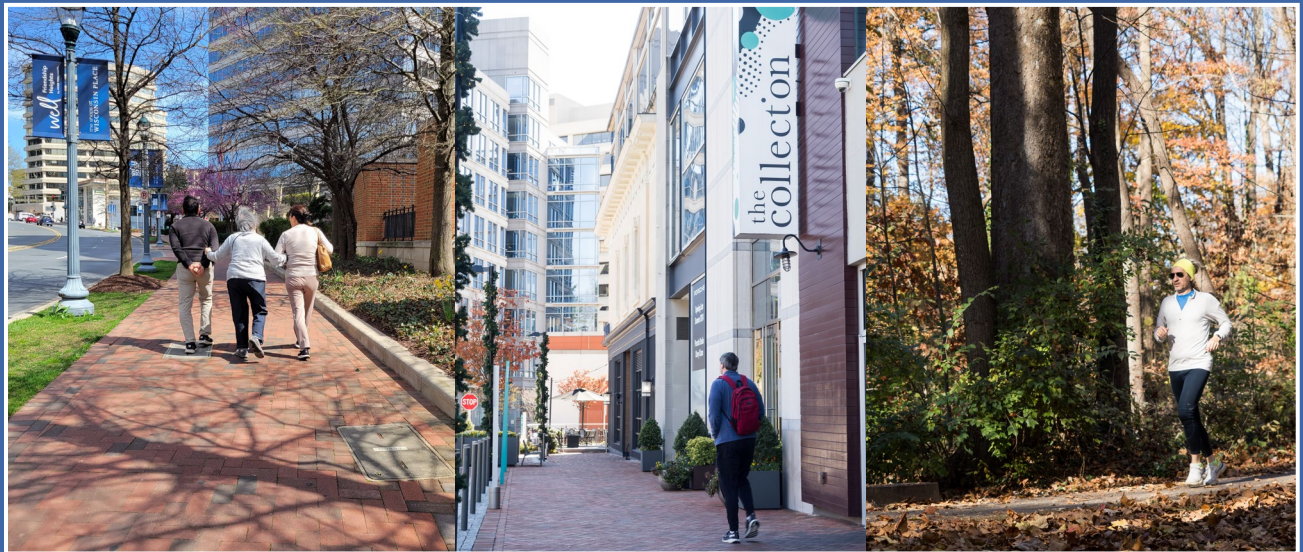


## FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS SECTOR PLAN

### SCOPE OF WORK



#### Description

Planning staff will brief the Planning Board on the proposed scope of work and plan boundary for the Friendship Heights Sector Plan.

## MASTER PLAN INFORMATION

### Topic

Friendship Heights Sector Plan Scope of Work

### Date

February 6, 2025

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MCPB Item #6

Date: 02-06-25

Completed: 01-29-25

Corrected: 02-05-25

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## SUMMARY

Planning staff will present the proposed scope of work and Plan boundary for the Friendship Heights Sector Plan. Staff will brief the Board on the preliminary engagement activities conducted during the fall of 2024, including a snapshot of community comments.

