

A photograph of a classical building facade, likely a government or institutional building, featuring a balcony filled with numerous international flags. The flags are arranged in rows and are waving in the wind. The building has large windows and classical architectural elements like columns and a decorative balcony railing. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

# Foreign Missions and International Organizations

*Element*



# Federal Elements

## Foreign Missions and International Organizations

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.....ComprehensivePlan  
*for the National Capital*

# Introduction

## Foreign Missions and International Organizations

*It is the goal of the federal government to:*

Plan a secure and welcoming environment for the location of diplomatic and international activities in Washington, D.C. in a manner that is appropriate to the status and dignity of these activities, while enhancing Washington's role as one of the great capitals of the world.



Chancery of Canada

Washington, D.C. is one of the world's most important diplomatic centers. There are 191 countries in the world, and the United States maintains diplomatic relations with 180 of them, and with many international organizations. One hundred sixty nine of those countries have foreign missions in Washington. These missions are vital to the United States government in assisting it to manage diplomatic relations with international institutions, organizations, and states. Foreign missions help promote peace and stability, and bring nations together to address global challenges.

The Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element of the Comprehensive Plan provides a policy framework for the U.S. to fulfill its international obligation to assist foreign governments and international organizations in obtaining suitable locations for their diplomatic missions. This in turn ensures efficient functioning of diplomatic and international activities. The element also includes policies to ensure that foreign missions acknowledge the prestigious nature of the diplomatic mission, contribute to the beauty of the city, and reinforce the unique characteristics of Washington's neighborhoods.

An important component in the accommodation of foreign missions in the nation's capital is the treaty obligations of the United States. The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations obligates the U.S. government to assist foreign governments in obtaining suitable facilities for diplomatic missions. The Convention states that the host country can either "facilitate the acquisition on its territory...by the sending State of premises necessary for its mission" or assist in "obtaining accommodations in some other way."

The Foreign Missions Act of 1982 reaffirms the federal government's jurisdiction over the operation of foreign missions and international organizations in the United States. It enunciates the policy to support and facilitate the secure and efficient operation of U.S. missions abroad and of foreign missions and international organizations in the United States.

To ensure reciprocal accommodations in foreign countries, the Act established the Office of Foreign Missions within the Department of State to review and control the operations of foreign missions in the United States. It empowers the Secretary of State to set forth the mechanism and criteria relating to the location of foreign missions in the District of Columbia.



Foreign missions occupy buildings of all sizes, shapes, and ages. Some are housed in former residential row houses or mansions, while many are in custom-designed buildings. Others lease space in commercial office buildings. The facilities that house diplomatic functions—office space where the diplomatic mission is conducted, and the residence of the ambassador—are commonly referred to as embassies. To differentiate the functions that typically occur in these facilities, however, different designations have been given to different types of buildings: chanceries, chancery annexes, and ambassadors' residences. The *chancery* is the principal office of a foreign mission used for diplomatic purposes. A *chancery annex* is used for diplomatic purposes in support of the mission, such as cultural or military attachés, or consular operations. *Chanceries* and *chancery annexes* are the same in this element when considering the accommodation of foreign missions in the District of Columbia. An *ambassador's residence* is the official home of the ambassador or the chief of mission. Many foreign missions in Washington occupy chanceries, chancery annexes, and ambassadors' residences in more than one location. Collectively and individually, these buildings contribute to the vibrancy and diversity of Washington's neighborhoods and add significantly to the visual interest and character of the city.



Chanceries are accommodated in a variety of building types and on different lot sizes.



(clockwise from upper left) Chanceries of Sweden, France, the Philippines, and Mexico

## The Economic and Fiscal Impact of Foreign Missions on the Nation's Capital

The 169 foreign missions in the District of Columbia represent the world's major countries, and with few exceptions are those countries' largest missions. Even though foreign missions by themselves are not major generators of economic activity, they have an economic force far exceeding their measurable benefits. In addition to their direct and indirect spending, they represent a critical component of the international business industry, which annually totals an estimated \$10.4 billion in direct spending in the District of Columbia. The continued growth and vitality of the city's international business industry is closely tied to maintaining its dominant position as the power center among world capitals, generating country-to-country business opportunities, and attracting visitors seeking individual or multiple-country meetings.

- Foreign missions employ nearly 10,000 workers in the District of Columbia, with an annual payroll close to \$300 million.
- Consumer spending by foreign mission employees is estimated to total over \$32 million annually.
- Non-payroll spending by foreign missions is estimated at over \$258 million annually.
- Foreign missions attract a large volume of day visitors and business visitors staying overnight, spending over \$183 million annually on lodging, food, and shopping.
- The District collects almost \$24 million annually from taxes generated by the office space and homes leased in the city by foreign missions and their employees, respectively.

Source: *The Economic and Fiscal Impact of Foreign Missions on the Nation's Capital*, prepared for NCPC by Stephen S. Fuller, George Mason University, 2002.

Some countries maintain limited diplomatic establishments in Washington, with only the minimal staff needed to maintain diplomatic relations. Others have quite extensive activities, and employ hundreds of people to work in specialized offices with particular functions. For example, several foreign missions maintain trade offices to encourage the import and export of goods to and from their countries, and many missions have offices for military liaisons to the U.S. Department of Defense. In total, the diplomatic and international community in Washington employs almost 10,000 people, and is a formidable economic force in the District of Columbia.

