



# Bethesda Downtown Plan Annual Monitoring Report

May 2019

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 information regarding the implementation of the Sector Plan for the year starting May 2018 ending May 2019. 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  
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Online at [montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-Downtown-plan](http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-Downtown-plan)

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Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Department

[MontgomeryPlanning.org](http://MontgomeryPlanning.org)

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# May 2018 - May 2019

What has happened in downtown Bethesda over the past year?



## Construction

In addition to the Purple Line station, 4 construction projects are underway including Marriott Headquarters, The Wilson and The Elm, 7900 Wisconsin and Edgemont II.



## Design

The Design Advisory Panel has reviewed 7 projects since May 2018.



## Schools

In the current school year, the cluster is at 95.2% capacity utilization at the elementary school level, 80.8% at the middle school level, and 88.3% at the high school level



## Parks and Open Space

First Park Impact Payment (PIP) received from Marriott for \$5.06 million towards parks acquisition and development.



## Transportation

Design for Capital Crescent Surface Trail is at 90% and targeted to open Fall 2019.



## Implementation

The Bethesda Downtown Plan Implementation Guidelines were approved by the Planning Board on May 2nd to provide direction and procedures for implementing the Sector Plan.

# Executive Summary

This report provides a comprehensive update on the implementation of the 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 recognition of this complexity, the Plan establishes annual monitoring and reporting of schools, parks, and transportation adequacy.

The Plan envisions a Bethesda where residents will have a downtown that is a model for sustainability, accessibility, equity and innovation. They will have more affordable choices of housing near jobs, shopping and recreation. Residents 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 their 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.

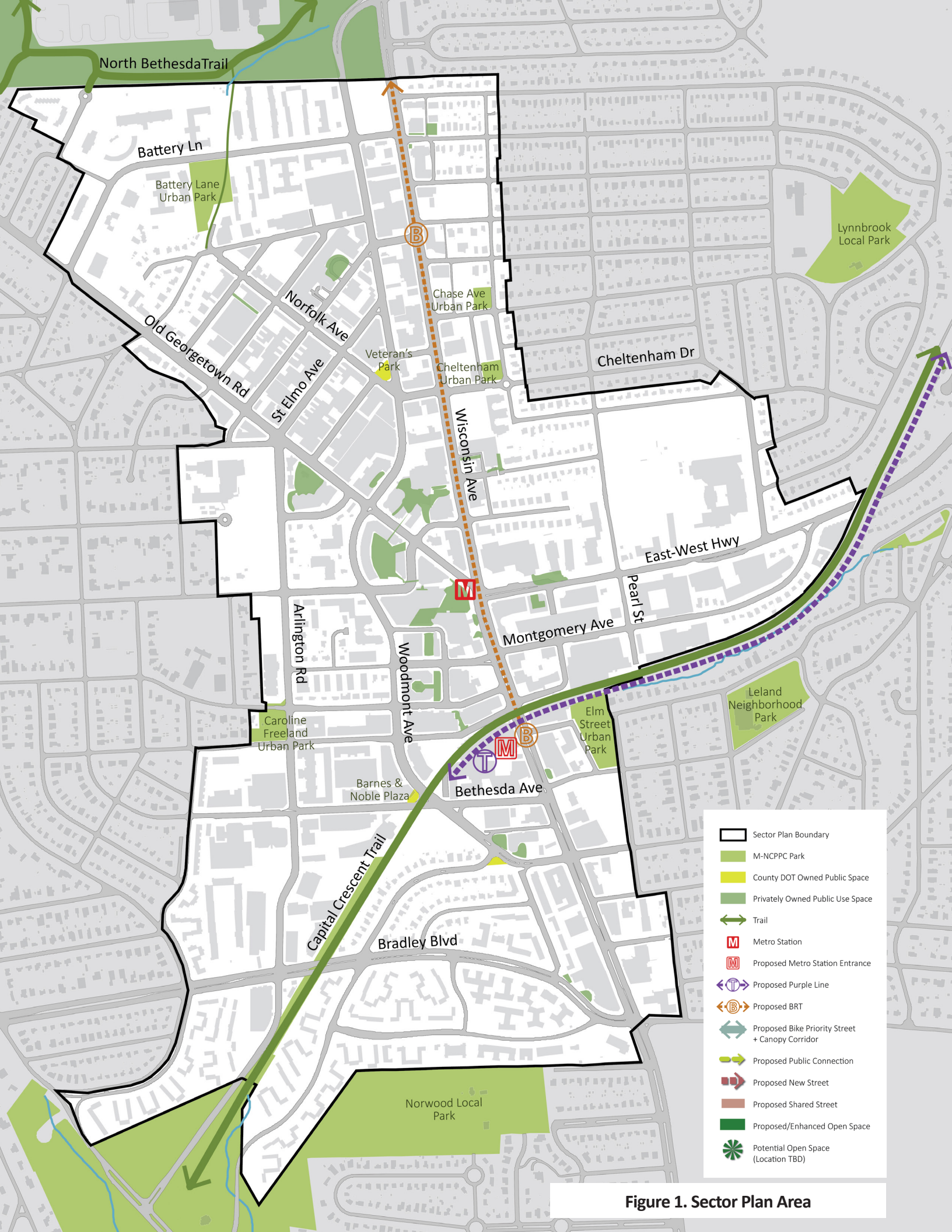
The annual report will be presented to the Planning Board in the spring of each year and transmitted to the

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 15 projects have been received since plan approval in 2017. Of those projects, 2 are under construction, 6 are approved but not yet constructed and 7 are currently under staff and planning board review. One project includes the revitalization of Montgomery County Farm Women's Cooperative Market and contribution to the Eastern Greenway. The first Park Impact Payment was received from the Marriott project for \$5.06 Million toward parks acquisition and development. Purple Line construction is underway. With the necessary closure of the Capital Crescent Trail, the design for the alternative route, Capital Crescent Surface Trail, is 90% completed and targeted to open fall 2019. Lastly, Implementation Guidelines have been approved to give direction and the appropriate procedures for implementing the Sector Plan recommendations.

The report also provides updates on parks and open space, school capacity and transportation adequacy.





- Sector Plan Boundary
- M-NCPPC Park
- County DOT Owned Public Space
- Privately Owned Public Use Space
- Trail
- Metro Station
- Proposed Metro Station Entrance
- Proposed Purple Line
- Proposed BRT
- Proposed Bike Priority Street + Canopy Corridor
- Proposed Public Connection
- Proposed New Street
- Proposed Shared Street
- Proposed/Enhanced Open Space
- Potential Open Space (Location TBD)

Figure 1. Sector Plan Area

# 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 and 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, 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 2018 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). Finally, this report is intended to provide an overview of the implementation of the Sector Plan recommendations that aim to achieve the Plan's vision.

# Bethesda Downtown Plan



## Key Monitoring Updates

Several committees and tools were 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 that 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 2018, the DAP has reviewed 15 projects, with 7 projects receiving Site Plan approval from the Planning Board. The following table illustrates the information associated with the DAP reviews. Detailed information can be found on the website: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-design-advisory-panel/>

### 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 comprises seven members representing the interest of local businesses and large property owners and seven members representing the interest of local residents. The IAC meets regularly once a month. Last year, new co-chairs were selected



with one new appointee to the committee. Detailed information can be found on the website: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-implementation-advisory-committee/>

## Online Monitoring and Tracking Program

The Monitoring and Tracking Program is an online tool that 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. The information and data from this online tool reports the development data for each project development application submitted to the Planning Department. The online tool reports:

- Project base and proposed density
- Amount of BOZ density requested by project
- Amount of Park Impact Payment (PIP) being assessed
- Number and percent of 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: <http://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-development-tracking/>

Project	Application Stage(s)	Date(s) Reviewed	Exceptional Design Points Requested	Exceptional Design Points Approved*
8000 Wisconsin Avenue	Sketch Plan	February 28, 2018 (Sketch) and November 28, 2018 (Site)	10	10
7000 Wisconsin Avenue	Sketch Plan	April 24, 2019 and May 22, 2019	20	TBD
4 Bethesda Metro	Sketch Plan	June 27, 2018	10	10
4702 West Virginia Avenue	Sketch Plan	April 24, 2019	20	TBD
Metro Tower	Sketch + Site Plan	November 28, 2018 (Sketch) and April 24, 2019 (Site)	30	TBD
Bethesda Market	Sketch Plan	October 24, 2018	10	TBD
Battery Lane District	Sketch Plan	March 27, 2019 and May 22, 2019	30	TBD
St. Elmo Apartments	Sketch + Preliminary Plan	September 26, 2018 (Sketch)	15	TBD
4915 Auburn Avenue	Sketch + Site Plan	July 25, 2018 (Sketch) and April 24, 2019 (Site)	30	TBD
7607 Old Georgetown Road	Sketch + Site Plan	April 4, 2018 (Sketch) and September 26, 2018 (Site)	30	30
Edgemont at Bethesda II	Sketch + Site Plan	November 29, 2017 (Sketch) and June 27, 2018 (Site)	20	20
8280 Wisconsin	Sketch + Site Plan	May 23, 2018 (Sketch) and September 26, 2018 (Site)	25	25
ZOM Bethesda	Sketch + Site Plan	November 8, 2017 (Sketch) and April 25, 2018 (Site)	10	10
The Claiborne	Sketch + Site Plan	July 25, 2018 (Sketch + Site) and October 24, 2018 (Sketch + Site)	10	10
8015 Old Georgetown Rd	Sketch Plan	May 22, 2019	20	TBD

\*Projects receive approval from the Planning Board with Site Plan reviews.

