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## IDEAS FOR ADAMS MORGAN

ADAMS MORGAN **VISION FRAMEWORK** APPENDIX B 2016

## APPENDIX B: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OVERVIEW

### Overview of Comprehensive Plan Policies for Adams Morgan

This Appendix highlights the policies and actions for Adams Morgan contained in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital: District Elements (as amended in 2011). The Comprehensive Plan is the legislatively-adopted 20-year general policy document which provides the vision and framework for the future land use planning and development of the District of Columbia. The Comprehensive Plan is available on OP's website at <http://planning.dc.gov/page/comprehensive-plan>. This Appendix also demonstrates how the Adams Morgan Vision Framework's recommendations are aligned with the Comprehensive Plan. It is anticipated that the Vision Framework will also inform amendments to the Comprehensive Plan during the 2nd Amendment Cycle that is kicking off in 2016.

The Comprehensive Plan includes twelve topic-specific Citywide Elements (chapters), ten Area Elements that give geographically-specific guidance, and two maps, the Future Land Use Map and the Generalized Policy Map. The Adams Morgan neighborhood is included in the Mid-City Area Element. The Mid-City Area Element provides guidance for Adams Morgan in its Planning and Development section and the Policy Focus Areas section. The Adams Morgan Vision Framework adds more context-specific detail to the Comprehensive Plan's guidance through focused analysis, extensive community engagement and recommended actions.

### Summary of Relevant Comprehensive Plan Guidance

The following sections summarize Comprehensive Plan guidance on specific topics. Please refer to the list of specific Comprehensive Plan policies and actions under "Select Comprehensive Plan Policies and Action Items for Adams Morgan" for more detailed guidance.

**Identity.** The Planning and Development Priorities section of the Mid-City Area Element summarizes feedback from Comprehensive Plan community meetings held in Mid-City in 2005 and 2006. Community members stated the distinct and eclectic character that defines the Mid-City Area should be protected as infill development takes place. Additionally, while community investment is welcomed, many community members are worried that the rapid pace of redevelopment will change the fabric of the community too quickly. (§2007.2) An impetus for the Vision Framework planning study was community stakeholder concern regarding the rapid pace of both commercial and residential development throughout Adams Morgan. The Vision Framework supports efforts to protect both the distinct and eclectic character that defines Adams Morgan's architectural character and the existing demographic diversity through a series of targeted goals and recommendations to strengthen neighborhood identity through arts, history and culture (see pages 18 -20 of the Vision Framework).

**Land Use.** The existing land use composition of Adams Morgan is defined primarily by its residential housing stock consisting of a range of building typologies including row houses, flats, mid and high rise buildings and a strong commercial core laid out along 18th Street and Columbia Road, NW. Similar to the Vision Framework (see page 20), the Comprehensive Plan contains several policies and actions that support increasing housing opportunities for people at all income levels so that Adams Morgan can remain a diverse neighborhood.

**Arts and Culture.** The Comprehensive Plan states that the arts should be recognized as an essential part of community life in the Mid-City area (§2007.2). The Mid-City area, in particular Adams Morgan, has been the home of many ethnic and racial groups since the 1920s, and long been a center of creative expression and cultural diversity. The Vision Framework includes goals and recommendations that reinforce Adams Morgan's

identity as place for arts and culture and the unique needs of ethnic groups' involvement in community life and civic affairs (see pages 10, 15, 19).

**Retail and Businesses.** The Comprehensive Plan states the need for better economic balance in the neighborhood. While it references neighborhood centers on the west side of the Mid-City Planning Area as generally successful with a strong demand for commercial space, this condition has changed since the Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2006 and now a presents a challenge to the historically vibrant commercial corridor. The Vision Framework clearly articulates the economic challenges of Adams Morgan's commercial core and includes targeted goals and recommendations for redefining retail, retaining the existing customer base and drawing new customers to the neighborhood (see pages 12 – 15).

The 18th Street/Columbia Road commercial district is a Priority Focus Area in the Mid-City Area Element. (§2014). Within the 18th Street/Columbia Road Policy Focus Area, the Comprehensive Plan recognizes the realities of a neighborhood that continues to experience growing pains as it grapples with strong demand for housing and the popularity of its entertainment scene. The Comprehensive Plan highlights the need to protect the character of Adams Morgan, neighborhood preference for local-serving businesses, retention and reuse of public and institutional facilities, and pedestrian and bicycle enhancements and local business assistance (§2014.3 - 14). The Vision Framework includes goals and recommendations that address each of these priority focus areas and a path for implementation.