In recent decades the nature of international diplomacy has shifted. In addition to political relationships, economic and cultural relationships have taken on added significance. This expansion of diplomatic functions has resulted in a commensurate shift in foreign mission facilities, with buildings increasingly used to signify the importance the country places in its relations with its host and to project a positive image.

In addition to their traditional function as places of negotiation, chanceries have become hybrid facilities that act as communication vehicles for their countries. Increasingly, foreign missions use their chancery facilities as event spaces to foster intergovernmental relations at the political, economic, and cultural level. Using the power of architecture to convey a message in a way that spoken and written words cannot, many foreign missions now host cultural events such as art exhibits, concerts, and films, or sponsor special events to increase awareness of their country and promote trade and tourism. These new programs often result in the need for larger buildings, specialized space, and increased parking requirements. In addition, increased security requirements have become a consideration in chancery development.

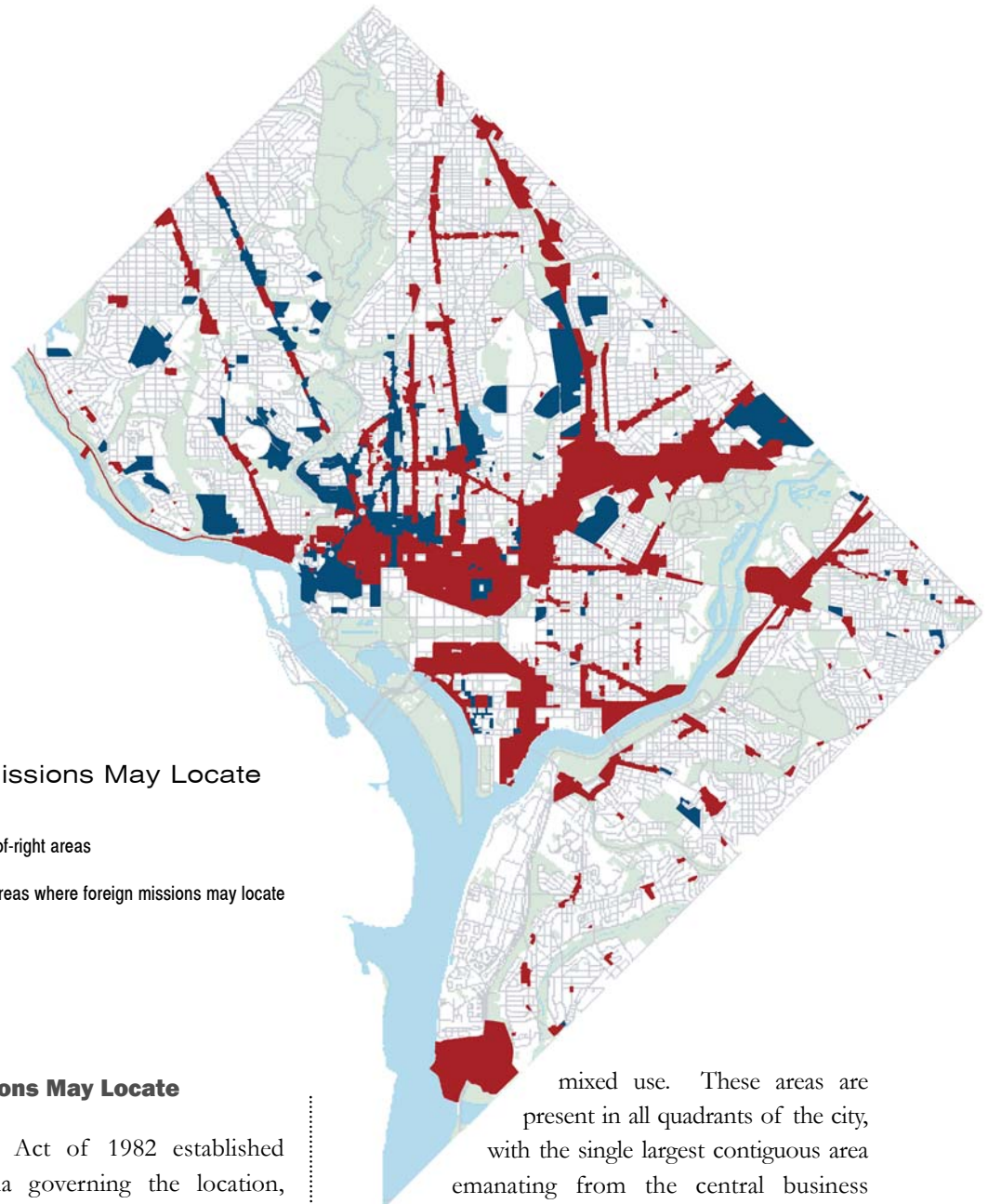


Chancery of Italy

### Foreign Missions Since 1983

In 1983, when the Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element of the Comprehensive Plan was last updated, there were 133 foreign missions in Washington, D.C. In the past 20 years the number of missions has increased by 27 percent, to 169, an average of almost two new missions each year. However, the rate at which new foreign missions have established offices in Washington has not increased evenly over the years. For example, Washington became host to several new foreign missions after the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the fall of the Iron Curtain. The remaining new foreign missions in Washington occurred as other countries established diplomatic ties with the U.S., or relocated their primary missions to Washington from New York.