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## INTRODUCTION

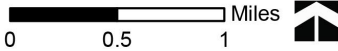
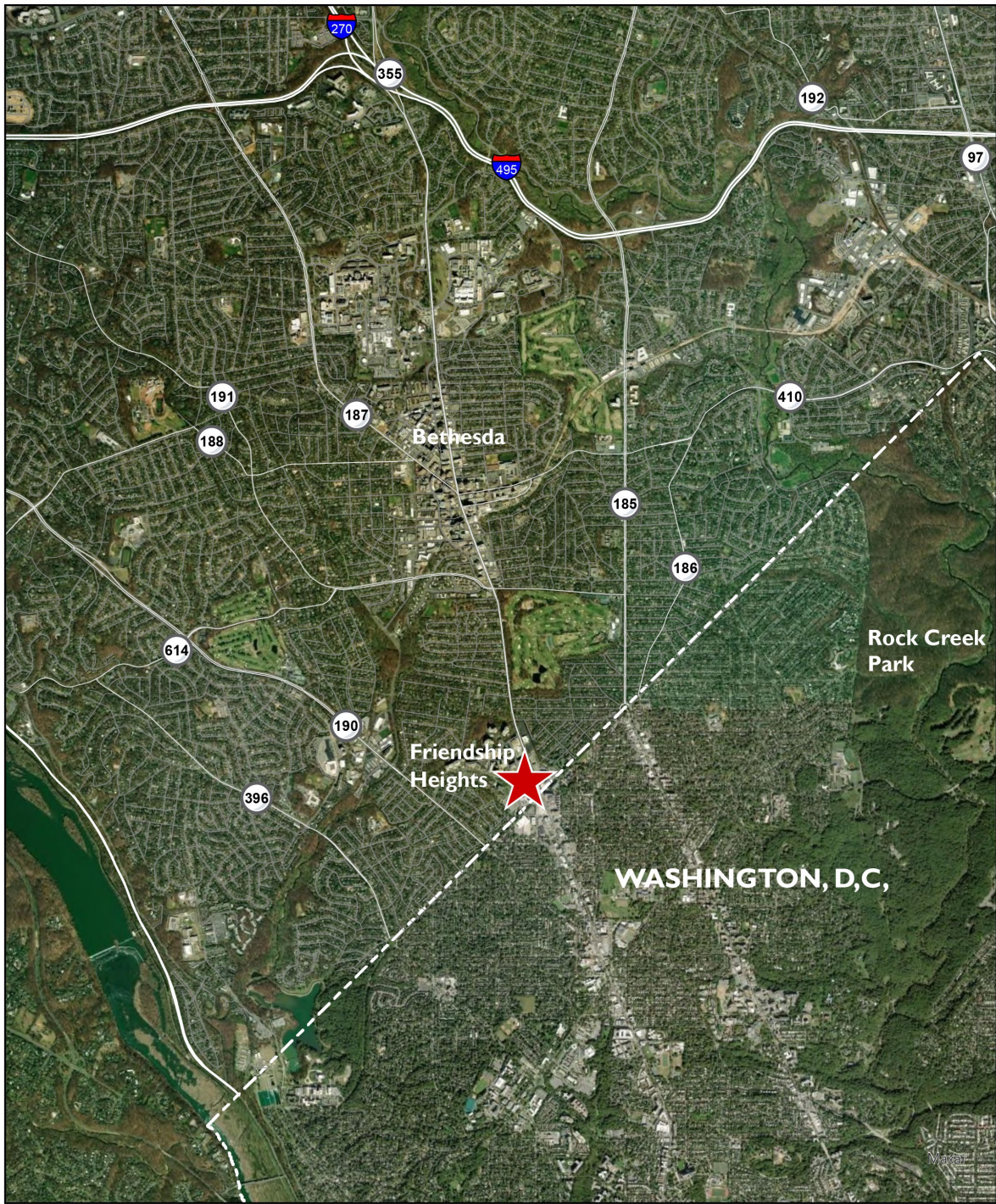
### PURPOSE AND CONTEXT

As described in this proposed Scope of Work, the Friendship Heights Sector Plan (FHSP) will update the 1998 *Friendship Heights Sector Plan*, portions of the 1990 *Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan*, and related functional plans described below, as well as *Thrive Montgomery 2050*, the county's General Plan.

Friendship Heights is one of the county's four downtowns (previously designated Central Business Districts) along with Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Wheaton. It is a unique urban area that extends along Wisconsin Avenue on both sides of the Washington, D.C. and Maryland border (Map 1).

Friendship Heights has a centrally located Metro station, with entrances in both Montgomery County and the District of Columbia. Retail, office, and restaurant uses cluster along Wisconsin Avenue in both jurisdictions, while high-rise office and residential uses predominate on the Montgomery County side.

Friendship Heights includes the incorporated municipality of the Village of Friendship Heights, as well as unincorporated properties. The area is bordered on all sides in Maryland by single-family residential neighborhoods, which include incorporated municipalities such as Chevy Chase Village to the east and the Town of Somerset to the north. The neighborhood of Brookdale borders Friendship Heights to the west (Map 2).



Map 1: Friendship Heights Regional Context



Map 2: Friendship Heights Local Context

## BACKGROUND

### HISTORY

From the 1700s until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area that is now Friendship Heights was farmland. The extension of the Georgetown streetcar line into Maryland in 1890 spurred investors to buy and subdivide the land, and by 1914, the Village of Friendship Heights was incorporated as a special taxing district. Similarly, the adjacent area of Chevy Chase was being developed as a “streetcar suburb” specifically for upper middle-class White families. It was during this time that a real estate deal that would have allowed wealthy Black families to put down roots just adjacent to Friendship Heights was deliberately dismantled by one of the development partners. Until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Friendship Heights remained a well-off suburban community comprised of single-family homes.

In the 1950s, spurred by the opening of several department stores in both Maryland and Washington, D.C. and the opening of the GEICO headquarters, Friendship Heights started its transformation from residential suburb to mixed-use commercial center. In the 1960s, zoning changes allowed for taller buildings in the area, and by the early 1970s nearly all the single-family homes in the Village of Friendship Heights had been acquired by developers to erect mid-rise multifamily buildings. By the time the Metrorail station opened in 1984, Friendship Heights was a popular destination for shopping and restaurants.

Over the following years and into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, Friendship Heights established itself as a successful urban center with a mix of residential, retail and office uses.

### FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS TODAY

Today, Friendship Heights is a mixed-use neighborhood, although recent years have seen rising retail and office vacancies, compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic. With limited new development in the past 20 years, the population of Friendship Heights has remained relatively static, at approximately 6,000 residents.

