental Affordable Housing Units	<u>1,915</u>	[7,187] <u>Will depend on market conditions and use of public benefit points</u>	[260% increase] <u>TBD</u>
[Rent] <u>Income Restricted</u>	<u>892</u>	[Minimum 892, Maximum 1269] <u>1269</u>	[54] <u>142%</u> increase

\* Estimate of new units indicates maximum possible residential units if there is no commercial development.

Page 13: Update and Edit Figure 1.01: Concept Framework, removing street classifications from Legend because they will be included in the Urban Design Guidelines, and update graphic to remove asterisks for new parks between Highland and West Virginia Avenue and on Chevy Chase Drive and for the expansion of Chase Avenue Urban Park.

Page 14: Modify the first and third bullets under A. Land Use Recommendations as follows:

- [Coordinate and align] Explore the potential to achieve the goal of common boundaries by coordinating and aligning the Central Business District (CBD), Urban District (UD),<sup>1</sup> Parking Lot District (PLD) and the Transportation Management District (TMD) boundaries.
- Preserve and enhance the community's existing affordable housing throughout the Sector Plan area by leveraging proximity to transit stations and supporting flexible zoning, density incentives and expanded economic programs.
- Make increasing the provision for moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) from 12.5 percent to 15 percent a [priority amenity in] requirement for all optional method projects in Downtown Bethesda.

Pages 14-15: Modify bullets under B. Zoning Recommendations as follows:

- Zone individual properties Commercial Residential (CR) with the currently mapped density limit and recommended heights as documented in this Plan.
- Properties rezoned to a CR or CRT from an R-10, R-60, EOF and PD zone will be translated to an equivalent density specified in the District recommendations that follow.
- Cover all properties within the Sector Plan boundary with the Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ).
- [Identify and prioritize key density averaging sending sites to achieve desired parks and open space, facilitate landmark preservation and preservation of existing market-rate affordable housing. Implement through the use of an Overlay Zone. Priority Sending Sites will be mapped CR or CRT with additional density as shown in Chapter Three: Districts.]
- For development sites less than 20,000 square feet, encourage a fee-in-lieu of the required public open space as part of the property's public benefits.



- Update the existing streetscape guidelines and allow for improvements and flexibility within the pavement and public right-of-way.
- [Introduce a floating zone designation for the Bethesda Fire Station (Tax Map HN341) at the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue.]

Page 15: Revise the third bullet under A. Roadway Recommendations as follows:

- Propose [new streets] the Pearl District Connector, as discussed in Chapter Two.

Page 15: Add a fifth bullet under C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Recommendations as follows:

- Evaluate concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e. a “Barnes Dance”) at the intersection of Woodmont Avenue/ Bethesda Avenue

Page 15: Modify bullet under D. Transportation Demand Management Recommendations as follows:

- Expand the existing Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) to include residents and increase [both goals] the average combined NADMS goal to [50] 55 percent.

Page 17: Modify the second full bullet as follows:

- Design buildings [with operable windows for cross-ventilation.] to utilize passive means of heating, cooling and ventilation.

Page 17: Modify the sixth and seventh full bullets as follows:

- Exceed minimum County requirements for energy efficiency [minimum LEED certification or equivalent standards].
- [Utilize district energy (central heating/cooling) if two or more buildings are being constructed adjacent to each other.]

Page 17: Modify the bullet under 1.3.4 High Performance Area as follows:

- In the High Performance Area, buildings must meet the public benefits category for CR Energy Conservation and Generation 59-C-15.856 (b). An optional method building over 4 stories must exceed the current ASHRAE 90.1 requirement by at least 15 percent. Should the County approve alternative or additional standards, similar improvements in efficiency should be required [the International Green Construction Code (IgCC), building energy performance must rank two points lower (more efficient) than the Zero Energy Performance Index (zEPI) score listed in the most recent International Green Building Code (IGCC) as locally amended].

Page 17: Modify the first bullet under B. Urban Form as follows:

- Design signature [tall] buildings that integrate design and sustainability innovation to occupy the symbolic center and surround civic gathering spaces.

Page 18: Modify the third bullet under C. Placemaking as follows:

- Create gateways at [the] transit [and street] entrances [to the Downtown] that integrate elements such as wayfinding, landscape and building form unique to Bethesda.

Page 18: Add a fifth bullet under 1.3.6 Parks and Open Space as follows:

- Convert county owned surface parking lots to parkland/neighborhood greens to the maximum extent feasible.

Page 24: Modify the second sentence of the third paragraph as follows:

The Plan estimates [an ultimate build-out over the next 20 years of approximately] a maximum of 8,456 additional multi-unit residential units if limited commercial development occurs [, a 81 percent increase above current levels].

Page 25: Modify the first bullet under A. General as follows:

- [Coordinate and align] Explore the potential to achieve the goal of common boundaries by coordinating and aligning the Central Business District (CBD), Urban District (UD), Parking Lot District (PLD) and the Transportation Management District (TMD) boundaries.

Page 25: Modify the second bullet under B. Land Use as follows:

- Make increasing the provision for Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) from 12.5 percent to 15 percent a [priority amenity in] requirement for all optional method projects in Downtown Bethesda.

Page 25: Delete the third bullet under 2.2.2 Recommendations: A. Zoning as follows:

- [Identify and prioritize key density averaging sending sites to achieve desired parks and open space, and to facilitate historic/community resources preservation and implement through the use of an Overlay Zone (see Figure 4.01). Priority Sending Sites will be mapped CR or CRT with additional density as shown in Chapter Three: Districts.]

Page 27: Edit Figure 2.03: Recommended Land Use to include updated land uses.

Page 29: Edit Figure 2.05: Recommended Zoning to include updated zoning.

Page 30: Edit Figure 2.06: Bethesda Boundaries to include the following note:

This map illustrates one option for aligning the boundaries. Other options may be considered.

Page 31: Modify language in the third and fourth paragraphs as follows:

Along with high housing costs, Downtown Bethesda also continues to have a shortage of committed affordable housing. Of the [4,669] 5,124 multi-unit rental apartments in the Bethesda Downtown Study Area, only 826 (17.69%) are [rent] income-restricted as defined by MPDU requirements, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits or public subsidies. The Sector Plan increases the requirement for MPDUs for all new optional method development.

There also [exists] exist about [1,992] 1,915 “market-affordable”<sup>4</sup> rental apartments in Bethesda-apartments [who] with market rents that fall within affordable income levels due to their age or limited amenities. [-but given] Given Bethesda’s high land values and overall desirability, these rents have the potential to increase considerably. This Plan includes new strategies to encourage the preservation of market-rate affordable units by offering public benefit points in exchange for a specified amount of preservation of rent-restricted units in existing and/or replacement units within the Sector Plan area. Figure 2.07 illustrates the current distribution of affordable market-rate and rent-restricted rental units in Downtown Bethesda. [Thus, absent special efforts, there will be a continuing] Even with these new strategies, there could still be a shortfall of existing and new units to meet the needs of moderate-to-lower income households that require the services of, or are employed by retail establishments in Bethesda.

Page 32: Under Recommendations, modify the first and third bullets and add three bullets before the fourth bullet as follows:

- Add more units to the marketplace by [providing] requiring a minimum 15 percent MPDUs for optional method residential development within Downtown Bethesda.
- Provide 15 percent MPDUs on-site as a first priority.
- [Preserve existing market-rate affordable housing by identifying some sites as Priority Sending Sites for density averaging. Affordable Housing Sending Sites that choose to transfer their density must enter into a rental agreement to retain 30 percent of their existing affordable housing units, defined as 65 percent of area median income (AMI) or below, for 20 years.]
- Provide an incentive to encourage 25% or more MPDUs (by allowing an increase in FAR without additional payments otherwise required for increases in FAR).
- Create a new category of public benefit points related to the retention of existing market-rate affordable housing in existing and/or replacement units within the Sector Plan area using rental agreements with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA).
- In the South Bethesda and Battery Lane Districts, preservation of market-rate affordable housing and/or additional MPDUs beyond 15 percent is the top priority for public benefit points.



Page 32: Modify footnote 4 as follows:

<sup>4</sup> *[Market-rate rentals are defined as affordable if their rent price plus expected tenant-paid utility costs are not more 30 percent of household income (not rent restricted).] Market-rate affordable rental housing is defined as a rental housing unit where the rent plus the expected tenant-paid utility costs must not exceed the median rent for the planning area and is affordable to a household earning 80% of area median income, adjusted as MPDUs for household and unit size. There is no income restriction on a household renting a market-rate affordable unit.*

Page 33: Update Figure 2.07: 2014 Affordable Market-Rate and Rent-Restricted Rental Units to include 2017 data.

Page 36: Delete sections B. Strathmore Street Extended (B-2) and D. Arlington Road Realignment and revise section C. Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue Intersection Improvements as follows, and change E. Further Evaluation to C. Further Evaluation:

**[B. Strathmore Street Extended (B-2)]**

60-foot right-of-way; Bradley Boulevard to Chevy Chase Drive:

This street would improve connectivity between the residential area north of Bradley Boulevard and Norwood Park by extending the existing Strathmore Street. This improvement could improve access from Downtown Bethesda and activate Norwood Local Park. Public/Private ownership and specific horizontal alignment should be determined at the time adjacent properties are reviewed for regulatory approval.]

**[C] B. Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue Intersection Improvements**

Reconfigure the intersection of Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue to shorten or otherwise improve the pedestrian crossing distance and expand the plaza located on the northwest side of the intersection. Future evaluation of this intersection should specifically evaluate a concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e., a pedestrian scramble or Barnes Dance) for all crossings during periods of peak pedestrian demand. This intersection is an important crossing for pedestrians on Woodmont Avenue, Bethesda Avenue and the Capital Crescent Trail. Additional demand is anticipated in the future with the implementation of the Bethesda South Station and future park on the east side of Woodmont Avenue. Further analysis is necessary to determine the extent to which this reconfiguration can occur, given the angle of intersection between Woodmont Avenue and Bethesda Avenue.

**[D. Arlington Road Realignment]**

This Plan carries forward an element of the 1994 Plan that recommends improving safety on Arlington Road, south of Bethesda Avenue. This segment of Arlington Road combines poor sight distance, caused by a sharp curve, with a number of driveways accessing the road from adjacent development and increasing numbers of pedestrians. The Plan

recommends realigning Arlington Road to reduce the curve and provide better sight distance. This improvement may require more right-of-way than the minimum recommended in Table 2.01 of this Plan.]

**[E] C. Further Evaluation**

Page 37: Modify Figure 2.08: Roadway Classification as follows:

1. Reclassify as minor arterial roadways:
  - a. Hillandale Road, between Bradley Boulevard and the S. Sector Plan Boundary
  - b. Battery Lane, between Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road
2. Reclassify Offutt Lane and Wellington Drive as secondary residential streets.
3. Remove “B-2” [from the table. This should be a pedestrian/bicycle connection, as approved by Council].

Page 38: Modify Table 2.01: Street Classification and Right-of-Way Recommendations as follows:

1. Add a new footnote (#1) to the table heading that states, “all streets within the Downtown Sector Plan Boundary have a target speed no greater than 25 mph [target speed].”

