

APPROVED AND ADOPTED

MARCH 2006

WOODMONT TRIANGLE AMENDMENT TO THE SECTOR PLAN FOR THE BETHESDA CBD



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

APPROVED AND ADOPTED

Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD

March 2006

This Amendment is a revision to the Approved and Adopted Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD dated July 1994, and the General Plan for the Physical Development for the Maryland-Washington Regional District.

Prepared by:

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning
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Approved by:

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

January 31, 2006

Adopted by:

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

March 15, 2006

ABSTRACT

TITLE: Approved and Adopted
Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the
Bethesda CBD

AUTHOR: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

SUBJECT: This document is a limited amendment to the Sector Plan for the
Bethesda Central Business District, dated July 1994, for the
Woodmont Triangle Study Area.

DATE: March 2006

**PLANNING
AGENCY:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

**SOURCE OF
COPIES:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760

ABSTRACT: The Woodmont Triangle Amendment is a comprehensive
examination of land use, housing to serve a variety of income
levels, retail revitalization, enhancement of the Arts and
Entertainment District, streets, and public amenities. The
amendment covers the Woodmont Triangle Study Area located
south of the National Institutes of Health, west of Wisconsin
Avenue, north of Woodmont Avenue, and east of Old
Georgetown Road.

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is a bi-county agency created by the General Assembly of Maryland in 1927. The Commission's geographic authority extends to the great majority of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties; the Maryland-Washington Regional District (M-NCPPC planning jurisdiction) comprises 1,001 square miles, while the Metropolitan District (parks) comprises 919 square miles, in the two counties.

The Commission has three major functions:

- 1) The preparation, adoption, and, from time to time, amendment or extension of The General Plan (On Wedges and Corridors) for the Physical Development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties;
- 2) The acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of a public park system; and
- 3) In Prince George's County only, the operation of the entire County public recreation program.

The Commission operates in each county through a Planning Board appointed by and responsible to the county government. All local plans, recommendations on zoning amendments, administration of subdivision regulations, and general administration of parks are responsibilities of the Planning Boards.

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NOTICE TO READERS

A sector plan, after approval by the County Council and adoption by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, constitutes an amendment to the General Plan for Montgomery County. As such, it provides a set of comprehensive recommendations and guidelines for the use of publicly and privately owned land within its plan area. Each sector plan reflects a vision of future development that responds to the unique character of the local community within the context of a countywide perspective.

Sector plans provide more detail and cover a smaller area than a master plan. They are intended to provide a point of reference with regard to public policy. Together with relevant countywide functional master plans, master plans and sector plans should be referred to by public officials and private individuals when decisions are made that affect the use of land within the plan's boundaries.

Sector plans generally look ahead about 20 years from the date of adoption, although they are intended to be updated and revised about every ten years. The original circumstances at the time of plan adoption will change, and specifics of a sector plan may become less relevant as time passes.

THE SECTOR PLAN PROCESS

STAFF DRAFT PLAN — This document is prepared by the Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning for presentation to the Montgomery County Planning Board. The Planning Board reviews the Staff Draft Plan, makes preliminary changes as appropriate, and approves the Plan for public hearing. When the Planning Board's changes are made, the document becomes the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft Plan.

PUBLIC HEARING (PRELIMINARY) DRAFT PLAN — This Sector Plan is a formal proposal to amend the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD. Its recommendations are not necessarily those of the Planning Board; it is prepared for the purpose of receiving public hearing testimony. The Planning Board holds a public hearing and receives testimony on the Draft Plan. After the public hearing record is closed, the Planning Board holds public worksessions to review the testimony and to revise the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft Plan as appropriate. When the Planning Board's changes are made, the document becomes the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan.

PLANNING BOARD (FINAL) DRAFT PLAN — This Sector Plan is the Planning Board's recommended Plan and it reflects the revisions made by the Planning Board in its worksessions on the Public Hearing (Preliminary) Draft Plan. The Regional District Act requires the Planning Board to transmit the Sector Plan directly to the County Council with copies to the County Executive. The Regional District Act then requires the County Executive, within sixty days, to prepare and transmit a fiscal impact analysis of the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan to the County Council. The County Executive may also forward to the County Council other comments and recommendations regarding the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan within the sixty-day period.

After receiving the Executive's fiscal impact analysis and comments, the County Council may hold a public hearing to receive public testimony on the Sector Plan. After the record of this public hearing is closed, the Council's Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee holds public worksessions to review the testimony and then makes recommendations to the County Council. The Council holds its own worksessions, then adopts a resolution approving the Planning Board (Final) Draft Plan, as revised.

ADOPTED PLAN — The Sector Plan approved by the County Council is forwarded to The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission for adoption. Once adopted by the Commission, the Plan officially amends the various plans cited in the Commission's adoption resolution.

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

In October 2003, the Montgomery County Council requested that The M-NCPPC examine the potential for a limited Amendment to the 1994 Approved and Adopted Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District (CBD). The purpose of this Amendment was to reconsider how redevelopment could both provide more opportunities for housing close to the Metro station and retain the qualities and ambience of the small-scale retail that distinguishes the study area from other parts of the Bethesda CBD.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

An outreach program was developed to address the issues in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area. The M-NCPPC with the Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County held five public workshops and several focus group meetings. The public workshops and meetings included representatives from the East Montgomery Civic Association, Edgemoor Civic Association, the Bethesda Chamber of Commerce, property owners, retail business owners, developers and architects from the Bethesda area. Individuals from the original Citizens Advisory Committee were also included in the workshops to provide continuity and familiarity with the issues from the Approved Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District. The Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County helped facilitate the workshops. The workshops were open to all interested individuals. The workshops included the following topics:

- **Workshop No. 1: Community Interests** – This open workshop was intended to identify the interests and issues of the business owners and developers of the area without identifying solutions.
- **Workshop No. 2: Community Interests** – This open workshop was intended to identify the interests and issues of the residents of the Woodmont Triangle and adjacent communities.
- **Workshop No. 3: Vision, Challenges and Actions** – This highly participatory workshop provided the opportunity for all individuals to identify the vision, challenges and actions necessary to address the interests and issues identified in the previous two workshops. The individuals were divided into five groups to prepare recommendations.
- **Workshop No. 4: Resolution of Issues** – This workshop was intended to provide an open forum for the participants to resolve issues identified in Workshop No. 3.

- **Workshop No. 5: Staff Recommendation** – The final workshop was intended to resolve remaining issues and present the staff recommendations prior to preparation of the Staff Draft.

Separate meetings with individuals, government agencies and civic associations were also held to augment the discussions in the workshops. Electronic media, phone messages and written announcements were used to notify individuals of the date and location of the workshops.

BACKGROUND - THE 1994 SECTOR PLAN

The 1994 Sector Plan had four objectives for the Woodmont Triangle District:

- Preserve the predominantly low-density and low-scale character of the district.
- Provide additional housing particularly in the north end of the district.
- Support a diverse specialty retail and restaurant environment to serve the community, including sidewalk cafes and dispersed parking.
- Improve the pedestrian environment with up-graded streetscape including street trees and green open spaces.

The 1994 Sector Plan recommended the use of CBD zones to further the goals of the plan. Development in the CBD zones may occur under two options: the Standard Method and the Optional Method. The Standard Method requires the development to comply with a specific set of standards and density. The Optional Method does not have as many specific standards and allows higher densities if certain public facilities and amenities are provided. The CBD zones permit an increase in density, height and intensity where such increases conform to the Sector Plan.

The design concept for the 1994 Bethesda CBD Sector Plan encourages the greatest height at the Metro and a “step down” in height away from the CBD Core. To ensure that the desired heights would be achieved, the Sector Plan recommended lower floor area ratios (FAR) and capped building heights lower than the maximum allowed in the zone to address scale, shading, and compatibility with the existing neighborhood character. The Sector Plan further directed future development with a series of Urban Design Guidelines and priority public improvements.

After the Sector Plan was approved and the District Council granted the Sectional Map Amendment implementing the zoning recommendations of the Plan, development in the Bethesda CBD proceeded in conformance with the Sector Plan. While portions of the Bethesda CBD redeveloped as recommended, the Woodmont Triangle District did not realize the vision of the 1994 Plan. Although the Sector Plan envisioned an increase in housing in the Woodmont Triangle District, the building height and density limits inhibited redevelopment. Retail and housing did not expand in this area, and some businesses began to relocate to the newly developed areas in south Bethesda, leading some to believe that the area was beginning to decline.

Since 1994, market forces, lack of redevelopment and the need for more housing, especially housing for all income levels, indicated that reconsideration of objectives in the Sector Plan was warranted. The Woodmont Triangle area appeared to be an appropriate area to address the County's housing needs and provide incentives to encourage revitalization and redevelopment.

