



ISSUES REPORT

# *Bethesda CBD Sector Plan*

December 1990



## ABSTRACT

TITLE: Bethesda CBD Sector Plan Issues Report

AUTHOR: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

SUBJECT: The scope of Issues to be considered in the development of a Comprehensive Amendment to the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan

DATE: December, 1990

PLANNING AGENCY: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
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NUMBER OF PAGES: 40

ABSTRACT: The Issues Report constitutes the initial stage of the Sector Plan process. The report gives a general description of the Planning Area, examines the contextual frame of reference for planning in Bethesda, and summarizes concurrent activities and current development.

Issues identified include the changing role and context for land use and transportation planning in Bethesda, the balance between housing and employment, the relationships between land use patterns, density and congestion, affordable housing, and issues related to the environment, urban design and community facilities. Selected demographic and economic characteristics are detailed in Appendix 1.



BETHESDA CBD SECTOR PLAN

ISSUES REPORT

December, 1990

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

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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 for the physical development of the Maryland-Washington Regional District;
- (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.



## NOTICE TO READERS

An area 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 planning area. Each area plan reflects a vision of future development that responds to the unique character of the local community within the context of a County-wide perspective.

Area sector plans are intended to provide a benchmark point of reference with regard to public policy. Together with relevant County-wide functional master plans, they 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. It should be noted that master plan recommendations and guidelines are not intended to be specifically binding on subsequent actions, except in certain instances where an ordinance or regulation requires a specifically defined linkage to be established. The precise timing and character of public facility projects is determined annually through the Capital Improvements Program and the Operating Budget.

Sector plans generally look ahead to a time horizon of about 20 years from the date of adoption, although it is intended that they be updated and revised about every ten years. It is recognized that the original circumstances at the time of plan adoption will change over time, and that the specifics of a master plan may become less relevant as time goes on. Any sketches or site plans in an adopted plan are for illustrative purposes only, and are intended to convey a general sense of desirable future character rather than any specific commitment to a particular detailed design.



## THE MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS

Staff Draft -- This document is prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Department for presentation to the Montgomery County Planning Board. It is a working paper that identifies the major issues being addressed by the proposed amendment. Alternative courses of action and specific recommendations are presented. The public is given the opportunity to comment on the Staff Draft, often at worksessions. A Preliminary Draft Amendment is then prepared for approval by the Planning Board. The Preliminary Draft incorporates those changes to the Staff Draft which the Planning Board considers appropriate.

Preliminary Draft Amendment -- This document is a formal proposal to amend an adopted master plan. It is prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Board of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Before proceeding to publish a final draft amendment, the Planning Board must hold a public hearing. After the close of the record of this public hearing, the Planning Board holds open worksessions to review the testimony, and to determine whether to make any revisions to the preliminary draft.

Final Draft Amendment -- This document contains the Planning Board's final recommendations. It is transmitted to the County Executive, who must review it and forward it to the County Council, with any revisions deemed appropriate. If the County Executive makes no revisions in the Planning Board's final draft, the Council may adopt the unchanged draft without holding a public hearing. If the Executive does make revisions, or if the Council wishes to consider any revisions, the Council must schedule a public hearing. After the close of record of this public hearing, the Council holds an open worksession to review the testimony, and then adopts a resolution approving, modifying, or disapproving the final plan amendment.

If the Council action modifies and approves the Executive's Revised Final Draft Amendment, the Approved Amendment must be sent to the County Executive for approval or disapproval. If disapproved by the County Executive, the Council may override the disapproval of the Plan by an affirmative vote of five members.

Failure of either the County Executive or the Council to act within the prescribed time limits constitutes approval of the plan amendment as submitted to the body which fails to act.

Adopted Amendment -- The amendment approved by the County Council is forwarded to The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission for adoption. Once adopted by the Commission, the amendment officially amends the various master plans cited in the Commission's adoption resolution.



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CAROL TRAWICK, B-CC Citizens Advisory Board  
MIER WOLF, Town of Chevy Chase

The listing of the names of members of the Advisory Committee does not indicate approval of this document by any committee member. The Advisory Committee does not take a position or vote as a body. The members advise the Montgomery County Planning Board regarding the problems, needs and views of the groups or areas they represent. These views will be considered by the Planning Board in its deliberations regarding the forthcoming Sector Plan.



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Figure 1

*Montgomery County  
Master Plan Development Process*

Planning Board submits,  
Executive recommends,  
and Council approves:

**Annual Work Program**

Planning staff prepares,  
with Executive staff review:

**Issues Report**

Planning staff initiates community participation,  
solicitation of Executive staff ideas,  
and then prepares:

**Staff Draft Plan**

Planning Board reviews Staff Draft,  
and, with modification,  
sends to public hearing:

**Preliminary Draft Plan**

Planning Board reviews public hearing testimony,  
receives Executive comments at Board worksessions,  
and adjusts Preliminary Draft to become:

**Final Draft Plan**

Executive reviews Final Draft and  
forwards to County Council:

**Final Draft Plan  
With Executive's Recommended Revisions**

Council holds public hearing and worksessions  
and approves, disapproves, or amends  
Final Draft with Executive Revisions  
(Executive may veto and Council may override veto),  
which is forwarded to M-NCPPC to become:

**Approved and Adopted Master Plan**



## INTRODUCTION

The Issues Report is the first major report leading to the preparation of the new Bethesda CBD Sector Plan. The purpose of the report is to identify for staff, the Sector Plan Citizens Advisory Committee, and the public the broad range of issues that must be addressed in preparing a comprehensive revision to the Sector Plan. Of course other issues will become apparent as we begin to analyze alternatives and develop recommendations for the Staff Draft Sector Plan. While the Issues Report does not pre-judge the Sector Plan recommendations, it may imply alternative to be considered in preparation of the Plan. The nature and limits of Sector Plan contents is described on the prefix page titled "Notice to Readers" and the various Plan documents are described on Figure 1, The Master Plan Amendment Process. The Sector Plan development process offers several opportunities for formal and informal public discussion and comment. The steps in the public process are summarized in Figure 2.

July 1990, the Montgomery County Planning Board appointed a Bethesda CBD Sector Plan Citizens Advisory Committee. Members of the Committee were chosen to represent a balanced spectrum of interests. While most are either resident or business representatives located in or near the Sector Plan area, some are located to represent a broader Bethesda-Chevy Chase constituency. The Committee has been meeting since July.

In October 1990, a major public forum was held in Bethesda. At that time the community identified both visions for the future and issues which need to be addressed in preparation of the Sector Plan. This Issues Report was prepared based upon the preliminary identification of issues by the Bethesda Citizens Advisory Committee and the results of the Bethesda Forum.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

### Boundaries

The Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan boundary includes an area of about 405 acres located within Planning Area 35 (Figure 3). The Sector Plan boundary has an irregular shape which includes the National Institutes of Health on the north; Tilbury Street, Sleaford Road, and Chelton Streets on the east; also the CSX rail line, 46th Street, and West Avenue on the east; Nottingham Drive, Chevy Chase Recreation Center, and portions of Kenwood Forest on the south; the C-2 zoned property west of Arlington Road and properties west of Arlington Road on the west; properties southwest of Old Georgetown Road and portions of Old Georgetown Road on the west. The Sector Plan boundary is shown in Figure 4 and is identified as the study area boundary.



# Bethesda CBD Sector Plan

## Steps in the Public Process

1990		1991										
Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Issues Report		Alternatives Analysis										Staff Draft