Page 39: Modify Table 2.01: Street Classification and Right-of-Way Recommendations as follows:

1. Reclassify Hillandale Road, between Bradley Boulevard and the S. Sector Plan Boundary, as a minor arterial.
2. Reclassify Battery Lane, between Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road, as a minor arterial.
3. Add primary residential streets shown in Figure 2.08 (p.37) to Table 2.01.
4. Add a footnote for Pearl Street that states, “This Plan anticipates future abandonment of Pearl Street between Montgomery Avenue and the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT), as long as there is sufficient width for pedestrian/ bicycle access between the CCT and Montgomery Avenue and that access for the abutting private properties is provided.”
5. Add a footnote for Hampden Lane that states, “The County should consider a proposed abandonment of street right-of-way for a development that uses the abandoned right-of-way to provide a significant public benefit.”
6. Remove “B-2” [from the table. This should be a pedestrian/ bicycle connection, as approved by Council].
7. Add a Primary Residential Street category, including:
  - Strathmore Street from Woodmont Avenue to Bradley Boulevard, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Chevy Chase Drive from Hillandale Road to Bradley Boulevard, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Avondale Street, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Tilbury Street, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Chestnut Street, Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Pearl Street, Middleton Lane to Sleaford Road, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Chelton Road, East-West Highway to Sleaford Road, 60’ right-of-way;
  - Keystone Avenue, Battery Lane to North Brook Lane, 60’ right-of-way;

North Brook Lane, Keystone Avenue to northern terminus, 60' right-of-way.

Page 40: Revise language under F. Capacity as follows, including shifting the last paragraph to below the deleted second paragraph:

### **[Policy Area] Roadway Network Adequacy Test**

In support of the [2012] 2016 Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP), key intersections were evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology, which estimates seconds of delay per vehicle during the morning and evening peak periods. Intersections within the Sector Plan limits were tested against a policy area standard of 120 seconds/vehicle delay while intersections outside the Sector Plan limits were tested against a policy area standard of 80 seconds/vehicle delay. As a result of this analysis, all intersections within the Sector Plan limits were found to be within the policy area standard; however, three intersections immediately outside the Sector Plan limits are estimated to exceed the policy area standard: [a Transportation Policy Area Review (TPAR) analysis was performed for each policy area in the County to test the roadway network's adequacy in 2040. The year 2040 TPAR analysis took into account build-out of all the adopted County Master Plans by the year 2040 in combination with the implementation of all the unbuilt master planned projects anticipated to be constructed by 2040. It should be noted that this study differs from TPAR analysis for year 2024 that is currently used in the context of the regulatory review process.]

[In the 2012 SSP year 2040 TPAR analysis, the Bethesda Chevy Chase Policy Area is shown to be adequate for the roadway test. Given that the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area is a small subset of a much larger policy area, the transportation network is considered in balance with the land use and densities proposed by the Sector Plan.]

[Immediately outside the Sector Plan area, four intersections are forecast to exceed the Bethesda/Chevy Chase Policy Area congestion standard of 1,600 CLV. Those intersections are listed below:]

- East-West Highway and Connecticut Avenue
- [Rockville Pike and Cedar Lane
- Bradley Boulevard and Huntington Parkway]
- Connecticut Avenue and Bradley Lane
- Rockville Pike and Jones Bridge Road

The Council will consider capacity improvements to resolve or mitigate future congestion at these intersections to be included in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan's Unified Mobility Program (BUMP) and in subsequent revisions to the BUMP. For the intersection improvement at Connecticut Avenue and Bradley Lane, the Council will also consider historic preservation, environmental, and other community impacts.

### Methodology

Plan Vision with Existing Street Network Scenario: Traffic analysis of the Plan Vision 2040 land use determined that all intersections within the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area are



projected to operate within the current [1,800 Critical Lane Volume (CLV)] 120 seconds/vehicle delay threshold. That analysis assumed maintenance of the existing street network, including funded improvements, and traffic flow pattern (without reconfiguration of any one-way streets). [The most congested intersection within the limits of the sector plan is at Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue, which is projected to operate at 1,533 CLV in the evening peak hour – an eight percent increase over the existing CLV at this location.]

Plan Vision with Two-Way Street Conversion Scenario: When considering the proposed two-way street conversion scenario, the traffic analysis indicates that [the intersection of Montgomery Lane and Wisconsin Avenue] Sector Plan intersections would approach, but remain within, the congestion standard [with a forecast CLV of 1,765 in the evening peak hour. Under the same scenario, the analysis indicates that the intersection of Wisconsin Avenue and Old Georgetown Road/East-West Highway would remain within the congestion standard with a forecast CLV of 1,427 in the evening peak hour].

This analysis suggests that the conversion of one-way streets in Bethesda may not significantly impact traffic circulation within the Sector Plan area; however, the introduction of a two-way street pattern should be subject to a more detailed examination following this Sector Plan.

Page 41: Modify language under A. Bethesda Circulator Expansion as follows:

A more robust Circulator Bus route should be considered to serve an expanded Downtown Bethesda. That route should include service to the Battery Lane and Pearl Districts.[. Potential new stops should include the following locations (see Figure 2.10: Proposed Circulator Route Revisions):] new Bethesda South Metrorail station/Purple Line station on Elm Street, the Pearl District, and Medical Center Metrorail station.

[1. Battery Lane:

- Battery Lane Urban Park
- Old Georgetown Road
- Woodmont Avenue

2. Pearl District:

- Waverly Street Parking Garage

3. Bethesda South

- Woodmont Avenue at Wisconsin Avenue
- Bradley Boulevard at Wisconsin Avenue
- Bradley Boulevard at Leland Street
- Arlington Road between Bradley Boulevard and Bethesda Avenue The proposed expansion would require elimination of service to the following existing stations:
- Arlington Road north of Elm Street
- Arlington Road/Montgomery Lane
- Edgemoor Lane near Woodmont Avenue (two stops)

4. Auburn Avenue at:

- Old Georgetown Road
- Norfolk Avenue

- Rugby Avenue Phasing of the proposed Circulator Bus expansion should be considered at the time of implementation to account for anticipated ridership and impacts on overall service. At the time this Sector Plan was drafted, the Bethesda South and Battery Lane districts seemed to be the first logical expansion areas. Expansion into the Pearl District should be timed to coincide with that district's development in the future.]

Page 45: Delete Figure 2.10: Proposed Circulator Route Revisions.

Page 46: Modify Figure 2.11: Bikeway Classification as follows:

1. Reclassify the portion of LB-6, "Strathmore Street Extended," south of Bradley Boulevard, to a proposed shared use path.
2. Add a proposed separated bike lane, "CT-8" to Old Georgetown Road, between Woodmont and Wisconsin Avenue, and East-West Highway, between Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Avenue.
3. Add a proposed separated bike lane, "CT-9" to Montgomery Avenue, between Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway.
4. Add separated bike lanes to Edgemoor Lane, between Arlington Road and Bethesda Metrorail Station
  - a. Add "SR-7" label to the section of Edgemoor Lane between Exeter Road and Arlington Road
5. Delete "LB-4" label and revise to reflect an extension of bike lane "BL-44," Norfolk Avenue/Cheltenham Drive, to Tilbury Street.
6. Revise Pearl Street, "LB-7," to bike lane, "LB-3" (blue line)
7. Add bike lane "LB-7" to Chelton Road, between Sleaford Road and East-West Highway.
8. Add bike lane "LB-4" to Waverly Street, between East-West Highway and Montgomery Avenue.

Page 47: Modify Table 2.02: Bicycle Network Recommendations as follows:

1. Add a proposed separated bike lane, "CT-8," to Old Georgetown Road between Woodmont and Wisconsin Avenue, and East-West Highway between Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Avenue.
2. Add a proposed separated bike lane, "CT-9," to Montgomery Avenue between Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway.
3. Add a new line under the "Shared Use Path" subheading to classify the portion of LB-6, "Strathmore Street Extended," south of Bradley Boulevard, to a proposed shared use path. Retain "LB-6" designation.
4. Add a footnote corresponding to "LB-3," Pearl Street south of Montgomery Avenue, that states, "This bikeway may be implemented as a shared use path if the County Council abandons Pearl Street south of Montgomery Avenue."
5. Add separated bike lanes to Edgemoor Lane, between Arlington Road and Bethesda Metrorail Station.
  - a. Revise SR-8 to eliminate "Edgemoor Lane" and revise limits to "Edgemoor Lane to Avondale Street."
  - b. Add "SR-7" as the section of Edgemoor Lane between Exeter Road and Arlington Road.

6. Delete shared roadway line “LB-4” and revise bike lane “BL-44,” Norfolk Avenue, to include Cheltenham Drive and extend to Tilbury Street.
7. Delete shared roadway line “LB-7,” and revise Bike Lane “LB-3,” Pearl Street limits to reflect the following: “Sleaford Road to Montgomery Avenue.”
8. Add bike lane “LB-7” to Chelton Road, between Sleaford Road and East-West Highway.
9. Add bike lane “LB-4” to Waverly Street, between East-West Highway and Montgomery Avenue.
10. Revise the designation of proposed bike lanes on Arlington Road between Old Georgetown Road and Bradley Boulevard as separated bike lanes.
11. Revise the limits of the Woodmont Avenue separated bike lanes to between Wisconsin Avenue and the North Sector Plan boundary.

Page 48: Add a sentence under A. New Bikeway Proposals and modify the first full paragraph under 1. Woodmont Avenue (CT-4) as follows:

A. New Bikeway Proposals

Any section of bikeway proposed in this plan that requires a road diet will require a more detailed interagency operational analysis before it is implemented.

**1. Woodmont Avenue (CT-4)**

Separated Bike Lanes (ultimate); Bike Lanes (interim); Battery Lane to Bethesda Avenue

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity within the Sector Plan area and would serve as the primary alternative to Wisconsin Avenue for bicyclists. Due to potential parking and operational impacts resulting from lane reallocation required as part of this recommendation, the following alternatives have been identified for further analysis and the implemented bikeway may contain a combination of configurations; however, there is a strong preference for separated bike lanes along Woodmont Avenue (see also Table 2.02: Bicycle Network Recommendations):

Pages 48-51: Modify language for section 3. Norfolk Avenue (BL-44) as follows:

Bike Lanes/Shared Street; Battery Lane Urban Park to [Wisconsin Avenue] Tilbury Street

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity within the Sector Plan area and would serve as the primary alternative to Old Georgetown Road for bicyclists. Due to the recommendation that a portion of Norfolk Avenue be reconfigured as a shared street, the following alternatives have been identified for further analysis:

- a. Bike Lanes Alternative: This alternative is recommended for the near-term, prior to any implementation of the shared street concept. The primary advantage to this alternative is the relative ease with which it can be implemented. Norfolk Avenue is currently 48 feet wide with two travel (16 feet wide) lanes and two on-street parking lanes. As a result, two



6-foot wide bike lanes and two 10-foot wide travel lanes can be implemented without any additional reallocation of the existing roadway or loss of parking.

- b. Shared Street Alternative: This alternative reflects the Sector Plan recommendation that a portion of Norfolk Avenue, within the Woodmont Triangle, be improved as a shared street with alternative paving materials and flush curbs. Once implemented, the shared street concept is anticipated to have a traffic calming effect and will support relatively low-speed mixed traffic. Under such a scenario, separated bike lanes are unnecessary for bicyclists' comfort.