CHANGES TO DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

As a result of zoning, height and floor area ratio changes proposed in this Amendment and changes in law and regulation that have occurred since the adoption of the 1994 Sector Plan, the estimated residential development increases and the estimated commercial development decreases are indicated in the following table.

Changes to Development Potential

1994 Sector Plan		2005 Amendment		Difference	
Commercial Development SF	Residential Development	Commercial Development SF	Residential Development	Commercial Development SF	Residential Development
2,957,900 SF 11,350 Jobs	3,400 DUs	2,661,710 SF 10,491 Jobs	5,012 DUs	-296,190 SF -859 jobs	+1612 DUs

Recommendations to monitor the actual development on an ongoing basis are contained in the Implementation chapter of this Sector Plan.

STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

This Amendment analyzed an area larger than the Woodmont Triangle District described in the 1994 Sector Plan in order to more comprehensively evaluate the effect the recommended changes might have on the surrounding districts. The study area included in this Amendment (see map on page 4) includes the entire Woodmont Triangle District, as defined in the 1994 Approved and Adopted Sector Plan, the west side of the Wisconsin Avenue North District, the east side of the Old Georgetown Road Corridor District, and the entire Battery Lane District.

The study area is bounded on the north by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), on the east by Wisconsin Avenue, on the southeast by Woodmont Avenue, and on the southwest by Old Georgetown Road.

VISION AND GOALS

VISION

This Amendment envisions the Woodmont Triangle Study Area as a vibrant urban, mixed-use neighborhood that emphasizes residential small-scale retail, the arts and public amenities. One-of-a kind small-scale specialty retail stores, art galleries and studio space, and people strolling on pedestrian-friendly local streets characterize this neighborhood.

GOALS

The goals of this Amendment include the following:

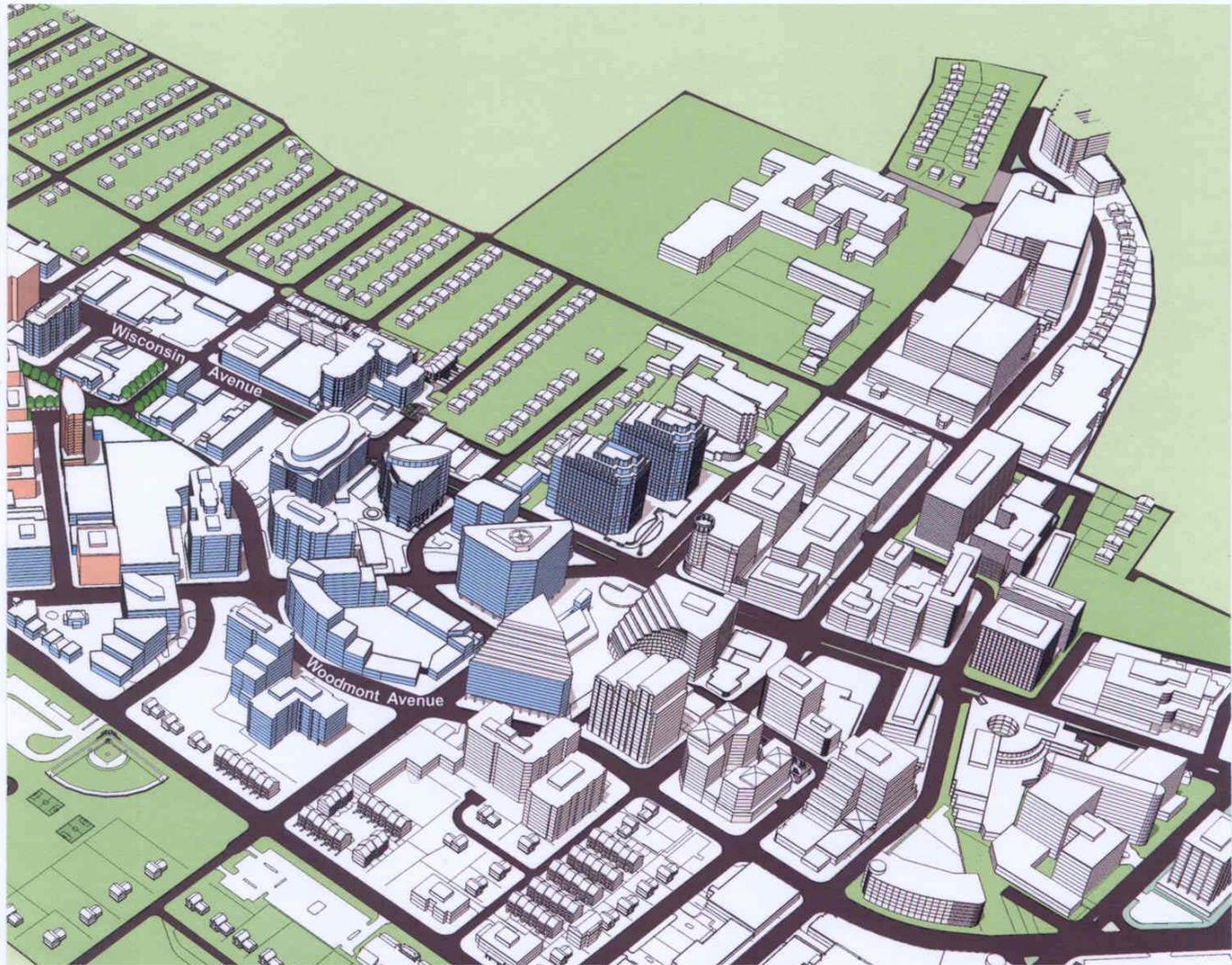
- **Housing** – Provide opportunities to increase the supply of housing to serve a variety of income levels.
- **Small-Scale Retail** – Provide opportunities to retain existing businesses and expand opportunities for new businesses.
- **Arts and Entertainment District** – Enhance the existing public arts programs in the Bethesda CBD and provide opportunities for both the visual and performing arts.
- **Safe and Attractive Streets** – Focus on improving the safety and character of the existing streets. Establish Norfolk Avenue as the main street in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area.
- **Public Amenities** – Increase the flexibility in providing the public use space through the Optional Method of Development by allowing off-site and on-site fulfillment of this requirement, and by identifying a list of priority public amenities.

WOODMONT TRIANGLE PERSPECTIVE

The following perspective shows Norfolk Avenue as the Woodmont Triangle's main street linking its two primary public spaces, Veterans Park and the Battery Lane Urban Park. Woodmont's urban spine will be lined with restaurants, retail and other animating uses. Washington Globe street lights, shade trees, benches, and an arts theme will contribute to a significantly improved pedestrian environment. The proposed Norfolk bikeway will connect the North Bethesda Trolley Trail to the Capital Crescent Trail.



