

District of Columbia Comprehensive Plan Generalized Policy Map

Purpose

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. 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 context of each location.

Status of this Map

This map was approved by the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and Generalized Policy Map Approval Resolution of 2021 (R24-0292).

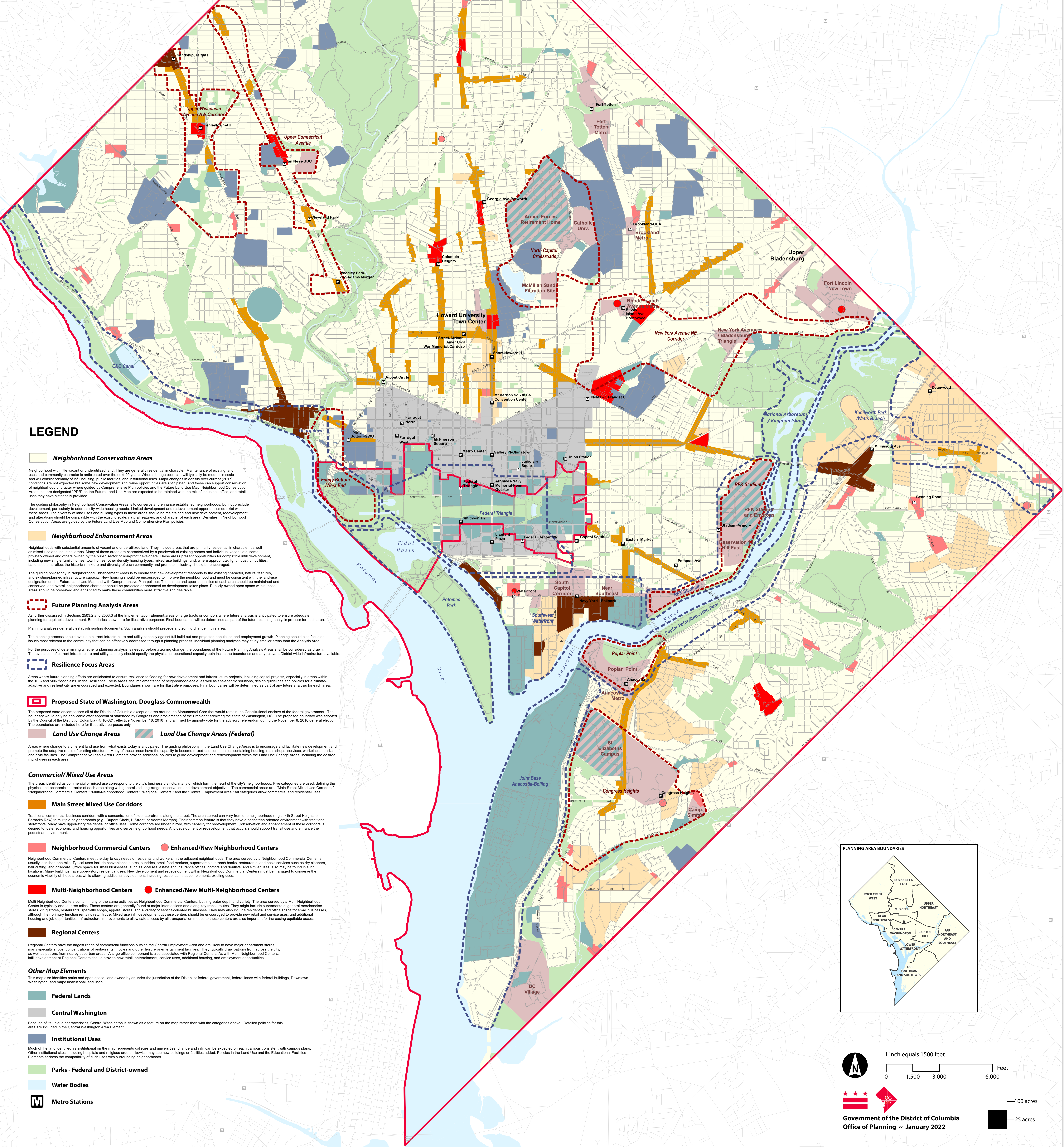
Guidelines for Using this Map

The Generalized Policy Map and Future Land Use Map are intended to provide generalized guidance for development and conservation decisions and are considered in concert with other Comprehensive Plan policies. Several important parameters, defined below, apply to their use and interpretation:

This map is a generalized depiction of anticipated changes through the horizon year of the Comprehensive Plan. Because it is a generalized view, boundaries shown should be interpreted as approximate and not precise delineations. By its nature, it is a projection, and the changes outlined may or may not occur as anticipated.

This map and the Future Land Use Map can be amended. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a dynamic document that is periodically updated in response to the changing needs of the city. Requests to amend the maps can be made by residents, property owners, developers, and the District itself. In all cases, such changes require formal public hearings before the Council of the District of Columbia, and ample opportunities for formal public input. The process for Comprehensive Plan amendments is described in the Implementation Element.

The generalized depiction shown on this map was designed to be essentially correct as printed, and it is the print edition of this map that is incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan. Users of electronic copies of this map may be able to "zoom in" to reveal additional detail, but any information not clearly visible at the scale of the print edition of the map has not been reviewed by Council, may or may not be correct, and does not reflect any policy of or guidance by the District of Columbia Government.



LEGEND

Neighborhood Conservation Areas

Neighborhood with little vacant or underutilized land. They are generally residential in character. Maintenance of existing land uses and community character is anticipated over the next 20 years. Where change does occur, it will typically be modest in scale and will consist primarily of infill housing, public facilities, and institutional uses. Major changes in density over current (2017) conditions are not expected but some new development and reuse opportunities are anticipated, and these can support conservation of neighborhood character where guided by Comprehensive Plan policies and the Future Land Use Map. Neighborhood Conservation Areas that are designated "PDC" on the Future Land Use Map are expected to be planned with the mix of industrial, office, and retail uses they have historically provided.