In 1983 foreign missions occupied 375 separate facilities. Today, the 169 countries with foreign missions in Washington occupy 483 facilities, including chanceries, chancery annexes, and ambassadors' residences. While most chancery facilities are owned by the countries that occupy them, several missions lease space, typically floors or suites in office buildings and sometimes in small commercial buildings or freestanding structures. In 2002, 152 foreign missions owned the facilities in which their principal chanceries were located, while 17 missions occupied leased space.



### Where Foreign Missions May Locate

- Matter-of-right areas
- Other areas where foreign missions may locate

#### Where Foreign Missions May Locate

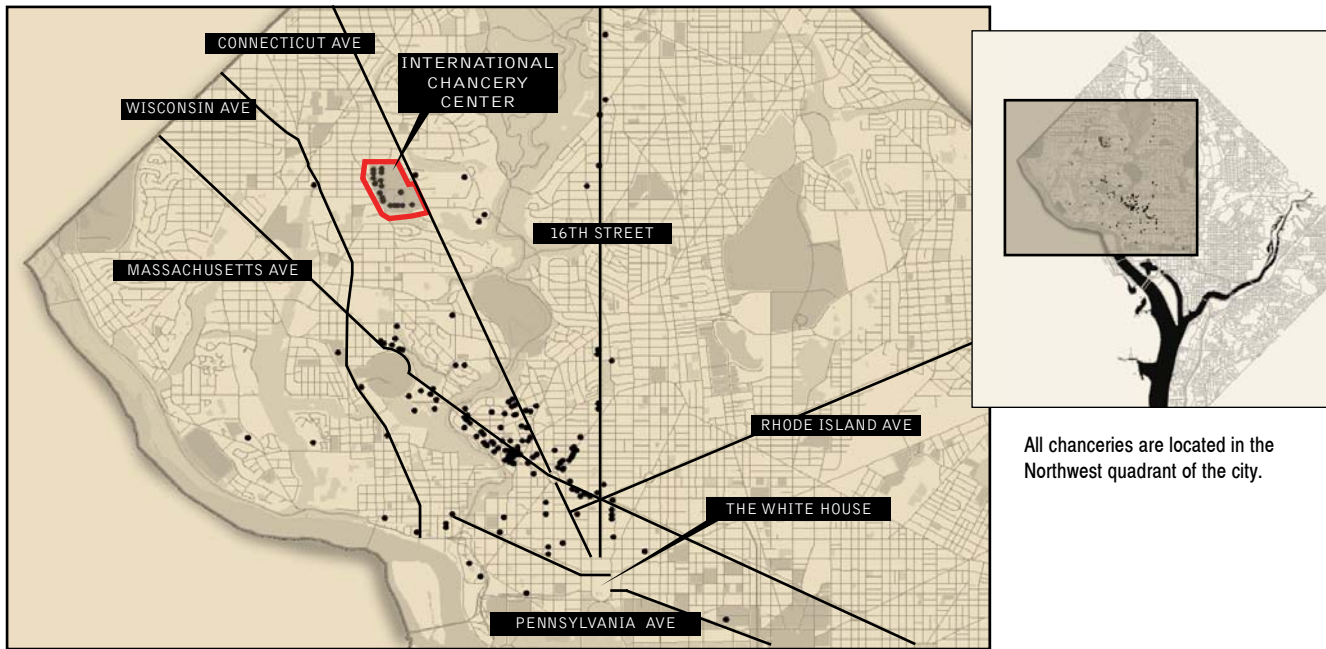
The Foreign Missions Act of 1982 established procedures and criteria governing the location, replacement, or expansion of chanceries in the District of Columbia. The Act identifies areas where foreign missions may locate without regulatory review, and those areas where foreign missions may locate subject to disapproval by the District of Columbia Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment.

The areas where foreign missions may locate without regulatory review are referred to as *matter-of-right*. A foreign mission may locate a chancery in a matter-of-right area without it being subject to review by the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment. Matter-of-right areas are those areas in the District of Columbia zoned commercial, industrial, waterfront, or

mixed use. These areas are present in all quadrants of the city, with the single largest contiguous area emanating from the central business district. From this core, several matter-of-right areas extend outward along major avenues of the city. In addition, large matter-of-right areas are located south of the National Mall and east of the Anacostia River.

Other areas in the District where foreign missions may locate subject to disapproval by the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment include areas zoned medium-high-density residential, high-density residential, special purpose, and diplomatic. Although also located in all quadrants of the District, these areas are primarily located in Northwest and Northeast Washington.





All chanceries are located in the Northwest quadrant of the city.

### Where Foreign Missions Have Located

Currently, all chanceries in Washington, D.C. are located in the Northwest quadrant of the District, with the majority located in the area bounded by 16th Street on the east and Wisconsin Avenue on the west. Within that area, the Sheridan Kalorama neighborhood is home to more chanceries than any other neighborhood in the city, and the adjacent Dupont Circle neighborhood contains the second greatest number.

