



NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION

# FOREIGN MISSIONS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

*Future Location Analysis*



  
NCPC

October 2003



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**Glossary**

**Appendix A** - Expanded Context

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in the National Capital Region

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Washington, DC, the nation's capital, is home to 169 foreign missions. Foreign missions occupy chanceries, chancery annexes, and ambassadors' residences. The chancery is the principal office of a foreign mission and is used primarily for diplomatic purposes. Chancery annexes are typically used in support of the mission and may include cultural or military attaches, and consular operations. The ambassador's residence, or embassy is the official home of the ambassador or the chief of mission.



The Canadian Embassy on Pennsylvania Avenue between the White House and the Capitol

Foreign missions contribute to the cultural life and livability of the city and represent a significant economic force. They are also a critical component of the international business industry, attracting a large volume of visitors to the nation's capital and contributing annually in excess of \$10 billion in direct spending in the District of Columbia.

The interests of the diplomatic community and of the federal and local governments are best served by continuing to locate foreign missions in the nation's capital. The desire to ensure that adequate opportunities are available for future chancery

development, while also restricting overdevelopment within existing residential neighborhoods, has engaged representatives of foreign missions, citizens, and federal and local government officials in the identification of future opportunities for the location of chanceries within the nation's capital.

Since 1982, 36 countries established new foreign missions in Washington, DC and another 48 moved to other locations within the District of Columbia. The International Chancery Center (ICC) is fully committed and no longer offers an alternative to the private lease or purchase of buildings or sites for new chancery facilities. In addition, in the last 20 years, many foreign missions have built large, distinctive chancery facilities featuring stand-alone, multi-use buildings with underground parking garages.

The large number of chanceries that have located in the Kalorama neighborhood has changed the character of this area and resulted in increased traffic and parking demands, and an increase in noise and other impacts associated with office development. As a result, citizens and elected officials have begun to question and oppose the location of future chanceries within these areas.



Chanceries located in Northwest, DC



Embassies are accommodated in a variety of building types and lot sizes.

Embassies of Brazil, Mexico, Estonia, and the Philippines



The nation’s capital holds opportunities in both established and redeveloping areas that are, or will be, suitable for the location of future chanceries. Some of these areas currently meet diplomatic, federal and District of Columbia planning objectives, others offer significant long-term opportunities.

The Foreign Missions Act of 1982 established procedures and criteria governing the location, replacement, and expansion of chanceries and annexes in the nation’s capital. The Act identifies a Diplomatic District that includes areas where chanceries can locate without regulatory review (Matter of Right), and areas where foreign missions may locate subject to review by the District of Columbia Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). The current regulatory environment under which the Zoning Commission operates has not been updated in almost 20 years.

This *Future Location Analysis* study is intended to provide the analysis and findings that form the basis for identification of opportunities and a revised regulatory environment for the future location of foreign missions within the nation’s capital. These findings conclude:

- The 16th Street corridor and the adjacent Columbia Heights revitalization area offer an immediate to mid-term opportunity for the location of foreign missions.
- The Anacostia Waterfront, most notably the redevelopment areas of the South Capitol Street corridor, Southeast Federal Center, Reservation 13, and Poplar Point may offer long-term development opportunities.
- The U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home offers an immediate opportunity to develop a foreign mission center on federal land.
- A smaller, more urban, foreign missions center model may have application within future development on private land on the Anacostia Waterfront.

- NCPD, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State and the District government, should undertake a feasibility study for a new foreign missions center.
- The current regulatory environment should be revised to create a new Diplomatic District offering future opportunities to foreign missions to locate in the nation’s capital while restricting the number of foreign missions within existing residential neighborhoods that have become impacted by chancery development.

NCPD will work closely with the Office of Foreign Missions of the Department of State, and the District of Columbia Office of Planning to prepare the following documents:

- A revised Foreign Missions Element of the NCPD Comprehensive Plan,
- District Zoning and Text Amendments,
- Revisions to the Department of State Foreign Missions and International Organizations Real Property Manual.



Embassy Row on Massachusetts Avenue, NW



# SUMMARY FINDINGS

## Existing Context

The nation's capital is an important diplomatic center. The United States maintains diplomatic relations with 180 countries and with many foreign organizations. Today 169 countries maintain foreign missions in the District of Columbia.

The diplomatic and international community is a significant contributor to the local economy. In November 2001, the Commission released a detailed study of the economic and fiscal impact of foreign missions on the District of Columbia. The study found that foreign missions employ over 10,000 people and that, in 2003, estimated direct spending from international businesses in the District of Columbia totaled approximately \$10.4 billion. International business is the city's second most important source of economic activity, second only to federal spending.

Moreover, in recent decades, the role of foreign missions has expanded significantly as political, economic, and cultural relationships have taken on added significance. This change in functions has resulted in a commensurate shift in the design and location of many foreign missions, including the demand for larger buildings with specialized facilities



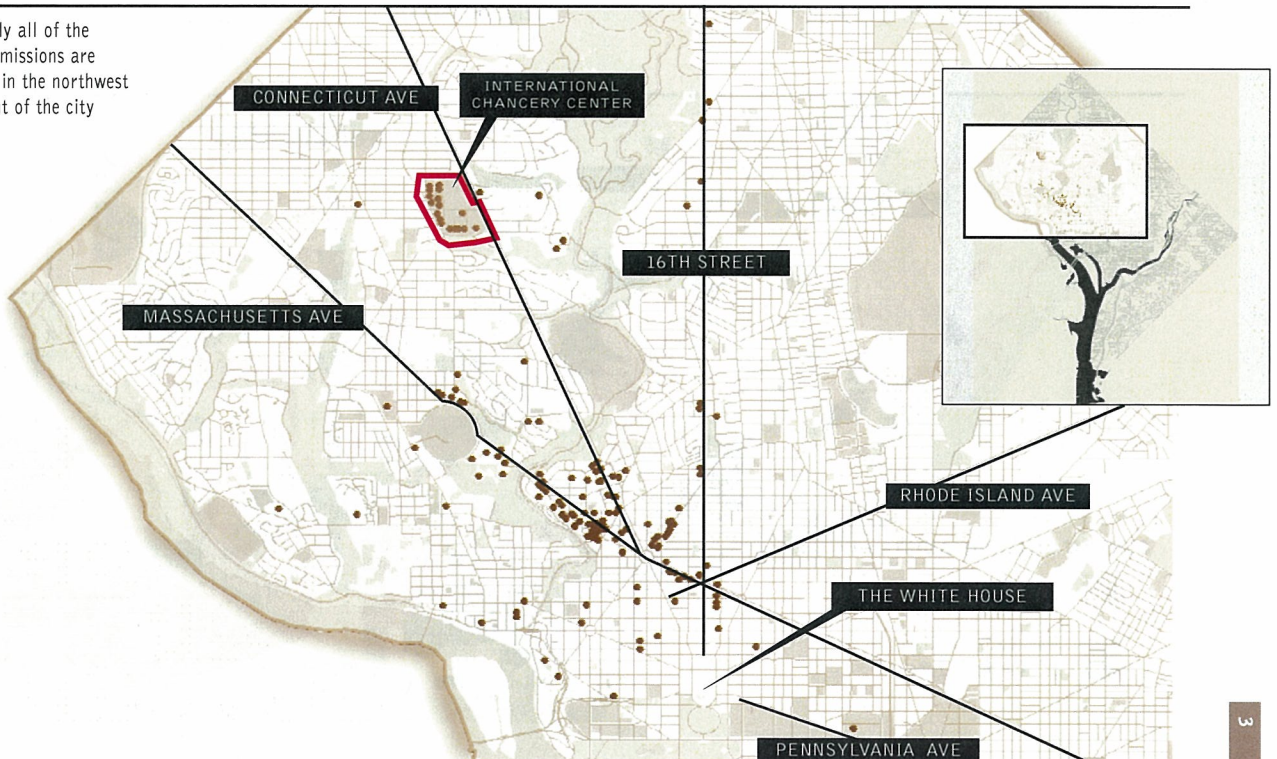
Chanceries on a residential street in NW.

and increased parking requirements. In addition, increased security requirements have become a consideration in the design of both existing and new chanceries.

