



# Bethesda Downtown Plan Annual Monitoring Report

May 2020

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION



## Abstract

This report meets the 2017 Bethesda Downtown Plan requirements for annual monitoring of schools, parks and transportation and provides the Planning Board and County Council with advance guidance regarding the implementation of the Sector Plan for FY2021-2022. This report also includes a review of development activity and development approvals as it relates to the monitoring and tracking of the cap on development required by the Bethesda Overlay Zone.

## Sources of Copies

The Montgomery County Planning Department  
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Online at <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/>

# Bethesda Downtown Plan Annual Monitoring Report

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Department

MontgomeryPlanning.org

May 2020

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# May 2019 - May 2020

What has happened in Downtown Bethesda over the past year?



## Construction

In addition to the Purple Line station, seven construction projects are underway including Marriott Headquarters, The Wilson and The Elm, 7900 Wisconsin, Edgemont II, 7359 Wisconsin Avenue (Avocet Tower), ZOM Bethesda and Artery Plaza.



## Parks and Open Space

Currently, four Park Impact Payments (PIPs) have been received in the amount of approximately \$9.6 million.



## Design

The Design Advisory Panel has reviewed six new projects since May 2019.



## Transportation

Phase 1 design of the Capital Crescent Surface Trail is complete and permitting is underway. Phase 2 design is at 30 percent complete.



## Schools

In the current academic year, schools in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase cluster are experiencing the following capacity utilization rates: 97.2% at the elementary school, 83.1% at the middle school and 91.9% at the high school.



## Implementation

The Planning Board appointed four new members to the Bethesda Downtown Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC).

# Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive update on the implementation of the May 2017 *Approved and Adopted Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan*. The Bethesda Downtown Plan, along with the Bethesda Overlay Zone is comprised of many complex elements, each of which depends upon the success of other Plan elements. In accordance with the Plan, development projects are monitored and tracked for adherence to plans, density and development cap concerns. School capacity, park funding and implementation and transportation adequacy will also be reviewed and reported annually. This report provides the results of those efforts.

The Plan envisions a Bethesda where residents will have a downtown that is a model for sustainability, accessibility, equity and innovation. Residents will have more affordable choices of housing near jobs, shopping and recreation. They will safely walk and bike to stores and offices, past new energy-efficient buildings and familiar landmarks. New parks and open spaces will provide green, tranquil places for the residents, their families and friends to gather, socialize and relax. Nearby Metrorail and Purple Line stations will be quickly reached from tree-lined streets and sidewalks to meet the needs of both the residents and visitors to downtown Bethesda. This vision stems from the goals and recommendations within the Sector Plan to enhance downtown Bethesda over the next 20 years.

This annual monitoring report will be presented to the Planning Board in the spring of each year and transmitted to the County Council for review. Planning staff is responsible for identifying issues with potential solutions for discussion during the Planning Board's review.

Although this report focuses on the events of the last year, it is important to look at the cumulative change in the area. A total of 21 projects have been received since plan approval in 2017. Of those 21 projects, seven are under construction, nine have received site plan approval but are not yet constructed and five are currently under staff and Planning Board review. Three new Park Impact Payments (PIP) have been received for the 7359 Wisconsin Avenue (Avocet Tower) project, the ZOM Bethesda project, and the Edgemont II Bethesda Project for approximately \$4.6 million toward parks acquisition, design and development. With the PIP received from the Marriott Headquarters project in 2018, the total PIP funds received to-date is approximately \$9.6 million. One lot has been acquired and another is under contract by the Parks Department to provide for the future civic green as recommended in the Sector Plan for the expansion of Veteran's Park. Purple Line construction continues to move forward.

# Introduction

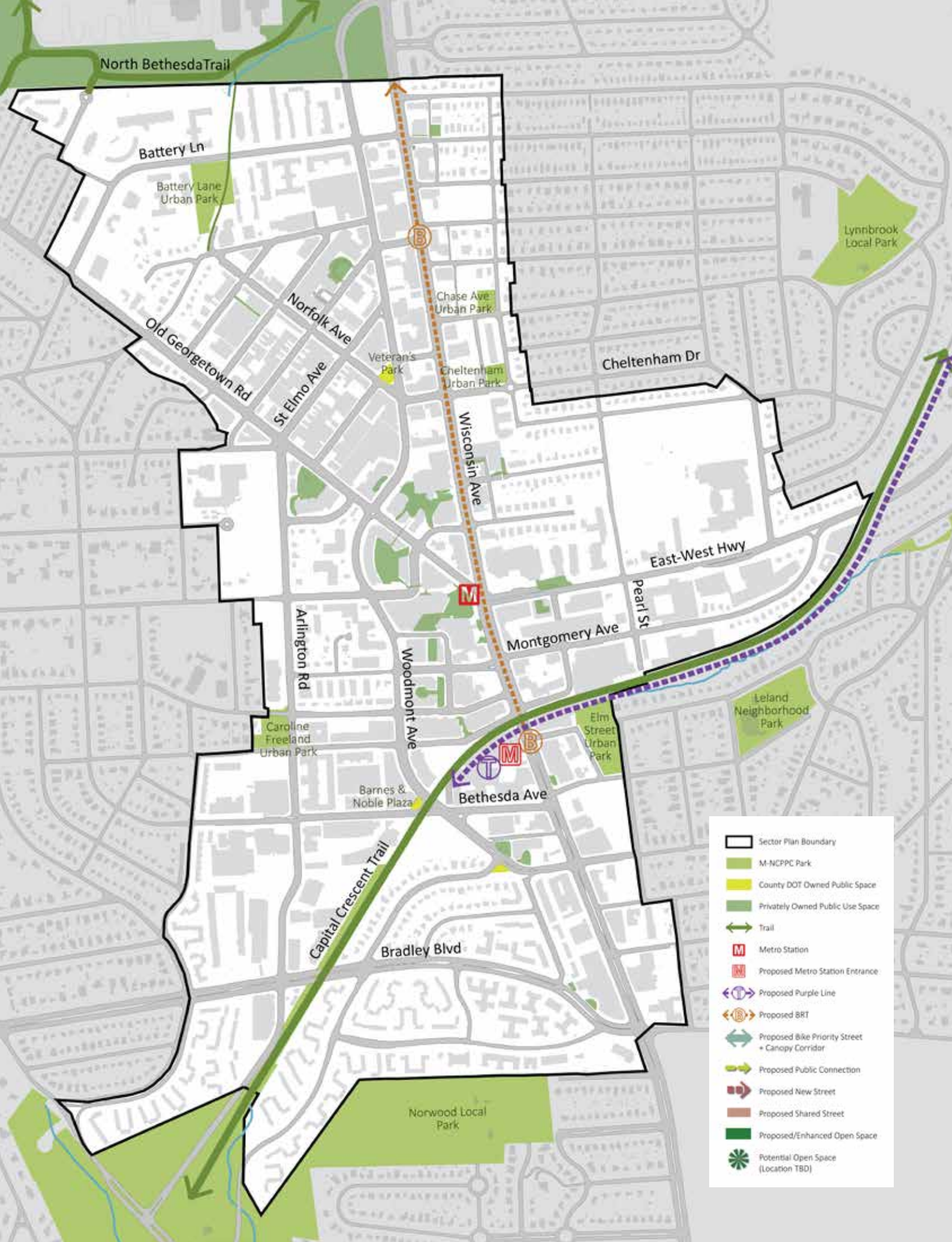
Downtown Bethesda's diverse, mixed-use and residential districts have created a distinct character and an identity that residents and visitors value. The 2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan creates a framework that maintains Bethesda as a center of economic vitality, as well as promotes all the elements that are fundamental to keeping Bethesda unique and competitive in the years to come. The Plan recommends 13 additional parks, and envisions the continuation of downtown Bethesda as a thriving urban center with a regional draw for employment, shopping and entertainment. The Plan estimates an additional 14,200 jobs by 2040, a 38 percent increase above existing levels. In addition, the Plan envisions a continued focus on housing by proposing a diverse mix of residential choices throughout downtown Bethesda to accommodate more workers and reduce commuter traffic congestion. The Plan estimates a maximum of 8,456 additional multi-unit residential units if limited commercial development occurs.

The Sector Plan is being implemented through focused coordination between public and private interests to promote increased parks and open space, affordable housing, environmental innovation, economic competitiveness and design excellence.

The Plan's vision will be implemented through various tools, including zoning, a park impact payment (PIP), design guidelines and annual monitoring. This report is a required tool to monitor and analyze the progress toward implementation for downtown Bethesda.

To ensure an appropriate balance between new development and required public infrastructure, the Plan has established monitoring of schools, parks and open space and transportation as new development occurs. This report provides the status of these infrastructure elements and approved development. The perspective from the Implementation Advisory Committee is included to provide a broader viewpoint on the implementation of the Plan.

This report's sections address the Sector Plan and provide updates since the May 2019 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Finally, this report provides an overview of the implementation of the Sector Plan recommendations that achieve the Plan's vision.





# Bethesda Downtown Plan

## Key Monitoring Updates

Several committees and tools have been created to assist in the implementation of the Sector Plan recommendations, new projects have been approved and land for a key civic gathering space has been acquired by the Parks Department.

### Design Advisory Panel

The Design Advisory Panel (DAP) provides advice and recommendations to heighten design excellence and improve the quality of architecture, urban design and landscape architecture in downtown Bethesda. The DAP is guided by the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan and the related Design Guidelines.

Since May 2019, the DAP has reviewed 10 projects. The following table illustrates the information associated with the DAP reviews. Two DAP members were reappointed to new terms.

### Implementation Advisory Committee

The Bethesda Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) coordinates and monitors the progress of development and addresses implementation of the recommendations in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan. The 14-member IAC includes seven members representing the interest of local businesses and large property owners and seven members representing the interest of local residents. The IAC meets once a month.

In 2019, the committee reappointed the 2018 co-chairs and the Planning Board reappointed three sitting members to new terms. The board also appointed

**Table 1: Design Advisory Panel - Projects Reviewed Since May 2019**

Project	Application Stage(s)	Date(s) Reviewed	Exceptional Design Points Requested	Exceptional Design Points Approved
7000 Wisconsin Avenue	Sketch Plan	May 22, 2019	20	TBD
	Site Plan	November 20, 2019 January 22, 2020	20	10
Battery Lane District	Sketch Plan	May 22, 2019	30	TBD
8015 Old Georgetown Road	Sketch Plan	May 22, 2019	30	10
	Site Plan	January 22, 2020	20	15
7800 Wisconsin Avenue	Concept Plan	September 25, 2019	N/A	TBD
7340 Wisconsin Avenue	Sketch Plan	September 25, 2019 February 26, 2020	30	TBD
Bethesda Market	Sketch Plan	September 25, 2019	10	TBD
St. Elmo Apartments Amendment	Site Plan Amendment	October 23, 2019	15	15
4702 West Virginia Avenue	Site Plan	November 20, 2019	20	20
4824 Edgemoor Lane	Sketch Plan	November 20, 2019	25	TBD
		January 22, 2020		
		February 26, 2020		
4725 Cheltenham Drive	Concept Plan	February 26, 2020	N/A	TBD
	Sketch Plan	May 27, 2020	20	TBD

four new members to the committee. Information about the IAC can be found on the IAC website at the following link: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-implementation-advisory-committee/>

### Online Monitoring and Tracking Program

The online *Monitoring and Tracking Program* will monitor proposed development and track the approved square footage (SF) in downtown Bethesda against the overall cap on development of 32.4 million square feet, set forth in the Bethesda Overlay Zone. This online tool provides development data for each project application submitted to the Planning Department. The online tool includes:

- Project base and proposed density
- Amount of Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) Density requested by project
- Amount of Park Impact Payment (PIP) being assessed

- Number and percent of Moderately Priced Dwelling Units (MPDUs) (if applicable)
- Residential Square Footage and number of dwelling units (if applicable)
- Total BOZ Density allocated by the Planning Board at Site Plan
- Remaining BOZ Density available based on Site Plan allocations/approvals

The *Monitoring and Tracking Program* website is located here: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-development-tracking/>



### Selected New Projects Reviewed by the Design Advisory Panel

#### Bethesda Market

This is a large, complex project developing both the east and west side of Wisconsin Avenue with mixed-use and multi-family residential. The project proposes two alternate design approaches for the redevelopment of the east side properties, one including Parking Lot 24 and Parking Lot 10. Both options retain the Montgomery Farm Women’s Cooperative Market as the designated historic resource it is, including changes to revitalize the site and recontextualize it as the centerpiece of a broader, comprehensive mixed-use development as envisioned by the Bethesda Downtown Plan as a major civic gathering place along with the creation of the eastern greenway as a network of parks and open spaces on Lot 24 and Lot 10.

One option introduces two new multi-family residential buildings with ground-floor retail, a rehabilitated and expanded Farm Women’s Market building for retail and restaurant uses, a comprehensive redesign and development of the remainder of the properties as a series of parks and open spaces connecting Wisconsin Avenue to Elm Street Park via the realization of the southern half of the Sector-Plan-recommended Eastern Greenway, and public and private underground parking.

The west side properties would feature a mixed-use building consisting of multi-family residential units and ground floor retail uses, as well as private underground parking, and public and private amenities. The east side properties would be redeveloped with multi-family residential units and ground-floor retail in the new multi-family building and cellar-level retail in the expanded Farm Women’s Cooperative Market building.

The proposal would relocate existing public parking spaces on Parking Lot 24 and Parking Lot 10 on the east side of Wisconsin Avenue into a new underground garage.

#### 7340 Wisconsin Avenue

The property located at 7340 Wisconsin Ave, between Hampden Lane and Montgomery Lane, occupies a former Exxon gas station that has been vacant for several years. The project proposes a new 250-foot-tall mixed-use building of residential development for senior housing and commercial retail on the ground floor. The project will incorporate energy efficient building systems as required by the Bethesda Overlay Zone. In addition, intensive green roof systems are proposed to maximize the property’s overall green cover.

#### 4702 West Virginia Avenue

Located at 4702 West Virginia Avenue, to the west of Tilbury Street. The property is located within a transitional block between the Wisconsin Avenue corridor and East Bethesda residential neighborhood. Currently a single family lot, this property will be transformed into a 35-foot-tall traditional multi-family condominium project totaling 20,000 square feet with underground parking. The project includes up to eight dwelling units within the new building that will be stylistically designed as townhouses. The project creates frontages on all four sides of the property to enhance the streetscape on West Virginia Avenue and the side elevation is activated to face the future Eastern Greenway, which will be part of a more comprehensive network of open spaces. Finally, the south facade is activated to have a compatible relationship with Chase Avenue Urban Park.



Illustrative View of the Bethesda Market Sketch Plan Proposal



Illustrative view of 4702 West Virginia Avenue





## Development Approvals

The Planning Board approves sketch plans, preliminary plans, site plans and BOZ Density allocation requests for new development in the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area. A total of 21 projects have been received since plan approval in 2017. Since May 2019, seven projects have received sketch and/or preliminary plan approval and four have received site plan approval as shown in Tables 3a and 3b on page 11.