PERSPECTIVE VIEW OF WOODMONT TRIANGLE

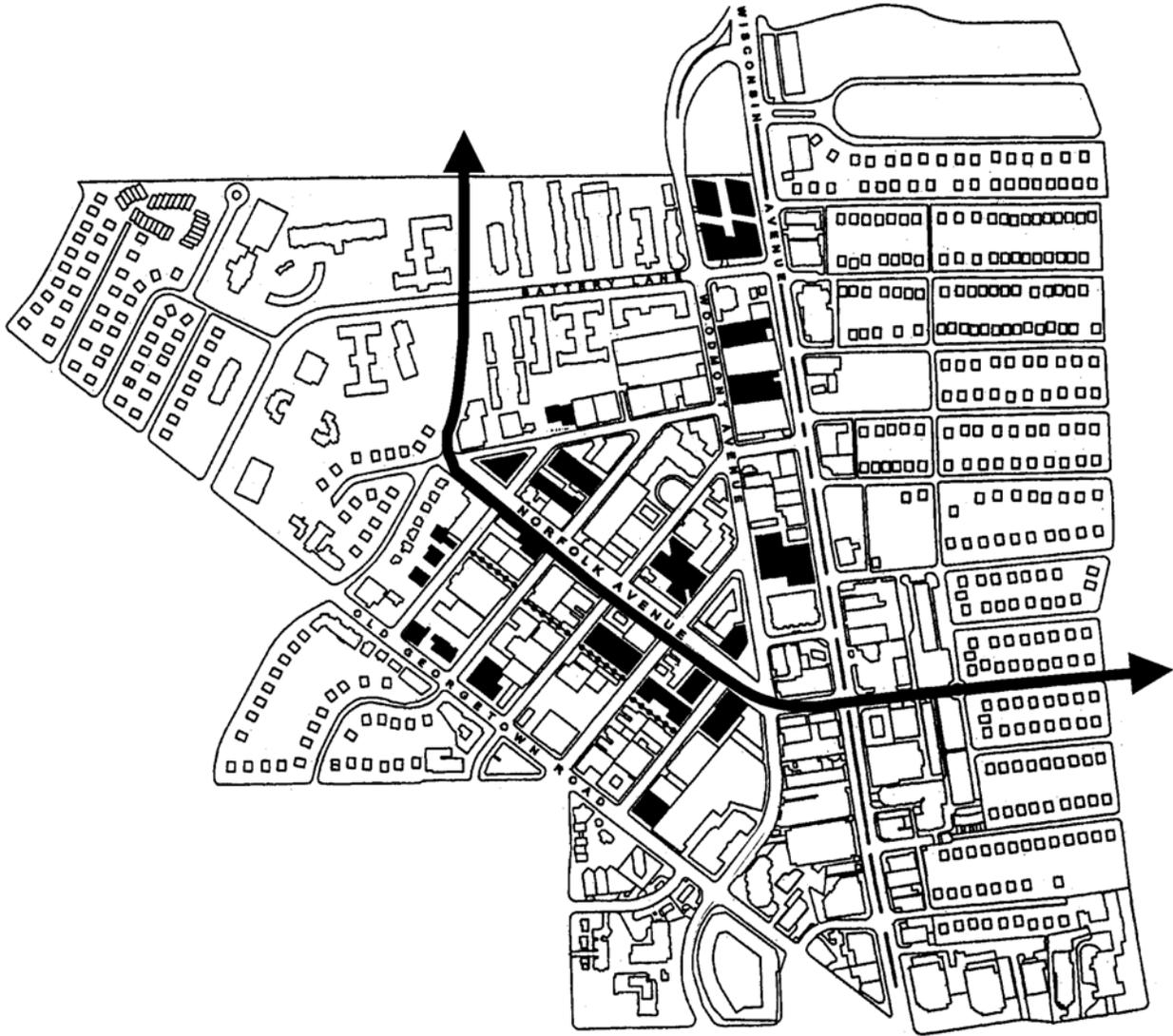


HIGHLIGHTS

This Amendment to the Sector Plan:

- Reduces the amount of future commercial development and increases the amount of residential development.
- Allows an increase in residential FAR (floor area ratio) to encourage housing.
- Encourages retention of small-scale retail.
- Removes the 1994 Sector Plan height limits to encourage redevelopment, but retains the step down principles from the core and along Norfolk Avenue to preserve solar access.
- Encourages the location of first floor retail.
- Recommends improvements to enhance Norfolk Avenue as the “main street” for the Woodmont Triangle District.
- Recommends improving Battery Lane Urban Park for all users and to provide a better connection between the Woodmont Triangle Study Area, NIH and the North Bethesda Trolley Trail.
- Recommends limited zoning changes to encourage housing.
- Recommends the use of PD zoning at a density of 44 units per acre for the properties along Glenbrook Road and Rugby Avenue currently zoned R-60.
- Recommends amendments to the CBD zones that lowers the minimum lot size necessary to apply for the Optional Method of Development, and provides a transfer of density option.

WOODMONT TRIANGLE STUDY AREA CONCEPT DIAGRAM



BICYCLE CONNECTION



DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS



MID-BLOCK PEDSTRIAN CONNECTIONS



GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WOODMONT TRIANGLE STUDY AREA

This Amendment recommends zoning changes, higher FAR and greater building height than were recommended in the 1994 Sector Plan. The 1994 Sector Plan capped heights and FAR below that allowed in the respective CBD zones. The Plan specifically restricted some of the CBD-1 zoned properties to 50 feet in height and CBD-R2 zoned properties to a height of 90 to 110 feet in order to preserve the existing low-density and low-scale character. This Amendment encourages redevelopment to provide housing opportunities along with retention of small-scale retail by eliminating the caps set in the 1994 Plan. The Amendment recommends using the standards of the existing zones to determine building height. Mixed-use projects with moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs) on-site can achieve the greater height and density allowed in the respective zones as specified in this Amendment, but at a FAR no greater than the maximum allowed in the Zoning Ordinance. The Amendment continues to recommend that buildings “step down” from the Metro station area to the edges of the Central Business District except where noted in the specific Block recommendations. The Amendment proposes priority public use space and amenities, emphasizing improvements along Norfolk Avenue, to more fully realize the vision of the 1994 Sector Plan.

In addition to removing the caps of the 1994 Sector Plan, this Amendment recommends that two provisions be added to the CBD zones to encourage redevelopment and yet retain small-scale retail. The first reduces the minimum lot size requirement for the Optional Method; the second allows transfer of density between CBD zoned properties within the Woodmont Triangle Study Area. The transfer of density provides development flexibility whereby existing retail businesses wishing to remain could transfer unused density to parcels within the density transfer area as described in this Amendment. Both these provisions would be added to the CBD zones through a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment, which is more fully described in the Implementation chapter.

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

This amendment will capitalize on the development and revitalization potential of the study area as a transit-oriented urban neighborhood. Most of the area is within 2,500 feet of the Metro station, a basic guideline for a transit-oriented development (TOD), and it has the mix of uses that meet TOD criteria. Residents of the Battery Lane District and surrounding neighborhoods shop in the Woodmont Triangle, and they take advantage of its location between two Metro stations. In addition, the Woodmont Triangle hosts many public events as part of the Bethesda CBD Arts and Entertainment District program.

HOUSING

In the ten years since the Sector Plan was approved, the cost of housing in the Bethesda CBD has increased significantly. Although many new dwelling units are becoming available, the diversity and supply of housing are not sufficient to serve a variety of income levels.

- Provide a range of housing opportunities including new low-rise and high-rise housing to serve a variety of income levels.
- Public surface parking lots in the Sector Plan area should be considered for Optional Method housing projects and projects with significant permanent affordable housing, as is being done in other areas in Bethesda such as Lot 31.

BUILDING HEIGHT LIMITS

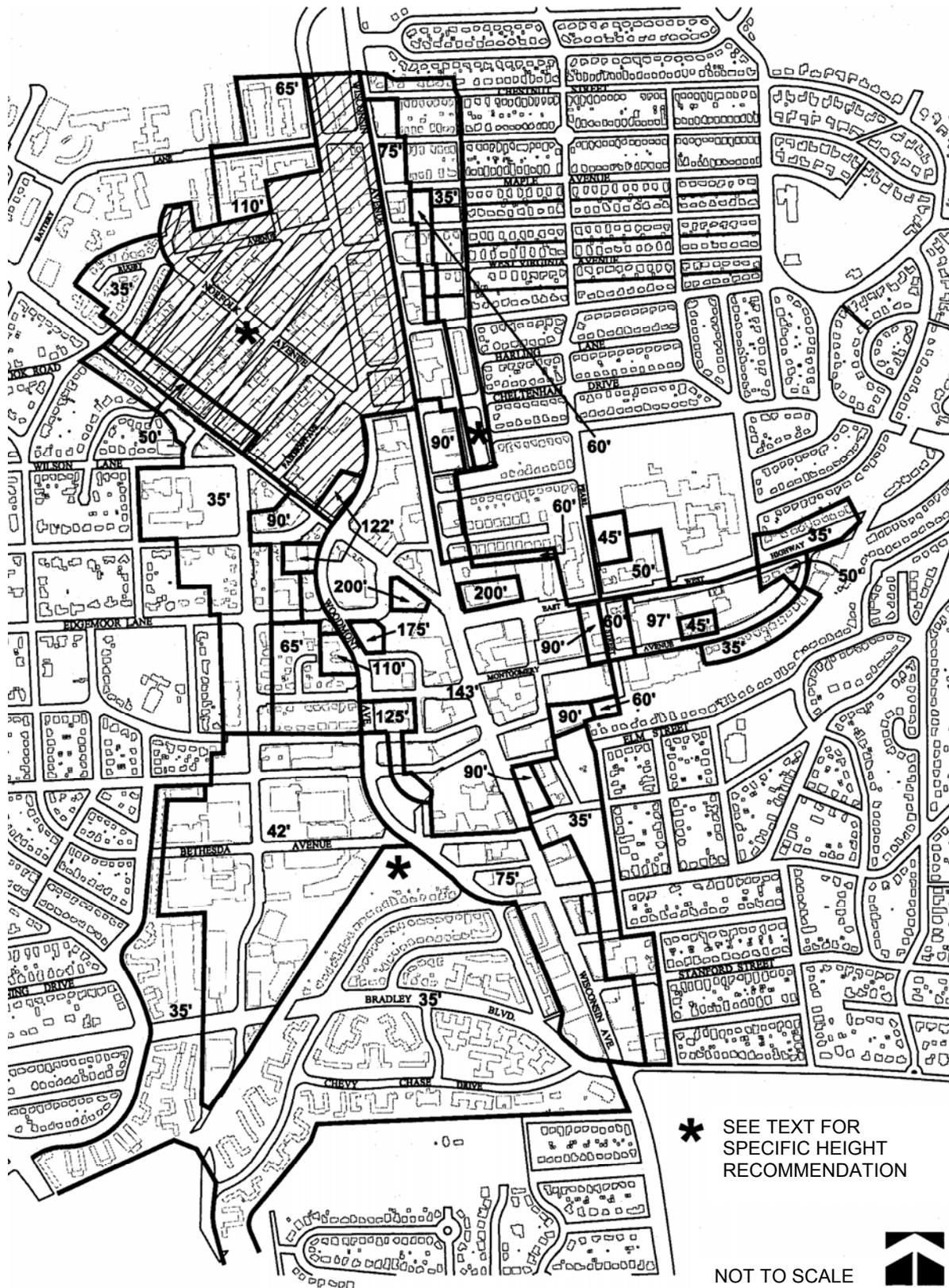
The guidelines for building heights in the 1994 Sector Plan were designed to protect the neighborhoods at the edge of the CBD and to concentrate building height near the Metro station. These goals can still be achieved while changing some of the height limits in the study area.

