

## community facilities

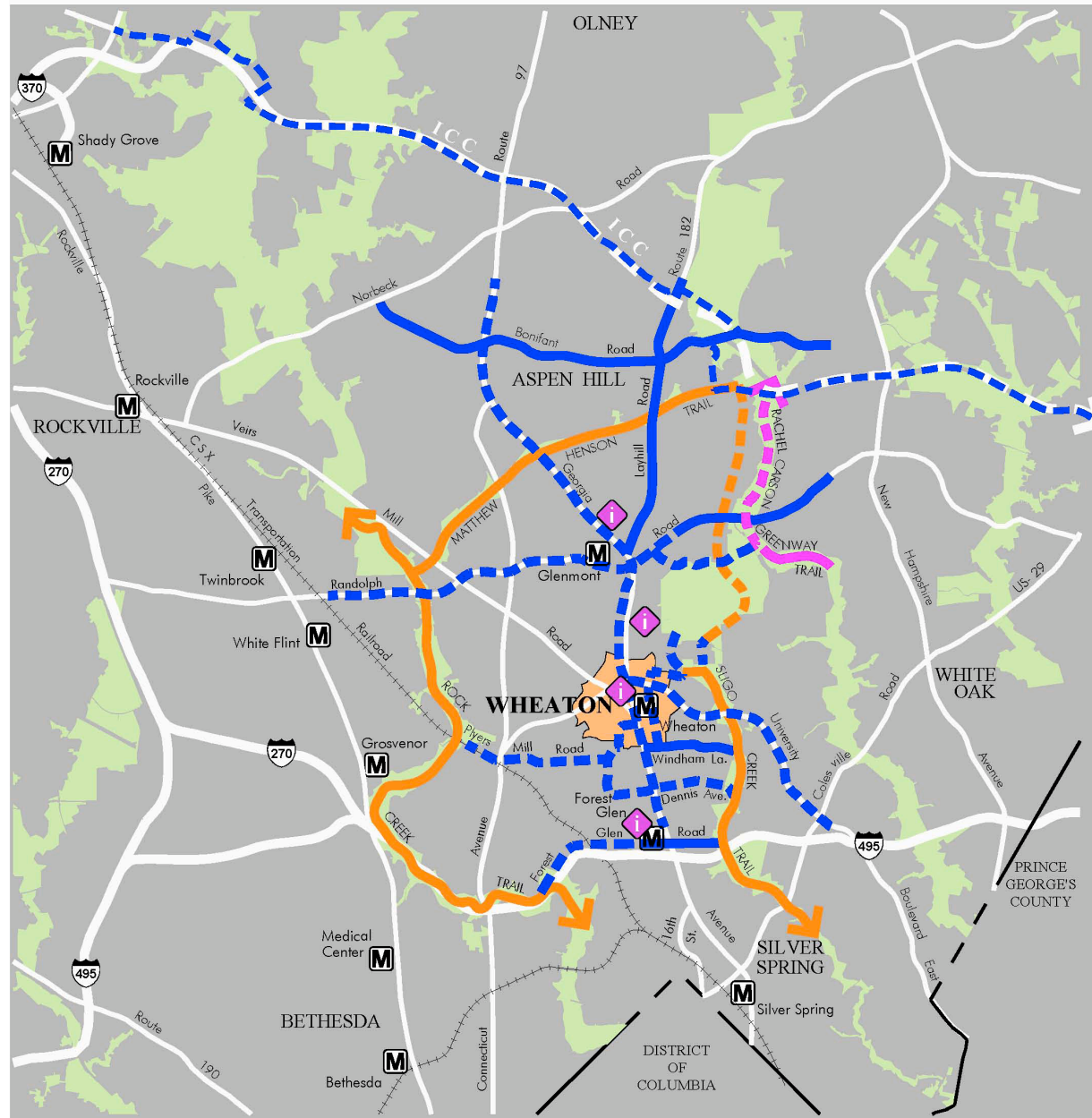
The Wheaton community is served by one of the County's regional services centers, public schools, a library, private hospitals and health clinics, police stations, fire and rescue facilities, family services, a regional park, and a variety of public and private recreation facilities including a pool and recreation center. The Plan's recommendations ensure that public services and facilities are safe and accessible and will meet the present and future needs of all residents.