Since the 1998 *Friendship Heights Sector Plan*, there have only been a handful of significant development projects in Friendship Heights. In 2009, the Wisconsin Place project brought multi-family apartment units, a Whole Foods supermarket, office space, a county recreation center and other retail to the downtown, and in 2019 a refresh of The Collection, a shopping center along the east side of Wisconsin Avenue, was completed. In April 2023, the Planning Board approved a mixed-use development at 5500 Wisconsin Avenue, which will add new multi-family apartment units and retail to a site with an existing hotel. This development will also be the first building in Friendship Heights with 15% Moderately Priced Dwelling Units as required by Montgomery County.



The challenge of office and retail space in a post-pandemic era is present on both sides of the border. In 2024 the Washington, D.C. Office of Planning completed the *Wisconsin Avenue Development Framework* which focused on opportunities for housing and other development along the corridor, as well as public realm improvements. Staff will be considering this recent plan as part of the context for Friendship Heights.

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## PREVIOUS PLANNING WORK

### FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS SECTOR PLAN (1998)

The 1998 *Friendship Heights Sector Plan* (Map 3) was written when Friendship Heights was a regional destination for high-end retail, in both Maryland and D.C. Multiple department stores were thriving and several specialty stores drew people to the area. The Plan focused on supporting that identity of the downtown and recommendations considered how to increase green space in the downtown and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

The 1998 Plan made several recommendations that have been realized and have contributed significantly to the vibrancy of Friendship Heights. The mixed-use development Wisconsin Place emerged from a Plan recommendation, as well as the upgrade to The Collection as a retail destination along Wisconsin Avenue, including the integrated public spaces and parking that sits behind that development.

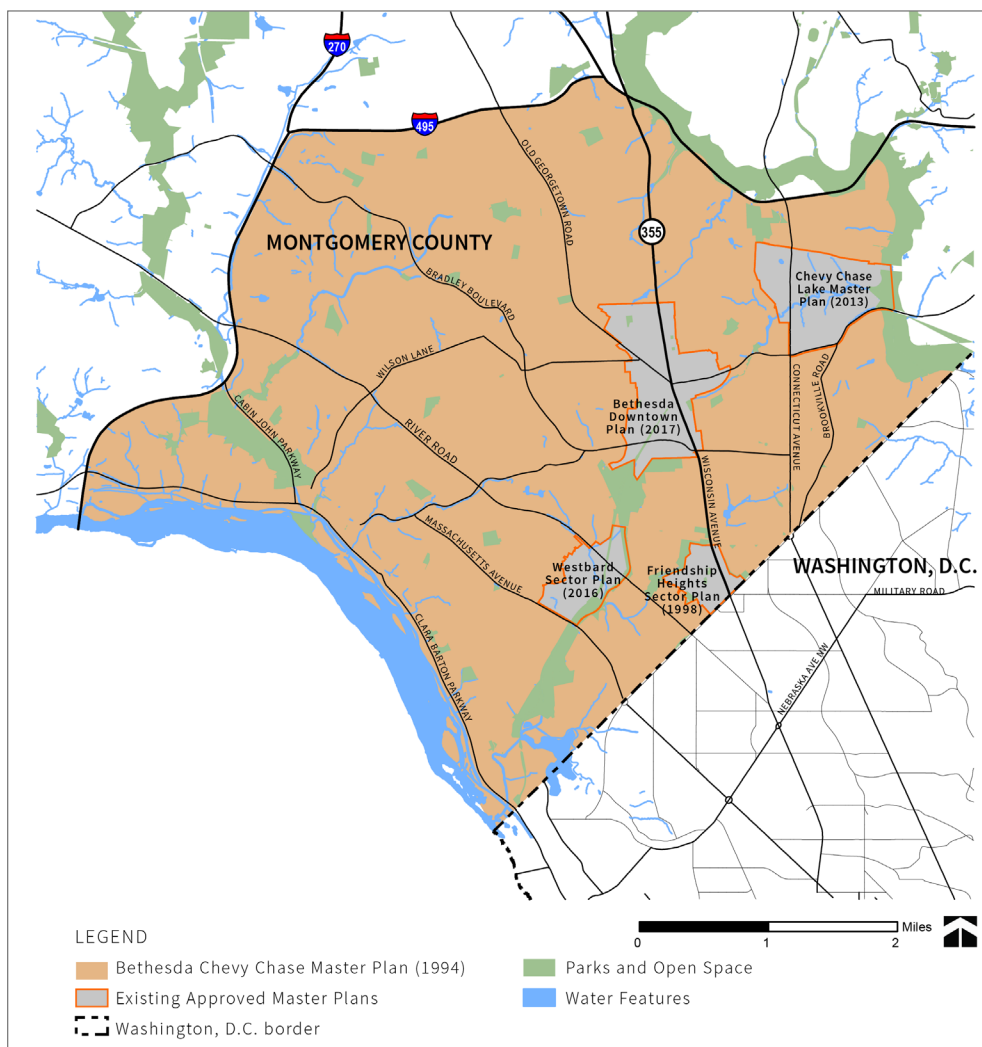
However, not all major recommendations were realized. The Plan also recommended the redevelopment of the GEICO parcel, which at 26 acres is nearly one quarter of the area of the downtown. The Plan proposed a mixed-use concept that included office buildings, low-rise residential development, ballfields and other amenities. While a development plan was approved in 2002 (and is still valid), no further steps have been taken towards implementing this development.