Currently the majority of the foreign missions have located their chanceries in a relatively small area in the northwest quadrant of the city. The majority are located in the area bounded by 16th Street on the east and Wisconsin Avenue on the west. Within this area, the Kalorama Heights neighborhood is home to 48 chanceries, more than any other neighborhood. Chanceries have located in Northwest Washington as a result of:

- Historic development patterns,
- Availability of buildings and land,
- Proximity to other chanceries and international organizations and to the Department of State and other federal agencies, and
- Federal and local regulations that direct the location of foreign missions.

Currently all of the foreign missions are located in the northwest quadrant of the city



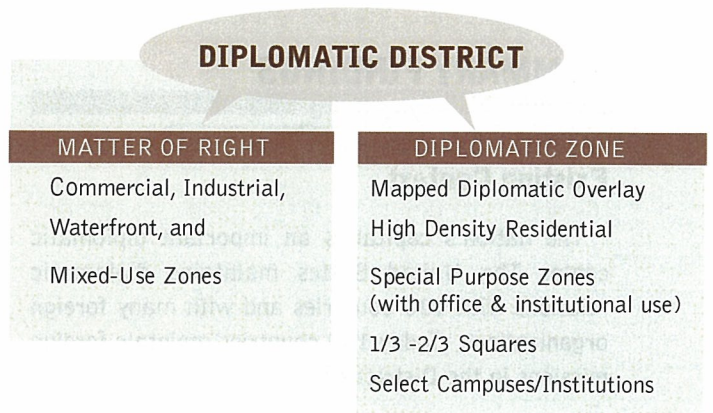


## Existing Regulatory Environment

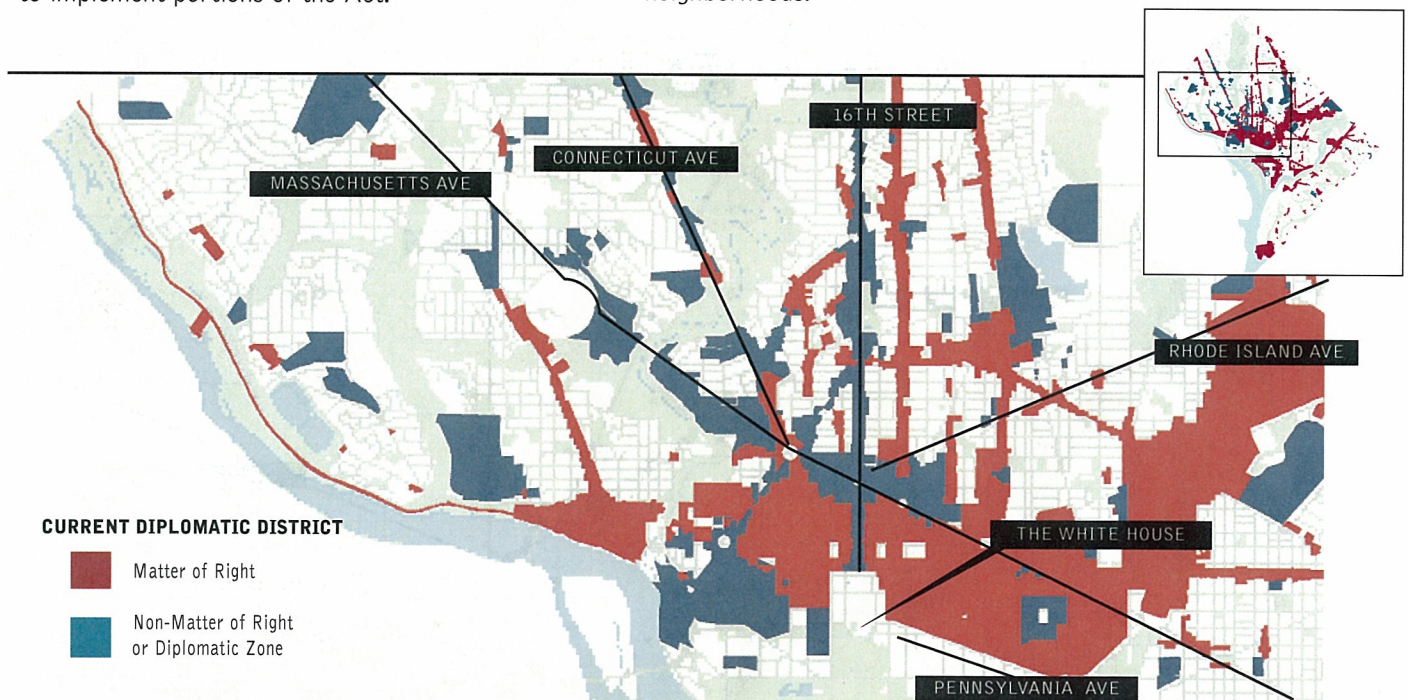
### *Foreign Missions Act and District of Columbia Zoning*

Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act of 1982 (Act) established procedures and criteria governing the location, replacement, and expansion of chanceries and annexes in the national capital. The Act identifies a Diplomatic District that includes areas within which chanceries can locate without regulatory review (Matter of Right), and areas within which foreign missions may locate subject to review by the District of Columbia Foreign Missions Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). Matter-of-Right areas include areas zoned commercial, industrial, waterfront and mixed use. Areas where chanceries may locate pending a hearing by BZA are identified as a defined Diplomatic Zone. As described in the Act, this Diplomatic Zone includes the mapped mixed-use Diplomatic (D) Overlay, areas zoned high-density residential and special purpose, and any other area, determined on the basis of existing uses, which includes office or institutional uses.

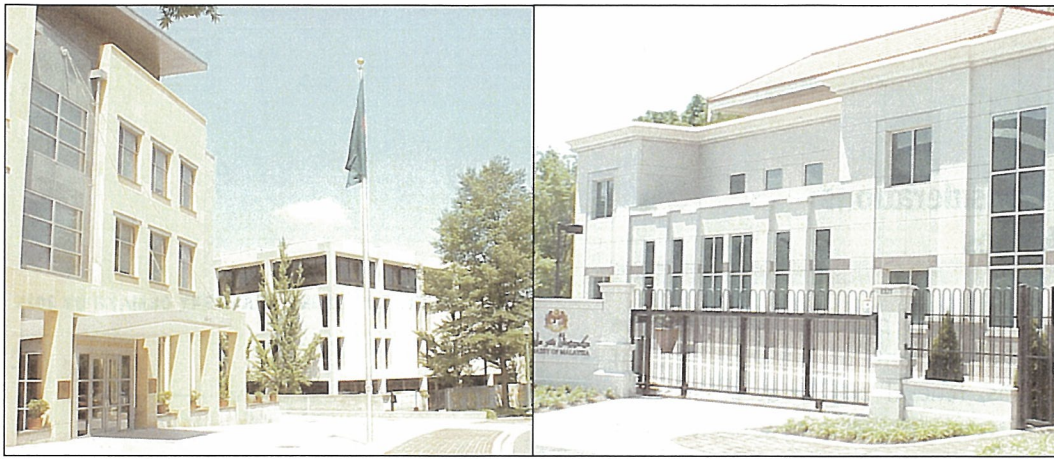
The location, replacement, or expansion of chanceries in the national capital is subject to Section 4306 of the District of Columbia Zoning Code. Subsequent to the Foreign Missions Act of 1982, the Zoning Commission of the District of Columbia amended the Zoning Regulations and Map to implement portions of the Act.