Page 51: Modify language for sections 4. Arlington Road (LB-2) and 5. Cheltenham Drive (LB-4), and the first part of section 6. Edgemoor Lane/Commerce Lane/Avondale Street (SR-8) as follows:

#### **4. Arlington Road (LB-2)**

[Buffered or] Separated Bike Lanes; Old Georgetown Road to Bradley Boulevard

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity on the west side of the Sector Plan area and would provide a direct connection between the Woodmont Triangle and proposed Bradley Boulevard bikeway via Bethesda Row. [The following alternatives have been identified for further analysis (see also Table 2.02: Bicycle Network Recommendations):

- a. Buffered Bike Lanes: Implementation of this option would require converting Arlington Road from a four-lane road to a three-lane road, including a center-turn lane.
- b. Separated Bike Lanes: As with buffered bike lanes, this] This [option] configuration would require a road diet that [converting] converts Arlington Road from a four-lane road to a three-lane road, including a center-turn lane. [The main difference between buffered bike lanes and separated bike lanes is the presence of vertical separation between traffic lanes and bike lanes.]

#### **5. [Cheltenham Drive (LB-4)]**

Shared Roadway; Wisconsin Avenue to Tilbury Street

This bikeway would improve east-west connectivity across Wisconsin Avenue, between the proposed Norfolk Avenue bike lanes in the Woodmont Triangle, and single-unit residential neighborhoods east of Wisconsin Avenue. Additionally, this connection would provide an alternative connection to the Capital Crescent Trail via the existing Sleaford Road connection. This bikeway should have clear way-finding signs and markings to encourage its use as an important connection within Downtown Bethesda.]

#### **6. [Edgemoor Lane/]Commerce Lane/Avondale Street (SR-8)]**

Shared Roadway; [Exeter Road] Edgemoor Lane to Avondale Street

Page 54: Modify language for section 9. Pearl Street (LB-7) as follows:

## 9. Pearl Street (LB-[7] 3)

Bike Lane; Montgomery Avenue [and Avondale Street] to Sleaford Road.

Shared Roadway; North of [Avondale Street] Sleaford Road to Sector Plan Boundary

This bikeway would improve north-south connectivity on the east side of the Sector Plan and would provide a direct connection between the emerging Pearl District and single-unit residential neighborhood to the north and east of the Sector Plan area. This Plan recommends bike lanes on the block between [East-West Highway] Sleaford Road and Montgomery Avenue, given the anticipated level of activity in that area of the Pearl District. North of [East-West Highway] Sleaford Road, this bikeway should be implemented as a shared roadway. This bikeway should have clear wayfinding signs and markings to encourage its use as an important connection within Downtown Bethesda.

Pages 54-55: Add a third bullet before the last paragraph of section 4. Intersection Improvements as follows:

- Future evaluation should specifically evaluate a concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e., a pedestrian scramble or Barnes Dance) for all crossings of the Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue intersection during periods of peak pedestrian demand, especially weekends when traffic congestion is less of a concern.

Page 56: In Figure 2.14: Arlington Road Existing and Proposed Street Sections, delete “Proposed Section Opt. 1: Buffered Bike Lanes.”

Page 57: Revise heading as follows:

Arlington Rd (Old Georgetown Road to Bradley Boulevard, Looking North)  
Proposed Section [Opt. 2]: Separated Bike Lanes (one-way)

Page 59: Modify the third sentence of the second paragraph under 2.3.5 Transportation Demand Management as follows:

Success in implementing TDM strategies is determined by establishing and monitoring Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS). The current NADMS in Bethesda indicates that approximately 42 percent of commuters arrive at work by means other than single occupancy vehicles. This Sector Plan recommends that the NADMS goal be expanded to apply to both commuters and residents and increased to a combined average of [50] 55 percent for both groups.

Pages 64-65: Modify the first bullet under 2.4.3 Energy, Recommendations as follows:

- In the High Performance Area, buildings must meet the public benefit category for CR Energy Conservation and Generation 59-C-15.856 (b). An optional method building over 4 stories must exceed the current ASHRAE 90.1 requirement by at least 15 percent. Should the County approve alternative or additional standards, similar improvements in efficiency

should be required [the International Green Construction Code (IgCC), building energy performance must rank two points lower (more efficient) than the Zero Energy Performance Index (zEPI) score listed in the most recent International Green Building Code (IGCC) as locally amended].

Page 65: Modify the fifth full bullet on the page as follows:

- Design buildings [with operable windows for cross-ventilation] to utilize passive means of heating, cooling and ventilation.

Page 65: Modify the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> full bullets as follows:

- Exceed minimum County requirements for energy efficiency [minimum LEED certification or equivalent standards].
- [Utilize district energy (central heating/cooling) if two or more buildings are being constructed adjacent to each other.]

Page 67: Revise the map of the High Performance Area to exclude all properties zoned R-60.

Page 68: Delete the fourth sentence of the bullet under A. Energy as follows:

- [For example, if the County approves the International Green Construction Code (IgCC), building energy performance should rank two points lower (more efficient) than the Zero Energy Performance Index (zEPI) score listed in the most recent International Green Building Code as locally amended.]

Page 71: Edit Figure 2.19: Public Space Network to remove the potential open space asterisks between Highland and West Virginia Avenues and Chevy Chase Drive, and remove recommended/enhanced open space next to Chase Ave Urban Park.

Page 72: Modify the first bullet under 2.6.2 Urban Form, Recommendations as follows:

- Symbolic Center and Civic Gathering Spaces: Design signature [tall] buildings that integrate design and sustainability innovation to occupy the symbolic center and surround civic gathering spaces.

Page 73: Edit Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights to include updated building height decisions.

Page 75: Modify language for the “Base” in Figure 2.21: Building Form Recommendations as follows:

**Base:** [Provide a low to mid-rise building base that frames the street with fine grain façade articulation]. Articulate large building bases to ensure that facades are not exceedingly long, uninterrupted and rigidly uniform.



Page 75: Modify the first paragraph under Intent as follows:

With the increases to allowable building heights recommended for Downtown Bethesda and the flexibility to transfer and allocate additional density in the overlay zone, building form recommendations are critical to create clear expectations to guide the development review process. Design Guidelines will be developed with specific recommendations to achieve these objectives and elaborate on the general guidance and illustrative diagrams presented on this page.

Page 76: Modify the third bullet as follows:

- Create gateways at [the] transit [and street] entrances [to the Downtown] that integrate elements such as wayfinding, landscape and building form unique to Bethesda.

Page 80: Modify the second bullet as follows:

- One or more [A] central “civic green” urban [park] parks (Chapter 3), ranging in size from ½ to 2 acres, depending on projected densities, located in close proximity to a public transit hub, next to activating uses, with a mixture of hard and soft surfaces, including a central lawn area for events.

Page 81: Edit Figure 2.23: Urban Parks Hierarchy to update and include key to parks recommendations on pages 82-87.

Page 83: Modify 1. Veteran’s Park Civic Green, Vision to include the following language:

**Vision:** Veteran’s Park Civic Green is envisioned as a green extension of the existing successful public open space called Veteran’s Park at the intersections of Woodmont Avenue, Wisconsin Avenue and [Cheltenham Drive] Norfolk Avenue. This new park would expand the existing limited public space across the street and could serve as a linkage between the established center of the Woodmont Triangle District and Wisconsin Avenue Corridor District. Figure 2.23 on page 81 and Figure 3.02 on page 103 depict the general location for the expansion of Veteran’s Park as a community benefit under the CR zone. Other potential locations may also be explored through the development process.

Page 83: Modify 2. The Farm Women’s Market Civic Green, Vision and Recommended Size as follows:

**Vision:** This Civic Green is envisioned as a green open space next to the Farm Women’s Cooperative Market, which is a longstanding community institution in the historic heart of Bethesda. This space would act as both a destination and a local gathering spot, providing a space for market customers to eat and relax. It serves as an extension of Elm Street Park and the proposed Eastern Greenway. To create a prominent civic space, it is recommended that this new civic green be integrated with the potential new park on Lot 24. The open space at the famous Weaver Street Market in Carrboro, North Carolina, serves as an example of the type of space envisioned here.

**Recommended size:** [0.6] 1.6 acres (including market building and the proposed park for Lot 24).

Page 85: Remove Fire Station 6 Urban Buffer Park as follows, since it was linked to potential redevelopment of the site, which is no longer recommended.

#### **[1. Fire Station 6 Urban Buffer Park**

**Vision:** A walk to green space for the residents of the South Bethesda and Wisconsin Avenue Districts, this space will also provide a needed trail connection into the Norwood Local Park (*See Section 3.3.3.2.B for zoning recommendations*).

**Recommended size:** 0.85 acres.

**Purpose:** Fire Station 6 Urban Buffer Park will allow for needed walk-to facilities, such as community open space, dog parks, skate parks or community gardens.]

Page 86: Remove the Implementation language under 4. Bethesda-Chevy Chase East Neighborhood Green as follows:

**[Implementation:** This park space would be acquired through the Montgomery County Department of Parks Capital Improvements Program, developed through private sector contributions and coordinated with Montgomery County Public Schools.]

Page 86: Modify 5. Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens language by adding the following text before a. North End:

#### **4. Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens**

Convert county owned surface parking lots 25, 44, 24 and 10 to parkland/neighborhood greens to the maximum extent feasible. The conversion of Lot 24 (adjacent to the Farm Women's Market) to parkland could help create a larger civic green and regional park. The parking needs of neighborhood businesses that rely on these lots should be addressed and parking replaced where necessary.

Page 87: Remove 2. Chase Avenue Neighborhood Green Expansion as follows:

#### **[2. Chase Avenue Neighborhood Green Expansion**

**Vision:** This extension is envisioned as an addition to the existing small Neighborhood Green (formerly classified as an urban park) and to the proposed Eastern greenway along the eastern edge of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan boundary.

**Recommended size:** 0.8 acres

Purpose: These parcels will add to the small-scale neighborhood recreational opportunities and act as green buffers for the community on the eastern side of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan boundary.]

Pages 91-92: Modify the fourth paragraph (including bullets) under 2.8.3 Public Security, B. Fire and Rescue Stations as follows:

**A. Fire and Rescue Stations**

Fire Station 6 was built in 1969 and has aged considerably. The fire department is determining the best way to provide a modernized fire station that will meet the constantly increasing community needs for the next 40-50 years. [by considering the following options:]

- [Maintain Fire Station 6.
- Renovate the existing Fire Station 6.
- Build a new stand-alone Fire Station 6.
- Work with an outside developer to redevelop the property as a residential building, including a new Fire Station 6.
- Determine the possibility of obtaining density rights that could be sold to other properties in Bethesda to fund a renovation or a new Fire Station 6.]

Page 92: Modify 2.8.3 Public Security, B. Fire and Rescue Stations, Recommendations as follows:

This Plan recommends that the rescue squad site located at the intersection of Battery Lane and Old Georgetown Road change from its current R-60 zone to a Commercial Residential (CR) zone and the Fire Station 6 site at the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue retain its R-10 base zone. The new rescue squad building and any residential development should be located to optimize functionality of the rescue squad building and maximize compatibility with the surrounding residential community [A floating zone is recommended with a Commercial Residential (CR) designation to permit some additional uses consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and renovation of the facilities to improve safety and services] (*see Figure 2.05: Recommended Zoning*).

Page 92: Revise the first and second sentences of the second paragraph under B. Public Schools as follows:

In addition, the Sector Plan provides for up to 8,456 new multi-unit high-rise housing units (assuming limited commercial development). Based on student generation for this area of the County, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) estimates at full build-out, the new housing would result in approximately [355] 430 elementary school students, [145] 177 middle school students and [195] 236 high school students.

Page 92: Revise the first sentence of the fifth paragraph under 2.8.4 Educational Facilities, B. Public Schools as follows:



At the elementary school level, Bethesda Elementary School completed a [has a] building addition [scheduled for completion] in August 2015 to address increased enrollment.

