

# Master Plan Review

## **FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS**

Approved and Adopted 1998



Updated January 2013



## ZONING CODE REWRITE

In 2007, the Montgomery County Council directed the Planning Department to undertake a comprehensive zoning ordinance rewrite. Last rewritten in 1977, the current 1,200 + page code is viewed as antiquated and hard to use with standards that have failed to keep pace with modern development practices.

With only about four percent of land in the County available for greenfield development, the new zoning code can play a crucial role in guiding redevelopment to areas like surface parking lots and strip shopping centers. An updated zoning code is important for achieving the kind of growth Montgomery County policymakers and residents want.

Initial sections of the new code were drafted by Code Studio, a zoning consultant. These drafts were subsequently analyzed and edited by planners based on feedback from the Zoning Advisory Panel (a citizen panel appointed by the Planning Board to weigh in on the project's direction), county agency representatives, residents and other stakeholders. In September 2012, planning staff began the release of a draft code in sections accompanied by a report highlighting changes from the current code. The staff drafts were reviewed at length by the Planning Board.



After several public sessions and many worksessions, the Board is nearing the end of its review. After additional worksessions in February to consider definitions, parking and other outstanding issues, the Board will undertake an implementation review, where they will evaluate and make recommendations on potential zone changes. Later this spring, following the completion of the text and implementation review, a Planning Board Draft will be sent to County Council for consideration.

## ZONE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

An important aspect of the Zoning Rewrite process is the potential simplification of 123 existing zones into about 30 proposed zones. While some of the proposed zones are a direct one-to-one translation of existing zones, others are the result of combining existing zones with similar standards. Additionally, existing zones that are not currently mapped or are no longer used in the County have been eliminated from the proposed code. Through the implementation process, Montgomery County aims to simplify the number of zones, eliminate redundancy, and clarify development standards. A full translation table for all zones can be found in the documents section of our website: [www.zoningmontgomery.org](http://www.zoningmontgomery.org).



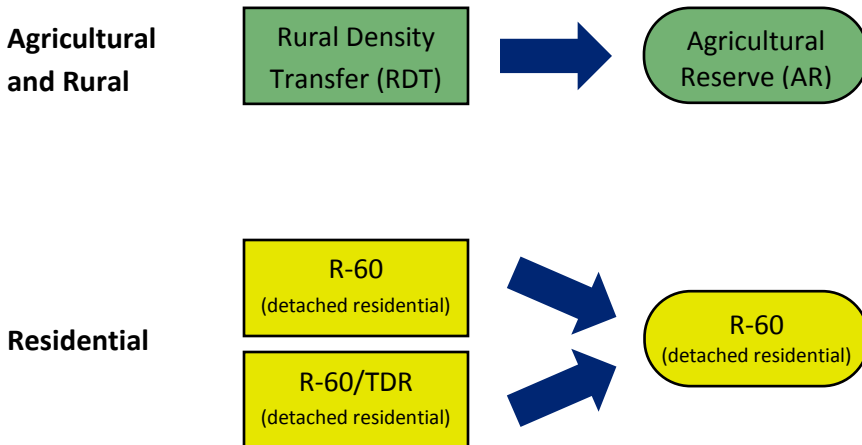
### Agricultural, Residential, and Industrial Zone Implementation:

For agricultural and rural zones, the existing zones will be translated to proposed zones on a one-to-one basis, with the exception of the Low Density Rural Cluster zone which is not currently used in the County and will be eliminated.

Many of the existing residential zones will remain the same. Other residential zones will be combined with existing zones that have similar development standards. The R-4Plex zone, which is not currently mapped anywhere in the county, will be removed from the proposed code.

Implementation of Industrial zones will combine similar zones (Rural Service, I-1, and R+D) into the proposed Industrial Moderate (IM) zone. The existing heavy industrial zone (I-2) will be renamed as the Industrial Heavy (IH) zone.

