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Memorandum ● Government of the District of Columbia

TO: D.C. Zoning Commission

Department, Agency, Office: Planning

FROM: Fred L. Greene, Director
Office of Planning

Date: SEP 25 1987

SUBJECT: Zoning Commission Case No. 86-26, Connecticut Avenue Corridor Study

Attached is the Preliminary Report of the Office of Planning regarding the Connecticut Avenue Corridor, Zoning Commission Case No. 86-26. This land-use and transportation study of the avenue covers the corridor from Florida Avenue to Chevy Chase Circle.

In Chapter VI, Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Analysis, four areas are proposed for zoning changes; public hearings are accordingly recommended. First, on pages 46-47, it is recommended that the west frontage of Connecticut Avenue from Harrison Street to Military Road be considered for rezoning from R-5-C to a more restrictive residential classification in a range from R-5-B to R-3. Second, on page 49, it is recommended that the portion of Square 2039 now zoned R-1-A be rezoned R-5-C. On pages 54-62, the Cleveland Park commercial area is analyzed and specific controls for any overlay zone district are recommended. On pages 64-71, the Woodley Park commercial area is analyzed and specific controls are recommended for overlay zoning in this area as well.

The last two proposed actions in the report are related to the creation of overlay districts. These actions have a significantly higher priority than the first two.

The actual text of the proposed overlay districts is now being drafted and will directly reflect the specific controls recommended in the discussion of the Woodley Park and Cleveland Park commercial areas within the corridor study. The corridor study is being sent at this time to the Zoning Commission and the Connecuticut Avenue task force in order to provide a basis for review by both groups. The

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ZONING COMMISSION
CASE No. 86-26
EXHIBIT No. 75

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District of Columbia
CASE NO.86-26
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proposed text for purposes of the Notice of Public Hearing will be provided several days in advance of the Zoning Commission's special meeting of October 1, 1987 to consider hearing action on this matter.

Attachment

Office of Planning
Preliminary Report

Connecticut Avenue Corridor Study

Government of the District of Columbia Marion Barry Jr., Mayor September 1987

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Connecticut Avenue Corridor Study

I. Introduction

A. Background

The Office of Planning with the assistance of the Department of Public Works (DPW) has undertaken an analysis of the impact of potential future development along Connecticut Avenue between Western Avenue at Chevy Chase Circle to Calvert Street in Woodley Park. During the Ward Planning process, the Ward 3 Citizens Advisory Committee suggested that a study be done to ensure that new development would not result in the destabilization of neighborhoods along Ward 3's major commercial corridors.

In 1986, a study of the Wisconsin Avenue Corridor recommended that several commercial blocks in the Tenley Circle area be rezoned. These squares, or portions of squares, were rezoned in a manner which reduced redevelopment potential. The Zoning Commission, however, did not rezone those squares in the immediate vicinity of the Tenleytown Metro Station.

This Connecticut Avenue study is the second study produced by the Office of Planning and the Department of Public Works concerning redevelopment along Ward 3's commercial corridors. It focuses on the street frontage of Connecticut Avenue. Approximately 80 squares were surveyed by Office of Planning staff to determine existing development conditions in five subsections: Chevy Chase Circle to Nebraska Avenue; Nebraska Avenue to Tilden Street; Tilden Street to Klingle Road; Klingle Road to Calvert Street (Taft Bridge); and Calvert Street (Taft Bridge) to Florida Avenue (in Ward 1).

Field survey data, supplemented by information from the Department of Finance and Revenue, the Department of Public Works, the D.C. Surveyor and the city's Municipal Automatic Geographic (MAGIS) system, was analyzed to determine existing levels of development for each squares' frontage included in the study area. This information constitutes the existing development (or base case) scenario.

Based on a number of factors (age of existing structures, existing use, land assembly patterns, proximity to Metro stations, recent construction activity, zoning, etc.) 26 squares were selected as having potential for possible major development or redevelopment by the Year 2000. Projected development of these squares at full potential under existing zoning served as the data base for the Year 2000 scenario.

All relevant data was submitted to the Department of Public Works (Office of Policy and Planning) for traffic research and analysis. The Transportation Assessment section of this study presents the findings and conclusions which resulted.

As work on this study progressed, it became apparent that the Calvert Street (Taft Bridge) - Florida Avenue section of Connecticut Avenue presented significantly different characteristics than those of the remaining four sections from Calvert Street north to Chevy Chase Circle. This section of Connecticut Avenue in Ward 1 is more closely aligned with central city/near central city development and transportation patterns. With the exception of the C-3-C zoned area between Florida Avenue and T Street, this section of Connecticut Avenue is residentially zoned (R-5-C), fully developed, with little if any, likelihood of significant new development or redevelopment based on the premises of this study. As a result, this section of Connecticut Avenue has not been included in the traffic assessment done for this study. It is, however, included in the zoning review.

B. Organization of Study

Section I of the Connecticut Avenue Study provides a brief introduction to the structure of the report, a capsule history of Connecticut Avenue, and existing conditions therein. Section II describes the urban design setting for Connecticut Avenue. Section III discusses the relationship of the Comprehensive Plan's objectives and policies to the study area. Section IV describes the base case and Year 2000 development scenarios used to assess hypothetical development and traffic conditions in the Year 2000. Section V presents the findings and conclusions of the traffic assessment undertaken by the Department of Public Works, Section VI presents the zoning analysis and conclusions of the study.

C. Description of Study Area

1. History

Connecticut Avenue has long been one of the District's vital transportation arteries traversing Wards 1, 2 and 3. The downtown portion was one of the original diagonal avenues in Pierre L'Enfant's plan for the national capital. Its early development was characterized by the construction of large homes between Lafayette Park and Florida Avenue. With the construction of the first bridge across Rock Creek Park in 1905 and the extension of a streetcar line to Chevy Chase, development along Connecticut Avenue outside of the central city began to increase substantially. Early corridor development was a function of streetcar traffic and pockets of commercial uses grew to service the growing communities adjacent to the avenue. In the 1920s and 1930s with the coming of the automobile, development surged ahead forming many of the residential neighborhoods known today. It was also during this period that many of the large apartment buildings within the corridor were constructed and the commercial areas began to fill in.

Today, the avenue is considered to be essentially developed with little change anticipated along its entire length. Connecticut Avenue continues to be one of the city's truly "special streets" with

development patterns, architectural character, and urban design attributes which make it unique among the city's grand avenues.

2. Chevy Chase Circle to Nebraska Avenue

Chevy Chase Circle is the Connecticut Avenue gateway to the District of Columbia. The placid, fountained circle serves as a distinct point of entry into the city. Characteristically the more urban environment of the city is reflected in the low scale commercial buildings which begin just south of the circle and extend four blocks to Livingston Street. The change from large homes surrounded by landscaped lawns and gardens in Maryland, to one-, two- and three-story shops is evidenced, with a transition of scale and character provided by the large stately churches which boarder the tree lined circle at Western Avenue.

The former trolley station on the west side of Connecticut Avenue is a fitting link to the past, providing a sense of community continuity and historical connection. It contines to serve as a neighborhood symbol in its modern function as a Metrobus terminal. The Chevy Chase Community Center and Library are other recent additions to this community and serve as prominent landmarks for the Chevy Chase area. This entire section of commercial Chevy Chase is replete with the variety of services and small scale buildings, which signify a functional and cohesive neighborhood center, both accessible and intimate.

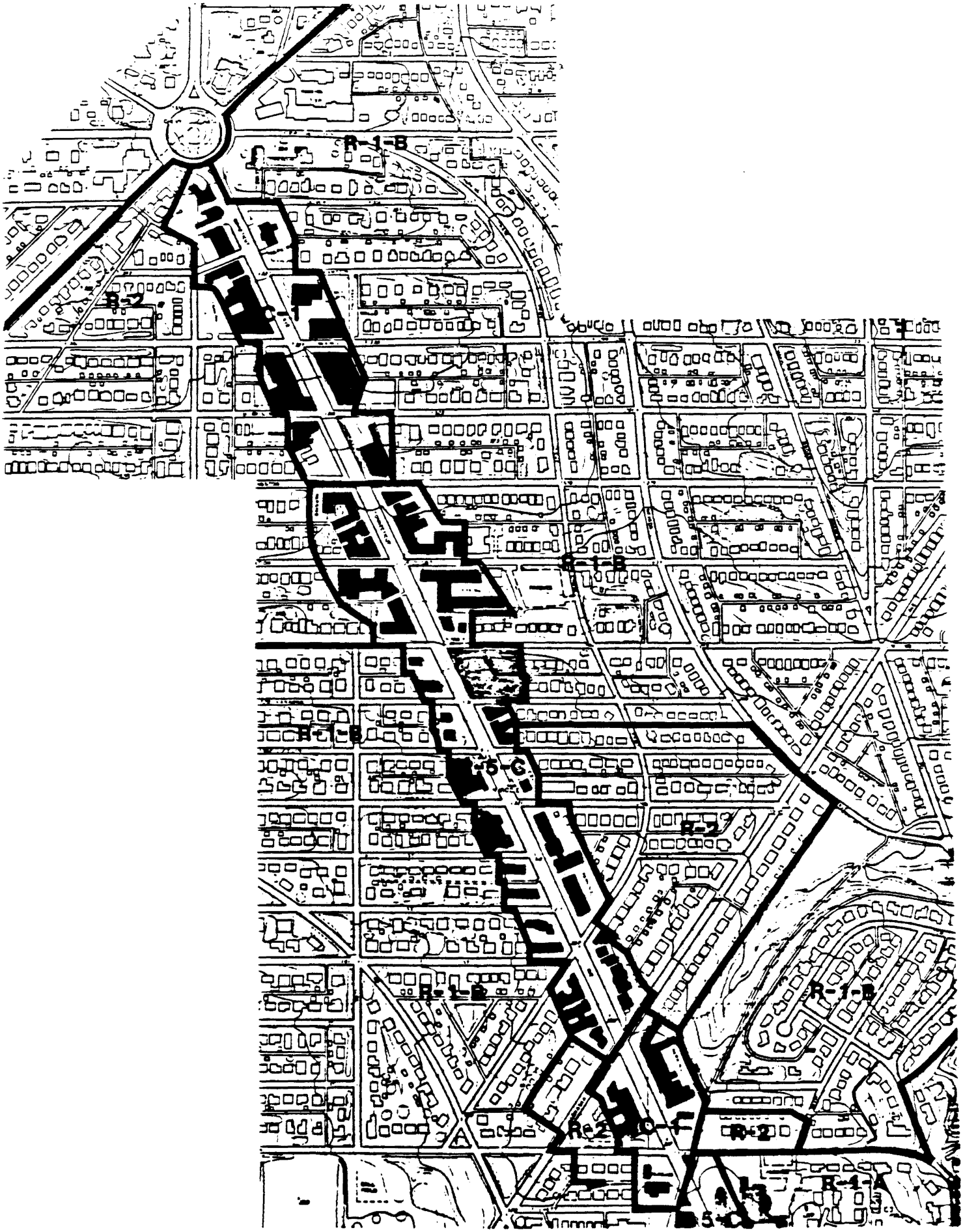
The majority of buildings along the Chevy Chase commercial strip are one or two-story structures. Two major grocery stores anchor the strip and mark it as a full-range center. Other retail outlets include two large drugstores, a lighting store, several banks and restaurants as well as two dozen retail and service establishments. Both sides of Connecticut Avenue from Chevy Chase Circle to Livingston Street are lined with shops and service establishments which supply a fairly broad range of consumer goods and services necessary to fulfill daily living needs. Several buildings have offices above the ground floor. Their presence, however, is barely noticed amid the retail color and variety which forms the dominant theme of this area.

South of Livingston Street down to Military Road, the avenue is nearly solidly lined with apartment buildings. The major exception occurs at Military Road where a group of townhouses has been constructed on the northwest corner of the intersection. From Military Road to Nebraska Avenue, both townhouses and apartment buildings line the street. A portion of this section is controlled by covenants which do not allow multi-family buildings. In typical fashion for residential neighborhoods adjoining Connecticut Avenue, are single-family detached and semi-detached homes which occupy areas both east and west of the avenue.

Zoning patterns between Chevy Chase Circle and Nebraska Avenue are typical of Connecticut Avenue -- dense residential stretches broken by compact commercial strips. The Chevy Chase commercial area is zoned C-1 from the circle south to Livingston Street. This is the city's least intense commercial zone which is reflected in the low-scale character of the commercial structures here. Livingston Street to Nebraska Avenue (a nine block stretch) is zoned R-5-C, a medium high density residential zone. This pattern, dense residential zoning broken at regular intervals with lower density commercial concentrations, establishes the basic zoning and land use framework for the entire length of Connecticut Avenue in Ward 3. It is this land use pattern, regularly repeated which serves as the foundation for the development of Connecticut Avenue.

3. <u>Nebraska Avenue to Tilden Street</u>

South of Nebraska Avenue is a small commercial area extending to Everett Street on the west side of Connecticut Avenue (two blocks), and a single block on the east side to Fessenden Street. Shops and services which are located here include a drugstore, two gasoline stations, restaurants, and a number of other small scale retail and service establishments. The southeast corner of Nebraska and Connecticut Avenues was redeveloped recently with a series of townhouse-styled office and retail structures. This is the only significant office presence in this center. The area possesses the ambiance of small town, which is



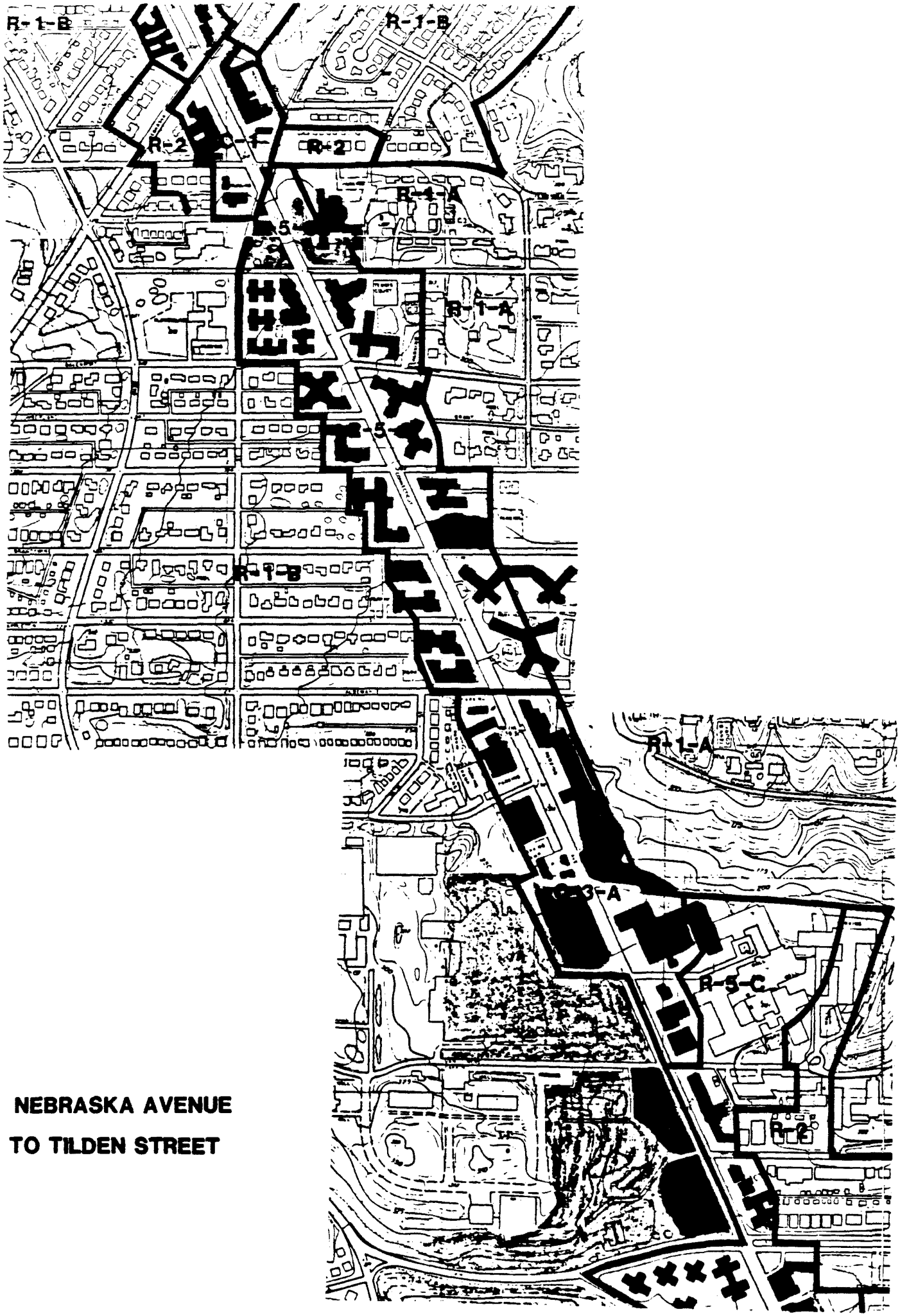
CHEVY CHASE CIRCLE TO NEBRASKA AVENUE

solidly retail in character. The majority of the structures are one- to three-stories high and were constructed between 1920 and 1940 as the residential areas near this section of Connecticut Avenue were developed.

The zoning in this area is C-1. The Connecticut Avenue frontages north and south are zoned R-5-C while R-1-A, R-1-B and small R-2 pockets lie east and west of the corridor. Characteristically, Nebraska Avenue between Connecticut and Nevada Avenues is lined with duplex houses. The R-2 zone, where these dwellings are located, extends from Joceyln Street to the south side of Nebraska Avenue and has its eastern boundary at Nevada Avenue. West of Connecticut Avenue is a large R-1-B zone which stretches to Wisconsin Avenue. The R-1-B zone permits single- family homes with minimum lot areas of 5,000 square feet. The R-2 zone permits single-family homes and duplexes (semi-detached dwellings) and requires a minimum lot area of 3,000 square feet. East of Connecticut Avenue and south of Fessenden Street are single-family detached homes with underlying R-1-A zoning which requires a minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet. The avenue itself is zoned R-5-C between Fessendon and Albermarle streets and is solidly lined with large apartment buildings which range in height from four- to nine-stories.

South of Albermarle Street the avenue frontages are zoned C-3-A. This is the highest density commercial zone on Connecticut Avenue between Florida Avenue and Chevy Chase Circle. It is also the location of upper Connecticut Avenue's most intense commercial development. The Van Ness area is home to the Van Ness campus of the University of the District of Columbia, the Howard University Law School INTELSAT, Van Ness Center, and the International Center. Several restaurants, two grocery stores, and a variety of service and specialty retail shops are also located here.

Van Ness Center, one of the city's largest apartment, office and retail developments, was constructed in the late 1960s. Begun in 1983,



NEBRASKA AVENUE

TO TILDEN STREET

INTELSAT is completing the final phase of its headquarters building on the old National Bureau of Standards/Harry Diamond Laboratories site. The Van Ness commercial center has been an active development area in recent years. The medium density C-3-A zoning and the opening of the Van Ness/UDC Metro station together have supported redevelopment of this section of Connecticut Avenue.

The INTELSAT headquarters is the largest single office complex in the Van Ness area with approximately 550,000 square feet of gross floor area. The site is federally-owned property and therefore, not governed by zoning. Office uses in general are a strong presence in the Van Ness commercial area.

The C-3-A zone in the Van Ness area begins at Albermarle Street and extends down the east side of Connecticut Avenue to Van Ness Street. The southern limit of the C-3-A zone on the west side of the avenue is at the intersection of Veazy Terrace. An R-5-C zone covers land occupied by the Van Ness and Consulate apartment completes as well as the eastern frontage of Connecticut Avenue down to Tilden Street. South of the C-3-A zone on the west side (from the intersection of Veazy Terrace to Tilden Street) is R-1-B zoning.

4. Tilden Street to Macomb Street

The section of Connecticut Avenue between Tilden and Macomb streets contains some of the most architecturally and historically significant structures in the corridor. Tilden Street is the northern boundary of the newly established Cleveland Park Historic District, and Klingle Road (just south of Macomb Street in the floor of the Klingle Valley section of Rock Creek Park) is its southern boundary. All of the west side of Connecticut Avenue is included in the historic district, while on the east side, only the section from and including the Broadmoor Apartments south to Klingle Road is included.

One of the earliest non-residential structures built in the Cleveland Park area is the fire station at 3522 Connecticut Avenue. Next door is the first apartment house built in Cleveland Park, 3520 Connecticut Avenue. It was designed by Harry

Wardman and constructed in 1921. Thus began the development of Connecticut Avenue in Cleveland Park as a more urban counterpoint to the "summer estates" and single-family homes which developed west of Connecticut Avenue beginning in the latter decades of the 19th century. Early 20th century additions to the avenue include Tilden Gardens and the Broadmoor in 1929 and Sedgewick Gardens in 1931. In 1930, the Park and Shop shopping center was constructed which complemented the individual shops which had been constructed nearby. In the 1930s the commercial stretches of Cleveland Park began to fill in, capped with the opening of the Uptown Theater in 1936. It remains the largest, single-screen movie house in Washington.

Zoning along this section of Connecticut Avenue is typical -- higher density residential zoning fronting both sides between Tilden Street and Porter Street and lower density commercial strip - zoning between Porter Street and Macomb Street. The R-5-C zone north of Porter Street is solidly developed with apartment buildings. The commercial area is developed largely with one- to three-story structures, some with residential units on the upper floors. The Cleveland Park Branch of the D.C. Public Library system is located at 3300 Connecticut Avenue at the corner of Macomb Street.

