

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

COMMUNITY FACILITY OBJECTIVES

- Provide for services and facilities which meet the present and future needs of the community.
- Protect all citizens and their property, and create an environment in which people feel safe.
- Create a park and open space system of linked facilities that tie the Wheaton Central Business District together and to the surrounding communities.
- Provide green spaces in convenient locations.
- Ensure that a balance of passive and active parks and open space is provided in surrounding communities.
- Create boulevards that tie existing open space together using street trees, plazas, and pedestrian and bicycle pathways.
- Foster the development of a vital "18-hour" Central Business District which encourages the presence of people and decreases the likelihood of crime.
- Create safer areas through better design.
- Create adequate capacity and modern school facilities which accommodate the general and special needs of students in the area.
- Maintain library space and services necessary to serve community interests.
- Maintain a government community center which is accessible and has adequate space and services to meet the needs of the community.

A necessary part of the land use plan for Wheaton is the array of community facilities provided to the residents, employees, and users of the area. Community facilities, such as parks, recreation, schools, fire and police stations, libraries and government buildings, are a major element in a community's ability to provide its residents with a desirable "quality of life."

An area which is predominantly built-up already has a wide range of community services. In such an area, the Sector Plan is primarily concerned with:

- the provision of expanded facilities in parts of the Sector Plan area that are deficient;
- the provision of new facilities where new or intensified growth is anticipated;
- the replacement of facilities that are obsolete or unable to meet future demands; and

- the broadening of the range of facilities provided to meet the demands of a varied population.

As new development occurs, some new or replacement facilities will come about, mandated by the site plan review provisions of the zones under which that development takes place. Other facilities, however, are within the range of government.

CHILD CARE

Both the increasing demand for child care facilities within major employment centers and the nearness of the Wheaton CBD to residential neighborhoods support the need for child care services within the Sector Plan area. This Plan recommends greater child care opportunities at appropriate locations in the Wheaton area.

The Wheaton area has the third highest proportion of single parent headed households and the highest proportion of male parent headed households in Montgomery County. Inexpensive, quality day care is an especially high priority for these groups of people. The Department of Family Resources Human Services Issues report cites the two primary needs in the Wheaton area as child day care and Latchkey programs. The Wheaton area has a unique resource for potential facilities for child day care in that it has several closed public schools which could be utilized for such a purpose.

The Wheaton Sector Plan also supports the recommendations in the Department of Facility Resources' "Profile of the Kensington-Wheaton Area," such as:

- Encouraging the development of licensed small child care centers (up to 6 children as permitted use) in private homes.
- Educating the public on the community block grant process as a means of securing start-up funds for child care.
- Studying modifications appropriate to reduce adverse effects (such as noise) of child care facilities in apartment buildings, condominiums, and co-ops. The study should also address the issue of liability insurance for child day care by owner and homeowner associations for these buildings.
- Adding school-based day care in shared space for school-aged children.

In addition, the Plan recommends:

- When appropriate, consider day care centers as an amenity associated with applications for option method of development in the CBD Zones.

SCHOOLS

As indicated in Table 4, the Wheaton Sector Plan area is served by the Kennedy and Einstein Clusters. There are four elementary schools in the area surrounding the Sector Plan: Rock View, Oakland Terrace, and Glen Haven Elementary Schools – all in the Einstein Cluster; and Kemp Mill Elementary School in the Kennedy Cluster.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY HIGH SCHOOL CLUSTER

High School Cluster/ School Name	Date Ori- gally Con- structed	Year Modern- ized	Site Size (Acres)	Number of Teaching Stations/ Classrooms
EINSTEIN CLUSTER				
Einstein High	1962		25.7 PK	66
Sligo Middle	1959	1990	21.7 PK	64
Glen Haven Elementary	1950	1972	10.0	23
Oakland Terrace Elementary	1950	1970 M	9.5 PK	23
Rock View Elementary	1955		7.4	30
KENNEDY CLUSTER				
Kennedy High	1964		31.1	65
Lee Middle	1966		16.5 PK	39
Kemp Mill Elementary	1960		10.0	26

NOTE: M — denotes minor or partial renovation;
PK — denotes an adjacent park site; park acreage is in
addition to that shown.