- Support the “step down” of building heights from the Metro station area to the edges of the Central Business District, but provide incentives for increased building heights to encourage new opportunities for housing for all income levels. Specific height recommendations are discussed in the section entitled “Recommendations by Block within the Study Area.”
- Protect the sunlight to the area’s main street, Norfolk Avenue, by approving development that steps back from Norfolk Avenue, particularly on the southwest side of the street.
- Limit the height along Old Georgetown Road north of St. Elmo Avenue to 50 feet, extending 60 feet back from Old Georgetown Road to maintain compatibility with existing development.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

The 1994 Sector Plan capped heights within the CBD-1 Zone to 50 feet and limited FAR to the limits proscribed under the Standard Method of the CBD zones. This resulted in few development applications under the Optional Method of Development. This Amendment removes the height caps and recommends higher FARs to encourage use of the Optional Method to create more opportunities for residential development and also provide desired public facilities and amenities. The Woodmont Triangle Study Area is a desirable location for future residential development. Housing for a variety of incomes is equally important. Building MPDUs within the study area is a priority for all projects developing under the Optional Method of Development.

PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS



Density – Properties may develop to the density permitted in the CBD-1, CBD-2 and CBD-R2 Zones. CBD-1 mixed-use projects can achieve a floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.0 and those in the CBD-2 and CBD-R2 zones can achieve a FAR of 5.0.

- **FAR** – In order to encourage residential development, the recommended increase in density up to the maximum allowed would be for residential development. All CBD zoned parcels within in the study area will be limited to a FAR of 1.0 for non-residential development.
- **Public Use Space** – The public use space and amenity priorities include improvements to the streetscape, Battery Lane Urban Park, and support for the Arts and Entertainment District through providing public art and private arts facilities. Optional Method of Development projects may provide required public use space off-site, if needed to accommodate MPDUs on-site. This Amendment recommends a text amendment that allows public use space to be provided off-site in the same density transfer area if the Planning Board finds that an off-site location implements a Sector Plan recommendation. If public use space is located on-site, it should contribute to establishing a variety of public spaces in the area. All developments should avoid extensive setbacks of retail from the streets. Public spaces should support retail and an active pedestrian environment.

RETAIL PRESERVATION

The existing commercial enterprises in the study area provide needed goods and services. Some of the businesses are one-of-a-kind retail shops and restaurants, which contribute to the unique urban flavor of the study area. This Amendment encourages the retention of this retail, as did the 1994 Plan, but recommends some additional mechanisms to allow for redevelopment. Reduction in minimum lot size and density transfers are intended to foster new small-scale retail in character with the existing retail environment in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area.

- **Lot Sizes** – Minimum lot sizes of 22,000 square feet were required for Optional Method of Development in the CBD zones to be sure that significant amenity and public use space could be provided on-site. Achieving these minimums in the study area would require assemblage of multiple parcels given the small size of most properties. Requiring larger projects is contrary to the Plan’s goal of encouraging small retail. Moreover, the Plan’s recommendation for off-site public amenities means that a threshold minimum lot size for Optional Method of Development is unnecessary in Woodmont Triangle Study Area.
- **Density Transfer** – In order to encourage retention of existing small-scale retail, incentives are needed to encourage businesses to remain. Density transfer between properties is one way to achieve that goal. This Amendment designates a Density Transfer Area that would be appropriate for this transfer. Owners of small commercial properties that wish to remain can offer unrealized density to other properties to amass enough square footage or FAR to develop a mixed-use project. This density transfer would be permitted through a proposed text amendment; please see the Implementation chapter.

URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

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

- Design new buildings so that public streets and spaces retain adequate sunlight, particularly along Norfolk Avenue.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

PERSPECTIVE VIEW ALONG NORFOLK AVENUE



- 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.
- Maintain the established building line along Norfolk Avenue.

PUBLIC AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

In the Woodmont Triangle Study Area, there is a need for revitalization. Businesses have seen their clientele decline over the last several years due to the popularity of Bethesda Row, with its pleasant streetscape environment, new buildings, and attractive assortment of uses. The Woodmont Triangle needs improved lighting for public safety, attractive streets and sidewalks, and incentives to expand uses and hours of operation. In addition to new housing, upgraded public facilities help promote revitalization.

Improvements to Public Streets and Spaces

This Amendment recommends public and private improvements to the public streets and spaces within the study area. The improvements will enhance pedestrian safety and access to transit. Improving the pedestrian and bicycle connections between the NIH, the Battery Lane District, the adjacent neighborhoods and the Metro stations is a primary objective. Either on-site or off-site improvements would be required in the Optional Method of Development according to a list of public use spaces and amenities.

Public Amenities and Public Use Space

The Woodmont Triangle Study Area is an important part of the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District. Within the study area, there are currently over 20 art galleries, music stores, and dance and music schools. This Amendment supports the continued use of the Optional Method to provide public art, art facilities, and public gathering spaces.

The existing provisions of the Optional Method of Development require a minimum of 20 percent of the net lot area of each parcel be devoted to public use space on-site. Public use space may be provided off-site in the same density transfer area if the Planning Board finds that an off-site location implements Plan recommendations or if needed to accommodate MPDUs. Off-site amenities include streetscape in the public right-of way, improvement to parks, and other public facilities. Public use spaces and amenities approved through the Optional Method of Development will be located to serve the revitalization and improve the vitality of the entire district. To facilitate the development of amenities and public use space appropriate to the Woodmont Triangle Area, this Plan recommends the creation of an amenity fund, addressed in more detail in the Public and Private Funding section.

The following list represents the priority amenities and facilities for the Woodmont Triangle Study Area. Projects should incorporate items from this list as a first priority. This list is not intended to be inclusive of all the facilities and amenities that may be considered. Sufficient amenities and facilities must be provided in each project to serve the additional density and building height proposed in this Amendment. The amenities and facilities in each project should contribute to the function or appearance of the mixed-use urban neighborhood.

Priorities

- Improve Norfolk Avenue as a pedestrian system that connects existing public facilities and amenities, such as Battery Lane Urban Park, the Whitney Theater, the Bethesda Outdoor Stage, Imagination Stage, and Veterans Park to the Capital Crescent Trail. Renovation of Norfolk Avenue should include:
 - Utilities placed underground
 - Washington Globe street lights and other festive lighting
 - Benches, bike racks, brackets for banners, and trash receptacles
 - Street trees
 - Outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes
 - Public art
 - Special paving for sidewalks established as the standard for Bethesda (the Bethesda paver).
- Provide the Bethesda streetscape on other streets in the study area, such as Cordell Avenue.
- Battery Lane Urban Park - A future facility plan should be completed by a developer, in coordination with The M-NCPPC's Park Development Division, in exchange for additional density under the Optional Method of Development or as part of a CIP project. This facility plan will be the guiding document for all future development and improvements within the park including other potential developer-funded projects.
- Improve the intersection of Rugby Avenue and Norfolk Avenue for a better pedestrian and bicycle connection to Battery Lane Urban Park.
- Establish north-south, mid-block pedestrian connections for the blocks located between Old Georgetown Road and Norfolk Avenue.
- Establish a network of diverse urban spaces including public use space on-site.
- Provide public art, art facilities, and public gathering spaces. The arts-related space needs could include the following:
 - Arts incubator space – A stand-alone building or portion of a building open to the public to provide studio space for emerging visual and performing artists.
 - Exhibit, teaching and lecture space – Flexible space within existing or new buildings for a variety of functions.
 - Space for the arts, such as dance studios, a black box theater, and live/work space for artists that could be leased at moderate rates to non-profit arts organizations.

Through the combination of new housing, improved public facilities and the development of an arts theme, the Plan will not only foster revitalization for the Woodmont Triangle, but will also capitalize on its close relationship to the Metro to achieve Sector Plan goals.