NCPC and the District of Columbia Office of Planning analysis of Section 206(b)(2)(B), "in any other area, determined on the basis of existing uses ...", resulted in the identification of the so called 1/3 - 2/3 squares. These are squares in which one third or more of the area is used for office, commercial, or other non-residential uses (excluding parkland, educational, medical and religious uses). These 1/3 - 2/3 squares were included as a component of the Diplomatic District. Although these areas have been utilized as an integral component of the regulatory environment for the past twenty years, the limitations imposed by the 1/3 - 2/3 squares continue to be a source of concern to the Department of State, and their evolving nature (as land uses change) have resulted in the criticism of citizens and local officials as allowing, even promoting, over-saturation by chanceries within low-density residential neighborhoods.







Embassies of Jordan and Malaysia in the International Chancery Center (ICC)

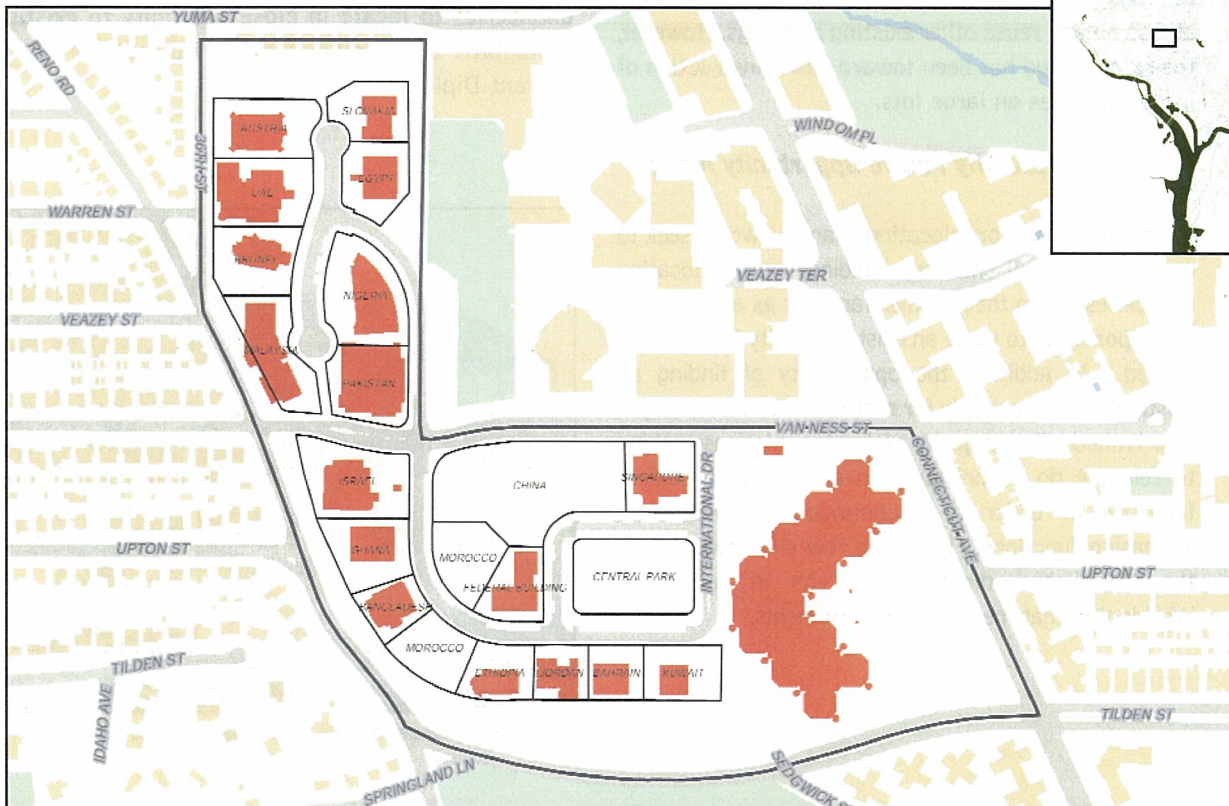
**International Center Act**

In 1968 the International Center Act established a 47-acre enclave known as the International Chancery Center (ICC), where foreign missions and international organizations lease federal land from the United States government. The ICC has allowed foreign missions to avoid the protracted negotiations and regulatory review encountered with locating on private property. All of the properties within the ICC have been leased.

**NPC Comprehensive Plan (Foreign Missions Element)**

The Foreign Missions element of the NPC Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1983, encourages foreign missions to locate or retain their chancery facilities in the Northwest quadrant of the city. While acknowledging that chanceries could locate in other areas of the city, the Comprehensive Plan policies sought to protect the unique character created by the concentration of chanceries in the established diplomatic areas. These policies have reinforced the historic pattern of chancery location and, collectively, the existing regulatory environment has discouraged the location of foreign missions in other quadrants of the city.

**INTERNATIONAL CHANCERY CENTER LEASE COMMITMENTS AND EXISTING CHANCERY BUILDINGS**





## Planning Considerations and Challenges

In recent years, several planning challenges have engaged the Department of State Office of Foreign Missions, federal and local government officials, and citizens regarding new locations of chanceries. Among these challenges is the need to ensure that adequate opportunities are available for future foreign missions in the national capital. Meeting this challenge requires identifying development opportunity areas that are available today and for the long-term, and that meet the criteria of the diplomatic community and the planning and economic objectives of both the federal and local governments.

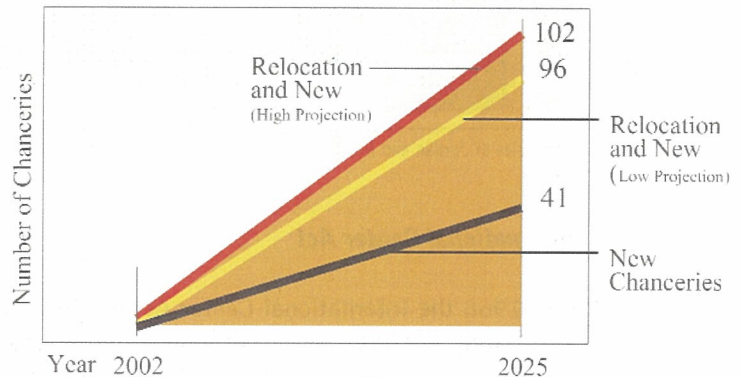
### ***Future Foreign Missions Site Demands***

Trends of the past 20 years suggest that locations for approximately 100 new or relocated chanceries could be required by 2025. Forty-eight chanceries relocated within the nation's capital in the last 20 years and, if this trend continues, some 64 to 72 chanceries will look to relocate in the next 25 years. Not all of these chanceries will require new sites as some will choose to locate in leased space; some may relocate within existing foreign missions facilities; and some will reuse other existing buildings. However, the recent trend has been toward new construction of larger facilities on large lots.