The commercial strip provides a relatively broad range of retail goods and services. There is a moderate-sized grocery store, several dry cleaning establishments and restaurants, book shops, a drugstore and various speciality shops. Office uses are negligable and do not have a significant presence in the area.

Parking in the commercial area is a problem. With the exception of the Park and Shop site and the small group of shops at the corner of Newark Street, none of the commercial establishments provide a significant number of parking spaces. Most rely exclusively on metered curb parking. The east side of Connecticut Avenue between Macomb and Ordway streets is the only stretch of Connecticut Avenue which has a service lane where metered parking is available. Nonetheless, the

demand for parking is strong due to the diversity of retail services and entertainment provided and the presence of a very large capacity movie theatre which generates major parking demand in the evening period.

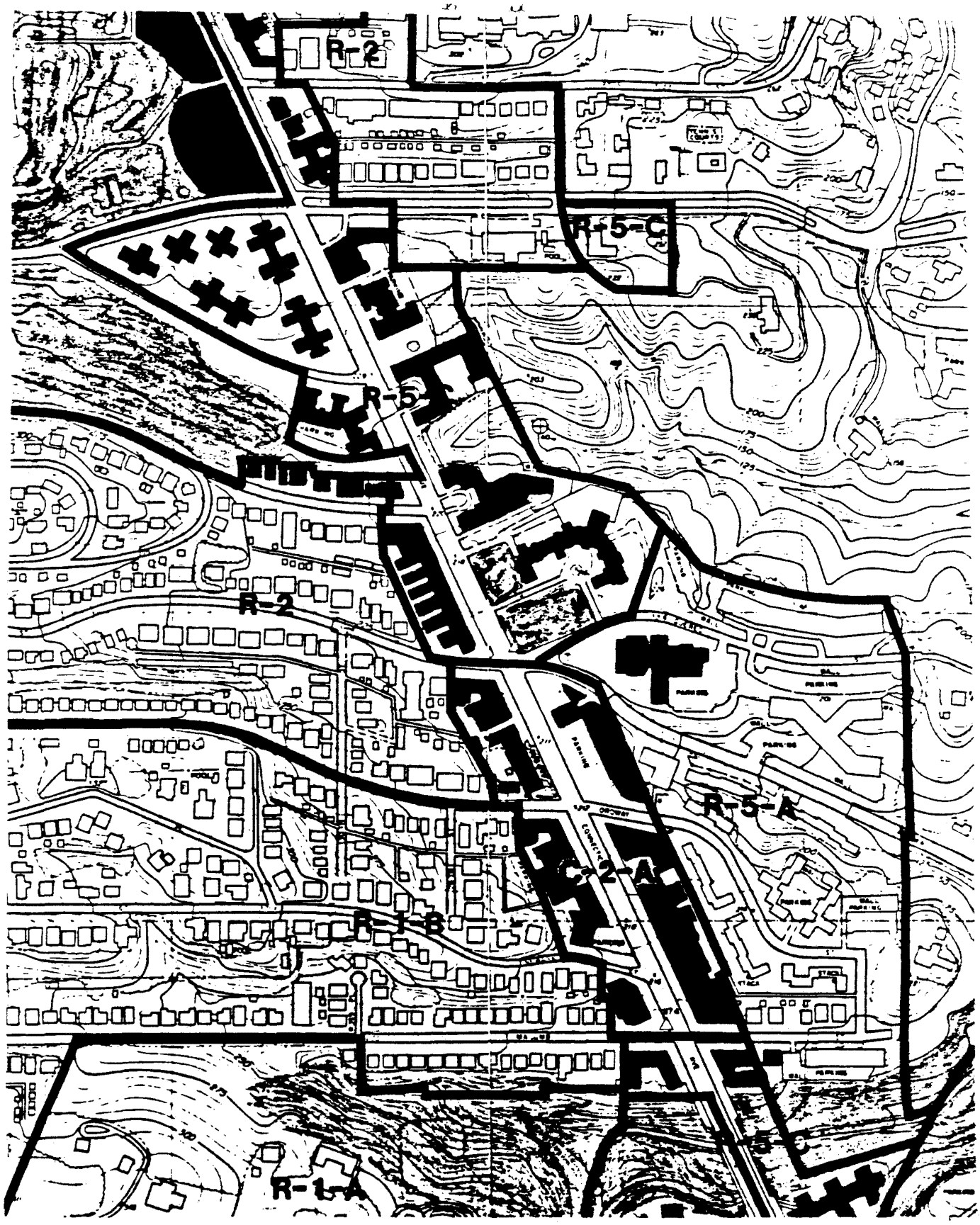
5. Macomb Street to Calvert Street (Taft Bridge)

This section of Connecticut Avenue is developed with a variety of buildings. Perched at the edge of the Klingle Valley just south of Macomb are three modest, five-story apartment buildings built in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Just south of the bridge beyond Klingle Valley are two of Connecticut Avenue's prototypical buildings, the six story Woodley Park Towers and the nine story Kennedy-Warren. Each of the buildings is sited to take full advantage of the parklands which adjoin them. Just south of the Woodley Park Towers on the west side of Connecticut is the Cathedral Park Apartments built in the mid 1920s. This three building complex was an early condominium conversion in the 1970s. The Cathedral Park complex sits directly opposite the western entrance to the National Zoo.

A series of shops and sidewalk vendors provide limited services to neighborhood residents and tourists. South of the National Zoo on the east side are a series of five- and six-story apartment buildings constructed in the 1920s.

The west side of Connecticut Avenue between Devonshire Place and Cathedral Avenue is occupied in full by the Cathedral Park complex. South of Cathedral the landscape of the avenue shifts. South to Calvert Street are more two-, three- and four-story structures (originally built as single-family houses) as well as older apartment buildings. The area between Cathedral and Woodley is solidly residential. A new apartment building is under construction in the 2700 block on the east side. Below Woodley Road is the Woodley Park commercial area, the Washington Sheraton and Shoreham hotels, and a bank which is located on the south side of Calvert Street at the edge of Rock Creek Park.

Zoning in this section of Connecticut Avenue is R-5-C (90 feet, 3.5 FAR) between Macomb Street and



TILDEN STREET TO MACOMB STREET

Woodley Road with the exception of the small row of commercial shops opposite the entrance to the National Zoo. This small one-story commercial area has about 35,000 square feet of land area and is zoned C-2-A.

South of Woodley Road the zoning is commercial: C-2-A (50 feet and 1.5 commercial FAR) on the west side of Connecticut Avenue and at the southeast corner of Calvert Street and Connecticut Avenue; and C-2-B (65 feet and 1.5 commercial FAR) on the east side between Woodley Road and Calvert Street.

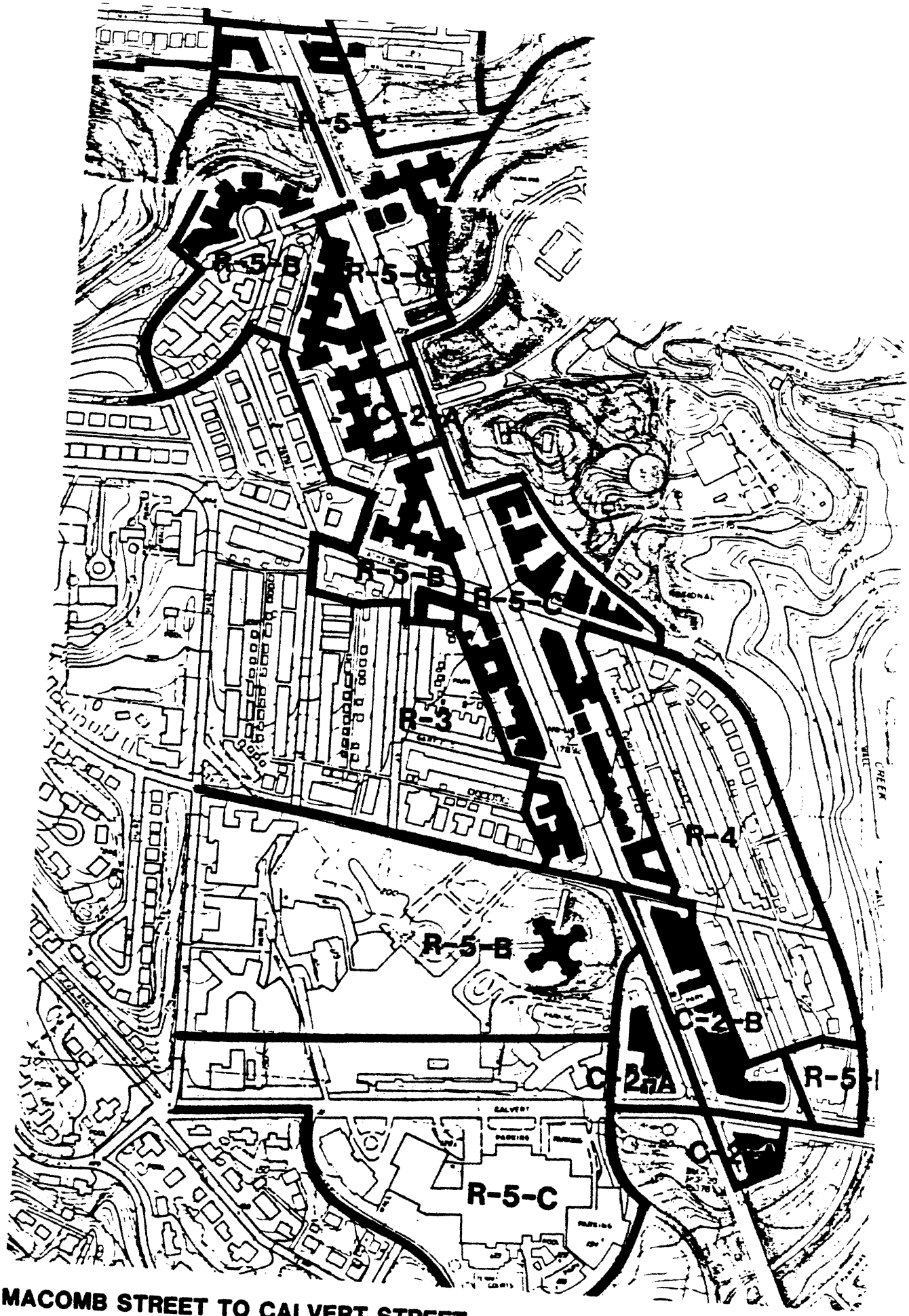
6. Calvert Street (Taft Bridge) to Florida Avenue

The greater portion of this segment of the Connecticut Avenue corridor is zoned R-5-C and is developed with many large, older high-rise apartment buildings. A small section of an R-3 residentially zoned area abuts the avenue at the northwest corner of Florida and Connecticut avenues. The Washington Hilton Hotel is located on the east side of the avenue in an area bounded by Connecticut Avenue, Columbia Road, and T and 19th streets (Square 2535) and is in the R-5-C zoning district. A one-block area of C-3-C zoning (high bulk, major business and employment center) exists just south of the Hilton across T Street consisting of offices, restaurants, retail establishments, a U.S. Post Office and the Embassy Theatre.

The elevation of Connecticut Avenue drops sharply over the escarpment above Florida Avenue. This section is much more densely urban in character than the more northern sections. It is associated more closely in ambiance with the close-in neighborhoods of Kalorama and Dupont Circle and has a more central city connection. Unlike the residential areas adjoining Connecticut Avenue north of Rock Creek Park which are largely single family detached housing, the residential areas adjoining this portion of the avenue are characterized by three- and four-story townhouses and a variety of small and large apartment buildings.

D. Community Issues

The major issues in the Connecticut Avenue



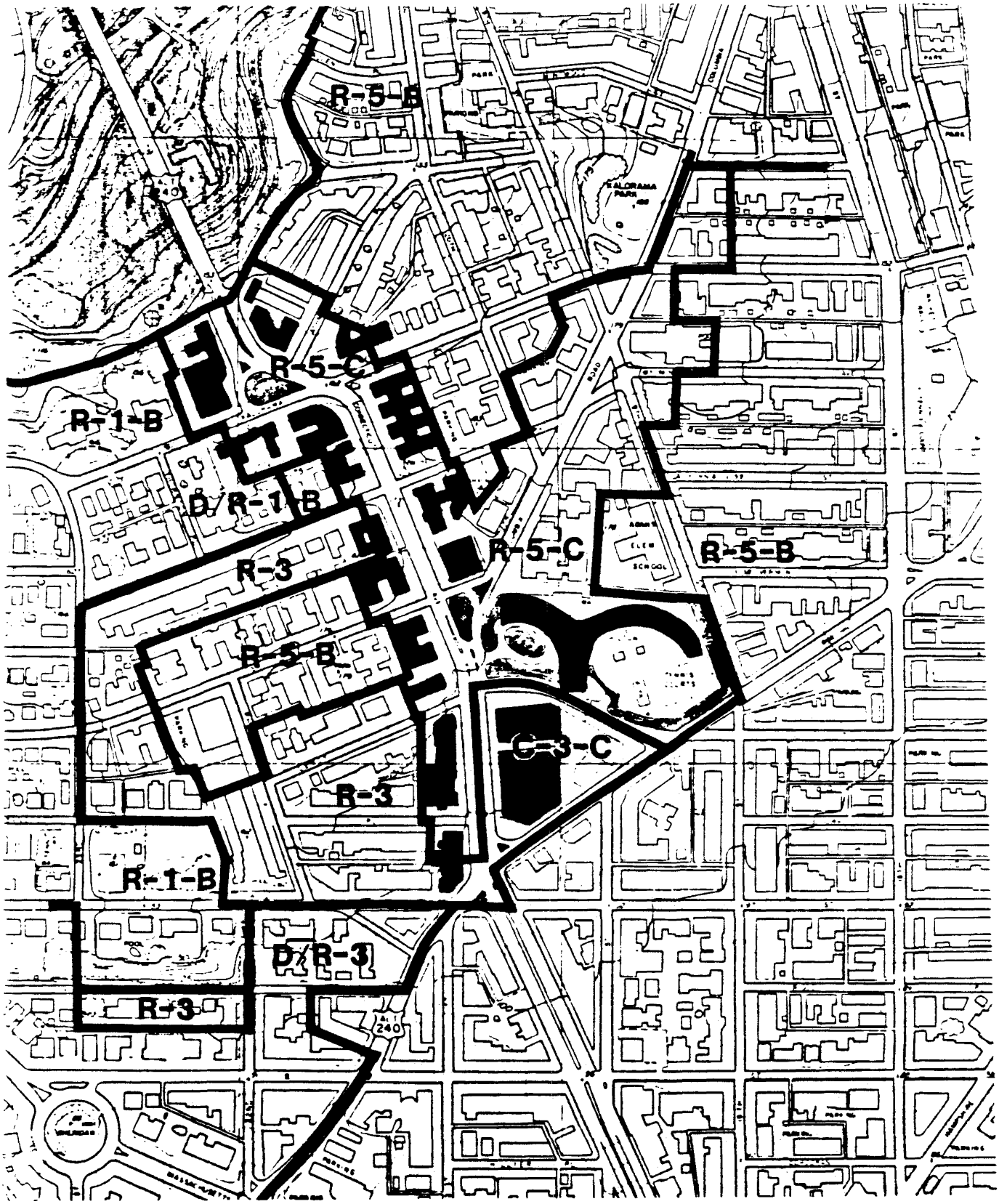
MACOMB STREET TO CALVERT STREET

corridor are development and traffic. For the most part, the development issues revolve around the potential replacement of existing small scale buildings and neighborhood uses with large office buildings and non-neighborhood uses. Associated with this potential redevelopment is increased traffic volume and the increased congestion and safety problems more traffic brings.

In recent years, overall traffic volume has been relatively stable along Connecticut Avenue. It is one of the citys most efficient transportation arteries combining reversable lane patterns, a wide, straight and unobstructed roadway, and offering major Metrobus and Metrorail service. Traffic problems do occur, however, particularly in the Woodley Park and Van Ness areas.

Along with the frequently heard concerns over traffic congestion, safety and diminishing neighborhood quality, several neighborhoods along Connecticut Avenue have specific concerns. In Chevy Chase, there is a strong desire that the small town, more intimate character of the commercial areas be maintained. More than any other Connecticut Avenue commercial area, Chevy Chase provides a very broad range of consumer goods and services. This area is not served by Metrorail and neighborhood residents believe that redevelopment would not only introduce non-local uses and destroy the small scale character of the area, but would also result in more traffic congestion, parking shortages for retail uses, parking and traffic spillover onto residential streets.

The Van Ness commercial area is the most intensely developed of the Connecticut Avenue commercial centers in Ward 3. INTELSAT, one of the largest office buildings outside of the Central Business District, and the Van Ness campus of UDC are located here. Several new buildings have been constructed in recent years, and there is now a substantial office component in this center. In addition to general traffic concerns, pedestrian safety has been raised as an important issue in Van Ness. There is a concentration of pedestrian activity in the Van Ness area, particularly students,



CALVERT STREET TO FLORIDA AVENUE

MAJOR ISSUES

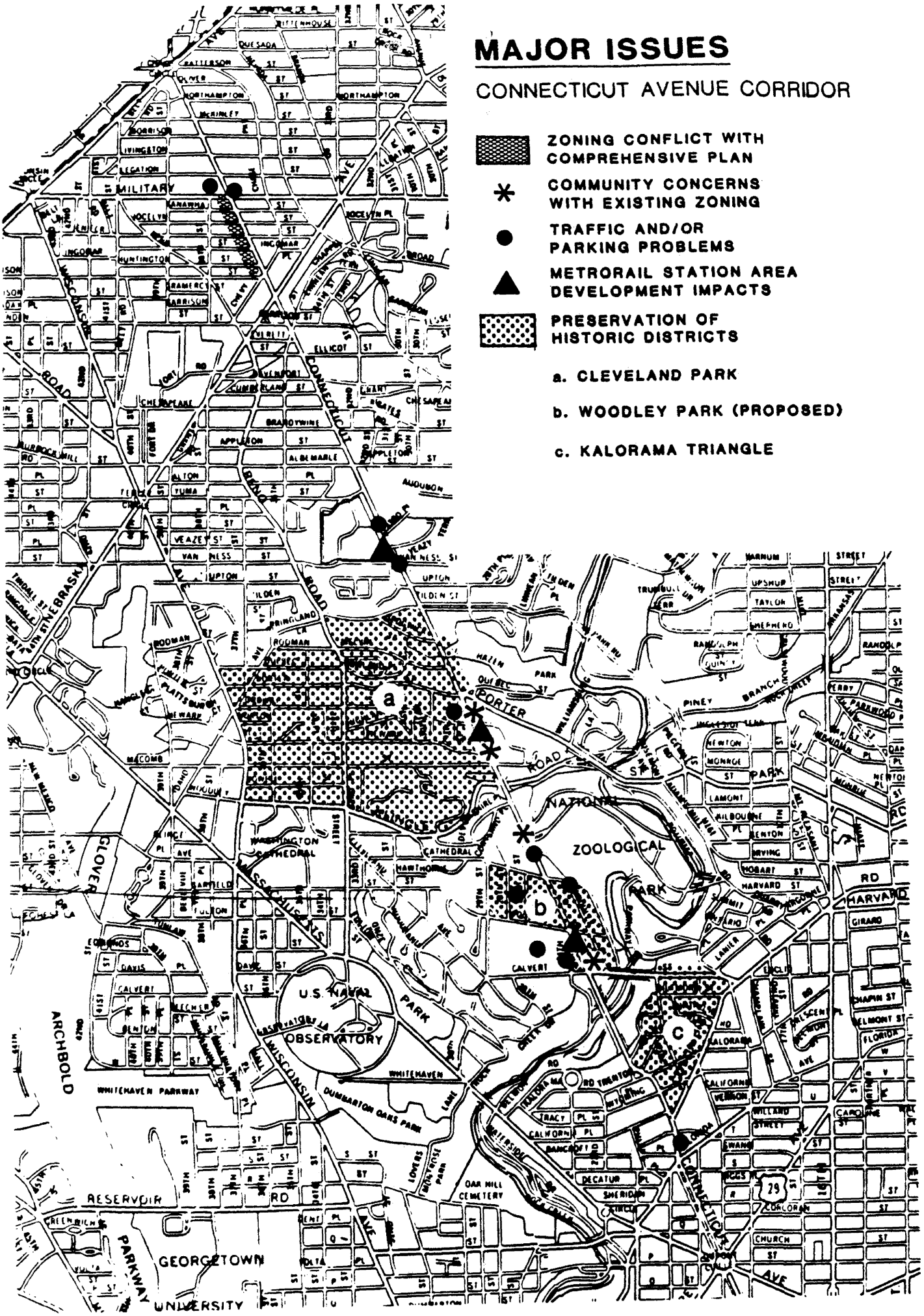
CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR

- ZONING CONFLICT WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
- * COMMUNITY CONCERNS WITH EXISTING ZONING
- ● TRAFFIC AND/OR PARKING PROBLEMS
- ▲ METRORAIL STATION AREA DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS
- PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC DISTRICTS

a. CLEVELAND PARK

b. WOODLEY PARK (PROPOSED)

c. KALORAMA TRIANGLE



and also a significant number of elderly residents. Urban design, streetscape treatments and public space usage are important issues raised by the community in connection with the Van Ness area in addition to traffic related problems.

In Cleveland Park, the issues of zoning, Metro station area development and historic preservation are important. There has been no major new development in the Cleveland Park commercial area even though it is served by Metrorail. The preservation of existing buildings and the maintenance of the existing low scale quality of the commercial strip is an oft-voiced community objective. The future of the Park and Shop site specifically and the more general issue of appropriate scale and use of new development in Metro station areas have also been raised as significant community concerns. The problem of retaining and supporting small business establishments has also emerged as an issue.