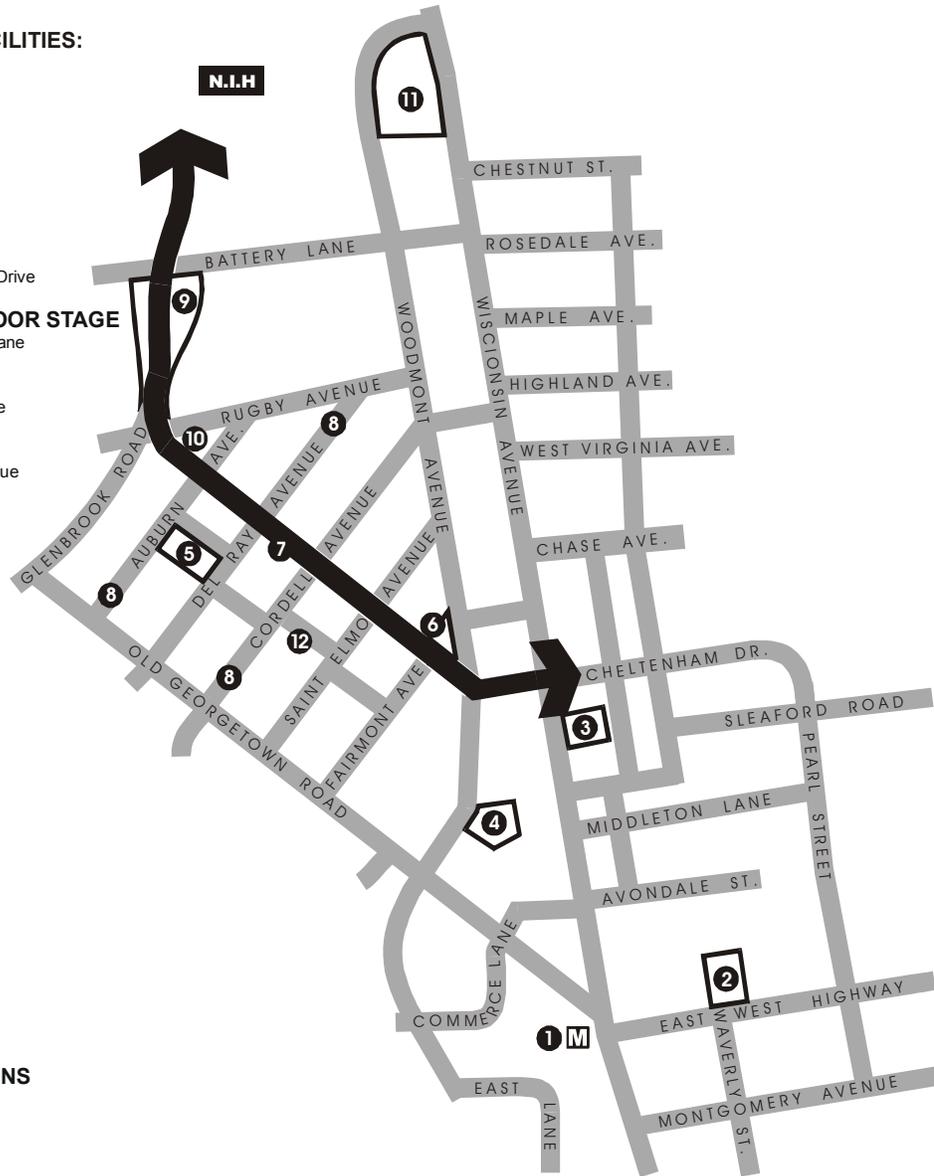
PUBLIC AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

EXISTING AMENITIES AND FACILITIES:

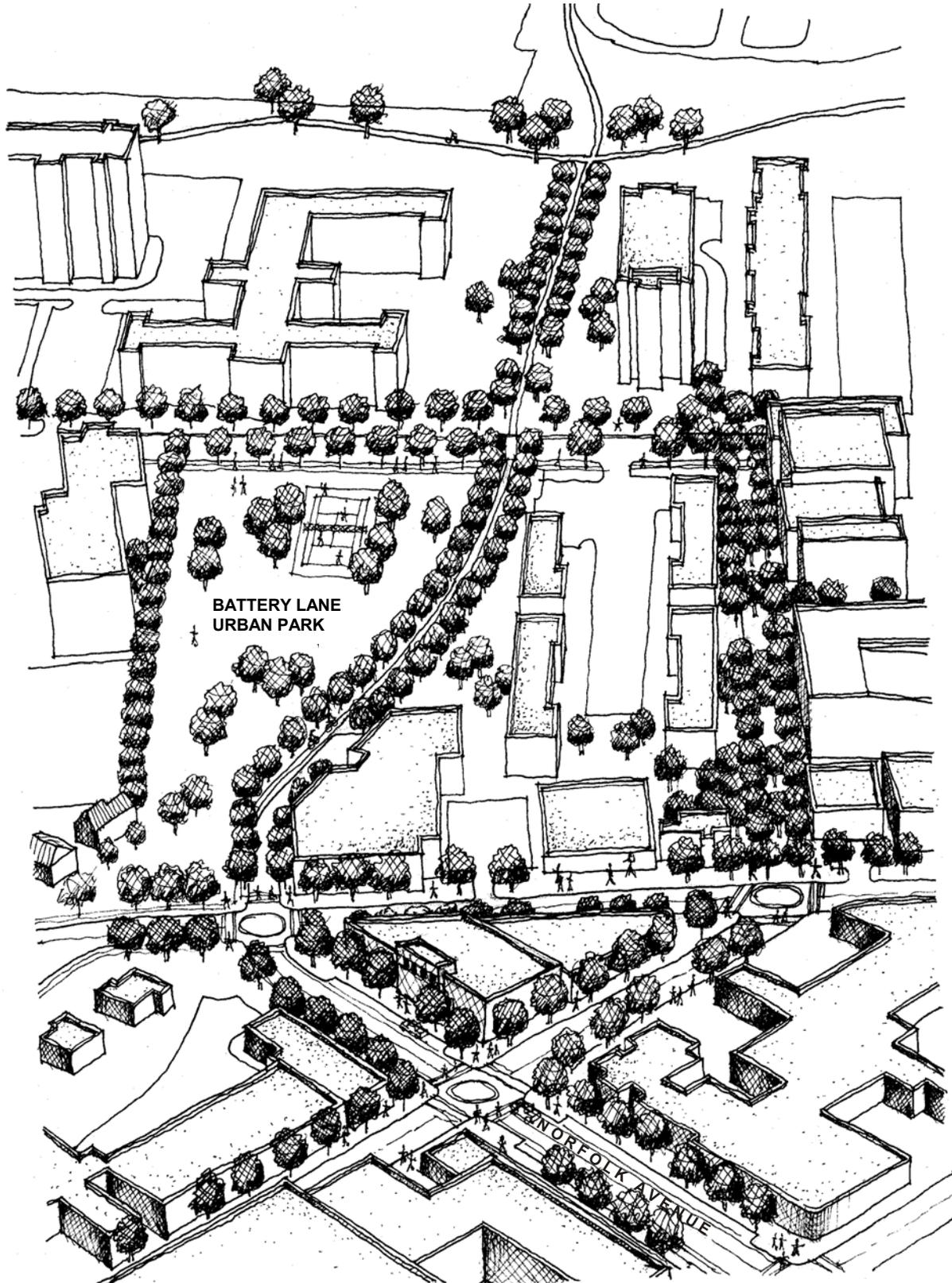
- 1 METRO STATION PLAZA**
Wisconsin Avenue and East West Highway
- 2 ROUND HOUSE THEATER**
East West Highway near Wisconsin Avenue
- 3 WHITNEY THEATER**
Wisconsin Avenue and Cheltenham Drive
- 4 BETHESDA PLACE OUTDOOR STAGE**
Wisconsin Avenue and Commerce Lane
- 5 IMAGINATION STAGE**
Del Ray Avenue Near Norfolk Avenue
- 6 VETERANS PARK**
Norfolk Avenue and Woodmont Avenue

PROPOSED AMENITIES AND FACILITIES:

- 7 NORFOLK AVENUE URBAN SPINE**
Woodmont to NIH
- 8 STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**
All Streets in the Woodmont Triangle
- 9 BATTERY LANE URBAN PARK IMPROVEMENTS**
Between Norfolk Avenue and Battery Lane
- 10 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS**
Rugby Avenue and Norfolk Avenue
- 11 NIH GATEWAY PARK**
Wisconsin Avenue and Woodmont Avenue at NIH
- 12 PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS**
Fairmont Avenue to Auburn Avenue