In 1968 the International Center Act established a 47-acre enclave known as the International Chancery Center, where foreign missions lease land from the U.S. government. This enclave provides low-cost federal land that has allowed foreign missions to avoid protracted negotiations and regulatory review sometimes encountered when they initially locate, relocate, or expand their facilities on private land in the District of Columbia.

There were originally 23 parcels and a large lot for an international organization when land first became available for foreign mission use at the International Chancery Center. Since then, several lots have been combined, and all the lots have been leased. Sixteen chanceries have been constructed, and the center will contain 18 missions when the final two chanceries are completed. In addition, the Department of State has a federal office building on one of the lots to provide services to the diplomatic community.

### Location Decisions

The Northwest quadrant of the city has attracted foreign missions due to historic development patterns, availability of buildings and land, proximity to government offices and other chanceries, and Comprehensive Plan policies that encouraged chanceries to locate in Northwest D.C.

*Historic Patterns.* The historic pattern of foreign missions locating in the Northwest quadrant of the city came early in the diplomatic history of Washington. The first foreign missions in the city were near the White House, and as outlying areas of the city became fashionable—and increasingly urbanized—foreign missions followed. The first concentration of foreign missions in Washington occurred in the vicinity of Meridian Hill Park, and by the 1920s 16th Street was referred to as Embassy Row. However, during the depression years many of the grand homes in the area northwest of Dupont Circle became vacant and were bought by foreign missions that wanted to establish their presence in a stylish neighborhood. By the end of the 1930s Massachusetts Avenue from Scott Circle to Wisconsin Avenue had become the new Embassy Row. As the United States became an international power and Washington became an increasingly important diplomatic center, more and more foreign missions clustered around this area, and its desirability continues to this day.



*Available Buildings.* As large private homes became available throughout the 20th century, many foreign missions purchased and occupied them. When these foreign missions later moved into larger facilities, new missions establishing or increasing their diplomatic presence often moved into these former residences.

*Available Land.* Although recent chancery construction has dispersed to areas such as the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor and Georgetown, for many years the availability of large lots along the Massachusetts Avenue corridor has allowed the construction of new chancery facilities that accommodate a variety of functions and uses. This has contributed to the evolution of adjacent residential neighborhoods into mixed-use areas.

*Proximity to Government Offices and Other Chanceries.* As increasing numbers of foreign missions clustered in one quadrant of the city, the desirability of locating chanceries near or in the cluster increased. The character of the neighborhood and the prestige of the nearby foreign missions added to the desire to locate in these areas. In addition, foreign missions in the Northwest quadrant of the city often located in proximity to the Department of State, with easy access to other government functions located around the monumental core.

*Former Comprehensive Plan Policies.* The Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element of the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1983 encouraged foreign missions to locate or retain their chancery facilities in Northwest Washington. While acknowledging that foreign missions could locate in matter-of-right and other areas of the city, the adopted policies sought to protect the unique character created by the concentration of chanceries in Northwest. Other policies encouraged foreign missions to locate chanceries on Pennsylvania Avenue, NW in order to promote the redevelopment of downtown, and to locate in the International Chancery Center. Collectively, these policies continued the historic pattern of chancery development in Northwest Washington, D.C.

## Future Demand

The greatest demand for new chancery facilities will likely be from existing foreign missions that expand as they increase their presence and the services they perform. In addition, several countries that do not currently have diplomatic relations with the U.S. can be expected to establish missions in Washington. A few small countries that house their primary diplomatic missions to the U.S. in New York may also choose to open chanceries in the capital. And, as new countries are created over time, it is likely that they too may establish diplomatic relations with the U.S.

Trends of the past 20 years suggest that locations for as many as 100 new and relocated chanceries may have to be found in the next 25 years. This could require the identification of four to five chancery sites per year. Forty-eight foreign missions relocated within the nation's capital in the last 20 years, and if this trend continues, some 60 foreign missions will relocate by 2030. In addition, approximately 40 new foreign missions could locate new chanceries in the District. Not all of these foreign missions will require new sites—some will buy or lease existing foreign mission facilities, while others may buy or lease other existing buildings. However, the recent trend has been toward new construction of larger facilities on large lots, both on privately owned land and in the International Chancery Center. As a result, there may be a requirement to identify a significant number of buildings and sites for these future chanceries.



Chancery of Germany



Chanceries on 16th Street in Northwest Washington, D.C.

### Future Building Requirements

In recent years, over two dozen foreign countries have built new chancery facilities. Ten large, distinctive facilities have been built on prominent, busy streets. Most of these chanceries are stand-alone, multi-use buildings that have underground garage parking and increasingly sophisticated security.

In addition to prominent new construction, three other patterns of chancery development have emerged. Several countries have rehabilitated prestigious historic structures, others have moved into chancery buildings vacated as other countries have moved out, and several have leased space in commercial office buildings.

Based on chancery development over the past 20 years, most foreign missions occupying new buildings in the future will likely choose one of the following types of structures for their chancery facilities: townhouse-type, attached structures; mid-rise or high-rise buildings adjacent to other structures; and detached, stand-alone buildings.