In Woodley Park the same scale and use issues as well as Metro station area development and zoning have been raised. The Woodley Park commercial area is heavily influenced by the nearby Sheraton Washington and Shoreham hotels. The presence of over 2000 nearby hotel rooms and major convention and meeting facilities supports area businesses but also presents significant parking problems and brings hotel-related bus and truck activity to the area. There is growing concern over the number of restaurants in the Woodley Park commercial area and a well articulated desire to maintain the present height, density and character of the commercial strip.

The section of Connecticut Avenue south of the Taft Bridge to Florida Avenue has significant parking problems. In addition, area residents are greatly concerned over the displacement of residential uses with diplomatic ones. The presence of a major hotel, the Washington Hilton, its future expansion plans and the truck and bus traffic it generates have all been cited as major issues.

II. Urban Design and Environmental Character

The entire length of Connecticut Avenue is a designated Special Street in the Preservation and Historic Features Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The lower sections of Connecticut Avenue are an important component of the L'Enfant Plan for Washington while the portions outside the L'Enfant boundary make a significant contribution to the design framework of the national capital as a continuation of one the city's original diagonal avenues.

Comprehensive Plan policies for Special Streets include:*

> Maintenance and enhancement in a manner which promotes their roles as major features of the National Capital and establishes its images and symbols in the minds of residents and visitors;
>
> Retention of the exceptional width and openness of street space and the discouragement of structures and signs within the public right-of-way that obscure street views or vistas and impair movement;
>
> Control and coordination of visual quality through the selection and placement of street signs, traffic signals, lighting, bus stops, and other elements of street furniture;
>
> Landscape treatment which reinforces the "green city" or "city in a park" character fostered by the National Capital's natural features, parks, public buildings, monuments and memorials.
>
> Careful consideration of building height and massing to create continuous lines of sight.

There is no question in the minds of residents who live along Connecticut Avenue, daily commuters who traverse its length, or architects and urban designers, that

*See Sec. 808, Criteria for Designating Special Streets and Places "Preservation and Historic Features Element", Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

Connecticut Avenue is, indeed, a special street. From its downtown terminus at the northern edge of Lafayette Park facing the White House to Chevy Chase Circle, it is one of the city's best-defined thoroughfares and captures a range and depth of the city's cultural and architectural history, its historical patterns of urban development and natural environment in a fashion that no other street, avenue or "special street" duplicates.

Its urban design qualities, from tightly knit, patently urban and urbane at Farragut Square, old-wordly and evocative of stately elegance at Dupont Circle and in Kalorama, to small town charm and intimacy in Chevy Chase, are unsurpassed for richness and variety.

Seen as a whole, Connecticut Avenue from the Taft Bridge to Chevy Chase Circle is essentially a grand, solidly residential avenue with primarily "low scale" commercial enclaves at fairly regular intervals. (Van Ness is the single exception to the "low scale" quality of the commercial centers.) It is the contrast between the tall, enclosing apartment buildings and the lower, small shop ambiance of Woodley Park, Cleveland Park and Chevy Chase which provide the principal built environment for the avenue. Its wide (130') right- of-way, with deep building set-back lines, is well defined and appropriately contained by the large 60- to 90-foot apartment buildings characteristic of the Avenue. The tall, mature trees which are generally continuous in the residential sections, and the unbroken sidewalk spaces buttressed by uniformly placed front building facades tie the visual and spatial aspects of the avenue together providing a continuity of sight lines and enclosed urban space throughout its length.

The lower height of most of the commercial areas provides the punctuation or opening of the solid urban enclosure to "let in" the sky and to provide a contrast to the fairly uniformly contained open urban space of the residential sections. Still linked by uniform street and sidewalk width, building set-back, and the wide straight avenue itself, the contrasting scale of the commercial areas heightens the aesthetic appeal of the more enclosed, more majestic, more confined, residential areas and complement one another.

Within this larger, urban design setting, is a richness of architectural detail and articulation at the small scale which fills in the overall framework. There is a

marked contrast and variety of architectural style and detail of individual buildings from Chevy Chase Circle to Florida Avenue. Many late 1950s early 1960s buildings are stark and severe while abundant detailing characterizes many older (and some of the newer) structures.

The Wardman Tower (a part of the Washington Sheraton Hotel) exemplifies the stately, grand residential setting of the avenue. Tilden Gardens in Cleveland Park, the Kennedy-Warren, and Sedgewick Gardens are all early 20th century apartment projects which define the essential urban design character of the residential element of Connecticut Avenue. They are large, fairly tall apartment buildings set in spacious landscaped greenspace: urban residential complexes in park-like settings. Architecturally these early complexes are richly detailed, early 20th century examples of urban apartment living at its best. The same fundamental scale of these early developments has been continued in most of the newer apartment buildings although not so elegantly realized in many instances.

The commercial areas along the corridor vary markedly in style. The Woodley Park commercial area is a mixture of two-, three- and four-story converted townhouses on the east side of Connecticut and around the corner on the north side of Calvert Street. Remarkably cohesive architecturally and with a consistent scale and rhythm, this group of structures is relatively intact and creates a handsome urban environment.

In Square 2203, the west side of the avenue, the situation is somewhat different. Although heights do vary from one- to three-stories, one-story buildings predominate. A combination of old and newer buildings are present, having a less cohesive, less attractive street ambiance than does the east side.

Cleveland Park between Macomb and Porter streets is distinguished as the only commercial area on upper Connecticut Avenue which is included within an historic district. One-story buildings dominate the east side and form a uniform and cohesive urban design frame. Individual buildings vary in richness of articulation,

however, a strong Art Deco presence is evident. The west side of the Cleveland Park commercial strip is dominated by the Uptown Theatre. To the south are a series of one-story shops and a four-story mixed use building set back from the avenue. The block north of Ordway Street has a row of handsome three-story structures. The Park and Shop site on the east side of the avenue has been vacant for sometime and is in disrepair but stands as an early Washington example of "automobile-age" shopping centers.

At Van Ness, the commercial scale and character is markedly different from other commercial areas along upper Connecticut Avenue. There has been quantity of new construction here during the past two decades. New buildings with retail and office uses are the norm. Sixty foot high buildings predominate as does a variety of modern architectural styles. This area is spatially defined by the newer buildings even though older one-, two- and three-story shops and shopping centers still exist. The buildings of the University of the District of Columbia and INTELSAT are visual focal points for the area.

New construction has changed the urban design and architectural character of the Van Ness commercial center by defining the spatial enclosure of this portion of the avenue. The urban envelope does not spill out here as it does in Cleveland Park and Chevy Chase for example. It is contained in much the same fashion as those sections of Connecticut Avenue which are lined with tall apartment buildings. The ambiance at Van Ness center is one of concentrated urban activity.

The Chevy Chase commercial area, both south of Nebraska Avenue and south of Chevy Chase Circle, is decidely "small town" in character. Low in commercial intensity and building height, there is a broad range of architectural styles within the area. This the only commercial area along upper Connecticut Avenue which has substantial off-street surface parking to serve retail uses. There is an ease of access by car which is not found elsewhere along the avenue and a range of services which is not duplicated in any of the other centers. The ambiance is decidely less urban than any of the other commercial areas. This is emphasized by the greater variety of building heights, building sizes and architectural styles.

III. Comprehensive Plan Relationships

A. General Overview/Background

Section 423 of the District of Columbia "Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act" (Home Rule Act, P.L. 93-198), establishes the Office of the Mayor as the central planning agency for the District. The Mayor is responsible for the coordination of all planning and implementation of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital.

With the adoption of the first 10 elements of the Comprehensive Plan in April 1984 (D.C. Law 5-76) and the Land Use Element in March 1985 (D.C. Law 5-187), the city's first modern comprehensive statement of goals, policies and objectives for the District of Columbia was established. The Comprehensive Plan is designed to guide the decisions of both the public and private sectors of the District. It sets forth goals, policies and objectives for economic development, housing, environmental protection, transportation, public facilities, urban design, preservation and historic features, downtown, human services and land use. An eleventh element, General Provisions, sets forth the major themes of the Plan, describing the general planning process in the District and includes definitions and other information.

Section 102, "Interpretation of the District Elements" of the Comprehensive Plan describes the dynamic fashion by which the Plan elements are to be interpreted and applied. Section 102 reads as follows:

> "The primary dynamic of the District elements of the Plan are the overlapping of its elements goals. This overlapping is intentional. District elements of the Plan should be studied and executed in concert with each other and should be interpreted broadly. The interpretation and implementation of any element should necessarily rely upon, and be respectful of, the objectives and policies of other elements. An element may be tempered, even defined, by one or more of the other elements. This may occur both within one element and between elements. The interpretation of the District elements of the Plan should also be guided by the major themes contained in Section 101, which establish the overall priorities of the District elements of the Plan.

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

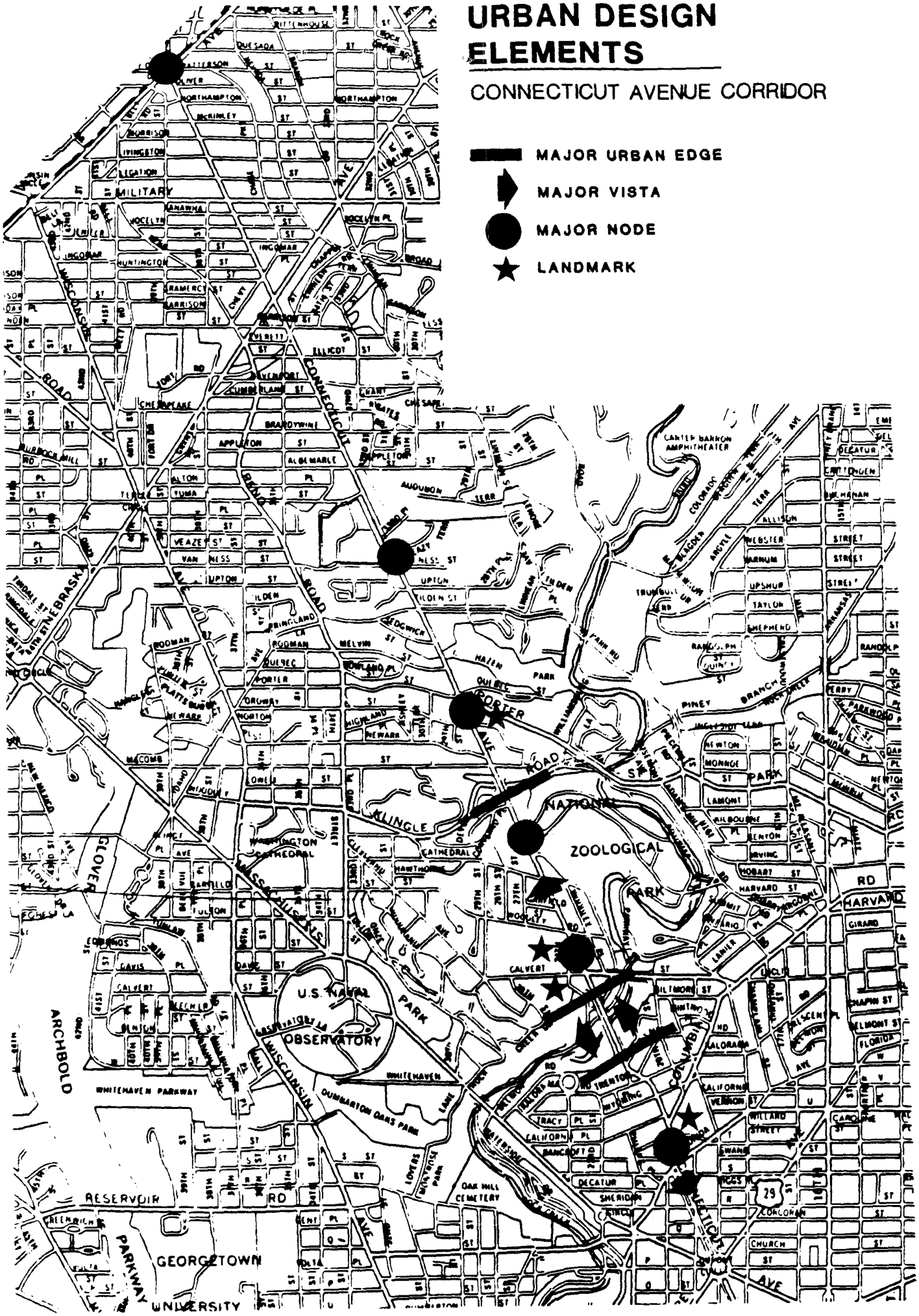
CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR

MAJOR URBAN EDGE

MAJOR VISTA

MAJOR NODE

LANDMARK



> Except as specifically provided by other law, including but not limited to an Act providing for the zoning of the District of Columbia and the regulation of the location, height, bulk, and uses of buildings and other structures and of the uses of land in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes, as amended by Section 492(b) of the District of Columbia Self-Government and Governmental Reorganization Act, approved December 24, 1973 (87 Stat. 792; D.C. Code, Sec. 5-414), or as specifically provided by the District elements of the Plan itself, the District elements of the Plan are a guide intended to establish broad policies and goals while affording flexibility for future implementation and are not binding policy directives."

Essential to the application of the goals, policies and objectives of the Plan's elements is their fundamental interconnection. Although not all plan elements may be relevant to a given situation at all times, reliance upon a single plan element or portion of an element does not, by itself, adequately address all the factors surrounding various issues.

To focus solely on a single factor, in particular the zoning/land use consistency issue, invariably leads to errors of interpretation and understanding of the Comprehensive Plan. Section 492 of the "Home Rule Act" amended the prior Act of March 1, 1920 (D.C. Code, SEC T-412, that established the first zoning regulations for the District of Columbia. Section 492(b) (1) is the pertinent section of the Home Rule Act which establishes the relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and zoning. It reads as follows:

> "The first sentence of Section 2 of the [the] act (of March 1, 1920) (D.C. Code, Sec. 5-144) is amended by striking out "such (zoning) regulations shall be made in accordance with a Comprehensive Plan and inserting in lieu thereof "Zoning maps and regulations, and amendments thereto shall not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital..."

1. Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan

The key phrase that establishes a relationship between zoning and the Comprehensive Plan is quoted above. This section of the Home Rule Act

contains the only reference to zoning and the Comprehensive Plan. Of singular importance is the fact that it is not the Land Use Element which is referenced as requiring zoning maps and regulations to "not be inconsistent with...", but the entire Comprehensive Plan, now consisting of eleven District elements.

Section 423(a) of the Home Rule Act states that the Comprehensive Plan, prepared by the Mayor, "may include land use elements, urban renewal and redevelopment elements, a multi-year program of municipal public works for the District, and physical, social, economic, transportation and population elements."

The concept of the Comprehensive Plan outlined in this section of the Home Rule Act is not the "master plan" form of planning documents common in the early decades of the 20th century which usually contained only physical elements. The city's enacted Comprehensive Plan includes both physical and non-physical elements in accord with the concept outlined in the Home Rule Act. Land use is noted in Section 423(a) as one of the possible elements which may constitute a portion of a modern comprehensive plan. Thus the Home Rule Act conceptualized a plan of which land use was to be one of a spectrum of topic areas to be addressed.

Section 429 of the Home Rule Act amended several sections of the then existing zoning enabling acts. It contains the phrase "Zoning maps and regulations, and amendments thereto, shall not be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan..." which must be read in the context of the District's Comprehensive Plan conceptually outlined in Section 423. It refers to a Plan which is comprehensive in nature, incorporating social, physical and an array of other elements concerned with the whole urban entity that is the District of Columbia.

The "inconsistency" language of Section 492 does not specifically denote a land use element (or maps) with which the zoning regulations and maps shall not be inconsistent. It refers simply to

the Comprehensive Plan of which land use is but one element. There is no ambiguity on this point; the language is clear and direct and refers to the entire Comprehensive Plan.

There is no question that both historically and for practical purposes, land use does bear a more direct relationship to zoning than the area of human services or urban design, for example zoning concretely defines both specific kinds of uses (commercial, residential, educational, religious, etc.) which may occur at a specific location and the specific form of physical container that may house a given use.

A given piece of property at a given location may be influenced by a number of factors which help to determine how the property is used. Many factors may come into play: a piece of land may be within the boundaries of an historic district; it may be adjacent to an existing commercial center or it may be in an area where industry predominates. The objectives and needs of a city and its communities change over time and the District's Comprehensive Plan is a reflection of the multiplicity of dynamic factors which influence the patterns of urban living. It is more encompassing than a master plan. No single element stands alone but all are dynamically interrelated just as the urban environment is shaped and influenced by a variety of mutually interacting forces.

2. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Maps

The series of four policy maps which are a part of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan illustrate the goals, policies and objectives of the city's use of land in the future. As stated in Section 1101(k) "Declaration of Major Policies" of the Land Use Element... "The Land Use Element does not identify or fix every use, height and density on every block in the District. The text and the maps construct a guiding framework within which private land use and zoning decisions are to be made."

This statement is followed by Land Use Goal, Section 1102, which reads:

> "It is the goal of the District to assure the efficient use of land resources within legal, economic, fiscal, environmental, and other public policy constraints to meet neighborhood, community and District-wide needs and to help foster other District goals."

These sections of the Land Use Element clearly reiterate the overlapping dynamic interpretation of the entire 11 elements of the Plan. There is, from the Congressional mandate, through the Home Rule Act, to the last element of the District's Comprehensive Plan, a consistency in this essential dynamic, comprehensive, generalized nature envisioned for the Plan both as it was developed by the Mayor and as it was adopted by the Council of the District of Columbia.

Zoning issues are discussed more specifically in Chapter VI of this report.

IV. Development Scenarios

This section describes two possible land use scenarios: (1) no fundamental changes in the existing land use, development and zoning patterns; and, (2) development and redevelopment of the avenue with expanded or new uses in specific selected areas. In the second scenario, the Comprehensive Plan serves as the guide for potential change. The two scenarios are referred to as the Existing Development Scenario and the Year 2000 Scenario. For the purposes of this study, both scenarios analyzed squares that front Connecticut Avenue (approximately 85).

The Existing Development scenario provides the baseline data for this study. The baseline consists of all existing development along with any development which has been recently completed for those squares included in the study. Data for the baseline scenario was collected from field surveys conducted by the Office of Planning staff. Each city square that fronts on Connecticut Avenue was surveyed. Field data collected included existing land uses, existing uses of structures, building heights and vacant areas. Information on existing zoning, floor area ratios (FARs) and land area statistics was obtained from the Municipal Automatic Geographic Information System (MAGIS.)

The Year 2000 scenario is obviously hypothetical. It is comprised of all development that could reasonably be expected to result over the next 13 years. For the purposes of defining this particular scenario, the staff made a number of assumptions about development within the corridor. Those major assumptions are as follows:

(1) The majority of residentially zoned areas along the avenue are basically stable with no major changes anticipated;

(2) Development will occur in accord with the Comprehensive Plan policies;

(3) In new development 100 percent of the zoning envelope will be used;

(4) Only selected commercially zoned areas along the avenue may be subject to development or redevelopment by the Year 2000; and

- all such development will take place by the Year 2000.

As a hypothetical situation, it is highly unlikely that the Year 2000 Scenario would prove true. Market conditions would have to remain very strong over the next decade and a half to achieve the full development projected. In regard to traffic projections under the Year 2000 Sceneric, they are based upon current conditions and do not take higher gasoline prices, additional ride-sharing and van-pooling, increased public transit patronage, or other traffic reducing influences. It is, by all accounts, a worst case scenario.

DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR

SCENARIO I

EXISTING CONDITIONS

SCENARIO II

FUTURE YEAR 2000 CONDITIONS

TABLE

SQUARES SURVEYED BY ANALYSIS SECTOR

CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR

SCENARIO I	SCENARIO II
A. EXISTING CONDITIONS	B. FUTURE YEAR 2000 CONDITIONS
SECTOR:	SECTOR:
#1 Chevy Chase Circle - Nebraska Ave. Squares: 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1746, 1860, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1859, 1858, 1857, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1879, 1989	#1 Chevy Chase Circle - Nebraska Ave. Squares: 1860, 1746, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1859
#2 Nebraska Ave. - Tilden Street Squares: 1986, 1985, 1983, 2032, 2033, 1982, 1981, 2035, 1978, 2037, 1977, 2038, 1973, 2039, 1972, 1971, 2046, 1965, 2047, 2048, 2051, 2055, 2243, 2235	#2 Nebraska Ave. - Tilden Street Squares: 1986, 1985, 1971, 2047, 2046, 2048, 2051
#3 Tilden Street - Klingle Rd. Squares: 2059, 2060, 2061, 2234, 2226, 2223, 2068, 2069, 2083, 2082, 2222, 2218, 2084, 2213	#3 Tilden Street - Klingle Rd. Squares: 2068, 2222, 2083, 2218, 2082, 2069
#4 Klingle Rd. - Conn. Ave. Bridge Squares: 2106, 2214, 2106, 2103, 2107, 2108, 2132, 2203, 2138, 2201, 2210, 2208, 2204, 2202	#4 Klingle Rd. - Conn. Ave. Bridge Squares: 2106, 2203, 2204, 2202
#5 Conn. Ave. Bridge - Florida Ave. Squares: 2526, 2527, 2528, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2541, 2540, 2537, 2536, 2535	#5 Conn. Ave. Bridge - Florida Ave. Squares: 2535, 2532

V. Transportation Assessment

A. Introduction

This chapter of the Connecticut Avenue Study deals specifically with the traffic implications relating to existing and Year 2000 land use and development scenarios. Calculations also include anticipated traffic growth whether or not development occurs. This is referred to as natural growth. This chapter includes a summary of the traffic findings, a discussion of the study design, an analysis section and conclusions.

