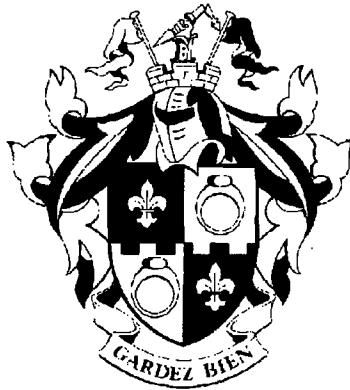


An Evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.



**Office of Legislative Oversight
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Executive Summary

Local law authorizes the County to establish urban district corporations to provide services within the County's urban districts. The Council established the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. as the corporation for the Bethesda Urban District in 1993. The Code requires that the Council re-authorize the Partnership every five years, and that the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) evaluate the performance of the Partnership before re-authorization.

The Partnership provides a variety of services within and outside of the Bethesda Urban District through contracts with the County Government. In FY 2004:

- A \$1.9 million contract with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center funds maintenance, marketing, and special events in the Bethesda Urban District,
- A \$430,000 contract with the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) funds Bethesda Transportation Solutions,
- A \$188,000 contract with the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts funds trash collection and street sweeping in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts, and
- A \$38,000 contract with DPWT funds groundskeeping services at public parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District.

Approximately 70% of the County funds allocated to the Partnership in FY 04 come from the Bethesda Parking Lot District (PLD) Fund. Bethesda Urban District tax funds represent approximately 17%. Other sources of County funds include Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District funds (7%) and revenue from maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners (6%).

OLO's evaluation concludes that the Partnership fulfilled the purposes of the organization outlined in County law, the Partnership's Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership's Bylaws. Specifically, the Partnership successfully provides maintenance and marketing services, advances the sense of community, enhances safety and security, and enlists financial support for the Bethesda Urban District. In response to a Council recommendation, the Partnership also prepared a strategic plan that proposes strategic initiatives and actions for the next five years, presents priorities for the first year, and recommends Council discussion items.

OLO's interviews with individuals who interact with the Partnership found that the staff is professional and responsive, and produces high quality work. The results of five focus groups, convened by the Partnership, suggest that individuals are pleased with the Partnership's maintenance services. Focus group participants also reported a concern about inadequate street lighting in the Bethesda Urban District and the need to make the Woodmont Triangle area more "people friendly."

OLO recommends that the Council:

- Adopt a resolution to re-authorize the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.,
- Ask the Partnership to work with the Executive Branch to examine the Partnership's Strategic Plan in more detail and further develop items in the plan, and
- Ask the Partnership to prepare biennial updates on services, and short-term goals and initiatives; and continue to develop five-year strategic plans that outline longer-term goals and initiatives.

I. Introduction

A. Authority

Council Resolution Number 15-281, "Office of Legislative Oversight FY 2004 Work Program", adopted July 29, 2003.

B. Scope and Organization

County Code Chapter 68A, Montgomery County Urban Districts defines an urban district corporation as an independent entity that exists for a five-year term after its articles of incorporation are accepted for filing by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation. The existence of any corporation may be extended for an unlimited number of additional five-year terms by a resolution adopted by the Council and approved by the Executive. Before the Council acts to extend the term, the law requires the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) to evaluate the performance of the urban district corporation.

The Council established the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. (the Partnership) as an urban district corporation in 1993. The Partnership serves as the management entity for the Bethesda Urban District, and conducts maintenance, landscaping, marketing, and special events for downtown Bethesda. The Partnership also manages the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District and Bethesda Transportation Solutions. In the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts, the Partnership provides streetsweeping and trash collection services.

In November 1998, the County Council released an OLO evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership's first five years of operation. OLO found a high level of satisfaction with the Partnership, and recommended that the Council re-authorize the Partnership for another five-year term. In December 1998, the Council adopted Resolution 13-1494 to re-authorize the Partnership for an additional five-year term that ends January 31, 2004.

This OLO report, required by County Code Section 68A-12, evaluates the Partnership in preparation for Council action on another five-year extension. The evaluation is organized as follows:

Chapter II. Background provides an overview of the Bethesda Urban District and other districts in Bethesda. It also includes background information about the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.

Chapter III. Bethesda Urban Partnership Operations describes the Partnership's organization and staffing, services provided, spending, and funding sources.

Chapter IV. Evaluating the Performance of the Bethesda Urban Partnership examines whether the Partnership has fulfilled the purposes of the organization in County law, performed effectively, and followed through on a Council recommendation to develop a strategic plan.

Chapter V. Findings summarizes the findings of this OLO evaluation.

Chapter VI. Recommendations presents OLO's recommendations to the Council.

C. Methodology

OLO completed this evaluation during the fall of 2003. It involved collecting background information about Bethesda and the Partnership, including the legislative history, organization and staffing, services provided, relationship with the County Government and other agencies, and funding sources and amounts. The evaluation included interviews with:

- Bethesda Urban Partnership staff and members of the Board of Directors,
- Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce staff,
- Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission staff,
- County Government representatives from the Regional Services Centers, Department of Public Works and Transportation, Montgomery County Police Department, County Attorney's Office, and Office of Management and Budget, and
- County Council staff.

D. Acknowledgements

OLO appreciates the cooperation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership staff and Board of Directors. In particular, OLO thanks Dave Dabney, Jeff Burton, Stephanie Coppula, and Francine Waters. OLO thanks the members of the Board of Directors who provided input to the evaluation, including Jason Hoffman, Carol Trawick, Jack Hayes, and Elliot Schnitzer, as well as Albert Kohn with the Transportation Management District Advisory Committee. Ginanne Italiano with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce also provided information.

OLO appreciates the assistance of County Government and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) staff, including Deborah Snead, Natalie Cantor, Gary Stith and Joe Callaway from the Regional Services Centers, Joe Beach from the Office of Management and Budget, John Fisher from the County Attorney's Office, Al Genetti, Carolyn Biggins, Sandra Brecher, Bill Withers, and John Polletto from the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT), Betsy Davis and John D'Albora from the Police Department, Bill Mooney from the County Executive's Office, and Marilyn Clemens from M-NCPPC.

II. Background

County Code Chapter 68A, Montgomery County Urban Districts allows the County to create urban districts and urban district corporations. An urban district is a legally designated geographic area created as a special taxing district to maintain and enhance communities with diverse commercial, institutional and residential development. The goal is to maintain an urban district as a prosperous, livable urban center.

The Code indicates that the County creates urban districts “to provide public services that are: (1) primarily of benefit to the property and persons within the urban district rather than the County as a whole, and (2) in addition to services and facilities that the County provides generally.” The law establishes the following funding sources for the operation of an urban district:

- An urban district tax based on assessed value that cannot exceed \$0.30 per \$100 of assessable property,
- A parking fee surcharge that must not exceed the number of parking spaces multiplied by the number of enforcement hours and by ten cents, and
- A charge against each optional method development property for the cost of maintaining off-site amenities.

The County Council established the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. in 1993 to serve as the management entity for the Bethesda Urban District. This part of the report provides background information about the Bethesda Urban District and three other districts in Bethesda associated with the Partnership’s operations. It also describes the state and local laws governing the Partnership, the Partnership’s operating procedures, and the Partnership’s interactions with other organizations.

A. Overview of the Bethesda Urban District

The Partnership provides services within the Bethesda Urban District, which is part of the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD). The approved sector plan for Bethesda, adopted in July 1994, established zoning to encourage residential and commercial development at densities supported by public facilities and compatible with the surrounding areas. The sector plan encourages the provision of open space and other amenities, and promotes better pedestrian and vehicular circulation.

The Bethesda Urban District is one of Montgomery County’s premier urban centers. In 2002, the Bethesda Urban District had almost 9 million square feet of office space, 1.5 million square feet of retail space, 5,121 multifamily housing units, and 637 single family houses. Since 1994, the Urban District has experienced a 23% increase in office space, a 10% increase in housing, and an 8% increase in retail space. The pipeline of approved development will more than double the current inventory of housing, retail and office space. Table 1 on page 4 summarizes development data for the Bethesda Urban District.

Table 1. Data on the Bethesda Urban District

	1994	2002	Approved for Future Development (as of 2002)
Single Family Housing Units	580	637	662
Multi-Family Housing Units	4,660	5,121	7,741
Office Space Square Footage	7.27 million	8.97 million	9 million
Retail Space Square Footage	1.39 million	1.50 million	2 million

Source: M-NCPPC

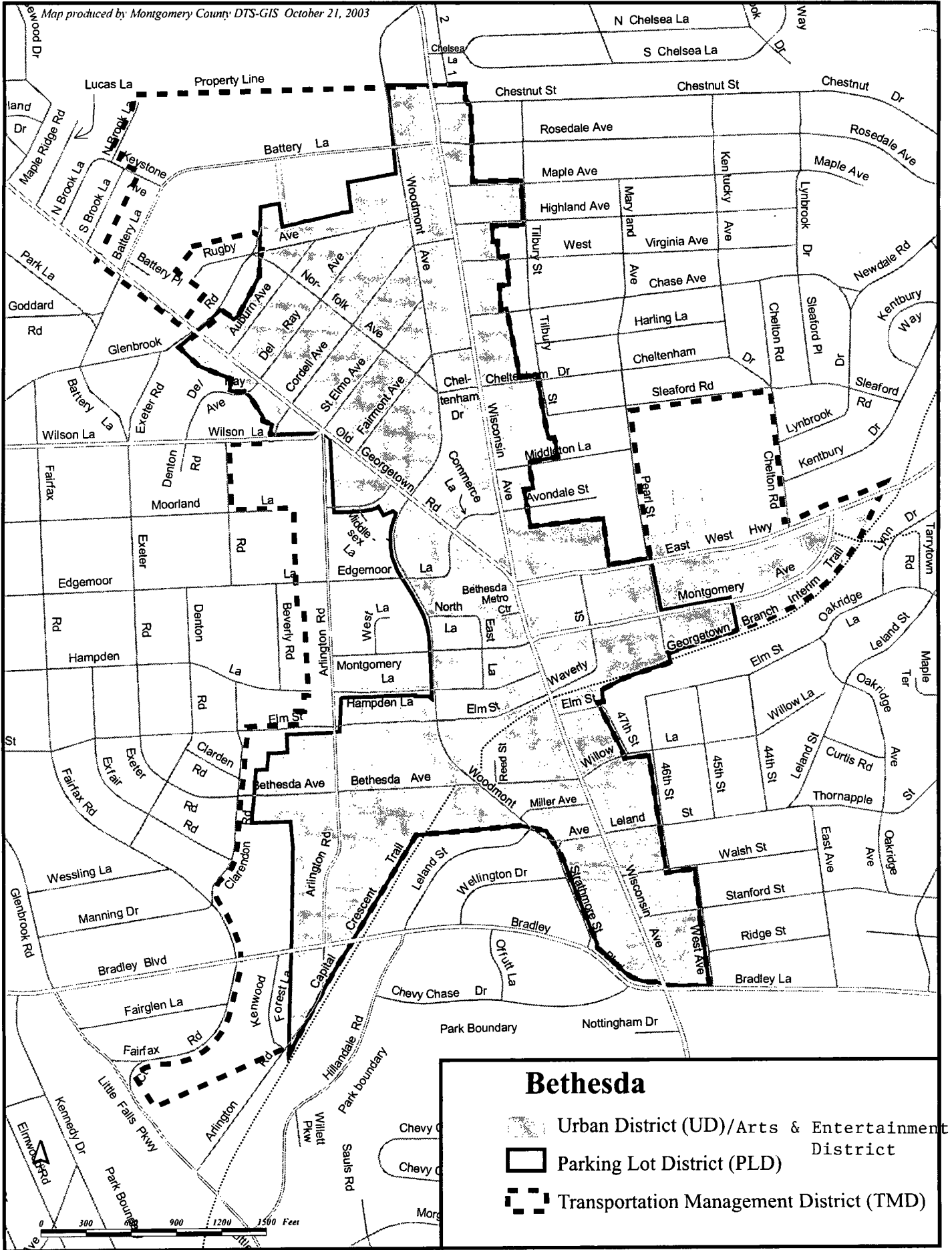
B. Other Districts in Bethesda

There are three other legally designated districts in the downtown Bethesda area associated with the Bethesda Urban Partnership: the Parking Lot District, the Transportation Management District, and the Arts and Entertainment District. The map on page 5 shows the geographic relationships among the districts. While the boundary of the Urban District and the Arts and Entertainment District (shaded area) are the same, they do not match the boundaries of the Parking Lot District (solid line) and the Transportation Management District (dashed line). The map shows that:




- The Bethesda Parking Lot District (PLD) is slightly smaller than the Bethesda Urban District. Specifically, the boundary of the Bethesda Parking Lot District follows that of the Urban District, with the exception of an area east of Pearl Street bounded by East West Highway and the Georgetown Branch Interim Trail.
- The Transportation Management District (TMD) encompasses a larger area than the Urban District boundary. Specifically, the TMD extends further west than the Urban District and, on the eastern border, encompasses an area north of East West Highway that is not included in the Urban District.

1. Bethesda Parking Lot District

A parking lot district (PLD) is a legally designated geographic area established to promote economic growth and stability by providing sufficient parking to accommodate demand. Chapter 60 of the Montgomery County Code authorizes the County to collect taxes and fees within parking lot districts to provide, operate, and maintain economically self-sufficient parking facilities.



Bethesda

-  Urban District (UD)/Arts & Entertainment District
-  Parking Lot District (PLD)
-  Transportation Management District (TMD)

Chapter 60 states that the Director of Finance must keep the special taxes and parking fees collected from each district in a separate fund for each parking lot district. It also states that the County must use each fund so that enough resources are available to pay the principal and interest due on bonds issued to acquire, build, restore or improve parking facilities in the district. PLD funds also pay for parking garage and lot maintenance, and may be transferred to the Mass Transit Fund to support transportation management services.

The Bethesda Parking Lot District is one of four parking lot districts in the County. (The other districts are in Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Montgomery Hills.) The solid line on the map (page 5) designates the boundaries of the Bethesda PLD. The County uses dollars collected from the Bethesda PLD to fund the majority of the County's contracts with the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

2. Bethesda Transportation Management District

A Transportation Management District (TMD) is a legally designated geographic area established by the County Council to address traffic congestion issues through transportation demand management actions. The Montgomery County Code states that "Transportation demand management will help provide sufficient transportation capacity, reduce the demand for roads, promote traffic safety and pedestrian access, and help reduce vehicular emissions, energy consumption, and noise levels."

The dashed line on the map (page 5) outlines the boundaries of the Bethesda Transportation Management District (TMD). The County Council established the Bethesda TMD in 1999. The Bethesda Urban Partnership operates Bethesda Transportation Solutions, which manages the Bethesda TMD.

3. Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District

In 2001, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation creating Arts and Entertainment Districts. An Arts and Entertainment District is a State-designated geographic area in which special tax incentives are used to encourage artists and entertainment venues to locate in the area.

The law allows qualified artists to receive income tax breaks on the work created or performed in the district. It allows developers who create space for artists to live and work to be exempt from paying certain property taxes on the value of the property improvements for up to ten years. It also creates exemptions from some or all admission and amusement taxes, depending on local enabling legislation.

The State designated a Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District in 2002. The boundaries of the District are the same as the Bethesda Urban District (shaded area on the map on page 5). The Bethesda Urban Partnership manages the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District.

C. Overview of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.

The Council established the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. in 1993 to serve as the management entity for the Bethesda Urban District. The mission of the Bethesda Urban Partnership is to “foster an environment in which the downtown can thrive and prosper.”

The Partnership is an independent, non-profit, urban district corporation, modeled after the concept of a business improvement district. Business improvement districts are special taxing districts that local governments create to enable local property owners in downtown commercial areas to tax themselves. The tax creates an alternative revenue source and allows businesses to maintain desired service levels. One or more non-profit organizations are typically set up to manage the district and the local government contracts with the non-profit organization to provide services in the district.

1. State and County Laws Governing the Bethesda Urban Partnership

State and County laws govern the Partnership. Article 24A, Section 5(FF) of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes charter counties to create commercial district management authorities (CDMA) to fund promotions, marketing, security, maintenance, or amenities in commercial districts. Under State law, CDMAs may be financed through fees or taxes levied against businesses.

County Code Chapter 68A, Montgomery County Urban Districts authorizes the establishment of urban districts and urban district corporations. The Code states that the County Council must adopt and the County Executive approve a resolution to create an urban district corporation. The law also requires the establishment of an 11-member board of directors of the corporation, appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the Council. The board directs all aspects of the program, management and finances of the corporation, and adopts bylaws and rules of procedure. The board must include diverse representation from the business and residential communities. A description of the Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors begins on page 11.

The County government and the Partnership annually execute an agreement that specifies the services the corporation will provide and addresses how the County will transfer funds to the corporation. The law requires each urban district corporation to annually prepare and submit a budget to the County’s Office of Management and Budget for review. It also requires an urban district corporation to submit the following items to the County annually:

- Independent audit and management letter,
- Financial report,
- Report on contracting with Minority/Female/Disabled-owned businesses, and
- Report on purchasing recycled goods.

Other County laws also govern the Partnership, including portions of Chapter 11B, Procurement; a portion of Chapter 20, Finance; and a portion of Chapter 60, Parking Districts.

2. Articles of Incorporation and Partnership's Bylaws

The County Code requires the County Council and County Executive to approve an urban district corporation's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. The Partnership's Articles of Incorporation establish the name and duration of the corporation, set forth the powers and restrictions on powers, and describe the Board of Directors. The Partnership's Bylaws describe the structure of the Board of Directors, including the terms of Board members, Board meetings, and officers and committees of the Board. It also describes the duties of the Executive Director, and the Corporations' finance and procurement practices.

The Council and Executive approved the Bethesda Urban Partnership's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. The Partnership must submit any changes to the Executive and Council for approval.

3. Operating Procedures

The Partnership has written procedures for personnel, procurement and budget matters. Those procedures have not changed significantly since the last re-authorization. Partnership staff noted that, during the past five years, they updated the employee manual and strengthened the accounting procedures to increase efficiency.

Partnership employees are not considered County employees, however they are eligible to participate in the County's health insurance plan, with the Partnership paying the employer's share. The Partnership also maintains a simplified employee pension plan.

4. Interactions with other Organizations

The Partnership works closely with multiple County Government departments, County agencies, and other organizations. The remainder of this chapter summarizes some relevant relationships and interactions.

The County Executive appoints and removes Board members, designates an ex officio, non-voting member of the Board, recommends a budget for the Partnership, and approves amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and Partnership's Bylaws.

The County Council confirms the Executive's appointments to the Board of Directors, reviews and approves the Partnership's annual budget, and approves amendments to the Articles of Incorporation and Partnership's Bylaws. The Council also re-authorizes the Partnership.

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center Director serves as the County's ex-officio representative on the Partnership's Board of Directors and administers one of the County's contracts with the Partnership. As the coordinator for all of the County contracts with the Partnership, the Center Director also coordinates meetings with the other contract administrators and serves as a consultant on day-to-day management and other issues.

The Department of Public Works and Transportation and the Partnership jointly maintain the public rights-of-way in downtown Bethesda. For example, the Partnership is responsible for streetscaping of the medians and streetsweeping inside the curbs, while DPWT is responsible for maintenance inside and including the curbs. DPWT also contracts with the Partnership to:

- Maintain County-owned parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District, and
- Manage the Bethesda Transportation Management District through Bethesda Transportation Solutions.

Montgomery County Police Department's Bethesda District Station officers and commander maintain communication with Partnership staff regarding safety issues and criminal activity. They also coordinate when planning Partnership events in the downtown, and support each other when special needs arise (e.g., preparing for tropical storm Isabel).

The Office of Management and Budget works with the Partnership and the contract administrators in DPWT and the Regional Services Centers to develop the annual budget.

The Department of Finance Director transfers funds to the Partnership, and receives an annual report and annual independent audit from the Partnership.

The County Attorney is the legal advisor to the Partnership. The County Attorney's Office helps draft contracts and provides other legal advice as needed.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) staff consults with the Partnership on specific project proposals under review and coordinates with the Partnership on long range planning issues. The two organizations also interact through M-NCPPC's extensive community outreach activities. M-NCPPC's enforcement division works with Partnership staff to identify properties that do not abide by M-NCPPC plan requirements.

III. Bethesda Urban Partnership Operations

The Bethesda Urban Partnership has undergone a number of changes since the 1998 re-authorization. This part of the report begins with a summary of changes since 1998, then describes the current Partnership organizational structure, services, spending, and funding sources.

Summary of Changes Since 1998. The number of staff and services provided has increased since the Partnership's 1998 re-authorization. The staff increased from 19 in 1998 to 31 in 2003. In terms of services, the Partnership:

- Gained responsibility for managing the Arts and Entertainment District and the Transportation Management District (Bethesda Transportation Solutions),
- Produces more marketing brochures,
- Holds more special events annually,
- Maintains more streetscape amenities and completes maintenance tasks more frequently (e.g., streetsweeping, trash and litter collection), and
- Created the Ask Me Team to provide assistance in the Bethesda Urban District on weekends and evenings.

Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, the total value of the Partnership's contracts with the County increased 29% from \$1.99 million to \$2.56 million. The increase primarily represents the addition of Bethesda Transportation Solutions and the Ask Me Team to the Partnership's responsibilities. No additional County funds support the Partnership's management of the new Arts and Entertainment District.

County funds represented approximately 93% of the Partnership's revenue each year between FY 2000 and FY 2004. The sources of County funds allocated to the Partnership have remained the same since the corporation's creation in 1993. They include:

- Bethesda Parking Lot District Funds,
- Bethesda Urban District Tax revenues,
- General Funds transfers¹,
- Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District funds, and
- Revenue from maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners.

Since 1993, the majority of the Partnership's County funds have come from the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund. In FY 2004, Bethesda Parking Lot District funds represent approximately 70% of the total County dollars allocated to the Partnership, and Bethesda Urban District Tax funds represent approximately 17%. Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District funds account for approximately 7% of the County dollars in FY 2004,

¹ The Partnership did not receive County General Funds in FY 2004.

and revenue from maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners represents approximately 6%.

A. Organizational Structure and Staffing

An 11-member **Board of Directors**, appointed by the Executive and confirmed by the Council, governs the Bethesda Urban Partnership. The Board is responsible for all aspects of the program, management, and finances of the corporation. The members serve a three-year term and may be re-appointed for one additional term. They serve without compensation and meet at least once quarterly. A list of current Board members is attached at ©61. It includes:

- Four members who own businesses in the Bethesda Urban District,
- Two members appointed by the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce,
- Four members who live in or near the Bethesda Urban District, and
- An ex-officio, non-voting member who is the County Executive's designee.

Officers include a chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer. The Board of Directors can designate an executive committee and one or more other committees. A Board member chairs each committee, which can include individuals who are not Board members. The Board currently has three committees in addition to the Executive Committee:

- The Event Applications Committee works with the Partnership's Marketing Department to review applications for events in the Bethesda Urban District,
- The Transportation Management District Advisory Committee provides guidance to Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS), and
- The Strategic Planning Committee led the effort to develop a strategic plan.

County law indicates that the Board of Directors must hire an **Executive Director** of the Partnership to:

- Serve as chief executive officer of the corporation,
- See that all orders and resolutions of the Board are carried into effect,
- Perform all other duties incident to the office and as may be assigned by the Board,
- Prepare a proposed annual budget, and
- Enter into contracts (including sole source contracts) as authorized by the Board.

The Partnership had 31 employees as of October 2003, compared to 19 employees in 1998. An organization chart, attached at ©1, shows the following departments or units:

- An Administrative Department has four employees who perform all the administrative functions to support the Partnership's services,

- Field Operations has 19 employees in four teams responsible for landscaping, streetsweeping, brick sidewalk repair, trash and litter pickup, and other maintenance tasks. The new Ask Me Program staff are included in Field Operations,
- Marketing has four employees who manage the design, content, and production of all the Partnership's promotional pieces and special events, and
- Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) has four employees who operate BTS.

The Partnership offices moved in September 2001 from 7906 Woodmont Avenue to 7700 Old Georgetown Road. The new facility provides space for additional staff and programming, as well as space on-site for Partnership vehicles and equipment. It also includes a locker room for maintenance staff use.

B. Services

The Partnership provides a variety of services within and outside of the Bethesda Urban District. Table 2 summarizes the services, which are described in detail below.

Table 2. Summary of Services

<p><u>Maintenance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and landscape the Bethesda Urban District, ▪ Sweep streets and remove trash in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts, ▪ Maintain grounds at public parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District, ▪ Maintain gateway areas on State roads in Bethesda, and ▪ Maintain optional method development properties in the Bethesda Urban District. <p><u>Marketing and Special Events</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Market the Bethesda Urban District, ▪ Promote and coordinate special events in the Bethesda Urban District, and ▪ Manage the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District. <p><u>Bethesda Transportation Solutions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Manage the Bethesda Transportation Management District. <p><u>Ask Me Program</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide information and assistance during evenings and weekends. <p><u>Tunnel Gates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open and close the pedestrian tunnel gates daily.

1. Maintenance

a. Maintenance and Landscaping in the Bethesda Urban District

An annual agreement between the County and the Partnership indicates that the Partnership will conduct maintenance activities on all public rights-of-way within the Bethesda Urban District boundaries. The Partnership is responsible for:

- 65,000 flowers in three annual rotations,
- 1,200 trees,
- 122,000 square feet of turf,
- 4,000 miles of streets,
- 9,500 miles of sidewalks, and
- 194 trash cans.

An addendum to the annual agreement between the County and the Partnership lists the “standard level of services” the Partnership will provide to beautify, maintain and landscape Bethesda. Table 3 on page 14 summarizes the maintenance tasks and frequency.

The annual agreement between the County and the Partnership also requires the Partnership to implement a method of servicing after-hours Police and Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) requests for street cleaning and removal of road blockages within the Bethesda Urban District. In extraordinary circumstances or natural disasters, the Partnership may request the County’s assistance and supplemental funding to respond to streetscaping and road blockage needs.

While the Partnership completes streetscaping of the medians and streetsweeping inside the curbs, DPWT completes other maintenance inside and including the curbs. In addition, a DPWT contractor replaces knocked down streetlights, and paints and repairs streetlights in the Bethesda Urban District.

Table 3. Bethesda Urban District Maintenance Tasks and Frequency

Task	Frequency	Description
Litter Collection	1 time/day	Collect and dispose of litter from all sidewalks, County-owned pedestrian bridges, planters, and tree pits in the urban district and specific areas outside the district
Trash Receptacle Service	3 times/week and daily on weekends	Empty all trash receptacles and replace trash bags
Brick Sidewalk Cleaning	1 time/year	Scrub, steam or otherwise clean all brick walks of gum, paint, and other debris and soil
Landscape Maintenance	2 times/year	Mulch all planting areas, prune shrubs and fertilize
	Continually	Pull/dispose of weeds and apply chemical weed control
	As needed	Water plants and use pest management techniques
Tree Maintenance	As needed	Clean and mulch tree pits, remove weeds and debris, water, prune, control pests, oversee contractor completing tree trimming, and maintain appropriate State tree permits
	Annually	Fertilize
Tree Planting	As needed	Plan and coordinate tree planting, obtain State permits, open tree pits and water
Mowing	12 times/year	Mow, edge mowed areas, remove grass clippings, remove litter, and fertilize
Snow Removal	As needed	Remove snow from marked crosswalks and complete ice treatment
Streetsweeping	3 times/week	Mechanically remove debris from curb lines and curbed medians, and dispose of streetsweeping debris
Sidewalk and Curb Maintenance/Repair	Inspections – at least twice/year	Maintain standard concrete sidewalks and curbs, and all brick or other non-standard sidewalks
	Repairs – upon request and as needed based on priority ²	

² Based on the results of inspections, the Partnership rates sidewalk and curb defects and repairs the highest priority items first. The remaining funds pay for as many additional repairs as possible.

b. Streetsweeping and Trash Removal in the Wheaton and Silver Spring Urban Districts

Emergency Bill 21-00 states that “A Corporation may provide a service outside the boundaries of the urban district if the service will primarily benefit businesses or residents in the urban district. A Corporation may also provide any authorized service to another Corporation or urban district.”

