

## **223 GENERALIZED POLICY MAP**

### **223.1 Purpose of the Policy Map**

The purpose of the Generalized Policy Map is to categorize how different parts of the District may change between 2005 and 2025. It highlights areas where more detailed policies are necessary, both within the Comprehensive Plan and in follow-up plans, to manage this change. 223.1

### **223.2 Purpose of the Policy Map**

The map should be used to guide land use decision-making in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan text, the Future Land Use Map, and other Comprehensive Plan maps. Boundaries on the map are to be interpreted in concert with these other sources, as well as the actual physical characteristics of each location shown. 223.2

### **223.3 Categories**

The Generalized Policy Map identifies the following four different types of areas: Neighborhood Conservation Areas, Neighborhood Enhancement Areas, Land Use Change Areas, and Commercial/Mixed Use Areas. 223.3

#### 223.4 Neighborhood Conservation Areas

Neighborhood Conservation areas have very little vacant or underutilized land. They are primarily residential in character. Maintenance of existing land uses and community character is anticipated over the next 20 years. Where change occurs, it will be modest in scale and will consist primarily of scattered site infill housing, public facilities, and institutional uses. Major changes in density over current (2005) conditions are not expected but some new development and reuse opportunities are anticipated. Neighborhood Conservation Areas that are designated “PDR” on the Future Land Use Map are expected to be retained with the mix of industrial, office, and retail uses they have historically provided. 223.4

223.5 The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas is to conserve and enhance established neighborhoods. Limited development and redevelopment opportunities do exist within these areas but they are small in scale. The diversity of land uses and building types in these areas should be maintained and new development and alterations should be compatible with the existing scale and architectural character of each area. Densities in Neighborhood Conservation Areas are guided by the Future Land Use Map.

223.5

## 223.6 Neighborhood Enhancement Areas

Neighborhood Enhancement Areas are neighborhoods with substantial amounts of vacant residentially zoned land. They are primarily residential in character. Many of these areas are characterized by a patchwork of existing homes and individual vacant lots, some privately owned and others owned by the public sector or non-profit developers. These areas present opportunities for compatible small-scale infill development, including new single family homes, townhomes, and other density housing types. Land uses that reflect the historical mixture and diversity of each community should be encouraged. 223.6

223.7 The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Enhancement Areas is to ensure that new development “fits-in” and responds to the existing character, natural features, and existing/planned infrastructure capacity. New housing should be encouraged to improve the neighborhood and must be consistent with the land use designation on the Future Land Use Map. The unique and special qualities of each area should be maintained and conserved, and overall neighborhood character should be protected as development takes

place. Publicly-owned open space within these areas should be preserved and enhanced to make these communities more attractive and desirable.

223.7

223.8 The main difference between Neighborhood Enhancement and Neighborhood Conservation Areas is the large amount of vacant land that exists in the Enhancement Areas. Neighborhood Enhancement Areas often contain many acres of undeveloped lots, whereas Neighborhood Conservation Areas appear to be “built out.” As infill development takes place on undeveloped lots, special care must be taken to avoid displacement nearby. Existing housing should be enhanced through rehabilitation assistance. New development in these areas should improve the real estate market, reduce crime and blight, and attract complementary new uses and services that better serve the needs of existing and future residents. 223.8

### 223.9 Land Use Change Areas

Land Use Change Areas are areas where change to a different land use from what exists today is anticipated. In some cases, the Future Land Use Map

depicts the specific mix of uses expected for these areas. In other cases, the Future Land Use Map shows these sites as “Federal”, indicating the District does not have the authority to determine land uses, but expects a change by 2025. 223.9

223.10 There are more than two dozen Land Use Change Areas identified on the Policy Map. They include many of the city’s large development opportunity sites, and other smaller sites that are undergoing redevelopment or that are anticipated to undergo redevelopment. Together, they represent much of the city’s supply of vacant and underutilized land. 223.10

223.11 The guiding philosophy in the Land Use Change Areas is to encourage and facilitate new development and promote the adaptive reuse of existing structures. Many of these areas have the capacity to become mixed-use communities containing housing, retail shops, services, workplaces, parks and civic facilities. The Comprehensive Plan’s Area Elements provide additional policies to guide development and redevelopment within the Land Use Change Areas, including the desired mix of uses in each area. 223.11

223.13 As Land Use Change Areas are redeveloped, the District aspires to create high quality environments that include exemplary site and architectural design and that are compatible with and do not negatively impact nearby neighborhoods. Programs to avoid and mitigate any undesirable impacts of development of the Land Use Change Areas upon adjacent neighborhoods should be required as necessary. 223.12

### **223.13 Commercial/Mixed Use Areas**

These classifications correspond to the city's business districts, many of which form the heart of its neighborhoods. Five categories are used, defining the physical and economic character of each area along with generalized long-range conservation and development objectives. The commercial areas defined are: "Main Street mixed use corridors," "neighborhood commercial centers," "multi-neighborhood commercial centers", "regional commercial centers," and "central employment area."

