



## TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the major concerns of the task force is the need to improve traffic flow through the King/Quaker/Braddock intersection.

The major problem of the intersection is not an unusually high volume of traffic on any one street segment, but rather the fact that there are so many movements through the intersection that the sum total of all the signal phases result in a very long cycle time with a limited number of cars being able to move through each phase. It is clear that the only way to make a significant impact on the intersection is to reduce the total number of traffic movements either by 1) eliminating some turning movements, 2) building a grade separation with King Street passing under the intersection, or 3) combining King and Braddock traffic together where they cross Quaker Lane.

The intersection involves three major arterials, one of which is a State route and any significant improvements will require analysis by the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation. Therefore, staff recommends that City Council authorize the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services to submit the King Street/Quaker Lane/Braddock Road intersection to the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation for preliminary engineering and evaluation of design alternatives. The study process may take a considerable amount of time. It is to the City's interest to initiate that process soon so that the alternative solutions can be analyzed.

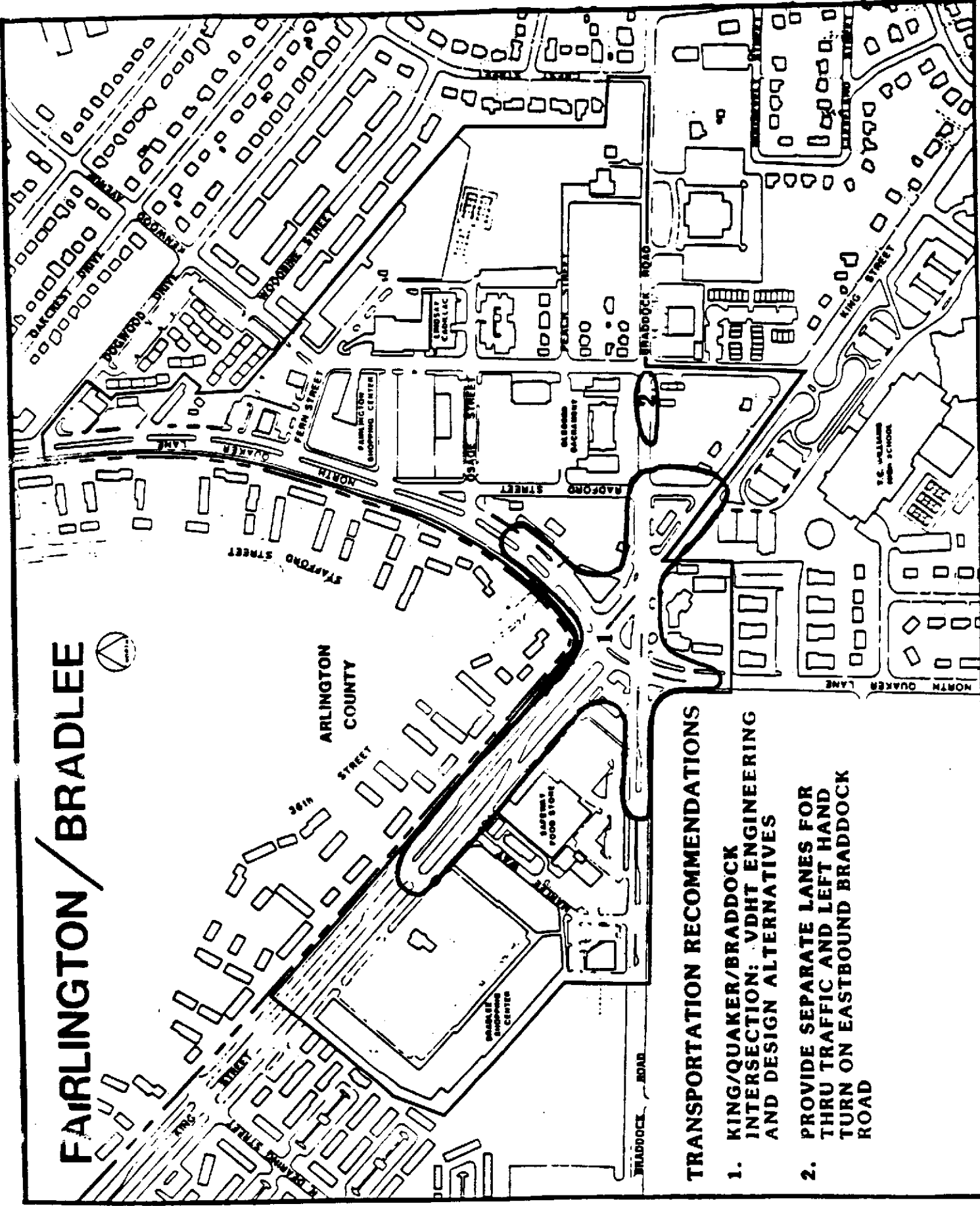
The task force also raised two other transportation issues. One concerns the entrance to the Bradlee Shopping Center where the intersection of King Street and Taylor Drive is controlled by a traffic signal and Taylor Drive and the King Street service drive is controlled by stop signs. This situation produces confusion over who has the right-of-way which results in congestion.

The other issue that citizens requested to be examined was converting eastbound Braddock Road at Kenwood Street from one travel lane to two lanes: one for left turn movement and the other for through and right turns. Currently, cars are permitted to park up to the corner on Braddock Road.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That City Council ~~authorize the~~ <sup>INSTRUCT</sup> Director of Transportation and Environmental Services to ~~submit the King Street/Quaker Lane/Braddock Road intersection to the Virginia Department of Highways and Transportation for preliminary engineering and preparation of design alternatives.~~ <sup>STUDY</sup> We would anticipate that this study will also address the service drive on King Street (Map 9). <sup>AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION</sup> ~~AND~~
2. Direct the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services to investigate if parking on eastbound Braddock

Road at Kenwood Avenue can be restricted in order to provide one lane for left hand turns onto Kenwood and one lane for through and right hand turn movements (Map 10).



**FAIRLINGTON / BRADLEE**

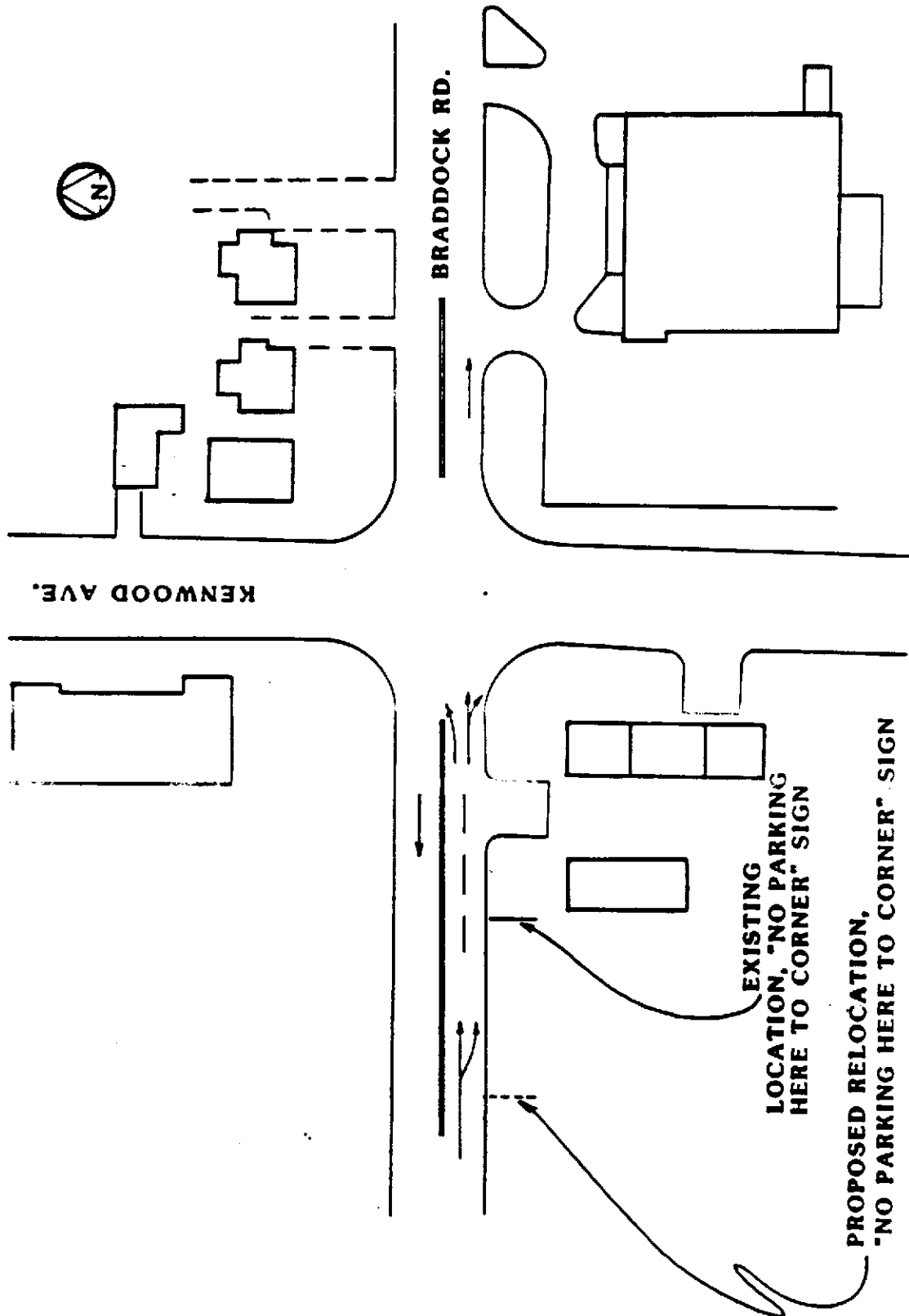


ARLINGTON COUNTY

**TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. KING/QUAKER/BRADDOCK INTERSECTION: VDHHT ENGINEERING AND DESIGN ALTERNATIVES
2. PROVIDE SEPARATE LANES FOR THRU TRAFFIC AND LEFT HAND TURN ON EASTBOUND BRADDOCK ROAD

**RECOMMENDATION TO OVIDE FOR  
LEFT TURN & THRU TRAFFIC LANES  
ON EASTBOUND BRADDOCK ROAD**



## URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fairlington/Bradlee area is made up of two retail centers with Bradlee Shopping Center serving as the focal point. Both have recently been upgraded and renovated improving the visual appearance of the centers. Lindsay Cadillac has just completed improvements to its new car storage lot and plans to renovate its used car facility at Quaker Lane and Braddock Road.

The Fairlington/Bradlee area is one of the City's main focal points with a high volume of traffic carried on its three major arterials. The area is bordered by attractive well established residential and institutional areas.

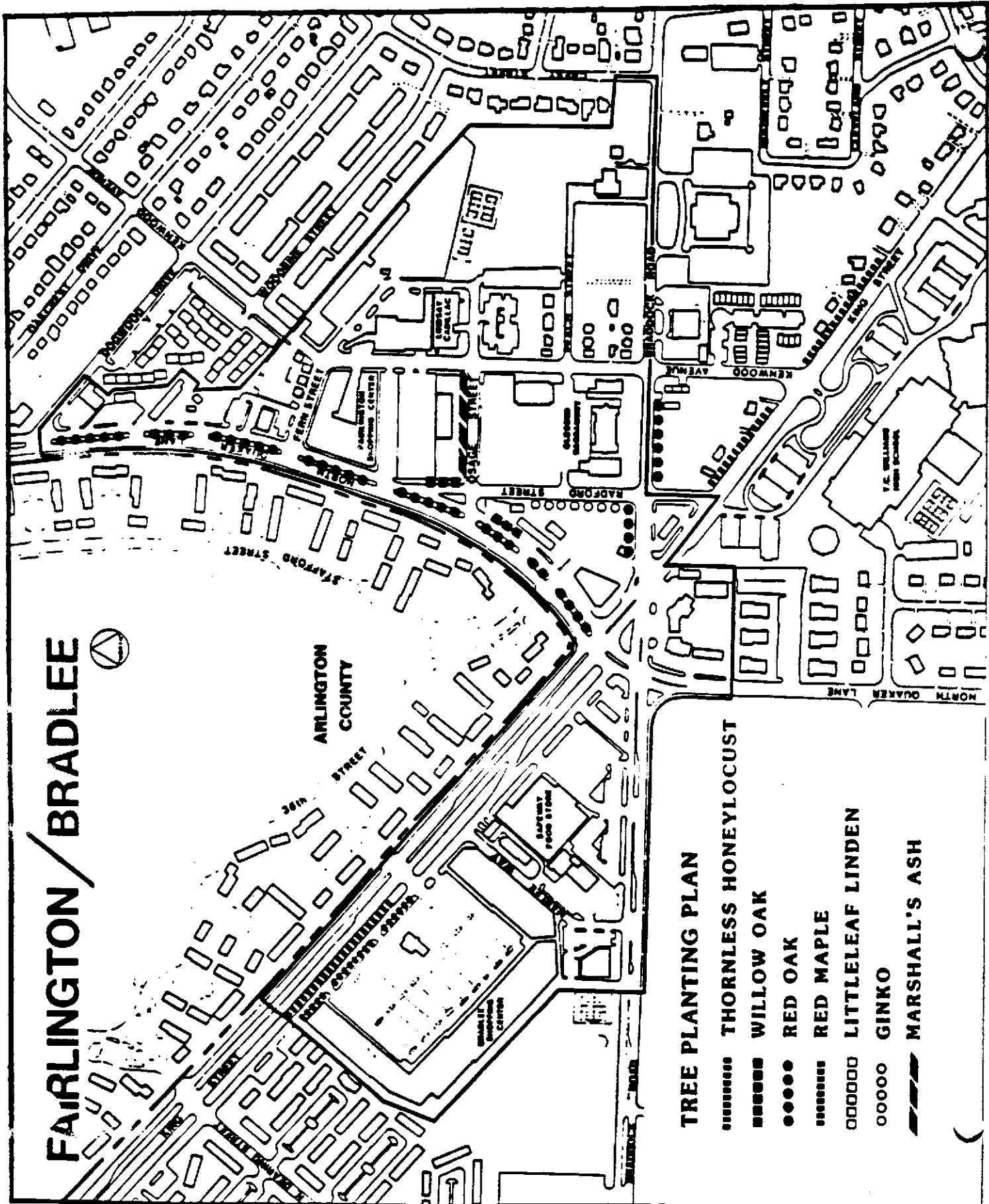
Yet for all these strengths much of the area suffers from a lack of visual form. The visual appearance of the area does not convey a strong sense of neighborhood retail. Pedestrian access is hazardous and not well defined throughout the area. A vast amount of the area is devoted to paving to accommodate the automobile both in parking and in wide streets. These elements have created a harsh visual and pedestrian environment that can be softened by landscape improvements and delineation of pedestrian crossing points.

Some landscape improvements have occurred as a result of recent construction or renovations of commercial properties, but staff's plan calls for modest tree plantings in areas that the City Arborist determined to be in need of additional plantings and/or replacement of damaged or dying trees.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Council ask the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities to consider the plan for tree plantings in the Fairlington/Bradlee area and inclusion of that plan as a capital expenditure to be included in the Capital Improvements Program (Map 11).

Staff has not proposed trees along the portion of King Street likely to be affected by the study of ways to improve the intersection.



**FAIRLINGTON / BRADLEE**



ARLINGTON COUNTY

- TREE PLANTING PLAN**
- THORNLESS HONEYLOCUST
  - ===== WILLOW OAK
  - RED OAK
  - RED MAPLE
  - ◇◇◇◇◇ LITTLELEAF LINDEN
  - △△△△△ GINKGO
  - ////// MARSHALL'S ASH

RESOLUTION  
NO. MP-89-2

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission may adopt amendments in the Master Plan of the City and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Community Development, as directed by City Council, has prepared the Northeast Small Area Plan for adoption as an amendment to the 1974 Consolidated Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, as amended; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on said small area plan was held on the 17th day of January, 1989 with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that:

1. The Department of Planning and Community Development has made comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions, trends of future developments and probable future requirements of the City as a whole and of the geographical division of the City within said small area plan which the Commission ratifies and adopts; and
2. The said Plan should be amended as shown in the Northeast Small Area Plan as Revised by the Planning Commission January 17, 1989; and
3. The said plan is necessary or desirable to guide and accomplish a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the City and the geographical division thereof encompassed within said small area plan; and
4. The said small area plan shows the Commission's long range recommendations for the general development of the geographical division of the City encompassed therein; and
5. The said small area plan is generally consistent with the newly adopted Master Plan goals and objectives for the City for preserving neighborhoods and for directing economic growth to appropriate locations for the general welfare of the citizens of the City; and
6. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the Northeast Small Area Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best

promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The Northeast Small Area Plan, as amended, comprised of the maps, plats, charts and descriptive matter attached hereto and incorporated by reference, is hereby adopted in its entirety as an amendment to the 1974 Consolidated Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia; such Small Area Plan to supercede all text and references to the geographic division of the City known as Northeast as may be contained in the 1974 Consolidated Master Plan.


2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution accompanied by the Northeast Small Area Plan be forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED THE 2ND DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1989.



William B. Hurd. Sr., Vice Chairman

ATTEST:

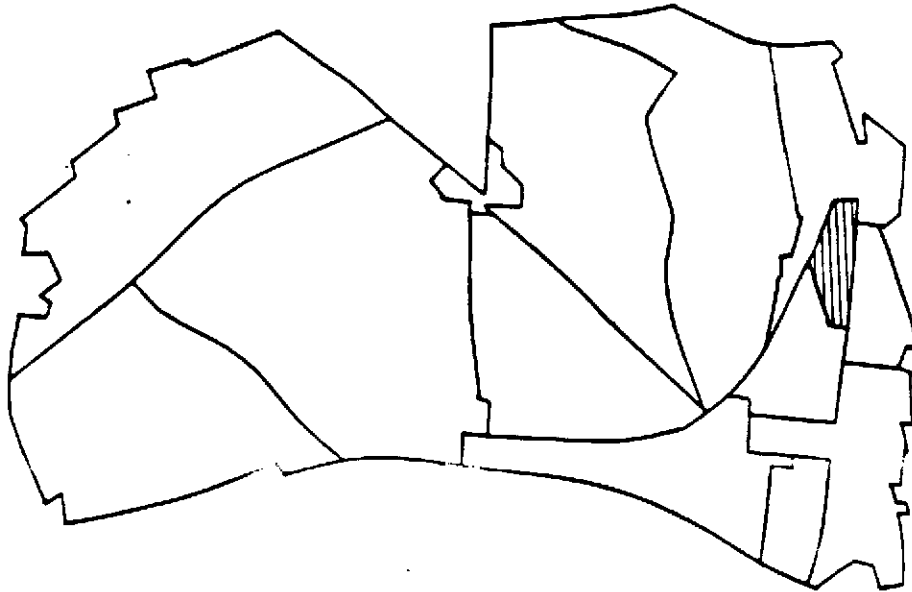
  
Sheldon Lynn, Secretary

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# NORTHEAST

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## SMALL AREA PLAN



SEPTEMBER 1988

As Revised By Planning Commission 1/17/89

Department of Planning and Community Development  
City of Alexandria, Virginia

# **NORTHEAST**

## **SMALL AREA PLAN**

**Department of Planning and Community Development  
City of Alexandria, Virginia**

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## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this document is to update the 1974 Master Plan for the Northeast Area. This plan will serve as the basis for future City Council policy initiatives and actions affecting land use, zoning, capital improvements and other programs in the Northeast Area.

## ORGANIZATION AND CONTENTS

The Northeast Area Plan is organized into two sections: Background and Issues and Plan Recommendations. The first section reviews and analyzes existing conditions and trends in the study area including physical description, demographics, land use, zoning, economic development activities and trends, transportation and urban design. This section also retraces past City policies including adopted plans, rezonings, resolutions and capital improvement programs. Based on this analysis, this section identifies issues which need to be addressed in the plan for the area.

The second section lists the goals, objectives and specific recommendations on land use, zoning, transportation and urban design.

## PLANNING PROCESS

This plan has been developed in consultation with citizens, property owners, and community and business groups, through a series of meetings which included review of existing conditions and trends in the Northeast Area, identification of issues, review of the 1974 plan of the area and review of plan recommendations.

DRAFT PROPOSED MASTER PLAN LAND USE CATEGORIES

CODE	CATEGORY	PURPOSE	USES	POSSIBLE HEIGHT (FEET)
RL	Residential Low	Single family detached residential neighborhoods within a homogeneous area. Unless specified in a small area plan to include two family dwellings this land use category would exclude any residential other than single family detached units.	1 family dwellings except when 2 family noted in plan.	35
RM	Residential Medium	Townhouse and garden apartment residential neighborhoods.	Townhouses Garden Apartments	45
RH	Residential High	Mid-rise and high-rise residential areas	Mid-rise residential High-rise Residential	150
CL	Commercial Low	Low scale, low intensity neighborhood-oriented retail and commercial service uses, including townhouse offices compatible with adjacent or nearby low density residential.	Low intensity retail and service uses; townhouse scale office.	35-50
CG	Commercial General	Auto oriented low scale commercial retail uses normally located on arterial streets. This category includes neighborhood shopping centers and other clusters of auto oriented retail and service uses. It may include limited office uses, but is not an office center.	Auto oriented retail and service activities; shopping centers; limited office.	50
CD	Commercial Downtown	High density, limited height, specialized mix of retail, office, service, hotel, residential and civic functions located in Old Town and compatible with nearby Old Town residential housing.	Retail, office, service, hotel and residential activities within the central business area.	50

\* Increased density with SUP.

CR	Commercial Regional	Large-scale, region-serving shopping centers which primarily offer comparison shopper goods and which are accessible from regional highways.	Major retail centers serving a regional market.	150
OCH	Office/Commercial Medium	Medium density limited height office development which can be mixed with supporting retail, hotel and possibly residential uses.	Medium scale office, retail, services, hotel, residential; mix of uses desired;	77
OCH	Office/Commercial High	High density office centers located in development potential areas designated for high density. May include supporting retail, hotel and residential. Generally involves structured parking.	Large scale office, retail, services, hotel, residential; mix of uses desired; limited to high density development potential areas.	150*
SCL	Service/Commercial Low	Low intensity service and commercial uses including clean industry, warehousing, low scale office and other uses which are compatible with nearby medium density residential areas.	Low intensity service and commercial; low scale office and clean industrial uses compatible with medium density residential areas.	50
I	Service/Industrial	Sites for service, distribution, manufacturing, wholesale and internal and/or external storage facilities; limited office; flex space.	Service, distribution, manufacturing, wholesale and storage; limited office.	50
UT	Utilities/Transportation	Regulated utility and transportation facilities whose change of use would require regional, State or Federal approval.	Utilities, transportation facilities	50

\* Increased height or density with SUP.

CDD	Commercial/Residential Mixed Use	To designate area; where development above a low density will contain a mix of uses which may include offices, hotel, retail and residential, with a minimum of 40% residential; to insure lively, more attractive and more secure development areas.	Mixed use with at least 40 percent residential at medium or high densities; limited densities with no residential.	Medium 77 High 150
CDD	Coordinated/Development District	To ensure that large sized designated growth areas, which, if developed would have a significant impact on the City, are developed in a planned coordinated manner under the guidance of the City's Master Plan and in accordance with the City's overall goals and objectives. The CDD designated sites are intended for mixed use development to include office, residential, retail and hotel with appropriate open space and recreational amenities to serve the project users and possibly residents citywide. CDD's are intended to encourage land assemblage and/or cooperation and joint planning where there are multiple owners in the CDD designated area. CDD's are intended to result in a higher quality of development with greater densities and amenities than what otherwise would be allowed if no overall plan were developed for the site. CDD's are intended to encourage joint planning between the City and the developer with the resultant consensus plan becoming the basis for zoning for the site. CDD plans are intended to be conceptual and flexible as to design yet be specific as to what land use, transportation and design principles are to guide plan implementation.	Large mixed use growth areas to be developed in accord with a comprehensive development plan.	150* determined by plan.
P	Parks, and Open Space	Active and passive open space and recreational facilities for use by the general public; cemeteries.	Parks, facilities and open space, cemeteries.	35
INS	Institutional	Public and non-profit uses which serve the educational, social, spiritual, and health needs of the community.	Public facilities, private institutions, churches, schools.	50

\*Increased height or density with SUP.

**BACKGROUND  
AND ISSUES**

## **BOUNDARIES**

The Northeast Area is defined by the following boundaries: the George Washington Memorial Parkway to the east; Montgomery Street to the south; Route 1 to the west; and northern property lines of the Potowmack Landing Apartments and RF&P piggyback yards to the north. The Potomac Yards are to the north, Old Town North is to the east, and the Braddock Road Metro Station area is to the west and south. (See Map 1.)

Although the Piggyback yards are within the Northeast area, they are not analyzed in this plan and no recommendations for the piggyback yards are made in this plan. The piggyback yards will be studied with the rest of the Potomac Yards in a separate plan.

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

### **Population**

The population of the Northeast Area increased slightly from 1980 to 1985, and is expected to remain fairly stable. The 1985 estimated population of the area was 2,265, up 4.4 percent from the 1980 estimate of 2,170.

During the same 1980 to 1985 period, the number of households in the Northeast Area increased by 12.0 percent, from 955 to 1070. The larger increase in households versus population reflects a decrease in average household size during the same period, from 2.3 persons per household (pph) in 1980 to 2.12 pph in 1985.

### **Employment**

In 1985, an estimated 560 persons worked at locations within the Northeast Area, not including Potomac Yards workers or self-employed persons. This reflects an increase of about 220 jobs since 1976.

## **EXISTING LAND USE**

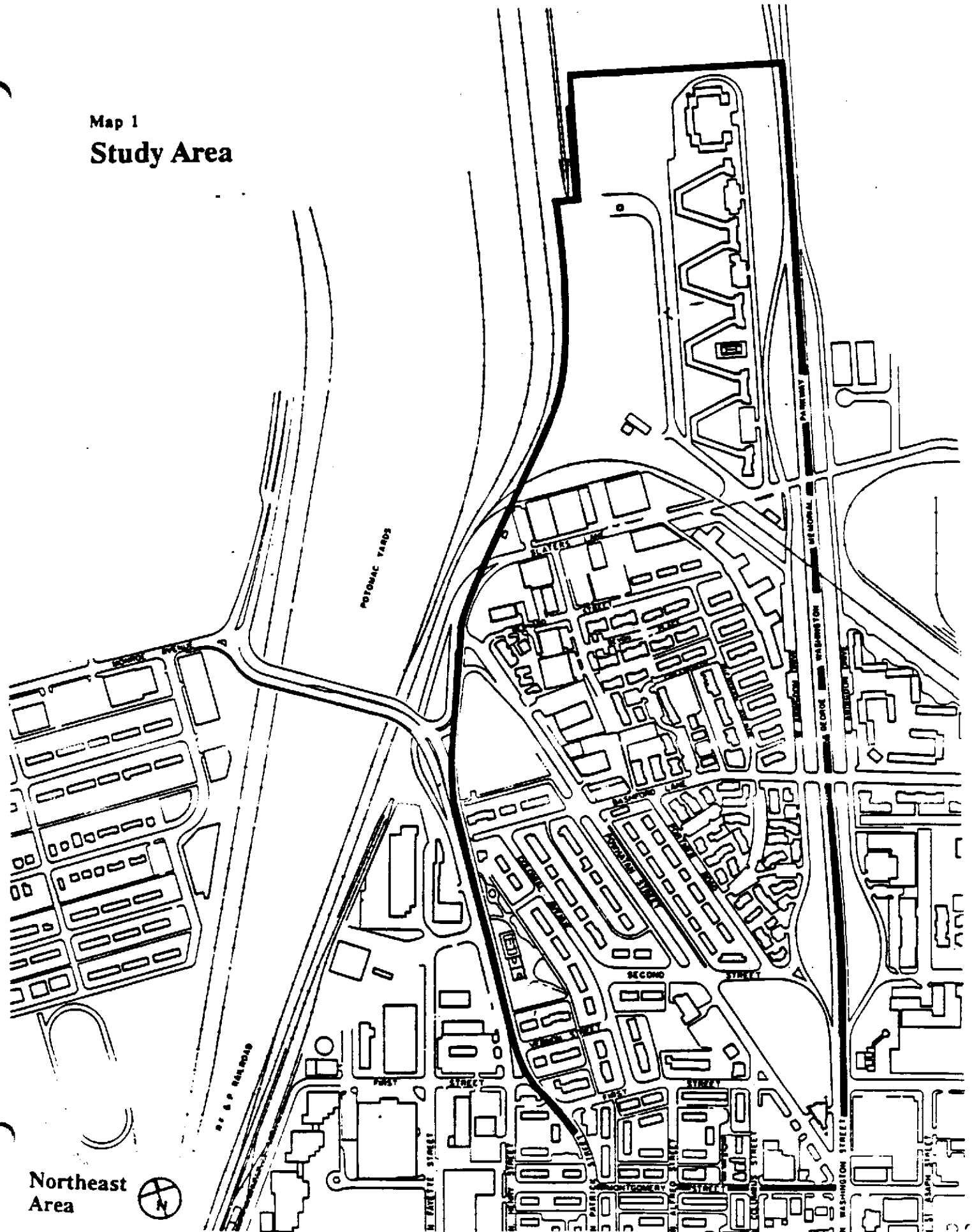
The Northeast area is a predominately medium density residential area, with commercial and light industrial activities along sections of Powhatan Street and to the north along Slaters Lane and the eastern section of Bernard Street. See Map 2 and Table 1.

### **Residential Land Use**

About 72 percent (43.0 acres) of the total land area is developed in residential uses. There are 1,163 dwelling units in the Northeast Area, split almost evenly between townhouse type units and garden apartments, all at medium densities.

Most of the dwelling units were built in the 1930s and 1940s; since that time the number of units in the area has stayed fairly constant. About 90 new townhouses were built during the 1970s. In the early 1980s, 169 garden apartments on the block bounded by W. Abingdon Drive, Bashford Lane and Portner Road, were demolished and replaced with 144 cluster townhouse units.