### Overview of Comprehensive Plan Maps

In addition to the Mid-City Area Element, the Comprehensive Plan's Generalized Policy and Future Land Use Maps provide additional planning and development guidance.

The Generalized Policy Map classifies Adams Morgan as a **Neighborhood Conservation Area and Main Street Mixed Use Corridor**. A focused view of this map is located on page 7 of this document. Neighborhood Conservation Areas are established neighborhoods with very little vacant or underutilized land and are primarily residential in character. Policies in the areas support maintaining and enhancing existing uses. Maintenance of existing land uses and community character is anticipated over the next 20 years. Where change occurs, it will be modest in scale and will consist primarily of scattered site infill housing, public facilities, and institutions uses. (Chapter 2: Framework Element, §223.4)

Main Street Mixed Use Corridors are defined as neighborhood shopping streets characterized by ground floor retail and upper floor residential and office uses. These are traditional commercial business corridors with a concentration of older storefronts along the street. The common feature of Main Street Mixed Use Corridors is they have a pedestrian-oriented environment with traditional storefronts. Conversion and enhancement of these corridors is desired to foster economic and housing opportunities and serve neighborhood needs. (§223.14)

The Future Land Use Map classifies Adams Morgan as predominantly **Medium and Moderate Density Residential and commercial corridors that are generally designated for low- to moderate-density mixed use development**. A focused view of this map is located on page 6 of this document. Areas with Medium and Moderate Density Residential classification generally include a mix of mid- to high rises, small apartments and

row houses. Typical low- to moderate-density mixed use commercial corridors generally are three to five stories in height and include areas of retail, office, and service uses.

Comprehensive Plan land use designations inform zoning, which cannot be inconsistent with the Plan, but they do not establish zoning. While the Comprehensive Plan does not establish zoning, the zone districts that typically correspond to properties with those land use designations are generally R-5-B and R-5-D in the residential areas and C-2-A and C-2-B in the commercial areas; some other districts may apply. (§225.4, 225.6, 225.8, and 225.9) The Adams Morgan Vision Framework does not make any recommendations to change the future land use or zoning for the area and is consistent with the Plan.

### Select Comprehensive Plan Policies and Action Items for Adams Morgan

The following section provides a list of key policies and actions from the Comprehensive Plan Mid-City Area Element that have the greatest relevance to the topics covered in the Vision Framework.

#### Policy MC-1.1.1: Neighborhood Conservation

Retain and reinforce the historic character of Mid-City neighborhoods, particularly its row houses, older apartment houses, historic districts, and walkable neighborhood shopping districts. The area's rich architectural heritage and cultural history should be protected and enhanced. 2008.2

#### Policy MC-1.1.4: Local Services and Small Businesses

Protect the small businesses and essential local services that serve Mid-City. Encourage the establishment of new businesses that provide these services in areas where they are lacking, especially on the east side of the Planning Area. 2008.5

#### Policy MC-1.1.5: Conservation of Row House Neighborhoods

Recognize the value and importance of Mid-City's row house neighborhoods as an essential part of the fabric of the local community. Ensure that the Comprehensive Plan and zoning designations for these neighborhoods reflect the desire to retain the row house pattern. Land use controls should discourage the subdivision of single family row houses into multi-unit apartment buildings but should encourage the use of English basements as separate dwelling units, in order to retain and increase the rental housing supply. 2008.6

#### Policy MC-1.1.6: Mixed Use Districts

Encourage preservation of the housing located within Mid-City's commercially zoned areas. Within mixed use (commercial/residential) areas, such as Mount Pleasant Street and Columbia Road, encourage commercial uses that do not adversely impact the established residential uses. 2008.7

#### Policy MC-1.1.7: Protection of Affordable Housing

Strive to retain the character of Mid-City as a mixed income community by protecting the area's existing stock of affordable housing units and promoting the construction of new affordable units. 2008.8

## APPENDIX B: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OVERVIEW

### **Policy MC-1.1.8: Traffic and Parking Management**

Improve traffic circulation along major Mid-City arterial streets, with a priority on 14th Street, Georgia Avenue, U Street, 18th Street, Columbia Road, and Connecticut Avenue. Implement programs in these areas to improve bus circulation, improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and ease of travel, and mitigate the effects of increased traffic on residential streets. Consistent with the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, provide alternatives to automobile use—including improved transit and innovative personal transportation options—for existing and new residents to reduce the necessity of auto ownership, particularly where parking and traffic problems exist. 2008.9 See the Transportation Element for additional policies on reducing auto dependence.

