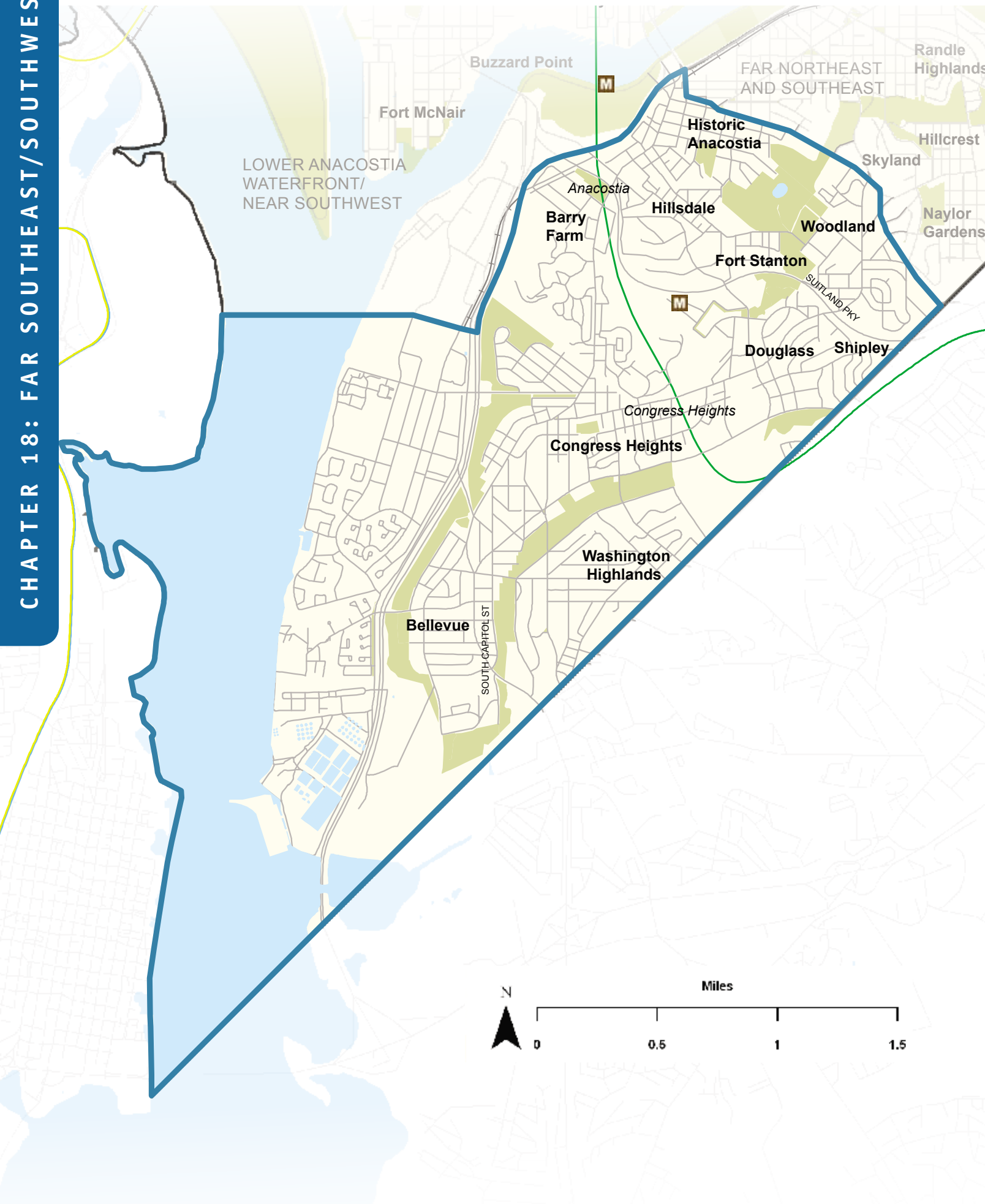
Chapter 18
Far Southeast/ Southwest Area Element


Buzzard Point
Fort McNair
LOWER ANACOSTIA WATERFRONT/ NEAR SOUTHWEST
FAR NORTHEAST AND SOUTHEAST
Randle Highlands
Historic Anacostia
Hillcrest
Skyland
Anacostia
Hillsdale
Barry Farm
Woodland
Naylor Gardens
Fort Stanton
SUITLAND PKY
Douglass
Shipley
Congress Heights
Congress Heights
Washington Highlands
Bellevue
SOUTH CAPITOL ST
N
Miles
0
0.5
1
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Far Southeast/Southwest Area Element

Overview 1800

The Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area encompasses 10.1 square miles east of the Anacostia Freeway and south of Good Hope Road/Naylor Road. The Planning Area includes neighborhoods such as Historic Anacostia, Congress Heights, Hillsdale, Woodland, Fort Stanton, Barry Farm, Bellevue, Washington Highlands, Douglas/Shipley Terrace, Garfield Heights, and Knox Hill/Buena Vista. Most of this area has historically been Ward 8, but prior to redistricting in 2002, the northern portion was in Ward 6. Planning Area boundaries are shown in the Map to the left. 1800.1

Far Southeast/Southwest is a community of surprising contrasts. It includes the 19th century row houses of Historic Anacostia as well as brand new communities like Henson Ridge and Wheeler Creek. Its housing ranges from single family homes in neighborhoods like Congress Heights, to garden apartments in neighborhoods like Washington Highlands and Fort Stanton, to high-rise apartments such as the Wyngates and Faircliff Plaza. 1800.2

It is home to two National Historic Landmarks—the residence of abolitionist champion Frederick Douglass at Cedar Hill, and the St. Elizabeths Hospital campus, one of the country's most renowned institutions for the treatment of mental illness for more than 150 years. Its commercial areas range from a brand new shopping center under construction at Camp Simms to more traditional neighborhood centers along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, Good Hope Road, and South Capitol Street. The community also includes open spaces and natural areas like Oxon Run and Oxon Cove. 1800.3

Anacostia and the surrounding Far Southeast/Southwest neighborhoods that surround it have stayed strong through difficult times. Many middle-class residents left the area in the 1970's, 80's and 90's, affecting the stability of the area's neighborhoods. Between 1990 and 2000 population in this Planning Area declined by nine percent and the poverty rate increased from 28 percent to 38 percent. The crime rate and unemployment rate remain chronically high and are well above the city and regional average. The average resident must go outside their neighborhood to shop, enjoy a restaurant, and even find basic services like groceries. 1800.4

Today, the priorities are clear: safer streets, better schools, more jobs, and improved housing choices. The Comprehensive Plan reflects these priorities in its policies and maps. Poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, crime, and other social issues must be addressed to improve the quality of life for residents in the Far Southeast/Southwest. For revitalization to truly succeed, all residents must be given opportunities to advance. 1800.5

Far Southeast/Southwest includes the residence of abolitionist champion Frederick Douglass at Cedar Hill, a National Historic Landmark.

