

INDIVIDUAL DISTRICT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section of the amendment describes the changes to specific districts identified in the existing Sector Plan. In contrast to the general recommendations, this section applies to the specific, individual districts as follows:

- Minor modifications to the Battery Lane District, the Wisconsin Avenue North Corridor, and the Old Georgetown Road Corridor.
- Complete replacement of the text and recommendations for the Woodmont Triangle District (pages 94-102 of the 1994 Sector Plan).

BATTERY LANE DISTRICT

- This amendment recognized the importance of improvements to Battery Lane Urban Park to create an active public open space and provide a better pedestrian and bicycle link between the NIH, the Woodmont Triangle and the Metro station.
- The restriction on building height is deleted for a portion of the Battery Lane District nearest to Woodmont Avenue.
- The former Trunnell property and the adjacent multi-family complex may develop either separately or together under the PD-75 Zone.
- Increase the R-10/TDR receiving area along Battery Lane.
- Retain the R-60 Zone for properties along Rugby Avenue, Glenbrook Road and Old Georgetown Road. Provide the opportunity for these properties including an existing church to develop in the PD-44 Zone either separately or together. Elderly housing is encouraged.

WISCONSIN AVENUE NORTH CORRIDOR

- Revise the building height limit on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue up to St. Elmo Avenue to allow the property in the CBD-R2 Zone to develop up to the maximum height of the zone. The height in this area was limited to 122 feet by the existing Sector Plan.
- A hotel may be allowed as a use in the CBD-R2 Zone between Woodmont Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue.

OLD GEORGETOWN ROAD CORRIDOR

- Properties in the CBD-1 Zone, south of St. Elmo Avenue and along Old Georgetown Road, will be rezoned to CBD-2.
- North of St. Elmo Avenue, the existing height limitation of 50 feet will remain to provide compatibility with the nearby residential neighborhood.
- South of St. Elmo Avenue, CBD-2 properties may develop to the maximum height of the zone in the Optional Method of Development, if MPDUs are included on-site.

WOODMONT TRIANGLE DISTRICT

This limited amendment replaces the entire section of the Woodmont Triangle District described in the existing Sector Plan. The Woodmont Triangle District has the potential to be a complete transit-oriented neighborhood. Improvements to the public streets and spaces are needed to provide the vibrant environment necessary to create a safe and attractive urban environment. This amendment supports mixed-use development that retains the unique qualities of the existing Woodmont Triangle District. The following items summarize the changes:

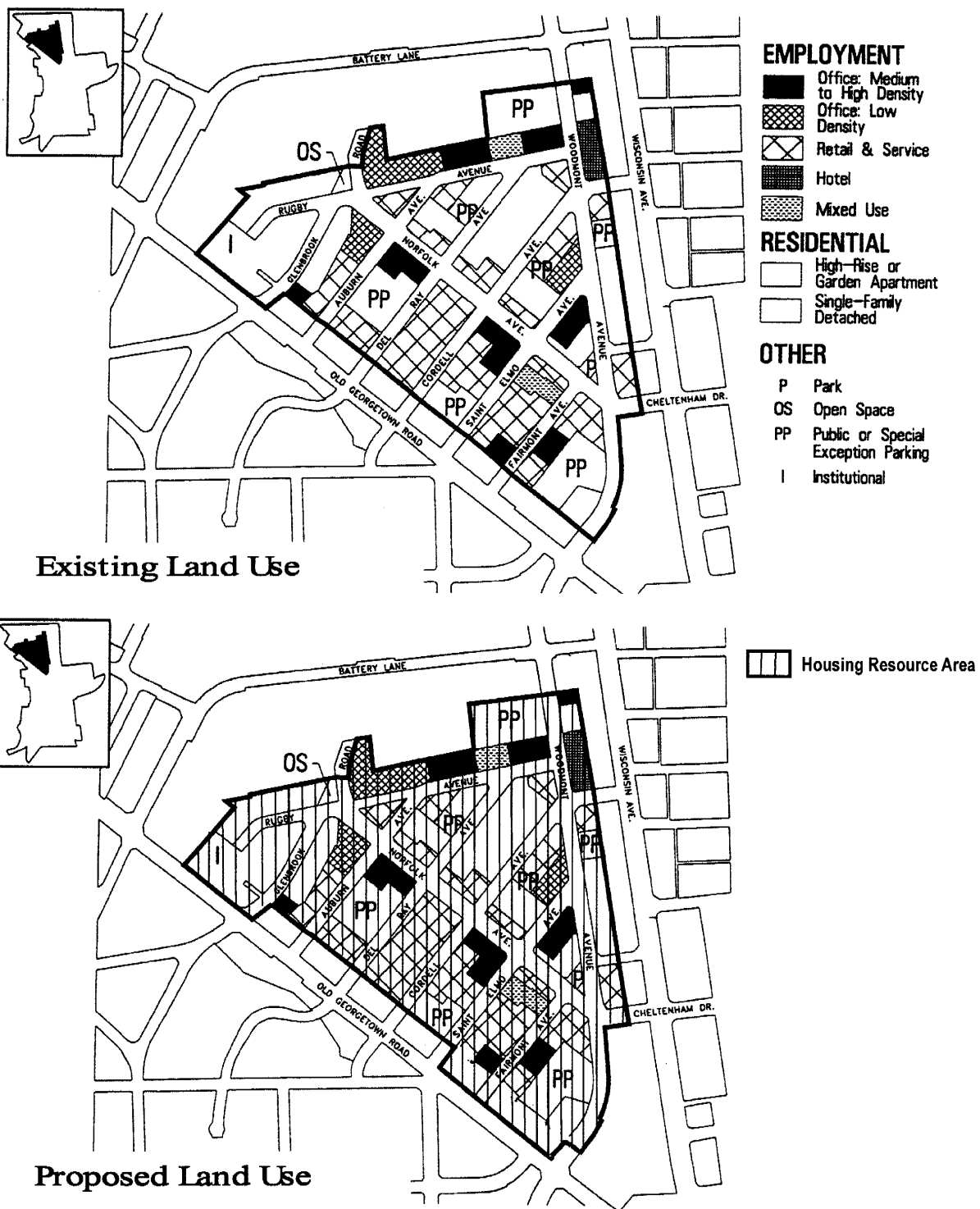
- Properties in the Woodmont Triangle could be constructed according to the development standards of their zones. This recommendation revises the building height and density limits imposed on the Woodmont Triangle District. This amendment is intended to encourage the development of housing for a variety of income levels and to support retail business.
- The amendment also revises the recommendations for the improvements to Norfolk Avenue. Instead of a median, this plan recommends improving the intersections and sidewalk areas for pedestrians. A bikeway will also be provided along Norfolk Avenue. These recommendations are intended to encourage retail revitalization, and create an attractive main street. These improvements will be accomplished through the Capital Improvements Program and the Optional Method of Development.