### Status of Available BOZ Density

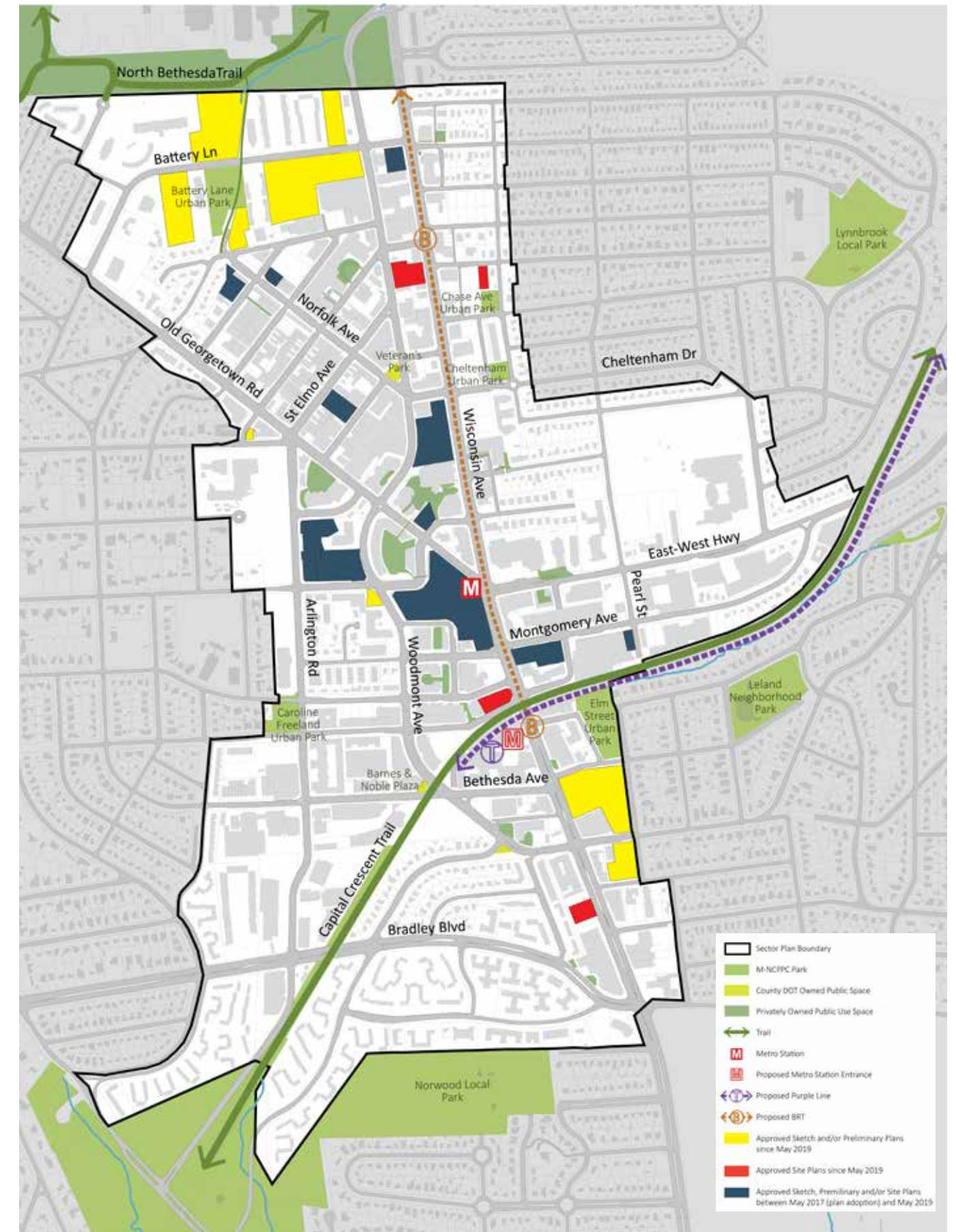
The Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) sets a cap on development limiting the total density of existing, approved and new development to 32.4 million square feet of gross floor area. *The Monitoring and Tracking Program* website identifies the remaining available BOZ Density in downtown Bethesda as of April 2020 as **3,331,529 square feet**. Bethesda Overlay Zone Density will fluctuate based upon projects submitted and approved as well as projects whose adequate public facilities (APF) expire.

### Public Benefit Points

With the increase in density proposed by the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan, public benefits must be provided that enhance or contribute to the objectives of the zone and the goals of the Plan. The Sector Plan prioritizes specific public benefits that will contribute to the achievement of the Plan's vision, including: affordable housing, public open space, High Performance Area, enhanced vegetated roofs to increase green cover, exceptional design, and minimum parking.

All residential projects reviewed since April 2019 have met 15 percent of MPDUs, as required by the Sector

Figure 1. Sector Plan Approvals (since May 2017)





Plan. Two of the projects exceeded this minimum and received affordable housing public benefit points at the time of site plan approval.

Open space is an important element of the public realm and is essential to downtown Bethesda's civic life. Public benefit points are awarded to projects that provide or make a payment for public open space in excess of the minimum requirement of the zone. One of the four projects from Table 3b have received public benefit points for open space.

The Plan delineates a High Performance Area as a place where the greatest densities of development

and the tallest building heights are anticipated. Energy Conservation and Generation is encouraged for buildings within the High Performance Area to deliver energy-efficiency benefits. Three of the four projects from Table 3b have received public benefit points for energy conservation and generation.

The Plan prioritizes public benefit points for projects that demonstrate exceptional design that enhances the visual and functional character of a setting. All four of the projects in Table 3b received Exceptional Design public benefit points.

**Table 2: Approved Site Plan Public Benefit Points (since April 2019)**

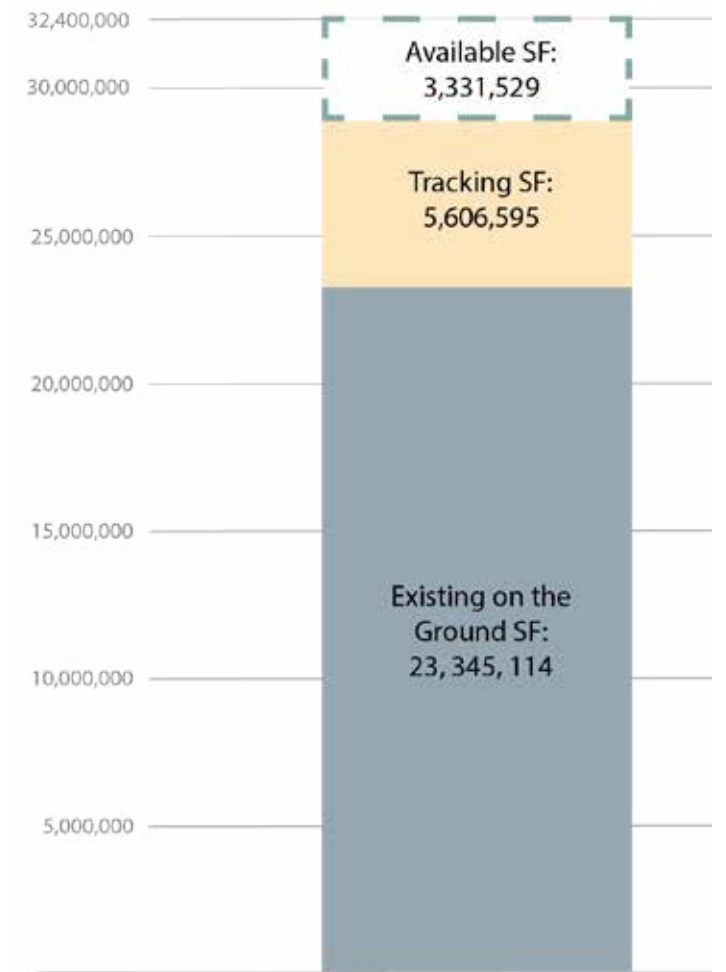
Type of Public Benefit Points	8000 Wisconsin Avenue		7000 Wisconsin Avenue		Metro Tower		4702 West Virginia Avenue	
	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved
<b>Major Public Facilities</b>								
Park Impact Payment							20	20
Transit Proximity								
<b>Connectivity and Mobility</b>								
Minimum Parking	10	10	17	17	19	17.7	1	1
Through Block Connections			20	20	15	15		
Transit Access Connections								
Wayfinding								
<b>Diversity of Uses and Activities</b>								
Small Business Opportunities					10	10		
Affordable Housing	150	150	39	39				
Enhanced Accessibility for the Disabled								
<b>Quality of Building and Site Design</b>								
Architectural Elevations							15	15
Exceptional Design	10	10	10	10	30	30	10	10
Public Open Space			7.2	7.2				
Tower Step Back					5	5		
Structured Parking	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
<b>Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment</b>								
Building Lot Terminations (BLTs)			4.2	4.2	8	8		
Cool Roof								
Recycling Facility Plan								
Energy Conservation and Generation	15	15	15	15	15	15		
Vegetated Wall								
Vegetated Roof								
<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>132.4</b>	<b>132.4</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>120.7</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>66</b>

To promote a transit-oriented downtown and encourage the use of travel modes other than single-occupancy vehicles, public benefit points are granted to developments that provide fewer than the maximum allowed number of parking spaces. All four projects in Table 3b received public benefit points for minimum parking.

Detailed requested and approved public benefits for the 4 site plan approved projects reviewed since April 2019 can be found in Table 2.

**Recommendations**

- Once total development reaches 30.4 million square feet, the County Council may require certain actions before additional development is permitted. As of April 2020, total development density is 28,951,709 square feet.
- Continue to monitor and track the development square footage in downtown Bethesda against the cap of 32.4 million square feet and report available and/or remaining BOZ Density to the Planning Board.



BOZ Density Tracking Tool (as of April 2020)

**Table 3a: Approvals since April 2019 - Sketch and Preliminary Plans (Monitoring)**

Project	Existing SF	Requested SF	Proposed DUs/MPDUs	BOZ Density Requested(SF)	PIP	Max Height
Bethesda Market	4,195	650,305	TBD	191,878+21,991	TBD	175/225
8101 Glenbrook Road	30,304	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	35
Battery Lane District	549,100	1,752,000	1530/20%	500,110	TBD	120
7340 Wisconsin Avenue	0	315,500	TBD	142,475	TBD	250
4 Bethesda Metro	632,774	1,092,242	479/15%	0	0	290
4824 Edgemoor Lane	2,474	92,000	77/15%	70,353	779,505.70	120
Kohlius Property	4,362	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	35

**Table 3b: Approvals since April 2019 - Site Plans (Tracking)**

Project	Existing SF	Approved Un-built SF	DUs/MPDUs	BOZ Density (SF)	PIP	Max Height
8000 Wisconsin Avenue	30,518	399,482	441/25%	301,048	N/A	199
4702 West Virginia	4,048	20,000	TBD	14,750	TBD	35
Metro Tower	79,127	400,000	366/15%	188,506	1,301,560	250
7000 Wisconsin Avenue	0	210,000	TBD/17.6%	117,069	970,043	122

Source: Monitoring and Tracking Program, April 2020

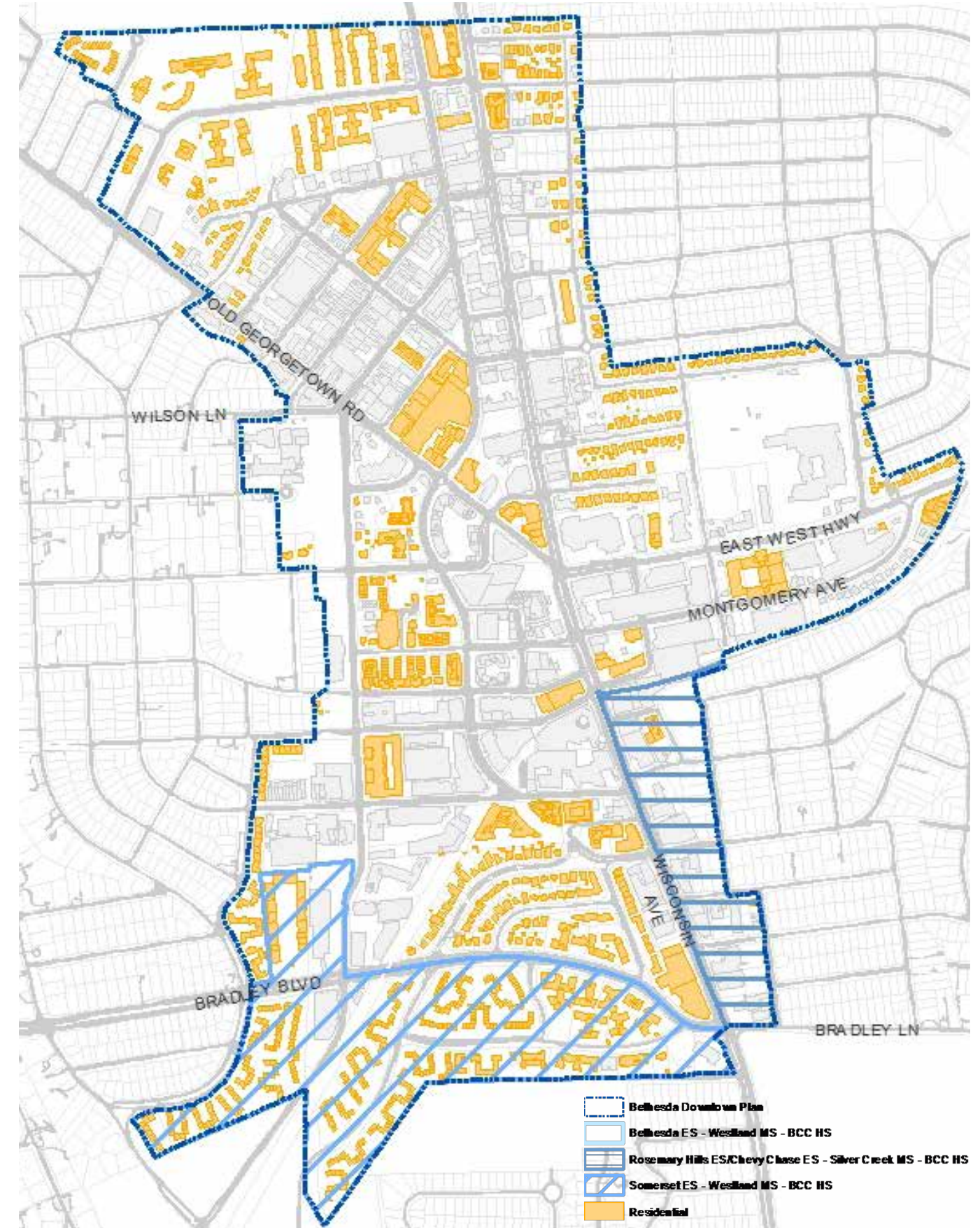


## Schools

The Bethesda Downtown Plan is geographically within the Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) Cluster. It is primarily served by Westland Middle School and Bethesda Elementary School, some residential properties are served by Somerset Elementary School. There is also a small area served by the paired Rosemary-Hills/Chevy Chase Elementary Schools and Silver Creek Middle School, but that area consists mostly of commercial properties.

As a process of monitoring the adequacy of school facilities in the Bethesda Downtown Plan area, current and projected enrollment and capacity data for the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster is reviewed in the following report. Adequacy is determined by calculating the utilization rate (enrollment to capacity ratio) of the entire cluster at the elementary, middle, and high school levels respectively. For analysis, the actual utilization rate of the most recent school year (2019-2020) and the projected utilization rate of six years out (2025-2026) is compared to the estimated enrollment impact of the Plan that was calculated under a full residential build-out scenario. The data used in the process is provided by the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) Division of Capital Planning.

Figure 2. Bethesda Downtown Plan School Service Areas by Feeder Pattern





## Cluster Adequacy Review

### Enrollment Trend

Cluster-wide, student enrollment has increased moderately at all school levels according to the MCPS' official September 30th, 2019 enrollment data. Compared to the previous 2018-2019 school year, actual enrollment increased by 34 students at the elementary school level (0.9 percent increase from the previous year), 59 students at the middle school level (3.6 percent increase), and 131 students at the high school level (6.1 percent increase). According to the 2025-2026 school year projections provided in the MCPS Superintendent's Recommended CIP for FY 2021-2026 Capital Improvements Program (CIP), cluster enrollment at the middle school and high school levels will continue to increase moderately over the next six school years, while enrollment at the elementary school level will remain relatively stable.