### **Policy MC-1.1.9: Transit Improvements**

Improve public transit throughout the Mid-City Planning Area, with an emphasis on shorter headways on the north-south bus routes, additional east-west and cross-park bus routes, and more frequent and extended Metrorail service. Continue assistance programs for the area's transit dependent groups, including the elderly, students, and disabled. 2008.10

### **Action MC-1.1.A: Rezoning Of Row House Blocks**

Selectively rezone well-established residential areas where the current zoning allows densities that are well beyond the existing development pattern. The emphasis should be on row house neighborhoods that are presently zoned R-5-B or higher, which include the areas between 14th and 16th Streets NW, parts of Adams Morgan, areas between S and U Streets NW, and sections of Florida Avenue, Calvert Street, and 16th Street. 2008.11

### **Action MC-1.1.C: Transit Improvements**

Support the development of a fully integrated bus, streetcar, subway, bicycle, and pedestrian system within the Planning Area by moving forward with plans for expanded service on the Metro Green Line, extension of the Metrorail Yellow Line, and bus rapid transit on Georgia Avenue. 2008.13 Action MC-1.1.D: Off-Street Parking Support the development of off-street parking facilities in the Columbia Heights, Adams Morgan, and U Street commercial districts, and the implementation of parking management programs that maximize the use of existing parking resources (such as the Reeves Center garage), minimize traffic associated with “circling” for spaces, and reduce conflicts between users. 2008.14

See the Citywide Transportation and Land Use Elements for additional policies on off-street parking standards.

## **MC-1.2 Conserving and Enhancing Community Resources 2009**

### **Policy MC-1.2.1: Cultural Diversity**

Maintain the cultural diversity of Mid-City by encouraging housing and business opportunities for all residents, sustaining a strong network of social services for immigrant groups, and retaining affordable housing within the Planning Area. 2009.1

### **Policy MC-1.2.2: English Language Programs and Vocational Training**

Work with established institutions such as public schools, charter schools, and Howard University to support alternative education and vocational training options for non-English speaking residents. 2009.2