Map 1  
Study Area



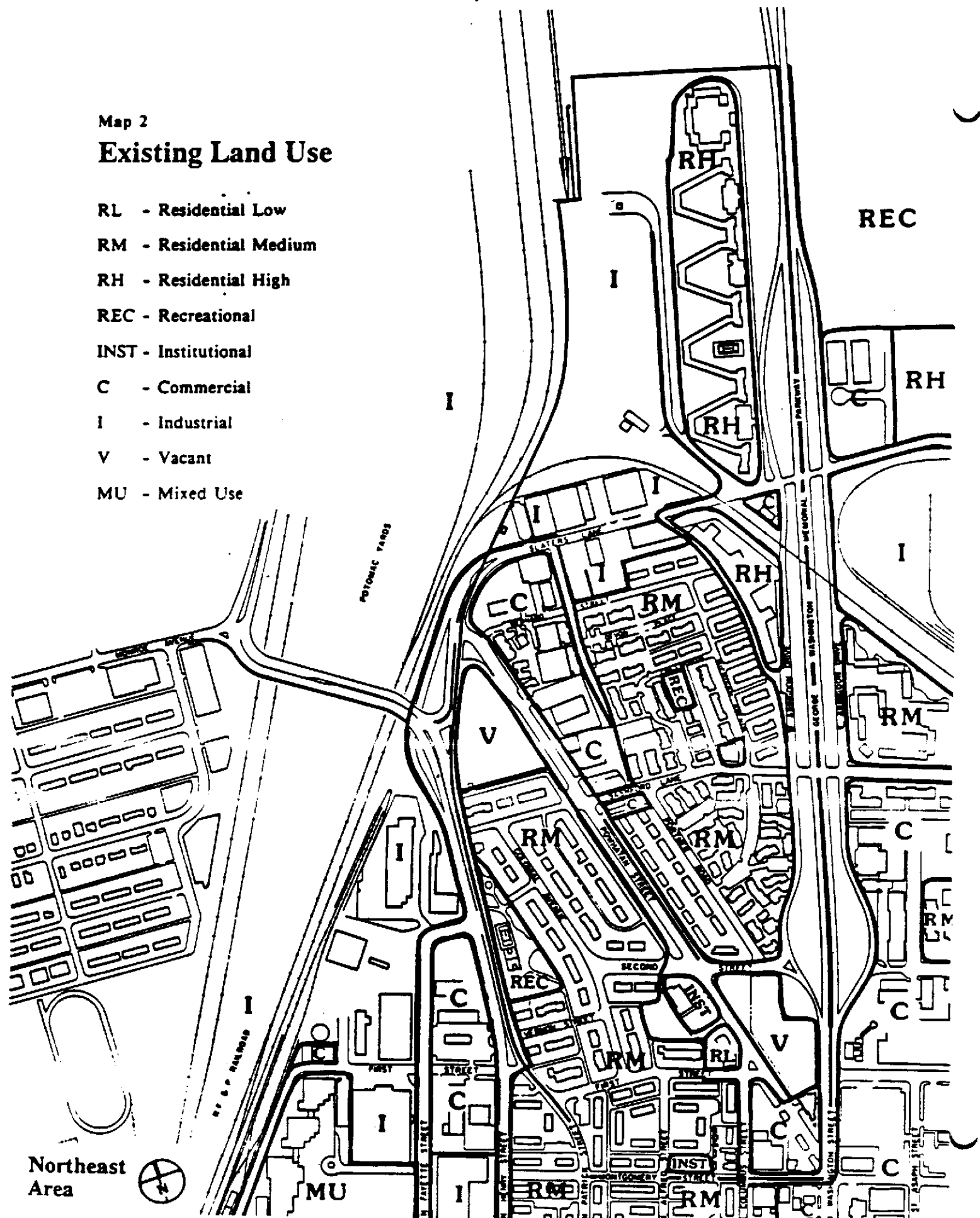
Northeast  
Area



Map 2

# Existing Land Use

- RL - Residential Low
- RM - Residential Medium
- RH - Residential High
- REC - Recreational
- INST - Institutional
- C - Commercial
- I - Industrial
- V - Vacant
- MU - Mixed Use



Northeast Area



Of the 1163 dwelling units within Northeast, 89 (7.7 percent) are public housing units. The public housing is part of the Samuel Madden projects, located on the blocks south of First Street.

**TABLE 1**  
**Existing Land Use**  
**Northeast Area**

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Sq. Ft.</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Industrial	232,973	5.3	9.0%
Commercial	138,625	3.2	5.3%
Residential	1,875,055	43.0	72.0%
Institutional	60,536	1.4	2.3%
Open Space/Recreation	71,753	1.6	2.8%
Vacant	<u>224,097</u>	<u>5.1</u>	<u>8.6%</u>
Total	2,603,039	59.8	100.0%

**Industrial Land Use**

Industrial land uses are the second most prevalent type of land use in the study area, with 9.0 percent (5.3 acres) of the Northeast land area in industrial uses. The industrial uses are located along Slaters Lane, the western end of Bernard Street, and the northern section of Powhatan. The industrial uses are generally light and include activities such as wholesaling, warehousing and distribution.

**Commercial Land Use**

Commercial uses cover only 5.3 percent (3.2 acres) of the Northeast land area. The focus of commercial activity is at the corner of Powhatan and Washington Street where there is a small office building, a convenience store, and a vacant gas station. A few commercial uses are also located at the northern end of Powhatan Street, including a small office building and some retail activity. Other commercial uses in the Northeast area include a restaurant, two small grocery stores and two cleaners.

The Northeast Area has only two office buildings greater than 5,000 gross square feet (gsf), although there is additional office space located in office/warehouse type buildings. Tivoli Square, at 1423 Powhatan Street, has 24,000 gsf of space and the American Academy of Physicians Assistants building, at the corner of Washington and Powhatan Streets, has just been completed with 11,162 gsf.

**Other Land Use**

There are two institutional uses located within the Northeast Study area. Fire Station No. 4 is located at 900 Second Street. Also, the City Shop, at the northeast corner of Powhatan Street and Bernard Street, is within the area. The City Shop facility is used primarily for sign painting and storage. It is

expected that the Shop will relocate to another part of the City in the near future.

Northeast has two parks or open space areas; Powhatan Park, between Route 1 and Colonial Avenue, and Chetworth Park, on Chetworth Place.

**Vacant Land**

About 8.6 percent (5.1 acres) of the Northeast area is vacant land. Most of this vacant land is in two key parcels. The Kass parcel, south of Second Street along Washington Street has 88,688 square feet (2.0 acres). The Powhatan Gateway parcel, at the foot of the Monroe Avenue Bridge is the other key vacant parcel. The parcel is owned partly by the State and partly by the City and includes 96,412 square feet (2.2 acres).

**SUMMARY -- LAND USE**

- o The Northeast Area is primarily a medium density residential area.
- o Light industrial activities are located adjacent to the residential area, to the north.
- o The key commercial area is along Washington Street, but a few other commercial uses are scattered throughout the area. There is very little office development within the area.
- o Vacant land is concentrated in two large commercial parcels at the northern and southern ends of the study area.

**EXISTING ZONING**

As with land use, zoning in the Northeast area is predominantly residential; 77.3 percent (46.2 acres) of the land area is zoned for residential uses. Zoning patterns resemble the patterns of existing land use, with commercial zoning along Washington Street, industrial zoning at the northern end of the study area and along the northern half of Powhatan Street, and residential zoning elsewhere. (See Table 2)

**TABLE 2**  
**Existing Zoning**  
**Northeast Area**

		<u>Sq. Ft.</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Industrial:	I-1	376,684	8.6	14.5%
Commercial:	C-2	215,487	4.9	8.3%
Residential:	RB	1,161,827	26.7	44.6%
	RC	543,613	12.5	20.9%
	RM	<u>305,428</u>	<u>7.0</u>	<u>11.7%</u>
Total:		2,603,039	59.8	100.0%

Development of some parcels in the Northeast Area is limited beyond zoning by their inclusion in the Old and Historic District and the Parker Gray District. (See Map 3.) Both Districts seek to preserve residential and non-residential buildings with a significant architectural and cultural history. Any building proposed for construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, moving, removing or demolition within these Districts must be approved by a board of Architectural Review. In addition, heights within both Districts are limited to 50 feet.

### **Residential Zoning**

Over half of the residential zoning is RB-medium density residential, which permits single family and townhouse homes at densities up to 22 units per acre (and multifamily units and densities up to 27 units per acre if built prior to 1973). The two large apartment complexes in the area, Potowmack Landing and Mason Hall Apartments, are zoned RC which allows 54 units per acre. The newer townhouse development south of Bashford Lane west of Abingdon Drive is zoned RM, which allows 30 units per acre.

### **Industrial Zoning**

The I-1 Industrial zone covers 14.5 percent (8.6 acres) of the land area in the Northeast Area. The I-1 zone allows nonnoxious industrial activities including warehousing, storage, distribution, light manufacturing; and most commercial uses, including office, retail and service uses. A Planned Unit Development unit provision also permits residential development on very large parcels. Densities and heights permitted under I-1 zoning are a 2.5 floor area ratio (F.A.R.) and heights up to 77 feet by right, or a 5.0 F.A.R. and heights up to 150 feet with a P.U.D..

### **Commercial Zoning**

The C-2 zone is the only type of commercial zone in the Northeast, and it covers 8.3 percent (4.9 acres) of the land area, including the key vacant Kass and Powhatan Gateway parcels. The C-2 zone allows office, service and retail uses at a 3.0 F.A.R. and heights up to 150 feet by right. With the exception of the Powhatan Gateway parcel, all C-2 zoned land is located within the Old and Historic District and is subject to a 50 foot height district.

### **Theoretical Development Potential**

The theoretical maximum of commercial development that could occur by right in the Northeast area on industrially and commercially zoned parcels is about 2.26 million gross square feet. This number reflects development to the maximum densities allowed under zoning on all of the vacant land and redevelopment of the industrial and commercial parcels. It is extremely unlikely that the market would ever support these levels of development in the Northeast area, but this is the level that current zoning allows.

Map 3

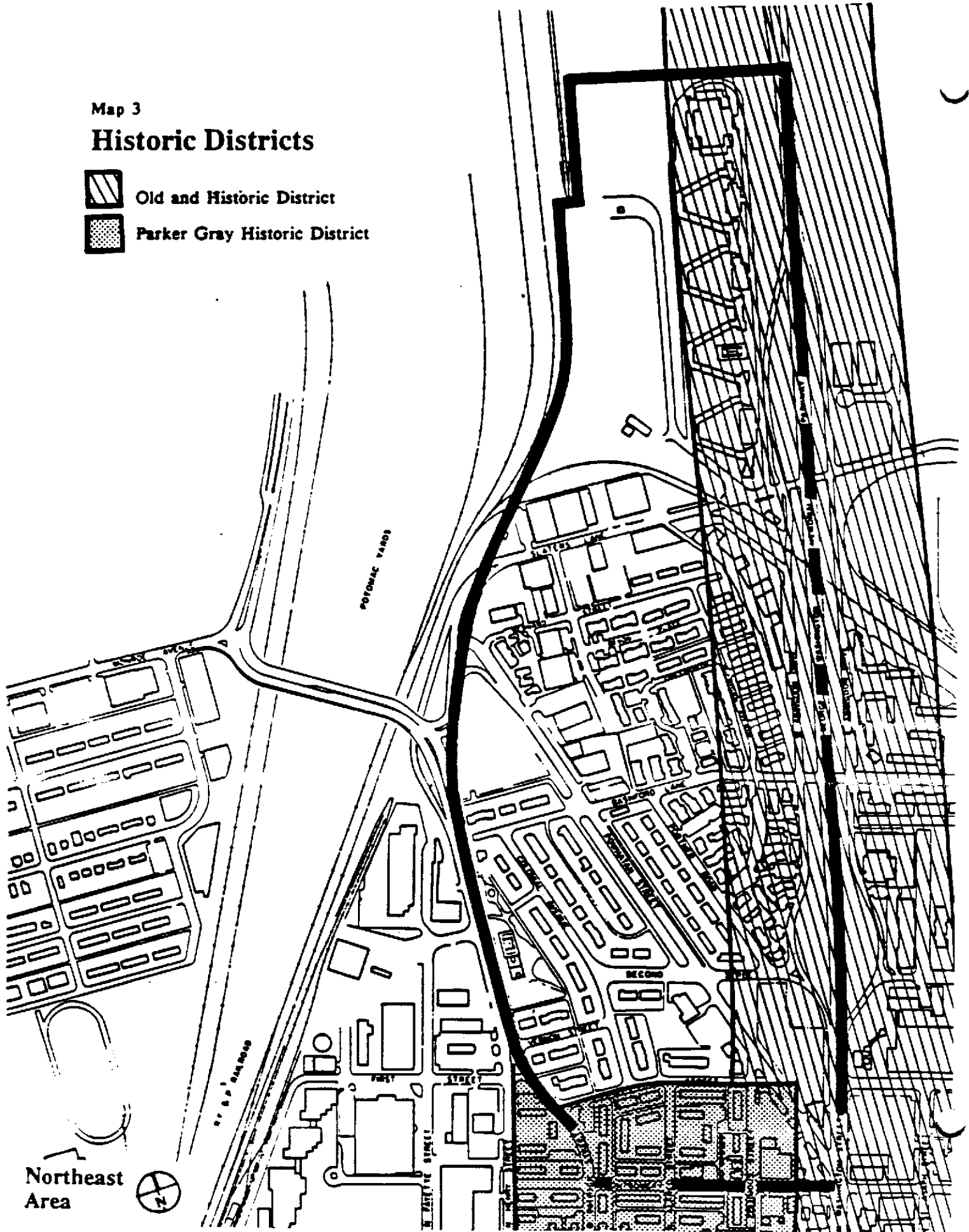
# Historic Districts



Old and Historic District



Parker Gray Historic District



Northeast Area



### Non-Conforming Uses

There are two non-conforming commercial uses within the Northeast Area: the Dixie Pig restaurant and Lee's Market. These two commercial uses are located on land zoned RB-residential medium. When City Council adopted the Zoning Code in 1951, existing uses on land not zoned for that use were allowed to continue, but were limited to a forty year period of operation as non-conforming uses in a residential zone. By law, these uses will have to cease commercial operation in 1991, unless they are rezoned. (See Map 4.)

The four billboards located on the Kass parcel along the southern end of Powhatan Street are another kind of non-conforming use within the Northeast area. The billboards have been in place, it is believed, since the 1920s. In the early 1970s, the badly deteriorated wooden billboards were replaced with metal structures without a building permit even though, as a non-conforming use, they should have been removed in the 1950s.

In 1976 the City began to bring suit against the parcel owner and the billboard owner to force removal of the billboards. An agreement was reached between the billboard owners and the City whereby the owner would apply for a special use permit to place the billboards at a more appropriate site in the City. The case was put on hold for four months to give the billboard owner the opportunity to file the special use permit for a new billboard site. Because the City never found an alternative site for the billboards, the billboard owner never filed for a special use permit for another site. Since that time, no action has been taken with regard to the billboards.

In October 1987, the property owner's representative made the City an offer to remove the billboards in return for upkeep of the property. The City Recreation Department determined that the yearly cost of mowing the grass on the parcel would be \$7,500. The City did not pursue the offer because of the high cost.

### SUMMARY -- ZONING

- o Zoning in the Northeast Area is predominately medium density residential.
- o Most of the non-residential parcels are zoned I-1 industrial, which permits the existing light industrial activity but also allows intense commercial redevelopment.
- o The Kass parcel and Powhatan Gateway parcel are two large vacant parcels in the area; both have C-2 zoning, but the 150 foot height limit of the C-2 zone is restricted by a historic district to 50 feet on the Kass parcel.
- o The theoretical maximum of development that could occur by right under existing zoning in the area is 2.26 million g.s.f.; this figure includes development of vacant parcels and redevelopment of existing commercial and industrial properties.
- o There are two non-conforming uses in the Northeast area: the Dixie Pig Restaurant on Powhatan Street and Lee's Market on Bashford Lane.

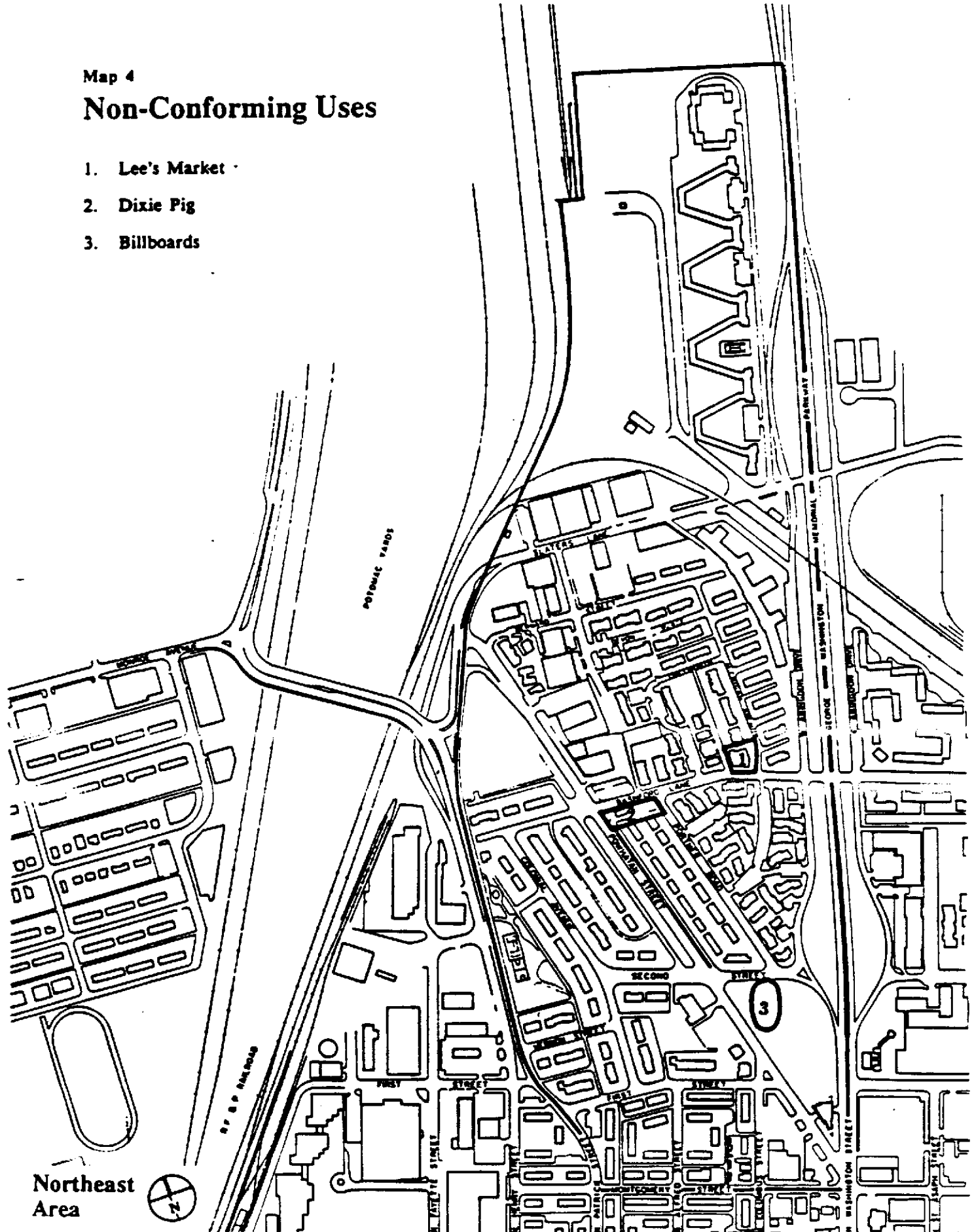
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Map 4

# Non-Conforming Uses

1. Lee's Market
2. Dixie Pig
3. Billboards



Northeast Area



## ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

### Recent Development

To date, there has been relatively little development or redevelopment activity occurring in the Northeast Area. The largest project was residential and involved the razing of 169 garden apartments at Virginia Village to make way for a 144 unit townhouse residential development in the early 1980s. This project, Nethergate, has been very successful and reflects the excellent location of the Northeast area, near Old Town and accessible to the George Washington Parkway. Recent commercial development consists of the construction of two small office buildings. Tivoli Square, at 1423 Powhatan Street, is a 24,000 gross square feet (gsf) building completed in 1983. A speculative office building, Tivoli Square was very slow to absorb. The 11,000 gsf American Academy of Physicians Assistants (AAPA) Building, at 950 North Washington Street, was completed in 1988. The AAPA building was built-to-suit and was partially funded with an Industrial Revenue Bond.

### Potential Development Sites

There are three key parcels on which new commercial development will occur. It is likely that the two large vacant parcels in the study area will undergo development in the near future. The vacant Kass Property, with 88,688 sq. ft., has been placed on the market for sale. Its location along Washington Street at the gateway to the City makes it an attractive development site. The vacant Powhatan Gateway site, with 96,412, square feet, was acquired by the State in conjunction with the Monroe Avenue Bridge project. Now that the bridge is completed, it is possible for the site to be developed. The Powhatan Gateway site is owned mostly by the State, however the City owns part and would have some control over its development. The third key commercial development site is the City Shop parcel, at the northeast corner of Bernard and Powhatan Streets. The City Shop facility will probably be relocated to another part of the City, freeing that 38,000 sq. ft. site for redevelopment.

Several other smaller sites are likely to be developed or redeveloped. The site adjacent to the 7-11 store at the southwest corner of Powhatan and Washington Street was previously used as a gas station, but is currently unused. This parcel is also likely to redevelop; however, its development is linked to the adjoining 7-11 parcel, which is currently under a long-term lease. There are also two small vacant parcels along Slaters Lane which are likely to develop at some point. Finally, all of the industrially zoned land has redevelopment potential. Current market conditions make unlikely any major redevelopment of the industrial sites in the near future. Development at Potomac Greens to the north could affect the value of these parcels, fostering redevelopment. However, this is a stable light industrial area; the industrial uses are generally not blighted and the value of the land does not far exceed the value of the improvements. The Northeast area is unlikely in the near future to be the locus for major commercial development.

The only vacant residential land left for development in the Northeast Area is located at the northern end of the study area on Bernard Street. Residential development would also be appropriate on the northern edge of the Kass parcel, along Second Street; however, this parcel is zoned C-2 and residential development is unlikely unless the zoning is changed.

## SUMMARY -- ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND TRENDS

- o Northeast is a stable residential community.
- o Very little commercial development has occurred in the Northeast area in the past decade.
- o Industrial uses in the Northeast are viable and are unlikely to undergo redevelopment in the near future.
- o Future development will focus on 3 key sites, two of which are under public control.

## TRANSPORTATION

As a primarily residential area, Northeast has almost all local streets. However, it is bounded on both sides by two major north-south arterials, Route 1 to the west and the George Washington Parkway to the east; and by a primary collector, Montgomery Street, to the south. The major traffic movements within the area occur on Slaters Lane, Bashford Lane and Powhatan Street.

### Major Thoroughfare Plan

The 1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan for the City designated expressways, arterials, primary collectors and residential collectors. Only two streets within the Northeast area were designated in the Plan. Powhatan Street, with two lanes in each direction, was designated as a primary collector and the small segment of Columbus Street within the study area, with one lane in each direction, was designated as a residential collector. (See Map 5.)

### Recent Capital Improvements in the Street System

The most significant project in the Northeast area was the replacement of the Monroe Avenue bridge, at the western boundary of the study area, which was recently completed. The new bridge has the same number of lanes as the bridge it replaced, two lanes in each direction; however the alignment of the bridge with Route 1 and Powhatan Street was altered significantly in the new bridge design, changing the circulation patterns and improving traffic flow. The new alignment facilitates traffic movement from Slaters Lane on to Route 1, while discouraging the use of Powhatan Street. As part of the bridge project, the intersection of Bashford Lane and Route 1 was closed (Map 6).

Other capital improvements in the area since 1974 include the improvement of the intersections between the George Washington Parkway and Bashford and Slaters Lane and the widening of Slaters Lane.

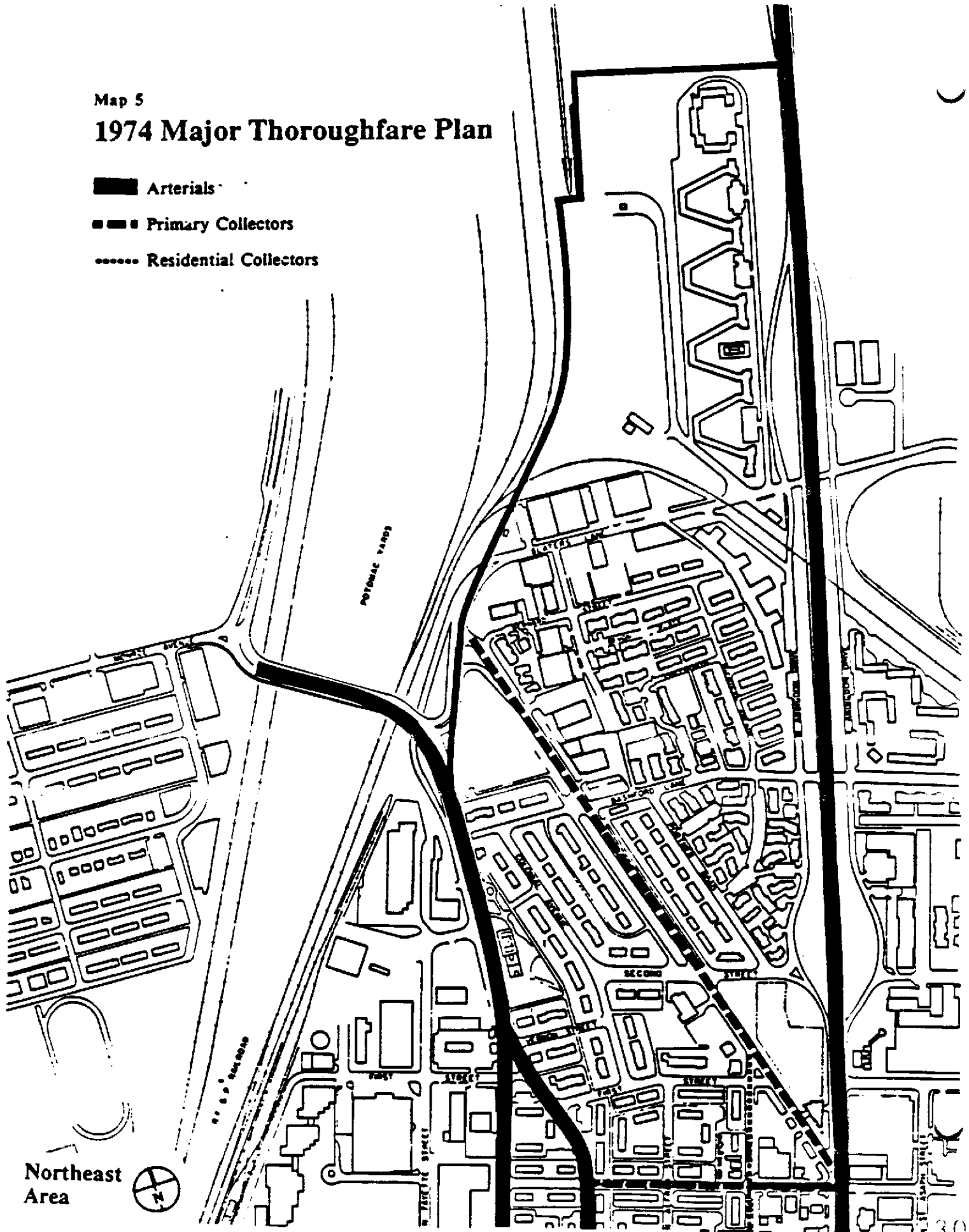
### Existing Traffic Flow

The heaviest traffic flows within the area occur on Slaters Lane, at the northern end of the study area. Very little of the traffic on Slaters Lane is local traffic, most is traffic between Route 1 and the George Washington Parkway. Other than Slaters Lane, the heaviest traffic flows in the area occur on Bashford Lane and Powhatan Street. The new Monroe Avenue bridge alignment was designed to decrease traffic on Powhatan Street, and along with the closure of the Route 1

Map 5

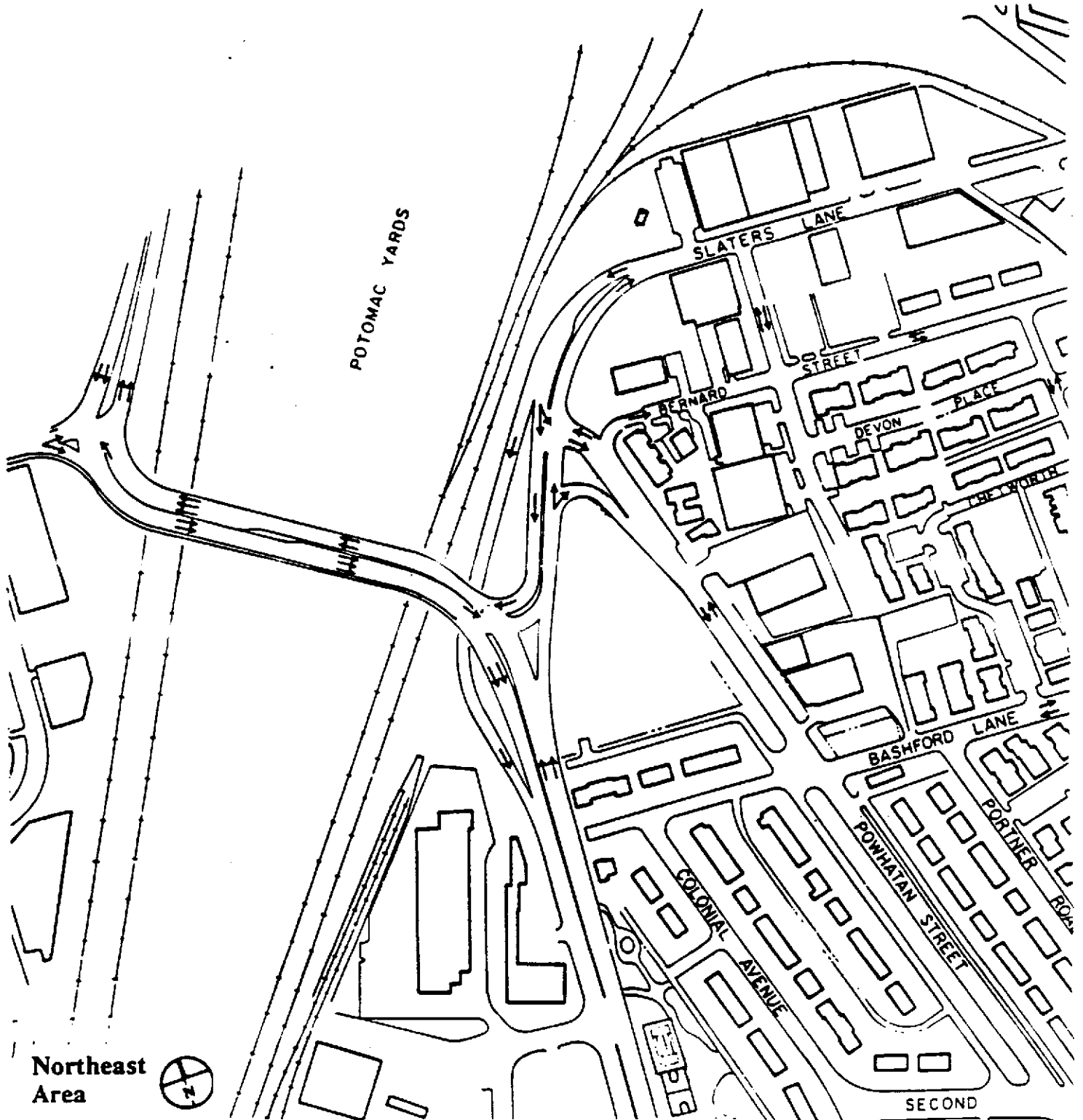
# 1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan

- Arterials
- ▣ Primary Collectors
- ⋯ Residential Collectors



Map 6

# New Monroe Avenue Bridge Design



Northeast  
Area



and Bashford Lane intersection, will also decrease traffic on Bashford Lane. Slaters Lane will continue to be heavily traveled. Montgomery Street which is one-way westbound, at the study area's southern boundary, also carries substantial traffic.

