

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

2.1 LAND USE AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The study area is located in the District’s Rock Creek West Planning Area, which is characterized by stable and well-maintained neighborhoods surrounded by large natural and cultural resources such as Rock Creek Park and the National Zoo. Existing land uses within the primary and secondary study areas are shown in **Figure 2**. Despite its overall residential character, Rock Creek West has more jobs than households, with retail shopping districts located along the Connecticut Avenue NW corridor. Based on the District’s comprehensive plan, future land uses are expected to remain similar to existing land uses.

Overall, from north to south in the primary study area, Connecticut Avenue NW generally transitions from lower-density uses north of Nebraska Avenue NW to higher-density, more mixed-use parcels south towards the DC core, with the densest development around the three Metrorail stations. The predominant land use throughout is low to moderate density residential, which is typified by rowhouses, low-rise garden-style apartment buildings, and single-family homes. Commercial and office use is the next highest classification. While small restaurants and businesses are located throughout the corridor, the highest density of both are within the Van Ness, Cleveland Park, and Woodley Park neighborhoods (i.e., the Metrorail station locations). The University of the District of Columbia (UDC) and the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (Intelsat) are the largest institutional uses along the corridor and, being adjacent to each other on either side of Tilden Street NW, they are quite predominant in the Van Ness-UDC Metrorail surrounds. There are several hotels along the corridor, including the Marriott Hotel/Historic Wardman Tower at Woodley Road NW.

Community facilities are depicted in **Figure 3**. As typical for a major thoroughfare through an urban area, numerous parks, churches, educational institutions, fire stations, and public service facilities are interspersed along Connecticut Avenue NW to serve the Chevy Chase, Cleveland Park, and Woodley Park communities. Engine 31 Fire Station and the Peter Muhlenberg Memorial are located on Connecticut Avenue NW near its intersection with Fessenden Street NW in the northern end of the primary project area, and Engine 28 Fire Station, a post office, and a DC public library are located on Connecticut Avenue NW in Cleveland Park. Details on parks are described in Section 2.5 and historic properties in Section 2.6.



Typical low- and high- density residential buildings along Connecticut Avenue NW (near Macomb Street NW).