Map 3: 1998 Friendship Heights Sector Plan boundary

## BETHESDA-CHEVY CHASE MASTER PLAN (1994)

A portion of the proposed Plan Area is included in the 1990 *Bethesda-Chevy Chase Master Plan* (Map 4). This Master Plan covers a large swath of the Downcounty planning area west of Rock Creek surrounding the plan areas of the *Bethesda Downtown Plan* (2017), the *Friendship Heights Sector Plan* (1998), the *Westbard Sector Plan* (2016) and *Chevy Chase Lake Sector Plan* (2013). Major goals of the 1990 Master Plan included preserving the residential character of the neighborhoods in the plan, encouraging a shift from traveling in cars to using transit, providing a “balanced housing supply” so that people of different income levels and backgrounds could find housing, and protecting natural resources.



Map 4: Bethesda Chevy Chase Master Plan (1994)

## FRIENDSHIP HEIGHTS URBAN DESIGN STUDY (2024)

From July 2023 through March 2024, Montgomery Planning conducted the *Friendship Heights Urban Design Study*. Using the 1998 Plan boundary as shown in Map 3, the Study focused on how people experience the public realm in Friendship Heights. The public realm is any area that is accessible by the public, including streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas and other open spaces. Staff conducted a brief engagement effort where over 200 stakeholders provided thoughts about urban design and Friendship Heights via two open house events and an online survey. The study concludes with observations on the strengths of the area and identifies items that merit further investigation. This work will inform the sector plan update.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Successful stakeholder engagement is key to an inclusive planning process. Stakeholders help shape the future vision of their plan area by participating in a variety of engagement opportunities. Staff held two kickoff events that were open to the community in the fall of 2024, an in-person event located at the Wisconsin Place Recreation Center and a virtual event that took place on Zoom. Over 150 stakeholders learned about the master planning process and participated in small discussion groups about the future of Friendship Heights. As community engagement continues throughout the planning process, Planning and Parks staff, with support from consultant Brick and Story, will continue to employ the successful strategies used during the initial engagement to meet the outlined objectives.

### ENGAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Staff will be guided by the following engagement objectives:

- Deliver a clear and straightforward message about the planning process and why it is important that stakeholders participate in the process. Explain why it matters if people participate, but also manage expectations about what sector plans can deliver.
- Work with community partners, property owners, municipalities in and around the plan area, community groups and associations, and neighborhood groups/homeowners' associations (HOA) to build trust and increase awareness of the planning effort. Continue a high level of coordination with the Village of Friendship Heights as they are entirely inside the proposed plan area.
- Employ an engagement strategy that allows people of all ages and life stages to participate. Consider event locations and timing to allow access to engagement opportunities.

- Provide a range of avenues for people to engage in this process, which may include (but is not limited to) large group gatherings, smaller focus groups, pop-ups at community events, presentations at regular meetings hosted by community groups, and online asynchronous opportunities for feedback.
- Coordinate and collaborate with partner agencies from Washington, D.C. and the State of Maryland, particularly with regard to transportation and connectivity.

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## ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Staff has developed a variety of strategies to achieve the engagement objectives. A few of these strategies were employed during the Plan kickoff and will continue to be used throughout the Plan:

- **Communicate Plan updates and important information clearly via e-newsletter and website.** Staff will regularly update stakeholders via an email newsletter and the Plan website. These updates will announce engagement opportunities and major plan milestones. Initial engagement indicated that email is the preferred means of communication in this area.
- **Build relationships with community organizations, local municipalities, and stakeholder groups.** Staff has presented regularly at meetings of numerous groups in and around Friendship Heights including the Village of Friendship Heights and other municipalities, local civic associations, community non-profits and county groups that focus on Friendship Heights. Staff will continue to meet with these groups throughout the plan as a regular part of the engagement process.
- **Coordinate regularly with partner agencies.** Montgomery Planning and Parks staff will consistently coordinate and collaborate on the Plan vision and recommendations with agency partners from around the region, such as Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), DC Office of Planning, District Department of Transportation (DDOT), the Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA), and the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration. As the Plan work continues, additional agencies and partners will be added to this effort.
- **Attend community events such as farmers markets and festivals.** Staff will look for opportunities to participate in community events such as the “makers markets” hosted by the Friendship Heights Alliance and the regular farmers markets in the Village of Friendship Heights. Establishing a presence at these events can help staff connect with stakeholders who are not yet familiar with the Plan effort.

- **Table on the street/host a pop-up in Friendship Heights.** Throughout the *Friendship Heights Urban Design Study*, Planning staff members sat at a table at central locations in the downtown during midday to introduce Montgomery Planning and to share information about the *Study*. This strategy was also used during the Plan’s initial engagement and allowed staff to engage people who work, shop, or visit the downtown and may not have heard of the sector plan effort.
- **Listen to and learn from unique groups.** During the visioning phase, staff will work to strategically reach populations that are part of Friendship Heights but have not been participating in the public engagement opportunities in large numbers. These groups will be determined after additional initial engagement and analysis has been conducted.