### Future Traffic Flow

As noted above, traffic on Powhatan Street and Bashford Lane has already decreased with the new bridge alignment. Traffic on Slaters Lane is expected to increase along with traffic on the arterials it connects. New development to the north on the RF&P piggyback yards or Potomac Greens would substantially increase the amount of traffic through the northern end of the study area, on Slaters Lane and could also impact the residential streets in the Northeast area.

Redevelopment of the industrially zoned parcels would also increase traffic in the area. Although this is unlikely to occur, theoretically the zoning allows for the development of 2.26 million square feet of office development, which would add an estimated 3,650 a.m. peak hour trips to the streets in the study area, forcing traffic on the residential streets.

### Public Transit

The Northeast Area is served by the Braddock Metro Station, which is a five to ten minute walk from most parts of the Northeast area. Bus service is provided by two metro lines and one DASH line within the study area, and two other DASH routes provide service along Montgomery Street at the Northeast Area's southern boundary.

### SUMMARY -- TRANSPORTATION

- o The Northeast area is surrounded by heavily trafficked streets: Route 1 and Washington Street arterials are to the west and east and are connected by Slaters Lane and Montgomery Street to the north and south.
- o The Monroe Avenue bridge was designed to decrease traffic on Powhatan Street.

### URBAN DESIGN CHARACTER

#### Height and Density Character

The Northeast Area is comprised primarily of two to three story row housing. Two garden apartment complexes along Washington Street are also low in scale and relatively low in density. While some of the industrially and commercially used buildings at the northern end of the study area have large footprints (cover a large area), they are all generally low in scale with one to three stories.

Development along the eastern third and southern edge of the study area is limited to fifty feet by the two Historic Districts. Heights over the northern part of the study area are limited to 77 feet by right or 150 feet with a P.U.D. by the industrial zoning. The 77 feet and 150 feet heights allowed by the zoning

are clearly out-of-scale with the existing low-scale character of the study area. The industrial zoning allows development with densities up to a 2.5 floor-area-ratio by right; this allowed density is considerably more than that which exists in the area and is inconsistent with the Northeast's existing character.

### Pedestrian Circulation and Visual Character

The major arterials on both sides of the Northeast area, Washington Street and Route 1, form barriers for pedestrians. To the east, one of the key pedestrian paths across Washington Street is at First Street, which is signalized and has a pedestrian crosswalk. Northeast resident's access to this crosswalk is inhibited by the lack of sidewalks on the adjacent Kass parcel and along the Parkway/Washington Street.

To the west, Route 1 is the major barrier for pedestrians traveling between the Northeast Area and points west, particularly the Monroe Avenue bridge and the Braddock Road metro station. A crosswalk and signal provide access across Route 1 at the Monroe Ave./Route 1/Slaters Lane intersection and the Montgomery St./Route 1 intersection. A pedestrian crossing is part of the intersection design for the Route 1/Fayette St. intersection currently being completed. The Fayette St./Route 1 pedestrian crossing will provide needed access to the Braddock Rd. metro station and surrounding area.

There are two sites within the Northeast area where an excessive amount of pavement inhibits pedestrian movement and/or detracts considerably from the visual character of the area. These sites are the intersection of Powhatan St. and Bashford Lane, and the First St./Columbus St./Powhatan St. intersection and adjoining 7-11 site. These areas can be improved by extending islands, adding landscaping and street improvements, as appropriate.

### SUMMARY -- URBAN DESIGN

- o The Northeast Area has a low density, low scale character in both the residential and industrial areas.
- o Existing development rights would allow heights and densities which are clearly out of scale for this residential area.
- o Pedestrian access across Route 1 and Washington Street at key intersections needs improvement.

### POLICY HISTORY

The 1974 Master Plan for the City designated most of the Northeast area for residential uses. Industrial uses were designated along the northern part of the study area, and a small commercial area was designated at the southeast corner of the study area along Washington Street. In the text of the Plan, however, relocation of industrial uses from Planning District 1 to more appropriate areas in the City was encouraged when one or more of the following conditions was present: 1) close proximity to single-family homes, 2) new uses being planned, 3) obsolescence of buildings, 4) environmental hazard. Another recommendation of the 1974 plan relating to the Northeast area was to protect the appearance of Washington Street as the gateway of Planning District I.

In April, 1979, at the request of City Council, a study of the Northeast Area was undertaken by the Department of Planning and Community Development. Although a draft small area plan for the Northeast Area was developed by staff, the plan was never sent to Council for adoption. Citizen resistance to the Plan resulted in its deferral and it was never completed. The resistance to the plan, as expressed by the Northeast Neighborhood Association, resulted from the residents' desire to see a more detailed and implementation oriented planning document for the neighborhood.

In 1978, the City approved a rezoning from RB to RM of the Virginia Village garden apartment located on the block bounded by Bashford, Abingdon Lane, Second Street and Portner Road. This rezoning allowed development at a density higher than that allowed under the old zoning, but still limited redevelopment to a density lower than that of the apartments being replaced. A Special Use Permit was approved on the Virginia Village site for Nethergate, a cluster townhouse project.

In 1986, the City denied a request to rezone the parcel at the corner of Bernard Street and Portner Road from RB medium density residential to I-1 industrial. This parcel is located at the edge of the residential area, directly adjacent to the industrial area. The City denied the rezoning request, with the Planning Commission deciding that the rezoning was out of character with the predominately residential character of the properties to the east and south.

Other City policies in the Northeast focused on improving the physical environment within the Northeast Area, primarily through the Potomac East Neighborhood Improvement Program. Program funding allocated to the Northeast Neighborhood was used to acquire and develop Powhatan Park, to landscape the park at Powhatan Gateway, and to improve streetscapes along First, Second and Powhatan Streets.

In 1987, the City began construction of the new Monroe Avenue bridge over the rail yards. The initial studies on the alignment of the new bridge were done in the late 1970s. Citizen concern about increased traffic impacts on local streets, depending on the final alignment of the bridge with regard to Route 1, resulted in long delays in the project. Finally, a bridge design with the same number of lanes as the old bridge, one span with four lanes, was agreed upon. Also the alignment of the bridge as it meets Route 1 was designed to discourage traffic from using Powhatan Street. Construction of the new bridge was completed in the Spring of 1988.

Other Capital Improvements within the Northeast area in the past decade include the widening of Bashford and Slaters Lane at the intersection with Washington Street. Bashford Lane was widened only at the intersection with Washington Street in recognition of the residential character of the rest of the Street.

One other notable capital improvement made by the City in recent years was the acquisition of land for Chetworth Park, located on Chetworth Place.

#### **SUMMARY -- POLICY HISTORY**

- o City policy in the Northeast Area focused on improving and protecting the residential neighborhoods by discouraging through traffic, commercial encroachment and providing open space.

## ISSUES

The Northeast area is primarily a residential neighborhood, although it does have a number of long-established low intensity industrial uses as well as a small pocket of commercial land. One of the key issues in the area is protecting these residential uses from the negative impacts of intense adjacent commercial development. The area is an extremely viable residential area, with few sites remaining for additional residential development. However, industrial zoning on the industrial parcels allows for high density commercial redevelopment adjacent to the residential uses. The existing uses are compatible with each other in terms of uses, densities and heights and should be maintained by replacing the existing I-1 zoning with a true low-intensity industrial zone which does not also allow high commercial densities.

Development within the study area will focus on three key parcels, two of which are under public control. Although the zoning on the publicly controlled Powhatan Gateway and City Shop parcels allows high density and scale development, the City should provide only for lower scale development compatible with the adjacent residential area. The Kass parcel is the other key vacant parcel and it is not under public control. While part of this parcel has been designated for residential land use since the 1974 plan, the entire parcel is zoned C-2 for commercial development. While development heights are effectively restricted on this parcel by the Old and Historic District, commercial development could occur under the existing zoning along Second Street, a primarily residential street. A transition or buffer needs to be provided between the two uses.

Another major issue for the Northeast Area is its vulnerability to through traffic, because of its location, surrounded by areas of high and potentially high commercial development and bounded by two major arterials, Route 1 and the George Washington Parkway. Past policies, including the design of the Monroe Avenue bridge and the widening of intersections along Washington Street, have been sensitive to the residential nature of the Northeast Area's streets. The City should continue to discourage through traffic on the residential streets and should ensure that new development within the Northeast Area does not generate high volumes of traffic which will spill onto the residential streets.

The Northeast Area is bounded by heavily trafficked streets. Another issue is improving pedestrian access, particularly across Route 1 to the Monroe Avenue bridge and the Braddock Road metro station, and across Washington Street to the Giant grocery store and downtown.

Finally, there is the issue of the non-conforming uses within the Northeast Area. Two commercial uses: the Dixie Pig Restaurant and Lee's Market, are non-conforming uses and will have to cease operation in 1991. The community has expressed support for the Market, asserting that it provides a needed service. A policy must be formulated by the City for dealing with these non-conforming uses in the Northeast area, as well as the other non-conforming uses in other parts of the City.

ELIM

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE AREA

The goal of this plan is to preserve the primarily residential Northeast area, including ensuring protection of the residential neighborhoods from incompatible redevelopment of the adjacent commercial and industrial parcels and protection from non-local traffic. More specifically, this plan pursues the objectives listed below.

- o Ensure that commercial development and redevelopment are compatible with the residential areas in both use and scale.
  - o Encourage commercial development at a scale compatible with the adjacent residential uses.
  - o Buffer residential development from commercial areas and major arterials.
  - o Discourage non-local traffic through the area, making the local street system more residential in nature.
  - o Improve the quality of residential life by providing adequate parking, improving pedestrian circulation, providing adequate open space and improving the visual appearance of the area.
- o Preserve and protect existing neighborhoods.

## LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

The exiting land use plan for the Northeast area is shown on Map 7. Map 8 shows proposed changes to the land use plan and Map 9 shows the proposed land use.

The 1974 Master Plan designated most of the Northeast area as residential, with industrial uses designated along the northern edge and commercial uses designated at the southeast corner along Washington Street. This plan provides for similar land use designations, while refining the definitions of the industrial and commercial land use designations. The major land use in the Northeast is clearly residential, and this plan retains the residential designation over most of the Northeast area. At the northern end of the study area toward the railroad yards, along Slaters Lane and the northern end of Powhatan Street, land use is designated for Service Commercial Low (SCL), which would maintain the existing uses at low scales and low densities compatible with the adjacent residential. The area along Washington Street is suitable for commercial development and is designated Office Commercial Medium, which provides for medium density and medium scale office and retail development. A residential transition area is designated on the Kass parcel south of Second Street west of Abingdon in order to complete Second Street as a residential street and buffer the existing residential on the northern side of Second Street.

### Recommendations:

1. Change the parcels south of Slaters Lane and along Northern Powhatan Street from Industrial and Residential Medium to Service/Commercial Low, with open space toward the south of the Powhatan Gateway parcel.

Existing use in this area, now designated as medium density residential and industrial, is predominately very light industrial along with wholesaling, distribution and limited commercial uses; and is not suited for either residential or heavier industrial uses. Many of the current uses are appropriate for a transitional area such as this one. The scale and density of development is low and the uses do not impact the residential area by creating excessive traffic, noise, light and fumes.

This area is recommended for Service/Commercial Low (SCL), to provide a transition between residential areas to the south and east and the railroad and possible future intense development to the north. SCL allows low intensity service and commercial uses, including low-scale office and very light industrial activities compatible with medium density residential areas, at heights generally no greater than four stories. The SCL designation generally allows for the continuation of the current uses in the area.

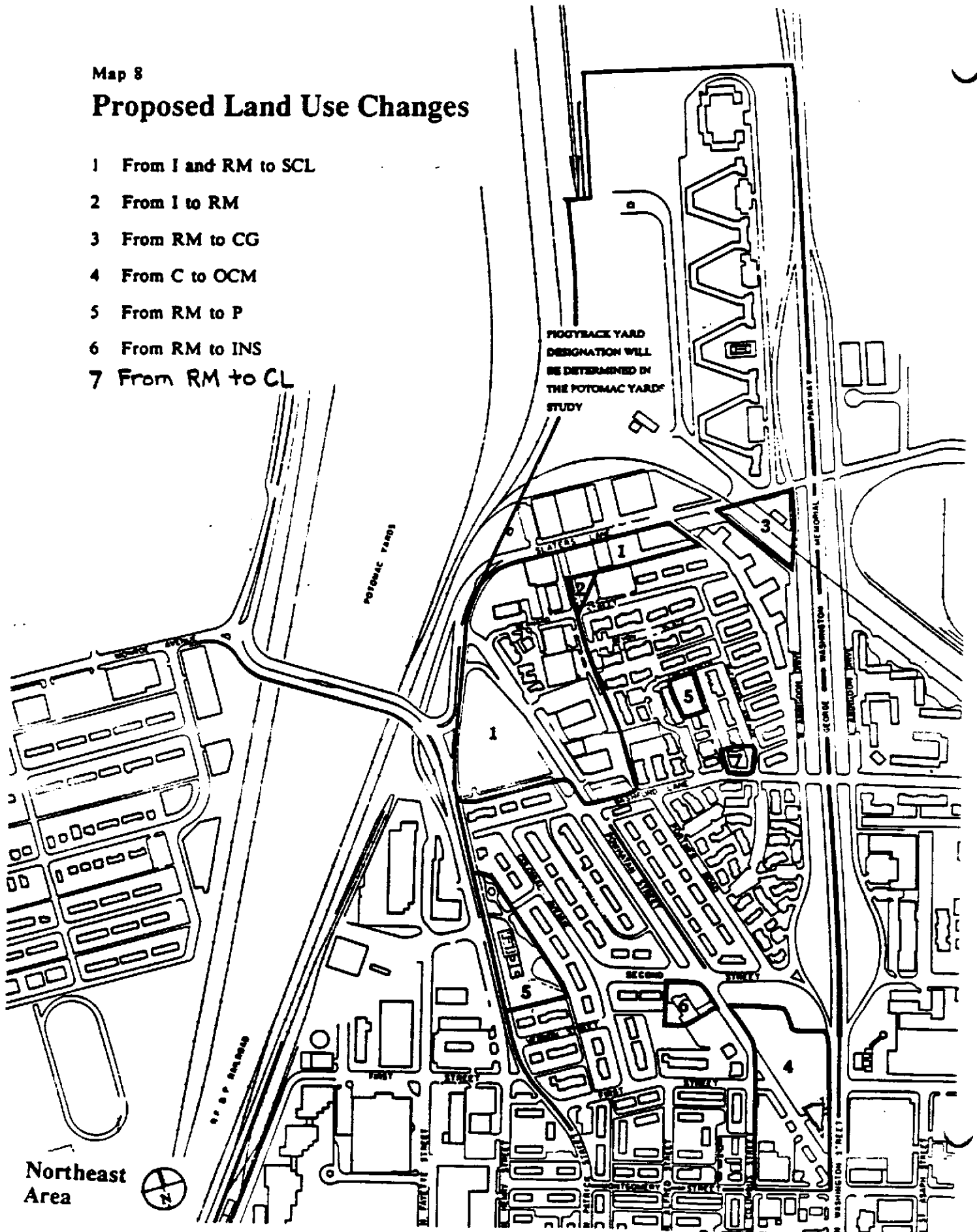
It is recommended that part of the parcel at the foot of the Monroe Avenue Bridge be set aside for open space. The open space should be toward the southeast corner of the parcel, away from the major traffic flows and sheltered from the traffic by the development on the rest of the parcel. The exact layout can best be determined in the context of development on the rest of the parcel, which is currently unknown. The open space would also provide a buffer between future development on the Powhatan Gateway parcel and the residences to the south.



Map 8

# Proposed Land Use Changes

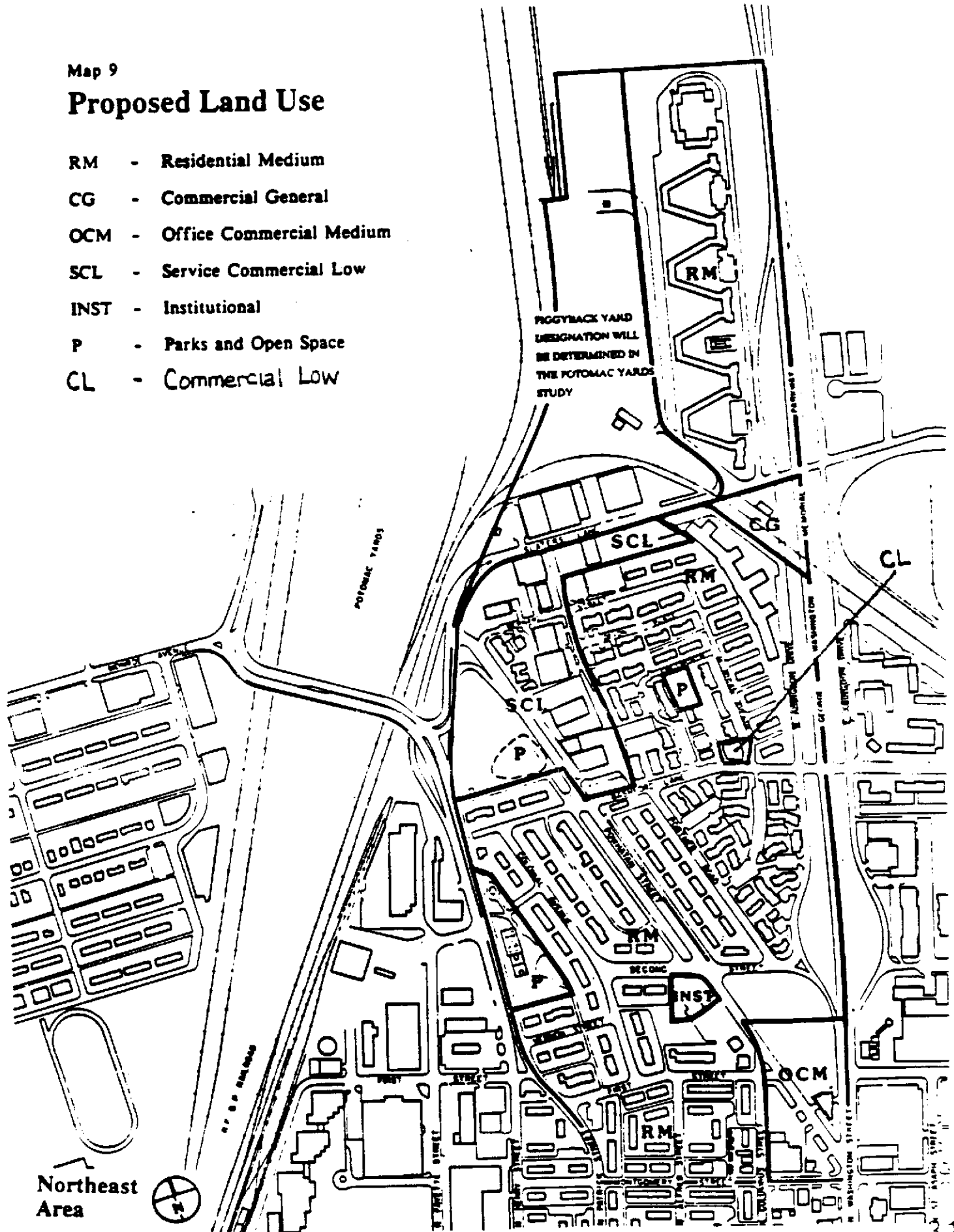
- 1 From I and RM to SCL
- 2 From I to RM
- 3 From RM to CG
- 4 From C to OCM
- 5 From RM to P
- 6 From RM to INS
- 7 From RM to CL



Map 9

# Proposed Land Use

- RM - Residential Medium
- CG - Commercial General
- OCM - Office Commercial Medium
- SCL - Service Commercial Low
- INST - Institutional
- P - Parks and Open Space
- CL - Commercial Low



Northeast Area



2. Change the Parking Lot on Portner Road and Bernard Street from Industrial to Residential Medium.

The rest of this block, fronting Bernard Street west of Portner, is already designated Residential Medium. Designation of this area from Industrial to Residential Medium makes the plan consistent with the existing residential zoning, which is desired. In 1987, the City rejected a proposal to rezone this parcel to commercial.

3. Change the parcel at the southwest corner of Slaters Lane and the George Washington Parkway from Residential Medium to General Commercial.

This parcel's small size and location along railroad tracks and a major arterial make it an undesirable site for residential development. The parcel is designated general commercial, which allows for use similar to its current use, a cleaners, or for some other auto-oriented use.

4. Change the Kass property and the Powhatan/Montgomery/Columbus block from Commercial and Residential Medium to Office Commercial Medium and Residential Medium.

It is likely that these blocks will be used for retail and/or office uses, consistent with retail and office uses along the rest of Washington Street. These blocks are proposed for a land use designation of Office Commercial Medium (OCM), which provides for medium scale office, retail and service activity. This designation reduces the intensity of development from the very high levels allowed by the old commercial category. Scale of development is already limited to heights of 50 feet over most of the parcels because they are in the Old and Historic District.

The large vacant Kass parcel, zoned C-2, is one of the key development sites in the Northeast Area. In order to ensure maintenance of a transition zone between the residential development to the north and likely commercial development on the Kass block, this plan calls for retaining the residential land use designation on the northern edge of the block below Second Street; however, the area of the Kass parcel designated for residential is decreased slightly from the 1974 Master Plan.

5/6. Change Cherworth and Powhatan Parks from Residential Medium to Parks and Open Space.

6. These two sites are existing City parks.

7. Change the fire station from Residential Medium to Institutional.

The existing fire station is shown as institutional.

7. Change Lee's Market from RM to CL-Commercial Low.

Lees Market is a neighborhood serving low intensity commercial use. This change would preserve the use.

## ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Map 10 shows existing zoning, Map 11 shows the proposed zoning changes and Map 12 shows the proposed Zoning. These zoning recommendations seek to preserve the residential character of the Northeast Area by rezoning C-2 and I-1 areas where intense commercial and industrial development is now allowed by right to zones permitting less intense, more appropriate development.

### Non-Conforming Uses

ELIM

The non-conforming commercial use issue cannot be dealt with on a case-by-case basis; an overall policy decision regarding non-conforming uses must be made by City Council. City Council has already referred this matter for study to the Planning Commission on a city-wide basis. Therefore, no specific recommendation is made concerning the Northeast non-conforming uses in this plan.

The billboards on the Kass parcel are a non-conforming use in a commercial zone, which should have been removed by law in the 1950's and are inappropriate in this residential area. This plan recommends that the City pursue their removal.

### Recommendations (See Map 6):

1. Rezone the northern 120 feet south of Second Street between Washington and Powhatan Street from C-2 to R-B.

This allows the development of townhouses to serve as a buffer between the residential area to the north and the commercial area to the south.

2. Rezone the commercial and industrial parcels along Powhatan, Bernard and Slaters Lane to a new zone compatible with the Service Commercial Low (SCL) land use designation.

The SCL land use category is designed for non-growth areas near medium density residential and calls for a low scale of development, low heights (probably not more than four stories) and low intensity service and commercial; low scale office and clean industrial uses. Zoning which provides for this type of development is needed on these parcels.

3. Rezone the parcel on the southwest corner of Slaters Lane at the George Washington Parkway from C-2 to a new zone compatible with the Commercial General land use designation.

This will allow for the existing use, a cleaners, or some other small scale auto-oriented use.

4. Rezone the parcels at the Southern end of Powhatan Street along Washington Street from C-2 to a zone consistent with the Office Commercial Medium (OCM) land use designation.

The existing C-2 zone allows development at a very high density. A moderate density zone, consistent with OCM is more appropriate in this primarily residential area, and would allow for office and/or retail uses similar to those currently existing along Washington Street.

5. Rezone Chetworth and Powhatan Parks from RB to a zone consistent with the Park and Open Space land use designation.

This rezoning is consistent with the existing park use.

6. Direct the City Attorney to pursue removal of the billboards on Powhatan St.

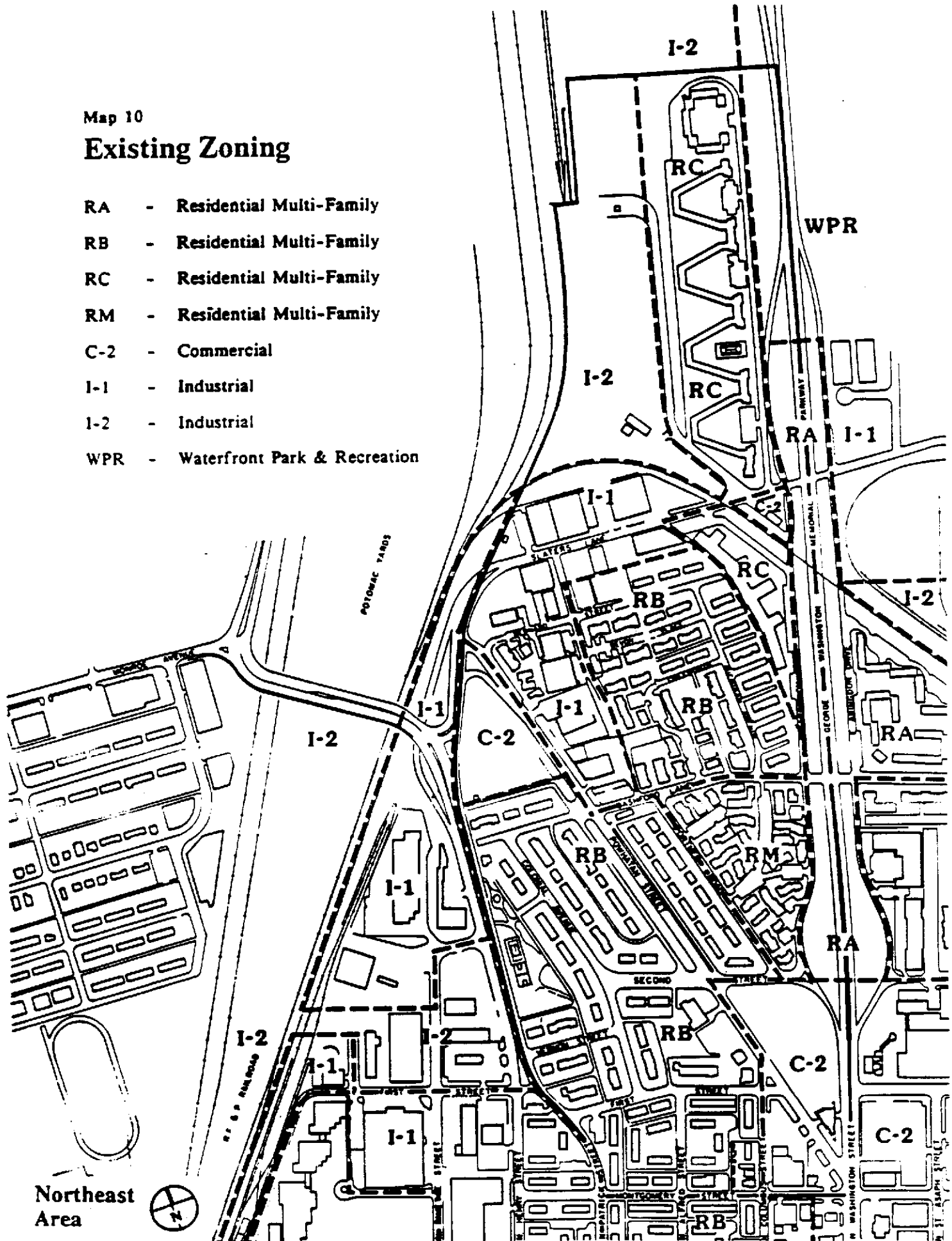
7. Rezone Lee's Market site from RB to a zone consistent with the Commercial Low land use designation.

This will make the existing use conforming.