### Future Land Requirements

Lot sizes will differ with each variation of the projected building types, but it is anticipated that the pace at which larger lot sizes are required may increase in the future. Larger chanceries that house a multitude of functions, increased parking requirements for employees, visitors, and guests attending special events, and increased security requirements that necessitate larger building setbacks will increasingly dominate land requirements and require larger parcels. The availability of sites that meet the needs of foreign missions within traditional diplomatic areas is increasingly limited, and the International Chancery Center has no available sites for chancery development. Therefore, additional development opportunities in areas zoned for chancery use may be required for the future location of chanceries within the nation's capital, and it may be necessary for foreign missions to look beyond traditional diplomatic enclaves. In addition, it may be necessary to establish new foreign missions center development areas.

# Policies

## Chancery Development

Several emerging planning challenges have engaged representatives of foreign missions, citizens, and federal and local government officials in discussions regarding future chancery development areas. Among these challenges is the need to ensure that adequate areas are available in the District of Columbia for chancery development, and that future chancery development is compatible with adjacent neighborhood uses.

As the seat of our nation's government and as an important diplomatic center, Washington, D.C. should provide future development opportunities for new chanceries so that foreign missions will not have to relocate outside the boundaries of the nation's capital.

This commitment to providing space for foreign missions presents the dual challenge of identifying areas that are appropriate for chancery development and finding locations that are available in both the short- and long-term future.

These areas must meet the criteria of foreign missions and the planning objectives of the federal and local government. One of these criteria is to balance the operational needs of foreign missions against revitalization and economic development goals of federal and local planners. It is equally important that future chancery development occurs in neighborhoods where chancery functions are compatible with adjacent land uses, and where foreign missions can contribute to the vibrant life of the nation's capital.

## Chancery Development

### *Policies*

The federal government should:

1. Encourage all foreign missions to locate chanceries, combined chancery/ambassadors' residences, and chancery annexes in owned or leased facilities in the District of Columbia as the established seat of the federal government.
2. Identify areas appropriate for the future location of foreign missions in the nation's capital.

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Site chanceries so that they satisfy their operational requirements as well as applicable requirements of the Department of State to further the efficient conduct of relations between the United States and other nations.
2. Site chanceries so that they add visual interest and character, contribute to cultural life, and promote diverse and lively communities.



## Locating Chanceries

### Define a New Diplomatic District

As the number of foreign missions in Washington increased throughout the twentieth century, different regulatory mechanisms were enacted to guide chancery location decisions. Over time, however, the function of foreign missions diversified, and social and technological advancements created land-use controversies in some of the residential neighborhoods in which chanceries are located.

As a result of the analysis accomplished in support of the Foreign Missions Act of 1982, a methodology was developed in 1983 to determine the most appropriate areas for foreign missions to locate, subject to disapproval by the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment. The 1983 methodology allows foreign missions to locate in low- and medium-density residential city blocks, or “squares” in which one third or more of the area is used for office, commercial, or other non-residential uses. However, in some cases, a consequence of the “square-by-square” determination has been an unanticipated increase in the number of chanceries on certain squares.

To help address the concerns that have resulted from the 1983 methodology and adopted zoning regulations, the *Foreign Missions in the District of Columbia—Future Location Analysis* examined existing neighborhood compatibility, analyzed the availability of suitable chancery locations, and determined if adjustments or revisions to the zoned diplomatic district are necessary. The study suggests several steps to provide an alternative to the diplomatic district with a goal of providing greater clarity and more predictability for decision makers in the chancery siting process.

- Identify additional areas where foreign missions may locate without review by the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment.
- Develop a new methodology to determine appropriate additional chancery development areas.
- Revise the mapped diplomatic areas, reflecting additional areas where foreign missions may locate.

The National Capital Planning Commission is now working jointly with the U.S. Department of State and the District of Columbia government to ensure that zoning regulations and maps reflect areas identified as appropriate for accommodating foreign missions now and in the future.

### Foreign Missions in the District of Columbia—Future Location Analysis

The 2003 National Capital Planning Commission’s *Foreign Missions in the District of Columbia—Future Location Analysis* identified potential areas in the District where future chancery development could fulfill the needs of foreign missions while advancing federal and District planning objectives. This study also advanced the themes and policies of the *Legacy Plan* that encourage foreign missions and international organizations to contribute to the city’s revitalization.

The Future Location Analysis evaluated existing and potential areas appropriate for the location of foreign missions facilities in all quadrants of the city. Future potential chancery development areas were identified by mapping various criteria, including locations where chanceries are allowed to locate under the Foreign Missions Act of 1982, existing and proposed land uses, ease of access, development opportunities, and compliance with federal and District planning initiatives.

In addition to identifying opportunity areas for future chancery development, the study also made the following recommendations:

- The National Capital Planning Commission, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and the District of Columbia government, should undertake a feasibility study for a new foreign missions center.
- District of Columbia zoning regulations could be revised to redefine a diplomatic district in a way that creates more opportunities for foreign missions to locate in the nation’s capital, while discouraging additional chanceries in low-density residential neighborhoods. These revisions would require the collaboration of the National Capital Planning Commission, the U.S. Department of State, the District of Columbia Zoning Commission, and the District of Columbia government.
- The District of Columbia government should identify and evaluate additional areas where foreign missions could locate chanceries without review by the Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment.