### Major Forums

\* Owners  
Forum

\* Public  
Forum

### C.A.C. Meet

\* \* \* \* \*

### Interest Groups and Special Topics

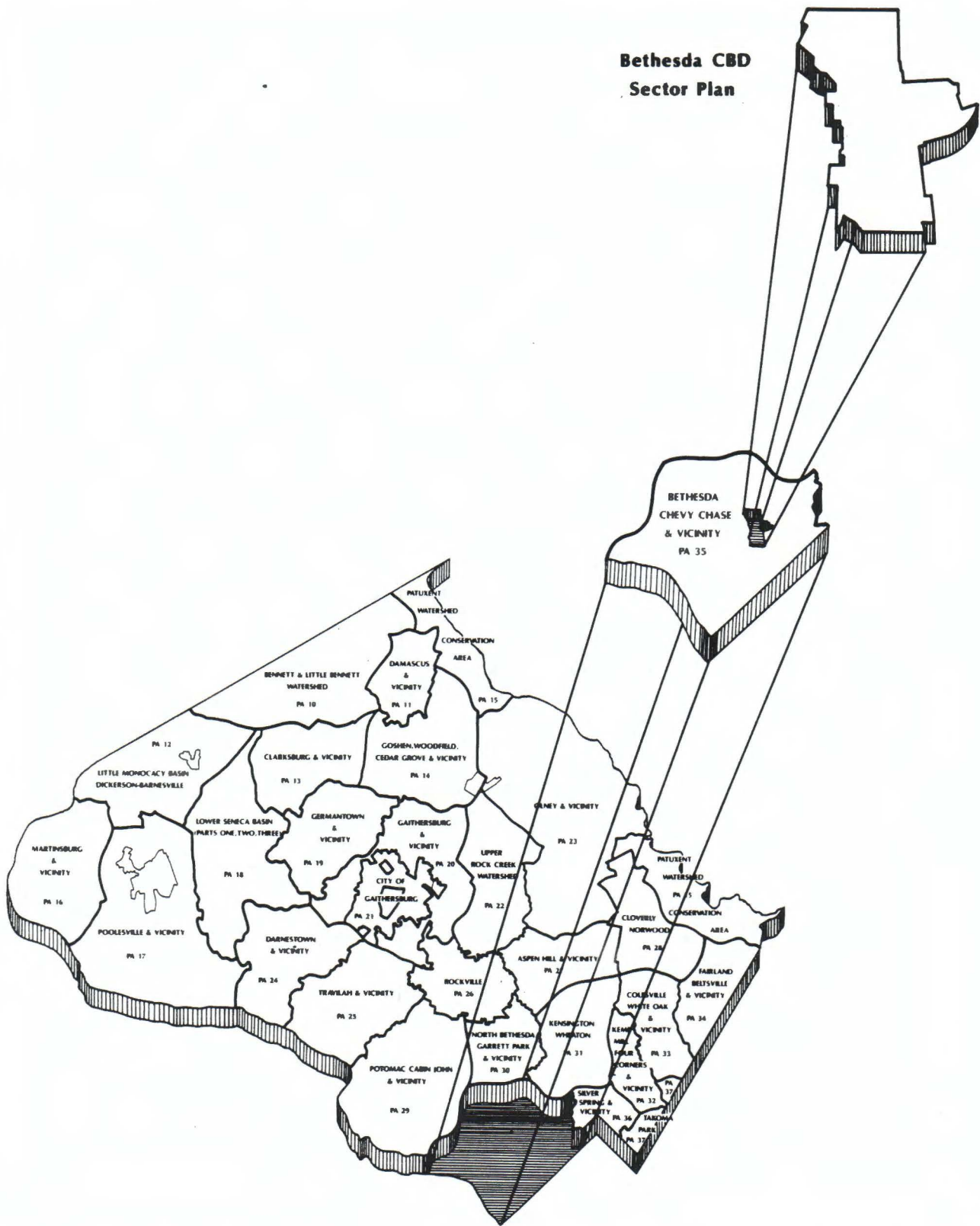
• • • • •

### News Memos

\* \* \*



# Bethesda CBD Sector Plan



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

November 1990

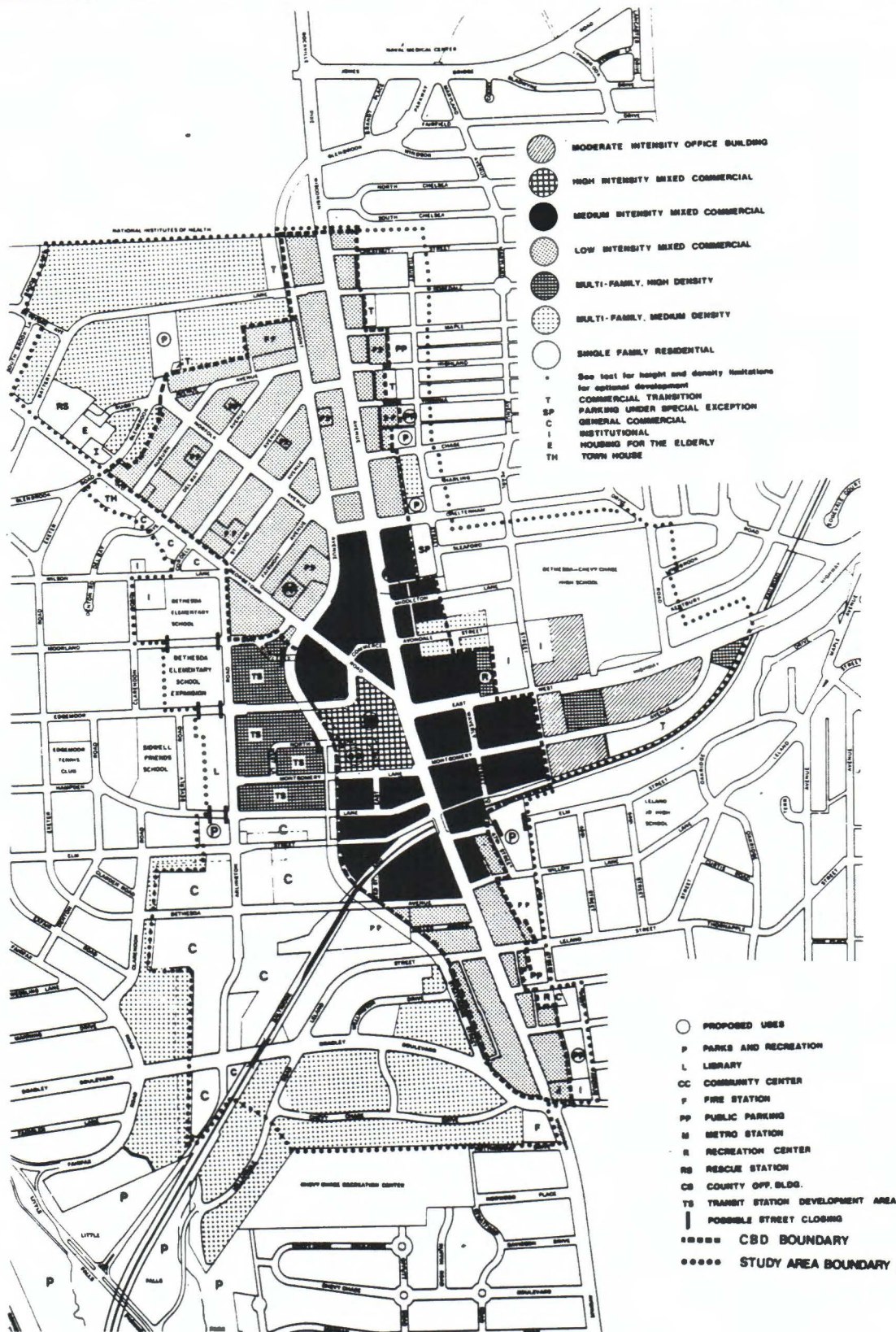
**Bethesda  
CBD**

**Sector Plan Area**



Figure  
**3**





# Bethesda CBD

## Land Use Plan (1976) Including Public Facilities



Figure  
4



## Regional Location

Figure 3 illustrates the location of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area in the southern most corner of Montgomery County. The center of Bethesda is located at the intersection of major State of Maryland highways Wisconsin Avenue, East-West Highway, and Old Georgetown Road. The Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area is located between the Capital Beltway (I-495) and an area known as northwest Washington, D.C.

## Land Use and Zoning Plan

In 1976 the present Sector Plan was adopted. The Land Use Plan (see Figure 4) and the Zoning Plan (see Figure 5) provided for the concentration of high and medium intensity mixed commercial and multi-family high density development near the Metro mass transit station at the center of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area. The Plan recommended use of new zones CBD-1, CBD-2, and CBD-3 to provide incentives for redevelopment and site plan review for higher intensity development.

There are four major objectives in the 1976 Sector Plan. One, limit the floor area of total development to remain within the transportation capacity of the area. Two, protect and buffer the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Three, conserve and rehabilitate the Business District. Four, improve the amenity of the area for residents, workers, and shoppers.

The four objectives have been implemented through four recommended actions. One, staging plans have been adopted so that traffic from new development does not exceed the traffic capacity of the streets. Two, buffer land uses and height guidelines were established along the residential edges of the Sector Plan area. Three, the 1982 Sector Plan Amendment provided for concentration of high density development around the core. Four, design concept plans have been prepared to achieve a high quality streetscape plan, undergrounding of utilities, and public space amenities on private property.

## Highway and Transit System

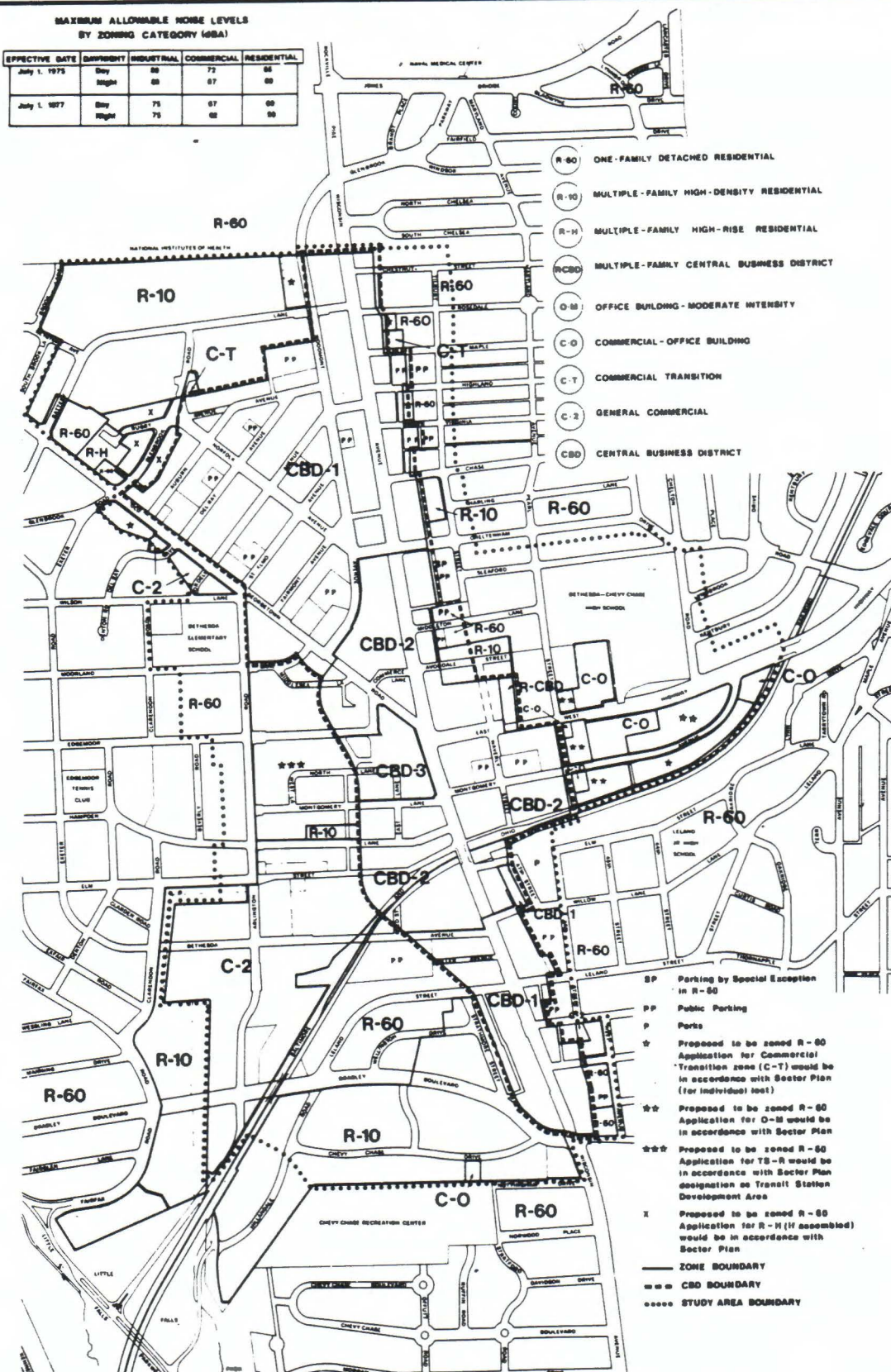
Two major highway improvements have been implemented. A one-way pair has been created along East-West Highway and Montgomery Avenue. Local circulation improvements have been provided by completion of Woodmont Avenue north to Wisconsin Avenue and south to Leland Street (see Figure 6). Almost all traffic capacity associated with through traffic, as well as existing and approved development has been allocated. Only a small amount of capacity remains for residential development.