**Provide opportunities for virtual engagement to increase accessibility.** In addition to in-person engagement opportunities, there will be ways to participate in the planning process online, such as surveys and interactive maps/exhibits where community members can provide comments on their own time.

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## ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

### PLAN KICKOFF EVENTS

Montgomery Planning held two kickoff events – one in-person at the Wisconsin Place Community Recreation Center on November 20, 2024, and one online via Zoom on December 3, 2024. Around 60 stakeholders attended each event. Both events began with an opening presentation that reviewed the planning process and what sector plans typically address, and then participants were split into discussion groups moderated by staff. The groups discussed what excited and concerned them about future change in Friendship Heights, what other communities could serve as precedents for a future vision for the downtown, and what is special about Friendship Heights and should be preserved. Staff’s presentation of this proposed Scope of Work will include key takeaways from the kickoff engagement. A full summary is included in the attached document.

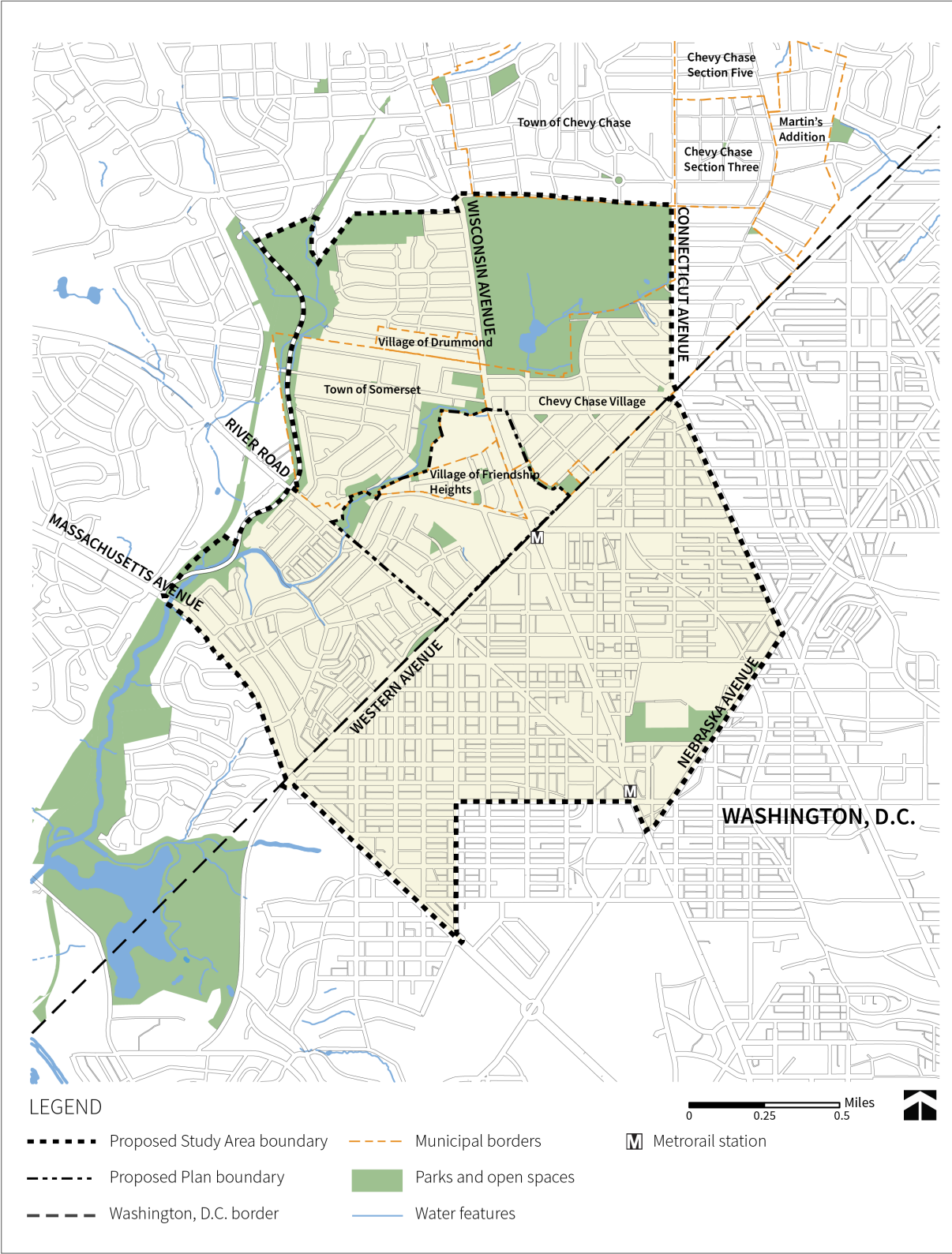
### MEETING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

In addition to the kickoff events, staff presented at several meetings of stakeholder groups throughout the fall of 2024 and winter 2025, including the Village of Friendships Heights, Chevy Chase Village, Town of Somerset, Somerset House, the Friendship Heights Urban District Advisory Committee, the Western Montgomery Citizens Advisory Board, the Friendship Heights Neighbors Network, and the Citizens Coordinating Committee for Friendship Heights. Staff also met with the

Friendship Heights Alliance and a group of several major property owners to talk about the plan process and schedule.