### ***The Need to Identify Future Opportunity Areas***

Although a new or relocating chancery would seek to occupy a vacated chancery building, many relocating chanceries retain their former facilities as annexes and the opportunity to reuse an existing facility is extremely limited. In addition, the opportunity of finding an existing building suitable for renovation as a chancery is also limited. The majority of foreign missions seeking to relocate do so primarily to expand their current facilities in order to accommodate growth and increasing functions. There are few sites available in the established diplomatic areas in northwest Washington that meet these requirements.

**TREND PROJECTED FUTURE CHANCERY DEMAND BY 2025**



Although the reuse of existing buildings within existing diplomatic areas is encouraged, the changing nature of operations at foreign missions has prompted the need to identify areas of the city suitable for locating larger new facilities. These include the reuse of existing mansions and the new construction of new buildings on large lots in mixed use areas, and location in dedicated office buildings in commercial areas.

Where potential opportunities do exist for chanceries to locate in close proximity to existing diplomatic areas, many tend to fall outside of the current Diplomatic District.



Greek chancery expansion within the Sheridan-Kalorama neighborhood



### ***Increasing Neighborhood Impacts***

Chanceries concentrated in a few neighborhoods have resulted in traffic congestion, greater demand for parking, an increase in noise, and other impacts associated with office development. The changing character of these neighborhoods, in combination with the existence of several poorly maintained and vacant chanceries, have led the Kalorama Heights neighborhood in particular to resist the addition of future chanceries.

### ***The Need to Revise the Existing Regulatory Environment***

Twenty years have passed since the Foreign Missions Act of 1982, the NCPC Comprehensive Plan of 1983, and the Zoning Commission's adoption of amendments specific to the location of foreign missions within the national capital. Over the years, both the nature of foreign missions and zoning within the District of Columbia have undergone significant change. This regulatory environment has not kept pace with these changes, resulting in an over-concentration of chancery facilities within the same residential neighborhoods and limiting opportunities for foreign missions to locate their chanceries in areas that meet current requirements and criteria of the diplomatic community.



Vacant former Italian Embassy on 16th Street

## **Opportunity Areas**

Foreign missions locate based on a variety of reasons, including: the availability of buildings and sites in prominent locations, proximity to other foreign missions and established neighborhoods, access to public transportation and security. Planning criteria are based on goals such as limiting non-residential uses in residential neighborhoods, maximizing the reuse of existing structures, and advancing current planning initiatives. Together these considerations form a complementary set of criteria to assist in the identification of the most desirable locations for future chancery development.

Opportunities for locating future foreign missions exist throughout the national capital, but not all of these areas currently meet diplomatic and/or federal and District planning objectives and criteria.

Areas that offer significant immediate to mid-term opportunities include established development areas along the 16th Street corridor. The Anacostia Waterfront redevelopment areas of the South Capitol Street corridor and Near Southeast offer major long-term development opportunities.

### ***Established Development Areas***

While there continue to be site opportunities within the Diplomatic District, current opportunities also exist in the 16th Street corridor and the adjacent Columbia Heights and associated revitalizing areas. Buildings potentially reusable for foreign mission facilities are available within these areas, as are a number of properties that are suitable for new construction. To avail these opportunities to the future location of chanceries requires revision of the current regulatory environment to include these areas in the Diplomatic District.



### **Anacostia Waterfront (Redevelopment) Areas**

While Columbia Heights and the 16th Street corridor offer opportunities for reuse and infill development, long-term opportunities exist for the development of new foreign missions as part of the planned revitalization of the Anacostia Waterfront in Southeast Washington. The South Capitol Street corridor is expected to undergo major redevelopment. Significant plans for the Southeast Federal Center are proceeding quickly and plans for the extension of

Massachusetts Avenue to the river (within the planned redevelopment of Reservation 13), along with the redevelopment of private land within the Poplar Point area, offer substantial opportunities for the future location of foreign missions. Moreover, these locations are, for the most part, within the Matter-of-Right zoning identified in the Foreign Missions Act.

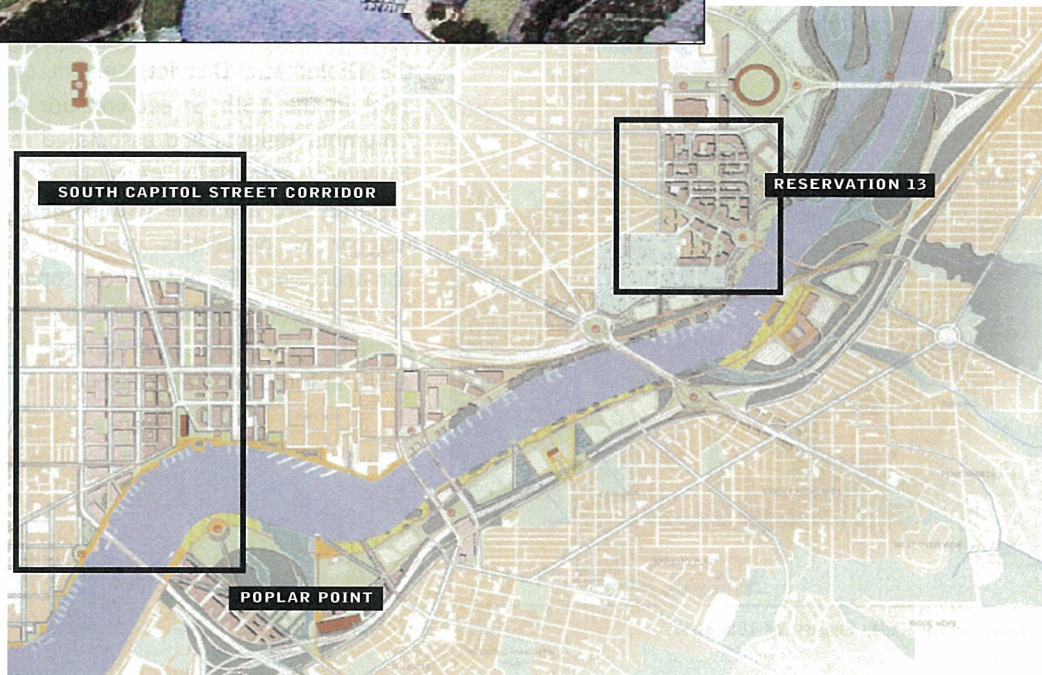


**SOUTH CAPITOL STREET CORRIDOR**

**POPLAR POINT**

**SOUTHEAST FEDERAL CENTER**

Source: The Anacostia Waterfront Initiative Draft Framework Plan, District of Columbia Office of Planning, January 2003



**SOUTH CAPITOL STREET CORRIDOR**

**RESERVATION 13**

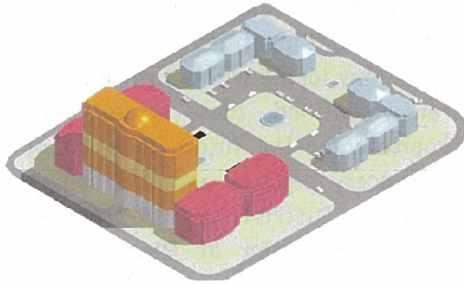
**POPLAR POINT**



## ***Opportunities for New Foreign Missions Centers***

Although it took over 20 years to reach capacity, the majority of sites were committed over a relatively short period in the last decade and the current International Chancery Center (ICC) is fully leased. The ICC has proven effective in accommodating large foreign missions relocating due to increasing facilities requirements and as security requirements increase the appeal of a center may increase.