The area's social and economic needs affect its physical environment in many ways. They translate to a need for more facilities for vocational training and job placement like the One-Stop Career Center on South Capitol Street. Community priorities mean that aging neighborhood schools like Savoy and Turner must be rebuilt; that aging libraries like the Washington Highlands Branch must be modernized; and that new recreation centers and cultural centers like Bald Eagle and the ARC are provided to create positive alternatives for at-risk youth and others. New opportunities for local entrepreneurs also are needed—providing a chance to start a business, hire local residents, and provide needed services to the community. 1800.6

The strength of the District's real estate market is already bringing a wave of change to the Far Southeast/Southwest. Thousands of affordable housing units have been constructed or rehabilitated since 2000. The HOPE VI projects have created many first time homeowners, including former public housing residents. Projects such as Monterrey Park, Livingston Apartments, Danbury Station, Royal Court and Congress Park are just a few examples of the improved housing choices in the area. The first new shopping center in over a decade is under construction—and after two decades of waiting, the community will finally have a full-service modern supermarket. 1800.7

Investment in public facilities has been a catalyst for housing development in the area. Bald Eagle Recreation Center and Fort Greble Recreation Center have received major upgrades in the last two years. The new Patterson Elementary School has opened, and several more schools are slated for major renovation or new construction. A new Senior Wellness Center opened in Congress Heights in 2002. 1800.8

The future of the Far Southeast/Southwest depends on active community engagement. The continued involvement of groups like the East of the River Community Development Corporation, Anacostia Economic Development Corporation, Far SW/SE Community Development Corporation, the United Planning Organization and the Far SE Family Strengthening Collaborative can help revitalize the community. Moreover, groups such as the Congress Heights and Fort Stanton Civic Associations, the Frederick Douglass Community Improvement Council, the Anacostia Coordinating Council and the Ward 8 Business Council provide a community resource and are an important voice in neighborhood and citywide affairs. 1800.9

Context

History 1801

While "the Far Southeast/Southwest" is a new name for this part of the city, the area itself has a long and interesting history. 1801.1

In 1662, the first land grant in the Washington area was made to George Thompson on land along the east bank of the Potomac River, extending from Blue Plains to what is now the St. Elizabeths Campus. The land was farmed as a tobacco plantation until 1862. In 1863, a portion of the tract was leased by the government as an army post called Camp Stoneman. The post became a resort after the Civil War until it burned down in 1888. Other late 19th century uses in the Far Southeast/Southwest included a race course, a one-room schoolhouse on what is now Congress Heights School, and dairy farms. St. Elizabeths Hospital was founded in 1852, growing into the largest federal psychiatric facility in the country by 1940. More than 7,000 residents lived there at its peak. 1801.2

Present-day Anacostia was established as Uniontown in 1854 as a bedroom community for Navy Yard workers. The neighborhood was a "whites-only" community until abolitionist Fredrick Douglass purchased his home on Cedar Hill in 1877. Many of the original wood frame and brick homes, along with some of the original commercial structures along Good Hope Road and Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, still remain today and are protected through their designation as a 25-block Historic District. 1801.3

By the turn of the century, the expanding capital city began to spread east of the Anacostia River. A seawall was constructed to protect the Anacostia shoreline and storm sewers were installed. In 1908, Washington Steel and Ordnance Company—best remembered as "the steel plant"—arrived at the foot of what is now Portland Street. The Army developed an airfield on the still rural land near the shoreline in 1917, with a ferry connection to Hains Point established a year later. The compound would eventually become Bolling Air Force Base and the Naval Air Station. 1801.4

Large farms still persisted through the 1920s and 30s. In fact, some of this area was still active farmland as recently as 50 years ago and longtime residents recall "moving out to the country" when they first arrived. Winding roads follow the natural contours of the land and reflect the area's development during a time when great suburban growth was occurring beyond the city limits. The grid and diagonal road system that characterizes much of the rest of Washington was not followed, resulting in a more organic pattern of development. 1801.5

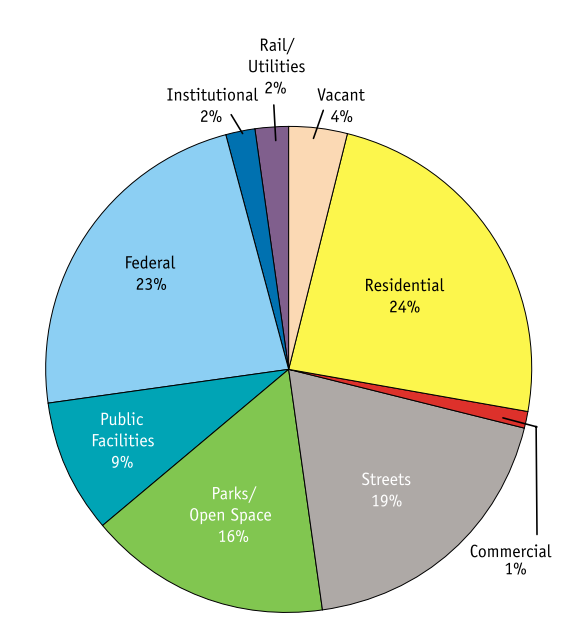
Many of the original wood frame and brick homes, along with some of the original commercial structures along Good Hope Road and Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, still remain today and are protected through their designation as a 25-block Historic District.

The Second World War was a period of great change in the Far Southeast/Southwest. The population grew by over 200 percent during the 1940s, as neighborhoods like Bellevue and Washington Highlands were developed. The wartime growth of Bolling Field and the Naval Research Laboratory fueled demand for housing, with thousands of garden apartments constructed. One of the complexes developed during this period was Barry Farm. Once literally a farm, the site was part of a 375-acre tract established in 1867 to provide freed slaves with an opportunity to become homeowners. 1801.6

After the War, apartments continued to be constructed, only now the arriving residents included many households displaced from urban renewal activities west of the Anacostia River. The influx of new residents was coupled with the closure of wartime industrial uses, such as the Navy armaments factory in Congress Heights. The combined effects of economic and social disruption triggered a long period of economic and population decline which started in the late 1950s and continued for four decades. By 2000, nearly one in six housing units in the Planning Area were vacant and more than one in three residents lived in poverty. 1801.7

Today, there are signs of a turn-around in many parts of the area. Transportation, economic development, and housing initiatives are underway, bringing new investment and promise of better times ahead. 1801.8

Figure 18.1:
Land Use Composition in Far Southeast/Southwest 1802.2



DC Office of Planning, 2006

Land Use 1802

Excluding water, the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area comprises 4,687 acres, which represents about 12 percent of the city's land area. Figure 18.1 indicates the land use mix in the area. 1802.1

A majority of the land within the Planning Area—amounting to two-thirds of the total—is publicly owned. Federal properties such as Bolling Air Force Base comprise about 23 percent of the total, and parks—most of which are also under federal control—comprise 16 percent of the total. Local public facilities, consisting primarily of Blue Plains, DC Village, and school campuses, make up nine percent. Roads make up 20 percent of the total area, slightly less than they do in the other nine Planning Areas. 1802.3

Residential uses make up 24 percent of the total area, or about 1,060 acres. Of this amount, more than half consists of garden apartments, and about one-quarter consists of row houses and townhomes. Garden apartments predominate in Washington Highlands, Hillsdale, Barry Farm, Fort Stanton, Shipley Terrace, Douglass, and Knox Hill. Only about 163 acres in the Planning Area consists of single-family detached homes, mostly located in Bellevue and Congress Heights. 1802.4

Henson Ridge

The area has very little commercial and industrial land. These uses make up 1.5 percent of the total area, and consist primarily of a commercial spine extending along Good Hope Road, Martin Luther King Junior Avenue, and South Capitol Street. Good Hope/Martin Luther King form a traditional "Main Street" through Historic Anacostia with many small storefronts and neighborhood businesses. Further south along this spine, there are neighborhood commercial centers at Malcolm X Avenue, Atlantic Avenue, and Southern Avenue. There are scattered small shopping centers and convenience stores elsewhere in the Planning Area. 1802.5

The Far Southeast/Southwest includes about 188 acres of vacant land. Although this represents just four percent of the Planning Area total, it represents nearly one-quarter of the vacant land in the entire District of Columbia. Most of this acreage is residentially zoned and is privately owned, suggesting the potential for much change during the coming years. 1802.6

Demographics 1803

Table 18.1 shows basic demographic data for Far Southeast/Southwest. In 2000, the Planning Area had a population of 64,600 or 11 percent of the city total. The area has lost five to 10 percent of its population in each decennial census since 1960. Estimates for 2005 indicate a leveling off in this decline over the last five years. Average household size in the Planning Area was 2.74 in 2005, which was substantially higher than the citywide average of 2.12. The larger household size suggests that there are more children here than elsewhere in the city. In fact, 36 percent of the area's residents were under 18 in 2000, compared to 20 percent in the city as a whole. 1803.1