Map 10

# Existing Zoning

- RA - Residential Multi-Family
- RB - Residential Multi-Family
- RC - Residential Multi-Family
- RM - Residential Multi-Family
- C-2 - Commercial
- I-1 - Industrial
- I-2 - Industrial
- WPR - Waterfront Park & Recreation



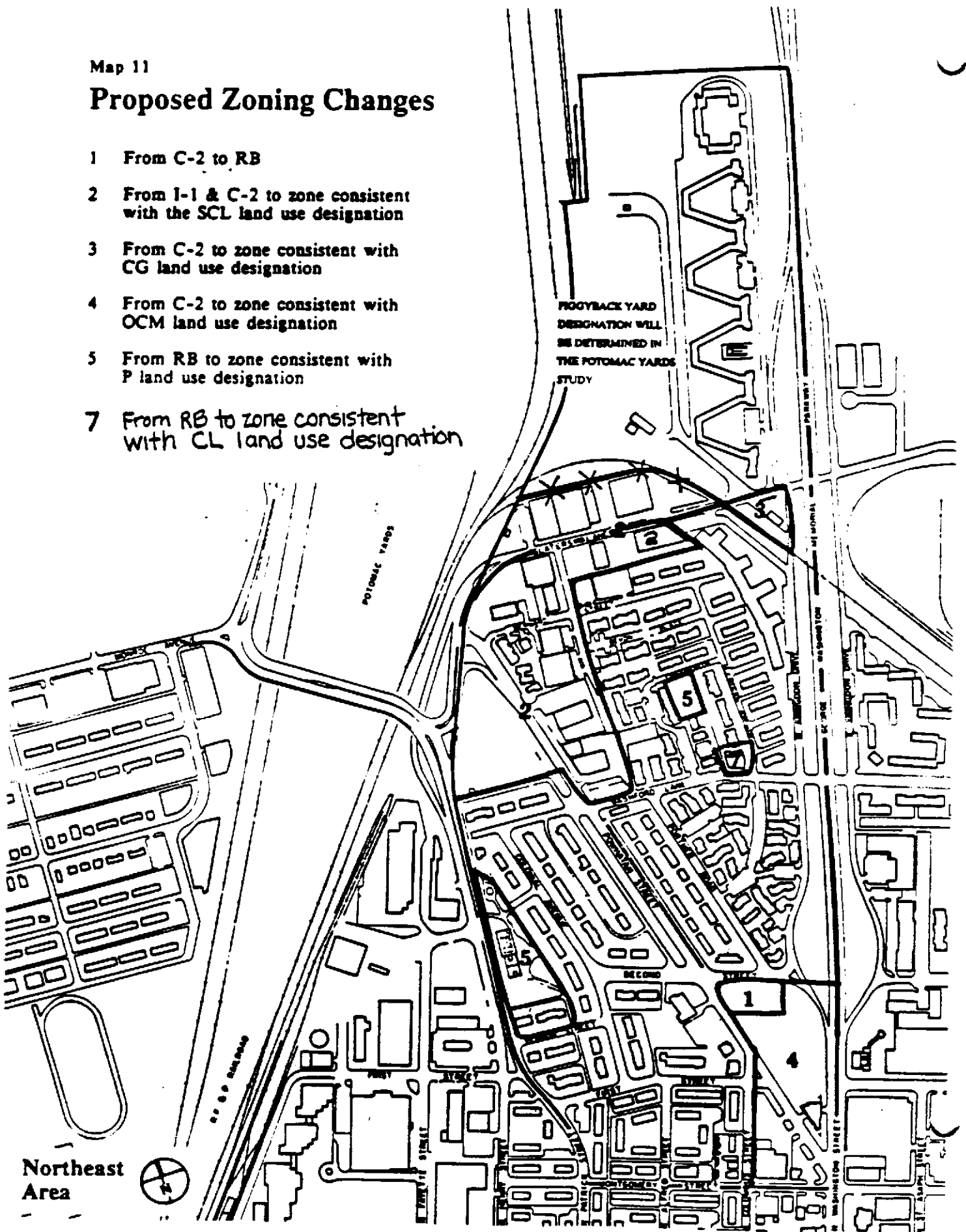
Northeast Area



Map 11

## Proposed Zoning Changes

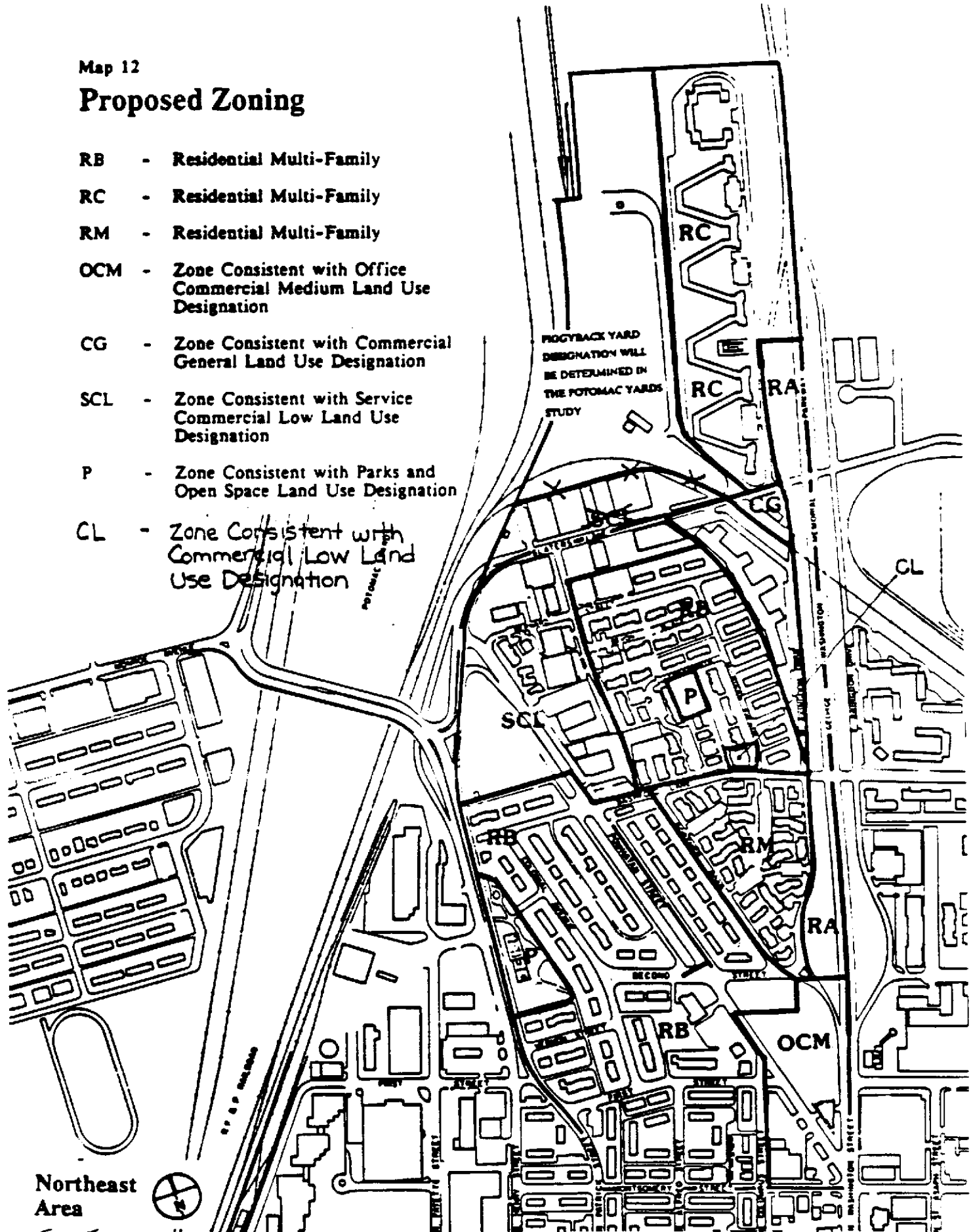
- 1 From C-2 to RB
- 2 From I-1 & C-2 to zone consistent with the SCL land use designation
- 3 From C-2 to zone consistent with CG land use designation
- 4 From C-2 to zone consistent with OCM land use designation
- 5 From RB to zone consistent with P land use designation
- 7 From RB to zone consistent with CL land use designation



Map 12

# Proposed Zoning

- RB - Residential Multi-Family
- RC - Residential Multi-Family
- RM - Residential Multi-Family
- OCM - Zone Consistent with Office Commercial Medium Land Use Designation
- CG - Zone Consistent with Commercial General Land Use Designation
- SCL - Zone Consistent with Service Commercial Low Land Use Designation
- P - Zone Consistent with Parks and Open Space Land Use Designation
- CL - Zone Consistent with Commercial Low Land Use Designation



## **HEIGHTS**

Map 13 shows existing height limits in the Northeast Area. Map 14 shows proposed height changes, and Map 15 shows proposed heights.

Most of the heights in the Northeast Area are limited by right to 45-50 feet. Greater heights are currently allowed in the non-residential areas at the northwest corner of the study area. I-1 and I-2 zoning limit heights to 77 feet; the parcel at the foot of the Monroe Avenue bridge allows heights of 150 feet because of its C-2 zoning.

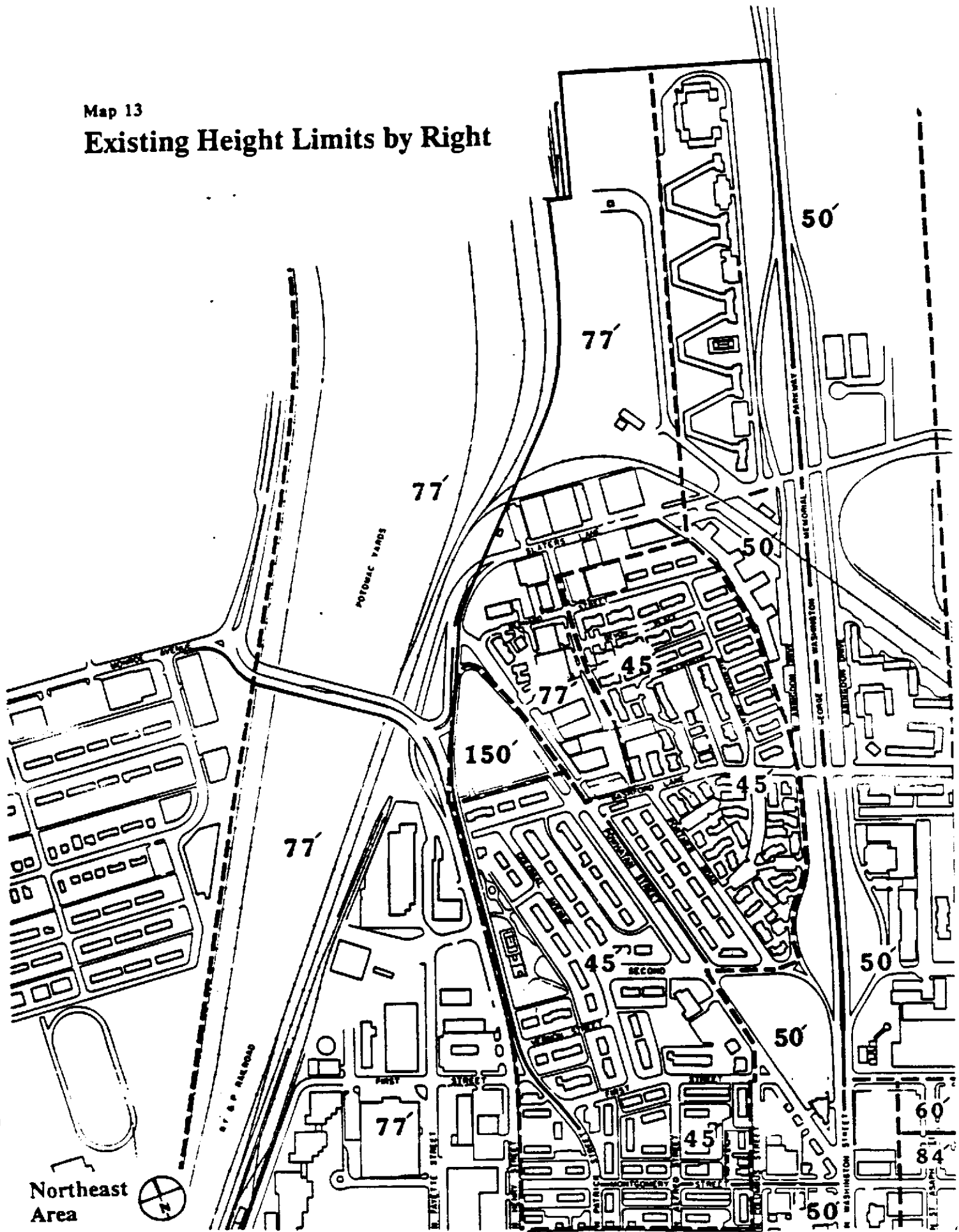
Development to heights of 150 feet is not appropriate in this neighborhood, where townhouse residences are the primary structures. Even 77 feet is slightly out of scale for much of the area. Restricting development to heights of about 50 feet (or four stories) will ensure appropriate scales of development. This limit can be accomplished by height restrictions in the new zoning category, in which case a new height district will not be necessary.

### **Recommendation:**

1. Change the height limits as shown on Map 14 through zoning.

Map 13

# Existing Height Limits by Right



Northeast Area



Map 14

# Proposed Height Changes

- 1 From 150' to 50'
- 2 From 77' to 50'

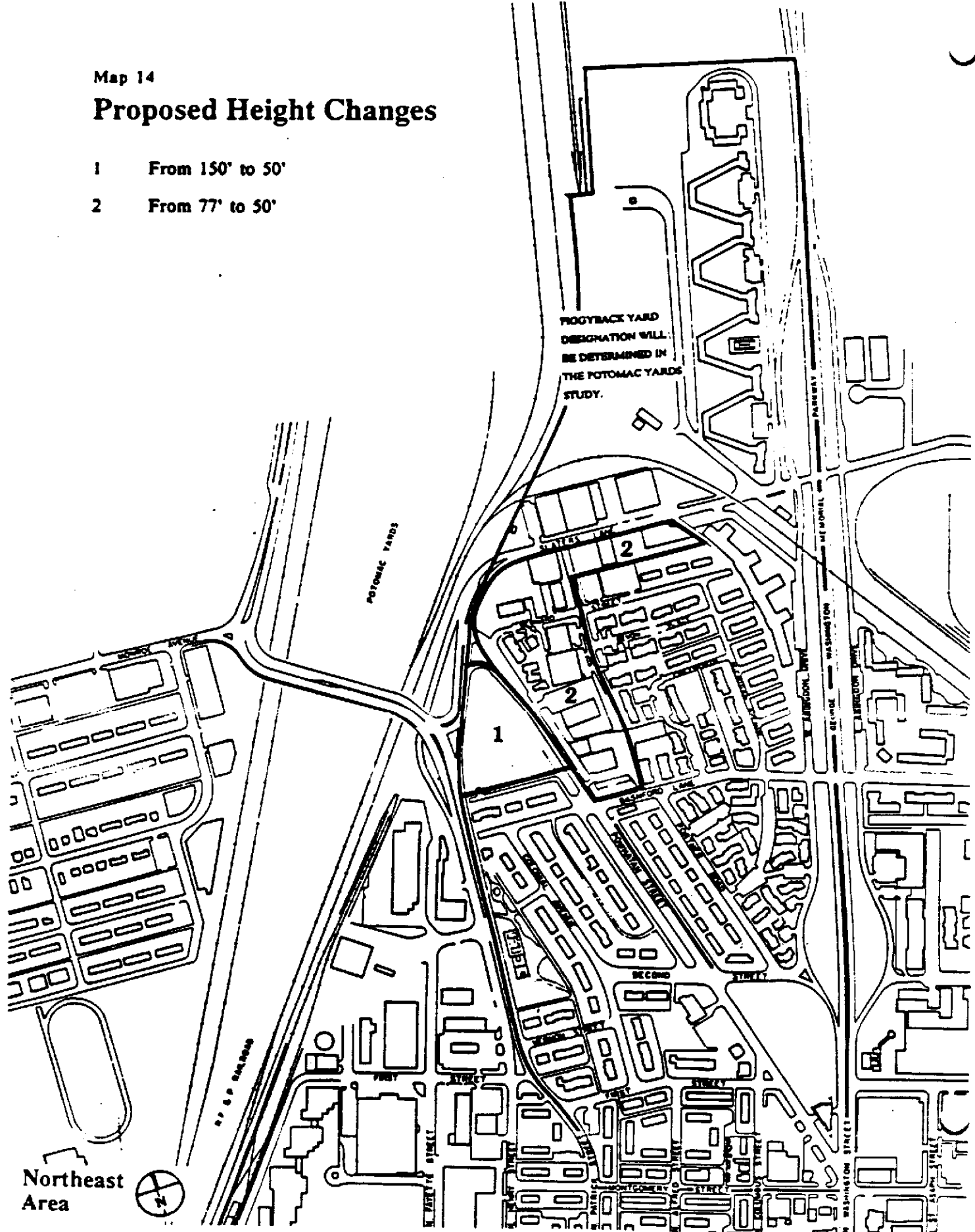
FOOTBACK YARD  
DESIGNATION WILL  
BE DETERMINED IN  
THE POTOMAC YARDS  
STUDY.

POTOMAC YARDS

1

2

Northeast  
Area





## TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The transportation recommendations for the Northeast Area are summarized on Map 16.

collector

It is recommended that Powhatan Street be redesignated from a primary collector to a residential collector on the Major Thoroughfare Plan and that parking be allowed between Bashford Lane and Second Street, on one side of the street. Now that the Monroe Avenue bridge is completed, allowing parking along Powhatan will alleviate the residential parking problem and help discourage Powhatan's use by non-neighborhood traffic. Parking should only be allowed during non-rush hours so that the number of traffic lanes is not technically reduced for the purpose of allocating state funds for roads to the City. Powhatan's identity as a residential street should be strengthened by its redesignation as a ~~local street~~ residential collector on the Major Thoroughfare Plan.

Residents have expressed concern over the safety of the intersection at Powhatan and Columbus Streets. A request by residents to make N. Columbus Street one-way south from Powhatan Street to First Street was deferred by the Traffic and Parking Board in December 1980 pending a plan for the Northeast Area. This proposal would eliminate the northbound movement from Columbus Street to Powhatan Street, detouring northbound traffic to a right turn at First Street and then to Powhatan Street at a safer angle. (See Map 17.)

Finally, it is recommended that the traffic island at the northwest corner of Powhatan Street and Bashford Lane be extended south to the point where it is even with Bashford Lane, if Transportation and Environmental Services determines the island's extension will not impede the access of City garbage trucks into the alley. (See Map 18.) The excessive amount of asphalt at this intersection makes crossing the street more hazardous than necessary and also detracts from the visual appearance of the area.

### Recommendations:

1. Refer to the Traffic and Parking Board consideration of parking along one side of Powhatan between Bashford and Second Streets during non-rush hours.
2. Redesignate Powhatan Street from a primary collector to a ~~local street~~ residential collector on the Major Thoroughfare Plan.
3. Refer to the Traffic and Parking Board the proposal to make N. Columbus Street one-way southbound from Powhatan Street to First Street.
4. Refer to Transportation and Environmental Services the proposal to extend the island at the northwest corner of Powhatan Street and Bashford Lane.

Map 16

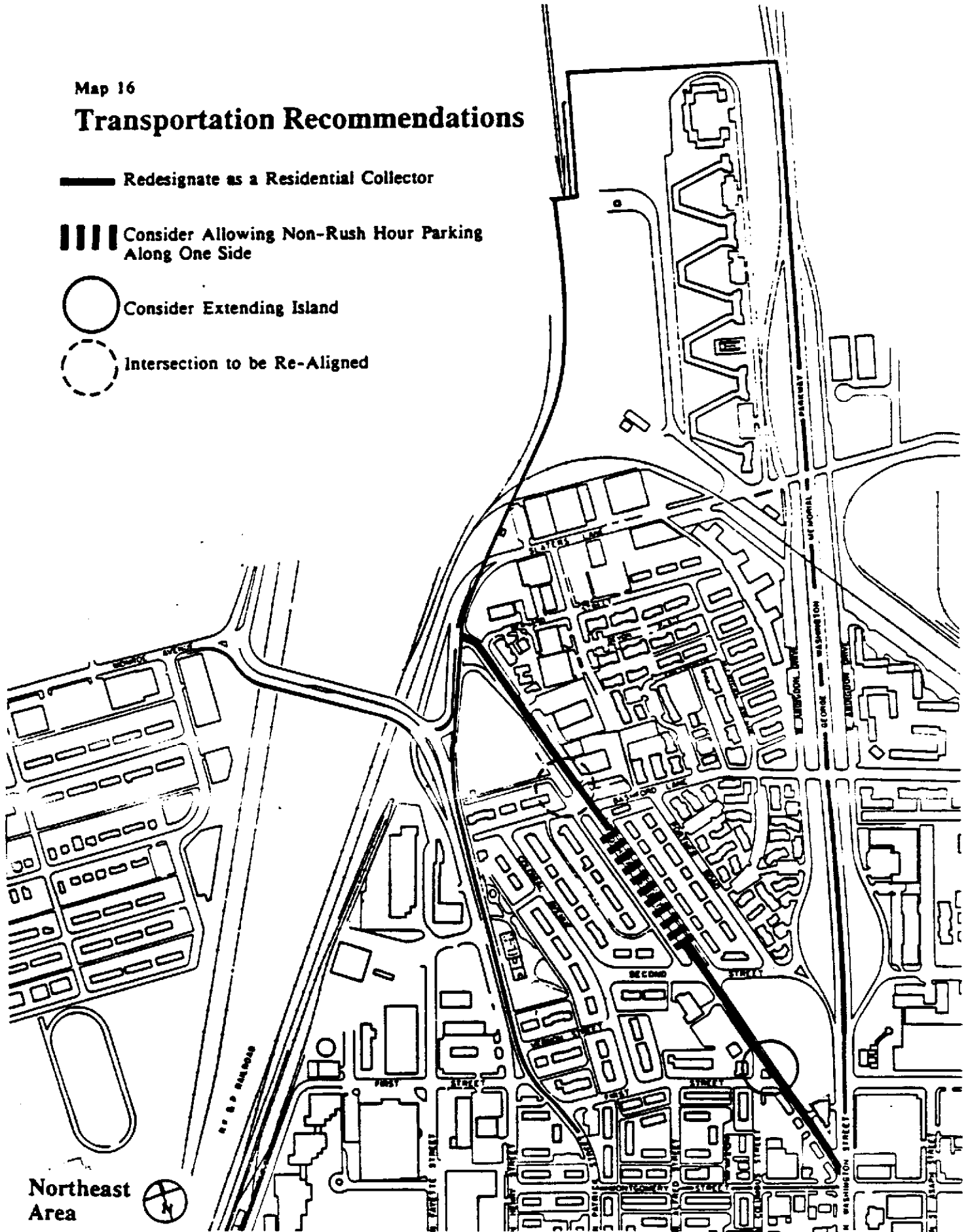
# Transportation Recommendations

**————** Redesignate as a Residential Collector

**||||** Consider Allowing Non-Rush Hour Parking Along One Side

**○** Consider Extending Island

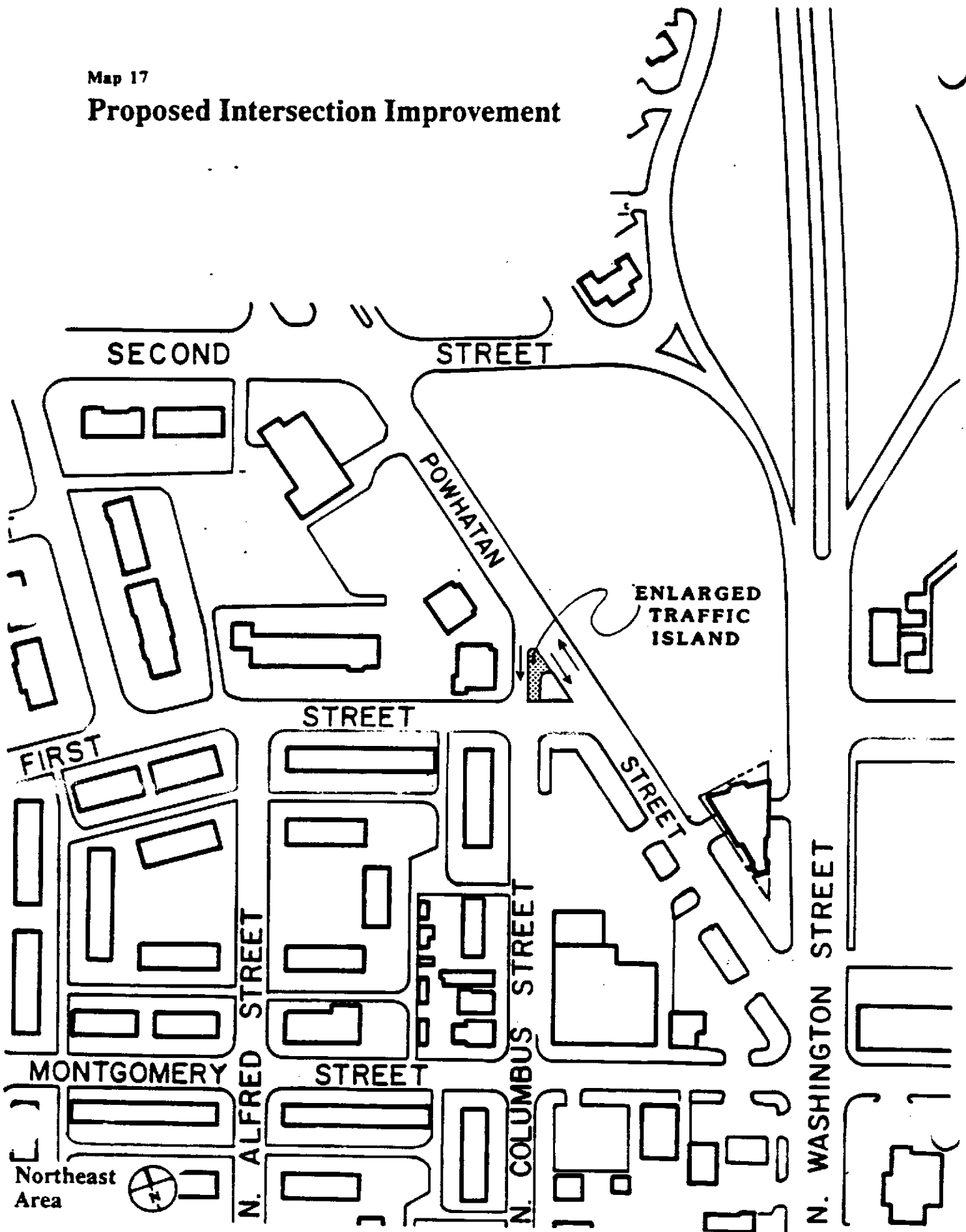
**○** Intersection to be Re-Aligned



Northeast Area

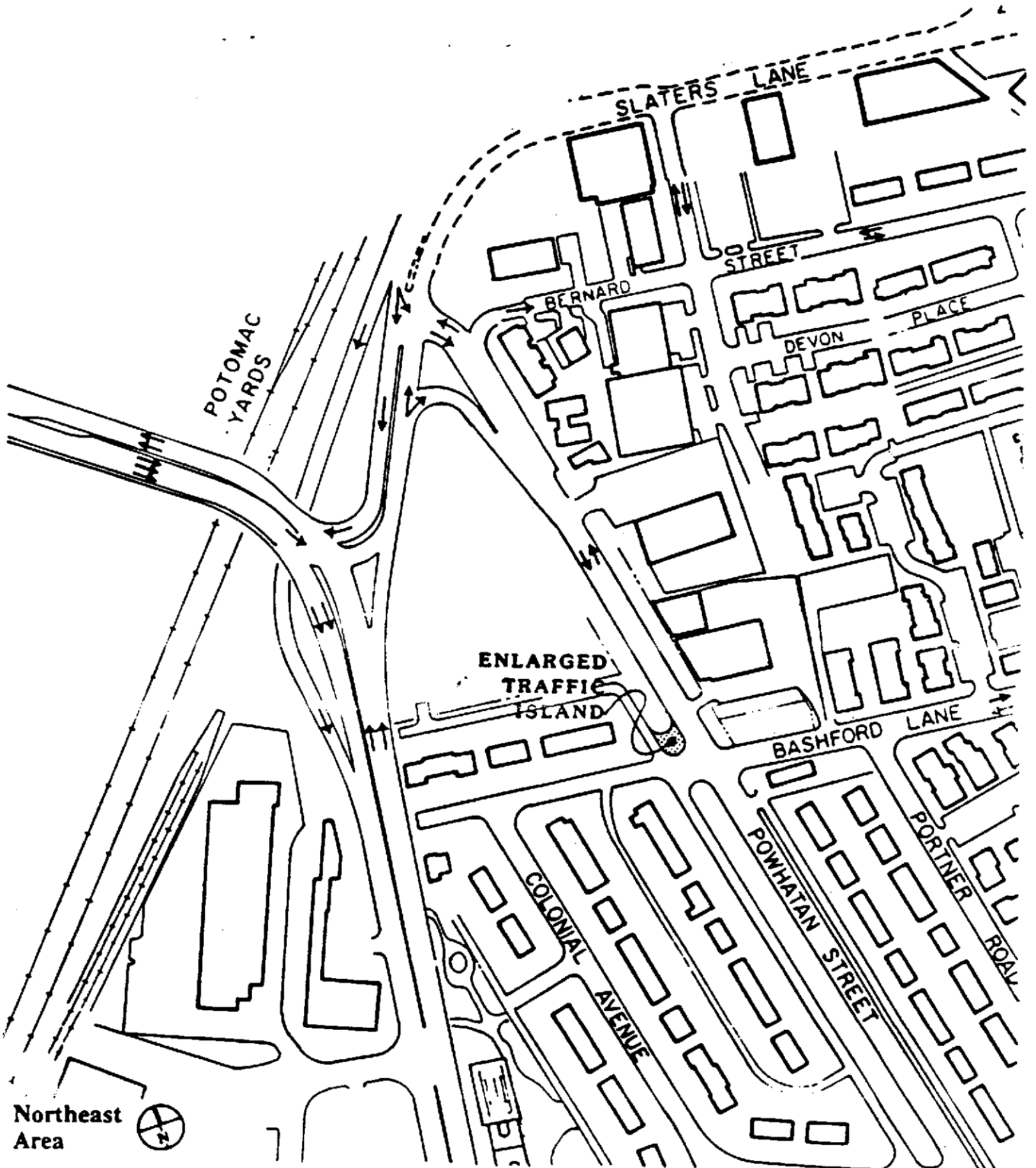
Map 17

# Proposed Intersection Improvement



Map 18

# Proposed Traffic Island Extension



Northeast  
Area



## URBAN DESIGN/PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

The urban design recommendations in this section address the need for improving pedestrian circulation, visual appearance and quality of life in the Northeast Area. The issues and concerns raised by the neighborhood, as well as staff observation, suggest several improvements to enhance and protect the character of the Northeast Area community.