The following text and illustrations replace pages 94 through 102 in the Approved Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District dated July 1994.

A. DESCRIPTION

The Woodmont Triangle District is located between Old Georgetown Road and Wisconsin Avenue, south of the Battery Lane District. The Old Georgetown Road Corridor and the Metro Core District are directly to the south.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED LAND USE



The Woodmont Triangle District has been a retail, restaurant and office center for many years. Office uses continue to occupy both low-scale and a few high-rise buildings in the Triangle. Restaurants and arts-related uses also contribute to its increasingly urban, mixed-use environment. Until recently, the housing consisted of a few older, high-rise buildings and a small community of single-family homes on Rugby Avenue and Glenbrook Parkway.

The Triangle has a predominance of older, low-rise buildings on small parcels, creating a strong visual contrast with the height and density of the Metro Core District to the south. A “step-down” in height from the Metro Core to the edges of the CBD is a fundamental principle necessary to protect the residential neighborhoods on the edge of the CBD. The overall skyline within the Woodmont Triangle District is very irregular with abrupt changes in height. The value of commercial and residential real estate is high in Bethesda as a whole, but the difficulty of assembling small parcels in order to develop a project under the Optional Method of Development has been a restraint to revitalization. Older, often non-conforming office and retail space, inadequately lit streets, and narrow sidewalks have come to characterize parts of the Woodmont Triangle. Recently, an increase in retail and office vacancies has coincided with the success of the Bethesda Row area to the south. While new multi-family residential projects, such as the Palisades, the Whitney and the Residences of Rosedale have been completed within and near the Triangle, their impact on the prosperity of the area has not yet been realized. Improvements to the safety and character of the public streets and spaces of the Woodmont Triangle are necessary to spur revitalization and renovation.

The vision for the Triangle is for a vibrant, urban neighborhood, emphasizing a variety of residential, retail and arts uses. This amendment provides opportunities for additional housing to serve a variety of income levels.

B. OBJECTIVES

1. Encourage mixed-use projects to provide moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) on site to achieve Bethesda CBD Sector Plan housing goals.
2. Support a diverse urban neighborhood environment including restaurants, space for the arts and convenient parking facilities.
3. Create a vibrant, safe, and attractive pedestrian and retail environment through improvements to public streets and open spaces using the existing guidelines for the Bethesda streetscape.
4. Require improvements to the public sidewalks, public spaces and streets through the public use space and amenity requirements of the Optional Method of Development.
5. Establish a Woodmont Triangle Task Force to discuss and monitor neighborhood concerns including mechanisms for retaining existing and encouraging new retail shops and supporting the arts.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Support the development of mixed-use projects including affordable housing, retail and arts uses.
2. Change the density and building heights for the Triangle District to the limits in the zones.
3. Encourage smaller projects using the Standard Method of Development to provide retail on the first floor and housing on the upper floors.
4. Promote an arts theme in the review of all projects, emphasizing the Woodmont Triangle's importance to the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District.
5. Designate the Woodmont Triangle District as a housing resource area.

D. URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

In addition to the general objectives and recommendations, the following guidelines apply in the Woodmont Triangle District:

1. Design new buildings so that public streets and spaces retain adequate sunlight, particularly along Norfolk Avenue.
2. Provide sufficient building setbacks to adequately accommodate pedestrians and streetscape improvements. Where outdoor restaurants are proposed, additional building setbacks may be required to accommodate pedestrian space and outdoor seating areas.
3. Review new projects for compatibility with existing uses and to ensure animation of the first floor space through use of retail, restaurant or other activating uses.
4. Improve pedestrian and bicycle access across the intersection of Rugby and Norfolk Avenues by redesigning the intersection, potentially adding acreage to Battery Lane Urban Park.
5. Provide street-oriented retail, restaurants, and other street animating uses on the first floor of buildings located along streets such as Norfolk Avenue and Cordell Avenue (see Concept for Cordell Avenue).
6. Maintain the established building line along Norfolk Avenue.

The map of Existing and Proposed Land Use replaces Figure 4.21, page 96 of the 1994 Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District.

CONCEPT FOR CORDELL AVENUE