The Partnership contracts with the Wheaton and Silver Spring Urban Districts to provide streetsweeping and trash removal. The Partnership staff sweeps all of the streets in the two urban districts three times per week. The agreement uses the term “sweep” to include all activities associated with cleaning all street surfaces including curbs, gutters, service drives, parking lanes, shoulders, and turning lanes. Partnership staff collects trash from 185 cans in Silver Spring Urban District six days per week and from 52 cans in Wheaton Urban District three days per week. That includes picking up litter and other debris within five feet of the trash receptacle.

c. Groundskeeping at the Public Parking Garages and Parking Lots in the Bethesda Urban District

The Partnership contracts with DPWT to provide groundskeeping services at the public parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District. The contract requires the Partnership to:

- Collect litter,
- Mow,
- Trim around trees, shrubs and walls,
- Edge along curbs and walks,
- Test soil,
- Fertilize,
- Control weeds and insects,
- Aerate turf,
- Prune trees and shrubs, and
- Mulch.

The Partnership maintains the grounds for eight parking lots and five garages. Those parking areas add up to 2,573 square yards of turf maintenance, 3,127 square yards of flowerbed maintenance, 6,145 square yards of litter pick up, and 91 trees. DPWT can also ask the Partnership to complete additional work, such as landscaping enhancements.

d. Maintenance of Gateway Areas on State Roads

The Partnership also maintains landscaped medians along state roads that function as “gateways” to the Bethesda Central Business District. The Partnership currently has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the State Highway Administration to provide maintenance along:

- Wisconsin Avenue from Pooks Hill Road to Dorset Avenue, and
- Bradley Boulevard from Wisconsin Avenue to Goldsboro Road.

Services include mowing, tree pruning, litter collection, streetsweeping, and landscaping. The MOU designates the required frequency of each activity.

e. Maintenance for Optional Method Development Properties

The Partnership may also enter into agreements with optional method development property owners to maintain streetscape amenities on private or public properties in the Bethesda Urban District.³ In general, the Partnership conducts tree trimming, mowing, turf trimming, fertilizing, brick cleaning and repair, and trash and litter collection. The Partnership invoices the County monthly for the work completed, based on fixed rates per task. The County adds overhead and insurance costs and bills each optional method development property owner quarterly.

2. Marketing and Special Events

a. Marketing

The Partnership originally produced “Eat Here” (restaurant guide), “Destination: Downtown Bethesda” (guide to cultural arts, dining, public services, lodging and shopping), and a bi-monthly “Events Calendar.” The Partnership distributes the free “Events Calendar” to 55,000 residents in four Bethesda and Chevy Chase zip codes, to Bethesda’s apartment, hotel and building concierges, and to several gathering places in Bethesda (e.g., Barnes and Noble). “Bethesda’s Best in Home Fashion” is a new publication describing each home fashion shop and its merchandise.

Since the last re-authorization, the Partnership also created and maintains a web site at www.bethesda.org with information about the Bethesda Urban Partnership and the community. The website is divided into several categories including: shopping, dining, arts & entertainment, special events, and information on what’s new. It also includes a history of Bethesda, maps, parking information, and lodging options. An on-line version of the Partnership’s calendar of events is available. Users can also link to the Bethesda

³ Under site plan agreements signed with the Planning Board, optional method developers agreed to construct and maintain streetscape and amenity space on their own private property and on public property. Optional method developers also agreed to allow the County to maintain the amenities and to pay the County a maintenance charge to cover the cost.

Transportation Solutions web site (Bethesda Transportation Solutions is described beginning on page 18.)

b. Special Events

The annual agreement with the County states that the Partnership may plan, coordinate and manage promotional activities and events that benefit both commercial and residential interests within the urban district. The agreement does not list specific events.

The number of special events has increased over the past five years. In 1998, the Partnership held the Taste of Bethesda, Imagination Bethesda, Winter Wonderland, and summer concerts (Thursday afternoons and evenings in May, June and July). The Partnership continues to operate these events, with more restaurants participating in the Taste of Bethesda and expanded entertainment and event site for Winter Wonderland.

The Partnership instituted a Bethesda Literary Festival in 2000. The four-day event takes place throughout downtown Bethesda's bookstores, restaurants, art galleries and retail businesses during the last week of April. It brings together novelists, poets, journalists, nonfiction writers, and authors of children's literature. Literary guests have included journalist Jim Lehrer and Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Henry Taylor.

The Partnership also has a co-sponsorship program for groups to apply for technical assistance to stage events in Bethesda. The Event Applications Committee of the Board of Directors reviews and approves the applications. Partnership staff provides assistance for the events, such as closing streets and covering parking meters. The Partnership charges for-profit organizations for the assistance. Recent co-sponsorship events included: Business & Tech Expo, Bethesda Row International Market, Friday Night Dance Concerts, Bethesda Grand Prix, Best of Bethesda Day, Bethesda Row Arts Festival, and Marathon in the Parks.

c. Arts and Entertainment District

The Bethesda Urban Partnership's marketing team manages the new Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District. The State designated a Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District in July 2002. The boundaries are the same as the Bethesda Urban District. The purpose of an Arts and Entertainment District is to use special tax incentives to benefit artists and to attract artists and entertainment venues to the area. For example:

- Artists who live and work in the Arts and Entertainment District can receive certain income tax breaks,
- Developers who renovate spaces for arts use can be exempt from paying certain property taxes on the value of the renovations for up to 10 years, and
- Arts enterprises that charge the Admissions and Amusement tax are exempt from this tax.

Current Arts and Entertainment District activities include

- Bethesda Artist Market – The first Artist Market took place in October 2003. Approximately 25 local, regional and national artists displayed and sold their work. The event was free to the public.
- Bethesda “Art Walk” – The walk takes place from 6 – 10 pm on the second Friday of each month. Individuals walk throughout downtown or take the free shuttle that stops at each participating gallery on the Art Walk. The galleries provide free refreshments.
- The Trawick Prize: Bethesda Contemporary Art Awards – This is a new visual art competition that awards \$14,000 in prize monies to four artists. 2003 was the inaugural year of the Trawick Prize.

In addition to these activities, the Partnership publishes the following brochures to promote the Arts and Entertainment District:

- “The Art & Soul of Bethesda” brochure describes public art, visual art, performing arts, and arts organizations in downtown Bethesda.
- “Arts & Entertainment District” brochure details the State and County tax incentives that organizations, artists, and developers can receive as part of the Arts and Entertainment District.

3. Bethesda Transportation Solutions

In February 1999, County Council Resolution 14-56 created the Bethesda Transportation Management District. In December 1999, the County created Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) to take actions necessary to achieve effective transportation demand management in the Bethesda Transportation Management District. The primary mission of BTS is to promote a shift from drive-alone auto use to transit, carpooling, and other alternatives during peak traffic congestion hours.

Bethesda Urban Partnership manages BTS, under the guidance of the Transportation Management District Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee:

- Proposes guidelines for traffic mitigation agreements,
- Monitors the implementation of traffic mitigation agreements,
- Evaluates progress in attaining commuting goals,
- Recommends government, private or joint actions necessary to facilitate attainment of the commuting goals,
- Advises on parking policies,
- Reviews traffic patterns and control measures, and
- Submits comments and recommendations about the BTS biennial report.

A list of Advisory Committee members is attached at ©2. It includes the following 11 voting members that serve a three-year term:

- Three members nominated by the local Chamber of Commerce,
- Four members nominated by the Citizens Advisory Board,
- Two employers of fewer than 50 employees in the Central Business District, and
- Two employers of 50 or more employees in the Central Business District.

The Board also includes five non-voting members representing the County Government, M-NCPPC, and the National Institutes of Health/National Naval Medical Center.

The County's contract with the Partnership to operate BTS requires that BTS:

- Develop and maintain an inventory of public parking supply and utilization, private parking supply and utilization, transit services and utilization, and pedestrian facilities (e.g., crosswalks).
- Distribute an annual survey to approximately 9,000 commuters⁴ from downtown Bethesda employers to compile a database of employee commuting patterns and monitor progress toward reaching commuting goals.
- Assist employers in the Bethesda Transportation Management District to prepare a Traffic Mitigation Plan, as required by County Code Chapter 42A. A sample Traffic Mitigation Plan is attached beginning at ©3. The Transportation Management District Advisory Committee reviews the submitted Traffic Mitigation Plans.
- Market alternative transportation options and provide free assistance to individuals who commute to work in Bethesda, such as hold employee transportation fairs at employment sites; provide advice and coordination for ride sharing, telework, and flextime arrangements; facilitate participation in the County's FareShare/Super FareShare program and the Maryland Commuter Tax Credit; share transit information; and encourage employers to designate Employee Transportation Coordinators.
- Prepare a biennial report that includes the results of the annual commuter survey, traffic and pedestrian counts for specific intersections, and data on parking supply and transit ridership.
- Share an annual financial accounting report and annual independent audit/management letter with the County.

⁴ Specifically, 8,000 commuters surveyed are from businesses with 25 employees or more and 1,000 commuters are from businesses with fewer than 25 employees.

BTS also publishes a monthly newsletter (over 1,600 copies distributed to area employers), a Transportation Management District brochure, and “Metro Opens Doors to Bethesda” brochure. BTS also maintains a web site (www.bethesdatransit.org) and database of commuters interested in carpooling and in using public transit. BTS also manages annual traffic counts at nineteen intersections, installed more than 40 bike racks in downtown Bethesda, and coordinated the Poetry Benches project along the Bethesda 8 Trolley route.

4. Ask Me Program

The Ask Me Program began in August 2003. During the evenings and weekends⁵, the Ask Me team assists guests, residents and employees navigating downtown Bethesda. The Team:

- Provides directions,
- Fields questions about the community, parking, and mass transit,
- Escorts to parking areas,
- Offers first aid and quick response in emergency situations, and
- Responds to emergency maintenance issues.

The Partnership stations Ask Me Team members in the Woodmont Triangle, Wisconsin Avenue, and Bethesda Row areas. Other team members rove throughout the entire downtown. Ask Me Team members staff a kiosk donated by Federal Realty Investment Trust at the corner of Bethesda and Woodmont Avenues that is stocked with free information and promotional materials. Other Team members carry materials to hand out.

According to the Partnership, the Ask Me Team assisted over 100 citizens during the first week of operation, and the business community has responded positively to the program. The Team members also provide useful feedback to the Partnership and Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center on issues or problems encountered during the evenings and weekends.

5. Bethesda Tunnel Gates

The Bethesda Tunnel located under the Air Rights Building at 2550 Montgomery Avenue is a public pedestrian pathway. The County’s FY 2004 agreement with the Partnership requires Partnership staff to open the gates at each end of the tunnel at 6:00 am daily and close the gates at 10:00 pm daily.

⁵ The Team operates Wednesday through Saturday from 3:30 pm to 12:00 am and Sunday from 11:30 am to 8:00 pm.

6. Other Services

The Partnership provides additional miscellaneous services to further meet the needs of businesses and residents in the Urban District. For example, the Partnership facilitated the establishment of the Bethesda Farmers Market by obtaining the street closure permit. The Partnership continues to support the market by helping to set up and tear down the street closure every week, serving as an on-site representative to handle complaints or concerns, and including the market in promotional materials.

Following the 2003 winter storms, the Partnership coordinated with the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) to repair potholes. DPWT provided the roadway material and Partnership staff repaired the potholes. Partnership staff report that the arrangement resulted in faster pothole repair in Bethesda, and allowed DPWT to focus its efforts on other parts of the County.

The Partnership is also involved in Veterans Park renovations. Partnership staff identified a firm to complete the design at no cost. They sought donations to help cover the cost of constructing the project, and received an anonymous donation for the entire cost. They also worked with M-NCPPC to walk the project through the County's project approval process.

The Partnership also works with non-profit organizations to promote community issues and interests. For example, the Partnership:

- Was involved in the search for a new location for Bethesda Cares during the renovations of the County parking garage that houses the organization,
- Worked with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad to train Partnership staff in first aid and CPR, and
- Works with the Arts & Humanities Council to promote more visibility for arts in the Urban District.

C. Spending

1. Maintenance, Marketing/Special Events, Capital Projects, Administration, and Reserve for Equipment Replacement

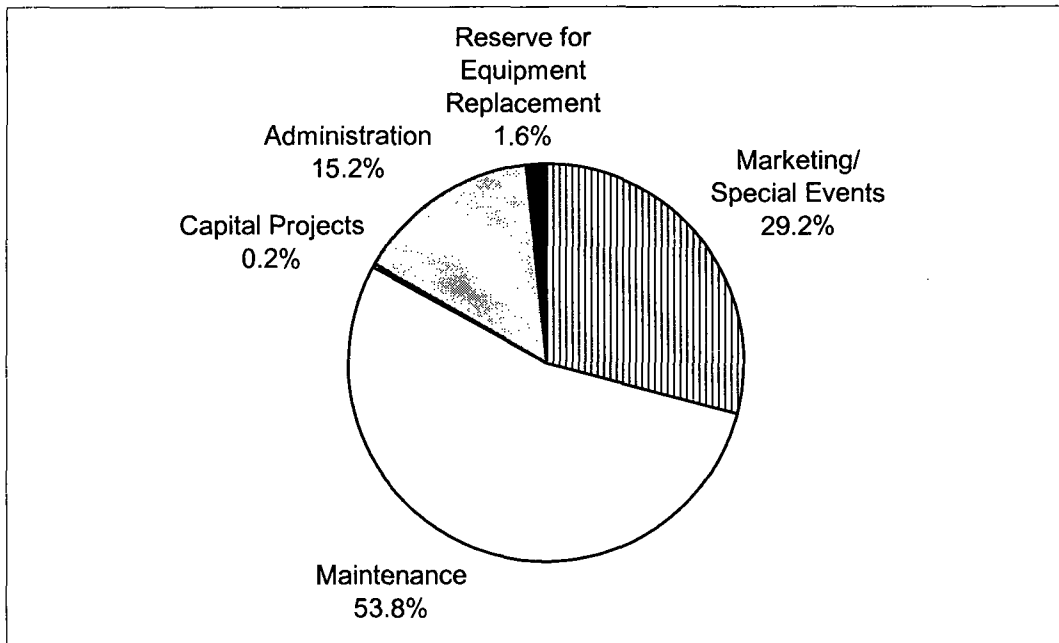
The Partnership's spending on all activities except Bethesda Transportation Solutions is broken into the following categories: Maintenance, Marketing/Special Events, Capital Projects, Administration, and Reserve for Equipment Replacement. Table 4 on page 23 shows the expenditures for each category and selected subcategories between FY 2000 and FY 2004.

Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, the Partnership's spending increased from \$1.85 million to \$2.29 million. Specifically, spending on marketing was relatively consistent, with an 8% increase between FY 2000 and FY 2004. Spending on both administration and

maintenance activities increased approximately 34%.⁶ In contrast, spending on capital projects fell over the five year period from \$54,000 to \$4,000.

Graph 1 illustrates the FY 2004 breakdown of spending on maintenance, marketing/special events, capital projects, administration and reserve for equipment replacement. Half of the Partnership's FY 2004 spending funds maintenance activities. Partnership spending on marketing accounts for approximately 30% of the FY 2004 spending, and administration expenses account for approximately 15%.

Graph 1. Spending on Maintenance, Marketing/Special Events, Capital Projects, Administration, and Reserve for Equipment Replacement, FY 2004



⁶ The increase in spending on maintenance in part reflects the FY 2004 addition of the Ask Me Team, which is budgeted under maintenance.

Table 4. Bethesda Urban Partnership Spending – Maintenance, Marketing/Special Events, Capital Projects, Administration, and Reserve for Equipment Replacement, FY 2000 - 2004

Services	FY 00		FY 01		FY 02		FY 03		FY 04	
	\$ (000's)	%	\$ (000's)	%	\$ (000's)	%	\$ (000's)	%	\$ (000's)	%
Marketing										
Overhead	229		210		226		243		274	
Events	199		193		170		165		184	
Communications	190		217		203		188		211	
Marketing Subtotal	\$618	33%	\$620	32%	\$599	32%	\$596	31%	\$669	29%
Maintenance										
Overhead	473		516		499		522		642	
Sidewalks	71		49		81		79		76	
Streetscape/Landscape	315		364		346		361		333	
Trees	58		45		37		34		41	
Ask Me Program	0		0		0		0		139	
Special Projects	3		9		3		2		1	
Maintenance Subtotal	\$920	50%	\$983	51%	\$966	51%	\$998	52%	\$1,232	54%
Capital Projects	\$54	3%	\$31	2%	\$5	0.3%	\$1	0%	\$4	0.2%
Administration	\$260	14%	\$310	16%	\$320	17%	\$306	16%	\$348	15%
Reserve for Equipment Replacement	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	\$36	2%	\$36	2%
Total	\$1,852	100%	\$1,944	100%	\$1,890	100%	\$1,936	100%	\$2,289	100%

2. Bethesda Transportation Solutions

The Partnership tracks Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) spending separately. Spending on BTS increased 30% between FY 2001 and FY 2004, from \$330,000 to \$430,000. Partnership data indicate that approximately 80% of the BTS funds cover overhead expenses annually, such as staffing, rent, insurance, and administration. The remaining dollars fund marketing to Bethesda employees and businesses, advertising, information gathering and evaluation, and signage.

D. Sources of Funds

Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, County funds represent approximately 93% of the Partnership's revenues each year. The Partnership receives the County funds through five contracts with County departments for the services described in this chapter. The Partnership raises the remaining 7% of revenue annually primarily from special event income and sponsorships. This part of the report describes the sources of non-County funds, the County contracts with the Partnership, and the sources of County funds.

1. Non-County Revenue

When the Partnership was created, the County anticipated that the Partnership would raise other revenues in addition to county funds from county contracts. The Partnership earns additional revenue annually from the State Highway Administration for maintenance of State roads in "gateway areas." The Partnership also raises revenue from income and/or sponsorships for special events such as the Taste of Bethesda, Imagination Bethesda, the Literary Festival, Winter Wonderland, and Bethesda Place and Veteran's Place Concerts. Other sources include miscellaneous maintenance revenue and "Events Calendar" marketing revenue.

Table 5 shows the amounts of these other revenue sources between FY 2000 and FY 2004. It ranged from a low of \$145,000 in FY 2003 to a high of \$176,000 in FY 2002. Event sponsorships and income represent the majority of the non-County revenue raised each year.

Table 5. Non-County Revenue Sources (\$000), FY 2000 - FY 2004

Fiscal Year	Maintenance on State Roads	Event Income and Sponsorships	Marketing Revenue - Events Calendar	Miscellaneous Maintenance	Total
FY 00	\$13	\$112	\$21	\$9	\$155
FY 01	\$26	\$110	\$24	\$8	\$168
FY 02	\$26	\$119	\$19	\$12	\$176
FY 03	\$26	\$114	\$0	\$5	\$145
FY 04	\$26	\$129	\$0	\$13	\$168

2. County Revenue

The Partnership and the County Government enter into five contracts annually. Table 6 below shows the services provided under each contract, the County department administering the contract, and the contract dollar values between FY 2000 and FY 2004. Graph 2 on page 26 illustrates the total value of the County contracts with the Partnership between FY 2000 and FY 2004. The total value of the five contracts increased 29% during the five-year period, from \$1.99 million to \$2.56 million. Each contract is described beginning on page 26.

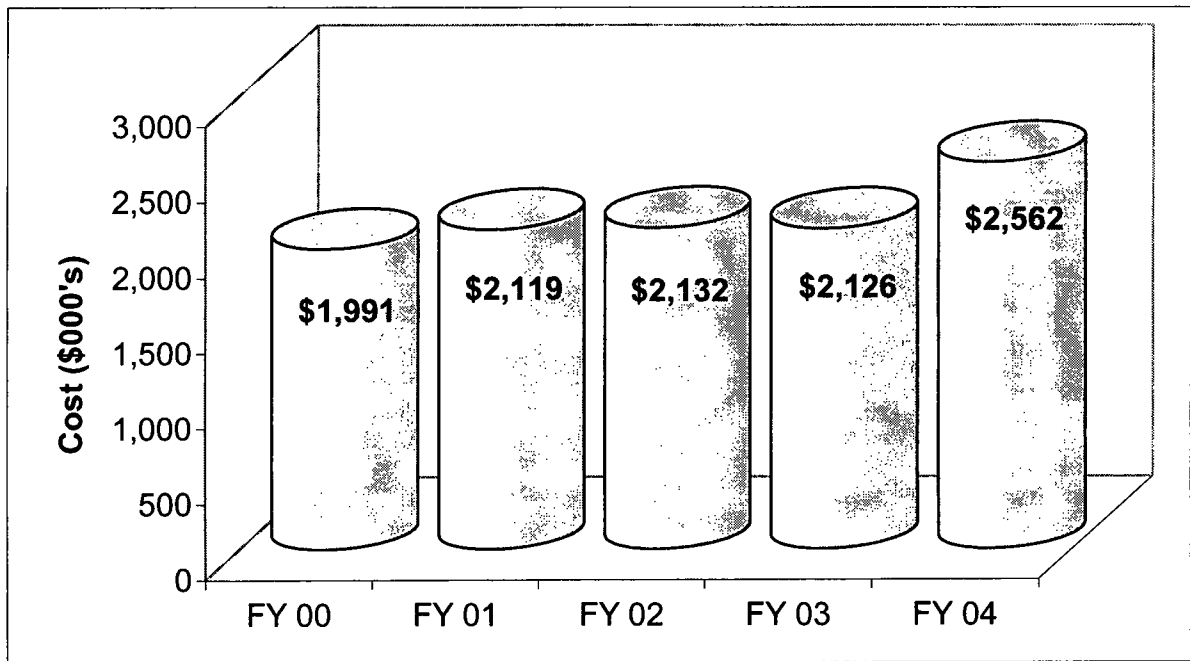
Table 6. Contracts Between the County Government and the Bethesda Urban Partnership

Service	Administering Department/Office	Contract Amount (\$000)	
Maintenance, Special Events, Marketing, Ask Me Program	Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center	FY 00 Actual	\$ 1,531
		FY 01 Actual	\$ 1,587
		FY 02 Actual	\$ 1,616
		FY 03 Actual	\$ 1,590
		FY 04 Approved	\$ 1,906
Bethesda Transportation Solutions	DPWT, Transit Services	FY 00 Actual	\$ 270 ⁷
		FY 01 Actual	\$ 330
		FY 02 Actual	\$ 320
		FY 03 Actual	\$ 340
		FY 04 Approved	\$ 430
Streetsweeping and Trash Collection in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts ⁸	Mid-County and Silver Spring Regional Services Centers	FY 00 Actual	\$ 167
		FY 01 Actual	\$ 175
		FY 02 Actual	\$ 171
		FY 03 Actual	\$ 159
		FY 04 Approved	\$ 188
Groundskeeping Services at Public Parking Garages and Parking Lots	DPWT, Parking District Services	FY 00 Actual	\$ 23
		FY 01 Actual	\$ 27
		FY 02 Actual	\$ 25
		FY 03 Actual	\$ 37
		FY 04 Approved	\$ 38

⁷ DPWT and the Partnership signed the first contract in December so the FY 2000 dollars represent work completed over approximately one half of a fiscal year.

⁸ The Regional Services Centers enter into two contracts with the Partnership, one for streetsweeping and another for trash collection. This table sums the dollars for those two contracts.

Graph 2. Total Value of the Five County Contracts with the Partnership, FY 2000 - FY 2004



The County established urban districts and urban district corporations as self-funded special districts, expecting the property owners, businesses, and other visitors to pay for most operations. The majority of the funds for the County's contracts with the Partnership annually come from the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund and the Bethesda Urban District Tax.

In FY 2004, Bethesda Parking Lot District funds represent approximately 70% of the dollars allocated to the Partnership through County contracts. Bethesda Urban District Tax revenues represent approximately 17% of the County dollars. Other sources of County funds in FY 2004 include Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District funds (7%) and revenue from maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners (6%).

a. Contract for Maintenance, Special Events, Marketing, and Ask Me Program

The contract administered by the Director of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center outlines the maintenance, marketing, and special event services that the Partnership will provide in the Bethesda Urban District. The value of the contract with the Partnership changed from \$1.5 million in FY 2000 to \$1.9 million in FY 2004. In FY 2004, this contract represents 74% of the total dollars in County contracts with the Partnership.

Table 8 and Graph 3 on the next page show the sources of funds for the Bethesda Urban District between FY 2000 and FY 2004. Approximately 95% of the funds appropriated to the Bethesda Urban District each year fund the contract with the Partnership. The other dollars appropriated to the Urban District fund streetlight repair and a contract with an accountant to provide oversight of the contract with the Partnership and review Partnership financial statements.

The five sources of funds for the Bethesda Urban District, and consequently the contract with the Partnership, include:

- **Bethesda Urban District Tax** – The Urban District tax is an ad valorem tax on all property in the urban district. The tax rate has been at four cents per \$100 of assessed value since the Partnership was created. Urban district tax proceeds averaged \$368,000 annually between FY 2000 and FY 2004, and represent approximately 20% of the Bethesda Urban District resources.
- **Bethesda Parking Lot District Funds** – The County authorizes the use of revenues from the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund to support the Urban District. Transfers from the Parking Lot District Fund averaged approximately \$1.02 million annually between FY 2000 and FY 2004, and represent approximately half of the Bethesda Urban District resources.

Chapter 68A of the County Code requires that proceeds from either the urban district tax or the Parking Lot District Fund transfer not exceed 90% of the sum of both revenues. Table 7 shows that between FY 2000 and FY 2004, the Urban District tax represented between 23% and 32% of the sum of both revenues. During that same five-year period, the transfer of funds from the Parking Lot District Fund represented between 68% and 77% of the sum of both revenues. This is in line with the County Code requirements.