The neighborhood identified the lack of sidewalks on the predominately vacant parcel bounded by Powhatan, Second and Washington Streets as a major problem for pedestrians using the crosswalk at First Street on Washington Street. Many of these pedestrians are neighborhood residents walking to the Giant Food Store across Washington Street or to the bus-stop on Powhatan Street.

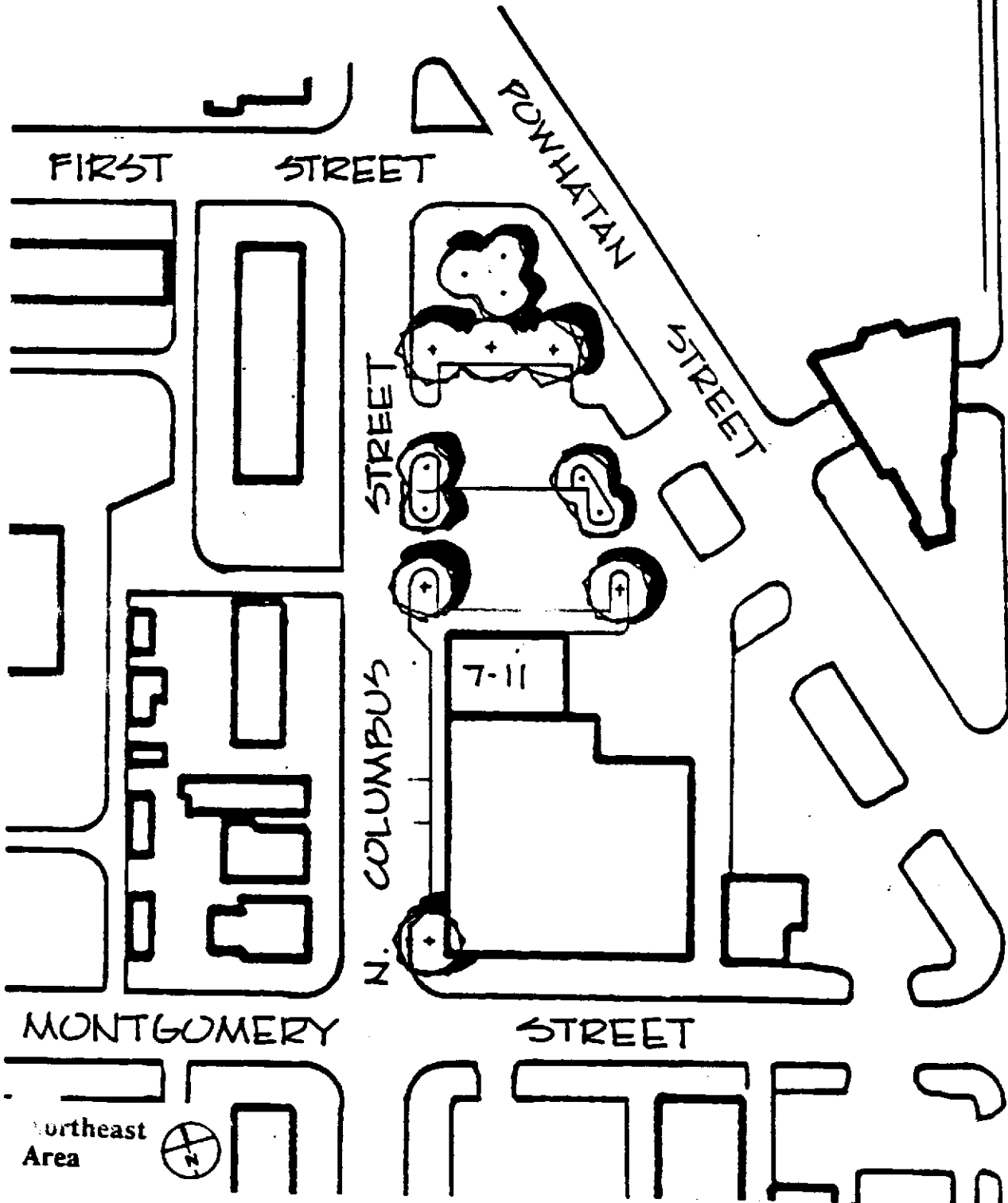
There was also a consensus that the visual appearance of the 7-11 site at the southeast corner of Powhatan and Columbus could be improved. The residents requested staff to develop a sketch plan for the site (Map 19). The plan calls for the City to add sidewalk, curb and gutter with two curb cuts along North Columbus Street. On the property itself, staff has proposed that the amount of asphalt be reduced and that tree planters be added.

### Recommendations:

1. Direct the City Manager to program funds for the construction of sidewalks from a point at the bus stop on Powhatan Street around to Second Street to proceed on National Park Service right-of-way around to North Washington Street and connect up to the sidewalk of the AAPA building at North Washington Street and Powhatan Street Map 20.
2. Direct the City Manager to program funds for sidewalk, curb and gutter on the 7-11 site at the corner of Powhatan and Columbus Streets, in conjunction with recommendation 3.
3. Direct the City Manager to negotiate with the property owner of the 7-11 site and the Southland Corporation for resident requested improvements that will enhance the visual appearance of the 7-Eleven grounds.

Map 19

# Proposed 7-11 Site Improvements



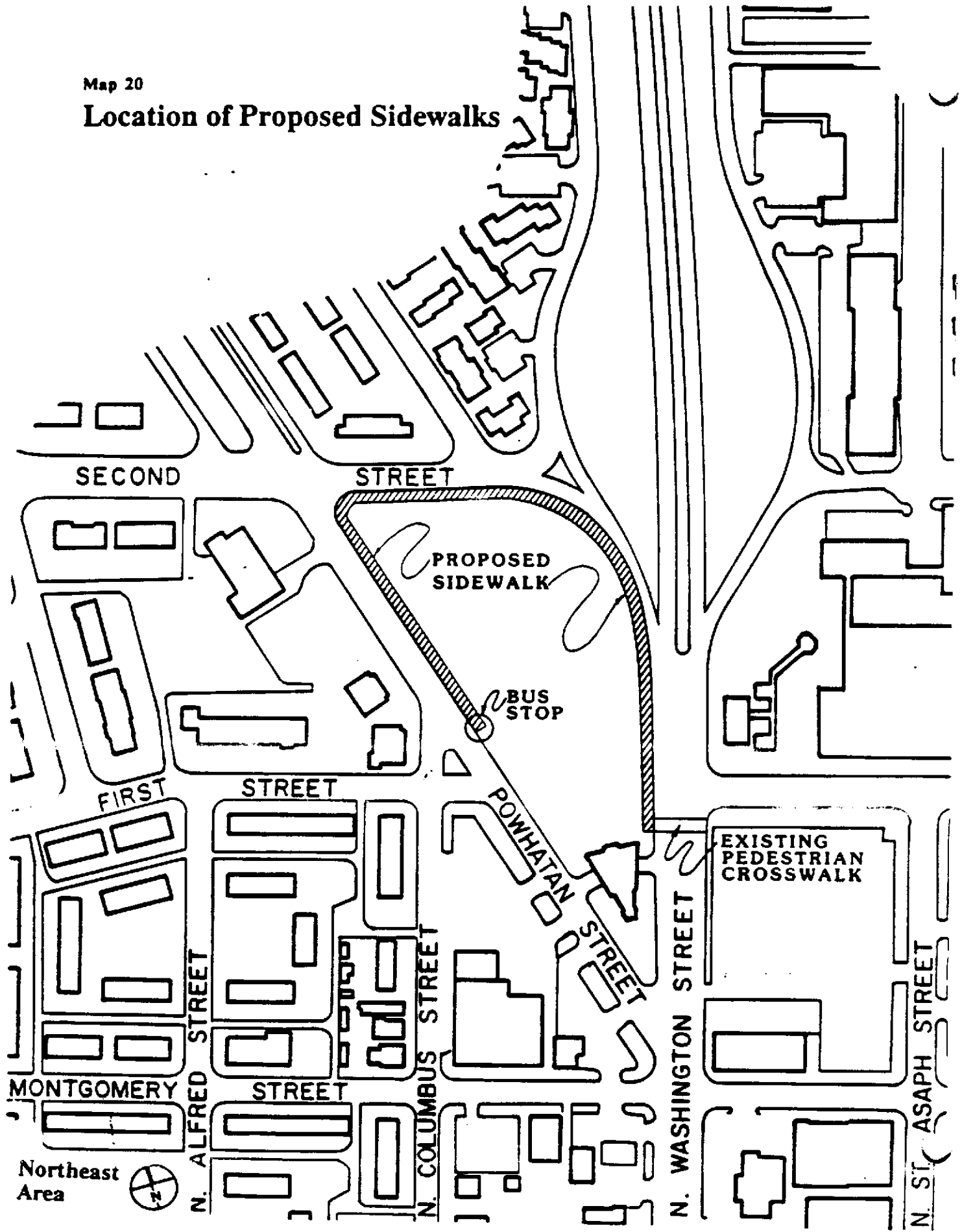
Northeast Area



N. WASHINGTON STREET

Map 20

# Location of Proposed Sidewalks



## OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

The State-owned Powhatan Gateway site, at the foot of the Monroe Street Bridge, should not be developed at the scale allowed under its current C-2 zoning (150 feet height limit and 3.0 F.A.R.). Also, staff has determined that this site was the most feasible one in the plan area for additional open space, a need stressed by residents. If the City acquires the parcel from the State it can set aside a portion for open space and can place conditions on the development of the rest of the parcel before selling it to a developer. These restrictions will ensure development at a scale and intensity that is compatible with the residential areas to the east (Map 21).

Staff cannot recommend that the entire parcel be maintained as open space. The parcel's location at the foot of the Monroe Avenue bridge and beside a major arterial make it an extremely poor location for a park. A building along the western edge of the parcel would shelter a small park to the east. Although the resulting open space would be somewhat smaller in size, it would also be much more usable by the community than would be the large space created by maintaining the entire parcel as open space.

Residents expressed concern over the future of the State-owned Portner right-of-way (Map 16). This right-of-way was acquired by the State as part of the plan to extend Portner road through to Bashford Lane. The R.O.W. is between townhouse backyards to the east and commercial buildings to the west. If the ROW was sold back to the original owners, commercial uses such as parking could conceivably move closer to the residences on the East. Maintenance of this R.O.W. as open space will ensure at least a small transition area.

The state owned parcel at the corner of Powhatan Street and Bashford lane is not recommended for acquisition. Staff recommends that this parcel be sold by the State.

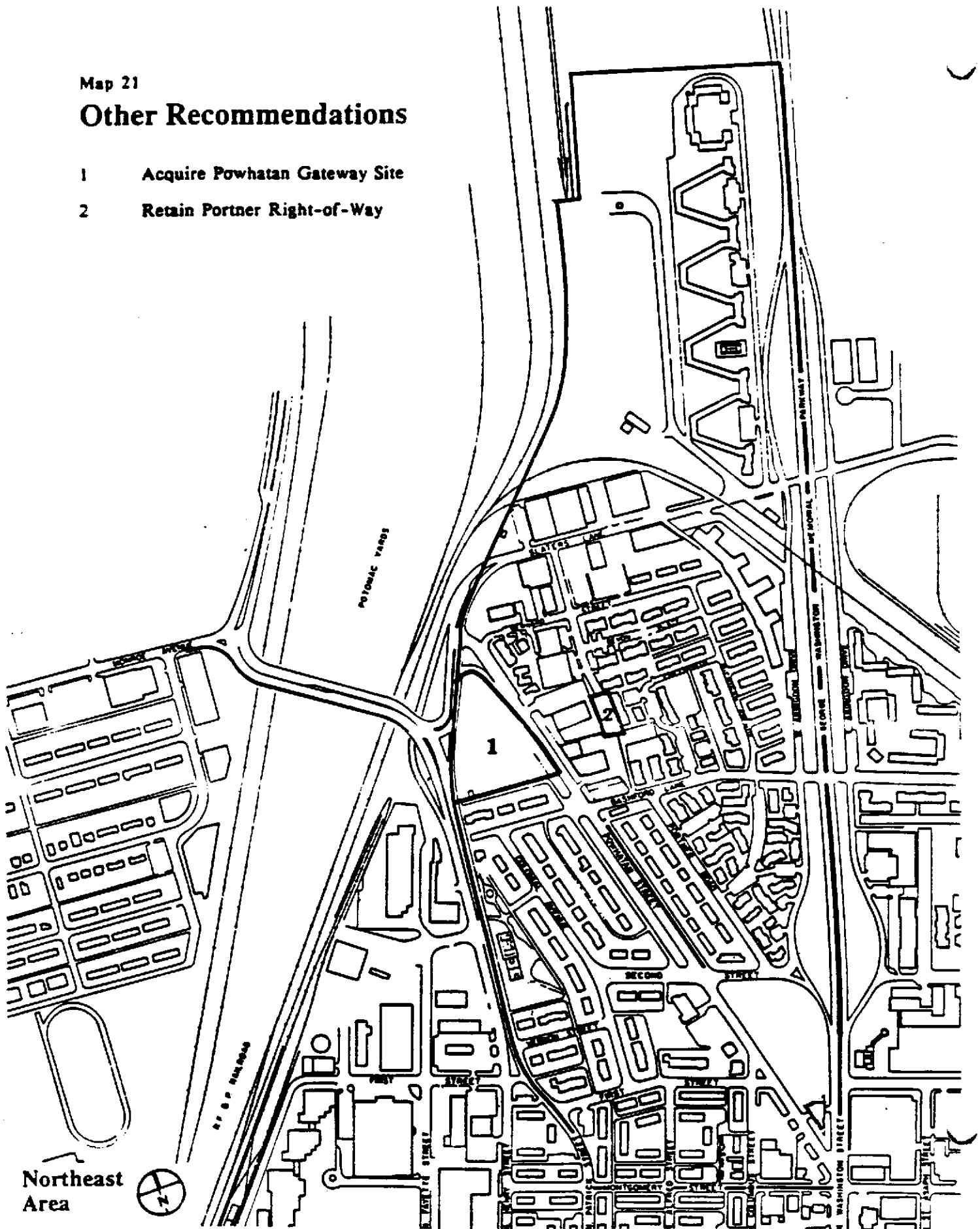
Recommendations: The residents expressed the need for some type of community facility in the area for meeting use.

1. Direct staff to try to acquire the Powhatan Gateway site at the foot of the Monroe Avenue bridge from the State, maintain part of the parcel as open space, and sell the remainder for commercial development with height and F.A.R. restrictions attached.
2. Direct staff to try to acquire the State-owned Portner Road right-of-way to ensure it remains an open space buffer between the residences to the east and the commercial development to the west.
3. Study the need for a community facility or center in the Northeast Area.

Map 21

# Other Recommendations

- 1 Acquire Powhatan Gateway Site
- 2 Retain Portner Right-of-Way



RESOLUTION  
NO. MP-89-4

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the City Planning Commission may adopt amendments in the Master Plan of the City and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Community Development, as directed by City Council, has prepared the Potomac West Small Area Plan for adoption as an amendment to the 1974 Consolidated Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, as amended; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on said small area plan was held on the 21th day of February, 1989 with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that:

1. The Department of Planning and Community Development has made comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions, trends of future developments and probable future requirements of the City as a whole and of the geographical division of the City within said small area plan which the Commission ratifies and adopts; and

2. The said Plan should be amended as shown in the Potomac West Small Area Plan as Revised by the Planning Commission February 21, 1989; and

3. The said plan is necessary or desirable to guide and accomplish a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the City and the geographical division thereof encompassed within said small area plan; and

4. The said small area plan shows the Commission's long range recommendations for the general development of the geographical division of the City encompassed therein; and

5. The said small area plan is generally consistent with the newly adopted Master Plan goals and objectives for the City for preserving neighborhoods and for directing economic growth to appropriate locations for the general welfare of the citizens of the City; and

6. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the Potomac West Small Area Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best

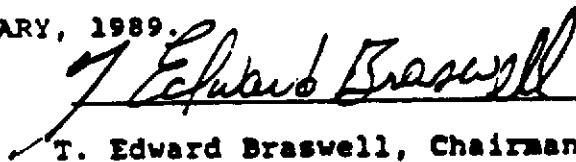
promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The Potomac West Small Area Plan, as amended, comprised of the maps, plats, charts and descriptive matter attached hereto and incorporated by reference, is hereby adopted in its entirety as an amendment to the 1974 Consolidated Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia; such Small Area Plan to supercede all text and references to the geographic division of the City known as the Potomac West Area as may be contained in the 1974 Consolidated Master Plan.

2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution accompanied by the Potomac West Small Area Plan be forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED THE 21ST DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1989.

  
T. Edward Braswell, Chairman

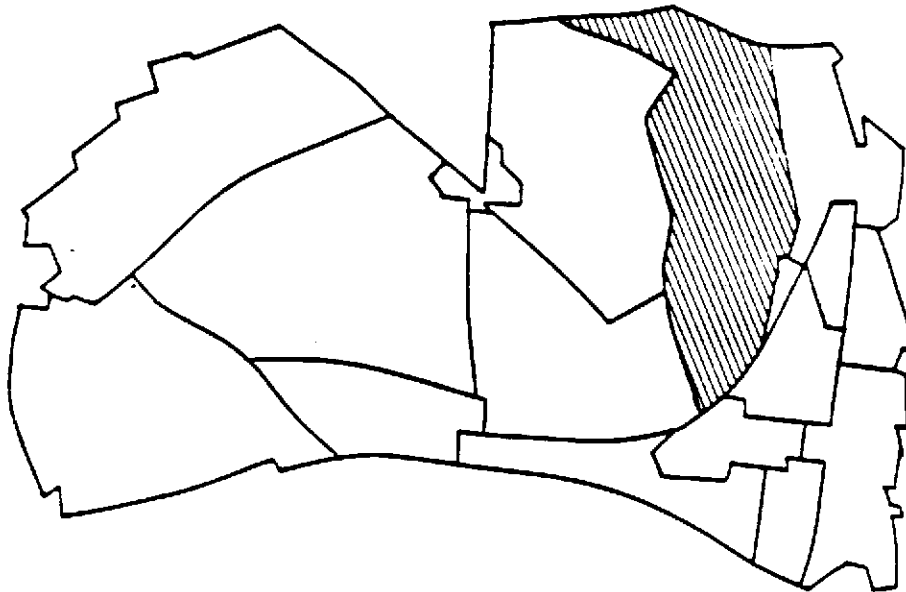
ATTEST:   
Sheldon Lynn, Secretary

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# POTOMAC WEST

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## SMALL AREA PLAN



AUGUST 1988

*As Amended by the  
Planning Commission  
2/21/89*

**Department of Planning and Community Development  
City of Alexandria, Virginia**

Changes recommended by the  
Planning Commission will be found  
on the following pages:

P. 14, map 5

P. 35

P. 38

P. 39

P. 46

P. 48

P. 49 map 17

P. 53

P. 59 map 21

An error has been corrected on p. 57

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# POTOMAC WEST

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## SMALL AREA PLAN

Department of Planning and Community Development  
City of Alexandria, Virginia

**Staff:**

Sheldon Lynn, Director

**Authors:**

Larry Grossman

Susan Grosser

Van Slaymaker

**Graphics:**

Van Slaymaker

Carla Childress

CHANGES MADE TO AUGUST 1988 FINAL DRAFT

JANUARY 30, 1989

1. PAGE 14 - MAP 5- ZONING MAP CORRECTED
2. PAGE 22 - TEXT - MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN - TEXT CHANGED TO NOTE THAT A PORTION OF MT. VERNON AVENUE AND BRADDOCK ROAD ARE CLASSIFIED IN THE 1974 MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN AS ARTERIALS.
3. PAGE 44 TEXT - RECOMMENDATION NO.5 - NEW TEXT DOES NOT REQUIRE THAT THE ARLANDRIA SHOPPING CENTER BUILDING NECESSARILY BE RETAINED.
4. PAGE 57 - TEXT- CDD PRINCIPLES - NEW TEXT DOES NOT REQUIRE THAT THE ARLANDRIA SHOPPING CENTER BUILDING NECESSARILY BE RETAINED.

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## PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this document is to update the Adopted 1982 Potomac West Area Plan and to incorporate a new 1988 Potomac West Plan into the City's new Master Plan. This plan will serve as the basis for future City Council policy initiatives and actions affecting land use, zoning, capital improvements and other programs in the Potomac West area.

## ORGANIZATION AND CONTENTS

The Potomac West Plan is organized into two sections: Background and Issues and Plan Recommendations. The first section reviews and analyzes existing conditions and trends in the study area including physical description, demographics, land use, zoning, economic development activities and trends, transportation and urban design. This section also retraces past City policies including adopted plans, rezonings, resolutions and capital improvement programs. Based on this analysis this section identifies issues which need to be addressed in the plan for the area.

The second section lists the goals, objectives and specific recommendations on land use, zoning, transportation and urban design.

## PLANNING PROCESS

This plan has been developed in consultation with citizens, property owners, and community and business groups, through a series of meetings which included review of existing conditions and trends in the Potomac West area, identification of issues, review of the 1982 and 1974 plans of the area and review of plan recommendations.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The Potomac West area is located in Planning District II, in the northeastern part of the City. The area is delineated by Four Mile Run on the north, the Potomac Railroad Yard to the east, Union Station to the south and Russell and Glebe Road to the west. The boundaries used in this Plan are based on the Adopted 1982 Potomac West Plan.

Potomac West (Map 1) consists of an 1,116 acre area which extends north-south, from the City line at Four Mile Run to the Amtrak Station on Callahan Drive. The area is formed by four major north-south streets. Russell Road, defining the western boundary of the area from King Street to Glebe Road, is a four lane roadway fronted by single family detached homes. Commonwealth Avenue, which parallels Russell Road to the east, is a broad four lane street with a wide, central median and fronted by single family detached homes and townhouses.

Mt. Vernon Avenue bisects the area and serves as the commercial spine of Potomac West. Forming the eastern boundary of the area, Route 1, or Jefferson Davis Highway, is a major commuter thoroughfare fronted by light industrial uses and by the Potomac Railroad Freight Classification Yard.

Topographically, the Potomac West area is relatively flat. The area slopes upward toward Russell Road which forms a ridge defining Beverly Hills to the west. One of the most important natural features in Potomac West is Four Mile Run and its flood plain which forms the northern boundary of the planning area.

The Potomac West study area is primarily residential and distinguished by a narrow grid of streets, closely spaced bungalow houses and small, single-family lots subdivided around the turn of the century -- in the pre-automobile era. Its residential character and development history reflect the important influence of the nearby Potomac Yards as a source of jobs. Potomac West was a convenient residential location for many railroad workers in the early part of this century. Transportation facilities such as the railroad, and, later, nearby National Airport also influenced the location of industries along Jefferson Davis Highway.

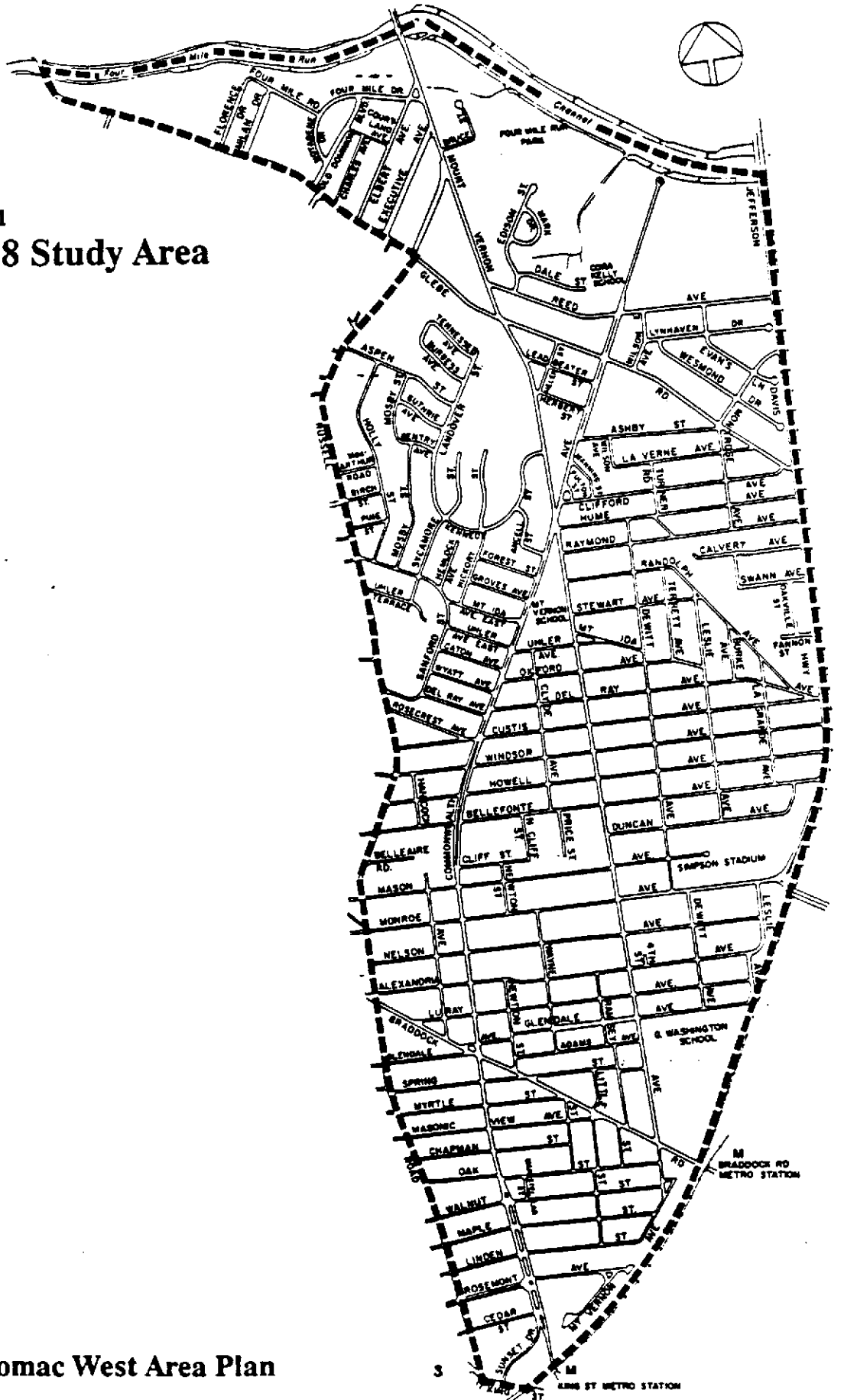
As a large, diverse residential community, Potomac West can be divided into five defined neighborhoods (Map 2). Starting in the northern part of the area is Arlandria, a neighborhood located between Four Mile Run, Glebe Road and Commonwealth Avenue. This neighborhood contains a very dense concentration of garden apartments which predominate the area. There are also smaller concentrations of duplexes, rowhouses and single family detached residential units located east and west of Mt. Vernon Avenue and along Reed Avenue.

Del Ray/Warwick Village is located in the central portion of Potomac West and is defined by Randolph Street and the former W&OD right of way on the north and by Braddock Road to the south. Del Ray contains older, single family homes dating from the turn of the century and the Warwick Village rowhouse condominiums. Warwick Village, built as a planned unit development rental project in the 1950's, converted to home ownership in the 1970's.

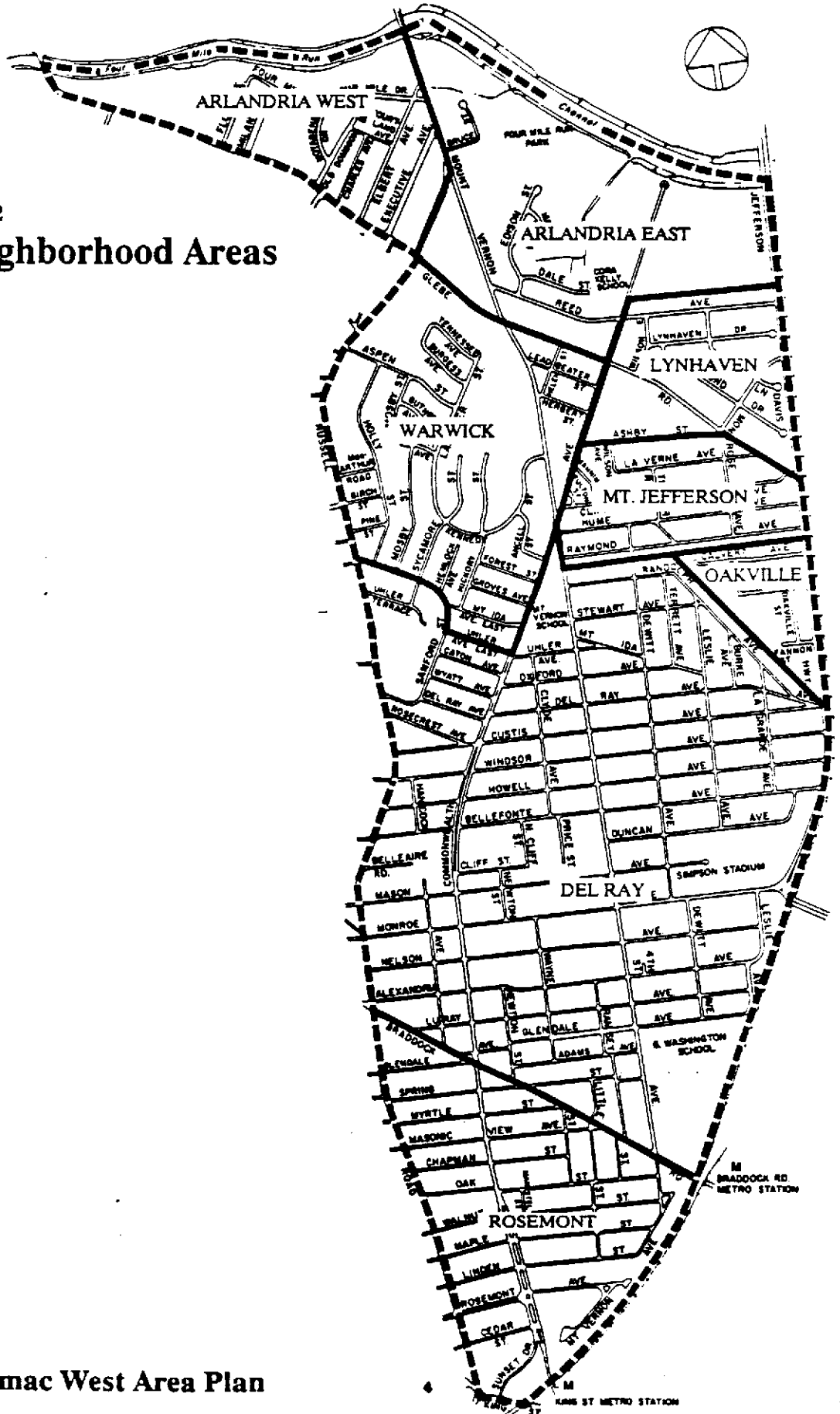
Lynhaven encompasses the blocks of rowhouses bounded by Glebe Road, Commonwealth Avenue, East Reed Avenue and Route 1. It also includes two older apartment complexes, Lynhaven Gardens and Auburn Gardens, the latter of which has recently undergone renovation and conversion to condominiums.