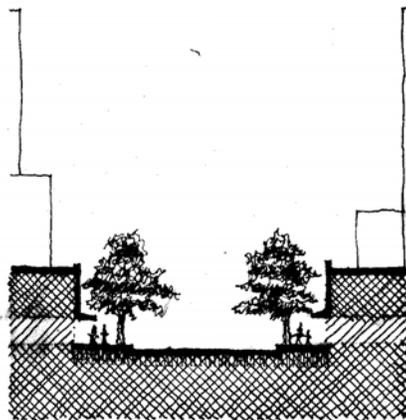
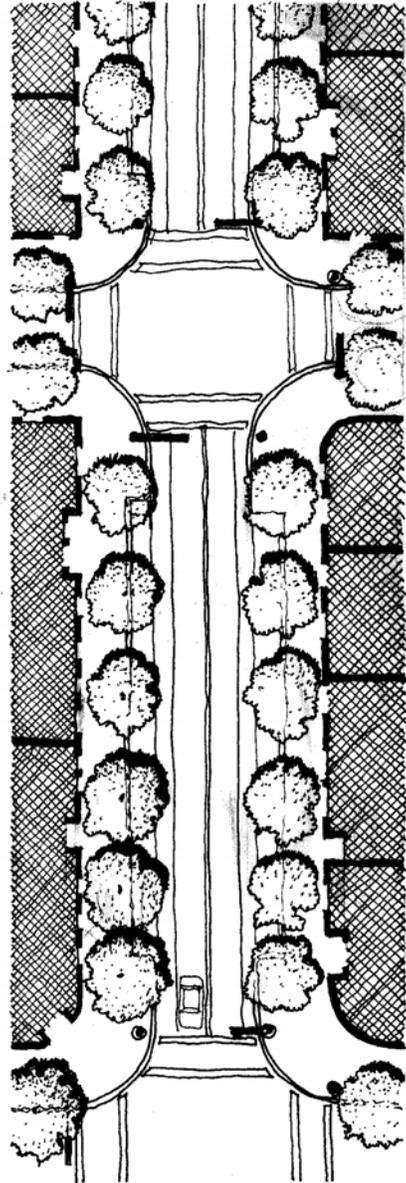
VIEW OF NORFOLK AVENUE AND BATTERY LANE URBAN PARK



NORFOLK AVENUE CONCEPT

This Plan recommends improving the intersections and sidewalk areas for pedestrians. A bikeway will be provided along Norfolk Avenue. These recommendations are intended to encourage retail revitalization, and create an attractive main street. The improvements will be accomplished through the Capital Improvements Program and the Optional Method of Development.

The illustration on this page shows the proposed plan and section for Norfolk Avenue and includes street trees, street lights, a bikeway, narrowed intersections, crosswalks, and brick sidewalks. The buildings are oriented to the street and stepped back to provide solar access.



NORFOLK AVENUE SPINE

PERSPECTIVE VIEW ALONG CORDELL AVENUE

The following perspective delineates a future view from the intersection of Woodmont Avenue along Cordell Avenue. This perspective includes new crosswalks, streetlights, street trees, and brick sidewalks. Small-scale retail shops and high-rise housing are also shown. A low-rise, infill retail and office building is also shown. The perspective is intended to indicate the potential for retail preservation, additional housing, and augmented streetscape that are recommended in the Woodmont Triangle Amendment.



RECOMMENDATIONS BY BLOCK WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

This Amendment recommends zoning changes, FAR and building height changes in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area, including all of the Woodmont Triangle District and portions of the Wisconsin Avenue North Corridor and the Old Georgetown Road Corridor Districts. The 1994 Sector Plan restricted some of the CBD-1 properties to 50 feet in height and limited CBD-R2 properties to a height of 90 to 110 feet. In order to encourage redevelopment and provide housing opportunities, properties within the study area may develop to heights permitted in the respective zones, except for properties along Old Georgetown Road, north of St. Elmo Avenue where the height limit will remain 50 feet, extending 60 feet back from Old Georgetown Road. This Plan recommends limiting non-residential FAR to 1.0. Mixed-use projects with MPDUs on-site may achieve a greater height and density than allowed in the 1994 Sector Plan as specified in this Amendment, but no greater than the maximum in the Zoning Ordinance. Building height may also be adjusted to accommodate workforce housing if pending legislation is adopted, but again, no greater than the maximum allowed in the zone.

Block 8

The existing zoning in Block 8 is CBD-1. This Plan does not recommend any zoning changes to this block.

Block 9

This block is zoned CBD-1 and includes several existing buildings. Existing development meets or exceeds the standards of the CBD-1 Zone. Future development should be mixed-use with retail on the first floor. This Amendment confirms the CBD-1 Zone and allows a FAR of 3.0 with residential development. The Amendment limits height in Block 9 to 90 feet or 110 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus. Parcel 646, The American Inn property is situated between two taller buildings. To achieve comparable heights, building height may be increased on this property up to 118 feet. This property may reach 143 feet if the MPDU bonus is provided.

Block 10

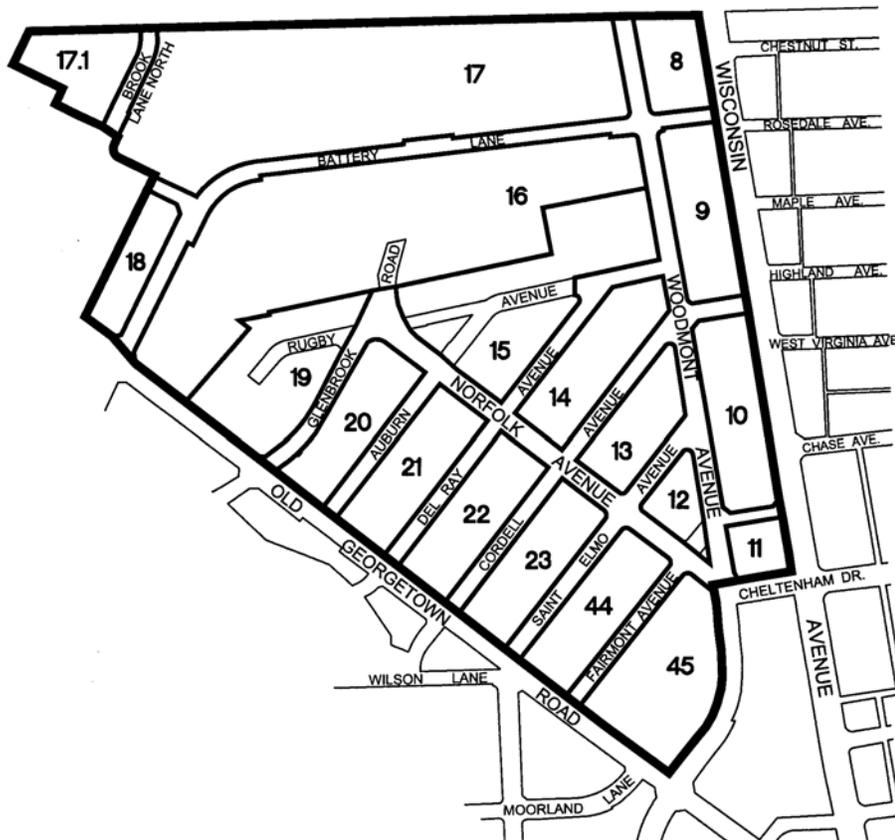
This block is zoned CBD-1 and CBD-R2. While mixed use is encouraged, development should be primarily residential. To encourage residential development, this Amendment increases the FAR from 2.0 to 3.0 on CBD-1 properties, while retaining the FAR on the CBD-R2 at 5.0. Heights are limited on CBD-1 properties to 90 feet or 110 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus and limited on CBD-R2 properties to 143 feet or 174 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus. The Plank, Inc. and Troiano properties are situated south of an existing building of 135 feet and north of a CBD-R2 property which has a height limit of 143 feet (or more if MPDUs are provided). To achieve comparable building heights, this Amendment retains the CBD-1 zoning on these properties, but increases the height limit to 118 feet or up to 143 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus density. This Amendment supports a hotel as a use in the CBD-R2 portion of this block.

Recommended Zoning by Block				
Block	Zoning	FAR	Height in Feet with 12.5% MPDUs	MPDU Bonus Height in Feet (up to 22% greater than otherwise allowed but not greater than indicated below)
8	CBD-1	3.0	90	110
9	CBD-1	3.0	90 ¹	110 ¹
10	CBD-1	3.0	90 ²	110 ²
	CBD-R2	5.0	143	174
11	CBD-1	3.0	118	143
12	CBD-R2	5.0	143	174
13 ³	CBD-R2	5.0	143	174
14 ³	CBD-R2	5.0	143	174
15	CBD-1	3.0	90	110
	CBD-R1	3.0	118	143
	CBD-R2	5.0	143	174
20, 21, 22, 23	CBD-1	3.0	50-90	50-110
44	CBD-2	5.0	143	174
45	CBD-R2	5.0	143	174
	CBD-2	5.0	143	174

¹The height on Parcel 646 may be increased up to 118 feet with 12.5 percent MPDUs or 143 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus.

²The height limit on the Plank, Inc. and Troiano properties is 118 feet with 12.5 percent MPDUs or 143 feet, with 22 percent a MPDU bonus.

