

# BRAC Community Vision 1-19-2010

| 1. Strengths of my community -- Why did I choose to live or work here? | 2. Weaknesses of my community -- What would make me live or work elsewhere?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 3. What distinguishes my community from others?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 4. Opportunities of my community -- How can we make it better?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 5. Threats to my community -- What is worrying me?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 6. Defining the ideal community -- "Long term vision."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 7. What do I need to know? -- Questions for government and planning officials                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| Ilava Hopkins (East Bethesda Neighborhood Coalition)                   | Cost.<br>Congestion                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | We interact with our neighbors (strong sense of community).<br>We patronize local businesses.<br>Residents are informed and are not narrow or close minded                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Provide more points of access for many kinds of people to live here.<br>Provide better public transit options so people don't have to take their cars                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Gridlock.<br>Too many people priced out of the area.<br>Economic decline of the business community.<br>Decline in property values                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Served by reliable, safe public transit.<br>Walkable, bikeable, livable.<br>Gelling people (workers, residents, visitors) out of their cars and interacting with neighbors and local businesses.<br>Planning and implementing changes in a sustainable manner.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | The county's vision for this area. How it relates to surrounding areas (White Flint, Chevy Chase, Kensington).<br>The county's commitment to infrastructure to support existing and provide for anticipated expansion of job base and necessary housing in the Medical Center/White Flint/Chevy Chase area                                                                                                                                                     |
| Lawrence Hirsch (Mentor, Neighborhood Coalition)                       | Mature trees, balance of nature and roadways that, if anything, emphasizes nature, expanded.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Maintenance of natural balance is a real quality of the aspect of the community that is in jeopardy if commuter traffic is not diverted to mass transit, or if the relatively narrow roadways are                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| George Milne (Stone Ridge School)                                      | Vibrant community - full of families                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Proximity to world class medical institutions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Look at the Big Picture. Plan and implement accordingly                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Bandaid solutions to major problems                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Need broader perspective and participation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Where's the commeline and money?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Chuck Floyd (Kensington)                                               | Closer to downtown for work, metro, and shopping                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Stable neighborhoods, good schools                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Better traffic control, more highway upgrades                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Illegal immigrants, crime, too much traffic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Better roads, bike/running paths, law enforcement of illegals and crime                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | How will the traffic situation be solved?<br>Will the police start enforcing the law?<br>Will the elected officials stop approving new developments until the road situation is corrected?<br>Will the elected officials stop protecting the illegals?                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Jim Altman (Bethesda Parkway)                                          | Cost.<br>Congestion.<br>Blandness                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Community is diverse and engaged. Lots of people -- scientists, US government employees, etc -- who are making the world a better place                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Provide more points of access for many kinds of people to live here.<br>Provide better public transit options so people don't have to take their cars                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | This close-in area might come to have all of the worst aspects of suburban sprawl                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | A sense of place is important. Not just anonymous people doing anonymous things, but a livable, walkable and diverse community                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | I want a sense of community. I know what's most important to me. I have no idea what's most important to them. If everything is a priority, nothing is.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Nancy Alados (Bethesda Crest)                                          | Not over-density but cosmopolitan in demographics and amenities.<br>Accessible to downtown DC<br>Adequate infrastructure - sophisticated enough to have a "Cultural Arts Masterplan."<br>Walkable to Metro<br>Relatively clean and safe<br>Culturally, ethnically, racially, religiously diverse<br>Not too anonymous concrete canyon filled with too many people, noise or dirt | European style street life and trees, fountains, live music, outside cafes, etc.<br>Arts and Entertainment District (Theatres, art house movies, galleries, Wilbur's Center; other places where people of all ages can interact and learn.)