# **BACKGROUND AND ISSUES**

Map 1  
1988 Study Area



Map 2  
Neighborhood Areas



St. Elmo/Mt. Jefferson is a relatively small area bounded by Route 1, Mt. Vernon Avenue, Ashby Street and Glebe Road. The neighborhood contains mainly single-family houses dating from the 1930's, some as early as 1900. This residential area abuts the Oakville Industrial triangle located to the south.

Lower Rosemont, generally east of Russell Road and south of Braddock Road, is a section of the Rosemont neighborhood that lies within Potomac West. It consists mainly of single-family detached houses and a few older garden apartments in small buildings, primarily along Commonwealth Avenue.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### Population

Potomac West, with a 1985 population of 19,624, contains 18% of the City's residents. The population of the Potomac West study area decreased 5% from a 1980 population of 20,594. This decline is primarily due to an ongoing national trend toward a decrease in average household size, which is quite noticeable in Alexandria. From 1980 to 1985, average household size in the Potomac West area went from 2.37 persons per household to 2.19. At the same time, the number of households actually increased, going from 8,693 in 1980 to 8,944 in 1985, an increase of 3%.

### Employment

An estimated 5,442 people worked at locations within the Potomac West area in 1985, not including self-employed persons. As shown in Table 1 jobs increased by 34% over the past 9 years, primarily in the industrial and service sectors.

**TABLE 1**  
**Employment**  
**Potomac West Area**

	<u>1976</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Industrial	1,189	1,630	1,742	+ 46.5%
Wholesale ]		289	253 ]	
Retail ]	1,252	939	942 ]	- 4.6%
F.I.R.E.	178	180	233	+ 30.9%
Services	892	1,000	1,617	+ 81.3%
Federal ]		19	18 ]	
State/Local ]	337	344	576 ]	+ 76.3%
Self Employed	304	580	383	+ 26.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,152</b>	<b>4,698</b>	<b>5,575</b>	<b>+ 34.3%</b>

SOURCE: COG Regional Employment Census 1976, 1980, 1985.

The increase in industrial sector employment stands in marked contrast to other parts of the city which have experienced a steady loss of industrial employment. The prime industrial site in Potomac West is the Oakville Triangle located along Route 1 between the W& OD right-of-way and Raymond Avenue. The 31 firms in this area provide some 836 jobs.

The economic diversity in Potomac West is also reflected in the different income levels of households living in the study area. Potomac West is one of the few remaining areas in the City which has affordable housing for low and moderate income families.

Table 2 compares the median household income for the different neighborhoods within Potomac West to the Citywide median income.

**TABLE 2**  
**1980 Median Income - Resident Households**  
**Potomac West Area**

<u>Neighborhood</u>	<u>Warwick Village</u>	<u>Arlandria</u>	<u>St. Elmo</u>	<u>Del Ray East</u>	<u>Del Ray West</u>	<u>Rosemont</u>
1980 Median	\$23,420	\$12,254	\$14,851	\$16,941	\$19,024	\$25,655
% of City	111.4%	58.3%	70.7%	80.6%	90.5%	122.1%

SOURCE: 1980 U.S. Census.

### SUMMARY -- DEMOGRAPHICS

- o Potomac West is primarily a turn of the century residential area containing a wide diversity of neighborhoods, housing types and households.
- o As an area whose origins were linked to a nearby railroad classification yard Potomac West has retained its industrial employment base which is still growing.

### EXISTING LAND USE

The Potomac West study area (excluding street and alley right-of-ways) includes approximately 1,116 acres of land, with a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, open space and recreational land uses. The predominant land use in the area is residential (table 3).

#### Residential Land Use

About 77% of the total land area (859 acres) in Potomac West is devoted to residential use. Single-family detached homes and rowhouses are the predominant form of housing. With the exception of four mid to high-rise apartment buildings (The Portals, The Calvert, and The Landover House) developments in the area are three stories or less in height.

Map 3  
**Generalized  
 Existing Land Use**

	Residential
	Commercial
	Industrial
	Park

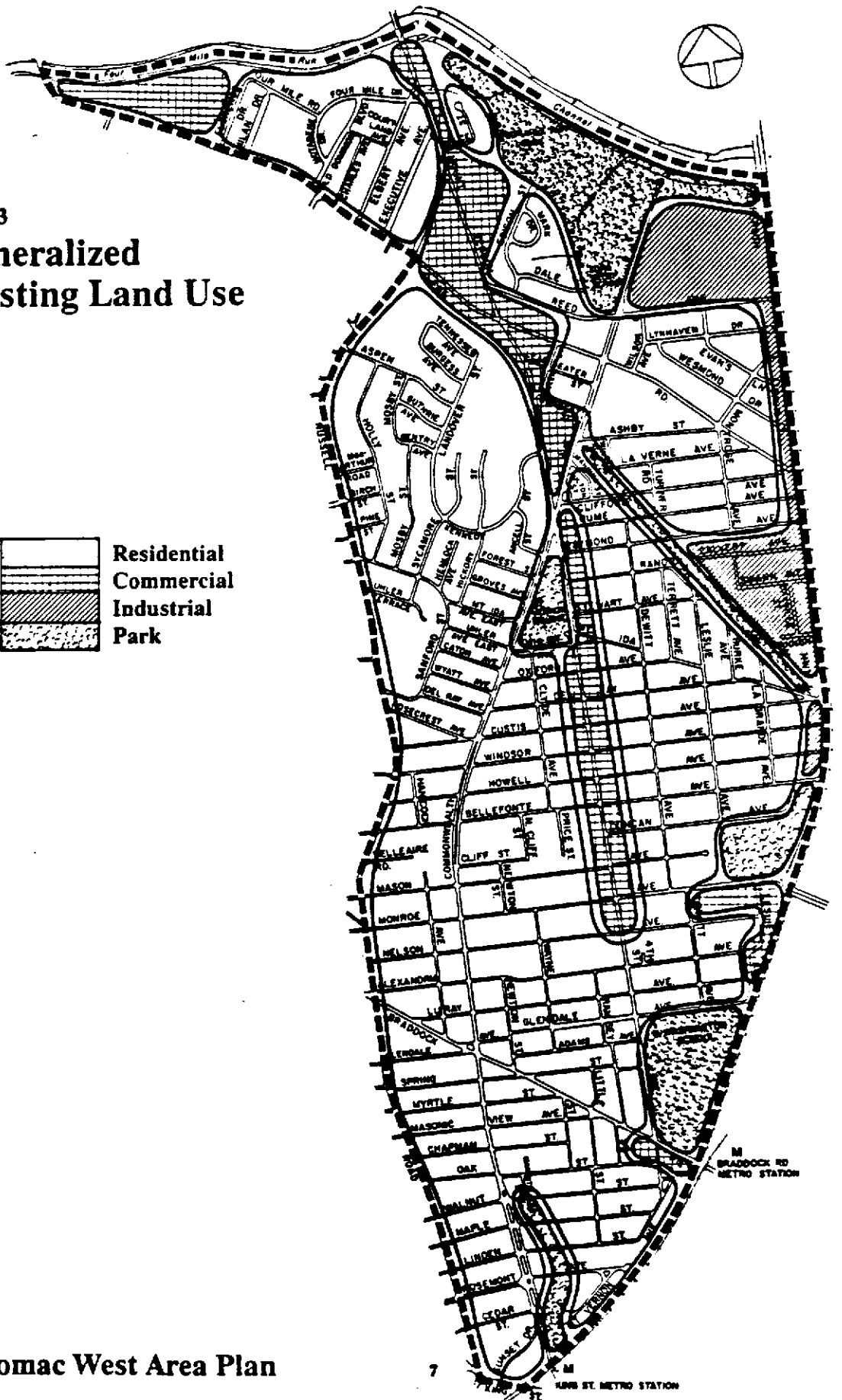


TABLE 3

Existing Land Use  
Potomac West Area

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Residential	858.87	76.97
Commercial	82.57	7.43
Industrial	71.67	6.45
Recreational <sup>1</sup>	100.44	8.96
Institutional <sup>2</sup>	1.15	.09
Utilities	1.30	.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,116</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> includes school buildings.

<sup>2</sup> includes Y, Fire Department, and Salvation Army; excludes Library, Human Services.

Potomac West primarily has an older housing stock consisting of single family detached homes constructed prior to 1940; rowhouses, built during the 1940's; garden apartments, erected from the 1930's to the 1950's; and some high-rise apartment buildings constructed in the 1960's.

Rowhouses are concentrated in Arlandria East (along Mark, Edison, Reed and Dale Streets), Lynhaven, Warwick Village and those sections of Del Ray north and south of George Washington School. Garden apartments are located throughout the study area, with the major complexes concentrated in central Del Ray (between Route 1, Bellefonte and Monroe Avenue near Commonwealth Avenue) and in the northern portions of the study area, most notably in Arlandria West.

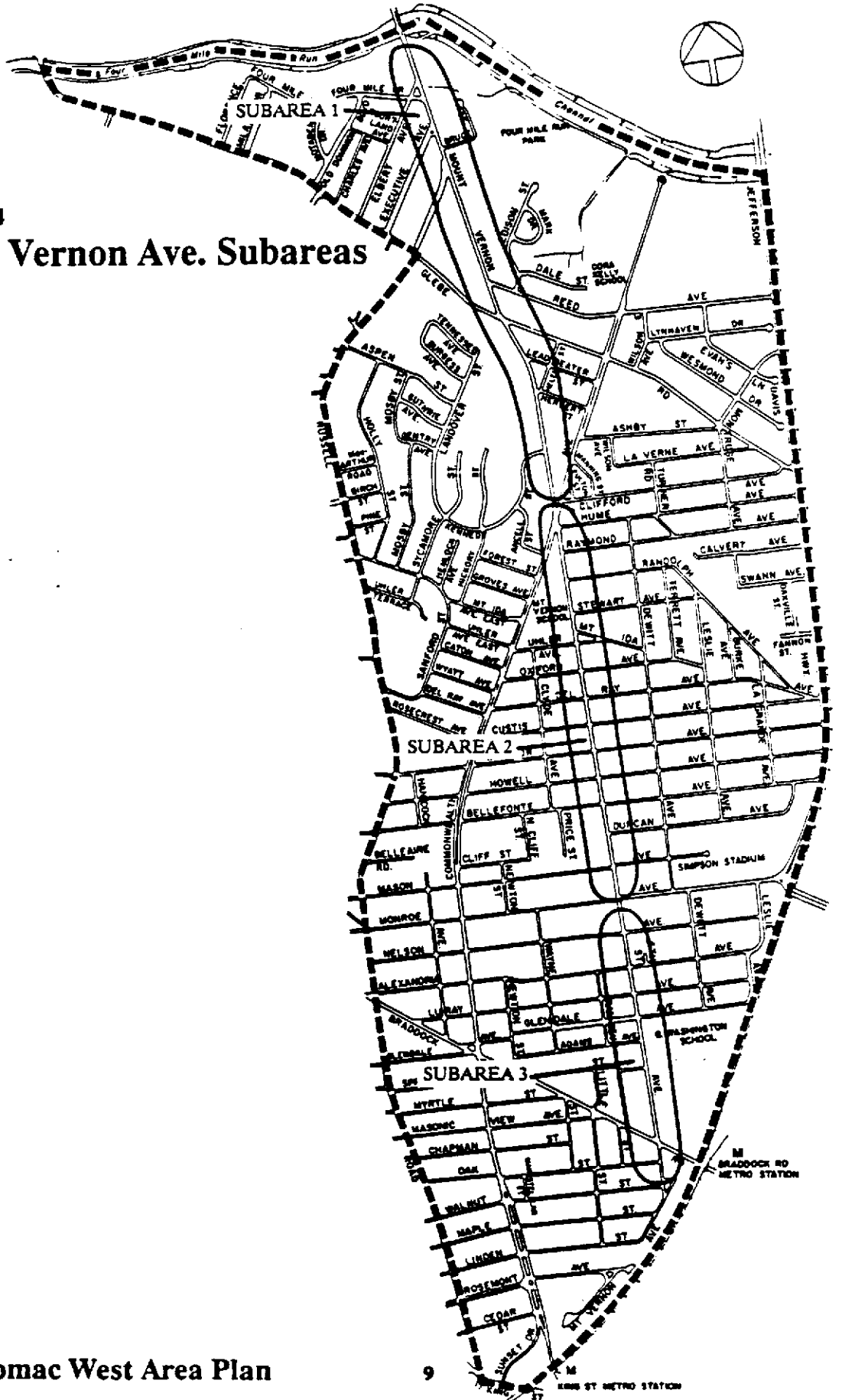
According to the 1980 U.S. Census, there were 9,151 housing units in the Potomac West study area. Of these, some 2,819 were apartments, with the majority of housing units being single family homes.

Commercial Land Use

Commercial land uses account for 7.4% (83 acres) of the total land use in the study area. Mt. Vernon Avenue, running two and a half miles from Braddock Road north to Four Mile Run, is the focus for much of the commercial activity in Potomac West. Mt. Vernon Avenue is not a typical commercial strip. The Avenue actually is composed of a mix of commercial, residential, recreational and institutional uses. Commercial uses are quite varied and are best described as distinct subareas - each with its own character (Map 4).

Starting from the north, the Arlandria\Glebe Road Subarea includes 72 commercial properties on Mt. Vernon Avenue between Four Mile Run and Commonwealth Avenue and the properties along Glebe Road between Russell Road and Helen Street. This area includes approximately 93 businesses which occupy 418,327 square feet of floor space on 35 acres of land.

Map 4  
**Mt. Vernon Ave. Subareas**



The Arlandria\Glebe Road commercial area is distinguished by its large scale commercial facilities including a neighborhood shopping center (Arlandria) built during the 1940's, a mid-rise office building, a major chain drug store, two grocery stores, a C&P Telephone Training Center, a film processing plant, a foreign car dealership, three gas stations and an auto parts store. In addition, there are smaller scaled establishments which provide personal services such as beauty salons, barber shops, fast food restaurants, appliance, radio and T.V. repair shops, dry cleaners and other convenience stores.

Historically, this section of Mt. Vernon Avenue was subjected to repeated flooding of nearby Four Mile Run during the 1960's and 1970's which discouraged investment and development of the area. However, the completion of the flood control project during the mid-1970's has effectively eliminated the flooding problem.

The Mt. Vernon School\Del Ray Subarea includes commercial uses from Commonwealth Avenue to Monroe Avenue. There are approximately 140 businesses located on this segment of the Avenue with a total of 294,000 square feet of floor area. Many of the businesses are located in two to four story commercial structures or converted residences. In some cases, a commercial activity occupies the first floor of a building and residential quarters are located on the upper two floors. This subarea consists of 16 acres.

The businesses in this section of Mt. Vernon Avenue include convenience stores, cafes, restaurants, shoe repair shops, hair salons and barber shops and several second-hand furniture shops and antique shops. In contrast to the Arlandria\Glebe Road commercial area this section of Mt. Vernon Avenue is characterized by small scale buildings and shops and is often referred to as "Main Street" because of its small town character. A dominant feature of this section of the Avenue is the Mt. Vernon Elementary School and its adjacent library, playfield and swimming pool.

It is noted that there are some larger scaled commercial uses along this segment of the Avenue including the Crestar Bank with its surface parking lot and an auto dealership located towards Monroe Avenue. The only large office structure in the sub-area is the City Department of Human Resources Building which contains approximately 27,000 square feet of space in a two story structure.

The Monroe Avenue\Braddock Road Subarea is a tree lined section of Mt. Vernon Avenue that covers an area between Monroe Avenue and Walnut Street. The low density of development provides a pleasant transition or buffer between the more commercially active areas and the residential properties. Complementing the transitional setting is the George Washington School facility and the adjacent Braddock Playfield. The school and recreational facilities cover 21.9 acres and are the most prominent uses along this segment of the Avenue.

Commercial activity in this section consists of 24 businesses totaling 81,707 square feet located in commercial clusters. These clusters are mixed with single family houses, rowhouses and garden apartments.

The largest commercial use is the C&P Telephone Switching Center. While this center, located between Alexandria and Luray Avenue, is a major structure, few persons are employed there.

Near the intersection of Monroe and Mt. Vernon Avenues, there are several well established businesses including a music store, an oriental rug shop and cleaners, a restaurant, a hardware store, an auto accessory store and a medical supply store.

Another cluster of businesses is focused at the intersection of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Braddock Road. This commercial area includes a convenience store, sub shop, two service stations, a roofing company, an office supply firm and a hair salon. A former fast food and garage site is located at the northwest corner of the intersection.

Although Mt. Vernon Avenue is the primary locus of commercial activity there is a supermarket and a drug store on Monroe Avenue near the Monroe Avenue Bridge which serves the Del Ray neighborhood.

Table 4 displays the commercial square footage by type of use for each subarea and for the entire Avenue. Although the database is seven years old there has not been a significant amount of new commercial space added along the Avenue since the detailed survey was conducted. As shown, commercial uses along Mt. Vernon Avenue are predominantly retail and services. Office uses are a relatively minor feature of the Avenue. Most of the office space is concentrated in the former Datatel Building just north of Glebe Road and in the Human Services Building located across from the Mt. Vernon Elementary School.

**TABLE 4**  
**Mount Vernon Avenue**  
**Inventory of Commercial Uses-1981**

Mount Vernon Commercial Section

<u>Commercial Use</u>	<u>I</u> <u>Arlaudria</u> <u>Glebe Rd.</u>	<u>II</u> <u>Mt. Vernon School</u> <u>Del Ray</u>	<u>III</u> <u>Monroe Ave.</u> <u>Braddock Rd.</u>	<u>Total</u>
Office	92,120	54,770	0	146,890
Retail	161,558	70,621	27,475	259,654
Services	40,158	46,274	11,724	98,156
Eating	27,931	4,308	2,838	35,077
Other	64,647	46,342	37,417	148,406
Vacant	<u>31,913</u>	<u>72,595</u>	<u>2,253</u>	<u>106,761</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>418,327</b>	<b>294,910</b>	<b>81,707</b>	<b>794,944</b>

**Industrial Land Use**

Industrial uses cover 6% (72 acres) of the total land area and are concentrated at Oakville Triangle and at other locations along Route 1.

The 24.3 acre Oakville Industrial Triangle (bounded by Route 1, the abandoned W&OD right-of-way and Raymond Avenue) is the principal location of industrial activity in Potomac West. The Triangle consists of one and two story brick and metal warehouse structures occupied by a variety of firms including printing, metal fabrication, equipment and construction materials supply companies, a dairy and auto related businesses.

Because this industrial area is wedged in on the south by the W&OD embankment, uses on this site are partially cut off and screened from adjacent residential uses. The exception is along Raymond Avenue where there is no real transition between the industrial and residential uses.

Another large industrial site (23 acres) is located at the northern city boundary at Four Mile Run, Jefferson Davis Highway and Reed Avenue. Referred to as the Route 1 properties, this site contains some auto repair related industrial uses. However, the site is mostly vacant. The Hertz Rental Car Company is located in a new office building to the rear of the site near Commonwealth Avenue and Four Mile Run.

In addition to the Oakville Triangle, most of the frontage along the Jefferson Davis Highway is industrial in character and consists of printing, auto repair, moving and storage firms, a bottling company, contractors, equipment storage, bottled gas and warehouse storage firms. Aside from a restaurant, carryouts, a tire store and a gas station there are few retail uses (and no office uses) on Jefferson Davis Highway.

There is also some industrial property along Leslie Avenue which is used for light manufacturing and warehouse purposes. Left over from a time when this portion of Route 1 was predominantly industrial, this area is changing from industrial to heavy commercial uses such as Schindler Elevator Company, MCC, Fitzgerald Moving and Storage and American Transmission.

#### Other Land Use

The Potomac West area has several major park and recreational facilities, as well as numerous pocket parks, covering a combined total of 62.4 acres or 5.6% of the land area. The Alexandria portion of Four Mile Run Park (some 25 acres) and Mt. Jefferson Park are in the area. The major open space and recreational sites in Potomac West are located in the northern end of the study area at Four Mile Run Park, at Simpson Stadium, adjacent to Mt. Vernon Elementary School and George Washington School, along the W&OD right-of-way and Hooff's Run Park. Other parks include Warwick Village and Hoofs Run Park in the Rosemont area. In addition, Simpson Stadium and Braddock Field are located in Potomac West. There are also two public swimming pools in the area, Warwick Pool and Del Ray Pool.

Institutional uses cover about 3.1% (34.8 acres) of the land in the study area and include the Cora Kelly School, Mt. Vernon School, George Washington School, Duncan Library, the Y.M.C.A. and the Salvation Army.

#### Vacant Land

About 2.7 percent (30 acres) of the land in the study area is vacant. The most significant vacant parcel is the so-called Route 1 properties, the northernmost collection of properties west of Route 1 between Four Mile Run, Commonwealth and Reed Avenues. The rest of the vacant properties are scattered throughout the study area.

#### SUMMARY --LAND USE

- o Land use within the Potomac West area is predominantly residential, with commercial uses focused on Mt. Vernon Avenue and industrial uses focused on Jefferson Davis Highway.
- o Except for the Route 1 properties, there is very little vacant land available in the planning area.

## ZONING

Zoning in the Potomac West area essentially mirrors the land use pattern, with residential being the clearly predominant category. About 77% of the land (865 acres) is zoned for residential development, with commercial and industrial zoning accounting respectively for about 7.4% and 6.4% of the remaining land area. Industrial zoning is located primarily along Route 1 with the largest parcels at the Oakville Triangle and at the Route 1 property and in a strip along Route 1 which connects these two sites. In addition, the VEPCO utility facility, on West Glebe Road, is also presently zoned industrial.

**TABLE 5**  
**Existing Zoning**  
**Potomac West Area**

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Commercial	82.57	7.39
Industrial	71.67	6.42
Residential	<u>865.00</u>	<u>77.50</u>
Total	1,019.24	91.30*

\* difference is due to institutional and recreational uses zoned commercial and not included here

### Residential Zoning

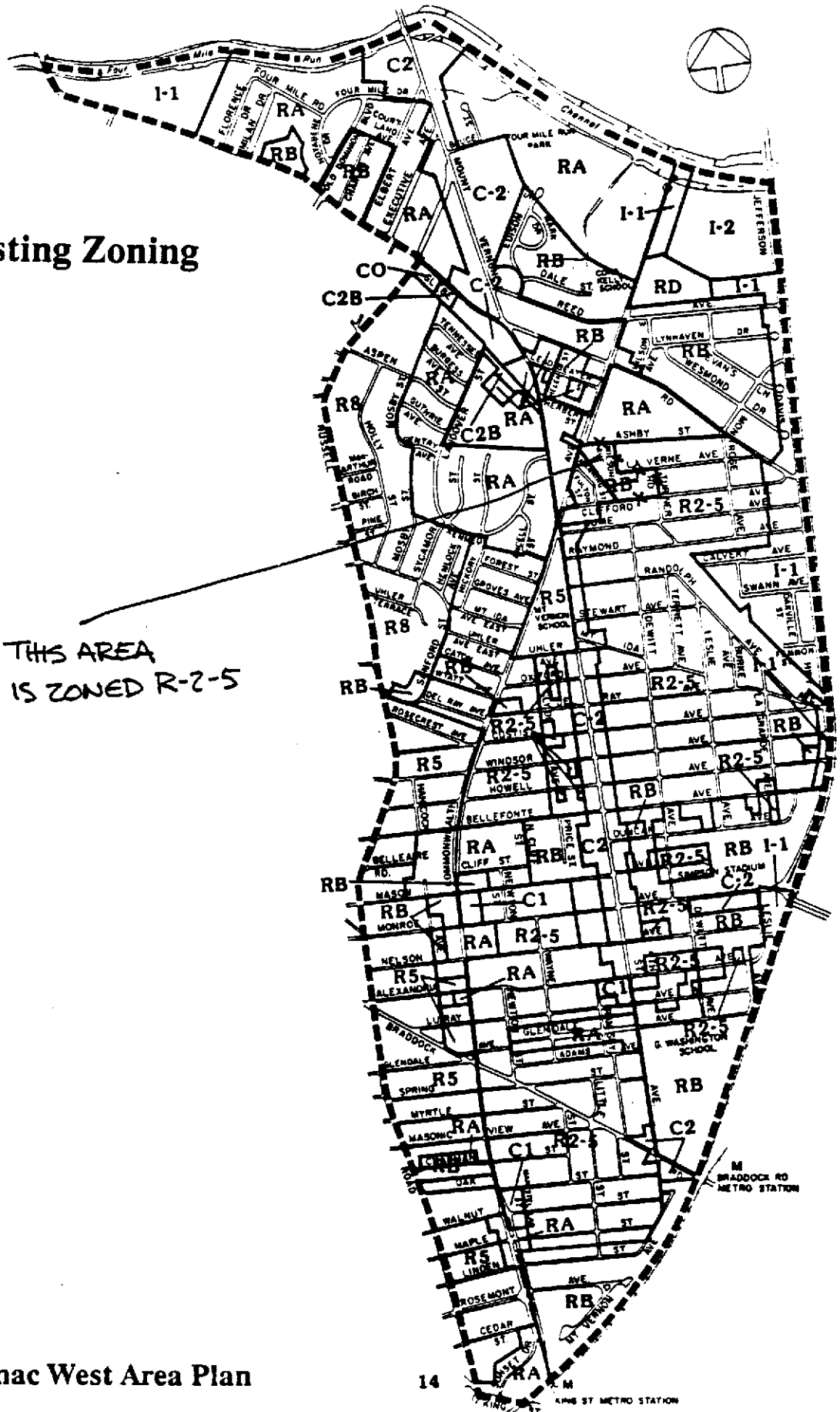
The residential zoning in the area is divided between the R2-5, R-5, R-8, RB and RA categories. Of these, the largest residential zoning category is R2-5, which permits single family and two family homes at densities of up to 17.42 units per acre. This zone is found primarily in the middle portion of Potomac West, between Ashby Street and Glendale Avenue. Along the western edge of the study area and Russell Road are found R-8 and R-5 zoning, which permit only single family homes at medium densities of 5.45 and 8.71 units per acre respectively.

The majority of RB zoning is located at the northeast and southeast edges of Potomac West and at scattered, small sites throughout the study area. RB zoning permits single-family and townhouse homes at densities of up to 22 units per acre and multi-family units at densities of 27 units per acre, if built prior to 1973.

RA zoning allows single, two or multi-family dwellings at densities of up to 27 units per acre. RA zoning is scattered throughout the area, with the largest concentration near the intersections of Mt. Vernon Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue and Glebe Road, south of Glebe Road between Tennessee Avenue, Mosby Street, Ansell Street and Ashby Street to Mt. Vernon Avenue; and east of Commonwealth Avenue between Ashby Street and Glebe Road. Another large concentration of RA zoning is located at Four Mile Run Park at the northern boundary of the study area. (See Map 5.)

Map 5  
Existing Zoning

THIS AREA  
IS ZONED R-2-5



### Commercial Zoning

Commercial zoning in Potomac West is almost entirely C-2, with a few spots of C-1 zoning. The C-2 zone extends primarily along Mt. Vernon Avenue and allows office, retail and service uses at a density of 3.0 F.A.R. and at heights of up to 150 feet. The C-1 zone allows commercial and residential uses at densities of 1.0 F.A.R. and heights of up to 150 feet. Almost all of the commercially zoned land in Potomac West falls under the C-2 category.

In the Potomac West area, a significant portion (25.7%) of C-2 zoned parcels are presently used for non-commercial purposes (see Table 6). Approximately 15.5 acres of commercially zoned land is used for residential purposes. In addition, recreational, institutional and utility uses are also zoned C-2.

**TABLE 6**  
**C-2 Commercial Zoned Land By Use**  
**Potomac West Area**

	<u>Acres</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Residential	15.5	18.79
Institutional	1.15	1.39
Utility	1.30	1.57
Recreational	3.28	3.97
Commercial	<u>61.34</u>	<u>74.28</u>
Total	82.57	100.00

### Industrial Zoning

Except for the Route 1 north parcels (zoned I-2), the industrial zoning in the study area is I-1. The I-1 zone allows non-noxious industrial activities including light manufacturing, storage, warehousing and distribution. In addition, the industrial zones allow most commercial uses, including office, retail and service uses, while under a Planned Unit Development permit, residential uses are also allowed. Densities and heights permitted are a 2.5 F.A.R. and 77 feet by right or a 5.0 F.A.R. and heights of up to 200 feet with a P.U.D.

In the Potomac West area, almost all of the industrially zoned parcels are proximate to residential areas; the major exception is the Route 1 properties fronting Jefferson Davis Highway.

### Theoretical vs. Built Commercial Zoning Envelopes

Table 7 compares the amount of commercial development which would theoretically be allowed under the C-2 zone versus the actual built commercial square footage. As shown there is only a 12.5% utilization of the theoretical development rights along the Mt. Vernon Avenue commercial corridor.

In part, the underutilization of commercial property is a reflection of market conditions. As noted, there is little demand evidenced for high density office

development along the Avenue. In large measure, however, the low utilization of the theoretical envelope reflects parcelization, zoning patterns and zoning constraints.

Many of the parcels along Mt. Vernon Avenue are small and fragmented. The zoning pattern usually is high density commercial zoning next to low and medium density residential zoning. This pattern means that commercial development along the Avenue must provide a zone transition setback from the abutting residential zone. The zone transition requirement effectively lowers the achievable height and density of commercial development for many parcels along the Avenue.