### Capacity – Capital Projects

The superintendent of MCPS recommended additions at Westbrook and Bethesda Elementary Schools to be included for the FY 2021-2026 CIP, with completion dates scheduled for September 2021 and 2023 respectively. Due to fiscal constraints however, the addition at Westbrook Elementary School, which was a plan to build-out existing shell space to accommodate more classrooms, has not been approved. The

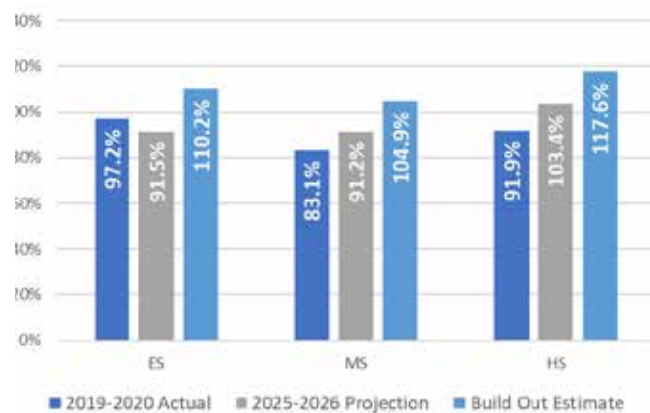


Figure 3: Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster Capacity Utilization Rates

reassignment of students from the overutilized Somerset Elementary School, which the project was initially intended for, is expected to proceed as planned. The addition at Bethesda Elementary School, which is projected to increase the program capacity by 205 seats, has been approved with a two-year delay in schedule and is expected to be completed by September 2025. There is also a new elementary school being considered jointly for the Bethesda-Chevy Chase and Walter Johnson clusters in the out-years of the FY 2021-2026 CIP for which a completion date will be considered in a future CIP.

### Utilization Rates

At the elementary school level, the cluster-wide utilization rate for the 2019-2020 school year was 97.2 percent. Addition at Bethesda Elementary School is expected to increase the overall capacity of the cluster and bring down the projected utilization rate for the 2025-2026 school year to 91.5 percent.

At the middle school level, the cluster recently received a major capital investment to see the opening of Silver Creek Middle School in September 2017. The utilization rate for the 2019-2020 school year therefore is at a relatively low 83.1 percent. Projections show that enrollment will continue to increase in the coming years and reach a utilization rate of 91.2 percent for the 2025-2026 school year.

Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School also received an addition in capacity through a capital project in 2017, and is currently utilized at 91.9 percent. Projections show that enrollment will continue to increase during the six-year capital planning period, and the utilization rate is expected to reach 103.4 percent by the 2025-2026 school year.

## Anticipated Build-Out Adequacy

When the Bethesda Downtown Plan was adopted in 2017, planning staff calculated an enrollment estimate of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster based on a hypothetical full residential buildout scenario of all recently approved plans within the cluster boundary. This included not only impacts of the Bethesda Downtown Plan, but also the Greater Lyttonsville, Chevy Chase Lake and Westbard Sector Plans.

The realistic probability of a plan area reaching its maximum buildout scenario is hard to gauge and may differ by plan, not to mention the difficulty in predicting the timeline of when things will actually materialize. There is also a possibility of change in enrollment trends in the longer term due to shifts in population, demographics, economy, neighborhood turnover, or other factors that may not be as foreseeable during a master planning stage. Nevertheless, the enrollment estimate provides a tangible standard to measure current enrollment and projections against for analysis purposes.

The following table shows a comparison of the enrollment and capacity at each school level in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Cluster for the most current school year, latest school year projected in the six-year capital budget planning cycle, and the estimated enrollment at full build-out stage of all plans impacting the cluster.

During adoption of the Bethesda Downtown Plan, Council staff worked with MCPS to identify possible capacity options that could potentially be explored

Table 4 - Current Enrollment and Capacity Compared to Projected Enrollment at Buildout					
	Current Capacity 2019-2020	Current Enrollment 2019-2020	Projected Capacity 2025-2026	Projected Enrollment 2025-2026	Projected Enrollment at Buildout 2025-2026
Elementary School	3,748	3,643	3,953	3,618	4,357
Middle School	2,040	1,695	2,040	1,860	2,139
High School	2,457	2,257	2,457	2,541	2,889

if overutilization continues to be an issue. At the elementary school level, these options include the addition at Westbrook Elementary School and the reopening of Lynnbrook and/or Rollingwood Elementary School sites. At the middle school level, the existing two schools were found to be able to accommodate additional capacity for up to 383 seats. The high school, however, was deemed inappropriate for any further additions on the existing site. The Sector Plan accordingly included the possibility of expanding the current site through acquisition of neighboring properties or looking for capacity solutions outside the cluster. MCPS is also conducting a countywide boundary analysis through a third-party consultant that will provide a comprehensive assessment of current school boundaries using school facility utilization, capacity, school assignment, etc., as data points for analysis.

## Recommendations

- Continue to monitor capacity needs of the schools that serve the Bethesda Downtown Plan area and ensure that the potential options discussed to provide capacity are available if necessary. These options may include, but are not limited to, building additional capacity at existing schools, reopening former schools, seeking opportunities for future school sites, or reassigning students to underutilized schools.



# Parks and Open Space

## Plan Recommendations

The Plan recommends new and enhanced parks and open spaces in downtown Bethesda, including new civic greens at Veteran’s Park, Montgomery Farm Women’s Cooperative Market, and the Capital Crescent Trail, and new urban parks, neighborhood greens, pathways and gateways to major trail systems.

The overarching parks and open space goals of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan are to:

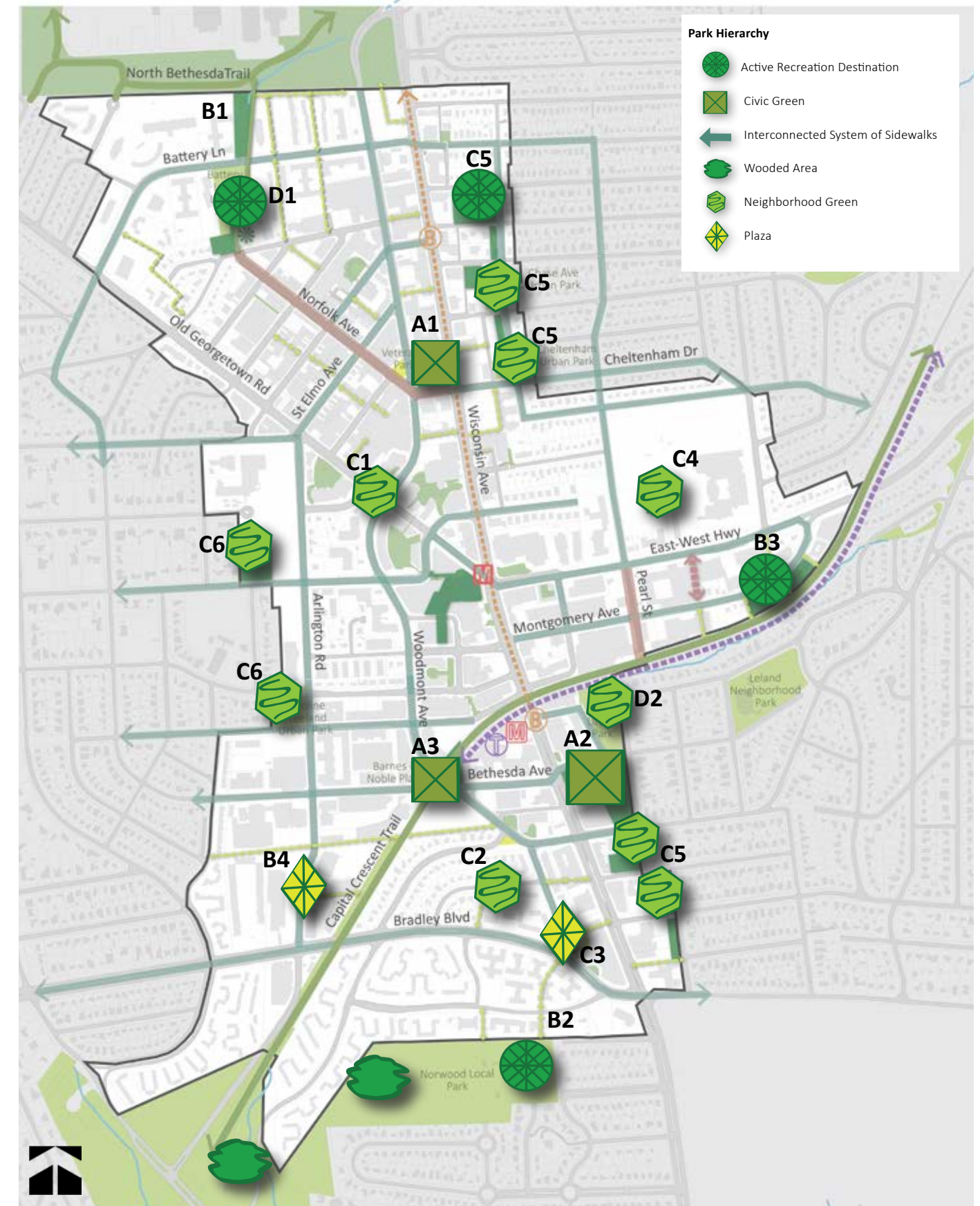
- Support the centers with civic gathering spaces.
- Provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail systems.
- Create livable communities and appropriate transitions by greening and buffering the edges.
- Create green neighborhood parks.
- Add to the existing park, trail, and open space system.

The table on page 18 reflects the status for the specific parks and open space recommendations in the Plan. This section also addresses and summarizes planned improvements to existing parks through the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), Park Impact Payments (PIP) received through the development approval process, and privately owned public spaces (POPS) that are being created through the development process.

## Parks Inventory Status

Table 5 identifies new status updates to the inventory of existing and proposed parks since last year’s report (May 2019). See the Sector Plan Recommended Parks and Open Space map of proposed parks in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Sector Plan Recommended Parks and Open Space





**Table 5: Parks Inventory Status**

Sector Plan Parks and Open Spaces	Existing Acres	New Acres	Park Type (PROS 2017)	Description	Status
A.1. Veteran's Park Civic Green	0	0.3	Civic Green	Expand current park into a full Civic Green to serve as flexible green community open space. Will provide space for casual, informal use as well as platform for community events and programming.	One lot has been acquired and another is under contract (0.26 acres total) to provide for the future Civic Green. Negotiations with adjacent/nearby landowners will determine how and where to create the Civic Green using land exchanges or other real estate transactions.
A.2. Montgomery County Farm Women's Cooperative Market Civic Green	0	1.6	Civic Green	Green open space next to the historic market as a destination and local gathering spot, an activating feature connecting Eastern Greenway and Elm Street Urban Park.	Anticipated to be created as a privately-owned public space (POPS) as part of adjacent redevelopment projects. A sketch plan has been approved with two options. Both options include revitalization of the market building and its grounds.
A.3. Capital Crescent Civic Green	0.5	0	Civic Green	Civic Green to serve as gateway to the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT), a meeting spot for cyclists & business patrons, and with a large lawn for community events & programming. Added to Legacy Open Space as an Urban Open Space.	Land for this Civic Green was purchased in December 2017. The site is serving as a staging area for Purple Line construction. The project is a candidate in the Parks CIP for facility planning in FY20-22. The intent is to complete facility planning before the Purple Line construction is completed, so that the project can be programmed for design and construction as soon as the land is turned over to Parks.
B.1. North Bethesda Trail Urban Greenway	0	0.9	Urban Greenway	A linear bicycle and pedestrian trail to connect NIH and Woodmont Triangle. This greenway provides a trail through Battery Lane Urban Park and north, providing environmental interpretation and play elements.	The trail through Battery Lane Urban Park will be widened (Summer 2018) to 10 feet, matching the width of the existing Bethesda Trolley Trail. The future connecting trail will be created during redevelopment of adjacent properties.
B.2. Gateway into Norwood Local Park	0	0.1	Local Park	Create a 15-foot wide pedestrian access and gateway from Chevy Chase Drive to Norwood LP, to provide a welcoming, green entrance that improves connectivity to the area north of the park.	This gateway will be created during redevelopment of properties north of Norwood LP.
B.3. Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway	0	1.9	Urban Greenway	Create active recreational gateway into the Bethesda CBD along the Capital Crescent Trail. Also designated in Legacy Open Space as Urban Open Space. Facilities could include adult fitness equipment, a dog park, skateboarding, courts and a playground.	This new park will be created primarily through land purchase. Acquisition efforts are underway for several parcels. One parcel has been acquired by MTA for Purple Line construction and will be later transferred to Parks to initiate the creation of this park.
B.4. Arlington South Gateway Plaza	0	0.2	Urban Plaza	Linear urban plaza to link Arlington South District to the Capital Crescent Trail. Could include a wide walkway for pedestrians and cyclists, shade features, and a focal feature that visually draws people to the park.	This plaza and entrance to the CCT will be created during future redevelopment of the adjacent properties.
C.1. Old Georgetown Road Neighborhood Green	0	0.3	Neighborhood Green	Create shady green "living room" on highly visible site at Woodmont Avenue and Old Georgetown Road.	This site was recently developed with a bank building. This park may be implemented on this location in the future if the opportunity arises, or may be provided on a nearby site to meet needs in this area.

**Table 5: Parks Inventory Status**

Sector Plan Parks and Open Spaces	Existing Acres	New Acres	Park Type (PROS 2017)	Description	Status
C.2. Wellington Drive Neighborhood Green	0	0.5	Neighborhood Green	At Bradley Boulevard and Strathmore Street, provide in-demand, walk-to amenities such as community open space, trees, nature-based play area for the immediate community.	This open space may be created through the development process as a public park or privately owned public space (POPS).
C.3. South Bethesda Public Plaza	0	0.2	Urban Plaza	Small shaded open space at corner of Bradley Boulevard and Strathmore Street for the dense residential community proposed along Bradley Blvd west of Wisconsin Avenue.	This plaza is likely to be created through development as a POPS.
C.4. Bethesda-Chevy Chase East Neighborhood Green	0	0.3	Neighborhood Green	Create community open space, seating, trees, and art or nature-based play area to serve future development between Bethesda Chevy Chase High School, Pearl Street, and East-West Highway.	This park may be created through redevelopment projects in this area of the Pearl District either as a public park or a POPS.
C.5.a. Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens, North End	0.7	2.0	Neighborhood Green	Create green space along west side of Tilbury Street to provide buffering of the eastern edge of the CBD and provide a variety of walk-to recreational amenities. In North End, create two additional 0.5-acre parks plus greenways to connect to Chase and Cheltenham Parks between Maple Avenue and Cheltenham Drive.	This portion of the greenway includes two existing parks, Cheltenham and Chase Avenue. Development is proposed next to Cheltenham and the developer has been asked by the DAP to coordinate their design to include more park presence and inclusion for the private residential development.
C.5.b. Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens, South End	0	3.0	Neighborhood Green	Create green space along west side of 46th Street and West Avenue to provide buffering of the eastern edge of the CBD and provide a variety of walk-to recreational amenities. In South End, add a total of 3 acres of green space across four blocks from Willow Lane to Ridge Street.	A recently approved sketch plan (Bethesda Market) includes one option that would create a large new park on portions of PLD's Lots 24 & 10. If that preferred option is pursued by the involved parties, the core park of the South End of the Eastern Greenway would be created.
C.6. Western Edge Neighborhood Greens	1.0	1.2	Neighborhood Green	Add two areas to existing public land at Caroline Freeland Urban Park (0.15 acres) and Bethesda ES (1 acre) to provide more green space and small-scale neighborhood recreation spaces	These additions to existing open space and parkland are likely to be implemented through land purchase.
D.1. Battery Lane Neighborhood Green Expansion	2.0	0.7	Neighborhood Green	Additional land will provide for needed facilities such as community open space, dog parks, skate parks, or community gardens.	Battery Lane may be expanded through several means, including direction purchase of adjacent lots, dedication or purchase of land during redevelopment, and/or ROW abandonment.
D.2. Elm Street Neighborhood Green Improvements (Elm Street Urban Park)	2.1	0	Neighborhood Green	Complete the design and construction of rehabilitation of northern portion of this important urban park. No additional land proposed, but construction funding needed.	Design and construction of the park is on hold pending decisions regarding funding for the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue, which connects to the Georgetown Branch Trail (Purple Line Trail) through the park. Work will be coordinated with the Purple Line and MCDOT. If the tunnel project is not funded, renovations to the park will be coordinated in conjunction with the CCT surface route.
<b>Existing and Proposed Acres</b>	<b>10.2</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>23.1</b>	<b>Potential Future Acres of Parks and Open Space</b>	

## Development Projects for Existing Parks

The following update outlines development activity in existing parks, including park renovations, and repurposing of amenities to new uses.