SOURCE: Requested FY 91 Capital Budget and the FY 91 to FY 96 Capital
Improvements Program, November 1, 1989, Montgomery County Public
Schools.

The Stephen Knolls Special School is located within the planning area and serves students with special needs from both inside and outside of the Sector Plan Area.

In response to declining enrollment in the 1970s and early 1980s, the Board of Education closed several elementary and junior high schools in the Kensington-Wheaton Planning Area. Using the Intermediate Forecast from the Research Division, Montgomery County Public School planners project that elementary, intermediate and middle enrollments will increase steadily in the next decades. It is unlikely that there will be additional school closings in the Wheaton area during the life of this Plan.

Projected development in the Wheaton Sector Plan area is expected to provide approximately 1000 additional dwelling units. These units will be a mixture of detached and attached single-family units and multi-family units. The Board of Education operates an extensive rehabilitation program which both improves the quality of existing school buildings and adds classrooms or additional spaces as required. It also has the flexibility to modify service areas, redistributing excess students to empty classrooms. The County programs public school additions and modernizations through the Approved Master Plan for Educational Facilities and the annual Capital Improvements Program. The timing of additions and modernizations will be evaluated in future Master Plans for Educational Facilities and annual Capital Improvements Program. Potential demand for additional school facilities can be accommodated within the existing structures or by reopening previously closed schools.

There are no undeveloped school sites in or near the Sector Plan Area. No additional school sites are currently proposed for the Kensington-Wheaton Planning Area.

FIRE/RESCUE

The Wheaton Sector Plan area is currently served by Station 5 (Connecticut Avenue and Plyers Mill Road in Kensington), Station 18 (Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road in the Wheaton CBD), Station 19 (Montgomery Hills), and Station 21 (Veirs Mill Village), as well as by the Wheaton Rescue Squad, located at 11435 Grandview Avenue. The Wheaton Rescue Squad has been in operation since 1968 and provides advanced life support, basic ambulance service, and a heavy rescue squad. It completed an expansion of its present facility eight years ago. Station 21 also has a heavy rescue squad. In early 1990, Station 25 (previously located at Georgia Avenue a block north of Connecticut Avenue) relocated to a new facility on Bel Pre Road at Connecticut Avenue.

Fire and rescue officials anticipate added demand placed on the Wheaton Rescue Squad by development in the Wheaton CBD.

Current building codes and safety requirements, such as sprinklers in buildings over three stories in height, are expected to minimize the dangers of building fires in new development in the Wheaton CBD. Older buildings are inspected annually. Fire and rescue officials do not anticipate a significant impact on response calls to fires, but do expect "nuisance" and rescue calls to increase as a result of new buildings and more people.

POLICE

Police protection is provided by the Wheaton-Glenmont Police Station, located at Randolph Road and Georgia Avenue.