Current studies show very little congestion within the Sector Plan area. Moderate congestion levels (Level of Service D\E) occur at some of the cordon points near the Sector Plan boundary. The highest congestion levels (LOS F) occur at some intersections in the area surrounding the Bethesda CBD.



MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE NOISE LEVELS  
BY ZONING CATEGORY (MSA)

EFFECTIVE DATE	DAY	NIGHT	INDUSTRIAL	COMMERCIAL	RESIDENTIAL
July 1, 1975	Day	88	72	64	64
	Night	68	57	50	50
July 1, 1977	Day	75	67	60	60
	Night	55	50	43	43



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

November 1990

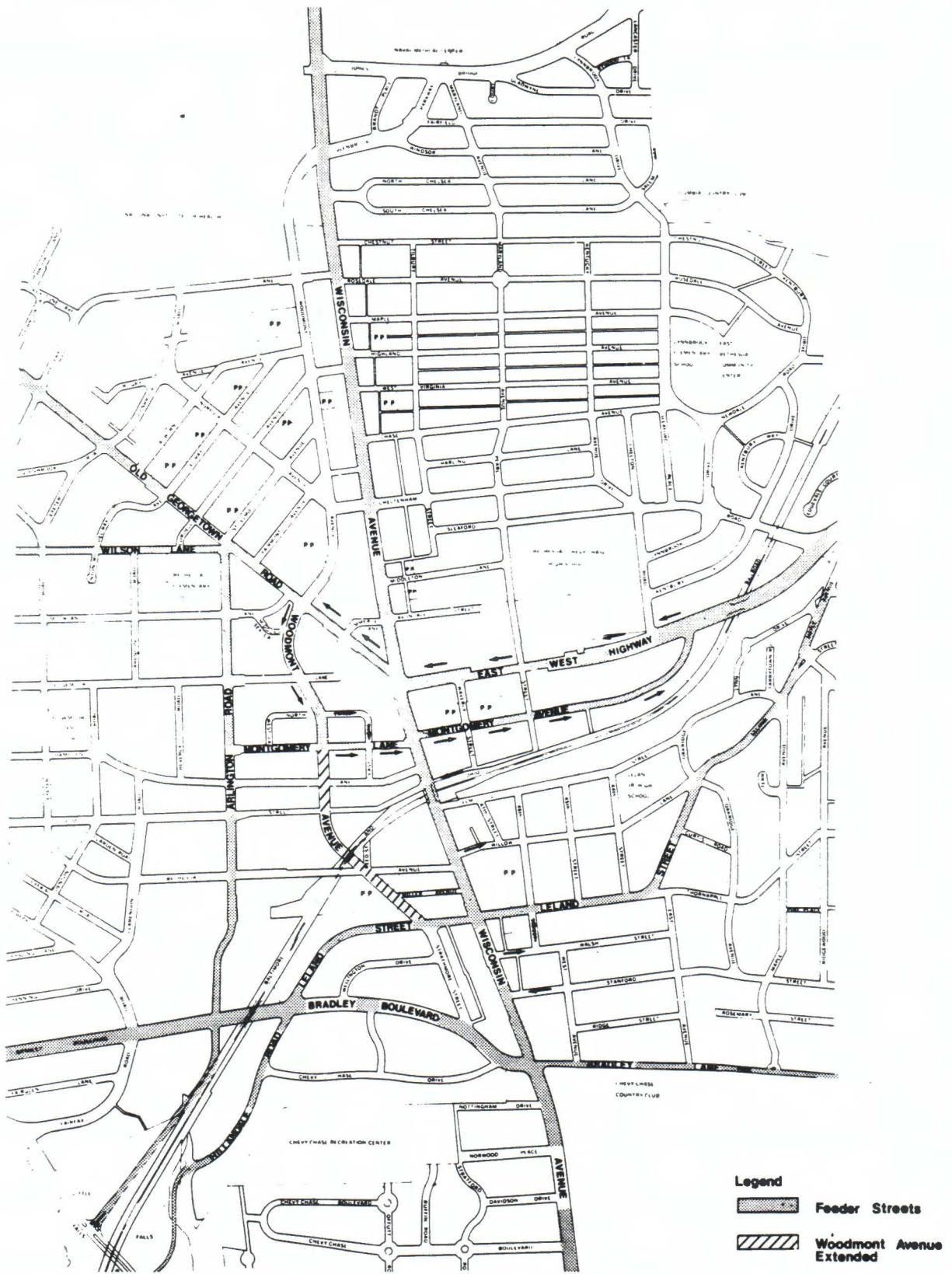
**Bethesda  
CBD**

**Zoning Plan (1976)**



Figure  
**5**





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November 1990

**Bethesda  
CBD**

# Highway Plan (1982)



Figure  
**6**



The regional Metro rail system operates the Red Line through the Bethesda station to the National Institutes of Health station on the north or the Friendship Heights station on the south. The station provides access for regional traffic and effects the development capacity of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area. Bethesda passenger boardings have been among the highest in the Metro rail system and have increased steadily since 1984.

Other transit services, including conventional fixed-route bus service, are supplied by WMATA and the County's Ride-On service. Most of these are scheduled service, with thirty-minute headways, designed to serve as feeder routes to and from Metro-rail. Approximately 17 percent of Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area employees arrive by transit, including both bus and Metrorail. Of employed Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area residents, 32 percent use transit for their work trip.

#### Current Development

Bethesda CBD Sector Plan development is a mix of land uses in an urban downtown environment. Highest intensities are concentrated in the CBD-2 and CBD-3 zones near the Metro station. While the CBD-1 areas to the north and south generally contain low intensity commercial and office uses, large office and apartment buildings are also located in these areas. A range of low to mid rise residential structures are located in the TS-R zoned area west of the central core, as well as in the north and south end of the study area. Several enclaves of single-family detached housing are located within and at the edges of the study area. Figure 7 shows Existing Parcels and Figure 8 shows Building Footprints. These are preliminary maps which will be fully updated to 1990 data.

The existing level of non-residential development is 10.3 million square feet of floor area, of which 6.8 million square feet is office space. There are 4,600 residential units within the study area and another 650 units of townhouses or apartments just beyond the Sector Plan area boundary. The current employment level in Bethesda is 39,400 jobs.

A profile of demographic and economic conditions for the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area is attached in the Appendix. The distribution of existing non-residential land use is shown on Figure 9.

#### SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY

Current development activity includes three small office and retail buildings on the south end of Woodmont Avenue. Renovations are occurring at a building on Montgomery Avenue. Two major pending projects include the Lorenz Building (office) and Garage 49 residential building, both in the central core area. Information on office activity is from the Spaulding & Slye Coliers Office Report of October 1990. As of 9\27\90, the Staff