Page 93: Update language for the second paragraph from the bottom of the page as follows:

At the middle school level, Westland Middle School is projected to be over capacity by more than 800 students in the coming years. A second middle school for the B-CC cluster is scheduled to open in August 2017, called Silver Creek Middle School. [The temporary name for this school is Bethesda- Chevy Chase Middle School #2. The boundaries for the new middle school, and changes to the Westland Middle School service area, have been are not yet determined.]

Page 94: Add bullet at the beginning of the second set of bullets on page to include options for B-CC High School expansion as follows:

- Explore options for expansion of the B-CC High School and/or its fields, including the possibility of acquiring parcels directly adjacent to the school.

Page 94: Modify the first two sentences under A. Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center as follows:

[Bethesda is not an incorporated municipality, but it provides a local government office to strengthen communication between the community and various agencies of County government.] The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center is one of four regional services centers in the County that [functions] function as [a] local town [hall] halls, offering problem-solving and information, and referral services to residents.

Page 95: Under the Recommendation for A. Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, modify the text as follows:

Support the priorities of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center and rezone the property to allow potential redevelopment with an improved center, additional civic uses, and possibly a recreation center.

Page 95: Add language to 2.8.5 Other Public Facilities to include a Recreational Facility as follows:

#### D. New Recreation Center

To support the additional growth in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase regional area, downtown Bethesda will need to accommodate recreational services and facilities for all ages and abilities. The Sector Plan calls for the study and implementation of a new County Recreation Center in Downtown Bethesda.

### **Recommendation**

Explore the viability of providing a new County recreation facility in Downtown Bethesda, taking advantage of under-utilized sites near the Metro Station and/or colocation with the existing B-CC Regional Services Center at 4805 Edgemoor. Other viable sites should also be explored as part of this study.

Page 99: Modify the first bullet under 1. Goals as follows:

- Encourage infill and reinvestment on underutilized commercial sites and private surface parking lots.

Page 100: Modify and add bullets under b. Zoning as follows:

#### b. Zoning

- See Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights in the Wisconsin Avenue District and Figure 3.01: Wisconsin Avenue District Zoning for the following recommendations.
- [Establish nine Priority Sending Sites for density averaging (Farm Women's Cooperative Market, Union Hardware site, the old post office, Brooks Photographer's Building at 7349 Wisconsin Avenue, St. John's Episcopal Church, lots 14, 15, 16 on the south side of Avondale Street and the Metropolitan Apartments) to create, enhance and/or preserve key parks and historic and community resources (see figure 3.01 Recommended Zoning and 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites).]
- Rezone Map #53 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #54 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 120 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #55 and #59 from their current zones to increase the commercial FAR from 1.0 to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 145 feet.
- Rezone Map #56 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #57 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 145 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #58 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #60 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #61 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #62 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowed building height from 145T to 200 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #63 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 120T to 290 feet if the project includes 25 percent MPDUs. If only 15 percent MPDUs are included in the project, then the height is limited to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #64 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 120T to 290 feet if the project includes 25 percent MPDUs. If only 15 percent MPDUs are included in the project, then the height is limited to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #65 and #66 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from a 1.0 FAR to a 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and increase the maximum allowable building height from 120T to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #67 from its current zone to increase maximum allowable building height from 145T to 300 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #68 from its current zone to increase maximum allowable building height from 145T to 165 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #69 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 175 feet.
- Rezone Map #70 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 225 feet.
- Rezone Map #71 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #72 to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 225 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #73 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #74 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to



175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #75 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #76 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #77 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 240 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #78 and #79 from their current R-10 zone to CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to provide flexible development opportunities near the core of Downtown Bethesda and still maintain compatibility with its surrounding neighborhood.
- Rezone Map #80, #82, #83 and #86 from their current zones to increase the maximum allowable building height from 90T to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #81 from its current zone of R-10 to a CRN zone to reflect the existing development and ensure compatibility with adjacent single family detached units. Rezone to CRN 0.75, C-0, R-0.75, H-45.
- Rezone Map #84 and #85 from their current zones to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #87 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 90T to 145 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and to address the proximity to both the commercial core on Wisconsin Avenue and the adjacent single family unit neighborhood of East Bethesda.
- Rezone Map #88, #89, #90, #91, #92, #93, #94, and #95 to increase the maximum allowable building heights to 90 feet to provide for an appropriate transition to the adjacent single family unit neighborhoods of East Bethesda. Increase the commercial FAR on Map #90, #91, and #92 from 2.0 to 3.0 and the residential FAR on Map #91 from 2.75 FAR to 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #96 to reduce the maximum allowable building height to 70 feet to provide for an appropriate transition to the adjacent single family unit neighborhoods of East Bethesda and Glenbrook Village.
- Rezone Map #97 to increase the maximum allowable building heights to 70 feet to provide for an appropriate transition to the adjacent single family unit neighborhoods of East Bethesda.
- Rezone Map #98 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 175T to 210 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #99 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable height from 175T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #100 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR, increase residential FAR from 7.5 to 7.75, and increase the maximum allowable building height from 145T to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #101 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 6.0 FAR to 8.0 FAR, the residential density from 7.5 to 7.75, and increase the maximum allowable building height from 200T to 250 to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #102 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 200 feet on the east side of the property closest to the Bethesda Metro, tapering down to a compatible building height as it gets closer to Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #103 and #104 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #105 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #106 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #107 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 200 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions. Allow an increase in the maximum allowable building height to 225 feet if the property redevelops in a manner that benefits the Farm Women's Cooperative Market to the east.
- Rezone Map #108 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #109 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 120 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development, including a movie theater. If the project does not include a movie theater, the height should be limited to 110 feet.
- Rezone Map #110 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 90 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

- Rezone Map #111 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to be compatible with the surrounding single family neighborhoods to the east and the low to mid-rise commercial along Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #112 from its current zone to a uniform zone of CR 2.25, C-2.25, R-2.25, H-90 across the entire property from Wisconsin Avenue to West Avenue, increasing the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to be compatible with the surrounding single family neighborhoods to the east and the low to mid-rise commercial along Wisconsin Avenue. If neighboring properties redevelop, consider compatibility with the St. John's Episcopal Church property, and specifically the unique use made of the northern edge of that property as a columbarium, through the site design process.
- Rezone Map #113 and #114 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to be compatible with the surrounding single family neighborhoods to the east and the low to mid-rise commercial along Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #115 and Map #116 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 90 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Revise Map #117 to increase the commercial FAR from 2.0 to 3.0 and correct the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 145 feet to prevent the building from becoming non-conforming.
- Rezone Map #118 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 150 feet and allow an increase in the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet if the property redevelops as a joint development with the Farm Women's Cooperative Market to the north.
- Rezone Map #119 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #120 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #121, #122 and #124 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #123 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 290 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #125 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 4.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to



provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

Page 100: Under 1. Public Realm, after b. Goal, add c. Goal as follows:

c. Goal: Retain a significant private open space at Metro Center

Recommendations:

- In conjunction with construction of one or more new buildings at Metro Center, redesign and reconfigure the existing open space to make it more usable, more programmable, and more inviting.
- Accommodate new plaza-level retail to further activate the open space.
- Provide a welcoming and accessible central gathering area, with appropriate surface and design features to accommodate the broader community as well as adjacent employees and residents.
- Improve the connections between the below-grade Metro bus area and the Plaza to encourage Metro riders to use the open space and visit the retail.
- Improve the Metro bus area with lighting, art, and other features to make it a more inviting area.

Page 100: Under 2. Building Form, a. Goal, remove the third bullet as follows:

- [Step down development at the southeast corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Cheltenham Drive on Block 2 lots 2, 7 and 8 from 250 feet along Wisconsin Avenue to 110 feet at the rear of the lots.]

Page 102: Revise bullets under b. Goal, Recommendations as follows:

- Provide increased height at [the gateways at the north and south boundaries of the Sector Plan area, as well as at] the transit gateways to the Metrorail and Purple Line stations.
- Mark the Veteran's Park Civic Green as a major civic gathering space through [taller] signature buildings at this location.

Page 102: Revise bullets under c. Goal, Recommendations as follows:

- [Allow a maximum height of up to 200 feet along Wisconsin Avenue on the properties at the northeast corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Chase Avenue on Block 9, including lot 27, PT 4 and PT 5 if lots 21 and 22 are dedicated as an extension of Chase Avenue Urban Park. If the park land is not provided, limit building height to 145 feet.]
- Allow a maximum height of up to 225 [290] feet at the northwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Norfolk Avenue on Map #65 and #66 [lots 613 and 621] [if a park is dedicated as an extension of Veterans Park and the block is assembled. If a park is not provided, limit building height to 250 feet].
- Allow a maximum height of up to 290 feet at the southwest corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Fairmont Avenue on Map #63 and #64 [lot 655] if 25 [15] percent MPDUs [and 10

percent workforce housing] are provided [and the block is assembled]. If the affordable housing is not provided, limit building height to 225 [250] feet.

Page 103: Figure 3.02: Wisconsin Avenue Corridor District Public Realm Improvements, revise illustrative graphic by removing the potential development at the Bethesda Metro Center and remove Recommended Gateway symbols at the northern and southern ends of the corridor.

Page 104: Modify language under 2. Recommendations as follows:

*a. Land Use*

Create a new civic gathering space in the form of a civic green across from the [Barnes and Noble store] plaza at the intersection of Bethesda Avenue and Woodmont Avenue.

*b. Zoning*

- See Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights in the Bethesda Row District and Figure 3.03 Bethesda Row District Recommended Zoning for the following recommendations.
- [Designate the empty lot owned by Federal Realty Investment Trust across from the Barnes and Noble plaza as a Priority Sending Site for density averaging to create a new central gathering space for the Bethesda Row district (*see Figure 3.03 Recommended Zoning and Figure 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites*).]
- [Designate Lot 10, 4913 Hampden Lane as a Priority Sending Site for density averaging to preserve existing market-rate affordable housing (*See Figure 3.03 Recommended Zoning and Figure 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites*).]
- Rezone Map #146 to increase maximum allowable building height to 60 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities, and increase the FAR from 1.75 to 2.75 so that the existing building does not become non-conforming. Rezone the property to CR 2.75, C-0.25, R-2.75, H-60 so that the existing building does not become non-conforming.
- Rezone Map #147 to increase maximum allowable building height to 90 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #149 to increase maximum allowable building height to 70 feet to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #151 to increase maximum allowable building height to 175 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #152 to increase maximum allowable building height to 250 feet closest to the Purple Line Station and retain maximum allowable building height of 145 feet along Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #154 to increase maximum allowable building height to 170 feet to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #155 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.5 FAR to 2.25 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 90 feet to

- provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #156 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.5 FAR to 2.25 FAR to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Modify Map #160 to include Map #160a to allow maximum allowable building heights of 90 feet at the corner of Bethesda and Arlington Road and on the interior of the block to accommodate potential housing behind the existing retail, transitioning to a maximum height of 70 feet along Bethesda Avenue, and increase the commercial and residential FAR to 2.25.
  - Rezone Map #161 to increase maximum allowable building height to 65 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
  - Rezone Map #162 to increase maximum allowable building height to 110 feet as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
  - Rezone Map #163 from its current zone to increase the commercial FAR from 2.0 to 3.0 FAR and increase maximum allowable building height to 200 feet, to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #164 to increase maximum allowable building height to 90 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.