### Promote New Chancery Development Areas

The Future Location Analysis also recommended several areas in the District of Columbia that could accommodate future chancery development. Available both now and under longer-term redevelopment scenarios, these areas have land uses compatible with chancery development, adequate land for a variety of chancery sizes, and potential redevelopment and reuse opportunities. These areas offer prominent sites that can accommodate the prestigious nature of the diplomatic mission, and meet the planning objectives of the local and federal government. These areas are easily accessible by multiple modes of transportation, often promote historic preservation and adaptive reuse, and can strengthen the image and character of the capital. In some areas, promoting chancery development encourages foreign missions to locate in areas of the District that have not traditionally been considered for this type of activity. In other areas, chancery use may already be present, and the further development of chanceries can strengthen neighborhood redevelopment goals.

Neighborhoods that offer significant opportunities for individual chancery development include established development areas along the 16th Street corridor, and the South Capitol Street corridor, including some Anacostia waterfront redevelopment areas.

*16th Street Corridor.* Characterized by its mix of housing alternatives and commercial and retail businesses, public transportation access, and close proximity to downtown and existing foreign missions, the 16th Street corridor through the Columbia Heights, Adams Morgan, and Mt. Pleasant neighborhoods offer opportunities now for infill development, adaptive reuse, and large lot development for the location of new chanceries. Although these areas have suffered from a period of economic decline, foreign missions have long maintained a presence in these neighborhoods. This is a positive indicator that this corridor has the potential to resurge as a diplomatic center, while maintaining compatibility with the mix of neighborhood land uses. Future chancery development in the corridor could enhance the ongoing economic redevelopment of the neighborhoods. Development parcels in a variety of sizes are available that meet foreign mission criteria, and prominent L'Enfant street both promote the dignity of the diplomatic mission and reinforce local and federal planning objectives.

Vacant former Italian Chancery on 16th Street



*South Capitol Street Corridor.* The South Capitol Street corridor, the adjacent Southeast Federal Center, and portions of the Anacostia River waterfront have excellent potential for chancery development in the long term. Federal and local redevelopment plans provide a unique opportunity for development in these mixed-use areas. Land is available for new development and reuse opportunities with the potential for high visibility, prominence, and prestige. Several locations in the area offer exceptional development opportunities—Potomac Avenue and South Capitol Street near the Anacostia River, and New Jersey Avenue—and all of them offer the promise of mixed-use development that is compatible with chanceries.

*Reservation 13.* Proposed redevelopment plans for Reservation 13 offer some opportunities for the development of chanceries in a mixed-use development that will also include health care facilities, offices, residential areas, and recreational facilities. Individual redevelopment lots on the new extension of Massachusetts Avenue will provide prominent locations that meet foreign mission criteria and further local and federal planning initiatives.

**Establish New Foreign Missions Centers**

The anticipated demand for an average of four or five new chancery sites within the District of Columbia each year, the build-out of the existing International Chancery Center, and increasing private-sector land and development costs demonstrate the need to plan and establish one or more additional foreign missions centers to assist in the accommodation of new and expanding foreign missions. A high-density center with urban characteristics incorporating a combination of attached townhouse-type chanceries and mid- and high-rise structures could be developed at several scales: a large-scale center could accommodate several dozen chanceries in one location and accommodate several years of demand, while one or more smaller centers that could accommodate a lower number of chanceries would offer geographic dispersion and a shorter time horizon. Ideally, new foreign missions centers would be developed on land that is already owned by the federal government. However, foreign missions centers could also be built on privately owned land in new developments, similar to the new Swedish chancery on the Georgetown waterfront, which will lease space from a private owner.

Proposed Chancery Development Areas





Foreign missions can be expected to relocate their chanceries to a new foreign missions center for several reasons: incentives, such as lower land costs; a wide range of office space alternatives; office space that is appropriate for chancery use; increased security requirements; proximity to other chanceries; and amenities that serve the diplomatic community.

*Incentives.* At the existing International Chancery Center, foreign missions lease land at a favorable rate. The lease price for the land was determined by the size of the property and the commensurate cost of building the infrastructure necessary to support the facility. Although it is unlikely that the same low-cost lease rates could be offered in a new foreign missions center, it is anticipated that land acquisition costs would be more favorable than in the open market.

*Office Space Alternatives.* Several foreign missions currently occupy small buildings or office space in commercial buildings. Several foreign missions have moved from small facilities to larger facilities as their missions expand and the range of services they provide increases. The demand for varying space requirements over time would be met in a foreign missions center that contains a wide range of buildings available to foreign missions for shorter lease periods than is currently available.

*Appropriate Office Space.* Chancery office space in a center can also fulfill the unique requirements of the diplomatic community without the need for expensive renovation, and without negatively affecting the character of the neighborhood. This might mean the construction of facilities with increased security and privacy requirements, or parking requirements appropriate to the vehicular traffic a foreign mission may be expected to generate.

*Security.* It may be easier to control access and provide increased security to chanceries located in a foreign missions center. In addition, facilities built exclusively for chancery use can be built to accommodate increased security standards.