Although the transportation research and analysis provides good general analysis of present and future traffic conditions on Connecticut Avenue, inherent limitations need to be noted. Due to the restricted nature of the transportation analysis undertaken, the study was not able to:

- assess the impact of Metro on traffic conditions on Connecticut Avenue and the opportunity for increased transit use.
- perform a detailed analysis of the impacts of regional growth on the corridor. Growth rates were, however, extrapolated from historical trends.
- analyze potential changes in side street traffic.
- utilize the Metropolitan Council of Governments' (COG) long-range forecasting data to predict future traffic volumes on Connecticut Avenue and the arterial streets which cross it.
- analyze any options other than worst case development and through traffic growth.

B. Summary of Findings

This summary presents the findings of a traffic engineering study of the present and anticipated future quality of vehicular traffic flow along Connecticut Avenue. To provide a more accurate assessment of Connecticut Avenue with its varying land uses and

geometry from Western Avenue to Calvert Street, the Avenue was divided into four relatively homogeneous zones as follows:

Zone 1: Western Avenue to Nebraska Avenue
Zone 2: Nebraska Avenue to Tilden Street
Zone 3: Tilden Street to Macomb Street
Zone 4: Macomb Street to Calvert Street

The analysis consisted of determining the present and future levels of service (LOS) of traffic flow. Levels of service range from A to F, as detailed in a following section. Future for this study was determined to be the Year 2000.

Existing traffic volume data were collected and future traffic volumes (based on the existing traffic volume data, natural traffic growth factors, and the Year 2000 projected zoning/land use growth factors) were projected.

In general, the findings are shown below.

- Present rush hour traffic flow along all zones of Connecticut Avenue indicates levels of service ranging from A to E, with levels of service A, B, and C predominating.

- In Zone 1, most intersections exhibit a drop of one service level during rush hours before TSM measures are implemented. After implementation, service levels are restored to existing levels.

- In Zone 2, future typical rush hour levels of service are anticipated to decrease from B and C to C and D and the only problem intersection is at the Metro station at Van Ness Street in the PM peak.

- In Zone 3, the levels of service remain good at all intersections except Porter Street which will require Transportation System Management (TSM) measures to maintain the current level of service.

- In Zone 4, there are no intersections with current or projected serious level of service problems.

- The traffic growth on Connecticut Avenue due to development is localized and is not expected to

cause serious traffic congestion either on Connecticut Avenue or in the Connecticut Avenue Corridor.

- The implementation of Transportation System Management (TSM) techniques at intersections with projected low levels of service can improve the quality of flow at most intersections by one level of service.

C. Study Design

The ability of Connecticut Avenue to handle the existing and projected traffic was evaluated by the use of the nationally accepted Highway Capacity Manual* methods, specifically by the use of levels of service calculations.

"Level of service" is defined as follows: Level of service for signalized intersections is defined in terms of delay. Delay is a measure of driver discomfort, frustrations, fuel consumption and lost travel time. The inputs into the level of service (LOS) calculation are traffic volumes, turning traffic, number of lanes on each approach, traffic signal timing apportionment and percent of trucks and buses.

Six levels of service are defined for signalized intersections. They are given letter designations, from A to F, with level of service A representing the best operating conditions and level of service F the worst. The normal condition on major arterial routes in Washington are levels C and D.

Level of Service Definitions: In general, the various levels of service are defined as follows:

- Level of service A describes operations with very low delay, i.e., less than five seconds per vehicle. Most vehicles arrive during the green signal phase and do not stop at all. This generally occurs with extremely favorable signal progression and short cycle lengths.

*Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, Transportation Research Board, 1985.

- Level of service B describes operations with delay in the range of five to 15 seconds per vehicle. More vehicles stop at traffic signals than for levels of service A but traffic movements are generally stable with a minimum of congestion.

- Level of service C describes operations with delays in the range of 15 to 25 seconds per vehicle. Individual cycle failures (all vehicles stopped for red signal not clearing intersection on next green signal) may begin to appear at this level. The number of vehicles stopping is significant although many still pass through the intersection without stopping.

- Level of service D describes operations with delay in the range of 25 to 40 seconds per vehicle. At level D the influence of congestion becomes more noticeable. Many vehicles stop and the proportion of vehicles not stopping declines. Individual cycle failures are noticeable.

- Level of service E describes operations with delay in the range of 40 to 60 seconds per vehicle. This is considered to be the limit of acceptable delay. These high delays generally indicate high volume to capacity ratios and individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.

- Level of service F describes operations with delay in excess of 60 seconds per vehicle. This is considered to be unacceptable to most drivers. This condition occurs when arrival flow rates exceed the capacity of the intersection.

The study was performed in two parts: one concentrated on the existing traffic and the other for target Year 2000. The methodology used to conduct each part is described below.

1. Existing Conditions

The current condition of traffic flow on Connecticut Avenue was determined by performing

peak and midday level of service analyses at a number of critical intersections within each study zone. These intersections are presented on Figure 1.

Current traffic volume information was gathered for each of these intersections from existing traffic counts or new counts conducted for this study. This traffic data consisted of hourly volumes for each leg of each intersection. This data also included the number of vehicles turning both left and right at each intersection.

Other data assembled to calculate levels of service was traffic signal phasing, roadway geometry, truck volumes and parking regulations for the approaches to each intersection.

All the data was inserted into a computer software package that generated a.m., p.m. and midday levels of service for the critical intersections. The results of these calculations are presented in Table 1.

2. Year 2000

The future traffic volumes for Connecticut Avenue and selected intersecting streets were developed considering both the natural growth in through traffic in the corridor and the increase in induced traffic generated by the development detailed in the Year 2000 plan. These two components were then combined to provide a percentage increase in traffic for each of the four study zones.

The following assumptions, based on time constraints, the availability of data and professional judgement were made for this analysis.

the growth in peak and midday through traffic is the same for all zones.

the growth in locally induced traffic is different for each of the four study zones.

through traffic accounts for 70 percent of the existing flows on Connecticut Avenue and

locally generated trips account for the remaining 30 percent during peak hours. During the nonpeak hours, the through traffic accounts for 50 percent of the volume on Connecticut Avenue and locally induced traffic generates the remaining 50 percent. These assumptions were based on data from the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments. These splits in traffic are assumed to be constant for the entire area.

(a) Through Traffic Growth: An examination of traffic trends along Connecticut Avenue over the past 10 years shows little to no growth in peak period flows and small increases in nonpeak flows, although a 2 percent growth has occurred since 1982 along the avenue in the nonpeak hours. The determination of trends for Connecticut Avenue is complicated by the effects of gasoline shortages in the 70s and early 80s and the opening of Metrorail service to and beyond the D.C. line. For the purpose of this study, however, a one percent annual growth rate in through traffic, which is in excess of current trends, was assumed. For the midday periods and weekends, a 2 percent annual growth rate was assumed. This rate has only occurred for the past few years and is not a long-term trend. However, it will be representative of a worst case analysis.

(b) Local Traffic Growth: The technique for projecting local traffic increases on Connecticut Avenue was based upon the changes in land use in the four study zones. Numbers on existing and projected land use were obtained from the Office of Planning for each block along Connecticut Avenue. The data was then aggregated into the four study zones. Standard trip generation factors based upon the type and magnitude of each land use were utilized to generate total trips from uses within each zone for the existing situation and the Year 2000 scenario stipulated by the

Office of Planning. The ratio of the Year 2000 trips to existing trips was factored to project local growth. For example, if the total trips generated from a zone in 1986 was 1,000 and the total trips generated in the Year 2000 was 1,500, the increase in local traffic would be 50 percent.

The increase in local traffic for the four zones generated by this technique are:

- Zone 1: 44 percent increase
- Zone 2: 32 percent increase
- Zone 3: 39 percent increase
- Zone 4: 14 percent increase

(c) Total Traffic Increase: The through and locally generated traffic was then combined to provide an overall peak and nonpeak traffic growth factor for each study zone. The growth factors were generated as in the following example:

- Existing Peak Hour Traffic Volume: 1,000 vehicles per hour
- Through Component: 700 vehicles per hour (see assumption #3)
- Local Component: 300 vehicles per hour
- Study Zone: #4

Formula for Obtaining Total Future Peak Hour Traffic:

700 (1.01)	[Through Traffic x 1% percent per year growth (1986-2000)]
+ 300 (1.14)	[Local Traffic x Zone Increase]
Total	

The total growth in each zone by time period is listed below, as is the natural and induced component of the growth.

Zone	Total Percentage Increase		Natural Growth		Induced Growth	
	Peak	Nonpeak	Peak	Nonpeak	Peak	Nonpeak
1	24	36	15	32	44	44
2	20	32	15	32	32	32
3	22	34	15	32	39	39
4	14	27	15	32	14	14

These factors were applied to the existing traffic volumes along Connecticut Avenue. The resulting volumes were used to calculate the Year 2000 level of service at the selected study intersections on Connecticut Avenue for the peak and nonpeak periods.

The future levels of service for these intersections were also calculated considering the implementation of various TSM activities, including left turn restrictions, reversible lanes on Connecticut Avenue, minor roadway widening and the removal of permissive curb parking.

3. Treatment of Side Street Impacts

The staff reviewed the issue of potential side street impacts for the Year 2000 scenario. Although several methods of analysis were considered, it was concluded that no simple method of forecasting these changes exists. Time was not sufficient to review historical data to determine trends of the many streets crossing, and parallel to, the corridor. With more time, this could be done and general trends projected showing streets impacted due only to increasing traffic levels. However, the staff also lacks site-specific information (such as building uses and access points) which is necessary to predict individual street impacts from possible land use changes. The information available from the new large tract review process will provide the type of data necessary to this analysis in the future.

Despite these limitations, several assumptions can reasonably be made.

(1) As development related traffic growth is minimal and Connecticut Avenue is expected to operate at an acceptable level, side street impacts are not anticipated to be a major problem.

(2) Generally increasing traffic congestion along the corridor, described in the Analysis section of this chapter, may result in some drivers attempting to take alternate routes through the surrounding neighborhoods.

(3) Traffic attracted to new development on the Avenue may also use local streets (the location of the development will largely determine which streets) to get to the corridor from points east and west.

(4) Without physical changes to the road network in the area, the streets most likely to see the greatest impact from generally increasing traffic levels are those currently used as collectors and arterials.

Mitigation of many of the impacts that may occur is possible with advance planning and standard TSM measures.

D. Analysis

Table 2 shows the present and projected future weekday levels of service along Connecticut Avenue. There are two columns of future levels of service. The first column contains the levels anticipated with no traffic capacity improvements implemented throughout the corridor. The second column contains levels of service anticipated with the implementation of transportation system management (TSM) improvements at intersections with future levels of service of E or F. These improvements include the extension of the reversible lane operation on Connecticut Avenue in the peak periods, restricted parking at selected areas along Connecticut Avenue, turning restrictions and/or the addition of turning lanes at selected intersections and traffic signalization improvements.

The traffic projections for these levels of service were generated by zones and the analysis of impacts will, therefore, be summarized by the same zones.

Zone 1 - Western Avenue to Nebraska Avenue

The additional traffic expected due to natural growth and development related growth will not cause a serious degradation of traffic service during the peak periods.

Only two intersections, Military Road and Nebraska Avenue, exhibit levels of service E and/or F under the future case. The implementation of TSM techniques will improve the level of service at both intersections. All other intersections are projected to perform at good levels.

Midday levels of service decline only slightly and remain good at all intersections except Military Road which declines to level of service D.

Zone 2 - Nebraska Avenue to Tilden Street

The moderate development expected in this zone and the natural growth expected in through traffic do not have a serious impact upon service levels. The intersections projected to have service levels of E or F, Tilden and Van Ness Streets, are experiencing congestion at the present time and will require TSM techniques to maintain acceptable levels of service.

Midday traffic conditions are good at the present time and are not expected to decline significantly by the Year 2000.

Zone 3 - Tilden Street to Macomb Street

Minor peak period congestion occurs at present at Porter Street and will worsen in the future to service level E. TSM measures are necessary to bring the future levels back to existing conditions.

Midday levels of service remain good at all intersections in this zone.

Zone 4 - Macomb Street to Calvert Street

There is very little development induced growth in this zone and future traffic levels reflect this minimal growth. The normal projected growth in through traffic produces a decline of a maximum of only one level of service at most intersections throughout the day.

The overall minor decrease in levels of service in all four zones indicates that projected increased traffic levels within the Connecticut Avenue corridor will not be of a magnitude to cause serious levels of congestion. Development growth is minimal and transportation impacts will not be a cause for changes in development plans in the Connecticut Avenue corridor.

TABLE 1

EXISTING LEVELS OF SERVICE
CONNECTICUT AVENUE AT:

	AM PEAK	MID-DAY	PM PEAK
OLIVER STREET	A	A	B
MCKINLEY STREET	D	B	E
LIVINGSTON STREET	B	A	A
MILITARY ROAD	E	A	E
JENIFER STREET	A	A	A
HUNTINGTON STREET	A	A	A
NEBRASKA AVENUE	E	A	E
FESSENDEN STREET	B	A	A
DAVENPORT STREET	B	A	A
BRANDYWINE STREET	C	A	A
ALBEMARLE STREET	C	A	B
YUMA STREET	C	A	B
WINDOM STREET	C	B	C
VEAZEY STREET	C	B	C
VAN NESS STREET	C	B	E
TILDEN STREET	D	B	C
SEDGEWICK STREET	A	A	A
PORTER STREET	C	A	C
ORDWAY STREET	A	A	A
MACOMB STREET	A	A	B
DEVONSHIRE PLACE	A	A	A
ZOO ENTRANCE	A	A	B
CATHEDRAL AVENUE	B	A	C
WOODLEY ROAD	C	A	A
24TH STREET	A	A	A
CALVERT STREET	C	B	B

TABLE 2

EXISTING AND PROJECTED LEVELS OF SERVICE AT INTERSECTIONS ALONG CONNECTICUT AVENUE - YEAR 2000

LOCATION	AM PEAK EXISTING	AM PEAK FUTURE NOTSM	AM PEAK FUTURE TSM	MID-DAY EXISTING	MID-DAY FUTURE NOTSM	MID-DAY FUTURE TSM	PM PEAK EXISTING	PM PEAK FUTURE NOTSM	PM PEAK FUTURE TSM	TSM MEASURES
Zone #1										
Oliver	A	B	A	A	A	*	B	D	B	Reversible
McKinley	D	E	D	B	D	*	E	E	D	Lane
Livingston	B	C	B	A	B	*	A	C	B	No Left Turn
Military	E	E	E	A	D	*	E	E	E	
Jenifer	A	A	*	A	A	*	A	A	*	
Huntington	A	A	*	A	A	*	A	A	*	Parking
Nebraska	E	F	E	A	C	B	E	E	E	Restrictions
Zone #2										
Fessenden	B	C	*	A	A	*	A	B	*	
Davenport	B	C	*	A	A	*	A	B	*	
Brandywine	C	D	*	A	A	*	A	B	*	
Albemarle	C	D	*	A	B	*	B	C	*	
Yuma	C	D	*	A	B	*	B	C	*	
Windom	C	D	*	B	B	*	C	D	*	Improve Bus
Veazey	C	D	*	B	B	*	C	C	*	Operation
Van Ness	C	C	*	B	C	*	E	F	E	Bus Bays
Tilden	D	E	C	B	D	B	C	D	C	NP on Tilden
Zone #3										
Sedgewick	A	B	*	A	A	*	A	B	*	
Porter	C	E	E	A	A	*	C	E	D	Turn
Ordway	A	A	*	A	A	*	A	B	*	Restrictions
Macomb	A	B	*	A	A	*	B	C	*	
Zone #4										
Devonshire	A	B	*	A	A	*	A	B	*	
Zoo	A	B	*	A	A	*	B	C	*	
Cathedral	B	C	B	A	B	*	C	D	D	Remove W/B
Woodley	C	C	*	A	A	*	A	A	*	Parking

24th	A	B	*	A	A	*	A	A	*
Calvert	C	D	D	B	C	*	B	C	*

* - No TSM Measures Proposed

E. Conclusions

Based on the analyses conducted as part of this study, several conclusions may be drawn.

- Existing levels of service, with few exceptions, are good for all time periods throughout the length of Connecticut Avenue.

- The impact of the development proposed in this study upon future traffic levels is minimal and does not warrant any change in current development plans.

- Any side street impacts will be localized and should not be attributable to unacceptable levels of service on Connecticut Avenue.

- Future peak period levels of service at a few intersections will deteriorate to a point that TSM measures will be necessary to maintain existing service levels. These measures may include:

  - Parking restrictions near intersections
  - Turning restrictions
  - Bus bays
  - Extention of the current reversible lane operation

VI. Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Analysis

A. Overview

Connecticut Avenue, from the District of Columbia boundary at Western Avenue in Ward 3 to Florida Avenue in Ward 1, functions as a major transportation and land use corridor. The zoning and land use pattern of properties fronting on the avenue are either medium-high density residential or commercial at low or medium height. This intensity and height, together with the broad street width and high traffic volume carried, constitute the "corridor." Connecticut Avenue is one of the original diagonal avenues in the L'Enfant Plan for the National Capital, and has long been a vital north-south transportation artery.

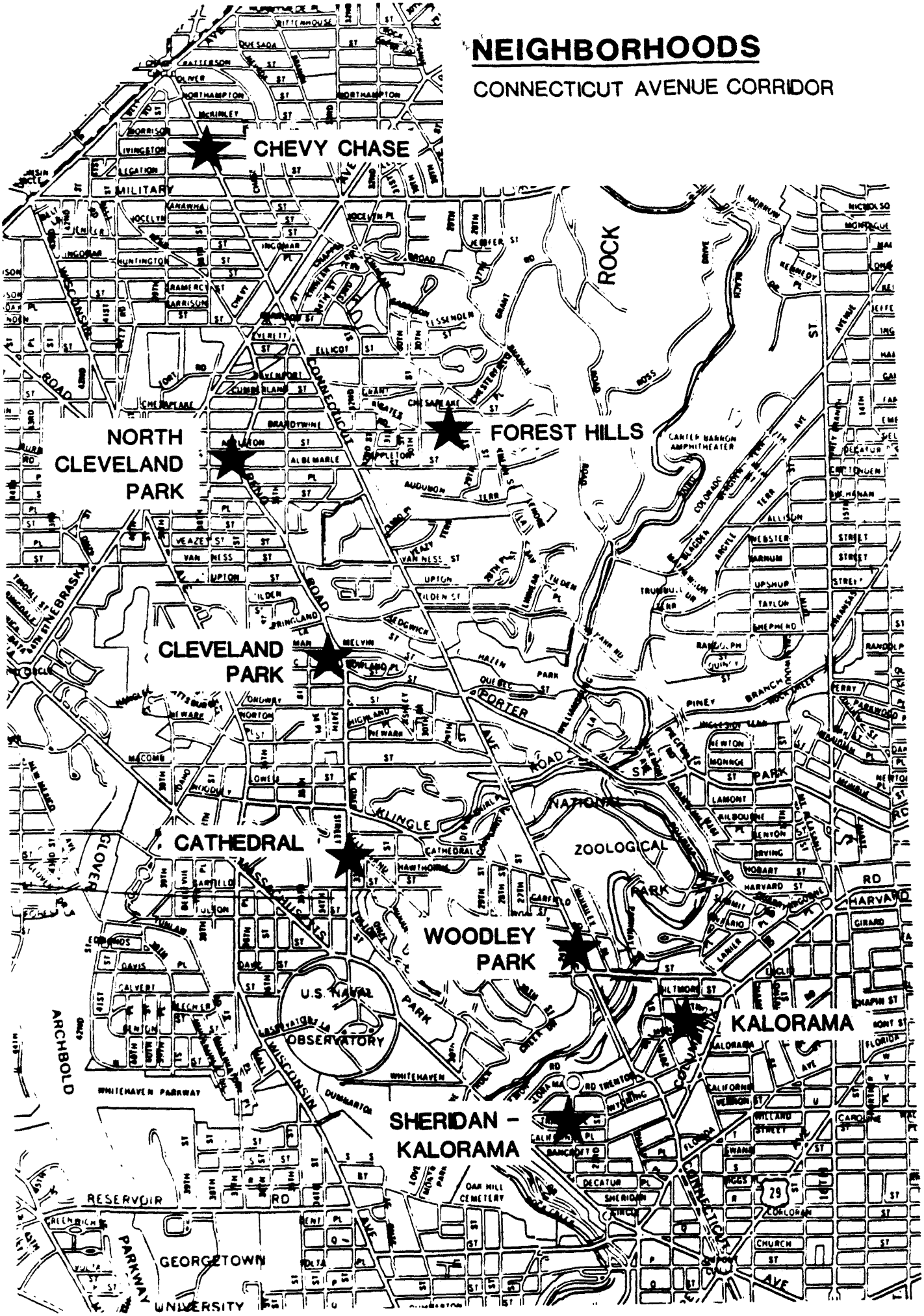
This corridor passes through a number of residential neighborhoods, specifically (proceeding from north to south), Chevy Chase, Forest Hills, North Cleveland Park, Cleveland Park, Woodley Park, Kalorama and Sheridan-Kalorama (See Neighborhoods Map). These are predominantly low and moderate density neighborhoods zoned R-1-A, R-1-B, R-3, R-4 and R-5-B. (See Existing Zoning Map.) The Diplomatic Overlay District is also mapped in some Squares in the Sheridan-Kalorama neighborhood at the southern end of the corridor. The zone districts fronting on the avenue and forming the higher intensity corridor are R-5-C, R-5-B, C-3-A, C-2-B, C-2-A, and C-1.