#### Examples:



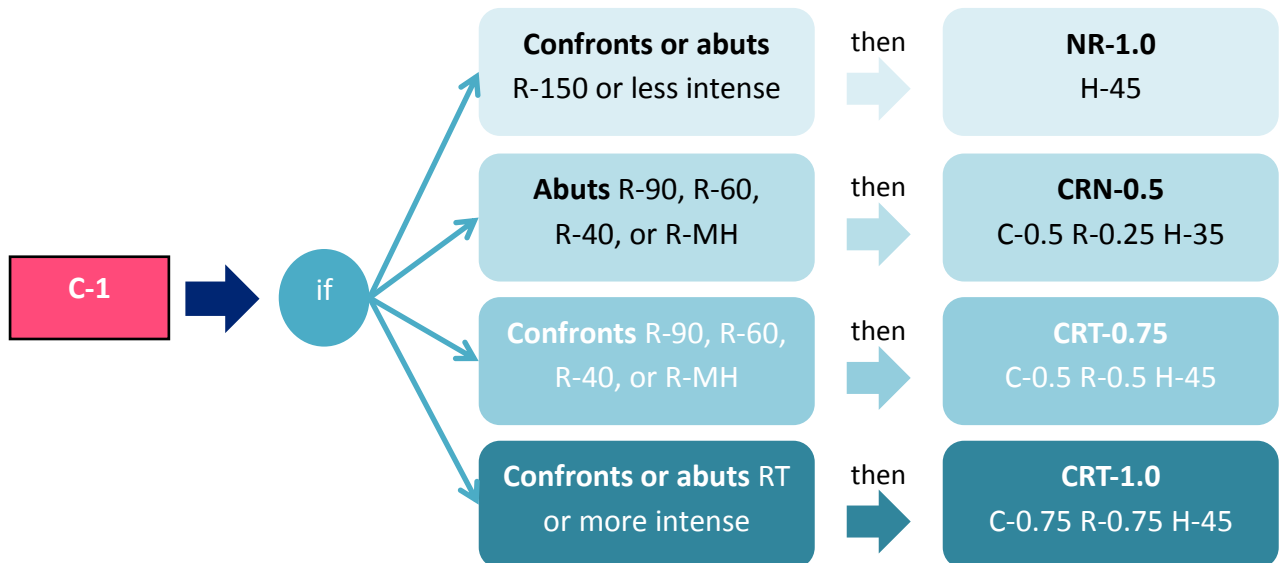
## Commercial and Mixed-Use Zone Implementation:

Parcels located in the existing Commercial, Mixed-use, Central Business District (CBD), and Transit Station zones will be translated into one of the proposed Commercial/Residential (CR) or Employment (E) Zones using a two-tiered process.

First, decisions about specific parcels in these zones were based on recommendations within the Master Plan. Planning staff reviewed each Master Plan in the County. When the Master Plan provided specific recommendations about allowed density, height, or mix of uses for individual commercial or mixed-use parcels, those recommendations were used to build the formula of the proposed zone. This ensures consistency with currently allowed density and height, and helps codify Master Plan recommendations in a parcel-specific manner.

Second, if the Master Plan did not make specific recommendations, the current zone changed to a proposed zone on a one-to-one basis or the proposed zone was determined using a specific standardized decision tree (*see example below*). The standardized decision tree translates existing zones by considering each specific parcel's proximity to single-family neighborhoods or other factors. The goal of the implementation decision tree is to retain currently allowed heights and densities and maintain context sensitivity.

### Example: C-1 Convenience Commercial



# FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS

## PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Friendship Heights Sector Plan was approved and adopted in 1998. The Plan establishes recommendations in four areas of Land Use, Neighborhood Preservation, Transportation, and Open Space and Environment.

### Land Use:

- Concentrate new growth in the Metro-served area while preserving surrounding neighborhoods
- Enhance the Town Center by adding mixed land uses on major redevelopable parcels to integrate the different parts of Friendship Heights
- Provide new places for social gathering on the Hecht's and Chevy Chase Land Company sites to reinforce community
- Enhance Wisconsin Avenue as a shopping boulevard by expanding opportunities for retail on the Hecht's site and along Wisconsin Avenue on the Chevy Chase Land Company site
- Support neighborhood-serving retail at the Chevy Chase Center
- Provide opportunities for additional office development on the Hecht's, Chevy Chase Land Company, and GEICO sites, including replacing the existing GEICO office building
- Provide housing opportunities on the Hecht's and GEICO sites