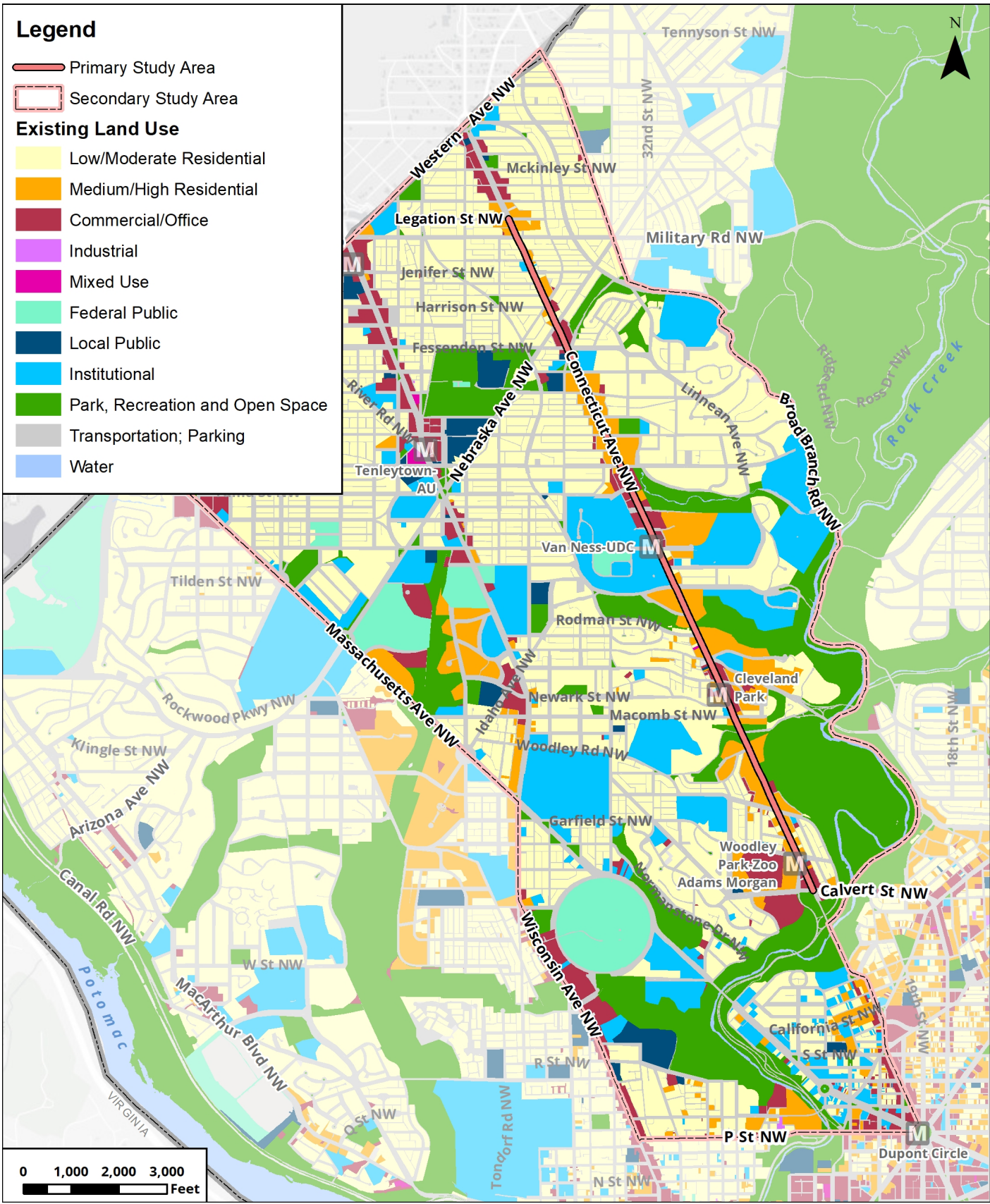


Figure 2 | Land Use



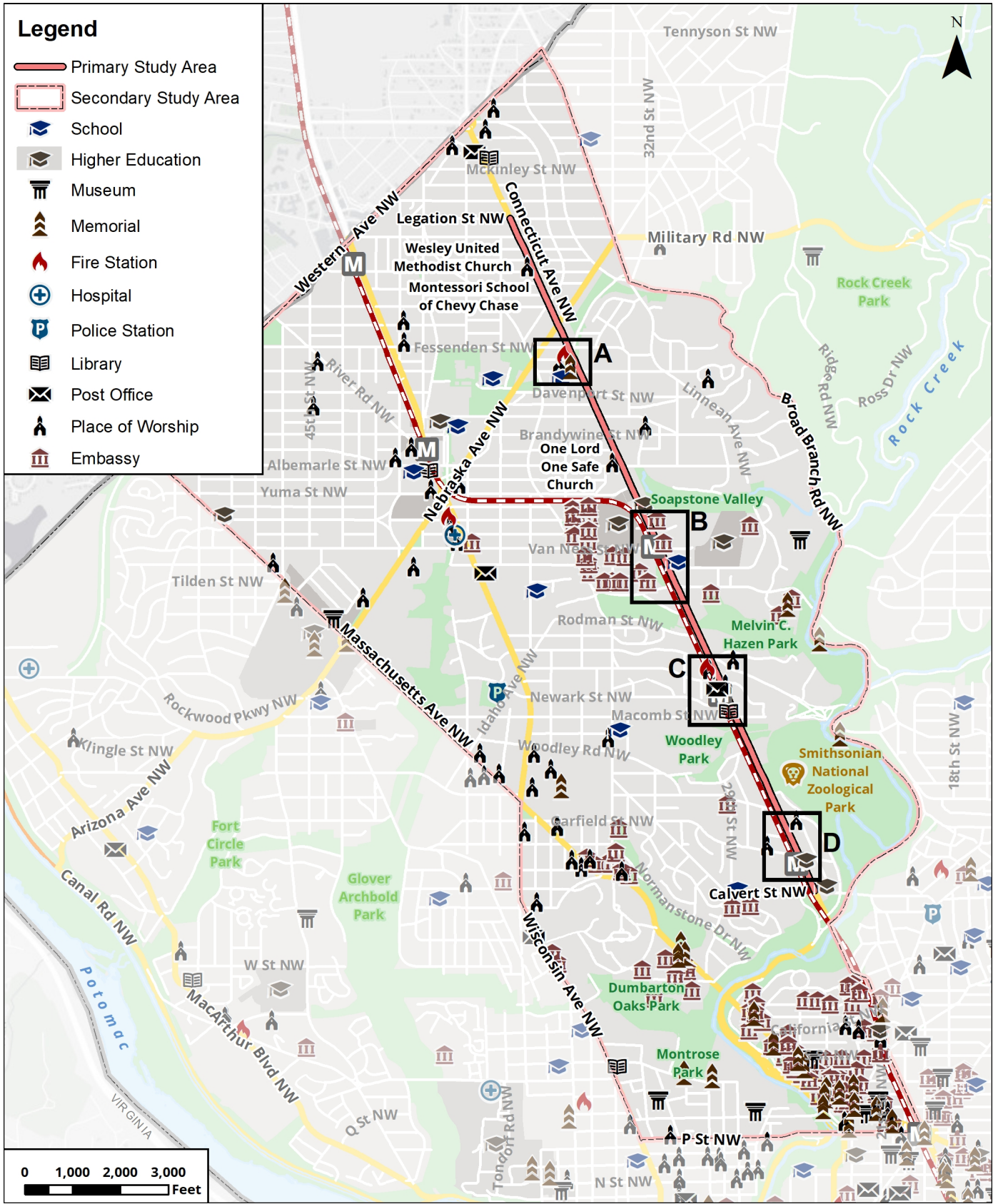


Figure 3a | Community Facilities

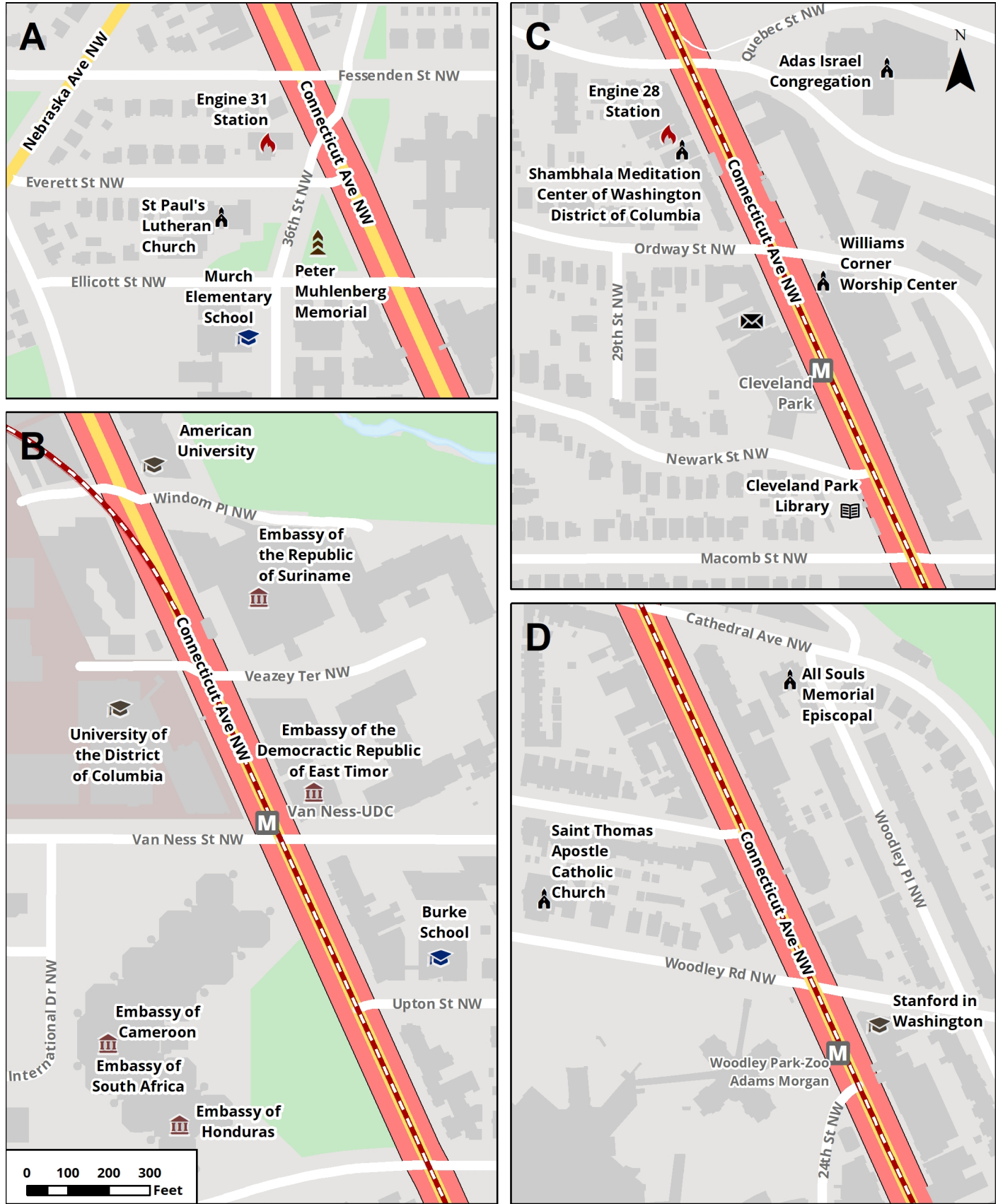


Figure 3b | Community Facilities – Details



2.2 VISUAL CONTEXT

The visual character of the primary study area is that of a typical linear, urban corridor with interspersed views of adjacent natural and cultural resources. Traversing the Chevy Chase, Cleveland Park, and Woodley Park neighborhoods, Connecticut Avenue NW is a six-lane arterial with developed parcels, continuous sidewalks, curb and cutter, and limited streetscaping along both sides of the roadway. While there are a few vertical curves that limit line-of-sight along Connecticut Avenue NW, the roadway generally decreases in elevation from north to south. Between Woodley Park and Cleveland Park, Connecticut Avenue NW traverses a deep, natural valley on the historic Klinge Valley Bridge, north of the National Zoo.