³Small portions along Norfolk Avenue of Blocks 13 and 14 are zoned CBD-1 and have FAR limits of 3.0, height limits of 90 feet or 110 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus.



Block 11

Block 11 is located between Wisconsin Avenue, Woodmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue, across the street from the CBD Core, and within two blocks of the Metro station. There is no residential development in this block. This is an appropriate location for housing. To encourage residential redevelopment, this Amendment retains the existing CBD-1 zoning but increases the FAR to 3.0. Heights are limited to 118 feet or 143 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus density.

Block 12

This block is the closest to the Bethesda Metro Station and offers sufficient area for development of a primarily residential mixed-use project. This Amendment rezones the properties from CBD-1 to CBD-R2 in order to encourage residential re-development. One property, Parcel 647, is already developed above full density. This rezoning would allow this property to either remain as an office building or develop as housing. FAR is limited to 5.0 and heights are limited to 143 feet or 174 feet with a 22 percent MPDU bonus density.

Blocks 13, 14 and 15

Blocks 13-15 are located between Woodmont and Norfolk Avenues. Block 13 has a number of small-scale restaurants and retail uses. The property owners could use the provisions of the density transfer option. This Amendment recommends that Blocks 13, 14 and 15 retain the existing CBD-1, CBD-R1 and CBD-R2 zones. FAR is limited to 3.0 for CBD-1 properties, 3.0 for CBD-R1 properties, and 5.0 for CBD-R2 properties. Height is limited to 90 feet or 110 feet with a MPDU bonus in CBD-1 properties, 143 feet with or without a MPDU bonus in CBD-R1 properties, and 143 feet or 174 feet with a MPDU bonus in CBD-R2 properties.

Blocks 16,17,17.1 and 18

This Amendment leaves unchanged the current zoning and height limits in the Battery Lane District. In the future, the M-NCPPC will prepare a new Sector Plan Amendment to address options to retain or increase housing in the Battery Lane District while maintaining a stock of affordable housing.

Block 19

Properties along Rugby Avenue, Glenbrook Road and Old Georgetown Road at the western corner of the Study Area are currently zoned R-60. This Plan recommends PD-44 zoning provided that issues of compatibility with existing single-family homes can be addressed. This would allow the near-term redevelopment of an existing church property and possible longer-term redevelopment of the single-family detached homes, some of which have recently been renovated. At the time of rezoning, any application should be reviewed to determine compatibility with existing single-family homes, both north and south of Old Georgetown Road. In addition, the rezoning should not be allowed to result in multi-family development surrounding or isolating a limited number of single-family homes.

Blocks 20, 21, 22 and 23

Block 20 contains an office building with associated parking, zoned CBD-1, and single-family homes, zoned R-60. Lots facing Norfolk and Auburn Avenues are zoned CBD-1 with a mix of mid and low-rise retail and office. The portions of Blocks 21-23 between Norfolk Avenue and the edge of the Old Georgetown Road Corridor and are zoned CBD-1. These areas are appropriate for residential mixed-use development. This Amendment confirms the CBD-1 zoning, but allows a FAR of 3.0 to encourage residential development. Height is limited to 50-90 feet or 50-110 feet including a 22 percent MPDU bonus.

Blocks 44 and 45

Blocks 44 and 45 are the blocks in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area that are closest to the Bethesda Metro Station and provide the potential for higher density redevelopment. The existing zoning on these blocks is CBD-1 and CBD-R2. Block 45 contains Garage 11, a public parking garage, and an approved mixed-use development located within the CBD-R2 Zone. There are parcels in Block 45, zoned CBD-1, that could redevelop and may be able to use the transfer of density option. In order to encourage residential redevelopment, this Amendment recommends changing the CBD-1 properties to CBD-2 and retaining the existing zoning on the CBD-R2 property. The Amendment recommends a FAR of 5.0 for all properties in these blocks and a height limit of 143 feet or 174 with a 22 percent MPDU bonus.

IMPLEMENTATION

To implement the recommendations of this Amendment, actions need to be taken by a variety of governmental bodies. This chapter provides strategies relating to zoning, the Capital Improvements Program, and public and private funding.

MONITORING JOBS AND HOUSING

As part of each of the Planning Board's biennial Final Draft Growth Policy reports, the Planning Board must prepare an update of development activity in the Bethesda Central Business District. The update must include a review of approved development plans as well as development completed during the reporting period. Each report must also indicate if the approved or completed development in that area has exceeded the projections in the most recent master plan, and if so, must indicate if the change is significant enough to impact public facilities and whether any change in staging or zoning is required to address the unanticipated increases in development potential.

PROPOSED ZONING

- Implement zoning changes recommended in this Amendment through the Sectional Map Amendment process (SMA).
- Confirm zoning for the remainder of the study area.

TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

This limited Amendment to the existing Sector Plan supports modifications to the CBD Zones to increase the opportunities for housing, support retail revitalization, and improve the character of the streets. The final list of modifications should be part of a series of comprehensive amendments to the CBD Zones including the following:

- **Minimum Lot Size** – The minimum lot size is being reduced from 22,000 square feet to 18,000 square feet in CBD Zones county-wide. For the Woodmont Triangle, this Amendment recommends there be no minimum lot size for the Optional Method of Development to encourage smaller development projects. The Planning Board must make a finding that a property can meet all requirements of the Optional Method of Development, including providing public amenities and public use space on or off-site.
- **Transfer of Density** – The transfer of density is presently permitted throughout the overlay zones in the Silver Spring Central Business District. This transfer of density could be expanded to the CBD Zones within the study area. This provision would provide more flexibility to preserve existing retail businesses by transferring density to parcels within the Density Transfer Area as delineated in this Amendment.

The County Council recently approved the following text amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

- **Public Use Space** – A recently approved amendment to the Zoning Ordinance allows an increase in the flexibility in providing off-site public use space to meet the MPDU requirements in the Zoning Ordinance. The Optional Method of Development requirement for public amenities could be met on-site or off-site. Public use space may also be provided off-site in the same density transfer area if the Planning Board finds that an off-site location implements the Plan recommendations. The transfer of public use space to off-site areas provides the opportunity to create meaningful public spaces including indoor amenities open to the public. Developers are encouraged to combine properties to provide more significant and useful public use space than could be provided individually.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE FUNDING

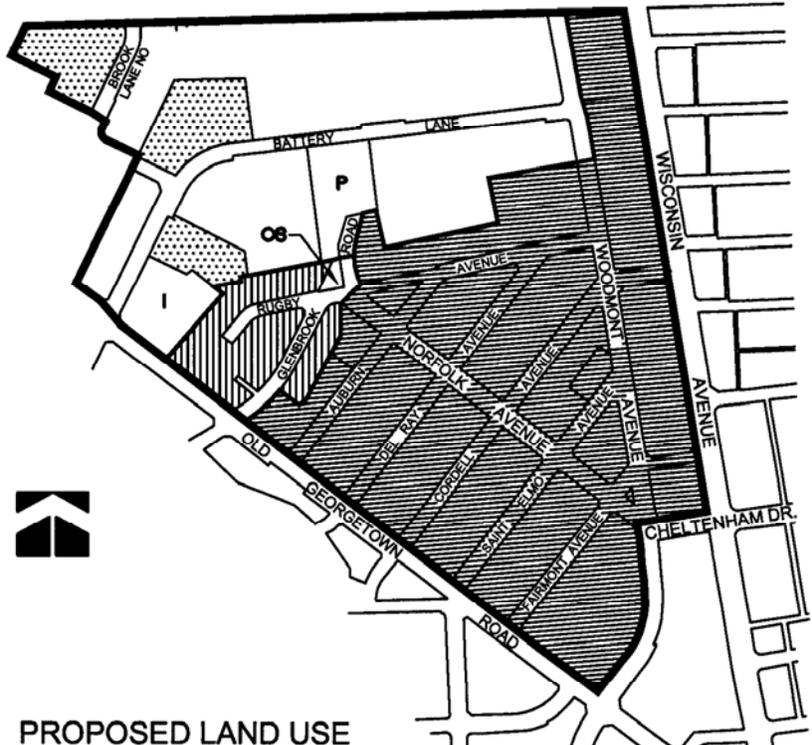
Funds will be needed to enhance the streetscape on Norfolk Avenue, designated as the “Main Street” for the study area. Funds are also necessary for improving pedestrian safety, the character of the remaining streets in the Woodmont Triangle, and for improving Battery Lane Urban Park. The sources of funds for these improvements include the following:

- **Capital Improvements Program** – The present Capital Improvements Program provides limited funds for the construction of streetscape improvements. Additional funding is needed to realize the recommendations of this Amendment.
- **Private Funding** – The streetscape in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area could be improved in accordance with the Bethesda Streetscape Guidelines through a combination of the Optional Method of Development requirements and the Capital Improvements Program. Battery Lane Urban Park could also be substantially improved through combined funding sources. Projects developing under the Optional Method of Development will be encouraged to include public art and art facilities as part of the required amenities, to support the Bethesda Arts and Entertainment District, and to strengthen the links between existing arts facilities in the Woodmont Triangle and the rest of the CBD.
- **Amenity Fund** – An amenity fund should be established, the donation to which is a lawful alternative to the amenity requirement associated with Standard and Optional Method Development projects. Although physical improvements are preferred, the Planning Board has approved the use of amenity funds as an alternative to satisfy the requirements for public use space and amenities in the Optional Method of Development. Donations to an amenity fund for the construction, purchase, management and maintenance of space for the arts and streetscape are permitted in this Woodmont Triangle Amendment either as part of the Optional Method of Development or as private donations. If amenity funds are approved as part of the review of an Optional Method of Development, the Planning Board should control the use of the funds but may designate a non-profit entity to assist the Board. The Planning Board should not approve any amenity project that could require ongoing County funding unless it obtains County Council approval of the project.