223.13

### **223.14 Main Street Mixed Use Corridors**

These are traditional commercial business corridors with a concentration of older storefronts along the street. The service area for Main Streets can vary from one neighborhood (e.g., 14<sup>th</sup> Street Heights or Barracks Row) to multiple neighborhoods (e.g., Dupont Circle, H Street, or Adams Morgan). Their common feature is that they have a pedestrian-oriented environment with traditional storefronts. Many have upper story residential or office uses. Conservation and enhancement of these corridors is desired to foster economic and housing opportunities and serve neighborhood needs. Any development or redevelopment that occurs should support transit use and enhance the pedestrian environment. 223.14

#### **223.15 Neighborhood Commercial Centers**

Neighborhood Commercial Centers meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers in the adjacent neighborhoods. Their service area is usually less than one mile. Typical uses include convenience stores, sundries, small food markets, supermarkets, branch banks, restaurants, and basic services such as dry cleaners, hair cutting, and child care. Office space for small businesses, such as local real estate and insurance offices, doctors and dentists, and similar uses, also may be found in such locations. 223.15

223.16 Unlike Main Street Retail Corridors, the Neighborhood Commercial Centers include both auto-oriented centers and pedestrian-oriented shopping areas. Examples include Penn Branch Shopping Center on Pennsylvania Avenue, SE and the Spring Valley Shopping Center on Massachusetts Avenue, NW. New development and redevelopment within Neighborhood Commercial Areas must be managed to conserve the economic viability of these areas while allowing additional development that complements existing uses. 223.16

#### **223.17 Multi-Neighborhood Centers**

Multi-neighborhood centers contain many of the same activities as neighborhood centers but in greater depth and variety. Their service area is typically one to three miles. These centers are generally found at major intersections and along key transit routes. These centers might include supermarkets, general merchandise stores, drug stores, restaurants, specialty shops, apparel stores, and a variety of service-oriented businesses. These centers also may include office space for small businesses, although their primary function remains retail trade. 223.17



223.18 Examples of multi-neighborhood business centers include Hechinger Mall, Brentwood Shopping Center, and Skyland Shopping Center. Mixed-use infill development at these centers should be encouraged to provide new retail and service uses, and additional housing and job opportunities. Transit improvements to these centers are also desirable. 223.18

### 223.19 Regional Centers

Regional centers have the largest range of commercial functions outside the Central Employment Area and are likely to have major department stores, many specialty shops, concentrations of restaurants, movies and other leisure or entertainment facilities. They typically draw patrons from across the city, as well as patrons from nearby suburban areas. A large office component is also associated with regional centers. As with Multi-Neighborhood Centers, infill development at Regional Centers should provide new retail, entertainment, service uses, additional housing, and employment opportunities where feasible. 223.19

223.20 These centers are generally located along major arterials and are served by transit, and typically generate significant demand for parking. Off-street

parking may be provided on a cooperative/shared basis within the area, using both self-contained and nearby commercial parking lots and garages. Heights and densities in regional centers should be appropriate to the scale and function of development in adjoining communities, and should be further guided by policies in the Land Use Element and the Area Elements. Examples of regional centers include Friendship Heights and Georgetown.

223.20

#### **223.21 Central Employment Area**

The Central Employment Area is the business and retail heart of the District and the metropolitan area. It has the widest variety of commercial uses, including but not limited to major government and corporate offices; retail, cultural, and entertainment uses; and hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality uses. The Central Employment Area draws patrons, workers, and visitors from across the region. The Comprehensive Plan's Land Use and Economic Development Elements, and the Central Washington Area Element and Anacostia Waterfront Element provide additional guidance, policies and actions related to the Central Employment Area. 223.21

## 223.22 Other Areas

The Generalized Policy Map also identifies parks and open space, federal lands, Downtown Washington, and major institutional land uses. The fact that these areas are not designated as Conservation, Enhancement, or Change does not mean they are exempt from the policies of the Comprehensive Plan or will remain static. Park and open space will be conserved and carefully managed in the future. Federal lands are called out to acknowledge the District's limited jurisdiction over them, but are still discussed in the text of the District Elements. Downtown includes its own set of conservation, enhancement, and change areas, described in more detail in the Central Washington Area Element. Much of the institutional land on the map represents colleges and universities; change and infill can be expected on each campus consistent with campus plans. Other institutional sites likewise may see new buildings or facilities added. Policies in the Land Use Element and the Educational Facilities Element address the compatibility of such uses with surrounding neighborhoods. 223.22

*The provisions of Title 10, Part A of the DCMR accessible through this web interface are codification of the District Elements of the Comprehensive Plan*

*for the National Capital. As such, they do not represent the organic provisions adopted by the Council of the District of Columbia. The official version of the District Elements only appears as a hard copy volume of Title 10, Part A published pursuant to section 9a of the District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Act of 1994, effective April 10, 1984 (D.C. Law 5-76; D.C. Official Code § 1 -301.66) . In the event of any inconsistency between the provisions accessible through this site and the provisions contained in the published version of Title 10, Part A, the provisions contained in the published version govern. A copy of the published District Elements is available [www.planning.dc.gov](http://www.planning.dc.gov).*