The neighborhood residential zones are briefly described below. The areas so mapped are removed from the immediate frontage of the avenue and are quite fully developed with uses and at densities generally consistent with existing zoning. The neighborhoods are considered stable and subject to little change. Remaining smaller or larger infill development parcels are subject to existing zoning and planning policies found in the Comprehensive Plan and in the forthcoming Ward Plans, plus historic preservation controls where applicable. The focus of the Connecticut Avenue Corridor Study is on the corridor itself. However, the following zoning controls in the neighborhood areas are noted:

> The R-1-A District permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached dwellings with a minimum lot area of

NEIGHBORHOODS

CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR



7,500 square feet, a minimum lot width of 75 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of forty percent, and a maximum height of three stories/forty feet.

The R-1-B District permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached dwellings with a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet, a minimum lot width of 50 feet, a maximum lot occupancy of forty percent, and a maximum height of three stories/forty feet.

The R-3 District permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses including detached, semi-detached, and row dwellings with a minimum lot area of 2,000 square feet, a minimum lot width of twenty feet, a maximum lot occupancy of sixty percent, and a maximum height of three stories/forty feet.

The R-4 District permits matter-of-right development of residential uses (including detached, semi-detached and row single-family dwellings and flats) with a minimum lot area of 1,800 square feet, a minimum lot width of eighteen feet, a maximum lot occupancy of sixty percent, and maximum height limit of three stories/forty feet. Conversions of existing buildings to apartment are permitted for lots with a minimum lot area of 900 square feet per dwelling unit.

The zone districts mapped on the corridor itself will be described in the context of a segment-by-segment review of land use, zoning and Comprehensive Plan issues. First, the overall land use and zoning pattern may be described as predominantly a series of medium-high residential strips interspersed with several distinct commercial strips and nodes. More specifically, there are five R-5-C strips interspersed with the following commercial areas: two C-1 strips in the Chevy Chase area, some C-3-A frontage in the Van Ness-UDC Metro Station area, a C-2-A node in the Cleveland Park commercial area, a small pocket of C-2-A opposite the entrance to the National Zoo, and a combination of C-2-A and C-2-B zoning immediately surrounding the Woodley Park/Zoo Metro Station. Near the intersection of Van Ness Street and Connecticut Avenue there is also a significant acreage of federal land, which is unzoned but devoted to chanceries and offices of international agencies.

The single most extensive zone district is R-5-C, reflecting the historic development of the avenue as predominantly a high-rise apartment house corridor. Connecticut Avenue is the preeminent R-5-C corridor in the city. Functionally and historically this land use pattern has provided residents with relatively quick and efficient bus service to Downtown employment centers. The density of residents in the apartments, plus additional ridership from adjacent low-density neighborhoods, made a high volume of bus service feasible. The conveniently-spaced commercial strips and pockets were (and are) also within walking distance of many of the apartment house residents, providing a convenience to them and consumer support for the businesses. With the advent of the Metrorail system Connecticut Avenue was the logical choice for the bulk of the stations on the Red Line enroute to Montgomery County, precisely because of the population density in the apartment houses. Three of the commercial areas -- Woodley Park, Cleveland Park, and Van Ness -- became logical locations for Metrorail stations. Consequently, the avenue continues to function as an efficient, coherent land use/transportation corridor, with a high degree of public transit ridership.

Brief comparisons with Georgia Avenue and Wisconsin Avenue reveal other positive attributes of the land use and zoning pattern of Connecticut Avenue. Georgia Avenue is an extremely long, predominantly C-2-A strip. There is arguably an excess of commercially zoned land, with many subareas underdeveloped and economically depressed (together with some sections of economic strength). Commercial development is thinly and unevenly spread in linear fashion, and there are no apartment sectors comparable to Connecticut Avenue to provide a concentration of consumer support for business. Also, retail services tend to be spread out inconveniently rather than concentrated in nodes. Finally, bus service (and the flow of automobile traffic generally) have historically been relatively slow on Georgia Avenue in part because of the multiplicity of curb cuts throughout plus a traffic signalization pattern geared to serving neighborhood shops rather than through traffic. In short, Connecticut Avenue has been spared the traffic, environmental and business development problems associated with commercial strip zoning.

Wisconsin Avenue presents a different situation. There are sections of strip zoning, primarily C-2-A, C-3-A

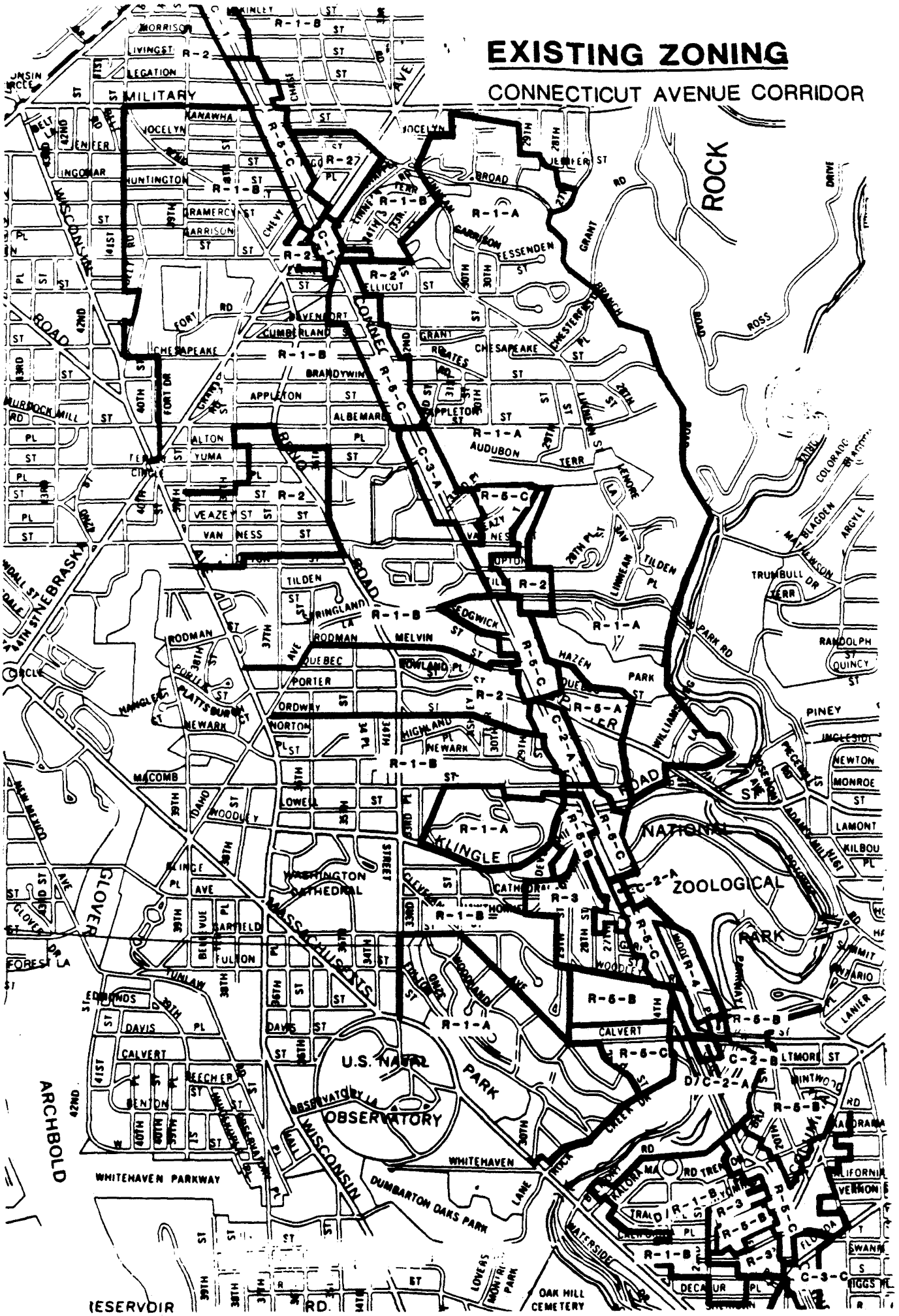
and R-5-C. However, the corridor effect is interrupted in a number of locations where the abutting lower density residential zones extend to the frontage of the avenue, so that the uniform street wall is interrupted by lower building heights and varying setbacks. There are also locations where the zoning boundary is the avenue, so that facing frontages have distinctly different permitted building heights and densities. Thus, the design pattern on Wisconsin Avenue is generally more random and less coherent in most locations than is Connecticut Avenue, where the corridor zoning and development pattern create a firm street wall of high rise apartment houses and low- and mid-rise commercial buildings. On Wisconsin Avenue the unusual depth of C-3-A zoning near the Van Ness Street intersection -- and well-removed from Metrorail service -- was a principal reason for the rezoning of that area in Zoning Commission Case No. 86-17. The two major development nodes on Connecticut Avenue where high-intensity zoning and development extend some distance from the avenue in a nodal pattern are both directly at Metrorail stations -- Woodley Park/Zoo and Van Ness/UDC. However, at the Friendship Heights Metro Station on Wisconsin Avenue, it should be noted that high-intensity zoning and land development in a nodal pattern exists.

In general terms, Connecticut Avenue is strong in meeting various Comprehensive Plan policies regarding urban design, provision of housing, economic development in the form of viable businesses plus office development concentrated at Van Ness and a major convention hotel at Woodley Park, and environmental and transportation benefits derived from the efficient transportation/land use pattern previously described.

For the most part, the commercial and residential sections of the avenue are fully built up, and only occasional infill development is anticipated. The zoning is generally reflective of the existing development pattern, and there are few vacant sites. Because of the strip zoning pattern the depth of properties is relatively shallow and limits overall potential for change. The two major nodes of existing development have contrasting situations which will be discussed more fully in the segment-by-segment review of the zoning and land use. However, it may be stated in overview that the Van Ness/UDC area has substantial remaining development potential, especially on federal

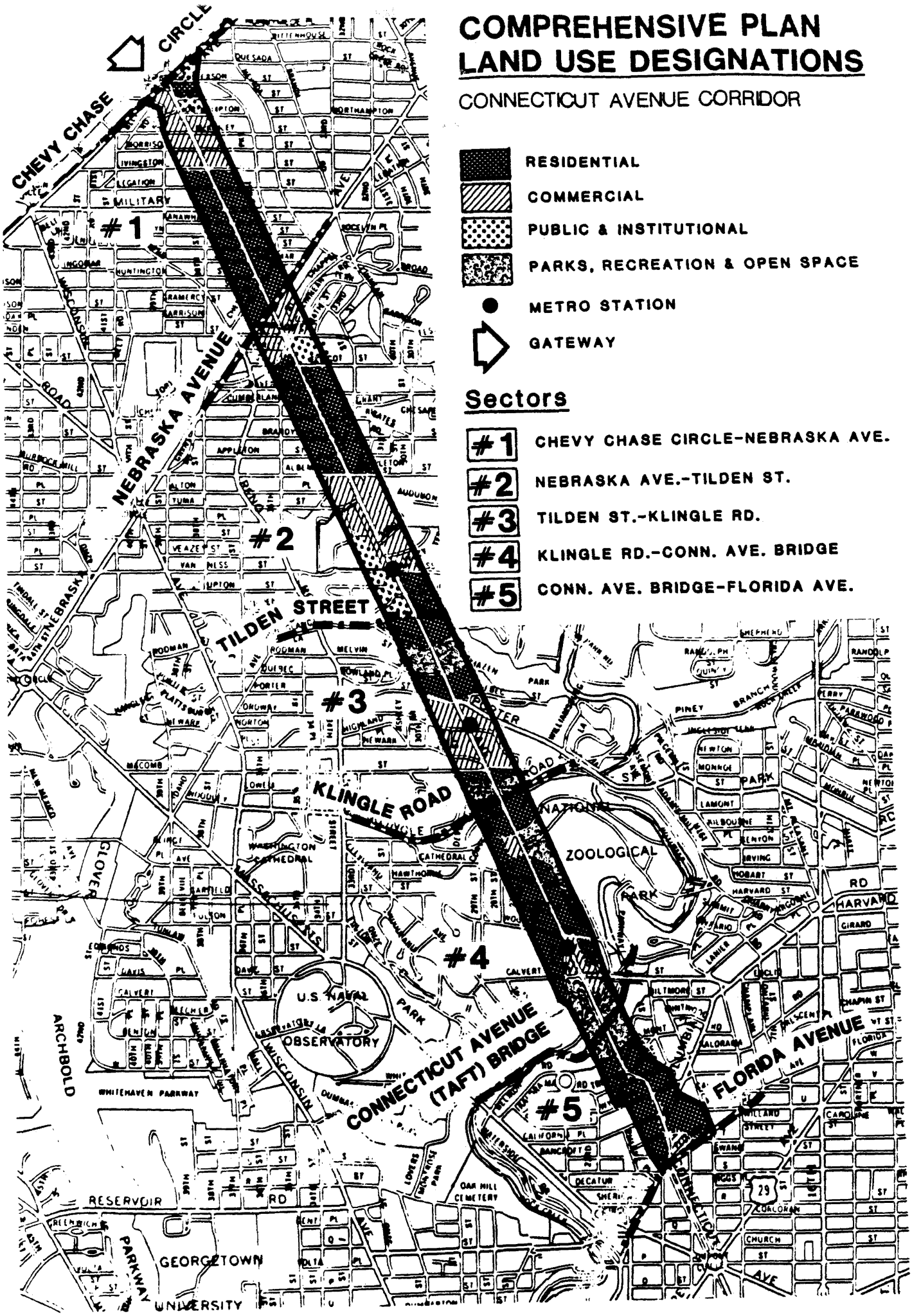
EXISTING ZONING

CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

CONNECTICUT AVENUE CORRIDOR



- RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- PUBLIC & INSTITUTIONAL
- PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE
- METRO STATION
- GATEWAY

Sectors

- #1 CHEVY CHASE CIRCLE-NEBRASKA AVE.
- #2 NEBRASKA AVE.-TILDEN ST.
- #3 TILDEN ST.-KLINGLE RD.
- #4 KLINGLE RD.-CONN. AVE. BRIDGE
- #5 CONN. AVE. BRIDGE-FLORIDA AVE.

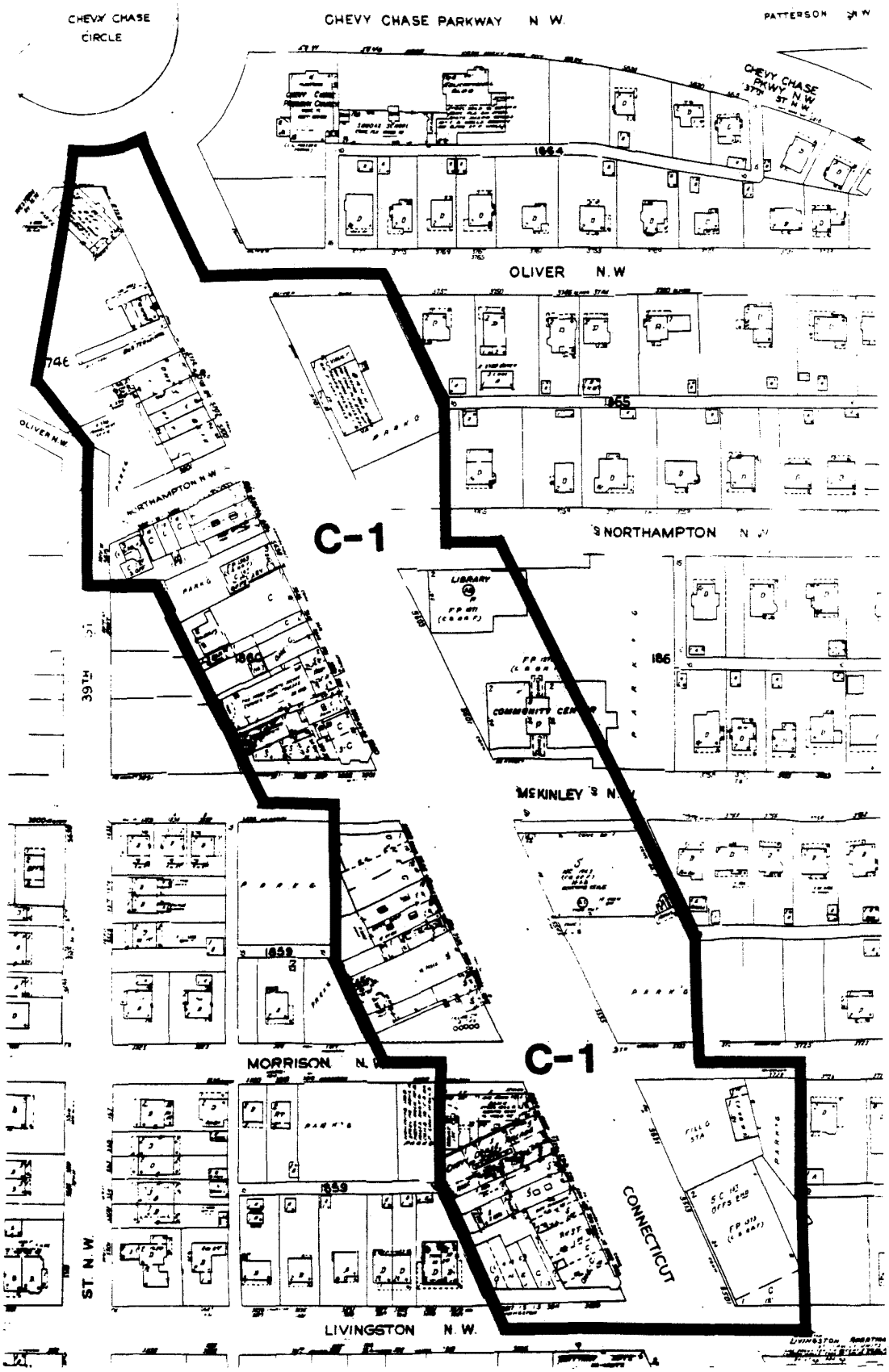
land reserved for chanceries, whereas the Woodley Park/Zoo Metro station area has limited development potential.

In recent years, there have been only two distinct development trends. The first is medium-density office development at the Van Ness/UDC Metro station area. This includes several private mid-rise office buildings, two of which were reviewed and approved as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs), plus the INTELSAT and other chancery/international office developments on federal land to the south and west of the UDC campus. The second development trend has been construction or planned construction of several mid- and high-rise apartment buildings, including the Hastings (complete, at Albemarle), the Woodley Plaza (under construction), an approved PUD (Horning Brothers) at Brandywine, and a proposed apartment building at Kanawha, being reviewed for a proposed alley restructuring.

B. Sector-by-Sector Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Review

In this section of the report, the existing development pattern, existing zoning, and Comprehensive Plan objectives are reviewed sector-by-sector, proceeding from north to south in the Corridor. The purpose, as discussed at length in Chapter II, is to determine whether the existing zoning is "not inconsistent" with the Comprehensive Plan. All elements, goals and policies of the Plan are relevant. This review will be organized within the context of the Land Use Element which is particularly important in land use and zoning actions pursuant to the Plan. Other policies and elements will be drawn upon as needed, primarily if a change from the existing zoning is proposed. Since the Connecticut Avenue corridor is zoned and developed as a series of alternating residential and commercial areas, two of the land use policy maps take on considerable importance: the Generalized Commercial and Production and Technical Employment (PTE) Land Use Policies Maps and the Generalized Residential Land Use Policies Map.

The discussion is organized by discrete zone districts. Zoning issues reviewed will include previously adopted or potential text amendments as well as zoning map questions. In each section the existing zoning is described, then the existing development pattern, followed by Comprehensive Plan factors and finally zoning map and text issues and proposals.



CHEVY CHASE COMMERCIAL AREA

1. Chevy Chase Commercial Area (C-1). Extending from Chevy Chase Circle five blocks south to Livingston Street, the Chevy Chase commercial area is strip-zoned C-1 to a typical depth of 140 to 160 feet on both frontages of Connecticut Avenue. The C-1 District is the most restrictive commercial zone in the city, permitting a maximum building height of 40 feet within three stories, a maximum floor area ratio of 1.0 and a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent. There is little incentive for property owners or developers to pursue a planned unit development in that the height and FAR guidelines remain 40 feet and 1.0 FAR. Permitted uses include those allowed in Residential and Special Purpose Districts, a full range of neighborhood convenience, service and retail businesses, a number of comparison and specialty retail/service uses, office space, hotels, chanceries, and a limited range of other uses as specified in Section 701 of the Zoning Regulations (DCMR Title 11).

The Preamble to the zone, Section 700, states that this zone is "designed to provide convenient retail and personal service establishments for the day-to-day needs of a small tributary area, with a minimum impact upon surrounding residential development". (700.1) Only low-bulk development is to be permitted, and the C-1 District is to be mapped "only in outlying areas". (700.2) Sub-section 700.3 further states, "Some community facilities, housing, and mixed uses, as well as the usual neighborhood shopping and service establishments shall be permitted".

The existing development pattern in this C-1 District has been described in Chapter I of this report. Important characteristics may be summarized as follows. Most buildings are low in scale, primarily one and two stories. A broad range of convenience establishments, plus some specialty shopping outlets, are present. Two supermarkets provide the retail "anchors". A limited number of eating, drinking and entertainment establishments including the Avalon I and II movie theatres are present. There is a limited amount of upper story office use. Community facilities such as the Metrobus terminal, Chevy Chase Community Center and Library

present. The amount of parking available is plentiful in relationship to consumer demand than is generally true in the commercial areas in the southern reaches of the corridor. The parking available includes several sizeable surface parking areas in addition to on-street metered spaces.