Approximately 93 percent of the area's population is African-American, which is significantly higher than the citywide average of 60 percent. Only one percent of the area's residents are of Hispanic origin and less than two percent are foreign born. 1803.2

Table 18.1:

Far Southeast/Southwest at a Glance 1803.3

Basic Statistics	
Land Area (square miles)	7.3
Population	
1990	75,551
2000	64,618
2005 (estimated)*	64,000
2025 (projected)*	81,800
Households (2005)*	22,800
Household Population (2005)* (excludes group quarters)	62,500
Persons Per Household (2005)*	2.74
Jobs (2005)*	21,800
Density (persons per sq mile) (2005)*	8,800

Year 2000 Census Data Profile			
	Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area**		Citywide
	Total	% of Total	% of Total
Age			
Under 18	23,674	36.3%	20.0%
18-65	36,887	56.5%	67.8%
Over 65	4,681	7.2%	12.3%
Residents Below Poverty Level	24,419	37.8%	20.2%
Racial Composition			
White	2,979	4.6%	30.6%
Black	59,959	92.8%	60.0%
Native American	165	0.2%	0.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	399	0.6%	2.6%
Other	311	0.7%	3.8%
Multi-Racial	668	1.0%	2.6%
Hispanic Origin	773	1.1%	7.9%
Foreign-Born Residents	1.5%	1.9%	12.9%
Tenure			
Owner Households	4,499	19.9%	40.7%
Renter Households	18,137	80.1%	59.3%
Population 5+ yrs in same house in 2000 as in 1995	30,019	51.8%	46.9%
Housing Occupancy			
Occupied Units	22,636	84.1%	90.4%
Vacant Units	4,272	15.9%	9.6%
Housing by Unit Type			
1-unit detached	1,601	5.9%	13.1%
1-unit attached	6,114	22.7%	26.4%
2-4 units	4,003	14.9%	11.0%
5-9 units	5,299	19.7%	8.0%
10-19 units	7,819	29.1%	10.3%
20-49 units	615	2.2%	7.4%
50+ units	1,456	5.4%	23.3%
Mobile/other	0	0%	0.2%

* *Figures noted with an asterisk are estimates developed by the Office of Planning and the Department of Employment Services based on a variety of data sources.*

** *Total population of subcategories may not match 2000 Census totals due to sampling errors.*

Housing Characteristics 1804

There were about 26,900 housing units in the Far Southeast/Southwest as of the 2000 Census. About 16 percent of these units were vacant—nearly double the citywide average. Compared to the rest of the city, the Planning Area has an abundance of small apartment buildings. In fact, 20 percent of the housing units were in 5-9 unit buildings, and almost 30 percent were in 10-19 unit buildings. Both of these percentages are more than double the citywide averages. Only about six percent of the housing units were single family detached homes, less than half the citywide figure. 1804.1

As one might expect given the high percentage of apartments, the homeownership rate in the Planning Area is low. In fact, it was 20 percent in 2000—compared to 41 percent citywide. However, there are indications that the ownership rate is on the rise; it was only 14 percent in 1980 and much of the housing built since 2000 has been owner-occupied. 1804.2

Income and Employment 1805

Information provided by the Department of Employment Services and the Office of Planning shows there were 21,800 jobs in the Far Southeast/Southwest in 2005. Most are government related and are associated with the military and St. Elizabeths. As of the 2000 Census the median household income for the area was $23,290 per year, or about one-half the city's median income of $45,927. 1805.1

In the fourth quarter of 2005, the unemployment rate in the Far Southeast/Southwest was 13 percent. This was four times higher than the rate in Upper Northwest neighborhoods and more than three times the average for the Washington region. Data on commute patterns indicates that 31 percent of the employed residents in the Planning Area commuted to jobs in Central Washington. Some eight percent worked within the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area itself, and 34 percent commuted to jobs elsewhere in the city. The remaining 26 percent commuted to Maryland or Virginia. 1805.2

Projections 1806

Based on land availability, recent development activity, planning policies, and regional growth trends, significant growth is expected during the next 20 years. The planning area is expected to grow from about 22,800 households in 2005 to 30,100 households in 2025, an increase of about 32 percent. By 2025, the area is expected to have a population of almost 82,000. While this is still fewer residents than the area had during the peak years of the 1950s, it marks a major turnaround after five decades of decline. The projections assume that vacant and abandoned housing units in the Planning Area will be refurbished or replaced, and that new units will be developed on vacant and underutilized sites. 1806.1

Based on land availability, recent development activity, planning policies, and regional growth trends, significant growth is expected during the next 20 years. The planning area is expected to grow from about 22,800 households in 2005 to 30,100 households in 2025, an increase of about 32 percent. Approximately 6,000 additional jobs are forecast in the Planning Area during the next two decades.

Oxon Run Townhomes

A period of sustained growth in the Planning Area has already started. Between 2000 and 2005, an astonishing 8,000 units of housing have been constructed or rehabilitated, including more than 1,000 new units in HOPE VI projects at the former Stanton Dwellings, Frederick Douglass Homes and Valley Green public housing developments. Future housing development is expected around the Anacostia and Congress Heights Metro stations, on the East Campus of St. Elizabeths Campus, at the now vacant Sheridan Terrace housing complex, and at Barry Farm. Infill development is also expected along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, South Capitol Street, and on scattered vacant sites. 1806.2

Approximately 6,000 additional jobs are forecast in the Planning Area during the next two decades. Future job centers include St. Elizabeths, DC Village, and the Anacostia Metrorail Station and Gateway areas.[1] 1806.3

Planning and Development Priorities 1807

Three Comprehensive Plan workshops took place in the Far Southeast/Southwest during 2005 and 2006. Many residents, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners, and civic association leaders provided input at these meetings, discussing local planning issues and priorities. There have also been many meetings in the community not directly connected to the Comprehensive Plan, but focusing on other long-range planning issues. Topics such as the rebuilding of the 11th Street and South Capitol Street Bridges, development of Poplar Point, the redevelopment of Camp Simms and St. Elizabeths, and streetscape improvements for Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE have all been addressed at public meetings in the last two years. 1807.1

Several important messages came across in these meetings, including: 1807.2

a. An improved educational system, job and vocational training system, and social service safety net is essential to the area's future. A 40 percent high school dropout rate is unacceptable—and the double-digit unemployment that results in part from poor education also is unacceptable. Improved job training and adult education are essential to alleviate unemployment, under-employment, and poverty—and additional facilities to house these services are needed. As noted elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan, establishing a community college or branch campus of the University of the District of Columbia east of the Anacostia River could go a long way toward preparing youth and adults for good, quality jobs in the District's economy. Good access to transit is essential to connect residents with jobs in the District and elsewhere in the region.

1 These forecasts were prepared before the Department of Homeland Security announced its plans for the west campus of St. Elizabeths; consequently, actual employment growth in the Planning Area could significantly exceed 6,000 jobs.

b. The culture of drugs and violence still destroys the lives of too many youth and families in the community. While the root causes of this problem are complex, greater investment in schools, libraries, child care centers, recreation centers, parks, and health clinics provides an important start toward improved public safety. Many residents have advocated for improved public facilities and services; the development that is planned for this area over the next 20 years should be leveraged to make this a reality. The Anacostia and Washington Highlands Libraries must be reconstructed. Anacostia High, Ketcham, Birney, Savoy, Ballou, and other schools must be modernized. Public facility improvements should be the cornerstone of any revitalization or neighborhood economic development program in this area.