Overall, Connecticut Avenue NW contains a variety of architectural styles, displayed in numerous multi-story apartment buildings, single-family houses, rowhouses, embassies, and institutional and commercial buildings that line the corridor. More modern buildings are generally located north of Tilden Street NW; south of Tilden Street NW, the visual character of buildings is defined largely by the Cleveland Park Historic District and the Woodley Park Historic District (as described in Section 2.6).

Views to and from Connecticut Avenue NW are dominated by the roadway itself (pavement, moving or parked vehicles, and sidewalks), street trees, and the density of development along the corridor. There are few open or vacant parcels. Residential and commercial parcels are developed, typically with minimal setback between the building faces and the transportation right-of-way and with minimal landscaped vegetation. A few residential or institutional areas provide wider green or community spaces, and some restaurants, particularly those along Connecticut Avenue NW adjacent to the Metrorail stations, provide outdoor seating areas along/on the sidewalk. There are minimal open, expansive views, other than the park areas that cross or are adjacent to the corridor; however, the parks are typically located in stream valleys that are lower in elevation than the roadway and adjacent properties. Forested lands within the parks adjacent to Connecticut Avenue NW are in a relatively natural state.

The following photographs represent the views of typical roadway elements and buildings along Connecticut Avenue NW within the primary study area.



View of high-density apartment buildings along Connecticut Avenue NW (facing south) near Davenport Street NW.



View of Cleveland Park (facing north) near Newark Street NW.



View along Connecticut Avenue NW (facing north) near Nebraska Avenue NW.



Views along Connecticut Avenue NW (facing north) and historic Wardman Tower near Woodley Park Metrorail Station.