### Battery Lane Park

The existing playground was renovated in 2019 and additional improvements made, including new fitness equipment, lighting, picnic tables, seating, stormwater management improvements, additional shade tree plantings, resurfacing of the basketball court, and renovation of the Bethesda Trolley Trail within the park. Additional accessibility improvements are planned for 2020.

### Caroline Freeland Park

A facility plan for renovation of the park was approved by the Montgomery County Planning Board in 2015. The park is scheduled for design beginning in FY2020-2021 and construction from FY2021-FY2023.



### Chase Avenue and Cheltenham Urban Parks

Maintenance renovations and accessibility improvements are underway in Spring 2020 to improve the parks. Additional site furnishings were installed in 2019.

## Park Impact Payment (PIP)

The implementation of these new parks and open spaces will be supported through a funding mechanism tied to new development called the Park Impact Payment, or PIP. Any new development in downtown Bethesda that is allocated Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) Density by the Planning Board is required to make a PIP of \$11.08 per square foot on the gross floor area of the approved BOZ Density. Exceptions to this requirement include the gross floor area allocated for MPDUs and projects that are providing 25% or more MPDUs. Park Impact Payments must be submitted to the Planning Department's Development Applications and Regulatory Coordination (DARC) Division as a condition of the Planning Board approval and prior to any above-grade building permit application being issued.

Submitted PIPs are placed in the Bethesda Park Impact Payment Project Development Form (PDF) within the Commission's Capital Improvements Programs (CIP) for appropriation and expenditure. Park Impact Payment funds may only be used for acquisition of parkland and for planning, design and construction of new park facilities and new parks within the Bethesda Downtown Plan boundary as illustrated in the Sector Plan, consistent with Planning Board approval.

Ten development site plans have been approved with PIP requirements totaling almost \$14.5 million. So far, four PIPs have been submitted totaling \$9,634,380, and the remaining approved PIPs are expected to be paid during FY2020-FY2021. Additional development projects may result in several million dollars more over the following two years. After approval of the pending FY2021-2026 CIP, the Bethesda Park Impact Payment (PIP) project will include appropriation of \$15 million to be able to spend the incoming PIPs on priority acquisitions and park development projects.

Park Impact Payment funds will be used based on the priorities set forth in Section 2.7 of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan. Priorities include the following:

- 1. Civic Gathering Spaces:** Civic Greens that support the centers of activity including Veteran's Park Civic Green, the Farm Women's Market Civic Green and the Capital Crescent Civic Green.
- 2. Linkages and Gateways to Major Trail Systems:** These park spaces provide linkages and signature gateways to the major trail systems through the development of additional community open spaces that provide active recreation destinations.
- 3. Green Neighborhood Parks:** Parks that serve as spaces for informal or small-event gatherings or relaxation for residents and workers in the surrounding neighborhoods and downtown.
- 4. Enhancing Existing Parks, Open Spaces and Trails:** Expansion and improvements have been recommended for Battery Lane Urban Park and Elm Street Neighborhood Green in the Sector Plan.

Implementation of the Sector Plan's park and open space recommendations, while following the general priorities listed above, will take place over time and will be affected by a myriad of factors. The implementation program will create and develop new parks and open spaces, but priorities will adapt to changing conditions and opportunities. Implementation of the Plan recommendations and expenditure of the PIP funds will be affected by the timing and realization of development projects and acquisition opportunities, the rate at which PIP funds are accumulated, the timing of creating partnerships, and other factors.

To date, PIP funds have been allocated for the purchase of the real estate assets needed to implement the new Veterans Park Civic Green (\$9.6 million in two phases). In addition, \$500,000 has been allocated for facility planning for the future Capital



Crescent Civic Green to implement this important park at the end of the Purple Line in a timely fashion.

The online *Monitoring and Tracking Program* on the Planning Department website will continue to provide updated information on the most recent list of development projects and anticipated/actual PIPs contributed.

### Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) – Existing and Planned

The Sector Plan identifies privately owned public spaces (POPS) as an important partner in creating a successful active public space network for downtown Bethesda. The recommendations for privately owned public space include:

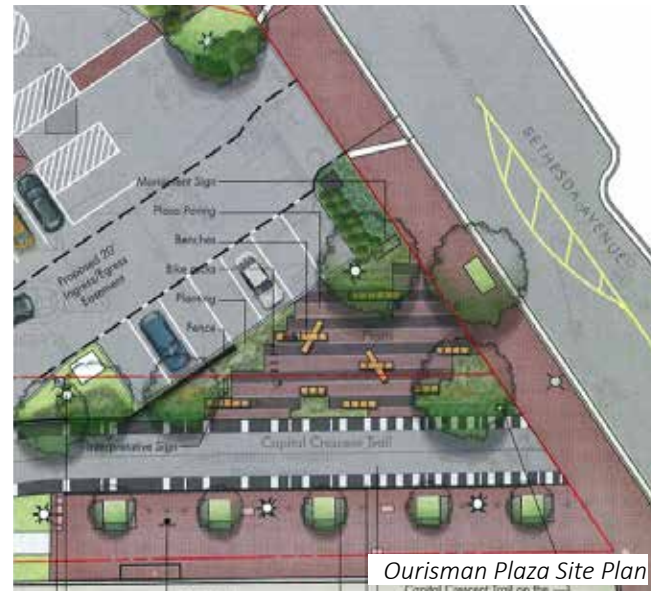
- Improve visibility and connections to the street.
- Consider integrating new buildings with active ground-floor uses.
- Use creative wayfinding and public art as beacons.
- Unclutter plaza spaces by smoothing grade and limiting large permanent furniture.
- Integrate stormwater management practices into flexible lawn spaces and plantings.
- Encourage more temporary programming, such as events kiosks and educational opportunities.

Fostering a sense of place is central to enhancing Bethesda’s community character and identity. Placemaking involves creating great streets, open spaces whether public or privately owned and buildings that represent downtown Bethesda, making it recognizable and special to both residents and visitors alike. Improvements to existing POPS and future opportunities for downtown Bethesda are identified on the following pages.

### Ourisman Plaza

The plan creates a 2,200± square foot, public plaza on the west side of the trail at Bethesda Avenue by relocating the existing vehicular entrance to the dealership, and rearranging its surface parking area. Ourisman offered an additional approximately 793 square feet of its own land to include in the Plaza”.

The new plaza includes special paving in a striped pattern with custom-designed angled benches located to reinforce the design of the striped plaza paving, and landscape planting.



### Metro Tower

The Metro Tower project will provide 2,020 square feet of public open space on the Metro Tower portion of the site consisting primarily of streetscape along the frontages. Additionally, the project will expand and improve the immediately adjoining open space plaza (on the One Bethesda Center site) that connects Hampden Lane to Elm Street at the western edge of the Property. The upgraded Plaza will increase the size of the existing privately-owned, yet publicly accessible, open space area from approximately 4,672 square feet to approximately 9,183 square feet overall, with potential for the Plaza’s edges to be used for private café seating. To facilitate this expansion, existing public art in the current plaza – including the clock tower feature – will be decommissioned per county guidelines. The applicant is currently working with an art consultant to provide replacement art for the plaza space.





## 7000 Wisconsin Avenue

7000 Wisconsin Avenue will add 1,440 square feet, as public open space along the northern portion of the property that will ultimately allow for the through-block connection envisioned by the Sector Plan. The pedestrian connection between Wisconsin Avenue and the public alley along the west site frontage will have a minimum width of 22-feet and measure two stories in height. It will remain open to the public between the hours of 8:00 am and 9:00 pm. The through-block pedestrian connection will incorporate a two-story covered walkway accentuated by lighting to ensure that the space will be inviting to the public. People

will be encouraged to gather and socialize in spaces demarcated with raised planters, conversational furniture and decorative paving materials. The mid-block connection will be lined with active ground floor uses on both sides. These ground floor spaces will be designed to provide ample transparency, to activate the pass-through, while still creating an intimate setting commensurate with the character of the residential building.



Through block connection and POPS at 7000 Wisconsin Avenue

## Artery Plaza

The existing plaza at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Bethesda Avenue will be revitalized to provide a more up to date, relevant design to refresh this corner of the Property, encourage use of the plaza, provide desired outdoor dining opportunities, coordinate the design of the plaza with the construction of the CCST, and physically integrate the CCST into the overall plaza design.

The proposed redesign of this space will create a three-level plaza from Bethesda Avenue to the primary building entrance to the north. The new plaza is positioned to be a multi-functional gathering space and is designed to simultaneously accommodate separate uses, provide a variety of experiences, and improve pedestrian circulation. The upper level of the plaza will function as a welcoming and open circulation route to the existing office lobby of the building, provide two designated outdoor dining areas for new restaurants, and provide open space for the general public. The middle level will become the core gathering space

in the plaza with a variety of integrated and flexible seating elements and will include a small stage. The lower level of the plaza at the southern end of the Property will provide a transition from the CCST, a bike rack, a public art wall, landscaping and seating areas.

## Recommendations

- Continue to work towards the creation of new parks using a variety of tools (direct purchase, dedication through development, and partnerships with other landowners) to implement the parks recommendations in the Sector Plan.
- Continue to work with property owners to create functional, accessible, and active privately-owned public spaces as part of the development process.
- Continue to engage the Implementation Advisory Committee to support realization of the Sector Plan's recommended parks and open spaces.



Aerial Rendering of Proposed Renovation to Artery Plaza





## Transportation

### Plan Recommendations

The Plan recommends enhancing the existing transportation network with “complete streets” improvements to the roadway network that increase the connectivity, safety, and quality for all modes of transportation. These treatments were recommended for major corridors and key connectors including Wisconsin Avenue, Woodmont Avenue, Norfolk Avenue and Arlington Road. Both short and long-term cross sections were identified for these roads to safely accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and for Wisconsin Avenue, bus rapid transit. Separate projects were recommended to improve the bikeway network with both public and private funds.

Additionally, the Plan included policy recommendations that encourage non-driver travel modes. For example, the Transportation Management District (TMD) was confirmed and expanded from the 1994 Bethesda Central Business District (CBD) Sector Plan, which establishes and monitors the Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS).

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of the recommended projects and policies that achieve the goals of the Sector Plan. As directed by Council at the time of the Plan’s adoption, the report will cover all of the goals and recommendations in the Approved and Adopted Sector Plan in each report cycle, but will provide detailed information on the status of the Non-Auto Drive Mode Share (NADMS) and Road Adequacy Test in alternating years. The Road Adequacy Network will be reported on in even-numbered years and an update on progress towards achieving the Plan’s NADMS goal will be covered in odd-numbered years.

### Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS)

Non-Auto Driver Mode Share (NADMS) measures the percentage of non-drivers arriving at a destination within a defined area, during the peak period. This is referenced as NADMS-E (for “employees”) or “inbound commuters.” NADMS is also used to measure the percentage of residents living within a defined area who use non-driving modes to get to work, referenced as NADMS-R (for “residents”) or “outbound” commuters. “Non-driver” includes all commuters who arrive to work via “alternative modes” to driving, including transit, biking, walking, etc., and includes those who telework instead of traveling to a worksite. NADMS includes carpool and vanpool passengers but excludes carpool and vanpool drivers.

The Bethesda Downtown Plan recommends a combined average goal of 55 percent NADMS for both employees and residents. The goal established in the Sector Plan recognizes the potential traffic impacts of the large number of existing and planned multi-unit residential property developments in the downtown Bethesda area. While many future residents may either walk or bike to work or chose to take transit due to their proximity to Metro and other transit options, it is expected there may also be an increase in outbound auto drivers from Bethesda to other locations.

In 2019, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) reported the weighted average NADMS for employees was 36.4 percent.

The first residentially based commuter survey in the Bethesda TMD was deployed during fall of 2019. Therefore the data was not available for the 2019 report which was published in May of that year. Instead, MCDOT estimated the NADMS-R by analyzing 2013-2017 data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. Based on this data, 59.6 percent of residents aged 16+ commuting to work were non-drivers.

Data for the 2021 report is being analyzed now and will be available to the public in May of next year.

## Bicycle and Pedestrians Connections

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) designated the Sector Plan area as a Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Area (BiPPA) prior to the adoption of the Sector Plan. Montgomery County has a similar designation and the Sector Plan recommended that MCDOT recognize the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan area as such. This designation from both agencies, requires SHA and MCDOT to use best design practices to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians through all phases of transportation planning.

All approved development will contribute to improving pedestrian and bikeway connections throughout the Sector Plan area. Several new bikeway recommendations were made for on-road and trail connections. Implementation of these projects will be funded and/or constructed by both public and private sources. Since the adoption of the Plan, several of the projects were initiated. A list of these projects with their completion status is included below. A more detailed project description is included in the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) section of this report.

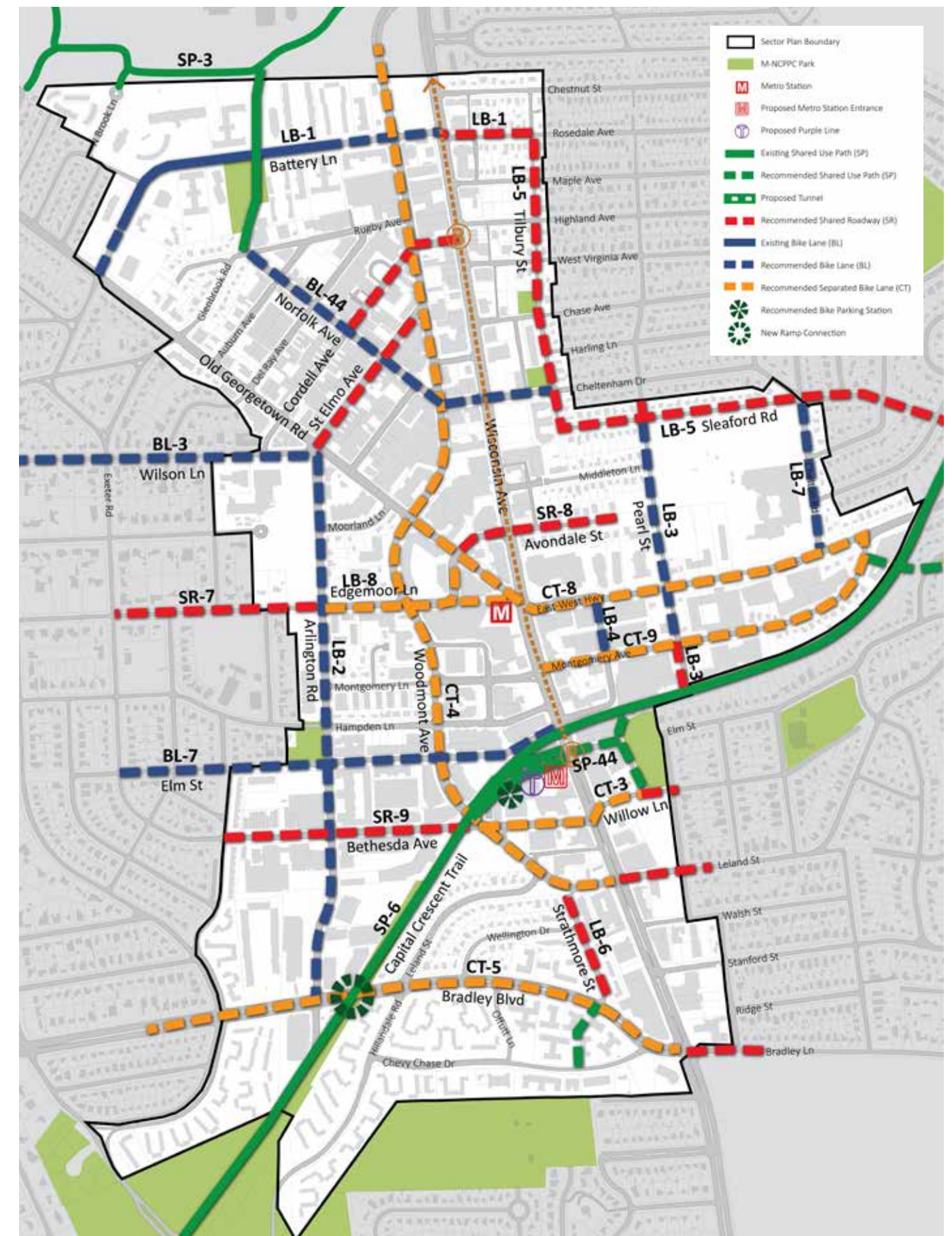
- **The Capital Crescent Surface Trail** was planned to provide a street-level connection through downtown Bethesda. It will also serve as an alternate route while the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) tunnel is closed for construction of the Purple Line. Phase 1 Design of the project is complete and permitting is underway. Phase 2 design is at 30 percent design.
- **Woodmont Avenue** between Wisconsin Avenue/ Leland Street and Norfolk Avenue is planned for a two-way separated bike lane. Design is complete

for Phase 1. Phase 2 is scheduled for construction in coordination with Marriott headquarters and Edgemont II at Bethesda.<sup>1</sup>