### Public Park Facilities

- Provide an interconnected system of parks, trails, and public open spaces where people can gather, enjoy the outdoors, and conduct business. Wheaton's public use space system should be designed to create connections, both physical and visual, to the parks and trails, as well as to other destinations. Spaces serving the entire planning area and beyond should be owned and operated by the Department of Parks.
- Renovate Wheaton Veterans Urban Park to be more visible and inviting from the surrounding streets. The function of memorializing war veterans could be moved to a more central open space in another location. Any relocation or redevelopment of the veterans memorial should be closely coordinated with veterans groups.
- Provide a central open space in the Core District, close to the Metro station, for public events and community-wide activities. This space should be located in the vicinity of Parking Lot 13 and become a permanent public use space.
- Provide opportunities for urban recreation in the downtown. Because developable land is at a premium, a typical, suburban 15-acre local park is not feasible. The Department of Parks should explore opportunities for large parks outside, but near the Plan area, to meet the standards established in the *Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan*. Some recreation facilities will be achieved within the downtown through the Recreation Guidelines used for determining the adequacy of recreation facilities during the development review process.
- Improve connectivity to regional parks and trails near the CBD. Improve signage on streets that lead to trail connectors, as well as on the trails to Wheaton Regional Park and Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park—along Windham Lane to Sligo Creek Park and along Blueridge Avenue to Wheaton Regional Park.
- Improve access to Wheaton Regional Park. Provide entry features where roadways lead to the park, and way-finding kiosks at central locations such as the Metro station and public parking facilities.



**Map 22 Existing and Proposed Trails**



## County Recreation Facilities

A variety of community recreation facilities are located adjacent to the Plan area and are accessible by public transportation. The Wheaton Community Center at Georgia Avenue between Hermitage and Parker Avenues is a multi-purpose recreational facility that serves people of all ages. Also outside the Plan area, in Wheaton Regional Park, is the Wheaton Ice Arena. It is one of two ice skating facilities owned and managed by the Parks Department.

Wheaton residents are served by three public regional indoor pools, all accessible by transit: the Montgomery Athletic Club (MAC) in White Flint, the Olney Athletic Club (OAC), and the Martin Luther King Athletic Club (MLKAC) on New Hampshire Avenue. There is one outdoor pool, the Wheaton/Glenmont Pool, located minutes from the Plan area by car. There is community interest in another pool and the County Recreation Department should evaluate this possibility.

## Public Schools

The Plan area is served by the Downcounty Consortium cluster including Blair, Kennedy, Wheaton, Einstein, and Northwood High Schools. Students may attend their home school or choose a signature program offered by a school in the Consortium. This arrangement has been successful in managing capacity constraints. Under current projections, the three middle schools (Colonel E. Brooke Lee, Newport Mill, and Sligo) have capacity. The elementary schools—Arcola, Glen Haven, Rock View, and Oakland Terrace—are projected to be over capacity in the near future under existing conditions.

The Stephen Knolls School is also located in the Plan area, in the Kensington Heights neighborhood, south of the Westfield Wheaton Mall. It provides special education programs.

The Plan's estimated residential development could yield up to 386 elementary school students, 310 middle school students, and 300 high school students. There are no capacity issues for middle and high schools, but an additional elementary school site may be needed if the actual development is higher than the likely development estimated in this Plan.

- Retain the County-owned former Pleasant View Elementary School building and site on Upton Drive, currently used by the Crossways Community, for a future elementary school if needed.