The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

November 1990

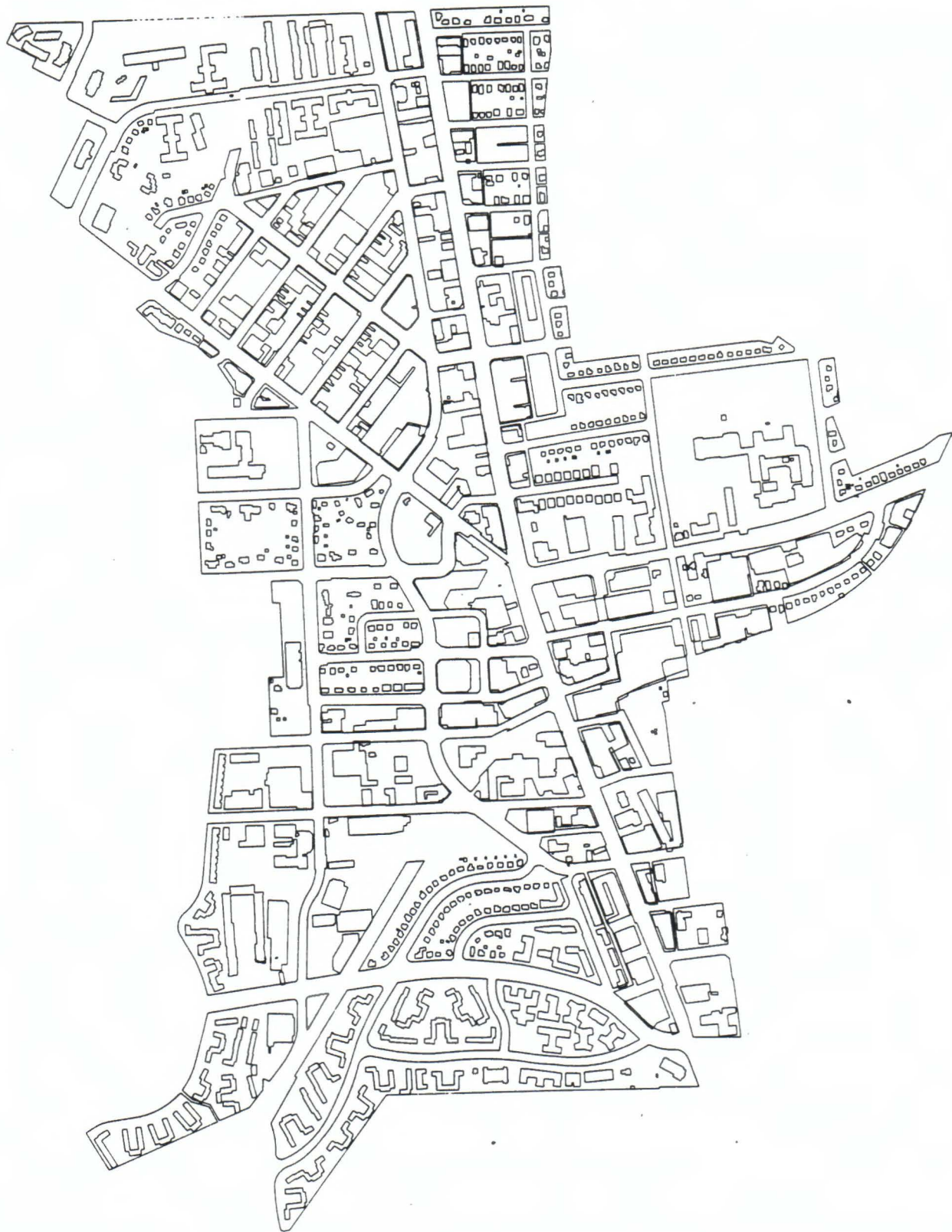
**Bethesda  
CBD**

**Existing Parcels**



Figure  
**7**





The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

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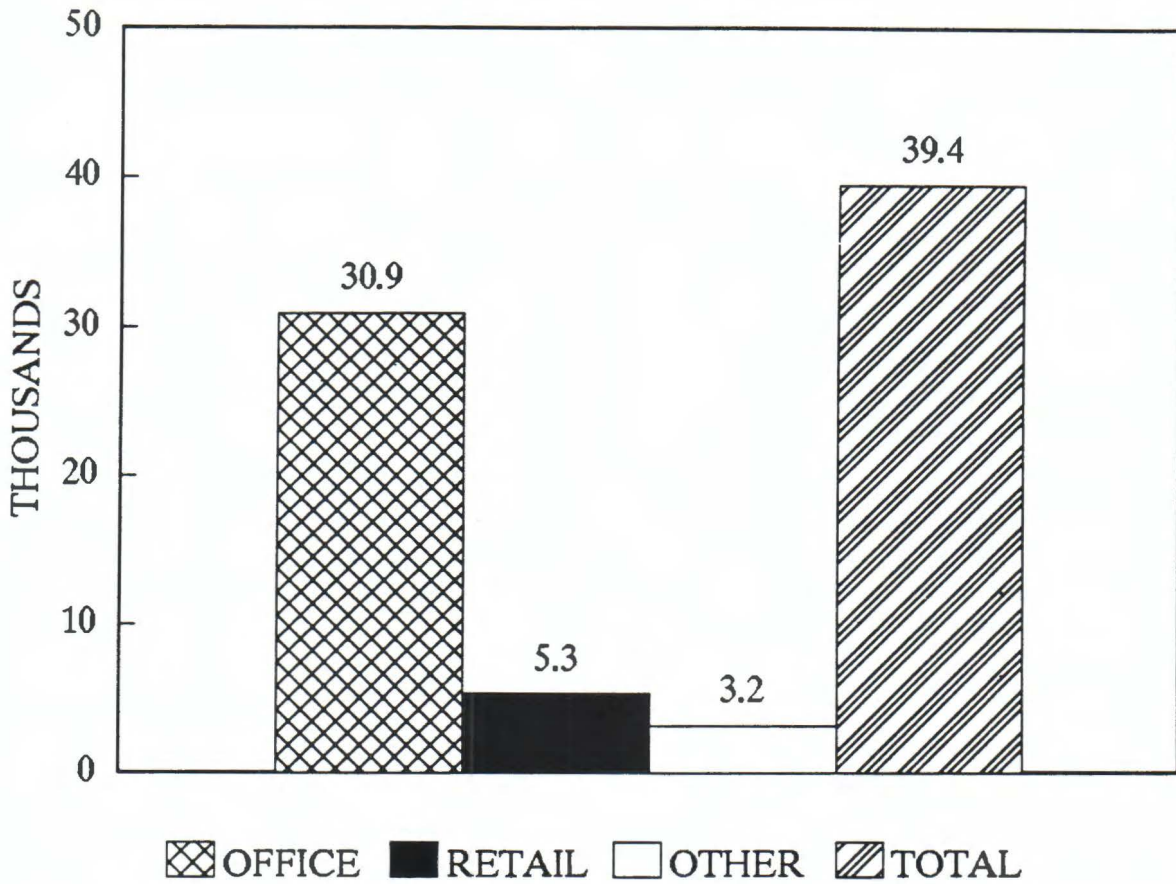
**Bethesda  
CBD**

## Building Footprints



Figure  
**8**







Draft FY 92 Annual Growth Policy reports that there are projects which would generate 3,734 jobs, which are in the pipeline of projects yet to be built or completed. The same report states that there are pending preliminary subdivision plans which could generate as many as 2,478 jobs (also known as the Job Queue). (See Figure 10.)

Multi-family residential development is expected to yield 840 units, to be completed between 1989 and 1991. The five projects either completed or being built include The Fairmont, Bethesda Place, Park Place, The Christopher House, and Chase II. These projects are either open or are nearly completed and leasing. A limited amount of street capacity under current Sector Plan policies is available for new residential development, possibly up to 200 units. Such development could occur in either the TSR area or in CBD zoned areas which have not been fully developed. Information on residential activity is from Planning Department Research Division "Intermediate Residential Pipeline Forecast", dated November 1989. As of 9\27\90, the Staff Draft FY 92 Annual Growth Policy reports that there are pending preliminary subdivision plans which would generate 171 residential units (also known as the Housing Queue).

Since 1985 there has been no street capacity for projects relying on the standard method of development. Two amendments to the Sector Plan, the latest in 1988, allow for very small projects to receive subdivision approval. In 1989 the County Council approved "loophole closure" legislation (Bill 25-89), which places development limits on properties recorded prior to 1982. Such properties must show that they would not generate 50 or more peak hour vehicle trips. Over 200 such properties in the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area have registered.

#### CONTEXT FOR PLANNING

Montgomery County has experienced a rapid rate of urban growth in the past five years. Although this growth has been contained within the framework of the County's growth management system, the experience has justified taking a deeper look into the future.

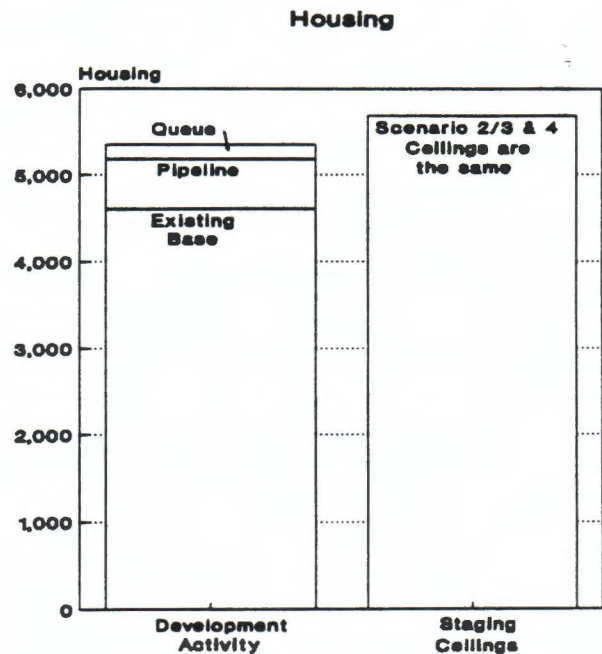
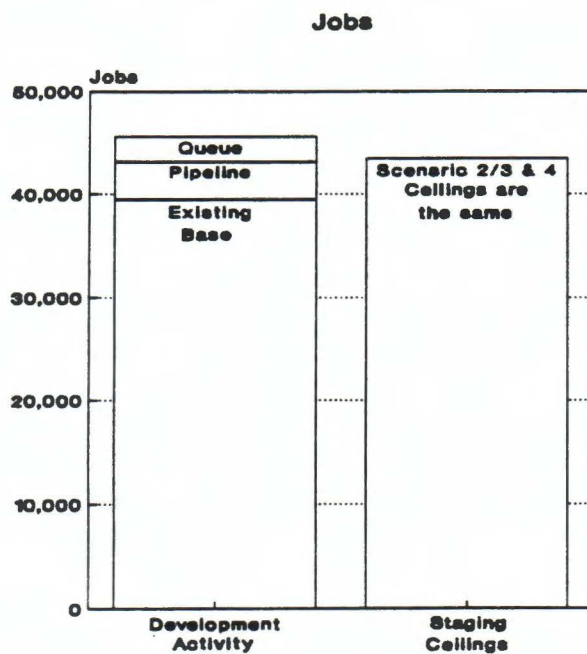
Recognizing the importance of long range planning, the Montgomery County Council commissioned a broad scale examination of future prospects by an appointed citizen advisory group, called the Commission on the Future. In their report, "Envisioning Our Future", June 1988, several major themes emerged which guided the Commission in framing their recommendations. These themes included:

1. encourage a sense of community;
2. maintain a moderate course on growth;
3. recognize demographic change; and,



**Figure 10**  
**BETHESDA CBD**

	<b>JOBS</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>
1990 Base	39,400	4,600
Gross Pipeline (9/27/90)	43,134	5,185
FY 92 Scenario 2/3 Gross Ceiling	43,493	5,685
Net Remaining	359	500
FY 92 Scenario 4 Gross Ceiling	43,493	5,685
Net Remaining	359	500



**PROFILE**  
1990 Estimate

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Rank</b>
H Job Queue (7/1/90)	2,478	7
I Housing Queue (7/1/90)	171	12
J Job/Housing Ratio	8.57	2
K Land Area in Square Miles	0.66	21



4. prepare our children to meet the future.