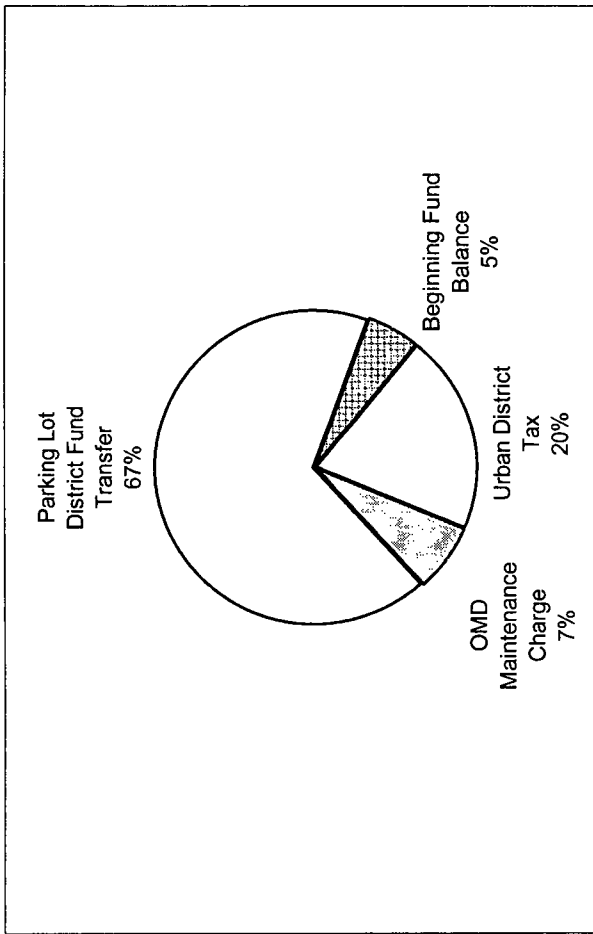
Table 7. Relationship Between Urban District Tax Revenues and Parking Lot District Transfers, FY 2000 - FY 2004

Fiscal Year	Urban District Tax (\$000)	Parking Fee Transfer (\$000)	Total Tax and Fee (\$000)	Urban District Tax % of Total	Parking Fee % of Total
FY 00	\$329	\$950	\$1,279	26%	74%
FY 01	\$324	\$1,072	\$1,396	23%	77%
FY 02	\$376	\$866	\$1,242	30%	70%
FY 03	\$396	\$843	\$1,239	32%	68%
FY 04	\$417	\$1,373	\$1,790	23%	77%

Table 8. Bethesda Urban District Resources, FY 2000 - FY 2004

	FY 00 Actual		FY 01 Actual		FY 02 Actual		FY 03 Estimated		FY 04 Approved	
	\$000s	%	\$000s	%	\$000s	%	\$000s	%	\$000s	%
Beginning Fund Balance	\$118	7%	\$132	7%	\$241	13%	\$160	9%	\$109	5%
Revenues										
Urban District Tax	\$329	19%	\$324	17%	\$376	20%	\$396	23%	\$417	20%
OMD Maintenance Charge	\$96	5%	\$109	6%	\$129	7%	\$129	7%	\$145	7%
Investment Income	\$12	1%	\$19	1%	\$9	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Miscellaneous	\$26	1%	\$4	0.2%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Inter-Fund Transfers										
Parking Lot District Fund Transfer	\$950	54%	\$1,072	57%	\$866	47%	\$843	48%	\$1,373	67%
General Fund Transfer	\$230	13%	\$230	12%	\$230	12%	\$230	13%	\$0	0%
Transfer to Tax Supported Funds	-\$2	0%	-\$3	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%	\$0	0%
Total Resources	\$1,759	100%	\$1,887	100%	\$1,851	100%	\$1,758	100%	\$2,044	100%

Graph 3. FY 2004 Sources of Funds – Bethesda Urban District



- **Maintenance Charges Paid by Optional Method Developers** – Optional method developers construct streetscape and amenity space on their private property and on public property. Optional method developers agreed to pay the County a “maintenance charge” to maintain the amenities on public property. These resources averaged approximately \$122,000 annually between FY 2000 and FY 2004, and represent approximately 6% of the Urban District resources.
- **General Fund Transfers** – The Council adopted a practice of providing general fund revenues to each urban district to cover the cost of baseline services in the urban districts. Between FY 2000 and FY 2003, the Bethesda Urban District received approximately \$230,000 of General Fund revenue annually, which represented approximately 12% of the Urban District resources each year. In FY 2004, the Council replaced those General Fund dollars with Bethesda Parking Lot District funds.
- **Investment Income and Miscellaneous Income** - This income represent the remainder of the Bethesda Urban District resources, accounting for 2% or less of the resources annually.

b. Contract for Bethesda Transportation Solutions

The Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) contracts with the Partnership to manage the Bethesda Transportation Management District (TMD). The Partnership’s Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) operates the TMD. The value of the contract changed from \$330,000 in FY 2001 to \$430,000 in FY 2004. In FY 2004, this contract represents 17% of the total dollars in County contracts with the Partnership.

In FY 04, the contract for BTS is paid for with Bethesda Parking Lot District funds transferred to the Mass Transit Fund. While the County Code limits the amount of Parking Lot District Funds that can support Urban Districts, there is no limit on the amount of Parking Lot District Funds used to support BTS.

c. Contracts for Streetsweeping and Trash Collection in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts

The County’s Silver Spring and Mid-County Regional Services Centers enter into two contracts annually with the Partnership to provide streetsweeping and trash collection services in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts. Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District dollars fund these contracts, which increased in value from \$167,000 in FY 2000 to \$188,000 in FY 2004. In FY 2004, these contracts represent 7% of the total County contract dollars allocated to the Partnership.

For the streetsweeping contract, the Urban Districts pay the Partnership monthly based on a fixed rate per linear curb mile of street cleaned and square foot of parking lot cleaned. For the trash collection contract, the Urban Districts pay the Partnership monthly based on a fixed rate per trash receptacle.

d. Contract for Groundskeeping at Public Parking Garages and Parking Lots in the Bethesda Urban District

DPWT's Parking District Services contracts with the Partnership to provide groundskeeping services at the public parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District. The source of funds for this contract is the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund. The Partnership bills the County monthly for the services, based on a fixed cost per unit of service. This contract value changed from \$23,000 in FY 2000 to \$38,000 in FY 2004. In FY 2004, it represents 2% of the total dollars in County contracts with the Partnership.

IV. Evaluating the Performance of the Bethesda Urban Partnership

To fulfill the Council's oversight responsibilities and provide information for the discussion of re-authorizing the Partnership, this chapter examines the following questions:

- Has the Partnership fulfilled the purposes of the organization in County law?
- Has the Partnership performed effectively?
- Has the Partnership followed through on the Council's recommendation to prepare a strategic plan?

A. Has the Partnership fulfilled the purposes of the organization in County law?

The purposes of the Partnership are outlined in County law, the Partnership's Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership's Bylaws. **County law** states that the County creates urban district corporations for the benefit of each urban district to perform tasks "of benefit to the government." The services that an urban district corporation may provide include:

- Streetscape maintenance and landscaping,
- Promotions and special events,
- Enhanced safety and security,
- Specialized transportation services including jitney services,
- Capital projects that promote the economic stability and growth of the district, and
- Other initiatives to advance the residential and business environment and sense of community.

Emergency Bill 21-00, adopted in August 2000, further expands the purpose of urban district corporations by indicating that a corporation may provide a service outside the boundaries of the urban district if the service will primarily benefit businesses or residents in the urban district. Bill 21-00 also indicates that "a corporation may provide any authorized service to another Corporation or urban district."

The **Articles of Incorporation** for the Partnership add four more purposes to those listed in County law, including:

- To provide more direct involvement of the community in the provision of services to the district,
- To enlist the active interest and financial support of those concerned about the improvement of the district,
- To collaborate and cooperate with government agencies, civic associations and other business associations, and
- To support the activities of other nonprofit organizations serving the district.

Finally, the **Bylaws** of the Partnership state:

It is the intent of the Corporation to utilize committees to involve a broad spectrum of the local community in its activities. By one or more resolutions adopted by a majority of the directors, the board may designate from among its members an executive committee and one or more other committees, each of which will be chaired by a Board member and can include persons who are not on the Board of Directors.

Based on a review of the Partnership's performance, OLO concludes that the Partnership fulfilled the purposes of the organization outlined in the law, the Partnership's Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership's Bylaws. Table 9 on pages 33 and 34 summarizes the purposes of the Partnership and examples of Partnership achievements related to each purpose.

B. Has the Partnership performed effectively?

The effectiveness of an urban district corporation can be measured in part by the perceptions of the organization's constituents, and opinions of corporation members. To describe the Bethesda Urban Partnership's performance, OLO summarizes feedback from focus groups convened by the Partnership and OLO interviews with individuals on the Partnership Board of Directors, County Government and M-NCPPC staff, and other relevant constituents.

1. Results of OLO's Interviews

OLO interviewed individuals who interact with the Partnership to obtain feedback about the services provided, the Partnership's performance, and needs or concerns of individuals who live in, work in, and visit Bethesda. OLO interviewed representatives of the:

- Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors,
- Bethesda Transportation Management District Advisory Committee,
- Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce,
- Montgomery County Police Department,
- Department of Public Works and Transportation,
- Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Mid-County Regional Services Centers,
- Office of Management and Budget,
- County Attorney's Office, and
- Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

A list of specific interviewees is attached at ©62. This part of the report summarizes the comments and thoughts shared in the interviews.

Table 9. Summary of Bethesda Urban Partnership Achievements, FY 2000 – FY 2004

Purposes	Achievements
Chapter 68A	
Provide streetscape maintenance and landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant 65,000 flowers in three annual rotations and care for 1, 200 trees each year, • Maintain 122,000 square feet of turf, • Sweep over 4,000 miles of streets and 9,500 miles of sidewalks in the Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts, and • Collect trash from 194 cans in Bethesda, 185 in Silver Spring, and 52 in Wheaton.
Provide promotions and special events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish “Eat Here”, “Destination: Downtown Bethesda”, “Bethesda’s Best in Home Fashion”, and a bi-monthly “Events Calendar”, • Sponsor the Taste of Bethesda, Imagination Bethesda, Winter Wonderland, Bethesda Literary Festival, and summer concerts, and • Maintain a web site with detailed information about Bethesda and the Partnership.
Provide enhanced safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to emergencies as appropriate, • Train Partnership staff in first aid and CPR, • Accompany individuals to their cars after dark, • Donate Nextel phones and bicycles to the Bethesda Police District Station, and • Implement countdown timers at selected crosswalks.
Provide specialized transportation services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate Bethesda Transportation Solutions to manage the Bethesda Transportation Management District, • Field questions about and promote the Bethesda 8 Trolley, • Pursue state grant for implementation of poetry benches along the Bethesda 8 Trolley route, and • Share information with the community about alternate parking during County garage and lot closures/renovations.
Provide capital projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete installation of welcome, street, directional and parking signs throughout the urban district (Wayfinding Program), and • Work with M-NCPPC and the County to develop and fund renovations to Veterans Park.
Other initiatives to advance the sense of community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District, including develop brochures, sponsor special events and awards, and encourage artists to locate in Bethesda, • Help bring together the property owners in Woodmont Triangle to coordinate projects, marketing and other improvements, • Work with DPWT to acquire materials to fill potholes in the urban district in a timely manner, and • Facilitate the establishment of a Farmer’s Market and provide an on-site representative to handle complaints or concerns.

Articles of Incorporation	
Increase direct involvement of the community in the provision of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a database of volunteers and rely on volunteers to help run major events, • Establish quarterly meetings of optional method developers to discuss district management issues, and • Communicate and work with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce, including having the Chamber's Executive Director attend Partnership Board meetings.
Enlist active interest and financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate sponsorship revenue for events (Taste of Bethesda, Imagination Bethesda, Literary Festival, Winter Wonderland, and concerts), • Generate in-kind sponsor support (e.g., Ask Me program kiosk donated by Federal Realty, Ask Me program vehicle donated by Chevy Chase Cars), and • Solicit donations from the community for urban district projects (e.g., Veterans Park renovations).
Collaborate with government agencies, civic associations and business associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on a regular basis with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Silver Spring and Wheaton Regional Services Centers, Department of Public Works and Transportation, M-NCPPC, and Montgomery County Police Department, and • Work with the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce, developers, property owners, business owners, and civic associations (e.g., East Bethesda Citizens Association, Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board).
Support nonprofits serving the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the County to help Bethesda Cares identify operating space in Bethesda while the Woodmont Avenue garage is under construction, and • Serve on the boards of non-profit organizations to facilitate Partnership communication and cooperation with non-profits.
Partnership Bylaws	
Use committees to involve a broad spectrum of the local community in its activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Event Applications Committee of the Board including local business people, property owners, and residents to review co-sponsorship applications, and • Invite residents, visitors, and business/property owners to a series of focus groups with the Board's Strategic Planning Committee to discuss the Partnership and downtown Bethesda.

Overview - The individuals interviewed agreed that the Partnership benefits the Bethesda Urban District and adds to the vitality of the community. For example, interviewees noted that the Partnership's special events, such as the Taste of Bethesda, bring a sense of community to Bethesda and its residents.

Several individuals reported that the Partnership's success is due in part to its business-like or entrepreneurial approach to providing services. This approach helps the Partnership to give Bethesda residents, employees and visitors the services they need and want quickly and efficiently, and avoids some of the bureaucracy associated with other service provision. Further, the focus on local needs allows them to be more responsive than the County Government, which has a much larger geographic area of responsibility.

Interviewees also credited the Partnership with building good working relationships within the community. County staff report good working relationships with the Partnership, and that the Partnership insulates the County departments from some minor day to day management issues that would be inefficient for the County Government to address. County staff reported that the Partnership is a professional and responsive organization that produces high quality work.

Staff - Interviewees described the staff as professional and enthusiastic, from the top of the organization to the bottom. Those interviewed credited the leadership style of the Executive Director, including his ability to infuse the entire organization with enthusiasm, a sense of mission, and enjoyment of their work. As a result, there is little turnover within the organization. Interviewees also described the staff as going above and beyond what is required.

Issues - OLO asked the individuals interviewed if they heard any complaints about the Bethesda Urban District or the Partnership, or if there were any issues that will impact the Partnership and the downtown in the future. Those interviewed report that they do not hear complaints about the Partnership. In terms of concerns about the Urban District, some reported that parking and congestion are issues, but not new ones.

Some interviewees mentioned that the lack of street lighting in the Woodmont Triangle and slow repairs to broken lights requires attention to ensure safety. Other participants raised concerns about the need for coordination of improvements in the Woodmont Triangle. Individuals commented that the high number of property owners in the area make this task challenging.

Partnership Board members reported that the Partnership staff spends a great deal of time on budget preparation and indicated that this takes away from the time the staff has to respond to community needs. Board members also expressed interest in expanding the role of the Partnership in the future.

2. Focus Group Results

During the process of developing a Strategic Plan, Partnership staff and Board members distributed a survey and convened five focus group sessions to gain feedback about the Partnership and downtown Bethesda. The sessions involved the following constituents:

- Optional Method Developers (OMD),
- Business owners,
- Customers,
- Residents, and
- Employees.

Survey – Prior to the focus group meetings, each attendee was asked to complete a 12 question survey. A copy of the survey is attached at ©15. The survey responses are attached at ©39. The purpose of the survey was “to provide a snapshot of each individual participant’s perspective of downtown Bethesda prior to any influence by the group dynamics and/or clarification information from the facilitators.”

The survey focused on the individuals’ awareness or understanding of BUP and their use of downtown Bethesda. Examples of these types of questions include:

- What is the Bethesda Urban Partnership?
- What are the two main responsibilities of the Bethesda Urban Partnership?
- Do you dine out in Bethesda? What is your favorite restaurant?
- Do you shop in Bethesda? What is your favorite retail store?
- Have you ever attended a large-scale special event in downtown Bethesda? If so, what event did you attend?

The survey results show that optional method developers, business owners, and customers are more familiar with the Partnership than Bethesda Urban District residents. Dining out and shopping in Bethesda were very popular among all groups. While a number of those surveyed had attended the Taste of Bethesda and Round House Theatre, the optional method developer group participated least in these kinds of special events.

Other questions on the survey asked participants to report how they travel to Bethesda and if they have ever had a challenge finding parking. Approximately 50% of the responders indicated that they drive to Bethesda, another 25% walk, and 25% use mass transit. According to the Partnership, 50% of those who drive report difficulty locating parking.

Two of the 12 questions gathered information about the performance of the Partnership specifically. One question asked participants whether they think Bethesda is being properly maintained. Most participants were pleased with the Partnership's maintenance services. The only concerns expressed were:

- "I would love to see more street lights." (three individuals),
- "The trash cans need to be replaced." (one individual),
- "Some attention could be given to sidewalks." (one individual),
- "Better maintenance of landscaping." (one individual),
- "Snow removal could be better." (one individual), and
- "Homeless are an issue." (one individual).

The survey also asked how individuals get information about downtown Bethesda. Approximately 50% reported that they receive information from Partnership publications, another 28% from newspapers, and 14% from the internet.

Sessions - The Partnership convened one focus group session per week over a six week period at the beginning of calendar year 2003. Each session lasted one and a half hours; between four and nine participants attended each. The Partnership reports that the following themes emerged from the focus groups:

- All groups except the optional method developers needed a brief explanation of the Partnership's structure, responsibilities, and funding sources. Many participants had little knowledge of the corporation and assumed the "government" completed the Partnership's tasks.
- All groups expressed concern with insufficient street lighting and slow repairs of broken street lights, particularly in the Woodmont Triangle area. The Partnership indicates that focus group participants expressed a desire for the Partnership to expand its services to include responsibility for street lighting.
- Participants suggested that the Partnership educate drivers about parking, pedestrians about proper street crossing, and drivers and pedestrians about the Bethesda 8 Trolley. Specifically, participants suggested distributing more promotional literature about these topics, increasing the number of well-marked crosswalks, and using pedestrian countdown lights and street "paddle signs."
- Participants expressed interest in upgrading the "look" of the Woodmont Triangle area to make it more people friendly. Specific ideas shared included creating a focal point for gathering; increasing lighting, benches, trees and flowers; repairing sidewalks; and creating a merchants group facilitated by the Partnership to coordinate things like evening store hours.

- The optional method development group felt that the Partnership should be a “one stop response system” responsible for all repair and maintenance in the urban district from the curb to the buildings.
- The Partnership indicates that all focus groups supported the Partnership developing a pilot fee-for-service program to maintain private portions of optional method development property. In addition, “The resident group was also interested as they perceived it could possibly afford them improved service for a reasonable additional cost with accountable management close by.”
- According to the Partnership, “All groups supported the clarification of the urban district boundaries as outlined by the BUP Board. In a surprising development, residents living south of Parking Lot 31 just outside the urban district eagerly volunteered that they would pay more if they could be included in the urban district.”

The Partnership concluded the focus groups with the following question: Is Bethesda a city, town or postal designation and what is the ideal organization for BUP and downtown Bethesda in the future? According to the Partnership, all groups thought that downtown Bethesda was a town or city, and were surprised to learn it was only a postal designation under the jurisdiction of Montgomery County. In terms of the future of Bethesda, all but one participant felt that downtown Bethesda should seek more independence. According to the Partnership, incorporation as a town or city with an elected council was a popular idea.

In terms of the future of the Partnership specifically, the participants felt the corporation needs more control and expanded responsibility. According to the Partnership, “Suggestions for expanded BUP control ran the gamut from total control of all maintenance and present funding sources such as the Parking District to the ability to raise and reduce fees and levy special assessments on property.”

C. Has the Partnership followed through on the Council’s recommendation to prepare a strategic plan?

OLO’s first evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, completed in 1998, recommended that the Partnership:

“engage constituent groups, including select County departments, in a strategic, long-range planning process. The goal of this exercise should be to clarify the purpose, scope and funding of the organization over the next five years.”

In October 2003, the Partnership completed the Bethesda Urban Partnership Strategic Plan 2003. The document outlines the Partnership’s plans for fiscal years 2004 through 2008. The Partnership shared copies of the strategic plan with the County Council on October 21, 2003. A copy of the Strategic Plan is attached beginning at ©6.

1. Overview

The strategic plan provides a brief summary of Partnership services, the results of focus group discussions, strategic initiatives for the next five years, priorities for the first year, and recommendations for Council discussion. A special committee of the Partnership Board of Directors led the year long effort to develop the plan. The process included:

- Six months of committee and staff research and preparation,
- Two Board of Directors planning sessions,
- Five focus groups (described beginning on page 36), and
- A presentation to the Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce and the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board.

A flowchart of the Five Year Plan is attached at ©22-23. The plan breaks the strategies or initiatives into three Focus Areas: Maintenance, Pedestrian/Vehicular Safety, and Marketing. Under each focus area, the plan identifies strategic initiatives and specific strategic actions.

The plan's three focus areas are consistent with the Partnership's existing core service areas. The proposed initiatives and actions within each focus area differ in their breadth and scale. The initiatives and actions under the Marketing focus area generally expand current activities. In contrast, initiatives and actions under the other two focus areas propose more significant changes. For example, some of the actions under the maintenance focus area expand the Partnership's services outside the County's Urban Districts (e.g., to the Friendship Heights Central Business District). Other items in the plan propose the Partnership assume responsibility for maintenance activities currently provided by the County Government.

Partnership staff indicated that some of the items in the flowchart have been implemented, such as development of an Ambassador Program (Ask Me Team) and use of kiosks for marketing and promotions. Some items in the flow chart represent activities that the Partnership has been doing and will continue, such as coordinating branding. Staff indicated that other items in the plan are not under active consideration at this time (e.g., expand Partnership boundaries).

The items in the plan impact the contract currently in place with the County, County funding for Partnership operations, and County programs. County Government departments were not involved in the development of the strategic plan.⁹ As of this writing, Executive Branch staff has not yet examined the plan or its impacts.

⁹ The County Executive's ex-officio member of the Board of Directors received periodic updates on the status of the strategic plan that were shared with the Board.

2. First Year Priorities

The strategic plan identifies six priorities for FY 2004. They include:

- Expanded Maintenance/Ask Me Team – This item was already implemented. The FY 04 approved budget included funds for the Ask Me Team. This report describes the team on page 20.
- Merchants Marketing Committee – The Merchants Marketing Committee would pool resources to create marketing campaigns, hire live entertainment, select evenings to stay open late, and brainstorm ways to enhance the atmosphere in specific parts of the Bethesda Urban District.
- Unified Branding – The Partnership’s goal is to maintain consistency in branding and communications to their constituents. This priority involves evaluating how new initiatives (e.g., BTS, Arts and Entertainment District) fit into the overall marketing and branding campaigns.
- Fee for Services – The Partnership currently maintains all public areas for the optional method developers. Some developers have asked the Partnership to serve their private property as well. The Partnership would like to implement a pilot project with an interested optional method developer on a fee-for-service basis.
- Lighting Maintenance and Enhancement – The focus groups convened by the Partnership communicated concern about inadequate street lighting and repairs. The Partnership would like to increase the number of streetlights and assume responsibility for repairing street lights.
- Revision of the Partnership’s Budget Cycle – The Partnership would like the corporation’s budget reviewed by the Executive and Council every two years instead of annually.

3. Recommended County Council Discussion Items

The strategic plan identifies specific items for County Council discussion including:

- Transferring management of the Bethesda 8 Trolley from the County to the Partnership, and expanding the route and operating hours,
- Transferring streetlight enhancement and maintenance, crosswalk maintenance, and pothole repair from the County to the Partnership,
- Giving the Partnership the authority to work with the County to manage the implementation of CIP projects in the Bethesda Urban District,
- Changing the current budget process so the Council would review the Partnership budget every two years instead of annually,

- Designating a set stream of Parking Lot District Funds to be allocated annually to the Bethesda Urban District for the contract with the Partnership specifically.

The strategic plan concludes that “if the County Council adopts these recommendations and continues to reinvest the Bethesda Parking Lot District funds; the Council’s intent for the management of downtown Bethesda will continue on its successful path in meeting the constituent needs.”

V. Findings

County Code Section 68A, Montgomery County Urban Districts defines an urban district corporation as an independent entity that exists for a five-year term after its articles of incorporation are accepted for filing by the State Department of Assessments and Taxation. The existence of any corporation may be extended for an unlimited number of additional five-year terms by a resolution adopted by the Council and approved by the Executive. Before the Council acts to extend the term, Code Section 68A-12 requires the Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) to evaluate the performance of the urban district corporation.

Finding 1. The County Council established the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. in 1993 to serve as the management entity for the Bethesda Urban District. The Council reauthorized the Partnership in 1998 for another five-year term, which concludes on January 31, 2004.

The Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. is an independent, non-profit, urban district corporation created to “foster an environment in which the downtown can thrive and prosper.” The Council created the Partnership in 1993 and re-authorized it in 1998, following the first OLO evaluation. The Partnership’s current five-year term ends on January 31, 2004.

State and County laws, the Partnership’s Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership’s Bylaws govern the Partnership. An 11-member Board of Directors, appointed by the Executive and confirmed by the Council, oversees the Bethesda Urban Partnership. The Board is responsible for all aspects of the program, management, and finances of the corporation. By law, the Board includes:

- Four members who own businesses,
- Two members appointed by the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce,
- Four members who live in or near the Bethesda Urban District, and
- An ex-officio, non-voting member who is the Executive’s designee.

An Executive Director hired by the Board of Directors manages the day to day activities of the Partnership. The corporation currently employs 31 individuals.

Finding 2. The Partnership provides a variety of services within and outside of the Bethesda Urban District, including maintenance, marketing, special events, and the Ask Me Program. The Partnership also manages Bethesda Transportation Solutions and the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District.

The Partnership provides a variety of services within and outside of the Bethesda Urban District. In terms of maintenance tasks, the Partnership:

- Maintains and landscapes in the Bethesda Urban District,
- Sweeps streets and removes trash in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts,
- Maintains grounds at public parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District,
- Maintains gateway areas on State roads in Bethesda, and
- Maintains optional method development properties in the Bethesda Urban District.

In terms of marketing and special events, the Partnership:

- Markets the Bethesda Urban District through publications and a web site,
- Promotes and coordinates special events in the Bethesda Urban District, and
- Manages the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District.

The Partnership also operates Bethesda Transportation Solutions, the management entity for the Bethesda Transportation Management District. In FY 2004, the Partnership implemented a new program called the Ask Me Team that provides assistance to individuals in Bethesda on the weekends and evenings.

Finding 3. Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, Partnership spending on maintenance, marketing/special events, capital projects, administration, and reserve for equipment repair increased approximately 24%, from \$1.85 million to \$2.29 million. Spending on Bethesda Transportation Solutions increased 30% between FY 2001 and FY 2004, from \$330,000 to \$430,000.

The Partnership's spending on all activities except Bethesda Transportation Solutions is broken into the following categories: maintenance, marketing/special events, capital projects, administration, and reserve for equipment repair. Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, total spending increased from \$1.85 million to \$2.29 million or approximately 24%. Spending on marketing/special events increased 8%, spending on administration increased 34%, and spending on maintenance increased 34%.

Approximately half of the Partnership's annual spending on maintenance, marketing/special events, capital projects, administration, and reserve for equipment repair funds maintenance activities. Marketing and special events activities account for approximately 30% of the spending annually, and administrative expenses account for approximately 15%.

The Partnership tracks spending associated with Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) separately. Spending on BTS increased 30% between FY 2001 and FY 2004, from \$330,000 to \$430,000. Partnership data indicate that approximately 80% of the BTS funds cover overhead expenses annually, such as staffing, rent, insurance, and administration. The remaining dollars fund marketing to Bethesda employees and businesses, advertising, information gathering and evaluation, and signage.

Finding 4. Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, the Partnership's revenues included County and non-County funds. County funds represent approximately 93% of the total revenues each year of the five-year period. The majority of the County funds comes from the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund.

The Partnership's revenues include County and non-County funds. County funds represent approximately 93% of the total revenues each year between FY 2000 and FY 2004. The majority of the County funds allocated to the Partnership annually come from the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund. Other sources include:

- Bethesda Urban District Tax revenue,
- General Fund transfers,
- Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District funds, and
- Revenue from maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners.

In FY 2004, Bethesda Parking Lot District funds represent approximately 70% of the County dollars and the Bethesda Urban District Tax revenue represents approximately 17%. Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District funds account for approximately 7% of the County dollars in FY 2004, and revenue from maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners represents approximately 6%.

The Partnership's non-County revenue includes funds from the State Highway Administration for maintenance on State roads, special event sponsorships and income, and other miscellaneous maintenance income. Those non-County revenue sources totaled approximately \$168,000 in FY 2004.

Finding 5. The Partnership and County Government enter into five contracts annually for the Partnership's services. The total value of the five contracts increased from \$1.99 million in FY 2000 to \$2.56 million in FY 2004.

The Partnership and the County Government enter into four contracts annually for the Partnership's services. Between FY 2000 and FY 2004, the total value of the four contracts increased from \$1.99 million to \$2.56 million.