CVS Regional Learning Center and DC One-Stop Career Center on South Capitol Street

c. The Far Southeast/Southwest needs more housing suitable for families and young homeowners. The concentration of poverty in the community has resulted in part from the concentration of poorly maintained rental apartments and public housing, and few opportunities for home ownership. The established single family, row house, and duplex neighborhoods should be protected and enhanced. Additional low to moderate density housing should be encouraged as sites like St. Elizabeths (east campus) and Sheridan Terrace are redeveloped. In some areas, rezoning may be needed to promote the desired housing types—currently, much of the area is zoned "R-5-A" which perpetuates the garden apartment pattern.

d. The community recognizes that there are opportunities for increased density within the Planning Area—especially around the Metro stations at Anacostia and Congress Heights, at St. Elizabeths, and in neighborhood centers along Martin Luther King Junior Avenue and South Capitol Street. Transit-oriented development in these areas can provide opportunities for seniors, households without cars, young renters, and others. Residents would like an array of housing choices, but believe that higher-density housing should be limited to the areas listed above. Beyond these areas, many residents have expressed the opinion that deteriorating apartment complexes should be replaced with less dense housing over time. In fact, this is what has happened at Frederick Douglass, Stanton Dwellings, and Valley Green, with public housing replaced by mixed income townhomes and detached units. Many residents asked that the remaining vacant sites in the community be planned and zoned for single family homes rather than more garden apartments.

e. Housing maintenance is a big issue in the Planning Area, and affects the lives of residents in many ways. Residents are concerned about rising costs—especially rising rents and property taxes. The demolition of much of the area's public housing has displaced

More retail services are needed in the community, especially supermarkets and sit-down restaurants. The community also needs basic services like full-service gas stations and hardware stores, so residents do not have to travel to Prince George's County to shop.

some long-time residents and created concerns about future redevelopment. There is an interest in preserving the affordability of some of the area's rental housing through rehabilitation and renovation. On the other hand, there are also concerns about lax code enforcement, unpermitted construction, and a continued need to clean up vacant and abandoned properties.

f. More retail services are needed in the community, especially supermarkets and sit-down restaurants. The community also needs basic services like full-service gas stations and hardware stores, so residents do not have to travel to Prince George's County to shop. The Camp Simms Shopping Center is an important step in the right direction; additional investment should be made in the existing retail centers along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, Good Hope Road, Alabama Road, and South Capitol Streets. Façade improvements, streetscape improvements, and upgraded public transit along these streets can help existing businesses, and promote new businesses—with the added benefit of creating new jobs for area residents.

g. Traffic congestion is a problem—with much of the traffic generated by non-residents passing through the area or using local streets as short-cuts when I-295 is congested. Traffic "calming" measures are needed to reduce cut-through traffic, and to slow down speeding traffic and reduce unsafe driving. Public transit improvements also are needed. Approximately half of the area's households do not own a car and rely on the Metrobus or Metrorail to get around. Residents are concerned that projects like the Anacostia streetcar will reduce bus service, especially across the Anacostia River.

h. Despite its proximity to the waterfront, much of the Far Southeast/Southwest is cut off from the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers. Access to the Potomac River is limited due to the uses along the shoreline (Bolling AFB and the Blue Plains treatment plant). Anacostia River access is difficult due to the I-295 freeway, railroad tracks, and other barriers. Crossing the river on the South Capitol Street or 11th/12th Street bridges is difficult, if not impossible, for pedestrians and bicyclists. Better access to Poplar Point and Anacostia Park on the north, and to Oxon Cove on the south, should be achieved in the future. Historic Anacostia was born as a waterfront community and its identity as a waterfront community should be restored in the future.

i. The Far Southeast/Southwest contains hilly topography. A prominent ridgeline crosses the area, affording great views of Washington and abundant natural scenery. In some cases development has been insensitive to topography, not only missing an opportunity for better design but also causing soil erosion

and unnecessary grading and tree removal. The disregard for the natural environment also manifests itself in illegal dumping—a problem along Oxon Run, in other streambeds, and on vacant land throughout the area. A cleaner environment, and preservation of the area's natural beauty, are both high priorities.

Despite its proximity to the waterfront, much of the Far Southeast/ Southwest is cut off from the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers. Access to the Potomac River is limited due to the uses along the shoreline (Bolling AFB and the Blue Plains treatment plant).

Policies and Actions

FSS-1 General Policies

FSS-1.1 Guiding Growth and Neighborhood Conservation 1808

The following general policies and actions should guide growth and neighborhood conservation decisions in the Far Southeast/Southwest. These policies and actions should be considered in tandem with those in the citywide elements of the Comprehensive Plan. 1808.1

Policy FSS-1.1.1: Directing Growth

Concentrate future housing development and employment growth in the Far Southeast/Southwest around the Congress Heights and Anacostia Metro Stations, on the St. Elizabeths Hospital Campus, and along the "Great Streets" corridors of Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE and South Capitol Street. Provide improved transit and automobile access to these areas and improve their visual and urban design qualities. 1808.2

Policy FSS-1.1.2: Conservation of Lower Density Neighborhoods

Protect existing single family housing within the Far Southeast/Southwest by appropriately designating such areas as "Low Density Residential" on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map, and by zoning such areas for single family, rather than multi-family housing. 1808.3

Policy FSS-1.1.3: Rehabilitation of Multi-Family Housing

Support rehabilitation and stronger and more consistent code enforcement for the many garden apartments in the Planning Area, particularly in Shipley Terrace, Knox Hill, and Washington Highlands. Support city programs which provide financial assistance to renovate such complexes, with the condition that a significant portion of the units are preserved as affordable after renovation. 1808.4

Policy FSS-1.1.4: Infill Housing Development

Support infill housing development on vacant sites within the Far Southeast/Southwest, especially in Historic Anacostia, and in the Hillsdale, Fort Stanton, Bellevue, Congress Heights and Washington Highlands neighborhoods. 1808.5

Wheeler Creek

Policy FSS-1.1.5: Transportation Improvements

Undertake transportation improvements and design changes that reduce the amount of "cut through" commuter traffic on local streets. These changes should include new bridges over the Anacostia River, redesigned ramps, and better connections between Downtown, I-295, and Suitland Parkway. 1808.6

Policy FSS-1.1.6: Anacostia Streetcar Project

Coordinate land use and transportation decisions along the proposed route of the Anacostia Streetcar between Bolling AFB and the Anacostia Gateway area. Future development along the streetcar line should be clustered around proposed transit stops. In addition, the streetcar route should be designed and planned to minimize impacts on traffic flow and to avoid negative impacts on the historic character of the Anacostia community. 1808.7

Policy FSS-1.1.7: Retail Development

Support additional retail development within the Far Southeast/Southwest, especially in Historic Anacostia, and in the neighborhood centers at Malcolm X/Martin Luther King Jr Avenue and South Capitol/Atlantic. Projects which combine upper story housing or offices and ground floor retail are particularly encouraged in these three locations. 1808.8

Policy FSS-1.1.8: Supermarkets and Services

Attract additional supermarkets, family-style restaurants, full-service gas stations, and general merchandise stores to the Far Southeast/Southwest. The area's larger commercial sites should be marketed to potential investors, and economic and regulatory incentives should be used to attract business. The upgrading and renovation of the area's existing auto-oriented shopping centers is strongly encouraged. 1808.9

Policy FSS-1.1.9: Parking

Support additional dedicated off-street parking and loading areas in the business districts at Martin Luther King Jr Avenue/Malcolm X Avenue, Alabama Avenue/23rd Street, and Historic Anacostia. Work with local merchants in each area to identify potential sites. 1808.10

Policy FSS-1.1.10: Minority/Small Disadvantaged Business Development

Provide technical assistance to minority-owned and small businesses in the Far Southeast/Southwest to improve the range of goods and services available to the community. Joint venture opportunities, minority business set-asides, business incubator centers, and assistance to community-based development organizations should all be used to jumpstart local business and provide jobs in the community. 1808.11

