

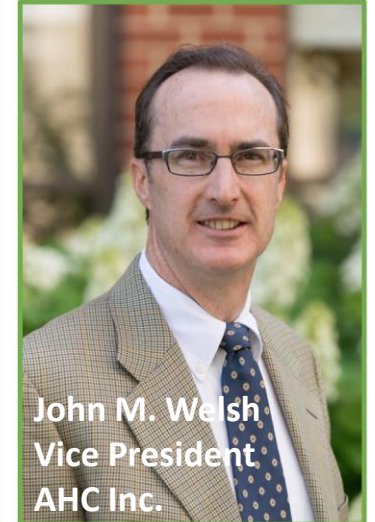


# Friendship Heights

An epicenter of equity, access, and opportunity



# Meet the Team



# Vision Statement

- By 2035, Friendship Heights will be a prominent, energy-filled residential, retail, and office destination in the Washington Metro region, successfully serving the needs and desires of families, employers, and neighbors in route.
- Friendship Heights will be a new epicenter for racial equity—Access, Opportunity, Results.



# The Challenges

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# Friendship Heights is Failing as a Live, Work, Play Neighborhood

- 2Q2020 retail vacancy is 10.4% compared to the Washington DC Metro average of 4.4%
- 2Q2020 office vacancy is 17.6% compared to the Washington DC Metro average of 13.1%
- 4Q2019 apartment asking rents in downtown Bethesda are 17.3% higher than in Friendship Heights

## Friendship Heights and Downtown Bethesda Inventory Growth and Development Pipeline

MULTIFAMILY (in units)			
Year	Bethesda	Friendship Heights	Variance
2010	2,435	1,989	446 (22.4%)
2020	3,090	1,989	1,101 (55.4%)
2024	4,361	2,108	2,253 (106.9%)

RETAIL (in sf)			
Year	Bethesda	Friendship Heights	Variance
2010	1,682,109	1,368,771	313,338 (22.9%)
2020	1,738,150	1,350,057	388,093 (28.7%)
2024	1,767,150	1,369,857	397,293 (29.0%)

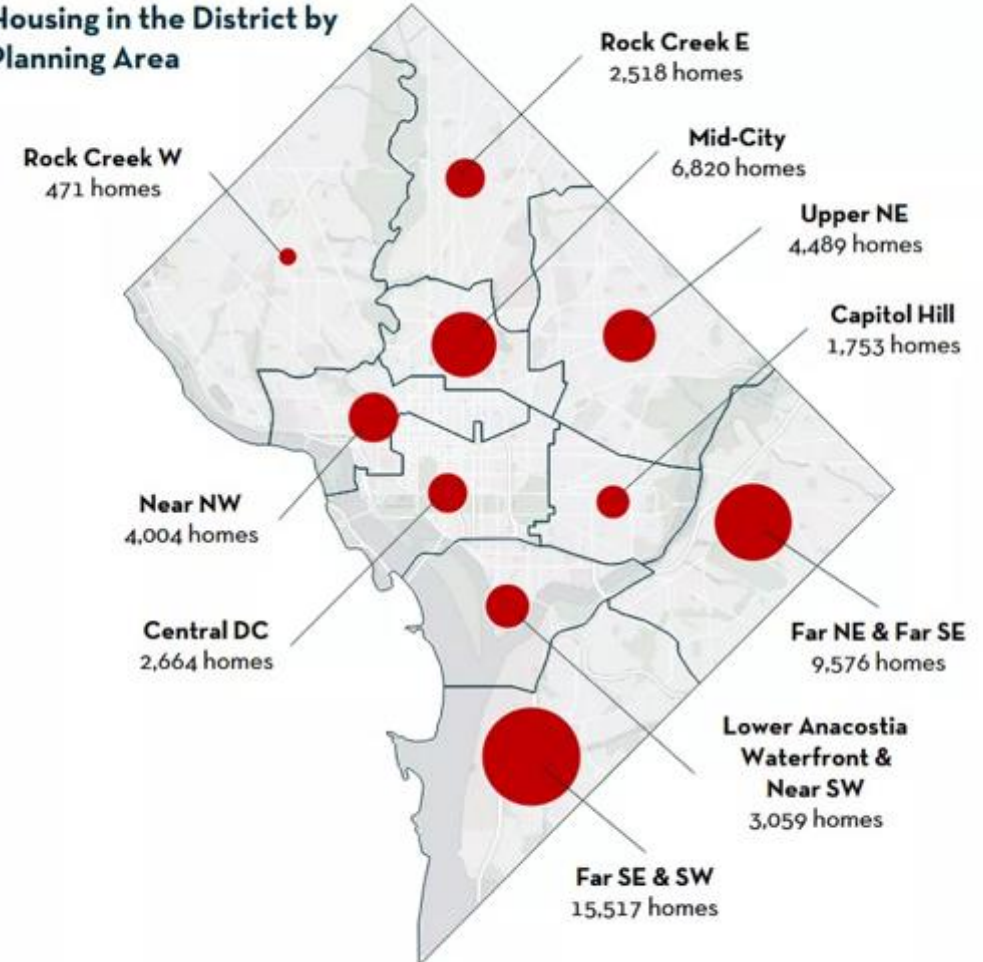
OFFICE (in SF)			
Year	Bethesda	Friendship Heights	Variance
2010	7,391,077	3,516,713	3,874,364 (110.2%)
2020	7,516,778	3,516,778	4,000,065 (113.7%)
2024	8,524,813	8,524,868	4,952,055 (138.6%)



