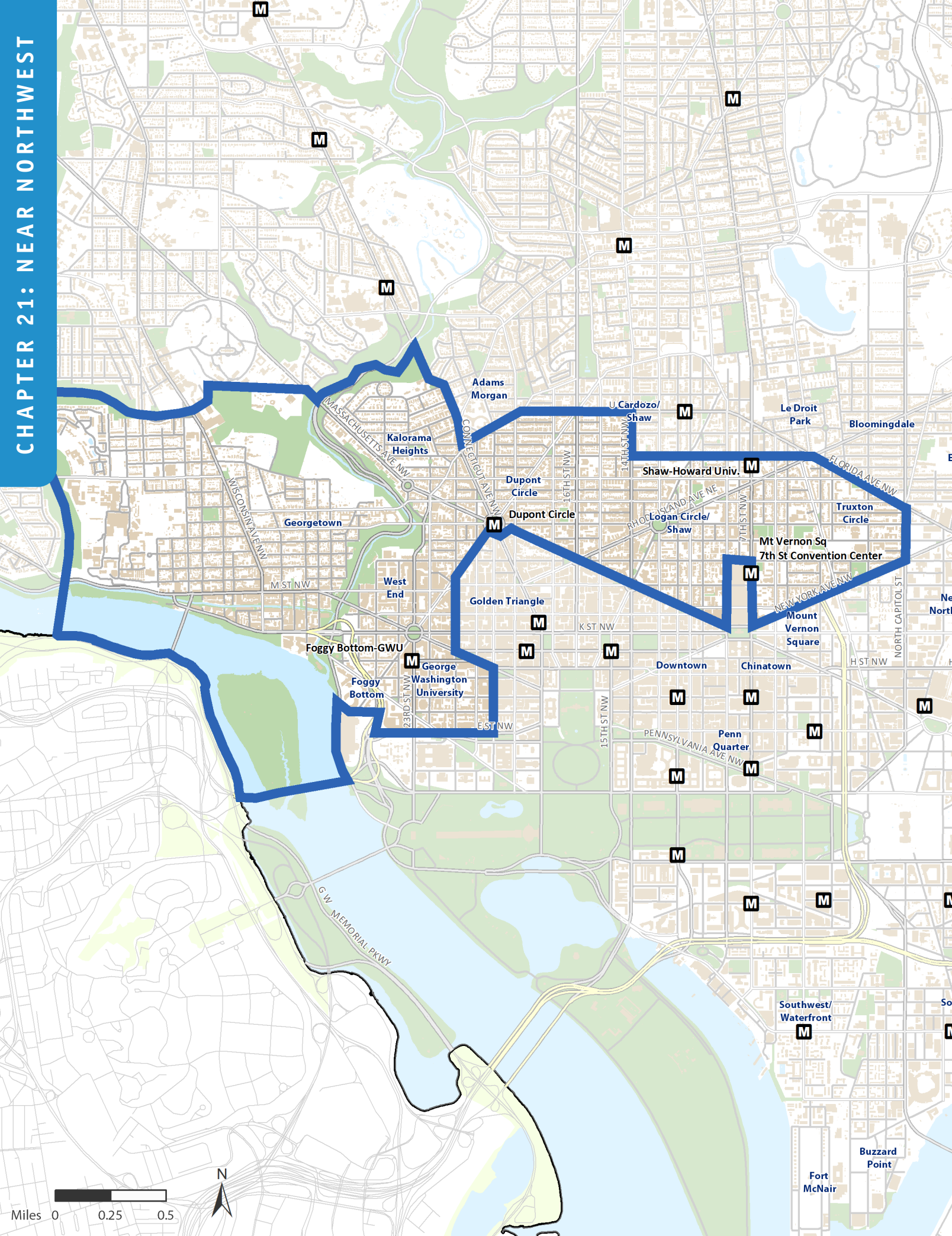


# **Chapter 21**

## **Near Northwest Area Element**



# Near Northwest Area Element

## Overview <sup>2100</sup>

**T**HE NEAR NORTHWEST PLANNING AREA ENCOMPASSES THE 3.6 SQUARE miles located directly north and west of Central Washington. It extends from Glover Archbold Park on the west to North Capitol Street NW on the east. Its northern boundary is formed by Whitehaven Parkway west of Rock Creek and by Connecticut Avenue, U Street, and Florida Avenue NW east of Rock Creek. The southern boundary is formed by the Potomac River, the Central Employment Area, and New York Avenue NW (east of 7th Street NW). These boundaries are shown on the map at left. Most of this area has historically been Ward 2, although in past and present times, parts have also been included in Wards 1, 5, and 6. <sup>2100.1</sup>

Near Northwest is known for its historic architecture, well-established neighborhoods, lively shopping areas, and nationally recognized institutions. These features provide enduring reminders of the District's growth, from the 18th century to today's international destination. The Georgetown Historic District, established in 1950 in response to the demolition of large numbers of waterfront and canal-related buildings, was the first such district established in Washington, DC. Today, more than half of Near Northwest's land area is included in historic districts, with concentrations of landmarks in Georgetown, on Washington Circle, within the campus of The George Washington University (GW), in Dupont and Logan Circles, and along Massachusetts Avenue NW. These designations include some of the oldest residential and commercial buildings in Washington, DC. <sup>2100.2</sup>

The development pattern in the area is one of the densest in the Washington metropolitan region. Near Northwest neighborhoods contain some of the most diverse housing stock in the District, varying from single-family homes to high-rise apartments. Townhouses and mid-rise apartment buildings dating from the mid 19th to early 20th centuries define the area's residential neighborhoods; they are most prominent in Georgetown, Burleith, Dupont Circle, Foggy Bottom, Logan Circle, Shaw, and Mount Vernon Square. Kalorama principally consists of single-family homes dating to the early 20th century. Large apartment buildings, many built during the 1920s and 1930s, are concentrated along major roadways, including Connecticut, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island Avenues, and 16th Street NW. Mid-century modern and more contemporary high-density construction defines West End and the 14th Street NW corridor, as well as riverfront communities like the Watergate and Washington Harbour. <sup>2100.3</sup>

Located outside of Georgetown, the area is well connected to other parts of the District and region by mass transit, including the Red, Green, Orange, Blue, and Silver Metrorail (Metro) lines and multiple bus lines. Several parkways, highways, and interstates also pass through or are immediately adjacent to the area, often creating barriers between neighborhoods, parks, and the Potomac



*Near Northwest includes Georgetown, one of the oldest inhabited areas of the District.*

River in the eastern portion of the area. These include Interstate 66, the Whitehurst Freeway, Canal Road, Rock Creek and Potomac Parkways, and the I-395/Center Leg Freeway. The overall street pattern reflects the L'Enfant Plan, with prominent diagonal boulevards bisecting a rectangular grid. <sup>2100.4</sup>

Shopping areas in Near Northwest range from regional destinations, such as M Street in Georgetown, to neighborhood commercial districts, such as 17th Street NW in Dupont Circle. The more prominent retail areas are on the major streets and avenues, including Connecticut Avenue, U Street, and 7th, 9th, and 14th Streets NW. There are smaller retail districts throughout the area and corner stores in almost every residential neighborhood. While it has a limited number of neighborhood parks, the entire Near Northwest area is within one and a half miles of Rock Creek Park or the National Mall. <sup>2100.5</sup>

Near Northwest is home to a number of institutions known both locally and internationally. Established in 1789, Georgetown is the nation's oldest Catholic and Jesuit university. The 100-acre main campus overlooks the Potomac River and features traditional and modern architecture, including Healy Hall, which was designed in neo-medieval style, built between 1877-1879, and designated as a National Historic Landmark. Today, much of the university's open space is available to community members, neighborhood schools, organizations, and individuals for recreational use. GW, located in Foggy Bottom at the edge of the Central Business District, is a much more urban campus, well integrated into the dense fabric of the neighborhood surrounding it. Museums and historic sites, including the Phillips Collection, Woodrow Wilson House, and the Mary McLeod Bethune Council House, attract visitors from the region and across the country. 14th Street NW is home to the Studio Theater, as well as other performing arts venues and galleries. After years of disinvestment following the unrest in 1968, 14th Street has experienced intense development activity and restaurant openings, which have contributed to establishing the corridor as one of Washington, DC's premier food and entertainment districts. Foreign embassies are concentrated along Massachusetts Avenue NW, in the Dupont Circle neighborhood, and in Kalorama. <sup>2100.6</sup>

A number of local community and business associations play an active role in shaping Near Northwest land use decisions. In addition to seven Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) that represent residents from three wards, there are many community associations and active groups with a specific focus. Some, like the Georgetown Business Improvement District (BID), work toward building a stronger business community. Others, like the Citizens Association of Georgetown, the Foggy Bottom Association, the Logan Circle Community Association, and the Dupont Circle Conservancy, have strong preservation programs. Others work directly with residents to create a higher quality of life. The Georgetown Community Partnership,



for example, includes community, university, and student leaders and was formed as a consensus-based forum to develop a campus plan for Georgetown's historic main campus and manage community-university issues. 2100.7

In the recent past, increasing values in long-sought-after neighborhoods like Georgetown, Kalorama, Foggy Bottom, West End, and Dupont Circle, have resulted in development activity moving east into Logan Circle, Shaw, and Mount Vernon Square. The strong real estate market has prompted many owners in these neighborhoods to renovate or sell their properties, leading to sharp increases in home prices and rents and a loss of affordable units. 2100.8