## PLAN AREA

As in every sector plan, staff has developed a study area (Map 5), to be used for context information to support the existing conditions work, particularly with regard to demographics, transportation and housing data. As Friendship Heights sits at the border with Washington D.C., the study area extends into that neighboring jurisdiction so that staff can take into account the key context information there as well. In early engagement conversations, stakeholders emphasized that residents and visitors to Friendship Heights use the streets, parks, shops, and other community resources on both sides of the border without regard to jurisdiction.



Map 5: Proposed Friendship Heights Sector Plan Study Area Boundary



Based on recent community engagement, the findings of the *Friendship Heights Urban Design Study*, and initial analysis of the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, staff proposes the Plan boundary as shown in Map 6.

The 1998 *Friendship Heights Sector Plan* boundary (Map 3, page 7) encompassed the downtown area. For this sector plan update, staff proposes extending the Plan Boundary to River Road, including the entirety of the large block enclosed by Willard Avenue, Friendship Boulevard, Western Avenue NW, and River Road. Staff also proposes including the entirety of Willard Avenue Neighborhood Park on the north side of Willard Avenue.

Including the large block allows the Plan to better address the transition between the single-family Brookdale neighborhood and potential redevelopment of the GEICO parcel and the downtown beyond, including connectivity, open space, and compatibility.

Including Willard Avenue Neighborhood Park allows the Plan to address neighborhood concerns about the programming of the park and preservation of the natural environment. It would also allow consideration of how the park might be better connected to the neighborhood and downtown Friendship Heights, as it is the only option for active recreation proximate to the urban area.



Map 6: Proposed Friendship Heights Sector Plan Boundary

## PLANNING FRAMEWORK

### COUNTYWIDE PLANNING INITIATIVES

All sector and master plans consider plans and initiatives and plans that guide policy at the countywide level. For the Friendship Heights Sector Plan these include:

*Thrive Montgomery 2050 (2022)* - Montgomery County's General Plan establishes a framework to guide the county's future land use policies, including master plans. This plan will rely on *Thrive Montgomery 2050* for guidance and work to further the General Plan's goals within the Friendship Heights Sector Plan area.

*Racial Equity and Social Justice Act* - In 2019, the Montgomery County Council passed the Racial Equity and Social Justice Act (27-19) that requires the Planning Board to consider racial equity and social justice impacts when preparing a Master or Sector Plan. Staff will apply an equity lens to the recommendations considered as part of this planning effort as well as the planning process itself, particularly with regard to community engagement.

*Climate Action Plan (2021)* - This plan outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions 80 percent by 2027 and 100 percent by 2035. Planning staff will incorporate guidance from the Climate Action Plan and develop recommendations to assist the county in achieving these goals.

*Vision Zero* - In 2016, the county adopted a resolution mandating the Vision Zero approach to all transportation planning efforts and policies, with the aim of eliminating all traffic fatalities and severe roadway injuries in the county by 2030. Vision Zero will be an essential lens for considering recommendations for the Plan, particularly along Wisconsin Avenue and Willard Avenue.

*Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan (2013)* - Wisconsin Avenue (MD 355) is identified as a key corridor for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in this Plan, but only as far south as the Bethesda Metro Station. The Plan states that BRT should extend south to Western Avenue only if Washington, D.C. plans to implement BRT from the Friendship Heights Metro to the National Cathedral area, thus completing the corridor. This Plan also includes priorities and recommendations for pedestrian and bike improvements within urban areas. The *Friendship Heights Sector Plan* will be an opportunity to focus on MD 355 between Bethesda and Washington, D.C. and to consider BRT as well as other as other important issues along the corridor.

*Complete Streets Design Guide (2021)* - Complete Streets are roadways that are designed and operated to provide safe, accessible, and healthy travel for all users of the roadway system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. This document offers design guidance for all of the various roadway types in the county. This tool will be crucial in informing the recommendations for the roadway network in the Plan Area.

*Bicycle Master Plan (2018)* – The *Bicycle Master Plan* establishes recommendations for a network of low-stress bikeways throughout the entire county. Although this document provides street-level bicycle recommendations, this Plan will be an opportunity to re-examine those recommendations and consider any additional recommendations that will further connect the bicycle network throughout the proposed Plan Area. Notably, the *Bicycle Master Plan* recommended separated bike facilities for Friendship Heights, none of which have been implemented.