# Disparity in Affordable Housing Distribution

- Overconcentration of low-cost housing East of the River leads to poor services, high crime rates, isolation, despair
- City motivated to build new affordable units west of Rock Creek Park (Ward 3)

**Distribution of Subsidized Housing in the District by Planning Area**



Current distribution of affordable housing across D.C. | D.C. government



# The Housing Need

- D.C. Metro Population by 2030 = 7+ million
- Housing Needs by 2030 = 374,000, with 267,000 being affordable (Urban Institute)
- Supply Deficit = ~10,000 units/year
- Montgomery – 38% of renters <50% AMI, but only 19% of rental units are affordable at that income
- DC – 48% of HH pay more than 30% income on rent
- Result: High housing costs inhibit worker mobility & discourage businesses from locating there.
- Result: Slow supply growth promotes gentrification and displacement of lower-income HH
- Terwilliger Center: HH fixed costs = housing + transit



# Public School Need

- Ward 3 DCPS--relatively diverse ethnically & racially (41%), but lowest African-American (5%) in DC
- Ward 3 DCPS are most economically stratified in DC.
- All Ward 3 schools are at or exceed 95% functional capacity in 2019. By 2028, schools will range from 98-154% of functional capacity.





# The Solutions

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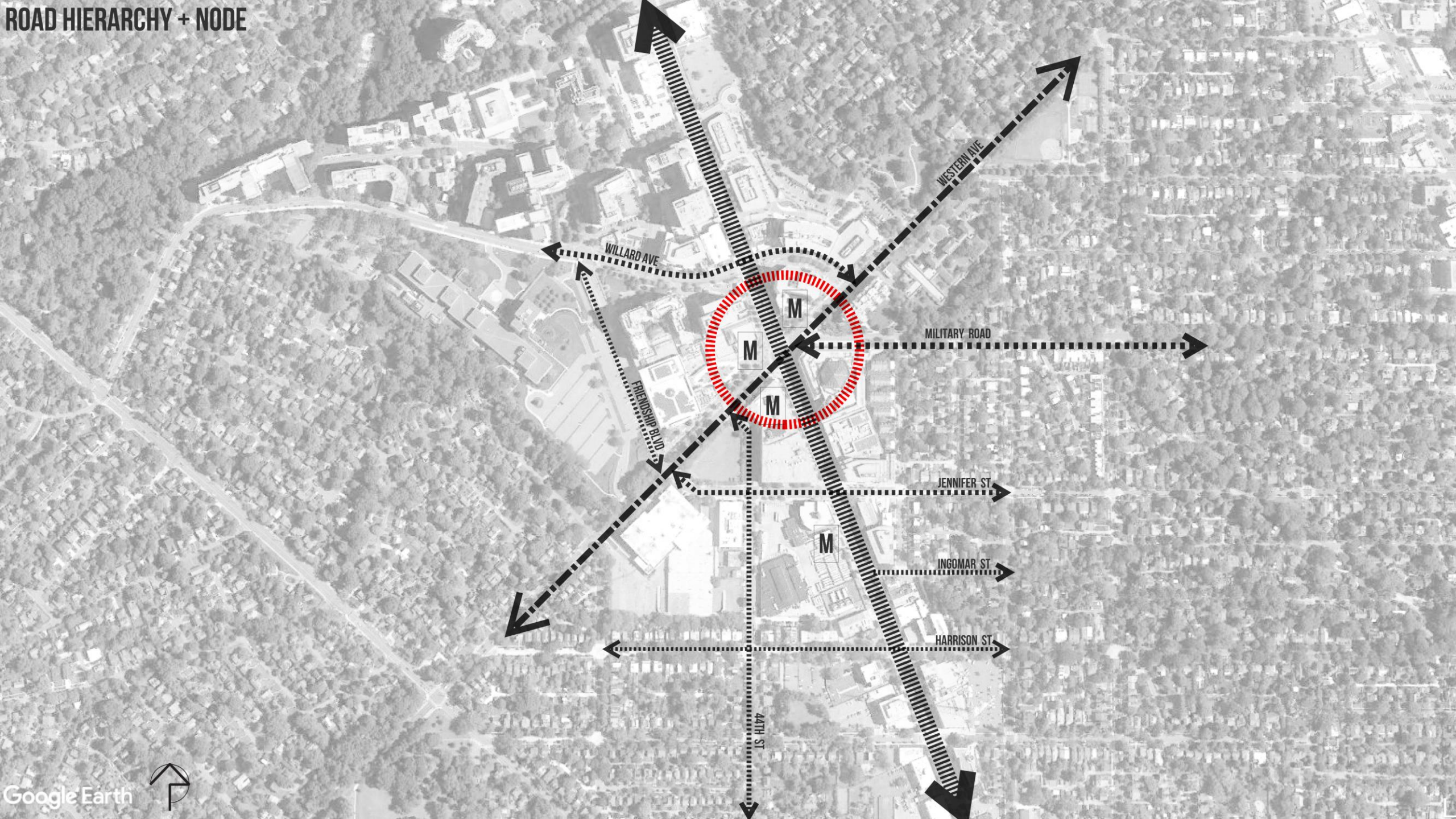