The most significant challenge facing the Near Northwest Planning Area is retaining the physical and social fabric of the community in the face of intense economic pressure. Parts of the area are still trying to find the right balance between development and preservation. This plays out in daily debates on physical planning issues like height, scale, and design, and on social issues relating to changing demographics and cultural values. Policies are needed to address a host of local issues, including the preservation and production of affordable housing; strengthening the opportunities for small and local businesses; maintaining existing and expanding new infrastructure and services, such as schools and recreational spaces, to serve a growing population of families in the area; and addressing the tensions that inevitably result from the area's highly diverse mix of land uses and densities. 2100.9

## History 2101

Near Northwest includes the oldest inhabited areas of the District. Georgetown, established in 1751 by the Maryland Assembly, was a tobacco port and independent municipality incorporated into Washington, DC in 1800. At the time, the settlement was just outside the boundaries of the federal city. Construction of Georgetown University began in 1788, three years before Pierre L'Enfant's Plan was prepared. 2101.1

Prior to 1850, most of the area east of Georgetown was sparsely populated. Several businesses were located along the waterfront in Foggy Bottom at the mouth of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. In the area nearby, just west of the White House, some of the District's first grand homes were built. The Shaw and Mount Vernon Square neighborhoods also experienced modest residential development prior to the Civil War and were known as Northern Liberties. 2101.2



*Near Northwest is known for its historic architecture, well-established neighborhoods, lively shopping areas, and nationally recognized institutions.*

**Working-class**  
Georgetown evolved into one of the District's most notable residential and business addresses. By the 1990s, industrial uses along the waterfront had been replaced by offices, shops, and expensive residences. Similarly, the growth of GW in Foggy Bottom redefined much of that neighborhood.

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The increase in population resulting from the Civil War facilitated residential development in Foggy Bottom, Shaw, and Mount Vernon Square. By the mid- to late- 19th century, these areas were home to a mix of professional and moderate-income residents. A number of alley dwellings were built in these areas, often housing Washington, DC's low-income residents. <sup>2101.3</sup>

The residential neighborhoods of Logan Circle, Dupont Circle, and Kalorama did not see significant development until the late 19th century. After the Civil War, Logan Circle became one of the most sought-after addresses in Washington, DC. The row houses in this area and along 14th Street NW were more substantial than those built before the Civil War. Small apartment buildings began to appear in the area as the population increased and building sites became more limited. The Dupont Circle area followed a similar trend, as Massachusetts Avenue NW and its intersections at Dupont and Sheridan Circles created sites ideal for large, stand-alone residences. Between 1870 and 1900, the avenue became the center of Washington, DC's most notable cultural gatherings. Kalorama, meanwhile, began to develop with townhomes and grand apartments, followed in the 1920s by large single-family homes. <sup>2101.4</sup>

By the late 19th century, horse-powered vehicles were replaced with independent streetcar routes that quickly became lined with commercial businesses. One line reinforced Wisconsin Avenue and M Street in Georgetown as a center of commercial activity, but residential districts on Connecticut Avenue and 14th Street NW were transformed: the former into a high-end shopping district, and the latter as a center for automobile sales and maintenance. Streetcar lines on 7th and 11th Streets NW also attracted commercial businesses that served residents living in nearby areas, as well as those heading home to areas further north. <sup>2101.5</sup>

The ethnicity of residents living in Near Northwest has always been diverse. Until the 1930s, about one-third of Georgetown's population was Black. An active, free Black population also lived in the Dupont Circle area prior to the Civil War and led to some of the District's earliest education initiatives. During the mid- 20th century, parts of Logan Circle and the Strivers Section of Dupont Circle were home to prominent Blacks, and the Shaw neighborhood became a vibrant center of Black culture. <sup>2101.6</sup>

By the 1950s, the close-in residential neighborhoods of this Planning Area were considered to be less sought-after than the outlying suburbs, and many residents moved or redeveloped their properties. Some of the large homes in Dupont Circle were torn down to make way for commercial development or apartment buildings, and the Shaw School Urban Renewal Plan replaced many of the alley dwellings with modern housing projects. Working-class Georgetown evolved into one of the District's most notable residential and

business addresses. By the 1990s, industrial uses along the waterfront had been replaced by offices, shops, and expensive residences. Similarly, the growth of GW in Foggy Bottom redefined much of that neighborhood. <sup>2101.7</sup>

Today, 15 historic districts preserve the character of the area's residential neighborhoods and help guide the integration of new development. Campus plans steer further development of Georgetown University and GW. The commercial parts of Georgetown and Dupont Circle are home to boutiques, galleries, and local and national retailers, and 14th Street NW is one of the District's most vibrant areas for dining, arts, and shopping. Development along the street continues at a rapid pace, with hundreds of new housing units added in recent years. Housing production is expected to continue as the demand for living in the neighborhood remains strong. The Walter E. Washington Convention Center anchors the Shaw and Mount Vernon Square neighborhoods. Completion of the convention center has spurred significant reinvestment in the neighborhood's housing, retail, and office spaces. <sup>2101.8</sup>

## Land Use <sup>2102</sup>

Statistics on existing land use are estimated from current lot-by-lot property tax data together with additional information on housing units, employment, District and federal land ownership, parks, roads, water bodies, etc. They are not comparable to the statistics included in the 2006 plan that were based on a much simpler method. Even large differences between the older and newer statistics may reflect differences in the modeling approaches used a decade apart and not actual changes in land use. <sup>2102.1</sup> Land use statistics for Near Northwest appear in Figure 21.1. Near Northwest comprises about 2,501 acres, including 248 acres of water and about 2,253 acres of land. This represents about 5.7 percent of the District's land area. <sup>2102.1</sup>

Street rights-of-way occupy more land than any other use in the Planning Area, representing about one-third of the total acreage. This is slightly higher than in other parts of Washington, DC due to the fact that a rigorous street grid and the broad avenues of the L'Enfant Plan are predominant in this area, reserving a larger percentage of the land to street right-of-way compared to more suburban areas of the District, where winding roadways, cul-de-sacs, and larger lot sizes are more common. <sup>2102.2</sup>

Residential uses occupy 27.4 percent of the total land area. Of the residential acreage, about 30 percent consists of mid- to high-rise apartments, and about 55 percent consists of row houses. The remaining 15 percent consists of single-family detached or semi-detached homes. High-density housing is concentrated along the Connecticut Avenue, Massachusetts Avenue, and 16th Street corridors NW. <sup>2102.3</sup>

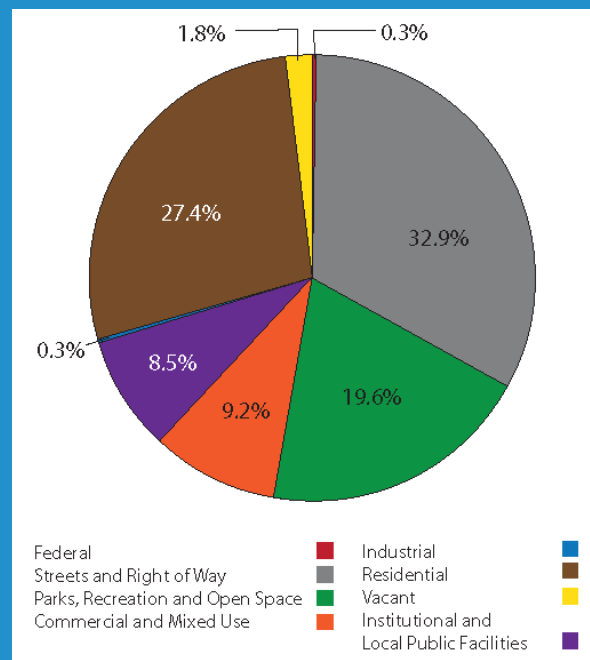
Between 2000 and 2017, the ethnic demographics of the area shifted. The white population increased from 62.7 percent in 2000 to 69.4 percent in 2017. By contrast, the Black population decreased from 23.2 percent in 2000 to 13.7 percent in 2017. The absolute number of Black residents also decreased by close to 5,000 people, a decrease of approximately 31 percent.

Recreation and open space make up 19.6 percent of the Planning Area, slightly below the citywide average. Most of the open space is associated with Rock Creek Park and Roosevelt Island. Other significant open spaces include the historic Dupont, Logan, Washington Circles, and the waterfront by Georgetown. There are three recreation centers: Georgetown Recreation Center, Stead Park in Dupont Circle, and Kennedy Recreation Center in Shaw. Other park areas have active recreation facilities, including athletic fields, swimming pools, and ball courts. Small playgrounds and triangle parks are located in all parts of the area. <sup>2102.4</sup>

Commercial and institutional uses represent a much larger share of the Planning Area than they do in Washington, DC as a whole. Collectively, they represent 17.7 percent of the Planning Area compared to 10 percent District-wide. The most significant retail areas are along linear corridors such as Wisconsin Avenue and M Street, Connecticut Avenue, and 14th Street NW. Institutional uses, including Georgetown University and GW, comprise 8.5 percent of the Planning Area. <sup>2102.5</sup>

The Planning Area has very little federal land other than its parks and about 41.1 acres of local public facilities (primarily schools). Only about 42.2 acres of the Planning Area consist of vacant private land, and most of this land is committed to future development projects. Only 0.3 percent of the area is set aside as industrial land. <sup>2102.7</sup>

Figure 21.1:  
Land Use Composition in  
Near Northwest <sup>2102.6</sup>



## Demographics <sup>2103</sup>

With 54 percent of the population in Near Northwest between the ages of 18 and 34, young professionals make up a much higher percentage of the population in this area than they do in Washington, DC, where only 34.6 percent of the population falls in that age range. This difference is likely due to the presence of several university campuses in the area. The population under the age of 18 is significantly lower than the District-wide total of 17.5 percent. The population over 65 is also lower than the District-wide total. <sup>2103.2</sup>