*Pedestrian Master Plan (2023)* – This recently adopted plan is Montgomery Planning’s first comprehensive vision to create safer, more comfortable experiences walking or rolling around the county. This Plan will echo several recommendations from this effort, particularly those that are focused on pedestrian comfort and safety, two priorities that stakeholders raised during the *Urban Design Study*.

*Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (2022)* – This most recent update to the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan guides the future development and management of the county’s park system. This update emphasizes the role of parks in supporting physical activity, social connectivity and environmental stewardship. Parks will be an important focus of this plan, with Willard Avenue Neighborhood Park and Brookdale Neighborhood Park both included in the proposed Plan Area.

*Attainable Housing Strategies Initiative (2024)*– This initiative is focused on increasing the diversity of housing options across more of Montgomery County. In 2024 the Planning Board transmitted recommendations to the County Council which includes creating a Priority Housing District surrounding key transit stations and along corridors. The document also defines three scales of attainable housing (small, medium and large) and identifies where these housing types would be most appropriate, focusing on increasing density along growth corridors. Although the initiative focuses primarily on areas with residential (R) zoning, and downtown Friendship Heights is mostly commercial-residential (CR) mixed-use zoning, the Plan will, in concert with the goals of *Thrive Montgomery 2050*, explore how to achieve a diversity of housing options in the downtown. The County Council is currently considering a variety of approaches for increasing the housing supply in the County.

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## OTHER PLANNING INITIATIVES

In addition to the countywide plans and policies described above, the Friendship Heights Sector Plan will be informed by the *Friendship Heights Urban Design Study*, as described earlier, and by the DC Office of Planning’s recently completed *Wisconsin Avenue Development Framework (2024)*. This framework looks at the Wisconsin Avenue corridor from Friendship Heights south to Tenleytown. It focuses on opportunities for increased affordable housing, enhanced open space connections, and improvements that will support walkability and increased transit ridership. Plan staff will continue to

hold regular meetings with the DC Office of Planning, WMATA and DDOT to coordinate on the Friendship Heights Sector Plan and other relevant planning initiatives in both jurisdictions.

## PLAN ELEMENTS

### QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

Through the ongoing existing conditions analysis and initial phase of community engagement, staff identified key questions to explore through the next phases of the planning process. These questions are intended to serve as a guide for the Sector Plan team as they examine the future of the proposed Plan Area. As the planning process proceeds, additional questions may be added to this list.

- What will Friendship Heights be in 20 years? Today it is an urban area that is struggling to define itself after decades as a high-end retail destination. Many community members expressed a need for change but are unclear what that should entail. Through continued engagement with stakeholders, staff will arrive at a new vision for the downtown.
- What is the future of the retail market in Friendship Heights? How can a new sector plan help make this a desirable place for businesses?
- How can the unique cross-jurisdictional identity of this place continue to be a key asset? How can the connections between Friendship Heights and the surrounding neighborhoods be strengthened to increase activity and vitality in the downtown?

### ELEMENTS TO EXPLORE

Below is a list of elements that staff will explore as work on the Plan begins:

#### Community Identity

When the 1998 Friendship Heights Sector Plan was adopted, Friendship Heights was a regional destination for high-end retail. Twenty-five years later that is not the primary identity of the downtown. Most of the high-end stores have closed, and Whole Foods is one of the main retail destinations. During the community engagement for the *Urban Design Study*, people expressed a variety of ideas about what Friendship Heights is today, and what sort of change could be beneficial to

the downtown. Through continued engagement and visioning with stakeholders, this sector plan update will produce a new vision and identity for Friendship Heights.

### Economic Development

While the urban fabric of Friendship Heights today has not changed significantly over the last 25 years, the economic realities of the area have changed. When the 1998 Plan was written, Friendship Heights was a successful regional retail destination with a strong multi-family residential market and a mix of commercial tenants throughout the urban area. In the early 2010s the retail market began to falter and by the time the COVID-19 pandemic arrived, there were numerous vacant retail spaces, both large and small, in addition to commercial buildings with persistent, substantial vacancies. The Plan will analyze the existing economic profile of the Plan Area and its context and explore strategies to attract new businesses and jobs to the downtown while supporting existing businesses. Staff will also analyze how the mix of office tenants has shifted since the last Plan and how this has impacted the downtown. As part of the economic development scope, real estate consulting firm RCLCO will conduct a market-driven analysis of opportunity sites in the downtown to inform recommendations related to both land use and economic development.

### Housing

Friendship Heights has seen limited development since the 1998 Plan was adopted, aside from the creation of Wisconsin Place and The Collection. In 2023, the first multi-family building was approved for construction in Friendship Heights in over a decade at 5500 Wisconsin Avenue. This project will bring 300 new units to the downtown, 15% of which will be affordable in compliance with county policy. In 2019, regional housing targets were set which identified a need for Montgomery County to add 31,000 new units needed by 2030. This plan will explore what additional housing will mean for Friendship Heights, including considering a diversity of housing types and possible opportunity sites.