New Foreign Missions Center Model



A new foreign missions center model that is denser and more urban in character, incorporating a combination of attached row and mid-rise chancery buildings as an alternative, is recommended as more appropriate to future center requirements and location opportunities than the existing International Chancery Center (ICC).

Candidate sites identified include sites on federal lands, District of Columbia properties, and private sites. Federal properties include: the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home, the west campus of St. Elizabeths, and the U.S. Naval Security Station. Other candidate site areas include the South Capitol Street Corridor and Reservation 13.

### ***The U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home (USSAH) Represents a New Foreign Missions Center Opportunity***

In 1997 Congress granted the USSAH permission to sell or lease excess land in order to generate income to finance its future operations. USSAH is currently proposing to lease 45 acres of undeveloped land in the southwestern corner of the main campus. This is more than is required to develop a future foreign missions center. NCPD staff has illustrated the possible development of a new center with the denser, more urban prototype. This could be implemented in the near- to mid-range future.

## ***Other Federal Reservations***

St. Elizabeths Hospital in Southeast DC is another federal property that could accommodate a future foreign missions center. This opportunity exists in conjunction with the District of Columbia's planned redevelopment of this campus. The U.S. Naval Security Station might be another federal site with long-range potential; however, the Department of the Navy has indicated that it will likely occupy the site into the foreseeable future. The newly formed Department of Homeland Security headquarters is also currently located on this installation.

The District of Columbia, which has a continuing concern regarding the loss of property from the tax rolls, supports the development of a new foreign missions center on federal land, which is tax exempt.

## ***Private Site Opportunities***

Federal and District lands are not the only opportunities for the future location of foreign missions centers in the national capital. Private site development opportunities also exist in the South Capitol Street Corridor and Reservation 13 redevelopment areas of the Anacostia waterfront. These will offer potential for the development of small or 'mini' foreign missions centers.

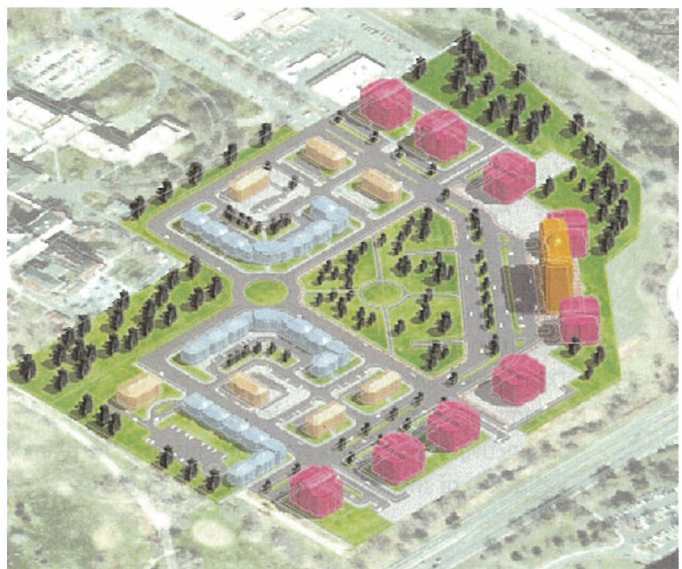


Illustration of the new Foreign Missions Center model on the USSAH site

## Defining A New Diplomatic District

### Revisions to the Regulatory Environment

Until 1957, chanceries were permitted to locate anywhere within the national capital. New zoning regulations allowed these facilities to locate in residential areas only with the approval of the District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA). The 1984 Fulbright Act excluded chanceries from all residential areas except high-density zones and then only with the specific approval of the BZA.

Adopted in 1977, the Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element of the National Capital Planning Commission's Comprehensive Plan established criteria allowing chanceries to locate as a Matter of Right (without BZA approval) in certain areas and the Zoning Commission adopted new regulations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. A new zoning classification, the mixed use Diplomatic (D) Overlay Zone, was established to define permissible locations for chancery facilities.

The passage of the Foreign Missions Act in 1982 significantly changed where and how chanceries and annexes were allowed to locate within the District of Columbia. Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act clearly defined areas where chanceries could locate as a Matter of Right, and broadened the areas where chanceries could locate dependent upon BZA review.

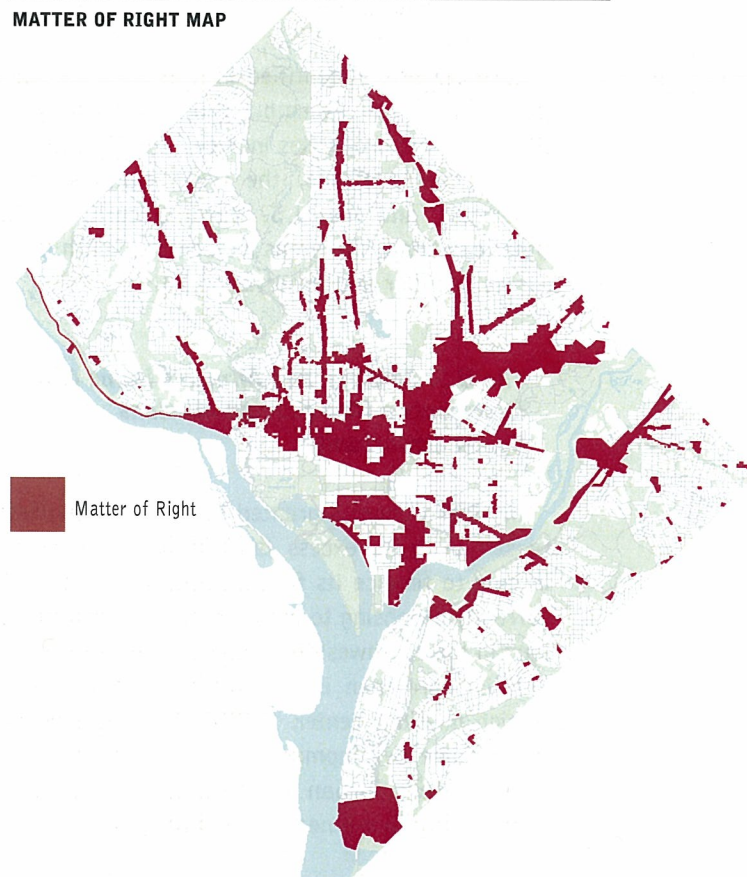
The Foreign Missions and International Organizations Element of the NCPC Comprehensive Plan was revised and adopted in 1983 to conform with the Foreign Missions Act. District of Columbia Zoning Regulations were also amended in response to the Act. The need to redefine the regulatory environment has emerged once again. Although the Foreign Missions Act does not require revision, reinterpretation of those components that were identified in 1983 will result in the definition of a new Diplomatic District that can provide the diplomatic community with opportunities to grow in a way that is supportive of both their requirements and the planning initiatives of the federal and local governments.