Policy FSS-1.1.11: Workforce Development Centers

Support the development of additional vocational schools, job training facilities, and workforce development centers. Encourage the retention of existing job training centers, and the development of new centers on such sites as the St. Elizabeths Campus and DC Village to increase employment opportunities for local residents. 1808.12

Policy FSS-1.1.12: Increasing Home Ownership

Address the low rate of home ownership in the Far Southeast/Southwest by providing more owner-occupied housing in new construction, encouraging the construction of single family homes, and by supporting the conversion of rental apartments to owner-occupied housing, with an emphasis on units that are affordable to current tenants. 1808.13

Policy FSS-1.1.13: School Modernization

Strongly support the modernization of schools in the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area. Plans for additional housing must be accompanied by a commitment to improving educational facilities to meet current and future needs, and recognition that education is among the community's highest priorities. 1808.14

Action FSS-1.1.A: R-5-A Zoning

Evaluate the continued appropriateness of the R-5-A zoning that occurs throughout the Far Southeast/Southwest Planning Area. Currently, this zoning applies to many row house, duplex, and single family areas within the community. Rezoning should be considered to better match existing character, and to ensure that future infill development is compatible. The use of R-5-A and other, more dense multi-family zones should continue in areas where multi-family development exists or is desirable in the future. 1808.15

Action FSS-1.1.B: Façade Improvements

Implement urban design and façade improvements in the established commercial districts along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE, Good Hope Road SE and South Capitol Street SW. 1808.16

Action FSS-1.1.C: Retail Development

Complete construction of the Camp Simms retail center by 2008 and support efforts to bring quality retail services to the site. 1808.17

Action FSS-1.1.D: UDC Satellite Campus

Pursue the development of a satellite campus for University of the District of Columbia or another university (in consultation with local colleges and universities) either in this Planning Area or in the adjacent Planning Area to the north. Possible sites could include vacated DC Public Schools, the St. Elizabeths Campus, Poplar Point, and the Anacostia Metro Station area. 1808.18

Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center

Action FSS-1.1.E: East of the River Development Zone Initiatives

Continue implementation of the various East of the River Development Zone Initiatives, designed to foster housing and economic development along Alabama Avenue SE and Martin Luther King Jr Avenue (in Anacostia) through financial and tax incentives. 1808.19

Action FSS-1.1.F: Transportation Improvements

Implement the recommendations of the Middle Anacostia Crossings Study, prepared by the District Department of Transportation in 2005. These recommendations include redesign of interchanges along I-295 to reduce traffic congestion on surface streets in Historic Anacostia and its vicinity. 1808.20

Action FSS-1.1.G: Streetcar Extension

Study the feasibility of extending the proposed Anacostia streetcar from Bolling Air Force Base south to DC Village and National Harbor. 1808.21

FSS-1.2 Conserving and Enhancing Community Resources 1809

Policy FSS-1.2.1: Health Care Facilities

Sustain and support existing health care facilities in Far Southeast/Southwest and develop additional health care and social service facilities to respond to the urgent unmet need for primary care, pre- and post-natal care, child care, youth development, family counseling, and drug and alcohol treatment centers. Pursue co-location or consolidation of these facilities with other public facilities where possible, and where the uses are compatible. 1809.1

Policy FSS-1.2.2: Historic Resources

Protect buildings of important significance in the Far Southeast/Southwest community, such as the old Anacostia Museum site (also known the Good Samaritan Foundation). Support the designation of additional historic landmarks within the Far Southeast/Southwest neighborhoods. 1809.2

Policy FSS-1.2.3: Connecting To the River

Reconnect the neighborhoods of the Far Southeast/Southwest to the Anacostia River, particularly through the redevelopment of Poplar Point, implementation of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative park and trail improvements, and reconstruction of the Anacostia River bridges. 1809.3

Policy FSS-1.2.4: Designing With Nature

Protect and enhance the wooded ridges and slopes of the Far Southeast/Southwest, particularly views of the monumental core of the city from the major north-south ridge that crosses the area. Development should be particularly sensitive to environmental features along Oxon Run Parkway, Shepherd Parkway (along I-295), and on the St. Elizabeths and DC Village sites. 1809.4

Policy FSS-1.2.5: Fort Circle Parks

Improve the Fort Circle Parks within the Far Southeast/Southwest, including upgrades to the Fort Circle Trail, and additional recreational facilities and amenities at Fort Stanton Park. 1809.5

Policy FSS-1.2.6: Soil Erosion

Correct existing soil erosion problems in the Far Southeast/Southwest, particularly in Congress Heights, Buena Vista, and Washington Highlands, and ensure that new development mitigates potential impacts on soil stability. 1809.6

Policy FSS-1.2.7: Blue Plains

Work with WASA to reduce foul odors at the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant. Land uses on DC Village and elsewhere in the vicinity of the plant should be regulated in a way that limits the exposure of future residents to odors and other hazards associated with the plant. 1809.7

Action FSS-1.2.A: Oxon Run Trail

Upgrade the Oxon Run Trail and extend it to Oxon Cove, consistent with the City's Bicycle Master Plan. Develop additional trail links between Oxon Run, the Fort Circle Parks, and the Anacostia River. 1809.8

See the Lower Anacostia Waterfront/Near Southwest Element for additional policies on the Anacostia River and its parks, including Stickfoot Creek.

View from Fort Stanton

FSS-2 Policy Focus Areas 1810

The Comprehensive Plan has identified seven areas in the Far Southeast/Southwest as "policy focus areas," indicating that they require a level of direction and guidance above that in the prior section of this Area Element and in the citywide elements (see Map 18.1 and Table 18.2). These areas are:

- Historic Anacostia
- St. Elizabeths Campus
- Barry Farm/Hillsdale/Fort Stanton
- Congress Heights Metro Station
- Congress Heights Commercial District
- Bellevue/Washington Highlands
- DC Village. 1810.1

Table 18.2:

Policy Focus Areas Within and Adjacent to Far Southeast/ Southwest 1810.2

Within Far Southeast/Southwest	
2.1	Historic Anacostia (see p. 18-16)
2.2	St. Elizabeths Campus (see p. 18-19)
2.3	Barry Farm/Hillsdale/Fort Stanton (see p. 18-21)
2.4	Congress Heights Metro Station (see p. 18-22)
2.5	Congress Heights Commercial District (see p. 18-22)
2.6	Bellevue/Washington Highlands (see p. 18-24)
2.7	DC Village (see p. 18-25)
Adjacent to Far Southeast/Southwest	
1	Poplar Point (see p. 19-24)
2	Skyland (see p. 17-23)

FSS-2.1 Historic Anacostia 1811

Since the 1980s, much of the planning activity east of the Anacostia River has focused on Historic Anacostia. The area always has had symbolic importance, as it is the oldest area of continuous settlement east of the river and the gateway to the East of the River neighborhoods. Its narrow streets, wood-frame row houses, well-defined business district, and hilly terrain create the ambiance of a small historic mill town—yet is literally minutes away from the US Capitol. The extension of the Metrorail Green Line in the early 1990s made the area more accessible and has created opportunities for revival. 1811.1

Revitalization has been slow, but the area is on the cusp on positive change. The business district was designated as a DC Main Street in 2002, and commercial façade and streetscape improvements have been completed. The abandoned Nichols School has been beautifully refurbished and reopened as Thurgood Marshall Academy. A new streetcar line is planned, and a new government center will soon break ground at the foot of the 11th and 12th Street bridges. Future development at Poplar Point and St. Elizabeths should also help Anacostia rebound. 1811.2