### **Policy MC-1.2.3: Rock Creek Park**

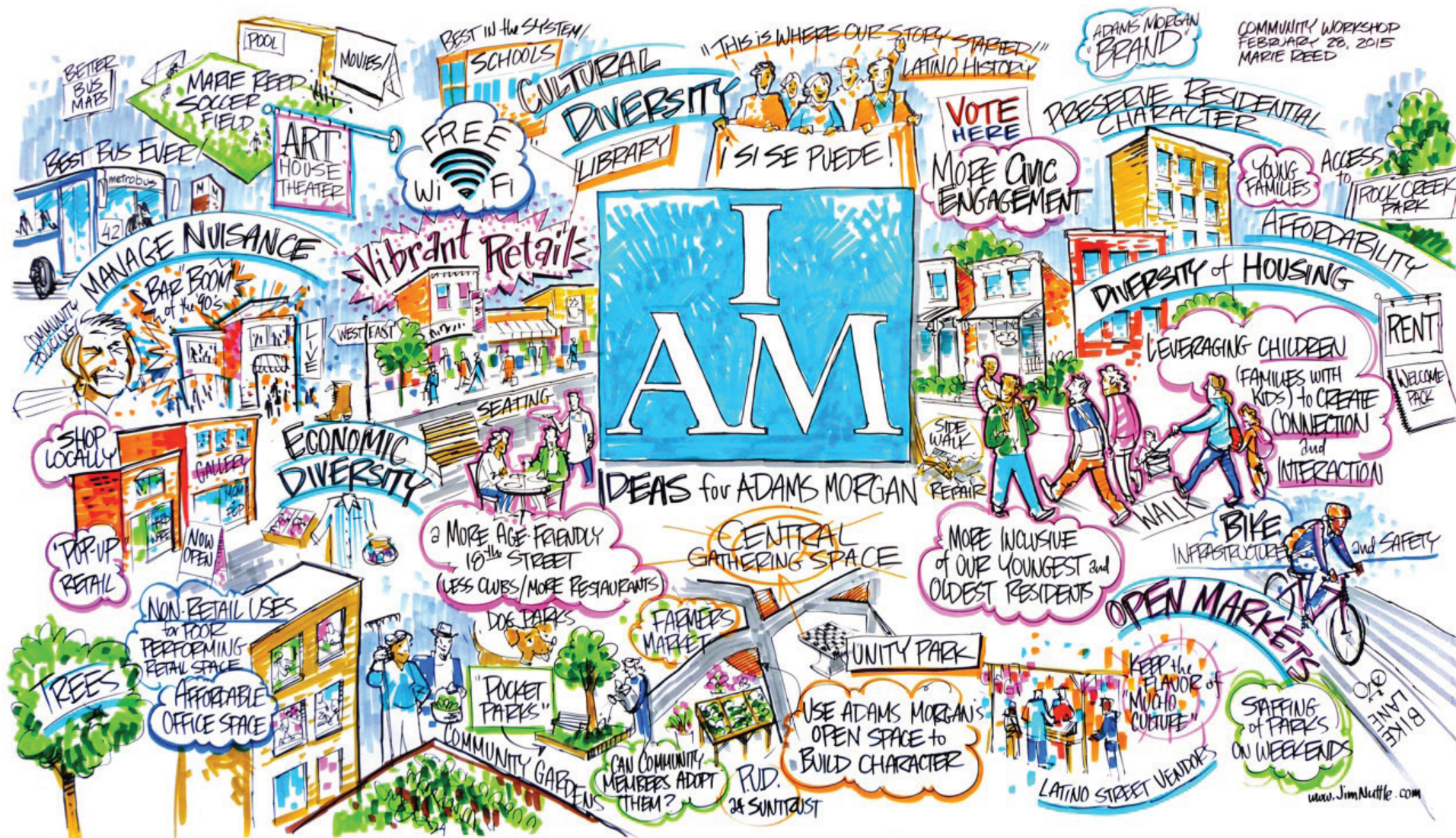
Improve community access from the Mid-City area to Rock Creek Park. Work with the National Park Service to explore opportunities for new recreational amenities in the park that reduce the deficit of open space and recreational facilities in the Mid-City. 2009.3

