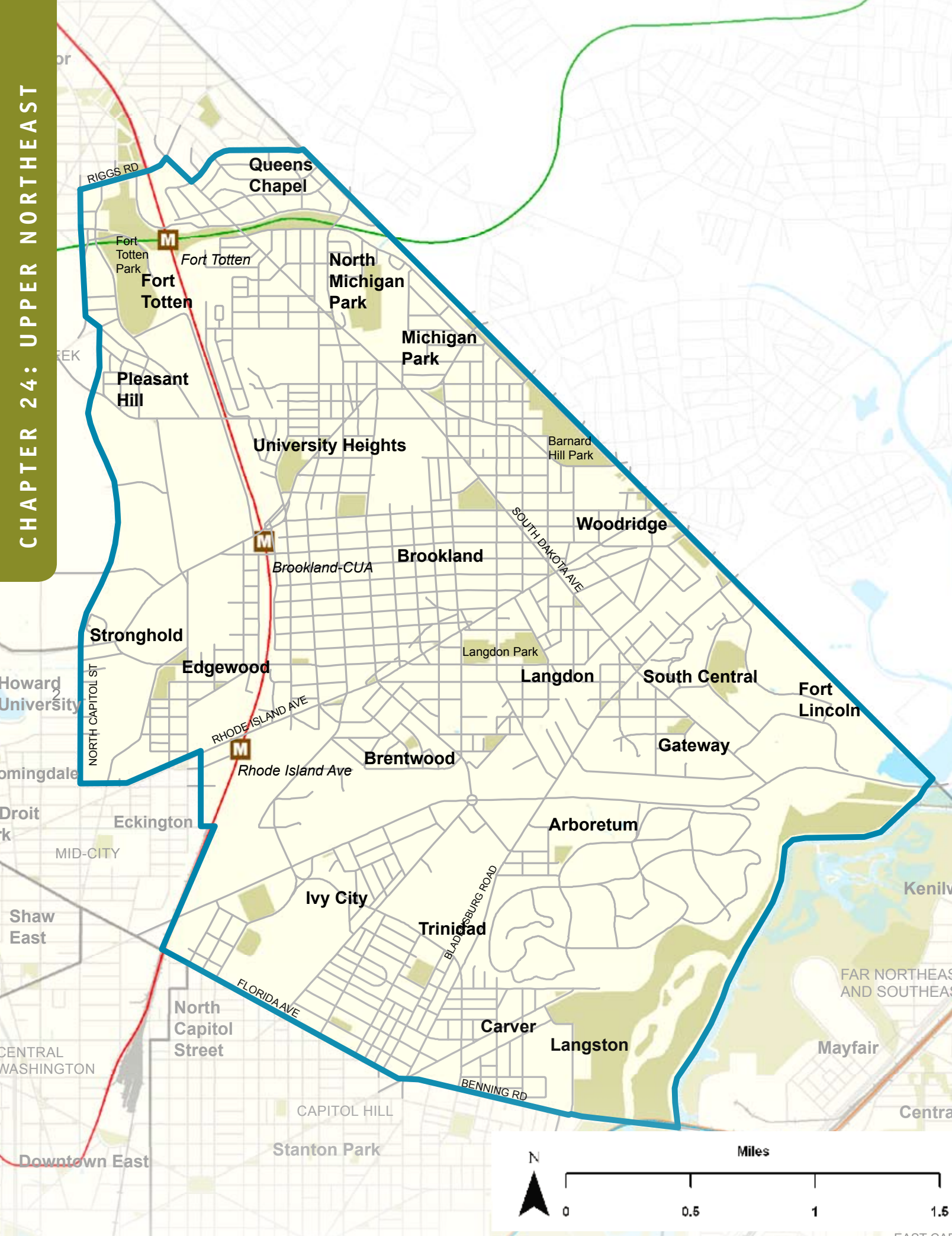


# **Chapter 24 Upper Northeast Area Element**

Friends of Rhode Island Avenue NE, scroll down 2 pages to read DC's Comprehensive Plan, as it pertains to Rhode Island Avenue NE.



**Friends of RIA, start reading here**

a shopping center, and offices or distribution facilities should follow in the coming years. The increased population presents an opportunity to revitalize the adjacent Bladensburg corridor, and bring back some of the neighborhood-oriented shopping that disappeared from the corridor years ago. <sup>2414.2</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.4.1: Fort Lincoln New Town***

Support the continued development of Fort Lincoln New Town consistent with approved plans for the site. Fort Lincoln should be recognized as an important opportunity for family-oriented, owner-occupied housing, large-scale retail development, and additional employment. <sup>2414.3</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.4.2: Upper Bladensburg Corridor***

Support additional neighborhood-serving retail uses along the Upper Bladensburg Road corridor (from South Dakota Avenue to Eastern Avenue). Encourage the gradual transition of this area from an industrial “strip” to a more pedestrian-oriented retail area, providing services to the adjacent Woodridge, South Central, and Fort Lincoln neighborhoods. <sup>2414.4</sup>

***Action UNE-2.4.A: Streetscape and Façade Improvements***

Develop programs to improve the streetscape and commercial facades along Bladensburg Road from Eastern Avenue to South Dakota Avenue. <sup>2414.5</sup>

***Action UNE-2.4.B: South Dakota Avenue Transportation Study***

Implement the recommendations in the DDOT South Dakota Avenue Transportation study, intended to improve traffic safety, reduce conflicts caused by heavy truck traffic, and reduce speeding. <sup>2414.6</sup>

