

# **PLANNING BOARD DRAFT**

## **Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda CBD**

November 2004

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

Prepared by:

**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning  
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Approved by:

**THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**

Adopted by:

**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

## **ABSTRACT**

**TITLE:** Planning Board Draft  
Woodmont Triangle Amendment to the Sector Plan for the  
Bethesda CBD

**AUTHOR:** The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

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

**DATE:** November 2004

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

# CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL AND ADOPTION

## **THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION**

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

The Commission has three major functions:

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

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

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the involvement and participation of individuals with disabilities, and its facilities are accessible. For assistance with special needs (e.g., large print materials, listening devices, sign language interpretation, etc.), please contact the Community Relations Office, 301-495-4600 or TDD 301-495-1331.

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## **NOTICE TO READERS**

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

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

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

## THE MASTER PLAN PROCESS

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

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

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

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

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

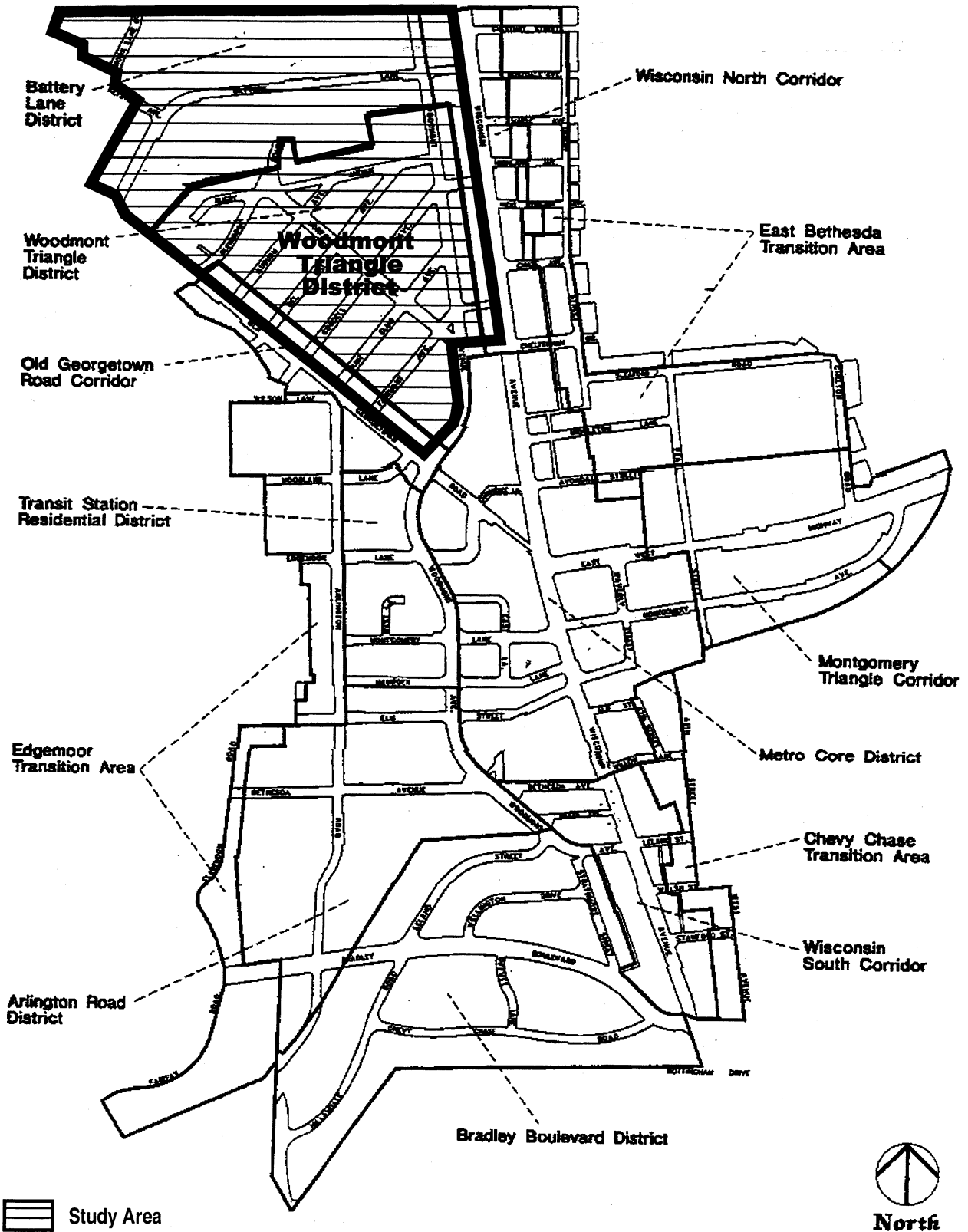
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# STUDY AREA BOUNDARY



# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE OF THE AMENDMENT

In October 2003, the Montgomery County Council requested that the M-NCPPC examine the potential for a limited amendment to the existing Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District, dated July 1994. The primary purpose of this amendment was to increase opportunities for housing to serve a variety of income levels and to improve the retail environment in the Woodmont Triangle area.

## SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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

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

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

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

## **RELATIONSHIP TO THE 1994 SECTOR PLAN**

This limited amendment to the Sector Plan for the Bethesda Central Business District is intended to retain the vision of the existing Sector Plan. This amendment is intended to provide additional opportunities to help realize the “housing and neighborhoods” objective (pages 28–31) of the existing Sector Plan. The amendment is not intended as a significant departure from the recommendations in the existing Sector Plan. This limited amendment focuses on the Woodmont Triangle District including a complete revision to pages 94–102. Minor amendments to the Battery Lane District, the Wisconsin Avenue North Corridor and the Old Georgetown Road Corridor are also recommended.

## **WOODMONT TRIANGLE STUDY AREA BOUNDARY**

The boundary of the Woodmont Triangle Study Area is shown on the adjacent map. The study area is bound on the north by the National Institutes of Health, on the east by Wisconsin Avenue, on the south by Woodmont Avenue, and on the west by Old Georgetown Road. The study area includes portions of the Battery Lane District, the Wisconsin Avenue North Corridor, the Old Georgetown Road Corridor, and the entire Woodmont Triangle District of the existing Sector Plan. The multi-family housing located along Battery Lane and adjacent to the National Institutes of Health is included in the Woodmont Triangle Study Area. Portions of the properties along the west side of Wisconsin Avenue and the properties along the east side of Old Georgetown Road are also included as part of the mixed-use environment of the study area.