1. The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center contracts with the Partnership for maintenance, marketing, special events, and the Ask Me Program. In FY 2004, this contract totals approximately \$1.9 million or 74% of the County contract dollars allocated to the Partnership. The sources of funds for this contract in FY 2004 include Bethesda Parking Lot District funds, Bethesda Urban District Tax revenue, and maintenance fees charged to optional method development property owners.
2. The Department of Public Works and Transportation's Transit Services contracts with the Partnership to operate Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS). In FY 2004, this contract totals approximately \$430,000 or 17% of the County contract dollars allocated to the Partnership. Parking Lot District funds transferred to the Mass Transit Fund pay for the contract.
3. The Silver Spring and Mid-County Regional Services Centers contract with the Partnership for streetsweeping and trash collection services in the Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban Districts. In FY 2004, these contracts total approximately \$188,000 or 7% of the County contract dollars allocated to the Partnership. Silver Spring and Wheaton Urban District dollars fund the contracts.
4. The Department of Public Works and Transportation contracts with the Partnership to provide groundskeeping services at public parking garages and parking lots in the Bethesda Urban District. In FY 2004, this contract totals approximately \$38,000 or 2% of the County contract dollars allocated to the Partnership. The source of funds for this contract is the Bethesda Parking Lot District Fund.

Finding 6. The Partnership fulfilled the purposes of the organization outlined in County law, the Partnership's Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership's Bylaws.

The purposes of the Partnership are outlined in County law, the Partnership's Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership's Bylaws. OLO concludes that the Partnership has fulfilled the purposes of the organization. Table 9 (pages 33-34) summarizes the purposes of the organization and the Partnership's achievements related to each purpose. For example, the Partnership:

- Plants 65,000 flowers in three annual rotations and cares for 1,200 trees each year,
- Publishes “Eat Here”, “Destination: Downtown Bethesda”, “Bethesda’s Best in Home Fashion”, and a bi-monthly “Events Calendar”,
- Responds to emergencies and has staff trained in CPR and first aid,
- Helps bring together property owners to coordinate projects, marketing, and other improvements,
- Maintains a database of volunteers and relies on volunteers to help run events,
- Generates in-kind sponsor support, and
- Serves on the boards of non-profit organizations to facilitate communication and cooperation with non-profits.

Finding 7. The Partnership performed effectively over the past five years.

To examine the Bethesda Urban Partnership’s performance, OLO reviewed feedback from focus groups convened by the Partnership and conducted interviews with individuals on the Partnership Board of Directors, County Government and M-NCPPC staff, and other relevant constituents.

OLO Interviews – Interviewees agreed that the Partnership benefits the Bethesda Urban District. Several individuals reported that the Partnership’s success is due in part to the business-like or entrepreneurial approach to providing services. That approach helps the Partnership give Bethesda residents, employees and visitors the services they need and want quickly and efficiently, and avoids some of the bureaucracy associated with other service provision.

The Partnership is credited with building good working relationships within the community. County staff that works with the Partnership reported that the Partnership staff is professional, enthusiastic, and responsive. Interviewees also described the staff as going above and beyond what is required, and reported that the Partnership completes high quality work. In addition, the Partnership insulates County departments from some minor day to day management issues that would be inefficient for the County Government to address.

In terms of concerns, some interviewees mentioned that the lack of street lighting and slow repairs to broken street lights requires attention to ensure safety. The need for coordinating improvements in the Woodmont Triangle is another area of concern. Partnership Board members expressed concern that the time staff invests in budget preparation takes away from time available to provide direct services. Board members also expressed interest in expanding the role of the Partnership in the future.

Partnership Survey - In early 2003, the Partnership distributed surveys and convened focus groups of the survey responders. Optional method developers, business owners, customers, residents, and employees were involved. The survey focused on the individuals’ awareness of the Partnership and their use of downtown Bethesda.

Two of the twelve questions on the survey gathered information about the performance of the Partnership specifically. One question asked participants if they think Bethesda is properly maintained. Most participants were pleased with the Partnership's maintenance services. The survey also asked how individuals get information about downtown Bethesda. Approximately 50% responded that they receive information about Bethesda from Partnership publications.

Partnership Focus Groups – The Partnership led six focus group sessions that included between four and nine individuals. The Strategic Plan describes themes that emerged from the focus group sessions. For example:

- Many participants had little knowledge of the Partnership and assumed that the Partnership's work was completed by the "government,"
- All groups mentioned the need for more street lighting and faster street light repairs, particularly in the Woodmont Triangle area,
- Participants suggested that the Partnership do more to educate drivers about parking, pedestrians about proper street crossing, and drivers and pedestrians about the Bethesda 8 Trolley,
- Participants expressed interest in upgrading the "look" of the Woodmont Triangle area to make it more people friendly, and
- The optional method development group felt that the Partnership should be a "one stop response system" responsible for all repair and maintenance in the urban district from the curb to the buildings.

Finding 8. The Partnership followed through on the Council's recommendation to prepare a strategic plan. The items proposed in the strategic plan impact the County's contracts with the Partnership. As of this writing, Executive Branch staff has not yet examined the plan or its impacts.

OLO's first evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, completed in 1998, recommended that the Partnership:

“engage constituent groups, including select County departments, in a strategic, long-range planning process. The goal of this exercise should be to clarify the purpose, scope and funding of the organization over the next five years.”

A special committee of the Board of Directors led a year-long effort to develop a strategic plan. In October 2003, the Partnership completed the Bethesda Urban Partnership Strategic Plan 2003. The Partnership transmitted copies of the strategic plan to the County Council on October 21, 2003.

The strategic plan is summarized beginning on page 38 of this report. The plan is attached in its entirety beginning at ©6. The Plan includes:

- A brief summary of BUP services,
- The results of focus group discussions,
- A list of strategic initiatives for the next five years,
- A description of the priorities for the first year, and
- Five recommendations for Council discussion.

The plan presents strategic initiatives and actions in three focus areas consistent with the Partnership's existing core service areas: Maintenance, Pedestrian/Vehicular Safety, and Marketing. The initiatives and actions under the marketing focus area generally expand current activities. In contrast, initiatives and actions under the other two focus areas propose more significant changes. For example, some of the actions under the maintenance focus area expand the Partnership's services outside the County's Urban Districts (e.g., to the Friendship Heights Central Business District). Other items in the plan propose that the Partnership assume responsibility for maintenance activities currently provided by the County Government.

The items in the plan impact the contracts currently in place with the County, County funding for Partnership operations, and County programs. County Government departments were not involved in the development of the plan.¹⁰ As of this writing, Executive Branch staff has not yet examined the plan or its impacts.

¹⁰ The County Executive's ex-officio member of the Board of Directors received periodic updates on the status of the strategic plan that were shared with the Board of Directors.

VI. Recommendations

Recommendation #1. The Council should re-authorize the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. for another five years, and retain the requirement for an OLO evaluation before the next re-authorization.

OLO recommends that the Council adopt a resolution to re-authorize the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. OLO found that the Partnership continues to fulfill the purposes of the organization designated in County law, the Partnership's Articles of Incorporation, and the Partnership's Bylaws. OLO's interviews, combined with results of focus groups convened by the Partnership, indicate satisfaction with the Partnership's performance. Overall, the Partnership's customers are pleased with the quality of work and working relationships they have with the Partnership.

OLO recommends that the Council require another re-authorization and OLO evaluation five years from now. In another five years it will be a good time to re-examine the Partnership's:

- Responsibilities and services provided,
- Staffing, organization, funding sources, and funding amounts,
- Performance, and
- Future roles and responsibilities.

Recommendation #2. The Council should ask the Bethesda Urban Partnership to work with Executive Branch staff to examine the Partnership's 2003 Strategic Plan in detail, and to further develop items in the plan for the Council's consideration.

In 1998, the Council approved an OLO recommendation that the Partnership "engage constituent groups, including select County departments, in a strategic, long-range planning process." In October 2003, the Partnership completed the Bethesda Urban Partnership Strategic Plan 2003.

The document presents the Partnership's strategic initiatives and actions for the next five years. It also presents priority items for the first year of the plan and items for discussion with the County Council. The plan is summarized beginning on page 38 of this report, and is attached in its entirety beginning at ©6.

The strategic plan proposes changes to the current roles and responsibilities of the Partnership that require further analysis and examination in cooperation with the Executive Branch. OLO recommends that the Council ask the Partnership to work with the Executive Branch to examine the plan and its impacts in more detail, and to further develop items presented in the strategic plan for the Council's consideration.

Specifically, OLO recommends that the Council ask the Partnership to work with the Executive Branch to examine:

- The potential legal implications of the changes in responsibilities, policies, and practices in the plan,
- The budgetary and funding impacts of the items in the plan, and
- The programmatic and contractual impacts of the items in the plan.

This examination should also include further defining initiatives and actions in the strategic plan, and developing specific approaches for funding and implementation. This process will give the Council the specific information they need to make decisions about the items in the plan, and the future roles and responsibilities of the Partnership.

Since the Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, and Wheaton Regional Services Centers and the Department of Public Works and Transportation administer the County's contracts with the Partnership, OLO recommends involving those organizations in the further analysis of the strategic plan. Given the potential legal and budgetary implications of the plan, OLO recommends also involving the County Attorney's Office and the Office of Management and Budget in this cooperative effort.

Recommendation #3. The Council should ask the Partnership to produce biennial updates on the Partnership's services, and short term goals and initiatives; and continue to develop five-year strategic plans that outline longer-term goals and initiatives.

The Council currently receives detailed information about the Partnership's organizational structure, services, funding, and performance every five years through OLO's formal evaluation. Limited information is shared with the Council annually through the operating budget review process. To enhance the Council's oversight and understanding of the Partnership, OLO recommends that the Council ask the Partnership to report biennially to the Council on the Partnership's activities and shorter term goals and initiatives.

OLO recommends that the Council ask the Partnership to continue developing five-year strategic plans to guide the organization's future. The Partnership can use the strategic plans to assess its operations and plan for the future, and to share its longer-term goals with the Council. OLO recommends that the Partnership involve representatives from the Regional Services Centers, Department of Public Works and Transportation, Office of Management and Budget, County Attorney's Office, and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission in the process of developing the plan.

OLO recognizes the value of focus group input and recommends that the Council ask the Partnership to continue using focus group feedback as part of the strategic planning process. To enhance the value of the exercise, OLO recommends that the Partnership:

- Use an independent, professional facilitator to lead the focus groups and summarize the results,
- Include a focus group for County Government and M-NCPPC staff who work with the Partnership, and
- Use the focus groups to learn more information about the Partnership's performance specifically, such as satisfaction with parking garage and lot cleanliness, satisfaction with sidewalk cleanliness and repair, satisfaction with the Ask Me Team assistance, usefulness of the wayfinding signs in navigating downtown Bethesda, and value of the BTS promotional materials and events.

VII. County Government & Bethesda Urban Partnership Comments

OLO circulated a draft of this report in November 2003 to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO); the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT); Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, and Mid-County Regional Services Centers; Office of Management and Budget (OMB); Office of the County Attorney; and the Montgomery County Police Department. OLO also shared the draft with the staff and Board of Directors of the Bethesda Urban Partnership. The Chief Administrative Officer and Partnership Board of Directors' written comments on the draft are included in their entirety, beginning on the following page.

OLO appreciates the time taken by the Executive Branch and Bethesda Urban Partnership to review and comment on the draft report. OLO looks forward to a continuing discussion of the Partnership as the Council reviews the report.



OFFICES OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

November 21, 2003

Bruce Romer
Chief Administrative Officer

TO: Karen Orlansky, Director
Office of Legislative Oversight

FROM: Bruce Romer
Chief Administrative Officer *Bruce Romer*

SUBJECT: Office of Legislative Oversight DRAFT Report, 2004-1; An Evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DRAFT OLO Report 2004-1: An Evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. The Bethesda Urban Partnership has undergone a number of changes since it was re-authorized in 1998. This OLO report is comprehensive and an excellent reference document. The evaluation confirms that the Bethesda Urban Partnership continues to fulfill the purposes of an urban corporation: providing maintenance, landscaping, promotions and special events.

We concur with OLO's recommendation regarding continuation and urge the Council to adopt a resolution reauthorizing the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. with another OLO evaluation and Council re-authorization in five years. We also concur with OLO's recommendation regarding the importance of the Partnership working with the Executive Branch to examine the Partnership's 2003 Strategic Plan and to prepare specific information before Council consideration of the future roles and responsibilities of the Partnership.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this draft report. We look forward to participating with the Council in its review of this report.



**Board of Directors Response to
OLO Report 2004-1
An Evaluation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership**

The Board of Directors of the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) has reviewed a draft of OLO Report 2004-1. Overall the Board is very pleased with the report. It confirms our own findings that the Partnership has been an effective service provider within the urban district. It is good to hear that the OLO found that our constituents are satisfied with our efforts and that the Council's intent for the management of downtown Bethesda is being met. Also, the Board is impressed and appreciative of the speed and professionalism with which the OLO staff accomplished the report.

A year ago, the Board established a Strategic Plan Committee to lead the evaluation and reauthorization process. The Board submitted a Strategic Plan Report to OLO in October 2003. In this document, we comment generally on the OLO draft Report's three recommendations.

Recommendation 1:

The OLO recommends that the Partnership be authorized for another five years. However, considering the Partnership's successful 10 years experience, the Board strongly recommends that the Council amend the relevant statute to schedule the reauthorization in ten year increments. BUP's annual report gives sufficient information to monitor the activities of BUP annually, along with the informal reporting which occurs through the membership of the County Executive's representative and communications with the Office of Management & Budget, and DPWT. At the five year mark, a more comprehensive report than the annual report could be prepared along with another 5 year Strategic Plan. Conducting the reauthorization at ten year intervals would allow a reallocation of BUP Board and Staff time from the reauthorization process to mission requirements.

Recommendation 2:

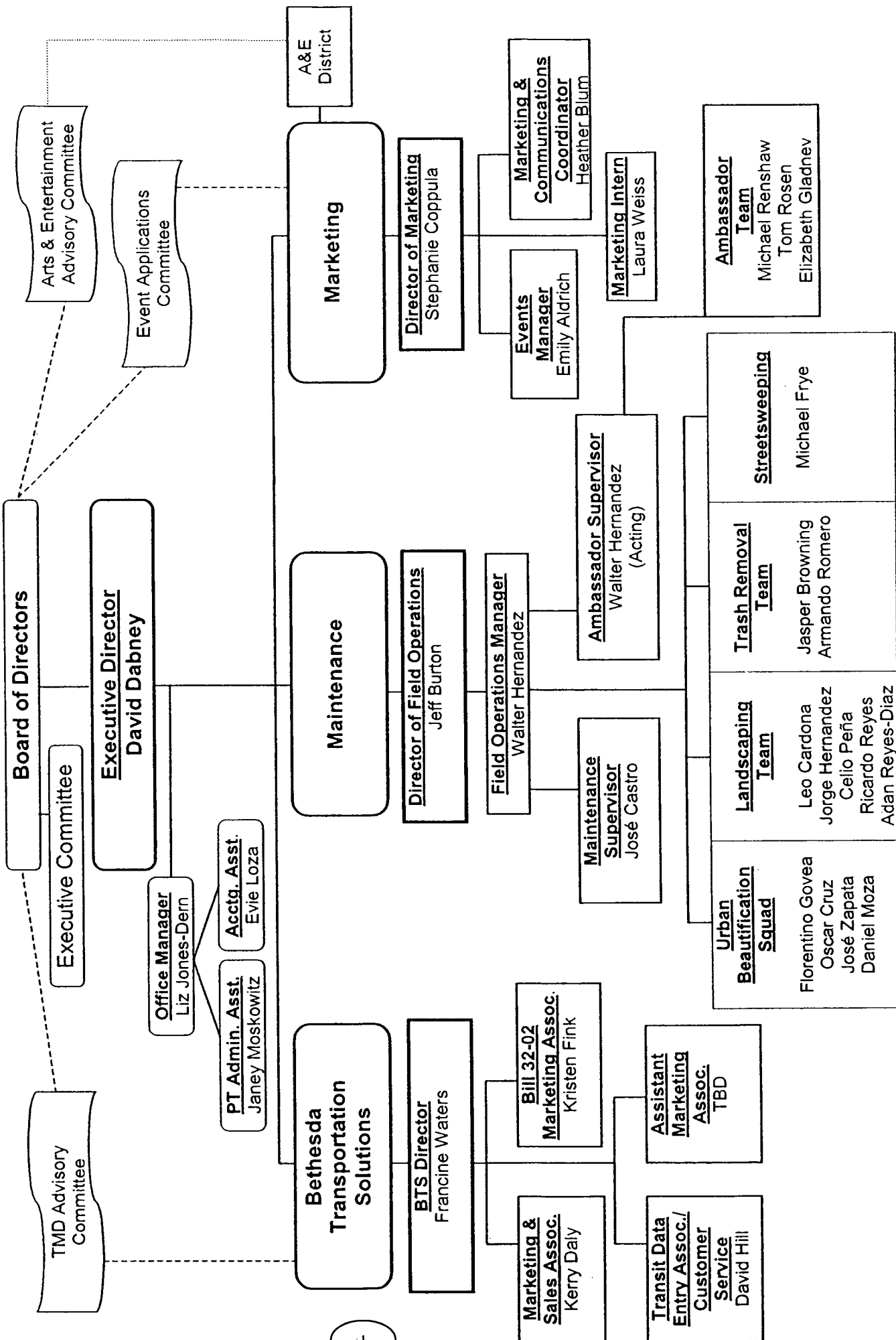
The Partnership strongly believes that an accelerated review of the modifications of its authority by County personnel should be a part of the reauthorization process, rather than making this review the focus of everyone's efforts for the next five years. If the Council accepts the Board's recommendations, the proposed changes to BUP's roles and responsibilities are not so complicated and could be accomplished in a focused effort by the County Attorney's Office, DPWT, OMB and others in a several month process. To recommend, as OLO has, that BUP engage in this process after reauthorization, without any time limit, is likely to result in an inefficient use of BUP staff and County staff time in prolonged, inefficient and unnecessary series of discussions. Meanwhile, the impetus for making the changes--inadequate services delivery--will persist and frustration will prevail among BUP's constituents.

Recommendation 3:

The Board believes that the request for the Partnership to report biennially on its services is unnecessary. Currently, BUP prepares an annual report available publicly, and informal information on its activities is shared liberally with a variety of County personnel in the Regional Services Office, DPWT, OMB and the County Council. The Board agrees that a 5 year Strategic Plan with constituency input reported to the Council is essential. However, preparing additional formal reports and hiring an independent professional consultant are time intensive and cost prohibitive for BUP's staff and budget and do little to implement BUP's mission to its constituents. BUP is always willing to engage in more frequent and/or intensive discussions, consultations, etc. with interested County personnel, Park & Planning Staff and the like upon request.

The BUP Board is confident that if the County Council adopts our recommendations and continues to reinvest the Bethesda Parking Lot District funds, the Council's intent for the management of downtown Bethesda will continue on its successful path in meeting the constituent needs.

Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.



**Bethesda Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
FY03**

Nominated by B-CC Chamber of Commerce			
<p><u>Anne C. Martin</u> Linowes & Blocher LLP 7200 Wisconsin Ave. Suite 800 Phone: (301) 961-5127 Fax: (301) 654-2801 amartin@linowes-law.com Term Ending Dec. 2004</p>	<p><u>David Smith</u> The Chevy Chase Land Company 2 Bethesda Metro Center, Ste. 210 Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 951-5600 dms@cclandco.com Term Ending Feb. 2005</p>	<p><u>M.G. Diamond</u> Law Offices of M. Gregg Diamond, P.C. 4416 East-West Hwy, Ste. 400 Bethesda, MD 20814-4568 Phone: (301) 634-3181 Fax: (301) 634-3182 MGDiamond@mgd-law.com Term Ending Mar. 2005</p>	
Nominated by Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board			
Representing Neighborhoods Adjacent to the TMD		Representing Residents Living within the TMD	
<p><u>Malcolm D. Rivkin</u> 7801 Fairfax Rd. Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 656-5155 Fax: (301) 656-3441 Rivkin@erols.com 2nd Term Ending June 2006</p>	<p><u>Martha Spiro Covell</u> 4307 Stanford Street Chevy Chase, MD 20815 Phone: (301)652-5583 mcovell@townofchevychase.org Term Ending June 2006</p>	<p><u>Nelson J. Cooney</u> 4912 Edgemoor Ln Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 656-6152 Cell: (301) 906-5707 n.cooney@verizon.net Term Ending Nov. 2005</p>	<p><u>Beryl Neuman</u> 7620 Old Georgetown Road Apt. 306 Bethesda, MD 20814 (202) 693-8661 Term ending June 2006</p>
Bethesda Employer with 50 or More Employees		Bethesda Employer with Fewer than 50 Employees	
<p align="center">VACANT</p>	<p><u>James Landry</u> Chevy Chase Bank 7501 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (240) 497-4665 Fax: (301) 907-4733 jelandry@chevychasebank.net Term Ending May 2004</p>	<p><u>Sue Morris</u> Equals Three Communications 7910 Woodmont Ave. Ste. 200 Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 656-3100 swmorris@equals3.com 2nd Term Ending June 2006</p>	<p><u>Arnold J. Kohn</u> Bethesda Place 11501 Huff Court North Bethesda, MD 20895 Phone: (301) 692-1420 Fax: (301) 984-6033 ajkohn@towercompanies.com Term Ending Dec. 2004</p>
Non-Voting Members			
<p><u>Chuck Kines</u> MD Nat'l. Capital Park and Planning Comm. 8787 Georgia Ave. Silver Spring, MD 20910 Phone: (301) 495-2184 Fax: (301) 495-1302 Charles.Kines@mncppc.org</p>	<p><u>Deborah Snead</u> Director B-CC Regional Svs. Cent. 4805 Edgemoor Ln. Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 986-4325 Deborah.snead@co.mo.md.us</p>	<p><u>Tom Gallagher, Ph.D.</u> Dir., Ofc. of Cmty. Liaison Nat'l. Institutes of Health 1 Center Drive, Room 259 Bethesda, MD 20892 Phone: (301) 496-3931 Fax: (301) 594-2592 gallagth@od.nih.gov</p>	<p><u>Sgt. Roy Russell</u> 2nd District Traffic Squad Supervisor Mont. County Police Dept. 7359 Wisconsin Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 657-0962 Fax: (301) 657-0123 Roy.Russell@montgomerycountymd.gov</p>
<p><u>Jack D. Hayes</u> Representing BUP 8305 Kentucky Ave. Bethesda, MD 20814 Phone: (301) 656-0410 jdhsr@aol.com</p>	<p><u>Jim Carlson</u> Representing DPWT 8401 Colesville Rd. Ste. 150 Silver Spring, MD 20910 Phone: (301) 565-5701 sandra.brecher@co.mo.md.us</p>		

SAMPLE TRAFFIC MITIGATION PLAN

Company/Organization: Global Solutions, Inc.

Address: 5555 County Drive, Bethesda MD 20814

Number of Full-time Employees: 300 Part-time Employees 0

Submitted by: Tom A. Jones Title President

Signature: _____ Date: May 1, 2003

Here's our plan to reduce gridlock in Montgomery County by offering the selected transportation benefits to our employees. In the first column, we've placed an *E* next to the strategies that we already have in place, and *N* next to the strategies that we will implement with this year's Traffic Mitigation Plan. In the last column, we've described our current or planned efforts.

E= Existing Strategy N= New Strategy * Required Strategy

<u>Traffic Mitigation Strategy</u>	<u>Employer Description</u>
* E Contact person designated to receive and distribute information	Ellen Davis, Human Resources Director 301-555-5555; edavis@globalsolutions.com We will notify the TMD in writing of any changes in this information
* E Information on transit/pooling/other commute alternatives distributed/posted regularly (furnished by TMD)	Information on transportation services is posted in the employee break room.
* N Facilitate TMD staff presentations to employees and HR/Administrative staff on commute information/alternatives on periodic basis	We hold an annual benefits seminar in the fall. We would like TMD Staff to attend to display information and answer employee questions.
* N Guaranteed Ride Home Promotion (free regional program offering emergency rides)	We promote the Guaranteed Ride Home program to our employees. We provide brochures to employees with their monthly transit benefit.
* N Annual Commuter Survey distributed to employees (short survey of transportation—supplied by TMD)	[Please describe your approach to gaining 80 percent participation from your employees] We will distribute survey to our employees via e-mail from our company president. We will also send an e-mail reminder.
* N ADA information provided (transportation services for people with disabilities)	We will provide disabled employees with information on the regional Metro Access program and Montgomery County's Same Day Access program.
* N Permanent display area for TMD-provided bus schedules and other transportation information	We plan to install a transit map and brochure racks in our employee break room.
* N Compile information on yearly TMP activities and submit Annual Report	We will maintain a file on the promotion and implementation of the strategies selected above and include in our Annual Report to DPWT.
N Attendance at free CSS-sponsored meetings/workshops permitted for designated contact person	Ms. Davis will be permitted to attend four such meetings per year.

SAMPLE TRAFFIC MITIGATION PLAN

	<u>Traffic Mitigation Strategy</u>	<u>Employer Description</u>
E	Information on commuting alternatives provided to new employees (TMD can provide materials and/or attend orientations)	We inform new employees of our transit subsidy program and provide Metro pocket guide and Ride On route maps to assist them in transit planning.
	Free or reduced rate parking for car/vanpools offered to employees	
	Preferred location and/or reserved parking for car/vanpools offered to employees	
N	Bike amenities at worksite, such as racks, lockers, and showers (TMD may be able to supply)	We will arrange to have bike racks installed in our garage.
	Transit/pedestrian amenities at worksite, e.g. sidewalks, benches, etc.	
	Carpool matching for employees (as part of free region-wide matching program, or can be on-site only)	
N	Alternative work schedules: <input type="checkbox"/> Flex Time <input type="checkbox"/> Jobsharing <input type="checkbox"/> Compressed Work Week <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telecommute/Teleworking	We allow teleworking for some employees in special circumstances. We would be interested in formalizing this program and making it available to more employees.
E	Tax-free monthly transit subsidies provided to employees, including Super Fare Share, Fare Share and Metrochek	We participate in the Super Fare Share program. We joined in September 2000. Fifty employees currently participate in the program. We inform new employees about the subsidy at orientation.
N	Maryland State Commuter Tax Credit for employers	TMD Staff explained that we qualify for the State's 50 percent tax credit on our contributions to employees commuting costs up to \$30/month. We will apply for credit this tax year.
	Pre-tax payroll deduction for transit costs offered to employees (Saves employer & employee money)	
	Transit passes/tokens offered for purchase at worksite (at full or reduced price)	
	Subsidize employee parking and transit equally (if employee parking is currently subsidized, offer equal subsidy for transit costs)	
	Ozone Action Days participation (regional program to alert people to dangerous air quality days)	
	Other: Please Indicate	

Please attach to cover letter and submit to:

Albert J. Genetti, Jr., Director

Montgomery County DPWT c/o Commuter Services

8401 Colesville Road, Suite 150, Silver Spring MD 20910—301-565-5890 (fax)

with copy to:

Francine E. Waters, Director, Bethesda Transportation Solutions

7700 Old Georgetown Road Bethesda, MD 20814 240-223-0200 (fax)

Global/

Solutions

Sample Letter

May 1, 2003

Mr. Albert J. Genetti, Jr., Director
Montgomery County DPWT
c/o Commuter Services
8401 Colesville Road, Suite 150
Silver Spring MD 20910

Dear Mr. Genetti:

In response to your letter of March 15, 2003 regarding traffic reduction in the County, I am attaching Global Solutions' Traffic Mitigation Plan (TMP) for 2003. Our Vice President for Administration has worked with the staff of your Bethesda Transportation Management District (Bethesda Transportation Solutions) to incorporate elements of Global Solutions' existing benefits with other effective transportation management strategies. We think the resulting TMP will encourage our employees and prospective employees to consider alternate commutes to Downtown Bethesda.