The Diplomatic District is composed of Matter-of-Right areas and the components of the Diplomatic Zone that are subject to BZA review.

### *Matter of Right*

As defined in the Foreign Missions Act, the Matter of Right identifies those areas where foreign missions may locate without review by the BZA. As currently defined, these areas are considered appropriate for the future location of chanceries and chancery annexes and this component of the Diplomatic District is not recommended for revision. The Matter of Right may be modified through rezoning sections of the area from those zoning categories included in the definition of the Matter of Right to other zoning categories. In addition, should it be felt appropriate, redefinition of the Matter of Right would require amendment of the Foreign Missions Act.

**MATTER OF RIGHT MAP**





## The Diplomatic Zone

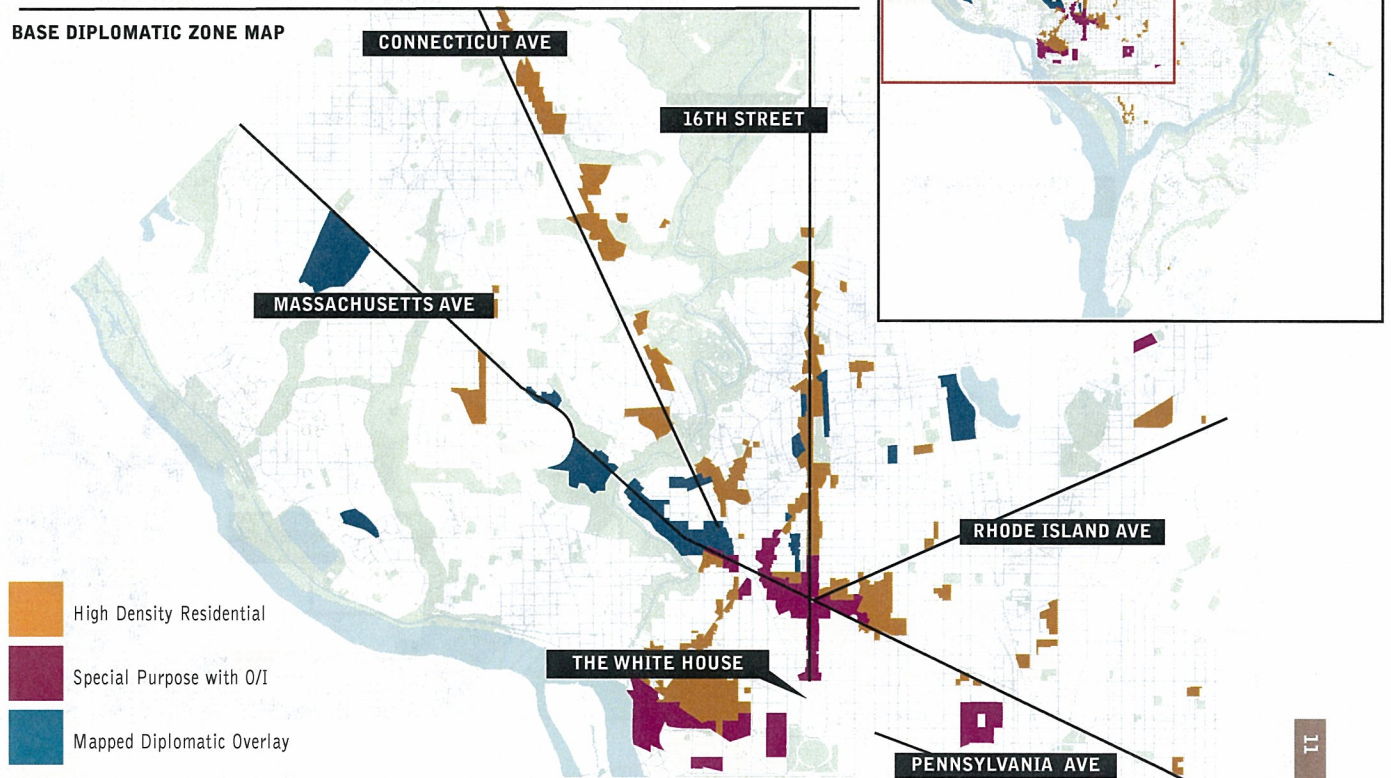
The Diplomatic Zone is that component of the Diplomatic District that permits the location of chanceries pending BZA review. This zone is composed of components either specifically defined in the Foreign Missions Act, or defined through interpretation of the Act by the collaborative efforts of the District of Columbia and NCPD. Both the interpretation and application of this zone require updating or revision due to changes in zoning and land use over the past twenty years, as well as the concerns of oversaturation of chanceries in some neighborhoods and a lack of opportunities for the future location of chanceries in areas that meet the requirements of the diplomatic community.

The Foreign Missions Act specifically states that chanceries, subject to disapproval by the BZA, shall be permitted to locate in sections of the District of Columbia zoned High-Density Residential (R-5-D and R-5-E), or Special Purpose (SP1 or SP2) that contain at least one office or institutional land use. Although the areas identified by these zones may be modified through rezoning, their elimination from the Diplomatic Zone would require amendment of the Foreign Missions Act.

## Mapped, Mixed-Use Diplomatic (D) Overlay

The existing mapped, mixed-use Diplomatic (D) Overlay District was created in 1977 to incorporate existing chanceries. There are 57 chanceries located within this area and its elimination would require their grandfathering in that they are not located in any other component of the Diplomatic District. In general, this component should be retained as part of the new Diplomatic Zone; however, there are areas of this component that overlay low-density residential neighborhoods and may be inappropriate for future chancery development. In this case some revision may be appropriate. The overlay also offers flexibility in identifying additional opportunities areas for the future location of chanceries, while ensuring that this occurs in areas felt to be appropriate based on use. Revision of this zoning overlay is solely the authority of the District of Columbia Zoning Commission.