Among the many recommendations are some that relate to preparation of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan, repeated as follows: Strive for a steady, sustained growth in the creation of new jobs. Be selective in the kinds of employment growth we encourage. Plan for a more compact pattern of living near selected Metrorail stops. Increase housing production by 50 percent above projected levels county wide. Provide convenient, free public bus transportation within the county. Give greater attention to aesthetic considerations in all aspects of planning.

The County Council also assigned to the Planning Commission a technical study (August 1989), called the Comprehensive Growth Policy Study (CGPS). This study concludes that growth can occur without excessive congestion. However, to do so the average share of auto driver work trips on the roads must be reduced from 75 percent to 50 percent. To accomplish this significant shift in travel behavior, we would need to:

1. Introduce new travel networks (e.g., trolley, van, and hiker/biker trails);
2. Cluster land uses at points along these networks (e.g., urban village centers); and
3. Take actions to help people break the automobile habit (e.g., auto/transit pricing and pedestrian friendly design).

The CGPS characterizes this new vision for County growth as emphasizing "Centers and Trails". The CGPS calls for the revision of master plans and zoning over time to further reduce sprawl and increase strategic concentration urban village centers.

The Montgomery County Council recently adopted a new Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan (April 1990). That Plan addresses development levels and location policies which directly relate to the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan. Much of the remaining discussion is taken directly from the new Master Plan. A major objective of the Master Plan is to establish a broad framework for the density, location, and type of ultimate development within the Planning Area.

The B-CC Master Plan recommends a moderate level of development for Bethesda-Chevy Chase. This allows for development which achieves much of the expectations of property owners, but can be reasonably accommodated within the transportation capacity of the Planning Area. This objective assumes some of the following recommendations:

1. Maintain or possibly increase the relative level of households compared to jobs.



2. Locate new employment and residential development in existing centers near Metro stations.
3. Recognize the importance of biomedical development in the area, but place less emphasis on large-scale office projects.
4. Support existing businesses, including those that meet community retail and service needs.
5. Support increased housing densities and types, where compatible with nearby properties.

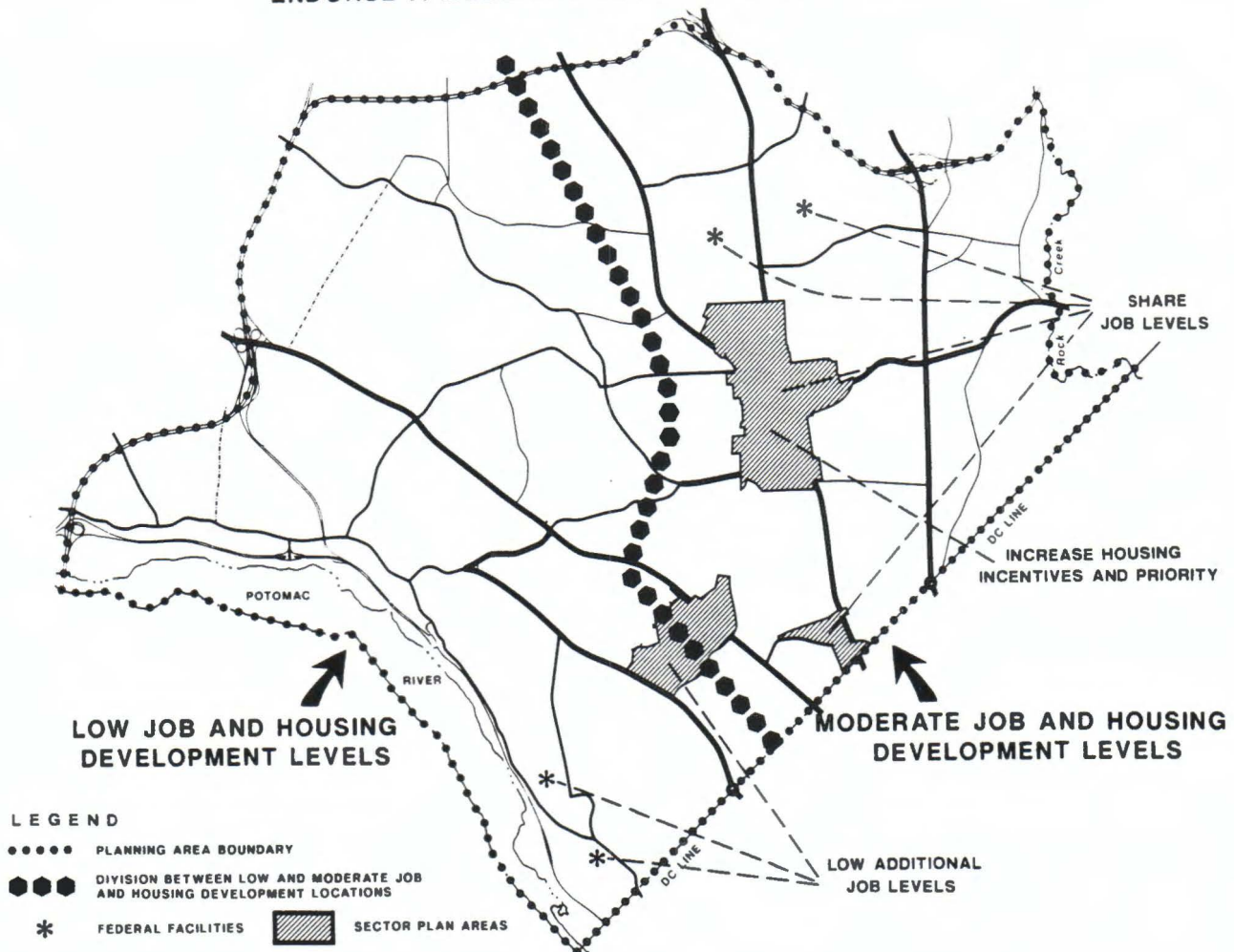
The B-CC Master Plan does not assign a specific development level allocation to each employment center in B-CC. Such an allocation should be done as part of each Sector Plan amendment and through the Annual Growth Policy. The amount of available traffic capacity will be determined as part of those studies. Figure 11 illustrates the development location policies of the B-CC Master Plan. The figure shows that moderate levels of job and housing development may occur in the eastern portion of the Planning Area. The moderate level of job development endorsed by the B-CC Master Plan must be shared among the major employment centers of the area, including the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area. The potential for increasing the supply of housing is greatest in the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area.

The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan recommends that the following general policies concerning the location, type, and density of new development be considered in planning for the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area. These policies provide general guidance for future planning decisions.

1. Remain the largest center of job capacity in B-CC.
2. Share any future traffic capacity for new development with National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Naval Medical Command.
3. During preparation of the next Sector Plan, evaluate:
  - a. Assigning priority to standard method development projects that support existing and small businesses, and would provide for retail and services in the B-CC area.
  - b. Reducing emphasis on approval of large-scale optional method office projects; any new approvals are to be guided by a subsequent amendment to the Sector Plan.
  - c. Whether the existing zoned density can be achieved.



# ENDORSE A MODERATE LEVEL OF DEVELOPMENT





Together the Comprehensive Growth Policy Study, the Commission on the Futures Report, and the new Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan provide a context for planning the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area. These studies emphasize the importance of providing both employment and housing near Metro stations. They also emphasize that moderate levels of growth are appropriate and that new transportation approaches will be needed. There is also an emphasis on the character and quality of our "urban villages" and the need to emphasize a sense of community.

#### CONCURRENT ACTIVITIES

The following is a summary of concurrent studies and activities which may be applicable to the development of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan.

There are other Master or Sector Plans in process. The comprehensive revision to the Friendship Heights CBD Sector Plan is on about the same schedule as the Bethesda Plan. The comprehensive revision to the North Bethesda Master Plan is well into the stage of alternatives analysis. New master plans for the National Institutes of Health and for the Naval Medical Center have begun.

Montgomery County Planning Department staff are working on several studies which relate to the development of the Sector Plan. Work has begun on preparation of a Montgomery County Greenways Master Plan, which is also intended to address bicycle access throughout the County. A study of amenities in optional method projects has begun and will continue for a year. The Planning Staff will be meeting with staff from Montgomery County government and other agencies, to review public facility issues. Staff may also create some special working groups to focus on Sector Plan topics such as retail and service businesses, as well as housing. We may also form a group to focus on pedestrian, elderly, handicapped, and bicycle access.

Various transportation studies and approaches are related to meeting the transportation needs of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area. The Bethesda Action Group, staffed by Montgomery County DOT, address transportation and pedestrian access solutions. A Parking Needs Study for the northern half of the Bethesda CBD is being finished by the Montgomery County DOT. The Georgetown Branch Light Rail is being implemented by the Maryland DOT. In North Bethesda, COG has prepared a Rockville Pike Corridor Shuttle Study, which identifies shuttle bus linkages with Metro stations. The Silver Spring Transportation Systems Management District provides a model approach for encouraging use of alternative transportation approaches.

There are numerous area community organizations which have a major interest in the future of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan. The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Citizen's Advisory Board advises County government on issues related to all of the B-CC area and portions of North Bethesda. The Bethesda Coalition represents the views



of nearby Civic Associations. The Town of Chevy Chase is part of the Bethesda Coalition, but also has independent governing status. The Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce has a long history of interest and involvement with Sector Plan issues.

Some community organizations have functional responsibilities within the area. The Bethesda Urban District, which is staffed by Montgomery County DOT, provides maintenance and programming for public spaces throughout Bethesda. Bethesda Evergreen is a private organization which provides for the planting of trees throughout Bethesda. Bethesda Arts Alive Center provides a place for public arts activities and is intended to facilitate an enrichment of arts activities throughout the area.

#### VISION AND ROLE ISSUES

The Bethesda Business District is a relatively large, high-density area containing a mix of jobs and housing. It is a downtown which provides the commercial heart and the urban identity for the greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase suburban community.