## 7607 Old Georgetown Road

Located between Woodmont Ave. and Commerce Lane, the project will redevelop the site with an energy-efficient mixed-use development, including 200 new residential units and up to 3,000 square feet of retail space. The building will include 15% moderately priced dwelling units, minimum parking, small business opportunities and structured parking, among other public benefits. The project includes an allocation of density from the Bethesda Overlay Zone with a Park Impact Payment of approximately \$1,116,150. The project received Site Plan approval from the Planning Board on January 24, 2019.

## Edgemont at Bethesda II

Edgemont II is an addition to the existing Edgemont I residential development, located on Edgemoor Lane, between Arlington Rd. and Woodmont Ave. The new Edgemont II building will add 154 multifamily units, 15% of which will be moderately priced dwelling units, as well as a minimum of 4,000 square feet of public open space and an intensive green roof. The project includes an allocation of density from the Bethesda Overlay Zone with a Park Impact Payment of approximately \$1,210,930. The project received Site Plan approval from the Planning Board on September 20, 2018.



Edgemont at Bethesda II, Illustrative Perspective from Southeast



ZOM Bethesda, Arlington Road Elevation (Arlington Road/Moorland Lane)

## 8280 Wisconsin Ave

8280 Wisconsin Ave, is a 581,704 square foot state-of-the-art research and development facility. The project includes an allocation of density from the Bethesda Overlay Zone with a Park Impact Payment of approximately \$816,330. The project received Site Plan approval from the Planning Board on May 3, 2018.



8280 Wisconsin, Southwest perspective of Wisconsin Avenue frontage

## ZOM Bethesda

ZOM Bethesda is a 253,200 square feet residential development with up to 230 new multifamily dwelling units, 15% of which will be moderately priced dwelling units. The building will occupy the entirety of the block on Arlington Road and will feature street entrances for units along Arlington Road. The project will feature two works of public art by two local artists, Zachary Oxman and Jeff Chyatte. The project includes an allocation of density from the Bethesda Overlay Zone with a Park Impact Payment of approximately \$1,439,870. The applicant agreed to contribute \$785,275 to the Amenity Fund, for off-site public improvements in downtown Bethesda. The improvements must be coordinated between the Department of General Services, Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP), and other relevant agencies. The project received Site Plan approval from the Planning Board on July 19, 2018.

## Recommendations

- Planning Staff should work with the appropriate agencies to clarify the procedures for the Amenity Fund in the Bethesda Downtown Plan Area and make public.





## 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.

### Status of Available BOZ Density

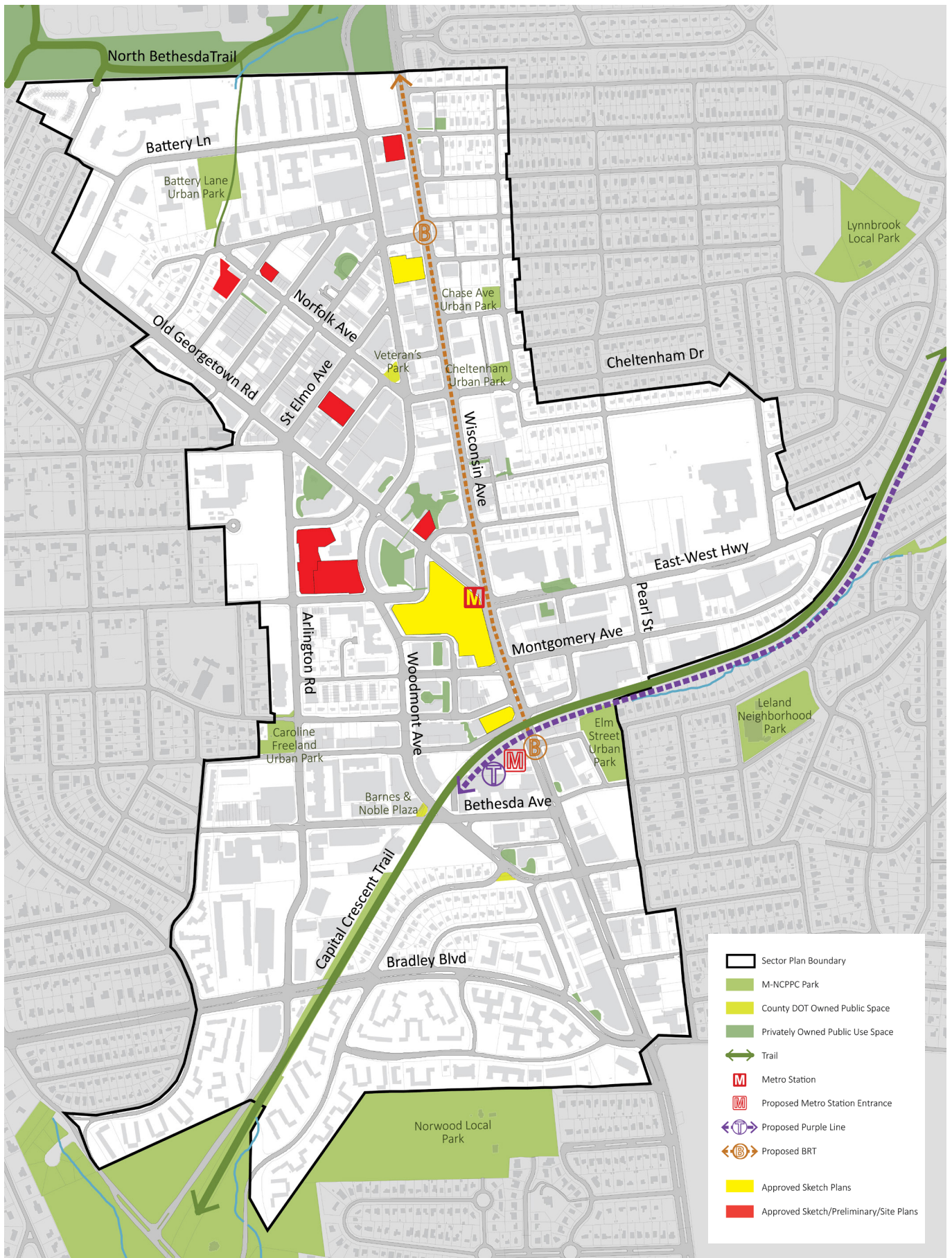
The Bethesda Overlay Zone (BOZ) sets a cap on development limiting the total density of existing, approved and new development to 32.4 million square feet of gross floor area. The Monitoring and Tracking Program website identifies the remaining available BOZ density in downtown Bethesda as of April 2019 is **4,403,694 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, Enhanced Vegetated Roofs to Increase Green Cover, Exceptional Design, and Minimum Parking.

All residential projects reviewed since May 2018 have met 15 percent of MPDUs, as required by the Sector Plan. One of the projects exceeded this minimum and received Affordable Housing public benefit points.

Figure 2. Sector Plan Approved Plans (since May 2018)



Open space is an important element of the public realm and is essential to downtown Bethesda's civic life and patterns of activities. Public benefits points are awarded to projects that provide or make a payment for public open space in excess of the minimum open space requirement of the zone. Four of the 10 projects requested public benefit points for open space. The plan delineates a High Performance Area, where the greatest densities of development and the tallest building heights are anticipated. Vegetated roofs, which allow for the growth of more locally adapted plants and greater storm water treatment, are encouraged within the High Performance Area to deliver energy-efficiency benefits. Two of the 10 projects reviewed have received public benefit points for vegetated roofs. The plan prioritizes public benefits points for projects that demonstrate exceptional design that enhances the visual and functional character of a setting. Nine of the 10 reviewed projects requested Exceptional Design public benefits points. 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 ten projects reviewed requested public benefits points for minimum parking. Detailed requested and approved public benefits for the 10 projects reviewed since April 2018 can be found in Table 3.

## Recommendations

- 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.