- **Montgomery Lane and Montgomery Avenue** between Woodmont Avenue and Pearl Street is planned for a two-way separated bike lane. The concept design is underway, and construction is anticipated for Phase 1 (Woodmont Avenue to Wisconsin Avenue) in FY2021-2022 and Phase 2 (Wisconsin Avenue to Pearl Street) in 2021. The second phase of the project is timed with the Avocet Tower redevelopment (7373 Wisconsin Avenue)<sup>2</sup>.
- **Pedestrian crossings** are where pedestrians are most vulnerable and exposed to potential conflicts with motor vehicles. Recommendations were included in the Sector Plan to address pedestrian safety and comfort at intersections in downtown Bethesda. The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) has plans to improve the pedestrian crossing experience at Wisconsin Avenue and Middleton Lane.

1. MCDOT will coordinate with private developers and public agencies with construction projects that affect the Woodmont Avenue bike facility project. It is possible that private construction or other factors could delay these projects.  
 2. MCDOT will coordinate with private developers and public agencies with construction projects that affect the Montgomery Avenue and Montgomery Lane bike facility projects. It is possible that private construction or other factors could delay these projects.

Figure 5. Sector Plan Bikeways Network





## Road Network Adequacy Test

As required by the 2016 Subdivision Staging Policy (SSP), key intersections were evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology which estimates average seconds of delay per vehicle during morning and evening peak periods. The eight intersections studied within the Sector Plan boundary are located within the Bethesda Metro Station Policy Area and were therefore evaluated for adequacy based on a policy area delay standard of 120 seconds/vehicle. The six gateway intersections studied as part of the roadway network analysis are located within the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Policy Area and were evaluated for adequacy based on a policy area delay standard of 80 seconds per vehicle. Using these standards, these intersections were evaluated for the 2018 annual monitoring report using the most recent historical traffic counts available at the time the report was produced. These same 14 intersections were reevaluated for this annual monitoring report based on traffic counts collected during the Spring of 2019. Table 6 below shows the results of the average vehicle

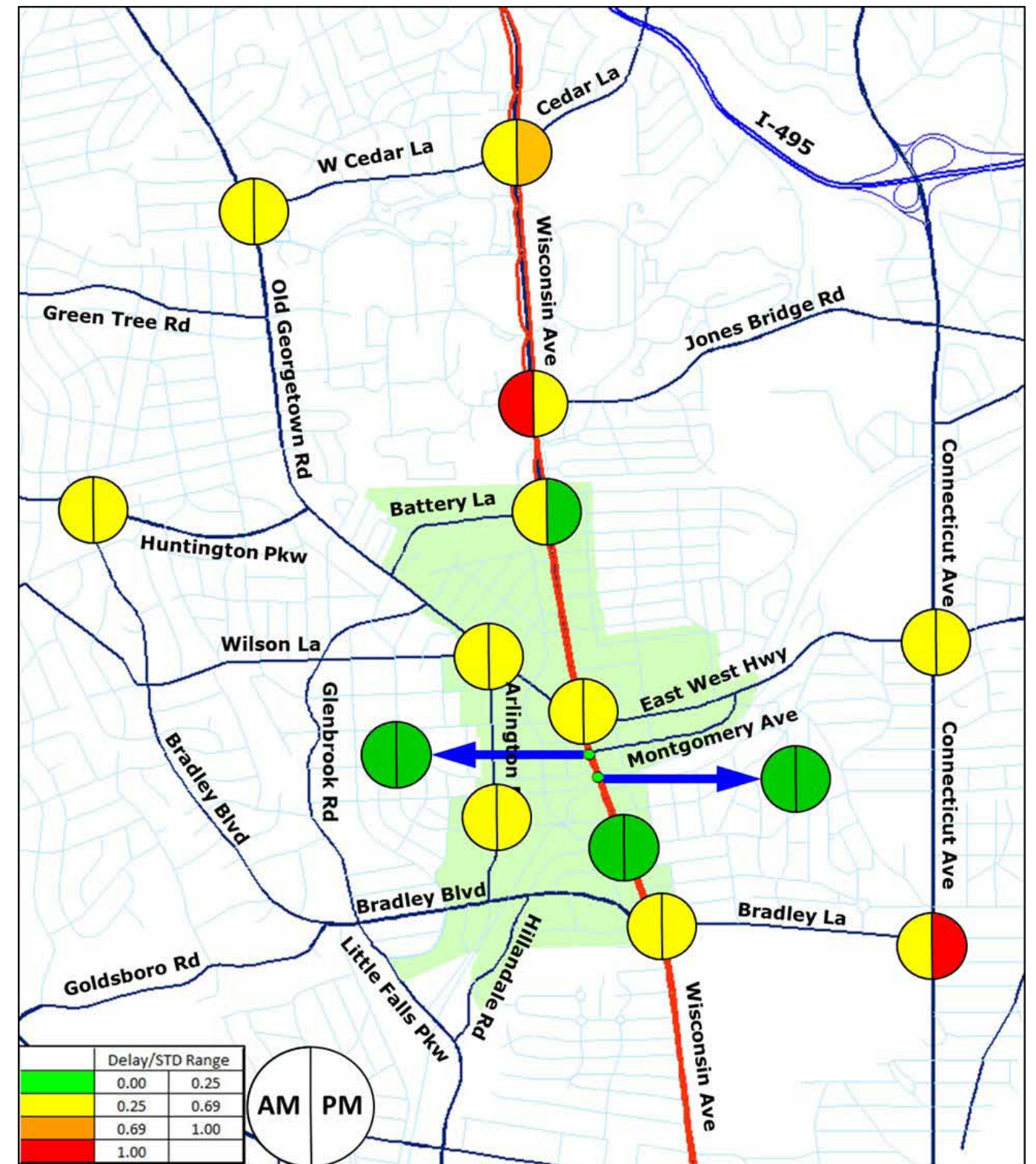
delay analysis (in seconds per vehicle) of the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan study intersections using this information. These results are depicted graphically in the color-coded intersection average vehicle delay Dot map provided as Figure 6. The left-half side of the dots in the figure reflect observed delay conditions during the AM peak hour based on a ratio of the delay results relative to the applicable policy area congestion standard. In this context, the green, yellow and orange colors reflect increasing, yet still adequate, congestion conditions. The red color reflects inadequate congestion conditions. The right-half side of the dots in the figure reflect observed delay conditions during the PM peak hour using the same approach. As shown in Table 6, all intersections within the Plan boundary are estimated to operate adequately based on the applicable policy area standard for average vehicle delay; however, two of the six gateway intersections are estimated to exceed the applicable policy area congestion standard. These intersections are highlighted in the table and briefly described below:

**Table 6: Average Vehicle Delay Analysis**

ID	East-West Road	North-South Road	HCM Delay Standard (sec)	2018 Annual Report			2020 Annual Report		
				Count Year*	AM Delay (sec)	PM Delay (sec)	Count Year*	AM Delay (sec)	PM Delay (sec)
1	Battery Lane	Wisconsin Avenue	120	2017	21.6	17.2	2019	36.7	28.4
2	Elm Street	Wisconsin Avenue	120	2016	9.3	15.4	2019	3.2	4.0
3	Bradley Boulevard	Wisconsin Avenue	120	2016	43.8	27.3	2019	67.8	45.6
4	East-West Highway	Wisconsin Avenue/ Old Georgetown Road	120	2017	65.6	75.1	2019	31.3	31.5
5	Montgomery Avenue	Wisconsin Avenue	120	2017	25.8	27.4	2019	16.5	19.1
6	Bethesda Avenue	Arlington Road	120	2010*	28.6	72.3	2019	35.3	35.4
7	Leland Street	Wisconsin Avenue	120	2016	12.7	13.4	2019	13.7	9.0
8	Wilson Lane	Old Georgetown Road	120	2017	49.8	70.5	2019	34.4	39.7
9	East-West Highway	Connecticut Avenue	120	2014*	88.0	115.2	2019	78.1	65.2
10	<b>Bradley Lane</b>	<b>Connecticut Avenue</b>	80	2014*	26.0	109.6	2019	32.0	<b>113.9</b>
11	West Cedar Lane	Old Georgetown Road	80	2013*	34.7	34.0	2019	28.3	29.6
12	Cedar Lane	Rockville Pike	80	2017	50.4	59.5	2019	50.4	59.5
13	<b>Jones Bridge Road</b>	<b>Rockville Pike</b>	80	2014	114.0	47.6	2019	<b>162.2</b>	70.3
14	Huntington Parkway	Bradley Boulevard	80	2013*	33.5	53.7	2019	33.5	53.7

Intersections within the Sector Plan Boundary
  Gateway Intersections

**Figure 6. Dot Map of Average Vehicle Delay**



- Bradley Lane and Connecticut Avenue – Estimated to exceed the applicable policy area intersection congestion standard during the evening peak hour.
- Jones Bridge Road and Rockville Pike – Estimated to exceed the applicable policy area intersection congestion standard during the morning peak hour.

These gateway intersections were discussed in detail with the Council’s Planning Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee prior to the adoption of the 2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan. Staff determined that traffic congestion exceeded the applicable policy area standard for average vehicle delay in the current condition prior to forecasting potential impacts from the additional density envisioned by the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan. After discussing potential mitigation strategies, the PHED Committee members ultimately decided not to include conceptual or illustrative recommendations in the Sector Plan for the purpose of future traffic mitigation at these locations. Instead, the Council decided to consider capacity improvements at these intersections as part of the development of the Unified Mobility Program (UMP) for Bethesda. For the intersection improvement at Connecticut Avenue and Bradley Lane, the Council will also consider historic preservation, environment and other community impacts. Until the UMP is finalized (anticipated to occur later this year), staff will continue to monitor all 14 intersections studied for the Sector Plan.

To supplement the average intersection delay analysis described above, a traffic queuing analysis was performed at the eight study intersections within the CBD area and at the Connecticut Avenue and East-West Highway intersection. The results of the analysis are reported in Table 7. The highlighted cells in the table indicate the travel lane movement that is projected to have vehicle queues that exceed the existing storage/turn lanes length. Two different queuing results are reported – Synchro 95th Percentile Queues and SimTraffic Max Queues:

- Synchro 95th Percentile Queues – 95th percentile queue length that is projected to occur within the peak hours, based on statistical models that takes into account the queuing impacts of the individual intersection and its coordinated intersections.
- SimTraffic Max Queues – Maximum queue length that is projected to occur within the peak hour, based on a traffic simulation that takes into account the full impact of queuing of the entire network.

The key takeaways from the queuing analysis are summarized below:

- Seven of the nine study intersections are projected to have vehicle queue lengths on certain approach(es) that exceed the existing storage/turn lane lengths and may spill back into the adjacent lane.
  - Connecticut Avenue and East-West Highway
  - Wisconsin Avenue and Montgomery Avenue
  - Wisconsin Avenue and Woodmont Avenue/Leland Street
  - Wisconsin Avenue and Bradley Boulevard
  - Old Georgetown Road and Wilson Lane
  - Arlington Road/St. Elmo Avenue
  - Arlington Road and Bethesda Avenue
- Four of the study intersections are projected to have vehicle queue lengths that exceed the storage/turn lane lengths in both the mainline and side street approaches.
  - Connecticut Avenue and East-West Highway
  - Wisconsin Avenue and Woodmont Avenue/Leland Street
  - Wisconsin Avenue and Bradley Boulevard
  - Old Georgetown Road and Wilson Lane and Arlington Road/St. Elmo Avenue

Possible mitigation to improve vehicle queuing include optimizing network signal timings and extending existing turn lanes as needed.

Intersection	Approach	Movement	AM Peak		PM Peak		Existing Storage (ft)
			Synchro 95th Percentile Queues (ft)	SimTraffic Max Queues (ft)	Synchro 95th Percentile Queues (ft)	SimTraffic Max Queues (ft)	
Connecticut Avenue & East-West Highway	Eastbound	EBL	#293	234	m#464	235	300
		EBTR	278	225	m#482	291	-
	Westbound	WBL	193	74	#273	75	50
		WBTR	#534	569	#328	569	-
	Northbound	NBL	m#398	250	m60	250	225
		NBTR	382	2012	m335	486	-
	Southbound	SBL	79	350	#326	350	325
		SBTR	#1093	549	516	501	-
Wisconsin Avenue & Battery Lane/Rosedale Avenue	Eastbound	EBL	182	101	120	184	-
		EBLTR	255	211	#277	227	-
	Westbound	WBLT	95	494	134	175	-
		WBR	0	100	0	100	-
	Northbound	NBLTR	179	199	466	252	-
	Southbound	SBTR	#688	287	222	236	-
Wisconsin Avenue & Old Georgetown Road/East-West Highway	Westbound	WBL	185	223	224	244	-
		WBT	171	345	284	372	-
		WBR	74	94	165	369	-
	Northbound	NBL	#518	362	#488	363	115
		NBT	234	227	244	279	-
	Southbound	SBT	m239	220	m238	236	-
Wisconsin Avenue & Montgomery Avenue	Eastbound	EBLT	250	249	261	267	-
		EBR	128	97	39	75	-
	Northbound	NBT	136	295	194	326	-
		NBR	177	99	212	100	-
	Southbound	SBL	77	139	104	140	115
		SBT	113	241	161	212	-
Wisconsin Avenue & Elm Street	Westbound	WBL	35	75	46	250	-
		WBR	65	284	124	295	-
	Northbound	NBT	46	419	54	442	-
Southbound	SBT	m1	76	m15	53	-	
Wisconsin Avenue & Woodmont Avenue/Leland Street	Eastbound	EBL	#251	140	112	136	115
		EBT	114	536	105	167	-
		EBR	196	102	158	975	-
	Westbound	WBLT	111	217	167	217	-
		WBR	4	209	35	212	-
	Northbound	NBL	m61	64	m19	149	125
		NBTR	145	1048	42	1069	-
	Southbound	SBL	m14	139	m1	60	115
		SBTR	m163	253	21	93	-
Wisconsin Avenue & Bradley Boulevard	Eastbound	EBL	143	1729	132	856	-
		EBT	219	1742	396	914	-
		EBR	#911	225	340	225	200
	Westbound	WBL	119	100	99	100	75
		WBTR	#434	3682	376	2595	-
	Northbound	NBL	#208	214	#400	215	190
		NBTR	303	713	419	728	-
	Southbound	SBL	m24	184	90	185	160
		SBTR	#527	437	#411	760	-
Old Georgetown Road and Wilson Lane and Arlington Road/St. Elmo Avenue	Eastbound	EBR	#285	486	176	436	125
		NBL	m88	83	m#238	174	150
	Northbound	NBTR	16	52	m50	195	-
		SBT	m206	807	188	790	-
	Southbound	SBR	m165	265	#397	265	240
		NEBL	136	370	#431	396	-
	Northeastbound	NEBTR	118	220	218	225	-
		SWBLT	170	358	170	544	-
Southwestbound	SWBR	66	73	#203	225	200	
Arlington Road & Bethesda Avenue	Eastbound	EBLT	#236	538	107	538	-
		EBR	0	125	0	125	100
	Westbound	WBL	67	174	182	175	150
		WBTR	97	539	273	915	-
	Northbound	NBLTR	406	961	395	950	-
		SBL	m22	72	m43	91	250
Southbound	SBTR	m122	134	281	289	-	

# = 95th Percentile Volumes Exceed Capacity; Queue May Be Longer  
m = Volume for 95th Percentile Queue is Metered by Upstream Signal



## Development Approvals

A summary of each project with Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) approval since April 2019, is included below, listed chronologically in order of APF approval date. Each subsequent project was required to consider the previously approved project(s) as part of the background traffic for their analysis.