Page 106: Modify second bullet under 1. Public Realm, Recommendations as follows:

- Reconfigure the intersection of Woodmont Avenue/Bethesda Avenue to shorten or otherwise improve the pedestrian crossing distance and expand the plaza located on the northwest side of the intersection. Future evaluation of this intersection should specifically evaluate a concurrent exclusive pedestrian phase (i.e., a pedestrian scramble or Barnes Dance) for all crossings during periods of peak pedestrian demand. [Reduce the size of the intersection of Woodmont Avenue and Bethesda Avenue to enhance the pedestrian experience by extending the Barnes and Noble plaza.]

Pages 108-110: Modify language under 2. Recommendations, a. Zoning as follows:

a. Zoning

- See *Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the Woodmont Triangle District and *Figure 3.05: Woodmont Triangle District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Recommend small-scale standard method infill development along Norfolk Avenue and the southern portion of the Triangle through step back regulations.
- Make existing buildings more useful and attractive with very small additions.



- [Designate properties that front Norfolk Avenue as Priority Sending Sites in order to preserve the pedestrian-scale main street atmosphere (see Figure 3.05 for Recommended Zoning and Figure 4.01 for *Proposed Priority Sending Sites*).]
- Eliminate the Woodmont Triangle Density Transfer Area to facilitate the CR zone density averaging initiatives.
- Eliminate the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment FAR 1.0 limit on nonresidential development.
- Rezone Map #19 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 0.75 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #20 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 120 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #21 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase height to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #22 from its current zone to increase the commercial FAR from 1.0 to 3.0 and increase the residential FAR from 2.75 to 3.0 FAR.
- Rezone Map #23, #24, #25, #26, and #27 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #28 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and reduce the residential density from 5.0 FAR to a 4.75 FAR to allow for some ground floor retail uses, and increase height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #29 from its current zone to reduce the residential density from 5.0 FAR to 4.75 FAR to allow for some ground floor retail uses and increase commercial FAR from 1.0 to 5.0 to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #30 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #31 and #33 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #32 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the residential density from 4.75 to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #34 and #35 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 2.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 110

- feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #36 and #38 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #37 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and the residential density from 4.75 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 225 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #39 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 250 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #40, #41 and #42 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #43 from its current zone to increase the commercial density from 0.75 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #44, #45, #46 and #47 from their current zones to increase the commercial density from 1.0 FAR to 3.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 110 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
  - Rezone Map #48 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential density from 0.5 FAR to 1.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building heights to 50 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.

Page 110: Revise the first bullet under 2. Building Form, Recommendations as follows:

- Consider the effects of sunlight and shadow on Norfolk Avenue and its small retail character by designing new development to step back from Norfolk Avenue. For new development or redevelopment, the recommended step-back is a minimum of 15 feet above a low to mid-rise base of no higher than 50 feet. The upper floor step-back should be retained across at least 70 percent of the building façade.

Page 116: Modify the third through the sixth bullets and add new bullets as follows:

- See Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights in the Pearl District and Figure 3.07 Pearl District Recommended Zoning for the following recommendations.
- Since the 1976 Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan, the houses along the south side of Montgomery Avenue have been converted to commercial uses. This Sector Plan

recommends redevelopment of [the] Map #202 CRN zoned lots to an equivalent CRT zone to allow for a new recreational park in the future that connects to the Capital Crescent Trail and expands the network of public open spaces in this district. [The Plan recommends designating the CRN zoned lots 4 – 12 as Priority Sending Sites for density averaging to create a new recreational park (*see figure 3.07: Pearl District Recommended Zoning and Figure 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites*).]

- [Designate the Waverly House apartments as a Priority Sending Site for density averaging to preserve existing affordable housing (*see figure 3.07: Pearl District Recommended Zoning and Figure 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites*).]
- Rezone [the 4400, 4340 and 4338 Montgomery Avenue properties] Map #203 from [their] its current CRN zone to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-120, reflective of the surrounding density east of Pearl Street and to provide flexible development opportunities in the future.
- [Rezone 4425 and 4343 Montgomery Avenue properties from their current CRN zone to a comparable CR zone reflective of the surrounding density east of Pearl Street (*see Figure 3.07 Pearl District Recommended Zoning and Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights*).]
- Rezone Map #189 to increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet, as all previously “T” designated heights are being increased by 20 percent to provide flexible development opportunities.
- Rezone Map #190 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height to 175 feet to provide flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #191 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential FAR to 5.0 FAR and increase the maximum allowable building height from 100T to 125 feet to provide compatibility with the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #192 from its current zone to increase the commercial and residential density from 3.0 FAR to 4.0 FAR and height from 145T to 175 feet to make sure the existing development is not made non-conforming.
- Rezone Map #194 from its current zone to CRT 0.25, C-0.25, R-0.25, H-50 to provide opportunities for shared parking and/or potential open space.
- Rezone Map #195 from its current zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-100, increasing the maximum allowable building height from 50 feet to 100 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #196 from its current EOF zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-145, increasing the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Revise Map #197 into three separate zoned areas designated as Map #197, Map #197a and Map #197b so that existing structures do not become non-conforming as follows: Map #197 (East West Towers) – CR 6.25, C-6.25, R-6.25, H-145, Map #197a (Topaz House) – CR 5.25, C-5.25, R-5.25, H-120 and Map #197b (East West Garage) – CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-120.
- Rezone Map #198 and #199 from their current EOF zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-120, increasing the maximum allowable building height to 120 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.



- Rezone Map #200 from its current zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density and building height (CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-100) to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #201 from its current EOF zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density and building height (CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-60) to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #204 from its current EOF zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density (CR-1.5) and increase the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.
- Rezone Map #205 from its current EOF zone to an equivalent CR zone with the same density (CR 3.0) and increase the maximum allowable building height to 145 feet to promote infill redevelopment with a mix of uses.

Page 118: Under 1. Public Realm, add a new Goal and Recommendation as follows:

d. Goal: Consider opportunities to expand B-CC High School

Recommendation:

- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) should evaluate the need to expand Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) High School through the expansion or acquisition of neighboring properties.

Page 118: Modify second bullet and add a third bullet under 2. Building Form, Recommendation as follows:

- Step down development to the west of B-CC High School on parcel P224 from 100 [120] feet along East-West Highway to 50 feet at the rear of the lots.
- Development along the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) should enhance the trail experience for users and minimize negative impacts. The façade of new development along the CCT should orient towards the trail with ground floor activating uses or provide an appropriate transition with setback and landscape buffer.

Page 120: Modify fourth and fifth bullets under 3.2.2 Arlington South District, A. Land Use and Zoning, 1. Goals as follows:

- Promote mixed-use redevelopment along Arlington Road [through increased building heights and density].
- Create enhanced [gateway,] access and connections for pedestrians and cyclists to Capital Crescent Trail.

Page 120: Under 2. Recommendations, a. Zoning, revise the first bullet and add a third bullet as follows:

- The Sector Plan recommends rezoning [the old post office site] Map #165, which is currently a Planned Unit Development (PD)-44 zone. The site has been recently

redeveloped as a mixed-use residential project. Rezoning the property as Commercial Residential Town (CRT) zone, CRT 1.75, C-0.5, R-1.75, H-70, would reflect the current redevelopment project, while promoting a mixed-use redevelopment compatible with the land uses in the area and character of Bethesda Row. The addition of the residential use will provide a transition from commercial uses to the Sacks subdivision of single-unit houses to the east, helping to maintain the vitality of the neighborhood (See *Figure 3.09: Arlington South District Recommended Zoning* and *Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights*).

- Eliminate the Chevy Chase Neighborhood Retail (CCNR) Overlay Zone.
- Rezone Map #166 and #167 from their current zones to increase the commercial and residential FAR to 2.25 and increase the maximum allowable building height to 90 feet to provide compatibility with the surrounding area (see *Figure 3.09: Arlington South District Recommended Zoning* and *Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights*).

Page 122: Revise the first and third bullets as follows:

- Allow increased heights on the east side of Arlington Road in the district to encourage retail and mixed-use redevelopment.
- Transition heights beyond the Arlington South district down to current allowable zoning to provide compatibility with single-unit residential neighborhoods to the east of the Sector Plan area.
- Step down heights on the property along Bradley Boulevard between Arlington Road and the Capital Crescent Trail from 90 [120] feet along Arlington Road to 70 feet on parcel P881 along the Capital Crescent Trail.

Page 124: Under 2. Recommendations, a. Zoning, modify and add zoning recommendations as follows:

- See *Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the Battery Lane District and *Figure 3.11: Battery Lane District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Rezone all PD-zoned properties in the Battery Lane District (Map #7, #8, #9, and #17) to a comparable Commercial Residential (CR) zone to promote infill redevelopment with high density residential.
- [Allow redevelopment of Lot 23, Block 2 and Lot 26, Block 2 currently zoned R-10. Rezone these properties to a comparable CR zone, allowing for redevelopment of residential apartments at a higher intensity and increased lot coverage.]
- [Allow redevelopment of Lot 8, Block 1 and Lot 43 Block 1 on the south side of Battery Lane currently zoned R-10. Rezone these properties to a comparable CR zone, allowing for redevelopment of residential apartments at a higher density and increased lot coverage.]
- Most of the existing market-rate affordable housing in the district should be [preserved] retained to ensure a variety of housing types and allow retention of lower-cost housing. The Sector Plan recommends that the retention of market-rate affordable housing in existing or replacement units in the Sector Plan area be the highest priority for public benefit points and endorses application of County programs to ensure that housing remains affordable.

- Facilitate several possible scenarios for [Lot 633] Map #12 located at 8101 Glenbrook Road, which is identified as an expansion area for Battery Lane Urban Park in Chapter 2.7 of this Plan, including park acquisition, partial redevelopment combined with park dedication, or redevelopment. Rezone Map #12 from its current CR and CRN split zoning to CR 3.0, C-3.0, R-3.0, H-120. Any redevelopment should be accessed from Rugby Avenue in order to facilitate park expansion with land from both the lot and the Glenbrook Road right-of-way and maximize visibility of the park from Woodmont Triangle. [Additionally, designate Lot 633 as a Priority Sending Site for density averaging to facilitate park expansion (see *Figure 3.11: Recommended Zoning* and *Figure 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites*)].
- Rezone the townhouse development on North Brook Lane from its current RT-12.5 zone to the Townhouse High Density (THD) zone. With the adoption of the new County Zoning Ordinance in October 2014, RT zones are being phased out and the new townhouse zones implemented through the master planning process.
- Rezone Map #16 [Lot 56], the Chevy Chase Rescue Squad site located at Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane currently zoned R-60, to [a comparable CR zone] CR 2.5, C-2.5, R-2.5, H-90 to [redevelop the Rescue Squad facility so the new construction includes high density residential uses] provide flexible redevelopment opportunities for the rescue squad that would preserve its ability to provide services while also allowing for some residential development.
- Rezone Map #4 and #6 from their current zones to CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120 to promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- Rezone Map #10 from its current zone to increase the maximum allowable building height to 120 feet to promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- Rezone Map #11 and #14 from their current zones to CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-120 to promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.

Page 126: Under 2. Building Form, remove a. Goal and Recommendations as follows:

***[a. Goal: Provide an architectural gateway to Downtown Bethesda along Old Georgetown Road.***

***Recommendations:***

Allow increased heights at the two community facilities, Bethesda Rescue Squad and Christ Lutheran Church, to provide a gateway to Downtown Bethesda along Old Georgetown Road.]