### Neighborhood Preservation

- Create a new residential neighborhood of townhouses and low-rise apartments on part of the GEICO site
- Preserve views from existing high-rise apartment buildings by incorporating guidelines for the height and location of new development, and by tree preservation and planting
- Protect single-family residential neighborhoods surrounding the Sector Plan



*Wisconsin Place in Friendship Heights*



## Transportation

- Improve access to the Metro station by providing direct pedestrian connections, enhance access for people with disabilities, short-term parking and taxi facilities on the west side of Wisconsin Avenue, and a neighborhood shuttle service
- Create a Transportation Management District, an entity whose structure would encourage use of transit
- Create a bikeway network for commuters and recreational users with additional bicycle storage at the Metro station
- Improve the pedestrian environment with safer streets and pedestrian crossings

## Open Space and Environmental Protection

- Provide a major public park on the Hecht's site
- Provide urban parks and plazas in the Town Center on the Chevy Chase Land Company and Barlow sites
- Provide other small green open spaces to complement the promenades and create quiet seating areas on the GEICO and Hecht's sites
- Create a new neighborhood park on Parcel 6 in the Village of Friendship Heights, expanding Brookdale Park, and adding other open spaces on the GEICO site
- Preserve and extend greenways on the edges of the Sector Plan area for visual screening, pedestrian and bicycle paths, wildlife habitat, and watershed protection
- Improve water quality and quantity control through on-site and/or regional stormwater management facilities
- Improve long-term regional air quality through Metro-centered development and shift from single-occupant vehicles
- Implement the County agricultural preservation policy through the use of transferable development rights (TDRs) on the GEICO site



# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

The Friendship Heights Planning Area currently has 6 zones: 3 Residential, 2 Central Business District (CBD) and 1 Transit Station zone.

## **Existing Residential:**

R-60: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-60/TDR: Detached Unit, Single-Family  
R-H: Multi-Family, High-Rise Planned

## **Existing CBD:**

CBD-1: Central Business District  
CBD-2: Central Business District

## **Existing Transit Station**

TS-M: Transit Station, Mixed

## **Standard Translation:**

The existing R-60 and R-60 TDR will combine into R-60. The existing R-H zone will remain R-H. The R-60/TDR properties will be incorporated into a new TDR Overlay zone.

The existing CBD and Transit Station zones will be translated to the specific proposed CR (Commercial Residential) using both the standard translation criteria and specific Master Plan recommendations. CBD and Transit Station parcels that do not have specific Master Plan recommendations will translate to the proposed zone based on the standard zoning translation table.

## **Master Plan Recommended Translation:**

Several Friendship Heights parcels will translate to the proposed zones based on Friendship Heights Master Plan recommendations. We refer to these as non-standard translations. These parcels and the Master Plan guided translations are shown below.



# MASTER PLAN-DRIVEN TRANSLATION





# MASTER PLAN-DRIVEN TRANSLATION

<b>Area</b>	1
<b>Existing Zoning</b>	CBD-1
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	CR-3.0 C-0.5 R-2.5 H-90
<b>Number of Parcels</b>	1
<b>Reason for Non-Standard Translation</b>	Master Plan recommendations regarding density.
<b>Modification</b>	Commercial FAR limited to 0.5.
<b>Relevant Text</b>	<p>Friendship Heights Sector Plan (1998): Page 77</p> <p><i>“If the existing office building is demolished, reconfirm the recommendation of the 1974 Sector Plan for an optional method residential development with a maximum of 200 dwelling units and 30,000 square feet of ground-floor retail.</i></p>