Between 2000 and 2017, the ethnic demographics of the area shifted. The white population increased from 62.7 percent in 2000 to 69.4 percent in 2017. By contrast, the Black population decreased from 23.2 percent in 2000 to 13.7 percent in 2017. The absolute number of Black residents also decreased by close to 5,000 people, a decrease of approximately 31 percent. The Asian and Hispanic/Latino populations grew in the area, with both populations increasing



Figure 21.2:

# Near Northwest at a Glance 2103.1

Basic Statistics and Projections						
	2000	2010	2017*	2025	2035	2045
Population	68,539	77,780	79,374	93,406	99,973	107,210
Households	35,121	38,410	37,551	44,337	46,170	48,551
Household Population	59,317	64,541	67,203	79,275	85,718	92,707
Persons Per Household	1.69	1.68	1.79	1.79	1.86	1.91
Jobs	95,570	83,642	90,512	93,683	97,224	101,257
Density (persons per sq mile)	19,039	21,606	22,048	25,946	27,770	29,781
Land Area (square miles)	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6

2000 and 2017 Census Data Profile					
	2000		2017*		Citywide 2017*
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage	Percentage
<b>Age</b>					
Under 18	6,137	9.0%	5,667	7.1%	17.6%
18-64	56,401	82.3%	66,300	83.5%	70.6%
18-34	33,822	49.3%	42,575	53.6%	34.6%
35-64	22,579	32.9%	23,725	29.9%	35.9%
65 and over	6,001	8.8%	7,407	9.3%	11.9%
<b>Residents Below Poverty Level</b>	12,968	19.0%	9,010	13.3%	17.4%
<b>Racial Composition</b>					
White	42,846	62.7%	55,046	69.4%	40.7%
Black	15,880	23.2%	10,907	13.7%	47.7%
Native American	380	0.6%	241	0.3%	0.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4,537	6.6%	6,915	8.7%	3.8%
Other	2,491	3.6%	3,168	4.0%	4.6%
Multi-Racial	2,190	3.2%	3,096	3.9%	2.9%
<b>Hispanic Origin</b>	6,783	9.9%	9,554	12.0%	10.7%
<b>Foreign-Born Residents</b>	13,499	8.5%	16,568	20.9%	14.0%
<b>Tenure</b>					
Owner Households	11,641	33.5%	13,890	37.0%	41.7%
Renter Households	23,100	66.5%	23,660	63.0%	58.3%
<b>Housing Occupancy</b>					
Occupied Units	34,741	92.5%	37,551	88.8%	90.2%
Vacant Units	3,201	7.5%	4,731	11.2%	9.8%
<b>Housing by Unit Type</b>					
1-unit, detached	1,179	3.1%	1,169	2.8%	11.9%
1-unit, attached	6,809	17.9%	6,425	15.2%	25.1%
2-4 units	3,974	10.5%	4,309	10.2%	10.3%
5-9 units	2,181	5.7%	2,079	4.9%	6.8%
10-19 units	2,518	6.6%	2,628	6.2%	10.5%
20 or more	21,269	56.3%	25,644	60.6%	35.4%
Mobile/other	12	>0.1%	28	0.1%	0.1%

\* Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



*In 2017, 82 percent of the housing units in Near Northwest were in multi-unit buildings, mostly buildings of 20 units or more.*

in percentage and in the total number of residents. Compared to the rest of the District, Near Northwest has a higher percentage of whites, Asians, and Hispanics/Latinos, and a lower percentage of Black residents. About one in five of the area's residents were born in another country, which is significantly higher than the District-wide total, and also increased from 2000. <sup>2103.3</sup>

In 2017, almost 15.3 percent of the area's residents lived in group quarters. Much of this population was associated with dormitories on university campuses. Several dormitories have been built between since 2000, and in 2017, an estimated 12,171 people in Near Northwest resided in group quarters. <sup>2103.4</sup>

### Housing Characteristics <sup>2104</sup>

In 2017, 82 percent of the housing units in Near Northwest were in multi-unit buildings, mostly buildings of 20 units or more. The percentage of housing units in large apartment buildings of 20 units or more was greater than the District-wide total (60.6 percent for the area compared to 35.4 percent for the District). Near Northwest also had a large number of one-unit attached homes, but the percentage was lower than the District-wide total (15.2 percent compared to 25.1 percent District-wide). Only 2.8 percent of the area's housing units were single-family detached homes. The number of housing units in the Planning Area increased by about 4,300 units between 2000 and 2017, and the majority of this growth occurred in buildings with 20 or more units. <sup>2104.1</sup>

Near Northwest experienced an increase in the number of vacant units between 2000 and 2017. In 2000, 7.5 percent of the area's housing units were vacant. That figure increased to 11.2 percent in 2017, which was higher than the District-wide vacancy rate of 9.8 percent. <sup>2104.2</sup>

The 2000 Census reported that 33.5 percent of housing units in the area were owner-occupied, and 66.5 percent were renter-occupied. In 2017, the percentage of owner-occupied housing units increased slightly to 37 percent, and renter-occupied units decreased slightly to 63 percent. The percentage of renter-occupied units was higher in the Planning Area than in the District as a whole, which was 58.3 percent renter-occupied. <sup>2104.3</sup>

### Income and Employment <sup>2105</sup>

The 2017 Census reported the area's median household income to be \$101,099, an increase from the 2000 median household income of \$48,852. Near Northwest's median household income in 2017 was 30.2 percent higher than the District-wide median of \$77,649. Nearly 13.3 percent of the area's population was below the federal poverty line in 2017—lower than

the 17.4 percent poverty rate for the District. These statistics are somewhat misleading, however, as the high poverty rate in some census tracts correlates to the large student population in Near Northwest. <sup>2105.1</sup>

The 2015 US Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Statistics dataset includes data on the commuting patterns of residents of Near Northwest, and those who lived elsewhere but commuted to jobs within this Planning Area. Approximately 70.7 percent of the area's residents worked within the District and 29.3 percent commuted to the suburbs. Of those who worked within the District, 60 percent commuted downtown, 23 percent worked within Near Northwest, and 16.8 percent worked elsewhere in Washington, DC. For residents living in Near Northwest, the potential proximity to work can provide shorter commutes. Nearly 40 percent of the area's residents walked or bicycled to work in 2000, which far exceeded the District-wide total. <sup>2105.2</sup>

Data from the District Department of Employment Services (DOES) and the DC Office of Planning (OP) indicates that the Near Northwest has more jobs than any other Planning Area of the city except for Central Washington. Major employers include universities and their affiliated hospitals. There were 90,512 jobs in 2017, or 11 percent of Washington, DC's total. According to the census, about one- third of these jobs were filled by District residents. <sup>2105.3</sup>

## Projections <sup>2106</sup>

Based on land availability, planning policies, and regional growth trends, Near Northwest is projected to continue adding households, population, and jobs through 2045. The Planning Area is expected to grow from 37,551 households in 2017 to 48,551 households in 2045. The population will also increase over this time from 79,374 in 2017 to 93,406 in 2025, to 99,973 in 2035, and to 107,210 in 2045. <sup>2106.1</sup>

Residential growth is expected to be concentrated on the eastern side of the Planning Area, particularly along corridors like 7th, 9th, 11th, and 14th Streets NW. Additional job growth is also expected to take place in the Near Northwest Area, with an increase of over 8,000 jobs from 90,512 jobs in 2017 to 101,257 jobs in 2045. <sup>2106.2</sup>

## Planning and Development Priorities <sup>2107</sup>

This section summarizes the opportunities and challenges residents and stakeholders prioritized during the 2006 Comprehensive Plan revision. During large community workshops, residents shared their feedback on District-wide and neighborhood specific issues. Since the 2006 community workshops, however, some of the challenges and opportunities facing the community have evolved. The following summary does not reflect



*The area's dense and historic development pattern results in many different uses adjacent to each other.*

new community priorities or feedback from either amendment cycle but summarizes the most important issues during the 2006 Comprehensive Plan revision. <sup>2107.1</sup>

Comprehensive Plan workshops in Near Northwest during 2005-2006 provided an opportunity for residents to discuss both District-wide and neighborhood planning issues. Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs) were briefed on the Comprehensive Plan on several occasions, providing additional opportunities for input. There have also been other meetings in the community not directly connected to the Comprehensive Plan that focused on specific planning issues for different parts of the area. These include meetings relating to the Shaw/Convention Center Small Area Plan, the Great Streets Initiative, campus plans for the local universities, and a variety of transportation, historic preservation, and economic development initiatives across the area. <sup>2107.2</sup>

During these meetings the community delivered several key messages, summarized below:

- Improved public safety, a strong economy, and rising confidence in the real estate market have fueled demand for housing across the area. Home prices in Shaw rose 30 percent between 2004 and 2005 alone. As a result, there is growing anxiety about the effects of change, particularly east of 14th Street NW. On the one hand, the reduced number of abandoned units and extensive restoration of older homes are positive signs that should continue to be encouraged. On the other hand, renovation has led to increased rents and property tax assessments, along with the risk of displacement of older and lower-income residents, many who have lived in the community for generations. Economic diversity should be protected, and programs to retain and add affordable housing are urgently needed.
- Given the location of Near Northwest adjacent to Central Washington, the encroachment of offices, hotels, and other commercial uses has been an issue for many years. During the 1950s and 1960s, much of downtown's expansion occurred in the area just south of Dupont Circle. Today, zoning regulations and historic districts limit commercial encroachment into Near Northwest neighborhoods. However, the conversion of housing to non-residential uses continues to be an issue. In Sheridan-Kalorama, there continue to be concerns about homes being turned into foreign chanceries, with attendant impacts on parking, upkeep, and security. Foggy Bottom residents remain apprehensive about the impacts of university expansion on housing and neighborhood character. In Dupont and Logan Circles, there are ongoing issues relating to the conversion of apartments to hotels, offices, and institutional uses. Concentration of community-based residential facilities is an issue in Logan Circle and in Shaw.