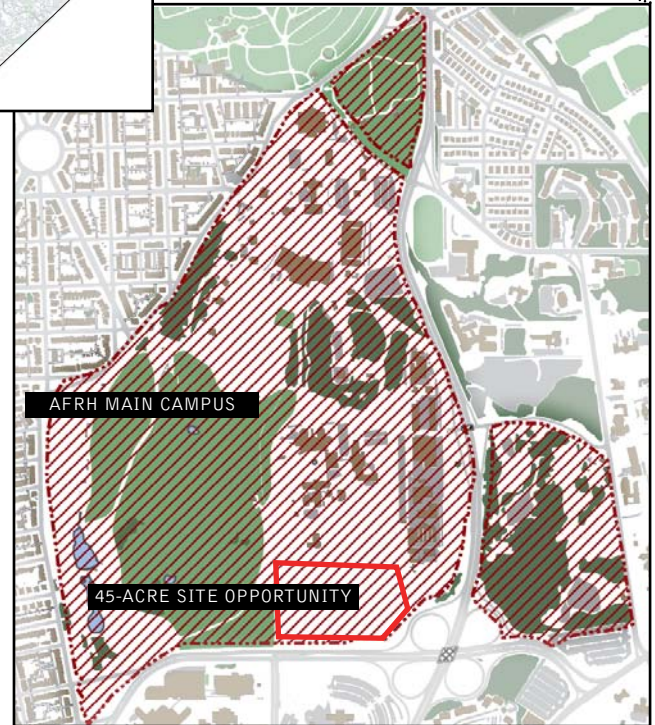
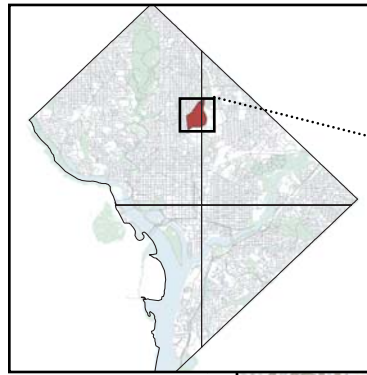
*Proximity.* As was demonstrated by the success of the International Chancery Center, proximity to other foreign missions may create greater demand to relocate, and add to the prestige of a foreign missions center address.

*Amenities.* A large concentration of chanceries is likely to require amenities necessary to support the diplomatic community, such as restaurants, housing, retail, and back-office functions. As a foreign missions center is developed these amenities are likely to locate in the vicinity.

### **Potential Development Areas**

In the foreseeable future the prime development area for a large-scale foreign missions center is the Armed Forces Retirement Home. Small-scale foreign missions center development sites include the South Capitol Street corridor and the Anacostia River waterfront redevelopment areas. Both of these areas could accommodate centers developed by the government or by public-private partnerships.

*South Capitol Street Corridor.* In addition to the potential for individual chancery development, the South Capitol Street corridor and the Anacostia River waterfront have adequate development opportunities for a foreign missions center. A foreign missions center in this location could range from a small center accommodating three or four chanceries to a larger center with a dozen or more chanceries. Private site development opportunities offer significant potential for the development of small foreign missions centers on vacant and underutilized properties in these areas and along the proposed extension of Massachusetts Avenue to the Anacostia River.



*Armed Forces Retirement Home.* The Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) is a campus-like facility that includes housing and amenities for military veterans. To achieve the primary goal of providing resident services, the AFRH is pursuing revenue-generating development to enhance its long-term financial viability. Twenty acres of undeveloped land in the southeastern corner of the main campus are currently proposed for new development. An additional adjacent 25 to 30 acres are available for mixed-use development and would exceed the requirements for a future foreign missions center. This would meet the financial goals prescribed by the AFRH and could be implemented in the near to mid-range future.

The Armed Forces Retirement Home in Northwest Washington plans to lease some of its land for development.

## Locating Chanceries

### *Policies*

The federal government is encouraged to:

1. Give priority consideration for the location of a new foreign missions center at the Armed Forces Retirement Home.
2. Give priority consideration for the location of a new foreign missions center in the South Capitol Street corridor.

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Locate chanceries within the diplomatic districts of the 16th Street corridor and the adjacent Columbia Heights, Adams Morgan, and Mt. Pleasant neighborhoods.
2. Locate chanceries within the diplomatic districts of the South Capitol Street corridor and adjacent Anacostia waterfront development areas in the Southwest and Southeast quadrants of the District.

## Chancery Siting

Foreign missions in the nation's capital make their chancery siting decisions for a variety of reasons, including proximity to other foreign missions and government offices, neighborhood character, access, cost, and security requirements. Federal and local planners in Washington have the unique responsibility of balancing the needs of foreign missions with the responsibility of orderly growth and development of the community. Consistency with federal and District planning initiatives and compliance with federal and local plans and regulations are primary criteria guiding planners' decisions. Some of these criteria include historic preservation and revitalization goals that must be balanced against the needs of the foreign missions. Other criteria include transportation goals, historic

preservation guidelines, and the desire to protect the unique character of the city established by the 1791 L'Enfant Plan. Together, these criteria form a complementary set of guiding principles from which the most desirable locations can be recommended for future chancery development.

The following policies provide general guidance in response to the identified needs of foreign missions and ensure foreign missions locate chanceries in a way that enhances the unique qualities of the nation's capital. When new chanceries are built or foreign missions relocate to other facilities, these policies should be applied to ensure that chancery development is compatible with the neighborhood and that the integrity of residential neighborhoods is maintained.