SCALE / USE: NO MIDDLE GROUND



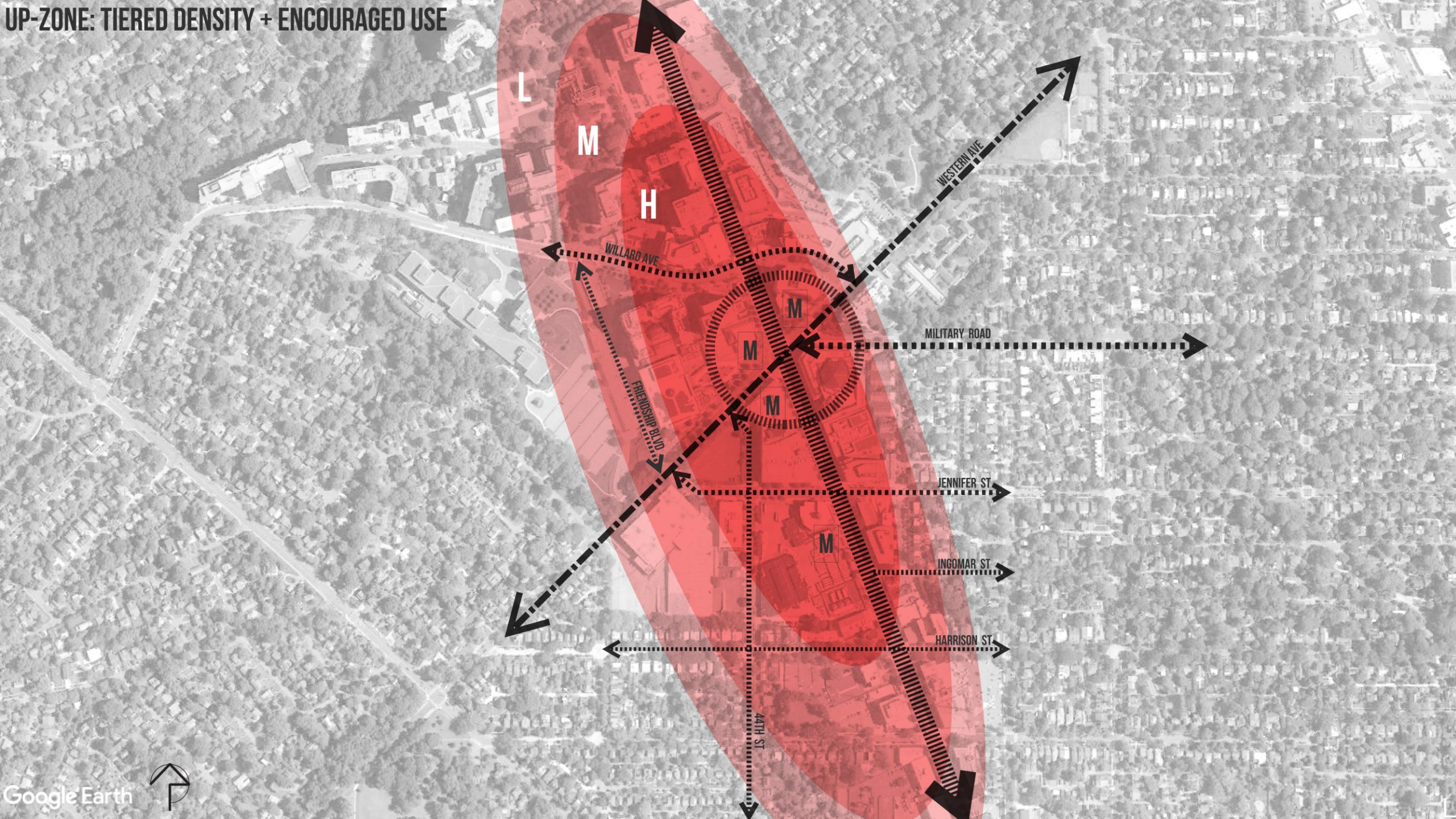


# ROAD HIERARCHY + NODE



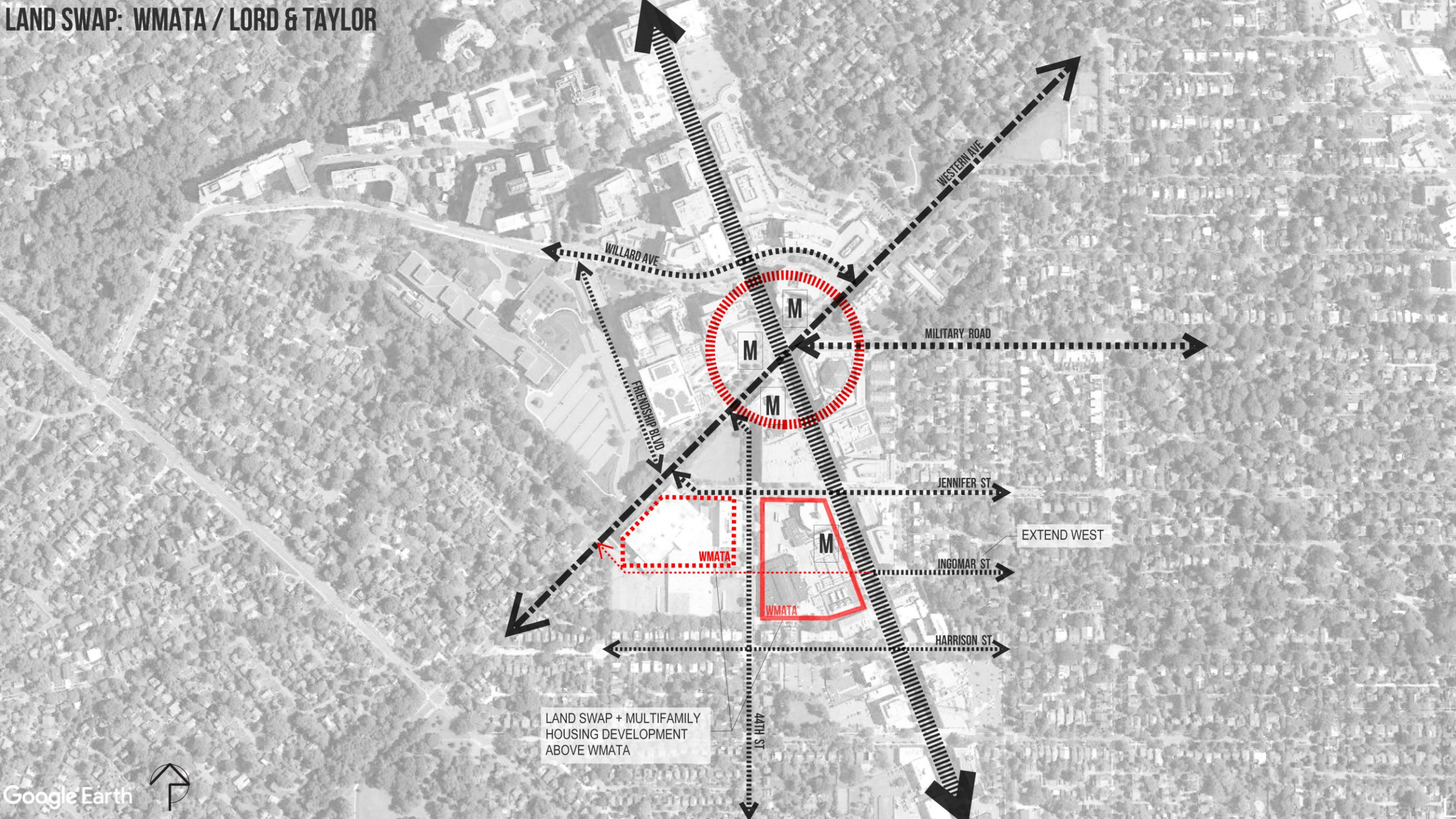


# UP-ZONE: TIERED DENSITY + ENCOURAGED USE





Google Earth





# ROAD HIERARCHY + NODE

1: UP-ZONE + TIERED DENSITY/ USE

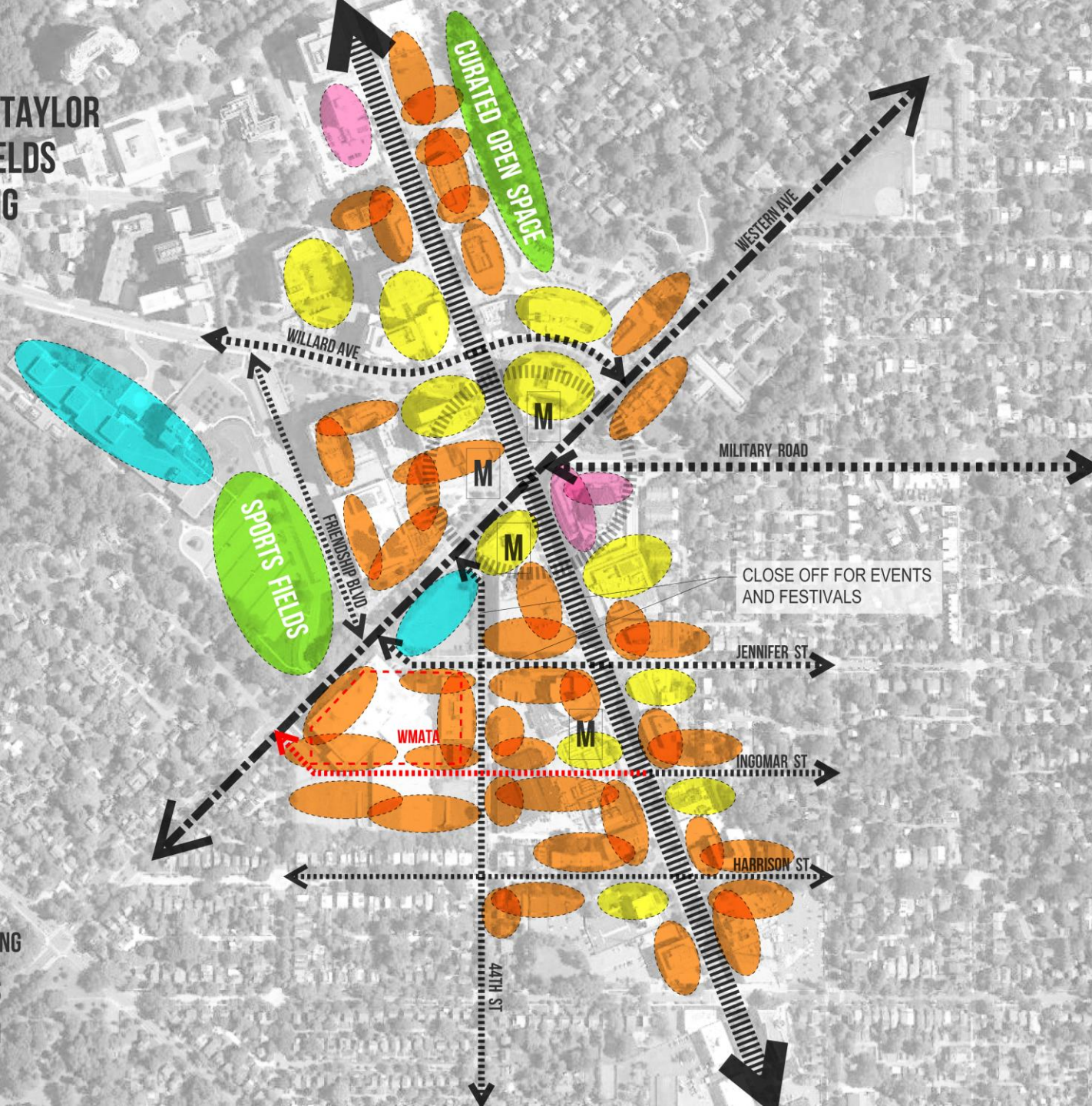
2: LAND SWAP, WMATA / LORD & TAYLOR

3: CURATED OPEN SPACE + FIELDS

4: MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING

5: SCHOOL

- OFFICE
- MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING
- OPEN SPACE / FIELDS
- SCHOOL / EDUCATION
- HOTEL





## The Four E's

Education, Environment and Energy are the four prongs of our vision.