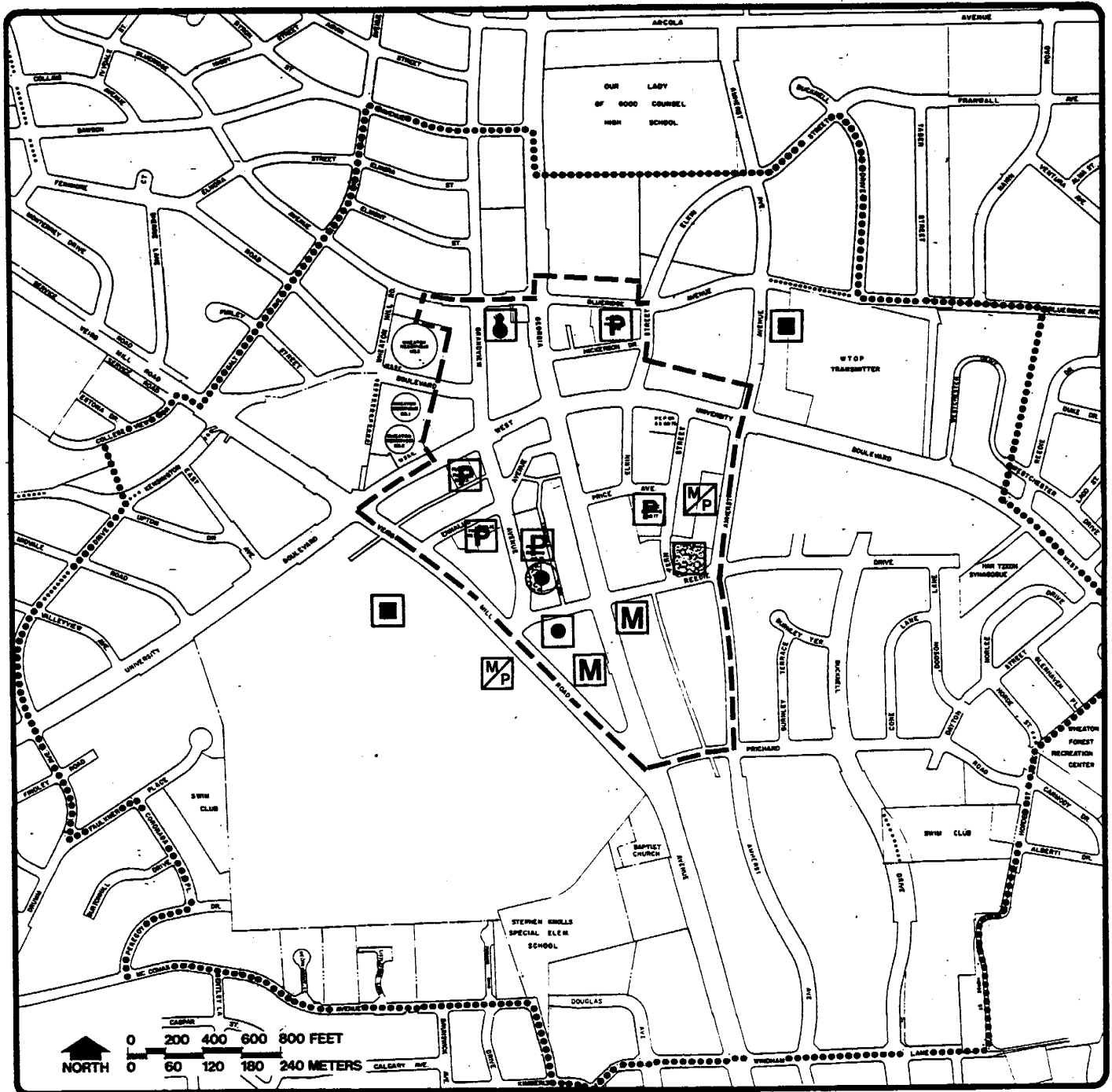
Over the next decade, an increase in business and residential population within the Wheaton Sector Plan area may require additional police protection. The use of walking patrols and police officers on motorcycles could supplement car patrols in Wheaton.

LIBRARY

Wheaton is serviced by the Wheaton Library, located at 1701 Georgia Avenue at the corner of Arcola Avenue. It is one of four regional libraries with a total service area containing over 75,000 persons. In 1983 the library closed for renovation and reopened in 1985 in a substantially new facility of 41,000 square feet.

Use of the library increased over 12 percent between 1987 and 1989. It is the second most heavily utilized library in the County in terms of circulation. There is an extensive range of children's programs available through the library and a children's reading collection. The library has also added INFOTRACK: a computerized database of the library's magazine articles.

The Wheaton Regional Library is currently the only County library with a Health Information Center. The Center is partially supported by grants and functions as a referral agency for consumers of health information/services. The Literacy



COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

- Community Service Center
- Fire/Rescue
- Post Office
- Public Parking

- Public Park
- Metro
- Metro Parking
- Marketplace Square

WHEATON

--- Central Business District Boundary
 Sector Plan Boundary



SEPT. 1990

SECTOR PLAN
KW
 PLANNING AREA

Council for Montgomery County is also located in the Wheaton Library and serves over 600 people County-wide. The literacy collection includes a collection for people learning English, as well as a foreign language section.