### **Policy MC-1.2.4: New Parks**

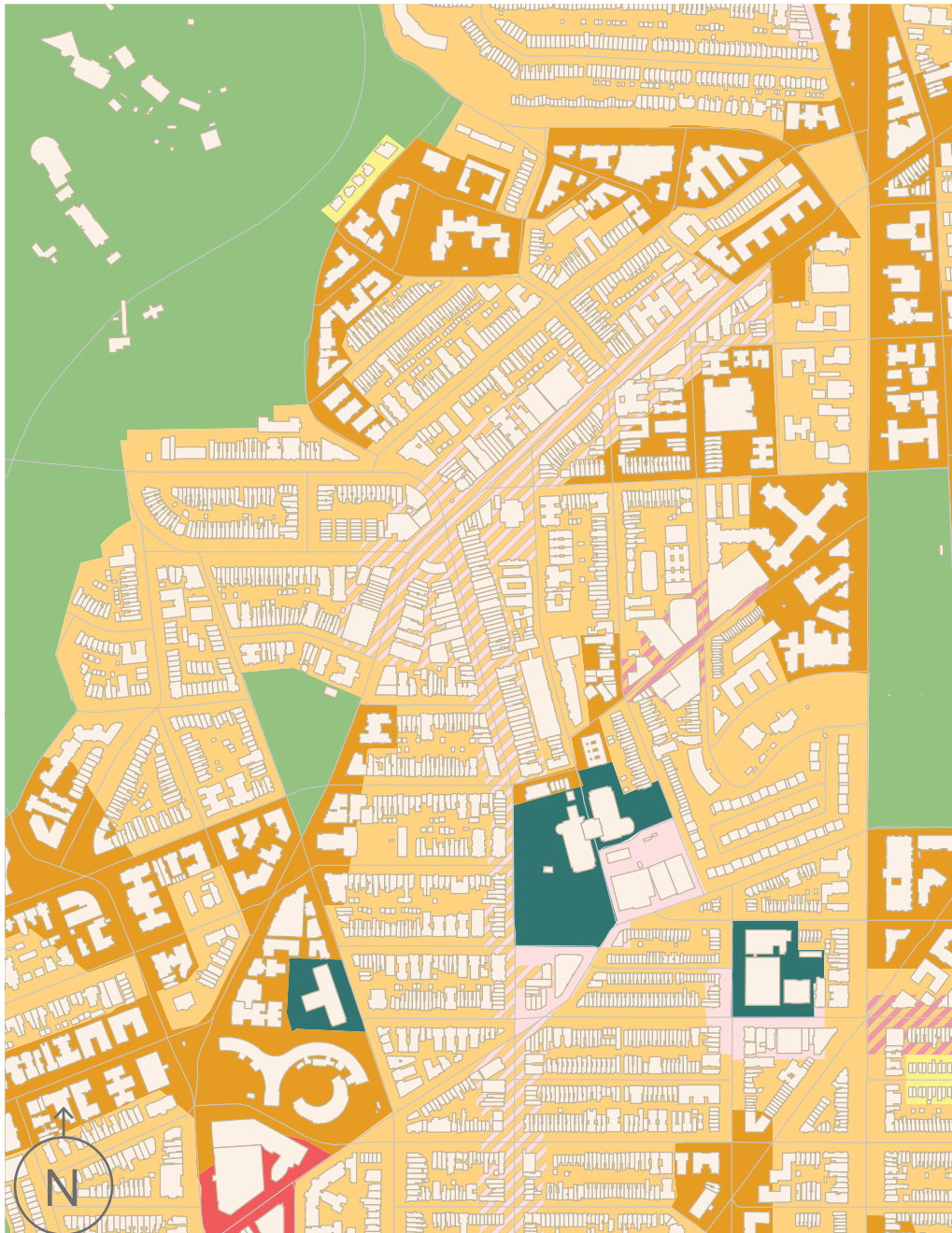
Explore the possibility for new neighborhood parks within the Mid-City area, particularly in the area around the proposed Howard Town Center, and on the McMillan Reservoir site. Additionally, pocket parks and plazas such as those planned for the Columbia Heights Metro station area should be encouraged elsewhere in the Planning Area, particularly near higher density development. The dearth of parks in the Mid-City area is a serious problem that must be addressed as its population grows—all recreation areas must be retained and new recreation areas must be provided wherever possible. 2009.4

### **Policy MC-1.2.5: Neighborhood Greening**

Undertake neighborhood greening and planting projects throughout the Mid-City Area, particularly on median strips, public triangles, and along sidewalk planting strips. 2009.5