- EQUITY – Developing affordable housing in Friendship Heights will bring needed density and serve to balance the community. Given the disparity in affordable housing in DC will allow many new residents to benefit from the transit-rich community.
- EDUCATION - Transforming persistently vacant retail and office space into repurposed public schools will satisfy the expanding needs of children in the DC Public School system.
- ENVIRONMENT - Enhancing the green and curbside environment in the corridor will improve the pedestrian and vehicular experiences. Transit connectivity upgrades and new green space will enhance environmental conditions.
- ENERGY – Transforming Mazza Gallerie, The Shops at Wisconsin Place, and other properties will add residents and businesses, promoting seven-day activity, bringing new Energy to Friendship Heights.







# Recommendations

1. Increase density through zoning entitlements, as well as building above existing buildings for creative solutions.
2. Emphasize the “boulevard” with strong architectural design and street-activating retail at base to attract residents and workers alike.
3. Reorient primary Metro access from Wisconsin Circle to Jennifer @ Wisconsin.
4. Repurpose under-performing commercial for public education purposes.
5. Encourage residential/commercial interest by creating inviting active and passive outdoor spaces and incorporating experiential retail and pop-up uses, parks, and festivals.
6. Eliminate or relocate uses that front major roads but are inappropriate for these prime, pedestrian scaled locations (i.e. bus garage, large parking lots).
7. Develop a multi-jurisdictional BID to focus on the implementation of the recommendations.





# Creating a “THERE”

Existing outdoor spaces, such as the plazas next to Bloomingdales, can be activated with splash pad and public art





# Traffic Calming and Mode Share

- Coordinating traffic control, reorienting Metro entrance, enhancing pedestrian/bicycle connectivity will alleviate dangerous and noisy conditions at Wisconsin and Western Avenue.
- Landscaped medians, textured crosswalks, bike/scooter lanes and on-street parking separate cars from pedestrians.