The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Conservation Areas is to conserve and enhance established neighborhoods, but not preclude development, particularly to address housing needs. Limited development and redevelopment opportunities do exist within these areas. The diversity of land uses and building types in these areas should be maintained and new development, redevelopment, and alterations should be compatible with the existing scale, natural features, and character of each area. Densities in Neighborhood Conservation Areas are guided by the Future Land Use Map and Comprehensive Plan policies.

Neighborhood Enhancement Areas

Neighborhoods with substantial amounts of vacant and underutilized land. They include areas that are primarily residential in character, as well as mixed-use and industrial areas. 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 infill development, including new single-family homes, townhomes, other density housing types, mixed-use buildings, and, where appropriate, light industrial facilities. Land uses that reflect the historical nature and diversity of each community and promote inclusivity should be encouraged.

The guiding philosophy in Neighborhood Enhancement Areas is to ensure that new development 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 and with Comprehensive Plan policies. The unique and special qualities of each area should be maintained and conserved, and overall neighborhood character should be preserved or enhanced as development takes place. Publicly owned open space within these areas should be preserved and enhanced to make these communities more attractive and desirable.

Future Planning Analysis Areas

As further discussed in Sections 2503.2 and 2503.3 of the Implementation Element, areas of large tracts or corridors where future analysis is anticipated to ensure adequate planning for equitable development. Boundaries shown are for illustrative purposes. Final boundaries will be determined as part of the future planning analysis process for each area. Planning analyses generally establish guiding documents. Such analysis should precede any zoning change in this area.

The planning process should evaluate current infrastructure and utility capacity against full build out and projected population and employment growth. Planning should also focus on issues most relevant to the community that can be effectively addressed through a planning process. Individual planning analyses may study smaller areas than the Analysis Area.

For the purposes of determining whether a planning analysis is needed before a zoning change, the boundaries of the Future Planning Analysis Areas shall be considered as drawn. The evaluation of current infrastructure and utility capacity should specify the physical or operational capacity both inside the boundaries and any relevant District-wide infrastructure available.

Resilience Focus Areas

Areas where future planning efforts are anticipated to ensure resilience to flooding for new development and infrastructure projects, including capital projects, especially in areas within the 100- and 500-year floodplains. In the Resilience Focus Areas, the implementation of neighborhood-scale, as well as site-specific solutions, design guidelines and policies for a climate-adaptive and resilient city are encouraged and expected. Boundaries shown are for illustrative purposes. Final boundaries will be determined as part of any future analysis for each area.

Proposed State of Washington, Douglass Commonwealth

The proposed state encompasses all of the District of Columbia except an area around the Monumental Core that would remain the Constitutional enclave of the federal government. The boundary would only be applicable after approval of statehood by Congress and proclamation of the President admitting the State of Washington, DC. The proposed boundary was adopted by the Council of the District of Columbia (C-18-021) effective November 18, 2016 and affirmed by joint vote for the advisory referendum during the November 8, 2016 general election. The boundaries are included here for illustrative purposes only.

Land Use Change Areas

Areas where change to a different land use from what exists today is anticipated. 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.

Commercial/Mixed Use Areas

The areas identified as commercial or mixed use correspond to the city's business districts, many of which form the heart of the city's 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 are: "Main Street Mixed Use Corridors," "Neighborhood Commercial Centers," "Multi-Neighborhood Centers," "Regional Centers," and the "Central Employment Area." All categories allow commercial and residential uses.

Main Street Mixed Use Corridors

Traditional commercial business corridors with a concentration of older storefronts along the street. The area served can vary from one neighborhood (e.g., 14th Street Heights or Barakka 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. Some corridors are underutilized, with capacity for redevelopment. 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.

Neighborhood Commercial Centers

Neighborhood Commercial Centers meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers in the adjacent neighborhoods. The area served by a Neighborhood Commercial Center 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 cleaner, hair cutting, and childcare. 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. Many buildings have upper-story residential uses. New development and redevelopment within Neighborhood Commercial Centers must be managed to conserve the economic viability of these areas while allowing additional development, including residential, that complements existing uses.

Multi-Neighborhood Centers

Multi-Neighborhood Centers contain many of the same activities as Neighborhood Commercial Centers, but in greater depth and variety. The area served by a Multi-Neighborhood Center is typically one to three miles. These centers are generally found at major intersections and along key transit routes. They might include supermarkets, general merchandise stores, drug stores, restaurants, specialty shops, apparel stores, and a variety of service-oriented businesses. They may also include residential and office space for small businesses, although their primary function remains retail trade. Mixed-use infill development at these centers should be encouraged to provide new retail and service uses, and additional housing and job opportunities. Infrastructure improvements to allow safe access by all transportation modes to these centers are also important for increasing equitable access.

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.

Other Map Elements

This map also identifies parks and open space, land owned by or under the jurisdiction of the District or federal government, federal lands with federal buildings, Downtown Washington, and major institutional land uses.

Federal Lands

Because of its unique characteristics, Central Washington is shown as a feature on the map rather than with the categories above. Detailed policies for this area are included in the Central Washington Area Element.

Institutional Uses

Much of the land identified as institutional on the map represents colleges and universities; change and infill can be expected on each campus consistent with campus plans. Other institutional sites, including hospitals and religious orders, likewise may see new buildings or facilities added. Policies in the Land Use and the Educational Facilities Elements address the compatibility of such uses with surrounding neighborhoods.

Parks - Federal and District-owned

Water Bodies

Metro Stations