To consider the "vision" is to look at the future of the Bethesda Business District. That future can be seen in terms of functions and physical form. It can also be viewed in geographic terms as related to the surrounding community, to immediate neighbors, as well as to the various parts and districts internal to the Business District.

Relation to Bethesda-Chevy Chase, Montgomery County, and the Washington Metropolitan Area

- o How does the present image of the Bethesda Business District within the Washington Metropolitan area and Montgomery County create possibilities for future changes in character? How might that image be changed over time? Should the vision of the 1976 Sector Plan and the 1982 Amendment be continued or modified?
- o Are changes needed to enhance the role of the Bethesda Business District as one of the most important commercial and employment center locations in Montgomery County and as the primary downtown for Bethesda-Chevy Chase?
- o How can the Sector Plan reflect and contribute to the strong sense of community and the close relationship to the surrounding B-CC area?
- o How is Bethesda's future effected by the presence of the NIH, Naval Medical Center, and Friendship Heights employment centers? How can major interactions among these centers be considered in the planning of Bethesda?



- o Are there changes in the height, bulk, and form of buildings that would enhance the ability of the public to better understand how to use Bethesda? How might such changes improve the appearance or "skyline" of Bethesda? How can the "skyline" retain a sensitive relationship to the surrounding residential community?
- o Should the uses and activities of Bethesda be changed to effect the variety, location, and time of activity within the area? How can Bethesda achieve a diversity of activities, visual character, and population? How can diversity be extended beyond weekday periods into the evenings and weekends?
- o How do we achieve the new vision for Bethesda? Achieve widespread support for the Plan? Insure coordinated strategies for implementation?
- o What further role could the Urban District, the Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Economic Development, or a new organization play in the marketing of Bethesda to the area and the region? How might the Town of Chevy Chase and nearby civic associations cooperate with such efforts?
- o What can be learned from other major commercial centers of similar size and character to Bethesda?

#### Roles of Various Districts within the Bethesda Business District

- o Should districts be distinct and individualized or should the whole study area be more blended together?
- o How can street life be extended beyond office hours in the core area? How should infill development within and near the core relate to the the high densities currently in place? Can the Metro entry points be enhanced as gateways to Bethesda?
- o How could the community and shopping oriented character of the Arlington\Bradley Shopping District be enhanced?
- o In the Woodmont Triangle\*, should the predominately low level buildings with a variety of retail and service functions be retained? Could more housing be introduced into the area? How could the visual character and quality of the pedestrian environment be enhanced?

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\* Area bounded by Old Georgetown Road, Rugby Avenue, and Woodmont Avenue.



- o In the Montgomery Triangle\*\* what should be the future character and density of both infill and transition development? Is the appearance of the area acceptable as both an entry to and exit from the Business District?
- o Is the appearance of the Wisconsin Avenue and the Old Georgetown Road Corridors acceptable as both entries to and exits from the Business District?
- o In the TSR neighborhood, should the same pattern of mid-rise apartments be continued? How might the form of this transitional area improve?
- o Are the Battery Lane, Bradley Boulevard, Fairfax Road, and Clarendon Road Residential Areas areas subject to possible changes that could reduce the quality of these residential communities? Is there redevelopment potential that could change the character of the housing in these areas?

#### LAND USE ISSUES

The Bethesda Business District Sector Plan area contains a mix of land uses ranging from high rise office and apartment buildings to one level retail stores and single family detached houses. Densities are highest near the Metro transit station and generally become lower near the boundaries of the Sector Plan study area.

One important policy of the 1976 Sector Plan is to conserve and rehabilitate the Business District. Another policy is to protect and buffer the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Land use issues revolve around continuation of current patterns or identification of possible changes.

#### Density and Mix of Uses

- o Are the densities, uses, and zones recommended in the 1976 Sector Plan appropriate for the future of Bethesda? Can the existing zoned holding capacity be achieved or will a reduction in zoned density be needed?
- o What is the most appropriate mix of housing, office, retail, and service uses within each of the districts of Bethesda? Is the mix of uses sufficient to allow for an active business district after office hours? Can a desirable mix be achieved through zoning and development guidelines?

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\*\* Area located east of Pearl Street, between East West.



- o How might uses be mixed on a single site to better achieve Sector Plan objectives? Can incentives be provided to encourage assembly and redevelopment of small parcels?
- o How much development is likely to occur under current zoning on loophole properties? Is potential loophole development likely to remove flexibility to guide future land use change and thereby interfere with attainment of a new vision for Bethesda?
- o Should other uses traditionally associated with a vibrant business district be encouraged? Such uses may include a more visible public facility presence, legitimate theater, and department or major clothing stores in the core. Should further expansion of hotel space be considered?

### Housing

- o Is more housing needed in Bethesda? If so, how might larger numbers of housing units be provided within the Bethesda Business District, especially for Business District employees?
- o How might other groups, such as the elderly, be better served by new housing? What special housing and service needs might allow the elderly to age in place?
- o How can some additional affordable housing be provided? Can public land, such as parking lots, be provided as part of the subsidy needed to provide affordable housing? How might other incentives be provided to encourage private construction of affordable housing? Could affordable housing be provided above retail shops? What strategies are needed to maintain existing affordable housing in the area?
- o Where might different types and densities of housing be encouraged? What strategies are needed to maintain existing housing of all types within the study area?
- o How should enclaves of single-family detached housing within the study area boundary be preserved, protected, or allowed to change?

### Office Development

- o To what extent should the recent major growth in office space continue?
- o At what locations should major optional method office infill be considered? Where might standard method office development be appropriate?



- o Will there be sufficient future demand in the nation and the region to justify a large increase in office space? Does Bethesda have unique qualities that could support significant office growth despite future regional potential?
- o How does further growth of office space relate to a desirable balance and mix of land uses, as well as to various alternative visions for Bethesda?

#### Retail and Small Business

- o Do we have enough community serving retail? How can community serving retail and service businesses be supported and continued? In addition to Arlington Road, what areas could benefit from improved local retail orientation?
- o Can area or regional serving retail businesses be enhanced as one way of increasing the vitality of the Business District? What retail groups, in addition to restaurants, could be expanded to serve area or regional markets? Should addition of a downtown shopping mall be considered?
- o How can Bethesda most effectively meet the needs of employees in Bethesda?
- o How might present limits on standard method development effect the maintenance of existing retail and service business or limit the growth of such businesses? How might changes in zoning be used to encourage retention of small scale retail and service businesses?
- o How can retail space be encouraged, especially at appropriate locations in mixed-use development?
- o How might the Sector Plan address other difficulties for retail or service businesses such as parking supply, hiring difficulties, or affordable housing?
- o What approaches might retailers pursue as a group that could strengthen their ability to serve local, area, and regional markets, and to compete effectively with other retail areas and shopping malls?

#### Historic Sites

- o How should potential resources listed on the Atlas of Historic Resources be treated? These include Brooks Photographers (7349 Wisconsin Avenue), Tudor Style Shopping Complex (7003-7029 Wisconsin Avenue), and C&P Telephone Company Building (6925 Wisconsin Avenue).



- o Are there other potential resources that should be designated, such as Mrs. Withers' house on Old Georgetown Road?
- o How do historic resources relate to the daily life of employees and area residents? How do historic resources relate to the evolving character of the CBD?

#### Boundary Areas

- o Should the existing boundaries of the Sector Plan study area be maintained or changed? Should townhouse or apartment areas be added? Should single family detached areas be removed? Should an effort be made to make the boundary co-terminus with the Parking District and the Urban District boundaries?
- o Are the existing array of transition uses sufficient to provide a clear boundary between commercial development and single-family residential areas? Should the boundary be less visible to the casual observer? Do some transition uses require changes or clearer guidance to maintain their effectiveness as a boundary?
- o In single-family areas which are predominately investor owned, should the Sector Plan allow alternative uses? How can nearby residential areas be given firm and reliable protection from intrusion of nonresidential land uses?

#### URBAN DESIGN ISSUES

Bethesda was at one time a crossroads community with linear commercial development lined up along the major streets of Wisconsin Avenue, Old Georgetown Road, and East-West Highway. In the 1990's, it has evolved into a community of more distinct districts served by major corridors.

Bethesda has grown most recently around the Metro station where zoning has allowed for the tallest buildings, the most density and the highest level of amenities. The more urban character and form of this newly emerged core has been the focus of much of the previous planning and design review. The uses, form, and character of the areas which surround are as critical to the future of Bethesda as is the core. To consider the urban design of Bethesda's CBD is to look at it as a whole as well as to see the distinct areas which form it.

To best understand the underlying urban design of Bethesda, it is helpful to think of the CBD first in terms of its predominant land uses, level of densities, and building types. By doing so, it becomes apparent that Bethesda is not all one homogenous place. The Woodmont Triangle is not the same type of shopping district as the Arlington/Bradley Shopping area. In terms of urban design, each area has a distinctive character



all of its own. Urban design issues for each area addresses topics such as:

- center or focus and unique places such as parks or historic buildings,
- strong borders or transitions, and clear entries to and exits from the area.

When looking at Bethesda's urban design, it is important to ask if the character of the area as expressed in its predominant uses and built form achieves a positive, desirable and compatible image. Or, is the existing character lacking in some way, that is incompatible and undesirable. How can the existing character of these distinct areas be improved?

#### Districts and Corridors

- o Should future redevelopment blurr the distinctions between the various areas which comprise the CBD, or help to reinforce the unique character of each area?
- o How might the urban form of Bethesda help to reinforce a better sense of orientation to the core area and to the other districts of Bethesda?
- o How should the Plan enhance the diversity and special characteristics of each district, while providing for understandable transitions between districts?
- o Is the regreening of Bethesda and the gardensque theme used throughout the open spaces of the Core District and streetscape appropriate for other areas of Bethesda.
- o How might the Sector Plan surrounding transition areas be viewed as districts?