- Much of what makes Near Northwest sought-after is lies in the beauty of its tree-lined streets, its urbane and historic architecture, and the proportions of its buildings and public spaces. Maintaining the quality and scale of development continues to be a top priority for the community. Residents expressed the opinion that new infill development should avoid creating monotonous or repetitive building designs, and strive for a mix of building types and scales. View obstruction, insensitive design, and street and alley closings were all raised as issues. In the Shaw Area and the Mount Vernon Square North Area, additional designation of historic landmarks and establishment of historic districts may be needed. At the same time, downzoning is needed in parts of Dupont and Logan Circles, particularly where blocks of historic row houses are zoned for high-density apartments. Zoning in such locations has not kept up with their historic designations. There have also been ongoing debates about the definition of historic, particularly as preservationists seek to recognize the recent past.
- The process of creating, administering, and enforcing zoning regulations, including the granting of variances and zoning changes, needs to be refined and consistently applied. Several meeting participants singled out the granting of large numbers of Special Exceptions as an objectionable practice. Another issue raised was the excessive use of Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and the resulting allowances for increased density. The community asked that future PUDs be rigorously reviewed and designed in a manner that minimizes their impacts on adjacent properties and provides ample community amenities. Other specific zoning issues identified included parking provisions and the regulation of institutional uses.
- The area's dense and historic development pattern results in many different uses adjacent to each other. This is part of what makes the area vibrant and interesting, but it inevitably leads to land use conflicts. There are continuing concerns about the impact of commercial development on the ambience of shopping districts and residential streets in Georgetown and Dupont Circle. Public safety and crowd control remains an issue in these areas. Certain kinds of commercial activities, such as fast food restaurants and liquor licensed establishments are a source of concern for neighbors. The proximity of commercial and residential uses also leads to issues like the regulation of deliveries, trash removal, and sidewalk cafes. ANCs in the area play a particularly important role in addressing and resolving these issues.
- In some respects, those who live and work in Near Northwest enjoy some of the best transportation service in the city. The area's compact development pattern and proximity to downtown encourages walking, biking, and transit use, and for many owning a car is a



*Institutional uses have a large presence in this part of town. Their expansion is a matter of importance to both the institutions and community stakeholders around them.*

choice rather than a necessity. But the area's location at the hub of the region's transportation system also produces adverse impacts. Arterials such as Wisconsin, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania Avenues and 16th Street NW carry high volumes of car and truck traffic into the central Washington, DC from outlying District neighborhoods and from the suburbs, with accompanying noise, congestion, and safety hazards. The wide avenues are efficient for moving traffic, but the flow is complicated by the pattern of circles and squares. Moreover, the arterials move traffic in a radial direction in and out of downtown, but traveling from east to west across the area is difficult. Given this fact, long-range plans for the Whitehurst Freeway are a concern for many neighbors. Other transportation issues raised at Comprehensive Plan meetings in Near Northwest include the need for better access between Georgetown and the Metrorail system, the need to control cut-through traffic on residential side streets, and the need for improved pedestrian and bicycle safety.

- Parking continues to be an issue in almost all of the area's residential neighborhoods, particularly near the commercial districts and around major employment centers. Georgetown, Foggy Bottom, Logan Circle, and Dupont Circle, are affected by evening visitors to restaurants and bars. Foggy Bottom and Georgetown are also affected by student parking from George Washington and Georgetown Universities and other employers and businesses in the area. Many of the area's residences do not have off-street parking, leaving residents to compete with visitors and employees for a limited number of off-street spaces. Cars circling for parking contribute to traffic and congestion in the area. Measures such as residential permit parking and university shuttle services addresses the shortage to some degree, but additional programs are needed to reduce parking conflicts.
- Near Northwest is underserved by recreational facilities and open space. Despite proximity to Rock Creek Park, the ratio of park acres per resident is among the lowest in Washington, DC. Most of the neighborhood parks in the area are small and have limited or aging facilities. An analysis of recreational needs performed as part of the 2006 Parks and Recreation Master Plan concluded that virtually all parts of Near Northwest were deficient in athletic fields and that the east side was deficient in swimming pools. The Foggy Bottom-West End area and Logan Circle were identified as needing new recreation centers. Given the shortage of parkland, it is not surprising that many participants in Comprehensive Plan workshops also expressed concerns about the loss of private open space. Particular concerns included the construction of additions and new buildings on lawns, patios, and parking lots, leading one workshop participant to the conclusion that "every inch of the area was being paved over."

Creating new parks will be difficult given the built out character of the area. Looking forward, it will be imperative to retain and enhance existing parks, make better use of street rights-of-way as open space, provide better connections to the area's large parks, and set aside ample open space within new development. Landscaping, tree planting, and rooftop gardens should all be strongly encouraged.

- Retail conditions in Near Northwest are uneven. Neighborhoods on the east side of the planning area do not have adequate commercial and service establishments; 7th and 9th Streets NW, for example, still contend with shuttered storefronts and abandoned buildings. Retail districts on the west side of the planning area appear prosperous, but face other challenges. The unique quality of some of the area's streets is disappearing, as lower-cost stores and services are replaced by national chain stores. There are worries about the area becoming too homogenous-with some suggesting that Georgetown's M Street NW has effectively become a suburban mall in an urban setting. The changes along 14th Street NW are welcomed by some, but create tension between the old and the new. Despite the vastly different physical conditions on the east and west sides of the Planning Area, small businesses across the entire area face the stress of rising rents. Residents from Burleith to Shaw are concerned about the loss of the neighborhood businesses that define the character of their local shopping streets.
- Expansion of institutional uses and nonprofit organizations is an issue both for the community and the institutions themselves. The issue was most often raised in connection with George Washington University (GW), but was also brought up more broadly with regard to the effects of institutional expansion on the District's tax base, traffic, parking, the loss of housing, and neighborhood character. Many residents believe that additional regulation and enforcement is needed to monitor university growth. University representatives, on the other hand, note the constraints of operating within enrollment and employment caps, and point to the steps they have taken to buffer adjacent areas from objectionable effects. In general, workshop participants emphasized the need to assess institutional impacts on a cumulative, rather than incremental, basis. Campus plans guide the growth of universities, but there is no comparable mechanism to guide the expansion of institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF, and the Red Cross. One approach that warrants further consideration is to allow universities to build up on their properties, reducing the need for additional land for expansion. Of course, this raises other concerns, such as building height and mass. Another approach is to promote the development of satellite campuses and facilities. Careful balancing is needed to make sure the interests of all parties are considered, and to reach solutions where all can benefit. <sup>2107.3</sup>



*Historic, mixed density land uses characterize many Near Northwest neighborhoods.*



Georgetown commercial area

## Policies and Actions

### NNW-1 General Policies

#### NNW-1.1 Guiding Growth and Neighborhood Conservation <sup>2108</sup>

The following general policies and actions should guide growth and neighborhood conservation decisions in Near Northwest. These policies and actions should be considered in tandem with those in the Citywide Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. <sup>2108.1</sup>

##### *Policy NNW-1.1.1: Residential Neighborhoods*

Maintain and enhance the historic, architecturally distinctive mixed-density character of Near Northwest residential neighborhoods, including Burleith, Georgetown, Foggy Bottom, Dupont Circle, Sheridan-Kalorama, Logan Circle, Mount Vernon Square, and Shaw. Ensure that infill development within these areas is architecturally compatible with its surroundings and positively contributes to the identity and quality of each neighborhood, while providing new housing opportunities, especially affordable housing options. <sup>2108.2</sup>

##### *Policy NNW-1.1.2: Enhancing Established Commercial Areas*

Sustain and enhance the neighborhood, community, and regional shopping areas of Near Northwest, including M, P, and U Streets, Wisconsin, Connecticut, and Florida Avenues NW, and 18<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets NW. Sustain these areas as diverse, unique, pedestrian-oriented shopping streets that meet the needs of District residents, workers, and visitors. <sup>2108.3</sup>

##### *Policy NNW-1.1.3: Neighborhood Commercial Vibrancy*

Support the vibrancy of neighborhood shopping areas along 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, and North Capitol Streets NW. The vibrancy of the established businesses on these streets should be strongly encouraged, and new businesses that provide needed goods and services to District residents should be attracted. <sup>2108.4</sup>

##### *Policy NNW-1.1.4: Nonprofits and Private Service Organizations*

Work with private service and nonprofit organizations in the Near Northwest area to ensure that their locations and operations complement neighboring properties and enrich the surrounding communities. In particular, the campus plans of Georgetown University and GW should minimize negative impacts to surrounding residential areas and should aspire to improve such areas through improved landscaping, better lighting, safer pedestrian connections, cultural amenities, and enhanced community policing. <sup>2108.5</sup>



***Policy NNW-1.1.5: Loss of Housing***

Strongly discourage the demolition of viable housing or the conversion of occupied housing units to non-residential uses, such as medical offices, hotels, and institutions. Maintain zoning regulations that limit the encroachment of non-residential uses into Near Northwest neighborhoods, particularly around the Convention Center, along the west side of Connecticut Avenue NW, and in Foggy Bottom. <sup>2108.6</sup>

***Policy NNW-1.1.7: Student Housing***

Support and promote efforts by the District’s universities to develop and renovate on-campus housing for students in order to reduce pressure on housing in nearby neighborhoods. <sup>2108.7</sup>