## Libraries

The Wheaton Library is located at the corner of Georgia and Arcola Avenues. The library is one of the County's busiest branches with over 600,000 items circulated each year and more than 425,000 annual visits. The library's planned renovation at its current location, currently planned as a joint library/community recreation center on land occupied by the Wheaton Library and the Wheaton Community Center, will consider future needs including demands for computers, Wi-Fi, language learning programs, and services to teens and the diverse Wheaton community. Existing and future library services can accommodate new development anticipated in this Plan.

## Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Medical Services

The Plan area is served by two fire-rescue stations—the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad (WVRS) Station 42 and the Kensington Volunteer Fire Department (KVFD) Station 18 (on Georgia Avenue in Glenmont). Nearby fire-rescue stations that respond into the Wheaton CBD when needed include KVFD Stations 5 (Town of Kensington), 21 (Veirs Mill Village), and 25 (Aspen Hill) as well as the Silver Spring Volunteer Fire Department Stations 16 (Four Corners) and 19 (Montgomery Hills).

While existing fire suppression and heavy rescue resources serving the CBD area should remain adequate for the foreseeable future, the Department of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS) projects that an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) unit will likely be needed at Station 18 to serve future additional residents. By about 2014 or soon thereafter, Station 18 will be relocated in Glenmont on the west side of Georgia Avenue across the street from the Glenmont Metro Station. The relocation is necessary due to the planned grade separation of Georgia Avenue and Randolph Road, which will impact the existing site. Also within the early timeframe of this Plan, the Wheaton Volunteer Rescue Squad (Station 42) will be relocated from its Grandview Avenue location in Wheaton's downtown to the corner of Georgia and Arcola Avenues. The new locations of Stations 18 and 42 will facilitate adequate response coverage throughout the Wheaton area.

## Regional Services Center

The Mid-County Regional Services Center on Reddie Drive is one of the County's five regional services centers and occupies a part of the WMATA Triangle. It has served the community since 1978.

In addition to housing the offices of the Mid-County Regional Services Center and the Wheaton Redevelopment Program, it accommodates the Mid-County Citizens' Advisory Board, the Wheaton Urban District Advisory Committee, Conflict Resolution, Adult Behavioral Health, Women's Cancer Control, Information and Referral Services, Projecto Salud Health Clinic (Montgomery Cares), Community Police Resource Center, and the Mid-County United Ministries. The building is approaching obsolescence.

- Rebuild the center in the Core District.



## Law Enforcement

The Fourth District Police Station at 2300 Randolph Road serves Wheaton, Glenmont, Aspen Hill, and some areas extending to Howard County. Originally constructed in 1958, the facility is the County's oldest police station but was recently modernized. A district satellite office, used by officers only to write reports, is located at the Westfield Wheaton Mall. According to the Police Department, no new public safety facilities would be needed for the Plan's estimated growth.

## Historic Resources

### WTOP Transmitter Building, 2115 University Boulevard West

The WTOP Transmitter Building, completed in 1940, is a designated historic site in the County's *Master Plan for Historic Preservation*. The transmitter, historically known as WJSV, was considered a cutting-edge design with a distinctive sculptural quality, lack of ornamentation, and stark simplicity—hallmarks of the International Style that was virtually unknown in Montgomery County. Influence of the Art Moderne, popular in this era, is evident in curving, streamlined surfaces and the use of glass block. *Architectural Record* featured a two-page layout on the WJSV/WTOP Transmitter in 1941, one year after the radio station began operation. WTOP is one of the oldest radio stations in the country and still broadcasts from this facility, operated remotely from offices in Northwest Washington.

The environmental setting for this historic resource is 1.4 acres. The larger property is interlaced with buried copper wire mesh used for broadcasting, a potential constraint for future redevelopment.

See Appendix 6, Historic Preservation for more information about this historic resource and the Historic Preservation program.

- Any redevelopment of the approximately 12.31-acre WTOP site must conform to the requirements established in its historic designation, including preserving the 1.4-acre historic setting.