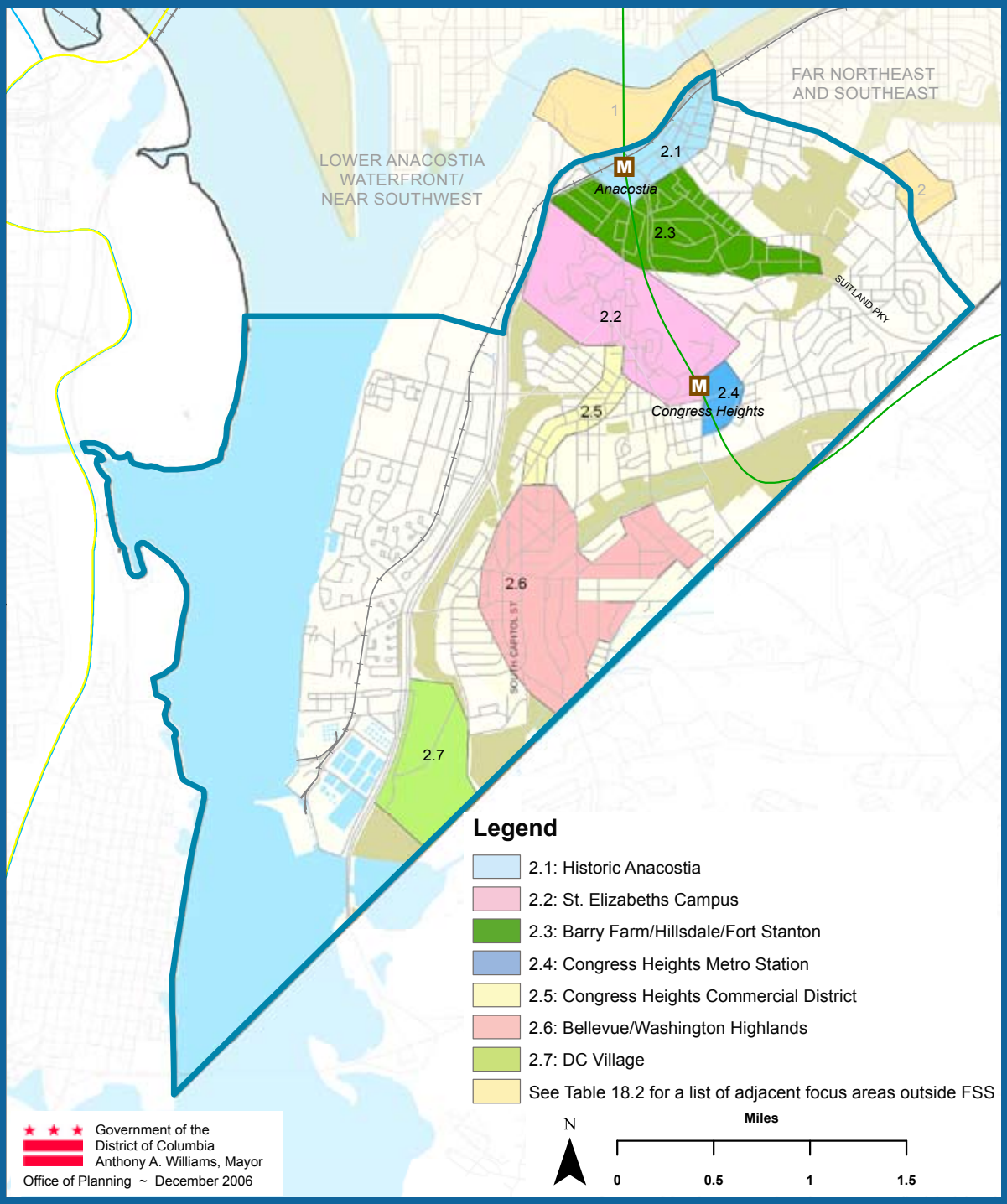
An Anacostia Transit Area Strategic Investment and Development Plan was prepared in 2004 and 2005 to provide guidance on several key sites along the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue corridor from the 4-acre Metro station site on the south to the "gateway" at Good Hope Road on the north. The Plan proposes mixed use (residential and commercial) development on vacant sites, restoration of historic buildings, better ground floor retail, a return to two-way traffic on MLK Jr Avenue, and improved connections to parks and adjacent neighborhoods. Three distinct centers of activity are identified—these are summarized in Policy FSS-2.1.2 below. 1811.3

Policy FSS-2.1.1: Historic Anacostia Revitalization

Encourage the continued revitalization of Historic Anacostia as a safe, walkable, and attractive neighborhood, with restored historic buildings and compatible, well-designed mixed use projects. New development should serve a variety of income groups and household types and should restore needed retail services to the community. 1811.4

Map 18.1:

Far Southeast/Southwest Policy Focus Areas 1810.3



Historic Anacostia

Policy FSS-2.1.2: Activity Concentrations

Concentrate development activity in Historic Anacostia at the following locations:

a. The Metro station, including the station site and the adjacent Bethelehem Baptist Church site, which should be developed with a mix of single and multi-family homes with ground floor retail;

b. The W Street/Martin Luther King Jr Avenue area, where diverse new housing opportunities and ground floor retail should be encouraged on parking lots and underutilized sites; and

c. The Gateway area (at Good Hope Road), where a government center is planned, and additional opportunities exist for residences, shops, offices, and arts uses.

Densities and intensities should be compatible with the area's historic character and should generally be in the moderate range, with medium density on the Metro station site. 1811.5

Policy FSS-2.1.3: Pedestrian Connectivity

Improve connections between the Anacostia Metro station, Poplar Point, Anacostia Park, Cedar Hill, the Good Hope Road area, and Hillsdale/Fort Stanton, especially for pedestrians and transit users. 1811.6

Policy FSS-2.1.4: Historic Preservation

Encourage continued historic preservation efforts in Anacostia, including the restoration of commercial facades along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue and Good Hope Road and the rehabilitation of older and historic residential and commercial buildings. 1811.7

Action FSS-2.1.A: Government Center

Complete the Anacostia Gateway Government Center, which will include the headquarters for the District Department of Transportation, by 2008. Ensure that streetscape and landscape improvements take place concurrently. 1811.8

Action FSS-2.1.B: Transportation and Public Realm Improvements

Implement the transportation improvements identified in the Anacostia Strategic Development and Investment Plan, including the Anacostia streetcar, pedestrian safety improvements, new landscaping and street trees, improved signage, redesign of the Metrobus Plaza, and development of new off-street parking facilities. In addition, Martin Luther King Jr Avenue SE should be restored as a two-way street to improve retail accessibility. 1811.9

Action FSS-2.1.C: Public Facility Improvements

Restore cultural and public facilities throughout Historic Anacostia, including Savoy and Burney Schools, the Anacostia Public Library, and the historic Carver Theater. 1811.10

Action FSS-2.1.D: 1900 Block of Martin Luther King Jr Avenue

Ensure that future development on this block includes rehabilitation plans for the existing structures in order to preserve their historic character. 1811.11

See the Anacostia Transit Station Strategic Investment and Development Plan for additional detail.

FSS-2.2 St. Elizabeths Hospital Campus 1812

The St. Elizabeths Campus contains 336 acres and is one of the most historically significant and strategically located properties in the entire District of Columbia. It is divided into a 154-acre East Campus under District control, and a 183-acre West Campus under Federal control. The East Campus was transferred to the District by the federal government in 1987 and continues to be used as a mental health facility. In 2006, it housed about 500 patients. In 2003, the District constructed a new Unified Communications Center on a portion of the site. Construction is now starting on a new psychiatric hospital, freeing up the remainder of the site for other uses. 1812.1

A Framework Plan for the East Campus was completed in 2005. The Plan recommends a phased development program, with up to 1,035 additional housing units, 540,000 square feet of office and retail space, new academic and cultural facilities, and new city parks and plazas. Adaptive reuse of many of the existing buildings is proposed. The Plan takes particular care to integrate the East Campus into the adjacent Congress Heights neighborhood, and to maximize access to the Congress Heights Metro station. Four development areas have been identified, each defined by a unique mix of uses, density, scale, and character. An extensive network of public open space also is proposed, including formal plazas and quadrangles, linear parks, lawns, and forested land. 1812.2

The fate of the West Campus has been in flux for more than a decade. Many of the site's historic buildings are in disrepair and will require costly renovation. In 2005, the federal government announced its intent to develop the site as a secured office complex for the US Coast Guard. Other divisions of the federal department of Homeland Security also may relocate there; current estimates call for between 4,000 and 14,000 federal employees. Improvements to the road and transit network will be required as this area

A Framework Plan for the East Campus was completed in 2005. The Plan recommends a phased development program, with up to 1,035 additional housing units, 540,000 million square feet of office and retail space, new academic and cultural facilities, and new city parks and plazas.