**Table 2. Monitoring and Tracking Program Approvals since April 2018**

Sketch Plans (Monitoring)						
Project	Existing SF	Requested SF	Proposed DUs/ MPDUs	BOZ Density Requested(SF)	PIP	Max Height
8000 Wisconsin Avenue	30,518	430,000	441/110	219,130	TBD	175 ft
Metro Tower	79,127	400,000	TBD	118,491	TBD	250 ft
4 Bethesda Metro	631,274	1,092,242	160/24	162,012	TBD	290 ft

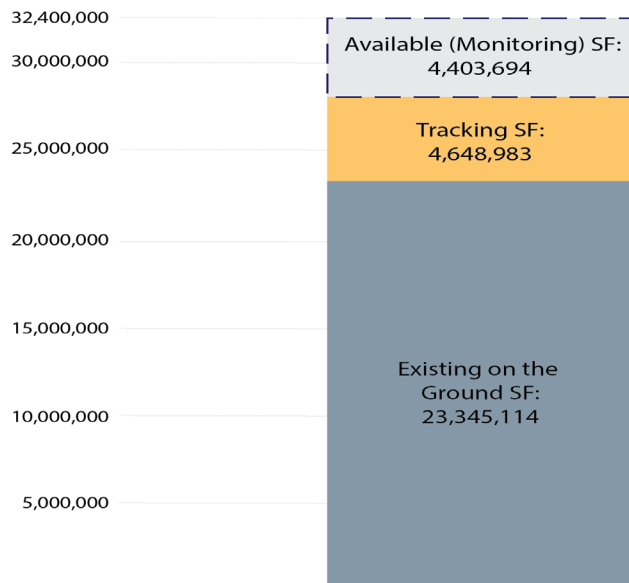
  

Preliminary and Site Plans (Tracking)						
Project	Existing SF	Approved Un- built SF	DUs/MPDUs	BOZ Density (SF)	PIP	Max Height
7607 Old Georgetown Road	31,612	83,388	200/30	133,615	\$1,116,150	225 ft
Edgemont at Bethesda II	134,248	166,495	154/24	138,083	\$1,215,490	150 ft
8280 Wisconsin Avenue	91,612	83,388	N/A	81,633	\$816,330	145 ft
4915 Auburn Avenue	32,456	204,728	148/32	80,008	N/A	122 ft
ZOM Bethesda	12,487	240,713	230/35	168,233	\$1,439,870	60 ft
The Claiborne	1,768	95,232	84/13	36,273	\$224,730	110 ft
St. Elmo Apartments	25,630	238,326	245/37	162,012	TBD	225 ft

Source: Monitoring and Tracking Program, April 2019



SECTOR PLAN CAP = 32.4 M SQUARE FEET (SF)



BOZ Density Tracking Tool  
(as of May 2019)

For an up-to-date version of the BOZ density tracking tool and more information about how the Bethesda Downtown Plan Area's density is calculated, visit the Monitoring and Tracking Program's webpage: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/planning/communities/area-1/bethesda-downtown-plan/bethesda-downtown-development-tracking/>

**Table 3a. Public Benefits Points Requested (Not Yet Approved) between May 2018 - April 2019**

	4915 Auburn Avenue	Metro Tower	St. Elmo Apartments	TOTAL
	Points Requested	Points Requested	Points Requested	Points Requested
<b>Connectivity and Mobility</b>				<b>76.99</b>
. Minimum Parking	11.49	19	6.5	36.99
. Through-Block Connection	10	15	15	40
<b>Diversity of Uses and Activities</b>				<b>57</b>
. Small Business Opportunities		10	10	20
. Affordable Housing	37			37
<b>Quality of Building and Site Design</b>				<b>174.04</b>
. Exceptional Design	20	30	15	65
. Public Art			15	15
. Public Open Space	9.04		20	29.04
. Tower Step Back		5	20	25
. Structured Parking	20	20		40
<b>Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment</b>				<b>78.49</b>
. Building Lot Terminations (BLTs)	3.41	4	6.08	13.49
. Cool Roof	5		10	15
. Energy Conservation and Generation	15	15	15	45
. Vegetated Wall	5			5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135.94</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>132.58</b>	

**Table 3b. Public Benefits Points Requested and Approved between May 2018 - April 2019**

	Edgemont II at Bethesda		ZOM Bethesda		8280 Wisconsin Avenue	
	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved
Major Public Facility						
. Bike Share					7.01	7.01
Connectivity and Mobility						
. Minimum Parking	12.6	12.6	10	10	11.83	11.83
. Streetscape Improvements						
. Trip Mitigation					10	10
Diversity of Uses and Activities						
. Adaptive Buildings					6.75	6.75
. Small Business Opportunities						
. Affordable Housing						
. Enhanced Accessibility for the Disabled	3.8	3.8	20	20		
Quality of Building and Site Design						
. Architectural Elevations	20	20				
. Exceptional Design	20	20	10	10	25	25
. Public Art			15	15		
. Public Open Space					3.65	3.65
. Tower Step Back						
. Structured Parking	20	20	20	20	20	20
Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Environment						
. Building Lot Terminations (BLTs)	3.7	3.7	4.56	4.56	3.4	3.4
. Cool Roof	10	10			15	15
. Recycling Facility Plan	10	10	10	10		
. Energy Conservation and Generation			10	10	15	15
. Vegetated Roof	7.5	7.5	15	15		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107.6</b>	<b>107.6</b>	<b>114.56</b>	<b>114.56</b>	<b>117.64</b>	<b>117.64</b>

8000 Wisconsin Avenue		4 Bethesda Metro Center		7607 Old Georgetown Road		The Claiborne		TOTAL	
Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved	Points Requested	Points Approved
								46.01	46.01
		30	30	9	9			46.01	46.01
								106.82	106.82
10	10	9.21	9.21	9.18	9.18	12	12	74.82	74.82
						12	12	12	12
				10	10			20	20
								193.55	193.55
								6.75	6.75
				10	10			10	10
150	150							150	150
						3	3	26.8	26.8
								366.71	361.91
				30	30	10	10	60	60
10	10	10	10	30	30	10	10	115	115
								15	15
		18.06	18.06					21.71	21.71
				5	5	10	5.2	15	10.2
20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	140	140
								191.55	191.54
		8.69	8.69	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.89	24.05	24.04
						10	10	35	35
						5	5	25	25
15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	85	85
								22.5	22.5
205	205	110.96	110.96	139.98	139.98	108.9	104.09		



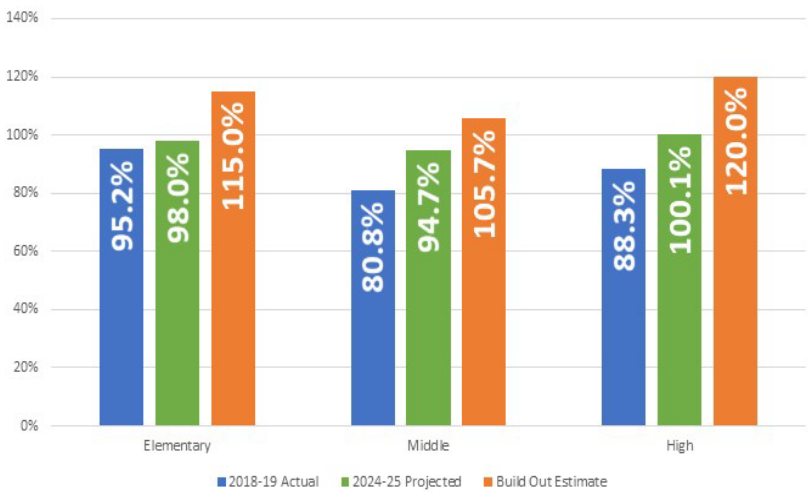
# Schools

The following reflects the current status of schools serving the Bethesda Downtown Plan area. For this analysis, we have also compared projected school utilization to the original estimate of the Plan’s enrollment impact.

## Current School Adequacy

The Bethesda Downtown Plan is served by the Bethesda-Chevy Chase (B-CC) Cluster. In the current school year, the cluster is at 95.2% capacity utilization at the elementary school level. According to the Montgomery County Public School’s (MCPS) Division of Capital Planning, the elementary school utilization cluster-wide is expected to generally remain stable throughout the six-year timeframe. Due to the opening of Silver Creek Middle School in September 2017, the current middle school utilization across the cluster is 80.8%. MCPS expects the middle school utilization to increase to 94.7% by the end of the six-year window. Current utilization at B-CC High School is at 88.3%, thanks in large part due to the opening of a 34-classroom addition in September 2018. Nevertheless, the utilization is projected to increase to 100.1% in 2024-25.

**Figure 3. B-CC Cluster Capacity Utilization Rates**



The Plan area is primarily served by Bethesda Elementary School, which opened the current school year at 116.4% utilization, despite the recent opening of an addition in August 2015. MCPS projects the school to be at 130.5% utilization and 171 students over capacity for the 2024-25 school year. In accordance with the 2016 Subdivision Staging Policy, this projected utilization would continue to classify the school's capacity as inadequate in the upcoming FY2020 Annual School Test.

The Plan area is also served by Somerset Elementary School (mostly south of Bradley Boulevard), which opened the current school year at 114.0% utilization. MCPS projects the school to be at 127.4% utilization and 141 students over capacity for the 2024-25 school year. Like Bethesda ES, Somerset's projected utilization would continue to classify the school's capacity as inadequate.

The service area for both elementary schools, however, will not enter a residential development moratorium because the County Council has included placeholder funding in the Capital Improvements Program as capacity relief at both schools. The placeholder funding is justified based on an approved capacity study currently in progress, which is evaluating options to relieve over-utilization at individual elementary schools in both the B-CC Cluster and the Walter Johnson Cluster, including both Bethesda ES and Somerset ES. As part of that effort, MCPS will study options to open a previously closed elementary school that would serve downtown Bethesda as well

as options to reassign students from over-utilized schools to under-utilized schools. To further validate the placeholder funding, MCPS has committed to implementing a real capacity solution for both schools by the 2024-25 school year.

## Buildout Enrollment Comparison and Capacity Options

When developing the Bethesda Downtown Plan, planning staff estimated future enrollment within the B-CC Cluster based on full residential buildout of the Plan as well as the Greater Lyttonsville, Chevy Chase Lake and Westbard sector plans, which also feed into the B-CC Cluster. The likelihood of achieving buildout for each of these plans varies, as does the potential timeline. Nevertheless, Table 4 includes a comparison of how current enrollments and projected enrollments in 2024-25 compare to the estimated buildout enrollments.

During adoption of the Bethesda Downtown Plan, council staff worked with MCPS to identify potential capacity options that could be explored to alleviate overcrowding in the B-CC Cluster. At the elementary school level, these included a potential addition at Westbrook ES and the potential reopening of Lynnbrook ES and/or Rollingwood ES. These continue to remain options for MCPS should the need to accommodate more elementary students arise.