We look forward to sharing the results of our efforts with you in the near future. Should you have any questions, please contact our Director of Administration, Ellen Brown at 301-555-9999 or ebrown@globalsolutions.com.

Sincerely,

Tom A. Jones
President

cc: Bethesda Transportation Solutions

5555 County Way, Bethesda, Maryland 20814
301-555-9999 · www.globalsolutions.com · 301-555-1111 fax



URBAN PARTNERSHIP INC.

**BETHESDA URBAN PARTNERSHIP
STRATEGIC PLAN 2003**

**REPORT TO
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE
OVERSIGHT**

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

OLO REPORT
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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 1998 the County Council Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO), issued a performance evaluation report on the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. (BUP) that recommended reauthorization of BUP. Also, the report recommended that prior to the next reauthorization in 2004, BUP should complete an evaluation and a five year strategic plan. The OLO recommended that the goal of the plan should be to clarify the purpose, scope and funding of the organization and consider its future; whether it should continue as a service organization or evolve into a more independent full service district.

A special committee of the BUP Board of Directors led the year long Strategic Plan Project. It consisted of six months of committee and staff research and preparation followed by the first Board Planning Session in November 2002. A series of Focus Group Sessions with BUP's five constituency groups took place in the Spring of 2003 followed by the second BUP Board Planning Session in May 2003. A summary of the Five Year Strategic Plan was presented to the Greater Bethesda Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce and the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board in July 2003.

To begin implementation of the Strategic Plan, the Board determined the following six priorities for FY04:

1. Expanded Maintenance/Information Crew
2. Merchants Marketing Committee
3. Unified Branding
4. Fee for Service
5. Lighting Maintenance and Enhancement
6. Revision of BUP Budget Cycle

The Board is pleased to report that progress has already been made on the first three priorities in the first quarter of FY2004. *(See Section IV.)*

In considering the future of BUP as an organization, the BUP Board acknowledged the input of the focus groups: That BUP should seek more independence in order to better control the reinvestment of Parking Lot District Funds to address the increasing maintenance, marketing and transportation management needs of downtown Bethesda.

However, the BUP Board determined that during the next five years, the Partnership's emphasis should be to enhance its reputation by continuing to add services that relate, improve or enhance the present BUP mission in maintenance, marketing and transportation management services in downtown Bethesda.

Therefore, the BUP Board will pursue discussions with the Montgomery County Council on the following five items:

1. Management of the free trolley service.
2. Expanded responsibility to implement increased lighting, crosswalk and pothole repair.
3. Designated authority to track and implement Sector Plan/Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) of limited scope.
4. Implementation of a bi-annual budget.
5. Authorization of a designated funding stream from the Parking Lot District.

It has been noted in the 1998 OLO Report and comments by the County Executive Office that it was advantageous to encourage the Partnership in an “entrepreneurial approach to service delivery.” They also said that BUP, operating as a non-profit corporation, “permits a slightly arms-length arrangement with the County that in turn, reinforces the entrepreneurship.” (*OLO Report, 1998*)

As this presentation highlights, the relationship between the County and BUP has led to the successful provision of quality service to downtown Bethesda in an efficient, cost effective manner.

The BUP Board is confident that its recommendations for the next five years derive from its experience, enhanced by community input, and that these recommendations continue to build on the council’s intent for the management of downtown Bethesda.

II. ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

The Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) has successfully managed its budget, staff and on-going maintenance and marketing programs since its creation in 1994. The BUP maintenance and landscaping team maintains Bethesda's flowers, trees and turf. In addition the team picks up litter, sweeps Bethesda's streets and power washes and repairs Bethesda's brick sidewalks throughout the year. BUP initiated and executed the "wayfinding" signage program that directs patrons to Metro and parking and identifies the sections of downtown Bethesda. The Bethesda Urban Partnership "Ask Me" informational team began in August 2003.

BUP's marketing team implements large-scale special events such as the Taste of Bethesda, Imagination Bethesda, Winter Wonderland (formerly titled Holiday Lighting), Bethesda's Literary Festival and a free summer concert series. BUP also created and maintains Bethesda's Web site, marketing collateral and advertising/public relations campaigns. The state of Maryland designated Bethesda as an Arts and Entertainment District in July 2002 which is managed by the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

Additionally, BUP was given the responsibility three years ago to initiate and manage the Bethesda Transportation Solutions, a Transportation Management District (TMD).

BUP is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors made up of residents, developers and businesses. Three directors (Marketing/Communications, Landscaping/Maintenance and Bethesda Transportation Solutions) report to the Executive Director.

During the last ten years, the Bethesda Urban Partnership has expanded its services and staff with minimal increase in budget. Additional programs and services have been added by bringing numerous contracts and staff in-house and by reaching out to corporate partners as sponsors to expand the scope of the Bethesda Urban Partnership.

A. MAINTENANCE SERVICES

BUP's maintenance team is responsible for:

- 65,000 flowers in three annual rotations
- 1,200 trees
- 122,000 square feet of turf
- 4,000 miles of streets
- 9,500 miles of sidewalks annually
- 500,00 square feet of sidewalks per year
- Litter removal three times daily, emptying trash once a day.
- Trash removal of the three Urban Districts (Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton.)
- Street sweeping of the three Urban Districts (Bethesda, Silver Spring and Wheaton.)
- "Ask Me" Team that serves as the second shift informational crew.
- Maintenance of the Wisconsin Avenue median strip from the Capital Beltway to the town of Somerset.

- The CPR/First Aid Certification received by both the maintenance and “Ask Me” teams.
- English as a Second Language classes provided to maintenance team.

B. MARKETING SERVICES

BUP’s marketing team is responsible for:

- Management of the Bethesda’s Arts and Entertainment District
 - ✓ The Trawick Prize: Bethesda Contemporary Art Awards
 - ✓ Bethesda Art Walk
 - ✓ *The Art & Soul of Bethesda* brochure includes public art, visual art, performing arts and arts organizations throughout downtown Bethesda.
 - ✓ Bethesda Artist Market
- Bethesda’s Web site, www.bethesda.org.
- Publications promoting Bethesda’s restaurant, retail and arts and entertainment venues and community events.
- Targeted advertising and public relations campaigns promoting downtown Bethesda as a dining, shopping and arts and entertainment destination.
- Special Events
 - ✓ Taste of Bethesda
 - ✓ Imagination Bethesda
 - ✓ Summer Concert Series
 - ✓ Bethesda Literary Festival
 - ✓ Winter Wonderland

C. TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) is responsible for:

- Marketing alternative modes of transportation to the Bethesda work force with concentration on the peak commute hours from 7-9am.
 - ✓ Alternate modes of transportation include rail, bus, carpooling, teleworking, flextime, vanpooling, biking, walking and personalized transit route information.
- Marketing the county, state and federal commuter programs to the business community.
- BTS Web site, www.bethesdatransit.org.
- Annual *Bike to Work* and *Communities in Motion* events.
- Facilitation with the state and county for the first site for “Sign of the Times” in the Bethesda Metrobus Bay (display of real time bus arrivals.)
- Weekly Commuter Information Lobby promotions in downtown Bethesda’s office buildings.
- Promotion of Fare Share and Super Fare Share to downtown Bethesda employers.
- Management of annual traffic count of nineteen intersections.
- Data collection and analysis of Annual Commuter Survey of more than 8,000 employees.
- Biennial report and monthly newsletters.
- Monitoring of Share-A-Ride District Parking Reduction Program.
- Re-striping and cross hatching of 65 pedestrian crosswalks in 2002.

- Installation of more than 30 bike racks throughout downtown Bethesda in 2002.
- The artist-designed Bethesda 8 Poetry Benches which adorn the Bethesda 8 Trolley stops.
- Liaison with Bethesda businesses for Montgomery County Council Legislation 32-02 which requires employers with 25 or more employees to prepare and submit for approval a Transportation Mitigation Plan.
- Review developers' Traffic Mitigation Agreements.

(See Attachment 1 for the 2002 BUP Annual Report.)

III. FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY

A. INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of 2003, the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) hosted five sessions with the following Central Business District (CBD) constituent groups: Optional Method Developers (OMD), Business Owners, Customers, Residents and Employees.

A three member committee of the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) Board of Directors organized and ran the focus groups: Carol Trawick, Chair; Jeanette Pfothauer and Patricia Harris. They were assisted by BUP Marketing Director, Stephanie Coppola and her staff.

The sessions were held one per week over a six week period. Each session lasted one and a half hours. The attendees ranged from four to nine per group.

A twelve question survey was developed based on one that had been used in 1997. The question design was open ended to solicit spontaneous answers. The survey was distributed to each attendee to complete prior to each session.

The survey was important as a vehicle to provide a snapshot of each individual participant's perspective of downtown Bethesda prior to any influence by the group dynamics and/or clarification information from the facilitators.

The group sessions not only provided feedback from the individuals on their perceptions of the downtown but also allowed for creative ideas to be expressed.

The following results of the focus groups were presented to the Greater Bethesda Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce and the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board during the summer of 2003. Both groups were interested in the feedback that was received as well as supportive of the Bethesda Urban Partnership's five year strategic plan.

B. SURVEY

(See Figure 1, Questionnaire.)

1. Overview

The survey responses were overwhelmingly positive. *(See Figure 2, Group Session Data.)*

The predominant words used to describe the downtown were “vibrant” “fun” and “urban.” The nouns “town,” “city,” “suburbia” and “community” were defined by “charming,” “creative,” “chic,” “dynamic,” “walkable,” “pleasant” and “wonderful,” and in combination, such as “a chic urban community” or an “urban village.”

The BUP organization and its responsibilities were best known by the OMD, Business Owner and Customer groups and much less known by the resident group. However, all groups needed some clarification about BUP’s structure, functions and funding.

Dining out in Bethesda was very popular among all groups and shopping ran a close second. The variety of restaurants and shops was the main appeal of the “Downtown Bethesda” experience.

Someone in each group had attended Taste of Bethesda and the Round House Theatre. The OMD group participated the least in events.

Most were pleased with the present landscaping and trash maintenance. Improved lighting was a concern for many.

Approximately 50% came to Bethesda by car, 25% walking and another 25% by metro/bus or other. For those who drove into downtown 50% were secure in their parking options. For the others, the question of where to park remains a continuing difficulty.

All groups had difficulty answering “What is the Bethesda 8”? Although two thirds of the attendees knew it was a trolley and/or a bus, another one third had no idea what it was. Two participants thought it was a movie theater.

About 50% received information about the downtown from BUP publications, 28% from newspapers, 14% from the Web and 8% from other places.

(See Attachment 2, All Group Responses Organized by Survey Question.)

FIGURE 1

Questionnaire

Please take a moment to review and answer the following questions on downtown Bethesda.

1. Describe downtown Bethesda in a sentence.

2. What is the Bethesda Urban Partnership?

3. What are the two main responsibilities of the Bethesda Urban Partnership?

4. Do you dine out in Bethesda? What is your favorite restaurant?

5. Do you shop in Bethesda? What is your favorite retail store?

6. Have you attended an artistic or cultural activity in downtown Bethesda? If so, what event or venue did you visit?

7. How do you travel into Bethesda?

8. What is the "Bethesda 8"?

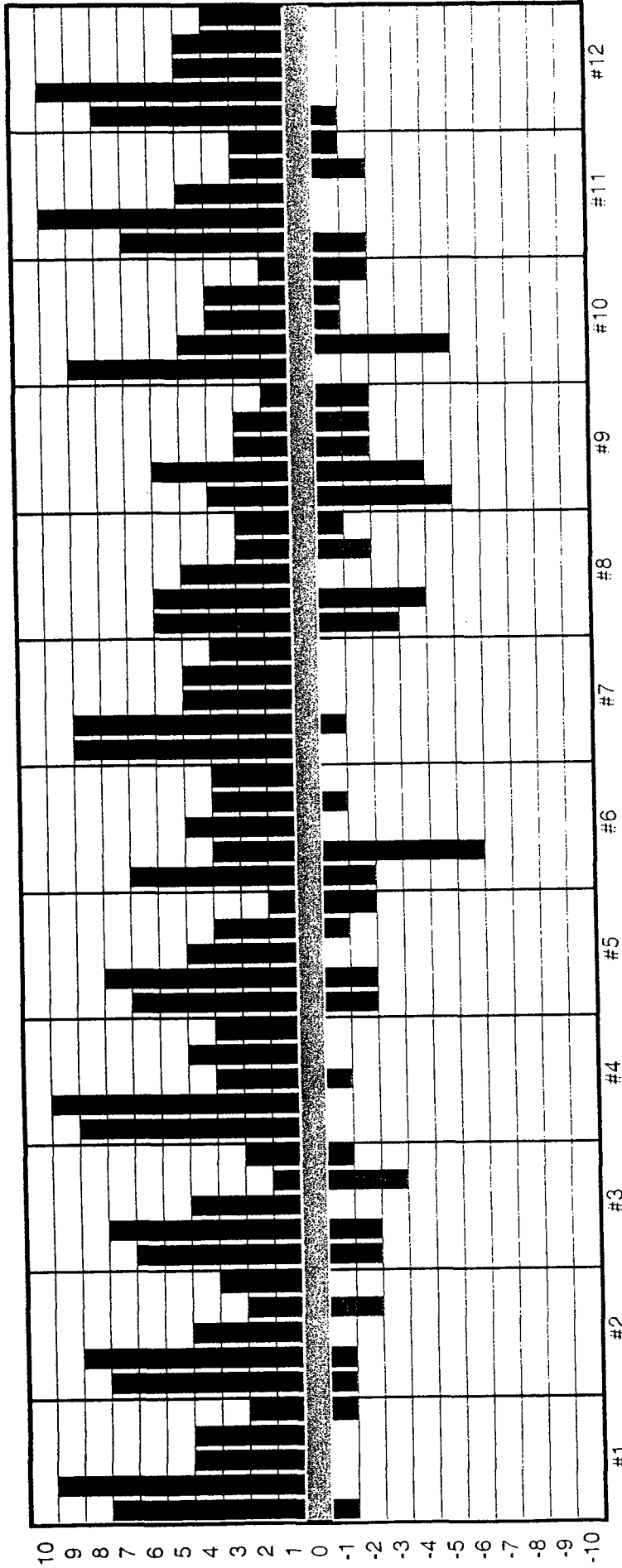
9. If you have driven into downtown Bethesda, where do you park? Have you ever had a challenge finding available parking?

10. Have you ever attended a large-scale special event in downtown Bethesda? If so, what event did you attend?

11. Do you think that Bethesda is being properly maintained? If not, what additional maintenance is needed?

12. How do you get information about downtown Bethesda?

FIGURE 2
GROUP SESSION DATA CHART
 WINTER 2003
 CHART OF POSITIVE/NEGATIVE RESPONSES BY GROUPS



= QUESTIONS (SEE ATTACHED SURVEY FORMS)

Legend: Groups Represented

- = Business Owners
- = OMD
- = Customers
- = Residents
- = Employees

C. GROUP SESSIONS

1. Summary of Discussion Topics

The groups were most dynamic and generated a synergism that enhanced creative thinking among participants.

Several themes emerged:

(a.) Understanding of the urban district management

All groups except the Optional Method Developers (OMD) needed a brief explanation of the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) structure, responsibilities, and funding sources. Many participants had little knowledge about the BUP and assumed the quality of the maintenance and events was provided by the “government.” All groups strongly agreed that more parking lot funds should be reinvested to meet expanding needs in the downtown.

(b.) Urban district boundaries

All groups supported the clarification of the urban district boundaries as outlined by the BUP board. In a surprising development, residents living south of Parking Lot 31 just outside the urban district eagerly volunteered that they would pay more if they could be included in the urban district.

(c.) Maintenance

Although all groups were pleased that the district was well maintained as far as cleanliness and beautification, there was a desire for BUP to expand services, particularly lighting which they associated with safety.

Upgrading the “look” of the Woodmont Triangle to make it more people friendly – not in the same way as Bethesda Avenue but with the same effect was emphasized. Although there was a strong desire to maintain separate personalities for the areas, there was an equal desire to “connect the two Bethesda’s.” The consensus was that the Woodmont Triangle “doesn’t gel as an area.” Some ideas and other joint marketing efforts for improvement include: a focal point for gathering, more lighting, benches, trees, flowers, repaired sidewalks, and a merchants group facilitated by BUP to organize such things as evening store hours.

The OMD group felt strongly that BUP should be a “One Stop Response System” responsible for all repair and maintenance from the curb to the building in the entire urban district.

All groups supported training the BUP maintenance crew with information to assist with parking and trolley use. Also, the visibility would provide an additional source of security.

Fee for Service

All groups supported BUP developing a fee for service program preferably initiating it through a pilot program with one property owner which then can be showcased to others. The resident group was also interested as they perceived it could possibly afford them improved services for a reasonable additional cost with accountable management close by.

Pedestrian/Vehicular Safety/Parking Issues

Suggestions were pervasive for BUP to find ways to educate drivers about parking and pedestrians about proper crossing and both groups about the free trolley availability. It was strongly felt that better literature distributed through employers and apartment management, as well as additional trained BUP employees and trolley drivers could help. Increasing the number of well-marked crosswalks, timed pedestrian countdown lights and street “paddle signs” were popular suggestions.

There was a definite desire for a study of large intersections, particularly Bethesda Avenue at Woodmont Avenue, and a review of inconsistent parking times in the Woodmont Triangle.

There was a strong concern for improved street lighting particularly in the Woodmont Triangle and a desire throughout the district for faster light replacement.

Marketing

Initial information about BUP events was received predominantly from hard copy such as newspaper ads, event listings in newspapers and BUP’s events calendar.

The preponderance of marketing outreach suggestions had to do with promoting the walkability of Bethesda and improving how we let people know where to park, use the free trolley and navigate Bethesda, such as, creating an “info blitz,” kiosks and lists that link a trolley stop to the restaurants/shops/attractions available at its stop.

The synergism within the Business group produced the suggestion to form a merchants group facilitated by BUP to coordinate joint marketing efforts that could include evening hours, a banner program, cooperative ads, etc.

2. Participant Ideas for the Future

Group Sessions – Final Question: The Future

Is Bethesda a city, town or postal designation and what is the ideal organization for BUP and downtown Bethesda in the future?

This was the question posed to all five constituent focus groups.

All groups thought that downtown Bethesda was a town or city and were surprised to learn it was only a postal designation under the jurisdiction of Montgomery County.

All participants, except one, felt that downtown Bethesda should seek independence with local control as a town or city. The one exception, an employee, felt things were well taken care of under present circumstances.

Except for one participant satisfied with the status quo, all participants felt that BUP needed more control of the present fees raised in the Urban District.

Incorporation with an elected council was a popular idea. Two residents in an adjoining area to the downtown were not only in favor of independence but wanted to be included even if it meant paying special additional taxes for higher levels of service. A suggestion was made to make an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages for downtown property owners.

Suggestions for expanded BUP control ran the gamut from total control of all maintenance and present funding sources such as the Parking District to the ability to raise and reduce fees and levy special assessments on property.

IV. FIVE-YEAR PLAN

A. SUMMARY WITH HIGHLIGHTS

The five-year strategic plan of the Bethesda Urban Partnership was created in several steps. 1) The executive director and staff directors met with an outside management consultant who facilitated the creation of the staff's recommendations given to the Strategic Plan committee of the BUP board. 2) The committee evaluated the recommendations and organized a five-year plan for study by the Board of Directors. 3) The full Board of Directors held a strategic planning retreat in November 2002 to discuss the strategic plan and next steps. 4) It was decided that it was necessary to invite each constituent group represented by the Bethesda Urban Partnership to focus group meetings to ascertain their opinions on the strategic direction of BUP and downtown Bethesda. 5) A final meeting was held in May 2003 in which the Board reviewed the outcomes of the focus groups; set the first year priorities of the five-year strategic plan and determined the direction of BUP for the future.

The attached flowchart of the five-year focus areas, lists the strategic initiatives of the Bethesda Urban Partnership as agreed upon by the BUP board, staff and constituents. The three focus areas are 1) Maintenance 2) Pedestrian/Vehicular Safety and 3) Marketing which includes Communications and Special Events. The following provides highlights of some of the strategic initiatives.

Maintenance

- A. Develop and maintain public spaces, sidewalks and plazas adjacent and contiguous to the Urban District at a first class standard, such as expanding to include the maintenance of East West Highway on the North side of the street since the South side is already within the Urban District.
- B. Develop and maintain Bethesda Urban District's public spaces, sidewalks, and plazas at a first class standard, such as BUP assuming responsibility for certain county maintenance functions within the Urban District (for example, street lighting.)
- C. Expand the functional responsibilities of designated maintenance workers to give directions, recognize problems, and report unusual circumstances, such as the new "Ask Me" team.
- D. Provide services and expertise to private property owners within the Bethesda Urban District on a fee for service basis, such as with Optional Method Developer properties.
- E. Expand services and expertise to Central Business Districts (CBD) outside of the Bethesda Urban District on a fee for service basis, such as maintaining streetscape in the Friendship Heights CBD.

Pedestrian/Vehicular Safety

- A. Promote pedestrian safety, such as increasing the number of crosswalks.
- B. Increase public presence in order to enhance safety.
- C. Coordinate with community groups to educate public such as in the use of the Wisconsin Avenue Tunnel.

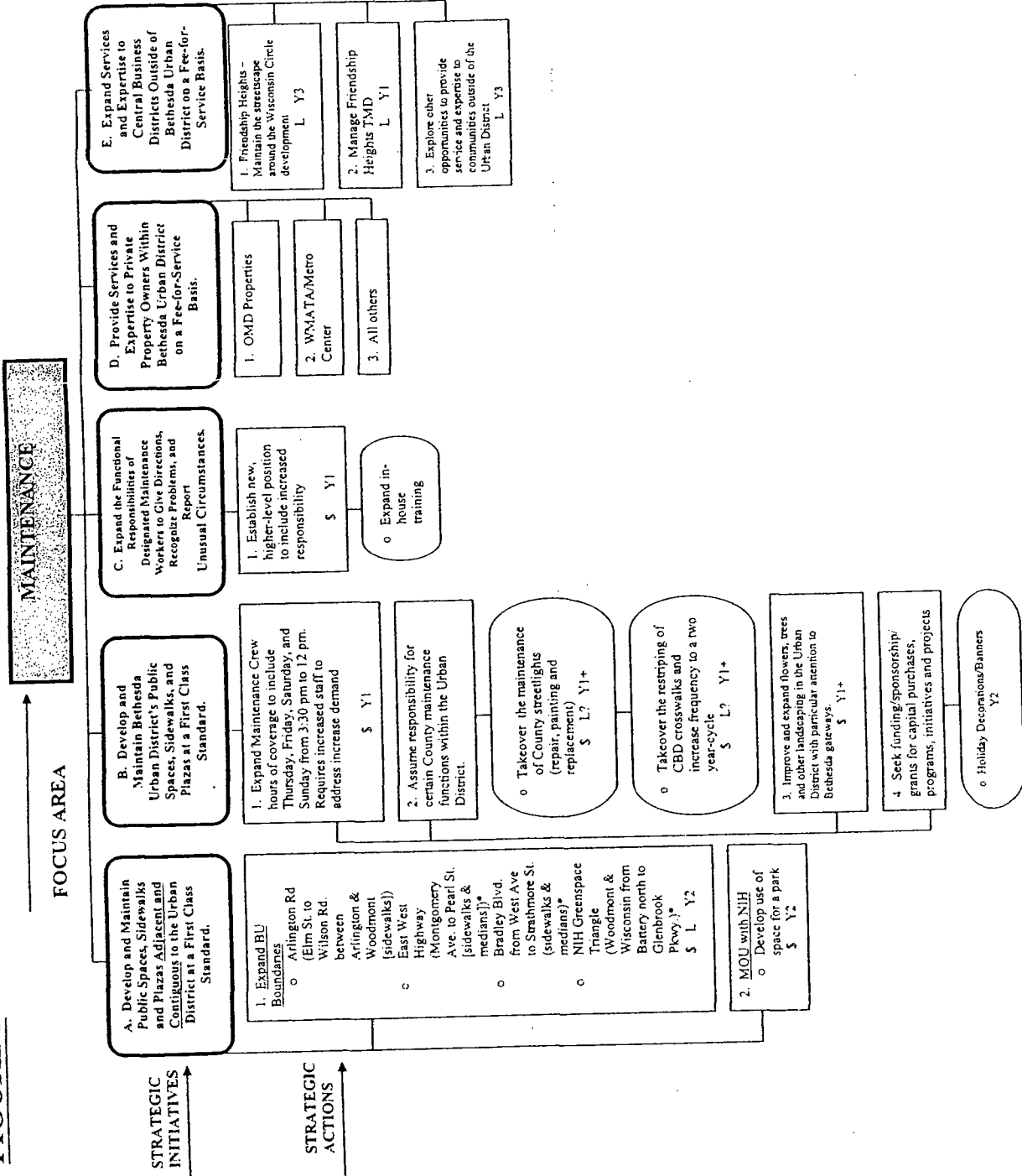
D. Improve vehicle circulation and parking such as expanding the free trolley.

Marketing (Communications and Special Events)

- A. Market Bethesda as distinct place with a cohesive sense of community via unified branding.
- B. Promote the tapestry of multicultural and diverse businesses in the Urban District through a series of press articles.
- C. Develop Bethesda's Arts and Entertainment District with juried visual art competitions, artist markets and more arts related special events.

(See Figure 3, Flowchart of Five Year Plan.)