***Policy NNW-1.1.8: Affordable Housing***

Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing in the Near Northwest Planning Area, by bringing to bear new measures to preserve and produce affordable housing in a way that advances fair housing goals and minimizes displacement. <sup>2108.8</sup>

***Policy NNW-1.1.9: Parking Management***

Continue to develop and implement programs to improve parking management in the commercial districts along Wisconsin Avenue, M Street, Connecticut Avenue, P Street, and 17<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets NW. Using pricing, time limits, and curbside regulations, encourage motorists to use public curbside parking for short-term needs and promote curbside turnover and utilization, while pushing longer-term parking needs to private, off-street parking facilities. In addition, efforts should be taken to encourage visitors to these commercial districts via non-motorized modes, public transit, and ridesharing services. <sup>2108.9</sup>

***Policy NNW-1.1.10: Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety***

Improve safety for pedestrians and bicycles throughout the Near Northwest through the continued upgrading of high-priority sidewalks, intersections, and roadways, and by supporting the construction of more separated bike infrastructure. <sup>2108.10</sup>

***Policy NNW-1.1.11: Pedestrian Connections***

Improve pedestrian connections through Near Northwest, especially along M Street between Connecticut Avenue NW and Georgetown ; between the Dupont/Logan Circle areas and downtown; and along (and to and from) the waterfronts in the Georgetown and Foggy Bottom areas. Create a continuous tree canopy along the area’s streets to create more comfortable conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists. <sup>2108.11</sup>

Preserve the existing stock of affordable housing in the Near Northwest Planning Area, by bringing to bear new measures to preserve and produce affordable housing in a way that advances fair housing goals and minimizes displacement.

### ***Policy NNW-1.1.12: Managing Transportation Demand***

Strongly support buses, private shuttles, and other transit solutions that address travel needs within the Near Northwest area, including connections between Metro and the universities and the Georgetown commercial district, and connections between the Connecticut Avenue and Embassy Row hotels and the National Mall and downtown areas. <sup>2108.12</sup>

### ***Policy NNW-1.1.13: Transit to Georgetown***

Improve transit connections to Georgetown by implementing a transit way on K Street downtown. <sup>2108.13</sup>

### ***Action NNW-1.1.A: Managing and Balancing Entertainment Districts***

The Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA), in conjunction with the Mayor's Office of Nightlife and Culture (MONC), should work together with local stakeholders to create retail, restaurant, and entertainment districts that have a balanced mix of uses and services that cater to both local residents and the larger District, so as to avoid an overconcentration of bars and night clubs. <sup>2108.14</sup>

### ***Action NNW-1.1.B: Expanding Mass Transit***

Alleviate parking and traffic congestion by improving multimodal operations and by providing mass transit enhancements on K Street NW, including a dedicated transit way, as well as bus lanes on 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets NW. <sup>2108.15</sup>

## **NNW-1.2 Conserving and Enhancing Community Resources <sup>2109</sup>**

### ***Policy NNW-1.2.1: Scenic Resource Protection***

Conserve and enhance the scenic visual resources of the Near Northwest Planning Area, including the Potomac waterfront, Rock Creek Park, the park circles of the L'Enfant Plan, and the historic architecture and streetscapes that define the area's commercial and residential areas. <sup>2109.1</sup>

*See the Urban Design Element for policies on preserving and enhancing architectural character.*

### ***Policy NNW-1.2.2: Heritage Tourism***

Promote the famous and the lesser-known cultural resources of Near Northwest neighborhoods, such as theaters, galleries, historic home museums, historic districts and landmarks, and colleges and universities. Encourage heritage trails, walking tours, historic markers, and other measures that create a greater awareness of these resources. <sup>2109.2</sup>

### ***Policy NNW-1.2.3: Noise Reduction***

Continue efforts to reduce noise in Georgetown and Foggy Bottom associated with the air traffic in and out of Washington Reagan National Airport. <sup>2109.3</sup>

***Policy NNW-1.2.4: Job Linkages***

Capitalize on the presence of hotels and universities within the Planning Area to create additional job opportunities for residents of Near Northwest and other parts of the District. Encourage partnerships with the area's institutional and hospitality sector employers that help residents from across Washington, DC obtain a job and move up the employment ladder.

2109.4

***Policy NNW-1.2.5: Park Partnerships***

Encourage partnerships between the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the National Park Service (NPS) so that federal parkland, particularly Rock Creek Park and the L'Enfant park reservations, can better serve Near Northwest residents. Such partnerships are particularly important given the shortage of athletic fields and other recreational facilities within Near Northwest, and the limited land available for new recreational facilities. 2109.5

***Policy NNW-1.2.6: Increasing Park Use and Acreage***

Identify opportunities for new pocket parks, plazas, and public spaces within the Near Northwest Planning Area, as well as opportunities to expand and take full advantage of existing parks. 2109.6

***Policy NNW-1.2.7: Shoreline Access***

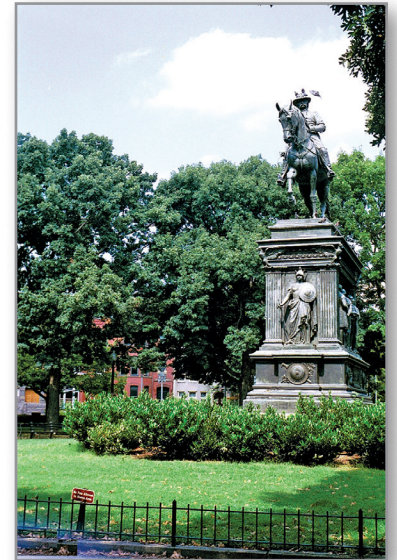
Continue efforts to improve access along the full length of the Potomac River shoreline and to improve access between the shoreline and adjacent neighborhoods such as Georgetown and Foggy Bottom. 2109.7

***Policy NNW-1.2.8: Arts Districts***

Encourage existing and new arts activities along 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Streets NW in an effort to link these corridors to the arts district along the U Street NW corridor in the adjacent Mid-City Planning Area. Theaters, galleries, studios, and other arts and cultural facilities and activities should be encouraged on these streets. 2109.8

***Policy NNW-1.2.9: Design Review***

Use the historic preservation design review process to promote high quality architecture and urban design in Near Northwest's designated historic districts, including Georgetown, Sheridan-Kalorama, Strivers Section, Dupont Circle, Foggy Bottom, Massachusetts Avenue NW, Mount Vernon Square, 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Logan Circle, Blagden Alley, and Shaw. 2109.9



Logan Circle

*Action NNW-1.2.A: Add New Capacity to Recreational Infrastructure in Near Northwest*

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan has identified the Near Northwest Area as deficient in recreational infrastructure, particularly in the east-west stretch through Shaw, Logan Circle, Dupont Circle, and Foggy Bottom. Develop additional recreation centers or additional recreation space at existing facilities. Also work with DPR, DC Public Schools (DCPS), the Department of General Services (DGS), and existing private schools to make sure that the use of existing recreational facilities in and outside schools are open to the public after hours and that permitting for the use of public facilities is easy and streamlined. <sup>2109.10</sup>

*Action NNW-1.2.B: Historic Resource Recognition*

Document places of potential historic significance within the Near Northwest. <sup>2109.11</sup>

## NNW-2 Policy Focus Areas <sup>2110</sup>

The Comprehensive Plan has identified five areas in Near Northwest 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 21.1 and Figure 21.3). These areas are:

- Shaw/Convention Center Area
- Dupont Circle
- 14th Street/Logan Circle
- Georgetown Waterfront
- Foggy Bottom/West End. <sup>2110.1</sup>