### 8101 Glenbrook Road: 12016001A

- AFPO Approval: July 18, 2019
- Density: up to 21,200 square feet of day care facility (up to 231 students) and up to 9,004 square feet of general office use

The applicant is required to install brick sidewalk and streetlights along the Rugby Avenue frontage.

Table 8: 8101 Glenbrook Road APFO Analysis							
Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)						
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Glenbrook Road/Rugby Avenue/Norfolk Avenue	120	7.2	7.5	7.4	7.6	7.7	7.9
Woodmont Avenue/Rugby Avenue	120	2.2	5.7	5.2	15.6	10.9	29.7
Old Georgetown Road/Glenbrook Road (1)	120	2.6	-	18.2	-	19.4	-
Norfolk Avenue/St Elmo Avenue	120	12.6	13.7	13.3	14.7	13.5	15.0

Source: *The Traffic Group Transportation Study, April 4, 2019.*

(1) HCM Methodology cannot be applied to this intersection since the CLV is below 1,150, the intersection is adequate.

### 8000 Wisconsin Avenue

- APFO Approval: October 11, 2018
- Density: up to 441 multifamily units, up to 20,000 square feet of commercial uses

A transportation statement, dated January 5, 2018, was submitted with the project, indicating that the approved development will generate 15 fewer morning peak-hour person trips (8 net new vehicle trips) when compared to the existing use and 169 fewer evening peak-hour person trips (65 fewer vehicle trips). Because the estimated transportation impact of the project is less than 50 net new person trips, the project satisfied the Local Area Transportation Review requirement without further analysis.

The 2013 Countywide Transit Corridors Function Master Plan recommends that the Maryland 355 South Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) have a station at the intersection of MD 355 and Cordell Avenue. Based on current engineering guidance from MCDOT, that station is anticipated to project beyond the subject property's northern lot line and must therefore be accommodated by the project's site design. The project responded to this unique design criteria by canting the building's ground floor away from the requisite station clear area and by providing adequate dedication along the Wisconsin Avenue frontage.

### Metro Tower: 120190190

- APFO Approval: July 18, 2019
- Density: up to 366 multifamily units, up to 11,000 square feet of ancillary retail

A transportation impact statement, dated January 23, 2019, was submitted with the application, indicating that the proposed development will generate 43 net new morning peak-hour person trips and 65 fewer net new evening peak-hour person trips when compared to the existing use. Because the estimated transportation impact of the application is less than 50 net new person trips, the application satisfied the Local Area Transportation Review Requirement without further analysis.

The applicant is required to construct Bethesda Central Business District streetscaping along Hampden Lane, Wisconsin Avenue, and Elm Street frontages. Prior to certified preliminary plan, the applicant will work with MCDOT concerning the design and location of the proposed mid-block crosswalk on Elm Street.

### 4915 Auburn Avenue (amendment): 12018021A

- APFO Approval: September 12, 2019
- Density: up to 175 multifamily units, up to 12,500 square feet of non-residential uses

The Planning Board previously approved Preliminary Plan 120180210 on December 13, 2018 for up to 180 multifamily units and up to 12,500 square feet of retail.

The applicant already had APFO approval for 180 multifamily units, and the proposed density was a decreased from what was previously approved. Therefore, no further study was required by the LATR.

In addition to the streetscape improvements required along the frontage, the project will participate in the implementation of the Norfolk Avenue Shared Street concept, as recommended in the Sector Plan on page 53 and pages 114-117. As of the date of this report, the applicant is continuing to work with MCDOT to determine the scope and manner of participation in the Norfolk Avenue shared street concept, which may take the form of a monetary contribution, approved by MCDOT, or implementation of a portion of the Norfolk Avenue shared street as a "pilot" to implement the Sector Plan recommendation. The applicant's cost estimate of \$55,208 for the pro-rata portion of the shared street, as confirmed by MCDOT.

### Kolius Property: 120190200

- APFO Approval: November 14, 2019
- Approval is limited to two lots: one lot for an existing two-story building and one lot for an existing one-story building (not proposed density changes)

A transportation exemption statement, dated April 29, 2019, satisfied the Local Area Transportation Review (LATR) for the subject application because the project generates fewer than 50 net new peak hour person trips. There is no proposed construction and no increase in square footage, which results in zero net new person trips.

The project incorporates the master plan recommended 10-foot sidepath on Wilson Lane by dedicating adequate right-of-way for its future implementation. The applicant will be required to coordinate with MCDOT to make a financial contribution towards the design and implementation of the planned sidepath.

#### 4 Bethesda Metro: 11981068B

- APFO Approval: November 14, 2019
- Density: up to 479 multifamily units, up to 20,600 square feet of ground floor retail.

The applicant evaluated a total of 15 intersections on five corridors within downtown Bethesda. In accordance with the 2016-2020 Subdivision Staging Policy, the corridors were evaluated using the Highway Capacity Manual methodology.

Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)								
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total		Total with Master Plan Improvements (1)	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Wisconsin Avenue	120	14	15	21	33	48	47	54	52
Woodmont Avenue (1)	120	11	12	22	19	22	20	32	18
Edgemoor Lane	120	30	40	32	42	31	42	36	48
Montgomery Lane/Avenue	120	21	29	26	38	27	39	34	86
Old Georgetown Road/East-West Highway	120	29	25	62	40	62	40	57	42

(1) Woodmont Avenue (corridor also includes segment of Arlington Rd), and Montgomery Lane improvements as specified in the Sector Plan

Source: Wells & Associates Transportation Study, dated May 17, 2019 and revised September 13, 2019

Because the project generates more than 50 peak hour pedestrian trips, the applicant evaluated each of the crosswalk level of service at LATR study intersections within 500 feet of the site and determined that each of the pedestrian crossings would operate at a level of service “D” or better in the future condition. Additionally, the applicant evaluated American with Disabilities Act (ADA) non-compliance issues within 500 feet of the site and found that existing and proposed infrastructure were adequate.

The applicant evaluated bicycle travel in accordance with the Planning Department’s “Level of Traffic Stress” analysis, which recognizes the effect different roadways have on bicyclists’ comfort. The analysis determined that bicycle facilities within 750 feet of the site were Level of Traffic Stress “2” or better. This low level of traffic stress is due, in large part, to the future provision of new physically separated bicycle lanes on Woodmont Avenue through the MCDOT Capital Improvements

Program (CIP) and the new bicycle lanes on North Lane, which will be provided as part of the subject project. Although the Project generates more than 50 transit trips, the application is exempt from the transit test of the LATR because of the site’s proximity to the Bethesda Metrorail Station. As a result, the application satisfies the transit test without further analysis.

The applicant is required to construct the master planned separated bicycle lanes along the project’s North Lane frontage. The applicant will participate on a pro-rata basis towards the construction of the Sector-Planned bicycle facility on their frontage of Old Georgetown Road.

#### Transportation Mitigation Agreements

In 2019, County Code required employers with 25 or more employees and owners of residential buildings or complexes with at least 100 dwelling units located within the Bethesda Transportation Management District are required to execute a Transportation Mitigation Agreement (TMAG) with the county at the time of subdivision, before receiving a building permit .

These agreements are legally-binding and their purpose is to reduce the number of trips made by single-occupancy vehicles into the district.

As recommended in the Bethesda Downtown Plan, strategies to reduce single-occupancy driver trips include:

- constrained parking or no parking on site
- subsidizing transit fares to increase ridership
- parking management activities
- establishing live-near-work, flextime, or telecommuting programs.

During the calendar year of 2019 through the time of writing this report, the following Traffic Mitigation Agreements (TMAGs) were executed for developments in Bethesda:

1. The Claiborne (December)
  - a. 84 multi-family residential units
  - b. 5,000 square feet commercial uses
2. 7607 Old Georgetown Road (July)
  - a. 200 multi-family residential units
  - b. 3,000 square feet commercial uses
3. 7373 Wisconsin Avenue (May)
  - a. 225 hotel rooms (135,000 square feet)

- b. 400,000 square feet office use
4. Edgemont Bethesda II (May)
    - a. 160 multi-family residential units
  5. ZOM Bethesda (May)
    - a. 230 multi-family residential units



## Construction and Operational Impacts on the Network

Currently, construction continues on several projects including Avocet Tower, Marriott HQ (Wisconsin Avenue, Norfolk Avenue and Woodmont Avenue), The Wilson & The Elm (Wisconsin Avenue) and others to start soon. To alleviate negative impacts to the vehicular and pedestrian circulation during construction, the Bethesda Regional Services Center in coordination with Departments of Permitting Services, Environmental Protection, Traffic Engineering and Operations, Police, the Bethesda Urban Partnership and State Highway Administration and WSSC continue to participate in regular Construction Activity Coordination meetings to review Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plans. These meetings help to ensure that pedestrian and bicycle safety are maintained throughout construction projects. Maintaining continual traffic flow and reducing lane closures is also a priority in an already congested area. Additionally, project managers for each construction site sends construction updates to all interested parties. The coordinating meetings have been effective in reducing construction impacts and the group continues to work on additional complaints of water issues and noise.

The Bethesda Regional Services Center is partnering with the Departments of Permitting Services, Environmental Protection and Police to enforce the existing traffic controls, where possible. The Department of Transportation Parking subgroup is working to determine the feasibility of allowing loading and deliveries to be done in no-parking zones and changing signage to reflect this in addition to issuing citations.

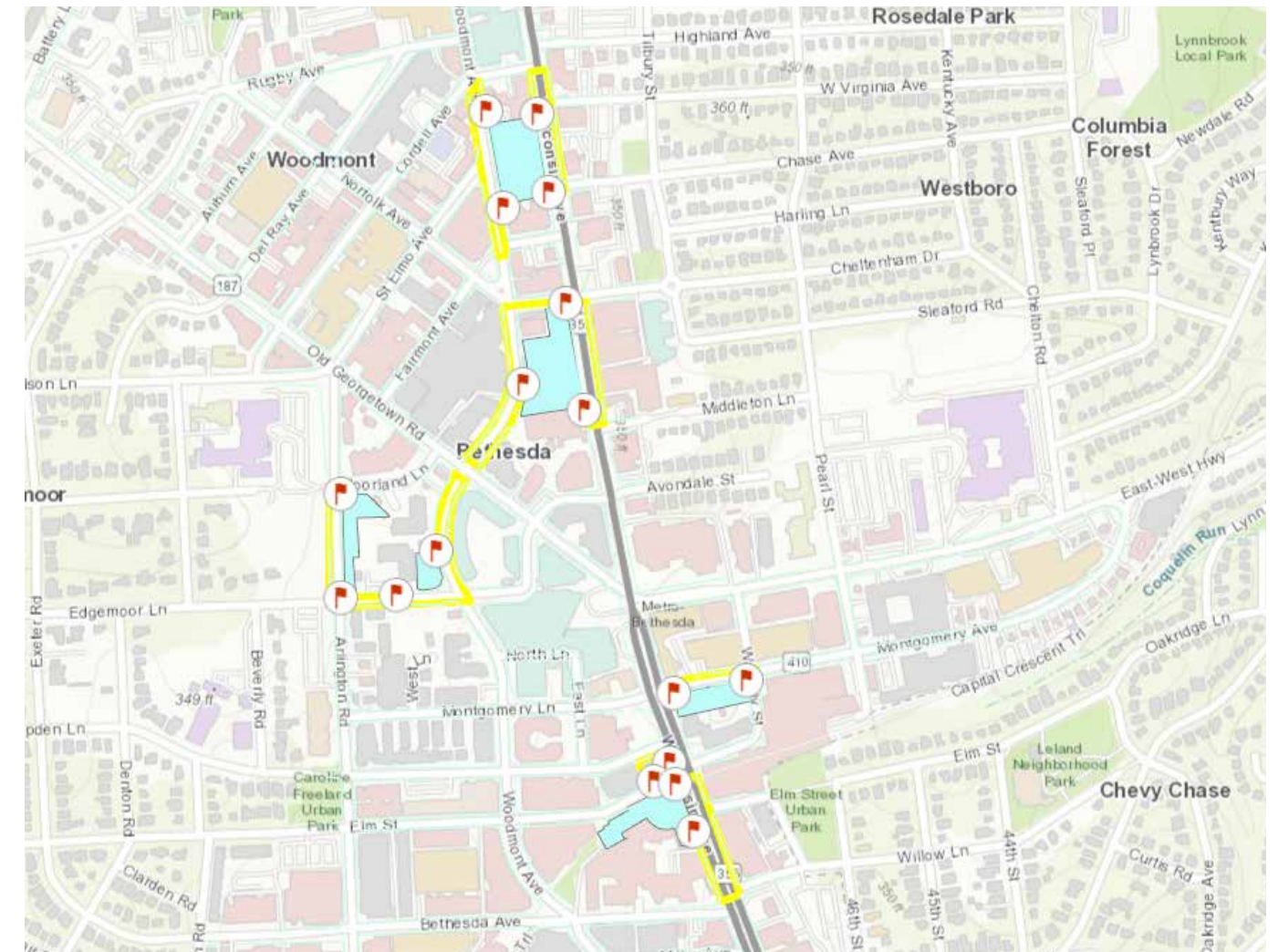
Related to this issue, the IAC has raised concerns about the negative impacts of delivery and loading trucks on the traffic network and on pedestrian safety due to blockage of sidewalks and crosswalks. In response, the Planning Department has proposed an urban loading and delivery management study that if funded by the

Council, will document and analyze existing delivery practices and make recommendations for solutions in urban centers throughout the county. The Council will determine the final budget and if funded the project may begin sometime this fall.

The Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) has been tracking all the impacts and interruptions construction has had on the pedestrian and motor vehicle transportation network. To help make sense of the rapidly changing conditions, BUP developed and released to the public an interactive map showing all the sidewalk closures and detours. A list of all the interruptions is included below:

- MD 355 Southbound between Cordell Avenue and Fairmont Avenue: curb lane 24/7
- MD 355 Southbound between Norfolk Avenue and Middleton Lane: curb lane 24/7, open to pedestrians after work hours
- Norfolk Avenue South side between Woodmont Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue: curb lane 24/7, open to pedestrians after hours
- MD 355 Southbound between Hampden Lane and Bethesda Avenue: curb lane 24/7
- Elm Street between MD 355 and Woodmont Avenue: closed 24/7 (local traffic only for short stretch east of Woodmont Avenue)
- Bethesda Avenue north side between Wisconsin and mid-block: curb lane 24/7 with pedestrian access maintained
- Woodmont Avenue east Side between Fairmont Avenue and St. Elmo Avenue: curb lane 24/7, pedestrian access maintained
- Woodmont Avenue east side between Old Georgetown Road and Norfolk Avenue: curb lane 24/7, pedestrian access maintained
- MD 355 Northbound between Waverly Street and Montgomery Avenue: Right turn lane 24/7, pedestrian access maintained

Figure 7. Pedestrian Detour Map (Bethesda Urban Partnership)



- Montgomery Avenue south side between Wisconsin Avenue and Waverly Street: curb lane 24/7
- Waverly Street west side just south of Montgomery Avenue: curb lane 24/7
- Arlington Road east side between Edgemoor Lane and Moorland Lane: curb lane/sidewalk 24/7
- Woodmont Avenue west side between Old Georgetown Road and Edgemoor Lane: curb lane 24/7, pedestrian access maintained
- Edgemoor Lane north side between Woodmont Avenue and Arlington Lane: curb lane 24/7, pedestrian access maintained
- Moorland Lane south side just east of Arlington Road: curb lane 24/7, pedestrian access maintained



## Current Traffic Studies

### Arlington Road - Old Georgetown Road to Little Falls Parkway Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety Evaluation

In March of 2018, MCDOT released their re-evaluation of the road diet recommended in the Sector Plan on Arlington Road, previously studied in 2014. While MCDOT staff did not recommend restriping Arlington Road to three lanes along the studied segment, other crossing improvements were evaluated to improve the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists traveling in Bethesda. Most of the recommended improvements have been implemented, but a few were scheduled and not yet implemented at the time of the May 2019 report. An updated summary of the recommended projects and their status is included in the table below.

### Little Falls Parkway/Capital Crescent Trail Crossing

In January of 2017, the Parks Department implemented a temporary road diet on Little Falls Parkway to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety at the Capital Crescent Trail crossing between Hillandale Road and Arlington Road. The trail crossing has been the site of several crashes, some fatal. Applying the County's Vision Zero Initiative, the project reduced the four-way lane configuration on Little Falls Parkway to two lanes (one in each direction), with the use of pavement markings, chains and bollards. The speed limit was also reduced to 25 miles per hour.

On June 13, 2019 the Parks Department presented three design alternatives for permanent implementation which included variations on the interim road diet, a grade separated crossing, and diversion of the trail crossing to the signalized intersection of Little Falls Parkway and Arlington Road. During that meeting, the Montgomery County Planning Board voted to divert the Capital Crescent Trail to cross at the signalized intersection at Arlington Road and to remove the interim road diet by re-opening all four lanes along Little Falls Parkway.

On September 12, 2019, the Planning Board reviewed the M-NCPPC FY2021-2026 Capital Improvements Project (CIP) budget, during their regularly scheduled meeting. As part of the review of that agenda item, the Planning Board voted to delay funding permanent improvements for the Capital Crescent Trail crossing Little Falls Parkway project until FY2025-2026. The interim road diet will remain in place until permanent improvements are implemented. The Montgomery County Parks Department will continue to monitor safety and traffic conditions at the crossing and is assessing the installation of a raised crosswalk and additional street lighting along Little Falls Parkway and Hillandale Road.

In December of 2019, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation installed a new streetlight at the Capital Crescent Trail crossing at Little Falls Parkway, on the north side. As of February 2020, the Montgomery County Parks Department is working with a traffic engineering consultant to develop construction drawings to convert the crossing into a raised crosswalk, slightly realign the trail to obtain

additional buffer from the new streetlight and add speed tables to the park-owned portion of Hillandale Road. It is anticipated that construction for these improvements will occur in spring 2020.

## Capital Improvements Projects

Several CIP projects identified in the Plan are in some phase of development. On-road bicycle facilities are funded and in some phase of design along segments of Woodmont Avenue, Bethesda Avenue, Montgomery Avenue and Willow Lane. To complement the on-road bicycle routes, re-design of existing intersections is planned at Norfolk Avenue and Woodmont Avenue, Woodmont Avenue and Bethesda Avenue, Montgomery Avenue and Pearl Street, and Bethesda Avenue/Willow Lane at Wisconsin Avenue. Construction is underway for the Purple Line and the Bethesda Metrorail South Entrance. Analysis of the identified alternatives for the MD 355 Bus Rapid Transit route continues. A complete list of the CIP projects listed in the Sector Plan is included with an assessment of the project status. Brief descriptions and the status of these projects are summarized below.

### Capital Crescent Surface Trail

This project is envisioned as a two-way, on-road separated bikeway that will provide a street-level connection through downtown Bethesda. It will also serve as an alternate route until the replacement CCT Tunnel is constructed. The Phase 1 segment begins at the intersection of the CCT trail at Bethesda Avenue and ends at Willow Lane and 47th Street. Design is complete and permitting is underway. Phase 2 of the project will provide a connection between Willow Lane and 47th Street and Elm Street Urban Park. Completion of the project is targeted for late summer of 2020. Private participation in this project is required of the Artery Plaza project.

### Capital Crescent Trail Tunnel

This project provides for the design and construction of the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) Tunnel. The west end of the facility is located at the west side of the new building at 7272 Wisconsin Avenue, near the Civic Green Park at Woodmont Avenue. It then runs to the east through the lower parking level of the building where it continues out the east side under Wisconsin Avenue, then continues east below Elm Street, and emerges above ground at the CCT Surface Trail in Elm Street Park. The total length is approximately 1,000 feet. The interior height and width will be 14 feet and 16 feet (a 12-foot trail with 2-foot shoulders). The riding surface will be concrete. A bicycle storage area will also be provided for public use located at the west end of the tunnel within the building. Coordination with the Department of Parks and the Town of Chevy Chase has occurred and will continue throughout the design process. Final design is anticipated to be complete by summer of 2020. This project is not currently funded for construction.

### Woodmont Avenue Bikeway

A two-way, on-road separated bikeway is planned along Woodmont Avenue between Wisconsin Avenue and Norfolk Avenue. Design is complete for Phase 1 (Montgomery Lane to Leland Street), construction is anticipated in summer 2020 through CIP P500119 Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities. Phase 2 (Norfolk Avenue to Montgomery Lane) scheduled for construction (FY2022) in coordination with the Marriott headquarters (currently under construction) and Edgemont II at Bethesda.

### Norfolk Avenue Shared Street

Concept design for CIP project 509337 is funded for FY2021, and therefore work can begin on July 1, 2020. Construction funding is not identified at this time. The Claiborne is participating by either constructing

**Table 10: MCDOT Recommended Pedestrian Crossing Safety Improvements (Updates since May 2019)**

Intersection with Arlington Road	Proposed Improvements	Status
Moorland Lane	Increase Flashing Don't Walk (FDW) time across Arlington Road	<b>TMC determined FDW was adequate</b>
Elm Street	Relocate the signal cabinet and utility guy wire in the southwest corner to meet ADA standards (to be completed during FY19 as part of the signal reconstruction project)	<b>Implemented</b>



a portion of the shared street along their frontage or making a financial contribution of up to \$127,000 as a condition of their site plan approval, the determination of which will be made at the time of certified site plan. The approved development project at 4915 Auburn Avenue must participate in implementation of the shared street project by contributing \$55,208 to MCDOT prior to the issuance of the first above-grade building permit.

### Montgomery Lane/Avenue Bikeway

A two-way, on-road separated bikeway is planned for Montgomery Avenue/Lane from Woodmont Avenue to Pearl Street. Design is underway, and construction is anticipated for Phase 1 (Woodmont Avenue to MD 355) in FY2021-2022 and Phase 2 (MD 355 to Pearl Street) in 2021. The second phase of the project is timed with the Avocet Tower redevelopment (7373 Wisconsin Avenue).

### Maryland 355 South Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Update

The Sector Plan confirmed recommendations for a BRT line along Wisconsin Avenue and expanded the recommendation to extend the route beyond the previously planned southern terminus at the current Bethesda Metro Station to Bethesda Avenue, where an additional metro station entrance is also planned. This location will also be near the entrance to the Purple Line station in Bethesda. MCDOT has completed the planning phase. The project includes dedicated BRT lanes, new BRT stations with level boarding and off-board payment, Transit Signal Priority, purchase of new 60-foot articulated vehicles and other associated pedestrian and bicycle improvements along the corridor.

In summer 2019, the MD355 FLASH alternatives analysis was presented to the County Council. The Council stated their preference for Alternative B

Modified. This alternative would include median BRT lanes for most of the corridor. The southern portion of the corridor (south of Rockville) would be dual-lane median lanes, and the northern portion would be a single reversible or bi-directional lane. At the same time, Council also approved \$3 million to begin preliminary engineering on the entire corridor. MCDOT then initiated design activities consistent with Alternative B Modified. MCDOT plans to continue the ongoing design activities and identify progressive design solutions to accomplish MD 355 FLASH more efficiently and effectively. We also plan to work with property owners to establish a different approach to providing the needed right-of-way where redevelopment is anticipated.

### Purple Line Transit Update

The planned alignment of the Purple Line increased demand for development and had a profound effect on the multimodal transportation network. On August 28, 2017 officials including Governor Larry Hogan and U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao broke ground on the eastern end of New Carrollton and construction preparations along the entire alignment followed soon after. The following includes a list of Purple Line activities within the Sector Plan area since the Sector Plan was approved.

- The construction of the new buildings in the old Apex Building’s site in Bethesda adjacent to the Purple Line continues.
- The Montgomery County Council tentatively approved \$54.9 million on April 30, 2020 to build the bicycle and pedestrian section of the tunnel that will connect Bethesda Avenue to Elm Street Park that will run under Wisconsin Avenue. The final vote on the County’s budget is expected May 21, 2020. The tunnel is scheduled to open in 2026.
- Purple Line Transit Constructors (PLTC) continue

**Table 11: Capital Improvements Transportation Projects Status Update**

Project Name	Coordinating Agency	Project Status
Redesign Wisconsin Avenue as an urban boulevard	M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Not funded
Redesign Old Georgetown Road as an urban boulevard	M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Not funded
Redesign East-West Highway as an urban boulevard	M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Not funded
Redesign Norfolk Avenue as a shared street	M-NCPPC	Not fully funded; Facility Planning (only) funded for FY2022-2023
Redesign Pearl Street as a shared street	M-NCPPC	Not funded
Pearl Street Connector	M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Not funded
Capital Crescent Trail tunnel/surface route beneath Wisconsin Avenue and Elm Street, via Elm Street Park	SHA, M-NCPPC, Town of Chevy Chase	Design in progress
Reconfigure East-West Highway, Montgomery Lane, Old Georgetown Road and Woodmont Avenue with separated bike lanes	M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Design in progress for Montgomery Lane/Avenue between Woodmont and Pearl  Design in progress for Woodmont Avenue between Norfolk Avenue (south to) and MD 355.  <b>Construction anticipated for Phase 1 from Woodmont Avenue to MD 355 in FY2021; Phase 2 from MD 355 to Pearl in coordination with development at 7373 Wisconsin Avenue.</b>  Other projects not funded
Purple Line/Station Construction	MTA/M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Construction underway
Extend BRT Corridor 3: MD 355 South from the Bethesda North Station to the Bethesda South Station to connect to the Purple Line	MTA/M-NCPPC/MCDOT	Design in progress
Bethesda South Bus Circulation	SHA, BUP	Not funded
Bethesda Circulator Bus Expansion	SHA, BUP	Not funded
Full-service bicycle storage facility located adjacent to the CCT tunnel routes	M-NCPPC	Design in-progress
New separated bikeway lanes on Woodmont Avenue, Bradley Boulevard, Arlington Road and Bethesda Avenue/Willow Lane between Woodmont Avenue and 47th Street	SHA, M-NCPPC	Design in progress for Woodmont Ave between Norfolk Ave (south to) and MD 355  <b>Woodmont Phase 1 from Montgomery to Leland-construction to start in summer 2020 (FY2020-FY2021)</b>  <b>Phase 2 – Norfolk to Montgomery Avenue (coordination with Marriott HQ resurfacing work on Woodmont Avenue)</b>  Other projects not funded
Shared Roadway on Commerce Lane, Avondale Street, Rosedale Avenue, Tilbury Street, St. Elmo Avenue, Cordell Avenue and Bethesda Avenue	M-NCPPC	Not funded
New trail connection at Bradley Boulevard and Capital Crescent Trail and Pearl Street.	M-NCPPC	Not funded
North Bethesda Trail- widening	MCDOT	Not funded
Bike Share Station	M-NCPPC	Not funded
Undergrounding of public utilities	SHA, M-NCPPC	Not funded
New bike lanes on Chelton Road, Pearl Street, Norfolk Avenue, Cheltenham Drive, Elm Street, Battery Lane and Wilson Lane	M-NCPPC	<b>Concept design in progress for Norfolk/Cheltenham between Woodmont Avenue and Tilbury Street</b>  Other projects not funded

to work on the construction of the new Purple Line Bethesda Station and the fit out of the light rail tunnel below Wisconsin Avenue and the construction of the new Bethesda Metro Station South Entrance. PLTC is currently pouring concrete at the shaft and has some excavation work left to complete the new South Entrance shaft and connector into the existing Red Line Metro Station.

- MDOT MTA’s goal is to open six operational stops from the New Carrollton Metro Station to the College Park Metro-UMD Station in Prince George’s County in December of 2022. The remainder of the Purple Line (15 stops) is anticipated to be open in mid-2023.

Avenue and Montgomery Avenue. Work took place from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays and weekends. Temporary lane closures occurred.

c. At the Georgetown Branch Trail Between Jones Mill Road and the Lyttonville Place Bridge, during the month of March, crews were pile driving at the Georgetown Branch Trail between Jones Mill Road and the Lyttonville Place Bridge. Pile driving took place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays.

d. At Jones Mill Road, traffic has shifted onto the southbound side of Jones Mill Road for Phase I of the traffic change, where crews will be excavating and installing the arch for the future underpass. Work will take place from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and weekends.

e. At Rock Creek Park between the Rays Meadow Park and Susanna Lane Access Points, during the month of March, crews worked in the area of the Rock Creek Park bridge from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and weekends. Temporary trail closures occurred

f. At the Bethesda Work Zone (Elm Street), during the month of March, crews continued working in two shifts from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. on weekdays and weekends.

g. At Wisconsin Avenue between Montgomery Lane and Bethesda Avenue, during the month of March, southbound lanes along Wisconsin Avenue between Montgomery Lane and Bethesda Avenue experienced temporary closures. Work took place from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. on weekdays and weekends.

h. At the Georgetown Branch Trail between Wisconsin Avenue and Connecticut Avenue, during the month of March, crews worked along the Georgetown Branch Trail between Wisconsin Avenue and Connecticut Avenue. Work took place on weekdays and weekends from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

i. At Connecticut Avenue between Jones Bridge Road and East-West Highway, during the month of March, crews were relocating utilities on Connecticut Avenue between Jones Bridge Road and East-West Highway. Work occurred from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. on weekdays and weekends. Temporary lane closures with flagging operations occurred.

j. At Columbia Country Club, during the month of March, crews continued work in the area of the Columbia Country Club from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays and weekends.

k. At Jones Mill Road and Jones Bridge Road, during the month of March, crews continued working along Jones Bridge Road between Altimont Lane and Jones Mill Road, as well as Jones Mill Road between Flushing Meadow Terrace and Coquelin Terrace. Temporary lane closures took place from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays and weekends.

l. Along the Georgetown Branch Trail between Sleaford Road and East-West Highway, on February 13, 2020, crews began working nights along the Georgetown Branch Trail between Sleaford Road and East-West Highway for utility relocations. Work occurred in two shifts from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. on weekdays and weekends, for approximately three weeks.

state delegation sent Paul Smedberg, the chair of the WMATA board, a letter on February 25, 2020, opposing the cuts.