Another constraint is the parking requirement which for small, narrow parcels makes redevelopment at high densities and heights difficult. There is the option to structure or underground parking but this is expensive and not always economically feasible.

In fact if all zoning standards are applied to a typical block frontage along the Avenue the result is likely to be a three story building with a 1.3 floor area ratio.

TABLE 7

Built Commercial Vs. Theoretical Zoning Envelope  
By Commercial Section  
Potomac West Area

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Built</u>	<u>Zoning Envelope</u>	<u>% Utilized</u>
I	418,327	4,180,369	10.0
II	328,517	1,877,407	17.0
III	<u>81,000</u>	<u>527,089</u>	<u>15.0</u>
Total	827,844	6,585,456	12.5%

SUMMARY - ZONING

- o Zoning in the Potomac West area is predominantly low to medium density residential.
- o Non-residential zoning is split fairly evenly between commercial and industrial zones. Most of the commercially zoned land is along Mt. Vernon Avenue, while most of the industrially zoned land is along Route 1.
- o Almost all commercially zoned land allows high density development and 150 foot building heights, with C-2 zoning adjacent to low and medium density residential areas.
- o The C-2 zone is used extensively for non-commercial uses such as residential, institutional and open space purposes.
- o Parking and setback requirements on commercially zoned land along Mt. Vernon Avenue effectively reduce heights and densities from what would otherwise be maximally allowed under the C-2 zone.

## ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND TRENDS

The focus for economic activity in Potomac West is Mt. Vernon Avenue. Much of the impetus for commercial revitalization has been the City's active role in using capital improvement and business loan programs to encourage business development along the Avenue. Some 30 new businesses have located on the Avenue since 1980- many of which occupy renovated structures.

Most new commercial construction has occurred in the Arlandria/Glebe Road area and include the Duron Paint store, Erol's Video and the 24 Hour Express convenience store. In addition, a 48,000 square foot complex of three story, townhouse style professional office buildings, Vernon Square, was recently completed at Mt. Vernon Avenue and Herbert Street.

Other commercial activity in the form of proposed projects include Potomac Town Square, located at 2200 Mt. Vernon Avenue, to consist of 33,000 square feet of office and retail space and Mt. Vernon Associates property, located at the corner of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Braddock Road, to consist of 40,000 square feet of office and retail. Both projects will be three stories in height.

Coupled with increased commercial activity has been increased housing investment and renovation. Much of this activity has occurred in Arlandria West where some 1400 apartment units have been renovated. Also in Arlandria West, under a unique agreement between the Sunnyside residents, the owner of the Sunnyside tract and the City, some 103 new townhouses are to be constructed with 15 of the units to be made available to Sunnyside residents and their families at a discounted price.

The City has also been instrumental in renovating townhouses in Arlandria East through the Tower Homes project.

In general the residential real estate market is strong. Single family residential assessments have increased 11.2% on average over the past year.

### Potential Development and Redevelopment Sites

Although Potomac West is largely built up, there are sites and areas which could be redeveloped over the next 10 years. The two most significant sites subject to major development or redevelopment are the Arlandria Shopping Center/Berkey Photo properties and the Route 1 properties (Map 6).

#### Arlandria Center/Berkey Photo Site

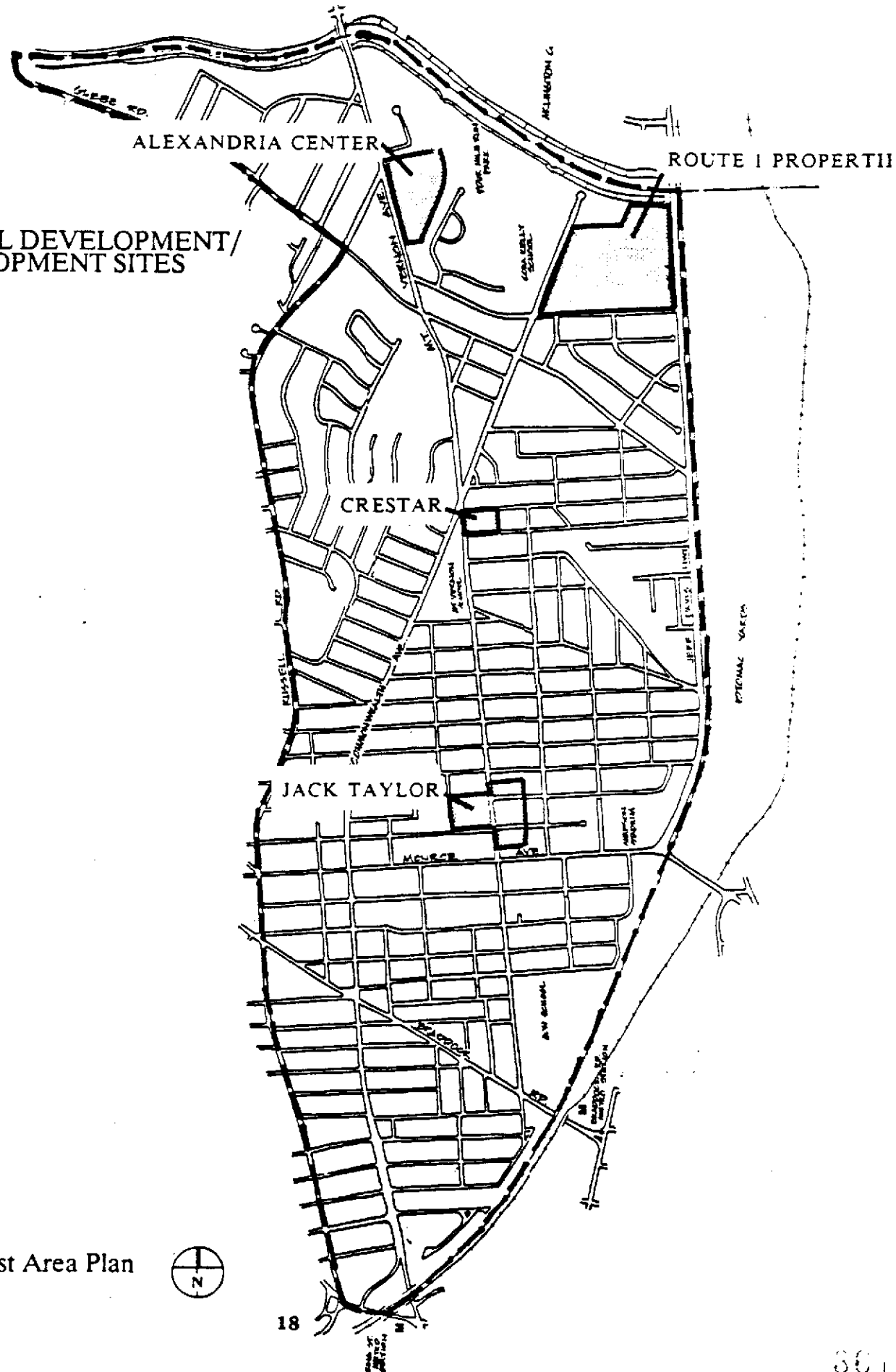
The Arlandria Center/Berkey Photo site includes approximately 6.5 acres composed of the Arlandria Shopping Center and the Berkey Photo building. In addition, there are another 2.0 acres of small parcels that could be assembled with the larger sites. This potential 8.5 acre assemblage would make this site the largest commercially zoned and redevelopable tract of land along Mt. Vernon Avenue.

All of these abutting properties are located on the east side of Mount Vernon Avenue south of Bruce Street, with Four Mile Run Park to the east and the Tower Homes subdivision to the south.

The Arlandria Center was an active neighborhood shopping facility during the 1940's through the 1960's. The Center included some 85,000 square feet of space and featured junior department stores, a shoe store, a pharmacy, an ABC store and carpet shop.

Map 6

POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT/  
REDEVELOPMENT SITES



Potomac West Area Plan



However, over the years, as major flooding from Four Mile Run resulted in extensive damage to the Center and to other properties and businesses in Arlandria, the shopping center went into decline.

The completion of the flood control project during the 1970's removed the threat of periodic flooding and improved the investment prospects for the property. Recently there was a change in ownership and a major investment made to improve the facade of the building and the parking area.

Although the recent face-lift has enlivened its appearance, the shopping center suffers from functional and physical obsolescence. Because of past flooding problems and changes in the surrounding neighborhoods, much of the market support for the Center, at least from the more affluent nearby areas, has shifted elsewhere to competitive centers such as Bradlee or Shirlington. The large sized store modules designed for junior department stores and five and dime stores are now less viable in light of changes in the market and changes in consumer tastes. The inability to relet a large space vacated by Robcyn's Department Store over the past three years is a good indicator of this problem.

The Center is also disadvantaged by the placement of the building close towards the Avenue and the location of the majority of the parking to the rear of the building not visible from the street. This means that the majority of the customers have to walk around the building to enter the stores to shop.

This large .46 acre site zoned C-2 for high density office development could be redeveloped. The site itself is only built out at a .42 Floor Area Ratio whereas the zoning would permit 3.0 FAR and a 150 foot building. Alternatively, the shopping center could be modernized, redesigned and expanded to make it more competitive and attractive.

Abutting the Arlandria Shopping Center to the southeast is the Berkey Photo property. This site is 1.89 acres and is occupied by a 56,000 square foot, one story building. The property abuts the backyards of townhouse residences and Four Mile Run Park and has very little frontage along Mt. Vernon Avenue. Again the zoning is C-2 which permits high density office development.

The remaining abutting properties in this area include the Feaser and Town and Country vacant properties which front the Avenue and some small office and retail buildings.

It is not certain whether a developer would consider assembling all of these properties for redevelopment. It is likely, however, that an investor would want to control or coordinate the type and quality of development for all of these sites to protect his/her investment. Locationally, and from a developer's perspective, the future of these properties are linked.

### Route 1 Properties

The Route 1 Properties are located just south of the Arlington County/ Alexandria City line and Four Mile Run Channel, west of Commonwealth Avenue, Cora Kelly Elementary School and Four Mile Run Park, north of Reed Avenue and east of U.S Route 1 -Jefferson Davis Highway and the Potomac Rail Yard.

The major portion of the site consists of seven parcels owned by four different owners with the remainder of the site consisting of 49 frame built duplex and single family homes along Reed Avenue under multiple ownership.

The major parcels consist of the Hertz rental car turn around facility and administrative offices, 5.05 acres zoned I-1 and I-2; the Smith Properties, 13.17 acres zoned I-2 of which 5.12 acres is located in an easement for the Four Mile Run Channel; the Arban and Carosi property, 2.52 acres zoned I-2; the Poladian properties, 8.24 acres zoned RD and I-1 and 1.95 acres zoned I-2. In addition, there are 26 residential properties zoned RB along E. Reed Avenue under multiple ownerships (all but 11 absentee) totaling 1.7 acres and a City owned .3 acre parcel zoned I-1 and located at the corner of E. Reed Avenue and Jefferson Davis Highway. Combined these properties offer 20 to 25 acres for development and redevelopment.

Most of the site is vacant or marginally developed except for the four year old Hertz Administrative building. The residences along E. Reed Avenue are generally in fair to poor condition.

Since the early 1970's this site has been recognized as a future potential development area. The site has excellent access to Crystal City and to National Airport. This access has been enhanced by the road improvements recently made to Jefferson Davis Highway through Crystal City and connecting to I-395 and Washington D.C.. As part of the second phase of this project, Route 1 is being widened to six lanes from the Airport Viaduct to a point 100 feet north of E. Reed Avenue. The site also has good access from I-395 via South Glebe Road in Arlington.

Although these properties have good access and tremendous visibility to Route 1 there are negative factors which could affect optimum development of the site. The fragmentation of ownership may result in uncoordinated development where the uncertainty and risk of not knowing how an adjacent property will be developed may deter quality development and encourage suboptimal use of the properties. The site also has poor soil conditions which will restrict or make expensive underground parking. There is a major storm water easement in the center of the site running north/south and emptying into Four Mile Run which would have to be maintained.

In addition to site constraints, the types and conditions of uses adjacent and near the site may be a deterrent to investment. Along Jefferson Davis Highway between the Airport Viaduct and the Alexandria City Line, there are car rental agencies, various industrial uses, the Four Mile Run Bus Garage, the Arlington Sewer Treatment Facility and a car dealership. Although some of the private uses may eventually be upgraded the public uses are unlikely to change. The problem is that between Crystal City and the Route 1 properties is a no man's land which might deter developer interest in the site for major development activity.

Adjacent to the site on the eastern side of Jefferson Davis Highway is the Potomac Railroad Yard. Although it is anticipated that part or all of the Yard will be redeveloped eventually, this would not even begin to occur for at least 10 years. In the interim, the railroad use is a negative factor in terms of encouraging quality development on the Route 1 properties.

Other negative adjacency factors are the condition of the houses along both sides of E. Reed Avenue, to some extent the physical condition of the Cora Kelly School, the baseball fields along Commonwealth Avenue and the condition of Four Mile Run Park. These conditions are treatable through neighborhood conservation programs, school facility upgrading, landscaping and facility improvements to Four Mile Run Park.

### Other Potential Sites

The aforementioned sites are the largest and the most likely candidates for redevelopment. There are other larger underutilized sites within Potomac West which possibly could be redeveloped if warranted by market conditions. For example, the intersection of Glebe Road and Mt. Vernon Avenue is characterized by large sites with low scaled retail and auto oriented uses. If there was evidence of a demand for office development, these sites, which are zoned C-2, might be subjected to development pressures.

Since this is not the case and since these sites may have long term leases encumbering any change in use, the Glebe Road area is not considered to be a potential development area at least for the foreseeable future.

There are other underutilized properties further south along Mt. Vernon Avenue which are smaller and which could be subject to redevelopment. The Crestar Bank site at Mt. Vernon Avenue and Hume Avenue is 1.23 acres and consists of a two story bank building and a large parking lot. The zoning is C-2 and R2-5. It is possible that this site could be redeveloped with office and residential.

Another site is the Jack Taylor Toyota dealership located on both sides of Mt. Vernon Avenue near Duncan Avenue, Mason Avenue and Monroe Avenue. Although the site has one story showcase buildings to serve the dealership, most of the site is used to store cars.

Combined, the dealership contains 2.36 acres, all zoned for C-2 high density office development. Although some of the zoning constraints discussed previously may effect achievable densities and heights, the size of the assembled properties and the amount of frontage along Mt. Vernon Avenue make this site a potential development site should the dealership relocate.

### SUMMARY -- ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

- o Through a combination of public programs and private initiatives Potomac West is renewing itself with residential renovation activity and new businesses.
- o Commercial activity is characterized by neighborhood oriented retail stores and services and professional office uses.
- o Recent development proposals reflect interest in small scale office development rather than large scale, multi tenant office projects such as have been developed in other parts of the City.
- o The area lacks large amounts of speculative office space and is not a major office center.
- o Most of Potomac West is built up with proportionately very little land left for development. However, there are two major sites where development and redevelopment could occur; the Arlandria Center/Berkey Photo Site and the Route 1 Properties.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Street System

The street system in the Potomac West area is dominated by four major north-south through streets: Mt. Vernon Avenue, which traverses the heart of the area; Commonwealth Avenue, which intersects Mt. Vernon Avenue; Russell Road, which constitutes the western boundary of the area; and Route 1, which is at the eastern edge of the area. Major east-west movements within the study area occur on Monroe Avenue, Braddock Road and Glebe Road. To the east of Commonwealth Avenue, the street system is primarily a basic grid pattern; to the west, curving streets.

### 1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan

The 1974 Major Thoroughfare Plan classified City streets into five categories: expressways, arterials, primary collectors, residential collectors and local streets (Map 7). Of these, the last four may be found within Potomac West.

U.S. Route 1/Jefferson Davis Highway is a four lane arterial which serves north south traffic through the City. Mt. Vernon Avenue between Commonwealth and the City limit and Braddock Road between West Street and Commonwealth are also arterials.

West Glebe Road, Commonwealth Avenue, the remainder of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Braddock Road, Monroe Avenue and a portion of Russell Road above West Glebe are classified as primary collectors. Glebe Road carries traffic from the Four Mile Run area of Arlington County to Route 1 along an east/west axis. Commonwealth Avenue carries traffic from the northern end of the study area to connect ultimately with King Street, while Mt. Vernon Avenue runs north/south through the center of Potomac West and connects with South Glebe Road in Arlington and Braddock Road in Alexandria.

Russell Road and Monroe Avenue are both residential collectors, which take traffic from a number of lesser residential streets and provide access to primary collectors or arterials. Russell Road carries traffic north-south from the Arlandria portion of Potomac West to King Street, while Monroe Avenue runs east/west through the study area connecting Russell Road to Route 1.

Most of the rest of the streets in the Potomac West area are local streets, which function primarily as a means of providing access to residential areas.

A description of each of these categories, with examples from Potomac West's street system, is given below:

Arterial: A four-to-six-lane divided highway with controlled access. Arterials provide major traffic movements not served by expressways. (Route 1 - Jefferson Davis Highway)




Primary Collector: A highway with 80-foot right-of-way widths and serving through traffic at medium speeds. Primary collectors connect two arterials or an arterial with another collector. (Glebe Road, Commonwealth and Mt. Vernon Avenues).

Residential Collector: A major street with a 66-foot right-of-way to collect traffic from a number of lesser residential streets and provide access from residential areas to primary collectors or arterials. (Russell Road, Monroe Avenue).

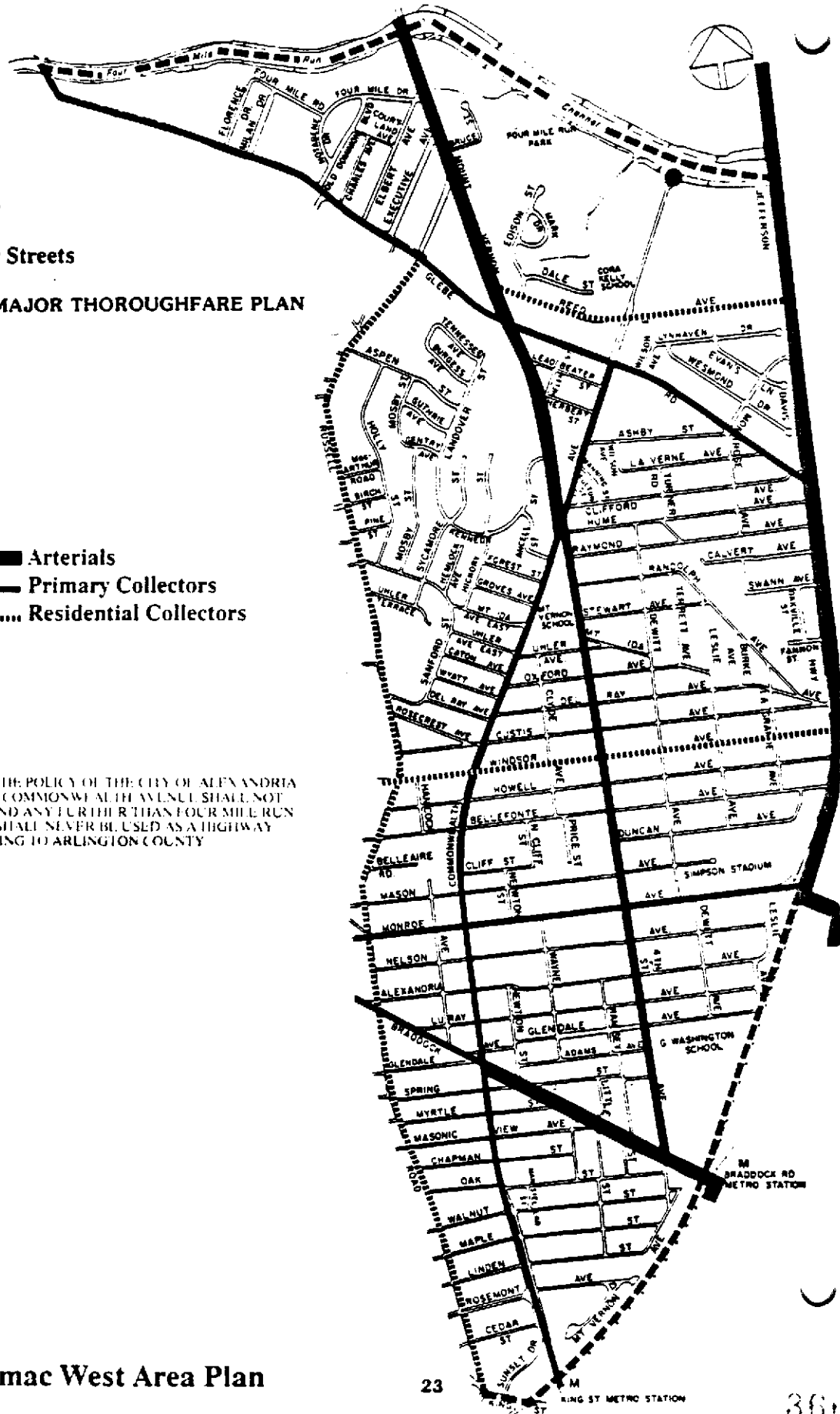
**Map 7**

**Major Streets**

**1974 MAJOR THOROUGHFARE PLAN**

-  Arterials
-  Primary Collectors
-  Residential Collectors

● IF IT IS THE POLICY OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA THAT COMMONWEALTH AVENUE SHALL NOT EXTEND ANY FURTHER THAN FOUR MILE RUN AND SHALL NEVER BE USED AS A HIGHWAY LEADING TO ARLINGTON COUNTY



**Potomac West Area Plan**

Local Street: A minor street primarily functioning to provide access to properties in residential areas. Right-of-way widths vary from 44-66 feet, with a minimum width of 60 feet required for all new streets. (Most of the streets in Potomac West are in this category).

#### Existing Traffic Flow

Potomac West's street system is adequate to serve the traffic generated by land uses located within the area. There is use of certain major streets by through commuter traffic which, during the rush hours, causes some congestion on Mt. Vernon Avenue, Commonwealth Avenue, Glebe Road and Monroe Avenue and Route 1. Local streets are also sometimes used to bypass points of congestion. However, overall traffic congestion within Potomac West is not a major problem.

#### Recent and Planned Capital Improvements

The recently opened Monroe Avenue Bridge has improved access to Potomac West from the south. While the new bridge retains the same four through lane configuration as did the old bridge the new bridge provides full turning lanes at either end of the bridge which does not interfere with through traffic movement.

Future road improvement projects included in the 1989 Capital Improvements Plan are the widening of Mt. Vernon Avenue from Russell Road to Four Mile Run and the widening of Jefferson Davis Highway north of Reed Avenue to Four Mile Run. Also scheduled is the widening of the four approaches to the Mt Vernon Avenue/Glebe Road intersection with a provision of left turn bays.

#### Public Transit Facilities

The Potomac West area is served by Metrorail immediately to the south of the study area by the Braddock Road and King Street Metro Stations and by both Metro bus and Dash bus routes. Metro runs four lines along Mt. Vernon Avenue and two along Route 1, which serve the study area. In addition, Dash has a bus route along Glebe Road and Russell Road connecting with the Braddock Road Metro Station which serves the Potomac West area.

#### Bike and Pedestrian Paths

One of the City's designated bikeways runs through the area on Commonwealth Avenue, north to Four Mile Run Park.

#### Future Traffic Flow

As a mostly built up area it is unlikely that Potomac West will internally generate much additional traffic impacting the overall street system. Future traffic growth will be generated by specific development sites within Potomac West which will impact streets and intersections immediately adjacent to the sites.

If the Arlandria Center/Berkey Photo site ever redeveloped as an office center as allowed under the C-2 zone, the site could theoretically be developed with over 1 million square feet of office development which could generate some 1900 peak hour vehicles. This level of peak traffic could not be accommodated by Mt. Vernon Avenue which has limited through capacity and virtually no capacity to handle left hand turning movements.

The Route 1 properties, a site three times as large as the Arlandria site, could also be developed at high densities and could also generate large peak hour traffic volumes. Traffic generation and directional flow would be lessened somewhat by the RD zoning which would allow mostly residential development for a portion of the entire site. Traffic impacts would also be mitigated by the fact that this site can access a six lane Route 1 with provisions for turning movements. South Glebe Road in Arlington affords this site good east west access which will not impact City streets.

Local Alexandria streets which could be directly impacted by development of this site are E. Reed Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue. This traffic would impact the residential areas and the Cora Kelly School. Care would have to be taken to emphasize Route 1 vehicular access to the site and to discourage, if not prohibit, commercial vehicular access to Commonwealth Avenue and to at least the residential portion of E. Reed Avenue to protect the neighborhood from traffic impacts generated by development of the Route 1 properties.

Although not within the study area itself, the possible redevelopment of the Potomac Yard could have an enormous traffic impact on the Potomac West area. Unless additional roadway capacity and alternative access are provided, development of the Yard would have a direct impact to Route 1 which during the peak hour is at or near capacity. More important to Potomac West neighborhoods would be the amount of east/west traffic attracted to the Yard site which would filter through residential streets. One mitigation solution would be the improvement of South Glebe Road in Arlington to serve as a major east/west connector to the site.

#### SUMMARY--TRANSPORTATION

- o Vehicular access to the study area is, on the whole, good, with adequate north-south and east-west connections. Commuter traffic filters through the study area on primary collector streets, but there are no major points of congestion.
- o The Braddock Road Metro Station, immediately south of the study area, affords good transit service to Potomac West, as does the Metro and DASH feeder bus routes and service.
- o Future traffic growth will focus on potential development sites. Depending upon how these sites are developed, the mix and intensity of uses, these sites could have a significant traffic impact on the surrounding street system.
- o Unless additional road improvements could be constructed to facilitate north/south and east/west movement, possible redevelopment of the Potomac Yard could have an enormous impact on Potomac West.

#### URBAN DESIGN

The Potomac West area is primarily a low scale residential area comprised of single-family detached and semi-detached two and three story housing units. Most of the older housing is generally frame construction on lots ranging from 2500 to 5000 square feet. Neighborhoods are not always well defined because of the varied housing styles that exist; housing unit sizes can vary dramatically within each block. Nevertheless, the placement of mostly single family homes on a fairly uniform grid system gives the residential areas an overall cohesiveness.

The main commercial area in Potomac West is along Mt. Vernon Avenue. Low scale, two story buildings prevail; most businesses are small scale and neighborhood serving. The type, scale and character of most of the businesses along the Avenue relate well and are compatible with the abutting residential areas. Among other factors, it is this relationship, hearkening back to a quieter historic era, which makes Potomac West unique.

The principle industrial area is the Oakville Triangle and a strip along Route 1. The commercial and industrial frontage along Route 1 could be characterized as the typical arrangement of highway oriented buildings ranging from commercial service uses to manufacturing and light industrial activities.

To some extent the relationship between the highway oriented industrial uses and the abutting residential uses further west are compatible. In other cases the transitions are awkward; industrial uses seem to encroach upon the residential character of a street such as Raymond Avenue.

With the overall built form of Potomac West well established, the focus of the urban design analysis is on those elements within the area that are likely to change - the commercial uses along Mt. Vernon Avenue and potential growth sites - and how these elements might affect the character of Potomac West.

#### Mt. Vernon Avenue

Cutting through the middle of Potomac West is Mt. Vernon Avenue, a major commercial corridor serving much of Potomac West. As indicated previously, Mt. Vernon Avenue does not present a linear procession of stores and commercial uses. Schools, parks, playgrounds and residential uses are interdispersed among shops and stores.

Nor are the types of commercial uses uniform. The upper Mt. Vernon Avenue area, including Arlandria and Glebe Road, contain mostly larger scaled commercial uses which are auto oriented and fronted by surface parking lots. Within this area only the row of buildings beginning with the Waffle Shop and ending before the Datatel Building present an urban facade of small shops close to the street. The remainder of Mt. Vernon Avenue between Glebe and Four Mile Run is a jumble of garden apartment residential, large frontages of vacant lots, gas stations, the Arlandria Shopping Center, free standing commercial buildings, a suburban style dry cleaners and an auto parts store.

More confusing from an urban design perspective is the commercial area at the intersection of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Glebe Road and the area between West Reed Avenue and Glebe Road. The streets themselves are in large measure the source of the problem by diagonally cutting up parcels and fragmenting the area. The overwhelming auto orientation of the commercial uses with numerous curb cuts, large asphalted parking lots and lack of landscaping contribute to the harshness of the environment.

Finally, the buildings themselves are undistinguished and semi-industrial in character. There are several free standing buildings which have been vacant and boarded for some time, others in disrepair.

The remainder of the Avenue moving southward stands in contrast to Upper Mt. Vernon Avenue. Although there are still gas stations and auto oriented uses, there are more blocks of small shops with a strong street presence along the section of the Avenue south of Commonwealth Avenue than there are north of Commonwealth.

In some cases this concentration of commercial uses is broken up by non-commercial uses, by small vacant lots and by lots which have marginal buildings on them. This section of Mt. Vernon Avenue offers many opportunities for small scale infill development.

In other cases there are larger, possibly underutilized, sites which could redevelop as focal points along the Avenue. Sites such as the Crestar Bank property at Hume Avenue and Mt. Vernon and the Jack Taylor Toyota properties at Mason Avenue and Mt. Vernon Avenue are larger than simply infill sites, yet smaller than the potential development sites identified in Arlandria and along Route 1. Because of their size and their frontage along the Avenue, redevelopment of these sites will play an important role in shaping the character of the surrounding areas.

A major urban design consideration with respect to infill development along the Avenue is scale compatibility and building orientation. Keeping the building scale low and the building frontage oriented towards the street would be principles consistent with maintaining or strengthening the pedestrian orientation of the street and the character of the surrounding neighborhoods.

In contrast, the introduction of large scale buildings amidst three to three and a half story buildings may weaken the character of the Avenue. Such is the effect of the Datatel Building which looms oddly above its surroundings. Similarly, the pedestrian orientation of an Avenue is weakened by a succession of buildings which are set back from the street to allow for parking and curb cuts. Such is the effect of the buildings along Glebe Road.

In addition to building scale, building orientation and parking, other design considerations for Mt. Vernon Avenue include; maintaining adequate sidewalk widths for pedestrian movement, providing pedestrian crosswalks, with perhaps special pavement treatment at major crosswalk points, special pavement treatment for sidewalks coupled with standardized street furniture, landscaping and street trees, undergrounding of utilities and commercial signage controls.