### Chancery Siting

#### *Policies*

#### **Land Use and Zoning**

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Locate their chancery facilities in areas where adjacent existing and proposed land use is compatible (e.g., office, commercial, and mixed use), giving special care to protecting residential areas.
2. Ensure that chancery locations are compatible with existing or proposed zoning, giving special care to protecting the integrity of residential areas.



## Chancery Siting

### *Policies*

#### **Urban Design**

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Protect the historic open space system of the L'Enfant Plan, and develop structures and landscaping that enhance and preserve its historic qualities.
2. Preserve and enhance the urban spaces, circles, squares, and plazas generated by the L'Enfant Plan and the unique views and vistas of the nation's capital.
3. Protect the historic legacy of Washington, D.C. by ensuring that buildings and landscapes are consistent with the grandeur of a great world capital.
4. Construct chanceries to complement or reflect neighboring buildings and settings and ensure that the height, size, and spatial orientation of chanceries are consistent with the character of the neighborhood.
5. Construct buildings and landscapes that demonstrate an appreciation of the architectural style and landscape of the surrounding environs while representing the finest architectural thought of the corresponding nation.

#### **Historic Preservation**

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Protect the integrity of historic districts and historic structures when locating chanceries in them.
2. Ensure that chanceries in historic districts are sensitive to the character of the district.
3. Protect and enhance historic landscapes by ensuring that development adjacent to such landscapes promotes their protection and integrity.
4. Preserve and maintain the features and character of historic properties.

## Chancery Siting

### *Policies*

#### **Access**

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Locate chanceries such that access is possible by different transportation modes, including walking, public transportation, and automobile.
2. Consider urban design qualities, neighborhood characteristics, and traffic capacity in the configuration of vehicular access.
3. Provide pedestrian access and offer safe, clean, and pleasant environments for pedestrians that include sidewalks and other amenities.
4. Provide adequate off-street parking that accommodates employees, visitors, and special event participants.

#### **Open Space and Parkland**

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Preserve existing open space and parkland.
2. Enhance and make accessible open space or parkland, including waterfront locations, when chanceries are located adjacent to it.
3. Construct landscapes that promote a beautiful and healthy environment by preserving the tree canopy and avoiding the destruction of mature trees.



Residence of the Ambassador of France

# Policies

## Ambassadors' Residences

As the number of foreign missions in Washington, D.C. has increased, so has the number of ambassadors' residences. Since 1983, 20 new ambassadors' residences were established, increasing the total official residences in the region from 145 to 165. Like most chancery facilities, most ambassadors' residences are under the ownership of the country that occupies them. One hundred twenty of the residences are in the District of Columbia, 35 are in the Maryland suburbs, and 10 are in the Northern Virginia suburbs immediately outside the District.

Over the next 20 years, the number of new ambassadors' residences established in the National Capital Region is expected to be the same as the number of foreign countries that establish new foreign missions. While the majority of residences are expected to locate in the District of Columbia, some are expected to locate in the Maryland and Virginia suburbs of Washington.

In the District of Columbia, zoning regulations are applied to ambassadors' residences just as they are to other residences. Therefore, ambassadors' residences are permitted to locate in all areas of the District of Columbia except areas zoned industrial.

## Ambassadors' Residences

### *Policies*

Foreign missions are encouraged to:

1. Locate ambassadors' residences, as the official home of the ambassadors or heads of foreign missions, in the District of Columbia as the established seat of the federal government.
2. Locate ambassadors' residences in all areas where residential uses are permitted within the District of Columbia, in all quadrants of the city.

The Secretary of State is encouraged to:

1. Ensure that ambassadors' residences are used and maintained in accordance with the procedures established in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and other laws and agreements.



# Policies

## International Organizations



The Organization of American States

International organizations perform a wide range of functions and activities in the National Capital Region. In 1983 there were 23 international organizations located in the region; in 2002 there were 28. Most international organizations are located in the downtown office district, particularly in the area west of the White House. Proximity to the State Department, the Treasury Department, and other international activities has been a key factor in the site selection of international organizations. Since 1983 there has also been a significant increase in the number of employees, from 11,430 to 20,077 in 2002.

Most international organizations prefer high-density office and mixed-use areas that are convenient to federal offices and other organizations and foreign missions with which they interact. The majority of the organizations occupy leased office space. While national symbolism is not a factor for international

organizations, the location and design of international organizations' facilities can increase public awareness of the organization. Additionally, international organizations can contribute to the visual appearance of the nation's capital by maintaining and restoring historic structures and locating on the historic street network of the L'Enfant Plan.

Under the Foreign Missions Act, the Secretary of State may extend the relevant provisions of the Act to an international organization. In that event, the references to chanceries in the preceding policies would also apply to the offices of that international organization. When subject to the Act, international organizations are permitted to locate in areas zoned waterfront, mixed use, and commercial. When not subject to the Act, international organizations are regarded as offices.

## International Organizations

### *Policies*

International organizations in the National Capital Region are encouraged to:

1. Locate their principal offices in the District of Columbia, as the established seat of the federal government.
2. Locate in a manner that permits the activities they house to function efficiently and to be compatible with the land uses surrounding them.