### Land Use and Zoning

Economic development and housing goals are linked to land use. Staff will evaluate current and future potential land use approaches to arrive at recommendations, including proposed zoning, that will support economic growth, and the housing goals discussed above.

### Transportation, Access, and Connectivity

Drawing on guidance from Thrive Montgomery 2050 and other countywide plans such as the *Master Plan of Highways and Transitways*, this Plan will evaluate the transportation network in Friendship Heights, including Wisconsin Avenue/MD-355, Willard Avenue and other local streets, and make recommendations to support a multimodal system that serves pedestrians, motorists, and bicyclists. The Plan will also identify how to make the pedestrian network safer and more accessible, and how to

improve pedestrian connectivity, throughout the proposed Plan Area and into the surrounding neighborhoods.

Friendship Heights has a robust transit network that includes a Metrorail station, a bus hub, and an internal shuttle operated by the Village of Friendship Heights. The Plan will explore opportunities to better integrate these systems to improve transit accessibility in the downtown. The Plan will also look at the transit facilities on the Montgomery County side of the downtown to ensure that they are successfully serving stakeholders.

The work described above will be done in collaboration with partner agencies including the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT), the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA), the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). Staff will also be coordinating with the Village of Friendship Heights regarding streets within the special taxing district.

The Plan will also incorporate traffic modeling analysis to assess transportation adequacy within the context of the sector plan. This analysis which will consider existing and proposed land uses in the proposed Plan Area.

### Environmental Resilience

The impacts of climate change, impervious cover, habitat loss, and ecological diseases have local and global impacts. Increases in urban heat island effect, precipitation, flooding, storms, biodiversity loss, and carbon emissions all contribute to a community's health, safety, and climate resiliency. This Plan will assess and make recommendations to reduce these impacts to increase and protect natural resources and increase climate resiliency for all Friendship Heights residents.

### Parks and Open Space

The proposed Plan Area includes several parks and open spaces owned and operated by both public and private entities. Willard Avenue Neighborhood Park is an M-NCPPC Park and Brookdale Neighborhood Park is operated as an M-NCPPC Park under a lease from GEICO who owns the underlying property. The remaining parks and open spaces in Friendship Heights are either Village of Friendship Heights Parks or privately owned public spaces. The Plan will explore the existing network of parks and open spaces in and around Friendship Heights and make recommendations with the goal of ensuring that the area has a variety of park experiences and amenities that serve all stakeholders.

### Urban Design

Building on the recently completed *Friendship Heights Urban Design Study*, the Plan will explore how to improve and enhance the public realm, increase street activation and look for opportunities to

recommend urban design interventions that will strengthen Friendship Heights as a destination for stakeholders of all ages and backgrounds.

### Community Amenities

As part of the *Urban Design Study*, staff conducted a cursory survey of community amenities in and around Friendship Heights. The study showed that there are limited amenities in the downtown and stakeholders leave the downtown to access libraries, gyms, swimming pools, arts destinations, movie theaters and more. The Plan will take a closer look at access to amenities from Friendship Heights and will recommend which amenities would serve the community best in the future.

### Schools

While the proposed Plan Area does not include any schools, there are two public elementary schools immediately outside the boundary that draw from Friendship Heights. This Plan will consider how/if Plan recommendations impact future enrollment, and potential capacity options that Montgomery County Public Schools can pursue if necessary. The Plan will also explore opportunities to improve connectivity and access to these schools as appropriate.

### Planning History and Historic Resources

The Sector Plan will expand our understanding of the growth of Friendship Heights. Specifically, Montgomery Planning will explore how the development and planning history of the area, particularly from a social and racial equity perspective, influenced the evolution of the community from the 1900s to the present day. Staff will explore how proposed plan recommendations for the topics discussed above can respond to any historical inequities.

In the proposed boundary, there are no buildings or sites listed in Montgomery County's Locational Atlas & Index of Historic Sites or in the Master Plan for Historic Preservation. In addition, there are no resources designated to the National Register of Historic Places. Within the Brookdale neighborhood, on Murray Road, the Shoemaker (Isaac) Family Cemetery site is listed on the Montgomery Burial Sites Inventory. Over the course of the Sector Plan, staff will assess whether any potential historic resources merit evaluation for listing at the local, state, or federal levels.



## PLAN SCHEDULE

Staff work on the Friendship Heights Sector Plan began in October 2024 and the Planning Board Draft is scheduled for transmission to the County Executive and County Council by May 2026. Significant milestones are outlined below.

Scope of Work:	February 2025
Existing Conditions Analysis:	Winter – Spring 2025
Visioning and Preliminary Recommendations:	Late Spring – Fall 2025
Working Draft:	Winter 2026
Planning Board Work Sessions and Public Hearing:	Spring 2026
County Executive Review, County Council Review and Work Sessions:	Spring - Summer 2026
Commission Adoption of Plan and Sectional Map Amendment:	Fall 2026

## ATTACHMENTS

### **Attachment 1 – Summary of Plan Kickoff Engagement Feedback**