In order to assure the adequacy of this facility, the quality of library services should be continually improved and supplemented by the policies of providing educational programs for children, youth, and adults and by promoting the use of meeting rooms for civic functions.

POST OFFICE

Two postal facilities are located in the Wheaton Business District. The main facility on Amherst Avenue provides basic postal services while a self-service facility at Wheaton Plaza provides additional and off-hour service to occasional patrons. The postal facility in Aspen Hill has created a reduction in demand at the Wheaton facility. The Wheaton Post Office is expected to be able to handle new demand in Wheaton as a result of the Aspen Hill facility to the north.

COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

The Wheaton Government Services Center is located at 2424 Reddie Drive, west of Georgia Avenue. The building is the second of the County's decentralized service centers and is patterned after the successful facility at Silver Spring.

The facility contains approximately 29,000 square feet and includes a wide range of government services, including information referral, complaint intake, basic health care, mental health services, general social services, and general government office space. The Center and its staff also provide services for the homeless in the area, in lieu of other shelters or services in Wheaton.

There is no on-site parking at the facility and the current building is operating at its capacity. While the projected growth in Wheaton will probably not pose significant additional demands on staff, there is concern that the increasing needs of residents on the remainder of the service area cannot be adequately served by the present facility. The possibility of moving the Center to another location should be considered. One alternative is to examine the possibility of a "land swap" with Metro. The current Government Center sits on the northwest portion of the block bounded on the north by Reddie Drive and on the east, west, and south by Veirs Mill Road and Georgia Avenue, respectively. With the exception of the Government Center and one other parcel, the block will be developed by Metro as a bus terminal to serve the Wheaton Metrorail station. Metro owns a 3.87-acre parcel on the east side of Georgia Avenue, south of and immediately adjacent to Our Lady of Good Counsel High School. The site is currently being used by Metro for construction of an extension to the Wheaton station to store trains until the line is extended to Glenmont. Any future plans to construct air-rights development over the bus terminal would probably have greater feasibility if the current Center parcel could be used for access to Reddie Drive. The County may wish to investigate the possibility of a future exchange of land with Metro if it becomes necessary to expand the Service Center. Any change of this nature must consider the concerns of the residential community near the new site. Moreover, a decision regarding the possible relocation of the Government Center also should consider accessibility to public transit routes.

PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND RECREATION

The Wheaton Sector Plan is served by several facilities, most of which are outside the immediate Sector Plan area. These include regional parks, stream valley parks, recreation centers, and urban parks, all of which are within the immediate reach of residents of the Sector Plan area. The closest facilities are those in Sligo Stream Valley Park, which parallels Georgia Avenue about one mile to the east, in Wheaton Regional Park, at the foot of Shorefield Road, and at the Newport Mill and Pleasant View playgrounds and the Wheaton recreation center, on Newport Mill Road and on Claridge Road, respectively.

At the present time, the Wheaton Veterans Park is the only park currently within the Wheaton Central Business District. The 0.7-acre park is bounded on three sides by roads (Fern Street, Reddie Drive, and Amherst Avenue) and is adjacent to the future Metro parking garage. The first stages of development in this park have been completed and include a memorial wall and plaza area to be used by local groups for ceremonial purposes and community events. Additional development, scheduled for fiscal year 1992, may include sitting areas, walkways, lighting, and landscaping.

The Wheaton Central Business District is of an extremely urban nature, with no unimproved land available for park development. The Plan proposes the creation of new open space in the Wheaton Triangle area. This additional open space may provide an area for community activities and an attractive urban setting in which shoppers and employees may relax, read, and eat lunch.

Additional facilities in the business area could be developed as small private open spaces as part of the amenity package in optional method projects. These parks would be convenient to shoppers, workers, and the surrounding population. They could be sitting areas, places to walk and rest, or children's play areas. The Plan recommends that as projects are submitted, staff look at possible locations for such areas, particularly as redevelopment proceeds and establishes new patterns of pedestrian concentrations and movements.