Similarly, staff indicated that additions at the cluster's two middle schools could result in capacity for an additional 383 students. At the high school level,

**Table 4. Current and Enrollment and Capacity within the B-CC Cluster, Compared to Projected Enrollment at Buildout**

	Projected Capacity 2024-2025	Actual Enrollment 2018-19	Projected Enrollment 2024-2025	Projected Enrollment at Buildout
Elementary School	3,790	3,609	3,714	4,357
Middle School	2,024	1,636	1,917	2,139
High School	2,408	2,126	2,410	2,889



however, MCPS does not anticipate being able to add any more capacity to B-CC High School on its current site. As specified in the Sector Plan, MCPS should evaluate the need to expand B-CC High School through the expansion or acquisition of neighboring properties in the Pearl District along East West Highway. Additionally, MCPS should also look for capacity solutions outside the cluster. MCPS anticipates reopening Woodward High School as a comprehensive high school in 2025. This will provide relief to over-utilization projected in the downcounty area. While this option has been discussed as primarily serving to ease enrollment issues at Walter Johnson High School and Albert Einstein High School, it has also been discussed as a possible solution for long-term enrollment burdens at B-CC High School. MCPS is also currently pursuing a countywide boundary analysis that will look for opportunities to better balance utilization (and student diversity) through boundary

realignments. Recommendations from a consultant, anticipated in June 2020, should provide additional insight into the feasibility of relieving future enrollment burdens at B-CC High School through boundary changes.

## Recommendations

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



*Bethesda Elementary School*





# 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, Bethesda Farm Women’s Cooperative Market, 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.

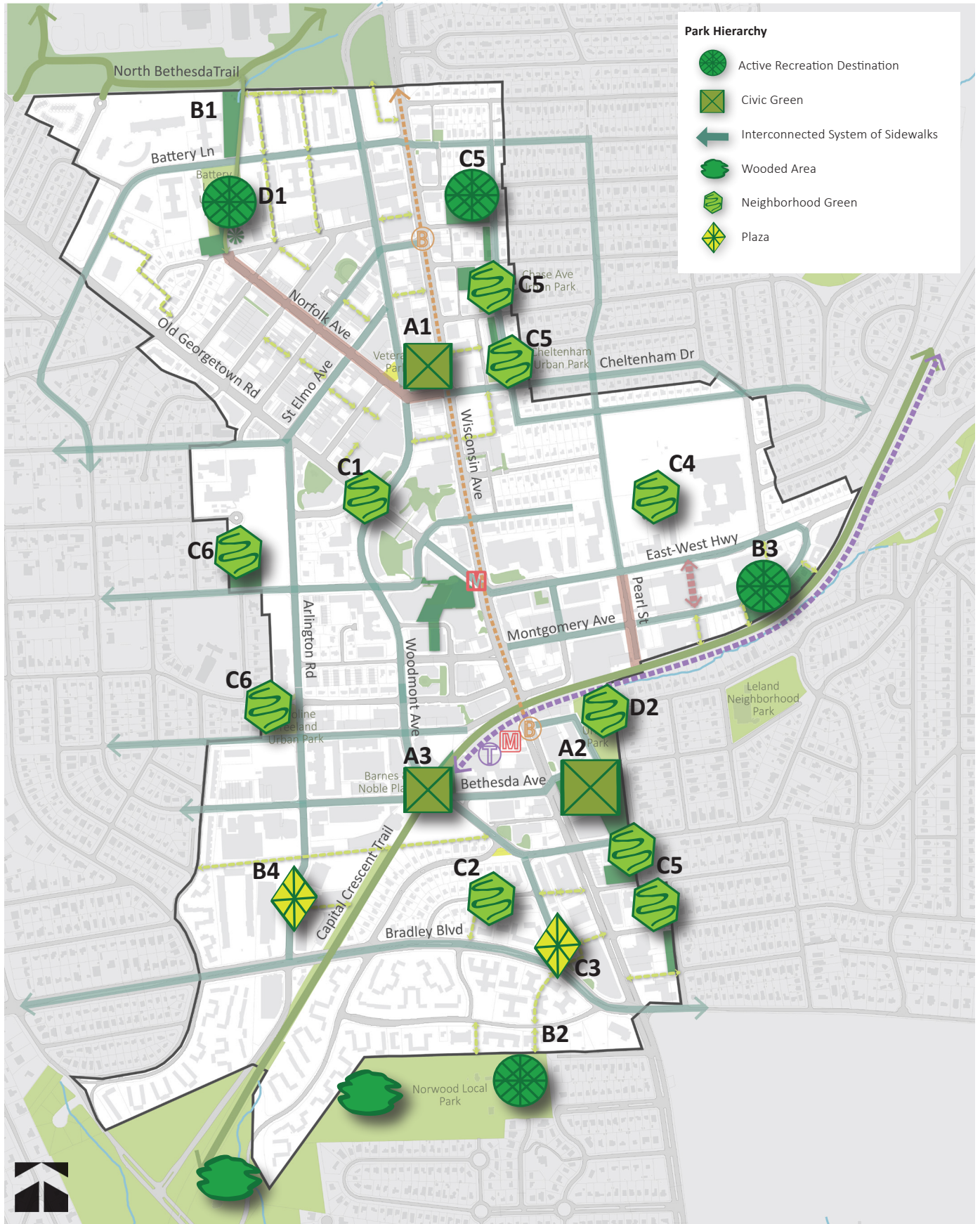
The table on the following pages reflects the status for the specific parks and open space recommendations in the Plan. This section also addresses and summarizes planned improvements to existing parks through the CIP, Park Impact Payments (PIP) received through the development approval process, and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

## Parks Inventory Status

The following table identifies the inventory of existing and proposed parks and the implementation status of all park and open space recommendations. See Sector Plan Recommended Parks and Open Space map of proposed parks from the Sector Plan.



## Sector Plan Recommended Parks and Open Space





**Table 5. Parks Inventory Status**

Recommended Parks and Open Spaces (2.7.3, pp 80-85)	Existing Acres	New Acres	Urban Park Type (PROS 2017)	Description	Status
A.1. Veteran's Park Civic Green	0	0.5	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.	This Civic Green may be created through future dedication and/or purchase of land.
<b>A.2. Montgomery County Farm Women's Cooperative Market Civic Green</b>	0	1.6	Civic Green	Green open space next to the historic market as a destination and local gathering spot, and as activating feature connecting Eastern Greenway and Elm Street Park.	<b>This Civic Green is likely to be created as a privately owned public space (POPS) via two pending development projects. Early development plans have been submitted where the applicant proposes to revitalize the market building and the grounds. The development proposal also may include the creation of a park on part of PLD's Lots 24 &amp; 10, depending on PLD's disposition decision. The project is under review before Historic Preservation Commission on Farm Women's Market.</b>
<b>A.3. Capital Crescent Civic Green</b>	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.	<b>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 anticipated for facility planning beginning in FY20-21. 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>
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>B.3. Eastern Capital Crescent Urban Greenway</b>	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.	<b>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>
B.4. Arlington South Gateway Plaza	0	0.2	Urban Plaza	Linear urban plaza to link Arlington South District to the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT). 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.

**\*Green text denotes updates since May 2018**

**Table 5. Parks Inventory Status**

<b>Recommended Parks and Open Spaces (2.7.3, pp 80-85)</b>	<b>Existing Acres</b>	<b>New Acres</b>	<b>Urban Park Type (PROS 2017)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Status</b>
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.	A combination of tools will be used to implement the vision of the Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens, including dedication and POPS through development, partnerships with private and public entities, and direct purchase.
<b>C.5.b. Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens, South End</b>	0	2.5	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.	<b>A combination of tools will be used to implement the vision of the Eastern Greenway Neighborhood Greens, including dedication and POPS through development, partnerships with private and public entities, and direct purchase. A Sketch Plan has been submitted for a development that may include PLD's Lots 24 &amp; 10. This development may result in creation of a large park as the core of the South End of the Eastern Greenway, depending on PLD's disposition decision.</b>
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.
<b>D.2. Elm Street Neighborhood Green Improvements</b>	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.	<b>Design of the park will be initiated once the locations of the tunnel for the Capital Crescent Trail under Wisconsin Avenue, the tunnel portal, and the trail connection to the Georgetown Branch Trail (Purple Line Trail) are finalized. Work will be coordinated with the Purple Line and MCDOT.</b>
<b>Capital Crescent Trail</b>	3.9	0	Trail Corridor	Existing, no proposed changes	<b>Montgomery County Department of Transportation is determining the alignment and location for the trail from Bethesda Avenue to Elm Street Park and the Georgetown Branch Trail (Purple Line Trail).</b>
<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>	

## Park Development Projects for Existing Parks

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

### Battery Lane Park

Construction is underway for renovation of the existing playground and will be completed in Summer 2019. Additional minor improvements are planned, including new fitness equipment, picnic tables, seating, stormwater management improvements, additional shade tree plantings, and renovation of the Bethesda Trolley Trail within the park.