FIGURE 3



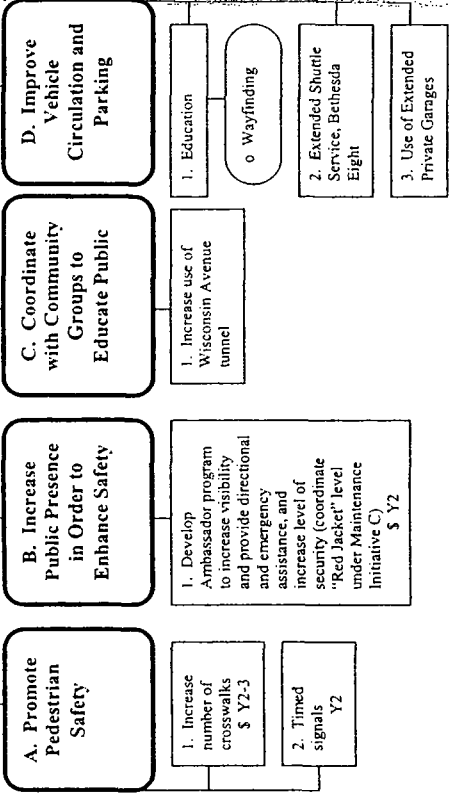
Legend:
 \$: requires additional funding
 L: requires adjustment to present Law
 Y: number of years to complete (Y1 = start budget year 2004)
 *: further exploration required

PEDESTRIAN/VEHICULAR SAFETY

FOCUS AREA

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

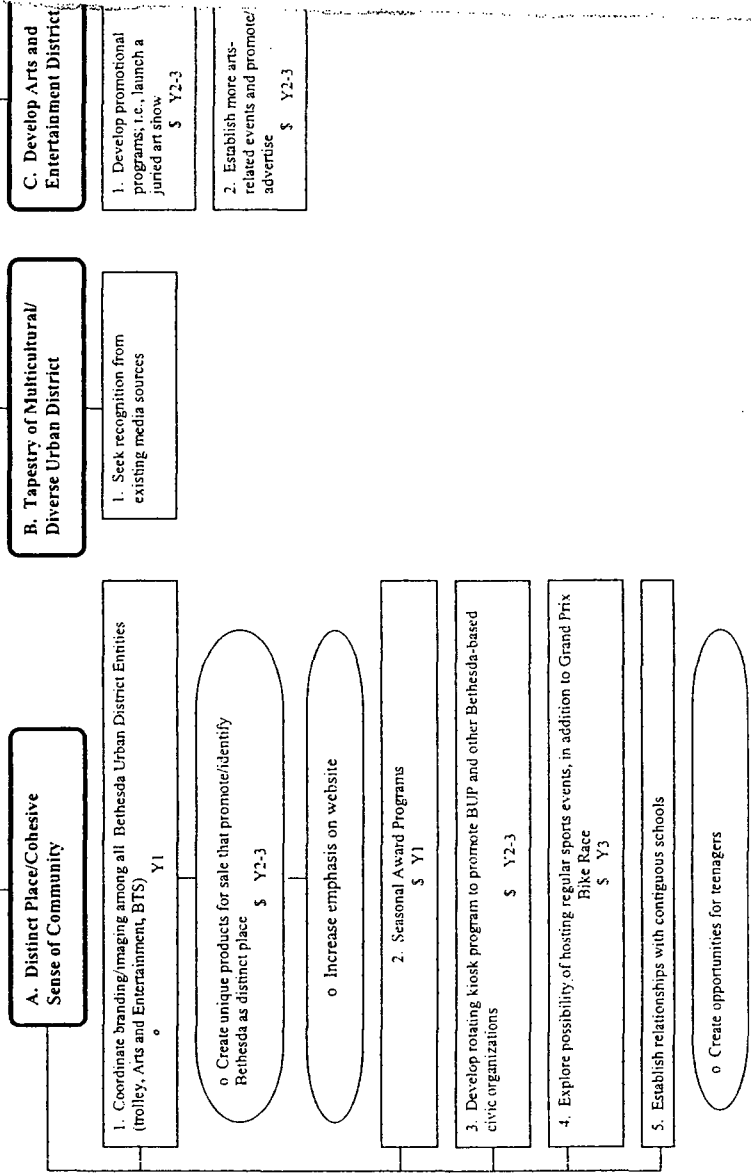


MARKETING (COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT)

FOCUS AREA

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

STRATEGIC ACTIONS



C. YEAR ONE PRIORITIES

Of the focus areas for the next several years detailed in the flowchart, the Board agreed on the following strategic initiatives for the first year:

- Expanded Maintenance/"Ask Me" Team
- Merchants' Marketing Association
- Unified Branding
- Lighting Maintenance and Enhancement (*See Section V*)
- Fee for Service
- Revision of the BUP Budget Cycle (*See Section V*)

The Board is pleased to report that progress has already been made on the first three items during the first quarter of FY2004.

D. BACKGROUND FOR YEAR ONE PRIORITIES

The following details the areas of focus for the first year of the Bethesda Urban Partnership strategic plan.

1. "ASK ME" Team

In FY04, BUP received funding for an expanded crew to cover Bethesda's busy evening and weekend hours in the downtown. The "Ask Me" team members are on duty Wednesday through Saturday from 3:30 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. and on Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The Bethesda Urban Partnership "Ask Me" team assists visitors and residents with navigating downtown Bethesda, fielding questions about the community, and offering first aid and quick response in emergency situations.

This program officially began on August 13, 2003 after an intensive orientation program that included customer service and hospitality training; CPR/First Aid training and certification; history of BUP and downtown Bethesda and public safety/crime prevention training. In the first two weeks of the program the crew members visited every street level business in Bethesda and distributed cards that described the program and duties. An overwhelmingly positive response came from the business community. The crew members also assisted over 100 citizens in the first week of operation.

The Bethesda Urban Partnership "Ask Me" Team provides the following services:

- Direct guests to their destinations.
- Provide information on navigating downtown Bethesda including directions to Metro, parking facilities and the Bethesda 8 Trolley.
- Provide employees or guests with an escort to parking facilities.
- Provide first aid or CPR in the event of an emergency.
- Contact appropriate agencies to respond in the event of emergencies.
- Serve as the "eyes and ears" of the Partnership in terms of public safety issues.
- Respond to emergency maintenance issues and contact appropriate resources.
- Provide feedback to the Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors and staff.

The “Ask Me” Team is stationed in the Woodmont Triangle, Wisconsin Avenue and Bethesda Row areas to assist visitors and residents. Additionally, team members rove throughout the entire downtown. Team members are identifiable by their red shirts with the words “Ask Me” on the back. Each “Ask Me” representative is equipped with copies of *Destination Downtown Bethesda*, a “yellow pages” guide of downtown Bethesda featuring Bethesda’s retail businesses, restaurants and services. Additionally, a donated kiosk from Federal Realty Investment Trust sits at the corner of Bethesda and Woodmont Avenues stocked with downtown Bethesda’s free restaurant, retail, arts and event guides and is managed by the “Ask Me” Team.

2. Merchants’ Marketing Groups

The focus group that was held with the retail businesses of downtown Bethesda revealed the need for a merchants’ marketing group(s) for downtown Bethesda. Individual business owners recommended that a group be formed through the Bethesda Urban Partnership that brought individual merchants together to pool their resources to create marketing campaigns, hire live entertainment, select evenings to stay open late and brainstorm ways to create an enhanced atmosphere within specific areas of downtown Bethesda. There is no other mechanism in place to bring individual retailers together and the Bethesda Urban Partnership is able to fulfill this request. Additionally, merchants and retailers associations are a constituent group represented within Business Improvement Districts throughout the country.

3. Unified Branding

As the activities and marketing initiatives of the Bethesda Urban Partnership expand, the marketing department will focus and continue to evaluate how added initiatives, such as Bethesda Transportation Solutions and the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District, fit into the overall marketing and branding campaigns. It is BUP’s goal to maintain consistency in branding and communications message to our constituents.

4. Fee for Service

In BUP’s annual contract with the county, it states that “The Corporation (BUP) may enter into agreements with the Optional Method Developers (OMD) enabling the Corporation to maintain streetscape amenities on private or public properties in the urban district.” BUP currently maintains all public areas for the Optional Method Developers, but has recently been asked to perform services for Optional Method Developers on their private property. BUP would like to explore some pilot projects with interested Optional Method Developers on a fee for service basis. Maintaining OMD areas within the downtown will create a more unified appearance and level of service between the public rights of way in downtown Bethesda and private properties.

V. THE FUTURE OF THE BUP ORGANIZATION

A. INTRODUCTION

The focus groups were most vocal in drawing a connection between maintaining quality services as growth increased in downtown Bethesda and the need to have a dedicated stream of funding from the Parking District fund. The Focus Groups recommended more independence for downtown Bethesda and a restructured relationship with the county.

However, the BUP Board of Directors determined that for the next five years, the community would be best served if BUP worked to further enhance its reputation by continuing to add services that relate, improve, or enhance the present BUP mission in maintenance, marketing and transportation management services.

To this end the BUP Board will pursue discussions with the County Council on the following five items:

1. Management of the free Trolley service.
2. Expanded responsibility to implement increased lighting (Woodmont Triangle), crosswalk and pothole repair.
3. Designated authority to track and implement Sector Plan/Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) of limited scope.
4. Implement action of a biannual budget cycle with consideration of a change to a calendar fiscal year.
5. Authorized action of a designated funding stream from the Parking Lot District.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCIL

The following details the items that the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) recommends for County Council approval. BUP has effectively managed the maintenance, marketing and transportation management of downtown Bethesda for ten years, not only meeting the expectations set forth by the county and our constituents but also exceeding those expectations. **Therefore, the Board strongly believes that it is within BUP's scope to take on related additional duties that further enhance the level of service that is provided to our constituents.**

1. Management of the Free Trolley Service

Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) markets the Bethesda 8 Trolley which provides a circulation system connecting rail and bus with office buildings within the central business district. It also connects public garages to the retail community. Currently it is a single figure eight operating from Rugby Avenue to the North, Bethesda Avenue in the South bordered by Woodmont to the East and Arlington to

the West. It is a popular system under an operational contract with First Transit through Montgomery County. Its current hours of operation are Monday through Thursday 7am – 12am, Friday 7am – 2am, and Saturday from 6pm – 2:00am. There is no Sunday service. Daily ridership tops over 1,000 commuters. *(See Attachment 3 for the Bethesda 8 Trolley route including a proposed expanded route.)*

BTS receives consistent requests to expand the system into the NIH campus to the North, Bradley Boulevard to the South and to serve the businesses on Montgomery Lane and East West Highway. BUP receives requests to expand the hours of operation to mirror the Metro and for all day service on Saturday and Sunday. This would require more vehicles in operation to maintain consistent eight minute headways and to establish several new circulating routes within downtown Bethesda. A minimum of four additional units and a minimum of three additional back up units would be necessary to complete the system.

If BUP and BTS directly managed the Bethesda 8 Trolley contract, schedule modifications and customer service could be handled directly with the county's contractor thus allowing the Trolley to offer better customer service and quicker route modifications. BUP and BTS would also have direct contact with the contractor to fully assess the Trolley and then make recommendations to the county on additional vehicles, vehicle maintenance issues and additional routes.

2. Expanded responsibility to implement enhanced Lighting, Crosswalk and Pothole Repair

a) Enhanced Lighting:

In 1997, the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. (BUP), in response to community concerns about insufficient light levels on many of the downtown streets and sidewalks, performed a photometric analysis for Montgomery County's Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT.) DPWT's division of traffic engineering reviewed the data collected by BUP and made recommendations to upgrade existing light levels and install new lights where needed. According to Montgomery County in 2002, \$359,300 is required to complete this project. BUP was subsequently informed that this would have to become part of the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) budget to receive funding.

BUP has proposed this project in the last two CIP budget submissions without success. With a significant amount of evening and nighttime activity in downtown Bethesda with 200 restaurants, a growing Arts and Entertainment District and increased numbers of people visiting and living in the downtown, enhanced lighting is of the utmost importance for the public safety in downtown Bethesda.

BUP performs a monthly survey of county street lights in the downtown for DPW&T. The survey is faxed to DPW&T who forwards the outages to a contractor for repair. In the program measures for DPW&T it is stated that there is a 48-hour response time to repair light outages. There have been outages in

downtown Bethesda that have not been repaired for several weeks or months. Many of the lights in need of repair are the responsibility of the county's contractor, not light poles that are the responsibility of PEPCO.

The Bethesda Urban Partnership proposes that Montgomery County provide BUP the funds necessary to take over the lighting maintenance of county lights in downtown Bethesda. BUP will handle the responsibility for surveying and repairing light outages, which will increase turnaround time on lighting repair and result in a safer downtown while the county would continue to handle knockdown pole replacements.

b) Crosswalk and Pothole Maintenance

During the winter of 2003, the Bethesda Urban Partnership received numerous calls regarding potholes and crosswalks and the need for re-striping. Recognizing the enormous amount of pothole work that DPW&T would be faced with, BUP volunteered to fix potholes on county streets in downtown Bethesda if DPW&T would provide the patching material. The former Director of Highway Services, John Thompson, was pleased to have the assistance, and instructed his depot to give BUP all the material needed to perform the repairs. After a few trips to the depot, the BUP maintenance crew had a difficult time obtaining the necessary materials. We ask that a formal agreement be reached in which BUP would provide the labor and DPW&T would provide the materials for pothole repairs. BUP would repair all potholes in the urban district thus allowing the county more manpower to complete the rest of the pothole repairs in other parts of the county.

In downtown Bethesda, there is a very active pedestrian environment with 45,000 daytime employees and thousands of evening patrons visiting restaurants, retail and evening arts activities. As a result, the need for high visibility crosswalks is greater than in less dense areas of the county. Bethesda's crosswalks fade much faster and need to be replaced more frequently than the county's five year schedule. In addition, BUP and our constituents feel that it is necessary to have a higher visibility crosswalk than the current county standard. BUP requests that the county give BUP the funding and responsibility to maintain the urban district crosswalks on a three year re-striping cycle to ensure that downtown Bethesda's crosswalks are visible to vehicles and pedestrians to ensure the highest level of pedestrian safety within the downtown.

3) Designated Authority to Track and Implement Sector Plan/Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)

The Bethesda Urban Partnership has earned a reputation over the last 10 years as being highly professional and immediately responsive to the needs of the downtown Bethesda community. The responsibilities of our organization mandated in accordance with its articles of incorporation, by-laws and County Code have been the subject of much discussion. BUP has exceeded the expectations of our constituents when it comes to mandated services.

With added burdens and an increased workload to the county government, the same level of service provided by BUP has not been available for services outside BUP's mandated work within the downtown. The constant question raised by BUP's constituent groups is "Why can't we handle more since we have proven ourselves as highly professional and very responsive?" This could eliminate some of the excess burden on the county and improve the responsiveness to the community.

Montgomery County's Capital Improvement Projects for downtown Bethesda is one such area that BUP could directly benefit downtown Bethesda by managing the CIPs currently on the CIP list while lessening the burden on the county to manage these projects. The County has already targeted some CIP's in the Bethesda Urban District which include: Norfolk Avenue revitalization; additional streetlights and Wisconsin Avenue and East West highway streetscape improvements.

The recommendation being put forth for consideration is to allow BUP's management team the ability to work with the county to manage the implementation of these CIP projects in the Bethesda Urban District to better serve downtown Bethesda and the needs of the community.

4) Implement a Bi-Annual Budget

Currently, the Bethesda Urban Partnership's budget is evaluated on an annual basis as part of the County Executive's and County Council's annual budget review and recommendation process. However, the Bethesda Urban Partnership is now wholly funded via the Bethesda Parking Lot District, not general tax dollars. BUP's Executive Director spends 40-50% of his time on the annual budget process and the BUP directors spend 30% of their work hours on writing the budget, re-working numbers per the county's request, attending hearings and updating constituent groups on what BUP will receive in each round of the budget cycle hearings.

BUP is required to attend budget hearings with other county groups whose budgets are wholly funded via general tax dollars. It seems that combining the BUP budget review and recommendations with that of other organizations whose budgets are derived for the general tax fund can be confusing to other county groups and local media.

We propose that since the BUP budget is not derived from the general tax dollars but from the Bethesda Parking Lot District that the County Council review and make recommendations on the BUP budget on a bi-annual cycle so the Council members and members of the BUP board and staff spend less time on the budget process for BUP during the general fund budget hearings and recommendations. This allows the county to concentrate on the general tax dollars without having to consider the Bethesda Parking Lot District funds at the same time as the distribution of general tax dollars. BUP can organize a bi-annual budget for consideration by the County Council on a bi-annual basis saving time for both the County Council as well as the Bethesda Urban Partnership board and staff. It is understood that even with a Bi-

Annual budget review process, the funding would be approved annually in the Councils Annual Budget Resolution. *(See Attachment 5, Bi-annual Budget.)*

BTS has a separate budget from BUP that goes through a cycle from July 1 through June 30 every fiscal year. Fiscal year budget requests are submitted to the county through Commuter Services (contract administrator), on through the Department of Public Works and Transportation, then on through the Office of Management and Budget and then to the County Executive. Because the BUP and BTS budgets are derived from the Bethesda Parking Lot District, it would save staff time and money to also put the BTS budget on the same two year cycle.

5) Authorized Designated Funding Stream

The maintenance needs of the downtown Bethesda they were continue to outpace the BUP budget. *(See Attachment 6, Budget Charts)*

In the next year, three large apartment complexes are coming on line aggravating the situation of straining BUP resources that have already been stretched due to years of nearly flat budgets. It is a reasonable solution to reinvest Parking Lot District funds and designate a set funding stream which is within the Urban District Law.

VI. CONCLUSION

In its ten years of existence, the Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) has met and exceeded the expectations of county government and our constituent groups. In doing so, BUP has proven the County Council right in its decision to privatize the Bethesda Urban District under the management of a non-profit organization.

BUP's strong and measured progress over the decade has built community confidence in its ability to meet every day maintenance, marketing and transportation management issues. BUP is the "go to" entity for downtown Bethesda's constituency groups. By acting as intermediary and addressing local issues, BUP insulates the county, allowing the county employees to focus on other areas and address broader county issues.

However, there are some gaps between reality and perception as the constituency focus groups identified. Members of the downtown Bethesda community assumed BUP already had more authority than it does. For example, it was assumed that BUP maintained and could enhance street lights.

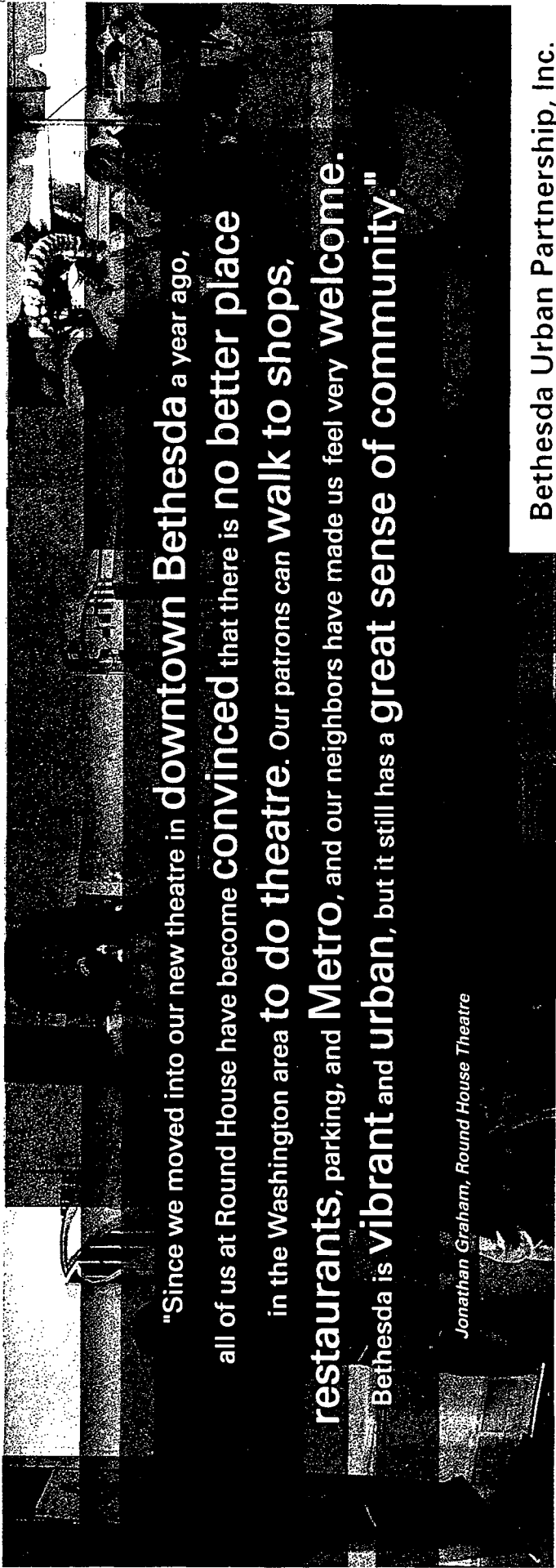
The focus groups saw the solution in more independence for the downtown. The BUP Board however feels strongly that the following more reasonable recommendations should be implemented:

1. Management of the free trolley service.
2. Expanded responsibility to implement increased lighting, crosswalk and pothole repair.
3. Designated authority to track and implement Sector Plan/CIP Capital projects of limited scope.
4. Implementation of a bi-annual budget.
5. Authorization of a designated funding stream from the Parking Lot District.

The BUP Board is confident that if the County Council adopts these recommendations and continues to reinvest the Bethesda Parking Lot District funds; the council's intent for the management of downtown Bethesda will continue on its successful path in meeting the constituent needs.

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"Since we moved into our new theatre in **downtown Bethesda** a year ago, all of us at Round House have become **convinced** that there is **no better place** in the Washington area **to do theatre**. Our patrons can **walk to shops, restaurants, parking, and Metro**, and our neighbors have made us feel very **welcome**. Bethesda is **vibrant and urban**, but it still has a **great sense of community**."

Jonathan Graham, Round House Theatre

Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc.



"Bethesda is an urban village
with variety that
appeals to all."

Phil Tufano, Hyatt Regency Bethesda



Craig Smith, Strosmiders Hardware

"Bethesda offers the best of both
suburban and urban
surroundings."

The mission of the Bethesda Urban Partnership is to foster an environment in which downtown Bethesda can thrive and prosper.

A beautiful community is a key factor in making any city area a destination. Bethesda's tree lined streets are always inviting with beautiful flowers and well-maintained turf. Bethesda's walkable downtown is managed and maintained by a dedicated maintenance team. The team removes litter, sweeps Bethesda's streets and powerwashes Bethesda's signature brick sidewalks throughout the year.

Bethesda is one of the most renowned communities in the Washington metropolitan area. Bethesda is known as a great destination for its multitude of ethnic restaurants, boutiques, home décor shops and artistic and trendy hot spots. Bethesda has successfully grown into a thriving destination due to the hard work of the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. (BUP), a nonprofit downtown management organization, established by Montgomery County in 1994. The Bethesda Urban Partnership, Inc. handles landscaping and maintenance as well as promoting the downtown through innovative marketing campaigns and large-scale events. Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS), a subsidiary of BUP, promotes commuter alternatives and a safe navigation of downtown Bethesda.

Maintenance Staff

Jeff Burton
Director of Landscape & Maintenance Operations

Walter Hernandez
Field Operations Manager

Jose Castro
Assistant Supervisor

Jasper Browning
Trash Truck Operator

Armando Romero
Trash Removal

Michael Frye
Street Sweeper Operator

Landscapers

Leo Cardona

Omar Fernandez

Jorge Hernandez

Celio Pena

Ricardo Reyes

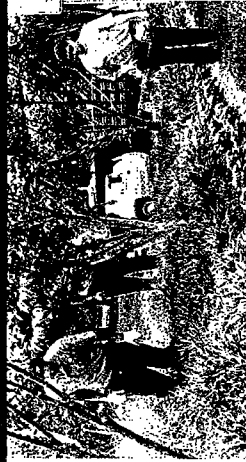
Urban Beautification Squad

Adan Diaz

Florentino Govea

Jose Zapata

Daniel Mozo



BUP's Landscaping Team is Responsible for the Maintenance of:

- 65,000 flowers in three annual rotations
- 1,200 trees
- 122,000 square feet of turf
- 4,000 miles of streets
- 9,500 miles of sidewalks annually
- 500,000 square feet of sidewalks per year
- Litter removal three times daily and emptying trash once a day

2002 Accomplishments

- Renovation of the medians on Wisconsin Avenue from Montgomery Avenue to Bradley Boulevard.
- The field staff attained CPR/First Aid Certification by the American Red Cross.

Marketing

"This is a mini Manhattan, there is everything here."

Ekamul Talukder, Delhi Dhaba Indian Café

The marketing of Bethesda as a cultural and enjoyable destination full of distinctive shops, diverse events and multi-ethnic restaurants is the responsibility of BUP's marketing and communications department.



This year BUP boasts several major new projects including:

Bethesda's Arts and Entertainment District—designated in June of 2002. The program, which was enacted by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2001 legislative session, enables local and county governments to ap-

ply for the Arts and Entertainment District designation for areas that are wholly within a Smart Growth/Priority Funding Area.

From award winning theatre to independent films, downtown Bethesda's Arts and Entertainment District is filled with inspiring artists and art venues. Unique galleries and public art fill the streets throughout downtown. Bethesda's galleries feature paintings, sculpture, photography, pottery, jewelry and mixed media; a monthly "art walk" highlights participating galleries on the second Friday of the month. BUP also produced a new brochure explaining the benefits of an Arts & Entertainment District for the public.

A New Web Site — designed in the fall of 2002 to promote and market the Bethesda community to both residents and visitors alike. The Web site was enhanced to help people easily access information on upcoming events in downtown Bethesda, parking and Metro options and the hundreds of retail, restaurant and arts and entertainment venues.

A New Marketing Campaign — started in 2002 for the downtown area. This new "Bethesda

Events

"The encounter of cultural venues in a city establishes the very difference between a visit for practical needs and a chance to linger in an environment that enlightens."

Elyse Harrison, Little City Art Studio, Inc

Special events bring the Bethesda community together and create excitement, entertainment and cultural experiences for Bethesda's many visitors and residents while promoting the distinctive retail business, diverse restaurant and innovative arts venues present within the downtown.



Photo © Sunny Olson, 2002

Taste of Bethesda — held the first Saturday in October is a renowned food and music festival. Taste highlights Bethesda's multi-cultural restaurants with four stages of musical and cultural entertainment.

Imagination Bethesda — a children's summer street festival produced by BUP. The event offers a fun day for children 12 and under with cultural and educational activities plus two stages of entertainment, clowns, balloon artists and more.

Summer Concert Series — music fills the streets of downtown Bethesda during the free summer concert series that is held during lunchtime and evenings from May through July. The concert series showcases the culture and talent offered in Bethesda.

The Bethesda Literary Festival — a four-day event celebrating literary artists throughout downtown Bethesda. Literary events are held at many of Bethesda's innovative shops and businesses.

The Bethesda Art Walk — started in the summer of 2002. This great event features 14 local galleries that open their doors on the second Friday of every month for scores of art lovers across the region. A free shuttle transports visitors between the galleries, or art lovers may walk the fun-filled streets of Bethesda to enjoy the arts.

Bethesda's Winter Wonderland — a festive holiday event held on the first Saturday of December, featuring entertainment provided by local children's cultural groups and schools.

I can't change the **direction** of the wind,
but I can **adjust** my sails to always
reach my destination.

James Dean

All of Bethesda's events are made possible with the help of generous sponsors, hard-working volunteers and a dedicated staff.

Eat Here Guide — a comprehensive list of Bethesda's many multi-cultural restaurants, including cuisine type, location and price.

Bethesda's Best in Home Fashion — features Bethesda's many home fashion shops with descriptions of each shop and its merchandise.

The Destination Guide — a must-have publication produced annually which lists all of Bethesda's many retail businesses by category and includes the phone number and address for each merchant.

Bethesda's Events Calendar — a bi-monthly publication mailed to the Bethesda Chevy Chase area residents featuring local events and details on upcoming large-scale festivals.

The Art & Soul of Bethesda — includes public art, visual art, performing arts and arts organizations throughout downtown Bethesda.

Metro Opens Doors — offers helpful tips in navigating Bethesda via alternative transit means like Metro and the Bethesda 8 FREE Trolley. The guide also includes a map of local parking garages for visitors.

BUP Events

Bethesda Literary Festival
Last weekend in April

Summer Concert Series
May through July

Imagination Bethesda
First Saturday in June

Taste of Bethesda
First Saturday in October

Winter Wonderland
First Saturday in December

BUP Co-Sponsored Events

Business & Tech Expo
First Wednesday in February

Bethesda Row International Market
Second Weekend in May

Friday Night Dance Concerts
May through September

Bethesda Grand Prix
Fourth Sunday in June

Best of Bethesda Day
First Saturday in October

Bethesda Row Arts Festival
Third Weekend in October

Marathon in the Parks
First Sunday in November

Every destination needs a transportation management organization that assists commuters with alternate methods of transportation. Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) assists employers with the federal, state and local commuter tax and county incentives that provide for the use of transportation alternatives, such as: rail, bus, carpooling, teleworking, flextime, vanpooling, biking, walking and personalized transit routing information.

BTS 2002 Accomplishments

- BTS produced its first biennial report in 2002. This report explains the organization's goals and accomplishments within the past two years.
- The artist-designed Bethesda 8 Poetry Benches were unveiled and installed in 2002. The Poetry Benches are the first such project in the nation. Adorning Bethesda 8 stops, these public art benches have added a great new feature to the Bethesda community.
- BTS hosted its Second Annual Bike to Work Day in 2002, which promotes biking as alternative means to commute to work.
- A new brochure was produced in a partnership with BUP, BTS and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The Metro Opens Doors to Bethesda Brochure & Campaign offers helpful tips in navigating Bethesda through alternative transit means like Metro and the Bethesda 8 trolley. The guide also includes a map of local parking garages for visitors.
- BTS also was responsible for the re-striping and cross hatching of 65 pedestrian crosswalks and the installation of more than thirty bike racks throughout downtown Bethesda.