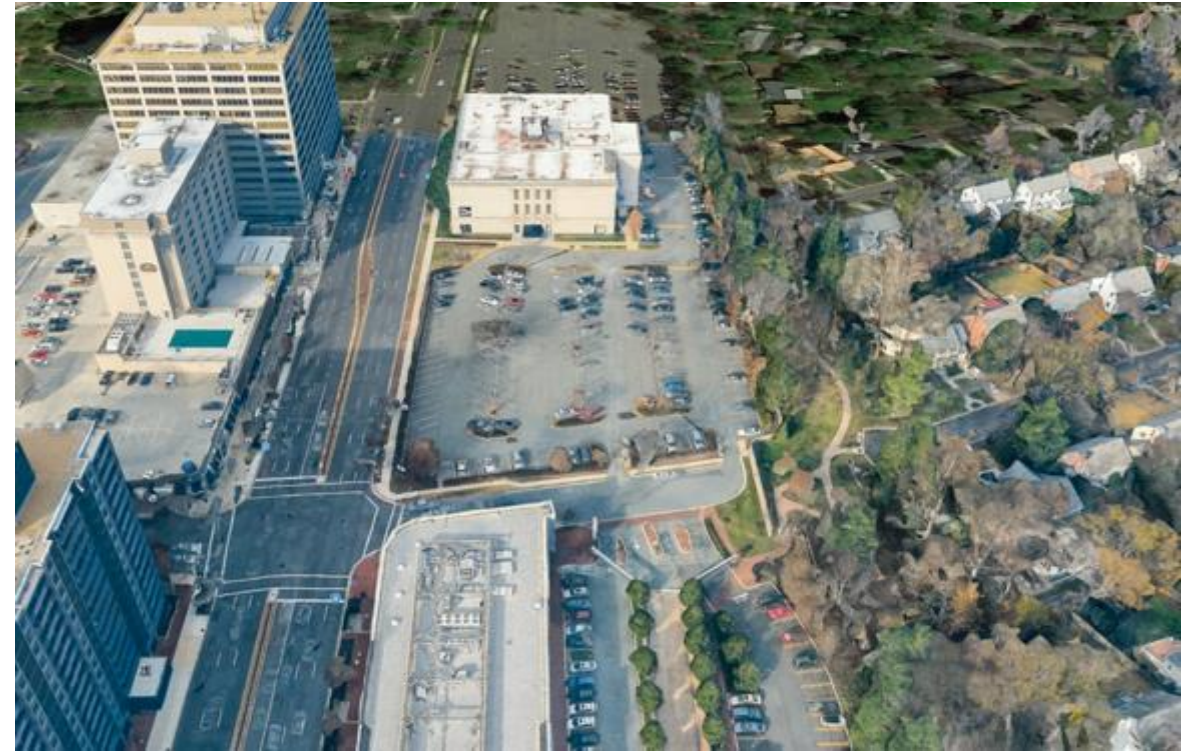


# Changing the Environment— Placemaking Opportunity: Close Off Jennifer Street

- Strategically limiting traffic on Jennifer Street will allow store/restaurant fronts with sidewalk seating
- Precedent: closed street at Bethesda Row, The Wharf
- As a portion of Jennifer is already restricted, this will have limited impact







## More Reasons to Stay:

Experiential retail, places to sit and eat, and unique play spaces all invite visitors to stay and explore

- Montgomery County has partnered with the Better Block Foundation to activate underutilized retail parking lots
- The Saks parking lot provides an opportunity for pop-up beer garden, farmers market, food trucks, etc. (Or for new mid-rise development)
- NoMa's Wundergarten started as a temporary beer garden. It's popularity made it permanent
- Seating near food trucks invites people to stay instead of heading back to the office or home





# Conclusion

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- Affordable Housing and increased density will promote **Equity**
- Adaptive reuse of under-performing commercial buildings into modern **Education** programs for DCPS/MCPS (e.g. IntelSat→Whittle School)
- Reimagined retail & pop-up **Environment** will transform the pedestrian experience
- **Energy** from new Residents and Businesses will revitalize Friendship Heights