### 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 FY20-21 and construction from FY21-FY23.

## Park Impact Payment (PIP)

A new project within the Commission's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) has been submitted to the County Council and County Executive for approval as part of the biennial update to the FY19-24 CIP. This new Project Description Form (PDF) will hold all PIP funds for appropriation and expenditure. Five development site plans have been approved with PIP requirements totaling over \$11 million, and these PIPs are expected to be paid during FY20-FY21. Additional pending development projects may result in several million more over the following two years. The new CIP project includes a requested appropriation of \$10 million to be able to spend the incoming Park Impact Payments on priority acquisitions and park development projects starting in July 2019.

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 framework:

- 1. Civic Gathering Spaces:** Civic Greens that support the centers of activity including Veteran's Park Civic Green, the Farm Women's Cooperative 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 for more active recreation destinations.
- 3. Green Neighborhood Parks:** Parks that serve as spaces for informal or small-event gatherings or lunchtime 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.

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 below.

### Edgemont II

Edgemont II will add 4,109 square feet of public open space to downtown Bethesda, exceeding the minimum zoning requirement. The development will expand upon the standard streetscape improvements by increasing green space, removing a dated drop-off/parking area, and programming the space to coincide

with the MCDOT requirement for a bike share station, to create a "bike park." This new open space will increase green space and tree canopy, complement future bike lane infrastructure and provide bike users and pedestrians a much improved Edgemoor Lane experience. Amenities such as a bike repair kit and seating areas will allow all bike users to benefit from this new space.

## 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.
- Work with property owners to create functional, accessible, and active privately owned public spaces as part of the development process.
- Establish the process for appropriating and expending the Park Impact Payment funds through the CIP as the initial PIPs are submitted over the coming year.
- Engage the Implementation Advisory Committee to support realization of the Sector Plan's recommended parks and open spaces.



*Edgemont II  
Illustrative Open Space  
Perspective*





# 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.

Additionally, the Plan includes policy recommendations that encourage non-auto 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 2017 Bethesda Downtown Sector Plan recommended the TMD responsibilities be expanded to include parking management efforts. This document also includes recommendations in support of the 1994 Bethesda CBD Plan’s recommendation to maintain a constrained long-term parking supply.

## 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 the worksite. NADMS includes carpool and vanpool passengers but excludes carpool and vanpool drivers.

The NADMS goals for areas within the county are analyzed for both the 2-hour and 3-hour peak-period morning commute periods: 7:00 am – 9:00 am and 6:30 am – 9:30 am. While goals for some areas originally focused on just the 2-hour peak period, the analysis has been extended in recent years to include a 3-hour period, due to the increase in traffic volumes over a more extended peak period in many areas of the county.

The NADMS goal applies to peak period travel, since that is the period when traffic congestion is most significant and road capacity is most constrained. In addition, surveys conducted by the county are targeted at collecting and analyzing peak-period information.

### **Data Collection and Current Methodology**

Goals: The Bethesda Downtown Plan recommends a combined average goal of 55 percent NADMS for both employees and residents. Under the prior Sector Plan the NADMS goal was 37 percent, which applied only to inbound commuters (employees) whose destination workplace was in Bethesda. The goal established in the 2017 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 be transit riders 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.

Results: The county commuter survey results, cited at the time of Plan approval, indicated that the downtown Bethesda NADMS-E was approximately 42

percent (FY2013 survey). However, there is typically a wide variation in employer and employee participation and response rates to the survey from year to year owing to several factors. Any single year’s results should not be construed as representative of ongoing commuting patterns for the TMD as a whole and the NADMS reported at the time of planned development (42%) is an outlier. A more accurate 3-year weighted average using the most recent data (FY2014, 16 & 18) shows the NADMS-E to be closer to 36.4 percent for the 2-hour peak, and 37 percent for the 3-hour peak period.

Variability of Results: Commuter survey response rates tend to be highly variable for several reasons. The survey is not distributed to the same group of employers every year. A subset of all employers of 25 or more employees within the TMD is selected for participation and an effort is made to alternate selected employers in succeeding survey years to avoid survey fatigue. In addition, within the same worksite employee composition changes from year to year due to turnover, and employees also move residences or have other life events that result in changes to commuting modes. In conclusion, there are many factors that influence variability in survey results apart from those impacted by TDM-related efforts. Furthermore, the county relies on employer contacts at work sites to distribute the survey to employees. Typically, there are employer contacts (“Transportation Benefit Coordinators”) who will distribute the survey at the worksite and follow up with reminders and incentives to employees, but there is no way to compel employees to respond. Therefore, Commuter Services relies on on-site promotions, prize drawing incentives (for Transportation Coordinators and respondents) and other incentives to achieve an adequate response rate.

Despite its limitations, the commuter survey has been the primary basis for evaluating commuting activity within the county’s TMDs, as it reveals more information about commuting at a small-area level

than many other sources, including the peak hours of commuting, the mode of travel, the ratio between cars and passengers (“average auto occupancy”), the home origins of commuters, employer location and other data points. The survey gathers information on commuting patterns over the duration of a normal work week to get an accurate picture of daily commuting patterns (Appendix 1). The results are analyzed for each employer and for all participating employers within each TMD survey area to assess progress toward achieving NADMS goals. Similar analyses will be made of mode share for residents commuting from their homes to their respective worksites.

### **Analysis of Commuting Patterns in Downtown Bethesda**

Residents Bethesda’s combined 55 percent NADMS goal for employees and residents requires a comprehensive effort to survey residents living in downtown Bethesda. Bethesda Urban Partnership (BUP) will coordinate with contacts identified in the required transportation mitigation agreements to distribute and collect surveys. BUP is the county’s contractor for TDM outreach in the Bethesda Transportation Management District. BUP operates Bethesda Transportation Solutions (BTS) for that purpose; BTS has begun identifying contacts for residential buildings and developing a marketing outreach strategy to reach residents throughout the downtown area.

The first residentially-based commuter survey in the Bethesda TMD is being deployed during fall of 2019; subsequent surveys will be conducted in alternating years. The residential survey will have essentially the same format and questions as those used in the employee survey, including use of a one-week trip diary and questions related to worksite policies. (Appendix 2).

The data analysis from this first Bethesda residential

survey will not be available until sometime after publication of this 2019 Annual Monitoring Report. Therefore, the primary data source for “outbound” residential commuting for the 2019 monitoring report is from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Data from the ACS is collected each year and aggregated into 5-year data sets to estimate commuting mode share for the county’s policy areas. The Census Block boundaries of the 2013-2017 ACS closely align with the Bethesda Downtown Plan boundary. This ACS data may continue to be used in combination with the county survey for analyses of residential commuting patterns in subsequent years.

The 2013-2017 data from ACS, which has been aggregated from eight block groups to approximate the area of the Bethesda CBD, shows that approximately 56.9 percent of residents age 16+ commuting to work were non-drivers. Out of the total 7,212 respondents to the survey, 3,241 (44.9 percent) drove vehicles, and a portion of these were also pool drivers; and 2,984 (41.4 percent) drove alone to work.

The ACS data set identifies commuters who travel in pools; however, that number includes the driver. In order to derive the NADMS, the pool drivers must be identified separately. The survey results show that 257 respondents carpooled (2-person pool=221 / 3-person pool=36). The 56.9 NADMS includes the assumption of 110 drivers in the 2-person pools and 12 drivers in the 3-person pools.

ACS data does not identify commuters who travel in the peak periods. While it is likely the majority of residents’ trips to work occurred during the peak period, there is no data available to determine which peak-period trips were taken by which mode. That is the type of data the county’s commuter survey would seek to obtain.

Employees The FY2018 employee commuter survey in the Bethesda TMD was conducted in the fall of 2017. That data, combined with

prior years' data, will serve as the basis for analysis of "inbound" employee commuting for the 2019 Bethesda Annual Monitoring Report. Bethesda's employee commuter survey will be conducted on an alternating year basis, using a similar survey instrument to the one used over the past several surveys. The next employee survey in downtown Bethesda will be for FY20 and will be conducted in fall of 2019.

The table below shows the most recent commuter survey response rates. The NADMS weighted average for employees for the last three years is approximately 36.4 percent.

<b>Table 6. Three Year NADMS-E Average</b>		
Year	Respondents+	NADMS%
FY14	786	34.2
FY16	837	38.0
FY18	1,420	36.6

### Future Years Analysis and Methodology

Annual Monitoring Reports for subsequent years will rely primarily on the county's residential and employer surveys to establish a combined baseline NADMS. The Census ACS data sets will also be analyzed and may be used to validate or calibrate the results from the county's commuter survey. Future technological advancements in data collection and other data sources may be used as survey processes and analytic approaches evolve.

Secondary data sources that may be used for comparison or validation purposes include the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC) "State of the Commute" Report, published every three years. The next report is due in 2019; the data collected as part of that effort may provide an opportunity to compare the county's data with a regional source. MWCOC also conducts a household survey every 10 years that collects data for certain

areas of the county; White Flint and Friendship Heights have been included in the past. Bethesda has not been included in that survey but perhaps could be in the future. That survey may provide another way to assess the validity of the county's survey results for downtown Bethesda.

## Road Network Adequacy Test

The 2018 Annual Monitoring Report included analysis of the nine intersections within the Sector Plan boundary and five gateway intersections. As required by the council with the adoption and approval of the Sector Plan, traffic analysis will be reported in the even years and the NADMS will be the focus of the report in the odd years.

Data collection for the 2020 Annual Monitoring Report will begin later this spring. As recommended in the 2018 report, the 2020 report analysis will include road network adequacy tests at the 14 study intersections (listed below), as well as a queuing analysis for the major corridors including Wisconsin Avenue, Old Georgetown Road, Woodmont Avenue, and Arlington Road.