**Figure 21.3:**  
**Policy Focus Areas Within and Adjacent to Near Northwest** <sup>2110.2</sup>

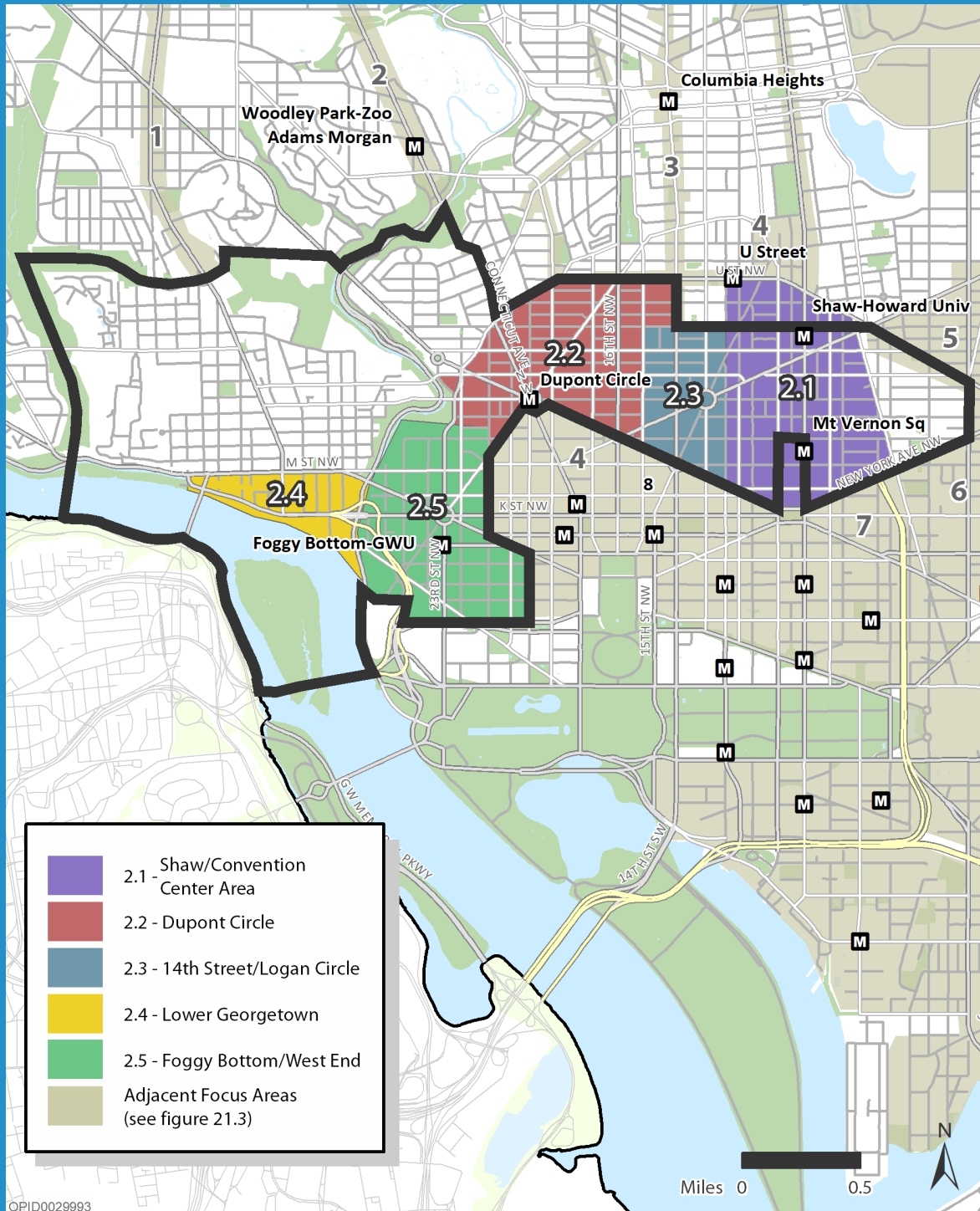
Within Near Northwest	
2.1	Shaw/Convention Center area
2.2	Dupont Circle
2.3	14th Street/Logan Circle
2.4	Lower Georgetown
2.5	Foggy Bottom/West End
Adjacent to Near Northwest	
1	Wisconsin Avenue corridor
2	Connecticut Avenue corridor
3	18th Street/Columbia Road
4	U Street/Uptown
5	North Capitol St/Florida Av/New York Av
6	NoMa/Northwest one
7	Mount Vernon District
8	Golden triangle/K Street



Map 21.1:

# Near Northwest Policy Focus Areas

2110.3



OPID0029993

In 2006, nearly one-fifth of the housing units in the study area received some form of public subsidy and were considered affordable. Based on 2017 estimates, the share of affordable housing units in the same area dropped to seven percent, making it a much less economically diverse real estate market and community.



*Blagden Alley in Shaw showcases DC's Alley Museum with public art from DC and national artists*

## NNW-2.1 Shaw/Convention Center Area <sup>2111</sup>

The Shaw/Convention Center area is bounded by Massachusetts and New York Avenues NW on the south, 12th Street and Vermont Avenue NW on the west, U Street and Florida Avenue NW on the north, and New Jersey Avenue NW on the east. This area has a long history as an economically and ethnically diverse residential neighborhood. An urban renewal plan for the area was adopted in 1969 in response to the unrest in 1968 and deficient housing conditions in much of the area. The urban renewal plan took a more incremental approach than was taken in Southwest, selectively clearing alley dwellings and substandard housing rather than calling for wholesale clearance. As a result, the area contains a mix of affordable housing complexes from the 1970s and older row houses from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. <sup>2111.1</sup>

Recent market trends in the District, as well as the opening of the Washington Convention Center in 2004 and other notable real estate developments such as the O Street Market, have increased development pressure on the neighborhood. This has helped revitalize the underserved business districts along 7th, 9th, and 11th Streets NW but has also brought displacement pressures for long-time, low-income residents. Development and revitalization efforts have contributed to transforming the area alley system as well. Blagden Alley has experienced a renaissance, with many creative businesses moving in and the establishment of the DC Alley Museum through a grant from the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCHA) and support from the Blagden Alley Neighbors, which funds artists to create murals and public art in the alley. Two historic districts were created in the area in 1999 to manage growth, preserve places of architectural and cultural significance, and blend new buildings into the neighborhood. <sup>2111.2</sup>

In 2005, OP completed the Convention Center Area Strategic Development Plan to guide development, revitalization, and conservation in this area. The plan identified several issues, including the need to conserve affordable housing, generate new quality housing, revitalize local businesses, improve sidewalks and public spaces, upgrade parks and public facilities, provide stronger design controls, and expand the Shaw Historic District. In 2006, nearly one-fifth of the housing units in the study area received some form of public subsidy and were considered affordable. Based on 2017 estimates, the share of affordable housing units in the same area dropped to seven percent, making it a much less economically diverse real estate market and community. <sup>2111.3</sup>

In 2014, the D.C. Council approved the Mid-City East Small Area Plan (SAP), which provides a strategic framework for revitalization of Bates/Truxton Circle, Bloomingdale, Eckington, Hanover, LeDroit Park, and

Sursum Corda, as well as sections of Edgewood and Stronghold. The study area is predominately in Ward 5, with portions of Wards 1 and 6, and is traversed by five major corridors: North Capitol Street and New York, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Florida Avenues. The vision for the Mid-City East SAP is to improve quality of life and enhance neighborhood amenities and character while supporting a community of culturally, economically, and generationally diverse residents. The Mid-City East SAP is a community-based plan guided by market-based solutions and a shared vision and principles. The plan builds from previous work and provides analysis and recommendations for land use, redevelopment of underutilized and/or underdeveloped sites, walkability, retail readiness along commercial corridors, and improvements to parks and open spaces. <sup>2111.4</sup>

Preserve existing affordable housing within the Shaw/Convention Center area and produce new affordable housing and market rate housing on underutilized and future development sites.

#### ***Policy NNW-2.1.1: Affordable Housing***

Preserve existing affordable housing within the Shaw/Convention Center area and produce new affordable housing and market rate housing on underutilized and future development sites. Use a range of tools to retain and develop affordable housing in the Planning Area, including tenant organization and public education, inclusionary zoning, renewing project-based public housing contracts, tax abatements, public-private partnerships, and affordable housing when development on publicly- owned land includes a residential component. <sup>2111.5</sup>

#### ***Policy NNW-2.1.2: Reinforce Existing Development Patterns***

Stabilize and maintain existing moderate-density row house areas within the Shaw/Convention Center area. Locate multi-unit buildings in areas already zoned for greater density, including areas near the Mount Vernon Square and Shaw/Howard University Metro stations, and on publicly owned land with the potential for housing. Ensure that development on infill sites scattered throughout the row house portions of the Shaw/Convention Center area is sensitive to and complements the neighborhood's character. <sup>2111.6</sup>

#### ***Policy NNW-2.1.3: Shaw/Howard University and Mount Vernon Square/7<sup>th</sup> Street NW-Convention Center Metro Stations***

Encourage mixed-income residential development with underground parking adjacent to the Shaw/Howard and Mount Vernon Square Metro stations, particularly on existing surface parking lots and Metro station entrances. <sup>2111.7</sup>

#### ***Policy NNW-2.1.4: Blagden Alley***

Encourage adaptive reuse and mixed-use infill development, with special consideration for cultural, creative, and art uses, along Blagden Alley, a residentially zoned block with historic structures such as carriage houses, garages, and warehouses. Appropriate measures should be taken to safeguard existing residential uses as such development takes place. <sup>2111.8</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.1.5: 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Street NW Street Corridors***

Support and sustain retail development within the Shaw/Convention Center area in a manner that best serves residents, creates the best environment for businesses to thrive, and uses land already zoned for commercial uses. Continuous ground floor retail uses should be encouraged along sections of 7th and 9th Streets NW as designated in the 2005 Strategic Development Plan to create a traditional pedestrian-oriented Main Street pattern and establish a unified identity for the community. These corridors should attract convention-goers, residents, and visitors, and should include both new and existing businesses. <sup>2111.9</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.1.6: Public Realm***

Improve streets and open spaces throughout the Shaw/Convention Center area. Open space in the area should promote a sense of community, provide a high level of public safety, and address multiple needs. Connections between the area's parks and open spaces should be strengthened and opportunities for new recreational activities should be accommodated where feasible. <sup>2111.10</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.1.7: Street Hierarchy***

Design the streetscapes in the Shaw/Convention Center area to clearly differentiate between residential streets and commercial streets, and to highlight the distinct role of avenues, retail streets, greenways, and primary and secondary residential streets. <sup>2111.11</sup>

***Action NNW-2.1.A: New and Affordable Housing***

Support the development of mixed-income housing above retail space on 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets NW, and encourage development of multi-family apartments and condominiums on parcels that are vacant or that contain buildings identified as non-contributing to the Shaw Historic District on 11<sup>th</sup> Street NW. <sup>2111.12</sup>

***Action NNW-2.1.B: Redevelopment of Parcel 42***

The long-term vacant lots known as Parcel 42 at the intersection of Rhode Island Avenue and 7th and R Streets NW represent an opportunity to add new affordable housing units in the Shaw neighborhood. The District and the Zoning Commission should support redevelopment of the vacant lots at Square 442 and Lots 106 and 803 with a mixed-use project of up to 110 feet in building height, to include ground floor retail uses with both destination and neighborhood-serving retail; a residential component that maximizes affordability beyond the requirements of the Inclusionary Zoning Program; and publicly accessible open space on Lot 803 as per public input shared during the community engagement process for the redevelopment of the site. <sup>2111.13</sup>



### *Action NNW-2.1.C: Street Hierarchy and Public Realm*

Undertake the following actions to improve the public realm in the Shaw/Convention Center area:

- Develop, maintain, and enforce standards for residential and commercial streets that address sidewalks, tree boxes, and public rights-of-way;
- Improve the appearance of gateway intersections at New Jersey and Rhode Island Avenues NW, New Jersey and New York Avenues NW, Mount Vernon Square, 11th Street, and Massachusetts Avenue NW; and
- Explore the designation of P Street NW as a greenway and identify opportunities for connecting open spaces along the street. <sup>2111.14</sup>

### *Action NNW-2.1.D: Expiring Public Housing Contracts*

Implement the DC Housing Preservation Strike Force recommendations for expiring project-based public housing contracts within the Shaw area and beyond, recognizing the vulnerability of these units to conversion to market rate housing. Consider the redevelopment of these sites with mixed-income projects that include, at a minimum, an equivalent number of affordable units, additional market rate units, and measures to avoid displacement of on-site residents. <sup>2111.15</sup>

### *Action NNW-2.1.E: Former Shaw High School Site*

Complete redevelopment of the former Shaw Junior High School site for the renovated Benjamin Banneker Academic High School in alignment with DCPS strategic planning and capital funding availability. Continue to conduct engagement and analysis to identify any additional facility needs and programs on the DCPS and DPR portions of the site. <sup>2111.16</sup>

### *Action NNW-2.1.F: Mid-City East SAP*

Implement recommendations provided in the Mid-City East SAP. <sup>2111.17</sup>

### *Action NNW-2.1.G: Mid-City East Livability Study*

Implement recommendations provided in the Mid-City East Livability Study. <sup>2111.18</sup>

## **NNW-2.2 Dupont Circle** <sup>2112</sup>

The general pattern of land use in Dupont Circle is well established. Future development in the area is managed by the area's designation as a historic district and the application of the Dupont Circle zoning. The area is a sought-after residential neighborhood due to its proximity to downtown, restaurants and shopping, pedestrian-friendly streets, historic architecture, and diverse housing stock. Commercial and residential infill development



Dupont Circle fountain

and renovation are anticipated to continue, creating economic opportunities and concerns about the displacement of local services by national chains and regional-serving retail uses. The healthy mix of commercial and residential uses necessitates careful management and balance of public safety, and commercial noise to maintain a high quality of life. <sup>2112.1</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.2.1: Maintaining Dupont Circle’s Residential Character***

Discourage the expansion of commercial uses into residential areas, while maintaining the Dupont Circle neighborhood as a primarily residential area. For the purposes of this policy, Dupont Circle shall be defined as the area generally bounded by Rock Creek Park on the west, 15th Street NW on the east, Massachusetts Avenue NW (east of Connecticut Avenue NW) and N Street NW (west of Connecticut Avenue NW) on the south, and Florida Avenue and U Street NW on the north. This area is shown on Map 21.1. <sup>2112.2</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.2.2: Dupont Circle Building Design***

Use the following standards in evaluating new buildings and alterations in the Dupont Circle area:

- Encourage a scale of development compatible with the nature and character of the Dupont Circle area in height and bulk;
- Encourage a general compatibility in the scale of new buildings with older low-scale buildings by enacting sensitive design and appropriate transitions;
- Preclude demolitions or partial demolitions that would lead to an increase in height and floor area ratios inappropriate to the area;
- Enhance the residential character of the area by maintaining existing residential uses and controlling the scale, location, and density of commercial and residential development; and
- Ensure compatibility of development with the Comprehensive Plan, including District-wide goals to address the affordable housing need, by promoting increased housing opportunities. <sup>2112.3</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.2.3: Q Street NW Plaza***

Maintain the Dupont Circle Q Street Metro entrance as a civic plaza that is compatible with the adjacent mixed-use neighborhood. Encourage the restoration of storefronts as active retail uses along Connecticut Avenue from Q Street NW to the Circle. <sup>2112.4</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.2.4: Encourage the Development of Dupont Circle as a Neighborhood for All Ages and Families***

Encourage the development of the neighborhood to be welcoming of all people of all ages and all family types by making sure that new developments are designed for all age and economic demographics and

that parks and public spaces are designed for the needs of older adults and families, as well as for younger residents. 2112.5

### ***Policy NNW-2.2.5: LGBTQ Cultural Hub***

Celebrate existing and new LGBTQ arts, cultural experiences, and history within Dupont Circle with placemaking and sustained, active programming in parks and community areas in the neighborhood. Leverage opportunities presented by Dupont Circle and the Dupont Underground and the future Connecticut Avenue Streetscape and Deck-Over Project. 2112.7<sup>1</sup>

### ***Action NNW-2.2.A: Dupont Circle Zoning Expansion***

Consider expansion of Dupont Circle zoning to include the east side of the 18th Street commercial area (between S and U Streets) and the south side of U Street between 15<sup>th</sup> and h 18<sup>th</sup> Streets NW. 2112.8

### ***Action NNW-2.2.B: Connecticut Avenue Streetscape and Deck-Over Project***

Complete study of the of the Connecticut Avenue Streetscape and Deck-Over project over the north Connecticut Avenue NW underpass between Dupont Circle and Q Street NW. The new park should be designed as a neighborhood gathering point with green features and public art, so it may support programming and host events like the weekly farmers market. 2112.98

### ***Action NNW-2.2.C: Dupont Underground***

In line with the DC Cultural Plan premise that all infrastructure is a stage, continue supporting the use of the long-vacant underground trolley infrastructure under Dupont Circle for arts and community development activities like the community-led Dupont Underground space. 2112.10

### ***Action NNW-2.2.D: Streetscape Improvements Along Connecticut and Massachusetts Avenues NW***

Create new streetscapes along Connecticut and Massachusetts Avenues NW that maximize green space and outdoor seating where possible. 2112.11

### ***Action NNW-2.2.E: Expanded Recreation Center at Stead Park***

Create an expanded recreation center at Stead Park, which should include modern facilities to accommodate the growing needs of community programming for residents of all ages. The expanded recreation center should strive to receive certification as a net zero energy building, if possible, or a high-level green certification. 2112.12

### ***Action NNW-2.2.F: Improve Neighborhood Bike Lane Infrastructure***

Study the possibility of creating additional protected bike lanes in Dupont Circle, including on 17th and 18th Streets NW and Massachusetts Avenue NW. 2112.13

<sup>1</sup> Section 2112.6 is reserved and intentionally omitted.



*Dupont Circle row houses*



Over the past dozen years or more, 14th Street has emerged as one of the most popular retail, dining and party streets in DC attracting new investment and shoppers.

See the Central Washington Element for additional information about the Lower 16<sup>th</sup> Street Area.

### NNW-2.3 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW/Logan Circle <sup>2113</sup>

The 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW corridor extending from Massachusetts Avenue north to S Street NW, and the adjacent area between 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Streets NW, includes a wide range of residential development, from large historic mansions and row houses to high-rise apartment buildings. The southern part of this area along Massachusetts Avenue is one of the most densely developed areas in Washington, DC. Low-rise and garden apartments, including subsidized housing, have also been built within this area. The Logan Circle neighborhood includes numerous churches as well. The area's only larger-scale parks and open spaces are Logan Circle, which are owned and maintained by NPS, and the playing fields at Garrison Elementary School. <sup>2113.1</sup>

Major building renovation has been taking place in the Logan Circle area for more than two decades. The development of a Whole Foods supermarket on P Street just west of 14th Street NW in 2001 was a catalyst for revitalization, sparking additional commercial development on P Street NW, as well as the development of many large-scale residential projects in the vicinity. Other catalytic projects, like the Studio and Woolly Mammoth Theaters (which has relocated to Penn Quarter in 2004), have helped transform 14th Street NW from its former life as Washington, DC's Auto Row into a lively arts, restaurant, and loft district. The designation of the corridor as an Arts Zone district that includes incentives for arts-oriented businesses was an important factor in the transformation of the corridor into a hub for art galleries, theaters, and music venues. However, today's strong market is attracting retail and restaurants that are replacing arts-oriented businesses.

<sup>2113.2</sup>

Current trends in Logan Circle are expected to continue into the future, with 14th Street emerging as an even stronger center for entertainment over the next decade. Additional restaurants, theaters, lofts, and apartments are encouraged on the blocks between Thomas Circle and U Street, creating a dynamic street environment that epitomizes the best qualities of urban living. Development on the corridor should be designed to minimize impacts on adjacent residential areas, adaptively reuse important historic structures, and preserve long-time neighborhood institutions like churches.