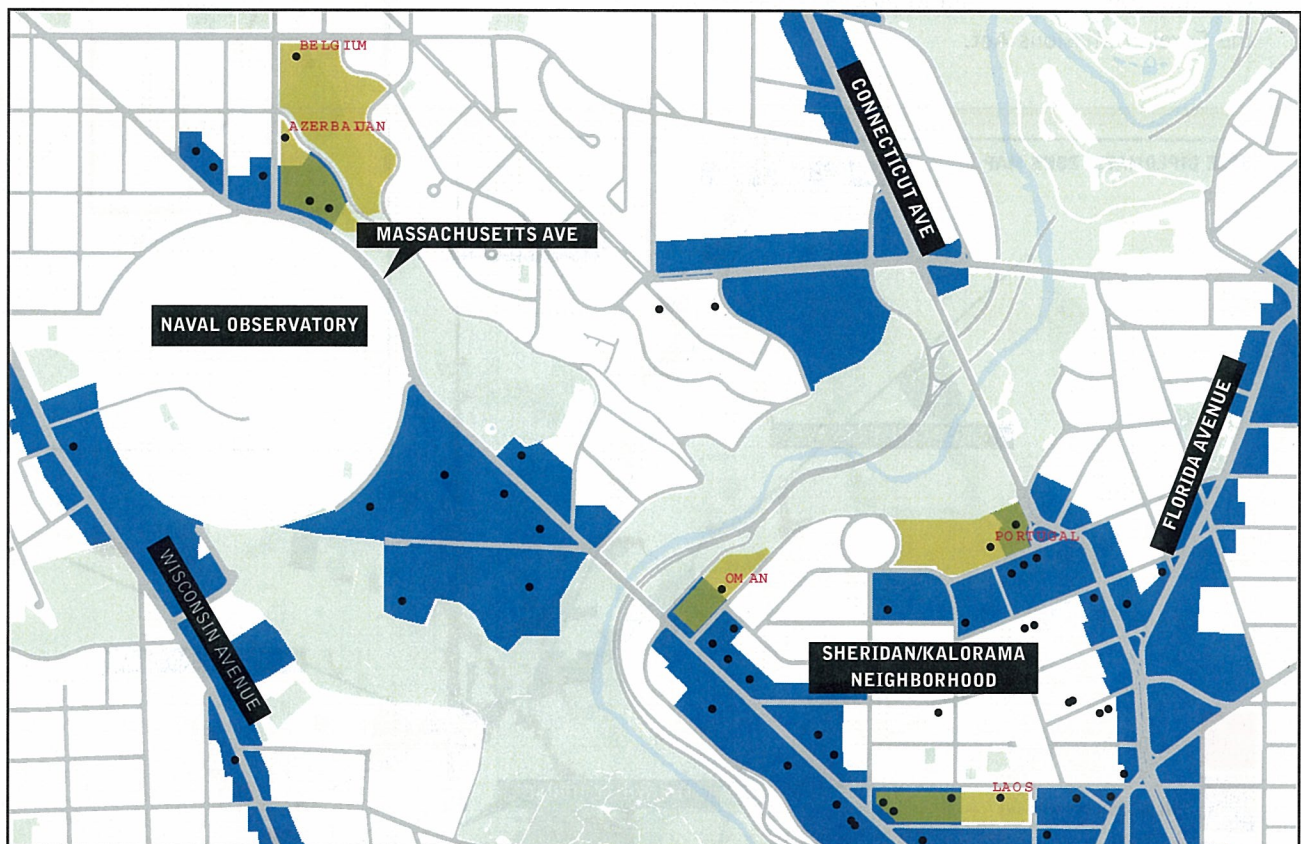
BASE DIPLOMATIC ZONE MAP



### **1/3 - 2/3 Squares**

The current Diplomatic Zone also contains a component commonly referred to as the 1/3 - 2/3 Squares. This was derived to implement Section 206 of the Foreign Missions Act. The methodology used to create the 1/3 - 2/3 squares was based upon conditions that existed 20 years ago. Applying that methodology today results in the identification of squares that are different than those originally identified. Retention of this component does not support goals associated with the future location of chanceries (e.g., allowing additional chanceries in residential neighborhoods that are already impacted by substantial non-residential development). Nor will this component result in a regulatory environment that is capable of evolving with changes in zoning and land use over time. Deleting the 1/3 - 2/3 squares from the Diplomatic Zone will require the "grandfathering" of the five existing chanceries of Azerbaijan, Belgium, Laos, Oman and Portugal. All of the other chanceries that are located in these squares are also located within other components proposed to remain a part of the new Diplomatic Zone.

**CHANCERIES THAT FALL SOLELY IN 1/3 - 2/3 SQUARES (YELLOW) AND WOULD BE "GRANDFATHERED" WITH THE ELIMINATION OF THIS COMPONENT OF THE DIPLOMATIC ZONE**





### ***Alternatives for Revising the Diplomatic Zone***

In order to remove sites from the future location of foreign missions in the Kalorama Heights neighborhood and other oversaturated areas, consideration of the removal of the mapped, mixed-use Diplomatic (D) Overlay areas in these neighborhoods is recommended.

In order to provide additional sites for the location of future foreign missions along the 16th Street corridor and adjacent revitalizing areas, consideration is recommended for expansion of the Diplomatic Zone to include sections of these areas, as determined appropriate. Areas can be designated that would expand the possible sites and help protect low and moderate density residential areas.

There are a number of methods that can be explored in revising the existing Diplomatic Zone.

One way to both restrict existing and provide new opportunities is to revise the mapped mixed-use Diplomatic (D) Overlay. Although historically this overlay has followed underlying zoning boundaries, it can be drawn to follow streets, alleys, and property boundaries. Through careful analysis of existing land use conditions, current development trends and planning initiatives, new areas can be drawn and included in the overlay.

Another option to increase opportunity areas is to add some portion of an existing zoning district to the Diplomatic Zone. An example of this would be to allow chanceries in the Medium Density Residential R-5-C District. If this proves to be too broad this can be conditioned by the presence of an office or institutional use and/or requiring a section to contain a certain percentage of nonresidential land uses. The district can also be further refined through rezoning.

Rezoning sections of the base zones that comprise the Matter of Right would result in changing this area. This can also be done to either expand or contract the High Density Residential and Special Purpose components of the Diplomatic Zone.

Finally, amending the Foreign Missions Act would result in a redefinition of the Diplomatic District.