<b>Area</b>	2
<b>Existing Zoning</b>	TS-M
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	CR-2.5 C-2.0 R-1.0 H-90
<b>Number of Parcels</b>	1
<b>Reason for Non-Standard Translation</b>	Master Plan recommendations regarding density and height.
<b>Modification</b>	Overall density set at 2.5 FAR. Commercial element set at 2.0, residential at 1.0. Height set at 90 feet.
<b>Relevant Text</b>	<p>Friendship Heights Sector Plan (1998): Page 63-65</p> <p><i>“This area will accommodate the proposed commercial redevelopment of the GEICO property along Friendship Boulevard: approximately 295,000 square feet of new office development or a maximum of 810,000 square feet of total office development. It will also accommodate multi-family residential development along Willard Avenue. The approximate number of dwelling units in the residential portion of the TS-M area would be 272, including Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) and applying the maximum MPDU bonus. The number of dwelling units in the residential portion of the TS-M area, when combined with the dwelling units in the R-60/TDR area, may not exceed 500, including MPDUs.”</i></p>



# MASTER PLAN-DRIVEN TRANSLATION

<b>Area</b>	3
<b>Existing Zoning</b>	CBD-1 (Chevy Chase Comparison Retail Protection Overlay)
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-90
<b>Number of Parcels</b>	2
<b>Reason for Non-Standard Translation</b>	Master Plan recommended densities.
<b>Modification</b>	Densities limited to 3.0 FAR overall.
<b>Relevant Text</b>	<p>Friendship Heights CBD Sector Plan (1998): Page 53</p> <p><i>“Rezone the site from the CBD-1 Zone to the CBD-2 Zone, with a maximum of 1,050,000 square feet of total development.”</i></p>

<b>Area</b>	5
<b>Existing Zoning</b>	CBD-1 (Chevy Chase Neighborhood Retail Overlay)
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	CR-2.0 C-2.0 R-1.5 H-90
<b>Number of Parcels</b>	1
<b>Reason for Non-Standard Translation</b>	Master Plan height and density recommendations.
<b>Modification</b>	Overall FAR set at 2.0. Residential component set at 1.5. Height set at 90 feet.
<b>Relevant Text</b>	<p>Friendship Heights Sector Plan (1998): Page 42</p> <p><i>“Allow a maximum of 300,000 square feet of total development (approximately 65,000 square feet of neighborhood retail space, generally on the ground floor, and 235,000 square feet of office space). This limit includes any existing structure that is not redeveloped.”</i></p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p>Friendship Heights Sector Plan (1998): Page 43</p> <p><i>“Step buildings down from a maximum of nine stories in the center (on Wisconsin Circle) to no more than five stories on Wisconsin Avenue and four stories along Western Avenue.”</i></p>



## MASTER PLAN-DRIVEN TRANSLATION

<b>Area</b>	6
<b>Existing Zoning</b>	TS-M
<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	CR-1.5 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-40
<b>Number of Parcels</b>	1
<b>Reason for Non-Standard Translation</b>	Master Plan height and density recommendations.
<b>Modification</b>	Overall FAR set at 1.5, commercial and residential each at 1.0. Height set at 40 feet
<b>Relevant Text</b>	Friendship Heights Sector Plan (1998): Page 47 <i>“Allow up to 112,000 square feet of development along Wisconsin Avenue. No development is allowed on Parcel 10A other than that described in the design guidelines below, which include the possibility of terrace parking. Buildings proposed for other locations would not be in compliance with the Sector Plan... ...Limit the building height to three floors and set back the top floor.”</i>



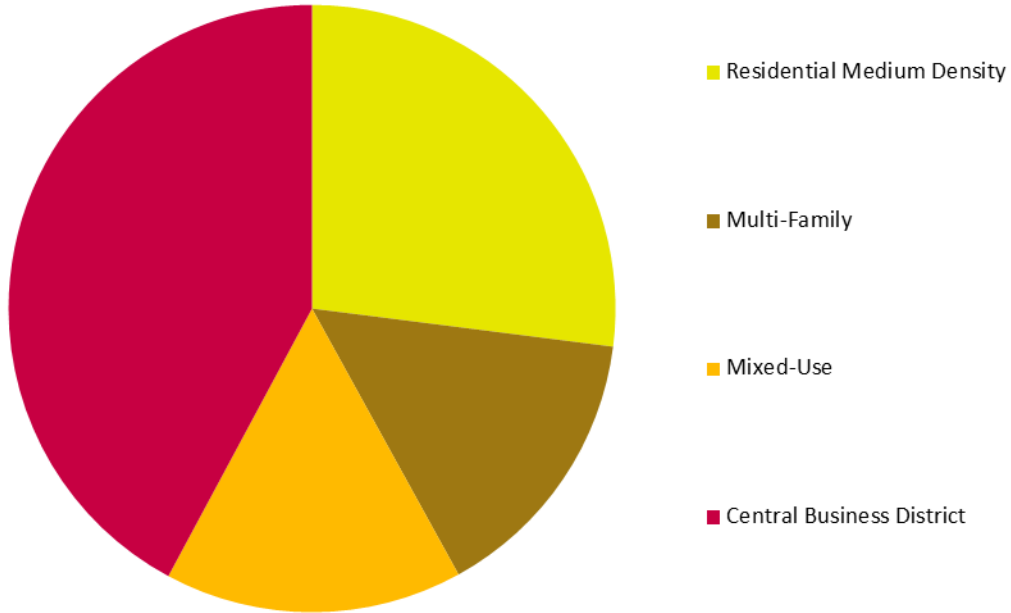
# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