Page 127: Figure 3.13: Battery Lane District Public Realm Improvements – remove recommended gateway symbol from Old Georgetown Road and Battery Lane Intersection.

Page 128: Under A. Land Use and Zoning, 1. Goals, modify the third bullet identifying that PLD lots 10, 24, 25 and 44 should be converted to Parks as follows:

- Make the best use of land near the Bethesda Metrorail Station and future Purple Line station by promoting redevelopment of under-utilized properties and [County] private surface



parking lots. Parking Lot District (PLD) lots 10, 24, 25 and 44 should be converted to parks to the maximum extent feasible. The parking needs of neighborhood businesses that rely on these lots should be addressed and parking replaced where necessary.

Page 130: Remove the first bullet and add zoning recommendations as follows:

- See Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights in the Eastern Greenway Districts and Figure 3.14 Eastern Greenway Districts Recommended Zoning for the following recommendations.
- [Designate PLD Lot 10 as a Priority Sending Site and rezone from R-60 to a CRT zone with additional density to allow density averaging and to facilitate potential expansion of the Eastern Greenway (see Figure 3.14 Recommended Zoning and Figure 2.20 Proposed Building Heights).]
- Eliminate the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) designation.
- Rezone Map #206 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #207 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60 feet to 70 feet with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #208 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 90 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from the properties along Tilbury Street to Wisconsin Avenue and to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #209 from its current zone to CR 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.5, H-70 to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions and to provide an appropriate step up transition from the properties along Tilbury Street to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #210 from its current zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate eastern greenway if the property redevelops.
- Rezone Map #211 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #212 from its current zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate eastern greenway if the property redevelops.
- Rezone Map #213, the portion that is not parkland, from its current zone of R-60 to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions.
- Rezone Map #214 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 60T to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from the properties along Tilbury Street to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #215 from its current zone R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70, to facilitate the greenway if the property redevelops in the future.
- Rezone Map #217 from its current zone (PD-35) to a comparable CRT 1.25, C-0.25, R-1.25, H-35 zone to promote infill redevelopment.
- Rezone Map #218 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from Elm Street Park to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #219 (PLD Lot 24) from its current R-60 zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway and additional parkland.

- Rezone Map #220 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 90 feet to provide flexibility with the goal of converting this parking lot to parkland.
- Rezone Map #221 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from 46<sup>th</sup> Street to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #222 (PLD Lot 10) from its current R-60 zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway and additional parkland.
- Rezone Map #223 from its current R-60 zone to CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-0.5, H-70 to allow for flexible development opportunities and allow future development to better adapt to market conditions. This is currently a County owned property and is being used as the Writer's Center for the downtown Bethesda area.
- Rezone Map #224 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 45 feet to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from West Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #225 from its current R-60 zone to CRT 0.5, C-0.25, R-0.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway if the property redevelops in the future.
- Rezone Map #226 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35 feet to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from West Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #227 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 70 feet to provide an appropriate step up transition from West Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue.
- Rezone Map #228 and #229 from their current R-60 zone to CRT 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to facilitate the eastern greenway if the property redevelops in the future.
- Rezone Map #230 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35 feet to 45 feet to provide compatibility with the surrounding single family unit neighborhood.

Page 130: Modify greenway language in section 1. Public Realm and Building Form, Recommendations as follows:

- [Tier building heights based on the amount and type of green space provided (*see Section 4.4 Implementation*).
  - **Tier 1 Green Street:** The green street should be designed to accommodate elements such as tree canopy, wide sidewalks and stormwater management.
  - **Tier 2 Greenway:** The greenway should be designed to accommodate elements such as tree canopy and vegetation; wide pathways; seating; stormwater management; and activity space, such as small play areas, exercise stations and community gardens.
  - **Tier 3 Neighborhood Green:** The neighborhood green should be designed to accommodate space for informal recreation and activities, tree canopy and vegetation, wide pathways, seating and stormwater management.]
- The greenway should be designed to accommodate elements such as tree canopy and vegetation; wide pathways; seating; stormwater management; and activity space, such as small play areas, exercise stations and community gardens.
- In order to enhance compatibility with the adjacent residential neighborhood, the required building setback is equal to the amount of building height proposed. For example, a building proposed to have a maximum height of 50 feet must provide a minimum 50-foot setback from the existing curb. All sites should provide at minimum a 35-foot greenway. If this is not feasible because of site constraints, the Planning Board may approve a reduced setback of no less than 20 feet, with a maximum height of 35 feet if the proposed

development otherwise achieves the Eastern Greenway District vision and is compatible with the surrounding community.

- Activate ground floors of buildings facing onto the greenway, provide entries, articulate/step back upper floors and encourage balconies to ensure that the greenway-facing façade is compatible with adjacent neighborhoods and is not designed as the back of the building.
- Encourage [provision of a Tier 3 Neighborhood Green or] a larger destination park adjacent to the Farm Women's Cooperative Market on Parking Lot 24 to provide green space and programming within a short walk of the future Metrorail station entrance and Purple Line station.
- Allow structured parking to be built underneath the greenway or neighborhood green with sufficient soil depth for tree planting.
- [On blocks with existing single-unit homes, the greenway only occurs if the entire block is redeveloped.]

Page 132: Revise Figure 3.15: Eastern Greenway Districts Public Realm Improvements to illustrate the new Greenway language recommended above.

Page 133: Revise Figure 3.16: Eastern Greenway Districts Tiered Allowable Heights to reflect changes to building setbacks and building heights based on amount of park space provided as described in the language above.

Page 134: Under Land Use and Zoning, 1. Goals, remove third and last [bullet] bullets and add a bullet as follows:

- Retain [Preserve] the existing market-rate affordable multi-unit housing.
- Promote enhanced redevelopment opportunities to foster a quality mix of housing options.
- [Confirm R-60 zoning for the Sacks neighborhood.]
- For properties recommended to retain their R-10 and R-30 zoning, confirm the 35-foot height limit from the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan.
- Enhance pedestrian connectivity to Norwood Local Park.
- Improve pedestrian and bike safety along Bradley Boulevard.
- [Extend Strathmore Street to Chevy Chase Drive.]

Page 134: Under a. Land Use, delete the first bullet as follows:

[Extend Strathmore Street south across Bradley Boulevard to Chevy Chase Drive to provide additional access and mobility from Downtown Bethesda to south of Bradley and Norwood Local Park (*see Transportation Section in Chapter Two*).]

Page 134: Under b. Zoning, modify the first and third bullets and add a fourth bullet as follows (retain the remaining bullets):

- Confirm the existing R-60 zoning in the Sacks subdivision to retain the single-unit detached houses along Leland Street and Wellington Drive. [The Plan supports efforts to preserve the viability and residential integrity of the neighborhood as an alternative to multi-unit



living in the Sector Plan area.] The Plan also recommends a Residential Floating Zone to allow for residential development at higher densities in appropriate circumstances. Whether a Townhouse or Apartment Floating zone is appropriate, and maximum allowable height and density, should be based on the size of tract and whether only a limited portion of the neighborhood requests rezoning or the entire neighborhood is rezoned. Should only part of the neighborhood be rezoned, then the compatibility of new development with the remaining single-family homes will be important.

- Rezone all Employment Office (EOF) properties in the South Bethesda District to a comparable Commercial Residential (CR) zone to promote infill redevelopment (*see Figure 3.17 Recommended Zoning and Figure 2.20 Proposed Building Heights*).
- Extend a pedestrian pathway along the east edge of the Cokinos property, Map #186 [Lot 6, Block 1], to allow for a more formalized public access to Norwood Local Park from Downtown Bethesda.
- Confirm the R-10 zoning for the Bethesda Fire Station 6.

Page 136: Remove the first and second bullets and add zoning recommendations as follows:

- See Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights for maximum building heights in the South Bethesda District and Figure 3.17 South Bethesda District Recommended Zoning for the following recommendations.
- [Provide redevelopment opportunities for the Barclay Apartments (HOC/Chevy Chase Development Corporation) located on Bradley Boulevard and Chevy Chase Drive, that are currently zoned R-10, by rezoning the property to a CR zone. Designate the property as a Priority Sending Site for density transfer to preserve existing market-rate affordable housing and to provide opportunities for some redevelopment (*see Figure 3.17 Recommended Zoning, Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights and Figure 4.01 Proposed Priority Sending Sites*).]
- [Allow redevelopment potential of the Bethesda Fire Department site located at the corner of Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue that is currently zoned R-10 by recommending a CR floating zone that would allow for replacement of the fire station in order to maintain service to the community and to allow additional uses on the property. The Bethesda Fire Department property would retain the base zone of R-10 with a maximum height of 35 feet until the floating zone of CR 1.5, C-1.5, R-1.5, H-70 is applied for and approved by the County Council through the process outlined in the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance (*see Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights*). For the undeveloped portion of the property to the west of the Fire Station facility, which is identified as a potential open space in Chapter 2.7 and on *Figure 2.19 Public Open Space*, facilitate several possible scenarios, including park acquisition and partial redevelopment combined with park dedication.]
- Rezone Map #172 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to allow the Condominium ownership the ability to redevelop in the future. Any redevelopment should be compatible with the surrounding Sacks Neighborhood and heights may be limited to less than 70 feet to ensure compatibility.
- Rezone Map #174 and #175 from their current zones of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.

- Rezone Map #176 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.5, R-1.5, H-90 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #177 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #178 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-90 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #179 from its current zone R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #180 from its current zone of R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.75, C-0.25, R-1.75, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.
- Rezone Map #185 and #187 from their current zones R-10 to a comparable CR zone, CR 1.5, C-0.25, R-1.5, H-70 to promote infill redevelopment of residential apartments and increased lot coverage.

Page 138: Under b. Zoning, modify second bullet and add zoning recommendations as follows:

- See *Figure 2.20: Recommended Maximum Building Heights* for maximum building heights in the Arlington North District and *Figure 3.19 Arlington North District Recommended Zoning* for the following recommendations.
- Rezone the five R-60 properties in this District to a comparable CR zone reflective of the surrounding density [(see *Figure 3.19 Recommended Zoning* and *Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights*)].
- Rezone [Lot 16] (Map #126) on Moorland Lane currently zoned CRN 0.5, C-0.5, R-0.25, H-35 to a [comparable] CR zone [reflective of the surrounding densities] with an increased maximum allowable building height of 120 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Limit height of new development along Arlington Road to a maximum of 60 feet.
- Rezone Map #127 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 125T to 150 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #128 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 35T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #129 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.0, C-0.25, R-2.0, H-60, reflective of the density and building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #130 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 40T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #131 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #132 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.5, R-2.5, H-150, reflective of the density and building heights near the core of downtown along Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #133 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.5, R-2.5, H-120, reflective of the density and building heights near the core of downtown along Woodmont Avenue.

- Rezone Map #134 to increase the maximum allowable building height to 155 feet, reflective of the building heights along Woodmont Avenue.
- Rezone Map #135 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.25, R-2.5, H-70, reflective of the density and building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #136 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 40T to 50 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #137 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 50T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #138 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 70T to 85 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #139 from its current R-60 zone to CR 2.5, C-0.25, R-2.5, H-70, reflective of the density and building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #140 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 70T to 85 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #141 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 50T to 60 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #142 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 45T to 55 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #143 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 40T to 50 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.
- Rezone Map #144 to increase the maximum allowable building height from 75T to 90 feet, reflective of the building heights in the surrounding area.