#### The Core District

- o What changes are needed to improve the comfort and safety of pedestrian access in the core area? How can awareness of pedestrian pathways, such as the tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue, be improved?
- o How can promised public amenities be provided and be made fully accessible to the public?
- o Can the quality and use of the existing public use spaces be improved?
- o Are changes needed in the location of retail space, as related to pedestrian activity, to increase the activity along sidewalks and in public areas?



- o Should underdeveloped properties continue to emphasize commercial development, with ground level retail? Are there some alternative uses that would be appropriate for underdeveloped locations such as hotels or residential?
- o Is another public use space appropriate on the Hot Shoppes site given its proximity to the Metro Center's plazas?

#### The Woodmont Triangle

- o Should the sector plan include design guidelines for upgrading the pedestrian environment within the Woodmont Triangle given the high level of pedestrian activity? Should it be paid for primarily by property owners with redeveloped parcels, as is the case in the Core District? Should the public sector bear the costs or should a combination of cost sharing be worked out?
- o What should be the urban form associated with redevelopment in this area? Should the sector plan contain design guidelines on building form and height?

#### The TSR Neighborhood

- o Are the current sector plan guidelines still appropriate and adequate to protect residential views and maintain compatibility?
- o Given that the TSR zone's requirement for 50% green space tends to result in mid-rise towers, is this the appropriate zone for areas where less building height is desired? Would development of a more compact cluster of housing with varied rooflines of lower heights be more appropriate?
- o How might isolated sites with no potential for assembly be developed?

#### The Arlington Road/Bradley Shopping Center

- o Is the pedestrian environment of this area safe, adequate, and attractive? Should the sector plan contain design guidelines to enhance the "Main Street" image and encourage more streetscape improvements?
- o Given the low-rise character of most existing structures, two to three stories, should new development be permitted to build taller structures, as permitted under current zoning? Should the sector plan provide design guidelines on building form and height to encourage compatibility with adjacent residential areas?



## Pedestrian Environment and Visual Character

- o Should the sector plan include design guidelines for improving the pedestrian and visual environment for Bethesda beyond the Core?
- o Should such design guidelines attempt to encourage pedestrian activity by identifying special opportunities for more pedestrian space, such as expanded sidewalk areas, parks, plaza area?
- o Should such design guidelines attempt to improve the visual unity of Bethesda's commercial areas by providing selected streetscape elements (Bethesda lanterns, brick sidewalks, and street trees) along the main corridors and in the Woodmont Triangle? Should the garden and public art themes be extended to future optional method projects? Should other themes be considered, such as awnings over sidewalks?
- o What are the priorities in upgrading the pedestrian environment? Should main corridors be upgraded first or certain districts like the Woodmont Triangle? How can coordination of the streetscape implementation be improved?
- o How can the greening of Bethesda be extended? Where is preservation of existing trees appropriate?
- o How might the general appearance of Bethesda be improved by the undergrounding of public utilities? What are the fiscal trade-offs with other aesthetic improvements such as tree preservation?
- o Should the billboard on Bradley Boulevard be removed to improve the general appearance of Bethesda, or should it be retained to contribute to the visual diversity of the area?
- o In the future, could the Discovery Trail be extended and made more visible to the general public?

## Residential and Boundary Areas

- o How can we best buffer and enhance various enclaves of single-family housing within the study area?
- o What are appropriate buffer features and transition uses between commercial areas and nearby single-family residential communities?



## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Changes in the environment of the Bethesda Business District study area have occurred as a result of many years of urban development. Most of the development occurred before the current environmental laws and regulations were adopted. Many adverse impacts from development cannot be easily reversed without considerable expense. Therefore, environmental issues relate primarily to the quality and character of Bethesda as experienced by residents, employees, and customers. The implications for stormwater, water supply, sanitary sewage, and waste should also be considered.

### Noise Impact

- o What types of mitigation measures are appropriate to protect pedestrian and habitants along streets from noise impact?
- o What can we do to control noise emission from both stationery and mobile sources within the Business District, such as outdoor restaurants, and truck traffic?
- o How does noise from Genstar Concrete impact and relate to the character of the area?
- o Are special noise control guidelines related to construction activity needed in addition to the County noise ordinance?

### Air Quality

- o What programs can we undertake to lessen automobile use and encourage pedestrian activity and use of mass transit within the CBD in support of regional programs to reduce ozone levels?
- o Given automobile use, what transportation control methods can we adopt to address carbon monoxide levels and impacts near congested intersections?
- o What guidelines may be needed to protect fresh air intakes and properly locate parking garage exhausts in new buildings?

### Tree Planting

- o Can we recommend a comprehensive landscape and tree planting plan to address perceptual noise mitigation, air quality and water quality issues?



## Stormwater Management

- o What programs may be needed to address channel erosion and flooding in Coquelin Run and Little Falls Branch streams?
- o Erosion problems of Stony Creek within the Naval Medical Center are related in part to storm drainage from Woodmont Triangle. How should these problems be addressed? The proposed stormwater management facility within the NIH facility as shown in the B-CC Master Plan, will help to prevent future erosion in Stony Creek. Should channel stabilization also be considered?

## Water Supply and Sanitary Sewerage

- o Based on further development as recommended in the plan, what water/sewer improvements are needed?

## Waste Management

- o What innovative recycling measures can we promote?

## TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

The existing Sector Plan (1976) includes a Transportation Plan which emphasizes use of transit. The Plan also provides recommendations for improvements to the street system, pedestrian ways, bikeways, and parking. The new Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan (1990) also assumes that additional transportation service in B-CC should be based primarily on an expanded and vigorous program of transit and other mobility services. The Master Plan recommends that a moderate level of highway improvements be endorsed for implementation during the life of the Plan.

The issues to be addressed in the new Sector Plan emphasize transit use, pedestrian access, and bicycle access. While the Sector Plan can recommend general approaches, specific programs must be established by operating departments of County government. The Plan also addresses traffic flow and circulation and can recommend right-of-way widths and specific street changes. The Plan will also address standards for acceptable levels of congestion and an approach to parking needs.

## Transit

- o What has been the experience with the Bethesda ride-sharing program? Have the goals for transit and ride-sharing set in the previous Sector Plan amendment been achieved?
- o Should a mandatory Transportation Management District similar to the Silver Spring CBD be established in the Bethesda CBD? What are the appropriate future goals



for transit, walking, and auto occupancy (non-auto driver mode share)? How can bus access from the surrounding area to the CBD and Metro transit be improved?

- o How does the future location of the Georgetown Branch trolley effect the transportation system? What access improvements are necessary?
- o What Transportation management programs can minimize vehicle trips from NIH and BNMC? How can such programs be encouraged in the Sector Plan?
- o Should the mini bus service recommended in the 1976 Sector Plan be carried forward in the new Plan? What mechanisms can be endorsed to provide for it's successful use? How might such a system improve the use and interaction between NIH, the Naval Medical Center, and Friendship Heights?
- o How could improved cab service be provided to allow for better circulation within the CBD?

#### Pedestrians and Bicycles

- o How can the quality and safety of the pedestrian system be improved to further encourage walking in the CBD ?
- o Can traffic circulation patterns, signage, and cross-walk improvements be modified to improve pedestrian access in areas such as the Arlington Road shopping area, along Wisconsin Avenue, and in parts of the Woodmont Triangle?
- o How can a coherent bicycle pathway system be established to encourage use of this mode for commuting? How can pedestrian and bicycle access to the Metro station and core area be improved?
- o What can be done to encourage use of the pedestrian underpass of Wisconsin Avenue at East West Highway?
- o How can the plan provide for improved access from residential neighborhoods? Is pedestrian access between parking garages and clusters of restaurants in the Woodmont Triangle adequate?

#### Traffic Flows and Circulation

- o How can the needs of through and local trips be balanced in the more congested locations, such as along Wisconsin Avenue?
- o Should Woodmont Avenue be extended to Bradley Boulevard? Are there other local circulation links needed?



- o What would be the effects of a one-way Woodmont Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue pair?
- o Should the Waverly, Avondale, and Commerce Streets by pass of the Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway intersection be retained in the Plan? How might this change allow for improved pedestrian access in the core area?
- o What mechanisms, such as possible street closings, should be used to protect neighborhoods from cut-through traffic?

#### Standards

- o How have traffic volumes changed at the cordon intersections? Have the internal locations inside the CBD provided for adequate traffic circulation as expected?
- o What is the standard to use for evaluating internal CBD intersections as well as B-CC area highways?
- o How should the traffic generation methodology be revised to better reflect trips that stay in the area during the evening rush hour? Are there activity types such as restaurants or theaters that may help reduce peak hour traffic?

#### Parking

- o How can private and public parking needs be reconciled and provided without encouraging the excessive use of the automobile? Where should future parking be provided?
- o What approach is needed to provide parking for retail customers? How can some areas be better served with short-term parking for retail customers?
- o How might area park and ride lots, such as those recommended in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan (1990), be used to improve commuter access to the Bethesda CBD and other major employment centers along Wisconsin Avenue?

#### DEVELOPMENT BALANCE ISSUES

Growth in the Bethesda Business District has resulted in part from policies in Montgomery County to encourage corridors of higher density development, with the highest densities to be located near Metro transit stations. In recent years the Annual Growth Policy has become a means for balancing additional growth with available public facilities such as transportation. The recent Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan (1990) recommends that a moderate level of future development be permitted in the area to



maintain that balance. The Master Plan recognizes that a limited amount of new job development must be shared among the major employment centers of Bethesda CBD, Friendship Heights, National Institutes of Health, and Naval Medical Command.

#### Relation to County-wide and Bethesda-Chevy Chase Development

- o As growth continues in Montgomery County, how much new residential and employment growth should occur in the Bethesda Business District? How should Bethesda development respond to County policy to focus development at Metro stations?
- o As a moderate amount of future employment development occurs, how much should be shared with Friendship Heights and with federal employment centers?
- o Should the present mix of jobs and housing in Bethesda-Chevy Chase change over time, given the relatively high jobs to housing ratio of 2.2 to 1.0 in the B-CC area?
- o Should new development be market driven and not regulated or subsidized?