Friendship Heights					
Existing			Proposed		
Zone	Acres	Percent	Zone	Acres	Percent
R-60	10.41	11.23	R-60	25.03	27.00
R-60/TDR	14.62	15.77			
R-H	13.88	14.98	R-H	13.88	14.98
CBD-1	37.68	40.64	CR-2.0 C-2.0 R-1.5 H-90	3.57	3.85
			CR-3.0 C-0.5 R-2.5 H-90	2.12	2.29
			CR-3.0 C-2.0 R-2.5 H-90	24.02	25.91
			CR-3.0 C-2.5 R-1.5 H-90	7.97	8.60
CBD-2	1.40	1.51	CR-5.0 C-5.0 R-4.5 H-145	1.40	1.51
TS-M	14.72	15.87	CR-1.5 C-1.0 R-1.0 H-40	4.48	4.83
			CR-2.5 C-2.0 R-1.0 H-90	10.24	11.04
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>92.70</b>		<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>92.70</b>	

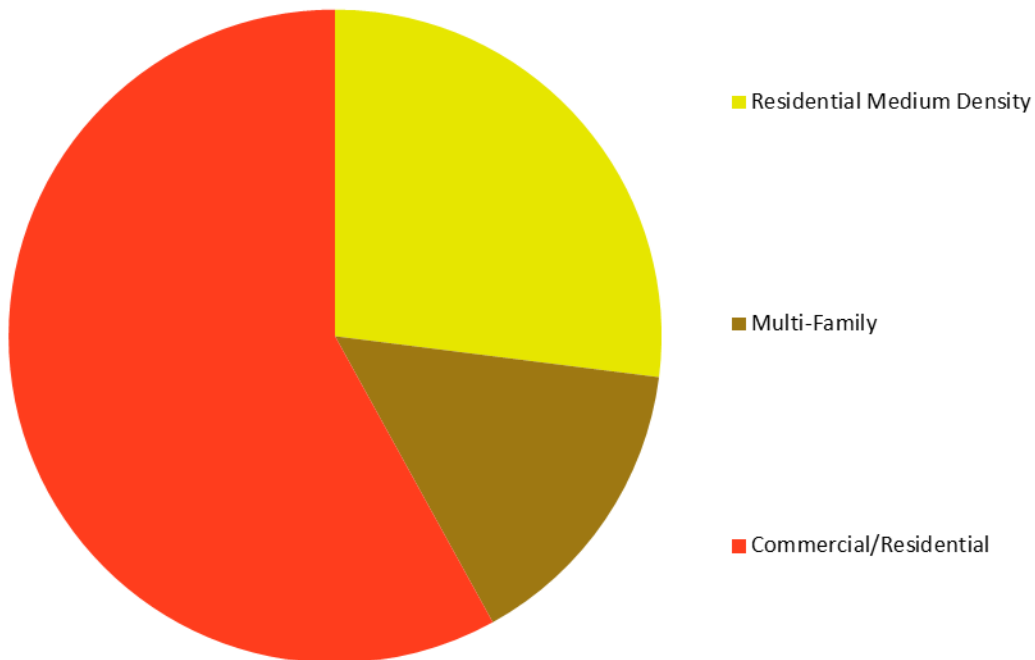


# ZONE IMPLEMENTATION

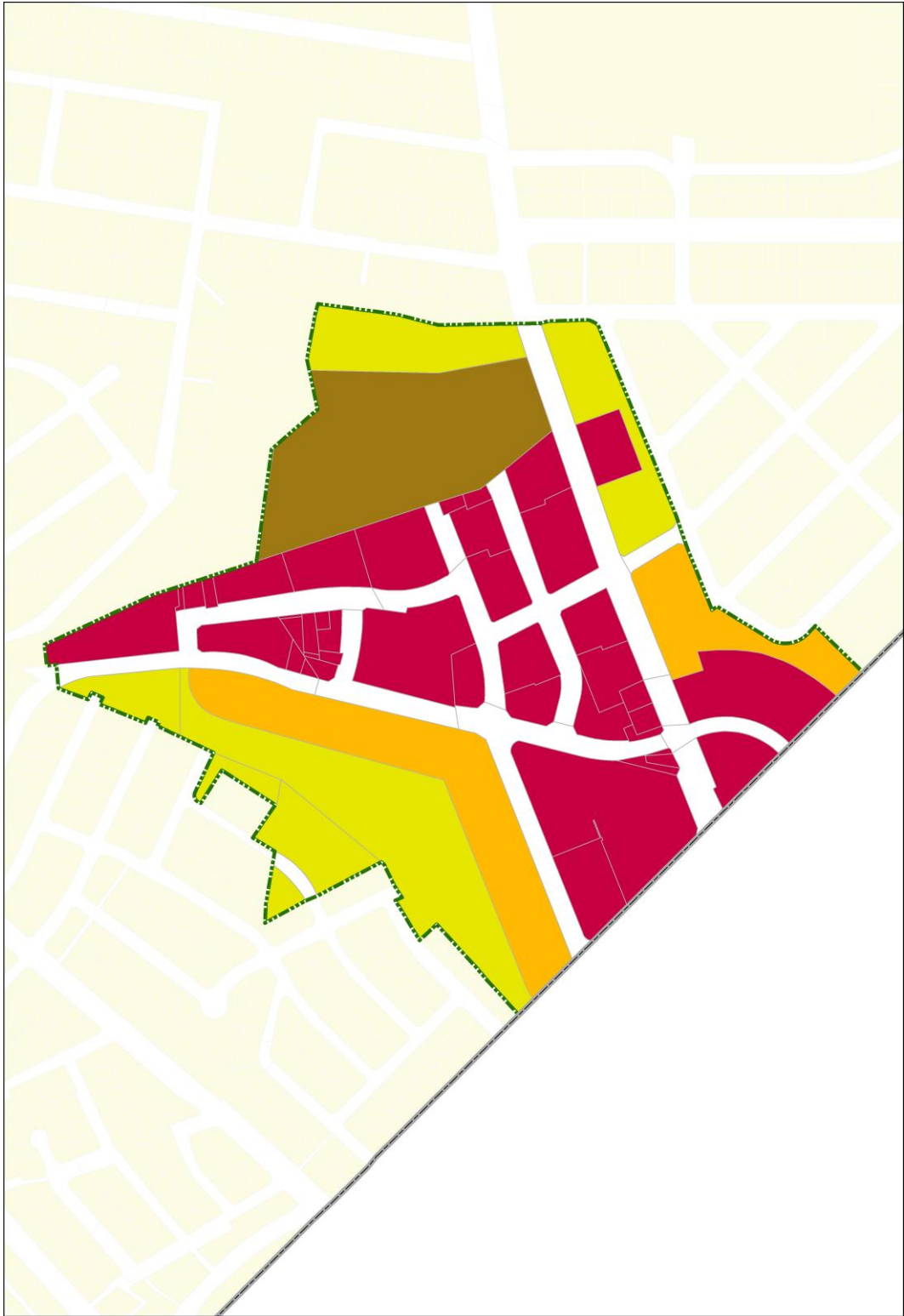
## Friendship Heights: Existing Zoning



## Friendship Heights: Proposed Zoning



# EXISTING ZONING MAP



## Existing Zones

- Residential Medium Density**  
R-60  
R-60/TDR

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- Multi-Family**  
R-H

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- Central Bus. Dist.**  
CBD-1  
CBD-2