1. Battery Lane and Wisconsin Avenue
2. Elm Street and Wisconsin Avenue
3. Bradley Boulevard and Wisconsin Avenue
4. East-West Highway and Wisconsin Avenue/Old Georgetown Road
5. Montgomery Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue
6. Bethesda Avenue and Arlington Road
7. Leland Street and Wisconsin Avenue
8. Wilson Lane and Old Georgetown Road
9. East-West Highway and Connecticut Avenue
10. Bradley Lane and Connecticut Avenue
11. West Cedar Lane and Old Georgetown Road
12. Cedar Lane and Rockville Pike
13. Jones Bridge Road and Rockville Pike
14. Huntington Parkway and Bradley Boulevard



The map displays a sector plan boundary with various transportation infrastructure projects. The legend identifies the following elements:

- Sector Plan Boundary (Black outline)
- M-NCPPC Park (Green area)
- Metro Station (Red 'M' icon)
- Proposed Metro Station Entrance (Red 'M' icon with a dot)
- Proposed Purple Line (Purple line with a circle)
- Existing Shared Use Path (SP) (Green line)
- Recommended Shared Use Path (SP) (Green dashed line)
- Proposed Tunnel (Green line with a rectangle)
- Recommended Shared Roadway (SR) (Red dashed line)
- Existing Bike Lane (BL) (Blue line)
- Recommended Bike Lane (BL) (Blue dashed line)
- Recommended Separated Bike Lane (CT) (Orange dashed line)
- Recommended Bike Parking Station (Green star icon)
- New Ramp Connection (Green line with a triangle)

Key roads and streets shown include: Brook Ln, Battery Ln, Rugby Ave, Chestnut St, Rosedale Ave, Maple Ave, Highland Ave, West Virginia Ave, Chase Ave, Harling Ln, Cheltenham Dr, Wilson Ln, Old Georgetown Rd, Norfolk Ave, Cordell Ave, St Elmo Ave, Wisconsin Ave, Middleton Ln, Avondale St, East-West Hwy, Montgomery Ave, Elm St, Leland St, Walsh St, Stanford St, Ridge St, Bradley Ln, Wellington Dr, Strathmore St, Bradley Blvd, Chevy Chase Dr, Hillandale Rd, Leola St, and Omit Ln. Other labels include BL-1, LB-1, LB-5, LB-3, LB-7, LB-8, LB-2, LB-4, LB-6, LB-3, CT-8, CT-9, CT-4, CT-5, CT-3, SR-7, SR-8, SR-9, BL-3, BL-7, BL-44, SP-3, SP-44, SP-6, and Capital Crescent Trail.

## 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 detour for cyclists while segments of the trail are closed for the construction of the Purple Line. The surface trail will continue across segments of roadway in a designated space. The alignment for most of the treatment is a two-way separated bike lane on one side of the street. The route begins at the intersection of the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) and Bethesda Avenue. It will continue east across Wisconsin Avenue, along Willow Lane and along 47th Street. Design has progressed to 90 percent at the time of this report, and the project is targeted for completion in fall of 2019.

- Woodmont Avenue between Wisconsin Avenue/Leland Street and Norfolk Avenue is planned for a two-way separated bike lane. The concept design is underway and will continue through FY 19-20. Construction is anticipated in FY 19-21.<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 will continue through FY19-20. Construction is anticipated in FY 19-21.<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.

In response to the sector plan, one signalized intersection is under study for an all-pedestrian phase in the signal cycle, which would allow pedestrians to cross in all directions at once, without the potential for conflicts with vehicles. The location considered for this treatment is at the intersection of Woodmont Avenue at Bethesda Avenue. This treatment was implemented at Bethesda Avenue at Arlington Road in 2018.

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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.

## Development Approvals

A summary of each project with Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) approval since February 8, 2018, 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.

### 7359 Wisconsin Avenue: 120180040

- APFO Approval: March 22, 2018
- Density: up to 400,000 SF office up to 135,000 SF hotel

Table 7. 7359 Wisconsin Avenue APFO Analysis							
Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)						
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Woodmont Avenue/Elm Street	120	13.0	13.0	29.9	17.3	29.3	19.6
Wisconsin Avenue*	120	31.0	27.0	43.0	43.0	50.0	48.0
East-West Highway*	120	57.0	38.0	82.0	54.0	92.0	61.0
Montgomery Avenue*	120	25.0	23.0	32.0	41.0	40.0	47.0

Source: Wells & Associates Transportation Study, dated December 21, 2017.

\* Denotes a corridor analysis.

In accordance with the 2016-2020 Subdivision Staging Policy, eight of the 10 intersections included in this analysis were evaluated as part of larger transportation corridors within the downtown area under the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology. In addition to the typical HCM methodology analysis completed to satisfy the LATR, the applicant also analyzed an alternative scenario in which the master planned separated bicycle lanes were implemented within an existing travel lane on Bethesda Avenue and Montgomery Avenue.

Bike share facilities will be provided off-site by the applicant, who will contribute the capital costs of one 19-dock bikeshare station. The application provides streetscape improvements along Wisconsin Avenue, Montgomery Avenue, and Waverly Street, with new street trees, improved sidewalks, and street lighting.

### ZOM Bethesda: 120180140

- APFO Approval: February 8, 2018
- Density: up to 230 multifamily units

Although the county Department of Transportation has deferred implementation of the master planned separated bicycle lanes on Arlington Road, staff required the Applicant to evaluate an alternative scenario in which the separated bicycle lanes were implemented on Arlington Road via a road diet. The findings of that analysis indicate that each of the study area intersections will continue to operate within acceptable limits of congestion following completion of the project under either the existing Arlington Road configuration or potential future road diet scenario.

The applicant will participate in the implementation of new separated bike lanes on Arlington Road and Edgemoor lane.

**Table 8. ZOM Bethesda APFO Analysis**

Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)						
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Arlington Road/Moorland Lane	120	7.3	8.6	29.9	9.3	7.0	9.9
Arlington Road/Edgemoor Lane	120	14.0	21.6	14.6	23.3	14.6	23.5
Old Georgetown Road/Moorland Lane	120	1.4	1.3	2.4	1.2	3.2	1.6
Old Georgetown Road/Woodmont Avenue	120	37.7	26.8	103.8	51.1	107.9	52.5
Site Driveway/Moorland Lane	120	2.5	4.4	2.5	4.4	3.5	4.8

Source: Wells & Associates Transportation Study, dated February 21, 2018.

#### Edgemont II Bethesda: 11984058A, 820180170

- AFPO Approval: July 19, 2018
- Density: up to 282 multifamily units

**Table 9. Edgemont at Bethesda II APFO Analysis**

Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)						
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Edgemoor Lane/Arlington Road	120	12.6	30.0	14.4	30.5	23.1	68.4
Edgemoor Lane/Site Driveway (west)	120	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.8	1.1	0.8
Edgemoor Lane/Site Driveway (east)	120	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Edgemoor Lane/Site Loading	120	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Edgemoor Lane/Woodmont Avenue	120	16.5	18.2	17.1	18.6	16.9	18.6
Elm Street/Woodmont Avenue	120	12.6	13.5	43.2	18.3	42.5	17.9
Elm Street/Arlington Road	120	13.1	21.0	15.5	28.7	45.3	58.4

Source: Wells + Associates Transportation Study, dated June 30, 2017.

Staff required the applicant to evaluate an alternative scenario in which the separated bicycle lanes were implemented on Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. The findings of that analysis indicate that each of the study area intersections will continue to operate within acceptable limits of congestion following completion of the project under either the existing Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane configurations or planned future bicycle improvement scenarios.

The applicant will participate in the implementation of new separated bike lanes on Woodmont Avenue and Edgemoor Lane. The applicant must install the Bethesda Streetscape Standard along the Subject Property's right-of-way frontage, including the undergrounding of utilities.



**St. Elmo: 12015020A, 820170030**

- APFO Approval: October 11, 2018
- Density: up to 210 multifamily units; up to 10,000 SF office; up to 6,000 SF retail or other non-residential use

**Table 10. St. Elmo APFO Analysis**

Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)								
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total (With Bike Lanes)		Total (With Signal Opt.)	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Norfolk Avenue*	120	14.0	16.0	17.0	23.0	14.0	21.0	14.0	21.0
Old Georgetown Road*	120	48.0	83.0	87.0	126.0	98.0	132.0	102.0	117.0
St. Elmo Avenue/Site Access	120	-	-	-	-	0.9	0.5	0.9	0.5

Source: Wells + Associates Transportation Study, dated May 4, 2018.

\*Denotes a corridor analysis

Staff required the applicant to evaluate two separate alternative scenarios; one in which bicycle improvements were implemented on Woodmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue and another in which all signals were optimized with the bike improvements. The findings of that analysis indicate that each of the study area intersections will continue to operate within acceptable limits of congestion following completion of the project under the existing roadway configurations on Woodmont Avenue and Norfolk Avenue or potential future scenarios with bike improvements with signal optimization. Without signal optimization, the impact of the project combined with planned bicycle improvements were estimated to exceed the network capacity for the Old Georgetown Road corridor.

As conditions of approval for the project, the applicant is required to install the Bethesda Streetscape Standard along the site frontages, including undergrounding utilities, and address potential conflicts as necessary with street tree plantings.