#### Relation Between Land Use and Transportation

- o What is an appropriate means of measuring the impact of development on transportation capacity? What weight should be given to congested intersections within, at the cordon, or external to the Bethesda Business District?
- o How should the capacity of adjacent residential streets be viewed?
- o How should development in the Bethesda Business District be related to the Montgomery County Annual Growth Policy? Should some form of development staging be continued in the new Sector Plan? Can staging be done to avoid a boom\crash process?
- o How should future capacity of the Capital Crescent rail system be viewed, since the County has decided to defer a decision on capacity until the system has been operating for 5 years?
- o Does development of a business district require a different perception of traffic congestion than in more suburban areas. Should transit service be expanded so Bethesda would be assigned a Level VI in the Annual Growth Policy?



## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES ISSUES

Community facilities and services play a significant role in the development and enhancement of the "sense of community" for Bethesda residents. Community facilities provide both specific services and opportunities for additional meeting space for a wide variety of community-based organizations. There are a wide variety of community facilities and services which serve both the Bethesda CBD and the broader Bethesda-Chevy Chase community. Discussions with the community suggest, however, that there is a desire for more variety of programs and facilities within the Bethesda CBD and increased access to a wide variety of cultural and recreational sites within the region.

Within this section of the Plan, the issues will address facilities and services located within or near the boundary of the Bethesda Sector Plan study area. Related facilities within the B-CC area are discussed as part of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan (April 1990). In general, a Sector Plan may provide guidance for location of public facilities but does not address operational programs. Facility location recommendations are made in cooperation with the appropriate department.

### General

- o Do we need to achieve a stronger community identity and focus through the provision or expansion of public facilities in the area? How?

### Public Schools

- o In addition to their primary educational function, do the existing public schools adequately serve as flexible resources to meet the range of needs of Bethesda area residents?
- o Is there a need for an additional or expanded facility to serve the educational and cultural needs of Bethesda area residents?
- o Is there a long term public use for the Board of Education property on Arlington Road between Moorland Drive and Wilson Lane?

### Parks and Recreation

- o Are there a sufficient number of parks and recreational facilities to serve both the passive and active recreational needs of the workers and residents of Bethesda? Are there park needs within the CBD zoned area?
- o What is the quality and frequency of park maintenance in Bethesda? Are existing parks accessible?



- o What alternate public uses may be appropriate for the currently abandoned Walsh Street Center, such as additional recreational or cultural programs?
- o Is there a need for more of a variety of recreational programs closer to residential neighborhoods?

#### Library

- o Is heavy use of the Bethesda Regional Library primarily due to short-term remodeling projects at the Chevy Chase and Little Falls Branches?
- o Is there a need for expansion of either parking or the current Bethesda Regional Library building?

#### Fire and Rescue Services

- o How may long-term facility and service changes effect service to the Bethesda Business District?

#### Police Station

- o Is there adequate police protection for the workers and residents of Bethesda both during the day and evening? How might the needs of vagrant and homeless people be better addressed?
- o Will the ultimate Police Station site provide both operational efficiency without impinging upon the residential communities directly adjacent to the CBD?
- o Is there a need for foot patrols within the CBD?

#### Senior Services

- o Are there a sufficient number and variety of programs for seniors within the Bethesda area?
- o Are services at Waverly House adequate for both the residents and other members of the Bethesda community?

#### Bethesda-Chevy Chase Government Center

- o Is there a need for another site for both the Government Center and Montgomery College?
- o Can we achieve a stronger community identity and focus through the provision or expansion of public facilities in the area?
- o Is there a need to expand the public information activity in the area?



## Culture and Arts

- o How might a public focus on visual and performing arts be enhanced in Bethesda? Can optional method projects contribute to additional facilities?
- o What might be the respective roles of the Arts Alive Center, Strathmore Hall, and the Bethesda Unitarian Community Theater? Can space be provided for arts organizations?

## Fiscal Implications

- o What levels of government expenditure are needed to serve the existing or a low level of additional development in the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase area? How much new tax revenue can be attributed to new development in the 1980's?
- o What are the likely levels of government expenditure given moderate or high levels of future development in the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area? What expenditures would be attributed to the development in the Bethesda Business District?
- o What are the fiscal implications of supporting subsidizing affordable housing? -- Of providing additional public facilities? -- Of providing underground utilities and streetscaping?
- o How might the cost of additional facilities or services be paid for? What is the expected role of tax revenues? -- Of expenditures by new development?



## APPENDIX I

### KEY DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS

#### Bethesda CBD Sector Plan Area At A Glance

This information presents a brief overview of the demographic and economic characteristics of the Bethesda Central Business District Sector Plan area (CBD). The socio-economic characteristics of the CBD\* are strongly influenced by its functions as a business district and by the nature of its housing stock. As might be expected, non-residential uses predominate, affecting the balance of jobs and housing. Over 90 percent of the housing stock consists of multi-family apartments. Certain demographic characteristics, which are generally typical of apartment dwellers, are also true of Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area residents: their households are smaller, they own fewer cars, they are more apt to be single, and more of the adults are aged 65 and older or under 35 than the general adult population. This pattern is clearly visible in the information which follows.

#### 1990 Population and Jobs

	Bethesda CBD	Montgomery County
Population	7,000	750,000
Jobs	39,400	455,000
Households	4,600	280,000
Job/Housing Ratio	8.6	1.6
Size (Square miles)	0.66	495

#### The Residents

According to the 1987 Census Update Survey, the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area population includes:

- o A substantial female majority - 60.7 percent compared with 52.7 percent County-wide.
- o Little racial diversity - 4.4 percent of household heads are not white compared to 13.6 percent County-wide.

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\* References to CBD or Bethesda CBD include all of the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area.



	White	Black	Asian
Bethesda CBD	95.6%	3.0%	1.4%
County	86.4%	8.8%	4.6%

- o A higher proportion of Spanish origin householders or their spouses - 6.2 percent compared to 4.3 percent County-wide.
- o An older median age and very few children - only 7.2 percent of the population is under age 20 compared to 25.9 percent County-wide.

	Median Age (Years)	% Age 25-34	% Age 65+
Bethesda CBD	39.8	29.2%	16.4%
County	34.5	18.6%	10.5%

- o A large percentage of single persons living alone and a relatively small percentage of married couple households - the percentage of single persons living with other relatives is also high, double the County-wide percentage. (This last group is overwhelmingly female in Bethesda CBD.)

	Bethesda CBD	County
Married	42.6%	63.7%
Male single-parent	1.0%	1.2%
Female single-parent	5.0%	6.5%
Single with other relatives	4.5%	2.2%
Single with unrelated persons	4.3%	4.0%
Single persons living alone	36.4%	20.5%

- o Households that are very small - an average of 1.52 persons per household compared to 2.65 County-wide.
- o A modest median household income in keeping with the small household size.

	1986 Household Median Income
Bethesda CBD	\$30,292
County	\$46,475



- o Slight need for additional day care facilities - only 1.9 percent of respondents reported an unmet need for day care compared to 10 percent County-wide. Most of this need appears to be for day care for elderly persons. (It should be noted, however, that this analysis addresses only the needs of 1987 residents of the CBD. It does not measure the needs of the thousands of workers who commute into the CBD or the residents of the surrounding area. Substantial unmet needs may well exist among those groups.)
- o A high level of education -
  - Of persons age 25+, the median level of education is a college degree as it is Countywide
  - 29.1 percent of the residents age 25 and over have a graduate degree compared to 24.1 percent County-wide
- o High levels of employment concentrated nearby or in Washington, DC and heavy use of mass transit -
  - A high proportion of the residents age 16 and over are employed full- or part-time
  - 76.2 percent compared to 73.8 percent County-wide. Another large group are retired, 14 percent compared to 10.7 percent.
  - Of the employed Bethesda CBD Sector Plan area residents, many work in Washington, DC -- 40.5 percent compared to 24.4 percent County-wide. Another 34.8 percent work in the CBD or the B-CC planning area compared to 12.4 percent County-wide
  - These employment locations permit heavier use of mass transit -- 31.6 percent by employed Bethesda CBD Sector Plan residents compared to 11.7 percent Countywide
- o Ownership of only one car - 71.0 percent compared to 31.0 percent County-wide. Another 15.5 percent do not own a car compared to 4.5 percent Countywide.
- o A substantial majority of apartment dwellers relative to the County, which is especially evident when high-rise rates are compared



Structure Type	Bethesda CBD	County
Single-Family	5.3%	55.7%
Townhouse	3.4%	14.7%
Garden Apt.	41.2%	18.8%
High-Rise	50.1%	10.8%
	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, Research Division, Tax Assessor's Parcel File, 1990.

- In consequence, Bethesda CBD residents are much more likely to rent their housing than households Countywide.

	Owners	Renters
Bethesda CBD	12.5%	87.5%
Montgomery County	70.0%	30.0%

- o The housing is older, relatively moderately priced, but still expensive for its occupants.

	Bethesda CBD	County
Average age of housing unit	28.9 yrs	21.9 yrs.
Median rent	\$574	\$582
Housing cost/income ratio of 30 percent or more	26.0%	15.1%

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department, Research Division, 1987 Census Update Survey.

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## BETHESDA CBD SECTOR PLAN

### PLANNING STAFF TEAM MEMBERS and their General Tasks

#### Community Planning

Perry Berman, Chief  
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#### Transportation Planning

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John Bailey - Capacity Analysis  
Frederick Harris - Consultant  
Ecosometrics - Consultant

#### Research Division

Sally Roman, Lead Planner

#### Environmental Planning

Swam Ayya, Lead Planner

#### Other Support Staff:

Scott Stickerod	-	Drafting
Dave Fugitt	-	Drafting, Cover Design
Florence Taylor	-	Administrative Support
Roberta Ehrlich	-	Community Relations
Les Scattergood	-	Research, GIS Mapping
Dan Brooks	-	Research, GIS Mapping
George Marenka	-	Drafting, GIS Mapping

Brandt Hare	-	Admin. Services Supervisor
Charles Colesman	-	Reproduction Clerk

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\* Resigned