St. Elizabeths Hospital Campus

redevelops. Great care must be taken to retain the historic proportions of the site and its buildings and landscapes. The General Services Administration is in the process of doing a master plan for the West Campus. 1812.3

Policy FSS-2.2.1: St. Elizabeths East Campus

Redevelop the East Campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital as a new community containing a mix of uses, including mixed density housing, retail shops, offices, a comprehensive mental health care facility, and parks and open space. Other uses such as satellite college campuses, civic uses, and local public facilities should be incorporated. 1812.4

Policy FSS-2.2.2: St. Elizabeths West Campus

Work collaboratively with the federal government on the reuse of the West Campus. Particular priority should be given to preserve historic resources—including not only the buildings, but the historic open spaces and massing of buildings on the site. To the greatest extent feasible, redevelopment of the West Campus should create new publicly accessible open space and should be coordinated with redevelopment of the East Campus. 1812.5

Policy FSS-2.2.3: Relationship To Nearby Uses

Ensure that future development on St. Elizabeths enhances the surrounding neighborhood. It is particularly important that the site's reuse is coordinated with planning for the nearby Anacostia and Congress Heights Metro Stations, Poplar Point, Barry Farm, and the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue/ Malcolm X shopping district. 1812.6

Policy FSS-2.2.4: Development Density

Provide development densities and intensities on the site that are compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods—with moderate to medium density residential and commercial on most of the site, and higher densities clustered in the area closest to the Congress Heights Metrorail station. 1812.7

Action FSS-2.2.A: St. Elizabeths East Campus Framework Plan

Complete the Framework Plan for the East Campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital and submit it to the DC Council as a Small Area Plan. 1812.8

Action FSS-2.2.B: New St. Elizabeths Hospital

Complete construction of the new 300-bed facility on the east campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital to house mentally ill patients, while maintaining current service levels for outpatient treatment. 1812.9

FSS-2.3 Barry Farm, Hillsdale, and Fort Stanton 1813

The neighborhoods of Barry Farm, Hillsdale, and Fort Stanton are sandwiched between Historic Anacostia on the north and the St. Elizabeths Campus and Suitland Parkway on the South. While these three

neighborhoods are currently home to more than 8,000 residents, they also contain some of the largest vacant sites east of the Anacostia River. For example, the 9-acre Sheridan Terrace site has sat vacant since 1996, when the apartment complex that once stood there was demolished. The Focus Area includes one of the city's largest public housing complexes at Barry Farm, the historic Fort Stanton Park, and the Smithsonian Institution Anacostia Museum. Topography in the area is hilly, affording panoramic views of the central city. 1813.1

Barry Farm

This area has been called out in the Area Element for three reasons. First, Barry Farm has been identified as a potential "new community" and policies are needed to guide future change. Second, policies are needed to ensure that development is sensitive to the hilly terrain and the area's established moderate to low density character. Third, policies should ensure that this area is better connected to the fast-changing areas on the north and south, with improved access to transit, parks, jobs, public facilities, and retail services. Barry Farm, Hillsdale, and Fort Stanton should not be left behind as the areas around them move forward. 1813.2

Policy FSS-2.3.1: Barry Farm New Community

Encourage the revitalization of Barry Farm in a manner which:

a. Ensures one-for-one replacement of any public housing that is removed, along with measures to assist residents and avoid dislocation or personal hardship;

b. Creates additional opportunities for workforce and market rate housing on the site, consistent with the goals of the city's New Communities program; and

c. Provides new amenities such as community facilities, parks, and improved access to the Anacostia River and Anacostia Metro Station.

While some increase in density will be required to meet the one-for-one replacement requirement, consideration should be given to including nearby vacant land in the New Community site, so that densities may remain in the moderate to medium range. 1813.3

Policy FSS-2.3.2: Housing Opportunities

Encourage compatible infill development on vacant and underutilized land within the Hillsdale and Fort Stanton neighborhoods, with an emphasis on low to moderate density housing designed for families. Special care should be taken to respect the area's topography, avoid erosion, improve the street and circulation system, and mitigate any traffic increases caused by new development. 1813.4

Congress Heights Metro station site

Policy FSS-2.3.3: Connections To Adjacent Areas

Improve pedestrian and road connections between the Barry Farm, Hillsdale, and Fort Stanton communities, and between these communities and the future developments at Poplar Point and the St. Elizabeths Campus. Residents should be able to safely walk or bicycle to the Anacostia Metro station, Anacostia Park, and Fort Stanton Park. 1813.5

Action FSS-2.3.A: Sheridan Terrace

Consider adding the vacant Sheridan Terrace public housing site and other nearby vacant sites to the Barry Farm New Community proposal, in order to improve the economic viability of the proposal and ensure that mixed income, family-oriented housing can be provided. 1813.6

FSS-2.4 Congress Heights Metro Station 1814

The Congress Heights Metrorail Station is the last station on the Metrorail Green Line before leaving the District of Columbia. The station is about five acres in size and consists of a surface parking lot and subway entrance. Its location on the southeastern edge of the St. Elizabeths Campus makes it a critical part of the hospital redevelopment plans, and suggests it will become an increasingly important gateway to the area in the coming years. Land uses in the immediate vicinity include Malcolm X Elementary School, a Police sub-station, apartment complexes, single family homes, and an historic Jewish cemetery. Major projects within a half-mile of the station include the 600-unit Henson Ridge development and the Camp Simms shopping center and housing development. 1814.1

The Station is one of the newest in the Metro system, having opened in 2001. Passenger volumes are currently the lowest in the city. It presents an important joint development opportunity, with the potential for new housing, retail, public, and open space uses, as well as Metro parking and bus transfer points. Future development will need to establish appropriate transitions to nearby uses, which are generally low to moderate density. Additional community-based planning for the area is needed to determine the right mix of uses and to address a variety of land use, transportation, and urban design issues in the Congress Heights community. 1814.2

Policy FSS-2.4.1: Congress Heights Metro Station Mixed Use

Encourage reuse of the Congress Heights Metro station site with mixed use moderate density residential and commercial development. Development on the site should be compatible with the adjacent lower density neighborhood to the west and south, provide a connection to the future development on the St. Elizabeths Campus, and create a stronger sense of identity and gateway for the Congress Heights neighborhood. 1814.3

Action FSS-2.4.A: Congress Heights Small Area Plan

Prepare a Small Area Plan for the Congress Heights Metrorail Station and the surrounding Congress Heights neighborhood. The Plan should include more specific detail on the market for different uses on the site; the desired scale, mix, and intensity of development; future circulation patterns; and provisions for open space and public facilities. 1814.4

Congress Heights commercial district

FSS-2.5 Congress Heights Commercial District 1815

This Policy Focus Area extends along Martin Luther King Jr Avenue from the edge of the St. Elizabeths Campus south to the intersection of South Capitol Street. Land uses are mostly commercial between St. Elizabeths and Alabama Avenue and residential between Alabama Avenue and South Capitol. There are a range of other uses along this mile-long corridor, including churches, non-profits, and health clinics. The heart of the area is the intersection of Malcolm X Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr Avenue, which is the main commercial center for the Congress Heights community. 1815.1