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FUTURE LAND USE MAP

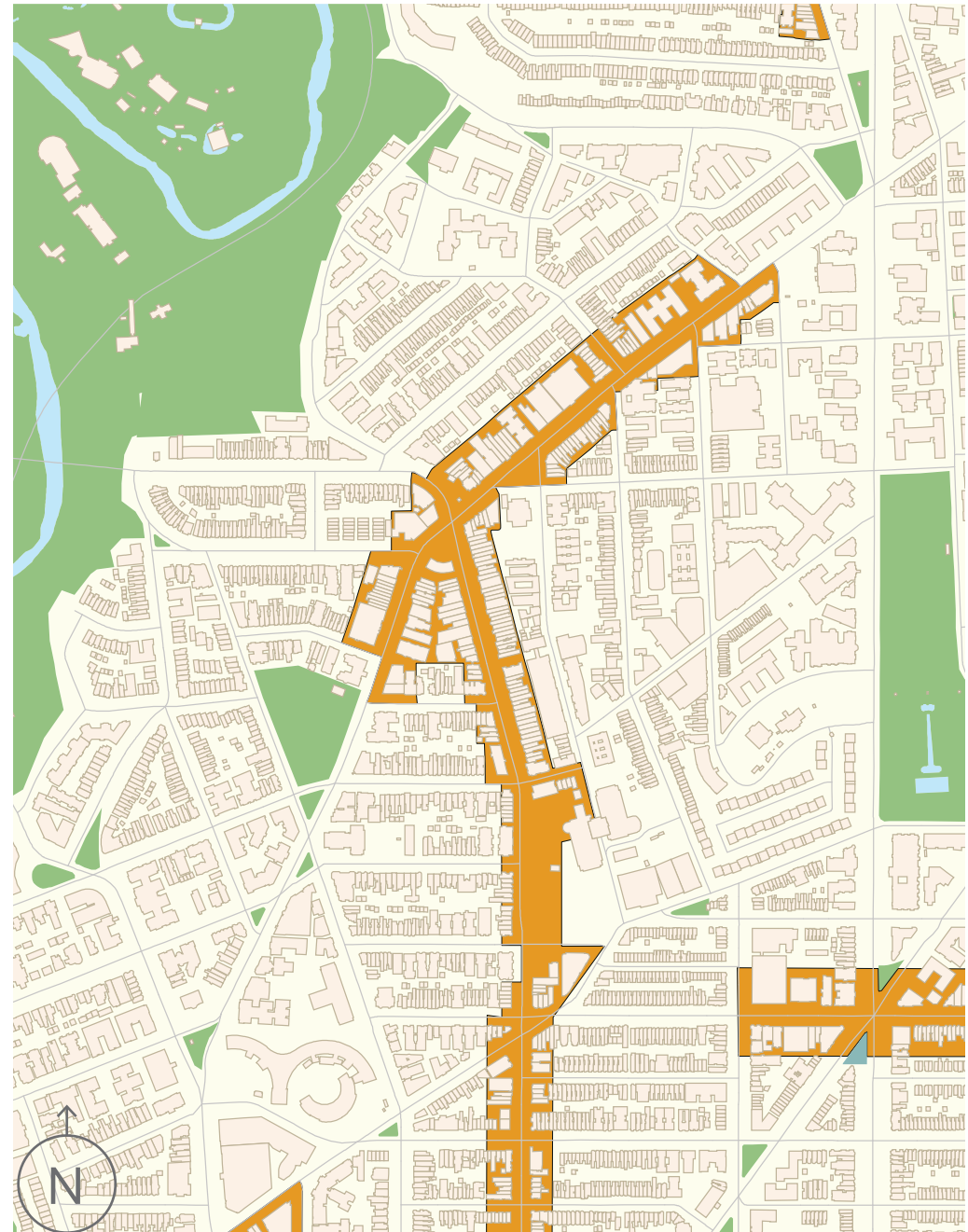
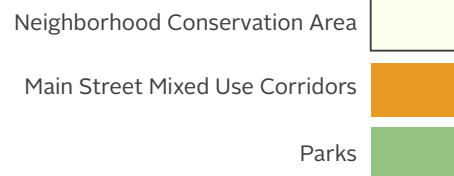


The Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map is one of the most important guides for zoning and a key implementation tool for the Comprehensive Plan. This map shows that most of Adams Moran is Medium and Moderate Density Residential and commercial corridors that are generally designated for low- to moderate-density mixed use development. Areas with Medium and Moderate Density Residential classification generally include a mix of mid- to high rises, small apartments and row houses. Typical low- to moderate-density mixed use commercial corridors generally are three to five stories in height and include areas of retail, office, and service uses. For more information about this map please visit [planning.dc.gov/page/comprehensive-plan](http://planning.dc.gov/page/comprehensive-plan)

- Low Density Residential
- Moderate Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Low Density Commercial
- Moderate Density Commercial
- Medium Density Commercial
- Local Public Facilities
- Parks Recreation, and Open Space
- Mixed Use: Moderate Density Residential Low Density Commercial
- Mixed Use: Moderate Density Residential Moderate Density Commercial

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GENERALIZED POLICY MAP

This map is a visual depiction of the Comprehensive Plan's Policies. The map classifies Adams Morgan as a Neighborhood Conservation Area and Main Street Mixed Use Corridors Neighborhood Conservation Areas are established neighborhoods with very little vacant or underutilized land and are primarily residential in character. Main Street Mixed Use Corridors are defined as neighborhood shopping streets characterized by ground floor retail and upper floor residential and office uses. The common feature of Main Street Mixed Use Corridors is they have a pedestrian-oriented environment with traditional storefronts. For more information about this map please visit [planning.dc.gov/page/comprehensive-plan](http://planning.dc.gov/page/comprehensive-plan)



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