The Generalized Commercial and PTE Land Use Policies Map of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes three important designations which need to be addressed:

> the proposed use and density (color on the map), in the commercial use series ranging from "Low" through "High" with "Moderate" and "Medium" in the middle of the series;
>
> the commercial classification (Local Neighborhood Center, Multi-Neighborhood Center, and Regional Center); and
>
> any special planning designation or absence thereof, most importantly Development Opportunity Area or Special Treatment Area.

The Chevy Chase commercial area is indicated as a Low Density Commercial, Local Neighborhood Commercial Center, and has no designation as either a Development Opportunity Area or as a Special Treatment Area. Section 1107(a)(1) of the Land Use Element of the Plan states: "The low density commercial land use category includes shopping and service areas that are generally low in scale, character, and activity and that provide a limited or specialized range of retail goods and services as the predominant uses".

Local Neighborhood Commercial Center is defined in Sec. 1108(b)(1) as follows:

> "Local neighborhood centers supply sales of daily groceries, sundries, convenience goods and personal services to neighborhood residents and workers. There is limited parking. Motorists are likely to go to larger concentrations of stores where parking and a greater selection of goods and services

are more readily available. A small food and sundries store selling convenience items is usually a principal element of a local neighborhood center. Service stores such as gas stations, carryouts, barber shops, cleaners, diners, and bars also locate in local neighborhood centers. There is limited office space. Local neighborhood centers may be further subclassified to identify new centers to be established and existing centers to be upgraded".

The existing C-1 zoning and the existing development pattern appear to be "not inconsistent" with these designations. The scale of existing buildings is low. The range of commercial services is generally as described, and office space is limited. This Neighborhood Center is also shown as "existing" rather than "new or upgraded" in the Policies Map. A continuation of C-1 zoning would tend to continue the low scale of buildings on any infill site, limit the range of new uses to those permitted in C-1, and in general reinforce the existing function and character of the area.

Two other zoning specifics are worth noting. First, the Avalon I and II movie theatres constitute a use first permitted in the C-2-A District. Consequently, this nonconforming theatre may continue in use indefinitely but without expansion subject to the special nonconformity provisions of Chapter 20 of the Zoning Regulations. Second, a substantial portion of the surface parking areas serving this commercial strip is located in the adjacent R-1-B and R-2 Districts. Accordingly, these parking lots and accessory spaces are subject to review and approval by the Board of Zoning Adjustment pursuant to Sections 212 and 213 of the Zoning Regulations. This process permits the Board to assess and control factors such as buffering and screening, safety and ease of access, lighting, adequacy of supply versus demand for spaces, lay-out and actual use of the parking spaces. The periodic renewal of BZA Orders governing these properties typically brings active and intense neighborhood participation, and offers the public

the opportunity to secure maximum utility and land use compatibility from these necessary but often unsightly surface parking areas.

It should also be noted that the Text Amendments adopted in Zoning Commission Case No. 82-5 (Parking and Loading), effective April 1, 1985, established new requirements intended to increase the buffering and attractiveness of open parking adjacent to residential zones. Subsections 2117.11 through 2117.13 require the following for groups of 10 or more open parking spaces: landscaping covering at least five percent of the total area and maintained in a healthy condition; screening of such parking spaces from any contiguous property zoned Residential or SP by means of a solid brick wall 42 inches in height or by thickly planted evergreens to at least that height when planted; and directing any lighting to the paved area only. All of these provisions are expected to gradually improve the aesthetics of open parking areas and to provide better screening for abutting residential areas.

2. Livingston Street to Nebraska Avenue (R-5-C). This nine-block-long section of the Connecticut Avenue Corridor is zoned R-5-C on both frontages. The R-5-C District permits matter-of-right, medium-high density development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats, and apartment buildings, to a maximum height of 90 feet, a maximum floor area ratio of 3.5 and a maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent. North of Military Road the depth of R-5-C zoning is quite substantial but variable, ranging from approximately 100 to 350 feet. South of Military the typical depth of the strip zoning is from approximately 80 to 140 feet.

Existing development includes a variety of housing types, from semi-detached houses to clustered townhouses, and walk-up, mid-rise, and high-rise apartments. The area with the greatest depth of R-5-C zoning includes two major apartment complexes opposite each other immediately south of Legation Street.

South of Military Road on the east side of the avenue a major apartment house is proposed to be built in Square 1873, at Kanawha Street. At

present, issues related to closing and repaving abutting alleys have been raised by citizens testifying at the Council of the District of Columbia's hearings on the alley actions, and negotiations continue between the citizens and the developer. The size of this site was substantially increased by a rezoning in 1965 from R-1-B to R-5-C (Zoning Commission Case No. 65-13). Other development on the east frontage of Connecticut Avenue ranges from low-rise to high-rise structures. On the west side, from Harrison Street to Military Road, the development pattern is predominantly cluster, single-family townhouses to relatively recent construction, within the past 10 to 15 years. The Wesley Methodist Church, at Jenifer Street, and a vacant lot of approximately 11,000 square feet at the corner of Military Road, are also in this sector.

The Generalized Land Use Map indicates this sector of the avenue for "High Density Residential" use and development on the east frontage and on both frontages north of Military Road and south of Chevy Chase Parkway. High Density Residential is defined as follows: "High-rise apartment buildings are the predominant uses; may also include low, moderate, and medium density housing". In this location the moderate and medium density existing housing is more prevalent than the high-rise, 90-foot apartment houses. However, the High Density designation suggests continuation of at least the R-5-C apartment house zoning, and the permitted building height of 90 feet will allow the tallest buildings in the sector to continue as conforming structures.

On the west frontage of the avenue, from Harrison Street to Military Road, the designation in the Generalized Land Use Map is for "Moderate Density Residential", defined as "Row houses and garden apartments are the predominant uses; may also include low density housing". In the subject location the Council specifically amended the land use map from High Density Residential to Moderate Density, in order to reflect the scale and type of existing development, lessen pressures for redevelopment of the recently constructed townhouses, and ensure that any infill development or redevelopment is generally in scale with the existing predominant development pattern.

CHEVY CHASE COMMERCIAL AREA (NEBRASKA AVENUE)

This issue has previously been brought before the Zoning Commission by petition from the Chevy Chase Defense League, the Chevy Chase Citizens Association and Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3G, who requested a public hearing to consider and remap the area R-3 or some other low- to medium-density residential designation. The petitions mode reference to a covenant in effect in this general neighborhood area restricting development to single family housing only as another basis for the rezoning request.

In a report to the Zoning Commission on this matter dated October 27, 1986, prior to the Connecticut Avenue Corridor Study, the Office of Planning recommended a public hearing on the petition because of the Moderate Density Land Use designation in the Comprehensive Plan, but also noted: "In reference to the covenant, our view is that it is a restriction placed upon development of land as agreed upon by private parties and is independent and distinct from other applicable city regulations such as zoning. Private covenants are a vehicle mainly to protect private interests as perceived by the parties. The city regulations are, on the other hand, designed to promote policies and objectives to be applied uniformly on a city-wide basis and not selectively. We think that the covenant referred to ... does not relate to zoning". (p.1)

Despite the opinion of the Office of Planning that the restrictive covenant is a private matter separate from zoning, the Office continues to recommend that a public hearing be scheduled to consider rezoning of this sector as to the issues of compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan and the appropriate scale of new development. The case should include a review of the existing height and density of existing development, the potential for infill and redevelopment in the context of a comparison between existing zoning and development and the land use policies of the Plan. One important factor to be examined as well is whether a rezoning might create nonconforming structures. The preferred zone district for this sector will be "not inconsistent" with the Comprehensive Plan and will provide effective controls over both existing development and potential new buildings.

3. Nebraska Avenue C-1 Pocket. This small commercial area extends from Nebraska Avenue south two blocks to Everett Street on the west frontage and a single block to Fessenden on the east. The C-1 zone district has previously been described. Existing buildings in this commercial cluster are low in scale, one to three stories in height. Existing shops and services include a drugstore, three gasoline service stations, a number of restaurants, and other retail services. The most significant development in recent years was the construction of an attractive group of townhouse offices at the southeast corner of Nebraska and Connecticut Avenues. The other new construction in the past several years was the major expansion of gasoline station use at the southwest corner of the Nebraska-Connecticut Avenue intersection. The expansion and redevelopment of this property into a major "gas-and-go" facility involved the demolition of four small-scale commercial buildings adjacent to the previous service station at the corner. Board of Zoning Adjustment approval was and is required for service station use in all of the neighborhood commercial zones. At the first two public hearings on the proposed redevelopment the Office of Planning and affected community groups were strongly in opposition because the loss of the four low-scale buildings would seriously erode what had been a one-block "neighborhood crossroads" retail ambiance on both sides of the street, in keeping with the clear intent of the C-1 District. Also, two other gasoline service stations were located only a block away. Ultimately, the buildings were demolished and a further application to the BZA was approved, and the new facility was constructed.

This episode empashizes that zoning does not specifically control demolition permits. They are subject to laws enacted by the Council and regulations adopted by the Executive Branch pursuant thereto. Relatively restrictive zoning, i.e., zoning only marginally more permissive of use and development than the existing building and use pattern in an area, can reduce the economic incentive of property owners to demolish and rebuild. But at the present time, the only review and control over demolitions as a land use policy

is the historic preservation laws and regulations regarding historic districts and individually designated historic landmarks.

The Generalized Commercial and PTE Land Use Policies Map indicates this C-1 area for low-density commercial use and an existing Local Neighborhood Commercial Center. The policy context is similar to that of the Chevy Chase commercial strip, previously discussed. The clear implication is a continuation of existing C-1 zoning.

4. Fessenden to Albemarle Streets (R-5-C). This seven-block stretch of Connecticut Avenue is solidly lined with large apartment buildings, predominantly developed to a height of 90 feet, but with four generally mid-rise buildings as well. This sector provides a large number of apartment units, and includes such major apartment complexes as the Brandywine Apartments and Albemarle House, on more than three and more than two acre sites, respectively. The majority of both of these properties is outside the R-5-C District and in the R-1-A District. Thus, both of these large apartment complexes are nonconforming uses and nonconforming structures. In the event of major fire or other damage to the structures, redevelopment back to preexisting height, floor area and apartment use be prevented or constrained by the restrictions on nonconforming uses and structures as found in Subsections 2001.4 and 2004.1. Given the city's need to conserve its housing stock, especially rental apartments, the Office of Planning would recommend that the Zoning Commission consider rezoning these properties R-5-C to 32nd Street as the eastern boundary. The R-5-C would then encompass all of Square 2039. Such a public hearing could be conducted as a portion of a general hearing encompassing other aspects of Connecticut Avenue zoning. Alternatively, the Zoning Commission could leave the initiative on the property owners to file for a map amendment. Staff has informed the owners of the situation.

An infill apartment house of approximately 200 units will be constructed on a vacant site at Brandywine Street and Connecticut (east side), pursuant to approval of a planned unit development by the Zoning Commission in Spring 1987. The

apartment buildings developed in this sector are a good illustration of the design and density differences between R-5-C zoning at 3.5 FAR, 90 feet, and R-5-D and SP at 6.0 FAR, 90 feet. The lower, medium-high density of the R-5-C District permits a considerable degree of architectural and site planning flexibility, permitting significant open space at ground level with landscaping and sometimes circular drives, spacious grounds for the complexes on very large sites, and building setbacks and detailing in the building design itself. This is possible because the medium-high density of 3.5 FAR can readily be achieved in a variety of site plans and building configurations, leaving ample room in the zoning envelope for the architect to attempt an aesthetic design. R-5-C buildings typically have 175 to 200 units per acre. The R-5-D and SP Districts, predominantly mapped in the immediate periphery of Downtown, produce much denser, bulkier buildings, with many more dwelling units within land area, and less flexibility for architectural design and ground level open space. R-5-D and SP apartment buildings are typically developed at 350 to 390 units per acre. This density is more appropriate on the edge of Downtown, and includes a greater proportion of efficiencies and one-bedroom units than uptown apartment buildings typically do. On Connecticut Avenue, the combination of major trees and landscaping together with high-rise apartment buildings is a public and private benefit resulting from a relatively tall building height (the maximum permitted in residential zones by the Height Act of 1910) together with only a medium or medium-high density.

The Generalized Land Use Map of the Comprehensive Plan designates this sector for high-density residential use and development. As with the previously discussed R-5-C sectors of the avenue, the existing zoning and development pattern appear to be "not inconsistent" with the Comprehensive Plan.

5. Van Ness/UDC Metro Station Area (C-3-A, R-5-C, federal/unzoned). The Van Ness UDC Metro Station area has the greatest concentration of existing development on the Connecticut Avenue corridor. This is a major, mixed use, uptown center of the type often envisioned and proposed by city planners for locations which have:

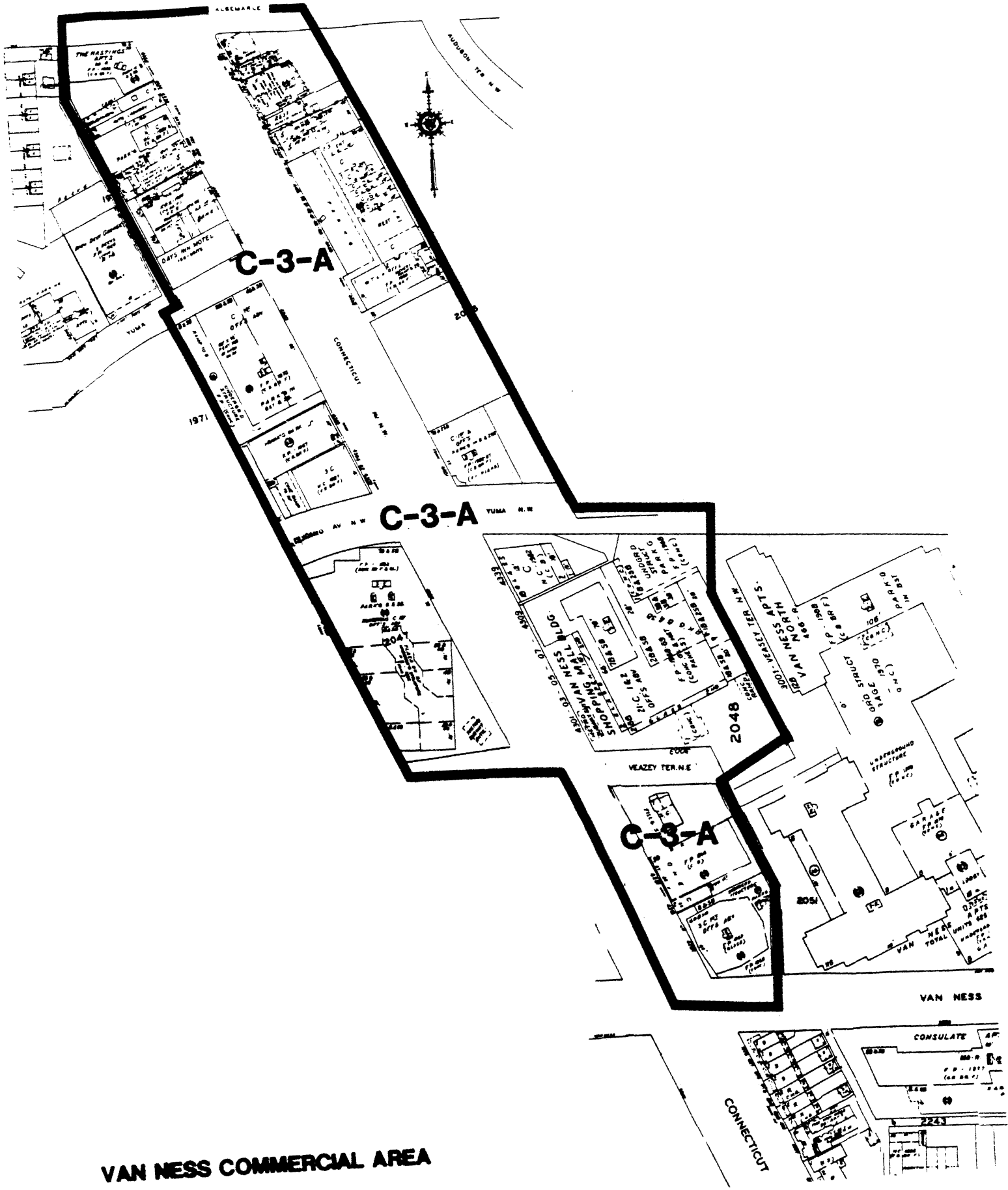
immediate proximity to a rapid transit station as well as high automobile accessibility via major arterial streets;

large parcels of vacant or underutilized land available for new development without displacement of existing buildings and their occupants;

adequate natural or man-made buffers to protect surrounding lower density communities from the high levels of traffic, noise and other effects of high intensity development, and to provide a design separation or transition from taller, more massive buildings to neighborhood scale residences; and,

a need and demand for the various uses to occupy new buildings.

The geographic pattern of this development is that of a "node", that is, a generally circular mass as distinct from a linear strip. The depth of the intensively developed area extends approximately 1,700 feet from Connecticut Avenue on the west side and 1,000 to 1,200 feet on the east side. The buffers from surrounding neighborhoods are provided by Soapstone Valley Park and the Howard University Law School campus on the east side of the avenue, by the Melvin C. Hazen Park on the south, and by the open, campus-like development pattern on the west formed by the campus of the University of the District of Columbia and the International Center. One major component of development is medium and high density apartment buildings. Several hundred units are located in a multi-building complex known as the Van Ness Center to the north and east of the intersection of Connecticut Avenue and Van Ness Street. These buildings were constructed primarily in the 1960s and in the R-5-C District. The Hastings is a mid-rise apartment building constructed in the C-3-A District in the early 1980s. Thus, this area provides a large amount of housing within easy walking distance of Metrorail service. Lower density housing in the R-1-A, R-1-B, R-2, and nearby R-5-C Districts are also within easy walking distance of the station.



VAN NESS COMMERCIAL AREA

The C-3-A District is mapped in a strip pattern from Albemarle Street south to Veazy on both frontages and to Van Ness Street on the east side only. The strip includes some older commercial development at one- to three-stories in height, plus a mid-rise hotel (Days Inn) and newer mid-rise office retail and residential buildings. The Van Ness Center is a mid-rise building originally constructed as multi-level retail plus office space as part of a complex including the apartment buildings. Upper story retail use ultimately proved unsuccessful, so that today the upper stories are devoted solely to office use. Two mid-rise office buildings have been approved as planned unit developments -- the air rights building over the Metro station entrance on the west side of Connecticut Avenue and 4401 Connecticut Avenue, still under construction, on the east side.

The C-3-A District permits matter-of-right development for major retail and office uses to a maximum height of 65 feet, a maximum floor area ratio of 4.0 for residential and 2.5 for other permitted uses, and maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent for residential uses. A continuation of this zoning in the subject strip location implies a pattern of infill development of four- to six-stories, with all-commercial development limited to medium density at 2.5 FAR and significantly less than the maximum 65 foot height. (The two PUDs referred to both included density and height increases as part of the PUD process.) Residential and mixed residential commercial buildings are encouraged by the higher permitted, 4.0 FAR, and are more likely to utilize the full 65 foot height maximum. However, infill sites are now limited in number, and the large but horizontal retail building south of Albemarle Street on the east side on Connecticut Avenue may well lend itself to adaptive reuse rather than to redevelopment.

On the west side of Connecticut Avenue is the UDC campus, a very significant and substantial complex of academic buildings, extending quite far back from the avenue north of Van Ness Street. South of Van Ness Street is the INTELSAT office building comprising some 715,000 square feet of office

space. The International Center also includes 23 sites for development of chanceries for individual countries and groups of countries within a campus-like, landscaped setting with a perimeter security fence and centralized security services. Part of the intent of this complex is to accommodate chanceries at this site which otherwise might locate in residential areas with Diplomatic overlay zoning and greater impact on local neighborhoods. Several chanceries have been constructed to date at the International Center. The International Center and the UDC campus are not subject to zoning controls. The UDC campus was constructed on federal land and reviewed and controlled by the National Capitol Planning Commission (NCPC) by master plan submitted by the Washington Technical Institute, a predecessor school to UDC. The International Center is subject to planning review and control by NCPC because of the latter's planning responsibility for federal and international developments. Federally-owned property which is devoted to a public purpose is legally unzoned and accordingly, not subject to the Zoning Regulations.

Between the C-3-A District and unzoned property the quantity of office space in this area is very substantial, in the range of one million square feet of floor area. The other major components in this uptown center are, as previously mentioned, residential uses from low- to high-density, university campuses, retail and open space. This mixture of uses makes good utilization of street and Metrorail capacity in that automobile and transit trips are balanced and spread out by time of day and by in-bound or out-bound direction. The potential, not yet fully realized, exists for 18-hour activity due in particular to the presence of numerous apartments, university classes and other activities. The presence of office workers together with the students and residents of the area offers the market support for substantially more retail and service businesses and space than exist at present. This has yet to be realized but may change with time and fuller occupancy of the INTELSAT complex and additional chanceries.