Page 144: Modify the first two paragraphs under 4.1.2 Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) as follows:

In general, an overlay zone is a mapped district placed over the standard, underlying zone that modifies the uses or development requirements of the zone. An overlay zone imposes requirements or restrictions in addition to, or in place of, those of the underlying zoning classification. [In theory, an] An overlay zone can be either more restrictive or less restrictive than the standards and requirements of the underlying zoning classification.

Overlay zones are appropriate where there is a special public policy interest that cannot be met by either the standards of the underlying zone or by rezoning to a different zone. [The intent of an overlay zone is to provide requirements and standards that are necessary to achieve the planning goals and objectives for development or redevelopment of an area.] Overlay zones are created in areas of critical public interest and provide uniform, comprehensive development regulations for an area. An overlay zone can only be applied when it has been recommended by a Master Plan and must be implemented by a Sectional Map Amendment.

Page 145: Modify the second and fourth paragraphs (including bullets) as follows:

The Bethesda Overlay Zone is also intended to [appropriately allocate density within Downtown Bethesda that will protect existing residential neighborhoods, provide additional land for parks and open space critical to support additional development, expand the County's affordable housing inventory, ensure high quality design through the use of a Design Review Advisory Panel and for the purpose of modifying the density averaging rules] implement the



recommendations of the Bethesda Downtown Plan as it relates to density, building heights, affordable housing goals, parks, and design.

In order to accomplish these objectives, this Plan recommends zoning individual properties CR with the currently mapped density limit and the building heights recommended in this Sector Plan along with the Bethesda Overlay Zone.

More specifically, the Bethesda Overlay Zone will:

- Cover all properties within the Sector Plan boundary.
- Set a cap on development to ensure that total density in the Plan Area, including existing, [mapped CR density] approved, and new development (including affordable housing), does not exceed [approximately] 32.4 million square feet of gross floor area.
- Allow development to exceed the mapped CR density limit on a property [if overlay zone density is available and the proposed development meets certain requirements] under certain circumstances.
- Establish the requirements for additional density received through the Bethesda Overlay Zone, including a requirement to [proportionally] provide [a Park Impact Payment, provide 15 percent MPDUs and participate in a Design Review Advisory Panel at the Concept Plan and/or Sketch Plan application phase] for park needs.
- [No additional building height will be given with MPDUs outside of the High Performance Area] Increase the minimum MPDU requirement from 12.5% to 15% MPDUs for all residential optional method projects and remove height and density bonus for providing up to 15% MPDUs. The Overlay zone should determine whether there are circumstances under which additional height should be allowed for properties that provide more than 15% MPDUs.
- Establish the ability for projects that provide 25% MPDUs to exceed the CR density limit on such properties without additional payments or proportionate costs.
- Establish [the] a process for obtaining approval of a development [with overlay zone density and using it in a timely manner] so that building design is given enhanced consideration, the provision of market rate affordable housing is rewarded, and unused density is not hoarded.
- Modify the density averaging rules [to encourage transfers of density from the Priority Sending Sites identified in this Sector Plan].

Page 145: Add new section 4.1.3 Annual Monitoring and Reporting as follows:

#### **4.1.3 Annual Monitoring and Reporting**

The Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan is comprised of many complex elements, each of which depends upon the success of other Plan elements. In recognition of this complexity, this Sector Plan recommends annual monitoring of schools, parks, and transportation. The annual report will be presented to the Planning Board each year and transmitted to the County Council for review. If any of the elements included in the annual report demonstrate issues, staff will specifically identify issues and potential solutions for discussion during the annual presentation to the Board.

Once total development—including approvals—reaches 30.4 million square feet, the County Council may require certain actions before additional development is permitted. Depending on the Planning Board’s recommendations, such actions would address needed infrastructure and/or achieving of the NADMS goal as outlined in 2.3.5 Transportation Demand Management and progress toward the acquisition of half of the recommended new urban parks as discussed in 2.7 Parks and Open Space. This would not apply to projects providing or preserving at least 25 percent MPDUs.

Page 145: Change section numbering as follows:

**[4.1.3] 4.1.4 Public Amenities and Benefits**

Pages 145-146: Change section numbering for 4.1.4 Public Benefits in the CR Zone and modify language before 2. Public Open Space as follows:

**[4.1.4] 4.1.5 Public Benefits in the CR Zone**

This Sector Plan recommends modifying the public benefits points allowed in Bethesda via the Bethesda Overlay Zone. Potential changes include eliminating points for transit proximity and points for formerly optional actions that are otherwise required by the Overlay Zone (e.g., 15 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs)).

**A. Top Priority Benefits**

The following public benefits are of highest priority in all optional method projects:

**1. Affordable Housing**

Since the Overlay Zone requires that all optional method projects provide 15 percent MPDUs, public benefit points should not be provided for projects that comply with the required 15 percent, but should be allowed for projects providing more than 15 percent MPDUs. [This Plan recommends that optional method development in the Sector Plan Area should be allowed only if it delivers certain affordable housing benefits. An optional method project that includes residential dwellings should provide a minimum of 15 percent Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs).] See Bethesda Overlay Zone for specific requirements and building heights restrictions.

- Create a new category of public benefit points related to the retention of existing market-rate affordable housing in existing and/or replacement units within the Sector Plan using rental agreements with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA).
- In the South Bethesda and Battery Lane Districts, preservation of market-rate affordable housing and/or additional MPDUs beyond 15 percent is the top priority for public benefit points.

Pages 147-149: Remove Section 4.2 Priority Sending Sites.

Page 147: Add Section 4.2 Density Averaging as follows:

#### **4.2 Density Averaging**

Transfers of density between properties have occurred in Bethesda under existing provisions in the Zoning Ordinance and were an important recommendation in the 2006 Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan as a means of preserving the existing small businesses in the area, to provide more opportunities for multi-unit residential development and to retain the eclectic character of the neighborhood that was unique to Woodmont Triangle.

In the past there has been no limit on the ability of a future master plan to increase density, regardless of whether a transfer occurred in the past.

This Sector Plan recommends providing additional clarity regarding the policy on density averaging in Downtown Bethesda.

#### **Recommendation**

A new master plan can increase height and/or density on a site that has transferred density (particularly for properties near transit); however, the transferred density should be deducted from the new allowable total development.

Page 152: Under section 4.5 Greenway, modify language in the second and third paragraphs, including bullets, as follows:

On a site identified as a greenway, this Plan recommends that building heights be reduced below the maximum height allowed in the applicable zone based on the setback from the street and the land be dedicated for the greenway. This reduction in height applies to the entire [parcel] portion of the property zoned 70 feet (35 feet) in the Eastern Greenway Districts, as shown in Figure 2.20 Recommended Maximum Building Heights.

In order to enhance compatibility with the [abutting] adjacent residential neighborhood, [the greater the setback, the lesser the reduction in the allowed building height, as follows:] the required building setback is equal to the amount of building height proposed. For example, a building proposed to have a maximum height of 50 feet must provide a minimum 50-foot setback from the existing curb. All sites should provide at minimum a 35-foot greenway. If this is not feasible because of site constraints, the Planning Board may approve a reduced setback of no less than 20 feet with a maximum height of 35 feet if the proposed development otherwise achieves the Eastern Greenway District vision and is compatible with the surrounding community.

- **[Tier 1 Green Street:** For a building set back 20 feet to 35 feet from the curb, the maximum building height is 35 feet.
- **Tier 2 Greenway:** For a building set back 36 feet to 75 feet from the curb, the maximum building height is 50 feet.



- **Tier 3 Neighborhood Green:** For a building set back at a distance greater than 75 feet from the curb, the maximum building height is 70 feet.]

Similar to compatibility requirements in the zoning code, the maximum building height measurement [for each tier] is taken from the average grade along the building facing the greenway.

Page 153: Change the heading and add new sub-heading as follows:

#### 4.6 Capital Improvements Program and New Financing Mechanisms

##### 4.6.1 Capital Improvements Program

Page 153: Revise second sentence as follows:

Some projects may be completed using the Amenity Fund and with private sector participation[, including:].

Pages 153-154: Revise Table 4.01 as follows:

1. Delete “Strathmore Street Extension.” line.
2. Revise eighth line as follows: “Reconfigure East-West Hwy, Montgomery Lane, Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont Avenue [into two-way street systems] with separated bike lanes”.
3. Add “Capital Crescent Trail tunnel/surface route beneath Wisconsin Avenue and Elm Street, via Elm Street Park.” Category: Transportation. Lead Agency: MCDOT. Coordinating Agencies: SHA, M-NCPPC, Town of Chevy Chase.
4. Revise project name for the last project on page 153 as follows: “New separated [Bikeway] bikeway lanes on Woodmont Avenue, Bradley Boulevard, [Norfolk Avenue,] Arlington Road, and Bethesda Avenue/Willow Lane between Woodmont Avenue and 47<sup>th</sup> Street.” Category: Transportation. Lead Agency: MCDOT. Coordinating Agencies: SHA, M-NCPPC.
5. On page 153, add a new line, “New bike lanes on Chelton Road, Pearl Street, Norfolk Avenue, Cheltenham Drive, Elm Street, Battery Lane, and Wilson Lane.” Category: Transportation. Lead Agencies: MCDOT. SHA. Coordinating Agency: M-NCPPC.
6. Revise top line on page 154 as follows: “Shared Roadway on [Cheltenham Road, Edgemoor Lane,] Commerce Lane, Avondale Street, Rosedale Avenue, Tilbury [street] Street, [Pearl Street], St. Elmo Avenue, Cordell Avenue, Bethesda Avenue.”

Page 154: Add the following new section at the end of the page:

##### 4.6.2 New Financing Mechanisms

One of the four overarching goals of the Sector Plan is to increase parks and open space in Bethesda. The Sector Plan identifies several projects in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to achieve this goal, but the capacity of the current CIP to fund these projects is limited and the cost of acquiring and developing new parks in a developed area will be significant.

This Plan recommends the exploration of new financing mechanisms that could help pay for new parks. This includes the park impact payment recommended for the Overlay zone, as well as other potential alternative financing mechanisms (such as a special taxing district) that could provide a more stable source of funding not linked to new development and therefore available in the near term.

Page 156: Under **4.7.4 Woodmont Triangle Action Group (WTAG)**, revise the fourth paragraph as follows:

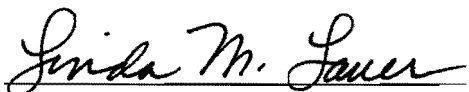
This Sector Plan supports the creation of a standing committee or an advisory group to address implementation of this Sector Plan. The formation of any new standing committee or advisory group should be staffed [initiated] by the Planning Department in close coordination with the Board of the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

### **General**

All illustrations and tables included in the Plan will be revised to reflect the District Council changes to the Planning Board Draft Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan (July 2016). The text and graphics will be revised as necessary to achieve and improve clarity and consistency, to update factual information, and to convey the actions of the District Council. Graphics and tables will be revised to be consistent with the text.

A strategic plan for achieving the plan's NADMS goal should be prepared by the Department of Transportation—in collaboration with the Planning Department and Bethesda Transportation Solutions—within one year of the adoption of the plan. The strategic plan should consist of a Transportation Demand Management Plan specific to Bethesda, a Bethesda Unified Mobility Program (BUMP), and any other element needed to help achieve the NADMS goal.