Bethesda
Transportation Solutions
 "There is Another Way"

Bethesda Transportation Solutions Staff

Francine Waters
 Director of Bethesda Transportation Solutions

Kerry Daly-Foxwell
 Sales and Marketing

Kristen Fink
 Sales and Marketing

David Hill
 Data Manager/Idesharing Coordinator

BTS is operated by the Bethesda Urban Partnership under the guidance of an Advisory Committee with funding from Montgomery County.

Bethesda Transportation Solutions is a member of Commuter Connections of the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments.

One Destination | One Community | a World of Excitement



7700 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
301.215.6660 main
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www.bethesda.org

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A Special Thanks to Our Event Sponsors and Partners

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Washington Parent	Strike Bethesda
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ATTACHMENT 2

ALL GROUP RESPONSES ORGANIZED BY SURVEY QUESTIONS

RED – Optional Method Developers (OMD)

BLUE – Business owners in CBD

GREEN – Customers

ORANGE – Residents

PURPLE - Employees

1. Describe downtown Bethesda in a sentence.

- Urban village.
- Vibrant, growing, localized.
- Vibrant busy commercial area.
- Vibrant.
- Big city with small town feeling.
- Very nice family oriented “town” pleasant to work in.
- The town center.
- Urban feel with a suburban comfort.
- A fun event-filled town.

- A place that is rapidly becoming a destination for retail, restaurants, etc.
- A vibrant, busy, upscale urban district.
- Urban/suburban combo.
- Great place to walk around.
- A cosmopolitan city with a small town feel.
- Simplicity disrupted by revitalization efforts and retro-new development.
- Suburban sprawl creates affluent urban district.
- A chic urban community.

- It is dynamic, interesting, growing, and fun.
- A vibrant little town/city.
- I'm proud to live and work in such a vibrant, creative, arts-supportive, “walkable” urban-suburbia that is Bethesda! I love it here!
- Vibrant variety of retail, entertainment, dining professional options.

- Wonderful! Because of Frit.
- For me, it's a place to go to when I need to unwind, eat and just walk around.
- A bustling but comfortable and safe community which offers all the fun and necessities of a major busy metropolitan area in an easily negotiated (walked) geographic area.
- Charming, urban and fun.

- Bethesda is an area with many restaurants, shops, businesses, and even some bike paths.
- An eclectic, Quaint, business district with a thriving artistic, cultural, and restaurant scene.
- (1 unanswered).

2. What is the Bethesda Urban Partnership?

- An organization tasked with uniformly identifying the community to promote local business.
- Nonprofit that oversees maintenance and promotes Bethesda businesses.

- An organization responsible for bolstering activity within downtown while also maintaining the downtown area.
- Committee to analyze and ensure needs of community.
- The agency which maintains the common areas of the city.
- Community association.
- Organization that supports Bethesda commercial community.
- Helpful organization.
- (1 unanswered)

- A group or coalition responsible for support and growth for Bethesda community.
- A government supported organization designed to market and maintain Bethesda.(2)
- Group responsible for events and promotion of Bethesda in general.
- The wonderful people who make Bethesda look beautiful.
- The urban district planning group.
- Nonprofit organization promoting the interests of Bethesda business.
- (1unanswered).

- The catalyst for development and of business and the arts in the CBD.
- A maintenance and promotion organization.
- A community based nonprofit organizing and promoting events and activities in Bethesda.
- Nonprofit, building/promoting Bethesda.

- It's the group responsible for promoting downtown Bethesda as well as maintaining its development.
- I'm guessing-a group representing the government, residents, and retailers of the community, working to the benefit of all?
- (1 unanswered)
- I have no idea.

- Business/nonprofit that promotes and manages events and community.
- An organization dedicated to improving Bethesda and keeping restaurants and businesses happy with the surrounding environment.
- A group of local people dedicated to improving the economic viability of the area.

3. What are the two main responsibilities of the Bethesda Urban Partnership?

- Promote Bethesda and maintain common community elements in partnership with local businesses.
- Support local businesses and maintain the beauty of downtown.
- Landscape and safety.
- Community service/coordination group and maintenance service of common areas.
- Events; support of community.
- Partner with local businesses and groups that serve the Bethesda market; promote downtown Bethesda.
- Maintenance and marketing.
- (2 unanswered)

- To spread the word about Bethesda and maintain it.
- Promote/maintain downtown Bethesda. (3)
- Future planning of Bethesda and upkeep.
- I have no idea!
- To create awareness and to promote Bethesda as a destination.
- (1 unanswered).

- Inspiring business development and Inspiring arts and entertainment.

- Maintenance and promotion.
- Community liaison planning and development for business, marketing, and promoting Bethesda.
- Festivals, maintenance

- Maintaining and improving the local scene and organizing local events.
- I don't know (2)
- (1 unanswered)

- Promote downtown Bethesda.
- To improve Bethesda for businesses and to improve Bethesda for residents.
- (1 unanswered).

4. Do you dine out in Bethesda? What is your favorite restaurant?

- Yes (7)
Too many to choose and too many to name (2); Pines of Rome; Rio Grande; Café Deluxe; McCormick & Schmick's (2); Tommy Joe's, lunch only; Mon Ami Gabi/Red Tomato; South Beach.

- Yes (8)
La Miche; Sweet Basil; California Tortilla; Black's Bar & Kitchen, Red Tomato, Faryab and many more; Olazzo; I have so many favorites, I don't know their names, just locations; Rio Grande; Café Bethesda.

- Yes (4)
Mon Ami Gabi; The restaurant scene is one of the best parts of Bethesda. We go to Matuba and BD's Mongolian a lot; Chipotle.

- Yes (4)
Delhi Dhaba; Bangkok Garden; Andaman; Ben and Jerry's; China Village.; Grapeseed; Tastee Diner; Caribou.

- Montgomery's Grill, Green Papaya.
- Yes – So many to choose from it's hard to choose a favorite. Maybe Andaman.
- California Tortilla.

5. Do you shop in Bethesda? What is your favorite retail store?

- Yes – no favorite, there is such a diversity.
- Yes (2)
- Yes – mainly for errands; Barnes & Noble/Strosnidars, etc.
- From time to time; No particular store.
- No (2)
- On occasion; No specific favorite (farmer's markets)
- Varies

- No (2)
- Olsson's
- Yes – Barnes & Noble
- Daisy Too!, Plaza Artist Materials
- Yes – Three Dog Bakery
- B&S Appliance Store
- Yes

- Yes, Sansar.
- Olsson's.
- Yes, Yes. All over Bethesda Row.

- No
- Yes, aside from the weekly trip to the grocery, I like Olsson's Bookstore and the Paper Store.
- Yes, but I'm new enough to the area that right now, I'm mostly seeking necessities, and so the winner is...Trader Joe's.
- (1 unanswered)
- Yes, Chico's.
- Not really.
- Occasionally. (Most shopped at is Barnes & Noble).
- No favorite.

6. Have you attended an artistic or cultural activity in downtown Bethesda? If so, what event or venue did you visit?

- Yes – Round House Theater
- No (5)
- Yes – Taste of Bethesda, Bethesda Row International Market
- Most of them.
- (1 unanswered)
- Round House Theater, Creative Partners Gallery
- Literary Festival
- Taste, Imagination
- No
- Lights Out, Art Walk
- Taste of Bethesda (2)
- Yes – Arts Festival (2)
- (1 unanswered)
- Yes, Round House Theater.
- An art opening.
- Taste of Bethesda (2) European Market, Arts Festival (2) Imagination (2), Literary Festival.
- Round House Theater, movies, art shows.
- I attended the Art Walk a number of times, the outdoor concerts in the summer.
- Not yet...
- Yes, Taste of Bethesda, Arts fair
- ArtScape and Taste of Bethesda.
- Yes – Arts Fair/Street Fair.
- Taste of Bethesda.

7. How do you travel into Bethesda?

- Car (8)
- (1 unanswered)
- Walk (3)
- Car or bus
- Car or walk
- Metro as often as possible
- Car (2)

- N/A
- Walk (2)
- I live in downtown Bethesda; usually I leave and return by car if going further into the suburbs and by Metro if going downtown.
- Car
- Metrobus/Car
- By car from Frederick.

8. What is the “Bethesda 8”?

- Trolley (4)
- Free shuttle that runs around Bethesda.
- Don't know.
- (3 unanswered)
- Movie Theaters
- A free bus service around the CBD (2)
- Trolley (3)
- No idea
- (1 unanswered)
- Trolley (4)
- Trolley (2)
- Don't know (2); sounds like a movie theatre.
- The Bethesda Trolley.
- A trolley that circles Bethesda.
- No idea.

9. If you have driven into downtown Bethesda, where do you park? Have you ever had a challenge finding available parking?

- I park at 7501 Wisconsin Avenue during workdays or in Montgomery County public lots when visiting businesses not within walking distance to 7501 Wisconsin Ave.
- At my office; Yes – Public lots are busy.
- Woodmont Garage or Bethesda Avenue Garage.
- I usually park in the garage off of Bethesda Avenue.
- Work location; Yes – when visiting.
- Office building garage (7272 Wisconsin Ave.); difficulty with Montgomery County parking when needed at times.
- 3 Bethesda Metro Center
- Park in open lot at corner of Bethesda Ave. and Woodmont; Yes – in the garage on Cordell.
- B.P.
- Metered parking.
- Usually Waverly Street garages
- Parking is hard. I am lucky enough to have a space at my building.
- Parking Garage on Cordell or Old Georgetown.
- Yes (3)
- Parking is bad; Yes – I avoid driving, however, we provide some parking.
- Garage at St.Elmo and Bethesda.
- Anywhere possible! Parking lots
- Lot 31

- Garages, lots. No.
- Rare, street or garage parking – difficult.

- N/A
- If I drive, I usually park at the lot at Cordell Ave. The only time it was crowded was when there is an ongoing event. But then, I always seem to find parking easily.
- When I'm not parking in my own building for whatever reason, I have struggled to find parking in the evening hours.
- I used to before moving here.

- Elm and Bethesda parking garage.
- In one of the lots. Yes – Parking can be difficult to find!
- In the Old Georgetown Road garage between Cordell and St. Elmo. Yes, especially around noon.

10. Have you ever attended a large-scale special event in downtown Bethesda? If so, what event did you attend?

- No (5)
- Yes – Come Back to Bethesda
- Taste of Bethesda (3)
- Bethesda Row International Market

- Taste of Bethesda (6)
- Imagination Bethesda
- Art Walk (2)
- Lights Out.
- Arts Festival. European Market

- Literary Festival (2)
- Taste of Bethesda (2)
- European Market, Arts Festival, Kids Festival,
- (1 unanswered).

- Taste of Bethesda (2), Art show, etc.
- Not yet.
- 60th Birthday party

- Taste of Bethesda.
- No.
- (1 unanswered).

11. Do you think that Bethesda is being properly maintained? If not, what additional maintenance is needed?

- Yes (5)
- Overall, Yes; the trash cans need to be replaced.
- Yes – Homeless are an issue though.
- Bethesda, for the most part, is maintained at a very high level.
- Yes – Some attention could be given to sidewalks.

- Yes (5)
- Yes – better maintenance of landscaping
- Lighting, safety patrolmen on the streets
- (1 unanswered).

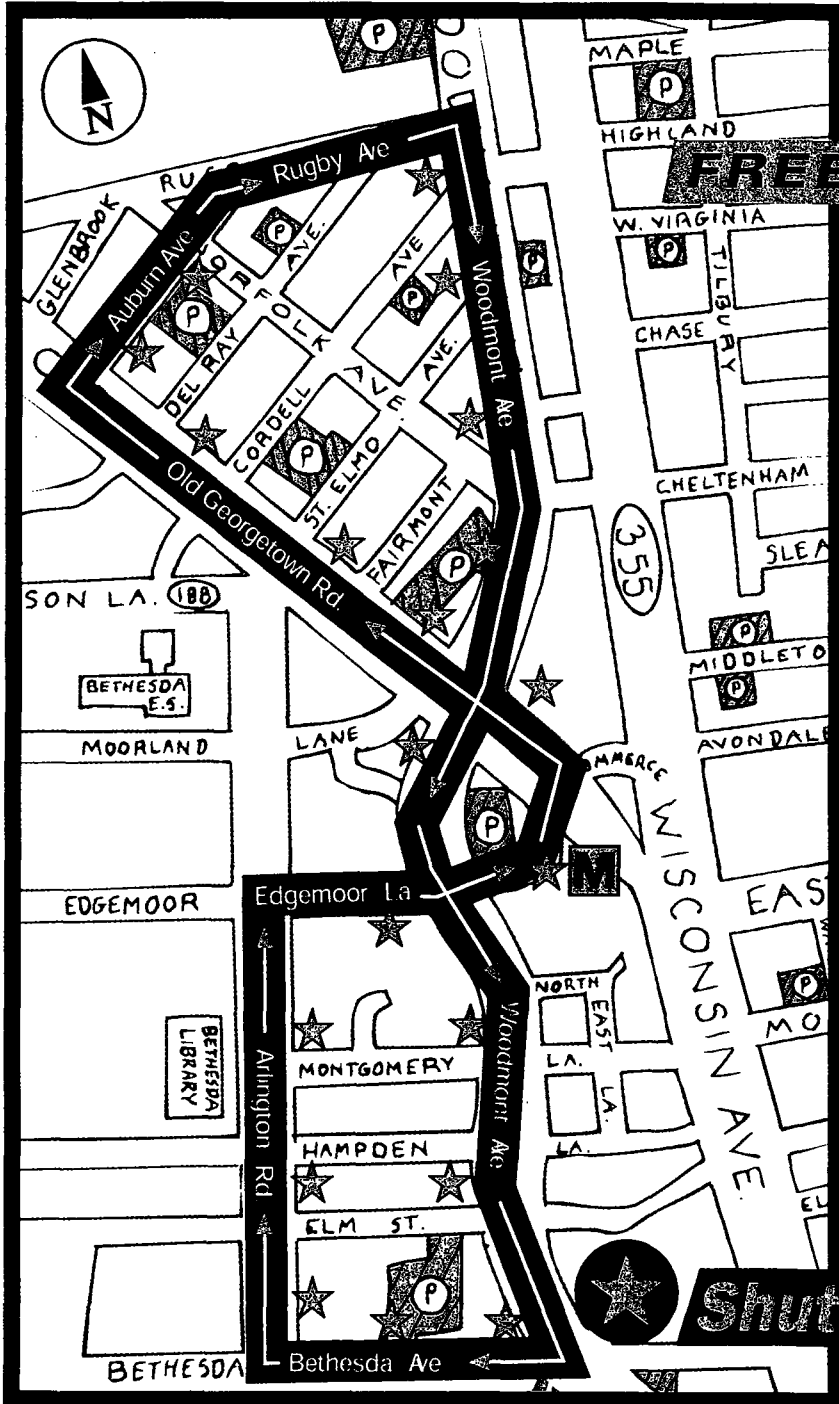
- Yes (2)
- Yes except for the Bethesda lanterns.

- Wonderfully! I love the garden design and urban design. The streets are so clean and the atmosphere is artsy and festive.
- Yes
- I would love to see more street lights. The benches at the bus stops are a pleasant and welcome surprise for me. Pedestrian crosswalks should be more visible to the drivers. I think the additional lights would help solve this.
- It seems very, very well maintained to someone who lived in Boston for a long time.
- IN general yes, but snow removal could be better.
- Yes – Very well maintained.
- Yes
- I'm discouraged by all the ripped-up streets due to construction; however, I am excited about the improvement to this side of the city.

12. How do you get information about downtown Bethesda?

- BUP (3)
- BUP Publications (2)
- BUP, Weekend section of Washington Post.
- BUP newsletter that comes to my home (3)
- Web site, Montgomery Journal.
- Bethesda Gazette
- The Gazette (3)
- BUP publications, Internet
- Pamphlets/promotional materials
- BUP Web page (2)
- Word of mouth (2)
- News
- From BUP
- Mailings
- Bethesda Gazette (3) Washington Post, mail.
- Bethesda UP
- Web site: Bethesda.org
- Banners (2), brochure
- Zagat guide for restaurants, on-line for specific questions, otherwise by walking out my front door and exploring.
- On-line and newsletter (2)
- On-line, marketing.
- Newspaper.
- Hearsay.

BETHESDA 8 TROLLEY



Monday-Thursday
7:00am-Midnight
Friday, 7:00am-2:00am
Saturday, 6:00pm-2:00am
no Sunday Service

Look for the brown and gold signs at the Bethesda Metro Station, on Auburn, Woodmont and Bethesda Avenues, and along Arlington and Old Georgetown Roads – west of Wisconsin Avenue.



Bethesda Transportation Solutions
 7700 Old Georgetown Road
 Bethesda, MD 20814-6126
 301.656.0868 fax 240.223.0200
 www.bethesdatransit.org

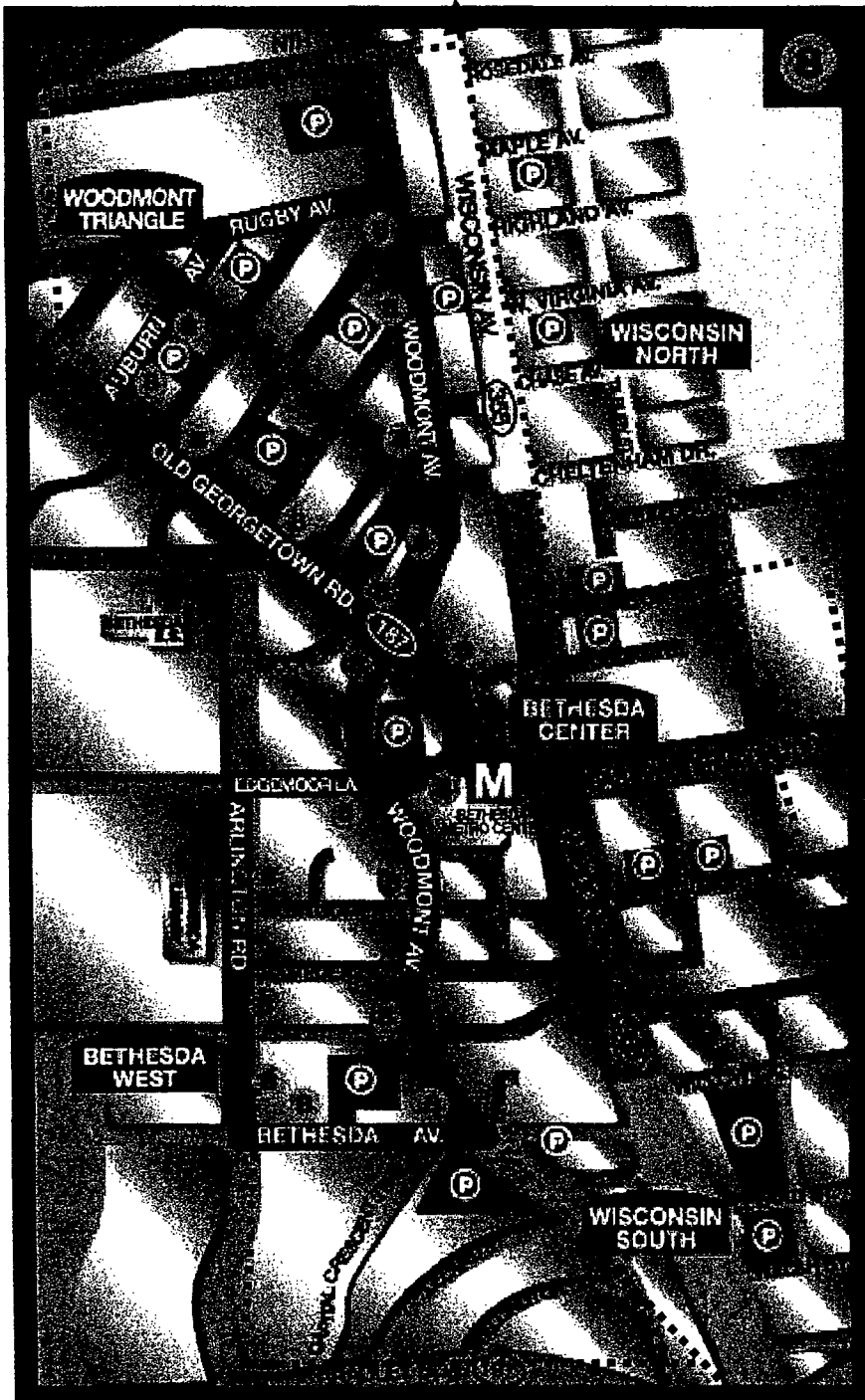


"There is another way"

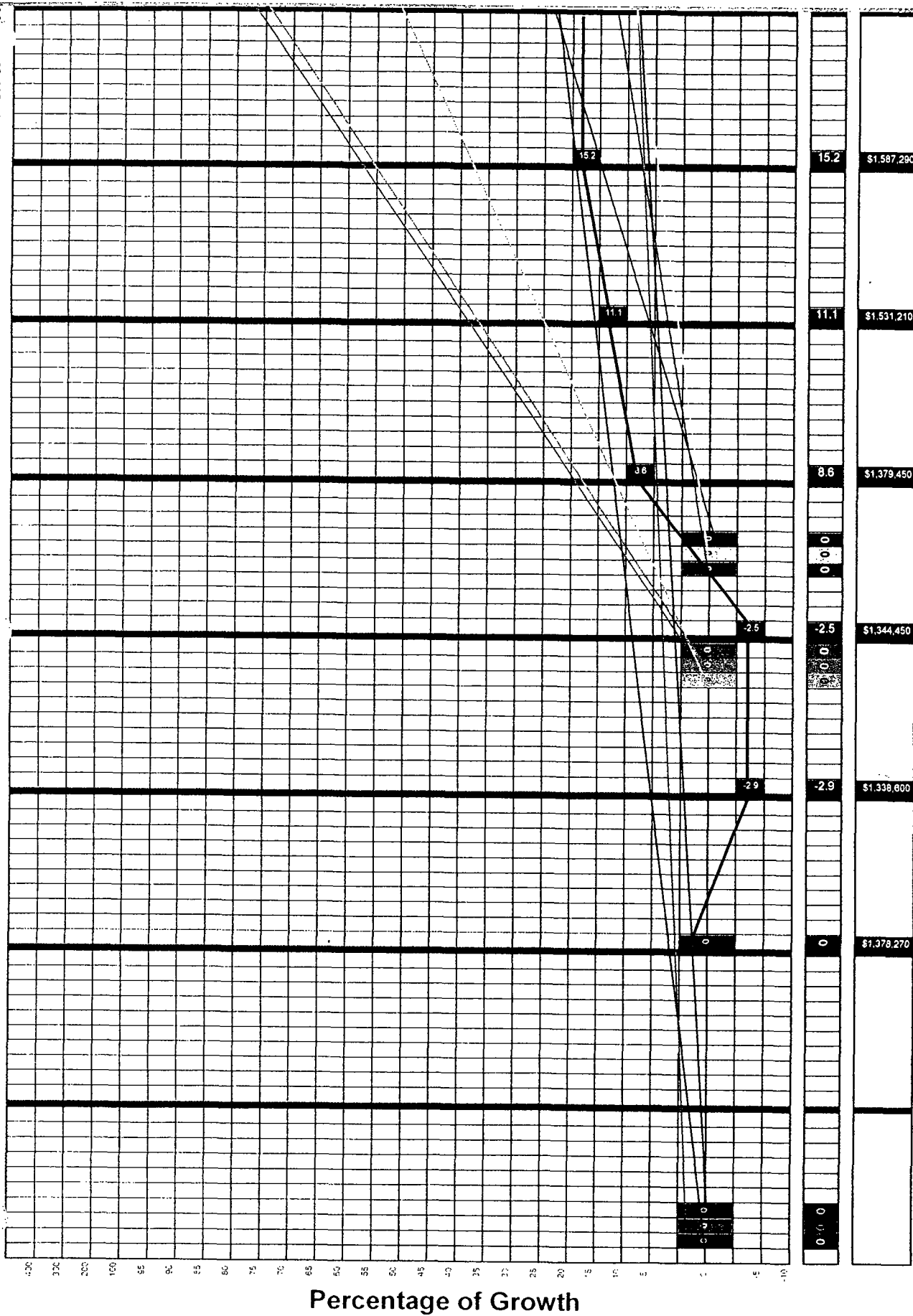
ATTACHMENT 3

EXPANDED BETHESDA 8 TROLLEY ROUTE

----- denotes proposed expanded route



Percentage of Growth in the Bethesda Urban Partnership District Needs and the Bethesda Urban Partnership District



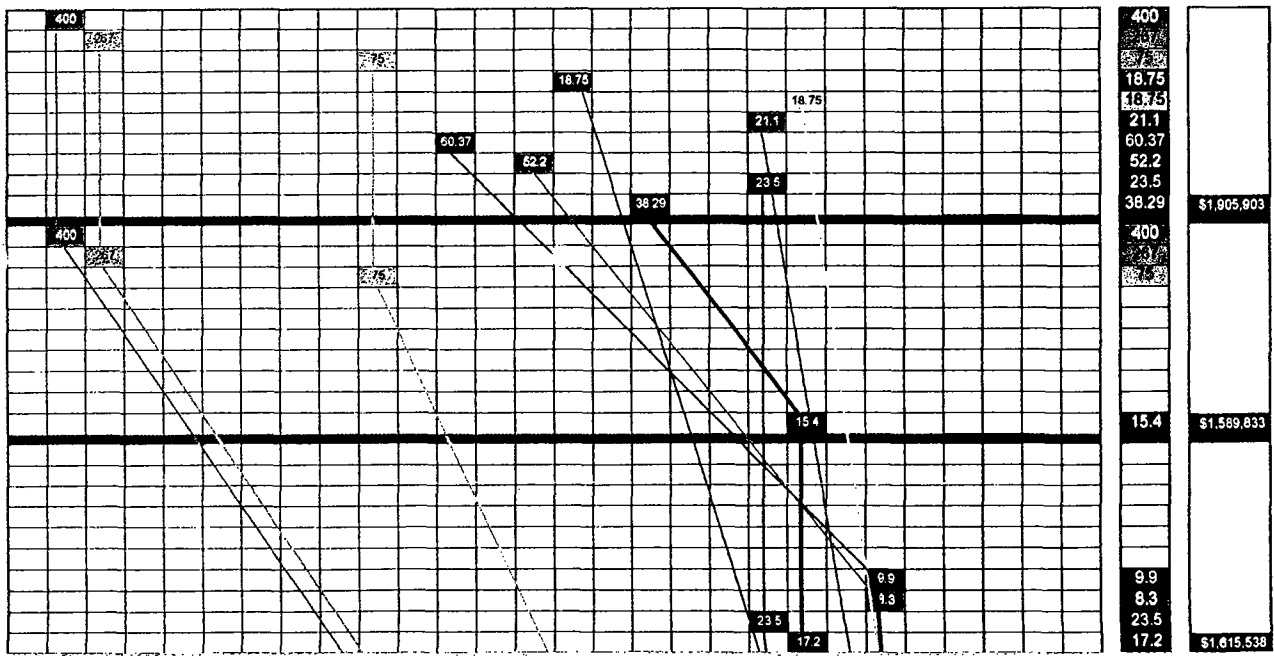
1994 1995 1996 1997 1998 1999 2000 2001

Legend:

- BUP Annual Revenue
- Urban District Office Space, Square Feet
- Urban District Retail Space, Square Feet
- Urban District Housing Units
- Tree Care Services, Number of Trees
- Trash Collection, # of Cans Collected
- Brick Service, Square Yards
- Special Events
- Pubs & Web Site
- A & E

Percentage of Growth

Ship Annual Revenue



Sample Bi-Annual Budget

		05 Budget	06 Budget
Revenues			
Transfer from County		1,963,080	2,041,603
Additional Sources of Income			
<i>Maintenance Income</i>		260,000	270,000
<i>Taste of Bethesda Revenue</i>		95,000	95,000
<i>Imagination Bethesda Revenue</i>		20,000	20,000
<i>Sponsorship Revenue</i>		20,000	20,000
<i>Marketing Revenue-Events Calendar</i>		10,000	12,150
Total Additional Sources		405,000	417,150
Total Revenues		2,368,080	2,458,753

Sample Bi-Annual Budget

Marketing		05 Budget	06 Budget
Overhead			
<i>Staff Costs</i>		192,000	199,150
<i>Occupancy Costs</i>		72,000	76,000
<i>Administrative</i>		24,000	26,000
<i>Fixed Asset Purchases</i>		4,000	5,000
Total Marketing Overhead		292,000	306,150
Events			
<i>Taste of Bethesda</i>		80,000	80,500
<i>Imagination Bethesda</i>		40,000	40,500
<i>Literary Festival</i>		36,000	36,000
<i>Winter Wonderland</i>		12,000	12,000
<i>Other Events</i>		5,000	7,040
<i>Bethesda Place Concerts</i>		13,000	13,000
<i>Metro Center Dance Concerts</i>		2,000	2,000
<i>Veterans Park Concerts</i>		14,000	15,000
Total Events		202,000	206,040
Marketing Communications			
<i>Contractor Fees</i>		20,000	20,140
<i>Arts Brochure</i>		7,000	7,000
<i>Home Fashion Brochure</i>		11,000	11,000
<i>Annual Report</i>		6,500	6,500
<i>Destination Downtown Bethesda</i>		17,000	17,000
<i>Eat Here Brochure</i>		13,000	13,000
<i>Events Calendar/Updates</i>		93,000	93,000
<i>Developer's Meetings</i>		1,000	1,000
<i>Advertising Campaigns</i>		40,000	42,000
<i>Public Relations Program</i>		4,000	4,000
<i>Website</i>		12,000	12,000
<i>Special Projects</i>		7,500	10,000
Total Marketing Communications		232,000	236,640
Marketing Total		726,000	748,830

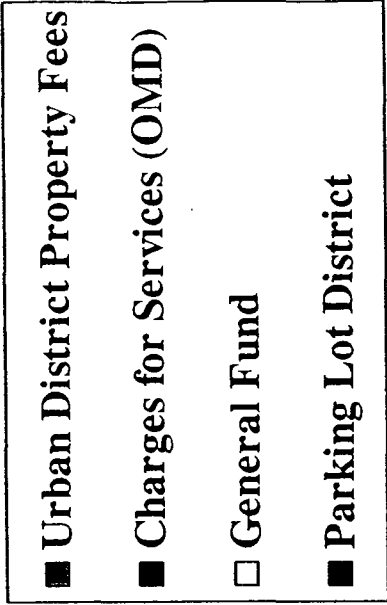
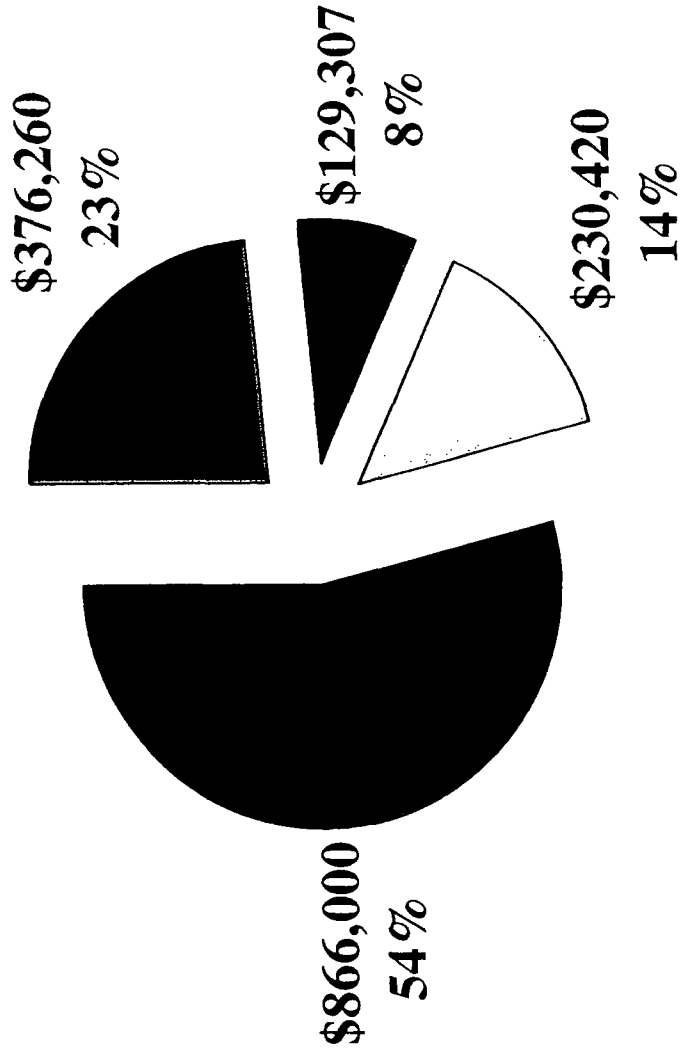
Sample Bi-Annual Budget

Maintenance	05 Budget	06 Budget
Overhead		
<i>Staff Costs</i>	490,000	510,300
<i>Occupancy</i>	72,000	76,000
<i>Administrative</i>	33,000	36,000
<i>Fixed Asset Purchases</i>	10,000	12,500
Total Maintenance Overhead	605,000	634,800
Maintenance Projects		
Sidewalks		
<i>Sidewalk Repairs and Maintenance</i>	75,000	76,660
<i>Sidewalk Sweeping</i>	8,000	8,000
Total Sidewalks	83,000	84,660
Streetscape/Landscape		
<i>Holiday Decorations</i>	10,000	10,000
<i>Landscaping</i>	90,000	95,000
<i>Outdoor Furniture</i>	4,000	5,000
<i>Pest Control</i>	4,000	4,000
<i>Sign Maintenance</i>	5,000	5,000
<i>Snow Removal</i>	2,500	3,000
<i>Street Sweeping</i>	80,000	80,000
<i>Graffiti Abatement</i>	1,000	1,270
<i>Trash Removal</i>	142,000	142,000
Total Streetscape/Landscape	338,500	345,270
Trees		
<i>Tree Installation</i>	35,000	35,000
<i>Pruning</i>	1,000	1,000
<i>Tree Health Care</i>	10,000	11,000
<i>Watering</i>	1,500	1,450
Total Trees	47,500	48,450
Ambassador Program (Second Shift)	148,000	150,960
Maintenance Special Projects	1,000	1,500
Maintenance Total	1,223,000	1,265,640

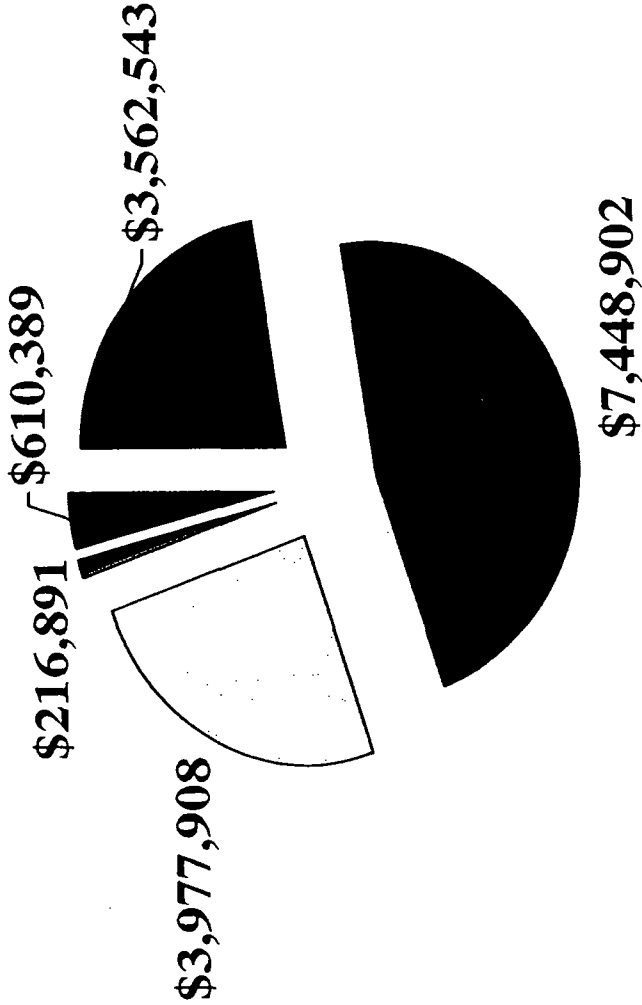
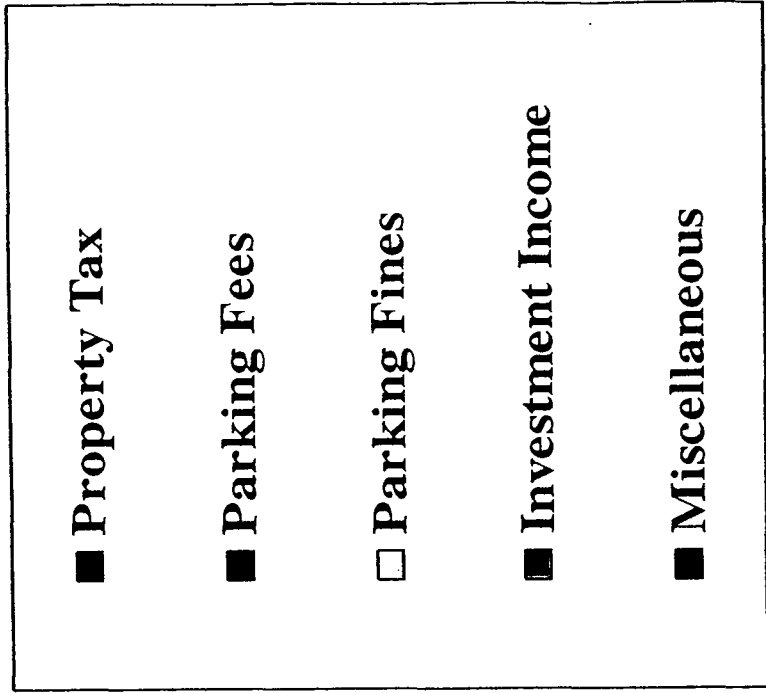
Sample Bi-Annual Budget

		<u>05 Budget</u>	<u>06 Budget</u>
<u>Capital Projects</u>			
Contractors		3,000	5,000
Sidewalk/Crosswalk Improvements		-	-
Signage Programs		2,000	2,500
<u>Capital Projects Total</u>		<u>5,000</u>	<u>7,500</u>
<u>Administration</u>			
Staff Costs		248,000	261,783
Occupancy Costs		75,000	77,000
Administration		44,580	46,000
Fixed Asset Purchases		6,500	7,000
<u>Administration Total</u>		<u>374,080</u>	<u>391,783</u>
<u>Reserve for Equipment Replacements</u>		40,000	45,000
<u>Total Expenses</u>		<u>2,368,080</u>	<u>2,458,753</u>
<u>Net</u>		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

FY02 REVENUE SOURCES

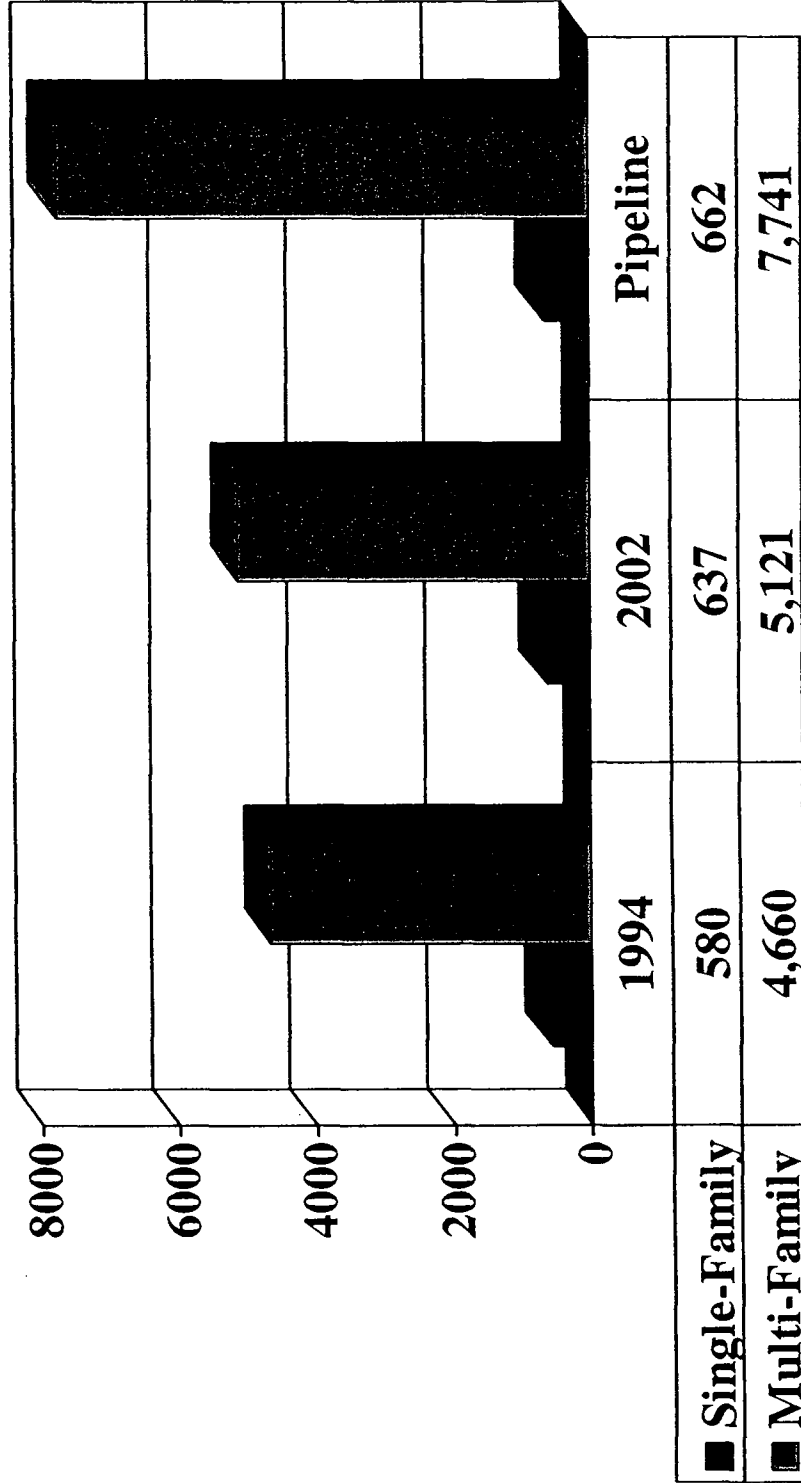


Parking Lot District Revenues



Bethesda Parking Lot District Revenues -- \$15,816,633

Urban District Housing Units

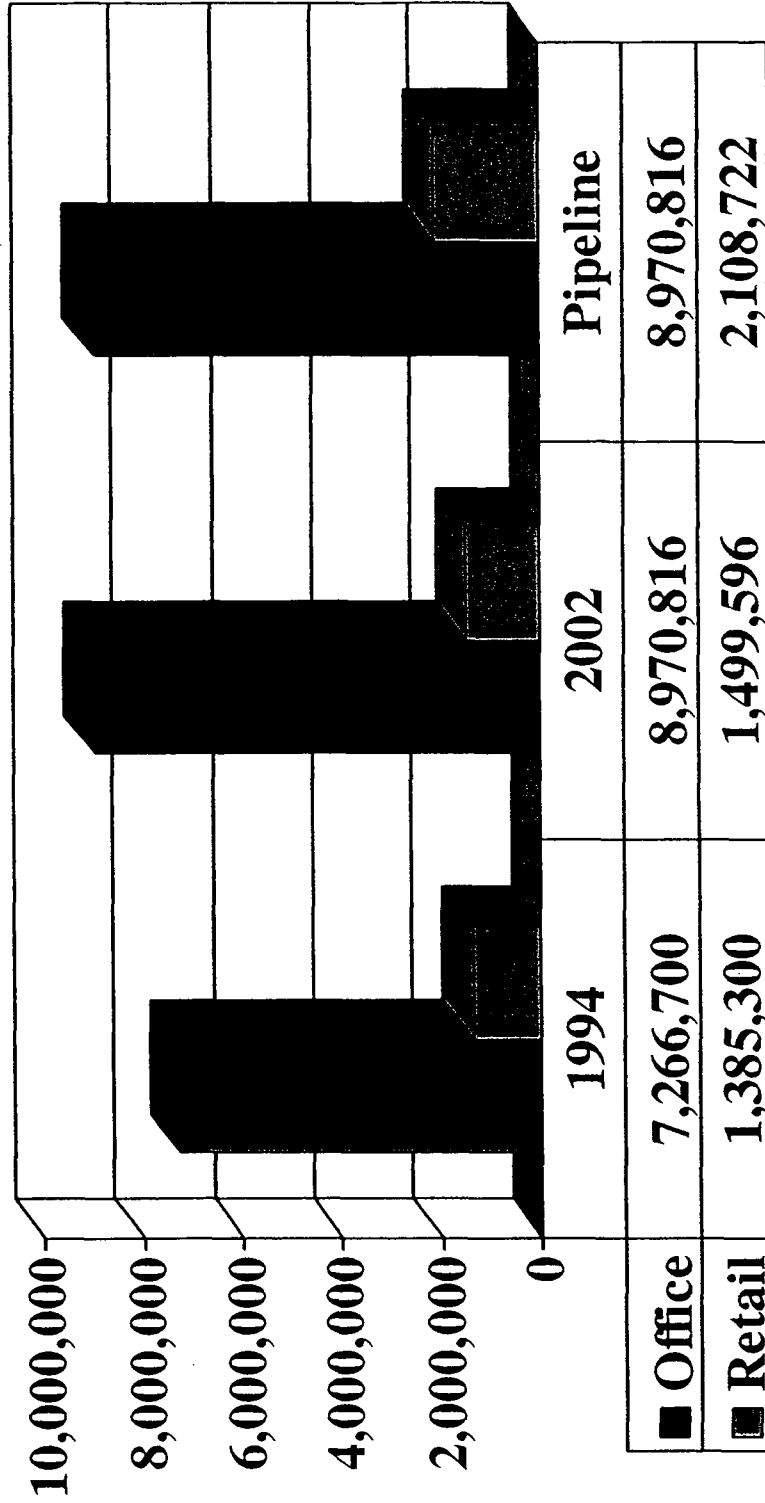


2.47 persons per household/single family

1.42 persons per household/multi-family

Information provided by MNCPPC

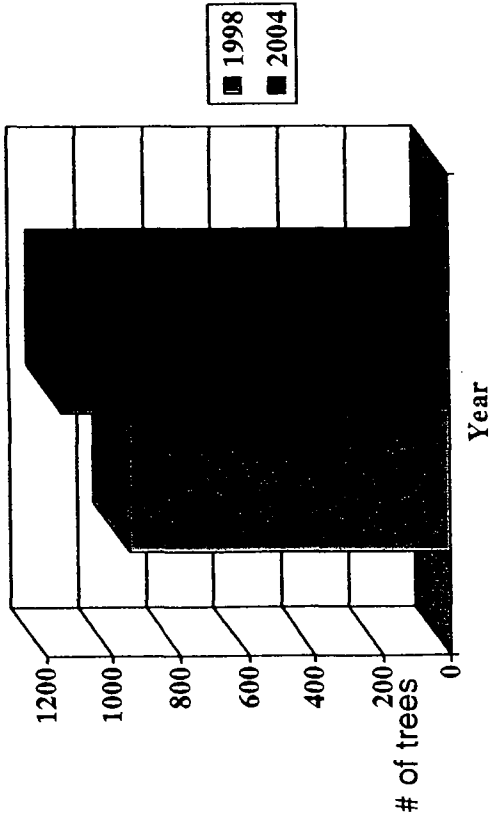
Urban District Office/Retail Square Feet



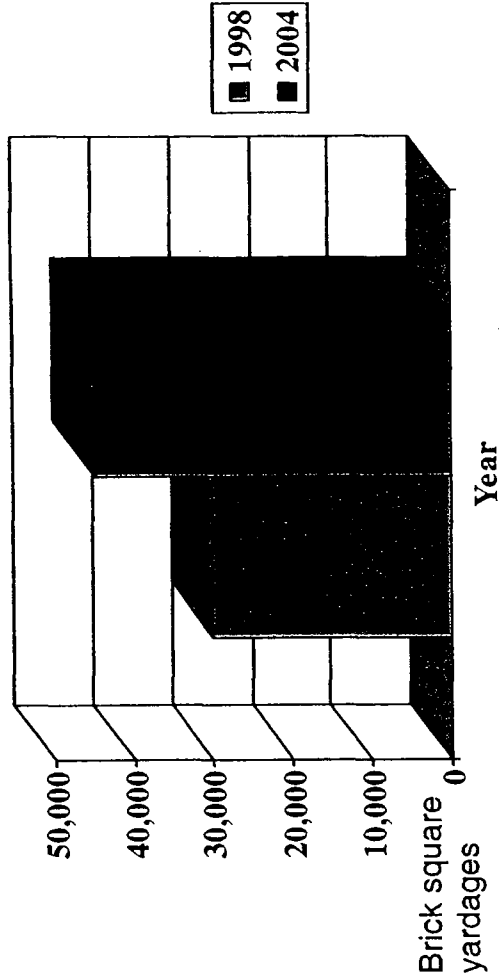
Multippliers of 225 SF/employee for office space; 400 SF/employee for retail space

Bethesda Urban Partnership Maintenance Budget Analysis

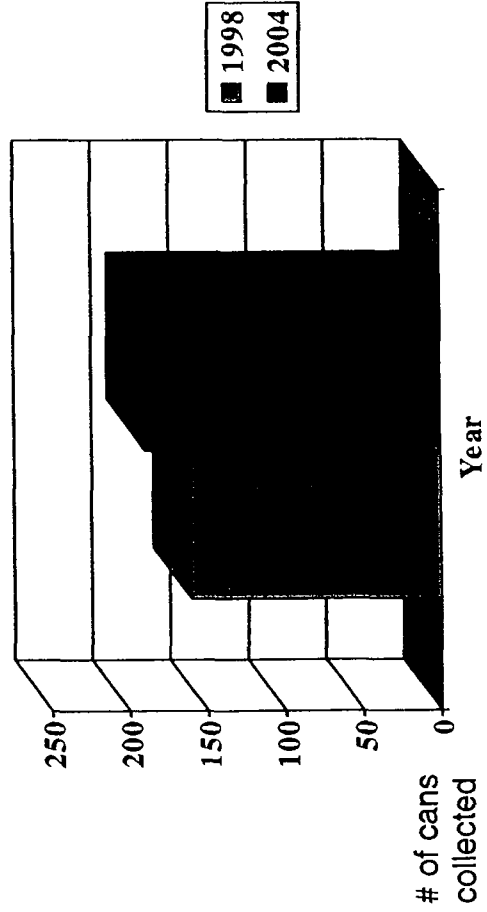
Tree Care Service Comparison



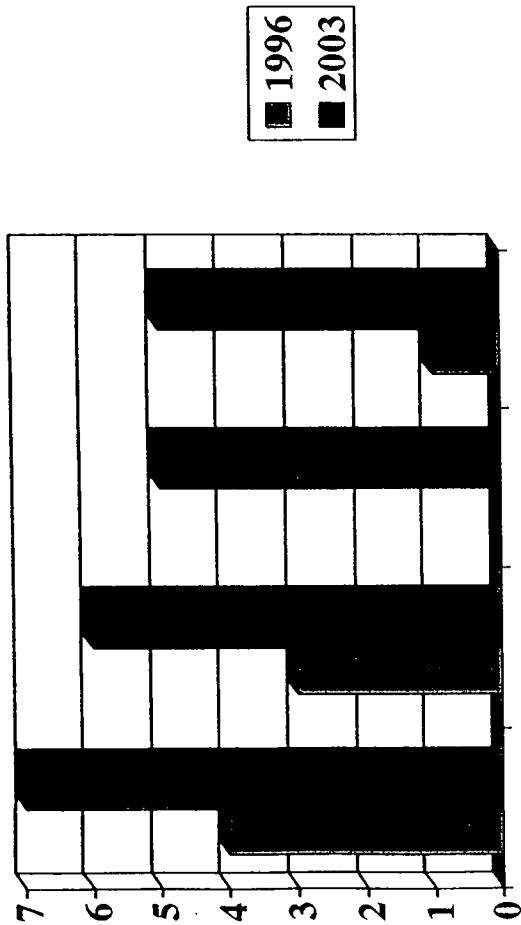
Brick Service Comparison



Trash Collection Service Comparison



Bethesda Urban Partnership Marketing Analysis



2002/2003 Marketing initiatives

Special Events

- Bethesda Literary Festival
- Special Events
- Taste of Bethesda (50 restaurants)
- Imagination Bethesda
- Winter Wonderland (expanded event site and entertainment)
- Summer concerts

Publications (Pubs)

- Bethesda's Best in Home Fashion
- Metro Opens Doors to Bethesda
- Bethesda bags
- Eat Here

Destination guide

- Events Calendar

Web site

- www.bethesda.org

Arts and Entertainment (A & E)

- State designated A & E District
- A&E District brochure
- Bethesda "Art Walk"
- Arts brochure highlighting art galleries and studios, theatre, public art
- The Trawick Prize: Bethesda Contemporary Art Awards

1996 Marketing initiatives

Special Events

- Taste of Bethesda (30 restaurants)
- Imagination Bethesda
- Winter Wonderland
- Summer concerts

Publications (Pubs)

- Eat Here
- Destination guide
- Events Calendar

Arts & Entertainment (A & E)

- Public art brochure

Executive Committee

Chair

Jason Hoffman

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Term 2 ending: October 2005

Treasurer

Elliot Schnitzer

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Term 1 ending: October 2004

Vice Chair

Carol Trawick

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Term 1 ending: October 2004

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Liz Jones, Office Manager (ljonesdern@bethesda.org)

List of OLO Interviews

Joe Beach, Office of Management and Budget

Carolyn Biggins, DPWT, Division of Transit Services

Sandra Brecher, DPWT, Division of Transit Services

Natalie Cantor, Mid-County Regional Services Center

Marilyn Clemens, M-NCPPC

John D'Albora, Montgomery County Police Department, Bethesda CBD Bicycle Unit

Betsy Davis, Montgomery County Police Department, Bethesda District

John Fisher, Office of the County Attorney

Jack Hayes, Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors, Secretary

Jason Hoffman, Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors, Chair

Ginanne Italiano, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce

Arnold Kohn, Bethesda Transportation Management District Advisory Committee, Chair

Elliot Schnitzer, Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors, Treasurer

Deborah Snead, Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center

Gary Stith, Silver Spring Regional Services Center

Carol Trawick, Bethesda Urban Partnership Board of Directors, Vice Chair

Bill Withers, Department of Public Works and Transportation