#### Potential Development Sites

##### Arlandria Center/Berkey Photo

As described earlier, this site, in consideration of all abutting properties which could be assembled, is 8.5 acres. The site is dominated by the three story art deco styled Arlandria Shopping Center which sits to the north; the other large element on the site being the one story Berkey Photo Building.

The site has extensive frontage along Mt. Vernon Avenue. The most significant feature of the site in terms of its development potential is the depth of the lots. The bulk of the site faces Four Mile Run Park and the Tower Homes and Potomac West apartments to the south and the Potomac Village apartments to the north. The context for the site is residences and open space for the rear portion and commercial uses for the front portion of the properties.

In terms of redevelopment, a possible option would be to encourage residential development to the rear of the site and focused on the Berkey Photo property, allow for office and retail uses to fill in the Mt. Vernon Avenue frontage and to revitalize the Arlandria Shopping Center through building redesign, modernization and reconfiguration.

The size of the site would allow for some flexibility and variety in heights. Taller buildings could be placed to the rear of the site and adjacent to the park areas. Care would have to be taken to provide for transitions to existing low scale residential uses.

Also important, the scale of infill buildings along Mt. Vernon Avenue should relate to the low scale retail buildings across the street. Parking should be to the rear of buildings or in structure. Any parking which needs to front the street should be screened.

This option envisions that the Arlandria Center/Berkey Photo site would be redeveloped mostly with a combination of retail and residential with some office uses. Although the C-2 zoning of this site would allow for this combination of uses, this zoning category would also allow for high density office development up to 150 feet in height.

There is a question as to whether this type of zoning is appropriate. From a design perspective, redevelopment of the Arlandria Center site for high density office uses and tall buildings would result in a project which would be out of scale and character with the surrounding residential and retail uses. From a market perspective, there seems to be little market support for high density office centers along Mt. Vernon Avenue.

Lastly from a traffic perspective, Mt. Vernon Avenue functions efficiently because it has no major traffic generators at any one location. However, redevelopment of the Arlandria Center site as an office center would cause considerable local traffic congestion at Mt. Vernon and Glebe Road and at Mt. Vernon Avenue and Russell Road.

#### Route 1 Properties

The major design considerations for the Route 1 properties are that the site fronts Jefferson Davis Highway and the Railroad Yard to the east; Four Mile Run, and the Sewer Treatment Plant to the north; Four Mile Run Park and the Cora Kelly School and ballfields to the west and low scaled residences with some auto oriented commercial uses to the south.

These adjacency factors suggest that commercial uses would be most appropriate fronting Jefferson Davis Highway where there is good visibility and access afforded by the six lane highway. Similarly, residential uses would be most appropriate along Commonwealth Avenue and E. Reed Avenue. These uses would not have as significant a traffic impact as office uses and would be compatible with existing residential uses and community facilities.

Consideration of these adjacency factors also suggest what would be appropriate height relationships; taller buildings towards the northeastern portion of the site and smaller buildings as building sites approach the existing residential areas.

Overall, a large mixed use office, residential, retail and hotel project could be accommodated on this site. Commercial uses would be focused on Jefferson Davis with buildings of descending height from north to south. The residential areas would front along Commonwealth Avenue and E. Reed Avenue with a possible mix of townhouses, garden apartments and mid-rise units - gradually scaling up the further away from existing residential uses.

Coupled with a possible coordinated mixed use development for this site may be City and/or private efforts to upgrade Four Mile Run Park, provide screening of the Arlington side of Four Mile Run and upgrading the surrounding residential areas and school site. These efforts could improve the environment for residential development along Commonwealth Avenue and E. Reed Avenue.

Another important consideration for residential redevelopment is the possible displacement of existing residents along E. Reed Avenue. The City should consider strategies to ensure that relocation needs and replacement housing are provided to existing tenants and that the impacts of displacement are minimized.

### POLICY HISTORY

Over the past three decades, City policy in the Potomac West area has focused consistently on four main themes which have been articulated and acted upon in Planning documents, Council resolutions, City expenditures, special programs and zoning actions. These four themes have been:

- o preserving and strengthening existing neighborhoods and creating housing opportunities for a range of household incomes
- o encouraging commercial revitalization and business development along Mt. Vernon Avenue
- o focusing of potential development or redevelopment at limited select locations
- o Using capital improvement, commercial revitalization and housing programs to support the above policies.

City policies for Potomac West for neighborhood conservation, housing rehabilitation, retail revitalization and controlled development are reflected in the Adopted 1982 Potomac West Plan. The Plan emphasized;

- o recognizing Potomac West as a mostly built up "non-growth" area
- o encouraging conservation of most existing uses
- o strengthening the existing residential character of Potomac West
- o encouraging infill residential development consistent with the scale and density of surrounding housing
- o providing effective buffers between residential and adjoining commercial and industrial uses
- o encouraging mixed use medium density development along Mt. Vernon Avenue
- o retaining industrial uses fronting on Route 1 as far north as Reed Avenue
- o revitalizing neighborhood serving commercial areas along Mt. Vernon Avenue

- o consolidating commercial activity into nodes
- o designating the Arlandria Center area and the Route 1 Properties as development/redevelopment sites

In concert with the 1982 Plan, the City has developed ongoing programs in housing conservation, commercial revitalization and capital improvements.

The City's neighborhood conservation program includes rehabilitation loans, home ownership assistance, senior rehabilitation grants, blighting influences removal and rat baiting. Since the mid 1970's, over \$2,872,934 have been spent to improve over 324 residences in the area. (Map 8.)

In support of commercial revitalization, in 1982 the City initiated a loan subsidy program to assist neighborhood businesses and to encourage new business growth along the Avenue. Nearly \$ 2 million in City, Federal and private funds have gone into renovations, new construction, signs and equipment to over 25 Potomac businesses (see Map 9) resulting in more than 150 jobs.

Most recently, the Mt. Vernon Revitalization Task Force, the City's Office of Housing and the joint City Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Program sponsored production of a brochure promoting business development along the Avenue.

Since 1972, the City has used the Potomac West Neighborhood Program to preserve and upgrade residential areas. During the first two years of the seven- year, \$5 million improvement program, the following projects were initiated: acquisition of land for future park and greenway construction; closing of four streets in the Lynhaven neighborhood at their intersections with Route 1; execution of extensive curb, gutter and sidewalk construction; installation of pedestrian oriented lighting; planting of landscape beautification at Ancell Street, Mount Ida, Commonwealth Avenue and Mount Avenue; development of the W&OD trailway; development of Hooff's Run Park.

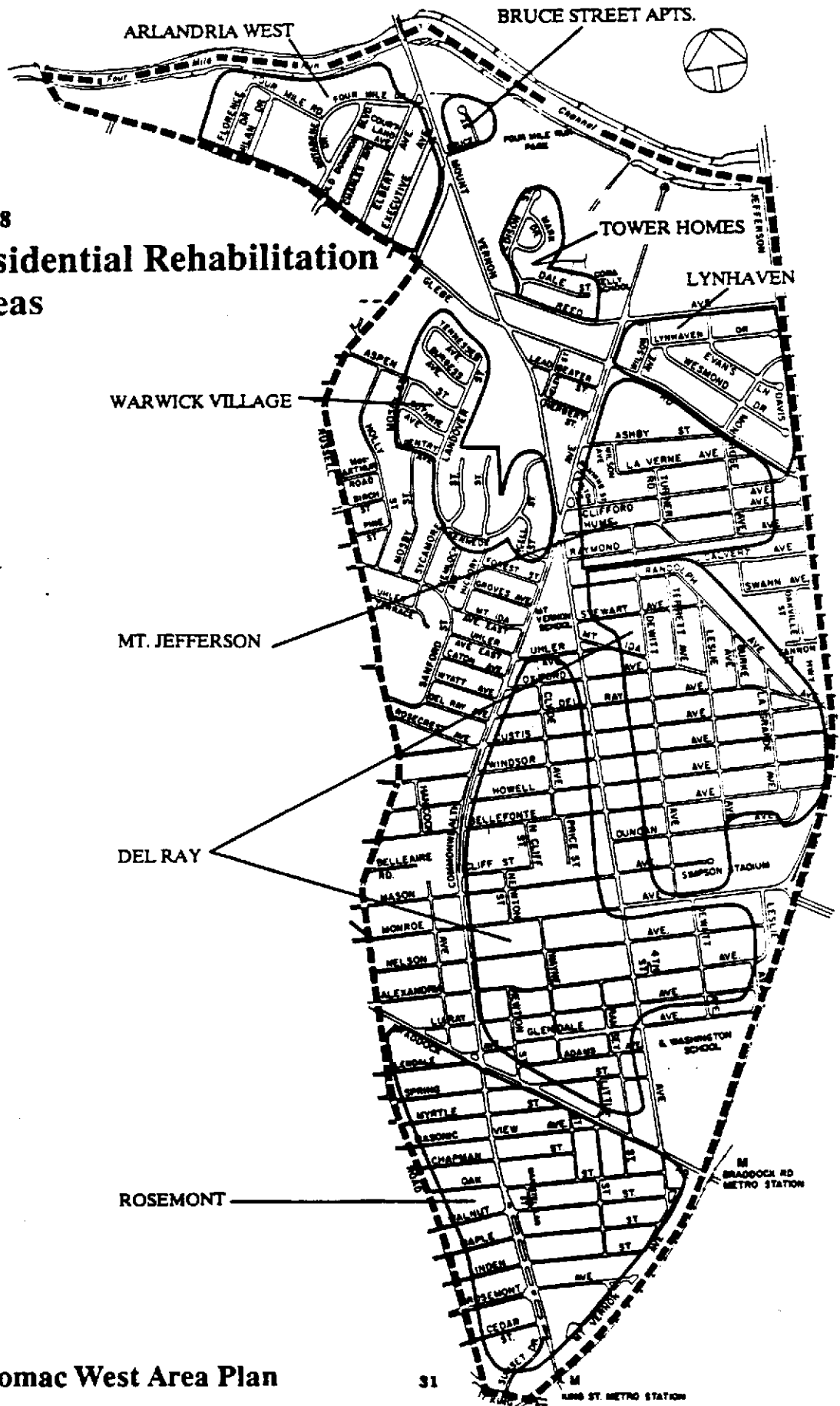
The City has also used capital improvements to stimulate commercial revitalization. Since FY '85, the City has spent \$1.5 million to underground utility wires and poles along Mt. Vernon Avenue. Another \$1 million is programmed for utility undergrounding by FY '90 (Map 10). Other capital improvement projects programmed for Potomac West for the upcoming fiscal year are shown on Map 11.

In 1986, because of proposed purchase and rehabilitation of many of the apartments housing low and moderate income households in Arlandria, City Council appointed two Councilmen to form the Arlandria Subcommittee. Although the Subcommittee focused on the most immediate problem of tenant dislocation due to private upgrading of the housing stock, the scope of its recommendations included all of Upper Mt. Vernon Avenue, Arlandria East, Lynhaven and the Route 1 properties.

City Council adopted the Subcommittee Report which included recommendations to:

- o promote the revitalization of the upper Mt. Vernon Avenue area as a vibrant commercial retail center
- o develop a gateway to Mt. Vernon Avenue by encouraging redevelopment and in-fill development, providing additional landscaping, and by working with developers to coordinate plans

**Map 8  
Residential Rehabilitation  
Areas**



Map 9

# Commercial Revitalization 1980-1987

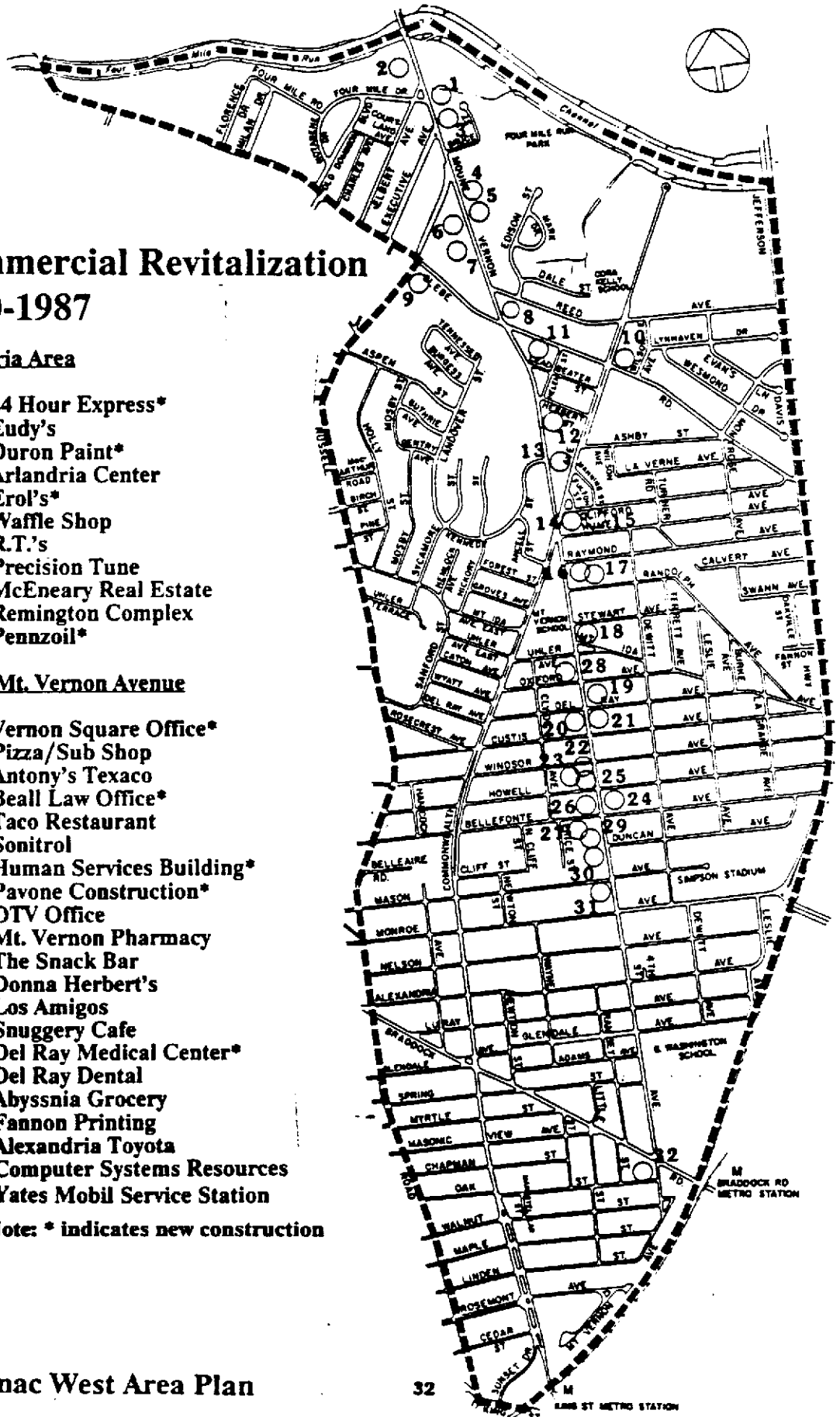
## Arlandria Area

1. 24 Hour Express\*
2. Eudy's
3. Duron Paint\*
4. Arlandria Center
5. Erol's\*
6. Waffle Shop
7. R.T.'s
8. Precision Tune
9. McEnearly Real Estate
10. Remington Complex
11. Pennzoil\*

## Lower Mt. Vernon Avenue

12. Vernon Square Office\*
13. Pizza/Sub Shop
14. Antony's Texaco
15. Beall Law Office\*
16. Taco Restaurant
17. Sonitrol
18. Human Services Building\*
19. Pavone Construction\*
20. OTV Office
21. Mt. Vernon Pharmacy
22. The Snack Bar
23. Donna Herbert's
24. Los Amigos
25. Snuggery Cafe
26. Del Ray Medical Center\*
27. Del Ray Dental
28. Abyssnia Grocery
29. Fannon Printing
30. Alexandria Toyota
31. Computer Systems Resources
32. Yates Mobil Service Station

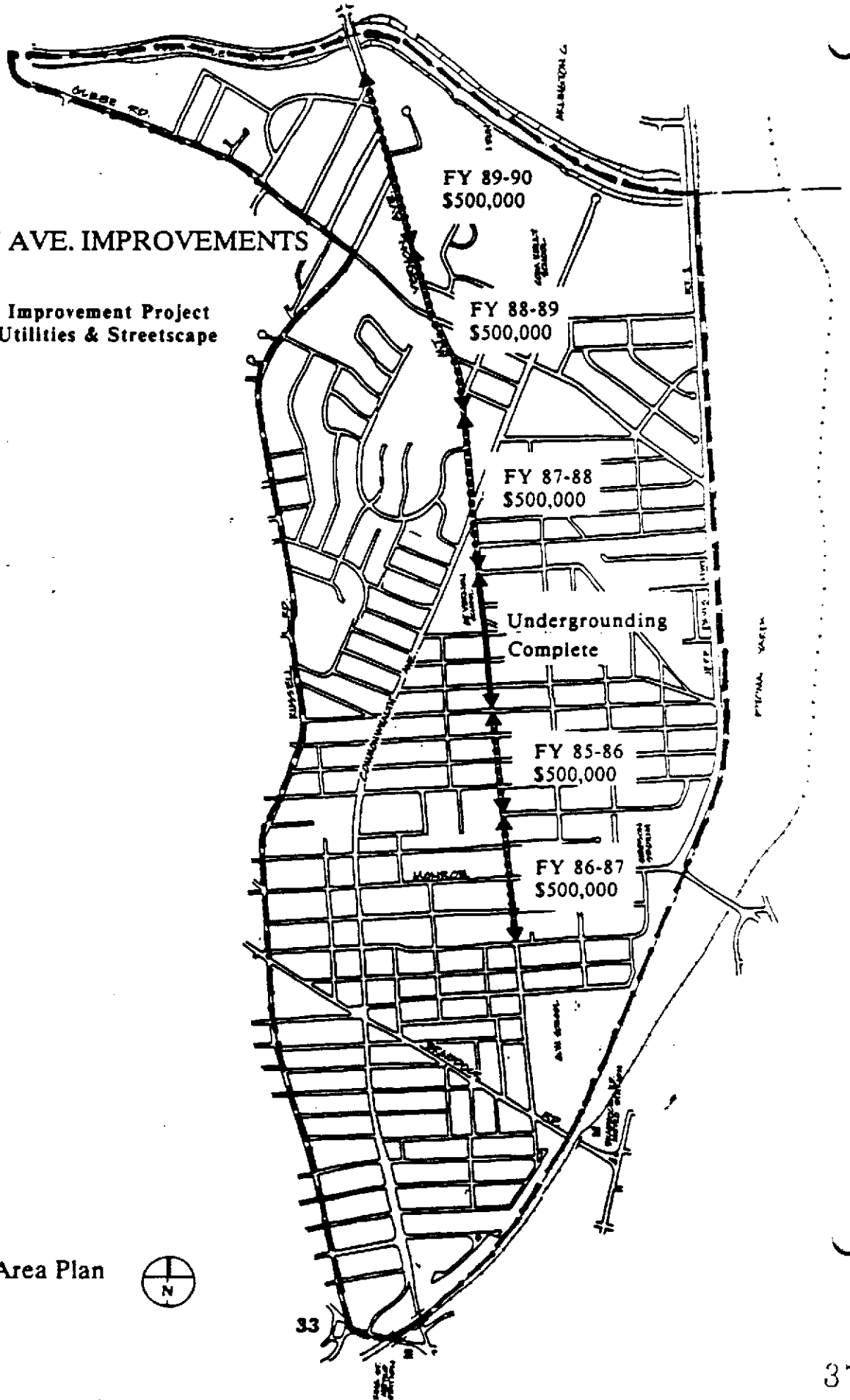
Note: \* indicates new construction



Map 10

# MT. VERNON AVE. IMPROVEMENTS

1974-1990 Capital Improvement Project  
for Underground Utilities & Streetscape



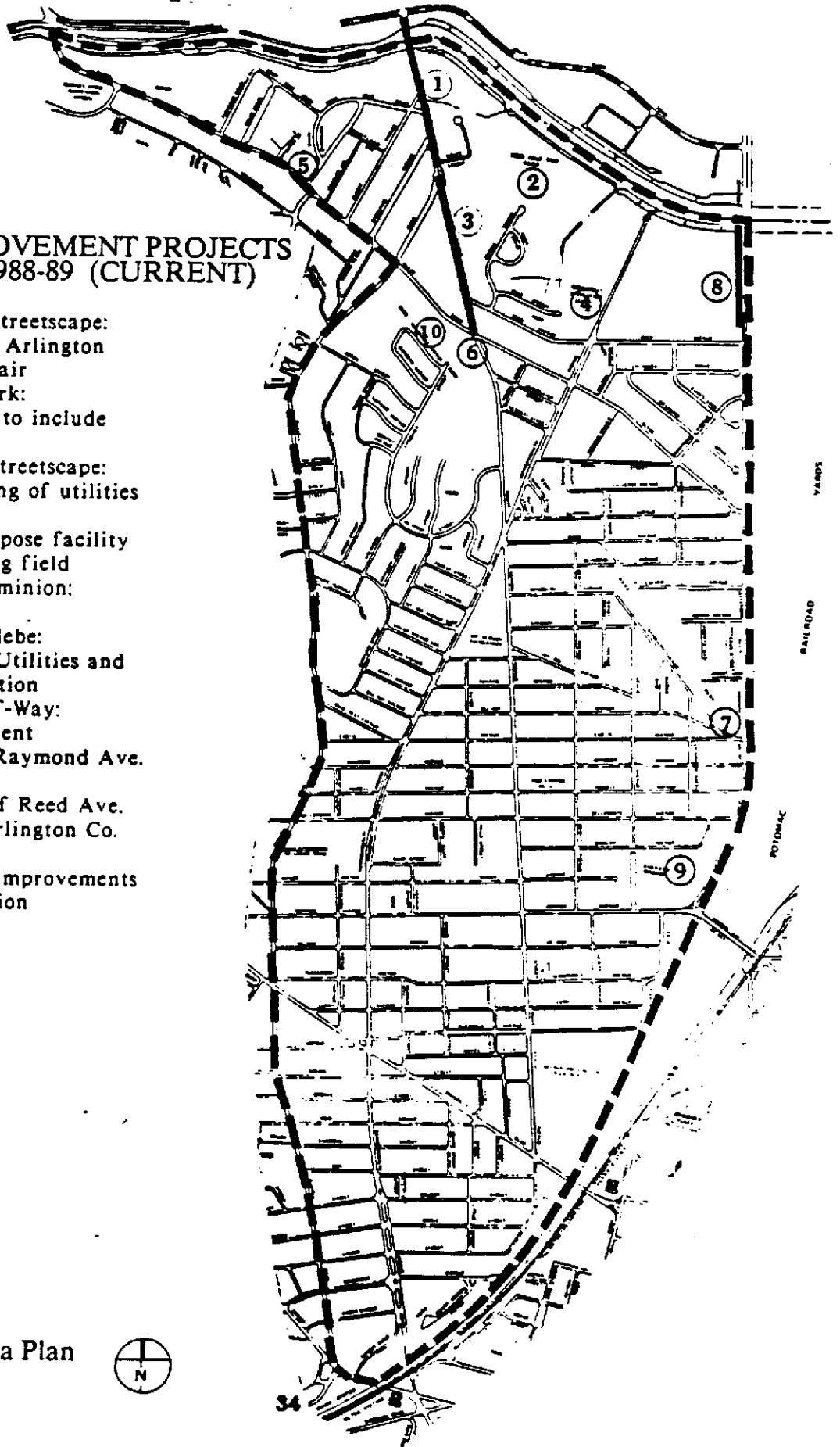
Potomac West Area Plan



Map 11

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FISCAL YEAR 1988-89 (CURRENT)

1. Mt. Vernon Ave. Streetscape:  
Russell Rd. to Arlington  
Co. bridge repair
2. Four Mile Run Park:  
Improvements to include  
tennis courts
3. Mt. Vernon Ave. Streetscape:  
Undergrounding of utilities
4. Cora Kelly School:  
New, multipurpose facility  
Expand playing field
5. Glebe and Old Dominion:  
Tot lot
6. Mt. Vernon and Glebe:  
Underground Utilities and  
widen intersection
7. W. & O.D. Right-of-Way:  
Remove abutment  
Landscape to Raymond Ave.
8. Rt. 1 widening:  
124 ft. north of Reed Ave.  
to City line/Arlington Co.
9. Simpson Stadium:  
Jogging track improvements
10. W. & O.D. Acquisition



- o use capital improvements to encourage revitalization
- o encourage coordinated mixed use development of the Route 1 properties

#### SUMMARY - POLICY

- o The City has viewed Potomac West as mostly a built up non-growth area and has encouraged programs emphasizing the conservation and rehabilitation of existing uses.
- o To further enhance and serve residential neighborhoods, the City has encouraged commercial revitalization along Mt. Vernon Avenue using a business loan program and capital improvements.
- o Significant capital improvements in the forms of flood control, parks, street closings, streetscaping and the undergrounding of utilities have been made by the City to strengthen the residential and commercial components of the area.
- o The City has adopted policies to preserve existing industrial areas.
- o The City has selected two sites for coordinated development/redevelopment; Arlandria Center and Route 1 Properties.

#### ISSUES

Potomac West is one of the older neighborhoods in the City. Its character and built form have developed over at least the past century. Potomac West is changing; it is beginning to renew itself gradually, and mostly through renovation and small scale infill development.

Over the past 20 years, City policies have fostered the process of self-renewal, emphasizing preservation rather than redevelopment, and viewing Potomac West as a non-growth area except for selected key sites where development could invigorate and serve the area. The City's revitalization and conservation programs have been successful and need to continue.

Perhaps the key issue facing Potomac West and addressed in the Plan is that the commercial and industrial zoning within Potomac West is largely discordant, or out of sync, with this process of self renewal and with the policy objectives and programs pursued vigilantly by the City over the past two decades.

The industrial zones and the C-2 commercial zone were established in 1952 upon adoption of the City's first comprehensive zoning code. The zones allowed many different uses and were applied to many different urban contexts. The application of the C-2 zone to commercial, residential, recreational and institutional uses within Potomac West exemplifies the wide range use of a single zone which was designed primarily for commercial uses.

The cumulative nature of the industrial and commercial zoning means that high density office uses are allowed by right. Although the height by right allowance within the industrial zone has been reduced to 77 feet, the C-2 zone still carries a 150 foot height allowance (this despite the reduction in the allowable C-3 zone to 77 feet).

At a time in the 1950's when the City was less complex, less diverse, more industrial less commercial these all encompassing zones seemed appropriate and seemed to work. The notion of the City developing into an employment center with high density office development was remote. The notion that office development would price out the use of land for residential development was also remote.

Over the past 30 years the City has become more urban, more diverse, far less industrial. Certain areas of the City such as downtown, the Metro Station areas, the north waterfront have established themselves as office centers. Potomac West has not; it has retained some of its industrial character and has experienced small scale infill retail and professional office development. Yet despite these trends and City policies, the old high density zoning persists.

What also sometimes persists are expectations among landowners that their C-2 zoned property should be priced for high density office development despite physical, zoning and market constraints which probably preclude such development. The result of these unrealistic expectations can be that underutilized or vacant land is kept off the market to remain unproductive until price expectations are met. Alternative uses such as residential, which may be more marketable than office development may get priced out.

The industrial and commercial zoning in Potomac West needs to be changed to insure that the scale of commercial development is compatible with abutting residential areas. It is also important that the zoning support the City's goals for Potomac West renewal and preservation. The industrial areas to be retained should not be subjected to zoning which encourages office redevelopment. The residential sites to be retained, zoned C-2, should not be subjected to possible office conversion. Those neighborhood serving commercial uses such as grocery stores, convenience stores and shopping centers which can be vital to the quality of life in a neighborhood need to be preserved and not zoned for high density office uses. Instead, the zoning should be structured to preserve those uses desired for the neighborhood and to allow upgrading and possible infill development or redevelopment in scale with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Where larger scaled development is desirable, the zoning should be used to implement planning guidelines for coordinated development. This relates to the larger issue of developing guidelines for future development of the Arlandria Center site and the Route 1 Properties.

The Arlandria Center site, zoned C-2, is one of the few areas in Potomac West where high density office development could be physically realized. Yet this type of development would be undesirable in consideration of the low scale residential, retail and park uses adjacent to the site.

The analysis suggests that the existing shopping center should be preserved and modernized to once again serve as a thriving retail center. A mix of residential uses seems appropriate for the back portions of the site where the Berkey Photo building is located. Low scaled office and retail uses could fill the now vacant frontage along the Avenue. What is needed is a zone which is tailored to this general concept and which provides incentives for coordinated development of this site.

The 25 acre Route 1 properties site is probably the only location within Potomac West which can accommodate high density development including an office center without harming the adjacent residential areas. Commercial development could be concentrated on Jefferson Davis Highway with access limited to the highway and to the easternmost portion of East Reed Avenue. Residential development could focus on those portions of the site fronting Commonwealth Avenue and the western portions of East Reed Avenue.

What is desirable is coordinated mixed use development of the site. However, there are many obstacles to overcome before this concept could be realized. Although the site is a gateway to the City, has good access and exposure, and is proximate to Crystal City and to National Airport, the site does not present itself well and is not helped by the condition of adjacent uses.

Moreover, the fragmentation of ownership and expectations of the owners concerning the value of the site may make coordinated development of the site difficult. Also problematic are the zoning patterns which poorly relate to this concept. Whereas frontage along Commonwealth Avenue is most suitable for residential development there is industrial zoning. (From this perspective, it is unfortunate that the Hertz building is located on a site more suitable for residential use.)

Whereas residential development of the site should provide a mix of housing types with height transitions, the zoning pattern pits an elongated, high density, 100 unit per acre RD zoned parcel next to a long strip of RB townhouse zoned parcels along East Reed Avenue with no transition. The shape of the RD parcel is not ideal for development because of its narrowness and lack of frontage along Commonwealth Avenue. The RB zoned parcels, if redeveloped, could result in a three block long row of townhouses unrelieved by side streets.

What is needed for the Route 1 properties is a concept and design guidelines for mixed use redevelopment of the site and a zone which is tailored to the concept and which provides a combination of zoning incentives and controls to encourage coordinated development of the site.