This is a correct copy of Council action.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Linda M. Lauer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Linda M. Lauer, Clerk of the Council



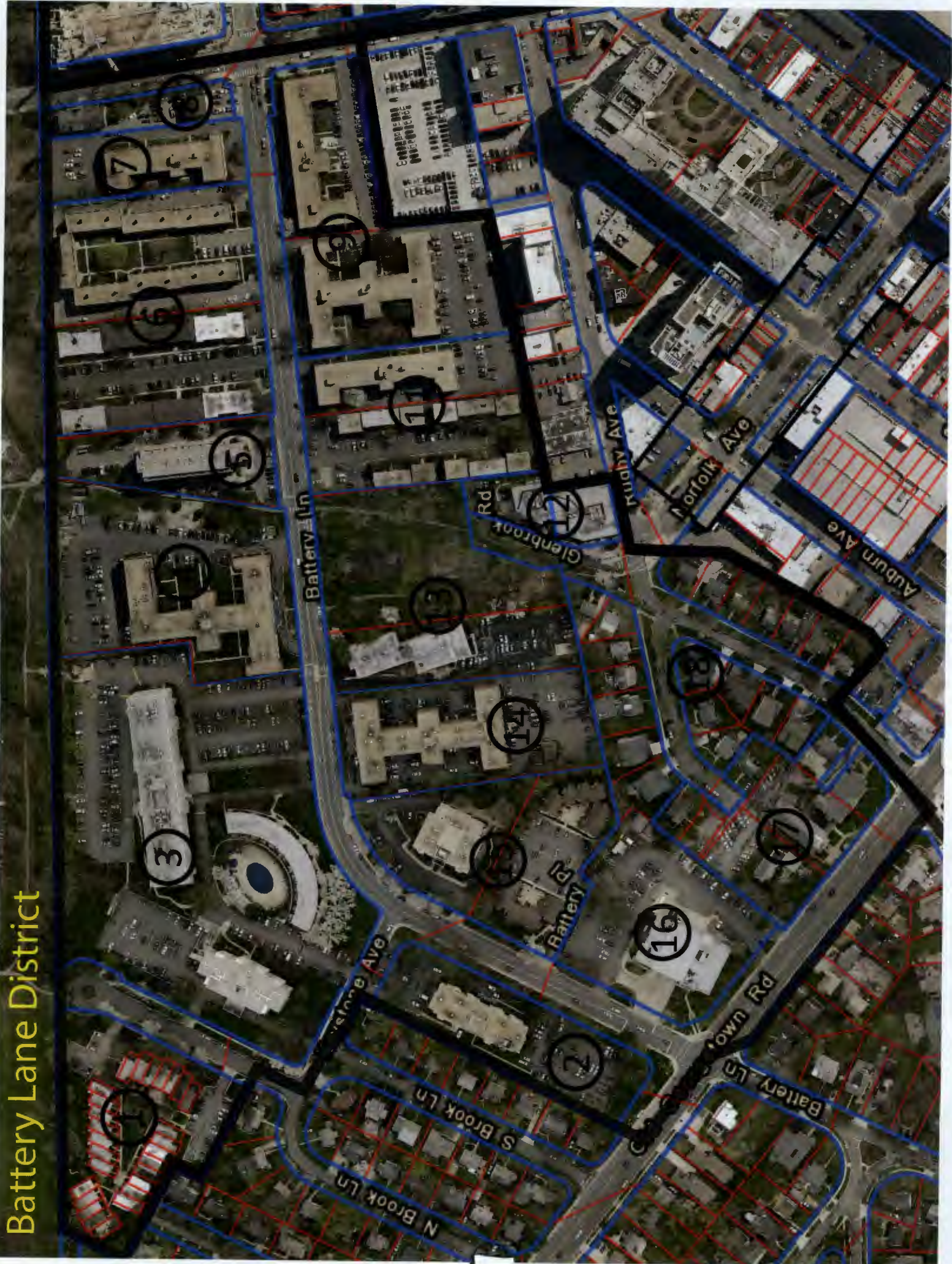


# Arlington South District



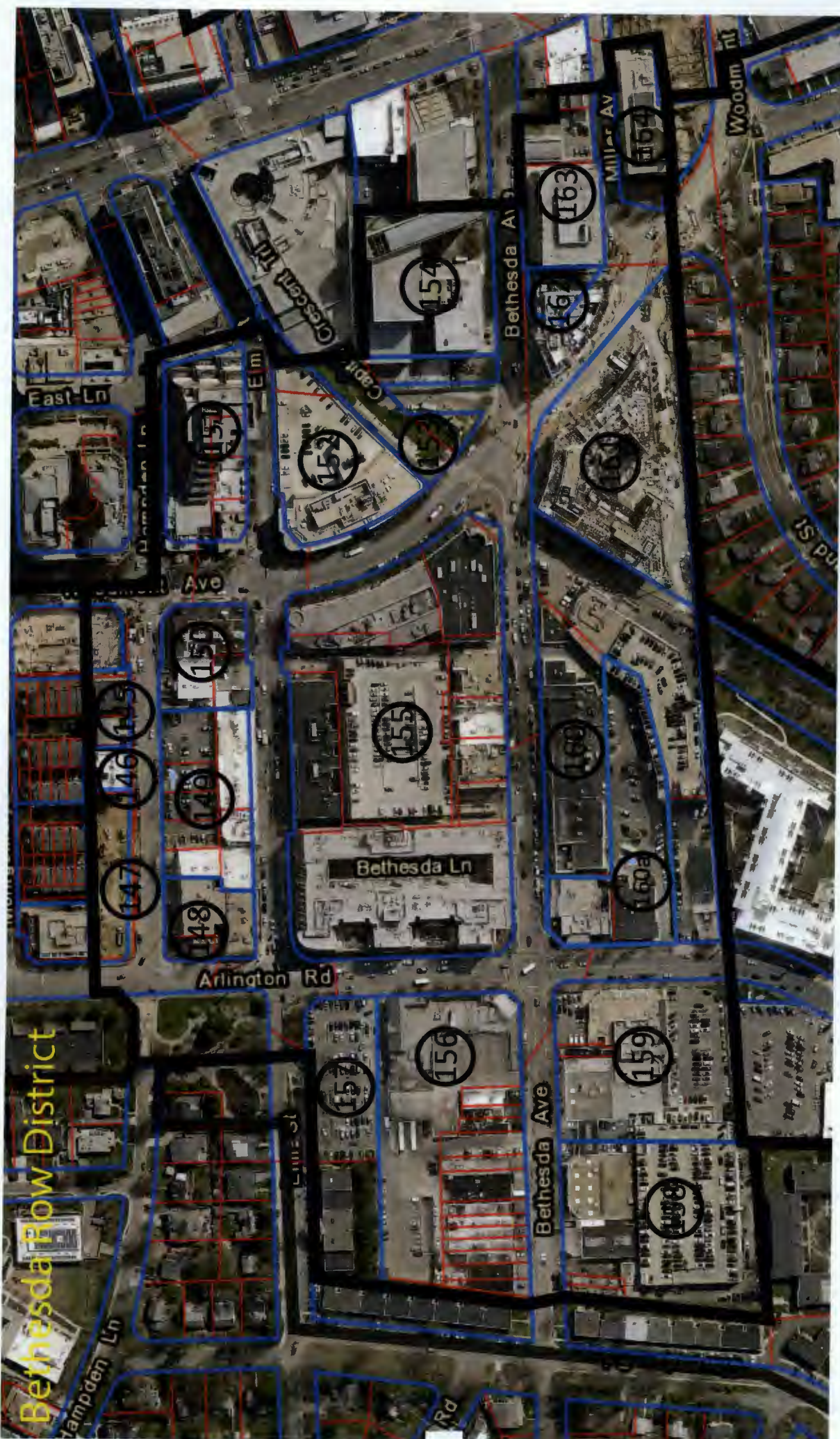


# Battery Lane District





Bethesda Row District









# Eastern Greenway St South





Pearl District

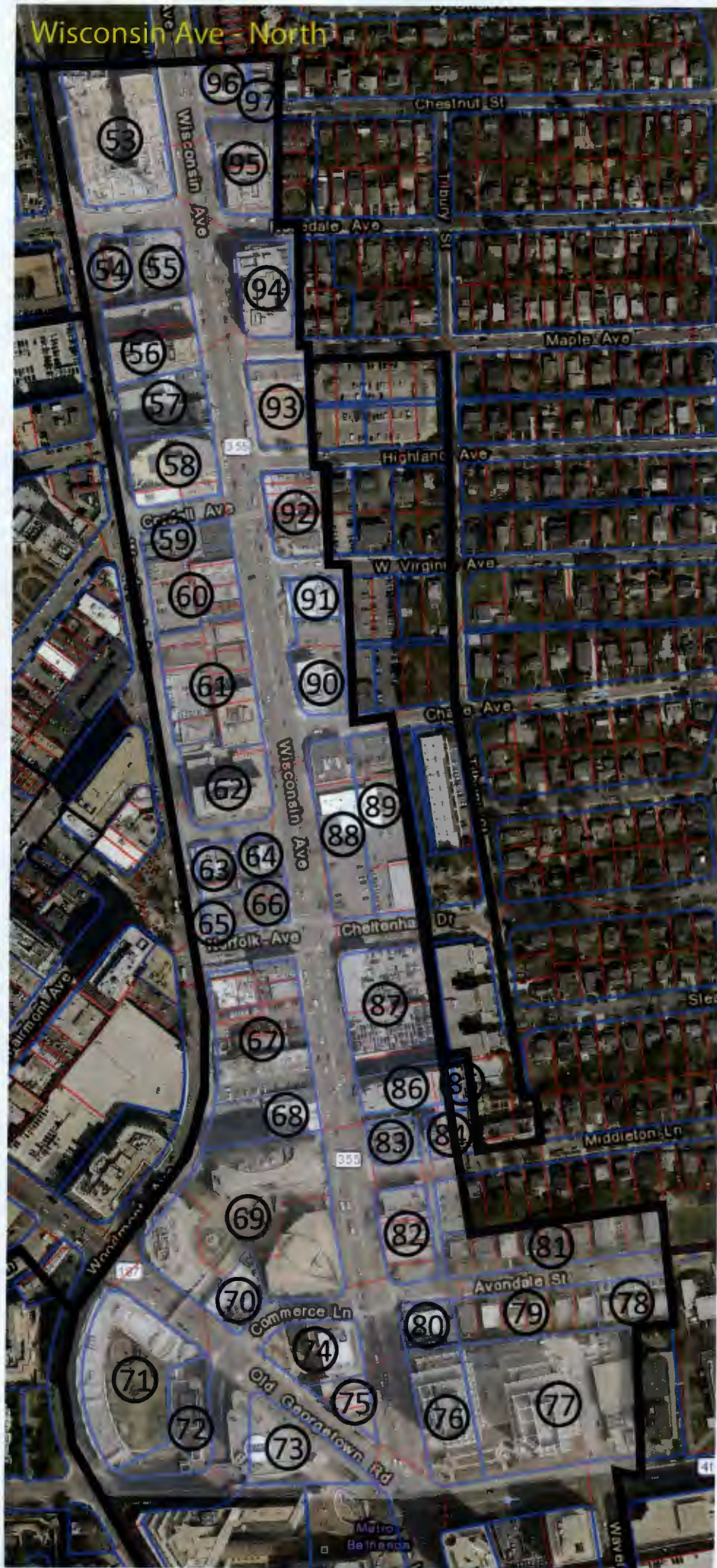








Wisconsin Ave - North









# Woodmont Triangle District











# Bethesda Downtown Plan

**Approved and Adopted May 2017**

M-NCPPC  
The Montgomery County Planning Department  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

[MontgomeryPlanning.org](http://MontgomeryPlanning.org)