**FORTY-EIGHT CHANCERIES ARE LOCATED IN THE KALORAMA NEIGHBORHOOD**

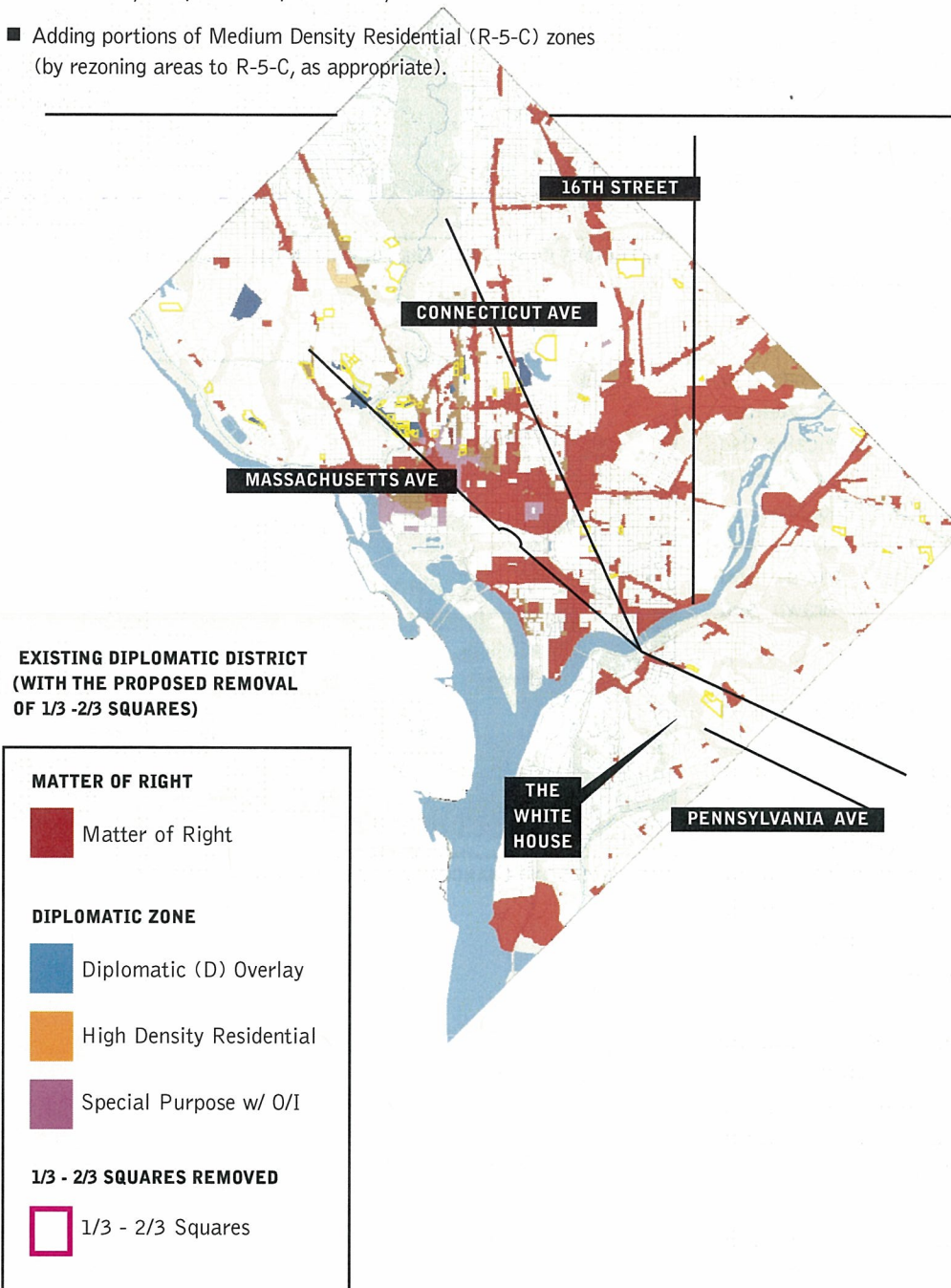


**CHANCERIES AND CHANCERY ANNEXES ON 16TH STREET, NW**

## A New Diplomatic District

A new Diplomatic District is recommended to incorporate the existing Matter-of-Right and a revised Diplomatic Zone. Methods applicable to revision of the Diplomatic Zone include:

- Deletion of the 1/3 - 2/3 Squares,
- Revision of the mapped, mixed-use Diplomatic (D) Overlay,
- Rezoning (to or from zones that comprise the Matter of Right, High Density Residential, or Special Purpose zones),
- Adding portions of Medium Density Residential (R-5-C) zones (by rezoning areas to R-5-C, as appropriate).





## Next Steps

### **NCPC Comprehensive Plan Foreign Missions Element Revision**

The Foreign Missions Element of the NCPC Comprehensive Plan adopted in 1983. This element currently references the outdated Matter-of-Right and non-Matter-of-Right (Diplomatic Zone) maps developed subsequent to the Foreign Missions Act of 1982.

NCPC is in the process of revising all federal elements of the *Comprehensive Plan for the National Capital*. An updated Foreign Missions Element that reflects the findings of this study is being prepared and is scheduled for commission approval to distribute for public review and comment in the fall of this year (2003).

### **District of Columbia Zoning Text and Map Amendments**

NCPC will work closely with the District of Columbia offices of Zoning and Planning to prepare zoning amendments to accommodate the future location of foreign missions within the national capital. Findings contained in this report serve as the basis for these revisions. More specifically, zoning text amendments are required to modify the Diplomatic Zone, and changes to zoning maps are required to incorporate both zoning changes that have occurred since 1984 and the revisions proposed for the Diplomatic District. All zoning text and map amendments require adoption by the Zoning Commission.

### **Department of State Foreign Missions and International Organizations Real Property Manual Revision**

The Foreign Missions and International Organizations Real Property Manual was published jointly by the Department of State, the National Capital Planning Commission, and the District of Columbia in 1987 as a guide for foreign missions and others interested or involved in the development process. This manual describes the step-by-step process and procedures for a foreign mission to acquire, locate, relocate, replace, expand and improve embassies, chanceries and office space in the national capital. The steps described are based on the Foreign Missions Act and other federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations.

This manual should be revised to reflect recommended changes in the Diplomatic District. The process of updating this manual should be done concurrently with the zoning revisions.

### **New Foreign Missions Centers Feasibility Study**

All of the sites in the International Chancery Center (ICC) are committed. Although it has taken over two decades to build out this center, the ability to offer foreign missions the opportunity to lease federal land provides benefits to these countries and to the United States. Although the ICC may not meet the location criteria of all foreign missions, further study is required to determine the feasibility of the Department of State providing a future foreign missions center or centers within the national capital.

Specifically, this study will determine the feasibility of a new foreign missions center or centers, including analyzing programmatic requirements and sites, identifying development scenarios and strategies, developing cost estimates and funding sources to include partnerships with other federal agencies and possibly with the private sector. The study will draft legislation for a new Foreign Missions Center Act, as appropriate.

## Glossary

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**Chancery** - Defined in the Foreign Missions Act as "the principal offices of a foreign mission used for diplomatic or related purposes, and annexes to such offices (including ancillary offices and support facilities), and includes the site and any building on such site which is used for such purposes."

**Diplomatic District** - Areas in which chanceries may locate within the District of Columbia. This district is comprised of two different components, the Matter-of-Right and the Diplomatic Zone.

**Diplomatic Zone** - The component of the Diplomatic District that permits the location of chanceries subject to the disapproval of the District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment. The components that make up the Diplomatic Zone include: the mixed-use diplomatic overlay, the high-density residential zoning district, and those sections zoned special purpose (SP1 or SP2) that contain at least one (1) office or institutional land use.

**Foreign Mission** - Defined in the Foreign Missions Act as "any mission or agency or entity in the United States which is involved in the diplomatic consular, or other activities of, or which is substantially owned or effectively controlled by a foreign government, or organization (other than an international organization) representing a territory or political entity which has been granted diplomatic or other official privileges and immunities under the laws of the United States..."

**High-Density Residential Zoning District** - Those sections throughout the District of Columbia that are zoned R-5-D and R-5-E.

**Institutional** - (for purposes of this report) Any property within the District of Columbia having a land use description of: medical, museums, libraries, galleries, or health care facility.

**Low-Density Residential Zoning District** - Those sections throughout the District of Columbia that are zoned R-1 and R-2.

**Matter-of-Right** - The component of the Diplomatic District that permits the location of chanceries as a "matter-of-right." The components that make up the Matter-of-Right include the Commercial, Industrial, Waterfront, and Mixed Use (CR) zoning districts.

**Medium-Density Residential Zoning District** - Those sections throughout the District of Columbia that are zoned R-5-B and R-5-C.

**Mixed-Use Diplomatic Overlay** - Also known as the "Mixed Use Diplomatic District," 'D' Overlay, or Mixed-Use Diplomatic Overlay, permits the location of chanceries, subject to the disapproval of the District of Columbia Board of Zoning Adjustment. It is an overlay district and is mapped in combination with the underlying zoning. Chanceries wishing to locate within the Diplomatic Overlay are required to abide by the provisions of the underlying zoning.

**Moderate-Density Residential Zoning District** - Those sections throughout the District of Columbia that are zoned R-3, R-4, R-5-A, and R-5-B.

**Office** - (for purposes of this report) Any property within the District of Columbia having a land use description of: office-small, office-large, office-condominium horizontal, office-condominium vertical, commercial-office-condominium, commercial-office, misc., banks and financial, or embassy/chancery/etc.

**Special Purpose** - A section of the mixed-use zoning district (SP1 and SP2).

**Square** - Land designated as a square on the records of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia.

**Zoning District** - Sections of the District of Columbia delineated on the Zoning Map for which the Zone District governing the use of land and the use, density, bulk, and height of buildings or other structures are the same.