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- Mixed-Use**  
TS-M



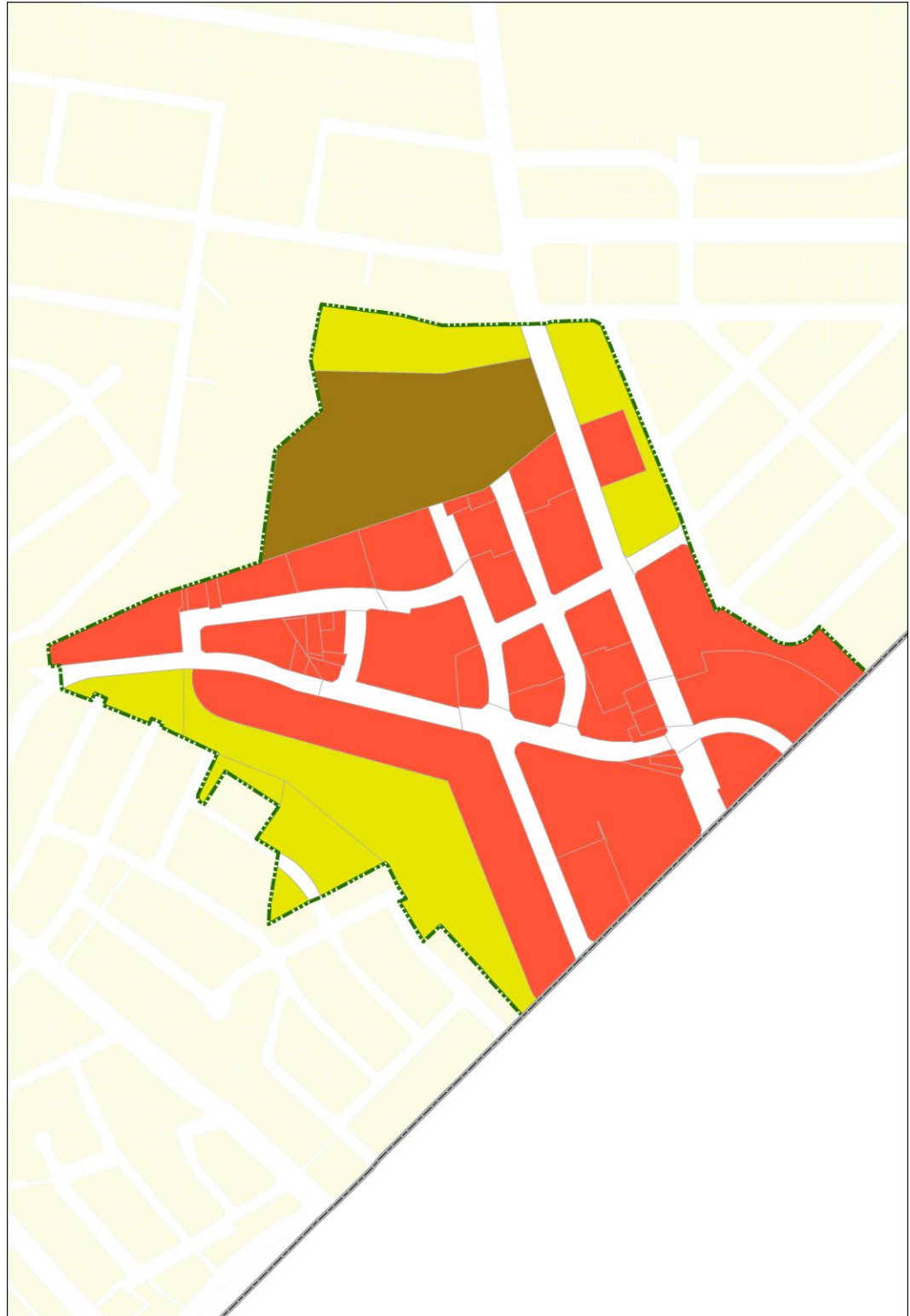
# PROPOSED ZONING MAP

## Proposed Zones

 Residential  
Medium Density  