Previous Comprehensive Plans for the city have identified this business district for revitalization, and a number of city and non-profit initiatives have been launched to assist in its renewal. In 2005, the corridor was named as part of the city's Great Streets program. Its proximity to the redeveloping St. Elizabeths Campus means that it will continue to be an important center of neighborhood commerce. Efforts to strengthen and revitalize the corridor should continue, with infill development creating opportunities for new business and housing. 1815.2

Policy FSS-2.5.1: Martin Luther King Jr/Malcolm X Business District

Encourage new commercial and small, local business development in the shopping area at Martin Luther King Jr Avenue and Malcolm X Avenue. Strengthen this area as the commercial hub of the Congress Heights neighborhood, and upgrade the mix of uses to better meet neighborhood needs. 1815.3

Policy FSS-2.5.2: Great Street Housing Opportunities

Pursue opportunities for additional multi-family housing, possibly with ground floor retail or office uses, along the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue corridor between St. Elizabeths Hospital and Alabama Avenue. 1815.4

Policy FSS-2.5.3: Business Improvement

Support the continued efforts of local merchants to improve the Congress Heights shopping district, provide adequate off-street parking and loading areas, manage on-street parking more effectively, and enhance building facades and storefronts. 1815.5

Bellevue shopping district

Action FSS-2.5.A: Coordination with St. Elizabeths Development

Coordinate planning and reinvestment activities along the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue corridor with planning and development of the St. Elizabeths Campus. Recognize the opportunity for new businesses and services to meet the future demand created by new jobs and housing on the former Hospital site. 1815.6

Action FSS-2.5.B: Main Street Designation

Consider the designation of the Martin Luther King Jr Avenue commercial district as a Main Street under the District's Main Streets program. 1815.7

FSS-2.6 Bellevue/Washington Highlands 1816

The Bellevue commercial district includes several blocks around the intersection of South Capitol and Atlantic Streets. The area is a traditional neighborhood center, including small retailers, a bank, food and liquor stores, a gas station, personal services, a drugstore/training center for pharmacy technicians, and a Department of Employment Services (DOES) branch office. It includes the former Atlantic Theater and the Washington Highlands Library, and is adjacent to the new campus of Patterson Elementary School. 1816.1

In 2002, the area was designated a Strategic Neighborhood Improvement Program (SNIP) area by the District. The program's goals were to improve the area's commercial and retail opportunities, increase home ownership and housing choices, improve the quality of infrastructure, enhance workforce and youth development opportunities, and promote public safety. A local advisory committee was created to prepare recommendations as part of this process. These included buying vacant homes for resale to non-profit developers; improving streets, sidewalks, and infrastructure; repaving the street; and upgrading public facilities such as the library. Efforts to strengthen South Capitol/Atlantic as a neighborhood center should continue in the future. South Capitol is part of the city's Great Streets program and has been targeted for additional investment and economic development. 1816.2

The neighborhoods surrounding the commercial district include a large number of garden apartments, many in deteriorating condition. Some of these apartments were quickly constructed during the boom years of the 1940s and may need replacement or substantial renovation during the coming years. The policies below ensure that neighborhood character will be enhanced and that housing choices will be retained as these changes take place. 1816.3

Policy FSS-2.6.1: Neighborhood Shopping Improvements

Encourage new commercial development and adaptive reuse of existing commercial buildings in the South Capitol/Atlantic Streets commercial

district. Development should provide improved commercial goods and services to the surrounding Bellevue and Washington Highlands neighborhoods. 1816.4

Policy FSS-2.6.2: Business Improvement

Support the continued efforts of local merchants to improve the Bellevue shopping district, provide adequate off-street parking and loading areas, and enhance building facades and storefronts. 1816.5

Policy FSS-2.6.3: Bellevue-Washington Highlands Infill

Encourage refurbishment and/or replacement of deteriorating apartment complexes within Bellevue and Washington Highlands. Where buildings are removed, encourage their replacement with mixed income housing, including owner-occupied single family homes and townhomes as well as new apartments. Every effort shall be made to avoid resident displacement when such actions are taken, and to provide existing residents with opportunities to purchase their units or find suitable housing in the community. 1816.6

Action FSS-2.6.A: Great Street Improvements

Implement the Great Street Plan to beautify South Capitol Street, maintaining the width of the street and landscaping it from Martin Luther King Jr Avenue to the Maryland border. 1816.7

Action FSS-2.6.B: Merchants Association

Encourage local merchants in the South Capitol/Atlantic shopping district to form a merchants association to address issues such as the reuse of the Atlantic Theater. 1816.8

Action FSS-2.6.C: Washington Highlands Library

Consider joint public-private development opportunities to reconstruct the Washington Highlands library, providing the Bellevue and Washington Highlands neighborhoods with a first class, state-of-the art public library. 1816.9

Washington Highlands Library serves Bellevue and the nearby Washington Highlands area.

FSS-2.7 DC Village 1817

The 167-acre District of Columbia Village tract lies between Martin Luther King Jr Avenue and I-295, east of the Blue Plains Wastewater Plant, just south of Bellevue. The site houses an eclectic mix of city operations, including training facilities for the Police and Fire Departments, an impound lots for towed cars, an evidence warehouse, and a District-operated homeless shelter. Other public uses, including the greenhouses of the Architect of the Capitol and the Potomac Job Corps Center are located on the site. The National Park Service controls the forested land on the perimeter of the site, including Oxon Cove to the south. 1817.1

Every effort should be made to link future jobs on the DC Village site to residents in East of the River neighborhoods, in order to assist residents in gaining income and work experience.

DC Village provides a vital resource for local government operations, but the site is poorly laid out. It is physically isolated from the rest of the city, and its internal street pattern is confusing and hard to navigate. Abandoned structures, weed-covered lots, winding streets, and semi-industrial uses create the impression of a forgotten backwater. The District and surrounding Ward 8 community have wrestled with the site's future for years. It was designated a "Development Zone" in 1986 and a "Special Treatment Area" by the previous Comprehensive Plan. Various uses have been considered over the years, including a 700-unit housing development, an industrial park, and even a prison (on the land to the south near Oxon Cove). 1817.2

While there may be room for other uses on the site in the long term, the immediate priority is to reorganize existing uses and use the land more efficiently for District operations. DC Village is facing pressure to accommodate uses being displaced from the Anacostia Waterfront and other redeveloping areas. The site should be master planned and reorganized, with circulation improvements, higher design standards, and refurbishment or replacement of vacant buildings. 1817.3

Policy FSS-2.7.1: Retention of DC Village for Municipal Uses

Retain DC Village as a municipal facility that accommodates activities and functions that are vital to the operation of District government. The organization of uses on the site should be improved so that it is used more efficiently and can function more effectively. 1817.4

Policy FSS-2.7.2: Non-Government Activities at DC Village

As existing activities at DC Village are reorganized, consider the potential for other employment uses on the site, such as small business incubators and light industry. Such uses should not be accommodated at the expense of District government operations, and only should be allowed if the land is not essential for municipal purposes. Any future private uses on the site should be compatible with the existing quasi-industrial municipal uses. Every effort should be made to link future jobs on the DC Village site to residents in East of the River neighborhoods, in order to assist residents in gaining income and work experience. 1817.5

Policy FSS-2.7.3: Open Space around DC Village

Retain the National Park Service land on the perimeter of DC Village as open space. The forested land south of the site around Oxon Cove should not be developed. 1817.6

Policy FSS-2.7.4: Retention of Job Training Activities

Retain job training programs and facilities on the DC Village site, including the Potomac Job Corps Center, and promote participation in these programs by Far Southeast/Southwest residents. 1817.7

DC Village

Action FSS-2.7.A: DC Village Master Plan

Prepare a master plan for the DC Village site, addressing the organization of uses on the site, access and circulation standards, environmental improvements, and urban design. The Plan should be linked to the Public Facilities Master Plan called for elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan, and should ensure that sufficient land is retained for municipal activities. 1817.8