**8280 Wisconsin Avenue: 120180280, 820180230**

- APFO Approval: October 25, 2018
- Density: Lot 63 up to 175,000 SF new research and development/office use; Lot 663 up to 453 multifamily unit, 17,532 SF non-residential use

**Table 11. 8280 Wisconsin Ave APFO Analysis**

Intersection	Traffic Conditions (Delay in seconds)						
	SSP Standard	Existing		Background		Total	
		AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Woodmont Avenue/Battery Lane	120	21.9	19.8	21.6	19.6	21.8	19.7
Site Access Point/Battery Lane)	120	-	-	-	-	1.2	1.1
Wisconsin Avenue/Battery Lane/Rosedale	120	36.6	30.5	37.2	29.3	38.2	30.5

Source: The Traffic Group Transportation Study, dated June 21, 2018.

Out of the six projects to gain APFO approvals, only one of the projects forecasted traffic volumes that would exceed the standard of average vehicle delay at intersections set by the 2016 SSP. The applicant for the St. Elmo project suggested and tested a future scenario with signalize optimization, which met the requirements for mitigation as required by the 2016 SSP. This mitigation was recommended by staff and ultimately approved by the Planning Board. All other projects forecasted future traffic volumes that could be accommodated with current network capacity. Until these projects are constructed and occupied, they will be included in transportation impact studies as background traffic for future projects.

Two additional projects, 4915 Auburn Avenue and an amendment to the Claiborne, were also approved since the Sector Plan's adoption but did not forecast enough new person trips to require a transportation impact study. These preliminary plans were approved on November 29, 2018 and February 7, 2019 respectively. The 4915 Auburn Avenue project will provide streetscape improvements along its two frontages on the Auburn Avenue and Norfolk Avenue, including the undergrounding of utilities on Auburn Avenue and the Claiborne will contribute to the Norfolk Avenue shared street project.

## **Construction and Operational Impacts on the Network**

Currently, there are several construction projects underway including Avocet Tower, Marriott HQ (Wisconsin Avenue, Norfolk Avenue and Woodmont Avenue), Artena Bethesda (Wisconsin Avenue) Gallery Bethesda pedestrian plaza (Rugby Avenue), The Wilson & The Elm (Wisconsin Avenue) with the ZOM project 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 participate in monthly 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 meeting has been effective in reducing construction impacts and continues to work on additional complaints of water issues and noise.

Over the past year, the IAC has raised concerns about the negative impacts of delivery and loading trucks on the traffic network. In response, 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. Additionally, Bethesda Urban Partnership surveyed local businesses in December 2018 to understand the type of deliveries, days and times they are received, consistency of delivery schedule and schedule for waste disposal/recycling pick-up (specifically day and time done and consistency of schedule). These results are currently being reviewed. Lastly, the Bethesda Urban Services Specialist based out of the Regional Services Center has conducted in-person outreach to frequent offenders to engage businesses in alternative locations and delivery times.

## Transportation Mitigation Agreements

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, flex-time, or telecommuting programs.

Between September 1, 2017 (beginning of FY2018) through the time of writing this report, the following Traffic Mitigation Agreements (TMAgs) were executed for developments in Bethesda:

1. 8008 Wisconsin Avenue (September 2017)
  - 106 multi-family residential units
  - 5,793 SF commercial uses, structured parking and associated public use spaces
2. 7200 Wisconsin (September 2017)
  - 543,170 SF office
  - 43,441 SF commercial uses
3. Amendment to TMAg 7200 Wisconsin Avenue (Artery Plaza) (April 2018)
  - The amendment was executed to revise the applicant's obligations regarding bikeshare as required in the TMAg executed September 2017. The applicant must provide space in the project and pay for 1 on-site bikeshare station and pay for a 2nd station to be located off-site.
4. 7900 Wisconsin Avenue (April 2018)
  - 450 multi-family residential units
  - 21,630 SF commercial uses
5. 7272 Wisconsin Avenue (April 2018)
  - 480 multi-family residential units
  - 375,372 SF commercial uses
6. Marriott Headquarters (November 2018)
  - 795,000 SF office/commercial
  - 240 hotel rooms
  - 12,350 SF commercial (restaurant & retail)
7. 7359 Wisconsin Ave (pending)
  - 400,000 SF office
  - 130,000 SF hotel
  - 12,350 SF commercial (restaurant & retail)
8. Edgemont II (pending)
  - 282 multi-family units
9. ZOM Bethesda (pending)
  - 230 multi-family units

## 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. The road diet recommended restriping the existing four lane road configuration to three lanes with bicycle lanes on either side of Arlington Road. The study

found that the recommended road diet would likely increase congestion beyond the acceptable standard set by the 2016 SSP and would increase northbound queuing from Old Georgetown Road to beyond Bradley Boulevard in the evening peak hour, and southbound queuing from Bradley Boulevard to Moorland Lane during the evening peak hour. Therefore, MCDOT staff did not recommend restriping Arlington Road to three lanes along the studied segment.

Table 12. MCDOT Recommended Pedestrian Crossing Safety Improvements		
Intersection with Arlington Road	Proposed Improvements	Status
Moorland Lane	Implement a Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) for pedestrians crossing Arlington Road	Implemented
	Prohibit Right Turn on Red for the eastbound and westbound approaches	TMC is evaluating
	Increase Flashing Don't Walk (FDW) time across Arlington Road	TMC is evaluating
Edgemoor Lane	Implement an LPI for pedestrians crossing Edgemoor Lane	Implemented
	Prohibit Right Turn on Red for the north- and southbound approaches	Implemented
	Change signal phasing to exclusive left turns for the east- and westbound approaches	Split-phasing was implemented.
	Change east- and westbound lane use to 1 exclusive left turn lane and 1 shared through-right turn lane	Not implemented; lane configuration will not be changed.
	Increase FDW time across Arlington Road	Implemented
Montgomery Lane	Repair the school speed limit flasher north of the intersection	Implemented
	Correct the black and white school speed limit signs mounted along the corridor to reflect current school times	Implemented
Elm Street	Implement split phasing for the eastbound and westbound approaches	Implemented
	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)	Signal under construction. End of FY2019.
Bethesda Avenue	Install an All Pedestrian phase	Implemented
Bradley Boulevard	Install crosswalk on east leg	Requires SHA Approval
	Change signal phasing to exclusive left turns for the eastbound and westbound approaches	Requires SHA Approval
Kenwood Forest Lane	Upgrade pedestrian warning signs north and south of the intersection to fluorescent yellow	Implemented
	Provide lighting at the unsignalized crosswalk	Implemented
Little Falls Parkway	Coordinate with M-NCPPC to determine if the trail crossing should be relocated to the intersection	Coordination between agencies continues on this project.



In addition to reviewing the traffic conditions for vehicles, an analysis of existing pedestrian safety conditions were included in the traffic study. Upon reviewing crash data and field observations, MCDOT staff made recommendations to improve pedestrian crossing conditions throughout the corridor. The recommendations were focused on reducing conflicts between left turning vehicles and crossing pedestrians, increasing pedestrian crossing times, and upgrading pedestrian facilities along the corridor. The table on the previous page provides a list of the recommended projects and reports on their status.

The study recommended other maintenance projects including restriping all crosswalks and other repairs to help pedestrians navigate intersections. All of this recommended work was completed in spring of 2018.

## 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 Motorail 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 detour while the

Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) tunnel through downtown is closed for construction of the Purple Line. The segment begins at the intersection of the CCT trail at Bethesda Avenue and ends at Willow Lane and 47th Street. The 30 percent design is complete. The 90 percent design is underway, and completion of the project is targeted for fall of 2019. Private participation in this project is required of the Artery Plaza project.

### Woodmont Avenue Bikeway

A two-way, on-road separated bikeway is planned along Woodmont Avenue between Wisconsin Avenue and Norfolk Avenue. Design is underway, construction is funded in FY21-FY22 through CIP P500119 Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities. Private participation in this project is required by way of the approved site plan for the new Marriott headquarters and Edgemont II at Bethesda.

### Norfolk Avenue Shared Street

A study of the two-way conversion is programmed for FY22 and is included in the adopted FY19-FY24 CIP. The Norfolk Avenue study is programmed for Facility Planning in FY22-23. Design and construction funding is not identified at this time. The Claiborne is participating by either constructing a portion of the shared street along their frontage or making a financial contribution 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.

### Bethesda Streetscape CIP

This project (CIP P500102) provides for the design and construction of pedestrian improvements to complete unfinished streetscapes along approximately 2,670 feet of Central Business District (CBD) streets in Bethesda as identified in the Bethesda CBD Sector Plan (1994). It is intended to fill the gaps between private development projects which have been constructed or are approved in the CBD. The design elements include

the replacement and widening (where possible) of sidewalks, new vehicular and pedestrian lighting, street trees, street furniture, and roadway signs. This project addresses streetscape improvements only and does not assume the undergrounding of utilities. The project is programmed for FY23 and is included in the FY19-FY24 CIP. Utility relocations and construction are targeted for FY25.

### **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 funded in FY21-FY22 through CIP P500119 Bethesda Bikeway and Pedestrian Facilities. Private participation in this project is required by way of the approved sites plans for the old police station (7359 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. The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) are conducting a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridor Planning Study for Rockville Pike (MD 355). When completed the project will provide upgraded, frequent and reliable bus services between downtown Bethesda and Clarksburg along MD 355.