EXISTING AND PROPOSED LAND USE



EXISTING LAND USE

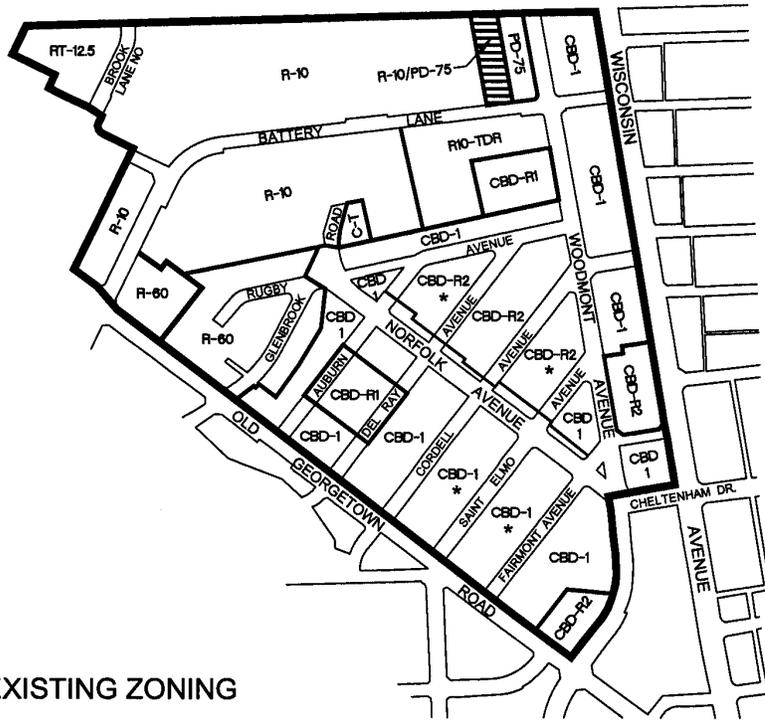


PROPOSED LAND USE

- EMPLOYMENT**
-  RETAIL & SERVICES
 -  OFFICE: LOW DENSITY
 -  OFFICE: MEDIUM TO HIGH DENSITY
 -  HOTEL
 -  MIXED USE
- RESIDENTIAL**
-  HIGH-RISE OR GARDEN APARTMENT
 -  TOWNHOUSE
 -  SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED
- OTHER**
- P PARK
 - PP PUBLIC OR SPECIAL EXCEPTION PARKING
 - I INSTITUTIONAL
 - OS OPEN SPACE

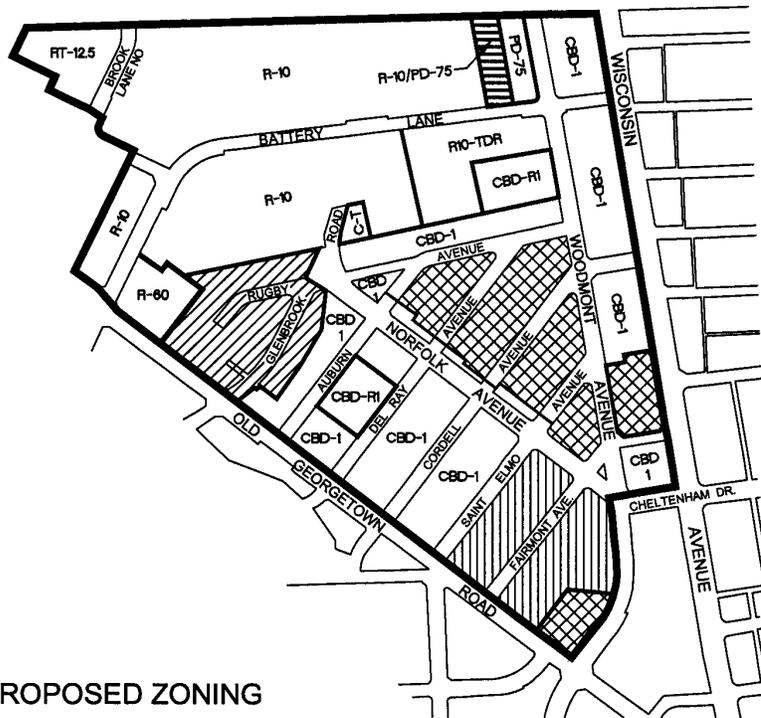
-  DENSITY TRANSFER AREA

EXISTING AND PROPOSED ZONING



EXISTING ZONING

* SEE DENSITY LIMITS IN TEXT



PROPOSED ZONING

-  R - 10 RECOMMENDED BASE ZONE
-  CBD-2
-  CBD - R2
-  R - 60/PD-44
-  R-10/PD-75



WOODMONT TRIANGLE ACTION GROUP

This Amendment recommends the creation of a Woodmont Triangle Action Group. The purpose of this Action Group is to coordinate and monitor the progress of development, retail revitalization, and the provision of amenities and facilities. Representatives from The M-NCPPC, the Bethesda Urban Partnership, Civic Associations, Bethesda Transportation Solutions, the Bethesda Chamber of Commerce, the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center, the Western Montgomery County Citizens Advisory Board, and other appropriate groups should be included in the Woodmont Triangle Action Group.

TEXT CHANGES TO THE 1994 APPROVED AND ADOPTED BETHESDA CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT SECTOR PLAN

In addition to the changes described above, the following text, maps and illustrations replace or add language in the other sections of the 1994 Approved Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District.

Page 5: Add the following at the end of the second paragraph entitled: Woodmont Triangle District, Old Georgetown Road Corridor and the Wisconsin North and South Corridors:

Additional FAR may be achieved on properties located in certain blocks under Optional Method of Development if moderately priced housing is located on-site.

Page 30: Add the following section “c” to Section 3:

- c. Development in specific locations under the Optional Method of Development may achieve higher FARs and building heights if moderately priced dwelling units are provided on-site and public use space is provided in conformance with the Sector Plan priorities.

Page 39:

Amend Figure 3.2 Building Height Limits

Page 54:

Amend Figure 4.3 Zoning Plan

Page 88:

Amend Figure 4.17 Old Georgetown Road Corridor

Pages 94-102:

Section entitled 4.5 The Woodmont Triangle District is replaced by this Amendment.

Page 105:

Remove reference to 122 feet in the first paragraph and replace with 143’.

Page 197:

Strike the last sentence on item E.1.

Page 215:

Add the following language under Recommendations, Item 1. Expansion of Battery Lane Urban Park:

A future facility plan should be completed by a developer, in coordination with the Park Development Division, in exchange for additional density under the Optional Method of Development or as part of a CIP project. This facility plan will be the guiding document for all future development and improvements within the park including other potential developer funded projects. Objectives of the facility plan may include the following:

- Improve the entrance to the park from Norfolk Avenue using public right-of-way or potential acquisition to increase the visibility and promote safe use of the park
- Widen the existing bicycle trail through the park to 10 feet and improve it as necessary to reinforce its importance in linking the Bethesda Trolley Trail and Capital Crescent Trail
- Create a new gathering area for picnics and small performances through potential expansion of the park
- Incorporate art or an arts and science theme into the site furnishings

Page 245:

Add the following paragraph after the first paragraph under the title 10.1 Zoning:

Development in the CBD zones may occur under two options: the Standard Method and the Optional Method. The Standard Method requires the development to comply with a specific set of standards and density. The Optional Method does not have as many specific standards and allows higher densities if certain public facilities and amenities are provided. The CBD zones are designed to encourage development in a CBD with an approved master or sector plan by permitting an increase in density, height and intensity where such increases conform to the master or sector plan.

APPENDIX

**COUNTY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 15-1316
FULL COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 06-04**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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APPROVED AND ADOPTED

WOODMONT TRIANGLE AMENDMENT TO THE
SECTOR PLAN FOR THE
BETHESDA CBD



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION
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