<sup>2113.3</sup>

#### **Policy NNW-2.3.1: 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW Arts District**

Promote and encourage the presence of the arts along 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW between M Street and Florida Avenue NW, and preserve and enhance the area's entertainment, arts, and architectural history. <sup>2113.4</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.3.2: 14th Street NW Mixed-Use Development***

Promote the development of art galleries, lofts, and business incubators for the arts along 14th Street, along with the establishment of cultural facilities and street-level retail and neighborhood service uses, such as restaurants and local-serving professional offices. <sup>2113.5</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.3.3: Public Realm***

Address public safety, urban design, and public space issues along 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW to foster a safe, attractive environment conducive to the arts and arts-related businesses. <sup>2113.6</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.3.4: Lot Consolidation***

Encourage lot consolidation to address the many narrow commercial sites that exist along 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW to encourage suitable scale and massing and to improve conditions for new development along the corridor. <sup>2113.7</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.3.5: Arts Funding***

Encourage programs that support arts and cultural activities and facilities along 14th Street NW. <sup>2113.8</sup>



*C&O Canal towpath in Georgetown*

**NNW-2.4 Lower Georgetown <sup>2114</sup>**

At one time, the Foggy Bottom and Georgetown waterfronts included industrial uses, such as gas works, glass companies, breweries, and warehouses. Most of these buildings were removed long ago to make way for office, retail, parks, and residential development. Some have been adapted for contemporary mixed-use development. The waterfront has emerged as a major activity center, with new parkland west of the Washington Harbour complex. <sup>2114.1</sup>

In recent years, the extension of the waterfront park from Washington Harbour to the Key Bridge has created a new, popular regional public attraction for Georgetown, revitalizing a long-neglected portion of the riverfront. <sup>2114.2</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.4.1: Georgetown and Foggy Bottom Waterfront***

Provide a continuous linear park connection along the Potomac River waterfront in Georgetown and Foggy Bottom, including paths for pedestrians and bicyclists, fountains, seating areas, landscaping and open space, lighting, public access to the water, new non-motorized boating facilities, and fishing areas. Focus on improving safe pedestrian access routes to and from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Watergate Complex, and to and from the larger Foggy Bottom neighborhood. A long-range plan in partnership with federal agencies to re-urbanize and improve connections over Route 66 will be needed in order to truly reconnect Foggy Bottom to its riverfront and better use land. The



plan should also take into account the area's potential flood vulnerability caused by climate change and sea level rise. <sup>2114.3</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.4.2: Upper Potomac Waterfront***

Partner with NPS and other federal agencies to conserve open space along the Potomac waterfront and preserve the wooded and scenic qualities of the Potomac Palisades and adjacent islands and shoreline. Be sensitive to the risks posed by climate change that increase flood risk along the river. <sup>2114.4</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.4.3: Chesapeake & Ohio (C&O) Canal***

Support efforts by NPS and partners to restore, reimagine, and revitalize the C&O Canal National Historic Park. <sup>2114.5</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.4.4: High-Capacity Transit Connections***

Explore multimodal options to improve high-capacity transit from Rosslyn, Virginia to Georgetown and from Georgetown to other parts of the District.

<sup>2114.6</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.4.5: Erosion and Bank Stabilization***

Work with NPS to stabilize the Potomac River's banks, clean tidal flat areas, and reduce erosion along the Potomac shoreline and along Rock Creek. <sup>2114.7</sup>

***Action NNW-2.4.A: West Heating Plant***

Support redevelopment of the West Heating Plant to include residential uses and a publicly accessible park with pedestrian and bicycle connections to Rock Creek Park and the C&O Canal National Historical Park. The connectivity should foster travel from those parks and trails to Georgetown and points south. Work with NPS to widen the bike/pedestrian path beside the Rock Creek Parkway to protect the safety of its many users. <sup>2114.8</sup>

**NNW-2.5 Foggy Bottom/West End <sup>2115</sup>**

Foggy Bottom is one of the District's oldest residential neighborhoods. It includes a mix of 19<sup>th</sup> century alley houses, small-scale townhouses, mid-rise apartments, and condominiums, as well as GW's campus and GW Hospital. Major federal uses, including the Department of State and the Kennedy Center, are located in the neighborhood, as well as major international institutions like the Pan American Health Organization. The neighborhood also includes Columbia Plaza and the Watergate, both mixed-use complexes that are predominantly residential. There are several hotels and office buildings in the area as well. <sup>2115.1</sup>

Starting with the planning and construction of the Whitehurst Freeway shortly after World War II, substantial parts of Foggy Bottom were lost to highway right-of-way. Highway construction followed the condemnation and demolition of large areas of Foggy Bottom. This prompted the organizing of a

grass-roots, anti- highway movement in Washington, DC and other US cities experiencing a similar level of urban demolition, which eventually helped end the highway building boom by the mid-1960s. The abrupt end to the building of urban highway systems left areas like Foggy Bottom with unfinished roads and ramps feeding into existing grids that were never designed to support highway-level traffic and with barriers bisecting the community and separating it from the Potomac River. <sup>2115.2</sup>

The neighborhood has a shortage of usable parkland. The Potomac Freeway along the area's western boundary restricts access between the neighborhood, adjacent parkland, the waterfront, and the Kennedy Center. George Washington Circle provides a large, centrally located open space, but vehicular traffic around the circle makes it difficult to access. Rock Creek Park itself is accessible from Virginia and Pennsylvania Avenues but is otherwise cut off from the area by the freeway. <sup>2115.3</sup>

The heart of the neighborhood, including the major concentration of 19th century townhouses, was designated a historic district in 1986. In 1992, the Foggy Bottom Overlay District (now the R-17 zone) was created to provide further conservation of the area and to maintain the residential development pattern. In 2014, the GW/Old West End historic district was established in the heart of the campus and some of the surrounding area, formerly known as West End. <sup>2115.4</sup>

The current West End, just north of Foggy Bottom, is a former industrial and residential area that has been undergoing major change since the late 1970s. The area was rezoned in 1975 to encourage mixed-use development. Since that time, there has been major office, hotel, residential, and creative mixed-use, public-private partnership development, including a new library with eight stories of residences above and a number of affordable units. Very few vacant sites remain. The opportunity remains to enhance the M Street NW corridor between Georgetown and Connecticut Avenue NW and to strengthen the Pennsylvania Avenue NW corridor, which currently defines the edge between Foggy Bottom and West End. <sup>2115.5</sup>

The expansion of GW has been an ongoing issue of significant concern in Foggy Bottom and West End, with neighbors expressing unease about the loss of housing stock and the changing character of the community. Continued commercial, hotel, and institutional expansion, coupled with increased regional commuter traffic, has caused traffic, parking problems, and concerns about air quality and disruption of the quality of life. On the other hand, GW has also been an engine of economic, social, and cultural growth for the community by revitalizing the retail and food offerings in the area, and providing medical services. Pursuant to the 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan, the university committed to develop its academic programs in



*Foggy Bottom*



*Multi-family housing in the District's West End*

the area within its boundaries and to discontinue off-campus undergraduate housing facilities. The objectives for land use decisions in the Foggy Bottom/West End area are to conserve and enhance the existing residential neighborhood, maintain and improve existing parkland and access to it, and balance the needs of local residents with the needs of the university to carry out its academic mission. Efforts should continue to retain the residential balance of the area, ensure adherence to the campus plan, and proactively address neighborhood and university concerns. <sup>2115.6</sup>

The area includes the Foggy Bottom/GW Metro station, one of the busiest stations in the Metrorail system, which has only one entrance/exit. A second entrance would be desirable and is encouraged in the future. <sup>2115.7</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.5.1: GW/Foggy Bottom Coordination***

Encourage continued efforts to improve communication and coordination between GW and the Foggy Bottom and West End communities. Campus plans for the university must demonstrate how the university can manage its academic mission within applicable limits for both campus development and enrollment. These efforts should preserve the residential character of Foggy Bottom while contributing to the cultural and physical diversity of the community. <sup>2115.8</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.5.2: Student Housing and Parking Issues***

Support continued efforts by GW to place students in residential facilities within the campus boundaries or at the Mount Vernon campus to alleviate pressure on the housing stock in Foggy Bottom/West End and to develop transportation demand management programs and facilities that reduce parking problems on residential streets in the campus area. <sup>2115.9</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.5.3: GW Building Intensity***

As approved in the 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan, increase density on the existing GW campus to accommodate future space and facility needs (as measured by the enrollment, staff, and faculty limits set in the approved plan). Take steps to avoid sharp contrasts in height and bulk between the campus and the surrounding community to mitigate the effects of increased traffic, parking, and other impacts. <sup>2115.10</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.5.4: West End/Foggy Bottom Parkland***

Maximize the benefits of all parks and open spaces in this area, including George Washington Circle, Juarez Circle, and adjacent open space islands: Rock Creek Park, Rock Creek, and the Potomac Parkway. The publicly owned land between M Street and Virginia Avenue NW and 26th and 29th Streets NW, which includes both federally and District-owned land, shall be part of a larger study on open space accessibility, transportation

infrastructure reconfiguration, urban fabric reconnectivity for Foggy Bottom. <sup>2115.11</sup>

***Policy NNW-2.5.5: Study Potential for Removing Highway Infrastructure in Foggy Bottom***

Study the feasibility of improving Foggy Bottom and West End’s access to the Potomac River, including the E Street NW corridor and the connection to Whitehurst Freeway, and existing park land, and create new open space and new development parcels by reconfiguring existing transportation infrastructure. Reconnecting to the District grid is essential for improving neighborhood connectivity and to support desirable enhanced transportation, improved park accessibility, affordable housing, and neighborhood-oriented development. <sup>2115.12</sup>

*Action NNW-2.5.A: Foggy Bottom/West End Transportation Improvements*

Conduct studies and implement appropriate changes to improve access and circulation between, through, and around the Foggy Bottom and West End neighborhoods, respecting the L’Enfant Plan street grid, conserving Juarez Circle and other parklands as open space and better incorporating the transportation needs of various institutions and uses into the fabric of surrounding neighborhoods. <sup>2115.13</sup>

*Action NNW-2.5.B: Washington Circle*

Design and implement pedestrian access improvements to Washington Circle’s open space, such as removing fences and architectural barriers to the lawns. <sup>2115.14</sup>

*Action NNW-2.5.C: Foggy Bottom River, Park, and Cultural Access Study*

Study the feasibility of reconfiguring existing highway infrastructure in Foggy Bottom so as to maximize the benefits and accessibility of the open space and parkland and maintain overall park space, reconnect the gaps in the street grid and urban fabric, create opportunities for affordable housing production, improve pedestrian and bike connections to and from Georgetown, the Kennedy Center, President’s Park, National Mall, national parkland, and other attractions, and create new memorials, linear parks, and civic spaces. <sup>2115.15</sup>