The land use designations of the Generalized Land Use Maps indicate this area to have "Moderate

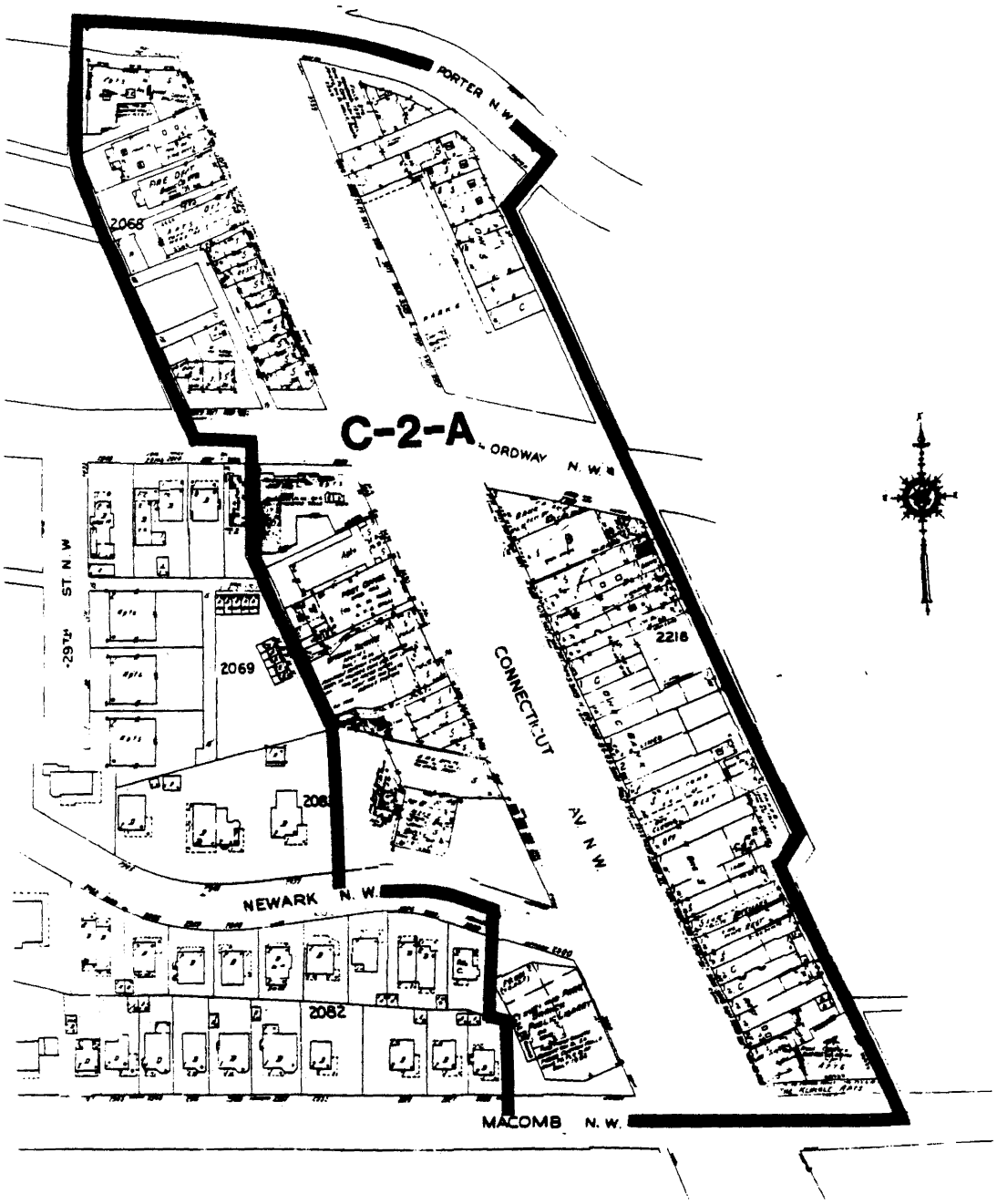
Density" commercial use and development in the area generally zoned C-3-A, a commercial classification as a "Multi-Neighborhood Center", "High Density" residential use generally corresponding to areas zoned R-5-C, "Federal" use and development where the UDC campus is situated, and "Parks, Recreation and Open Space" correspnding to lands devoted to public parks. These policies strongly suggest a continuation of existing zoning and other land use controls in this area.

6. Tilden to Porter Streets (R-5-C). This relatively short R-5-C area is developed with medium and medium-high density apartment houses. In terms of zoning and Comprehensive Plan analysis, the development pattern of Comprehensive Plan designations again suggest a continuation of R-5-C zoning.

7. Cleveland Park Commercial Area (C-2-A). The Cleveland Park commercial area extends three blocks from Porter to Macomb streets on both frontages of Connecticut Avenue. It is developed with approximately 60 commercial buildings accommodating nearly 80 businesses, the majority of them being neighborhood-serving retail/service uses. The overall physical scale is unusually low even for a neighborhood commercial district. Approximately 70 percent of the buildings are one-story in height; an additional 20 percent are two stories; and only 10 percent are three stories or more in height. There are also five mid-rise (three-to five-story) apartment houses within the C-2-A District. Most of these have ground floor retail and service uses. A number of the small commercial buildings also have apartments on the upper stories. Thus, a significant amount of housing, approximately 118,140 square feet of floor area, exists within the commercial district itself, providing moderate- to middle-income housing.

   Total commercial floor area is approximately 195,356* square feet of floor area. The resultant

*The source of this land use information is Richard Ridley and Associates, architects/planners for the Cleveland Park Historical Society. Some information is also derived from documentation establishing the historic district.



CLEVELAND PARK COMMERCIAL AREA

split between uses is approximately 38 percent residential and 62 percent commercial. This is a true mixed use commercial area with a substantial residential component. This extent of housing within the commercial area itself is quite unusual in Washington; it provides the shopping area with additional consumer support and a built-in presence of people on the street in evening hours. Physically, the pattern tends to be that the mid-rise apartment buildings are at the corners of blocks, with lower, retail buildings in between.

The fabric of the buildings a reflection of its historic character and the very limited amount of redevelopment which has occured in this area in recent years. The C-2-A area is included within the Cleveland Park Historic District, so that the important land use controls governing historic districts apply as well as zoning. Most importantly, the historic preservation controls include the ability to deny demolition permits, and review of exterior design of new buildings and exterior alterations of existing buildings.

Neighborhood-serving retail and service businesses are the predominant uses, including barber and beauty shops, drug store, grocery store, dry cleaners, florist, gasoline service station, liquor store, shoe repair, and a significant number of restaurants and bars. The Uptown movie theatre is one of the largest movie auditoriums in the region, with more than 2,000 seats. A fire station and a public library are also located within the strip. Parking overspill onto surrounding neighborhood streets is a frequent problem from the theatre and the combined effects of the other commercial establishments. The theatre plus the approximately 14 eating and drinking establishments represent a lively and significant concentration of evening activity and parking demand. The Cleveland Park Metrorail station is located between Ordway and Porter streets, with entrances on both sides of the avenue.

The Generalized Land Use Maps indicate this commercial area to remain a Low Density Commercial area and a Local Neighborhood Commercial Center.

Both terms have been previously described in this report. Together they represent a policy of continuing a neighborhood commercial area that is characterized as low in building scale, offering convenience retail services plus a limited range of speciality shopping and entertainment uses and a limited amount of office space.

Community groups including Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C and the Cleveland Park Historical Society have expressed concerns to the Office of Planning about the existing C-2-A zoning. These organizations formally petitioned the Zoning Commission in a memorandum dated July 6, 1987, regarding Case No. 86-26 (Connecticut Avenue Corridor), to consider rezoning the C-2-A strip to C-1 or to "a new zoning classification or overlay zone (district) which would more truly reflect, and be compatible with, the existing height, density, uses, and historic character of the subject area..." (p.1)

Petitioners indicate that their principal concern is redevelopment that would be out of scale with existing development and create adverse impacts on the commercial area and surrounding residential areas, such as traffic, noise, and parking overspill. "Already, one developer (Park and Shop site) has announced plans to request a PUD to construct a 65 foot, massive office building, a height, density and use which are clearly incompatible with the character of the existing historic district (to say nothing of the historic building which would be demolished in the process). Moreover, another party has assembled the properties across Connecticut from the Park and Shop site and indicated her intention to request a PUD for intensive development" (p. 3, July 6 Memorandum). The general intent is to secure zoning which will help retain the local shopping orientation of the area as against office redevelopment which would replace older buildings and businesses and substitute commuters and a more limited range of retail services for the previous neighborhood-serving businesses.

The issues raised in the petition and other communications to the Office of Planning are discussed, point by point below in the context of Comprehensive Plan policies, existing conditions, and the relevant zone district controls.

A. Height. The permitted building height of 50 feet in C-2-A is questioned as being too high in the context of a fabric of older buildings predominantly at 20 to 30 feet in height.

Comments: On small sites which utilize only the 1.5 commercial FAR will tend to be built structures of only to two or three stories in order to keep construction costs down (no need for taller construction and elevator core), and to provide a small retail or office-retail building. The building height most likely to be used in this situation is in the 25 to 35 foot range rather than 50 feet. Also, the Historic Preservation Review Board (HPRB) has design review over new construction, including the power to mandate a lower height if this is necessary to achieve a design compatible with the historic district. Zoning normally provides a building "envelope" somewhat larger than the scale of historic buildings which enables the architect and HPRB to use this design flexibility to correlate design features such as cornices, fenestration or to provide some variety in building heights.

Despite the foregoing, the discrepancy between existing height profile and permitted height in zoning should not be so great as to force HPRB to mandate major height reductions. The Office of Planning does not favor a specific 40 foot infill commercial buildings height limit as provided in the C-1 District, but the staff uses believe that building height is a serious concern, given the unusually low profile of existing building heights and the likelihood that most of these buildings are likely to remain in use for some years under historic preservation controls. Therefore, the Office proposes a variable formula for maximum building height within a proposed overlay zone district. This height formula would provide for height transitions by establishing a special height limit for infill sites abutting low buildings. The formula would limit the height of new buildings to a maximum of twice the height of the immediately abutting building. If the new building would be attached on both sides, the maximum infill building height would be two times the height of the lowest abutting building. This

approach would serve to modulate height variations in the area, and would not affect permitted FAR.

B. FAR. Petitioners are also concerned that the 1.5 commercial FAR or the 2.5 residential or mixed use FAR may be sufficient economic incentive to result in redevelopment of existing small buildings, loss of neighborhood convenience stores and new construction out of scale with existing buildings.

Comment: Demolition and redevelopment of significant parcels of land (as against infill development of an occasional single commercial row low or pair of such lots) should be constrained by the goals and implementation of the historic preservation law. Virtually all of the existing buildings in the area are deemed "contributing" to the character of the historic district. Thus, the historic preservation process has specific responsibility to protect the physical integrity of the historic district against demolitions, especially those designed to make way for major redevelopment. Given the existing pattern of small lots (with a few exceptions, notably the Park and Shop) and the lack of significant land assemblies for new development, the potential for redevelopment should be adequately controlled by historic preservation within the C-2-A zoning envelope.

The Office of Planning believes that either C-1 or C-2-A zoning could, in various locations, be considered "not inconsistent" with the applicable designation of the Comprehensive Plan. In this particular location the C-2-A District is oriented to a Metrorail system and also has automobile access from two principal arterial streets -- Connecticut Avenue and Porter Street. In this context, it is difficult to argue that C-2-A is overzoning in terms of development density. This area can be a quite active area within a relatively low building profile.

However, the Office of Planning staff believes that some zoning provisions, specifically geared to this C-2-A District with its historic preservation objectives, can help the area achieve

its design, neighborhood service, and economic objectives in a more fruitful way. These are as follows:

1. Retention of Housing. Prohibit the conversion of upper story residential uses to nonresidential use. This provision will help retain a significant amount of moderate-income housing which might otherwise be lost to commercial use over the years. This housing is in a location which helps provide consumer market support for neighborhood-serving businesses, an 18-hour presence of people on the street for greater safety and for the commercial area to provide more stores open in the evening. Note that a greater percentage of office workers in lieu of residents would tend to shift the retail market in the area more towards the services offered in office precincts and less towards residential neighborhood services.

2. Ground floor retail. Require the usable ground floor space of commercial buildings to be devoted to retail and service uses, not office space. This will avoid the creation of "dead spots" and fragmentation of retail services and instead will enhance the aesthetic and physical cohesiveness of the shopping district, ensure a wide range of services (rather than losing the space to office use), and improve pedestrian accessibility to stores. Another practical effect is to limit the total size of office use in the area. Within the 1.5 FAR permitted for office and retail uses combined, if 0.50 to 0.75 FAR is utilized as ground floor retail, the office component automatically does not become a major development component contrary to the Plan.

3. Height Limit. Within the maximum, matter-of-right building height of 50 feet, establish a lesser height limit geared to the heights of abutting

buildings. This will provide for suitable height transitions and avoid height extremes, especially in locations where abutting building are quite low, e.g., 16 and 18 feet.

The formula recommended would provide that the maximum height of a new building shall not exceed two time the height of the abutting building. If the new construction or enlargement is attached on two sides to existing buildings, then the maximum height would be twice the height of the lower of the two buildings. In this manner, infill buildings could have a flexible height based on the immediate design context. The HPRB would still have the opportunity and responsibility to require design changes, including height adjustments as needed. But the height discussion would start within more workable limits. Note that in a number of locations the maximum permitted height in zoning would still be 50 feet, in that the lowest abutting building would be 25 feet or more.

4. Drive-throughs, Curb Cuts. Restrictions are also proposed on drive-throughs as accessory uses and on curb cuts to provide access to driveways which would break up the principal block faces on Connecticut Avenue. The existing building fabric should be retained and automotive access should be via the alley systems to the rear of the buildings. Note that drive-through as accessory to a fast food restaurant is already prohibited in a C-2-A District. The effect of the proposed prohibition would be to prevent establishment of a drive-through as part of a bank, cleaning establishment or other principal use. The rationale for this is to minimize vehicular conflicts with pedestrian flows in a concentrated retail node at a Metrorail station; to avoid breaks in the physical fabric of buildings; and to avoid other aesthetic and vehicular circulaton detriments.

5. Eating and Drinking Establishments. Finally, a restriction is also proposed on the percentage of street frontage of a block which may be devoted to eating and drinking establishments. The present group of 14 such businesses provides a lively component of the commercial area, serving the surrounding neighborhood, some Metro passengers and some destination customers. However, it is possible over a period of time for bars and restaurants to concentrate in certain locations, acquire a critical mass, and price out a number of neighborhood retail uses, so that the diversity and function of the neighborhood shopping cluster is lost. What is proposed within the overlay zone is a ceiling on the percentage of street frontage that may be devoted to these uses. The specific percentage suggested will still allow a degree of expansion over what exists at present -- a level of such uses which may never in fact be achieved. However, should such a trend develop, a ceiling would be in place to assure that a balanced mix of uses can continue.

6. Park and Shop. The principal location in the strip where a significant amount of new floor area could be developed is the Park and Shop, located at the northeast corner of Ordway Street and Connecticut Avenue. The potential redevelopment of this site (approximately 50,000 s.f. of land area) as a PUD with a building height of 65 feet should be considered a special case. The existing low-scale building, presently vacant, is a contributing building within the historic district. Consequently, total redevelopment of the site can only occur if the historic preservation authorities find that the proposed new development is of "special merit" and therefore justifies the destruction of the existing building. The historic preservation authorities thus have control over demolition as

well as control over the design of any new building(s) on the site. This control includes the power to mandate changes in height and bulk as warranted. Also, the Zoning Commission has discretionary powers in a PUD. The proposed development must be found to meet the standards for PUDs found in Chapter 24 of the Zoning Regulations. Thus, two important decision-making bodies of the District of Columbia government must make a finding that the proposed development is of significant, if not exceptional merit, before any approval would occur. The Office of Planning believes that the Preservation Review Board and the Zoning Commission, with participation by all affected parties and the public, will be able to resolve the development and design issues on this site within the existing C-2-A zoning. Any development of this site as a PUD would be a design and use mix fully negotiated between the developer, the affected community and the government. If matter-of-right development were to occur, then any relevant parts of the overlay district would apply and the reviews required under historic preservation laws and regulations would also govern the development.

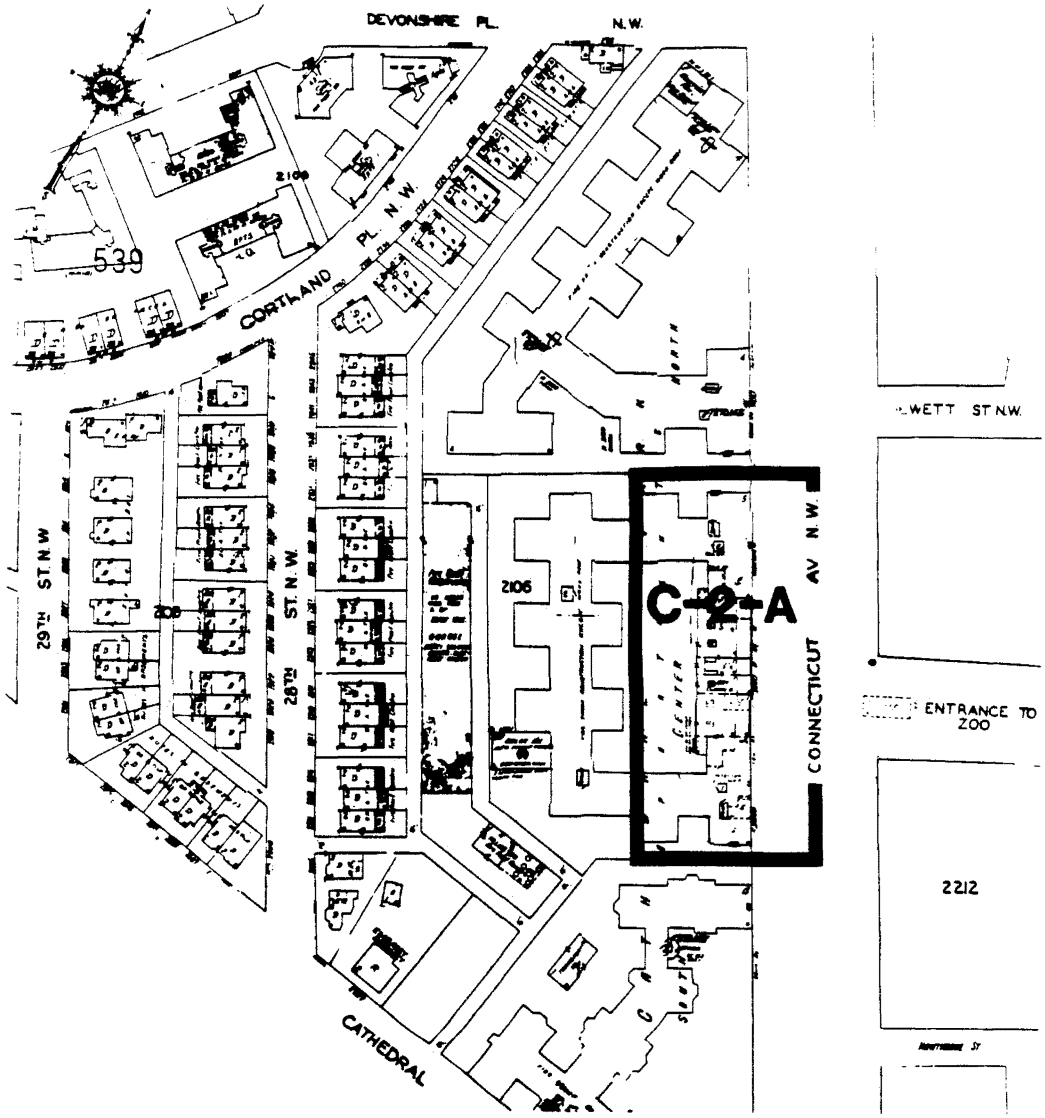
7. Waivers. Over the long term, specific situations are likely to arise when businesses or others might need to request a waiver of one of the requirements for the area. The actual overlay zone text will include a provision for the Board of Zoning Adjustment to consider and decide such requests after a public hearing. Specific criteria will be included in the text to ensure that waivers will only be granted in a manner which furthers the objectives of the overlay zone.

8. Macomb Street to Woodley Road (R-5-C, R-5-B). This stretch of Connecticut Avenue from Macomb

Street south to Woodley Road is developed with medium- and high-density residential buildings, both in the R-5-C zone fronting the avenue and in the R-5-B District immediately behind the frontage in some locations. A high-rise residential condominium, the Woodley Plaza, is under construction on the east frontage of the avenue north of Woodley Road. The Generalized Land Use Map of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan indicates these sectors for Medium Density and High Density Residential use and development. The Office of Planning believes that the existing zoning is generally consistent with these designations for reasons previously stated regarding other R-5-C strips.

9. Commercial Pocket Opposite National Zoo (C-2-A). On the west side of Connecticut Avenue, directly opposite the entrance to the National Zoo, is a small C-2-A District approximately 350 feet long and 100 feet deep. Included in this District are two wings of the Cathedral Mansions apartment complex which front on Connecticut Avenue. This is a five-story apartment complex which extends to the interior of the Square, into the R-5-B District. The two wings of the complex fronting on Connecticut Avenue are at the north and south ends of the C-2-A District. In between these is a one-story building containing retail establishments serving neighborhood residents and tourists. Shops include dry cleaning, hair care, liquor store, convenience food store and souvenirs. Retail use is also located in part of the ground floor of the apartment wings, and the management of Cathedral Mansions advised OP staff that the upper floors (two through five) of both front wings are devoted to office space and have been for at least 15 years. This office space is presumably within the 1.5 FAR maximum that may be devoted to office and retail uses in the C-2-A District. The Office of Planning has requested that the Zoning Administrator's office review whether the total commercial use is within the permitted 1.5 FAR.

The Generalized Land Use Maps indicate this commercial pocket as Low Density Commercial and as a Local Neighborhood Commercial Center. In our opinion, either C-1 or C-2-A could be consistent



NATIONAL ZOO COMMERCIAL AREA

with these designations. The height of the apartment wings is 46 feet and five stories. Therefore, a rezoning to C-1 would make the building nonconforming as to both height and number of stories (limited to three in C-1), and would presumably make part of the existing office space nonconforming as well. OP does not believe such rezoning is warranted.