As part of Phase 2 of the project, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is studying options for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service, called FLASH, along MD 355 (Wisconsin Avenue/Rockville Pike/Frederick Road) to meet the needs of

residents, businesses, and visitors along this busy corridor. FLASH service on MD 355 will run between Bethesda and Clarksburg.

At the time of this report evaluation of the four Build Alternatives, which are options for where and how the MD 355 FLASH will operate is underway by MCDOT. These alternatives are being evaluated using criteria related to travel time savings, reliability, ridership, connections to jobs and other destinations, economic development, costs, and property and environmental impacts. The evaluation will identify a single Recommended Alternative, which will include a route, station locations, a service plan, and proposed improvements to MD 355. Once a Recommended Alternative is identified, it can be advanced toward phased design and implementation.

### **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 in New Carrollton and construction preparations along the entire alignment followed soon after. The following includes a complete list of Purple Line activities since the Sector Plan was approved.

- The Apex Building (7272 Wisconsin Avenue) has been as part of a private development project. The partnership will be constructing the below-grade station and bicycle/pedestrian access tunnel. At the time of this report, the Purple Line Transit Partnership (PLTP) has completed demolition of the Apex Building, construction of the Purple Line Bethesda station box, Capital Crescent Trail tunnel, and other portions of the private development.
- Construction of the Bethesda Metro Station south entrance continues. The PLTP completed

**Table 13. Capital Improvement 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/MCDOT	Not fully funded; Facility Planning (only) funded for FY22-23
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	<b>Design in progress for Montgomery Lane / Ave between Woodmont and Pearl.</b>  <b>Design in progress for Woodmont Ave between Norfolk Ave (south to) and MD 355.</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	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	<b>Design in progress for Woodmont Ave between Norfolk Ave (south to) and MD 355</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>Design in progress for Norfolk / Cheltenham between Woodmont Ave and Tilbury Street.</b>  Other projects not funded

**\*updates since May 2018 in bold**

excavation to approximately 80 feet below Elm Street. Excavation in this area will continue for some time.

- The Purple Line Transportation Partners (PLTP) began mobilization efforts from Woodmont Plaza in spring of 2018. Excavation in this area will continue for some time.
- Tree clearing and grubbing is complete along the Georgetown Branch Trail from Wisconsin Avenue to the intersection of Montgomery Avenue and East-West Highway.
- The PLTP has started sanitary sewer relocation and erosion and sediment control installation along the Georgetown Branch Trail in this area.
- The PLTP has gone to two shifts (day shift and swing shift) at the Bethesda Metro Station south entrance since the fall of 2018.
- The PLTP will be commencing retaining wall work between Wisconsin Avenue and East-West Highway along the Georgetown Branch Trail in the spring of 2019.

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

- The Capital Crescent Trail is closed between Woodmont Avenue and Talbot Avenue. Elm Street is closed to pedestrians and motorists
- Occasional minor lane closures and flagging operations have occurred off and on since construction began on Jones Mill Road, East-West Highway and other roadways outside of the Sector Plan area.
- As of the time of this report, the Purple Line is scheduled to complete construction and begin service in 2022.

## **Metrorail Update**

In December of 2018, WMATA ended its practice of terminating service at the Grosvenor-Strathmore Metrorail Station, rather than continuing on to the end of the Red Line at Shady Grove (i.e. “turnbacks”). While this change occurs outside the plan area, the effect of doubling rush hour service (trains with 4-minute headways instead of 8-minute) for the stations north of Grosvenor could have impacts further south along the line. Future reports will include an update on ridership at the Bethesda Metrorail Station to evaluate if turnbacks or other operational changes affect ridership numbers over time.

According to WMATA’s published Metrorail Average Weekday Passenger Boardings, there has been a slight decline within the last few years (2-3% each year). Peak ridership was recorded in 2008 with 10,908 average daily boardings at the station.

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

Metrobus service of the J7 and J9 routes, which provided express service along I-270 between Lake Forest Park & Ride and Medical Center, were eliminated in September of 2017. 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 changes to the local, regular Ride On bus service provided by MCDOT within or surrounding the Sector Plan area.

## **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 in the near future is provided below.

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 & 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 2 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 14 shows the occupancy rate over three months in the fall of 2018.

The parking facilities with the highest occupancy are Garage 35 (97%), Lot 28 (93%), and Garage 47 (92%). Garage 35 and Lot 28 are located in the Woodmont Triangle area and Garage 47 is located east of Wisconsin Avenue, across from the Bethesda Row Master Plan District. Garage 49 (55%), Lot 44 (48%)

and Garage 42 (44%) have the lowest occupancy rates. Garage 49 is located near the Bethesda Metro Station and Bethesda Regional Services Center, and it is one of the largest parking facilities with a total capacity of 949 spaces. Lots 44 and 41 are located in the northeast quadrant of the sector plan area, and they are among the smallest parking facilities with capacities of 51 and 9 spaces, respectively.

Table 14: Parking Occupancy (3-month average)		
Garage/Lot	Average Occupancy	Total Capacity
Garage 11	68%	1,076
Garage 31	55%	952
Garage 35	99%	366
Garage 36	72%	729
Garage 40	78%	311
Garage 42	57%	337
Garage 47	97%	796
Garage 49	66%	949
Garage 57	77%	870
Lot 8	90%	10
Lot 10	88%	94
Lot 24	86%	210
Lot 25	53%	124
Lot 28	98%	18
Lot 41	93%	9
Lot 43	38%	37
Lot 44	53%	51

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.

### Unified Mobility Program

The purpose of the unified mobility program (UMP) is to provide 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 for the sector plan area to meet the transportation requirements of the Bethesda Downtown Plan, 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 and those fees will be accrued for implementation of the identified improvements.

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

- A traffic analysis to identify the transportation projects
- A total cost estimate for the identified transportation projects
- A fee schedule based new trips forecasted for new and re-development projects in the sector plan area
- A phasing plan for implementation of the transportation projects

At the time of this report, the first two milestones are largely complete. Work is underway to determine the appropriate fee schedule for new and redevelopment projects.

## Recommendations

- Continue to monitor the NADMS of the sector plan area. The results will be included in the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report.
- Continue to monitor the 14 intersections studied as part of the roadway network adequacy test. It is recommended that a queuing analysis for the main corridors of the Sector Plan be included as well. The results of which will be included in the 2020 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 2019 Annual Monitoring Report provides a comprehensive update on the efforts to implement the recommendations of the Bethesda Downtown Plan. This report provides a detailed review of the Plan's implementation efforts, including development approvals, school capacity, parks and open space and transportation adequacy, as well as recommendations to further the implementation the Plan.

## Development Approvals

- 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.
- Planning Staff should work with the appropriate agencies to clarify the procedures for the Amenity Fund in the Bethesda Downtown Plan Area and make public.

## Schools

- Continue to monitor the space needs for the schools that serve downtown Bethesda and ensure options for providing adequate school capacity, such as expansion and additions, reopening former schools in the vicinity, reassignment of students to other schools, 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 process 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 NADMS of the sector plan area. The results will be included in the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report.
- Continue to monitor the 14 intersections studied as part of the roadway network adequacy test. It is recommended that a queuing analysis for the main corridors of the Sector Plan be included as well. The results of which will be included in the 2020 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 Implementation Advisory Committee appreciates being part of the Bethesda development process, as an advisory group, and the work done by Staff to produce the 2019 Monitoring and Tracking Report. Since 2017, about half of the 8 million square feet of capacity established by the Bethesda Plan has been proposed for redevelopment projects throughout Bethesda. It has proved useful to both developers and property owners to present their projects to the IAC to allow discussion of issues and exchange of ideas. We welcome hearing about all projects, large and small.

This Annual Report provides an opportunity for the IAC to bring attention to issues that have arisen or are likely to arise as the Plan is implemented and more development occurs:

**Traffic Management** - traffic lanes and streets have been closed for construction, as have sidewalks, sometimes leaving no space for pedestrians to walk safely. Too often deliveries further snarl traffic. These problems will continue as buildings are completed and tenants move in. The growing reliance on delivery services as opposed to bricks-and-mortar retail has important implications for both traffic as well as street and neighborhood activation. The IAC suggests that measures of NADMS (non-auto drive share modes) receive more emphasis and funding in the future. Traffic management may need further coordinated review by both State and County agencies.

**Park Impact Payment Fund/Amenity Fund** - Funds have started coming into the Park Impact Payment Fund and a to-be-created Amenity Fund. We would like to understand and advise on the priorities for green spaces and amenities and begin to make them real. We look forward to working with the Parks Department on this.

**Schools** – We support all efforts to resolve capacity issues in the schools in Bethesda – in particular Bethesda Elementary, Somerset Elementary, and Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School – fairly and in a timely manner. This is of vital importance to current residents even as it impacts the area’s sustainability and attractiveness to potential new residents and businesses.

We note the challenges of creating a cohesive, architecturally pleasing “downtown” that consists of multiple properties with different owners. The work of the Design Advisory Panel has often informed IAC understanding of individual projects. As the development cap nears, the cooperative relationships among the various entities with roles in shaping Downtown Bethesda will be important in resolving the challenges that arise in creating a vibrant and positive future for Bethesda.

# 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
- **BUMP:** Bethesda Unified Mobility Program
- **BUP:** Bethesda Urban Partnership
- **CBD:** Central Business District
- **CCT:** Capital Crescent Trail
- **CIP:** Capital Improvement Project
- **DAP:** Design Advisory Panel
- **DU:** Dwelling Unit
- **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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