R-60

 Multi-Family  
R-H

 Commercial/  
Residential  
CR

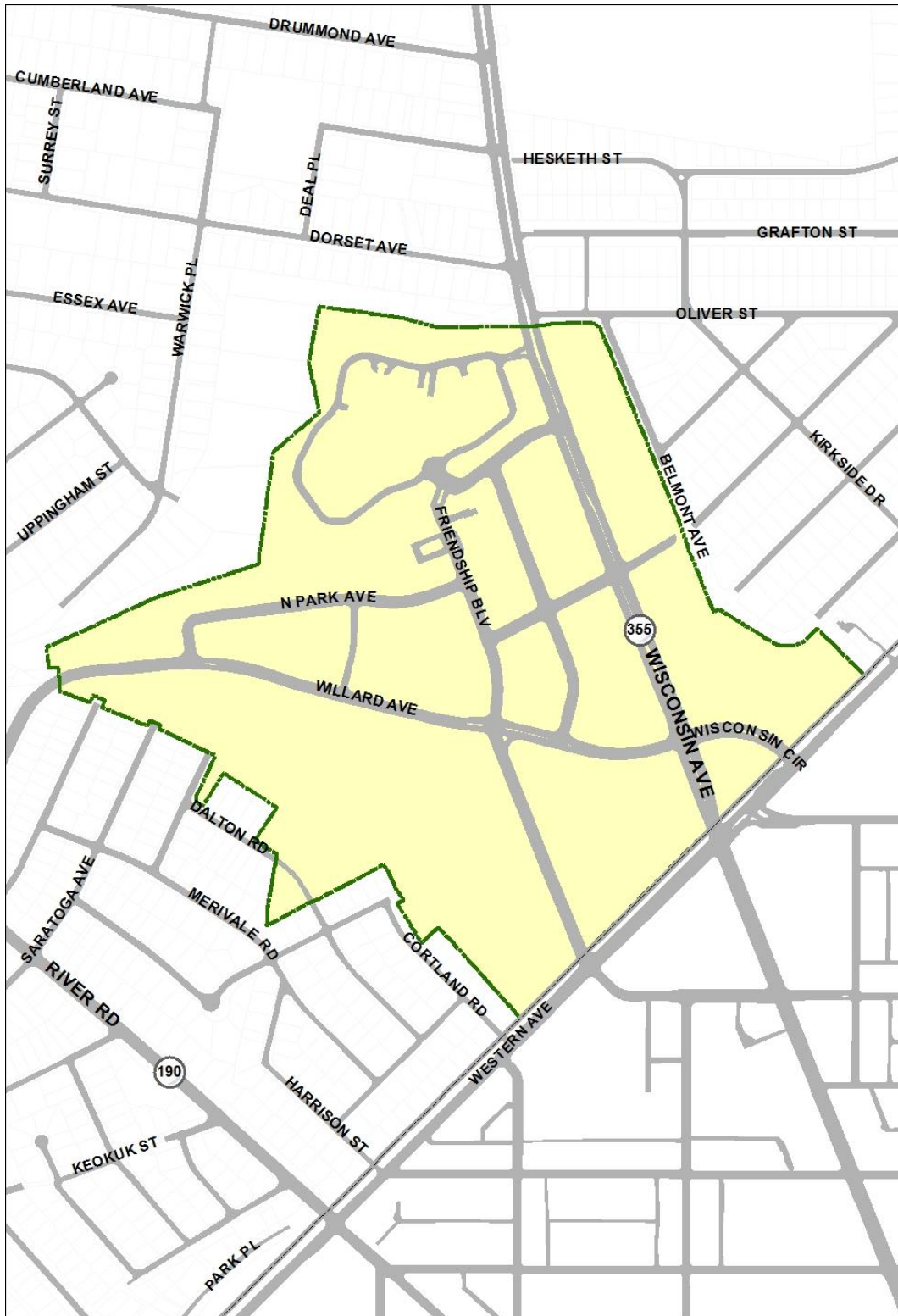


Updated January 2013





# PLANNING AREA CONTEXT



Updated January 2013