10. Woodley Park Commercial Area (C-2-B, C-2-A). The area surrounding the Woodley Park/Zoo Metrorail station may be considered the second most intense development node on the Connecticut Avenue corridor. This is primarily because of the immediate proximity to the west and north of the Metro station (itself located between Calvert Street and Woodley Road) of two major hotels, the Shoreham and the Sheraton Washington. Both are large in number of rooms, and the Sheraton is also the largest convention hotel in the city, having a large quantity of space for exhibitions, banquets, entertainment and conventions. The presence of these 2,000-plus hotel rooms plus other facilities presents significant parking problems in neighborhood areas and bus and truck traffic. The hotels also represent major economic development for the city, in terms of tourist spending and related business support and sales taxes, including hotel taxes. Also, hotels are a prime source of blue collar jobs, a type of employment on which the city places a high priority because of its importance in diversifying the job base and reducing unemployment in a predominantly white collar economy.

The hotels are zoned R-5-B and R-5-C. Both were built at a time when hotels were a matter-of-right use in these zone districts. However, since 1980 hotels are no longer a permitted new use in R-5-B and R-5-C, but existing hotels are conforming uses which are not permitted to expand.

To the north of Woodley Road, high density apartments in the R-5-C strip extend to the immediate vicinity of the commercial area surrounding the Metro station. To the east is an area zoned R-4 and fully developed primarily with townhouses. East of the R-4 area is the National Zoological Park and Rock Creek Park, which create

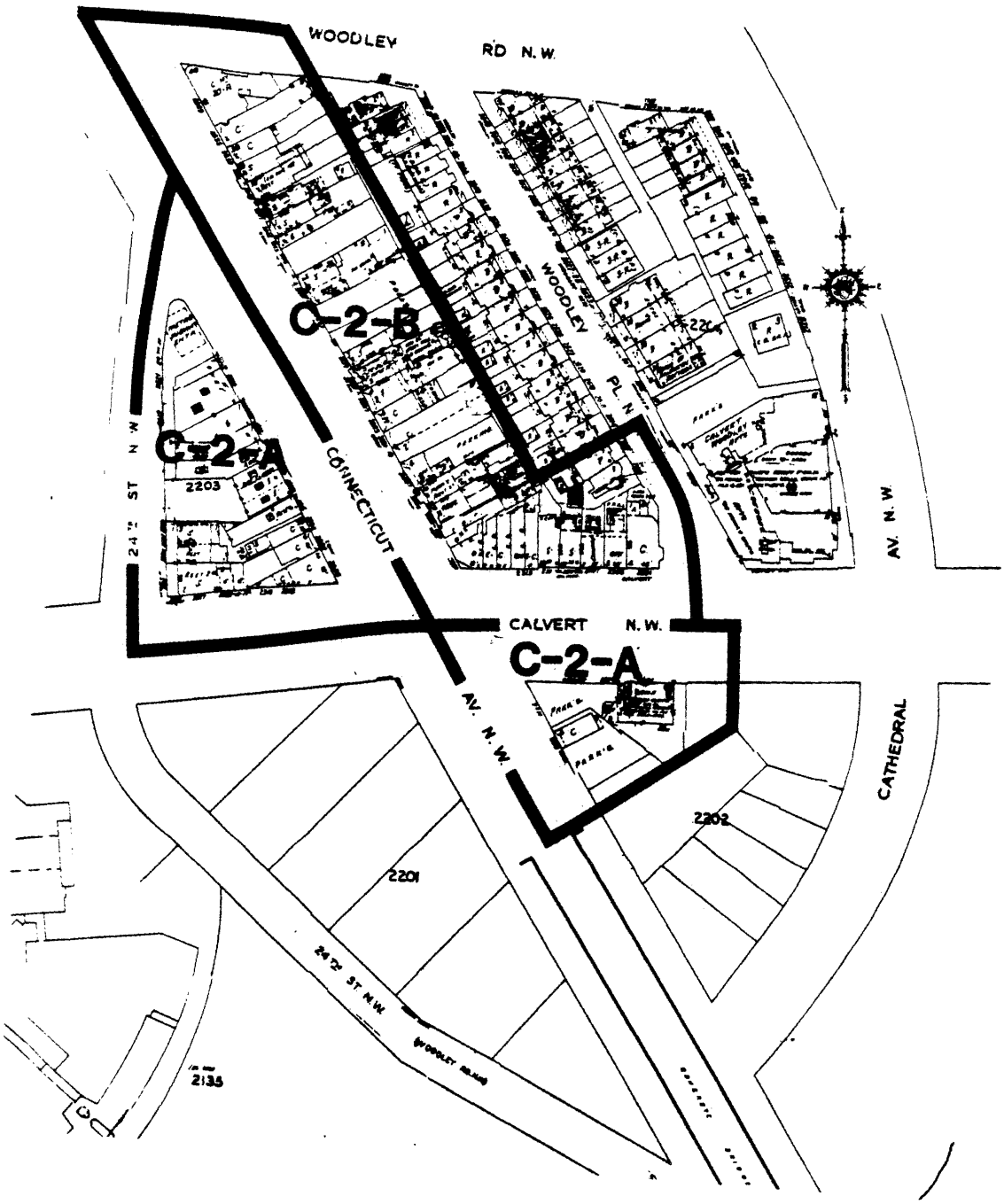
a natural eastern boundary to private development. Similarly, Rock Creek Park and the Taft Bridge form a physical southern boundary to this Metro station area.

In the middle of these areas is a small commercial area comprising parts of Squares 2202 and 2204 on the east side of Connecticut Avenue and Square 2203, a small triangular block, on the west side. The latter square is zoned C-2-A, contains the Metrorail entrance, and is developed with low-scale buildings of one to three stories, but with one-story structures being the greatest number. A combination of newer and older buildings is present, occupied by neighborhood retail stores, restaurants and a financial institution.

Diagonally across Connecticut Avenue and immediately south of Calvert Street is Square 2202, a small triangular portion of which is zoned C-2-A and developed with two low-rise structures occupied by a bank.

Square 2204 is zoned C-2-B on its Connecticut Avenue frontage from Calvert Street to Woodley Road and around the southern part of the block frontage on Calvert Street. Across a 15-foot-wide alley from the commercial district the remaining eastern and northern portion of the square is zoned R-4 and developed with townhouses. The commercial frontage on Connecticut Avenue and on Calvert Street is a mixture of two-, three- and four-story converted townhouses. Remarkably cohesive architecturally and with a consistent scale and rhythm, this group of structures is nearly intact and creates a handsome urban environment. Commercial uses include a significant concentration of restaurants plus a few commercial service establishments. A relatively small number of apartments are present, notably in the buildings at the corner of Woodley Road and Connecticut Avenue.

The built frontage on Connecticut Avenue is broken in one location by a surface parking lot of more than 16,000 square feet. A matter-of-right, mixed use building has been designed and proposed for this site and is currently undergoing large tract



WOODLEY PARK COMMERCIAL AREA

review coordinated by the Office of Planning. The building would have 57,630 square feet of floor area, 23,604 s.f. of which would be for retail and office uses and 34,026 s.f. of which would be devoted to 32 condominium residences. Fifty-two parking spaces are proposed, including a proposed 1/1 ratio for the residences. The building has setbacks at the upper levels to respect existing building heights and utilizes the full permitted 65-foot height limit. It is generally considered to be an attractive design, compatible with existing character, which would complete the built fabric on this frontage. The critical issue in the large tract review is whether the total height is still too tall despite the setbacks and sympathetic design.

The C-2-B District has not previously been described. It permits the same commercial FAR maximum of 1.5 as in the C-2-A District. The essential difference in scale is that total density for housing or mixed use buildings is 3.5 FAR and 65 feet in height, as against the 2.5 FAR and 50-foot height permitted in C-2-A. Uses permitted are nearly identical, one important exception being that fast food restaurant requires a special exception in C-2-A but is a matter-of-right use with buffering requirements from adjacent residential zones in C-2-B.

The land use designations for this area from the Comprehensive Plan are as follows. The small commercial core has the same designations as the Cleveland Park commercial area -- low density commercial and Local Neighborhood Commercial Center. To the west of Connecticut Avenue is a large, nodal area indicated for High Density Residential use, which area encompasses areas developed with apartments and with the two hotels. To the east and north of the commercial area are locations indicated as Moderate Density and Medium Density Residential.

These designations seem to imply substantially a continuation of existing zoning and development patterns. The zoning of the existing housing is generally at scale, and numerous Plan policies encourage a continuation and expansion in housing supply. The hotels are permitted to continue

indefinitely as conforming uses in the R-5-B and R-5-C Districts but without expansion. The commercial area, particularly the part zoned C-2-B, raises the principal policy issues.

The low density and Local Neighborhood Center designations suggest a continuation of generally low-scale commercial activity, even recognizing the existence of the Metrorail station. In effect, the policy is that the hotels, convention facilities and existing medium and high density housing constitute the economic development envelope for this Metrorail station. The small commercial area at the core is to continue its present function of providing services to hotel visitors, visitors to the National Zoo, and the surrounding neighborhood, but primarily within the physical scale of the existing buildings. The concentration of restaurants in the area, especially on the east frontage of Connecticut Avenue, reflects a service relationship to visitors, and a concentration of restaurants which have become a destination point for residents around the city as well as the neighborhood. The commercial designations in the Plan suggest that this area need not and should not become a significant location for development of office space by means of redeveloping the older, smaller buildings.

The existing C-2-A zoning would appear to accomplish these objectives in Squares 2202 and 2203, although the former would lend itself well to apartment house development with ground level retail. The principal issue has been the C-2-B zoning in Square 2204. In a July 27, 1987 memorandum, the Woodley Park Community Association, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 3C and two individual neighborhood residents petitioned the Zoning Commission to rezone the C-2-B area C-2-A and to rezone 2610 and 2612 Woodley Place from C-2-B to R-4. The latter two properties are townhouses which are physically part of the row development of Woodley Place in the R-4 District, but because they are the nearest to the Calvert Street commercial frontage they were included in the C-2-B District. The existing zone boundary does follow an alley between the subject townhouses and the main row in the R-4

District. However, there is another alley between the two houses and the commercial buildings fronting on Calvert Street. Accordingly, the Office of Planning believes that if a public hearing is scheduled on zoning in this area, it should include a consideration of rezoning these two properties to R-4.

The main issue is simply a concern that the C-2-B zoning could permit matter-of-right buildings that are out of scale with the cohesive row of commercial townhouse structures which make up nearly all of this C-2-B frontage. The predominant height range of these buildings is 25 to 35 feet, whereas C-2-B permits new buildings of up to 65 feet and with a 3.5 FAR. With a PUD development of up to 90 feet and with a 6.0 FAR is permitted. C-2-B tends to imply a degree of redevelopment, whereas C-2-A would tend to create less incentive for redevelopment. The petition also expresses concern that fast food restaurants are matter-of-right uses in C-2-B but require a special exception in C-2-A.

The Office of Planning believes that the strong and attractive cohesiveness of the commercial row along this frontage should generally be conserved rather than redeveloped, and that the narrowness of the alley separating the commercial area from adjacent townhouses (15 feet) is an additional constraint upon the scale of commercial development that should be permitted. There is a serious access constraint -- the harmonious frontage should not be broken by demolition for driveways to serve larger commercial development, yet the alley system is below the current city standard of 20 feet and should not be overburdened with automobile and truck traffic.

As an alternative to C-2-A, the Office of Planning suggests that an overlay district could address the same issues as rezoning to C-2-A while also providing other incentives and controls addressing other planning issues. The principal components of such a zone would be as follows: (These are generally similar to those proposed previously for the Cleveland Park commercial area but with a few changes geared to the different issues here.)

1. Mandatory retail use on ground floor. This is intended to assure that the total supply and variety of retail and service uses continues to be adequate. Also, ground floor retail use also limits total office space that may be built within the 1.5 FAR maximum. If some redevelopment does occur, net retail loss is lessened in contrast with the potential of office use at ground level, which weakens the concentration and total quantity of retail.

2. Prohibition of drive-throughs and of curb cuts through designated street frontages. Driveways conflict with cohesive architectural character, and with access limitations in the area. Curb cut prohibition would apply to Connecticut Avenue frontages, as Square 2203 in particular is a small triangular square bounded by 24th Street and Calvert Street as well as Connecticut Avenue. It will need access from one or both of the former streets.

3. Limits on eating and drinking establishments. As previously stated regarding Cleveland Park, an excessive concentration of eating and drinking establishments can utilize commercial space which might otherwise be devoted to a more balanced mix of retail uses including many with a neighborhood orientation. Bars and restaurants can become a dominant use in a district and price out other uses. The existing concentration of restaurants in the Woodley Park area is a higher percentage of street frontage than in Cleveland Park. However, this is probably in keeping with the much greater visitor component here. Accordingly, the threshold percentage of street frontage for eating and drinking uses should probably be a higher percentage. In the San Francisco Neighborhood Commercial zones, from which this approach is derived, certain commercial areas such as North Beach are accorded a higher percentage due to the function of the area.

4. Height limit. A height limit of 55 feet would keep any new buildings more in scale

with existing buildings than the current 65-foot height limit. This is only five feet more than the C-2-A maximum permitted height, and would allow for a 12 to 15-foot ground floor retail use plus four stories of approximately 10 feet each on upper levels. This limitation would have no practical effect on existing C-2-A areas, where the more restrictive 50-foot height maximum would apply.

5. Prohibition on fast food restaurants. This area already serves the immediate area and the city as a whole with a significant concentration of restaurants. These are "sit-down" restaurants in attractive, converted-townhouse settings, with several well-designed sidewalk cafes. In OP's opinion, it would be obtrusive to this setting and function, as well as unnecessary, to permit fast food restaurants. The two small C-2-A squares are both triangular in configuration, and the narrow alley system in the square zoned C-2-B both argue against the much higher automobile trip generation resulting from fast food restaurants as against other restaurants. (A drive-through accessory to a fast food restaurant is already prohibited in both C-2-A and C-2-B zone districts).

6. Prohibition on hotel use. The existing concentration of hotel rooms and related uses is by far the highest abutting a residential neighborhood of any in the city. As a conference center the Sheraton is the second largest in the city after the Convention Center itself, and the large number of hotel rooms has previously been mentioned. In Zoning Commission Case No. 79-1, when hotel use was removed from the apartment house zones as a new use, a complementary action was to remove impediments to hotel development in commercial uses. This was in part because so many hotels had been constructed in residential zones and only a limited number in commercial zones, including Downtown. Regarding the uptown commercial zones, the reason for permitting the guest room portion of hotels to go to the maximum

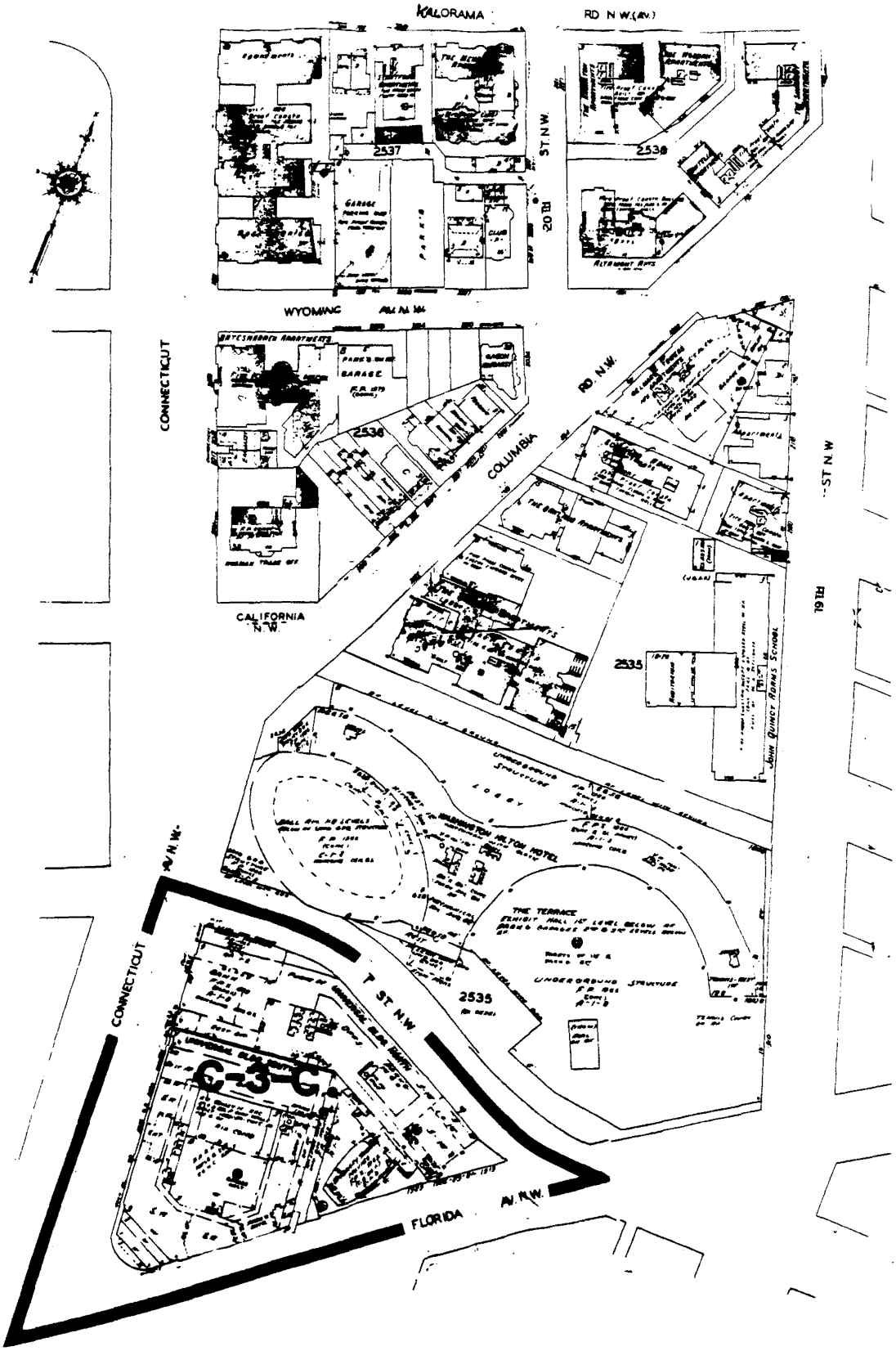
density of the zone was to encourage a degree of tourist hotel development in view of the shortage of such hotels in the city. They would, of course, be in scale with the height and density of other buildings in the subject zone and area. OP believes this is still sound policy city-wide, as there continues to be only a small number of hotels around the city in zones such as C-2-A, C-2-B and C-3-A. However, in the Woodley Park/Zoo Metro station area, a prohibition on hotel use or development in the C-2-A/C-2-B area seems appropriate. The area already has more than its complement of hotel rooms, and there may be a market for some hotel development drawing upon the conference trade of the Sheraton, and the proximity to the Zoo, existing restaurants and the Metro station. Such a hotel, if built, would reduce the quantity of retail and restaurant uses already in the area for a purpose of doubtful necessity here.

6. Waivers. Over the long term, specific situations are likely to arise when businesses or others might neet to request a waiver of one of the provision for the Board of Zoning Adjustment to consider and decide such requests after a public hearing. Specific criteria will be included in the text to ensure that waivers will only be granted in ways that further the objectives of the overlay zone.

11. Taft Bridge to Florida Avenue (R-5-C). South of Taft Bridge the R-5-C corridor on Connecticut Avenue curves through an area of medium-high density buildings occupied as apartments and as chanceries. Residents of the Sheridan-Kalorama area have been concerned for some time over conversions of residential buildings to chanceries. This neighborhood, which extends to the southwest to include both frontages of Massachusetts Avenue, includes a significant number of chanceries, which are the offices of foreign delegations. This issue was heatedly contested in Zoning Commission Case No. 84-7, a text and map case which was for the purpose of making the city's zoning "not inconsistent" with

the Foreign Missions Act of 1982 (by the U.S. Congress) and the Foreign Missions and International Agencies Element of the Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the National Capitol Planning Commission in 1983 pursuant to the former. The Zoning Commission case involved a determination of which additional city blocks, as mapped by NCPC, were suitable for official mapping with the Diplomatic (D) Overlay zone. (When the D District is mapped in combination with a residential zone, then chancery is a permitted use subject to review and decision by the Board of Zoning Adjustment.) In the Sheridan-Kalorama area, based on the NCPC map, seven additional city squares were advertised for potential mapping of the D District. However, based on fact-finding and advocacy by community representatives and the Office of Planning, only two of the squares were mapped with the D overlay zone. Thus, the further spread of chanceries in the area was limited significantly. Square 2535, on the east side of Connecticut Avenue immediately north of Florida Avenue, is zoned C-3-C and is developed with a major office building and other commercial space. This development and zoning pattern are an extension of the development pattern of Connecticut Avenue south of Florida Avenue.

This sector of Connecticut Avenue also includes a major convention hotel, the Washington Hilton. Like the Sheraton farther north, the Hilton is treated in the R-5-C zone as a "conforming" use but does not have the right to expand its facilities, pursuant to zoning text amendments adopted in 1980. The Generalized Land Use Map depicts this sector of Connecticut Avenue for use as High, Medium and Moderate Density Residential use and development. These density categories are mapped generally in locations that coincide with existing densities. These categories seem generally appropriate for the scale of the area and imply a policy of favoring residential use over further chancery conversion within the city's obligations under the Zoning Regulations and the Foreign Missions Act.



CONNECTICUT & FLORIDA COMMERCIAL AREA

Prepared by
Office of Planning
Government of the District of Columbia
415 12th Street, N.W.
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 727-6492