On March 3, 2020, the Montgomery County Council held a public meeting to capture comments from the public on the proposed budget. WMATA’s board will vote in the spring on the FY2021 budget. Any service changes would take effect July 1, when the fiscal year begins.

### Local Bus Service (Metrobus and Ride On)

MCDOT launched their new Ride On extRa Service in October of 2017. Ride On extRa provides service between Lakeforest Transit Center and Medical Center Metrorail Station, just beyond the Sector Plan boundary. There are no recommended or planned long-term changes to the local, regular Ride On bus service provided by MCDOT within or surrounding the Sector Plan area.

As with any major capital project, construction affects local mobility and access. The following includes a list of closures and affected travel modes:

- The Capital Crescent Trail is closed between Woodmont Avenue and Talbot Avenue. Elm Street is closed between Woodmont Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue to pedestrians and motorists.
- Lane closures and flagging operations have occurred off and on since construction began on roadways both within and just outside the Sector Plan Areas. Below is a summary of network impacts due to construction activities, since the last reporting period:
  - a. At the Georgetown Branch Trail between Jones Mill Road and the Rock Creek Bridge, beginning on or about March 16, 2020, crews were pile driving along the Georgetown Branch Trail between Jones Mill Road and the Rock Creek Bridge. Pile driving took place from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays for approximately eight weeks.
  - b. At Sleaford Road Work Zone to Montgomery Avenue, during the month of March, crews worked along East-West Highway between Connecticut

### Regional Transit Services (WMATA Metrorail and Metrobus)

WMATA’s proposed \$2 billion operating budget for FY2021 cuts service to several bus lines, one of which serves the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Area. Specifically, the budget shows a reduction in early morning and late-night service on the J2 route which connects Bethesda to Silver Spring. The Montgomery County Council and most of the Montgomery County’s



**Parking**

Nearly 8,000 parking spaces are provided by the Bethesda Parking Lot District (PLD) in garages, surface lots, and on public streets. This number has not significantly changed since the adoption and approval of the Downtown Sector Plan. A summary of changes to the parking capacity over the past year and anticipated changes soon is provided below. This information has not changed since the last reporting period.

- To facilitate redevelopment of the Apex site, the historic Community Hardware store was relocated to Lot 41 resulting in the reduction of available spaces in the lot from 18 to 9.
- Marriott has secured exclusive access to Garage 11 (1,076 total spaces) during business hours following the delivery of their new headquarters, which is expected in 2022. Garage 11 will remain available to the public during weekday evening hours and weekends. No other public parking spaces have been allocated to private development. Until that time, all spaces in Garage 11 are available to the public during all hours of operation.
- A local developer is the contract purchaser of Lot 43 to redevelop the existing parking lot into a residential high rise. Lot 43 continues to operate as a parking facility as the developer advances through the county's development process. The lot has 37 paid spaces and two ADA spaces.
- On-street parking spaces on Bethesda Avenue, Willow Lane and Woodmont Avenue will be removed for the implementation of bike lanes. As of the current design, 13 parking spaces are expected to be removed on Bethesda Avenue and Willow Lane. The amount removed from Woodmont Avenue is yet to be determined.

MCDOT regularly surveys the occupation of its parking facilities. Table 12 shows the occupancy rate over three months in the winter of 2019-2020.

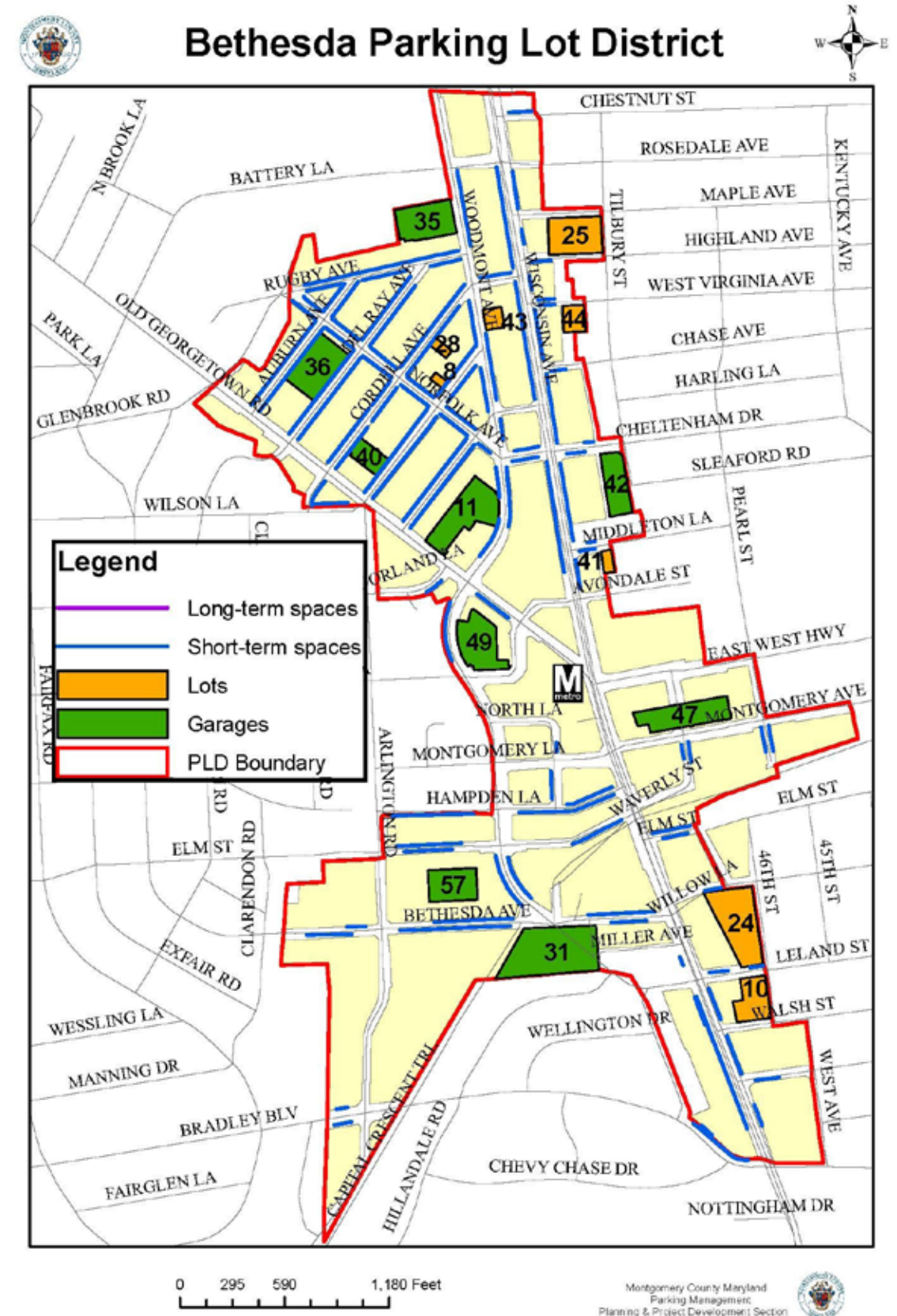
The parking facilities with the highest occupancy are Lot 10 (98%), Lot 8 (90%), and Garage 47 (89%). These facilities are spread out throughout the Parking Lot District: Lot 8 (St. Elmo Avenue) is in the Woodmont Triangle District, Lot 10 (Leland Street) is in the southern Eastern Greenway District and Garage 47 (Waverly Garage) is in the center of the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor District. In the previous report, the three facilities with the highest occupancy were Garage 35 (Woodmont Rugby Garage), Lot 28 (Cordell Avenue Lot) and Garage 47 (Waverly Garage).

**Table 12: Parking Occupancy (3-month average)**

Garage/Lot	Capacity	Average Occupancy
Garage 11	1,093	75%
Garage 31	952	87%
Garage 35	365	87%
Garage 36	729	59%
Garage 40	311	82%
Garage 42	337	61%
Garage 47	796	89%
Garage 49	949	65%
Garage 57	870	80%
Lot 8	10	90%
Lot 10	94	98%
Lot 24	210	87%
Lot 25	124	51%
Lot 28	18	70%
Lot 41	9	89%
Lot 43	39	80%
Lot 44	51	55%

Note: This table reports on the capacity and occupancy rate of paid parking spaces in a garage or surface lot. The figures in the table do not include spaces that do not require a parking fee, such as ADA accessible spaces.

Figure 8: Bethesda Parking Lot District



Garage 36 (59%), Lot 44 (55%) and Lot 25 (51%) have the lowest occupancy rates. Garage 36 (Auburn-Del Ray garage) is located among the larger parking facilities with a total capacity of 729 spaces. Lots 44 and 25 in the northeast quadrant of the Sector Plan area are among the smaller parking facilities with capacities of 51 and 124 spaces, respectively.

## Unified Mobility Program

The unified mobility program (UMP) provides a streamlined, transparent process for implementing transportation network improvements within and adjacent to the Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan Area. The resulting UMP will include a traffic study analysis related to the LATR associated with planned development and a cost estimate for all transportation improvements needed, such as road, intersection, transit, bikeway and walkway projects. Once the program is in place, fees will be collected as part of development applications in the Sector Plan area. Those fees will be accrued for implementation of the identified improvements.

Development of the Bethesda UMP was launched in the fall of 2018. The project has four critical milestones and they include:

1. A traffic analysis to identify the transportation projects
2. A total cost estimate for the identified transportation projects
3. A fee schedule based on new trips forecasted for new and re-development projects in the Sector Plan area
4. A phasing plan for implementation of the transportation projects

In 2019, milestones one and two were completed and the resulting traffic analysis and cost estimates were shared with the public at an open house in September of 2019. At the time of this report, milestone three, the fee schedule per trip, is nearly complete.

## Recommendations

- Continue to monitor the 14 intersections and corridors studied as part of the roadway network adequacy test.
- Continue to monitor the NADMS of the Sector Plan area. The results will be included in the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report.
- MCDOT will continue to develop the Unified Mobility Program for Bethesda to identify engineering strategies to mitigate congestion within the Plan area and at the identified gateway intersections. This program will inform future annual reports for the Sector Plan.





## Summary of Recommendations

The 2020 Annual Monitoring Report provides a comprehensive update on the efforts to implement the recommendations of the Bethesda Downtown Plan. This report reviews development approvals, school capacity, parks and open space and transportation adequacy, as well as recommendations to further the implementation of the Plan.

### Development Approvals

- Once total development reaches 30.4 million square feet, notify the Planning Board and County Council. The County Council may require certain actions before additional development is permitted. As of April 2020, total development density is 28,951,709 square feet.
- Continue to monitor and track the development square footage in downtown Bethesda against the cap of 32.4 million square feet and report available and/or remaining BOZ Density to the Planning Board.

### Schools

- Continue to monitor the space needs for the schools that serve downtown Bethesda and ensure options for providing adequate student enrollment capacity, such as expansion and additions, reopening former schools in the vicinity and opportunities for placement of future schools.

### Parks and Open Space

- Continue to work towards acquisition of land to implement the parks and open space recommendations in the Sector Plan.

- Continue to work with property owners to create functional, accessible, and active privately-owned public spaces as part of the development process.
- Continue to prepare implementation processes and priorities for use of the Park Impact Payment funds when they begin to come in, including the CIP.
- Continue to work with and engage the Implementation Advisory Committee to ensure the recommended parks in the Sector Plan are realized.

### Transportation

- Continue to monitor the 14 intersections and corridors studied as part of the roadway network adequacy test.
- Continue to monitor the NADMS of the Sector Plan area. The results will be included in the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report.
- MCDOT will continue to develop the Unified Mobility Program for Bethesda to identify engineering strategies to mitigate congestion within the Plan area and at the identified gateway intersections. This program will inform future annual reports for the Sector Plan.



## Implementation Advisory Committee Comments

The Bethesda Downtown Plan Implementation Advisory Committee (IAC) received the draft of this report and provided comments, many of which were included in this report. Planning staff will work closely with the IAC to continue monitoring and advocating for the implementation of the Sector Plan recommendations.

The Bethesda IAC notes the Bethesda Downtown Plan calls for schools, parks, and transportation improvements. The IAC believes the following points need to be addressed to ensure continued successful implementation of the Bethesda Downtown Plan:

- Public Benefit points: The IAC notes that only 1 of 11 projects within the past year requested public benefit points for open space, and only 3 of 11 requested public benefit points for energy conservation and generation. It may be appropriate to review the efficacy of the selection of benefits in terms of achieving the Plan's overall goals. Further, 9 of 11 projects received public benefit points for providing fewer than the allowed minimum of parking spaces, and although this is encouraging, attention is still warranted at sites within a half mile of transit, including Metro, the Purple Line, and Bus Rapid Transit.
- Parks: The IAC appreciates the Plan's funding of parks through the PIP which allowed the purchase of property for expansion of the Veteran's Park Civic Green, and is interested in seeing funds used for Eastern Greenway acquisitions and parking lot conversions in the near future.
- Approaching 30.4 Million Square Feet of Development: Bearing in mind that the tracking and monitoring numbers are subject to change depending on how projects progress, it appears that Bethesda may be approaching 30.4 million square feet of development and approvals in the next year or two. Pursuant to the Bethesda Plan (Section 4.1.3), when it reaches this milestone, the County Council and Planning Board may consider additional actions needed to address the goals of the Plan in the context of adequate infrastructure. It would be useful for the Planning Department to begin clarifying the parameters associated with reaching this development marker and how new applications will be handled.
- School Capacity: The IAC recommends that school capacity be considered closely during the next year because of budget/capital improvement constraints, particularly with the removal of the Westbrook Elementary School addition from the CIP and the delay of two years in the Bethesda Elementary School addition.
- Bicycle Safety: The IAC appreciates the commitment to separated bicycle lanes but has particular concerns about how such lanes will interact with vehicular traffic and turns especially into driveways and loading areas.
- Truck Deliveries and Loading: The IAC continues to be concerned about deliveries and loading and their effects on traffic and sidewalk access. We commend the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Regional Services Center and Bethesda Urban Partnership for their continuing work with state and local agencies to resolve these issues.
- COVID-19: The IAC notes that the coronavirus pandemic has led to concern about density, crowding, municipal revenue shortfalls for both operating expenses and capital improvements, and potentially different ways people work and

travel. In the next annual report it may be useful to look at its long-term impacts, including changes in commuting patterns, as well as the effect on commercial real estate and public facilities.



# List of Acronyms

- **ADA:** American with Disabilities Act
- **APFO:** Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance
- **BiPPA:** Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Area
- **BOZ:** Bethesda Overlay Zone
- **BRT:** Bus Rapid Transit
- **BUP:** Bethesda Urban Partnership
- **CBD:** Central Business District
- **CCT:** Capital Crescent Trail
- **CIP:** Capital Improvements Program
- **DAP:** Design Advisory Panel
- **FDW:** Flashing Don't Walk
- **HCM:** Highway Capacity Manual
- **IAC:** Implementation Advisory Committee
- **LPI:** Leading Pedestrian Interval
- **MCDOT:** Montgomery County Department of Transportation
- **MDOT:** Maryland Department of Transportation
- **M-NCPPC:** Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
- **MPDU:** Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit
- **NADMS:** Non-Auto Driver Mode Share
- **PHED:** Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee
- **PIP:** Park Impact Payment
- **PLD:** Parking Lot District
- **PLTP:** Purple Line Transportation Partners
- **POPS:** Privately-Owned Public Space
- **SHA:** State Highway Administration
- **SSP:** Subdivision Staging Policy
- **TMD:** Transportation Management District
- **TTI:** Travel Time Index
- **UMP:** Unified Mobility Program

# Bethesda Downtown Plan Annual Monitoring Report

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