<br>Cultural festivals like the Bethesda Literary Festival<br>Cultural, ethnic, religious, age, and socio-economic diversity<br>Relatively real, not plastic, because it grew into itself, not from governmental planning | Don't repeat old mistakes that create urban blight and make people move away<br>Public transportation to Northern Virginia<br>Keep it affordable to Mom & Pop stores/restaurants, who provide real goods or services<br>More subway stops, greater frequency, and more and cheaper cars<br>Mass transit educational campaign to improve public participation and increase public transportation use by all social strata | That Bethesda will implode from being used as a "Cash Cow" for the County and State<br>That officials care more about dollars and development than people and services<br>That specialized, ad hoc interest groups who press for "change" will ignore broader public opinion or common sense<br>Excessive high rise development will produce: 1) Too dense a population, 2) Strain (stretching) infrastructure, 3) Strain sunlight out of streets and buildings 3) a repeat of 1930's-60's Robert Moses types of bad "Avenue" urban development/design that will negate positive change | A place where community is built upon opportunities for people's interactions, not bricks<br>Local education and outlook, but adds to the whole region<br>Not anonymous not too large, tall, or dense in physical scale<br>Not so big a population that citizens don't have a voice or feel anonymous<br>Not a high rise canyon but a mixture of old and new architecture and heights--(don't care existing character)<br>Real and organic development, not institutionally planned or "plastic" | Is someone in charge of BRAC yet? I<br>How do you weigh info you get from town meetings?<br>How can you access more comprehensive responses from a broader population?<br>What will you do if BRAC or development masses up Bethesda?<br>Where or to whom should citizens go if they feel no one is listening and feel powerless?<br>How come no County agencies stepped forward proactively to tailor BRAC to better fit Bethesda and its existing community? |
|                                                                        | Mix of town/dough, serious and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Brain power and a sophisticated population that                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

|                                     | quitty buildings; crazy quilt of streets;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | attracts arts and lifestyle amenities                                                                            | Higher taxes and race/parking fees funneled to other parts of state or county; and shift changes us                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | In character                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Will local Representatives step in to protect Bethesda if State/County politicians' efforts to resuscitate Maryland's construction industry via the Bethesda BRAC (opportunism) gets too aggressive? (Tom Maryland's, "Jobs, Jobs, Jobs!") Sounds like they plan to develop us to smithereens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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|                                     | Mix of old and new (restaurants, character, etc.)<br>Fun and functional stores. (Tolerable boutiques and hardware stores, etc.)                                                                                                                                                 | It's a destination, not a bedroom suburb                                                                         | Overpopulation ruining quality of life by bringing more traffic, pollution, dirt, noise, crowding<br>Changing roads into highways that ruin neighborhoods and destroy greenery.                                                                                                                                                             | Transportation improvements/alternatives that don't hurt existing neighborhoods<br>Realistic development (So far, successfully walkable/sustainable cities I've read of are small and have populations of around 5,000 people.) | Why is there a great divide between what locals want/need and what planners/politicians envision? It's a question like, "Who is the servant and who is the master?"<br>How can citizens help (theory-oriented) planners and development-overzealous politicians get out of their bibles and hit reality? (They seem out of control)<br>Where do you think all the people will come from to fill the high-rise developments proposed for along 355? (They can't sell existing condos or fully lease apartments now and possibly in the long-term future. Retail along the Pike is struggling too.)<br>Why should we believe that you ("they") can sustain a low SOV ratio and build up public transportation? (Existing services are already badly maintained and insufficient.)<br>What if what denser development causes people to move further out/apart to find breathing space and escape negatively-impacted infrastructure? Won't this defeat the whole purpose? |
| Debbie Michaels (Glenbrook Village) | Walking to parks and Bethesda<br>Open space across the street, very convenient                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Open minded Professionals<br>Active Community Members                                                            | Gridlock<br>Decline in Community, business and property values                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Long term global vision, rules and guidelines in place that will stand the test of time and be upheld for all involved not place meal planning                                                                                  | What is the overall plan for Montgomery County and how does it fit in with the future of the State, projected growth and sustainable living?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Madlyn Mazuzan (Town of Okunant)    | 40+ years ago there was good local bus transport and good schools and rec facilities were near by.<br>Traffic conditions can make going somewhere a time consuming and a major hassle. I shop etc. off 1270 often because I am in that area almost every week for other reasons | It is a older community with many long-time residents as well as many younger families. All ages are represented | Traffic overload will make things intolerable especially for Seniors who want to remain in their homes<br>My community is near the center of Bethesda but traffic and parking conditions sometimes make it hard to take advantage of all it has to offer. Making it easier to get around without a car or providing more parking would help | A place where one can walk or access direct transportation to accomplish what they need and want to do in a physically attractive setting without excessive noise, pollution, or congestion                                     | What are the long term goals?<br>I do not see any real coordination between various projects.<br>Too much money is spent with not enough to show for it                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Ginanne Kallano (Greater Bethesda)  | Strong economy and business and federal                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | The BCC area is the economic hub of Montgomery County.                                                           | For government officials to realize the unique community we                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Government and other officials seeing the BCC area as a cash                                                                                                                                                                    | Does the County have a long term plan for this community.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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| <p><b>Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce</b></p> <p><b>government center.</b></p> <p>We close to work here because the BCC area provides the best community and business environments in which to work and live.</p> <p>This is where the County's economic hub is located</p>                                                                                                                            | <p>role that business plays in the community. Montgomery County is in danger of losing its status as a major headquarters center due to the increased taxes, fees, fines, bureaucracy and anti-business attitude found here</p> <p>which is the economic hub of the State.</p> <p>We boast the "smartest" community with more degrees than any other place in the nation.</p> <p>Our residents and businesses are involved in the community and work well together – understanding the lack of business appreciation discussed above.</p> <p>We are also the center of research and information especially in the area of health care (NIH, WRNMMC, Howard Hughes, etc.)</p> | <p>have and the importance of allowing more density by encouraging transit-oriented development throughout the entire BCC area (Friendship Heights, Downtown Bethesda, North Bethesda/Wilco Hill and Kensington).</p> <p>For appropriate officials to be more open-minded regarding the need to have an off-ramp from the Beltway to the NIH-WRNMMC campuses, which would significantly make a positive impact on this community</p> | <p>must review/expand how its decisions affect (and fit within) the existing economic and land use landscape. Piecemeal legislation and fragmented planning should not be allowed without a review of their economic and regional impacts. The BRAC and White Flint Sector Plan processes have uncovered and energized a new breed of citizen activists in our community. The new activist sees economic growth and land use planning as opportunities to better his/her quality of life.</p> <p>In response, the County, businesses, developers and community leaders must prove that proposed changes will, on balance, provide needed improvements for the majority of affected citizens. The County has a unique role in leading this new discussion and providing strong leadership (with a global perspective) in order to implement warranted and necessary changes</p> | <p>inclusive of the "surrounding" areas that are directly affected by BRAC?</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p><b>Avica Mahajan (Howard Hughes Medical Institute)</b></p> <p>HHMI located in Chevy Chase because of the ability to acquire sufficient property to create a retreat-like campus close to NIH and policy makers in Washington, D.C. It's why we stayed.</p> <p>Schools are excellent, the environment is attractive, and we are close to major transportation centers (Beltway, airports, Metro)</p> | <p>Montgomery County has an overly complex regulatory structure that makes it prohibitively expensive and difficult to expand or adapt physical facilities.</p> <p>The cost of real estate means that many employees commute from far-flung suburbs or Virginia.</p> <p>Absence of a refreshed master plan that ties the pieces together, particularly as regards transit, respect for existing residential communities, raises concern for the future</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>Highly capable workforce</p> <p>Quality of the schools.</p> <p>Great space and access to assets such as Rock Creek Park</p> <p>Easy access to vibrant entertainment/business centers in Bethesda CBD, Kensington, and Chevy Chase DC, walking distance to Starbucks</p>                                                                                                                                                           | <p>Important to bring together residential communities, businesses, and other interested parties to create a framework for the future aimed at maintaining a livable, walkable, sustainable environment in this important part of Montgomery County.</p> <p>Connecticut Avenue, in particular, has to be seen as more than a conduit for Beltway traffic</p> <p>The residential communities in and around the Beltway attendance camps require thoughtful attention so that they may be desirable and attractive places to live</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Who is prepared to take responsibility for blurring community, businesses, and governmental leaders together in charting a course for the future?</p> <p>The new Walter Reed will be the crown jewel of the military medical system. We ought to use it as a galvanizing opportunity to see whether it is possible to create a consensus for the future that also incorporates an understanding of the long-term patterns of growth at both Walter Reed and NIH.</p> <p>More broadly, how will Montgomery County streamline its regulatory, planning, and fiscal management without creating a free-for-all?</p> |
| <p><b>Leslie Weber (Suburban Hospital)</b></p> <p>We were invited here to help meet a community need, to make this community better and have continued to grow and evolve to meet evolving needs.</p> <p>One of the strengths that keeps us here is the ability to partner with others so that the quality of all we do together is higher</p>                                                         | <p>If clients or employees can't get to us, if our partners relocated or if we couldn't modernize and evolve</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p>Educational attainment of employees and clients and the subsequent climate of intellectual curiosity</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Invest in transportation: encourage density, continue to support education for young families and new opportunities to "age in place" for boomers</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>Places comfortable for families of diverse income, age, and ethnic characteristics</p> <p>An ideal community is one in which jobs, housing, and necessary services (retail, health, education, recreation, and public safety) are located in close proximity to one another and people can move relatively conveniently between them</p> <p>Infrastructure is in place to ensure good functioning on a day-to-day basis and the community has the resources to address emerging crises</p>                                                                                                                       |