**UNE-2.5 Rhode Island Avenue-Brentwood Metro Station and Corridor** <sup>2415</sup>

This focus area includes the Metro station vicinity and the 2.7-mile corridor extending from North Capitol Street east to the Maryland line. The Rhode Island Avenue-Brentwood Metro station opened in 1976 and was one of the first stations in the system. Despite the fact that the station is just one mile from Downtown DC, its current configuration has a suburban feel. The station is adjoined by one of the largest surface parking lots in the District of Columbia on its southeast, and by an aging shopping center on the northwest. Other uses in the vicinity include the new “big box” retail center on Brentwood Road, light industrial uses, and strip commercial uses on Rhode Island Avenue. <sup>2415.1</sup>

Land around the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station is underutilized and does not provide the community focal point it could. The WMATA parking lot presents the most immediate and obvious opportunity for redevelopment, but over time additional properties may transition to new

The Upper Bladensburg corridor has suffered from disinvestment for many years. Although it continues to support some neighborhood retail activity, it is dominated by automotive repair shops, auto parts shops, car lots, and vacant businesses.



Metrorail near Rhode Island Avenue

uses. Medium to high density housing is strongly encouraged in this area, and traffic improvements are recommended to make the station more accessible for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. Improvements to the Metropolitan Branch Trail are planned through this area. <sup>2415.2</sup>

Extending east from the station, Rhode Island Avenue is a wide tree-lined street with well kept homes and apartments, scattered commercial businesses and churches, and public uses like fire stations and parks. A walkable shopping district between 20<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Streets NE serves as the retail heart of the Woodridge community. <sup>2415.3</sup>

The general character of the Avenue is not expected to change significantly over the next 20 years, but there are opportunities for moderate density infill development in several locations. Filling in “gaps” in the street wall would be desirable in the commercial areas, creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment. While most of the street is zoned for commercial uses, development that includes ground floor retail uses and upper story housing would be desirable. The surrounding area is under-served by retail uses and would benefit from new restaurants, local-serving stores, and other services. <sup>2415.4</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.5.1: Rhode Island Avenue/Brentwood Metro Station***

Encourage the development of additional medium-to high-density mixed use development around the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station, particularly on the surface parking lots in the station vicinity. <sup>2415.5</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.5.2: Redevelopment of Older Commercial and Industrial Sites***

Encourage the long-term reuse of older commercial and industrial sites in the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station vicinity with higher-value mixed uses, including housing. Future mixed-use development should be pedestrian-oriented, with design features that encourage walking to the Metro station and nearby shopping. <sup>2415.6</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.5.3: Pedestrian Improvements***

Enhance pedestrian connections between the neighborhoods around the Rhode Island Avenue Metro station and the station itself. This should include improvements to the “public realm” along Rhode Island Avenue, with safer pedestrian crossings, street trees, and other amenities that make the street more attractive. <sup>2415.7</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.5.4: Rhode Island Avenue Corridor***

Strengthen the Rhode Island Avenue corridor from 13<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> Street NE as a pedestrian-oriented mixed use district that better meets the needs of residents in the Brentwood, Brookland, Woodridge, and South Central neighborhoods. Infill development that combines ground floor retail and upper-story office and/or housing should be encouraged. <sup>2415.8</sup>

*Action UNE-2.5.A: Rhode Island Avenue Station Area Planning*

Work with WMATA, the local Advisory Neighborhood Commission, local businesses, and the community to ensure that plans for the Rhode Island Avenue Metrorail parking area enhance the surrounding neighborhoods and address issues such as traffic, parking, and station access. <sup>2415.9</sup>

**UNE-2.6 Brookland/CUA Metro Station Area** <sup>2416</sup>

The Brookland/Catholic University of America (CUA) Metrorail Station is located between the Brookland commercial district (12th Street NE) on the east and the Catholic University/Trinity University campuses on the west. The station is abutted by low-density residential uses on the east, and a mix of light industrial, commercial, and institutional uses on the north, south, and west. Despite the presence of the Metro station, much of the vacant land in the station vicinity is zoned for industrial uses. Major property owners include WMATA and Catholic University. <sup>2416.1</sup>

The Office of Planning is scheduled to conduct a comprehensive study of the area surrounding the Metro station during 2006 and 2007, including an assessment of land use and zoning, the retail environment, transit/traffic safety, urban design, cultural tourism, and heritage development. The goal of the study is to guide future development in the station vicinity in a manner that respects the low density scale of the nearby residential area (particularly the area along 10<sup>th</sup> St NE and east of 10<sup>th</sup> Street NE), mitigates parking and traffic impacts, and improves connections to nearby institutions and shopping areas. <sup>2416.2</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.6.1: Brookland/CUA Metro Station Area***

Encourage moderate-density mixed use development on vacant and underutilized property in the vicinity of the Brookland/CUA Metro station, including the parking lot east of the station. Special care should be taken to protect the existing low-scale residential uses along and east of 10<sup>th</sup> Street NE, retain the number of bus bays at the station, and develop strategies to deal with overflow parking and cut-through traffic in the station vicinity. <sup>2416.3</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.6.2: Pedestrian Access***

Improve pedestrian safety and access to the Brookland Metro station, particularly eastward along Monroe Street (linking to the 12th Street NE shopping area) and Michigan Avenue (linking to Catholic University). <sup>2416.4</sup>

***Policy UNE-2.6.3: Long-Term Land Use Changes***

Support long-term land use changes on industrially zoned land in the station vicinity, particularly in the area immediately north of Michigan Avenue and in the area to the southwest along 8<sup>th</sup> Street. Consistent with the



*Brookland Metro Station*